

Chapter 6

Plantation Research in 1987: Ethnographic and Historical

This chapter discusses the five plantations on which archaeological work concentrated. An overview is given of their contemporary features, and the specific reasons why each was chosen for intensive investigation is discussed. The results of interviews bearing on possible cemetery locations are detailed, and the historical overviews of each plantation present whatever basic demographic information could be found relating to the slaves. It should be reemphasized that although the field season involved some research into primary sources, particularly in

the Barbados Department of Archives, this research was merely intended to gather data that had not been acquired on earlier field trips and which would help in developing historical overviews of the plantations. If archaeological evidence of a slave cemetery was to have been found, then it was intended to make more elaborate efforts at gathering historical materials. The five plantations are discussed in the order in which archaeological work was commenced.

Guinea

Lying amidst the gently undulating topography of the southeastern section of St. John parish (Figure 1), Guinea plantation, its fields of sugar cane often fanned by sea breezes, offers a highly pleasing perspective of the geography of Barbados, and provides broad vistas of the surrounding countryside and the fields of neighboring plantations.

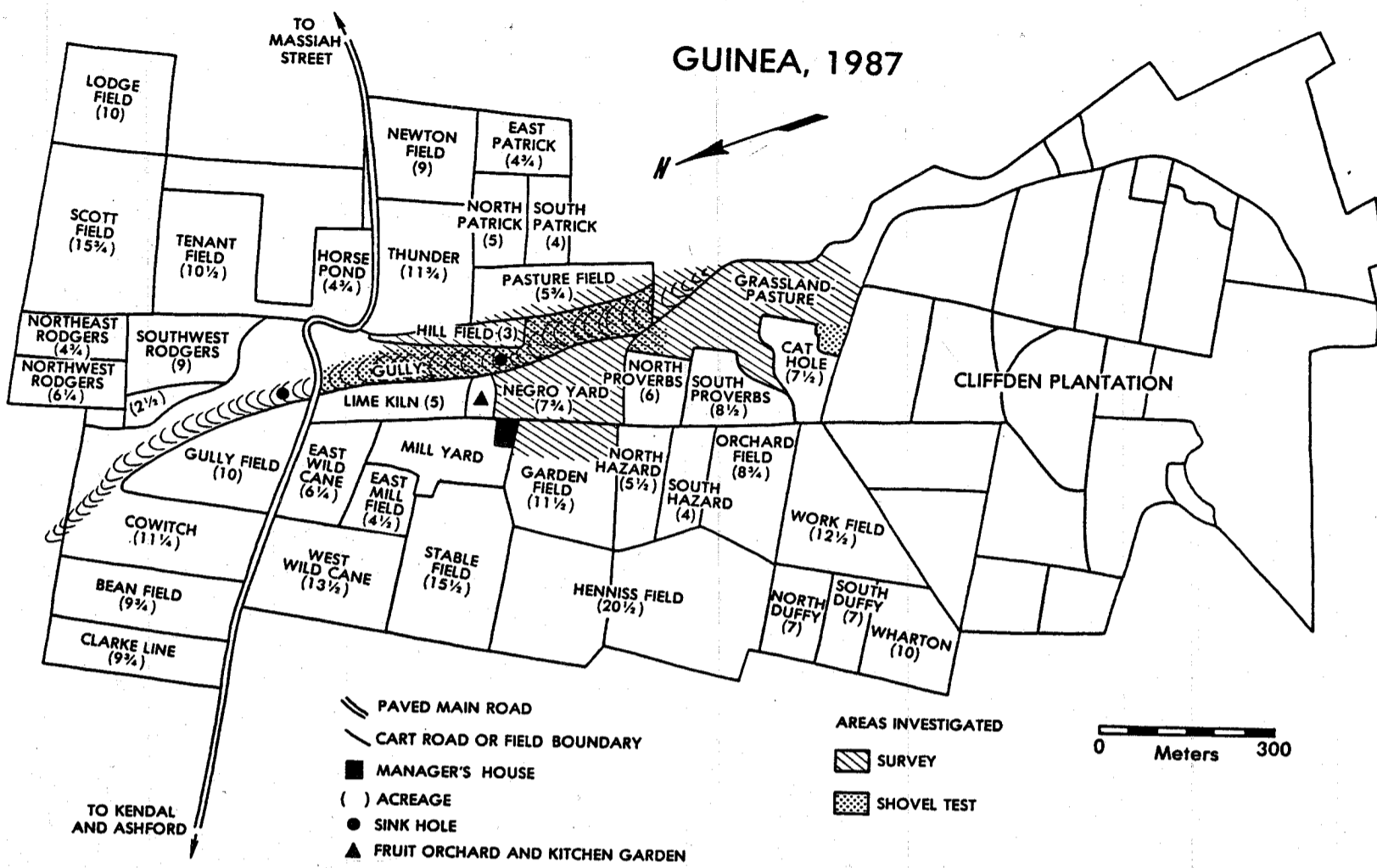
In its overall layout Guinea does not differ very much from other Barbados plantations. Its Mill Yard contains, among other structures, a well built and well maintained house for the manager, various outbuildings, and the ruins of an old sugar factory; there is also a pond area nearby. Surrounding the Mill Yard are the plantation's agricultural fields, including the Negro Yard field. This field lies immediately to the southeast of the Mill Yard and, separated only by a "cart road" (the general term for the unpaved, narrow roads that run between a plantation's fields), it virtually adjoins the manager's house. From the veranda of the latter, the entire Negro Yard and its surrounding fields and pastures are readily visible (Figure 2).

Today owned by a family based company which also holds other plantations, Guinea and an adjoining plantation (Cliffden, with which Guinea is today combined) is considered relatively large by Barbadian

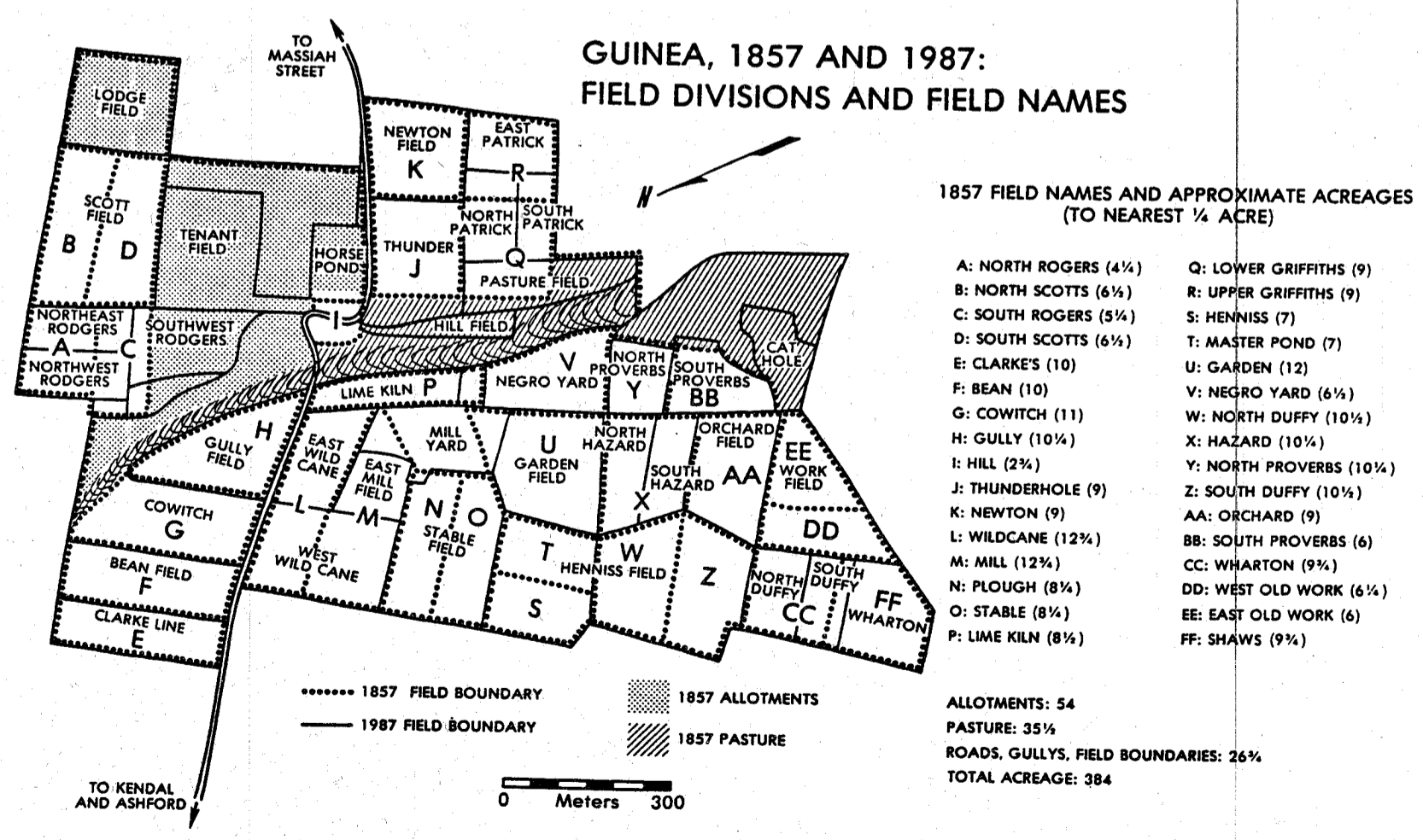
standards, and is supervised by a resident manager and two full-time submanagers. The land of Guinea itself contains some unused pastures and gullies, and about 309 arable acres divided into 37 named fields. The fields average about 8 1/3 acres; the Negro Yard, today planted in cane, contains 7 3/4 acres (Figure 2).

The eastern portion of the Negro Yard inclines into a thickly wooded gully with dense underbrush which runs for several hundred yards along an approximate northwestern-southeastern axis. This gully contains two 30 to 40 foot deep "sink holes," well-like structures which help drain excess water from the fields. Covering the steeply rising eastern side of this gully is an approximately six to seven acre pasture (together the pasture and gully area comprise about eight acres) with a thick grass cover and widely dispersed coconut trees (Figure 2). This pasture and its proximity to the Negro Yard were major factors in choosing Guinea for archaeological research.

Guinea was initially attractive for several reasons. The Project Director was already well acquainted with the plantation's major owner, who was very supportive of the proposed research. In addition, during the early 1970s historical research yielded enough data to compile a fairly detailed account of Guinea's ownership history; also available were some



2. Guinea, 1987: fields and archaeological research areas



3. Guinea, 1857 and 1987: field divisions and field names

relatively rich demographic data on the plantation's slaves during the 1820s (White 1972). A visit to Guinea in 1983 established the presence of a Negro Yard whose location followed the wider Barbadian pattern (and conformed to the Newton model) by its proximity to the Mill Yard. Moreover, it was later ascertained that the large pasture close to the Negro Yard had never been cultivated-- at least not within living memory. It is relevant that an 1857 map of Guinea also shows the area as a pasture (Figure 3). This pasture displayed topographical and other physical characteristics similar to the Newton cemetery area. As was experienced with many other pastures in Barbados, the extreme thickness of the grass cover made it difficult for surface inspections alone to establish if the apparent rises on the land were natural rock outcroppings, manmade rock piles or mounds, or just natural contours of the hilly land (Plate 3). Yet, the proximity of this pasture to the Negro Yard, its shallow soil cover, frequent rock outcroppings, and apparent mounds, suggested it was an ideal locale to search for the plantation cemetery; and it was here that the archaeological work began.

As with many contemporary Barbadian plantations, Guinea's history not only extends into the seventeenth century, but also its origin and development are only partially known and obscured by the complex of ownership changes and land transactions that have taken place over the years.³ Guinea apparently began as a sugar plantation in the 1640s with Thomas Ball's purchase of a 50-acre nuclear unit. Over the years, separate purchases added to this unit until the plantation reached some 300 acres toward the end of the seventeenth century, if not earlier. By 1704 and until at least 1734 (and probably later) Ball's was from 295 to 317 acres, and it continued to be owned by various Ball family members until the early 1740s, when the plantation was sold. Although identified on Barbados maps as Ball until the early nineteenth century (Jefferys 1775; Mayo 1722; Thomson 1814), by at least 1704 the plantation was called Guinea, this name appearing on deeds and wills from this early date; however, the first island map to identify the plantation as Guinea was not published until 1827 (Barralier 1827).⁴

It is uncertain how the name Guinea originated. The only written evidence suggesting its origin is in an 1825 account by Judge Nathaniel Lucas, a Barbadian, who wrote a great deal about the island's early history: "Tradition says this estate took its name from having been formerly stocked at once with an entire cargo of Africans from the coast of Guinea. If this is accurate, it must have been at some very remove period, for I have taken no trifling pains to ascertain this fact, hitherto without success" (Lucas 1953a:127). Another version was given in 1987 by an elderly informant who had been born on the plantation. Although he could not specify the names of the people involved, he relates that when the "old owners had bought Guinea, money was very small" (scarce) and they were able to buy the plantation cheap; "they bought it in Guineas . . . all in shillings." The informant had heard this account when he was a "boy," it being part of an oral tradition passed down "from one aged person to another."

Whatever the case, sometime in the late eighteenth century or early nineteenth, under new ownership, Guinea (Ball's) was combined with the Rouse plantation (which by at least 1720 had 120 acres and 59 slaves) and thereby expanded its acreage. In 1831, when the expanded Guinea became the property of Robert Haynes, a prominent member of the plantocracy, the plantation contained 420 acres, large by Barbadian standards (Handler and Lange 1978: 40); by 1847, if not earlier, it was 384, still a relatively large plantation and falling within the upper 22% of all Barbados plantations in terms of acreage (Gibbs 1975:17). In 1840, the average plantation in St. John was 229 acres; the island average was 186 (Davy 1854:109). Guinea remained at 384 acres for the duration of the nineteenth century and under the continued ownership of one member or another of the Haynes family. In 1900 it was sold out of the family.

An 1857 map of Guinea (today stored at the manager's house), provides a glimpse of the plantation some 130 years ago, only 23 years after emancipation (information presented in Figure 3 is derived from this map). In 1857 Guinea was close to 384 acres, about 268 of which were arable; the remainder was rented allotments (54 acres), pasture (35 1/2 acres), and "roads, gullies, intervals" (26 3/4 acres). The

arable acreage was divided into 32 named fields ranging in size from 2 3/4 acres to 12 3/4, and averaging 8 1/2 acres, not much more than today's 8 1/3 average.

Reflecting what is probably typical of many Barbadian plantations, most of Guinea's 1857 fields still existed in 1987. Of the 32 fields in 1857, 28 still exist; they are in the same locations as in 1857, although some acreages and boundaries have been altered as fields were combined or subdivided over the years (Figures 2, 3). For example, North Scotts and South Scotts in 1857, fields of about 6 1/2 acres each, are now one field, Scott, with 15 3/4 acres. The 10 1/4 acre Hazard field of 1857 became North Hazard and South Hazard with 5 1/2 and 4 acres, respectively. The 12 3/4 acre Mill field of 1857 was reduced to 4 1/2 acres by 1987, but the rest of it was added onto the Mill Yard and to Wildcane field. What is today Stable field with 15 1/2 acres was two fields in 1857, Stable (8 1/4 acres) and Plough (8 1/4 acres); the name Plough is no longer present. In 1857 there were approximately 54 acres in "allotments," and unnamed; today these "allotments" no longer exist, but rather are cultivated fields such as Lodge (10 acres), Tenant field (10 1/2 acres), Horse Pond (4 3/4 acres)-- field names that did not exist in 1857. Other fields, for example, Gully, Cowitch, Bean, Clarke, and Garden, have remained almost identical in size and shape over the years, and the Negro Yard, which was 6 1/2 acres in 1857, is now 7 3/4.

Despite changes in some acreages and boundaries, the physical layout of Guinea has not changed very much since 1857. The plantation's road network is very similar, and, of particular relevance, the Mill Yard (somewhat smaller in 1857 than in 1987), Negro Yard, and adjacent fields (including the large pasture) are all essentially the same today as they were around 130 years ago. Moreover, there is no reason to suspect that the 1857 layout was significantly different from the layout in still earlier times, at least by the later years of the slave period itself.

In 1705, Guinea, with 317 acres (before being joined with Rouse), had approximately 177 slaves, although this figure may be high and a result of faulty transcription from the primary source. In 1734, the plantation is again

recorded at 317 acres, but with only 70 slaves (51% female; 27 "men," 7 "boys," 28 "women," and 8 "girls"). Whatever Guinea's actual population in the early eighteenth century, later figures are much more accurate for they were acquired when triennial counts, mandated by the British government, were made of the island's (and West Indian) slaves in general. Between 1817 and 1832, Guinea's slave population averaged 196, increasing from 180 in 1817, to 190 in 1823, 203 in 1826, 208 in 1829, and 216 by 1832; by contemporary standards, Guinea would have been considered a large plantation in terms of its slave population. During this period, females averaged 102, or 52% of the total--a sexual distribution comparable to many other Barbadian plantations (Public Record Office 1817-1832; also, Barbados Department of Archives, Deeds [vol. 24, p. 295]; Handler and Lange 1978: 34-36; Lucas 1953a: 127; White 1972).

Available figures for Guinea show that over the 12 year period, 1818 through 1829, 74 of the plantation's slaves died, an average of 6.2 deaths a year, an approximate annual death rate of 3.2%-- somewhat higher than the estimated 2.8% for the parish of St. John during this period (Higman 1984: 643).⁵ Approximately 58% of Guinea's deaths were males, and children under five constituted 54% of the deaths, reflecting the high infant mortality rates generally found in Barbados; another 8% (five) were between five and nine years old (data on slave deaths at Guinea have been calculated from figures in Public Record Office 1817-1832; White 1972; cf. Handler and Lange 1978: 285-286).

Death rates in Barbados were higher in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries than during the preemancipation decades of the nineteenth, but no figures are available for the former periods. Similarly, figures for slave deaths at Guinea prior to 1818 are absent. However, assuming that the plantation had a minimum annual average of about 124 slaves (the mean between the 1705 and 1734 population figures) over the 113 year period, 1705 through 1818, and conservatively estimating 2.8% deaths per annum, then at least 392 slaves died during this period; adding to this figure the 74 who died between 1818 and 1829, then at least

466 slaves died between 1705 and 1829. This would be a very conservative estimate of slave deaths at Guinea; and if one could add the number of slaves who died prior to 1705 and after 1829, the number of deaths, of course, would be even larger. Whatever the actual numbers, it is reasonable to assume that at Guinea, as at Newton, many hundreds of slaves died during the plantation's existence. Lacking any historical evidence to the contrary, most, if not all, of these slaves must have been buried somewhere at Guinea itself.

As on all the plantations investigated, interviews at Guinea attempted to yield information that could complement and hopefully assist the archaeological efforts to locate the plantation's cemetery. The present and former plantation managers, principal owner, and elderly workers, both current and retired, all agreed that no skeletal materials had ever been found in Guinea's agricultural fields. Yet, aside from the general historical evidence which strongly indicated that each Barbadian plantation had a cemetery, there were some other clues suggesting the existence of such a cemetery at Guinea; these clues derived from two of the interviews.

Prior to the 1987 field season, one of Guinea's former managers reported that years earlier he had heard of a skeleton (or parts of a skeleton) being uncovered from the pasture area, described above, to the east of the plantation's Mill Yard and Negro Yard (Figure 2). Although he never saw the bones and was very vague on details, he was certain that he had heard the bones had been found somewhere on the slopes of the pasture. No other informant could confirm or substantiate this information, but none contradicted it.

Malvern

With its Mill Yard lying some 3 1/4 miles northwest, as the crow flies, of Guinea, with which it shares a generally similar topography, Malvern is in the northern part of St. John parish, a small portion of its land (including the Mill Yard) also falling into St. Joseph (Figure 1). To the north and northeast,

Several hours of interviews with another informant during 1987 established more firmly that Guinea once might have had a burial ground. By consensus, Stanley Gittens is the oldest living person ever to have worked at Guinea. (The names of all informants given in these pages are their real names.) Residing in a small village bordering Guinea's lands, this 83 year old (born in 1905) former agricultural worker started working at the plantation around 1917, at about the age of 13. Although frail and sickly today, during interviews Gittens was always lucid and articulate, and very cordial.

Gittens was queried extensively about the possible discovery of human bones during the course of his work career at Guinea. Although emphatic that he never saw bones nor ever heard of any being found, he was equally clear that his mother (born around 1885) had told him that burials occurred at the plantation "in the old days"; moreover, his mother had learned of this practice from her father.⁶ These burials, according to Gittens, did not take place during his or his mother's lifetime. When asked, he could not provide the names of people who might have been buried at Guinea, but he was emphatic that since "I come along" (i.e., since he was born) he had heard of burials on the plantation. No one, Gittens says, ever showed him where these "old people" were buried and he never inquired. Though questioned several times on this issue, he would not venture to guess a location either. It had been hoped that interviews with Gittens might have yielded an approximate location of the burial ground, as had occurred under similar circumstances at Newton (see chapter 1), but this did not occur. Thus, the quest for a cemetery entirely relied on the archaeological investigations that were proceeding concurrently with the interviews.

Malvern's lands extend to the rim of Hackleton's Cliff, the huge coral escarpment which sets off the Scotland District from the rest of Barbados. The edge of this escarpment affords a wide vista of the Scotland District and many miles of Barbados' Atlantic coast. In this area, close to the edge of the cliff and its

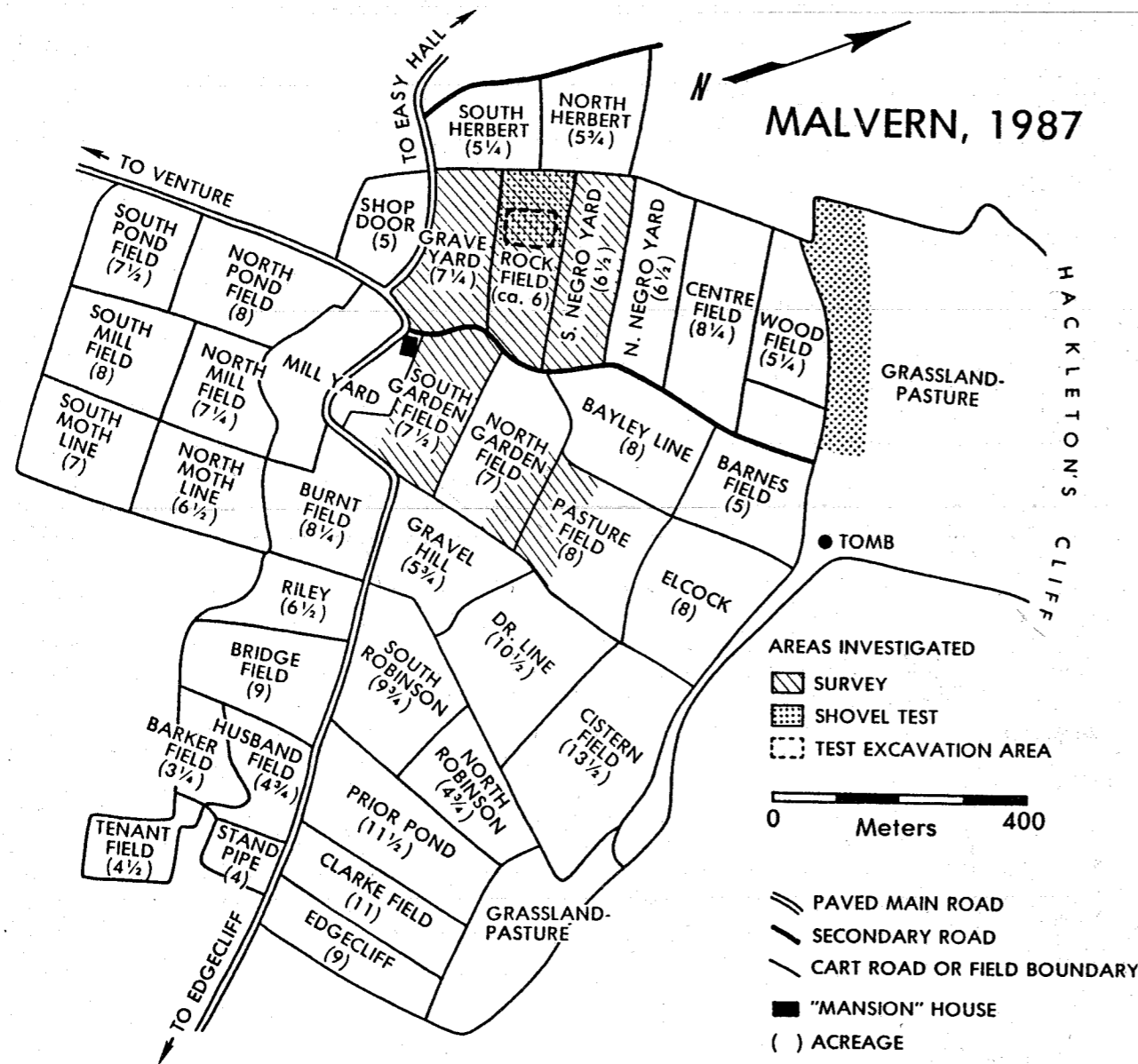
commanding views, but hidden in a grove of trees and underbrush, there is an old, rather large (approximately 11 m by 3 m) stone tomb with three separate vaults. All of these vaults, according to elderly informants, have been broken into many times over the years, most recently in 1985. The entrance to one of the vaults was resealed at least 10 years ago, perhaps somewhat earlier, but the other two were open and visible to inspection in 1987. One contained an apparently unopened lead coffin; the other contained human bones scattered about the surface (apparently from the coffin that had been removed) and a lead headstone with the inscription "Isaac Thorpe Forster, died May 20, 1775, aged 40." Thorpe had been an owner of Foster Hall plantation (adjoining Malvern to the north, but on the Scotland District side of the escarpment). There were no apparent indications of the names of those buried in the other vaults. The Malvern tomb, however, may be the one referred to by J. H. Lawrence-Archer in his nineteenth-century volume of monumental inscriptions. He refers to the Culpepper family tomb in St. John (without specifying the plantation location): "The mausoleum of the Colepepper [*sic*] family, in a quiet recess on the brink of Hackleton's Cliff, in . . . St. John, is singularly picturesque, and commands one of the most beautiful of sea views" (1875:348). However, according to Ronald Hughes (personal communication 1987), one of the tombs is that of the Harper family and another of the Mayer family.

Today Malvern is owned by a family trust composed of descendants of the original "colored" (in West Indian phenotypic usage) owner, Charles Miller Austin, who in 1913 purchased the plantation from its white owners. Malvern contains 315 acres, virtually the same acreage it has had since at least 1808, perhaps even earlier. Its old and somewhat ornate "great house is essentially Georgian of uncertain date" (Fraser and Hughes 1986:52) and was described in 1859 as "a large and most excellent dwelling house, suitable for a numerous family" (Extracts 1959:120). Today it shows the weathering of time and has a somewhat dilapidated appearance; it is the home of the resident manager.

Among the plantations investigated prior to 1987, Malvern had some unique

characteristics which made it extremely attractive for archaeological research. These related to its fields, primarily the presence of a Graveyard field. Graveyard, a cultivated field of 7 1/4 acres (in cane during 1987), adjoins the northwestern portion of the Mill Yard, very close to the "mansion house" and separated from the Mill Yard by only a narrow paved road. Immediately to the north of Graveyard are three adjoining fields which enhanced Malvern's appeal: Rock field, an uncultivated pasture of about 6 acres which, according to several elderly informants, had never been planted in sugar cane,⁷ and South and North Negro Yards, together totaling 13 acres and cultivated (Figure 4; Plate 4). Even from the furthest point of North Negro Yard, the manager's house is readily visible through the trees in the Mill Yard. However, it was the uncultivated Rock field, with its grass cover, a small gully transecting its sloping northern third, and its position between the Graveyard field, on the one hand, and the Negro Yards, on the other, that suggested a very likely area for a cemetery -- following the model offered by the Newton experience. Malvern's 315 acres are divided into 36 named fields, ranging from 3 1/4 to 13 1/2 acres and averaging about 7 1/4 acres. These fields comprise close to 260 acres; the plantation's remaining acreage includes its Mill Yard, scattered pastures and gullies, roads, and a relatively large pasture at the northeast which runs into the edge of Hackleton's Cliff (Figure 4). Although a contemporary map (upon which Figure 4 is based) shows Malvern's fields and their acreages, no present historical evidence, cartographic or otherwise, permits comparing today's fields with those of the nineteenth century or earlier. (A 1906 surveyor's chart, modifying one made in 1871, only shows exterior boundaries and gives no interior features.)

Malvern's long history is presently known only sketchily. The plantation apparently already existed by 1652 or 1656 when it contained 195 acres, as well as 25 white indentured servants and 2 black slaves; it was owned by Seth Rowley, a London merchant. Fraser and Hughes (1986: 52) maintain the plantation was called Rowley's throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but this name does not appear on early island maps (e.g.,



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Forde 1675; Jefferys 1775; Mayo 1722; Moll 1708), and no trace of Rowley's could be found in other sources. On several early maps (Jefferys 1775; Mayo 1722), however, Culpeper (*sic*) plantation is shown, with one windmill, in the general area of Malvern today, and, as noted above, the tomb on Malvern lands may be in some way related to the Culpepper family. In any case, in 1802 the plantation was purchased by Francis Shore Bayley who named it Malvern after the school he had attended in England, and it came to be identified as Malvern on island maps (e.g., Barralier 1827). By 1802, Malvern contained 313 or 314 acres, an acreage that remained virtually constant throughout the nineteenth century and up until the present. It can be noted that around the mid-nineteenth century, only 22% of Barbados' plantations were over 300 acres, and in 1840, for example, the average size of St. John's 39 plantations was 229 acres (Davy 1854: 109; Gibbs 1975:17).⁸

In 1808, at the death of Francis Bayley, the estate inventory of Malvern listed 160 slaves, including 31 "men," 42 "boys," 50 "women," and 37 "girls"; in 1817 and 1820, the slave contingent numbered 243 and 260, respectively. With females averaging 54% of its slaves during these three years, Malvern reflected a fairly typical sex ratio for Barbadian plantations; however, in terms of the size of its slave population, Malvern, as with Guinea, would have been considered a fairly large plantation (Handler and Lange 1978: 35-36).

Except for the period 1818 to 1820, during which 18 slaves died, mortality data are lacking for Malvern's slaves; there is no reason to suspect, however, that their death rates were significantly different from those at other plantations. Similarly, it is assumed that the dead were probably buried somewhere on the plantation's lands.

In attempting to discover Malvern's cemetery, brief and informal interviews were held with various members of the ownership trust, the manager, and current workers. These interviews concerned the plantation's fields and, particularly, any direct or heresay evidence involving human skeletal remains. Two of the interviewees were considered by the

others as being the most knowledgeable about the plantation's operations over the longest period of time.

Alleyne Young, now the plantation's watchman, was born in 1911 or 1913 and has worked at Malvern all of his life. He is considered by other informants as well as himself as the plantation's oldest living worker. Although Young was not interviewed as extensively as Stanley Gittens at Guinea, he was asked similar questions. In brief, he (as with others queried at the plantation) was unaware of any human skeletal remains found in the Graveyard field or elsewhere at Malvern; he had no idea were the "old time folks" were buried, other than in churchyards, and opined that Graveyard has its name because pigs and cows were formerly buried in the field, although it is unclear if he himself ever witnessed such burials.

Herbert Graves is a member of the family trust that owns Malvern; his grandfather was Charles Miller Austin. Graves was born at Malvern itself around 1907, lived there until the 1940s, and visits the plantation regularly as he deals with various of its business affairs; he knows its modern history intimately. He never heard of any human bones being found in any of the plantation's fields. Although he is unaware why Graveyard field is called such, he attaches no significance to explanations involving it as a place for livestock burials. Cows, mules, etcetera, he claims, were buried anywhere on the plantation with a convenient place and a soil depth of three to four feet. Such areas were usually in cultivated fields, but the animals would be buried before the cane was actually planted. Plantations tried to bury deep, he says, in order to protect the carcasses from being exhumed and eaten by dogs; sometimes this did not help and dogs got to the carcasses just the same. Graves suspects that "nearly every field" at Malvern has had animals buried in it at one time or another.

It can be noted that on all Barbados plantations, animals were fundamental to operations in the earlier periods (and even into more modern times). In 1808, for example, Malvern's inventory listed 57 head of "horned cattle" and 8 horses. Data are lacking on the

plantation's animal population for other periods, but if animals were buried on plantation fields it is reasonable to assume that evidence of their bones might have been sometimes found --to say nothing of some

Hanson

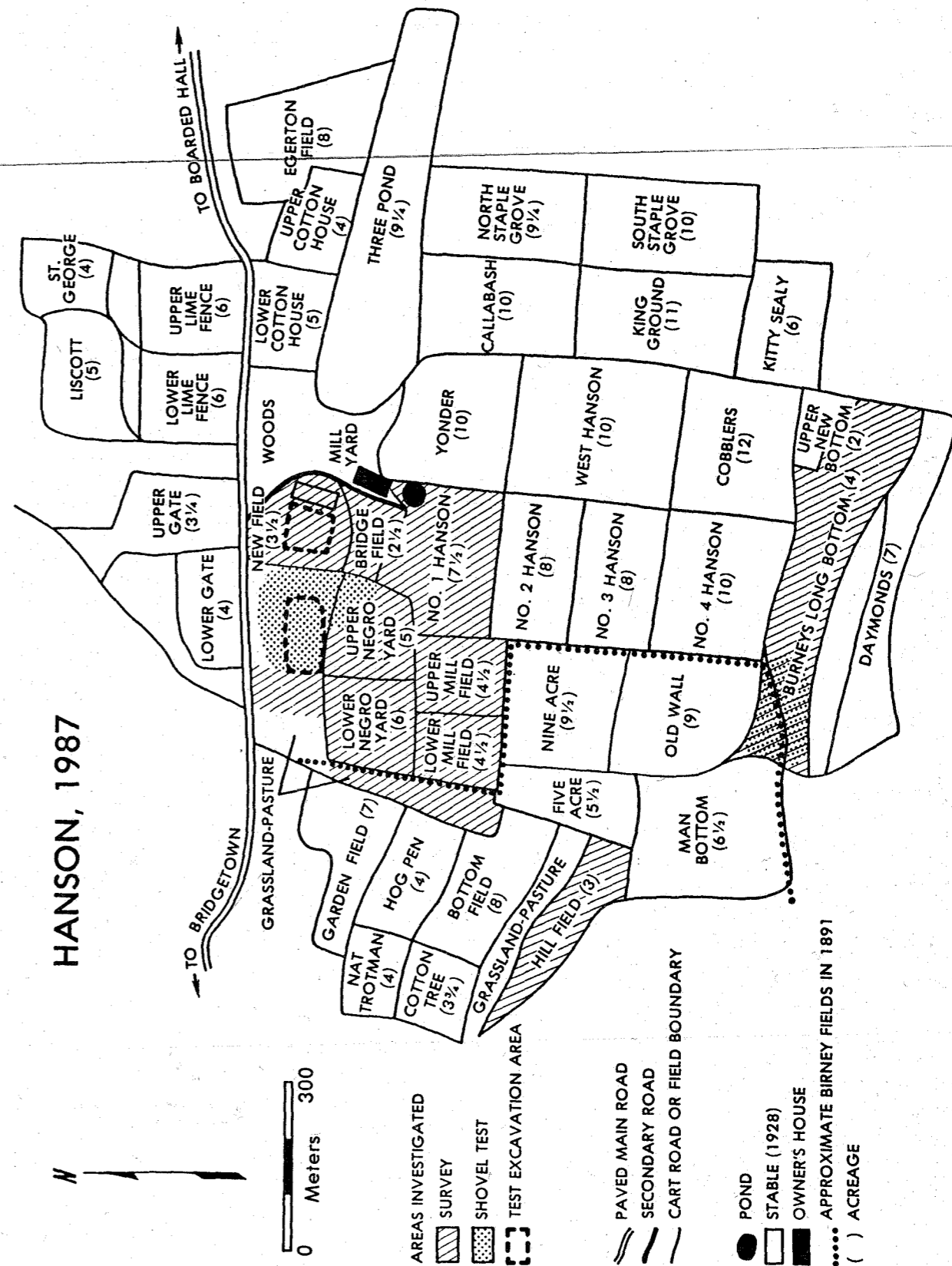
Whereas Guinea and Malvern are clearly in rural Barbados, Hanson lies relatively close to the densely populated environs of Bridgetown (Figure 1)-- an area which has experienced a great deal of physical and topographical modification in modern times. Most of Hanson's acreage, including its Mill Yard, are in St. George although a small portion of the plantation's lands extend into Christ Church parish. The "yard" contains the usual array of outbuildings, some in a state of ruin or disuse, that service plantations in contemporary Barbados, as well as the stables for the owner's race horses. The current owner has owned Hanson since 1953, and also functions as the plantation's manager; he inhabits what in earlier days was the manager's house, located in the southwest corner of the Mill Yard (Figure 5). The main house (the "dwelling house"), more centrally located in the Mill Yard was, during 1987, inhabited by the owner's son and his family. To the west of the Mill Yard are the Upper and Lower Negro Yard fields, 5 and 6 acres, respectively, and Bridge field, a 2 1/2 acre field which, up to 30 years ago, had been part of Upper Negro Yard and was carved out of it; therefore, in earlier times, the Negro Yard, as occurs on other Barbados plantations, adjoined the Mill Yard itself. From the rear veranda of the owner's house, facing south, the land slopes relatively steeply into a large pond which still contains water. This pond is also shown on an 1891 plantation map, and its proximity to the Negro Yards (including Bridge field) makes it tempting to speculate that in earlier days it may have been one of the water sources for the plantation's slaves (Figure 5).

Hanson was chosen for archaeological investigation for several reasons. Most importantly, it was the only plantation of the sample for which there was evidence, albeit indirect, of the discovery of human bones. These bones could be assigned an approximate date,

evidence of human remains. However, aside from a horse tooth and some nonhuman bone found at Graveyard field, no other skeletal materials were discovered.

and appeared to have represented slave burials. Information concerning the bones came from Betty King, a white woman (born ca. 1918) whose father, L. T. Yearwood, had once owned Hanson. Mrs. King had been born on the plantation and spent her early childhood there, living in the same house that is now occupied by the current owner. As a small girl, her father had constructed a new stable at the western edge of the Mill Yard (Figure 5). The stable, a large (approximately 45 x 20 m) rectangular building of coral limestone blocks with a cement floor, still stands; a stone over its main entrance bears the inscribed date 1928 (Plate 6). By all accounts the building's exterior has not been enlarged or otherwise significantly altered since its construction. Although her memory is vague on many details, Mrs. King recalls her father telling her that while the foundation was being excavated, the workmen uncovered some human bones and two or three white clay pipes amidst these bones. She herself never witnessed the excavation nor saw the bones, but she inherited the pipes along with other of her father's possessions after his death in 1964.

One or two of the pipes had been lost over the years, but the Project Director was shown the remaining one. Although broken, the pipe was virtually whole, containing the entire bowl and most of the stem. This was an unusual find. The fragments of European-manufactured white clay pipes are relatively easily discovered on the surfaces of plantation fields in Barbados today; however, the earlier Newton experience, as well as archaeological surveys in other plantation areas of Barbados, indicate that the only whole pipes apt to be found in the ground are in undisturbed grave sites. At Newton, a number of burials were interred with such pipes, but no whole pipes were found elsewhere on the island despite the discovery of an abundance of pipe stem and bowl fragments. A comparison of the Hanson pipe with published descriptions and illustrations of pipes



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found at Newton indicates that the former dated to around 1700 (cf. Blakeman and Riordan 1978: Figure 33D, Burial 90; rouletting around its mouth also indicates an early manufacture date). The fact that this apparently early pipe was found in possible association with human skeletons suggested the possibility of slave burials, and made a case for further exploration of Hanson.

