Background

Robert Hord (1795-1845), a Hord family historian who was born at Shady Grove, once stated that any American named Hord is descended from John Hord. John Hord was born in Ewell, Surrey, England in 1662. He was a descendant of Allen Hord who acquired the Manor of Cote in 1553, which is located near Bampton in Oxfordshire, England, approximately 70 mile west of London. The Manor of Cote remained in the Hord family for generations and is a very important Hord family landmark. The occupant of the Manor of Cote was considered the head of Hord family members at the time. Sir Thomas Hord, Knight, who died in 1662, was one of the family members that inherited Manor of Cote.

During this period many Hord families resided around the town of Bampton. They were predominantly members of Saint Mary's Church which is located there. In a corner of the chancel of the church, is a small room named the Hord Chapel where many distinguished members of the family are interred including Sir Thomas Hord. Next to the church is a large Hord family cemetery. Recently, Bampton and Saint Mary's church gained notoriety because they were used for the town and church scenes in the production of the very popular TV series, Downton Abbey. The Manor of Cote still exists today and was recently renovated and sold for more than 1.2 million pounds, approximately two million dollars.

John Hord (1662-1749) moved from England to the colony of Virginia around 1702 together with his wife, Elizabeth Jane Redd Hord, and his infant son, Thomas. They settled somewhere in Middlesex near the Christ Church Parish. While living there he and Elizabeth had four more children. Vestry records indicate that they were all baptized at Christ's Church Parish.

Eventually, in 1717 John and Elizabeth acquired a plantation in Essex County that they named Shady Grove. John had his house in England dismantled, moved and reconstructed on this plantation. In 1727, Essex county was rezoned to make way for the creation of Caroline county resulting in Shady Grove becoming
located in the newly formed Caroline County. Over time, John Hord acquired more surrounding property and Shady Grove grew to be approximately 2100 acres much of which was located in Essex county. Close to the house is a cemetery which contains many members of the Hord family including John Hord and his wife, Elizabeth. Nearby, is another cemetery containing an unknown number of slave graves.

Shady Grove Ownership

The Hord Family occupied Shady Grove for more than a hundred years. John Hord, who was apparently predeceased by his wife, Elizabeth, lived there until he died in 1749. He bequeathed the house and property to his son Ambrose Hord (c1725-1781). Ambrose had no children so, in 1781, he bequeathed ownership of Shady Grove to John Hord the son of his brother, William Hord. When he died in 1821, his son Robert Hord, who was executor of his estate, sold Shady Grove to Daniel Reynolds who still occupied the property in 1838. Afterward, the property passed to Birkenhead Boutwell but it is not known exactly when he purchased it. He died before 1850 leaving the property to his wife, Catherine Boutwell. During the Civil War she converted the house into a hospital to treat wounded soldiers. Catherine, who lived beyond 1870, left the property to her grandson John Boutwell Smith. When he died sometime between 1920 and 1930, ownership of Shady Grove passed to his sister, Ida Boutwell Smith Gatewood. When she died the property passed to her son, Homer Gatewood, who sold it sometime after 1937 to George Dorsey. In 1941, he was forced to sell Shady Grove to the government to make way for the construction of a new training facility for the US Army.

In 1941, the house and farm property at Shady Grove was occupied by Herbert and Ruth Farmer and their four children. Obviously, they were renting the property from the owner, George Dorsey. One of the children, Willard Jasper Farmer, who was later interviewed for the book, Wealthy at Heart, described his family's difficult life at Shady Grove. These were the depression years; his family struggled to exist by farming part of the land. The entire interview with Willard can be read in the report, Shady Grove - Final Years.

Shady Grove Location

Although there are numerous historical references to the location of Shady Grove, none of them provided sufficient information to determine exactly where the property was situated. The directions given by Robert Hord (1795-1845), who sold the property in 1821, were not very specific. Reverend Arnold Harris Hord (1867-1951), a Hord family historian, visited Shady Grove in 1893 and again in 1913 but directions that he provided weren't any more helpful in locating the property. One possible reason was that the roads in the area were not very well named or marked at that time. In December, 1936, the property was visited by Selma Farmer from Port Royal who surveyed it for the Caroline County WPA project but her directions to the property were incorrect and very misleading. Below are some of the historical descriptions given for the location of Shady Grove.
1) "It (Shady Grove) is located two miles south of the Rappahannock River and eight miles below where the town of Port Royal now stands. The present dividing line between the counties of Caroline and Essex passes near the house which was situated near a double popular tree now (1838) standing and for the past fifty years, a tree of great notoriety." - Robert Hord, Manuscript Genealogy of the Hord Family, 1838 and Rev Hord, The Hord Family of Virginia pg 40.

