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Cultural Landscape Report for Poplar Grove National Cemetery

Petersburg National Battlefield

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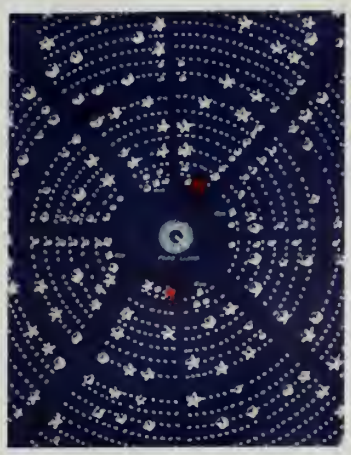

Cultural Landscape Report for Poplar Grove National Cemetery

Petersburg National Battlefield

Dinwiddie County, Virginia

Site History

Existing Conditions

Analysis and Evaluation

Treatment

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Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES, DRAWINGS, AND TABLES V

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS XI

FOREWORD XIII

INTRODUCTION 1

Purpose, Scope, and Methods 2
Summary of Findings 5

I. SITE HISTORY 13

Pre-Cemetery Period, to 1866 13
Establishment Period, 1866-1869 33
War Department Period, 1869-1933 57
National Park Service Period, 1933-Present 99

II. EXISTING CONDITIONS 131

Regional Context 131
Environmental Conditions 133
Operations Overview 134
Cemetery Landscape 135

III. ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION 157

National Register Evaluation 157
Cultural Landscape Evaluation 166

IV. TREATMENT 205

Framework for Treatment 206
General Treatment Issues 213
Treatment Guidelines and Tasks 217

REFERENCE LIST 269

(continued)

APPENDICES **275**

A. Abstract of Title for Poplar Grove National Cemetery (1866) 275
B. Poplar Grove Burial Location Plan (c.1954) 277
C. Post-1869 Burials at Poplar Grove National Cemetery 279
D. Chronology of Government Furnished Grave Markers 281
E. Standard Features of Civil War-Era National Cemeteries 283
F. Sample Quarterly Report for Poplar Grove National Cemetery 285
G. Chronological List of Plantings at Poplar Grove National Cemetery 289
H. Select Chronology of Poplar Grove National Cemetery 297
I. Summary of Regulations, Policies, and Planning Relevant to Treatment of the Poplar Grove National Cemetery Landscape 311
J. Treatment Alternatives Considered for Grave Markers 319
K. List of Research Contacts 325

FIGURES, DRAWINGS, AND TABLES

FIGURES

0.1	Regional context of Poplar Grove National Cemetery.	1
0.2	Map showing relationship of Poplar Grove to the City of Petersburg and Petersburg National Battlefield lands.	2
0.3	Photograph looking south on Vaughan Road near Poplar Grove.	2
0.4	Photograph of Poplar Grove looking toward the flagstaff.	3
1.1	Physiographic map of region around Poplar Grove.	13
1.2	"Map of the Most Inhabited Part of Virginia," Fry & Jefferson, 1751.	15
1.3	Detail, Colton's Map of Virginia, c.1850.	17
1.4	Detail, "Correct Map of Dinwiddie County by Ishmae. Hargraves," c.1850.	18
1.5	Map of Petersburg Campaign from Michler survey, c.1890.	19
1.6	Engraving of Poplar Springs Church, 1864.	20
1.7	Engraving of Union troops cutting the military railroad through pine forests south of Petersburg, 1864.)	20
1.8	Earthworks in front of Petersburg, 1865.	20
1.9	Camp of Oneida, New York Independent Cavalry Company in Petersburg, March 1865.	21
1.10	Map of the Federal Left Flank in vicinity of the camp of the 50th New York Volunteer Engineers, 1864-65.	21
1.11	Perspective drawing of the camp of the 50th New York Volunteer Engineers, 1865.	22
1.12	Photograph of the officers' quarters courtyard of the engineers' camp, circa October 1864.	23
1.13	Photograph of the headquarters tent at the engineers' camp, November 1864.	23
1.14	Photograph of the rebuilt officers' quarters courtyard of the engineers' camp, circa December 1864.	24
1.15	Photograph of the Surgeon's Quarters, March 1865.	24
1.16	Photograph of the officers' quarters courtyard, March 1865.	24
1.17	Photograph of Poplar Grove Church, March 1865.	25
1.18	Photograph of Poplar Grove Church nearing completion, circa February 1864.	25
1.19	Sketch looking through the log barracks in the engineers' camp, circa March 1865.	26
1.20	Perspective sketch of the engineers' camp, c.1865.	26
1.21	Photograph of battlefield burials at Warren Station, c.1864.	35

1.22	Union Army hospital cemetery at City Point, Virginia, c.1865.	36
1.23	Detail, Quartermaster survey of site for Poplar Grove National Cemetery, circa May 1866.	36
1.24	Detail, Quartermaster General map of surroundings of Poplar Grove National Cemetery, circa May 1866.	37
1.25	A traditional eighteenth-century graveyard, photographed 1936.	38
1.26	Mount Auburn Cemetery, the prototype American rural cemetery.	38
1.27	Spring Grove Cemetery, Cincinnati, the prototype lawn-style cemetery, photographed c.1869.	39
1.28	Plan of Gettysburg National Cemetery.	39
1.29	Photograph of Gettysburg National Cemetery, c.1913.	40
1.30	Photograph of Alexandria National Cemetery, c.1865.	40
1.31	Plan of Glendale National Cemetery, surveyed 1892.	41
1.32	Plan of City Point National Cemetery, surveyed 1892.	41
1.33	Detail of 1866 survey of site for Poplar Grove National Cemetery.	42
1.34	Diagram of layout of Poplar Grove burial grounds.	43
1.35	Example of wooden headboards, photograph of Soldiers' Home National Cemetery, photographed c.1865.	45
1.36	Bronze shield on Poplar Grove gun monument installed in circa June 1869, photographed 1968.	49
1.37	Detail, Map of Dinwiddie County in 1878.	57
1.38	Drawing of prototype for national cemetery lodges by General Montgomery Meigs.	61
1.39	Photograph of entrance to City Point National Cemetery, 1902.	62
1.40	Sketch plan of revised location for Poplar Grove lodge, August 1871.	62
1.41	The Poplar Grove lodge, built in 1871-1872.	63
1.42	Diagram of the Poplar Grove service area by 1880.	63
1.43	Photograph of the entrance to Cold Harbor National Cemetery, 1902.	64
1.44	Newspaper advertisement soliciting bids on construction of inclosure walls at Poplar Grove and Yorktown national cemeteries, July 16, 1873.	65
1.45	Survey of Poplar Grove National Cemetery made in February 1876.	66
1.46	Photograph of entrance to Fort Harrison National Cemetery, 1902.	66
1.47	View of Poplar Grove showing headstones and blocks installed in 1877, photographed c.1930.	69
1.48	Photograph of the center of Poplar Grove, c.1895.	*71*
1.49	Section diagram showing changes to the Poplar Grove flagstaff and mound by 1874.	72

1.50	Proposal for a settee submitted to the Quartermaster General in June 1877.	72
1.51	Quartermaster Plan of Poplar Grove, 1892.	76
1.52	A state monument at Culpeper National Cemetery erected in 1910.	77
1.53	Detail of the 1892 plan of Poplar Grove annotated to 1909 showing addition of the rostrum and gravel on main drive.	78
1.54	The Poplar Grove rostrum completed in 1897, photographed 1967.	79
1.55	Photograph of the entrance to Poplar Grove, 1904.	80
1.56	Plan of the Poplar Grove toolshed-stable, c.1915.	81
1.57	Photograph of the Poplar Grove burial grounds and main drive, c.1914.	82
1.58	Map of Petersburg National Battlefield showing general intent of c.1926 park plan, from a 1937 map.	84
1.59	The Poplar Grove public restroom building completed in 1929.	86
1.60	The Poplar Grove garage completed in 1929.	86
1.61	Detail of a 1939 photograph showing the new iron flagstaff installed in October 1930.	86
1.62	Tree planting plan for Poplar Grove, March 31, 1931.	87
1.63	Photograph of the Poplar Grove burial grounds, February 1932.	89
1.64	1946 map of the area near Poplar Grove.	99
1.65	Aerial photograph taken in 1994 showing development near Poplar Grove.	100
1.66	Detail of a c.1951 Petersburg Battlefield map showing relationship of Siege Line tour to Poplar Grove.	102
1.67	Article showing practice of resetting headstones as flat markers.	105
1.68	A 1939 photograph of the center of Poplar Grove.	107
1.69	Photograph of Yorktown National Cemetery showing replacement flat markers installed in c.1940.	109
1.70	Plan made in 1937 of proposed tree plantings at Poplar Grove. (National Park Service.)	110
1.71	Plan of Poplar Grove from Petersburg National Military Park master plan, c.1941.	111
1.72	Newspaper photograph of grave markers following rehabilitation in 1957.	114
1.73	Photograph of the center of Poplar Grove, July 1968.	115
1.74	Plan of Poplar Grove dating to c.1957 showing designation of burial grounds by blocks.	116
1.75	A 1968 photograph of the Maltese cross hedge.	116
1.76	A 1968 aerial photograph of the Odom farm surrounding Poplar Grove.	117

1.77	A sketch made in c.1977 showing the Blaha and Peterson houses on east side of Poplar Grove.	117
1.78	Photograph taken in 1978 looking east across Poplar Grove toward the Peterson house.	118
1.79	Plan completed in 1977 for redesign of the cemetery entrance area.	119
1.80	Survey of the Odom farm showing subdivision and plot offered for donation to the National Park Foundation in 1987.	120
1.81	Aerial photograph of Poplar Grove, 2004.	121
2.1	Current map of Petersburg National Battlefield lands showing relationship to Poplar Grove National Cemetery.	132
2.2	Map of the existing setting of Poplar Grove.	132
2.3	A suburban house opposite the cemetery entrance, 2006.	133
2.4	Map of current property ownership surrounding Poplar Grove.	136
2.5	Cultivated fields of the R. Taylor farm, 2006.	136
2.6	Barn and pasture of the R. Taylor farm, 2006.	136
2.7	The private drive to the Blaha and Peterson houses, 2006.	137
2.8	The Blaha house, 2006.	137
2.9	The Peterson house, 2006.	137
2.10	Vaughan Road on the approach to Poplar Grove, 2006.	138
2.11	The approach road at the R. Taylor farm, 2006.	138
2.12	The approach road at the Odom tract, 2006.	138
2.13	The Odom cemetery, 2006.	139
2.14	The visitor parking lot, 2006.	139
2.15	The inclosure wall at Block II, 2006.	140
2.16	The drainage opening in the inclosure wall at the cemetery low-point, 2006.	140
2.17	The interior of the cemetery entrance gate, 2006.	140
2.18	The outside of the cemetery entrance gate showing plaques, 2006.	141
2.19	A stone boundary marker, 2006.	141
2.20	The north woods with English ivy groundcover, 2006.	141
2.21	The lodge and public restroom building, 2006.	142
2.22	The rostrum during a Memorial Day service, 2005.	142
2.23	The garage and service yard, 2006.	143
2.24	Turf drives and walks in the burial grounds, 2006.	144
2.25	The main drive in the burial grounds, 2006.	144
2.26	The cemetery center with the flagstaff, 2006.	145
2.27	The gun monument, 2006.	145
2.28	A drive marker, 2006.	146
2.29	First-generation recessed-shield headstones, 2005.	147
2.30	Second-generation recessed-shield headstones, 2005.	147
2.31	Unknown blocks, 2005.	148

2.32	General headstones, 2005.	149
2.33	Government flat markers, 2005.	149
2.34	Medal of Honor bronze flat marker, 2005.	150
2.35	Non-government headstones installed in 1866-1869, 2005.	150
2.36	Non-government headstones installed after 1877, 2005.	150
2.37	Specimen trees in the burial grounds, 2006.	151
2.38	Large sweet-gum tree within a grave row, 2006.	151
2.39	A large white-cedar in Block XI, 2006.	152
2.40	Crape myrtle shrubs east of the flagstaff, 2006.	152
2.41	Remnant boxwood in the former allee between Blocks XVIII and XVI, 2006.	152
3.1	Historic natural and spatial characteristics in the setting of Poplar Grove illustrated on a c.1969 aerial photograph.	168
3.2	Existing natural and spatial characteristics in the setting of Poplar Grove illustrated on a 1994 aerial photograph.	168
3.3	Historic view of the burial grounds in 1932 showing character of the grave markers and specimen trees.	178
3.4	Existing view of the burial grounds showing change to the landscape from alteration of the grave markers.	178
4.1	Photograph of Richmond National Cemetery showing high level of maintenance carried out by the National Cemetery Administration (Veterans Affairs).	208
4.2	Illustration from the National Cemetery Administration's "Operational Standards and Measures" showing standards of landscape maintenance.	209
4.3	Photograph of Antietam National Cemetery showing level of maintenance at a National Park Service-administered national cemetery, c.2005.	214
4.4	Comparison of the engineers' camp in 1865 with Poplar Grove in 1932 showing perpetuation of loblolly pines.	216
4.5	Aerial photograph showing lands around Poplar Grove proposed for acquisition in the General Management Plan.	218
4.6	Suggested designs for cemetery entrance signs.	219
4.7	Photograph of the approach to Glendale National Cemetery showing similar rural setting proposed for Poplar Grove.	220
4.8	Information wayside at Antietam National Cemetery to serve as model for Poplar Grove.	229
4.9	Current standard government grave markers.	235
4.10	Example of government historical style headstone at Glendale National Cemetery.	235
4.11	Example of reproduction unknown block at Seven Pines National Cemetery.	235

4.12 - 4.23 Examples of marker types at Poplar Grove to illustrate proposed treatment. 239-40
4.24 Granite section marker at Richmond National Cemetery to serve as model for Poplar Grove. 241
4.25 Diagram of proposed treatment of central circle area. 243
4.26 The 1931 War Department planting plan for Poplar Grove to serve as basis for treatment of specimen trees in the burial grounds. 245
4.27 Photograph of Fort Harrison National Cemetery showing alternative placement of grave markers to avoid mature trees, 2006. 247
4.28 A 1939 photograph showing basis for treatment of shrubs in the burial grounds. 249
4.29 A 1968 photograph showing a historic settee at Poplar Grove and recommended contemporary design. 251
J.1 Alternative treatment for existing grave markers illustrated at Oakwood Cemetery, Syracuse, New York. 322

DRAWINGS

1.1 Pre-Cemetery Period Plan, Pre-1866. 31
1.2 Establishment Period Plan, 1866-1869. 55
1.3 War Department Period Plan, 1869-1933. 97
1.4 National Park Service Period Plan, 1933-Present. 129
2.1 Existing Conditions Plan, 2008. 155
3.1 Analysis and Evaluation Plan. 203
4.1 Treatment Plan. 261
4.2 Treatment: Cemetery Setting and Approach. 263
4.3 Treatment: Entrance Area. 265
4.4 Treatment: Lodge Grounds. 267

TABLES

2.1 Existing Grave Marker Tally. 146
3.1 Cultural Landscape Evaluation Summary. 198
4.1 Summary of Landscape Treatment Tasks. 251
4.2 Recommended Plant Materials. 253

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FOREWORD

The Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) for Poplar Grove National Cemetery is a remarkable document. John Auwaerter, Historical Landscape Architect at the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry at Syracuse, has worked in partnership with the Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation to prepare a well researched, artfully presented, and inestimably valuable reference and planning guide for the rehabilitation of an historic jewel. The CLR offers a blueprint to recapture the nobility and grace of this powerfully evocative place.

Even in its degraded condition, Poplar Grove has a "sense of place" like no other historic site in the area. Its bruised but loving character still imparts a stark reminder of the cost of the Civil War and the fact that thousands who lie below ground there died so early in life. The sadness is palpable. This CLR makes us see the landscape for what it once was and has revealed to us what the cemetery planners had in mind when they laid out its ordered, yet artful configuration, just after the Civil War.

Of the fourteen national cemeteries under the management of the National Park Service, Poplar Grove National Cemetery is the first, to our knowledge, to undergo such a comprehensive rehabilitation. This CLR will guide park planners and construction project managers through the many nuances of national cemetery rehabilitation, burial symbolism, and military tradition so that the final product will more meaningfully evoke the sense of loss and provide solace for the nation's loving remembrance of her fallen sons.

This wonderful collaborative effort will withstand the test of time and help the National Park Service return the luster of a faded jewel to the American people.

Bob Kirby
Superintendent
Petersburg National Battlefield

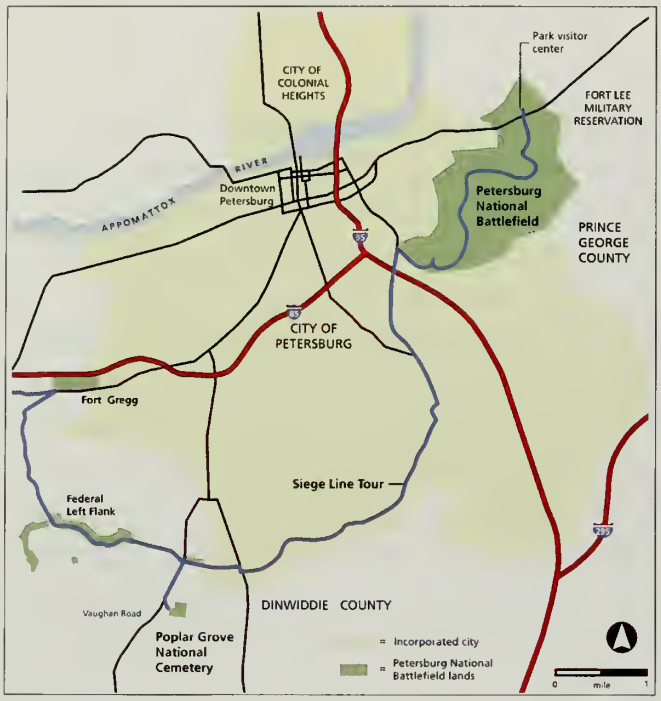
INTRODUCTION

Poplar Grove National Cemetery, located south of Petersburg in Dinwiddie County, Virginia, was established in 1866 to inter the thousands of fallen Union soldiers from the Petersburg Campaign (1864-1865) and other nearby Civil War battles in southeastern Virginia. Built on the site of the wartime camp of the 50th New York Volunteer Engineers, the cemetery takes it name from the camp's central feature, a rustic timber building called Poplar Grove Church. The federal government established the cemetery as part of the first systematic national effort to provide burial grounds for those who died in service to the country. The U.S. War Department administered the cemetery and nearby Petersburg National Military Park until 1933, when it transferred both properties to the National Park Service within the Department of the Interior. Poplar Grove is today one of fourteen of the nation's 142 national cemeteries within the National Park System. The others are managed by the National Cemetery Administration, an agency of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Accessed along a 1,000-foot long approach road flanked by working agricultural fields, Poplar Grove National Cemetery contains approximately 6,188 Civil War burials in its brick-wall enclosed eight-acre site. Approximately thirty-five percent of the burials are marked by white marble headstones inscribed with grave number and the name and company of the soldier. Most of the graves at Poplar Grove contain the remains of unidentified soldiers and are marked by simple square posts inscribed only with the grave number. Poplar Grove remains predominantly a Civil War cemetery with only sixty graves containing veterans of later wars. Closed to new burials in 1957, Poplar Grove still receives reinterment of Civil War remains, the most recent occurring in 2003.

Figure 0.1: Map showing context of Poplar Grove National Cemetery in the Virginia Tidewater region. (SUNY ESF.)

Poplar Grove National Cemetery is located on the western edge of the Virginia Tidewater region between Richmond and the North Carolina border, approximately 135 miles south of Washington, D.C. and seventy-file miles west of the Chesapeake Bay (fig. 0.1). The cemetery is five miles southwest of downtown Petersburg in a transitional rural-suburban area surrounded by second-growth woods, farm fields, and residential development (figs. 0.2, 0.3). Poplar Grove is administered as part of Petersburg National Battlefield, a park with multiple components on the outskirts of the city. The cemetery is stop 11 on the park's Siege Line Tour, which begins at the park's main area on the east side of Petersburg and



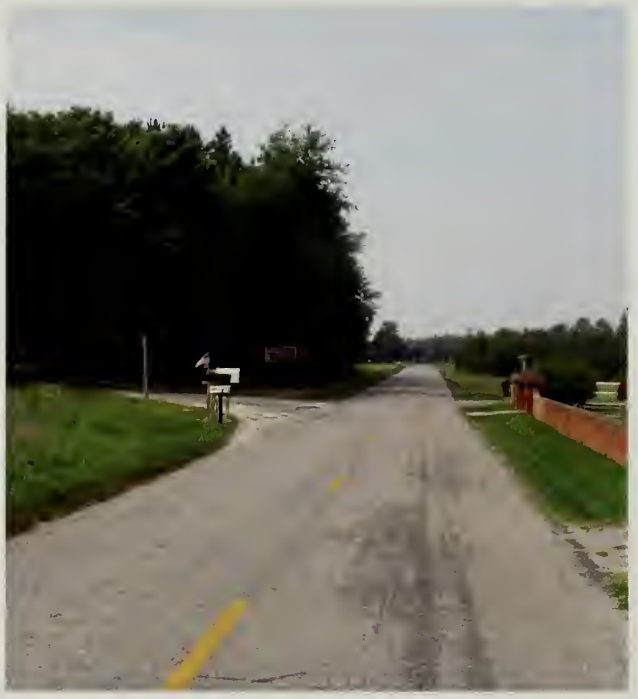


Figure 0.2 (left): Map showing the location of Poplar Grove National Cemetery in relation to Petersburg and components of Petersburg National Battlefield. The cemetery is stop #11 on the park's Siege Line Tour (blue line). (SUNY ESF.)

Figure 0.3 (right): Recent view (2006) looking south along Vaughan Road with the entrance to Poplar Grove National Cemetery at left and a suburban yard at right. (SUNY ESF.)

extends south and west along the line of Union fortifications that encircled the city (see fig. 0.2). The cemetery is accessed from an approach road that leads across farm fields to the main gates. Within its rectangular boundaries, Poplar Grove features a circular plan with graves and drives radiating out from a central point marked by a flagstaff. This plan is today not readily visible because the National Park Service transformed the marble headstones and blocks into flat markers in 1934 (fig. 0.4). Despite this, many other historic features remain intact, including a stone Second Empire-style superintendent's lodge, iron rostrum, Colonial Revival-style restroom building and garage, a gun monument (upright cannon), central flagstaff, and a brick inclosure (perimeter) wall with granite and iron entrance gates. The cemetery includes boxwood, magnolia, holly, oak, and loblolly pine that are remnants of a once richly planted landscape.

PURPOSE, SCOPE, AND METHODS

A Cultural Landscape Report is the primary document used by the National Park Service for management of its historically significant landscapes. This report for Poplar Grove National Cemetery has been developed according to the *Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques* (National Park Service, 1998). This report is organized into four chapters: Site History, Existing Conditions, Analysis and Evaluation, and Treatment, corresponding with the sections of Cultural Landscape Report Parts I and II. A resource list and appendices containing important historical documents, graphics, chronology, and list of repositories consulted are at the back of the report.

Figure 0.4: Recent view (2006) of Poplar Grove National Cemetery looking northwest across the burial grounds toward the center flagstaff. (SUNY ESF.)

The site history is a narrative of the physical development of the landscape and related contexts from pre-history to present, focusing on the time from the establishment of the engineers' camp in 1864 to the present. The chapter is divided into four periods, each defined by changes in land use, development, and ownership: Pre-Cemetery Period, to 1866; Establishment Period, 1866-1869; War Department Period, 1869-1933; and National Park Service Period, 1933-Present. The site history is accompanied by historic photographs, diagrams, and period plans illustrating change over time and the detailed condition of the landscape at the end of each period. The existing conditions chapter provides a narrative and graphic overview of the existing (2009) landscape. The chapter also describes the regional context, environmental conditions, cemetery setting (immediate environs), and park operations pertaining to the landscape.

The last two chapters provide park managers with detailed documentation on the significance of the landscape and its future management, building off the findings of the site history and existing conditions chapters. The first part of the analysis and evaluation assesses the historic significance of the landscape according to the criteria established by the National Register of Historic Places. The second

part, based on National Park Service cultural landscape methods, evaluates the landscape to assess its historic character, specifically changes since the end of the historic period. The treatment chapter describes an overall philosophy to guide short- and long-term management of the landscape, and prescribes tasks necessary to enhance the historic character of the landscape based on the findings of the evaluation and park operational needs.

The project area for this Cultural Landscape Report focuses on the eight-acre cemetery landscape delineated by the brick inclosure wall, and secondly on the approach road and setting consisting of a parcel owned by the National Park Foundation and several other privately-owned tracts proposed for park acquisition in the park's General Management Plan. Within this project area, the Cultural Landscape Report addresses the following five primary objectives:

1. Document the historic design and evolution of the landscape to inform management decisions regarding the nature and appropriateness of proposed repair and replacement efforts to minimize loss or disturbance of significant characteristics, features, and materials.
2. Document the changing historical appearance of character-defining site features, notably vegetation, circulation, grave markers, monuments, perimeter walls, and the drainage system, as well as the broader setting.
3. Provide contextual documentation on the history of American cemetery design and in particular on the design of Civil War-era national cemeteries.
4. Provide documentation that supports park consultation responsibilities under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.
5. Recommend treatment strategies for the long-term management of the cultural landscape.[1]

Many of these objectives pertain to planning for the line-item construction project, "Restore Facilities, Resources & Character Defining Elements to National Cemetery Standards."[2] Poplar Grove has lacked any significant enhancements in nearly fifty years. Today, the park recognizes that the condition of the headstones, decline in plant materials, loss of historic furnishings, and contemporary alterations detract from the landscape's historic character and the sacred nature of the cemetery. The construction project is intended to comprehensively address these deficiencies by enhancing the property's historic character, addressing deterioration of the grave markers, and improving visitor safety, orientation, and interpretation. The construction project is compatible with both the park's legislative purpose and its General Management Plan, which calls for the cemetery

to be brought up to the National Cemetery System standards of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Overall, research for this Cultural Landscape Report has been undertaken at a thorough level of investigation.[3] Historical research focused on holdings in the National Archives in Washington, D. C. and College Park, Maryland, and at Petersburg National Battlefield. Research was compared to field observations at Poplar Grove and at its companion Civil War-era national cemeteries in Virginia, including City Point, Cold Harbor, Culpeper, Fort Harrison, Glendale, Richmond, Seven Pines, and Yorktown. A history of Poplar Grove National Cemetery, prepared by National Park Service Historian Herbert Olsen in 1954, provided the basis for the overall history of the site, although it contains limited information on the landscape, and in particular on its development after 1880. Research into historic contexts, including the Civil War, post-war search and recovery program, and the administrative history of the War Department, National Cemetery System, and Petersburg National Battlefield, was limited largely to secondary sources.

Documentation of existing conditions is based upon field inventory, the most current site surveys and plans (including the park's GIS database), and discussions with park staff about current issues pertaining to maintenance, administration, and interpretation. The analysis and evaluation is based on the findings of the site history, the most current draft of the National Register documentation for Petersburg National Battlefield, the existing National Register multiple properties documentation for Department of Veterans Affairs Civil War-era National Cemeteries, and consultation with the History Program of the Northeast Region. Finally, the treatment chapter was developed based on the findings of the analysis and evaluation, the parameters of the line-item construction project, a treatment workshop with National Park Service staff, and a civic engagement held by the park to gain public input into the proposed rehabilitation project.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

SITE HISTORY OVERVIEW

Pre-Cemetery Period, To 1866

The site of Poplar Grove National Cemetery, situated south of the Appomattox River near the Fall Line dividing Virginia's plateau and tidewater regions, was part of what European explorers called "Apamatica Country." At the time of European contact in the seventeenth century, the region was a border area for several Native peoples, including the Eastern Siouan, Southern Iroquois, and the Appomattox. European settlement in the region began in the late eighteenth century based on

the plantation system with Petersburg as the central commercial and industrial center. On the eve of the Civil War, the site of the cemetery, covered in second-growth loblolly pine forest, was part of a ninety-acre farm owned by the Flower family.

In 1864 during the closing years of the Civil War, the Union Army built an extensive line of earthen fortifications as part of its siege on the city of Petersburg. In late October 1864 following Union victory at the nearby Battle of Peeble's Farm, the 50th New York Volunteer Engineers, who were responsible for construction of the fortifications, established their camp on the Flower farm. Here at the future site of the cemetery, the engineers cleared the loblolly woods to build an elaborate camp organized around a central parade grounds that included rustic wooden officers' quarters, barracks, and a meeting hall named Poplar Grove Church in honor of the church lost in the Battle of Peeble's Farm. The engineers occupied the camp until March 29, 1865. The camp buildings remained on the site for at least a year following the end of the Civil War on April 9, 1865.

Establishment Period, 1866-1869

In May 1866, Lieutenant Colonel James Moore of the Army's Office of the Quartermaster General selected the engineers' camp on the Flower farm as the site for a national cemetery. This cemetery was to be part of a new system of national cemeteries that the federal government established to address the unprecedented number of fallen soldiers from the Civil War. It was one of eleven national cemeteries that the Army established in the Virginia district, along with City Point, Cold Harbor, Culpeper, Fredericksburg, Glendale, Hampton, Richmond, Staunton, Winchester, and Yorktown National Cemeteries. The cemetery was named Poplar Grove after the engineers' Poplar Grove Church, which initially served as the focal point of the cemetery. The plan for the seven-acre cemetery, connected to the public highway (Vaughan Road) by a 1,052-foot long approach road through the fields of the Flower farm, consisted of graves in concentric circles around a central flagstaff, positioned on axis with Poplar Grove Church. By June 1, 1866, the cemetery was officially established as bodies were brought to the site from nearby battlefields by a force of upwards of one hundred men who were together known as the burial corps. The burial corps removed most of the old camp buildings by June 1, 1866, but kept many of the loblolly pines in the woods that surrounded the camp. By June 1867, most of the grave sites in the cemetery had been filled with total reinterments numbering 5,196.

For the following three years that it worked at Poplar Grove, the burial corps continued to reinter a small number of remains while developing the cemetery landscape. This work included building a wood perimeter fence, sodding grave mounds, putting up wooden headboards, erecting a central flagstaff on a six-foot

high mound encircled by four gun monuments, planting red cedar trees, and building drives, walks, drains, and a frame lodge for the superintendent. In the spring of 1868, the burial corps removed the namesake of the cemetery, Poplar Grove Church, which had become deteriorated beyond repair. One acre was added to the cemetery at its southwest corner, and on December 15, 1868, the government completed its acquisition of the 8.13-acre parcel from the Flower family. On June 30, 1869, the burial corps at Poplar Grove National Cemetery was officially disbanded, having interred a total of 6,178 Union soldiers and five civilians; only thirty-five percent of these remains were positively identified.

War Department Period, 1869-1933

After the burial corps was disbanded, administration was taken over by the U.S. War Department, which continued to develop the cemetery landscape through the Office of the Quartermaster General and on-site supervision of a cemetery superintendent. The development of the landscape and buildings was standardized throughout the national cemetery system and adapted to local conditions as necessary. Standard improvements at Poplar Grove included a stone Second Empire-style lodge (1871-72) based on a prototype designed by Quartermaster General Montgomery Meigs, specimen trees and sylvan hall of elms (1871), perimeter hedge of Osage orange and boxwood hedge in the shape of a Maltese cross (1871), brick inclosure wall with granite and iron gateway (1876), marble headstones for known graves and marble blocks for unknown graves (1877), settees (c.1878), approach road allee (1878), brick toolshed-stable and kitchen buildings (1879), and iron tablets (c.1881). Some changes had been made to features built by the burial corps between 1866 and 1869, including moving of the frame lodge to the rear of the new lodge in 1872, changing the surface of the drives and walks from gravel to turf in c.1872-74, and filling of brick gutters in 1877. By 1881, the War Department completed its program of major improvements for Poplar Grove.

For the following four decades, the War Department made few improvements to the landscape, with the exception of an iron rostrum added in 1897. Some landscape features were changed during this time, including removal of the Osage orange hedge in c.1888 and replacement with English ivy, graveling of the main drive in c.1900, and installation of an iron flagstaff and removal of the flagstaff mound n 1913. In 1915, a tornado swept across the cemetery, resulting in the loss of 139 trees. With the establishment of Petersburg National Military Park in 1926, the War Department began to plan for a series of improvements at Poplar Grove. This program resulted in the building of a Colonial Revival-style public restroom building and new garage in 1929; and in 1931, modernization of the lodge with a metal roof, planting of 101 trees, paving of the approach road and main drive, and installation of a new iron flagstaff.

National Park Service Period, 1933-Present

On August 10, 1933, administration of Poplar Grove National Cemetery and Petersburg National Battlefield was transferred from the Quartermaster Corps in the War Department to the National Park Service in the Department of the Interior. Administration was initially carried out through the Superintendent of Colonial National Monument until December 1935, when the cemetery was placed under the newly appointed Superintendent of Petersburg National Military Park. From 1933 through c.1942, maintenance and improvement of the cemetery was aided by labor from the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). During this time, the landscape was radically changed when, in February and March 1934, the park transformed the upright grave markers into flat markers to facilitate mowing and to enhance the appearance of the cemetery. The park received public criticism over the change, which did not ease maintenance as anticipated. In 1937, CCC crews planted 115 red cedars, mostly as screening along the perimeter of the cemetery, and repaired the inclosure wall.

After World War II, maintenance at the cemetery declined following the park's decision to abolish the position of cemetery superintendent in 1949. Maintenance of the cemetery fell to the small staff of Petersburg National Battlefield. Without an on-site superintendent and CCC laborers, the condition of the cemetery deteriorated, and by the 1950s, the park was again facing public criticism over the grave markers, many of which were not visible because they had sunken and become covered with grass. In 1957, as part of its MISSION 66 program, the park made modest improvements to the cemetery by raising the headstones above grade and installing two new signs to either side of the flagstaff that showed the burial register and the plan of the cemetery. That same year, the last new burial was made and the cemetery was official closed. No additional improvements were made to the landscape, which continued to erode through the loss of small-scale features and vegetation. In c.1974, the park removed the settees, boxwood Maltese cross hedge, and three of the four gun monuments, and cut the height of the flagstaff in half.

By the early 1970s, suburban development had begun to encroach on the setting of Poplar Grove. In c.1972, a drive was built from the approach road along the northern boundary of the cemetery to two houses constructed within seventy-five feet of the east wall. Four years later, the park began to plan for a program of improvements to the buildings and landscape, including the acquisition of eighteen surrounding acres to protect the setting of the cemetery and place the approach road in federal ownership. Apparently due to lack of funds, these plans were not implemented, although the property acquisition was eventually advanced. In 1987, a plan for acquiring a smaller amount of land—3.7 wooded acres to the west of the cemetery along with a section of the approach road—was

proposed by the park. The National Park Foundation, a not-for-profit advocacy group, acquired this land in 1991 with the intent of transferring ownership to the National Park Service. Although this transfer did not occur as planned, the park went ahead with construction of a visitor parking lot on the parcel in c.1995, adjoining the cemetery entrance gates. In recent years, the park has maintained the landscape, but without an infusion of resources, the grave markers, vegetation, and visitor facilities have continued to deteriorate.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The eight acres of Poplar Grove National Cemetery under National Park Service ownership consist of the landscape within the brick inclosure wall and a narrow strip outside of it. Within the walls are the burial grounds, lodge grounds, and service area. The burial grounds consist of nineteen unmarked blocks (an organization adopted in c.1957 from the original divisions and sections) arranged in concentric circles except for five blocks along the perimeter that have an orthogonal pattern. Orientation is provided through a faded grave locator map and interpretive panel installed in c.1957 near the central flagstaff. All grave markers lie flush with the ground or are raised slightly above grade. Most are in poor condition, characterized by eroded stone, chipped edges, and stained surfaces. There are three general types: white marble upright headstones that were installed between 1877 and 1934, and cut off at ground level and transformed into flat markers in 1934; square white marble posts marking unknown graves that were installed in 1877 at a height of six inches and sunk flush with the ground in 1934; and flat markers installed after 1934. At the center of the burial grounds, accessed by a curving entrance drive, is a forty-foot tall flagstaff installed in 1931 that was originally twice as tall and is largely concealed from view by surrounding trees. A gun monument, one of four upright cannons that lined the central circular drive, is to the north of the flagstaff.

Adjoining the entrance gates at the southwest corner of the cemetery are the lodge grounds and service area. The lodge grounds contain the 1872 lodge, which is largely unused except as a station for the attending park ranger. To the rear of the lodge is the 1929 restroom building, which remains in use but is not universally accessible. The open grounds of the assembly area to the east, with the 1897 rostrum, is used for Memorial Day ceremonies and other special gatherings. Across the main drive from the lodge grounds is the service area, with the 1929 garage that remains in use as the maintenance facility and maintenance office for the cemetery.

The 1,025-foot long approach road to the cemetery from Vaughan Road crosses private property along a federal right-of-way. The road is bordered mostly by second-growth volunteer trees and open agricultural fields of the R. Taylor farm.

Near the cemetery, the dense loblolly pine woods block views of the cemetery from the approach. These woods are on a 3.7-acre parcel (Odom Tract) owned by the National Park Foundation that also includes the eastern 325 feet of the approach road, the cemetery parking lot, and the Odom cemetery, a small plot established in 1971 and containing two headstones and four graves. To the north and east of the cemetery inclosure wall, the landscape is characterized by woods that were developed in c.1972 with two residences and an access drive. The land to the south of the cemetery consists of woods and a field.

ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

Poplar Grove is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, but is inadequately documented. Based on the National Register Criteria for Evaluation, this report recommends that Poplar Grove National Cemetery landscape be documented for its significance under Criterion A in the area of military history and Criterion C in the area of landscape architecture. In the area of military history, Poplar Grove is significant for its intimate association with the Civil War and as a component of the National Cemetery System. In the area of landscape architecture, Poplar Grove is significant for illustrating the initial development of the National Cemetery System through the early 1880s and its subsequent development through the 1930s under War Department administration.

Under Criterion A, the cemetery has an overall period of significance dating from its founding in 1866 through the last burial in 2003; this period may be extended if reinterment of Civil War remains occurs in the future. The period of significance for the landscape extends from 1866 through the end of the War Department period in 1933. The changes made to the landscape by the National Park Service after 1933, including alteration of the grave markers, do not have significance. The post-1933 graves are significant under National Register Criterion A.

Poplar Grove National Cemetery is composed of ten landscape characteristics: natural systems and features, spatial organization, land use, circulation, topography, vegetation, buildings and structures, views and vistas, small-scale features, and archeological features. While many of these historic characteristics remain, there have been substantial changes since 1933. Historic character has been lost in the landscape's spatial organization through growth of woods on fields in the cemetery's setting; in vegetation through the loss of the approach road allee, Maltese cross hedge, specimen trees, and shrubs; in views and vistas through growth of woods and specimen trees that block views upon approach to the cemetery and of the central flagstaff from within the burial grounds; and most notably, in small-scale features through removal of iron tablets, gun monuments, and upright grave markers.

TREATMENT

The recommended treatment philosophy for Poplar Grove National Cemetery is to rehabilitate the landscape to its character at the end of the War Department administration in 1933, prior to its transfer to the National Park Service and subsequent removal of the upright grave markers. Treatment to this date incorporates the development of the cemetery landscape from its founding in 1866 over the course of nearly seven decades of military administration when the majority of burials took place. This treatment philosophy focuses on managing the landscape for its historic character by preserving defining features, returning key features that have been lost since 1933, and allowing for change inherent in vegetation and necessary for contemporary uses, provided they are compatible with the historic character of the landscape. The philosophy also includes preservation and enhancement of the cemetery's rural setting, including its tree-lined approach road, views, and adjoining fields and woods. This philosophy is based on National Park Service management policies and regulations for national cemeteries that refer to the Department of Veterans Affairs' National Cemetery Administration standards, as well as on park planning and historic national cemetery standards issued by the War Department.

Key treatment tasks for the rehabilitation of the cemetery landscape include installation of new grave markers that, with a few exceptions, replicate the existing altered and deteriorated stones, and removal of the existing grave markers; planting of trees and shrubs; replacement of the central flagstaff to return it to its historic height above the tree canopy; resurfacing the main drive; reinstallation of the iron tablets presently in storage; rehabilitation of the lodge, garage, and restroom building to enhance their historic character and contemporary function, and installation of a new grave locator system, including section markers and a wayside near the cemetery entrance. Outside of the cemetery walls, key treatment tasks include reestablishment of the approach road allee; installation of new signage; relocation of the visitor parking lot to a less conspicuous location; and removal of the non-historic woods west of the cemetery to reestablish the open field and views of the cemetery from the approach road. Treatment also includes preservation of the existing agricultural fields and woods along the approach road and adjoining the cemetery, and screening of incompatible modern development. Most of these tasks for the setting are contingent upon the park gaining interest in the privately owned land.

ENDNOTES

1 Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, Project Agreement, Poplar Grove National Cemetery Cultural Landscape Report, 3 June 2005.

2 "Restore Facilities, Resources & Character Defining Elements to National Cemetery Standards—POGR," PMIS 89424, 8 April 2002 updated to 25 January 2005, Petersburg National Battlefield.

3 As defined in the National Park Service *Cultural Resource Management Guideline* (DO-28, 1998), "thorough" means research in selected published and documentary sources of known or presumed relevance that are readily accessible without extensive travel and that promise expeditious extraction of relevant data; interviewing all knowledgeable persons who are readily available, non-destructive investigation, and presenting findings in no greater detail than required by the task directive. National Park Service, *Cultural Resource Management Guideline*, NPS-28, web edition, 11 June 1998, http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books /nps28/28contents.htm, 17-19.

SITE HISTORY

PRE-CEMETERY PERIOD, TO 1866

In the centuries before its establishment as a national cemetery in 1866, the site of Poplar Grove was an indistinguishable part of the forests of the Virginia Fall Line and a homeland of Native Americans before becoming a remote corner of a Dinwiddie County plantation in the eighteenth century. Only during the Civil War did the site earn a distinctive use and character—as the camp of the 50th New York Volunteer Engineers. Although the natural topography was influential in determining regional land-use patterns, it is due to the engineers' camp that the cemetery owes its location and name.

NATIVE SETTING

The site of Poplar Grove National Cemetery is located along a geologic and physiographic divide that separates Appalachian highlands of igneous rock to the west known as the Piedmont Plateau, and sedimentary lowlands to the east known as the Coastal Plain or in its regional idiom, the Tidewater. This divide, traditionally called the Fall Line, extends from New Jersey south to the Carolinas parallel to the Atlantic coast. The Fall Line marks the edge of the Piedmont's east-facing escarpment (cliff), once an ancient ocean shore. The Coastal Plain was formed from sediments that washed down into the ocean over millions of years, eventually building up a sedimentary plain that buried the escarpment and extended far into the sea. The name Fall Line comes from the waterfalls and rapids that washed away the sedimentary plain and flow over the rocky Piedmont escarpment. The Fall Line—actually a zone several miles in width rather than a sharp dividing line—marks the westernmost extent of tidal waters. [1]

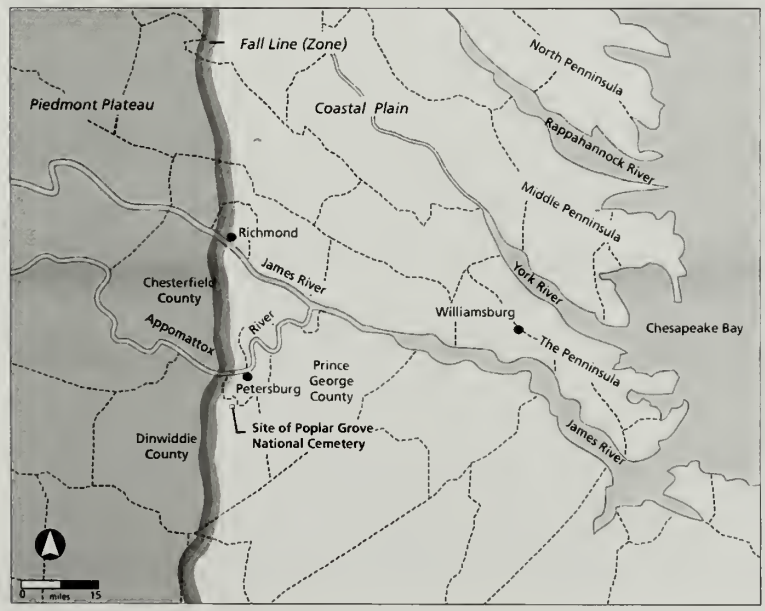


Figure 1.1: Physiographic regions illustrating general area of the Fall Line (Fall Zone) in relation to Poplar Grove National Cemetery and current county boundaries. (SUNY ESF.)

Poplar Grove National Cemetery is just east of the Fall Line within the western extreme of the Coastal Plain (fig. 1.1). The Fall Line in the region generally corresponds with elevations between 170 and 250 feet, with lower areas part of the Coastal Plain and higher areas as part of the Piedmont Plateau. [2] Near Poplar Grove, the geology of the Fall Line is most visible in the landscape west of Petersburg along the Appomattox River, a major tributary of the James River that flows into the Chesapeake Bay. Here, the Appomattox

(whose name is believed to be of Indian derivation meaning meandering river) cuts through a ravine in the Piedmont escarpment, with waterfalls and rapids extending along a five-mile stretch west from the city.[3] Poplar Grove is approximately five miles south of these rapids in a region where there is little outward sign of the Fall Line because the Piedmont escarpment is buried beneath Coastal Plain sediments. The topography here overall slopes toward the east, with local changes in elevation typically amounting to less than fifty feet. Poplar Grove lies above a small ravine in the headwaters of the Arthur Swamp near a watershed divide. The streams to the north of the cemetery drain to the Appomattox River and the Chesapeake Bay, while those adjoining and to the south of the cemetery drain to the Albemarle Sound in North Carolina. The siege line built by the Union Army along present-day Flank Road approximately one half mile north of the cemetery generally marks the line of this watershed divide.[4]

Due to extensive clearing by European settlers, little is known about the native plant species and communities that once existed in and around Poplar Grove National Cemetery. The soils, generally composed of deep loamy and clayey river and marine deposits, would have supported a temperate forest ecosystem.[5] The area was most likely dominated by longleaf pine (*Pinus palustris*) and mixed hardwoods such as American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), several species of oak (*Quercus sp.*), and American holly (*Ilex opaca*). Tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*)—probably the species that is the indirect namesake for the cemetery—were part of the native flora in the Petersburg area, especially along bottomlands where it is a common early successional tree. Loblolly pine (*Pinus taeda*)—a tree common today in the woods surrounding Poplar Grove—was generally a minor species, often found in mixed hardwood forests and along stream and swamp margins.[6] When European farmers began to clear the native forests beginning in the late seventeenth century, loblolly pine often became the dominant species due to its ability to regenerate readily in disturbed areas. This nature led to its nickname, "old-field pine."[7][8]

Human habitation in the region surrounding Poplar Grove National Cemetery, referred to as the "Apamatica Country" by European explorers and traders after the people who lived in the region at the time of contact in the seventeenth century, dates back more than 10,000 years. At the time of European contact, the region was a border area for several Native peoples, with a primary trading path running along the Fall Line. The cemetery site was probably at the western edge of the homeland of the Appomattox (or Appamatuck) people, neighboring Eastern Siouan Indians (a branch of the Western Sioux) to the west and Southern Iroquois to the south. The Appomattox built bark-covered houses in villages enclosed by palisades, and in surrounding fields farmed corn, beans, melons, pumpkins, root vegetables, and fruit trees.[9] It is not known whether the Appomattox or any other

earlier Native peoples had any specific use or association with the cemetery, which was most likely part of larger forested hunting grounds.

EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT

Soon after European settlers established Jamestown in 1607, they began to explore the headwaters of the James River, which were navigable up to the Fall Line. They arrived in Apamatica Country in 1608, but it was several decades before settlement reached that far west. In 1639, the British granted the first colonial patent at the falls of the Appomattox River within the present city of Petersburg. Six years later in anticipation of further settlement, the colony authorized Fort Henry to be constructed there as part of a series of forts along the Fall Line to defend the western edge of settlement. In 1644, the Powhatan Confederation, a federation of more than thirty Algonquian tribes, signed a treaty agreeing that all land east of the Fall Line belonged to the English, and all land to the west was Indian territory. South of the Appomattox River, the so-called Indian Line was poorly defined, leading to colonial settlement well to its west. By the end of the seventeenth century, the Appomattox and most of the Powhatan tribes in the region had been decimated by European diseases, war, and cultural pressures. The Indian Line gave way in 1690.[10]

By 1702, settlement had advanced sufficiently to warrant creation of Prince George County that took in Petersburg and miles of country to the east and west across the former Indian Line (fig. 1.2). Between 1715 and 1730, most of the county was granted to European settlers through patents. By mid-century,

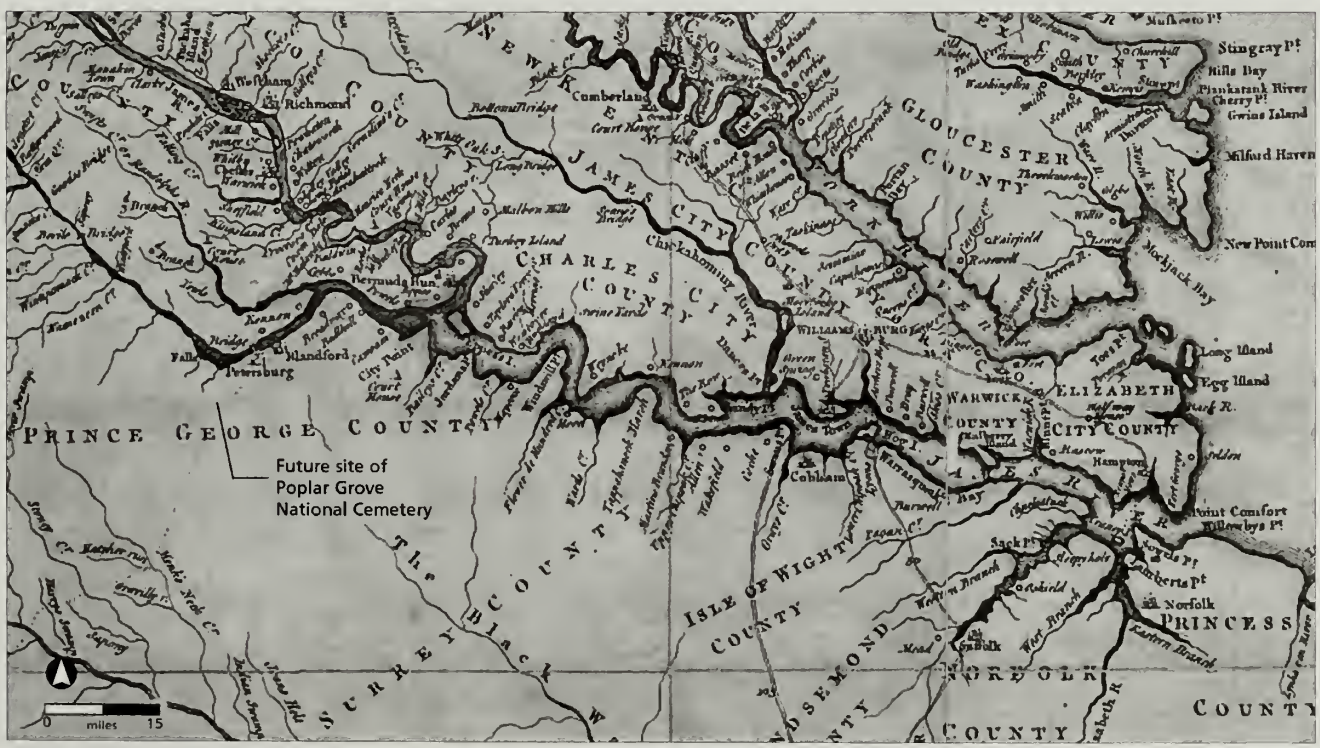


Figure 1.2: Detail, "Map of the Most Inhabited Part of Virginia (Fry & Jefferson, 1751), showing main settlements, waterways, and roads. Note lack of roads and settlements in area south of Petersburg. (Library of Congress, American Memory Collection, digital image g3880 ct000370, annotated by SUNY ESF.)

there were few towns in the county and all were clustered along the Appomattox River. The interior of the county was, however, being transformed from mostly forest into large farms known as plantations. Settlement had become sufficiently advanced by 1752 to warrant division of the western part of Saint George, including the site of Poplar Grove, as Dinwiddie County, named after Robert Dinwiddie who had been appointed Lieutenant Governor of Virginia the year before. [11]

Petersburg, located at the northeastern corner of Dinwiddie County, developed as the primary trade and market center for the surrounding agricultural region. The city was laid out in 1748, and by 1791 its population had reached nearly 3,000. Much of Petersburg's early growth was due to the tobacco trade and its position at the head of navigable waters on the Appomattox River. Throughout this period, surrounding Dinwiddie County remained predominantly rural and sparsely populated, with a population of 5,257 including slaves by 1830. Roads, usually little more than dirt tracks, were far between and generally extended perpendicular to streams and oriented in a radial pattern toward Petersburg.[12]

As was typical of most of Tidewater Virginia, the county was dominated by plantation agriculture dependent on tobacco with wheat and corn as secondary crops. By the early nineteenth century, years of tobacco growing was resulting in decreased productivity due to soil depletion, with second-growth loblolly pine woods on abandoned fields a familiar site throughout the rural landscape. Combined with competition from fertile Midwestern farms, the decline in productivity led to a drop in the value of the county's farms, which fell by more than half between 1820 and 1850.[13] These depressed conditions were evident in a description of the county written by the widely published journalist Benson J. Lossing during his visit in 1848:

> *...the country is broken, and patches of sandy soil with pine forests, alternated with red clay, bearing oaks, chestnuts, and gum-trees. Worse roads I never expect to travel, for they would be impassable...The country is sparsely populated, and the plantations generally bore evidences of unskilled culture. Although most of the soil is fertile, and might be made very productive, yet so wretchedly is it frequently managed that twenty bushels of wheat is considered a good yield for an acre...Tobacco is the staple product, yielding from five hundred to one thousand pounds per acre; but in the absence of manure, it destroys the vitality of the soil.*[14]

Despite Lossing's dismal account, improved transportation and agricultural practices were leading to increasing farm prosperity at the time. By 1860, land values had almost doubled and improved farm acreage had increased over the

Figure 1.3: A 1854 map of Virginia showing Petersburg as a transportation nexus. (Detail, G. W. Colton, *Virginia*, Published by J. H. Colton & Company, 1856.)

previous decade.[15] The antebellum years were also prosperous ones for Petersburg, which was incorporated as a city in 1850 and by the eve of the Civil War was ranked only behind Richmond among Virginia cities in its size, industry, and cultural life. [16] Much of its growth and importance became increasingly tied to its position as a transportation crossroads and nexus for the region's railroads. In 1833, the Petersburg Railroad (later renamed the Petersburg and Weldon Railroad) was completed to North Carolina, reinforcing Petersburg's importance as an agricultural market and industrial center, and soon additional rail links were built to Richmond, Norfolk, and City Point at the confluence of the Appomattox and James Rivers. [17] On the eve of the Civil War, five railroads and six major roads converged on Petersburg from all directions (fig. 1.3).[18]

The Flower Farm

As was typical of cities throughout the nation prior to the Civil War, Petersburg was a compact urban area along the banks of the Appomattox River. It quickly transitioned to a rural district that by the 1850s included smaller farms that had been subdivided from larger plantations. The site of Poplar Grove National Cemetery was within one of these smaller farms, approximately five miles southwest of Petersburg and east of Halifax Road, the primary road leading south from the city (fig. 1.4). On this road about a half mile east of the cemetery site was the Globe Tavern, one of the few commercial establishments outside of Petersburg. Southwest of the cemetery site along a crossroad was a small chapel named Poplar Spring Church.

The farm that included the cemetery site was located along Vaughan Road, a minor road running southwest from Halifax Road. Because of a fire at the Dinwiddie County Courthouse that destroyed all land records prior to c.1835, little is known about the earliest ownership of the land. It was apparently part of a large plantation known as the Clifford Tract that extended from the vicinity of Arthurs Swamp and Duncan Road (present Route 670) on the west to beyond Vaughan Road on the east. The plantation belonged to Jordon and Francis Floyd, who lived in a two-story frame dwelling later known as Cottage Place at the west

Figure 1.4: Map of area south of Petersburg near the future site of Poplar Grove National Cemetery prior to the Civil War. (Detail, "Correct Map of Dinwiddie County by Ishmae. Hargraves," c.1850, National Archives II, Cartographic Division, annotated by SUNY ESF.)

end of the plantation. Jordon Floyd was later a bonded tobacco inspector for Oaks warehouse in Petersburg.[19]

In 1838, the Floyds—then residents of Petersburg—sold a 450-acre tract along Vaughan Road at the eastern end of their plantation including the future cemetery site, to Benjamin H. and Frances Coupland for $2,612.33.[20] The Couplands probably built a farmhouse along the west side of Vaughan Road. Five years later in 1843, they sold the farm to Isaac Roney, of Dinwiddie County, for $1,200.[21] In 1844, Roney sold the farm to Joseph A. Sydnor, of Petersburg, for $2,000. Over their eight years of ownership, Sydnor and his wife Mary apparently rented out the farm, since they remained residents of Petersburg. On December 2, 1852, the Sydnors sold the farm to Juliana Dorsey for $3,000, who in turn sold the farm a year and a half later on March 21, 1855, to John Flower, of Delaware County, Pennsylvania, for $6,750.[22] In order to pay for the property, John Flower used a $5,000 bond that was issued by Reverend Thomas B. Flower, probably John's father or brother. John Flower was apparently unable to pay off the bond, and so he and his wife, Mary Ann, sold the farm to Reverend Flower on April 25, 1856, but the couple remained occupants of the land through the Civil War.[23] It is not known why the Flowers moved to Virginia. The agricultural economy in Dinwiddie County was improving by the 1850s, and perhaps they saw an opportunity there that they may not have had in Pennsylvania. They would have lived in the farmhouse that Benjamin and Francis Coupland may have built, located on the west side of Vaughan Road across from the present cemetery approach road.[24]

Into the early years of the Civil War, the site of the cemetery within the Flower farm was a four- or five-acre field surrounded on three sides by woods of loblolly pine, second-growth trees that had seeded in over the past two or three decades on former agricultural land.[25] The field, which adjoined another field to the south on land owned by the Farley family, occupied a plateau that bordered shallow ravines to the north and west formed by headwaters of the Arthur Swamp. The pine woods separated the field from other fields to the west along Vaughan Road, and more pine woods extended west to Halifax Road. The nearby marshy ravine

floors were probably covered in mixed bottomland hardwood trees, such as maple and poplar.[26]

THE CIVIL WAR

The transformation of a corner of the Flower farm to a military camp and ultimately the resting place for thousands of fallen soldiers resulted from the strategic place that Petersburg held in the latter years of the Civil War. The area around the city was the site of the terrible ten-month Petersburg Campaign that began in June 1864 and continued into April 1865—one of the longest sieges in American warfare. In the spring of 1864 following failed attempts at taking Richmond directly, General Grant changed to a strategy of indirectly taking the Confederate capitol by cutting off its supply routes, the most important of which came through Petersburg with its nexus of road and rail lines. After an initial four-day battle failed to take Petersburg, General Grant turned to siege operations of encirclement and attrition. With headquarters and major supply center at City Point east of Petersburg, the Union Army built an extensive line of siege fortifications from June 19, 1864 through the winter of 1865, extending in an arc around the city for more than ten miles through Prince George and Dinwiddie Counties (fig. 1.5). Confronted in the spring with near encirclement, the Confederate Army fled Petersburg on the night of April 2, 1865, and retreated

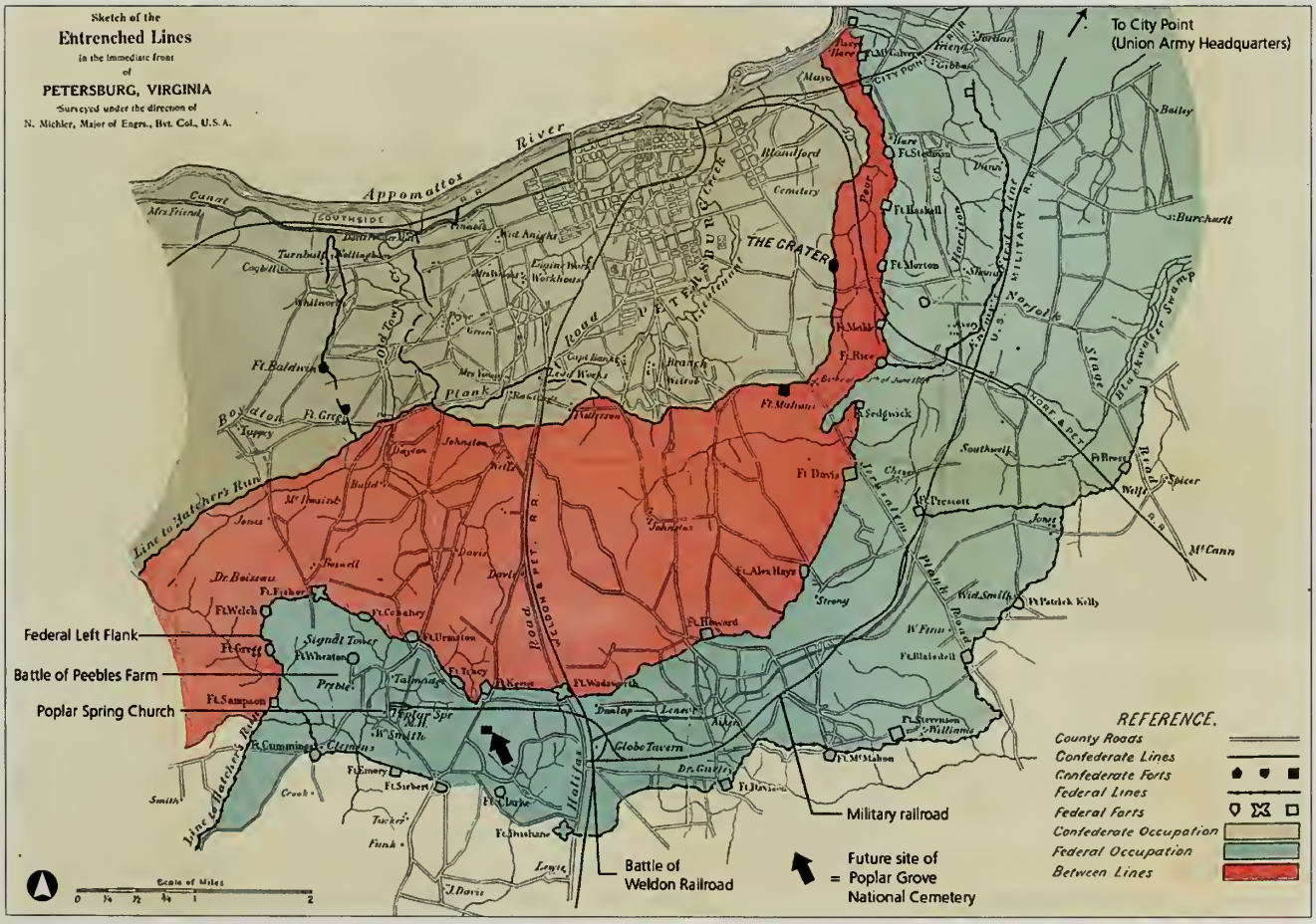


Figure 1.5: *Map of the Entrenched Lines* in the Petersburg Campaign redrawn from a survey by Brevet Colonel N. Michler, 1864-65 (Petersburg: T. 5. Beckwith & Co., c.1890). The map does not show the location of military camps or all farms. (Copyright The Library of Virginia, reproduced on the Library of Congress, American Memory Collection, digital image glva01 lva00165, annotated by SUNY E5F.)

west along the Appomattox River. One week later, on April 9, 1865, the Civil War ended when General Lee surrendered at Appomattox Court House.[27]

Aside from the loss of life, the only aspect of the Petersburg Campaign that directly influenced the development of Poplar Grove National Cemetery was the construction of the western part of the Union siege-line fortifications known as the Federal Left Flank. In the summer of 1864, following initial construction of the fortifications to the right or east of Petersburg, the Union Army began to push construction south and west through Confederate-held territory. On August 18-21, 1864, they captured the Petersburg & Weldon Railroad along Halifax Road near the Globe Tavern in the Battle of the Weldon Railroad (see fig. 1.5). This victory allowed the Union Army to extend its fortifications west of Halifax Road. They fortified the location by building Fort Wadsworth, and began laying down a military railroad from Pitkin Station on the eastern front at present-day Fort Lee, to the Weldon Railroad, in order to speed supplies for the extension of siege lines farther west.[28]

On September 29, 1864, the Union Army gained control of territory two miles to the west of the Globe Tavern in the Battle of Peebles Farm, near Poplar Spring Church (fig. 1.6). By October 2, they had extended the siege lines to Peebles Farm following high ground formed by the watershed divide and soon extended the military supply railroad, requiring clearing through dense pine forest (fig. 1.7). The railroad brought troops and supplies to extend the siege fortifications still further west. Peebles Farm became the main Union camp, centered at Fort Wheaton. Near here, a signal tower was erected to facilitate communications in the ongoing construction of the encircling siege line (see fig. 1.5). Unimpeded by major battles, the Union Army

Figure 1.6 (top): Engraving of the Poplar Spring Church (Meeting House) in the aftermath of the Battle of Peebles Farm on September 30th, 1864. (*Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, 22 October 1864.)

Figure 1.7 (middle): Engraving of Union troops cutting the military railroad through dense forests south of Petersburg, probably in the Left Flank. (*Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, 1 October 1864.)

Figure 1.8 (bottom): "Earthworks in front of Petersburg, Virginia," 1865, illustrating typical timber and earthen fortification and ravaged pine forest in background (location unknown). (Library of Congress, American Memory Collection, digital image LC-DIG-cwpb-01326.)

Figure 1.9: Camp of Oneida, New York Independent Cavalry Company in Petersburg showing quarters constructed of logs, with stumps from slashed pine forest in foreground, March 1865. (Library of Congress American Memory Collection, digital image LC-DIG-cwpb 03713.)

completed these fortifications, today known as the Fish Hook Siegeworks, during the winter of 1864-1865, along with a parallel secondary line to the south that created a protected Union zone of occupation.[29]

The war and in particular the construction of the siege lines had a devastating impact on a broad swath of landscape. Fields were destroyed, forests slashed, and extensive areas were excavated for the construction of a wide variety of military structures built of earth and timber (fig. 1.8). The soft, deep soils proved easily workable and helped speed construction of the fortifications. Camps for the troops were set up within the occupied zones, with canvas tents as well as more permanent structures built of logs harvested from the extensive slashing operations (fig. 1.9).

The Engineers' Camp

Building the Federal Left Flank—the fortifications extending west from the Weldon Railroad—was the charge of the 50th New York Volunteer Engineers. Originally organized in Elmira, New York, in 1861 as an infantry unit drawing recruits primarily from central and western parts of upstate New York and northern Pennsylvania, the unit was soon reorganized as an engineer battalion under the Army of the Potomac Engineers.[30] In late October 1864, two months after the Battle of Weldon Railroad, Engineers Company L and Company M, later followed by another four companies, relocated their camp to the Flower farm due west of the Globe Tavern between Vaughan Road and Halifax Road (fig. 1.10).[31] This location was roughly a mile and a half east of the main Union camp at Fort Wheaton. It is not known why the engineers selected this site in particular, although its position within the protected zone

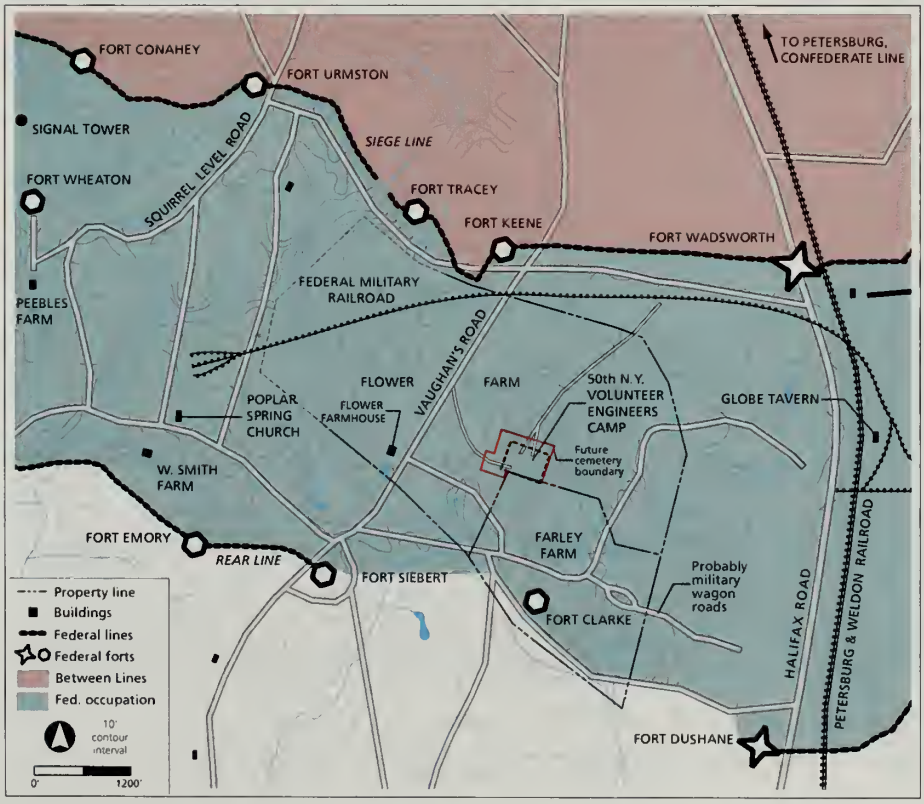


Figure 1.10: Map of the Federal Left Flank in the vicinity of the camp of the 50th New York Volunteer Engineers, based on Michler 1864-1865 survey. The Flower farmhouse was shown in a different location on other Civil War maps. (SUNY ESF.)

between the Union front and rear lines and proximity to the military railroad and winter quarters of the Sixth Corps may have been influential.[32] Another factor may have been the site's relatively level and enclosed character set back from the public road. Perhaps the Flower family—sympathetic Northerners from the Philadelphia area—offered the site to the engineers.[33] The engineers developed their camp through March 29, 1865, when they left to take part in the final offensive against the Confederate defense of Petersburg, four days before General Lee fled the city.[34]

Under the command of Brigadier General Ira Spaulding, the engineers built their camp in a rectilinear plan with the main officers' quarters and hospital on the west, officers' quarters and barracks on the east, and parade grounds in the middle with its center near the existing cemetery flagstaff (fig. 1.11). Buildings were connected by plank walks, and the camp was enclosed by a rail fence; there may also have been an orchard.[35] The main road to the camp was probably from the north in the direction of the military railroad. The road cut across small ravines and wetlands, requiring the construction of earthen causeways.[36] A second road probably entered from the southwest from Vaughan Road. The engineers initially erected elaborate tents that they replaced with timber buildings, including a church and additional barracks added in the last months of the camp. Overall length of the camp proper from east to west was less than 500 feet—an area smaller than later

Figure 1.11: Perspective drawing of the engineers' camp looking southwest toward Vaughan Road, circa January 1865. The camp at the time was under improvement and additional buildings would be added through the next few months. (Copyright Virginia Historical Society, image 1999.161.535, annotated by SUNY ESF.)

Figure 1.12 (left): Looking northwest into the officers' quarters courtyard of the engineers' camp showing initial tent structures, circa October 1864. The headquarters tent is the one in the middle with the paired arched entrance. (Library of Congress, American Memory Collection, digital image LC-DIG-cwpb-00513.)

Figure 1.13 (right): Looking southwest at the headquarters tent, photograph by Timothy O'Sullivan, November 1864. (Library of Congress American Memory Collection, digital image LC-DIG-cwp-4a39989.)

enclosed by the cemetery walls. The buildings were constructed out of unmilled timber from the surrounding pine woods. The engineers had developed a flair for working with raw timber, probably gained in part from their wartime experience of building wooden bridges, boats, fortifications, and camp buildings. They ornamented many of the buildings in a rustic style then fashionable in public parks and pleasure grounds of country estates in the engineers' Northern home states.[37]

The main officers' quarters were the most elaborately designed in the camp aside from the church. In its initial development in the fall of 1864, the area was comprised of four small officer tents and a headquarters tent that defined a small courtyard. Each tent was approximately six feet wide by twelve feet deep with facades made of a timber frame or lattice, on which evergreen boughs were twined and clipped, as in topiary (fig. 1.12). The headquarters tent was the most decorative, featuring a double Gothic-arched entrance complete with pilasters and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers insignia executed in relief of clipped evergreens (fig. 1.13). The courtyard was delineated by an evergreen hedge, which was apparently made of cut young pine trees or boughs staked in the ground. To the north was the surgeon's office, along with hospital and ambulance corps buildings.

During the lull in construction of the siege fortifications in the late fall and winter of 1864-1865, the engineers replaced their tents—the evergreen facades had probably turned brown within a few weeks—with elaborate timber buildings. The drawing of the camp made in January 1865 (see fig. 1.11) shows the Colonel's Quarters in place of the headquarters tent, and a new Surgeon's Quarters to the north. Over the next few months, another three matching buildings were built around the courtyard. Measuring approximately twelve feet wide by fifteen feet long, each building was sheathed in half logs with a classical façade of pilasters and pediments executed in twigs (figs. 1.14, 1.15). Lattice fences and archways spanned the buildings to enclose the courtyard. The Colonel's Quarters building

Figure 1.14 (left): The rebuilt officers' quarters courtyard, view looking northwest from parade grounds, circa December 1864. (Library of Congress American Memory Collection, digital image LC-DIG-cwp-02846.)

Figure 1.15 (top right): The Surgeon's Quarters in the officers' quarters courtyard showing rustic details, fencing, and corduroy walks, view looking northeast, March 1865. (Library of Congress American Memory Collection, digital image LC-DIG-cwpb 03905.)

Figure 1.16 (lower right): The officers' quarters courtyard, view looking west showing corduroy walk extending through the parade grounds on axis with the Colonel's Quarters, March 1865. (Library of Congress American Memory Collection, digital image LC-DIG-cwpb 03906.)

with its projecting central wing with an arched entrance was the centerpiece of the courtyard (fig. 1.16). To the north of the officers' quarters were the ambulance corps and hospital buildings within a hedge-enclosed yard, with a rustic entrance arch and flagstaff at the entry road.[38]

Purportedly to keep the men occupied during the winter months, General Spaulding gave the authorization on January 20, 1865 to begin construction of an elaborate central meeting hall on the north side of the parade grounds (fig. 1.17).[39] The engineers named the building Poplar Grove Church in honor of the congregation of nearby Poplar Spring Chapel, which was occupied by the Union Army since its victory at the Battle of Peebles Farm ("Grove" was substituted for "Spring" probably to distinguish the new building from the old). Construction was completed within two months, and on March 4, 1865, the Reverend Mr. Duryea of New York dedicated the building. It served both recreational and

Figure 1.17: Poplar Grove Church looking north across the parade grounds, March 1865. At right is a log fence, corduroy walk, and pine hedge along the barracks area. (Library of Congress American Memory Collection, digital image LC-DIG-cwpb-04329.)

Figure 1.18: Poplar Grove Church nearing completion, looking northeast from the officers' quarters, circa February 1864. Note loblolly pines in the background, corduroy walk to the left, and other buildings at right. (Library of Congress American Memory Collection, digital image LC-DIG-cwpb 00990.)

religious purposes, hosting Sunday services as well as minstrel shows and concerts attended by visiting dignitaries that included Mrs. General Grant and Mrs. General Meade. The church was also used as a hospital in the final days of the Petersburg Campaign.[40]

The Gothic, rustic-style church was designed by Brevet Major Michael H. McGrath, an architect-builder from Painted Post, New York who commanded the engineers' Company F.[41] McGrath designed the building in the plan of a modified cross, with a seating capacity for approximately 225 people. The entire structure was built of timber and featured a central tower with a spire that reached nearly sixty feet in height, shingled gable roofs with ridge ventilators, timber end chimneys, and vertical half-log walls (fig. 1.18). The main entrance, a Gothic-arched opening with recessed plank doors, was in the base of the tower, and four floor-length windows lined the façade, each with twig-lattice for muntins and cloth for glass. The tower featured two square base stages that tapered to an octagonal lantern with diamond-shaped twig-work. From here rose a spire topped by a mast. At the front of the tower was the Corps of Engineers insignia executed in twigs. The interior featured a

rostrum, clay fireplaces at either end, rustic twig chandeliers, and three-leg stools on half-log floors.[42] An inscription over the rostrum dedicated the building to the members of Poplar Spring Church.[43]

The eastern side of the camp was occupied by additional officers' quarters and rows of barracks, with cookhouses, a well, and washhouses to the east, and a storage area for pontoon boards to the south (see fig. 1.11). Due east of the church was the officers' quarters for Company L, a log building with a pedimented entrance facing east on axis with Company L Street, which was lined by log barracks (fig. 1.19). South of it was the officers' quarters for Company M, a similar, but smaller building than Company L's. The northern two rows of barracks belonging to Company L each consisted of seven connected log cabins with gable roofs. To the south were two additional rows of barracks of long, gabled buildings rather than small cabins. These barracks were enclosed by a log rail fence and evergreen hedges, and were connected by plank walks (see fig. 1.17).[44] A drawing of the camp made after March 1865 shows many additional rows of barracks extending to the south of the Company L and M barracks, probably for the other four

Figure 1.19: Unattributed sketch looking west through the log barracks of Company L toward Company L Officers' Quarters with Poplar Grove Church in the background, circa March 1865. (Courtesy of the Stettner family, Petersburg National Battlefield archives.)

Figure 1.20: The engineers' camp in a drawing by C. E. Hastings looking southeast, c.1865. Poplar Grove Church is in middle foreground; the officers' quarters courtyard on the right, and lines of barracks to the left. Visible at the lower right is the hedge-enclosed entrance yard and flagstaff at one of the two north entrances to the camp. This drawing is an exaggerated perspective and may show more barracks than actually existed. (Courtesy of the Stettner family, Petersburg National Battlefield archives.)

companies that occupied the camp (fig. 1.20). The drawing also shows the flagstaff and hedge-enclosed courtyard at the hospital entrance west of the church, the officers' quarters courtyard, enclosing fence, and pine woods, among other features. .

Aftermath

On the morning of April 3, 1865, Union troops entered Petersburg in the wake of General Lee's retreat toward Appomattox the previous night. By 10:00 a.m., President Lincoln arrived on the battlefield via the military railroad, touring the ravaged Union siege lines south of the city, but not visiting the engineers' camp.[45] With the end of the campaign, Petersburg entered a long period of occupation by the Union Army.

The combination of fortification construction and battle scars devastated the landscape around Petersburg. For many months following Lee's retreat, the Union siege-line fortifications lay abandoned. Local residents, strapped for building materials and income, scoured the battlefield, retrieving lead from bullets, timber from the fortifications, and iron from the military railroad. Some began to return the battlefields to agriculture. The feeling of death—marked not just by the physical destruction but also by bodies left scattered on the battlefields—permeated the landscape.[46]

For at least five months after General Lee's surrender in April 1865, the engineers' camp remained intact. In late September 1865, John Trowbridge, a Northerner, wrote the following description of the camp for his book, *The Desolate South:*

> *Passing the winter quarters of the Sixth Corps, we approached one of the most beautiful villages ever seen. It was sheltered by a grove of murmuring pines. An arched gateway admitted us to its silent streets. It was constructed entirely of pine saplings and logs. Even the neat sidewalks were composed of the same material. The huts—if those little dwellings, built in a unique and perfect style of architecture, may be called by that humble name—were furnished with bedrooms and mantelpieces within, and plain columns and fluted pilasters without, all of rough pine. The plain columns were formed of single bark on, of course. The walls were similarly constructed. The village was deserted and with the exception of a safeguard, consisting of half a dozen United States soldiers, stationed there to protect it from vandalism.*
>
> *The gem of the place was the church. Its walls, pillars, pointed arches and spire, one hundred feet high [sic], were composed entirely of pines selected and arranged with surprising taste and skill. The pulpit was in keeping*

> *with the rest. Above it was the following inscription: "Presented to the members of Poplar Spring Church by the 50th N. Y. V. Engineers. Capt. M. H. McGrath, architect."*[47]

Over the course of the following nine months, the entire camp was disassembled except for Poplar Grove Church, which became a refuge for freed slaves who held their meetings in the building, and several log barracks that may have been at the entrance from Vaughan Road.[48] Little is known about the fate of the ornate officers' quarters or any of the other buildings and camp infrastructure. Some of the buildings may have been temporarily moved to the adjoining woods and fields while plans were being developed for the camp's new use—as a cemetery for Union soldiers.[49]

ENDNOTES

1 Keith Frye, *Roadside Geology of Virginia* (Missoula, Montana: Mountain Press Publishing Company, 1986), 1-2, 83-85. Today, geologists use the term Fall Zone, because the divide is typically a broad area of several miles in width (rather than a strict line), typically marked by westernmost extent of tidal waters.

2 Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. "The Natural Communities of Virginia, Classification of Ecological Community Groups, Second Approximation (Version 2.1), section "General Setting," online article at http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/dnh/ncoverview.htm; U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resource Conservation Service in cooperation with Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, *Soil Survey of Dinwiddie Area, Virginia* (N.p.: USDA, August 1996), 4.

3 U.S. Geologic Survey, Petersburg Quadrangle, 1969 revised 1987; Richard L. Jones, *Dinwiddie County: Carrefour of the Commonwealth* (Dinwiddie, Virginia: Dinwiddie County Board of Supervisors, 1976), 112.

4 Jones, 35; Petersburg Quadrangle map.

5 *Soil Survey of Dinwiddie Area, Virginia*, 34, 41.

6 "The Natural Communities of Virginia," sections "The Coastal Plain," "The Piedmont Plateau."

7 Robert Schultz, *Loblolly Pine: The Ecology and Culture of Loblolly Pine* (U.S. Department of Agriculture, Handbook 713, December 1997), part 1, page 5.

8 "The Natural Communities of Virginia" and "The Piedmont Plateau."

9 Jones, 5-6, 37; George Percy Journal of May 26, 1607 cited in Conway Whittle Sams, *The Conquest of Virginia, Second Attempt* (Norfolk: Keiser & Doherty, 1929), cited in Roger Charles Sherry, "Cultural Landscape Report for the Federal Left Flank and Fish Hook Siegeworks" (National Park Service Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, October 2004), 11.

10 Jones, 10, 13, 15, 32-35.

11 Jones, 39-40.

12 Jones, 39.

13 Workers of the Writers' Program of the Works Projects Administration in the State of Virginia, *Dinwiddie County "The Countrey of the Apamatica"* (Richmond: Whittet & Shepperson for Dinwiddie County School Board, 1942), 164.

14 Benson Lossing, quoted in *Dinwiddie County "The Countrey of the Apamatica,"* 115-117.

15 *Dinwiddie County "The Countrey of the Apamatica"*, 165.

16 *Virginia: A Guide to the Old Dominion*, 275; John Trowbridge, ed. Gordon Carroll, *The Desolate South 1865-1866* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce-Little, Brown and Company, 1956), 113-114.

17 Jones, 132-133.

18 Sherry, 13.

19 Jones, 213-214; "Abstract of title to land upon which is located Poplar Grove U.S. National Cemetery" c.1866, (copy; see Appendix A), RG 92, Records of the Quartermaster General, Entry 576, Poplar Grove National Cemetery Records, National Archives I, Washington, D.C. [hereafter, "Poplar Grove Records, NARA I"], box 57.

20 Dinwiddie County Land Records, Jordon and Francis Floyd and Benjamin Johnson to Benjamin Coupland, book 2, page 119, and Floyds to Jeremiah Whitehead, book 2, page 122. The Coupland parcel was surveyed at 453 acres; this was later resurveyed to 450 acres. On June 4, 1838, the same day as the deed, Benjamin Coupland signed a "Deed of Trust" in the property to Edward L. Pegram and Benjamin Johnson (trustees to the Floyds) in order to use bonds to pay for the property. Book 2, page 121.

21 Dinwiddie County Land Records, book 3, page 578. The $1,200 price was less than half the value of the previous purchase, probably due to the seven-year depression that followed the panic of 1837. The deed from Coupland to Roney describes the property as lying on both sides of Vaughan's Road, and referenced "said tract of land, together with the premises and appurtenances thereto." The deed from the Floyds to Coupland did not reference premises or appurtenances on the land.

22 Dinwiddie County Land Records, book 4, page 529; book 7, page 273; book 8, page 270.

23 Dinwiddie County Land Records, book 7, page 271; book 8, page 275; book 8, page 522; book 8, page 523; and book 9, page 221. The trustees included Robert H. Mann, John Mann, and Thomas Branch. Thomas Britton Flower also employed a bond to pay for the property; his final release of deed for the property was signed on August 11, 1857. In a letter dated June 12, 1866 to Major General Meigs, Lt. Col. James Moore referred to the owner of the cemetery property—Rev. Flower—as a "gentleman from Philadelphia" (Delaware County adjoins Philadelphia). Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57. The farm is identified as belonging to "John Flowers" [sic] on the "Plan of the Locality of U.S. Nat. Cemetery at Poplar Grove. Va." (Surveyed by G. H. Thomason, C. E., c.1866), Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57.

24 The residence of "J. B. Flower" is shown on the west side of Vaughan Road on T. R. Rives, "Map of Dinwiddie County VA 1878" (traced by F. M. Lundahl, 1935), republished in Jones, back inside cover.

25 Photographs in the Library of Congress taken in the late fall of 1864 when the Camp of the 50th New York Volunteer Engineers was just being set up do not show tree stumps or substantial ground disturbance in the open center of the camp that would indicate the area had been recently cleared of trees. These photographs do show loblolly pine woods along the west and north perimeters of the camp.

26 Schultz, 5.

27 National Park Service, Petersburg National Battlefield park brochure (Government Printing Office, 2003); Herbert Olsen, "Poplar Grove National Cemetery History" (Unpublished report prepared for the National Park Service, 31 May 1954), 11-13.

28 Olsen, 20-21.

29 Sherry, 30-41.

30 Frederick Phisterer, *New York in the War of the Rebellion*, cited in "50th Engineer Regiment Civil War," New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center webpage, dmna.state.ny.us/historic/reghist/civil/other/50thEng/50thEngMain/htm.

31 Olsen, 20.

32 Trowbridge, 117. Trowbridge describes passing the winter quarters of the Sixth Corps on his way to the engineers' camp from the Weldon Railroad.

33 The owner of the Flower Farm, Rev. Thomas Britton Flower, purportedly offered the same property to the federal government in 1866 for the site of Poplar Grove National Cemetery.

34 Olsen, 20.

35 W. H. Owen, Office of the Inspector General, "Report of Inspection of Poplar Grove. (18 April 1885), Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57.

36 The 1864-65 Michler survey does not show the engineers' camp or roads leading to it. The existence of a road leading north is based on the Hastings drawing of the engineers' camp (see fig. 1.20) and by a causeway indicated through the ravine floor to the north of the cemetery on the c.1866 "Plan of the Locality of U.S. Nat. Cemetery at Poplar Grove" (see fig. 1.24).

37 The rustic style had its origins in the movement for scenic preservation that began in the 1840s, and in the English landscape gardening tradition, with its interest in follies.

38 Hastings drawing (c.1865).

39 William W. Folwell, "A Soldier's Church," *American Historical Record*, vol. 3, no. 36 (December 1874), 548.

40 Olsen, 22, 24-25.

41 "A Soldier's Church," 548.

42 "A Soldier's Church," 548; Trowbridge, 117; Sherry, 47.

43 The Petersburg *Advertiser*, referenced in Olsen, 23. William Folwell gives the following description of the building in his article, "A Soldier's Church:"

> *The material was the yellow or pitch pine growing in that part of Virginia. This timber has a smooth and closely adhering bark, which at a short distance shows the color of brown stone. Captain McGrath decided to so use this material that the exterior should not present a square inch of anything but the bark. Accordingly, selecting logs about one foot in diameter and nineteen feet long, he planted them "on end" in trenches three feet deep, thus forming the outer walls. The flat side was hewn smooth, and the edges were trimmed parallel. The joints were covered outside by rods or poles about two inches in diameter, forming a bead-moulding. At top of the walls were pinned "plates" hewn on three sides, showing the bark outside. On these were fitted the rafters neatly hewn. The roof was lathed with flattened poles and covered with handsome shingles, bolted, rived and shaved on the ground. The windows were closed by clean cotton cloth, outside of which small rods were crossed to imitate the "quarries" of stained glass windows. The fire-places and chimneys at either end were formed within the outer wall, of one solid brick. This was effected by building within a duplicated wall, leaving a space of eight inches, to be filled with tempered clay. / When all was ready the inner wall was burned out and the tempered clay baked in a mass. . .The floors were of puncheons, pinned to sleepers. The seats were portable three-legged stools. / The architect designed three elaborate rustic chandeliers, each holding eight candles, to light the interior. Inasmuch as the building was intended not merely for devotional purposes, but for the entertainment of the command, it was necessary to contrive foot-lights for the rostrum. Twenty-four tin-plates were got from the sutler. About one-third of the their surfaces were bent at right angles and nailed to the floor. The remainder of the discs concealed a row of candles from the audience.*

44 This Hastings perspective drawing shows many details, but the perspective appears to be highly distorted and the details do not all agree with period photographs.

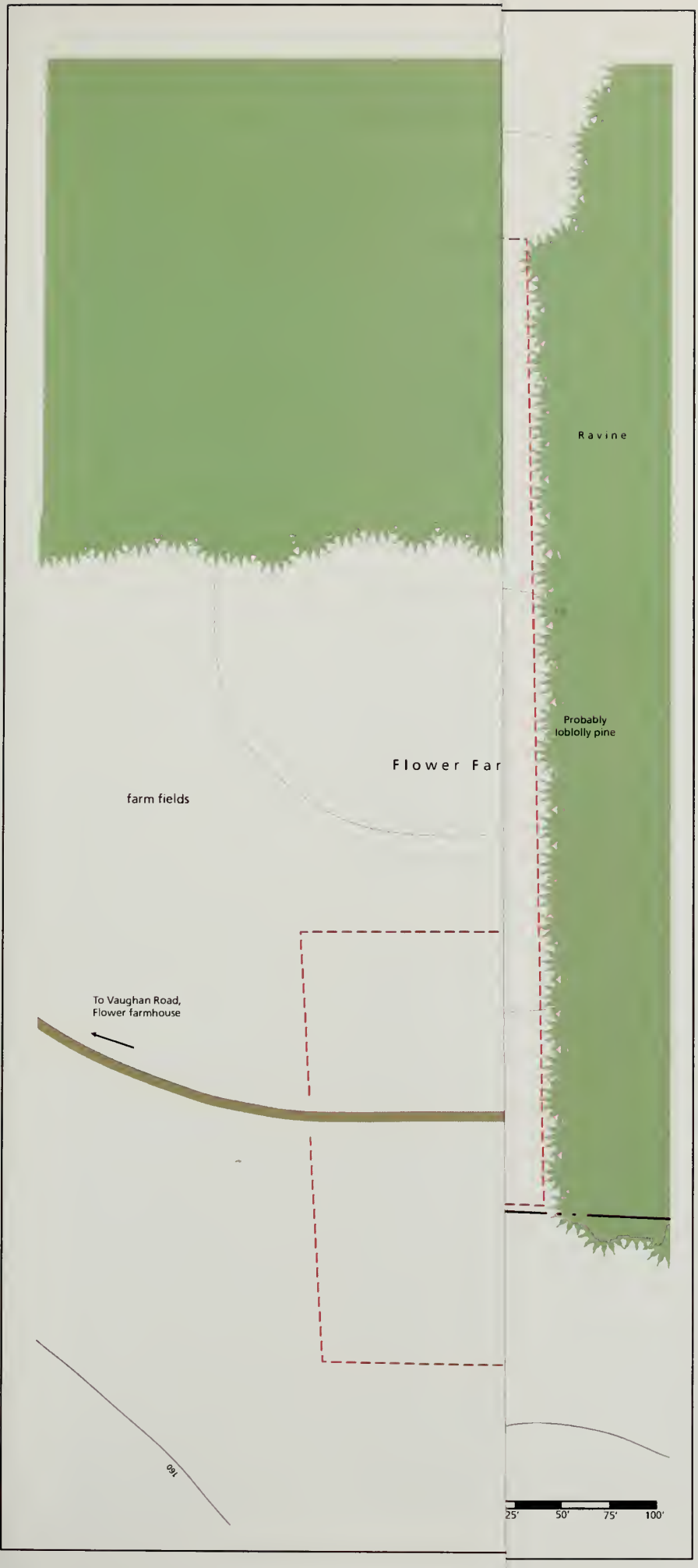
45 Sherry, 45-46.

46 Sherry, 45-47.

47 Trowbridge, 117.

48 Superintendent August Miller to Brevet Lt. Col. James M. Moore, 15 October 1867, and August Miller entry for 30 November 1869, Poplar Grove Correspondence database (1867), Poplar Grove National Cemetery, Petersburg National Battlefield.

49 The earliest known survey of Poplar Grove National Cemetery entitled "Plan of the Locality of U.S. Nat. Cemetery at Poplar Grove. Va." made in c.1866 (see fig. 1.24) shows eighteen buildings scattered in a haphazard manner around the periphery of the cemetery where earlier maps showed none, suggesting they may have been temporarily relocated camp buildings.



Cultural Landscape Report

Poplar Grove National Cemetery

Petersburg National Battlefield
Dinwiddie County, Virginia

Pre-Cemetery Period Engineers' Camp, 1865

Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation

National Park Service
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
www.nps.gov/oclp

in partnership with
Department of Landscape Architecture
SUNY College of Environmental
Science and Forestry

SOURCES

1. PETE GIS Data
2. Thomas, Plan of Poplar Grove Nat. Cemetery, c.1868
3. Camp photographs, 1864-1865
4. Austin camp perspective, Winter 1865
5. Hastings camp perspective, c. March 1865

DRAWN BY

John Auwaerter, Illustrator CS3, 2009

LEGEND

- Property line
- Current cemetery wall
- Building
- Tent
- Developed area
- Road
- Corduroy walk
- Fence
- Conifer tree, woods
- 10' contour
- Wetland

NOTES

1. All features are shown in approximate scale and location with some conjecture. This plan is based largely on historic photographs and drawings.
2. Plan shows landscape at height of engineers' camp in March 1865. These conditions may have persisted through the spring of 1866 prior to the establishment of the cemetery.
3. Location of initial camp features removed prior to March 1865 are not shown.
4. Landscape conditions prior to establishment of the camp in October 1864 are not known.

Drawing 1.1

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Drawing 1.1

ESTABLISHMENT PERIOD, 1866-1869

In the spring of 1866, the federal government designated the camp of the 50th New York Volunteer Engineers as the site of permanent burial grounds for Union soldiers who had fallen in the Petersburg Campaign and at other battles in the region. Authorized through a Joint Resolution of Congress passed on April 13, 1866, the new cemetery was named after the centerpiece of the camp—Poplar Grove Church. During a three-year search and recovery period, a workforce known as the burial corps interred thousands of remains from the battlefields and makeshift cemeteries while also making initial landscape improvements. In June 1869, the burial corps completed its work, having interred 6,183 bodies that took up most of the available space in the cemetery.

