



The Jacob Hunter Trust Newsletter



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Richard H. Hunter, Editor

June 2019

First Hunter Cemetery in America Discovered: William Hunter (our immigrant) Homestead and Family Cemetery

Years of research devoted to uncovering the location of William Hunter's land patent of 1695 and his second acquisition of 240 adjoining acres in 1702 by Trust researchers (see: *William Hunter of Nansemond County and His Early Descendants* (2013); Jacob Hunter Trust Newsletters 2015 & 2019) was significantly enhanced when Frank T. Cross, of Raleigh, sent material that contained an early drawing by Cornelia Hunter Meara (1834-1909) showing the location of the William Hunter home and cemetery. Comparing Ms. Meara's map to the Mosley Map of 1733, and a current Google Earth image provided sufficient evidence for the Trust to form a team to search for the original Hunter Family Cemetery.

The Trust sent a letter to the land owners seeking permission to search for the cemetery. When we reached the Godfreys, we were notified that they knew where the cemetery was located and that, at the request of their grandfather, have been taking care of it for several years.

The location of the original Hunter land and family cemetery was verified by comparing a section of the Mosley Map of 1733 listing the Hunter property to a present-day Google Earth image.

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Mosley Map of 1733 showing the original William Hunter homestead.



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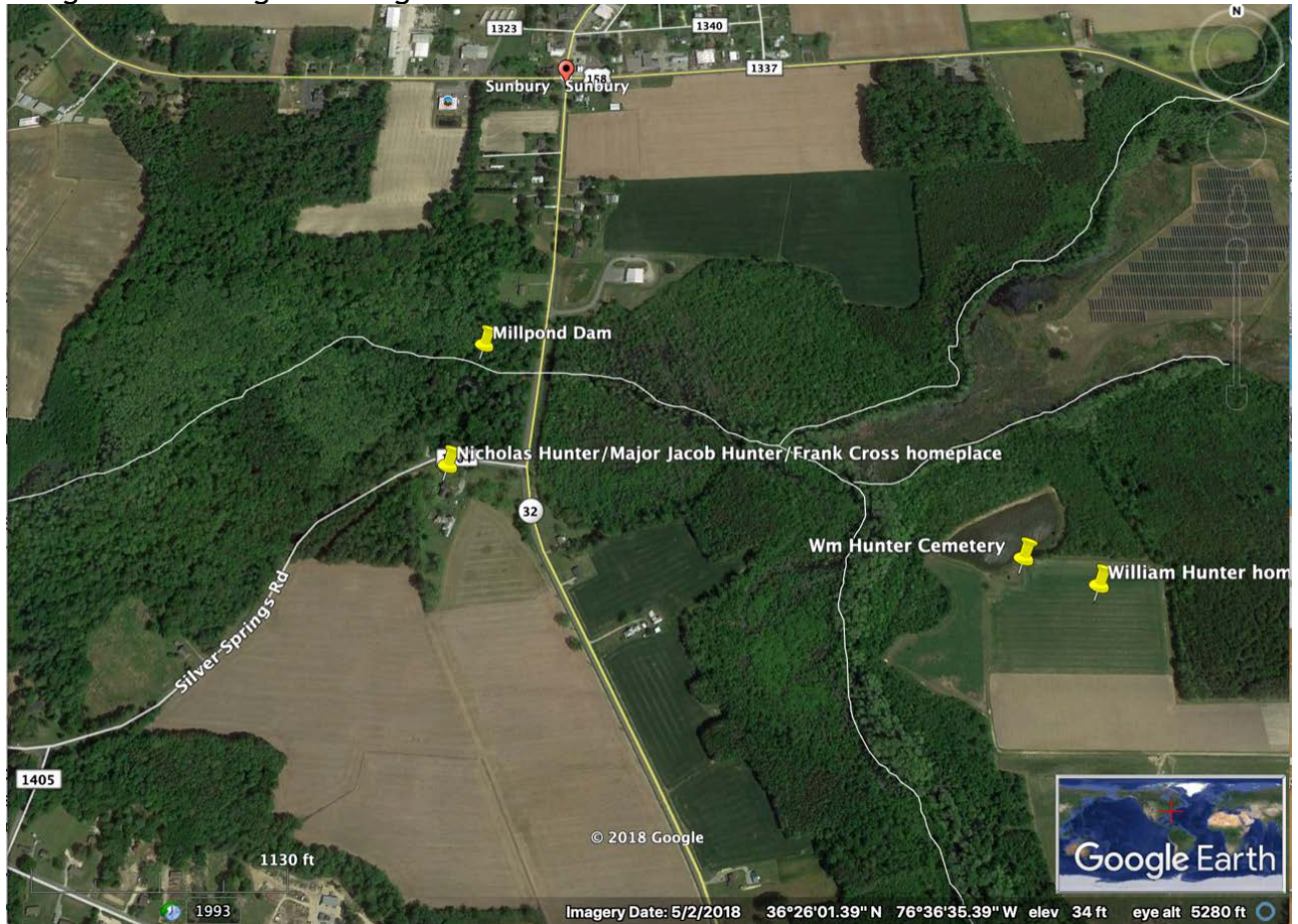
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Google Earth image showing William Hunter's homestead.



Further evidence of this property being part of the original William Hunter land patent was the discovery of the William T. Cross (1973) *Hunter* report (available on the Jacob Hunter Trust website). The Cross report describes William's land as follows: "We find that it lies just a short distance from the present village of Sunbury, going towards Edenton, and is part of the land whereon the Hunters lived" (p. 3).

Then, when describing where William's son Isaac lived, after receiving part of William's land, stated, "Isaac Hunter lived near what is now called "Sugar Run Road," a short distance South East from the present village of Sunbury, on what is apparently land which was granted to his father William Hunter, and it was he, with his father, who built the Mill and Pond, which bore his name for over two centuries" (p. 5).

The team visiting the William Hunter land and cemetery consisted of Rich Hunter, Still Hunter, Jr., Belle Long, and Josh Price. The Meara drawing is reproduced in the article below. The trust is grateful to Belle Long for composing an article describing our findings.

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Report on Visit to William Hunter Cemetery, Sunbury, NC, April 8, 2019

By Belle P. Long

Rich Hunter, Still Hunter, Jr., Belle Long, and Josh Price visited what strong evidence suggests is the location of our immigrant, William Hunter's, original land patent of 1695 (see: Hunter & Hunter (2019) *Hunter Original Land in Virginia/North Carolina* (pp. 9-11), and Cross & Hunter (2019) *William Hunter's Original Land in America, Jacob Hunter Trust Newsletter* (pp. 2-7), (28:1). The old Hunter family home and cemetery were marked on a drawing by Cornelia Hunter Meara (1834-1909). On April 8th, 2019 our team located what Meara named as the old William Hunter Family Cemetery on the current Godfrey farm at 121 Sugar Run Road in Sunbury, NC. The owners of the property, Helen and Kelly Godfrey, request that anyone who wishes to visit the cemetery call and request permission in advance. The site is on private property. Their contact information is available through the Jacob Hunter Trust.

The cemetery is just south of a pond at the end of a dirt road that runs through the Godfrey's property. They have requested no visitors when it is, or has been raining, due to additional wear and tear on the road. GPS coordinates for the cemetery are 36° 25' 60" North and 76° 36' 11" West.

The cemetery is noted on the Meara map (shown below) as "Hunters Cemetary [sic]," and it is shown just west of "Old Hunter House." Those locations are consistent with what Kermit Godfrey, father of Kelly Godfrey and former owner of the property, told us of the original location of the old house described below.