2) "The house (Shady Grove) is situated about a half of mile from the public highway and is approached by a winding road which is about two-thirds of a mile long. The first sight of the house from the pike is extremely pleasing. It stands upon a knoll or a ridge overlooking the surrounding country. From the broad hall that extends through the building from front to rear one may look in either direction over many miles of country. The house occupies the most conspicuous point in the landscape and with its white halls and red roof visible through the great oak trees that surround it, makes an attractive picture. About two hundred yards distant is the burial ground of the Hord family, which is marked by a group of tall trees standing in the midst of a field. The graveyard is over grown with honeysuckle to the depth of about two feet." - The Hord Family of Virginia, page 46 authored by Rev Arnold Harris Hord (1913).

3) "...situated on a branch of the Portobago Bay, called the deep branch, thence up the sd branch to the line of John Hord." - The Hord Family of Virginia, page 41 authored by Rev Arnold Harris Hord (1913), This is taken from an indenture (5/20/1734) for the sale of property adjacent to Shady Grove.

4) ...the Shady Grove estate comprised about 2100 acres of land." The Hord Family of Virginia, page 41 authored by Rev Arnold Harris Hord (1913), according to the Clerk of Caroline County in 1883.

5) "Shady Grove is located two miles northeast of Brandywine and one half mile west of hwy 619." - Selma Farmer, WPA Caroline County Survey, 12/18/1936, Port Royal - these directions are grossly inaccurate; it is impossible to go northeast of Brandywine and west of hwy 619, perhaps she meant southwest of Brandywine.

Needless to say, none of these directions to Shady Grove were sufficient to pinpoint its location. However, after a careful investigation, it soon became apparent that Shady Grove is now part of a very large US Army military base.

Fort AP Hill

In 1942, the government decided to build an artillery training facility in Caroline County, Virginia known as Fort AP Hill. Today, this facility covers more than 80,000 acres or approximately one quarter of the entire county. It is bounded on the northeast by hwy 17; on the east by hwy 625; on the south by hwy 630, and 721; and the west by hwy 2. Hwy 301, between Port Royal and Bowling Green, the Caroline County seat, essentially divides Fort AP Hill in half. Fort AP Hill headquarters are located on hwy 301, just a few miles
east of Bowling Green. Refer to the map on the right.

In preparation for the construction of the training facility, the US Army created a large tract map of the area that defined the boundaries of all the properties to be condemned and confiscated by the Army. This map assigned a tract number to each of the condemned properties. The map also identified the owners of the properties and the amount they were paid for their land. Most importantly the map identifies and shows the location of all the cemeteries on these properties which the Army intended to move. A copy of this map was located and photographed at the Library of Virginia in Richmond, Virginia. Another copy resides with the Caroline County Historical Society and is the working copy of the person who the Army contracted to move all of the cemeteries.

After carefully reviewing the US Army tract map it became apparent that Shady Grove was located on tract #1284, a 312 acre parcel which was last owned by George Dorsey who sold it to the government for $4565.00 in 1941. Two cemeteries are clearly marked on the tract map for the Shady Grove property proving that the Army was completely aware of their existence before construction began on the training facility. The location of Shady Grove is shown on the map to the right, which was provided by Fort AP Hill. The road that separates the shaded areas is old hwy 619, now North Range Road.

The construction of Fort AP Hill required the displacement of more than 500 families, approximately 2200 people. These were mostly poor farm families struggling to make a living during the depression. Many businesses, located within the boundary of the training facility, were either forced to relocate or close. A small town known as Brandywine, which was located about 2 miles north of Shady Grove, consisted of many small businesses that supplied the people living in the area with the essentials of life. Brandywine was completely razed and no longer exists. The buildings abandoned by the families that were evicted became artillery targets including the house and farm buildings at Shady Grove. The county highways throughout the area, 616, 618, 619, 620, 622, 623, 642 and others were eliminated and renamed by the Army. Approximately a half mile of the eastern border of Shady Grove was hwy 619, which is now known as North Range Road.