Other reasons which enhanced Hanson's appeal for archaeological investigation included its two Negro Yards (both under cultivation today) close to the Mill Yard (the plantation does not have a Graveyard field), and the presence of a relatively large noncultivated pasture next to the Negro Yards. As on other plantations investigated, this pasture displayed topographic characteristics broadly similar to those at the Newton cemetery: rock outcroppings, apparent shallow soil, thick grass cover. Another sloping pasture in the same general vicinity, which apparently never had been cultivated, showed similar topographic features, and within the general area of the Negro Yards several other sloping, rocky, and uncultivated areas suggested they might contain burials. In addition, an 1891 map of Hanson showed, among other features, field boundaries and acreages. Finally, Hanson is an old plantation and some historical information was already available before beginning the archaeological fieldwork.

Hanson has a long history that can be traced, only in a limited way at present, to at least 1674 and the original owner, Samuel Hanson. As a plantation, Hanson is named and marked on a detailed 1675 map of Barbados (Forde 1675) which shows it with two windmills "employed in the grinding of sugar canes"--thereby suggesting a relatively large plantation for the period. Although it is also shown on an early eighteenth century map (Moll 1708), it is not depicted on maps of the later eighteenth century (Jefferys 1775; Mayo 1722). Instead, such maps show a Barney (*sic*) plantation, with two windmills, in approximately the same location that Hanson is shown on the 1675 map. Hanson, however, is again shown and named as such on Barralier's 1827 map.

Little information is currently available on Hanson's early history and this leads to a confusing picture of its early ownership. The original owner, Samuel Hanson, died in 1687 or 1689 and the plantation appears to have been inherited by his only son, also named Samuel. But, as suggested by Mayo (1722), whose map was based on a survey between 1717 and 1721, the Berney family may have become involved sometime in the eighteenth century. A 1766 document, for example, involves one Hanson Berney, son of the late Sir Thomas Berney, and concerns "land in St. George's . . . formerly in tenure of Samuel Hanson" (Extracts 1947:121). Whatever the case, in 1794, when "the tenement and farm . . . formerly the tenure . . . of Samuel Hanson . . . deceased," was acquired by Sir John Berney, the plantation contained about 316 acres, with two windmills, assorted buildings and other property, including "Negro hereditments"--and an unspecified number of slaves (Barbados Department of Archives, Recopied Deeds [RB 1/202, pp. 14-15]). In 1809, Berney sold the plantation, then "commonly called or known by the name of Hansons or Upper Berneys" containing 317 acres and 80 slaves (Barbados Department of Archives, Recopied Deeds [RB 1/247, pp. 65-67, 110-111]), but by 1822, the plantation, then owned by John Simpson, contained 282 acres. In 1847, if not earlier, Hanson's acreage had been slightly reduced to 274 (in 1840 the average size of St. George's 62 plantations was 150 acres; the island average was 186 [Davy 1854:109]), and throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century and at least until 1921, the plantation's acreage was to remain at this figure. Sometime between 1921 and 1935, Hanson was formally joined to its western neighbor, Lower Birney or Birney, the spelling commonly used today. (Traditionally, in parishes east of St. Michael, when an owner had two adjoining plantations, the one to the west or near Bridgetown was usually called Lower [Hughes 1977: 22].) The combined acreage of the two now became 430 (although the arable acreage is much less), and some of Hanson's fields today were formerly part of Birney (Figure 5).⁹

The earliest available map of Hanson, which shows its field lines and acreages (but not their names) was certified in 1891, though it is

probably based on a still earlier map. In any case, the 1891 map is undoubtedly more faithful to the layout of Hanson in earlier periods than the modern field map, since the former shows Hanson before it was combined with Lower Birney. The modern map also includes various fields on the west which had once been part of Lower Birney. However, a comparison of the two maps strongly suggests that today's Negro Yards are in the same position as in 1891 (and undoubtedly during the days of slavery), although their boundaries may have been slightly altered since 1891 (Figure 5).

In 1891 Hanson's 45 fields averaged a little over 4 1/2 acres and encompassed about 209 1/4 of the plantation's total 274 acres; the remaining acreage included "pasture, roads, wood, yards, etc." Although field names are omitted from the 1891 map, comparing it with the modern map helps establish the 1891 Negro Yards. In 1891 Hanson had two Negro Yards, about 6 1/2 and 6 acres each, corresponding to today's Lower Negro Yard and Upper Negro Yard-- Bridge field, respectively. That is, the two 1891 Negro Yards had a combined acreage of a little over 12 1/2, while the combined total of the same fields today is about 13 1/2, a minor difference. In general, Hanson had more fields in 1891, but in comparing the two maps (and excluding today's fields that were formerly part of Lower Birney), it becomes apparent that since 1891 a number of smaller fields have been combined into larger fields. Today Hanson has 30 fields, averaging approximately 6 3/4 acres each. But, the fundamental geographic feature is that Hanson's field layout has not substantially changed for at least a century (and probably longer), and the 1891 Negro Yards, Mill Yard, and some of the pastures were still there in the summer of 1987.

In 1809, the earliest year with available information on Hanson's slaves, the plantation had 80 slaves (approximately in the lower third of Barbados plantations in terms of slave population size; Handler and Lange 1978: 35), 60 % of whom were females. There is no information on absolute age groups, but age-sex cohorts consisted of 17 "men," 15 "boys," 35 "women," and 13 "girls" (Barbados Department of Archives, Recopied Deeds [RB 1/247, fols. 65-67]). Although Hanson's acreage had decreased by 1822, its slave contingent had almost

doubled to 157 (bringing it into the approximate middle-third of the island's plantations). Females constituted 46.5 %, an atypical sex ratio for Barbadian plantations which tended toward a somewhat larger proportion of females (Handler and Lange 1978: 35-36). Age-sex groupings included 35 "men," 49 "boys," 42 "women," 31 "girls" (11 "boys" and 3 "girls" were defined as "infants"). Between 1809 and 1822, the percentage of "men" was approximately the same, while the percentage of "women" significantly lowered; the percentage of "boys" was much higher in 1822 than in 1809, while the percentage of "girls" was only slightly more in 1822.

The only available mortality figures for Hanson's slaves are for 1821 through 1823, during which time nine deaths were reported. As with the other plantations, however, hundreds undoubtedly died during the period of slavery; once again, it can be expected that most were buried somewhere on the plantation.

Although there existed for Hanson what was believed to be reasonable oral information concerning the possible location of the plantation cemetery, plantation informants also were queried concerning other evidence of human burials found during agricultural or other plantation activities. However, no one currently at Hanson could provide any useful or definitive information. The owner very casually mentioned that sometime after he acquired Hanson in 1953 he had heard some vague reports from the plantation's workers that burials took place beneath or around the stable, but he dismissed such reports as "loose rumors." Under questioning, he could add nothing to this information, but it may represent an independent confirmation of the information from Betty King, the former owner's daughter, that led us to Hanson in the first place.

As noted above, the finding of an early white clay pipe in possible association with human skeletal remains was a major factor leading to the archaeological investigation of Hanson. On two occasions (separated by a few years), Mrs. King was asked to point out the area around the stable where she believed the skeletons had been found. Although she was vague, and repeatedly stressed her lack of

certainly since she actually had never seen the bones, only having heard about them as "a little girl," she pointed to a general area adjacent to the western wall of the stable in New Field

St. Nicholas Abbey

St. Nicholas Abbey, Nicholas Abbey, St. Nicholas, or Nicholas (the last as it was called for much of the eighteenth century and early nineteenth) is arguably one of Barbados' most celebrated plantations. Its mostly gently rolling fields are largely in the eastern part of St. Peter, though a small portion of the plantation also lies in the northwestern corner of St. Andrew (Figure 1).

Approaching Nicholas Abbey from the coast at Speightstown, Barbados' second largest town, the main road curves to the northeast and gradually rises. Several miles from Speightstown it connects with another road which continues the rise a few more miles and ultimately levels off at approximately 650 feet, leading into one of Barbados' better known landmarks: Cherry Tree Hill, a mahogany tree-lined road. Cherry Tree Hill runs through the lands of St. Nicholas to the rim of the Scotland District and a spectacular panoramic view of Hackleton's Cliff, the Scotland District itself, and Barbados' Atlantic coast. Several hundred yards before reaching the end of Cherry Tree Hill, however, a well-marked turnoff leads north through a wood into the plantation yard; one is shortly confronted on the left by the sight of Nicholas Abbey's "mansion house" (Figure 12).

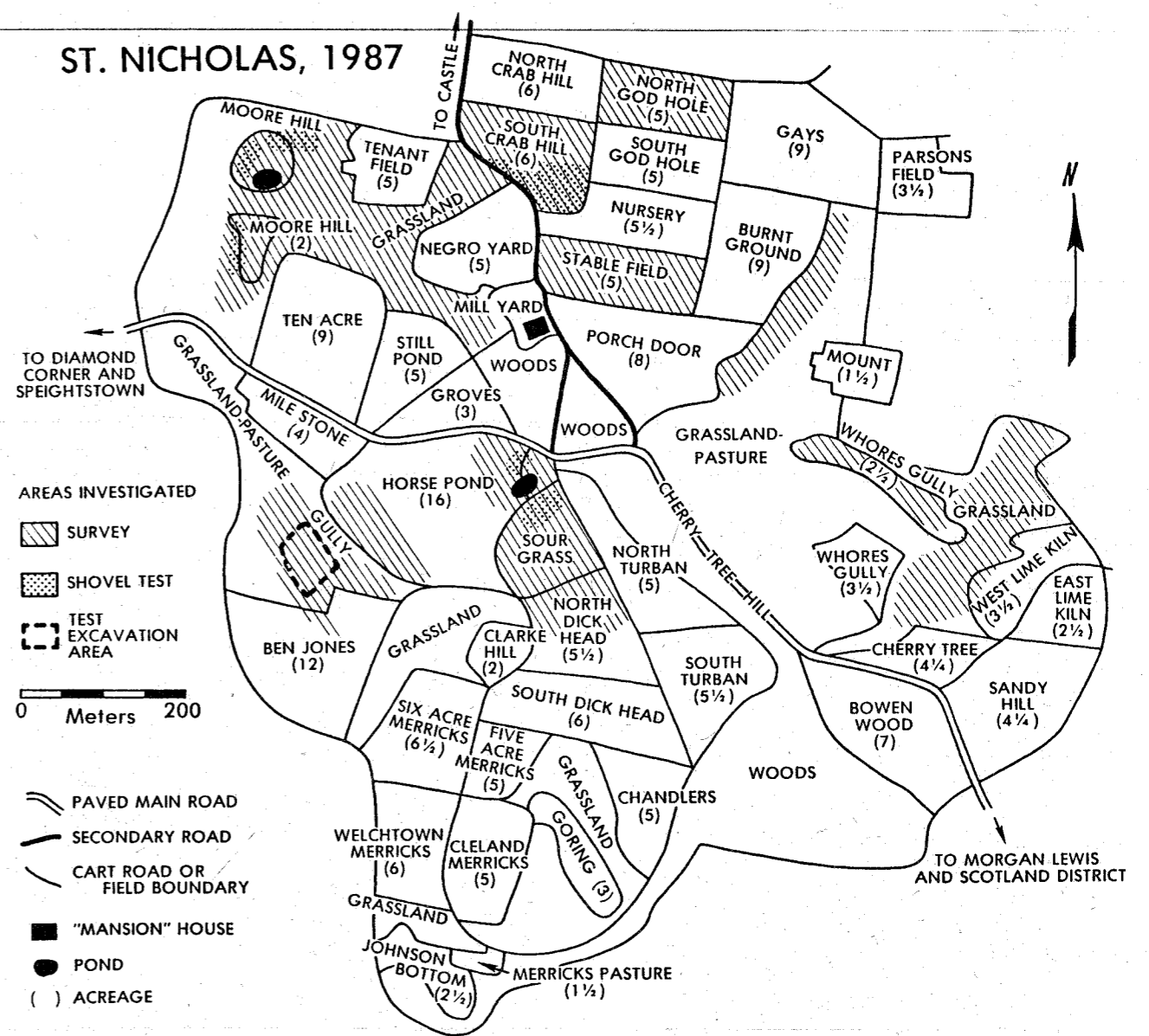
The centerpiece of Nicholas Abbey, and the main reason why the plantation is so widely known, is certainly this stately and picturesque three-storied house with its surrounding formal garden (Plate 8). One of the two oldest still standing and inhabited plantation houses in Barbados (the other being Drax Hall in St. George parish), it was constructed of coral blocks in the 1650s "from plans for an English manor house," and is said to be one of only three Jacobean-style plantation houses left in what was once English America--the others being Drax Hall and Bacon's Castle, near Williamsburg, Virginia (Fraser and Hughes 1986:11,15; Waterman 1946: 140-145).

(Figure 5). It was in this area that our archaeological investigations began.

"The exteriors," an architectural historian writes of both St. Nicholas and Drax Hall, "are so typically Jacobean that except for the tropical setting it is hard to realize that they stand five thousand miles from London"; Nicholas Abbey, he adds, "especially recalls English manor houses of the seventeenth century in that it retains the formal approach garden" (Waterman 1946: 141, 145). Architecturally interesting (including four chimneys and fireplaces), furnished with a considerable quantity of antiques, and today well-maintained, the house has been regularly open to the public since early 1980. For a modest fee, which goes towards repair and maintenance costs, one can tour the public rooms, and a visit to St. Nicholas house has become a standard and appealing Barbados tourist attraction. 10

Not only is Nicholas Abbey unique in its plantation house, but also it is fairly unique in its ownership history. Like many contemporary Barbadian plantations it has had a number of owners, but since 1822 it has been in the hands of one English family. The Caves were absentee owners who made periodic visits to Barbados, but the current owner, Lt. Col. Stephen Cave (retired from the British Army), the fifth generation Cave to own the plantation, acquired St. Nicholas in 1964 and established permanent residence there in 1983; he manages the plantation's finances and directs its agricultural activities, only assisted by an overseer. 11

St. Nicholas is a large plantation. It includes about 409 acres, 220 of which are arable. The remainder are in pasture (90 acres), trees or woods (31 acres), and rented tenancies, the Mill Yard, roads, gullies, and so forth (68 acres). The 220 arable acres are divided into 41 fields, averaging about 5 1/3 acres, and ranging from 1 1/2 to 16 acres. The Negro Yard field (St. Nicholas lacks a Graveyard) borders the Mill Yard on the north and is within ready visibility of the "mansion house"; the field comprises 5 acres and is under cultivation (Figure 6). The



6. St. Nicholas, 1987: fields and archaeological research areas

Mill Yard contains the "mansion house" (sometimes referred to as St. Nicholas Abbey in contrast to St. Nicholas as a name for the entire plantation, including the house) and various outbuildings, including the old boiling house and the walls of an old windmill. Near the boiling house, and adjacent to the Negro Yard, Colonel Cave has collected a variety of discarded parts and machinery from former boiling houses; ultimately he hopes to restore the plantation's boiling house as a museum. Now rusting in a field, these parts nonetheless bear testimony to former chapters in the history of the Barbados sugar industry as well as the past of St. Nicholas itself.

Several factors prompted selection of St. Nicholas for archaeological research. Initially the plantation was visited for its research potential because of the age of the house, a related body of secondary historical literature, and the Project Director's acquaintance with Colonel Cave, who has a very keen interest in the plantation's history and any research bearing on it. In addition, the plantation became attractive for possible fieldwork because of its Negro Yard field. The Negro Yard was inspected by the Project Director in January 1986. It contained young cane plants, but a fairly heavy scattering of pottery sherds was visible throughout the field. Among these sherds were various early import types, including a few of Buckley ware, an eighteenth-century British ceramic also found during the early 1970s in various areas, including Newton (Handler and Lange 1978: 137-138).¹²

Another feature making St. Nicholas attractive, following the Newton model, was a pasture area bordering the Negro Yard. The Negro Yard itself drops into a wooded gully on the opposite side of which, to the northwest, is a sloping grass piece (between the Negro Yard and Tenant field, Figure 6). This grass piece contained a scattering of apparent stone mounds which several informants reported as the remnants of about three or four old stone houses (referred to as "slave houses," a term frequently used in Barbados for this house type). These houses were once part of the plantation's tenantry and had been torn down sometime in the 1950s. The area around the stone mounds had a very thick grass cover, and because of its

rockiness and very shallow soil, it had never been cultivated. Along with its proximity to the Negro Yard, it appeared to merit exploration for grave sites. (Subsequent archaeological testing of this area, however, showed that it was almost pure rock outcropping obscured by the density of the grass; there was no evidence of bones.)

The final, and clinching, factor for choosing Nicholas Abbey as a research site involved some vague reports of a possible burial ground. After visiting the plantation in January 1986, the Project Director received a letter from Colonel Cave reporting that he had located someone "who says there is a possible slave graveyard on the other side of the plantation" (S. Cave to J. Handler, personal communication May 26, 1986). Then, a year later, in January 1987, on another brief visit to St. Nicholas, similar information was received from the overseer. Both reports led to an elderly, longtime resident of the area; although time did not permit an interview, this was accomplished during the summer of 1987 (see below).

In its general outlines the story of St. Nicholas' origin and early development conforms to that of other Barbadian sugar plantations.¹³ In 1640, Jon Yeamans (who later became a Governor of South Carolina) and Benjamin Berringer (or Beringer) co-owned an unknown amount of acreage in St. Peter which they increased by purchasing adjoining units. For example, in 1641 they acquired 60 acres, and in 1643, a unit of 100 acres and another of 13. By 1648 they jointly owned a 195 acre plantation in St. Peter and St. Andrew (probably today's Nicholas Abbey) in addition to other property in the same general area. Sometime between 1648 and 1661, perhaps in the former year, they divided their property, the plantation that was later to be called St. Nicholas going to Berringer. During Berringer's ownership the plantation's acreage probably expanded and the "mansion house" was built, sometime between 1656, after returning from a trip to England, and 1661, when he died. After Berringer's death, the plantation passed to his wife and ultimately to one of his sons, John. A detailed 1675 map of Barbados shows Beringer (*sic*)

plantation with a windmill "employed in the grinding of sugar canes" (Forde 1675).

In 1686, when John Berringer leased it, St. Nicholas contained 222 acres and included, among other property, the "mansion house," "overseer house," "other out houses," two windmills, and 157 slaves. The lessee was prohibited from cutting any of the plantation's timber unless it was needed for the necessary repair of plantation equipment and buildings. In addition, he was obliged to plant "potatoes, corn, bonivists, and other plantation provisions" to feed the slaves and white indentured servants; and he was cautioned that any newly born slave children were to be kept on the plantation and not sold. John Berringer died in 1693 or 1694 and his plantation, now containing 318 acres, passed to his widow and then, after her death, to their daughter, Susanna Berringer. Susanna was the wife of George Nicholas. It was through this marriage, in 1718 or somewhat earlier, in conformity with inheritance laws of the period, that the plantation automatically became the property of her husband and acquired the name it bears today. On an early map, based on a survey made between 1717 and 1721, it is identified as Nicholas (Mayo 1722), and subsequent eighteenth and early nineteenth century maps also refer to it by this name (e.g., Jefferys 1775; Thomson 1814).

George Nicholas lost the plantation through debts in 1730, and among its various owners throughout the remainder of the eighteenth century was John Gay Alleyne, one of the most prominent eighteenth-century Barbadian plantocrats. Alleyne died in 1801, the plantation was inherited by various kinsmen, but ultimately went into debt. In 1810 or 1811, St. Nicholas was purchased from the Chancery Court by the brothers Lawrence T. Cumberbatch and Edward C. Cumberbatch. The former died in 1822, leaving his share of the plantation to his daughter, Sarah (who also received the latter's share when he died not many years later); the wife of Charles Cave, the great-great-grandfather of the current owner; thus, Nicholas Abbey was acquired by the Cave family through marriage in 1822 and, as noted above, has remained in this family's hands till the present.

Although the origin of the plantation's name as Nicholas is clear, how it acquired the "Saint" and "Abbey" is unknown. There is no evidence that the "mansion house" was ever associated with any religious institution. Two Barbadian historians conjecture that "its full title may be the result of a family joke or pure affectation" (Fraser and Hughes 1986: 15), but Peter Campbell (1986b: 60) has recently observed that the name St. Nicholas Abbey only appeared in the 1820s. He convincingly speculates that this name was given the house (plantation?) sometime after 1811, when purchased by the Cumberbatches: "Their home in Bristol England, was in the parish of St. Nicholas, and they also had a close connection with Bath Abbey . . . it may have been decided to call the plantation St. Nicholas and the house St. Nicholas Abbey. Another possibility is that 'Abbey' was added on the occasion of the marriage in Bath Abbey of Sarah Cumberbatch and Charles Cave."

Nicholas Abbey contained 195 acres in 1648; it grew to 222 by 1686 and was 318 acres in 1693. Presently, eighteenth-century acreage figures are lacking, but the plantation must have been very large by local standards. A very detailed map of the island (Mayo 1722), based on a survey made between 1717 and 1721, shows Nicholas with two windmills: at this time, 59% of the close to 1,000 plantations on the map lacked a mill, and of the 405 with mills, only about 70 had two (Handler and Lange 1978:37; cf. Jefferys 1775). When acquired by the Cave family in 1822, St. Nicholas contained 404 acres. In 1829 it reportedly had 407, and by 1860, if not before, it contained 409 acres, a large plantation compared to St. Peter's 44 plantations that averaged 184 acres in 1840 while the island average was 186 (Davy 1854: 109). It has remained at 409 acres up to the present. Although land use patterns, field sizes, and field names undoubtedly have changed somewhat over the years, without a map or other data on the plantation's fields in earlier periods, these changes cannot be charted (Barbados Department of Archives n.d., Recopied Deeds [RB 1/281, pp. 249-251]; Nicholas Abbey 1822).

Not only in terms of its acreage, but also in terms of its slave population size, St. Nicholas would have been considered a large

plantation for most of the slave period. In 1686, there were 157 slaves, 41.4% of whom were females; by age-sex groups, there were 70 "men," 22 "boys," 52 "women," and 13 "girls." Between 1817 and 1832, the slave population averaged 183 (ranging between 173 and 202); females of all age groups averaged 55.7%, a sex ratio consistent with many other plantations (Barbados Department of Archives, Recopied Deeds [RB 1/281, pp. 249-251, RB 3/17, pp. 45-51]; Public Record Office 1817-1832; cf. Handler and Lange 1978: 35, 40).

The earliest figures currently available for slave deaths at St. Nicholas start in 1818. Over the 12 year period, 1818 through 1829, about 76 deaths were reported; another 47 died up to 1832 (a number of these resulting from a massive 1831 hurricane). Assuming an average annual slave population of about 165 over the 131 year period 1686 to 1817 (the mean between the figures for 1686 and 1817; not unreasonable given the plantation's acreage over the period) and conservatively estimating 3.0% deaths annually (the percentage of St. Peter's annual slave deaths during the 1820s [Higman 1984: 643], although the actual rate probably would have been higher in the earlier periods), then about 5 slaves (4.95) died each year; or approximately 649 from 1686 to 1817. By adding the 123 who died from 1818 to 1832, then over a considerable span of the plantation's history more than 770 slaves died. (Slave deaths have been calculated from Public Record Office 1817-1832.) Presumably following the wider Barbadian pattern, most of these slaves were probably buried somewhere on St. Nicholas "in places set apart for that purpose" (Society for the Conversion 1829). The archaeological and ethnographic research aimed at locating these "places."

As noted above, prior to the 1987 fieldwork at Nicholas Abbey reports vaguely indicated that some people on the plantation knew where a burial ground was located. At the start of the 1987 fieldwork, efforts were again made to trace these reports to their original source or sources. Brief conversations with the plantation owner and overseer led to interviews with Elton Scantlebury.

Scantlebury is an elderly (born in 1904), cordial, intelligent, and articulate retired carpenter. He was born and raised in the district and for a short period in the 1950s or early 1960s he was an overseer at Nicholas Abbey. Scantlebury reported that "long before I was born . . . all the plantations [in Barbados] had a buryin' spot," but this was no longer the case "in my day." When he had worked at Nicholas Abbey, he also had heard from "some old people" of a cemetery on the plantation. (However, Scantlebury's wife, also in her 80s, whose father used to be a "driver" [similar to a foreman] at Nicholas Abbey, never heard of such a cemetery.) Scantlebury led us to a pasture of some two to three acres, adjacent to Ben Jones field, some 350 m, as the crow flies, southwest of the Mill Yard (Figure 6; Plate 9). Although vague about the specific location of the rumored gravesites, he reiterated that he had heard about them and this location from some elderly plantation workers. After being encouraged to do so, Scantlebury introduced the Project Director to one of these people, Myrtle Williams.

Mrs. Williams was born at Nicholas Abbey (as was her mother) around 1919 (she claimed to be 68 years old), and has worked at the plantation all of her life. Asked about a cemetery, she led us to the same general area that Scantlebury had shown us on the previous day. Williams was not precise about the gravesite locations, but seemed a little more sure of herself than Scantlebury. She repeated that the pasture area next to Ben Jones was referred to as "the burial spot" all of her life, and that she learned this from her mother and other "old people now dead." During her working years at Nicholas Abbey, Mrs. Williams has occasionally cut grass in this field for animal fodder, but she never saw any bones or heard of any being found. However, the oral clues offering the possibility of a cemetery, despite the distance of this field from the Negro Yard, could not be ignored, and the pasture area became one of priority in the archaeological research.

Bissex-Parks

From Cherry Tree Hill, at the edge of Nicholas Abbey, there is a commanding view of the Scotland District. Looking directly across the District, the lands of Bissex-Parks are in view, some four miles to the southeast. Bissex and Parks adjoin one another in the northern portions of St. Joseph, close to the border of St. Andrew; in fact a small portion of Bissex is in St. Andrew (Figure 1). The plantations are well within the hills of the Scotland District, and from their often steep fields there are some fine vistas of the surrounding valleys, the village of Chalky Mount, and wide expanses of the island's east coast and the Atlantic ocean. The most commanding views of the region can be obtained from the top of Bissex Hill, close to 1,000 feet above sea level, the site of a former police station and magistrate's court whose ruins are surrounded by plantation fields (Figure 7).

Although Bissex and Parks are separate plantations, they have been worked and managed together as a single unit for many years along with Cambridge, a neighboring plantation (Figure 7). Management policies and agricultural practices have changed a great deal at Bissex-Parks since the early 1960s, when the Project Director resided in the village of Chalky Mount and conducted his doctoral dissertation research among plantations in the area (Handler 1964); fewer fields, for example, are today planted in cane, and deep mechanized plowing is used to a much greater extent than formerly. The present manager of Bissex-Parks leases the plantations from the current owners and directs activities on all three plantations from his residence at Cambridge. No plantation activities take place in the Mill Yards of Bissex or Parks. In fact, the "yard" at Parks is heavily overgrown with bush, and the ruins of its uninhabited "mansion house" are barely visible from the narrow secondary road which runs by it. The remains of a few outbuildings are also evident, but there is little evidence of former plantation operations.

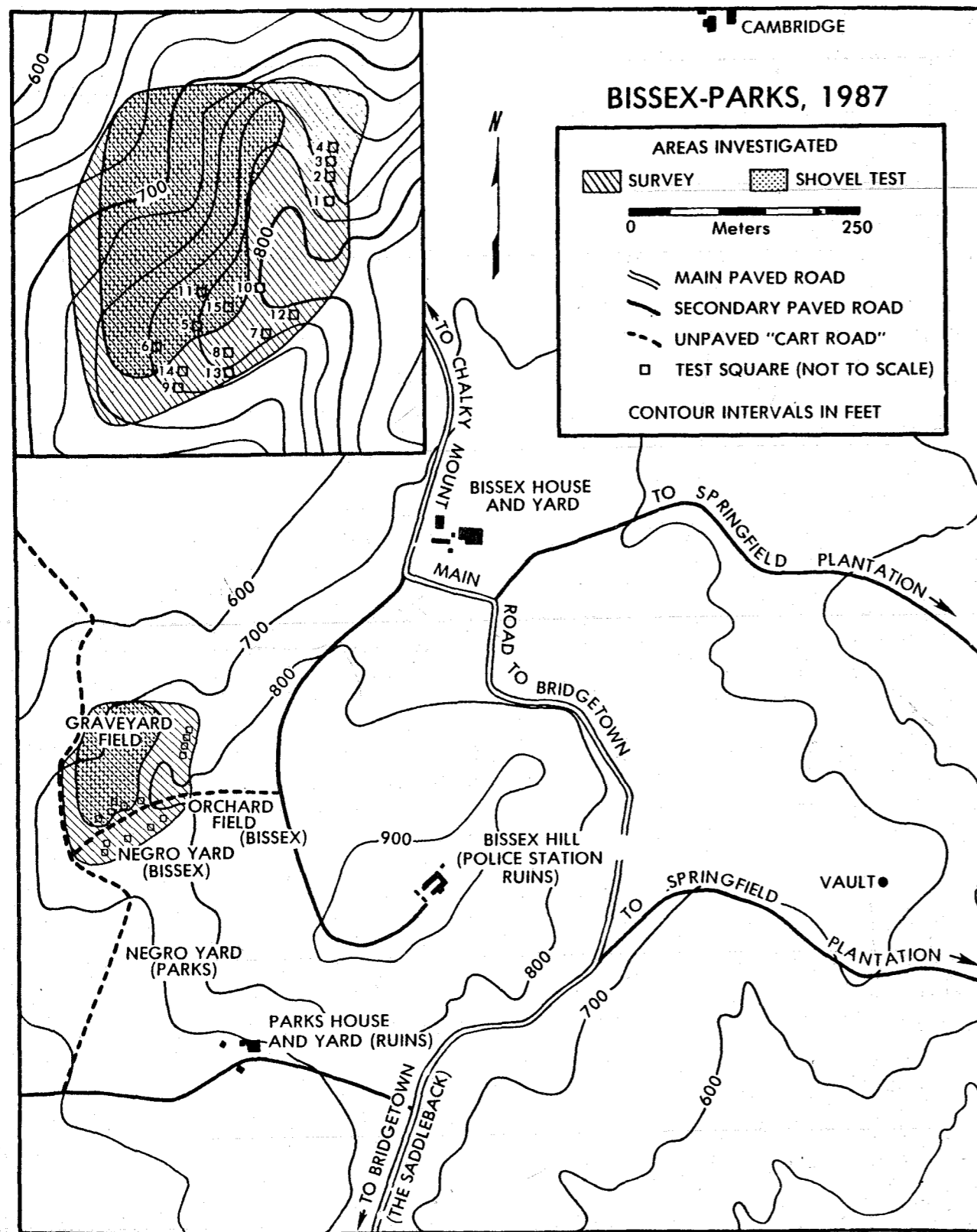
As the crow flies, approximately 600 m northeast of the Parks house ruins is the still inhabited Bissex House. For many years, this impressive structure was the residence of various members of the Haynes family, one of

Barbados' largest landowning families during the nineteenth century and first half or so of the twentieth. In 1955, Bissex plantation was sold by J. A. Haynes, but the house and its surrounding four to six acres were retained. The house continued to be inhabited by his mother until her death in the mid-1960s, when it and the grounds were also sold. Bissex House has since been renovated by its present overseas owners. Surrounded on several sides by a high wall that adjoins the main road, the house is virtually hidden from view by this wall and a surrounding thick wood or orchard. The northern facade of Bissex House and its terraced lawns is well hidden from the main road; it faces the Atlantic and from a vantage point of about 750 feet above sea level offers a wide and spectacular view of the coastline and the ocean.

Some 575 m southeast of Bissex House is the plantation's sugar-planted Vault Hill field. At the summit of an 800 foot hill on this field, but virtually hidden by a dense entanglement of brush, a stone vault contains the coffin(s?) of a probable former owner(s?). Although the cemented roof has crumbled, the structure is similar in construction and design to vaults occasionally still found on other Barbados plantations. The Bissex vault has no apparent markings or inscriptions giving dates or names, and no local tradition was discovered that could illuminate this issue. Facing the Atlantic coast, the vault site affords an impressive view and is similar in its perspective to the vault at Malvern.

Several factors precipitated the research at Bissex-Parks. The Project Director had initially considered these plantations for possible archaeological research because he knew something of their histories, and since the early 1960s he was on friendly terms with many of the plantation laborers as well as the current and former managers and owners.

It was known that Bissex had both Graveyard and Negro Yard fields, and a conversation with the retired manager in 1983 confirmed that these fields bordered one another. Subsequent visits to Bissex and conversations with several longtime workers



7. Bissex-Parks, 1987: research areas and excavation units

established the location and approximate boundaries of these fields. Interestingly, the Negro Yard at Bissex not only adjoins the Graveyard field, but also borders the Negro Yard at Parks (Figure 7). (No contemporary field map of Bissex-Parks was available; hence Figure 7 is based on field sketches and a 1:10,000 topographic map of the region.) In fact, at one time the two Negro Yards may have been but one field. The presence of the Negro Yards with the adjoining Graveyard field made Bissex-Parks especially attractive for archaeological exploration.

The Bissex Negro Yard is located some 400 m southwest of the main road that runs along the southern edge of the Bissex Mill Yard. The field is reached by ascending the winding and now badly rutted narrow paved road leading to the summit of Bissex Hill (and the old police station ruins), and then turning west onto a dirt "cart road." The "cart road" extends a couple of hundred m into the field itself, and, in fact, divides the Negro Yard from its neighboring Graveyard field. Today, the Negro Yard, of approximately 1 1/2 acres, is uncultivated pasture; it is an arable field, however, which had been planted in cane until very recent years. Immediately to the south of the Bissex Negro Yard is the Negro Yard of Parks. Much of this approximately 1 1/4 acre field is planted in cane. The Parks Negro Yard adjoins the plantation's abandoned Mill Yard and lies to the north-northwest of the "mansion house" ruins (Figure 7).

Bordering the two Negro Yards on the north, and lying roughly between Bissex House, on the one hand, and the Negro Yards, on the other, is Graveyard field (Figure 7). Containing about four or five acres, Graveyard is a hilly field, with some steep slopes and little level ground, bounded by casuarina trees ("mile trees" in the vernacular) and the "cart road." According to several older informants, until fairly recently most of Graveyard was planted in cane; a portion of it, however, has not been cultivated in living memory. This latter section, overgrown with trees and heavy brush, contains apparent rock outcroppings and steep slopes; surface observations before 1987 made it seem a likely area to explore for possible gravesites.

Very little is presently known about the early history of either Bissex or Parks. The family name "Bissick" appears as early as 1679 in the parish of St. Joseph, and the locale of Bissex Hill is shown on an early eighteenth century map (Handler 1963b; Mayo 1722). In a 1977/78 paper to which we have not had access, Ronald Hughes suggests that Bissex Hill may have been a plantation by at least 1740 (C. Matthews, personal communication 1988) and it is shown as a plantation on Barralier's detailed map, based on an 1818 survey but not published until 1827.

Mayo's 1722 map provides the earliest cartographic identification of Parks. It is shown with one windmill, thus suggesting it was larger than the average Barbados plantation at the time. Parks is also shown on later maps in the general vicinity of its present location (Barralier 1827; Jefferys 1775; Mayo 1722; Thomson 1814).

For many years both Bissex and Parks were owned by one member or another of the Haynes family. Although Bissex belonged to a Haynes (Richard) by the early 1820s, its previous owner being Joseph A. Payne, Parks was acquired by a Haynes around 1899 (in the early nineteenth century, Parks was owned by James Thomas Rogers); both remained in the hands of the Haynes family until the 1950s. As part of a wider process of selling off his many properties in Barbados, J. A. Haynes, the last Haynes to be a planter (at one time, he owned over 2,000 acres in St. Joseph and St. Andrew alone, an enormous amount of land for Barbados; he had acreage in other parishes as well), sold Bissex in 1955 and then Parks in 1957 (or 1959) to Mrs. E. V. Rock, a well-known black (in the West Indian phenotypic meaning) business woman; the heirs of the late Mrs. Rock and her late partner currently own the two plantations, having inherited them in recent years (Anciaux 1887; Fraser 1899; Handler 1961-62, 1980s; Public Record Office 1817-32).

From 1887 (the earliest year for which figures are available), when Parks was owned by Thomas Gill, and through the 1920s, when it belonged to A. P. Haynes (the father of J. A. Haynes), Parks had 262 acres; from around 1930 to 1950 it increased to about 295 acres. Then, the acreage was gradually reduced as some of the

more marginal agricultural lands were sold to local small farmers: by 1955 there were 260 acres, then 195 in 1958, as the bulk of the plantation was sold to E. V. Rock; by 1961 Parks had 170 acres. In general terms, the acreage history of Bissex is similar. From 1887 to 1950 the plantation fluctuated between 222 and 228 acres. After being sold by the Haynes family in 1955, it dropped to 208, and was 201 acres by 1960 (as late as 1907 or so Parks and Bissex each had one windmill, Anciaux 1887; Barbados Department of Archives 1905-1956; Fraser 1898, 1899, 1901, 1903, 1907-1908; Handler 1961-1962).

Because it was decided to curtail the archaeological work at Bissex-Parks (chapter 7), archival efforts to acquire more historical information on the plantations were limited. However, some information was produced concerning the slave populations. Between 1817 and 1832 Bissex averaged 102 slaves, 54.5 % of whom were females; during the same period Parks had an average population of 123, of which females comprised 56%. From 1818 through 1832, approximately 87 slaves died at Parks, while over the same period 46 died at Bissex; 9 of the total for both plantations were victims of the 1831 hurricane (Public Record Office 1817-1832).

A number of older informants (including a former longtime manager as well as several

Castle and Lamberts

Two other plantations were very briefly visited during the field season. Both came to our attention through work with informants at St. Nicholas Abbey, and both, as it turned out, offered some intriguing possibilities for archaeological exploration. Yet, we were unable to conduct research on either plantation because we only became aware of their possibilities late in the field season, when other priorities were commanding our attention.

The Castle in St. Peter, sometimes called Ellis Castle, adjoins St. Nicholas to the north (Figure 1). It is a large operation belonging to a company which owns a number of plantations. Although Castle lacks Negro Yard and Graveyard fields, several informants independently asserted that an area on the

current and retired laborers) with extensive knowledge of Bissex and Parks were queried with respect to the finding of bones on plantation fields, particularly Graveyard and the Negro Yards. These inquiries yielded no positive results. No one had seen human bones or had heard of their discovery, even during the days when the ground was hand "forked," rather than mechanically plowed, before planting.

All informants agreed that as long as they could remember Graveyard was called by this name; in the words of one, "I find it name[d] so when I come along." Yet, when asked the reason for this name, most offered no answer. However, Tommy Green (aged 62), who has worked on the plantation all of his life, said he heard from the "old folks" that the Graveyard field is where the "old time people used to bury"; in "olden days," he added, "people used to bury" on plantations. Some informants also offered the view that "they used to bury people all about de place," but no one would suggest a specific locale and all were very vague on the point. Lacking specific oral or historical information that would illuminate the clues provided by field names, archaeological work started in that section of Graveyard field which informants maintained had never been cultivated.

plantation, known as Silver Pond Hill, had once contained burials. These "old people" had not been buried in the lifetimes of the informants, who had only heard of such burials from various older family members. One informant, for example, in his 60s, derived this information from his grandfather (who died in 1943 at the age of 84) and grandmother (deceased in 1959 at 97 years), both of whom had been workers on the plantation. Another retired 78 year old, who had worked at Castle all of his life, acquired this information from his father (deceased in 1947), and showed us the area in question. A large pit in the coral limestone, it was hidden by overgrowth amidst the plantation's cane fields. When he was around 15 or 16, the informant reported, marl was being excavated from this pit, and he is emphatic

that these excavations yielded the remains of a "skull box" (i.e., a coffin?). A brief exploratory visit into the pit, often choked by dense underbrush, showed it to be relatively large, perhaps 9 to 12 m long, maybe more, and 4 to 5 m at its widest, with an apparently very shallow soil cover. There was no apparent evidence of bones on the surface, but there were three stone mounds at the bottom of the pit. These were not investigated although they might have merited further examination.

Lamberts, which primarily lies in the parish of St. Lucy, is to the northeast of Castle; it is owned by the same company that owns the latter and is managed by the same manager. The manager resides at Lamberts where the plantation business office also is located. Hanging in a glass covered wooden frame in the office is a plantation map, originally surveyor-certified in 1854 (when the plantation contained 518 acres), but which may have been based on an even earlier map. In any case, various surveyors have recertified the 1854 map over the years, most recently in 1964. Surviving nineteenth-century plantation maps are not very common in Barbados, and this one shows fairly standard details such as the Mill Yard with its windmill, main house etcetera, fields (with their acreages but not their names), ponds, and so forth. An unusual feature is the depiction of 10, obviously laborers', houses inside the northern portion of the Mill Yard. This area, in

turn, is surrounded by agricultural fields (each designated by a letter of the alphabet), with a pond in close proximity. If these houses existed in 1854, only 20 years after emancipation, they probably were occupied by the former slaves who had not yet been moved. Lambert does not have a Negro Yard field today, but if the 1854 area with houses once had formed part of the Mill Yard itself, that might explain why the plantation today lacks a Negro Yard field; that is, the former locale of the slave houses was included in the Mill Yard. A brief visit to the Lambert Mill Yard and comparison of its contemporary features with those marked on the 1854 map revealed a very close correspondence between the two. In particular, the area marked with the houses is very evident, though recent bulldozing activities have disturbed it greatly. Finally, only a day or so before leaving the island, the Project Director learned in a phone conversation with Lambert's manager that the plantation had a Graveyard field at the eastern edge of the plantation, not anywhere close to the Mill Yard; about 2 1/2 acres and planted in cane, it was, the manager reported, "not the best of fields." Although this was only the third Graveyard field to come to our attention, time limitations precluded a visit to this area, and the group's research efforts by this time were firmly committed to other areas of exploration.

Chapter 7

Plantation Research in 1987: Archaeological

The original plan of the 1987 field season was to attempt to locate and at least partially excavate a new slave cemetery. It was anticipated that the finding of burial evidence would be relatively easy, once work started on the first plantation, but if four to five weeks of fieldwork failed to uncover a cemetery, excavations at Newton would be resumed. If a new cemetery was found early enough in the season, excavation would focus first on ascertaining cemetery limits and burial density; then, time permitting, excavations designed to provide a skeletal sample large enough for comparison with the Newton sample would be conducted. By July 4, after about four and a half weeks of investigation at five plantations that revealed no evidence of human remains, it was decided not to extend the search beyond these five. Further work at Newton proved impractical¹⁴ and a decision was made to return to the four most promising plantations and areas not previously examined. The strategy now focused on locating a cemetery, since the field time remaining would not have permitted a thorough excavation of burials. It was hoped

Setting and Surface Visibility

Fieldwork took place in June and July, the beginning of Barbados' rainy season. The weather during this period is typically very pleasant. Daytime temperatures are generally in the mid-to-upper 80s Fahrenheit. Although the midday sun on a cloudless day can be hot, it is not oppressively so and the evenings can be very comfortable. The island receives the cooling effect of westerly trade winds blowing from the Atlantic and, in general, summer in Barbados is far from the excessive heat and humidity of, for example, the American Midwest or East coast during July and August. Rainfall during the field period was irregular, with generally brief but intense squalls. These storms were usually very localized and rarely interfered with fieldwork for more than an hour. Toward the end of the field season, the rains lasted longer and were more widespread.

The fieldwork was scheduled to coincide with a slack period in the agricultural

that if evidence of a cemetery could be found, there would be a possibility of acquiring grant funds to return to Barbados at a later date in order to excavate the burials.

This chapter outlines the general setting under which the fieldwork was conducted, the general survey and testing methods employed, and describes the work conducted at each of the plantations.

Cultural and legal issues surrounding the location and excavation of slave remains are discussed in detail in Appendixes B and C. Here it can be briefly noted that although no national permits were required to conduct archaeological research, general permission to stay on the island beyond the normal tourist stay was granted by the Barbados Department of Immigration. Permission to conduct the research on particular plantations was negotiated with the landowners concerned and written agreements were signed with them (Appendix C).

cycle. May and June mark the end of the sugar cane harvest, and normal plantation operations had slowed considerably before the archaeological work started. The timing minimized our interference with plantation activities and made it easier for plantation personnel to lend any needed assistance.

Geologically, Barbados can be divided into two main areas: the rugged Scotland District in the east-central portion of the island (covering about 14% of the island's area) and the remainder, which is dominated by gentler landforms punctuated by steep escarpments.

The Scotland District is comprised of steep ridges and hills interspersed with valleys, ranging from moderately broad to quite narrow. The underlying rock strata of the district are those which form the basement strata of the entire island, "much-folded sandstone and shales (the Scotland series) covered

unconformably by the soft, chalklike rocks of the Oceanic series" (Starkey 1939: 27). Except on the alluvial deposits in some of the valleys and on some of the broader ridges, the soil cover in the Scotland District is generally thin and poorly suited to agricultural, especially sugar cane, cultivation (Vernon and Carroll 1966). Bissex-Parks was the only plantation investigated in the Scotland District.

The remainder of Barbados is made up of a series of broad terraces bordered by cliffs of 5 to 250 m. The terraces represent coral limestones overlying the basement rock of the Scotland and Oceanic series. The limestone is generally overlain by usually well-developed soils of varying depths well-suited to agriculture, where the soil is deep enough and the slopes gentle enough for cultivation. The landscape of these terraces is flat to gently rolling, with occasional steeper and higher ridges, broader alluvial valleys, and numerous shallow gullies with only intermittent water flow. Soil depth outside the Scotland District ranges from over 2 m to a few cms (Vernon and Carroll 1966).

The typical plantation is divided into three major areas: the Mill Yard, cultivated fields, and pasture; other minor areas might be in orchards or woods and some of the pasture lands contain scrubby brush. Although it no longer plays the role in the national Barbadian economy it once did, sugar cane remains the dominant plantation crop; other crops include various starchy roots such as potatoes, yams, eddoes, and, occasionally, miscellaneous vegetables. Most plantation areas which can be successfully plowed¹⁵ and planted have been cultivated, although in recent times more plantation lands have been converted to other uses such as cattle raising or even housing developments. During the period of slavery, however, much less of a plantation's acreage was planted in cane than in more modern times (the amount of acreage devoted to cane began to expand after emancipation), but today, as earlier, major geographical factors limiting cane cultivation are soil depth and slope. Pastures, dominated by sour grass (Gooding 1974), are usually confined to areas with soil too thin and/or slopes too steep to allow crop cultivation and growth.

Barbados' soils also generally follow the basic physiographic dichotomy of the island: soils developed on coral limestone and Scotland District soils.

Vernon and Carroll (1966) identify nine soil associations on the island's limestone area. The most important and extensive of these, and the only ones encountered during fieldwork, are the red brown, yellow brown, grey brown, and black. The first two are found on the higher coral terraces and contain primarily kaolinite clay minerals; the latter two occur on the lower elevations and contain primarily montmorillonite clay minerals. Soils in all four associations contain 60% to 70% clay particles and have a pH of 7.0-7.5. As with all soils on the coral terraces, these four have been formed from weathering of the underlying limestone and volcanic ash that has occasionally fallen on the island during its geologic history. The differing profiles and clay mineralogy are a function of age and the amount and kind of ash; the soils on the higher elevations have been weathered longer and have been exposed to more ash fall (Vernon and Carroll 1966:15).

The typical red brown and yellow brown soils are 0.75 to 1 m deep with a 30 cm dark brown A horizon (loose to friable, weak to medium subangular blocky structure) over a red or yellow brown B horizon (firm, weak to medium subangular blocky structure) (Vernon and Carroll 1966:16). However, the underlying limestone can be much nearer the surface, often with less than 20 cm of soil and intermittent bedrock outcrops on the surface.

The typical black soil is 60 to 70 cm deep with a 30 cm very dark brown A horizon (friable to firm, weak to moderate fine subangular blocky structure) over a very dark brown to very dark grey brown B horizon (firm, weak to moderate subangular blocky structure). There is usually a thin layer of gritty coral rubble over the massive bedrock, and sometimes a thin layer of olive brown firm clay rests just above this rubble (Vernon and Carroll 1966: 21-22). The grey brown soils are similar but lighter in color. Both associations can be found in much shallower expressions with bedrock quite close to or at the surface.

Despite the intense weathering associated with wet tropical climates, the alkaline nature of the four major soil associations should provide conditions which are generally conducive to bone preservation, especially bones which have been buried for only a few centuries. At Newton (where the soils are of the black association), bone preservation ranged from good to poor. Poor preservation appears to have been at least partly a function of depth: bone in the more active A horizon was usually less well preserved than more deeply buried bone (Handler and Lange 1978).

Since the fieldwork aimed at locating unmarked slave cemeteries, surface visibility was important in determining the methods best suited for finding a cemetery in a particular field. In cultivated fields, surface visibility ranged from excellent to poor. Visibility was generally best in recently harvested or plowed fields, fields with young canes (newly planted or ratoon), and fields with crops other than sugar cane. Freshly plowed fields obviously

Field and Laboratory Methods

As discussed previously, the 1987 fieldwork attempted to locate cemeteries based on a model of cemetery location developed from the Newton results. The basic assumption was that cemeteries would be located in areas unsuited to cultivation near the former slave villages; thus, the pasture land near the Negro Yard was the focus of work on each plantation. This model was followed on all the plantations, although at Hanson and St. Nicholas it was deviated from because informants indicated that areas not fitting the model might contain cemeteries.

Work at each plantation was divided into survey and testing phases. These phases were not necessarily carried out sequentially. When initial survey identified an area suitable for testing, testing would be done at that time. At Hanson and St. Nicholas, testing started with little survey due to the informants' reports. When initial testing yielded no evidence for a cemetery, the survey area would be expanded and additional testing might be done. Work on each plantation was also not done sequentially. Since the ultimate goal was

had the best visibility, though cane fields which had not been plowed or planted since the last harvest, and fields with young cane plants also, usually had good to excellent visibility. In addition, some fields were covered with cane trash (debris from recently harvested fields) in order to prevent soil desiccation; this material also greatly obscured the ground surface. Visibility gradually worsens as the cane plants become taller; when they are above about 1.5 m tall, they are almost impossible to walk through. Because sugar cane takes between 12 and 15 months to mature, plantations generally have a range of crop covers at any one time. Cultivated fields without sugar most frequently were planted with root crops; because of constant weeding, these fields had good to excellent surface visibility.

As would be expected, the pasture fields had the worst visibility. Even in fields with short grass, the thick matting at ground level made the surface impossible to see in most instances.

to locate at least one cemetery as quickly as possible, each plantation initially was visited as early as possible in the field season to get a feel for which was the most promising; then each was visited two or three times for cycles of survey and testing. However, given the scale of the project and the desire to work on several plantations, no plantation could be fully investigated. Another limiting factor was a field's condition during the research period. Many fields which could have been investigated were not because of crop cover, which limited surface visibility and precluded any subsurface testing. The amount of effort expended on a plantation was primarily determined by the amount of pasture land near the Negro Yard and the crop cover on the Negro Yard and nearby cultivated fields.

Pasture survey was performed by having the crew (four to seven individuals) walk the field at about 10 m intervals. While walking, intermittent shovel tests would search for subsurface debris and check soil depth. One crew member carried an Oakfield soil probe with a 2.54 cm (one inch) barrel. The prober

would not walk in line with the other surveyors but would take soil cores intermittently throughout the field. The probe was capable of reaching a depth of about 75 cm, but it could rarely penetrate more than 20 to 30 cm because bedrock or a firm B horizon prevented the core from being pushed in deeper. Special attention was paid to flatter areas or rises which could have been artificial mounds similar to the burial containing ones at Newton. In addition, any cart paths or animal trails across the pasture were walked to check for surface indications of bone or other debris. Areas around bushes or trees where bare ground was exposed also were checked individually.

Some survey also was conducted in cultivated fields, particularly any Negro Yard with adequate visibility. These surveys attempted to confirm that the Negro Yard was indeed the location of slave quarters (based on debris densities and types), and to identify spatial differences in debris density within the field, which might indicate where habitation was likely to have been the greatest. Despite intense plowing over the years, such spatial distribution patterns still should have been observable. Plowing, which is designed to vertically mix the soil, should not seriously disrupt gross horizontal distribution patterns across a large field. Other cultivated fields were also surveyed, especially after initial survey and testing around the Negro Yard failed to locate a cemetery. Surveys in these fields were conducted to determine if areas outside the Negro Yard field supported slave habitations and to check for surface evidence of cemeteries, such as human bone or coffin hardware.

Surveys in cultivated fields involved walking the fields at 5 to 10 m intervals and picking up any bone, possible coffin hardware, and a sample of glass and ceramics. In addition, notes were made on the spatial distribution of any debris found. The material collected also provides basic data on the range of ceramics and other artifacts present. However, material was not collected systematically enough to consider the collections statistically representative of the kinds and frequencies of artifacts in the fields.

Two types of subsurface testing were performed in areas which appeared to merit

further work after survey (based on topography, soil depth, or informant information): shovel testing and hand-excavation of 1 x 2 m or 1 x 1 m units. Shovel testing was done in 5 to 10 m intervals. Each shovel hole was 1 to 1 1/2 shovel blades wide (15 to 25 cm) on each side. Holes were excavated until rock debris became too dense to continue or until the B horizon was penetrated 5 to 10 cm (the B horizons were usually too firm to permit excavating any deeper in a shovel hole). Then removed soil was sorted with a shovel or trowel to look for debris as the hole was refilled. In most cases the material merely was noted and returned to the hole.

At Malvern, the first plantation where test units were excavated, 1 x 2 m units were dug. In order to maximize the number of units and cover a wider area, 1 x 1 m units were excavated at the other plantations. The Malvern units were excavated in arbitrary 15 cm levels; at the other plantations, units were not excavated in controlled levels unless it appeared that relevant stratigraphic data could be obtained. At all plantations, all units were excavated to bedrock, dense rubble, or at least 10 to 20 cm into the undisturbed B horizon (that is, there was no evidence of grave pits or other subsurface features). Units were placed nonrandomly across the area investigated; they were located so as to provide both adequate coverage of the entire area and to sample any topographic divisions within the area. The lack of screening and controlled levels was also a compromise designed to allow excavation of the maximum number of units, since the immediate goal was simply to locate a cemetery. If one had been found, more controlled methods and a random sampling program would have been instituted.

During the field season, all debris collected by survey and excavation was washed, placed in plastic bags, and tagged with the name of the plantation, the field name, and, if appropriate, square and level number. All collected material was shipped to the Department of Anthropology at Southern Illinois University for analysis. Appendix D lists the material recovered; summary tables are provided below.

The vast majority of material observed and/or collected on the plantations consisted of

plain red earthenware, most of which may be of Barbadian manufacture (Handler and Lange 1978: 136; Lange and Carlson 1985), and ceramics of European, mostly English, manufacture. Although some of the redware was probably imported, and Barbadian redware manufacture has continued on a limited scale into modern times (Handler 1963a), none of the redware is time-diagnostic. However, almost all of the English material could be identified to ceramic types that were primarily manufactured during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (see Appendix D; Lange and Carlson 1984: Table 5.1; South 1977: Table 31). This strongly suggests that the material found during the fieldwork

Guinea

At Guinea 10 acres of cultivated fields and 10 acres of pasture were surveyed; 7 acres of pasture were shovel tested. No excavation units were placed at Guinea.

The only cultivated fields surveyed were Negro Yard field and the eastern one-third of Garden (Figure 2). The former was freshly plowed but unplanted, thus providing excellent visibility; the latter supported low cane plants and had good visibility. The Negro Yard contained a high density of eighteenth and nineteenth century domestic debris (Table 1), suggesting it was a habitation or dump area during this period.

Work at Guinea focused on a long area of pasture and scrubland bordered by Lime Kiln and Negro Yard fields on the west and Hill and Pasture fields on the east (Figures 2, 8; Plate 3). The pasture was located on the eastern slope of a long gully. The western slope of this gully (Lime Kiln and Negro Yard fields) was relatively gradual, but the eastern slope was much steeper; it was covered by grass, widely dispersed coconut trees, and thickets of bushes. The gully bottom was two tiered north of the Negro Yard: it included a narrow incised channel, which carried only intermittent water flow, and a broader area between the channel and the eastern slope. In many places the channel was overgrown with thick brush and trees; the broader area was open, with a cart

primarily represents items made, used, and, probably, discarded during the period of slavery and the 50 to 75 years immediately following emancipation. Three possible Amerindian (or African?) pottery sherds were also identified during tabulation, but there is no evidence that any of the areas worked contained any significant prehistoric components (cf. Lange and Handler 1980).

The laboratory tabulations also confirmed that fieldwork discovered no items indicative of a cemetery, such as human bone or coffin hardware.

path, grass, and coconut trees. Along the Negro Yard's eastern edge the incised channel petered out and the gully bottom became flat (Figure 8).

An area about 700 m by 100 m along the east side of the gully was surveyed and most of it shovel tested (Figure 2; Plate 3). In addition, the edges of Hill field (with poor visibility due to cane plants) and Pasture field (plowed but unplanted) were surveyed. A light scatter of cultural debris was found, primarily pieces of red earthenware. The pasture area soil was generally shallow, usually only 10 to 20 cm deep, and limestone frequently outcropped on the surface.

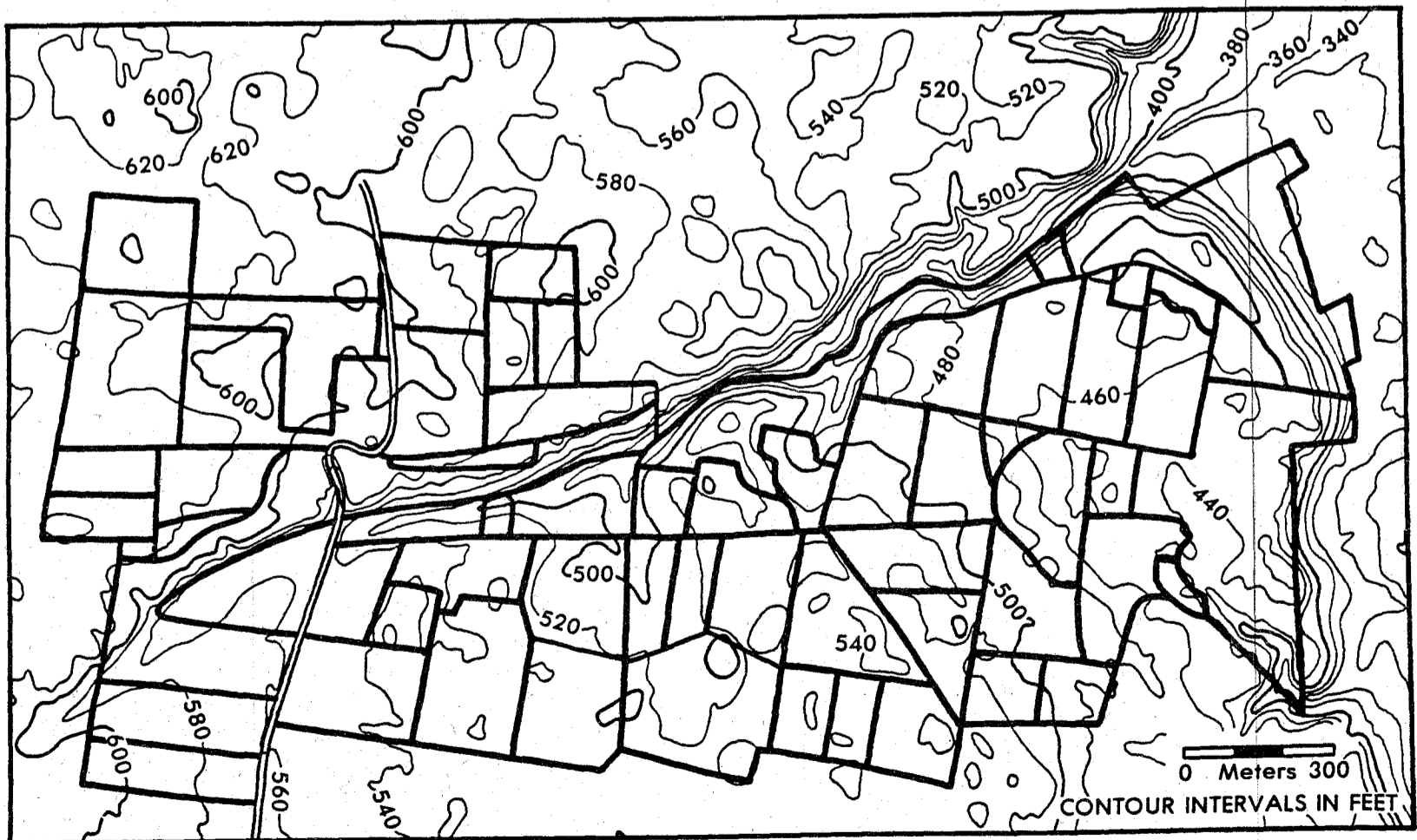
The gully bottom and steeper parts of the eastern slope contained several small rock shelters and shallow caves. These were examined, principally with the soil probe and some shovel tests, but they yielded no evidence of human remains.

Several pasture areas south of the Negro Yard were also surveyed (Figure 2), but the soil was generally very shallow with numerous limestone outcrops. One area in Cat Hole field contained deeper soil, 30 to 50 cm, and this area was intensively probed and shovel tested (Figure 2); very little debris and no evidence of subsurface pits or burials were found.

Table 1. Material Surface Collected at Guinea.

Field	Red Earthen-Ware	Undecorated White Ware	Undecorated Pearl Ware	Transfer Prints	Annular Ware	Cream Ware	Edged Rims	Other Ceramics	Pipe Fragments	Metal	Glass	Shell and Bone	Other
Garden	26	0	4	9	2	4	3	10	0	0	0	0	0
Negro Yard	102	0	8	16	5	6	5	22	0	0	0	0	0

GUINEA, 1987: TOPOGRAPHY AND FIELDS



8. Guinea, 1987: topography and fields

Malvern

Twenty-five acres of cultivated fields and 12 acres of pasture were surveyed at Malvern; also, 9 acres of pasture were shovel tested, and five 1 x 2 m test units were excavated.

Work concentrated in two fields immediately south of the South Negro Yard: the cultivated Graveyard field (with young cane plants) and Rock field, which contained pasture and recently established cherry trees; the latter were widely spaced and only about 50 cm tall (Figures 4, 9; Plate 4). Rock field was bisected by a 5 to 7 m deep gully which ran from the northwest to the southeast corner (Figure 10).

Walking over South Negro Yard (where no material was collected because of poor visibility due to tall sugar cane), among the cherry trees (where visibility was fair to good), and through the Graveyard field (which had excellent visibility) revealed a high density of material (Table 2). A high percentage of pre-twentieth century ceramics and density of the debris suggests the area from South Negro Yard south to Graveyard field supported living quarters during this period. Debris was heaviest in the eastern half of the cultivated fields, suggesting that the living quarters were probably concentrated on the high ground paralleling the road along the eastern edges of these fields (Figures 4, 10).

Despite its name, Graveyard produced no evidence of a cemetery. A horse tooth and some nonhuman bone were found, possibly indicating the area was used for animal burial. (As noted in chapters 5 and 7, some informants suggested that Graveyard fields were specifically used for animal burials, an assertion denied by other informants.) The northwest quadrant of Graveyard was resurveyed more intensively after the initial survey. Instead of the normal 5 to 10 m

Hanson

Thirty-one acres of cultivated fields and 28 acres of pastures were surveyed, and 6 acres of pasture were shovel tested at Hanson.

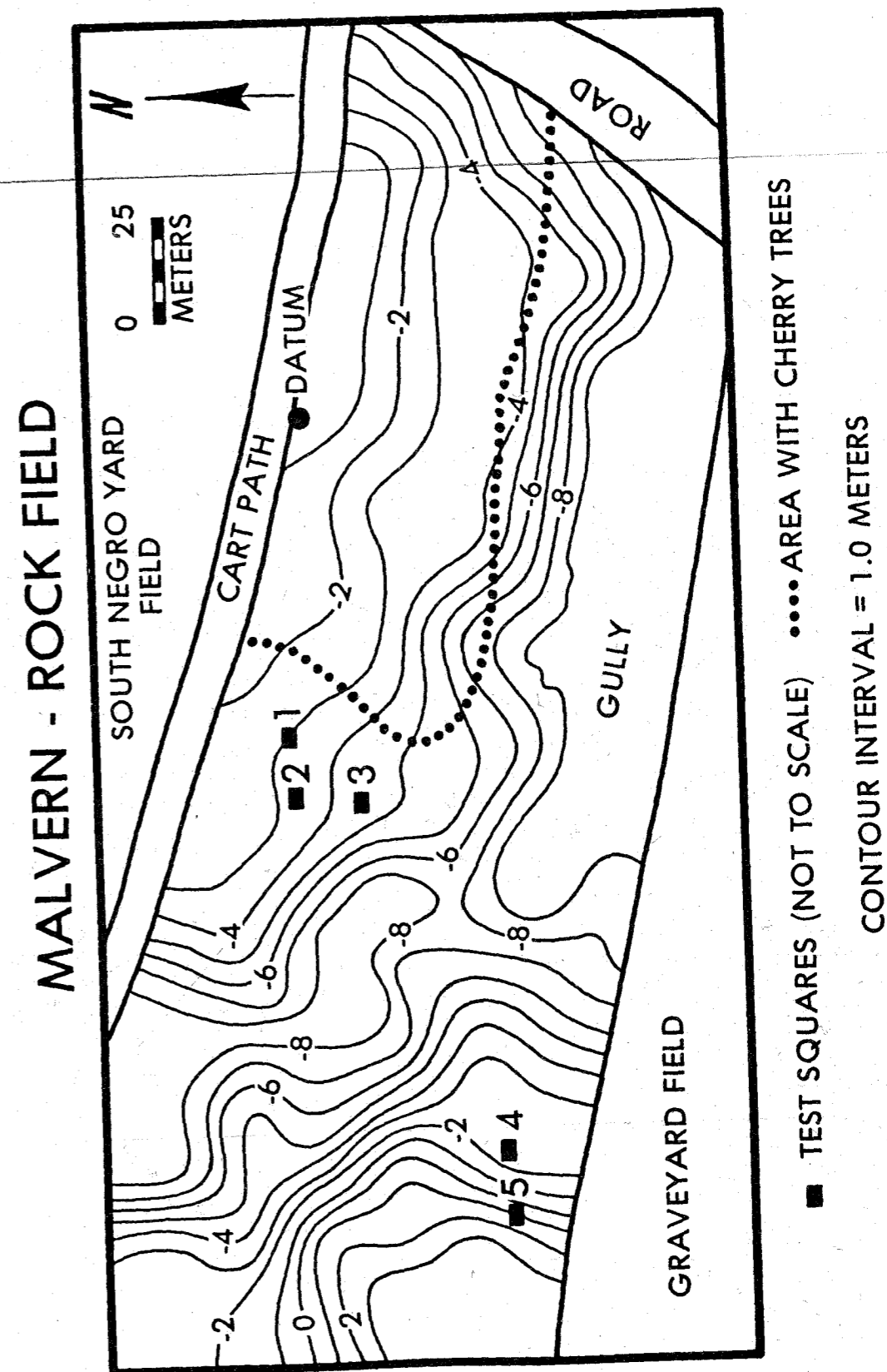
intervals, every row was walked and soil cores were taken every 10 m in every third row. Again, no evidence of a cemetery or any subsurface features was found.

A large pasture of about 12 acres, located between Wood field and Hackleton's Cliff, was surveyed and shovel tested (Figure 4) because it was the largest pasture near the Negro Yard fields. Coring indicated a soil cover rarely over 15 cm deep, and most shovel holes reached bedrock. There was very little cultural debris and no evidence of a cemetery.

Five 1 x 2 m test units were excavated in several of the flatter areas of Rock field, west of the cherry trees: three east of a gully running through the field and two west of it (Figure 9). No units could be placed among the cherry trees because excavation would have damaged their roots. All of the test units encountered limestone bedrock between 20 and 45 cm below the surface (Plate 5). Soil was typical of the red brown association: the A horizon was generally 15 to 20 cm thick, and the B horizon was firm, red medium brown in color, and had medium subangular blocky structure. Debris was found throughout the A horizon and into the top 10 cm of the B horizon. As noted earlier, several informants said the field had never been plowed, and there was no evidence of a plow zone in the profiles. The vertical distribution of the debris was probably due to bioturbation; the field had numerous ant colonies which would produce pronounced soil mixing, although grass roots also may have had some, albeit limited, effect.

After excavation of test squares, the rest of Rock field outside the cherry tree area was shovel tested. In about half of the shovel holes, bedrock was encountered within 15 cm of the surface, but in other areas the shovel holes terminated in the firm B horizon.

Thirty-three 1 x 1 m units were excavated in two fields (Figure 5). As discussed in chapter 6, possible slave skeletons were reportedly found



MALVERN, 1987: TOPOGRAPHY AND FIELDS



10. Malvern, 1987: topography and fields

Table 2. Material Collected at Malvern.

Field/Square/Level	Red Earthen- Ware	Undec- orated White Ware	Undec- orated Pearl Ware	Transfer Prints	Annular Ware	Cream Ware	Edged Rims	Other Ceramics	Pipe Frag- ments	Metal	Glass	Shell and Bone	Other
SURFACE COLLECTIONS													
Graveyard	35	2	1	29	10	10	4	18	5	4	2	0	2
Rock	45	7	19	77	57	21	30	41	8	8	8	4	1
ROCK FIELD TEST SQUARES													
TS1-1 0-15 ^a	5	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS1-2 15-30	9	2	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	2
TS1-3 30-45	14	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS2-1 0-15	4	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS2-2 15-30	9	1	1	3	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
TS2-3 30-45	3	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	1
TS3-1 0-15	10	0	4	2	1	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
TS3-2 15-30	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	7	0	0	0
TS3-3 30-45	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
TS4-1 0-15	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
TS4-2 15-30	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS5-1 0-15	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS5-2 15-30	22	0	0	1	0	3	0	2	0	0	0	0	0

^aDepth of level in centimeters below ground surface.

in the 1920s, near the stable on the Mill Yard's west side; and this was the first area archaeologically investigated at Hanson. However, no evidence of a cemetery was found. After this failure, additional survey and testing attempted to locate an unreported cemetery, but, again, nothing was found. The survey results are discussed before describing the test excavations.

The Lower and Upper Negro Yards yielded substantial debris (Table 3), the heaviest density being along the western half of Lower Negro Yard. There also appeared to be debris in the adjacent Lower Mill field, but, because of dense cane, visibility was poor and only a token collection was made. The western halves of Lower Negro Yard and Lower Mill are along a low, broad ridge which slopes gently up from the Upper Negro Yard and Upper Mill fields (lower and upper in field names refers to leeward and windward, rather than to elevation differences); the western edge of this ridge is marked by a steep drop of several meters into a narrow belt of grass and scrubland (Figure 9). This area would have been an excellent dump spot during the period of slavery, and its southern end, where it is somewhat broader, might be a likely place for a cemetery. Unfortunately, parts of the steep face have been used for quarrying limestone, and almost all of the area has been used for landfill since the 1950s; thus, the slave period ground surface has either been destroyed or is covered by several meters of refuse deposited in recent times.

Shovel-testing and intensive soil probing were conducted in several pasture areas to the north, southwest, and south of the Negro Yard fields (Figure 5). The best soil depth was at the western end of the pasture above Burney's (*sic*) Long Bottom and in a broad gully north of the Upper Negro Yard (Figures 5, 11). There was virtually no cultural debris in the former area, nor any evidence indicative of a cemetery.

The gully area was one of the two places where test excavations took place. The first place was near the stable, in the southeastern portion of New Field, an area of weeds and dispersed coconut trees (Plate 7; Figures 5, 12). Despite the excavation of 24 1 x 1 m units (Test Squares 1-24; Figure 12), no evidence of a cemetery was found.

The soil in New Field was typical of the black soil association: the A horizon was very clayey, and it generally covered a firm, olive brown B horizon. Bedrock or dense limestone rubble were generally encountered between 10 and 40 cm below the ground surface.

The squares yielded a wide range of debris (Table 4). Several squares were excavated through up to 30 cm of recent debris (mainly rock, nails, and ceramic roof tiles), possibly trash piles left over from construction of the stable. The only two squares not encountering gravel or bedrock were Test Squares 5 and 9; these adjacent squares (Figure 12) were excavated to about 30 cm depths, penetrating the B horizon 10 to 15 cm. The squares contained two subsurface features that were first defined at the A-B contact; both were narrow (30-50 cm) trenches which extended only about 10 cm into the B horizon. They appeared to be the bottoms of drainage trenches; both had a black, clayey fill and varvelike layers of soil at the bottom. The whole area west and south of the stable appeared to have been poorly drained for much of its history.

If skeletons were indeed found near the stable in the 1920s, it seems unlikely that they were part of a larger cemetery, given the amount of testing done in the area. Possibly more skeletons might still be present under the stable's concrete floor, but practical constraints prevented examining this possibility.

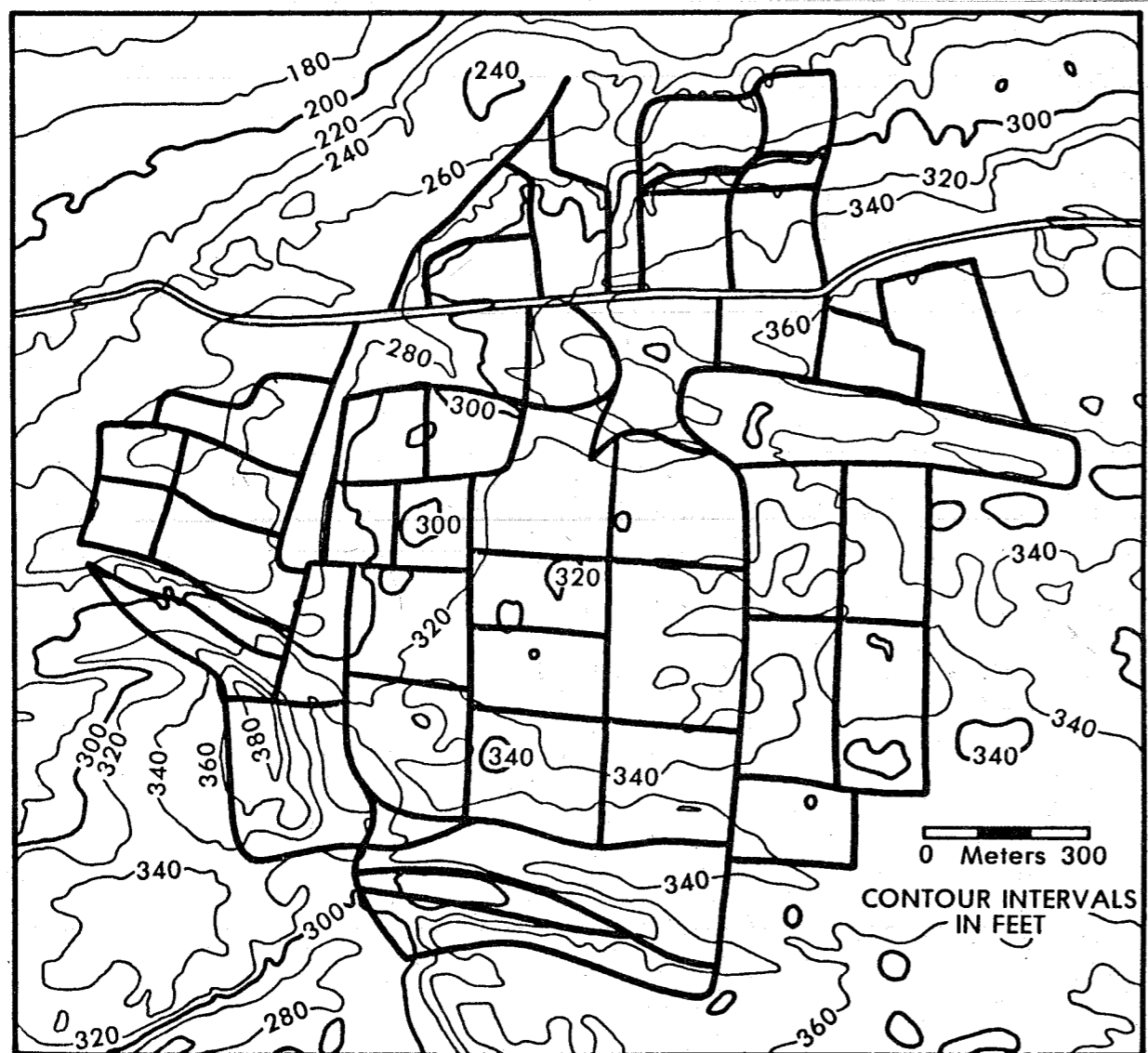
The second area tested was the pasture north of the Upper Negro Yard (Figures 5, 13). This area contained a broad gully with grass and small thickets of bushes. The gully, which carried only intermittent water flow, also ran through the northeast corner of Upper Negro Yard. The ridge on the north side of the pasture had supported late nineteenth century and early twentieth century houses according to people who lived nearby, but only several foundations remained visible. Nine 1 x 1 m units (Test Squares 25-33) were excavated in this area (Figure 13). The squares were concentrated on the gully bottom and sides, where probing had indicated the deepest soil.

Several squares were excavated to depths of 60 cm to 1 m without hitting bedrock.

Table 3. Material Surface Collected at Hanson.