The cemetery turned out to consist of two sites, catty-corner to one another. Rich Hunter's survey with his dowsing rods of the fenced area to the east, counted 120 burials. There were no discernible markers at this cemetery. It contained one very large camellia bush which could be over the top of additional graves, but the bush prohibited dowsing of that area. All the burials are surrounded by a metal fence made by the Stewart Iron Works of Cincinnati, Ohio, which further research revealed was founded in 1862 and is one of the largest iron fence companies in the country. The iron was clearly manufactured, not hand-wrought, which confirmed its manufacture to post-date 1862. The fence was bolted to hollow metal fence posts and was resting atop what appeared to be a cement foundation. The fence surrounded three sides of the cemetery. On the fourth, or north side, the iron had been removed, and only a few feet of foundation remained in the northeast corner. This portion of the northern boundary may have been compromised when a pond was constructed to the north of the cemetery.

The second site, Plot 2, was located just a few feet southwest of the fenced-in cemetery. It may have been established after the first cemetery filled up. It is enclosed on the east and south by an electric fence which keeps cows out of the cemetery. It is possible that there are additional graves on the south and east sides of the fence, but it was impossible to safely cross the fence to determine if

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additional graves were located there. The fenced area contained 98 graves by Rich's count.

We located three tombstones. The first was a tall obelisk whose urn had broken off the top and was lying beside the monument. The obelisk was inscribed "T. S. Meara, born 29 June 1889, died 2 Jan. 1908" and "Cornelia A. Meara born 9 Nov. 1834, died ____." Her death date was not listed.

One tombstone was partially visible in the ground. We dug it up and discovered it to read: "In Loving Memory of my Mother, Mrs. Emily Hunter [named on the Meara map] died 20 Sept. 1880 aged 81 years, 9 months, and 2 days, Asleep in Jesus." Research by Thomas Hunter revealed that Emily Riddick (1796-1879) who married Isaac Riddick Hunter (1791-1835) was the mother of Cornelia Artemisa Hunter (1834-1909), and Cornelia's husband was Captain Timothy Meara. We uncovered two more pieces of this very tall tombstone. We also found most of the footstone which was broken off at the top where the person's initials would have been and which was inscribed, "E.B. Davis, E[lizabeth] City, NC." (Note: Photo of footstone is missing—the writer is not 100% sure of surname of stone carver.) Kelly Godfrey remarked that the monument company is still in business. There were numerous bits of broken brick in the area of the two graves where we found the tombstones. These graves may have been lined with bricks, as was a practice in times past. Kelly Godfrey pointed out the location of another stone just to the south of Emily's which, when dug up, was found to be inscribed "Miss Elizabeth S. Hunter, died Mar 16 [broken & illegible]." We re-laid both stones flat in the ground to facilitate mowing of the cemetery by Mr. Godfrey.

Kermit Godfrey, father of Kelly, paid us a call while we were surveying the site. Kermit stated that the cemeteries had been quite overgrown many years ago, and he and his son had cleared them in 1991. We heartily thanked him for his work and for mowing the cemetery over the years.

Kermit also pointed out the location of the footpath that led to the footbridge over the old mill pond that is noted on the Meara map of the area. He stated that his mother-in-law used the footbridge on her five-mile walk to school from Folly Road where she grew up.

House

Kelly stated that his grandfather had lived in the small unpainted frame house located behind and west of the Godfrey's current home. Kermit said that the building had been moved from the middle of the field west of its current location and was added on to. Note: the former location of the house was closer to the cemeteries and in a site where it is possible that the original William Hunter house was located as noted on the Meara map. Kermit stated that they used to farm peanuts in the field where the house had been and encountered "brickbats," large bricks about 4" across and 12" long, while plowing, and that they were the remnants of the building's fireplace. Kelly said he now uses the frame building for storage and plans to tear it down but not in the immediate future.

When we asked permission to examine the house, Kelly said it was used for storage and too full of stuff. We drove back to look at and photograph it. Kermit had said that the rear or west portion was the older part, but on examination, that part appears to be newer. The existing brick chimney is very narrow and straight like a stove-pipe chimney. What we could photograph of the beams underneath that part of the building are of obvious modern and recent construction. In contrast, the eastern portion of the building has a large opening now covered by plywood and shaped like the large chimneys of 18th and early 19th century buildings. We were unable to photograph underneath this portion because it is so close to the ground and the gap is covered by items being stored. The door was blocked by a mountain of aluminum cans, so entry was impossible. This building merits closer study as dating it precisely with dendrochronology could confirm which generation of Hunters built the building and whether it would be worth attempting to save and move it.

[illegible]

Aerial view of the cemetery plots 1 and 2 from Google Earth:



Below, Plot 1 of Hunter Cemetery looking northeast:



Plot 1 of Hunter Cemetery looking north with gate and camellia bush:



Hunter Cemetery gate with manufacturer's name:



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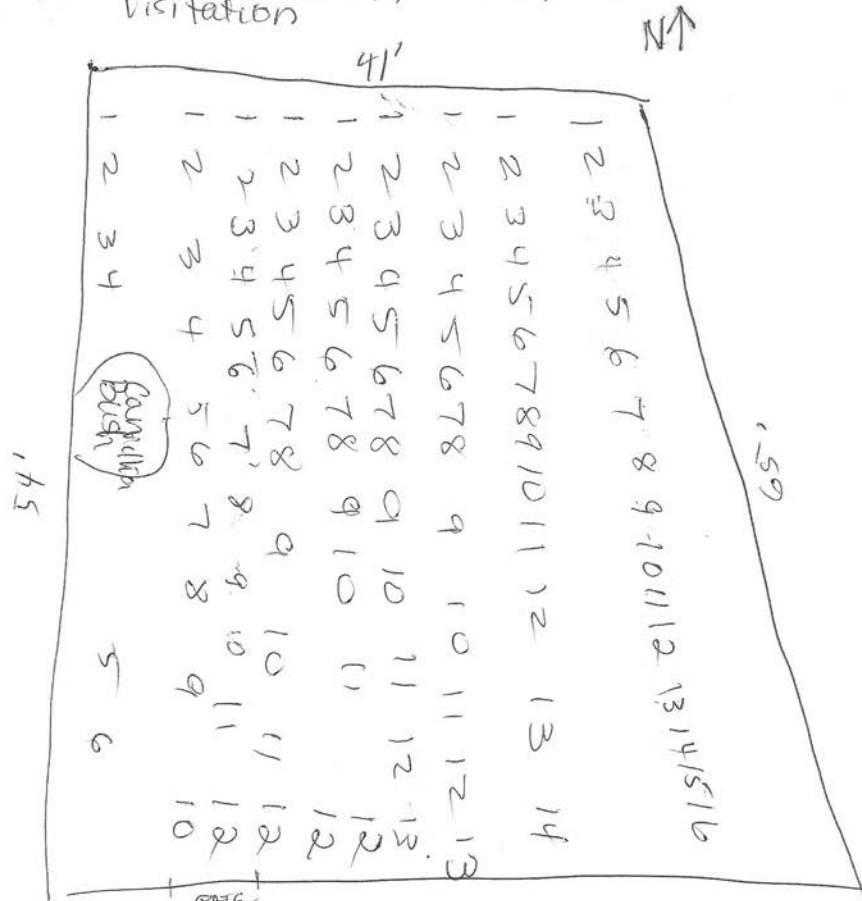
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Close-up of cement foundation of Hunter Cemetery wall:



Layout, William Hunter Cemetery, Plot 1:

William (?) Hunter Cemetery
121 Sugar Run Rd, Sunbury NC
Private - must notify owner prior to
visitation



120 burials, no stones 68'

Fence made by the Stewart Iron Works, Cincinnati

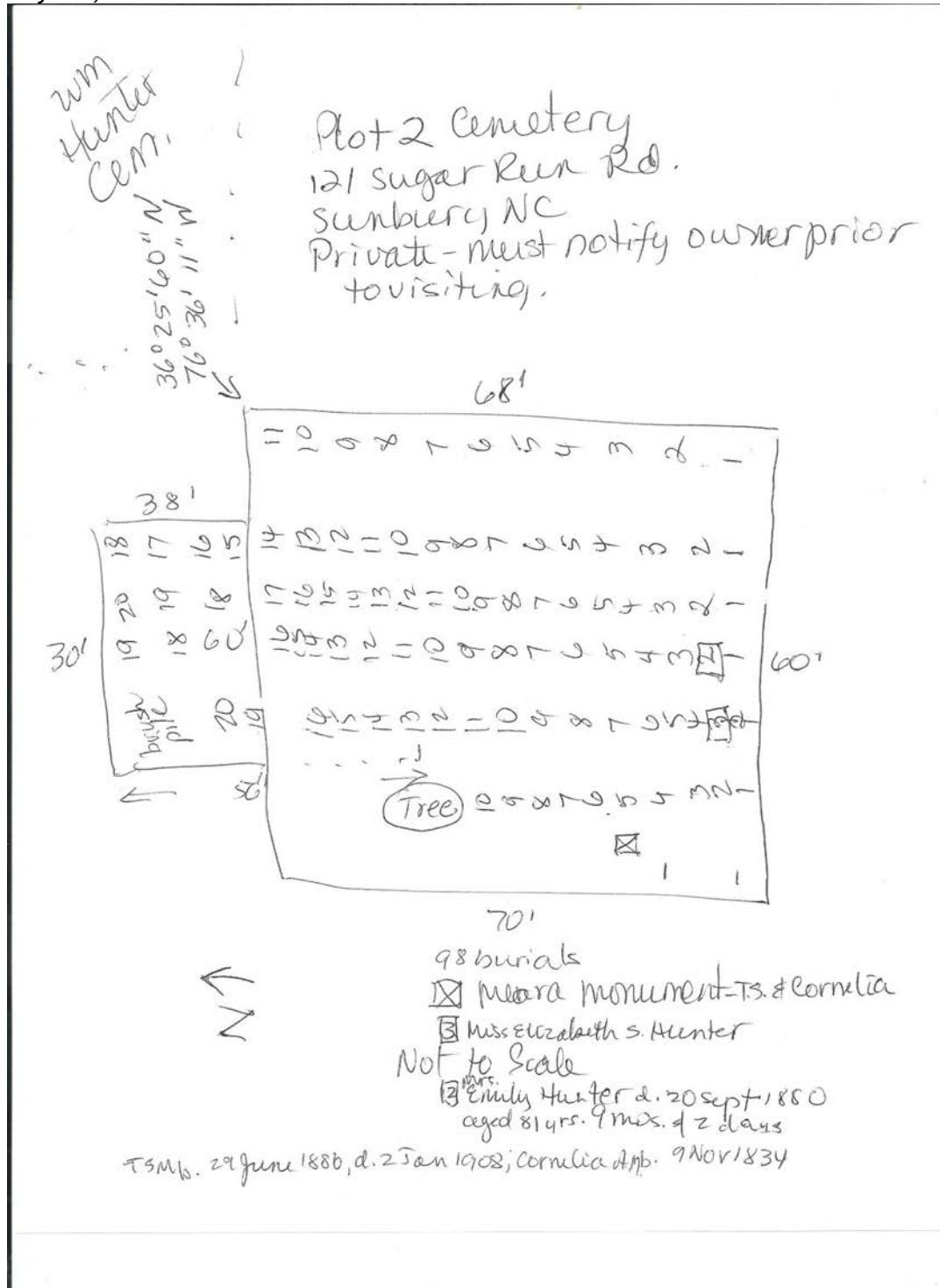
NOT TO SCALE

Plot
2

Plot 2 with Meara monument, looking east. The Camelia bush seen behind the Meara monument is in the older, fenced cemetery.



