



The Datum Point

NORTHERN VIRGINIA CHAPTER OF THE
ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF VIRGINIA

July 2005

From the President – Patrick O'Neill

Examples of hats will be at the July meeting, so come to see what we want to buy. **Chapter summer picnic is August 20th (Saturday) at the O'Neill House in Burke (3-6pm or so).** Directions and details in the August issue of the Datum Point. Please get ahold of Ann Wood for certification info. (see notice this page). Short, but sweet!

Next meeting: 7:30 p.m., Wednesday July 13th

This Month's Speaker:

Mike Johnson

Hartwell (44FX1847) and the Search for Tauxenent



Carved soapstone animal effigy dating to ca. A.D. 1340

This month's talk will be on excavations at the Hartwell site near Colchester in southern Fairfax County excavated by Fairfax County archaeologists. It proved to be the largest prehistoric undertaking by Fairfax County archaeologists and contained two, stratified, undisturbed, prehistoric, mussel shell middens at the confluence of Massey Creek and the Occoquan River. The County archeology program spent three years rescuing the site before it was to be destroyed by a shoreline stabilization project. The initial hope was that the midden contained trash from the "king's house,"

Tauxenent, recorded by Captain John Smith in 1608 and on his 1612 map of the Chesapeake. It was the main village of the Dogue (Moyumpse) Indians, which were the last tribe to occupy Fairfax County.

County Happenings in Archaeology

Meadowood Farm – the Saturday crew completed 17 shovel test pits on a prehistoric site next to the pond near the gate. We have named the site Gunston Road Pond #1. We tested the northern ¼ of the landform and still have the rest to test. We recovered a small number of quartz flakes, one unifacially worked piece of quartz, a possible prehistoric potsherd, and some fire-cracked rocks. The site also has a historic component, which so far consists of one small brown stoneware sherd and a wrought nail fragment.

Land Bay A - We have finished lab work on all but a few problem bags of material from the site. Rachel is off on her field school in Israel and has left the fire cracked rock project at the point where we need to determine the nature of any residues and find a way to remove them. We have been in touch with the USGS and have the possibility of professional help with the problem. When Rachel gets back from Israel we should be able to send off anything that can be analyzed. We will also start the excavation of feature 12F, which is wrapped in plastic in the basement.

Certification – by Ann Wood

If you are a candidate for certification, or if you would like to become one, would you please email your name to me at: annpwood@comcast.net. As your new NVC/ASV liaison to the certification program, I would like to set up an email group where we can communicate about what you need to complete the program.

Lithics Conference - Notice

The First Annual Falls Of The Ohio Lithics Conference, sponsored by The Falls Of The Ohio Archaeological Society, will be held on Sat. July 30, 2005, in Louisville, Kentucky. The conference will include presented papers, atlatl throwing, display and exchange of chert samples, & flintknapping. Contact Anne Bader at anne.t.bader@amec.com or [chezmoi@insightbb.com](http://chezmoi.insightbb.com) for more information.

Coleman/Fleshman Farm Cemetery - By Patrick O'Neill

Agnes Casto, from Fayetteville, Fayette County, West Virginia, through a series of personal contacts, approached me for free, volunteer assistance in trying to resolve an issue of whether or not graves located southwest of Fayetteville were civilians or Confederate soldiers. Local lore had always maintained Confederate soldiers were buried on the "Fleshman Farm" after the Battle of Fayetteville in September 1862. Today, a single upright tombstone for William S. Morgan (which appeared to be early 20th century origin) and several ground level markers (placed near the upright marker in the 1980s) were located in the middle of a once-cultivated grass pasture historically called the **Fleshman Farm** (Figure 1). An old walnut tree was also located a few dozen feet from the upright marker. A developer hopes to sell the construction location surrounding the markers to Wal-Mart, and Wal-Mart expressed that if the location was deemed historic, they would move to another nearby location. Mrs. Casto and her small group tried to stop the development, and also got the support of the American Battlefield Protection Program of the National Park Service and the West Virginia Coalition for Historic Preservation.

