

**Archaeological Reconnaissance  
Clapp Factory Cemetery**

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**Archaeological Reconnaissance and  
Monitoring of Clean-up Activities at the  
Clapp Factory Cemetery, 9Me187, Muscogee  
County, Georgia**

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## **Introduction**

The Clapp Factory Cemetery (State Archaeological Site Number 9Me187) is located in northern Muscogee County, just east of the Chattahoochee River and below the Georgia Power Company's Oliver Dam. The cemetery property is owned by Georgia Power Company. A grassroots preservation organization, known as the Clapp Factory Cemetery Preservation League, was formed in early 2003 for the purposes of preserving the history and place of the Clapp Factory and the Clapp Factory Cemetery. On March 29, 2003 a clean-up program was conducted by that fledgling organization at the Clapp Factory Cemetery in Muscogee County, Georgia. LAMAR Institute archaeologists Daniel Elliott and Rita Elliott conducted this preliminary reconnaissance of the cemetery in conjunction with the clean-up effort. This report provides background information on the history and previous archaeological investigations in the vicinity of the cemetery. The preliminary observations concerning the cemetery are described. Several recommendations for future management of the cemetery are offered.

## **Cemetery Research**

Historic cemeteries have only recently entered into the research domain of the historical archaeologist. Prior to the 1980s nearly all cemetery relocation projects were conducted by undertakers, or by special military grave removal teams. In the past two decades, however, that trend has witnessed substantial change. Bell (1994) compiled a bibliography of historical archaeology of cemetery studies in the United States, which reported only four cemetery archaeological excavations in Georgia. In the past decade that number has risen substantially, particularly following the passage of state legislation pertaining to the treatment of abandoned cemeteries and cemetery removal and relocation. The Historic Cemetery Committee of the Georgia Council of Professional Archaeologists recently produced a report that summarizes the current state of mortuary studies in Georgia (Elliott et al. 2000). Ted Brooke (1989, 1995, 2003) has compiled summary lists and bibliographies of historic cemetery literature in Georgia. Other important cemetery studies in Georgia include Combs' (1986) study of gravestone art in Georgia and South Carolina.

Historic cemeteries in Muscogee County have been the subject of historical and genealogical research since the early 1960s. Early surveys were conducted by June Hanna and Lewis Hanna and others (Land 2003; GaGenWeb 2003a). A survey of historic cemeteries on Fort Benning Military Reservation conducted by John Metcalf and others was reported by Elsie Hight (GaGenWeb 2003b). Systematic archaeological surveys on Fort Benning since 1980 have included survey data on many historic cemeteries within the military reservation. Grave removal excavations have been conducted at two of these cemeteries, which include an anonymous grave north of McBride's Bridge and the Mount Gilead Baptist Church Cemetery near Upatoi Creek (Gardner 1997; Schnell 1983, 1984; Wood et al. 1986). Recent preservation and restoration efforts at the Linwood Cemetery in Columbus have attracted local attention to cemetery preservation issues.

## Previous Research at Clapp Factory Cemetery

The property containing the Clapp Factory cemetery is presently owned by the Georgia Power Company and is located a short distance downstream from the Lake Oliver Dam. The cemetery is situated on a knoll on a ridge overlooking the Chattahoochee River. In many aspects this cemetery appears as an abandoned cemetery, although the public has been aware of the cemetery at some level of cognizance since its initial inception. Consequently, it may not fit the criteria of an "abandoned cemetery", as defined by Georgia code. This determination awaits to be argued.

The Clapp Factory and associated cemetery site was known to local historians and informed citizens since its demise as a water-powered mill and associated mill village. The following description of the Clapp Factory cemetery is extracted from a 1928 newspaper article by Omar Hill,

"...Visitors to the cemetery near the old Clapp's Factory site north of Columbus, which has, comparatively, been almost obliterated by the corroding elements of some three quarters of a century, and by the rather dense growth of the pine trees, many of which probably found root in the older graves, will not find sepulchers of grandeur and art or varied inscriptions that tell an unspoken story of yesteryears; but will find a "graveyard," cold, lurid, stoical in its loneliness, depressing in its unpreserved state, gloomy and bare and miserable in its utter desolation. Set aside as a burial plot of families of the old settlement that later went to make up the first employees of Clapp's Factory, the cemetery once covered some twenty or twenty-five acres. It now includes three or four acres, in so far as one can discern varied forms of markers or molds indicating graves".

