

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND FORENSIC RESEARCH
IN SUPPORT OF
THE 1921 TULSA RACE MASSACRE INVESTIGATION:
THE 2024 FIELD SEASON AT OAKLAWN CEMETERY**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Compiled by Kary L. Stackelbeck, Phoebe R. Stubblefield, and Amanda Regnier

Based on contributions by: Alex Badillo, Debra Green, Jennifer Haney, Brenda Nails-Alford, Ryan Peterson, Amanda L. Regnier, Douglas D. Scott, Kary L. Stackelbeck, and Phoebe R. Stubblefield

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The 2024 season yielded substantial evidence of trauma victims buried in Section 20 of Oaklawn Cemetery.
- The investigative team recovered the remains of four additional individuals with gunshot wounds who are likely victims of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre—Burials 135, 157, 194, and 195.
- Among the now-six confirmed gunshot victims recovered in Section 20, five display evidence of multiple gunshot wounds. A minimum of five different calibers of bullets were used to shoot these six victims. Several individuals were struck with bullets of multiple calibers.
- Burial 195 was exposed to intense post-mortem burning, resulting in destruction of components of the remains. Portions of architectural debris were comingled with his remains.
- Beyond the trauma victims, twenty-two other individuals are considered of interest because they partially meet the profile criteria developed for this investigation and have not yet been ruled out as potential Massacre victims.
- Confirmation of the identities of these individuals requires the support of potential descendants from across the country to participate in the DNA and genetic genealogical investigation by Intermountain Forensics (IMF). The potential surnames and places of interest for five of these individuals have been previously announced by IMF.
- Additional archaeological excavations and forensic examinations are proposed to more thoroughly recover likely Massacre victims buried in Oaklawn Cemetery, including three as-yet unrecovered burned victims based on death certificate data.
- Individuals exhumed during the 2022-2024 field seasons were reinterred and honored with a ceremony on November 12, 2024.

Introduction

This executive summary presents some of the most critical results of the archaeological and forensic research conducted in support of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre Investigation during the 2024 field season in Oaklawn Cemetery. This research was conducted by an interdisciplinary team of specialists from the Oklahoma Archeological Survey (OAS), C. A. Pound Human Identification Laboratory (University of Florida), Stantec Consulting Services, Inc., Oklahoma Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, University of Oklahoma, University of Tulsa, San Diego State University, and Texas State University (among others) with support from—and on behalf of—the City of Tulsa and community members. This work is an extension of previous phases of the investigation as coordinated with the Public Oversight Committee in various public meetings between July 27, 2019 and June 21, 2022. A fuller discussion of that process is found in Stackelbeck, Stubblefield, and Ellsworth (2022:1-2) and on the City’s website dedicated to the investigation: <https://www.cityoftulsa.org/1921graves>.

From the outset of the re-opened investigation to locate Massacre victims, several locations were identified as potential targets within Oaklawn Cemetery based on the limited available historic records and oral historic accounts, including the: Sexton Area; Original 18 Area; and two different Clyde Eddy Areas (Figure 1). Over the course of several previous mobilizations, the investigative team utilized remote sensing, the extraction of soil core and auger samples, test excavations, and/or block excavations to systematically examine subsurface deposits at each of these locations. The results of these prior efforts are presented in two comprehensive technical report (Stackelbeck and Stubblefield [compilers] 2022; Stackelbeck, Stubblefield, and Regnier [compilers] 2024) and various meetings, presentations, and press conferences that are archived on the City’s 1921 Graves website: <https://www.cityoftulsa.org/government/mayor-of-tulsa/1921-graves-investigation/committee-meetings-and-members/>.

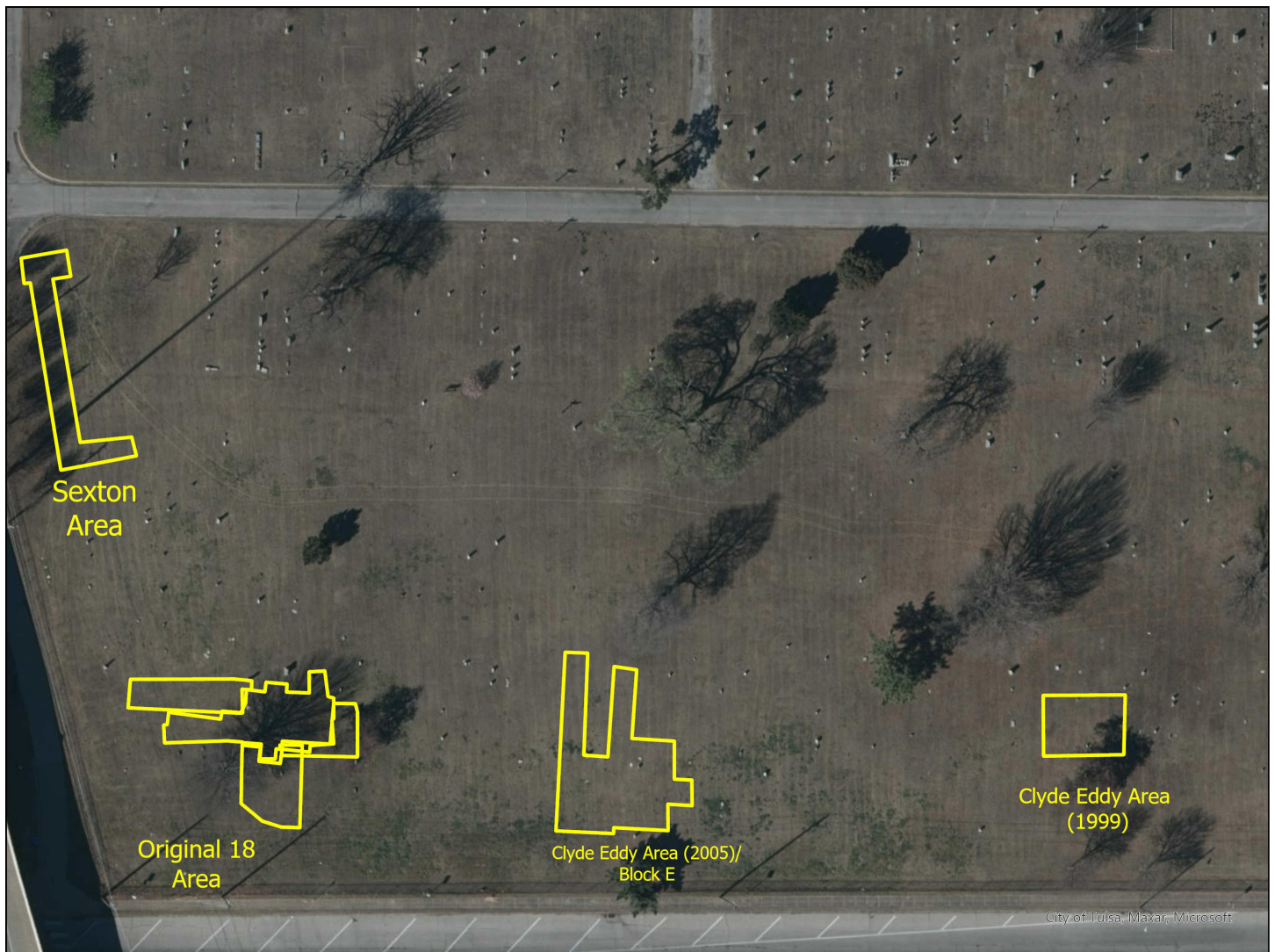


Figure 1. Aerial displaying areas of previous investigation in Oaklawn Cemetery during the 2019-2023 field seasons.