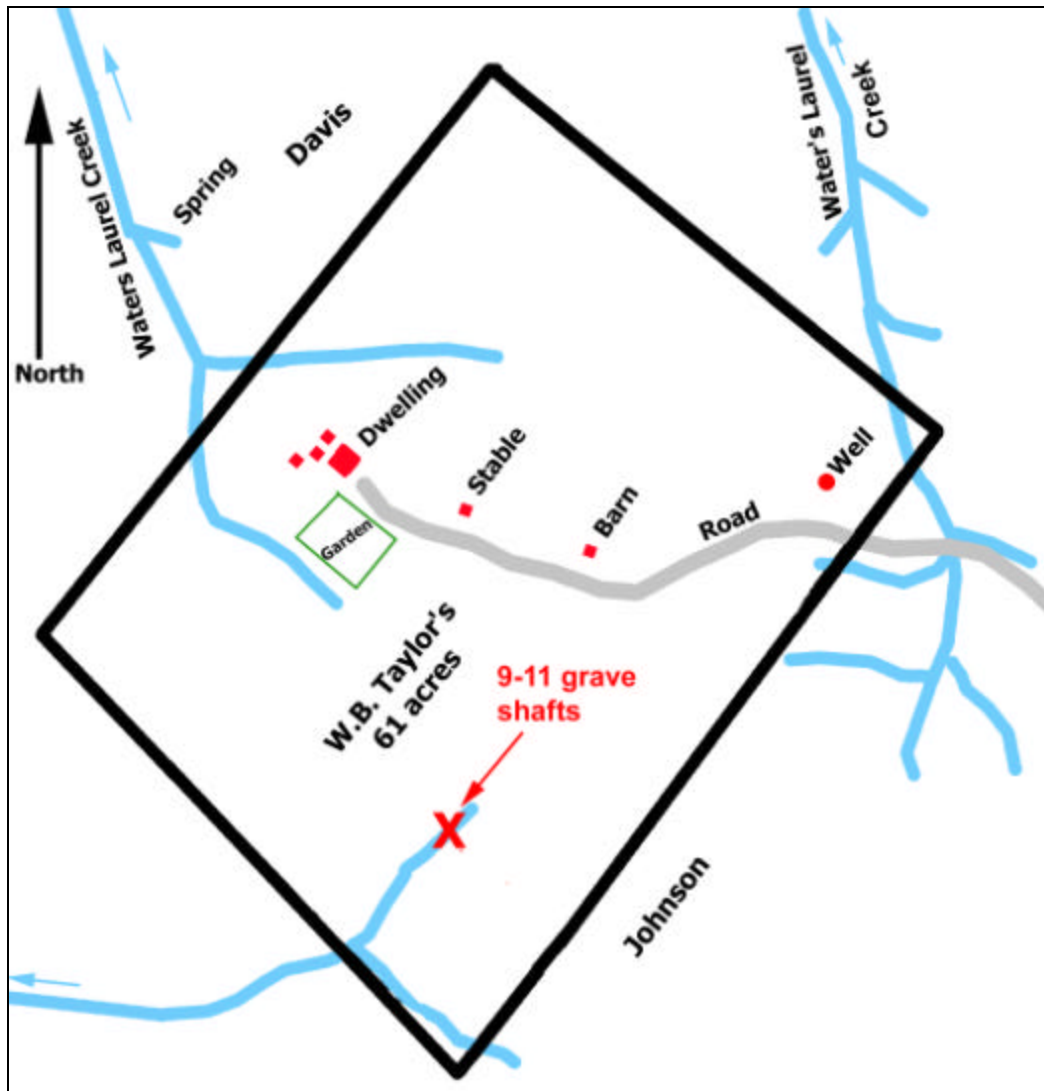


Figure 1: Fleshman Farm in 1894 (Fayette County Deed Book 15:427)

