Smoot Graves **1830-1878**
CH-659
Dentsville vic.
Private

The Smoot Family Cemetery is found atop a hill in an open pasture marked by a large cedar tree and a thicket near the intersection of Wheatley and Olivers Shop Roads. The cemetery consists of several broken limestone tablets containing simple inscriptions and little to no ornamentation. Members of the Smoot family have lived in Charles County since the colonial period. Although in poor condition, the site is representative of the typical burial customs of Charles County's more prosperous families.

Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. CH-659

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic	Smoot Graves
other	

2. Location

street and number	7700 Wheatley Road	___	not for publication
city, town	Dentsville	X	vicinity
county	Charles		

3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name	W.J. Wheatley				
street and number	7700 Wheatley Road			telephone	unlisted
city, town	LaPlata	state	MD	zip code	20646-4109

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.	Charles County Courthouse	tax map and parcel:	56 p. 43		
city, town	LaPlata	liber	38	folio	430

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

___ Contributing Resource in National Register District
___ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
___ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
___ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
___ Recorded by HABS/HAER
___ Historic Structure Report or Research Report
___ Other _____

6. Classification

Category
___ district
___ building(s)
___ structure
X site
X object

Ownership
___ public
X private
___ both

Current Function
X agriculture
___ commerce/trade
___ defense
___ domestic
___ education
___ funerary
___ government
___ health care
___ industry
___ landscape
___ recreation/culture
___ religion
___ social
___ transportation
___ work in progress
___ unknown
___ vacant/not in use
___ other: _____

Resource Count

Contributing	Noncontributing	
___	___	buildings
1	___	sites
___	___	structures
___	___	objects
___	___	Total

Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory
0

7. Description

Inventory No. CH-659

Condition

___ excellent	_X_ deteriorated
___ good	___ ruins
___ fair	___ altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The site of the Smoot Graves is in an open pasture on the corner of Wheatley and Olivers Shop Roads. The cemetery stands atop a hill marked by a large cedar tree on a large horse farm consisting of almost 200 acres. Four tablets were visible, many of which were broken and illegible. Much damage has occurred from neglect, vegetation and vermin. All visible stones were of inscribed limestone, simply shaped with rounded crests.

Five tombstones were transcribed by Danny Fluhart of the Charles County Historical Society in the 1980's.

Alexander Smoot died Jan'y 6, 1878, aged 55 years, 3 mos. and 19 days

Emaline A. Smoot died August 23, 1844 in the 18th year of her age

George T. Smoot died July 5, 1830 in the 86th year of his age

Josias Smoot died April 11, 185? In the 30th year of his age

In memory of Mary Smoot, consort of George Smoot, died February 12, 1853 in the 67th year of her age.

8. Significance

Inventory No. CH-659

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
__ 1600-1699	__ agriculture	__ economics	__ health/medicine	__ performing arts
__ 1700-1799	__ archeology	__ education	__ industry	__ philospohy
X 1800-1899	__ architecture	__ engineering	__ invention	__ politics/government
__ 1900-1999	__ art	__ entertainment/ recreation	__ landscape architecture	__ religion
__ 2000-	__ commerce		__ law	__ science
	__ communications	__ ethnic heritage	__ literature	__ social history
	__ community planning	__ exploration/ settlement	__ maritime industry	__ transportation
	__ conservation		__ military	__ other:

Specific dates 1830-1878 **Architect/Builder** N/A

Construction dates 1830-1878

Evaluation for:

_____ National Register _____ Maryland Register X not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form - see manual.)

The Smoot Family is a common surname appearing in some of the earliest records of Charles County. Family members remained active in local affairs well into the twentieth century. A quick overview of available records reveal that, in 1774, a George C. Smoot was one of the Charles County's 100 of the best known citizens appointed to a committee to act and to represent the county in response to the Boston Tea Party and the subsequent blockade of that city. A John Nathan Smoot was identified as quartermaster of Charles County's Lower Battalion during the American Revolution. In the following decade, one Richard M. Smoot is said to have sold the escape boat to one of the conspirators in the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln. This boat was used by John Wilkes Booth and David Herold seeking passage through Charles County and across the Potomac into Virginia. Whether or not he was sympathetic to the cause of the Southern States, as many Charles County plantation owners were, was not stated. Finally in 1896, a Dr. James J. Smoot was on the building committee for the construction of a new courthouse in the town of LaPlata.