Key findings from previous phases of the investigations as they pertain to the 2024 fieldwork:

- 1) The DNA and genetic genealogical team, working closely with his descendants, successfully identified Burial 3—exhumed in 2021—as that of World War I veteran Private C. L Daniel, an historically documented 1921 race massacre victim. His remains were exhumed in 2021 from the Original 18 Area;
- 2) Two gunshot victims were successfully located and documented: Burials 27 and 42;
- 3) Characteristics of Burial 42 resemble those expected for Eddie Lockard (Stubblefield np). This burial, however, is two rows to the west and two plots north of the position of his headstone. Section 20 of Oaklawn Cemetery has undergone much artificial landscape alteration, a circumstance that facilitates erroneous replacement of headstones as suspected for Burial 42. This calls into question who is interred in the grave shaft that *is* associated with Mr. Lockard’s headstone.
- 4) Two geophysical anomalies thought to be associated with Clyde Eddy’s eyewitness account of a trench (Brooks and Witten 2001; Snow 2001; Witten et al. 2001) have now been archaeologically examined. Neither location yielded evidence of a trench-style mass grave feature. However, individual graves of four adult males buried in simple wooden caskets—including one possible gunshot victim (Burial 101)—were exhumed from the westernmost Clyde Eddy Area. These four individuals have not yet been excluded as possible victims.

Beyond Pvt. Daniel, two gunshot victims (Burials 27 and 42), and one possible gunshot victim (Burial 101), we recovered the remains of 15 other individuals who have not yet been excluded as possible Massacre victims in Section 20 (Figure 2). However, we have not yet recovered the number of adult male trauma victims who are expected to be buried in Oaklawn based on death certificates and other limited records.

2024 Field Season

The 2024 archaeological excavations were conducted under the direction of Kary Stackelbeck (OAS) and Ryan Peterson (Stantec). Eleven sets of recovered remains were examined in the on-site forensic laboratory under the direction of Phoebe Stubblefield. The DNA analysis is under the direction of Daniel Hellwig (IMF) and Alison Wilde (IMF) is directing the genetic genealogical research.

Using the results of the earlier efforts we proposed and completed expansions of the excavation area to increase the likelihood of encountering other individuals who fit our target profile—adult male trauma victims buried in unadorned wooden caskets. Burial 42 was interred in a repurposed shipping crate, which supports expansion of the search parameters to include other forms of simple wooden containers that can expediently function as burial vessels.

New Excavation Blocks F - J were completed between July 22-August 16, 2024 (Figure 3). Seventy-two graves were recorded in these new excavation blocks, most of which were unmarked. Among the 11 exhumed individuals were the following: 1) three individuals from the previously excavated Block A; 2) five from Block F; and 3) one from Block H; and 4) two from Block I (Figure 3).

This document presents an executive summary of the most critical findings and recommendations of the 2024 field seasons—together with data from the 2020-2023 phases of the investigation—in support of expanded excavations at a future date. An exhaustive account of the collective results of the 2024 excavations and specialized analyses are detailed in a forthcoming technical report (Stackelbeck, Stubblefield, and Regnier [compilers] np).

Summary Observations of Burials of Interest

To-date, excavations in Blocks A - J have resulted in the documentation of at least 193 graves in Section 20 of Oaklawn Cemetery (Figure 4).

Twenty-eight individuals in the burial population are of interest because they fit at least two of the characteristics from our target profile: 1) evidence of trauma; 2) male; and 3) interred in a simple wooden burial container (Figure 5). This target profile does not preclude consideration of other individuals as potential victims, but it provides our team with a historical framework to discriminate those burials that are most likely to be potential Massacre victims and warrant exhumation and forensic analyses.

Observations Among the 28 Burials of Interest

- One confirmed Massacre victim—Pvt. C. L. Daniel—has been identified (Burial 3, exhumed in 2021).
- Five individuals were victims of multiple gunshot wounds: Burials 27, 135, 157, 194, and 195 (further details below).
- One individual, Burial 42, was the victim of one gunshot wound.
- One individual, Burial 101, displays evidence of a possible gunshot wound.
- All 28 individuals of interest are males.
- All are buried in plain wooden containers, including 24 unadorned rectangular caskets, one six-sided coffin (Burial 176), and three crates (perhaps repurposed shipping containers).
 - Observations of the construction style and variability in dimensions of the simple caskets suggest non-commercial, local production. Many of these appear to have been built to suit the size of the decedent.
 - Seven caskets appear to have been too small for the decedents they contained—or nearly so—