Scanning the area where Shady Grove is located using Google Earth, an area that the Army refers to as its "impact zone", shows evidence that much of the debris from the artillery training was removed, craters filled and large impacted areas graded over by heavy earth moving equipment. One such area on the Shady Grove property covers approximately 50 acres; it is close to the two cemeteries and is highly likely where John Hord's house stood. The remaining property contains groups of trees that appear to have been there for many years, surrounded by large amounts of land that was used for farming that is now lightly covered with small trees that appear to have been planted.
Shady Grove Directions

Shady Grove is located entirely within the confines of Fort AP Hill in an area referred to as the "impact zone" and hence, is totally inaccessible to the public or the family. However, if you could travel there, two approaches are available from hwy 17. First, travel two and a half miles southeast of Port Royal on hwy 17 until you reach a road called Hampton Trail which used to be hwy 620. Turn right onto Hampton Trail and travel two miles to the intersection of North Range Road which was hwy 619. This intersection is where the town of Brandywine was once located. Turn left onto North Range Road and travel for approximately one and a half miles, then turn right into Shady Grove.

Another way to get to Shady Grove is to follow hwy 17 approximately 6.5 miles southeast from Port Royal to the intersection of hwy 625. Turn right onto hwy 625 and proceed three and a half miles through the town of Supply to the intersection with North Range Road, old hwy 619. Turn right onto North Range road and travel north one and a half miles, then, turn left into Shady Grove.

Traveling southeast on hwy 17 towards the intersection with hwy 625 you will pass Portobago Bay, which is an upscale community on the left. This is the area where John Hord spent the winter months in an estate known as Liberty Hill. The house there burned down about 1912. Its exact location is still a mystery.

From the intersection of hwy 17 and hwy 625, approximately three miles further southeast on hwy 17 you will find Saint Anne's Parish on the left. This is where John Hord worshiped until he died in 1749. Saint Anne's is in excellent condition and is still an active church. It is referred to as Vauter's Church named after the owners of the property at the time it was built.

The Shady Grove Cemeteries

There were many cemeteries, which contained more than 2500 graves, located on some of the properties acquired by the Government for the construction of Fort AP Hill. One of these cemeteries is the Hord Family cemetery which is shown in the photo at the left. You can see the house at Shady Grove in the distance. The Army decided to move all of the graves to two nearby cemeteries; the graves of the white race were moved to Green Lawn Cemetery near Bowling Green while the graves of the black race were moved to Mount Lawn Cemetery near Woodford, Virginia, located six and a half miles north of Bowling Green.
Lloyd "Jack" Davis, shown here in the photo, owned a funeral home in Bowling Green; he was contracted by the Army to move all of the cemeteries prior to the construction of Fort AP Hill. He was under heavy pressure by the Army to complete the movement of all graves within 100 days. Although he had very limited resources he moved most all the graves and kept detailed record of every grave he moved; his records are posted on the Internet. Most of the remains had to be placed in new wooden coffins before being re-interred. Unfortunately, before he was able to complete his contract, he was apparently prohibited from moving several cemeteries. A review of his records reveals that the two cemeteries at Shady Grove were among those that he was prohibited from moving possibly because the Army was anxious to start artillery training exercises and the cemeteries at Shady Grove were in the newly defined "impact zone".

The Hord Family cemetery at Shady Grove contains approximately forty graves, many of whom were veterans of the Revolutionary War; attached is a list of these veterans. Others may have been veterans of the War of 1812. Most, if not all, of these veterans are among the many family members interred there. One of them, Lieutenant Thomas Hord, grandson of John Hord, was among the soldiers that survived the winter of 1777-1778 at Valley Forge. Later, after he was promoted to Captain, he lost his nose in the battle at Charleston where he and one other member of his unit were the only ones to survive. Another grandson of John Hord, Peter Hord, suffered the loss of a leg and an eye in the War.

The other cemetery at Shady Grove was a slave cemetery. For over one hundred and fifty years many slaves worked at Shady Grove. The 1850 census shows that 62 slaves were still employed there by the Boutwell family. