Bringing the Dead Back to Life: Reconstructing Cemetery Burial Registers

Abstract:

Many cemeteries are characterised with few tombstones and no extant burial registers, which could contribute to skewed statistical data. This research sought to apply a methodology that would provide more accurate figures for cemetery analysis. Using the Ironton Colored Cemetery as the sample, this research reconstructed missing burial records through the application of an interdisciplinary methodology, resulting in the discovery of 333 burials when only 50 tombstone markers were present. In addition to offering rich data, this methodology could be of value to archaeologists, and particularly those excavating Native American sites, when exhumation is either unfeasible or prohibited.

Keywords: *cemetery, reconstruction, African American, tombstone, burial register.*