

**Mortuary Research at Behavior Cemetery (9MC498),  
Sapelo Island, Georgia**

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Report Submitted to

The Hog Hammock Community  
Sapelo Island, Georgia

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To this diverse assemblage of contributors, we offer our gratitude.

## Introduction

*“We can’t swing a shovel without waking someone up.”*

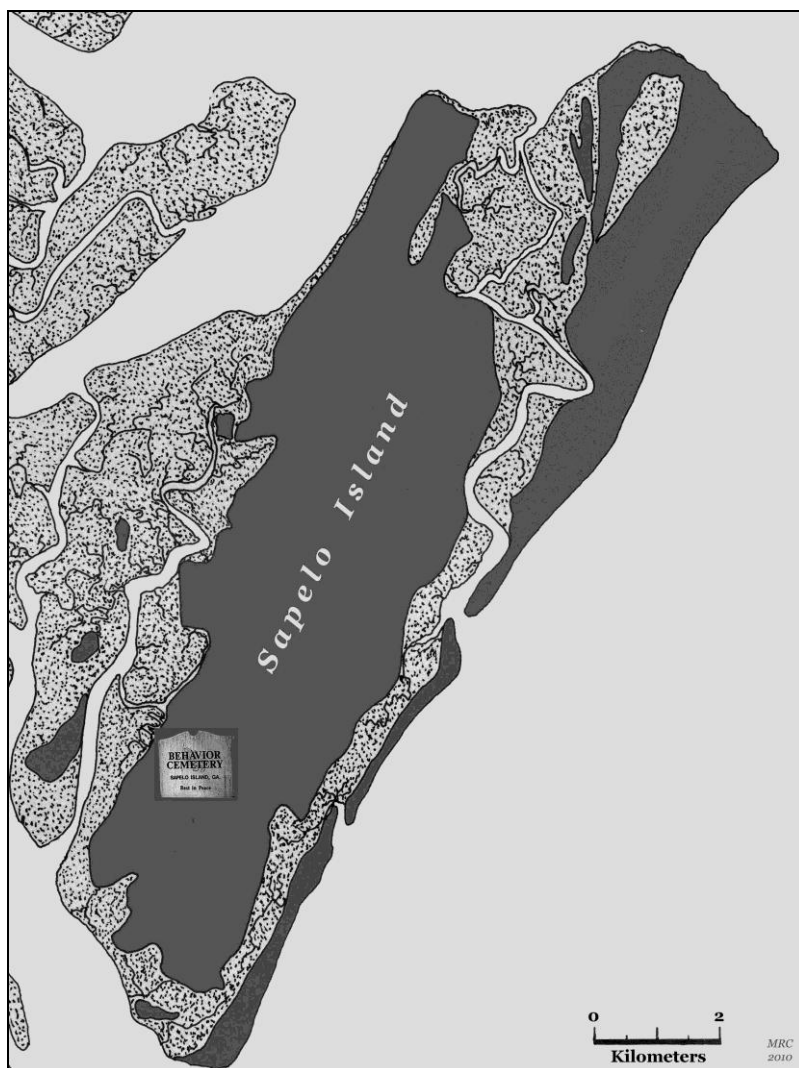
This statement, made by a Gullah-Geechee resident of the Hog Hammock community on Sapelo Island, Georgia, is important for two reasons. First, it speaks to an increasingly common problem occurring at the Island’s Behavior Cemetery: the presence of unmarked graves and disturbances to them from attempts to dig new graves. Second, it provided the impetus for a community-driven program of mortuary archaeological research at Behavior by the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (UTC). This research focused on three goals that were generated through conversations with the residents of Hog Hammock: (1) to record all extant grave markers in the c. five acre Cemetery and to make this information accessible to the local community; (2) to identify the presence of unmarked graves through the application of Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) in order to clear areas for future burials; and (3) to discover and record the spatial and temporal parameters of a 19<sup>th</sup> century slave site within the Cemetery parcel. All three of these goals were achieved, and the rest of this paper explains how they were met.

Under the direction of Dr. Nicholas Honerkamp and in collaboration with Dr. Ray Crook (Professor Emeritus, University of West Georgia), archaeological research at the five-acre Behavior Cemetery (Figure 1) was carried out using students enrolled in a UTC archaeological field methods course during May of 2010. Two consultants assisted the archaeologists. Using a RAMAC/X3M Integrated Radar Control Unit mounted on a wheeled-cart and linked to a RAMAC XV11 Monitor (Firmware, Version 3.2.36), Dan Elliot completed a GPR survey in three areas of the Cemetery, while UTC GIS Specialist Andy Carroll used a Trimble R6 pole mounted, survey grade GPS antennae to generate baseline geospatial coordinates on significant points in the project area. The antenna was linked to virtual reference system for real-time data correction via cell phone on the Verizon 3G network. At the end of the fieldwork Michelle Johnson, director of the Hog Hammock Library, coordinated and publicized an Archaeology Day program that presented the preliminary results of the project to the Sapelo community.

This report begins with a brief historical overview of Sapelo Island and a more in-depth examination of the Cemetery and the slave communities that preceded it. Results of the grave marker reconnaissance are presented, followed by a summary of the GPR data. The archaeological survey of the unused portion of Behavior Cemetery and the discovery of artifacts and features associated with a presumed slave component that pre-dates the Cemetery are then presented. Finally, the advantages of a community-based partnership between the residents of Hog Hammock and the archaeologists are discussed.

## Historical Background

In the last few years, Sapelo Island has seen a flurry of archaeological research programs aimed at understanding the cultural trajectories of diverse groups of former inhabitants. Perhaps this diversity is best illustrated by a symposium at the 2008 meetings of the Society for Historical Archaeology entitled “Five Cultures, One Island: Historical Archaeologies On Sapelo Island Georgia.” Papers presented in this session included discussions of historic-period Native Americans, the Spanish colonial era, British colonial and French occupations, and early and late antebellum Gullah-Geechee slave sites (Crook 2008; Harris 2008; Honerkamp 2008b; Jeffries and Moore 2008; Worth 2008). Added to this is the extensive prehistoric Native American



**Figure 1. Vicinity Map of Behavior Cemetery, 9MC498.**

remains present on the Island, and the numerous postbellum Gullah-Geechee communities that thrived there (Crook et al. 2003; Juengst 1980; Thompson 2007; Worth 1995). However, little research has been devoted exclusively to the historic burial practices and cemeteries of the Island's inhabitants.

The Behavior Cemetery is a significant part of the cultural landscape and is of on-going importance to Sapelo's Saltwater Geechee community. It is a landmark of considerable public interest that is shrouded in rich history. In recognition of its importance, Behavior Cemetery was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1996 (Thomas 1996). As emphasized in the National Register Nomination Form (pp. 6 – 7), this cemetery has the “potential to yield an enormous amount of information about the burial customs of the African-American communities on a coastal barrier island. The African-American burial customs include the laying of objects on the graves, as evidenced by recent burials. This practice has continued for some time. The cemetery's bearing the same name as the c.1865 and thus antebellum slave community also links it to the antebellum slave quarters of the Thomas Spalding Plantation which were in this area.”

More is known today about the antebellum slave community named Behavior than when the National Register research was completed. As the result of archaeological survey and excavation, in concert with documentary and oral history research, the location of the Behavior settlement is known and two small slave cabins have been defined through excavation (Crook et al. 2003, Crook 2008). One of three slave communities associated with Thomas Spalding's Sapelo plantation, Behavior appears to have been established shortly after Spalding purchased his 4000-acre South End tract in 1802. A closely associated community, later known as New Barn Creek, probably also was part of the original Behavior settlement. The community was self-styled in layout, lacking the formally structured linear plan characteristic of slave quarters more commonly found along the Georgia coast where settlement layout was defined by the plantation owner. Slave dwellings at Behavior were small wattle-and-tabby-daub huts and spatially dispersed, reflecting creolization as well as a significant degree of social and economic autonomy. The Behavior settlement may best be considered a village designed and built by enslaved Geechee.

As shown on a geo-referenced overlay of an 1868 map (*U.S. Coast Survey of Doboy Sound and Vicinity*, surveyed by W.H. Dennis), the Behavior cemetery would come to be located in a wooded area immediately west of the northern end of the Behavior settlement and just south of the New Barn Creek settlement (Figure 2). Both settlements are shown in the same locations on an earlier 1857 map (*Topographical Reconnaissance of Sapelo Island, Georgia*, surveyed by H.S. DuVal), but the frequency and placement of individual structures are somewhat different on the two maps. It is important to note that both maps show an absence of standing structures within this wooded patch, but neither the pre-Civil War nor post-emancipation map denotes a cemetery there. Each map should be considered a temporal snapshot of landscape details, but neither can be assumed to accurately reflect settlement details in the area over the entire span of its occupation since the early 1800s.