In late 2004, archaeologists hired by the developer stripped trenches in the area around the memorial markers and upright stone and found no graves directly associated with the memorial markers or upright tombstone, **but** did find 9-11 grave shafts off of alignment of some of the markers, a few with unmarked field stones (Figure 2). The report (Updike 2004) stated that since the graves 1) were 3.9 feet deep or deeper, much too deep for battle field graves, 2) had straight sides which indicated non-battle field graves, and 3) had unmarked field stones (battle soldiers had no time to collect stones for markers), that the grave shafts had to represent **civilians**, probably local inhabitants, rather than **soldiers**. The report also stated that no elements of the battle appeared to have left artifacts on the property and therefore the location did not qualify for protection. **This is where I stepped in.**

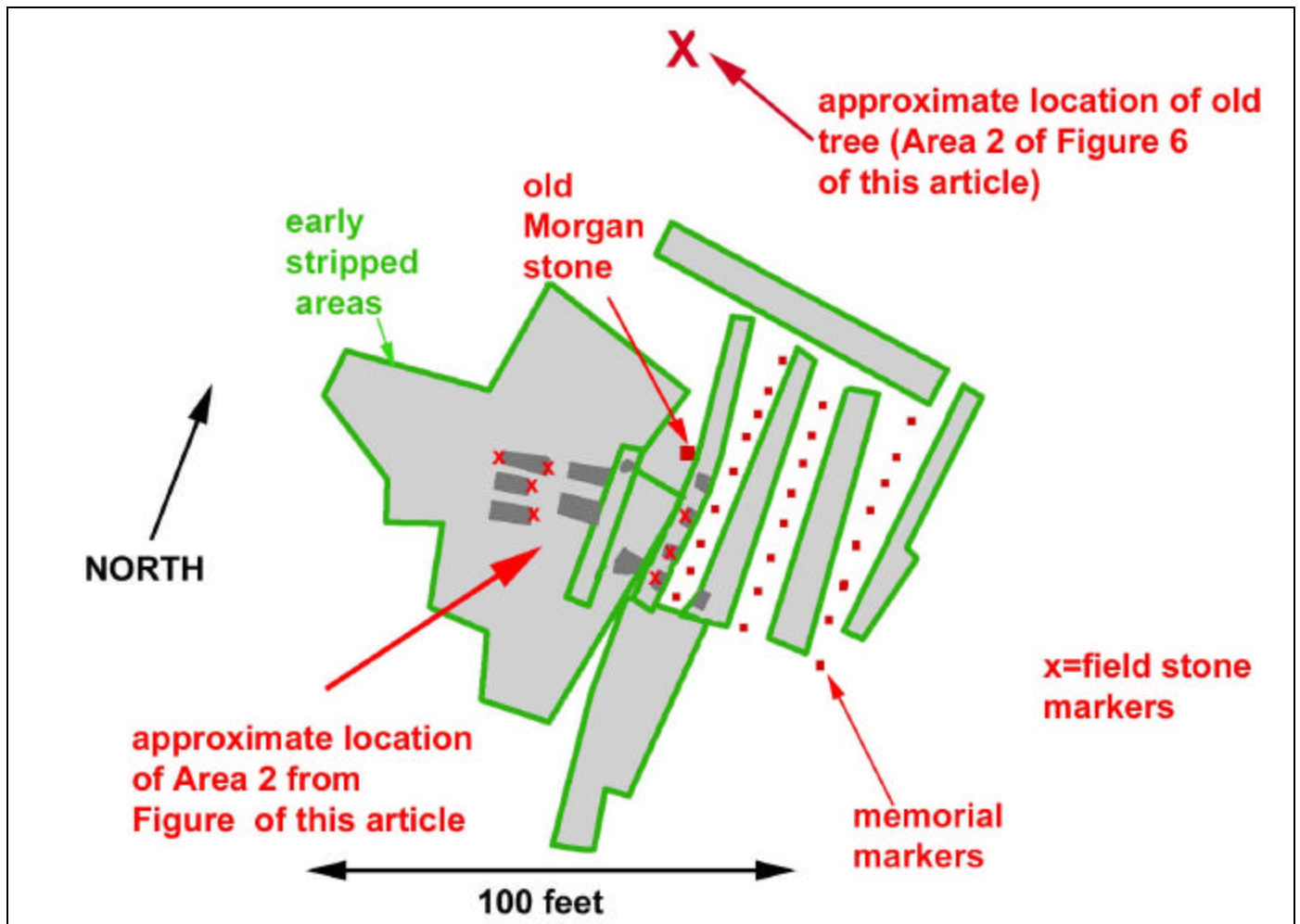


Figure 2: Stripped Area Showing Graves and Markers (modified from Updike 2004)

