

ANALYSIS & EVALUATION

This chapter provides an analysis of the Poplar Grove National Cemetery landscape and an evaluation of its historical significance based on the findings of the site history and existing conditions. Because the landscape encompasses the entire cemetery site, this chapter makes site-wide recommendations for historical significance, addressing both natural and built features that comprise the landscape. These recommendations have been developed according to the National Register Criteria for Evaluation and the NPS *Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques*.¹ National Register documentation for Petersburg National Battlefield, currently under development, will comprehensively address all areas of significance for Poplar Grove National Cemetery as a unit of the larger park.²

This chapter is divided into two sections:

1. Historical Significance: Summary of existing National Register documentation for Poplar Grove National Cemetery; recommendations for updating the documentation pertaining to the landscape including the period of significance; and an evaluation of historical integrity according to the seven aspects defined by the National Register. [See Appendix J for explanation of National Register evaluation of cultural landscapes.]
2. Landscape Evaluation: An evaluation of the landscape comparing historic and existing conditions for the purpose of updating the list of contributing and non-contributing resources and associated features in the National Register documentation. This section evaluates existing landscape characteristics and features and also describes those character-defining features that have been removed since the end of the historic period. Features removed during the historic period are not evaluated. The evaluation focuses on the recommended period of significance 1866-1933 under National Register Criterion C in the area of landscape architecture within the overall period of significance for the cemetery, 1866-2003. The landscape of Poplar Grove National Cemetery encompassed by this evaluation includes the cemetery proper (federally-owned land within original boundaries as modified in 1877), the approach road right-of-way through private property, and the Odom tract acquired by the federal government in 1991. The landscape also includes the cemetery's physical setting created in part by adjoining private property which is not managed by NPS.

A table of landscape features summarizing the analysis and evaluation is at the end of the chapter.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

SUMMARY OF EXISTING NATIONAL REGISTER DOCUMENTATION

Poplar Grove National Cemetery was administratively listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1966 as part of Petersburg National Battlefield. While this listing established the significance of the cemetery in the larger context of the Civil War and Petersburg Campaign, the cemetery also has significance in its own right. While cemeteries are generally not eligible for listing in the National Register, Poplar Grove meets National Register Criteria Consideration D (cemeteries) because national cemeteries have been designated by Congress as primary memorials to the military history of the United States.³

The current National Register listing for the Petersburg National Battlefield includes 27354 acres, four buildings, fifty-four structures, and two objects significant under the area of military history for association with the Civil War. The currently documented period of significance is 1850-1874, with historic functions identified as battle site and cemetery. The 1966 listing was made administratively and did not include adequate documentation.⁴ In 2006, National Register documentation for the entire park was advanced to an internal 80% draft. This draft proposed the extension of the park-wide period of significance to 1962, but does not specify a period of significance for Poplar Grove National Cemetery. The draft identifies the cemetery as a contributing site with three buildings (lodge, utility building/restrooms, and stable/garage), four structures (bandstand/rostrum, perimeter wall/inclosure, carriage lane/main drive, and flagpole/flagstaff), and three objects (monument/gun monument, section markers/radial avenue signs, and grave markers). In addition to significance in the area of military history, the draft also identified that Poplar Grove is significant under Criterion C for its architecture and landscape architecture.⁵

Aside from its listing as part of Petersburg National Battlefield, Poplar Grove National Cemetery meets the registration requirements of the National Register Multiple Property Listing “Civil War Era National Cemeteries” submitted by the Department of Veterans Affairs and approved by the National Register in 1994.⁶ Since that time, 54 Civil War-era national cemeteries administered by Veterans Affairs have been listed in the National Register according to the requirements of the Multiple Property Documentation. These include City Point, Cold Harbor, Culpeper, Fort Harrison, Glendale, Richmond, and Seven Pines National Cemeteries which were developed at the same time as Poplar Grove and with many of the same standardized features. Because Poplar Grove is administered by

the National Park Service, it has not been included as part of this Multiple Property Listing.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UPDATING NATIONAL REGISTER DOCUMENTATION

[Note: this sections being reviewed by NERO History Program]

This section provides an overview of how Poplar Grove National Cemetery meets the National Register Criteria based on the findings of this Cultural Landscape Report and on the Multiple Property Listing “Civil War Era National Cemeteries.” The following statements address the criteria related to the landscape, and not significance in the areas of architecture or archeology. These statements will require elaboration in future National Register documentation.

National Register Criterion A

Area: Military History

Poplar Grove National Cemetery derives its primary significance under National Register Criterion A in the area of military history for its intimate association with the Civil War, 1861-1865, and as a component of the National Cemetery System. This area of significance is presently documented in the Multiple Property Documentation, “Civil War Era National Cemeteries:”

The Civil War era national cemeteries were created originally to afford a decent resting place for those who fell in the defense of the Union. These cemeteries began the ongoing effort to honor and memorialize eternally the fighting forces who have and continue to defend our nation. Today, the entire national cemetery system symbolizes, in its gracious landscapes and marble headstones, both the violence of the struggle and the healing aftermath. The Civil War era national cemeteries are nationally significant under Criterion A, both for their symbolic and physical representation of that war, and for representing the origins of the National Cemetery System.⁷

Poplar Grove National Cemetery is associated with the Civil War and the Petersburg Campaign in particular through the interment within its walls of approximately 6,188 soldiers who gave their life in the war. The majority of these soldiers were reinterred at the cemetery from nearby battlefields and hospital cemeteries in the years between 1866 and 1869. The cemetery site, located in the rear zone of the Federal Left Flank, was the former site of the camp of the 50th New York Volunteer Engineers, responsible for construction of Union fortifications. The cemetery was named in honor of the central feature of this camp, Poplar Grove Church, which in turn was named for a nearby church

damaged in the Battle of Peebles Farm (Battle of Poplar Springs Church). Although the church and most all other camp structures were removed during the initial development of the cemetery between 1866 and 1869, the association of the cemetery with the camp remains through its name and location. Loblolly pines, although few in number today, were a prominent feature in the landscape of the engineers' camp.

In addition to its direct association with the Civil War, Poplar Grove derives its significance from association with the National Cemetery System, and in particular as a component of the system's initial development in the years following the Civil War. Poplar Grove was one of twenty-one national cemeteries established in 1866, which together with several established during the war, formed the basis of the National Cemetery System.⁸ Poplar Grove is also significant for its continued use as a national cemetery for veterans of subsequent wars through 1957, and its continued use for reinterment of Civil War remains discovered in the battlefields surrounding Petersburg, most recently in 2003.⁹ Although post-Civil War interments, numbering approximately sixty, constitute less than one percent of all burials, these later burials are significant according to the National Register Criteria.¹⁰ Poplar Grove reflects its association with the National Cemetery System through its landscape, with its standardized features, although alteration of the Civil War-type grave markers detracts from the historic integrity this association.

National Register Criterion C

Landscape Architecture

Poplar Grove National Cemetery is significant under National Register Criterion C in the area of landscape architecture for illustrating the initial development of the National Cemetery System through the early 1880s and its subsequent development through the early 1930s under War Department administration. This area of significance is documented in the Multiple Property Listing, "Civil War-Era National Cemeteries." This listing identifies as significant the role of Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs in the design of built features; rostrums as a manifestation of the beginnings of Memorial Day observances; and the lodges, headstones, and fences (inclosure walls) as characteristic features. With regard to the landscape, the Multiple Property Documentation states:

The Civil War era national cemeteries are...nationally significant under Criterion C for embodying an important and commonly recognized landscape design and for establishing certain landscape features that have been retained for over 100 years...The serene national cemeteries offer perpetual testimony of the concern of a

*grateful nation that the lives and services of members of the Armed Forces, who served their nation well, will be appropriately commemorated.*¹¹

Poplar Grove National Cemetery was laid out in a circular plan in 1866, and by 1869, the vast majority of the grave sites were filled and marked by wooden headboards. A mounded flagstaff, four gun monuments, and a circulation system of gravel and brick-gutter lined drives was completed by this time. Under the direction of the cemetery superintendent, a number of flowerbeds were also established. The cemetery was set amid woods of loblolly pine, set back from the public road across agricultural fields and accessed by a thousand-foot long approach road. Over the course of the next decade into the early 1880s, the War Department implemented a program of development and beautification that resulted in the addition of a Second Empire-style stone lodge and brick inclosure wall designed according to prototypes by Quartermaster General Montgomery Meigs; a fifty-six foot tall wooden flagstaff; a series of outbuildings; white marble grave markers with tablet headstones for known burials and blocks (posts) for unknown burials; settees; iron tablets citing regulations and four-line verses from the poem, “The Bivouac of the Dead;” and a planting program that included hundreds of specimen trees and shrubs, mostly placed informally as specimens, but also as an allee along the approach road, a sylvan hall of elms and allee of boxwood, perimeter Osage orange hedge, and a boxwood Maltese-cross hedge. Although the plantings and building materials reflected local conditions, overall these improvements reflected standardization intended to create uniformity among units of the National Cemetery System, and provide a recognizable federal presence. In overall effect, the national cemeteries had a military feeling in their simplicity, symmetry, and repetition that set them apart from their contemporary high-style civilian cemeteries in the picturesque rural cemetery mode.

While most of the Poplar Grove landscape was developed by c.1881, there had already been several substantial changes made to its initial design by this date. Between c.1872 and 1874, the drives within the burial grounds were changed from gravel to turf, and in 1877, the brick gutters were covered, creating an expansive area of lawn. These changes, apparently also instituted system-wide, reflected ongoing efforts to reduce maintenance costs, and possible also to create an aesthetic effect in keeping with the lawn style of cemetery design.¹² Into the 1920s, the landscape remained fairly consistent, with the exception of the addition of an iron rostrum designed in the Aesthetic Manner, built in 1897 within the cemetery’s assembly area near the lodge; elimination of the flagstaff mound with the installation of an iron flagstaff in 1913; and the return of the main drive to gravel in c.1900. The most notable change to the landscape during this time was the gradual decline of plant materials apparently in an effort to simplify

maintenance, as well as from two wind storms in 1915. It was not until the late 1920s, coinciding with the establishment of Petersburg National Military Park in 1926, that the War Department charted a plan for improvements at Poplar Grove. This plan resulted in the addition of the Colonial Revival-style public restroom building and garage in 1929, replacement of the flagstaff with a taller eighty-foot iron pole in 1930, and in 1931, replacement of the lodge roof, paving of the approach road and main drive, and planting of 101 specimen trees. These improvements reflected the War Department's preference for low maintenance and simplicity in the national cemeteries. Although these later improvements changed some details in the landscape, overall they continued the military feeling to the landscape and the overall intent of the initial design and development.

After the transfer of Poplar Grove to the National Park Service in August 1933, the landscape underwent several significant changes to its original design and development. Most notable was the dramatic change in 1934 created when the park, assisted by labor from the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), set the headstones and blocks flush with the ground in an effort to ease lawn mowing and, according to the Director of the National Park Service, to improve the aesthetics of the landscape. This project, also implemented at the National Park Service-administered Yorktown National Cemetery, was apparently the first major change at Poplar Grove that was inconsistent with the development of other units of the National Cemetery System. Aside from this change, the National Park Service retained most of the features in the cemetery during its initial years of administration, but following World War II, began to make changes that further eroded the cemetery's historic character. Aside from redesignation of the cemetery plan from sections and divisions into blocks and the addition of aluminum-frame signs in c.1957, the changes resulted largely from a lack of maintenance and loss of small-scale features and plantings. These losses included three of the four gun monuments, iron tablets, and settees. Notable plantings lost during this time, aside from specimen trees, included the Maltese cross boxwood hedge, boxwood allee, arborvitae hedge around the service yard, and approach road allee. This allee was lost to natural succession, as was an open field on the cemetery's west side, which had permitted views of the cemetery from the public road.