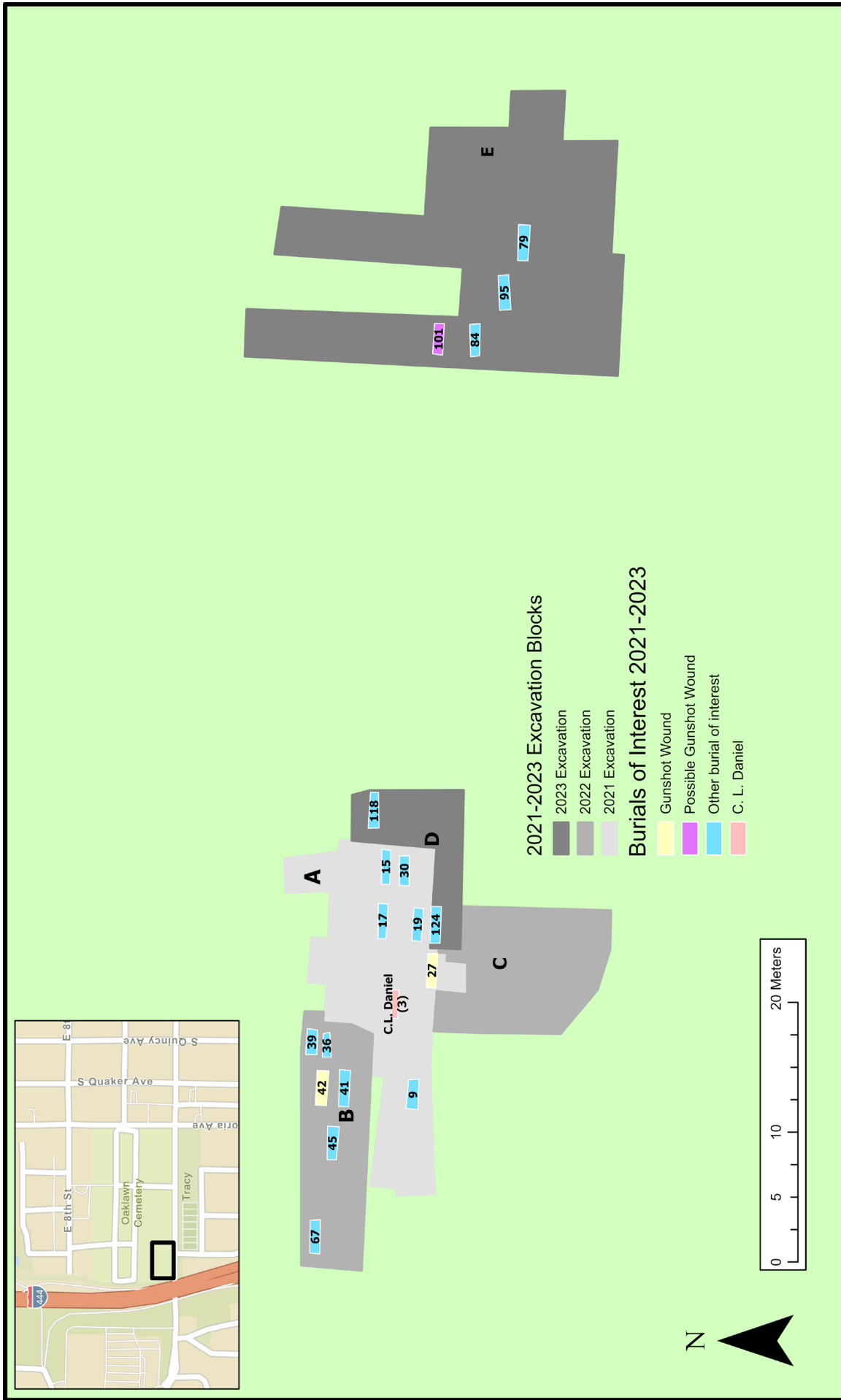


Figure 2. Distribution of burials of interest as located during the 2021-2023 phases of the investigation.

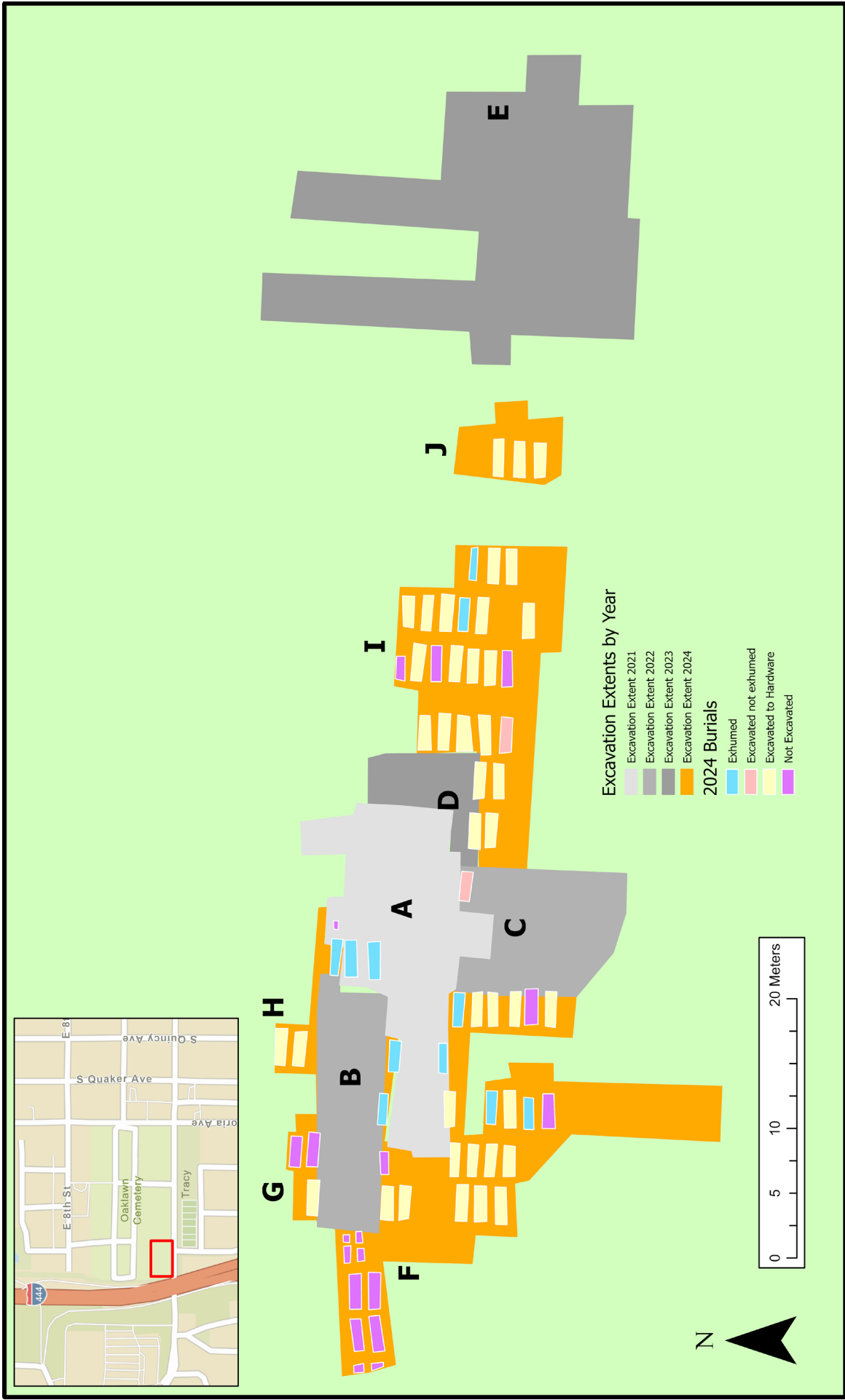


Figure 3. Distribution of documented graves in Excavation Blocks F - J.