FOUNDING OF THE NATIONAL CEMETERY SYSTEM

Although the creation of Poplar Grove National Cemetery was a result of the unique circumstances of its location, it was also part of a systematic federal effort to provide a proper burial for all fallen soldiers. The only cemeteries established by the United States military prior to the Civil War were small plots within post reservations. Elsewhere, military burials were generally made in civilian cemeteries. The one exception to these procedures came about after the Mexican War, when Congress approved the establishment of a national cemetery at Mexico City in 1850 to inter the remains of 750 Americans who fell in that war. This cemetery served as the precedent for handling large-scale burials when casualties quickly mounted with the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861. [1]

The first burial regulation of the Civil War, General Orders No. 75 issued on September 11, 1861, were intended to improve the burial process. It made Commanding Officers responsible for burials, and gave the Quartermaster General—traditionally the army office that administered supplies—the responsibility of overseeing the registration of burials and providing headboards. General Orders No. 75 did not, however, provide authority for acquisition of land for burials. This was provided eight months later in General Orders No. 33 issued on April 3, 1862, which gave generals the authority to lay out burial grounds near the battlefields. Together, these two General Orders resulted in the establishment of military cemeteries near hospitals, on battlefields, at Army posts, and in plots provided by private cemetery associations. On July 17, 1862 with escalation of the war and increasing casualties, Congress passed an act giving the President authority "...to purchase cemetery grounds...to be used as a National Cemetery for soldiers who shall have died in the service of the country."[2] This legislation, together with the General Orders, formed the basis for a system of national cemeteries. By the end of 1862, fourteen national cemeteries had been established near battlefields and in private cemeteries, primarily to relieve crowding at pre-

existing military installations.[3] These ranged from Alexandria National Cemetery at the wartime encampment surrounding the nation's capital, to Cypress Hills National Cemetery in the private Cypress Hills Cemetery near New York City, and Fort Leavenworth (Kansas) National Cemetery at that fort's old post cemetery. Only two battlefield cemeteries were established in the East, by private associations under state laws. Ten additional national cemeteries were established before the war was over.[4]

Although these wartime cemeteries formed the basis of a national cemetery system, they were for the most part hastily developed, lacking in uniformity and able to accommodate only a small percentage of Union soldiers killed in action. By the end of the war, only 101,736 of the total 359,520 total Union dead had been buried in permanent graves according to the wartime procedures; the majority still lay on the battlefields in temporary graves or on the ground.[5] As troops were being sent home in June 1865, the War Department—the federal executive department headed by the Secretary of War and responsible for the United States military establishment— began the enormous task of recovering more than 250,000 bodies from the battlefields and temporary cemeteries, and moving them to permanent burial sites within national cemeteries. Coordinated within the War Department by the Quartermaster General, the creation of these national cemeteries was authorized by Congress through a Joint Resolution issued on April 13, 1866, a year after the war's end:

> *Resolved. . . That the Secretary of War be, and he is hereby authorized and required to take immediate measures to preserve from desecration the graves of the soldiers of the United States who fell in battle or died of disease in the field and in hospital during the war of the rebellion; to secure suitable burial places in which they may be properly interred; and to have the grounds enclosed, so that the resting-places of the honored dead may be kept sacred forever.* [6]

To accommodate the enormous number of burials, the War Department established fifty new national cemeteries over the course of the search and recovery program, for a total of seventy-three national cemeteries established by 1869.[7] These national cemeteries were developed and administered through various geographic departments by the Cemeterial Division of the Quartermaster General. Virginia formed one such department, but it was administered through the Depot of Washington, under the charge of Brevet Lieutenant Colonel James M. Moore. Moore had prior experience in cemeterial affairs through his work in founding Arlington and Battleground National Cemeteries in 1864, both located at the nation's capital.[8] By June 30, 1866, the Quartermaster General reported that Colonel Moore had established national cemeteries at Hampton, Richmond,

Cold Harbor, Seven Pines, Glendale, Fort Harrison, Fredericksburg, Ball's Bluff, and Winchester, plus national cemetery plots within the private Hollywood and Oakwood Cemeteries near Richmond. At the time of the report, Moore was also beginning work on two cemeteries near the Petersburg battlefields—City Point and Poplar Grove.[9]

While the initial legislation established the general scope of the burial effort, there were few regulations about how the cemeteries should be developed and administered. This was corrected while the reburial process was underway in the years immediately following the war. On February 22, 1867, Congress passed legislation providing uniform standards for development entitled "An Act to Establish and Protect National Cemeteries." This act directed the Secretary of War to have standard facilities and improvements at each national cemetery, such as superintendent's lodges, grave markers, burial registers, and enclosing fences. The act also outlined administrative standards, including hiring of a veteran to serve as superintendent, undertaking annual inspections and reports to Congress with estimates of necessary appropriations, and securing of title in all cemetery lands in fee simple. The legislation provided $750,000 for implementation in addition to funds previously appropriated. Interpreted and expanded through regulations issued by the Quartermaster General, the act of 1867 would remain the basis for the development, maintenance, and administration of national cemeteries for many subsequent decades.[10]

FOUNDING OF POPLAR GROVE NATIONAL CEMETERY, 1866

For nearly a year after the Civil War ended on April 3, 1865, a majority of the Union dead still lay on the battlefields of Petersburg, many buried where they had fallen (fig. 1.21). There had been just two known attempts during the war to collect the bodies at Petersburg into cemeteries. In 1864, the Union Army established two temporary battlefield cemeteries near Meade Station, along the military railroad close to Fort Stedman in the eastern front. By March 1865, 1,214 Union soldiers had been buried in these two cemeteries, but this number accounted for only a fraction of the soldiers who died in battle. Another two cemeteries were established in 1864 near the depot hospitals at City Point and Point-of-Rocks (west of Petersburg), where wounded soldiers who died there were given a proper burial.[11] The City Point hospital cemetery was an

Figure 1.21: Battlefield burials at Warren Station near the Globe Tavern, east of the future site of Poplar Grove National Cemetery (burial mounds visible below railing at left), c.1864. It was from such sites that most of the bodies at Poplar Grove were removed. (Petersburg National Battlefield.)

Figure 1.22: Union Army hospital cemetery at City Point, Virginia, c.1865. Note grave mounds, white-painted headboards, and enclosing fence. (From a stereograph by Mathew B. Brady, Collection of the New-York Historical Society.)

unadorned field, marked by grave mounds and white-painted headboards, and enclosed by a wood fence (fig. 1.22).

On November 23, 1865, Colonel C. H. Folson issued a report to Quartermaster General Montgomery Meigs recommending that permanent military cemeteries be established at Petersburg to secure the numerous scattered graves on the battlefield, which Folson believed were in danger of being destroyed as local farmers returned the land to agriculture. In his report to Meigs, Folson recommended that the two cemeteries near Meade Station (near Fort Stedman) serve as the nuclei of the permanent cemeteries. The Office of the Quartermaster General apparently took no action on Colonel Folson's recommendation regarding the Meade Station cemeteries.[12]

At the time of Folson's November 23rd report, Lieutenant Colonel James M. Moore was in the process of selecting sites for national cemeteries in his role of supervising the reburial program in Virginia. On April 17, 1866, more than a year after the end of the Petersburg Campaign, Moore requested authority to select sites for national cemeteries near Petersburg, having previously concentrated on the Richmond-area cemeteries. On April 30, Moore received authority to select the sites for approval by the Secretary of War, to be accompanied by a report with a description of the land and a survey with an abstract of title.[13]

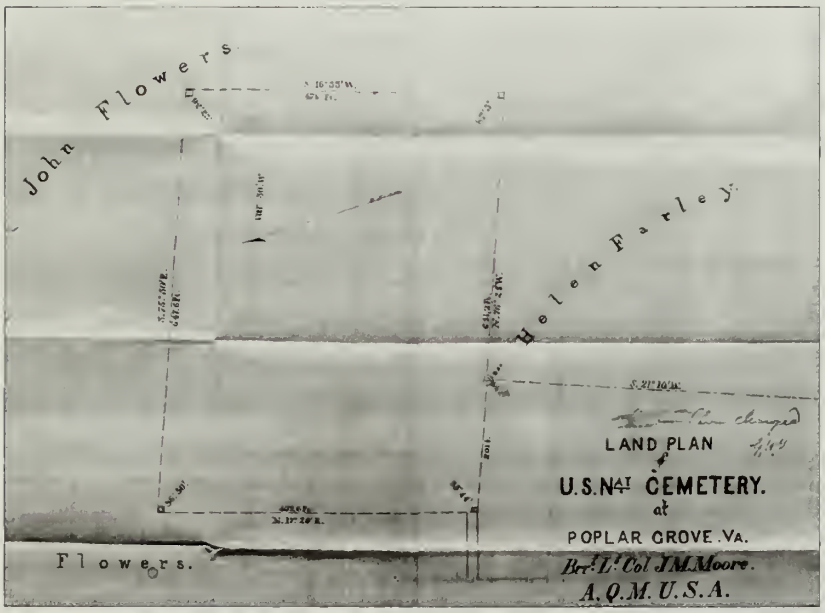


Figure 1.23: Detail, Quartermaster survey of site for Poplar Grove National Cemetery by G. H. Thomson, made soon after the site was selected by Lieutenant Colonel James M. Moore, circa May 1866. The property at the time was owned by Reverend Thomas Britton Flower, not "John Flowers" (sic). Note approach road at bottom right of parcel and annotation indicating one-acre addition made in 1867. (Records of the Quartermaster General, Entry 576, Poplar Grove National Cemetery Records, box 56, National Archives I.)

By early May of 1866, Lieutenant Colonel Moore had selected two cemetery sites: one at City Point and a second at the camp of the 50th New York Volunteer Engineers in Dinwiddie County. Moore selected these two sites for their proximity to the major battlefields: the City Point site apparently because it covered the eastern front and was near to the hospital cemetery, from which bodies were to be reinterred; and the engineers' camp because it was near the battlefields of the Federal western front. Centrality of location was not, however, Moore's only reason, because both cemeteries were to receive bodies from far afield. On June 12, 1866, Moore outlined his

reasons for selecting the engineers' camp to Quartermaster General Meigs, in response to a request made by a Mr. Colfax, (a local resident) who supported the Meade Station (Fort Stedman) location that had been recommended by Colonel Folson:

> *...The site [engineers' camp] is a more central one, and is in every respect superior and better adapted for burial purposes, than the one referred to by Hon. Mr. Colfax. The ground is owned by a gentleman from Philadelphia, who kindly offered to deed the same gratitously [sic] to the United States. The necessity for purchasing the land is therefore obviated. The site at Poplar Grove is a most excellent one, and the cemetery, when completed, will be one of the finest in the country...*[14]

Although in his letter Moore did not make specific reference to the engineers' camp as a reason for selecting the site, the refinement of the camp with its serene, pine-woods setting and rustic church undoubtedly influenced his decision. Moore's reference to the site as "Poplar Grove" indicates the symbolic importance of the church, which must have given the site a feeling of sanctity and perhaps also was seen as a fitting war memento.[5]

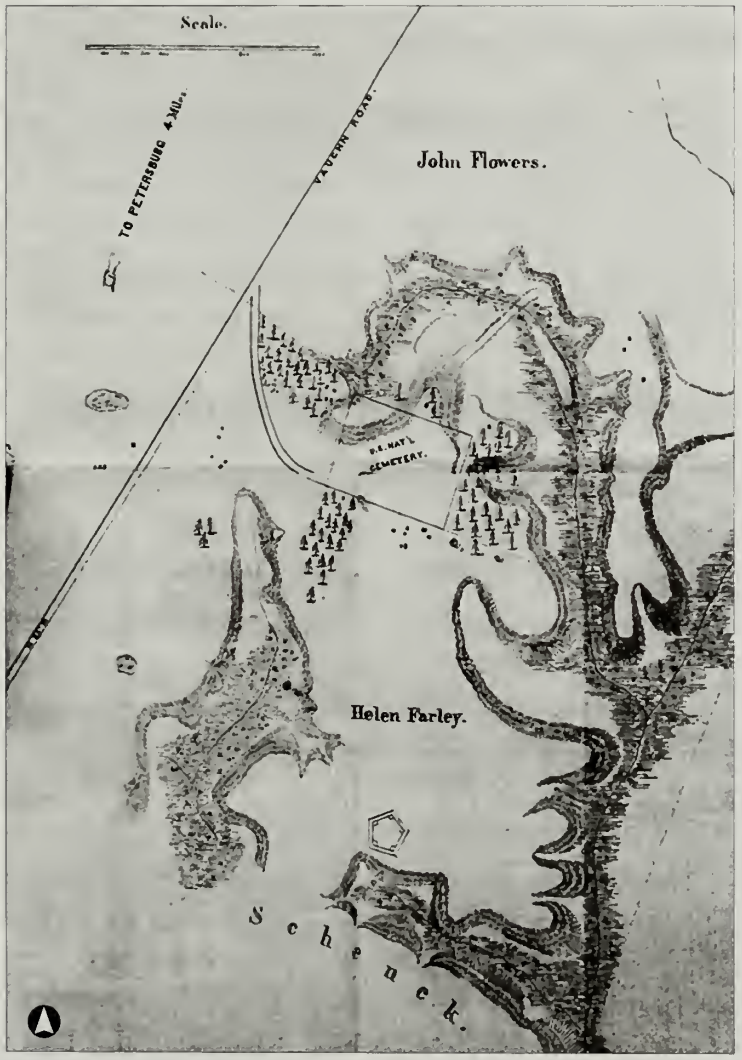


Figure 1.24: Detail, Quartermaster General map surveyed by G. H. Thomson in circa May 1866 to illustrate the context of the cemetery at Poplar Grove. Buildings within the cemetery parcel, including Poplar Grove Church, are not shown. Note causeway in ravine north of the cemetery, probably a remnant of the entrance road into the engineers' camp. (Records of the Quartermaster General, Entry 576, Poplar Grove National Cemetery Records, box 56, National Archives I.)

By the latter part of May 1866, soon after Lieutenant Colonel Moore had selected the site but before the cemetery was officially established, work apparently began on moving bodies to what was initially called "U.S. National Cemetery at Poplar Grove, Virginia."[16] In accordance with the April 30, 1866 orders from the Secretary of War, Moore had an Army surveyor prepare an abstract of title and a survey of the property, plus an illustrated map showing the larger setting (figs. 1.23, 1.24; abstract of title in Appendix A).[17] Although the abstract and maps were not dated, they were probably made soon after Moore had selected the site in early May 1866, and before June 1, 1866, when work was begun on the cemetery along with the one at City Point. This work was probably of a preparatory nature, rather than actual burials that most likely began in June.[18]

Figure 1.25: Example of a traditional eighteenth-century graveyard in Ephrata, Pennsylvania with characteristic slab headstones, row arrangement, lack of ornamental plantings, and perimeter wall, photographed 1936. (Historic American Building Survey, Library of Congress American Memory Collection, digital image HABS PA 36-EPH.)

The site for the new cemetery was a rectangular parcel surveyed at 7.2 acres and centered at the middle of the camp's parade grounds. Initially designed to accommodate 5,000 graves, Poplar Grove ranked among the larger national cemeteries established in the Virginia district.[19] The parcel measured approximately 645 feet on the north and south, and 475 feet on the east and west sides, and was accessed by a drive at the southwest corner, probably following a pre-existing entry to the camp from Vaughan Road (see figs. 1.23, 1.24). The parcel was situated entirely within the property belonging to Thomas B. Flower and probably occupied by John and Mary Ann Flower, but it shared about three-quarters of its south boundary with the farm belonging to Helen Farley. While work on the cemetery commenced in 1866, it would be nearly two years before the federal government actually secured title to the property from Thomas B. Flower, in keeping with the Act of February 22, 1867.

DESIGN OF NATIONAL CEMETERY LANDSCAPES

The national cemeteries established by the federal government for the Civil War dead not only provided decent burial places for soldiers, but were also designed to evoke military association and federal authority.[20] Although the cemeteries varied in plan, they were visually united through common design elements that drew upon both vernacular and high style civilian precedent, from the traditional graveyard to the picturesque rural cemetery.

Figure 1.26: Plan of Mount Auburn Cemetery, the prototype American rural cemetery, showing naturalistic design. (Cornelia Walter, *Mount Auburn: Illustrated in Highly Finished Line Engraving*, 1847.)

Throughout the nineteenth century, small, vernacular cemeteries in rural areas were typically graveyards characterized by upright headstones (tablets) set in rows and enclosed with a wall or fence, with little accompanying landscape ornamentation (fig. 1.25). The cemeteries established by the Army at frontier posts prior to the Civil War generally followed these patterns, using simple wooden headboards with a rounded top and bearing a registration number and name.[21]

In the 1830s, the old graveyards began to give way to a new style known as the rural cemetery, so-named for its suburban location and expansive grounds intended not only for mortuary uses, but also for recreational activities such as strolling. Designed in the style of eighteenth-century English landscape gardens, rural

Figure 1.27: Entrance to Spring Grove Cemetery, Cincinnati, the prototype lawn-style cemetery designed in 1855, photographed in c.1869. (Adolphus Strauch, *Spring Grove Cemetery: Its History and Improvements*, 1869.)

cemeteries featured idealized natural and rural characteristics typified by curving drives that wound through meadows and groves, framing picturesque views with often elaborate grave monuments serving as focal points. Traditional headstones were generally forbidden. The prototype was Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Massachusetts, established in 1831 (fig. 1.26).[22] By the middle of the century, two variants on the rural cemetery style became popular. One was the garden cemetery, a more ornamental landscape featuring beds of colorful flowering annuals and exotic plants, clipped shrubs, and walls and fences around family burial plots.[23] The other variant, known as the lawn cemetery, was basically a simplification of the rural cemetery. Originated in an 1855 plan by landscape gardener Adolphus Strauch for Cincinnati's Spring Grove Cemetery, the lawn cemetery emphasized an overall picturesque landscape effect, eliminating such things as plot fences, curbing, and ornamental plantings to create broad areas of open lawn marked by monuments, trees, and views of distant prospects (fig. 1.27).[24]

While the design of the first national cemeteries reflected these precedents, many traced their stylistic origin to Gettysburg National Cemetery, designed in 1863 by landscape gardener William Saunders of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.[25] His plan for the cemetery, near the battlefield and adjoining a decade-old rural cemetery outside the village of Gettysburg, featured an overall informal, picturesque landscape much like the style found in rural cemeteries, but with the burial plots at the center arranged in a contrasting geometric form with concentric half circles facing a central monument (figs. 1.28, 1.29). Saunders' design was in keeping with the recently introduced lawn style, with its winding approach drives, broad sweep of lawn framed by naturalistic plantings of trees, and overall simplicity.[26] Yet the stark geometry of the burials, perimeter stone wall, and uniform design of the gravestones for soldiers and officers alike, consisting of continuous curb-like markers, clearly set the cemetery apart from the surrounding civilian

Figure 1.28: Plan of Gettysburg National Cemetery, designed by William Saunders in 1863, showing circular burial grounds surrounded by a picturesque landscape with curving drives. Gravesites were organized by state within the concentric circles, facing the central monument. Adjoining Evergreen Cemetery was a pre-existing rural cemetery. (*Harpers New Monthly Magazine*, August 1866.)

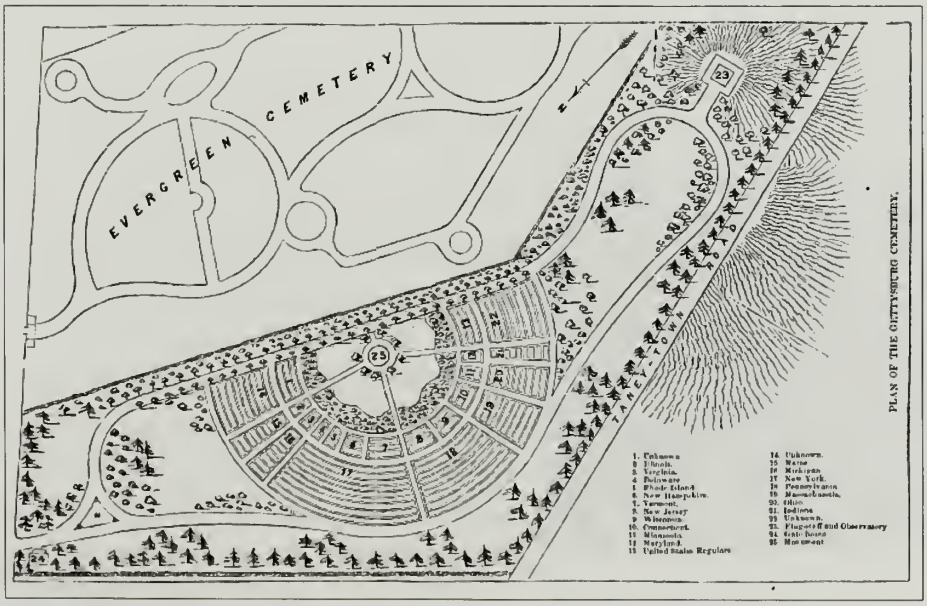


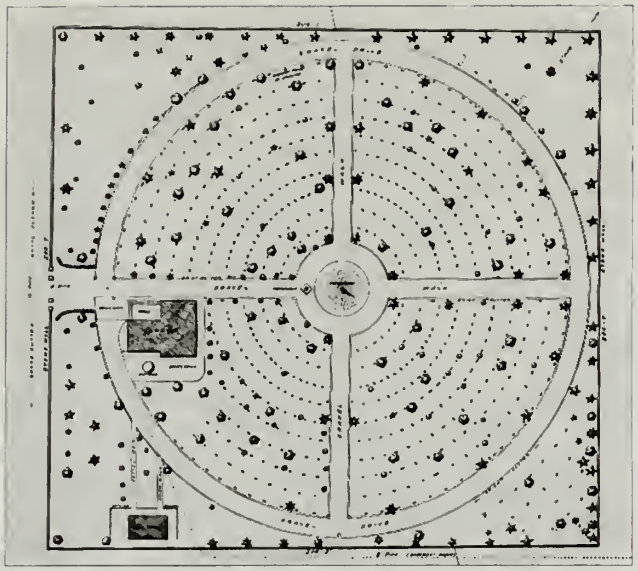
Figure 1.29: General view at Gettysburg National Cemetery showing simplicity of original landscape design, photographed c.1913. (Detroit Publishing Company, in Library of Congress American Memory Collection, digital image 6a09510.)

cemetery. Its circular plan evoked not only traditional mortuary associations with religion and eternity, but also the strict structure of military formation.[27] Antietam National Cemetery, established in 1865 near Sharpsburg, Maryland, was an early example of the Gettysburg model.[28] Some national cemeteries, however, owed more to the old post cemeteries and graveyards than Gettysburg. Alexandria National Cemetery, established in 1863, featured a simple linear plan and wooden headboards without any picturesque landscape effect to the setting (fig. 1.30).

While little is known about how the War Department designed the plans for Poplar Grove or other national cemeteries in the Virginia district, they all owe some similarity to Gettysburg with its circular plan and central focal point, and the older model of straight rows and simple headboards used at Alexandria. Unlike Gettysburg, none of the Virginia district cemeteries featured a picturesque landscape setting, most likely due to the government's cost constraints. The cemeteries encompassed the burial grounds and little more except for a small area of ornamental grounds, typically at the entrance or along the outside of the burial plots. Those cemeteries categorized as small, generally from one to four acres (later as third and fourth class) included Glendale, Fort Harrison, Seven Pines, and Yorktown National Cemeteries. Large cemeteries (later classified as first and second class) included Culpeper, Fredericksburg, Poplar Grove, and Richmond.[29] The plan and program of improvements at each cemetery was generally closely related to its size and number of burials.

Figure 1.30: Alexandria (Virginia) National Cemetery, photographed c.1865. While contemporary with Gettysburg, this cemetery followed traditional military post cemeteries in its layout. (Library of Congress, American Memory Collection, digital image LC-DIG-cwpob-03928DLC.)

The small Glendale National Cemetery, established in 1866 east of Richmond, consisted of a two-acre rectangular parcel with a circular burial plan, an outside circular drive, two cross-axis drives, and a central flagstaff (fig. 1.31). In contrast, the larger City Point National Cemetery located east of Petersburg, established in 1866, consisted of a seven-acre parcel with a rectangular burial plan, two small circular elements in the center for a flagstaff and monument, and a circular entrance area



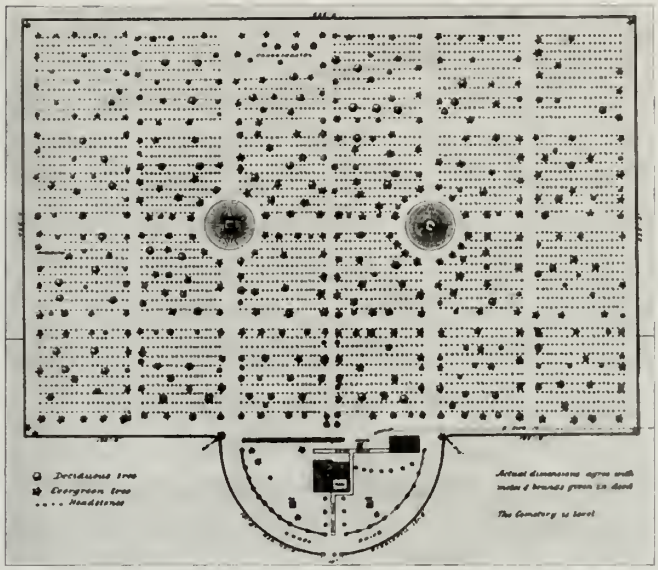


Figure 1.31 (left): Plan of Glendale National Cemetery, established in 1866 just prior to Poplar Grove, showing circular burial plan, from an 1892 survey. (Records of the Quartermaster General, RG 92, Entry 691, National Archives I.)

Figure 1.32 (right): Plan of City Point National Cemetery, commenced at the same time as Poplar Grove in 1866, showing a linear burial plan with central circular elements for a flagstaff and a monument, from an 1892 survey. (Records of the Quartermaster General, RG 92, Entry 691, National Archives I.)

outside the burial grounds (fig. 1.32). In keeping with General Orders Nos. 33 and 75, and with the Congressional act of July 17, 1862, these and all other national cemeteries were initially developed with uniform white-painted headboards with black lettering, and white-painted wood paling fences around the perimeter, similar to Alexandria National Cemetery (see fig. 1.30). As part of the initial development under the burial corps, the graves were generally mounded to allow for settling, the grounds were sodded, and the drives were surfaced in gravel. A central flagstaff, often placed upon a circular mound and adjoining one or more gun monuments, was generally part of the initial development as well.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE POPLAR GROVE LANDSCAPE, 1866-1869

When Lieutenant Colonel James M. Moore selected the site for Poplar Grove National Cemetery in late April or May of 1866, the camp of the 50th New York Volunteer Engineers had been standing vacant for nearly a year except for some caretaker troops and occasional meetings in the church. Since John Trowbridge's visit in late September 1865 when he described the camp as "one of the most beautiful villages ever seen," all of the buildings except for Poplar Grove Church and several log barracks had probably been disassembled or moved to new locations. The survey of the environs of the cemetery made by the Office of the Quartermaster General in circa May 1866 indicated fourteen buildings around the periphery of the parcel (fig. 1.33). Since none of these buildings are shown on earlier or later maps of the area, it seems likely these may have been camp buildings used perhaps by the burial corps, temporarily moved outside of the grounds being prepared as the site of the cemetery.[30]

The Cemetery Plan

Prior to the start of burials in the summer of 1866, the Office of the Quartermaster General had decided upon a circular plan for Poplar Grove National Cemetery. While this was among the most important decisions in determining the character of the cemetery, no known record survives of how the circular plan was chosen. Since the Quartermaster General apparently had no set design requirements for cemetery plans, the person responsible for selecting the cemetery site and approving its development—Lieutenant Colonel James M. Moore—was most likely influential, if not responsible, for the circular design. Moore had overseen the development of other cemeteries with circular plans, notably Battleground (1864) and Glendale (1866), although it is not known if he personally designed those plans. Most of the cemeteries under his jurisdiction did, however, feature circular elements and shared a simple layout organized around a central flagstaff. Aside from traditional mortuary and religious associations symbolizing life everlasting, the inspiration for the circular plan at Poplar Grove may have been the symmetrical layout of the engineers' camp.

The circular plan with room for approximately 5,000 graves was centered at a point on axis with the entrance to Poplar Grove Church and the center of the officers' quarters courtyard. The circle was slightly off-center within the entire cemetery parcel, creating a larger area for burials along the west side (fig. 1.34). The center of the cemetery was planned as an open circle for a flagstaff, with the church building located to its north.[31] Extending out from the center, the plan was divided in eight radiating segments organized into four larger areas known as "divisions" and lettered A through D; each division was in turn subdivided into smaller areas known as "sections." Graves were planned in concentric circles radiating out from the center, with rows ten feet apart and individual graves generally spaced at five feet.[32] All grave markers were intended to face the flagstaff, with the inscriptions visible when viewed from the center.[33] On the east and west sides, the graves transitioned to parallel rows, following the rectangular property boundaries.

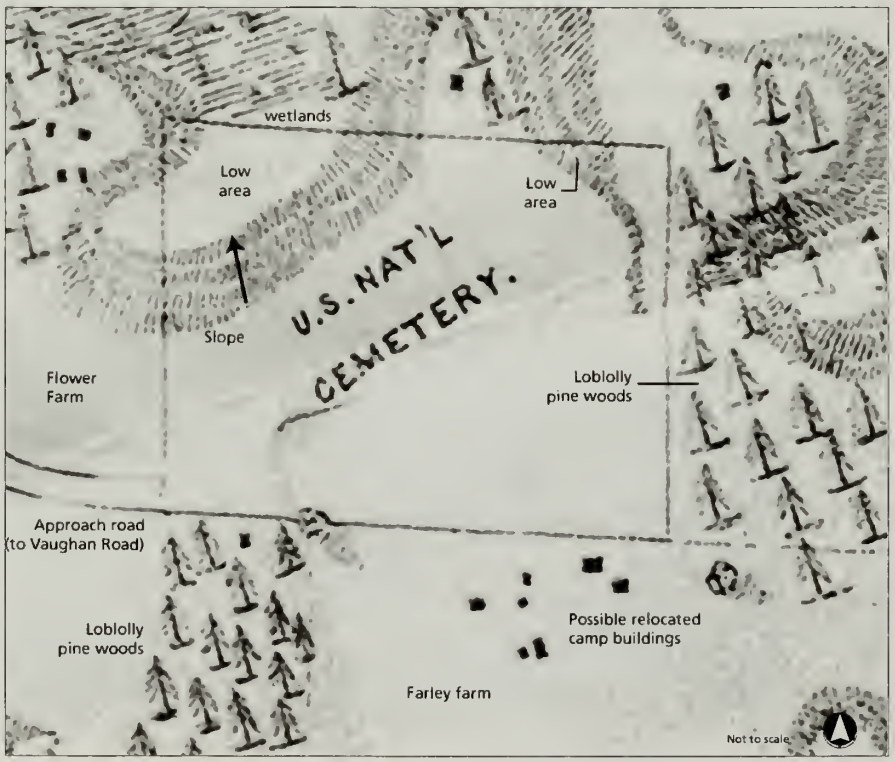


Figure 1.33: Detail of 1866 survey (fig. 1.24) showing topography of cemetery site, and buildings scattered around the periphery. The plan does not show any buildings, trees, or roads that may have been within the cemetery boundaries at the time. (National Archives I, detail of fig. 1.24, annotated by SUNY ESF.)

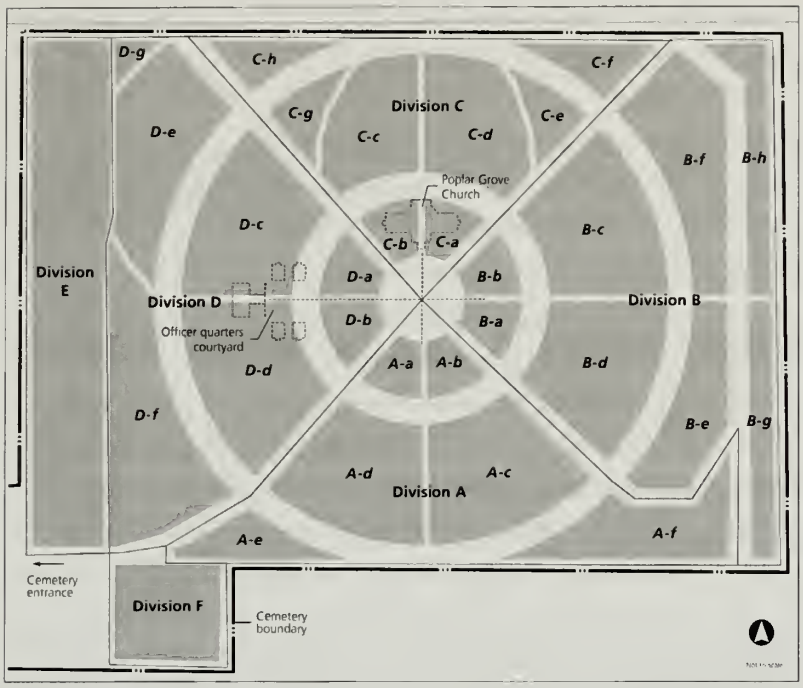


Figure 1.34: Diagram of burial grounds showing organization into divisions and sections, and approximate relationship to pre-existing officers' quarters courtyard and Poplar Grove Church. Division F is within the acre added to the original cemetery parcel. (SUNY ESF.)

The divisions and sections of the cemetery were defined by drives, which were the wider routes of circulation, measuring twelve feet wide. Walks were the narrower passages between individual rows, measuring between eight and ten feet wide.[34] Within the main circular part of the cemetery, the walks and drives all followed either a circular or cross-axis layout with a few exceptions. The main drive extending from the cemetery entrance followed a slightly curving alignment at the outer edge of the circle, probably because it followed the alignment of a pre-existing entrance into the engineers' camp. In addition, at the rear of Poplar Grove Church in Division C, two short drives dividing sections C-c and C-d curved toward the center, a layout that may have been designed in response to the church.[35] The drives in the outer areas reflected the irregular boundaries of the sections that resulted from the transition to parallel rows and the off-center placement of the main circular area.

Burials and Initial Improvements

According to Lieutenant General Moore's account, the burial corps began work by May of 1866 on searching, recovering, and removing Union remains to the camp of the 50th New York Engineers.[36] Jennie Friend, who lived near Poplar Grove, described the scene that summer:

> *The summer of 1866 was a time of searching through the country for the Union dead, to place in the cemetery. Five dollars was given [to civilians] for every collection of bones with a skull...The many dead lying about, with partially covered bodies, and worse yet the un-earthing of these bodies, made the whole country sickly...*[37]

For its first fifteen months of work, the burial corps was under the supervision of an acting superintendent, Major William S. Johnson, who was a discharged officer of the 1st Arkansas Cavalry. He in turn was responsible to Lieutenant Colonel James Moore in the Office of the Quartermaster General, which provided pay and supplies. In June 1867, a year into its work, the Poplar Grove burial corps reportedly employed ninety-six men, and had thirteen wagons, one ambulance, four carts, eighty-seven mules, and twenty-eight horses.[38] These numbers

probably reflected typical conditions during the first year of the burial corps when the bulk of the burials were made.

Between May and July of 1866, the burial corps was most likely busy with initial site preparation. Although the engineers' camp, as Lieutenant General Moore had noted in his initial survey, was well suited for a cemetery, it nonetheless required substantial preparation before burials could begin. The flat, treeless parade grounds at the center of the site required little work, but beyond it the officers' quarters, log barracks, fences, and walks had to be removed, if they had not been removed already, and their sites leveled. The most intensive work occurred beyond the limits of the engineers' camp—the cemetery parcel extended approximately 150 feet west and north of the fence that enclosed the camp. Here, to create suitable land for burials, the loblolly pine woods were thinned, leaving approximately 180 trees as specimens and creating what was likely a shady setting on the west and north sides. Although the center and southern half of the cemetery were relatively level, the land dropped to the northwest corner by approximately fifteen feet due to a shallow ravine that fed into wetlands northwest of the cemetery (see fig. 1.33). Although this ravine was too large to fill, its bottom grade may have been raised. A smaller ravine at the northeastern corner was apparently filled.[39]

Burials in permanent graves within the cemetery most likely began on June 18, 1866.[40] Work included burying the wooden caskets that were stacking up outside of the cemetery since the recovery effort began in May, and accommodating what must have been a steady stream of new arrivals. Over the course of the following year, the burial corps recovered bodies from most of the battlefields at Petersburg, including The Crater, Five Forks, Fort Stedman, Fort Gregg, Fort Hell, Weldon Railroad, Dinwiddie Court House, Hatcher's Run, Meade Station, and Ream's Station, and from several field hospital graveyards. Other bodies were recovered from battlefields at Lynchburg, Appomattox Station, and Harrison's Landing.[41] A sampling of the fallen soldiers buried at Poplar Grove includes:

William Montgomery: Mortally wounded at Appomattox Court House on April 9, 1865, Montgomery is believed to be the last enlisted man killed in Virginia. He was just eighteen years old when he died. (Burial #4841, Private, Company I, 155th Pennsylvania Infantry)

Hiram W. Clark: Clark was twenty-six years old when he was killed on April 9, 1865, just before the Confederate surrender. He is believed to be the last Union officer killed in Virginia. (Burial #4800, Lieutenant, Company G, 185th New York Infantry)

Maroot Bower: Bower was taken prisoner in Lynchburg in 1862 and transferred to a prison camp. When he stepped a few feet beyond the confines of the prison to obtain a bucket of water, he was shot dead by a guard. He was thirty-six years old. (Burial #4607, Private, Company E, 66th Ohio Infantry)

Edwin Keys: Wounded in the battle of Lynchburg, Keys had his arm and leg amputated at the Union field hospital. He and several other men were left behind when their unit fled the city, but was then captured and he died the following day. He was thirty-five years old and left behind his wife of ten years, Sybil. (Burial #4950, Captain, Company B, 116th Ohio Infantry) [42]

The process of burial began at the center in Division A, section a, in the south half of the cemetery across from Poplar Grove Church. Burials followed a sequential grave numbering system that proceeded by row through each section, filling in the division before moving to the next division in a counterclockwise fashion. The only major exception to this process occurred in Division C where Poplar Grove Church stood (the gravesites here were still numbered sequentially in line with the adjoining sections, in anticipation of the removal of the church).[43] The graves were arranged according to how they were brought to the cemetery. Known and unknown graves were generally clustered, but without formal arrangement. Each grave was covered with a foot-high earthen mound intended to provide fill as the grave sunk with the decomposition of the body and wooden coffin. In order to stabilize the soil, the grave mounds were covered in sod brought in from various locations in the vicinity.[44] Each grave was marked by a typical white-painted headboard, similar to those used on the battlefields and the cemeteries established during the war, such as Soldiers' Home in Washington, D.C. (fig. 1.35). They were made of pine with black lettering noting the name and rank of the soldier, if known, and, unlike those at Soldiers' Home, also noting the place from where the body was taken. [45] Most of the graves contained one body, but some of the unidentified graves had the remains of more than one soldier, some with up to six.[46]

Figure 1.35: Example of standard white-painted wooden headboards used in initial national cemetery development, in a c.1865 photograph of the Soldiers' Home National Cemetery, Washington, D.C. by Titian Ramsay Peale. This cemetery, like Poplar Grove, was under the supervision of Lieutenant Captain James M. Moore. Also note grave mounds and brick gutters along the gravel drives. (United States Sanitary Commission Records, New York Public Library Digital Gallery, digital ID 1150094.)

On June 10, 1867, Major General Lorenzo Thomas completed the cemetery's first inspection, reporting that the burial corps had interred 5,196 Union remains, including two sailors, one citizen, eighty-four officers, and 306 African Americans.

Of the total, 2,126 of the remains were positively identified, and 3,070 were unidentified. At the time of the Army report, the burial corps anticipated only three hundred additional burials.[47] Orders for disbanding the burial corps were issued in September 1867, only to be revoked within several weeks due to the discovery of additional bodies. Over the two years following the order to disband, the burial corps reinterred an additional 923 remains at the cemetery, bringing the total to 6,182 bodies. Only thirty-five percent, or approximately 2,164 remains, were positively identified. On June 30, 1869, the burial corps finally disbanded. [48]

While burials were the focus of the burial corps, some of the men also worked on landscape improvements. In addition to mounding and sodding the graves, and erecting the headboards, the burial corps built the walks and drives; erected a central wooden flagstaff on a six-foot high, forty-foot wide circular mound; and, as required by War Department regulations and Congressional legislation, erected a fence around the perimeter of the cemetery to protect the graves, notably from livestock. This was a five-foot high, white-washed paling (picket) fence supported by cedar posts with black-painted tops. [49]

On August 20, 1867, as burial work was slowing, the cemetery's first superintendent, August Miller, arrived for duty. A thirty-eight year-old disabled Civil War veteran born in Baden, Germany, Miller served as superintendent of Poplar Grove until 1876. He was directly responsible to the Quartermaster General (Washington Depot) and supervised five laborers who were separate from the burial corps, which remained under the command of its own acting superintendent. [50] The burial corps generally continued work on construction projects and burials, while Miller and his crew were responsible for maintenance work, such as mowing and weeding.[51]

By October 1867, the burial corps had completed the drives, which were surfaced in gravel and edged by 12,000 linear feet of brick-lined gutters (see fig. 1.35). These gutters, recommended by Major General Lorenzo Thomas in his June 10, 1867 inspection report, fed into wooden culverts (sewer boxes) that carried drainage outside of the cemetery and under drives and walks. The boxes varied in length from twenty-four to 210 feet for a total of 768 lineal feet, and were from one to two-and-one-half feet below grade. The gutters proved to be a maintenance problem for Superintendent Miller and his crew, who spent considerable time repairing faulty masonry and damage from the freeze-thaw cycle.[52]

One of the main projects required of the burial corps was the building of a lodge for the superintendent. At the time of Miller's arrival at Poplar Grove on August 20, 1867, work had not yet begun on this building, so he took up temporary quarters in a wall tent. Miller was informed that plans were to build a frame lodge

at the southwest corner of the cemetery, on the north side of the main entry drive (east of existing garage). In order to build here, approximately twenty graves had to be relocated. Miller felt that the planned lodge was too small, and that there was insufficient space around it for a flower garden, and so wrote to the Quartermaster General requesting that the cemetery be expanded to build the lodge on the south side of the approach road, outside of what was then the main entrance gate.[53] Despite Miller's request, the burial corps began work in late August of 1867 on relocating the graves and building the lodge at the initial site it had selected, probably on the assumption that the building would be temporary and that it would take some time to acquire the additional land. In September, the burial corps completed the lodge, a small rectangular frame building with board-and-batten siding and without an office or porch.[54]

In keeping with the Act of February 22, 1867, the federal government was required to obtain title to the cemetery land, which two years into the cemetery still remained in private ownership. This delay in securing title was most likely due to a change in ownership and expectations. Reverend Thomas Britton Flower had indicated to Lieutenant General Moore that he would donate the property to the government, but his death shortly after the cemetery's establishment in 1866 transferred the property to his young male children and their guardian, who decided against donation.[55]

Despite the continuing difficulties with the purchase, Superintendent Miller received instruction from Lieutenant Colonel Moore on November 25, 1867 to add the one-acre parcel that Miller had earlier suggested as the site for a lodge. At the time, the configuration of the addition had not been determined, but within a few months, a new survey was completed showing an 'L'-shaped one-acre extension at the southwest corner of the original cemetery plot (see fig. 1.23). The size of the cemetery with the addition was 8.13 acres.[56]

By the spring of 1868, the Flower heirs turned to the federal District Court in Virginia to request an appraisal of the cemetery property as was their right under the Act of February 22, 1867. On March 18, 1868, Moore reported that title papers for the 8.13-acre property were nearly complete, and then on April 3, 1868, the District Court issued an appraisal of $1,500. On the same date, Bradley T. Johnson, the court-appointed special commissioner for the Flower heirs, signed the deed, and eight months later on December 15, 1868 it was officially recorded at the Dinwiddie County Courthouse.[57] An intended thirty-foot wide right-of-way along the approach road that ran across the Flower farm was apparently left out of the final deed.[58]

By the time the deed to the cemetery had been recorded in the spring of 1868, Poplar Grove National Cemetery was taking on the appearance of completion, with its thousands of white headboards and grave mounds radiating out from the mounded central white flagstaff, gravel and brick gutter-lined drives, a small frame lodge marking the entrance, and a perimeter white-painted paling fence. The numerous loblolly pines in the cemetery made much of it shady, although many were probably declining due to root disturbance from the burials. Visible across open fields from Vaughan Road and framed by a background of pine woods to its east, the stark whiteness and geometry of the cemetery probably stood out even from afar. Its appearance would have been a marked contrast with the rustic architecture of the engineers' camp that blended in with its wooded surroundings. The one-acre addition at the main entrance, which Superintendent Miller had cleared of stumps and rubbish by early March 1868, remained outside of the perimeter fence and was otherwise unimproved. [59]

The one feature that had stood in stark contrast to the rest of the white and geometric cemetery landscape—Poplar Grove Church—had disappeared by the time that the deed was recorded in April 1868. As late as the fall of 1867, local African Americans were using the church as a meeting place as they had even before the cemetery was established. Finding this problematic, Superintendent Miller had requested permission in October 1867 to cease this use once the cemetery was completed: "...I would state that after dark those people commit nuisance around, and about the Building, and it is impossible to detect the perpetrators. To preserve the Graves from desecration, it is necessary that the Church will be locked, and the Meetings discontinued."[60] At the same time, the wooden building was showing signs of advanced deterioration. Miller recommended by midwinter that the entire building be removed from the cemetery. In February 1868, he wrote to the Assistant Quartermaster General: "...This building is now fast decaying, the Timber beginning to rot, the Window Lights are broken, and the Roof is in a leaky condition..." [61] The burial corps and Miller's laborers had apparently put no effort into maintaining the building, and the grave numbering system suggests that the Quartermaster General had not intended the church to be a permanent feature of the cemetery. At some point between March 20 and April 28, 1868, the burial corps removed Poplar Grove Church, and subsequently filled its site in sections a and b of Division C with graves (see fig. 1.34).[62] The church was purportedly acquired by a private citizen from New York City and erected for a time in Central Park, where it was exhibited as a war relic.[63]

Following the removal of Poplar Grove Church, the burial corps, which numbered about thirty men by December 1868, continued to work on the cemetery landscape during its final year that ended on June 30, 1869. [64] Superintendent

Miller was reporting his frustration with their progress, reporting "...that the object of the burial Corps is not to complete the Cemetery as soon as practicable, but to make the work last as long as possible."[65] The corps continued to bury the small number of bodies that were discovered during this time, and erect headboards and sod the grave mounds. From the time Poplar Grove Church was removed through June 30, 1869, the burial corps had interred an additional 278 bodies in 270 graves. Due to lack of space, in the winter of 1869 the corps had to bury twenty-three bodies outside of the cemetery, but these were eventually interred within the cemetery, probably to new burial sections created along the perimeter and in Division F within the one-acre expansion. This division was opened in the spring of 1869 and contained eighty-two burials by May 24, 1869. One hundred and forty-two additional bodies were reinterred in the cemetery in June 1869, most going into Division F.[66]

Figure 1.36: Bronze shield on the northern gun monument installed in c.June 1869, from a 1968 photograph. This was apparently the only sign within the cemetery at the time. (Photograph by Fred Bell, 2 June 1968, Poplar Grove administrative records, Petersburg National Battlefield.)

In addition to grave work, the burial corps also made some landscape improvements during its final year. In February 1869, four upright cannons known as gun monuments were positioned symmetrically around the flagstaff at the outer edge of the innermost circular drive, requiring the relocation of five graves. Gun monuments were a standard feature in National Cemeteries in Virginia, with the large cemeteries, such as Poplar Grove and Richmond, receiving four, and the smaller cemeteries, such as Glendale, Cold Harbor, and Seven Pines, one. The Poplar Grove gun monuments were thirty-two pounder Columbiad canons acquired from Fort Monroe, a federal fort on the Chesapeake Bay in Hampton, Virginia, and brought to Poplar Grove in the fall of 1868. As installed, the guns were six feet-seven inches tall and topped by a cannon-ball cap; they were surrounded by a masonry platform on which were set pyramidal stacks of cannon balls (a total of eighty-four).[67] One featured a plaque with the name of the cemetery and the burial record (fig. 1.36). Other landscape enhancements undertaken by the burial corps included planting of approximately 1,000 small cedar trees, which were transplanted from nearby woods during the winter of 1868-1869. All but about eighty failed to take root.[68]

While the burial corps was occupied with its work, Superintendent Miller and his crew of five worked on sodding remaining bare grave mounds and the space between the graves; hoeing the gravel drives to remove grass; cleaning out the brick gutters; painting and numbering new headboards; planting trees, flowering shrubs, and annuals; and mowing. In March 1869, Miller established four flowerbeds around the frame lodge representing the "Corps badges," probably in the style of Victorian carpet beds. He also maintained a hotbed for starting flowering annuals, and made cuttings of weeping willow trees—a

species with long-standing mortuary associations.[69] In his correspondence to the Office of Quartermaster General during the spring of 1869, Miller noted several maintenance problems, notably grass growing in the joints of the brick gutters and in the gravel drives; settling of the ground; and deterioration of the wooden headboards. Miller also reported on the inadequacy of the frame lodge, and the need for a woodshed, tool room, and privy. He complained about the bad condition of the water supply, which was via a tube well—a rudimentary well made by driving a tube or pipe into the ground and usually outfitted with a hand pump.[70]

With the disbanding of the burial corps at Poplar Grove National Cemetery on June 30, 1869, the cemetery with its 6,136 interments was officially complete. It was probably at this time that the gun monument located north of the circle, in front of the site of Poplar Grove Church, was ornamented with a standard eagle-emblazoned bronze shield providing the name of the cemetery, its date of establishment, and a tally of the burial record (fig 1.36).

The total cost of the search, recovery, reinterment, and construction program at Poplar Grover amounted to approximately $107,000, which was $33,000 more than earlier estimated.[71] Despite the substantial cost, there remained much outstanding work. Two hundred and seventy new graves in Division F—the new division within the added acre—had not been mounded or marked with headboards. The perimeter fence had not been extended around the one-acre addition, and there remained within the area several log cabins. [72] There were also several things left undone that Major General Lorenzo Thomas had identified in his inspection report of June 10, 1869, including the addition of a perimeter iron fence, a gateway, and permanent grave markers. [73] These features would be addressed in the refinement of the landscape over the course of the next decade.

ENDNOTES

1 Edward Steere, "Shrines of the Honored Dead" (Washington, D. C.: Department of the Army, Office of the Quartermaster General, c.1954), 3; Monro MacCloskey, *Hallowed Ground: Our National Cemeteries* (New York: Richards Rosen Press, 1968), 18-20.

2 Quoted in Steere, 1.

3 MacCloskey, 24.

4 Herbert Olsen, "Poplar Grove National Cemetery History" (Unpublished report prepared for the National Park Service, 31 May 1954), 3-6; Therese Sammartino, "National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, Civil War Era National Cemeteries" (United States Department of Veterans Affairs, 1994), Section E, pages 2-4, 6.

5 Catherine Zipf, "Marking Union Victory in the South, The Construction of the National Cemetery System," in Cynthia Mills and Pamela H. Simpson, editors, *Monuments to the Lost Cause: Women, Art, and the Landscapes of Southern Memory* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2003), 29.

6 *U.S. Statutes at Large*, XIV, 353, quoted in Olsen, 9-10.

7 Sammartino, Section E, pages 2-4; MacCloskey, 24, 35.

8 Sammartino, Section E, page 11.

9 United States War Department, Quartermaster General's Office. *Annual Reports of the Quartermaster-General from 1861 to 1866* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880), 222-223.

10 Steere, 16.

11 Olsen, 13-16.

12 Olsen, 17.

13 Letter, Brigadier General J. J. Dana to Lt. Colonel J. M. Moore, 30 April 1866, quoted in Olsen, 18.

14 Letter, Lt. Col. James Moore to Major General M. C. Meigs, 12 June 1866, RG 92, Records of the Quartermaster General, Entry 576, Poplar Grove National Cemetery Records, National Archives I, Washington, D.C. [hereafter, "Poplar Grove Records, NARA I"], box 57.

15 Olsen, 27; "Inspection Report of National Cemeteries in the Dept. of Va. By Bvt. [Brevet]. Maj. Gen. Lorenzo Thomas, June 10, 1867," RG 92, Entry 648, Inspection Report of National Cemeteries in Virginia, National Archives I, Washington, D. C. [hereafter, "Inspector General Records, NARA I"]. In this report, Thomas states: "This chapel [Poplar Grove Church] and the small groves of pines in which it is situated may have fixed the site—Also the final conflict took place near the position, the capture of the Rebel work Fort Greg, which caused the Retreat of Gen'l Lee. I should have selected a position on the right-of the line over-looking the city—where the ground is more undulating, say at Fort Stedman, or Morton, or Friends House, the Hd Quarters of Major Gen'l Meade..."

16 G. H. Thomas, C. E., "Land Plan of U.S. Nat. Cemetery at Poplar Grove Va." and "Plan of the Locality of U.S. Nat. Cemetery at Poplar Grove Va., (Quartermaster's Office, c.1866), Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57. In Moore's letter to Meigs of June 12, 1866, he states that prior to his receipt of Mr. Colfax's letter dated May 21, 1866, "...a site had already been selected by me at Poplar Grove, and the work of removing bodies to same had commenced."

17 No accompanying report or cost estimates were located along with the two survey maps in the Poplar Grove Records at NARA I.

18 The bronze shield on the gun monument lists the establishment of the cemetery as June 18, 1866. The date of June 1, 1866 cited as the beginning of work on the cemetery is taken from Thomas, "Inspection Report," June 10, 1867. Lieutenant Colonel Moore's reference to burials having commenced by May 21, 1866 may not reflect the official beginning of the cemetery and institution of the burial corps, but most likely reflects some initial work at bringing bodies to the site of Poplar Grove.

19 Lieutenant Colonel James Moore, "Consolidated Monthly Report of Progress Made on the National Cemeteries in the 1st Military District of Virginia," December 1868, Inspector General records, NARA I, box 1.

20 Zipf, 30.

21 U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, "History of Government Furnished Headstones and Markers," Burials & Memorials website, http://www.cem.va.gov/cem/hist/hmhist.asp (accessed 29 September 2006).

22 Blanche Linden-Ward, "Cemeteries," in William H. Tishler, editor, *American Landscape Architecture: Designers and Places* (Washington, D.C.: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1989), 121-122; Elizabeth Barlow Rogers, *Landscape Design: A Cultural and Architectural History* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2001), 334-336.

23 Linden-Ward, 121.

24 Linden-Ward, 121-122.

25 National Park Service, "Gettysburg National Military Park Virtual Tour—The National Cemetery," online article at www.nps.gov/gett/getttour/tstops/tstd4-23.htm. Gettysburg, as with several of the first national cemeteries, was not

developed by the War Department but was rather a joint effort by numerous states and private citizens. It was initially called the Soldier's National Cemetery and was incorporated into the National Cemetery System in 1872.

26 "National Cemeteries," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, vol. 33, issue 195, August 1866, 314.

27 "Circle" in "Glossary of Victorian Cemetery Symbolism, "Rochester's History: An Illustrated Timeline" webpage, http://www.vintageviews.org/vv-tl/pages/Cem_Symbolism.html; MacCloskey, 30. Only the national cemetery at Chattanooga, Tennessee (1863) did not incorporate a geometric plan for its burial plots, instead relying on an overall picturesque and informal arrangement more typical of civilian "rural" cemeteries.

28 Antietam National Battlefield, "Ranger Notebook: Antietam National Cemetery," http://www.nps/gov/archive/anti/cemetary.htm.

29 United States Department of Veterans Affairs, Facilities Management website, pages for individual national cemeteries, www.cem.va.gov/nchp; War Department, Office of the Quartermaster General, *Regulations for the Government of National Cemeteries* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1911), 3-4. Some of the cemeteries, such as Hampton (originally four acres, later expanded to twenty-seven acres), were raised in classification due to expansion in late 19th and early 20th centuries.

30 T. R. Rives, "Map of Dinwiddie County VA 1878," (traced by F. M. Lundahl, 1935), republished in Richard L. Jones, *Dinwiddie County: Carrefour of the Commonwealth* (Dinwiddie, Virginia: Dinwiddie County Board of Supervisors, 1976), inside back cover.

31 Superintendent Arthur Miller wrote in February 1868 regarding available space for burials: "...I found, that room can be made for 140 additional Graves, exclusive of the vacant space in front of the Church." Arthur Miller to Lieutenant Colonel James Moore, 14 February 1868, transcription of Poplar Grove archives at Petersburg National Battlefield by park ranger Betsy Dinger [hereafter, "POGR database"].

32 Thomas, "Inspection Report," June 10, 1867.

33 Superintendent Arthur Miller to Brevet Major General D. H. Rucker, Assistant Quartermaster General, 29 February 1868, POGR database.

34 Thomas, "Inspection Report," June 10, 1867.

35 No documentation was found on why the short drives were added between sections d and e, and c and g in Division C.

36 A full account of the work of the burial corps is found in Olsen, 27-40.

37 Jennie Friend Stephenson, "My Father's Household, Before, During and After the War," unpublished manuscript, Petersburg National Battlefield library.

38 Thomas, "Inspection Report," June 10, 1867; Olsen, 28.

39 Superintendent Arthur Miller reported trouble in establishing grass beneath "Pine-trees," suggesting that these were mature pines. Arthur Miller to Quartermaster General U.S.A., 27 May 1869, POGR database. There is no detailed topographic survey available of the cemetery (most detailed are ten-foot contours on U.S.G.S. quadrangle maps). The existence of the ravines extending into the cemetery is illustrated on the c.1866 Quartermaster General survey, "Plan of the Locality of U.S. National Cemetery at Poplar Grove" (see fig. 1.23). A Quartermaster survey of the cemetery made in 1892 noted that the maximum difference in elevation was approximately fifteen feet.

40 There is some disagreement on the beginning of burials within the cemetery. June 18, 1866 is the date given as the establishment of the cemetery on the gun monument bronze plaque containing the burial tally as of 1869. Olsen, in Appendix 1, 69, gives July 18, 1866 as the beginning of the "recovery and reinterment program," although recovery had probably begun well before then. In its annual report for the period ending June 30, 1866, the Office of the Quartermaster General did not list Poplar Grove as one of the cemeteries in the Virginia District (Washington Depot) as having commenced. *Annual Reports of the Quartermaster-General from 1861 to 1866*, 222-223, 242. This may have been an oversight.

41 Thomas, "Inspection Report," June 10, 1867; Superintendent August Miller, "History of Poplar Grove National Cemetery, 24 April 1871, POGR database.

42 Records compiled by Betsy Dinger, Park Ranger, "Poplar Grove National Cemetery Program" (Unpublished interpretive presentation transcript, c.2004), Petersburg National Battlefield.

43 Olsen, 77.

44 Thomas, "Inspection Report," June 10, 1867. In one instance, the sod was taken without the consent of the property owner. See James Lufsey, Petersburg, to General Lorenzo Thomas, Inspector of Cemeteries, 13 January 1868, Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57. Lufsey wrote asking for compensation: "When the National Cemetery at this place was being completed Mr Clarke the Supt [probably not a superintendent] procured turf from my land for the purpose of turfing the graves..." Lieutenant Colonel James Moore wrote to Major General D. H. Rucker about this: "The premises of claimant are situated in the suburbs of Petersburg, Va., they are not enclosed or improved—in fact more a common. Some sod was taken therefrom but only in small quantities...The turf was used to sod the graves in the Poplar Grove National Cemetery. In all other instances the small quantity required for [cemetery?] purposes, has been cheerfully furnished by different parties..."

45 Superintendent August Miller to Brevet Major General D. H. Rucker, 29 February 1868, POGR database. No photographs of the headboards have been found.

46 Poplar Grove burial register, Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 58.

47 Thomas, "Inspection Report," June 10, 1867.

48 Olsen, 30.

49 Thomas, "Inspection Report," June 10, 1867; Moore, "Consolidated Monthly Report of Progress Made on the National Cemeteries in the 1st Military District of Virginia," December 1868; Olsen, 27.

50 Descriptive record of August Miller submitted to Henry Hodges, 16 February 1871, POGR database. The acting superintendent of the burial corps was to remain in charge of Poplar Grove until the cemetery was deemed officially complete by meeting the requirements of the Act of February 22, 1867. Miller to Major General D. H. Rucker, Acting Quartermaster General, 31 August 1867, POGR database.

51 August Miller to Lieutenant Colonel James Moore, 15 October 1867, POGR database; August Miller to Major General Lorenzo Thomas, 31 March 1869, POGR database; August Miller to Colonel J. G. Chandler, 27 May 1869, POGR database. Miller also served as clerk to the superintendent of the burial corps, keeping the burial record, and making weekly and monthly reports.

52 Thomas, "Inspection Report," June 10, 1867; August Miller to Lieutenant Colonel James Moore, 15 October 1867; August Miller to Major General D. H. Rucker, 29 February 1868; August Miller to Captain Carling, 28 August 1871, POGR database. No drawings, photographs, or specifications for these brick gutters have been found. They were buried in 1878 and remain at least in part today, as found in 2003 during excavation work (NPS historian Jimmy Blankenship, communication to author, June 5, 2006).

53 Miller was probably following the recommendation made by Major General Lorenzo Thomas in his June 10, 1867 inspection report, in which he recommended that the cemetery be expanded on the south side by one acre to accommodate a lodge. Thomas, "Inspection Report," June 10, 1867; August Miller to Lieutenant Colonel A. P. Blunt, 22 August 1867, POGR database; Miller to Rucker, 31 August 1867.

54 Miller to Rucker, 31 August 1867; Miller to Chandler, 27 May 1869; August Miller to Quartermaster General, 30 September 1869, POGR database.

55 Olsen, 36-37. The infant heirs were James T. Flower, Archibald Flower, and Joseph Flower, represented by George Vickers, guardian.

56 This new parcel added a 101-foot by 92-foot rectangular area to the north of the approach road, and a 110-foot by 238-foot rectangular area to the south.

57 Olsen, 36-37; copy of deed, 90-91; Lieutenant General James Moore to Major General D. A. Rucker, 18 March 1868, Poplar Grove Records, NARA I ; United States War Department, *Military Reservations, National Cemeteries and Military Parks Title Jurisdiction Etc.*" (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, Revised Edition, 1916), 433-434.

58 Charles Pickett, National Cemetery, Poplar Grove, to M. L. Higgins, Chief Clerk Quartermaster Department, 12 May 1869, Poplar Grove Records, NARA I. Pickett, apparently a cemetery employee, wrote: "I would respectfully state that I have been to Dinwiddie Court House, and have ascertained the following facts in reference to land purchased for this Cemetery. Viz: A deed has been duly recorded, which specifies that eight (8) acres and 13/100 has been purchased and the sum of fifteen hundred dollars has been paid for the same, which includes the additional acre recently surveyed and gives a "right of way" 30 feet in width-extending to the main road." The deed, as transcribed in Olsen (90-91) does not include reference to the right-of-way.

59 August Miller to Major General D. H. Rucker, 29 February 1868, POGR database; Miller to Lieutenant Colonel James M. Moore, 9 March 1868, POGR database.

60 Miller to Moore, 15 October 1867.

61 Miller to Rucker, 29 February 1868.

62 Olsen, 37, 80. The graves at the site of the church in Division C were filled at some point between April 28 and June 30, 1869. These graves included all of sections a and b, plus seven graves in each row along the eastern edge of section c and the western edge of section d. This area in sections c and d had apparently served as a broad walk extending to the rear of the church. The walk was subsequently filled with burials at an undetermined date.

63 "The Right Hand of Fellowship—The Fruits of the Reconciliation Policy, as Exhibited at Poplar Grove Cemetery Yesterday," Petersburg *Daily Post*, 10 July 1877, page 1, column 2. This article, written on the occasion of a ceremony marking the installation of headstones, stated: "The chapel was taken down and carried to Central Park, New York, where it was for some time exhibited as a curiosity and relic of war."

64 Moore, "Consolidated Monthly Report of Progress Made on the National Cemeteries in the 1st Military District of Virginia," December 1868. This report listed 35 employees at the cemetery.

65 August Miller to Major General Lorenzo Thomas, 31 March 1869, POGR database.

66 Olsen, 29-31; Miller to Thomas, 31 March 1869; August Miller to Colonel J. G. Chandler, 27 May 1869, POGR database; August Miller to Adjunct General U.S.A., 30 June 1869, POGR database.

67 Miller to Thomas, 31 March 1869; Olsen, 38; August Miller to Colonel J. G. Chandler, 27 May 1869, POGR database.

68 Miller to Adjunct General, 30 June 1869.

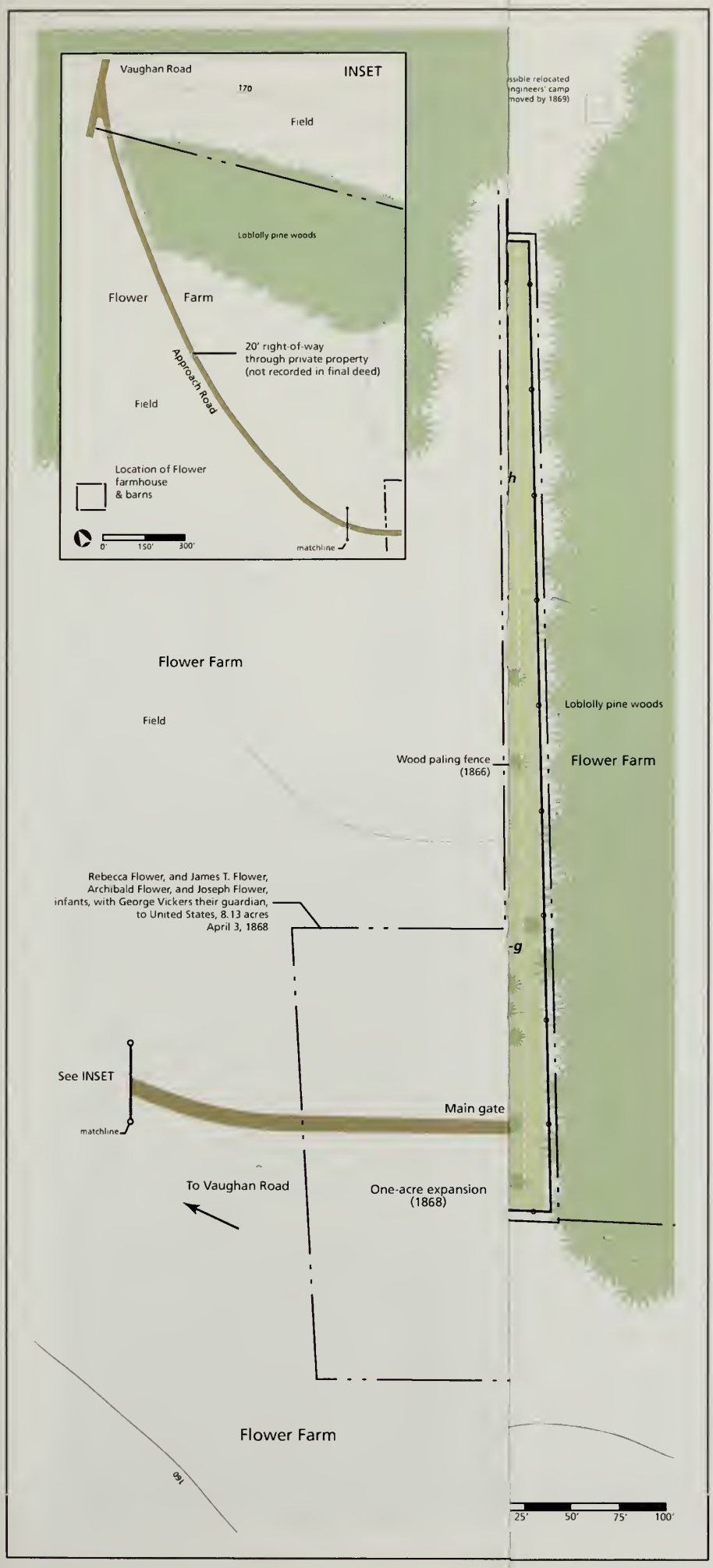
69 August Miller to Major General Lorenzo Thomas, 31 March 1869 and 30 April 1869, POGR database; August Miller to Quartermaster General U.S.A., 31 August 1869, POGR database. No documentation was found on the location of the tube well.

70 Miller to Thomas, 31 March 1869; Miller to Chandler, 27 May 1869.

71 Olsen, 30-31, 39.

72 August Miller to Adjunct General U.S.A., 31 July 1869, POGR database; Miller letter of 30 November 1869, POGR database. Miller noted in this last letter that "...old Army log cabins opposite the lodge were taken down and the ground leveled."

73 Thomas, "Inspection Report," June 10, 1867. Thomas had specified "iron blocks," the type of grave marker initially stipulated by General Montgomery Meigs for National Cemeteries.



Cultural Landscape Report

Poplar Grove National Cemetery

Petersburg National Battlefield
Dinwiddie County, Virginia

Establishment Period 1866-1869

National Park Service
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
www.nps.gov/oclp

in partnership with
Department of Landscape Architecture
SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry

SOURCES

1. PETE GIS Data
2. Thomas, Plan of Poplar Grove Nat. Cemetery, c.1866
3. Burial location plan, NPS, c.1970

DRAWN BY

John Auwaerter, Illustrator CS3, 2009

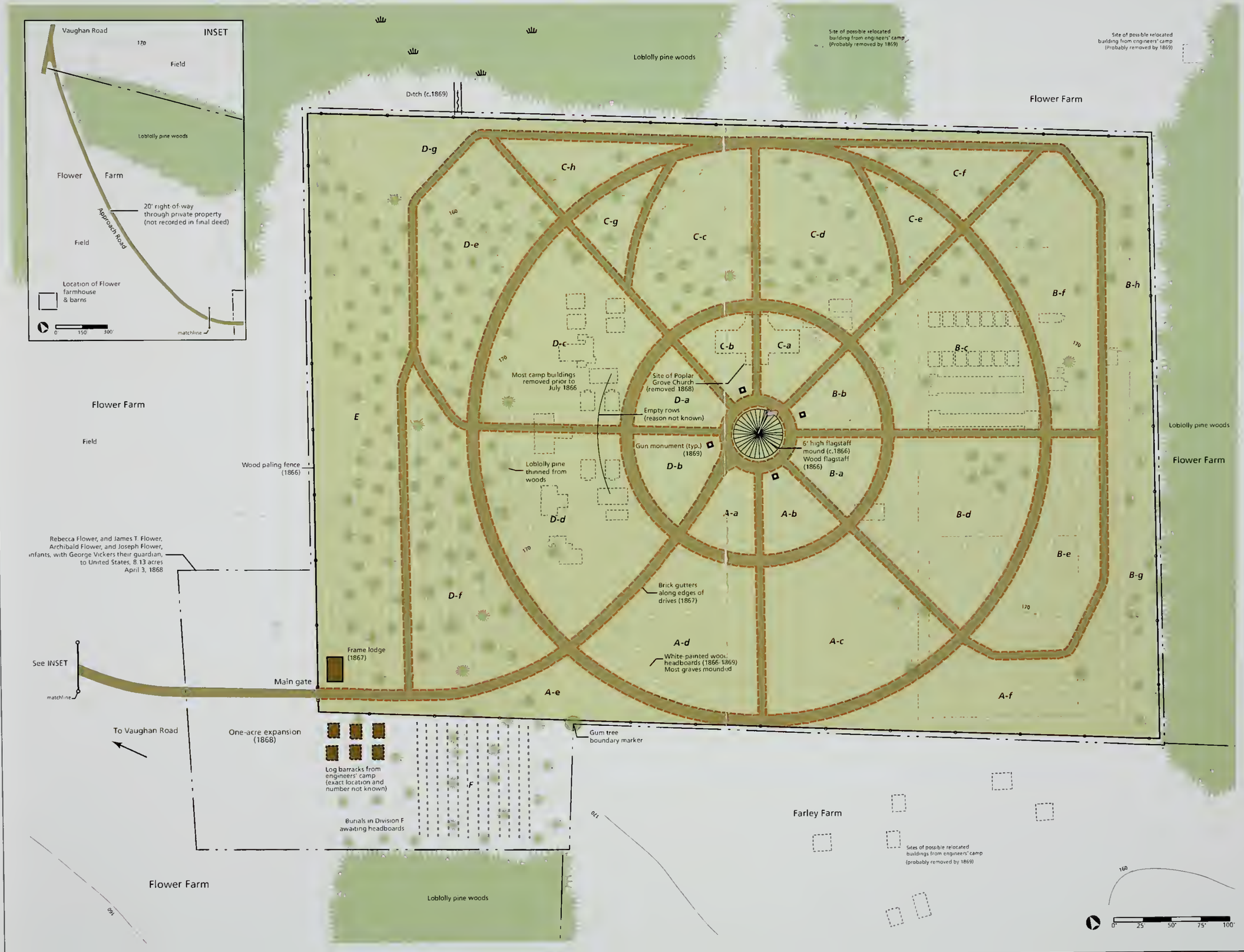
LEGEND

- Removed during period
- Property line
- Grave markers
- B-g Cemetery division-section
- Building
- Road
- Road with brick gutters
- Gun monument
- Fence
- Conifer tree (loblolly pine, approx.)
- Lawn
- 10' contour
- Wetland

NOTES

1. Plan represents landscape conditions in 1869 at end of the work of the burial corps, showing features removed during the period by dashed lines.
2. Dashed lines on existing features indicates approximate scale, location.
3. Locations of willows, cedars, and flowerbeds added during the period are not known.
4. All features shown in approximate scale and location. Location of brick gutters and gravel surfaces based on assumption of drive locations.

Drawing 1.2



Cultural Landscape Report

Poplar Grove National Cemetery

Petersburg National Battlefield
Dinwiddie County, Virginia

Establishment Period 1866-1869

National Park Service
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
www.nps.gov/oclp

in partnership with
Department of Landscape Architecture
SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry

SOURCES

1. PETE GIS Data
2. Thomas, Plan of Poplar Grove Nat. Cemetery, c.1866
3. Burial location plan, NPS, c.1970

DRAWN BY

John Auwaerter, Illustrator CS3, 2009

LEGEND

- Removed during period
- Property line
- Grave markers
- B-g Cemetery division-section
- Building
- Road
- Road with brick gutters
- Gun monument
- Fence
- Conifer tree (loblolly pine, approx.)
- Lawn
- 10' contour
- Wetland

NOTES

1. Plan represents landscape conditions in 1869 at end of the work of the burial corps, showing features removed during the period by dashed lines.
2. Dashed lines on existing features indicates approximate scale, location.
3. Locations of willows, cedars, and flowerbeds added during the period are not known.
4. All features shown in approximate scale and location. Location of brick gutters and gravel surfaces based on assumption of drive locations.

Drawing 1.2

WAR DEPARTMENT PERIOD, 1869-1933

By the time the Poplar Grove burial corps was officially disbanded on June 30, 1869, most of the burial space in the cemetery had been filled, completing the plan for the cemetery laid out three years earlier. During the ensuing seven decades of War Department administration, there were sixty additional burials from later wars due to expanded eligibility. These later burials amounted to roughly one percent of all graves, leaving Poplar Grove a predominantly Civil War cemetery.[1]

The landscape of the cemetery, although fixed in overall plan, was considerably improved in the years after 1869 in keeping with the War Department's changing regulations for national cemeteries. In general, these regulations led to a standardized landscape that accommodated local materials and growing conditions, and minimized maintenance through an overall simplified scheme. The 1870s through the early 1880s were a time of development and beautification at Poplar Grove, corresponding with relatively high visitation and increased funding for capital improvements. After this time into the latter 1920s, Poplar Grove entered a sleepy period in which visitation declined and few improvements were made to the landscape. Unlike other national cemeteries in Virginia such as Cold Harbor and Culpeper, Poplar Grove did not receive any commemorative monuments from states or societies. In the latter 1920s, following the establishment of Petersburg National Military Park in 1926, visitation to Poplar Grove began to rise and the War Department undertook a program of improvements. During this time of renewed activity, the federal government transferred administration of Poplar Grove to the Department of the Interior's National Park Service in August 1933.

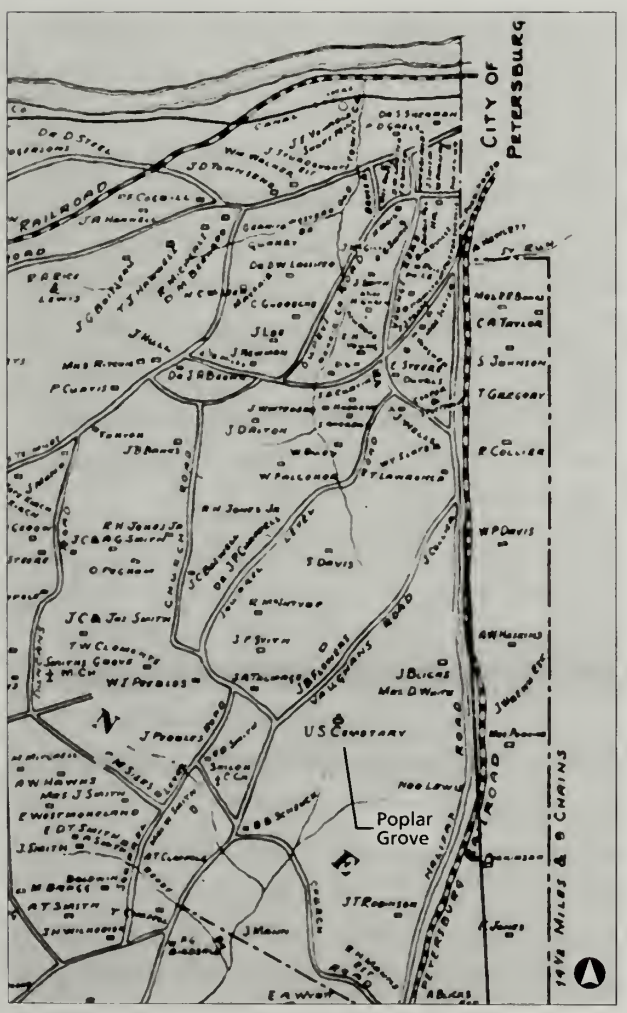


Figure 1.37: Map of Dinwiddie County (1878) showing rural context of Poplar Grove National Cemetery, adjoining the Flower farm along Vaughan Road. (Detail of map redrawn in Richard L. Jones, *Dinwiddie County: Carrefour of the Commonwealth*, 1976, annotated by SUNY ESF.)

Throughout its history under the War Department, Poplar Grove remained a relatively remote place set in the midst of a rural district of farm fields and pine woods with little surrounding development (fig. 1.37). The Flower family owned the farm that surrounded the cemetery on three sides through the 1870s, and thereafter it passed to the Blaha family, who occupied a new farmstead on the east side of Vaughan Road, southwest of the cemetery. Throughout this period, the cemetery was visible from Vaughan Road across farm fields, with the flagstaff rising above the tree canopy, framed in the background by woods of loblolly pine that extended east to the old Petersburg & Weldon Railroad

and Halifax Road. The limits of the City of Petersburg, which saw little growth from its pre-Civil War prosperity until the early twentieth century, remained well to the north. [2]

For years after the war, the devastation from the Civil War remained a conspicuous part of the landscape surrounding Poplar Grove, along with the Union forts and lines of fortifications. These relics moved cemetery Superintendent August Miller to include them in a description of the cemetery he wrote in 1871: "...The most elevated points in the vicinity have been strongly fortified with Earthworks, some of these works are still in a good state of preservation, and give the land a martial and somewhat picturesque appearance; from the center of the Cemetery can be see Forts Clark, Dushane [to the south], Wadsworth, Keene, Tracy [to the north and west] Emory and Seibert [to the southwest]..." (see fig. 1.10).[3] As the fields were returned to active agriculture and pine forests regenerated elsewhere on the war-torn landscape, the views to these fortifications became obscurred.

DEVELOPMENT AND BEAUTIFICATION, 1869-1882

During the 1870s and into the early 1880s, the War Department refined the Poplar Grove landscape with the addition of a new lodge, perimeter walls, entrance gates, marble grave markers, benches, interpretive plaques, and plantings of specimen trees, shrubs, and flowerbeds. The Act of February 22, 1867, passed while many cemeteries including Poplar Grove were still busy with battlefield recovery and burials, outlined a number of specific improvements, but these generally were not implemented until the 1870s once the burial work was substantially complete. The shift toward improvements in the 1870s was also brought about by the deterioration of the initial wooden features such as fences and headboards, which warranted rebuilding in more durable materials. Improvements also became increasingly necessary with the growing commemorative function of the national cemeteries, reflected by the designation of Memorial Day in 1868 and following the precedent of Gettysburg National Cemetery with its central commemorative monument. [4]

Congress recognized the need for beautification by setting aside funds in the War Department appropriation of 1870 for planting trees and shrubs in each of the seventy-three national cemeteries.[5] Quartermaster General Montgomery Meigs, the head commander of the national cemetery system, recognized that these plantings would shape the character of the cemetery landscapes for generations. He sought professional advice on the plantings, and in July 1870 contacted noted landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, best know for his design of Central Park in New York City. Olmsted, unable to offer specific detail due to the varied nature of the national cemeteries, advised Meigs on a general design that avoided ornamental gardening then popular in Victorian landscapes. Reflecting

his hallmark approach to design, Olmsted instead recommended that plantings emphasize the overall landscape effect, with a grove of trees providing the fundamental character to the landscape:

> *I would recommend that it (the general design) should be studiously simple...The main object should be to establish permanent dignity and tranquility. Looking forward several generations, the greater part of all that is artificial at present in the cemeteries must be expected to have either wholly disappeared or to have become inconspicuous and unimportant in the general landscape...This then is what I would recommend to be aimed at:--A sacred grove, sacredness and (protection) being expressed in the enclosing wall and in the perfect tranquility of the trees within.*[6]

In his reference to all that was then "artificial" in the cemeteries, Olmsted was referring to features such as ornamental flower beds, clipped shrubs, fence enclosures, mounds, and even grave markers. Foreshadowing subsequent maintenance and cost issues at Poplar Grove, Olmsted also recommended replacing lawn with cover of trees and shrubs; planting of indigenous trees using saplings transplanted from surrounding woods; avoiding fast-growing weak trees, including poplars, European linden, silver maple, balsam fir, and American and Chinese arborvitae; and establishing a nursery for the replacement of trees.[7]

The essence of Olmsted's recommendations, for an overall informal and simple arrangement of specimen trees as a sacred grove within the cemetery inclosure, was adopted at many national cemeteries, including Poplar Grove. Despite his advice against artificial ornament, however, the beautification and development undertaken throughout the system during the 1870s maintained lawn and upright grave markers as conspicuous parts of the landscape, along with scattered but generally not prolific use of ornamental flowerbeds and clipped shrubs. [8]

Administration and Use

In the post Civil War years, administration of the national cemeteries remained under the Office of the Quartermaster General, with direct oversight maintained by its regional offices. During the 1870s and 1880s, Poplar Grove was administered through the Quartermaster's Washington (D. C.) Depot, with large construction projects handled through the Philadelphia Depot.[9] The cemetery superintendent was required to submit to the Quartermaster General regular reports on burials, the condition of the cemetery buildings and landscape, and the need for improvements. Poplar Grove, along with all other national cemeteries, was inspected on a biannual basis by the Office of the Inspector General, established in the War Department by an act of 1813. In the early years of the cemetery, inspectors wrote informal reports remarking on the condition of buildings,

roads, vegetation, and grave markers; staffing and funding issues; and the need for improvements.

Regular employees under Superintendent Miller dropped from his initial five in 1867 to two by the summer of 1870. Miller reported: "In regard to the employees under my charge, I have two good (colored) laborers at work in the cemetery, to keep the grounds in order."[10] Through the remainder of this period, the superintendent generally had one permanent assistant, known as a gardener, and often two additional staff hired during busy times, mostly in the spring and fall. Additional laborers and trades people, such as carpenters and masons, were brought in under contract as needed, while Quartermaster engineers and other professionals from various offices, such as the Philadelphia Depot and Fort Monroe, Virginia, were involved in drafting plans and inspecting cemetery conditions.

Miller remained superintendent until 1876, when he was replaced for health reasons by H. C. Lacy, who remained in the position until 1890.[11] The superintendents lived with their families in the cemetery lodge. Due to the remote location far from stores, the superintendents maintained a hedge-enclosed garden plot and chicken yard outside of cemetery gate, on the north side of the entrance drive (current site of parking lot), apparently with the consent of the Flower and later Blaha families who owned the property.[12]

During its early years, Poplar Grove National Cemetery received "a large number of visitors," according to Superintendent Miller, probably mostly Northerners searching for the graves of their family and friends.[13] Decoration Day (Memorial Day) became the main public occasion at the cemetery, a date that generally saw the greatest visitation and the best level of maintenance in the landscape. May 30th was officially designated as Decoration Day in 1868 through General Orders No. 11 of the Grand Army of the Republic. The order called for "strewing with flowers or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country (during the late rebellion)..."[14] It was not until 1871, however, that Poplar Grove had its first Decoration Day ceremony. The people of Petersburg organized this ceremony for May 31, 1871, and a special train was run on the Petersburg & Weldon Railroad to shorten the five-mile trip to the cemetery. The Petersburg *Daily Courier* reported that the ceremony was attended by a large crowd of approximately 1,500 people: "...white and colored assembled... to join in the ceremony of decorating the graves of the federal soldiers buried at that place...Under the direction of the committee of arrangements, flowers were distributed upon the graves, and (flagstaff) mound and gateways were appropriately decorated..."[15] Decoration Day ceremonies were apparently held at Poplar Grove throughout the 1870s, such as one in 1875 in which it was

reported that the visitors were "quite numerous, and flowers and evergreens plentiful." [16]

Building of the New Lodge and Service Yard

In the summer and fall of 1869 after the burial corps disbanded, Superintendent Miller oversaw a number of immediate improvements to the landscape. One area requiring substantial work was the one-acre addition. In July, Miller reported to Quartermaster General Meigs: "The new Section (Division F), in which the late interments have been made, has been left in an unfinished state. The ground needs grading; and two hundred and sixty seven (267) Graves, have no mounds made, nor are they marked with Head Boards. Also Forty five Graves are not filled. Three Carpenters are now at work, in putting up a Fence around the lately added grounds."[17] By November 1869, the old log barracks remaining from the engineers' camp south of the main drive were taken down and the ground leveled, and Miller built a frame tool shed north of the drive.[18]

Soon after this time, plans were underway for building a new lodge in the one-acre addition, as Miller had earlier recommended. Although the frame lodge was only a few years old, Miller was reporting that it was too small for his family, and that it leaked and was cold in the winter. Fortunately for Miller, Quartermaster General Montgomery Meigs, who was an architect and engineer best known for his work on the dome and extension of the United States Capitol, was developing plans for substantial stone lodges to be built at each national cemetery. Meigs' prototype, first produced in 1870, was for a small, one and one-half story building in the fashionable Second Empire Style. A second version Meigs produced in 1871 featured quarry-faced ashlar stone walls, a polychrome slate Mansard (French) roof, pedimented dormers, a front porch, and casement windows (fig. 1.38). [19] The building style, contemporary and characteristically urban, stood in stark contrast to the Gothic and Egyptian Revival styles popular in rural cemeteries prior to the war. Meigs-designed lodges were built, with modifications, at most of the national cemeteries in the Virginia district under the supervision of Lieutenant Colonel James M. Moore, the first built in 1870 at Richmond and Cold Harbor, and the last completed at Seven Pines in 1874.[20] The lodge at City Point near Petersburg, built in 1871, was typical of the modifications to the Meigs prototype, with double-hung sash, a monochrome slate roof, and slightly different proportions (fig. 1.39). As with all lodges, the City Point building was

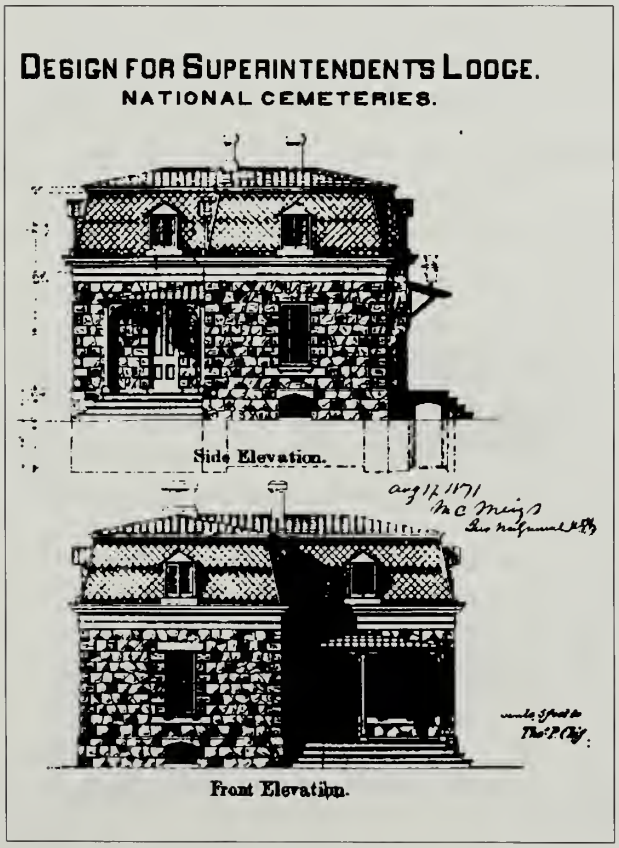


Figure 1.38: Prototype of a national cemetery lodge designed by Quartermaster General Montgomery Meigs, from a version dated August 17, 1871. (National Archives, from U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Facilities Management website, http://www.va.gov/facmgt/historic/Meigs.)

Figure 1.39: The main entrance to City Point National Cemetery, a second-class cemetery, showing Meigs-style lodge built in 1871, photographed 1902. Also note the stone wall and iron gates (c.1875), gun monuments (c.1869), lattice well house (c.1871, to right of lodge), and iron tablets (c.1882). (Records of the Quartermaster General, RG 92, Still Pictures Division, National Archives II.)

located at the main entrance to the cemetery, inside the inclosure fence or wall.

On May 27, 1870, the Office of the Quartermaster General selected plans for the new lodge at Poplar Grove, using the same plan for a brick lodge then being constructed at Richmond National Cemetery. Three days later, an advertisement was issued seeking construction bids for Poplar Grove, and on August 16, 1870, papers were signed awarding the contract to James R. Dobbyn and requiring construction to be completed by October 31, 1870. The site selected for the lodge was in the one-acre addition on the north side of the main drive adjacent to the frame lodge. By August 31, 1870, Dobbyn commenced work on the project, but within a short time defaulted on the project, leaving a cellar hole, mounded earth, and lumber.[21] In April 1871, the Quartermaster's office advertised for new bids using the same plan. The low bid for the plan as specified, using brick, came in at $2,892.00, but a bid by Kyran A. Murphy substituted stone for brick at a lower cost of $2,700.00. Murphy was most likely working at the time on the new lodge at City Point National Cemetery, which used the same stone (see fig. 1.39). Because of Murphy's low bid, he was awarded the contract for Poplar Grove and plans were changed to stone.[22] On August 3, Stark Frank, an agent with the Quartermaster's office, inspected the existing cellar hole, which had filled with water, and determined that the lodge should be instead built on the opposite side of the entrance drive (fig. 1.40).

On October 24, 1871, Murphy began construction of the stone lodge, and by the end of the year, had substantially completed the work.[23] The lodge featured the standard Meigs plan, with a concave mansard roof sheathed

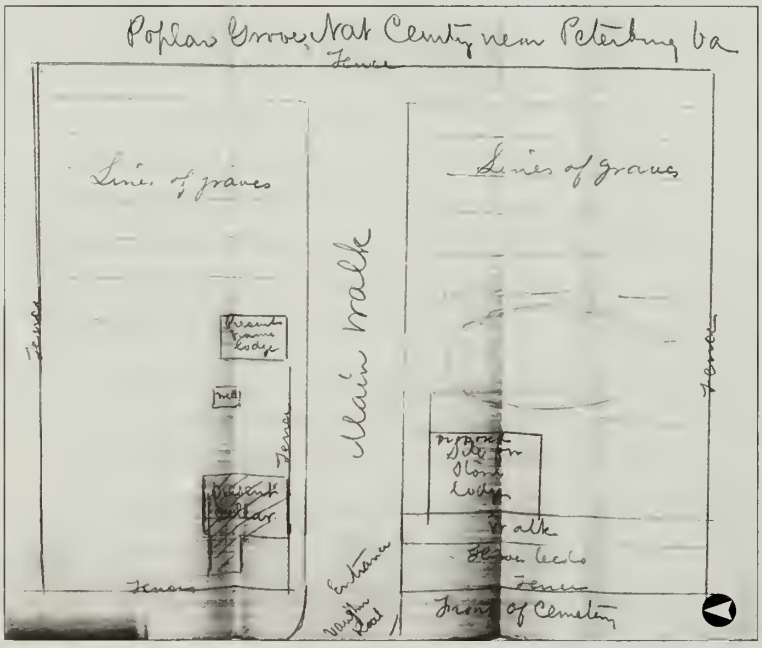


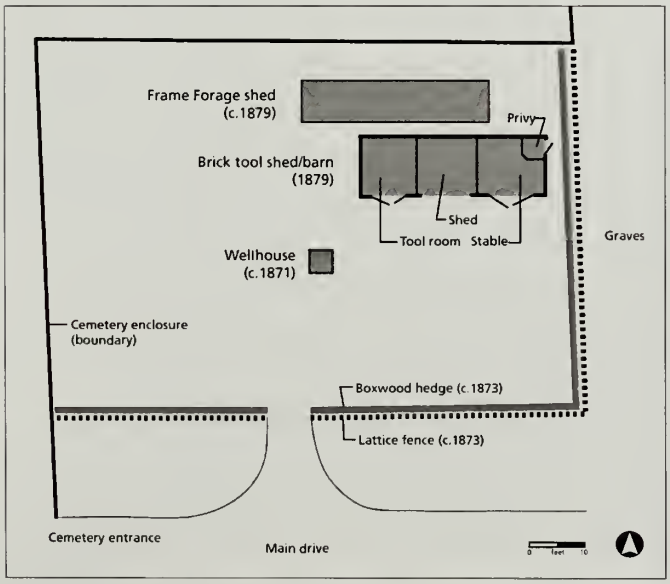
Figure 1.40: Sketch made in August 1871 for the site of the new stone lodge, showing "present cellar" on opposite side of the entrance drive (main walk) that was begun the year before. Also shown is the "Present frame lodge" above (east of) the cellar hole. The location of the fence and drive at the top of the drawing are not accurate. (Records of the Quartermaster General, Entry 576, Poplar Grove National Cemetery Records, box 57, National Archives I.)

Figure 1.41: The Poplar Grove lodge, built in 1871-1872, view of the front façade looking southeast from a recent photograph (2006). The building historically had dark trim and a monochrome slate roof with diamond-shaped slates. The tablet affixed to the building, installed in c.1913, contains Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. (SUNY ESF.)

in diamond-shaped monochrome gray slate, six-over-six double-hung sash windows, a front porch with simple squared posts, overhanging eaves ornamented by dentils, and rough-faced ashlar with varying shades of grays and browns (fig. 1.41). Work on finishing the interior lasted into the spring, and in April 1872, Miller moved into the lodge. Soon after this, he moved the old frame lodge to the rear of the new lodge for use as a kitchen and storage room.[24] The grounds surrounding the lodge were probably improved soon after the building's completion. Chief among these was the addition of a circular turn-around measuring ninety feet across, with a planted island and a straight east side that aligned with the grave rows in Division F. The turn-around was most likely intended for parking carriages that did not enter the cemetery proper, and probably also as a public gathering area. A walk branched off the south side of the circle, passing the rear and west sides of the lodge.

The grounds across the main drive from the lodge, where the original cellar hole was located, were developed into the cemetery's service yard, initially known as the wood yard. Here, the cemetery horse (used for lawn mowing) was stabled, and fuel wood, building materials, and equipment, such as lawn mowers, scythes, and wheelbarrows, were kept. The first structure in the yard was probably the toolshed built by Superintendent Miller in 1869, followed by a twenty-foot deep well with a lattice well house and pump, probably built together with the lodge in 1871. This well house was most likely the same design as the one built at City Point National Cemetery—a square structure with a pyramidal hipped roof and arched openings (see fig. 1.39). In 1873, a frame building known as the tool house, with stable and privy under one roof, was constructed in the yard, and additional small shacks were also added over the years. Shortly after the addition of the tool house (also known as the barn), the service yard was screened off from the rest of the cemetery by a six-foot high wooden lattice fence, inside of which was planted a boxwood hedge. In 1879, the numerous wooden buildings in the service yard were replaced with a three-bay brick tool house with an open central bay flanked by sets of swinging doors, and a privy at the side (fig. 1.42). Apparently the feed room in the new tool house was not adequate, and Superintendent Miller built a frame forage shed at the rear, probably out of materials salvaged from the old service buildings.[25]

Figure 1.42: Diagram showing the layout of the Poplar Grove service area by 1880. The location of the earlier (pre-1879) frame sheds is not known. (SUNY ESF.)



Inclosure Wall and Boundary Adjustment

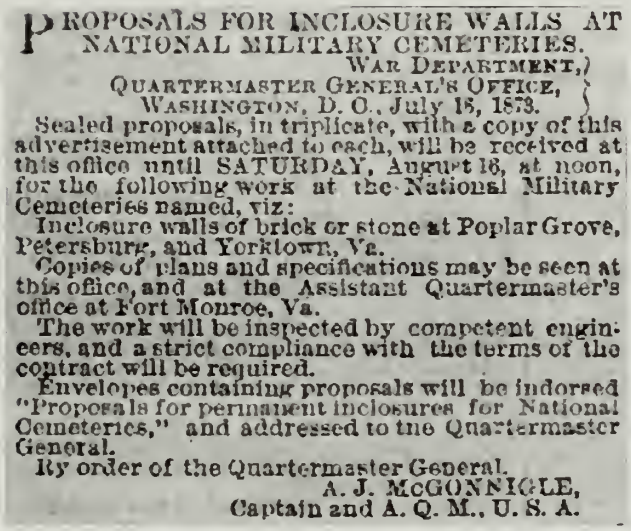
About the same time that Quartermaster General Montgomery Meigs developed plans for cemetery lodges, he was also working on plans for perimeter walls. The Act of February 22, 1867 had specified that all national cemeteries be enclosed by a perimeter fence, known as an inclosure, made either of iron or masonry. The legislation called for these iron or stone fences for symbolic reasons, as well as for the practical function of keeping out livestock from adjoining farms. In addition, the iron and stone fences were envisioned as an improvement over the old wood paling fences, which required continual repair and painting, and were subject to breakage from livestock. On August 12, 1870, Meigs filed plans for a prototype flat-top stone wall approximately five feet high with dividing pilasters and coping stones.[26] As with the lodges, the walls as built varied in proportions and materials, using either stone, or brick with brick or stone coping. Over the course of the next five years, enclosing walls were completed at all Virginia national cemeteries, along with iron gates for the main entrances. The larger cemeteries, such as Richmond, generally were outfitted with central vehicular gates flanked on both sides by smaller gates for pedestrians, while the smaller cemeteries, such as Cold Harbor and City Point, had either a single vehicular gate or just one pedestrian gate (fig. 1.43, see also fig. 1.39).