The emancipated residents of Behavior began to leave the community after the Civil War, most establishing new communities or small homesteads elsewhere on Sapelo Island. This movement evidently occurred over several years, rather than it being a sudden mass exodus. Some, particularly the frail and elderly, remained in their old community. For example Carolina and Hannah Underwood, two of Spalding's early slaves who were probably brought to Sapelo from the Bahamas, would reside in the New Barn Creek section until their deaths after a house fire in 1873 when both were about 98 years old (see Humphries 1991:134). Bilali and Phoebe, two of the most influential and famous of the early enslaved Geechee, and with many descendents within the modern Geechee population, almost certainly lived in the Behavior settlement (see Crook 2007). However, an elderly Bilali would die before emancipation, in about 1857. The date of Phoebe's death is unknown. Based on entries in Archibald McKinley's journal (Humphries 1991), some Geechee appear to have lived at Behavior well into the 1870s. However, there is no mention of a cemetery at Behavior during this period (June 1869 – April 1877).

The original slave cemetery on Sapelo Island was called New Orleans. While its exact location now is unknown, it was very likely near the banks of New Orleans Creek on the eastern side of the south end of the island. This would have been the final resting place for Bilali, probably Phoebe, Carolina, Hannah, and scores if not hundreds of other early Geechee. New



Figure 2. Locations of the Behavior and New Barn Creek Settlements in 1868, with later cemetery location indicated.



Orleans continued to be used as a burial place for several years following the Civil War. Oral traditions indicate that Sampson Pullen (aka Old Man Sampson) was the last to be buried at New Orleans, after which the conditions of a ditch at the cemetery's gate made entry impossible (see Crook et al. 2003). The date of his death is currently unknown. However, Sampson Pullen is listed on the 1870 U.S. Census and Sam Pullen, presumably the same person, is listed on the 1880 U.S. Census. On both censuses he is listed as being 75 years old, which is not an unusual discrepancy for census information during this period. Unfortunately most of the records, including those of Sapelo Island, of the following census of 1890 were destroyed in a fire in the Commerce Department building, Washington, D.C., in 1921 (see Blake 1996).

Currently available information indicates that the cemetery at Behavior began to be used sometime between 1880, when Sampson Pullen was listed on the U.S. Census, and 1889, when Isabella Robinson was buried in the graveyard. It is presumed that there was little if any overlap in the use of New Orleans and Behavior as cemeteries. Earlier graves, in both New Orleans and Behavior, may have had wooden or other perishable markers.

Traditional Gullah and Geechee beliefs and burial customs have an effect on the locations of their cemeteries, which are normally placed in unoccupied wooded areas. It may be expected that no one lived near New Orleans or Behavior during their use as graveyards. At death the physical body is buried, but the spirit of the deceased remains active and may even be mischievous and tantalize the living. Spirits must be appeased and not disturbed. To satisfy the spirit, and to keep it from roaming too far from the cemetery, personal items and other objects are placed on the grave. Nevertheless, shadows and black dogs associated with spirits persist near cemeteries and most Geechee will go out of their way to avoid them (see Georgia Writers' Project, Savannah Unit 1940; Jones-Jackson 1987; Bailey 2000; Crook et al 2003).

Sometimes erroneously called "grave decorations," the placement of spirit offerings such as dishes and pitchers on top of graves is a long-standing tradition that probably reflects the continuation of what was originally an African custom (see e.g. Pollitzer 1999). However, this practice usually has been treated as quaint or a curiosity by uninformed outsiders (Figure 3). Most of the offerings now have been removed from the graves at Behavior, inexplicably (and illegally) taken by visitors as souvenirs. These unwelcomed guests might be surprised to realize that some very unhappy spirits are attached to their stolen souvenirs.

Those who approach the gate to enter Behavior Cemetery ask permission today just as they have in the past. As Sapelo's Cuffy Wilson said long ago (Georgia Writers' Project, Savannah Unit 1940: 165):

*Wen yuh hab a fewnul eben today, yuh hab tuh ax leab tuh entuh duh cimiterry gate. Duh spirit ain gonuh let yuh in lessn yuh ask leab ub it.*

### **Gravestone Survey and Documentation: Methods and Results**

As indicated by historian Kenneth Thomas in his National Register nomination, Behavior Cemetery "...is informal in layout, with family "plots" in evidence, but with many unmarked graves. All graves are informally arranged, not in rows as one finds in more urban cemeteries" (1996:3). The informal nature of the grave arrangements, the inevitable decay and damage to some headstones over time (some of which are made of concrete), the use of wooden markers, and the presence of numerous unmarked graves creates considerable challenges when attempting to inventory graves at the Cemetery.





Photograph by W. Robert Moore

#### STRANGE CUSTOMS PREVAIL IN NEGRO CEMETERIES

The graves are decorated with dishes, lamps, alarm clocks, and even coin banks and other possessions of the dead. It is stated that the alarm clocks, such as the one seen at the left, are to awake the person on Judgment Day (see text, page 251).

**Figure 3. Picture and description of a grave at Behavior as presented in an article in National Geographic Magazine (Moore 1934).**

The UTC survey of extant gravestones at Behavior Cemetery began during the first week of the field school and continued until the end of the project. Documentation comprised three separate but interrelated components. First, the location of the southwest corner of each headstone was recorded using a total station and data collector. This data was combined with highly accurate Trimble GPS readings of critical points (such as the Cemetery corners and gates) to create a geospatially referenced map of the gravestone locations. A unique identification number was automatically assigned to each gravestone by the SurveyPro software program on the data collector, and a small flag with the identifying number was placed next to each stone for later reference. Information was then hand recorded on standardized forms that contained the assigned identification number, material, first and last names, dates, inscriptions, dimensions, and facing direction; the latter information was determined using a hand-held compass. When present, mortuary art was hand sketched on the forms. Finally, each gravestone was photographed with a digital camera.

A total of 375 stones and markers were recorded in this manner, along with a small number of additional features such as footstones (usually not photographed), an iron artesian

well pipe, and two upright wooden planks that may or may not mark the location of actual burials. Thirty-eight (9.2%) stones or metal funeral home markers that were illegible were also noted. The gravestone/marker locations appear in Figure 4 as red dots. This map was digitized for use in a web-based data base that shows the grave headstone locations with pop-up links to the associated names, dates, inscriptions, etc. A grave marker information table, arranged alphabetically by name, is also available with links to marker photographs. The location for this resource is at: <http://zog.utc.edu/~vislab/Behavior%20Cemetery/>. This link is quite useful for locating specific graves since it incorporates accurate geospatial data. Thus, family and friends of individuals buried at the Cemetery can easily locate specific graves by using these digital tools. The authors are working with Michelle Johnson of the Hog Hammock Public Library to include this link on the Library's web page.

### **Comparisons With Previous Burial Inventories**

The first systematic attempt to generate a burial inventory for Behavior apparently occurred around 1997 and was carried out by the Lower Altamaha Historical Society (LAHS). This report, edited by Mattie Gladstone (2000), is 17 pages long and includes hand-drawn maps that divide the Cemetery into seven arbitrary sections. A total of 275 names are listed, with the earliest grave being that of Isabella Robinson and dating to 1889,<sup>1</sup> while the latest year of death is 1997. A surprisingly robust total of 116 entries are listed as unmarked, with an additional 21 noted as illegible, but some of these were funeral home markers; in fact, 20 of these relatively fragile markers (noted as "FHM") appear in the 1997 inventory. If some of these FHMs were not replaced by more substantial headstones, the associated graves could easily become lost. Despite these uncertainties, the LAHS inventory is an important document, as it constitutes an initial snapshot of what was present in the Cemetery during the late 1990s. As such, interesting comparisons with the UTC inventory are possible, and some of the differences between the two inventories are briefly explored below.

A second Behavior database has also been created. Derived in part from the 1997 inventory, a revised digital version now exists as a LAHS-sponsored searchable web site. This digital inventory (see <http://www.glynngen.com/cemetery/mcintosh/behavior/>), edited by webmaster Amy Hedrick, is occasionally updated by the LAHS, with the latest date of death reported as 2008. However, it should be kept in mind that unlike the original hardcopy inventory, the 2008 version is more comprehensive since it includes burials derived from documentary sources in addition to gravestones. Thus, it would be expected that the number of recorded burials at Behavior differ between the two LAHS sources, as well as the UTC inventory. This is indeed the case, as illustrated in Table 1, which enumerates some of the overall inventory results that have

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<sup>1</sup> By way of contrast, Thomas (1996:6) states that the earliest reported gravestone for Behavior was 1890. It should also be noted that a concrete marker for Lulam (or Lula M) Wilson appears in the cemetery with a birth date of September 18, 1820 and September 8, 1852 as the date of death. This is presumed to be a memorial marker that was erected in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as concrete would not be used in 1852.