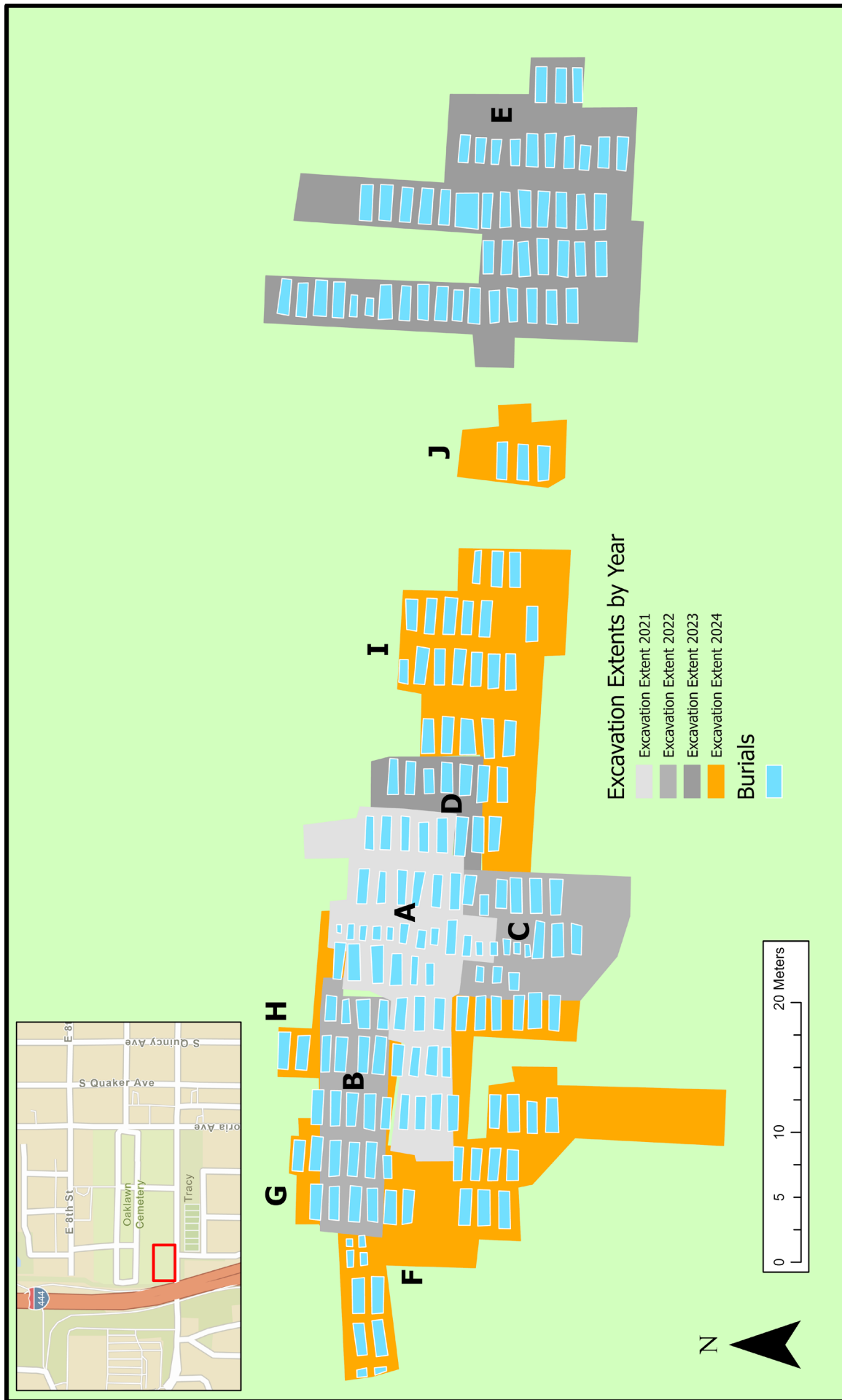


Figure 4. Distribution of all burials documented by the 2020-2024 phases of the investigation.

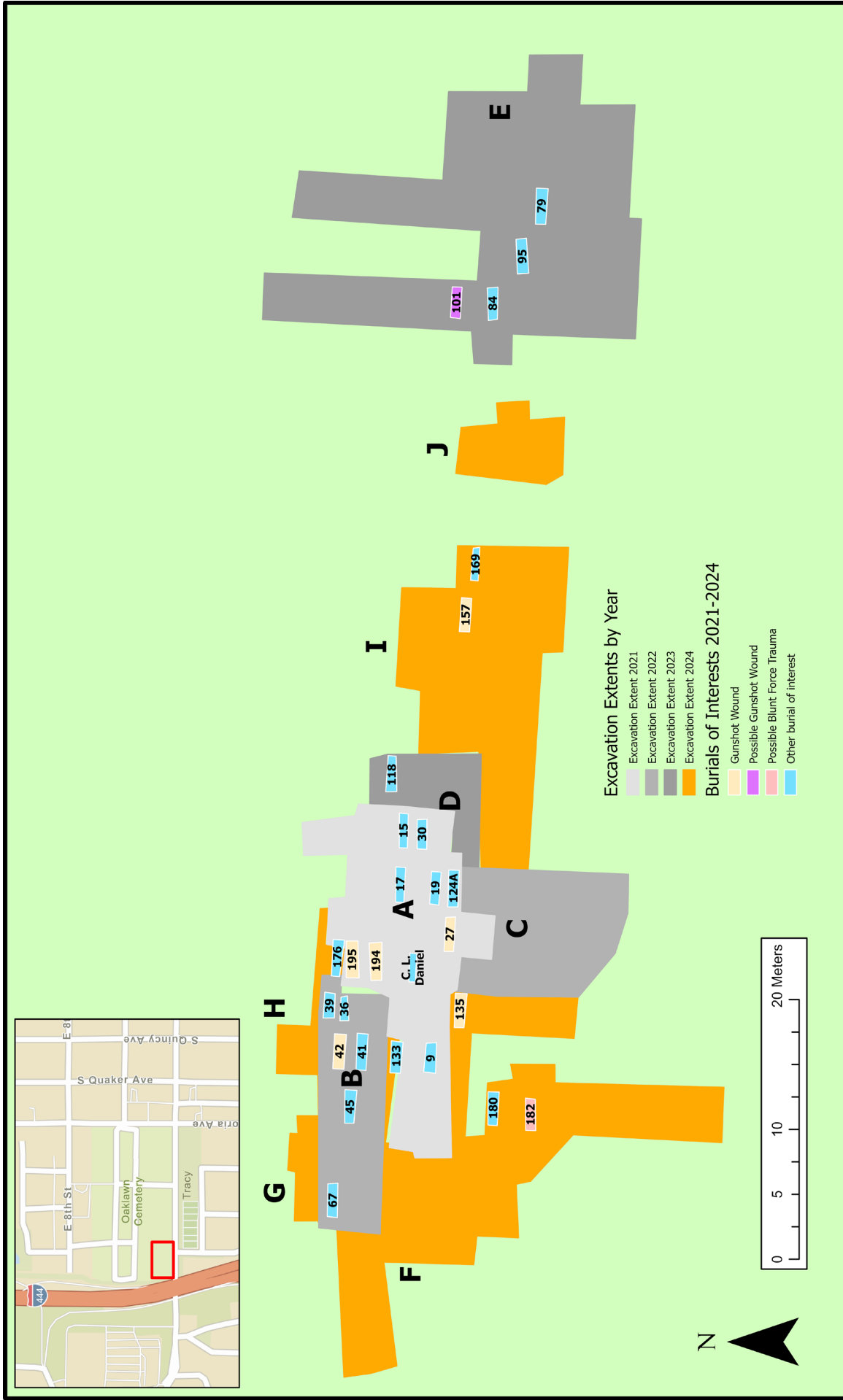


Figure 5. Distribution of burials of interest, including gunshot victims, possible gunshot victims, victims of possible blunt force trauma, and other burials of interest documented in 2020-2024.

including Burials 3, 17, 19, 45, 95, 157, and 182 (and perhaps Burials 84, 124, and 180).

- Two other containers—those of Burials 135 and 194—display the opposite phenomenon; they were too large for their respective individuals.
- The casket for Burial 169 was manufactured from multiple types of wood—which suggests local production and apparent lack of access to sufficient raw materials to use a single source of wood (Haney np).
- Burials 42, 194, and 195 were each interred in a crate—likely repurposed shipping containers. Each of these individuals was a trauma victim whose remains may not have been easily accommodated in a standard casket.
- Four additional examples of expediency are demonstrated by the containers for Burials 65, 95, 157, and 180. These caskets were manufactured from uncured “green” pine wood that had not properly dried, suggesting hasty, local construction with substandard materials. These burials are among those who have not yet been ruled out as Massacre victims except Burial 65. Burial 65 is that of an adult female who suffered blunt force trauma (Stubblefield np). She is not currently among the 28 individuals of forensic interest, but she is of archaeological interest and she is included among the individuals undergoing DNA and genetic genealogical research.
- Beyond C. L. Daniel, four others of these individuals have genetic genealogical profiles for which potential surnames and areas of interest have been previously announced by the Inter-Mountain Forensic (IMF) team, including Burials 15, 17, 41, and 45. DNA analysis is on-going for the remaining individuals and additional profiles are expected.
- At least 11 of the burials (Burials 17, 19, 27, 41, 42, 67, 79, 84, 135, 169, and 194) display evidence of probable postdepositional dislocation of remains at a stage of decomposition when soft tissue was likely still present.
- Among the burials of interest, all but Burial 15 is buried with his head to the west. Burial 15 is oriented with his head to the east.
- All 28 individuals of interest were interred in the relict stream channel that runs along the southern boundary of the cemetery in the New Potter’s Field portion of Section 20, which was established sometime prior to 1917.

Burials of Particular Interest from 2024 Season

The following descriptions of individual burials of particular interest from the 2024 season draws from the archaeological descriptions provided by Stantec, osteological evaluations conducted by the forensic team, and specialized analyses on the recovered bullets and wood samples, which appear in the forthcoming technical report.

Burial 135

- The individual in Burial 135 was a middle-aged adult male in his 30s to 40s.
- He was buried in a simple wooden casket that was significantly larger than necessary for the size of the individual.
- The recovery of a copper rivet and textile fragments around his abdomen and pelvis suggest he was clothed at the time of interment.
- He was the victim of multiple gunshot wounds to his lower body, including pellets from a shotgun and a .32-caliber lead bullet that was fired from a Colt, Smith & Wesson, or Winchester firearm (Figure 6).
- In addition to his gunshot wounds, he also may have suffered blunt facial trauma consistent with a kicking to the face or being struck by a blunt object.

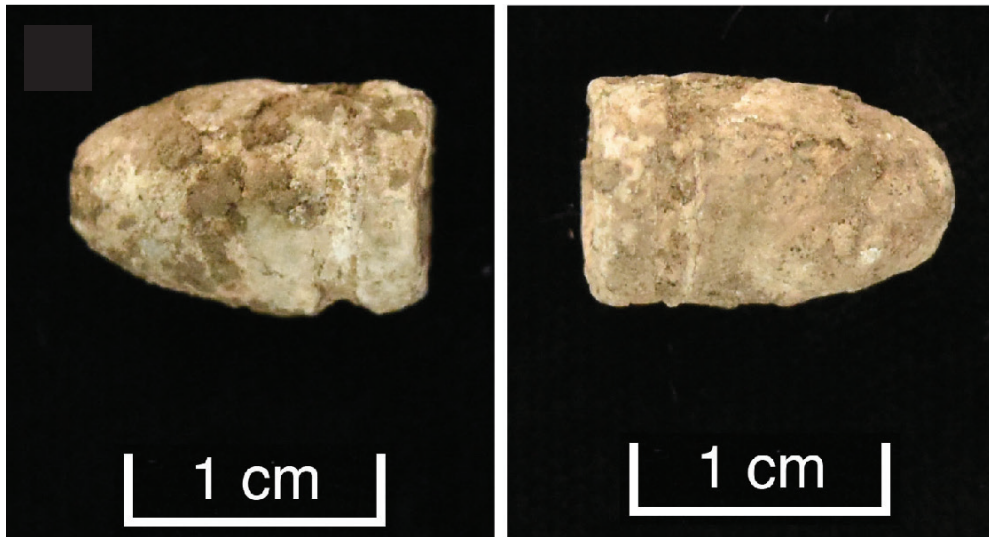


Figure 6. Two views of the .32-caliber lead bullet recovered from Burial 135 (Catalog 1326).

- Stubblefield's (np) summary: "This individual received a potentially disabling shotgun blast to the legs and feet, probably followed by the abdominal gunshot wound that would have caused a prolonged death."

Burial 157

- Burial 157 is that of a young adult male, perhaps in his early 20's who suffered multiple gunshot wounds.
- One bullet recovered from this individual was "a small, deformed lead shot pellet, possibly hardened with tin or antimony" (Scott np) (Figure 7).



Figure 7. Bullet recovered from Burial 157.

- This individual was interred in a simple wooden casket that was too small for his stature.

Burial 182

- The individual in Burial 182 is that of a middle-aged male who may have suffered blunt force trauma to the face.
- The casket was small for the decedent's stature.
- The recovery of three buttons and fragments of possible fabric provide limited evidence that he was likely clothed or wearing some type of garment at the time of interment.

Burial 194

- This individual was a male in his 30's or 40's who suffered multiple gunshot wounds from two guns based on the recovery of a .22-caliber bullet from his thorax and a .38-caliber bullet from his pelvis (Figure 8).
- He was wearing a ring on his left hand at the time of burial. The ring is a 10K-gold Ostby and Barton signet-style band (Drew np) (Figure 9).
- The context of his burial was highly unusual compared to others in the burial population. Portions of the skeletal remains were articulated but out of anatomical position. He appears to have been buried in a semi-flexed position with his knees bent towards his chest. No other burials documented to date have displayed this kind of positioning.
- He was buried in a crate that was repurposed as a casket; it was a large container that was too large for the decedent. The amount of open voided space may have facilitated post-depositional movement of the remains, particularly with water infiltration. This may explain why most of the remains had shifted toward

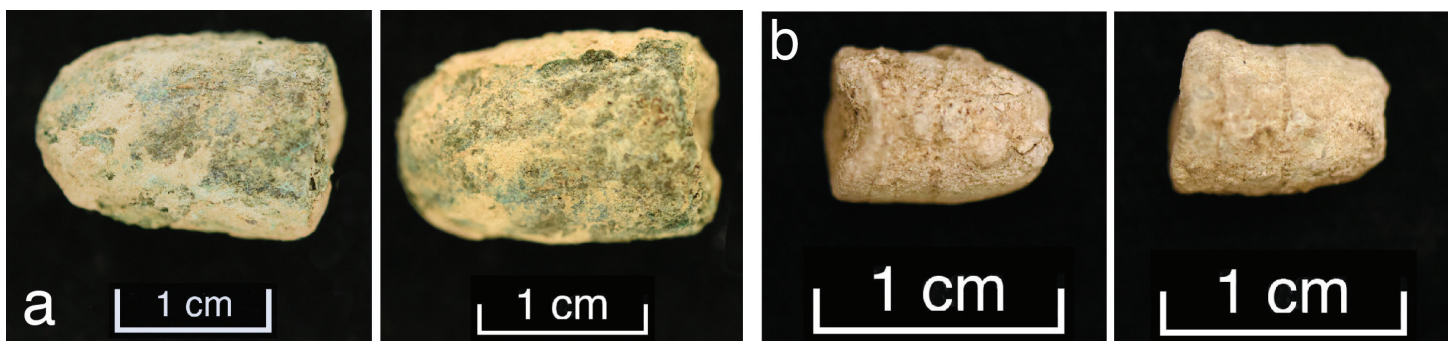


Figure 8. Two views of the bullets recovered from Burial 194: (a) .38-caliber lead bullet (Catalog 1445) and (b) .22 caliber lead bullet (Catalog 1465).

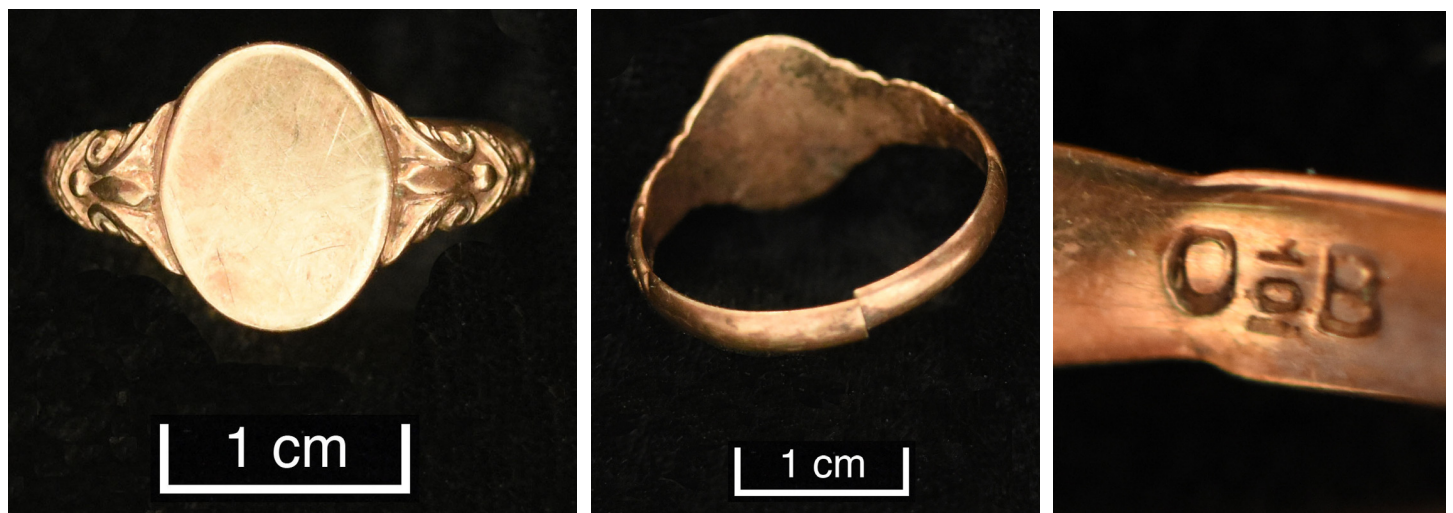


Figure 9. Three views of the 10K-gold Ostby and Barton signet-style band (Catalog 1444) worn on the left hand of the individual in Burial 194.

the east end of the container. However, such displacement would not fully account for the odd burial position as it was encountered during excavation.

Burial 195

- The individual in this burial was an adult male, possibly middle-aged in his 30's or 40's.
- According to Stubblefield (np): "This individual received a potentially disabling shotgun blast to a leg, and possibly received a blast to the torso as well, probably followed by the abdominal gunshot wound that would have caused a prolonged death. A cranial gunshot wound is also possible."
- According to munitions specialist, Doug Scott (np): "minimally the person was shot with at least one .38-caliber firearm, one .38-Special-caliber firearm, and a shotgun" (Figure 10)

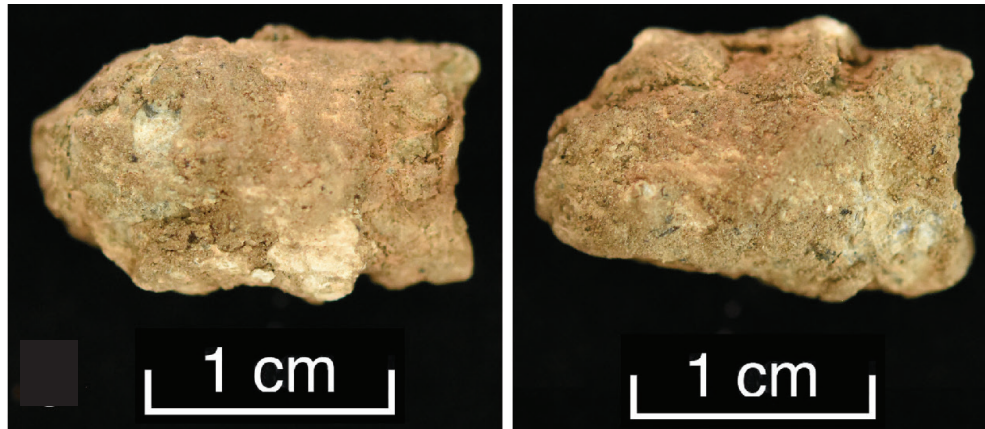


Figure 10. Two views of the .38-caliber lead bullet recovered from Burial 195 (Catalog 1452).

- He was exposed to burning, which resulted in substantial charring and destruction of the remains.
- Several elements were missing from the burial, including his hands, feet, and portions of the skull.
- He was buried in a rectangular container—perhaps a crate.
- Intermingled with his remains were objects that likely derived from the scene of his recovery, including carbonized timber fragments of larch wood, which is principally used in building materials (Haney np).
- Additional unusual objects were documented with this individual, though it is unclear if they were on his person at the time of death or recovered from the scene together with his remains. These include a glass button with thread and seven glass beads (Stubblefield np) and an unfired ballistic cap (Scott np) (Figure 11).
- The recovery of several buttons and textile fragments suggests the victim was clothed at the time of burial (Figure 12).
- Burial 195 is in a grave that is east of the headstone for Reuben Everett. However, the individual in this burial diverges from the death certificate data for Everett by being burned, which is not recorded in Everett's record. These remains also were likely unidentifiable at the time of recovery due to loss of most of the cranium and hands. The headstone is most likely associated with a different burial.