The three items I outlined above from the report (Updike 2004) were miss-leading statements that I want to clarify for the public. Indeed, sometimes, but not always, battlefield dead are buried in long shallow trenches for reburial at a later date, but several instances exist that individual battle field graves existed. If these individual battle field graves existed, then it is also likely that the shafts had straight side and were not sloppily excavated with irregular outlines. Lastly, there are many cases of unmarked field stones, boards, rifles, bayonets, etc. marking battlefield graves and the presence of unmarked field stones could easily have demarked soldier graves.

To be fair to the developer's archaeologist (Updike 2004), they did not yet have copies of the two major archival documents that came to light after the report was drafted, which drastically changed the balance of events relating to Confederate soldiers being buried within the project area. They are: 1) a 1905 newspaper article, and 2) a 1930s Confederate Cemetery survey report. A 1905 newspaper article reported that a Mr. J.B. Morgan placed an **initialed hemlock board** and **gravestone** (presumably not engraved) at his brother William S. Morgan's burial site when he helped bury him in 1862 (*Fayette Journal* September 28, 1905; Figure 3). The article states that in 1905, Mr. J. B. Morgan returned to Fayetteville and visited the gravesite of his brother on the old Nicholas **Coleman** farm, then known as the **Fleshman** farm. The project area was the only parcel in Fayette County that was owned by **both Nicholas Coleman** during the Civil War and then later owned by a **Fleshman** in 1905 (communication with Lee Estep, Fayette County Historical Society, March 28, 2005). This illustrates that the property J.B. Morgan visited in **1905** is indeed the current project parcel. Mr. Morgan was also to erect a **handsome monument** to his brother and referred to a **half dozen** other soldiers being buried in the same cemetery.

Figure 3 (below) : 1905 Newspaper Article
(Fayette Journal September 28, 1905)

