

UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE AT CHATTANOOGA

# **Additional Reconnaissance Survey of the New Orleans Cemetery Area, Sapelo Island, Georgia**

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**7/24/2012**

On July 18, 2012 a followup surface reconnaissance was made of the suspected site of the New Orleans Cemetery on Sapelo Island, Georgia. This work supplemented the pedestrian survey made by the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga Archaeological Field School on June 8, 2012. In the July 21, 2012 report for that earlier effort it was recommended that “any future survey in this [New Orleans Cemetery] area be concentrated along the eastern margin of the suspected cemetery location, which UTC did not thoroughly investigate.” This area was mentioned by Ray Crook in his description of work he had done with local residents Cornelia and Frank Bailey and Stanley Walker to identify the missing cemetery. In a September 25, 2011 email, Crook had added a correction, noted below Figure 1 in this report, that recommended an area south and east of the UTM coordinate be checked for the presence of unmarked graves. Thus, on July 18 a group consisting of Mryna and Max Crook, Sapelo Island Manager Fred Hay, and the author spent half a day walking the southeastern section adjacent to the suspected site area shown in Figure 1.

No grave depressions, tree nails from headboards, grave goods, or human bone was seen in this additional area. Also, an area just to the east of the bend in the access road that corresponds to an 1868 map was also surveyed (see Figure 1). This area was suggested to Fred Hay by the late George Walker as a location that contained the cemetery: as a boy, Mr. Walker remembered being taken there on a hunting trip and seeing numerous depressions from graves. However, no evidence of grave depressions or any other cemetery indicators were noted on July 18. A modern informal community trash dump was noted near the edge of the road.

The two area investigated were heavily overgrown with palmettos, water oaks, brambles, and privet, so that our original recommendations for future surveys to locate new Orleans Cemetery still hold: they should be carried out during the winter months to minimize the thick understory and thereby maximize visibility, and a controlled burn should precede any reconnaissance.



**Figure 1. Approximate Location of New Orleans Cemetery.**

“Sorry guys, but there’s an important correction to my email re the location to be surveyed/burned: I recommend that a controlled burn be executed in the area to the east and southeast (NOT south and southeast) of the UTM reference point.” Ray Crook email 9/25/2011.