While the Quartermaster's office was developing plans for the inclosure walls, it was also planning a system-wide project to enhance the old wood fences by planting perimeter hedges of Osage orange. Osage orange (*Maclura sp.*, native to Arkansas, Texas, and Oklahoma), was a very popular hedge plant before the advent of wire fences due to its dense habit and spiky thorns.[27] On August 29, 1870, the Quartermaster's office sent out advertisements soliciting bids for "Setting Osage Orange Plants" for national cemeteries in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, and North Carolina.[28] Those in Virginia followed soon after. In August 1870, Superintendent Miller was providing the Quartermaster's office with total linear footage for the hedge at Poplar Grove—just over a half mile. Preparations for planting the Osage orange hedge were completed on October 25, 1870 by eighteen men working a total of thirty-five days on digging a trench along the inside of the inclosing fence and backfilling it with manure. The contract for planting the hedge was awarded to J. E. Bailey of Georgetown, District of Columbia, who completed the project in early March 1871 after setting out 4,042 Osage orange saplings. The following month, Superintendent Miller reported: "An 'Osage Orange' hedge has been planted during this Spring, which will take the place of the old fence when it commences to

Figure 1.43: Cold Harbor National Cemetery, a typical third-class cemetery (1.4 acres) photographed 1902, showing an inclosure wall executed in brick and a single gate. This photograph also shows the lodge (1870), central entrance drive (c.1866), and in the distance, the flagstaff and flagstaff mound (c.1866). (Records of the Quartermaster General, RG 92, Still Pictures Division, National Archives II.)

decay..."[29] Miller apparently did not know that the Quartermaster's office was planning at the time for the eventual placement of the wooden fences with walls.

Two years after the hedge was planted, the Quartermaster's office took out newspaper advertisements to solicit bids on building the inclosure wall at Poplar Grove, together with the wall at Yorktown National Cemetery (fig. 1.44). Plans and specifications were developed by the Quartermaster's office at Fort Monroe, Virginia, calling for a brick wall instead of stone as had been specified in the Meigs prototype and used at the City Point National Cemetery wall. The Quartermaster's office awarded the bid to B. F. Childrey & Company, which began work on the project at Poplar Grove in the fall of 1873 with the production of bricks made in two kilns built just outside the cemetery. On December 16, 1873, Mr. Chenoweth, a civil engineer with the Quartermaster's office, reported: "I visited the kiln Dec 12, which is adjoining the Cemetery, and found the brick of a very inferior character....the kiln contains one hundred thousand bricks...No work has yet been done on the enclosing [sic] wall."[30] The Quartermaster's office subsequently rejected the work, and Childrey stopped the project and tried to sell his contract. The project stalled for two years and in the meantime the paling fence deteriorated, although it was hidden in part by the Osage orange hedge. A cemetery inspection on August 11, 1875—two years after the wall contract had been awarded—reported: "...The fence is in very bad condition, having to be propped up in many places; this with the dilapidated gate and gateway give the Cemetery a very unprepossessing appearance as you approach it."[31]



PROPOSALS FOR INCLOSURE WALLS AT NATIONAL MILITARY CEMETERIES.

War Department,
Quartermaster General's Office,
Washington, D. C., July 16, 1873.

Sealed proposals, in triplicate, with a copy of this advertisement attached to each, will be received at this office until SATURDAY, August 16, at noon, for the following work at the National Military Cemeteries named, viz:

Inclosure walls of brick or stone at Poplar Grove, Petersburg, and Yorktown, Va.

Copies of plans and specifications may be seen at this office, and at the Assistant Quartermaster's office at Fort Monroe, Va.

The work will be inspected by competent engineers, and a strict compliance with the terms of the contract will be required.

Envelopes containing proposals will be indorsed "Proposals for permanent inclosures for National Cemeteries," and addressed to the Quartermaster General.

By order of the Quartermaster General.

A. J. McGONNIGLE,
Captain and A. Q. M., U. S. A.

Figure 1.44: Quartermaster General advertisement in an unidentified newspaper soliciting bids on the construction of inclosure walls at Poplar Grove and Yorktown, dated July 16, 1873. (Records of the Quartermaster General, Entry 576, Poplar Grove National Cemetery Records, box 57, National Archives I.)

It was not until February 1, 1876 that the Quartermaster's office solicited new bids on the Poplar Grove wall that also included the inclosure wall at Seven Pines near Richmond (Chenoweth had apparently succeeded in building the brick wall at Yorktown National Cemetery under the initial contract).[32] In running the lines for the new wall at Poplar Grove in February 1876, Oliver Cox, civil engineer with the Quartermaster's office, found that the original survey as recorded in the deed did not correspond with the line of the paling fence and boundaries as marked on the ground. Cox discovered that the northeast and southwest corners of the cemetery were actually not on government land, as shown on a survey he drafted showing the boundaries according to the deed and those corresponding with the paling fence (fig. 1.45). To rectify the situation, Cox recommended that a ten-foot strip be acquired around the actual perimeter of the cemetery to provide a buffer strip for the graves (some of which were less than a foot from the fence), for proper drainage, and to provide space for an embankment needed for the new wall. [33]

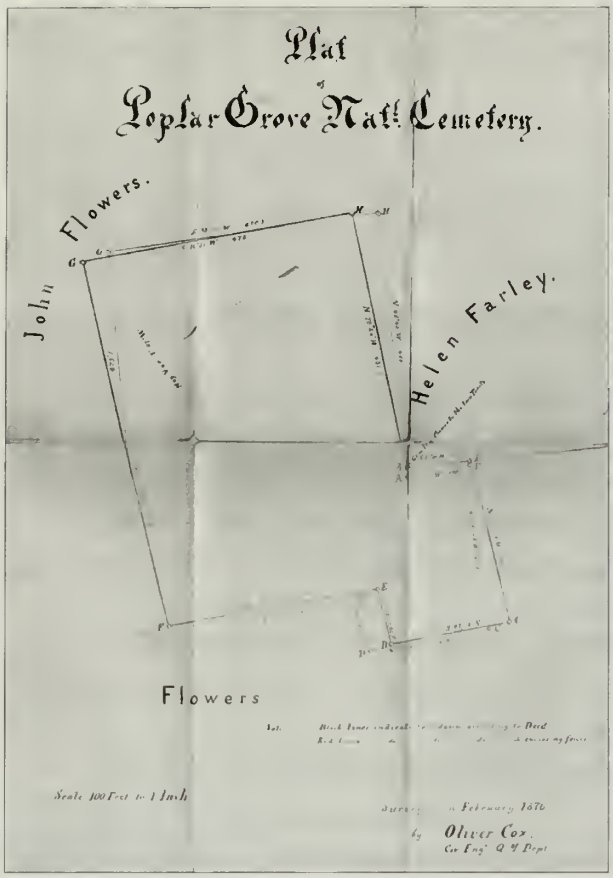


Figure 1.45: Survey of Poplar Grove National Cemetery made in February 1876 showing discrepancy between boundaries plotted in the original deed (dark line), and the actual boundary represented by the perimeter fence (lighter line). (Records of the Quartermaster General, Entry 576, Poplar Grove National Cemetery Records, box 57, National Archives I.)

It would be more than a year before the government acquired the ten-foot buffer strip from the adjoining property owners, but in the meantime, the Quartermaster's office continued to develop plans for constructing the brick inclosure wall. The project also proposed an entrance gateway of granite piers and iron gates, with a central carriageway flanked by two pedestrian entrances, a standard design also used at Fort Harrison National Cemetery near Richmond (fig. 1.46). On May 22, 1876, the Quartermaster's office selected a bid by John Brennon and Archibald L. Hutton of Washington, with a completion date set for October 31, 1876. Specifications were changed to substitute Ohio sandstone for brick on the pilaster caps, each of which were specified at twenty inches square and four- to-five inches thick with hammer-dressed sides, for the additional cost of $400. Total cost for the project amounted to $10,187.[34]

Brennon and Hutton began work on the wall in June 1876, using new bricks made in Alexandria, Virginia. James Gall, the Quartermaster civil engineer responsible for on-site supervision of the project, reported that the wall and entrance gates had been completed by September 20, 1876:

> *The wall is well built, of the correct materials, and presents a very good appearance. The stone caps at the pilasters give strength and protection to the work and improve the general appearance of the wall. The gate*

Figure 1.46: The granite and iron entrance gate at Fort Harrison National Cemetery near Richmond, installed in c.1876 and photographed in 1902. The same style gate was built at Poplar Grove in 1876. (Records of the Quartermaster General, RG 92, Still Pictures Division, National Archives II.)

> *parts are of good granite neatly cut and well set and the gates are strong... The ground on both sides of the wall has been graded to conform with the ground line of the wall at all points, thus giving the entire wall a uniform height of four feet six inches (4' 6") above the surface. Care has been taken to provide drainage outlets at all proper points, and to grade the ground in their vicinity as to permit discharge of all surface water from the cemetery grounds.*[35]

The spring following the completion of the wall, the Quartermaster Attorney General endorsed the addition of the buffer strip around the perimeter of Poplar Grove. The addition was not a continuous ten-foot strip, but rather an overlay on the existing survey (in two places, the deeded survey extended beyond ten feet of the perimeter wall). The delay in progressing the acquisition was purportedly due to ownership by minors on both the Flower and Farley farms. On April 30, 1877, two deeds, one for the Farley property, consisting of 0.919 of an acre (strip along the south boundary), and the other for the Flower property, consisting of 0.5019 of an acre (strips along east, north, and west boundaries) were signed by J. Wesley Friend, Special Commissioner acting on behalf of the Farley and Flower families, and the United States. The Flower purchase also provided the government with a right-of-way of unspecified width along the approach road, something that had been left out of the original 1868 deed. On May 14, 1877, the Quartermaster Attorney General reported, "...the Govt. has deed for all the land enclosed for cemetery purposes, together with the right of way thereonwhich through some oversight, has not heretofore been secured."[36]

With the wall complete and the property boundaries corrected, there still remained many refuse bricks outside of the cemetery left from the first contractor. Superintendent Lacy, who was appointed soon after the wall was completed in 1876, made plans to use at least some of these bricks for a new kitchen. In 1879, he was granted authority to remove the wooden kitchen at the rear of the lodge—the old frame lodge that Superintendent Miller had moved. At his own expense, Lacy built the new kitchen out of the refuse bricks, set back from the lodge near the inclosure wall. [37] The new toolshed in the service yard, built in 1879, was probably also constructed out of the same refuse bricks.

Replacement of the Grave Markers

At Poplar Grove and nearly every other national cemetery, improvement of the grave markers was one of the most pressing issues of the 1870s. The wooden headboards were not just a constant maintenance nuisance, requiring continual repainting and often replacement due to rot, but were inconsistent with the Act of February 22, 1867, which specified that each grave be marked by a "small headstone or block."[38] As part of a War Department board of officers charged

with considering the appropriate headstone design, Quartermaster General Montgomery Meigs proposed in 1867 that each grave be marked by a small, trapezoidal zinc-plated cast-iron monument placed at the foot of each grave, a design that apparently could have been executed within the initial appropriation provided by Congress. Meig's untraditional design proved unpopular, yet he continued to press for the zinc monument, delaying a final decision by the War Department. Public opinion favored the use of more expensive but traditional marble or granite headstones.[39]

Congress finally settled the question through passage of the Act of June 8, 1872, which amended the Act of February 22, 1867 by specifying that each grave be marked by a small head*stone*, thereby eliminating the use of alternative materials such as zinc. Congress appropriated one million dollars for the new headstones, specifying that they be of "durable stone," and thereafter the War Department developed specifications, which were finalized in 1873.[40] Two specifications were developed: one for a small upright headstone for known graves, the other for a block—a low square post—for unknown graves. The headstones were specified to be polished white marble with a curved top, and an inscription of raised letters inside a recessed shield indicating the name, state regiment, and grave number. Each headstone measured ten inches wide, four inches thick, and thirty-six inches long, with an intended installation height of twelve inches. The white marble blocks for the unknown graves only included the grave number inscribed on the top surface, and another number noting the number of interments if more than one. The blocks measured six inches square and thirty-six inches long, and were intended for an above-ground installed height of four inches. While unfashionable in high-style cemeteries, the headstones were consistent with the traditional uniformity of military wooden headboards, and minimized costs. The selection of the block, referenced in the Act of February 22, 1867, was a new type of grave marker in military cemeteries, and was probably selected to minimize costs, but perhaps also to suggest a feeling of loss or incompletion to the unknown graves. The contract to supply the new markers to all national cemeteries, totaling 265,000 headstones and blocks, was awarded to Captain Samuel G. Bridges in December 1873. The supplier and finisher for the headstones, made of Vermont marble, was Sheldon & Slason of West Rutland, Vermont. The company used the recently developed sand-blast method for inscribing the stones.[41]

While the grave marker project was begun in 1874, it was not until 1877 that Captain Bridges got to Poplar Grove, which was the very last of the national cemeteries to receive the new markers. Prior to Bridges' arrival, James Gall, Jr., Civil Engineer with the Quartermaster's office, visited Poplar Grove in June 1877 to make arrangements and in particular to determine the exact placement of the new stones with respect to the graves. He reported:

> *...On the large circular sections surrounding the flagstaff the headboards stand near the center of instead of at the heads of the graves and cannot therefore be taken as guides in setting the headstones, and I find it necessary in order to have the stones set in solid ground and to avoid placing them on or over the coffins, to make thorough tests by digging before establishing the head stone lines. This work has been begun to day and the Supt. instructed to give close attention to it.* [42]

The stones for Poplar Grove were shipped to Petersburg on June 28, 1877 as reported by the *Petersburg Daily Post*: "Our wharf [on the Appomattox River] now presents a lively appearance. There are twelve schooners now unloading and among them are two three masters, one of which came up this morning, drawing 10 ½ feet of water. She is loaded with headstones for the National Cemetery, Poplar Grove."[43] The next day, Captain Bridges and his crew of between 150 and 160 men began work at the cemetery by distributing the stones to each grave. In just one week, Bridges completed the $15,500 project (headstones at $3.39 each, blocks at $2.42 each), encompassing approximately 2,200 headstones and 3,355 blocks. The *Petersburg Index and Appeal* reported that the project "...has been done not only very quickly but remarkably well."[44] The *Daily Post* reported on the following day: "...The work is of the most approved style, and is just such as ought to mark the resting place of these soldiers, whose names, rank, regiment, and company, are now carved in enduring marble that will last for generations to come."[45] A ceremony, attended by 150 people assembled around the flagstaff with speakers seated on top of the flagstaff mound, took place the Monday after the work was completed.[46]

Figure 1.47: A later photograph showing the two types of grave markers installed in 1877, view southeast from the north side of the cemetery, c.1930. (Metropolitan Engraving Company, reproduced from *The City of Petersburg: Metropolis of Southside Virginia*, Louise Studio, c.1930.)

Although the new headstones continued the same white tablet form in the landscape, the substitution of blocks for the headstones at the unknown graves—amounting to over sixty percent of all grave markers—changed the uniformity of the circular plan (fig. 1.47). The new stones made clearly visible the enormous number of soldiers who died on the battlefield without proper identification and registration.

As part of the headstone project, the cemetery lawn was also improved through removal of remaining grave mounds, leveling, and application of lime and muck compost. This work had been recommended by James Gall at his June 7, 1877 visit: "A large number of grave mounds still remain and interfere considerably with the cutting of grass and hurt the appearance of the place. These will be leveled and other necessary grading (will be undertaken) with the headstone work."[47]

Drives and Walks

By the time that the new headstones were installed in 1877, the character of the gravel and brick gutter-lined drives had been altered due to maintenance concerns. Already in July 1869, Superintendent Miller was reporting that "constant labor is required to keep them in good order."[48] Miller was referring to the weeds growing in the gravel surface, which were removed with a hoe and other hand tools. The brick gutters also clogged with debris, became weedy, and required repointing and replacement of deteriorated brick. In addition to the routine maintenance, by the summer of 1871 the wooden culverts that carried drainage beneath the drives were beginning to rot. Over the next few years, Miller changed the smaller culverts to brick box culverts, and replaced the larger culverts—ranging from twenty-four to 210 feet in length—with grass swales that had gravel French drains at drive and walk crossings.[49]

Superintendent Miller received concurrence that the gravel surface of the drives was simply too difficult to maintain and could be changed to a grass surface, to match the grass surface of the walks. By August 1874, the drives were, according to Lieutenant Major O. A. Mack's inspection report, "overgrown with grass, which is kept close cut with the lawn mower."[50] This new turf on the drives was a Bermuda grass that was rolled to maintain an even surface.[51] The change to a grass surface was certainly motivated primarily by maintenance issues, but may have also been viewed as an aesthetic improvement. Despite the turf surface, the drives at the time remained visually distinct by the edging of brick gutters. Where there were no brick gutters—along the circular turn-around and the walk that ran from the lodge around the perimeter of Division G—a low hedge or border was planted to define the edge.[52]

An August 1874 inspection reported that some of the bricks in the gutters were soft and crumbling, although a subsequent report of January 1876 noted that the gutters were overall in sound condition, and kept free from grass and weeds.[53] The gutters would soon, however, meet their demise due to a technological improvement in lawn mowing—the acquisition of a horse-drawn lawn mower in the spring of 1878. A May 1878 inspection reported: "...the grounds had been

newly cut over with the lawn mower and looked very fine...It is very gratifying to see with what ease and efficiency the machine does its work...the grass need never be higher at any time than two or three inches." The brick gutters, however, proved to be an impediment to the operation of the new lawn mower. By October 1878, all of the gutters, including those along the main drive, were filled with earth and turfed to facilitate mowing.[54] With the covering of the brick gutters, the cemetery lawn extended over the entire cemetery landscape without interruption. As a result, the drives largely became undefined areas of open lawn between the cemetery divisions and sections (fig. 1.48).

Figure 1.48: Photograph of the center of the cemetery taken in c.1895 showing the turf drives, looking northwest with one of the radial drives in the foreground. This photograph also shows the flagstaff mound (by this time without plantings), gun monuments, and numerous clipped shrubs that were maintained at this time. The iron tablet next to the gun at left contained text from the 1867 national cemetery act. (From *The Artwork of Petersburg, Virginia*, 1903.)

In contrast to the roads within the cemetery, the 1,025-foot long approach road was improved in 1878 into a more formal and defined circulation feature. Up until this time, the approach road was an earthen track through the open fields of the Flower Farm. By the fall of 1878, a year after the government had secured the right-of-way along the road from the Flower family, a gravel surface had been laid down and plans were made for planting an allee of shade trees. In October 1878, Quartermaster Inspector James Gall reported: "The approach avenue leading from the County road [Vaughan Road] to the Cemetery was recently graveled and arrangements are made for planting shade trees (tulip trees, maples, etc.) along the borders. This avenue, when properly planted and graveled will give a very beautiful approach to the Cemetery..."[55]

New Plantings and Small-Scale Improvements

Aside from the major structural elements in the landscape—the wall, buildings, drives and walks, and gravestones—the landscape of Poplar Grove was enhanced during the 1870s and early 1880s through replacement of the flagstaff, and the addition of ornamental plantings, benches, and signs.

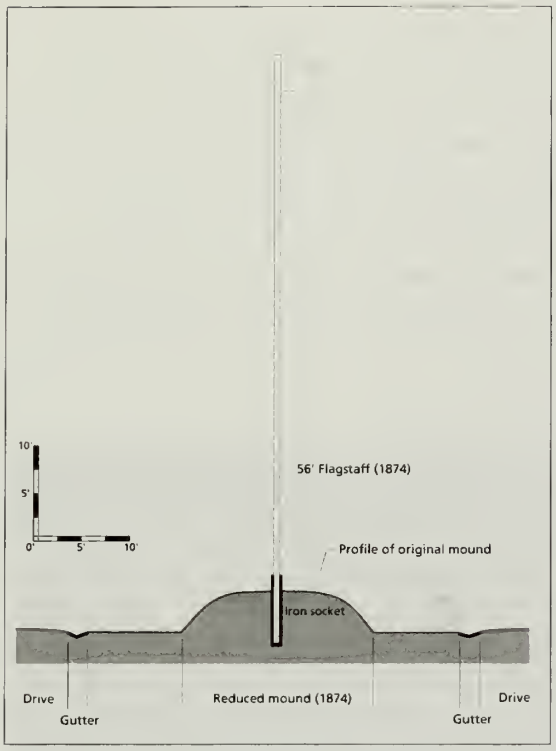


Figure 1.49: Section showing the scale of the reduced mound and flagstaff in 1874 compared to the original mound. (SUNY ESF.)

The flagstaff together with the six-foot high flagstaff mound and encircling drive and gun monuments comprised the visual and symbolic center of the cemetery. The original wooden flagstaff, erected in 1866 by the burial corps, began to rot after several years and plans were made in the early 1870s for its replacement. On June 6, 1873, Assistant Quartermaster General Major Erickson requested that Quartermaster General Meigs accept a proposal by John C. Comfort of Shiremanstown, Pennsylvania, to "...erect a good, stout flagstaff at Poplar Grove national cemetery properly sheathed with copper and completed ready for halliards (sic)..." for $250.00.[56] Comfort was given the contract, and after some initial problems with the construction were corrected, completed the project in the spring of 1874. The new wooden flagstaff was fifty-six feet high and twelve inches in diameter, and was painted white and set in a black-painted iron socket, which drained through a pipe to the brick gutter along the drive. Although the new flagstaff was an improvement, an inspection of the cemetery the following August remarked on its inadequacy, noting "...it is rather small for this place, where there are quite a number of tall pines, and standing between it and the Weldon Rail Road."[57] As part of the project, the flagstaff mound, which Quartermaster O. A. Mack had earlier found "much too large" for the cemetery," was reduced to four feet in height from six, and to twenty feet in diameter at the base from approximately forty (fig. 1.49; see also fig. 1.48). The mound, in the shape of a frustum of a cone, was ascended by a flight of unpainted wooden steps, and was planted with shrubs and beds of flowering annuals.[58]

Around the central flagstaff, and probably scattered along the main drive and throughout the cemetery, were settees, a term for a bench popular in the nineteenth century. The Quartermaster's office had begun soliciting bids in June 1878 for the installation of 1,100 settees at the national cemeteries, in apparent response to growing visitation and commemorative use. The second lowest bid was submitted by The Composite Iron Works Company of New York City for the "Composite Settee," at a cost of $3.00 each (fig. 1.50). This may have been the selected bid. Twenty settees, very similar to the Composite design but without the arms, were installed at Poplar Grove along the drives by the fall of 1878. Each measured approximately four feet long and had a slender cast-iron frame with a tie rod between the legs, and wood-slat back and seat, painted dark green.[59]

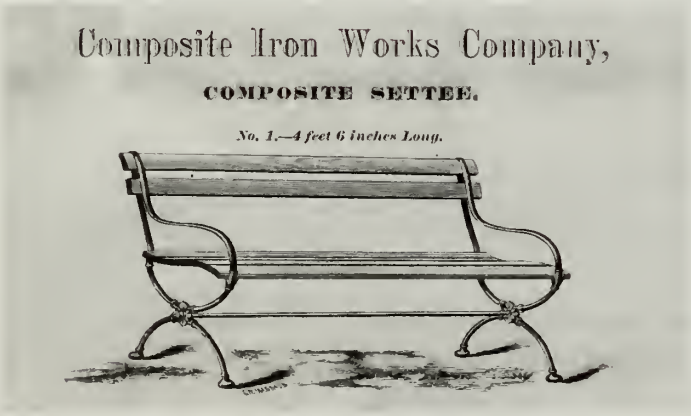


Figure 1.50: Proposal for the "Composite Settee" submitted to the Quartermaster General's Office in June 1877 by the Composite Iron Works Company of New York City. (RG 92, Records of the Quartermaster General Entry 689, National Archives I.)

Flowerbeds were features that the Quartermaster's office generally did not promote for the national cemetery landscapes, in keeping with Olmsted's advice to Quartermaster General Meigs. In its regulations for national cemeteries as later published, the Quartermaster's office cautioned in an Olmstedian tone:

> *A well-kept sward, graceful shade trees, pretty shrubs and evergreens are of greater importance and contribute more to the beauty of the cemetery than a promiscuous distribution of flower beds. A few flowers about the lodge and at one or more other prominent points are all that should be maintained, as the expense and attention required in the cultivation of a large number of flowers can be better utilized in the care of the lawns.*[60]

Despite this advice, most national cemeteries maintained more than a few flowerbeds and ornamental shrubs as part of the beautification program of the 1870s. The flowerbeds reflected ornamental qualities popular in garden cemeteries, and may have been added in many cases by superintendents who were probably reacting to poplar Victorian gardening styles. Superintendent Miller's flowerbeds were most likely in the style of carpet beds, consisting of flowering annuals arranged in patterns and in a low, uniform height, perhaps with a vertical feature, such as cannas or grasses, and bordered by boxwood.[61] Already in 1870, Miller had sown flower seeds in hot beds, low covered frames that were probably located along the perimeter south of the main gate, and was ordering flowering shrubs. On May 31, 1870, he wrote: "I have now 50 rose bushes in bloom in the cemetery, and have set out about 380 flowering plants, mostly annuals."[62] Some of these flowers were probably used for the four flowerbeds in the shape of corps badges near the old lodge that Miller had planted in 1869. With completion of the new stone lodge in 1872, a Maltese cross (the 5th Corps Badge) was established in front of the building, near the main gate. It was probably a flowerbed edged by boxwood.[63] Although the exact location and dimensions of the other flowerbeds is not known, several were probably located around the gun monuments and on or surrounding the flagstaff mound. The roses were scattered throughout the cemetery. Miller was also probably responsible for the addition of plum and peach trees along the walk near the circular turn-around and alongside of Division F.[64]

In another indication of poplar Victorian tastes, Miller also clipped shrubs into geometric shapes. The Quartermaster's office apparently cautioned against such ornament, as reflected in Lieutenant Colonel Mack's inspection of Poplar Grove in January 1876: "The evergreens are mostly cedars—common junipers—some of them have been trimmed in fancy shapes as the Supt. was not able to accompany me over the grounds I forgot to tell him to let nature attend to the forms of the rest of these trees. [65]

Poplar Grove received a large number of new plantings during the 1870s, initially as part of the 1870 appropriation for planting trees and shrubs in the national cemetery system. Up until this time, the cemetery trees were mostly cedars planted by the burial crops, the few willows and fruit trees planted by Miller, and loblolly pines that the burial corps had retained from the pre-existing woods. Approximately 150 specimen loblolly pines still remained in the cemetery by 1871, down from the roughly 180 recorded in 1867, with trunks ranging in diameter from four to six inches. [66] The first shipment of new plantings, a total of 183 trees, arrived at Poplar Grove in January 1871. These included horse chestnut, silver and sugar maples, box elder, linden, silver poplar, oak, ash, willow, Kentucky coffee tree, Norway and white spruce, Balsam fir, cedar, magnolia, purple beech, English hornbeam, and American larch. These were planted in an informal arrangement across the cemetery, in keeping with Olmsted's recommendation, but using several species he had recommended against due to their weak and fast-growing habit or non-native origin. By April of 1871, Superintendent Miller reported that the new plantings were doing well, except for the Norway and white spruce, box elder, and sugar maple. Some of the other trees, in particular the balsam fir that was outside of its natural growing range, most likely did not survive long. A year later, in August 1872, Miller reported that 150 of the trees were doing well, and the rest were making "little progress."[67]

In May 1871, five months after the initial tree shipment, 101 American elms arrived at Poplar Grove for planting in a formal allee called a sylvan hall, a feature that contrasted with the overall informal arrangement. The function of the sylvan hall, a concept devised by the Quartermaster's office in 1870 for implementation at all national cemeteries, was probably symbolic, but may have also served to define a formal approach to the flagstaff. At Poplar Grove, the sylvan hall was in the form of a cross that was probably along the north-south and east-west axis drives. The elms were planted three or four graves in from the drives, along with borders of boxwood and an undetermined conifer directly along the drives. Boxwoods were also planted along the drive between Divisions D and E, which may have served as the approach to the sylvan hall from the main drive.[68] In his August 1874 inspection, Lieutenant Major Mack reported: "The elms, which have been dormant for two years and more, have taken a start this season, and are growing vigorously now."[69]

There were apparently no additional trees planted within the cemetery through the early 1880s except on a replacement basis. In January 1876, Lieutenant Colonel Mack reported: "The trees in this cemetery are numerous, and in about the right proportion of evergreen and deciduous. I do not think any more are needed, except to replace such as may perish from time to time."[70] Two years

later, inspector James Gall made a similar report on the trees and shrubs, noting that they had: "...received the necessary care and look well, especially those in the Sylvan Hall, which are about 4 inches in diameter and vigorous and well shaped."[71]

Aside from the trees within the cemetery, the Quartermaster's office also oversaw the planting of the allee of trees along the approach road in 1878. The trees were saplings dug up from surrounding woods. Many did not survive, and few except for some of the tulip trees promised to grow into healthy specimens. By the spring of 1881, Inspector James Gall was recommending that new trees be planted, "... with the best obtainable trees from the nursery, and that such care be taken in the preparation of the holes...The avenue, if properly planted and shaded, will form an attractive feature of the place."[72] In the spring of 1882, the allee was replanted with red maple, elm, pin oak, and linden, spaced at twenty-five feet. At the same time, a number of other improvements were carried out in the cemetery, based in large part on recommendations made in Gall's spring 1881 inspection report. Replacement trees were planted within the cemetery, sunken graves and low spots were filled and turfed, headstones were reset where they had begun to lean, and a new signboard at the entrance on Vaughan Road was probably installed.[73]

The 1882 improvements also included the addition of commemorative and information signs known as tablets, which were installed systematically at all national cemeteries. The War Department intended these to provide a durable replacement for deteriorated painted signboards.[74] The tablets, made by the Army's Rock Island Arsenal, consisted of cast-iron rectangular placards of various sizes set at an angle, approximately two to three feet in height. The tablets were painted black with the lettering highlighted in silver, and were mounted on square white-painted wooden posts.[75] At Poplar Grove, there were sixteen tablets including one large tablet (2'6" x 3'10") near the main gate stating cemetery use regulations; one tablet (unknown dimension) on the circular drive adjoining the lodge stating "Visitors Notice, Invitation to Register;" four tablets (1'10" x 3') containing the text of the "Act to Establish & Protect National Cemeteries Approved February 22, 1867," located near the main entrance, two along the outer drives, and one near the flagstaff (see fig. 1.48); and ten small tablets (1'2" x 1'8") scattered throughout the cemetery containing a four-line verse from Theodore O'Hara's poem, "The Bivouac of the Dead."[76]

LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE, 1882-1925

The installation of the iron tablets in c.1882 was the last significant addition to the landscape of Poplar Grove National Cemetery in its initial period of development and beautification. In 1892, this landscape, little changed over the previous decade, was documented on a plan drawn by the Quartermaster's office as part

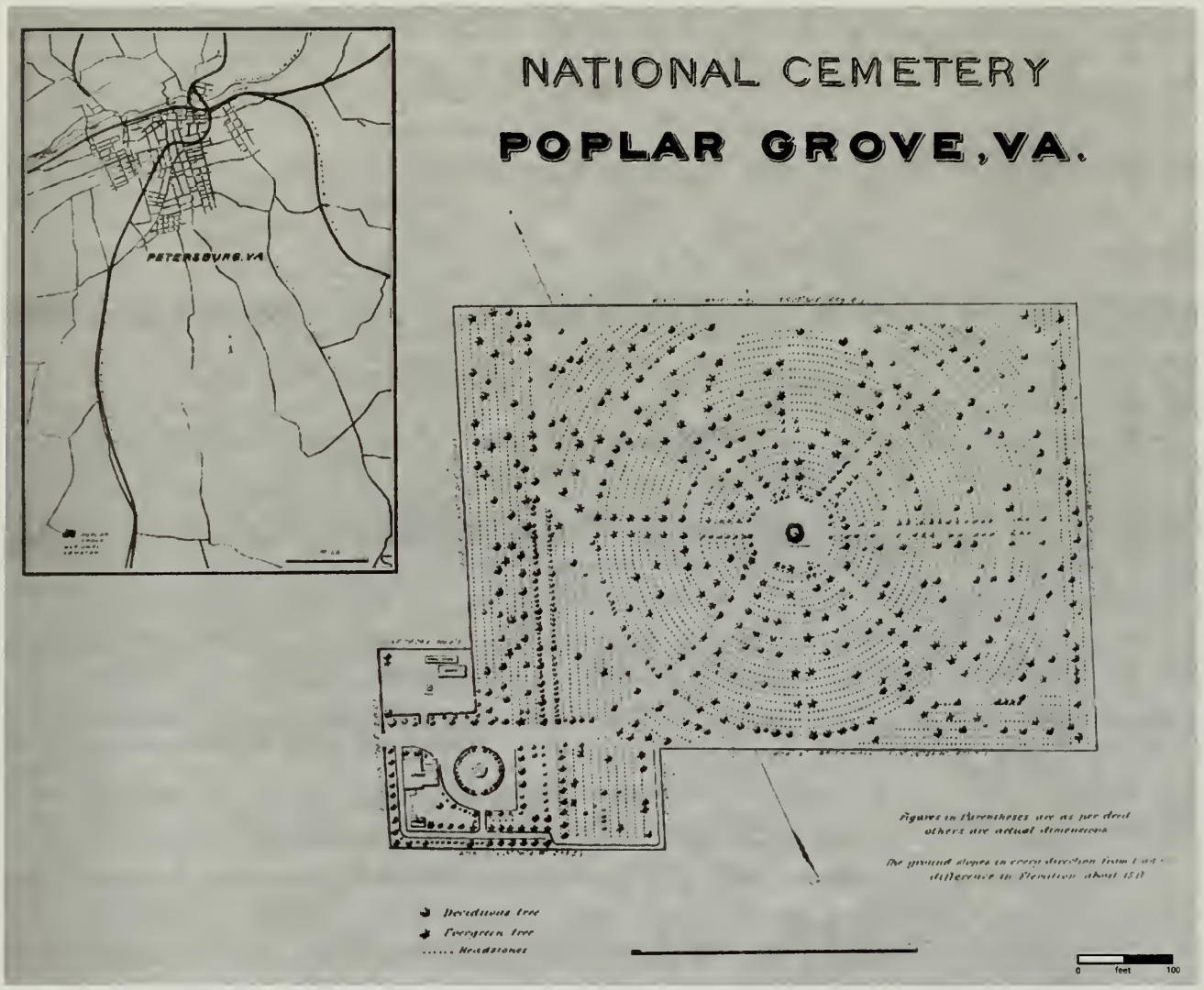


Figure 1.51: Plan of Poplar Grove drawn by the Office of the Quartermaster General, May 18, 1892, from a bound document of similar plans produced for all national cemeteries in 1892-1893. The notes at the right refer to the topography and boundaries of the cemetery; those at the left are a key to coniferous and deciduous trees, and headstones. (RG 92, Records of the Quartermaster General Entry 691, National Archives I.)

of a systematic documentation of the national cemetery system. The plan showed the local context, drives and walks, inclosure walls, central flagstaff and flagstaff mound, buildings, and trees and shrubs (fig. 1.51, see also fig. 1.48 dating to roughly the same time).[77]

Administration and Use

Into the first decade of the twentieth century, Poplar Grove National Cemetery continued to be administered through the Quartermaster's Washington Depot. In 1912, the Office of the Quartermaster General was reorganized into the Quartermaster Corps, and as part of the change, administration of Poplar Grove was transferred to the Quartermaster's Third Corps Area Headquarters based in Baltimore.[78] Although always standardized, administration became increasingly so during this period. Cemetery regulations were published in manual form in 1911, governing in exacting detail issues pertaining to staffing, building and landscape maintenance, and burial procedures. Beginning in 1913, reports filed by the

cemetery superintendents became standardized questionnaires, replacing the earlier hand-written reports. (Example report in Appendix F.)

Although Poplar Grove had few open plots, there were approximately twenty new burials made between 1896 and 1925, including the first Civil War veteran burial in 1896 (earlier burials were reinterred Civil War remains). The most active year for burials was 1918, when seven new graves were dug for Civil War veterans and casualties of World War I. Most of these burials were made in the walk north of the flagstaff in Division C or at the ends of grave rows. For these later burials and replacement of broken markers, the Quartermaster's office continued to use the same headstone specifications until shortly after the turn of the century. In 1903, after studying the durability of the original headstones, the specifications were changed to make them slightly bigger (two inches taller and wider) and the inscription font larger. At the same time, the War Department abandoned the use of the block for unknown graves and instead used headstones with the inscription "Unknown U.S. Soldier," along with the grave number. [79]

The lack of a substantial number of new burials at Poplar Grove eventually led, along with its remote location, difficult access, and other factors, to declining visitation by the late nineteenth century. [80] During the late 1880s, visitation was still substantial, as evidenced by ruts in the main drive caused by "considerable driving," according to a Quartermaster Inspection report.[81] By the 1890s, with the Civil War growing more distant, relatives and friends of the Union soldiers visited less frequently. Poplar Grove, as was typical of older or inactive cemeteries, became a sleepy place without new burials to infuse visitation for the recently departed. Even Decoration Day at Poplar Grove apparently received little attention after the 1880s—as a Union burial place, the cemetery did not share the same attraction for local residents as the Confederate burials at Blanford Cemetery in Petersburg (the Southern states did not recognize the federal Decoration Day until after World War I).[82]

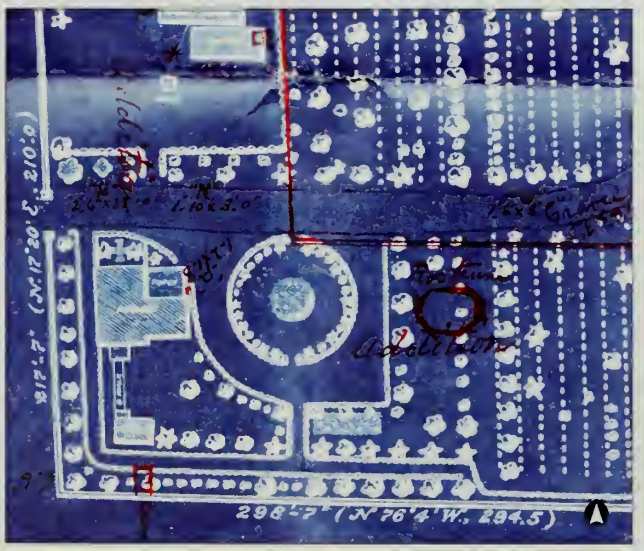
Figure 1.52: Monument erected by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in 1910 within the burial grounds of Culpeper National Cemetery, Virginia, from a recent photograph, 2006. (SUNY ESF.)

Perhaps due to the relatively low number of new burials or to its remote location, no commemorative monuments were added to Poplar Grove. As the twenty-fifth anniversary of the end of the war approached in 1890, veterans groups and northern states erected often elaborate monuments in national cemeteries, some of which were smaller than Poplar Grove but which were either associated with notable events of the war, or were still active burial grounds. Culpeper (Virginia) National Cemetery, for example, received three large monuments during this time erected by the 2nd Massachusetts Infantry in 1893, the State of New York in 1902 in honor of the 28th New York Volunteer Infantry, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in 1910 in honor of its fallen soldiers buried at the cemetery (fig. 1.52). Other Civil War-era national cemeteries that received similar monuments

during this time included Cold Harbor, Winchester, Fredericksburg, Gettysburg, and Antietam. Poplar Grove probably did not receive such monuments partly because several states, including Massachusetts, Maine, and Pennsylvania, erected large monuments nearby on the battlefields of Petersburg. Poplar Grove was also not alone in lacking such attention from veterans. Fort Harrison, Glendale, Richmond, Seven Pines, and Yorktown National Cemeteries also did not receive major commemorative monuments during this time. [83]

Staffing at Poplar Grove remained largely unchanged from the early years of the cemetery, with one superintendent (still required to be a disabled veteran) and one regular assistant, but the turnover increased after 1890. That year, Superintendent Lacy, who in 1876 had replaced the original superintendent, August Miller, retired. After Lacy, most superintendents remained at Poplar Grove for less than three years, with the exception of John Laun, who served from 1895 through 1903.[84] The remote location of the cemetery, and lack of activity with few new burials and low visitation, apparently made it a less than choice appointment.

Figure 1.53: Detail of a blueprint of the 1892 plan of Poplar Grove annotated in 1909 to show additions including the rostrum, cave (at lower left), and gravel surface on the main drive. The annotations also show the location of iron tablets (indicated by letters with dimensions), which had been installed in c.1882 but were not shown on the original plan. (Records of the Quartermaster General, Entry 576, Poplar Grove National Cemetery Records, box 57, National Archives I.)



Upkeep and Improvements

Despite its relative lack of attention, Poplar Grove remained well tended and received standard improvements. Quartermaster inspection reports from the 1880s through the first decade of the twentieth century remarked on the generally good condition of the cemetery.

The most notable standard Quartermaster improvement to Poplar Grove during this time was the addition of a rostrum (bandstand) where speakers gave memorial addresses. Rostrums were added to the national cemeteries in a systematic way beginning in the 1890s in tandem with the growing popularity of Decoration Day ceremonies.[85] In 1891, around the time interest in commemorating the Battle of Petersburg was emerging, Superintendent E. L. Grant began planning for a rostrum at Poplar Grove, but it was not until the summer of 1896 that the Quartermaster's office approved the project. The Poplar Grove rostrum, an iron structure completed on January 2, 1897, was a standard design that matched the rostrums at Fredericksburg, Richmond, and Yorktown National Cemeteries, among others. It was sited in the open area between the graves in Division F and the circular turn-around (fig. 1.53). From here, orators could address people gathered in the turn-around. It was an octagonal pavilion with cast-iron posts and wrought-iron ornamentation, set on a raised brick foundation, measuring fourteen feet in diameter with a ceiling height of ten and one-half feet (fig. 1.54).[86]

Figure 1.54 (right): The Poplar Grove rostrum completed in 1897, looking east from a 1967 photograph by Fred Bell. According to National Cemetery regulations, the structure would have been painted black with a light blue ceiling and a red roof. (Poplar Grove administrative files, Petersburg National Battlefield.)

Aside from the rostrum, other changes to the landscape during the later 1880s through the first decade of the twentieth century were modest and mostly to do with maintenance, such as filling sunken graves, painting buildings, replacing vegetation, and caring for the grave markers. Because the headstones were set directly in the ground, they were subject to shifting, and several inspection reports from this time identified the need for straightening, raising, and aligning. In addition, the white marble became dirty and moldy in the humid climate, and required periodic cleaning. The Quartermaster regulations stipulated that the headstones be cleaned at least once in five years, or more frequently in shady conditions, with palmetto-fiber scrubbing brushes and Sapolio (a brand of mild soap).[87]

Quartermaster inspectors generally found the trees and shrubs at Poplar Grove doing very well, such as reported in 1885:

> *The deciduous trees are numerous, thrifty & doing well. There is a large plantation of fine young elms [the sylvan hall], some large native Norway pinus [loblolly pine], numerous cedars & many thrifty fruit trees [near the circular turn-around]...The osage hedge [perimeter hedge] is very fine, has evidently been judiciously trimmed from an early day & is thick close to the ground & cut, wedge shape, very nicely...*[88]

Notable additions and changes to the cemetery plantings included the replacement of the boxwood hedge around the service yard with an arborvitae hedge in 1888, and replacement of the Osage orange hedge with a bed of English ivy in c.1891, despite its reported good condition a few years earlier. At the same time, the sylvan hall of American elms was removed. Several years earlier in an 1888 report, Quartermaster Inspector W. Owen identified a problem with these trees: "The Elms of the 'sylvan grove' [sic] are planted on the graves & some of them are much in the way of the lawn mower but that cannot well be helped. To take out any trees would destroy the cross."[89] Despite Owen's apparent support for keeping the sylvan hall, most of the elms were removed within a few years, leaving just scattered trees.[90]

Lawn mowing and lawn care were the biggest continual maintenance issues for the superintendent and his one assistant, despite the improvement provided by the horse-drawn mower. It probably took several days to mow the lawn, and during the spring, may have been a continual task. Despite the effort, the lawn often looked poor. A Quartermaster inspection report from 1885, for example,

Figure 1.55: Photograph of Poplar Grove National Cemetery looking east into the cemetery at the entrance gate, 1904. (Records of the Quartermaster General, RG 92, Still Pictures Division, National Archives II.)

found that the "...grass is backward, with much wild onion, sorrel & other small weeds...grass does not seem to do as well in this country or that at City Point as in and about Richmond. The soil is clayey & cold." The next inspection in 1888 found that the lawn was "...Poor and surface looks rough. Needs fertilizing & more frequent mowing."[91] The superintendent also had to maintain the grass on the walks and drives. The grass on the main drive, the most heavily used in the cemetery, often became rutted from use by carriages, an appearance that inspector Owen found "...looks like a country woods road." Owen recommended that the ruts be sodded and that carriages should be kept out of the cemetery.[92] By the turn of the century, the Quartermaster office decided to remove the turf and lay down a graded gravel surface, matching the materials of the approach road (the old brick gutters were not uncovered). The new surface included the circle around the flagstaff, but not the circular turn-around adjacent to the lodge. Here, the drive was widened for a small parking space.

Soon after the turn of the century, each of the national cemeteries was photographed, with Poplar Grove photographed in 1904 from the entrance gate (fig. 1.55). Taken in late fall or winter, the photograph captured the main drive with its recent gravel surface, the 1876 entrance gates and brick inclosure wall, the 1872 lodge with its stone walls, slate roof, and darkly painted trim, and the grass-covered circular turn-around, ringed by clipped boxwoods. The photograph also shows loblolly pines in the background (remnants from the landscape of the engineers' camp), an arborvitae hedge surrounding the service yard, and two magnolias at the entrance to the service yard. Also barely visible along the drive are an iron tablet and a settee.

During the decade following this photograph, there were a number of improvements to the buildings at Poplar Grove. Within the service yard, a frame privy, with a footprint of approximately four feet by five feet and two holes, was built in c.1905 on the west side of the forage shed, apparently to supplement the pre-existing privy within the toolshed-stable. The forage shed, which was erected by the superintendent in c.1879 and was still being used to store forage for the horse as well as fuel, was reported as being in "bad condition" in 1901.[93] Calls for replacement were again made in c.1910, but in 1912, an inspector found that the forage shed could last another year or two if it were patched and repaired. Finally, in c.1915, the forage shed was torn down and replaced by a frame addition housing a "feed room" at the rear of the brick toolshed-stable (fig. 1.56). In c.1925, the gap between the rear of the feed room and the brick inclosing wall was covered by a tin-roof for use as a shed.[94] Across the main drive, a new kitchen wing, built of brick and sheathed in stucco, was built at the rear of the lodge and completed in November 1914. First recommended by inspectors in 1910, the new wing was built as a modern replacement for the kitchen outbuilding built in c.1879. To the rear of the old kitchen outbuilding against the brick inclosure wall was a small brick building, partially below grade, known as "the cave" (see fig. 1.53). This building, measuring five feet by six feet and four feet deep, was constructed in c.1900, perhaps as a root cellar.[95]

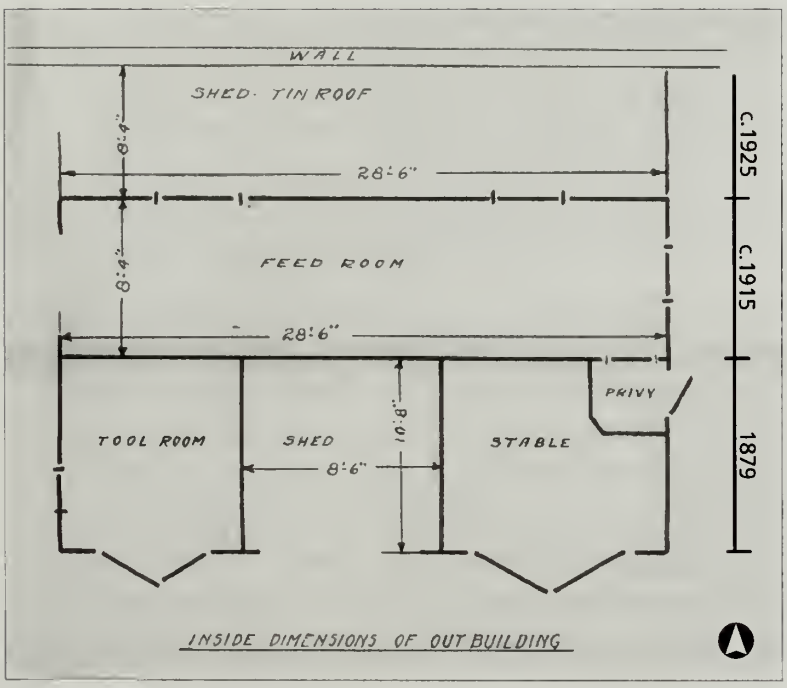


Figure 1.56: Plan made in c.1925 of the 1879 toolshed-stable and the "feed room" addition made in c.1915. The "Shed" extending to the brick inclosing wall was added in c.1925. (RG 79, Entry 5, Records of the War Department Relating to National Parks, 1892-1937, box 50, National Archives II, annotated by SUNY ESF.)

Other changes during the first two decades of the twentieth century occurred at the center of the cemetery. The fifty-six foot tall wooden flagstaff had been identified as being insufficiently tall for the size of Poplar Grove since the time it was installed in 1873, and

Figure 1.57: View from the rostrum looking northeast along the main drive toward the new iron flagstaff, c.1914. This photograph shows one of the Bivouac of the Dead tablets along the main drive at the right. The dark mounds in the foreground are sheared boxwood shrubs. (*War Diary of Luman Harris Tenney 1861-1865*, 1914).

as far back as 1888, an inspector had reported that it "...seems sound but is badly warped & ugly."[96] In 1910, the Quartermaster inspector raised the height issue again, recommending the installation of a taller pole, and three years later in 1913, a new white-painted iron flagstaff was erected and the old mound, which had lost its regular profile by the 1890s (see fig. 1.48), was removed.[97] Flagstaff mounds had also fallen out of favor by this time: the Quartermaster regulations for national cemeteries issued in 1911 forbade building of mounds around flagstaffs.[98]

A photograph of Poplar Grove taken in c.1914 shortly after the new flagstaff was installed captured the cemetery at what was most likely the height of its development, although the cemetery lacked some features and ornamental plantings it once had during Superintendent Miller's tenure in the 1870s (fig. 1.57). The photo illustrated the graveled main drive, mature specimen trees, neatly sheared boxwoods and other scattered shrubs, iron tablets, and the new flagstaff in the distance. The lawn had been recently mown, although trimming had not been completed around the grave markers. One year after this photograph was taken on August 2, 1915, a tornado swept across the cemetery, ripping down 110 trees (approximately half of the trees in the cemetery), breaking forty-seven headstones, and damaging the roof on the forage room addition on the toolshed-stable.[99] Plans were soon underway to correct the broken headstones, and during the summer of the following year, the Quartermaster office installed replacements

using the more durable specifications introduced in 1904. One of the headstones broken in the storm, a unique non-government headstone for the grave of Scotland native Adam Cowan Murray installed by 1869, was proposed for repair rather than replacement with a new government headstone.[100] While the grave markers were fixed, no plans for replacing the trees or repairing the damaged building were developed for more than a decade following the storm. Despite this, Quartermaster inspectors found the cemetery during this time to be in "excellent condition."[101]

FINAL WAR DEPARTMENT IMPROVEMENTS, 1925-1933

With the legislative establishment of Petersburg National Military Park in 1926, the War Department gained a new presence in Petersburg, building on its long-time involvement in Poplar Grove National Cemetery and its more recent but short-lived presence at Camp Lee, an Army installation located east of Petersburg established during World War I.[102] The legislation for the new park, developed out of a feasibility study begun in February 1925 and building on other efforts dating back to the 1890s, was created to mark and preserve lands related to the campaign, siege, and defense of Petersburg. The proposed park formed a series of parcels along the Federal and Confederate lines stretching for more than twenty miles, to be linked by park roads (fig. 1.58). The park was part of a system of military parks administered by the War Department, but park management and planning was largely handled by the Petersburg National Military Park Commission, a local civilian board. By 1928, the commission had begun to acquire property and carry out initial improvements. Over the next four years, nearly 500 acres were acquired and construction was begun on the connecting park roads. On June 20, 1932, Petersburg National Military Park was officially dedicated.[103] In the vicinity of Poplar Grove, plans for the new park called for the acquisition of lands along the Federal Left Flank, which ran in an east-west direction north of the cemetery. Most of these lands along the Federal Left Flank were acquired by 1932, but work on the planned park road paralleling the earthworks, known as Flank Road, was not begun until later. Plans called for Flank Road to cross Vaughan Road approximately a half mile north of Poplar Grove (see fig. 1.58).

Administration and Use

In response to the apparent lack of public interest going back several decades, the Office of the Inspector General recommended in its 1928 report on Poplar Grove that the "...War Department initiate correspondence with American Legion Posts or town officials with a view toward having appropriate ceremonies take place...on Decoration Day of each year and that all cemetery superintendents be instructed to offer the fullest cooperation."[104] New burials continued during

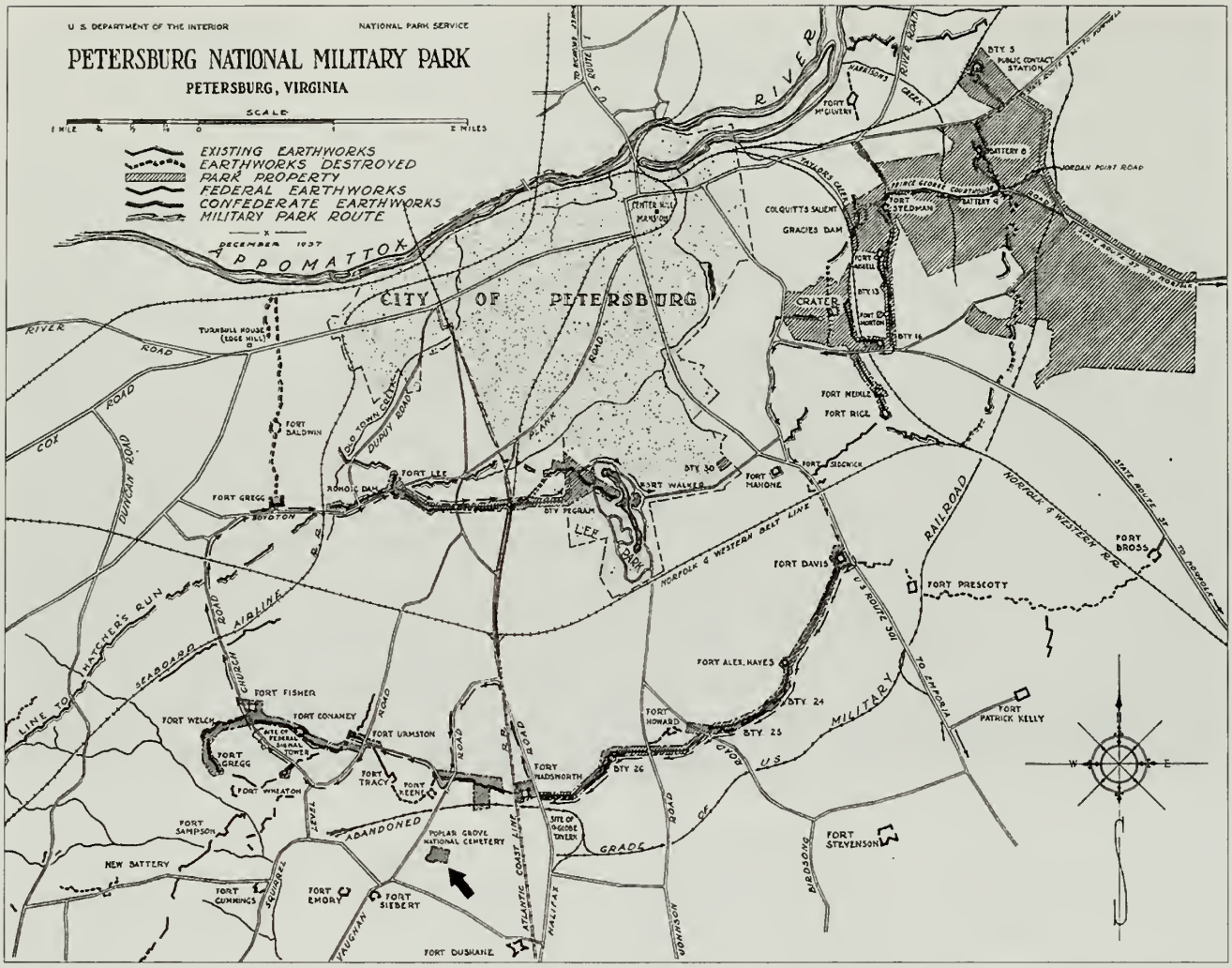


Figure 1.58: Map of Petersburg National Military Park showing general intent of original c.1926 park plan, from a 1937 map showing subsequent park development. The black arrow points to Poplar Grove. Hatched areas represent federal government lands. (RG 79, Records of the National Park Service, Entry 31, Poplar Grove National Cemetery, box 2704, National Archives II, annotated by SUNY ESF.)

this time at the slow rate characteristic of decades past, with a total of five burials between 1925 and 1933, not counting reinterment of Civil War remains.[105]

Despite the inspector's concern and limited new burials, public interest in visiting Poplar Grove was beginning to revive at the time due in part to the establishment of Petersburg National Military Park and easier access made possible by automobiles. While interest in the cemetery probably rose during the late 1920s over previous years, the numbers still remained small. Between August and December of 1928, Poplar Grove received seventy-eight visitors; and from January through June of 1929, sixty-six (including fourteen on Memorial Day). [106] Probably the heaviest day of visitation at Poplar Grove during the early years of the military park occurred in April 1931 with a ceremony marking the reinterment of the remains of twenty-nine unknown Union soldiers recovered from the Crater battlefield on March 28-30, 1931. The remains were unearthed as part of the park's acquisition and restoration of the Crater battlefield. According to the Petersburg city manager, a "tremendous crowd" attended the reinterment ceremony at Poplar Grove.[107]

While Poplar Grove National Cemetery was intimately related to the park theme, it remained under the administration of the Quartermaster rather than the local park commission. In February 1925, the same month that Congress approved a feasibility study for establishing a national military park at Petersburg, the Quartermaster Corps issued a report of repairs required at Poplar Grove, mapping out a five-year improvement program. With plans for a neighboring national military park, the Quartermaster Corps undoubtedly saw the need to spruce up the sleepy cemetery. Initial plans called for modernization of the lodge, removal of the frame building at the rear of the toolshed-stable, construction of a new public toilet and a new well house (to replace the c.1871 well house in the service yard), repairs to the rostrum, replacement of brick pavement around the lodge with concrete, paving of the main drive, and planting 250 trees to replace those lost in the 1915 tornado.[108] Planning for these improvements progressed over the following few years. A new well was proposed in 1926 (it is not known if it was built), and in 1927, the Quartermaster Corps revised plans to include construction of a new service building to replace the entire toolshed-stable and its additions, and construction of a "standard brick toilet building" with separate facilities for men and women. To justify the need for the new toilet building, Quartermaster Corps wrote that it was "...necessary for the reason that this cemetery is a considerable distance from any public building or hotel and is visited by a great many parties traveling in motor cars."[109] In 1928, word was circulating that Vaughan Road would be paved, probably also in response to plans for the new park and rising use of automobiles. The Quartermaster Corps recommended that if Vaughan Road were paved, the cemetery approach road and main drive should also be paved at the same time.[110]

Implementation of the Improvement Plans

In the summer of 1929, building plans were finalized through the Quartermaster Supply Officer, Washington General Depot. For the new stable-garage (officially called the "Outbuilding") and public restroom ("Utility Building"), plans called for simple, Colonial Revival-style buildings with stucco exteriors (unpainted, probably to relate to the stone of the lodge), gable roofs with eaves returns, metal roof sheathing, and multi-paned windows. The contract for the construction of both buildings was awarded to the firm of H. Herfurth Jr., of Washington D. C. The public restroom building, built at a cost of $3,127, was the first to be completed on August 10, 1929. Built of hollow tile, the one-story building housed separate restrooms for men and women, a fuel storage room, and an electric generating motor and water storage room (fig. 1.59). Construction required the demolition of the c.1879 brick kitchen, which had been used as a woodshed since the kitchen wing was built on the lodge in 1914. The brick cave along the inclosure wall was probably removed at the same time. The septic tank for the

Figure 1.59 (top left): The public restroom (utility) building completed in 1929, looking southeast from a recent photograph, 2006. The fence and white paint on the stucco are later changes. (SUNY ESF.)

Figure 1.60 (bottom left): The stable-garage (outbuilding) completed in 1929, looking northwest from a recent photograph, 2006. The set of garage doors to the right is a later alteration. (SUNY ESF.)

Figure 1.61 (right): The new iron flagstaff installed in October 1930, detail of a 1939 photograph. (Copyright The Library of Virginia, from Virginia Room Exhibit at the 1939 World's Fair, image / WF/0S/06/017.)

new restrooms was built to the east, and two years later in spring 1931, it was apparently retrofitted with a septic field, which included 360 feet of drain pipes and tiles. Construction of the septic field required removal of trees and shrubs in the lodge grounds, some of which had been planted around the former turn-around that probably fell out of use around 1900. [111] As part of the restroom building construction, the old brick and grass walks were removed from the lodge grounds and a new concrete walk was laid down between the lodge and the new building.

In the service yard, the 1879 toolshed-stable and adjoining forage shed and tin-roofed shed were demolished in 1929 for construction of the new stable-garage. Completed at a cost of $3,950 on October 10, 1929, the one and one-half story building was constructed of brick with a workroom and stall, and a loft for storage (fig. 1.60). Following the completion of the two new buildings, the lodge was modernized through several projects completed between 1930 and 1932 that included new utilities, removal of the slate roof and replacement with tin (matching the two new buildings), reconstruction of the front porch floor in concrete, and replacement of brick front walk with concrete. [112] It was probably also at this time that the trim was changed from a dark color to white, matching the trim on the garage and public restroom building.

In the landscape, the Quartermaster Depot developed plans in the fall of 1930 for the replacement of the iron flagstaff erected in 1913. Although a new flagstaff had not been identified as part of the five-year improvement plan outlined in1925, there must have been some flaw to the existing iron flagstaff, which in 1930 was just seventeen years old. Perhaps it had a structural defect, or more likely, it was not sufficiently tall for the size of the cemetery and height of the trees. In October 1930, crews installed the new flagstaff, which towered above the trees at upwards of eighty feet tall (fig. 1.61). It was built of iron sections fitted by bolted flanges, set on a concrete pad. The height of the flagstaff required support by guy wires fastened to the midsection of the flagstaff and anchored on the ground by turnbuckles. The flagstaff and guy wires were painted white, and the iron base and turnbuckles were painted black. [113]

The spring following the installation of the flagstaff, the Quartermaster Third Corps in Baltimore finalized a tree planting plan for the cemetery, the first since the tornado of 1915 resulted in the loss of 110 trees. Dated March 31, 1931, the plan called for planting of 101 new trees that would reestablish an even distribution across the landscape and a continuous allee along the approach road (fig. 1.62). The plan also documented eighty surviving mature trees within the

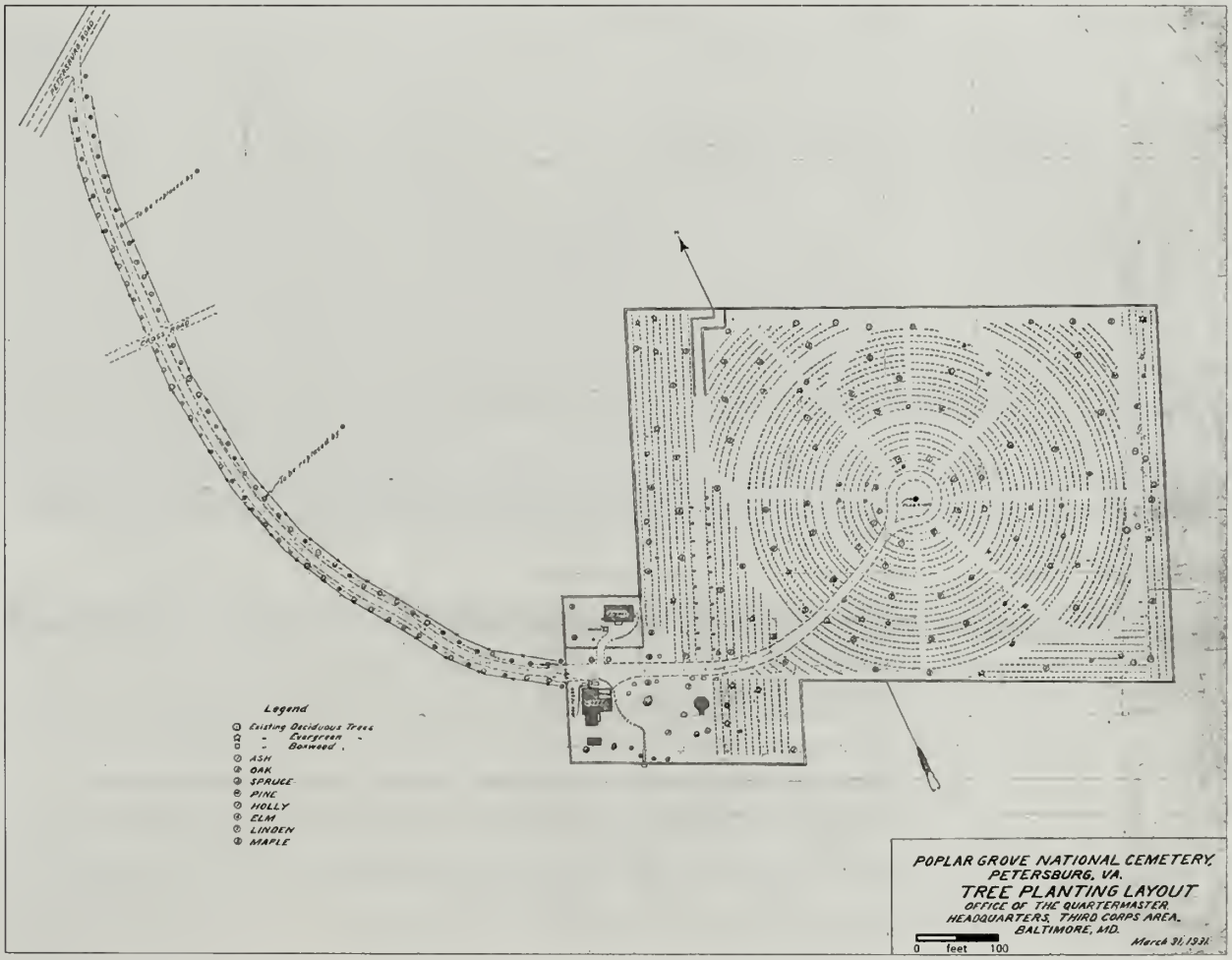


Figure 1.62: Planting plan for Poplar Grove National Cemetery and the approach road, March 31, 1931. The plan indicates existing and proposed specimen trees. (RG 79, Entry 5, Records of the War Department Relating to National Parks, 1892-1937, box 50, National Archives II.)

cemetery, plus thirty-four boxwood shrubs, the Maltese cross boxwood hedge in front of the lodge, and an arborvitae hedge screening the service yard. Trees were specified for planting in the walks between the rows of headstones, using eight species: European mountain ash (10 specimens), pin oak (20), Norway spruce (6), Austrian pine (4), American holly (6), American elm (20), American linden (12), and Norway maple (23). The contract for the trees was awarded to the nursery of Henkels & McCoy, "Landscape Contractors –Tree Surgeons – Road Builders," of Germantown, Pennsylvania, who completed the planting on May 18, 1931. While the specifications allowed changes based on field conditions, the plan was apparently executed without substantial modification.[114]

As planning was underway on the tree planting project, plans were also being finalized for paving the approach road and main drive. In the spring of 1931, the Quartermaster Corps finalized specifications for the project, following up on discussions about appropriate surface treatment going back several years. In response to an initial proposal for paving made in 1928, the Inspector General's Office had recommended the main drive within the cemetery be returned to turf and that all public motorized vehicles be banned from entering the cemetery. The Quartermaster Corps responded that it wished to retain the main drive in gravel to allow wagon access for interments, but alternatively would consider turfing the portion of the main drive beyond the service area. Ultimately the option for paving the entire main drive in asphalt prevailed, most likely based on arguments for durability and ease of maintenance.[115] On May 22, 1931, a contract for the paving was awarded to Vernon J. Cowing of Ashland, Virginia, a field engineer for The Bituminous Roads Company. The project, totaling 1,760 lineal feet from Vaughan Road to the flagstaff, included removal of the existing gravel, installation of a four-inch stone base, and application of a two inches of emulsified asphalt penetrating wear surface on a road width of twelve feet. The project also added earthen shoulders on the approach road, and changed the circular drive around the flagstaff to accommodate a wider turning radius. The paving changed the circle into a tear-drop shape and required the addition of thirty feet of concrete curbing to avoid grading over the adjoining grave markers in Division A, Section A. Cowing completed the paving project on June 26, 1931.[116]

While paving of the main drive and approach road reduced the maintenance work at the cemetery, the improvement probably proved insignificant compared with the labor still needed for lawn mowing with the cemetery's horse-drawn mower, three manual push mowers, and a scythe used to trim around the headstones. Although the new garage built in 1929 was designed to house the cemetery horse used in lawn mowing, just two years later in the fall of 1931, the Quartermaster Depot General decided to replace it with a gasoline-powered push lawn mower.[117]

Although the power mower eased the job, mowing eight acres and trimming around the nearly 5,600 grave markers still would have remained an onerous task.

In February 1932, a forester with the Office of the Inspector General visited Poplar Grove in its last year under War Department administration. The report focused on plans for improving vegetation and caring for eighty of the 101 trees that had survived from the new plantings the previous year. The report also documented general conditions, including a photograph looking east from near the rostrum (fig. 1.63).[118] The photograph showed widely spaced trees, including several tall loblolly pines—remnants from the engineers' camp—mown lawn, ivy growing on the brick perimeter wall, headstones, and the blocks marking unknown graves. Although generally well maintained, upon closer inspection the photograph reveals that the tablets and blocks were stained, some were leaning or sunken, and the surrounding grass was not closely trimmed.

Figure 1.63: Photograph of Poplar Grove taken from the near the rostrum looking east along the ivy-covered inclosure wall, from a tree inspection report, February 1932. The caption in the report reads: "Characteristic pines and hollies at Poplar Grove, Petersburg, Va." (RG 92, Entry 1891, Office of the Quartermaster General, Correspondence, Geographic File, 1922-1935, box 1773, National Archives II.)

The condition of the grave markers documented in the forester's photograph apparently spurred action on their improvement beginning in the spring of 1932. At this time, the newly-appointed cemetery superintendent, Walter Pearce, reported: "...Headstones, Is in poor alinement, Many of them was never aligned, and to line them now will be a job, Those that need lowering, raising and striating up will be attended to soon" [sic].[119] Over the course of the next year, cemetery laborers worked on aligning and cleaning the stones, although the work remained incomplete. To advance the work, in the fall of 1932 the Quartermaster Depot

provided hypochlorite of lime (a bleaching agent) for cleaning the stones, to replace the traditional method that employed brushing with soap.[120]

By the winter of 1932-1933, during the last days of War Department administration, Poplar Grove National Cemetery reflected five years of improvements with new and renovated buildings, a taller flagstaff, new trees, paved roads, and ongoing work to clean and align the grave markers. These improvements enhanced a landscape that had evolved over seven decades of military administration. Throughout this period, the long-standing issue of maintenance—notably the labor-intensive tasks of lawn mowing and care of the headstones—had proved problematic. This issue would soon lead to extensive changes in the landscape under a civilian federal agency that had little prior experience with administering cemeteries.

ENDNOTES

1 Herbert Olsen, "Poplar Grove National Cemetery History" (Unpublished report prepared for the National Park Service, 31 May 1954), 66.

2 Richard L. Jones, *Dinwiddie County: Carrefour of the Commonwealth* (Dinwiddie, Virginia: Dinwiddie County Board of Supervisors, 1976), 295.

3 August Miller, "History of Poplar Grove National Cemetery," 24 April 1871, Highlights of Superintendent Miller letters, transcription of Poplar Grove archives at Petersburg National Battlefield by park ranger Betsy Dinger (hereafter, "POGR database").

4 MacCloskey, 37, 44; Edward Steere, "Shrines of the Honored Dead" (Washington, D. C.: Department of the Army, Office of the Quartermaster General, c.1956), 26.

5 Olsen, 57. Plantings had not been specified in the initial $750,000 appropriated for national cemeteries through the act of February 22, 1867.

6 Frederick Law Olmsted to Montgomery Cunningham Meigs, 2 August 1870, *The Papers of Frederick Law Olmsted: Volume 6* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 386-388.

7 Olmsted to Meigs, 2 August 1870.

8 Inspection of Quartermaster General plans of the national cemeteries made in the 1890s, and photographs of the cemeteries made in c.1900-1905, National Archives I and II.

9 War Department, Office of the Quartermaster General, *Regulations for the Government of National Cemeteries* (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1911), 4; project correspondence, 1929-1933, Poplar Grove National Cemetery Records, RG 79, Entry 5, Records of the War Department Relating to National Parks, 1892-1937, National Archives II, College Park, Maryland (hereafter, "Poplar Grove NPS War Department Records, NARA II"), box 51.

10 Highlights of Superintendent Miller letters, 9 July 1870, POGR database.

11 Olsen, 87; Lieutenant Colonel O. A. Mack, Report of Inspection of the Poplar Grove & City Point National Cemeteries," 14 January 1876, RG 92, Entry 576, Poplar Grove National Cemetery Records, National Archives I, Washington, D.C. (hereafter, "Poplar Grove Records, NARA I"), box 57.

12 W. T. Wood, Inspector General, "Report of an Inspection of the National Cemetery Poplar Grove, Va.," 6 May 1904, Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 77. This garden existed by 1902 and was probably established much earlier.

13 August Miller to Major General Lorenzo Thomas, 31 March 1869, POGR database.

14 Therese Sammartino, "National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, Civil War Era National Cemeteries" (United States Department of Veterans Affairs, 1994), Section E, pages 13-14.

15 "Memorial Celebration To-Day at Poplar Grove," *Petersburg Daily Courier*, 30 May 1871, page 3, column 4; "Federal Decoration Day," *Petersburg Daily Courier*, 31 May 1871, page 3, column 1. Of this ceremony, Superintendent Miller wrote "...yesterday has been the first day on which the graves were generally decorated with Flowers, since I have charge of this Cemetery. The people of Petersburg and vicinity, both white and black, turned out en mass for the occasion. It was gratifying to see the people taking at last a [sic] interest in showing due respect to the graves of the fallen Soldiers..." Superintendent August Miller to General Meigs, 31 May 1871, POGR database.

16 "Decoration of Federal Graves," *Petersburg Index and Appeal*, 31 May 1875, page 3, column 2.

17 August Miller to Quartermaster General U.S.A., 31 July 1869, POGR database.

18 August Miller, letter to unidentified person, 30 November 1869, Highlights of Superintendent Miller's Letters, POGR database.

19 This same style was being employed in plans for what might be considered the parent building to the national cemetery lodges—the State, War, and Navy Building in Washington, D. C. Construction began in 1871, but plans for the building, designed by Alfred B. Mullet, may have been developed earlier.

20 Sammartino, National Register documentation, Section E, page 10.

21 Henry Hodges, Quartermaster, Philadelphia, to General M. C. Meigs, 8 March 1871, citing earlier correspondence, Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57; Bids for lodge at Poplar Grove and advertisement dated May 30, 1870 filed in Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57; Articles of Agreement, Henry C. Hodges, James R. Dobbyn, 16 August 1870; August Miller to Quartermaster General, 31 August 1870, POGR database.

22 Henry Hodges to General J. Meigs, 8 April 1871; "Case of Lodge, Poplar Grove Cemetery, Bids for," 26 April 1871 (various bids enclosed), Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57.

23 Superintendent August Miller, monthly reports for October 1871 and January 1872, POGR database.

24 Superintendent August Miller, June 1872 monthly report, POGR database.

25 August Miller to Quartermaster General, 30 September 1869, POGR database; Major O. A. Mack, "Inspection Report for Poplar Grove and City Point National Cemeteries," 7 August 1874, Oliver Cox, "Report on Poplar Grove," 6 November 1876, and W. H. Owen, "Report of Inspection of Poplar Grove," 18 April 1885, Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57.

26 Quartermaster General Montgomery Meigs, "Enclosing Walls for National Cemeteries," dated August 12, 1870, RG 92, Entry 689, "Sketches of Iron Railings, Gates, and Headstones, and Proposals and Specifications Relating to National Cemeteries," Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 1.

27 *The Standard Cyclopedia of Horticulture* (1950), s.v. "Maclura."

28 Office of the Chief Quartermaster, Third District, Department of the East, advertisement for solicitation of bids for Osage Orange plants, 29 August 1870, Records of the Quartermaster General, RG 92, Entry 689, box 1.

29 August Miller to Quartermaster General, 30 September 1869; August Miller to Quartermaster General, 31 August 1870; August Miller to Henry Hodges, 7 March 1871; Miller, "History of Poplar Grove National Cemetery, 24 April 1871, POGR database.

30 Mr. Chenoweth to B. G. Bingham, 16 December 1873; A. Whitehead to Assistant Quartermaster McGoningle, 30 June 1874, Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57.

31 Oliver Cox to A. F. Rockwell, 11 August 1875, Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57.

32 Advertisement from unidentified newspaper, Office of the Quartermaster General, "Proposals for Work at National Military Cemeteries," 1 February 1876, Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57.

33 Oliver Cox, "Reports survey of the Poplar Grove Cemetery & encloses plat," 9 March 1876, Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57.

34 Articles of Agreement, 22 May 187, A. F. Rockwell, Assistant Quartermaster Washington District, and John Brennon and Archibald L. Hutton of Washington, 22 May 1876, Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57; Olsen, 60.

35 James Gall to A. F. Rockwell, Assistant Quartermaster General, 20 September 1876, Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57.

36 J. Welsey Friend to United States (Farley), 30 April 1877, book 14, page 428; J. Welsey Friend to United States (Flower), 30 April 1877, book 14, page 429, Dinwiddie County Land Records, reproduced in Olsen, 92-96; Quartermaster Attorney General (name illegible), "Endorsement of Addition of Land to Poplar Grove," 14 May 1877, Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57.

37 C. M. Clarke to Quartermaster General, Inspection report for Poplar Grove, 29 March 1879; W. H. Owen, "Report of Inspection of Poplar Grove," 18 April 1885, Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57.

38 "An Act to Establish and to Protect National Cemeteries," approved February 22, 1867, section 1.

39 Steere, 17; Olsen, 53; drawing of Meigs' design in RG 92, Entry 689, Sketches of Iron Railings, Gates, and Headstones, and Proposals and Specifications Relating to National Cemeteries," NARA I.

40 Olsen, 55.

41 *Petersburg Index and Appeal*, 6 July 1877, page 4, column 2; Olsen, 56; H. Y. Smith and W. S. Rann, editors, *History of Rutland County, Vermont with Illustrations & Biographical Sketches of Some of Its Prominent Men & Pioneers* (Syracuse: D. Mason & Co., 1886), "Sheldon & Sons," 180-191. No information was found on Bridges.

42 James Gall, Jr., to Assistant Quartermaster Rockwell, 7 June 1877, Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57.

43 "River Items," *Petersburg Daily Post*, 28 June 1877, page 1, column 2.

44 "The Poplar Grove Cemetery—A Large Contract Completed," *Petersburg Index and Appeal*, 6 July 1877, page 4, column 2; Olsen, 56.

45 "Poplar Grove National Cemetery—Interesting Ceremonies Next Monday," *Petersburg Daily Post*, 7 July 1877, page 1, column 3.

46 "Poplar Grove Cemetery," *Petersburg Index and Appeal*, 10 July 1877, page 4, column 2.

47 Gall to Rockwell, 7 June 1877.

48 August Miller to Quartermaster General, 31 July 1869, Highlights of Superintendent Miller's Letters, POGR database.

49 August Miller to Captain Carline, Fort Monroe, 28 August 1871, Highlights of Superintendent Miller's Letters, POGR database.

50 Miller, monthly report for August 1872; "Inspection Report for Poplar Grove and City Point National Cemeteries," 7 August 1874.

51 Oliver Cox, "Report on Poplar Grove," 31 May 1876, Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57.

52 This border hedge along the edge of the circular drive and walk is documented on the 1892 Quartermaster General plan of Poplar Grove.

53 O. A. Mack, "Report of Inspection of the Poplar Grove & City Point National Cemeteries," 14 January 1876, Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57.

54 James Gall to Assistant Quartermaster Rockwell, inspection report, 2 May 1878 and 24 October 1878, Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57.

55 James Gall to Assistant Quartermaster Rockwell, 24 October 1878, Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57.

56 Major Eckerson to Montgomery Meigs, 6 June 1876, Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57.

57 Mack, "Inspection Report for Poplar Grove and City Point National Cemeteries," 7 August 1874; Mr. Chenoweth to General Meigs, 2 April 1874 and 19 May 1874; Quartermaster General's Office, National Cemetery inspection forms, 8 January 1889 and 1 March 1909, filled out for Poplar Grove, Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57. The 1889 form indicates the flagstaff is forty feet high; the 1909 form, fifty-six; the 1909 form contains more detailed measurements for other features, and is assumed to be more accurate. No information has been found on the finial of the flagstaff.

58 Mack, "Inspection Report for Poplar Grove and City Point National Cemeteries," 7 August 1874; James Gall, Inspection Report of Poplar Grove, 24 October 1878, Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57. No photographs of the flowerbeds surrounding the flagstaff and gun monuments has been found.

59 A. F. Rockwell, Captain and Assistant Quartermaster, bids for "1,100 Park Settees," June 1878, RG 92, Entry 689, Sketches of Iron Railings, Gates, and Headstones, and Proposals and Specifications Related to National Cemeteries," NARA I, box 1; Fred Bell, photograph of Poplar Grove, 1968, showing remaining settees around the central circle, park administration files for Poplar Grove, Petersburg National Battlefield; reference to twenty settees at Poplar Grove, W. Owen, Chief Engineer, Quartermasters Office, "Report upon Natl. Cemetery Poplar Grove VA," 2 May 1888, Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57. The same settees are shown in a c.1902 photograph of Cold Harbor National Cemetery, online at www.alexandria.lib.va.us/.../images/011.jpg.

60 Office of the Quartermaster General, *Regulations for the Government of National Cemeteries* (1911), 17.

61 No photographs have been found of the flowerbeds at Poplar Grove.

62 August Miller, unidentified letter, 31 May 1870, Highlights of Superintendent Miller's Letters, POGR database.

63 The boxwood Maltese cross is first documented the 1892 Quartermaster General plan of Poplar Grove, and is shown on the 1931 Quartermaster General "Tree Planting Layout" plan. The Maltese cross bed in subsequent years was maintained as a boxwood hedge—the boxwood probably remaining from the edging of the flowerbed.

64 Mack, "Inspection Report for Poplar Grove and City Point National Cemeteries," 7 August 1874. The fruit trees along the walk near the turn-around were documented in W. H Owen, "Report of Inspection of Poplar Grove," 18 April 1885. Owen reported that some of the fruit trees were "...planted by the soldiers in 1864," but given the alignment of the trees along the c.1872 walk and lack of any earlier documentation, this seems unlikely.

65 Mack, "Inspection Report for Poplar Grove and City Point National Cemeteries," 14 January 1876.

66 Miller, "History of Poplar Grove National Cemetery," 24 April 1871.

67 Olsen, 57; Listing of trees and shrubs received from Major Henry G. Hodges, 4 January 1871, Highlights of Superintendent Miller's Letters, POGR database; August Miller, Monthly reports for April 1871 and August 1872, Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57. No plan was found for the 1871 tree-planting program.

68 Olsen, 57-58; comparison of 1892 Quartermaster and 1937 National Park Service plans of Poplar Grove showing remaining elms and boxwood shrubs along the east-west walk. No plans of the sylvan hall have been found; most of the elms were apparently removed by the time the 1892 plan was drawn.

69 "Inspection Report for Poplar Grove and City Point National Cemeteries," 7 August 1874; Hodges, 4 January 1871, Highlights of Superintendent Miller's Letters, POGR database; 1892 Quartermaster General plan.

70 Mack, "Inspection Report for Poplar Grove and City Point National Cemeteries," 14 January 1876.

71 James Gall to Assistant Quartermaster Rockwell, inspection report for Poplar Grove, 2 May 1878, Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57.

72 James Gall, Inspection Report for Poplar Grove, 22 May 1881, Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57.

73 James Gall, Inspection Report for Poplar Grove, 16 March 1882, Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57.

74 History of the Bivouac of the Dead tablets, http://www.cem/va/gov/cem/hist/bivouac.asp. It is not known if Poplar Grove had the earlier wooden signs.

75 Two surviving tablets were examined at Culpeper National Cemetery in Culpeper, Virginia. These tablets have a foundry mark on the back by the Rock Island Arsenal dated 1881.

76 The tablets were documented in a Quartermaster General questionnaire dated March 1, 1909 that was filled out by Superintendent George Hess, and on the 1892 Quartermaster General survey of Poplar Grove National Cemetery (blueprint) annotated in 1909 with red ink, located in Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57. The Bivouac of the Dead poem has a total of twenty-four four-line verses. The Poplar Grove tablets were removed in c.1957 and today are in storage in the loft of the cemetery garage.

77 Book of national cemetery plans by the Quartermaster General, 1892-93, Records of the Quartermaster General, RG 92, Entry 691, NARA I. The plans did not document the location of smaller features such as flowerbeds, tablets, and settees. Although well detailed, the Poplar Grove plan may lack accuracy. For example, the main gate is shown as having two sets of piers instead of four.

78 Dr. Steven E. Anders, "With All Due Honors: A History of the Quartermaster Graves Registration Mission," *Quartermaster Professional Bulletin* (September 1988), transcript, Petersburg National Battlefield; Poplar Grove NPS War Department Records, NARA I, box 51.

79 Poplar Grove burial register; Jennifer Perunko, Historian, National Cemetery Administration, comments on draft cultural landscape report, 8 June 2009.

80 Olsen, 62.

81 W. Owen, Quartermaster Genera's Office, "Report Upon Natl. Cemetery Poplar Grove VA," 2 May 1888. Owen reported: "There is considerable driving in this Cemetery & ruts are worn in the main drive from gate to flagstaff..."

82 David Merchant, "Memorial Day" website, "History" page, http://www.usmemorialday.org/.

83 Department of Veterans Affairs, webpages for individual national cemeteries, http://www.cem.va.gov/CEM/cems.

84 Olsen, 87; Lieutenant Colonel O. A. Mack, Report of Inspection of the Poplar Grove & City Point National Cemeteries," 14 January 1876, Poplar Grove Records, NARA I, box 57.

85 Sammartino, National Register documentation, Section E, pages 10-11.

86 Olsen, 62. No information has been found on the manufacturer or builder of the rostrum. The rostrum at Yorktown no longer stands, and only the base of the one at Richmond National Cemetery remains today.

87 Office of the Quartermaster General, *Regulations for the Government of National Cemeteries* (1911), 4.

88 Owen, inspection report, 18 April 1885.

89 Owen, inspection report, 2 May 1888.

90 The 1892 Quartermaster plan of Poplar Grove, together with the 1931 Quartermaster and 1937 NPS planting plans show scattered American elms along the east-west walk. While the 1892 plan does not indicate tree species, it does not show the presence of an allee in the shape of a cross.

91 Owen, inspection reports, 18 April 1885 and 2 May 1888.

92 Owen, inspection reports, 18 April 1885 and 2 May 1888.

93 Major P. W. West, "Report of an Inspection of the National Cemetery Poplar Grove, Va.," 21 June 1901, Records of the Inspector General, NARA I, no box # (1901 inspection reports); Major W. T. Wood, "Report of an Inspection of the National Cemetery Poplar Grove, Va.," 6 May 1904, Records of the Inspector General, NARA I, box 77; Superintendent George Hess, completion of inspection form prepared by E. H Humphrey, Captain and Quartermaster, 1 March 1909, Records of the Inspector General, NARA I, box 576.

94 Lieutenant Colonel W. C. Brown, Poplar Grove inspection report, 11 December 1912, Records of the Inspector General, NARA I, box 155; Set of Poplar Grove building record sheets (plans), 1923, Poplar Grove NPS War Department Records, NARA II, box 50.

95 Poplar Grove building records, 1923; Brown, inspection report, 11 December 1912; 1892 Quartermaster plan of Poplar Grove, annotated to 1909; Superintendent Hess, Quartermaster questionnaire form, 1 March 1909. The cave is shown as an annotation on the original 1892 plan.

96 Owen, inspection report, 2 May 1888.

97 Olsen, 63; J. McClintock, Major, Quartermaster Corps, Inspection of Poplar Grove and Richmond National Cemeteries, 16 July 1928, Quartermaster Correspondence 1922-1935, NARA II, box 1773.

98 Office of the Quartermaster General, *Regulations for the Government of National Cemeteries* (1911), 17; McClintock, Inspection of Poplar Grove and Richmond National Cemeteries, 1928. McClintock called for the removal of the flagstaff mound at Richmond, but did not mention a mound at Poplar Grove, indicating it no longer existed.

99 Date of tornado cited in Charles E. Shevline, National Park Service Forester to Chief Forester, Office of National Parks, Buildings, and Reservations, 13 February 1934, Poplar Grove NPS War Department Records, NARA II, box 2704; James Bodley, Superintendent Poplar Grove to Depot Quartermaster, 25 August 1915, Quartermaster Correspondence 1922-1935, NARA II, box 1773.

100 Unattributed memorandum to Depot Quartermaster, 21 August 1916, Quartermaster Correspondence 1922-1935, NARA II, box 1773. The Murray marker was a tall slab stone with the inscription: "Green be the turf above thee/Friend of my early days/None knew thee but to love thee/None named thee but to praise."

101 Major Allen Kimberly, Poplar Grove inspection report, Records of the Inspector General, NARA II, box 294.

102 Camp Lee was decommissioned in 1920 and turned over to the Commonwealth of Virginia as a wildlife preserve. "This Week in Quartermaster History, 25 November-1 December," http://www.qmmuseum.lee.arm.mil/historyweek/Nov25-1Dec.htm.

103 Lee A. Wallace, "A History of Petersburg National Battlefield to 1956" (Unpublished report, National Park Service, 1957), 66-67, 76, 85.

104 Major Robert Goetz, Inspector General's Office, Survey of Poplar Grove National Cemetery, 18 May 1928, RG 92, Entry 1891, Office of the Quartermaster General, Correspondence, Geographic File, 1922-1935, (hereafter, "Quartermaster Correspondence 1922-1935"), NARA II, box 1773.

105 Poplar Grove burial register.

106 Poplar Grove Quarterly Report for the period ending June 30, 1929, Poplar Grove NPS War Department Records, NARA II, box 50. Visitation was noted inconsistently on the quarterly report forms (beginning in 1920s).

107 Memorandum, Colonel J. T. Conrad, Adjutant General, Quartermaster General's Office, 27 April 1931, Quartermaster Correspondence 1922-1935, NARA II, box 1773.

108 Office of the Quartermaster General, "Report of Repairs Required at Poplar Grove National Cemetery" (unattributed report), February 1925, Quartermaster Correspondence 1922-1935, NARA II, box 1773.

109 H. L. Ward to Quartermaster General, 27 April 1927, Quartermaster Correspondence 1922-1935, NARA II, box 1773.

110 H. L. Ward, Quartermaster Corps, to Quartermaster General, 28 May 1928, Quartermaster Correspondence 1922-1935, NARA II, box 1773.

111 Quarterly Report for Poplar Grove National Cemetery, period ending June 30, 1931, Poplar Grove NPS War Department Records, NARA II, box 50.

112 Poplar Grove building records, 1923 updated to 1933; Gwynne Conrad, Quartermaster Corps, to Quartermaster General, 3 October 1929, Poplar Grove NPS War Department Records, NARA II, box 50.

113 A. B. Kaempfer, Corps Area Inspector General, to Commanding General, 28 October 1931, referencing inspection of Poplar Grove made on 1 September 1931, Records of the Inspector General, NARA II, box 1773. Any portions of the flagstaff mound that may have remained following its reduction in 1913 were removed and the circle around the flagstaff was made level.

114 John T. Harris, Quartermaster Corps Assistant, to Quartermaster General, 14 May 1931; Headquarters Third Corps Area, "Specifications for Materials and Labor for Planting Trees at Poplar Grove National Cemetery, April 3, 1931;" miscellaneous notes and contracts in bound letters, "Poplar Grove Care of Trees, Etc.," Poplar Grove NPS War Department Records, NARA II, box 50. The tree stock was specified at heights ranging from 3 to 12 feet, and calipers from 1 to 1.5 inches.

115 Robert Goetz, Survey of Poplar Grove National Cemetery, 18 May 1928, Memorandum from Quartermaster Office, 17 September 1928, and Gwynne Conrad, Quartermaster Corps, to Quartermaster Supply Officer, 7 September 1928, Records of the Inspector General, NARA II, box 1773.

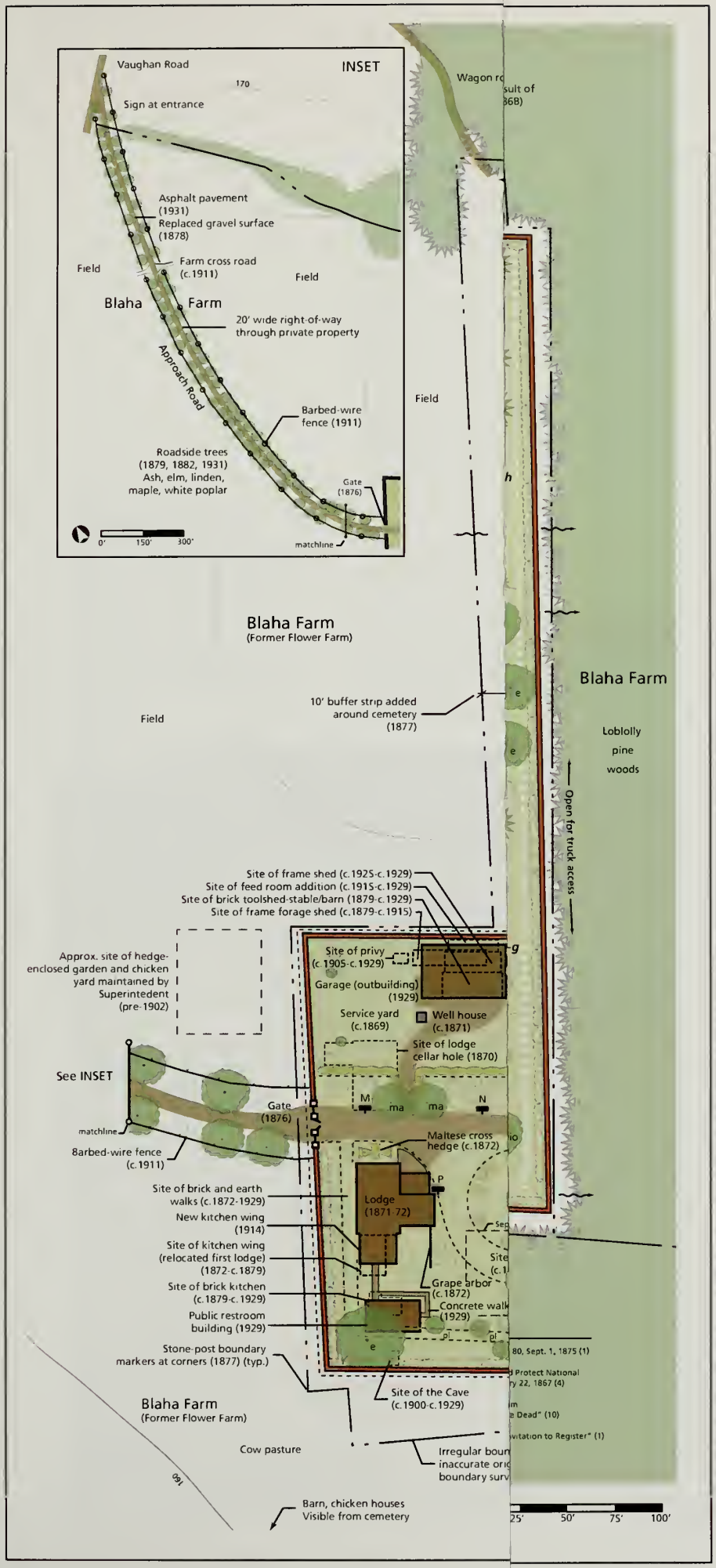
116 Certification of Vernon J. Cowing by W. H. Shaw, Civil Engineer, Headquarters Third Corps Area, 9 July 1931, Poplar Grove NPS War Department Records, NARA II, box 51, binder "Walks, Roads, Etc;" "Specifications for the Reconstruction of the Drives in Poplar Grove National Cemetery," 10 April 1931, Quartermaster Correspondence 1922-1935, NARA II, box 1773.

117 E. J. Heller, Captain, Quartermaster Corps, to Commanding General Third Corps Area, 6 November 1931, Inspector General Records, NARA II, box 1773. In November 1931, steps were being taken to dispose of the cemetery horse. No information was found on the size or type of mower.

118 Unattributed report by Inspector General forester, "Poplar Grove (P. O. Petersburg) VA," 25 February 1932, Inspector General Records, NARA II, box 1773.

119 Superintendent Walter Pearce, quarterly report ending March 31, 1932, Poplar Grove NPS War Department Records, NARA II, box 50.

120 Poplar Grove, Quarterly Report for period ending March 31, 1933, Poplar Grove NPS War Department Records, NARA II, box 50.



Cultural Landscape Report

Poplar Grove National Cemetery

Petersburg National Battlefield
Dinwiddie County, Virginia

War Department Period 1869-1933

National Park Service
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
www.nps.gov/oclp

in partnership with
Department of Landscape Architecture
SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry

SOURCES

1. PETE GIS Data
2. Illustrated plan of Poplar Grove, QMG, 1892
3. Quartermaster tree planting plan, 1931
4. NPS master plan, c.1941, planting plan, 1937
6. Burial Location Plan, NPS, c.1957.

