

## OLD CEMETERIES AT CHERRY POINT, N.C.

From 14 to 17 cemeteries have been identified at various times aboard MCAS Cherry Point. The count has changed due to the fact that some graves have been moved and others consolidated. In its Cultural Resources Survey, Archaeological Research Consultants (ARC) of Chapel Hill listed 15 found in 1985. The ARC cemetery survey information follows here. – Edward Ellis, October, 2010

### 9.4 CEMETERIES

Cemeteries and their engraved stones proved to be the most informative historic sites at MCAS Cherry Point. This section presents information transcribed from each of the gravestones and photographs of representative examples. In 1941, when these cemeteries were first recorded and some were moved, surveyors recorded locations, inscriptions (in abbreviated form), and information supplied by residents about unmarked cemeteries (Dept. of the Navy 1941).

The gravestones tend to provide a biased sample of information, however. Most of the graves recorded in 1941 lacked markers, and it is likely that slaves and less wealthy white residents had only wooden markers, if anything. Many of the residents of the black community around the Little Witness Church in the 1920s and 1930s (see Cemetery One) were buried with small metal and paper markers that have not survived the last 40 years.

Although this group of gravestones is relatively small in number, we can see some changes through time, and comparisons can be made with the Burying Ground of Beaufort, about twenty miles away. The earliest markers at MCAS Cherry Point are those of Evan and Sally Jones, (1813 and 1817), a relatively prosperous family that lived near the Neuse River and the mouth of Slocum Creek. Their markers (Figure App.1.14) have the "bedboard-shaped" profiles described by Benes for New England markers from 1670 to 1790. He attributes the use of this shape to the expression of a sleep metaphor, underlined by the normal presence of small footstones also shaped in the "bedboard" profile (Benes 1977:42). Such footstones are also present in the Jones plot. The use of the "bedboard" profile at Cherry Point continued as late as 1840s, when it appeared in the Winn cemetery (see Figures App.1.7 and App.1.8). In contrast, the Burying Ground in the seaport of Beaufort also features the "bedboard" profile beginning around the 1790s, but it nearly disappears from there in the 1820s, to be replaced by more elaborate and sentimental Victorian motifs such as the willow-and-urn, hands extended in farewell, or angels in flight. Crosses and cross motifs also became more common in Beaufort after the first quarter of the nineteenth century. At Cherry Point, the only example of the new Victorian type is the Holton stone, the largest in the inventory (Figure App.1.5). Dating from 1823, the stone marks the burial plot of Barbara Holton, the wife of Lot Holton, a wealthy plantation owner and naval stores producer. Although Lot's name and birth date are inscribed on the stone next to his wife, he later remarried and apparently is buried elsewhere. Over Barbara's name is a hand extended in farewell, paralleling the expression of the inscription below. Over Lot's name is a heart, also a graphic representation of his own inscription. The relatively large size and elaboration of the Holton marker seems to correspond with the wealth of the family, but we should remember that the Evan Jones family markers, erected only a few years earlier, were much plainer although the Jones family was also quite prosperous (see Section 3.4). The elaborate and sentimental Victorian style apparently did not take root in the Cherry

Point area. Later nineteenth century markers were either in the "bedboard" style or even plainer, featuring straight or arched but shoulder less tops (see Figure App.1.4, 1.10). In the meantime, Beaufort's markers from the 1840s onward began to display even more elaborate Victorian symbolism, including large, freestanding draped urns, broken columns, and obelisks. These do not appear in the Cherry Point area. Such elaboration was probably beyond the means of most of its residents, or perhaps they did not consider such displays appropriate.

In the early twentieth century, some elaboration appears and introduces diversity. Many stones were still in a simple style that featured a name outlined by rouletted lines and a short verse (see Figures App.1.16 and App.1.18). Others were more elaborate, with lamb motifs (Figure App.1.13), a hand descending from a cloud (or rising into it) and holding a flower (Figure App.1.2), crosses through crowns (Figure App.1.9), and Masonic or other fraternal symbols (Figures App.1.3 and App.1.11). Some featured only ephemeral metal markers; most of these have not survived (Figure App.1.15).

In every case, the marked graves at Cherry Point are oriented with headstones toward the west and footstones toward the east. Tradition holds that this orientation ensures that the graves' occupants will face eastward, the direction from which resurrection will come (Benes 1977:42). In every case but one, the inscribed faces of the stones face westward, away from the graves. The exception, the Hunter marker in Cemetery 10, has been broken off at the base and set upright, facing east. It may also have originally faced west.