Layout, Plot 2 with Meara monument:



Meara monument in Plot 2:



Mrs. Emily Hunter tombstone as re-laid:



Miss Elizabeth S. Hunter tombstone before re-laying:



Aerial view of old frame house west of Godfrey's house from Google Earth showing two distinct parts:



Rear (newer) portion of old frame house, south elevation:



Rear (newer) portion of old frame house, north elevation:



Underneath floor framing (clearly modern) of newer portion of old frame house:



Front (older) portion of old frame house, south elevation:



Connector between newer (to left) and older (to right) parts of frame house where the door is:

Theophilus Hunter Family Cemetery at Spring Hill,

705 Barbour Drive, Raleigh NC, (just southwest of the current Japan Center, located in the historic Spring Hill House)

By Belle Long

On April 10, 2019 Betsy Amos, Rich Hunter, Belle Long, and Bruce Lantrip visited the Theophilus Hunter family cemetery located on the campus of NC State University with the aim of confirming the location of any graves in addition to that of Theophilus Hunter, the only marked grave at the site. North Carolina State University and the State of North Carolina officials seem reluctant to acknowledge that there may be burials at this location in addition to that of Theophilus Hunter. Extensive research over a 5-month period by a group of Hunter descendants has confirmed at least two additional burials and uncovered the possibility of at least 25 additional family members who could be buried there. They all died prior to July 1864 when the land passed out of ownership of the Hunter family and are not documented as buried in other cemeteries in the area.

Rich used his dowsing rods to discover 16 burials at the site. Twelve were in proximity to the marked grave. Four more were located several yards southwest of Theophilus's grave, separated from the others by a stand of trees and bushes. The participants were unable to search the area between the two grave sites because of the vegetation, but believe that once the bushes are cleared, more graves may be located in the intervening area.

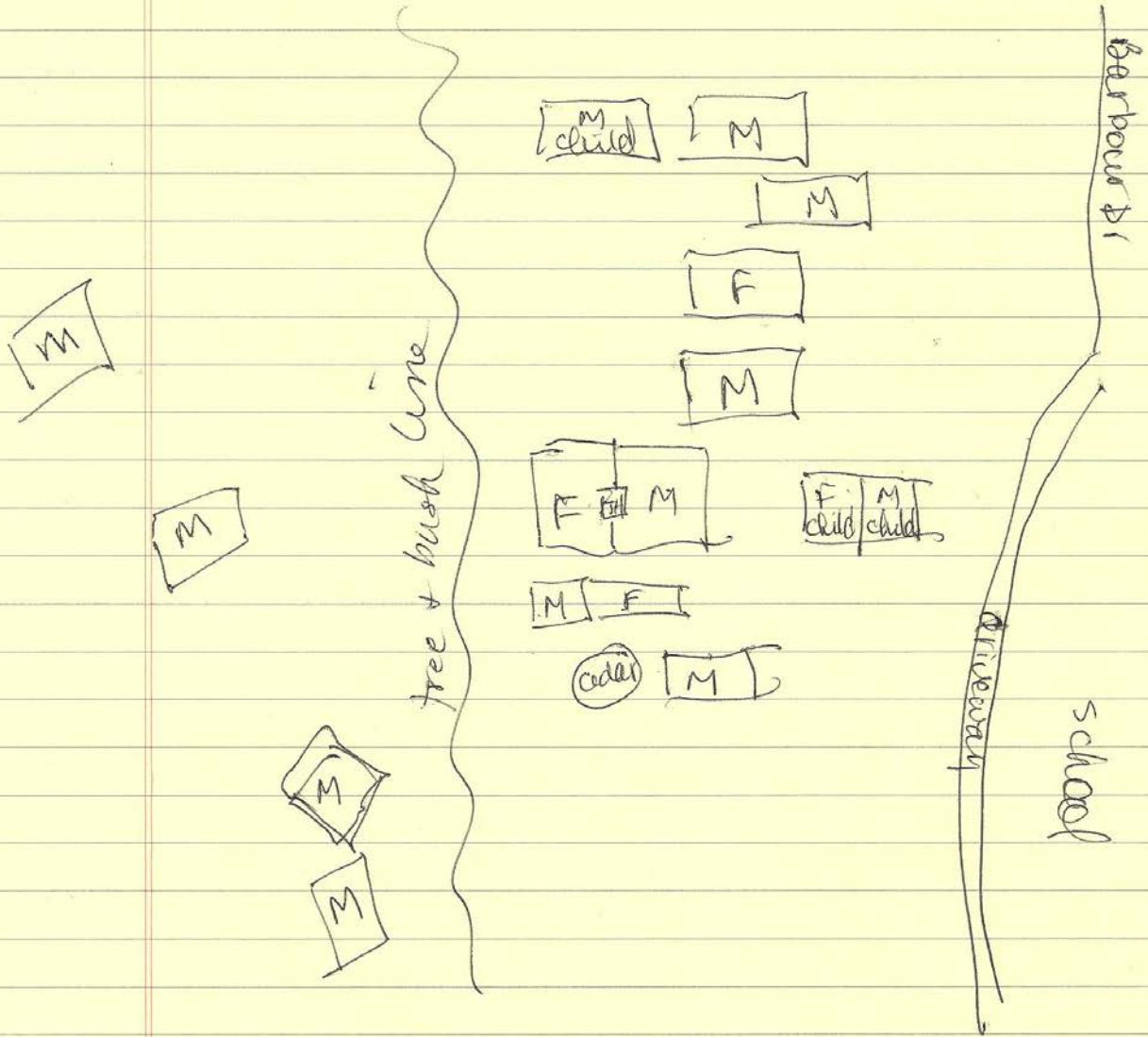
We believe that the current protected area of the graveyard is entirely inadequate. When the Spring Hill property is developed in the future, we are concerned that a large enough area be isolated from any construction to protect all identified graves and potential graves.