DRAWN BY

John Auwaerter, Illustrator CS3, 2009

LEGEND

- Removed during period
- Property line
- Inclosure (perimeter) wall
- Grave markers (black dash = added grave)
- B-g Cemetery division-section
- Building
- Road
- Walk
- Iron tablet, key reference
- Gun monument
- Settee
- Fence
- Conifer tree
- Deciduous tree/shrub
- Lawn
- Naturalized English ivy
- 10' contour
- Drainage through inclosure wall
- Wetland

NOTES

1. Plan represents landscape conditions in 1933, showing features removed during the period by dashed lines.
2. All features shown in approximate scale and location.
3. There were nine settees in 1929, locations not known.

Drawing 1.3

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Drawing 1.3

Specimen Tree Key

c	Cedar (Eastern red-cedar)	s	Spruce (Norway spruce)
e	Elm	wo	Water oak
g	Sweet-gum	wio	Willow oak
h	Holly	wc	White cedar
hc	Horsechestnut		
he	Hemlock	Notes	
lp	Loblolly pine	Species of existing and removed trees indicated where known	
m	Maple (sugar or red)	All shrubs are boxwood except where noted	
ma	Magnolia	Non-keyed (smallest) trees indicate 1931 plantings	
pl	Plum	European mountain ash, pin oak, Norway spruce, Austrian pine, holly, elm, linden, and Norway maple	
pe	Peach		
po	Poplar (white poplar)		

Tablet Key

M	General Orders No. 80, Sept. 1, 1875 (1)
N	Act to Establish and Protect National Cemeteries, February 22, 1867 (4)
O	Four-line verses from "The Bivouac of the Dead" (10)
P	"Visitors Notice, Invitation to Register" (1)

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE PERIOD, 1933-PRESENT

The 1933 transfer of Poplar Grove National Cemetery to civilian administration under the National Park Service was part of broad New Deal government restructuring. With the end of military administration, the cemetery came under the park service's mission to conserve natural and historic resources for public benefit. Aside from work done on the grave markers and plantings in the 1930s, however, the landscape of Poplar Grove National Cemetery during this period declined both in condition and historic character. While the park service planned numerous improvement projects over the years, few were implemented since the War Department's work completed between 1929 and 1933. Plans currently being deloped seek to reverse this record.

Through the 1930s, the setting of Poplar Grove remained predominantly rural, largely unchanged since the founding of the cemetery eight decades earlier. Increasing automobile ownership during this time was evident in the development of park roads along the siege lines and improvement of Vaughan Road into State Route 675. Suburban development around the fringes of Petersburg had begun after World War I, but by the time of World War II had not extended far from the city limits (fig. 1.64). The major physical changes in the region occurred mostly in the decades following World War II as the city center declined and suburban development reached into the countryside. During this time, Dinwiddie County and Petersburg, together with Hopewell and Colonial Heights, were incorporated into the Richmond Metropolitan Area, linked by the Richmond & Petersburg Turnpike (later Interstates 95 and 86), completed by 1952.[1] To retain development that was occurring outside of its historic limits, the City of Petersburg extended its municipal boundaries south to Flank Road in 1964, approximately a quarter mile north of the cemetery. Despite this, suburban growth still extended into Dinwiddie County, with houses often developed in strips along existing

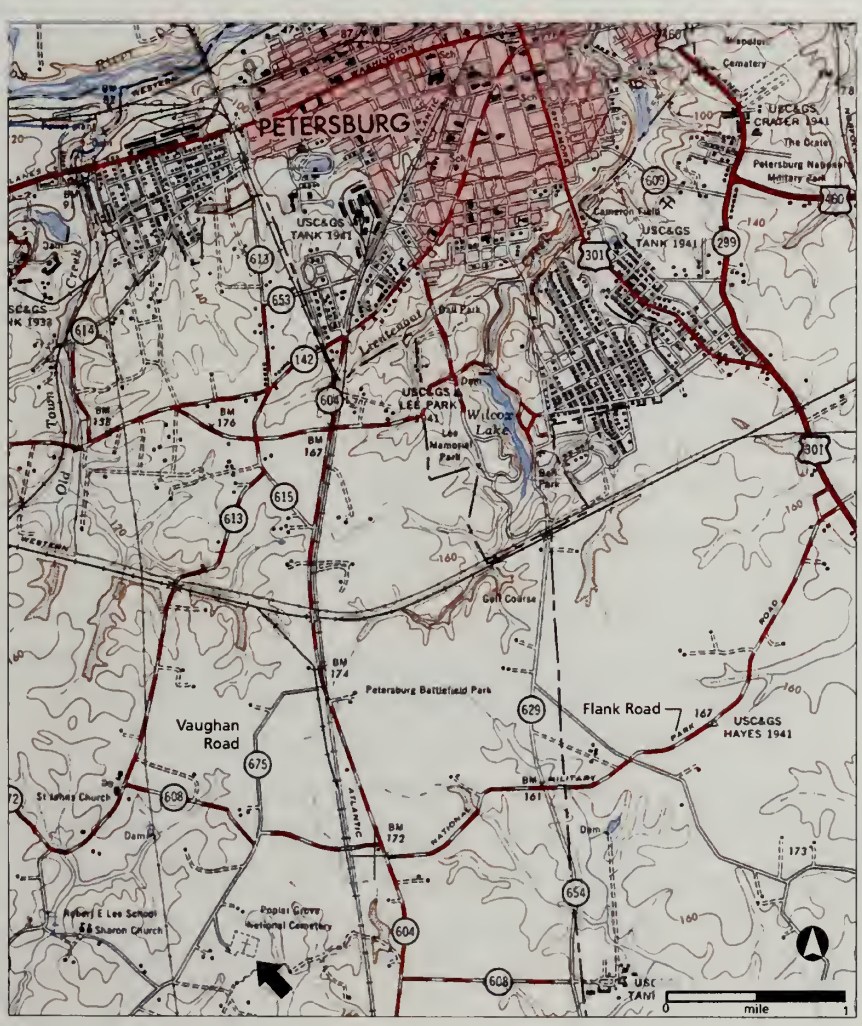


Figure 1.64: Roads and development in the region surrounding Poplar Grove, 1946. Vaughan Road is shown as Route 675. This map does not show Petersburg National Battlefield lands. (USGS Petersburg 15 minutes series quadrangle, 1946, surveyed in 1941, annotated by SUNY ESF.)

Figure 1.65: Roads and development in area surrounding Poplar Grove, 1994. Note numerous suburban houses built since World War II along nearby roads. (Detail, U.S.G.S. aerial photograph, 1994, annotated by SUNY ESF.)

roads, including Vaughan Road (fig. 1.65). Several large industrial plants were built north of the cemetery, and in 1970, the Collier Yard was enlarged on the Atlantic Coast (former Weldon & Petersburg) Railroad located east of the cemetery. Despite this development over the past four decades, the area immediately surrounding Poplar Grove retained large tracts of wooded land and farms growing crops such as soybeans, grapes, and hay.

EARLY NATIONAL PARK SERVICE STEWARDSHIP, 1933-1949

The National Park Service was created in 1916 to "promote and regulate the use of Federal areas known as national parks, monuments, and reservations"—mostly big national parks in the West—with a purpose to "conserve the scenery and natural and historic objects and the wild life therein, and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."[2] In its expanded role as steward of national cemeteries beginning in the 1930s, the National Park Service was embarking on administration of a new type of resource. Although Poplar Grove still shared the same issues common to its sister national cemeteries that remained in the War Department, the National Park Service took a different approach to management of the landscape, initially emphasizing natural characteristics found in the big national parks.

Administration and Use

On June 10, 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order No. 6166, which called for an extensive reorganization of Executive Agencies. Section 2 of this order specified the transfer and consolidation of all functions of military parks and national cemeteries under the War Department to the Department of the Interior for management by the National Park Service. The list of parks and cemeteries to be transferred, including Petersburg National Military Park and Poplar Grove National Cemetery, was approved on July 28, 1933 under Executive Order No. 6228. Only eleven national cemeteries were transferred; those deemed desirable to the mission of the War Department were not.[3] Cemeteries selected for transfer were considered to be more significant for their history than for their use as active burial grounds, and were located near national park units, usually battlefields. Transferred cemeteries in the mid-Atlantic region included Fredericksburg, as part of Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania County Battlefields Memorial National Military Park; Yorktown, as part of Colonial National Monument; and Gettysburg, as part of Gettysburg National Military Park.[4]

Despite the administrative transfer, the National Park Service was still responsible for adhering to national cemetery legislation and regulations.

Given its lack of experience with national cemeteries, the National Park Service maintained contact, at least initially, with the War Department on cemeterial issues.[5] The agency also continued to have cemetery superintendents complete the standardized Quartermaster General quarterly report through the 1930s.[6] However, biannual inspections of Poplar Grove by the Office of the Inspector General in the War Department ceased with the administrative transfer in 1933.[7] The National Park Service apparently maintained no formal system of regular outside inspections for the national cemeteries to address physical conditions, and there is no record of the War Department intervening in park service management of Poplar Grove during this time.[8]

The administrative transfer of Petersburg National Military Park and Poplar Grove National Cemetery took effect on August 10, 1933. Both the park and cemetery were placed under the temporary administration of Colonial National Monument, located in the vicinity of Williamsburg approximately sixty miles to the east near the Chesapeake Bay. Established in 1930 under National Park Service administration, Colonial National Monument (later renamed Colonial National Historical Park) preserved colonial-era sites, including the Revolutionary War battlefield at Yorktown, which surrounded the Civil War-era Yorktown National Cemetery, and the Jamestown settlement site. The relationship with Petersburg was probably created for two reasons: first, because Colonial National Monument was the closest pre-existing park unit to Petersburg; and second, because Colonial also administered Yorktown National Cemetery, which had been transferred from the War Department at the same time as Poplar Grove. [9] Poplar Grove remained under the administration of Colonial's Acting Superintendent B. Floyd Flickinger until December 1935, when administration was transferred to Petersburg National Military Park, which had been supplied with its first superintendent the previous September. [10] Poplar Grove retained its own superintendent, who reported to the park superintendent but also retained some autonomy. On September 5, 1933, Benjamin F. Moore was appointed the first cemetery superintendent under the National Park Service. As with War Department cemetery superintendents, Moore continued to be responsible for maintenance, cemetery staff, the burial record, and reporting.[11]

Although the significance of Poplar Grove to the rest of park was its association with the Civil War, the cemetery remained open to new burials of veterans of other wars. Burials continued in the earlier pattern of one or two per year with a few exceptions. Between 1933 and 1949, nineteen new graves were dug, with 1940 the most active year when there were five new burials.[12]

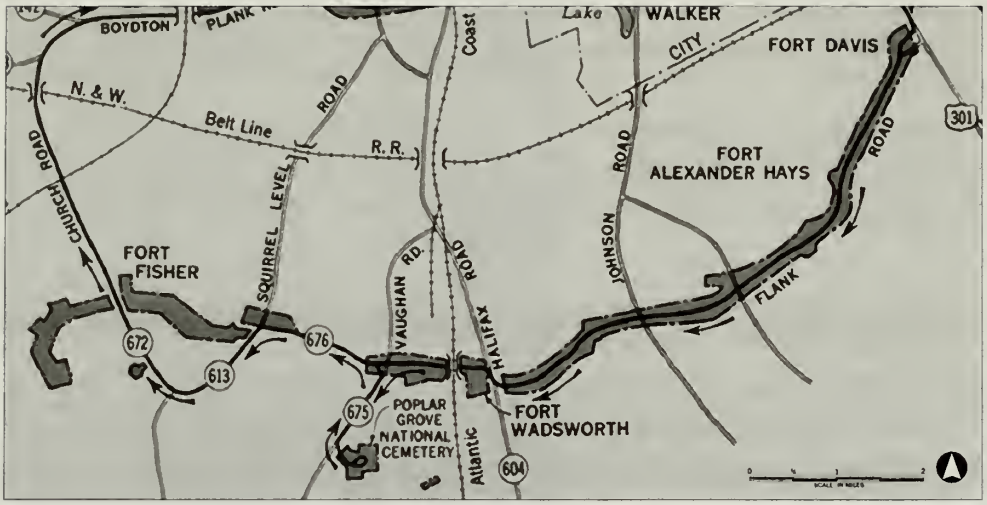


Figure 1.66: Detail of a 1951 tour map of Petersburg National Battlefield showing the relationship of Poplar Grove (stop #24) to the Siege Line Tour (Flank Road). Areas in gray are lands of Petersburg National Battlefield. The portion of Flank Road west of Vaughan Road was not built until the 1960s. (Richard Wayne Lykes, *Petersburg Battlefield*, National Park Service Historical Handbook Series 13, 1951).

In contrast to the burial rate, visitation to Poplar Grove rose dramatically, with ten times the number of visitors during the mid-1930s as there were in the late 1920s. For the fiscal year from October 1934 to September 1935, 1,675 visitors were reported, in contrast to the 142 visitors recorded during the fiscal year of 1928-1929.[13] This increase in visitation was most likely a result of increases in park visitation to the federal fortifications south and west of Petersburg that were linked by Flank Road, which was completed to Halifax Road and Fort Wadsworth in 1934.[14] Poplar Grove was identified as a stop on the tour, but visitors had to drive north on Halifax Road and then south on Vaughan Road to reach the cemetery. It was not until the completion of the Flank Road railroad underpass and extension of Flank Road to Vaughan Road in 1944 that the cemetery had a relatively direct connection to the route of the Siege Line Tour (fig. 1.66).

During the first eight years of National Park Service administration, Poplar Grove and Petersburg National Military Park enjoyed an ample workforce made possible through New Deal federal work-relief programs that addressed conservation and park development needs. Most of this labor was supplied through the Emergency Conservation Work (ECW) agency created on March 31, 1933, which carried out its work by a labor force called the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). The CCC, whose name was later adopted for the ECW agency, was charged with "restoration of the country's depleted natural resources..."[15] CCC camps were established at many national parks across the country, with the biggest parks often having six or seven camps. Petersburg National Military Park, still in its initial stages of development, was provided with one CCC camp. In July 1933, CCC Company 1364, consisting of approximately 173 enrollees, arrived from Camp Meade, Maryland, and established Camp MP-2 (MP = Military Park) near Fort Stedman within the main tract of the park east of Petersburg. In 1939, the CCC began to convert itself for defense work and the Petersburg CCC camp (redesignated as Camp VA NP (D)-3) was closed in July 1942. During its seven years at Petersburg, the CCC worked on such tasks as planting trees, clearing underbrush and stabilizing earthen fortifications, general maintenance, building park roads and trails, and maintaining Poplar Grove. In the vicinity of the national cemetery, the

CCC built Flank Road, and in the Federal Left Flank cleared underbrush from Fort Fisher and planted grass on Fort Welch, among many other projects.[16]

On September 18, 1933, Colonial Superintendent Flickinger wrote to Poplar Grove Superintendent Moore, "As I told you the day I was at your Cemetery, Mr. Colston [superintendent of the CCC camp] told me that he would be glad to furnish you with a detail of Conservation boys to help you with the clean-up work at your Cemetery..."[17] That fall, a CCC crew of five worked one day per week at Poplar Grove. Over the life of the CCC camp at Petersburg, a crew of between three and five men worked at Poplar Grove at various times during each month, with the schedule dependent on the season and whether there were any major projects underway. With this labor force, funded outside of the cemetery appropriation, the only regular employee maintained at Poplar Grove was the superintendent.[18] In addition to the assistance of the CCC, the cemetery also benefited from the system-wide resources of the National Park Service, such as the Branch of Plans and Designs, which developed a master plan for the cemetery between 1937 and 1941.

As was characteristic at most National Park System units, maintenance and funding declined at Poplar Grove during World War II, following the termination of the CCC program and through the post-war years into the late 1940s. Poplar Grove National Cemetery retained its own superintendent and funding appropriation until 1949.[19]

Maintenance and Transformation of the Grave Markers

Upon its transfer to the National Park Service in 1933, Poplar Grove was in overall good condition because of the War Department improvements made during the previous five years. In his first quarterly report to the National Park Service, cemetery superintendent Benjamin Moore described his work during the month of September 1933: "Cutting out 18-inch border at roots of ivy (on inclosure wall), trimming ivy and shrubbery, removing obstructions from drains, cutting grass and working flowerbeds."[20] None of this reflected any unusual or pressing problems. As park service personnel began to inspect the cemetery in the ensuing months, however, they identified a number of problems. The first addressed was tree work. In February 1934, CCC crews removed seven large elms, one maple, and one linden. A report to the Chief Forester of the National Park Service during this same month identified that the majority of the trees in the cemetery were in poor condition and that a large percentage would continue to be lost annually. It found the elms doing poorly and recommended that none be planted in the future (the report did not mention the discovery of Dutch elm disease in Ohio four years earlier). The report also recommended a program of feeding, pruning, and spraying, and new plantings.[21]

The second major problem initially identified by park administrators was maintenance of the grave markers and the lawn. Park administrators apparently felt that the significant amount of labor required for mowing the eight acres of cemetery lawn and trimming around the nearly 5,600 grave markers was a problem, despite advances provided by a power mower acquired just two years earlier in 1931 and the availability of CCC crews. With a new superintendent and a new agency, there was no institutional memory with which to judge the relative effort needed to mow the lawn. In addition to the mowing, there was also completion of the grave marker cleaning and alignment work that had begun in 1932.[22]

Instead of completing this work, the National Park Service decided to pursue a much different treatment—to convert the headstones and blocks into flat markers, a plan developed out of aesthetic and maintenance concerns. Park service managers believed that conversion to flat markers would ease maintenance because the power mower could simply ride over the markers; aesthetically, they believed the change would improve the appearance of what had become, at least administratively, a park landscape. During the 1930s, National Park Service designers and planners generally emphasized harmonizing built features with the natural landscape, an effort coined "landscape naturalization." [23] While the natural and rural character of the battlefields fit this aesthetic, the geometric design and Victorian details of the national cemeteries generally did not. In addition, the landscape design of Poplar Grove—then less than sixty years old and from the Victorian era not widely appreciated at the time—would not have been something the park service recognized as having historic significance and therefore worthy of preservation.[24]

The park service's concerns over maintenance and aesthetics with the old grave markers were not strictly an internal agency issue. Older cemeteries across the country were exploring ways to modernize and adapt to the popular lawn style of cemetery design. In the June 1925 edition of the journal *Park and Cemetery*, an article appeared on addressing problems associated with old-fashioned headstones that often leaned out of alignment. The article cited a solution employed at Greenwood Cemetery, a rural cemetery in Rockford, Illinois, in which the headstones were taken off their plinths (bases) and reset in the ground. According to the author, "With their neatly kept turf, the flat stones make a very presentable appearance as ledger memorials" (fig. 1.67).[25] Another article on the subject appeared in the July 1931 edition of *Park and Cemetery*, citing the same benefits, as well as the "very greatly reduced" costs of lawn maintenance made possible when headstones are reset at lawn level.[26] Whether park service staff were aware of these articles is not known. The War Department had not, however,

RESETTING LEANING HEADSTONES

THE LEANING HEADSTONES

Nearly all of the older cemeteries are faced with the problem of taking care of the old thin headstones, set in the early days before modern regulations regarding foundations and construction were in force. These old slabs in various stages of leaning and toppling may be seen in the old sections of many of our cemeteries. Many of them have fallen and broken, and present unsightly conditions that cemeteries have sought to ameliorate in various ways.

The illustrations on this page show how the problem is being taken care of by F. S. Marriner, Supt. of Greenwood Cemetery, Rockford, Ill. When these old stones begin to lean or need repairs, Mr. Marriner endeavors to get the permission of the lot owner to take them off of their shaky bases and reset them as ledger stones on good concrete foundations. The pictures speak for themselves. One shows some leaning stones that need attention and the other shows some of the old slabs that have been reset. With their neatly kept turf, the flat stones make a very presentable appearance as ledger memorials.

THE REMEDY—RESET AS LEDGER STONES

Figure 1.67: Article showing practice of resetting tablet headstones as flat markers. (*Park and Cemetery*, June 1925.)

adopted this approach toward the maintenance of its national cemeteries.

Planning for the alteration of the Poplar Grove grave markers traces back to October 1933, when Colonial Acting Superintendent Flickinger received word from Arthur E. Demaray, Associate Director of the National Park Service, that "As far as funds are available, improvements in both Yorktown and Poplar Grove National Cemeteries should be made...We hope that you will give this matter your prompt attention."[27] Yorktown was similar to Poplar Grove but smaller, with the standard features including a brick inclosure wall, white marble headstones and blocks, an iron rostrum, a tall central flagstaff, and a Meigs-style lodge. Associate Director Demaray mentioned specific work needed on the Yorktown rostrum, utility building, and flagstaff. Within a few months of Demaray's October 1933 letter, the park service had planned a far more extensive change at Yorktown. As that cemetery's superintendent reported: "All headstones and square block markers are being set flush with the surface of ground as a maintenance economy."[28] The project required cutting off the subsurface portion of the headstones.

The aesthetic reasons for transforming the Yorktown grave markers was evident in the park service's treatment of other built features in the national cemetery. In December 1933, Superintendent Flickinger recommended removal of the Victorian iron rostrum at Yorktown, which he reported was "a foreign note in the landscape."[29] The landscape that Flickinger was referring to was probably not the cemetery alone, but also the park's surrounding Revolutionary War-era battlefields. The National Park Service Branch of Plans and Designs concurred with Flickinger's recommendation and the rostrum was removed in c.1934. If the rostrum was a foreign element in the landscape, the park service must certainly have also considered the marble grave markers foreign as well.[30]

With the improvement work underway at Yorktown, Superintendent Flickinger turned to Poplar Grove to implement the same changes to the grave markers. For an unknown reason, he left the rostrum standing. In January 1934, Flickinger contacted the War Department for its concurrence on the project. On January 16, 1934, he received the following telegram from Hillory A. Tolson in the Assistant Director's Office of the National Park Service: "[To] Mr. B. Floyd Flickinger, Supt. Colonial National Monument, Yorktown, Virginia. Retel 15h stop War Department advises satisfactory lower headstones stop If done expense this office. Tolson."[31]

During February and March of 1934, CCC crews sunk Poplar Grove's 3,355 blocks and transformed the approximately 2,320 headstones into flat markers, laying the above-ground sections flush in the ground as ledger stones.[32] The CCC crews cut or broke off the headstone bases, often leaving jagged edges, and simply dug the upper sections into the ground rather than setting them on a firm footing. Unlike the larger headstones illustrated in *Park and Cemetery*, the small government headstones and even smaller blocks were inconspicuous in the lawn as flat markers, creating a dramatic change to the landscape that made the cemetery's circular plan largely invisible (fig. 1.68). CCC crews temporarily stacked the cut-off headstone bases in the cemetery, and in the following summer the park sold them to local resident Oswald E. Young, who purchased the two-foot slabs for $45 to construct a house nearby. (The Tombstone House, as it is known locally, was featured during the 1930s in Ripley's *Believe it or Not*.)[33]

As with Yorktown, the change to Poplar Grove's grave markers was done both for reasons of maintenance economy and for aesthetics—to create a more park-like appearance to the landscape.[34] While the project was apparently not well planned or documented, its underlying reasons came out in ensuing years in response to heated public criticism. In November 1935—on the eve of the cemetery's administrative transfer from Colonial National Monument to Petersburg National Military Park—cemetery superintendent Moore recounted the public's criticism directly to National Park Service Director Arno Cammerer:

> *There is no written complaint of record in this cemetery, but there has [sic] been many verbal expressions from tourists and visitors to the cemetery for the past year relative to two important features, namely, the section of unimproved road leading to the cemetery [Vaughan Road]; and to the present horizontal position of the headstones...People who have visited here frequently during the past years remark that when the stones were in an upright position arranged with uniformity in circles around the flagstaff there was an attractiveness and beauty of the grounds which is*

Figure 1.68: A 1939 photograph looking northeast toward the flagstaff from the rostrum showing the change in character with conversion of the headstones and blocks into flat markers. Several of the markers are visible at the lower right. Note the remaining tablets and gun monuments. (Copyright The Library of Virginia, from Virginia Room Exhibit at the 1939 World's Fair, image /WF/05/06/017.jpg.)

lost in the present position of the stones. Many of the more than sixteen hundred visitors to the cemetery during the past year have expressed themselves in various ways on this subject. Some were disappointed in not being able to get a picture of the grave and headstone of their relative, due to the stone being lowered. One party expressed regret that the stones could not have been left standing at least during the life of the present generation. An elderly school teacher in the community who had brought her pupils on each Memorial Day and decorated the graves for years past expressed deep regret at the change in the stones. Another lady said that for this same reason she did not desire her veteran husband interred here. Numerous other expressions included the opinion that the sentimental appeal of the upright headstones will be hard to overcome.[35]

Criticism from the Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War, based in Washington, D. C., reflected the public's perception that the National Park Service was changing the historic character of its national cemeteries to make them conform to park standards. In a 1937 complaint to her Congressman, Daughter Dorothea Dix Tent wrote:

> *Also, since the National Cemeteries, in which repose many thousands of our heroic dead have been taken from the jurisdiction of the War Department and transferred to the Interior Department along with the National Parks (military parks), are being made into parks. One, Poplar Grove National Cemetery, Petersburg, Virginia, has already been denuded of all the grave markers...and the cemetery is now literally a park. We are also asking you to use your influence against destroying these National Cemeteries where sleep the Nation's Honored Dead.*[36]

The Congressman in turn asked Director Cammerer to address the complaint. In his response, Cammerer confirmed not only that the stones had been leveled for maintenance reasons, but that indeed they had also been leveled for aesthetic purposes:

> *...Headstones have not been removed from the graves; they have simply been placed in a horizontal position flush with the ground. This was done for a dual purpose: to improve the appearance of the cemetery and to facilitate neat grass cutting. We feel that the result is very satisfactory.*[37]

While the conversion to flat markers may have improved the appearance of the landscape in the eyes of some park officials, the project in the end did little to ease maintenance. In 1939, Petersburg Superintendent O. F. Worthington, Jr., wrote, in response to continuing complaints about the grave markers, that lawn maintenance at Poplar Grove "...is admittedly a problem which demands a disproportionate share of our funds and time. The lowering of the stones contributes to the burden, for it is difficult indeed to keep the wire grass from covering them horizontally..."[38] Worthington noted that the grass around the stones had to be cut by hand, as it had when the stones were upright. In another problem ensuing from the project, he noted that some stones were being chipped by the mower as it passed over them.

Probably because of the public criticism and lack of practical benefit, the park service developed plans to improve the grave markers. In 1939, the park made a proposal that was never implemented to set the headstones in a concrete collar to keep grass from growing over stones and to prevent chipping from mowers.[39] The following year, in May 1940, the War Department advised the National Park Service that it could furnish new, rectangular flat markers for all of the graves, and Director Arno Cammerer recommended to cemetery Poplar Grove Superintendent Moore that "...it might be well to take advantage of their generous offer while the markers are available. This would mean a complete coverage of new headstone markers flush with the ground...The (War)

Figure 1.69: Replacement flat markers at Yorktown National Cemetery installed in c.1940, looking northeast from a recent photograph, 2006. In the background is the Revolutionary War battlefield. (SUNY ESF.)

Department seems most anxious to make these replacements at this time."[40] In 1939, the park had already begun to use these new headstones to mark new graves at Poplar Grove, using a standard design for flat marble markers issued in 1936 by the War Department for use in private lawn-style cemeteries.[41] Colonial National Historical Park took the War Department up on its offer and installed new flat markers at Yorktown National Cemetery in c.1940 (fig. 1.69). The project was not, however, implemented at Poplar Grove, probably because cemetery Superintendent Moore disagreed with Director Cammerer and advocated instead that the original upright headstones be furnished because the flat markers were "hard to maintain and source of criticism."[42]

Landscape Management During Early Years of Petersburg Administration

The park service did not alter Poplar Grove's headstones and blocks as part of any planned program of improvements. It was only in June 1934, after the stones were laid flat, that a plan was outlined, entitled "Six-Year Advance Program of Federal Construction for Poplar Grove National Cemetery." This plan, totaling $3,700, recommended tree surgery and protection, repair of the lodge and inclosure wall, construction of a concrete basement for a water tank, repair of the driveways, and "landscaping cemetery grounds." [43] These improvements would be implemented following Poplar Grove's administrative transfer from Colonial National Monument to Petersburg National Military Park in December 1935.

In 1936, the park proposed an ECW (CCC) project for seeding and sodding, and the following spring, CCC crews planted 115 Eastern red-cedar trees according to a January 1937 plan by the National Park Service Branch of Plans and Design.[44] This plan documented existing mature trees (the young trees planted in 1931 were not shown) and specified planting the native red-cedars on both sides of the inclosure wall near the entrance and lodge to screen the Blaha barnyard and chicken house (fig. 1.70). A wood post and barbed-wire fence was built along the property line to protect the new trees from livestock. Another grouping of red-cedars was planted alongside the lodge and utility (restroom) building to screen the view of this utilitarian area from the assembly area adjoining the rostrum. Other red-cedars were scattered across the cemetery lawn as specimens. After the planting, CCC crews worked through the summer of 1937 on repairing and repointing the inclosure wall with flush joints. Plans had called for replacing the sandstone pilaster caps with new concrete caps, but this work was not included in the project. Finally, in 1939 the old well house in the service yard was removed

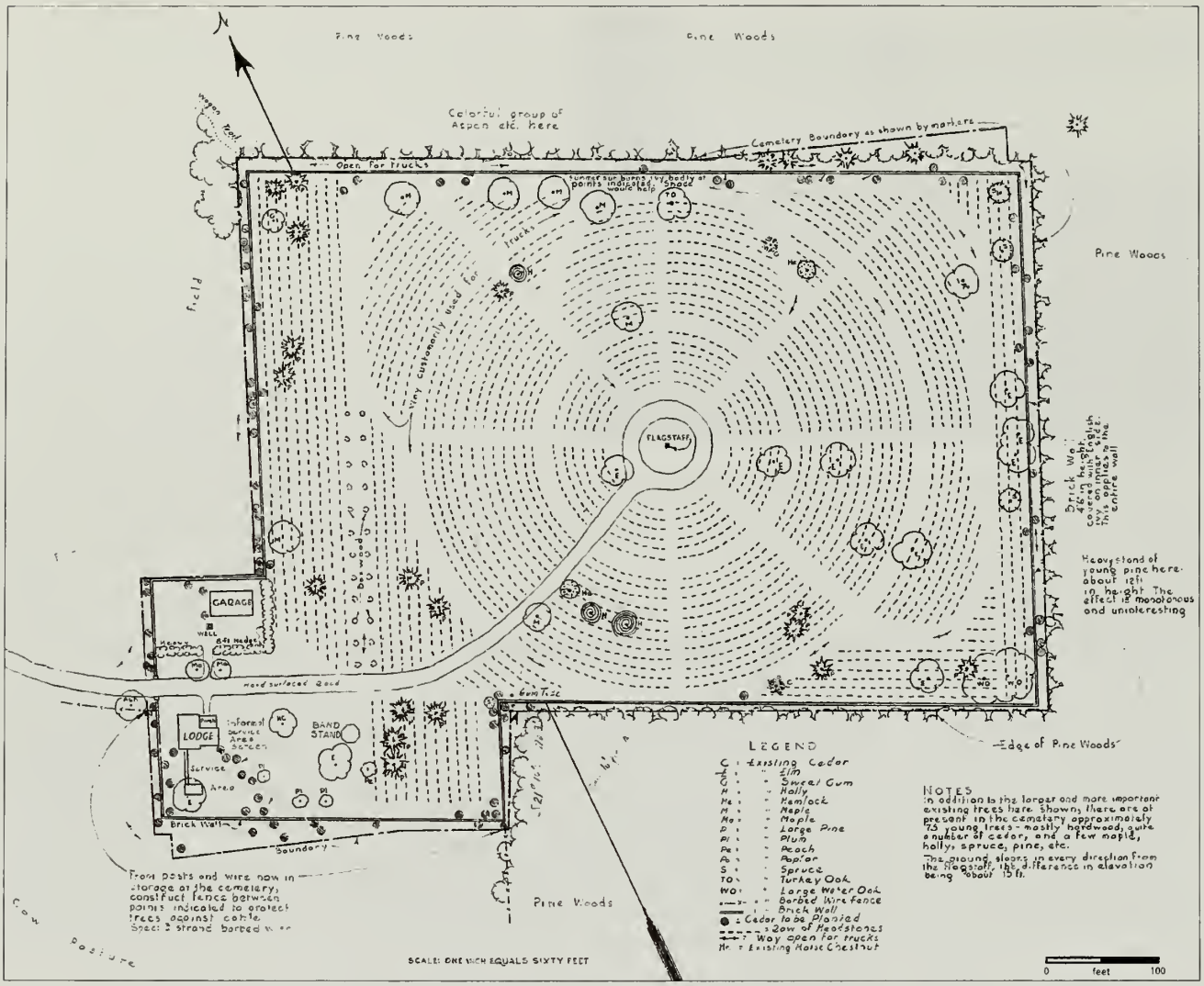


Figure 1.70: "Proposed Planting at Poplar Grove National Cemetery," 1937. The plan for planting 115 red-cedar trees also documented existing conditions except for young trees planted in 1931. (National Park Service Branch of Plans and Design, 29 May 1937, drawing PETE 325-8041, National Park Service Technical Information Center.)

and a new cover installed, and an overhead utility line was brought in from the Blaha farmhouse (southwest of the cemetery) to provide electrical power to the lodge.[45]

As these improvements were being planned and implemented, the National Park Service was developing a master plan for Petersburg National Battlefield, developed by the Branch of Plans and Design and completed in c.1941. The master plan, which encompassed elements of the six-year improvement program at Poplar Grove National Cemetery, included a detailed technical plan and an illustrated rendering of the cemetery showing its tree-lined approach road and a detail of the inclosure wall with proposed concrete caps (fig. 1.71).[46] The master plan focused on documenting existing conditions while apparently proposing no new improvements. It illustrated an overall informal, idealized rural landscape of lawn and scattered trees, characteristic of landscape design in the park service and long-standing efforts to minimize maintenance.

The technical plan contained a detailed inventory of all trees and shrubs, including small trees set out by the War Department in 1931 and the Eastern red-cedars planted in 1937.[47] (Listing of tree species inventoried in Appendix G.) The plan created a cataloguing system for the trees, identifying each by number and listing species, caliper, and condition. It was probably at this time that each tree was marked by a circular metal tag with the catalog number. The plan also showed buildings and structures, English ivy on the inside of the wall, the arborvitae hedge around the service yard, and woods to the north, east, and south sides. It did not show small-scale features such as the gun monuments, tablets, and settees. The plan also identified eighty-four open burial plots available in the cemetery, using drives and empty plots where trees had been removed. The War Department took the same approach to providing additional burial plots within other Civil War-era national cemeteries in the region.[48]

Although the CCC program was discontinued in 1942, several maintenance projects were completed during World War II, including removal of diseased and dead trees in 1942, and replacement of drain pipes in 1943.[49] Aside from these two projects, there were few changes to Poplar Grove's landscape through Benjamin Moore's retirement as the last cemetery superintendent in 1949.

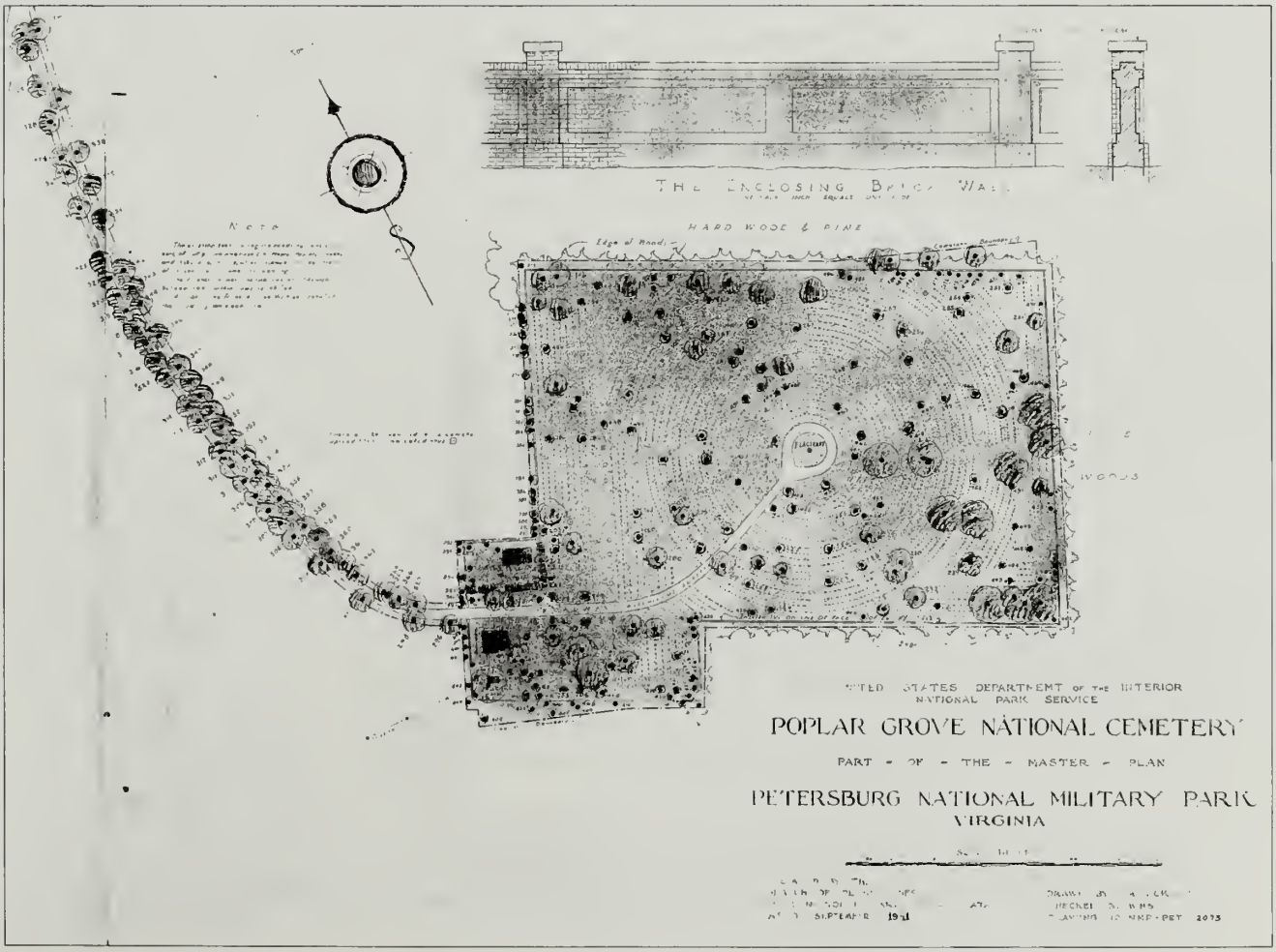


Figure 1.71: Rendered existing conditions plan of Poplar Grove completed for the Petersburg National Military Park master plan, c.1941. (National Park Service Branch of Plans and Design, from data as of September 1, 1941, drawing PETE 325-2073, National Park Service Technical Information Center.)

MISSION 66 ERA, 1949-1975

While there were sporadic efforts to spruce up the cemetery during the three decades following Superintendent Moore's retirement in 1949, overall maintenance and improvements were sustained at a bare minimum, despite an influx of funds for development of the larger battlefield park. It was during this period that many of the small-scale features in the cemetery landscape were lost, leaving it with a barren feeling, especially without the grave markers in a visible position and with a decreasing number of specimen trees and shrubs.

Planning and development at Petersburg National Military Park during this time were carried out largely through the structure of the National Park Service's MISSION 66 program and Parkscape, its successor program that extended into the early 1970s. The MISSION 66 program was approved by Congress in 1956 as a ten-year improvement program to be completed upon the fiftieth anniversary of the National Park Service in 1966. It was intended to make up for increases in visitation and deterioration in park infrastructure that had occurred since World War II, and to replace the earlier cycle of yearly budgets that had hindered post-war planning and construction. Although MISSION 66 was comprehensive in its scope, it in effect emphasized building construction. At Petersburg, the highlight of the MISSION 66 program was a new visitor center and overpass on Route 36 in the main part of the park between Petersburg and Hopewell, completed in 1967. Closer to Poplar Grove, the park completed Flank Road through the Federal Left Flank in 1963, following a CCC access road. These improvements were detailed in a new park master plan completed in 1965. [50]

Aside from the MISSION 66 improvements, the years between 1949 and 1976 were a time of significant change for the park, which was renamed Petersburg National Battlefield in 1962. Visitation increased dramatically, reaching more than a half million annually by 1976, attributed to the Civil War centennial. While the park was enjoying increased public support, it also divested itself of the original system of outlying tour roads due in large part to suburban development pressures. In 1973, the park transferred ownership of Flank Road east of Vaughan Road to the City of Petersburg, but retained the recently built section to the west (see fig. 1.66).[51] Near Poplar Grove, the regional suburban development trends led to changes in the setting of the cemetery as houses were built along roads and in the surrounding woods.

Administration and Use

Upon Benjamin Moore's retirement in 1949, Petersburg National Military Park decided to abolish the position of cemetery superintendent. Maintenance of the cemetery was subsequently absorbed by the existing staff of Petersburg National

Military Park.[52] Although the Poplar Grove lodge was used for park staff housing, the cemetery for the first time lacked daily on-site supervision until February 1957, when the park appointed a full-time caretaker. The caretaker was assisted by other park maintenance staff as needs arose. Yet with only three full-time maintenance workers during the 1950s for the entire park, labor for the cemetery was in short supply.[53]

Despite the problems with maintenance and funding, the park prepared studies and developed plans for managing Poplar Grove. In 1954, the park's historian, Herbert Olsen, completed the first history of the cemetery, for which two plans, a Historical Land Status Map and updated Burial Location Plan, were prepared by the regional Design & Construction Division. The Burial Location Plan was the first known graphic to show the location of the graves by number.[54] For its MISSION 66 prospectus, finalized in the spring of 1957, the park included an item for the repair of the cemetery's graves and markers, at a projected cost of $17,500.[55]

The years between 1950 and 1957 witnessed a record number of burials since the first new veteran graves were dug in 1896. During this eight-year period, there were twenty-one new burials, with a high of five burials in 1956 (chronological tally of burials in Appendix C). These new burials were concentrated in the row at the east end of Division F, and were also scattered throughout the cemetery, apparently in extra spaces within the rows that had been occupied by trees, but not filling in drives as detailed in the 1941 master plan. In 1957, Poplar Grove received its final burial at grave 3430A.[56] After this point, the park closed the cemetery to burials (although a spouse was subsequently buried within an existing grave), but remained open for the reinterment of Civil War remains. In May 1957, the Quartermaster Corps concurred with the park's decision on burials, and Poplar Grove was removed from the list of active national cemeteries.[57] Despite its closed status, Poplar Grove continued to receive relatively high visitation, reaching upwards of 7,000 annually, mostly tourists rather than visitors to graves.[58]

Landscape Changes

By the mid-1950s, Poplar Grove had fallen into very poor condition resulting from staff cuts and a long period of deferred maintenance stretching back to World War II. In April 1957, Roy Appleman, Petersburg National Military Park Staff Historian, wrote a letter to the Regional Director of the National Park Service criticizing the agency's management of Poplar Grove:

> *. . . I do not see how the National Park Service can escape the responsibility of carrying out a rather extensive rehabilitation of the cemetery in the near future. Of all the work that needs to be done at Petersburg, this needs*

most to be done. In fact, I have seen very few jobs to do anywhere in the park system that I think rank in urgency with this one. The Poplar Grove Cemetery is now in a condition that approaches a disgrace. The cemetery is relatively uncared for, the headstones cannot be found because twenty odd years ago they were cut off and laid flat on the ground and have since become covered with dirt and grass, and the speaker's stand [rostrum] is badly in need of repair and maintenance...On the occasion of my second visit to the cemetery...I saw two old women looking around in the grass for headstones—where none were to be seen. They were buried under dirt and grass. Occasionally a stone can be found, and I observed that in the back part of the cemetery quite a number were visible in whole or in part, but only a small portion I would estimate of the total number...[59]

Appleman was writing to the Regional Director in response to the park's recently released MISSION 66 prospectus, with its item for repair of the graves and markers. Apparently in response to Appleman's letter, the amount was raised from $11,200 to $17,500 ($76,000 to $119,000 in 2007 dollars), but still did not include any substantial improvements or new construction. On April 22, 1957, just a few weeks after Appleman's letter, National Park Service Assistant Director, Jackson E. Price, received harsh criticism on the condition of Poplar Grove from a Mrs. Arvo N. Niemi of Chicago, who had been in touch about the matter with her Senator. In this letter, she reinforced Appelman's observations and the longstanding public criticism over the grave stones:

...The neglect was evident in every inch of the cemetery. From the flagpole, the 'Stars and Stripes' were hanging limply and in ribboned tatters. Walking the width and length there were thousands of grave markers sunk below the ground level. As if this were not enough, the layers and layers of grass had completely obliterated from recognition the majority of Union graves. This was not true of the graves of World War I and World War II....I only wish that I could concur in your statement that the Poplar Grove Cemetery's condition was greatly superior to that indicated in my letter to Hon. Senator Potter. It was the extreme contrast, the woeful neglect of the final resting place of those who gave their lives in the Battle of the Crater and Petersburg that incensed me...[60]

Within weeks of Mrs. Niemi's letter, the park began improvements at the cemetery. By early May of 1957, work was underway on a new entrance sign, cleaning and

—Staff Photo

TRIBUTE—5,600 flags yesterday were placed on the graves of soldiers of the Civil War, World War I and World War II buried in Poplar Grove National Cemetery, Dinwiddie county. The Memorial Day observance was carried out by the National Park Service in co-operation with the army.

Figure 1.72: Item in *Richmond Times-Dispatch* on Memorial Day Services at Poplar Grove, May 29, 1957, illustrating recent work that included repositioning the headstones and blocks slightly above grade. (Clipping in RG 79, Series A58, Box 537, Poplar Grove National Cemetery, National Archives II.)

painting the entrance gate, tree trimming, and a general leveling and clean-up of the grounds. The work included addressing the condition of the grave markers in fulfillment of the MISSION 66 prospectus. The park did not heed Staff Historian Roy Appleman's suggestion, made in his letter to the Regional Director, that "... the only course is to raise the headstones and set them upright like they were originally."[61] Rather than use new stones, Appleman had recommended that the old stones be set with iron pins in new foundations, at an estimated cost of $2.00 per headstone. Instead, the park simply raised the existing flat headstones and blocks about two inches above grade. Despite previous problems with settling, the headstones were just set on the ground. Around this time, the park replaced a number of broken stones and blocks with contemporary government flat markers. Much of the work had been completed by Memorial Day in preparation for a ceremony carried out by the park in cooperation with Fort Lee, at which time American flags were placed at each grave marker (fig. 1.72).[62]

As part of this rehabilitation project, the park also installed new visitor information signs and revised the designation of the cemetery plan. The old iron tablets, with the four-line verses, cemetery regulations, and other notices, were most likely removed at the same time and stored in the loft of the garage.[63] Three new signs were installed at the flagstaff, each made of brushed aluminum frames: a small sign probably with a visitor registry, flanked by two larger signs, one with the burial register, the other with the revised plan with interpretive text and a rendering of Poplar Grove Church (fig. 1.73). In revising the cemetery organization, the park was apparently trying to make it easier for visitors to locate graves, an effort that had been difficult even with the headstones in their upright position. The new organization did away with the division and section designations and reordered the cemetery into twenty "Blocks" identified by Roman numerals (fig. 1.74). Ten of the blocks incorporated more than one section, and a new block (Block XX) was created for the row of recent burials on the east end of Division F (Block XIX). In addition to redesignating the divisions and sections,

Figure 1.73: View northeast across the center of the cemetery in July 1968 showing the signs near the flagstaff installed in c.1957. Also visible are small signs in the foreground identifying the radial drives (installed c.1957). Note that the shot had been removed from in front of the gun monuments. The identity of the people is not known. (Photograph by Fred Bell, June 2, 1968, Poplar Grove administrative records, Petersburg National Battlefield.)

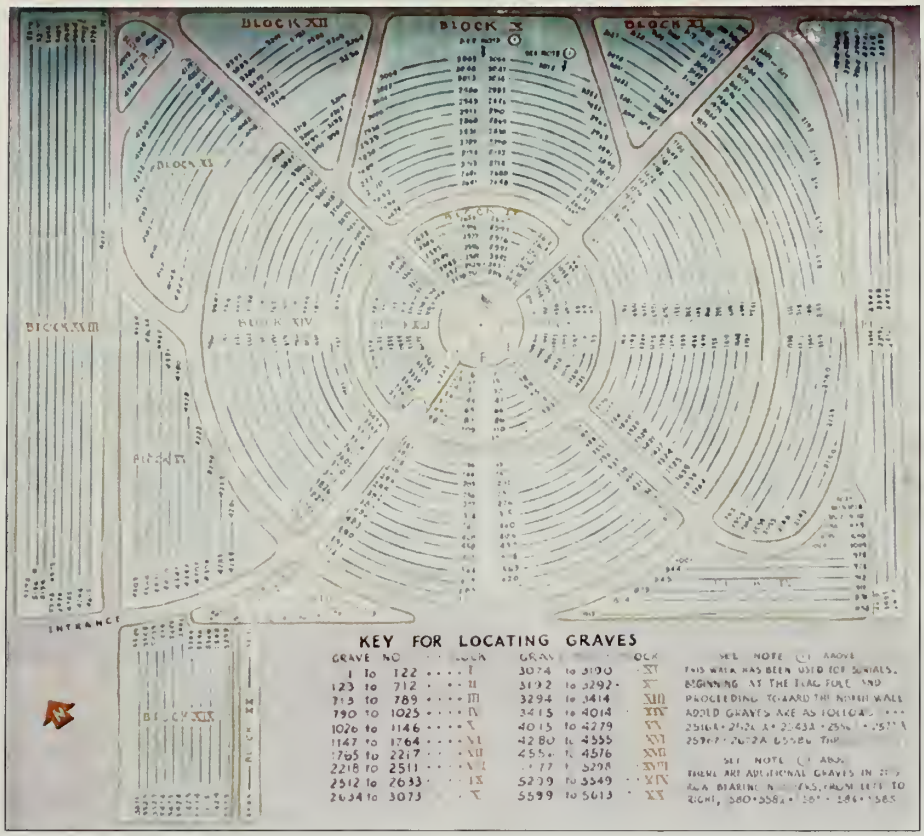


Figure 1.74: Plan of Poplar Grove showing the c.1957 organization by block, and naming of radiating drives by letter. This plan was posted, along with interpretive text and a drawing of Poplar Grove Church, in one of the aluminum-frame signs installed to either side of the flagstaff in c.1957. (Petersburg National Battlefield.)

the new plan named the radiating drives (except for the main drive) by letters A through F. Small iron tablets with the letter designation were installed at the head of the drives on the innermost circular drive (see fig. 1.73).[64]

Over the course of the two decades following the 1957 improvements, little additional work was undertaken at the cemetery. The park continued to maintain most of the features remaining from the War Department era, including the four gun monuments, settees, and flagstaff anchored by guy wires (see fig. 1.73). The park maintained the existing trees and shrubs, including the arborvitae hedge around the service yard, and the boxwood Maltese cross hedge in front of the lodge (fig. 1.75). New trees were planted in keeping with the existing informal arrangement, and included mostly holly, red maple, yellow birch, and willow oak. The gravestones, despite the work done in 1957, continued to sink and heave, and by the early 1970s, many had once again become obscured by grass. Cars drove over the graves along the main entrance drive when passing in opposite directions, and mowers continued to batter the edges of the stones.[65]

While there were few built changes within the cemetery walls, the situation was different outside on the former Flower farm that surrounded the cemetery. The land was owned by the Odom family and known by the 1970s as "Beau Vista Farms."[66] Lester G. and Roberta E. Odom had acquired the ninety-acre farm from Russell and Audrey Garner in 1954.[67] A 1969 aerial photograph of the farm documented the acreage of the farm's fields surrounding the cemetery (fig. 1.76). Two years later in 1971, Lester Odom

Figure 1.75: A 1968 photograph looking southwest at the Maltese cross hedge (c.1871), with the Gettysburg Address on the lodge wall added in c.1903. The identity of the boy is not known. (Photograph by Fred Bell, June 2, 1968, Poplar Grove administrative records, Petersburg National Battlefield.)

Figure 1.76: A 1969 aerial photograph of the Odom Farm that surrounded the national cemetery. The photograph does not include the eastern part of the farm (to right of the cemetery). (Poplar Grove administrative records, Petersburg National Battlefield.)

died, and he was buried in a small cyclone-fence enclosed family plot established on the south side of the cemetery approach road. That same year, a second burial was made in the family plot for Nellie E. Jones.[68]

Following the death of her husband, Roberta Odom began to subdivide rear portions of the farm, while retaining the prime agricultural land along Vaughan Road in production. In July 1972, she conveyed to other family members the small cemetery along the approach road, which she did, according to the deed, "expressly for the purpose of providing to the heirs of Lester Grady Odom, deceased, and their descendents, grantees herein, a place for maintaining a family cemetery" (fig. 1.77).[69] Around the same time, Mrs. Odom subdivided two lots along the north and east sides of the national cemetery and sold them to Anthony Blaha and Ronald Peterson, each of whom built single-family houses on the property, within seventy-five feet of the east wall. To access these houses, a driveway was built off the cemetery approach road, along the edge of an old field bordering the west side of the cemetery, extending along the full length of the cemetery's north side, and turning south to follow the cemetery's east wall.[70]

The construction of the Blaha and Peterson houses, along with the access drive, changed the rural setting of Poplar Grove. Along the north side of the cemetery, most of the woods were cleared for the access drive, leaving a thin hedgerow that opened up views of the drive, power line, and wetlands and fields to the north. Trees were also cleared around the two houses, which broke up the wooded enclosure and made the houses visible from within the cemetery (fig. 1.78). Despite this development, the rural setting

Figure 1.77: Sketch made by park staff in 1977 showing the Blaha and Peterson houses and access drive built in c.1972. The shaded area was proposed for park acquisition in 1977. (Poplar Grove administrative records, Petersburg National Battlefield, annotated by SUNY ESF.)

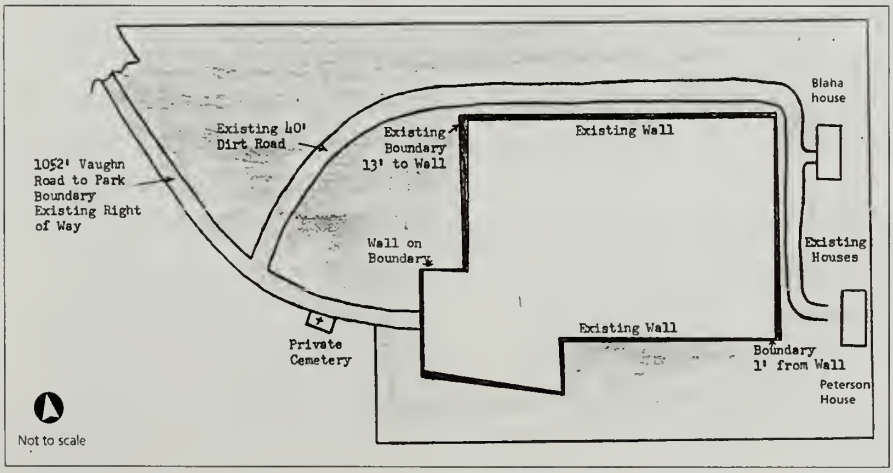


Figure 1.78: View looking east across the cemetery from the main entrance drive toward the Peterson house built in c.1972, photographed 1978. (File PETE D-58, National Park Service Technical Information Center.)

of the cemetery, visible from Vaughan Road across the fields of the Odom farm, remained largely intact.

During the tenure of Petersburg Superintendent Larry L. Hakel (1972-1975) and around the time that the park gave up ownership of Flank Road, the National Park Service completed work at the cemetery that effectively stripped the landscape of most of its remaining small-scale features from the War Department period. The park removed three of the four gun monuments and purportedly gave them to Fort Donalsen National Battlefield in Tennessee.[71] The settees were removed and replaced with two new benches on concrete pads at the flagstaff. The flagstaff's upper sections and guy wires were removed, leaving it well below the tree canopy at half its original eighty-foot height. The old well was replaced by a new one west of the garage.[72] At the time the park was removing these features, it was also reassessing its responsibility for the approach road, which remained in private ownership subject to a federal right-of-way as provided in the 1877 cemetery deed. The park's concern with maintaining the approach road was probably due to budget limitations and uncertainty over liability given increased private use of the road to access the Blaha and Peterson houses and the potential for similar new development in the adjoining fields of the Odom farm.[73] The approach road by this time had lost most of its formal allee to a border of scrubby successional woods.

1975 TO THE PRESENT

Following the appointment of Wallace B. Elms as the new superintendent of Petersburg National Battlefield in August 1975, the park began to take interest in preserving Poplar Grove's buildings, landscape, and rural setting. In November 1976, the park received approval for a "Development/Study Package Proposal" for cemetery improvements based on a Resource Management Plan approved the prior September. The stated purpose of this project was to "Improve the appearance and enhance the preservation of Poplar Grove National Cemetery." The project, budgeted at $321,000, was intended largely as a rehabilitation of the cemetery; there were no plans to restore lost features or to return the grave markers to their former upright position. In addition to the improvement work, the proposal also recommended acquisition of additional land around the cemetery, amounting to five acres, to provide the minimum area needed for maintenance of the inclosure wall and to place the approach road in government

ownership. The reasons that the park outlined for the project described conditions nearly identical to those prior to the 1957 improvement project:

> *The Service has been severely criticized for not meeting its obligations at Poplar Grove. The headstones have gradually sunk over the years until many are no longer visible. The brick wall that encloses the cemetery is in danger of collapse. Trees and shrubs no longer agree with the planting plan of 1937 and the cemetery generally looks shabby...Unless this project is funded the cemetery will continue to present a shabby appearance and the historic resource will continue to slowly deteriorate through benign neglect. Existing funds can only maintain this facility at existing levels, accordingly the need to upgrade the facility is critical.*[74]

A scope of work was soon developed by the National Park Service's central design office, the Denver Service Center, with final design scheduled for 1979 and construction the same year.[75] Details of the project, developed in 1977 by Livas & Associates Architects of Norfolk, Virginia, included setting the headstones and blocks one and one-half inches above grade on concrete foundations to prevent subsidence; installing granite paving around the flagstaff and one remaining gun monument; closing the main drive to vehicles by placing bollards east of the service yard; installing an interpretive wayside near the service yard; repairing the inclosure wall, lodge, stable, restrooms, and rostrum; and redesigning the entrance and service yard into a temporary visitor parking lot, with the long-term goal of creating parking outside of the cemetery (fig. 1.79). Plantings were only proposed around the new parking lot, pending further research on historic plantings and possible disturbance that tree plantings could cause to the graves.[76] Funding for

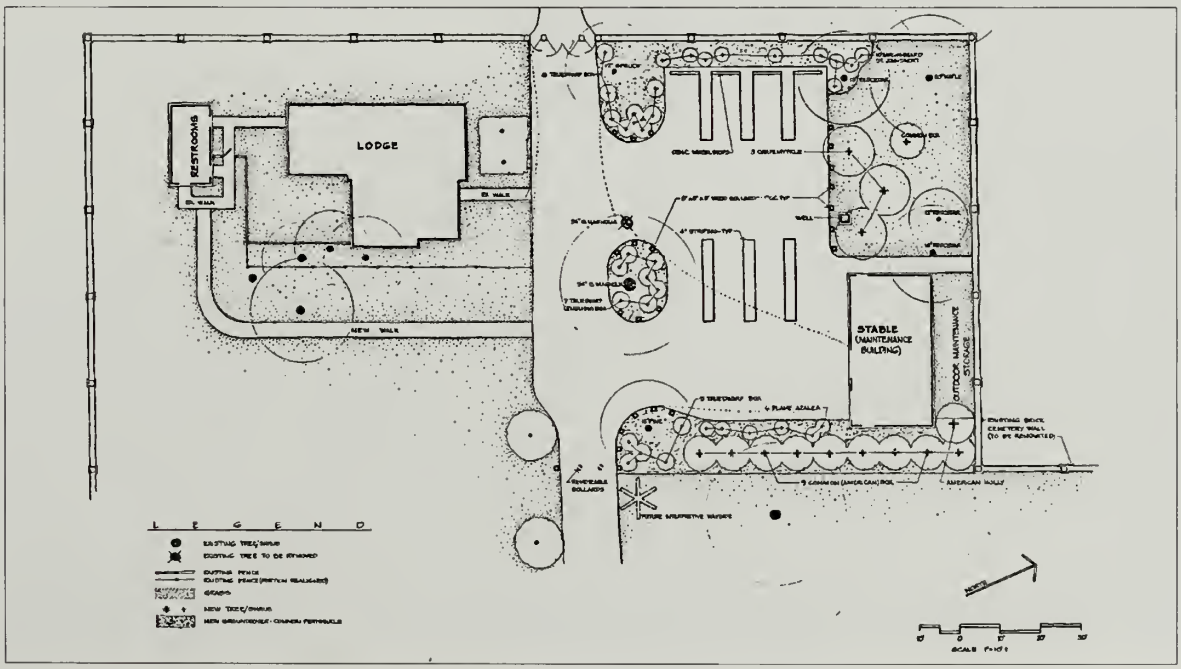


Figure 1.79: Plan completed in 1977 for redesign of the cemetery entrance area. (Livas & Associates, Architects, "Visitor Park & Grounds Improvement, Poplar Grove National Cemetery," August 1977, Drawing PETE 325-41012, National Park Service Technical Information Center.)

the improvements had been allocated through the final design stage, but nothing had been secured for actual construction by March 1978.[77] Apparently due to lack of funds, the project was never implemented.

While the improvements stalled, the park did progress with the land acquisition component. In July 1977, Superintendent Wallace Elms sent the Mid-Atlantic Regional Director sketches of the proposed minimum and optimum land acquisitions necessary to access the inclosure wall, secure the approach road, and preserve the setting of the cemetery. The optimum acquisition, amounting to over eighteen acres, included the approach road, field to its north, private access drive, and the Blaha and Peterson houses (see shaded area in fig. 1.77). The minimum area, amounting to five acres, included a strip around the cemetery, the approach road, and the old field between the west wall of the cemetery and the private access drive. Superintendent Elms closed his letter urging acquisition of the property "...in the near future before additional development makes acquisition impractical or at least much more costly."[78] By the following November, the park Regional Office had decided to support the optimum proposal, and a package of legislative support materials was completed in February 1978 for acquisition of 17.74 acres at an estimated cost of $295,000. The proposal outlined the park's intention to secure the cemetery approach road, prevent construction of additional houses next to the inclosure wall, and provide an "appropriate open space setting and buffer zone befitting the historicity and commemorative dignity of the final resting place for the Civil War dead interred therein."[79]

The acquisition stalled for a number of years, apparently due in part to a proposal for a housing development on the land and lack of funds.[80] By 1987, the park's new superintendent, Frank J. Deckert, settled with Roberta Odom on a much reduced proposal for acquisition of a 3.7-acre parcel that included the land between the west wall of the cemetery and the private driveway to the Blaha and Peterson houses, and a strip along and including a section of the approach road and Odom cemetery, extending one hundred feet south of the road (fig. 1.80). The remainder of the approach road extending out to Vaughan Road was not included in the proposal. Roberta Odom offered the property as a donation, in return for the park's commitment to maintain her family's small cemetery plot. According to Deckert, the 3.7 acres

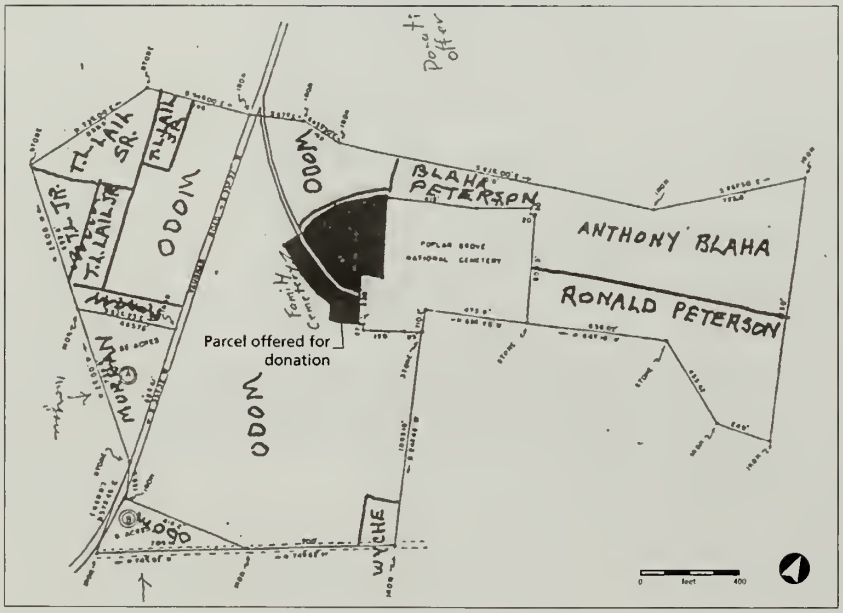


Figure 1.80: Survey of the Odom farm showing subdivisions and plot (shown in black) offered for donation by Roberta Odom in 1987. (Poplar Grove administrative records, Petersburg National Battlefield.)

"should provide an excellent buffer zone on the west side of the cemetery and a portion of it could be used for a small parking lot to accommodate visitors."[81] The regional office agreed with the proposal, and following completion of a survey in January 1990, a contract for donation between Roberta Odom and the National Park Foundation (a charitable organization working in partnership with the National Park Service) was finalized on September 5, 1990. The contract reserved forever the right of family members to access the cemetery, but did not specify how the cemetery would be maintained. The park assured Mrs. Odom that it was the intent of the National Park Service to maintain the cemetery to National Park Service standards.[82] On April 24, 1991, Roberta Odom signed the deed for donation of the property to the National Park Foundation. However, because the land was outside of the park's acquisition boundary that coincided with the cemetery property line, the National Park Foundation did not convey the property to the National Park Service.[83]

Despite this, the park managed the 3.7-acre parcel as park land. In c.1995, the park built a small visitor parking lot on the parcel along the north side of the approach road, adjoining the cemetery gates (fig. 1.81). Beyond the parking lot were young, dense woods of loblolly pine that had grown up since the driveway

Figure 1.81: Aerial photograph of Poplar Grove National Cemetery and its setting, spring 2004. (Poplar Grove GIS database, Petersburg National Battlefield, annotated by SUNY ESF.)

to the Blaha and Peterson houses had been built in c.1972. The growth of these woods obscured the views of the cemetery and approach road from the west that had characterized the landscape since the Civil War. Additional successional vegetation outside the southwestern wall had grown up around the scattered red-cedars planted in 1937, further changing the once open views looking out from the cemetery west and south to the surrounding farmland. Park managers probably viewed this vegetation as beneficial to screening potential new development in the adjoining fields.

Within the cemetery walls, the landscape continued to lose features as planning was underway for improvements and land acquisition from the 1970s through the 1990s. Losses included specimen trees and a part of the narrow band of woods along the north side due to a blow-down in 1994. The Maltese cross hedge, planted in front of the lodge in c.1872, was removed along with a sole remaining settee in c.1985. Built changes during this time included addition of a frame storage shed behind the garage in c.1982, addition of a steel exterior staircase on the west side of the garage in c.1990 that replaced the earlier pulley system used to access the garage loft; and installation of a new concrete tube well casing in the service yard in c.1990.[84] The main drive and approach road were repaved in 2003, using a sand and pea-gravel topcoat to provide the character of gravel. The park maintained the grave markers by periodic cleaning, leveling, and trimming the surrounding grass, although cutbacks in maintenance staff resulted in a backlog of work.

Recognizing the long-standing problems with the grave markers and the deteriorated condition of the rest of the landscape, the park received preliminary approval in 2002 for a comprehensive rehabilitation project with the stated purpose to "Remove those conditions which impair the ability of the American public to safely access, understand, enjoy and reverently commemorate Poplar Grove National Cemetery as the final resting place [for Civil War soldiers]..."[85] The primary objective addressed the condition of the grave markers. Since little research had been done on the history of the cemetery landscape, the park funded this Cultural Landscape Report as the first step in planning for the project.

Despite the seemingly shortsighted and insensitive changes over the years, Poplar Grove retains profound historic significance as the resting place for many thousands who gave their lives to the country, and for its landscape that reflects the nation's earliest efforts at commemorating its war dead. While no longer an active national cemetery, Poplar Grove still fulfills the intent of Congress, as expressed in its April 31, 1866 Joint Resolution, to keep the resting places of the honored dead sacred forever. Aside from its contemporary role as a place of commemorating past sacrifices and interpreting the Civil War, Poplar Grove does

continue to offer interment for long-lost soldiers of the Petersburg Campaign. In 2003, for the first time since 1957, two burials were made in the cemetery from remains discovered at Peeble's Farm and Ream's Station battlefields, and others will probably occur in the future.[86] While these active funerary uses subtly continue the cemetery's connection with the Civil War, this historic association is greatly weakened through the deteriorated and forlorn character of the landscape. However, once rehabilitated with upright headstones and blocks, new plantings, reinstalled iron tablets, and a new flagstaff as presently proposed, Poplar Grove will once again convey the tragic consequences of the Civil War, the distinctive character of a Civil War-era national cemetery, and the gratitude of a nation to those who gave their lives in service.

ENDNOTES

1 U.S.G.S. Petersburg 15 minute quadrangle map, 1952.

2 Preamble to The National Park Service Organic Act (16 U.S.C. 1 2 3, and 4), 25 August 1916 (39 Stat. 535).

3 During the 1930s, as the War Department was transferring the cemeteries to the National Park Service, it was also establishing several large new cemeteries near major metropolitan areas. The War Department was reorganized as the Department of Defense in 1949, and in 1973, most of the national cemetery system was transferred to the Veterans Administration (now the Department of Veterans Affairs). In 1998, the name of the National Cemetery System was changed to the National Cemetery Administration. Department of Veterans Affairs, "Fact Sheet: The National Cemetery Administration" (Unpublished paper, April 2004).

4 Monro MacCloskey, *Hallowed Ground: Our National Cemeteries* (New York: Richards Rosen Press, 1968), 123-124. City Point National Cemetery was probably not transferred to Petersburg National Military Park because it was still an active cemetery with many open plots. The numerous national cemeteries near Richmond National Battlefield Park, including Richmond, Seven Pines, Glendale, Cold Harbor, and Fort Harrison, were not transferred to the Department of Interior most likely because Richmond National Battlefield Park was not created until 1936, three years after Executive Order 6166.

5 On August 3, 1933, Jas. H. Laubach, Lieutenant Colonel, Quartermaster Corps, wrote a memo to the Quartermaster of the Third Corps Area, Baltimore, concerning the administrative transfer, in which he stated: "It is assumed that from conversations had with representatives of the Interior Department, your advice and recommendations will be sought for some months to come. It is the desire of this office that such assistance as can be rendered be promptly furnished." Aside from the Quarterly Reports, the only example of NPS contact with the War Department regarding the maintenance of Poplar Grove occurred in 1934 over the question of lowering the grave markers.

6 Herbert Olsen, "Poplar Grove National Cemetery History" (Unpublished report prepared for the National Park Service, 31 May 1954), 63; Quartermaster General National Cemetery Quarterly Report forms completed for Poplar Grove, 1933-1937, RG 79, Records of the National Park Service, Entry 31, Military Parks, National Cemeteries, National Archives II, College Park, Maryland (hereafter, Poplar Grove NPS Records, NARA II), box 2704.

7 The last Inspector General inspection of Poplar Grove found in the National Archives is from May 1928 (Robert G. Goetz, Survey of Poplar Grove to Commanding General, Third Corps Area, May 18, 1928; survey made on May 11, 1928, RG 159, Records of the Inspector General, Entry 11, Office of the Inspector General Annual Inspection Reports 1912-1939, Cemeteries, Box 294, National Archives II, College Park, Maryland). The last War Department inspection report was made in 1931 (A. B. Kaempfer, Corps Area Inspector General, Third Corps Area, 28 October 1931, RG 92, Entry 1891, Box 1773, Office of the Quartermaster General, Correspondence, Geographic File, 1922-1935, National Archives II). The function of the Inspector General by this date had apparently been transferred to the Office of the Quartermaster General (Corps Areas).

8 No record of War Department intervention was found in RG 79, the Poplar Grove NPS records at National Archives II. No post-1933 Poplar Grove records were found in RG 92, Office of the Quartermaster General at National Archives II.

9 Colonial National Historical Park, "Creation of Colonial National Historical Park," online article at http://www.nps/gov/archive/colo/Ythanout/colonhp.html.

10 R. M. Holmes, Chief Clerk, Office of National Parks, Buildings, and Reservations, to William H. Green, Superintendent, Poplar Grove National Cemetery, 26 August 1933; Floyd B. Flickinger to J. Walter Coleman, Acting Superintendent Petersburg National Military Park, 16 December 1935, Poplar Grove NPS Records, NARA II, box 2704; Lee A. Wallace, "A History of Petersburg National Battlefield to 1956" (National Park Service History Division, 1983), 89.

11 Olsen, 64, 88. The cemetery superintendent's autonomy from the park superintendent is suggested by the direct correspondence with the Director of the National Park Service during the 1930s and 1940s, Poplar Grove NPS Records, NARA II, boxes 2703-2704.

12 Poplar Grove burial register, digital Access table compiled by Betsy Dinger, Petersburg National Battlefield.

13 Benjamin Moore, Poplar Grover superintendent to H. C. Bryant, Assistant Director National Park Service, 11 October 1935, Poplar Grove NPS Records, NARA II, box 2704; Poplar Grove Quarterly Report for the period ending June 30, 1929, RG 79, Entry 5, Records of the War Department Relating to National Parks, 1892-1937, National Archives II, College Park, Maryland, box 50.

14 Roger Charles Sherry, "Cultural Landscape Report for the Federal Left Flank and Fish Hook Siegeworks" (National Park Service Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, October 2004), 57.

15 Richard Bartlett, "Preliminary Checklist of Records of the NPS Relating to the Civilian Conservation Corps Camps and Works Progress Administration Work Camps" (Unpublished paper, National Archives, June 1945), 3, NARA II.

16 Wallace, 128; Sherry, 55, 58, 95-96.

17 B. Floyd Flickinger, Superintendent Colonial National Monument, to Poplar Grove Superintendent Benjamin Moore, 18 September 1933, Poplar Grove NPS Records, NARA II, box 2704.

18 Quarterly Reports for Poplar Grove National Cemetery, for period ending 31 December 1933, 30 June 1934, 30 September 1935, 31 March 1937, Poplar Grove NPS Records, NARA II, box 2704. Although the 1937 quarterly report was the last report filed at the National Archives, it is likely that CCC crews continued to assist at Poplar Grove until the camp was closed in the spring of 1941.

19 Olsen, 88.

20 Benjamin Moore, Poplar Grove Quarterly Report for the Period Ending September 30, 1933, Poplar Grove NPS Records, NARA II, box 2704. No documentation was found on the exact location of the flowerbeds located near the lodge.

21 Charles E. Shevlin, Forester, to Chief Forester, Office of National Parks, Buildings, and Reservations, 13 February 1934, Poplar Grove NPS Records, NARA II, box 2704.

22 Superintendent Walter Pearce, quarterly report ending March 31, 1932, Poplar Grove NPS War Department Records, NARA II, box 50.

23 This was part of the so-called NPS rustic style. Linda Flint McClelland, P*resenting Nature: The Historic Landscape Design of the National Park Service, 1916- to 1942* (Washington: Department of the Interior, National Register of Historic Places, 1993), 153.

24 At the time, the park service had minimal experience with preserving historic landscapes. With a few exceptions, it was only with the administrative transfer in 1933 that the park service acquired battlefields and other historic sites.

25 Associate Director A. E. Demaray to Acting Superintendent B. Floyd Flickinger, 27 October 1933, Poplar Grove NPS Records, NARA II, box 2704.

26 Ray F. Wyrick, "Modernizing Old Sections: Redevelopment Work in Greenwood at Rockford," *Park and Cemetery*, volume 4, no. 5 (July 1931), 142-143.

27 "Resetting Leaning Headstones," *Park and Cemetery,* volume 35, no. 4 (June 1925), page 107.

28 Cemetery superintendent R. G. Anderson, Quarterly Report for Yorktown National Cemetery," for quarter October 1, 1933-December 31, 1933 (assumed date), RG 79, Entry 11, NPS Central Classified File, 1933-49, National Cemeteries, NARA II, files for Yorktown National Cemetery (hereafter, Yorktown NPS records, NARA II). Another reason for leveling the grave markers at Yorktown may have been to avoid needed repairs. A big windstorm had swept across Yorktown in August 1933, probably leading to damaged grave markers, similar to the impact from the 1915 tornado at Poplar Grove. The grave markers at Fredericksburg National Cemetery, which was also transferred to NPS, were not laid flat.

29 Acting Superintendent Flickinger to Director National Park Service, 26 December 1933, Yorktown NPS records, NARA II.

30 National Park Service Arno Cammerer to Superintendent Colonial National Monument, 3 January 1934, Yorktown NPS Records, NARA II. The brick inclosure wall was probably not considered foreign as brick was the favored building material at Colonial National Monument. The Second Empire-style Meigs lodge was, however, probably considered another foreign object in the landscape; a new lodge was specified as part of a six-year improvement plan. This plan was not implemented and the original lodge remains today. At an undetermined date, the tall War Department-era flagstaff was also removed from the center of the cemetery and replaced with a small flagpole near the cemetery entrance that was not visible from the surrounding Revolutionary War battlefields.

31 A transcript of the telegraph was contained in a letter from Raleigh C. Taylor, Acting Superintendent Petersburg National Military Park, to Director NPS, 1 August 1939, Poplar Grove NPS Records, NARA II, box 2704.

32 NPS Associate Director A. E. Demaray to Mr. Roy Hatten, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 13 January 1936, Poplar Grove NPS Records, NARA II, box 2704. Demaray cited the date of the work in response to a complaint by Mr. Hatten. No records of the grave marker project and CCC labor were found during research in the National Archives.

33 Acting Superintendent B. Floyd Flickinger to Director NPS, 14 July 1934; R. C. Jennings, Acting Associate Director NPS, 23 July 1934 (authorizing sale of slabs), Poplar Grove NPS Records, NARA II, box 2704. The house built with the headstones is today known as the tombstone house.

34 Manning C. Voorhis, Junior Historian and J. Walter Coleman, Acting Superintendent, Petersburg National Battlefield, to Verne E. Chatelain, NPS Acting Assistant Director, 3 January 1936, Poplar Grove NPS Records, NARA II, box 2704.

35 Cemetery superintendent Benjamin F. Moore to Director NPS, 6 November 1935, Poplar Grove NPS Records, NARA II, box 2704.

36 Edward W. Patterson, 30th District Kansas, House of Representatives, to Arno B. Cammerer, Director, NPS, 13 April 1937, Poplar Grove NPS Records, NARA II, box 2704.

37 NPS Director Arno B. Cammerer to Honorable Edward Patterson, House of Representatives, 26 April 1937, Poplar Grove NPS Records, NARA II, box 2704.

38 Superintendent O. F. Worthington, Jr., "Report of Conditions in the Poplar Grove National Cemetery," circa July 13, 1939, Poplar Grove NPS Records, NARA II, box 2704.

39 Quarterly report for period 31 March 1935 through 31 March 1944, Poplar Grove NPS Records, NARA II, box 2704.

40 NPS Director Arno Cammerer to Superintendent, Poplar Grove National Cemetery, 23 May 1940, Poplar Grove NPS Records, NARA II, box 2704.

41 U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, "History of Government Furnished Headstones and Markers," http://www.cem.va.gov/cem/hist/hmhist.asp. The earliest known government flat marker is at grave 1745, installed in 1939.

42 Cemetery Superintendent Moore to Director NPS, postal telegraph, 28 May 1940, Poplar Grove NPS Records, NARA II, box 2704.

43 Superintendent Benjamin Moore, "Six-Year Advance Program of Federal Construction of Poplar Grove National Cemetery," 5 June 1934, Poplar Grove NPS Records, NARA II, box 2704.

44 W. J. Endersbee, Associate Supervisor Emergency Conservation Work, Proposal, ECW project no. 74, 16 April 1936, Poplar Grove NPS Records, NARA II, box 2704.

45 Poplar Grove Quarterly Reports for periods ending 31 March 1937, 30 September 1937, 30 June 1939, Poplar Grove Records, NARA II, box 2704. The cedars are shown on N. A. Buckley, "Poplar Grove National Cemetery, Part of the Master Plan Petersburg National Military Park, Virginia" (detailed planting plan), c.1941, drawing PETE 325 8041, National Park Service Technical Information Center, Lakewood, Colorado (hereafter, NPS TIC). The precast concrete caps are specified on W. J. Carnes, "Proposed Improvement of Brick Wall at Poplar Grove National Cemetery," 29 May 1937, with notation "Job completed September 7, 1937, " drawing PETE 325 2056, NPS TIC. The inclosure wall today retains what appear to be the original sandstone pilaster caps.

46 Buckley, detailed planting plan, c.1941; N. A. Buckley, "Poplar Grove National Cemetery, Part of the Master Plan Petersburg National Military Park, Virginia" (rendered plan), c. 1941, drawing PETE 325 2073, NPS TIC. No textual materials from the master plan were found.

47 Although this plan inventoried each tree, the key on the table that indicated species and size only inventoried the mature trees.

48 Other national cemeteries in Virginia, including Cold Harbor, City Point, Glendale, and Fort Richmond, have filled in walks and drives with burials during the twentieth century. Personal observation by author, 2006.

49 Poplar Grove Quarterly Reports, for the period ending June 30, 1942 and June 30, 1943, Poplar Grove NPS Records, NARA II, box 2704.

50 Martin Conway, "History of Petersburg National Battlefield, 1957-1982" (National Park Service History Division, 1983), 4-5; Sherry, 60-61. The 1965 master plan and MISSION 66 documents were not examined for this project. According to correspondence from Superintendent Bob Kirby, the master plan consisted primarily of construction schematics. E-mail, Bob Kirby to Betsy Dinger, 18 September 2006.

51 Conway, 18, 23, 81, 85.

52 Olsen, 63.

53 NPS Assistant Director Jackson Price to Arvo Niemi, 3 May 1957; Staff Historian Roy Appleman to Regional Director, 1 April 1957, RG 79, Series A 58, Poplar Grove National Cemetery, NARA II, (hereafter, Poplar Grove NPS Records A58, NARA II), box 537. No information was found on how long this caretaker position was maintained.

54 NPS Design & Construction Division, Region One, "Burial Location Plan, Poplar Grove National Cemetery" (undated, c.1954), Drawing PETE 325-2037, NPS TIC; NPS Design & Construction Division, Region One, "Historical Land Status Map, Poplar Grove National Cemetery (30 April 1954), Drawing PETE 325-2038, NPS TIC.

55 NPS Assistant Director Jackson Price to Arvo Niemi, 3 May 1957, Poplar Grove NPS Records A58, NARA II, box 537.

56 Poplar Grove Burial Record.

57 Lieutenant Colonel John J. Flynn, Quartermaster Corps, Memorial Division, to Bernard Campbell, Petersburg National Military Park, 8 May 1957, Poplar Grove NPS Records A58, NARA II, box 537; NPS, "Quarterly Summary of Interments and Available Grave Sites," Poplar Grove, January-March 1958: Known, 2,205; Unknown: 4,110; total: 6,315. Reservations of Grave Sites Made During Month: 0. Total Grave sites remaining available: 0. "Remarks: There are seven reservations of which four are in the same gravesite with their spouse; and three are adjoining gravesites." It is not known if these reservations were subsequently used.

58 Poplar Grove visitation statistics, 1973-1977, in "Legislative Materials to support Acquisition of Additional Acreage for Poplar Grove National Cemetery a part of Petersburg National Battlefield" (Unpublished report, NPS Mid-Atlantic Region, finalized 10 February 1978), 8, NPS TIC, drawing PETE D-58.

59 Appleman to Regional Director, 1 April 1957.

60 Mrs. Arvo N. Niemi, Chicago, to NPS Assistant Director Jackson E. Price, 22 April 1957, Poplar Grove NPS Records A58, NARA II, box 537.

61 Appleman to Regional Director, 1 April 1957.

62 Bernard Campbell, Superintendent, Petersburg National Military Park, to Regional Director, 7 June 1957; clipping on Memorial Day Service at Poplar Grove, *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, 30 May 1957, Poplar Grove NPS Records A58, NARA II, box 537.

63 Richard Underwood, Petersburg park staff, conversation with author, 14 December 2006. The tablets remain in the loft of the garage.

64 Plan of Poplar Grove National Cemetery, c.1957; a gray-scale version of this plan was also created, located in the Petersburg National Battlefield administrative records for Poplar Grove, file 1975-1977, Hickory Hill administrative offices, Petersburg (hereafter, "Poplar Grove administrative records"). The numbering on this plan was probably based on the c.1954 "Burial Location Plan" that was included in the 1954 History of Poplar Grove by Herbert Olsen (this c.1954 plan does not show the block designations). The small iron tablets identifying the radiating drives appear in a 1968 photograph by Fred Bell, Poplar Grove administrative files. No evidence prior to 1957 of the letter designation to these drives, or to the block designations, was found.

65 National Park Service, "Task Directive: Cemetery Improvements at Poplar Grove, Petersburg National Cemetery" (Denver Service Center, finalized 1 March 1978), NPS TIC, document PETE D-36.

66 Memorandum, Ray Blaker to Superintendent Wallace B. Elms, 16 December 1975, Poplar Grove NPS Records A58, NARA II, box 537.

67 Deed, Russell W. Garner and Audrey E. Garner to L. G. Odom and Robert E. Odom, 24 February 1943, copy in Poplar Grove administrative records.

68 Existing grave stones in Odom cemetery: JONES, E. Everett 1885-1981, Nellie E. 1885-1971; ODOM, Roberta E. 1914-1993, L. Grady 1891-1971.

69 George Whitman, Jr., "Plat Showing .054-Ac Parcel Surveyed for Mrs. L. G. Odom," 29 July 1972, Poplar Grove administrative records; Deed, Robert E. Odom to Heirs of Lester Grady Odom, Book 157, page 313, Dinwiddie County land records.

70 William B. Redmon, NPS Regional Solicitor to Associate Regional Director, Mid-Atlantic Region, 8 March 1974: "...It is assumed that the local landowner who built an access road leading to the right-of-way [approach road] two years ago...", Poplar Grove administrative records.

71 Underwood, 14 December 2006.

72 Memo, Petersburg Superintendent Larry Hakel to Regional Director, Mid-Atlantic Region, 11 February 1974, Poplar Grove administrative records. The removed features were photographed in 1968 by Fred Bell, Poplar Grove administrative records, and do not appear in photographs taken in 1978, "Legislative Materials to support Acquisition of Additional Acreage for Poplar Grove National Cemetery" (Petersburg National Battlefield, 10 February 1978), NPS TIC, File PETE D-58.

73 Memo, Petersburg Superintendent Larry Hakel to Regional Director, Mid-Atlantic Region, 11 February 1974, Poplar Grove administrative records. The removed features were photographed in 1968 by Fred Bell, Poplar Grove administrative records; and do not appear in photographs taken in 1978, "Legislative Materials to support Acquisition of Additional Acreage for Poplar Grove National Cemetery (Petersburg National Battlefield, 10 February 1978), NPS TIC, File PETE D-58.

74 National Park Service, "Development/Study Package Proposal, Cemetery Improvements at Poplar Grove," approved 8 November 1976 and finalized 2 August 1977, in "Task Directive: Cemetery Improvements at Poplar Grove, Petersburg National Cemetery" (Denver Service Center, finalized 1 March 1978), NPS TIC, document PETE D-36.

75 Task Directive, 1978, 1.

76 Livas & Associates, "Miscellaneous Improvements, Poplar Grove Cemetery" (set of eight plans, cover sheet dated 15 December 1977), NPS TIC, Drawing PETE 325-41008.

77 Task Directive, 1978, 1, 4.

78 Superintendent Wallace B. Elms to NPS Regional Director, Mid-Atlantic Region, 1 July 1977, Poplar Grove administrative records.

79 "Legislative Materials to support Acquisition of Additional Acreage for Poplar Grove National Cemetery a part of Petersburg National Battlefield" (Unpublished report, NPS Mid-Atlantic Region, finalized 10 February 1978), 8, NPS TIC, PETE D-58.

80 Included in the "Legislative Materials" package is a communication from Senator Bill Bradley's office dated 29 October 1980 requesting the status of a "housing project proposed—next to Petersburg N.B.P."

81 Superintendent Frank J. Deckert to Regional Director, Mid-Atlantic Region, 9 September 1987, Poplar Grove administrative files.

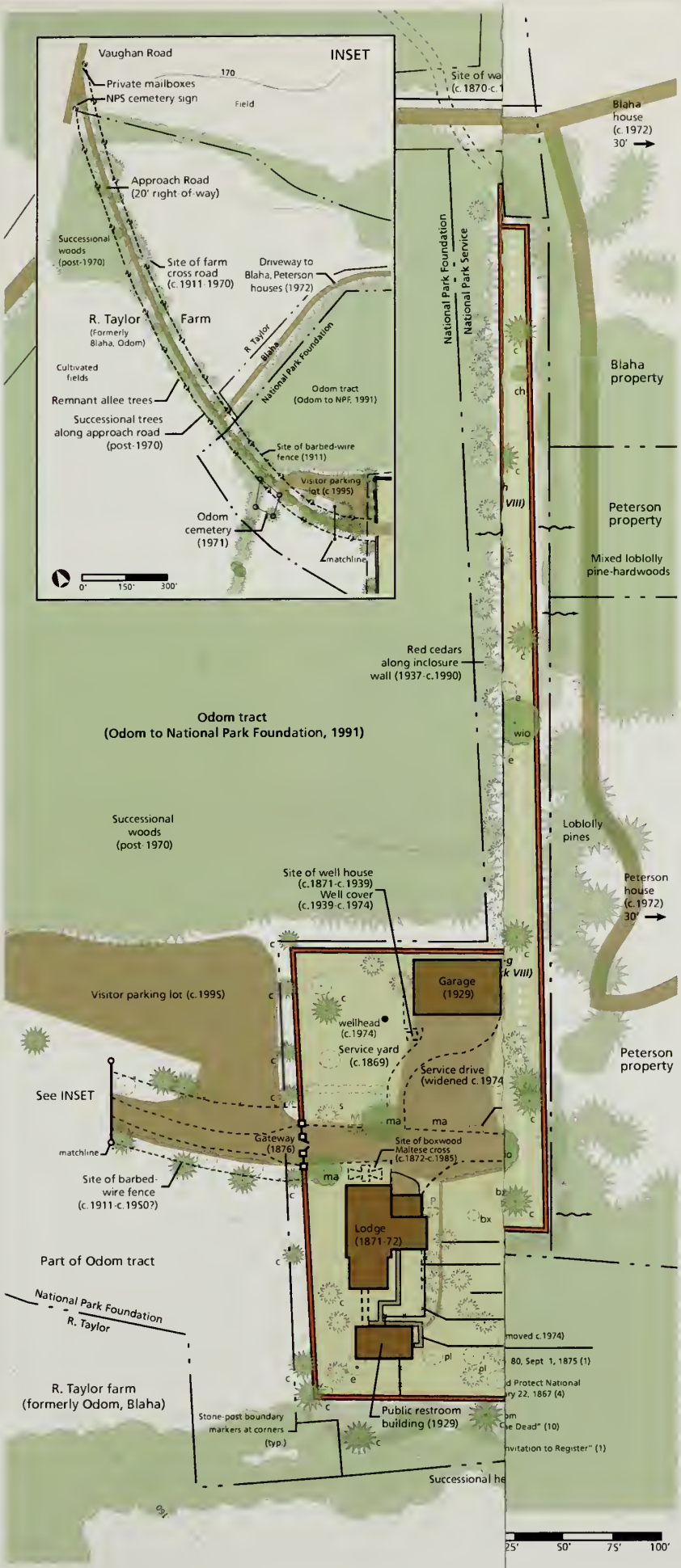
82 In a letter to Roberta Odom dated 8 March 1990, prior to the contract, Superintendent Frank Deckert wrote: "While we cannot obligate future funds or services in any of the documents that enable your donation to occur, you can be assured that it is the intent of the National Park Service (NPS) that the donated property (including your family cemetery) will be maintained to NPS standards." Poplar Grove administrative records.

83 "Individual Offer to Donate Real Property" (contract) signed by National Park Foundation on 5 September 1990, in letter, Alan A. Rubin, President, National Park Foundation to Gerlad L. Kirwan, Chief, NPS Land Resources Division, 6 September 1990; Memorandum, Gerald L. Kirwan to Superintendent, Petersburg National Battlefield, 9 April 1991, Poplar Grove administrative records; Tracy Allen, NPS Philadelphia Lands Office, telephone conversation with John Auwaerter, 17 April 2007.

84 Underwood, 14 December 2006.

85 "Restore Facilities, Resources & Character Defining Elements to National Cemetery Standards—POGR," PMIS 89424, created 8 April 2002, updated 24 January 2005, Petersburg National Battlefield.

86 Poplar Grove burial register; Ben Bagwell, "Poplar Grove Buries Three Unidentified Union Soldiers," Petersburg Progress-Index, 27 May 2003, http://www.progress-index.com.



Cultural Landscape Report

Poplar Grove National Cemetery

Petersburg National Battlefield
Dinwiddie County, Virginia

National Park Service Period 1933-Present

OLMSTED CENTER
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National Park Service
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
www.nps.gov/oclp

in partnership with
Department of Landscape Architecture
SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry

SOURCES

1. PETE GIS Data
2. Proposed planting plan, NPS, 1937
3. Master plan, NPS, c.1941
4. Aerial photograph, spring 2004
5. Burial plan, NPS, c.1957

DRAWN BY

John Auwaerter, Illustrator CS3, 2009

LEGEND

- Removed during period
- Property line
- Inclosure (perimeter) wall
- Grave markers (black dash = added grave)
- B-g — Cemetery division-section
- Building
- Road
- Walk
- Iron tablet, key reference
- Gun monument
- Settee
- Fence
- Drive marker
- Conifer tree
- Deciduous tree/shrub
- Lawn
- Naturalized English ivy
- 10' contour
- Drainage through inclosure wall
- Wetland

NOTES

1. Plan represents landscape conditions in 2006, showing features removed during the period by dashed lines.
2. All features shown in approximate scale and location.
3. Division and section designations changed to block designation by NPS, and radiating avenues designated by letters A-F, c.1957.

Drawing 1.4

Cultural Landscape Report

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Drawing 1.4

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Poplar Grove National Cemetery, an eight-acre burial ground established in 1866 and presently closed to new burials, contains approximately 6,779 graves, all but one percent of which are Civil War soldiers. The cemetery, part of Petersburg National Battlefield, is one of fourteen national cemeteries within the National Park System. It is not considered part of the National Cemetery System that is separately administered by the National Cemetery Administration, an agency of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The Poplar Grove landscape retains many of its character-defining features dating from the cemetery's initial development by the War Department during the nineteenth century as well as much of its historic rural setting. The approach road, brick inclosure wall, gates, lodge, and rostrum are standard government features that, along with the burial plan, characterize Poplar Grove as a first generation national cemetery. The cemetery also retains several later features added during the early twentieth century by the War Department including a restroom building and garage, as well as signs and some plantings from civilian administration under the National Park Service that began in 1933. The conversion of the formerly upright headstones and blocks into flat markers in 1934 sets Poplar Grove apart from its sister national cemeteries. Although well kept, the landscape has a barren feeling that has resulted largely from the loss of vegetation and small-scale features.

This chapter provides a narrative overview of the landscape's existing (2009) condition, supported by photographs and a graphic plan. The narrative also describes the cemetery's environmental conditions, regional context, and operations pertaining to the landscape.[1] For the purposes of this report, the cemetery landscape is described as the area presently owned or managed by the National Park Service, and the adjoining private property that constitutes the cemetery's setting. While the National Park Service does not presently own any of the land outside of the cemetery inclosure wall, it is working with adjoining owners to preserve the rural setting.