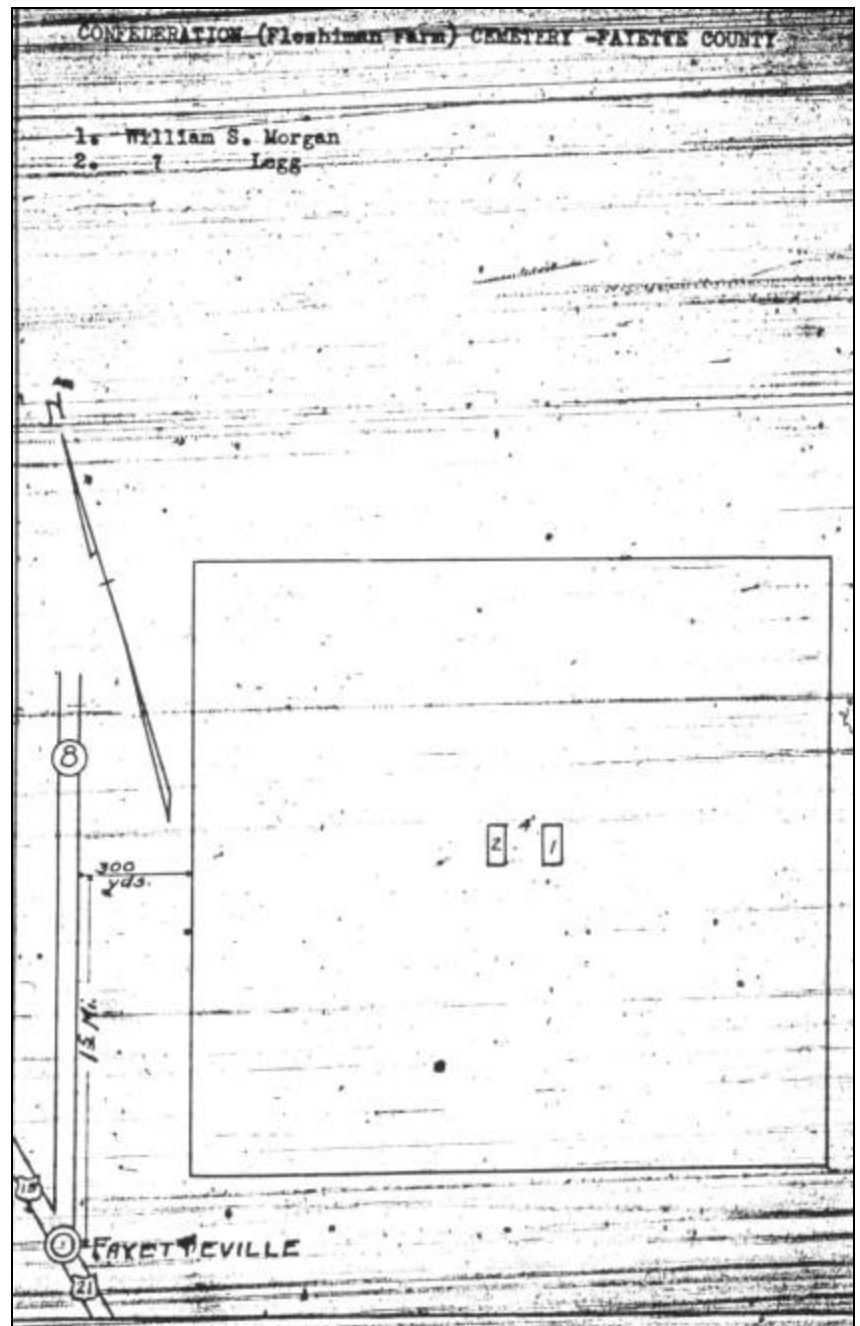
Figure 4 (right): Map of Cemetery in the
1930s (West Virginia Adjutant General
1930s).

AFTER 43 YEARS.

Capt. Morgan Returns to Fayetteville and Locates Grave of His Soldier Brother.

Among the old soldiers in Fayetteville the past week was Capt. J. B. Morgan, 24 Va. cavalry, now living at Grimm's Landing, Mason county. Capt. Morgan returned here after 43 years for the purpose of locating the grave of his brother W. S. Morgan, who was a member of the 86th Va. and who was killed in the battle here Sept. '62. Capt. Morgan's regiment was located at Beckwith when his brother was killed but he came up here and helped bury him, marking the site of the grave with a hemlock board and small stone.

Although he had not visited the grave since 1862 Capt. Morgan remembered well its location on the old Nick Coleman place, now known as the Fleshman farm. There are half a dozen soldiers graves in the old burying ground but Capt. Morgan identified the grave of his brother by finding both the hemlock board and grave stone placed there 43 years ago. Both were covered over with a few inches of earth but the initials on the board could be plainly recognized. Capt. Morgan will erect a handsome monument.



In the 1930s, a survey of Confederate gravesites was conducted by the Adjutant General's Office. This survey recorded a cemetery 300 yards "east" of a point 1.5 miles "north" of Fayetteville, on **Highway 8**, "north" of the intersection of **Highways 8, 19 and 21** (Figure 4 above; West Virginia Adjutant General 1930s). The developer's archaeologist used the 1930s survey to discredit Mrs. Casto, saying the cemetery was obviously north of town, but they were soon to be corrected.