"...The cemetery is accessible by roads leading from Second avenues [sic] beyond the farther end of North Highlands or by the River road and the dirt road leading down by the water works and back into the woods. By taking the North Highlands route, one must travel over sand and water guttered roads that lead around and over the wooded hills and through the swamps near the river. While the cemetery is bordered directly on the east by the road, a less observant traveler would not be attracted to the grounds as a "graveyard," so complete has been its desertion. A small strip of paling [?] which once served as an entrance to the grounds, fenced with barbed wire, remains half fallen, while the wire and posts have long since decayed or rusted. A heavy swamp furnished the northern boundary for the plot, a thickly wooded hill borders the south, while [on the west] the cemetery runs into a ranging slope that terminates at the river".

"Even the most confirmed of "cemetery tourists" and those who fail to conjure up stories of spooks and phantom shapes in the most dismal of burial grounds must see in their initial sight of the old cemetery an ideal home for ghosts, a site, with its dark overspread of haunting pines, the roaring of the river beyond and below the scattered wooden and small stone markers showing dark or white against a speckled background of moonlit clouds, a harbor for stranged [sic] shaped specters. There are probably two hundred graves, or that number, which can be located by markers, and it is estimated that as many more are in the original plot, mounds and markers having been washed away or decayed. While it has been many years since families have made interment in the cemetery, recent burials have been made there in a section reserved for those who die and leave no relatives or funds for their burial".

"Only about twenty of the graves are marked with cement or marble head boards, that of Benjamin F. HEATH bearing the date of 1856 being the eldest known; however, it is understood that many of the graves, which are now indicated by small wooden markers or none at all date back as far as 1835 or shortly after the incorporation of the city of Columbus. The marble

marker pictured above is that of Private William PAGE, son of Robert and Sarah PAGE, who died in 1862 at Camp Mercer, Skedaway Island. He was a soldier in Company A, 27th Regiment, Georgia Militia, and on his death was brought to the Clapp Factory cemetery for interment. Another marble marker shows the grave of Louisa J. HELMS who was born 1816 and died at the age of 64 years in 1880. All of the graves, exclusive of the few buried in the section for the poor, were made before the operation at Clapp Factory was suspended”.

A 1955 newspaper description of the Clapp Factory cemetery by Sid Thomas reveals a graveyard substantially reduced from its 1928 appearance, although it still encompassed an estimated 5 acres:

“An almost forgotten cemetery lies on a hill overlooking the river north of Columbus. It is an old cemetery. Residents who remember it as it was in days gone by recall that there were a few Indians buried there. It is also the resting place of some 20 Confederate soldiers from Georgia and Alabama, some of whom may have fallen in the battle of Columbus. Many persons who worked at the old Clapp Factory are buried there. The cemetery near the water works reservoir, once was beautiful. It had an iron fence, a gate, and around some of the graves were hand-made bricks. But today, a person can walk through the burial site, which covers about five acres, and not know there ever was a burial there unless he looks closely. The fence and gate are gone. Only a handful of bricks are scattered here and there. The weather, the curiosity seeker and the unscrupulous have leveled the mounds of earth and carried away or broken the grave markers. Tall, tornado-twisted trees blanketed by Spanish moss stand like gray ghosts on the hill...Below, the river is visible through the trees and the sound of the water rushing over the shoals drifts up like a fading hymn. The wind brushes through the trailing banners of moss. Two or three grave markers still left lie almost buried. Scrape away the red clay and one of the markers, carefully chiseled by hand, reads: M. C. Skipper ; Born Nov. 28, 1829 ; Died in faith Sep. 10, 1880.; C. W. Peddy, 305-D Baker Village, who used to walk to the cemetery when he was a boy, looks at the marker and shakes his head. There no telling what somebody sacrificed to get hold of that piece of marble.; Another slab has the following inscription crudely marked into it: John P. Lewis Born Dec. 12, 1812 Died Feb. 10, 1885 And a small grave slab, apparently that of a child, bears only a name J. F. Cain. E. D. Phillips, an old-timer in that section of the city, said he used to walk among the Confederate soldier graves when each had a marker giving his name and rank. Many of the soldiers were only 16 or 17 years old when they died, he recalls....” (Thomas 1955).

The Georgia Power Company has been aware of the cemetery since, at least, the late 1980s. Correspondence from the Georgia Power Land Office to Mr. Clint Claybrook, of *The Columbus Ledger*, dated September 24, 1991, discusses the cemetery site. This letter from Georgia Power Company’s archaeologist JoLee Gardner describes a reconnaissance survey visit to the cemetery, which was conducted on September 5, 1991.

“On September 5, 1991, I visited the proposed location of the ‘Clapp’s Factory Cemetery’. I observed several grave-like depressions; there were no formal headstones or markers at these depressions. (I counted 12 depressions, 6 which appeared to be the shape of a grave, the remaining depressions were oddly shaped and I would question whether they were graves without some type of subsurface testing.) Along the edge of the tract the most prominent vegetation was honeysuckle, sumac, a variety of grasses, and remnants of a mixed hardwood/pine forest....Along the northwestern side of the proposed cemetery (see attached sketch map), there were remnants of an old house. The artifacts and architectural materials that were present indicate that the structure had been occupied during the late 1940s to the mid 1960s. It apparently burned some time after that. There was no evidence of recent disturbance at this site.

The Land Department placed an iron gate across the dirt access road into the area several years ago. This gate is locked at all times, and open only to those individuals that have permission to enter the property. There is also a series of posts and cable across the face of the ridge where the

proposed cemetery is located. There are no signs posted....From the physical evidence, i.e. the depressions, it could be an unmarked cemetery, but, based on the lack of information in the literature there is no supporting evidence for this argument. To make such a determination the following must be completed: full archival research, field survey, testing and evaluation. This would be done in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and subject to approval by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

These activities would occur as standard procedure when there is a proposed change in the operation of the hydro project. At this time, there are no changes proposed, and in keeping with GPC Land Management policies and procedures the tract will remain unchanged and monitored on a yearly basis to determine whether there is any danger to the site. The monitoring results are filed with the SHPO and FERC on a yearly basis....”(Gardner 1991).

The cemetery was recorded in the Georgia Archaeological Site Files (GASF) in 1998 when it was visited by archaeologists with Brockington & Associates, a private CRM firm in Norcross, Georgia. The archaeologist, Dawn Reid, recorded the cemetery as State Site 9Me187. The cemetery was peripheral to Ms. Reid’s survey corridor, so only minimal study was conducted there. Ms Reid visited the site during a Phase I cultural resources survey of a proposed water pipeline (Reid 1998). The cemetery was not in the direct path of the proposed pipeline project, it was sufficiently close for Reid and her colleagues to make a brief visit to the cemetery and record it in the state files. Reid made a sketch of the cemetery with schematic representations of the grave depressions that were observed. Only three of the 20 grave depressions were shown to be oriented East-West. Most of the depressions were oriented Northeast-Southwest. The cemetery site was described as only 50 meters North-South by 40 meters East-West in size. The cemetery’s location was incorrectly plotted on the Fortson quadrangle map at GASF on a neighboring ridge, approximately 240 meters North-Northwest of the actual site. The UTM coordinates provided by Reid were nearer to the actual cemetery site, however. Reid recommended protection of the cemetery, although she deemed it ineligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

Preservation interest in the Clapp Factory Cemetery escalated in the year 2000 with a flurry of correspondence on the internet in various Muscogee County and historic cemetery newsgroups, webpages, and chat rooms. People who were instrumental in rallying this preservation effort included Rose Bird, Gwen Grant Bryan, Patricia Cantrell, Lea L. Dowd, John Mallory Land, Kemis Massey, Charles Misulia, Sally Ann Mount, Cynthia Nason, Kenneth Thomas, and others (Clapp Factory Cemetery Preservation League 2003). Scott Hendrix, land manager for Georgia Power Company, was very helpful in the cemetery preservation endeavor.

Rose Bird stated in an online chat in 2000 that locations were known for three graves, which included Cain, Miller, and Warren. From 2000 to 2003 descendants June Hanna, Lewis Hanna, John Mallory Land, Cynthia Nason, Buster Wright, and others compiled a list of people known to be buried in the Clapp Factory cemetery, which numbers at least 53, from various historical sources. Surnames of the interred include: Abney, Belcher, Brown, Cain, Clegg, Cole, Foster, Heath, Helms, Hill, Jackson, Lewis, Lummus, Martin, Miller, Morris, Newsom, Newsome, Nix, Page, Skipper, Statham, and Warren (Land 2003).