REGIONAL CONTEXT

Poplar Grove National Cemetery is in the Rohoic District of Dinwiddie County, approximately one-half mile south of the Petersburg city boundary and roughly halfway between Interstate 85 to the west and Interstate 95 to the east (fig. 2.1). While much of Dinwiddie County is rural in character, the area surrounding Poplar Grove is a suburban patchwork of woods, farms, residential development,

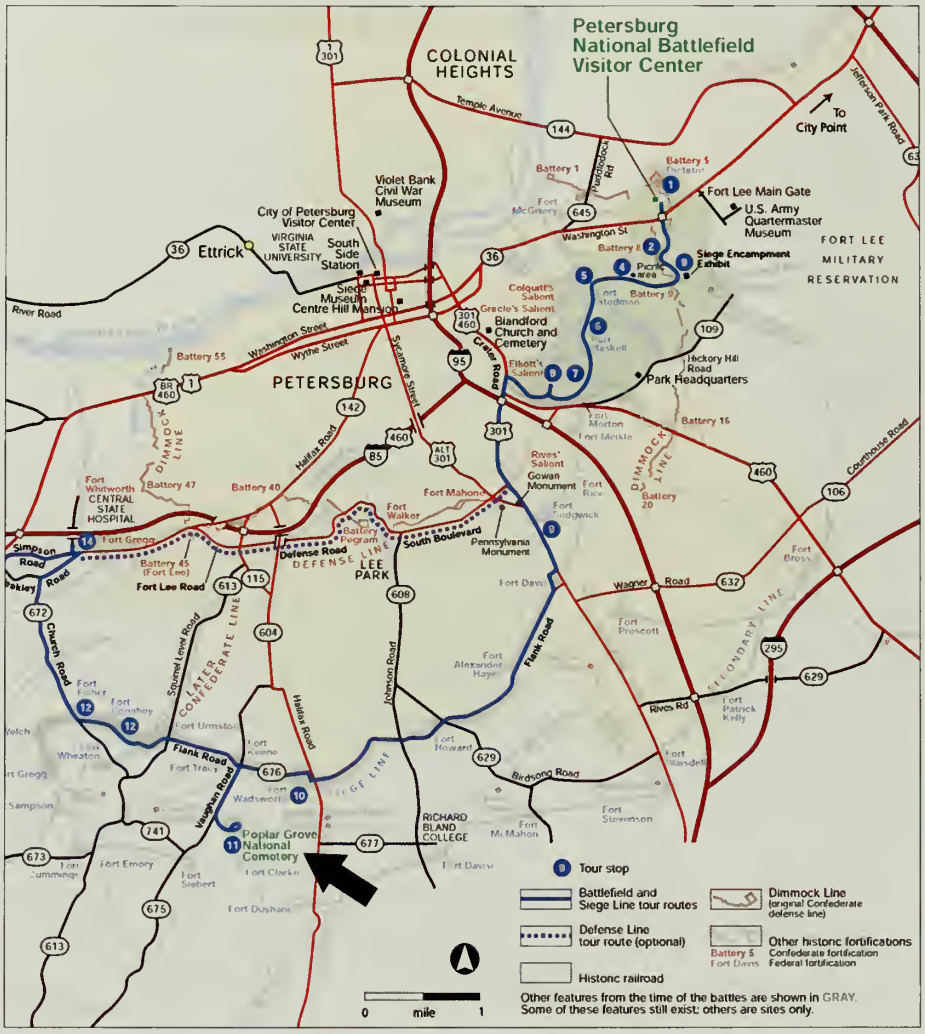


Figure 2.1: Map of Petersburg National Battlefield showing park lands and the Siege Line Tour in relation to the city of Petersburg (yellow area) and Poplar Grove National Cemetery (indicated by black arrow). (Petersburg National Battlefield park brochure, 1996, annotated by SUNY ESF.)

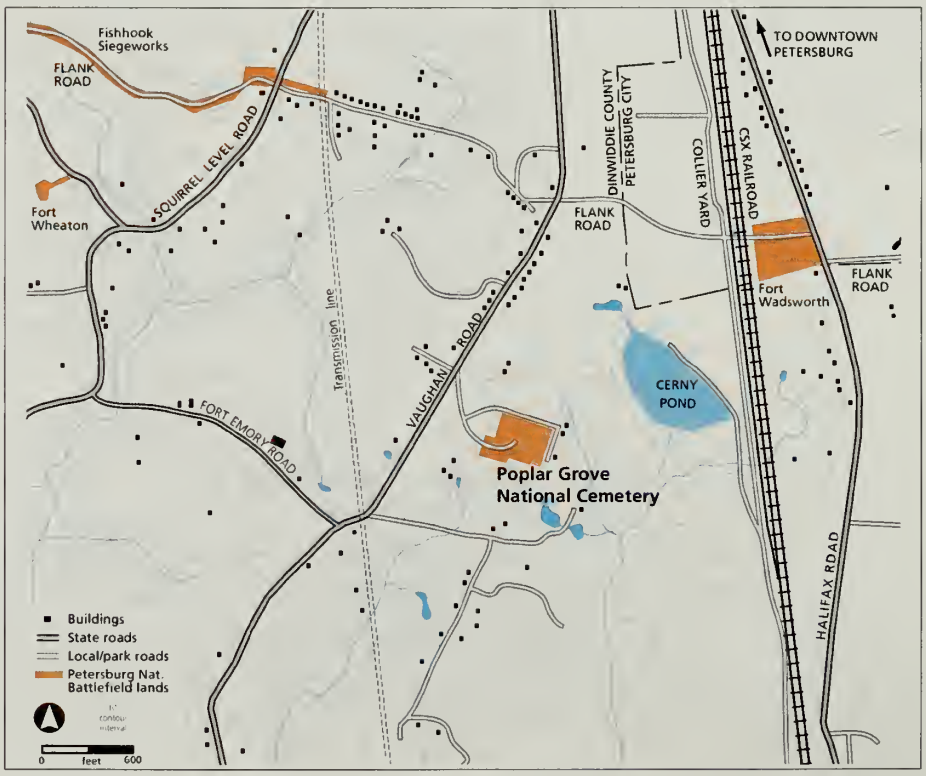


Figure 2.2: The setting of Poplar Grove National Cemetery showing city boundary, roads, rail line, suburban development, and park lands. (SUNY ESF.)

Figure 2.3: A suburban residence on Vaughan Road opposite the cemetery entrance, looking northwest with the cemetery sign at left and the approach road at right. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

and light industry. Situated within the Richmond Metropolitan Statistical Area, Dinwiddie County has experienced a growth rate of over six percent since 2000, with a population of 26,082 in 2008. The city of Petersburg declined in population by four percent since 2000 to 32,445 residents in 2006.[2]

Petersburg National Battlefield's sixteen-mile Siege Line Tour includes Poplar Grove National Cemetery as stop #11. The tour route follows Flank Road (Route 676), originally completed by the Civilian Conservation Corps as a park road in 1934, extended to Vaughan Road (Route 675) in 1944, and then completed through the Federal Left Flank west of Squirrel Level Road in the 1960s. The National Park Service transferred ownership of Flank Road east of Vaughan Road to the City of Petersburg in 1973, but the newer section in the Federal Left Flank remains in park ownership. Poplar Grove is one-half mile south of Flank Road on Vaughan Road, a narrow two-lane road. South of the cemetery are the sites of several fortifications from the Union Army's rear siege line, including Forts Clarke and Siebert, that are not part of the national battlefield.

The landscape of the Siege Line Tour near Poplar Grove is characterized by secondary roads, cultivated fields, woods, and suburban houses (figs. 2.2, 2.3). Northeast of the cemetery is Cerny Pond, a ten-acre water body constructed after 1955. Beyond the pond and about 2,500 feet east of the cemetery is the CSX "S" Line railroad and Collier Yard. This line was the Petersburg & Weldon Railroad during the Civil War and later became the Atlantic (Seaboard) Coast Line Railroad. It is a 126-mile corridor between Petersburg and Raleigh, North Carolina that is currently being studied for reconstruction as part of the Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor.[3] The railroad and much of the modern development in the vicinity are not visible from within the cemetery.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

Poplar Grove National Cemetery is near the Fall Line, the boundary zone between the Tidewater and the Piedmont, in a broad level area characterized by overlap of Coastal Plain sedimentary soils on Appalachian Plateau bedrock, with numerous swamps and minor ravines created by small streams.[4] Native surface soils within the cemetery and along the approach road are Mattaponi and Slagle sandy loams,

which are moderately well drained and very deep soils formed in loamy and clayey sediments deposited by ancient rivers and seas. Soils are generally sixty inches deep and have slow permeability with medium surface runoff. Ph ranges from strongly acid to extremely acid. Both Mattaponi and Slagle are considered good soils for hardwoods and conifers.[5] Initial development of the cemetery probably resulted in some intermixing of these soils, but probably did not alter the overall composition. No record was found suggesting that substantial amounts of topsoil were imported to the site. Trees commonly found on Mattaponi soils include loblolly pine, white oak, Virginia pine, and sweetgum; on Slagle soils, loblolly pine, sweet-gum, southern red oak, water oak, and yellow poplar (tulip-tree).[6] There are no known rare or endangered plants or animals within or adjoining the cemetery.

The climate in southeastern Virginia is classified as humid subtropical, with short winters and long summers. Poplar Grove is located on the boundary between USDA Plant Hardiness Zones 7A and 7B, with minimum low temperature of zero to ten degrees (Fahrenheit). Average daily maximum temperatures reach a high of eighty-nine degrees during July. Precipitation averages between three and four inches per month, with a total yearly average of 45.76 inches. Snowfall totals 10.4 inches in an average year.[7]

OPERATIONS OVERVIEW

Poplar Grove National Cemetery is open year-round to the public daily from dawn to dusk. The main public event at the cemetery is Memorial Day, when each grave is decorated with a small United States flag and a ceremony is held near the rostrum on the lodge grounds.

Aside from the standard metal park sign on Vaughan Road, the cemetery is only identified by two small shield-shaped plaques on the entrance gates that read "U.S. National Cemetery." There is no sign with the name Poplar Grove near the cemetery entrance. Visitors generally arrive by car or bus and park in the small lot outside of the cemetery gates. Cars are allowed to drive into the cemetery along the main drive only if necessary for accessibility. If two cars need to pass on the main drive within the burial grounds, they must ride over gravestones.

A park ranger is stationed in the lodge, which serves as a contact station, on a part-time basis from mid-June through mid-August to provide interpretation and assist with inquiries into burials and grave locations. The lodge is not used as a residence and is not furnished for visitor orientation or interpretation. Exterior interpretive materials include Lincoln's Gettysburg Address plaque affixed to the front of the lodge, a faded cemetery plan and burial register posted in large signs to either side of the flagstaff, and a sepia-tone brochure that discusses the establishment of the

cemetery and the search and recovery program. Interpretation of the landscape and development of the cemetery is generally provided verbally by park rangers. Visitor amenities are limited to a public restroom building at the rear of the lodge. There are no benches within the cemetery, aside from a staff picnic table in the service yard.

Maintenance of the landscape is under the direction of the Facility Manager of Petersburg National Battlefield. There is currently no dedicated maintenance staff, but rather on average three to five park staff or inmates routinely mow and clean the site once every three weeks from April to November. Maintenance operations and equipment are housed in the cemetery garage and its surrounding service yard, which is open to view from the rest of the cemetery.

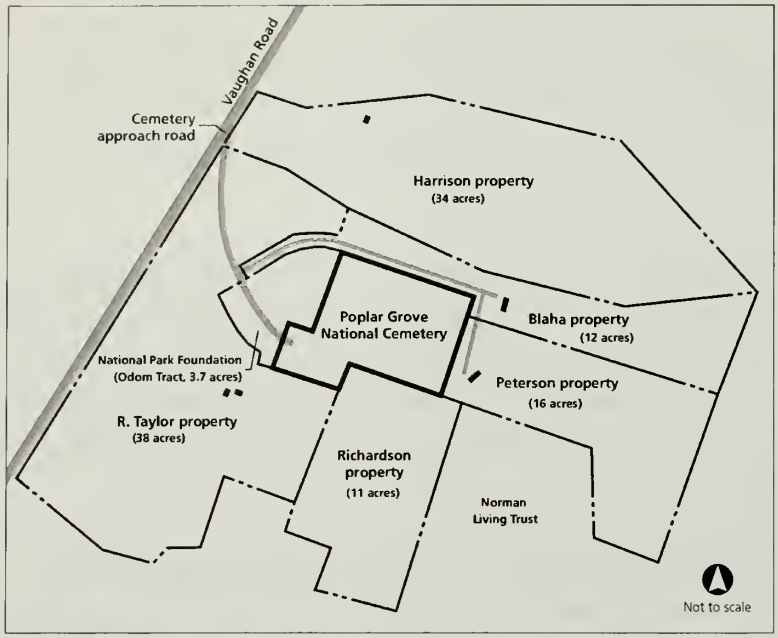
Maintenance work is primarily focused on lawn mowing and trimming, which is done by riding mowers and power trimmers. The park does not have an approved program of fertilization or herbicide use for the lawn. Hazard trees are removed as needed, but are not currently being replaced, pending an approved landscape treatment plan. In addition to vegetation maintenance, the park cleans and levels some of the grave markers each year with seasonal staff, but total annual time spent on this is usually no more than fifty hours. In the inclosure (perimeter outside of the wall), the park clears a narrow corridor to allow access to the wall for inspection purposes, and to clean the drains of debris. The park does not maintain the adjoining woods, which are on private property. Along the cemetery approach, the park maintains the parking lot and a small private cemetery, and mows the shoulders along the approach road.

CEMETERY LANDSCAPE

The following description of the cemetery landscape is organized into six character areas: cemetery setting and approach (private land), inclosure (federally owned perimeter), lodge grounds, service yard, and burial grounds. Existing conditions are documented in photographs keyed to drawing 2.1 (Existing Conditions Plan).

CEMETERY SETTING AND APPROACH

Poplar Grove National Cemetery is set back from Vaughan Road behind farm fields and woods. The National Park Service owns only the 8.7 acres within the cemetery walls; the surrounding land is privately owned, with the approach road subject to a federal right-of-way granted to the federal government in 1877 (the road is an original part of the cemetery as established in 1866). The 1877 deed did not state the width of the right-of-way, but the National Park Service Regional Solicitor determined in 1976 that it amounted to the historical usage of thirty feet



in width.[8] The head of the approach road at Vaughan Road is located on or adjoining the thirty-four acre Harrison property (fig. 2.4; see also fig. 1.81). Most of the land between Vaughan Road and the cemetery is part of the thirty-eight acre farm owned by Richard Taylor that was previously owned by the Flower, Blaha, and Odom families. This property is used for growing corn in the fields bordering the approach road (fig. 2.5). A barn and fenced corral on the farm are visible from the cemetery gates (fig. 2.6).

Between the R. Taylor farm and the cemetery is a 3.7-acre parcel owned by the National Park Foundation, a private non-profit partner of the National Park Service (see fig. 2.4). The foundation intended to give this parcel, known as the Odom tract after the previous owner, to the National Park Service when it acquired it in 1991, but was unable to do so because of the park's land acquisition boundary that ended at the cemetery property line. The land was historically fields, but the main part of the tract north of the approach road fell out of agricultural use by the 1960s. Since the 1970s natural succession has given way to woods of loblolly pine and mixed deciduous trees.

Figure 2.4 (top): Map of current (2009) property ownership surrounding Poplar Grove National Cemetery. (SUNY ESF.)

Figure 2.5 (middle): Cultivated fields of the R. Taylor farm looking southeast from the cemetery approach road. In the distance is the farmhouse. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

Figure 2.6 (bottom): The barn and pasture on the R. Taylor farm, view from the approach road near the cemetery gates looking southwest. The mown field in the foreground is part the Odom tract owned by the National Park Foundation. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

The parcel includes the cemetery parking lot, Odom family cemetery, and a part of the approach road.

Along the north side and east sides of the cemetery and Odom tract is the twelve-acre Blaha property that was historically woods (see fig. 2.4). The tract includes a gravel driveway built in c.1972 that extends from the approach road and parallels the north side of the inclosure wall (fig. 2.7). The thin margin of woods along the cemetery boundary allows views of a utility line that runs along the driveway and a field that is used as a vineyard. The driveway leads to a house located off the northeast corner of the cemetery (fig. 2.8). This driveway continues south to an adjoining house on the sixteen-acre Peterson property (fig. 2.9). Both of these houses were built in c.1972 on land that was historically wooded. To the south of the cemetery are undeveloped woods that are part of the eleven-acre Richardson property (see figs. 2.4, 1.83).

The 1,025-foot approach road to Poplar Grove National Cemetery extends southeasterly from Vaughan Road in an arc

Figure 2.7 (top): The private drive to the Blaha and Peterson houses, looking from the northwest corner of the cemetery, with partially cleared land in the distance. The orange stake marks the National Park Service property boundary. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

Figure 2.8 (middle): The Blaha house, looking east with the cemetery inclosure wall in the foreground. This area was historically woods. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

Figure 2.9 (bottom): The Peterson house, looking northeast with the cemetery inclosure wall in the foreground. This area was historically woods. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

to the cemetery gates. The western part of the approach road (700 feet) is located on the R. Taylor Farm and the eastern part (325 feet) is within the National Park Foundation-owned Odom Tract. The driveway to the Blaha and Peterson houses branches off the north side of the approach road approximately 680 feet from Vaughan Road. The entrance to the approach road, bordered by woods that have grown up on former farm fields, is marked by an inconspicuous National Park Service sign (fig. 2.10). A cluster of private mailboxes at the north corner of the road belong to the Blaha and Peterson houses east of the cemetery and houses along the west side of Vaughan Road. The approach road is approximately twelve feet or one lane wide with mown shoulders, and is paved in asphalt with a sand top coat (fig. 2.11). The land approximately ten feet to either side of the pavement is mown and is lined by groves of trees that form hedgerows along the adjoining fields. These trees are a mixture of volunteer and a small number of planted specimens that are remnants of a former allee that extended from Vaughan Road to the cemetery gates. The allee trees are identified by circular metal inventory

Figure 2.10 (top): The approach road entrance to Poplar Grove National Cemetery, looking south on Vaughan Road. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

Figure 2.11 (middle): The approach road looking west toward Vaughan Road from the private driveway (at right) showing pavement and bordering trees. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

Figure 2.12 (bottom): The approach road, looking east through the Odom tract showing adjoining woods on former farm fields. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

tags, probably installed in the late 1930s by National Park Service as part of the cemetery master plan completed in 1941.

Through the National Park Foundation-owned Odom tract, the approach road is lined by woods and remnant allee trees (fig. 2.12). On the south side of the road approximately 200 feet west of the cemetery gates is a small (0.05 acre) family burial plot established by the Odom family in 1971 (fig. 2.13). Surrounded by a cyclone fence, the cemetery contains two headstones, one with two graves dating to 1971 and 1981, and the other with two graves dating to 1971 and 1993. A government-issued grave marker is located at the foot of the grave of Lester Grady, who served in the Navy. The cemetery was acquired by National Park Foundation as part of the Odom tract in 1991 based on the condition that family members would be allowed access to the cemetery, and on the intent that the park would maintain the cemetery according to National Park Service standards.

Across from the Odom cemetery is the visitor parking lot, which dominates the view upon approach to the cemetery gates (fig. 2.14). Built by the park in c.1995, the lot has an irregular boundary measuring 175 feet long by forty feet wide, with separate entry and exit points at the east and west ends, and a narrow island separating the lot from the approach road. The parking lot is unmarked and can accommodate two buses and approximately ten cars.

Figure 2.13 (top): The Odom cemetery, looking southeast from the approach road. The split-rail fence is on the adjoining R. Taylor farm. In front of the cemetery is a remnant allee tree. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

Figure 2.14 (bottom): The visitor parking lot, looking east from the approach road toward the cemetery gates. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

INCLOSURE

Poplar Grove National Cemetery is enclosed by a four-foot high red brick wall that measures 2,700 feet long . Known in national cemeteries as the inclosure wall, the structure was completed in 1876 and is divided into 132 twenty-foot long sections divided by piers capped with sandstone caps (fig. 2.15). Portions of the wall are in poor condition due to loose and deteriorated mortar and settling. At eight low points, there are openings in the wall that drain the cemetery through grass swales. Several openings contain brick or concrete scuppers that extend beyond the wall. The opening with the greatest drainage, at the lowpoint of the cemetery (northwest side) feeds into a concrete spillway or ditch that runs through a concrete culvert below the private driveway into wetlands to the north (fig. 2.16). The ditch does not adequately drain the interior of the cemetery, leading to standing water remaining within the burial grounds after periods of rain. Similar problems occur at another drainage opening along the south side of the wall.

The cemetery entrance gate, built as part of the inclosure wall in 1876, consists of individual wrought-iron swinging gates hung from granite posts with chamfered edges and

Figure 2.15 (top): The inclosure wall, looking along the south side of the cemetery at Block II. This view shows an area of poor drainage. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

Figure 2.16 (middle): The drainage opening at the cemetery lowpoint in Block XVIII, looking north with the Blaha driveway in the background. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

Figure 2.17 (bottom): The cemetery entrance gate, looking west from inside the cemetery. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

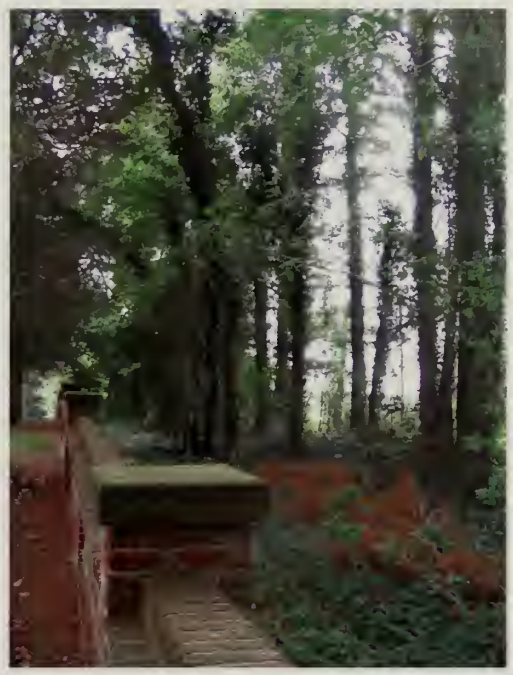


Figure 2.18 (top left): The cemetery entrance gate looking east into the cemetery showing plaques added after 1933. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

Figure 2.19 (bottom): A typical stone boundary marking a corner of the federal property, with later pipe and stake markers. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

Figure 2.20 (top right): The woods along the north side of the cemetery, looking west showing English ivy groundcover and high canopy. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

pyramidal tops (fig. 2.17). The structure has a central vehicular entrance with paired gates, flanked on each side by pedestrian entrances with single gates. The vehicular gates swing inward to iron stops. Cast metal shields with the inscription "U.S. National Cemetery," added in c.1935, are affixed to the piers to either side of the vehicular entrance (fig. 2.18).

Outside of the wall, National Park Service-owned land ranges from approximately two to fifteen feet in width. The corners of the federally owned cemetery property are marked by stone boundary posts installed in 1877, along with later pipes and orange stakes (fig. 2.19). The outside face of the wall abuts a cleared area of approximately five feet. Beyond this cleared area are naturalized plantings and woods (fig. 2.20). The woods on portions of the west and south sides of the cemetery provide solid walls of vegetation, while the woods on the north and east are thin and allow screened views to the adjoining houses, fields, and driveway. The woods consist primarily of loblolly pine, red maple, sumac, sweet-gum, and oak. Several large loblolly pines along the north enclosure are declining or dead. English ivy, escaped from plantings on the interior face of the inclosure wall made in c.1888, is a common ground cover in these woods along with poison ivy. There are some Eastern red-cedars outside of the wall that are remnants of a 1937 planting, notably near the entrance gates and south of the lodge grounds.

Figure 2.21 (top): The east side of the lodge with its rear kitchen wing addition, and the restroom building looking across the lodge grounds from the rostrum. The front of the lodge faces the main drive at right. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

Figure 2.22 (bottom): The rostrum, looking southeast from the main drive during a Memorial Day ceremony. (Betsy Dinger, Petersburg National Battlefield, 2005.)

This latter group contains remnants of post-and-barbed-wire fencing installed in 1937 to protect the trees from livestock in the adjoining pasture.

LODGE GROUNDS

Just inside the main entrance gates is the lodge and its adjoining grounds that serves as the cemetery's assembly area. The lodge is a one and one-half story Second Empire-style stone residence constructed in 1871-1872 according to a standardized plan developed by Quartermaster General Montgomery Meigs (fig. 2.21). The 'L'-plan building, with overall dimensions of twenty by thirty-three feet, has dressed random-course ashlar walls, six-over-six sash windows, an open front porch, and a green-painted standing-seam metal roof that replaced an earlier slate roof. Affixed to the front of the building is a standard plaque with Lincoln's Gettysburg address added in c.1913. At the rear of the lodge is a one-story stuccoed kitchen wing built in 1914. Since 2001, the lodge has been used as an occasional public contact station rather than a residence.

South of the lodge is the public restroom building, a simple Colonial Revival-style building constructed in 1929 according to plans by the Quartermaster General Third Corps Area, Baltimore (see fig. 2.21). The white-painted stucco-faced tile building, measuring twenty-four by fourteen, has a green-painted standing seam metal gable roof with eaves returns, three-light single sash windows, four-light paneled doors, a utility room, and separate rest rooms for men and women. The building's septic field is located in the lawn to the east. The restrooms are screened from the rear yard of the lodge by a wood plank privacy fence, and a concrete walk connects through this yard to a rear entrance on the lodge. An earthen path built on fill provides the primary public route to the restrooms. This path blocks the drainage swale that extends from the lodge downspouts to the nearby drain opening in the inclosure wall.

At the east side of the lodge grounds is a bandstand, known in national cemeteries as a rostrum. Completed in 1897, the rostrum reflects the Aesthetic Movement in its decoration. It is an octagonal structure sixteen feet in diameter, with a six-foot high brick base, iron steps, and a cast- and wrought-iron superstructure with a concave metal roof (fig. 2.22). The grounds between the rostrum and the lodge consist of open lawn that is used as an assembly area. There are no trees or shrubs here except for two large boxwoods that are remnants of once extensive plantings in the area.

SERVICE YARD

The service yard, a small area across from the lodge grounds next to the cemetery entrance, is the current maintenance area. The service yard, which was once enclosed by a hedge, is defined on the west and north sides by the inclosure wall, and is open on the remaining sides. To the east, the service yard abuts the graves in Block XVIII. At the rear of the yard is the garage that was built in 1929 at the same time as the restroom building and in a similar Colonial Revival style, according to plans by the Quartermaster General Third Corps Area, Baltimore (fig. 2.23). Originally designed as a stable and garage with a loft, it is a one-story building measuring thirty-eight feet by twenty-two feet, with two sets of swinging garage doors, six-over-six sash windows, unpainted stucco siding, and a standing-seam metal gable roof with eaves returns. At the rear of the building is a later frame shed addition. The garage is presently used for storage and to house the cemetery's maintenance equipment.

Figure 2.23: The garage and service yard, looking west from the burial grounds toward the cemetery entrance gate. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

Leading up to the garage is a short gravel drive, once much narrower, that is used for maintenance vehicles and as a staging area. It is paved in asphalt with a gravel top coat matching the main drive. West of the drive and garage is an open area of rough lawn used to park maintenance vehicles. In this area is a wellhead added in c.1974, a picnic table for park staff, a single Eastern red-cedar tree, and an aged southern magnolia at the corner of the service drive and main drive.

BURIAL GROUNDS

The burial grounds constitute the majority of the cemetery area at 7.13 acres. The graves are arranged in a radial plan organized around a central flagstaff, with circular and radiating drives. On the east and west sides of the cemetery, the plan

Figure 2.24 (top): Characteristic turf drive and walks, looking northwest toward the main drive in Division A between sections e and d (Blocks II and III). The wider space is a drive, the narrower space between the rows of grave markers are walks. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

Figure 2.25 (bottom): The main drive, looking east from near the rostrum showing asphalt paving with gravel surface coat. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

transitions to a rectilinear organization that follows the property boundaries. Drives define the limits of the thirty-one burial sections, which are presently defined by twenty-two blocks identified by Roman numerals I through XXII. The sections were originally organized into six divisions lettered A through F, corresponding to the four cemetery quadrants along with two outlying sections. There are no markers in the cemetery identifying either the blocks or the divisions and sections.

Drives and Walks

The drives (circulation between original grave sections) and walks (the narrower circulation between the grave rows) are all turf, except for the main drive, which has been paved in asphalt since 1931. The turf drives and walks blend in with the larger lawn and are therefore difficult to discern in the landscape (fig. 2.24). All of the original drives and walks remain, except for the central walk in Block IX (north of flagstaff), which was filled with graves between 1896 and 1918. The radiating drives with the exception of the main drive are designated by letters, A through F. The main drive is approximately eleven feet wide and has a worn gravel top coat on black asphalt (fig. 2.25). The drive encircles the flagstaff in a tear-drop shaped loop, an alignment that replaced the original circle when the drive was paved in 1931. At the south side of the loop, there is thirty feet of concrete curbing added at the time of the 1931 paving and realignment to avoid grading over the adjoining headstones.

Cemetery Center

The center of the cemetery is the ceremonial and symbolic heart of Poplar Grove. It consists of a forty-foot wide circular lawn with a forty-foot tall white-painted iron flagstaff at its center (fig. 2.26). This flagstaff, lower in height than the surrounding trees, consists of three sections connected by bolted flanges, an iron base and square concrete pad, and a small ball finial. As originally installed in 1930, this pole was approximately twice that height and was secured with

Figure 2.26 (left): The center of the cemetery, looking northeast from the main drive showing the flagstaff, teardrop-shaped loop in the main drive, and interpretive signs. The boxwood shrub in the foreground conceals a contemporary floodlight. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

Figure 2.27 (right): The remnant gun monument with its painted-over bronze plaque and missing cannonball cap, view looking northwest. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

four cable guy wires. The flagstaff is illuminated by a contemporary floodlight concealed by a boxwood shrub at the head of the main drive. To either side of the flagstaff are interpretive signs in brushed aluminum frames installed in c.1957, measuring fifty-seven inches wide and eighty inches tall. One sign contains the burial register, the other an illustrated plan of the cemetery by block, with text on the history of the cemetery and a drawing of Poplar Grove Church, the namesake of the cemetery. The church faced the flagstaff to the north in Block IX prior to its removal in 1868.

Along the outer edge of the encircling drive north of the flagstaff is an upright cannon, known in national cemeteries as a gun monument (fig. 2.27). This is one of four matching gun monuments that were installed symmetrically around the central circular drive in 1869; three were removed in c.1974. The remaining gun monument was the primary one, distinguished by a bronze plaque indicating the burial record tally to date and the name of the cemetery. The black-painted monument is a thirty-two pound Columbiad cannon tube from Fort Monroe in Hampton, Virginia. It is set vertically on a cracked, three-foot by six-foot concrete pad, and measures six feet-seven inches tall. The original cannonball cap is missing. In front of the cannon is a pyramidal stack of shot (nineteen cannon balls). Also along the outer edge of the encircling drive are six small metal markers with raised letters A through F identifying the radiating drives (fig. 2.28). These

Figure 2.28: One of the metal signs along the central circular loop of the main drive identifying radial drive "E." (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

markers, installed in c.1957, measure four by five inches and are mounted on a low pipe pole.

Grave Markers

The approximately 5,615 graves at Poplar Grove, interred between 1866 and 2003, contain flat markers set in either circular or straight rows. Due to their position and small size, the grave markers are inconspicuous features in the landscape, giving Poplar Grove the character of a lawn-style cemetery. The markers fall into three categories: headstones transformed into flat markers, blocks (square posts) for unknown graves transformed into flat markers, and flat markers originally installed flat. Set directly in the ground without footings, many of the markers have settled and drifted out of alignment in their rows. Most markers are flush with the ground, but some are about an inch above grade, while others have sunken. Rows are generally spaced eight feet apart on center. Space between markers ranges from approximately 3.5 feet to 4.5 feet on center within the inner circular sections, but is approximately four feet elsewhere. Markers generally align with an underlying grave, although there is variability.[9]

The grave markers are overall in poor condition characterized by heavy chipping along the edges, cracking, and weathering with eroded edges and sugared surfaces. All of the headstones installed before 1934 have had their bases (original subsurface sections) removed, with a rough cut or break along the bottom of the existing stones. Although the park has cleaned many of the markers in recent years, a large percentage has heavy accumulations of dirt and biological matter, especially on the headstones with recessed shields that capture water. The heaviest

TABLE 2.1: TALLY OF EXISTING GRAVE MARKERS
POPLAR GROVE NATIONAL CEMETERY [11]

Type	Number	Percent of Known Markers (2,338)	Percent of all grave markers (5,615)
Recessed Shield Headstones	2,105	90%	37%
1st generation	*2,046*	*88%*	*37%*
2nd generation	*59*	*2%*	*>1%*
Unknown Blocks	3,277	n/a	58%
General Headstones	13	>1%	>1%
Government Flat Markers	216	9%	4%
Medal of Flat Honor Markers	2	>1%	>1%
Non-Government Headstones	26	>1%	>1%

stained stones are generally in shady and wet locations. Despite their poor condition, most of the grave markers are legible. Although in recent years the park has curtailed its maintenance of the markers due to budget and staffing limitation, it continues to keep the grass trimmed around the markers.

There are six types of grave markers at Poplar Grove as described below. Table 2.1 details the number of each type and its percentage of the total number of grave markers.

Recessed-Shield Headstones (figs. 2.29, 2.30)
The 2,105 recessed shield headstones mark known graves of Civil War soldiers and later burials for pre-World War I veterans. There are two types at Poplar Grove: smaller first generation type (often referred to as Civil War-style headstones) installed between 1877 and c.1904, and larger second-generation type (often called Spanish-American War headstones) installed between c.1904 and 1934. The first generation type constitute the majority at 2,046, most installed in 1877; 59 are the second-generation type. All were transformed into flat markers in 1934.

The first generation recessed-shield headstones, which mark only known graves, are Vermont white marble cambered-profile tablets measuring ten inches wide

Figure 2.29: Representative first-generation recessed-shield headstones installed in 1877 and transformed into flat markers in 1934. These photographs illustrate characteristic chipping, cracking, weathering, and staining. The bases were cut or broken off. (Petersburg National Battlefield, 2005.)

Figure 2.30: Representative second-generation recessed-shield headstones, showing condition issues and two different types of fonts. The stones at left and right are categorized by the park as style A; the one in the middle with the cambered font, style B. The headstone at left replaced an unknown block. (Petersburg National Battlefield, 2005.)

and four inches thick. Most are approximately eighteen inches long, generally corresponding with the original above-ground section. The inscription is set in a recessed six-point shield, within which is the grave number at the top, the name in the middle, and the state regiment at the bottom. The size of the shield is generally consistent in width, but varies in height according to the size of the inscription. The headstones are perpendicular to the row (short side at the top of the grave). Several are oriented in line with the row (long side at the top of the grave). Locations of the headstones do not follow a regular pattern, but rather reflect how bodies were brought into the cemetery for burial.

The second-generation recessed-shield headstones mark both known and unknown graves. These headstones are scattered around the cemetery, with a concentration in the center walk in Block IX. Each headstone is a marble (origin unknown), cambered-profile tablet measuring twelve inches wide and four inches thick. Most are approximately eighteen inches long, corresponding with the original above-ground section. The inscription, created through hammering rather than sand-blasting, is set in a recessed six-point shield, within which is the grave number at the top, the name in the middle, and the regiment at the bottom. Two different fonts are found on these second-generation headstones at Poplar Grove (styles A and B as categorized by the park).

Unknown Blocks (fig. 2.31)
The 3,277 blocks at Poplar Grove, installed along with the headstones in 1877, mark unknown graves that are located throughout the cemetery. The blocks are set either flush or slightly above grade. Each block is a post of Vermont white marble measuring six inches square and thirty inches long, originally specified for installation at four inches above grade. The inscription, limited to the grave number and the number of remains in the grave if more than one, is inscribed in the top of the block.

Figure 2.31: Representative unknown blocks installed in 1877 and transformed into flat markers in 1934. The block at right marks a grave containing two remains. (Petersburg National Battlefield, 2005.)

General Headstones (fig. 2.32)
The thirteen General headstones at Poplar Grove, installed between c.1922 and 2003, mark the graves of World War I veterans, post-World War II Civil War reinterments, and pre-1934 graves (installed as replacements for recessed-shield

headstones). Scattered around the cemetery, the General headstones are white marble cambered-profile tablets, measuring thirteen inches wide, four inches thick, and approximately eighteen inches long (twenty-four inch base removed). The incised inscription, without a shield, includes an emblem of faith at the top, followed by the name, rank, and date of death. The General headstones dating prior to World War II have a different font than those used after the war and do not have the grave number inscribed on the front. The latter headstones have the grave number inscribed in the upper right corner.

Figure 2.32: General headstones introduced in 1922, showing pre-World War II design (left) transformed to a flat marker, and post-war design (current Veterans Administration standard) installed as replacement flat markers at Civil War graves. (Petersburg National Battlefield, 2005.)

Government Flat Markers (fig. 2.33)

The approximately 216 flat markers at Poplar Grove, installed between c.1939 and c.1980, mark the graves of World War I and II veterans, and were also installed as replacements for headstones and blocks on earlier graves.[10] The flat markers are scattered around the cemetery, with a concentration of new burials in Block XX. These markers are white marble and measure twenty-four inches long, twelve inches wide, and four inches thick, oriented with the long side at the top of the grave. The inscription includes an emblem of faith at the top for known burials, followed by the name, state, regiment, and date of death. Those installed prior to c.1945 have a stylized font and the grave number below the emblem of faith; later flat markers have a different font and the grave number at the upper right corner.

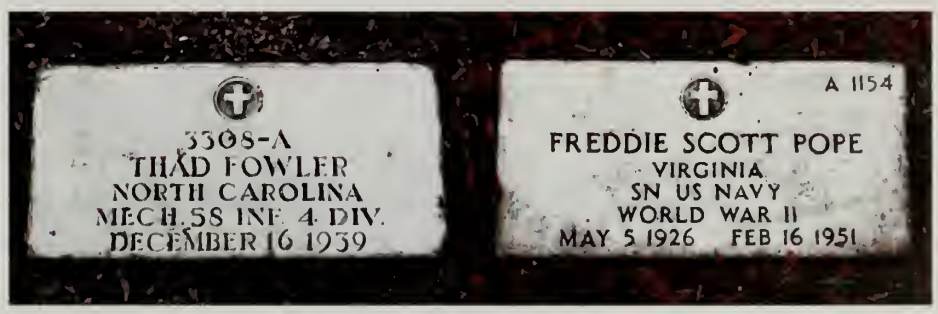


Figure 2.33: Government flat markers installed at Poplar Grove beginning in c.1939, showing font used prior to c.1945 (left) and later font (right). (Petersburg National Battlefield, 2005.)

Medal of Honor Flat Markers (fig. 2.34)

There are two Medal of Honor flat markers at Poplar Grove, installed as replacements for earlier government Civil War headstones at some point after 1940. They are flat markers made of bronze, measuring twenty-four inches long, twelve inches wide, and three-quarters inch thick, set on a concrete foundation. The marker has a raised, polished narrow border and inscription, with the Medal of Honor symbol at the top of the grave.

Figure 2.34: One of two Medal of Honor markers, installed as a replacement after 1940. (Petersburg National Battlefield, 2005.)

Non-Government Headstones (figs. 2.35, 2.36)

There are approximately twenty-six non-government headstones at Poplar Grove (these are also classified by a cemetery inventory as private, unique,

Figure 2.35: Three of the five of non-government headstones installed between 1866 and 1869. The two headstones at right were probably removed from a separate plinth; the one at left was apparently broken off (the iron bolts are from a c.1915 repair). (Petersburg National Battlefield, 2005.)

Figure 2.36: Examples of non-government headstones installed after 1877, showing variations in profile and inscriptions. (Petersburg National Battlefield, 2005.)

recut, and odd). Of these, five are large, relatively elaborate tablet headstones installed between c.1866 and c.1869. These headstones feature gabled, Gothic, and semicircular profiles, with text and graphic inscriptions including religious and Masonic symbolism. One was broken in 1915 and was repaired with iron bolts. These are the oldest grave markers in the cemetery, dating to the time when the government-issued marker was a wooden headboard. The headstones were transformed into flat markers in 1934, either through cutting off the subgrade base or removing the headstone from a separate plinth. No documentation survives on the appearance of the plinths.

In addition to these early markers, there are also twenty-one non-government headstones installed between c.1880 and c.1933, scattered at various grave sites throughout the cemetery. These are replacement markers for government headstones or markers for civilian graves, including two infants of cemetery superintendents. These markers were probably locally made, with cambered, square, and gabled profiles. One headstone (grave 3162) appears to have been inscribed by an amateur. None contains the six-point shield found on the Civil War and Spanish-American War headstones. Originally installed as upright headstones, they were transformed into flat markers along with all other headstones in 1934.

Figure 2.37 (top): General view of specimen trees, looking northeast from main drive and service drive, with holly in center foreground, red maples to right, and tall loblolly pine in the left distance. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

Figure 2.38 (bottom): A large sweet-gum tree within a grave row in Block XIV, looking west showing heaving of adjoining headstones. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

Trees and Shrubs

Vegetation within the burial grounds consists of specimen trees and shrubs; there are no herbaceous beds or groundcovers other than turf. The twenty-eight existing specimen trees within the burial grounds are widely and informally distributed across the landscape, with concentrations along the inclosure wall, main drive, and central circle/loop (fig. 2.37). There are a few large areas without any trees, notably in Block II, Blocks VI and VII, and Block XVIII. The trees are generally planted in the walks and along the edges of the drives, although some are planted within the rows, causing heaving of the adjoining markers (fig. 2.38). A concentration of trees around the central circle blocks views of the flagstaff from outlying graves.

The dominant tree is Eastern red-cedar (38 specimens), followed by holly (9), red maple (5), willow oak (5), and loblolly pine (4). Species

numbering three or fewer include ash, pignut hickory, red oak, southern magnolia, sugar maple, sweet-gum, tulip-poplar, white-cedar (false cypress), and yellow birch (see Appendix G). The trees generally are between fifty and eighty years old, with a few specimens more than one hundred years old, and several trees younger than thirty years. Specimens notable for their age and large size include two water oaks in the southeast corner in Blocks IV and VIIII, a Southern magnolia north of the flagstaff in Block IX, four loblolly pines in Blocks XIV and XVI, and the white-cedar in Block xi (fig. 2.39). The loblolly pines may be remnants of those that existed at the time of the cemetery's initial establishment. The trees are generally in good condition, although one of the loblolly pines is nearly dead, and a number of the red-cedars are declining.

Shrubs within the burial grounds are maintained in their natural habit, and are limited to boxwood and crape myrtle. The crape myrtles, planted by the National Park Service after 1933, are in a cluster of four within Drive D near the flagstaff, with a few individual specimens scattered elsewhere (fig. 2.40). There is an aged boxwood near the rostrum and two along the drive (between Blocks XVI and XVIII) that are remnants of a shrub allee planted in c.1871. Within the center circle, a young boxwood conceals the flagstaff floodlight.

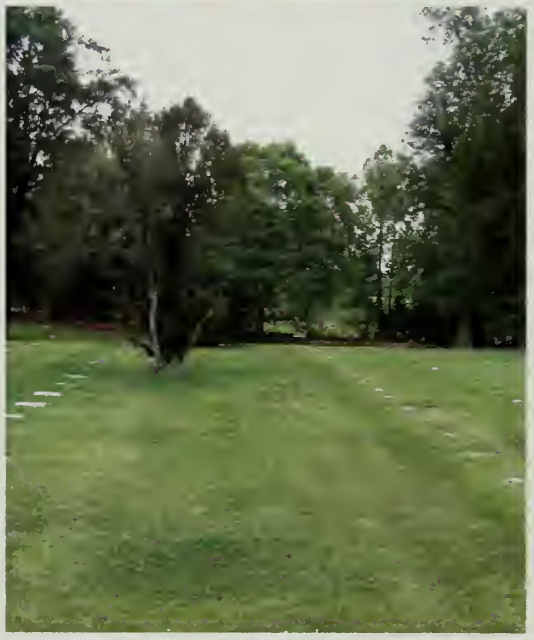


Figure 2.39 (top): A large white-cedar, also known as false cypress, in Block XI, looking northeast. The tree is probably more than one hundred years old. The adjoining tree is a red maple, one of the youngest trees in the cemetery. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

Figure 2.40 (middle): A group of crape myrtle shrubs east of the flagstaff in drive D, looking northeast. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

Figure 2.41 (bottom): One of three aged boxwood shrubs remaining from an allee that once lined the drive between Blocks XVIII and XVI, looking north from the main drive. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

ENDNOTES

1 Documentation of existing conditions is based on the site history and on fieldwork completed in June 2006, discussions with park staff including Facility Manager Jerry Helton and Ranger Betsy Dinger, and on the park's GIS database.

2 U.S. Census, "State and County Quick Facts," Dinwiddie County and City of Petersburg, online at http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/51/51053.html.

3 Federal Register, "Environmental Impact Statement: Rail Corridor—Petersburg, Virginia (Collier Yard) to Raleigh, North Carolina (Boylan Wye)," 22 May 2003, volume 68, number 99, online at http://www.epa.gov/fedrgstr/EPA-IMPACT/2003/May/Day-22/i12812.htm.

4 Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, "The Natural Communities of Virginia, Classification of Ecological Community Groups, Second Approximation (Version 2.1)," http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/dnh/ncoverview.htm; U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resource Conservation Service in cooperation with Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, *Soil Survey of Dinwiddie Area, Virginia* (n.p.: USDA, August 1996), 4.

5 U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resource Conservation Service in cooperation with Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, *Soil Survey of Dinwiddie Area, Virginia* (Washington, D. C.: U.S.D.A., August 1996), map 18 and pages 34-35, 41, 105.

6 *Soil Survey*, 99; U.S.D.A. Plant Hardiness Zone Map at http://www.usna.usda.gov/Hardzone/hzm-ne1.html.

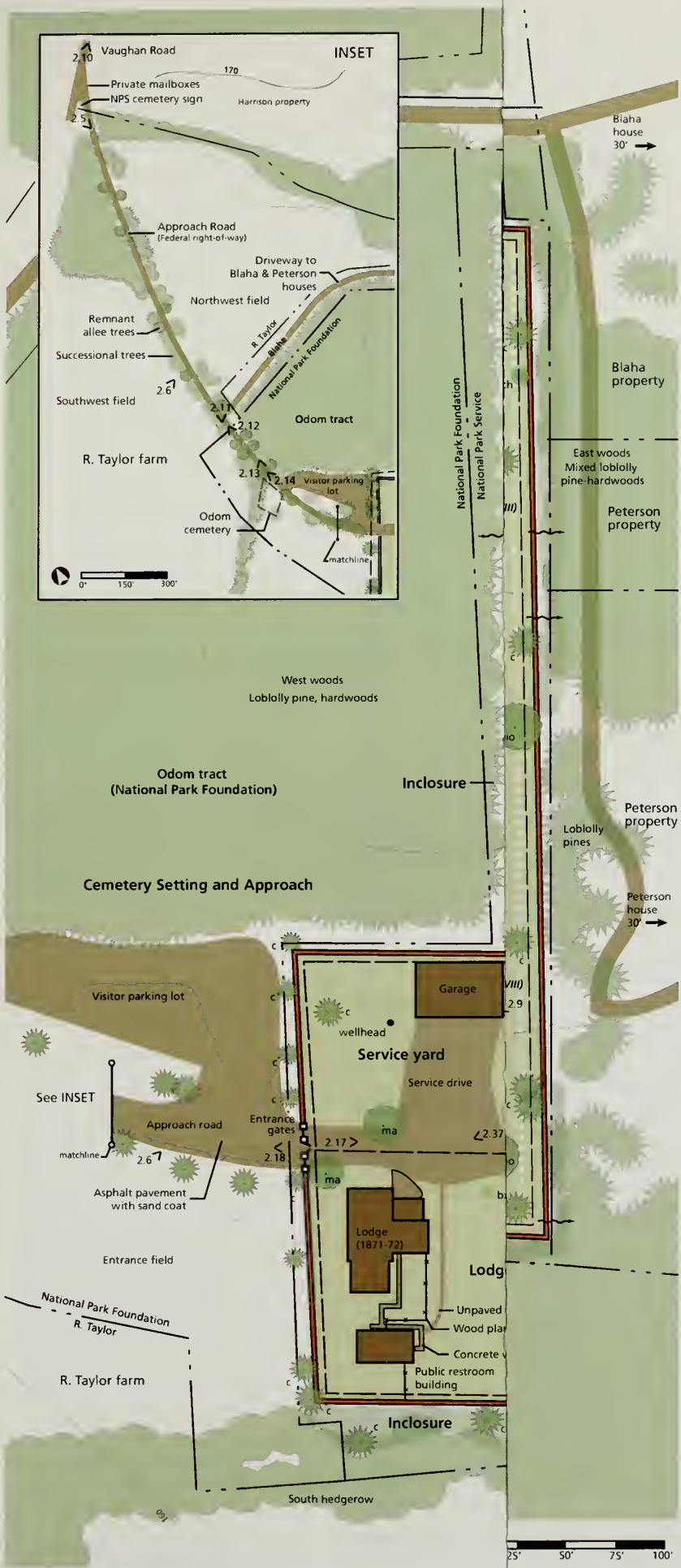
7 *Soil Survey*, 90.

8 William W. Redmond, NPS Regional Solicitor, Philadelphia, to Associate Regional Director, Operations, Mid-Atlantic Region, 9 March 1976, Poplar Grove administrative records, Hickory Hill headquarters, Petersburg National Battlefield; Deed, J. Wesley Friend, Commissioner, to the United States of America, 30 April 1877, Deed Book XIV, 429 Dinwiddie County Records, copy in Herbert Olsen, "Poplar Grove National Cemetery History" (Unpublished NPS report, 31 May 1954), 94.

9 Recent geophysical and archeological testing by the park (2008) identified that in some places existing grave markers do not align with the head of the graves. Markers were found in positions between two graves, several feet above the head of the grave shaft, off-center from the grave shaft, or even on top of the grave shaft. A few graves are located within drives. Petersburg National Battlefield, "Park Review of Draft Cultural Landscape Treatment Plan," 30 July 2008, 4-5.

10 The earliest government flat marker is for a 1939 burial at grave 1745; those for unknown graves do not contain a date of death.

11 Tally based on digital photographic inventory of existing headstones (excluding blocks), 2005, Petersburg National Battlefield; on sixty interments made between 1896 and 1957; and on 2,200 headstones and 3,355 blocks originally installed in 1877. The number of grave markers does not correspond with the total number of interments, since numerous graves have multiple remains.



Cultural Landscape Report

Poplar Grove National Cemetery

Petersburg National Battlefield
Dinwiddie County, Virginia

Existing Conditions 2009

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in partnership with
Department of Landscape Architecture
SUNY College of Environmental
Science and Forestry

SOURCES

1. PETE GIS Data
2. Burial Location Plan, NPS, , c.1954
3. Aerial photograph, spring 2004v

DRAWN BY

John Auwaerter, Illustrator CS3, 2009

LEGEND

- Property line
- Inclosure (perimeter) wall
- Grave markers (1 dash = approx. 1 marker)
- B-g Cemetery division-section
- Building
- Road
- Walk
- Gun monument
- Fence
- Drive marker
- Conifer tree
- Deciduous tree/shrub
- Lawn
- Naturalized English ivy
- 10' contour
- Drainage through inclosure wall
- Wetland
- <2.2 Photograph key, direction of view

NOTES

1. All features shown in approximate scale and location.
2. Dates in brackets indicate date of initial construction.
3. Division and section designations are shown with current block designations in parentheses.
4. Radial drives are designated by letter, A th rough F.

Drawing 2.1

Cultural Landscape Report

Poplar Grove National Cemetery

Petersburg National Battlefield
Dinwiddie County, Virginia

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Drawing 2.1

ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

While Poplar Grove National Cemetery has undergone many changes over its long history, it retains most of the key features that define it as a Civil War-era national cemetery. The findings in this chapter support a period of significance for the landscape extending over the course of military administration from the founding of the cemetery in 1866 through 1933, prior to Poplar Grove's transfer to the National Park Service. The landscape encompassed by this evaluation includes the cemetery proper and the surrounding private properties that comprise the setting, including the approach road.

The first section of this chapter evaluates the historic significance of the landscape according to the National Register Criteria for Evaluation. It begins with summarizing existing National Register documentation, provides recommendations for updating the documentation pertaining to the landscape, and concludes with an evaluation of historic integrity according to the seven aspects defined by the National Register. The second section of the chapter evaluates the historic character of Poplar Grove based on National Park Service cultural landscape methodology that organizes the landscape into landscape characteristics and associated features.[1] Historic and existing conditions of extant features are compared to assess historic character and change over time. Each feature is evaluated to determine whether it contributes to the historic character of the landscape or not. These findings are summarized in table 3.1 at the end of the chapter.

NATIONAL REGISTER EVALUATION

SUMMARY OF EXISTING NATIONAL REGISTER DOCUMENTATION

Poplar Grove National Cemetery was administratively listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1966 as part of Petersburg National Battlefield. While this listing established the significance of the cemetery in the larger context of the Civil War and Petersburg Campaign, it did not address the cemetery's own intrinsic significance due to its designation by Congress as a primary memorial to the military history of the United States.[2]

The current National Register listing for the Petersburg National Battlefield includes approximately 2,659 acres, four buildings, fifty-four structures, and two objects significant under the area of military history for association with the Civil War. The currently documented period of significance is 1850-1874, with historic functions identified as battle site and cemetery. The 1966 listing was

made administratively and did not include adequate documentation.[3] In 2006, National Register documentation for the entire park was advanced to an internal eighty percent draft. This draft proposed the extension of the park-wide period of significance to 1962, but did not specify a specific period of significance for Poplar Grove National Cemetery. The draft identified the cemetery as a contributing site with three buildings (lodge, restroom building, and garage), four structures (rostrum, inclosure wall, main drive, and flagstaff), and three objects (gun monument, radial avenue signs, and grave markers). In addition to significance in the area of military history under Criterion A, the draft also identified Poplar Grove as significant under Criterion C for its architecture and landscape architecture.[4]

Aside from its listing as part of Petersburg National Battlefield, Poplar Grove National Cemetery meets the registration requirements of the National Register Multiple Property Listing "Civil War Era National Cemeteries" submitted by the Department of Veterans Affairs and approved by the National Register in 1994.[5] Since that time, fifty-four Civil War-era national cemeteries administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs have been listed in the National Register according to the requirements of the Multiple Property Documentation. These include City Point, Cold Harbor, Culpeper, Fort Harrison, Glendale, Richmond, and Seven Pines National Cemeteries, which were developed at the same time as Poplar Grove and with many of the same standardized features. Because Poplar Grove is administered by the National Park Service, it has not been included as part of this Multiple Property Listing.

UPDATING NATIONAL REGISTER DOCUMENTATION

This section provides recommendations for updating the National Register documentation for Poplar Grove National Cemetery based on the findings of this Cultural Landscape Report and on the Multiple Property Listing "Civil War Era National Cemeteries." The following statements address the criteria related to the landscape, and not significance in the areas of architecture or archeology. National Register documentation for Petersburg National Battlefield, currently being developed, will comprehensively address all areas of significance for Poplar Grove National Cemetery as a unit of the larger park.[6] These statements will require elaboration in future National Register documentation.

National Register Criterion A: Military History

Poplar Grove National Cemetery derives its primary significance under National Register Criterion A in the area of military history for its intimate association with the Civil War and as a component of the National Cemetery System. This area of

significance is presently documented in the Multiple Property Documentation, "Civil War Era National Cemeteries:"

> *The Civil War era national cemeteries were created originally to afford a decent resting place for those who fell in the defense of the Union. These cemeteries began the ongoing effort to honor and memorialize eternally the fighting forces who have and continue to defend our nation. Today, the entire national cemetery system symbolizes, in its gracious landscapes and marble headstones, both the violence of the struggle and the healing aftermath. The Civil War era national cemeteries are nationally significant under Criterion A, both for their symbolic and physical representation of that war, and for representing the origins of the National Cemetery System.*[7]

Poplar Grove National Cemetery is associated with the Civil War and the Petersburg Campaign in particular through its interment of approximately 6,188 soldiers who gave their life in the war. The majority of these soldiers were reinterred at the cemetery from nearby battlefields and hospital cemeteries in the years between 1866 and 1869. The cemetery site, located in the rear zone of the Federal Left Flank, was the wartime camp of the 50th New York Volunteer Engineers who were responsible for construction of Union fortifications. The cemetery was named in honor of the central feature of this camp, Poplar Grove Church, which in turn was named for a nearby church damaged in the Battle of Poplar Springs Church. Although the church and most all other camp structures were removed during the initial development of the cemetery between 1866 and 1869, the association of the cemetery with the camp remains through its name and location. Loblolly pines, although few in number today, were a prominent feature in the landscape of the engineers' camp.

In addition to its direct association with the Civil War, Poplar Grove derives military significance from association with the National Cemetery System, and in particular as a component of the system's initial development in the years following the Civil War. Poplar Grove was one of twenty-one national cemeteries established in 1866, which together with several established during the war formed the basis of the National Cemetery System.[8] Poplar Grove is also significant for its continued use as a national cemetery for veterans through 1957, and its continued use for reinterment of Civil War remains discovered in the battlefields surrounding Petersburg, most recently in 2003.[9] Although post-Civil War interments, numbering approximately sixty, constitute less than one percent of all burials, these later burials are significant according to the National Register Criteria.[10] Poplar Grove reflects its association with the National Cemetery System through its landscape, with its standardized features, although the conversion of

the headstones and blocks to flat markers in 1934 detracts from the landscape's historic integrity under Criterion A.

National Register Criterion C: Landscape Architecture

Poplar Grove National Cemetery is significant under National Register Criterion C in the area of landscape architecture for illustrating the initial development of the National Cemetery System through the early 1880s and its subsequent development through the early 1930s under continued War Department administration. This area of significance is documented in the Multiple Property Listing, "Civil War-Era National Cemeteries," which identifies significance derived from the role of Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs in the design of built features; rostrums as a manifestation of the beginnings of Memorial Day observances; and the lodges, headstones, and inclosure walls as characteristic features. With regard to the landscape, the Multiple Property Documentation states:

> *The Civil War era national cemeteries are...nationally significant under Criterion C for embodying an important and commonly recognized landscape design and for establishing certain landscape features that have been retained for over 100 years...The serene national cemeteries offer perpetual testimony of the concern of a grateful nation that the lives and services of members of the Armed Forces, who served their nation well, will be appropriately commemorated.*[11]

Poplar Grove National Cemetery was laid out in a circular plan in 1866, and by 1869, the vast majority of the grave sites were filled and marked by wooden headboards. A mounded flagstaff, four gun monuments, and a circulation system of gravel and brick-gutter lined drives was completed by this time. Under the direction of the cemetery superintendent, a number of flowerbeds were also established. The cemetery was shaded by loblolly pine and was set back from the public road across agricultural fields and accessed by a thousand-foot long approach road. Over the course of the next decade into the early 1880s, the War Department implemented a program of development and beautification that resulted in the addition of a Second Empire-style stone lodge and brick inclosure wall designed according to prototypes by Quartermaster General Montgomery Meigs; a fifty-six foot tall wooden flagstaff; a series of outbuildings; white marble grave markers with headstones for known burials and blocks for unknown burials; settees; iron tablets citing regulations and four-line verses from the poem "The Bivouac of the Dead;" and a planting program that included hundreds of specimen trees and shrubs, mostly placed informally as specimens, but also as an allee along the approach road, a sylvan hall of elms, an allee of boxwood, a perimeter Osage orange hedge, and a boxwood Maltese cross. Although

the plantings and building materials reflected local conditions, overall these improvements reflected standardization intended to create uniformity among units of the National Cemetery System, and to provide a recognizable federal presence. In overall effect, the national cemeteries had a military feeling in their simplicity, symmetry, and repetition that set them apart from their contemporary high-style civilian cemeteries in the picturesque rural cemetery mode.

While most of the Poplar Grove landscape was developed by c.1881, there had already been several substantial changes made to its initial design by this date. Between c.1872 and 1874, the drives within the burial grounds were changed from gravel to turf, and in 1877, the brick gutters were covered, creating an expansive area of lawn. These changes, apparently also instituted system-wide, reflected ongoing efforts to reduce maintenance costs.[12] Into the 1920s, the landscape remained fairly consistent, with the exception of the addition of an iron rostrum designed in the Aesthetic Manner, built in 1897 within the cemetery's assembly area near the lodge; elimination of the flagstaff mound with the installation of an iron flagstaff in 1913; and the return of the main drive to gravel in c.1900. The most notable change to the landscape during this time was the gradual reduction in plant materials, apparently in an effort to simplify maintenance, as well as from two wind storms in 1915. It was not until the late 1920s, coinciding with the establishment of Petersburg National Military Park in 1926, that the War Department charted a plan for improvements at Poplar Grove. This plan resulted in the addition of the Colonial Revival-style public restroom building and garage in 1929, replacement of the flagstaff with a taller eighty-foot iron pole in 1930, and in 1931 replacement of the lodge roof, paving of the approach road and main drive, and planting of 101 specimen trees. These improvements reflected the War Department's preference for low maintenance and simplicity in the national cemeteries. Although these later improvements changed some details in the landscape, overall they continued the military feeling to the landscape and the overall intent of the initial design and development.

After the transfer of Poplar Grove to the National Park Service in August 1933, the landscape underwent several significant changes to its original design and development. Most notable was the dramatic change made by the park service in 1934 when it transformed the upright headstones and blocks to flat markers, using Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) labor. This change was intended to ease maintenance and to improve the aesthetics of the landscape. This project, also implemented at the National Park Service-administered Yorktown National Cemetery, was the first major change at Poplar Grove that was inconsistent with the development of other units of the National Cemetery System. Aside from this change, the National Park Service retained most of the features in the cemetery during its initial years of administration, but following World War II, began to

make changes that further eroded the cemetery's historic character. The changes resulted largely from a lack of maintenance and loss of small-scale features and plantings, including three of the four gun monuments, iron tablets, and settees. Notable plantings lost during this time, aside from specimen trees, included the boxwood Maltese cross, boxwood allee, arborvitae hedge around the service yard, and approach road allee. This allee was lost to natural succession, as was an open field on the cemetery's west side, which had permitted views of the cemetery from the approach road.

Because these changes are not reflective of the historic design and development of national cemeteries nor associated with the Civil War, the history of Poplar Grove after 1933 under National Park Service administration is not significant under National Register Criterion C (the graves dating after 1933 are, however, significant). This period, including the limited improvements made under MISSION 66, also does not contain any particular significance under Criterion C with the early development of Petersburg National Military Park. While involvement of the CCC is often considered a basis for significance under Criteria A and C, its involvement at Poplar Grove was limited and did not attest to any particular craftsmanship or design.

Overall Period of Significance, 1866-2003

The overall period of significance for Poplar Grove extends from its establishment in 1866 through its most recent burial—reinterment of three Civil War remains—in 2003. Poplar Grove was closed to new burials in 1957, but remains open for the reinterment of Civil War remains discovered in the battlefields of Petersburg. According to the National Register Criteria, the fifty-year threshold for significance does not apply to National Cemeteries: "...Because these cemeteries draw their significance from the presence of remains of military personnel who have served the country throughout its history, the age of the cemetery is not a factor in judging eligibility, although integrity must be present." [13] The Keeper of the National Register has interpreted this statement to mean that the period of significance for National Cemeteries extends until the last burial, including reinterments.[14] The overall period of significance for Poplar Grove (1866-2003) applies to its significance under Criterion A.

The years prior to the establishment of the cemetery in 1866, encompassing development of the site as the camp of the 50th New York Volunteer Engineers in 1865-1865 is not included in the period of significance because the property does not retains integrity from that time.

Period of Significance for the Landscape, 1866-1933

In addition to its overall period of significance, Poplar Grove has a more limited period of significance under Criterion C in the area of landscape architecture that ends in 1933 with the transfer of administration from the War Department to the National Park Service. This end date reflects the height of development under the War Department following the improvement program executed between 1929 and 1931 that resulted, among other things, in the addition of major features in the landscape, including the garage, public restroom building, and flagstaff. The 1933 end-date identifies as non-historic those landscape changes made after 1933, with the exception of the graves interred after 1933 that are significant within the overall period of significance, 1866-2003.

EVALUATION OF HISTORICAL INTEGRITY

Integrity as defined by the National Register is the ability of a property to convey its significance through its physical resources. Within the concept of integrity, the National Register recognizes seven aspects: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.[15] The following evaluation is based on the period of significance for the landscape extending from 1866 through 1933 under Criterion C, within the overall period of significance extending to the last burial in 2003. The only features dating from 1933-2003 that are considered significant are the graves. Their original grave markers may, however, also be considered significant under Criterion A.

Location

Location is defined by the National Register as the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred. Poplar Grove National Cemetery retains all land included in its initial development in 1866-1869, together with small strips of land added along the boundary through a survey adjustment made in 1877. It also retains the original government-maintained approach road laid out in c.1866 on a right-of-way through private property.
Evaluation: Retains integrity of location

Design

Design is defined by the National Register as the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property. Poplar Grove National Cemetery retains the original burial plan as laid out in 1866-1869 comprised of concentric grave rows and circulation around a central flagstaff, together with the lodge grounds and service yard laid out by c.1871. Unlike many other Civil War-era National Cemeteries, Poplar Grove retains its burial plan and

its historic circulation patterns except for one walk that was filled with graves between 1896 and 1918, and a circular turn-around that was eliminated prior to 1900. Poplar Grove also retains built features that convey the original design and historic development of the cemetery through 1933, including the Meigs-type lodge (1871-1872), inclosure wall and entrance gates (1876), rostrum (1897), garage (1929) and public restroom building (1929). The historic design of Poplar Grove has been diminished through the loss of trees and shrubs, settees, tablets, and gun monuments; the lowering of the flagstaff; and the conversion of the headstones and blocks to flat markers.
Evaluation: Retains integrity of design

Setting

Setting is the physical environment of a property, and in particular the general character of a place. While the cemetery retains its overall setting defined by unifying lawn, brick inclosure wall, and cluster of buildings at the entrance, the alteration of the grave markers and loss of plantings has changed the cemetery's historic character. In terms of the larger setting defined by property outside of the cemetery inclosure wall, the wooded surroundings remain on the north, east, and south sides, although they have been altered through development of two suburban houses and a driveway close to the cemetery inclosure wall. On the west and southwest sides and along the approach road, the growth of woods on former farm fields since c.1970 has altered the historically open setting that permitted views of the cemetery from the approach road. Despite this, agricultural fields still flank much of the approach road.
Evaluation: Retains integrity of setting

Materials

Materials are the physical elements that in a particular pattern or configuration gave form to the property. In terms of built materials, Poplar Grove National Cemetery retains stone, brick, stucco, marble, iron, and asphalt on the buildings, walls, grave markers, monument, and drives. Loss of historic built materials has resulted from removal of benches, iron tablets, and three of the four gun monuments. There have been no modern or artificial materials used to either cover or replace historic materials. The general palette of plant materials, including the lawn, specimen trees, and shrubs, remains generally consistent with those used during the historic period, although in reduced quantity.
Evaluation: Retains integrity of materials

Workmanship

Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts and methods of construction used during the historic period. Poplar Grove National Cemetery retains workmanship characteristic of its initial development during the latter nineteenth century in the stone and woodwork of the lodge, in the masonry of the inclosure wall, the metalwork of the gun monument, and in the headstones. There is also early twentieth-century workmanship evident in construction of the garage and stable, and in the later headstones. The workmanship of the headstones and blocks has been diminished due to deterioration of the marble.
Evaluation: Retains integrity of workmanship

Feeling

Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time resulting from the presence of physical features that, taken together, convey the property's historic character. Poplar Grove National Cemetery has lost much of the solemn dignity that characterized it historically and related it to its companion Civil War-era cemeteries in the National Cemetery System. This loss of feeling is due to alteration of the headstones and blocks, loss of specimen trees and shrubs, removal of the interpretive tablets and three of the four gun monuments, lowering of the flagstaff, and loss of the approach road allee. Overall, the cemetery has a barren feeling that does not reflect the country's intent for memorializing its fallen soldiers.
Evaluation: Does not retain integrity of feeling

Association

Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property. Poplar Grove National Cemetery remains intimately associated with the Civil War, with a total of ninety-nine percent of its burials from that war; approximately sixty burials are from veterans of subsequent wars. While the cemetery's transfer to the National Park Service in 1933 removed its historic association with the National Cemetery System administered by agencies of the U.S. military, the cemetery landscape retains many of its physical resources that illustrate its historic association with the system.
Evaluation: Retains integrity of association

Summary Evaluation of Integrity

Poplar Grove National Cemetery retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and association, but lacks integrity of feeling. As a whole, the cemetery landscape conveys its significance for association with the Civil War and as a component of the National Cemetery System as initially developed

during the post-Civil War period through the early twentieth century under War Department administration. While the diminished aspects of integrity detract from the historic details of the property, Poplar Grove National Cemetery retains its overall historic physical form. The individual graves interred after 1933 also remain intact during the overall historic period associated with the National Cemetery System that extends until the last new burial was interred in 2003.

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE EVALUATION

This section evaluates the historic character of Poplar Grove National Cemetery landscape and its setting by contrasting historic conditions (1866-1933) with existing conditions. The evaluation is organized by a brief narrative of the landscape characteristic followed by an evaluation of extant associated features. Character-defining features that have been lost since the end of the historic period are described in the characteristic narrative. Features are evaluated as contributing or non-contributing to the historic character of the cemetery, or unevaluated if there is insufficient information. If the feature is on adjoining private land, ownership is indicated next to the feature name. Existing features, features added since the end of the historic period, and features lost since the end of the historic period are shown on drawing 3.1 (Analysis and Evaluation Plan). Illustrations are limited to two sets of comparative photographs. Feature photographs, if available, are in the site history and existing conditions chapter.

NATURAL SYSTEMS AND FEATURES

This characteristic is comprised of the natural aspects that shape the landscape. Included within this characteristic is natural vegetation (woods), but not managed vegetation (see Vegetation characteristic); natural landforms, but not built topography (see Topography characteristic). The cemetery was developed on this site in part due to its natural features, including relatively level surface and deep, soft soils. A broad depression extends from the northwest corner of the cemetery, with a change in elevation of approximately fifteen feet from the central flagstaff. The low point of this depression along the north inclosure wall has remained a wet area since the cemetery was established. Throughout much of the historic period, the cemetery landscape was enclosed on three sides by woods dominated by loblolly pine. Today, these woods remain, although much of the loblolly pine has been succeeded by hardwoods, and portions of the woods have been removed for suburban development. Natural succession has led to a greater amount of wooded land in the cemetery's western setting and along the approach road.

Triangular Woodlot (R. Taylor Farm)

Evaluation: Non-Contributing

The triangular woodlot is a young stand of mostly deciduous woods that have grown up since 1970 on what had historically been an open field (part of the southwest field) (figs. 3.1, 3.2). It is on private land and extends into the NPS right-of-way along the approach road. The woodlot detracts from the open setting of the approach road, and encroaches on the site of the approach road allee.

West Woods (National Park Foundation)

Evaluation: Non-Contributing

The west woods are approximately three acres of young, mixed loblolly pine and deciduous woods that have grown up since 1970 on what had historically been an open field (part of the northwest field) (see figs. 3.1, 3.2). The west woods are bordered by the cemetery's inclosure wall on the east, visitor parking lot on the south, and a private driveway to the west and north. These woods detract from the historic character of the cemetery by enclosing what had been an open setting, and by obscuring the approach road view of the cemetery.

North Woods (Blaha Property and NPS)

Evaluation: Contributing

At the time of the cemetery's establishment in 1866, the area north of the cemetery on the Flower farm consisted of scattered woods of loblolly pine, which through natural succession soon grew into continuous woods. Through the end of the historic period, the woods were dominated by loblolly pine, with aspen in the wet low area off the northwest corner of the cemetery (see fig. 3.1). Construction of the driveway to the Blaha and Peterson houses in c.1972 approximately fifteen feet north of the cemetery inclosure wall reduced the woods to a thin band (see fig. 3.2). A blow-down in 1994 took down part of this remaining band. Several large loblolly pines in the eastern half bordering the inclosure wall are either dead or declining. The thinness and poor condition of the woods, which allows views to the adjoining non-historic driveway and fields, detract from the historic character of the landscape.

East Woods (Blaha and Peterson Properties)

Evaluation: Contributing

At the time of the cemetery's establishment in 1866, the area east of the cemetery on the Flower farm consisted of loblolly pine woods. Over time, these woods were cleared and grew back. In c.1972, portions of the woods were cleared for construction of the Blaha and Peterson houses and driveway, opening views from the cemetery (see fig. 3.2). Loblolly pines today characterize the remnant woods in

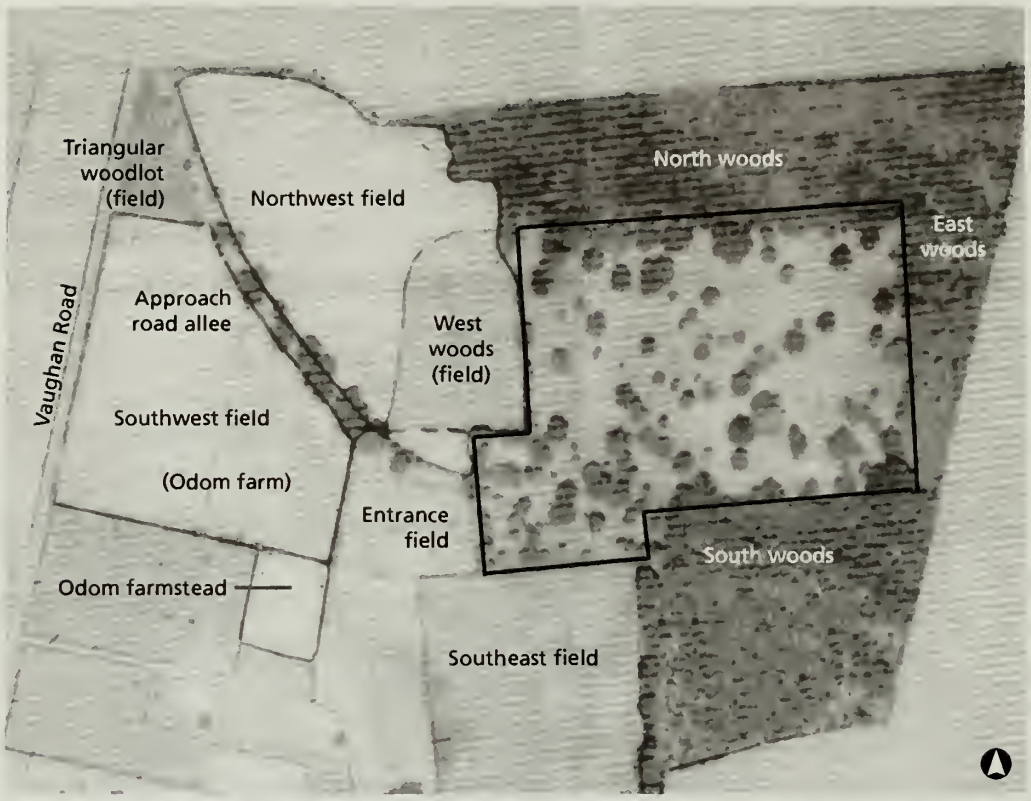


Figure 3.1: Historic natural systems and spatial organization characteristics in the setting of Poplar Grove National Cemetery, shown on a c.1969 aerial photograph taken prior to suburban development in the early 1970s. These conditions approximate those of the historic period, 1866-1931. (Detail of fig. 1.76, Petersburg National Battlefield, annotated by SUNY ESF.)

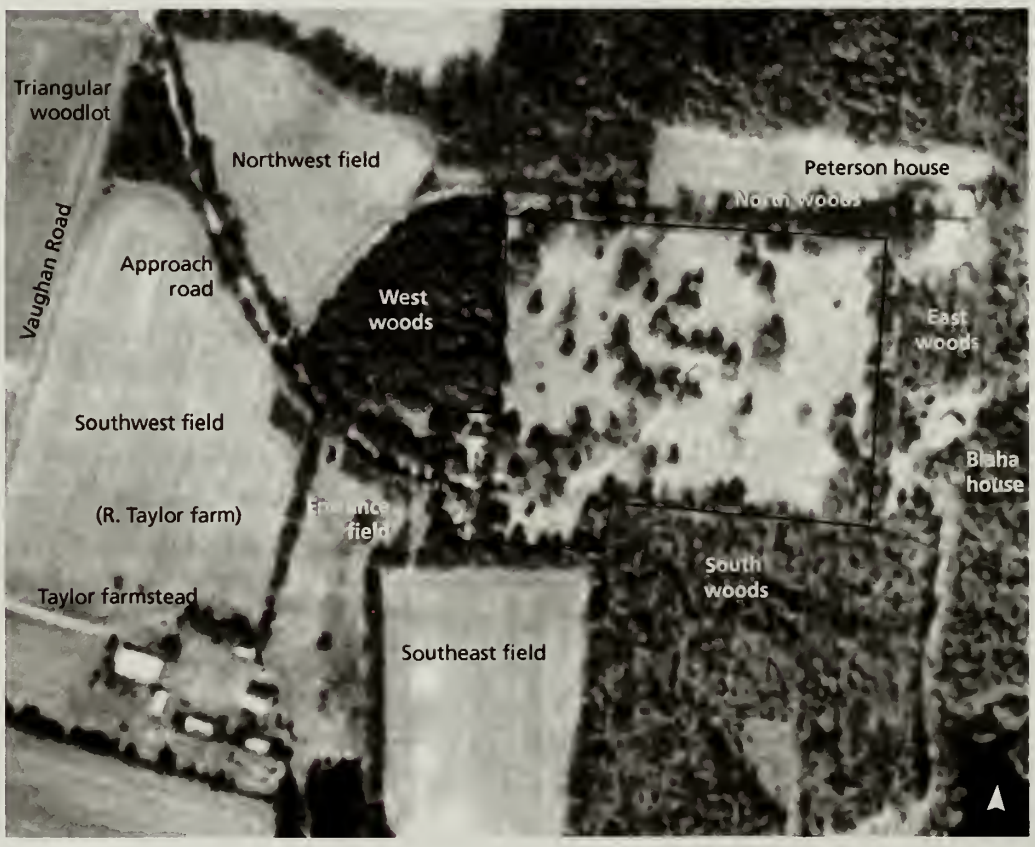


Figure 3.2: Existing natural systems and spatial organization characteristics in the setting of Poplar Grove National Cemetery, shown on 1994 aerial photograph. These conditions approximate existing conditions. (Detail, USGS aerial photograph, 1994, annotated by SUNY ESF.)

the south half, and the north half of the woods are mixed hardwoods. While these woods still frame the east side of the cemetery in large part, the openings to the private drive and two houses detract from the historic character of the landscape.

South Woods (Richardson Property)

Evaluation: Contributing

At the time of the cemetery's establishment in 1866, the area south of the burial grounds was an open field on the Farley farm. By the end of the historic period, the field had grown into woods of loblolly pine. Since the end of the historic period, these woods have become a mixed stand of hardwoods. While no longer dominated by loblolly pine, the woods remain and have not been developed within view of the cemetery (see figs. 3.1, 3.2).

North Hedgerow (R. Taylor Farm, Harrison Property)

Evaluation: Non-contributing

The hedgerow along the north side of the northwest field (R. Taylor Farm) is natural vegetation that grew up after the c.1970 along a property boundary. The hedgerow does not detract from the historic character of the landscape, except at its western end where it extends into the area historically occupied by the approach road allee.

Entrance Field Hedgerow (National Park Foundation, R. Taylor Farm)

Evaluation: Non-contributing

The hedgerow that extends along the west side of the Odom Cemetery and divides the southwest field from the entrance field is volunteer vegetation that grew up after c.1970, probably along a fence line. The north end of the hedgerow detracts from the historic character of the landscape because it extends into space historically occupied by the approach road allee.

South Hedgerow (R. Taylor Farm and NPS)

Evaluation: Non-contributing

The hedgerow along the south cemetery boundary south of the lodge grounds is volunteer vegetation that grew up after c.1970 along a fence line and around Eastern red-cedars planted in 1937. The hedgerow detracts from the historic character of the landscape because it obstructs the open space and views to the southeast field.

SPATIAL ORGANIZATION

This characteristic is defined by the arrangement of elements creating the ground, vertical, and overhead planes that define and create spaces. During the historic period, Poplar Grove National Cemetery was a distinct space defined by its inclosure wall and enclosing woods on the north, east, and south sides, with fields to the west extending to Vaughan Road. The approach road crossed these fields in a corridor defined by an allee of trees. Within the cemetery, the landscape was defined by the burial grounds as the major space, and the lodge grounds and service yard as smaller spaces flanking the main entrance. Since the historic period, the spatial organization has been altered through natural succession, alteration of the grave markers, and loss of plant materials. Despite these changes, the landscape retains the overall organization that has defined it since its initial development between 1866 and 1881.

Cemetery Approach (R. Taylor Farm and National Park Foundation)

Evaluation: Contributing

The cemetery approach is the corridor defined by the approach road and the adjoining trees. Initially, the approach road crossed the fields of the Flower farm without any enclosure. In 1879, the War Department planted an allee of deciduous trees to either side of the road. In 1911, a barbed-wire fence was built along the outer edge of the allee to protect the trees from livestock. The approach was defined by the allee through the historic period, but after c.1970, maintenance of the allee was curtailed and it transitioned to a volunteer border dominated by red-cedar. Natural succession on adjoining fields (west woods, triangular wood lot) after c.1970 and construction of the visitor parking lot in c.1995 also changed the open spaces that historically flanked the approach. Today, although a large part of the cemetery approach remains a distinct spatial corridor defined by trees with the northwest and southwest fields to either side, the loss of the allee and natural succession has altered the historic well-defined and symmetrical character of the corridor.

The cemetery approach extends for 700 feet from Vaughan Road through private land in a NPS-owned right of way (approximately thirty feet wide), acquired in 1877. The western 325 feet of the corridor was acquired by National Park Foundation in 1991 as part of the Odom tract. While the width of the right-of-way has never been defined in property records, NPS has determined that historic usage is a sound basis on which to determine the right-of-way. This usage includes the eleven-foot road bed and approximately ten to twenty feet to either side, extending to the outer edge of the historic allee canopy.

Northwest Field (R. Taylor Farm)

Evaluation: Contributing

The northwest field, located north of the approach road, predates the establishment of the cemetery. It has been farmed continuously since then, although its eastern end fell out of agricultural use by c.1970 and subsequently grew into woods (west woods) through natural succession (see figs. 3.1, 3.2). A driveway to the Peterson and Blaha houses was built through the field in c.1972. The northwest field contributes to the historic character of the landscape as part of the open space that historically flanked the approach road and formed the rural setting of the cemetery.

Southwest Field (R. Taylor Farm)

Evaluation: Contributing

The southwest field, located south of the approach road, predates the establishment of the cemetery. It has been farmed continuously since then, although a small area at its western side at the intersection of Vaughan Road and the cemetery approach road fell out of agricultural use by c.1970 and subsequently grew into woods (triangular woodlot) through natural succession (see figs. 3.1, 3.2). The southwest field contributes to the historic character of the landscape as part of the open space that historically flanked the approach road and formed the rural setting of the cemetery.

Entrance Field (National Park Foundation, R. Taylor Farm)

Evaluation: Contributing

The entrance field is the open area south of the cemetery entrance gate between the southwest field and cemetery inclosure wall. Since the end of the historic period, hedgerows along its west and south sides have separated the field spatially from the adjoining southwest and southeast fields (see figs. 3.1, 3.2). The portion of the entrance field on National Park Foundation property is maintained as mown field; the portion to the south extending onto the R. Taylor farm contains a corral enclosed by a split-rail fence. The barn associated with the farm is visible across this field. The entrance field contributes to the historic character of the landscape as part of the open space that historically flanked the approach road and formed the rural setting of the cemetery.

Southeast Field (R. Taylor Farm)

Evaluation: Contributing

The southeast field is located south of the cemetery lodge grounds and east of the entrance field. It was used during the historic period as a cow pasture and was open to views from the cemetery. Since c.1970, a hedgerow has grown up

along the cemetery inclosure wall and today visually separates the southeast field from the cemetery (see figs. 3.1, 3.2). Although no longer clearly visible, the south pasture contributes to the historic open setting of the cemetery.

Odom Cemetery (National Park Foundation)

Evaluation: Non-contributing

The Odom cemetery is a tiny family cemetery with two grave plots. It is located on the south side of the approach road within the entrance field and consists of 0.05 acres enclosed by a cyclone fence and bordering a red-cedar hedgerow to the west. It was established in 1971 by the Odom family, owners of the surrounding farm. The first burials in the Odom cemetery occurred in 1971, and in 1972 the boundaries of the tract were platted. In 1991, the National Park Foundation acquired the Odom cemetery as part of the 3.7-acre Odom tract, based on the understanding the cemetery would be maintained to National Park Service standards and that family members would be allowed access to it. Given its recent origin distinct from the national cemetery, the Odom cemetery does not contribute to the historic character of the landscape. Its cyclone fence detracts from the spatial character of the cemetery approach.

Cemetery Inclosure Space

Evaluation: Contributing

The cemetery inclosure is the space on the perimeter of the cemetery, from the inclosure (perimeter) wall to the outside property boundary. During the historic period, the inclosure space was framed by woods on the north, east, and south sides, and was open to fields on the west side and a portion of the south side. The inclosure was initially defined by a wood paling fence that was replaced in 1876 by the existing brick inclosure wall. A hedge of Osage orange lined the interior of the wall until it was removed in c.1888. By the end of the historic period, a wagon road was maintained along the outside of the wall for access. Since the end of the historic period, the spatial character of the inclosure has changed from open to closed on the west and south sides, and on the north and east sides has become less enclosed through openings created in the woods for suburban development. The cemetery inclosure space remains a character-defining feature of the cemetery landscape, although the change in the adjoining woods and fields detracts from its historic character.

Service Yard

Evaluation: Contributing

The service yard, developed beginning in c .1871 as the cemetery's maintenance area, is defined by the inclosure wall, main drive, and burial grounds. It occupies

the portion of the one-acre addition (1868) north of the main drive. During the historic period, the service yard was initially enclosed on the south and east sides by a boxwood hedge and lattice fence, which were replaced in c.1888 by an arborvitae hedge. Inside of the hedge, the yard contained several service buildings and a privy at the northeast corner that were replaced in 1929 by the present garage. There was also a well house in the center of the yard, which was removed in c.1939 and replaced by a new well with an inconspicuous wellhead in c.1974. In c.1974, the arborvitae hedge was removed and the limits of the service drive were expanded. Although the historic enclosure provided by the arborvitae hedge has been lost and the drive is much larger than it was historically, the service yard remains a character-defining space in the cemetery landscape.

Lodge Grounds

Evaluation: Contributing

The lodge grounds, developed beginning in c.1871 as the cemetery's assembly area, is defined by the inclosure wall, main drive, and burial grounds (Division F/Block XIX). It occupies the portion of the one-acre addition (1868) south of the main drive. During the historic period, the lodge grounds included the lodge completed in 1872, the public restroom building that replaced several earlier outbuildings in 1929 on the west, and the rostrum, completed in 1897, on the east. Between these buildings was the cemetery's assembly area, which was defined by a circular turn-around that branched off the main drive. This feature existed until c.1900. Internally, the space by the early twentieth century was framed by fruit trees and a walk along the south inclosure wall and by boxwood shrubs ringing the turn-around, as well as by scattered specimen trees. Today, the lodge grounds remain defined by the three major buildings and the inclosure wall, but the loss of the plant materials and circulation features has altered the internal organization of the space. Despite these changes, the lodge grounds remain a character-defining space in the cemetery landscape.

Burial Grounds

Evaluation: Contributing

The burial grounds, laid out between 1866 and 1869, comprise the primary space of the cemetery, defined externally by the inclosure, service yard, and lodge grounds, and internally by the radial burial plan and plantings. During the historic period, the internal spatial organization was characterized by scattered specimen trees that did not define any particular space and an allee of boxwoods between Divisions E (Block XVIII) and D (Block XVI). The sylvan hall, a standard national cemetery planting consisting of a cross-shaped space defined by rows of American elms with boxwood shrubs, was removed by c.1890, although the boxwoods were retained. Since the end of the historic period, the interior spatial

organization of the burial grounds has been altered by the transformation of the headstones and blocks to flat markers, and the loss of the boxwood allee and specimen trees, which have created an expansiveness to the landscape that did not exist historically. In contrast, trees added around the central circle after 1933 have created greater enclosure and block views of the cemetery flagstaff from the graves. The external organization remains largely intact with the exception of changes to the adjoining inclosure woods. Despite these changes, the burial grounds remain a character-defining space in the cemetery landscape.

LAND USE

This characteristic describes uses that affect the physical form of the landscape. During the historic period, Poplar Grove National Cemetery was characterized by funerary and commemorative land uses. While the vast majority of the burials were made as reinterments between 1866 and 1869, new burials continued through the historic period, but were few in number. New burials ceased after 1957, except for reinterment of Civil War remains, the last of which occurred in 2003. The cemetery remains open for the reinterment of Civil War remains discovered in the battlefields surrounding Petersburg. Unlike some national cemeteries, Poplar Grove never received a major commemorative monument, but the gun monument installed in 1869 and the rostrum completed in 1897 reflect commemorative uses. In addition to visitation to individual gravesites, the cemetery hosted public ceremonies, in particular on Memorial Day, although visitation with few exceptions tended to be sparse. With the establishment of Petersburg National Military Park in 1926, the cemetery began to be used formally for interpretive purposes. Historic agricultural land uses in the cemetery's setting remain in the fields to the west, but suburban residential uses have been introduced in the historically wooded areas to the north and east.

CIRCULATION

This characteristic describes systems of movement through the landscape. As initially developed, circulation was a conspicuous characteristic of Poplar Grove National Cemetery, but as the landscape was developed through the late nineteenth century, the circulation system within the burial grounds became less visible with the change from gravel to turf surfaces and removal of brick gutters. The alteration of the grave markers in 1934 after the historic period further eroded the definition of the drives and walks. With the exception of the service drive, circulation in the cemetery retains the general character present at the end of the historic period following improvements made by the War Department between 1929 and 1931.

Two circulation features lost during the historic period included the circular turn-around and adjoining walk in the lodge grounds. The circular turn-around drive was built in c.1871 and featured a central island ringed by boxwoods and annual plantings or a low hedge, with a horsechestnut tree in the center. The walks, also built in c.1871 and defined by low hedges or planted borders, extended from the main drive on the west side of the lodge along the inclosure wall and to the turn-around and Division F. It is not known if these features were initially surfaced in gravel or turf; after c.1874, they were probably turf to match the cemetery drives and walks. The turn-around fell out of use by c.1900 and the walks were removed with construction of the public restroom building in 1929 and expansion of the septic system in 1931.

Approach Road (National Park Foundation, R. Taylor Farm)

Evaluation: Contributing

The approach road is the 1,025-foot long entrance drive to Poplar Grove National Cemetery from the public highway, Vaughan Road. It dates to the establishment of the cemetery in 1866 and may have been constructed prior to the cemetery as a farm road or as part of the war-time camp of the 50th New York Volunteer Engineers. In 1877, the federal government secured a right-of-way of unspecified width through the Flower farm. The War Department maintained the road with a grave surface, approximately eleven feet wide, with grass shoulders and bordered by an allee of deciduous trees planted in 1879. At approximately 200 feet from Vaughan Road, a farm road crossing was built in c.1911 at the time that the right-of-way was enclosed by a barbed-wire fence. In 1931, the War Department resurfaced the approach road in asphalt along with the main drive. After the historic period, a private driveway was built off the north side of the approach road, and in 1991, the National Park Foundation acquired the eastern 325 feet of the approach road as part of the 3.7-acre Odom tract. In c.1995, the section near the entrance gates was widened, probably at the time the visitor parking lot was built in c.1995, and in 2003 the approach road was repaved in asphalt with a sand top coat. Overall, the approach road retains the alignment and surface that characterized it at the end of the historic period.

Driveway to Blaha and Peterson Houses (Blaha and Peterson Properties)

Evaluation: Non-Contributing

In c.1972, a gravel driveway approximately ten feet wide was constructed to access two suburban houses east of the cemetery. This driveway extended northeast from the approach road through the southwest field and turned east where it was built roughly fifteen feet north of the cemetery inclosure wall. The driveway turned south following the east side of the inclosure wall to the two houses. The drive was constructed on fill in the low area off the northwest corner of the cemetery, where

a culvert carries the roadbed over the cemetery drainage ditch. The driveway is visible from the approach road and through the thin woods in the inclosure. Due to its recent origin and location, the driveway detracts from the historic rural character of the landscape.

Visitor Parking Lot (National Park Foundation)

Evaluation: Non-contributing

The visitor parking lot is located along the north side of the approach road near the entrance gates, and was built by the park in c.1995 following National Park Foundation acquisition of the 3.7-acre Odom tract. The parking lot detracts from the historic character of the landscape because it disrupts the symmetry and rural setting of the cemetery approach.

Main Drive

Evaluation: Contributing

The main drive, a continuation of the approach road within the cemetery, extends from the entrance gates and loops around the flagstaff. It is one of eight radiating drives, and may have originated in part as an entrance into the Civil War camp of the 50th New York Volunteer Engineers. It was part of the initial development of the cemetery in 1866, and was surfaced in gravel and lined by brick gutters. In c.1871, a circular turn-around was built off the drive within the lodge grounds. In c.1872-1874, the surface of the main drive was changed to turf along with all other drives in the burial grounds, and in 1877 all of the brick gutters were filled and covered in turf. In c.1900, the main drive was set apart as a distinct drive in the burial grounds when its surface was changed back to gravel (the gutters were not uncovered). In 1931, the main drive was paved in asphalt with a three-quarter inch grave top coat. As part of the paving project, the alignment of the central circle was changed into a teardrop shape to provide an easier turning radius for vehicles. This change required the addition of a concrete curb on the south side to avoid grading over the adjoining headstones. This change in alignment, although made during the historic period, detracts from the circular symmetry of the cemetery. Since the end of the historic period, the drive has been widened in front of the lodge and service yard, and in 2003 was repaved with a pea gravel top coat. Overall, the main drive retains its character from the end of the historic period.

Service Drive

Evaluation: Contributing

The service drive was initially laid out in c.1873 as a short access from the main drive into the service yard, passing through a lattice fence and boxwood hedge (later arborvitae hedge) that screened the service yard. With the construction of

the garage in 1929, the drive was extended to the width of the building, wrapping around the well house that stood in front. After the historic period, the drive was widened from the main drive to the garage for the width of the building, probably when the arborvitae hedge was removed in c.1974. In 2003, the drive was paved in asphalt with a pea gravel top coat. An aged magnolia marks the original southwestern corner of the original narrow drive entrance; a companion magnolia historically marked the other corner. The expansion of the drive and resulting loss of the narrow entrance detract from the historic character of the service drive.

Burial Grounds Drives

Evaluation: Contributing

The drives within the burial grounds (today generally known as walks, and historically also known as avenues) are the primary, wider circulation routes between burial sections, averaging twelve to fifteen feet wide. The drives were constructed between 1866 and 1869 with gravel surfaces and brick gutters. Between c.1872 and 1874, the drives were changed to turf due primarily to maintenance concerns (difficulty in keeping grass from growing in the gravel). The turf was a Bermuda grass (*Cynodon dactylon*) rolled to create an even surface. In 1877, the brick gutters were filled and covered with turf as another maintenance economy. With these changes, the drives became subtle features in the landscape, defined only by the voids between grave sections. The main drive remained visually consistent with the other drives until c.1900, when it was changed to a gravel surface; the other drives were kept in turf. After the historic period, the alteration of the grave markers in 1934 further eroded the definition of the drives, and they became largely indiscernible (figs. 3.3, 3.4). In c.1957, the radial drives, except for the main drive and the drive due north of the flagstaff that had been filled with graves between 1896 and 1918, were identified by letters A through F (the drives were historically not named). All of the drives remain as circulation corridors, except for the drive north of the flagstaff that was filled with graves. Aside from the change in setting resulting from the alteration of the grave markers, the drives remain largely intact, reflecting conditions in the latter historic period.

Burial Grounds Walks

Evaluation: Contributing

The walks within the burial grounds are the secondary, narrower circulation routes between the grave rows, averaging seven feet wide. They were created between 1866 and 1869, and were surfaced in turf as part of the cemetery lawn. Trees were planted in many of the walks. After the historic period, the alteration of the grave markers eroded the definition of the walks (see figs. 3.3, 3.4). Despite this, they remain largely intact as circulation corridors and with the same surface that they have had throughout the historic period.

Figure 3.3: Historic view of the burial grounds in 1932, taken from near the rostrum looking east along the south wall showing the upright headstones and blocks defining grass drives and walks, and widely spaced specimen trees. Also note ivy bed along wall. (Repeat of fig. 1.63, National Archives II.)

Figure 3.4: Existing view of the burial grounds looking in the same direction as figure 3.3., illustrating changes to the landscape from alteration of the grave markers in 1934. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

Restroom Walks

Evaluation: Contributing

Three-foot wide concrete walks were constructed in c.1929 to access the public restroom (utility) building constructed at the same time. The walk was built from the east wing of the lodge and back to the restroom building, where it accessed both restrooms and the utility room. In c.1970, the walk was closed off from the public by a wood plank fence enclosing the rear yard of the lodge. Although in part no longer used as the main public access to the restrooms, the concrete walks remain intact and are minor details in the historic landscape.

Restroom Path

Evaluation: Non-contributing

An earthen path was built in 2003 to provide access to the restrooms from the main drive. It was built on fill that interfered with the drainage swale from the lodge southeast to an opening in the inclosure wall. The path is surfaced in earth and turf. Due to its design and recent origin, it detracts from the historic character of the landscape.

TOPOGRAPHY

This characteristic is defined as the built, three-dimensional configuration of the landscape (natural landforms are addressed under the natural systems and features characteristic). In the initial development of the cemetery, the natural contours were probably manipulated to provide even, level surfaces adequate for burials. Topography was a conspicuous characteristic of the early cemetery landscape due to the mounds built over each grave, intended to provide fill as the coffin disintegrated. These grave mounds were gradually removed until the last were leveled in 1877 with the installation of the marble grave markers. The only other topographic features within the landscape were a drainage ditch off the northwest corner of the cemetery built in c.1869, and the flagstaff mound that was initially built in c.1866 as a six-foot high, forty-foot wide earthen mound. With replacement of the original flagstaff in 1874, the mound was reduced to four feet high and approximately twenty feet wide. With the replacement of the flagstaff in 1913, the mound was eliminated. The only remaining topographic feature in the landscape is the drainage ditch.