The cemetery in the 1930s report was also located on the **Fleshman** farm. No **Fleshman's** owned land **north** of Fayetteville at that time; Fleshmans only owned the tract surrounding the project area, which was a couple of miles south of town. If the 1930s map directions were turned 180 degrees, a **Fleshman** owned a farm 1.5 miles "**south**" as the crow flies (and not the distance along the road) of the intersection of **Highways 8, 19, and 21** in Fayetteville (communication with Lee Estep, Fayette County Historical Society, March 28, 2005). A point 300 yards "**west**" of the highway would place the cemetery east the old **Fleshman** house and a little to the north of the old lane. The distance is a little short to be exactly where the grave shafts are located, but the map was schematic so certain allowances have to be considered.

Furthermore, the 1930s report listed only two graves in the cemetery (West Virginia Adjutant General 1930s). One grave is stated to be for a Confederate soldier named Legg, although it is unclear if the name appeared on a stone, or if the person was only said to be interred there. A man named League died in the battle (Updike 2004). The other marker in the 1930s report was for a Confederate soldier labeled: WILLIAM S. MORGAN BORN JANUARY 30, 1843 KILLED IN BATTLE AT FAYETTEVILLE SEPT. 10, 1862.



Figure 5: William S. Morgan Stone

So, these two items introduced after the initial round of fieldwork indicated that at least 1 or 2 of the soldiers from the Battle of Fayetteville were buried on the old Fleshman Farm, somewhere within the project area. The upright tombstone for Morgan on the site today could be considered "handsome" and typical of the early 1900s and could be the stone placed there by John Morgan in 1905 (Figure 5). The Morgan marker is also engraved with the exact information recorded in the 1930s report, including abbreviations. This heavily suggests that the upright marker is the one possibly placed there by J.B. Morgan in 1905.

The West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office (WVSHPO) told the developer, based on my letter report (O'Neill 2005a), to search

specific areas on the site. The developer made a small effort to do so, but used a bulldozer instead of a smooth bucket backhoe or grade all, and of course found nothing. The developer also failed to provide the exact location of the new strip trenches. The developer's archaeologist determined that I might be right and therefore no further work was needed (Updike 2005).

Still, the issue was unresolved. Why would someone have placed a soldier two miles from town where the battle took place? I got in contact with an anonymous source (he doesn't want to have his name in print) that has letters from a commander of a soldier from the battle that died just north of Fayetteville but was buried on the **Roach Farm** about six miles south of town! So, there may be several small Confederate Cemeteries from the battle across the landscape around town. Oral histories were taken from several local people, including of Rembrandt Morgan, a grand-nephew of William Morgan, who visited the cemetery in the 1930s (Morgan 2005). At that time, he saw two sandstone markers, one with WSM on it. These graves were in the midst of some shumatz trees. If the upright marker for Morgan was present, it is possible Rembrandt missed it being covered with the honeysuckle vines he described. Rembrandt also mentioned going "right" of the lane presumably as he entered the property from the east, which would suggest to the north of the lane.

A letter report dated January 14, 2005 from William Updike to Mr. Neuhoﬀ illustrated that two local informants (Vicki Wade and James Whitlock) placed the cemetery in its current location, although there was discrepancy between whether the upright marker was there or not (one agreed the other did not). Since that time, another local informant (Mr. H.D. Crist) drafted a map of the farm, and also placed the cemetery where it is today. All these informants combined remember the cemetery from dates ranging from the 1930s to the 1950s. All but Rembrandt Morgan remembered it as being south of the lane in a field. Morgan's mention of only a few graves and the general description of the cemetery match the general descriptions given by the other three. In historic times, the cemetery has always been partially or totally overgrown, and even when a professional archaeologist is looking at a cemetery, only intense clearing and probing shows all stones. Therefore, that some of the informants did not see the upright stone does not mean it was not there.

I was able to get copy of the 1945 aerial photograph, the earliest available for the area, from the National Archives in College Park, Maryland (Figure 6), and the closest to the period covered by all of the informants. By comparing Figures 1 and 6 of this article, you can easily see the rectangular boundaries of the old Fleshman Farm, which would equate to the size of the area needed to be surveyed for the cemetery based on the archival record. I looked for oddities on the 1945 aerial, such as isolated trees, re-growth of shrubs and trees, basically anything that might give me a clue as to areas the farmer was avoiding, since all informants agreed the cemetery was in an isolated clump of brush.