Although little is known about either the dwelling which was once associated with this site, or the individuals buried there, a review of the 1850 census reveals that Alexander Smoot was then employed as a clerk in the village of Port Tobacco. By 1870 he had risen to become a fur-trader.

The cemetery, although not currently maintained and in poor condition, is representative of the preferred burial customs of local families in Charles County. It's location on high ground, the presence of a large cedar tree, and simple inscriptions on modest rounded tablets are typical features found in most family burial plots throughout the County.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. CH-659

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 10

Acreage of historical setting 198

Quadrangle name LaPlata

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The Smoot Graves are associated with Charles County Property Tax Map 56, Grid 6, Parcel 43.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Cathy Currey/Historic Sites Surveyor		
organization	Charles County Planning Department	date	4/5/01
street and number	200 Baltimore Street	telephone	301-396-5815
city or town	LaPlata	state MD	zip code 20646

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville MD 21032
410-514-7600

Major Bibliographic References:

Brown, Jack D., et al. Charles County, Maryland, A History. Charles County Bicentennial Committee, 1976.

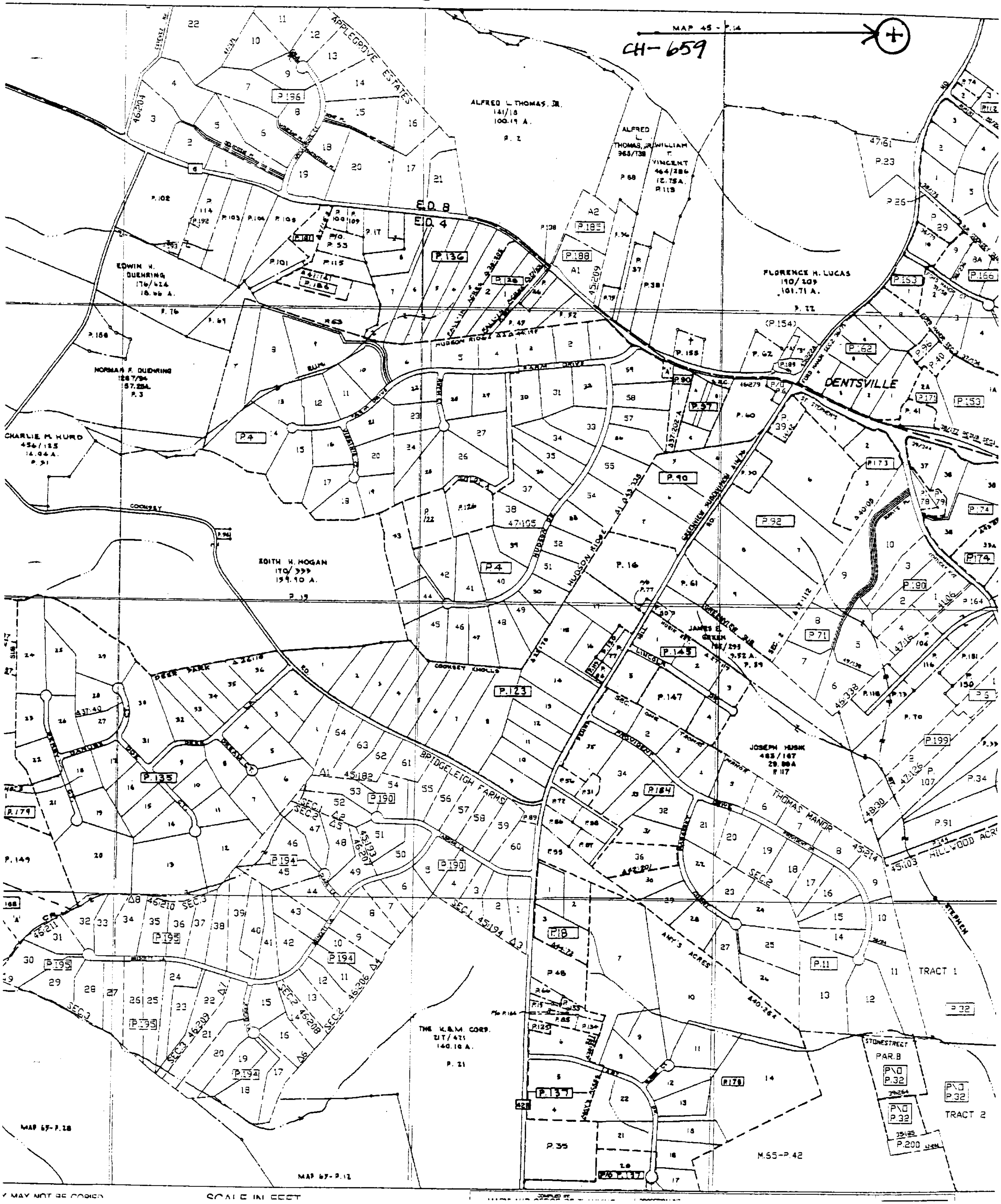
Charles County Circuit Court Land Records, Charles County Courthouse, LaPlata, Maryland.