These individuals, along with others who were exhumed during the 2022-2024 field seasons, were reinterred and honored with a ceremony on November 12, 2024 (Figures 13-16). Pvt. C. L. Daniel was also honored in this ceremony (Figures 15-16), which was attended by several of his descendants who assisted the genetic genealogical team with the recovery of his identity. The family issued a letter, a copy of which is included with this executive summary (Figure 17) and is available elsewhere on the City of Tulsa's website dedicated to this investigation.

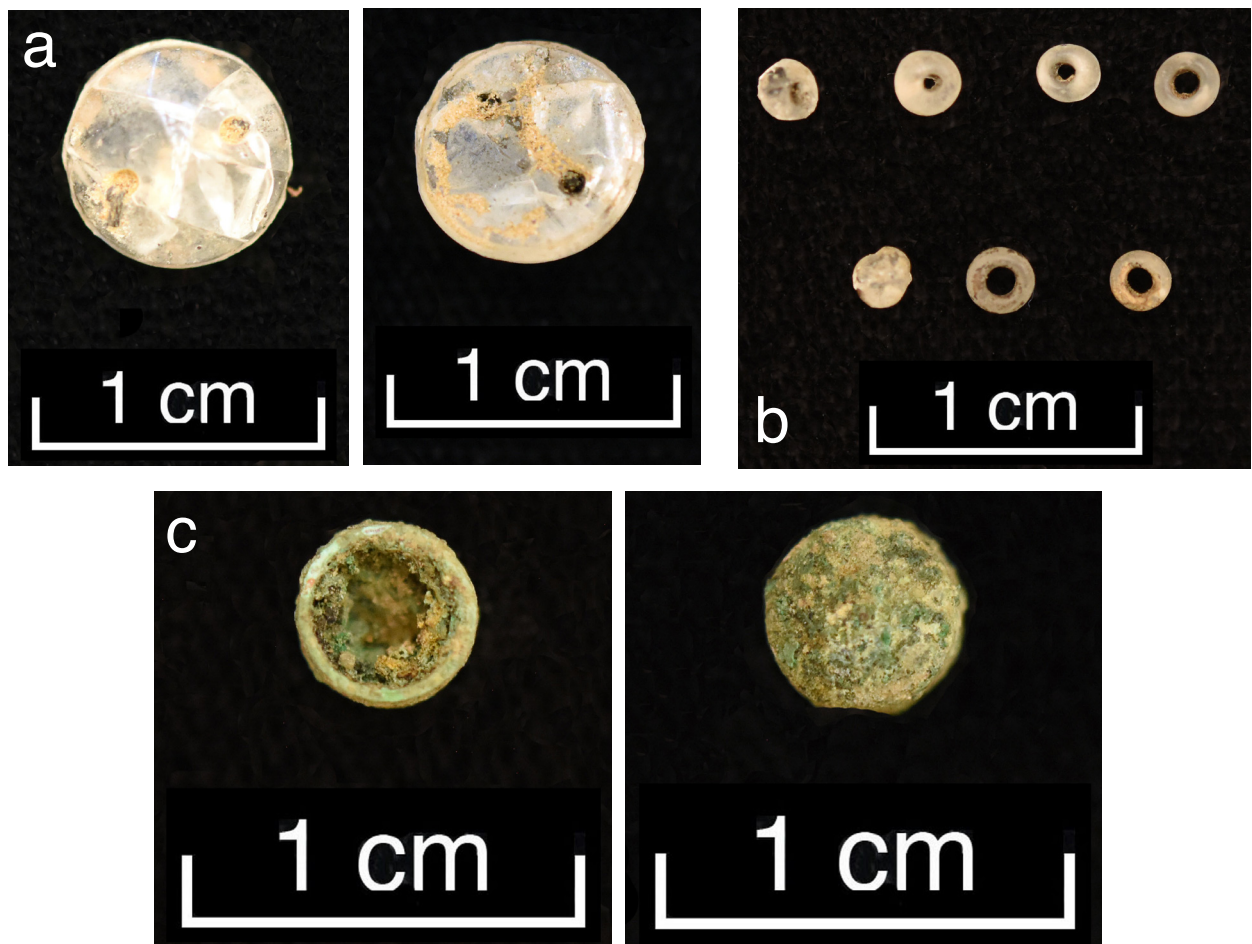


Figure 11. Personal effects from Burial 195, including: (a) two views of a faceted glass button (Catalog 1461), (b) seven seed beads (Catalog 1460), and (c) two views of an unfired ballistic cap (Catalog 1473).



Figure 12. Textile fragments recovered from Burial 195, indicating that he was likely clothed when he was interred.

Markers were placed on the graves of all individuals who have been exhumed as part of this investigation, as well as unmarked graves of individuals whose remains were exposed through excavation but not exhumed (Figure 18). A monument regarding the investigation was erected adjacent to the excavation area (Figure 19). Pvt. Daniel's name appears on the back of the monument, with space for the addition of other names as identities of victims are recovered (Figure 20).

Proposed Next Steps

Taking all the above evidence into consideration, along with other details from the archaeological and forensic investigations, we propose to expand excavations at Oaklawn Cemetery (Figure 21). We have not yet recovered the number of gunshot victims and burn victims that are expected to be buried in Oaklawn based on death certificate data. Block K will target areas west of Block F inside the existing fence line (Figure 21). Excavations in this area will complete documentation of at least ten graves in Block F that were only partially exposed in the 2024 field work (Figure 21). The process of excavation, *in situ* documentation, exhumation, on-site forensic analysis, and extraction of samples for DNA and genetic genealogical analyses will be consistent with previous phases of the investigation.

This proposed work will coordinate with the recommendations of the memorialization committee led by Ms. Brenda Nails-Alford, to conduct reburials of exhumed individuals and marking of exposed burials. This effort should include replacement of existing markers removed for protection during the excavations, as well as enactment of the memorialization committee recommendations.

In closing, the investigative team wishes to express our profound appreciation and gratitude for Mayor G. T. Bynum whose support for this work has been consistent, unwavering, and authentic. We would not be at this juncture in this investigation without his dedication and that of his administration, the Tulsa City Council, and the citizens of Tulsa.



Figure 13. Mayor G. T. Bynum speaking at the reburial ceremony in Oaklawn Cemetery on November 12, 2024 (Photo by Kary L. Stackelbeck).



Figure 14. Community member and descendant representative, Brenda Nails-Alford, speaking at the reburial ceremony in Oaklawn Cemetery on November 12, 2024 (Photo by Kary L. Stackelbeck).



Figure 15. Playing of taps in honor of World War I veteran and Massacre victim, Pvt. C. L. Daniel, at the 2024 reburial ceremony (Photo by Kary L. Stackelbeck).