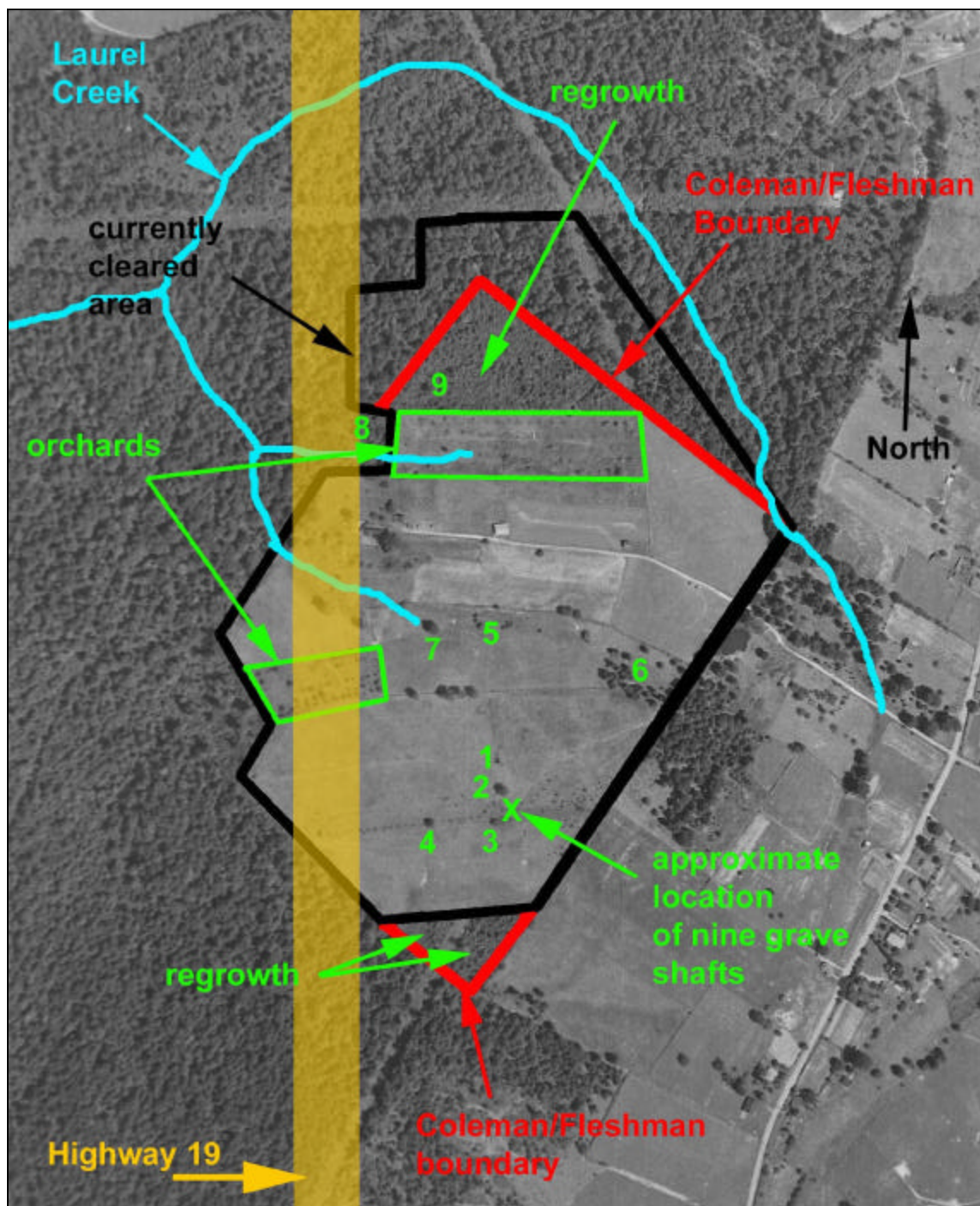


Figure 6: Edited 1945 Aerial of the Project Area (NARA 1945)

I identified 9 areas that I would have examined if I would have had the luxury to do so, in particularly an area (Area 2 on Figure 6) that was very close to the location of the graves found by the developer's archaeologist (O'Neill 2005b). However, by the time I viewed the 1945 aerial and prepared another letter report to the WVSHPO, the developer had cleared the entire area around the cemetery and lowered the surface by several feet (Figure 7).