Because these changes are not reflective of the historic design and development of national cemeteries nor associated with the Civil War, the history of Poplar Grove after 1933 under National Park Service administration after 1933 is not significant under National Register Criterion C (the graves dating after 1933 are, however, significant). This period, including the limited improvements made under MISSION 66, also does not manifest any particular significance under

Criterion C with the early development of Petersburg National Military Park. While involvement of the CCC is often considered a basis for significance under Criterion C, its involvement at Poplar Grove was to provide labor and did not attest to any particular craftsmanship or design.

Overall Period of Significance, 1866-2003

The overall period of significance for Poplar Grove extends from its establishment in 1866 through its most recent burial—reinterment of three Civil War remains—in 2003. Poplar Grove was closed to new burials in 1957, but remained open for the reinterment of Civil War remains discovered in the battlefields of Petersburg. The 2003 reinterments were the first at the cemetery since 1957. According to the National Register Criteria, the fifty-year threshold for significance does not apply to National Cemeteries: “...Because these cemeteries draw their significance from the presence of remains of military personnel who have served the country throughout its history, the age of the cemetery is not a factor in judging eligibility, although integrity must be present.”

¹³ The Keeper of the National Register has interpreted this statement to mean that the period of significance for National Cemeteries extends until the last burial, including reinterments.¹⁴ The overall period of significance for Poplar Grove (1866-2003) applies to its significance under Criterion A.

The years prior to the establishment of the cemetery in 1866, encompassing development of the site as the camp of the 50th New York Volunteer Engineers in 1865-1865, is not included in the period of significance because the property retains no integrity from that time.

Period of Significance for the Landscape, 1866-1933

In addition to its overall period of significance, Poplar Grove has a more limited period of significance under Criterion C in the area of landscape architecture that ends in 1933 with the transfer of administration from the War Department to the National Park Service. This end date reflects the height of development under the War Department following the improvement program executed between 1929 and 1931 that resulted, among other things, in the addition of two major features in the landscape—the garage and public restroom building (utility building). The 1933 end-date identifies as non-historic those landscape changes made after 1933, with the exception of the graves interred after 1933, which are significant within the overall period of significance, 1866-2003. The grave markers associated with these post-1933 graves are significant, while the grave markers installed after 1933 as replacements for broken markers on pre-existing graves are not significant.

EVALUATION OF HISTORICAL INTEGRITY

Integrity as defined by the National Register is the ability of a property to convey its significance through its physical resources. Within the concept of integrity, the National Register recognizes seven aspects: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.¹⁵ This evaluation is based on a period of significance for the landscape extending from 1866 through 1933, within the overall period of significance extending to the last burial in 2003. The only features dating from 1933-2003 that are considered significant are the graves themselves and their original (post-1933) grave markers.

Location

Location is defined by the National Register as the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred. Poplar Grove National Cemetery retains all land included in its initial development in 1866-1869, together with small strips of land added along the boundary through a survey adjustment made in 1877. It also retains the original government-maintained approach road laid out in c.1866 on a right-of-way through private property secured in the survey adjustment of 1877. Since the end of the historic period, the federal government has acquired 3.7 acres to the west of the cemetery (Odom tract) that includes a portion of the approach road. This land was not acquired as an expansion of the cemetery, but rather to secure a portion of the cemetery's setting.

Evaluation: Retains integrity of location.

Design

Design is defined by the National Register as the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property. Poplar Grove National Cemetery retains the original burial plan as laid out in 1866 comprised of concentric grave rows and circulation around a central flagstaff, together with the lodge grounds and service yard laid out by c.1871. Unlike many other Civil War-era National Cemeteries, Poplar Grove retains its burial plan and its historic circulation patterns except for one walk that was filled with graves between 1896 and 1918, and a circular turn-around that was eliminated in c.1931. Poplar Grove also retains built features that convey the original design and historic development of the cemetery through 1933, including the Meigs-type lodge (1871-1872), inclosure wall and gateway (1876), rostrum (1897), garage (1929) and public restroom building (1929). The historic design of Poplar Grove has been

diminished through the loss after 1933 of plantings, benches, tablets, and gun monuments, and the alteration of the flagstaff and grave markers.

Evaluation: Retains diminished integrity of design

Setting

Setting is the physical environment of a property, and in particular the general character of the place. While the cemetery retains its overall setting defined by unifying lawn, brick inclosure wall, and cluster of buildings at the entrance, the alteration of the grave markers and loss of plantings has changed the cemetery's historic character. In terms of the larger setting defined by property outside of the cemetery inclosure wall, the north, east, and south sides retain the general wooded enclosure that historically defined the cemetery, although modern developed on the north and east sides has diminished this enclosure. On the west and south-west sides and along the approach road, the growth of successional woods since c.1970 has altered the historically open setting that permitted views of the cemetery from Vaughan Road and on the approach road. Despite this, agricultural fields still flank much of the approach road.

Evaluation: Retains diminished integrity of setting

Materials

Materials are the physical elements that in a particular pattern or configuration gave form to the property. In terms of built materials, Poplar Grove National Cemetery retains stone, brick, stucco, marble, iron, and asphalt on the buildings, walls, grave markers, monument, and drives. Loss of historic built materials has resulted from removal of benches, iron tablets, and three of the four gun monuments. There have been no modern or artificial materials used to either cover or replace historic materials. The general palette of plant materials, including the lawn, specimen trees, and shrubs, remains generally consistent with those used during the historic period, although in reduced quantity.

Evaluation: Retains diminished integrity of Materials

Workmanship

Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts and methods of construction used during the historic period. Poplar Grove National Cemetery retains workmanship characteristic of its initial development during the latter nineteenth century in the stone and woodwork of the lodge, in the masonry of the inclosure wall, the metalwork of the gun monument, and in the headstones. The existing horizontal position detracts from the workmanship evident in the headstones.

There is also early twentieth-century workmanship evident in construction of the garage and stable, and in the later headstones.

Evaluation: Retains diminished integrity of workmanship

Feeling

Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time resulting from the presence of physical features that, taken together, convey the property's historic character. Poplar Grove National Cemetery has lost much of the solemn dignity that characterized it historically and related it to its companion Civil War-era cemeteries in the National Cemetery System. This loss of feeling is due to alteration of the headstones, loss of specimen trees and shrubs, removal of the interpretive tablets and three of the four gun monuments, lowering of the flagstaff, and loss of the approach road allee.

Evaluation: Does not retain integrity of feeling

Association

Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property. Poplar Grove National Cemetery remains intimately associated with the Civil War, with a total of ninety-nine percent of its burials from that war; approximately sixty of the burials are from veterans of subsequent wars. In addition, Poplar Grove retains its association with the National Cemetery System through retention of standard features including the lodge, perimeter wall and gates, outbuildings, and grave markers (the horizontal position detracts from this association; with the exception of NPS-administered Yorktown National Cemetery, no other national cemetery is known to have altered its grave markers in this way). Although Poplar Grove has been administered by the NPS since 1933, it remains a part of the National Cemetery System, most of which has historically been administered by the military.

Evaluation: Retains diminished integrity of association

Summary Evaluation of Integrity

Poplar Grove National Cemetery retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and association, but lacks integrity of feeling. As a whole, the cemetery landscape conveys its significance for association with the Civil War and as a component of the National Cemetery System as initially developed during the post-Civil War period through the early twentieth century under War Department administration. While the diminished aspects of integrity

detract from the historic details of the property, Poplar Grove National Cemetery retains its overall historic physical form. The individual graves interred after 1933 also remain intact during the broader historic period associated with the National Cemetery System that extends until the last new burial was interred in 2003.

LANDSCAPE EVALUATION

This section evaluates the historic character of Poplar Grove National Cemetery by contrasting historic landscape conditions (1866-1933) with existing conditions. The evaluation is organized by a brief narrative of the landscape characteristic followed by an evaluation of extant associated features. Character-defining features that have been lost since the end of the historic period are described in the characteristic narrative. In recognition that the cemetery landscape is comprised of more than the property presently in federal ownership, this evaluation addresses the portion of the approach road that is privately owned and in which NPS has legal interest, and adjoining woods and fields under private ownership. Features are evaluated as contributing or non-contributing to the historic character of the cemetery, or unevaluated if there is insufficient information. If the feature is on adjoining private land, this is indicated in the evaluation by “(Setting),” or if the feature extends onto NPS property, “(Setting and NPS).”

Landscape features are generally ordered within each characteristic by physical location from west to east (approach road to cemetery, gateway to flagstaff). Feature cross-references are indicated in bold type. Existing features, features added since the end of the historic period, and features lost since the end of the historic period are shown on Drawing 6 (Analysis & Evaluation plan).

NATURAL SYSTEMS AND FEATURES

This characteristic is comprised of the natural aspects that often influence the development of a landscape. Included within this characteristic is natural vegetation (woods), but not managed vegetation (specimen trees, hedgerows, lawn, etc.) or built topography (drainage ditches, mounds, etc.). The cemetery was developed on this site in part due to its natural features, including relatively level surface and deep soils. A shallow ravine extends into the northwest corner of the cemetery, with a change in elevation of approximately fifteen feet from the central flagstaff. The floor of this ravine along the north inclosure wall has remained a wet area since the cemetery was established. Throughout much of the historic period, the cemetery landscape was enclosed on three sides by successional woods dominated by loblolly pine. Today, these woods remain characteristic of the landscape, although much of the loblolly pine has been

succeeded by hardwoods. Natural succession has led to a greater amount of wooded land in the cemetery's western setting and along the approach road.

Triangular Woodlot

Evaluation: Non-Contributing (Setting)

The triangular woodlot is a young stand of deciduous woods that have grown up since 1970 on what had historically been an open field (part of the **south field**). [Figures 3.1, 3.2] It is on private land and extends into the NPS right-of-way along the approach road. The woodlot detracts from the open setting of the approach road, and has replaced in part what had been an **allee** of trees along the road.

Odom Tract Woods

Evaluation: Non-Contributing

The Odom tract woods consist of approximately two acres of young, mixed loblolly pine and deciduous woods that have grown up since 1970 on what had historically been an open field (part of the **north field**) [see Figures 3.1, 3.2]. The woods are bordered by the cemetery's **inclosure wall** on the east, **visitor parking area** on the south, and NPS boundary/**private driveway** to the west and north. These woods detract from the historic character of the cemetery by enclosing what had been an open setting, and by obscuring the **approach road view** of the cemetery.

North Inclosure Woods

Evaluation: Contributing (Setting and NPS)

At the time of the cemetery's establishment in 1866, the north side of the cemetery extending onto the Flower farm consisted of scattered woods of loblolly pine, which through natural succession soon grew into continuous woods. Through the end of the historic period, the woods were dominated by loblolly pine, with aspen in the wet low area off the northwest corner of the cemetery [see Figure 3.1]. Construction of the **private driveway** in c.1972 approximately fifteen feet north of the cemetery inclosure wall reduced the woods to a thin band [see Figure 3.2]. In 1994, a windstorm blew down the western half of these woods, and since then a scrubby mix of successional vegetation has developed, and several large loblolly pine in the eastern half are either dead or declining. While the woods still frame the north inclosure in large part, the open areas, successional vegetation, and decline of the loblolly pine detract from the historic character of the landscape.

East Inclosure Woods

Evaluation: Contributing (Setting and NPS)

At the time of the cemetery's establishment in 1866, the eastern side of the cemetery extending onto the Flower farm was framed by loblolly pine woods. At some point in the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries, the southern part of these woods was cleared and a young, dense stand of loblolly pines existed by the end of the historic period [see Figure .31]. In c.1972, portions of the woods were cleared for construction of the Blaha and Peterson houses and **private drive**, opening the woods to views of the houses and surrounding lawn from the cemetery [see Figure 3.2]. Loblolly pines today characterize the remnant woods in the south half, and the north half of the woods are mixed hardwoods. While the woods still frame the east side of the cemetery in large part, the openings to the **private drive** and two houses detract from the historic character of the landscape.

South Inclosure Woods

Evaluation: Contributing (Setting and NPS)

At the time of the cemetery's establishment in 1866, the eastern part of the southern side of the cemetery was an open field on the Farley farm. By the end of the historic period, the field had turned through natural succession into mature woods of loblolly pine. Since the end of the historic period, these woods have become a mixed stand of hardwoods. While no longer dominated by loblolly pine, the woods still frame the southern side of the cemetery, and have not been developed within view of the cemetery [see Figures 3.1, 3.2].

South Inclosure Hedgerow

Evaluation: Non-contributing (Setting and NPS)

The hedgerow within and adjoining the south inclosure south of the lodge grounds is volunteer vegetation that grew up after c.1970, surrounding red cedars planted in 1937. The hedgerow detracts from the historic character of the landscape because it obstructs the open space and views to the **south pasture**.

SPATIAL ORGANIZATION

This characteristic is defined by the arrangement of elements creating the ground, vertical, and overhead planes that define and create spaces. During the historic period, Poplar Grove National Cemetery was a distinct space defined by its inclosure wall and enclosing woods on the north, east, and south sides, with fields to the west extending to Vaughan Road. The approach road crossed these fields in a corridor defined by an allee of trees. Within the cemetery, the landscape was defined by the burial grounds as the major space, and the lodge grounds and service yard as smaller spaces flanking the main entrance. Since the historic period, the spatial organization has been altered through natural succession, alteration of the grave markers, and loss of plant materials. Despite

these changes, the landscape retains the overall organization that has defined it since its initial development between 1866 and 1881.

Cemetery Approach (NPS Right-of-Way)

Evaluation: Contributing

The cemetery approach is the corridor defined by the approach road and the adjoining trees. Initially, the **approach road** crossed the fields of the Flower farm without any enclosure. In 1879, an **allee** of deciduous trees was planted to either side of the road. In 1911, a barbed-wire fence was built along the outer edge of the allee to protect the trees from livestock. The approach was defined by the allee through the historic period, but after c.1970, maintenance of the allee was curtailed and it was largely replaced through natural succession by red cedar woods. Natural succession on adjoining fields (**Odom tract woods, triangular wood lot**) after c.1970 and construction of the visitor parking area in c.1995 also changed the open spaces that historically flanked the approach. Today, although a large part of the cemetery approach remains a distinct spatial corridor defined by trees with the **north** and **south fields** to either side, the loss of the allee and natural succession has altered the historic well-defined and symmetrical character of the corridor. The cemetery approach extends for 700 feet from Vaughan Road through private land in a NPS-owned right of way (approximately 30 feet wide), acquired in 1877. The western 325 feet of the corridor was acquired by NPS in 1991 as part of the Odom tract. While the width of the right-of-way has never been defined in property records, NPS has determined that historic usage is a sound basis on which to determine the right-of-way. This usage includes the eleven-foot road bed and approximately ten to twenty feet to either side, extending to outer edge of the historic allee canopy.

North Field

Evaluation: Contributing (Setting)

The north field, located north of the **approach road** and defined on the north by a hedgerow along a property line, predates the establishment of the cemetery. It has been farmed continuously since then, although its eastern end fell out of agricultural use by c.1970 and subsequently grew into woods (**Odom tract woods**) through natural succession [see Figures 3.1, 3.2]. In addition, a **private driveway** to the Peterson and Blaha houses was built through the field in c.1972. The north field contributes to the historic character of the landscape as part of the open space that historically flanked the **approach road**. It borders the NPS right-of-way.

South Field

Evaluation: Contributing (Setting and NPS)

The south field, located south of the **approach road**, predates the establishment of the cemetery. It has been farmed continuously since then, although a small area at its western side at the intersection of Vaughan Road and the cemetery approach road fell out of agricultural use by c.1970 and subsequently grew into woods (**triangular woodlot**) through natural succession [see Figures 3.1, 3.2]. The associated farmhouse and barns (Flower-Blaha-Odom farm) is located on the east end of the field. The south field contributes to the historic character of the landscape as part of the open space that historically flanked the **approach road**. It borders the NPS right-of-way and extends at its southeast corner into the NPS-owned Odom tract.

Odom Tract Field

Evaluation: Contributing (Setting and NPS)

The Odom tract field is the open area south of the **approach road** between the **south field** and cemetery **inclosure wall**. Since the end of the historic period, hedgerows have grown up to visually separate it on the west from the **south field** and on the south/southeast from the **south pasture** [see Figures 3.1, 3.2]. The portion of the field on NPS property is maintained as mown field; the portion to the south extending onto private property is in part used as a corral enclosed by a contemporary split-rail fence. The barn associated with the farm is visible across this field from the cemetery entranceway. The Odom tract field contributes to the historic character of the landscape as part of the open space that historically flanked the **approach road**.

South Pasture

Evaluation: Contributing (Setting)

The south pasture is a field south of the cemetery **lodge grounds** that during the historic period was used as a cow pasture and was open to view from the cemetery. Since c.1970, a **hedgerow** has grown up within and adjoining the south inclosure that visually separates the south pasture from the cemetery [see Figures 3.1, 3.2]. Although no longer clearly visible, the south pasture contributes to the historic setting of the cemetery. It is located on private property and adjoins the cemetery's southern property boundary.

Odom Cemetery

Evaluation: Non-contributing

The Odom cemetery is a tiny family cemetery with two grave plots. It is located on the south side of the **approach road** within the **Odom tract field** and consists of 0.05 acres enclosed by a cyclone fence and bordering a red cedar hedgerow to the west. It was established in 1971 by the Odom family, owners of the adjoining

farm. The first burials in the Odom cemetery occurred in 1971, and in 1972 the boundaries of the tract were platted. In 1991, NPS acquired the Odom cemetery as part of the 3.7-acre Odom tract, based on the understanding the cemetery would be maintained to NPS standards and that family members would be allowed access to it. Given its recent origin distinct from the national cemetery, the Odom cemetery does not contribute to the historic character of the landscape.

Cemetery Inclosure Space

Evaluation: Contributing

The cemetery inclosure is the space on the perimeter of the cemetery, from the inclosure (perimeter) wall to the outside property boundary. During the historic period, the inclosure was framed by woods on the north, east, and south sides, (**north, east, and south inclosure woods**) and was open to fields on the west side and a portion of the south side. It was initially defined by a wood paling fence that was replaced in 1876 by the existing brick **inclosure wall**. A hedge of Osage orange reinforced the inclosure until it was removed in c.1888. By the end of the historic period, a wagon road was maintained along the outside of the wall for access. Since the end of the historic period, the spatial character of the inclosure has changed from open to closed on the west and south sides, and on the north and east sides has become less enclosed through openings created in the woods. The cemetery inclosure space remains a character-defining feature of the cemetery landscape, although the change from open to closed on the west and south sides detracts from its historic character.

Service Yard

Evaluation: Contributing

The service yard, developed beginning in c.1871 as the cemetery's maintenance area, is defined by the **inclosure wall**, **main drive**, and **burial grounds** (division E/block XVIII). It occupies the portion of the one-acre addition (1868) north of the main drive. During the historic period, the service yard was initially enclosed on the south and east sides by a boxwood hedge and lattice fence, which was replaced in c.1888 by an arborvitae hedge. Inside of the hedge, the yard contained several service buildings and a privy at the northeast corner that were replaced in 1929 by the present **garage**. There was also a well house in the center of the yard, which was removed in c.1939 and replaced by a new well with an inconspicuous wellhead in c.1974. In c.1974, the arborvitae hedge was removed and the limits of the **service drive** were expanded. Although the historic enclosure provided by the arborvitae hedge has been lost and the drive is much larger than it was historically, the service yard remains a character-defining space in the cemetery landscape.

Lodge Grounds

Evaluation: Contributing

The lodge grounds, developed beginning in c.1871 as the cemetery's assembly area, is defined by the **inclosure wall**, **main drive**, and **burial grounds** (division F/block XIX). It occupies the portion of the one-acre addition (1868) south of the main drive. During the historic period, the lodge grounds were dominated by the **lodge** completed in 1872, the **public restroom building** that replaced several earlier outbuildings in 1929 on the west, and the **rostrum**, completed in 1897, on the east. Between these buildings was the cemetery's assembly area, which was defined by a circular turn-around that branched off the main drive. This feature existed until c.1931. Internally, the space by the early twentieth century was framed by fruit trees and a walk along the south **inclosure wall** and by boxwood shrubs ringing the turn-around, as well as by scattered specimen trees. Today, the lodge grounds remain defined by the three major buildings and the inclosure wall, but the loss of the plant materials and circulation features has altered the internal organization of the space. Despite these changes, the lodge grounds remain a character-defining space in the cemetery landscape.

Burial Grounds

Evaluation: Contributing

The burial grounds, laid out between 1866 and 1869, comprise the primary space of the cemetery, defined externally by the **inclosure**, **service yard**, and **lodge grounds**, and internally by the radial burial plan and plantings. During the historic period, the internal spatial organization was characterized by scattered **specimen trees** that did not define any particular space aside from the central circle surrounding the flagstaff and an allee of boxwoods between division E (block XVIII) and D (block XVI). The sylvan hall, a standard national cemetery planting consisting of a cross-shaped space defined by rows of American elms, was removed by c.1890. Since the end of the historic period, the interior spatial organization of the burial grounds has been altered by the repositioning of the grave markers to lie flush with the ground, and the loss of the boxwood allee and specimen trees, which have created an expansiveness to the landscape that did not exist historically. The external organization remains largely intact with the exception of changes to the adjoining inclosure woods. Despite these changes, the burial grounds remain a character-defining space in the cemetery landscape.

LAND USE

This characteristic describes uses that affect the physical form of the landscape. During the historic period, Poplar Grove National Cemetery was characterized by funerary and commemorative land uses. While the vast majority of the burials were made as reinterments between 1866 and 1869, new burials continued at a

very slow rate through the historic period, amounting to less than one percent of all graves. For the most part, the cemetery thus served commemorative uses. In addition to visitation to individual gravesites, the cemetery also hosted public ceremonies, in particular on Memorial Day. The **gun monument** installed in 1869, and the **rostrum** completed in 1897, are manifestations of public commemorative uses. Poplar Grove historically experienced light visitation and never received a major commemorative monument. With the establishment of Petersburg National Military Park (Battlefield) in 1926, the cemetery began to be formally used for interpretive purposes. New burials ceased after 1957, except for reinterment of Civil War veterans, the last of which occurred in 2003. The cemetery remains open for the reinterment of Civil War remains discovered in the battlefields surrounding Petersburg. Aside from the introduction of suburban residential uses in the cemetery's immediate setting, there have been no substantial changes to land uses at Poplar Grove since the end of the historic period.

CIRCULATION

This characteristic describes systems of movement through the landscape. As initially developed, circulation was a conspicuous characteristic of Poplar Grove National Cemetery, but as the landscape was developed through the late nineteenth century, the circulation system within the **burial grounds** became less visible due to changes in materials. The central circulation feature historically remained the main drive and the approach road. The alteration of the grave markers in 1934 after the historic period further eroded the definition of the drives and walks. With the exception of the service drive, circulation in the cemetery retains the general character present at the end of the historic period following improvements made by the War Department between 1929 and 1931.

Two circulation features most likely lost toward the end of the historic period were the circular turn-around and adjoining walk in the lodge grounds. The circular turn-around drive was built in c.1871 and featured a central island ringed by boxwoods and annual plantings or a low hedge, with a horsechestnut tree in the center. The walk, also built in c.1871 and defined by a low hedge or planted border, extended from the main drive on the west side of the lodge along inclosure wall and to the turn-around and division F. It is not known if these features were initially surfaced in gravel or turf; after c.1874, they were probably turf to match the cemetery drives and walks. The turn-around and walk were probably removed between 1929 and 1931 with the construction of the public restroom building in 1929 and expansion of the septic system in 1931. The turn-around had probably fallen out of use for vehicular circulation when the main

drive was changed to a gravel surface in c.1900 (the turn-around remained in turf).

Approach Road

Evaluation: Contributing

The approach road is the 1,025-foot long entrance drive to Poplar Grove National Cemetery from the public highway, Vaughan Road. It dates to the establishment of the cemetery in 1866 and may have been constructed prior to the cemetery as part of the war-time camp of the 50th New York Volunteer Engineers. In 1877, the federal government secured a right-of-way of unspecified width through the Flower farm. The road was maintained with a grave surface, approximately eleven feet wide, with grass shoulders and bordered by an **allee** of deciduous trees set out in 1879. At approximately 200 feet from Vaughan Road, a farm road crossing was built in c.1911 at the time the right-of-way was enclosed by a barbed-wire fence. In 1931, the approach road was resurfaced in asphalt along with the **main drive**. After the historic period, a **private driveway** was built off the north side of the approach road, and in 1991, the federal government acquired the eastern 325 feet of the approach road as part of the 3.7-acre Odom tract. In c.1995, the section near the gateway was widened probably at the time the **visitor parking area** was built in c.1995, and in 2003 the approach road was repaved in asphalt with a sand topcoat. Overall, the approach road retains the alignment and surface that characterized it at the very end of the historic period.

Private Driveway

Evaluation: Non-Contributing

In c.1972, a gravel driveway approximately ten feet wide was constructed from the approach road within the NPS right-of-way along the boundary of the Odom tract and approximately fifteen feet from the north and east sides of the cemetery **inclosure wall**. The drive was built on fill in the low area off the northwest corner of the cemetery, where it required a culvert to pass over the cemetery drainage ditch. Although not on NPS property, the private driveway is visible from the cemetery and detracts from the historic character of the landscape.

Visitor Parking Area

Evaluation: Non-contributing

The visitor parking area is located along the north side of the approach road near the cemetery **gateway**, and was built by NPS in c.1995 following acquisition of the 3.7-acre Odom tract. The parking area detracts from the historic character of the landscape because it disrupts the symmetry and rural setting of the cemetery approach and gateway.

Main Drive

Evaluation: Contributing

The main drive, a continuation of the approach road within the cemetery, extends from the **gateway** and loops around the **flagstaff**. It is one of eight radiating drives, and may have originated as an entrance into the Civil War camp of the 50th New York Volunteer Engineers. It was laid out in 1866 as part of the initial development of the cemetery, and was surfaced in gravel and lined by brick gutters. In c.1871, a circular turn-around was built off the drive within the lodge grounds. In c.1872-1874, the surface of the main drive was changed to turf along with all other drives in the burial grounds, and in 1877 all of the brick gutters were filled and covered in turf. In c.1900, the main drive was set apart as a distinct drive in the burial grounds when its surface was changed back to gravel (the gutters were not uncovered). In 1931, the main drive was paved in asphalt with a $\frac{3}{4}$ inch grave top coat. As part of the paving project, the alignment of the central circle was changed into a tear-drop shape to provide an easier turning radius for vehicles. This change required the addition of a concrete curb on the south side to avoid grading over the adjoining headstones. This change in alignment, although made during the historic period, detracts from the circular symmetry of the cemetery. Since the end of the historic period, the drive has been widened in front of the lodge and service yard, and in 2003 was repaved with a pea gravel top coat. Overall, the main drive retains its character from the very end of the historic period.

Service Drive

Evaluation: Non-contributing

The service drive was initially laid out in c.1873 as a short access from the **main drive** through the lattice fence and boxwood hedge (later arborvitae hedge) that screened the service yard. With the construction of the **garage** in 1929, the drive was extended to the width of the building, wrapping around the well house. After the historic period, the drive was widened from the main drive to the garage for the width of the building, probably when the arborvitae hedge was removed in c.1974. In 2003, the drive was paved in asphalt with a pea gravel top coat. An aged magnolia marks the original southwestern corner of the drive entrance; a companion magnolia historically marked the other corner. Due to loss of integrity, the existing service drive does not contribute to the historic character of the landscape.

Burial Grounds Drives

Evaluation: Contributing

The drives within the burial grounds (today generally known as walks) are the primary, wider circulation routes. They were built between 1866 and 1869 with

gravel surfaces and brick gutters. Between c.1872 and 1874, the surface was changed to turf in part due to the difficulty in keeping grass from growing in the gravel. The turf was a Bermuda grass (*Cynodon dactylon*) rolled to create an even surface. In 1877, the brick gutters were filled and covered with turf as another maintenance economy. With these changes, the drives became subtle features in the landscape, defined only by the voids between grave sections. [Figure 3.3] The **main drive** remained visually consistent with the other drives until c.1900, when it was changed to a gravel surface; the other drives were kept in turf. After the historic period, the alteration of the **grave markers** in 1934 further eroded the definition of the drives and they became largely indiscernible. [Figure 3.4] In c.1957, the radial drives, except for the main drive and the drive due north of the **flagstaff** that had been filled with graves between 1896 and 1918, were identified by letter, A through F (the drives were historically not named). All of the drives remain as circulation corridors, except for the drive north of the flagstaff (at many Civil War-era national cemeteries, the drives have been used for burial space). Aside from the change in character resulting from the alteration of the grave markers, the drives remain largely intact, reflecting conditions in the latter half of the historic period.

Burial Grounds Walks

Evaluation: Contributing

The walks within the burial grounds are the secondary, narrower circulation routes between the grave rows. They were built between 1866 and 1869, and were surfaced in turf as an extension of the larger cemetery **lawn** [see Figure 3.3]. Trees were planted in many of the walks. After the historic period, the alteration of the **grave markers** eroded the definition of the walks [see Figure 3.4]. Despite this, the walks as circulation corridors remain largely intact and with the same surface that they have had throughout the historic period.

Walk from Lodge to Public Restroom Building

Evaluation: Contributing

This walk was constructed in c.1929 at the same time as the public restroom (utility) building. It extends from the east wing of the lodge and jogs back to the restroom building, where it wraps around the corner to provide access to both restrooms and to the door to the utility room. It is a three-foot wide concrete walk. In c.1970, the walk was closed off from the public by a **wood plank fence** enclosing the rear yard of the lodge. At this time, a new **dirt path** to the public restrooms was introduced along the east side of the lodge. Although in part no longer used as the main public access to the restrooms, the walk remains intact and is a minor detail of the historic landscape.

Dirt Path

Evaluation: Non-contributing

The dirt path was built in c.1970 to provide public access to the restrooms. The path was built on fill that interfered with the drainage from the lodge southeast to an opening in the **inclosure wall**. It is a narrow path with undefined edges and a yellowish gravel-earthen surface. The dirt path detracts from the historic character of the landscape.

TOPOGRAPHY

This characteristic is defined as the built, three-dimensional configuration of the landscape (the natural contour of the land is part of the natural systems and features characteristic). In the initial development of the cemetery, the natural contours were probably manipulated to provide even, level surfaces adequate for burials. Topography was an important characteristic of the early cemetery landscape due to the mounds built over each grave, intended to provide fill as the coffin disintegrated. These grave mounds were gradually removed until the last were leveled in 1877 with the installation of the marble grave markers. The only other topographic feature within the landscape was the flagstaff mound. It was initially built in c.1866 as a six-foot high mound approximately forty feet wide, but with the replacement of the original **flagstaff** in 1874, the mound was reduced to four feet high and approximately twenty feet wide. With the replacement of the flagstaff in 1913, the mound was eliminated. During the latter part of the historic period, there were no significant topographic features, and none have been introduced since.

VEGETATION

This characteristic describes the managed trees, shrubs, vines, ground covers, and herbaceous materials in the landscape (but not the natural vegetation such as woods, which are part of the natural systems and features characteristic). The vegetation of Poplar Grove National Cemetery was characterized throughout the historic period by an allee along the approach road, and lawn and specimen trees within the cemetery. There was historically a preponderance of evergreens (loblolly pine and cedars), which traditionally have a funerary association with eternal life. Shrubs, hedges, vines, and flowerbeds were generally secondary features. The amount of vegetation was at its greatest from the initial beautification of the cemetery during the 1870s through the 1890s. After this time, the amount of vegetation declined, especially flowerbeds and shrubs, in response to natural decline and disaster, lack of replacement, and efforts to decrease maintenance. The last major planting during the historic period occurred in 1931.

After the historic period, NPS made additional plantings in the burial grounds, but did not alter the overall character of evenly spaced trees and lawn aside from the planting of red cedars clustered along the inclosure. Although the amount of vegetation has declined and several new species have been introduced since the end of the historic period, the overall character of the vegetation within the cemetery created by collection of specimen trees informally distributed across the landscape remains largely intact. The approach road allee does not remain intact. [Chronological list of plantings in Appendix H.]

Character-defining vegetation features that have been lost since the end of the historic period, aside from individual specimens, include the boxwood allee between divisions E (block XVIII) and D (Block XVI) (c.1871-c.1980?), the arborvitae hedge around the service yard (c.1888-c.1974), fruit trees in the lodge grounds (c.1871-c.1960?), a boxwood hedge in the shape of a Maltese cross in front of the lodge (c.1871-c.1974), and English ivy on the inclosure wall (c.1888-c.1957). There was also a grape arbor extending back from the southeast corner of the lodge (c.1872-c.1934).

