

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District

Other names/site number: DHR #127-7231

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

### 2. Location

Street & number: Bounded by 2nd St. on west, northern limit of CSX right-of-way on north, on SE and east by historic property line and former stream courses

City or town: Richmond State: VA County: Independent City

Not For Publication:  N/A Vicinity:  N/A

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,


I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national  statewide  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A  B  C  D

 Signature of certifying official/Title:	<u>09-14-2022</u> Date
<u>Virginia Department of Historic Resources</u> State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	
In my opinion, the property <input type="checkbox"/> meets <input type="checkbox"/> does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

---

#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

---

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

---

#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

##### Category of Property

(Check only one box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	buildings
<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>5</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>4</u>	<u>7</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 7  
The Almshouse: 4 contributing buildings; Shockoe Hill Cemetery: 1 contributing site;  
Hebrew Cemetery: 1 contributing building, 1 contributing site

---

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

FUNERARY/Cemetery

HEALTH CARE/Hospital

DEFENSE/Arms Storage

DEFENSE/Military Facility

DOMESTIC/Institutional Housing/Poor House

EDUCATION/Medical Training

EDUCATION/School/Military Academy

\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

FUNERARY/Cemetery

DOMESTIC/Multiple Dwelling/ Apartment Building

TRANSPORTATION/road-related (vehicular)

TRANSPORTATION/rail-related

COMMERCE/TRADE/Business/Employment Agency

\_\_\_\_\_

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

---

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN/ Italianate

LATE VICTORIAN/Romanesque Revival

MID-19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY/ Exotic Revival

EARLY REPUBLIC

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS: Colonial Revival

---

---

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK; METAL: Wrought and Cast Iron, Zinc; STONE: Sandstone, Granite, Limestone, Marble

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

---

### Summary Paragraph

The Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District occupies 43 acres bounded to the south by E. Bates Street, to the north by the northern limit of the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (previously the CSX rail line) right-of-way (City of Richmond parcel #N0000233022) at the southern margin of the Bacon's Quarter Branch valley, to the west by 2nd Street, and to the east by the historic edge of the City property at the former location of Shockoe Creek (Figures 1 and 2). The District encompasses most of a 28.5-acre tract acquired in 1799 by the recently incorporated City of Richmond to fulfill several municipal functions along with later additions to this original tract. The District is a significant example of a municipal almshouse-public hospital-cemetery complex of the sort that arose in the period of the New Republic following disestablishment of the Anglican Church. The District illustrates changing social and racial relationships in Richmond through the New Republic, Antebellum, Civil War, Reconstruction, and Jim Crow/Lost Cause eras of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. While the three previously listed properties within the District (The Almshouse [NRHP 1981, 1989; DHR #127-0353], Shockoe Hill Cemetery [NRHP 1995; DHR #127-0389], and Hebrew Cemetery [NRHP 2006; DHR #127-6166]) illustrate wonderfully the public appreciation for and memorialization of important and wealthy persons, such as civic leaders and historical figures like John Marshall

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

and Elizabeth Van Lew, in addition to excellence in public architecture and design, there is much more to the Shockoe Hill tract. The District features a suite of municipal functions and services concerned with matters of public welfare, health, and safety, which the City of Richmond relegated to its then-periphery on its northern boundary during the nineteenth century. Four newly identified sites, the City Hospital and Colored Almshouse Site (DHR #44HE0709), the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground (DHR #44HE1203), the Poor House of 1806 site (DHR #44HE1251) and the City Powder Magazine Site (44HE1228), are contributing to the District. There are 7 newly identified non-contributing resources consisting of 2 buildings and 5 structures. All of these are associated with incompatible development within and adjacent to the historic district starting in the second half of the nineteenth century, when development projects began to impact the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground's physical features as well as other sites, including the City Powder Magazine and the City Hospital and Colored Almshouse sites. The District's integrity today is varied. All of the contributing resources have integrity of location and association. The three previously-listed cemeteries have integrity of setting, design, materials, workmanship, and feeling. The Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground has integrity of setting and feeling that are the result both of its historic function as a cemetery for Black Richmonders as well as the cemetery's subsequent erasure from public memory and redevelopment during the twentieth century. The African Burying Ground's integrity of design, materials, and workmanship was altered or destroyed by construction of incompatible transportation and commercial resources from the late-nineteenth to mid-twentieth century. Intact subsurface cultural deposits, however, can provide important information about the cemetery's use over almost a century from the Early Republic to Jim Crow eras. The integrity of the City Hospital and Colored Almshouse Site (DHR #44HE0709) appears to be good; although the site has had limited professional testing, current aerial imagery indicates evidence of substantial subsurface architectural features from the buildings that once stood here. The City Powder Magazine Site (44HE1228) has not been archaeologically tested, and its integrity as an arsenal or magazine reflects its intentional destruction in 1865 as well as subsequent efforts to cover and fill the site to its present condition. The effect of the magazine's explosion on the environs, buildings, and inhabitants of the District, make this site a contributing site

---

## **Narrative Description**

### Setting

The Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District is mostly defined by the original 28.5-acre parcel laid out by the City in 1799 for the purpose of locating a burying ground "for white people," and the incremental expansion of that plot throughout the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> This parcel is located at the northeastern edge of Shockoe Hill, one of the main hills on which the City of Richmond was built, and it extends into the floodplain valleys of Shockoe Creek and its tributary Bacon's Quarter Branch. In the early nineteenth century, this tract lay at a remote edge of the City and spread across the boundary between the City and neighboring Henrico County. Early maps indicate that this northeastern promontory of Shockoe Hill was cut through by several major erosional gullies and/or spring-fed streams. However, it appears that throughout

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

the nineteenth century there were ongoing efforts to fill in these gullies (Figures 11, 14, 17-19), and by the end of that century, the landform had come to look very much as it does today.

Inventory (Note: Resources are keyed to the attached Sketch Maps using the first DHR number shown in each inventory entry.)

*Previously Listed Contributing Resources*

The Almshouse, NRHP 1981, Boundary Increase 1989, Additional Documentation 2020; DHR Nos. 127-0353, 127-6075, and 127-7231-0001; 4 contributing buildings  
Shockoe Hill Cemetery, NRHP 1995; DHR Nos. 127-0389 and 127-7231-0002; 1 contributing site  
Hebrew Cemetery, NRHP 2006; DHR Nos. 127-6166, 127-6075, and 127-7231-0003; 1 contributing building, 1 contributing site

*Newly Identified Contributing Resources*

City Hospital and Colored Almshouse Site, DHR No. 44HE0709, 1 contributing site  
Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground, DHR Nos. 44HE1203, 127-6660, and 127-7231-0006, 1 contributing site  
The Poor House of 1806 Site, DHR No. 44HE1251, 1 contributing site  
City Powder Magazine Site, DHR Nos. 44HE1228 and 127-7231-0013, 1 contributing site

*Newly Identified Non-Contributing Resources*

Sunoco/Talley's Auto Center and Billboard, DHR Nos. 127-6660, 44HE1203, and 127-7231-0006; 1 non-contributing building and 1 non-contributing structure  
Former Animal Shelter/ Staff Zone Commercial Building, DHR Nos. 127-6659 and 127-7231-0007, 1 non-contributing building  
Seaboard Air Line/CSX Railroad Embankment and Track, DHR No. 127-7231-0009, 1 non-contributing structure  
Curtis Holt, Sr. Bridge (on the site of the earlier 5th Street/Northside Viaduct and subsequent Stonewall Jackson Memorial Bridge), DHR Nos. 127-0360 and 127-7231-0010, 1 non-contributing structure  
I-64 Shockoe Valley Bridges and ramps, westbound ramp, DHR Nos. 127-7050 and 127-7231-0011, and eastbound ramp, DHR Nos. 127-7051 and 127-7231-0012, 2 non-contributing structures

Detailed Description

The District consists primarily of properties just to the north and south of Hospital Street, which traverses and roughly bisects the District. The description that follows imagines a walk through the district from west to east along Hospital Street, presenting in sequence each of the District's contributing and non-contributing properties as they are encountered.

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

The Almshouse Complex (127-0353, 127-6075, and 127-7231-0001) including the Site of the Poor House of 1806 (44HE1251)  
(Contributing Property)

The prominently visible landscape of the District begins in the west at 2nd Street (Photo 1). To the north is The Almshouse (DHR #127-0353, NRHP reference numbers 81000647, 89001913), a complex which includes four contributing buildings constructed between 1860 and 1926, significant in medical and social history and for its imposing Italianate architecture (Photos 2 and 3). Originally listed on the National Register in 1981, the Almshouse property's nomination was updated in 1989 to include discussion of its early twentieth-century addition, and the nomination was updated in 2020 to clarify the property's period of significance. The six-acre Almshouse property, extending north from its existing structures on Hospital Street to the southern edge of the railroad right-of-way, was sometimes used for burying inmates of The Almshouse.

There may also be remains of structures and other features from the 1806 Poor House, which has been recorded as an archaeological site (44HE1251) based solely on evidence from records, although the construction of the Almshouse and the later three associated buildings has probably destroyed most of the earlier features and deposits. Nonetheless, the site is included here as a reminder that significant early deposits may be intact on parts of this tract.

#### Shockoe Hill Cemetery (Contributing Property)

Opposite the Almshouse, on the south side of Hospital Street, is the enclosed portion of the municipal burying ground reserved for White people: Shockoe Hill Cemetery (DHR #127-0389, NRHP reference number 95000818). In many ways this large formal cemetery sets the general tone for the District with its weathered old brick walls, gridded walkways, park-like landscape, enclosed family plots and abundance of monumental styles (Figure 5, Photos 4, 5 and 6). Portions of this property had been used to bury paupers prior to the cemetery's formal designation as such, possibly as early as 1805. The first recorded interments occurred in 1822. The majority of the visible landscape reflects aesthetics of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century. The property comprises 12.7 acres, which includes an original 4-acre plot and two expansions that occurred in the nineteenth century. It is still owned by the City of Richmond, and it is maintained in large part by a volunteer organization: The Friends of Shockoe Hill Cemetery. There are approximately 4,000 remaining extant grave markers in the cemetery. Research by Jeffry Burden of The Friends of Shockoe Hill Cemetery suggests that there are approximately 22,000 interments within the walls.

#### Hebrew Cemetery (Contributing Property)

After passing the Almshouse, on the north side of the street is Hebrew Cemetery (DHR #127-6166, NRHP reference number 06000348). In 1816, the City granted one acre at the corner of

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

Hospital Street (at the time called Marshall Street) and 4th Street to a local Jewish congregation, Beth Shalome, for use as a burying ground. Since then, the property has been extended through a series of five additional purchases and two gifts from the City's Shockoe Hill tract. The heart of the property is laid out in a block-and-grid plan typical of many nineteenth-century urban cemeteries. In 1911, Hebrew Cemetery expanded to the south side of Hospital Street and took over what had been the property formerly occupied by the old City Hospital. This tract south of Hospital Street and east of 4th Street, along with other additions to Hebrew Cemetery, had previously been included in the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground. It now comprises 8.4 acres total (Figure 6, Photos 7 and 8).

City Hospital and Colored Almshouse Site (44HE0709)  
(Contributing Site)

The archeological site of the City Hospital/Colored Almshouse lies just east of and adjacent to Shockoe Hill Cemetery on the south side of Hospital Street and the east side of 4th Street (Figure 7). The building was constructed by 1842. The lot surrounding the City Hospital had been formally incorporated into the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground by 1850. The hospital remained in City use until the beginning of the twentieth century. It was a large multistory brick building to which an equally large wing was added following the Civil War. Figure 8 is a view of the original City Hospital building in 1865. A detail from a ca. 1891 photograph by Richmond's Cook Studio shows the City's "Colored Almshouse," which occupied the buildings at that time (Figure 9). That latter function was taken over in 1910 by the newly constructed West Building at The Almshouse complex and the old City Hospital building was razed. A portion of the property was purchased for use as an "annex" by the Hebrew Cemetery Company in 1911. Archaeological remains of the City Hospital and Colored Almshouse (probably including associated graves) survive on the property.

Archaeological site 44HE0709 was first recorded in 1989 by Dan Mouer, an author of this nomination. At the time, Mouer noted:

One archaeological site of interest was discovered south of the project area. In the large green space which occupies the block between Fifth Street and Shockoe Hill cemetery, extensive ground exposure revealed architectural debris and nineteenth century artifacts.<sup>2</sup>

Aerial imagery indicates subsurface architectural remains from these large buildings (Figure 24). Fragments of brick, window glass and other artifacts are visible on the surface in numerous bare spots. Historical documents indicate that the City Hospital had a basement, and it is apparent that archaeological remains are present, and that subsequent damage from intrusions by new graves in the Hebrew Cemetery "Annex" have been minimal.



Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground (44HE1203)  
(Contributing Site)

The Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground (44HE1203), founded in 1816, is a contributing site to the District (Figure 10; Photos 9, 10, and 11). Portions of this massive site are on both sides of Hospital Street as well as on both sides of 5th Street and, as mentioned previously, overlap significantly with both the present-day Hebrew Cemetery boundary and the earlier City Hospital and Colored Almshouse lot. Documentary research indicates that more than 22,000 African American men, women, and children were buried here, making it the City's primary burying ground for the enslaved and free people of color who died in Richmond between 1816 and 1879. The original early nineteenth-century core of this burying ground encompassed two acres at the northeast corner of present-day 5th and Hospital streets (Figure 11). By the time this burying ground was officially closed by the City to further interments, it extended east to Shockoe Creek, north to Bacon's Quarter Branch, and south to the city property line at an unnamed spring-fed branch of Shockoe Creek. Note that a portion of the Burying Ground lies outside of the proposed Historic District (Figure 12. See Section 10 for discussion of boundary justification, below.)

Sunoco/Talley's Auto Center and Billboard (DHR #127-6660)  
(Non-Contributing Building and Non-Contributing Structure)

At 1305 North 5th Street, in the middle of the oldest portion of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground are the remains of an abandoned ca. 1960 Sunoco service station (VDHR #127-6660).<sup>3</sup> The one-story, brick-veneer building has a flat roof. The southwest façade has two large bays for overhead doors, and a two-bay office area. All of the bay openings are boarded over. Restrooms are on the northwest side of the building. Remains of the concrete pad where gas pumps once stood are located southwest of the building, alongside a more recent semi-circular gravel driveway. A short distance to the east, towering above the former service station, is a billboard structure designed to face traffic along the elevated multiple lanes of Interstate 64. The incompatible function of these two resources make them non-contributing to the District, although their placement on a historic Black cemetery is indicative of the difficulties African Americans have faced in preserving their burial grounds. Notably, records indicate that the City quietly acknowledged that this property had been recorded as a cemetery when the municipality sold it to the Sun Oil Company in 1960. The City has recently re-acquired ownership of the lot containing this building with the intention of preserving and/or memorializing this portion of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground.

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

Former Animal Shelter/ Staff Zone Building (DHR #127-6659)  
(Non-Contributing Building)

Located at 501 Hospital Street is a small, non-contributing commercial building (DHR #127-6659). Constructed in 1958, the one-story building has concrete block walls and a flat roof edged with metal trim. The primary entrance is located on the north façade at the western end of the building and is flanked by two windows with fixed sash. A series of regularly spaced windows with multiple-light awning sash is along the remainder of the north façade. Openings on the east, south (rear), and west elevations have similar windows. A paved parking lot is located along the south and east sides of the building, while a chain-link fence separates the property from the adjacent I-64 ramp and 5th Street. The building originally housed an animal shelter or dog pound. Currently, it is occupied by a staffing agency. Its incompatible use and placement atop a portion of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground (44HE1203) make the building a non-contributing resource.

City Powder Magazine Site (44HE1228) (Contributing Site)

South of Hospital Street lies the archaeological site of the City of Richmond powder magazine (44HE1228), which was exploded by Confederate troops during the evacuation of Richmond on April 3, 1865, causing considerable damage to properties throughout the city including the other properties in the District (Figure 13, Photo 12). The magazine stood partially within the gully formed by the branch that bounded the city's property. The magazine was surrounded on at least three sides by the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground. Today its site has been largely covered with fill.

Archaeological remains of the City Powder Magazine (44HE1228) may survive at depth below subsequent urban fill both under the building at 501 Hospital Street (DHR #127-6659) and in the partly filled gully immediately to the south. The site has not been archaeologically tested, and its integrity as an arsenal or magazine has likely been transformed by the explosion and by subsequent efforts to cover and fill the site to its present condition. Nonetheless, the impact, literally, of the magazine's explosion on the City and, especially, on the environs, buildings, and inhabitants of the District, make this site a contributing site under National Register Criterion A.

Future testing could provide material architectural/engineering details of the structure(s) and their intentional destruction. Additionally, two very conflicting descriptions of that magazine from slightly different periods have been found. In one, the magazine was a rectangular brick building with a high surrounding brick wall, while in another version it is described as a structure covered with a large earthen mound. Archaeology could undoubtedly answer questions about which of these was true, or, if both, reveal some basic differences between the two structures and assign them to the date ranges of their use.

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

Seaboard Air Line/CSX Railroad Embankment and Track (DHR #127-7231-0009)  
(Non-Contributing Structure)

Downhill into Shockoe Valley is the turn-of-the-twentieth-century track of the Seaboard Air Line Railroad. The two parallel sets of railroad tracks, originally constructed in 1900 by the Seaboard Air Line Railroad, are now owned by CSX and by the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPRA) as of July 2, 2021. Shockoe Creek and its major tributary, Bacon's Quarter Branch, are both now confined to large subterranean sewers that were constructed in 1917. The rail line and the stretch of 7th Street nearby are elevated on fill over what was once part of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground. Farther west along the railroad track stretches the northernmost portion of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground (Figure 12, Photo 13). By the early 1850s, the Burying Ground comprised a rising series of terraces cut into the northern and eastern faces of Shockoe Hill for the purpose of burying the dead. The Burying Ground—later referred to as the City's "Potters Field"—eventually reached north to Bacon's Quarter Branch and west as far as 2nd Street.<sup>4</sup> The railroad corridor was constructed without, as far as is known today, any provision for reinternment of human remains on land within the corridor, nor for burials at the limits of the burial ground to the north and west of the corridor. Its incompatible function and use with the cemetery over which it was constructed makes the railroad corridor a non-contributing resource, but its presence demonstrates the difficulties that African Americans faced in preserving their cemeteries. The northernmost of the two sets of tracks is now owned by VPRA.

Curtis Holt, Sr. Bridge (on the site of the earlier 5th Street/Northside Viaduct and subsequent  
Stonewall Jackson Memorial Bridge), (DHR #127-0360) and  
I-64 Shockoe Valley Bridges and ramps (DHR #127-7050 and 127-7051)  
(Non-Contributing Structures)

The Curtis Holt, Sr. Bridge (DHR #127-0360) took its current form in 1997. It replaced two earlier such structures, the 5<sup>th</sup> Street (or Northside) Viaduct built in 1891 to facilitate vehicular, and a subsequent replacement built in 1932 by the Richmond Bridge Corporation and renamed, the Stonewall Jackson Memorial Bridge. For the 1932 structure, Alfredo C. Janni designed the 1,185-foot-long viaduct as a fourteen-span reinforced-concrete structure consisting of a series of seven double-span, rigid-frame units. Each rigid-frame unit featured a stiff tower as a central support and, on either end, slender expansion piers which flexed to accommodate the expansion of the concrete under varying temperature and load conditions. The ribbed deck of the viaduct carried two lanes of automotive traffic, a single set of streetcar tracks, and a sidewalk 139 feet above the Bacon's Quarter Branch Valley, which by this time was crowded with late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century industrial development. In addition to the Seaboard Air Line

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

Railroad built in 1900, development included a sewer carrying the enclosed Bacon's Quarter Branch and a large array of buildings and railroad tracks owned by the American Locomotive Works. Entirely replaced in 1996, the bridge now is a multi-span, reinforced concrete, vehicular bridge built on concrete hammerhead piers. The concrete-and-corrugated-metal substructure supports a milled-pavement deck, which accommodates two lanes of vehicular traffic. The bridge is flanked with concrete parapets, which support metal fencing and matching metal lampposts. Concrete sidewalks adjacent to the parapets provide pedestrian access to the bridge.

During the 1960s, highway planners routed the Richmond-Petersburg Turnpike, now combining sections of I-64 and I-95, over the eastern terminus of the District. Carrying today's I-64 above Valley Road, Hospital Street, and the CSX railroad tracks are two bridges. The first, DHR #127-7050, carries westbound traffic and is a multi-span, 90-foot bridge supported by concrete capped, square-columned piers with a continuous, steel-stringer, multi-beam girder substructure. The steel components are held together with rivets. The paved-asphalt concrete deck is flanked by concrete parapets with steel beam railings. Poured concrete abutments anchor the bridge's ends while the approaches are lined with metal guardrails. A grassy median fills the space between the bridge and its twin span on the approaches. Originally constructed in 1967, the bridge was modified in 2001. The eastbound span (DHR #127-7051) is located immediately to the northeast of the westbound bridge and is separated from the Curtis Holt, Sr. Bridge (DHR #127-0360) to the northwest by a dirt lot and power lines. The CSX railroad bed, containing two tracks, runs perpendicular to the eastbound span at the southwest end of the bridge while Valley Road extends perpendicular at the northeast end of the bridge. Similar to the westbound span, the eastbound bridge is a multi-span, vehicular bridge supported by concrete-capped and square-columned piers with a continuous, steel-stringer, multi-beam girder substructure. The steel components are held together with rivets. The paved-asphalt concrete deck is flanked by concrete parapets with steel beam railings. Poured concrete abutments anchor the bridge's ends while the approaches are lined with metal guardrails. These two Interstate 64 bridges have a VDOT number 2806/2807 with a Federal number 21425. While the history underlying these three structures is central to the importance of the District, these structures do not contribute meaningfully in their present altered forms.

Extension of 5th Street and construction of the 5th Street Viaduct caused substantial harm to the original core of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground (DHR #44HE1203) in the period ca. 1889-1891, after erasure of the cemetery had begun. That event, combined with earlier street projects such as the realignment of Hospital Street across the oldest portion of the burying ground, set the pattern for a series of ongoing road widening and bridge replacements that have continued to the present day, including the above-named resources. Their incompatible function and intrusion on the African Burying Ground make the three structures non-contributing to the District, but their existence atop a cemetery highlights the unequal treatment accorded to cemeteries for persons of color versus those for White people.

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

### The District Now and in History

The above-ground contributing properties in this District have been expertly described in the National Register nominations for the Almshouse (DHR #127-0353), Shockoe Hill Cemetery (DHR #127-0389), and Hebrew Cemetery (DHR #127-6166). The additional documentation in 2020 for the Almshouse and its attendant West Building, a segregated almshouse and hospital for Black persons during the Jim Crow era of the early twentieth century, describes in detail each resource's architectural qualities. The important design elements of both Shockoe Hill Cemetery and Hebrew Cemetery have been extensively documented. Historically important persons and classes of people—from Chief Justice John Marshall to the Jewish soldiers who fought for the Confederacy—are featured in those nominations.

During the nineteenth century, there were several City of Richmond gallows sites erected at various times within the District boundary, some of which can be placed with reasonable confidence on contemporary maps. One of those locations stood on the hill near the City Powder Magazine Site (44HE1228) and near the original lots of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground (44HE1203). Another gallows location was just north of the enclosing wall of the Almshouse complex (DHR #127-0353).

Following the Civil War, two new commercial powder magazines were constructed within the eastern margin of the District. They did not last very long as the City soon decided to close them down by ca. 1883. The sale by the City of these parcels from the Burying Ground to a private owner for these two magazines represent the sort of intrusions into the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground (44HE1203) that are critical to understanding the integrity and significance in multiple areas of importance to the District. The construction of one of these magazines in 1867 disturbed “over one hundred” burials in the African Burying Ground (Figure 14).<sup>5</sup> Historic map projections indicate that its location was approximately beneath the present I-64 overpass. Archaeological testing done here in 2013, in preparation for construction of an additional lane to the overpass, revealed that the ground here had been highly modified through a variety of cutting and filling processes. The resulting report does indicate considerable disturbance, but there are fill zones within the tested area that were not excavated to sterile subsoil. It is possible that some of the deposits revealed here are filling the remains of one of these magazines.<sup>6</sup>

Today, the District continues to be used in ways that are similar to how it was used during the nineteenth century. The majority of the landscape is allocated for use as burying grounds. The Almshouse (DHR #127-0353) is now a privately managed apartment complex for low-income senior residents. Of course, there are no gallows, no public powder magazine and, unfortunately, no markings or enclosures indicating the presence of the vast Shockoe Hill African Burying

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

Ground (44HE1203), which historically extended to the north and east even beyond the boundaries of the District (Figure 12).

The area remains primarily a quiet, somewhat secluded historic anomaly surrounded by industrial landscapes and dense residential areas including the Gilpin Court (DHR #127-6883) public housing complex. The principal intrusions into the District include Hospital Street east of 5th Street; the Curtis Holt Sr. Bridge, which carries 5th Street across the Bacon's Quarter Branch valley; Interstate 64, which passes over the eastern edge of the District in the vicinity of the oldest part of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground (44HE1203); the CSX railroad track (DHR #127-7231-0009) which bounds the District on the north and east at the base of Shockoe Hill; the abandoned Sunoco gas station and billboard tower (DHR #127-6660) which sit on a portion of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground; and finally, a one-story building (DHR #127-6659), formerly used as an animal shelter, currently used to house the Staff Zone employment agency.

Obviously, the appearance of the District changed somewhat through its long period of its historical significance. We have some pictorial evidence from the Civil War period, and at that time the new Almshouse (DHR #127-0353) was in use both as a military hospital and to house the Virginia Military Institute. It appears that little effort was being expended to maintain the aesthetics of the cemeteries during the war. There are also two important photographs, by the Cook Studio, which bracket the period before and after construction of the 5th Street Viaduct (DHR #127-0360), which extended 5th Street over Bacon's Quarter Branch over the period 1888-1891 (Figures 20-23). These will be discussed at length in the Section 8 statement of significance, below.

At approximately the same time as the construction of the 5th Street Viaduct (DHR #127-0360) to carry 5th Street across the Bacons Quarter Branch valley, 7th Street was also extended across the eastern tip of the property in order to enable easier transportation from the heart of Richmond to the growing industrial complexes and expanding suburbs rising in the Shockoe Valley and beyond. This marked an important change in the character of the setting. Prior to ca. 1890, the District lay at the periphery of the City of Richmond and astride its border with neighboring Henrico County. After that point, the District became increasingly surrounded by urban growth. This had been a place one could travel to easily enough, but it was hard to travel through it and beyond it. Today, the District feels very much in the middle of a metropolis rather than on its edge, and it is traveled through and over rather than traveled to. The extensions of city streets through the African Burial Ground compounded earlier intrusions including the regular practice of grave robbing at the site and the explosion of the powder magazine in 1865, thereby accelerating a process which caused the Burial Ground to be cut off from the other cemeteries, further intruded upon, desecrated, and eventually forgotten.

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

Figure 15 includes an image of The Almshouse (DHR #127-0353) by Scottish photographer Alexander Gardner, photographed from City Hospital (DHR #44HE0709) on April 12, 1865, just days after the fall of Richmond to United States troops. We can juxtapose this image with a quote from Lt. Col. John Lyell, a Confederate officer who served at The Almshouse during the Civil War, describing the landscape at that time of the Shockoe Hill Burying Ground:

The Almshouse was to many of us a doleful place. Shockoe Hill Cemetery was just across the street in front of us. The Jewish Cemetery to our left, separated from us by an area used for a parade ground, the Colored Cemetery to the rear, and in the rear, just outside the enclosure, the gallows with many gruesome associations.<sup>7</sup>

Between the photograph and Lyell's description we see the totality of the Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District in 1865 with The Almshouse (DHR #127-0353), Shockoe Hill Cemetery (DHR #127-0389), Hebrew Cemetery (DHR #127-6166), the gallows, and the "Colored Cemetery" (44HE1203) A close look at the Almshouse reveals shattered windows from the explosion of the City Magazine just a few days previously. If the northeastern corner of the brick wall surrounding Shockoe Hill Cemetery were visible here, it would be seen to have been badly damaged. These components, the contributing properties, all functioned together as an integral system throughout most of the nineteenth century.

The eastern end of the District clearly lacks the high-style Victorian-era aesthetics of the remainder of the District. Initial impressions of the District east of 5th Street are that the landscape has been completely and irreversibly transformed; that it stands apart from and in stark contrast to the better preserved, bounded, more grand and memorialized landscape west of 5th Street. Yet, upon reflection, this impression fades and is refashioned, and the stark contrast of the present-day re-emerges as one of the District's most enduring and essential defining characteristics. It is here that the highway overpass and the remains of an abandoned gas station leave the area feeling desolate, which is how Lenora McQueen, a member of the descendant community of people buried here, and one of the authors of this nomination, first described this place when recounting her attempt to find her ancestor's grave. Interestingly, that is precisely how Frederick Law Olmsted described arriving at the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground (DHR #44HE1203) while following a funeral there in 1853.

Passing out into the country, a little beyond the principal cemetery of the city (a neat, rural ground, well filled with monuments and evergreens), the hearse halted at a desolate place, where a dozen colored people were already engaged heaping the earth over the grave of a child...

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

Lenora McQueen was searching for the grave of Kitty Cary, her great-great-great-grandmother. In a poem, published in *Harper's Weekly*, on September 1, 1866, Elizabeth Akers Allen (writing as "Florence Percy") describes the scene at the burial place of Kitty Cary, an enslaved woman who had died in 1857 and was buried here. Allen noted that "nothing guards her humble place of rest," and that "straying cattle" and "untended goats" were grazing on her grave.

The City's Superintendent of the Burying Ground described it as unenclosed in 1877 when he urged the City to abandon it and begin interments of Black residents in a new cemetery. There were few permanent markers or walls like those found in the adjacent cemeteries for White Christians and Jewish people, although one account refers to a marble stone for a grave occupant named "Old Aunt Sally" and some headboards placed over a few of the Union dead buried there. In short, it seems that throughout the entire period of significance, this eastern edge of the District had been somewhat "desolate."<sup>8</sup> This lack of respect, monumentalizing, and memorializing of Black dead, in stark contrast to the Whites in neighboring cemeteries, was nothing new, indeed it is a "character-defining feature" of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground (44HE1203).<sup>9</sup> In that sense, the historic aesthetics resonate with the present, and the defining characteristics of the District remain remarkably intact.

### The Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District: A Note on Historic Integrity

The regulations defining eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places rightly place emphasis on the historic integrity of a property, and the regulatory definition of integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance. Of course, no historic site or district can be expected to clearly or unequivocally convey historic significance to an observer or visitor who has no access to information about the property and the people or events or cultural patterns for which it is considered significant.

In Section 8, below, we present a detailed discussion of the history and historical significance of the District. Following this more in-depth elucidation of the events, patterns of history and associations among the contributing properties and the changes they have undergone through time, we suggest a visitor will understand what had been and how it relates to what is visible now. Even in the one portion of the District where intrusion and alteration has been relatively substantial, it is not difficult to experience a deeper understanding and association with the events that shaped what is now seen. It is for this reason that the authors of this report feel strongly that proper recognition and preservation of this District is critically important to an understanding of the history of Richmond, Virginia, and the impact of that past on our present.



Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

### Potential for Boundary Increase

The full extent of the African Burying Ground is shown in the Appendix of Maps and Figures, specifically Figure 12. The northern extent of the burial area stretched to the north of the current district boundary, past the berm that supports the railroad tracks. The area was not included in the historic boundary due to the known significant intrusions into that area: building construction, floodplain evolution; culvert construction; railroad tracks, multiple spur line construction and construction of parking lots.

The original extent of the African Burying Ground is based on City maps from 1848, 1853, 1876, 1877, 1891 and 1905 (all cited in the bibliography). In addition to the mapping, Frederick Law Olmsted provided an eyewitness description of the funeral procession that he followed, and the two funerals and burials that he then witnessed in 1853. He described the burials as extending to the crumbling bank of the stream bed area of Shockoe Creek and Bacon's Quarter Branch.

Review of dozens of historic maps (including those cited above) show that the exact location of Bacon's Quarter Branch had moved within its floodplain a number of times during the period of use of the African Burying Ground. Additionally, the Branch valley is subjected to periodic intense flood episodes which alter its physiography and may have had substantial impacts on any human interments in that low ground.

The construction of the railroad track by the Seaboard Air Line Railroad in 1900 and the construction of a culvert to re-route Bacon's Quarter Branch underground around that same time undoubtedly damaged parts of the African Burying Ground. But since the railroad was constructed on a substantial berm, it is possible that human interments and remains might still be found beneath that berm. Burials are almost certainly present on the slope immediately south of the berm.

While current presence of surviving remains of human interments in the floodplain and railroad corridor is not known, future discoveries or additional documentary research may reveal intact areas of the burial area beyond the nominated boundary. In those circumstances, an extension of the historic district's boundary should be considered.

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

---

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

SOCIAL HISTORY

ETHNIC HERITAGE: African American

ETHNIC HERITAGE: Jewish

MILITARY

HEALTH/MEDICINE

ARCHITECTURE

ARCHAEOLOGY: Historic – Non-aboriginal

EDUCATION

RELIGION

SOCIAL/ HUMANITARIAN

ART

### Period of Significance

1799-1968

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Significant Dates

1799 City purchased the site for use as a municipal burying ground

1806 City Poor House and Workhouse constructed

1816 City Powder Magazine established at Shockoe Hill

1816 City designated two 1-acre burial tracts, one each for “free persons of colour” and “slaves,” which form the core of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground

1816 City transferred 1-acre plot for burial plot “for Jews”

1822 First officially recognized interments in the Shockoe Hill Cemetery designated for White people

1842 First appearance of “City Hospital” building on map

1843 Two acres added to Shockoe Hill Cemetery

1850 Five acres added to Shockoe Hill Cemetery, 9 acres added to Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground

1860 Construction of Almshouse to replace Poor and Work House

1861 Confederate military took charge of new Almshouse building

1864 Virginia Military Institute moved into the new Almshouse

1865 Confederates exploded the powder magazine on April 3rd

1866 The City sold two parcels from the African Burying Ground to W. S. Wortham to use for new powder magazines

1879 City closed Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground to further interments

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

- 1882 Hebrew Cemetery purchased a portion of African Burying Ground to its north from the city of Richmond
- 1883 City extended 5th Street, disturbing burials in the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground
- 1886 Hebrew Cemetery was extended further across the former African Burying Ground via a gift of land from the City
- 1890-1891 Construction of 5th Street Viaduct led to destruction of more graves in the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground
- 1900 Seaboard Air Line Railroad track extended through the eastern and northern edge of the District, causing destruction of portions of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground
- 1911 Hebrew Cemetery expanded south across Hospital Street to former City Hospital property
- 1932 Reconstruction of 5th Street Viaduct as the Stonewall Jackson Bridge intruded on Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground
- 1959 Construction of animal shelter partly on the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground and on fill overlying the City Powder Magazine site
- 1960 Construction of Sunoco/ Talley's Auto Station on the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground
- 1968 Completion of Interstate 64 bridges and approaches across Shockoe Valley

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

African American  
Euro-American  
Jewish

**Architect/Builder**

Gill, Washington, Jr. (The Almshouse)  
Davies, John W. (Shockoe Hill Cemetery)  
Mountjoy, William and J. (Shockoe Hill Cemetery)  
Rogers, John T. (Shockoe Hill Cemetery)  
Miller, William (Shockoe Hill Cemetery)  
Wallen, James (Shockoe Hill Cemetery)  
Wray, Andrew (Shockoe Hill Cemetery)  
Dimmock, James (Hebrew Cemetery)

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District represents a unique landscape in Richmond, Virginia, that emerged following the disestablishment of the Anglican Church in the late eighteenth century. It embodies the City's assumption of responsibilities for the medical and housing needs of the poor, for treatment and isolation facilities for victims of epidemics, and for burial of its residents. The contributing resources named here that together comprise the historic district are historic sites, archaeological sites, cemeteries, and buildings. The District in its entirety is significant at the statewide level under Criterion A in the areas of Social History, Ethnic Heritage: African American, Military, and Health/ Medicine. Under Criterion D, the District is significant at the statewide level in the area of Archaeology: Historic – Non-Aboriginal. The District's period of significance begins in 1799 with the City of Richmond's decision to acquire land for "a public burying ground for white persons" on the northern edge of the city on Shockoe Hill.<sup>10</sup> The period of significance ends in 1968 with completion of the I-64 bridges that represent construction of the most recent resources within the historic district, thus bringing the district to its current appearance and complement of built resources. The list of significant dates provided above are major development milestones in the District's history and are important to understanding the District's multilayered significance. Criteria Consideration D for cemeteries applies to the District given its core function as a municipal burial ground during the nineteenth century. All of the resources within the District are inextricably linked by historic contexts, conjoined and complementary purposes, and common municipal management or oversight. The District's contributing resources reflect and illustrate patterns and changes in social and racial relationships, the impacts of war, medical practices and education, and the construction of historical memory. In its oversight of the original 19<sup>th</sup> century development of this district, the City of Richmond created a key example of the kinds of municipal design forces that reshaped cities across the early republic. As at Philadelphia, New Orleans, and other growing cities, authorities in Richmond paid greater attention to the spatial articulation of social differences and sought to reorder the city's functions and its core along more orderly lines.

The District's historic sites and landscape contain numerous types of resources that have considerable potential to yield important information through the study of material remains and material culture. For that reason the historic district in its entirety—and individually for some of its properties—is eligible under Criterion D in the area of Archaeology: Historic – Non-Aboriginal). Criterion D significance is discussed in greater detail at the end of the significance narrative.

The Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground is a critical contributing resource under Criterion A due to its unique role in representing African American history throughout the period 1799-

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

1968.<sup>11</sup> It may be the largest known nineteenth-century public burying ground for enslaved and free people of color in the United States, in terms of overall size and numbers of interments. By comparison, the New York African Burial Ground, operational for a comparable span of time over the eighteenth century, covered an estimated six acres of ground and held an estimated 15,000 interments.<sup>12</sup> The Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground is also eligible under Criterion D as a data source for local funerary customs of the Black enslaved community, for bioarchaeological information important to elucidating the health and life patterns of the enslaved, and/or geoarchaeological data that can illuminate the attempted destruction of the African Burying Ground during Richmond's long Jim Crow/Lost Cause era.

There are three individually listed properties within the District. The Almshouse (DHR #127-0353) was listed in the NRHP in 1981, prior to the use of the four National Register eligibility criteria; its historic boundary was expanded in 1990 and additional documentation for the property was approved in 2020. Listed at the statewide level of significance, the property's areas of significance are Architecture, Military, Social/ Humanitarian, and Other: Medicine. The 2020 additional documentation established the property's period of significance as 1860-1929 and the eligibility criteria applicable to the property (Criterion A for Military and the updated terms Social History and Health/ Medicine; and Criterion C in the area of Architecture).

Listed in 1995, Shockoe Hill Cemetery (DHR #127-0389) is nationally significant as an example of a municipal cemetery involving the work of eastern artists and craftsmen. The cemetery is listed under Criterion C in the area of Art, Criterion D in the area of Social History, and Criteria Consideration D (for cemeteries). The cemetery's period of significance is 1820-1900.

Hebrew Cemetery (DHR #127-6166) was listed in 2006 at the statewide level of significance under Criterion A in the areas of Religion, Social History, and Ethnic History (Jewish), under Criterion C in the area of Art,<sup>13</sup> and under Criteria Considerations A (for religious properties) and Criteria Consideration D (for cemeteries). Although Criterion C is checked on the nomination form at the beginning of Section 8, an accompanying area of significance is not listed here; however, the cemetery's significant funerary art is described. The cemetery's period of significance is 1816-1956.

---

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District comprises a variety of distinctive properties related to each other through a long period of historic significance (1799-1968). We present discussion of these individual properties and of their corporate or collective areas of significance using a chronological framework.

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

### The City of Richmond Creates New Public Burying Grounds (1799-1821)

Shortly after the surrender of the British at Yorktown ending the American Revolutionary War, Richmond was incorporated as a city and officially became Virginia's new capital. Richmond's first charter was drafted in July 1782. In 1799, the City of Richmond surveyed and set aside a 28.5-acre plot of land straddling its northern corporate margin for the purpose of establishing a "burying ground for white people." Burial, however, would not be the City's first use of the property. The first known public use of the property was to set aside a portion of the tract in 1803 to establish a "Poor House and Workhouse" that would address what had become the City's responsibility for attending to the domestic and medical needs of the City's paupers and disabled residents. That building, which was located on the lot where the Almshouse complex now stands, was a four-story brick structure completed in 1805 (Figure 16). Its first occupants took up residence there in December of 1806.

The Poor House accommodated both White and Black residents, at least in its early decades. It is not currently known whether the races were initially segregated, although genders were housed separately in the building. At least by 1843, however, it appears that Black paupers were housed outside the main Poor House building, in "huts." Dr. Robert William Haxall, a member of the Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Committee, brought the following report and recommendations to the City Council:

The condition of the huts for the accommodation of the blacks, which are situated in rear of the main building, are in wretched order, and in the opinion of the Committee beyond the point of profitable repair. They recommend that this class of inmates be removed to the basement story of the Hospital building, and that speedy measure be taken to effect this object. To place the rooms in this story in habitable condition, the following expenditures will become necessary: Plank floors to three rooms \$100 -- gutters and conductors to drain off the water \$50-- general repairs \$50-- \$200.<sup>14</sup>

An important function of early poor houses, including this one, was to provide medical services for the poor as well as isolation spaces in times of epidemics. For that reason, there were hospital and clinical facilities at the Poor House. According to an 1816 plan, the Poor House occupied a rectangular lot of just over three acres (Figure 4). The Poor House, measuring 43.5 by 71 feet, stood in the center of its lot, diagonally spanning the projected course of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and mirroring the orientation of a deep gully to the west rather than the City's orthogonal grid. To the east of the Poor House was a small adjoining yard enclosed by a brick wall, while larger yards enclosed by a combination of brick wall and wooden fence extended around the north, west, and east sides of the building. North and south of the Poor House and its yards were larger spaces, also enclosed by wooden fences, designated "front" and "back" gardens.

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

Life at the City's Poor House was strictly regulated with discipline and work activities controlled in a manner patterned after the Virginia State Penitentiary, according to architect-historians Gibson and Richard Worsham. Nonetheless, it was apparently operated with a human sense of moral responsibility for the poor. The Worshams write:

Robert Greenhow, a prominent merchant, civic leader, and president of the Richmond Overseers of the Poor, described the board's duties in 1820: "The trust imposed on us is, indeed, an important one. We are the constituted almoners of the City; we are the nominated guardians, friends, and protectors of the destitute and forlorn, the Widow & the Orphan, & we are invested with the power of administering to their necessities as . . . applicants for relief, in our opinion, deserve."<sup>15</sup>

No matter what their situation while living there, Richmond's Poor House residents apparently were segregated at death. Further to the south, just across Marshall Street (now Hospital Street) and a short distance to the east, across 4th Street, Richard Young's 1816 Plan (Figure 11) shows two burying ground lots. These were designated as one for burying White residents who died at the Poor House and another for Black residents. These lots were at least partially within the grounds that later contained Shockoe Hill Cemetery and the City Hospital.

Aside from these paupers' graves, the first moves towards establishing a formal burying ground on the 28.5-acre municipal property came via a petition written by Christopher McPherson in 1810, representing the free people of color in Richmond.<sup>16</sup> This petition presented grievances claiming that the City's existing burying ground for free persons of color and enslaved people of African descent was unsuitable and shamefully maintained. McPherson requested that a new cemetery for people of color be constructed on the property on Shockoe Hill. McPherson reported that one of the "honorable members of the common hall" (the city council of the day) replied that the Shockoe Hill property was "too valuable" to be used for burying Black people. McPherson and Richmond's free Black community continued to press City Council however, and by 1816 the City had set aside two adjacent burial-ground lots of one acre each on Shockoe Hill: one for "free people of colour" and one for "Negroes" (or "slaves" as termed in an 1816 notice in the *Richmond Enquirer*). These lots lay some distance east of the Poor House, on the northeastern promontory and side slopes of Shockoe Hill above the confluence of Bacon's Quarter Branch and Shockoe Creek. To the west these new burial lots for free and enslaved African Americans were bounded by the 5<sup>th</sup> Street corridor and to the south by the corridor of Marshall Street.<sup>17</sup>

Richmond's Jewish population had also begun pressing for a similar accommodation from the City and succeeded in acquiring from the City a one-acre lot on the corner of Marshall and 5th



Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

Streets between the Poor House and the new plots designated for Blacks. The City granted this plot, labelled on the 1816 plat as the “Burying Ground for Jews,” to a local congregation, Beth Shalome.

The year after platting these new Shockoe Hill properties, City Surveyor Richard Young published his completed map of the City of Richmond. On this map he indicated the area near the original Poor House burial grounds on the south side of Marshall Street (later renamed Hospital Street) and west of 4th Street with the label “Burying Ground for White Persons.” Just east of 5th Street and adjacent south of Marshall Street, opposite the new African Burying Grounds, Young also showed the location of the new City Magazine, relocated from its original location near 15th Street. While the new “Burying Ground for White Persons” did not receive its first official interments until five years later, the period 1816-17 clearly saw the development of the City’s Shockoe Hill tract to become the conglomeration of public and semi-public facilities that would characterize this District throughout the nineteenth century.

The “Burying Ground for White Persons,” later referred to simply as “The New Burying Ground,” and now known as Shockoe Hill Cemetery, received its first interments in 1822. At the time, it comprised 4 acres. New acreage was added in 1843 and 1850, each time expanding the brick perimeter walls that still define the property, and which quickly came to separate and distinguish the burying places for affluent White persons from those parts of the Shockoe Hill Burying Ground used for burying non-Whites and those without the means to purchase a private plot.

#### The Antebellum Era: Hospitals, Resurrectionists, Gallows, and Growing Cemeteries (ca. 1830-1859)

The 1835 Bates Map of Richmond gives a good picture of the District in the early Antebellum period (Figure 17). In this image, the original one acre set aside “For Free people of Colour” appears relatively stable, while the companion acre set aside “For Slaves” appears to have grown to cover more of the eastern tip of the City’s property. The other properties on the tract are labelled “The Poor House,” “New Burying Ground,” “Jew’s Cemetery,” and the “Powder Magazine.”

Beginning as early as 1832, medical faculty at the nascent University of Virginia regularly negotiated to purchase cadavers robbed from the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground and to have them shipped to Charlottesville for study and eventual discard.<sup>18</sup> Hampden-Sydney College established an independent medical school in Richmond in 1837 and soon advertised that it had ample access to a good supply of cadavers for their students. That supply was largely due to the direct pipeline between physicians and medical students working or residing at the Poor House

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

and the new City Hospital (discussed below) at Shockoe Hill, and Hampden-Sydney's Medical College just several blocks to the south. That college would become the Medical College of Virginia (MCV) and it is now part of Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). See Exhibits 1 – 4, below.

Richmond, Enquirer, August 2, 1842

Richmond Medical College / City Hospital and Almshouse

"Professors Cullen and Warner will each deliver two Clinical Lectures a week, in the infirmary, at the College; Professor Johnson two a week, at the Alms House; and Professor Chamberlayne occasional Lectures at the Penitentiary and City Hospital, as interesting cases present themselves"

RICHMOND MEDICAL COLLEGE.—The Winter term of Lectures in this Institution will commence on Monday, the 21st of October, and continue 6 weeks.  
John Cullen, M. D., Professor of the Theory and Practice of Medicine.  
T. W. Chamberlayne, M. D., Professor of Materia Medica and Therapeutics.  
R. L. Buchanan, M. D., Professor of Obstetrics and Diseases of Women and Children.  
Thomas Johnson, M. D., Professor of Anatomy and Physiology.  
Alec. L. Warner, M. D., Professor of Surgery and Surgical Anatomy.  
W. Scamper, M. D., Professor of Chemistry and Pharmacy.  
Professors Cullen and Warner will each deliver two Clinical Lectures a week, in the Infirmary, at the College; Professor Johnson two a week, at the Alms House; and Professor Chamberlayne occasional Lectures at the Penitentiary and City Hospital, as interesting cases present themselves. These Institutions furnish a large number of dissection cases, and the numerous Clinical Lectures, in all of which the student will be admitted without charge, will afford him every advantage for becoming acquainted with the types of Fevers, &c., and witnessing the appropriate treatment. The Surgical cases admitted into the College Infirmary afford the Professor of Surgery opportunities of performing many of the major and minor operations before the public.  
The facilities for the study of practical Anatomy are unsurpassed any where. The material for dissection is most ample, and the extensive Anatomical Museum is well stored with healthy and morbid preparations.  
The Anatomical Apparatus and collection of specimens in Materia Medica are very complete. In Surgery Institutions there are facilities for the preservation of Medical studies unsurpassed by any similar Institutions in this country.  
Fees \$25 to each Professor.  
The price of Board, including fuel, lights, servant's attendance, &c., is from \$3.50 to \$5.00 per week.  
A. L. WARNER, Dean of the Faculty.  
July 20

"The facilities for the study of practical Anatomy are unsurpassed any where. The material for dissection is most ample, and the extensive Anatomical Museum is well stored with healthy and morbid preparations."

Exhibit 1. Advertisement from the Richmond *Enquirer* newspaper regarding medical lectures at the city's Poor House (termed Alms House in this advertisement).

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

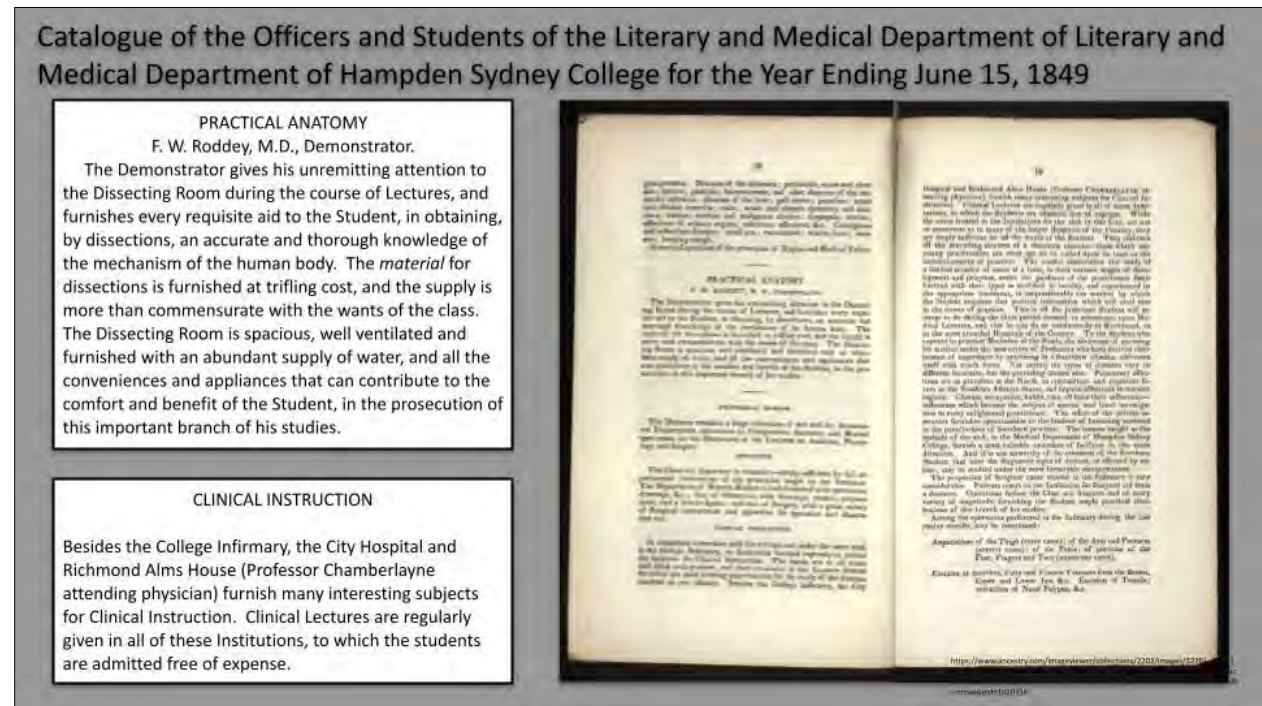


Exhibit 2. Excerpts concerning instruction in anatomy from Hampden-Sydney College catalog.

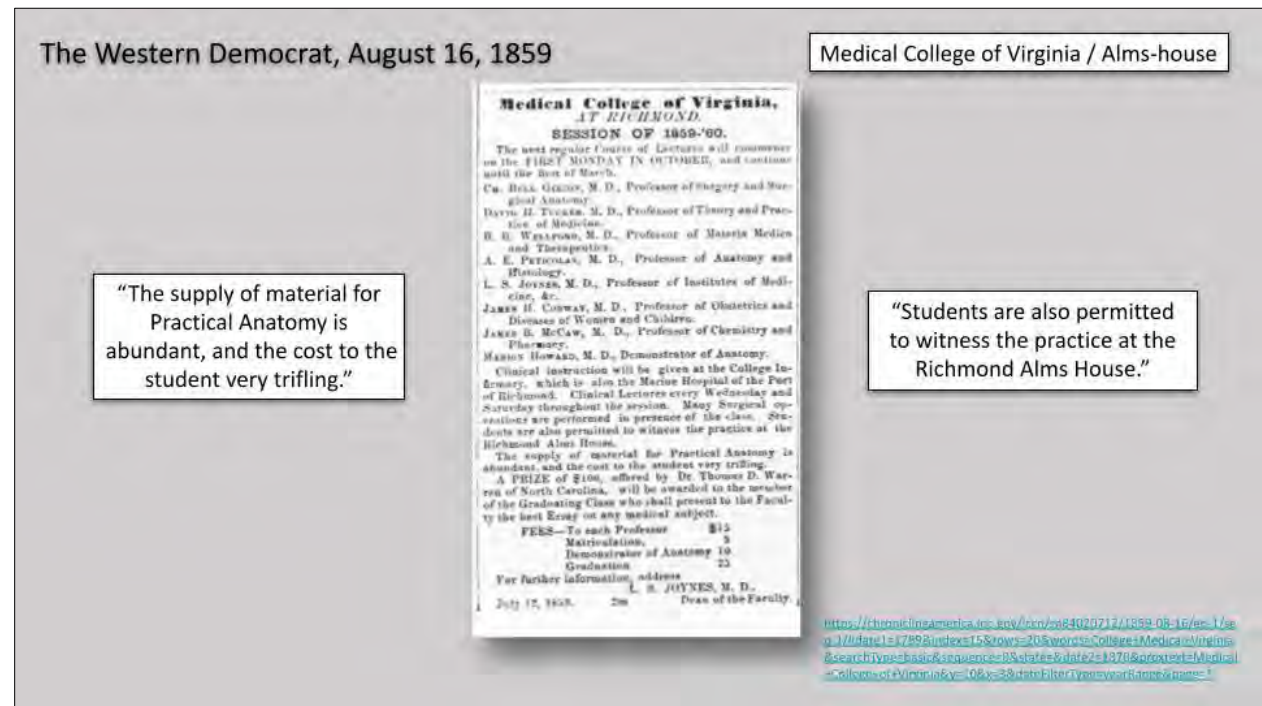


Exhibit 3. Article from *The Western Democrat* about educational practices at the Medical College of Virginia and the city’s Poor House (termed Alms House in this advertisement).

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

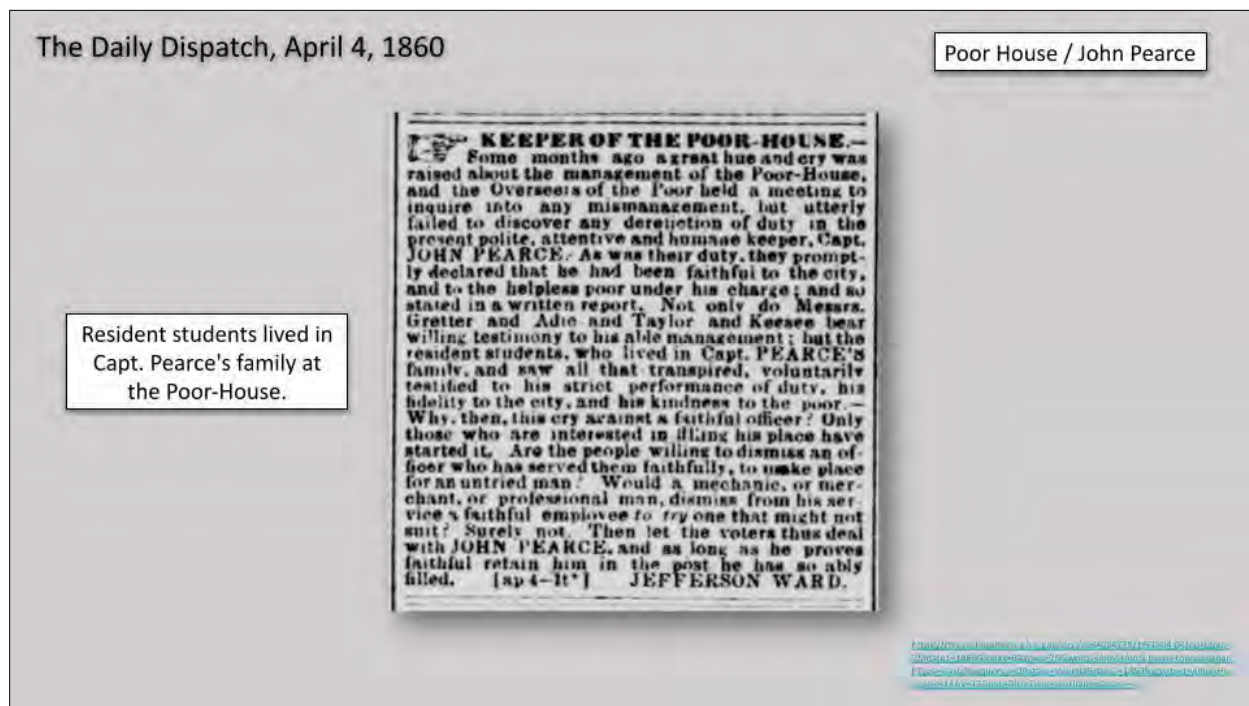


Exhibit 4. Article from *The Daily Dispatch* regarding medical students living at the city's Poor House.

In 1994, construction of a new building at VCU's medical school revealed a nineteenth-century well that had been used to dispose of cadavers used for instructing students in anatomy and physiology in the period ca. 1840 to 1860. All or nearly all of the identifiable remains from the MCV well were those of African Americans.<sup>19</sup> Research by Jodi Koste has led to a better understanding of the Medical College's use of grave-robbers, known at the time as "resurrectionists," to acquire these "specimens" primarily from the Richmond public cemetery—that is, from the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground.<sup>20</sup>

The grave-robbing was common knowledge at the time, and there were ongoing protests from religious groups and the public. Typically, at least one physician and some medical students were present at the Poor House and/or City Hospital, and contemporary sources indicate that they would watch for funerals at the African Burying Ground and alert the "resurrectionists" to disinter a fresh "commodity" the following day. Use of the African Burying Ground on the margin of Shockoe Hill to provide cadavers for medical training continued throughout the following decades and did not cease until the City finally closed the cemetery for new interments in 1879.

While there had been a hospital facility at The Poor House from the beginning, this was supplemented by a new City Hospital during the Antebellum period. The City Hospital stood just

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

east of the “New Burying Ground” and across the street from the “Jew’s Cemetery.” The new City Hospital does not appear on Bates’s 1835 map, but can be seen on his 1842 “Corrected Plat of the City Property at the Poor House” which also shows the acquisition of two additional properties. By this time, the municipal property on Shockoe Hill had increased to 36 acres (Figure 18).

The City Hospital, now an archaeological site, began as a 3-1/2-story brick building. The earliest image we have of the City Hospital is one made by Alexander Gardner on April 12, 1865 (Figure 8). According to the Worshams:

In 1831 the state authorized localities to set up smallpox hospitals and remove patients to them. A city ordinance of 1841 “To provide for the removal of persons infected with the Small Pox, and other dangerous, contagious diseases, and for other purposes” directed that infected persons were to be removed to the City Hospital until “he or she shall have gone through the distemper” or pay ten dollars per day.<sup>21</sup>

Over the first few decades after its opening, the “New Burying Ground” (now Shockoe Hill Cemetery) became the popular burying place for White residents who could afford to purchase individual or family plots there. The *Richmond Enquirer* in 1849 listed three City-owned cemeteries on Shockoe Hill as the “Shockoe Hill Burying Ground,” the “Coloured Persons’ Burying Ground,” and the “Paupers and Strangers Burying Ground.”<sup>22</sup> The first two of these were already at capacity and the City laid off additional acreage for their expansions. Six acres were added to Shockoe Hill Cemetery and nine acres were added to the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground with provision to surround the grounds, including the City Hospital grounds, with a plank fence, perhaps to prevent livestock—if not resurrectionists—from so easily entering the precinct.<sup>23</sup>

When the original City Powder Magazine and the old African Burying Ground along Shockoe Creek had been abandoned and replaced by the newer upstream and uphill facilities, the City also moved its gallows to Shockoe Hill. On Friday, September 10, 1852, Jane Williams, an enslaved domestic servant, was executed on gallows “erected a short distance south east of the Poor House, on the side of the hill near the powder magazine, appropriated to the purpose of a grave yard for blacks.” The story notes that “She was interred in a grave dug near the scaffold, under the hill.” Her husband was also hanged at this spot several weeks later.<sup>24</sup> Lenora McQueen has compiled documentation of public executions performed in the Shockoe Hill Burying Ground District. In each of these cases where the location of the gallows is specifically reported, they were located either at the location described here for Jane Williams’s hanging or at a “gibbeting place” which stood for some years north of the walls of the Poor House.

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

The 1853 Smith Map of Henrico County includes an inset detail showing a closer look at the City of Richmond (Figure 19). In the overall map the location of the historic district is labelled “Shockoe Hill Burying Ground.” In the detailed inset, the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground is separately labelled.

In 1853, the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground was visited by a sojourner from the North; he was America’s premier landscape architect. His visit to Shockoe Hill is described by historian Ryan K. Smith:

A picture of activity at the site—demonstrating how the Black community found ways to sustain meaning there—was laid before the eyes of northern readers in 1853. It came from the pen of Frederick Law Olmsted, whom the *New-York Daily Times* had commissioned to traverse the South and assess the impact of slavery on the region. One chilly Sunday afternoon in Richmond, he happened upon “a negro funeral procession.” Curious, he “followed after it to the place of burial,” which, based on his descriptions, seems to have been the [Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground]. The procession was impressive: “There was a decent hearse,” Olmsted observed, “of the usual style, drawn by two horses; six hackney coaches followed it, and six men, mounted on handsome saddle-horses, and riding them well, rode in the rear of these.” Accompanying the riders were about twenty black men and women on foot. “Passing out into the country,” the procession moved “a little beyond the principal cemetery of the city,” or Shockoe Hill Cemetery, which Olmsted found to be “a neat, rural ground, well filled with monuments and evergreens.” Just beyond “the hearse halted at a desolate place, where a dozen colored people were already engaged heaping the earth over the grave of a child, and singing a wild kind of chant.” Olmsted was not familiar with African American spirituals and hence struggled to describe their rhythm, tone, and delivery. He noticed a new grave dug immediately alongside that of the child, lying “near the foot of a hill, in a crumbling bank—the ground below being already occupied, and the graves apparently advancing in terraces up the hill-side,” an arrangement which he thought practical given the steep terrain. The arriving mourners joined in the singing and heaping of earth over the child’s grave, and then turned to prepare the adult’s pine coffin for lowering into the ground.<sup>25</sup>

Four years after Olmsted’s visit, Kitty Cary, an enslaved servant of a Richmond family, died and was buried at the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground. Lenora McQueen, a co-author of this nomination report and a principal researcher working towards the preservation and recognition of this Burying Ground, is a descendant. McQueen writes:

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

My 4th great-grandmother Kitty Cary would have been buried in the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground; the now invisible Grave Yard for Free People of Colour and For Slaves at 5th and Hospital Street. She died a little over 160 years ago in the city of Richmond, where she lived in the home of her owner on the south-side of Franklin St., between 6th and 7th. That place today is a parking garage. Elizabeth Fisher, the daughter of her owner wrote a heartfelt letter to her sister Ann in Philadelphia the very same morning that Kitty died in 1857; lovingly, but very sadly informing her sister of the death of their beloved Kitty. The letter brought tears to my eyes as I read of her long illness, and painful death. I was touched by how much love was expressed for her in that letter by Elizabeth. Kitty's daughters who were present were devastated. Her other children and grandchildren [did not know] what had occurred – as they had been sold after the death of their owner a few years prior, splitting up the family. The deceased owner was Elizabeth's father. Elizabeth told of how she had Kitty's body neatly prepared for the grave "It is what she would have done for me," she said. Kitty was dressed in the garment that she herself had requested for that purpose. Her last words were spoken to her children in an attempt to comfort them as she herself lay dying, seeing them weeping: "Don't cry children, don't cry for me, I am going home." She breathed her last breath and died. Elizabeth then told her sister how she intended to follow Kitty's body to the burying ground the following day.<sup>26</sup>

It is almost certain that the grave prepared that day in 1857 was one and the same grave seen a few years later by poet Elizabeth Akers Allen. Allen penned a poem titled "Kitty Cary" and had it published (using her pen name "Florence Percy") in *Harper's Weekly* in 1866. Allen also included the poem, with slightly different wording, in her 1886 book, *The Silver Bridge and Other Poems*. We reproduce the poem here because it, along with Olmsted's vignette and the photography and written accounts from the Civil War, gives us the best impression of what this eastern end of the District was like in the mid-nineteenth century.

*Kitty Cary*

No marble tells where Kitty Cary sleeps —  
Only a simple slab of painted pine,  
Time-stained and worn, her poor memorial keeps —  
One brief and half-obliterated line —

So near the highway, that the yellow sand  
From passing wheels falls thickly on her grave —  
In death, as in her life, proscribed and banned —

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

For Kitty Cary lived and died a slave.

Ay, lived and died before the Almighty's hand  
Struck the strong fetters from the bondman's limbs,  
And made the farthest borders of the land  
Shake with her dark-browed kindred's freedom hymns.

Alas ! too early snapped the silver cord,  
Or all too slowly came the tardy good —  
Life was to her but toil without reward :  
And death the welcome end of servitude.

Death brought her freedom. Haply it may be  
That Kitty Cary, from some fairer sphere,  
Looks down to-day and pities tenderly  
The bitter bondage of existence here;

Yet smiles to see her race with freedom crowned,  
Subject no longer to a master's rule,  
Nor grieves because their thoughtless children bound  
Across her grave-mound, on their way to school ;

For nothing guards her humble place of rest,  
The straying cattle browse above her head,  
Untended goats pause in their hungry quest  
To crop the scanty herbage from her bed.

Yet Nature's self has not forgotten her,  
But decks her lonely grave with dainty grace ;  
See ! in the wind the blossomed sweet-briars stir,  
And scatter fragrance round her resting-place.<sup>27</sup>

A detail from the Cook Studio photograph taken ca. 1888 (Figures 20 and 21) shows the hillside at the northeastern end of the District as it appeared nearly a decade after the closing of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground. Clearly the heart of that property is nearly devoid of vegetation. Likewise, the hillside is patterned with multiple low terraces, perhaps the remnants of those observed by Olmsted several decades earlier and since co-opted and further transformed



Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

into the paths of wandering livestock—like the cows and goats who kept Kitty Cary’s grave clean— as they traversed the steep land, nose-to-tale, gleaning the property and preventing its overgrowth by shrubs, vines and trees. Rilling and gullying by erosion, which must have been a perpetual force that reshaped this denuded terrain, is also visible on the lower slopes in the early Cook Studio photograph.

### The Civil War Transforms Shockoe Hill (1861-1865)

#### *A New Almshouse, Delayed*

In 1859, the City’s Common Council authorized construction of a new almshouse complex to replace the old Poor House and Workhouse. The new building was designed by city engineer Washington Gill, Jr. and would occupy the same ground, albeit an expanded lot, as the original 1806 building. To permit razing the old structures and construction of the new, the Poor House resident paupers were moved to temporary housing. This facility was located on the John W. Smith property adjacent to the City’s Shockoe Hill tract. Smith, who died in 1861, had served for many years as Keeper of the Magazine. The City arranged to rent his house and some smaller buildings on his property to use while the new Almshouse was under construction, but that temporary arrangement lasted until the end of the Civil War. By the time the new structure was completed, war had broken out, and the new “Almshouse” was repurposed as Confederate General Hospital #1.

In that capacity, the City’s new almshouse on Shockoe Hill became the first hospital devoted to the treatment of both Confederate and Union soldiers. It operated under the direction of Dr. Charles Bell Gibson, the head of the surgical department at the Medical College of Virginia. In December 1864, the Almshouse also became the temporary home of the Virginia Military Institute (VMI), after the Institute’s Lexington campus had been burned by Union troops. VMI remained housed in the building until the city was occupied by Union forces in April 1865.

Although Union and Confederate soldiers were both being treated at the Hospital, the dead from each side were typically buried in different graveyards. Hollywood Cemetery and Oakwood Cemetery, located on the western and eastern edges of the city, respectively, drew the vast majority of Confederate soldier burials during the war. That said, there are nonetheless an estimated 700 graves of Confederate soldiers and veterans within the walls of Shockoe Hill Cemetery.

Union dead, including those who died in the Confederate Hospital #1 or in the horrific conditions of Libby Prison, were buried at Shockoe Hill, outside the walls, in the African Burying Ground. They were buried on the north side of the City Hospital in orderly graves (though many contained more than one body), and they were buried on the eastern side of City Hospital on the

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

outside of a fence going down into a gully in pits containing multiple bodies. Still others were buried in the vicinity of the Poorhouse.<sup>28</sup>

### *The Magazine Explosion*

Arguably, the most widely reported event to occur within the District during the Civil War was the purposeful explosion of the City Powder Magazine. That happened during the evacuation of Richmond by the Confederate Army on April 2 and 3, 1865. Thomas Hughes was a Richmond boy who was among the youngest cadets living at “the Institute”—that is, the new Almshouse serving as temporary quarters for VMI—when this occurred. In a memoir Thomas later described what happened on Shockoe Hill on April 3rd, 1865.<sup>29</sup>

...it was apparent to anyone that the City was to be abandoned by the Confederate troops... I had first gone out to the Institute to see how matters stood there and I found it was in possession of a horde of men, women and children from all the neighborhood around, who had broken open the building and were carrying away everything movable, furniture, cadets’ trunks, books, guns and swords indeed their vandalism spared nothing. I went to my room and was able to secure my blankets and my knife and fork and my books. It was intensely distressing to observe the property of the cadets who were off in the discharge of their duty, boldly appropriated and carried off before my eyes...In leaving I noticed that the brick arsenal across the road from the Institute had been during the night blown up with such force that the fresh dirt in two graves alongside had been blown out. They were the graves of two negroes who shortly before had been hung on the hill to the east of the Institute, having been found guilty of burglarously entering the cellar of the Rev. Dr. Moses D. Hoge, the Presbyterian minister in Richmond, out of which they had stolen a couple of hams.

Confederate troops had arrived at the City Magazine very early on the morning of April 3rd with the intention of exploding the powder stores there to prevent them from falling into enemy hands. Early notices from the press reported that as many as 30 people had been killed by the blast. Apparently windows were shattered throughout the city, and photographs taken by Union photographers just a few days later show glassless windows at the City Hospital and the Almshouse (VMI) building. The John Smith House and some other buildings serving as the temporary almshouse were virtually destroyed. In coming days, the actual scope of the disaster became a bit clearer.

On April 27th, 1865, the *Richmond Whig* newspaper published an overview of the event and its damage, providing a better idea of what the Magazine looked like before the explosion, and what might be expected of its archaeological remains:

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

THE CITY MAGAZINE. – To the curious, the site of the late city magazine will repay a visit. It will be recollected the magazine was blown up by the Confederates just before sunrise on the morning of the 3d instant.

- Eleven inmates of the city almshouse and one old colored man living on 2d street being killed by the explosion, and thousands of panes of glass in the city smashed by the concussion. We have no means of ascertaining the quantity of powder in the magazine at the time it was blown up but presume it must have been several tons. The magazine, a small brick building, twenty feet wide, by thirty long and twenty high, surmounted by a steep slate covered roof, and surrounded at the distance of six feet by a thick brick wall which rose above the eaves, was situated on the southern slope of a hill one hundred yards east of the northern extremity of Shockoe Hill Cemetery, and about the same distance north of the buildings occupied by the Superintendent of the Poor and the city paupers.

- The building faced due north and south. On the morning of the evacuation, the Superintendent and inmates of the Poor House somehow became aware that the magazine was to be blown up, and all hustled out and ran in their night clothes over the neighboring hills and stopped in what they considered places of safety. Having waited some time, and no explosion taking place, a number of them determined to return and save their clothing. About the time they reached the places where they had left their clothing and whatever other little property they possessed, the explosion occurred. The four walls of the magazine were blown not equally in every direction, but in four volleys towards the four cardinal points of the compass. One of these volleys raked the almshouse premises, making a wreck of one-half of the main building and utterly demolishing several of the smaller buildings. Eleven of the paupers were killed outright either by flying brickbats or the concussion, and several others seriously injured.

- Another volley was thrown westward up the hill toward the [Shockoe Hill Cemetery], about twenty yards of the wall of which was knocked down level with the earth. - Many of the bricks and other rubbish were thrown much farther westward, to Second street and beyond. An old colored man, lying asleep in the upper story of his house, on Second street, was killed by a brick which passed through the roof and struck him in the temple. The other two volleys, flying east and north, expended themselves on the hills. Nothing but a long narrow trench in the ground, looking like the grave of a resurrected giant, marks the spot where the magazine stood.

- It is astonishing into what atoms the brickbats and timbers of the building were for the most part blown. They have more the appearance of having been ground in a grist mill or quartz-crusher than blown up. None of the rubbish fell back into the

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

foundation. From each side spreads out over the green hills the pulverized brickbats, like four enormous pale red faces.

- By this explosion the City Hospital and the new Poor House had most of their glass broken but received no other considerable damage. Had the magazine not been situated somewhat in a ravine, the injury to the city and the loss of life resulting from its being blown up must have been much greater. We have not learned the name of the individual who applied the torch. We wish we were able to state that he lost his life by the exploit.

Much of the activity of federal occupiers at Shockoe Hill involved locating the remains of the Union dead buried there. Most were interred in ground that previously had been designated for burying Black persons. We have a description of the situation from the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, April 11, 1865. The correspondent writes:

Near the magazine, and, between it and the Military Institute, is a Potter's Field, Used as a burial ground for negroes, and which constitutes the last resting place of a number of departed Northern heroes, who died in the modern 'Black Hole,' Libby Prison. It is a dreary, desolate-looking place, and close by a large and rather handsome cemetery. Slaves, paupers and Union soldiers are buried indiscriminately together, the 'chivalry' doubtless thinking it would be contaminating in the highest degree to have a defender of the Union interred in the cemetery, where lie the relatives and friends of the would-be destroyers of the country. By some chance, a few of the graves of our men have rough head-boards indicating the name and rank of the deceased. - A Gallant Deceased Pennsylvanian - Among others, I noticed the following:--'Captain S. S. Marchand, Company H, One-hundred-and-thirty-sixth Pennsylvania.' I learned from a Union officer that Captain Marchand belonged to Jacksonville, Pennsylvania, and was a gentleman of considerable influence, widely known and highly respected in the neighborhood where he resided. He was wounded at Fredericksburg and died soon after at Libby Prison. Another head board bears the name of Captain Charles D. Schaffle, Company D, Fifth Pennsylvania Reserves, and others contain the names of C. Hamilton, Thirty-ninth New York; Wm. Sturgis, Thirty-ninth Kentucky; P. A. Rice, Mercersburg, Pennsylvania, and John Langlin, Company D, Twelfth Illinois. One grave, which had evidently received more care and attention than its neighbors, contained a white marble head stone of small size, on which was cut, in regularly formed letters, the name of 'Old Aunt Sally,' and giving date of birth, &c....\"<sup>30</sup>

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

Union troops and Federal officials returned the new Almshouse to its original intended use. Two years into the occupation of Richmond, the Federal officials noted that the U.S. Government had assumed responsibility for the City's paupers, and mandated that such responsibility should be returned to the cities and counties without regard to race. An article in the October 31, 1867, edition of the *Daily Dispatch* reported that City officials were seeking proposals to convert it into an almshouse for "colored paupers," which would require draining a flooded basement, making alterations to the building, and construction of a new three-story addition to the City Hospital in order to accommodate this "new class of paupers." The "Colored Almshouse," as it was now known continued to grow and serve as a segregated facility under the direction of the Superintendent of the Almshouse. By the late 1880s, it was evident that the facility was inadequate to the task, but it was not until 1910 when the new Colored Almshouse (known today as the "West Building" at the Almshouse complex) took on the role of housing the City's Black paupers.

#### After Reconstruction: The Lost Cause, Jim Crow, and the "Disappearance" of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground (1870-1968)

Richmond was a dynamic city in the Postbellum era. It was a time of rapid growth fueled by a revitalization and expansion of industry and transportation that was augmented by a measure of land speculation. The District experienced a flurry of activity involving the construction of sidewalks and the re-alignment and extension of city streets. Hebrew Cemetery began to expand rapidly, often by taking over grounds that had earlier been included in the African Burying Ground. As illustrated by the detail of the 1888 Cook Studio photograph, it is apparent that Hebrew Cemetery had expanded north to the rim of the hill overlooking the Bacon's Quarter Branch valley (Figure 21) and two additional parcels extending down the slope and north to the banks of the Branch. By the time this picture was taken, it is obvious that this extension, which had formerly been part of the African Burying Ground, had been enclosed by a fence, probably to keep out the grazing animals, allowing the natural vegetation to return, and to prevent the continued use of this hillside as a "Potters Field."

In his report of February 21, 1877, the Superintendent of Shockoe Hill Cemetery recommended to City Council that it was time to find a new burying ground for Black people. The following month, the Council's minutes recorded their decision to follow that recommendation:

Five hundred and forty-seven interments have been made this year—243 white and 304 colored. The interments during the preceding year were 488, being an increase this year of 59. That portion of the cemetery allotted to the colored poor is by its locality and arrangements (being an unenclosed field) illy fitted for a burial-place, and its now overcrowded condition renders it impossible to make

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

any interment therein without disturbing some previous burial, thus making it both repulsive and inhuman.<sup>31</sup>

The Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground was closed to further interments two years later. Over the following decade, the city began a series of intrusions into the Burying Ground that continued into the late twentieth century.

### *Street Construction and Grave Desecration*

Without a doubt, the most extensive changes to the District landscape occurred following the end of Reconstruction and are closely entangled with a combination of municipal and private development and urban expansion coupled with disregard for the sanctity of the burials of certain groups. This period in the District's history has been analyzed and reported by historian Ryan K. Smith, a co-author of this nomination, in an essay titled "Disappearing the Enslaved: The Destruction and Recovery of Richmond's Second African Burial Ground." Smith's essay begins setting the context by comparing what we see here today with an earlier reality that is now hidden by the processes of history.

Atop a hillside just north of downtown Richmond, Virginia, an abandoned automobile service station sits on a lonely lot ... travelers passing by Fifth Street would miss the extraordinary significance of the ground beneath Talley's Auto Center. The site served as the principal burial ground for the city's African Americans, enslaved and free, from 1816 through 1879.

This population made up half the city's residents, conducting their lives in the shadow of one of the nation's largest slave markets. These residents shouldered war when Richmond became the capital of the Confederacy, and they would contend with the forefront of postwar Lost Cause mythmaking following emancipation. Evidence suggests over twenty-one thousand interments took place in the site's initial two acres and its eventual hillside overruns throughout these years, making it one of the largest and longest-serving burial grounds for enslaved Blacks in the nation. Treated as sacred by its people, the burial ground offered a ritual space for public mourning, and for a time it inscribed the African American presence on the landscape in a way few other sites could. At the same time, its history was entwined with two adjoining burial grounds for whites—the privately owned Hebrew Cemetery and the municipally owned Shockoe Hill Cemetery, both of which remain recognized and celebrated today.

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

But following war and emancipation in 1865, the once-titled “African” burial ground was subject to a series of assaults on the part of White authorities that served to erase the ground’s place in public memory. First, the deliberate explosion of a gunpowder magazine there unearthed some of the field’s buried remains, and the construction of new magazines displaced more. The continued predation of grave robbers seeking anatomical specimens for medical schools further undermined the site. Later, as the city moved to close the still-active graveyard in the 1870s, engineers ran streets through it and used its bones and bodies for fill. Then a viaduct project on one end opened graves to the curiosity of passersby. At the turn of the century, the city delivered sections of the ground to the local Jewish community for the expansion of Hebrew Cemetery. The site’s definitive destruction took place in the 1950s when the city converted one corner of the old graveyard into a dog pound before selling off the rest to the Sun Oil Company for the service station that would become Talley’s Auto Center. Throughout the process, African American voices protested the violations to no avail. Their voices eventually turned to similarly threatened cemeteries in an effort to ward off the continuation of the destruction elsewhere. “The tangible past is altered mainly to make history conform with memory,” geographer David Lowenthal has observed, and Richmond’s white leaders had no use for such memories. Amid the New South rush to champion a heroic Confederate past and an exclusively White polity, the burial ground was not, as some would say, abandoned—it was actively destroyed. The loss of this immense burial ground underscores how essential the landscape and even human bodies are for the maintenance of social space and memory. We are left with the unrecognized shell of Talley’s Auto Center today and a long-forgotten history.<sup>32</sup>

The “disappearing” of the portion of the Shockoe Hill Burying Ground that had been used to bury Blacks began with the realignment of Hospital Street, which cut off the Southeastern corner of the African Burying Ground. Hospital Street east of 5th Street was re-routed in the early 1860s, cutting diagonally across a portion of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground. Two new powder magazines were then constructed on the Burying Ground—one north and one south of Hospital Street. One of these, completed in 1867, led to the disturbance and recovery of “more than 100” skeletons.

In 1883, attempts to fill in eroded ground in the area where 5th Street crosses the old “Poorhouse Gully,” led to the exposure of numerous graves. Even with considerable public outcry, workers were not instructed to clean up the exposed graves and rebury the remains until months after the road work was completed. Human remains had been used as street fill and had lain exposed on the ground for months before the issue was raised in the City Council and instructions were issued to clean up the site.<sup>33</sup>

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

Again in 1890, as 5th Street was extended to the northern edge of the hill and ground was prepared for the abutments of the new viaduct that would carry streetcars over Bacon's Quarter Branch and into Richmond's newest suburban neighborhoods, many more graves were exposed to view. At the same time, 7th Street was extended through the eastern tip of the Burying Ground in order to provide access to the new industries that were then growing across the Shockoe Creek Valley floor. More human remains were also uncovered during this construction work. John Mitchell, Jr., editor of the *Richmond Planet*, wrote about these intrusions into the Burying Ground:

This was done, too, at the instance of people who profited by the desecration of the burial ground on Poor-house Hill, North 5th Street when graves were dug into, bones scattered, coffins exposed, and the hearts of the surviving families made to bleed by the desecration of the remains of their loved ones.<sup>34</sup>

One long-time resident of Richmond remembered this incident later in his life:

About fifty years ago when Fifth street north of Hospital was graded, a large hill was gone into and a number of graves were cut into. The boys of that day found it interesting to climb up the bank and peer into the end which had been exposed. All the ground unenclosed in this vicinity was evidently used as a potters' field.<sup>35</sup>

That "unenclosed" field was a substantial portion of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground following its expansion in 1850. These violations of the public cemetery were all met with public outcries, but the City had no interest in thwarting growth and development for the sake of maintaining a now-closed burying ground for Black persons. Fully three-quarters of a century after Christopher McPherson succeeded in his pleas to the City to provide an adequate facility, the White city leaders resurrected the sentiment that the ground was too valuable to be used as a cemetery for Blacks.

The most substantial damage to the Burying Ground is best illustrated by a second Cook Studio taken in 1890 or 1891 showing the completed, or nearly completed extension of 5th Street and the 5th Street Viaduct (DHR #127-0360; Figures 22 and 23). When compared with the earlier (ca. 1888) Cook Studio image taken from much the same vantage point, it is obvious that the top of the knoll that had once been the original 1816 "Burying Ground for Free People of Color and Slaves" had been cut down. Period accounts as well as City records reveal that portions of the sacred ground and its contents had been used to fill the bedding for 5th Street and to raise the ground in the natural gully there to permit construction of the abutments for the bridge.



Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

There can be no doubt that dozens—perhaps hundreds—of gravesites were destroyed in these construction projects. Whatever grave markings that remained after the African Burying Ground was closed in 1879 apparently had been uprooted and scattered. It seems possible that many of the large cobbles or boulders that can be seen strewn down the barren hillside in these photographs had once been placed as informal grave markers by friends or family members who could not afford carved monuments. Scattered, too, were the rough-cut wooden posts or simple tree limbs used as grave markers, such as those described by Olmsted, as well as head boards or stones like those left for Kitty Cary and “Old Aunt Sally.” Eventually these intrusions and desecrations caused the cemetery to fade from historical memory.<sup>36</sup>

Smith’s essay charts the loss of memory of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground to its conclusion.

In 1958, the municipal director of parks and recreation who had oversight of the city’s cemeteries requested the city assessor’s office to draw up a sketch of the “Paupers Burying Ground” at Hospital and Fifth Streets. The resulting sketch showed only a small triangle of property on the northeast corner, apparently discounting any potential graves beyond the lot. The parks director acknowledged that when authorities had earlier attempted to clear the area on the southeast corner of this intersection, they had been “instructed not to disturb it because bodies had been interred there.” But he found that “this has not been substantiated by the records,” and he allowed a dog pound [presently, the Staff Zone building] to be built south of Hospital Street. The following year, city council took steps against the north side of Hospital Street. “Records,” the city officials maintained in a startling conclusion, “fail to disclose whether it was ever used for the purposes for which it was designated.” So the city rezoned the worn hillside and sold it to the Sun Oil Company, allowing for the construction of the diminutive automobile service station.

That left the ground available to become a gas station, an animal shelter-cum-employment agency, and a shadowed, eroded hillside partially hidden beneath an Interstate highway. What has not vanished, however, are thousands of undisturbed graves as well as the bones, grave goods, and coffin furnishings that were unceremoniously redeposited in filled gullies and roadbeds. They are still there. Nor has the landscape that displaced them vanished.

The City of Richmond in the twenty-first century is trying to come to grips with, and to mitigate, some of the failings of its history. Among those failings is the attempted destruction of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground. On April 16, 2021 the City re-acquired the lot containing the abandoned Sunoco Station. The City is now formulating plans to preserve and commemorate this, the site of the original 2-acre burying ground for “free people of color and slaves.” It is time

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

to recognize, to whatever extent possible, the formerly discarded and ignored portions of the history of this District as it actually functioned in and as it presently illustrates that history. It is time to honor the fact that a large, but largely “invisible,” part of it is sacred ground for descendants of the thousands of African Americans buried here. The stark contrast between the portions of the Shockoe Hill Burying Ground set aside and memorialized for White people, Christian and Jewish, on the one hand, and Black people, on the other, illustrates clearly one of the major areas of significance of the District; namely, the lasting social effects of race slavery, the Civil War that ended that system, and the Lost Cause movement that sought to remove it from memory. Shockoe Hill houses the dead of both Black and White residents, but it is not an accident of history that African Americans cannot find their ancestors’ resting places there. It is beyond time to recognize the complete history of this historic place.

Establishing Historic Justice for Richmond’s Nineteenth-Century Public Facilities for the Poor,  
the Sick, the Disabled, and the Dead

The late 1980s witnessed the beginnings of a major social movement by African Americans in Richmond, as elsewhere throughout the country, to reclaim Black heritage by finding and forcing public recognition of important “lost” historic sites. The discovery of the cadavers in the well at the Medical College of Virginia became a magnet for African American residents, academics, and civic leaders to bring together forces and methods for identifying heritage resources and instigating processes to reclaim such sites through site visibility and interpretation. The work of this nomination is intended to reclaim an equal and truthful representation of the lives and the deaths of Black individuals, and the segregated facilities that are now a major missing component of the City’s history. The truth of history is presently misrepresented by the Register-listed historic properties on Shockoe Hill without the components that fully illustrate the District’s historic contexts and their significance.

While there is much to admire and enjoy in the well designed and purposefully curated visible properties of the District, historical *significance* now resides equally in the partial destruction, often deliberate, of a highly meaningful, emotionally charged, and racially fraught landscape. This nomination seeks both to recognize its full extent and to expose the great disparities that have characterized efforts at preservation and historical valorization across this public place. Whether graves are marked with elaborate monuments or natural vegetation, that ground remains nonetheless both sacred and historic.

Criterion D: Archaeology/ Historic – Non-Aboriginal

The Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District is uniquely and extraordinarily significant under Criterion D for contributions that have been made or can be made to our understanding of

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

archaeology and history. Nonetheless, no ground disturbance in any portion of the district for the principal purpose of archaeological study should be conducted at this time. Research that does not cause ground disturbance or in other ways disrespect the religious and/or cultural values of those buried here and their descendants is encouraged.

The original 28.5-acre property was designated to be a burying ground in 1799. All, or nearly all expansions of the cemetery's original boundaries were added to provide land to accommodate additional burials. In addition to the cemeteries specifically delineated and enclosed by walls and fences and official burials of Black people, there were also interments of Union soldiers, hanged felons, and, presumably, many White and Black paupers placed in the Burying Ground "outside the walls." Historic records clearly indicate that the designated place for burying Black people changed from time to time. Human remains and mortuary features could be found in any part of the present historic district, including the steep northern slopes and the northern and eastern peripheries of the property to the edge of the Shockoe Creek drainage channels.

Due to its urban situation, there will be an ongoing need to repair or upgrade infrastructure, and such projects are highly likely to encounter human remains and/or associated materials. Likewise, the forces of nature have uncovered and disrupted graves in the past and will undoubtedly do so in the future. It is for these reasons that the archaeological significance of the entire District is emphasized, and this nomination provides guidance that might help prevent unnecessary disturbances or, if necessary, mitigate their adverse effects through careful and appropriate research.

#### *Archaeological Research Potential of the Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District<sup>37</sup>*

National Register regulations and traditions require that specific research domains or questions should be presented to justify significance under Criterion D. Archaeology is the science which studies humanity through material evidence. For most people, that work is associated with the destructive excavation of things underground, but cultural "material" ranging from gravestone iconography to cemetery landscape design, and the varied treatments of the City's White Christian, Hebrew and Black inhabitants can be studied without shovels. Therefore, we present the following eight categories of potential lines of research linked to the district's unique archaeological features.

1. Mortuary Culture. Some distinctions might be discerned in mortuary culture among different groups represented at Shockoe Hill through studies using non-destructive remote sensing. Ground-penetrating radar (GPR) and trained human remains-sensing dogs were recently used by the City of Richmond to conduct a preliminary study on a small portion of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground. That work has revealed several possible intact grave shafts and bone remains were also found eroding from the eastern bank of the city-owned lot. These, along with

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

any additional non-intrusive GPR readings in the future, can add important information about the directional orientation of the graves at that site. Research questions that could be answered include: To what extent do those grave orientations show east/west alignment, as found at New York City's African Burial Ground, at Philadelphia's First African Baptist Church Cemetery, and closer to home at St. John's Churchyard in Richmond and at Hebrew Cemetery across the street? Or, to what extent do they show more variable patterns, as with those graves of Africans found at Utopia plantation near Williamsburg, or even with those graves of Euro-Americans at Richmond's Hollywood Cemetery and Shockoe Hill Cemetery?<sup>38</sup>

2. Gravestones and Monuments. Above-ground archaeological information is abundant in the district in the form of extant grave markers at Shockoe Hill Cemetery and Hebrew Cemetery. This presents an excellent opportunity for many types of comparisons to answer research questions. To what extent do the stylistic patterns of grave markers for those different populations overlap or diverge? Many of those stones contain maker's marks. How do the examples in those cemeteries from particular gravestone carvers fit in with the overall bodies of work of those same carvers elsewhere? And how do those markers compare with the few surviving documentary descriptions of individual grave markers once found at the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground?<sup>39</sup>

3. "Erasure" of African burying grounds. Many other African American cemeteries across the nation have suffered comparable processes of erasure as that endured by the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground. Thus, the current archaeological landscape in the Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District provides direct opportunities for comparison with similar intrusions and topographical changes elsewhere. How do the process and results of erasure that played out at Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground compare with those at comparable places such as the Freedmen's Cemetery in Dallas, Texas, at the Lower Cemetery in Columbia, South Carolina, at Zion Cemetery in Tampa, Florida, and at the Contrabands and Freedmen's Cemetery in Alexandria, Virginia, for example?<sup>40</sup>

4. Grave-robbing practices. Currently, Virginia Commonwealth University is sponsoring extensive forensic analysis (including osteological analysis and biocultural analysis) of the human remains previously found disposed in the well outside the Medical College of Virginia's Egyptian building on Richmond's East Marshall Street. Those remains date to the antebellum period, and as information herein has shown, documentary research indicates that the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground was the most likely source of those cadavers. Examination of archaeological signs of disturbance and bioarchaeological analyses from future disinterments would add considerably to our understanding of covert grave-robbing practices in the South, both prior to and following Emancipation. How might the resulting conclusions regarding those remains help us to understand the lives of those once interred in these grounds?

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

5. Bioarchaeology. As noted above, there is always a likelihood that below-ground remains can be disturbed through normal processes of grounds and infrastructure maintenance, as well as natural forces such as the mass-wasting incident resulting from Hurricane Gaston in 2004 that exposed and eroded interments along the northern rim of the hill in the Hebrew Cemetery. In such cases proper analyses of exposed human remains and artifacts and their archaeological contexts can take place. With osteological and microscopic bioarchaeological techniques, the bioarchaeological research potential of the cemeteries in the district is unparalleled. Information preserved in bones and teeth, through Harris lines and linear enamel hypoplasias, are a well-recognized indicator for long-term stress and chronic illness in individuals. Metabolic illnesses caused by malnutrition or deficiencies can cause rickets or osteomalacia, preserving a record of ill health that can specifically date the age a person was when they experienced the dietary restrictions. Some diseases, such as tuberculosis, bone infections, tooth infections, syphilis, leprosy, and gout, leave skeletal indicators. Tendon and ligament damage and muscular development create enthesitis and bony protrusions on bones that can indicate the amount of physical activity a person performed in life. Asymmetry in skeletons can illustrate the existence of a long-term disability or impairment, or provide insights into types of activity that require asymmetrical stresses on the body. Traumatic injuries that affect the bones, whether accidental or inflicted, can be identified in skeletons. Isotope analysis of bones and teeth can provide information regarding where a person was born or grew up, the relative presence of foods like corn and seafood in their diet, and the quantity of lead they were exposed to. Skeletons can also provide means of identifying behaviors, such as the tooth facets that can form with habitual pipe use and with specific occupational uses of the teeth such as in sailing, sewing, and some types of manufacturing. As a result, a skeleton can be a rich source of biographical data that is much more individualized than most archaeological information. When conducted within a framework that shares power with descendant community representatives, such research has the potential to provide meaningful insights into life histories of people in the past.

Bioarchaeological examination of health, activity, migration, trauma, and diet would also have unparalleled research potential within the district. Studies rely on significant population sizes to be able to extrapolate population trends and patterns. The authors estimate that the combined burying grounds in the Historic District contain more than 60,000 human interments, even accounting for relatively large losses in the past. The assessed size of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground in particular dwarfs all current available single bioarchaeological collections related to Africans and their descendants, whether associated with slavery or not, in the Americas. Other large bioarchaeological populations associated with enslaved and free Africans include the 325 individuals who died during the Middle Passage excavated on the island of St. Helena, 419 individuals buried during the 18th century in New York excavated from what is now the African Burial Ground National Monument, 101 burials from the 18th and 19th century in Newton Cemetery in Barbados, 223 burials from the Foster Cemetery in Alabama, 140 free Africans from the 19th century buried at First African Baptist Church in Philadelphia, and 1,150

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

burials representing the main cemetery for people of African descent in Dallas from 1869 to 1907. Across the country, many cemeteries associated with enslaved and free African communities are identified as part of federal or state compliance archaeology and may have been excavated without considerable descendant community engagement, collaborative research or academic publication. Within Virginia, the majority of the burials of African descent communities that have been excavated have fewer than fifty individuals. The best comparison for scale of the population within the African Burial Ground would be the Virginia State Penitentiary collection from Richmond, a collection of approximately 200 individuals incarcerated under the Black Codes in the waning years of the African Burying Ground's operation.<sup>41</sup>

In short, the racial injustices and disparities that can be read into the present-day landscape of Shockoe Hill will therefore be apparent in the developmental and epidemiological profiles of the individuals contained within the district's several different and discrete burying grounds, and the information that might be learned from the relocation of even a small number of burials could provide data significant under Criterion D. With the necessary support of descendant communities and other stakeholders, physical anthropological and bioarchaeological analyses prior to reinterment can provide important baseline and comparative information on the origins, diet, activity patterns, health, and causes of death of the ethnically and socially diverse populations buried on Shockoe Hill.

6. The physical nature and impacts of the City Powder Magazine and its purposeful explosion on April 3, 1865. Archaeological questions would be addressed by future research at this site (44HE1228) have been discussed in Section 7, above, and the significance of any material remains probably would warrant individual eligibility of the site under Criterion D. It is very likely that the substantial remains of the Magazine, the crater, and consequent damage caused by the explosion are extant. The best evidence for this supposition is the fact that the present landform, which includes the high spot on which the Staff Zone employment agency is situated, appears to be at an elevation at least 20-30 feet higher than the same landform was shown to be by the USGS 1895 15-minute Richmond Quad map. This suggests that large amounts of fill were used to fill the explosion crater, both on the hilltop and in the gulley adjacent.

7. The 1806 Poor House (44HE1251). Remains of the 1806 Poor House structure and grounds are not known for certain to be intact, and it seems likely that construction of the Almshouse, beginning in 1860, and the subsequent buildings on the Almshouse Grounds must have done considerable damage to the earlier site. There is, however, also evidence of considerable raising of the ground level and filling in of a substantial erosional gulley in the time of the Almshouse construction. Because there is a possibility of earlier deposits on the grounds, documentary evidence has been used to create a record for archaeological remains of that Poor House and its

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

facilities and grounds. Future construction on the Almshouse tract should take seriously the possibility of significant archaeological remains.

8. The City Hospital/Colored Almshouse Site (44HE0709). As noted in the preceding narrative, there are considerable underground remains of the City Hospital, constructed prior to 1842, and its much-enlarged version, beginning in 1868, as the Colored Almshouse. It should be kept in mind that the grounds surrounding this building were used for interments of Poor House residents, probably beginning shortly after 1806. By 1850, the property had been added to the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground. During the period of the Civil War, these grounds were used to bury Union soldiers who died in the Confederate prison camps as well as in the Confederate hospital within the Almshouse building. The Colored Almshouse was dismantled shortly after the turn of the 20th century and, in 1911, it was transferred to the ownership of The Hebrew Cemetery as an annex. With this history, there is no doubt that the material remains of the 19th-century buildings, their filled basements, and the complex mass of burial plots surrounding those buildings have a very high potential to provide significant information of importance to archaeology and history.

9. While physical remains of the original Poor House of 1806 (44HE1251) have undoubtedly been disturbed by subsequent construction of the Almshouse and its attending buildings, any remains could be significant. White and Black residents were apparently housed separately, at least during part of the era of this site (ca. 1805-1860). For instance, there are references to Black persons being housed in "huts" out behind (north of) the main building. Comparing archaeological remains of these quarters with many examples of contemporary quarters for enslaved or indigent Black people elsewhere in the City and surrounding countryside would be of great potential value.

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

---

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

“Additional Burying-Ground Needed.” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, February 21, 1877.

Akers, Elizabeth. *The Silver Bridge and Other Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1886.

“Almshouse Lot Brings \$18,000.” *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, June 21, 1910.

Black, Allen J. “Robbing Graves in Old Richmond.” *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, June 1, 1930.

Blakey, Michael L. “Bioarchaeology of the African Diaspora in the Americas: Its Origins and Scope.” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 30 (2001): 387–422.

Breeden, James O. “Body Snatchers and Anatomy Professors: Medical Education in Nineteenth Century Virginia.” *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 83 (July 1975): 321–45.

“Burials During the Year.” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, January 1, 1879.

Calhoun, Emily. *Archaeological and Geoarchaeological Assessment of the Slave and Free Black Burying Ground, I-64 Shockoe Valley Bridge Project, City of Richmond, Virginia*. Cultural Resource Analysts, 2013.

*Catalogue of the officers and students of the medical department of Hampden-Sydney College in Richmond, Virginia* (Richmond: 1849).

Chapman, Ellen, Libby Cook, Ana Edwards. “Bones in Stasis: The Challenging History and Uncertain Future of the Virginia State Penitentiary Collection.” *Journal for the Anthropology of North America* 23 (Spring 2020): 12-31.

Chesson, Michael A. *Richmond After the War, 1865-1890*. Richmond: Virginia State Library, 1981.

“The Cholera.” *Richmond Enquirer*, September 28 and October 5, 1832.

“Cholera Statistics.” *Richmond Enquirer*, October 23, 1832.

“The City Magazine.” *Richmond Whig*, April 27, 1865.

Davis, Veronica A. *Here I Lay My Burdens Down: A History of the Black Cemeteries of Richmond, Virginia*. Richmond: Dietz Press, 2003.

“The Dead of the Past—Interesting Memorials.” *Richmond Whig*, October 12, 1866.

“The Dead Resurrected.” *Richmond Whig*, April 9, 1867.



Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

Ezekiel, Herbert T. "Regiment of Federal Prisoners Buried During War, Probably Near Shockoe, Is Actual 'Lost Battalion.'" *Richmond News Leader*, September 10, 1932.

Ezekiel, Herbert T. and Gaston Lichtenstein. *The History of the Jews of Richmond From 1769 to 1917*. Richmond: Herbert T. Ezekiel, 1917.

"Fifth Street Viaduct." Historic American Engineering Record No. VA-67. 1992.

"Former Burying Ground Rezoned." *Richmond News Leader*, October 13, 1959.

Franklin, Maria and Samuel M. Wilson. "A Bioarchaeological Study of African American Health and Mortality in the Post-Emancipation U.S. South." *American Antiquity* 85 (2020): 652-675.

"From Another Correspondent." *Philadelphia Inquirer*, April 11, 1865.

Green, Elna C. *This Business of Relief: Confronting Poverty in a Southern City, 1740-1940*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2003.

"Health of the City." *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, July 25, 1854.

Higginbotham family papers. Virginia Historical Society.

Hughes, Thomas. *A Boy's Experiences in the Civil War, 1860-1865*. N.P., 1904.

"Keeper of the Poor-House," *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, April 4, 1860.

Koste, Jodi L. "Artifacts and Commingled Skeletal Remains from a Well on the Medical College of Virginia Campus: Anatomical and Surgical Training in Nineteenth-Century Richmond." 2012. <https://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/arch001/2/>

Lazarus, Jeremy M. "One woman's crusade brings attention to long-forgotten Black cemetery." *Richmond Free Press*, March 6, 2020.

Library of Virginia, manuscripts:

First African Baptist Church minute books, 1841-1897.

Quarterly interment reports for Shockoe Hill Burying Ground, 1862-1864, Richmond City Council Papers, Library of Virginia.

Richmond, City of. Board of Aldermen's Journals, 1878-1892.

Richmond, City of. Records of the Common Hall and City Council, 1796-1889.

Richmond, City of. Ordinance books, 1806-1816.

Shockoe Hill Cemetery Records, Registers of Interment.

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

McInnis, Maurie D. *Slaves Waiting for Sale: Abolitionist Art and the American Slave Trade*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011.

McPherson, Christopher. *Christ's Millennium, of One Thousand Years Commenced and the Downfall of Kings, &c., Before the Throne of Justice, by the Word Particularly Sent to Them as Noted Herein*. Richmond: Printed for the author, 1811.

McQueen, Lenora. "The Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Interments: A Study in Search of Burial Records for the Grave Yard for Free Persons of Color and For Slaves, Established 1816." Virtual presentation to the Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Research Group (December 26, 2019).

----- "Honoring Ancestors." *Style Weekly*, October 20, 2020.

----- "Documentary Evidence for the Establishment and Expansion of the Boundaries of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground: A Synthesis of On-Going Research." Virtual presentation to the Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Research Group (January 22, 2022).

"Medical College of Virginia," *Western Democrat*, August 16, 1859

"Meeting of the City Council," *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, October 31, 1867.

Mouer, L. Daniel. *Phase 1 Cultural Resource Study of Proposed Replacement of the Stonewall Jackson Bridge, City of Richmond, Virginia*. Virginia Commonwealth University Archaeological Research Center, 1989.

National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places Nomination Forms:

1981 The Almshouse, NPS property number 81000647, 89001913

1995 Shockoe Hill Cemetery, NPS property number 95000818

2001 Streetcar Suburbs in Northside Richmond, Virginia

2006 Hebrew Cemetery, NPS property number 06000348

National Park Service. *How to Apply The National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, National Register Bulletin, 1997.

"Negro smallpox hospital at Howard's Grove; hospital near Shockoe Burying Ground reserved for Whites." *Richmond Enquirer*, January 13, 1863.

*The New York African Burial Ground: Unearthing the African Presence in Colonial New York*. 5 vols. Washington, DC: Howard University Press in association with the General Services Administration, 2009.

Olmsted, Frederick Law. *A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States; With Remarks on Their Economy*. London and New York: Dix and Edwards, 1856.

----- *The Cotton Kingdom*. New York: Mason Brothers, 1861.

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

“Opening Streets.” *Richmond Dispatch*, June 29, 1890.

Owsley, Douglas W. and Karin Bruwelheide. “Artifacts and Commingled Skeletal Remains from a Well on the Medical College of Virginia Campus: Human Skeletal Remains from Archaeological Site 44He814.” Office of the President, Virginia Commonwealth University, 2012. <http://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/arch001>.

*Particulars of the Dreadful Tragedy in Richmond, on the Morning of the 19th July, 1852.*  
Richmond: Hammersley, 1852.

Pearson, Andrew, Ben Jeffs, Annsofie Witkin, and Helen MacQuarrie. *Infernal Traffic: Excavation of a Liberated African Graveyard in Rupert's Valley, St. Helena.* York: Council for British Archaeology, 2011.

Percy, Florence [Elizabeth Akers Allen]. “Kitty Cary.” *Harper's Weekly*, September 1, 1866.

“The Petersburg Express.” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, September 8, 1855.

Rainville, Lynn. *Hidden History: African-American Cemeteries in Central Virginia.*  
Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2014.

-----, “Home at Last: Mortuary Commemoration in Virginian Slave Cemeteries.” *Markers* 26 (2009): 54-83.

Rankin-Hill, Lesley M. *A Biohistory of 19th-Century Afro-Americans: The Burial Remains of a Philadelphia Cemetery.* Westport, Conn.: Bergin & Garvey, 1997.

Richardson, Selden. *Built By Blacks: African American Architecture and Neighborhoods in Richmond.* Richmond: Dietz Press, 2007.

Richmond City Chancery Deed Books:

93B, p. 224: City of Richmond to Congregations of K. K. Beth Shalome and Beth Ahaba, March 10, 1871

116A, p. 194: City of Richmond to Hebrew Burying Ground Trustees, April 14, 1880

121C, p. 99: City of Richmond to Hebrew Cemetery trustees, June 21, 1882

130C, p. 290-91: City of Richmond to Hebrew Cemetery Company, June 14, 1886

158B, p. 133: City of Richmond to Hebrew Cemetery Company, June 3, 1896

210D, p. 369: City of Richmond to Hebrew Cemetery Company, January 2, 1911

601A, p. 429-32: City of Richmond to Sun Oil Company, March 29, 1960

Richmond City Hustings Deed Books:

31, p. 548: Dr. John Yale and his wife Mary A. to City of Richmond, March 6, 1833

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

58, p. 313: John W. Smith and wife to City of Richmond, June 3, 1850

82B, p. 579: City of Richmond to E. & S. Wortham, May 25, 1866

84B, p. 82: city of Richmond to Samuel C. Tardy, February 5, 1867

Richmond, City of. City directories, 1866-1879.

"Richmond Medical College," *Richmond Enquirer*, August 2, 1842.

*Roll of Honor (No. XVI): Names of Soldiers Who Died in Defence of the American Union, Interred in the National Cemeteries and Other Burial Places.* Washington: Government Printing Office, 1868.

"Saunders Claim Is Laid on Table." *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, April 20, 1909.

Seeman, Eric R. *Death in the New World: Cross-Cultural Encounters, 1492-1800.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010.

"Shockoe Hill Cemetery." *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, June 8, 1866.

Smith, Ryan K. *Death and Rebirth in a Southern City: Richmond's Historic Cemeteries.* Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2020.

----- "Disappearing the Enslaved: The Destruction and Recovery of Richmond's Second African Burial Ground." *Buildings & Landscapes* 27 (Spring 2020): 17-45.

Takagi, Midori. *"Rearing Wolves to Our Own Destruction": Slavery in Richmond, Virginia, 1782-1865.* Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1999.

Taylor-White, Alyson L. *Shockoe Hill Cemetery: A Richmond Landmark History.* Charleston: History Press, 2017.

"This is to inform the Inhabitants of the City of Richmond." *Richmond Enquirer*, February 22, 1816.

Tratner, Walter L. *From Poor Laws to Welfare State: A History of Welfare in America.* New York, Free Press, 1974.

Upton, Dell. *Another City: Urban Life and Urban Spaces in the New American Republic.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008.

U. S. Department of Transportation, Federal Railroad Administration, and Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation. *DC to Richmond Southeast High Speed Rail Tier II Final Environmental Impact Statement.* 2019.

Utsey, Shawn O. *Until the Well Runs Dry: Medicine and the Exploitation of Black Bodies.* Burn Baby Burn Productions, 2001.

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

Von Daacke, Kirt. "Anatomical Theater," in *Educated in Tyranny: Slavery at Thomas Jefferson's University*, edited by Maurie D. McInnis and Louis P. Nelson. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2019.

Wade, Richard C. *Slavery in the Cities: The South, 1820-1860*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1964.

Walsh, Lorena S. *From Calabar to Carter's Grove: The History of a Virginia Slave Community*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1997.

[Walthall, Ernest Taylor]. *Hidden Things Brought to Light*. Richmond: Walthall Printing Co., 1908.

Ward, Harry M. *Public Executions in Richmond, Virginia: A History, 1782-1907*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Co., 2012.

Watkinson, James D. "Rogues, Vagabonds, and Fit Objects: The Treatment of the Poor in Antebellum Virginia." *Virginia Cavalcade* 49 (2000): 16-29.

Williams, Emily. *Stories in Stone: Memorialization, the Creation of History and the Role of Preservation*. Wilmington, Del.: Vernon Press, 2020.

Wise, Jennings C. *The Military History of the Virginia Military Institute from 1839 to 1865*. Lynchburg: J. P. Bell, 1915.

Worsham, Gibson and Richard Worsham. "The Richmond Almshouse and Hospital," Urban Scale Richmond (Blog), <https://urbanscalerichmondvirginia.blogspot.com/2016/11/the-richmond-almhouse-and-hospital.html>. 2016.

Wright, Roberta Hughes and Wilbur B. Hughes III. *Lay Down Body: Living History in African American Cemeteries*. Detroit: Visible Ink Press, 1996.

"Yeoman" [Frederick Law Olmsted]. "The South; Letters on the Productions, Industry and Resources of the Slave States, Number Three." *New-York Daily Times*, February 25, 1853.

### **Maps (Chronological Order):**

Richard Young, Plan of the City of Richmond, c. 1809, Library of Virginia.

Richard Young, Plan of 28 1/2 Acres of Ground Whereon is Situated the Poorhouse of the city of Richmond, 1816, city of Richmond Engineering Department.

Richard Young, Map of the City of Richmond and its Jurisdiction Including Manchester, 1817, Library of Virginia.

Micajah Bates, Plan of the City of Richmond, 1835, Library of Virginia.

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

Micajah Bates, Plat of The City Property Near the Poor House, 1842, city of Richmond cemeteries office.

Charles S. Morgan, Plan of Richmond (Henrico County) Manchester & Springhill, Virginia, 1848, Library of Virginia.

Robert P. Smith, *Smith's Map of Henrico County, Virginia from actual surveys by James Keily*, 1853, Library of Virginia.

William Sides, *Map of the City of Richmond, Henrico County, Virginia*. Baltimore: Moses Ellison, 1856.

Richmond, Henrico County, Manchester and Springhill, Chesterfield Co. (Virginia). London: London Illustrated News, 1861, Library of Congress

C. Bohn and United States Coast Survey, Map of the City of Richmond, Virginia, 1864, Library of Congress.

Nathaniel Michler and Peter Michie, Richmond, 632.9, 1867, Library of Congress.

J. F. Z. Caracristi, Office Map of the City of Richmond and Surroundings, 1873, Library of Virginia.

F. W. Beers, *Illustrated Atlas of the City of Richmond*. Richmond: Beers, 1877.

J. Thompson and Brown Real Estate Agents and Auctioneers, Cities of Richmond and Manchester, VA, 1886, Library of Virginia.

G. W. Baist, *Atlas of the City of Richmond, Virginia and Vicinity*. Philadelphia: Baist, 1889.

Baist Atlas of the City of Richmond outline and Index map, 1889.

Maps of the City of Richmond from *Hill's Richmond city directories*, 1906-1922.

Beers, F. W. (1876). "Outline Map of Cities in Richmond and Manchester and Vicinity", Virginia Memory, Library of Virginia.

Highland Park Company (1891). "Map of the Property of the Highland Park Company showing its location with reference to the City of Richmond", University of Virginia Special Collections.

Scrivernor, Arthur, T. Crawford Redd & Bro. surveyors and engineers (1905). "Map of Richmond and Surroundings", Valentine Museum.

### **Images:**

Alexander Gardner, photographs of Richmond's city hospital and Richmond's almshouse, Library of Congress Prints & Photographs Division, 1865.

<https://www.loc.gov/item/2018671526/>

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

Two views of the Richmond Locomotive Works and the Almshouse, circa 1888 and circa 1891,  
Cook Collection, Valentine Museum.

---

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested  
 previously listed in the National Register  
 previously determined eligible by the National Register  
 designated a National Historic Landmark  
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, VA;  
Library of Virginia, Richmond, VA; Valentine Museum, Richmond, VA; Beth Ahabah  
Museum and Archives, Richmond, VA

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** DHR #127-7231

---

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** Approximately 43 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 37.551180                      Longitude: -77.433830
2. Latitude: 37.553190                      Longitude: -77.431990
3. Latitude: 37.554560                      Longitude: -77.431480
4. Latitude: 37.554790                      Longitude: -77.430960

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

- |                         |                       |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 5. Latitude: 37.551940  | Longitude: -77.427230 |
| 6. Latitude: 37.551240  | Longitude: -77.426830 |
| 7. Latitude: 37.550990  | Longitude: -77.425980 |
| 8. Latitude: 37.550560  | Longitude: -77.426260 |
| 9. Latitude: 37.550590  | Longitude: -77.426990 |
| 10. Latitude: 37.550960 | Longitude: -77.427490 |
| 11. Latitude: 37.550510 | Longitude: -77.430190 |
| 12. Latitude: 37.550180 | Longitude: -77.431490 |
| 13. Latitude: 37.550170 | Longitude: -77.431840 |
| 14. Latitude: 37.550070 | Longitude: -77.432080 |

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927    or     NAD 1983

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District occupies 43 acres bounded to the south by E. Bates Street, to the north by the northern limit of the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority's rail line at the southern margin of the Bacon's Quarter Branch valley, to the west by 2nd Street, and to the east by the historic edge of the City property at the former location of Shockoe Creek. The true and correct historic boundary is shown on the attached scaled Location Map.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries of the historic district are mostly defined by the boundaries of the original 28.5-acre parcel of the City of Richmond property as acquired and platted in 1799, along with additional parcels added to the property by the City during the nineteenth century. The southeastern boundary follows the map-projected course of the historic stream bed used as the original property boundary. The eastern boundary is defined by the location of Shockoe Creek as it was near the end of the nineteenth century. The Northern boundary is defined as



Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

the northern extent of the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority railroad track berm (this railroad track previously was owned by CSX).

The district's northern boundary was chosen because historic portions of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground (Figure 12), which once extended much further north to the property boundary at Bacon's Quarter Branch, have been impacted by redevelopment. The northern area of the rail right-of-way had been very heavily industrialized following the City's abandonment of that Burying Ground in 1879. Extensive construction and development, along with the re-routing and burying of Bacon's Quarter Branch and Shockoe Creek, have highly altered the landscape in that area.

The original African Burying Ground does extend beyond the nominated boundary. The edge of the actual burial area (closed to burials by 1879) is based on City maps from 1848, 1853, 1876, 1877, 1891 and 1905 (all cited in the bibliography). In addition to the mapping, Frederick Law Olmsted provided an eyewitness description of the funeral procession that he followed, and the two funerals and burials that he then witnessed in 1853. He described the burials as extending to the crumbling bank of the stream bed area of Shockoe Creek and Bacon's Quarter Branch.

Review of dozens of historic maps (including those cited above) show that the exact location of Bacon's Quarter Branch had moved within its floodplain a number of times during the period of use of the Burying Ground. Additionally, the Branch valley is subjected to periodic intense flood episodes which alter its physiography and may have had substantial impacts on any human interments and remains in that low ground.

The construction of the railroad track by the Seaboard Air Line Railroad in 1900 and a large culvert c. 1917 undoubtedly damaged parts of the African Burying Ground, but since the tracks were constructed on a substantial berm, it is possible that human interments and remains might still be found beneath that berm. Burials are almost certainly present on the slope immediately south of the berm.

While current presence of surviving remains of human interments in the floodplain and railroad corridor is not known, future discoveries or additional documentary research may reveal intact areas of the burial area beyond the nominated boundary. In those circumstances, an extension of the Historic District should be considered.

---

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: L. Daniel Mouer, PhD, Lenora McQueen, Ryan K. Smith, PhD, Steve Thompson, PhD

organization: N/A

street & number: % Dan Mouer, 600 W 30th St., Richmond, Va. 23225

city or town: Richmond state: VA zip code: 23225

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

e-mail: danmouer@fastmail.fm

telephone: 804-233-2824

date: February-March 2022

---

### **Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### **Photographs**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### **Photo Log**

Name of Property: Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District

City or Vicinity: City of Richmond

County: Independent City      State: Virginia

Photographer: all photos by L. Daniel Mouer except for Photo #4 by Ellen Chapman,

Date Photographed: all photographed on June 18, 2021 except for Photo #4, photographed on February 16, 2021

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photo #1: View toward Hospital Street at 2nd Street, camera facing southeast

Photo #2 The Almshouse, camera facing east

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

Photo #3: The Almshouse, view from 4th Street, camera facing north

Photo #4 Shockoe Hill Cemetery, camera facing northeast

Photo #5 Shockoe Hill Cemetery, camera facing northeast

Photo #6 View along 4th Street, camera facing southwest

Photo #7 Chapel of Hebrew Cemetery, camera facing north

Photo #8 Hebrew Cemetery, camera facing southeast

Photo #9 View of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground from Hebrew Cemetery, camera facing east/southeast

Photo #10 View across 5th Street of a portion of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground, camera facing east/southeast

Photo #11 Eastern Gateway to the Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District, camera facing northwest

Photo #12 Intersection of 5th Street and Hospital Street, camera facing southeast

Photo #13 View along the CSX Railroad track, camera facing northwest

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

Tier 1 – 60-100 hours

Tier 2 – 120 hours

Tier 3 – 230 hours

Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

## ENDNOTES

1. A portion of the original 28.5-acre parcel, on the floodplain of Bacons Quarter Branch, has been excluded from the proposed District due to extensive industrial development there beginning in the 1880s.
2. L. Daniel Mouer. Phase 1 Cultural Resource Study of Proposed Replacement of the Stonewall Jackson Bridge, City of Richmond, Virginia. Virginia Commonwealth University Archaeological Research Center, 1989.
- 3 Records indicate that the City quietly acknowledged that this property had been recorded as a cemetery when the municipality sold it to the Sun Oil Company in 1960. See Ryan K. Smith. "Disappearing the Enslaved: The Destruction and Recovery of Richmond's Second African Burial Ground." *Buildings & Landscapes* 27 (Spring 2020): 17-45. The City has recently re-acquired ownership of the lot containing this building with the intention of preserving and memorializing this portion of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground.
4. Frederick Law Olmsted, *A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States; With Remarks on Their Economy* (London and New York: Dix and Edwards, 1856). "Potters Field" is a term derived from biblical use to refer to a burying ground for paupers. The term first appears in reference to the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground following the Civil War.
5. *Richmond Whig*, April 9, 1867
6. Emily Calhoun. "Archaeological and Geoarchaeological Assessment of the Slave and Free Black Burying Ground, I-64 Shockoe Valley Bridge Project, City of Richmond, Virginia." Cultural Resource Analysts, 2013.
7. Jennings C Wise, *The Military History of the Virginia Military Institute from 1839 to 1865* (Lynchburg, Va.: J. P. Bell, 1915).
8. The abiding desolate appearance of the eastern end of the proposed District, along with the existence, or lack of, grave markers or monuments, will be discussed in detail in the following Significance section of this nomination.
9. Guidelines for Treatment of Cultural Landscapes: Defining Landscape Terminology  
<https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/four-treatments/landscape-guidelines/terminology.htm>
- 10 Entry for April 15, 1799, in Richmond City Council Minutes, 1796–1807.
11. "Ordinarily cemeteries...shall not be considered eligible for the National Register. However, such properties will qualify if they are integral parts of districts that do meet the criteria or if they fall within the following categories: ... d. A cemetery which derives its primary significance...from association with historic events." (National Register Bulletin 15: p2)
- 12 *The New York African Burial Ground: Unearthing the African Presence in Colonial New York*, 5 vols. (Washington, DC: Howard University Press in association with the General Services Administration, 2009). For other comparable sites, see Roberta Hughes Wright and Wilbur B. Hughes III, *Lay Down Body: Living History in African American Cemeteries* (Detroit: Visible Ink Press, 1996).
- 13 Note that Criterion C is checked on the nomination form at the start of Section 8, but Art is not among the areas of significance listed here. The statement of significance summary paragraph states that the cemetery is significant for its collection of funerary art and grave markers associated with Jewish culture.
14. *Richmond Daily Whig*, June 29, 1843
15. Gibson Worsham and Richard Worsham. "The Richmond Almshouse and Hospital," Urban Scale Richmond (Blog), <https://urbanscalerichmondvirginia.blogspot.com/2016/11/the-richmond-almhouse-and-hospital.html>, 2016.
16. Christopher McPherson, *Christ's Millennium, of One Thousand Years Commenced and the Downfall of Kings, &c., Before the Throne of Justice, by the Word Particularly Sent to Them as Noted Herein* (Richmond: Printed for the author, 1811).

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

17. Marshall Street was later renamed Hospital Street, although the section east of 5th Street was re-routed and cut diagonally across these original burying ground parcels.
18. Kirt Von Daacke. "Anatomical Theater," in *Educated in Tyranny: Slavery at Thomas Jefferson's University*, edited by Maurie D. McInnis and Louis P. Nelson (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2019); Ryan K. Smith. *Death and Rebirth in a Southern City: Richmond's Historic Cemeteries*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2020.
19. Douglas W. Owsley and Karin Bruwelheide, "Artifacts and Commingled Skeletal Remains from a Well on the Medical College of Virginia Campus: Human Skeletal Remains from Archaeological Site 44He814," Office of the President, Virginia Commonwealth University, 2012. <http://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/arch001>.
20. Jodi L. Koste, "Artifacts and Commingled Skeletal Remains from a Well on the Medical College of Virginia Campus: Anatomical and Surgical Training in Nineteenth-Century Richmond," 2012. <https://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/arch001/2/>
21. Gibson Worsham and Richard Worsham. "The Richmond Almshouse and Hospital," Urban Scale Richmond (Blog), <https://urbanscalerichmondvirginia.blogspot.com/2016/11/the-richmond-almhouse-and-hospital.html>, 2016.
22. "Health of Richmond," *Richmond Enquirer*, August 17, 1849. This unique reference to a separate burying ground for "Paupers and Strangers" may presage later references to the "potters' field," which appear occasionally in documents from the 1860s to the early twentieth century. These seem to refer to the much expanded Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground as indicated by the detail of the Smith Map of Henrico County of 1853 (see Figure 19).
23. Richmond Common Council Minutes 1848-1852, January 16, 1850.
24. *Particulars of the Dreadful Tragedy in Richmond, on the Morning of the 19th July, 1852: Being a Full Account of the Awful Murder of the Winston Family* (Richmond: Hammersley, 1852).
25. Ryan K. Smith. "Disappearing the Enslaved: The Destruction and Recovery of Richmond's Second African Burial Ground." *Buildings & Landscapes* 27 (Spring 2020): 17-45; Frederick Law Olmsted. *A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States; With Remarks on Their Economy* (London and New York: Dix and Edwards, 1856).
26. Lenora McQueen to the City of Richmond Planning Commission, the Honorable Ellen Robertson, and the Richmond City Council, in support of Ordinance 2020-213, October 4, 2020.
27. Florence Percy, "Kitty Cary," *Harper's Weekly*, September 1, 1866.
28. *Roll of Honor (No. 16): Names of Soldiers Who Died in Defence of the American Union, Interred in the National Cemeteries and Other Burial Places* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1868).
29. Thomas Hughes, *A Boy's Experiences in the Civil War, 1860-1865* (N.P., 1904).
30. *Philadelphia Inquirer*, April 11, 1865 (subtitled: "Special Correspondence of the Inquirer / Richmond, Va., Spottswood House, April 7, 1865").
31. Entry for March 3, 1877 in Richmond City Council Minutes.
32. Ryan K. Smith. "Disappearing the Enslaved: The Destruction and Recovery of Richmond's Second African Burial Ground." *Buildings & Landscapes* 27 (Spring 2020): 17-45.
33. "Human Bones: Be it resolved that the Street Committee be required to provide for the collection and suitable burial of human bones which are now exposed and scattered along the extension of 7th St. near Hospital St." Richmond City Common Council Journal, April 1887-November 1890, 743.
34. *Richmond Planet*, March 21, 1896.
35. Herbert T. Ezekiel, "Regiment of Federal Prisoners Buried During War, Probably Near Shockoe, Is Actual 'Lost Battalion,'" *Richmond News Leader*, September 10, 1932.

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
Name of Property

City of Richmond, VA  
County and State

36. Olmsted's account includes the description of a member of the burial party gathering "two small branches hung with withered leaves, that he had broken off a beech tree; which were stuck, one at the head, the other at the foot of the grave."

<sup>37</sup> The authors of this nomination would like to thank Ellen Chapman, PhD, for her suggestions in completing this section.

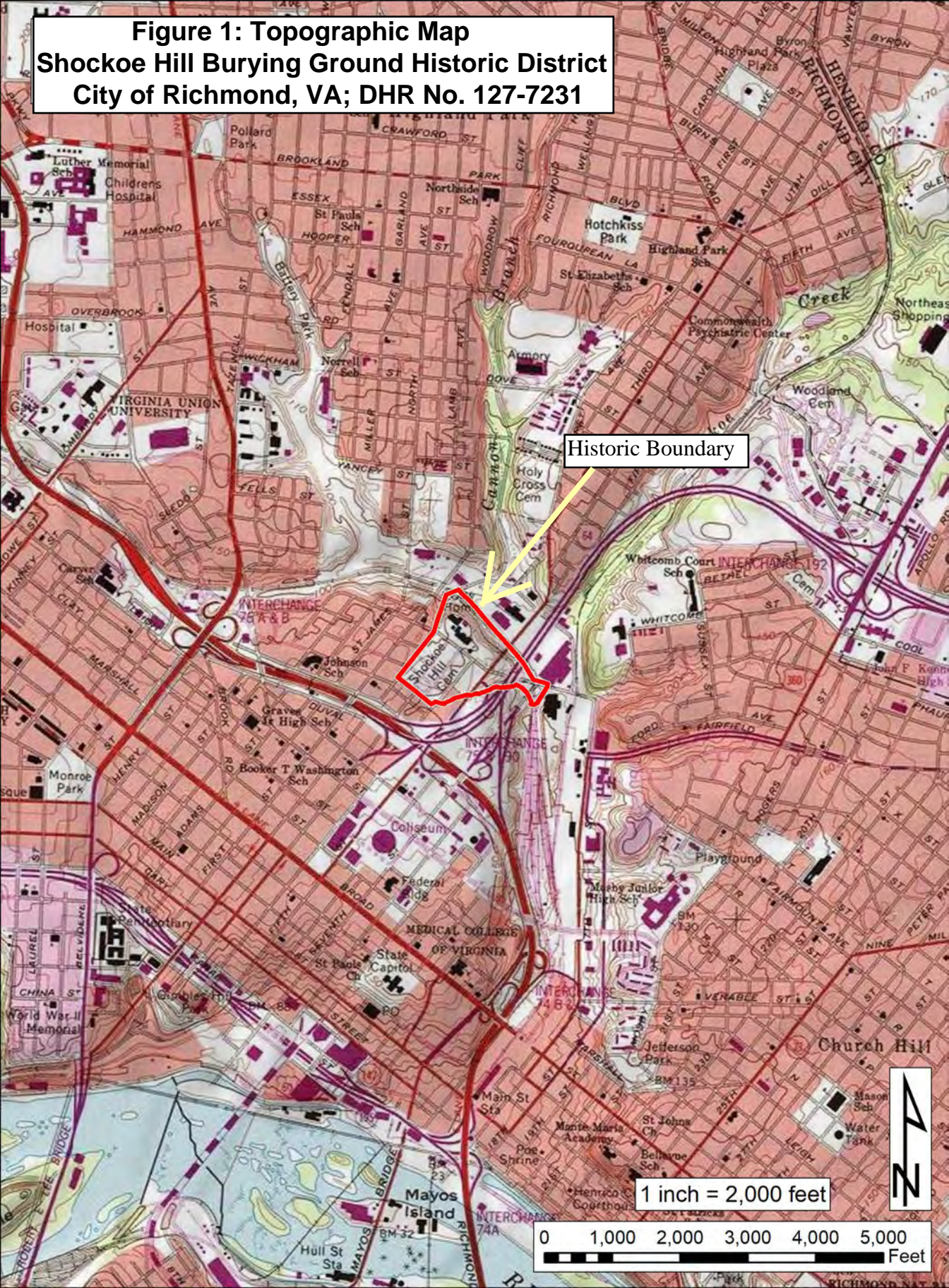
<sup>38</sup> Lorena S. Walsh, *From Calabar to Carter's Grove: The History of a Virginia Slave Community* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1997); Eric R. Seeman, *Death in the New World: Cross-Cultural Encounters, 1492-1800* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010); Paul Martin and Kimberly Chen, multiple personal communications, 2022.

<sup>39</sup> Emily Williams, *Stories in Stone: Memorialization, the Creation of History and the Role of Preservation* (Wilmington, Del.: Vernon Press, 2020); Ryan K. Smith, *Death and Rebirth in a Southern City: Richmond's Historic Cemeteries* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2020).

<sup>40</sup> Roberta Hughes Wright and Wilbur B. Hughes III, *Lay Down Body: Living History in African American Cemeteries* (Detroit: Visible Ink Press, 1996).

<sup>41</sup> Michael L. Blakey, "Bioarchaeology of the African Diaspora in the Americas: Its Origins and Scope," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 30: 387-422 (2001); Andrew Pearson, Ben Jeffs, Annsophie Witkin, and Helen MacQuarrie, *Infernal Traffic: Excavation of a Liberated African Graveyard in Rupert's Valley, St. Helena* (York: Council for British Archaeology, 2011); Michael L. Blakey and Lesley M. Rankin-Hill, "The Skeletal Biology of the New York African Burial Ground," vol. 1 of *The New York African Burial Ground: Unearthing the African Presence in Colonial New York* (Washington, DC: Howard University Press in association with the General Services Administration; Ellen Chapman, Libby Cook, Ana Edwards. "Bones in Stasis: The Challenging History and Uncertain Future of the Virginia State Penitentiary Collection." *Journal for the Anthropology of North America* 23 (Spring 2020): 12-31; James M. Davidson, "Freedman's cemetery (1869-1907): Establishing a Chronology for Exhumed Burials from an African-American Burial Ground, Dallas, Texas," *African Diaspora Archaeology Newsletter* 6 (1999); Maria Franklin and Samuel M. Wilson 2020. "A Bioarchaeological Study of African American Health and Mortality in the Post-Emancipation U.S. South," *American Antiquity* 85 (2020): 652-675.

**Figure 1: Topographic Map  
Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
City of Richmond, VA; DHR No. 127-7231**



Historic Boundary

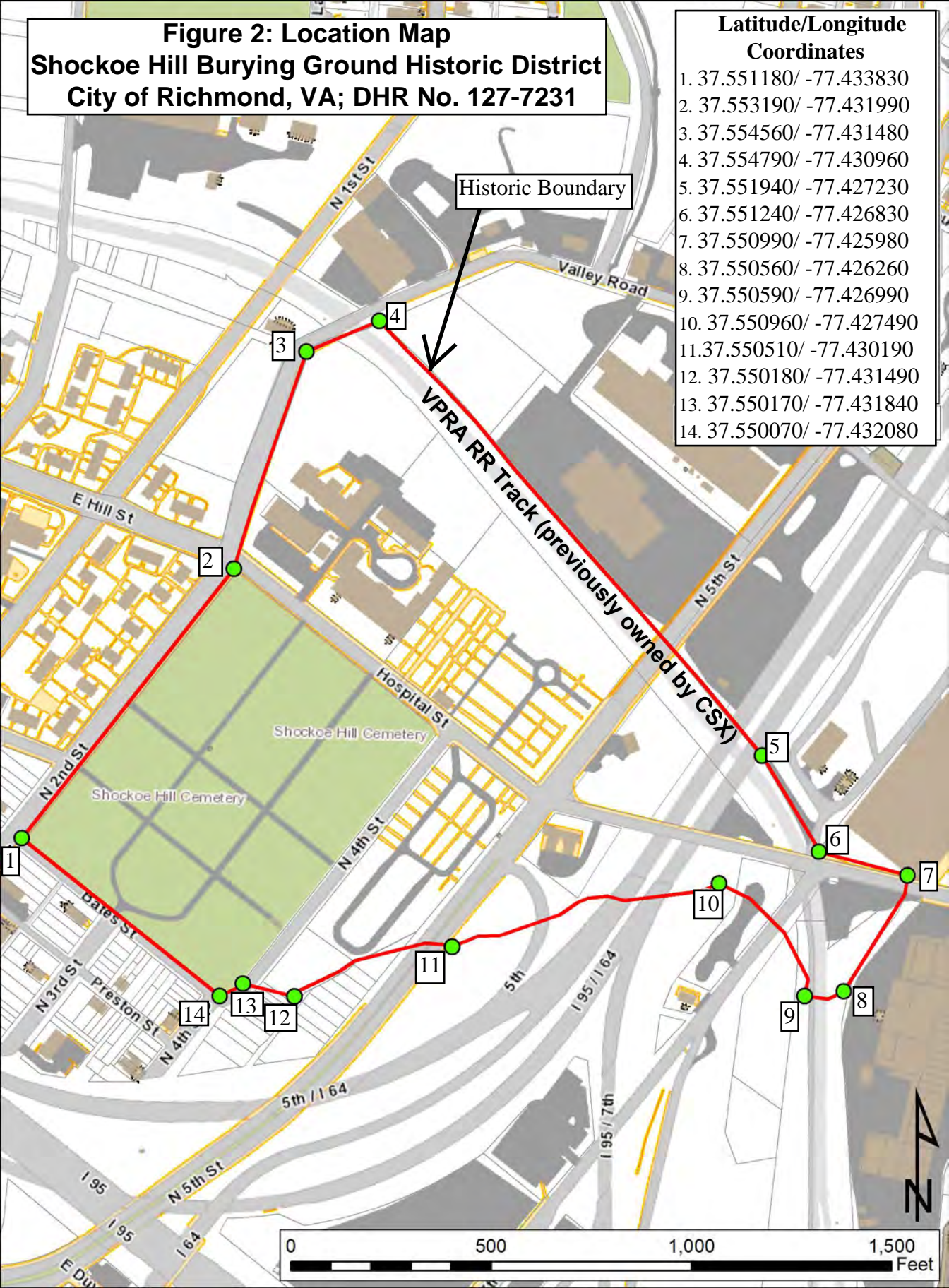
1 inch = 2,000 feet

0 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 5,000 Feet

**Figure 2: Location Map**  
**Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District**  
**City of Richmond, VA; DHR No. 127-7231**

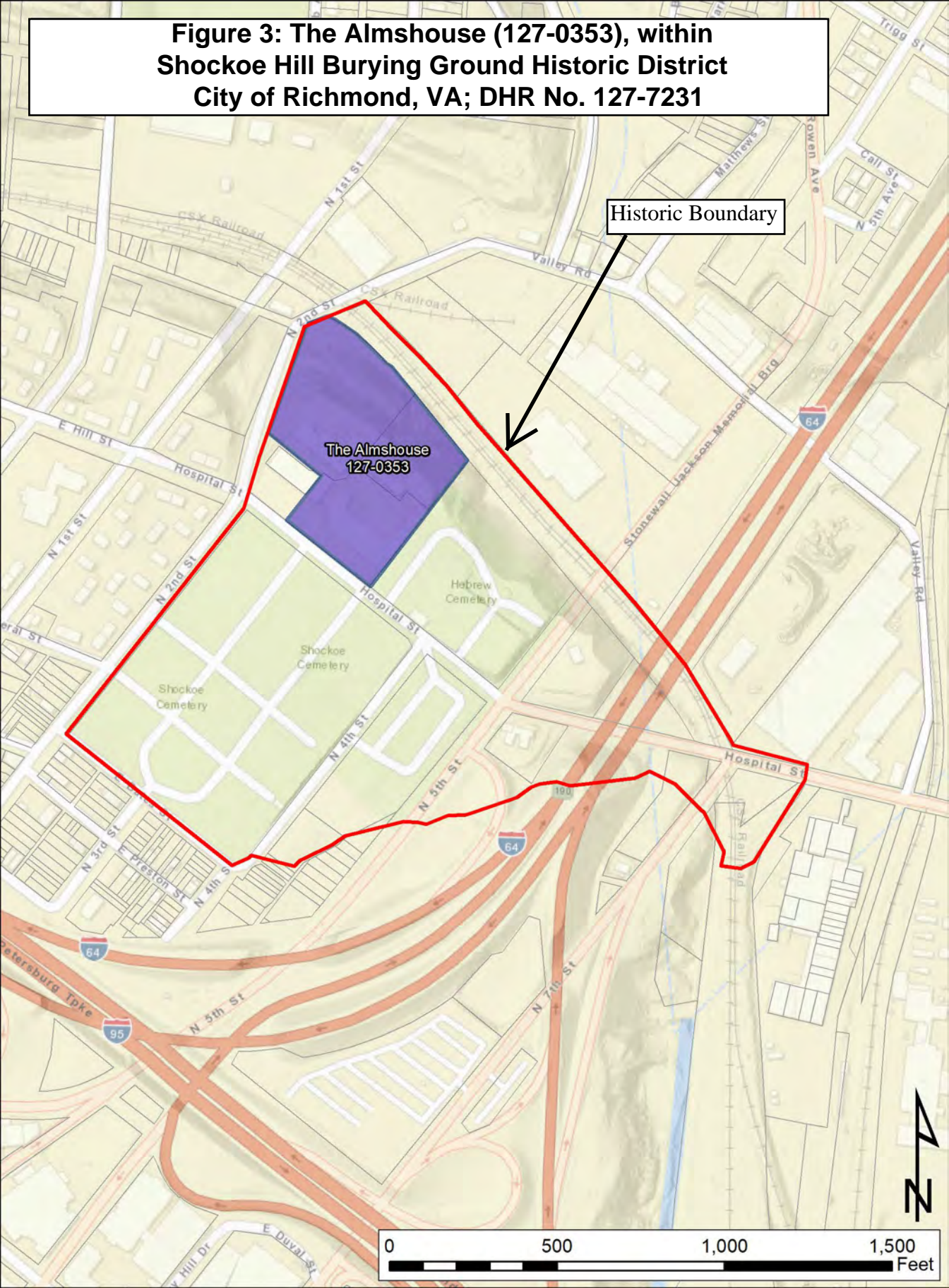
**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

- 37.551180/ -77.433830
- 37.553190/ -77.431990
- 37.554560/ -77.431480
- 37.554790/ -77.430960
- 37.551940/ -77.427230
- 37.551240/ -77.426830
- 37.550990/ -77.425980
- 37.550560/ -77.426260
- 37.550590/ -77.426990
- 37.550960/ -77.427490
- 37.550510/ -77.430190
- 37.550180/ -77.431490
- 37.550170/ -77.431840
- 37.550070/ -77.432080

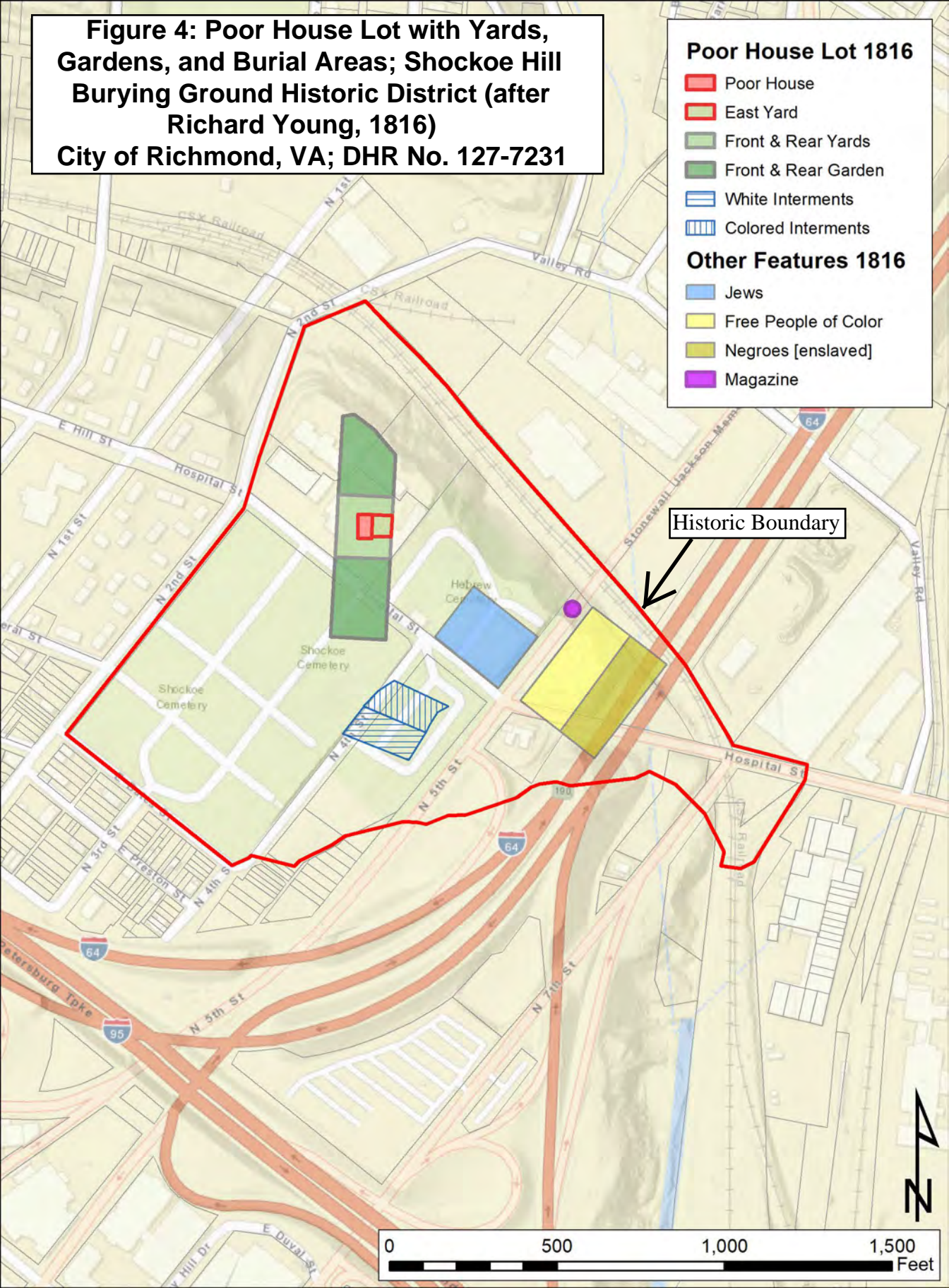




**Figure 3: The Almshouse (127-0353), within Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
City of Richmond, VA; DHR No. 127-7231**



**Figure 4: Poor House Lot with Yards, Gardens, and Burial Areas; Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District (after Richard Young, 1816)  
City of Richmond, VA; DHR No. 127-7231**



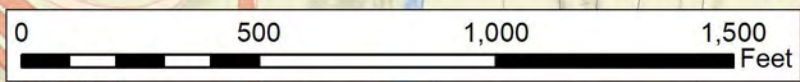
**Poor House Lot 1816**

- Poor House
- East Yard
- Front & Rear Yards
- Front & Rear Garden
- White Interments
- Colored Interments

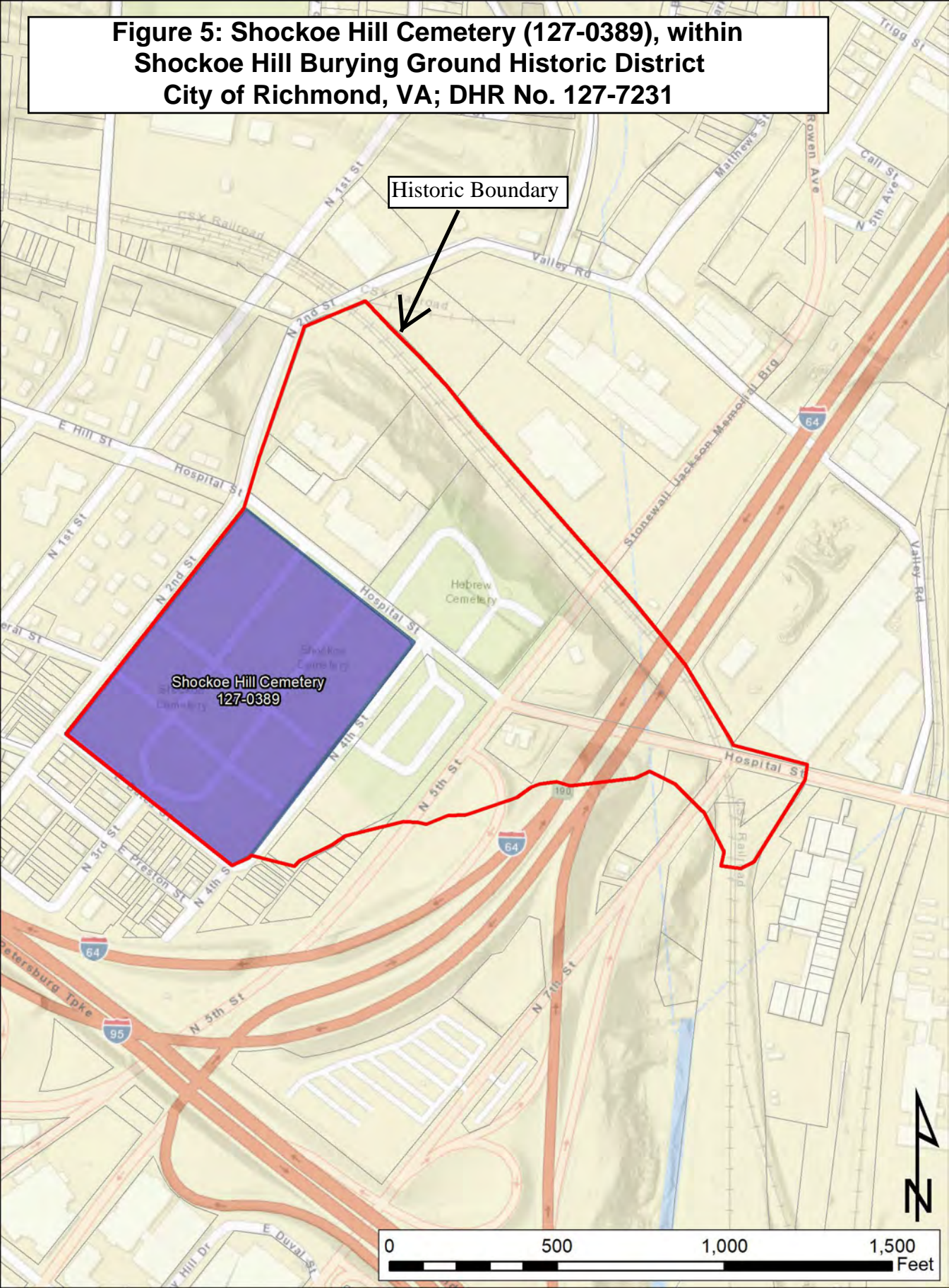
**Other Features 1816**

- Jews
- Free People of Color
- Negroes [enslaved]
- Magazine

Historic Boundary

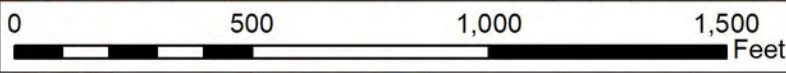


**Figure 5: Shockoe Hill Cemetery (127-0389), within Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District City of Richmond, VA; DHR No. 127-7231**

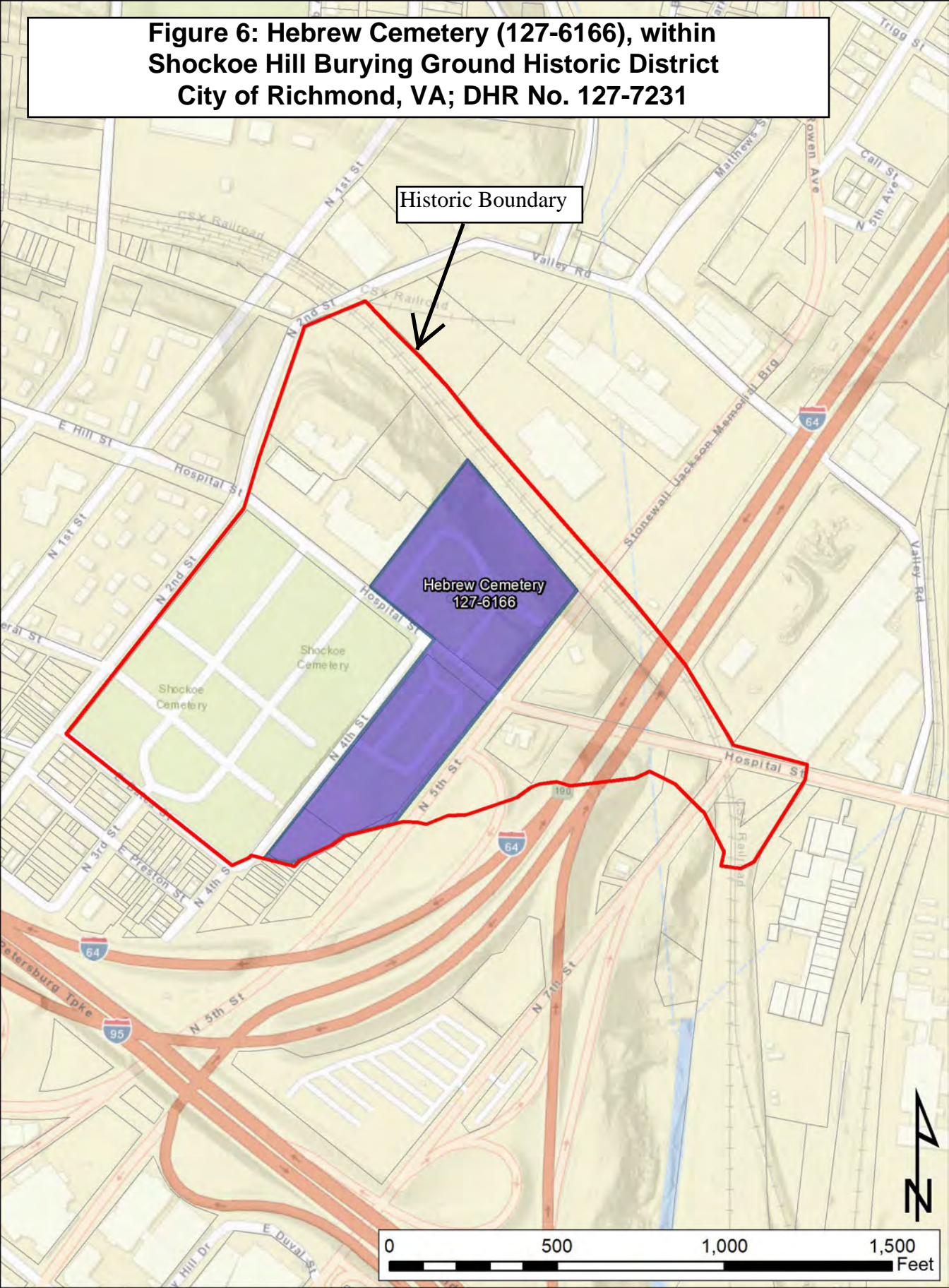


Historic Boundary

Shockoe Hill Cemetery  
127-0389

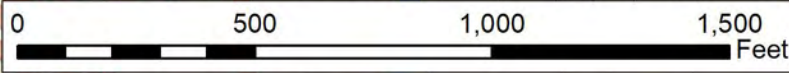


**Figure 6: Hebrew Cemetery (127-6166), within Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District City of Richmond, VA; DHR No. 127-7231**

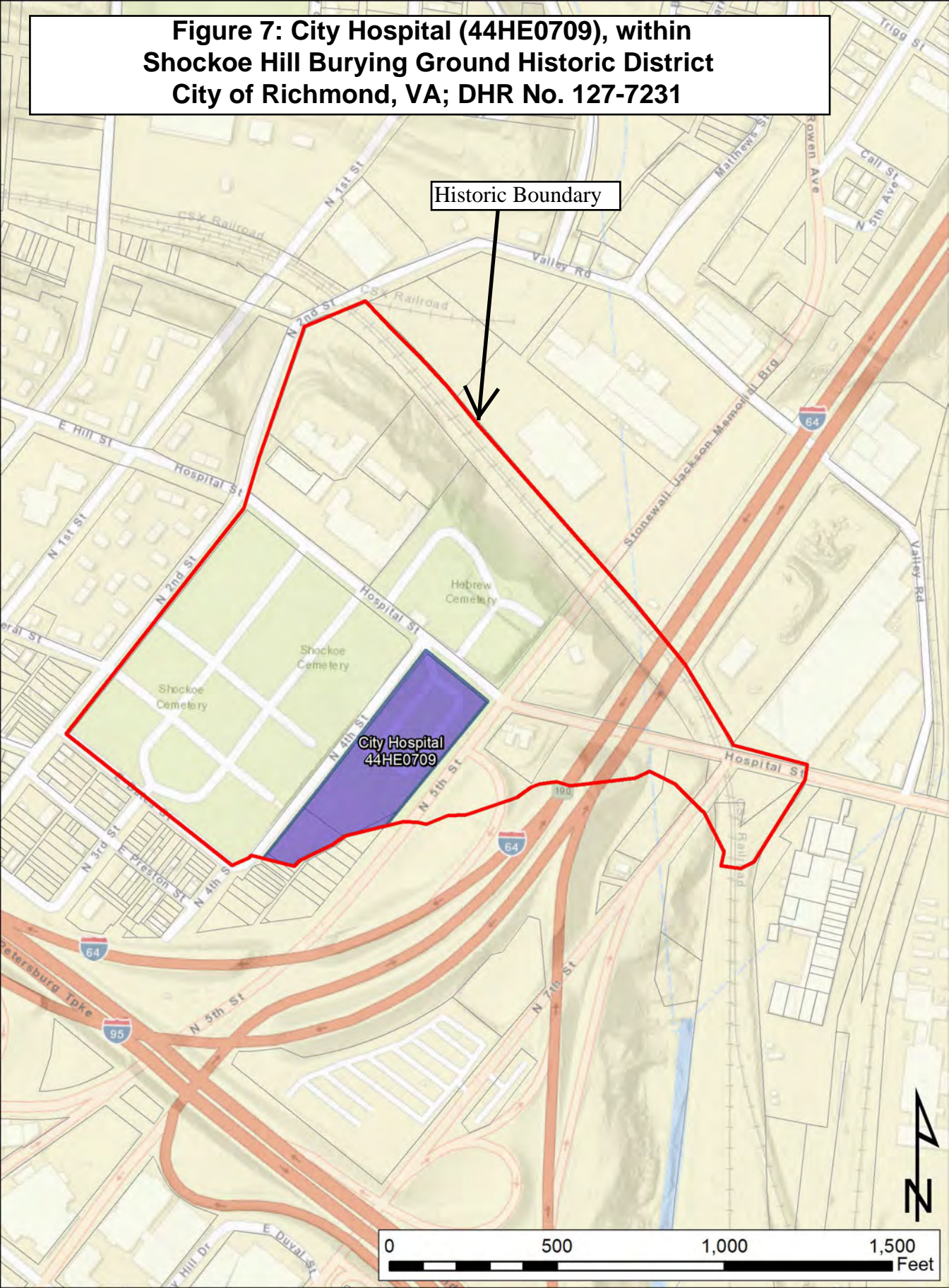


Historic Boundary

Hebrew Cemetery  
127-6166



**Figure 7: City Hospital (44HE0709), within Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
City of Richmond, VA; DHR No. 127-7231**



Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
City of Richmond, VA  
DHR No. 127-7231

**Figure 8: City Hospital, April 1865**



Photograph by Alexander Gardner, April 1865

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
City of Richmond, VA  
DHR No. 127-7231

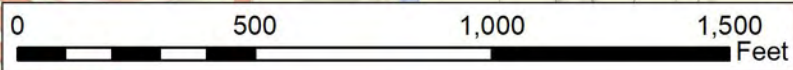
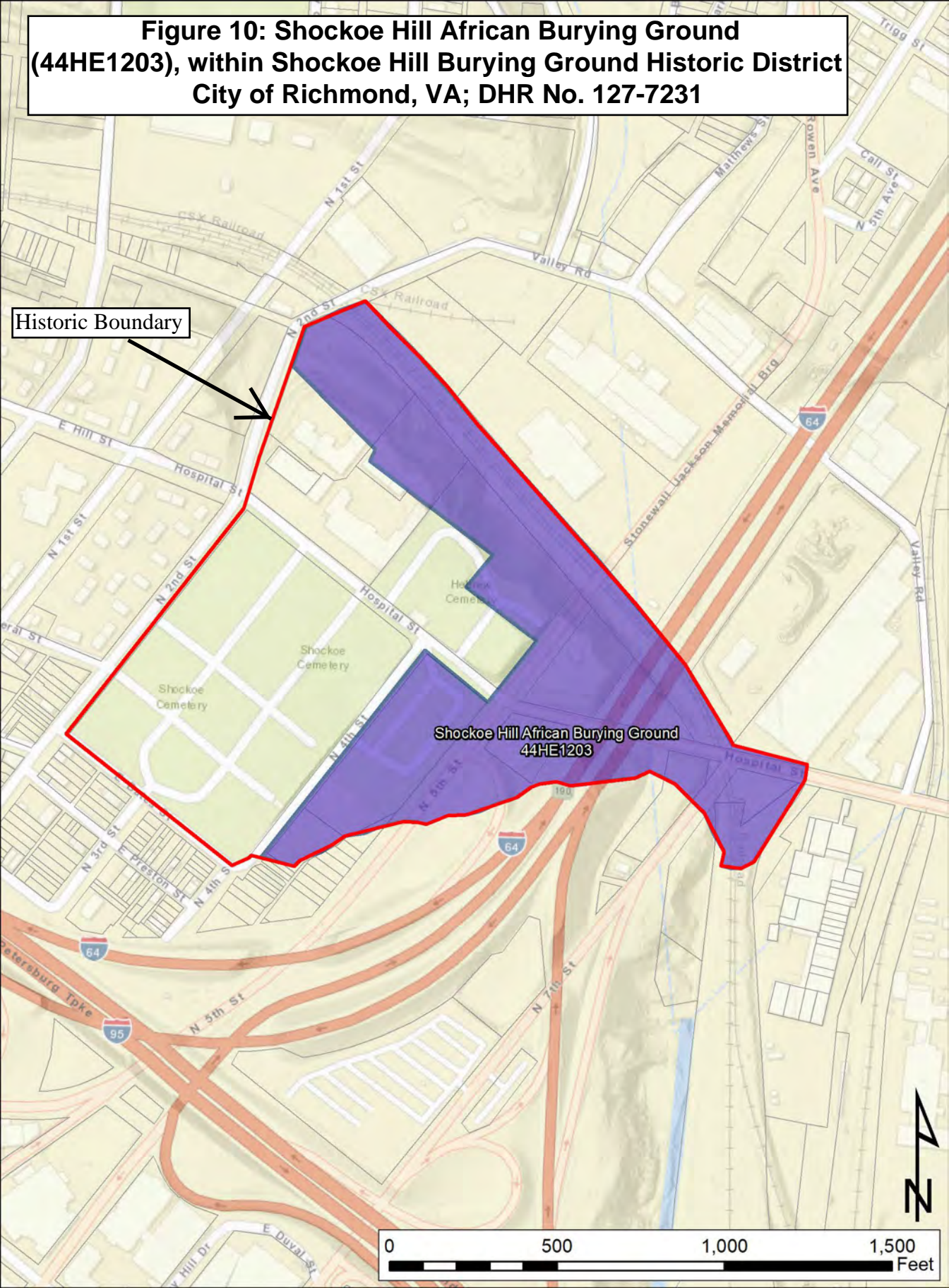
**Figure 9: The "Colored Almshouse," ca. 1891**



Detail of a photograph by the Cook Studio, Richmond, Virginia

**Figure 10: Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground (44HE1203), within Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
City of Richmond, VA; DHR No. 127-7231**

Historic Boundary





Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
 City of Richmond, VA  
 DHR No. 127-7231

**Figure 11: Annotated detail of Richard Young Map, 1816**

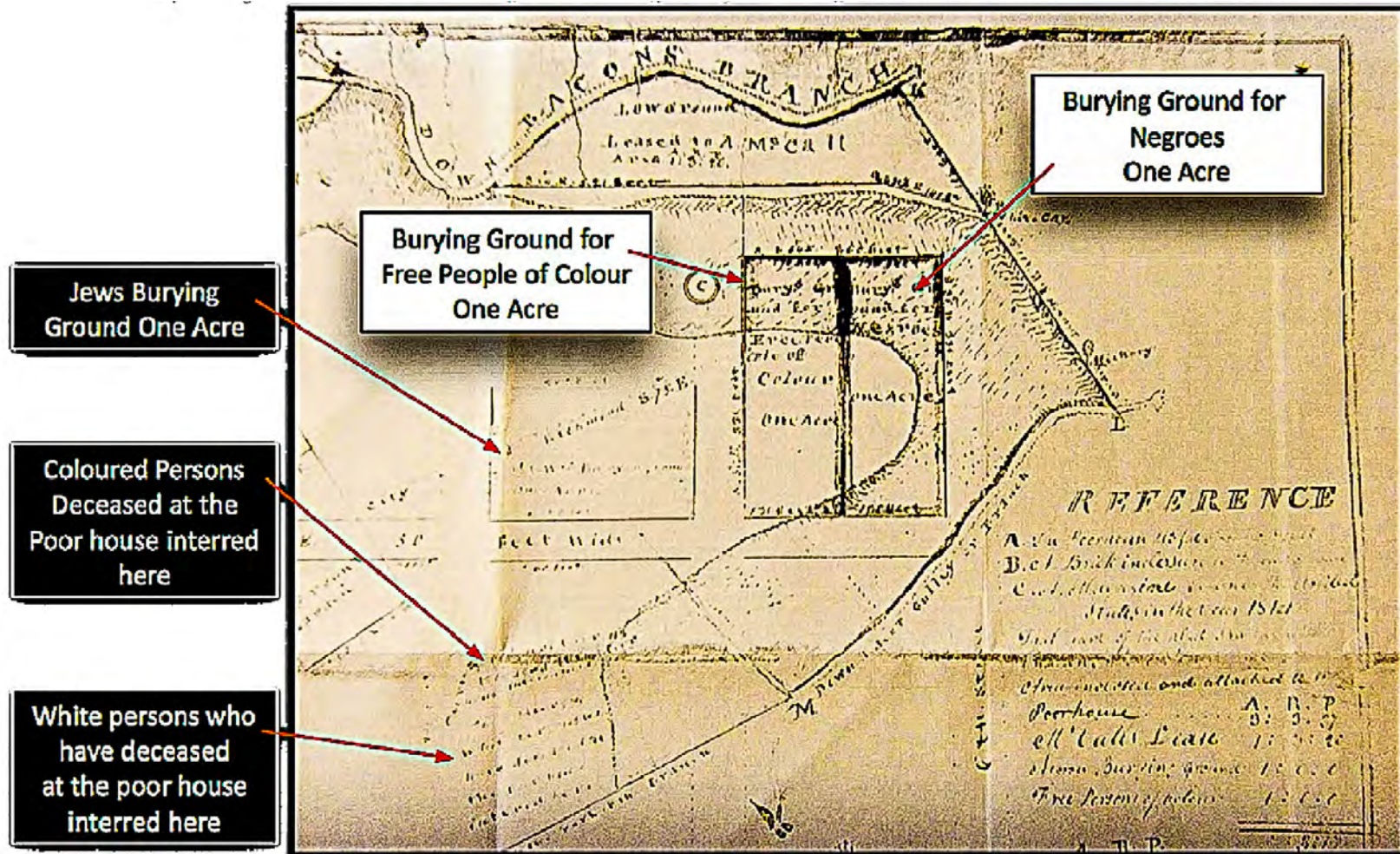
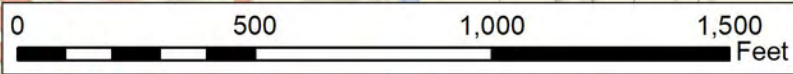
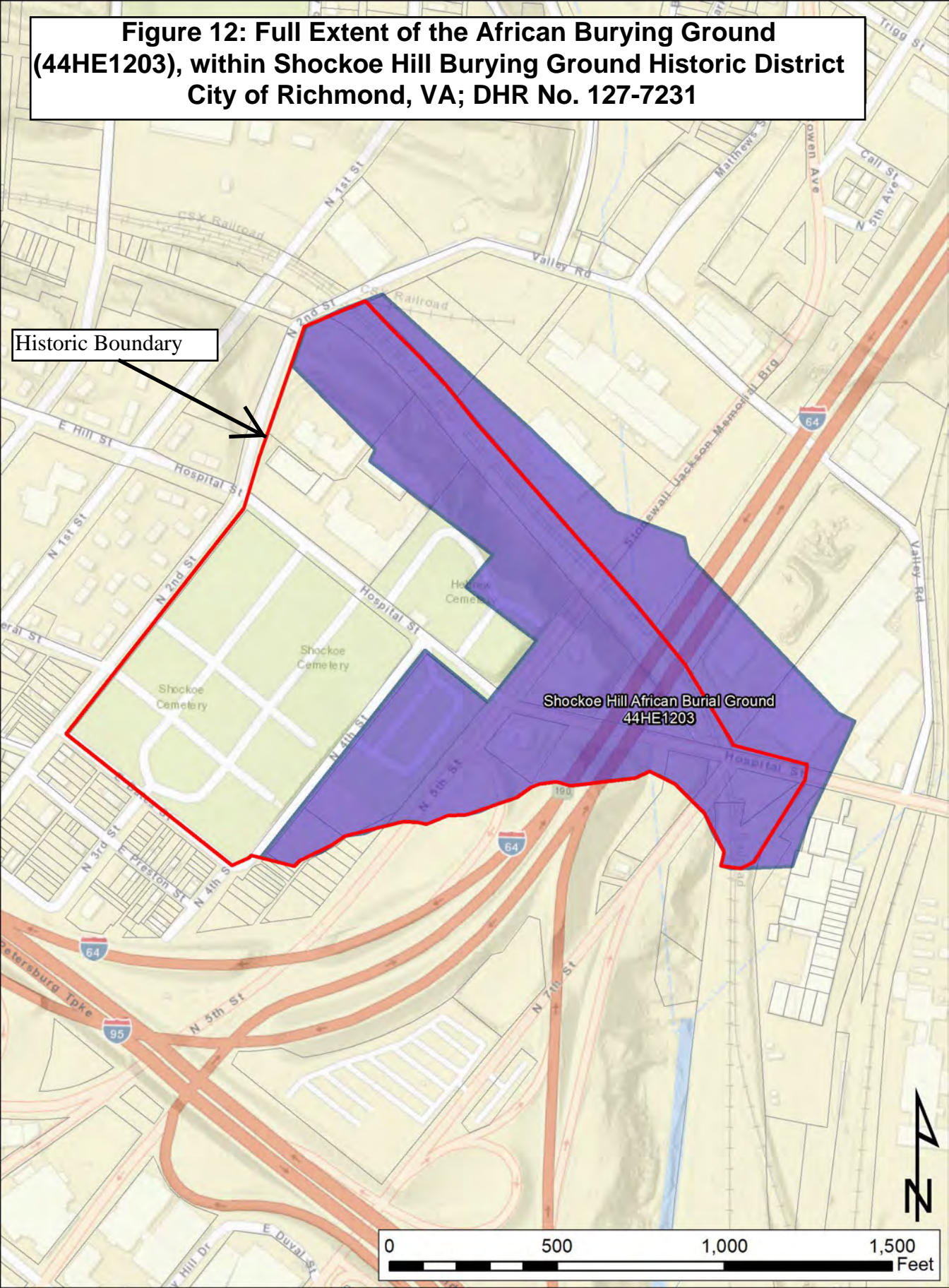


Illustration from McQueen, n.d.