Figure 7: Cemetery (left edge) and cut bank for development (right edge)

In conclusion, I was able to help Mrs. Casto raise awareness that there were possibly Confederate soldiers buried on the site, backed by archival records, but only field verification through exhumation will prove this (and that is not recommended at this time). She was able to get the developer to provide a buffer around the graves, but the developer has narrowed the buffer tremendously. I am still not happy with the fact that more archaeology was not done and the developer proceeded without permission from the WVSHPO. Fayetteville's town council voted to give the developer the permit as they need the growth, but as Mrs. Casto knows, it came at a price they do not yet comprehend. The WVSHPO stated the developer was at fault for not following recommendations, but has not openly reprimanded them. At this time, I am trying to help Mrs. Casto develop a management plan to be the steward of the cemetery, no matter who is buried there. She raised public awareness, took on the establishment, preserved the cemetery, and I commend her for her integrity. We will never know if others were buried on the property, but for now, 9 to 11 graves have been saved thanks to grass root efforts!!!!

References:

Morgan, Rembrandt

2005 Affidavit describing the cemetery in the 1930s. Signed March 15, 2005.

O'Neill, Patrick L.

2005a Coleman/Fleshman Farm Cemetery. Letter Report to WVSHPO dated April 4, 2005.

2005b Letter Report to Mrs. Casto, June 28, 2005.

Udike, William D.

2004 *Archival, Geophysical, and Archaeological Investigations of a Reported Confederate Cemetery, 46FA62, Located Near Fayetteville, Fayette County, West Virginia*. Prepared for Neuhoft Taylor Architects, P.C. of Chattanooga, Tennessee by Cultural Resource Analysts, Inc. of Hurricane, West Virginia.

2005 *Archaeological Monitoring for the Identification of Confederate Graves at Select Locations within a 60-acre Development Project Near Fayetteville, Fayette County, West Virginia*. Prepared for Fayette Oaks Partners, LLC of Beckley, West Virginia by Cultural Resource Analysts, Inc. of Hurricane, West Virginia.

West Virginia Adjutant General

1930s *Confederation (Fleshman Farm) Cemetery, Fayette County*. Burial and Cemetery Records, Roll 12, Lemley - Patterson. On file at the West Virginia State Library, Charlestown, West Virginia.

NVC/ASV CHAPTER OFFICERS

President	Patrick O'Neill	patrickoneill@erols.com 703-244-6275 (cell)
Vice President	C.K. Gailey	vpnvc@nvcasv.org 703-425-4668
Treasurer	George Monken	gmonken@BraemarNet.com 703-393-6775
Corresponding Sec.	Vicki Monken	same as above
Recording Sec.	Diane Schug-O'Neill	schugoneill@erols.com
Editor	Karen Schweikart	schweikartk@earthlink.net

FCPA ARCHAEOLOGISTS

CHAPTER Sponsors:

Elizabeth Crowell (elizabeth.crowell@fairfaxcounty.gov)
Mike Johnson, Richard Sacchi,
Bob Wharton, John Rutherford call 703-534-3881

Archaeological Educational Programs in N. Va.

Mount Vernon	Esther White	ewhite@mountvernon.org
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Chapter members are encouraged to join our parent organization, the Archeological Society of Virginia.

The Chapter meets at 7:30p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month at the James Lee Center at the above address.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!!!!

The Datum Point

Northern Virginia Chapter
Archeological Society of Virginia
2855 Annandale Rd.
Falls Church, VA 22042

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED