





U. S. Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Ivy Hill Cemetery  
Isle of Wight, Virginia

### 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 a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance** (Enter categories from instructions) LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance** 1886-1956

**Significant Dates** 1886

**Significant Person** (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) N/A

**Cultural Affiliation** N/A

**Architect/Builder** unknown

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

### 9. Major Bibliographical References

#### Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

#### 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 # \_\_\_\_\_

#### Primary Location of Additional Data

State Historic Preservation Office

U. S. Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Ivy Hill Cemetery  
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- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** 14 acres

**UTM References** (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing			
1	<u>18</u>	<u>354738</u>	<u>4094914</u>	2	<u>18</u>	<u>354792</u>	<u>4094751</u>	3	<u>18</u>	<u>354770</u>	<u>4094545</u>
4	<u>18</u>	<u>354543</u>	<u>4094518</u>	5	<u>18</u>	<u>354638</u>	<u>4094927</u>				

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Marcus R. Pollard, Historian  
 Organization: Commonwealth Preservation Group date 9/1/2006  
 street & number: PO Box 4266 telephone 757-923-1900  
 city or town Suffolk state VA zip code 23439

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

- Maps** A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs** Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional items** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Ivy Hill Cemetery  
 street & number 13004 Great Springs Road telephone (757) 357-4593  
 city or town Smithfield state VA zip code 23430

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications 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. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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### 7. Summary Description:

The Ivy Hill Cemetery is a privately owned cemetery established in 1886. It lies on a long plot of land which is bordered on three sides by the Pagan River and its adjoining wetlands. The cemetery has maintained its current size throughout its history and comprises approximately 14 acres. The plan flows with the curves and rolls of the land and only minor alterations have been made to the terrain. Grave markers within the cemetery date from the mid-nineteenth century to the present day. The earliest markers are simple and traditional, and become more detailed and articulated as time passes. There are a few unique and elaborate markers from the twentieth century. Considered under Criterion C (Landscape Architecture) and Criterion Consideration D (Cemetery) with a period of significance from 1886-1956, this cemetery, still used today, is a representative example of private cemetery planning and significant local and regional family history from southeast Virginia, Isle of Wight County, and the Town of Smithfield.

#### Description:

While sections of Ivy Hill Cemetery follow a traditional grid pattern, much of the cemetery follows the property as it meanders up and down around the teardrop shaped peninsula which juts out into the Pagan River and surrounding wetlands. The cemetery runs on a north to south axis. The entire cemetery was established at one time in 1886 in Smithfield, Virginia, but the family and individual plots were filled sporadically as time passed leaving a patchwork of plot dates and shapes. The only section of the cemetery which is consistently later in date is the grouping of graves near the entrance to the north, while the oldest graves are loosely grouped around the center of the cemetery. There are also numerous examples of pre-1886 markers which represent a trend, started when the cemetery opened, of moving graves to Ivy Hill from other nearby cemeteries because of the prominent standing in the community of this Smithfield cemetery.

The cemetery follows the few gravel roads which wind through it. The main route leads into the cemetery on a straightaway, between two sections of a modern brick wall entrance, down the middle of the more modern section, then follows the perimeter of the peninsula in two ovals. The first oval, which is the smaller of the two, is almond shaped and covers mostly flat ground. The second, much larger oval road section leads around the peninsula section of the cemetery which slopes down to the river to the south, then winds around the far side and heads back upwards as it turns north and eventually completes the circle and connects to the end of the first

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oval road. There are a few grass paths and less used roads that cross the larger lower oval section of the cemetery but they are irregular in size, placement, and direction. There is also terracing along some edges of the cemetery, outside of the main road perimeter, as the land slopes down to the water. The peninsula shape, the topography of the land, and the surrounding wetlands help define the character of the cemetery and define its borders. The entire cemetery is planted in numerous oaks, hollies, magnolias, as well as several other species of deciduous and coniferous trees and shrubs. 1 – CONTRIBUTING SITE

Most of the graves are within family plots which line both sides of the roads and paths of the cemetery. The plots are delineated in fairly simple fashion with cornerstones, low stone walls, and a few raised platforms. There are a few cast iron decorative elements but not much in the way of fences or gates as seen in more elaborate cemeteries. Most of the headstones and markers are marble, granite, sandstone, and limestone. Virtually all of the markers are vernacular in style and type with many upright slabs, either flat or block in shape, with flat or rounded tops; there are also some cross types. Some variations include urns, carved foliate motifs, “broken” columns, and the common carving of a lamb for deceased children. There are also numerous chest tombs with most being flat on slabs or raised on a 1-2 foot base. The etchings vary from simple names and dates, to long and elaborate inscriptions. Most gravestones are simple, but there are a few high-style examples scattered around the cemetery, all dating from the twentieth century. These notable examples vary from large traditional obelisks, to a few unique types, to a rare statue marker. There are also numerous family monuments and markers which are larger than the individual headstones and have family names inscribed either in raised letters or incised. There are also many replacement markers for individuals and families. There are no mausoleums in the cemetery.

All of the more ornate, notable examples date from the early twentieth century and later. The marker for Richard Randolph Turner (1901) and Martha Raynor Turner (1903) is in the shape of a tall tree trunk with roots and broken branches jutting upwards. The grave of Sally Pickett Eley Chalmers (1900) is marked by the only statue marker in the cemetery; a nearly life sized young lady with curled hair and a flowing robe. The tallest marker in the cemetery, in one of several Gwaltney family plots, is a huge obelisk which towers over the central portion of the cemetery. Near the front of the cemetery, in the more modern section, is an Art Deco styled marker for the Jester family. Finally, there is a unique example of what appears to be a rough, poorly hand carved headstone at the back of the cemetery dedicated to C. B. Pierce (1927). A few gravestones are signed by the craftsman J.T. Couper of Norfolk.

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There is one monument within the cemetery dedicated to the Confederate war dead. The monument consists of a two step rusticated base topped by a granite slab with rusticated edges. The inscription reads: "To Our Confederate Dead, 1861-1865." It was erected in 1916 by the Isle of Wight chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy. 1 – CONTRIBUTING OBJECT

There is only one entrance to the cemetery and it is marked on North Church Street by a sign. The service road leads straight off Church Street due west, between several buildings on either side belonging to Smithfield Foods, before curving to the south and becoming the main road into the cemetery entrance. The entrance at the beginning of the cemetery is marked by a pair of modern brick walls erected in 1990 "in memory of the Nathan Jones Family."

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Summary:

Ivy Hill Cemetery was created in 1886 as a private cemetery to serve the residents of Smithfield and Isle of Wight County. The land was originally part of the T.B. Wright farm until it was laid out as a cemetery along the slopes of a small peninsula of land overlooking the Pagan River. It has been, and continues to be, the burial ground for many of the area's prominent citizens. The cemetery is eligible under Criterion C (Landscape Architecture) as a fine example of a local cemetery influenced by the earlier "rural" cemetery movement, and Criterion Consideration D (Cemetery) because of its gravesites of persons of local and regional importance.

### Significance Statement:

The "rural" cemetery movement, originally influenced by European trends in gardening and landscape design, had an impact on American cemetery design. Cemeteries were planned farther from urban areas and were characterized by the natural design of the land. With wooded sites, rolling hills, serpentine pathways and drives, the cemetery came to be a place of recreation separated from the bustling urban environment.

Ivy Hill Cemetery is a planned cemetery approximately one mile north of downtown Smithfield and directly west of North Church Street. The cemetery dates to 1886 when it was created from land that was part of the T.B. Wright farm. Within its first few years of existence, many important families moved their families' remains from smaller nearby cemeteries to this larger cemetery in Smithfield. The cemetery is part of land that was later annexed by Smithfield in 1961.<sup>1</sup> Ivy Hill Cemetery has served many of the older families of Smithfield and Isle of Wight County from the late nineteenth century to the present day.

Many of the leading citizens of Smithfield and Isle of Wight County are buried in Ivy Hill Cemetery. Pembroke Decatur Gwaltney (1836-1915), founder of the highly successful Gwaltney ham and peanut business, is not only buried in Ivy Hill, but erected one of its more prominent grave stones: a large obelisk to honor his two brothers killed in the Civil War.<sup>2</sup> Next to the early Gwaltney obelisk is the Wrenn plot containing many graves moved from the private Wrenn Cemetery at the Old Bay Church near Shoal Bay. These Wrenn graves, the oldest at Ivy Hill,

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were moved according to the will of Emily W. Wrenn. A large cross was erected with inscriptions on either side to honor two young Wrenn brothers killed in the Civil War. There are also graves of men killed in several other major American conflicts including World War I, World War II, and the Korean Conflict.<sup>3</sup>

Joel Holleman (1799-1844) is buried at Ivy Hill Cemetery. Holleman served in the Virginia House of Delegates (1832, 1834, 1841-44), where he was elected Speaker, and in the Virginia Senate (1836-39) before being elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1839. Dr. John W. Lawson (1837-1905) is also buried at Ivy Hill after having served in the Virginia House of Delegates and the House of Representatives (1888-1896), and his gravestone declares him to be “a lover of truth, honor, and Justice.”<sup>4</sup> Richard Randolph Turner, “Dick Turner” (1838-1901) was second in command at infamous Libby Prison during the Civil War. He was arrested as a war criminal after the war and imprisoned where he had formerly been the jailor. Turner escaped from Libby Prison, lived out the remainder of his life in Isle of Wight County and was buried with his wife in Ivy Hill Cemetery.

On a different note, the namesake of Morgart’s Beach in Day’s Point on the James River is buried at Ivy Hill Cemetery as well. In 1918 J.A. Morgart drowned in the river and washed up on the shore which would thenceforth bear his name.<sup>5</sup> Joseph Luter, father of the founder of Luter’s Smithfield Packing plant, which later became Smithfield Foods, and grandfather of Joseph Luter III, current CEO of Smithfield Foods, is also buried in the cemetery. Cecil Gwaltney, president of Ivy Hill Cemetery for many years and a prominent local business owner, is buried at Ivy Hill as well. Finally, the source of much of contemporary information on Smithfield and, indeed, Ivy Hill Cemetery, Segar Cofer Dashiell, author of Smithfield: A Pictorial History, was buried at Ivy Hill in 2001.

To give a sense of the passion for, and loyalty to, this region, one of the best known grave inscriptions from Ivy Hill reads:

“And when it comes my time to die  
Just take me back and let me lie  
Close where the James goes rolling by  
Down in old Virginia.”

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This quotation is from the gravestone of Josiah Parker Cowper (1849-1906) a native of Isle of Wight who died in Hoboken, New Jersey but was buried back in Smithfield, Virginia.<sup>6</sup>

There is one monument within the cemetery; it is dedicated to the Confederate war dead. The monument consists of a two step rusticated base topped by a granite slab with rusticated edges. The inscription reads: "To Our Confederate Dead, 1861-1865." It was erected in 1916 by the Isle of Wight chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy. Prior to World War I, Memorial Day services were held at Ivy Hill by the United Daughters of the Confederacy. The services were held in early June instead of the traditional May 30, because of that day's association with commemoration of Union dead. The monument was unveiled on June 2 at one of these Memorial Day services.<sup>7</sup>

The Ivy Hill Cemetery has maintained its current form since its creation in 1886 and continues to be used by the local community. Ivy Hill is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion Consideration D (Cemetery) and Criterion C (Architecture) with a period of significance of 1886-1956. This is a representative example of local cemetery planning following the "rural" landscaped influence, and is significant as the final resting place for individuals influential in local and regional history from southeast Virginia, Isle of Wight County, and the Town of Smithfield.

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**Endnotes:**

1. Segar Cofer Dashiell, Smithfield: A Pictorial History, Virginia Beach, VA: The Donning Company Publishers, 1996, p.94.
2. Helen Haverty King, Historical Notes on Isle of Wight County, Virginia Beach, VA: Donning and Company: 1993, p.182-83.
3. Smithfield: A Pictorial History, p.94.
4. Smithfield: A Pictorial History, p.83.
5. Historical Notes on Isle of Wight County, p.450-51.
6. Smithfield: A Pictorial History, p.95.
7. Smithfield: A Pictorial History, p.95.

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**Major Bibliographical References:**

Dashiell, Segar Cofer. Smithfield: A Pictorial History. Virginia Beach, VA: The Donning Company Publishers, 1996.

Garrett, Jr., Mrs. John William, Bartlett, Mrs. Walter H., and Robinson, Mrs. William G. Isle of Wight Cemetery Records, Virginia. State of Virginia, Genealogical Records Committee, 1982.

Keister, Douglas. Stories in Stone: A Field Guide to Cemetery Symbolism and Iconography. Salt Lake City, Utah: Gibbs Smith, Publisher, 2004.

King, Helen Haverty. Historical Notes on Isle of Wight County. Virginia Beach, VA: Donning and Company: 1993.

Potter, Elisabeth Walton and Boland, Beth M. National Register Bulletin 41: Guidelines for Evaluating and Registering Cemeteries and Burial Places. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1992.

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**Verbal Boundary Description:**

Ivy Hill Cemetery consists of 14 acres as shown on Tax Map # 21A-01-022 on the City of Smithfield Tax Assessment Maps. Ivy Hill Cemetery is owned by a private entity of that name and lies directly to the north of Smithfield, Virginia and west of North Church Street. It is bounded by the Pagan River and adjoining wetlands to the south and surrounded on the east, north, and west by lands owned by Smithfield Foods.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary reflects the entire current configuration and surrounding landscaping of Ivy Hill Cemetery the development of which occurred from 1886 to 1956 as discussed in Sections 7 and 8 of this document.

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Ivy Hill Cemetery (VDHR #300-5005), Smithfield, Isle of Wight County, Virginia  
Negative # 23043, negatives are stored at the Department of Historic Resources

Date of Photographs: August, 2006

Photographers: Marcus R. Pollard, Paige L.W. Pollard

SUBJECT: Cemetery entrance looking into cemetery through brick wall  
VIEW: Facing S  
PHOTO 1 of 7

SUBJECT: Confederate Monument  
VIEW: Facing S  
PHOTO 2 of 7

SUBJECT: Art Deco Jester family grave marker  
VIEW: Facing E  
PHOTO 3 of 7

SUBJECT: View from back of cemetery looking towards center  
VIEW: Facing N  
PHOTO 4 of 7

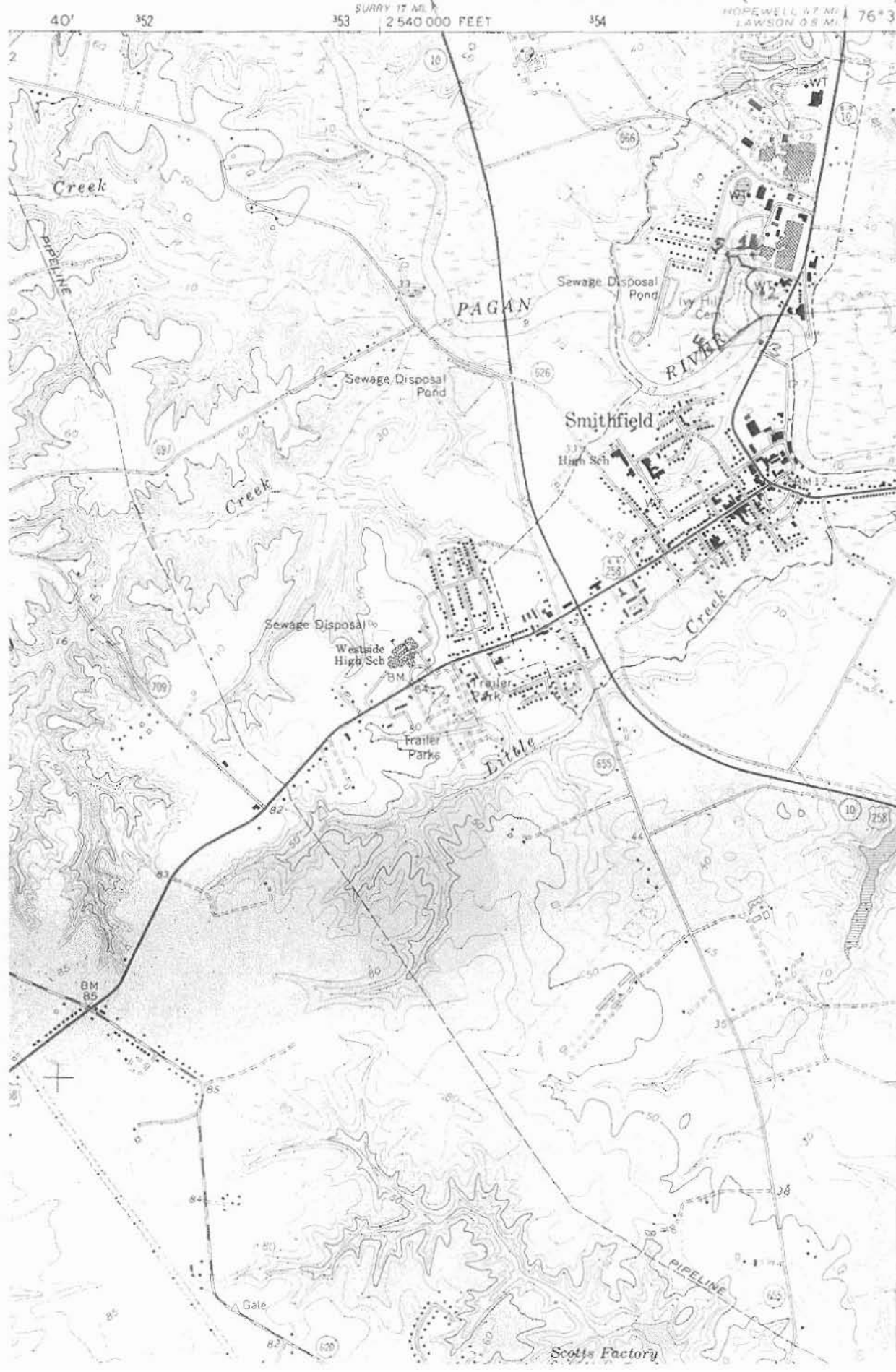
SUBJECT: C.B. Pierce rare hand carved marker  
VIEW: Facing N  
PHOTO 5 of 7

SUBJECT: Sally Pickett Eley Chalmers figural marker  
VIEW: Facing S  
PHOTO 6 of 7

SUBJECT: Scene of a variety of marker styles from late 19<sup>th</sup>, early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries  
VIEW: Facing NW  
PHOTO 7 of 7

SMITHFIELD QUADRANGLE  
 VIRGINIA - ISLE OF WIGHT CO.  
 7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

9658 11 SE  
 MULBERRY ISLAND



Ivy Hill Cemetery  
 Smithfield, VA  
 UTM references  
 1. 8/354736/4094914  
 2. 18/354792/4094751  
 3. 18/354770/4094545  
 4. 18/354542/4094518  
 5. 18/354638/4094927  
 #300-5005

BEWINS CHURCH 4.1 MI  
 BEWINS CHURCH 4 MI  
 240 000  
 FEET  
 4095  
 4092  
 4091  
 57' 30"

SURRY 17 MI  
 2 540 000 FEET  
 HOPEWELL 17 MI  
 LAWSON 18 MI  
 76° 37' 30"  
 37° 00'

Scotts Factory