Approach Road Allee

Evaluation: Non-contributing

Volunteer eastern red cedar and mixed deciduous trees, and scattered planted specimens, line either side of the **approach road** from Vaughan Road to the cemetery gateway. In 1879, maple and tulip-tree were planted at twenty-five foot spacing (approximately eighty trees total) to either side of the approach road as a formal allee. Replacement plantings were made in 1882 and again in 1931 with a mix of ash, elm, linden, maple, and white poplar. After the end of the historic period, the allee was not maintained, and mowing around the trees probably ceased leading to growth of successional woods, primarily red cedar. By 1969, the allee had large gaps, and today there are approximately fourteen of the original trees left, scattered within irregular volunteer specimens, groves, and adjoining woods [see Figures 3.1, 3.2]. The existing trees lack the symmetry and formality of the historic allee, and also block views to the cemetery and adjoining **south field** and **north field**. Due to lack of integrity, the approach road allee does not contribute to the historic character of the landscape, although during the historic period it was a significant feature.

Specimen Trees

Evaluation: Contributing

In the initial establishment of Poplar Grove National Cemetery, specimen trees within the burial grounds included fruit trees (purportedly planted by the engineers) and second-growth loblolly pines, which were thinned from the woods surrounding the engineers' camp and retained as specimens. In 1868, there

were approximately 180 specimen loblolly pines and that same year, the burial corps planted approximately 1,000 cedars transplanted from nearby woods, most of which died. In 1871, a major planting program was undertaken that included approximately 200 specimens. Species included ash (probably European mountain), purple beech, cedar (probably false cypress), hornbeam (hop hornbeam), horsechestnut, balsam fir, elm, Kentucky coffee tree, larch, linden, magnolia, box elder, silver maple, sugar maple, oak (probably pin, water, and willow), silver poplar, Norway spruce, white spruce, and weeping willow. One hundred and one elms were planted as two allees in the shape of gothic cross to create a “sylvan hall” that was found in many national cemeteries of the time. Most of the elms in the sylvan hall were removed in c.1890 apparently because they were interfering with the graves and mowing. Other trees planted after 1871 included dwarf black spruce, mugho pine, red maple, sweetgum, and tulip-tree. Many of these trees were lost in two storms during the summer of 1915, which destroyed approximately 139 trees. These trees were not replaced until 1931, when the first major planting program since 1871 was undertaken. It specified approximately seventy trees within the cemetery walls, including elm, holly, linden, Austrian pine, European mountain ash, Norway maple, Norway spruce, and pin oak. By the end of the historic period, there were 169 trees in the cemetery, generally evenly and informally distributed across the landscape, and characterized by elm, loblolly pine, holly, cedars, magnolia, and oaks.

After the end of the historic period, NPS removed many specimen trees due to decline and also made new and replacement plantings. These included approximately one hundred Eastern red cedars planted in 1937, primarily along the inclosure wall. By 1941, there were a total of 137 deciduous and 156 evergreen trees (including 80 deciduous trees in the **approach road allee**). By 1962, the number of evergreen trees within the cemetery had decreased to twenty, and the deciduous trees to thirty-seven. NPS has made limited replacement plantings, using red oak, yellow birch, scrub pine, pignut hickory, willow oak, sweetgum, cherry, and Colorado blue spruce. While there are approximately eighty specimen trees in the cemetery today, only twenty likely date to the historic period. Despite this, the specimen trees retain the overall historic character of the end of the historic period defined by informal arrangement and generally even distribution across the landscape. The loss of trees and changes in species, particularly the loss of evergreens with their funerary association, detracts from the historic character of the landscape. The trees planted after 1934 are generally compatible with the historic character, although some, notably near the center, interfere with views from the flagstaff out to the graves due to low branching.

The oldest specimen trees (including those in the approach road allee) are identified by circular metal tags imprinted with an inventory number and affixed to the trunk. These tags most likely date to the master plan completed in c.1941. The inventory system may have been continued after the war, but was eventually discontinued. The younger trees in the cemetery do not have these identification tags.

Specimen Shrubs

Evaluation: Contributing

Shrubs within the cemetery include six aged boxwoods in the lodge grounds and between division E (block XVIII) and Division D (block XVI), and a grouping of crape myrtle east of the flagstaff and a single specimen in Division D. The two boxwoods within the center of the lodge grounds are remnants of boxwoods planted in c.1871 in the island of the turn-around drive, while the one near the rostrum and between divisions E and F are remnants of a boxwood allee that existed through the 1960s. The crape myrtle may date to the historic period (“myrtle” was listed as an evergreen in 1932). During the early history of the cemetery, many more shrubs characterized the landscape. The 1871 planting program included one hundred boxwoods (planted as the allee, in the sylvan hall, Maltese cross hedge in front of the lodge, and hedge around the service area) and 4,042 Osage orange (as a perimeter hedge, removed in c.1888), and during the 1870s there were unspecified shrubs planted on the flagstaff mound that were removed by c.1913. The boxwood shrubs were clipped into mounds. In 1888, the boxwood hedge around the service yard was replaced with an arborvitae hedge. By the end of the historic period, shrubs within the cemetery included the Maltese cross hedge, arborvitae hedge, boxwood allee, boxwood along the drives near the flagstaff, and probably other scattered shrubs including possibly crape myrtle. After the historic period, the number of shrubs declined with the notable loss of the boxwood allee, arborvitae hedge, and Maltese cross hedge, and the remaining boxwoods were not clipped but allowed to grow naturally. While the existing shrubs are only remnants of the shrub plantings that existed historically, they contribute as historic plant material and as evidence of the larger plantings.

Cemetery Lawn

Evaluation: Contributing

The cemetery lawn dates back to the initial development of the cemetery in 1866-1869. It was initially a discontinuous and uneven lawn due to the presence of grave mounds. By 1877, the last of the grave mounds were leveled, and together with change from gravel to turf on the drives by 1874 and removal of the brick gutters in 1877, the lawn had become an expansive and unifying feature of the landscape, in keeping with the lawn style of cemetery design. Mowing was done by hand mowers, with trimming done by sickle or scythe. In 1878, the cemetery

acquired a horse-drawn lawn mower, and in 1931, the first gasoline powered mower. The cemetery lawn, primarily Bermuda grass with wild onion, sorrel, and other weeds, was often cited as being difficult to maintain due to clayey soils. After the historic period, NPS maintained the cemetery lawn much as it had been during the historic period, although the alteration of the **grave markers** had a marked visual impact on the lawn, creating a single expanse of lawn where historically it had been punctuated by the rows of upright grave markers. In addition, the lawn has at times been in poor condition. Despite this visual change and conditions problems, the lawn remains a character-defining feature of the cemetery landscape.

Inclosure Ivy Groundcover

Evaluation: Non-contributing

Around the outside of the inclosure wall on portions of the south, east, and north sides, there is English ivy that has naturalized within the inclosure woods. This ivy most likely escaped from the ivy planted in 1888 along the inside of the inclosure wall in a bed cut into the lawn, and was cut back from the top of the wall [see Figure 3.3]. The ivy was maintained through the end of the historic period and into the late 1930s. During the war and into the 1950s during a time of decreased maintenance, the ivy probably grew over the wall and into the adjoining woods. It was most likely removed from the inside of the wall as part of a general cemetery improvement undertaken in 1957. It was probably removed to preserve the brick wall (ivy can damage the masonry) and reduce maintenance. Although the existing ivy is an interesting remnant, it most likely did not exist historically in its current location and therefore does not contribute to the historic character of the landscape. The loss of the ivy on the inclosure wall detracts from the historic character of the cemetery.

Inclosure Red Cedars

Evaluation: Non-contributing

In the south inclosure south of the lodge grounds, and along the outside of the inclosure wall to either side of the gateway are specimen Eastern red cedars. Those south of the lodge grounds are surrounded by successional vegetation (**south inclosure hedgerow**). These cedars were planted after the historic period in 1937, and included plantings along the west inclosure wall north of the service yard (now lost due to growth of the **Odom tract woods**). These cedars were planted as clustered specimens, apparently as points of interest within the open areas of the inclosure rather than to provide screening. Because they were planted after the historic period, as individual trees these cedars do not contribute to the historic character of the landscape. However, given their

limited extent and relationship to plants used historically in the landscape, they do not detract from the historic character.

BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

This characteristic includes three-dimensional constructs, with buildings defined as constructs for shelter such as houses, barns, and garages; and structures as constructs that do not provide shelter, such as walls and bridges. Buildings and structures at Poplar Grove are clustered at the entrance to the cemetery, mark the center, and frame the perimeter. Buildings that were removed during the historic period included Poplar Grove Church (1865-1868), the first lodge (1867-c.1879), the brick kitchen (1879-1929) and “cave” (c.1900-1929, use not known) to the rear of the lodge; and in the service yard, the well-house (c.1871-c.1939), brick toolshed-stable (1879-c.1929), forage shed, (1879-c.1915), service yard privy (c.1905-1929), and frame shed (c.1925-c.1929). Notable lost structures include the system of brick gutters that lined the drives in the burial grounds (1866-1869), which were covered in 1877 and probably still remain intact below the surface. While there was substantial change during the historic period, buildings and structures remain largely unchanged since 1934.

Inclosure Wall and Gateway

Evaluation: Contributing

The perimeter wall (known as an inclosure in national cemetery terminology) and gateway mark the entrance and delineate the perimeter of the cemetery. The inclosure walls and gateway were built based on a prototype plan made in 1870 by Quartermaster General Montgomery Meigs. Initially begun in 1873 to replace a white-painted wood paling fence erected in 1866, the Poplar Grove inclosure wall and gateway was completed in 1876 by John Brennon and Archibald L. Hutton of Washington. The wall was built of brick with pilasters capped by sandstone blocks. At approximately eight locations, openings in the brick wall were made for drainage, originally from the system of brick gutters and wooden sewer boxes that drained the grounds. The gateway, built of granite posts with iron gates, was characteristic of larger national cemeteries with two pedestrian gates flanking a central vehicular gate. As first constructed, the wall remained obscured from inside the cemetery by a perimeter hedge of Osage orange, which was replaced in c.1888 by a planting of English ivy that climbed the wall. The ivy remained until c.1957. Thus throughout the historic period, much of the inclosure wall remained hidden by vegetation. Aside from repairs, the structure remains intact, although the existing sandstone caps may be a restoration that replaced concrete caps added as a Civilian Conservation Corps repair project in 1937. The inclosure wall and gateway remain character-defining features of the cemetery landscape, although the removal of vegetation along the interior of the wall has altered its

historic character. It is similar to brick inclosure walls at Yorktown, Seven Pines, Richmond, Culpeper, and Fort Harrison National Cemeteries, among others, all built around the same time according to the Meigs prototype.