Charles County, Maryland Tombstone and Bible Records and Name Index. Unpublished Manuscript at the Southern Maryland Studies Center, Charles County Community College.

Klapthor, Margaret Brown. The History of Charles County, Maryland. LaPlata, MD: Charles County Tercentenary, Inc., 1958.

CHARLES COUNTY PROPERTY TAX MAP 2000.
#56

45



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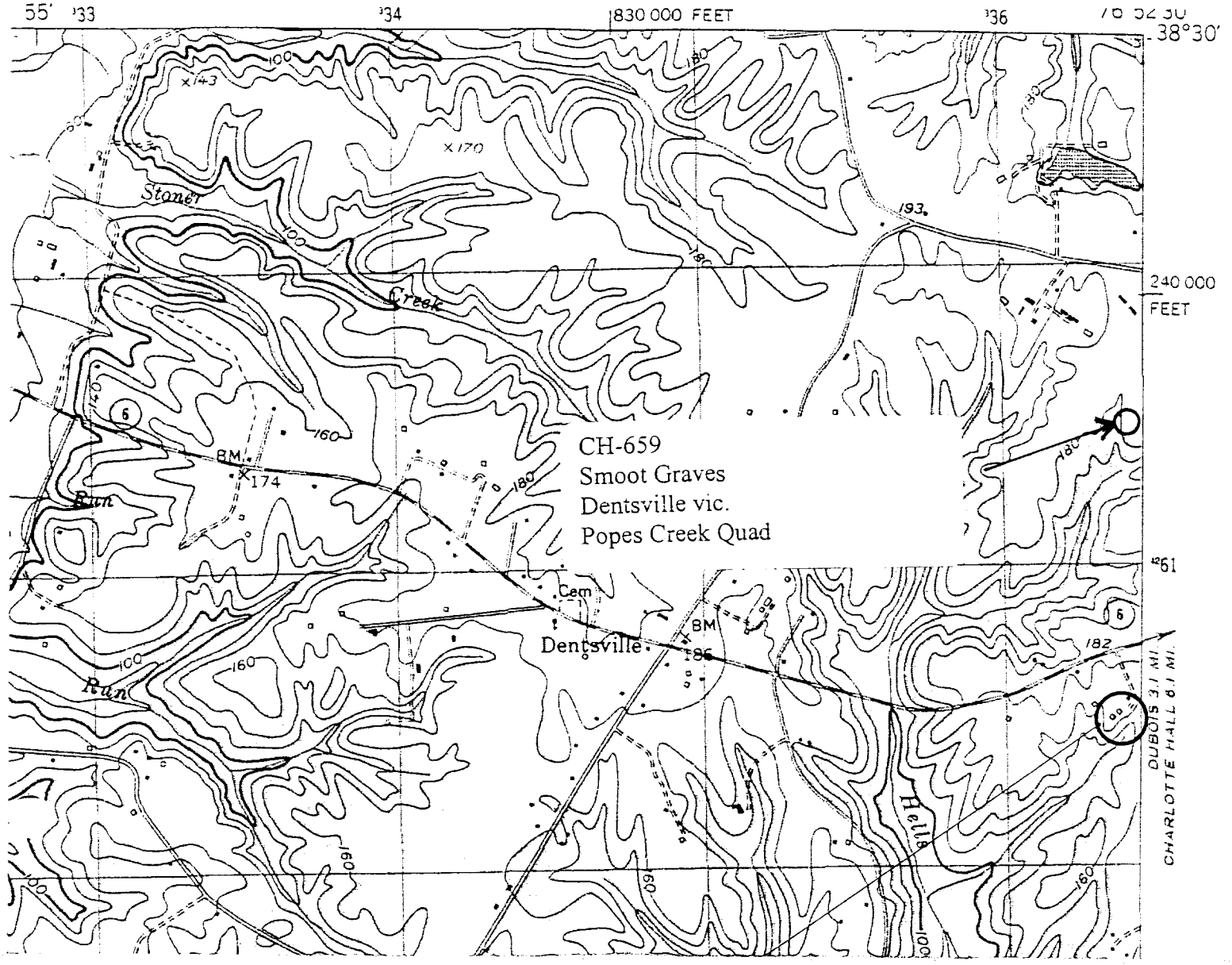

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Stoner
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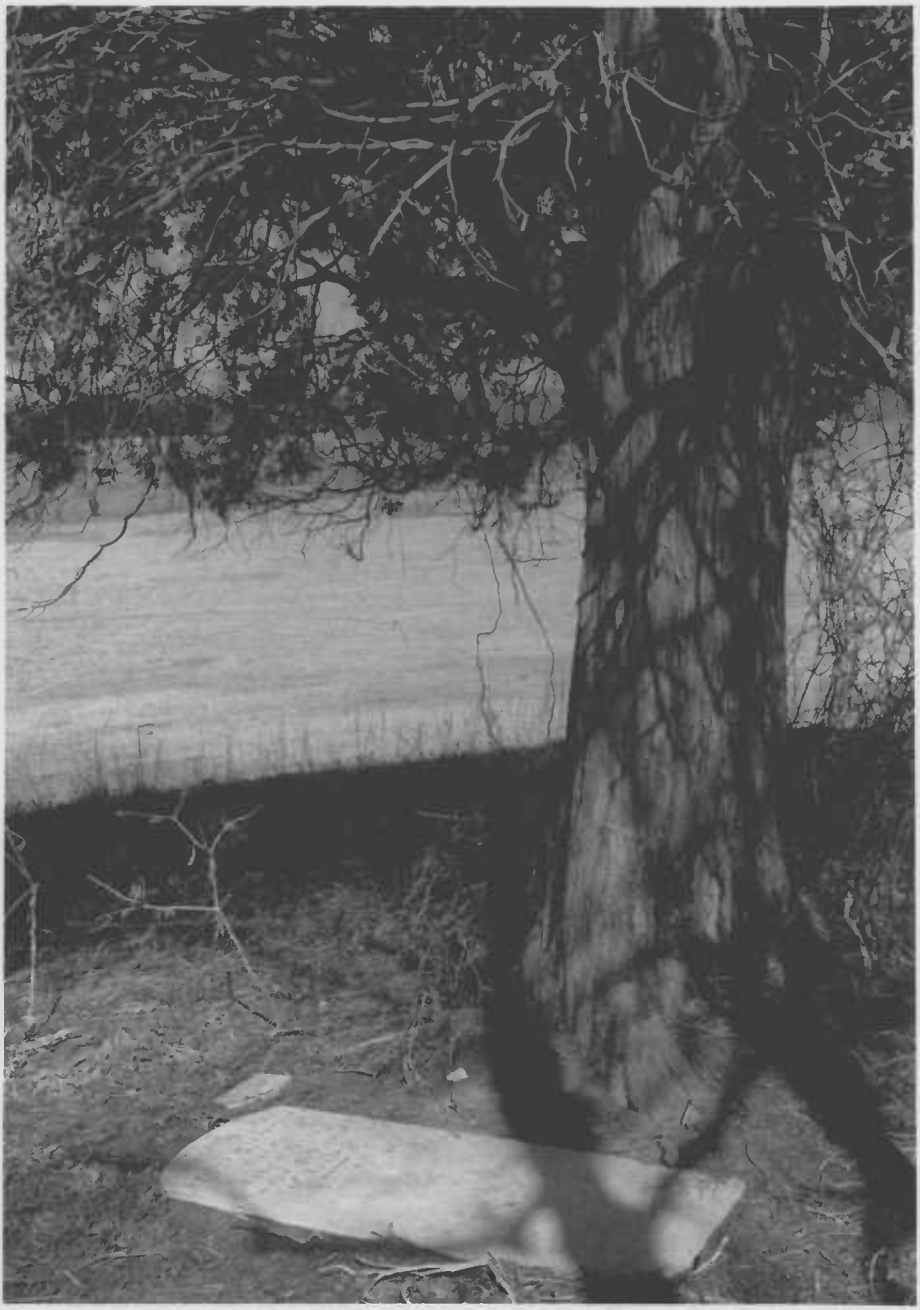
182
193
CH-659
Smoot Graves
Dentsville vic.
Popes Creek Quad
DUBOIS 3.1 MI.
CHARLOTTE HALL 6.1 MI.



CH-659
SMOOT GRAVES
DENTSVILLE
1/2001
C. CURREY/
MD SHPO/
LOOKING NORTH
1 OF 1