Figure 16. Honor guard folding an American flag in honor of World War I veteran and Massacre victim, Pvt. C. L. Daniel, at the 2024 reburial ceremony (Photo by Kary L. Stackelbeck).

Honoring the Memory and Legacy of C.L. Daniel, Tulsa Race Massacre Victim

For the family of C.L. Daniel, today serves as a profound reminder of the enduring power of love, especially a mother's devotion. C.L. Daniel, the youngest of Thomas and Amanda Daniel's seven sons, grew up under the care of a vigilant and dedicated mother. While DNA provided the scientific key to his identity, letters written on Amanda's behalf offered the context and connection that confirmed C.L. was killed in the massacre. Amanda's perseverance in seeking redress serves as clear, indisputable proof that C.L. Daniel was indeed a victim of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre.

Over the past two years, we have felt as if our ancestors were with us, guiding us and those dedicated to this project.

C.L. Daniel's journey—from his early days in Newnan, Georgia, to his World War I military service, to his tragic end as a victim of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre—has been brought to light thanks to the dedication of his family and a team of committed researchers and scientists. Today represents more than a memorial for C.L. Daniel and those still resting in unidentified graves; it is a long-awaited acknowledgment of lives impacted by the massacre and a testament to the resilience of the Greenwood community, which has sought recognition and justice for their loved ones over generations. We are profoundly grateful to the Greenwood descendant community.

The family also extends heartfelt gratitude to the City of Tulsa and Mayor G.T. Bynum for their commitment to the 1921 Graves Investigation, which led to the successful identification of C.L. Daniel. This investigation has provided acknowledgment and recognition for the families of those lost, empowering voices that have long been silenced. It is our sincerest hope that this project continues well into the future.

The family wishes to publicly acknowledge and thank the scientists at Intermountain Forensics Lab and the entire investigative genetic genealogy team, especially Janel Daniels and Alison Wilde. Additionally, we extend our gratitude to Dr. Phoebe Stubblefield, Director of Forensic Anthropology from the University of Florida, and Dr. Kary Stackelbeck, State Archaeologist from the University of Oklahoma and their staff, for their tireless work. These teams have illuminated C.L. Daniel's story, reinstating his place in history and preserving his memory for future generations.

On behalf of C.L. Daniel's great-nieces and nephews, we thank you for honoring the life and memory of our great-uncle. His story and death serve as a reminder for all to remain committed to remembrance, justice, and healing.

In unity and remembrance,

The Family of C. L. Daniel
The Family of C.L. Daniel

(For any additional inquiries, contact Stacy Daniel Brown and Andrew Poythress at Cldaniel1921@gmail.com)

Figure 17. Letter from the family of Pvt. C. L. Daniel.



Figure 18. Example of a marker erected for previously unmarked graves investigated as part of this investigation; this specific marker is for C. L. Daniel (Photo by Kary L. Stackelbeck).



Figure 19. Memorial placed near the excavation area in Section 20 of Oaklawn Cemetery (Photo by Kary L. Stackelbeck).

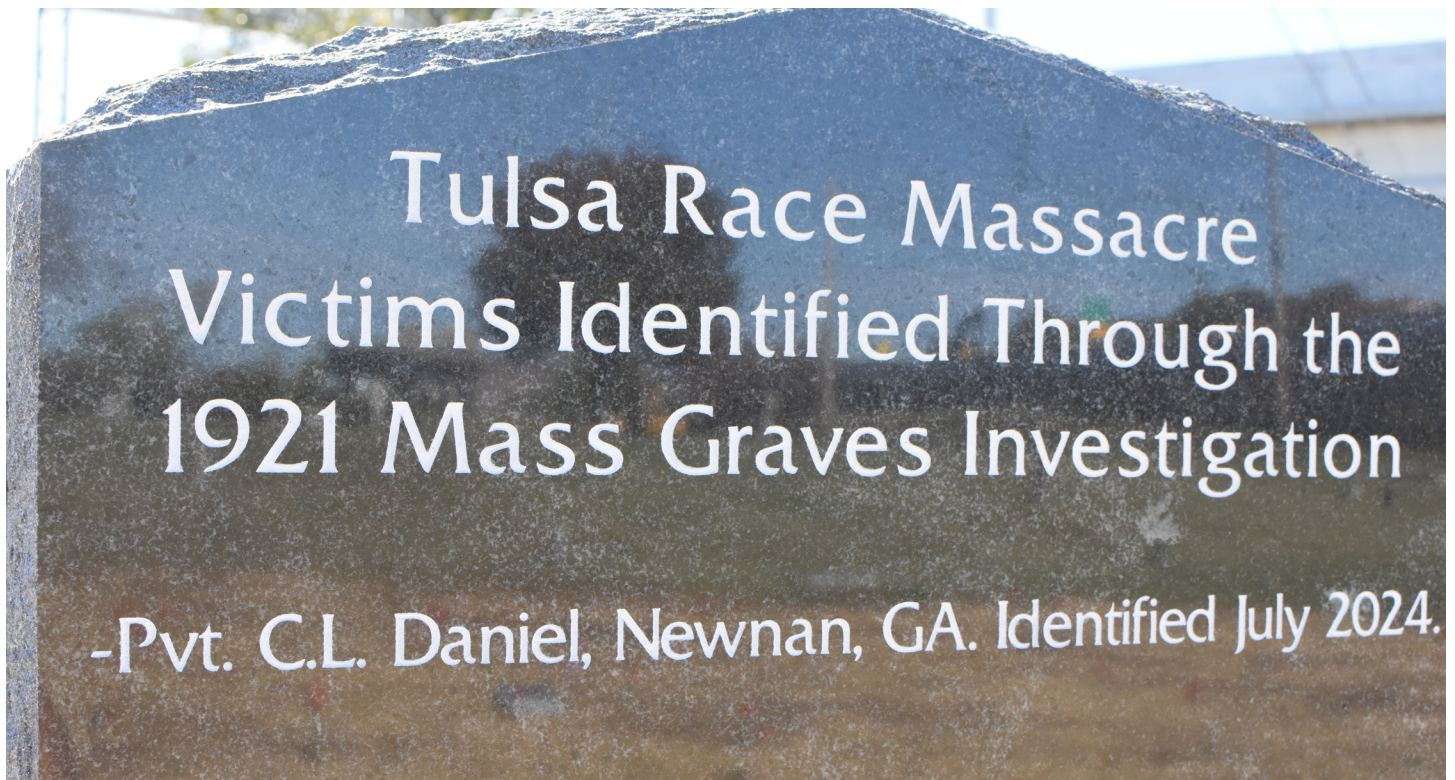


Figure 20. Backside of the memorial etched with the name of Pvt. C. L. Daniel. Names of other Massacre victims will be added as their identities are recovered (Photo by Kary L. Stackelbeck).



Figure 21. Aerial image displaying previous excavations (Blocks A - C and F - H), distribution of documented graves within those blocks, and the proposed Block K.

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