Lodge

Evaluation: Contributing

The lodge, located inside the entrance gateway, is a small one and one-half story house with a Mansard roof that historically functioned as the residence of the cemetery superintendent and his family. It replaced a frame lodge built in 1867 on the north side of the drive within the original cemetery gates, and was designed according to a prototype plan in the Second Empire style by Quartermaster General Montgomery Meigs. Work on the building, initially designed to be brick, began in 1870 on the north side of the main drive inside the cemetery entrance. This site was abandoned and the following year the project was rebid and awarded to Kyran A. Murphy, this time using stone construction and a site on the south side of the main drive. The frame lodge was moved to the rear of lodge for use as a kitchen wing, and was removed with the construction of a separate brick kitchen to the rear of the lodge in c.1879. In 1914, a stucco-finished one-story kitchen wing was added at the rear of the lodge. The final exterior modifications to the Lodge were made at the end of the historic period as part of the War Department's program of improvements that included the building of the garage and public restroom building. In 1931, the floor of the porch was replaced in concrete and the lower slope of the mansard roof was replaced with standing-seam metal, matching the roofs on the stable and restroom building. At an undetermined date during the historic period, an iron tablet with Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, a standard feature at national cemeteries, was affixed to the front of the lodge. Since the end of the historic period, there have been no substantial changes to the exterior of the lodge. It remains a character-defining feature of the landscape that closely identifies Poplar Grove as a Civil War-era National Cemetery. The lodge is similar in style and overall plan and details to the lodges at Richmond, Fort Harrison, Cold Harbor, Seven Pines, Yorktown, and Culpeper National Cemeteries, among others.

Garage (Outbuilding)

Evaluation: Contributing

The garage, historically known as the stable-garage or the outbuilding, is a one and one-half story building with a metal gable roof located in the northeast corner of the service yard along the inclosure wall. The Colonial Revival-style building was constructed in 1929 by the firm of H. Herfurth Jr., of Washington D. C. according to design of the Quartermaster Supply Officer, Washington General Depot. It replaced the 1879 brick toolshed-stable and adjoining frame

outbuildings. The garage was built to house the cemetery horse (which was still be used for lawn mowing at the time) and provide a tool room and privy. It was sided in stucco probably to match the general character of the stone lodge. Historically screened in part by an arborvitae hedge, the building is today is clearly visible upon entrance to the cemetery. Aside from installation of a new garage door on the front façade and an exterior steel stairway on the west (facing the cemetery entrance), the exterior of the building has undergone little change since the historic period. It is characteristic, along with its companion, the **public restroom building**, of the style of buildings constructed by the War Department at national cemeteries during the early twentieth century.

Public Restroom Building (Utility Building)

Evaluation: Contributing

The public restroom building, historically known as the utility building, is a small one-story building with a metal gable roof located at the rear of the lodge. The Colonial Revival-style building was constructed in 1929 by the firm of H. Herfurth Jr., of Washington, D. C. according to the design of the Quartermaster Supply Officer, Washington General Depot, with stucco siding probably to match the general character of the stone lodge. The building was constructed on the site of the c.1879 brick kitchen, which had last been used as a woodshed. The building was constructed to provide public restrooms, and rooms for fuel storage, an electric generating motor, and water storage. The restrooms were serviced by a septic tank that was apparently expanded with a septic field in 1931. Aside from painting of the stucco (white), there have been no substantial changes to the building since the historic period. It is characteristic, along with its companion, the **garage**, of the style of buildings constructed by the War Department at national cemeteries during the early twentieth century.

Rostrum

Evaluation: Contributing

The rostrum is an open-air eight-sided iron pavilion on a brick base located on the eastern side of the **lodge grounds**. The building, reflecting the Aesthetic Movement in its decoration, was completed in 1897 and was a standard design matching the rostrums at Richmond and Yorktown National Cemeteries, among others. The War Department began building rostrums at national cemeteries in a systematic way during the 1890s. National Cemetery regulations called for the ironwork to be painted black, the top of the roof red, and the underside of the roof (ceiling), light blue. Aside from changes in paint color, the rostrum remains intact. It is a rare-surviving example of its type, reflecting the growing national importance of commemoration and Memorial Day services in particular during the late nineteenth century. The only rostrums that remain from this period are at

Cave Hill (Kentucky) and San Antonio (Texas) National Cemeteries.¹⁶ Only the brick and iron base of the rostrum at Richmond National Cemetery survives.

Flagstaff

Evaluation: Non-Contributing

The flagstaff, located within an island defined by a loop in the **main entrance drive**, is the physical and symbolic center of the cemetery. The first flagstaff (height not known) was erected at the start of the cemetery's development in 1866, and was positioned on a six-foot high mound in the shape of frustum of a cone. By 1874, this wooden pole had deteriorated and was replaced under contract to J. C. Comfort of Shiremanstown, Pennsylvania, with a fifty-six foot tall wooden flagstaff. At this time, the flagstaff mound was reduce in size to four feet tall and twenty-three feet wide. In 1913, the wood flagstaff, which cemetery inspectors had found to be too short, was again replaced with an iron pole (height not known). This iron pole was replaced in 1930 with a new and much taller pole anchored by four guy wires that reached above the tree canopy at approximately eighty feet in height. It was probably clearly visible from Vaughan Road. National Cemetery regulations called for the flagstaff to be white with a black base. After the historic period, the pole was reduced in height by roughly half, and the guy wires were removed. Due to this extensive change, the flagstaff does not retain integrity, although it was historically a character-defining feature.

VIEWS AND VISTAS

This characteristic describes a prospect, either natural or constructed. Views are generally broad prospects of a general area, while vistas are designed and directed views of a particular scene or feature. During the historic period, the view of the cemetery across open fields from Vaughan Road, with the flagstaff rising above the tree canopy, was a character-defining feature of the landscape and setting, and surely an emotionally moving scene for visitors. Such a view remains at several Civil War-era national cemeteries, notably Glendale. Since the historic period, this view at Poplar Grove has been lost due to the growth of successional woods along the west side of the cemetery and along the approach road. The cemetery does not come into view until visitors reach the parking area, and then without a broad prospect. The landscape retains two historic vistas, although they have been altered since the historic period.

Vista of Main Gateway from Approach Road

Evaluation: Contributing

The arc of the approach road historically revealed a vista of the cemetery **gateway**, symmetrically framed by the **approach road allee** initially planted in

1879 with open fields to either side. Since the historic period, this vista has been altered by changes to the approach road allee and to the construction of the **visitor parking area** (c.1995). While the gateway still comes into view, the vista is no longer directed at the gateway due to the loss of the enclosing allee and loss of symmetry. The parking area today dominates the scene.

View of Grave Markers from Flagstaff

Evaluation: Contributing

The cemetery plan, of graves facing the center in radiating circles, was devised so that the **grave markers** could be viewed from the central **flagstaff**. The lowering of the grave markers in 1934 after the historic period greatly diminished this aspect of the plan. In addition, low branching of specimen trees along the central circle has obstructed the view out from the flagstaff. Although diminished, this view remains a character-defining feature of the landscape.

View of Flagstaff from Main Drive

Evaluation: Contributing

The view of the **flagstaff** upon approach along the **main drive** was historically a character-defining feature of the landscape that directed visitors to the center, from where the individual graves could be accessed via the radiating drives [see Figure 1.71]. Trees were apparently kept back from the main drive and central circle to maintain this view. Since the end of the historic period, this view has largely been partly obstructed due to the decrease in height of the flagstaff, and to the planting of obstructing trees and low canopies. Although diminished, the view contributes to the historic character of the landscape.

SMALL-SCALE FEATURES

This characteristic describes elements that provide detail and diversity in the landscape for utility or aesthetics, including such things as benches, signs, and light fixtures. Historically the landscape of Poplar Grove National Cemetery was dominated by small-scale features that were standard elements in Civil War-era national cemeteries. These most notably included the grave markers, but also a series of other features, including four upright cannon known as gun monuments (1869), placed symmetrically around the central flagstaff; wrought-iron and wood-slat settees (c.1879, nine extant in 1929); a total of sixteen interpretive and information cast-iron signs (c.1881) known as tablets on which were cast the legislation establishing the national cemeteries, an invitation to register, and on a series of ten tablets, four-line verses from the poem, “The Bivouac of the Dead.” All but one of these small-scale features has been lost since the end of the historic period. Alteration of the grave markers to lie flush with the ground has been the most extensive change to the cemetery landscape since the end of the historic

period. Small-scale features, although historically a defining characteristic, are today a minor aspect of the landscape.

Entrance Sign

Evaluation: Non-contributing

At the south side of the approach road at its intersection with Vaughan Road is a standard brown-faced NPS sign, "Poplar Grove National Cemetery, Petersburg National Battlefield..." The sign, mounted on wood posts, was added in c.1990? [check] and has a bed ringed by stones around its base. During the historic period, a sign was maintained in this general location. No documentation was found on the appearance or content of the historic sign.

Stone-Post Corner Boundary Markers

Evaluation: Contributing

The corners of the pre-1991 cemetery boundaries (prior to NPS acquisition of the Odom tract) are marked by low stone posts. These posts were installed in 1877 as part of the resurvey and expansion of the cemetery property that occurred as part of the construction of the **inclosure wall**. The irregular lines of the boundary are a result of the inaccurate original (c.1868) survey overlaid by the 1877 expansion that added a buffer strip between zero and ten feet to the perimeter of the cemetery. Although the stone-post boundary markers are not conspicuous in the landscape, they contribute as materials related to the administration of the cemetery during the historic period. Pipe posts are located next to the stone posts (along with contemporary orange stakes) and do not appear to contribute to the significance of the property.

Barbed-Wire Fence

Evaluation: Non-contributing

Along the NPS property line south of the **lodge grounds** are remnants of a wood post and barbed-wire fence. This fence was installed in 1937 to protect the red cedars planted between the property line and the inclosure wall from livestock in the adjoining **south pasture**. The fence has not been maintained and is in poor condition. It has been replaced by the private property owner with an electric livestock fence. Because it was added after the historic period, and because it is largely invisible, the barbed-wire fence does not contribute to the historic character of the landscape.

Wood Privacy Fence

Evaluation: Non-contributing

A unfinished wood-plank fence with rounded tops to each plank extends from the southeast corner of the lodge and jogs back to the **public restroom building**

(utility building), defining a rear yard for the lodge. The fence, installed in c.1970, crosses the **walk from the lodge to the public restroom building**. A grape arbor, built in c.1871 and removed in c.1934, historically existed in this location. Red cedars were planted in this area in 1937 to screen the rear yard and public restroom building. The wood privacy fence does not contribute to the historic character of the landscape because it was added after the historic period, and is detracting due to its materials and location.

Civil War-type Grave Markers

Evaluation: Contributing (Criterion A; do not contribute under Criterion C)

[Note: this evaluation under discussion with NERO History Program]

The Civil War-type grave markers, consisting of Vermont marble headstones for known graves and blocks (square posts) for unknown graves, presently comprise 95% of all grave markers in the cemetery. They were installed in 1877 as part of a system-wide project begun in 1873 to replace wooden painted headboards initially used to mark the graves. There were originally a total of 2,200 headstones and 3,355 blocks. Poplar Grove was the last cemetery in the system to receive the new grave markers. The stones were installed under contract by Captain Samuel G. Bridges, and were supplied and finished by Sheldon & Slason of West Rutland, Vermont. The company used the “sand blast” method for inscribing the stones. Use of the blocks instead of headstones changed the uniformity of the landscape, but made visible the large percentage of soldiers who could not be identified [see Figure 3.3]. The stones were not set in a foundation. In 1903, the War Department abandoned use of blocks for unknown graves and slightly modified the design of the headstones. The modified design was used both for replacement of broken grave markers (notably for the summer storms of 1915 that broke forty-seven markers), and for new graves, which were concentrated in the drive north of the **flagstaff** and in division F.