Sources of information on burials or potential burials in the cemetery include newspaper obituaries, family bibles, oral tradition, and early recorded visits to the cemetery, and broader cemetery compilations. More indirect sources, where probable burial in the cemetery may be inferred is found in Federal census schedules.

## **Research Methods**

The methods employed in the March 2003 cemetery walkover were relatively simple and straightforward. First, the archaeologists walked the suspected perimeter of the cemetery with John Mallory Land, a descendant of families associated with the Clapp Factory. Mr. Land has gathered extensive historical information pertaining to the cemetery, factory, and associated settlements. Mr. Land also had spent some time on at least two previous visits examining the cemetery for potential burial features. Mr. Land's research has determined that the first documented burial in the cemetery was in 1856 most recent documented burial was in 1904. At least 53 burials in the cemetery were gleaned from historical sources (Land 2003:2, 6-9).

The archaeologists carefully walked the perimeter of the cemetery to better define its boundaries based on surface clues. Next grave depressions, grave markers, and displaced grave marker fragments were located with the aid of a Garmin V Global Positioning System (GPS) hand-held receiver with WAAS capabilities. Each grave or noteworthy feature was designated with a waypoint number. A total of 129 waypoints was recorded. Each waypoint was averaged to increase its geographic accuracy. The orientation (bearing in degrees) and length of the grave depression (in meters) were recorded. This mapping effort was very limited and focused on graves located on the perimeter of the cemetery. The clean-up effort was conducted simultaneously to the archaeological examination and these areas were avoided by the archaeologists for safety reasons. Only a portion of the cemetery was "cleaned-up". The initial archaeological inspection lasted approximately 4 hours. A follow-up visit to the cemetery was made on April 2, 2003 by Mr. Elliott. The exposed grave depressions in the cleared area were recorded, as well as a few other grave depressions and landmark features. A reference datum GPS reading on a creosote post near the southern end of the site was recorded. The location of this datum was UTM E688443 N3598876. The GPS waypoints were recorded using the 1927 North American Datum and were recorded in metric UTM coordinates. The GPS data were uploaded into the computer and manipulated with geographic information systems (GIS) software. The accuracy of the GPS data was generally within 4 to 12 meters for each waypoint, which was satisfactory for examining the site boundary but should not be considered reliable for relocating individual graves. An updated archaeological site form for 9Me187 was submitted to the Georgia Archaeological Site Files in Athens, Georgia.

## **Observations of the March 29<sup>th</sup> Clean-up**

Considerable historical research has been conducted by interested volunteers since Reid's examination in 1998, particular the efforts of John Land. These historical findings were recently summarized by Land (2003). The present author was only able to contribute a



minor amount of additional historical information to this research database. This included examination and electronic scanning of early USDA aerial photographs that were taken in the cemetery vicinity (USDA 1938).

The Clapp Factory Cemetery was observed to be in a neglected state in early 2003. Several broken concrete grave marker fragments were observed. Trash had been illegally dumped at several loci on the cemetery. The clean-up effort was accomplished by a diverse array of individuals and organizations who came together in a remarkable display of civic cooperation.

Descriptions of the cemeteries size vary considerably. In 1928 Hill noted that the cemetery had covered an area 20 to 25 acres but that it was reduced to 3 to 4 acres at the time of his visit. Thomas placed the size of the cemetery at about 5 acres in the mid-1950s. In 1998 Reid defined the cemetery as covering an area only 50 meters by 40 meters. An obvious trend for the cemetery to shrink in size is suggested by these accounts. The site dimensions suggested by the present 2003 study, however, indicate that graves cover an area approximately 115 meters by 80 meters, considerably larger than that described by Reid but woefully smaller than that described by Hill sometime prior to 1928. Clearly, the cemetery experienced significant attrition sometime between 1955 and 1998.

The location of the Clapp Factory Cemetery site is shown in Figure 1. A rough estimate of the site's size is 7037 square meters. The approximate centerpoint of the site (UTM Coordinates Zone 16, based on the 1927 North American datum) are Easting 688375 meters, Northing 3598871 meters. The site location recorded by Reid was clearly erroneous. Prior to the clean-up approximately 20 grave depressions had been recognized by Reid and her colleagues (Reid 1998). As a result of the clean-up and reconnaissance effort, more than 118 graves were identified. Many more graves are likely located within the cleared area, as well as in the undisturbed parts of the cemetery.

The northern and western sides of the cemetery were marked by extensive cuts by heavy machinery, whereby large amounts of soil from the original topographic landform were removed. If any graves were located in these two areas, they are probably totally destroyed. The steep grade created by these cuts were carefully examined for any clear evidence of exposed grave shafts, tombstone fragments, other grave markers, or other important clues such as square coffin nails, brick, concrete, ceramics, or bottle glass.

The southwestern side of the cemetery was used as a staging area for the portable toilet, information table, food tables, and refreshments. A series of large creosoted posts had been erected on the southwestern side of the cemetery. Based on the metal plaque on one of the posts, they date to the early 1930s. They were erected at the cemetery sometime after that date, and probably decades later, since they were probably originally used as power transmission poles and recycled for cemetery use.

The southeastern side of the cemetery contains a less severe cut bank, which is flanked by the newly constructed Riverwalk. The surface of the Riverwalk is paved with asphalt.



The slope break on the south side of the cemetery contained a railroad steel rail and wire cable barrier. The age of this fence was not determined, but is presumed to date to the mid to late 20th century.

The northeastern flank of the cemetery remains wooded. An older cut bank is present on this side of the cemetery, which may be contemporary with its use as a cemetery. A large quantity of trash was present on the southeastern side of the cemetery, which obscured the ground surface over a 10 m by 10 m area. A cluster of grave depressions on the northern side of the cemetery was partially obscured by a discarded kitchen appliance and other large metal items.

A series of waypoints, or locations, recorded in the cemetery included graves, other unidentified depressions, and notable landmarks. The bearing (or direction in 360 degrees) from the waypoint was recorded, as was the approximate length (in meters) of the grave depression.

Waypoints 1 through 9 and 11 through 13 were probably not graves. Several of these were very large depressions that may represent tree falls, or possibly military rifle pits. Waypoint 13 was a large area (approximately 10 meters in diameter) containing modern trash. The surface visibility in the vicinity of Waypoint 13 was obscured by the debris.

Waypoint 10 was a possible grave depression, bearing 90 degrees, which was located off the northern slope of the knoll. This depression, which is located at UTM E688422 N3598955, may represent the approximate northern limit of the cemetery.

Waypoint 14 was a 1.5 meter long depression, bearing 70 degrees, which was located on an unnatural terrace on the north side of the cemetery. It may represent a grave.

Waypoint 15 was a 10 meter long trench depression, bearing 105 degrees, which contained two cement grave marker fragments. This trench was located on the north side of the site on the previously cited unnatural terrace. The waypoint was recorded in the approximate center of this trench where the grave marker fragments were located. One of the marked stone fragments was previously described as:

**“J O - found on a piece of concrete in a small cut or gully on the north side of the dirt road leading into the cemetery, with another piece of concrete reading “FEB 1885” (reported by June & Lewis HANNA on 28 JUN 1984); are these fragments of the marker for John P. LEWIS that was still legible in 1955?” (Land 2003).**

Waypoint 19 was a grave depression oriented 245 degrees and flanked with new growth of daylilies. This grave, which was located at UTM E688472 N3598895, may represent the approximate southeastern limit of the cemetery.

Waypoints 40 through 43 were probable grave depressions that were located just off the northeast slope of the knoll.

Waypoint 44 was an area that contained two very large depressions (covering altogether about 10 meters) whose function was not determined. These may represent wells or possibly a cluster of grave depressions. Waypoint 57 was a similar unidentified depression, approximately 5 meters in diameter, which may represent a well.

Waypoint 45 marked a grave depression near the western edge of the cemetery. It may mark the western limit, although more study is needed to determine this. The area further west of this depression has been disturbed and other graves may be obscured. The location of Waypoint 45 was at UTM E688376 N3598903.

Waypoint 52 was surrounded with a thick patch of unidentified mint family vegetation. This grave may mark the approximate southern limit of the cemetery, although more study is needed to determine this. It was located at UTM E688407 N3598875.

Waypoint 58 was a probable grave marked by bricks, although it was mostly obscured by soil and vegetation. Waypoint 59 was a grave marked by one rock and flanked by a growth of baby's breath ornamentals. Waypoints 60 and 107 recorded a grave depression that was marked with 2 rocks and a large concrete slab. The slab fragment had markings, including "10" or "IO".

Waypoint 63 marked a grave depression that may indicate the approximate eastern limit of the cemetery. It was located at UTM E688488 N359815.

Waypoint 66 marked a grave that contained one handmade brick on its eastern end.

Waypoint 70 marked a grave depression that contained one loose fieldstone marker.

Waypoint 77 marked a grave depression that had a jonquil (or similar flower) planted adjacent to it.

Waypoint 95 marked a grave depression that contained one displaced old brick on the surface.

Waypoint 98 was a grave depression that had one field stone marker on its western end.

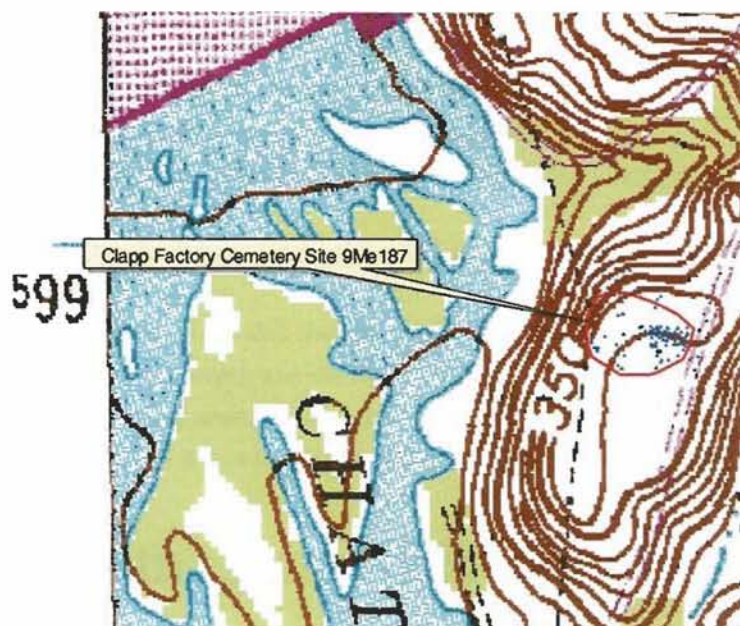
Waypoint 102 marked a grave depression that contained four,

scattered old bricks and one fieldstone marker on its western end. Waypoints 119 and 120

marked grave depressions that were surrounded by ornamental vegetation (possibly

spirea). An old brick lay on the surface near Waypoint 120.

The remaining grave depressions were nondescript elongated depressions that ranged in length from 1.25 to 2.5 meters. Their width was not recorded. Nearly all of these were oriented East-West, or nearly so. Approximately four grave depressions were oriented North-South, or nearly so.



**Figure 1. Clapp Cemetery Site, 9Me187** (Approximate site boundary outlined in Red, Recorded waypoints shown as small Blue triangles, Source: Fortson USGS Quadrangle Sheet).

A grave marking a member of the Cain family was not recorded using the GPS, although it was observed on March 29, 2003. This concrete slab marker was described as follows:

**CAIN, J. R. - only marker now in cemetery, no dates**  
 [Is this the same as grave of a child, J. F. CAIN,  
 per pp. 1 and 8, The Columbus Enquirer, 04 FEB 1955,  
 as cited by Gwen (GRANT) BRYAN? List reported by  
 June & Lewis HANNA shows "J. P. CAIN" (no dates) on  
 flat concrete slab along dirt road (which cuts  
 between the main cemetery area and the gully to the  
 south).] (Land 2003).

Several previously described grave markers were not observed and may have been destroyed or removed from the cemetery. These include markers of members of the

Heath, Lewis, Lummus, Skipper, and Warren families. The Heath, Lewis, and Skipper markers were described in the previous section of this report. The Lummus gravestone was described as follows:

**“LUMMUS?, Louis & Josephine?, beloved daughter of, b.  
\_\_ MAR 1893, d. 11 FEB 1895, small pink marble  
headstone located by Mr. Benny BROOKINS in gully to  
the south of the main cemetery area and reported by  
June & Lewis HANNA on 28 JUN 1984” (Land 2003).**

The Warren grave marker was described as follows:

**“WARREN? - concrete slab showing W A R N (only  
legible markings), which had slid down the north  
side of the hill and rested in an upright position -  
reported by June & Lewis HANNA on 28 JUN 1984” (Land 2003).**

## **Site Management Recommendations**

To reiterate, not all of the grave depressions in the cemetery were mapped with the GPS device and this report should not be construed as a survey report for purposes of legal delineation of the cemetery. At least 118 grave depressions were observed and it is quite likely that additional graves are located beyond the bounds suggested by this reconnaissance, particularly on the northern and northeastern parts of the cemetery where they have been obscured by trash dumping, vehicle traffic, and other surface disturbances. Many graves in the interior portions of the cemetery were not mapped because of the thick vegetation conditions. By conservative estimate the cemetery may contain 300 to 500 graves.

The Clapp Factory Cemetery has been shown by historical records to be a significant component of the historical landscape of 19<sup>th</sup> century Columbus, Georgia. The cemetery itself has experienced decades of neglect and abuse. Consequently, a substantial portion of its surface features have been erased. Tombstones have been removed, vandalized and stolen. Large quantities of modern trash were deposited on portions of the cemetery. Heavy traffic in the cemetery by motorized vehicles has further degraded the surface of the cemetery. The present effort to clean up and preserve the cemetery signal a reversal of this trend. Cooperation between the concerned descendants of those buried in the cemetery, other concerned citizens, Columbus government officials, and Georgia Power Company representatives promise to give the abandoned cemetery a “new lease on life”. As this preservation effort moves forward, the LAMAR Institute would like to provide a few gentle words of advice.

## **Develop a Master Plan**

The first important step in developing a master plan is to determine who are the responsible parties in the recognition and preservation of the Clapp Factory Cemetery. The descendants of those buried in the cemetery are an obvious interested party. The ranks of this category continue to grow daily as new information is brought to light. The landowner, Georgia Power Company, has an obvious responsibility for protecting and delineating the cemetery. The City of Columbus and Muscogee County government, who recently constructed a Riverwalk near the cemetery also share some responsibility for the protection of this “abandoned cemetery”. A meeting should be arranged between all of these interests to discuss the situation.

One early goal of a master plan should include the proper delineation of the cemetery to establish its boundaries. This should be done to professional standards well beyond the three “archaeological reconnaissances” conducted thus far. The State Archaeologist and the State Historic Preservation Officer at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta should be able to provide guidance and advice in this regard.

Before the historical resources at the Clapp Factory cemetery can be properly managed they must be properly identified on today’s landscape. The information offered in this report should not be construed as a cemetery delineation. It was done to serve as a general guide to the extensiveness of the cultural resource base at the Clapp Factory Cemetery. Interested parties should sponsor systematic historical deed research for the property containing the cemetery and of the families known to be associated with the Clapp’s Factory complex. The identification of next of kin and their proper notification is an important part of any activity that has a potential impact on human graves. Current Georgia law provides guidance and necessary steps for this notification process. Those interested in preserving Clapp Factory Cemetery should sponsor an intensive archaeological survey of the cemetery and its surroundings. Such survey should include detailed topographic mapping, probing, remote sensing survey techniques (such as Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR)), and limited shallow excavations to locate graves in the cemetery. Another important facet of the cemetery landscape is its biota, or the natural and ornamental plants that grow on the site. Interested parties sponsor a botanical survey of the cemetery and its surroundings.

An important side issue in defining the cemetery landscape to provide access to it. Access is presently limited in selected areas as a result of trash deposits. We suggest the careful removal of trash that has been illegally dumped on the cemetery.

Another issue that should be addressed in the near term is soil erosion and landscape stabilization. Active erosion conditions exist on the northern and western portions of the cemetery. Future clean-up efforts should avoid unnecessary ground disturbance to the cemetery.

A long-term goal of a master plan should preserve the cemetery for posterity. Interested parties should establish a program for perpetual care of the cemetery. The Clapp Factory

Cemetery (9Me187) is deemed potentially eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, under Criteria D, and possibly Criteria A. This assessment is opposite the previous assessment made by Brockington & Associate's research team (Reid 1998). Since their study was conducted, considerable historical information has been gathered by interested parties, which poignantly illustrates the historical importance of the Clapp Factory cemetery in the early history of the Columbus, Georgia and Phenix City, Alabama areas.

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