**Figure 12: Full Extent of the African Burying Ground (44HE1203), within Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District City of Richmond, VA; DHR No. 127-7231**

Historic Boundary

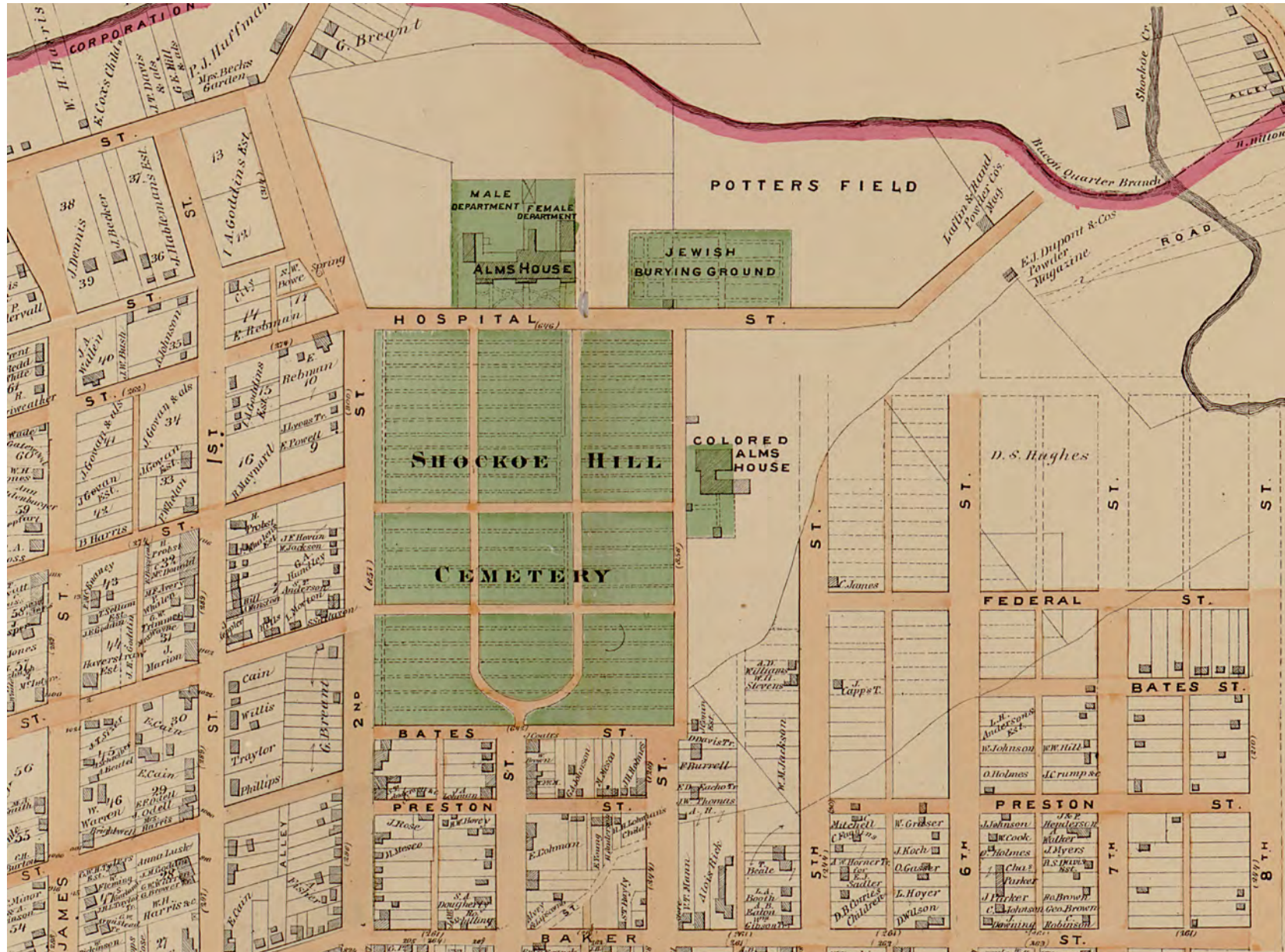


**Figure 13: Richmond Public Powder Magazine (44HE1228),  
within Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
City of Richmond, VA; DHR No. 127-7231**



Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
City of Richmond, VA  
DHR No. 127-7231

Figure 14: Detail from Beers Atlas 1877



Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
City of Richmond, VA  
DHR No. 127-7231

**Figure 15: The Almshouse in April, 1865**



Photograph by Alexander Gardner, April 12, 1865

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
City of Richmond, VA  
DHR No. 127-72313

Figure 16: The Poor House of 1805

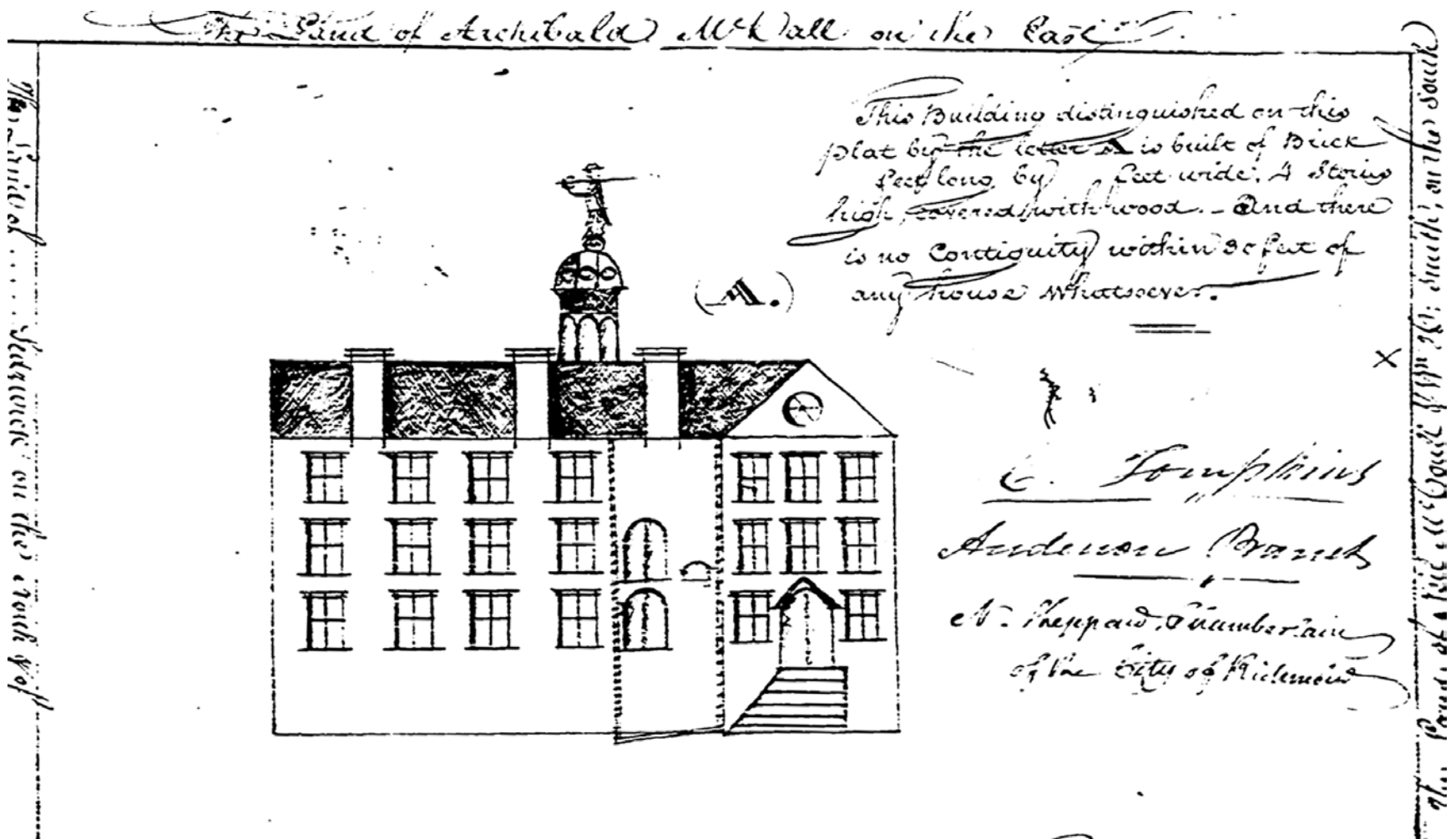
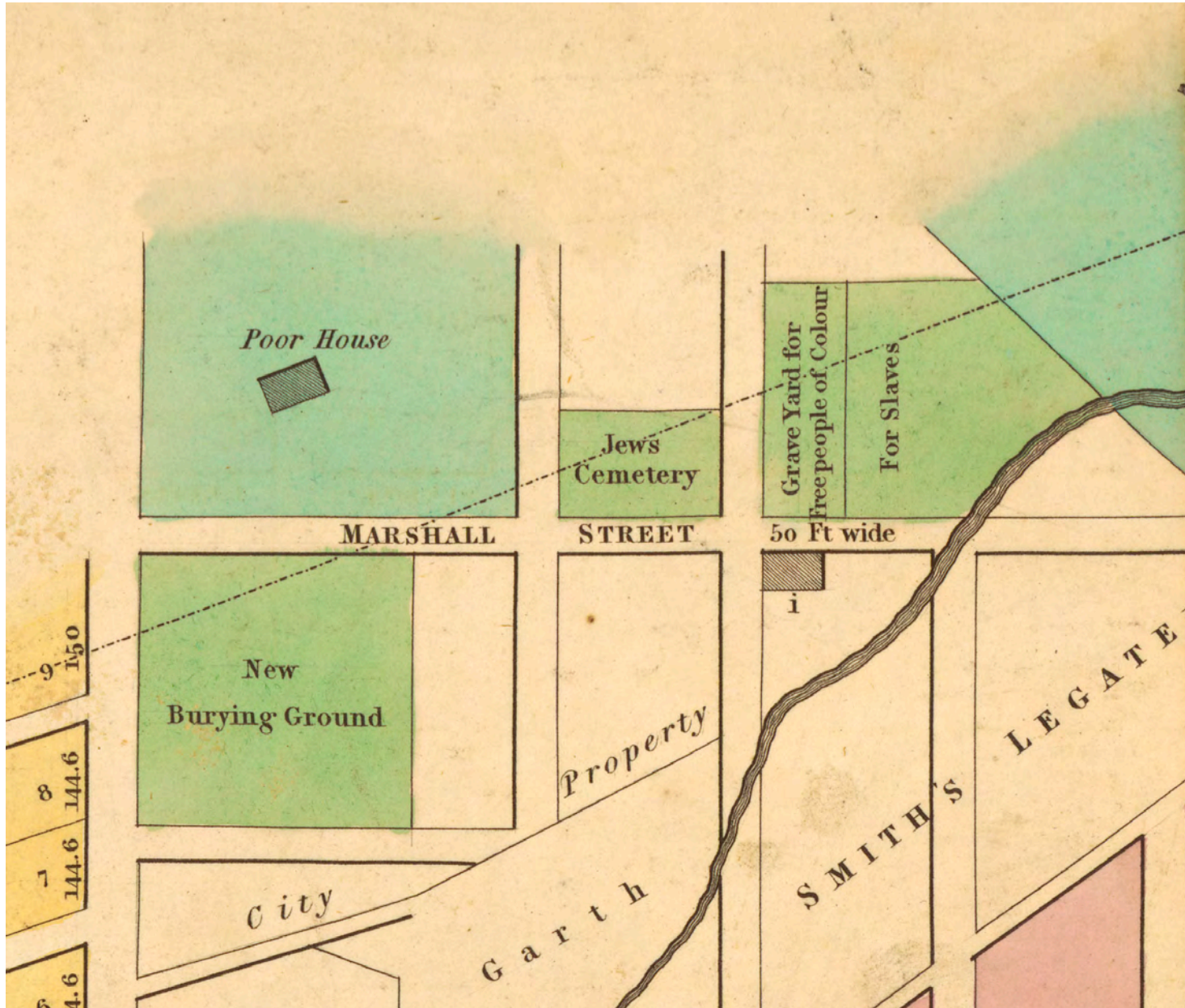
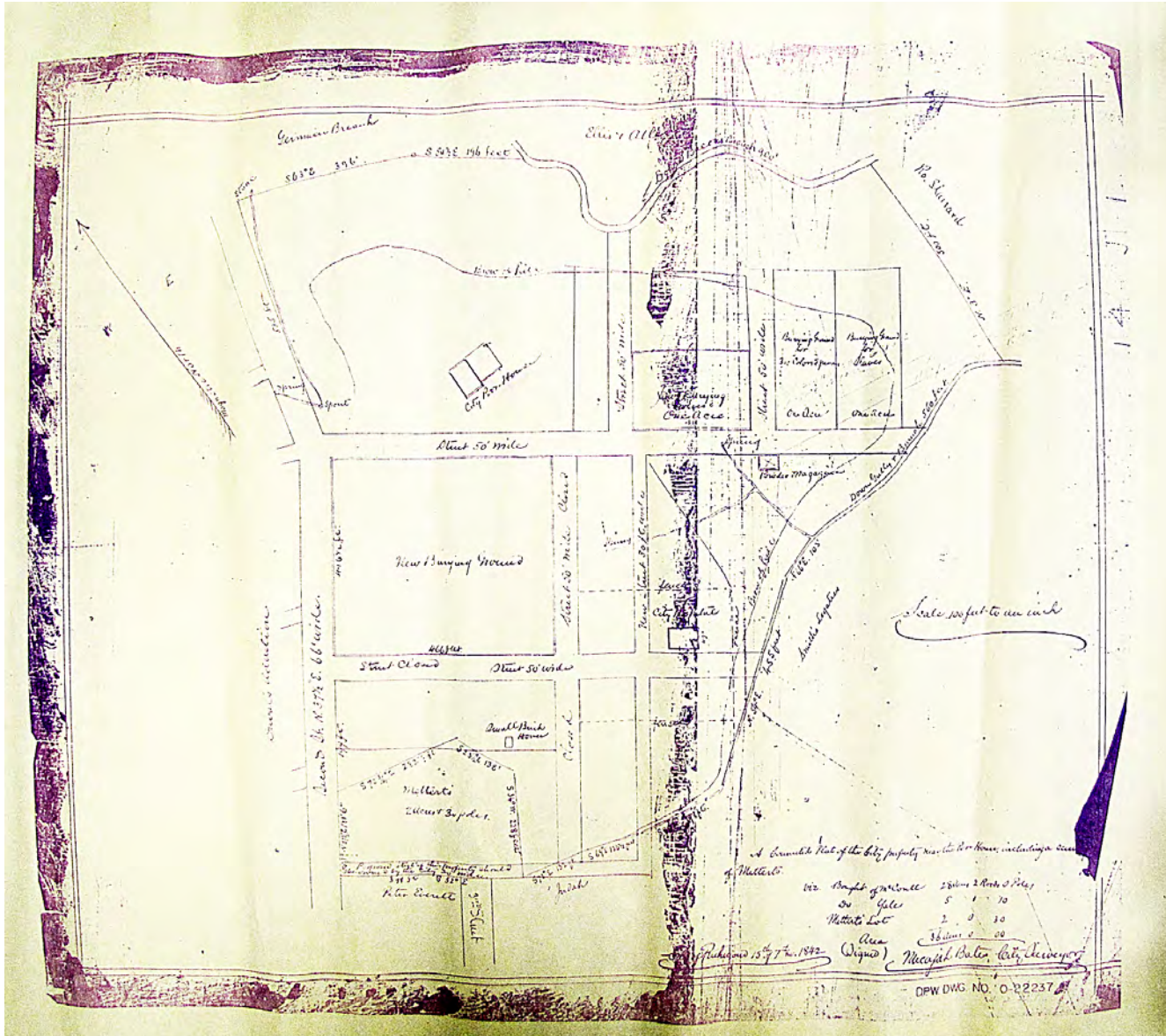


Illustration from a Mutual Assurance Society policy of 1814

**Figure 17: Detail from the 1835 Map of Richmond by Micajah Bates**



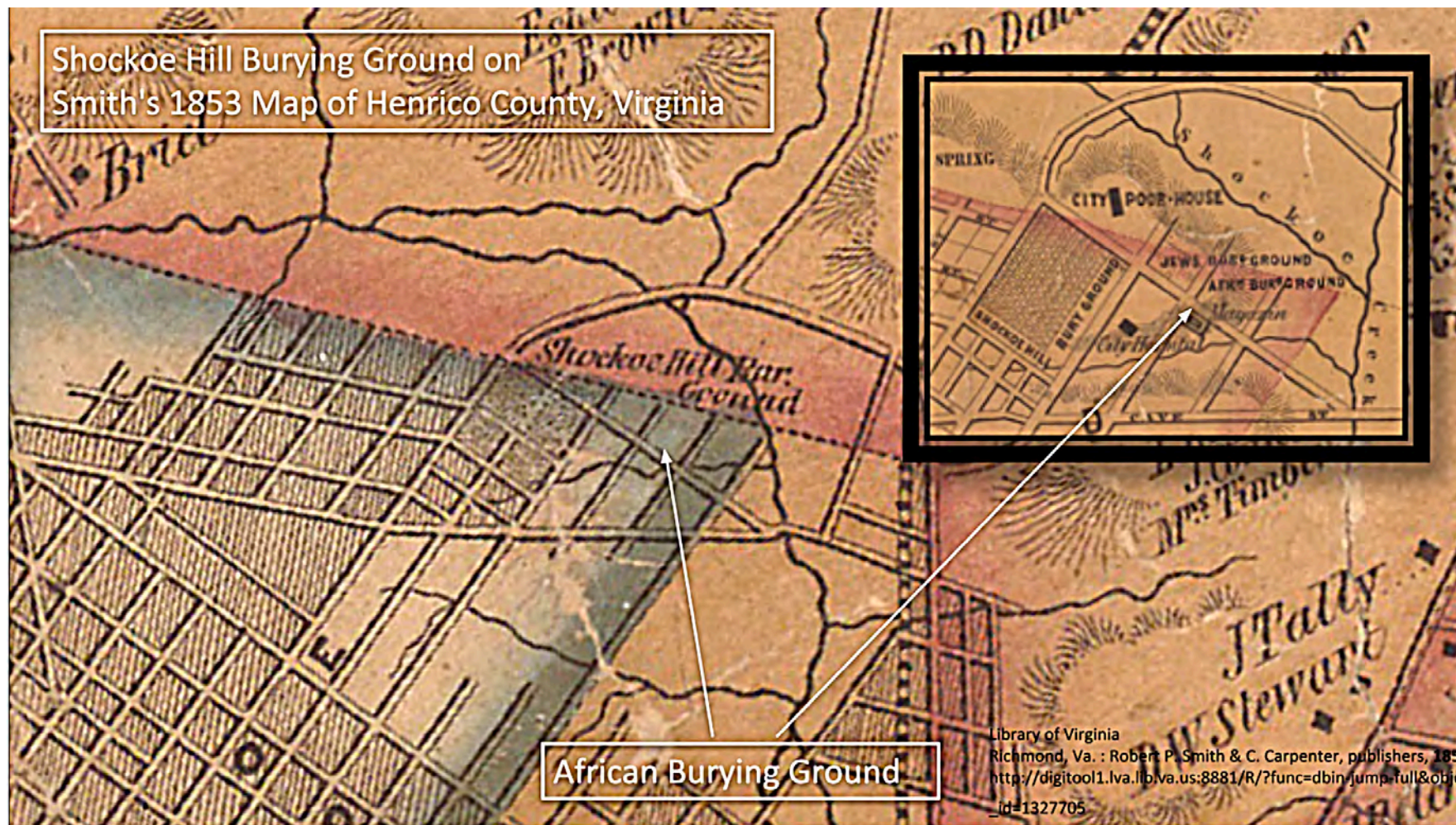
**Figure 18: A Corrected Plat of the City Property Near the Poor House by Micajah Bates 1842**





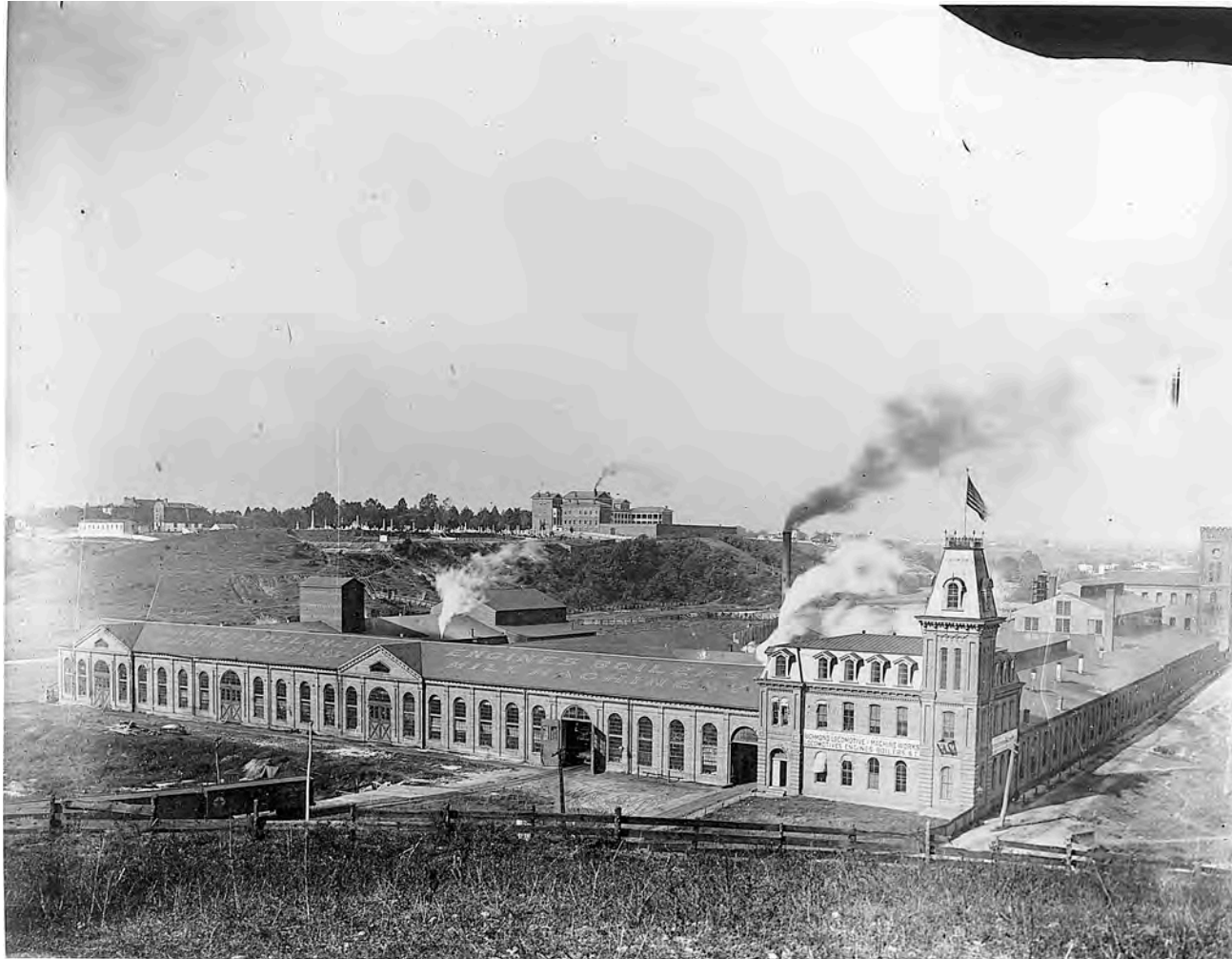
Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
City of Richmond, VA  
DHR No. 127-7231

**Figure 19: Annotated Detail of the Smith Map of Henrico County, 1853**



Slide illustration from McQueen, n.d.

**Figure 20: Photograph by the Cook Studio,  
Richmond, Virginia, ca. 1888**



Cook184Valentine813

## Figure 21 Detail of ca. 1888 Cook Studio Photograph



Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
City of Richmond, VA  
DHR No. 127-7231

**Figure 22: Photograph by the Cook Studio Richmond Va., ca. 1891**



Cook 1867 The Valentine 814

Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District  
City of Richmond, VA  
DHR No. 127-7231

**Figure 23: Detail of Photograph by the Cook Studio Richmond Va., ca. 1891**



Cook 1867 The Valentine 814

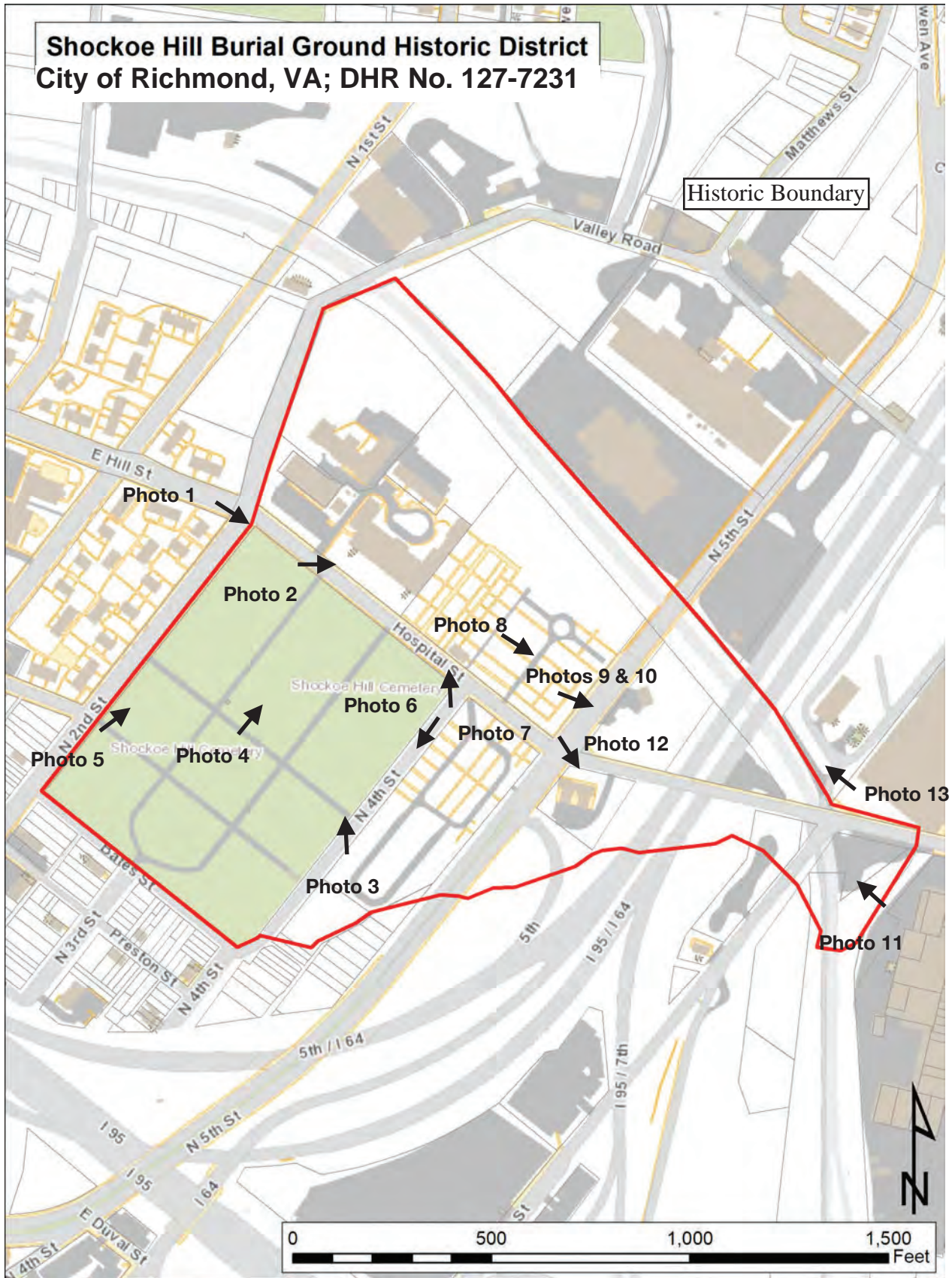
**Figure 24: Visible remains of the City Hospital/Colored Almshouse Site  
(44HE0709)**

**From 2017 Landsat Image and overlay of 1877 Beers Atlas of Richmond, Va.**





# Photo Key



Locations and Points of View for the Documentation Photographs