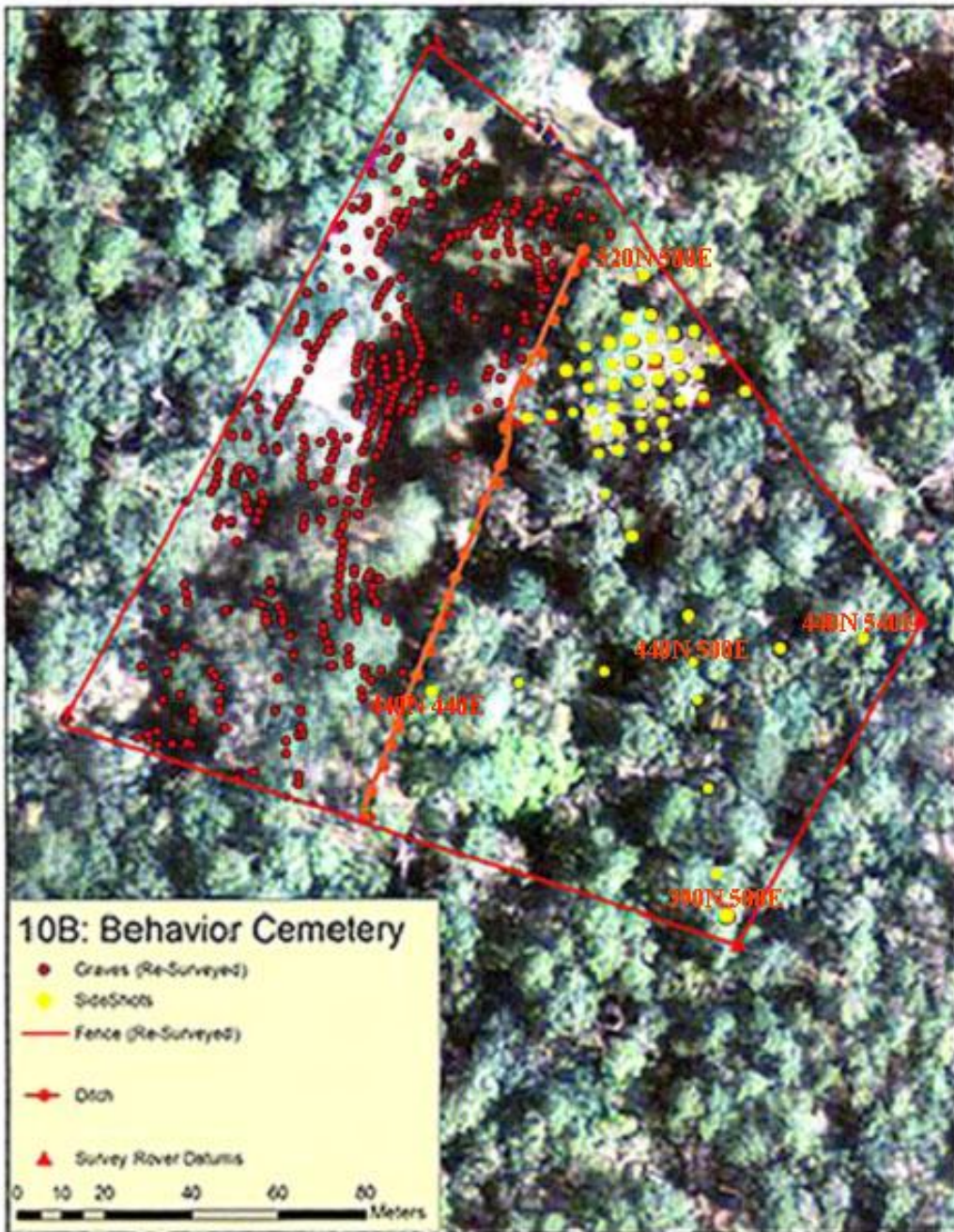


Figure 4. Behavior Cemetery Project Map.

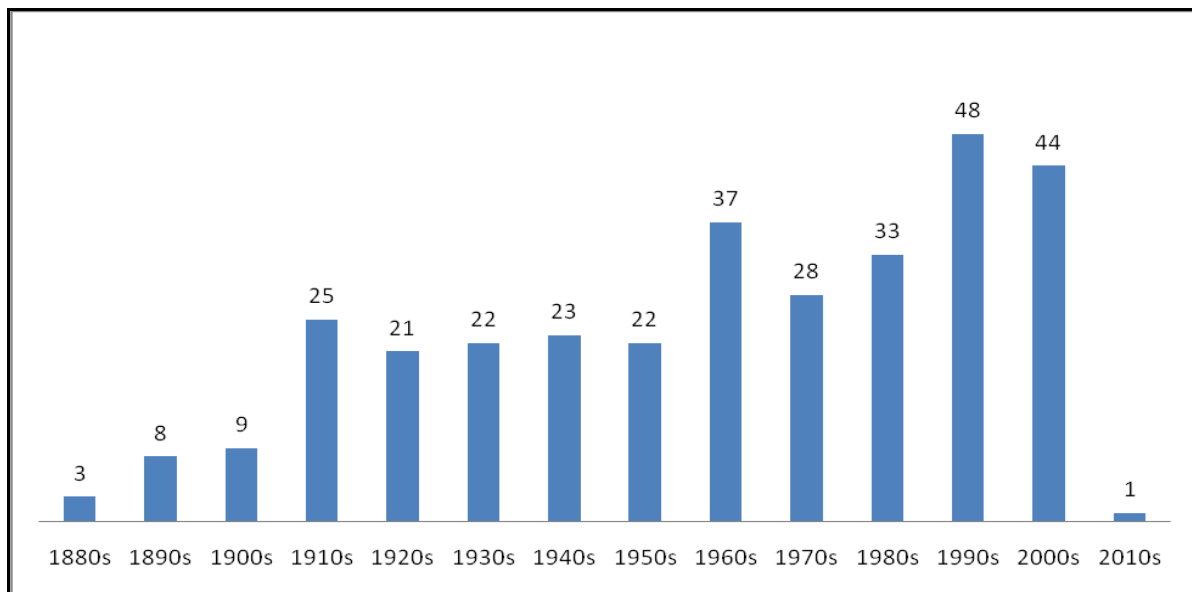
been generated from the different sources and/or time periods for each database. While the later burial-date differences are obviously a function of the year each inventory was produced, the differences in recorded graves between the UTC 2010 and especially the LAHS 1997 surveys are striking. Even including the 58 post-1997 burials recorded by UTC, the 2010 inventory has far fewer graves than either of the previous inventories. Unmarked or illegible stones constitute the most significant contrast, but cannot account for such a large difference, especially since the

**Table 1. Behavior Cemetery Burial Inventory Summaries, 1997 - 2010.**

<u>Source</u>	<u>Marked Graves</u>	<u>Unmarked/UID</u>	<u>Earliest Date</u>	<u>Latest Date</u>
LAHS 1997	412	137 (33%)	1889	1997
LAHS 2008	499	133 (27%)	1889	2008
UTC 2010	375	38 (11%)	1889	2010

1997 survey seems to have been an on-the-ground inventory. The ultimate reasons for this disparity are unknown.

It should be emphasized that besides having a practical utility for locating gravestones throughout the Cemetery, the UTC gravestone inventory also possesses important research potential. Table 2 illustrates mortality trends that can be derived from this data. Relative increases in burials occur during the 1960s, 1990s, and 2000s, as indicated by actual gravestone dates. However, while the LAHS 2008 inventory indicates similar increases in the 1960 and 1990 decades, it also records a considerable spike in burials during the 1920s: rather than the 21 internments recorded by UTC, nearly 90 burials are listed for that decade by the LAHS. While the scope of this report does not allow us to pursue this large disparity, documenting such differences at least provides a first step in constructing and testing explanations for them.