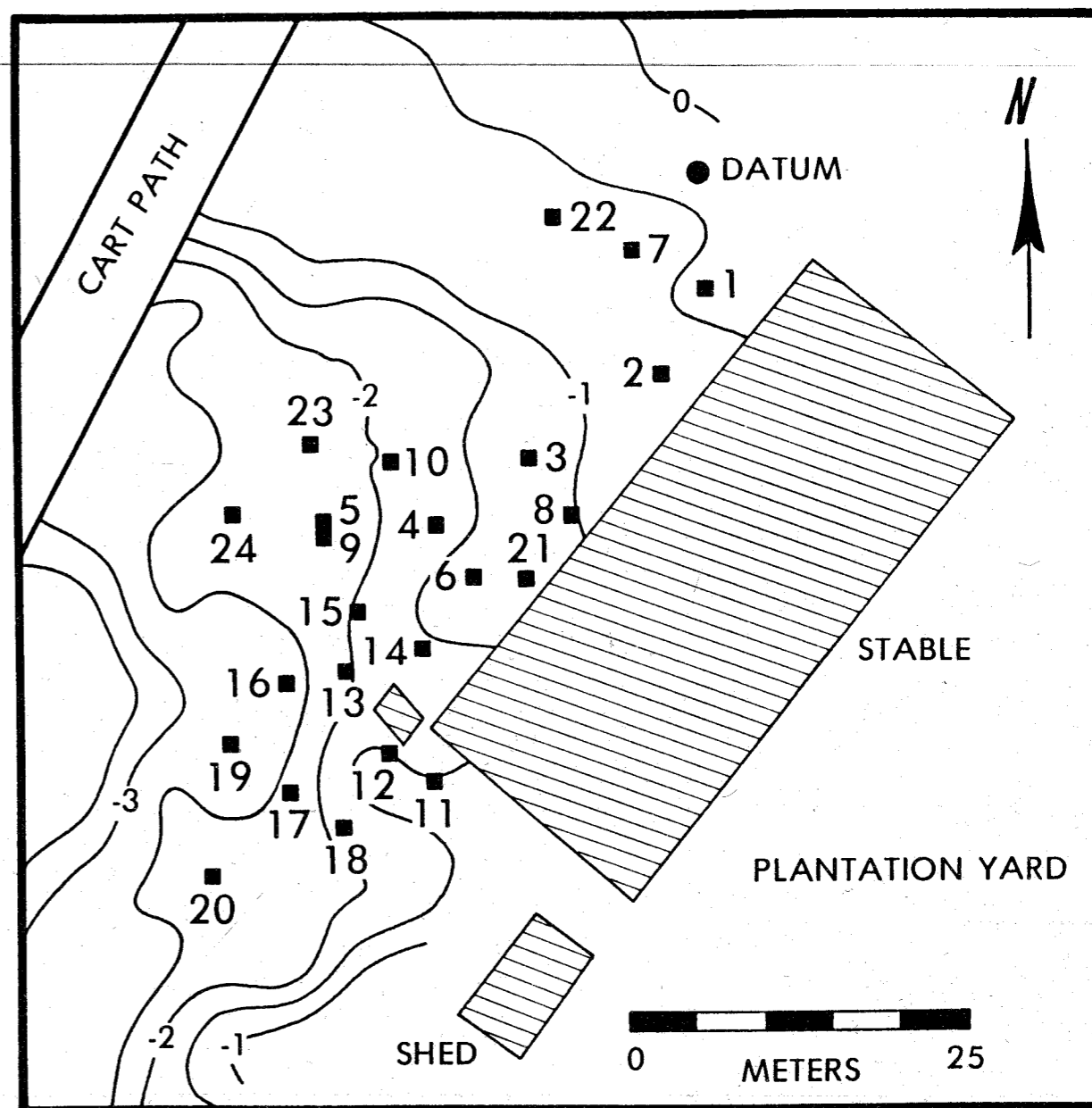
Field	Red Earthen- Ware	Undec- orated White Ware	Undec- orated Pearl Ware	Transfer Prints	Annular Ware	Cream Ware	Egged Rims	Other Ceramics	Pipe Frag- ments	Metal	Glass	Shell and Bone	Other
No. 1 Hanson	4	4	0	4	2	0	0	4	2	0	1	0	2
Lower Mill	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lower Negro Yard	37	4	0	33	35	9	12	48	20	7	13	3	7
Upper Negro Yard	9	2	0	6	3	0	2	5	4	0	1	1	0

HANSON, 1987: TOPOGRAPHY AND FIELDS



11. Hanson, 1987: topography and fields

HANSON - STABLE AREA



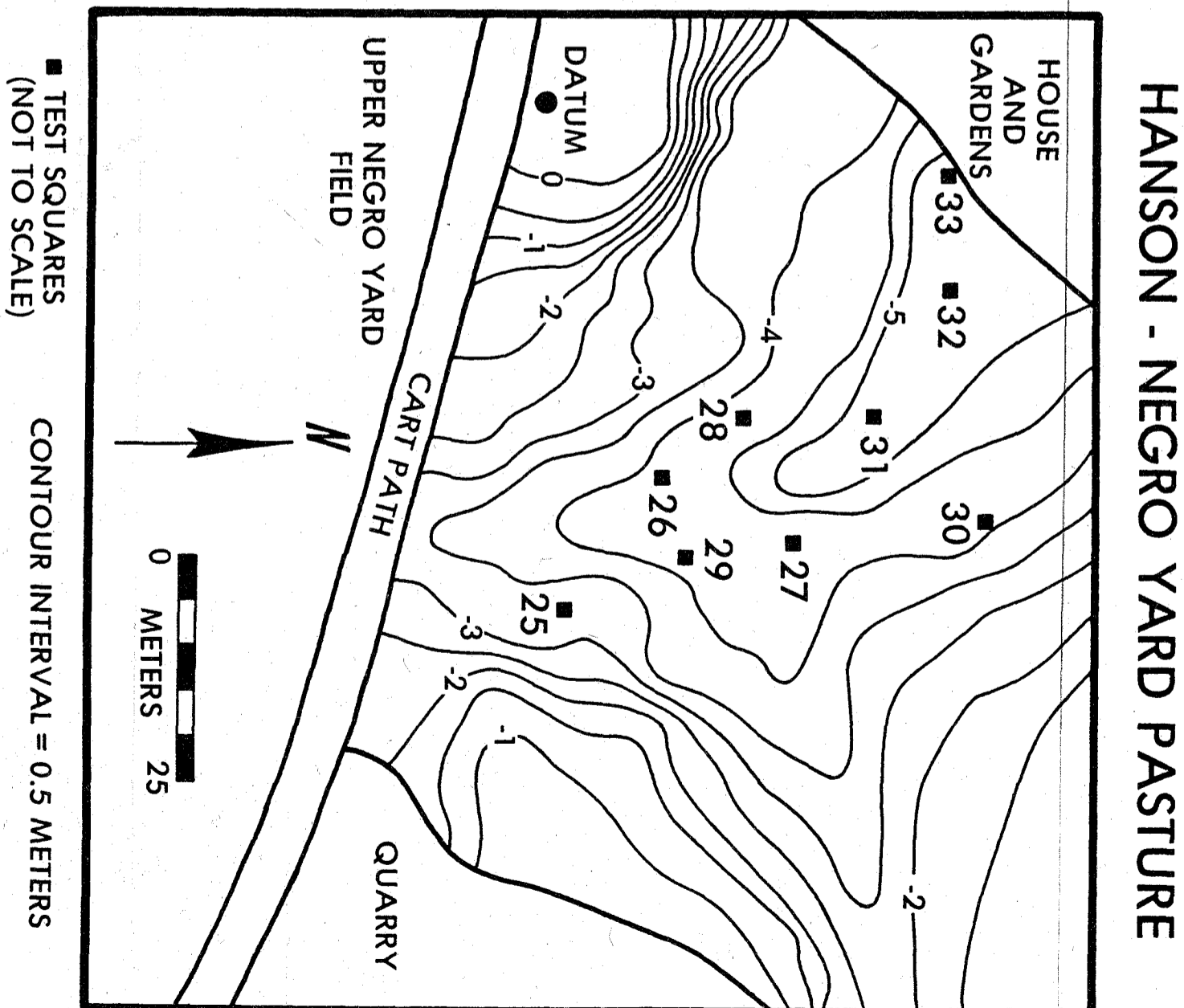
■ TEST SQUARES (NOT TO SCALE) ▨ BUILDINGS
 CONTOUR INTERVAL = 0.5 METERS

12. Hanson: excavation units in stable area

Table 4. Material from Test Squares near Hanson Stable.

Square/Level		Red Earthen- Ware	Undec- orated White Ware	Undec- orated Pearl Ware	Transfer Prints	Annular Ware	Cream Ware	Edged Rims	Other Ceramics	Pipe Frag- ments	Metal	Glass	Shell and Bone	Other
TS1-1	0-37 ^a	42	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS2-1	0-35	14	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS3-1	0-42	19	0	0	0	1	0	1	5	0	2	0	0	2
TS5-1	0-20	46	1	0	3	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1
TS5-2	20-30	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
TS6-1	0-54	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS7-1	0-50	53	0	0	1	1	4	0	3	0	2	1	0	7
TS8-1	0-27	11	0	0	4	3	0	0	2	0	2	2	0	1
TS9-1	0-20	33	3	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	1	1	0	0
TS9-2	20-30	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0
TS10-1	0-25	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
TS11-1	0-27	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS12-1	0-31	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	8	1	0	0
TS13-1	0-44	63	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	7
TS14-1	0-50	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	6	0	0	4
TS14-2	50-70	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
TS15-1	0-53	2	2	0	3	0	0	0	4	0	4	2	4	2
TS16-1	0-31	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS17-1	0-40	12	5	0	2	1	0	1	4	1	5	7	0	1
TS18-1	0-35	1	2	0	2	0	0	0	3	0	7	1	1	2
TS19-1	0-40	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS20-1	0-51	9	4	0	11	2	3	0	3	2	0	5	1	1
TS21-1	0-41	12	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	2
TS22-1	0-40	49	2	0	1	0	0	1	1	3	0	1	0	3
TS23-1	0-25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS24-1	0-25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

^aDepth in centimeters below ground surface.



13. Hanson: excavation units in Negro Yard pasture area

The profiles of the deeper squares revealed a black A horizon, usually about 20 cm deep, over 20 to 50 cm of dark soil which tended to grey gradually downward; beneath this was olive brown clay. This profile is typical of black and grey brown soils. Debris density in the squares was light, but material was found throughout the dark B horizon (Table 5). This zone probably represents a mixture of colluvial and alluvial infilling in the gully; the area also might have been a trash dump.

A buried subsurface feature was found in Test Square 32. Approximately 60 cm below ground surface, there was a thin gravel lens, which covered the entire square, at the base of the dark B horizon. Below this lens was what appeared to be an old channel, either natural or a manmade drainage ditch. It was about 1 m wide and 45 cm deep and ran from the southeast to northwest corner of the square, the

St. Nicholas Abbey

The most extensive survey was conducted at this large plantation. Surveys on cultivated fields totaled 25 acres, pastures 54 acres, and 7 acres were shovel tested; in addition, 18 1 x 1 m units were placed in one pasture field (Figure 6). Survey and shovel testing centered on a long gully running west and southwest from the Negro Yard field (Figures 6, 14). The east slope of the gully and the high ground above it were in pasture; the west slope and bottom were generally tree covered until the gully broadened in the area of the two Moore Hill fields. Several areas in the broader bottomland and along the slopes were shovel tested, although the flattest land with the deepest soil was in sugar cane (the two Moore Hill fields; Figure 6). These cultivated fields were walked and probed. The pasture soil was generally shallow; shovel holes often hit rock within 15 cm of the surface, except around the edges of the cultivated fields.

Shovel testing was also conducted in the cultivated south half of South Crab Hill field, just north of the Negro Yard (Figure 6). The field's northern half was in young cane, but the southern half had not yet been replanted after harvesting. This half of the field was a large bowl-shaped depression; a hole in a limestone face on the southern side of the depression

approximate axis of modern drainage in this part of the gully. The channel was cut into the olive brown B horizon, and was filled with a dark, grey brown clay with limestone grit and pebbles; it contained several pieces of historic debris. The top of the channel obviously represents an old land surface that subsequently was buried by soil accumulation.

The pasture excavations did not reveal a cemetery. However, they produced evidence that significant, and possibly rapid, modification of the gully has occurred over the last 100 to 200 years, probably due to a combination of colluvial and alluvial processes, and perhaps some cultural factors as well. As is discussed below, such processes provide one possible explanation for why slave cemeteries are so difficult to locate.

allowed water to drain into the head of the gully discussed above. Such depressions are common at St. Nicholas and other plantations, and they help drain the cultivated fields. A small area of standing water was at the base of the depression, and cane had been planted right up to the water's edge. Shovel tests revealed that a soil buildup around the water was due to colluviation, but the slopes of the depression had a well-developed olive brown B horizon under the 15 to 20 cm plow zone/A horizon. The surface and shovel holes yielded only a light scatter of debris (Table 6).

Survey and shovel tests were carried out in several other areas of St. Nicholas (Figure 6), most notably Sour Grass field, a pasture with a small rise in a flat area at the base of a hill. The setting was very similar to Newton, although there was only one possible mound. However, extensive shovel tests and soil coring failed to find any evidence of a cemetery, and the rise was apparently a natural knoll rather than an artificial mound.

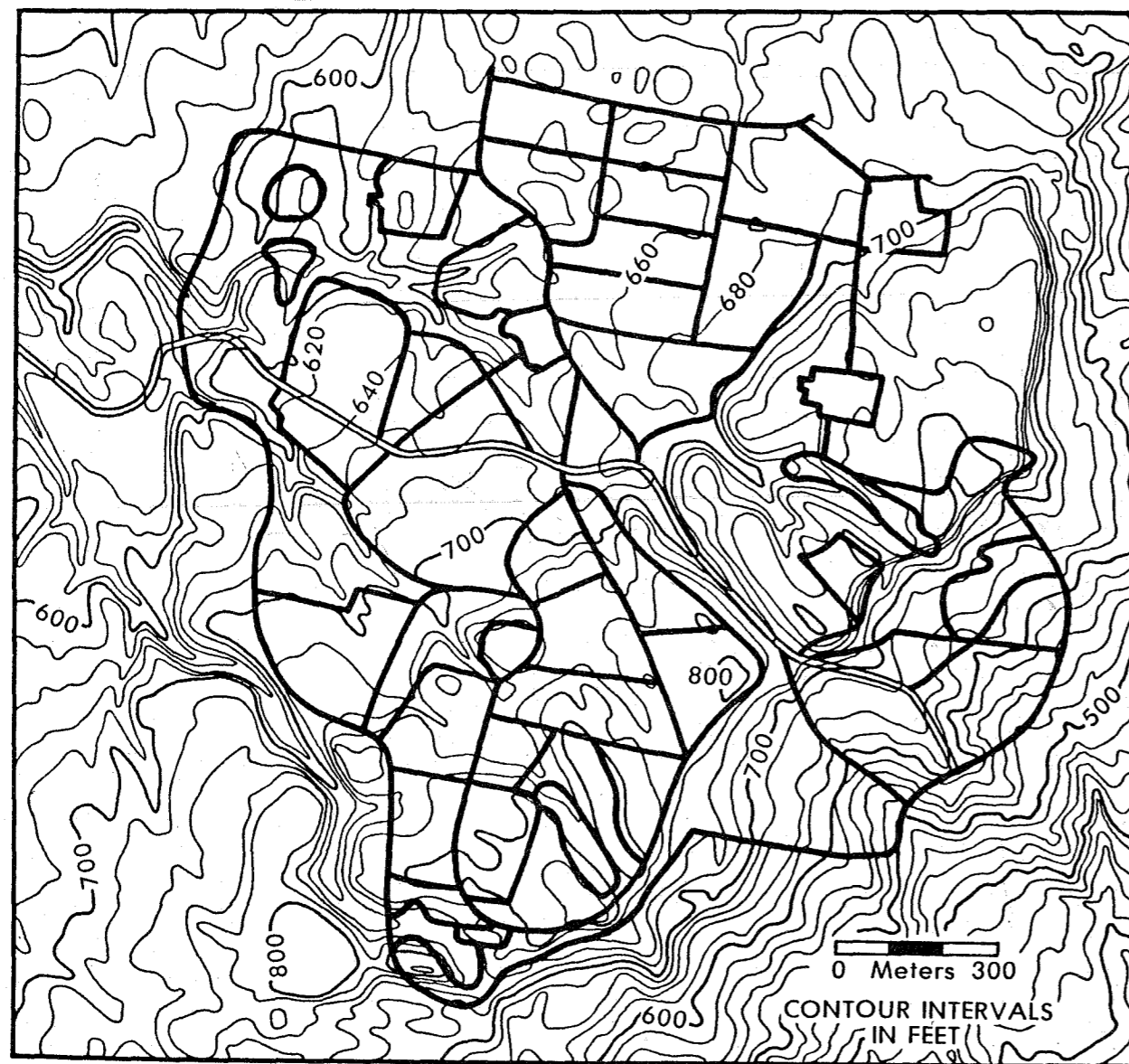
Though removed from the Negro Yard, a pasture north of Ben Jones field was intensely investigated because, as discussed in chapter 6, oral reports suggested the existence of a cemetery (Plate 9; Figure 6). Shovel testing and

Table 5. Material from Test Squares in Pasture North of Hanson Upper Negro Yard Field.

Square/Level	Red Earthen- Ware	Undecorated White Ware	Undecorated Pearl Ware	Transfer Prints	Annular Ware	Cream Ware	Edged Rims	Other Ceramics	Pipe Frag- ments	Metal	Glass	Shell and Bone	Other
TS25-1 0-20 ^a	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS26-1 0-20	2	3	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0
TS26-2 20-40	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
TS26-3 40-60	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS27-1 0-20	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS27-2 20-30	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
TS28-1 0-60	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS29-1 0-20	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
TS30-1 0-50	10	0	3	1	5	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	0
TS30-2 50-65	7	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS31-1 0-20	4	0	2	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
TS31-2 20-40	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
TS31-3 40-60	4	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0
TS31-4 60-80	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS32-1 0-20	5	0	0	1	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
TS32-2 20-40	5	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
TS32-3 40-60	7	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS32-4 60-80	10	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS32-5 80-100	5	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
TS33-1 0-60	42	3	0	0	0	0	0	6	2	1	0	0	2

^aDepth in centimeters below ground surface.

ST. NICHOLAS, 1987: TOPOGRAPHY AND FIELDS



14. St. Nicholas, 1987: topography and fields

soil probing indicated areas of deeper soil in the pasture, which was on a ridge on the southwest side of a gully; however, shovel testing yielded very little cultural material. Eighteen 1 x 1 m units were excavated on the ridge (Figure 15). The squares revealed no evidence that the area had ever been plowed. The soil was typical of the red brown association. The dark brown to black A horizon was 20 to 25 cm deep (when not formed directly over shallower limestone); the B horizon was red brown and firm. Bedrock was generally struck 25 to 50 cm below the ground surface, except in the center of the ridge; in Test Squares 6, 7, 10, and 11, with depths of 40 to 87 cm, bedrock was not encountered.

Bissex-Parks

Survey, shovel testing, and test excavations at Bissex-Parks were limited to an approximately four or five acre portion of the Graveyard field (Figure 7).

Graveyard field was a topographically complex area of pasture and trees on high ground north of the Negro Yard. The field's eastern edge was a narrow ridge with grass and scattered saplings. On its southern edge was a grassy knoll, its northern end entering a small forest with dense, medium-sized trees, and its eastern border containing a wooded slope of mature casuarina trees. West of the ridge the ground dropped about 5 to 20 m; the greatest drop was on the north end, where a steep, brush-covered slope led into a broad swale, or low lying meadow, with grass and saplings (Plate 10). South of this low area the ground rose in a gradual slope to the ridge marking the south border of Graveyard (Figure 7).

All of this area was surveyed. Shovel testing was done in the swale and from it across the entire slope to the south ridge (Figure 7). The forested area on the north end of the east ridge was also shovel tested. Fourteen 1 x 1 m test units were excavated: 4 on the narrow east ridge and 10 on the south ridge (Figure 7, inset). In addition, debris collections were made along the cart paths along the south ridge and

Discussion and Directions for Future Research

Several possible reasons might help account for the failure to find evidence of slave

The squares had little cultural debris (Table 6), and yielded no evidence of subsurface features. Any pits dug into the B horizon would have been easily identified, given the color, structure, and compactness of the soil. After the archaeological excavations revealed the soil depth on the ridge, the plantation owner became interested in the agricultural potential of the area and had it plowed (Figure 15). Examination of the surface after plowing confirmed the low density of debris found in the shovel testing and test units; no bone or possible coffin hardware was found.

bordering Graveyard to the west. Debris was heaviest in the swale and the road along the west edge of Graveyard field; the test squares contained very little material (Table 7).

As expected, since this was the only Scotland District plantation investigated, the Graveyard field soils differed from those on other plantations. The ridges had very little organic development and showed very shallow, poorly defined A horizons. Below this was a grey to dark grey silty soil with numerous pieces of soft shale or siltstone rock, which gradually became denser with depth. The swale contained a deeper, better-developed, more clayey A horizon over rocky subsoil. The soil in the test squares resembled the grey brown subgroup of soils formed on Oceanic Formation parent materials (Vernon and Carroll 1966: 27-28).

No surface collections were made from Negro Yard fields at Bissex-Parks. When the test excavations were conducted, the fields were too muddy to walk. It later proved impractical to return because of work commitments at the other plantations. Bissex-Parks was given a lower priority because, except for the Graveyard field, there were few areas near the Negro Yards which appeared suitable for additional survey and testing.

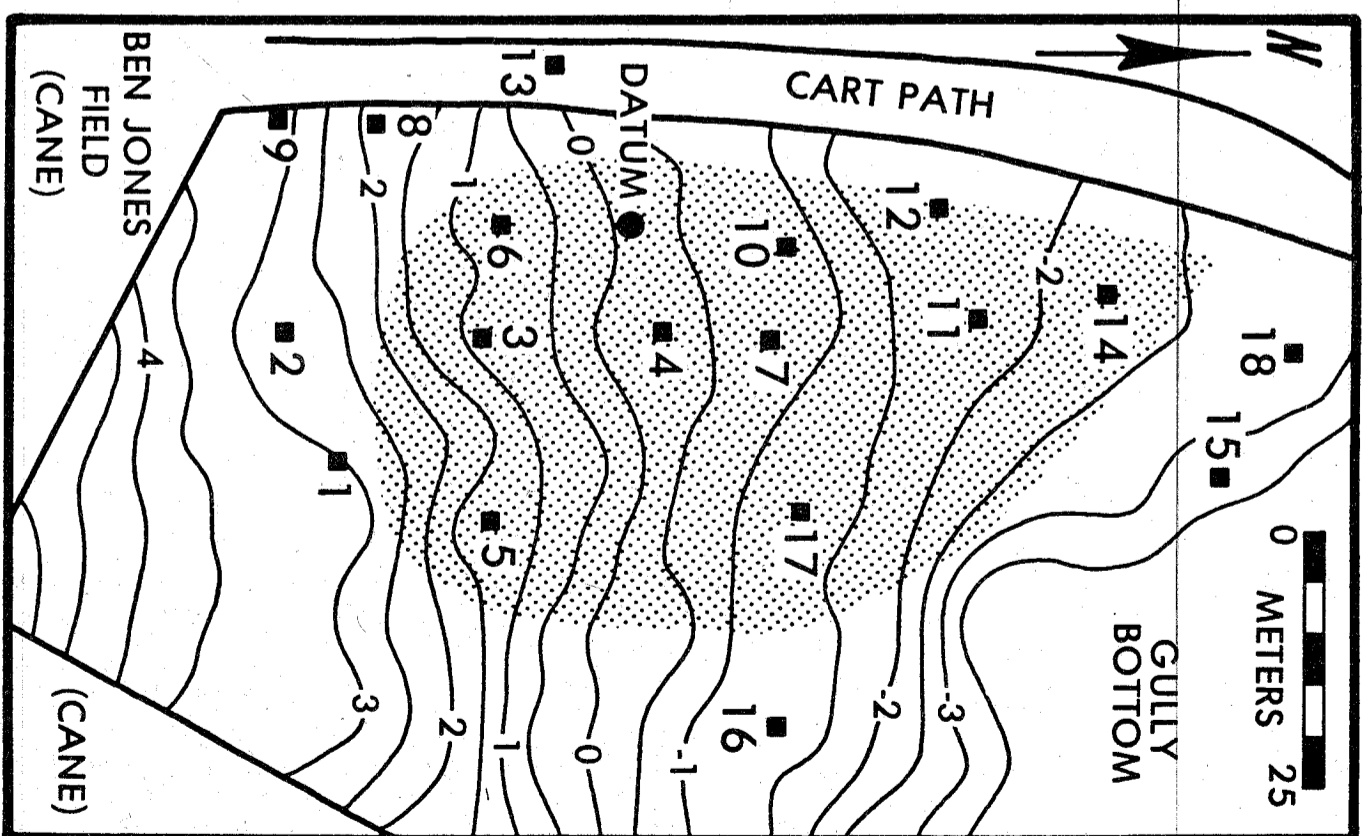
cemeteries on the plantations investigated during 1987: unsuitable archaeological methods;

Table 6. Material Collected at St. Nicholas.

Field/Square/Level	Red Earthen- Ware	Undec- orated White Ware	Undec- orated Pearl Ware	Transfer Prints	Annular Ware	Cream Ware	Edged Rims	Other Ceramics	Pipe Frag- ments	Metal	Glass	Shell and Bone	Other
SURFACE COLLECTIONS													
South Crab Hill	7	2	0	0	1	0	1	2	1	0	0	1	0
BEN JONES TEST SQUARES													
TS1-1 0-39 ^a	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0
TS2-1 0-53	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS3-1 0-32	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS4-1 0-58	3	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS5-1 0-36	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS6-1 0-68	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS7-1 0-73	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS8-1 0-59	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	5	0	3
TS9-1 0-38	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS10-1 0-87	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS11-1 0-39	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS12-1 0-46	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
TS13-1 0-30	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
TS14-1 0-50	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS15-1 0-25	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
TS16-1 0-28	1	5	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS17-1 0-40	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TS18-1 0-32	6	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0

^aDepth in centimeters below ground surface.

ST. NICHOLAS - BEN JONES FIELD



■ TEST SQUARES (NOT TO SCALE)
 ■ AREA PLOWED AFTER EXCAVATION
 CONTOUR INTERVAL = 0.5 METERS

15. St. Nicholas: excavation units in Ben Jones field pasture area

Table 7. Material Collected from Graveyard Field at Bissex-Parks.

Square/Level	Undecorated White Ware		Red Earthen-Ware	Undecorated Pearl Ware		Transfer Prints	Annular Ware	Cream Ware	Edged Rims	Other Ceramics	Pipe Fragments	Metal	Glass	Shell and Bone		
	Other	Other		Bone	Other											
Surface and road	2	2	18	2	2	8	6	3	0	6	9	1	2	1	0	
TS1-1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
TS2-1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	
TS3-1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	1	
TS4-1	1	0	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
TS6-1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	
TS7-1	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
TS12-1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	

the previous destruction of the cemeteries; and the Newton model's failure to predict cemetery location.

That the methods used were not suitable for the goals of the project cannot be completely dismissed, but it can be argued that a cemetery like Newton, and in a similar topographic situation, should have been discovered if it was present. The methods employed were compromises engendered by several factors: the desire to investigate at least several plantations as thoroughly as possible; the presence of few clues, other than the general model offered by the Newton cemetery setting, to indicate where a cemetery might be located on a given plantation; the short field season; and the need for the Field Director to quickly familiarize himself with a totally unfamiliar landscape and archaeological setting. It should be emphasized that although much "testing" was described above, in reality only different types of survey were conducted. Testing implies work geared toward understanding the structure of a site. In this case, except for Newton, no sites of interest to the project were in fact known. Therefore, methods were chosen which allowed for greater ground coverage in search of a Newton-type cemetery. That is, a cemetery with a high burial density and at least some coffin burials; a pasture with a relatively shallow soil depth (though there might be pockets of deeper soil) and possibly human-constructed or artificial mounds; and proximity to a Negro Yard field.

Shovel testing is usually not the best method for discovering subsurface features (Krakker et al. 1983; Shott 1985). In our fieldwork, however, the majority of shovel tests terminated in dense rock or bedrock, making discovery of burials much more likely if any evidence of them remained. In deeper soils, the soil probe allowed a relatively precise definition of deeper soil pockets and indicated whether excavation units would be required to examine larger areas. The soil core also was used extensively to probe any possible artificial mounds. Even where soil cores and shovel holes could not penetrate the compact B horizon, the presence of numerous deeper grave pits would likely have been recognized, since such pits would be much softer and more easily

penetrated than the natural, undisturbed B horizon.

It should also be reemphasized that no plantation was exhaustively investigated. In general, we surveyed or tested any fields judged subjectively to be reasonably near the Negro Yards; also, areas relatively distant from the Negro Yards were often surveyed. Some fields near the Negro Yards could not be investigated due to crop cover or other factors. It is certainly possible that the cemeteries were simply located in areas we did not investigate, though with the coverage given to several plantations and the amount of work done on each, this does not seem to be an adequate reason for the total failure to find a cemetery.

While one can never be certain that these methods alone failed to find burial sites in any of the investigated areas, it is reasonably certain that our methods would have found Newton's cemetery. Newton was visited twice during the 1987 season; one at the very beginning and the other toward the middle. Except for the absence of the casuarina trees (which burned years ago), the cemetery area has changed very little since the early 1970s fieldwork. The first visit in 1987 allowed the crew to become familiar with the setting and topography, and to see the burial group and mound locations reported by Handler and Lange (1978). The second visit occurred when any initial optimism about quickly finding another cemetery was waning; however, within one hour we had "found" Newton. A small piece of adult ulna was discovered at the edge of North Grand Rock field (Handler and Lange 1978: 48), a plowed field adjacent to the pasture containing the cemetery, which had not been excavated in the early 1970s. One suspicious rise not noted on Handler and Lange's site map (1978: 106, 107) was probed with the Oakfield core. Not only was the soil distinctly softer and darker than the normal natural subsoil, but one of the cores brought up bone from about 30 cm below ground surface. No shovel testing was done, but given the density of burials at Newton and the amount of bone near the surface, it is doubtful that shovel tests would have failed to find bone. (It should be reemphasized that bone at Newton cemetery was initially discovered when holes were dug to plant casuarina trees.)

One plantation owner speculated (with no specific information) that most slave cemeteries were no longer recognizable or in existence because they would probably have been placed on steeper slopes (i.e., ground not productive for much else except pasture) where the soil was very thin. This is a real possibility, but there are several reasons why it appears not to be the best explanation for the lack of known cemeteries. If the burials had been so shallow that they quickly eroded out, bones would have been exposed in relatively short periods after interment, in fact while slaves were still living on the plantation and, perhaps, still even using the cemetery area. For cultural reasons (stemming from slave beliefs as well as the attitudes and conventions of white managers/owners), it seems unlikely that burial locations which eroded out in a decade or two would have continued to be used. Shallow burials, especially without coffins, would also raise the possibility that scavenging dogs might exhume the bodies. As noted earlier, some informants reported that dead plantation livestock were buried deeply in cultivated fields to prevent dogs from digging them up. If the burials were covered well enough that they did not erode out until after emancipation in 1834, many should still be present. Even if not found by our project, more cemeteries in this condition should have been found accidentally over the years by plantation owners and workers, and probably would have come to the Project Director's attention prior to 1987.

Our lack of success archaeologically and the failure of normal plantation work activities to discover burial sites on the plantations we investigated and elsewhere strongly suggests that Newton is, in fact, not a typical cemetery. The question is, however, in what way is Newton atypical? There is no suggestion in historical records that the general mortuary patterns of the plantation's slaves deviated from those at other plantations in Barbados, and surely the very existence of a cemetery at Newton plantation should not be atypical. Even though no records specify the exact location of plantation cemeteries, historical evidence is sufficiently strong to indicate that plantation burials were the normal interment pattern for the vast majority of Barbados' slaves throughout the slave period. Given the island's soils, it also seems unlikely that bone

preservation at Newton would have been atypical. Even without the presence of bones, there is a high probability that a cemetery would have been recognized if found during this project, especially in the fields where excavation units were placed. While the Field Director had no previous experience in identifying subsurface pits in Barbados' soils, pits dug into the normally firm B horizon should have been easily detectable even without the presence of bone. Constant attention was given to any soil variations which might have been a filled pit; few such areas were identified, and only the possible drainage trenches at Hanson appeared to be anything but natural soil variations.

The location of Newton in a mildly sloping area, where erosion would be less than on a steep slope, might be one way it is atypical, though arguments against the placement of cemeteries on steep slopes were presented above. However, available evidence cannot exclude the possibility that Newton was atypical in another way: that slave burials so rarely are found on plantations because most are buried too deeply to be recognized or accidentally discovered. Two lines of evidence support this idea. One is the observation that numerous topographic situations exist on plantations where active soil accumulation would have taken place over the past 300 years, when agriculture would have accelerated soil erosion from cultivated fields and its deposition in gullies and other low-lying areas. The Hanson excavations dramatically illustrated the significant soil accumulation that has occurred in the gully area north of the Negro Yard fields: material postdating European settlement of Barbados was found from the present surface down to a depth of 1 m. Secondly, there is some, albeit slim, historic evidence to support this idea. A unique piece of information shows that in 1812 Edgecombe plantation had 210 acres, two of which were "a bottom containing a pond, trees & bamboos & which has the common burial place"; the source does not specify the location of this "bottom" (Society for the Improvement 1811-1816: 43).¹⁶ Typically, bottomlands on most plantations are gullies, draws, and bowl-shaped fields, which carry only intermittent water flow; however, we investigated only two such areas -- the Hanson gully and South Crab Hill field at St. Nicholas -- because the project

was designed to look for cemeteries using the Newton model. A great deal more excavation or deep coring would be required in such locations to determine if many do, in fact, contain slave cemeteries. Finally, it can be mentioned that we believe our crew size was reasonable given our logistical situation and limited resources, and

Directions for Future Archaeological Research

The mystery of the slave cemeteries of Barbados is truly that--a mystery. Why should cemeteries be virtually unknown when tens of thousands of plantation slaves died over several centuries and, as indicated by historical sources, were buried on plantation lands? The discovery of the cemetery at Newton in the early 1970s only underscores the mystery. Why this one cemetery, discovered in a way that sites are constantly brought to light in all areas of the world: that is, some human bones are unearthed by workers engaged in an ordinary task in an ordinary location, and years later the find is mentioned to an archaeologist or anthropologist who recognizes the possible meaning of the find? How can this problem ultimately be solved? More than likely, it must await further accidental discoveries such as the way in which the cemetery at Newton was found. But such discoveries may also result from recent construction activities. For example, in the countryside of Barbados today it is not unusual to find plantation areas, particularly agriculturally marginal ones, being sold for housing developments. In 1986, the Project Director visited such an area, on lands belonging to Brighton plantation in Christ Church parish. One of the homeowners reported that while digging the house foundation several years earlier parts of a human skeleton, particularly its skull, as well as coffin handles and some buttons, were found; the homeowner was vague in describing these materials which he had either discarded or lost. A neighbor had also encountered some skeletal remains in excavating his house foundation. Both cases could have involved slave burials, but various factors, including the constructional activity in the housing area, did not appear to make the area attractive for finding an undisturbed cemetery. Yet, because of the considerable modifications now taking place in certain traditional plantation areas of Barbados, more skeletal finds may occur, and some may represent slave

that even a somewhat larger crew would not have made any difference in the fundamental finding, namely, that cemeteries are very difficult to locate and were not where we hoped they would be.

burials which can ultimately lead to an undisturbed cemetery.

In addition, future work might also pay greater attention to occasional reports concerning "cholera grounds" on plantation lands. We are aware of several areas in Barbados where such locales have been reported. Some of the anticipated problems in archaeologically dealing with "cholera grounds" are discussed in Appendix A. It may be, however, that oral traditions are misleading, and that not all of the reported "cholera grounds" actually contain the victims of the 1854 epidemic; indeed, some may be in fact plantation slave burial sites.¹⁷

Only the discovery of more plantation cemeteries or burial sites will allow the development of a real model of cemetery locations for Barbados slave plantations, and only then will a more complete understanding of plantation mortuary behavior be achieved. One way to increase the chances that accidental burial discoveries will come to light would be a long-term, intensive survey of many plantations, perhaps an entire parish, rather than 5 or 10 or even 20. Such a large-scale survey over a greater period of time than was expended for this project should begin with extensive interviews of long-time plantation owners, managers, and workers, both present and retired. As many reports as possible of accidental discoveries of bones or other evidence of cemeteries should be collected, cross-checked, and documented. Ultimately one will lead to the next Newton. Although the archaeological projects of the early 1970s and 1987 have started a data base of field collections from a number of plantations, the large-scale survey proposed here also should include collections from Negro Yard fields and other cultivated fields in order to document the distribution of slave period occupations. These data could then be used to identify areas near the occupation fields

topographically suitable for a cemetery. Examination of aerial photographs might also be used to identify areas suitable for on-site survey, and some form of geophysical remote sensing device could be useful for recovering subsurface burial data.

A more fruitful approach, however, would begin with a detailed geomorphological and geoarchaeological study at several plantations. Our fieldwork has demonstrated that in the gully at Hanson active soil accumulation occurred over the last two centuries at least. Given Barbados' topography and extensive cultivation, such situations are almost certainly more widespread. However, we are unaware of any studies of the geomorphological processes active in these small bottom areas. A geoarchaeological study of the problem is needed. Such a project would combine geomorphological analysis of the soils and stratigraphy in these areas with archaeological analysis of collected materials (which might lead to determination of rates of accumulation based on datable artifacts) and archaeological testing of any possible sites

associated with buried land surfaces. The most efficient means of conducting such a project would be soil coring (using a hydraulic core rather than a hand probe), trenching (with a backhoe, or mechanical ditch digger), and hand excavation of archaeological units.

If many of these bottom areas do, indeed, contain buried sites it could lead to many new developments in Barbados archaeology. Slave cemeteries may not be the only sites buried in these areas. Except for the Newton cemetery, archaeological work on the island in the early 1970s (Handler and Lange 1978; cf. Lange and Carlson 1985) as well as this project have failed to find in situ, undisturbed sites relating to slave life. Thus far all archaeological data relating to slave habitation sites and other activity areas derive from surface collections made in heavily plowed fields. While it is unlikely that major slave living areas would be buried in the small gullies, other sites relating to slave activities might be found there.

Chapter 8 Conclusions

Summary of 1987 Fieldwork

The preceding pages give a detailed account of the archaeological research on Barbados plantations during the summer of 1987; in addition, they provide the results of the ethnographic and historical investigations bearing on the plantations where the archaeological research took place. Also described are the procedures involved in choosing the plantations for investigation as well as the background to the 1987 research within the context of the Senior Author's wider research project on Barbados slavery. Despite the failure to achieve the major objective of the archaeological fieldwork -- the discovery of one or more slave cemeteries and recovery of some skeletal and artifactual materials -- the historical and ethnographic data presented in this report nonetheless contribute to the history of Barbados' plantations.

During the approximately two centuries that slavery existed in Barbados, tens of thousands of slaves died on the island; and historical, ethnographic, and archaeological data (the last, from the Newton plantation excavations in the early 1970s) converge to provide incontrovertible evidence that most of these people were buried on plantations, in areas defined as slave graveyards. It might be easy to assume that the location of some plantation cemeteries would be known on an island as small as Barbados with its long history of slavery, high population densities, and intensive agricultural development over a long period. Yet, such is not the case. The nonsuccess of the 1987 archaeological, ethnographic, and historical research to produce evidence for a cemetery on a specific plantation was a major disappointment, and made us fully realize that slave cemeteries are far more difficult to locate than we anticipated before the fieldwork began. Yet, despite our failure we maintain that evidence of such cemeteries is obtainable. The fact that we did not find one only underscores the luck and unique circumstances that led to the discovery in the early 1970s of the Newton plantation cemetery; this cemetery continues to be the first slave

cemetery to have been identified in Barbados as well as the only one that is definitely known.

Chapter 6 describes the five plantations on which research took place in terms of their contemporary features and histories, and presents any ethnographic information that might have had bearing on the location/existence of a cemetery -- none of these data offered unequivocal evidence, but some offered clues that were archaeologically pursued. Chapter 7 describes the archaeological research itself and discusses several possible reasons why this research did not discover evidence for a cemetery on a specific plantation. Although these reasons include the possibility of methodological shortcomings, we believe that a plantation cemetery similar to Newton (for example, with a sloping topography, shallow soil cover and unsuitability for cane cultivation, proximity to the Negro Yard field), would have been discovered with the procedures we followed and the techniques we adopted. Moreover, we are aware that time and other limitations on our resources prevented any of the plantations from being exhaustively investigated. For example, there is certainly the possibility that the cemeteries being sought were located in areas that were inaccessible to archaeological survey or excavation, such as in fields with relatively dense or mature sugar cane growth. Yet, as was discussed in chapter 7, the amount of archaeological work and the land area that was covered on each of the five plantations seems to militate against lack of exhaustive coverage as adequately explaining why a cemetery was not found.

The 1987 field experience has led us to believe that, contrary to our initial expectations, the strongest reason for our lack of success derives from the possibility that the Newton cemetery model, which guided our research, may have been misleading; and that the location and topographic features of the Newton cemetery were more anomalous for Barbadian plantations than we believed while