Rich was able to identify the gender of the burials and the size. The boundaries of each grave were marked with paint, and the gender noted. A small grave can indicate a child or infant burial, depending on its length. The results revealed 10 adult males, 3 adult females, 2 male children, and one female child, for a total of 16 graves. See layout and photos below:

Theophilus Hunter Family Cemetery
 Campus of NKSI April 10, 2019
 Raleigh, NC

N ↑

Spring
 Hill
 House



Not to scale

16 graves. Unable to survey tree
 & bush line.

Rear of marker for Theophilus Hunter's grave installed in 1940 by the Daughters of the American Revolution. (School in distance):



Aerial view of Spring Hill House (upper left) and cemetery (lower right) from Google Earth



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Aerial view of cemetery area from Google Earth:



Theophilus Hunter grave and grave marker:



Female grave adjacent to (west of) Theophilus Hunter's grave:



Other burials in the area of (north of) Theophilus Hunter's grave.
Spring Hill house in the distance on right.



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Burials south of Theophilus Hunter's grave:



Burials east of Theophilus Hunter's grave:



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One of four graves southwest of TH's grave, west of the vegetation line:



Jacob Hunter Trust expands scope to include all descendants of William Hunter, our immigrant

With the discovery of the William Hunter Family Homestead and Cemetery, established in 1695, the Jacob Hunter Trust has expanded its scope to include all descendants of our immigrant, William Hunter (b._____, d. ca 1728). Since its beginning in 1991, the Jacob Hunter Trust has sponsored and published research on the Hunter line, beginning with Jacob Hunter, our Revolutionary War ancestor. Years of collaborative research with our extended family has expanded this family line back to our original Hunter ancestor, William Hunter, who we believed arrived in America in 1685 or earlier. William's first land patent was for 200 acres in 1695. We now know the location of that original patent as well as the additional 240 acres William purchased in 1702. This composed the original Hunter family homestead that remained in the family for over 200 years.

To honor this extended family, the Jacob Hunter Trust revised and reformatted its website in May of 2019. A special edition of the Jacob Hunter Trust

Newsletter was published in June 2019. Please visit the website often and consider adding to the rich history of this historic American family.

