



## MEET THE PEOPLE

### BURIAL 192b A Very Hardworking Man

This very robust man of African heritage stood 6 feet tall, weighed 159 pounds, and lived to be over 50 years old. During his life, he ate somewhat more corn-based products than other people buried in the Cemetery.

The man's bones show he led one of the hardest lives of anyone buried in the Cemetery. Over the course of his long life, he lost a fair number of teeth, and the remaining ones showed much wear. He suffered from malnutrition throughout his life. As a child, he experienced a number of childhood illnesses or times when food was scarce, witnessed by the stress lines in his teeth. And as an adult, he suffered from adult rickets, which is linked to Vitamin D deficiency. In children, the condition results in curved long-bones. In adults, bones become puffy, sponge-like, and soft. Adult rickets results in widespread bone pain and muscle weakness.

His life was one of very physical, very heavy labor. His shoulders show evidence of arthritis, and his elbow joints are enlarged. He also has strong muscle markings on his upper arms and forearms. All of these features point to repeated lifting of heavy objects. Years of heavy physical labor also are reflected in his lower back. There, he suffered from arthritis and collapsed disks, as indicated by painful protrusions on his spine. These conditions suggest his work involved rotation

while lifting, the kind of movement someone would do, for example, while loading heavy bales of hemp onto a riverboat.

His expanded knee and hip joints would have made it painful for him to walk. His right ankle had a boney scar, indicating he had twisted it very badly sometime in his life. It would have taken several months to heal, and even then, he may have walked with a limp. Certainly he would have had some trouble walking after it healed. Lesions on his skull, pelvis, and lower right leg suggest he had experienced some kind of unidentifiable infection sometime in his life. On his head were button tumors. Though unsightly, they are rarely painful.

At his death, this hard-working man's family dressed him in a shirt with two small, four-hole shell buttons, and pants with 10 large five-hole bone buttons. They placed his arms along his sides, with his hands on his pelvis. Then they wrapped his worn-out body in a shroud, pinning it in place with machine-made straight pins. This style of pin indicates he died after 1835.

He was buried in the northern half of the Lower Area. His hexagonal wooden coffin was placed in a simple grave shaft that was covered with limestone slabs. His grave was located directly above Burial 192c. Perhaps she was his daughter, who had died several years before.