Since the end of the historic period, the Civil War-type grave markers have been dramatically altered. In 1934, workers from the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) under the direction of the NPS sunk the blocks flush with the ground and cut the headstones and laid the upper portions flush with the ground in an effort to simplify lawn maintenance and improve the aesthetics of the landscape [see Figure 3.4]. In addition to this change, since the end of the historic period the condition of the stones has deteriorated, most notably through heavy chipping along the edges from mowers. Despite this, nearly all of the markers remain legible. Since the end of the historic period, approximately ninety-five of the Civil War-type headstones have been replaced with different styles of grave markers. Of the 3,355 blocks originally installed, there remain 3,277 today (some of these were replaced during the historic period after 1903 with headstones).

Given the dramatic alteration of their historic condition, the Civil War-type grave markers do not contribute to the historic character of the landscape under Criterion C. However, because they retain integrity of materials (with the exception of the loss of the headstone bases, which were not visible historically), workmanship, location, and association with individual graves, they may have significance under Criterion A. Their deteriorated condition, however, detracts from significance under Criterion A. Grave markers at National Cemeteries administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs are traditionally replaced when a deteriorated or altered condition does not allow proper identification of the grave or dishonors the veteran. [Source: check with VA]

Private/Other Grave Markers

[check with Betsy on number, type]

There are five non-government issued grave markers within Poplar Grove National Cemetery that were privately made, as well as a number of plain tablets that do not conform to standard government-issued grave markers. These total approximately seven, or less than one percent of all headstones. They are tablet (slab) headstones of varying sizes, and like the **Civil War-type markers**, were laid flush with the grounds in 1934 after the end of the historic period. While these grave markers have been dramatically altered and contribute little to the historic character of the landscape, they nonetheless remain significant for their historic material, workmanship, and association.

Rectangular Flat Grave Markers

Evaluation: Contributing (new burials); non-contributing (replacements)

In c.1939 after the end of the historic period and the alteration of the **Civil War-type grave markers**, NPS began to employ a new type of government-issued rectangular marble headstone designed to lie flush with the ground. The first of these stones were installed in c.1939, and over the course of the next two decades, a total of 216 of these markers (9% of total) were used for both new burials (last in 1957) and replacement of broken Civil War-type grave markers. These stones are scattered around the cemetery, with a concentration for new burials in block XX (division F). Because the burials that occurred after 1933 fall within the broader period of significance for Poplar Grove as a national cemetery, they are contributing features, although they do not contribute to the significance of the landscape. The rectangular flat grave markers used as replacement of Civil War-type headstones and blocks do not contribute to the significance of the cemetery because they are not associated either with the significance of the landscape or with the graves that they are marking. The variation of the rectangular flush marker executed in bronze for the Medal of Honor Civil War burial, installed after 1940, should be considered contributing as an exception.

General-Type Grave Markers (Headstones)

Evaluation: Non-contributing

The General-type headstone, developed by the War Department at the end of World War I, is a simple tablet headstone that is the current standard in national cemeteries. There are approximately nine of these headstones at Poplar Grove, used primarily as replacement markers but also for the reinterment of Civil War remains. Because they have been installed after the period of significance for burials associated with the Civil War, they do not contribute either to the character of the landscape or the significance of Poplar Grove as a national cemetery.

Gun Monument (Cannon)

Evaluation: Contributing

The gun monument, consisting of an upright cannon tube with a pyramidal stack of cannon balls set on a concrete pad, is located to the north of the **flagstaff** along the outer edge of the **main drive** loop. The cannon is a thirty-two pounder Columbiad acquired from Fort Monroe, a federal fort on the Chesapeake Bay in Hampton, Virginia, and brought to Poplar Grove in the fall of 1868. It is the central one (marked by a bronze shield with the burial tally and name of the cemetery) of a set of four installed symmetrically about the flagstaff in 1869. Gun monuments were a standard feature in national cemeteries in Virginia, with the large cemeteries such as Poplar Grove and Richmond receiving four, and the smaller cemeteries, such as Glendale, Cold Harbor, and Seven Pines, one. The three other gun monuments and their concrete pads were removed in c.1974. The existing gun monument—the only monument in the cemetery—remains intact, although its bronze shield has been painted black and is difficult to read. The loss of the three other gun monuments detracts from the historic character of the landscape.

Radial Drive Markers

Evaluation: Non-contributing

There are six small iron signs (also referred to as section markers) that designate each of the radiating drives (walks) except for the **main drive** and the **drive** north of the flagstaff filled with graves between 1896 and 1918. These cast metal signs, painted black and measuring four by five inches and affixed to an iron pipe, were most likely installed in c.1957 as part of the redesignation of the cemetery plan from divisions and sections to blocks. Because they were added after the historic period, these markers do not contribute to the historic character of the landscape.

Flagstaff Floodlight

Evaluation: Non-contributing

The **flagstaff** is illuminated by contemporary floodlight mounted at ground level at the head of the main drive and screened by a young boxwood shrub. A floodlight for the flagstaff may have initially been installed in 1976, when the National Cemetery system instituted a program of lighting. The existing floodlight does not contribute to the character of the landscape due to its recent origin and inconspicuous design.

Grave Locator-Interpretive Signs

Evaluation: Non-contributing

The two aluminum-frame signs to either side of the **flagstaff**, showing the burial register for known graves, a plan of the cemetery, and an illustrated history of the cemetery, were installed in c.1957. The signs were most likely part of a general grounds improvement project included in the park's MISSION 66 prospectus. The plan of the cemetery shows a reclassification of the divisions and sections into twenty blocks, and naming of the radial avenues by letter A through F. These signs do not contribute to the historic character of the landscape because they were installed after the historic period. In addition, the aluminum materials are incongruous with the historic character of the landscape, and the scale and placement detract from the formality of the center of the cemetery. The burial register is also worn and difficult to read.

Concrete Pads Near Flagstaff

Evaluation: Unevaluated

There are two concrete pads to the west of the **flagstaff**, measuring approximately three feet square. The origin of these pads is not known [anyone from the park know?]. They most likely post-date c.1913, when the flagstaff mound was removed. Although not a character-defining feature of the landscape, the pads may be important as clues to prior development. Further research is needed to determine if they were added before 1933 or after.

Miscellaneous Contemporary Small-Scale Features

Evaluation: Non-contributing

Scattered along the **approach road** and around the **parking lot** are small directional signs, trash containers, and underground utility fixtures. There is also a staff picnic table within the **service yard**. These features appear to be recent in origin and therefore do not contribute to the historic character of the landscape. They are generally unobtrusive.

ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES

This characteristic describes surface and subsurface remains related to historic or prehistoric land use. The primary archeological resources at Poplar Grove National Cemetery are its burials. There may be additional archeological resources within the cemetery, such as remains from removed built features. Archeological investigation could add to the historic documentation on the landscape, informing such questions as the function of the “Cave” (c.1900-1929), a structure located south of the Lodge, or the extent and exact location of the system of brick gutters (c.1866, covered in 1877). A comprehensive archeological investigation has not been undertaken to date to determine the existence and significance of potential resources.

Graves

Evaluation: Contributing

There are currently 5,613 individual graves, and a total of approximately 6,238 interments (the higher number is due to multiple interments in single graves). The number of Civil War interments in 1954 was 6,178, and since that time three additional Civil War remains have been reinterred (in 2003).¹⁷ The exact location of each grave is not known for certain, although the top of the headstones and the blocks should correspond with the head of the grave. Archeological testing would be required to assess the exact location of the graves with respect to the grave markers and adjoining walks. All graves at Poplar Grove National Cemetery and their associated original grave markers are considered historically significant within the overall period of significance extending from the first interments in 1866 through the last in 2003 (reinterment of Civil War remains).

SUMMARY EVALUATION OF LANDSCAPE FEATURES

The following table lists by landscape characteristic all inventoried landscape features within the National Park Service boundaries of Poplar Grove National Cemetery, including the approximately thirty-foot wide right-of-way along the approach road. This table does not address the contribution of adjoining privately owned land to the historic setting of the cemetery (refer back to section 2 of the analysis and evaluation).

Poplar Grove National Cemetery Summary Evaluation of Landscape Features by Characteristic		
Feature Name	Evaluation	Comments
Natural Systems and Features		
Triangular woodlot	Non-contributing	Successional woods that grew after 1970; historically part of an open field.
Odom Tract woods	Non-contributing	Successional woods that grew after 1970; historically an open field.
North inclosure woods	Contributing	Continuous woods since late 19 th century; reduced to thin strip of woods in c.1972, further opened in 1994 storm.
East inclosure woods	Contributing	Continuous woods since before cemetery; opened up in c.1972 with construction of two houses.
South inclosure woods	Contributing	Continuous woods since late 19 th century within Richardson-Farley property.
South inclosure hedgerow	Non-contributing	Volunteer woods that have grown up since c.1970 on historically open field.
Spatial Organization		
Cemetery approach	Contributing	Approach road right-of-way through private property dating to c.1866; eastern 325 feet acquired by NPS in 1991; historically framed by allee of deciduous trees.
North field	Contributing (Setting)	Pre-dates establishment of cemetery; private land bordering NPS right-of-way.
South field	Contributing (Setting and NPS)	Pre-dates establishment of cemetery; private land bordering NPS right-of-way.
Odom tract field	Contributing (Setting and NPS)	Pre-dates establishment of cemetery; portion acquired by NPS in 1991; may have historically been part of the south field.

Odom cemetery	Non-contributing	Private family cemetery established in 1971, acquired by NPS in 1991.
South pasture	Contributing (Setting)	Pre-dates establishment of cemetery; private land bordering south inclosure.
Cemetery inclosure space	Contributing	Cemetery perimeter, 1866; resurveyed and enlarged, 1877; west side changed with addition of Odom tract in 1991.
Service yard	Non-contributing	Maintenance area of the cemetery, dating to c.1871; enclosed by fence/hedge until c.1974.
Lodge grounds	Contributing	Assembly area of the cemetery, dating to c.1871.
Burial grounds	Contributing	99% of graves dug 1866-1869; last new burial in 1957.
Land Use		
		No associated features.
Circulation		
Approach Road	Contributing	Entrance drive from Vaughan Road, built in c.1866, paved in 1931; partly on private land in NPS right-of-way.
Private driveway	Non-contributing	Built in c.1972; partly within NPS right-of-way.
Visitor parking area	Non-contributing	Built c.1995.
Main drive	Contributing	Drive from approach road to flagstaff, built in c.1866, paved in 1931.
Service drive	Non-contributing	Short drive between garage and main drive, initially built c.1871, enlarged to present width in c.1974.
Burial grounds drives	Contributing	Primary circulation routes through burial grounds, built with gravel surface and brick gutters in 1866-1869; changed to grass surface c.1872-1874; brick gutters covered, 1877.
Burial grounds walks	Contributing	Secondary circulation routes through burial grounds (primarily corridors between grave rows), built 1866-1869.
Walk from lodge to public restrooms	Contributing	Built c.1929.
Dirt path	Non-contributing	Built c.1970 for public access to the restrooms.
Topography		
		No associated features.
Vegetation		
Approach road allee	Non-contributing	Planted in 1879, replanted 1882, 1931;