Raymond Hunter to lead Task Force to Enhance the William Hunter Cemetery

Raymond Hunter, principle author of the groundbreaking book, *William Hunter of Nansemond Co. and His Early Descendants*, has agreed to form a group of Hunter family researchers to plan improvements to the historic William Hunter Cemetery. Raymond invited his “gang of 8” (those involved with him in writing his book) along with the Trust’s Raleigh team of Belle Long, Surry Roberts, MD, Betsy Amos, and Josh Price. The first project they will undertake is to design and install a monument (a stele) at the cemetery. Raymond can be contacted at rejlhunters@gmail.com. Anyone interested in assisting in the funding this project can donate to the Jacob Hunter Trust and designate his/her gift for the monument.

PLEASE CONSIDER MAKING AN ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE JACOB HUNTER TRUST

In addition to publishing family history through the Jacob Hunter Trust website and the JHT Newsletters, the Trust maintains, or oversees, five historic, family cemeteries. Costs associated with maintaining these cemeteries in a manner that respects our ancestors are substantial and will increase over time.

It is the objective of the Jacob Hunter Trust to raise sufficient funds so the account may be turned over to a professional trust administrator at a bank with a trust department. Before this can be done, the Trust needs to raise sufficient funds so that the interest on the money will cover the costs associated with perpetual care of these cemeteries.

We are asking all interested individuals to donate every year so the income can exceed the annual costs of cemetery maintenance and build a balance to the level required to provide perpetual care based on annual earnings.

We also need people who are interested in providing support via Gifts and Bequests to the Jacob Hunter Trust. Judge Robert S. Hunter (1919-2012) has written instructions (see article below) for leaving money through one’s will, or “payable on death” (POD) accounts that include investments, savings accounts, certificates of deposits, etc. to the Jacob Hunter Trust. The Jacob Hunter Trust is registered with the IRS as a tax-exempt 501 (c) 13 charitable organization. Donating to the Jacob Hunter Trust may provide substantial tax benefits.

Gifts and Bequests to the Jacob Hunter Trust

by Judge Robert S. Hunter (1919-2012)

Your gift or bequest can help to assure that the Jacob Hunter Trust can support research, provide cemetery maintenance, and cemetery restoration for eternity. The easiest way to accomplish this is to make gifts from time to time. You can do so by making checks payable to “Jacob Hunter Trust” where funds will be strictly controlled and used only for purposes that are consistent with the trust objectives.

You can remember the trust in your will. A simple bequest, as follows will suffice: “I give and bequeath to the Jacob Hunter Trust, a trust created to preserve the burial grounds of Hunter family descendants the sum of \$(amount).”

Another simple way to make a gift to the trust is known as the payable on death account (POD). You can open such an account at your bank or savings and loan. You open this kind of account by creating it in the name of “(Your name) Payable on Death to the Jacob Hunter Trust.” The Trustee is Richard H. Hunter, 10202 Briggs Road, Marion, IL 62959-5844.

There are numerous advantages to such an account: 1. you retain full control over it as long as you live, 2. you can increase or decrease the amount or close it out without notifying anyone, 3. you are entitled to the income therefrom as long as you live, 4. it is entirely confidential. The only difference between it and any other account you own is that, upon your death, the balance that is in the account is paid to the Jacob Hunter Trust. The Jacob Hunter Trust is registered with the IRS as a tax-exempt 501 (c) (13) organization.

By contributing to the Trust, you will be strengthening our efforts to preserve family cemeteries, compile further historical information, and share information with interested relatives and selected public libraries.

Notice to Readers:

Trust recruiting assistance: If you, a child or grandchild, have skills in computer programming, especially having skills in WordPress, and are willing to volunteer a couple of hours a year, we need your help. The Jacob Hunter Trust’s website is programmed in WordPress and we need someone to assist us to upload newsletters and make minor updates and adjustments during the year. If you are able to help, please contact rich@jacobhuntertrust.org. Your expertise would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your support of the Jacob Hunter Trust.