

RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY AND ARCHIVAL STUDY OF
THE STEWART, WATTS, AND SMITH AFRICAN AMERICAN CEMETERIES,
MONROE HALL, WESTMORELAND COUNTY, VIRGINIA



PREPARED FOR THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HISTORIC RESOURCES &
WESTMORELAND COUNTY
BY ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH GROUP, LLC
MAY 2022

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MONROE HALL, WESTMORELAND COUNTY, VIRGINIA

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND
SURVEY AND PLANNING

Prepared for:
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORIC RESOURCES
2801 Kensington Avenue | Richmond, VA 23221
&
WESTMORELAND COUNTY
111 Polk Street | Montross, VA 22520

Prepared by:
Anna Maas, MUEP, Rebekah Yousaf, MSHP,
E. Nicole Mills, MSc, and Rosie Tullos, PhD



ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH GROUP, LLC
6049 Falls Road | Baltimore, MD 21209
410-366-5170
ergllc@envrg.com | www.envrg.com

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ABSTRACT

This report presents the results of a reconnaissance survey and limited archival study of multiple African American cemeteries, located in the community of Monroe Hall, west of Colonial Beach, in Westmoreland County, Virginia. Environmental Research Group, LLC (ERG) conducted the survey for the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR), which is the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and Westmoreland County local government. The project proponent is the Armstead Tasker (A.T.) Johnson Museum. The project is funded through the Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund (ESHPPF), which is a grant program administered to SHPOs by the National Park Service (NPS) for projects related to disaster recovery, including survey and inventory of historic resources in impacted areas. In 2019, DHR received funding through the ESHPPF following Hurricanes Michael and Florence, which impacted Virginia in September and October 2018. A.T. Johnson Museum noted that Hurricane Michael compromised the stability of the cemeteries.

Fieldwork was conducted in March 2022. Based on personal communication with descendants during the field survey and identification of cemetery names in Virginia Death Records during archival research, there are three distinct cemeteries: the Stewart Cemetery (096-5301), the Watts Cemetery (096-5302), and the Smith Cemetery (096-5303). They are located north of four late-nineteenth-to-early-twentieth-century African American archaeological sites previously identified on the James Monroe Birthplace, including the Stewart House Site (44WM0038), the Watts House Site (44WM0310), Site 44WM0287, and Site 44WM0288.

Due to the presence of the James Monroe Birthplace (096-0046; 44WM0038), the land surrounding the cemeteries has been intensively surveyed. Previous investigations have determined that Parcel 6-129 (the present-day park land and Stewart Cemetery) and Parcel 6-128, 6-130, and 6-131 (the Watts and Smith Cemeteries) were occupied roughly from the 1750s to the 1780s by the Monroes. After 100 years of ownership by absentee Northerners, a White Washington, D.C. investor sold the present-day parkland and cemeteries to three Black families: the eastern part to the Smiths in 1871, and the west two-thirds to the Stewarts and the Watts in 1872. From 1871 to 1879, they moved from Nomini Grove, which is roughly 30 miles southeast, and founded Monroe Hall. Whether they are tied to the Great Manumission of 500 enslaved laborers from Nomini Hall by Robert Carter III in the 1790s is unknown.

All three African American cemeteries are associated with the founding families of this Reconstruction- and Jim Crow-era community. They are also associated with African American's intentional and continued segregation of worship and burial practices following Reconstruction. With many older, intact memorials belonging to second and third generation family members descendent of Monroe Hall founders, Samuel and Peggy Stewart, Moses and Mary Watts, and James and Alice Key Watts, the Stewart and Watts Cemeteries are recommended as potentially eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criteria A and/or B using Criteria Consideration D, as each cemetery may derive its primary significance from graves of persons of transcendent importance to Westmoreland Black history and from association with African American burial practices and settlement of one of the earliest Reconstruction-era Black communities in Westmoreland County. The Smith Cemetery is recommended for further study as the earliest known interment dates to 1969 and most burials are third, fourth, and fifth generation to the Monroe Hall founders George and Sallie Smith.

It is also recommended that a reconnaissance survey of Monroe Hall be conducted and that the cemeteries and previously identified African American Dwelling Sites be evaluated for inclusion in the NRHP as contributing or non-contributing resources to the potential Monroe Hall Historic District under Criterion A and/or B.

The Stewart, Watts, and Smith Cemeteries and surrounding landscape have suffered tremendously from environmental impacts related to timber clearing (pre-1870s), lack of riparian buffers around agricultural fields (1870s-1920s), sand and gravel mining (1930s-1960s), illegal dumping (1960s-Present), and accelerated climate change (1970s-Present). In general, burials may have been destroyed by mining, eroded into the abandoned sand and gravel pits, or washed away into Freeneck Gut. Among other recommendations, foremost, Westmoreland County in consultation with stakeholders should participate in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Map Modernization program and conduct feasibility studies and seek grants for three large-scale initiatives: Freeneck Gut and Monroe Creek Stream Restoration, Dump Clean-up and Abandoned Mineral Mine Land Reclamation, and acquisition of Parcel 6-128 to reclaim part of the abandoned mineral mine and create parkland between the Watts and Smith Cemeteries and James Monroe Birthplace and Monroe Creek. These initiatives will help stabilize all three cemeteries and improve the overall health of the watershed, which will in turn benefit James Monroe Memorial Foundation (JMMF) and Westmoreland County Tourism and Parks and Recreation. Potential funding sources are included at the end of the report.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Fieldwork was carried out in March 2022 with Marian Veney Ashton, Executive Director of A.T. Johnson Museum; Etta Mae Lucas, co-owner of Parcel 6-131; and William Dudley, who is related to a number of people interred at the cemeteries. ERG is eternally grateful to Ms. Lucas and Mr. Dudley for spending their day with us and sharing their family stories and knowledge about the cemeteries and how the land has changed through the years. We are especially thankful to Mr. Dudley for taking his weekend to clear the path of storm debris in advance of our visit to the cemeteries. Special thanks to Ms. Ashton for initiating the survey and bringing these two, exceptional local experts together. ERG would also like to express thanks to the volunteers of JMMF, which leases the James Monroe Birthplace Park and Museum, and their long-time maintenance contractor, Leon Phillips, who shared his knowledge of flooding and environmental issues at the Stewart Cemetery and the path to the Watts and Smith cemeteries. Thank you to Becky Jenkins, Head Librarian of Westmoreland County Museum, for her review of their records, and to David Lewes of William & Mary Center for Archaeological Research and Lauren McMillan of the University of Mary Washington, Department of Historic Preservation, for sharing relevant photographs and research from their institutions' previous work at the James Monroe Birthplace.

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of a reconnaissance survey and limited archival study of multiple African American cemeteries, located in the community of Monroe Hall, west of Colonial Beach, in Westmoreland County, Virginia (**Figure 1.1**). Environmental Research Group, LLC (ERG) conducted the survey for the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR), which is the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and Westmoreland County local government. The project proponent is the Armstead Tasker (A.T.) Johnson Museum. The project is funded through the Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund (ESHPPF), which is a grant program administered to SHPOs by the National Park Service (NPS) for projects related to disaster recovery, including survey and inventory of historic resources in impacted areas. In 2019, DHR received funding through the ESHPPF following Hurricanes Michael and Florence, which impacted Virginia in September and October 2018. A.T. Johnson Museum noted that Hurricane Michael compromised the stability of the cemeteries.

As project proponent, the A.T. Johnson Museum aims to increase awareness of significant African American historic properties and to aid in long-range historic preservation planning and disaster preparedness and mitigation efforts by DHR, Westmoreland County, and the museum. The objectives of the survey are to better define the boundaries of the African American cemeteries; prepare a brief property history, including environmental changes, based on limited archival research; prepare DHR survey forms through the Virginia Cultural Resources Information System (V-CRIS) with preliminary evaluation of eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP); and provide recommendations for further investigations, treatment, and funding.

The project overview issued by DHR on August 25, 2021, notes that the “Stuart and Watts” cemeteries consist of multiple sections within a parcel owned by Westmoreland County and inclusive of the James Monroe Birthplace (DHR No. 096-0046); however, based on personal communication with a Watts descendant, Etta Mae Lucas, and review of property records and Virginia Death Records, there are three distinct cemeteries on four parcels. They are the “Stewart” Cemetery (DHR No. 096-5301), which is located within a 0.5-acre cemetery reserve on the 74.60-acre James Monroe Birthplace Park and Museum (Co. Parcel 6-129) at 4460 James Monroe Highway; and the Watts Cemetery (DHR No. 096-5302) and Smith Cemetery (DHR No. 096-5303), which are located approximately 1,400 feet east of the Stewart Cemetery. The Watts Cemetery is primarily located on Parcel 6-131, which is 2.42 acres owned by Ms. Lucas and the Ganey Johnson Estate, and partially on Parcel 6-130, which is an abandoned sand and gravel mine purchased by the county from the heirs of Christine Watts in 1993. The Smith Cemetery is located partially on Parcel 6-131 and partially on Parcel 6-128, which is an abandoned sand and gravel mine owned by John Maxwell Comerford (**Figure 1.2**). The Watts and Smith Cemeteries were once accessible by a bridge that crossed Freeneck Gut from the Colonial Beach Moose Lodge #1267 at 4780 James Monroe Highway but now are only accessible from the scenic loop and a dirt road northeast of the James Monroe Birthplace visitors center parking lot.

Fieldwork was carried out in March 2022 with Marian Veney Ashton, Executive Director of A.T. Johnson Museum; Ms. Lucas; and William Dudley, who is related to a number of people interred at the cemeteries and cleared fallen trees from the path to the Watts and Smith Cemeteries (**Figure 1.3**). The earliest burials identified date to 1926 in both the Stewart and Watts Cemeteries and to 1969 in the Smith Cemetery; however, unmarked burials may date to as early as the 1870s, when a Washington, D.C. investor subdivided the long vacant Monroe birthplace and sold portions of it to the Smiths, Stewarts, and Watts of Nomini Grove in the 1870s. Though “REV. C. STUART” appears on his memorial stone in 1926, “Stewart” appears in



Figure 1.1 Survey areas overview on topographic map.

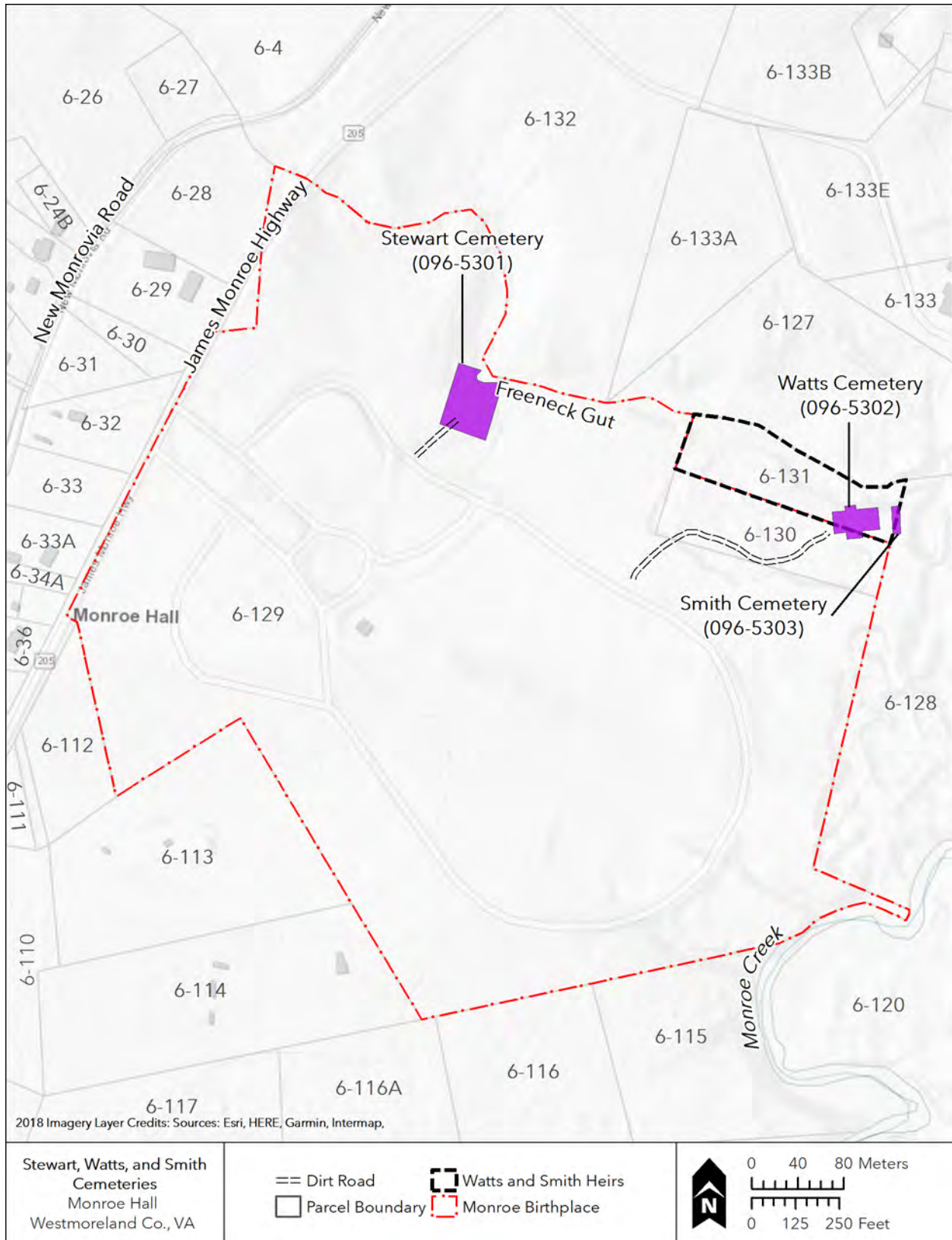


Figure 1.2 Survey areas and cemeteries on Westmoreland County parcel map.

many vital statistics, census years, and military records and is used by funeral homes to identify the cemetery in Virginia Death Records, thus, that spelling is used throughout the report. This also prevents confusion with the European American Charles E. Stuart who purchased multiple lots from the Stewart Estate to assist in establishing the Monroe birthplace park.

ERG conducted the investigation in accordance with The Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archaeology and Historic Preservation (1983) and National Register Bulletin 15, How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation (2002), both published by the U.S. Department of Interior (DOI), National Park Service (NPS); and Guidelines for Conducting Historic Resources Survey in Virginia (VDHR 2017). Anna Maas, MUEP, Principal Architectural Historian, and Rebekah Yousaf, MSHP, Project Architectural Historian, conducted the survey and prepared the report (**Appendix A**). E. Nicole Mills, RPA 989256, prepared graphics and assisted with collecting environmental data related to the survey areas. Rosie Tullos, PhD, RPA 17317, Bioarchaeologist, assisted in preparing recommendations regarding intensive survey and maintenance of the cemeteries (see Appendix A). James C. Pritchard, RPA 12649, served as editor. All technical leads meet or exceed the NPS professional standards outlined in the Standards and Guidelines for Archaeology and Historic Preservation (36 CFR part 61).

The report is broken into eight chapters: Introduction; Methodology; Previous Investigations of the James Monroe Birthplace, which include evaluations of African American dwelling sites and the Stewart Cemetery; Environmental Context including issues around climate change; Cultural Context with a survey area history, which, though the scope called for limited archival research, is intensive due to the abundance of information available in previous investigations; Survey Results for the three cemeteries identified; Recommendations for future cemetery maintenance, survey, research, outreach, and funding; and Summary and Conclusions.



Figure 1.3 Marian Veney Ashton, Executive Director of A.T. Johnson Museum; Etta Mae Lucas, a Watts descendent and co-owner of Parcel 6-131, including the Watts and Smith Cemeteries; and William Dudley, who is related to a number of people interred at the cemeteries (March 2022).

CHAPTER 2. METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH METHODS

ERG conducted documentary research in the physical and digital archives of a variety of local, state, and national repositories. Local repositories include the Westmoreland County Circuit Court and County Administrator's Office; Westmoreland County Museum; A.T. Johnson Museum; and the James Monroe Memorial Foundation (JMMF). State repositories include V-CRIS housed at DHR; the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (VDCR), Center for Coastal Resources Management; the Virginia Department of Energy (VDOE); Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ); the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT); the Library of Virginia (LVA); UMW; and WMCAR. National repositories include the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA); National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA); National Park Service (NPS); National Archives and Records Administration (NARA); and the Library of Congress (LOC).

ERG retrieved information regarding early investigations of the area from NARA and the Westmoreland County Museum, and later investigations from DHR, UMW, and WMCAR. Historic and current maps and aerials were retrieved from VDOT, LVA, and LOC. ERG identified environmental data on the websites of VDCR, VDOE, USDA, and NOAA. The chain of title was developed from review of previous investigations of the James Monroe Birthplace available at DHR and records at Westmoreland County Clerk of Circuit Court in Montross. ERG also reviewed primary documents and vital records available on Ancestry.com among other websites. Marian Veney Ashton of the A.T. Johnson Museum provided photographs and a draft volunteer cemetery survey form from 2009.

GIS METHODS

All Global Positioning System (GPS) and Geographic Information System (GIS) data was created, processed, and analyzed using Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) coordinate system (Zone 18 North) and the World Geodetic Survey 1984 (WGS84) datum in ArcGIS 10.8. Site plans were created from field notes and GPS data collected via a Trimble Geo 7X GPS unit. ERG supplemented the site plans with natural and cultural features represented on historic maps and modern aerial imagery. Historic imagery and natural and cultural data, including elevation datasets, water resources, soils, roads, facilities, and surveys, detail the environmental evolution of the survey area.

FIELD METHODS

Anna Maas and Becky Yousaf conducted fieldwork on March 7, 2022, with guidance from Ms. Lucas, Mr. Dudley, and Ms. Ashton. The survey began with a visual reconnaissance of each cemetery. Ms. Yousaf sketched a map of each area with notes based on headstone inscriptions and information provided by Ms. Lucas and Mr. Dudley. Ms. Maas recorded the location of each headstone and the head of each obvious, unmarked depression with a Trimble Geo 7X GPS unit. A follow-up site visit was conducted one week later by Ms. Maas on March 15. The sketch map, GPS data, and notes from both site visits were cross referenced to prepare the survey results chapter.

EVALUATION METHODS

Resources were evaluated for local, regional, and national significance, according to criteria codified in 36 CFR Part 60, NRHP:

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and

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

Seven types of properties are ordinarily not considered for listing; however, they may qualify if part of a district or if they meet one of the following criteria considerations:

- a. a religious property deriving primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance; or
- b. a building or structure removed from its original location, but which is significant primarily for architectural value, or which is the surviving structure most importantly associated with a historic person or event; or
- c. a birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance if there is no appropriate site or building directly associated with his or her productive life; or
- d. a cemetery which derives its primary significance from graves of persons of transcendent importance, from age, from distinctive design features, from association with historic events; or
- e. a reconstructed building when accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented in a dignified manner as part of a restoration master plan, and when no other building or structure with the same association has survived; or
- f. a property primarily commemorative in intent if design, age, tradition, or symbolic value has invested it with its own exceptional significance; or,
- g. a property achieving significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance.

For the three cemeteries investigated, ERG prepared preliminary NRHP evaluations using Criteria Consideration D based on information drawn from previous investigations and new research and site visits.

CHAPTER 3. PREVIOUS INVESTIGATIONS

Previous investigations related specifically to the African American cemeteries on and near the James Monroe Birthplace Park and Museum are minimal; however, the Monroe Birthplace has been investigated extensively by archaeologists and architectural historians in addition to reporters and volunteers since at the least the 1930s. Mention of African American occupants is brief in earlier reports available in V-CRIS but more extensive in a 1937 report prepared by the NPS and in recent archaeological investigations, which have identified two African American dwelling sites likely associated with the Stewarts, Watts, and Smiths (44WM0287 and 44WM0288); the James Watts House Site (44WM0310); and the Stewart House Site recorded as part of the James Monroe Family Home Site (096-0046; 44WM0038) (**Tables 3.1-3.2; Figure 3.1**). Below is a summary of these investigations as well as other sources that have discussed the birthplace and/or African American cemeteries and occupants of Monroe Hall.

In 1932, during the bicentennial of the birth of George Washington, the first president of U.S. (1789-1797), local European American historic preservation advocates H.H. Nichols and Judge Wat T. Mayo encouraged VDOT's predecessor, the Virginia Department of Highways, to create a memorial highway between sites associated with important White leaders. They also began the first known intensive research near the survey area, conducting chain-of-title research and a number of excavations on the greater Monroe properties. During this time, they found the Monroe family cemetery, which by then was already missing its headstones and now is a modern subdivision at Doctor's Point southeast of the present-day James Monroe Birthplace (Monroe and Lewes 2009). Though they would not have been buried side-by-side, it is possible that a cemetery for persons enslaved by the Monroes would have been somewhere near this area.

Based on these investigations, by 1934, Judge Mayo and David Eaton, who published a book regarding the original land grants and patents in the county, asserted that land previously owned by the Rev. Cornelius Stewart contained the birthplace. They submitted a request to the NPS to establish a national monument, while the White owner of Doctor's Point claimed the birthplace site was there and submitted a competing request. In 1936, members of the Westmoreland County Garden Club established the Monroe Birthplace Monument Association (MBMA), predecessor to JMMF (Monroe and Lewes 2009:31). In 1937, Dr. Charles W. Porter, III, NPS Region One Assistant Historian, officially surveyed the Stewart property and the farm at Doctor's Point as well as conducted thorough archival research to assist in confirming its location. In his *Report on the Proposed Monroe Birthplace National Monument or Park at Monroe Hall, Virginia*, Porter concluded that the Stewart property was the probable birthplace but recommended an official archaeological survey for confirmation.

He also suggested that the park include the Monroe cemetery at or near Doctor's Point and noted that the MBMA could not hope to purchase all the parcels within the African American village of Monroe Hall for the proposed park, which today only contains 74 of the 250 acres Monroe's father owned at his birth in 1752. To support his conclusions, Porter included extensive discussion of the existing landscape; a list of property owners both White and Black, including numerous Smiths, Watts, and Stewarts, within the much larger proposed park boundary; the amount of acreage each person owned with building values; and affidavits from Black and White residents and former residents regarding the possible location of the birthplace. The report, which includes photographs of Monroe Hall, merits further study in the context of African American history and future surveys of the Stewart, Watts, and Smith Cemeteries as well as the community of Monroe Hall, where residents may trace their ancestry to free and/or enslaved antebellum laborers who worked in the area.

Table 3.1 Previous investigations of the James Monroe Birthplace property, which mention Monroe Hall's African American history and occupants.

Year	Type	Title	Author	Organization	DHR No.
1937	Plan	Report on the Proposed Monroe Birthplace National Monument or Park at Monroe Hall, Virginia	Charles W. Porter, III	NPS	n/a (NARA)
1956	Plat	State Route 205 Engineering Drawings	State Engineer	Virginia Department of Highways	n/a (VDOT)
1960	Notes	James Monroe Birthplace	Virginia Sherman	Local Volunteer	n/a (Westmoreland Co Museum)
1976	Phase III	Preliminary Report, James Monroe Project	Keith T. Egloff	VRCA	WM-001
1976	Phase III	James Monroe Project	Keith T. Egloff, Martha W. McCartney	VRCA	WM-002
1976	Archival	James Monroe's Birthplace, Westmoreland County Virginia	Martha W. McCartney	VRCA	WM-010
1979	NRHP	James Monroe Family Home Site NRHP Nomination	Keith T. Egloff	VRCA	096-0046
1980	Phase III	Excavations at the James Monroe Birthplace Westmoreland County, Virginia	Keith T. Egloff, Martha W. McCartney	VRCA	WM-011
2003	Phase I	Archaeological Survey of Selected Portions of the James Monroe Birthplace Historic Site	Chrissy Wample, Emily Lindtveit, Mike Klein	Mary Washington College Center for Historic Preservation	WM-040
2006	Phase I&II	Origins of an American President: Archaeological Survey and Evaluation at the James Monroe Birthplace, Westmoreland County, Virginia	David W. Lewes, Elizabeth J. Monroe	WMCAR	WM-084
2007	NRHP	James Monroe Birthplace (updated nomination)	David W. Lewes	WMCAR	096-0046
2009	Phase III	Archaeological Evaluation at the James Monroe Birthplace Site (44WM0038), Westmoreland County, Virginia	Elizabeth Monroe, David Lewes	WMCAR	WM-051
2015	Phase I	Archaeological Investigations Associated with the James Monroe Birthplace Master Plan Development, Westmoreland County, Virginia	Benjamin Ford	RAS	WM-065

Table 3.2 Resources previously recorded within the James Monroe Birthplace Park and Museum (V-CRIS 2022).

DHR No.	Name	Resource Type	Date	NRHP Status
096-0046	James Monroe Birthplace	Single Dwelling Site, Park	1758	Listed
44WM0038	James Monroe Family Home Site; African American Stewart House Site	Single Dwelling Site, Park	1750-1799; 1900-1949	18th c. Listed; 19th c. Non-contributing
44WM0287	[African American Dwelling Site on] James Monroe Family Home Site	Single Dwelling Site, Park	1750-1799; 1900-1949	18th c. Listed; 19th c. Non-contributing
44WM0288	[African American Dwelling Site on] James Monroe Family Home Site	Single Dwelling Site, Park	1750-1799; 1900-1949	18th c. Listed; 19th c. Non-contributing
44WM0310	18 th century component; African American James Watts House Site	Single Dwelling Site	1752-?; 1877-1936	18th c. Listed; 19th c. Non-contributing

After preparation of the 1937 NPS report, the MBMA purchased the properties that comprise the park today in 1941, reserving the 0.5-acre Stewart Cemetery for descendants; however, because of World War I, work on the project halted. After the war, the MBMA was incorporated in 1947 and renewed its efforts to create a master plan in 1951-1952. In 1953, the group presented a highly stylized, recreation of the house by architect Milton Grigg, and a scenic loop road to the Virginia Department of Highways. The proposed house was not constructed, but the highway engineers prepared plans for Route 205 (James Monroe Highway) improvements and the proposed scenic loop within the James Monroe Birthplace property in 1956 (**Figure 3.2**). Conducted ten years prior to the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, the scenic loop construction activities led to the inadvertent discovery of two possible wells near the James Monroe Birthplace. "Asst. Chief Engineer H. H. Harris noted that one well would not fall within the right-of-way. The other well-like feature proved, upon further investigation, to be a test hole for the illegal sand and gravel mining that had recently occurred on the property" (Monroe and Lewes 2009:37).

With ongoing issues around mining and dumping, the project stalled again until local historian and State Secretary of the Archeological Society of Virginia, Virginia Sherman, resurrected Monroe birthplace research in the 1970s and prepared a manuscript in 1983.

The earliest DHR reports on record date to 1976. The Virginia Research Center for Archaeology (VRCA) conducted the first full scale archaeological investigation of the James Monroe Birthplace and presented the results in two survey reports as the work progressed (Egloff 1976; Egloff and McCartney 1976). The excavation revealed evidence of an eighteenth-century house associated with the Monroe family (44WM0038) within a 4.5-site. Cornelius Stewart is mentioned as having moved bricks from the cellar. Included in both reports, **Figure 3.3** shows multiple late-nineteenth and twentieth century house sites associated with African American families who sold their land to MBMA and some of whom are interred in the nearby cemeteries (VRCA Site Nos. JM45 through JM50); it also shows gravel pits and two cemeteries, one west of a dump area (the Stewart Cemetery) and one east of it (the Watts and

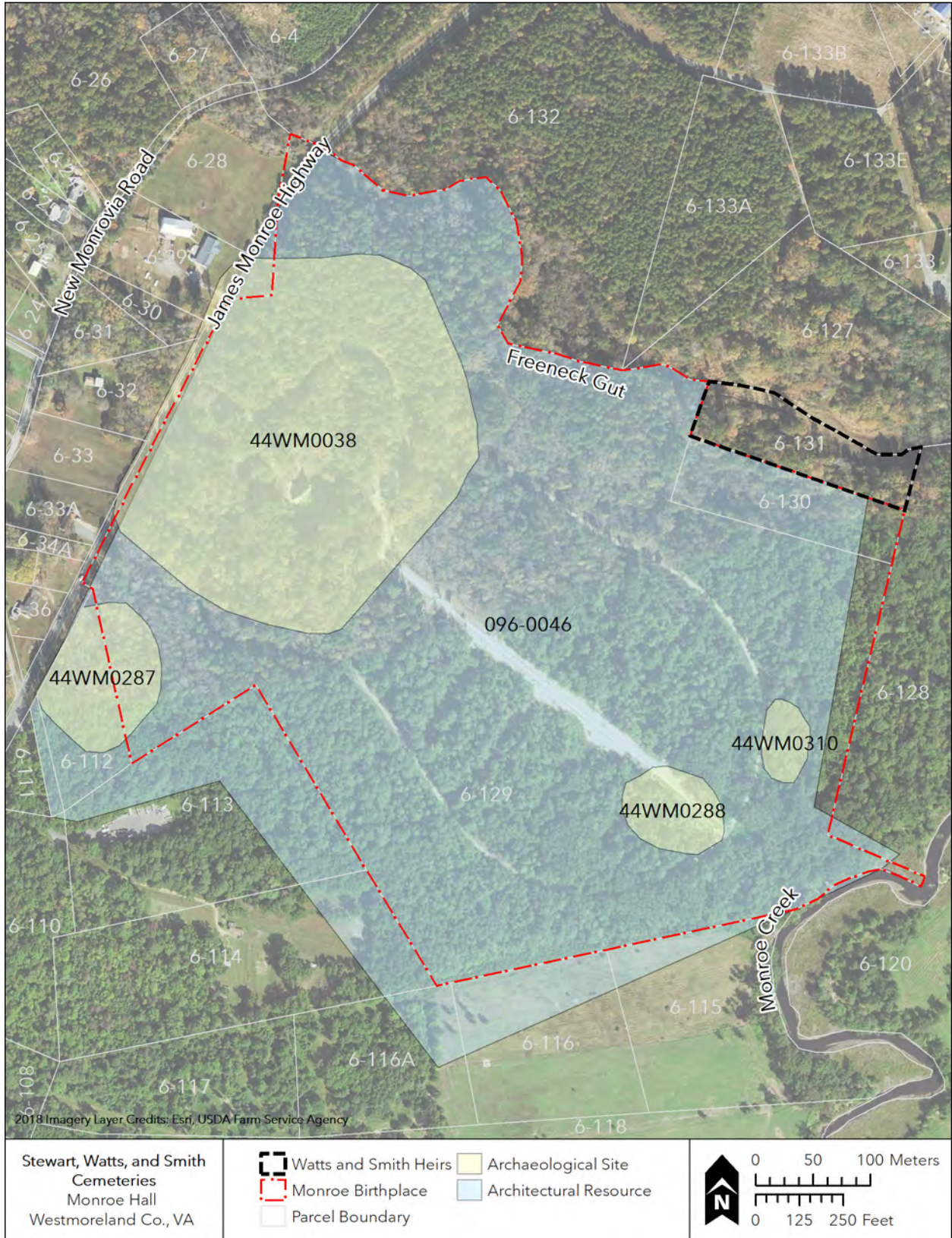


Figure 3.1 Resources previously recorded within the survey areas and the James Monroe Birthplace Park and Museum (V-CRIS 2022).

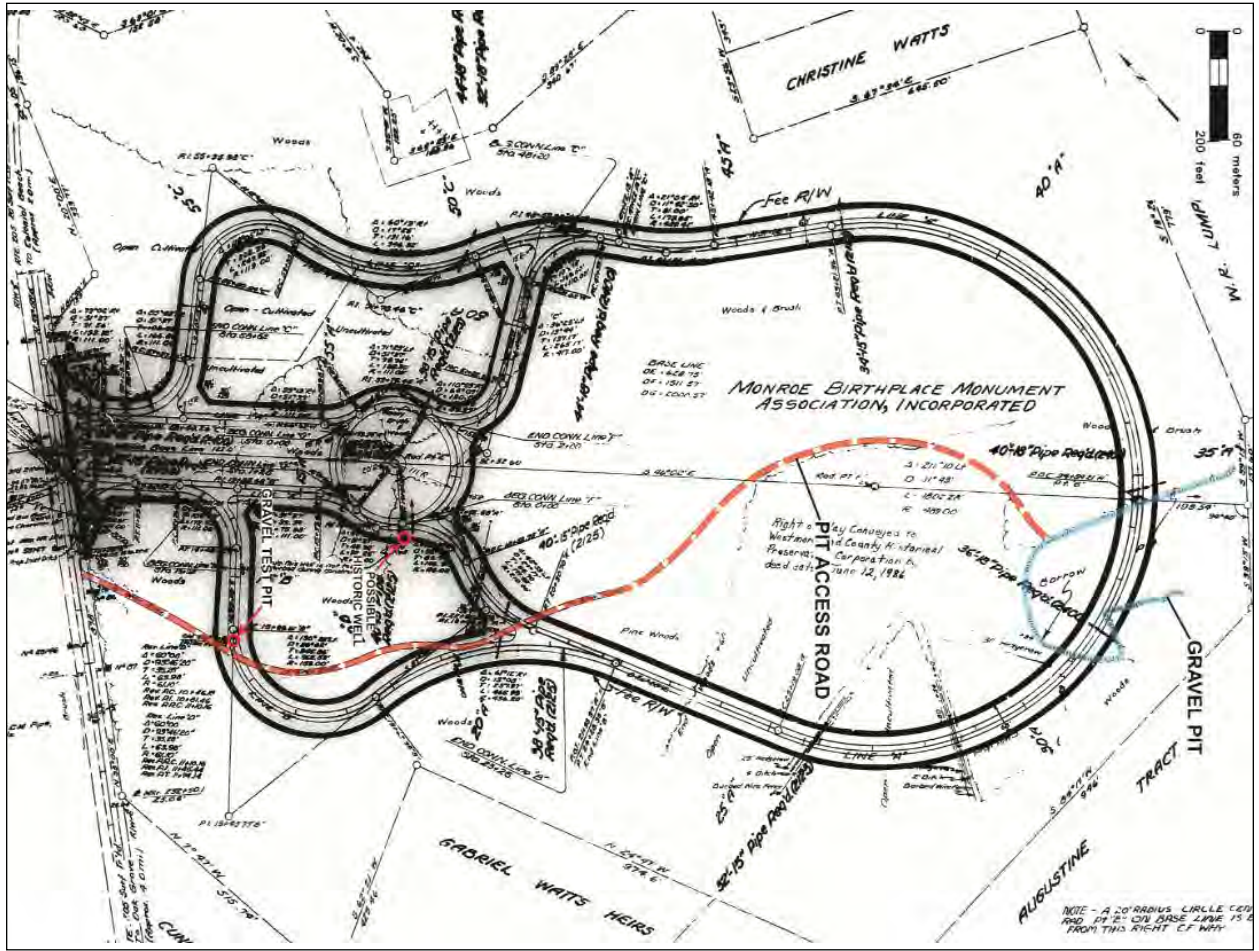


Figure 3.2 Virginia Department of Highways Route 205 and James Monroe Birthplace scenic loop (Route 209) annotated by WMCAR, showing sand and gravel mine, test gravel pit, old well/Stewart trash pit, and official 0.5-acre Stewart Cemetery Reserve (Monroe and Lewes 2009:36).

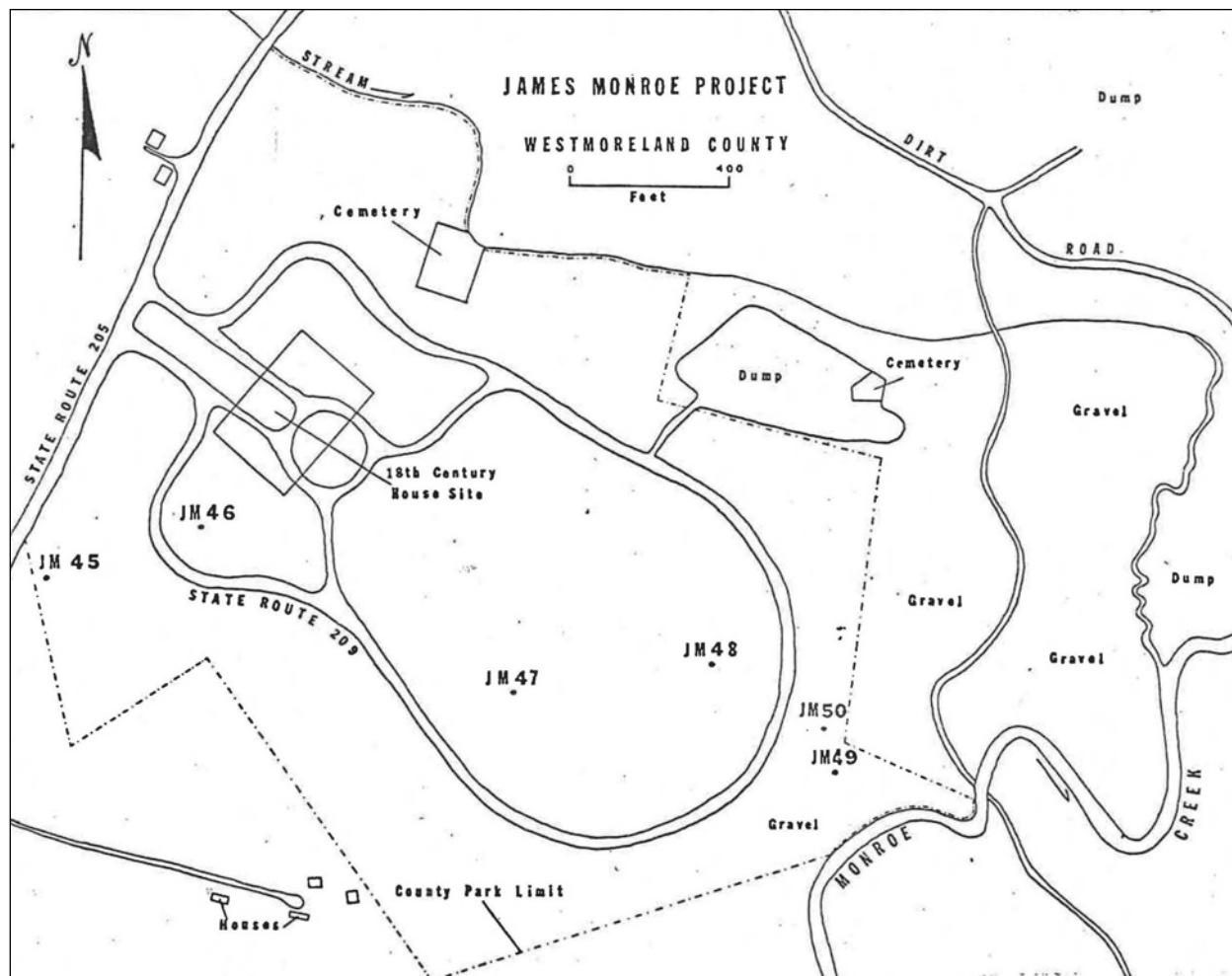


Figure 3.3 James Monroe Project archaeological survey map, showing African American dwelling sites, two of which were later identified as Stewart and James Watts house sites (JM46 and JM50); sand and gravel mines; illegal dump; and the Stewart Cemetery west of the dump and the Watts and Smith Cemeteries east of it (Elgloff 1976).

Smith Cemeteries). Though VRCA assigned these sites temporary numbers and discussed them in some detail in Part V of the report, Survey of the Surrounding 100 Acres, DHR survey numbers were not assigned at that time. The report states that the MBMA likely dismantled the dwellings when the properties were purchased in 1941.

VRCA followed these two investigations with historical research and documentation of the James Monroe's Birthplace without references to the cemeteries or associated African American families (McCartney 1976). The result of this research was published in the Northern Neck Historical Magazine in 1980 (Egloff and McCartney). During this period, the James Monroe Family Home Site/Birthplace (096-0046, 44WM0038) was listed in the Virginia Landmarks Register (VLR) on December 21, 1976, and in the NRHP on March 15, 1979 (NRHP No. 79003095; 08000285). The NRHP nomination notes that the house was built circa 1752 by the father of James Monroe, Spence Monroe. The nomination does not reference the cemetery or African American occupancy.

The next investigation occurred over two decades later and was prompted by a proposed visitor's center and parking lot for the James Monroe Birthplace. Mary Washington College (now UMW) Center for Historic Preservation conducted the Phase I Archaeological Survey of Selected Portions of the James Monroe Birthplace Historic Site, which identified circa 1760-1840 artifacts within 150 feet of the birthplace site (Wamplle et al. 2003). The cemeteries to the east were not depicted in report figures, because they are on privately owned land. The Stewart Cemetery was depicted in multiple figures, however, only referenced once in regard to being close to where a pearlware fragment was unearthed.

The first photographs identified of the Stewart Cemetery were not taken for an official architectural or archaeological survey but were taken in 2005 by reporter Frank Delano who covered a proposed subdivision, which was never built, north of Freeneck Gut (**Figures 3.4-3.5**). One photograph reveals that stones in Stewart Cemetery had already sunk by then.

In 2006, WMCAR carried out archaeological investigations of areas with potential within 61 of the 74 acres not previously surveyed by UMW (**Figure 3.6**). The investigation was prepared for JMMF, successor to MBMA, as the newly formed organization planned to build a more realistic replica of the Monroe dwelling and associated dependencies than was planned in 1956. WMCAR also conducted intensive documentary research and an architectural history investigation as well as prepared an NRHP nomination update in 2007. The results of this work were presented in *Origins of an American President: Archaeological Survey and Evaluation at the James Monroe Birthplace, Westmoreland County, Virginia* (Lewes and Monroe 2006) and *Archaeological Evaluation at the James Monroe Birthplace Site (44WM0038), Westmoreland County, Virginia* (Monroe and Lewes 2009).

The documentary research indicates that the Monroes and their enslaved labor no longer lived in the area by the 1780s and that the birthplace was likely gone by the Civil War as the property changed hands amongst absentee landowners many times. The archaeological investigation resulted in the identification of 23 archaeological locations, five of which surround the Stewart Cemetery; the identification of the Reverend Cornelius Stewart House Site, identified as JM46 in the 1976 VRCA survey (see Figure 3.3), within the site boundaries of the Monroe family home site (44WM0038); and the identification of two twentieth-century African American domestic sites (44WM0287 and 44WM0288), which somewhat align with JM45 and JM48 in 1976 (see Figures 3.1 and 3.3). The boundary of site 44WM0038, including the Stewart House Site, was expanded from 4.5 acres to 14.4 acres following fieldwork.



Figure 3.4 Harry Maiden, Jr. Headstone (Burial 10) partially sunken at Stewart Cemetery (Delano 6 June 2005).



Figure 3.5 Eunice Newman Headstone (Burial 18) at Stewart Cemetery (Delano 6 June 2005).

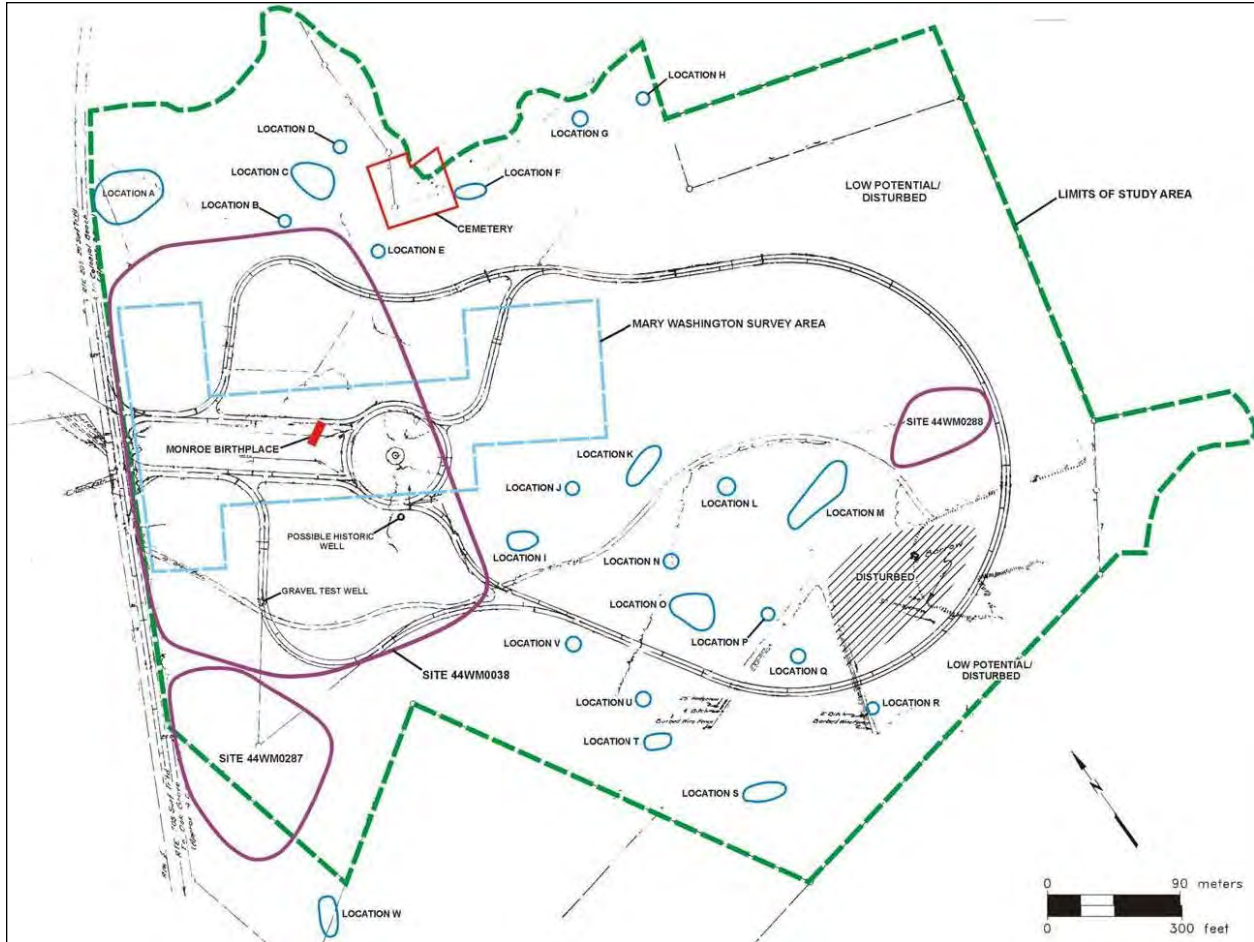


Figure 3.6 Plat showing 0.5-acre Stewart Cemetery reserve and previous investigations conducted by UMW in 2003 (dashed blue line) and WMCAR in 2006 (dashed green line) (Monroe and Lewes 2009:28).

Overlapping the southern part of site 44WM0038, discoveries associated with the Stewart House Site include the Monroe well that was converted to trash pit by the Stewarts plus architectural and domestic artifacts – windowpane glass, wire nails/nail fragments, asphalt siding, a plastic comb, a porcelain doll part, and two U.S. Army General Service copper alloy buttons, definitively dated to 1900-1902 (**Figure 3.7**) (Lewes and Monroe 2006:45, 49). Incidentally, numerous veteran headstones are located within the Stewart and Watts Cemeteries. Because the latter is on private land, only the Stewart Cemetery was photographed in 2007 and included on the architectural survey form for the James Monroe Birthplace (096-0046) (**Figure 3.8**).

The nomination update was prepared by WMCAR with new information from the 2006 investigation and approved by the VLR in 2007 and the NRHP in 2008. It included only one contributing resource, the eighteenth-century component of site 44WM0038, and seven non-contributing resources:

- (1) James Monroe Birthplace Site (44WM0038); 1750s-early nineteenth century, late nineteenth/early twentieth century; Contributing
- (2) [African American Dwelling] Site 44WM0287; Non-Contributing
- (3) [African American Dwelling] Site 44WM0288; Non-Contributing
- (4) Stewart family burial ground; twentieth century; Non-Contributing
- (5) Road Network; 1956; Contributing
- (6) Commemorative obelisk monument; 1993; Non-Contributing
- (7) Commemorative plaque; 1989; Non-Contributing
- (8) Commemorative garden and plaque; 2003; Non-Contributing

Of the Stewart Cemetery, the nomination update includes the following:

A family burial ground used by the family and descendants of Cornelius Stewart is located north-northwest of the Monroe dwelling at the northern edge of the property. The 160-ft.-square plot is defined on a 1956 engineering drawing of the sand-clay road network. A wide range of grave markers includes iron stakes, headstones of inscribed, polished granite, and more crudely inscribed limestone markers. The convex roofs of several concrete vaults also are visible. From the markers, it is evident that the cemetery was in active use from the early twentieth century through the 1950s. The size of saplings throughout the graveyard indicates it has not been maintained for several decades. Objects such as plastic flower stands suggest memorial activities within the last 10 to 20 years. Signs of vandalism are evident from overturned and broken markers (Lewes 2007:7-6).

The African American sites were said to have issues of integrity due to disturbance. Regardless of integrity, the non-contributing status of the Stewart House Site, the two other African American dwelling sites, and the Stewart Cemetery largely stems from falling outside of the periods of significance (1752-1783, 1952-1956) and lack of association with James Monroe. While they may not be able to yield new information about the past (Criterion D), their significance may be re-evaluated in terms of association with African American heritage and the village of Monroe Hall (Criteria A and B).



Figure 3.7 Discovered at site 44WM0038, U.S. Army General Services buttons that date to 1900-1902 and are associated with the Stewart family occupation (Lewes and Monroe 2006).



Figure 3.8 Stewart Cemetery included on the architectural survey form for the James Monroe Birthplace (Lewes 2007).

In 2009, Mary Veney Ashton, then a volunteer and now the Executive Director of the A.T. Johnson Museum, took photographs and prepared a cemetery survey form, which was not submitted to DHR, for the Stewart, Watts, and Smith Cemeteries (**Appendix B**). Photographs from 2005 to 2009 at the Stewart Cemetery reveal that displaced stones were in the same condition then as they are now; however, the Watts Cemetery has declined from excellent condition in 2009 to fair condition in 2022 due to significant tree fall, and the Smith Cemetery has lost some plaques in the same period.

In 2015, Rivanna Archaeological Services (RAS) conducted a Phase I investigation for three proposed parking lots and presented the results in *Archaeological Investigations Associated with the James Monroe Birthplace Master Plan Development, Westmoreland County, Virginia* (Ford 2015). RAS identified seven archaeological locations and one new site (44WM0310), coinciding with JM50 in the 1976 survey (see Figure 3.1). It contained an eighteenth-century cluster of ceramics, container glass and nails, and a late nineteenth to early twentieth century component, which was identified as the James Watts House Site. The report states that:

Watts purchased a 23+ acre parcel in 1877 and was likely the first to construct a post-Emancipation residence in this location... The presence and concentration of dark organic soils in limited areas suggests that the residence may have burned. Subsequent razing of the structure in the post-1936 period may also have removed other potentially significant cultural features (Ford 2015:42-43).

Thus, the Watts House component was not recommended for further study; however, the earlier component was recommended Potentially Eligible due to its rarity. Like 44WM0287, 44WM0288, and the Stewart Cemetery, the significance of the Watts House Site may be re-evaluated in relationship to the African American village of Monroe Hall.

CHAPTER 4. ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

Since European contact, Westmoreland County has been historically rural with agriculture, timber, seafood, and sand and gravel mining fueling the local economy, but it is now experiencing suburbanization from Fredericksburg to the west. All but the seafood industry is known to have had a direct effect on the environmental quality of the cemetery survey area.

WATERSHED

The Stewart, Watts, and Smith Cemeteries are located in Monroe Hall, Westmoreland County on the north side of the Virginia peninsula known as the Northern Neck between the Rappahannock and Potomac Rivers within the 64,000-square-mile Chesapeake Bay watershed, which flows into the Atlantic Ocean. The cemeteries are situated on the south bank of Freeneck Gut, which drains east into the upper reaches of Monroe Creek (**Figures 4.1-4.4**). Monroe Creek drains into Monroe Bay, and Monroe Bay empties into the Potomac River at Colonial Beach. With headwaters in West Virginia and Maryland, the Potomac River separates Westmoreland County “from Maryland to the north and is navigable by ocean-going vessels as far north as Washington, D.C... The topography is generally level and is cut by wide tidal creeks and bays...” (Nicholson 1981:1)

The 236-square-mile county is entirely within “the northern Coastal Plain physiographic region of Virginia and has three general types of topography: neckland, upland, and cliffs. Approximately 20-to-30 feet in elevation, the survey areas are in the neckland, which is nearly level and undulates in elevation from less than 10 feet to about 50 feet above sea level with areas of low-lying swamps or marshes” (Nicholson 1981:2).

FLORA AND FAUNA

Flora in Westmoreland County includes evergreens, such as holly and pine, and a mixture of deciduous trees, such as maple and oak, all of which were observed in the survey areas (**Figures 4.5-4.8**).

Fauna includes white-tailed deer, beaver, opossum, raccoon, gray squirrel, cotton-tail rabbit, black snake, box turtle, wild turkey, herons, egrets, rodents, and small birds. A beaver dam was observed north of Smith Cemetery (see Figure 4.4), and multiple deceased box turtles were observed at the north edge of the Watts Cemetery near Freeneck Gut.

SOILS

The Stewart Cemetery is primarily on Lenoir silt loam (9), with a small portion on Lumbee loam (10); the Watts Cemetery Bibb and Levy soils (2) and Nansemond fine sandy loam (12); and the Smith Cemetery is located on Bibby and Levy soils (2) and Sand and Gravel Pits (14) (**Table 4.1; Figure 4.9**).

Table 4.1 Soil types located within the survey areas.

Map Unit	Soil Type	Seasonal High-Water Table	Cemeteries
2	Bibb and Levy soils	6 in to 1.5 ft	Watts and Smith
9	Lenoir silt loam	1 to 2.5 ft	Stewart
10	Lumbee loam	Surface to 1.5 ft	Stewart
12	Nansemond fine sandy loam	1 to 2.5 ft	Watts
14	Pits, sand and gravel		Smith



Figure 4.1 Freeneck Gut from northwest corner of Stewart Cemetery (096-5301), view northwest.



Figure 4.2 Freeneck Gut from northwest corner of Stewart Cemetery (096-5301), view southeast.



*Figure 4.3 Freeneck Gut north of Watts Cemetery (096-5302),
view northwest from Burial 15.*



*Figure 4.4 Freeneck Gut Beaver Dam north of Smith Cemetery (096-5303),
view north.*



Figure 4.5 Stewart Cemetery (096-5301) overview, view northeast from dirt road.



Figure 4.6 Stewart Cemetery (096-5301) overview, view southeast from Burial 18. JMMF maintenance has observed frequent flooding up to the holly trees pictured.



Figure 4.7 Watts Cemetery (096-5302) overview, view northwest towards Burials 14-16.



Figure 4.8 Smith Cemetery (096-5303) overview, view northwest.

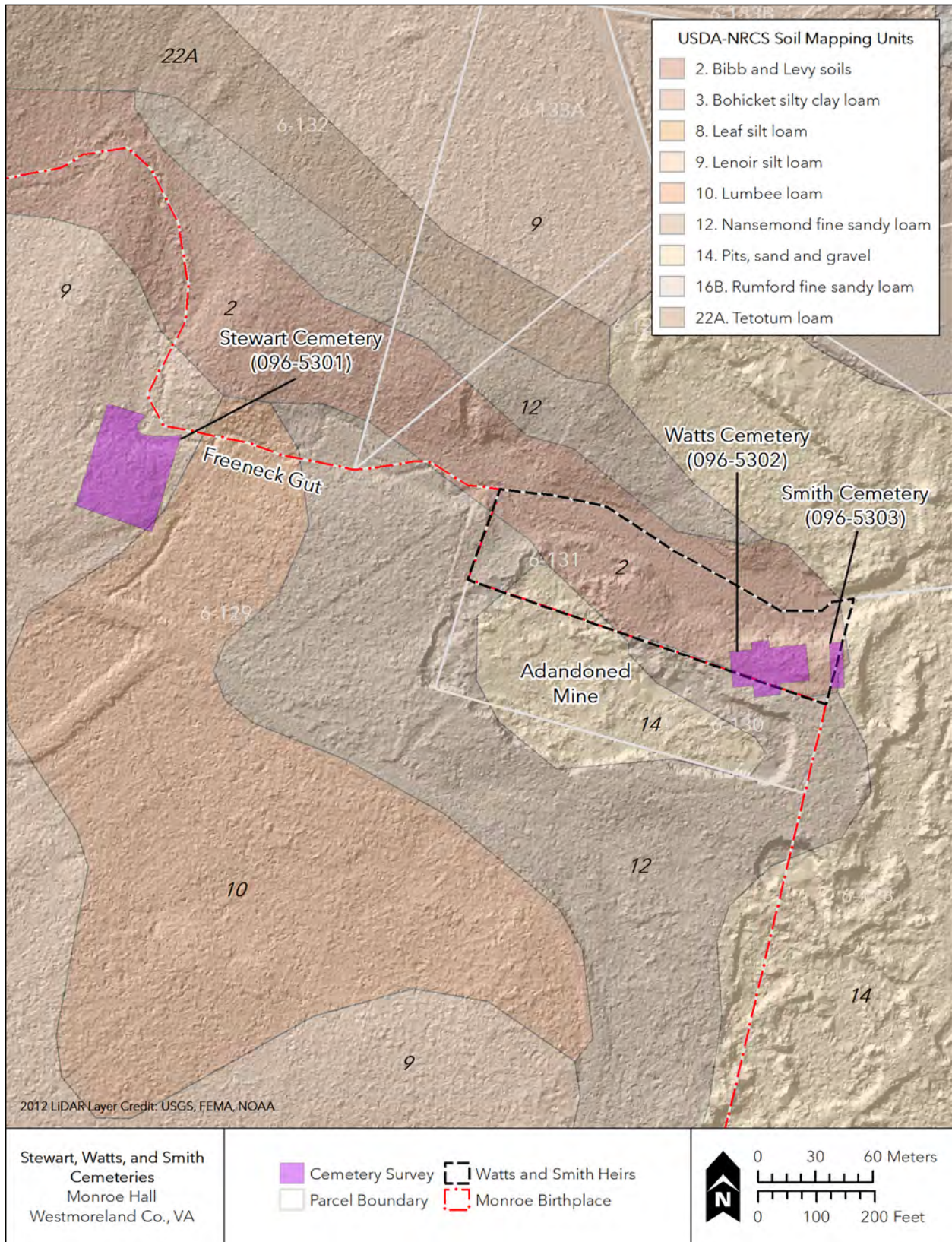


Figure 4.9 Cemeteries and USDA-NRCS Soil Mapping Units overlaid on LiDAR.

MAP UNIT 2: BIBB AND LEVY SOILS

This unit consists of deep, poorly and very poorly drained soils along drainageways and adjacent to or near tidal marshes. The mapped acreage of the unit is about 50 percent Bibb soils, 30 percent Levy soils, and 20 percent other soils. Many areas of this unit are flooded during storms. The areas near tidal marshes are also flooded by exceptionally high tides (Nicholson 1981).

Permeability is moderate in the Bibb soils and slow in the Levy soils. Available water capacity is high in both soils, and the organic matter content in the surface layer is moderate to high. The seasonal high-water table is at a depth of 6 inches to 1.5 feet in the Bibb soils and is at the surface of the Levy soils. The substratum of the Levy soils has a high shrinkswell potential (Nicholson 1981). Shrink-swell is the volume change that occurs as a result of changes in the moisture content of clay-rich soils. Swelling pressures can cause heave, or lifting of structures, whilst shrinkage can cause settlement or subsidence, which may be differential. This may be the reason the burial shafts are distinct.

Most areas of these soils are in woodland. The hazard of flooding and the seasonal high-water table make this unit generally unsuitable for farming, but the Bibb soils are moderately well suited to pasture. Drainage and flood control are the main management needs. Seasonal wetness and flooding are the major limitations of these soils for most types of nonfarm use (Nicholson 1981).

MAP UNIT 9: LENOIR SILT LOAM

This soil map unit is deep, somewhat poorly drained, and nearly level. It is on broad flats at an elevation of less than 50 feet. Typically, the surface layer is grayish brown silt loam 5 inches thick. The subsoil extends to a depth of 60 inches or more. It is light olive brown silty clay loam to a depth of 12 inches and gray and light gray clay at a depth of more than 12 inches. Most areas of this soil are in woodland. A few areas are farmed and used for pasture and hay (Nicholson 1981).

The permeability of Lenoir silt loam is slow, and the available water capacity is moderate. Runoff is slow. The soil is low in natural fertility and organic matter content. The subsoil has a moderate shrink-swell potential. A seasonal high-water table is at a depth of 1 to 2.5 feet during winter and early in spring. The seasonal high-water table and slow permeability are the main limitations of the soil for nonfarm use. Both limit the use of the soil as a building site, as a site for sanitary landfills or septic tank absorption fields, and for most recreational uses. The soil is a poor subgrade material for local roads and streets (Nicholson 1981).

MAP UNIT 10: LUMBEE LOAM

This soil is deep, nearly level, and poorly drained. It is on very broad flats at an elevation of less than 50 feet. Typically, the surface layer is dark grayish brown loam about 7 inches thick. The subsoil is about 20 inches thick. It is light brownish gray loam and clay loam mottled with light olive brown and strong brown. The substratum extends to a depth of 60 inches or more. It is gray fine sand, loamy fine sand, and sandy clay. Most areas of this soil are in woodland. A few areas have been drained and are used for pasture or hay.

The permeability of this Lumbee soil is moderate, and the available water capacity is low. Surface runoff is slow to very slow. The surface layer is very friable and easily tilled. During winter and spring, water is frequently ponded on the surface of the soil for brief periods and a seasonal high-water table is between the surface and a depth of 1.5 feet. The seasonal high-water table and occasional ponding are the main limitations of the soil for nonfarm use. Both limit the use

of the soil as a building site, as a site for sanitary landfills or septic tank absorption fields, and for most recreational uses. The soil is a poor subgrade material for local roads and streets.

MAP UNIT 12: NANSEMOND FINE SANDY LOAM

This soil is deep, nearly level, and moderately well drained. It is on broad flats at an elevation of less than 50 feet. The permeability of this Nansemond soil is moderately rapid. Available water capacity is moderate, and runoff is slow. A seasonal high-water table is at a depth of 1.5 to 2.5 feet during winter and early in spring. The seasonal high-water table is the major management concern and the main limitation for nonfarm use. It especially limits this soil as a site for septic tank absorption fields, shallow excavations, and dwellings with basements. The soil is a fair subgrade material for local roads and streets (Nicholson 1981).

MAP UNIT 14: PITS, SAND, AND GRAVEL

This unit consists of areas from which gravel and sand have been removed for construction purposes. The excavations are mostly 5 to 15 feet deep and have steep sides and a nearly level floor. They are commonly irregular in shape and range from 2 to about 40 acres. Some have been partially filled and used as a dump. Some areas of the unit have small pools of water.

Very low available water capacity makes this unit droughty. Runoff is generally slow. Permeability varies, but it is mainly moderately rapid to very rapid. A few areas of this unit have been reclaimed and used for recreation or pine trees. Most are abandoned and have a sparse vegetation of woody bushes, grasses, and other annuals. The very low available water capacity makes this unit generally unsuitable for farming or woodland. A hazard of ground-water pollution limits the unit for waste disposal. Onsite investigation is needed to determine the potential of the unit for most uses and to determine the feasibility of reclamation.

ABANDONED MINE/ILLEGAL DUMP

Operated in the mid-twentieth century prior to implementation of significant private property surface mining regulations in Virginia, abandoned sand pits around the survey areas are recorded in the Virginia Department of Energy (VDOE) Orphaned Mine database as points on Parcel 6-128 and 6-130 (<https://energy.virginia.gov/webmaps/MineralMining/>); however, they are on all four parcels (6-128 through 6-131) containing the survey areas and extend much farther than shown, wrapping around all sides of the Watts and Smith Cemeteries (**Figures 4.10-16**). The part of Freeneck Gut that is now underwater was likely mined as well (**Figure 4.17**). These areas historically would have been Nansemond Fine Sand Loam like the James Monroe Birthplace scenic loop, from which they are accessed (**Figure 4.18**). According to VDOE, the mine to the north was last inspected in 2020 and the mine in the survey area was inspected in 2008. Beginning in the 1960s, the pits were used as an illegal dump where old building materials, cars, tires, and smaller items have been discarded (**Figures 4.19-22**).

The VDOE website (2022) notes:

- The major environmental problems associated with inactive/abandoned mine sites are stream sedimentation from unvegetated soils, acid draining tailings and waste piles, ground water degradation, and trash dumps.
- The major public health and safety problems associated with inactive/abandoned mine sites in Virginia are fall hazards from highwalls, shafts and other mine openings, and the unauthorized and unsupervised use of mine sites as recreational areas.

"... abandoned sand and gravel mines provide potential sources of non-point and point source pollution of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries" (VDOE 2022).

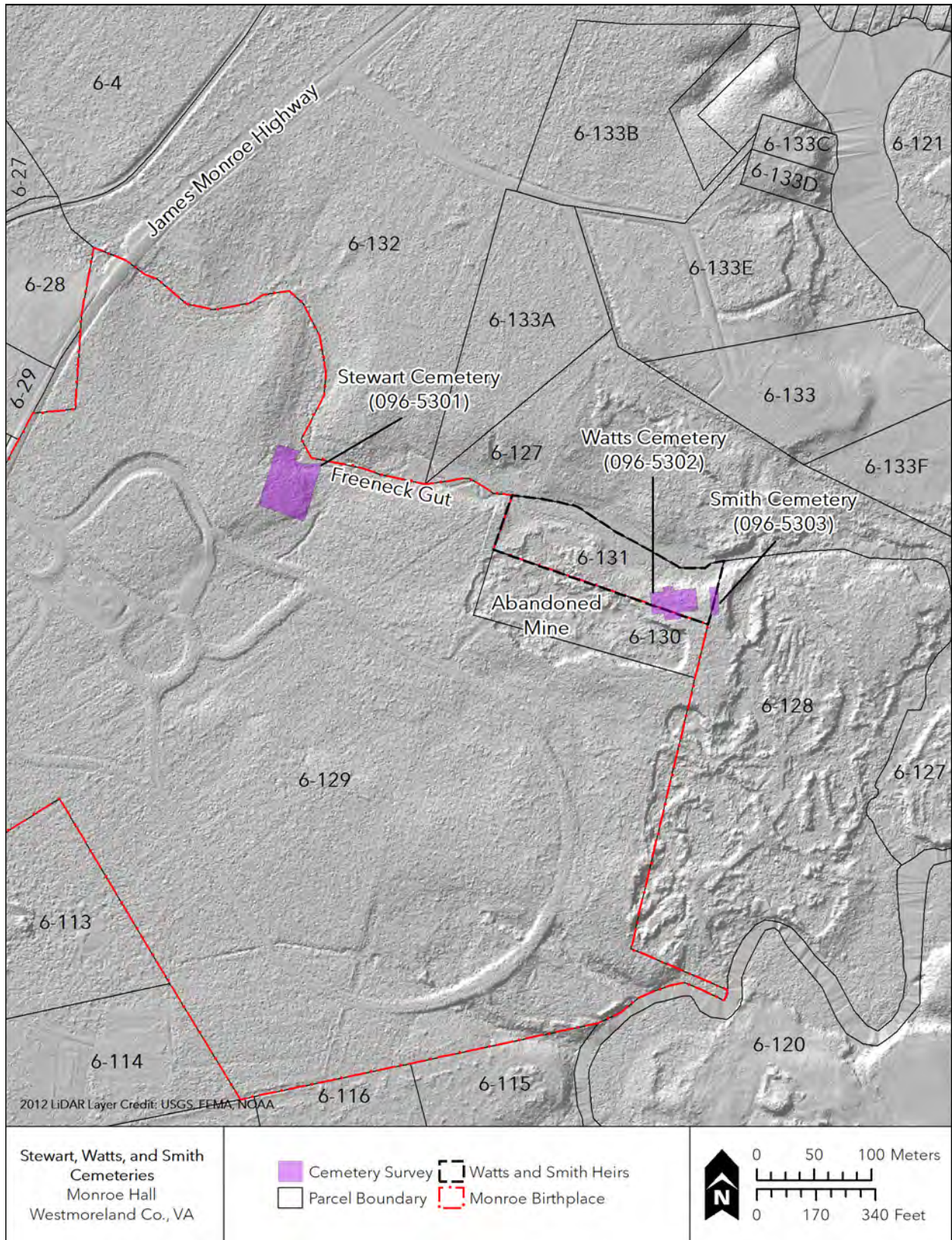


Figure 4.10 Cultural resources overlaid on 2012 LiDAR.



Figure 4.11 Abandoned mine and illegal dump on path to Watts and Smith Cemeteries, view east-southeast.



Figure 4.12 Abandoned mine and pooling on path to Watts and Smith Cemeteries, view southeast.



Figure 4.13 Abandoned mine excavation wall and pooling southwest of Watts Cemetery, view southeast.



Figure 4.14 Fallen trees over mining pit at south edge of Watts Cemetery (096-5302), view east.



Figure 4.15 Abandoned mine excavation wall near Burials 31-37 at Watts Cemetery (096-5302), view southeast.



Figure 4.16 Abandoned mine and pooling on east side of Smith Cemetery (096-5303), view southeast.



Figure 4.17 Freeneck Gut, which may have been mined, from Smith Cemetery (096-5303), view northwest towards abandoned mine.



Figure 4.18 James Monroe Birthplace scenic loop constructed in 1956, view southeast showing Nansemond Fine Sand Loam that would have historically been where abandoned mine pits are located.



Figure 4.19 Illegal dumping in abandoned mine between Stewart and Watts Cemeteries, view north.



Figure 4.20 Illegal dumping in abandoned mine between Stewart and Watts Cemeteries, view northeast towards Freeneck Gut.



Figure 4.21 Illegal dumping in abandoned mine between Stewart and Watts Cemeteries, view south.



Figure 4.22 Illegal dumping in abandoned mine between Stewart and Watts Cemeteries.

CLIMATE

Virginia has a humid climate with very warm summers and moderately cold winters. In Westmoreland County, the 12-month average temperature increased 3°F from April 1900 to March 2022. From April 1900 to March 2022, the 12-month average temperature was 56.7°F. The 12-month total precipitation increased 0.1 inches from April 1900 to March 2022. From April 1900 to March 2022, the average 12-month total precipitation was 42.9 inches (USAFacts 2022).

The cemeteries are located in low lying areas adjacent to a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) special flood hazard area immediately north (**Figure 4.23**); however, the FEMA flood map appears to be out-of-date based on observations by A.T. Johnson and JMMF volunteers and contractors (Mary Veney Ashton, William Dudley, and Leon Phillips, 2022, personal communication).

Since 1900, the global average sea level has risen approximately 7-to-8 inches, while it has risen up to 17 inches in the coastal plains of Virginia, where the land is also sinking (NOAA 2022). The projected sea-level rise in the survey areas is presented in **Figure 4.24**.

SITE CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

Due to the presence of beaver, soil types with poor drainage, abandoned mines, an illegal dump, climate change, and other environmental factors, Freeneck Gut is deeply incised near Stewart Cemetery and much wider and deeper on the north side of Watts and Smith Cemeteries than it appears in historic aerials dating back to 1937 (**Figure 4.25**, see Figure 4.18). The Stewart Cemetery is subject to more intense and frequent flooding of Freeneck Gut. The Watts and Smith Cemeteries almost sit on an island, surrounded by “abandoned mineral mined lands,” which are defined as “those areas disturbed by the mining of all minerals, except coal, which were not required by law to be reclaimed or have not been reclaimed” (VDOE 2022). While at a slightly higher elevation, they are threatened by erosion on all four sides and more intense tree fall during hurricane season due to the surrounding mine walls. In general, burials may have been destroyed by mining, eroded into the abandoned sand and gravel pits, or washed away into Freeneck Gut (**Figure 4.26**). The soils present in the survey areas do not drain well and have contributed to significant and damaging tree fall during hurricane season (**Figures 4.27-4.30**). During fieldwork in March 2022, a tree fell just east of a drainage ditch near the Stewart Cemetery.

Table 4.2 includes an analysis of site conditions from 1780 to present day based on various sources, including historic sales notices, census records, maps and aerials, and field survey (**Figures 4.31-4.40**).

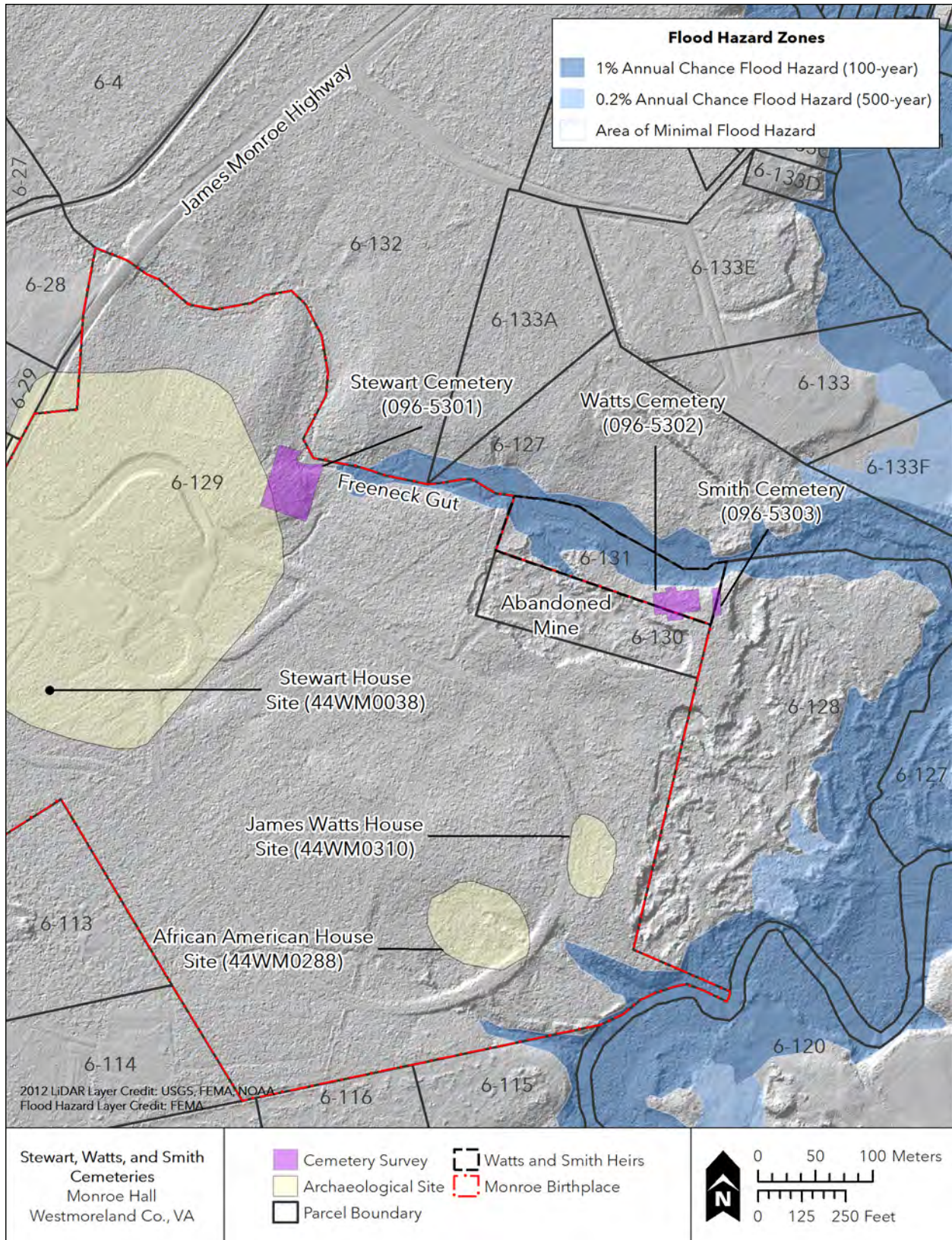


Figure 4.23 Cultural resources and FEMA mapping overlaid on 2012 LiDAR. Based on JMMF maintenance observations of frequent flooding in the Stewart Cemetery, this map needs to be modernized.

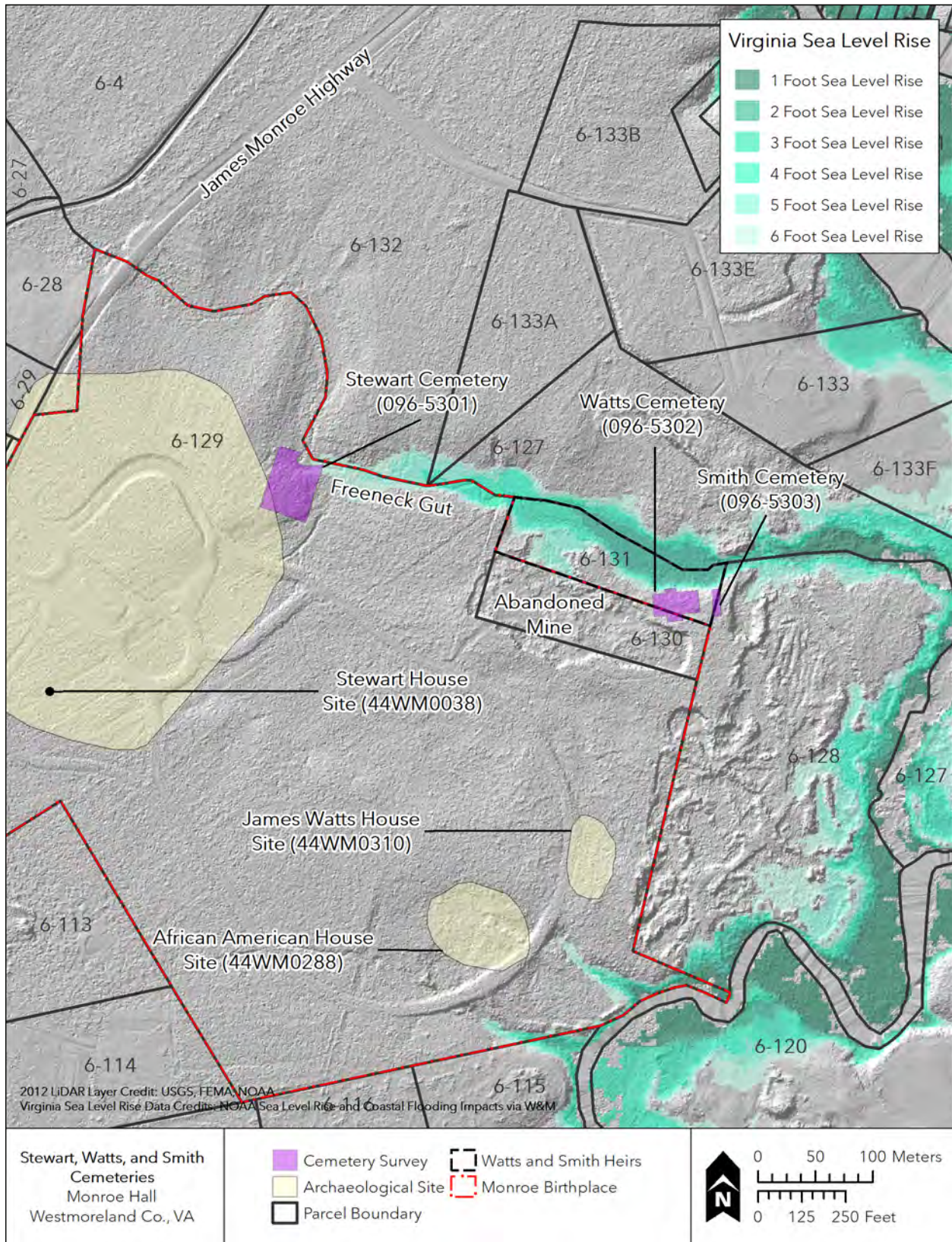


Figure 4.24 Cultural resources and sea-level rise mapping overlaid on 2012 LiDAR.



Figure 4.25 Deep incision of Freeneck Gut, view southwest of Stewart Cemetery (096-5301) from north bank.



Figure 4.26 Erosion at Smith Cemetery (096-5303), view south.



Figure 4.27 Tree fallen over potential burials at Stewart Cemetery (096-5301), view north.



Figure 4.28 Old tree fall at Smith Cemetery (096-5303), view southwest.



Figure 4.29 Watts Cemetery (096-5302) in 2009 before hurricane damage, view northwest from Burial 32 (Marian Veney Ashton).



Figure 4.30 Same view of Watts Cemetery (096-5302) in 2022, showing fallen trees and root ball over exposed burial.

Table 4.2 Environmental conditions of Monroe Hall and survey area 1780 to present.

Year	Environmental Conditions	Source
1780	500 ac perfectly level and rich; large marshes; valuable oak timber; recently vacated by Monroes	Sale Notice
1857	836 ac irregularly cultivated; suffers from surface water; Oak, Pine, Cedar and Gum; not owner occupied if at all	Sale Notice
1868	706 ac timber cleared; absentee Northern owners	Sale Notice
1880	Part of Parcel 6-129. Samuel Stewart 33 ac farmed and 5 ac unimproved	Ag Census
	Part of Parcel 6-129. Moses Watts 15 ac farmed and 23 ac unimproved	
	Parcel 6-130, 6-131, and Part of Parcel 6-129. James Watts 20 ac farmed and 0 ac unimproved	
	Likely Parcel 6-128. George Smith 18 ac farmed and 2 ac unimproved	
1937	Parcel 6-129. 38.73 acres. Freeneck Gut is narrow with no riparian buffer and has shifted a meander west since property line originally drawn. Stewart Cemetery <0.5 ac forested rectangle surrounded by cultivated fields.	Aerial
	Parcel 6-131. 2.5 acres. Freeneck Gut is narrow, meandering through the property, with no riparian buffer, and passes under a bridge on Parcel 6-128. West end is cultivated. East end is forested around Watts and Smith Cemeteries.	
	Parcel 6-130. 2.5 acres. South tip of Watts Cemetery forested. Cultivated fields to west.	
	Parcel 6-128. SE tip of Smith Cemetery is forested. Mined farther to the SE.	
1953	Parcel 6-129. 74 acres. Freeneck Gut is narrow with new-growth riparian buffer. Stewart Cemetery <0.5 ac forested surrounded by overgrown fields with some mining farther south.	Aerial
	Parcel 6-131. Freeneck Gut is narrow, meandering through the property, with no riparian buffer, and passes under a bridge on Parcel 6-128. Completely forested, including Watts and Smith Cemeteries at east end.	
	Parcel 6-130. Completely forested, including south tip of Watts Cemetery.	
	Parcel 6-128. SE tip of Smith Cemetery is forested. Road and mine immediately east.	
1969	Parcel 6-129. Freeneck Gut is narrow and completely forested. Stewart Cemetery surrounded by forest and James Monroe Birthplace scenic loop to the south.	Aerial
	Parcel 6-131. Freeneck Gut is narrow meandering through forested area before becoming a little wider near bridge on Parcel 6-128. West end is mined. East end is forested around Watts and Smith Cemeteries.	
	Parcel 6-130. Completely mined around south tip of Watts Cemetery.	

Year	Environmental Conditions	Source
	Parcel 6-128. SE tip of Smith Cemetery and abandoned mine forested.	
1981	Parcel 6-129. Freeneck Gut is narrow and completely forested. Stewart Cemetery surrounded by forest and James Monroe Birthplace scenic loop to the south.	Aerial
	Parcel 6-131. Freeneck Gut is much wider likely due to mining. West end mine is partially reforested. East end is forested around Watts and Smith Cemeteries.	
	Parcel 6-130. Abandoned mine around south tip of Watts Cemetery is partially reforested.	
	Parcel 6-128. SE tip of Smith Cemetery and abandoned mine forested.	
1992-2022	Parcel 6-129. Freeneck Gut appears to have shifted but is still completely forested. Stewart Cemetery surrounded by forest and James Monroe Birthplace scenic loop to the south.	Aerial
	Parcel 6-131. Freeneck Gut has expanded into a pond partially due to mining and to beaver dams, reducing acres from 2.5 to 2.42. West end abandoned mine is reforested but swampy with standing pools. East end is forested around Watts and Smith Cemeteries.	
	Parcel 6-130. Abandoned mine around south tip of Watts Cemetery is reforested but swampy with two large standing pools.	
	Parcel 6-128. Abandoned mine is reforested with some pooling.	
2005	Parcel 6-129. Maiden Stones at Stewart Cemetery were sunken to same degree as in 2022.	Free Lance Star
2007	Parcel 6-129. Displacement of Stewart Cemetery stones had already occurred	WMCAR
2009	Parcel 6-129. Displacement of Stewart Cemetery stones had already occurred. There was no significant tree fall.	Ashton
	Parcel 6-131. Watts Cemetery was free of tree fall. Smith Cemetery plaques on concrete vaults were intact.	
2022	Parcel 6-129. Freeneck Gut is somewhat narrow and deeply incised. Stewart Cemetery is forested with deep bed of leaves, deep burial depressions, and damage from flooding and fallen trees and limbs. Contractor notes flood water rises to the holly trees at the center of the cemetery regularly. FEMA and Sea Level Rise projection maps are out of date.	ERG
	Parcel 6-131. Freeneck Gut is a large pond. West end abandoned mine is swampy forest with standing pools and illegal dumping grounds. East end is open with some trees around Watts and Smith Cemeteries. The Watts Cemetery is sandy and mossy with mostly flat burials. It has experienced damage from a very large fallen tree, which exposed a burial. Both cemeteries are eroding have sunken burials on north side.	
	Parcel 6-130. Abandoned mine around south tip of Watts Cemetery is forested swamp with two large standing pools and significant tree fall.	
	Parcel 6-128. Abandoned mine is forested with pooling.	

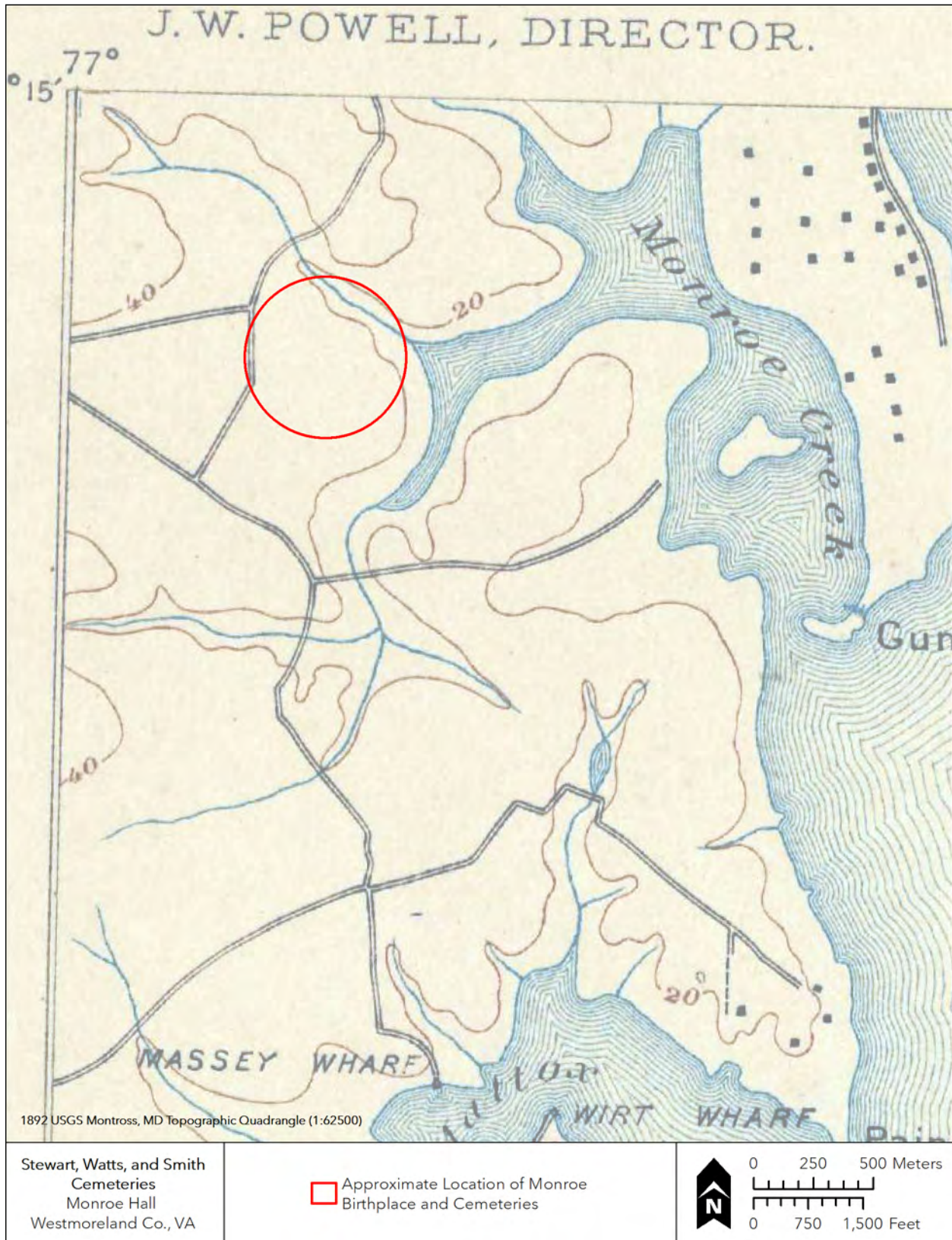


Figure 4.31 Approximate survey area on 1892 topo.



Figure 4.32 Cemeteries and previously identified archaeological sites overlaid on 1932 topo.

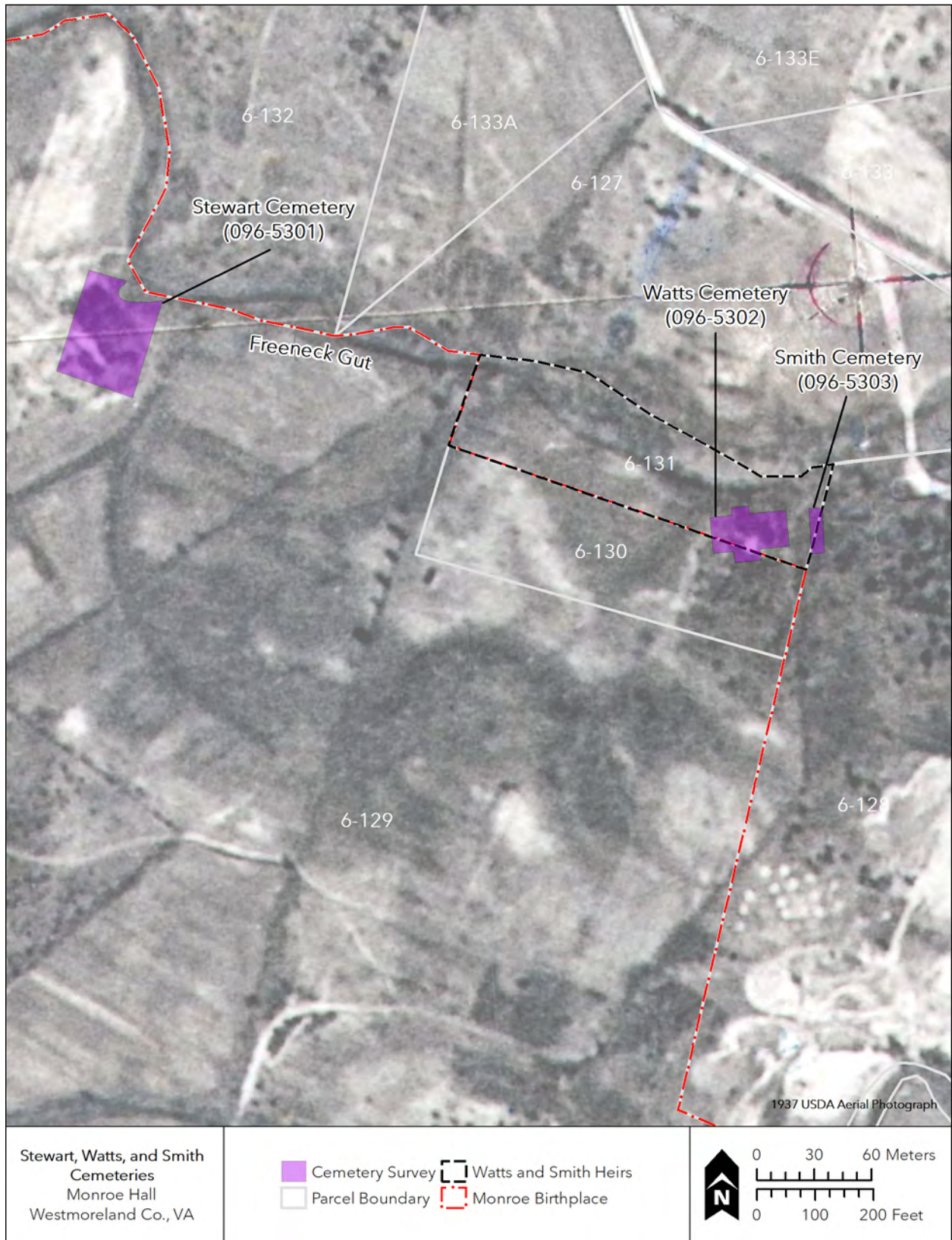


Figure 4.33 Cemeteries overlaid on 1937 aerial.



Figure 4.34 Cemeteries overlaid on 1953 aerial.



Figure 4.35 Cemeteries and previously identified archaeological sites overlaid on 1953 topo.

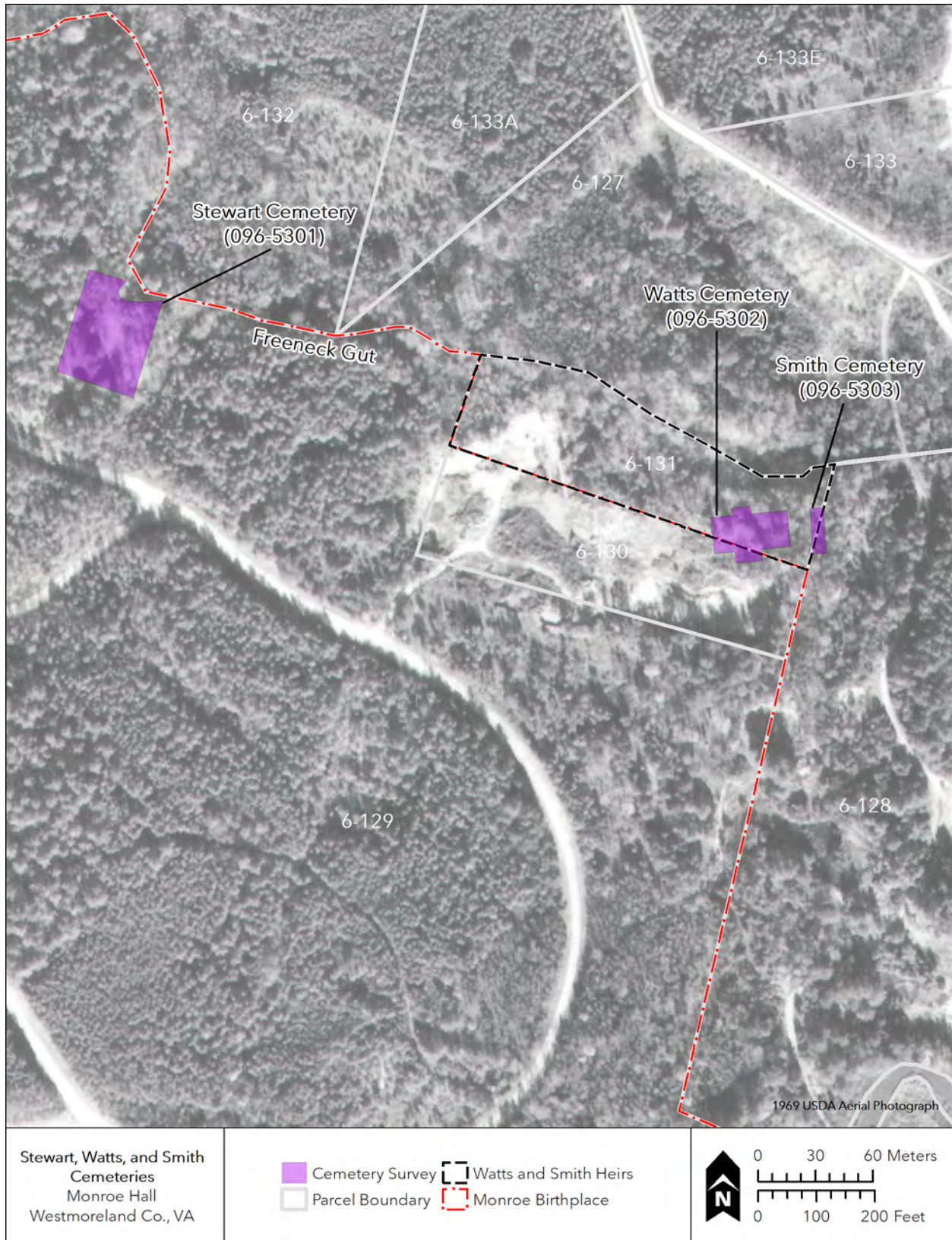


Figure 4.36 Cemeteries overlaid on 1969 aerial.



Figure 4.37 Cemeteries and previously identified archaeological sites overlaid on 1968 topo.

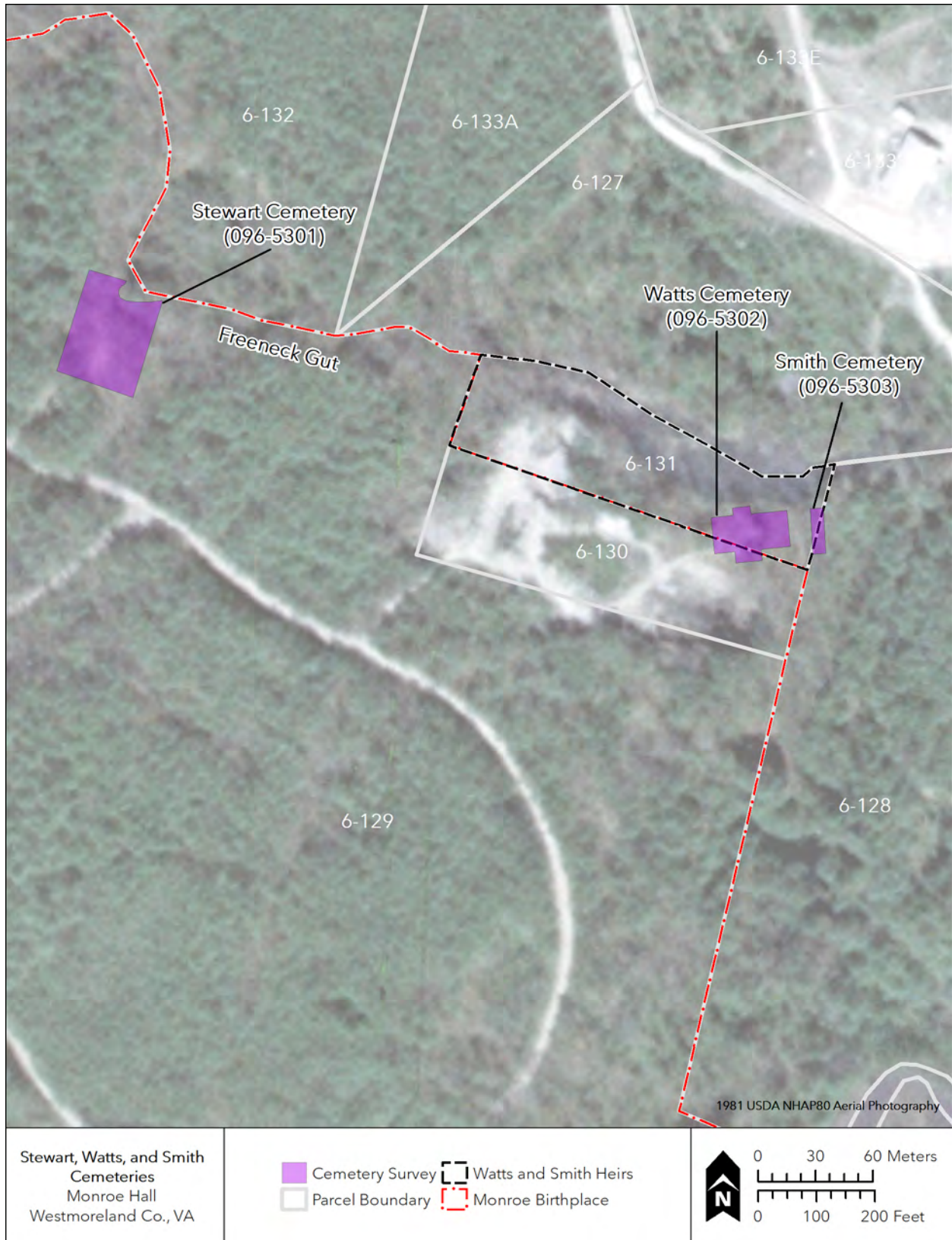


Figure 4.38 Cemeteries overlaid on 1981 aerial.

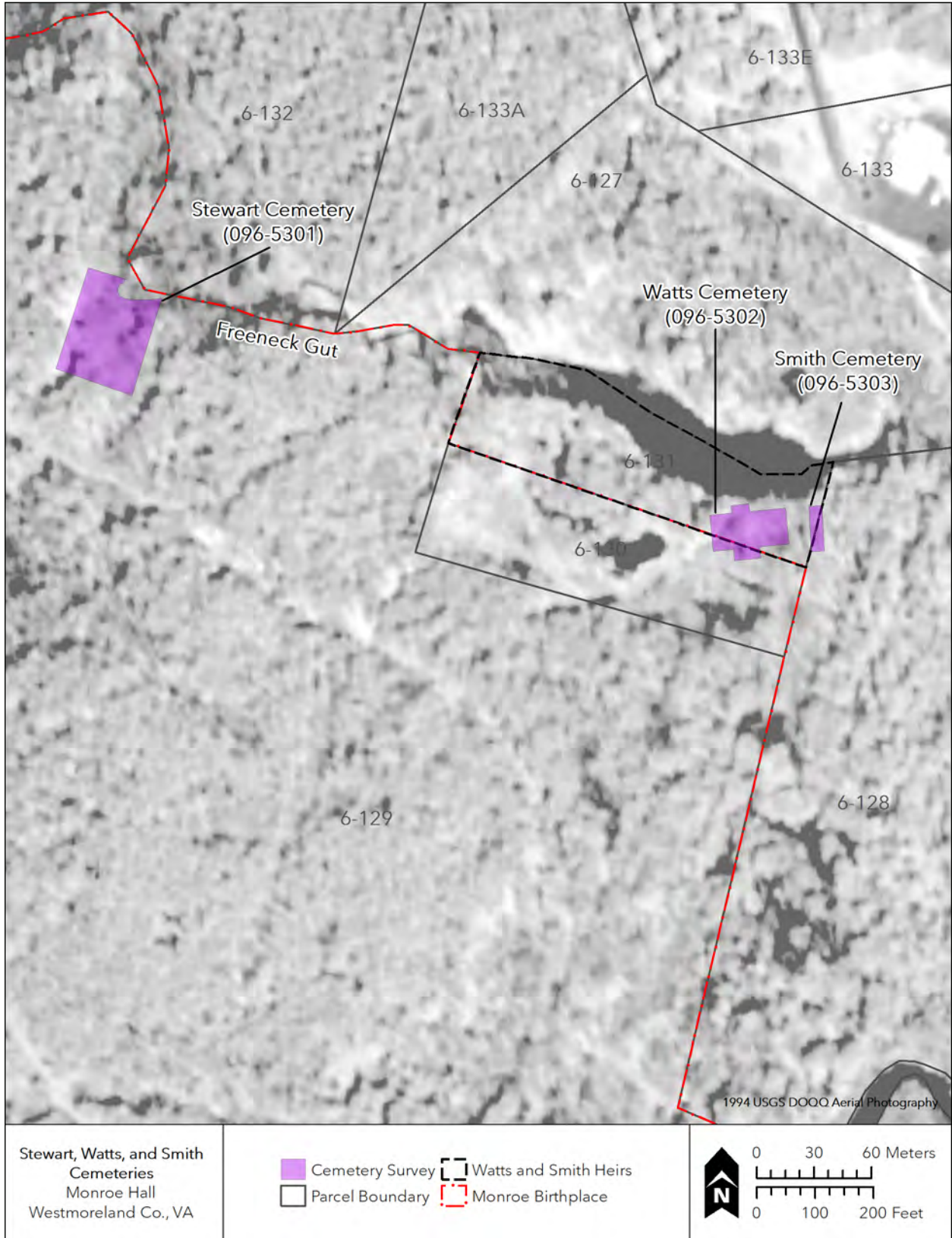


Figure 4.39 Cemeteries overlaid on 1994 aerial.