**Table 2. UTC Behavior Cemetery Burial Frequencies By Decade, 1889 – 2010.**

Another interesting result of the inventory is seen in the data on gravestone orientation. Since the carved surface of each gravestone was recorded according to direction, it is possible to discern possible orientation patterns. All the stones were placed on the west end of each grave, as would be typical of Christian practices, including creolized African-Americans/Geechee, with the Biblical referent of positioning the deceased for rebirth on Judgment Day; the ability to rise

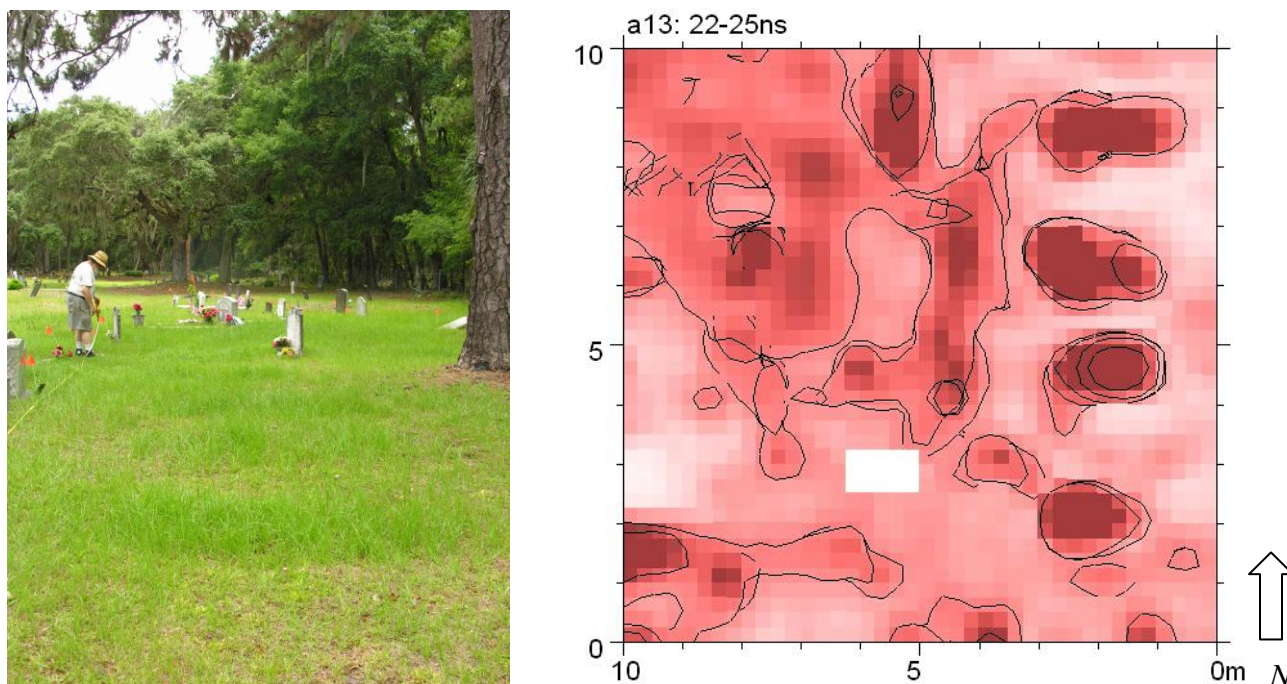


without having to turn around at the call of Gabriel's trumpet. There may have been additional significance as well for the slaves and freedmen – east to west positioning also was the direction of home, Africa.

The majority of stones (166) were carved on the west face, while the next highest frequency (74) was found on the eastern face. Fifty-four stones faced the southeast, 43 faced the northwest, 17 faced the southwest, and only 3 faced the northeast; the rest were undetermined due to disturbance. This variation may be due in part to individual family plots tending to adhere to the earliest gravestone orientation. Another possibility is that the differences reflect seasonal variation in the position of the sunrise. What is clear is that the standardization that is often found in commercial cemeteries is absent at Behavior; family and tradition take precedence over homogeneity.

### Ground Penetrating Radar Survey: Methods and Results

The search for unmarked graves relied on ground penetrating radar provided by remote sensing consultant Dan Elliot. Due to time constraints, no ground-truthing with a backhoe was undertaken. Two noncontiguous areas in the Cemetery were investigated. Near the utility shed, in the northwest corner of the Cemetery, four linear depressions were visible. Oriented east-west on the long axes, they were almost certainly unmarked adult burials. As shown in Figure 5, the



**Figure 5. Suspected Unmarked Graves at Behavior. Left, Dan Elliot lays a GPR grid next to differential grass growth marking possible grave locations. Looking south. Right, GPR results for the same four graves.**

GPR anomalies for this 10 x 10 m section strongly echo this attribution: the even spacing and consistent orientations of the four anomalies appear between meters 1 and 3 (east-west) and 1 and 9 (north-south). In essence, the correspondence between the GPR anomalies and these

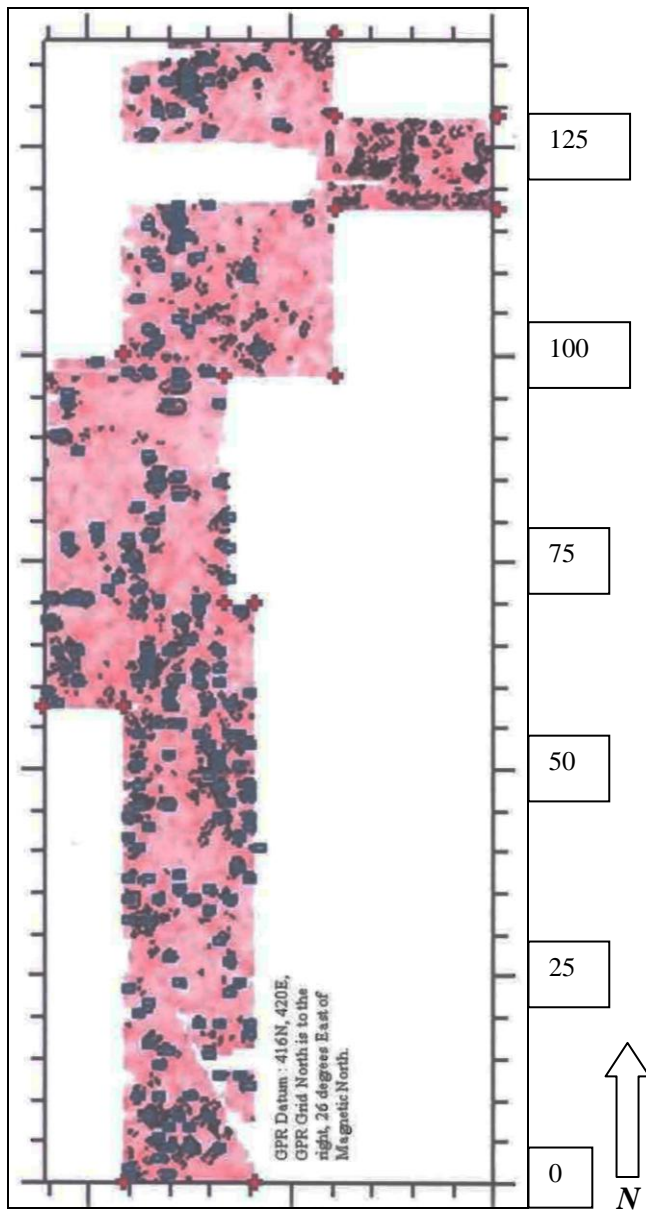
suspected unmarked graves provided a positive test for identifying numerous other unmarked graves at the site. Most of the GPR work was concentrated on an extensive area just to the east of the extant gravestones. A north-south drainage ditch that may have been dug during the Coffin era<sup>2</sup> was used as the arbitrary eastern edge of this survey (see Figure 4). The area lying between the extant graves and the ditch has seen the most pressure in recent years for gravesite expansion. Also included in the GPR survey was a block extending east of the ditch that contained relatively high artifact and feature densities, as generated from the archaeological survey. A total of 5,567.75 meters of radargrams was collected from these samples. The LAMAR Institute's web link at [http://www.thelamarinstitute.org/images/PDFs/publication\\_155.pdf](http://www.thelamarinstitute.org/images/PDFs/publication_155.pdf) provides the complete GPR report.

The large-scale GPR results appear in Figure 6. Although this image is quite busy in terms of anomalies, several conclusions can be drawn from it. First, there are apparently over 180 unmarked graves present, mostly to the east of the marked graves; Figure 7 illustrates the relationship between graves that are marked and unmarked. Although some anomalies may represent the remains of tree roots or other non-burial features, the majority are, in all likelihood, recording the locations of individual unmarked burials. Second, it is probably the case that unmarked burials extend east beyond the trench to an unknown distance (especially at the 50 m north section of the GPR sweep). This is undoubtedly the case in much of the rest of the Cemetery, as "open" areas on the western portion of the GPR sweep contained numerous anomalies. The full extent of these graves can only be determined through additional remote sensing and/or trenching. Third, no obvious burials appear in the slave cabin area to the east of the trench, but in this location a number of interesting linear anomalies are present there. As discussed below, this seems to indicate that despite the reliance on a "short" five-meter survey interval, much still remains to be discovered in the slave cabin vicinity.