Although we know of no published studies from N.C. that examine and compare gravestones in the region in ways long since common in New England (e.g. Benes 1977; Deetz and Dethlefsen 1978), we see no reason why it could not be done. Although the state lacks a recognized tradition of gravestone art in contrast to New England, it seems likely that anthropological and folkloristic studies of regularities and deviations in this area, given wide enough scope, could make useful contributions to regional and local history.

Appendix 1 lists inscriptions for each of the marked graves and presents representative photographs of marker types discussed in this chapter.

## APPENDIX 1

CEMETERY 1 (Little Witness)

- |          |               |             |
|----------|---------------|-------------|
| 1.       | G.W. Cully    |             |
| son of   | Born          | Husband     |
| W. H.    | Dec. 27, 1869 | of          |
| &        | Died          | A. L. Cully |
| Nancy E. | Nov. 6, 1919  |             |
| Cully    |               |             |

Peaceful be thy [illegible] slumber.

2. Sarah F. wife of  
Allen Whittington  
Nov. 6, 1860  
Feb. 10, 1922  
Best mother, rest in sweet sleep,  
While friends in sorrow o'er  
thee weep.

3. Kissie Sykes  
Aged 40 years

4. James B. Robinson  
Born Feb. 18, 1877  
Died March 10, 1926  
Pride of Havelock Chamber  
6091 - Havelock, N.C.

5. The following names were noted in 1941 from small metal-and-paper undertakers' markers. None of the markers seems to have survived.

John King; Jan 24, 1939, age 42 years

Charlie Nelson; 1915 - 1941

James Nelson; died 1929

Dinah Nelson; June 18, 1939, 65 years

Joe Early Fenner; Nov. 28, 1930; 40 years old

Ollie Berrie; died 1939

Rosa Lee Prichard; 1914 - 1941

John McCray; April 21, 1940

Marietta Singleton; Feb. 28, 1935



Jimmie Lee Richards; 1 year 8 months

Pollock

Estelle Gibbs; 1918 - 1940

W. R. Willoughby; June 15, 1928, Age 58 years

T. McCray; died 1923

Reta Bryant; Dec. 29, 1925, age 4 years

Mindora Bryant; died June 20, 1935

Addie George; Sept. 24, 1926, 18 years

Virginia Dove; June 7, 1932, age 64 years

William Dove; 63 years old

Walter M. Toon; Dec. 8, 1926, age 7

Redmon Paton; July 28, 1926, 60 years old

Annie Dewie; Aug. 20, 1926, 40 years old

Steven Berry; April 12, 1930, 51 years old

Elizabeth Berry; Feb. 17, 1935, 25 years

Earnest Lee Berry; Oct. 12, 1936, 16 months old



Figure App.1.1 Cemetery 1, the Little Witness Cemetery (eastward).



Figure App.1.2 Cemetery 1, marker 2; Sarah F. Whittington



Figure App.1.3 Cemetery 1, marker 4; James B. Robinson

## CEMETERY 2 (Wynne Family)

The cemetery survey notes from 1941 state only, "Overgrown with trees and brush - no markers, sinks visible - impossible to give an accurate count of the graves."

## CEMETERY 3

Another unmarked cemetery, with an estimated 15 to 25 graves, according to Emma Hill Stevens, a nearby resident at the time of the cemetery survey in 1941.

## CEMETERY 4

This cemetery also lacks markers, but the surveyors in 1941 estimated that three or four graves were present. According to their informant, Emma Hill Stevens, one of the graves is the burial place of a man named Sparks.

## CEMETERY 5 and 6

This cemetery preceded the Little Witness Church cemetery, according to the local informants in 1941. The informants also stated that about 40 to 50 graves were present, but only one was marked:

## Our Darlings Together in Heaven

Nannie K.	Maudie E.
dau. of	dau. of
A. F. & M. C.	A. F. & M. C.
Moore	Moore
Born	Born
June 7, 1890	Feb. 12, 1892
Died	Died
July 9, 1895	Aug. 30, 1898

## CEMETERY 7

In addition to at least one unmarked grave, this cemetery contains two stones:

1.

Sacred  
to the Memory of  
Caroline R.  
daughter of  
Wm. B. and Elizabeth  
Thorpe  
Born  
July 8, 1846  
Died  
Jan 30, 1867  
20 years 6 mos. 22 days

2.

Philip J.  
son of  
John W. & Maria F. Armes  
Born  
Jan 2, 1848  
Died  
March 5, 1896

In the r[ ]ted Fork I'm resting,  
Safely sheltered I abide.

## CEMETERY 8

The 1941 cemetery survey originally recorded that only unmarked graves were present. At an unknown later date, this entry was corrected to include the one marker present:

Barbara Holton  
was born  
Mar. 25, 1783  
and died  
July 8, 1823

Lot Holton  
was born  
Oct. 6, 1780

Farewell dear husband  
prepare to meet me  
in Eternity

Here is my heart [illeg.]  
to meet you in that  
happy life.





Figure App.1.4 Cemetery 7, marker 1 in foreground (eastward).

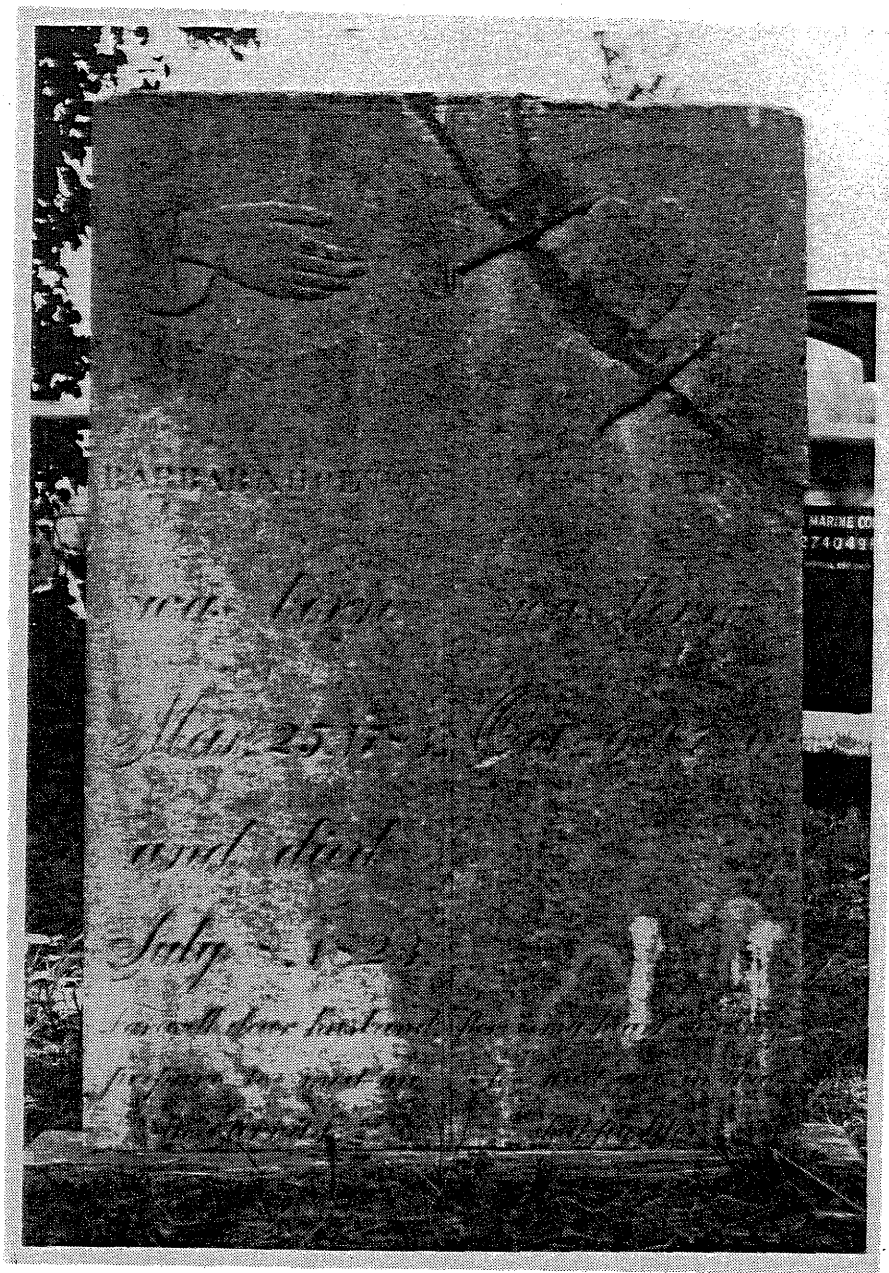


Figure App.1.5 Cemetery 8, the Holton marker (eastward).



## CEMETERY 9

1.

William Buys  
 Born  
 July 28, 1847  
 Died  
 Sept. 27, 1918

Kind, upright, honest and true

2.

Anna  
 daughter of  
 William and Nellie Buys  
 Born  
 Jan. 17, 1875  
 Died  
 Nov. 24, 1917

Faithful in the Lord's service until death.

3.

Mrs. Nellie Buys  
 Born  
 April 17, 1847  
 Died  
 Sept. 23, 1881

In loving remembrance.

4.

In  
 Memory of  
 Antge Visser Buys  
 Brandt  
 Born Nov. 26, 1813  
 Died Oct. 1, 1904  
 Aged 91 years.

5.

In  
 Memory of  
 Elizabeth H. Jones  
 daughter of  
 Bryan & Sarah Jones  
 Born Jan. 24, 1842  
 Died June 17, 1843

Not youth, nor age, nor beauty  
 can evade  
 the sentence  
 passed on man; Then parents  
 dear from grief refrain, for I  
 through Christ shall live again.

Forgot by man but remembered  
 by God.

6.

In  
 Memory of  
 Elizabeth Winn  
 wife of  
 Stephen W. Winn  
 who died Dec. 27, 1842  
 Aged 54 years

Her ways were ways of  
 Pleasantness, and all her  
 paths were paths of peace.

7.

In  
 Memory of  
 Stephen Winn, Esq.  
 Who departed this life Feb. 23, 1833  
 Aged 45 years  
 10 months  
 and 24 days

8.

In  
 Memory of  
 Martha E. Jones  
 daughter of  
 Bryan and Sarah J. Jones  
 Who was born Feb. 13, 1842  
 and died Feb. 27, 1848

9.

In Memory of  
 Gilley A. Cooper  
 daughter of  
 Bryan and Sarah Jones  
 Who was born Nov. 22, 1848  
 and departed this life June 27, 1850.

Farewell, lovely babe, fare-  
 well, with me thou canst no  
 longer dwell. I hope ere long  
 with thee to tell, that Jesus  
 has done all things well.



Figure App.1.6 Cemetery 9, overall view (eastward).



Figure App.1.7 Cemetery 9, markers 7 and 6, left to right in foreground, markers 8 and 9, left to right in background

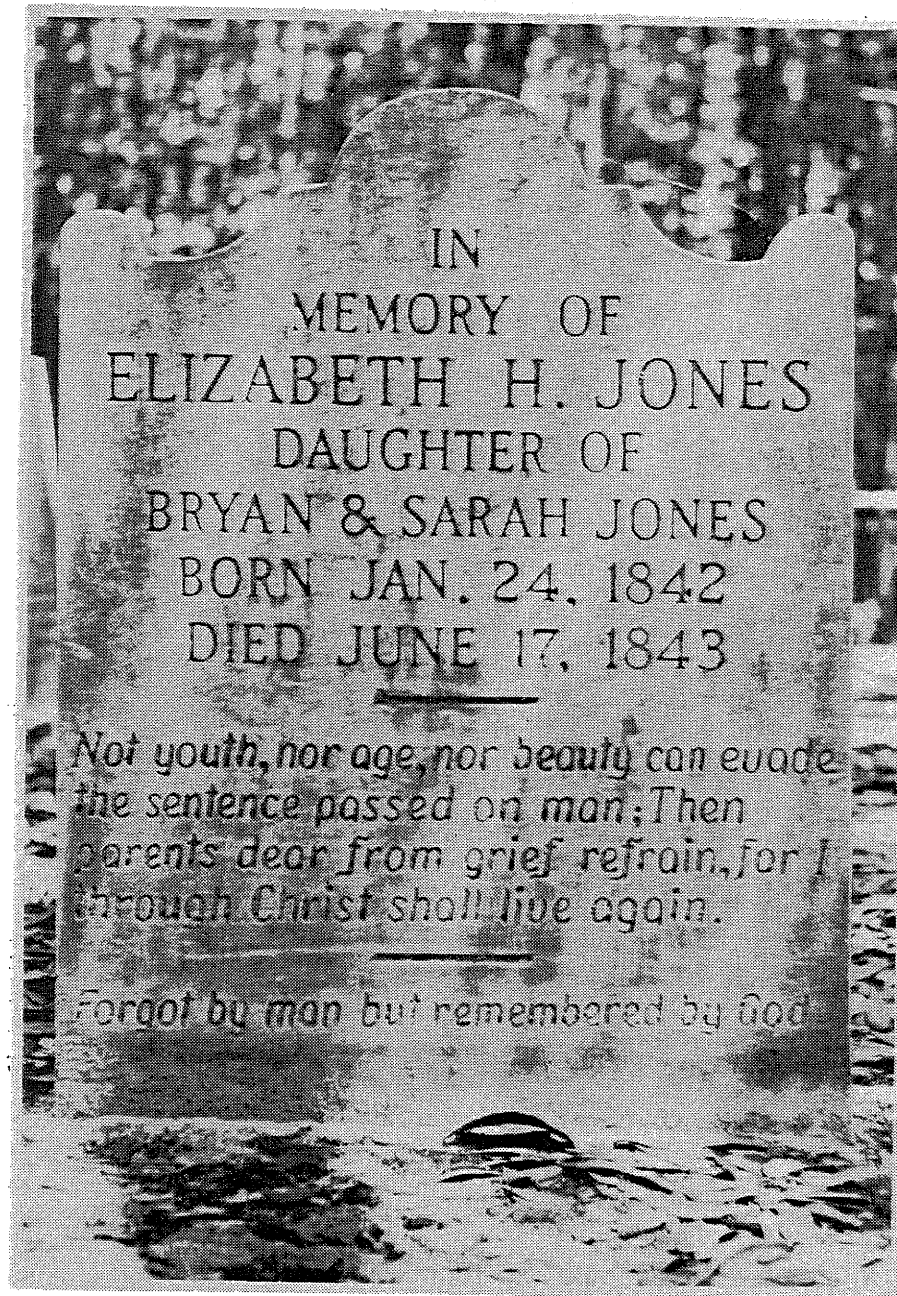


Figure App.1.8 Cemetery 9, marker 5.



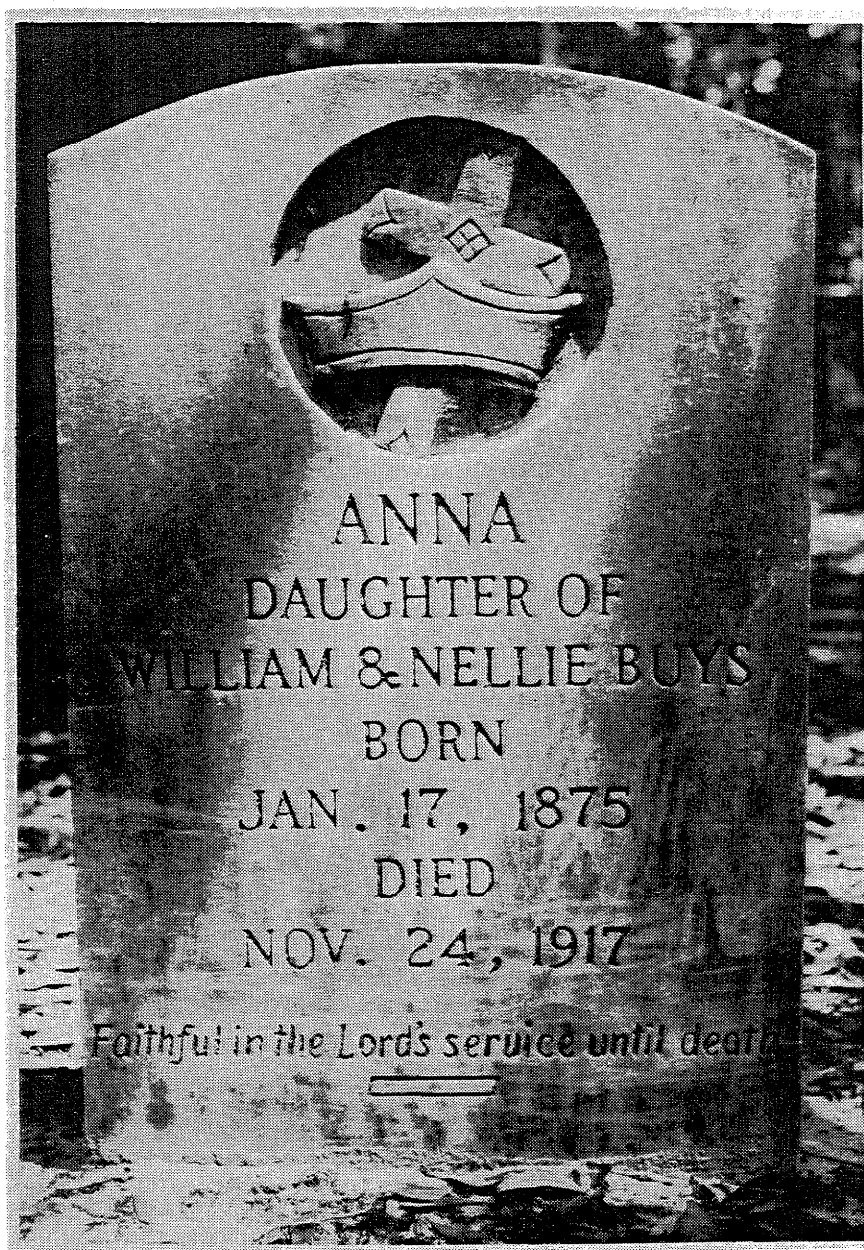


Figure App.1.9. Cemetery 9, marker 2.

## CEMETERY 10

Local informants in 1941 estimated that 100 graves are present. Only one marker is present.

John N. son of  
J. H. & Mary J. Hunter  
Born Feb. 15, 1859  
Died April 23, 1905



Figure App.1.10 Cemetery 10, John Hunter foot and headstones (westward).

## CEMETERY 11

1. G. A. Russell  
June 9, 1876  
June 14, 1936

Father is gone, but not forgotten.

2. Annie B.  
wife of  
G. A. Russell  
Died June 12, 1935  
Age 63 years

Mother's in heaven.

3. Anthony J. Russell  
Dec. 31, 1898  
March 7, 1940

Gone, but not forgotten.

4. Edward Borden Russell  
Born Dec. 23, 1901  
Died Dec. 27, 1911

Rest in Peace.

5. Annie Virginia  
daughter of  
Darrow & Madge Weatherington  
July 20, 1922  
April 13, 1924  
Gone to Be an Angel

6. Our Beloved One  
Dorothy Lillian  
daughter of  
Anthony & Missouri Russell  
Born & Died October 28, 1926

7. B. D. Borden  
Died Jan. 18, 1923  
Age 76 years

Gone, but not forgotten.



Figure App.1.13 Cemetery 11, marker 5.



## CEMETERY 12

The 1941 cemetery surveyors' notes stated "No markers but sinks can be seen. Approximate area about 35 feet by 30 feet." No additional information is available.

## CEMETERY 13

1.

In  
Memory of  
Sally  
the wife of  
Evan Jones  
who departed this Life  
Feb'y 21st, 1813  
Aged 52 years

2.

In  
Memory of  
Evan Jones  
Who departed his life  
March the 2nd 1817  
Aged 60 years

3.

In Memory of  
Geo. D. Pate  
whose  
stay on earth was  
86  
years  
Died May 26, 1920

4.

Edward Salter  
Born  
June 29, 1861  
Died  
May 3, 1916

Dearest husband thou hast left us.  
And thy loss we deeply feel.  
But 'tis God that hath bereft us  
He can all our sorrows heal.  
Yet again we hope to [illeg.]  
When the day of life has fled.  
Then in heaven with joy to greet thee  
Where no farewell tears are shed.

