



CHICORA FOUNDATION, INC.

PRESERVING THE PAST FOR THE FUTURE

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July 18, 2012

Mr. C.B. Smith
John C. B. Smith Real Estate
P. O. Box 563
Columbia, SC 29202

Dear Mr. Smith,

Per your request I spent about 2½ hours at the Two Notch Road property with your equipment operators exploring the posited grave on the tract. This stone is situated on a small “island” of relatively undisturbed soil bounded by dirt roads to the north, south, and west. A small pine tree is situated about 3 feet to the southeast of the monument.



Aerial photo of project area.

By way of background, you know that the stone inscription (Marion Estelle/Daughter of W. J. & S. E. Martin/Born Oct 10, 1899/Died Jan 30, 1902/Asleep in Jesus) has been identified on the Enon Church Cemetery at Fort Jackson in 1982 and the inscription provided is identical to that on the stone found on your tract (http://genealogytrails.com/scar/richland/enon_cem.htm).

In addition, the stone on your tract does not appear to have been set in the manner typical for the period. In general the base of a monument such as this would have been buried about a third of the way in the ground. This stone is sitting essentially on the surface, with only a very slight built-up of pine needles around it. When the stone was lifted, several pieces of auto plastic were found running under the stone.



Area before investigation. Note rubber gasket running under the stone.



Stone moved showing rubber gasket running under the stone.

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The physical evidence then almost conclusively indicates that the stone was not on your property prior to 1982 and has been set there over auto parts dating to the late 20th century. Nevertheless, out of an abundance of caution the decision was made to more carefully examine the upper foot of soil.

We used a small track hoe with a 1-foot bucket. The bucket teeth were covered with a cutting bar so that the equipment could carefully scrape back the soil in the vicinity of the marker. The goal was to remove the upper A horizon soils, exposing the subsoil at a depth of approximately 1 foot to determine if there was evidence of a grave stain. This is an archaeological technique that is commonly used to identify grave locations and one that the profession has great confidence in. While grave stains may fade over time, they remain visible to a trained archaeologist. Moreover, this is a relatively recent grave and its stain would be clearly identifiable.

A series of three cuts were placed to the east of the monument, running north-south in order to open a trench about 3 feet in width and about 15 feet in length. This trench would have completely exposed the lower half of any grave associated with this monument, assuming that the monument was placed at the head of the posited grave. The work identified an A horizon that was about 0.3 to 0.5 foot in depth and consisted of very dark grayish brown (10YR 3/2). Below this was a C horizon of yellowish brown (10YR 5/4) sand that tended to get lighter with depth. This is generally consistent with the Lakeland soils, with the exception that the A horizon is deeper. I believe this may be the result of mixing resulting from the previous use of the parcel. I also observed that metal, glass, and plastic parts were found throughout the soil profile to a depth of at least 1 foot.

An additional tree cuts were placed to the west of the monument (and the pine tree), running north-south. This created a second trench about 3 feet in width and about 15 feet in length. This trench was placed to ensure that there was no grave extending west from the monument. Soils and conditions were consistent with the first trench.

Finally, a third trench was placed north of the pine and monument, opening an area measuring about 3 feet by 8 feet. Conditions here were again consistent with the previous two test areas.

In each of these three trenches I found only A horizon soil overlying C horizon soil with no indication of any disturbance, hole, excavation, or burial. The soils, with the exception of the various modern materials incorporated into the upper foot, were sterile.

In addition, I found that the pine tree roots ran under the monument and across the trench without interruption. Had there been a grave placed since the early 1980s, these roots would not have extended so completely and in such size and density.

Based on this investigation I am confident that (1) no grave exists in this immediate area and (2) the monument has been transported from its original grave to this location sometime since 1982. Given soil indications I suspect it was brought to this site within the last decade, perhaps within the past 5 years. I believe it has only recently been placed on this property. I see no need to request permission to remove a grave, since no grave exists at this location.

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Beginning the cut east of the stone. View looking north.



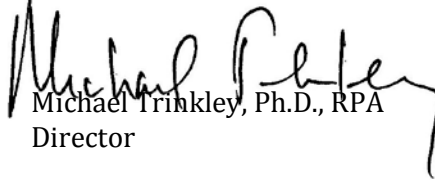
Close-up showing soil stripped east of monument; no grave is present. View to the south.

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Given these findings, I recommend that the stone be taken back to Enon Church. Even if the grave site cannot be precisely identified, the stone can be placed in proximity to the child's mother, Sarah E. Martin. Although the 1982 document does not record a grave for the father, William Jessie Martin, his death certificate (1928, #29742) indicates that he was buried in this cemetery. Since he was a widower at the time there may not have been family left to mark his grave. In any event, a space should be identified in the vicinity of the mother and the stone reset. This will, at the very least, ensure that Marion Estelle's grave continues to be commemorated.

I also withdraw my concerns regarding activities on this parcel and hope that it can be successfully improved. I appreciate your kindness and sensitivity in this matter. If there is anything further that I or Chicora Foundation can do to assist your efforts, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Michael Trinkley, Ph.D., RPA
Director