The GPR-based map shown in Figure 6 was presented by the authors to Hog Hammock community leaders in a June 10, 2010 meeting on Sapelo. Although the full extent of the unmarked graves is unknown, enough has been learned to recommend that the entire area immediately east of the marked graves up to the North-south drainage ditch be excluded from any future grave excavations. To this end, the UTC archaeologists concentrated a significant part of the fieldwork on creating a viewscape into the eastern half of the Cemetery property. It was hoped that cutting trees and clearing underbrush would aid in bringing about a transition in how Behavior is used in the future by the Gullah-Geechee community: future burials could be located in an area that might be called "New Behavior." This gradual transition will undoubtedly be a difficult one, as it requires family plots to be spatially divided between extant and future internments. Such a transition will also require regular maintenance of the underbrush to make the eastern half of the property suitable for burials. If the eastern parcel becomes overgrown, it simply will not be used, and unmarked graves will continue to be disturbed in Old Behavior.

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<sup>2</sup> This information was recounted by Stanley Walker, as told to him by his grandfather, Hix Walker. The ditch was constructed by Geechee men during the early 1920s to drain the cemetery of standing water.



**Figure 6. GPR Anomalies On the East Edge of the Extant Cemetery. The easternmost block is in the slave cabin vicinity. Each tick = 5 m.**



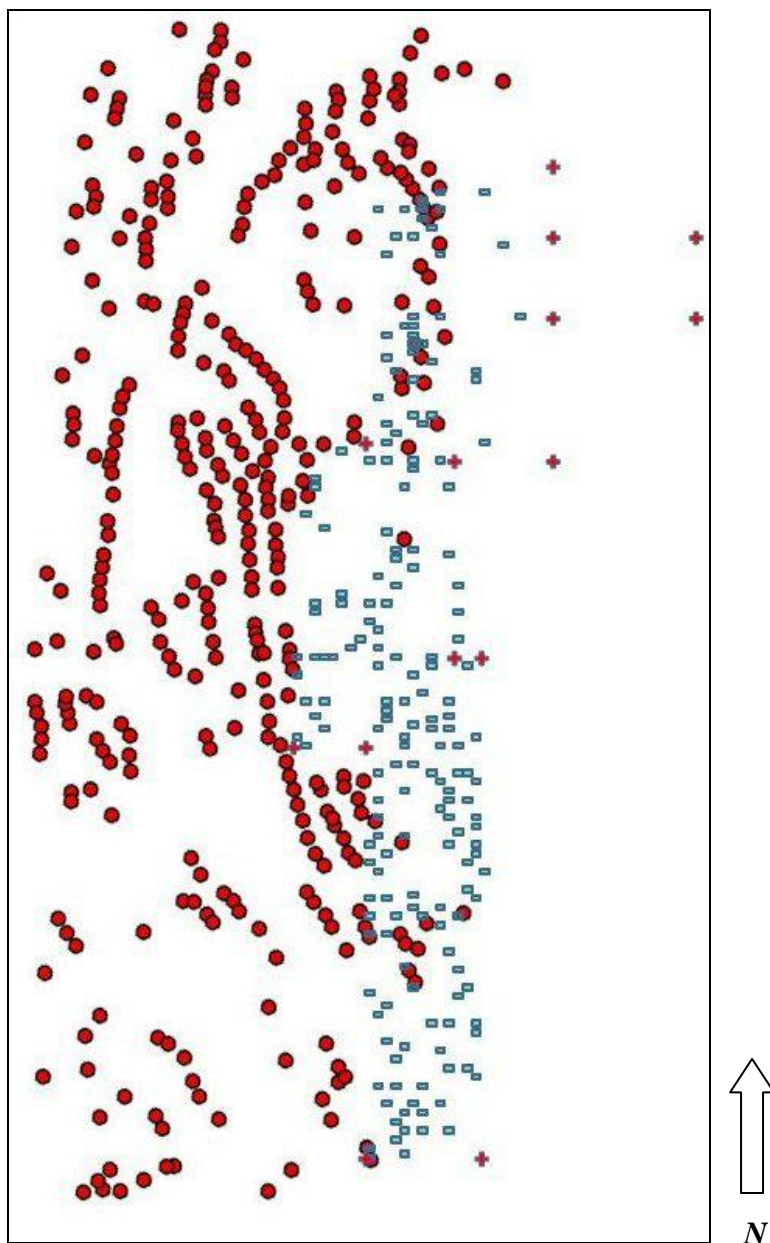


Figure 7. Marked and Unmarked Graves At Behavior Cemetery. Red dots = marked; blue squares = unmarked.

### Behavior Cemetery Archaeological Survey: Methods and Results

The third important objective for the Behavior Cemetery project was to investigate the remains of a suspected slave cabin site near the northern edge of the Cemetery property. This goal was directly inspired by Cornelia Bailey's long-term interest in the presence of a small mound of plaster in this area. In response, the authors designed a modified systematic survey for the unused section of the Cemetery to provide information that focused on two goals. The first was to determine the structure and function of the presumed slave occupation in the area immediately adjacent to the tabby deposit. A surface reconnaissance over the entire eastern half

of the property failed to locate any other significant archaeological remains, so a subsurface sample was generated. Figure 4 illustrates the location of the 53 survey units that were excavated, represented by yellow dots. A grid oriented to magnetic north was established using a total station, with the 500N 500E point located approximately 10 m south of the center of the tabby pile. From this point the grid extended 120 m south to 390N 500E, at the fence line near the southeast corner of the property, and 30 m north to 520N 500E; the east-west line of the survey units extended from 440E to 540E on the 440N line.

Survey units measuring 50 cm<sup>2</sup> were initially placed every 20 m along the 500E center line, but this interval was narrowed to 10 m and eventually 5 m when cultural materials were encountered in the northern segment of the grid. In addition, the 520N 500E unit was expanded into a 1 x 1 m unit due to the presence of a feature. However, this feature turned out to be natural rather than cultural in origin, and both the survey unit and the expanded 1 x 1 m were devoid of artifacts. Screens with 1/4 inch mesh were used and all survey unit excavations were normally taken to 50 cm below surface (cmbs). Most of the survey units encountered hardpan and/or sterile soil well above this depth, and the vast majority of the recovered artifacts were found within the first 25 cmbs. A total of 29 (55%) of the survey units proved to be artifact-free; in fact, survey units placed south of the 480N line and east-west on the 440N line (see Figure 4) were uniformly sterile. However, the small tabby deposit that had originally piqued Cornelia Bailey's interest quickly became the main focus of the survey effort at the Cemetery, and a very tight grid was eventually constructed around it. The artifact assemblage and several features that were discovered are described below. Curation of the assemblage will occur at the Antonio J. Waring, Jr. Archaeological Laboratory at the university of West Georgia.

As might be inferred from the distribution of survey units shown in Figure 4, the northern end of the project area produced the majority of artifacts. This area is also the location of at least two structures, as discussed below. Table 3 presents the artifact inventory generated from the survey (based on South's 1977 classification format), while Table 4 indicates the modest frequencies (27) and weights (177.9 gm) for historic ceramics recovered from the site; several ceramic types are illustrated in Figures 8 and 10 (these tables and figures include surface finds). Such low artifact occurrences indicate a short occupation span, and the preponderance of whitewares produced a Mean Ceramic Date (MCD) of 1847.8 for 23 dateable sherds. However, the presence of a single fragment of tin enameled earthenware as well as the transfer printed pearlware sherd at least suggest the possibility of an earlier occupation (Noel Hume 1974). So also does the partially reconstructed wine bottle seen in Figure 9. According to Noel Hume (1974:68), the form of this highly patinated dark green glass bottle most closely resembles an example that dates to the 1790s, which is roughly consistent with the two "early" sherds.