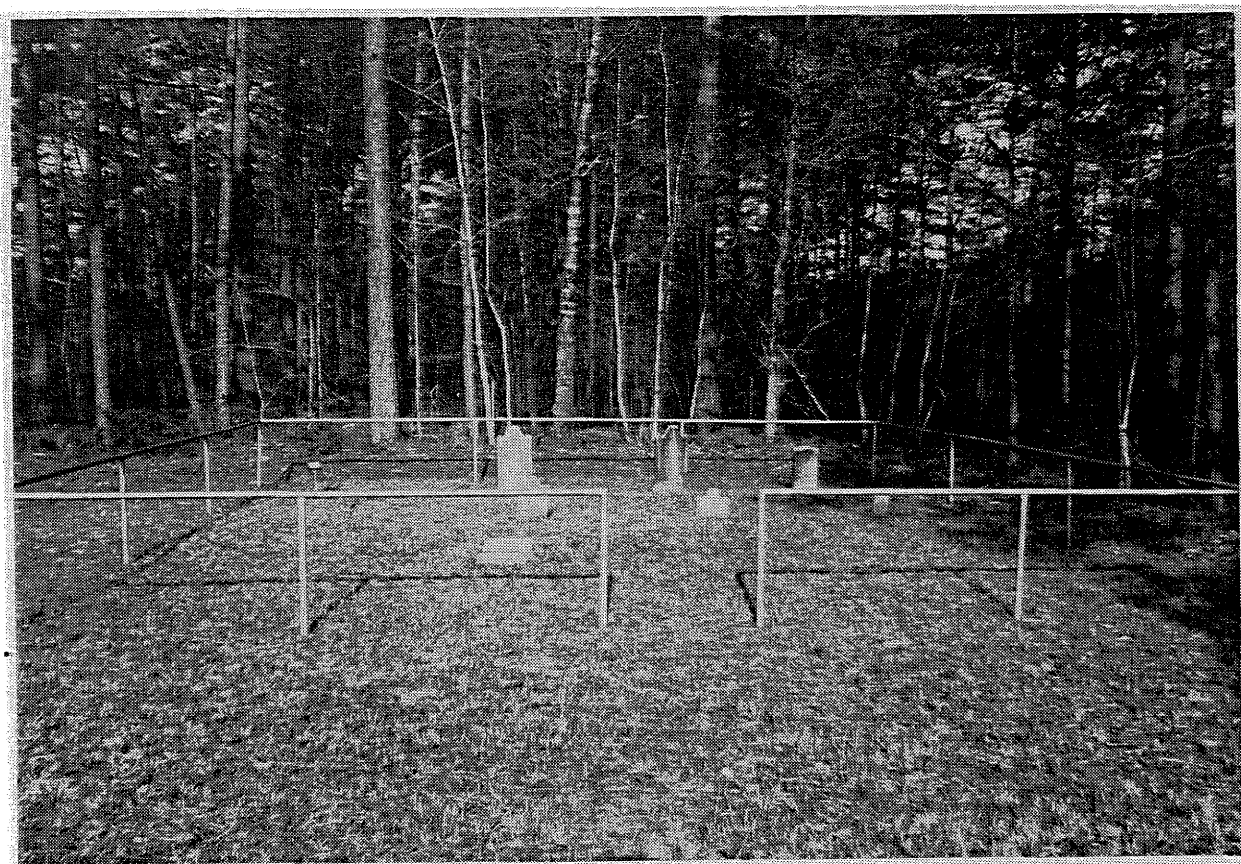


Figure App.1.14 Cemetery 13, overall view (westward). Left to right: Unknown; marker 2; marker 1; marker 3. Marker 4 is lying flat in the foreground.



Figure App.1.15 Twentieth century metal marker  
cemetery 13.

## CEMETERY 14

1.

In Memory of  
Charles E.  
Holland  
Born  
Mar. 3, 1880  
Died  
Feb. 21, 1908  
Thy will be done

2.

Jacob Holland  
Son of John R. &  
Emily Jane Holland  
Born Dec. 24, 1886  
Died April 26, 1907  
"Asleep in Jesus"

3.

John B. Holland  
Born  
Nov. 10, 1838  
Died  
Sept. 12, 1911  
A member of the M. B.  
Church for 45 yrs. and  
the H. P. T.

4.

ODIOUS  
son of  
O. D. and  
Cordelia Moore  
Sept. 14, 1915  
March 4, 1916

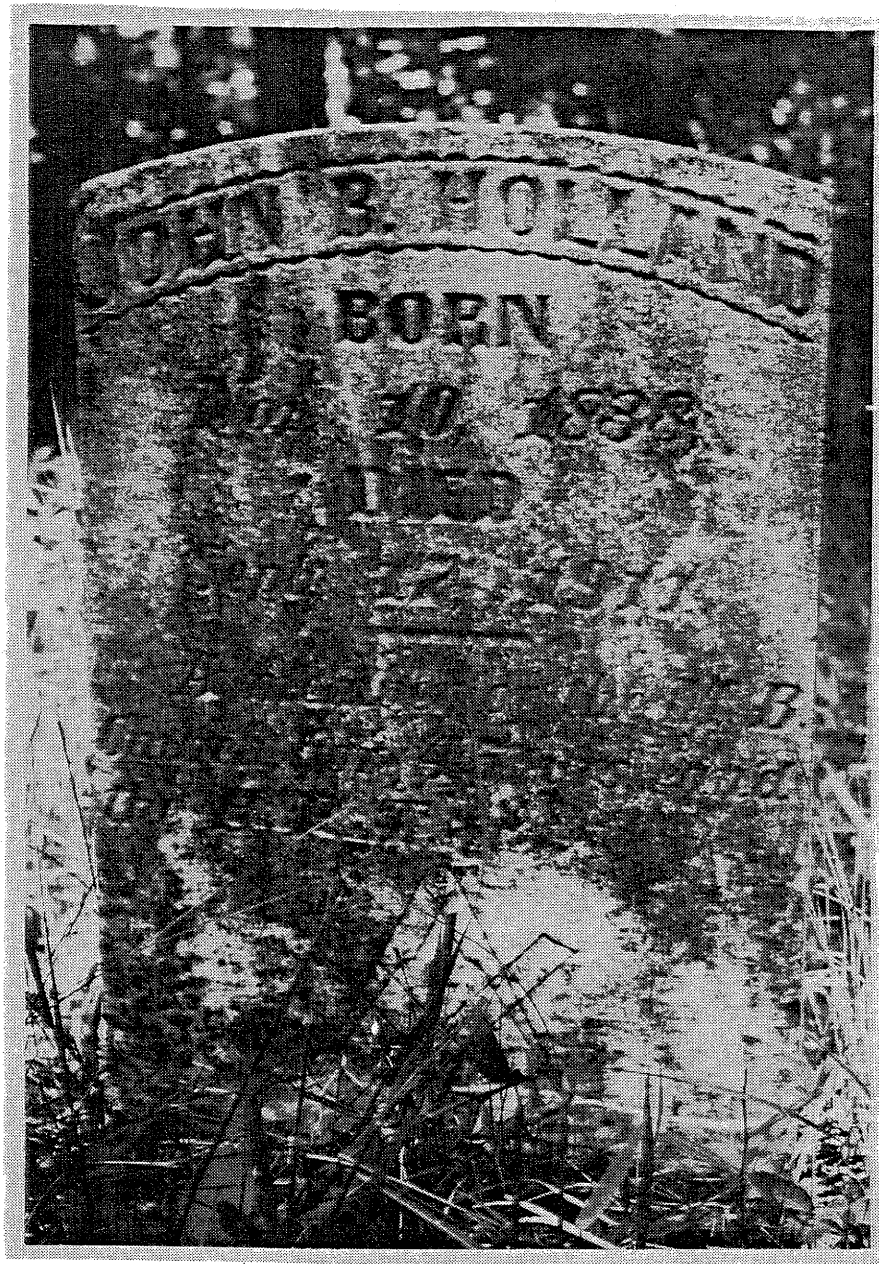


Figure App.1.16 Cemetery 14, marker 3.

## CEMETERY 15

1. Willie L. Barnes  
Born  
May 9, 1881  
Died  
Mar. 16, 1917
2. Willie J.  
Son of  
J. R. & Dinksie Barnes  
Born  
Nov. 8, 1909  
Died  
Mar. 2, 1911  
Gone but not forgotten
3. Maggie  
Daughter of  
John R. & M. E. Barnes  
Born  
Oct. 27, 1882  
Died  
Oct. 14, 1898
4. Murphy E.  
Wife of  
John R. Barnes  
Born  
Mar. 26, 1850  
Died  
Mar 26, 1900
5. Susannah  
Wife of  
Francis M. Barnes  
Born  
Nov. 21, 1838  
Died  
June 1, 1989  
We shall sleep, but not forever.  
There will be a glorious dawn.  
We shall meet to part no, never  
On the resurection [sic] morn.
6. Francis M. Barnes  
Born  
Dec. 26, 1832  
Died  
June 16, 1909

7.

Joel H. Barnes

Born

May 20, 1874

Died

Aug. 18, 1907

In the bright eternal city

Death can never, never come.

In his own good time he'll call us,

From our rest to home, sweet home.

8.

Caroline

Wife of

Denard B. Garner

Born

Mar. 12, 1861

Died

Sept. 21, 1906

Gone Home





Figure App.1.17 Cemetery 15, overall view (eastward).





Figure App.1.18 Cemetery 15, marker 7.



**A CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY  
AT U.S. MARINE CORPS AIR STATION  
CHERRY POINT, NORTH CAROLINA**

**Thomas H. Hargrove  
Dennis Lewarch  
Scott Madry  
Ian von Essen  
Charlotte Brown**

**Archaeological Research Consultants, Inc.  
P.O. Box 3296  
Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27514**

**A Report submitted to the Archaeological Services Branch, National Park Service,  
Southeast Regional Office, Atlanta, by Archaeological Research Consultants, Inc.,  
under Contract Number CX 5000-4-0268.**

**Funded by the United States Marine Corps**

**RECEIVED AUG 6 1985**