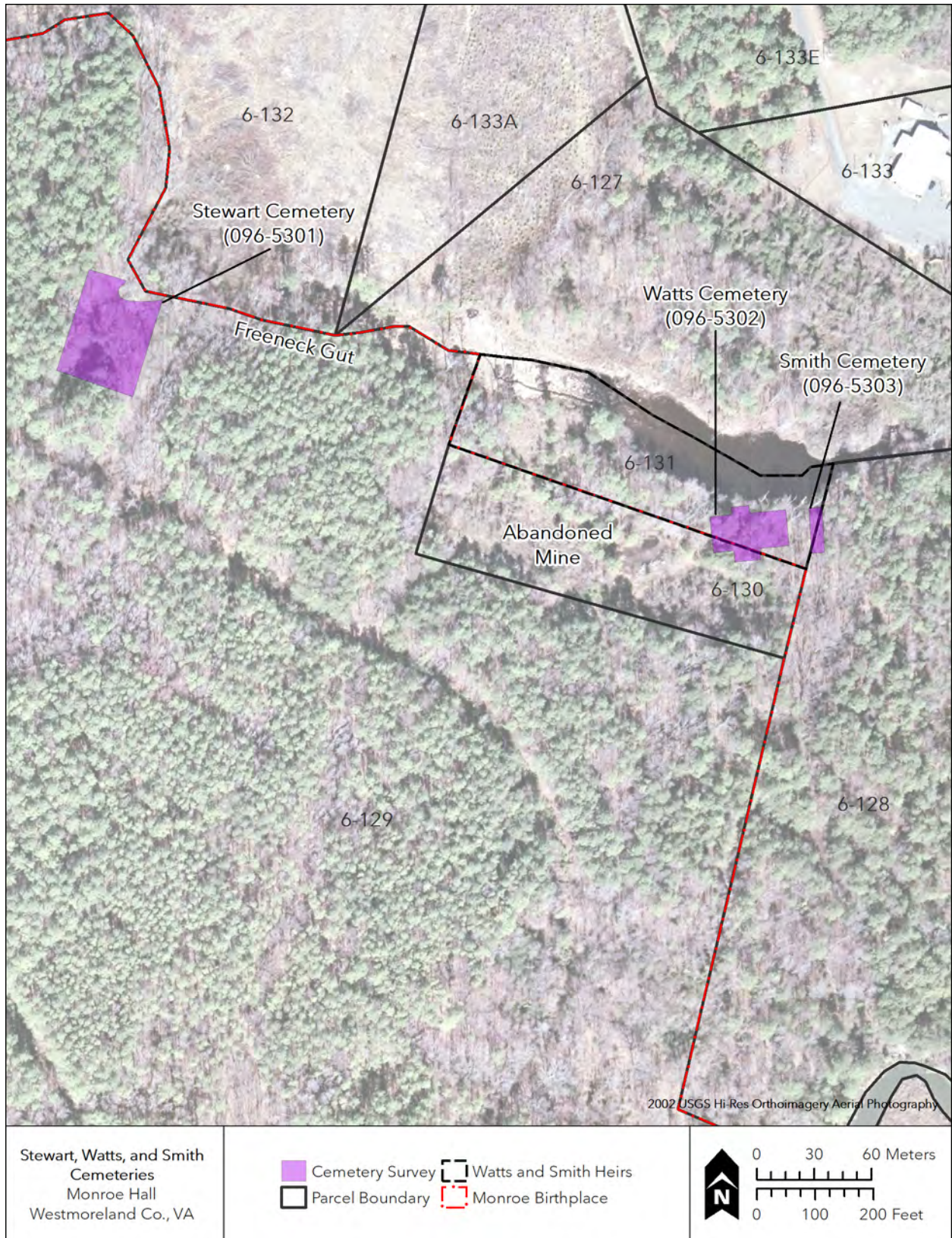


Figure 4.40 Cemeteries overlaid on 2002 aerial.

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CHAPTER 5. CULTURAL CONTEXT

SETTLEMENT AND ENSLAVEMENT (1607-1750)

Under the command of Captain Christopher Newport, English explorers arrived at Cape Comfort at present-day Fort Monroe National Monument in Hampton in 1607. After establishing the Colony of Virginia, the British progressively forced Native Americans out of the lower and middle peninsulas, which were formed by the James, York, and Rappahannock Rivers. Native American men who did not flee were killed, while women and children were enslaved and worked alongside English indentured servants. In 1619, Captain John Colyn Jope brought the first Africans, probably from Kimbundu-speaking West Central Africa (present-day Angola), to present-day Hampton, though major importation and the institution of race-based, hereditary slavery did not become entrenched in the colonies until the end of the century (McCartney 2019; Walsh 2001:149).

Tobacco strains native to Virginia and brought from the West Indies in 1612 quickly became the staple crop and currency for over 150 years. In the coming decades, various laws overseen by the Church of England, the Colonial Virginia Assembly, and agents of the British Crown were passed regulating tobacco, land, slavery, ethnic identity, marriage, voting, and taxation among other facets of life, all of which exclusively favored male, European landowners. As southeast Virginia became crowded, the English established Northumberland County on the northern peninsula in 1645. Stretching from the mouth of the Rappahannock to the headwaters of the Potomac River, the Northern Neck had been designated an Indian District, but with countyhood, Native Americans were again forced west if not killed or enslaved. Settlers of the Colony of Maryland, which was established across the Potomac in 1832, also came to the Northern Neck amidst conflict between Catholic and Protestant leaders.

Though connected to Maryland's Catholic elite, Scottish immigrants Andrew and Elizabeth Monroe (great, great grandparents of fifth U.S. president, James Monroe) sided with Protestants in the conflict and moved to the Northern Neck after Catholics regained control of Maryland in 1646. By 1650, Westmoreland County was established and was further subdivided into additional counties and independent cities in the following decades and centuries as westward movement increased. By his death around 1668, Andrew Monroe acquired 920 acres, including Doctor's Point, southeast of the present-day James Monroe Birthplace and the present-day Stewart, Watts, and Smith Cemeteries (see Figure 1.1). Investigations conducted in the 1930s revealed that there was a Monroe homestead and family cemetery near Doctor's Point, but they had fallen into major disrepair with all headstones removed by a later owner who reused them around his farm (Lewes and Monroe 2006:15). Though they would not have been buried side-by-side, it is likely that a cemetery for persons enslaved by the Monroes would have been somewhere near this area, which is now a subdivision southeast of the James Monroe Birthplace park boundary.

1691-1783: MOUNTJOY-MONROE SETTLEMENT

Andrew Monroe II inherited the northside of Andrew Monroe's land east of Monroe Creek around 1668 and eventually acquired the land including the birthplace west of Monroe Creek in 1693 from his remarried mother and stepfather, Edward Mountjoy (**Table 5.1**). During this period, a 1680 act prohibited enslaved laborers from carrying weapons, meeting in public, and traveling without permission in the Virginia Colony. In 1687, Westmoreland enslaved laborers conspired to kill White enslavers and destroy property within the county and throughout Virginia; known as the Westmoreland Slave Plot, it "was the first conspiracy in

Table 5.1 Owners of birthplace and present-day cemeteries 1691-1783 drawn from previous investigations (Lewes and Monroe 2006, 2009).

Date Acquired	Grantee (relationship to Grantor)	Acres
1691 Patent	Thomas Mountjoy	321 + 94
By 1693	Edward Mountjoy (son or another heir)	321 + 94
1693	Andrew Monroe II (stepson)	400+
By 1713	William Monroe (brother)	400+
1737	Spence Monroe (nephew)	250
1774-1783	James Monroe (son)	550

British North America not to involve White colonists or Native Americans” but certainly not the last with another attempt in Westmoreland County alone occurring in 1688 (Johnson 2022).

By 1713, William Monroe, brother of Andrew II, purchased the birthplace property. William Monroe’s most valuable assets at his death in 1737 were 12 enslaved laborers: Toney, Jack, Robin, man Philip, Tom, Frank, Cate, Sue, Joe, Ben, Jeaney, Sarah Hilliard, a mulatto (Lewes and Monroe 2006:20). During this period, Virginians who lived on the Potomac often purchased enslaved Africans in Maryland to evade the higher duties imposed by the Virginia Colony. Three-quarters of those whose point of origin is documented came to the upper Potomac River region from the upper part of the West African coast (Walsh 2001:145-147).

In 1737, William Monroe left the land containing the birthplace to his nephew, Andrew Monroe II’s son, Spence Monroe (1727-1774), who was then only 10 years old. After he came of age, Spence Monroe took control of the land and married Elizabeth Jones (1730-1772) in 1752, which is when they likely moved to the birthplace. In 1758, they welcomed their son, James Monroe. At this time, the property contained roughly 350 acres, a relatively moderate landholding compared to local elite families such as the Washingtons and Lees. He worked as a cabinetmaker and farmer, relying on a number of enslaved laborers. An appraisal of the Monroe’s estate after Spence and Elizabeth’s deaths in 1772 and 1774 included ten exploited individuals: Peter, Joe, Cuffee, Kate, Fanny, Nell & Child, Mud, Ralph, and Daphny. The appraisal also records a Samuel Cooper, who might have been an overseer, tradesman, or indentured servant (Lewes and Monroe 2006:25).

COLONY TO NATION (1751-1789)

Just before the outbreak of the American Revolutionary War (1775-1783), James Monroe, then 16, and his brother, Andrew, each inherited 175 acres and one enslaved laborer from their father, Spence Monroe. Their sister in Caroline County inherited multiple enslaved people. James Monroe’s portion of the land included his birthplace and the present-day Stewart, Watts, and Smith cemeteries. With his uncle’s guidance James left for William and Mary College in 1774 but soon joined the Continental Army, which he served until 1880 (Lewes and Monroe 2006:26). While away, he increased his landholdings around the birthplace and published an advertisement for the sale of “about 500 acres” with “a dwelling house with a passage and several rooms below and above, with a kitchen, barn, stables, and other necessary out-houses on Monroe’s Creek” (*Virginia Gazette* 30 Dec 1780). At this time, he moved back to Williamsburg where he studied law under Thomas Jefferson 1780-1783 and never returned to live in Westmoreland.

1783-1849: POST-MONROE ABSENTEE INVESTORS

Just as James Monroe finished his study of law, he sold all of his Westmoreland County land, including his birthplace and the land containing the present-day cemeteries, to Gawen Corbin, who was associated with the Lee family among other upper-class enslavers in the Northern Neck and middle peninsula (**Table 5.2**). Invested heavily in Caroline and Spotsylvania counties, Corbin appears to have purchased the former Monroe property as an investment and may have leased it to tenants or left management to an overseer with enslaved workers (Lewes and Monroe 2006:29).

Table 5.2 Owners of birthplace and present-day cemeteries 1783-1871 drawn from previous investigations (Ford 2015:7; Lewes and Monroe 2006, 2009).

Date Acquired	Grantee (relationship to Grantor)	Acres
1783	Gawen Corbin	550
1799	Henry 'Light Horse Harry' Lee of Westmoreland Co.	550 + 312
1799	Isaac Pollock of Washington, D.C.	862
1801	Marcia Burns	862
1802	John P. Van Ness (husband of Marcia Burns) of Washington, D.C.	862
1847	Richard Smith (trustee for Van Ness heirs of Washington, D.C. and New York)	862
1849	Thomas R. Ditty and Joseph F. Harvey of Westmoreland Co.	862
1853	George W. Bourne and Henry W. Kingsberry of Kennebunk, Maine	862
1857	Joshua and Thomas B. Reamy of Stafford Co. and Randall B. Sutton of Westmoreland Co.	836
1868	Henry B. Gouldman	706
1868	Robert Bell, Jr. and Samuel Baker of Alexandria, Virginia	706
1868	George W. Haines of Washington, D.C.	654

EARLY NATIONAL PERIOD (1790-1829)

As the American Revolution came to an end, the newly organized Commonwealth of Virginia passed an act allowing the manumission of enslaved labor in 1782. Despite their prominent role in the American Revolution and drafting a constitution that promised freedom and equality for all, the founding fathers, including James Monroe, and much of their families kept most if not all of their workers enslaved during their lifetimes even when they questioned the morality of it, because they could not maintain their level of wealth and privilege without them. However, other enslavers as well as abolitionists who purchased people for the sole reason of freeing them took advantage of the new law. Most notably, beginning in 1791, the descendant of the wealthiest and largest landholding family in the colonies, Robert Carter III, emancipated more than 500 of his slaves from Nomini Hall, 30 miles southeast of the survey area in Westmoreland County. It was "the largest number ever manumitted by an individual in the U.S." (Nomini Hall Slave Legacy 2022).

With manumission, the free Black population of Virginia grew steadily, which in 1793, prompted the commonwealth to prohibit immigration of free Blacks from other states, while requiring free Blacks in-state to register themselves with the court every three years. Threatened by continued slave rebellions and an expanding free population, other restrictions on Blacks were enforced in the coming decades. Effective January 1, 1808, Congress banned the importation of enslaved people, which raised their value, discouraged further manumissions, and fueled a domestic trade, which further separated and devastated Black enslaved families (Williams et al. 2017:32). By the next decade, prominent European American figures from Westmoreland County, including the Washingtons and Monroes, played a part in the organization of the American Colonization Society (ACS) in 1816. ACS sought to free Blacks while requiring them to move to a colony in Monrovia in present-day Liberia, though most were many generations removed from that continent and ended up not being physically or mentally prepared for the transition (Seagrave 2012).

As the founding fathers struggled with how to handle the evil of slavery and maintain their way of life, Virginia entered into a regional recession as soils were exhausted and Revolutionary War and War of 1812 veterans were given large land grants on untapped tracts west of the Appalachian Mountains. Northerners noticed and began investing in cheap property in the South well before the Civil War (Maas 2021). After Corbin and a very brief period of ownership by Henry Lee in 1799, the estate grew in acreage but declined in condition as it changed hands multiple times between non-residents, who primarily lived in Washington, D.C. and as far north as Maine (see Table 5.2). Later sales notices indicate that the property was used for harvesting timber for ship building, which was a major industry upriver in Alexandria in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries; whether it was occupied by tenants or enslaved labor is uncertain but unlikely (Lewes and Monroe 2006:29; Williams et al. 2017).

ANTEBELLUM PERIOD (1830-1860)

In 1835, *A New and Comprehensive Gazetteer of Virginia, and the District of Columbia* noted that the 1830 population of the county included 3,718 “whites, 3,845 slaves, and 848 free persons of color” (Martin et al. 1835:291). It also described Westmoreland County as the Athens of Virginia due to the number of European American leaders born there and noted the location and significance of the birthplace of James Monroe, by then the fifth President of the United States (1817-1825). A woodcut of the modest house, thought to have been drawn before 1820, appeared in other contemporary publications (Monroe and Lewes 2009:19).

Leading up to the Civil War (1861-1865), abolitionists sentiments grew as free African Americans remained subject to increasing restrictions and enslaved and formerly enslaved individuals began to have their stories widely published (Johnson 2022).

1849-1871: MONROE HALL INVESTORS

Not until 1849 did locals, Thomas R. Ditty and Joseph F. Harvey of Westmoreland County, purchase the Monroe birthplace, though it too was for an investment, and they soon sold it to George W. Bourne and Henry W. Kingsberry of Kennebunk, Maine (see Table 5.2). They only retained the land for four years. In 1857, the property was referred to as “Monroe Hall” for the first time. In the sales advertisement, the 836 acres was described as having poor soils and poor conditions, because it had for “50 or 60 years [been] in the hands of nonresident owners” using it for timber (Alexandria Gazette 11 Aug 1857).

CIVIL WAR (1861-1865)

During the Civil War (1861-865), 34 African American men from Westmoreland County joined the Union Army (Johnson 2022). The land around the birthplace likely continued to be vacant throughout the remainder of the antebellum period and Civil War evident in previous investigations of the property that reveal the birthplace was in disrepair and the African American dwelling sites within the current James Monroe birthplace park date to the late nineteenth century (Monroe and Lewes 2009; Ford 2015).

RECONSTRUCTION TO JIM CROW (1866-1945)

Between 1865 and 1870, the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to the U.S. Constitution abolished slavery, provided equal rights to all male citizens, and guaranteed voting rights for all men. In 1870, Virginia was readmitted into the Union, and a new state Constitution was adopted. In the early years of Reconstruction before the establishment of discriminatory real estate and urban planning practices, newly freed Blacks purchased property from born-free Blacks, cash-strapped former enslavers, and immigrant and Northern land speculators like those who owned Monroe Hall. Cities and rural areas were fairly integrated in terms of distribution of the population, while schools and churches were segregated. The latter was at the decision of the Black community, who had been prohibited from having their own worship spaces before the Civil War and had held services in secret in forests and along streams. Whites made Blacks sit in balconies or the back of White churches or, in more progressive areas, allowed them to have their own church with White chaperones, because they recognized that Black churches provided education, hope, and a meeting place to organize rebellions. After the war, the Black church served as the center of industrial urban neighborhoods and agricultural rural communities like Monroe Hall, initially providing the space needed for newly required public schools, which did not receive adequate funding (Williams et al. 2017; Maas 2021).

1871-1941: AFRICAN AMERICAN VILLAGE OF MONROE HALL

Twentieth century maps identify the African American community of Monroe Hall as being primarily southwest of the present-day James Monroe Birthplace park boundary, yet historically, many Monroe Hall residents also lived within and adjacent to the park along James Monroe Highway (State Route 205) and Old Road (Route 632). After the Civil War, the 706-acre Monroe Hall property “was all in timber except 50 acres around the old mansion building” (Alexandria Gazette 8 Aug 1868). Though referred to as a mansion in an 1868 sale notice, other records indicate that the birthplace was in ruins by then (Egloff and McCartney 1976:52). By the end of 1868, the acreage was reduced from 706 to 654 after changing hands three times in one year (Lewes and Monroe 2006:30) (see Table 5.2). The last to purchase it that year, George W. Haines of Washington, D.C. cleared most timber, subdivided Monroe Hall, and over several decades sold parcels to African American families who established a thriving community, maintaining small market farms, opening shops, and working in the oyster industry with the men on the water and the women shucking. They included the Stewarts, Watts, and Smiths (**Tables 5.3-5.5; Figure 5.1**).



Figure 5.1 East to West. Blue area is 23 of 43 acres owned by George Smith 1871-1877 and James Watts and heirs 1877-1936. Yellow area is 38 acres owned by Moses Watts family 1879-1936. Red area is 38 acres owned by Samuel Stewart and heirs 1879-1926 (Portion of figure prepared by Ford 2015).

Table 5.3 Owners of Parcel 6-131, which contain the bulk of the present-day Watts and Smith Cemeteries, drawn from previous investigations and Westmoreland County property records (Monroe and Lewes 2009).

Date Acquired	Grantee (relationship to Grantor)	Acres
1871	George and Sallie Smith of [Nomini Grove], Westmoreland Co.	43
1877	James and Alice Key Watts	23
ca 1910	James Henry Watts (son)	23
1936	James Henry and Susan Johnson Watts	2.5
1978	Leo Toliver Johnson and Ganey Johnson (Watts' stepsons)	2.5
1989	Ellen S. Toliver (wife of Leo) and Ganey Johnson	2.5
1996	Etta Mae [Johnson] Lucas (niece) and Ganey Johnson Estate	2.5

Table 5.4 Owners of present-day Stewart Cemetery Reserve (Parcel 6.129) drawn from previous investigations and Westmoreland County property records (Monroe and Lewes 2009).

Date Acquired	Grantee (relationship to Grantor)	Acres
1872	Samuel Stewart and Moses Watts of [Nomini Grove], Westmoreland Co.	84
1879	Samuel and Margaret Stewart	38.73
ca 1890	The Rev. Cornelius B. and Martha Anna Stewart, Sr. (son)	38.73
1926	Cornelius B. Stewart, Jr. (son) and siblings	38.73
1929	Stewart Heirs	0.5

Table 5.5 Stewart, Watts, and Smith 1880 property assessment and agricultural production in Monroe Hall (USCB; Ford 2015).

	Improved Acreage	Unimproved Acreage	Value of Farm Land / Buildings	Value of Farm Implements	Value of Livestock	Value of Productions	Horses	Oxen	Milk Cow	Lbs. Cheese	Pigs	Barnyard Poultry	Eggs produced	Corn / bushels	Oats / bushels	Wheat / bushels
George Smith	18	2	\$200	\$15	\$150	\$108	2	4	2	26	1	16	60	175	-	8
James Watts	20	-	\$200	\$15	\$90	\$137	1	4	1	-	-	15	60	250	-	10
Moses Watts	15	23	\$190	\$5	\$60	\$150	1	2	2	-	4	9	36	300	-	14
Samuel Stewart	33	5	\$266	\$12	\$105	\$180	1	4	2	12	3	13	75	275	6	13

1871-1936: GEORGE SMITH-JAMES WATTS PARCEL

1871-1877: GEORGE AND SALLIE SMITH

In 1871, George and Mary Haines sold over 43 acres "lying on Monroe Creek' and 'being a part of a tract of land known as Monroe Hall'" to George Smith (WMDB 39:1). In 1870 (USCB), George Smith was a Black carpenter who lived in Nomini Grove near Nomini Hall 30 miles southeast with his wife Sallie and five children, Henderson Smith (c 1857), Peggy Smith (c 1860), Henry Smith (c 1862), Margaret Smith (c 1865), and George Smith (c 1870). By 1880 (USCB), George and his wife Sallie had four more children, Kate Smith (c 1871), Lilly Smith (c 1873), Frederick Smith (c 1875), and Harrieta Smith (c 1879).

In 1877, while keeping 20 acres, the Smiths sold 23 of their 43-plus acres to James Watts (WMDB 41:442). They and their children settled beyond the current James Monroe Birthplace park boundary and Lucas-Ganey property boundary, likely on present-day Parcel 6-128, though a chain of title has not been conducted for this parcel. The Smith's original parcel included the present-day Watts and Smith cemeteries, the latter of which is where their grandson Canyon Smith (1910-1980) and many of his children and grandchildren are buried.

1877-CA 1910: JAMES AND ALICE KEY WATTS

Most of James Watts 23-acre property is now in the easternmost part of the James Monroe Birthplace, but 2.42 acres in the northeast corner, which includes part of the Watts Cemetery (096-5302) and Smith Cemetery (096-5303), is still privately owned by descendants. Previous investigations of the birthplace have identified an unnamed African American house site (44WM0288) and the James Watts House Site (44WM0310) with late nineteenth century and early twentieth century artifacts within his land in the park boundary (Ford 2015).

James Watts (c 1835) was born in Westmoreland County to Emanuel and Hannah Watts. Moses Watts, who purchased the land immediately west, may have been a brother or cousin. By the time he moved to Monroe Hall in 1880, James was a twice widowed farmer with five children, Emanuel (c 1860), Lawrence (c 1862), Catherine (c 1864), Margaret (c 1878) and James Lewis (c 1879). Six years later, he married for a third time to Alice Key with whom he had at least eight more children while living in Monroe Hall between 1880 and 1910, James Henry (1890-1978), Hannah (c 1892), Causemore (c 1894), Mary (c 1897), Maggie (c 1899), Mabel (c 1902), John (c 1904), and Cornelia (c 1907). By 1890, James became a minister.

By 1910, George Smith and James Watts purchased an additional 162 acres in Monroe Hall from George Haines (Porter 1937: Appendix I). After his parents died sometime between 1907 and 1910, James Henry Watts, who was born on the fourth of July in 1890 and buried at the Watts Cemetery, became head of the household and took care of his younger siblings.

CA 1910-1978: JAMES HENRY AND SUSAN JOHNSON WATTS

After his parents died around 1910, James Henry Watts (1890-1978) and his sibling inherited the land containing the present-day Watts and Smith cemeteries. He married Susie Johnson, in 1914. By 1920, they lived outside of the survey areas with her father, Dennis Johnson; her younger sister, Mary F. Johnson; and their two children Leo (c 1911) and Ganey (c 1912). James worked as a dredger and waterman in the seafood industry, while Susie worked as a laundress.

1872-1929: MOSES WATTS-SAMUEL STEWART PARCEL

1872-1879: MOSES WATTS & SAMUEL STEWART

In 1872, George and Mary Haines sold another parcel of the former Monroe plantation containing 84 acres and the Monroe "mansion" to Moses Watts and Samuel Stewart (WMDB 39:407). Stewart worked as a farmer and Watts as a plasterer (USCB 1870; 1880). Neither built anything on the property in the 1870s according to tax records (Lewes and Monroe 2006:30).

Prior to purchasing the land, in 1870, Samuel Stewart (c 1810), like Smith and Watts, operated a farm with an estimated personal estate of \$125 in Nomini Grove. He lived there with his wife Margaret "Peggy" (c 1820) and three children who labored on the farm: Cornelius (1852-1926), Hannah (c 1857), and George (c 1858) (USCB 1870). A Mary Watts (c 1857) is also listed in the 1870 household, while a Mary Watts (c 1858) is listed in Moses Watts' household two dwellings away in Nomini Grove.

In 1879, Stewart and Moses Watts verbally agreed to divide their 84 acres into equal parts of 38.73 acres. Stewart settled the northwest half on "Irish Neck Road," including the foundations of the Monroe residence and the present-day Stewart Cemetery, and Moses Watts took the southeast half, which was a pie piece wedged in between Stewart and James Watts (Monroe and Lewes 2009:30; WMDB 98:278). Evident from archival research and previous investigations, the Stewarts and Watts moved from Nomini Grove to Monroe Hall around that time.

1879-1936: MOSES STEWART AND HEIRS

There are no cemeteries documented or sites recorded within the park boundary on the former land of Moses Watts, and where he is buried is unknown, therefore, he may be interred in an unmarked burial at one of the cemeteries, where many of his direct descendants are located. His estate was the subject of a chancery suit in the 1930s. James Watts, who purchased the land immediately east, may have been a brother or cousin.

Moses (c 1820) married Mary Watts with whom he had at least four children, Mary, Jr. (c 1858), Moses, Jr. (c 1854-1924), Gabriel (c 1861), and Robert (c 1862). Mary Watts, Jr. had two children who used the last name Watts, Rachel (c 1874) and Daniel (c 1879). Daniel Watts married an Eliza with whom he had at least five children. They are the parents of the Rev. William Lloyd Watts, who is buried in the Watts Cemetery.

1879-CA 1890: SAMUEL & MARGARET "PEGGY" STEWART

Within the 38.73-acre Stewart parcel, previous investigations have identified an unnamed African American house site (44WM0287) and the Stewart House Site within the James Monroe Birthplace site boundary (44WM0038), where the Stewarts are thought to have converted the Monroe well into a trash pit. These sites contain artifacts dating to the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century within the park boundaries. The Stewart Cemetery consists of a 0.5-acre reserve in a wooded area by Freeneck Gut in the central northern part of the former Stewart parcel within the park boundary (see Chapter 4 Figures). The selection of a burial site in the woods near a stream was in keeping with the spiritual practices of antebellum times when free and enslaved African Americans were not allowed to have their own churches and worshiped together in secret in such places.

The year after they moved to Monroe Hall, Samuel and Peggy Stewart's 1880 household included their youngest son George (c 1858) and a grandson Emanuel Carter (c 1867), who was interviewed in his old age about the location of the birthplace and was likely the son of Hannah. In 1885, Samuel's younger son, George Stewart, married Matilda Smith. His eldest, Cornelius B. Stewart, Sr. (1852-1926), farmed land perhaps within the same 38.73-acre parcel, though he was head of a different household. He married Martha Ann Smith on June 30, 1875, and had two children by 1880, Hannah (c 1874) and Ida (c 1877) (Virginia, U.S., Marriage Registers, 1853-1935). By 1890, a Stewart building was valued at \$150 in the tax records (Lewes and Monroe 2006:30).

CA 1890-1926: THE REV. CORNELIUS B. & MARTHA ANN SMITH STEWART

Between 1880 and 1900, Samuel and Peggy Stewart died. By 1900, George Stewart remarried to Sallie Taliferro/Toliver (a named tied to an antebellum family with large slave holdings and the Watts Cemetery). His brother, Cornelius Stewart, Sr., had become a prominent figure in both Monroe Hall and Colonial Beach where he served as Pastor of the First Baptist Church. In 1905, the *Richmond Times Dispatch*, a White news source in the former Confederate capital, wrote, "Rev. Cornelius Stewart, the colored divine, who owns and occupies a portion of the plantation in Westmoreland on which President Monroe was born, enjoys the distinction of having seventeen living children" (*Richmond Times Dispatch* 12 Nov 1905). Only seven have been identified in census records. In 1900, Ida had either died or moved, while Hannah remained at home with five younger siblings, Josephine (c 1881), Tuler (c 1883), Cornelius B., Jr. (1888-1954), Katie (c 1899), and Matilda (1892-1964). Some of these children have metal funeral home markers in the Stewart Cemetery and some may account for the unmarked burials.

Rev. Stewart was included in the newspaper's society column due to his ownership of the Monroe birthplace. It noted, he "is a widely known darkey, and is seen and 'interviewed' by nearly all sight-seers who visit the old Monroe birthplace" (*Richmond Times Dispatch* 12 Nov 1905). Published earlier that year, the *News Leader* reported:

The Rev. Cornelius Stewart has completed the arrangements for removing the bricks from the ancient well in the yard of historic Monroe hall... The time-honored well is said to have been dug by direction and partly under the supervision of President Monroe. Its original depth was seventy-five feet, and it is walled from bottom to top with bricks. The bricks recovered from it will be carried to the town of Colonial Beach and used in building flues, &c [sic] (*News Leader* 2 Feb 1905).

By 1909, Rev. Stewart and his brother, George, acquired an additional 162 acres in Monroe Hall from George Haines, as had George Smith and James Watts (Porter 1937: Appendix I). By 1910 (USCB), Martha Ann Stewart died. The widowed Rev. Stewart owned his farm and house mortgage free and lived with his brother George; his children, Cornelius, Jr., Matilda Stewart Tinsley, and Kate; his son-in-law, Lee Tinsley, who was an oysterman (c 1888).

Cornelius Bennet Stewart, Jr. worked "odd jobs" while living with his father. He married a Hattie on October 1, 1913. He served in France in Company I, 367th Infantry in World War I (1914-1918) (U.S. Army Passenger List). After his return to Monroe Hall, Cornelius, Jr. is thought to have removed the remaining bricks from the Monroe birthplace for use at various building sites in Monroe Hall, including the New Monrovia Baptist Church (*Northern Neck News* 11 March 1938; Monroe and Lewes 2009:31).

MONROE HALL CEMETERIES

POST 1879: STEWART CEMETERY

One of the earliest burials identified within the three documented cemeteries belongs to "REV. C. STUART" who died in 1926; however, unmarked burials and ones that have washed away likely date to as early as the late nineteenth century after Samuel Stewart established his farm around 1879. The family situated the cemetery in a wooded area by Freeneck Gut in the central northern part of the former Stewart parcel (see Chapter 4 Figures). The selection of a burial site in the woods near a stream was in keeping with the spiritual practices of antebellum times when free and enslaved African Americans were not allowed to have their own churches and worshiped together in such places. Following the funeral held at the Reconstruction-era First Baptist Church of Colonial Beach, the *Northern Neck News* reported, "We are sorry to learn of the death of Rev Cornelius Stewart, a very high esteemed colored citizen..." whose funeral was "attended by a large number of white as well as colored people" (*Northern Neck News* 22 Jan 1926).

Following Stewart's death, his land became subject of a chancery suit, Charlotte Severn vs. Stewart heirs, and was advertised for sale at public auction July 1928. In 1929, Charles E. Stuart and his wife Clara, a White couple who owned Stratford Hall, purchased at public auction 0.54-acre road access and six acres thought to contain the James Monroe Birthplace site. They also purchased two surrounding lots, 0.96 acre and 0.4 acre, while Blake T. and Bertha Newton acquired the surrounding 24 acres minus 0.5 acre reserved as a cemetery for the Stewart heirs. In 1933, a deed of partition of the former Stewart land was filed (**Figure 5.2**). In 1934, the Stuarts sold Stratford Hall to the United Daughters of the Confederacy to memorialize the Lee family, and in 1941, they and Newton sold the Stewart parcels minus the 0.5-acre cemetery reserve to JMMF's predecessor for the birthplace park (Lewes and Monroe 2006:34). After acquisition by the memorial association, all buildings associated with African American occupancy were likely removed or demolished by neglect. The 1937 aerial of the properties illustrate tilled farmed fields, a narrow Freeneck Gut, and a rectangular stand of trees around the Stewart Cemetery (see Chapter 4).

To the southwest, the heirs of Harriet [Hannah Stewart] Cunningham (Henrietta Brown, Ida Newman, and Annie Maiden) owned Lot 1. Matilda [Stewart] Tinsley [later Campbell] owned Lot 2. Kate [Stewart] Maiden owned Lot 3. Lula [Stewart] Beckett owned Lot 4. The daughters and granddaughters of Rev. Stewart were respected community leaders in home demonstration clubs, which provided practical advice on home and agricultural improvements to local farm families (*Northern Neck News*). Some of them and their children were definitively buried in Stewart Cemetery along with Cornelius Stewart, Jr. And some may be buried there without markers.

POST 1877: WATTS CEMETERY

The earliest burial identified in the Watts Cemetery is contemporary with Rev. Stewart; Maggie F. Richards, daughter of Austin Maiden and husband of Musker Richards, died October 10, 1926. Her exact connection to Annie Maiden was not identified during this survey. Twenty out of the 47 burials documented for this survey have no markers or illegible markers and may date to as early as 1879 when James and Alice Key Watts moved to Monroe Hall from Nomini Grove. Like the Stuarts, with whom family members likely intermarried, the Watts situated their family cemetery in a wooded area by Freeneck Gut (see Chapter 4 Figures).

Also like the Stewarts, in 1936, the Watts property became subject of a chancery suit, *Mary Tyler Cole vs. Christine Watts et al.* Mary Cole was a White woman from North Dakota, who later married the Monroe Birthplace booster, Judge Watt Mayo. In the suit, James Henry Watts was granted 2.5 acres, which contain most of the Watts and Smith Cemeteries; Christine Watts was granted 2.5 acres, which contains the south tip of the Watts Cemetery; and Mary Cole acquired the remaining 18 acres along with Moses Watts' land (WMDB 93:344) (**Figure 5.3**).

The son of James Henry Watts (1890-1978) left all of his property, including the 2.5-acre parcel with cemeteries, to his wife Susie Johnson Watts. In the event of her death in 1967, he left it to his stepsons, Leo Toliver Johnson and Ganey Johnson in 1978 (WC WB 277:679). Leo Toliver Johnson married Ellen M. Toliver. After Leo's death in 1989, she remarried to Willie James Dickerson and, in 1996, conveyed her share to Etta Mae Lucas, the niece of Charles E. Johnson (1932-2005) and daughter of Mary I. "Tulley" Johnson (1942-2002), in consideration of love and affection (WC DB 455:562).

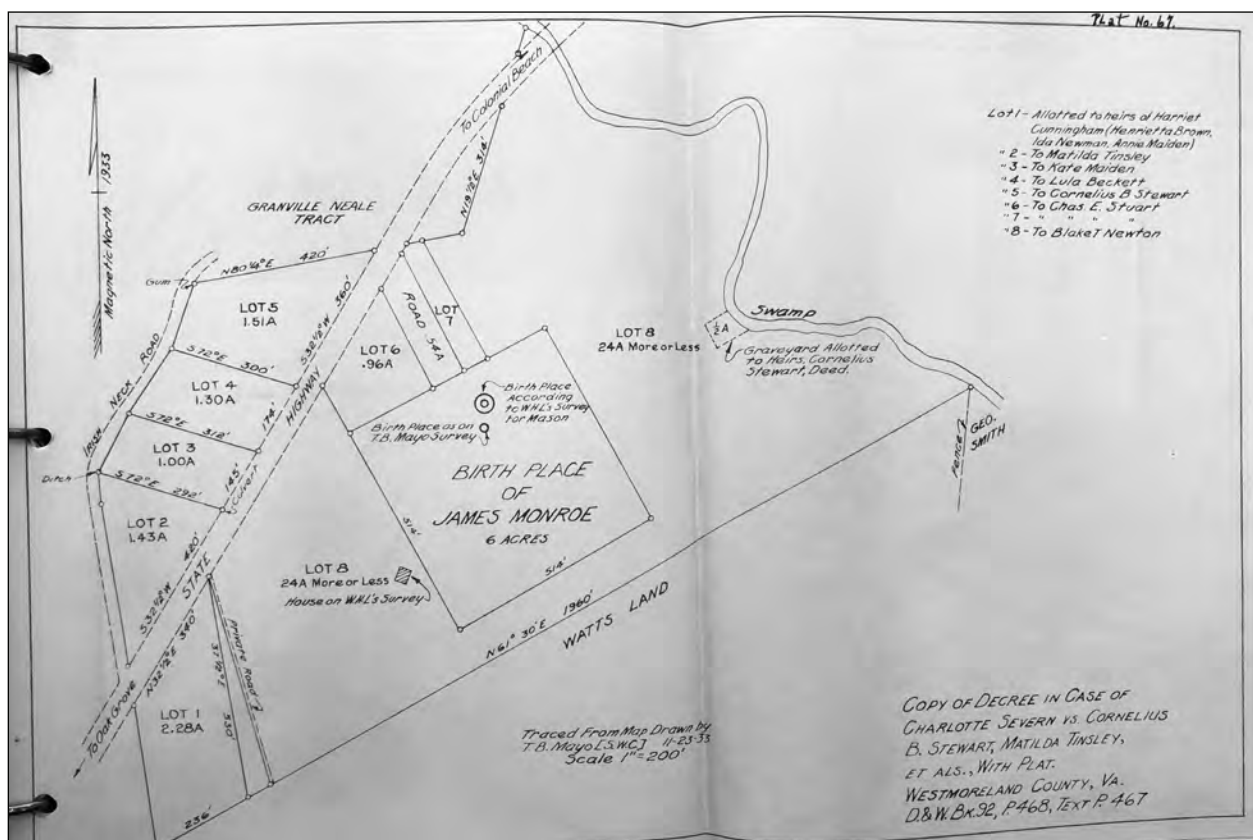


Figure 5.2 Tracing of plat surveyed by T.B. Mayo November 23, 1933, showing Samuel Stewart's 1879 farm subdivided, including 0.5-acre Stewart Cemetery reserve, lots owned by multiple Samuel Stewart heirs interred at the cemetery, and five lots acquired for the Monroe Birthplace Memorial (Porter 1937 from WC DB 92:467).

POST 1871: SMITH CEMETERY

The earliest known burial in the Smith Cemetery is 1969 with the next known one not dating till 1980; however, archival records suggest that there could be much earlier burials that are not readily evident or were destroyed by mid-twentieth century sand and gravel mining that abuts the cemetery. Interents are primarily third generation and fourth generations Smiths, being the great grandchildren of Monroe Hall settlers, George (ca 1830) and Sallie (ca 1840) Smith; the grandchildren of Henderson Smith (c 1857) and Maggie Key; and the children of Canyon "Cannon Ball" (1910-1980) and Ardell Johnson (1915-1988). The Wests, Fortunes, and Beverly's married fourth generation Smiths.

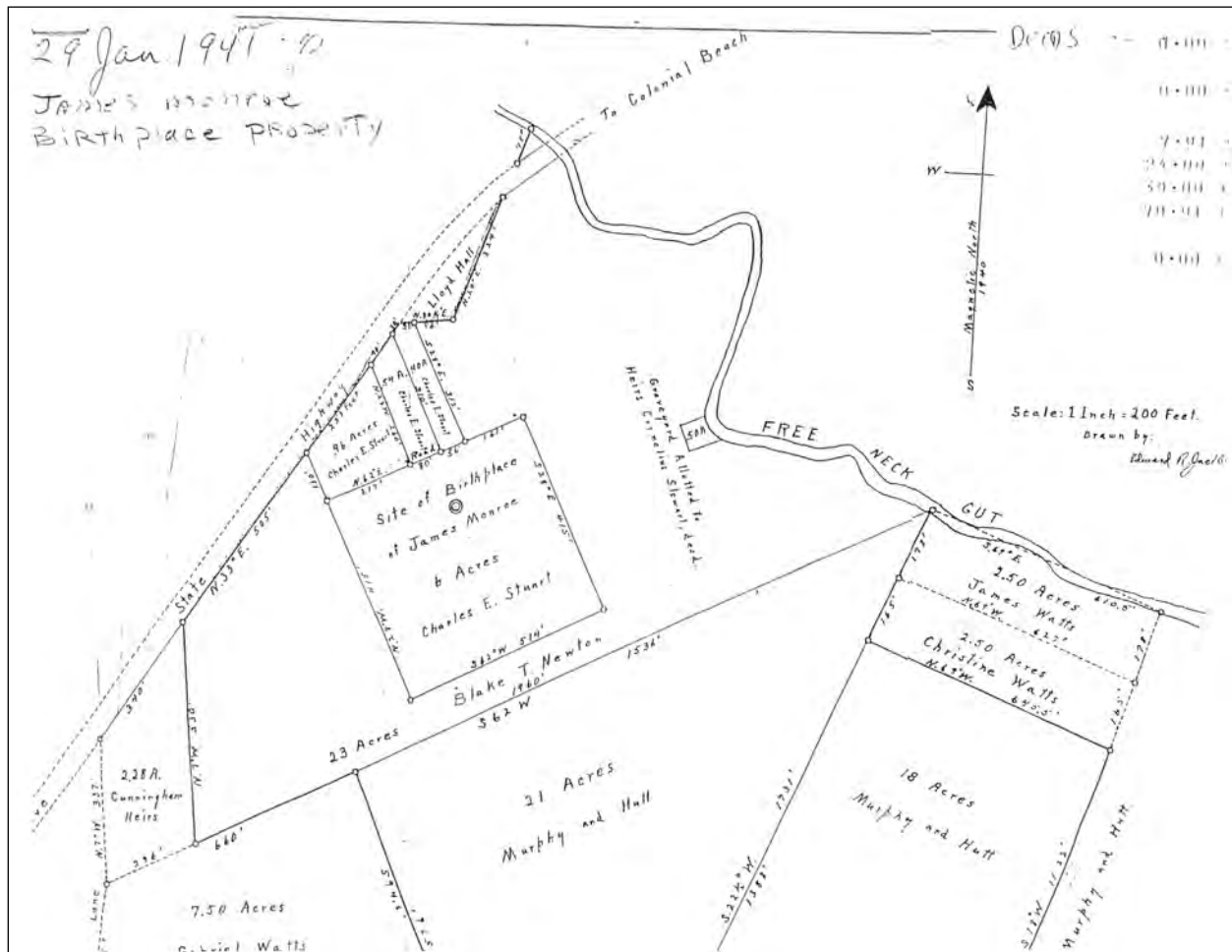


Figure 5.3 Plat of James Monroe Birthplace Property January 29, 1941, showing Stewart Cemetery Reserve and the James Watts 2.5-acre parcel containing the Watts and Smith Cemeteries (WCDB).

1929-PRESENT: MINING AND THE JAMES MONROE BIRTHPLACE

Coinciding with the Jim Crow era and increasing violence towards African Americans and immigrants in the early twentieth century, the movement to preserve sites and install monuments relating to White American leaders was in full swing. In Westmoreland County, the George Washington Birthplace National Monument was established by the NPS in 1931, while plans were underway to preserve the James Monroe Birthplace and Stratford Hall, the latter because of its architecture and association with the Lee family, who were intertwined with the Washingtons and grew in prominence as Confederates during the Civil War.

As noted, a local White family who owned Stratford Hall already began purchasing lots from the Rev. Stewart estate in 1929. Discussed in more detail in the Chapter 3, Previous Investigations, local White advocates conducted excavations in the area and successfully led an effort with other interested parties and the Westmoreland County Garden Club to establish the MBMA in 1936. Thus, began the collection of affidavits from Black and White residents of Monroe Hall by Dr. Charles W. Porter, III, NPS Region One Assistant Historian, in 1937 to document the birthplace location based on oral tradition, while wealthy White descendants of local plantation owners continued to purchase tracts from the Black descendants of Stewart, Watts, and Smith (Porter 1937).

Porter included photographs with the affidavits. One showed two African American men standing by “the Old Well” near the purported birthplace, and another showed a panorama of the village of Monroe Hall (**Figures 5.4-5.5**). Later investigations suggest that this well was one reused as a trash pit by the Rev. Cornelius Stewart. One of the men standing near the well in Figure 3.1 may be “Emanuel Carter, colored, age 72, Dec. 15, 1935, grandson of Samuel Stewart,” (listed as living with his grandparents in 1880 and perhaps interred at the cemetery). He reiterated other affidavits, saying that he had always heard that the birthplace was at or near a locust tree, visible near a building in the background of Figure 3.1 (Porter 1937:9). He also noted “that there had been a large pear tree and an apple tree... and that bricks had been taken out of the cellar of the old foundations and used to build a hall for the Ancient and Independent Order of Moses and the New Monrovia Colored Baptist Church.”

In 1941, working with Charles Stuart and Monroe descendant Laurence Hoes, the MBMA purchased the land previously acquired by Stuart, Murphy and Hutt, and Newton to assemble the birthplace park that exists today, but the Second World War slowed momentum (Monroe and Lewes 2009; WMDB 93:344; 94:227; 94:229; 94:278; and 94:279).

THE NEW DOMINION (1946-1991)

After the war, MBMA was incorporated and renewed its efforts to create a master plan in 1951-1952, hiring Milton Grigg, a premier, Beaux Art trained, Virginia architect known for his “restoration” of plantation houses and Williamsburg. The restoration methods that he and his contemporaries employed resulted in buildings and landscapes that have since been recognized as having an air of false historicism based on conjecture and overly romanticized notions of colonial and antebellum times. They ignored or erased what slavery and a working farm really looked like as well as any changes that had been made to plantations in the interim, such as the African American dwellings and cemeteries present at Monroe Hall. In 1953, the group presented a highly stylized, interpretation of the house and a scenic loop road to the Virginia Department of Highways. The house was never constructed, but by 1956, the scenic loop was completed with great fanfare and designated as State Highway 209 in 1957 (Monroe and Lewes 2009:38).



Figure 5.4 Two African American men standing near an old well, cedar trees, and an orchard in the foreground. A locust tree near the birthplace and a house are in the background. Stewart fields had yet to be reforested. Originally captioned "Negro Boys Standing by the Old Well. Locust Tree on the Right" (Porter 1937).



Figure 5.5 The community of Monroe Hall, showing New Monrovia Baptist Church, which was built with bricks from the birthplace, and two houses that still stand at 145 New Monrovia Rd and 4459 James Monroe Hwy. Originally captioned "Negro Village on the Other Side of the Road" (Porter 1937).

While the loop was under construction, the MBMA became discouraged by adjacent landowners and others carrying out timber harvesting and sand and gravel mining. Begun by 1937 and expanded in the 1940s and 1950s, mining had long term negative effects on the cemeteries as well as the natural environment (see Chapter 4). Surface mining in the Virginia Coastal Plain was and still is the primary source of sand and gravel in the state, and at that time was not regulated on private land, as it was more than a decade before Virginia enacted mining reclamation laws in 1968 and two decades before the U.S. Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (SMCRA) (VDOE 2022).

Shelton Dickinson had opened several pits surrounding the Watts and Smith Cemeteries and drove through the MBMA property as well as across Freeneck Gut from the present-day Moose Lodge to access them. John Henry Watts felled timber. The Virginia Department of Highways construction of the scenic loop (209), ten years prior to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA), along with the mining activity significantly disturbed the land and resulted in a loss of enthusiasm and funding for MBMA's planned archaeological investigations. By 1959, MBMA dissolved and abandoned the site (Lewes and Monroe 2006:38). The sand and gravel pits were also abandoned after which they were used as an illegal dump, leading the state to block the scenic loop in 1971 and to remove its designation as 209 from the state highway system in 1986.

By 1973, the Westmoreland County Historical Preservation Corporation acquired the property, after local historian Virginia Sherman resurrected research and interest in the Monroes and reaffirmed that the residence must be on the six acres purchased by Charles E. Stuart (Monroe and Lewes 2009:38). As noted in Chapter 3, Previous Investigations, in 1976, VRCA carried out an investigation on the property, locating the footprint of the Monroe "mansion" and confirming the site's importance. Three years later, this research was compiled into a nomination and James Monroe's Birthplace was added to the NRHP in 1979.

Through 1980s and 1990s, the vision for what the memorial should be varied as leadership and ownership fluctuated. As such, its expansion occurred intermittently but eventually came to include walking trails with interpretive signage, a visitor center, parking areas, a pond, and a canoe landing. In 1993, Westmoreland County acquired 2.5 acres (Parcel 6-130), which contains the southern tip of the Watts Cemetery, from the heirs of Christine Watts south of the heirs of James Henry Watts (WC DB 413:476).

An official survey of the birthplace in 1997 continues to show the 0.5-acre Stewart Cemetery reserve in Parcel 6-129 and reveals Ellen S. Toliver and Ganey Johnson, stepson of James Henry Watts, owned the James Watts parcel (6-131) (**Figure 5.6**). By then, both Watts parcels had become significantly degraded by the mid-century mining and dumping. By 2005, the James Monroe Memorial Foundation (JMMF) took the place of the MBMA and obtained a 99-year lease for the property from the county. The lease directed that the JMMF construct a replica of the Monroe residence and a visitor center. These were completed around 2005 and 2009, respectively (Monroe and Lewes 2009:38-42).

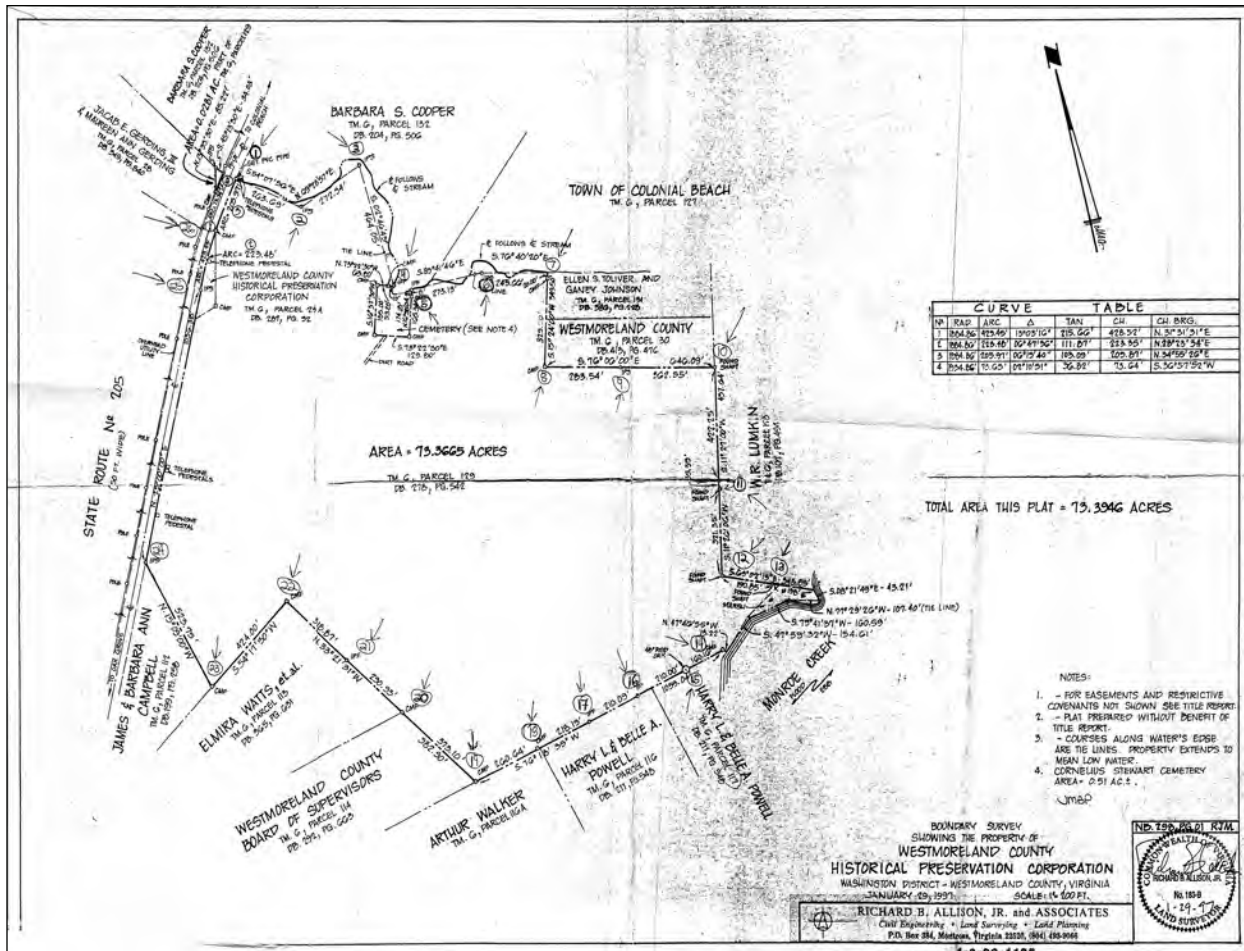


Figure 5.6 1997 boundary survey showing the property of Westmoreland County Historical Preservation Corporation, the 0.5-acre Stewart Cemetery reserve, and the James Henry Watts heirs property.

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CHAPTER 6. SURVEY RESULTS

Fieldwork was carried out in March 2022 with Marian Veney Ashton, Executive Director of A.T. Johnson Museum; Etta Mae Lucas, Watts descendant and co-owner of Parcel 6-131; and William Dudley, who cleared trees blocking the paths to the cemeteries and is related to a number of people interred there. Based on personal communication with Ms. Lucas and cemetery name identification in Virginia Death Records, there are three distinct cemeteries: the Stewart Cemetery (096-5301), the Watts Cemetery (096-5302), and the Smith Cemetery (096-5303). They are located north of four late-nineteenth-to-early-twentieth-century African American archaeological sites previously identified on the James Monroe Birthplace, including the Stewart House Site (44WM0038) within the birthplace site boundary, the Watts House Site (44WM0310), Site 44WM0287, and Site 44WM0288 (**Figure 6.1**).

STEWART CEMETERY (096-5301)

The Watts Cemetery in Monroe Hall, Westmoreland County, Virginia was previously documented by Marian Veney Ashton in 2009. Along with photographs taken by a reporter in 2005 and WMCAR in 2007, her 2009 documentation is included in **Appendix B**. Location map, evolution of site conditions, site plan, site plan key, and current survey photos are included in **Appendix C**. Notably, displacement of stones observed in 2022 had already occurred by 2007.

Set within a rural village, the Stewart Cemetery is located within a 0.5-acre cemetery reserve on the county-owned, 74.60-acre James Monroe Birthplace Park and Museum (Parcel 6-129) at 4460 James Monroe Highway. The Stewart House Site (44WM0038) is located to the southwest, and the Watts Cemetery (096-5302) and Smith Cemetery (096-5303) are situated approximately 1,400 feet to the east (see Figures 1.2, 4.23, and 6.1). It is immediately surrounded by the deeply incised Freeneck Gut to the north, a drainage ditch to the east, and the James Monroe scenic loop to the south and west.

The Stewart Cemetery spreads across a small knoll primarily on Lenoir silt loam (9), with a small portion on Lumbee loam (10) (see Figure 4.9). The area is forested and blanketed by a deep layer of damp leaves. Small holly trees grow throughout. Burials identified during this survey are primarily located on the knoll in the central-south part of the reserve, which JMMF maintenance says often floods, but unmarked burials are also on the north slope leading to Freeneck Gut, and there is evidence that the earth, elevation, and stream bed has shifted and potentially washed burials away (see Chapter 4 Figures).

DESCRIPTION

Thirty-four burials ranging from 1926 to 1986 were identified in the Stewart Cemetery; however, archival records suggest that there could be more and some could date to as early as 1879 when Samuel (ca 1810) and Peggy (ca 1820) Stewart established their farm. Six have fine granite or marble headstones, likely ordered from Baltimore. Two headstones are issued by the VA. Four have substantial concrete vaults. One is a hand-inscribed concrete headstone. Eight only have a metal stake and plaque issued by a funeral home, and 15 are unmarked. The most elaborate belongs to the Rev. Cornelius B. Stewart and his son, who served in the military. Artificial flowers, some of which are held in foam bases, are placed among them. When they become faded, family members throw them down hill (Etta Mae Lucas, 2022, personal communication) (see Appendix C).

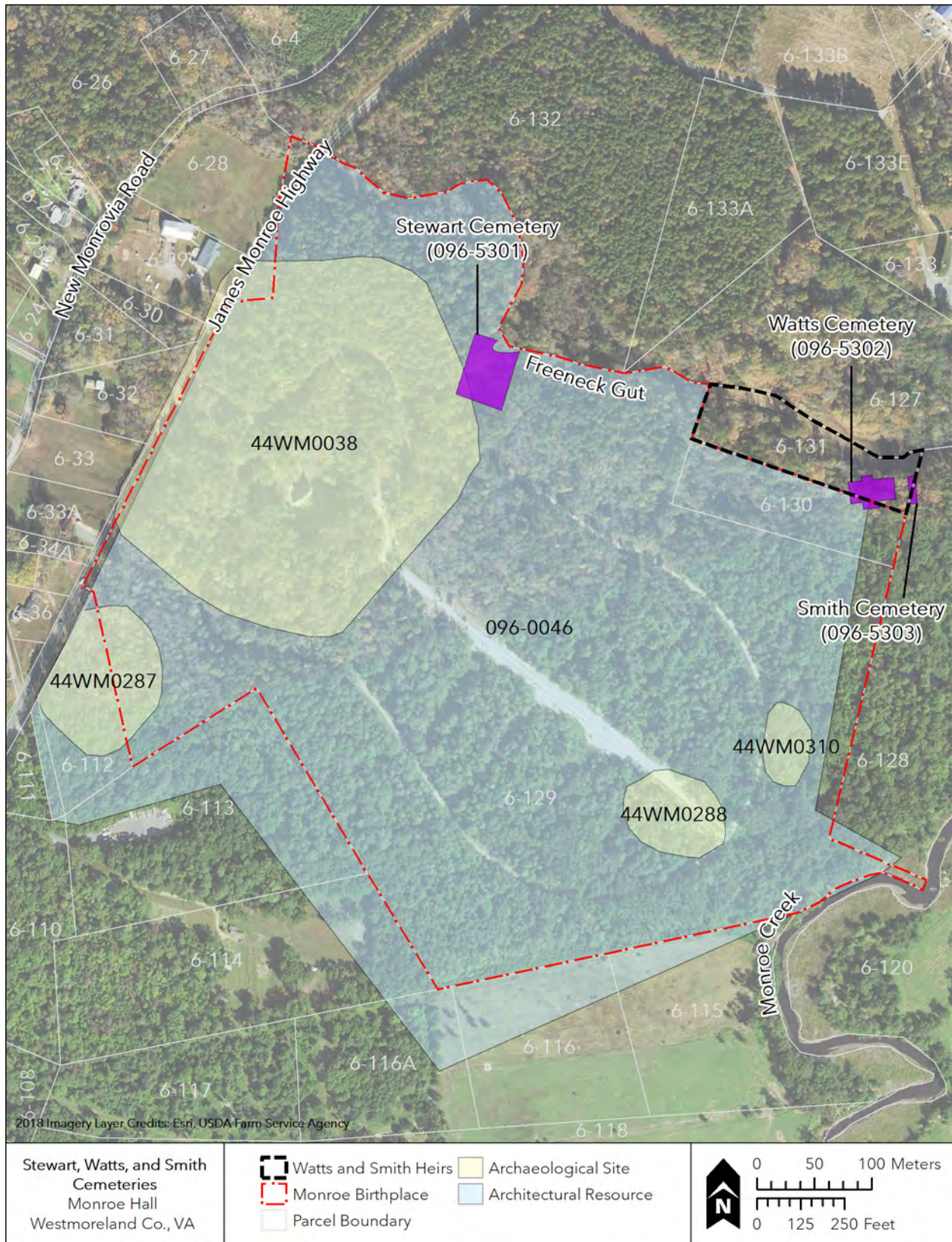


Figure 6.1 The Stewart, Watts, and Smith Cemeteries (096-5301, 096-5302, and 096-5303) and previously identified the Stewart House Site (44WM0038) within the birthplace site boundary, the Watts House Site (44WM0310), Site 44WM0287, and Site 44WM0288.

Interments range from second to at least fifth generation Stewarts, who are descendent from Monroe Hall settlers, Samuel and Peggy Stewart, defined as the first generation. The earliest known burial belongs to "REV. C. STUART," a son of Samuel and Peggy who died in 1926. Except for two burials, all other identifiable burials are his children, grandchildren, great grandchildren, great great grandchildren, and in-laws. Surnames of those married to Stewarts include Brown, Campbell, Cunningham, Dudley, Johnson, Maiden, and Tinsley. The relationship of two interments is uncertain, including Eunice Newman, who shares a last name with those interred at the Watts Cemetery, and Deloris Watts, who is the great granddaughter of Moses Watts, granddaughter of Daniel Watts, and daughter of Rev. W. Lloyd Watts, who is buried in the Watts Cemetery.

The Stewart Cemetery is in poor condition due to displacement of multiple high-end headstones, a fallen tree, and erosion and flooding, but it maintains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

HISTORY

From 1871 to 1879, the Smiths, Watts, and Stewarts moved to Monroe Hall from Nomini Grove, which is roughly 30 miles southeast. Whether they are tied to the Great Manumission of 500 enslaved laborers from Nomini Hall by Robert Carter III in the 1790s is unknown. In 1872, George and Mary Haines, a White Washington, D.C. couple, sold a part of the former Monroe plantation containing 84 acres and the Monroe "mansion" to Moses Watts and Samuel Stewart (WMDB 39:407). In 1879, Stewart and Moses Watts verbally agreed to divide their 84 acres into equal parts of 38.73 acres. Stewart settled the northwest half on "Irish Neck Road," including the foundations of the Monroe residence and the present-day Stewart Cemetery, and Moses Watts, his wife Mary, and children took the southeast half, which was a pie piece wedged in between Stewart and James Watts (Monroe and Lewes 2009:30; WMDB 98:278).

Samuel and Peggy Stewart had three children, the Rev. Cornelius B. Stewart, Sr. (1852-1926), and Hannah (c 1857), and George (c 1858), all of whom settled on farms in Monroe Hall. Hannah was likely the mother of Emanuel Carter (c 1867), who was identified as the grandson of Samuel and interviewed by the NPS in his old age about the location of the birthplace. George was married to Matilda Smith, very likely associated with the Smith Cemetery, and then to Sallie Taliferro/Toliver (a named tied to an antebellum family with large slave holdings and to the Watts Cemetery).

Cornelius married Martha Ann Smith, perhaps a sister of George's wife, on June 30, 1875 (Virginia, U.S., Marriage Registers, 1853-1935). Between 1880 and 1900, Samuel and Peggy Stewart died, and Cornelius and George inherited his property while buying other land in Monroe Hall (Porter 1937). By 1900, Cornelius Stewart, Sr., had become a prominent figure in both Monroe Hall and Colonial Beach where he served as Pastor of the First Baptist Church. In 1905, the *Richmond Times Dispatch*, a White news source in the former Confederate capital, wrote, "Rev. Cornelius Stewart, the colored divine, who owns and occupies a portion of the plantation in Westmoreland on which President Monroe was born, enjoys the distinction of having seventeen living children" (*Richmond Times Dispatch* 12 Nov 1905). Only seven have been identified in census records: Hannah (c 1874), Ida (c 1877), Josephine (c 1881), Tuler (c 1883), Cornelius B., Jr. (1888-1954), Katie (c 1899), and Matilda (1892-1964). Some of these children have metal funeral home markers in the Stewart Cemetery and some may account for the unmarked burials.

After his 1926 funeral, his land became subject of a chancery suit, Charlotte Severn vs. Stewart heirs, and was advertised for sale at public auction July 1928. In 1929, Charles E. Stuart and his wife Clara, a White couple who owned Stratford Hall, purchased at public auction

0.54-acre road access and six acres thought to contain the James Monroe Birthplace site. They also purchased two surrounding lots, 0.96 acre and 0.4 acre, while Blake T. and Bertha Newton acquired the surrounding 24 acres minus 0.5 acre reserved as a cemetery for the Stewart heirs. In 1933, a deed of partition of the former Stewart land was filed (see Chapter 5 Figures). In 1934, the Stuarts sold Stratford Hall to the United Daughters of the Confederacy to memorialize the Lee family, and in 1941, they and Newton sold the Stewart parcels minus the 0.5-acre cemetery reserve to JMMF's predecessor for the birthplace park (Lewes and Monroe 2006:34). After acquisition by the memorial association, all buildings associated with African American occupancy were likely removed or demolished by neglect. The 1937 aerial of the properties illustrate tilled farmed fields, a narrow Freeneck Gut, and a rectangular stand of trees around the Stewart Cemetery (see Chapter 4 Figures).

To the southwest, the heirs of Harriet [Hannah Stewart] Cunningham (Henrietta Brown, Ida Newman, and Annie Maiden) owned Lot 1. Matilda [Stewart] Tinsley [later Campbell] owned Lot 2. Kate [Stewart] Maiden owned Lot 3. Lula [Stewart] Beckett owned Lot 4. The daughters and granddaughters of Rev. Stewart were respected community leaders in home demonstration clubs, which provided practical advice on home and agricultural improvements to local farm families (*Northern Neck News*). Some of them and their children were definitively buried in Stewart Cemetery along with Cornelius Stewart, Jr. And some may be buried there without markers.

NRHP EVALUATION

The African American Stewart Cemetery is associated with a founding family and influential members of the Reconstruction- and Jim Crow-era community of Monroe Hall, which was established in the 1870s after the former Monroe plantation had been owned by absentee Northerners for almost 100 years. It is also associated with African American's intentional and continued segregation of worship and burial practices following Reconstruction.

The cemetery's location by a stream bank is reflective of African American spiritual practices developed before the Civil War, when Blacks had to attend White churches or be chaperoned for fear of rebellion. In response, free and enslaved Blacks held services together in secret in forested areas along streams before the war and, in Reconstruction, built their own Black churches that served as the center of urban neighborhoods and rural communities like Monroe Hall while maintaining family burial grounds on private land. Visible markers are illustrative of lower-to-upper-income African American burials, including a number of fine granite and marble headstones acquired from Baltimore or the VA as well as hand inscribed concrete markers, concrete vaults, metal funeral home plaques, and sunken depressions.

The Rev. Stewart's marker is most significant and is indicative of his stature in the community and beyond. Following Rev. Stewart's funeral held at the First Baptist Church of Colonial Beach, the *Northern Neck News* reported, "We are sorry to learn of the death of Rev Cornelius Stewart, a very high esteemed colored citizen..." whose funeral was "attended by a large number of white as well as colored people" (*Northern Neck News* 22 Jan 1926).

The Stewart Cemetery was previously recorded in 2007 as a secondary resource within the James Monroe Birthplace (096-0046/44WM0038) NRHP boundary update and, with the Stewart House Site (44WM0038), was determined to be not eligible as a secondary resource in 2007, because it falls outside of the area and period of significance; however, the cemetery is recommended as potentially eligible on the local level under Criteria A and B using Criterion Consideration D, as it derives its primary significance from graves of persons of transcendent importance to Westmoreland Black history, the Rev. Cornelius Stewart, and

from association with African American burial practices and settlement of one of the earliest Reconstruction-era Black communities in Westmoreland County.

A Phase I intensive survey should be conducted to identify additional burials and better define the cemetery boundaries. To determine who is interred in unmarked burials, Virginia Death Records, which identify cemetery names, should be consulted for a list of Stewart descendants, who are documented on various, active Ancestry.com family trees. Research should also include review of land ownership records and other information related to the African American community included in the Report on the Proposed Monroe Birthplace National Monument or Park at Monroe Hall, Virginia (Porter 1937, available at NARA, College Park). Research should try to address whether the Stewarts were free or enslaved before the Civil War and whether they are associated with African American Dwelling Sites (44WM0287 and 44WM0288), which were previously identified in James Monroe Birthplace investigations.

Once boundaries are better defined and additional archival research has been conducted, the cemetery should be further evaluated for individual NRHP eligibility. It is also recommended that a reconnaissance survey of Monroe Hall be conducted and that the Stewart, Watts, and Smith Cemeteries (096-5301, 096-5302, and 096-5303) as well as the previously identified archaeological sites, African American Dwelling Sites (44WM0287 and 44WM0288), the Watts House Site (44WM0310), and the Stewart House Site (44WM0038) be evaluated for inclusion in the NRHP as contributing or non-contributing resources to the potential Monroe Hall Historic District under Criterion A and/or B.

WATTS CEMETERY (096-5302)

The Watts Cemetery in Monroe Hall, Westmoreland County, Virginia was previously documented by Marian Veney Ashton in 2009. Her photographs are included in **Appendix B**. Location map, evolution of site conditions, site plan, site plan key, and current survey photos are included in **Appendix D**.

Set within a rural village, the Watt Cemetery survey area is approximately 0.22 acres. It is located partially on a 2.42-acre Parcel 6-131, owned by Etta Mae Lucas and the Ganey Johnson Estate (James Henry Watts heirs), and partially on 2.5-acre Parcel 6-130, which Westmoreland County purchased from the heirs of Christine Watts in 1993. The Watts House Site (44WM0310) is located to the south on the James Monroe Birthplace park (Parcel 6-129), the Stewart Cemetery (096-5301) is situated approximately 1,400 feet to the west, and the Smith Cemetery (096-5303) is immediately east (see Figures 1.2, 4.23, and 6.1).

The Watts and Smith Cemeteries were once accessible by a bridge that crossed Freeneck Gut from the Colonial Beach Moose Lodge #1267 at 4780 James Monroe Highway but can only be reached now by a dirt lane northeast of the visitor's center parking lot at the James Monroe Birthplace, 4460 James Monroe Highway.

The Watts Cemetery is located on Bibb and Levy soils (2) and Nansemond fine sandy loam (12), ranging from flat and sandy and mossy to sloped and damp and leafy at the north side adjacent to Freeneck Gut (see Figure 4.9). Operated in the mid-twentieth century prior to implementation of significant private property surface mining regulations in Virginia, abandoned sand and gravel pits around the survey areas are recorded in the Virginia Department of Energy (VDOE) Orphaned Mine database as points on Parcel 6-128 and 6-130 (<https://energy.virginia.gov/webmaps/MineralMining/>); however, they are on four parcels (6-128 through 6-131) and extend much farther than shown, wrapping around all sides of the Watts and Smith Cemeteries, almost creating an island.

North of Parcel 6-131, Freeneck Gut has transformed from a narrow stream feeding into Monroe Creek into a large pond with a beaver dam on the east end. The abandoned mine on the west end of Parcel 6-131 is a swampy forest with standing pools and illegal dumping grounds. The east end is open with some trees around the Watts and Smith Cemeteries. Since photographed in 2009, numerous trees have fallen in the Watts Cemetery with one exposing a burial. Both cemeteries are eroding and have sunken burials on the north side. On Parcels 6-128 and 6-130, the abandoned mine is forested with significant treefall on the mine walls and pooling at the base of the pits.

DESCRIPTION

The largest of the three cemeteries based on this investigation, Watts Cemetery contains 37 identifiable burials ranging from 1926 to 2005; however, archival records suggest that there could be more and some as early as 1877 when James (c 1835-by 1910) and Alice Key Watts established their farm. Seven have full-length concrete vaults. Five have headstones that were issued by the VA, four of which are half the height of a standard headstone. Many of the more recent ones have pillow granite headstones with engravings on them. Approximately six have funeral home issued metal stakes. Sixteen have no marker, two of which at the west end were flat and sandy but were identified as possible burials by Watts descendants. One that is unmarked has been exposed by tree fall, which likely occurred during a hurricane; Watts descendants identified it as the burial of Henry Lomax, who was married to Ethel Watts, a granddaughter of James Watts buried immediately south. They also identified another unmarked burial as belonging to Rosa Bell Johnson. The most elaborate stones belong to the Rev. W. Lloyd Watts, grandson of Monroe Hall founding resident Moses Watts, and Musker Richards [son of Mariah Johnson] and Maggie [Maiden] Richards, a married couple who have upright marble headstones, likely ordered from Baltimore. Artificial flowers, some of which are held in foam bases, are placed among them. When they become faded, family members throw them down hill (Etta Mae Lucas, 2022, personal communication) (see Appendix D).

Interments are primarily third to fifth generation Watts, being descendants of the first-generation Monroe Hall settlers, Moses and Mary Watts and James and Alice Key Watts, however, the relationship of all those interred was not identified during this investigation. Where earlier generations are buried is uncertain. Several of the surnames, such as Johnson, Maiden, and Newman also appear in the Stewart and Smith cemeteries. Maggie Key, whose relationship to Alice Key Watts is uncertain, married a second-generation Smith. Johnsons, Lomaxes, Richards, Shanklins, and Tollivers married into the Watts family. The name Tolliver is tied to the Stewarts and to a White antebellum family with large slave holdings.

The area is fairly well defined and in fair condition, due to hurricane damage, tree fall, and erosion into Freeneck Gut to the north and the abandoned mine to the south. It retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

HISTORY

From 1871 to 1879, the Smiths, Watts, and Stewarts moved to Monroe Hall from Nomini Grove, which is roughly 30 miles southeast. Whether they are tied to the Great Manumission of 500 enslaved laborers from Nomini Hall by Robert Carter III in the 1790s is unknown. James and Alice Key Watts arrived around 1877, originally purchasing land that contained part of Parcels 6-129 and all of 6-130 and 6-131 from George and Sallie Smith (WMDB 41:442). Counting children from a previous marriage, they eventually had at least 13, while Moses (c 1820), who owned the central part of present-day Parcel 6-129, had at least four children.

George Smith and James Watts invested in other land in Monroe Hall together into the early twentieth century. Around 1910, James Henry and Susan Johnson Watts along with his siblings inherited the 23 acres, containing part of the cemeteries, from his parents. In 1936, the Watts property became subject of a chancery suit, *Mary Tyler Cole vs. Christine Watts et al.* Mary Cole was a White woman from North Dakota, who later married the Monroe Birthplace booster, Judge Watt Mayo. In the suit, James Henry Watts was granted 2.5 acres, which contain most of the Watts and Smith Cemeteries (Parcel 6-131); Christine Watts was granted 2.5 acres south of it, which contains a small portion of the Watts Cemetery; and Mary Cole acquired the remaining 18 acres along with Moses Watts' land (WMDB 93:344) (see Figure 5.3).

The son of James Henry Watts (1890-1978) left all of his property, including the 2.5-acre parcel with cemeteries, to his wife Susie Johnson Watts. In the event of her death, he left it to his stepsons, Leo Toliver Johnson and Ganey Johnson in 1978 (WC WB 277:679). Leo Toliver Johnson married Ellen M. Toliver. After Leo's death in 1989, she remarried to Willie James Dickerson and, in 1996, conveyed her share to Etta Mae Lucas, the niece of Charles E. Johnson (1932-2005) and daughter of Mary I. "Tulley" Johnson (1942-2002), in consideration of love and affection (WC DB 455:562).

NRHP EVALUATION

The African American Watt Cemetery is associated with a founding family of the Reconstruction- and Jim Crow-era community of Monroe Hall, which was established in the 1870s after the former Monroe plantation had been owned by absentee Northerners for almost 100 years. It is also associated with African American's intentional and continued segregation of worship and burial practices following Reconstruction.

The cemetery's location by a stream bank is reflective of African American spiritual practices developed before the Civil War, when Blacks had to attend White churches or be chaperoned for fear of rebellion. In response, free and enslaved Blacks held services together in secret in forested areas along streams before the war and, in Reconstruction, built their own Black churches that served as the center of urban neighborhoods and rural communities like Monroe Hall while maintaining family burial grounds on private land. Visible markers are illustrative of lower-to-upper-income African American burials, including a number of fine granite and marble headstones acquired from Baltimore or the VA as well as hand inscribed concrete headstones, full-length concrete vaults, metal funeral home plaques, and unmarked plots.

The Watts Cemetery is recommended as potentially eligible for the NRHP with local significance under Criterion A and/or B using Criteria Consideration D, as it may derive its primary significance from the grave of a person of transcendent importance to Westmoreland Black history, the Rev. W. Lloyd Watts, and from association with African American burial practices and settlement of one of the earliest Reconstruction-era Black communities in Westmoreland County.

A Phase I intensive survey should be conducted to identify additional burials and better define the cemetery boundaries. To determine who is interred in unmarked burials, Virginia Death Records, which identify cemetery names, should be consulted for a list of Watts descendants, who are documented on various, active Ancestry.com family trees. Research should also include review of land ownership records and other information related to the African American community included in the Report on the Proposed Monroe Birthplace National Monument or Park at Monroe Hall, Virginia (Porter 1937, available at NARA, College Park). Research should try to address whether the Watts were free or enslaved before the Civil War and whether they are associated with African American Dwelling Sites (44WM0287 and 44WM0288), which were previously identified in James Monroe Birthplace investigations.

Once boundaries are better defined and additional archival research has been conducted, the cemetery should be further evaluated for individual NRHP eligibility. It is also recommended that a reconnaissance survey of Monroe Hall be conducted and that the Stewart, Watts, and Smith Cemeteries (096-5301, 096-5302, and 096-5303) as well as the previously identified archaeological sites, African American Dwelling Sites (44WM0287 and 44WM0288), the Watts House Site (44WM0310), and the Stewart House Site (44WM0038) be evaluated for inclusion in the NRHP as contributing or non-contributing resources to the potential Monroe Hall Historic District under Criterion A and/or B.

SMITH CEMETERY (096-5303)

The Smith Cemetery in Monroe Hall, Westmoreland County, Virginia was previously documented by Marian Veney Ashton in 2009. Her photographs are included in **Appendix B**. Location map, evolution of site conditions, site plan, site plan key, and current survey photos are included in **Appendix E**.

Set within a rural village, the Smith Cemetery survey area is approximately 0.04 acres. It is located partially on a 2.42-acre Parcel 6-131, owned by Etta Mae Lucas and the Ganey Johnson Estate (Watts heirs), and partially on Parcel 6-128 to the east, which is owned by John Maxwell Comerford and was likely part of a parcel purchased and settled on by George Smith in 1871 (see Figures 1.2, 4.23, and 6.1). The Watts and Smith Cemeteries were once accessible by a bridge that crossed Freeneck Gut from the Colonial Beach Moose Lodge #1267 at 4780 James Monroe Highway but can only be reached now by a dirt lane northeast of the visitor's center parking lot at the James Monroe Birthplace Park and Museum (Parcel 6-129), 4460 James Monroe Highway.

The Smith Cemetery is located on Bibby and Levy soils (2) and Sand and Gravel Pits (14), ranging from flat and sandy and mossy to sloped and damp and leafy at the north side adjacent to Freeneck Gut (see Figure 4.9). Operated in the mid-twentieth century prior to implementation of significant private property surface mining regulations in Virginia, abandoned sand pits around the survey areas are recorded in the Virginia Department of Energy (VDOE) Orphaned Mine database as points on Parcel 6-128 and 6-130 (<https://energy.virginia.gov/webmaps/MineralMining/>); however, they are on four parcels (6-128 through 6-131) and extend much farther than shown, wrapping around all sides of the Watts and Smith Cemeteries, almost creating an island.

North of Parcel 6-131, Freeneck Gut has transformed from a narrow stream feeding into Monroe Creek into a large pond. The abandoned mine on the west end of Parcel 6-131 is a swampy forest with standing pools and illegal dumping grounds. The east end is open with some trees around the Watts and Smith Cemeteries. Since photographed in 2009, several plaques are missing from the Smith Cemetery. Both cemeteries are eroding and have sunken burials on the north side. On Parcels 6-128 and 6-130, the abandoned mine is forested with significant treefall on the mine walls and pooling at the base of the pits.

DESCRIPTION

Sixteen burials ranging from 1969 to 2011 were identified in the Smith Cemetery; however, archival records suggest that there could be more with some dating to as early as 1871 when George and Sallie Smith established a farm. Six of the 16 have substantial concrete vaults. Five only have a metal stake and plaque issued by a funeral home. Three markers are ephemeral, being either small wooden crosses or artificial flowers. Only three of these had no indication of a name (see Appendix E). When artificial flowers become faded, family members throw

them down hill (Etta Mae Lucas, 2022, personal communication).

Interments are primarily third generation and fourth generations Smiths, being the great grandchildren of Monroe Hall settlers, George (ca 1830) and Sallie (ca 1840) Smith; the grandchildren of Henderson Smith (c 1857) and Maggie Key; and the children of Canyon "Cannon Ball" (1910-1980) and Ardell Johnson (1915-1988), whose memorials are most significant. The Wests, Fortunes, and Beverly's married fourth generation Smiths. Where the first and second generations are buried is uncertain.

The area is fairly well defined and in good condition other than erosion into Freeneck Gut to the north. It retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, considering a period of significance that begins with the first known burial in 1969; however, if earlier burials are identified in subsequent investigations, integrity will need to be evaluated based on whether they predate mid-century mining of the surrounding area.

HISTORY

From 1871 to 1879, the Smiths, Watts, and Stewarts moved to Monroe Hall from Nomini Grove, which is roughly 30 miles southeast. Whether they are tied to the Great Manumission of 500 enslaved laborers from Nomini Hall by Robert Carter III in the 1790s is unknown. George and Sallie Smith were the first-generation Smiths in Monroe Hall, originally purchasing land that contained part of Parcels 6-129 and all of 6-130 and 6-131, where most of the present-day Watts and Smith cemeteries are located. When they moved to the area around 1871, they had nine children, including Henderson Smith (c 1857) who married Maggie Key, perhaps a relative of Alice Key who married James Watts.

They settled beyond the current James Monroe Birthplace park boundary (Parcel 6-129) and Lucas-Ganey property boundary (Parcel 6-131), likely on present-day Parcel 6-128, though a chain of title has not been conducted for this parcel. In 1877, while keeping 20 acres, the Smiths sold 23 of their 43-plus acres to James and Alice Key Watts (WMDB 41:442). George Smith and James Watts invested in other land in Monroe Hall together into the early twentieth century. Around 1910, James Henry and Susan Johnson Watts along with his siblings inherited the 23 acres, containing part of the cemeteries, from his parents. In 1936, the Watts property became subject of a chancery suit, Mary Tyler Cole vs. Christine Watts et al. Mary Cole was a White woman from North Dakota, who later married the Monroe Birthplace booster, Judge Watt Mayo. In the suit, James Henry Watts was granted 2.5 acres, which contain most of the Watts and Smith Cemeteries (Parcel 6-131); Christine Watts was granted 2.5 acres below it, which contains a small portion of the Watts Cemetery; and Mary Cole acquired the remaining 18 acres along with Moses Watts' land (WMDB 93:344) (Figure 5.3).

The son of James Henry Watts (1890-1978) left all of his property, including the 2.5-acre parcel with cemeteries, to his wife Susie Johnson Watts. In the event of her death, he left it to his stepsons, Leo Toliver Johnson and Ganey Johnson in 1978 (WC WB 277:679). Leo Toliver Johnson married Ellen M. Toliver-Dickerson, who co-owned the parcel with Ganey in 1997. Leo Toliver Johnson married Ellen M. Toliver. After Leo's death in 1989, she remarried to Willie James Dickerson and, in 1996, conveyed her share to Etta Mae Lucas, the niece of Charles E. Johnson (1932-2005) and daughter of Mary I. "Tulley" Johnson (1942-2002), in consideration of love and affection (WC DB 455:562).

Ms. Lucas said the Watts descendants continue to grant Smith descendants access, and many people continue to use family cemeteries because they cannot afford a burial at History Land, which is a popular cemetery located in Fredericksburg. While waterman Cannonball Smith and his wife Ardell Johnson lived a long and prosperous life with their nine children, many of their

grandchildren had short lifespans and were less fortunate. Linda West died of exposure at the age of seven after going out into the woods and getting lost in 1969 and is marked by a small wooden cross added since 2009. James Fortune died of cardiorespiratory arrest at the University of Virginia Hospital at the age of 20. Alvin West died of a gunshot wound to the anterior chest at 21. Sterling West was stabbed to death at 24. Richard West died of liver failure at 47.

NRHP EVALUATION

The African American Smith Cemetery is associated with the descendants of a founding family of the Reconstruction- and Jim Crow-era community of Monroe Hall, which was established in the 1870s after the former Monroe plantation had been owned by absentee Northerners for almost 100 years. It is also associated with African American's intentional and continued segregation of worship and burial practices following Reconstruction.

The cemetery's location by a stream bank is reflective of African American spiritual practices developed before the Civil War, when Blacks had to attend White churches or be chaperoned for fear of rebellion. In response, free and enslaved Blacks held services together in secret in forested areas along streams before the war and, in Reconstruction, built their own Black churches that served as the center of urban neighborhoods and rural communities like Monroe Hall while maintaining family burial grounds on private land. Visible markers are illustrative of lower-to-middle-income African American burials, including concrete headstones and footstones that are hand inscribed, metal funeral home plaques, and more ephemeral material such as wooden crosses, glass vases, and temporary flowers among multiple substantial, concrete vaults. The short lifespans of those known to be interred at Smith Cemetery reflect the effect of systemic racism on the life expectancy of African Americans in the context of Westmoreland County.

The Smith Cemetery is recommended for further study as an individual resource to determine its NRHP eligibility under Criterion A and/or B using Criteria Consideration D at the local level. A Phase I intensive survey should be conducted to identify additional burials and better define the cemetery boundaries. To determine who is interred in unmarked burials, Virginia Death Records, which identify cemetery names, should be consulted for a list of Smith descendants, who are documented on various, active Ancestry.com family trees. Research should also include a chain of title for Parcel 6-128 and review of land ownership records and other information related to the African American community included in the Report on the Proposed Monroe Birthplace National Monument or Park at Monroe Hall, Virginia (Porter 1937, available at NARA, College Park). Research should try to address whether the Smiths were free or enslaved before the Civil War and whether they are associated with African American Dwelling Sites (44WM0287 and 44WM0288), which were previously identified in James Monroe Birthplace investigations. Research may also include exploring the effect of systemic racism on the life expectancy of African Americans in the context of Westmoreland County.

Once boundaries are better defined and additional archival research has been conducted, the cemetery should be reevaluated for individual NRHP eligibility. It is also recommended that a reconnaissance survey of Monroe Hall be conducted and that the Stewart, Watts, and Smith Cemeteries (096-5301, 096-5302, and 096-5303) as well as the previously identified archaeological sites, African American Dwelling Sites (44WM0287 and 44WM0288), the Watts House Site (44WM0310), and the Stewart House Site (44WM0038) be evaluated for inclusion in the NRHP as contributing or non-contributing resources to the potential Monroe Hall Historic District under Criterion A and/or B.

CHAPTER 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

FIELD SURVEY

Due to the level of past disturbance, intensive surveys beyond surface mapping are recommended to identify burial locations positively and determine the overall extent of the Stewart, Watts, and Smith Cemeteries. When developing a Scope of Work (SOW) for future documentation efforts, methods should be adapted to fit specific environmental conditions. Environmental conditions play a large role in the preservation of burial containers and human remains. Environmental conditions combined with historical significance affect priority or need. ERG recommends the following cultural resources studies in order of priority; however, tasks 1-3 may be combined into one survey effort:

1. Intensive Survey of the Stewart Cemetery (096-5301) to identify additional burials, better define boundaries, and further evaluate NRHP eligibility.
2. Intensive Survey of the Watts Cemetery (096-5302) to identify additional burials and better define boundaries, and further evaluate NRHP eligibility.
3. Intensive Survey of the Smith Cemetery (096-5303) to identify additional burials and better define boundaries, and further evaluate NRHP eligibility.
4. Reconnaissance survey and historic district evaluation of Monroe Hall.
5. DHR Preliminary Information Form (PIF) for Monroe Hall Historic District.
6. Evaluate Stewart Cemetery (096-5301), Watts Cemetery (096-5302), Smith Cemetery (096-5303), and previously identified African American archaeological sites as contributing or non-contributing to a potential Monroe Hall Historic District.

Survey will include the banks of the creek and the abandoned mines to determine if burial shafts are present. Ideally fieldwork will be conducted during the dry season. Archaeological survey methods may range from collecting shallow soil cores (less than one [1] foot [ft]) to excavating shallow slot trenches (less than 1 ft). Additionally, geophysical survey methods such as Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR), Electrical Resistivity, and Electromagnetic (EM) surveys may prove effective for the identification of individual burial locations within this cemetery. In this case, it is recommended that site conditions (e.g., soils and vegetation) be assessed in order to determine the overall efficacy of GPR (and other geophysical methods).

RESEARCH

In tandem with field survey, research topics may include but not be limited to the following:

- Determine whether the Stewarts, Watts, and Smiths were free or enslaved before the Civil War.
- Investigate whether they were tied to the Great Manumission of 500 enslaved laborers from Nomini Hall by Robert Carter III in the 1790s.
- Due to the number of veterans interred in the Stewart and Watts Cemeteries, explore the role of the military in the advancement of African Americans who were barred from private sector jobs in the context of Westmoreland County.
- Given the short lifespans of those known to be interred at Smith Cemetery, a study of the effect of systemic racism on the life expectancy of African Americans in the context of Westmoreland County may be appropriate.

Potential research sources may include but not be limited to the following:

- Intensive review of Virginia Death Records, which identify the Stewart, Watts, and Smith Cemeteries when applicable
- Records of the First Baptist Church of Colonial Beach
- Weldon's Funeral Home, Bailey's Service, and Lee Funeral Home if available
- Intensive review of land ownership records and other information related to the African American community included *Report on the Proposed Monroe Birthplace National Monument or Park at Monroe Hall, Virginia* (Porter 1937, available at NARA, College Park)
- Intensive review of *Mary Tyler Cole vs. James Henry Watts et al.*
- Intensive review of *Charlotte Severn vs. Cornelius B. Stewart [Jr.], Matilda Tinsley, et al.* (Digitized on LVA)
- *Westmoreland County (Va.) Free Negro and Slave Records, 1780-1863*. Local government records collection, Westmoreland County Court Records (Library of Virginia)
- *Westmoreland County (Va.) Registers of Free Negroes, 1817-1826, 1828-1861*. Westmoreland County Reel 100, Local Government Records Collection (LVA)
- *The Virginia Free Negro Farmer and Property Owner, 1830-1860* (LVA)
- The Freedmen's Bureau Collection (NARA digitized on various genealogy websites)
- Digital Library on American Slavery (<http://dlas.uncg.edu>)
- Enslaved: Peoples of the Historical Slave Trade (Enslaved.org)
- Nomini Hall Slave Legacy project <http://nominihallslavelegacy.com/>
- The Enslaved Households of James Monroe <https://www.whitehousehistory.org/the-enslaved-households-of-president-james-monroe>

OUTREACH

A cursory review of Ancestry.com family trees reveals a number of Stewart, Watts, and Smith descendants actively updating their accounts and engaged in their family history. To better engage descendants and Black history advocates and donors for the cemeteries and the county at large, outreach may include but not be limited to the following information gathering and interpretation techniques:

- Upload markers to FindAGrave.com
- Create public family trees for the Stewarts, Watts, Smiths, and other Monroe Hall families on an Ancestry.com account hosted by A.T. Johnson Museum
- Create a story map about Monroe Hall hosted by the website of A.T. Johnson Museum, Westmoreland County Museum, or Westmoreland County government. For example, <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/c1ea9dfa76c6493d853d0543feed09db>
- Regardless of African American ancestors' status as enslaved or free, consult *Engaging Descendant Communities in the Interpretation of Slavery at Museums and Historic Sites*, also known as The Rubric, which was developed by former staff members at James Madison's Montpelier and its descendant community. https://edu.lva.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Rubric-for-Interpreting-Slavery-9_26_18-2.pdf

MAINTENANCE

ONGOING

The following general steps may be taken at all three cemeteries:

1. Remove leaf litter and dead fall.
2. Maintain hardwoods to prevent deadfall/downed trees/uprooted trees.
 - a. If need to remove trees, cut to stump; do not remove root burl unless positive it does not interfere with interments.
3. Maintain walking paths to limit any further disturbance to areas most at risk.

SHORT TERM

Westmoreland County with the Watts and Smith heirs should reinter the coffin exposed by tree fall at the Watts Cemetery in consultation with the State Archaeologist (see Figure 4.27).

Westmoreland County with JMMF should place temporary corner markers at Stewart Cemetery based on the 1997 Westmoreland County survey plat that defines the 0.5-acre cemetery reserve boundaries (see Figure 5.6).

MID-TERM

Westmoreland County should participate in the FEMA Flood Map Modernization program and re-evaluate the 100-year and 500-year flood. Flood hazard zones and sea-level rise predictions are very likely inaccurate based on observations by Westmoreland County and JMMF contractors and volunteers (see Figures 4.22-4.23).

Following a more intensive field survey and better determination of boundaries, Westmoreland County should place permanent and substantial boundary markers at the corners of Stewart Cemetery and at the corners of the Watts and Smith cemeteries in consultation with landowners.

LONG TERM

Westmoreland County should conduct feasibility studies and seek grants from applicable agencies and organizations on three large-scale efforts to stabilize all three cemeteries and improve the overall health of the watershed, which will in turn benefit JMMF and Westmoreland County Tourism and Parks and Recreation. They are as follows:

1. Freeneck Gut and Monroe Creek Stream Restoration: Restoration of the stream channels through natural stream design restores and stabilizes the degraded stream channel bed and banks, to provide aquatic benefits, grade control, improve water quality, and prevent future erosion effecting the Stewart, Watts, and Smith Cemeteries.
2. Dump Clean-up and Abandoned Mineral Mine Land Reclamation: Clean-up and stabilization of abandoned mined areas decreases erosion and sedimentation, supports desirable vegetation and improves offsite water quality and or quantity. It improves the functionality of the land and protects public health, safety, and general welfare in addition to stabilizing the cemeteries.
3. Acquisition of Parcel 6-128 to reclaim the abandoned mineral mine and create parkland between the Watts and Smith Cemeteries and James Monroe Birthplace and Monroe Creek for the same reasons stated above.

If there is a desire to disinter/relocate remains due to even more accelerated climate change and land degradation or for some other unforeseen reason:

1. Next of kin must be contacted and grant permission.
2. Appropriate permits must be acquired in consultation with DHR.
3. Plots must be obtained from another cemetery, including interment fees (the plot, vault, burial container, labor) and headstone purchased.
 - a. Storage of remains may also be needed while excavations take place.
 - b. Chain of custody must be kept between consultant and the funeral home/relocation cemetery.
4. Extensive mapping of existing cemetery must occur.
5. Excavation must be performed by a bioarchaeologist.
6. Plan must be prepared for unknowns and/or if the remains do not match the records.
7. Soil must be brought in to compact the ground once all remains have been removed (either entire cemetery or the part most affected by environment).

FUNDING AND AID

MINOR MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS

Engage local churches or non-profits and schools that require students to acquire community service hours. Attract descendants through local public history events and public genealogy forums. They may assist in building an African American collection of papers at Westmoreland County Museum or A.T. Johnson Museum. They may also help fund initiatives or volunteer hours to make repairs, clean-up the cemeteries and illegal dump, or maintain an Ancestry.com account and digital collections hosted by Westmoreland County Museum or A.T. Johnson Museum.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

DHR Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund Disaster Grant Programs

Administered by DHR on behalf of the NPS. New rounds of these grants are dependent on how Congress responds to future disasters. <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/historicpreservationfund/disaster-recovery.htm>

<https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/grants/disaster-assistance/>

National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund

Grants from the National Trust's African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund are designed to advance ongoing preservation activities for historic places such as sites, museums, and landscapes representing African American cultural heritage. The fund supports work in four primary areas: Capital Projects, Organizational Capacity Building, Project Planning, and Programming and Interpretation. Grants made from the African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund will range from \$50,000 to \$150,000. In 2021, the National Trust awarded \$3 million to 40 projects.

<https://forum.savingplaces.org/build/funding/grant-seekers/specialprograms/aachactionfund>

STABILIZATION VIA MINE RECLAMATION

Virginia Department of Energy (DOE) Orphaned Land Fund

As a result of a proposal by the mining industry, legislation was enacted in 1978, which established a non-coal orphaned land reclamation program. Funds for the reclamation of orphaned mines are obtained from interest monies earned from a state managed industry self-bonding program. There are an estimated 4,000 orphan mines in the Commonwealth, 69% of which have been inventoried, including the one within the James Monroe Birthplace. Once identified, an abandoned mineral mine site is evaluated for its potential hazards to the environment and the public's health and safety. This evaluation includes soil and water investigations, studies on the feasibility of reclaiming the site, cost analysis, and seeking the landowner's consent to allow reclamation to proceed. The first orphaned land site was reclaimed in 1981. Since then, 134 orphaned land projects have been completed encompassing 650 acres at a cost of \$3,715,301 (2021). The average cost of reclamation per acre has been \$5,715.84.

<https://energy.virginia.gov/mineral-mining/AMML.shtml>

STABILIZATION VIA STREAM RESTORATION

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program

Protects, restores, and enhances coastal wetland ecosystems and associated uplands. States along the coasts or Great Lakes are eligible. If the state has established a fund for acquiring coastal wetlands, other natural areas, or open space, then NCWCG funds can be used to cover up to 75% of the cost of a project. If the state has not created such a fund, states are eligible to receive funding to cover up to 50% of the cost of a project.

<https://www.fws.gov/service/national-coastal-wetlands-conservation-grants>

Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program

The Virginia CZM Program office at DEQ administers the program's annual grant award from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), National Ocean Service, Office for Coastal Management. Among other projects, CZM grants can be used to fund the fee simple acquisition of property, the purchase of conservation easements, or the cost of habitat restoration, including streams. CZM grants used for the above projects require a 50% non-federal match.

<https://www.deq.virginia.gov/coasts/coastal-zone-management>

STABILIZATION VIA LAND ACQUISITION AND CONSERVATION

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Clean Water Financing and Assistance - Land Conservation Loan Program

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, on behalf of the State Water Control Board, manages the Virginia Clean Water Revolving Loan Fund. Funds the acquisition or permanent conservation of land that (1) protects or improves water quality and prevents the pollution of state waters, and (2) protects the natural or open-space values of the property or ensures its availability for agricultural, forest, recreational or open-space use. Repayment schedules of 20, 25 or 30 years are available, depending on the project type.

<https://www.deq.virginia.gov/water/clean-water-financing>

Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR) Land and Water Conservation Fund - State and Local Grant Funding

Federal program administered on the state level by DCR. Provides funding for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. These grants are for public bodies only. Towns, cities, counties, regional park authorities and state agencies may apply for 50% matching fund assistance. This is a reimbursement program meaning that the sponsoring agency should be capable of financing the project while requesting periodic reimbursement.

<https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/lwcf>

Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF) Get Outdoors

Provides grants for projects that increase equitable access to safe open space in Virginia's communities. Some examples of costs that can be covered include infrastructure, planning and capacity building.

<https://www.vof.org/protect/grants/go/>

VOF Virginia Open-Space Lands Preservation Trust Fund

Provides grants to localities or landowners for the protection of open space that offers a wide range of public benefits. Public Access grants are available for projects that result in new or expanded open space that is available to the public for recreation or education. Easement Assistance grants may cover legal fees, appraisals, surveys, partial purchase and other costs associated with conveying an open-space easement.

<https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/land-conservation/vlcf-grant-list?id=2022-01-21-16-53-00-598898-gan>

CHAPTER 8. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This report presents the results of a reconnaissance survey and limited archival study of multiple African American cemeteries, located in the community of Monroe Hall, west of Colonial Beach, in Westmoreland County, Virginia (see Figures 1.1-1.2). ERG conducted the survey for the DHR and Westmoreland County local government. The project proponent is the A.T. Johnson Museum. The project is funded through the ESHPF, which is a grant program administered to SHPOs, such as DHR, by the NPS for projects related to disaster recovery, including survey and inventory of historic resources in impacted areas. In 2019, DHR received funding through the ESHPF following Hurricanes Michael and Florence, which impacted Virginia in September and October 2018. A.T. Johnson Museum noted that Hurricane Michael compromised the stability of the cemeteries.

During this investigation, ERG identified the Stewart, Watts, and Smith Cemeteries (096-5301, 096-5302, and 096-5303). Due to the presence of the James Monroe Birthplace (096-0046; 44WM0038), the land surrounding the cemeteries has been intensively surveyed. Previous investigations have determined that Parcel 6-129 (the present-day park land and Stewart Cemetery) and Parcel 6-128, 6-130, and 6-131 (the Watts and Smith Cemeteries) were occupied roughly from the 1750s to the 1780s by the Monroes and again from the 1870s to the 1920s by at least four African American families (Dwelling Sites 44WM0038, 44WM0287, 44WM0288, and 44WM0310).

James Monroe, his siblings, and their inherited enslaved labor moved from Westmoreland County as young adults; the descendant community is well documented and active in Monroetown near Highland Plantation in Albemarle County (The White House Historical Association 2022). After 100 years of ownership by absentee Northerners, a White Washington, D.C. investor sold the present-day parkland and cemeteries to three Black families: the eastern part to the Smiths in 1871, and the west two-thirds to the Stewarts and the Watts in 1872. From 1871 to 1879, they moved from Nomini Grove, which is roughly 30 miles southeast, and founded Monroe Hall. Whether they are tied to the Great Manumission of 500 enslaved laborers from Nomini Hall by Robert Carter III in the 1790s is unknown.

All three African American cemeteries are associated with the founding families of this Reconstruction- and Jim Crow-era community. They are also associated with African American's intentional and continued segregation of worship and burial practices following Reconstruction. Their location by a stream bank is reflective of African American spiritual practices developed before the Civil War, when Blacks had to attend White churches or be chaperoned for fear of rebellion. In response, free and enslaved Blacks held services together in secret in forested areas along streams before the war and, in Reconstruction, built their own Black churches that served as the center of urban neighborhoods and rural communities like Monroe Hall while maintaining family burial grounds on private land.

Visible markers in the Stewart and Watts Cemeteries are illustrative of both lower- and middle-to-upper class African American burials and include ornate marble and granite headstones acquired from Maryland, classic government-issued Veterans Administration headstones, hand-inscribed limestone headstones, and large concrete vaults among numerous metal funeral home plaques and unmarked depressions in damp and leafy areas. Those in Smith Cemetery are illustrative of lower-to-middle-income African American burials and include hand inscribed concrete head- and footstones, metal funeral home plaques, and more ephemeral material such as wooden crosses, glass vases, and temporary flowers among multiple substantial, concrete vaults.

With many older, intact memorials belonging to second and third generation family members descendent of Monroe Hall founders, Samuel and Peggy Stewart, Moses and Mary Watts, and James and Alice Key Watts, the Stewart and Watts Cemeteries are recommended as potentially eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criteria A and/or B using Criteria Consideration D, as each cemetery may derive its primary significance from graves of persons of transcendent importance to Westmoreland Black history and from association with African American burial practices and settlement of one of the earliest Reconstruction-era Black communities in Westmoreland County. The Smith Cemetery is recommended for further study as the earliest known interment dates to 1969 and most burials are third, fourth, and fifth generation to the Monroe Hall founders George and Sallie Smith (**Table 8.1**).

Table 8.1 Resources recorded within the survey areas.

DHR No.	Name	Resource Type	Date	NRHP Status
096-5301	Stewart Cemetery	African American Heritage Site	Post-1879	Potentially Eligible; Further Study of Monroe Hall HD Recommended
096-5302	Watts Cemetery	African American Heritage Site	Post-1877	Potentially Eligible; Further Study of Monroe Hall HD Recommended
096-5303	Smith Cemetery	African American Heritage Site	Post-1872	Further Study Recommended; Further Study of Monroe Hall HD Recommended

ERG recommends the following cultural resources studies to identify additional burials, better define boundaries, and/or further evaluate NRHP eligibility. They are listed in order of priority; however, tasks 1-3 may be combined into one survey effort:

1. Intensive Survey of the Stewart Cemetery (096-5301)
2. Intensive Survey of the Watts Cemetery (096-5302)
3. Intensive Survey of the Smith Cemetery (096-5303)
4. Reconnaissance survey and historic district evaluation of Monroe Hall
5. DHR Preliminary Information Form (PIF) for Monroe Hall Historic District
6. Evaluate Stewart Cemetery (096-5301), Watts Cemetery (096-5302), Smith Cemetery (096-5303), and previously identified African American archaeological sites as contributing or non-contributing to a potential Monroe Hall Historic District

The Stewart, Watts, and Smith Cemeteries and surrounding landscape have suffered tremendously from environmental impacts related to the following:

- pre-1870s timber clearing
- 1870s-1920s lack of riparian buffers around agricultural fields
- 1930s-1960s sand and gravel mining
- 1960s-Present illegal dumping
- 1970s-Present accelerated climate change

The Stewart Cemetery is subject to more intense and frequent flooding of Freeneck Gut. The Watts and Smith Cemeteries almost sit on an island, surrounded by “abandoned mineral mined lands,” which are defined as “those areas disturbed by the mining of all minerals, except coal, which were not required by law to be reclaimed or have not been reclaimed” (VDOE 2022). While at a slightly higher elevation, they are threatened by erosion on all four sides and more intense tree fall during hurricane season due to the surrounding mine walls. In general, burials may have been destroyed by mining, eroded into the abandoned sand and gravel pits, or washed away into Freeneck Gut. The soils present in the survey areas do not drain well and have contributed to significant and damaging tree fall during hurricane season.

ERG recommends the following short-, mid-, and long-term actions:

- Continue to engage in Outreach in online forums to garner interest, funding, and volunteers in the descendant community.
- Maintain hardwoods to prevent deadfall/downed trees/uprooted trees.
- Reinter the coffin exposed by tree fall at the Watts Cemetery in consultation with the State Archaeologist.
- Place temporary and then permanent and substantial boundary markers at the corners of Stewart Cemetery and at the corners of the Watts and Smith Cemeteries in consultation with landowners after intensive survey.
- Participate in the FEMA Flood Map Modernization program and re-evaluate the 100-year and 500-year flood.
- Conduct feasibility studies and seek grants from applicable agencies and organizations on three large-scale efforts to stabilize all three cemeteries and improve the overall health of the watershed, which will in turn benefit JMMF and Westmoreland County Tourism and Parks and Recreation.
 1. Freeneck Gut and Monroe Creek Stream Restoration
 2. Dump Clean-up and Abandoned Mineral Mine Land Reclamation
 3. Acquisition of Parcel 6-128 to reclaim the abandoned mineral mine and create parkland between the Watts and Smith Cemeteries and James Monroe Birthplace and Monroe Creek

The following sources may help advance this important project to the next level:

- Community and Descendant Donors and Volunteers
- A.T. Johnson Museum
- James Monroe Memorial Foundation
- Westmoreland County Government
- Westmoreland County Museum
- DHR Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund Disaster Grant Programs
- National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund
- Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program
- Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR) Land and Water Conservation Fund
- Virginia Department of Energy (DOE) Orphaned Land Fund
- Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Clean Water Financing and Assistance - Land Conservation Loan Program
- Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF) Grants
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program

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