Only two utilitarian sherds of salt glazed stoneware were included in our sample. While somewhat surprising, this low frequency may be a reflection of small sample bias. An unusual aspect about the refined wares is the presence of four sherds of brown transfer printed whiteware (3) and pearlware (1); the minimum number of vessels (MNV) represented is four. (The small pearlware sherd exhibits only a minute streak of brown and could possibly be hand painted.) Shown in Figure 10 with the single fragment of tin enameled earthenware, these types are generally rare at antebellum sites on Sapelo: 3 (out of 390, or 0.8%) were found out the South End, none were encountered at High Point, and the six sherds noted at Chocolate account for just 2.4% of the ceramic assemblage there (Honerkamp 2008a; Honerkamp 2009; Honerkamp et al. 2007). The presence of such sherds at Behavior is especially interesting since two nearby

**Table 3. Behavior Cemetery Artifact Groups and Classes.**

	<u>Count</u>	<u>Weight</u> (grams)
Kitchen Group		
Ceramics	27	177.9
Bone	19	6.7
Green wine bottle	44	555.3
Green vial	1	17.1
Other glass, rnd sect	13	35.5
Other glass, flt sect	6	3.7
Charred Nuts	2	1.9
Kettle foot (?), iron	1	9.5
Architecture Group		
Nails, cut iron	7	29.1
Nails, UID iron	8	22.2
Tabby plaster	4249	8383.9
Impressed tabby	564	1717.2
Tabby mortar	188	128.0
Shell	6416	7890.9
Brick	217	2157.3
Brick w/ tabby	1	5.1
Slate	1	8.1
Ballast stone, various	31	102216.4
Clothing Group		
Button, brass	1	2.8
Bead, red faceted	1	0.4
Arms Group		
Shot, lead	1	1.2
Sprue, lead	1	1.6
Sheath, lead	1	6.3
Tobacco Pipe		
5/64 pipe stem	4	4.7
White clay bowl	1	0.8
Activities Group		
Lead splash	2	67.3
Strike-a-light, flint	1	55.5
UID iron	83	82.7
Wire, iron	3	2.0
Flat iron	1	0.6
Coral	2	3.4
Miscellaneous		
Aboriginal Ceramics	1	1.0
Modern Glass	5	22.3
Plastic	2	0.7

**Table 4. Historic Ceramic Types, Behavior Cemetery.**

<u>Type</u>	<u>Frequency (%)</u>	<u>Weight, grms (%)</u>
Aboriginal, grit tempered plain	1	1.0
Tin Enameled, plain	1 (3.7)	2.8 (1.6)
Pearlware, brown transfer print	1 (3.7)	0.5 (0.3)
Whiteware, plain	15 (55.6)	92.1 (51.8)
Whiteware, polychrome hand painted	2 (7.4)	0.8 (0.4)
Whiteware, blue shell edged	1 (3.7)	4.2 (2.4)
Whiteware, green shell edged	1 (3.7)	3.9 (2.2)
Whiteware, blue transfer print	1 (3.7)	3.2 (1.8)
Whiteware, brown transfer print	3 (11.1)	4.5 (2.5)
Stoneware, tan salt glazed	2 (7.4)	65.9 (37.0)
Historic Ceramic Totals	27 (100.0)	177.9 (100.0)



**Figure 8. Ceramics From Behavior Cemetery. Top, L-R: whiteware chamber pot rim (FS 19); brown salt glazed stoneware with Albany slip (FS 5). Bottom, L-R: blue edged whiteware (FS 16); green edged whiteware (FS 24); blue on white transfer printed whiteware (FS 24).**

Geechee slave cabin sites produced no examples of this type (Crook 2008). Since Spalding allowed a certain amount of autonomy in his slave force (Coulter 1940; Crook 2008), these four sherds (nearly 15% of the ceramic assemblage) may serve as a subtle indication of ceramic self provisioning by at least some of Behavior's residents. Of course, a total ceramic count of just 27 raises the possibility of small sample bias, but biased or not, the Behavior sample did produce these rare types.



**Figure 9. Partially Reconstructed Wine Bottle Associated With Feature 3.**

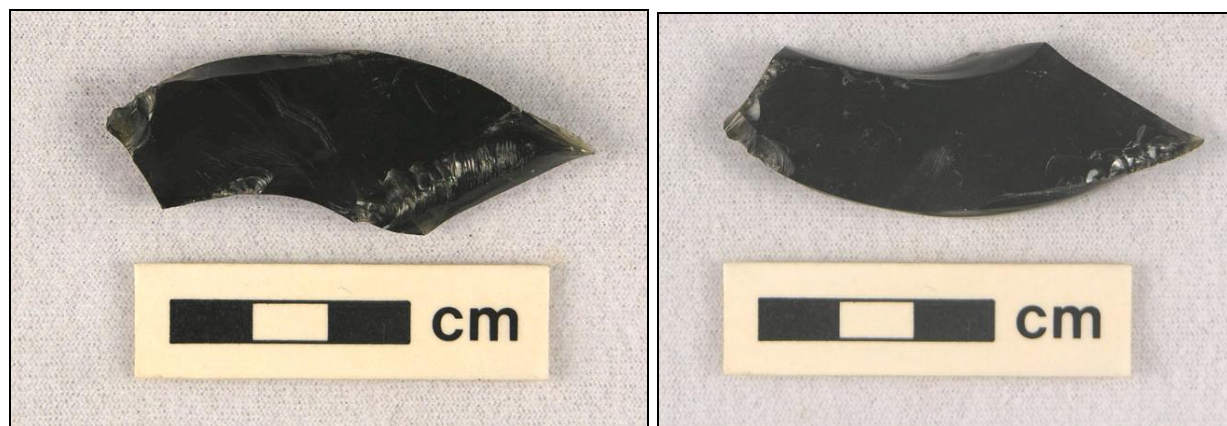


**Figure 10. Refined Earthenware Ceramics From Behavior Cemetery. Top: brown transfer printed whiteware (FS 21, 24, 5). Bottom: tin enameled earthenware (FS 55).**

The highest frequency of glass from the site is in the dark green wine bottle category. However, 42 (62.7%) of the total 67 fragments are from the partial wine bottle (see Figure 9) associated with Feature 3. An unusual glass artifact found in 495N 490E is the knapped wine bottle fragment shown in Figure 11. It is worked on both surfaces and appears to have been used as a scraper; none of the other four fragments of green wine bottle glass found with it displayed any use-wear or retouching. Honerkamp and Bean (2009:16-17) also report a recycled wine



bottle fragment that served as a scraper/spokeshave from the South End site (9MC496) on Sapelo, and Wilkie (1996) identified 35 utilized glass sherds from African-American contexts at Oakley Plantation in Louisiana. As with the Sapelo examples, the retouched sherds Wilkie recovered served as scrapers. She also lists seven other sites in the Southeast that contain worked glass artifacts from historic African American components. As indicated below, the Behavior example shown here was found in the vicinity of a presumed slave cabin, and as such it has a definite Geechee attribution.



**Figure 11. Knapped Wine Bottle Fragment. Interior left, exterior right. FS 59.**

The base of a small light green glass vial was also recovered (Figure 12). Although included in the Kitchen Group, it may well have functioned as a medicine container (Smith 1977). Figure 13 illustrates the two Clothing Group items that were found, consisting of a red faceted bead and a brass button. According to Stine et al. (1996:51), red beads make up less than 3% of bead



**Figure 12. Green Glass Vial Base. FS 31.**



**Figure 13. Clothing Group Artifacts. Left, bronze button (FS 14); right, red faceted bead (FS 60).**

assemblages from African American sites in Georgia and South Carolina; on Sapelo one has also been found at the South End (Honerkamp 2009). The brass button most closely resembles Noel Hume's Type 7 (1974:90-91), which falls within a date bracket of 1837 to 1865.

Perhaps some of the most intriguing artifacts from the survey are found in the Arms and Activities groups. Figure 14 illustrates a half circle of splash lead that measures 52 x 39 x 7 mm. One convex surface is irregular and bears impressions of sand, indicating it was sand cast. The other fairly flat surface (illustrated) contains numerous small gashes and one linear cut mark and indicates that it functioned as lead stock that was used to make other items. The small lead sprue fragment and the lead shot are possible candidates, particularly since all these items were found in the same survey unit (505N 485E). In combination with the lead stock, the presence of the sprue is especially significant, as it strongly suggests that shot was being cast at the site.<sup>3</sup> Casting lead hook-and-line or net fishing weights is another possibility. More indirect evidence of the presence of firearms at Behavior is seen in the lead sheath. This may have functioned as a gunflint cushion for a flintlock; a leather or lead cushion was commonly used to clamp the gunflint in the flintlock hammer (Butler 1971:22). Suffice it to say that evidence for the presence of firearms at this slave site, while not unique for the Georgia coast (Ascher and Fairbanks 1971; Fairbanks 1974, 1984), can certainly be interpreted as an important indication of Geechee self sufficiency at Behavior.