Drainage Ditch (NPS and Blaha property)

Evaluation: Non-contributing

In c.1869 during the initial development of the cemetery, a ditch was built to drain the topographical low point at the northwestern side of the cemetery. This ditch drained north onto the Flower farm. The ditch was probably rebuilt with the construction of the inclosure wall in 1876, and most likely several times after that. The most recent reconstruction, in c.1957, included a concrete spillway that extends beyond the NPS property line. In c.1972, a concrete culvert was built over the ditch to carry the driveway to the Blaha and Peterson houses. This construction may have led to the present failure of the ditch to adequately drain the burial grounds. Although functionally important, the drainage ditch not does contribute to the historic character of the landscape.

VEGETATION

This characteristic describes the managed trees, shrubs, vines, groundcovers, and herbaceous materials in the landscape (but not the natural unmanaged vegetation, which is part of the natural systems and features characteristic). The vegetation of Poplar Grove National Cemetery was characterized historically by an allee along the approach road, and lawn and specimen trees within the cemetery. There was historically a preponderance of evergreens (loblolly pine and cedars), which traditionally have a funerary association with eternal life. Shrubs, hedges, vines, and flowerbeds were generally secondary features. The amount of vegetation was at its greatest from the initial beautification of the cemetery during the 1870s through the 1890s. After this time, the War Department reduced the amount of vegetation, especially flowerbeds and shrubs, in response to natural decline and disaster, lack of replacement, and efforts to decrease maintenance. The last major planting during the historic period occurred in 1931. After the historic period, the National Park Service made additional plantings in the burial grounds, but did not alter the overall character of evenly spaced trees and lawn aside from the planting of Eastern red-cedars clustered along the inclosure wall. Although the amount of vegetation has declined and several new species have been introduced since the end of the historic period, the overall character of the vegetation within the cemetery created by collection of specimen trees informally distributed across the landscape remains largely intact. The approach road allee does not remain intact. (See also chronological list of plantings in Appendix G.)

Character-defining vegetation features that have been lost since the end of the historic period, aside from individual specimens, include the boxwood allee between Divisions E (Block XVIII) and D (Block XVI) (c.1871-c.1974), the arborvitae hedge around the service yard (c.1888-c.1974), fruit trees in the lodge grounds (c.1871-c.1970), a boxwood hedge in the shape of a Maltese cross in front of the lodge (c.1871-c.1985), and English ivy on the inclosure wall (c.1888-c.1957). There was also a grape arbor extending back from the southeast corner of the lodge (c.1872-c.1934).

Approach Road Trees (National Park Foundation, R. Taylor Farm)

Evaluation: Non-contributing

The approach road trees line either side of the approach road in the federal right-of-way through private property. In 1879, the War Department planted maples and tulip-trees at twenty-five foot intervals (approximately eighty trees total), symmetrically to either side of the approach road. These trees created a formal allee that provided a military-like rhythm to the approach. Replacement plantings were made in 1882 with a mix of ash, elm, linden, maple, and white poplar. In 1931, replacement plantings of elm, maple, and linden were recommended. After

the end of the historic period, the allee was not maintained, and mowing around the trees probably ceased leading to growth of volunteer trees, primarily Eastern red-cedar. By 1969, the allee had large gaps, and today the fourteen original trees are scattered among volunteer specimens, groves, and adjoining woods (see figs. 3.1, 3.2). The existing trees lack the symmetry and formality of the historic allee, and also block views to the cemetery and adjoining fields. Due to lack of integrity, the approach road trees do not contribute to the historic character of the landscape, although during the historic period the formal allee was a significant feature.

Odom Cemetery Trees and Shrubs (National Park Foundation)

Evaluation: Non-contributing

The Odom Cemetery, established in 1971, contains three deciduous shrubs and two young deciduous trees. Given their recent origin, the vegetation does not contribute to the historic character of the landscape. The trees detract from the historic character due to their location in what was historically an open field bordering the approach road allee.

Cemetery Specimen Trees

Evaluation: Contributing

In the initial establishment of Poplar Grove, specimen trees included fruit trees (purportedly planted by the engineers) and second-growth loblolly pines, which were thinned from the woods surrounding the engineers' camp and retained as specimens. Spaces within the grave rows most likely reflect planting around these trees. In 1868, there were approximately 180 specimen loblolly pines and that same year, the burial corps planted approximately 1,000 red-cedars transplanted from nearby woods, most of which died. In 1871, the Quartermaster General undertook a major planting program at the national cemeteries that included approximately 200 specimens at Poplar Grove. Species included ash (probably European mountain ash), purple beech, cedar (probably false cypress/white cedar), hornbeam (hop hornbeam), horsechestnut, balsam fir, elm, Kentucky coffee-tree, larch, linden, magnolia, box elder, silver maple, sugar maple, oak (probably pin, water, and willow), silver poplar, Norway spruce, white spruce, and weeping willow. Other trees planted after 1871 included dwarf black spruce, mugho pine, red maple, sweet-gum, and tulip-tree. Also in 1871, 101 elms were established as two allees in the shape of cross to create a so-called sylvan hall, a feature introduced at the time in many national cemeteries. Most of the elms in the sylvan hall were removed in c.1890 apparently because their heavy surface roots were interfering with the graves and mowing. Many trees were lost in two storms during the summer of 1915, which destroyed approximately 139 specimens. These trees were not replaced until 1931, when the first major

planting program since 1871 was undertaken. It specified approximately seventy trees within the cemetery walls, including elm, holly, linden, Austrian pine, European mountain ash, Norway maple, Norway spruce, and pin oak. By the end of the historic period, there were 169 trees in the cemetery, generally evenly and informally distributed across the landscape, with elm, loblolly pine, holly, cedars, magnolia, and oaks the most numerous species.

After the end of the historic period, the National Park Service removed many specimen trees due to decline and made new plantings. These included approximately one hundred Eastern red-cedar trees planted in 1937, primarily along the inclosure wall. By 1941, there were 137 deciduous and 156 evergreen trees (including eighty deciduous trees in the approach road allee). By 1962, the number of evergreen trees within the cemetery had decreased to twenty, and the deciduous trees to thirty-seven. The park made some new plantings after World War II using red oak, yellow birch, scrub pine, pignut hickory, willow oak, sweet-gum, cherry, and Colorado blue spruce. While there are approximately eighty specimen trees in the cemetery today, only twenty likely date to the historic period. The loss of trees and changes in species, particularly the loss of evergreens with their funerary association, detracts form the historic character of the landscape. The trees planted after 1934 are generally compatible with the historic character, although the hollies along the central circle interfere with views from the flagstaff out to the graves due to their heavy canopy and low branching.

The oldest specimen trees (including those in the approach road allee) are identified by circular metal tags imprinted with an inventory number affixed to the trunk. These tags most likely date to an inventory system created by the park service prior to World War II. This system was discontinued at an unknown time after the war, so the younger trees in the cemetery do not have the identification tags.

Cemetery Shrubs

Evaluation: Non-contributing

During the early history of the cemetery, the landscape was characterized by many shrubs. The 1871 planting program included 100 boxwoods (planted in an allee between Divisions D and E, along the drives, as edging for the Maltese cross in front of the lodge, and as a hedge around the service area) and 4,042 Osage orange (as a perimeter hedge), and during the 1870s there were unspecified shrubs planted on the flagstaff mound that were removed by c.1895. The boxwoods along the drives were clipped into mounds. In 1888, the boxwood hedge around the service yard was replaced with an arborvitae hedge. Crape myrtles were planted prior to 1932. Most of the shrubs remained intact by the end of the historic period, except for those around the circular turn-around in the lodge grounds that

were probably removed for a septic field. After the historic period, the number of shrubs declined with the notable loss of the boxwood allee, sheared boxwoods along the drives, service yard arborvitae hedge, and Maltese cross hedge. The remaining boxwoods were not clipped but allowed to grow naturally. New plantings were probably limited to a cluster of crape myrtle east of the flagstaff. Today, shrubs that probably date to the historic period are limited to six aged boxwoods in the lodge grounds and in the former allee, and a crape myrtle in Division D. Post-1933 shrubs include a group of crape myrtle in the drive east of the flagstaff. Due to their overgrown size, origin after 1933, and remnants of once larger plantings, the existing shrubs as a whole do not contribute to the historic character of the landscape. Clipped shrubs were historically a character-defining feature of Poplar Grove.

Cemetery Lawn

Evaluation: Contributing

The cemetery lawn dates back to the initial development of the cemetery in 1866-1869. It was initially a discontiguous and uneven lawn due to the presence of grave mounds. By 1877, the last of the grave mounds was leveled, and together with change from gravel to turf on the drives by1874 and removal of the brick gutters in 1877, the lawn became an expansive and unifying feature of the landscape. Mowing was done by hand mowers, with trimming done by sickle or scythe. In 1878, the cemetery acquired a horse-drawn lawn mower, and in 1931, a gasoline powered mower. The cemetery lawn, primarily Bermuda grass with wild onion, sorrel, and other weeds, was often cited as being difficult to maintain due to clayey soils. After the historic period, the park maintained the cemetery lawn much as it had been during the historic period, although the alteration of the grave markers had a marked visual impact on the lawn, creating a single expanse of lawn where historically it had been punctuated by the rows of upright grave markers. In addition, the lawn has at times been in poor condition. Despite this visual change and conditions problems, the lawn remains a character-defining feature of the cemetery landscape.

Inclosure Ivy Groundcover (NPS, National Park Foundation, Blaha and Peterson Properties)

Evaluation: Non-contributing

Around the outside of the inclosure wall on portions of the south, east, and north sides, there is English ivy that has become naturalized within the inclosure woods. This ivy escaped from the ivy planted in 1888 along the inside of the inclosure wall in a bed cut into the lawn. The ivy was kept trimmed in a line below the top of the wall, and was maintained through the end of the historic period and into the late 1930s. During the war and post-war years when maintenance was curtailed, the

ivy grew over the wall and into the adjoining woods. It was most likely removed from the inside of the wall as part of a general cemetery improvement undertaken in 1957. Although the existing ivy is an interesting remnant, it most likely did not exist historically in its current location and therefore does not contribute to the historic character of the landscape. The loss of the ivy on the inclosure wall detracts from the historic character of the cemetery.

Inclosure Red-Cedar Trees

Evaluation: Non-contributing

Along the outside of the south and west sides of the inclosure wall are Eastern red-cedar trees planted in 1937. These cedars were planted for visual interest and screening along the sides of the cemetery open to adjoining fields. Those south of the lodge grounds and west of the burial grounds are today surrounded by successional woods, while those to either side of the entrance gates remain as specimens. Because they were planted after the historic period, as individual trees these cedars do not contribute to the historic character of the landscape. However, given their limited extent and relationship to plants used historically, they do not detract from the historic character of the landscape.

BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

This characteristic includes three-dimensional constructs, with buildings defined as constructs for shelter such as houses, barns, and garages; and structures as constructs that do not provide shelter, such as walls and bridges. Buildings and structures at Poplar Grove are clustered at the entrance to the cemetery and frame the perimeter. Buildings that were removed during the historic period included Poplar Grove Church (1865-1868), the first lodge (1867-c.1879), the brick kitchen (1879-1929) and "cave" (c.1900-1929, use not known) to the rear of the lodge; and in the service yard, the well house (c.1871-c.1939), brick toolshed-stable (1879-c.1929), forage shed, (1879-c.1915), service yard privy (c.1905-1929), and frame shed (c.1925-c.1929). Notable lost structures include the system of brick gutters that lined the drives in the burial grounds (1866-1869), which were covered in 1877 and may still remain below the surface. While there was substantial change during the historic period, buildings and structures remain largely unchanged since the end of the historic period in 1933.

Two buildings—the Blaha and Peterson houses—have been introduced into the immediate setting of the cemetery since the historic period. Built in c.1972, both are visible from within the cemetery and detract from the historic setting of Poplar Grove.

Inclosure Wall and Entrance Gate

Evaluation: Contributing

The inclosure wall and entrance gate delineate the perimeter of the cemetery and were built based on a prototype plan made in 1870 by Quartermaster General Montgomery Meigs. Initially begun in 1873 to replace a white-painted wood paling fence erected in 1866, the Poplar Grove inclosure wall and entrance gates were built in 1876 by John Brennon and Archibald L. Hutton of Washington. The wall, measuring 2,700 feet long and four feet tall, was constructed of red brick with pilasters capped by Ohio sandstone blocks dividing each of the 132 sections. At approximately eight locations, openings in the brick wall were made for drainage, originally from the system of brick gutters and wooden sewer boxes that drained the cemetery. As first constructed, the wall remained obscured from inside the cemetery by a perimeter hedge of Osage orange, which was replaced in c.1888 by a planting of English ivy that climbed the wall. The ivy remained until c.1957. The entrance gate, built of granite posts with iron gates, was characteristic of larger national cemeteries with two pedestrian passages flanking a central vehicular way. In c.1935, the park added two metal plaques in the shape of a shield with the words "U.S. National Cemetery" to the granite posts. The inclosure wall and entrance gates remain intact and are character-defining features of Civil War-era national cemeteries. The wall and gates are similar to those at Yorktown, Seven Pines, Richmond, Culpeper, and Fort Harrison National Cemeteries, among others, all built around the same time according to the Meigs prototype. Removal of English ivy along the interior of the wall, probably done to conserve the brick masonry, has altered the historic character of the landscape.

Lodge

Evaluation: Contributing

The lodge, located at the cemetery entrance gates, is a small one and one-half story house with a Mansard roof that historically functioned as the residence of the cemetery superintendent and his family. It replaced a frame lodge built in 1867 on the north side of the drive, and was designed according to a prototype plan in the Second Empire style by Quartermaster General Montgomery Meigs. Work on the building, initially designed to be brick, began in 1870 on the north side of the main drive. This site was abandoned and the following year the project was rebid and awarded to Kyran A. Murphy, this time using stone construction and a site on the south side of the main drive. The old frame lodge was moved to the rear of the lodge for use as a kitchen wing, and was removed with the construction of a separate brick kitchen to the rear of the lodge in c.1879. In 1914, a stucco-finished one-story kitchen wing was added at the rear of the lodge. The final exterior modifications to the Lodge were made at the end of the historic period as part of the War Department's program of improvements that included the building

of the garage and public restroom building. In 1931, the floor of the porch was replaced in concrete and the lower slope of the slate Mansard roof was replaced with standing-seam metal, matching the roofs on the stable and restroom building. In c.1903, a standard iron tablet with Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, known as the Lincoln Memorial tablet, was affixed to the front of the lodge.[16] While the paint scheme at the end of the historic period in 1933 is not known, the 1931 National Cemetery regulations called for tin roofs to be painted red, trim white, doors bronze green, porch ceiling light blue, and borders and letters of the Lincoln Memorial tablet, copper-bronze.

Since the end of the historic period, there have been no substantial changes to the exterior of the lodge aside from the addition of aluminum triple-track storm windows and painting of the stucco kitchen wing in white. The lodge remains a character-defining feature of the landscape that identifies Poplar Grove as a Civil War-era National Cemetery. The lodge is similar in style and overall plan and details to the lodges at Richmond, Fort Harrison, Cold Harbor, Seven Pines, Yorktown, and Culpeper National Cemeteries, among others.

Garage

Evaluation: Contributing

The garage, historically known as the stable-garage or the outbuilding, is a one and one-half story building with a metal gable roof located in the service yard along the inclosure wall. The Colonial Revival-style building was constructed in 1929 by the firm of H. Herfurth Jr., of Washington D. C. according to the design of the Quartermaster Supply Officer, Washington General Depot. It replaced the 1879 brick toolshed-stable and adjoining frame outbuildings. The garage was built to house the cemetery horse that pulled the lawn mower at the time, and to provide a tool room and privy. It was sided in unpainted stucco probably to match the general character of the stone lodge. While the historic paint colors are not known, the 1931 National Cemetery regulations called for tin roofs to be painted red, the trim white, and the doors bronze-green.[17] Historically screened in part by an arborvitae hedge, the building is today clearly visible upon entrance to the cemetery. Aside from installation of a new garage door on the front façade and an exterior steel stairway on the west (facing the cemetery entrance), the exterior of the building has undergone little change since the historic period. It is characteristic, along with its companion public restroom building, of the style of buildings constructed by the War Department at national cemeteries during the early twentieth century.

Public Restroom Building

Evaluation: Contributing

The public restroom building, historically known as the utility building, is a small one-story building with a metal gable roof located at the rear of the lodge. The Colonial Revival-style building was constructed in 1929 by the firm of H. Herfurth Jr., of Washington, D. C. according to the design of the Quartermaster Supply Officer, Washington General Depot, with unpainted stucco siding probably to match the general character of the stone lodge. While the historic paint colors are not known, the 1931 National Cemetery regulations called for tin roofs to be painted red, the trim white, and the doors bronze-green.[18] The building was constructed on the site of the c.1879 brick kitchen, which had last been used as a woodshed. The building was constructed to provide public restrooms, and to provide space for fuel storage, an electric generating motor, and a water tank. The restrooms were serviced by a septic tank and septic field in the lodge grounds completed in 1931. Aside from painting of the stucco, there have been no substantial changes to the building since the historic period. It is characteristic, along with its companion garage, of the style of buildings constructed by the War Department at national cemeteries during the early twentieth century.

Rostrum

Evaluation: Contributing

The rostrum is an open-air eight-sided iron pavilion on a raised brick base located on the eastern side of the lodge grounds. The building, reflecting the Aesthetic Movement in its decoration, was completed in 1897 and was a standard design matching the rostrums at Richmond and Yorktown National Cemeteries, among others. The War Department began building rostrums at national cemeteries in a systematic way during the 1890s. National Cemetery regulations called for the ironwork to be painted black, the top of the roof red, and the underside of the roof ceiling light blue; it is not known if this rostrum was painted in these colors. By 1925, ivy grew on the brick foundation, and the vine persisted at least until 1968.[19] Aside from possible changes in paint color and loss of the ivy, the rostrum remains intact. It is a rare-surviving example of its type, reflecting the growing national importance of commemoration and Memorial Day services in particular during the late nineteenth century. The only rostrums that remain from this period are at Cave Hill (Kentucky) and San Antonio (Texas) National Cemeteries.[20] Only the base of the rostrum at Richmond National Cemetery survives.

VIEWS AND VISTAS

This characteristic describes a prospect, either natural or constructed. Views are generally broad prospects of a general area, while vistas are designed and directed views of a particular scene or feature. During the historic period, the view of the cemetery across open fields from Vaughan Road, with the flagstaff rising above the tree canopy, was a character-defining feature of the landscape, and surely a stirring scene for visitors. Such a view remains at several Civil War-era national cemeteries, notably Glendale near Richmond. Since the historic period, this view at Poplar Grove has been lost due to the growth of successional woods along the west side of the cemetery and along the approach road. The cemetery does not come into view until visitors reach the parking lot, where there is no broad prospect. The landscape retains a view and two vistas, although they have been altered since the historic period.

Vista of Entrance Gates from Approach Road (National Park Foundation)

Evaluation: Contributing

The eastern arc of the approach road historically revealed a vista of the cemetery entrance gate, symmetrically framed by the approach road allee initially planted in 1879 with open fields to either side. Since the historic period, this vista has been altered by changes to the approach road allee and to the addition of the visitor parking lot in c.1995. While the entrance gate still comes into view, the vista is no longer directed at the gate due to the loss of the enclosing allee and the widening of the pavement into the parking lot.

View of Flagstaff from Graves

Evaluation: Contributing

The cemetery plan, of graves facing the center in radiating circles, was devised so that the central flagstaff was visible from all graves. The lowering of the grave markers in 1934 after the historic period greatly diminished this aspect of the plan. In addition, low branching of specimen trees along the central circle has obstructed the view of the flagstaff. Although diminished, this view remains a character-defining feature of the landscape.

Vista of Flagstaff from Main Drive

Evaluation: Contributing

The vista of the flagstaff upon approach along the main drive historically directed visitors to the center, from where the individual graves could be accessed via the radiating drives. Trees were apparently kept back from the main drive and central circle to maintain this vista. Since the end of the historic period, this vista has been

partly obstructed due to the decrease in height of the flagstaff, and encroachment by trees.

SMALL SCALE FEATURES

This characteristic describes elements that provide detail and diversity in the landscape for utility or aesthetics, including such things as benches, monuments, signs, and monuments. Historically, the landscape of Poplar Grove National Cemetery was dominated by small-scale features that were standard elements in Civil War-era national cemeteries. Most important were the grave markers (1866-c.1933), along with four gun monuments (1869), placed symmetrically around the central flagstaff; wrought-iron and wood-slat settees (c.1879) along the drives; sixteen cast-iron signs known as tablets (c.1881) on which were cast the legislation establishing the national cemeteries, an invitation to register, and four-line verses from the poem, "The Bivouac of the Dead." All but one of these small-scale features have been removed or extensively altered since the end of the historic period. The tablets are presently stored in the loft of the garage. Conversion of the headstones and blocks to flat markers has been the most extensive change to the cemetery landscape since the end of the historic period. Small-scale features, although historically a defining characteristic, are today a minor aspect of the landscape.

Vaughan Road Entrance Sign (R. Taylor Farm)

Evaluation: Non-contributing

At the south side of the approach road at its intersection with Vaughan Road is a standard brown-faced National Park Service sign that identifies Poplar Grove National Cemetery as a part of Petersburg National Battlefield. The sign, mounted on wood posts, was added in c.1995 and has a bed ringed by stones around its base. During the historic period, a sign was maintained in this general location. No documentation was found on the appearance or content of the historic sign. The existing sign does not reflect the historic solemnity or formality of the cemetery or Poplar Grove's historic association with the national cemetery system.

Odom Cemetery Fence (National Park Foundation)

Evaluation: Non-contributing

The Odom cemetery, established in 1971, is enclosed by a four-foot high chain-link fence most likely installed in 1971 at the time of the first burial. In its materials, design, and location, the fence detracts from historic character of the landscape.

Odom Cemetery Headstones (National Park Foundation)

Evaluation: Non-contributing

The Odom cemetery, established in 1971, contains two granite headstones: JONES, with two burials for E. Everett 1885-1981, and Nellie E. 1885-1971; ODOM, with two burials for Roberta E. 1914-1993, and L. Grady 1891-1971. Given the recent origin of the cemetery distinct from the national cemetery, these do not contribute to the historic character of the landscape. Given their small scale, however, they do not detract. The National Park Service made a commitment to maintain the gravestones as part of Roberta Odom's donation of the property to the National Park Foundation in 1991.

Corner Boundary Markers

Evaluation: Contributing

The corners of the federally owned cemetery property are marked by low stone posts. These posts were installed in 1877 as part of the resurvey and expansion of the cemetery property undertaken for construction of the inclosure wall. The irregular lines of the boundary are a result of the inaccurate original (c.1868) survey overlaid by the 1877 expansion that added a buffer strip between zero and ten feet to the perimeter of the cemetery. Although the corner boundary markers are not conspicuous in the landscape, they convey the historic limits of the federal property. Pipe posts located next to the stone posts (along with contemporary orange stakes), probably added after 1934, do not contribute to the historic character of the landscape.

Barbed-Wire Fence

Evaluation: Non-contributing

Along the National Park Service property line south of the lodge grounds are remnants of a wood post and barbed-wire fence. This fence was installed in 1937 to protect the red-cedars planted between the property line and the inclosure wall from livestock in the adjoining cow pasture. The fence has not been maintained and is in poor condition. It has been replaced by the private property owner with an electric livestock fence. Because it was added after the historic period, the barbed-wire fence does not contribute to the historic character of the landscape.

Wood Privacy Fence

Evaluation: Non-contributing

An unfinished wood-plank fence extends from the southeast corner of the lodge and jogs back to the public restroom building, defining a rear yard for the lodge. The fence, installed after 1970, crosses the walk from the lodge to the public restroom building. A grape arbor, built in c.1871 and removed in c.1934,

historically existed in this location. Red-cedars were planted in this area in 1937 to screen the rear yard, but no longer exist. The wood privacy fence detracts from the historic character of the landscape through its materials and location.

Grave Markers

Evaluation: Non-contributing

The grave markers at Poplar Grove, which currently number approximately 5,615, were installed between c.1866 and 2003, with the vast majority installed in 1877 as upright headstones and square posts known as blocks. In 1934, the headstones and blocks were transformed into flat markers, giving Poplar Grove the character of a lawn-style cemetery. The park did this to ease lawn maintenance and improve the aesthetics of the landscape. After this time, only flat markers were installed on new graves and as replacement markers. As a whole, the grave markers therefore do not contribute to the historic character of the Poplar Grove cultural landscape as it relates to National Register Criterion C in the area of landscape architecture within the period of significance from 1866 through 1933. The post-1934 flat markers original to their graves may have significance under National Register Criterion A.[21] Aside from alteration to the historic design and setting, most of the grave markers are in poor condition marked by chipping, cracking, staining, and erosion. The deteriorated and irreparably altered conditions of the existing grave markers are not in keeping with historic National Cemetery standards and convey disrespect to the veterans.

The following is an evaluation of the five types of grave markers at Poplar Grove National Cemetery based on significance under Criterion C in the area of landscape architecture, and follows the classification used by the National Cemetery Administration. (See also Appendix D: Chronology of Government-Furnished Grave Markers.)

Recessed-Shield Headstones

Recessed-shield headstones are the most numerous type at Poplar Grove. Most were installed at known graves in 1877 as part of a national cemetery system project begun in 1873 to replace all wood painted headboards initially used to mark graves. Poplar Grove was the last cemetery in the system to receive the new grave markers, which are also referred to as Civil War-style headstones. There were originally 2,200 headstones installed, each a Vermont white-marble cambered-profile tablet measuring ten inches wide, four inches thick, and thirty-six inches tall. The original specifications called for an above-ground height of twelve inches, but the headstones may have been installed or later raised to a height of eighteen inches. The inscription was set within a recessed six-point shield, within which was the grave number at the top, the name in the middle, and the state regiment at the bottom. The headstones were installed under contract

by Captain Samuel G. Bridges, and were supplied and finished by Sheldon & Slason of West Rutland, Vermont. The company used a sand-blast method for inscribing the stones. The headstones were set directly in the ground. There are approximately 2,046 of these first-generation recessed-shield headstones remaining at Poplar Grove.

In 1903, the War Department revised its specifications for the recessed-shield headstone to make them more durable. Also known as Spanish-American War type, the revised headstones were slightly larger at twelve inches wide and thirty-nine inches tall. These headstones were probably installed at an above-ground height of 18 inches. The thickness remained the same at four inches. The inscriptions were hammered rather than sand-blasted, and featured two different font styles, probably representing a subsequent change in the specifications. Style A (as categorized by the park) had a larger font than the first generation headstones; style B had a cambered font. These headstones were used for veterans of the Spanish-American War and Civil War reinterments, and to replace broken grave markers (notably for the summer storms of 1915 that broke forty-seven markers). The last graves marked by this style of stone were probably the reinterments from the Crater battlefield made in 1931. Today there are approximately fifty-nine of these second-generation recessed-shield headstones at Poplar Grove.

In 1934, workers from the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) transformed all recessed-shield headstones into flat markers by cutting or breaking off the bases and laying the upper parts flush within the ground. The park subsequently sold the bases to a private individual, who built a nearby residence known today as the Tombstone House. Since the end of the historic period, approximately ninety-five of the recessed-shield headstones have been replaced with government flat markers.

Unknown Blocks

The blocks marking unknown graves of Civil War casualties were installed along with the recessed-shield headstones in 1877 as part of a system-wide project begun in 1873 to replace wood painted headboards initially used to mark the graves. Poplar Grove was the last cemetery in the system to receive the new grave markers. There were originally 3,555 blocks at Poplar Grove, each a post of Vermont white marble measuring six inches square and thirty inches long, specified for installation of four inches above grade; these were probably later raised to six inches above grade. The blocks were installed under contract by Captain Samuel G. Bridges, and were supplied and finished by Sheldon & Slason of West Rutland, Vermont. The company used the sand-blast method for inscribing the blocks, which just contained the grave number on the top surface,

and if applicable, the number of remains in the grave. The blocks were set directly in the ground. Use of the blocks instead of headstones changed the uniformity of the landscape, but made visible the large percentage of soldiers who could not be identified. In 1903, the War Department abandoned the use of blocks for marking unknown graves. In 1934, the blocks were transformed when workers from the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) sunk them flush with the ground. Today, the blocks are barely visible in the landscape. There are roughly 3,477 blocks remaining at Poplar Grove; approximately seventy-eight blocks have been replaced with different markers, most after 1933 with flat markers inscribed "Unknown U.S. Soldier."

General Headstones

The General headstone, developed by the War Department in 1922 for veterans of World War I in place of the recessed-shield headstone, is a white-marble cambered-profile tablet headstone measuring twelve inches wide, four inches thick, with an above-ground height of twenty-four inches. The inscription, without a recessed shield, includes a symbol of faith. There are thirteen of these headstones at Poplar Grove, most installed as replacement markers for Civil War graves and reinterments through 2003. Those installed prior to 1934 were originally upright headstones that were transformed to flat markers in 1934; later General headstones were installed as flat markers with their bases cut off. Those installed prior to World War II have a different font and size than those used after the war. There are approximately thirteen of these markers at Poplar Grove.

Government Flat Markers

In 1936, the War Department introduced a rectangular marble flat marker, twenty-four inches long by twelve-inches inches wide, for use in lawn-style cemeteries. In 1939, the same markers were offered in granite. In 1939, the National Park Service began to install flat markers at Poplar Grove instead of cut-off General headstones. Over the course of the next two decades, the park installed approximately 216 flat markers for both new burials (last in 1957) and as replacements. The flat markers installed through World War II featured a different font than those used after the war. The flat markers are scattered around the cemetery, with a concentration of new burials in Block XX (Division F).

Government Medal of Honor Flat Markers

In 1940, the War Department adopted a bronze flat marker, twenty-four inches long by twelve inches wide, as a standard marker for Medal of Honor recipients. At some point after this time, two Civil War-style headstones at Poplar Grove were replaced with Medal of Honor bronze markers.

Non-Government Headstones

There are five large tablet headstones at Poplar Grove that were privately commissioned and installed during the initial development of the cemetery between c.1866 and 1869, when wood headboards were being used to mark the graves. As with all other grave markers at Poplar Grove, these headstones were transformed into flat markers in 1934. While these grave markers do not presently contribute to the historic character of the landscape, they remain largely intact and could be readily returned to their historic upright position.

In addition to these four headstones, there are approximately twenty-one other non-government headstones at Poplar Grove. All appear to have been installed prior to 1934. Some mark civilian graves (including two infants of the cemetery superintendents), but most are replacement markers on veteran graves. They are all marble tablet headstones, with either cambered, square, or gabled profiles. None contain the six-point shield. These non-government headstones were transformed into flat markers in 1934 along with the rest of the cemetery grave markers. Because of their non-standard design and workmanship, including some that are crudely inscribed, these markers could be perceived as conveying dishonor upon the veteran graves.

Flagstaff

Evaluation: Non-Contributing

The flagstaff, located within a circular island defined by a loop in the main entrance drive, is the physical and symbolic center of the cemetery. The first flagstaff (height not known) was erected at the start of the cemetery's development in 1866, and was positioned on a six-foot high mound in the shape of frustum of a cone. By 1874, this wooden pole had deteriorated and was replaced under contract to J. C. Comfort of Shiremanstown, Pennsylvania, with a fifty-six foot tall wood flagstaff. At this time, the flagstaff mound was reduced in size to four feet tall and twenty-three feet wide. In 1913, the wood flagstaff, which cemetery inspectors had found to be too short, was again replaced with an iron pole (height not known). This iron pole was replaced in 1930 with a taller pole. It was constructed of sections bolted together with flanges, anchored by four guy wires, and surmounted by a ball finial. National Cemetery regulations called for the flagstaff to be white with the base and guy wire turnbuckles painted black. At approximately eighty feet high, the flagstaff reached above the tree canopy and was visible from Vaughan Road. This same style of flagstaff was installed at Fredericksburg National Cemetery. After the historic period, the pole was reduced in height by roughly half and the guy wires were removed. Due to this extensive change, the flagstaff does not contribute to the historic character of the landscape. It was historically a defining feature.

Flagstaff Floodlight

Evaluation: Non-contributing

The flagstaff is illuminated by a contemporary floodlight mounted at ground level at the head of the main drive and screened by a young boxwood shrub. A floodlight for the flagstaff may have initially been installed in 1976, when the National Cemetery System instituted a program of lighting for flagstaffs. The existing floodlight does not contribute to the character of the landscape due to its recent origin and inconspicuous design.

Gun Monument

Evaluation: Contributing

The gun monument, consisting of an upright cannon tube with a pyramidal stack of cannon balls set on a concrete pad, is located to the north of the flagstaff along the outer edge of the main drive loop. The cannon is one of four, thirty-two pounder Columbiad guns acquired from Fort Monroe, a federal fort on the Chesapeake Bay in Hampton, Virginia, and brought to Poplar Grove in the fall of 1868. The existing gun was the primary monument among the four, distinguished by a bronze shield with the burial tally and name of the cemetery. Gun monuments were a standard feature in national cemeteries in Virginia, with the large cemeteries such as Poplar Grove and Richmond receiving four each, and the smaller cemeteries, such as Glendale, Cold Harbor, and Seven Pines, one each. The existing gun monument—the only monument in the cemetery—remains intact except for its cannon-ball top. Its bronze shield has been painted black and is difficult to read. The existing concrete pad, which is cracked, dates to 1924 (the original type of pad is not known). The loss of the three other gun monuments, removed in c.1974, detracts from the historic character of the landscape.

Drive Markers

Evaluation: Non-contributing

There are six small iron signs (also referred to as section markers) that designate each of the radiating drives with the letters A through F, except for the main drive and the drive north of the flagstaff that was filled with graves between 1896 and 1918. These cast metal signs, painted black and measuring four by five inches and affixed to an iron pipe, were most likely installed in c.1957 as part of the redesignation of the cemetery plan from divisions and sections to blocks. Because they were added after the historic period, the drive markers do not contribute to the historic character of the landscape.

Grave Locator-Interpretive Signs

Evaluation: Non-contributing

The two aluminum-frame signs to either side of the flagstaff, showing the burial register for known graves, a plan of the cemetery, and an illustrated history of the cemetery, were installed in c.1957. The signs were most likely part of a general grounds improvement project included in the park's MISSION 66 prospectus. The plan of the cemetery shows a reclassification of the divisions and sections into twenty blocks, and naming of the radial avenues by the letters A through F. These signs do not contribute to the historic character of the landscape because they were installed after the historic period for the landscape. They detract from the historic character of the landscape due to their design, materials, and location that are incongruous with the formality of the center of the cemetery. The burial register is also worn and difficult to read.

Concrete Pads

Evaluation: Non-contributing

There are two concrete pads to the west of the flagstaff that were probably installed in 1957 as the bases for benches. Each measures approximately three feet square. It is not known when the benches or other above-ground components were removed. These pads do not contribute to the historic character because they were added after the historic period for the landscape.

Utilities, Signs, and Furnishings

Evaluation: Non-contributing

Scattered along the approach road, parking lot, and within the cemetery are small informational signs, trash containers, utility components, and a picnic table installed by the National Park Service since c.1990. These features are of recent origin and therefore do not contribute to the historic character of the landscape. Overall, they are inconspicuous.

ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES

This characteristic describes surface and subsurface remains related to historic or prehistoric land use. The primary archeological resources at Poplar Grove National Cemetery are its burials. There may be additional archeological resources within the cemetery, such as remains from removed built features. Archeological investigation could add to the historic documentation on the landscape, informing such questions as the function of the "cave" (c.1900-1929), a structure located south of the lodge, or the extent and exact location of the system of brick gutters (c.1866, covered in 1877). A comprehensive archeological investigation has not

been undertaken to date to determine the existence and significance of potential resources.

Graves

Evaluation: Contributing

There are currently 5,613 individual graves, and approximately 6,238 interments (the higher number is due to multiple unknown remains in single graves). The number of Civil War interments in 1954 was 6,178, and since that time three additional Civil War remains have been reinterred (in 2003).[22] Recent geophysical and archeological testing by the park (2008) identified that in some places existing grave markers do not align with the head of the graves. Markers were found in positions between two graves, several feet above the head of the grave shaft, off-center from the grave shaft, or even on top of the grave shaft. A few graves are located within drives. The testing did not reveal evidence of the original 1877 placement of the upright headstones.[23] All graves at Poplar Grove National Cemetery are considered historically significant within the overall period of significance extending from the first interments in 1866 through the last in 2003 (reinterment of Civil War remains).

TABLE 3.1: CULTURAL LANDSCAPE EVALUATION SUMMARY
POPLAR GROVE NATIONAL CEMETERY

FEATURE NAME	EVALUATION	COMMENTS
Natural Systems and Features		
Triangular Woodlot (R. Taylor farm)	Non-contributing	Woods that grew in after 1970; historically part of an open field.
West Woods (National Park Foundation)	Non-contributing	Woods that grew in after 1970; historically an open field.
North Woods (Blaha property and NPS)	Contributing	Part of large wooded area since late 19th century; reduced to thin strip of woods in c.1972, further opened in 1994 storm.
East Woods (Blaha and Peterson)	Contributing	Part of large wooded area since before the Civil War; opened up in c.1972 with construction of two houses.
South Woods (Richardson property)	Contributing	Part of wooded area since late 19th century.
North Hedgerow (R. Taylor farm, Harrison Property)	Non-contributing	Volunteer woods that have grown up since c.1970.
Entrance Field Hedgerow (National Park Foundation, R. Taylor farm)	Non-contributing	Volunteer woods that have grown up since c.1970 on historically open field.
South Hedgerow (R. Taylor farm, NPS)	Non-contributing	Volunteer woods that have grown up since c.1970 on historically open field.
Spatial Organization		
Cemetery Approach (R. Taylor farm, National Park Foundation)	Contributing	Approach road right-of-way through private property dating to c.1866; eastern 325 feet acquired by the National Park Foundation in 1991; historically framed by allee of deciduous trees.
Southwest Field (R. Taylor farm)	Contributing	Pre-dates establishment of cemetery; part of historic setting along approach road.
Northwest Field (R. Taylor farm)	Contributing	Pre-dates establishment of cemetery; part of historic setting along approach road.
Entrance Field (National Park Foundation, R. Taylor farm)	Contributing	Pre-dates establishment of cemetery, historically part of the southwest field; portion acquired by the National Park Foundation in 1991. Part of the cemetery setting along the approach road.
Odom Cemetery (National Park Foundation)	Non-contributing	Private family cemetery established in 1971 along approach road, acquired by the National Park Foundation in 1991.

Southeast Field (R. Taylor farm)	Contributing	Pre-dates establishment of the cemetery. Part of the open rural setting of the cemetery.
Cemetery Inclosure Space	Contributing	Cemetery perimeter, 1866; resurveyed and enlarged, 1877; west side changed with addition of Odom tract in 1991.
Service Yard	Contributing	Maintenance area of the cemetery, dating to c.1871; enclosed by fence/hedge until c.1974.
Lodge Grounds	Contributing	Assembly area of the cemetery, dating to c.1871.
Burial Grounds	Contributing	Space containing the graves, defined by the enclosure wall, lodge grounds, and service area; altered internally through loss of trees, shrubs, and conversion of headstones to flat markers.
Land Use		
		No associated features.
Circulation		
Approach Road (R. Taylor farm, National Park Foundation)	Contributing	Entrance drive from Vaughan Road, built in c.1866, paved in 1931. Federal right-of-way.
Driveway to Blaha and Peterson Houses (Blaha and Peterson properties)	Non-contributing	Built in c.1972; partly within NPS right-of-way.
Visitor Parking Area (National Park Foundation)	Non-contributing	Built c.1995.
Main Drive	Contributing	Drive from approach road to flagstaff, built in c.1866, paved in 1931.
Service Drive	Contributing	Short drive between garage and main drive, initially built c.1871, enlarged to present width in c.1974.
Burial Grounds Drives	Contributing	Primary circulation routes through burial grounds, built with gravel surface and brick gutters in 1866-1869; changed to grass surface c.1872-1874; brick gutters covered, 1877.
Burial Grounds Walks	Contributing	Secondary circulation routes through burial grounds (primarily corridors between grave rows), built 1866-1869.
Restroom Walks	Contributing	Built c.1929.
Restroom Path	Non-contributing	Built 2003 for public access to the restrooms.

Topography		
Drainage Ditch (NPS and Blaha property)	Non-contributing	Built c.1869, rebuilt c.1957
Vegetation		
Approach Road Trees (R. Taylor Farm, National Park Foundation)	Non-contributing	Planted as formal allee in 1879, replanted 1882, 1931; approximately 14 of original 80 allee trees remaining; trees replaced by volunteer vegetation since c.1970.
Odom Cemetery Trees & Shrubs	Non-contributing	Post-1971.
Cemetery Specimen Trees	Contributing	All trees probably post-1871. Contribute overall despite post-1934 plantings.
Cemetery Shrubs	Non-contributing	All shrubs post-1871. Existing shrubs either remnants of historic plantings or were planted after 1934.
Cemetery Lawn	Contributing	Established c.1866.
Inclosure Ivy Groundcover (NPS, National Park Foundation, Blaha and Peterson properties)	Non-contributing	Planted along inside of inclosure wall in 1888; removed in c.1960; escaped outside of wall.
Inclosure Red-cedar Trees	Non-Contributing	Planted 1937; remnant specimens south of lodge grounds, along west inclosure.
Buildings and Structures		
Inclosure Wall and Entrance Gate	Contributing	Built 1876.
Lodge	Contributing	Built 1871-1872; rear kitchen wing built in 1914; slate roof replace in metal and porch floor rebuilt in concrete, 1931.
Garage	Contributing	Built 1929.
Public Restroom Building	Contributing	Built 1929.
Rostrum	Contributing	Built 1897.
Views and Vistas		
Vista of Entrance Gates from Approach Road	Contributing	C. 1866, 1877.
View of Flagstaff from Graves	Contributing	C.1866
Vista of Flagstaff from Main Drive	Contributing	C. 1866.
Small-Scale Features		
Vaughan Road Entrance Sign (R. Taylor Farm)	Non-contributing	Added c.1990.
Odom Cemetery Fence (National Park Foundation)	Non-contributing	Added c.1971.
Odom Cemetery Headstones (National Park Foundation)	Non-contributing	Three markers added c.1971, 1981, 1993.
Corner Boundary Markers	Contributing	Installed 1877.

Barbed-Wire Fence	Non-contributing	Built 1937; remnants along south boundary.
Wood Privacy Fence	Non-contributing	Added c.1970.
Grave Markers	Non-contributing	Installed c.1866-2003; altered after historic period for the landscape (1866-1933) and overall deteriorated. Some may contribute under Criterion A.
Flagstaff	Non-contributing	Installed 1931 (replaced earlier flagstaffs), altered c.1974.
Flagstaff Floodlight	Non-contributing	Added after c.1976.
Gun Monument	Contributing	Installed 1869; one of original four remaining.
Drive Markers	Non-contributing	Added c.1957.
Grave Locator-Interpretive Signs	Non-contributing	Added c.1957.
Concrete Pads	Non-contributing	Near flagstaff; added c.1957.
Utilities, Signs, and Furnishings	Non-contributing	Installed after c.1990.
Archeological Sites		
Graves	Contributing	Most interred 1866-1869; last new burial 1957; most recent Civil War reinterment in 2003.

ENDNOTES

1 Robert R. Page, Cathy A. Gilbert, and Susan A. Dolan, *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1998).

2 *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (National Park Service, National Register Bulletin 15, 1991), 36.

3 Current National Register online database for Petersburg National Battlefield, Dinwiddie County, Virginia, listing 66000831, http://www.nationalregisterofhistoricplaces.com/VA/Dinwiddie/districts.html. The acreage of the park cited in the listing is not accurate.

4 John Milner Associates, "Petersburg National Battlefield National Register Nomination, 80% draft submission" (Prepared for the National Park Service Northeast Regional Office, February 2006).

5 Therese T. Sammartino, "National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, Civil War Era National Cemeteries" (Department of Veterans Affairs, 31 August 1994, certified by the Keeper of the Register, 14 October 1994).

6 Additional research and evaluation may be required to fully document all areas of historical significance for all cemetery resources, such as through the park's List of Classified Structures (LCS) and Archeological Sites Management Information System (ASMIS).

7 Sammartino, Section F, page 3.

8 Sammartino, Section E, page 7.

9 According to the Poplar Grove burial register, the interment of three Civil War remains in 2003 were the first burials since 1957.

10 *How to Apply the National Register Criteria*, 36.

11 Sammartino, Section F, page 3.

12 It is not known if similar changes were instituted at other national cemeteries at the same time. Today, the drives (except for main drive) at City Point, Cold Harbor, Culpeper, Fort Harrison, Glendale, Richmond, and Seven Pines National Cemeteries are turf.

13 *How to Apply the National Register Criteria*, 36.

14 Memorandum, Paul Weinbaum, Lead Historian, New England System Support Office, to Katy Lacy, Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, 29 May 1997, Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, Gettysburg Cultural Landscape Report, National Register file. The Keeper's opinion was in reference to Gettysburg National Cemetery, but applies to all units of the National Cemetery System.

15 *How to Apply the National Register Criteria*, 44-45.

16 The date of installation of the Lincoln Memorial tablet at Poplar Grove may have occurred at the fortieth anniversary of the speech in 1903. Lincoln Memorial tablets are referenced on page 15 in the 1911 edition, "Regulations for the Government of National Cemeteries."

17 U.S. War Department, Office of the Quartermaster General, *Regulations for the Government of National Cemeteries* (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1911; revised edition, 1931), 30-31.

18 National Cemetery Regulations, 30-31.

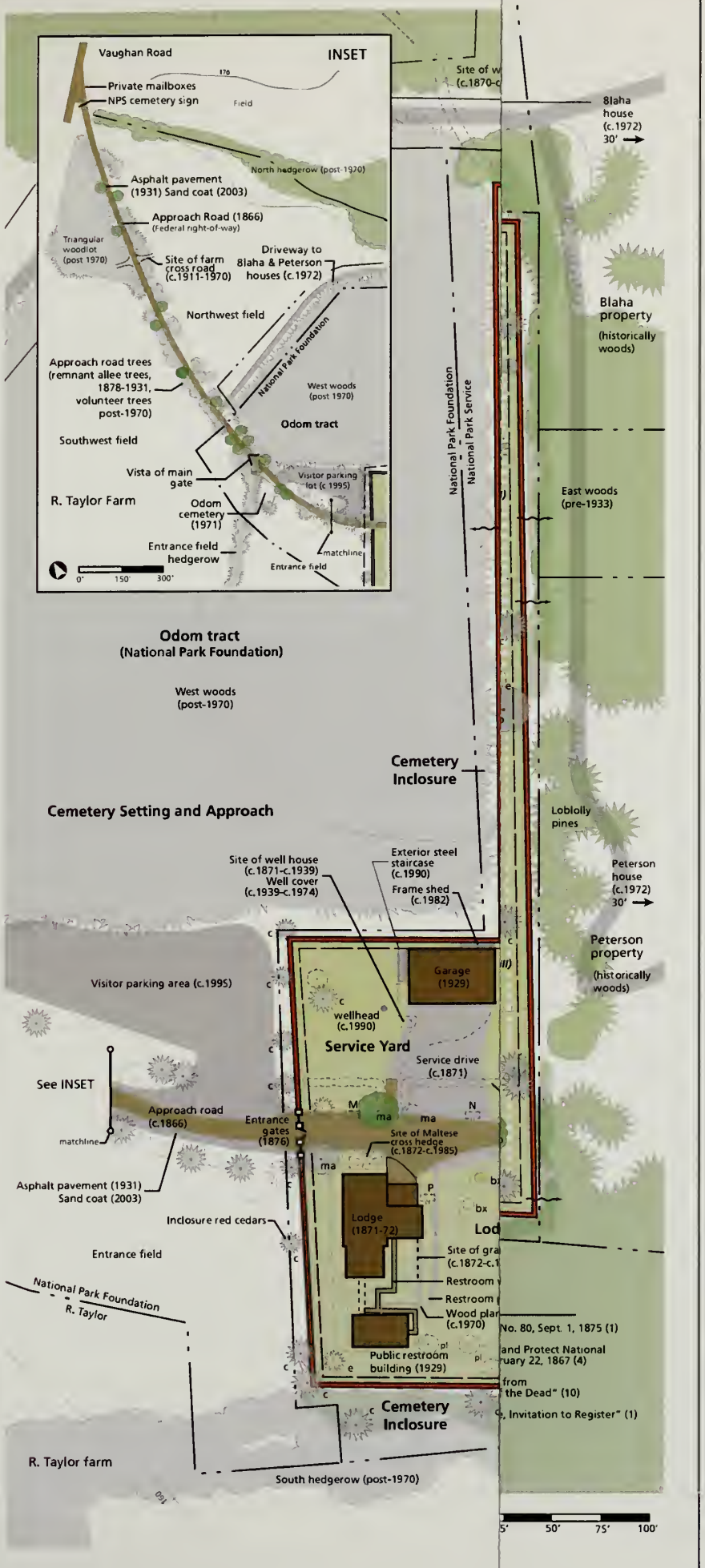
19 John Tallman, Superintendent, Quarterly Report for Poplar Grove National Cemetery, 30 September 1925, Poplar Grove NPS War Department Records, National Archives II, College Park, Maryland, box 50; Fred Bell, photograph of the rostrum, Fred Bell, 1968, park administration files for Poplar Grove, Petersburg National Battlefield.

20 Sammartino, Section E, pages 10-11.

21 Further evaluation under Criterion A is beyond the scope of this Cultural Landscape Report.

22 Access database burial record, Petersburg National Battlefield; Herbert Olsen, "Poplar Grove National Cemetery History" (Unpublished NPS report, 31 May 1954), 31. The Access database burial record indicates 5,613 graves and sixty non-Civil War burials.

23 Petersburg National Battlefield, "Park Review of Draft Cultural Landscape Treatment Plan," 30 July 2008, 4-5, referring to "Phase I Archeological Survey: Rehabilitate Poplar Grove National Cemetery Project" (Prepared for Petersburg National Battlefield by A.D. Marble & Company, December 2008).



Cultural Landscape Report

Poplar Grove National Cemetery

Petersburg National Battlefield
Dinwiddie County, Virginia

Analysis and Evaluation

OLMSTED CENTER for LANDSCAPE PRESERVATION

National Park Service
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
www.nps.gov/oclp

in partnership with
Department of Landscape Architecture
SUNY College of Environmental
Science and Forestry

SOURCES

CLR period plans and existing conditions plan

DRAWN BY

John Auwaerter, Illustrator CS3, 2009

LEGEND

- Feature removed since historic period
- Feature added since historic period
- Property line
- Inclosure (perimeter) wall
- Grave markers (1 dash = approx. 1 marker)
- B-g Cemetery division-section
- Building
- Road
- Walk
- Gun monument
- Iron tablet with key reference
- Bench
- Fence
- Drive marker
- Conifer tree
- Deciduous tree/shrub
- Lawn
- Naturalized English ivy
- 10' contour
- Drainage through inclosure wall
- Wetland

NOTES

1. Plan shows character-defining features removed since the end of the historic period (1933) by dashed lines.
2. Vegetation extant in c.1933 is approximate, based on 1931 War Department planting plan; species shown where known.
3. Dates in brackets indicate date of initial construction and removal where applicable.
4. All features shown in approximate scale and location.

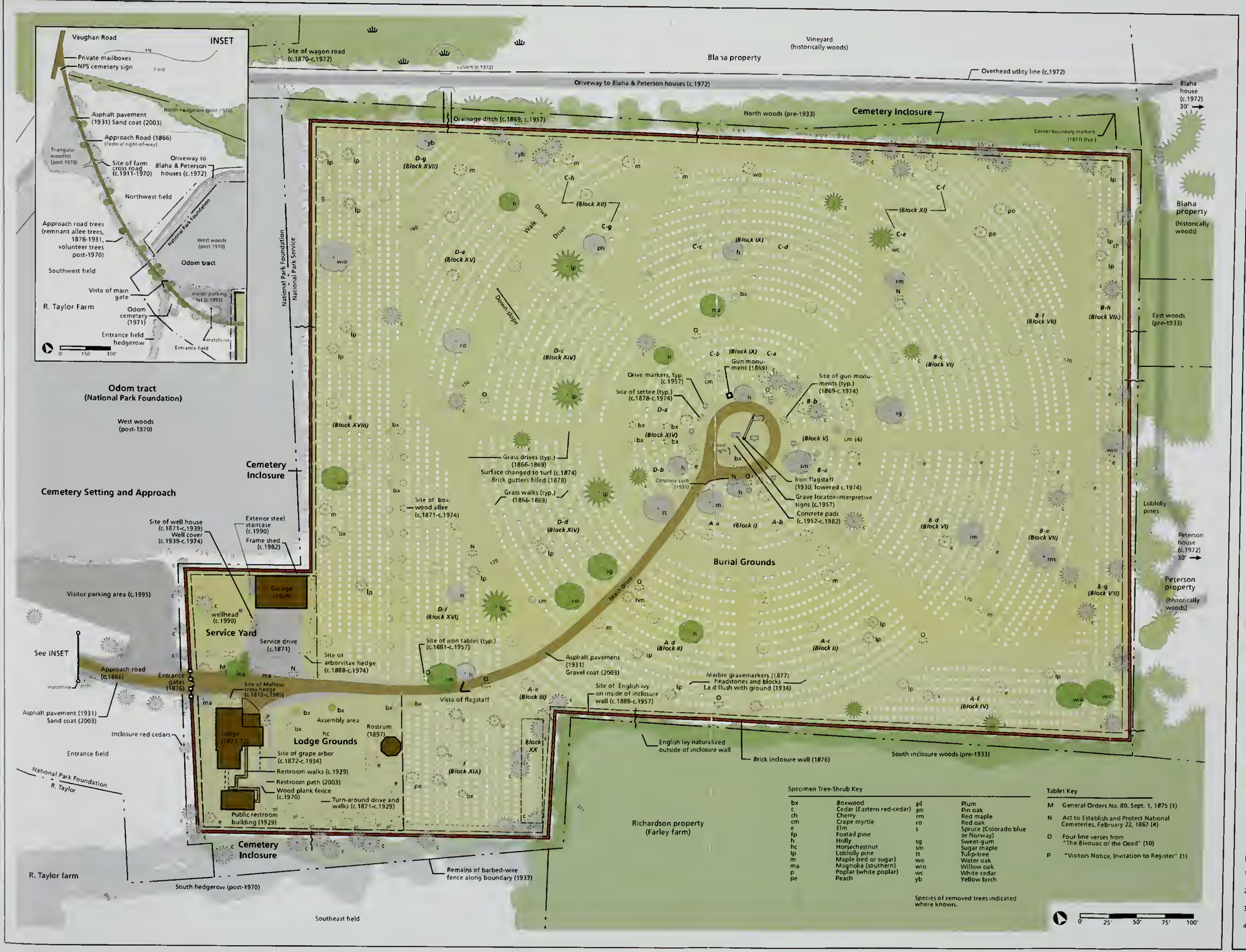
Drawing 3.1

Cultural Landscape Report

Poplar Grove National Cemetery

Petersburg National Battlefield
Dinwiddie County, Virginia

Analysis and Evaluation



Specimen Tree-Shrub Key

bx	Boxwood	pl	Plum
c	Cedar (Eastern red-cedar)	po	Pin oak
ch	Cherry	rm	Red maple
cm	Crape myrtle	ro	Red oak
e	Elm	s	Spruce (Colorado blue or Norway)
fp	Foxtail pine		
h	Holly	sg	Sweet-gum
hc	Horsechestnut	sm	Sugar maple
lp	Loblolly pine	tt	Tulip-tree
m	Maple (red or sugar)	wo	Water oak
ma	Magnolia (southern)	wio	Willow oak
p	Poplar (white poplar)	wc	White cedar
pe	Peach	yb	Yellow birch

Species of removed trees indicated where known.

Tablet Key

M General Orders No. 80, Sept. 1, 1875 (1)
N Act to Establish and Protect National Cemeteries, February 22, 1867 (4)
O Four-line verses from "The Bivouac of the Dead" (10)
P "Visitors Notice, Invitation to Register" (1)

0' 25' 50' 75' 100'

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Department of Landscape Architecture
SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry

SOURCES

CLR period plans and existing conditions plan

DRAWN BY

John Auwaerter, Illustrator CS3, 2009

LEGEND

- Feature removed since historic period
- Feature added since historic period
- Property line
- Inclosure (perimeter) wall
- Grave markers (1 dash = approx. 1 marker)
- B-g Cemetery division-section
- Building
- Road
- Walk
- Gun monument
- Iron tablet with key reference
- Bench
- Fence
- Drive marker
- Conifer tree
- Deciduous tree/shrub
- Lawn
- Naturalized English ivy
- 10' contour
- Drainage through inclosure wall
- Wetland

NOTES

1. Plan shows character-defining features removed since the end of the historic period (1933) by dashed lines.
2. Vegetation extant in c.1933 is approximate, based on 1931 War Department planting plan; species shown where known.
3. Dates in brackets indicate date of initial construction and removal where applicable.
4. All features shown in approximate scale and location.

Drawing 3.1

TREATMENT

As documented in the previous chapter, the landscape of Poplar Grove National Cemetery retains its overall rural setting and major historic features, but many of its details have been altered, lost, or obscured. The loss of upright headstones in particular detracts from the dignity of the graves and the identity of Poplar Grove as a unit of the Civil War-era national cemetery system. Through a relatively limited number of changes to the landscape, however, Poplar Grove will once again honor those who gave their lives to the country.

The National Park Service defines treatment as a preservation plan with the goal of enhancing the historic character of a cultural landscape within the context of its contemporary function.[1] Treatment essentially describes how the landscape should look in the future. While focused on historic preservation, treatment also addresses other park management goals, such as public access, natural resource conservation, and interpretation. Treatment does not address routine and cyclical measures, such as tree pruning and lawn mowing, necessary to maintain the existing character of the landscape.[2]

This chapter addresses the scope of the forthcoming line-item construction project, "Restore Facilities, Resources & Character Defining Elements to National Cemetery Standards" (PMIS 89424), as well as other short- and long-term treatment issues identified through park planning and research for this report. The recommendations also reflect input from park staff at a treatment workshop, public comments at two civic engagements, review by National Cemetery Administration staff, and consideration from project planners.[3]

The treatment recommendations in this chapter are focused on the cemetery proper—the land within and including the cemetery inclosure wall—and the cemetery approach from Vaughan Road within the existing federal right-of-way. Recommendations also address the surrounding private properties that form the historic rural setting of the cemetery. Treatment of private property is based on the park's intention to preserve these lands through possible federal acquisition.

The chapter begins by presenting a framework that, based on applicable policies, standards, and regulations, establishes an overall treatment philosophy that describes the intended historic character of the landscape. Based on this framework and a summary of general treatment issues, the body of this chapter provides narrative guidelines and tasks to preserve and enhance the historic character of the landscape. The narrative guidelines are supported by graphics including a series of treatment plans (drawings 4.1 through 4.4).

FRAMEWORK FOR TREATMENT

The framework for treatment of the Poplar Grove National Cemetery landscape is based in federal legislation that established the National Cemetery System during the Civil War and subsequently directed its initial development. The Congressional Joint Resolution of April 31, 1866 directed the establishment of national cemeteries to "preserve from desecration the graves of the soldiers of the United States," and to provide them with "suitable burial places in which they may be properly interred; and to have the grounds enclosed, so that the resting-places of the honored dead may be kept sacred forever."[4] Congress further articulated its intent through "An Act to Establish and Protect National Cemeteries" passed on February 22, 1867 that directed standard facilities and improvements at all national cemeteries. Treatment of the Poplar Grove landscape is also derived from subsequent federal legislation pertaining to historic preservation and the National Park System, from National Cemetery Administration standards, and from park planning within Petersburg National Battlefield.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE REGULATIONS AND POLICIES

As a component of the National Park System, treatment of Poplar Grove National Cemetery is guided by the mission of the National Park Service "...to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations" (Organic Act of 1916). The application of this mission to cultural landscapes is articulated in the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, which in turn are interpreted within a hierarchy of regulations and policies in National Park Service management. As a cultural resource, management of Poplar Grove National Cemetery is defined by 36 CFR Part 2: *Resource Protection, Public Use and Recreation (Preservation of Natural, Cultural, and Archeological Resources)*. The application of these regulations to cultural landscapes are contained within *National Park Service Management Policies (2006)*, *Director's Order #28 (Cultural Resource Management)*, and *National Park Service Resource Management Guidelines (NPS-28)*.

In addition to its management as a cultural resource, Poplar Grove is also subject to National Park Service regulations and policies specific to its status as a national cemetery. These include 36 CFR Part 12: *National Cemetery Regulations*, which are modeled after the parallel regulations under the National Cemetery Administration, 38 CFR Part 38: *National Cemeteries of the Department of Veterans Affairs*. The National Cemetery Administration is an agency within the Department of Veterans Affairs that administers the National Cemetery System. As reorganized in 1973, the National Cemetery System is comprised only of

national cemeteries under the jurisdiction of the Department of Veterans Affairs.[5] The fourteen national cemeteries within the National Park System are thereby excluded from the National Cemetery System.

The National Park Service national cemetery regulations provide general direction on cemetery use, including interments, special events, and floral tributes, and on the design of grave markers. These regulations are further defined through policy and guidelines beginning with *National Park Service Management Policies (2006)*, which state under section 8.6.10.1 (Use of the Parks):

> *All national cemeteries administered by the National Park Service will be managed as historically significant resources, and as integral parts of larger historical parks. Burials in national cemeteries will be permitted, pursuant to applicable regulations, until available space has been filled... The enlargement of a national cemetery for additional burials constitutes a modern intrusion, compromising the historical character of both the cemetery and historical park, and will not be permitted.*[6]

National Park Service Director's Order #61: National Cemetery Operations supplements the *Management Policies* and "...set[s] forth additional policy and procedures by which the NPS will preserve and administer the national cemeteries for which the NPS is responsible".[7] There are no parallel management guidelines for *Director's Order #61* as there are for *Director's Order #28*. *Director's Order #61* primarily concerns cemetery operations, installation of grave markers and commemorative monuments, and use of flags. Details of these policies are referenced to the following Department of Veterans Affairs publications:

> *National Cemetery System Policy Manual M40-1* (5 May 1975)
> *Operations of National Cemetery Manual M40-2* (1 May 1984)
> *Headstones and Markers Manual M40-3* (3 December 1982)

The Headstone and Markers Manual, which the National Cemetery Administration is currently revising, details eligibility, documentation, and marker styles. Important specifications for cultural landscape treatment include the types of headstones furnished, disposition of removed headstones, and replacement of headstones. Much of the manual is devoted to specifications for inscriptions. Replacement of historic headstones is also addressed in National Cemetery Administration Notice 2004-06, which includes information about the importance of preservation of the cultural landscape versus correcting information on nineteenth-century markers.[8]

NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION STANDARDS

While treatment of the Poplar Grove landscape is subject through *Director's Order #61* only to the Veterans Affairs headstone and markers policy, other National Cemetery Administration policies and standards have relevance to the National Park Service management of its national cemeteries. Both agencies share in the federal government's historic mission to honor the dead and keep their burial places sacred forever, as embodied in the Congressional Joint Resolution of April 3, 1866.

The National Cemetery Administration in recent years has completed revised guidelines on management of its landscapes in response to the Veterans Millennium Health Care and Benefit Act of 1999 (Title VI, Subtitle B, Section 613) that required a study of repairs needed at national cemeteries under the Department of Veterans Affairs. Based on this study, the National Cemetery Administration established the National Shrine Commitment, which articulates an overall vision for national cemeteries as national shrines:

> *A national shrine is a place of honor and memory that declares to the visitor or family member who views it that, within its majestic setting, each and every veteran may find a sense of serenity, historic sacrifice and nobility of purpose. Each visitor should depart feeling that the grounds, the gravesites and the environs of the national cemetery are a beautiful and awe-inspiring tribute to those who gave much to preserve our Nation's freedom and way of life.*[9]

As detailed in the National Cemetery Administration's "Operational Standards and Measures" (2004) that implement the National Shrine Commitment, the vision is evident in the agency's high level of maintenance and care, even at its oldest cemeteries such as the Civil War-era Richmond National Cemetery (fig. 4.1). The Operational Standards and Measures are the most current in a long line of published national cemetery standards going back to the beginning of the twentieth century under War Department administration. These outline requirements ranging from the percentage of lawn that must be weed free, to the percentage of headstones that must not show evidence of debris or objectionable accumulations (fig. 4.2).[10]

Figure 4.1: Well-kept character of Civil War-era Richmond National Cemetery looking toward the central flagstaff. This cemetery illustrates the high level of maintenance carried out by the National Cemetery Administration. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

Figure 4.2: Illustration from the National Cemetery Administration's "Operational Standards and Measures" showing standards for "headstones, markers and niche covers that do not show evidence of debris or objectionable accumulations" and "proper height and alignment for each headstone is maintained." This image also shows standards for lawn maintenance. (Department of Veterans Affairs, National Cemetery Administration, "National Shrine Commitment Operational Standards and Measures," Version 2.0, October 2004. The identity of the cemetery is not indicated.)

Although the National Shrine Commitment only pertains to the National Cemetery Administration, its standards designed to impart honor, memory, majesty, serenity, and beauty were also found historically in the development of all national cemeteries, including Poplar Grove.

Aside from existing National Cemetery Administration standards, the historic *National Cemetery Regulations* are also applicable to the treatment of the Poplar Grove landscape (Applicable excerpts of the 1931 edition in Appendix I).[11] These regulations, initially published in 1911 and incorporating standards extending back to the founding of the system during the Civil War, provide detailed direction on the treatment of headstones, buildings, and grounds during the period of significance for the Poplar Grove landscape. While these regulations provide an appropriate basis for the treatment of historic landscape features, they do not address contemporary needs for historic preservation and interpretation.

PARK PLANNING

The framework for treatment of Poplar Grove National Cemetery is also derived from park planning through the recently completed General Management Plan for Petersburg National Battlefield. While not offering any specific details on landscape treatment (except to a reference about replacing headstones), the preferred alternative in the General Management Plan calls for the rehabilitation of Poplar Grove to reflect the original sense of contemplation, quiet, and solemnity as part of the park's "Historic Interpretive Zone." The preferred alternative, entitled "The Landscape Tells the Stories," calls for returning to the early character of the landscape with upright headstones: "Visitors to the cemetery will experience a place much closer in design and atmosphere to the original cemetery, established in 1868 [sic]. The replaced headstones will evoke the original intentions of the designer."[12] In addition, the preferred alternative calls for National Park Service acquisition of the land adjoining the cemetery to protect the setting and the adjoining battlefield, and for rehabilitating the cemetery lodge into a visitor contact station for Poplar Grove and other areas within the park's Western Front.[13]

TREATMENT PHILOSOPHY

The recommended treatment philosophy for the Poplar Grove landscape is derived from the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. The *Standards* outline four approaches to treatment: *Preservation* (maintenance of the landscape as it currently exists); *Restoration* (returning

the landscape to a prior historic condition); *Reconstruction* (rebuilding of a lost landscape); and *Rehabilitation* (enhancing the historic character of the landscape while making compatible modifications to address contemporary uses and needs; usually incorporates one or all of the other treatments). These four treatments share a common philosophical approach that emphasizes retention of historic character and repair rather than replacement of historic materials.[14]

The recommended primary (overall) treatment for Poplar Grove National Cemetery is *Rehabilitation* in keeping with the preferred alternative of the Petersburg Battlefield General Management Plan and the scope of work in the upcoming line-item construction project.[15] The following are the individual standards for *Rehabilitation* adapted to cultural landscapes:

1. A cultural landscape is used as it was historically or is given a new or adaptive use that maximizes the retention of historic materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a cultural landscape is retained and preserved.
3. The replacement or removal of intact or repairable historic materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a landscape is avoided.
4. Each cultural landscape is recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features from other landscapes, are not undertaken. Work needed to stabilize, consolidate, and conserve historic materials and features is physically and visually compatible, identifiable upon close inspection, and properly documented for future research.
5. Changes to a cultural landscape that have acquired historical significance in their own right are retained and preserved.
6. Historic materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a cultural landscape are preserved.
7. Deteriorated historic features are repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires repair or replacement of a historic feature, the new feature matches the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Repair or replacement of missing features is substantiated by archeological, documentary, or physical evidence.
8. Chemical or physical treatments that cause damage to historic materials are not used.
9. Archeological and structural resources are protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures are undertaken including recovery, curation, and documentation.

> *10. Additions, alterations, or related new construction do not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the cultural landscape. New work is differentiated from the old and is compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing of the landscape.*
> *11. Additions and adjacent or related new construction are undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the cultural landscape would be unimpaired.*[16]

Rehabilitation is the most appropriate treatment for Poplar Grove National Cemetery because of the need to provide for contemporary park functions, visitor services, and environmental sustainability. This treatment focuses on managing the landscape for its historic character by preserving defining features, returning key features that have been lost, and allowing for change inherent in vegetation and necessary for contemporary uses. Contemporary changes will be in keeping with the historic character of the landscape and represent a minor component in the overall treatment. Within *Rehabilitation* as the primary treatment, much of the feature-level treatment will involve *Preservation*, *Restoration*, and *Reconstruction* in order to retain and enhance the historic character of the landscape.

The following paragraph describes the Poplar Grove landscape based on implementation of this treatment philosophy:[17]

> *Poplar Grove National Cemetery is a sacred and well-preserved historic landscape of honor and memory. The landscape tells the story of the cemetery's initial establishment in 1866 through its development under the War Department into the early 1930s, as well as its subsequent use for new burials through 1957 and for reinterment of Civil War remains to the present. The landscape is characterized by a circular plan with upright white marble headstones and blocks, unified by lawn and shaded by an informal distribution of specimen evergreen and deciduous trees, including loblolly pines that predate the cemetery's establishment. The graves are centered on a majestic flagstaff encircled by gun monuments, and are organized by radiating and circular grass drives. A screened service yard and welcoming assembly area with a well-preserved iron rostrum and Meigs-style lodge flank the entrance. The cemetery is framed within its surrounding rural setting by a brick inclosure wall with gates approached through a ceremonial tree-lined road. The landscape is well maintained and reflects the historic characteristics of Civil War-era national cemeteries.*

Treatment Date

The recommended treatment for Poplar Grove is to rehabilitate the landscape to its character at the end of the War Department administration in 1933, prior to its transfer to the National Park Service and subsequent alteration of the upright grave markers. This date, which serves as a benchmark for treatment, incorporates the development of the cemetery landscape from its founding in 1866 through the course of nearly seven decades of military administration when the majority of burials took place.

Treatment of the Poplar Grove landscape to the end of the War Department administration in 1933 corresponds with the final years of the recommended period of significance for the landscape under National Register Criterion C. This date recognizes the continued use of the cemetery for burials after 1933, and preserves these later graves as part of the significance of the cemetery under National Register Criterion A. Where post-1933 features or alterations (aside from graves) conflict with the historic character of the cemetery, they will be recommended for removal; where they are compatible with the historic character, they may be retained for aesthetic or functional values, or simply as testimony to the continued evolution of the cemetery landscape.

Aside from corresponding with the end of the period of significance, the end of the War Department era (1933) provides an appropriate treatment date for the following additional reasons:

- The War Department undertook a five-year improvement program between c.1929 and 1933 that resulted in the addition of the public restroom building and garage, the planting of 101 trees, a metal roof on the lodge, a new flagstaff, paving of the approach road and main drive, and removal of the old stable and lodge kitchen. This period reflects the maturity of the landscape after more than six decades of War Department administration. Returning the landscape to an earlier character would present inconsistencies with these post-1929 features that would not be in keeping with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards*.
- Restoring the "original" plan of Poplar Grove, as described in the General Management Plan, is not feasible because there was no one original design for the landscape aside from the arrangement of the graves and circulation. Many landscape features were added and altered after the cemetery's initial development between 1866 and 1869, including building of the lodge and service buildings and removal of the original gravel surface and brick gutters on the drives in the 1870s, addition of the rostrum in 1897, surfacing of the main drive with gravel in c.1900, and thinning of vegetation through the early twentieth century. The improvements made between c.1929 and 1933

represent a continuation of the cemetery's historic development under military administration.

- There is a lack of graphic documentation on the landscape adequate to return to a character prior to c.1929. The earliest photographs show only the cemetery center (c.1895) and the main entrance (1904) (see figs. 1.48, 1.55). The 1892 Quartermaster General plan of the cemetery (see fig. 1.51) shows the location of woody vegetation, but does not indicate species, scale, or the distinction between trees and shrubs. It also does not indicate the location of flowerbeds. By 1892, there had already been much change in the vegetation, notably through the removal of the sylvan hall of elms. Returning to the dense planting scheme of c.1892 or earlier would also likely pose an impractical maintenance burden.
- The national cemetery regulations published by the War Department in 1931 correspond with the recommended treatment period, thus providing a sound basis for treatment of most landscape features. No published regulations were found prior to 1911.

GENERAL TREATMENT ISSUES

The following are general treatment issues that inform the treatment guidelines and tasks in the second part of this chapter. Overall, these issues concern the loss of historic character in the landscape, preservation of the rural setting, and condition issues unfitting a national cemetery.

GRAVE MARKERS

The majority of the headstones and blocks, which were transformed into flat markers in 1934 and are deteriorating to the point of illegibility, do not meet national cemetery standards. Most are stained, chipped, and eroded, and some are cracked and have sunken below the turf. Most were crudely broken off their bases (bottom edge is an irregular break). When looking across the cemetery landscape, the markers are largely invisible. Most importantly, the grave markers do not convey honor and respect in their irreparably altered and deteriorated condition. The existing condition of the markers also makes it difficult to locate graves and read inscriptions. Addressing the condition of the grave markers is the key treatment issue for Poplar Grove National Cemetery.

GRAVE LOCATOR SYSTEM

The present grave locator system at Poplar Grove is provided by a worn burial ledger sign and map next to the central flagstaff, which reflect the c.1957 reordering of the cemetery into blocks and radial avenues lettered A through F. The sign has become illegible due to fading, and there are no markers identifying

individual blocks, only small signs at the center identifying the radial drives. Most national cemeteries have grave section markers, and provide grave location information at the cemetery entrance, not at the center. These conditions make it difficult for visitors to locate graves.

HISTORIC CHARACTER AND NATIONAL CEMETERY STANDARDS

Since the Civil War, the character of national cemeteries has been defined by the intangible attributes of honor, respect, and memory. The National Cemetery Administration has generally implemented these attributes through a much higher level of landscape maintenance than the National Park Service. For example, the National Cemetery Administration, maintains uniformity in the lawn, precisely aligns headstones, and cleans them to a pristine white three times per year (see figs. 4.1, 4.2). The National Park Service, in contrast, generally does not routinely align and clean its headstones, or maintain lawns to the same uniform quality (fig. 4.3). The National Cemetery Administration also generally prioritizes contemporary cemetery operations over preservation of historic landscapes as evident by its practice of removing trees from the burial grounds without replacement.[18]

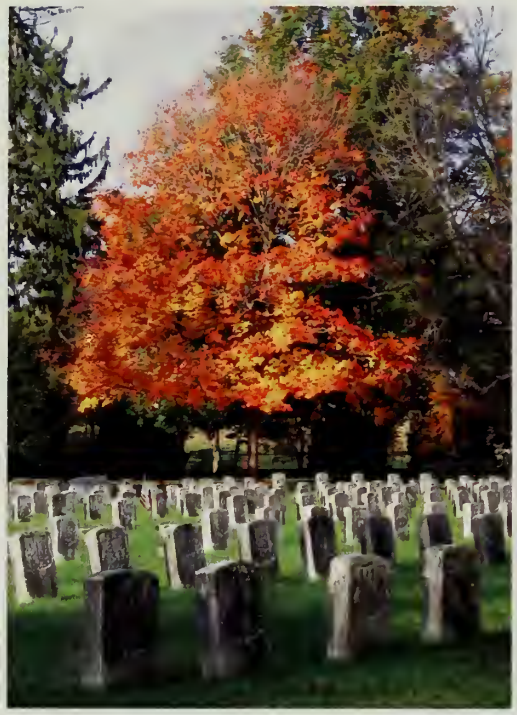


Figure 4.3: Recent photograph of Antietam National Cemetery showing level of maintenance at a National Park Service-administered national cemetery. Note the difference in maintenance of the headstones compared with figures 4.1 and 4.2. (Undated photograph by Keith Snyder, image 20060829 152450, Antietam National Battlefield website, www.nps.gov/anti/historyculture/antietam-national-cemetery-part-2.htm.)

As discussed under the preceding framework for treatment, the National Park Service is not obligated to follow the National Cemetery Administration's landscape regulations and policies, except as they pertain to the design of headstones and markers. Despite this, a low level of maintenance in the landscape—even though it may be the best preservation approach for built materials—may evoke an unintentional message of disrespect. The park must therefore carefully guard against certain aspects of maintenance and treatment that may be perceived as disrespectful, but at the same time also preserve the historic character and materials of the landscape.

Overall, the Poplar Grove landscape warrants a higher level of maintenance than is typically found at National Park Service historic sites. While Poplar Grove is a historic landscape, it will also forever remain a functioning national cemetery.

VISITOR AMENITIES AND SIGNAGE

Lack of visitor amenities and signage gives Poplar Grove a forlorn character unfitting the commemorative function of a national cemetery. The few existing visitor amenities include signs and restrooms that are not universally accessible. The lodge, which most recently served as a park staff residence but is now unoccupied except to serve as an office when a park ranger is present, contains

no facilities for tourists or those paying respects to veterans and family members. There are no benches within the cemetery, as there were historically. The assembly area, located in the open lawn in front of the rostrum, has lost most of its specimen trees, giving it a barren feeling with little shade during warm-weather events, such as Memorial Day. The cemetery lacks a welcoming entrance due to its parking lot with a worn sand/asphalt surface bordered by scrubby second-growth woods, and an unscreened service (maintenance) area located just inside the cemetery gates.

The cemetery entrance and approach also lack adequate signage. At Vaughan Road, Poplar Grove is identified by a small standard park service sign that does not denote the historic solemnity and formality of the cemetery. The presence of a group of private mailboxes on the opposite side of the approach road detracts from the federal identity of the cemetery and its connection to the approach road. As visitors proceed on the approach road, there are small directional signs, but none that provide a sense of arrival once visitors reach the parking lot. At the cemetery gates, there are no signs identifying the cemetery by name or directing visitors toward the information signs at the flagstaff. Two iron plaques that read "U.S. National Cemetery" are affixed to the cemetery gates, but these do not identify the cemetery by name.

CEMETERY SETTING AND APPROACH ROAD

Many of the national cemeteries in the Richmond region are losing their historic rural settings due to suburban development. While Poplar Grove retains much of its rural setting, it is surrounded by privately owned land that could be developed, and most of the approach road consists of only a federal right-of-way over private property. Aside from the National Park Foundation-owned Odom Tract adjoining the west side of the cemetery that is managed as park land, private property boundaries are as close as five feet away from the inclosure wall. The preferred alternative (D) of the General Management Plan recommends acquisition of land surrounding Poplar Grove National Cemetery.

SPECIMEN TREES IN BURIAL GROUNDS

Specimen trees were historically an important part of national cemetery landscapes. At Richmond-area national cemeteries, however, the National Cemetery Administration at present does not consider trees beneficial within the burial grounds. While it retains mature specimens, the National Cemetery Administration does not replace trees when they are lost, except when they are outside of the burial grounds.[19] Aside from maintenance concerns, grave markers can be heaved by tree roots and trunks, and roots can potentially disturb graves, although this is not well documented. The impact of tree roots on graves and

grave markers varies depending on the root characteristics of the tree species. While there are drawbacks, specimen trees were historically character-defining features of national cemetery landscapes.

LANDSCAPE INTERPRETATION

The park service is presently planning to improve interpretation at Poplar Grove by making available a podcast to visitors. At present, however, historical interpretation is provided verbally by a park ranger, but the cemetery is only staffed part time. When not staffed, visitors leave with a limited understanding of the cemetery's history and significance. Existing interpretative devices are limited to a faded sign at the flagstaff installed in c.1957; the sign contains an illustration of Poplar Grove Church and a brief narrative on the history of Poplar Grove National Cemetery during its initial reburial phase through 1869. This narrative is also available in a printed brochure available in a holder. There is no interpretation of the landscape, or of Poplar Grove's relationship to the National Cemetery System. Aside from the faded signs, only the Gettysburg Address plaque, located on the front wall of the lodge, remains to commemorate the cemetery's historic association with the Civil War. Iron tablets that were historically found throughout the cemetery for interpretation, visitor information, and inspiration have been removed, but remain in storage in the cemetery garage.

For many visitors, the Camp of the 50th New York Volunteer Engineers and its namesake for the cemetery, Poplar Grove Church, is a fascinating story. While there are no physical remnants of the camp structures, the landscape still conveys its connection through the cemetery plan that is centered on the camp parade grounds. The loblolly pines that surrounded the camp were retained in the development of the cemetery and remained prominent into the twentieth century. Today, however, only four of the trees remain to provide a living connection to the Civil War period (fig. 4.4).

Figure 4.4: Photographs of the engineers' camp in 1865 and the cemetery in 1932 showing the same loblolly pines sixty-six years later. The few loblolly pines that remain today are a living connection to these landscapes. (Details of photographs from Library of Congress and National Archives in figs. 1.17 and 1.65.)

TREATMENT GUIDELINES AND TASKS

The following treatment guidelines and tasks are organized by the five landscape character areas described in chapter 2 (Existing Conditions): cemetery setting and approach, cemetery inclosure, service yard, lodge grounds, and burial grounds. Each character area begins with an overview of pertinent treatment issues, and then describes individual treatment tasks listed by a code using the character-area abbreviation (CSA, CI, SY, LG, and BG), and ordered by priority and sequence for implementation. Each task contains a list of the affected landscape features as inventoried in chapter 3 (Analysis and Evaluation). Preservation is the default treatment where historic landscape features have no specific tasks identified. Treatment tasks are keyed to a treatment plan (Drawing 4.1) and three detail plans: cemetery setting and approach (Drawing 4.2), entrance field and parking lot (Drawing 4.3), and lodge grounds (Drawing 4.5); and are further illustrated in figures 4.5 through 4.21. A summary list of tasks and list of recommended plant materials are at the end of this chapter in tables 4.1 and 4.2.

CEMETERY SETTING AND APPROACH (CSA)

Overview

Overall treatment objectives for the setting and approach to Poplar Grove National Cemetery (including the existing National Park Foundation-owned Odom tract) are to retain and enhance the historic rural surroundings, and to reestablish the ceremonial and solemn character of the cemetery approach.[20] While still largely rural, the setting of the cemetery has been changed through suburban development and natural succession from fields to woods.

As mentioned under treatment issues, the federal government does not presently own the land surrounding the cemetery. The approach road is under private ownership with a government right-of-way for access to the cemetery from Vaughan Road.[21] To ensure long-term preservation of the historic setting and approach to the cemetery given the lack of a local preservation or conservation ordinance, it is strongly recommended that the land acquisition proposal under the preferred alternative (D) of the General Management Plan (2004) be implemented, including the need to expand the acquisition boundaries of the park (the boundaries currently correspond with the existing cemetery land in federal ownership). The General Management Plan calls for federal acquisition of all but one tract surrounding Poplar Grove as part of the Battlefield Protection Zone (fig. 4.5).[22] If federal acquisition of these properties in fee is not feasible, it is recommended that other means of protection be pursued such as acquisition of development rights and easements, or legal agreements with the property

Figure 4.5: Alternative D lands for protection, *General Management Plan for Petersburg National Battlefield* (2004), showing lands required for protection of the cemetery setting. Ownership is shown as of 2008. (National Park Service, annotated by SUNY ESF.)

owners to permit the National Park Service to carry out the recommended treatment tasks.

Among the parcels identified for acquisition, the highest priority for protection of the cemetery's setting should be the northwest, southwest, entrance, and southeast fields of the R. Taylor farm, encompassing approximately twenty acres of the thirty-eight acre farm (see fig. 4.5). Acquisition of this land would place most of the approach road in federal ownership, along with the flanking fields that are critical to the rural setting of the approach. The Blaha property (three acres) along the private drive between the northwest field and the Odom tract should also be acquired as a first priority. The second priority for protection is the field at the head of the approach road (part of the thirty-four acre Harrison property) and the wooded land along the southeast side of the cemetery (Richardson property, eleven acres). This eleven-acre parcel was not identified for acquisition in the General Management Plan, but the wooded northern part should be protected from development to a minimum of approximately 200 feet from the inclosure wall. The park should also secure development rights for the property adjoining the cemetery along the north and west sides to protect it from inappropriate development. This land is presently owned by the Blaha and Peterson families and includes two houses and an access drive.

The fields adjoining Poplar Grove should be kept in traditional agricultural use to retain the historic character of the cemetery setting. Appropriate agricultural uses include cultivated crops and pasture. Introduction of new agricultural uses

that differ in appearance, sound, or smell from existing and historic uses should be compatible with the cemetery setting. If agricultural uses cannot be continued, the fields should be kept as meadow to retain the historic spatial character of the landscape. The limits of the fields may require modification to screen modern development, such as along the west side of Vaughan Road.

CSA Task 1: Install New Entrance Signs (Drawing 4.2)

- Small-Scale Features: Vaughan Road Entrance Sign (non-contributing)

Install new entrance signs to enhance the identity of the cemetery and better reflect its historic solemnity. Replace the existing standard park service sign at Vaughan Road with a new sign in the same location, and install a second sign on the south side of the approach road near the cemetery gates to supplement the non-historic plaques that state "U.S. National Cemetery" without identifying the cemetery by name. Since there is no historic documentation on historic signs, the new signs should employ a contemporary, compatible design using a rectangular board, simple symmetrical layout, and an upper case font. Design the Vaughan Road entrance sign as the primary (larger) sign, and the one near the entrance gates as a secondary, more subtle sign in deference to gates (fig. 4.6). Remove the non-historic stone ring and planting bed around the Vaughan Road sign and maintain the foreground as lawn.

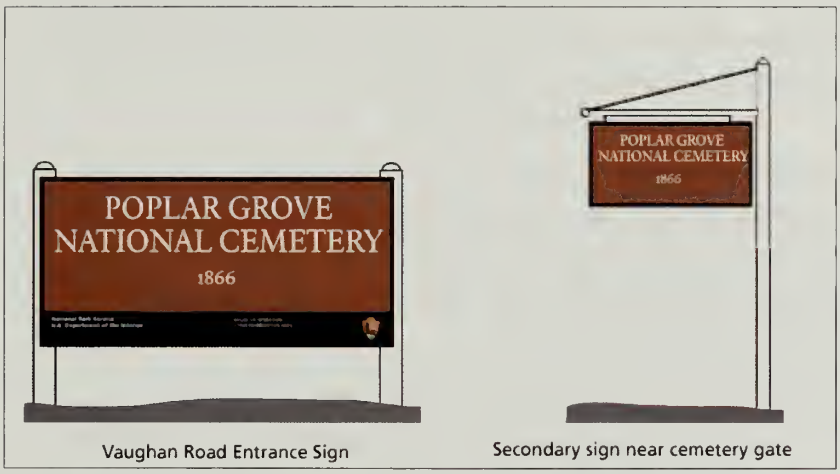


Figure 4.6: Suggested designs for signs at Vaughan Road and at the entrance gate (not to scale). (SUNY ESF.)

CSA Task 2: Clear West Woods and Reestablish Approach View of Cemetery (Drawing 4.2)

- Natural Systems and Features: West Woods (non-contributing)
- Spatial Organization: Northwest Field (contributing/setting)

The approach road to Poplar Grove National Cemetery historically featured a view of the cemetery with the flagstaff rising above the tree canopy, looking east across the northwest field toward the brick inclosure wall. A similar view remains at Glendale National Cemetery near Richmond (fig. 4.7). To reestablish the view and field along the west side of the cemetery, clear the non-historic successional west woods on the Odom tract. Eastern red-cedar trees along the edge of the woods along the inclosure wall, planted by the National Park Service in 1937, may be retained if they are in good condition. Maintain the cleared area, which has partly an uneven topography, as cultivated field and/or meadow. Preserve the northwest field (R. Taylor farm) as an open field through acquisition or easement.

Figure 4.7: View upon the approach to Glendale National Cemetery showing the rural setting and view of the cemetery flagstaff rising above the tree canopy, a landscape similar to what existed historically at Poplar Grove. The field extends to the cemetery inclosure wall, which is not visible in this photograph. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

Reestablishing the approach view will also require removal of the existing trees along the approach road (see CSA Task 5). The restored view would be through the replanted allee of trees along the approach road.

If the northwest field cannot be preserved and is threatened by development, remove only the east half of the west woods to reestablish the open setting along the west side of the cemetery. Leave the west half of the west woods to screen the development. Reestablishment of the view upon the approach would not be feasible in this scenario.

CSA Task 3: Clear Triangular Woodlot and Screen Vaughan Road (Drawing 4.2)

- Natural Systems and Features: Triangular Woodlot (non-contributing/setting))
- Spatial Organization: Southwest Field (contributing/setting)

To restore the historic limits of the southwest field (R. Taylor Farm) and screen modern suburban development looking west along the approach road, clear the triangular woodlot and establish a hedgerow along Vaughan Road. A portion of the woodlot may be retained as part of the hedgerow. The hedgerow should consist of native trees and understory similar to the hedgerow along the north side of the northwest field. Maintain the cleared woodlot as part of the southwest field, either as cultivated land or as meadow. Returning this woodlot to field will also return the historic open setting of the approach road and provide space for reestablishing the approach road allee (CSA Task 5). The hedgerow along Vaughan row should allow space for reestablishment of the approach road allee and end approximately twenty-five feet from the allee. This treatment task assumes the southwest field will be preserved through acquisition or easement. The west

side of Vaughan Road warrants screening because it presently contains several suburban houses and land that could be further subdivided and developed.

CSA Task 4: Redesign Odom Cemetery Inclosure (Drawing 4.3)

- Spatial Organization: Odom Cemetery (non-contributing)
- Small-Scale Features: Odom Cemetery fence (non-contributing)

Shift the northern side of Odom cemetery chain-link fence approximately ten feet from the approach road to provide space for replanting the approach road allee (CSA Task 5). The gate into the cemetery should be shifted to avoid opening onto or near the gravesites. Plant a hedge of boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens*) around the exterior of the fence to enhance the private nature of this family plot and screen it from the proposed relocation of the parking lot to the south (CSA Task 8). Boxwood is deer resistant and was used historically at Poplar Grove. Maintain the hedge at approximately five feet in height and clip it with a slightly battered profile. Although the Odom cemetery was never legally transferred to federal ownership, the National Park Service agreed in 1990 to maintain it as part of the donation to the National Park Foundation. This task should be undertaken in consultation with the Odom family.

CSA Task 5: Replant Approach Road Allee (Drawing 4.2)

- Vegetation: Approach road trees (non-contributing)
- Natural Systems and Features: West Woods (non-contributing), Triangular Woodlot (non-contributing/setting), Southwest Field Hedgerow (non-contributing/setting), Northwest Field Hedgerow (contributing/setting)

Replant the formal allee of deciduous trees along the entire length of the approach road from Vaughan Road to the cemetery gates. The historic twenty-five foot spacing of the trees shown on the 1931 War Department planting plan was apparently intended to provide a dense canopy and a clear military-like cadence to the approach. This close spacing, however, may have been a factor in the decline of the allee by the mid-twentieth century. For replanting, increase the spacing to thirty-five feet on center, with each pair of trees aligned perpendicular to the centerline. This wider spacing will retain the historic rhythm of the allee while providing additional growing space and allowing for the approach view of the cemetery (see CSA Task 2). The twenty-five foot spacing across the width of the road will allow for four-foot turf shoulders to either side of the twelve-foot wide pavement, plus an additional five feet to the tree trunks. Maintain the understory of the allee as mown lawn to a width of approximately thirty feet to either side of the road centerline.

Plant the allee with the following species in an even distribution through the allee: red maple (*Acer rubrum*), tulip-tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*), American linden (*Tilia americana)*, and a viable cultivar of American elm (*Ulmus americana*).[23] Hackberry is recommended as a replacement for white ash (*Fraxinus americana*) used historically within the allee. Ash species are presently threatened by ash yellows, a disease that is presently uncontrollable, and by the recent introduction of Emerald Ash Borer, an exotic beetle that kills ash trees.[24] In keeping with the 1931 War Department plan, plant Norway spruce at the terminus of the allee to either side of the cemetery gates, spaced approximately twenty feet from the road centerline so that at maturity the branches will not obstruct the cemetery gates.

In preparation for replanting of the allee, remove all existing trees along the approach road including the approximately fourteen remnant historic allee trees, which are generally in poor condition.[25] Clear adjoining woods that extend into the location of the allee, including the west woods (CSA Task 2), triangular woodlot (CSA Task 3), and portions of the north hedgerow (north side of northwest field) and southwest field hedgerow (east side of southwest field adjoining Odom cemetery).

CSA Task 6: Resurface Approach Road (Drawing 4.2)

- Circulation: Approach Road (contributing)

Return the approach road to its historic asphalt surface to give it more defined and well-maintained character. The 1931 specifications prepared by the Third Corps Area of the Quartermaster General were for a four-inch-stone base and two-inch emulsified asphalt penetrating wearing surface. As shown on a 1939 photograph of the main drive that was resurfaced at the same time (see fig. 1.68), this asphalt weathered to a gray color, and featured no curbs or other edging. The road was specified for a twelve-foot width; this remains the approximate existing width, except for the widened strip between the parking lot and gates. Return this widened strip to twelve feet and taper out to align with the inside edge of the outer (pedestrian) granite piers. The pavement should have straight, well-defined edges for a well-kept appearance. Maintain the shoulders as stabilized turf that can accommodate limited traffic. The 1931 work specified twelve-inch earthen (grass-covered) shoulders. Expand these to four feet for an overall width of twenty feet (twelve-foot pavement and four-foot shoulders on each side) sufficient to allow two oversized vehicles to pass.

Resurfacing of the approach road should be coordinated with resurfacing of the main drive within the cemetery (BS Task 4), reestablishment of the approach road allee (CSA Task 5), and relocation of the visitor parking lot (CSA Task 8). The approach road and main drive should have the same asphalt surface.

CSA Task 7: Remove South Hedgerow (Drawings 4.1, 4.2)

- Natural Systems and Features: South Hedgerow (non-contributing)
- Vegetation: Inclosure Red-cedar trees (non-contributing)
- Small-Scale Features: Barbed-Wire Fence (non-contributing)

Provided the adjoining south pasture (R. Taylor farm) is protected from development, clear the non-historic successional woods bordering the cemetery south inclosure to return the historic open spatial character and provide a more well kept appearance. Maintain the cleared ground as part of the adjoining pasture. Red-cedar trees along the edge of the woods along the inclosure wall, planted by the National Park Service in 1937, may be retained if they are in good condition. Remove the existing remnants of the barbed-wire fence installed along with the red-cedar trees in 1937. If additional livestock fencing is required, it should not be visible from within the cemetery (the existing electrified wire fence is appropriate).

CSA Task 8: Relocate Visitor Parking Lot (Drawing 4.3)

- Circulation: Visitor Parking Lot (non-contributing), Approach Road (contributing)
- Natural Systems and Features: West Woods (non-contributing)
- Spatial Organization: Entrance Field (contributing)
- Vegetation: Approach Road Trees (non-contributing)

Relocate the visitor parking lot, built in c.1995, to make it less conspicuous and to enhance the rural setting and formality of the cemetery approach. The preferred treatment is to move the parking lot south to the approximate site of a fenced corral on the R. Taylor farm within the entrance field alongside an existing hedgerow. This land is proposed for federal acquisition in the General Management Plan.

Under this concept, the parking lot would be an inconspicuous addition to the rural landscape without major vertical elements and lighting. This location would set the parking lot back from the approach road by approximately eighty feet across an open meadow. The parking lot would be screened by the existing hedgerow to the west and be outside of approach road view of the cemetery and vista of the cemetery gates. Planting of shrubs along the north, east, and south sides would further screen the lot. The surface should be distinguishable from the asphalt of the approach road. Vehicles would enter the lot along a one-way drive near the main gate so that visitors could experience the historic approach, and then exit to the west at a separate access point. A pedestrian walk would provide access to the cemetery entrance gates. The concept on drawing 4.3 shows a lot for twenty cars and two buses.

Relocation of the parking lot to the entrance field and R. Taylor farm corral is dependent on availability of space for a new septic field associated with the public restroom building within the cemetery. Positioning the parking lot along the hedgerow on the west side of the entrance field would leave an open area of approximately 11,500 square feet. Additional space for a septic field may also be available in the southeast field due south of the restroom building.[26]

CSA Task 9: Relocate Private Drive (Drawing 4.2)

- Circulation: Private Drive (non-contributing), Approach Road (contributing)
- Spatial Organization: Northwest Field (contributing/setting)

To enhance the cemetery setting and approach road, work with private property owners (Blaha) to relocate the section of the private drive through the northwest field. The preferred alternative is to relocate the drive through the Harrison property that is proposed for park acquisition in the General Management Plan (see fig. 4.5). The drive would either intersect the existing drive on the Harrison property (along the north boundary) or follow a new alignment to Vaughan Road. Relocation of the drive to this property would remove it from the approach road, which would serve solely as access to the national cemetery.

If acquisition of the Harrison property is not possible, reroute the private drive along the hedgerow on the north side of the northwest field (R. Taylor farm). The private drive would turn south at the west end of the hedgerow and use the approach road entrance off Vaughan Road. Locate the private drive intersection on the approach road approximately 125 feet east of Vaughan Road to make the drive less conspicuous and avoid a three-way intersection at the head of the approach road.