		approximately 14 of original 80 allee trees remaining; trees replace by volunteer vegetation since c.1970.
Specimen trees	Contributing	
Specimen shrubs	Non-contributing	
Cemetery lawn	Contributing	Established c.1866.
Inclosure ivy groundcover	Non-contributing	Planted along inside of inclosure wall in 1888; removed in c.1960; escaped outside of wall.
Inclosure red cedars	Non-Contributing	Planted 1937; remnant specimens south of lodge grounds, along west inclosure.
Buildings and Structures		
Inclosure (perimeter wall) and gateway	Contributing	Built 1876.
Lodge	Contributing	Built 1871-1872; rear kitchen wing built in 1914; slate roof replace in metal and porch floor rebuilt in concrete, 1931.
Garage (outbuilding)	Contributing	Built 1929.
Public restroom building (utility building)	Contributing	Built 1929.
Rostrum	Contributing	Built 1897.
Flagstaff	Non-contributing	Built 1931, altered c.1974.
Views and Vistas		
Vista of gateway from approach road	Contributing	C. 1866, 1877.
View of grave markers from flagstaff	Contributing	C.1866
Vista of flagstaff from main drive	Contributing	C. 1866.
Small-Scale Features		
Entrance Sign	Non-contributing	Added c.1990 (?)
Stone-post corner boundary markers	Contributing	Installed 1877.
Barbed-wire fence	Non-contributing	Built 1937; remnants along south boundary.
Wood privacy fence between public restrooms and lodge	Non-contributing	Added c.1970.
Civil War-type grave markers (headstones and blocks)	Contributing (Criterion A) (Do not contribute under Criterion C)	Headstones installed in 1877, laid level with ground, 1934; 37% of all grave markers; Blocks installed in 1877, submerged level with ground, 1934; 58% of all grave markers.
Private/other grave markers	Contributing	Installed c.1866-69+, laid level with ground, 1934; less than 1% of all grave markers.
Rectangular flat grave marker	Contributing/Non-contributing	Installed c.1939-1960, 4% of all grave markers. Headstones use for new graves are contributing, those installed as replacement of Civil War-type markers are non-contributing. Single marker in bronze for

		Medal of Honor Recipient, installed post-1940.
General-type grave marker (headstone)	Non-contributing	Contemporary standard headstone used for reinterments, replacements; post c.1960, >1% of all grave markers.
Gun monument (cannon)	Contributing	Installed 1869; one of original four remaining.
Radial drive markers	Non-contributing	Added c.1957.
Flagstaff floodlight	Non-contributing	Added after c.1976.
Grave locator-interpretive signs	Non-contributing	Added c.1957.
Concrete square pads near flagstaff	Unevaluated	Origin not known.
Miscellaneous contemporary small-scale features.	Non-contributing	Installed after c.1990.
Archeological Sites		
Graves	Contributing	Most interred 1866-1869; last new burial 1957; most recent Civil War reinterment, 2003.

ENDNOTES

¹ This report does specifically address architectural significance of individual buildings under Criterion C, nor archeological significance under Criterion D.

² Additional research and evaluation may be required to fully document all areas of historical significance for all park resources, such as through the park's List of Classified Structures (LCS) and Archeological Sites Management Information System (ASMIS).

³ *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (National Park Service, National Register Bulletin 15, 1991), 36.

⁴ Current National Register online database for Petersburg National Battlefield, Dinwiddie County, Virginia, listing 66000831, <http://www.nationalregisterofhistoricplaces.com/VA/Dinwiddie/districts.html> (accessed 6 December 2005). The acreage of the park cited in the listing is not accurate.

⁵ John Milner Associates, "Petersburg National Battlefield National Register Nomination [sic] 80% draft submission" (Prepared for the National Park Service Northeast Regional Office, February 2006).

⁶ Therese T. Sammartino, "National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, Civil War Era National Cemeteries" (Department of Veterans Affairs, 31 August 1994, certified by the Keeper of the Register, 14 October 1994).

⁷ Sammartino, Section F, page 3.

⁸ Sammartino, Section E, page 7.

⁹ According to the Poplar Grove burial register, the interment of three Civil War remains in 2003 was the first reinterment of Civil War remains since the last new burial was made in 1957.

¹⁰ *How to Apply the National Register Criteria*, 36.

¹¹ Sammartino, Section F, page 3.

¹² It is not known if similar changes were instituted at other national cemeteries at the same time. Today, the drives (except for main drive) at City Point, Cold Harbor, Culpeper, Fort Harrison, Glendale, Richmond, and Seven Pines National Cemeteries are turf.

¹³ *How to Apply the National Register Criteria*, 36.

¹⁴ Memorandum, Paul Weinbaum, Lead Historian, New England System Support Office, to Katy Lacy, Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, 29 May 1997, Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, Gettysburg Cultural Landscape Report, National Register file. The Keeper's opinion was in reference to Gettysburg National Cemetery, but applies to all units of the National Cemetery System.

¹⁵ *How to Apply the National Register Criteria*, 44-45.

¹⁶ Sammartino, Section E, pages 10-11.

¹⁷ Access database burial record, Petersburg National Battlefield; Herbert Olsen, "Poplar Grove National Cemetery History" (Unpublished NPS report, 31 May 1954), 31. The Access database burial record indicates 5,613 graves and sixty non-Civil War burials.

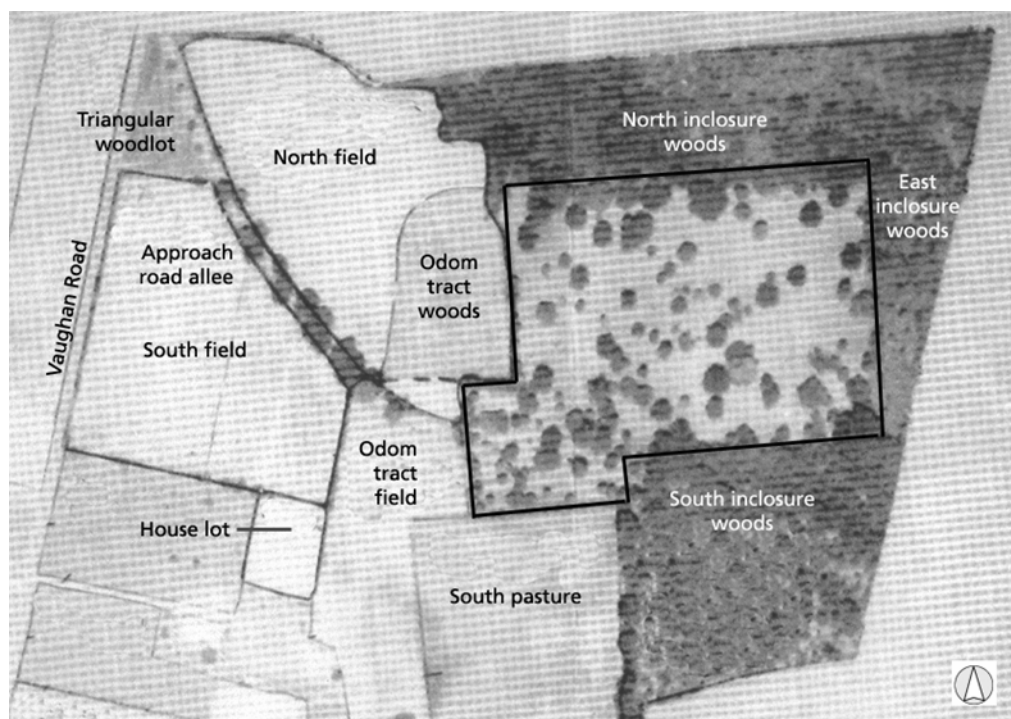


Figure 3.1: Components of the natural systems and spatial organization characteristics in the setting of Poplar Grove National Cemetery, shown on c.1969 aerial photograph taken prior to suburban development in the early 1970s. These conditions approximate those of the historic period (1866-1931). Aerial photograph of the Odom Farm, 1969, Poplar Grove administrative records, Petersburg National Battlefield, annotated by SUNY ESF.

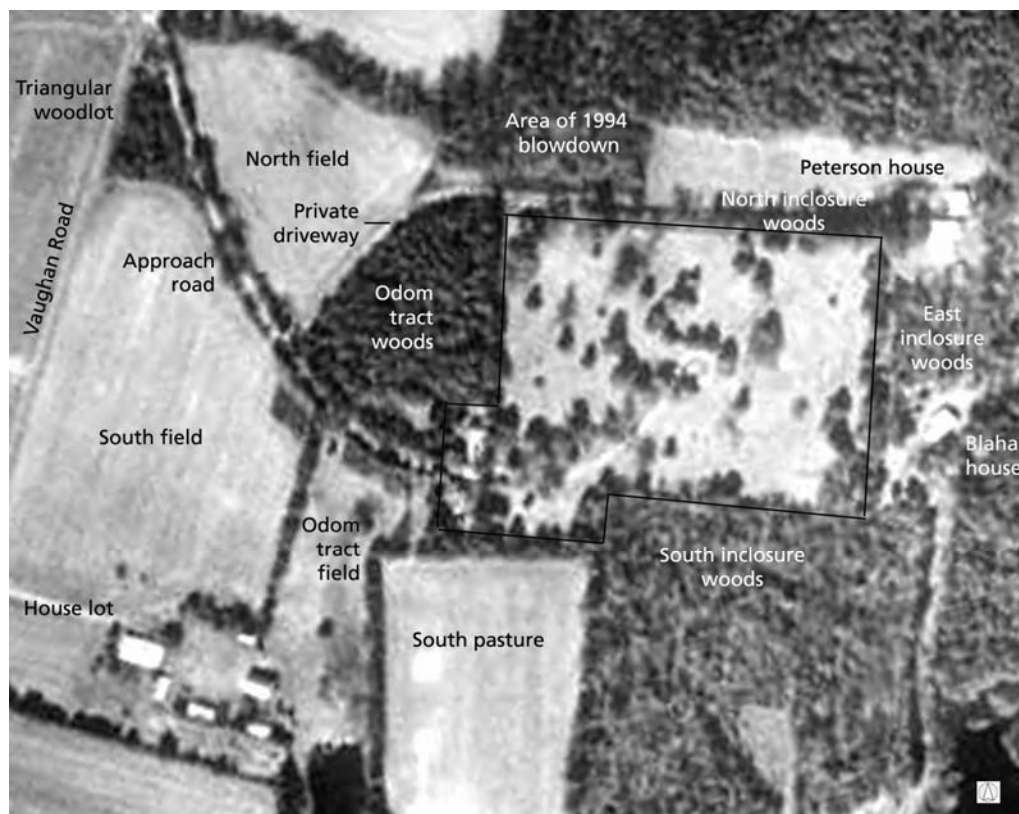


Figure 3.2: Components of the natural systems and spatial organization characteristics in the setting of Poplar Grove National Cemetery, shown on 1994 aerial photograph. These conditions approximate existing conditions. Detail, U.S.G.S. aerial photograph, 1994, annotated by SUNY ESF.



Figure 3.3: General view of the burial grounds at the end of the historic period in 1932, taken from near the rostrum looking east along the south wall showing the upright Civil War-type headstones and blocks defining grass drives and walks, and widely spaced specimen trees. Also note ivy bed along wall. RG 92, Entry 1891, Office of the Quartermaster General, Correspondence, Geographic File, 1922-1935, box 1773, National Archives II, College Park, Maryland.



Figure 3.4: Similar view of the burial grounds today, showing change to landscape from alteration of the grave markers undertaken in 1934 and loss of specimen trees. SUNY ESF, 2006. [replace with view to match 1932 photograph]