The cortex-bearing flint nodule shown in Figure 14 has a large flake removed from one surface, which may be a result of gunflint manufacture—the honey color of the matrix is reminiscent of blonde “French”-style gunflints (Honerkamp and Harris 2005; White 1975). The two debitage fragments were not associated with it and could be prehistoric in origin, although precious little only (a single sherd) in the way of definite aboriginal material was identified at the site. The battered edge of this fragment is characteristic of a strike-a-light function.

The presence of over 30 stones in the artifact assemblage is unusual. So also is the diversity of material represented by them: for no other site excavated to date on Sapelo are there

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<sup>3</sup> Trace element analysis of all these artifacts could possibly support this hypothesis.





**Figure 14. Lead and Flint Artifacts. Left column, splash lead (FS 24) and lead sheath (FS 60); center, lead sprue (FS 25) and lead shot (FS 24); right, flint strike-a-light (FS 11) and two fragments of debitage (FS 45).**

similar quantities or such a wide range of materials. As indicated by Table 5 and illustrated in Figure 15, the micaceous sandstones, weathered gneiss, and dolomitic sandstones are definitely not the geological by-products of barrier island formation; in fact, only the fossil coral would likely originate in the coastal area. These non-local rocks are undoubtedly recycled ballast stones that were transported to the site from one of the many ballast stone islands that occur in Doboy Sound. They are included in the Architecture Group due to their presumed use as corner piers for a frame structure. Frame cabins resting on corner posts are believed to have occurred at the South End slave community (Honerkamp and Bean 2009), although no stone pier remnants were noted, perhaps due to heavy reuse. The more isolated location at Behavior and/or the establishment of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century Cemetery may have curtailed the reuse process at that location. It should be mentioned, however, that the small number of square nails at the site is puzzling if a frame structure was present. In addition, while late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century Geechee frame houses on piers were quite common on Sapelo, the use of ballast stones in the construction of piers (or for chimney construction) has not been recorded. Interestingly, ballast stones were found in association with early wattle and tabby daub cabins at the nearby Behavior and at New Barn Creek sites, and at the Behavior cabin one was found in-situ in the foundation (Crook 2008).

Other architectural materials found at the site are the large quantities of tabby. Figure 15 (bottom, right) shows two fragments of tabby plaster that bear impressions. Unlike the

**Table 5. Ballast Stone Identification.**

<u>FS</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Material</u>	<u>Weight in grams</u>
13	499.663N 484.463, surface	micaceous feldspathic sandstone	701.4
14	500N 485E	weathered gneiss dolomitic siltstone	160.7 347.3
15	500N 485E, Fea 1	gneiss micaceous feldspathic sandstone	1582.3 3600.5
38	510N 500E, Fea 3	fossil coral dolomitic siltstone sandstone	876.4 154.4 62.0
50	510N 500E, Fea 3	micaceous quartzite sandstone	363.0
52	505N 490E	chert weathered gneiss 2 micaceous feldspathic sandstone	8.2 208.5 406.0



**Figure 15. Architectural Materials At Behavior. Top, bottom left, micaceous feldspathic sandstone; center gneiss; right impressed tabby. From Feature 1, FS 15.**

grapevine-impressed tabby daub discovered at Behavior and New Barn Creek (Crook 2008), only a short distance from Behavior Cemetery, these pieces have flattened impressions that

appear to be lathing. Apparently the tabby was applied to wall lathing, perhaps for insulation and/or as a finishing technique. It was probably not load-bearing. It is interesting to note that all the architectural-related artifacts shown in Figure 15 were derived from the same unit (500N 485E) and feature, described below.

### Feature Descriptions

Three cultural features were defined during the survey. Feature 1 was assigned to a relatively heavy concentration of ballast stones, tabby, and brick in 500N 485E (Figures 15 and 16). Upon encountering these structural materials at about 9 cmbs, it was assumed that they were architectural items that marked the location of a corner pier for supporting floor joists for a wood frame cabin. However, no discernable outline of a feature was noted or mapped. Despite the presence of an oyster shell lens on the east wall of the unit, no other artifacts were recovered. A brickbat and a limestone fragment were present on the surface of this unit, as was the whiteware chamberpot fragment shown in Figure 8. Similar architectural concentrations nearby may



**Figure 16. Stone, Brick, and tabby Fragments, 500N 485E. Facing north; vertical scale = 30 cm.**

account for some of the active images generated by the GPR scans for this part of the site (see the 125 m location in Figure 4). If this material marks the former presence of a cabin or some other structure, it is almost certainly separate from the Feature 3 tabby pile discussed below.

Feature 2 was discovered at 505N 485E, which was the most productive survey unit at the site. After excavating only a few centimeters, some of the ceramics shown in Figures 8 and 10 and the splash lead illustrated in Figure 14 were recovered. At 15 cmbs several fragments of plaster tabby were noted in the south half of the unit. Further excavation to 25 cmbs revealed the outline of a square posthole (31 x 27 cm), as shown in Figure 17, in the north half of the unit. The posthole was angled to the north, as it became smaller with increasing depth until it





**Figure 17. Feature 2 Posthole Plan View, 505N 485E. Facing north; scale = 30 cm.**

bottomed out at 38 cmbs. Unfortunately it was not present in the unit profile. The precise function of this feature is unknown, but its presence just five meters from the suspected ballast stone pier labeled as Feature 1 suggests that it is associated with a structure, most likely a slave cabin.

Corroborating evidence for this assertion is seen in Table 6, which enumerates the artifact assemblages associated with Feature 2 and the survey unit in which it was found. While not abundant, the presence of brick, tabby, and nails, combined with ceramics, glass, and faunal remains are consistent with the presence of a slave cabin and associated midden. The whiteware sherds indicate occupation in the second quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century or later. In conjunction with GPR, more extensive testing is needed in this area to better define this suspected structure.

The presence on the surface of a small scatter of oyster shell and tabby plaster fragments east of the extant burials, near the north edge of the Cemetery, marked the initial indication of the most substantial feature. The approximate center of a 20 cm high and roughly 2 x 3 m tabby deposit was located at 510N 500E on the survey grid; it was designated simply as a tabby pile. Instead of employing a standard 50 cm survey unit through the middle of the concentration, it was investigated through the excavation of a small trench on the southern edge (as determined by machete probing). The unit measured 1 m x 50 cm, with the long axis oriented east-west and the 510N 500E flag at the northeast corner. This expanded survey unit was intended to reveal the perimeter of the feature by providing a partial cross section of the tabby remains while at the same time minimizing the testing impact.

Excavation of this test resulted in the discovery of a tabby wall foundation designated as Feature 3. Shown in Figure 18, it was uncovered in the east half of the unit. The foundation incorporated a spread footing composed of loose oyster shell and tabby plaster; the straight-sided

**Table 6. Artifact Inventory for Feature 2 and 505N 485E.**

<u>Type</u>	<u>Feature 2 (FS 25)</u> <u>Frequency/Weight (grams)</u>	<u>505N 485E (FS 24)</u> <u>Frequency/Weight (grams)</u>
Whiteware, plain	-	2 / 1.9
Whiteware, blue transfer print	-	1 / 3.2
Whiteware, brown transfer print	-	1 / 1.0
Whiteware, green sell edged	-	1 / 3.9
Flat section glass, clear	1 / 1.2	-
Round section glass, clear	-	1 / 0.8
Lead sprue	1 / 1.6	-
Splash lead	-	1 / 59.9
Lead shot	-	1 / 1.2
5/64 pipe stem	2 / 2.5	1 / 1.0
Cut nail	1 / 9.4	2 / 6.2
UID iron	0 / 0	1 / 0.8
Brick	1 / 1.3	4 / 7.0
Plaster tabby	19 / 10.4	57 / 209.3
Impressed plaster tabby	-	3 / 70.3
Whitewashed plaster tabby	-	20 / 10.0
Oyster shell	34 / 8.8	132 / 109.1
Charcoal	45 / 5.0	31 / 3.9
UID bone	1 / 1.4	3 / 0.6