As part of the relocation of the private drive, remove the private mailboxes from the approach road at Vaughan Road to the head of the relocated private drive. The existence of these mailboxes does not befit the historic ceremonial character of the approach road.

CEMETERY INCLOSURE (CI)

Overall treatment objectives for this treatment area, which encompasses a narrow strip of land around the perimeter of the cemetery including the brick inclosure wall and adjoining woods, is to preserve the serenity and sacredness of the burial grounds and enhance the historic spatial character of the cemetery. Along the west and part of the south sides of the inclosure, the space will be opened through removal of the west woods (CSA Task 2) and south hedgerow (CSA Task 7). Treatment of the inclosure also addresses the need to maintain access

to the inclosure wall, and to improve drainage through it. Although the wall was historically covered in English ivy, reintroduction of this vine is not recommended due to potential damage it could cause to the masonry. If the park acquires adjoining private property, the stone boundary markers in the inclosure area at the corners of the current federal property should be retained.

CI Task 1: Improve Drainage Through Inclosure Wall (Drawing 4.1)

- Buildings and Structures: Drainage Ditch (non-contributing)
- Buildings and Structures: Inclosure Wall and Entrance Gate (contributing)

Modify inadequate drainage openings in the inclosure wall where necessary to improve drainage of the burial grounds. There are two areas where standing water occurs: one in Division A along the south side of the wall and a second in Division D at the northwest corner of the cemetery (cemetery low point). [27] Once positive drainage is achieved through adjusting the grade within the burial grounds (see BG Task 1), assess the function of the drainage openings. All but one of the openings feed into brick-and-concrete lined boxes that appear to have no outlet. Modification of these boxes would not impact the historic character of the landscape. The opening at the low point in Division D feeds into a concrete-lined ditch that extends north onto private property. Construction of the private drive and culvert over the ditch in c.1972, and subsequent alteration of the grade on its north side, may be impeding proper drainage. Improvements to this drainage ditch would require coordination with the private property owner.

CI Task 2: Enhance North and East Woods (Drawing 4.1)

- Natural Systems and Features: North Woods (contributing), East Woods (contributing)
- Spatial Organization: Cemetery Inclosure Space (contributing)

Plant trees and understory shrubs, or encourage natural succession, in the east and north woods to enhance the wooded setting and improve screening of the non-historic Blaha and Peterson houses and private drive. To ensure adequate planting, the park should work with the private property owners to plant on their property. Plant the vegetation to an approximate depth of forty feet from the cemetery inclosure wall, corresponding with the south side of the Blaha-Peterson access drive and along the east side of the cemetery where there is presently lawn. If growing conditions permit, loblolly pine would be the most historically appropriate trees to be planted in these woods. A five- to ten-foot clear zone should be maintained immediately along the inclosure wall to allow access for maintenance purposes (see CI Task 3). Keep the woods visible from the cemetery free of dead trees, broken limbs, and other debris in order to maintain a well-kept appearance.

CI Task 3: Maintain Mown Corridor Along Inclosure Wall (Drawing 4.1)

- Natural Systems and Features: North Woods (contributing), East Woods (contributing)
- Spatial Organization: Cemetery Inclosure Space (contributing)
- Vegetation: Inclosure Ivy Groundcover (non-contributing)

Establish a mown corridor along the outside of the inclosure wall to enhance the well-kept character of the cemetery, provide access to the wall, and prevent encroachment of vegetation. Along the west and part of the south sides that were open field historically, the corridor should be approximately ten-feet wide; along the wooded areas on the north, east, and part of the south sides, the corridor may need to be narrower to avoid removal of mature trees that are screening modern development. Keep the existing naturalized English ivy out of the corridor to prevent it from growing on the inclosure wall and damaging the masonry. It would also be appropriate to eradicate the English ivy, which is considered invasive in many areas when it reaches its mature (fruiting) stage.

SERVICE YARD (SY)

Overall treatment objectives for this area, which encompasses a rectangular section within the inclosure wall surrounding the garage, are to restore the dignity and sacred character of the cemetery landscape by screening service activities, and to reconstruct lost historic features extant in c.1933. Due to a lack of documentation, reconstruction of the well house that existed in c.1933 is not recommended. The service yard is intended to remain as the functioning maintenance area for the cemetery. The main drive, benches, and tablets adjoining are addressed under the Burial Grounds treatment area.

SY Task 1: Reconfigure Service Drive (Drawing 4.1)

- Circulation: Service Drive (contributing)

Restore the historic boundaries of the service drive that included a narrow entrance off the main drive. Shift the western edge of the pavement approximately five feet east to protect the historic magnolia and establish an eight-foot wide entrance drive, sufficient to accommodate modern maintenance vehicles. Pull the remaining pavement back from the main drive. Reconfiguration of the service drive is needed to allow for reestablishment of the service yard hedge (SY Task 2). Surface the drive in gravel or an asphalt chip seal that has the character of gravel to distinguish it from the main drive asphalt. The service drive was not paved in asphalt during the historic period.

SY Task 2: Reestablish Service Yard Hedge (Drawing 4.1)

- Spatial Organization: Service Yard (contributing)
- Vegetation: Service Yard Hedge (non-existing historic feature)

Plant an arborvitae hedge in the location of the historic hedge (removed in c.1974), but shift the location to accommodate the service drive entrance as reconfigured under SY Task 1. While the hedge was eight feet high by the end of the historic period, this was most likely not the desired height. Maintain the hedge at approximately four feet in height (corresponding to the height of the inclosure wall), with a slightly battered rectangular profile. Reestablishment of this hedge will define the historic enclosure of the service yard and screen service activities while still allowing the garage to be visible.

The service yard hedge was historically Oriental arborvitae (*Thuja orientalis*, recently reclassified as *Platycladus orientalis*), a less hardy but more drought tolerant shrub than American arborvitae (*Thuja occidentalis*). Oriental arborvitae is distinguished by its ascending, flat vertical branches. The variety used in the hedge is not known, but it was probably a dark green, upright variety such as 'pyramidalis.'[28] In planting the hedge, care should be taken not to damage the roots of the aged magnolia at the southwest corner of the service drive. If damage to the roots cannot be avoided, the section of the hedge extending out along the entrance of the service drive should not be replanted until the aged magnolia is replaced (see SY Task 3). Both tasks should then be accomplished concurrently. Monitor the hedge for possible infestation by arborvitae leafminer.

SY Task 3: Plant Specimen Trees (Drawing 4.1)

- Vegetation: Specimen Trees (contributing)

Plant a red maple (*Acer rubrum*) at the northwest corner of the service yard and a southern magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*) as a companion to the existing historic magnolia to flank the reconfigured service drive entrance (see SY Task 1). Prolong the life of the historic magnolia by prohibiting parking beneath its canopy to alleviate soil compaction. Both magnolias should have at least five feet of open ground between the trunk and the pavement of the service drive. If the aged magnolia is in decline when planting occurs, it should be removed and replaced in-kind.

SY Task 4: Return Garage to Historic Appearance (Drawing 4.1)

- Buildings and Structures: Garage (contributing)

Return the garage to its historic appearance by removing the non-historic exterior steel stairs and rear frame shed addition. Both additions will become more conspicuous with the removal of the west woods (CSA Task 2). For the garage attic to remain usable storage space, removal of the exterior stairs will require

either replacement with a functional pulley system or addition of an interior staircase. Determine the historic paint scheme, which should match that of the lodge and public restroom building. The 1931 National Cemetery regulations call for tin roofs to be painted red, trim white, and doors bronze-green.[29] Paint analysis should be undertaken on original components to determine if they were historically painted according to the regulations, and to ascertain a color match for repainting. The east garage door is a non-historic addition. If it is not necessary, it would be appropriate to remove it and return to the original configuration, which may have been either a blank wall or a six-over-six double-hung sash window matching that on the west side of the front façade.

LODGE GROUNDS (LG)

Overall treatment objectives for the lodge grounds are to beautify the landscape, reinforce its historic use as an assembly area, enhance public accessibility to the lodge and public restroom building, provide visitor orientation, and reconstruct lost features that existed during the treatment date. Due largely to the lack of visitor orientation and plantings, the lodge grounds do not provide a welcoming entrance to the cemetery or a comfortable assembly area.

The lodge grounds historically were dominated by a circular turn-around off of which branched a walk extending along the inclosure wall. For much of its history, this turn-around was surfaced in turf and edged by shrubs and a low border or hedge. By the late 1920s, the turn-around was probably no longer in use, but its form may have still been evident in the landscape through remnant plantings. With construction of the public restroom building in 1929, portions of the turn-around were probably removed for construction of a septic system. Although it was an important part of the lodge grounds for most of the historic period, restoration of the turn-around as a circulation feature is not being recommended because of the limited documentation and because it probably consisted only of remnant plantings by the treatment date (1933).

LG Task 1: Construct New Walk to Public Restroom Building (Drawing 4.4)

- Circulation: Restroom Path (non-contributing), Restroom Walks (contributing)

Construct a walk along the west side of the lodge to provide a new route to the public restroom building in place of the existing non-historic dirt path along the east side of the building. The proposed walk follows the general alignment of a walk that is shown on the 1892 Quartermaster General plan of the cemetery (see fig. 1.51). Locating the walk on this side of the lodge will avoid introduction of a new circulation feature within the assembly area. The new walk is proposed to tie into the existing historic concrete walk along the north side of the restroom

building. Build the new walk in concrete with a visible aggregate and scoring that distinguishes it from the historic concrete walk. Avoid impacts to the non-historic magnolia near the main gate, if possible. The walk should be universally accessible at four-feet wide to accommodate one wheelchair and pedestrian. Remove the existing restroom path on the east side of the lodge, and return the grade to its historic level. Grade to create a swale that directs water from the lodge downspout to the opening in the inclosure wall, avoiding proposed plantings (see LG Task 4). In place of a swale, use of subsurface drainage also would be compatible with the historic character of the landscape.

LG Task 2: Install New Cemetery Information Wayside (Drawing 4.4)

- Small-Scale Features: Grave Locator-Interpretive Signs (non-contributing); Iron Tablets (non-existing historic feature/in storage)

Install a cemetery information wayside at the entrance to the cemetery to replace the existing non-historic aluminum-frame signs that flank the central flagstaff. Historically, there was an iron tablet on the east side of the lodge that welcomed visitors to register (tablet "P" on Drawing 4.1). This location, adjoining the entrance to the lodge (proposed to become the visitor contact station) and before visitors enter the assembly area or burial grounds, would be the most appropriate location for the new wayside. If additional information or interpretive signs are necessary, they should be located outside of the cemetery, such as near the visitor parking lot.

Figure 4.8: Example of an appropriate style for a new sign that would be part of an information wayside within the lodge grounds. (National Park Service, Antietam National Cemetery website, www.nps.gove/anti/.)

Design the new wayside in a manner that recedes in the landscape and reflects the historic precedent of cast-metal signs (tablets). An appropriate model is the wayside at the National Park Service-administered Antietam National Cemetery (fig. 4.8). This sign relates to the historic style of signs at national cemeteries through its use of cast metal with raised letters, but is distinguished by a different finish. The Poplar Grove wayside should include a graphic plan of the cemetery and a brief account of its history and significance, as well as operational information if necessary. The burial register, currently displayed on the aluminum-frame signs at the flagstaff, would be more appropriately displayed in book form at the wayside (as is done at many national cemeteries) to reduce the scale of the wayside. Alternatively, the register could be available inside the lodge or on the lodge porch. The grave locator system is recommended for revision in Burial Grounds Task 3.

LG Task 3: Remove Privacy Fence and Plant Boxwood Hedge (Drawing 4.4)

- Spatial Organization: Lodge Grounds (contributing)
- Small-Scale Features: Wood Privacy Fence (non-contributing)

Remove the existing non-historic wood privacy fence to restore the historic spatial character of the lodge grounds. This fence extends from the rear of the lodge to the restroom (utility) building, and from the rear of the restroom building to the inclosure wall. It is not needed because the lodge is no longer a private residence. In place of the fence at the lodge, plant a boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens*) hedge extending approximately twenty feet off the southeast corner to screen the rear service area of the lodge from the adjoining assembly area. A grape arbor existed in this location during the historic period, but no documentation was found on its appearance.

LG Task 4: Establish New Plantings in Lodge Grounds (Drawing 4.4)

- Spatial Organization: Lodge Grounds (contributing)
- Vegetation: Specimen Trees (contributing), Specimen Shrubs (contributing)

Establish new plantings in the lodge grounds to improve the aesthetic character of the landscape as a point of entry for the cemetery, and to maintain and enhance the use of the grounds as an assembly area focused on the rostrum. The recommended plantings for this area provide a contemporary scheme that evokes the circular organization of the turn-around that was built in c.1872 and disappeared toward the end of War Department period. As shown on Drawing 4.4, this planting scheme places deciduous shade trees in a circular pattern that defines an open lawn assembly area facing the rostrum. The selected trees reflect historic species found in the approach road allee and the lodge grounds, including linden (*Tilia americana)*, tulip-tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), and a viable cultivar of American elm (*Ulmus americana)*. These trees can be maintained upon maturity with a high canopy that will not interfere with lines of sight from the assembly area to the rostrum. The circle of trees is enhanced with shrubs of crape myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*) and boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens*), supplementing those that exist at present.

In addition to the circle of trees, old-fashioned varieties of fruit trees (*Prunus americana and Pyrus sp.*) are recommended along the inclosure wall based on the 1892 Quartermaster General plan to return ornament and springtime color to the landscape. Plum and pear trees were purportedly first planted in the cemetery by the burial corps in the late 1860s. Use of sterile (non-fruiting) varieties would be appropriate to reduce maintenance, but avoid use of modern cultivars such as Bradford pear. A small flowerbed is recommended next to the lodge to add visual interest and provide a welcoming atmosphere for visitors. Plant the bed with shrub roses and peonies (documented in 1931), plus low-scale old-fashioned annuals such as wax begonias, geranium (*Pelargonium*), and marigolds. Refer to Table 4.2 for additional information on recommended plants.

LG Task 5: Replant Maltese Cross Hedge (Drawing 4.4)

- Vegetation: Maltese Cross Hedge (non-existing historic feature)

Replant a boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens*) hedge in the outline of a Maltese cross (5th Corps badge) in front of the lodge. This hedge, which was removed in c.1985, occupied the present lawn strip between the lodge and the main drive, with approximate overall dimensions of ten feet square. As shown in a 1968 photograph (see fig. 1.75), each section of the hedge was clipped in a rectangular profile, approximately thirty inches high by eighteen inches wide. Maintain the ground surrounding the hedge as lawn, and mulch the understory of the hedge with natural, dark mulch.

LG Task 6: Return Public Restroom Building to Historic Appearance (Drawing 4.4)

- Buildings and Structures: Public Restroom Building (contributing)

Return the public restroom building to its historic appearance by restoring the exterior color scheme. As with its sister building, the garage, the stucco walls of the public restroom building were most likely originally unpainted to complement the stone walls and stucco kitchen wing of the lodge. The trim and roof of the building should also match the color of the roofs on the lodge and garage. The 1931 National Cemetery regulations called for tin roofs to be painted red, trim white, and doors bronze-green.[30] Paint analysis should be undertaken on original components to determine if they were historically painted according to the regulations, and to ascertain a color match for repainting.

The existing use of the building as public restrooms should be maintained as part of planned rehabilitation of the lodge into a visitor contact station. While access to the building is on level ground, the restrooms do not meet universal accessibility standards primarily due to width of the doors. When the restrooms are rehabilitated, priority should be given to maintaining existing door and window openings, and expanding the space within the building (making use of fuel and motor rooms), rather than constructing an addition. If an addition is necessary, it would be appropriate to extend off the rear west corner, where the addition would be least visible from the assembly area of the lodge grounds. Further study is needed for this and other architectural issues.

LG Task7: Return Lodge to Historic Appearance (Drawing 4.4)

- Buildings and Structures: Lodge (contributing)

As part of the planned rehabilitation into a visitor contact station, return the lodge to its historic appearance at the end of the War Department period (1933). Returning the building to its original 1872 appearance, which would require restoration of the slate roof, wood porch floor, and darkly painted trim, as well as removal of the 1914 kitchen wing, would not be appropriate in the broader

treatment of the landscape reflecting development through the War Department period. Returning the building to its original appearance would also change the visual connection with the public restroom building (1929) and garage (1929) created by use of the same metal roofs and painting scheme.

While little has changed since c.1933, the historic character of the building would be enhanced through removal of aluminum triple-track storm windows and window air-conditioning units, and returning the paint color scheme to match that of the public restroom building and garage. The 1931 National Cemetery regulations called for tin roofs to be painted red, trim white, doors bronze green, porch ceiling light blue, and borders and letters of the Lincoln Memorial tablet (on the front of the buildings) copper-bronze. Paint analysis should be undertaken on historic (1933) components to determine if they were historically painted according to the regulations, and to ascertain a color match for repainting. The stucco on the kitchen wing was most likely unpainted to complement the stone on the original building. Rehabilitation will require that the building be accessible. It appears the front porch can be made accessible by raising the grade of the concrete pad to serve as a ramp. Further study is needed for this and other architectural issues. The park is anticipating completion of a historic structure report prior to designing the planned rehabilitation.

LG Task 8: Return Historic Color Scheme to Rostrum (Drawing 4.1)

- Buildings and Structures: Rostrum (contributing)

Return the rostrum to its historic color scheme as part of the conservation of the entire structure. The 1931 National Cemetery Regulations specify that iron rostrums be painted black, the roof red (matching metal roofs on other buildings), and the underside of the roof light blue (matching the ceiling of the lodge porch). The entire iron superstructure and metal roof of the rostrum is presently painted black. Paint analysis should be undertaken on these components to determine if they were historically painted according to the regulations, and to ascertain a color match for repainting. As with the inclosure wall, the brick rostrum foundation was historically covered in ivy (probably English ivy); replanting of this vine is not recommended due to the potential for damage to the historic masonry.

BURIAL GROUNDS (BG)

Overall treatment objectives for this character area, which includes all of the cemetery within the inclosure wall except for the service yard and lodge grounds, are to reestablish the sacred and well-maintained character of the landscape; to provide legible and historically appropriate grave markers and a grave locator system; to return the central circle/flagstaff to its historic majesty; to enhance interpretation and visitor amenities; and to return lost trees and shrubs. Treatment

of the grave markers, the majority of which are recessed-shield headstones and unknown blocks that were transformed into flat markers in 1934, is the task most critical to the overall rehabilitation of the landscape.

BG Task 1: Improve Cemetery Lawn (Drawing 4.1)

- Vegetation: Cemetery Lawn (contributing)
- Circulation: Burial Grounds Drives and Walks (contributing)

Improve the cemetery lawn toward "Class A" level of maintenance characterized by uniformity of appearance, low tolerance for weeds, a vibrant green color, and absence of debris. Use grass species that are adapted to the geographic region, and mow on a regular basis to maintain a well-kept appearance. Grass should be kept neatly trimmed around all grave markers, trees, drives, and other objects, avoiding impacts from line trimmers and mowers. The lawn was not irrigated historically, and therefore would have gone into dormancy (turned brown) during dry summer months; natural seasonal changes in the appearance of the lawn is therefore appropriate from the standpoints of both historic character and natural resource conservation.

As part of improving the health and appearance of the lawn, adjust the grade of sunken and low areas through addition of fill. Cutting should be avoided to protect the graves. Sunken areas detract from the historic uniformity of the lawn, and present a tripping hazard. There are two large low areas that collect standing water at the northwest corner in Division D, sections e and g (water often covers grave markers), and in Division A, between sections d and e. Raised the grade in these areas to create positive drainage toward the drainage openings in the inclosure wall (see CI Task 1). Correction of the grade should be undertaken prior to installation of new grave markers (BG Task 2).

BG Task 2: Install New Grave Markers (Drawing 4.1)

- Small-Scale Features: Grave Markers (non-contributing with some exceptions)

The general intent of this task is to return the grave markers (headstones and blocks) to their historic (1933) character consisting of upright marble headstones for known graves and blocks for unknown graves. Generally, graves will receive a new upright marker (headstone or block) appropriate to the veteran's service and date of interment. This task is organized into three parts: Replacement Issues and Guidelines, Grave Marker Replacement, and Removal of Existing Grave Markers. A list of treatment alternatives considered for this task is in Appendix J.

Replacement Issues and Guidelines

Criteria for Replacement

National Park Service *National Cemetery Regulations* and *Director's Order #61*, which defer to National Cemetery Administration policies pertaining to headstones and markers (VA *Headstones and Markers* manual), call for replacement of a previously furnished government headstone or marker at government (National Cemetery Administration) expense when it is:

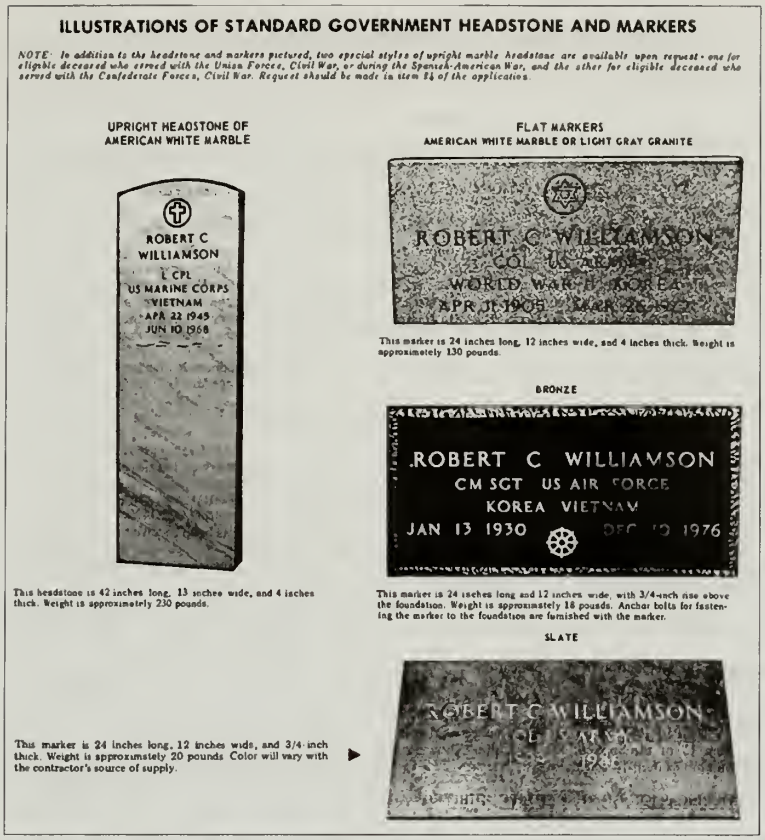
1. Deteriorated or illegible, e.g., weatherworn to the extent it is no longer readable.
2. Cracked, broken, or destroyed due to natural causes.
3. Broken or damaged, cause unknown.
4. Inscription information is erroneous through no fault of the applicant.
5. Material or workmanship is not in accordance with the specifications.
6. Extenuating circumstances not covered above may warrant replacement in some cases. [31]

Meeting criteria 1, 2, and 3 above generally translates into the headstones lacking historic integrity and therefore warranting in-kind replacement under National Park Service management policy and cultural resource management guidelines.

Replacement Specifications

The National Cemetery Administration (Department of Veterans Affairs) presently has four grave marker styles that generally correspond to those found at Poplar Grove during the period of significance for the landscape (1866-1933):

- Standard Government Headstones and Markers: World War I and later veterans. Upright headstone (equivalent to the General used at Poplar Grove 1922-c.1933): white marble, forty-two inches long, thirteen inches wide, four inches thick (fig. 4.9). [32] (Flat markers were used at Poplar Grove after 1933.)
- Historical Styles: Civil War Union and Spanish-American War. White marble, cambered top, raised lettering inside a recessed shield; XA: twelve inches wide, three inches thick, forty-two inches long; XB: thirteen inches wide, three inches thick, forty-two inches long (fig. 4.10); and XC: ten inches wide, three inches thick, and thirty-nine inches long. [33]
- Blocks ("6x6x30 unknowns"): Civil War Union unknown burials. The National Cemetery Administration does not presently have a contract for this type of marker, but they can be ordered off-contract by special request with inscriptions (fig 4.11).[34]



The Historical Styles (XA, XB, and XC) are similar to the recessed-shield headstones at Poplar Grove, but are not exact replicas. In dimensions, style XA is closest to the larger second-generation recessed-shield headstone, and style XC is closest to the first-generation. Both are three inches thick rather than the historic four inches. The thirty-nine inch length does not match the historic length of the first generation recessed-shield headstones, but they could be installed at the historic height of twelve to eighteen inches above grade. All three Historical Styles appear to use the larger font used on the second-generation recessed-shield headstones (the park's style A), and do not include the grave number within the shield. The current standard headstone is similar to the General, but has a different font than was used historically.

The National Cemetery Administration has indicated to the National Park Service that it can modify its replacement stone specifications to provide an exact match to the styles found at Poplar Grove. In finishing, care should be taken to replicate fonts, bevels, and finish. In addition, Vermont white marble or a similar white, lightly veined marble should be specified to match the visual character of the marble used historically for the historic first-generation recessed-shield headstones. The type of marble used historically for the second-generation recessed-shield headstones, General headstones, and flat markers is not known.

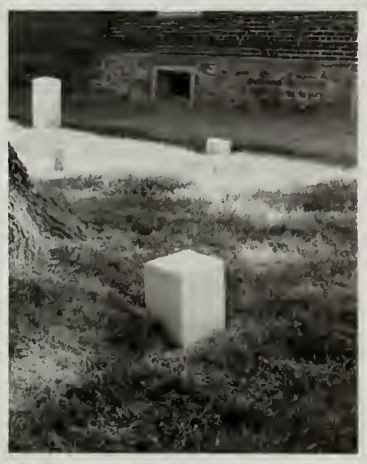


Figure 4.9 (top): Current standard government headstones and markers showing equivalent of the General used historically at Poplar Grove. The marble and bronze flat markers were used after 1933. (Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Memorial Affairs, *Headstones and Markers,* manual M40-3, December 1, 1982, Figure F.1.)

Figure 4.10 (middle): Example of recently installed government historical style stone "XB" at Glendale National Cemetery, with added inscription for the regiment within the shield and the date of burial below the shield. Note that the grave number, historically within the shield, was not replicated. This headstone is close to the second-generation recessed-shield headstones, but is three inches thick rather than four. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

Figure 4.11 (bottom): Reproduction unknown block at Seven Pines National Cemetery. The font used for the grave number does not match the historic font; in addition, this block was installed higher than it was historically. An historic block is visible in the background. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

Installation and Archeological Concerns

Replacement grave markers should be level and in alignment both laterally and longitudinally with adjoining markers. In terms of landscape character, priority should be given to aligning replacement grave markers with the historic plan of the cemetery rather than with the head of grave shaft, generally following the existing marker locations. Inscriptions on headstones will face the grave toward the center of the cemetery. Recent geophysical and archeological testing by the park (2008) identified that in some places existing grave markers do not align with the head of the graves. The testing did not reveal evidence of the original 1877 placement of the upright headstones.[35] Installation of replacement headstones should ideally be in the location of the original upright marker and avoid impacting the grave shaft. Where mature trees exist in the intended marker location, the markers should be moved to avoid impacts to the tree or its root system (see also BG Task 7).

The original specifications for the recessed-shield headstones called for an installed height of twelve inches; for the blocks, four inches. Based on inspection of existing upright headstones at City Point National Cemetery, it appears that the headstones were either installed at eighteen inches, or were raised to this height at some point after the original installation in 1877, probably when the second-generation recessed-shield headstones were introduced in 1903 (these were three inches longer and installed at eighteen inches). Existing blocks at City Point vary in height, but appear to have been raised to six inches in height above grade. These changes in installed height probably occurred at Poplar Grove as well, prior to 1934; the existing transformed headstones are generally cut off at eighteen inches, most likely at the original grade line. It thus may be appropriate to install the replacement headstones at Poplar Grove at eighteen inches tall and the blocks at six inches.

Inscriptions

In general, the inscriptions (font, orientation, and layout) should match the historic stones.[36] For example, on the recessed-shield headstones, the inscriptions should be limited to the grave number, name, and state. Adding further content beyond that found on the historic marker, such as the life dates below the shield as shown on the current historical styles, changes the character of individual markers and should be avoided. Correction of inaccuracies in the inscriptions would not impact the historic character of the landscape. (Addressing corrections is beyond the scope of this report.)

Disposition of Replaced Grave Markers

National Cemetery Administration regulations (headstone and marker policy), which apply to National Park Service national cemeteries, require that replaced grave markers be treated in a manner that prevents their reuse. The National

Cemetery Administration destroys old markers that are removed from a grave, but it does not insist that the National Park Service carry out this practice.[37] The intent of the regulations is to prevent a situation such as the so-called Tombstone House, where the old headstone bases from Poplar Grove were used to sheathe a house.

Grave Marker Replacement

After careful consideration and consultation with the public, State Historic Preservation Office, and National Cemetery Administration, the park has decided that the preferred treatment is to install replacement grave markers at all graves with a few exceptions. The grave markers as a whole meet the conditions for replacement under national cemetery regulations due to overall deterioration. Replacement is also warranted because the headstones installed prior to 1934 were irreparably altered by removal of the headstone base that would make return to an upright position infeasible. While the unknown blocks were not cut, they are in equally poor condition. Replacement of all markers is also warranted to reflect the historically equal treatment of the graves.

The overall grave marker replacement plan follows historic national cemetery standards, with marker styles selected based on the war association of the veterans and the date of burial. In general, recessed-shield headstones will be installed at the graves of all known Civil War Union and Spanish-American War veterans, no matter when they died, except for those veterans who received non-government (private) headstones installed between 1866 and 1869. These markers will be retained. Any other veteran who died prior to the introduction of the General headstone in 1922 will also receive a recessed-shield headstone. All Civil War unknown graves will receive an unknown block. Veterans of World War I and later wars will receive a General headstone. Any veteran with service prior to World War I (but not Civil War or Spanish-American War) who died after 1922 will also receive a General headstone. The park will consider how to treat the few markers at Confederate and civilian graves on a case-by-case basis. The inscriptions on existing markers will be replicated on the replacement markers with few exceptions. The park will establish a scrupulous process approved by the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). The process shall be academically rigorous and publicly transparent before the superintendent will approve that either stones or inscriptions be changed. The following is a description of how this plan will be implemented for each type of existing grave marker at Poplar Grove National Cemetery (dates in brackets indicate years of use).

Recessed-Shield Headstones (1877-c.1933): Replace all existing first- and second-generation recessed-shield headstones with replica upright first-generation recessed-shield headstones: white marble cambered-profile tablet measuring ten inches wide, four inches thick, and thirty-six inches tall, installed

Figure 4.12 (top), Figure 4.13 (middle), figure 4.14 (bottom). (Petersburg National Battlefield, 2005.)

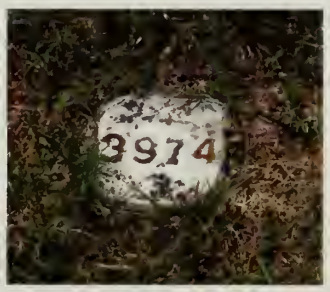


Figure 4.15. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

at a height of eighteen inches above grade (height at end of historic period). Inscriptions will consist of raised block letters set within a recessed six-point shield, with the grave number at the top, the name in the middle, and the state regiment at the bottom. The marble will match the marble of the unknown blocks.

To simplify the replacement process, this plan will eliminate the historic distinction between first- and second-generations of the recessed-shield headstone by using only the first-generation specifications. This change will not impact the historic character of the landscape because the two generations were very close in appearance and because less than one percent of the existing headstones are this type. Replicating the inscription "SP AM WAR," or adding it where missing, will distinguish the graves of Spanish-American War veterans. Most of the existing second-generation headstones, with the exception of Civil War reinterments made between 1903 and 1931, are replacements of the first-generation headstones or unknown blocks.

Examples:
The first-generation recessed-shield headstone at grave #2 (Sam'l Zeller, PA) will be replaced with a replica upright first-generation recessed-shield headstone with the same inscription (fig. 4.12).

The second-generation Spanish-American War headstone (style B) installed as a replacement at the unknown Civil War veteran grave #5585 will be replaced with an unknown block with the inscription limited to the grave number (fig. 4.13).

The second-generation recessed-shield headstone original to grave #3398-A (Isaac Davis, Spanish-American War veteran, style A) will be replaced with an upright first-generation recessed-shield headstone that replicates the existing inscription (fig. 4.14)

Unknown Blocks (1877-c.1903): Replace all unknown blocks with replica markers: white marble bevel-edged post measuring six inches square and thirty inches long, installed at a height of six inches above grade (height at end of historic period). The existing inscriptions (grave number and the number of remains if more than one) will be replicated. The marble will match the marble of the headstones.

Example:
The unknown block at grave #3974 will be replaced with a replica installed 6 inches above grade with the same inscription limited to the grave number (fig. 4.15).

Figure 4.16. (Petersburg National Battlefield, 2005.)

Figure 4.17. (Petersburg National Battlefield, 2005.)

Figure 4.18 (top), Figure 4.19 (middle), Figure 4.20 (bottom). (Petersburg National Battlefield, 2005.)

General Headstones (post-1922): Replace all General headstones for veterans of World War I and later service with the current standard upright General headstone: white marble, 13 inches wide, 4 inches thick, 42 inches long, installed at a height of 24 inches above ground, with incised inscription and no shield. Replace General headstones installed as replacements for Civil War and Spanish-American War veterans with recessed-shield headstone for known graves or blocks for unknown graves.

Examples:

The General headstone installed in 1928 at grave #5603 (Rogers Gilliam) will be replaced with a current standard upright General headstone with the same inscription (fig. 4.16).

The General headstone installed in c.1980 as a flat marker replacement at grave #1027 (S J Carriss, PA) will be replaced with an upright recessed-shield headstone with the inscription limited to the content contained on the first-generation headstones (grave number, name, state) (fig 4.17).

Government Flat Markers (post-1939): Replace existing flat markers with upright General headstones at the graves of all veterans of World War I and later service. These graves would have received General headstones had the cemetery not been converted to flat markers in 1934. Install recessed-shield headstones or unknown blocks at all flat markers installed as replacements on graves of Civil War and Spanish-American War veterans.

Examples:

The flat marker installed in 1940 at grave #5610 (John W. Brown) will be replaced with an upright General headstone with the same inscription (fig. 4.18).

The flat marker installed in c.1940 as a replacement of a Civil War headstone at grave #2922 (William Wood, PA) will be replaced with a recessed-shield with the inscription limited to the content contained on first-generation headstones (grave number, name, state) (fig. 4.19).

The flat marker installed after c.1940 at unknown grave #5496 (probably as a replacement of a Civil War unknown block) will be replaced with an unknown block with the inscription limited to the grave number (fig. 4.20).

Medal of Honor Flat Marker (post-1940): Replace the two markers for Civil War veterans who received the Medal of Honor with current standard General-type Medal of Honor headstones (inscription with outline of recessed shield and

Figure 4.21 (Petersburg National Battlefield, 2005.)

Medal of Honor emblem, highlighted in gold lithochrome). There was historically no distinction in the recessed-shield headstones for Medal of Honor recipients. Retaining the flat bronze marker and installing a recessed-shield headstone is contrary to National Cemetery Administration regulations, which prohibit double-marking graves.[38]

Example:
The Medal of Honor marker installed after 1940 as a replacement at grave #1283 (Henry M Hardenbergh, Civil War veteran) will be removed and replaced with an upright General-type Medal of Honor headstone (fig. 4.21).

Figure 4.22 (Petersburg National Battlefield, 2005.)

Non-Government Headstones (c.1866-c.1920): Restore the five non-government (private) headstones installed between 1866 and 1869 by conserving the stone and resetting the tablet in an upright position on a new plinth or other sound footing. These warrant special treatment due to their unique design and workmanship. Apply the same treatment to later non-government furnished headstones for civilians (two graves of infants of the cemetery superintendent). Replace non-government furnished headstones installed as replacements at Civil War and Spanish-American War veterans' graves (approximately six) with a recessed-shield headstone or unknown block, or if World War I or later service veterans, a General headstone.[39]

Examples:
The non-government headstone at grave #22 (John C. Murphy) installed in c.1868, will be conserved and set upright on a new plinth or other footing (fig. 4.22).

The non-government replacement stone at grave #3162 (J. J. Drake, Civil War veteran), will be removed and replaced with an upright recessed-shield headstone with the same inscription (fig. 4.23).

Figure 4.23 (Petersburg National Battlefield, 2005.)

Removal of Existing Grave Markers

After consideration of several alternatives (see Appendix J) and consultation with the National Cemetery Administration and the State Historic Preservation Office, the preferred treatment for all existing flat grave markers is to remove them from the cemetery when the replacement markers are installed.[40] Through the Environmental Assessment process, the park is currently exploring alternatives for disposition of the old grave markers once they are removed from the cemetery. In keeping with national cemetery regulations, these alternatives will prevent their reuse. A representative sampling of the old markers will be displayed for interpretation within the cemetery lodge or another nearby location.

BG Task 3: Redesign Grave Locator System (Drawing 4.1)

- Small-Scale Features: Radial Drive Markers (non-contributing), Grave Locator-Interpretive Signs (non-contributing)

Redesign the grave locator system by first returning to the original division-section designation. The existing designation by blocks, introduced in c.1957, combines several of the historic sections and therefore makes it more difficult to locate individual graves. The locator system should include both hand-held material and markers at each section. The markers would be keyed to a new information wayside near the cemetery entrance (see LG Task 2).

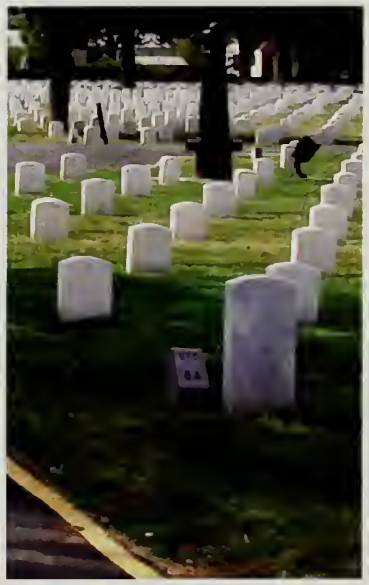


Figure 4.24: Granite section marker at the Civil War-era Richmond National Cemetery. The age of this section marker is not known. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

No documentation was found on the style of historic division-section markers at Poplar Grove. Therefore, the new markers should be considered a compatible new addition to the landscape. Install low granite posts with angled tops inscribed with the division letter and section number. This type of section marker is used at the Civil War-era Richmond National Cemetery (fig. 4.24). Given the radial plan of the cemetery, the most visible place for the grave markers is at the front of each section along the circular drives, facing the center. For rectangular sections, install the marker in the middle of the section along the adjoining drive. Installing multiple posts around each section (e.g., at the corners of each section) is not recommended because of the potential to clutter the landscape.[41]

As part of this task, remove the non-historic metal markers around the central loop of the main drive that identify the radial drives by the letters A through F. These markers relate to the contemporary block designation. Based on available documentation, the drives were not historically classified or named, aside from the main drive.

BG Task 4: Resurface Main Drive, Return Circular Alignment to Loop (Drawing 4.1)

- Circulation: Main Drive (contributing)

Return the main drive to its historic asphalt surface to give it more defined and well-maintained character. The 1931 specifications prepared by the Third Corps Area of the Quartermaster General were for a four inch-stone base and two-inch emulsified asphalt penetrating wearing surface. As shown on a 1939 photograph (see fig. 1.68), this asphalt surface weathered to a gray color, and had no curbs or other edging. The road was specified at ten feet in width, approximately the same as the existing surface except where it has been widened near the lodge and service yard. Remove the existing asphalt to return the pavement to the historic grade level with the turf. Resurfacing of the main drive should be coordinated with resurfacing of the approach road (CSA Task 6).

As part of this task, return the central loop of the main drive to its original circular alignment centered on the flagstaff. While the present teardrop alignment dates to the end of the historic period in 1931, it was most likely added in response to wear from automobiles extending beyond the original gravel bed, and does not contribute to the historic designed character of the landscape. The teardrop alignment detracts from the symmetry of the circular plan of the cemetery, and extends over several adjoining graves, where it is supported by a concrete curb. Given that automobiles are prohibited from the main drive except for special use, there is no need to accommodate an automobile turning radius at the central loop. As part of the realignment, remove the concrete curb. Archeological monitoring may be necessary as part of the removal of the concrete curb to avoid disturbing graves.

BG Task 5: Install New Flagstaff and Enhance Central Circle (Drawing 4.1)

- Buildings and Structures: Flagstaff (non-contributing)
- Small-Scale Features: Grave Locator-Interpretive Signs (non-contributing); Concrete Pads (non-contributing); Flagstaff Floodlight (non-contributing)

Return the flagstaff to its historic height and enhance the surrounding landscape of the central circle to reinforce its historic function as the majestic focal point of the cemetery. Undertake this task following completion of resurfacing the main drive (BG Task 4). Given the lack of historic integrity to the existing flagstaff, the preferred treatment is to replace it with a new painted metal flagstaff that matches or is close to the historic height of eighty feet so that the flag is visible above the tree canopy both within the cemetery and from the approach road (see CSA Task 2). The new flagstaff should have a simple finial and be painted to match the 1931 National Cemetery Regulations with a black base and white shaft.

In addition to returning the flagstaff to its historic height, enhance the surrounding landscape within the loop of the main drive by removing the non-historic aluminum-frame grave locator and interpretive signs (also recommended under BG Task 3), and the rectangular concrete pads that were installed after the historic period, most likely as bases for benches (fig. 4.25). In addition, remove the existing non-historic flagstaff floodlight, together with its surrounding rocks and concealing boxwood, and replace with lighting that is less conspicuous in the landscape. Options may include recessed ground lighting at the base of the flagstaff or lighting installed on the shaft of the flagstaff.

Once these non-historic features are removed, improve the lawn and establish a circular planting bed around the flagstaff to beautify the landscape, recall the mound that was removed in 1913, and provide a welcoming space for ceremonial gatherings. As a compatible new addition, establish a simple circular bed around

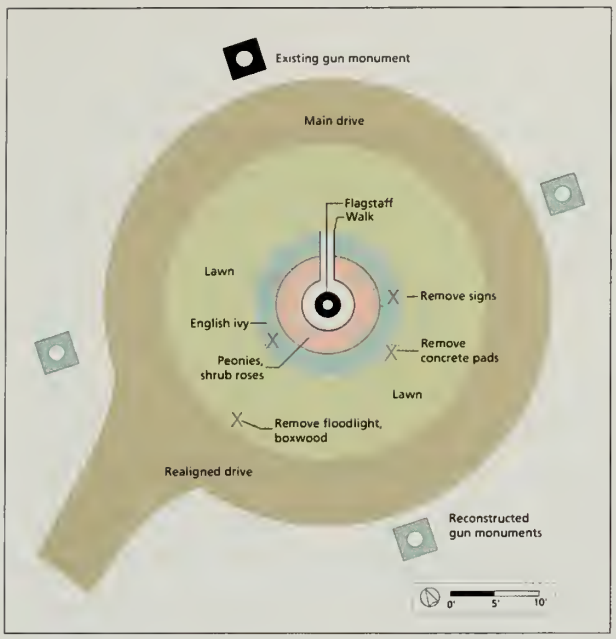


Figure 4.25: Diagram of the central circle showing proposed treatment in tasks BG Tasks 5 and 6. This drawing also shows the realigned circular loop of the main entrance drive as recommended in BG Task 4. (SUNY ESF.)

the flagstaff, approximately six feet in width (sixteen-foot overall diameter including the base of the flagstaff), with low-maintenance plant materials. Include a narrow walk on the north side for access to the halyard and an access pad around the flagstaff. The most appropriate material for the walk and the pad would be concrete with a coarse aggregate, allowed to weather.

Suggested plantings for the central bed include a simple border of English ivy (used historically along the inclosure wall) or similar evergreen groundcover, with an inner circle of long-lived low-maintenance flowering plants such as peonies and ever-blooming shrub roses (see fig. 4.25). Peonies and roses were used historically at Poplar Grove. Roses were traditionally used in cemetery landscapes as symbols of divine mercy, while evergreen ivy symbolized eternal life.[42]

BG Task 6: Reintroduce Three Missing Gun Monuments (Drawing 4.1)

- Small-Scale Feature: Gun Monument (contributing)

Reintroduce the three missing gun monuments (upright cannons) that together with the existing gun monument encircled the central flagstaff. Poplar Grove was historically among the larger Civil War-era national cemeteries, and as such was outfitted with four gun monuments; the present existence of one gun monument places Poplar Grove in the rank of the small cemeteries, such as Glendale and Seven Pines.

The preferred treatment is to acquire the three missing guns from Fort Donelson National Battlefield (Tennessee) where they were purportedly transferred in c.1974, and return them to Poplar Grove. If this is not feasible, then fabricate replicas of the guns using the existing gun monument as a mold. Install caps made of a single cannonball (see fig. 1.48; missing from existing gun monument). Consideration may be given to use of durable alternate materials provided the outward appearance is consistent with the historic painted iron. Do not include shields on the replicas; only the existing gun monument had one. Install the replicas on rectangular concrete pads and reproduce the pyramidal pile of shot as found at the existing gun. Remove the paint from the bronze shield on the existing gun monument and replicate the missing cannonball cap.

BG Task 7: Reestablish Historic Character of Burial Grounds Trees

- Vegetation: Specimen Trees (contributing)

Reestablish the historic character of the trees in the burial grounds through removal and new plantings to approximate the general character and species composition at the end of the historic period in 1933. This task is discussed first by general guidelines on the treatment of specimen trees in the burial grounds, then by tree removals and tree plantings.

General Guidelines

The recommended treatment for specimen trees within the burial grounds is to reestablish the character represented by War Department's 1931 plan, "Tree Planting Layout" (fig. 4.26). The intent of this treatment is to reestablish the overall even distribution of a diverse collection of coniferous and deciduous trees that existed at the end of the War Department period. Literal implementation of this plan may not be necessary to enhance historic character. There are a number of contemporary issues that may require flexibility in location and species, particularly to ensure preservation of the graves and headstones. Sanctity of the graves and preservation of the markers shall always take precedent over planting of new specimen trees.

In addition to those tree species shown on the 1931 plan, earlier species that existed in the cemetery during the War Department period but which disappeared by the 1933 treatment date may be appropriate for new plantings. Conifers historically made up a substantial proportion of the tree stock, mostly loblolly pines that predated the cemetery's establishment in 1866. In addition to providing year-round color, conifers were a traditional funerary symbol of life everlasting. Alternative species may be warranted when a species is no longer viable due to disease, or when a historic species is considered invasive or has the potential for damaging graves, markers, and lawn. In general, alternate species should either be those used historically within the cemetery (see Appendix G), or those that are close in appearance to the historic species (see Table 4.2). Tree species used historically at Poplar Grove that today have disease issues include American elm (Dutch elm disease and elm yellowing), purple beech (beech bark disease), European mountain ash (anthracnose), ash (ash yellowing and the recent introduction of Emerald Ash Borer—see CSA Task 5), and hemlock (hemlock woolly adelgid, an insect that causes fatal damage). Trees that have ecological issues include box elder and Norway maple, which are considered invasive in many areas. Sugar maples are at the limits of their southern range and may be stressed in future years given recent warming trends; certain cultivars such as Green Mountain, however, are better able to withstand heat.

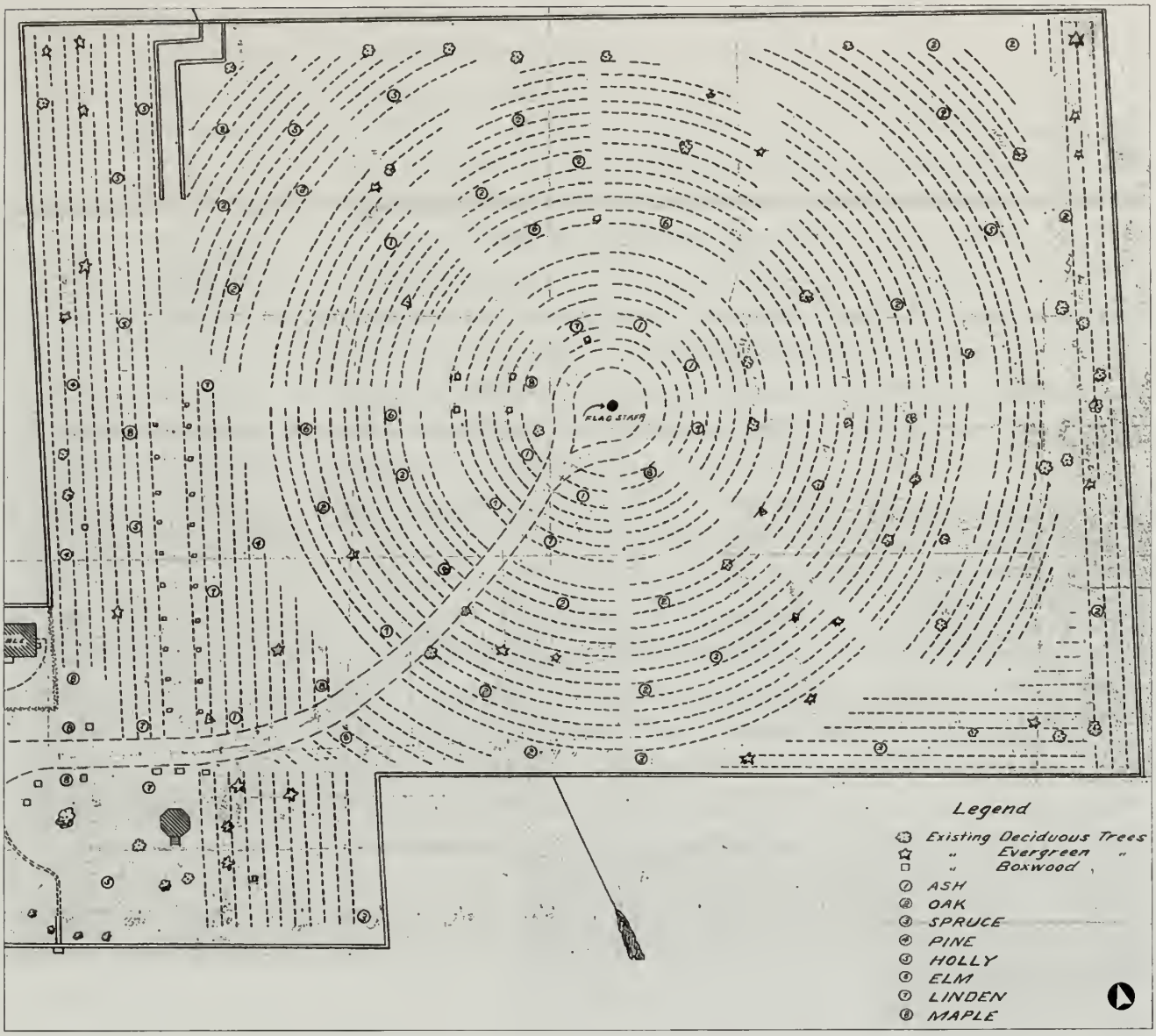


Figure 4.26: The 1931 War Department planting plan for Poplar Grove that serves as the basis for reestablishing the historic character of specimen trees and shrubs within the burial grounds in BG tasks 7 and 8. The ash specified was European mountain ash; oak, pin oak; pine, Austrian pine; spruce, Norway spruce; and maple, Norway maple. This plan does not identify the species of preexisting trees. (Detail of fig. 1.62, National Archives.)

Rooting habit is an important consideration within the burial grounds. Trees with shallow, lateral roots systems (typically lowland trees) may sap moisture from the lawn, heave grave markers, and make mowing difficult, but are unlikely to affect the underlying graves. Among the shallow-rooted trees found historically at Poplar Grove are Norway maple, Norway spruce, red maple, silver maple, and willows. In general, surface roots can be minimized by ensuring proper soils and moisture levels. Trees with deep, penetrating roots (taproot) are less likely to impact grave markers or mowing, but could penetrate graves. Those found historically at Poplar Grove include eastern red-cedar, loblolly pine, sugar maple, tulip-tree, false cypress, and willow oak. A third class of root system has wide spreading and deep laterals that may also pose disturbance issues if planted in inadequate soils. Those found historically at Poplar Grove include American elm, linden, green ash, horsechestnut, and pin oak.[43]

In addition to rooting habit, the density of the canopy is also an important consideration in lawn maintenance. Norway maple and big-leaf lindens tend to have dense canopies that create shade and drought conditions, which impede healthy lawn development. Dense canopies can also accelerate biological growths on the headstones.

All trees within the burial grounds should be pruned up at maturity, with lower branches not extending lower than ten feet to allow clear passage, allow for healthy turf, and not obstruct sight lines toward the central flagstaff. It may be appropriate to allow certain hollies, red-cedar, spruce, and magnolias in outlying parts of the burial grounds to have lower canopies for visual interest. Since mulch was not maintained around specimen trees during the historic period, the understory should be maintained as turf. Mulch is recommended for new plantings to avoid impacts from mowers and to improve growing conditions. As the trees become well established, the mulch should be replaced with turf.

Tree Preservation (Drawing 4.1).
Retain existing mature trees in good condition as shown on drawing 4.1. During the proposed installation of new grave markers (BG Task 2), aged and character-defining specimens such as the large willow oaks in Blocks IV, and VIII, and XVIII; the white-cedar in Block XI; the magnolia in Block X, and the scattered remaining loblolly pines, should be protected. Where there is a conflict with placement of the new markers, place the new headstones or blocks in front of or to the side of the tree. To avoid damage to the root systems, consider installing the headstones as flat markers. This is a practice used by the National Cemetery Administration at Fort Harrison National Cemetery near Richmond (fig. 4.27). When the tree is removed in the future, the markers can be returned to their intended location and position.

Figure 4.27: Alternative placement of headstones used to preserve and protect historic trees at Fort Harrison National Cemetery. It is recommended that a similar treatment be used when installing new markers at Poplar Grove if the historic marker placement conflicts with the location of mature, healthy specimen trees. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

Overall, the key to maintaining historic character of specimen trees in the long term is to implement a program of in-kind replacement. Trees should be allowed to mature naturally and be removed only when in a state of decline that threatens public safety or poses the potential for damage to adjoining historic features. While trees' natural growth can have a marked impact on landscape character, generally this dynamic is compatible because it was intentional and characterized the landscape historically. Large, aged trees are valuable because they are tangible markers of time passage and provide living connections to the past.

Tree Removals (Drawing 4.1)
Remove trees as indicated on drawing 4.1 because they block circulation patterns and site lines. These were all planted after 1933. Surrounding the central loop, the existing trees as a collection are too dense and have low branching that obstructs view of the flagstaff from the graves. Several cedars and a red maple and holly are recommended for removal for these reasons.

Many of the trees planted after 1934, including numerous red-cedar trees planted in 1937, are compatible with the historic character of the landscape and therefore may be retained. Once they require replacement, they can either be removed and not replaced, or replaced with the species used historically in that location (if any).

Tree Planting (Drawing 4.1)
Plant specimen trees as indicated, following the general intent of the 1931 War Department plan "Tree Planting Layout" with modifications to accommodate existing trees, better use open space between sections, screen modern development along the east and north sides, and diversify the species palette. Plant trees along the drive edges rather than within the drives to maintain the historic circulation patterns. Planting within the walks (area between the foot of the grave and the markers) and within the rows between markers (for smaller trees) is appropriate. Archeological testing may be necessary prior to tree planting to ascertain potential impacts to the graves.

Recommended species include those specified by the War Department on the 1931 plan, plus those that existed at the time or earlier in the cemetery's history, including false cypress, hickory, loblolly pine, southern magnolia, sweet-gum, silver maple, tulip-tree, willow oak, water oak, and red oak. From the 1931 proposed plantings, red horsechestnut is substituted for disease-prone European mountain ash; and red, silver, and sugar maples are substituted for invasive Norway maple. See Table 4.2 for additional information on tree species. For American elms, it is recommended that a viable cultivar be used, or that hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*), a member of the elm family with a similar vase-shaped habit, be substituted. American lindens and other dense canopy trees should be limbed high upon maturity to allow adequate sunlight for understory turf. The following is a list of the proposed tree plantings in the burial grounds (additional trees are recommended for the lodge grounds, service yard, cemetery inclosure, and approach; see CSA Task 5, CI Task 2, SY Task 3, and LG Task 4):

American elm (or hackberry)	5
American holly	5
Austrian pine	6

False Cypress	2
Hickory	1
American linden	6
Loblolly pine	35
Norway spruce	2
Pin oak	6
Red horsechestnut	4
Red oak	2
Silver maple	2
Southern magnolia	4
Sugar maple	3
Sweet-gum	2
Tulip-tree	4
Water oak	1
Willow oak	8
Total	98

BG Task 8: Plant Shrubs in Burial Grounds

- Vegetation: Specimen Shrubs (existing shrubs non-contributing)

Plant shrubs in the burial grounds to beautify the landscape and enhance historic character through removal and new plantings. This task is discussed first by general guidelines, then by shrub removals and plantings.

Guidelines

Shrubs should be planted and maintained to avoid obscuring grave markers and blocking drives. Because of their limited root systems, shrubs do not have the same potential as specimen trees to impact grave markers or underlying graves. Nonetheless, archeological testing may be required prior to planting.

At the end of the War Department period (1933), the burial grounds were characterized by many more shrubs than exist today. There was an allee or hedge of boxwood shrubs on the drive between Divisions D and E extending north from the rostrum, and boxwoods along the axial north-south and east-west drives near the flagstaff that were probably remnants of larger shrub borders. Most of these shrubs were clipped into low mounds. There were also scattered crape myrtles. There is no comprehensive documentation on shrubs that existed in 1933.

Shrub Removal (Drawing 4.1)

With a few exceptions, remove all existing shrubs within the burial grounds because of their poor condition or location blocking drives and sight lines.

These include two remnant boxwoods in the boxwood allee in Division D (to be replaced), and four crape myrtles in the drive east of the flagstaff in Division B. Retain the healthy boxwood on the south side of the main drive near the rostrum, and the crape myrtle in Division D, section d north of the main drive for their aged character (it is not known if they pre-date 1934).

Shrub Planting (Drawing 4.1)

Recommended shrub plantings consist of the following three shrub features. A list of proposed plant materials is in Table 4.2.

Plant boxwood shrubs along north-south and east-west axial drives: These recommended plantings reestablish the general arrangement of boxwoods shown on the War Department 1931 plan and extend these symmetrically to form a cross with the flagstaff at the center. Plant three boxwoods spaced approximately twenty-five feet apart on each side of the axial drives, beginning at the outer edge of second circular drive, for a total of twenty-four boxwoods. Clip these into low mounds, approximately three feet high, as shown in a 1939 photograph (fig. 4.28, see also fig. 1.48). Because there is no historic documentation for this exact planting, this is considered a compatible new addition that recalls the earlier plantings. The new plantings reinforce the center and the symmetry of the landscape by marking the filled-in drive north of the flagstaff. The shrubs will also help orient visitors to the layout of the cemetery.

Figure 4.28: A 1939 photograph showing low, clipped mounded boxwood shrubs along the east-west walk west of the flagstaff that date to the historic period. One of the historic iron tablets is visible at the right side of the photograph. (Detail of fig. 1.68, copyright Library of Virginia.)

Replant boxwood allee: Replant the boxwood allee (hedge) that extended along both sides of the drive between Divisions D and E. Plant twenty-five boxwood shrubs, twelve on the west side and thirteen on the east side of the drive. Space the shrubs approximately eighteen feet apart and align them with the spaces between the grave markers (to avoid obstruction). Clip the boxwoods into mounds, approximately three feet high as recommended for the east-west and north-south axial drives (see fig. 4.28). The function of this allee is not known for certain, but it may have served as a processional route from the lodge grounds to the flagstaff.

Plant crape myrtles along circular drive: There were six crape myrtles documented in 1931, but their locations are not known (these may be the deciduous shrubs

shown in fig. 4.28). The recommended plantings for seven new crape myrtles tie into the existing crape myrtle on the third circular drive in Division D north of the main drive. Prune the shrubs into a vase shape that does not obstruct adjoining grave markers. Because there is no historic documentation for this planting, this is intended as a compatible new addition.

BG Task 9: Reinstall Iron Tablets (Drawing 4.1)

- Small-Scale Features: Iron Tablets (in storage)

Reinstall the standard iron signs known as tablets that are presently in storage in the loft of the cemetery garage. While they have not been inventoried, it appears most of the signs exist. The complete set historically included one "General Orders No. 80" tablet (M on drawing 4.1) fronting the service yard; four "Act to Establish and Protect National Cemeteries" (N) tablets located in front of the service yard and in the burial grounds; one "Visitors Notice, Invitation to Register" (P) tablet near the lodge (should be reinstalled as part of a new information wayside, see LG Task 2); and ten four-line verses from "The Bivouac of the Dead" (O) scattered around the burial grounds.

Reinstall these tablets in their historic locations on new square posts painted white, approximately two to three feet off the ground (see fig 4.28). As specified in the 1931 National Cemetery Regulations, the tablets should be painted black with the borders and letters in aluminum paint.[44] If any of the tablets are missing or broken, they should be replicated. The original casting forms may still exist at the Army's Rock Island Arsenal in Rock Island, Illinois.

BG Task 10: Install Benches (Drawing 4.1)

- Small-Scale Features: Settees (non-existing historic feature)

Install fourteen benches along the drives to reintroduce this feature to the landscape and provide visitors with resting places. Place four benches symmetrically around the central loop drive; eight along the third outer loop drive; and two along the main entrance drive. There were nine settees in 1929, down from twenty in 1888, but their locations are not known. The preferred treatment is to fabricate a replica of the 1877 settees based on photographic record or on a surviving settee at another national cemetery, or plans if they can be located. If this is not feasible, install a contemporary bench that recalls the design of the historic settee using a metal frame and painted wood slats (fig. 4.29). Following the 1931 National Cemetery Regulations, paint the benches bronze green.[45]

Figure 4.29: A 1968 photograph showing a remaining c.1877 wood-slat and iron frame settee (left), and example of a contemporary bench with similar design. (Left: detail of fig. 1.73, Petersburg National Battlefield; right: item AL006, "Traditional Garden Bench," Benches.com, www.benches.com.)

TREATMENT PRIORITIES

The following table summarizes the recommended tasks for the rehabilitation of Poplar Grove National Cemetery, and provides a ranking of 1 through 3 to identify priorities. Overall, tasks with the highest priority reestablish character-defining landscape features to return a sense of honor and respect to the landscape, notably the grave markers, approach road allee, and specimen trees and shrubs. Tasks that enhance visitor use and interpretation, such as a new information wayside and reinstallation of the iron tablets, are also high priority.

TABLE 4.1: SUMMARY OF LANDSCAPE TREATMENT TASKS
POPLAR GROVE NATIONAL CEMETERY

TASK ID	TASK NAME	PRIORITY 1/HIGH 2/MED. 3/LOW	RELATED TASK
Cemetery Setting and Approach (CSA)			
CSA Task 1	Install New Entrance Signs	1	
CSA Task 2	Clear West Woods and Reestablish Approach View of Cemetery	1	CSA Task 5
CSA Task 3	Clear Triangular Woodlot and Screen Vaughan Road	1	CSA Task 5
CSA Task 4	Redesign Odom Cemetery Inclosure	3	CSA Task 5
CSA Task 5	Reestablish Approach Road Allee	1	CSA Tasks 2, 3, 4; BG Task 7
CSA Task 6	Resurface Approach Road	2	SY Task 1, BG Task 4

(continued)

CSA Task 7	Remove South Hedgerow	2	
CSA Task 8	Relocate Visitor Parking Lot	2	
CSA Task 9	Relocate Private Drive	3	
Cemetery Inclosure (CI)			
CI Task 1	Improve Drainage Through Inclosure Wall	1	BG Task 1
CI Task 2	Enhance North and East Woods	2	
CI Task 3	Maintain Mown Corridor Along Inclosure Wall	2	CI Task 2
Service Yard (SY)			
SY Task 1	Reconfigure Service Drive	1	CSA Task 6, BG Task 4
SY Task 2	Plant Service Yard Hedge	1	SY Task 1
SY Task 3	Plant Specimen Trees	2	SY Task 1, BG Task 7
SY Task 4	Return Garage to Historic Appearance	2	
Lodge Grounds (LG)			
LG Task 1	Construct New Walk to Public Restroom Building	1	LG Task 2
LG Task 2	Install New Cemetery Information Wayside	1	LG Task 1, BG Task 9
LG Task 3	Remove Privacy Fence and Plant Boxwood Hedge	3	
LG Task 4	Establish New Plantings in Lodge Grounds	1	BG Task 7, SY Task 3, CI Task 2, CSA Task 5
LG Task 5	Replant Maltese Cross Hedge	2	
LG Task 6	Return Public Restroom Building to Historic Appearance	3	
LG Task 7	Return Lodge to Historic Appearance	3	
LG Task 8	Return Historic Color Scheme to Rostrum	3	
Burial Grounds (BG)			
BG Task 1	Improve Cemetery Lawn	1	CI Task 1
BG Task 2	Install New Grave Markers	1	
BG Task 3	Redesign Grave Locator System	1	BG Task 2, LG Task 2
BG Task 4	Resurface Main Drive, Return Circular Alignment to Loop	1	BG Task 5, LG Task 2
BG Task 5	Install New Flagstaff and Enhance Central Circle	1	BG Tasks 4, 6
BG Task 6	Return Three Missing Gun Monuments	2	
BG Task 7	Reestablish Historic Character of Burial Grounds Trees	2	BG Task 2, LG Task 4, SY Task 3, CI Task 2, CSA Task 5
BG Task 8	Plant Shrubs in Burial Grounds	2	BG Task 7, LG Task 4
BG Task 9	Reinstall Iron Tablets	2	
BG Task 10	Install Benches	3	

TABLE 4.2: RECOMMENDED PLANT MATERIALS
POPLAR GROVE NATIONAL CEMETERY

RECOMMENDED SPECIES * ALTERNATES	COMMON NAME (DWG. 4.1 KEY)	HISTORIC PLANT MATERIAL AT POPLAR GROVE	NOTES
Trees			
Acer rubrum	Red maple (rm)	Same	Up to 100' tall, fast growing. Heavy surface rooting; should not be planted near headstones. Use cultivar with fuller crown and fewer tendencies toward branch dieback than species, such as "Autumn Flame".
Acer saccharinum	Silver maple (svm)	Same	Up to 100' tall, fast growing. Heavy surface rooting; should not be planted near headstones.
Acer saccharum	Sugar maple (sm)	Same. Use as substitute for Norway maple	Up to 100' tall, moderate growth rate. Use cultivar with better heat tolerance than species, such as "Green Mountain."
Aesculus x carmea	Red horsechestnut (hc)	Probably common horsechestnut, *Aesculus hippocastanum* European mountain ash, *Sorbus acuparia*	Up to 30' tall, *x carnea* smaller than common horsechestnut (up to 100' tall), historically limited to single specimen in lodge grounds (center of turn-around). *A. x carnea* is suitable as a replacement for European mountain ash, specified in the 1931 War Department plan, but a short-lived and diseased species.
Carya sp.	Hickory (hk)	Probably pignut hickory, *Carya glabra*	Up to 80' tall; existing specimen was planted after 1934.
Celtis occidentalis	Hackberry	Not applicable	Possible replacement for American elm; member of the elm family with similar vase-shape habit.
Chamaecyparis sp.	False cypress (fc)	Not determined; probably a variety of *C. lawsoniana* (Lawson Cypress)	Up to 100' tall, low branching, slow growing. Thriving single specimen in Division C, Section E.

Fraxinus americana * *Celtis occidentalis*	White ash (wa) * Hackberry	Either white or green ash (*F. pennsylvanica)*; planted in approach road allee	Up to 80' tall; select cultivars without tendency toward twigs and with vase-shape. Both green and white ash are susceptible to ash decline and ash yellowing; present threat of Emerald ash borer favors use of an alternate, such as hackberry.
Ilex opaca	American holly (h)	Same	Up to 50' tall, low branching. Several healthy mature specimens in cemetery.
Juniperus virginiana	Eastern red-cedar (rc)	Same. Native tree, originally transplanted from surrounding fields	Up to 40' tall, little canopy. Aside from initial planting by burial corps, there were few specimens during historic period; widely planted by NPS in 1937. Most in cemetery nearing end of lifespan.
Liriodendron tulipifera	Tulip-tree (yellow poplar) (tt)	Same. Originally transplanted from surrounding woods	Up to 100' tall, fast growing. Minimal surface roots. Most of the specimens were historically in the approach road allee.
Liquidambar styraciflua	Sweet-gum (sg)	Same	Up to 125' tall. One thriving specimen in cemetery.
Magnolia grandiflora	Southern magnolia (ma)	Same	Up to 35' tall, low branching; several thriving mature specimens.
Picea abies	Norway spruce (ns)	Same; cultivar not known	Up to 200' tall; some surface rooting and heavy canopy. Should not be planted adjacent to graves due to low, wide branching. Many cultivars; use one with a graceful, drooping habit for burial grounds; use narrow cultivar for specimens to either side of entrance gates. No specimens remain in cemetery; at southern end of range.
Pinus nigra	Austrian pine (ap)	Same	Up to 120'; high branching. No specimens remaining in cemetery; reason not known.
Pinus taeda	Loblolly pine (lp)	Same. Native variety, most from pre-existing second growth trees	Up to 100' tall, high branching; minimal surface roots. Dominant tree during historic period. Most specimens reaching end of life.

Prunus americana	American plum (pl)	Same	Up to 50' tall; native tree with profuse white flowers; not usually planted as an ornamental. For maintenance purposes, a sterile variety may be warranted. No longer existing in cemetery; historically planted in lodge grounds.
Pyrus sp.	Pear (pr)	Not known; most likely callery pear, *Pyrus comunis*	Up to 50' tall, common fruit tree with white flowers. Use variety/cultivar that is close in size to the American plum. For maintenance purposes, a sterile variety may be warranted. No longer existing in cemetery; historically planted in lodge grounds. Avoid contemporary ornamental cultivars, such as Bradford pear.
Quercus nigra	Water oak (wo)	Same	Up to 50' tall; good for wet areas; typically has surface roots. Relatively small and short-lived oak. No specimens remain in cemetery.
Quercus palustris	Pin oak (po)	Same	Up to 100' tall; not prone to surface roots. No specimens remain in cemetery; reason not known.
Quercus phellos	Willow oak (wio)	Same	Up to 100' tall, high canopy; limited surface roots, but massive trunk at maturity. Thriving specimens in cemetery.
Quercus rubra	Red oak (ro)	Probably introduced after 1934	Up to 100' tall, high canopy, relatively fast growing, native. Although not documented during the historic period, the existing red oak is thriving and has a comparable habit to the willow oak. It would be a good oak to retain in the cemetery's tree stock.
Tilia americana	American linden, basswood (ln)	Probably same; in approach road allee	Up to 100'; select variety that is resistant to suckering; prune canopy high to allow adequate sunlight for understory turf.
Tilia cordata	Little-leaf linden	*Tilia americana*, American	Up to 80' tall, moderate canopy height, some surface rooting. No

	(ln)	linden	lindens survive in cemetery. Little-leaf linden is preferred over American linden because the canopy is less dense and allows better lawn development underneath. Care must be taken to ensure young trees do not dry out.
Ulmus sp. * *Celtis occidentalis*	American elm (e) * Hackberry	*Ulmus Americana*	Up to 100' tall; was noted as a problem historically due to surface roots; most specimens removed during historic period. Plant only cultivar resistant to Dutch elm and elm yellowing disease (transgenic cultivar currently being tested; only cultivar resistant to both diseases). If no viable cultivar available, plant hackberry, which has a similar vase-shaped habit (in the elm family).
Shrubs & Vines			
Buxus sempervirens, 'Vardar Valley' or similar	Common boxwood, American boxwood (bx)	Probably common boxwood; (historic plants remain on site)	Most common shrub in cemetery during historic period. To be managed as shrubs clipped into mounds, approximately 3-4' high, 4-5' in diameter upon maturity. "Vardar Valley" is a dense, mound-forming variety with mid-to-dark green leaves.
Lagerstroemia indica	Crape myrtle (cm)	Same; color not known	Up to 20' tall; many hybrid cultivars. Existing crape myrtles are most likely post-1934 plantings.
Thuja orientalis (recently reclassified as *Platycladus orientalis*), 'Pyramidalis' or similar	Chinese arborvitae (ca)	Historic variety not known. Probably a dark green upright variety.	For use in service drive hedge. Many cultivars on the market; use one that is dark green (not yellow), 6-8' tall at maturity. Monitor for possible infestation of arborvitae leafminers (*Argyresthia sp.*), which will turn leaves brown at the end of a branchlet in early spring. Can be controlled by wasp parasites, or by application of pesticides, such as permethrin.

Bedding Plants			
Various	Flowering annuals	Not known.	Potential use of old-fashioned annuals with long bloom period, such as wax begonia, geranium, and marigold for proposed bed near the lodge and for flagstaff bed.
Paeonia officinalis	Common peony	Not known; probably common peony	May require staking; recommended for use in bed near the lodge.
Rosa spp.	Shrub rose	Not known.	Use low (2-3'), mounding rose, with extended bloom period; recommended for use in proposed bed near lodge and flagstaff bed.

Sources: L. H. Bailey, editor, *The Standard Cyclopedia of Horticulture* (1900, revised 1942).

Sean Hogan, consultant, *Flora: The Gardener's Bible* (2003).

National Park Service, 1941 "Poplar Grove Master Plan."

War Department, 1931 "Poplar Grove National Cemetery Tree Planting Layout."

Donald Wyman, *Wyman's Gardening Encyclopedia* (1986).

ENDNOTES

1 Robert R. Page, Cathy A. Gilbert, and Susan A. Dolan, *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1998), 81.

2 Such tasks are addressed in a separate cultural landscape document known in the NPS as a "Preservation Maintenance Plan." This plan is not included in the scope of this project.

3 The treatment workshop with staff from the Olmsted Center, SUNY ESF, National Park Service Northeast Region, and Petersburg National Battlefield was held on December 6, 2006. The park held civic engagements on the project on 28 September 2007 and 8 October 2008. Treatment concepts have been revised in keeping with the development of project plans and environmental impact statements.

4 *U.S. Statutes at Large*, volume XIV, 353, quoted in Herbert Olsen, "Poplar Grove National Cemetery History" (Unpublished National Park Service report, 31 May 1954), 9-10.

5 National Cemeteries Act of 1973, Pub. L. 93-43, Sec. 2(a), 18 June 1973. Poplar Grove is part of the historical system of national cemeteries, but legally not part of the current National Cemetery System.

6 2006 NPS Management Policies, Use of the Parks, section 8.6.10.1.

7 *Director's Order #61: National Cemetery Operations*, http://www.nps.gov/policy/DOrders/DOrder61.htm. These orders were revised and opened for comment through 15 January 2003. As of May 2009, the revision has not yet been finalized.

8 Veterans Administration, Department of Memorial Affairs, National Cemetery Administration, *Headstones and Markers* (Manual M40-3, 1 December 1982), chapters 4, 9; Jennifer Perunko, Historian, National Cemetery Administration, comments on draft cultural landscape report, 8 June 2009.

9 National Cemetery Administration, National Shrine Commitment, "Operational Standards and Measures," version 2.0 (October 2004), 4.

10 Operational Standards and Measures, 12, 23. The National Cemetery Administration provides additional landscape treatment guidelines through its Office of Construction Management within the National Cemetery Administration, available on its webpage at http://www.cem.va.gov/cem/ocm, "Site Elements / Features."

11 War Department, Office of the Quartermaster General, *National Cemetery Regulations* (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1931). 10.

12 National Park Service, "Petersburg National Battlefield Final General Management Plan/Abbreviated Final Environmental Impact Statement" (2004) (hereafter, "GMP"), 53, 55.

13 GMP, 52, 58.

14 *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* (1995), http://www.cr.nps.gov/local-law/arch_stnds_8_2.htm.

15 Primary Treatment Alternatives Considered But Not Recommended:

> *Preservation* is not recommended as the primary treatment for Poplar Grove National Cemetery because it would retain the existing appearance that is inconsistent with the historic character of the landscape and would perpetuate a perceived dishonor to the veterans buried therein.
>
> *Restoration* is not recommended as the primary treatment for Poplar Grove National Cemetery due to the lack of adequate documentation, particularly regarding the vegetation, the need to address contemporary park uses and visitor needs, and the existence of post-1934 graves that extend the period of significance under Criterion A to 2003.
>
> *Reconstruction* is not recommended as the primary treatment for Poplar Grove National Cemetery because the cemetery retains much of its historic fabric. *Reconstruction* as a primary treatment would theoretically involve rebuilding a vanished landscape.

16 NPS-28 Cultural Resource Management Guideline, Chapter 7: Management of Cultural Landscapes, http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/nps28/28chap7.htm.

17 A detailed description of the historic character of the landscape is found in chapter 3, Analysis and Evaluation.

18 Lawrence Bibbs, Manager and Program Analyst, Fort Harrison National Cemetery, conversation with author and Park Ranger Betsy Dinger, 7 June 2006; Operational Standards and Measures, 12, 23.

19 Bibbs.

20 Although Vaughan Road is part of the larger public approach to the cemetery, its treatment is beyond the scope of this CLR. The character of Vaughan Road from Flank Road (historic parkway) to the cemetery is part of the cemetery's larger setting. Increased development and substantial widening or increases in traffic volume could be detrimental to this setting.

21 The Odom tract, although not federally owned, is protected through its ownership by the National Park Foundation.

22 GMP, 52. The GMP states that this land acquisition is intended primarily to protect the Globe Tavern battlefield. Although the GMP identifies only approximately four of these acres (cemetery approach road and northwest field/R. Taylor farm) for protection of Poplar Grove National Cemetery, a far larger amount of acreage constitutes the cemetery's historic setting.

23 These include Valley Forge, New Harmony, and Princeton. For comparison of these elm varieties, see: http://www.elmpost.org/compare.htm. While resistant to Dutch elm disease, these elms may not be resistant to elm yellows, another lethal disease that attacks American elms. Tests are being conducted now at SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry on a transgenic American elm that is resistant to both Dutch elm disease and elm yellows (see http://www.esf.edu/ pubprog/elm/default.htm). The Asian varieties of elm, such as Siberian and Chinese elms, are generally not historically appropriate replacements for the American elm because of their markedly different form and growth habit.

24 Jill Pokorny and Wayne Sinclair, *How to Identify and Manage Ash Yellows in Forest Stands and Home Landscapes* (Washington, D.C.: USDA Forest Service, publication NA_FR-03-94, 1994). 2. Emerald ash borer was discovered in Virginia in summer 2008; see www.emeraldashborer.info.

25 An alternative to retaining the remaining allee trees was considered, but was rejected due to the condition of the trees and the need to reestablish uniformity to the replanted allee.

26 If there is insufficient space for a septic field in the entrance field or southeast field, an alternate location for the parking lot would be in the area presently occupied by the west woods, moving the lot north of its existing location.

27 A third drain opening in the south side of the wall within the lodge grounds/assembly area does not presently back up, but this may be due to the obstruction by the dirt walk of the swale that feeds into it from the lodge gutters. Removal of this dirt walk and restoration of the swale as proposed (see Lodge Grounds) may require improvement to this drainage opening.

28 *The Standard Cyclopedia of Horticulture*, s. V. "Thuja."

29 National Cemetery Regulations (1931), 30-31.

30 National Cemetery Regulations (1931), 30-31.

31 National Park Service, National Cemetery Regulations, 36 CFR 12, and Directors Order 61, cross reference to VA *Headstones and Markers,* manual M40-3 (1 December 1982), Section 9.01. Manual M40-3 is presently undergoing revision, and these provisions are subject to change. These are the criteria applicable to Poplar Grove; see manual for full list of replacement criteria, section 9.02.

32 *Headstones and Markers*, Figure 4.1.

33 National Cemetery Administration, "Headstones and Markers Pre World War I Era Headstones and Markers" webpage, http://www.cem.va.gov/cem/hm/hmcivil.asp, updated 6 June 2006.

34 Vicky Holly, National Cemetery Administration, e-mail to author, 4 December 2006. Ms. Holly directed further inquiry into the reproduction blocks to Gina White in the Program Support Unit, gina.white@va.gov.

35 Petersburg National Battlefield, "Park Review of Draft Cultural Landscape Treatment Plan", 30 July 2008, 4-5, referring to "Phase I Archeological Survey: Rehabilitate Poplar Grove National Cemetery Project" (Prepared for Petersburg National Battlefield by A.D. Marble & Company, December 2008).

36 *Headstones and Markers*, Chapter 7. Current National Cemetery regulations set forth specific policy on grave marker inscriptions, but these generally apply to current burials.

37 National Cemetery Regulations (1931), 23-24; *Headstones and Markers*, Chapter 4, section 11; Bob Kirby, Superintendent, Petersburg National Battlefield, e-mail to author, 21 April 2009; Meeting minutes, Petersburg National Battlefield, Virginia Department of Historic Resources, and National Cemetery Administration, 3 April 2009.

38 Perunko, 8 June 2009.

39 Although reflecting the historic development of the cemetery, the non-standard fabrication of these pre-1934 replacement markers, which lack the Civil War shield and have in several cases have poorly executed inscriptions, could be perceived as a dishonor.

40 Bob Kirby, Petersburg National Battlefield Superintendent, e-mail to author, 21 April 2009.

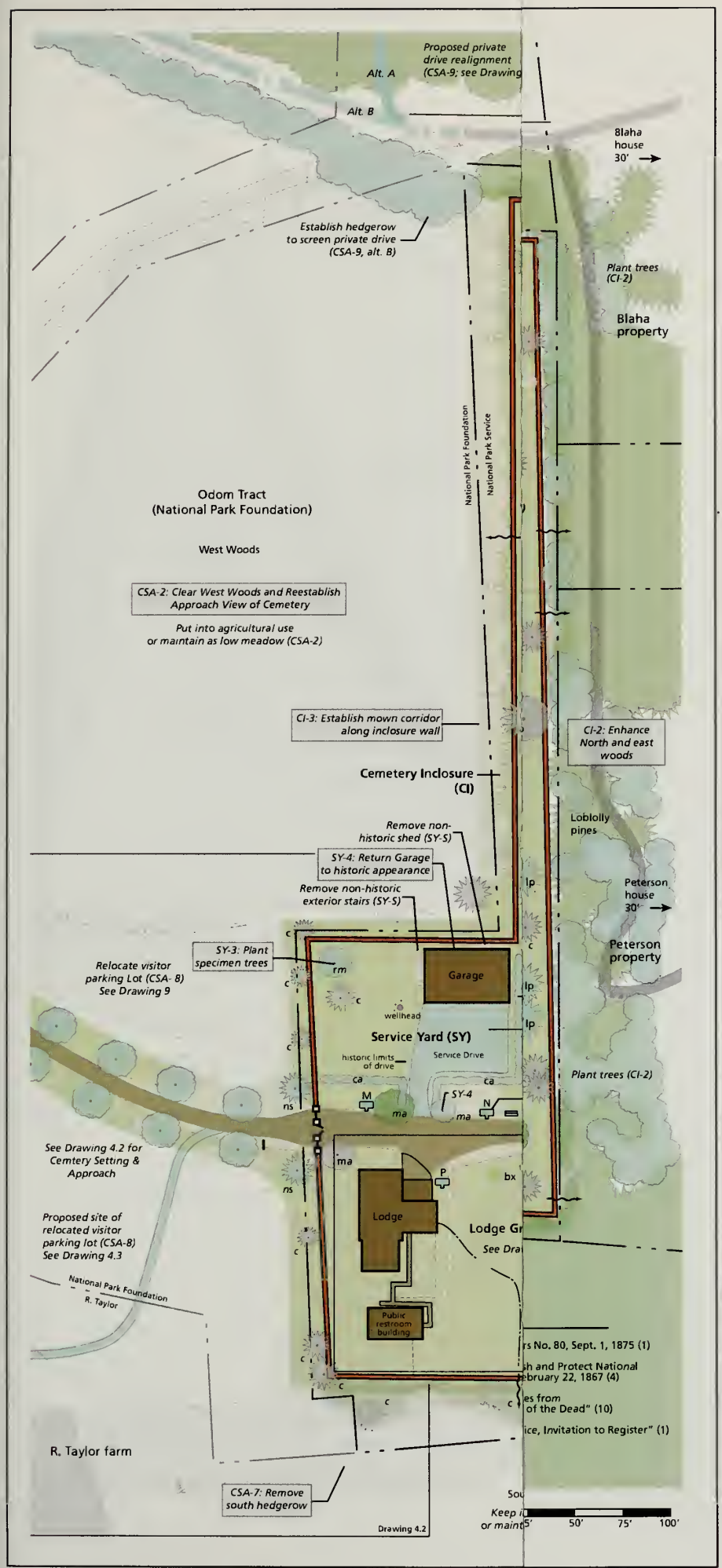
41 An alternative considered for this task but rejected was to inscribe the division letter and section number on the side of the grave markers at the corners of each section, on the narrow side of the upright headstone, or on the side of the block.

42 Teri Tillman, "Cemetery Roses Live On," online article of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, http://www.ggb.org/gar2/topics/plants/handbooks/roses/3b.html, accessed 5 February 2007.

43 Richard R. Fenska, *Tree Experts Manual* (New York: A. T. De La Mare Company, 1943), 15-16.

44 National Cemetery Regulations (1931), 31.

45 National Cemetery Regulations (1931), 31.



Cultural Landscape Report

Poplar Grove National Cemetery

Petersburg National Battlefield
Dinwiddie County, Virginia

Treatment

National Park Service
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
www.nps.gov/oclp

in partnership with
Department of Landscape Architecture
SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry

SOURCES

CLR Period, Existing Conditions, & Analysis Plans

DRAWN BY

John Auwaerter, Illustrator CS3, 2009

LEGEND

- Feature to remove
- Non-historic features to retain (light grayscale)
- New/reintroduced feature
- Property line
- Inclosure (perimeter) wall
- Grave markers (1 dash = approx. 1 marker)
- B-e Cemetery division-section
- Building
- Road
- Walk
- Gun monument
- Iron tablet with key reference
- Bench
- Fence
- Drive markers
- Conifer tree
- Deciduous tree/shrub
- Lawn
- Naturalized English ivy
- 10' contour
- Drainage through inclosure wall
- 8G-1 Task reference
- (8G-1) Subtask reference

NOTES

1. All features shown in approximate scale and location.
2. Treatment assume NPS acquiring interest in property presently under private ownership.

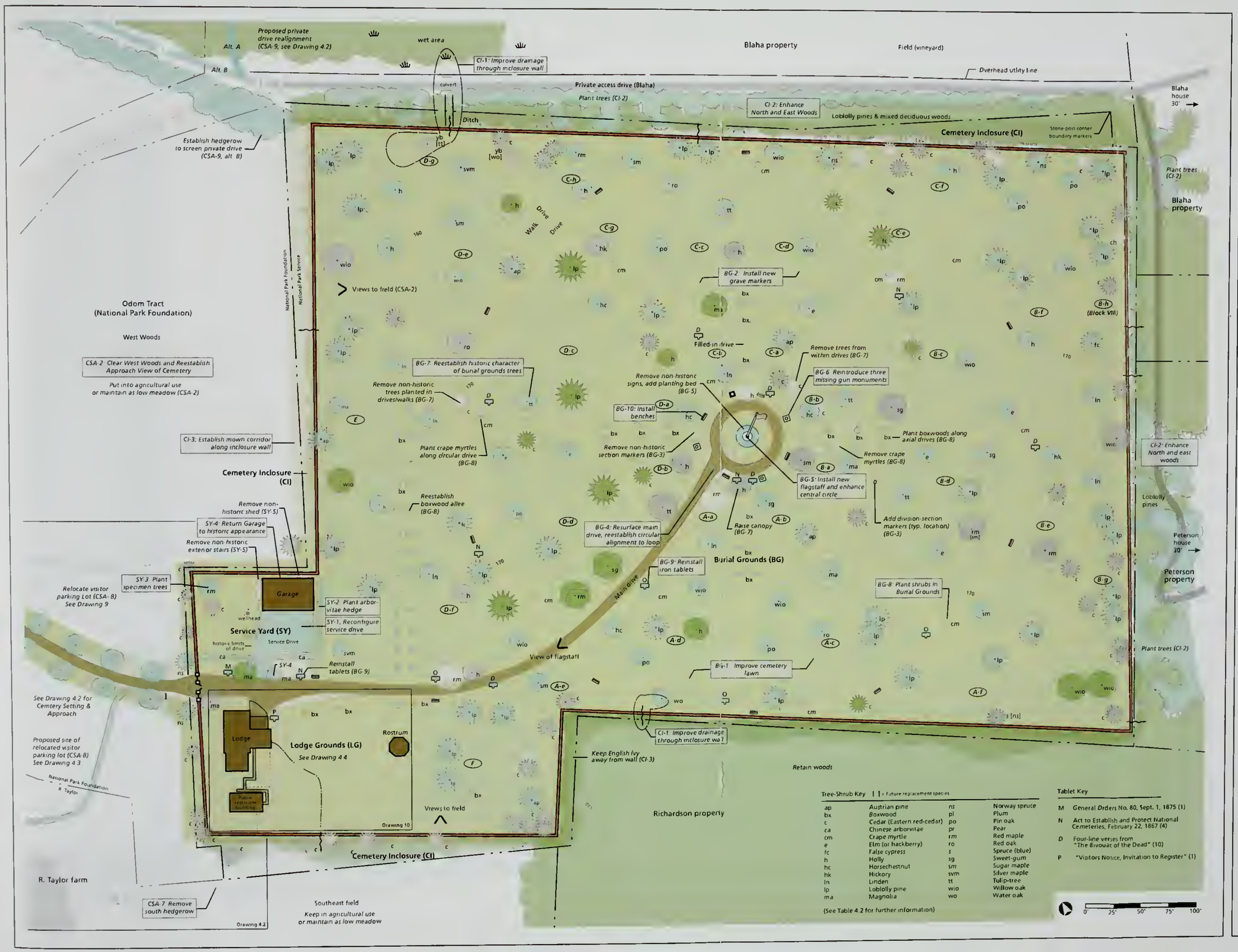
Drawing 4.1

Cultural Landscape Report

Poplar Grove National Cemetery

Petersburg National Battlefield
Dinwiddie County, Virginia

Treatment



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SOURCES

CLR Period, Existing Conditions, & Analysis Plans

DRAWN BY

John Auwaerter, Illustrator CS3, 2009

LEGEND

- Feature to remove
- Non-historic features to retain (light grayscale)
- New/reintroduced feature
- Property line
- Inclosure (perimeter) wall
- Grave markers (1 dash = approx. 1 marker)
- (B-e) Cemetery division-section
- Building
- Road
- Walk
- Gun monument
- Iron tablet with key reference
- Bench
- Fence
- Drive markers
- Conifer tree
- Deciduous tree/shrub
- Lawn
- Naturalized English ivy
- 10' contour
- Drainage through inclosure wall
- BG-1 Task reference
- (BG-1) Subtask reference

NOTES

1. All features shown in approximate scale and location.
2. Treatment assume NPS acquiring interest in property presently under private ownership.

Drawing 4.1

Relocate private mailboxes (CSA-9)

170

CSA-1: Install new entrance sign

Harrison property

Preserve field

CSA-9: Relocate private drive (alt. A)

Suburban housing, developable land

Vaughan Road

North hedgerow

Establish hedgerow to screen private drive (CSA-9, alt. B)

CSA-9: Relocate private drive (alt. B)

Blaha property

Remove triangular woodlot (CSA-3)

Northwest field

(R. Taylor Farm)

Preserve field

Retain portion of woodlot for screening (CSA-3)

CSA-1: Reestablish approach view of cemetery

Remove section of private drive (CSA-9)

CSA-3: Screen Vaughan Road (establish hedgerow)

Remove existing roadside trees (CSA-3, 5)

CSA-5: Replant approach road allee

Maintain allee understory as lawn (CSA-5)

Section A-A

Private drive

R. Taylor

Blaha

National Park Foundation

National Park Foundation

National Park Service

Odom Tract

(National Park Foundation)

Inclosure wall

Southwest field

(R. Taylor Farm)

Preserve field

West Woods

Remove west woods (LS-2)

CSA-6: Resurface approach road

Burial Grounds

See Drawing 4.1

Tree species for approach road allee:

American elm (*Ulmus americana**)
American linden (*Tilia americana*)
Hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*)
Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*)
Norway spruce (*Picea abies*) **
Tulip-tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*)

* Disease resistant cultivar
** To either side of entrance gates

Plant Norway spruce (CSA-5)

Service Yard

See Drawing 4.1

Section A-A

Entrance field

See Drawing 4.3

CSA-1: Install new entrance signs

Lodge Grounds

See Drawing 4.4

National Park Foundation

R. Taylor

Drawing 4.4

Inclosure wall

5' 4' 12' 4' 5'

allee shoulder pavement shoulder allee

See Drawing 4.3

0' 50' 100'

Cultural Landscape Report
Poplar Grove National Cemetery

Petersburg National Battlefield
Dinwiddie County, Virginia

Treatment
Cemetery Setting and Approach

National Park Service
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation

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SOURCES

1. CLR period plans
2. CLR Existing conditions plan

DRAWN BY

John Auwaerter
Illustrator CS 3, 2009

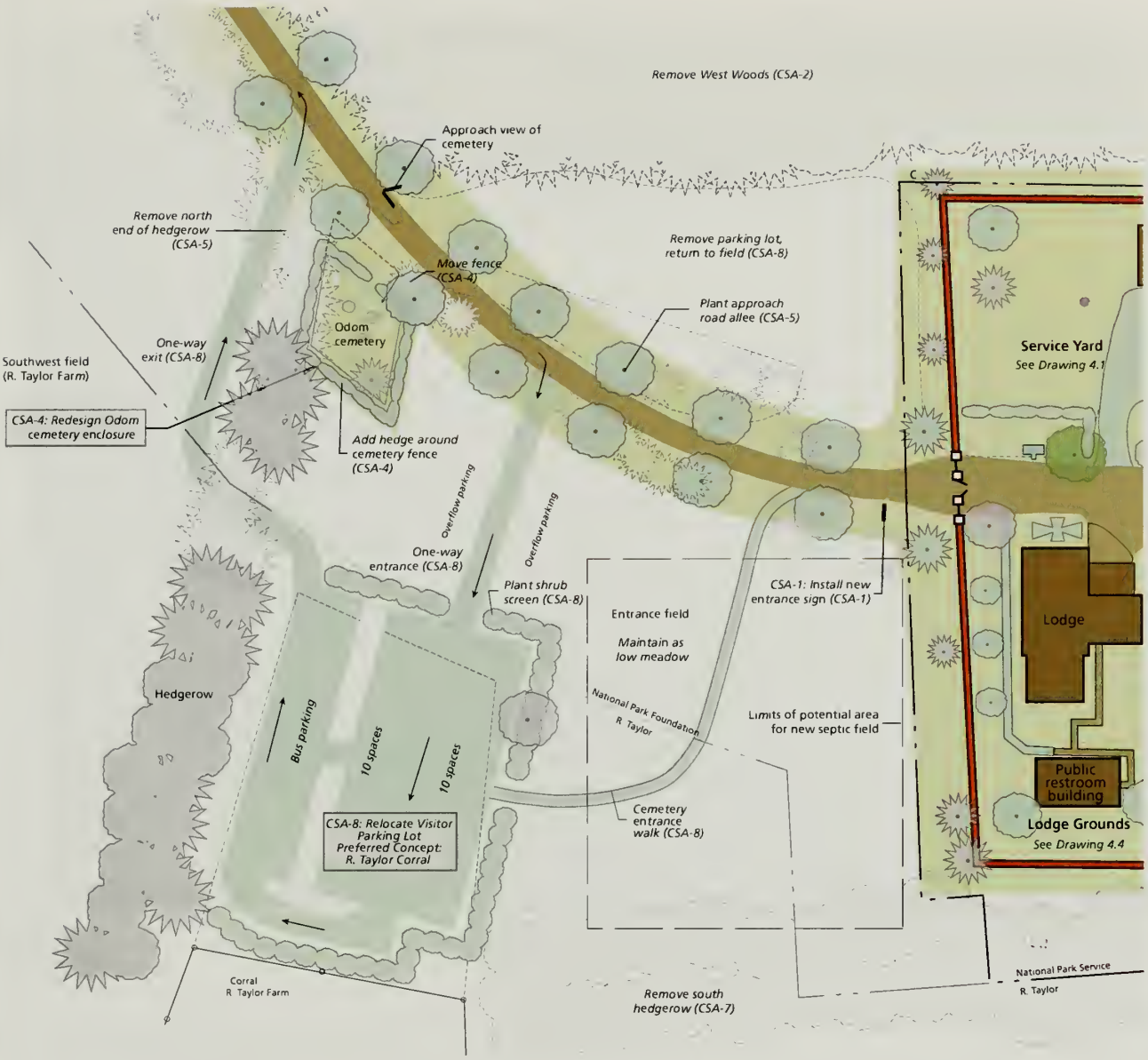
NOTES

1. All features shown in approximate scale and location.
2. Treatment assumes NPS acquiring interest in property presently under private ownership.

LEGEND

- Feature to remove
- Non-historic feature to retain
- New/reintroduced feature
- Property Line
- Grave markers
- Building
- Road
- Walk
- Fence
- Lawn
- Conifer tree/shrub
- Deciduous tree/shrub
- 10' contour
- CSA-1 Task reference
- (CSA-1) Subtask reference

Drawing 4.2



Cultural Landscape Report
Poplar Grove National Cemetery

Petersburg National Battlefield
Dinwiddie County, Virginia

Treatment
Entrance Area

National Park Service
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation

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SOURCES

1. CLR period plans
2. CLR Existing conditions plan

DRAWN BY

John Auwaerter
Illustrator CS 3, 2009

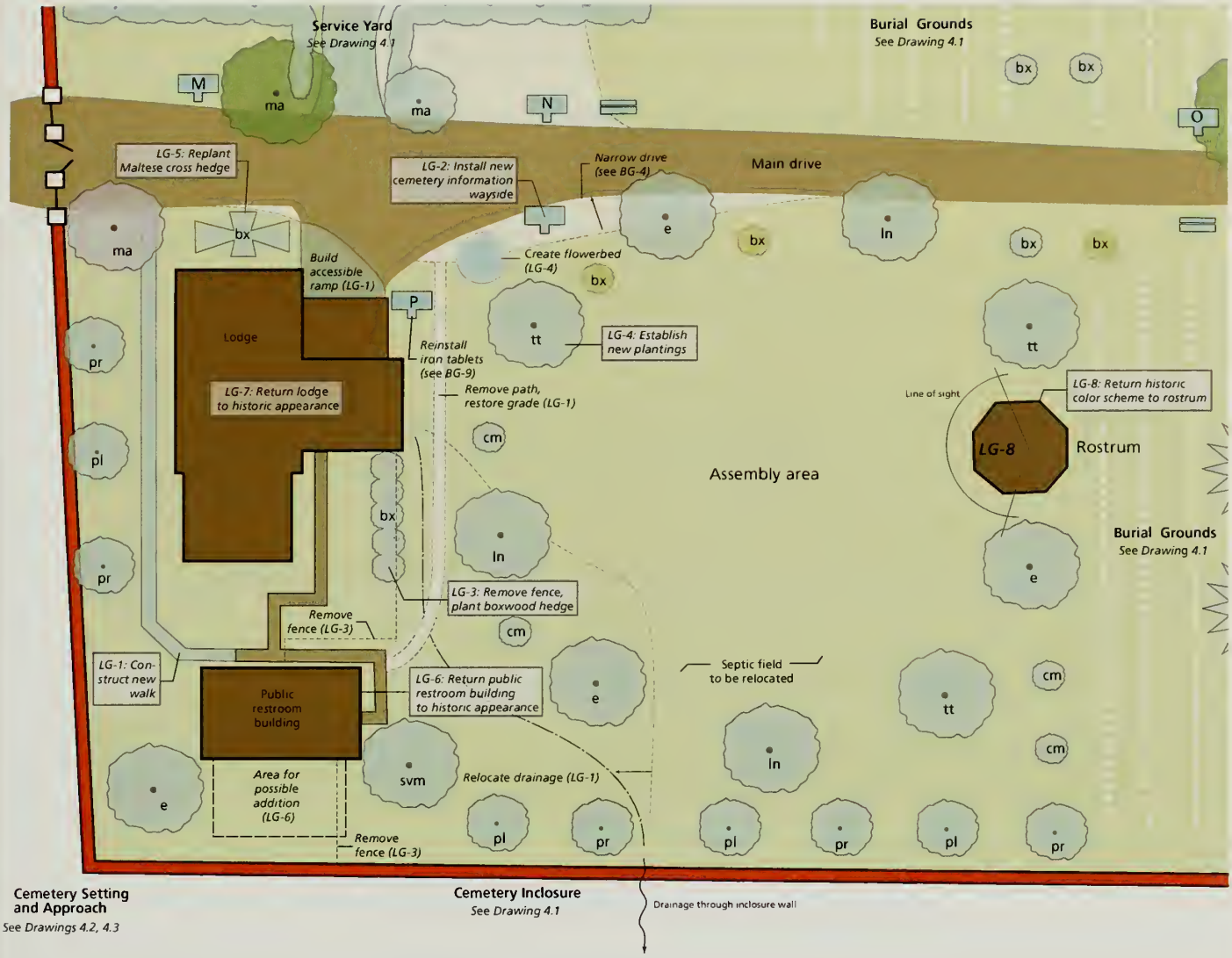
NOTES

1. All features shown in approximate scale and location.
2. Treatment assumes NPS acquiring interest in property presently under private ownership.

LEGEND

- Feature to remove
- Non-historic feature to retain
- New/reintroduced feature
- Property Line
- Grave markers
- Building
- Road
- Walk
- Fence
- Inclosure wall
- Conifer tree/shrub
- Deciduous tree/shrub
- 10' contour
- CSA-1 Task reference
- (CSA-1) Subtask reference

Drawing 4.3



Specimen Tree-Shrub Key

aa	American arborvitae
bx	Boxwood
cm	Crape myrtle
e	Elm (resistent cultivar or hackberry)
ln	Linden
ma	Magnolia (southern)
pr	Pear
pl	Plum (American)
svm	Silver maple
tt	Tulip-tree

(See Table 4.2 for further information)

0' 10' 20'

Cultural Landscape Report
Poplar Grove National Cemetery

Petersburg National Battlefield
Dinwiddie County, Virginia

Treatment
Lodge Grounds

National Park Service
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation

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SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry

SOURCES

1. CLR period plans
2. CLR Existing conditions plan

DRAWN BY

John Auwaerter
Illustrator CS 3, 2009

NOTES

1. All features shown in approximate scale and location.
2. See Drawings 7, 8, 9 for treatment of adjoining areas.

LEGEND

- Feature to remove
- Non-historic feature to retain
- New/reintroduced feature
- Property Line
- Grave markers
- Building
- Road
- Walk
- Fence
- Inclosure wall
- Conifer tree/shrub
- Deciduous tree/shrub
- 10' contour
- LG-1 Task reference key
- (LG-1) Subtask reference

Drawing 4.4

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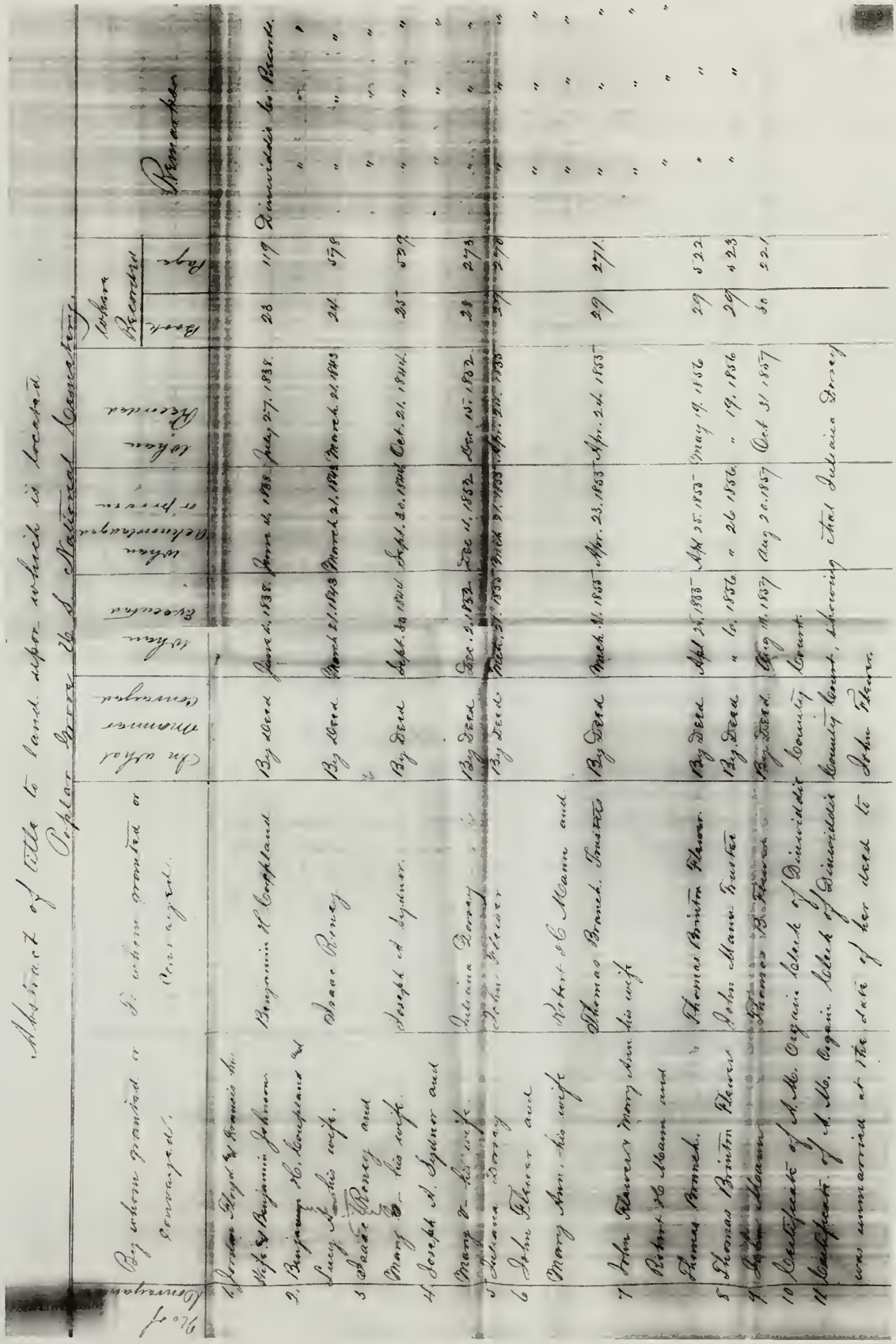
APPENDIX A

ABSTRACT OF TITLE FOR POPLAR GROVE NATIONAL CEMETERY, C.1866



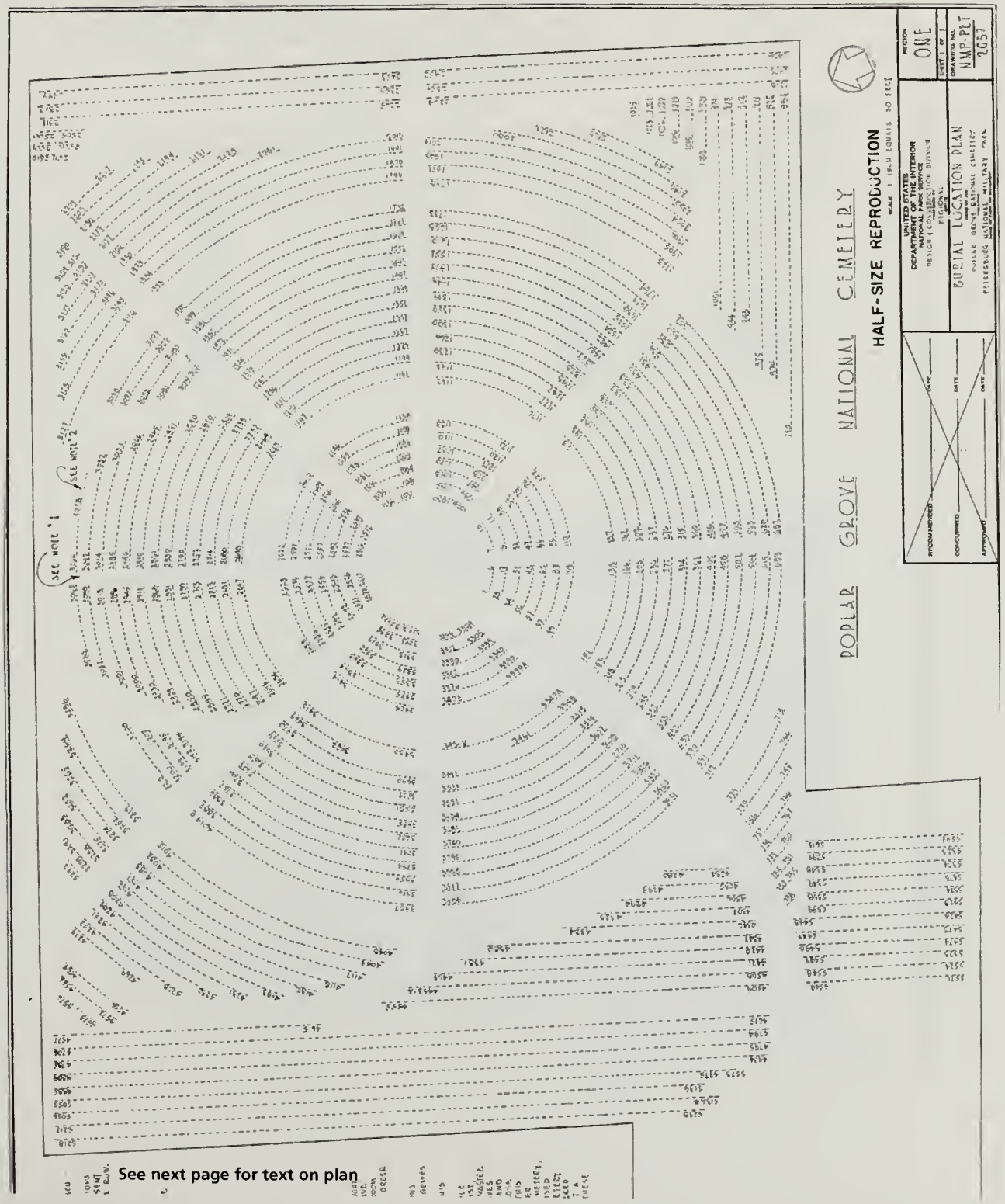
No. of Connection	By whom granted or conveyed	To whom granted or conveyed	In what manner conveyed	When Executed	When Delivered or Recorded	When Executed	Where Recorded Book	Where Recorded Page	Remarks
1	Jordan Floyd & Francis his wife								
	Nicholas & Benjamin Johnson	Benjamin N. Coopland	By Deed	June 6, 1838	June 11, 1838	July 27, 1838	28	119	Recorded in Records
2	Benjamin N. Coopland and Lucy Ann his wife	Moses Posey	By Deed	March 21, 1843	March 21, 1843	March 21, 1843	24	578	" " "
3	Moses Posey and Mary his wife	Joseph A. Spencer	By Deed	Sept. 30, 1844	Sept. 30, 1844	Oct. 21, 1844	25	579	" " "
4	Joseph A. Spencer and Mary his wife	Juliana Posey	By Deed	Dec. 2, 1852	Dec. 11, 1852	Dec. 15, 1852	28	273	" " "
5	Juliana Posey	John Flower	By Deed	Nov. 27, 1853	Nov. 27, 1853	Apr. 27, 1855	27	270	" " "
6	John Flower and Mary Ann his wife	Robert & Mann and Thomas Brand, Trustees	By Deed	March 11, 1853	March 11, 1853	Apr. 24, 1853	29	271	" " "
7	John Flower & Mary Ann his wife	Robert & Mann and Thomas Brand	By Deed	April 25, 1853	April 25, 1853	May 19, 1856	29	522	" " "
8	Thomas Brand	Thomas Brinton Flower	By Deed	" 6, 1856	" 26, 1856	" 19, 1856	29	523	" "
9	Thomas Brinton Flower	John Mann, Trustee	By Deed	Aug. 11, 1857	Aug. 20, 1857	Oct. 31, 1857	30	221	
10	Certificate of A. M. Organ, Clerk of Dinwiddie County Court,								
11	Certificate of A. M. Organ, Clerk of Dinwiddie County Court, showing that Julia Ann Posey was married at the date of her deed to John Flower.								

Source: Poplar Grove Records, RG 92, Records of the Quartermaster General, Entry 576, box 57, National Archives I, Washington, D.C. Note that property at the writing of the abstract remained under ownership of Thomas Britton Flower.

APPENDIX B

POPLAR GROVE BURIAL LOCATION PLAN, (C.1954)

Source: National Park Service, Technical Information Center, drawing NMP-PET 2037. (Plan does not show Division/Section or Block designations.)



NOTES

GENERAL:

THE NUMBERS INDICATE ONLY THE NUMBERS OF THE FIRST AND LAST GRAVES IN EACH ROW. NO ATTEMPT HAS BEEN MADE TO LIST EACH GRAVE SEPARATELY BUT EACH GRAVE HAS BEEN CHECKED INDIVIDUALLY TO INSURE THAT THERE ARE NO OMISSIONS IN ANY ROW EXCEPT AS NOTED. THE DOTS ON THIS MAP DO NOT EACH REPRESENT A GRAVE SINCE FOR THE MOST PART, THERE ARE NOT ENOUGH OF THEM IN A ROW.

THE AVERAGE DISTANCE BETWEEN ROWS IS 8 FEET.

THE AVERAGE DISTANCE BETWEEN HEADSTONES IS 4 FEET 6 INCHES

NOTE # 1

THIS WALK HAS BEEN USED FOR BURIALS AND IS COMPLETELY FILLED IN. BEGINNING AT THE FLAGPOLE AND PROCEEDING TOWARD THE NORTH WALL OF THE CEMETERY THEY ARE AS FOLLOWS:

BETWEEN GRAVES NO.	ADDED GRAVE	BETWEEN GRAVES NO.	ADDED GRAVE
2516 - 2517	2516 A	2752 - 2753	5589
2526 - 2527	2526 A	2789 - 2790	5590
2542 - 2543	2543 A	2830 - 2831	5591
2556 - 2557	2556 A	2868 - 2869	5592
2576 - 2577	2577 A	2910 - 2911	5593
2596 - 2597	2596 A	2945 - 2946	5594
2622 - 2623	2622 A	2985 - 2986	5595
2647 - 2648	5586	3014 - 3014	5596
2680 - 2681	5587	3047 - 3048	5597
2715 - 2716	5588	3065 - 3066	5598

NOTE # 2

THERE ARE ADDITIONAL GRAVES IN THE ROW BEARING THE NUMBERS, FROM LEFT TO RIGHT 5580, 5582, 5583, 5584, 5585. GRAVE NO. 5581 IS MISSING; THIS WAS THE GRAVE OF SUPT. MILES CHILD, WHO WAS DISINTERRED IN 1900. THERE IS NOT ENOUGH ROOM BETWEEN GRAVES 5580 AND 5582 TO REUSE THE NUMBER 5581 IN ITS PROPER ORDER.

NOTE # 3 OMISSIONS

GRAVES 3191 AND 3293 DO NOT APPEAR ON THE MAP; THE BURIAL REGISTER SHOWS THAT THESE NUMBERS WERE SKIPPED OVER, PROBABLY INADVERTENTLY, AND NO GRAVES BEARING THESE NUMBERS EXIST.

GRAVE NO. 789 HAS NOT BEEN FOUND AS YET. THE BURIAL REGISTER INDICATES THAT THIS GRAVE ACTUALLY EXISTS SOMEWHERE IN THE VICINITY OF GRAVE NO. 765.

GRAVES NUMBERED 5572-5577 INCLUSIVE AND 5579 HAVE NOT BEEN FOUND. WHILE THE BURIAL REGISTER WOULD SEEM TO INDICATE THAT THESE GRAVES SHOULD EXIST, CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE CEMETERY SUPERINTENDENT AND THE QUARTERMASTER OF THE WASHINGTON D.C. DEPOT IN 1911 INDICATES OTHERWISE. THESE GRAVES COULD NOT BE FOUND IN 1911 WHEN THE HEADSTONES WERE STILL UPRIGHT AND CONSEQUENTLY IT MUST BE CONCLUDED THAT THEY DID NOT EXIST. A CLOSE EXAMINATION OF THE BURIAL REGISTER PROVIDES A POSSIBLE ANSWER TO THIS MYSTERY. GRAVE NO 5571 DOES NOT EXIST ACCORDING TO THE BURIAL REGISTER AND YET A HEADSTONE BEARING THIS NUMBER IS TO BE FOUND IN THE CEMETERY, GRAVE NO. 5571 IS ALSO THE FIRST NUMBER WHICH SHOULD HAVE BEEN USED FOR THE REMAINS OF THE SEVEN UNKNOWN SOLDIERS BROUGHT TO THE CEMETERY FROM LYNCHBURG IN 1850 AND SUPPOSEDLY INTERRED IN GRAVES NUMBERED 5572-5577 AND 5579. IN VIEW OF THESE FACTS IT IS CONTENDED THAT A MISTAKE HAS BEEN MADE IN THE BURIAL RECORDS; THAT THE REMAINS OF THESE SEVEN SOLDIERS WERE GIVEN A MASS BURIAL IN GRAVE NO. 5571; AND THAT GRAVES NUMBERED 5572-5577 AND 5579 DO NOT AND NEVER DID EXIST.

APPENDIX C

POST-1869 BURIALS AT POPLAR GROVE NATIONAL CEMETERY

The following is a list by year of post-1869 interments at Poplar Grove for veterans of the Civil War and subsequent wars (primarily veterans who did not die in combat). This list does not show approximately twenty reinterments of Civil War remains made after 1869, the last of which occurred in 2003. (Source: Poplar Grove National Cemetery, digital burial record, c.2005.)

Year of Burial	# Graves	Cemetery Grave Plot Number
1896	1	5588
1897	2	5584, 5585
1914	1	5589
1915	1	5591
1916 (wife 1938)	1 (1)	5592
1918	7	5593 to 5598, 3447A
1919	2	3390A, 5600
1920	1	5601
1924	2	4463A, 5602
1928	1	5603, 2622A
1929	2	2577A, 5604
1932	1	2556A
1934	1	2543A
1935	1	5605
1938	3	2526A, 3398A, 5592
1939	3	3308A, 5606, 5607
1940	5	3902A, 5608-5611
1941	1	5612
1942	1	5613
1944	1	3754A
1946	1	3309A
1948	2	3546A, 2646A
1950	4	1458A, 3725A, 3842A, 3843A
1951	4	1082A, 1153A, 1154A, 5136A
1953	4	1297A, 1459A, 1594A, 1684A
1954	2	2799A, 3422A
1955	1	2070A
1956	5	495A, 1888A, 3370A, 3900A, 4002A
1957	1	3430A

APPENDIX D

CHRONOLOGY OF GOVERNMENT FURNISHED GRAVE MARKERS

Sources: U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Burial and Memorials Website and field examination by author at Poplar Grove National Cemetery.

1861 *General Orders #75* directs the Quartermaster General to provide headboards at each grave, using a wooden board with a rounded top and bearing information that had become the standard prior to the war.

1867 *An Act to Establish and Protect National Cemeteries*, February 22, 1867, directs that each grave in national cemeteries be marked by a small headstone or block.

1873 Secretary of War William W. Belknap adopts the first design for stone grave markers in the national cemeteries. These included tablet headstones at known graves, and blocks (square posts) at unknown graves. Headstone specifications included polished marble or durable stone with a curved top, four inches thick, ten inches wide, and thirty-six inches tall, installed at a height of twelve inches above grade. Inscriptions included the grave number and uppercase font indicating rank, name, and state. Soon after the original specifications were issued, a recessed six-point shield was added to the headstone design. The blocks were specified as marble or durable stone, six inches square and thirty inches long, installed at four inches above grade; the top and sides were polished and the grave number was inscribed on the top, along with the number of remains if more than one. The stones were inscribed using the sand-blast method.

1903 The War Department revises the recessed-shield headstone specifications to provide greater durability. This second generation was similar in appearance to the first generation recessed-shield headstones, but was larger at twelve inches wide and eighteen inches above grade (thirty-nine inches overall); the thickness remained at 4 inches. The use of blocks for marking unknown graves was discontinued and replaced with the same headstone for known graves. The stones were inscribed with tools rather than sand blasting. The earlier headstones may have been raised around this time to 18 inches above grade, and the blocks, 6 inches. In subsequent years, the second-generation recessed-shield headstones were produced in two variants with differing uppercase fonts (identified by Petersburg National Battlefield as styles A and B).

1922 The War Department authorizes the General headstone for marking graves of World War I veterans. The new specifications were for an upright white marble headstone with a rounded top measuring thirteen inches wide, four inches thick, and forty-two inches long installed approximately twenty-four inches above grade. The recessed inscription included name, rank, regiment, division, date of death, state, and an

emblem of belief (limited to a Latin cross or Jewish star until the late 1940s), without a recessed shield. (The General headstone remains the standard national cemetery marker to the present.)

1936 In response to burials at private lawn-style cemeteries where upright headstones were not allowed, the War Department introduces specifications for a white marble ledger stone known as a government flat marker. This marker was set flush in the ground and measured twenty-four inches long, twelve inches wide, and four inches thick with a recessed inscription matching that of the General headstone. Flat markers were also used at some national cemeteries.

1939 The War Department introduces use of granite for flat markers.

1940 The War Department introduces bronze flat markers for the graves of Medal of Honor recipients.

1973 The War Department redesigns the style of the bronze flat marker.

2005 Around this time, the Department of Veterans Affairs reintroduces production of the recessed-shield headstones to mark the graves of Civil War Union and Spanish-American War dead. The specifications were not an exact replica, and allowed for added inscriptions such as date of death.

APPENDIX E

STANDARD FEATURES OF CIVIL WAR-ERA NATIONAL CEMETERIES

Sources: Quartermaster General, *Regulations for the Government of National Cemeteries* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1911 and 1913), and National Cemetery quarterly report forms (1913-1937).

Approach Road	The road leading to the main cemetery entrance (also called "approach roadway").
Bronze Shield	The bronze plaque affixed to one of the gun monuments (cannon) showing date of cemetery establishment and burial record tally.
Burial Record	The official record of all burials in the cemetery; following a running numbering system based on order of burial recording the name, rank, and service.
Block	A low, square post used to mark the graves of unknown soldiers of the Civil War; marble.
Division	The major organization of the graves; subdivided into sections.
Drives	The primary internal circulation features of the cemetery intended for vehicles.
Flagstaff	The flagpole, usually at the center of the cemetery.
Flagstaff Mound	The raised ground from which the flagstaff rises.
Gov't. Flat Marker	A ledger-style grave marker issued by the federal government beginning in 1936 to mark veteran graves.
Gov't Headstone	An upright slab grave marker issued by the federal government, first specified in 1873 for Civil War veterans.
Grave Mound	The mound of earth placed upon a newly dug grave, intended to serve as fill as the grave sank due to decomposition.
Gun Monument	Upright cannon, typically placed near the flagstaff four at larger cemeteries, one at smaller cemeteries; usually ornamented by a pile of shot and a cannonball finial.
Gutter	An earthen or brick-lined drainage swale along drives and walks.
Headboard	A temporary grave marker made of painted wood, height of eighteen inches above grade; used by the federal government to mark Civil War graves prior

	to 1873; subsequently also erected immediately after interment if a headstone was not available.
Inclosure	The perimeter area of a national cemetery, usually, encompassing a stone or brick wall.
Inclosure Wall	The perimeter wall enclosing the burial grounds; usually stone or brick.
Lodge	The residence of the cemetery superintendent.
Monument	A grave marker or other commemorative feature.
Non-Gov't. Headstone	A headstone not furnished by the federal government (also referred to as private headstones or markers).
Outbuilding	The cemetery utility building; also known as the stable-toolshed or garage.
Rostrum	A bandstand or structure used for addresses.
Sections	Subdivisions within a Division of a cemetery.
Settees	Benches.
Shot	Cannonballs in pyramidal form adjoining the gun monuments.
Tablets	Rectangular iron placards with raised text, mounted on low poles; also used to refer to Gettysburg Address plaque affixed to Lodges.
Walks	Secondary internal circulation for pedestrians, usually between grave rows.

Other Cemetery Terminology

Footstone	A grave marker at the foot of a grave.
Grave Marker	A term for a monument used to mark a grave.
Gravestone	A general term for a headstone, footstone, or other grave marker made of stone.
Headstone	A grave marker at the head of the grave.
Ledger Stone	A grave marker laid flush with the ground.
Tablet	A slab-type upright headstone (term also used for iron signs in national cemeteries).

APPENDIX F

SAMPLE QUARTERLY REPORT FOR POPLAR GROVE NATIONAL CEMETERY

Source: Poplar Grove Records, National Archives

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Q. M. C. Form No. 419.
Authorized April 23, 1913.

QUARTERLY REPORT

POPLAR GROVE

NATIONAL CEMETERY

Quarter ended Sept 30th, 1925

INTERMENTS.

Grave Sites . 106	KNOWN.	UNKNOWN.
Previously reported	2159	4070
During quarter		
Total	2159	4070
Disinterments during quarter		
Total number of interments to date	6229	

This form will be made out in duplicate at the close of each quarter, one copy to be retained for file at the cemetery and one copy to be forwarded, without letter of transmittal, to the officer in charge of the cemetery.

Though this report is made quarterly, the cemetery will be maintained in good condition at all times and not neglected during any period. Superintendents will make frequent inspections of the entire cemetery, including roads, walks, grounds, approach roadway, etc., and will be held responsible for their condition and for failure to report matters requiring attention.

Interments and disinterments will be reported monthly on a separate form provided therefor.

The officer in charge of the cemetery, after examining this report, will at once forward it to the Quartermaster General, taking up directly with the superintendent any matters requiring attention. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 3—2766

DUPLICATED AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Quarterly Report of the POPLAR GROVE, Va. National Cemetery for the period ended September 30th, 19 25.

LODGE.—Is condition good? ..... Fair? ....yes..... Poor? .....

Are repairs needed for brickwork? ....no..... Woodwork? ...yes..... Roof? ...no.....

Tinwork? ....no..... Plumbing? ..... Plastering? ...yes.... Papering? ..yes....

Painting? .....no..... Other work? ..... If so, report full details by letter to the officer in charge, giving estimate of cost.

OUTHOUSES.—Is condition good? .....yes..... Fair? ..... Poor? .....

Are repairs needed for brickwork? ..~~xxx~~ no Woodwork? ...no..... Roof? ..no.....

Tinwork? ....no.... Plumbing? ..... Painting? ...no... Other work? ..no.....

If so, report full details by letter to the officer in charge, giving estimate of cost.

INCLOSURE.—Is condition good? .....yes..... Fair? ..... Poor? .....

Are repairs needed for repointing? ..... Painting? ....no.. Other repairs? ....no....

If so, report full details by letter to the officer in charge, giving estimate of cost.

FLAGSTAFF.—Is condition good? .....yes..... Fair? ..... Poor? .....

Are repairs needed for painting? ....no..... Tightening guy wires? ....no..... Renewing wooden braces? .....no..... If so, report full details by letter to the officer in charge, giving estimate of cost.

GUN MONUMENTS.—Do they need painting? .....no...

DRIVES AND WALKS.—Condition good? ....yes..... Fair? ..... Poor? .....

Are repairs needed to drives and walks, other than those in grass, for grading? ...no.....

Resurfacing? .....no..... If so, report full details by letter to the officer in charge, giving estimate of cost.

Are they free from grass, weeds, and other débris and properly outlined? ...yes....

DRAINAGE.—Is condition good? ..... Fair? .....yes..... Poor? .....

Are any repairs needed? .....no.... Are any new drains needed? ...no..... If so, report full details by letter to the officer in charge, giving estimate of cost.

Are drains, culverts, manholes, catch basins, etc., free from leaves and other obstructions, and have they been kept so during the quarter? .....yes.....

3-3754

WATER SUPPLY.—Do spigots, street washers, hose, pumps, cisterns, etc., need repairs or replacing yes, Wellhouse If so, report full details by letter to the officer in charge, giving estimate of cost. Is the quantity of water sufficient for domestic and irrigation purposes? Domestic What is the quality? Excellent

TREES, SHRUBS, AND LAWNS.—Are trees and shrubs free from dead limbs and snags? No Are they infected with insects? no Is mistletoe or poison ivy growing upon them? ..... Are there any dead ones to be removed? no Does any portion of lawns need seeding, sodding, or treatment with manure? no Are there any sunken graves? no

ROSTRUM.—If any, is condition good? Yes Fair? ..... Poor? .....

Are repairs needed for painting? no Brickwork? no Woodwork? .....

Other work? no Are vines or shrubs growing around walls or on columns? Ivy

Are they neatly trimmed? yes

LAWN MOWERS, VEHICLES, AND IMPLEMENTS.—Are they properly cleaned and kept under cover when not in use? yes Number of hand mowers? Three Horse mowers? one Number and kind of vehicles? 1 Wagon, 1 Hand Cart, 2 Wheel-barrow.

Are any repairs needed or new ones required? ..... If so, report full details by letter to the officer in charge.

FUEL.—Kind? Wood & Coal Quality? Good

ANIMALS.—Number? One Kind? Horse

State condition and whether adapted to the work required. Good, Excellent

EMPLOYEES.—Number and pay of permanent employees during the quarter? .....

Number and pay of day men employed during the quarter? One man, 49 days @ $2.25, $110.25. One man 32½ days @ $2.25, $73.13. One man 2 days @ $2.25 $4.50. Total $187.88

Are any of the employees minors? Yes Are any related to you? Yes If so, give name, age, and degree of relationship S. V. Tallman, 18 years, son.

5-8756

RECORDS.—Is the letters-received book posted and indexed to date? ....Yes.... Is the letters-sent book posted and indexed to date? ..yes..... Have you a book provided in which to keep a record of expenditures, and is it posted to date? ....yes..... Have all official communications received to date been properly filed? ..yes..... Are all interments to date recorded in the burial register? ...yes..... Have you a register for visitors, and are they given an opportunity to sign? ...yes.....

HEADSTONES.—Are there any broken headstones? ....no..... If so, submit separate list, giving full name, rank, service, and grave number. State approximate number cleaned during quarter ....none.... Number which require cleaning ....-----.... Aligning ....-----.... Raising ....-----.... Lowering ....-----....

IMPROVEMENTS.—State briefly what construction or repair work has been done during the quarter. Resurfaced, approach roadway, Driveway inside of the cemetery, up to and around the flag staff, approximate distance 500 yards, ¾in. gravel being used. Topped Tulip Poplar tree 300 ft. from main gate on approach roadway.

What improvements or repairs are now in progress? ..General care of Cemetery.....

.....

.....

APPROACH ROADWAY.—Is condition good? ....Yes.... Fair? ..... Poor? .....

Are repairs needed for grading or resurfacing portion lying without corporate limits of the city? ...no..... If so, report full details by letter to the officer in charge.

INSPECTIONS.—How many inspections of the entire cemetery and of the approach roadway have you made during the quarter? ...Twice a week.....

.....

I certify that the foregoing data is correct and was obtained by personal inspection of the cemetery.

John F. Tallman.....

JOHN F. TALLMAN, *Superintendent.*

Post-office address: Petersburg, Va. R.F. D. #1.....

APPENDIX G

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF PLANTINGS AT POPLAR GROVE NATIONAL CEMETERY

Notes: Compiled from cemetery records.
Plantings are listed by names used in cemetery records.
List includes plantings within the cemetery and along the approach road.
Plantings listed in italics are those that already existed in the cemetery by the listed date.
Number of plants, if known, indicated in parentheses.
Condition, location, and other information noted in brackets

1868

Loblolly pine (approx. 180) [Retained existing second-growth forest trees]
Cedars [Probably Eastern red-cedar]
Poplar [Probably white poplar]
Weeping willow

1869

Cedars (approx. 1,000) [Probably Eastern red-cedar]
Flower plants (approx. 250) [Annuals]
Shrubs (approx. 50) [Species not indicated]
Weeping willow (50) [From cuttings]

1870

Flower plants (380) [Mostly annuals]
Roses (50 bushes) [Scattered around the cemetery]

1871

Annual flowers
Ornamental trees and shrubs (approx. 475)
Second-growth pine trees (approx. 150) [Loblolly pine]
Ash (5)
Beech, purple (5)
Boxwood (100) [For hedges]
Cedar (7) [Probably arborvitae]
Hornbeam, English (12)
Horsechestnut (16)
Fir, balsam (7)
Kentucky coffee tree (4)
Larch, American (6)
Linden (6)
Magnolia (12) [Variety not indicated]
Maple, ash leaved (20) [Box elder; doing poorly 4/1871]
Maple, silver leaf (8)
Maple, sugar (9) [Doing poorly 4/1871]
Oak (8) [Probably pin, water, and/or willow oak]

Osage orange (4,042) [Perimeter hedge; doing well 4/1871 but requires 450 replacement plants]
Poplar, silver (5) [White poplar]
Spruce, Norway (21) [Doing poorly 4/1871]
Spruce, white (18) [Doing poorly 4/1871]
Willow (14) [Variety not indicated]

1872

Roses
Trees and Shrubs [150 doing well, 184 "making little progress"]

1874

Elms [Growing vigorously]
Flowerbeds [Around lodge and flagstaff mound]

1876

Cedars, red [Some "trimmed in fancy shapes"]

1878

Sylvan Hall elms [Doing well, 5/2/1878]
Bed of shrubs and ornamental plants surrounding flagstaff mound

1879

The following were transplanted from nearby woods and planted along the approach road:

Maples
Tulip-trees

1881

Maples [Along approach road, "not thrifty"]
Tulip-trees [Along approach road, "showing signs of thrift"]

1882

Box hedge [Surrounding service area inside of lattice fence; doing poorly]
The following were replacement trees set out along the approach road at twenty-five foot spacing:

American elm
Ash
Linden
Maple

1885

Cedars (Numerous)
Elms (Large plantation) [Sylvan Hall]
Fruit trees [Planted by the soldiers in 1864]
Loblolly pines [Large]
Osage orange hedge [Clipped in wedge shape]

1888

Arborvitae, Oriental [Replacement of boxwood hedge around service yard]
English ivy [Approximate date of planting along inside of perimeter wall]
Balsam fir
Cedars
Elms [Sylvan Hall]
Maple
Norway spruce
Osage orange hedge
Willow [Roots damaging well in service yard]
Yellow pine ("Many fine") [Loblolly pine]

1892

Plan by Quartermaster General documents following vegetation within the cemetery:

Deciduous trees (Approx. 220)
Coniferous trees (Approx. 189)
Shrubs
Screening hedge [Around service yard, arborvitae]
Hedge [Between Divisions D and E; boxwood]
Low hedge or border planting [Around perimeter of driveway circle, walk from lodge to Division F; species not known]
Boxwood hedge in shape of Maltese cross [In front of lodge]
Flowerbeds [Rectangular bed off circular turn-around, circular bed around flagstaff mound]

1931

Flowerbeds (2) [Near lodge]
Grape arbor
Peonies
Plum trees (5)
Roses
Silver maple [Near public restroom, scheduled for removal]

Following trees planted in May 1931 through contract with Henkels & McCoy, Germanton, Pennsylvania. Approximately one-third of the trees were planted along the approach road.

American elm (20)
American holly (6)
American linden (12)
Austrian pine (4)
European mountain ash (10)
Norway maple (23)

Norway spruce (6)
Pin oak (20)

1932

The following inventory taken from the Office of the Quartermaster General assessment of pruning needs for Poplar Grove trees, made on 25 February 1932, author not known. Trees identified as "small" probably planted under 1931 contract (no definition given for "large" and "small").

Deciduous
American elm (40 large)
European linden (6 large)
Hickory (3 large)
Hop hornbeam(1 large)
Horsechestnut (1 large)
Mountain ash (2 large)
Mulberry (1 small)
Norway maple (3 large)
Oaks (12 small) [Probably pin oak]
Pear (1 large)
Red maple (12 large)
Silver maple (4 large)
Spanish oak (4 small) [No previous record of Spanish oaks]
Tuliptree (13 large)
Water oak (1 large)
Willow oak (2 large)

Evergreen
American holly (8 large)
Arborvitae hedge (1)
Austrian pine (3 small)
Boxwood (39 large)
Dwarf black spruce (2 large)
Mugho pine (1 small)
Myrtle (6 large)
Norway spruce (4 large)
Red cedar (3 large)
Retinospora [false cypress; probably Chamaecyperis obtusa] (1 large)
Southern magnolia (3 large)
Virginia [Loblolly] pine (17 large)

1933

Flowerbeds

Ivy

1934

Report of February 13, 1934 indicates 169 trees in cemetery.
C.W.A. crews removed seven elms, one maple, one linden

Arborvitae
Cedar
Elms [Showing signs of malnutrition]
Maples
Oaks
Pines

1937

Cedars, red (approx. 100), planted within cemetery and outside of enclosing wall.

The following existing vegetation, excluding the approach road allee, documented on "Proposed Planting at Poplar Grove National Cemetery" (National Park Service, 1937):

Mature trees
Cedar (2)
Elm (11)
Sweet Gum (1)
Holly (3)
Hemlock (2)
Horsechestnut (1)
Magnolia (2)
Maple (7) [Red and silver]
Pine (17) [Loblolly pine]
Plum (3)
Peach (1)
Poplar (1)
Spruce (3)
Turkey oak (1)
Water oak (2)

Young trees (Total: approximately 75)
Cedar
Maple
Holly
Spruce
Pine
Other

English ivy [On enclosing wall]
Arborvitae hedge [Around service yard, 8-feet high]
Boxwood shrubs [Between Divisions D and E]

1941

The following trees are documented on Poplar Grove Master Plan (National Park Service, c.1941); plan reflects plantings by War Department in 1931 and red-cedar trees planted in 1937. Measurements indicates range of trunk diameter at breast height.

Total deciduous: 137; total evergreen: 156
American elm (Ulmus americana) small-26" (40)
Arborvitae, oriental (Thuja orientalis) 5" (1 specimen, plus 8' hedge)
Ash (Fraxinus americana) 3"-22" (7)
Buckeye (Aesculus octandra) 16"(1) [Buckeye]
Foxtail pine (Pinus balfouriana) 6" (2)
Hickory (Hicoria [sic] ovata) 18" (1)
Holly (Ilex ofaca) 1"-14" (4)
Hornbeam (Carpinus caroliniana) 14" (1)
Linden (Tilia americana) small--20" (8)
Loblolly pine (Pinus taeda) small-36" (28)
Norway spruce (Picea abies) 3" (3)
Pear (Pyrus communis) 10" (1)
Pin oak (Quercus palustris) 4"-6" (23)
Plum (Pyrus americana) 7"-9" (3)
Poplar (Populus alba) 13"-36" (16)
Red cedar (Juniperus virginiana) small-16" (115)
Red maple (Acer rubrum) small-30" (33)
Red spruce (Picea rubra) 3"-18" (3)
Scrub pine (Pinus banksiana) 6" (1) [Jack pine]
Southern magnolia (Magnolia grandiflora) 21"-30" (3)
Water oak (Quercus nigra) 30" (1)
White cedar (American arborvitae) Thuja occidentalis, 25" (1)
Willow oak (Quercus phellos) 30" (2)

1962

NPS Office of Resource Planning documented the following vegetation within the cemetery:

Evergreen trees (20)
Deciduous trees (37)
Hedge [Around service area]
Boxwood hedge [Between Divisions D and E]

2006 Existing Conditions

Trees

Cherry (Prunus sp.)
Colorado blue spruce (Picea pungens glauca)
Eastern red-cedar (Juniperus virginiana)
Holly (Ilex ofaca)
Loblolly pine (Pinus taeda)
Pignut hickory (Carya glabra)
Red maple (Acer rubrum)
Red oak (Quercus rubra)
Southern magnolia (Magnolia grandiflora)
Sugar maple (Acer saccharum)
Sweetgum (Liquidambar styraciflua)
Tulip-tree (Liriodendron tulipfera)
White-cedar or false cypress (Chamaecyparis thyoides)
Willow oak (Quercus phellos)
Yellow birch (Betula alleghanienses)

Shrubs

Crape myrtle(Lagerstroemia indica)
Common boxwood (Buxus sempervirens)

Groundcover

Grass
English ivy [outside of inclosure wall] (Hedera helix)

Approach Road Trees

Eastern red-cedar (Juniperus virginiana
Linden (Tilia americana)
Red maple (Acer rubrum)

APPENDIX H

SELECT CHRONOLOGY OF POPLAR GROVE NATIONAL CEMETERY

June 4, 1838	Jordan and Francis Floyd sell a 450-acre portion of their farm or plantation bordering Vaughan Road, including the future site of the national cemetery, to Benjamin H. Coupland.
March 21, 1843	Benjamin and Lucy Coupland sell the 450-acre farm to Isaac Roney.
September 30, 1844	Isaac and Mary Roney sell the 450-acre farm to Joseph A. Sydnor.
December 2, 1852	Joseph and Mary Sydnor sell the 450-acre farm to Juliana Dorsey.
March 21, 1855	Juliana Dorsey sells the 450-acre farm to John Flower.
April 25, 1856	John and Mary Ann Flower sell the 450-acre farm to Reverend Thomas Brinton Flower, probably John's father or brother.
April 12, 1861	Civil War begins with attack on Fort Sumter, Charleston, South Carolina.
July 17, 1862	In context of rising war fatalities, Congress passes act giving the President authority to purchase land for national cemeteries.
June 15-18, 1864	Opening battle in Petersburg Campaign.
August 18-21, 1864	Union victory in Battle of Weldon Railroad; Union siege-line fortifications begin to extend westward, built mostly under direction of the 50th New York Volunteer Engineers.
Sept. 29-Oct. 1, 1864	Union victory at Battle of Peeble's Farm (Battle of Poplar Springs Church); left flank extended to Fort Fisher, approximately two miles west of the Flower Farm.
Oct.-Nov. 1864	Engineers working intensively building and strengthening the siege-line fortifications of the western flank.
Late October 1864	Engineers' camp moved to the Flower Farm. Initial structures were tents and log barracks.
Nov. 1864-March 1865	Relative period of inactivity for Engineers; they develop camp facilities, notably rustic officers' quarters and Poplar Grove Church, the latter designed by Captain

	Michael H. McGrath and dedicated on March 6, 1865. Named in honor of the Poplar Springs Church, destroyed in the Battle of Peebles Farm.
March 29, 1864	Engineers break camp to take part in the final thrust against the Confederate defense of Petersburg, and then in the Appomattox Campaign.
April 2, 1865	Confederates abandon Petersburg.
April 9, 1865	Confederate surrender at Appomattox Court House, end of the Civil War.
April 17, 1866	Initial request by Lt. Colonel James M. Moore to the Secretary of War for authority to select sites for the establishment of national cemeteries near Petersburg and Richmond.
April 30, 1866	Secretary of War gives Lt. Colonel Moore authority to select sites for national cemeteries near Petersburg.
May 1866	Lt. Colonel Moore selects the campgrounds of the 50th New York Volunteer Engineers on the Flower Farm as the site of a national cemetery. He also selects a site at City Point for a second national cemetery near Petersburg. Poplar Grove and City Point are two of nine Civil War national cemeteries established in the Virginia district; others included Culpeper, Fredericksburg, Hampton, Richmond, Staunton, Winchester, and Yorktown National Cemeteries. Survey and abstract of title prepared for Poplar Grove.
May 21, 1866	By this date, Lt. General Moore reports that work had begun on bringing remains from surrounding battlefields to the cemetery at Poplar Grove. Work performed by a burial corps under the supervision of acting Superintendent Major William S. Johnson, a discharged officer of the 1st Arkansas Cavalry.
June 1, 1866	Work begun on the cemetery at Poplar Grove by this date, although the Quartermaster General does not record the cemetery as "commenced" in its annual report ending June 30, 1866 (probably meaning that burials had not begun).
July 18, 1866	By this date, burials have begun within Poplar Grove according to cemetery plan consisting of concentric circles around a central, mounded wood flagstaff. Most of the buildings from the engineers' camp had been removed except for Poplar Grove Church and some log barracks along the south boundary. Some of the buildings may have been relocated to outside the cemetery boundary.
February 22, 1867	Congress passes "Act to Establish and to Protect National Cemeteries."

June 10, 1867	Burial work is substantially complete. By this time, 5,196 bodies had been interred at the cemetery, and a five-foot high paling fence had been erected around the perimeter. Work is underway on sodding the grave mounds and central mound, gravelling the walks, installing white-painted wood headboards, and building drains.
August 6, 1867	August Miller is appointed the first superintendent of the cemetery, replacing Acting Superintendent Major William S. Johnson; law requires position to be filled by disabled veteran.
September 1867	Burial corps completes construction of a wood lodge at southwest corner of original cemetery parcel, on north side of entry drive in Division E.
October 1867	Burial corps completes laying almost 12,000 feet of brick gutters, and graveling of the walks and avenues.
November 27, 1867	Superintendent Miller receives authority to add an additional acre to the cemetery.
February 29, 1868	244 bodies interred since June 10, 1867; totals to date: 5,440 bodies in 5,033 graves.
April 3, 1868	The federal government acquires title in fee simple to the 8.13-acre cemetery tract from Rebecca T. Flower, widow of Rev. Thomas B. Flower, for appraised value of $1,500. Property includes original 7.13-acre rectangular plot and additional acre at southwest corner for site of proposed new lodge and Division F.
March-April 1868	Burial corps removes Poplar Grove Church from the cemetery during this time. Site is reused for burials. Church purportedly sold and temporarily re-erected in Central Park, New York City.
July 25, 1868	Report of final disposition of remains at Poplar Grove submitted to Quartermaster General Montgomery Meigs.
Fall 1868	Four 32-pounder cannons and 84 projectiles (shot) are transferred to the cemetery from Fort Monroe (Hampton, Virginia) to serve as gun monuments.
December 15, 1868	Deed for the 8.13-acre cemetery property, purchased from the Flower family by the federal government for $1,500, is entered in Dinwiddie County records.

Winter 1869	The burial corps transplants 1,200 small cedar trees to the cemetery from the neighboring fields.
February 1869	The four gun monuments received the previous fall are installed along the outer edge of the central drive encircling the flagstaff.
March 31, 1869	469 bodies interred in cemetery since February 1868; totals to date: 5,909 bodies in 5,292 graves.
June 30, 1869	The burial corps at Poplar Grove National Cemetery is disbanded. Since July 1866, the burial corps had interred a total of 6,142 Union soldiers, 36 Confederate soldiers, and five civilians; only thirty-five percent were positively identified.
July-Aug. 1869	The perimeter paling fence is extended around the one-acre expansion.
October 1869	A frame tool shed is constructed in the service yard.
November 30, 1869	Log barracks from the engineers' camp, located opposite the frame lodge (probably in Division F), are taken down and the ground leveled.
May 30, 1870	Advertisements are published soliciting bids for construction of a new brick lodge, designed according to a standard plan by General Montgomery Miegs.
August 16, 1870	James R. Dobbyn is awarded the contract for a new brick lodge. Work begins on August 31, cellar hole is dug on the north side of entry drive in the one-acre addition (present service yard). Contractor defaults.
January 1871	Major planting program begins; shipment of trees and shrubs arrives. Planting probably includes a boxwood hedge along the walk between Divisions E and D, and a flowerbed framed by boxwood borders in the shape of a Maltese cross in front of the lodge.
March 1871	Planting of the perimeter Osage orange hedge is completed along inside of perimeter fence.
April 26, 1871	A new bid by Kyran A. Murphy accepted for construction of lodge; specification changed to stone instead of brick, and a new site is selected on south side of entry drive.
May 1871	A "Sylvan Hall" of 110 elm trees is planted in the form of a cross or gothic church, following a standard Quartermaster Department plan.

October 24, 1871	Murphy begins work on the stone lodge; majority of the work is completed by January 1872.
1871-1872	The wood culverts (drain boxes) are replaced with grass swales and French (gravel) drains.
1872-1874	The gravel surface of the walks and drives is replaced by grass.
March 30, 1872	The stone lodge is completed. Around this time, a circular turn-around is added to the east of the lodge.
June 1872	Superintendent Miller relocates the old frame lodge to rear of new lodge as a kitchen wing.
August 1872	Forty-five bodies have been interred in cemetery since disbanding of the burial corps in June 1869; totals to date: 6,187 bodies in 5,562 graves.
Fall 1873	Work begins on a combination wood toolshed-stable across the road from the lodge.
July 1873	The wood flagstaff is taken down due to decay.
Fall 1873	Construction of a brick enclosing wall is awarded to B. F. Childrey & Company, which begins manufacture of bricks in two kilns adjoining the cemetery; 100,000 bricks made by December 12, 1873, but construction of wall not begun by that date. Bricks are rejected by the Quartermaster Department.
1874	Childrey defaults on the contract for the enclosing wall; project stalls for two years.
May 19, 1874	J. C. Comfort of Shiremanstown, Pennsylvania, installs a new wood flagstaff, fifty-six feet tall. The flagstaff mound is reduced from forty feet in diameter and six feet high, to twenty-three feet in diameter and four feet high.
May 22, 1876	A new contract for the brick enclosing wall is awarded to John Brennon and Archibald L. Hutton of Washington, D. C., per advertisement of February 1, 1876. Plans call for brick wall with Ohio sandstone pilaster caps.
1876-1877	Resurvey of the cemetery boundaries is made as part of wall construction project, in order to secure a ten-foot buffer around the wall; survey discloses that the original survey was inaccurate, and plans are made for acquiring strips of land from the adjoining Flower and Farley farms.

June 22, 1876	Brennon & Hutton begin work on the enclosing wall; bricks are shipped to Petersburg by schooner from Alexandria, Virginia. The project includes a gateway of granite piers and iron gates.
September 31, 1876	The brick enclosing wall and gates are completed at a cost of $10,187.
October 5, 1876	Superintendent August Miller is replaced by H. C. Lacy.
April 30, 1877	Deeds executed for corrected survey of the cemetery, which included the addition of a half-acre buffer strip around the perimeter: Francis B. Farley through J. Wesley Friend, Special Commissioner, to United States, 0.0919 of an acre, $30; Deed, Flowers [sic] & others through J. Wesley Friend, 0.5019 of an acre, "together with a right of way over and along the road as at present used from the public road to the said National Cemetery, and running over the land belonging to the said Flowers," $70.
June 7, 1877	Quartermaster Engineer James Gall visits Poplar Grove to arrange for replacing headboards with headstones and blocks. Test digging is begun to determine the location of coffins. Work calls for leveling a large number of grave mounds that remain.
September 13, 1877	Setting of stone property boundary markers (posts) is begun according to the revised and enlarged boundary. Grading of grave mounds is begun in preparation for installing headstones and blocks.
July 7, 1877	Installation of recessed-shield white marble headstones and unknown blocks completed at a cost of about $15,500; contract specified either "known" stone at $3.39 (headstone) or an "unknown" stone at $2.42 (block).
Spring 1878	Poplar Grove acquires a horse-drawn lawn mower, supplementing hand mowers and scythes.
Fall 1878	The brick gutters along the drives are filled and turfed; the approach road from Vaughan Road is improved and trees, taken from nearby forests, are planted along both sides as an allee.
July 1879	A brick toolshed-stable (barn) is built in the service area (site of current garage), replacing the earlier wooden shed. Around the same time, Superintendent Lacy builds a new kitchen behind the lodge out of refuse bricks from the wall, and removes the old frame kitchen wing on the lodge.

Spring 1882	Replacement trees are planted in approach road allee.
1889	Iron steps installed at flagstaff mound, replacing wood ones.
April 30, 1890	Superintendent Lacy is replaced by E. L. Grant.
1890	Around this time, the perimeter Osage orange hedge is removed.
1891	Superintendent Grant begins efforts to erect a rostrum for Memorial Day observances.
1892	Most of the American elms in the Sylvan Hall are removed by this time.
January 31, 1893	Superintendent Grant is replaced by Acting Superintendent B. S. Baldwin, followed by Acting Superintendent A. D. Sullivan.
December 12, 1893	Richard B. Hill is appointed Superintendent.
1895	Around this time, a two-seat privy is built in the service yard.
November 5, 1895	Superintendent Hill is replaced by John Laun.
Summer 1896	Work begins on the rostrum and completed on January 2, 1897.
1900	Around this time, a brick "cave" (function not known) is built to the rear of the brick kitchen against the enclosing wall, and the grass surface of the main drive is replaced by gravel.
1901	Twenty-three bodies have been interred at the cemetery since August 1872, bringing total burials to 6,210, in 5,584 graves.
1903	The War Department issues new specifications for recessed-shield headstones to provide a more durable marker; use of unknown blocks is discontinued. Headstones may have been raised to eighteen inches above grade around this time.
July 31, 1903	Superintendent Laun is replaced by T. H. Savage
July 27, 1904	Superintendent Savage is replaced by J. H. Osborne.
December 1, 1904	Superintendent Osborne is replaced by Richard B. Hill.

April 16, 1908	Superintendent Hill is replaced by Acting Superintendent H. L. Perkinson.
May 18, 1908	George Hess is appointed Superintendent.
June 11, 1910	Superintendent Hess is replaced by Acting Superintendent P. M. Brist.
August 4, 1910	Robert R. Dye is appointed Superintendent.
1911	The government erects a barbed-wire fence on both sides of the approach road, along the outer side of the allee.
1912	The Quartermaster Department is reorganized as the Quartermaster Corps; administration of Poplar Grove is shifted from the Washington Depot to the Quartermaster Third Corps Area, Baltimore.
May 29, 1913	Superintendent Dye is replaced by Theodore W. B. Brake.
1913	The wood flagstaff erected in 1874 is replaced by an iron flagstaff. The flagstaff mound is probably removed at this time.
August 1914`	A proposal is introduced for the federal government to acquire land along the approach road (right-of-way) and adjacent to cemetery; proposal defeated.
November 1914	A new stucco-faced kitchen wing is built at the rear of the lodge, replacing the kitchen outbuilding constructed of refuse bricks in c.1879.
December 14, 1914	Superintendent Brake is replaced by James W. Bodley.
July 30 and Aug. 2, 1915	Two storms topple 139 trees, break forty headstones, and tear off the roof of the toolshed-stable.
June 22, 1917	Superintendent Bodley is replaced by Acting Superintendent J. J. Blaha.
July 17, 1917	W. P. Kinter is appointed Superintendent.
December 16, 1918	Superintendent Kinter is replaced by Acting Superintendent Robert Hill.
February 1, 1919	William Davis is appointed Superintendent.
September 2, 1919	Superintendent Davis is replaced by J. B. Lovelace.

1922	The War Department issues a new headstone known as the General to differentiate veterans of World War I.
September 8, 1922	Superintendent Lovelace is replaced by Acting Superintendent J. J. Blaha.
January 27, 1923	John F. Tallman is appointed Superintendent.
1924	New concrete bases built for the gun monuments and shot.
April 11, 1926	Superintendent Tallman is replaced by Joseph A. Bobber.
August 6, 1927	Superintendent Bobber is replaced by Acting Superintendent J. J. Blaha.
November 17, 1927	Charles E. Jackson is appointed Superintendent.
August 10, 1929	A brick and stucco utility building (public restroom) is built at the rear of the lodge. The building was designed by Quartermaster Supply Officer, Washington General Depot and constructed under contract to H. Herfurth, Jr., Inc., of Washington, D. C.
October 10, 1929	A brick and stucco stable-garage in the service yard is completed; it replaced the old toolshed-stable and privy. The building was designed by Quartermaster Supply Officer, Washington General Depot and constructed under contract to H. Herfurth, Jr., Inc., of Washington, D. C.
October 1930	A new iron flagstaff is erected, replacing one installed in 1913. It is approximately eighty feet tall, anchored by four guy wires.
1931	Improvements are begun on the lodge; exterior work includes replacement of slate roof with a standing seam metal roof and installation of concrete floor in the front porch.
April 16, 1931	Remains of twenty-nine Union soldiers recovered from the Crater Battlefield on March 28-29, 1931 are reinterred at Poplar Grove.
May 18, 1931	Work is completed on planting 101 trees in the cemetery and along the approach road according to plans by the Office of the Quartermaster, Headquarters, Third Corps Area, Baltimore; trees planted under contract by Henkels & McCoy of Germantown, Pennsylvania.
May 22, 1931	Asphalt paving of the approach road and main drive is completed under contract to the Bituminous Roads Company of Ashland, Virginia.

Fall 1931	A gasoline-powered lawn mower is acquired; the horse and horse-drawn lawn mower are disposed.
December 12, 1931	Superintendent Jackson is replaced by Acting Superintendent William H. Green.
January 7, 1932	Walter J. Pearce is appointed Superintendent.
January 3, 1933	Superintendent Pearce is replaced by Felix E. Kavanagh, serving an "in-charge" position.
August 10, 1933	Poplar Grove National Cemetery is transferred from the War Department to National Park Service, along with Petersburg National Military Park. William H. Green is appointed acting cemetery superintendent.
August 23, 1933	Poplar Grove National Cemetery and Petersburg National Military Park are placed under the administration of Colonial National Monument, Yorktown, Virginia.
September 5, 1933	Benjamin F. Moore is appointed cemetery superintendent, the first cemetery superintendent appointed under the National Park Service.
1933-1941	The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and other federal public work agencies supplement work force at Poplar Grove.
January 16, 1934	B. Floyd Flickinger, Superintendent of Colonial National Monument, receives concurrence from the War Department for altering the headstones and blocks into flat markers.
February-March 1934	Upright headstones are cut at ground level and placed flush with the ground; headstone bases are temporarily stacked in the cemetery. Blocks are sunk flush with the ground.
June 5, 1934	Superintendent Moore submits a six-year program of federal construction for Poplar Grove.
July 23, 1934	The National Park Service Acting Associate Director authorizes sale of the headstone bases.
December 1935	Administration of Poplar Grove National Cemetery is placed under the recently appointed Superintendent, Petersburg National Military Park.

1936	The War Department issues specifications for white-marble flat markers, initially intended for use in private lawn-style cemeteries.
March 1937	CCC crews plant 115 Eastern red-cedar trees in and around the cemetery; a wood post and barbed-wire fence is erected along property line to protect cedars planted on the outside of the wall from livestock.
September 1937	CCC crews complete work on repairing the cemetery wall.
1939	The first flat marker (instead of an altered headstone) is installed at Poplar Grove (grave #1745).
March 1939	Work is completed on bringing electricity to the lodge; line enters the southwest corner of the cemetery from the Blaha farmhouse. A new cover is installed on the well in the service yard, replacing a well house.
1941	The Poplar Grove component of the Petersburg National Military Park master plan is completed; includes an illustrated plan of the cemetery and a planting plan. Probably at this time, circular metal inventory tags are installed on specimen trees.
Spring 1942	Diseased and dead trees are removed from the cemetery (number not specified).
1943	Cemetery drain pipes are replaced (locations not specified).
September 30, 1949	Superintendent Moore retires; position of cemetery superintendent is abolished; maintenance of Poplar Grove is transferred to the maintenance staff of Petersburg National Military Park.
1954	Petersburg National Battlefield Historian Herbert Olsen completes the first history of Poplar Grove National Cemetery; the National Park Service Regional Design and Construction Office completes a Historical Land Status Map for Poplar Grove.
1956	By this time, the MISSION 66 Prospectus for Petersburg National Battlefield is completed; it includes an item of $11,200 for improvement of grave markers at Poplar Grove.
Spring 1957	A general rehabilitation project is completed as part of a $17,500 program of improvements. A new entrance sign is installed; the lawn is leveled and cleaned; and flat headstones are raised above grade to improve visibility. Probably at this same time, a new cemetery plan/burial locater is drafted; old division and

	section classification is replaced with twenty block designations. A new block is established on the east side of Division F (Block XX). The radial drives, except for the main drive, are identified by letters A through F on small iron signs around the central circle. The cemetery plan, burial register, and interpretive panel are installed in two aluminum-frame signs erected to either side of the flagstaff. The iron tablets are probably removed at this time.
1962	The name of Petersburg National Military Park is changed to Petersburg National Battlefield. The Regional Resource-Planning Office of the National Park Service drafts a boundary-site plan for Poplar Grove.
1964	An interpretive prospectus is completed for Poplar Grove.
1965	A new master plan is completed for Petersburg National Battlefield, including Poplar Grove.
1971	The Odom family establishes a small cemetery on the south side of the approach road with the burial of Nellie E. Jones and Lester Grady Odom.
1972	Around this time, a driveway is built through the Blaha Farm extending from the approach road and running parallel to the north side of the cemetery to two houses built off east side of cemetery by Ronald Peterson and Anthony Blaha on subdivisions of Odom farm. The 0.05-acre Odom cemetery is platted.
1974	Around this time, the arborvitae hedge around the service yard, service yard well, Maltese cross hedge, settees, and three of the four gun monuments are removed; the flagstaff reduced in height and its guy wires are removed. A new well is installed in the service yard.
1976	A Resource Management Plan for Poplar Grove is approved.
November 1976	A Development/Study Package Proposal is approved for Poplar Grove, outlining a comprehensive program of improvements and acquisition of land for buffer purposes and to place the approach road in government ownership.
December 1977	Working drawings for the improvement program are completed by Livas & Associates, Architects. The plans are not implemented.
1987	Roberta E. Odom makes an initial offer to donate property along the west side of the cemetery.

September 5, 1990	A contract is executed for donation of fee simple title to a 3.7-acre tract along the west side of cemetery; includes a portion of the approach road and the .05-acre Odom cemetery. Property is donated by Roberta E. Odom to National Park Foundation with reservation of burial rights in the Odom family cemetery.
April 24, 1991	Roberta Odom signs a deed conveying the 3.7-acre tract to the National Park Foundation. The Foundation intends to convey the property to the National Park Service but is unable to do so because the property is outside of the park boundary (corresponding to cemetery property boundary).
1995	Around this time, the National Park Service builds a parking lot on the 3.7-acre Odom tract, along the north side of approach road.
2003	The remains of three unidentified Union soldiers are reinterred in the cemetery from Peeble's Farm and Reams Station. Around this time, the approach road and main drive are repaved in asphalt with a sand and pea-gravel top coat.
2004	A storm causes a blow-down in the woods north of the cemetery, creating openings in the narrow band of woods along the northern boundary.

APPENDIX I

SUMMARY OF REGULATIONS, POLICIES, AND PLANNING RELEVANT TO TREATMENT OF THE POPLAR GROVE NATIONAL CEMETERY LANDSCAPE

	VA National Cemetery Regulations & Policies * (current)	War Department National Cemetery Regulations ** (1931)	NPS National Cemetery Regulations & Policies ***	Existing Condition at Poplar Grove National Cemetery
Overall Landscape Character	National Cemeteries to be maintained as national shrines: a place of honor and memory that declares to the visitor or family member who views it that, within its majestic setting, each and every veteran may find a sense of serenity, historic sacrifice and nobility of purpose. Each visitor should depart feeling that the grounds, the gravesites and the environs of the national cemetery are a beautiful and awe-inspiring tribute to those who gave much to preserve our Nation's freedom and way of life (OSM, 4). Promote general grounds appearance that is aesthetically pleasing, generally consistent throughout all national cemeteries, and allows fulfillment of national shrine commitment (OSM, 11).	Sacred character (p. 18); Well-kept sward, graceful shade trees, pretty shrubs and evergreens (p. 33).	The NPS national cemeteries are administered to preserve the historic character, uniqueness, and solemn nature of both the cemeteries and the historical park (DO-61). Poplar Grove National Cemetery is rehabilitated to reflect the original [sic] sense of contemplation, quite, and solemnity (PETE GMP, 62).	Barren character. Loss of trees and shrubs, alteration of grave markers, and changes to the approach road detract from cemetery's historic beauty, solemnity, and awe-inspiring character. Alterations to grave markers and approach road, and loss of small-scale features (settees, tablets, gun monuments) detract from standardized nature (cemetery's association with Civil War-era national cemeteries).
Setting	No reference to setting (adjoining non-cemetery lands).	No reference to setting.	No reference to setting in DO-61. Four acres along approach road and Globe Tavern battlefield proposed for acquisition (PETE GMP, 30).	Adjoining development detracts from cemetery's historic beauty, solemnity, and awe-inspiring character.
Trees, Shrubs, Vines	Concentrate plantings in non-burial areas, such as trees along streets, buffer planting to screen unsightly views, and plantings to separate burial sections. Each plant used should serve a purpose and together should contribute to the function and overall design intent of the cemetery master plan. In general, use regionally native plants and employ landscaping practices and technologies that conserve water and prevent pollution. In non-burial areas, consider alternatives to standard turf that are suitable to drought conditions. (sitegrading.asp). Trees and shrubs are compatible with the geographic region and are healthy and vigorous (OSM Standard 3.1, 3.2).	Include graceful shade trees, pretty shrubs and evergreens (p. 33). Trees and shrubs will be kept clear of dead, dying or broken limbs and snags. Removal of lower limbs of evergreen trees and shrubs as a rule is prohibited. (p. 34). Ivy growing on the inside face of the inclosing wall will be kept trimmed on a line parallel with the lower edge of the coping. Flowering vines may be grown on the porches of the lodges, on arbors, and on rostrums (p. 35). Planting of trees, shrubs, vines, or other plants on any burial lot or grave site not permitted (p. 56).	No reference to trees, shrubs, vines.	Some trees and shrubs in decline.
Lawn	Visually prominent areas appear groomed and raked; have a well-established, healthy stand of turf generally free of weeds, bare areas, and debris; sunken graves are leveled; and grass around grave markers trimmed to recommended height (OSM, Standards 2.1-2.6). Irrigation is usually necessary to keep the landscape at an aesthetically pleasing level. Irrigation	To be a well-kept sward. Grass will be cut often during the growing season; coarse weeds will be kept down; care will be taken to avoid injury to monuments or	No reference to lawn.	Lawn does not have the character of a well-kept sward. **(continued)**

	lateral lines in burial sections should run parallel with the length of the gravesites. (siteirrigation.asp).	headstones when cutting the grass (p. 33).		
Flowerbeds	Planting beds are well maintained, attractive, and compatible with geographic region (OSM, Standard 6.1).	A few flowers about the lodge and at one or more other prominent points are all that should be maintained; flower beds will not be mounded (p. 33).	No reference to flower beds.	No flowerbeds extant.
Inclosure (Perimeter Wall and Entrance Gate)	Entrance area must incorporate the DVA Seal at least two feet in diameter, and the words "(Name) National Cemetery," in lettering sufficient to be seen from the public street (approach road); the cemetery name shall include unobtrusive lighting (.siteentrance.asp)	Paint color: iron gates, black; shields, black with letters outlined in gold leaf. Brick will not be painted (p. 32).	No reference to inclosure.	Name of cemetery lacking from entrance (entrance gate). Shields on entrance gate posts ("U. S. National Cemetery") are outlined in silver/aluminum rather than gold leaf.
Drives, Walks	Roads and walks are clean and well-maintained (OSM Other Standard 1.3) For the primary cemetery road, a main loop is desirable, allowing one to drive through the cemetery without turning around. Preferred road design includes curbing. All roads should support heavy equipment and large trucks loaded with wet dirt, gravel and headstones. Minimum width for entrance & primary roads: 24' edge to edge with no curb, 50' minimum radius (siteroadway.asp).	Drives and walks not grass-covered will be kept properly crowned, free from weeds or other growths, and properly defined by the alignment and trimming of the grass edges (p. 32).	No reference to drives, walks.	Existing entrance road +/-11 feet wide. Edges of drive not well defined. Existing asphalt with worn gravel coat gives impression of deterioration.
Approach Road and Parking	Parking lots are accessible and well-maintained (OSM Other Standard 1.4) Parking for special events and programs is accommodated on roadways and sometimes on the turf in undeveloped interment areas.	Approach road and the parking will be kept in good condition, the trees trimmed, and the gutters clear (p. 32). See also Drives, Walks.	No reference to approach road and parking in DO-61. The approach road and adjoining four acres will be acquired under federal ownership (PETE GMP, 25).	Existing asphalt with worn sand coat gives impression of deterioration. Trees along approach road not trimmed. Three-quarters of approach road not under federal ownership.
Gutters and Drains	No reference to gutters and drains.	Bermuda or other strong creeping grasses re-commended for revetting of the gutters; outlets and culverts will be kept open (p. 32).	No reference to gutters and drains.	Outlet at northwest corner not sufficient to drain low area of cemetery.
Stone Lodge (Visitor Contact Station)	Each cemetery to have a Public Information Center (.siteentrance.asp). Structures have a clean and well-maintained appearance (OSM Other Standard 1.2).	The office in the lodge will be used as the depository for public records and for receiving visitors. Its door will be kept unlocked during the hours that the cemetery gates are open. The lodge is intended for occupancy by the cemetery superintendent and his family. (p. 29) Paint colors: tin roof, red; wood trim, white; doors, blinds, and latticework, bronze green; porch ceiling, light blue;	No references to lodge. Lodge to be rehabilitated as visitor contact station to provide visitor information on cemetery and Western Front (PETE GMP, 49).	Lodge serves as visitor contact station, but its hours of operation are very limited and the building is not adequately furnished for the purpose. Paint colors not consistent with 1931 regulations (may not have been historically).

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		porch floor and steps, dark gray. (p. 30).		
Outbuildings	Restrooms are clean, functional, sanitary, and appropriately supplied and are handicapped accessible. Structures have a clean and well-maintained appearance (OSM Other Standards 1.1, 1.2).	Paint colors: same as lodge (p. 31; for brick or stone outbuildings, stucco not specified).	No references to building appearance. Restrooms, lodge? to be open year-round (PETE GMP, 56).	Paint colors not consistent with 1931 regulations (may not have been historically).
Iron Rostrum	No reference to iron rostrums.	Paint colors: railings, columns, and structural ironwork, black; top of roof, red; underside of roof, light blue (p. 31).	No reference to iron rostrums.	Paint colors not consistent with historic regulations (may not have been historically).
Wood Fences	No reference to wood fences.	Paint color: light gray (p. 32).	No reference to wood fences.	Wood privacy fence at lodge not painted.
Flagstaff	Primary flagpole: Provide trees/plantings at the flag that enhance the setting and are appropriate to the site (native, low maintenance). Provide ample and unobtrusive flag lighting (no in-ground fixtures). The flagpole shall meet FAA regulations for height and flight safety requirements (siteflag.asp). (No references to regulation height.)	Paint colors: flagstaff and guy wires, white; anchor rods to guy wires, black; base of flagstaff, black (p. 31). Mounds will not be made around the flagstaff (p. 33). (No references to regulation height).	Established procedures and protocols for displaying the U. S. flag are outlined in Reference Manual #61.	Flagstaff (40') is approximately half its original (1931) height. Surrounding landscape (within central circle) has a barren feeling. Low height of flagstaff and flanking burial locator-interpretive signs detract from beauty and awe-inspiring character.
Settees (Benches)	Use commercially available bench to be placed at selected locations to take advantage of views or vistas or to establish spots for meditation. Donations by veterans service organizations are the primary means for acquiring the benches.	Paint color: bronze green (p. 31).	No reference to benches or other visitor amenities.	No benches extant.
Grave Adornments	Artificial flowers and potted plants permitted on graves during periods when their presence will not interfere with grounds maintenance (gen. Easter through Memorial Day). Seasonal adornments may be placed on graves from Dec. 1 through Jan. 20. Permanent plantings, statues, vigil lights, breakable objects and similar items are not permitted on the graves. (Richmond National Cemetery website). Flower vases: To be stored in receptacles that make vases available for public use in the cemetery; design should be coordinated with other site fixtures; cemetery should include flower water-spigots (sitefurns.asp).	Cut flowers held in vases permitted. Color of vase: white (p. 31). On Memorial Day, each grave to be decorated with a small flag (p. 18).	Superintendents will designate the types of containers and the times floral arrangements may be placed on the graves in accordance with 36 CRF 12.10 (DO-61 4.2). The placement on a grave of fresh cut or artificial flowers in or on a metal or other non-breakable rod or container designated by the superintendent is allowed at times designated by the superintendent. The placement of a statue, vigil light, or other commemorative object on a grave, or the securing or attaching of any object to a headstone , marker, or commemorative monument is prohibited (36 CFR 12.10). Super-intendents may authorize the placement of small U. S. flags on each grave in honor of Memorial Day (DO-61, 4.11)	Small flags set out at each grave on Memorial Day.

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Signs (Tablets)	Signage is convenient and helpful (OSM Other Standard 1.5). Signage should be consistent with the NCA Program Guide, Signage Standards for national cemeteries, unless there is a compelling reason for a unique design. Signs should be a coordinated information system, and include the following types: trail blazer, site directory, traffic regulation, directional, street identification, place identification, floral regulation/visitor information, burial section markers, and committal service status board (sitefurns.asp).	Paint colors for tablets: black; borders and faces of letters, aluminum (p. 31).	No reference to signs DO-61). New waysides and interpretive programs planned (PETE GMP, 55-56).	Lack of convenient and helpful signage. No burial section markers. No traffic regulation signs. No street identification signs. No floral regulation/visitor information signs. No historic tablets remain.
Lincoln (Gettysburg Address) Memorial Tablet	No reference to Lincoln memorial tablet.	Paint colors: black; borders and faces of letters, copper-bronze paint (p. 31).	No reference to Lincoln memorial tablet.	Not consistent with historic regulations (may not have been historically); currently black with silver borders and letters.
Gravesite (Burial) Locator	A gravesite locator stand should accommodate public use of a book-type listing of interments with corresponding gravesite number. Design to be coordinated with other site furnishings. Will normally be located at the Public Information Center. In the future may be in an interactive computer accessible to the public (sitefurns.asp).	No reference. The Burial Register was usually kept in the lodge office.	No reference to gravesite locator.	Burial locator difficult to read. No corresponding grave section (block) markers.
Memorials and Monuments	Each cemetery should have an area or areas, separate and distinct from interment areas for the collective display of memorials donated by various recognized veterans groups. The area(s) may take the form of a path or terrace and should provide a place for quiet walks and contemplation for cemetery visitors. To the extent possible, an established wooded setting provides the best location for the donation area(s) or memorial path. A memorial walkway should have optimal locations designated along the path for donated memorials, plaques and benches. May include a flagpole for display of the POW/MIA flag (sitememorial.asp).	Applications from States, veteran organizations, societies, and others for the erection of memorial monuments will be submitted to the Secretary of War and no such monument will be erected until the design, inscription and site have been approved. The exposed portions of monuments may be constructed only of bronze or of durable stone or marble of approved color of the best quality and without flaws. (pp. 25-26; includes approved dimensions of monuments in various categories).	Commemorative monuments must conform to the type, size, materials, design, and specifications prescribed for the historic design of the cemetery section in which it is proposed for installation (DO-61 4.9).	Aside from Gun Monument, Poplar Grove has no memorials or monuments.
Gun Monuments	No reference to gun monuments.	Paint color: black. Bronze shield will not be painted (p. 31, 32).	No reference to gun monuments.	Bronze shield on gun monument painted black, making it difficult to read. Three of four original gun monuments have been removed.
Assembly Area	A turf assembly area, with the U. S. flag as its focus, should be developed for major gatherings of people on holidays; should incorporate a focal point in the spirit of a traditional rostrum that can be used as a speakers' platform. Provide adequate electrical service to meet ceremonial and maintenance needs. (siteflag.asp).	No reference to assembly area.	No reference to assembly area.	Assembly areas at rostrum; secondary area at flagstaff. Lack of support utilities at each.

(continued)

Avenue of Flags	The cemetery development plan should indicate the location for an "avenue of flags" where donated American burial flags are displayed on special days. The entrance road, or the primary road, is typically the most suitable for this designation. The development plan should provide for sockets adjacent to the roadway, for flagstaffs 15-30' high and spaced 15-30' apart.	No reference to Avenue of Flags.	No reference to Avenue of Flags.	No Avenue of Flags exists; none historically.
Headstones (Known graves)	[VA Manual M40-3 (Headstones and Markers)—awaiting from VA, not yet reviewed.] Headstones are properly aligned; clean; free of debris, and objectionable accumulations; not damaged by cemetery operations; and are visible and legible (OSM Standards 4.1-4.4). Historical headstones are replaced in-kind (OSM, Standard 4.4). Headstones damaged beyond reasonable repair by actions outside the cemetery's control (storms, auto accidents) are repaired or replaced (OSM Standard 4.5). Headstones that are no longer useable are disposed of in a manner that prevents reuse (OSM Standard 4.6). The Civil War and Spanish-American War headstones were recently reintroduced; are inscribed in raised lettering inside a sunken shield. There are two different sizes of these historical upright marble headstones: XA: 12" wide, 3" thick, 42" high; XB: 13" wide, 3" thick, 42" high. Inscription: shield with arched name and abbreviated military organization; no space for emblem or belief; dates of birth and death are inscribed below the shield (note: latter not on original Civil War stones) (www.cem.va.gov/hmcivil/htm).	White marble conforming to approved specifications; set on center line at head of grave; inscription facing grave; in alignment both laterally and longitudinally with adjoining headstones; 18" or 24" above ground. Headstones will be kept clean. A report will be made of any headstones that become illegible, broken, or which for any other reason should be replaced in order that action may be taken to replace them (pp. 24-25).	Refers to operation policy and procedural guidance for headstones and markers in VA Manual M40-3 (Headstones and Markers). Private headstones and markers are generally not permitted because of conflict with the historic character of the cemeteries (DO-61, 4.9).	New or replacement headstones have used the standard VA headstone (General type), but laid flush in the ground. Many of the existing stones are badly chipped and/or cracked. Vast majority not designed to lie flush in the ground. Some are illegible due to lack of cleaning and/or eroding of the marble. Labor-intensive to keep grass from growing over the headstones.
Blocks (Unknown Graves)	No reference to blocks.	See Headstones. (Height above grade 6.")	No reference to blocks.	Many of the existing blocks are badly chipped. Not designed to lie flush or slightly above grade. Some not visible due to cover of grass.
Footstones	No reference to footstones.	Footstones of durable stone sunk flush with the ground, not exceeding 10" by 20" at the top and inscribed with a suitable identifying inscription, may be placed at private expense at the foot of any grave (p. 28).	No reference to footstones.	No footstones exist; none historically.
Use—General		Visitors will respect dignity and sacred character of the cemetery (p. 18). National flag displayed every day from sunrise to sunset; post flag and storm flag depending on weather (p. 18). Grounds will be in best possible condition for Memorial Day	Visitors should be encouraged to conduct themselves in a manner befitting the solemn and dignified nature of the national cemeteries (DO-61 4.2). Conducting a special event or demonstration, whether spontaneous or organized, is prohibited except for official commemorative	No signs indicating proper visitor conduct. Picnic table located in service yard. Automobiles drive over graves when two passing on main drive. Ranger stationed at limited times to provide interpretation.

(continued)

		(p.18). The cemetery will not be used as a picnic grounds (p.18). Pedestrians not allowed to cross grave sections [remain on walks/drives] (p.19). Speed of auto-mobiles limited to 15 mph. (p. 19))	events conducted for Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and other dates designated by the superintendent as having historic and commemorative significance to a particular national cemetery (DO-61 4.10). The historic features and setting of Poplar Grove National Cemetery, along with guided tours, wayside exhibits, and special presentations are used by visitors to understand the commemorative landscape (PETE GMP, 64).	
Use—New Burials			The enlargement of a national cemetery for additional burials constitutes a modern intrusion, compromising the historical character of both the cemetery and the historical park, and will not be permitted. (2001 NPS Management Policies, 8.6.10.1: and Director's Order #61: National Cemeteries.)	Poplar Grove closed to new burials since 1957. Accepts reinterment of Civil War remains from surrounding battlefields (last in 2003).
Use—Private Cemetery (Odom Family Cemetery)	Not applicable.	Not applicable.	The burial of family members in family cemeteries that have been acquired by the Park Service in the course of establishment of parks will be permitted to the extent practicable, pursuant to applicable regulations, until space allotted to the cemeteries has been filled. Family members (or their designees) will be allowed access for purposes of upkeep and commemoration (such as wreath-laying and religious rituals) that do not jeopardize safety or resource protection. Park superintendents will keep active files on cemeteries for the purpose of responding to requests and inquiries. (2001 NPS Management Policies, 8.6.10.2 Family Cemeteries)	Permission for family burial and access in deed to NPS.

Key: OSM = Department of Veterans Affairs, National Cemetery Administration (NCA) Operational Standards and Measures (ver. 2 Oct. 2004)

DO-61 = NPS *Director's Order #61* (National Cemetery Operations).

PETE GMP = Petersburg National Battlefield Final General Management Plan (2004)

(title).asp = webpage from NCA Office of Construction Management website, "Site Elements/Features," http://www.cem.va.gov/cem/ocm

* = Based on National Cemetery Administration, "Operational Standards and Measures" (Ver. 2 October 2004); Department of Veterans Affairs, National Cemetery Administration Office of Construction Management website, and individual national cemetery websites.

** = Office of the Quartermaster General, *National Cemetery Regulations* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1931).

*** = Based on *DO #61 NPS National Cemetery Operations*, 36 CFR 12 (National Cemetery Regulations, with cross-references to DVA NCA policies), Nat'l Cemeteries Act of 1973; also PETE GMP.

Note: Interments are not addressed under use because Poplar Grove is closed to new burials except for Civil War remains.

APPENDIX J

TREATMENT ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED FOR GRAVE MARKERS

This appendix includes all treatment alternatives for the grave markers considered in development of this Cultural Landscape Report.

Alternative A: Install New Grave Markers Replicating Historic Changes

This alternative replicates the changes made to the headstones through 1933 (including replacement headstones), and retains flat markers installed after 1933 that are original to the grave. Replacement markers installed after 1933 are returned to their historic upright style of marker. This alternative will thus result in a dominant upright style of headstone with scattered flat markers.

Alternative B: Install New Grave Markers Using Styles Original to the Grave

As with Alternative A, this alternative replicates most grave markers that existed in 1933 while retaining *in situ* those markers original to the grave installed after 1933. In the replacement grave markers, however, this alternative will not retain the record of changes made through 1933. Regardless of whether the headstones were replaced before or after 1933, all markers will be returned to the style original to the grave (e.g., the first-generation recessed-shield headstones broken in the 1915 summer storms and replaced with second-generation recessed-shield headstones will be restored back to first-generation style).

Alternative C: Provide Upright Headstones or Blocks to All Graves
[Selected alternative]

This alternative installs new upright headstones or blocks at all graves with the exception of some of the non-government headstones. Post-1933 graves, including those originally having a flat marker, will receive a General upright headstone. This alternative will provide uniformity with the rest of the cemetery for the post-1933 graves that presently have flat markers..

Alternative to Second-Generation Recessed-Shield Headstones
[Selected]

In any of the three above alternatives, it would be appropriate in the context of the cultural landscape to use the first-generation (Civil War) recessed-shield headstones for the graves that have a second-generation type (Spanish-American War headstone). This substitution in the replacement stones would simplify the replacement process, and would be appropriate because the two styles are so close in appearance. Approximately sixty headstones are the second-generation type, and most of these are replacements of either Civil War headstones or blocks.

Alternatives to Replacement of Unknown Blocks

Because they were not cut but rather sunk in the ground, it may be possible to return the existing blocks ("6x6x30 unknowns") to their historic appearance without replacement. In addition, while most of the blocks have chipped edges, this condition is less apparent than the chipping on the headstones due to the small scale of the blocks. Given that nearly forty percent of the grave markers at Poplar Grove are blocks, alternatives to replacement could potential provide a substantial cost savings while also preserving historic materials.
Note: a subsequent examination of the blocks in 2009 found that as a whole, their deteriorated condition does not warrant their reuse.

Grave Marker Alternatives Not Recommended

1. Resetting Existing Pre-1934 Headstones Upright: This alternative is not recommended due to the deteriorated and altered condition of the existing headstones (bases cut off; chipped, heavily weathered, and cracked). Such damage and alteration is inconsistent with historic and current National Cemetery regulations intended to invoke honor and respect upon each grave. The existing headstones reflect over seventy years of neglect and if set upright would continue to detract from the historic well-maintained character of the landscape. In addition, the headstones were cut off at various angles and heights that would require custom foundations for each stone, most likely making the work of resetting the existing stones upright not economical. Such conditions would also result in inconsistent bases that would detract from the historic uniformity of the headstones.
2. Replacing Blocks with Headstones: The use of blocks for unknown graves is a character-defining feature of Civil War-era National Cemeteries, making clear in the landscape the vast number of unknown burials. Replacement of the blocks with headstones would therefore be incompatible with the historic character of the landscape.
3. Replacement only with Recessed-Shield Headstones and Blocks: This alternative would not retain the historic distinction with the introduction of the General headstone for World War I and later veterans. Although this alternative would not have a marked impact on the historic character of the landscape given the small number of markers to which it would apply, it would blur the historic development pattern of the graves and suggest the cemetery only contained Civil War and Spanish-American War veterans.
4. Replacement Using Flat Markers: This alternative, which was executed at Yorktown National Cemetery in c.1941, would not achieve the treatment objective of returning the grave markers to their historical appearance of upright headstones and blocks.
5. Retaining Existing Conditions (retain all existing grave markers in flush position): This alternative is not recommended because the existing damaged condition of the headstones and blocks does not meet current or historic National Cemetery Regulations; because the headstones and blocks are difficult to locate and read; and because it would not achieve the treatment objective of returning the grave markers to their historical appearance.

Treatment Alternatives for Disposition of Replaced Headstones

A possible conflict between National Cemetery regulations and National Park Service cultural resource management guidelines may arise over the disposition of the existing grave markers (headstones and blocks) where a new/replacement grave marker is installed. National Cemetery regulations require that replaced grave markers will be treated in a manner that prevents their reuse. If they are removed from a grave, the grave marker must be destroyed. In contrast, from a cultural resource management perspective the existing grave markers may be considered as a contributing resource in the revised National Register documentation pertaining to the historic significance of Poplar Grove National Cemetery under Criterion A. However, as documented in the analysis and evaluation section of this report, the existing grave markers do not contribute to the significance of the cemetery under National Register Criterion C in the area of landscape architecture due to a lack of integrity or installation after the period of significance for the landscape.

Given this dichotomy in evaluation of the existing grave markers, there are several alternatives that are appropriate to the treatment of Poplar Grove as a cultural landscape. The appropriateness of these alternatives may require further consideration by other National Park Service cultural resource management disciplines, notably museum objects and archeology.

Alternative A: Retain Existing Grave Markers In Situ

This alternative retains the existing headstones in their flat position, essentially as footstones. The headstones may require a slight shift in location (lower on the grave) to provide room for the proper alignment of the new upright headstone. A minimum of six inches should be maintained between the flat stone and the upright marker. If the blocks (Civil War unknowns) are replaced, the old blocks should be sunk flush with the ground to the side, at the head of the grave.

For the headstones, this alternative would avoid the requirement for destruction because the headstones would not be removed from the grave and their reuse would thus be prevented. (VA Manual M40-3, Chapter 4, Section 11 "Destruction or Removal.") This alternative is also consistent with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards* because the historic resource is retained, preserving the record of change over time. This record may have value where alternative treatments (Alternatives B and C) for the new headstones do not match the historic stone. For example, under Alternative B, where new first-generation recessed-shield headstones is installed at a grave currently with a second-generation type, this old grave marker would remain visible as a record of the change that occurred as a result of the summer storms of 1915.

From a cultural landscape perspective, retention of the existing headstones alongside the new upright headstones will not have a marked visual impact because the old headstones in their position flush with the ground are inconspicuous. Only upon close inspection will the old headstones become visible. From an archeological perspective, this alternative will also not impact the underlying grave. There may be a curatorial concern about material conservation of the old

Figure J.1: Illustration of alternative A for the old markers implemented at the Soldiers Plot of Oakwood Cemetery, Syracuse, New York. The old headstones were laid flush with the ground and new government-issued headstones were installed at the top of the grave. Note that the old headstones recede in the landscape, but remain visible upon close inspection. (SUNY ESF, 2006.)

markers because the stone will continue to suffer from weathering (the horizontal position exposes the inscribed face of the stone to heavier weathering than the upright position). The alternative may also pose an additional maintenance burden to trim around both the upright and flush headstones.

This alternative has been implemented on a few graves at the National Park Service-administered Fredericksburg National Cemetery, where new headstones were installed due to errors in the inscription of the old. (Donald Pfanz, Historian, Fredericksburg-Spotsylvania National Military Park, phone conversation with author, 30 November 2006.) It was implemented on a comprehensive level in c.2000 at the Soldiers Plot of Oakwood Cemetery, Syracuse, New York, a Civil War-era military plot in a private cemetery. Here, the old weathered headstones were laid flush with the ground, and new General headstones were installed at the top of each grave (fig. J.1). Viewed in its entirety, the retention of the old markers has a subtle impact on the historic character of the landscape. This impact is outweighed by the value of retaining the old headstones, which were not replicated in-kind, thus maintaining a visual historical record. The end result would be the same at Poplar Grove, the only difference being the existing grave markers were set flush in the ground many years before.

Alternative B: Burying Existing Grave Markers in Place

This variation on Alternative A would sink the headstones and blocks below grade, essentially making them archeological resources. The headstones would need to be buried to a depth that would prevent heaving and allow for healthy growth of turf. The blocks should be sunk to the side of their existing position at the head of the grave. Given their vertical length of thirty inches, resetting the old blocks in a flush position lower on the grave would have the potential of disturbing the underlying remains. This alternative would avoid the requirement to destroy the grave markers because they would not be removed from the grave and their reuse would be prevented. Drawbacks of this alternative over Alternative A include loss of the visual record of the old markers, and potential archeological impacts resulting from excavation. Benefits over Alternative A may be reduced maintenance (no need to trim around old headstones); a more accurate historic character to the landscape; and material conservation of the old headstones because they would not be as exposed to weathering.

Alternative C: Removal of Existing Grave Markers
[Selected alternative]

This alternative would remove the existing grave markers from their respective graves when the new headstone is installed. In keeping with National Cemetery regulations, this alternative would therefore require some means of preventing reuse of the old grave makers, either through destruction (e.g., grinding up the stones) or through removal to a place where they could not be reused (e.g., burial in a pit outside of the cemetery). This alternative poses a potential conflict with National Park Service cultural resource management guidelines if the old grave markers are considered a contributing resource (under Criterion A) because it would result in the loss of the historic resource (either through destruction or removal from its historic location). Benefits to this alternative over Alternative A would include reduced maintenance (no need to trim around the old headstones) and a more accurate historic character to the landscape. Benefits over Alternative B would include no archeological impacts to the underlying remains.

APPENDIX K

LIST OF RESEARCH CONTACTS

Department of Veterans Affairs, National Cemetery Administration.
Consulted webpage (http://www.cem.va.gov/) containing history of the National Cemetery System and consulted with National Cemetery Administration historians Sarah Leach and Jennifer Perunko.

Department of Veterans Affairs, National Cemetery Administration, Richmond Area.
Met with Lawrence Bibbs, Manager and Program Analyst for Richard area Veterans Affairs (VA) national cemeteries about current treatment and maintenance practices.

Dinwiddie Historical Society, Old Dinwiddie Courthouse, Boydon Plank Road, Dinwiddie, Virginia.
Spoke with county historian Betty Bowen. The historical society does not have any materials on Poplar Grove National Cemetery.

Dinwiddie Library, Appomattox Regional Library System, 14103 Boydon Plank Road, Dinwiddie, Virginia.
Spoke with librarian Joanne Cowden. The library does not have any materials on Poplar Grove National Cemetery in clipping or photographic files. Ms. Cowden also called over to the main regional library in Hopewell, where no additional materials were found.

Library of Congress, American Memory website, http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/index.html.
Searched for photographs on 50thNew York Engineers Camp, Petersburg, Poplar Grove National Cemetery, other National Cemeteries.

Library of Virginia, Richmond (state library and archives).
Consulted web catalogue and online photograph collection. Found a 1939 photograph of Poplar Grove National Cemetery and index to Petersburg newspapers 1797-1877.

National Archives: Archives I (Washington, D.C.) and Archives II (College Park, Maryland).
Searched following collections:

Archives I (Old Military Records)

RG 92.8.1 General Records

RG 92.8.2 Records relating to the administration of national cemeteries

RG 92.8.5 Records relating to the furnishing of headstones

RG 92.10 Records of War Department Commissions Concerned with Military Cemeteries and Battlefield Parks 1893-1923

RG 92.16, .17: Cartographic and Still Pictures

RG 92.7 Records of the Construction Division 1819-1941

RG 92.8 Records of the Memorial Division 1828-1962

RG 159.3 Inspection Report 1814-1939: Biannual Cemetery Inspection Reports

Archives II (Modern Military Records, NPS Records, Still Pictures)

General Correspondence Series

Entry 5, War Department Records (RG 79.2.2)

Poplar Grove: Box 537, Central Files (Stack 150, row 80, compartment 12, shelf 1)

Box 212, H series, NPS files

RG 79.10.4, Records of Yorktown National Cemetery

Still Pictures; photographs of national cemeteries in Virginia.

National Park Service, Denver Service Center, Lakewood, Colorado.
Repository for National Park Service reports and plans of Poplar Grove, 1934-c.1979.

National Park Service, Fredericksburg National Cemetery.
Spoke with Donald Pfanz, Historian, Fredericksburg-Spotsylvania National Military Park, about history and current management of Fredericksburg National Cemetery.

National Park Service, Petersburg National Battlefield archives, temporarily housed at Fort Lee, Hopewell, Virginia, originally at park visitor center.
The archives contain superintendents' letters, the burial record, and cemetery inventories. These materials were researched by Park Ranger Betsy Dinger for documentation as part of her digital database of cemetery records.

National Park Service, Petersburg National Battlefield Headquarters, Hickory Hill Road, Petersburg.
Administrative records for Poplar Grove, c.1957 to present.

National Park Service, Petersburg National Battlefield Park Maintenance.
Spoke with Richard Underwood, park electrician, about current and past maintenance at Poplar Grove. Mr. Underwood has worked at the park and Poplar Grove since 1978. He also conveyed information from his conversation with Leroy Bobbit, retired Petersburg maintenance mechanic, who began work at the park and cemetery in c.1970.

Petersburg Public Library System, William R. McKenney Branch Central Library, 137 S. Sycamore Street, Petersburg.
Searched Research Room (local history room) shelves and card catalogue, and spoke with reference librarian. The library does not have any collections pertaining specifically to Poplar Grove National Cemetery; found some materials in Petersburg history books. The library also has a collection of Petersburg newspapers on microfilm; those prior to 1877 are indexed and were searched for articles on Poplar Grove. Due to lack of index, the post-1877 newspapers were not searched.

Virginia Tech "Imagebase" (collection of online historical photographs), http://spec.lib.vt.edu/imagebase/. Searched under Petersburg, National Cemetery, and Dinwiddie County. No relevant materials found.

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