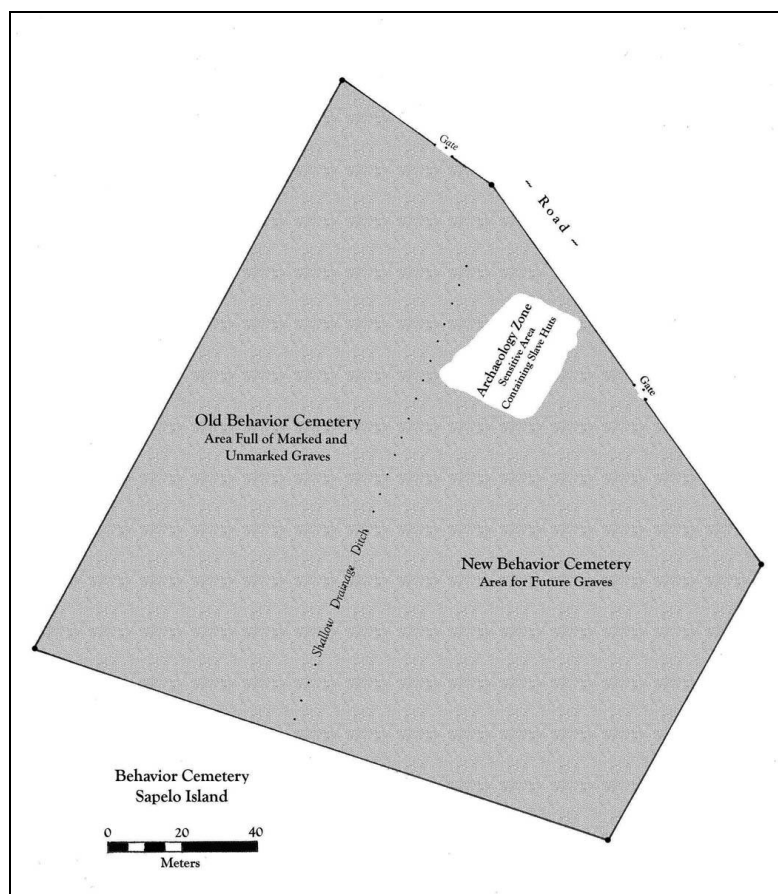
**Figure 18. Feature 3 Foundation. Facing northeast. Scale in 10cm increments.**

wall foundation consisted of more compacted tabby plaster, shell, and occasional brick. Beneath the foundation a shallow builder's trench with an uneven bottom is visible. The portion of the feature illustrated here measures 63 by 21 cm, and was roughly 20 cm deep. This foundation is believed to have served as a solid support for upright posts, as seen in earlier excavations at slave cabins at New Barn Creek and Behavior (Crook 2008).

The west half of the unit was taken down to 56 cmbs in arbitrary 10 cm levels, while the matrix adjacent to the feature in the east half of the unit was screened without recourse to arbitrary levels. Other than uncovering and recording it, the Feature 3 foundation was left undisturbed. Not much was revealed from excavation by levels: as expected, the first 20 cm contained the vast majority of the plaster tabby, accounting for 92% (2854.7 grams) of the recovered total. Several tabby fragments had a whitewashed surface on one side, indicating that at least part of the structure's walls had a formal interior. No tabby at all was found in Levels 5 and 6. The matrix directly adjacent to Feature 3, in the east half of the unit, produced only 242.4 grams of plaster tabby. Similar stratigraphic quantities were found for brick and oyster shell. Eight stone fragments were noted (1459.2 grams), with one consisting of fossil coral. Only one probable iron nail fragment was recovered. Surprisingly, except for the presence of glass fragments associated with a partial wine bottle in the north wall of the unit (Figure 9), the artifact inventory consisted only of miscellaneous oxidized flat iron fragments ( $f=41$ ). In essence, this lacuna of dateable artifacts leaves the wine bottle as the de facto chronological marker for Feature 3 and the larger tabby deposit. The absence of midden materials, particularly ceramics, could mean that the occupation was quite brief, and/or that this foundation was part of some kind of nondomestic special-use structure. For now, without further testing, the function of this structure remains firmly imbedded in speculation.

To summarize, at least two structures are indicated by the archaeological record at Behavior. Their chronological and functional relationships are as yet undetermined. One is tentatively identified as a slave cabin that consisted of a frame structure on ballast stone corner posts, and it appears to have been occupied for a short time. Associated artifacts from the vicinity of this structure include refined ceramics, container glass—including a recycled wine bottle fragment used as a scraper—a small amount of faunal remains, pipe stems (and one bowl fragment), a brass button, a red bead, a flint strike-a-light, and evidence for the manufacture of lead shot. A second, more substantial structure has also been identified with a continuous foundation. The size of this structure is unknown, but is probably less than four meters square. It may date to the 1790s, but temporally diagnostic artifacts are absent, and no sign of a midden was seen. The survey was only able to verify the presence of this structure; its extent, date, and function remain enigmatic.

Based on these field results, an archaeologically sensitive area was designated within the Cemetery parcel that included all the survey units containing historic materials and the two features. This area was clearly marked on the ground by the placement of 4 x 4 inch upright posts to indicate the maximum spatial extent of artifact distributions. A map of this area (Figure 19) was presented by the authors to Hog Hammock residents at the June 10, 2010 meeting. It was recommended then that future use of the cemetery exclude this sensitive and significant area. A consensus was reached at this meeting concerning the desirability of avoiding impacts to the "archaeology zone" described above. Since this area is clearly marked by prominent corner posts, future impacts can be minimized.



**Figure 19. Old and New Behavior Cemetery, With Archaeologically Sensitive Area Indicated.**

### **Archaeology Day**

Since the genesis of the Behavior Cemetery Project was predicated on a partnership between the Hog Hammock community and the UTC and UWG archaeologists, it was important to present the results of this work to the Geechee residents. Accordingly, an artifact display table was put up, Feature 3 was uncovered, and preliminary GPR maps were presented as part of an Archaeology Day program. As she has done over the last five years, Michele Johnson scheduled and publicized the Archaeology Day activities on Memorial Day by highlighted the results of the project. By any measure, this event was a success, as over 40 local residents visited the site to view and discuss the recovered artifacts, wall foundation, GPR results, and gravestone recording with the archaeologists (Figure 20).

### **Conclusions**

As revealed through systematic survey, the archaeological record at Behavior Cemetery is quite intriguing. The remains of at least two structures have been identified: a probable frame-on-post slave cabin and a continuous tabby foundation for a structure of unknown function. The precise temporal and functional relationships between these two components could not be determined from discovery-level survey data. While there are indications of a late 18<sup>th</sup> century occupation (delft, pearlware, and the partial wine bottle), the majority of the dateable ceramics





**Figure 20. Archaeology Day at Behavior Cemetery, May 31, 2010.**

from the site are types that indicate an occupation during the second quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the 1847.8 MCD for 23 dateable sherds support this observation. Whatever the time period, the “light” frequencies of all classes of artifacts point to an occupation or occupations of relatively brief duration(s), without the long-term/continuous cycling of artifacts into the archaeological record at sites like Chocolate (Honerkamp et al. 2007). If the site’s artifacts and features do indeed represent discreet components, this could provide a valuable research opportunity on an essentially synchronic Gullah-Geechee site. At a minimum, we recommend that future testing be aimed at better determining the temporal and structural characteristics in the suspected cabin area and the unknown tabby foundation building. As indicated from the positive results of limited GPR sweeps in this area, future testing should ideally be preceded by such remote sensing to provide specific testing targets. Such a phased approach would maximize the results of any testing program at the site.

While the possibility of continued research is acknowledged above, precedence should be given to the preservation and management of the archaeology zone. This area is, by its nature within an active cemetery, fortunately in a protected environment. The archaeological remains in this zone contain information significant to the Geechee heritage on Sapelo and may represent some of the few surviving remains of the early Behavior slave settlement. They deserve to be protected.

Specific recommendations for future graves in Behavior Cemetery are also appropriate. We wish to reiterate the need to locate future grave sites in the eastern half of the property, and the need for creating and maintaining an open vista there. Perhaps the community could identify particular plots that will be used first within this eastern “New Behavior Cemetery” area. Advanced planning of grave locations is also recommended. A basic rule of thumb that can be used is that the farther away future graves are from the 100 + unmarked graves shown in Figure 7, the better. It is also apparent

that additional unmarked graves may be present to the south and west of the existing cemetery fence lines. Only additional archaeological research can determine this.

Finally, several members of the community have suggested the possibility of marking the unmarked graves, and they indicated how composing and fabricating the headstones would be a wonderful activity for actively involving Sapelo youngsters in preserving their heritage. We fully support this suggestion, and offer our assistance in any way possible. Such a worthy project would represent a continuing collaboration between archaeologists and the Gullah-Geechee community.

In summary, the success of the Behavior Cemetery project serves as a positive example of community-oriented archaeology. Besides contributing to CRM and research goals, this effort has simultaneously resulted in a practical application of the archaeological research that is important to the Hog Hammock community. Rather than a research-first approach, this project was predicated on a collaborative effort that incorporated and directly addressed important community concerns. The Behavior Cemetery project highlights the mutually beneficial nature of a public partnership with archaeologists, one that has directly speaks to social and religious priorities of contemporary Gullah-Geechee peoples while simultaneously answering basic questions concerning antebellum Gullah-Geechee life.

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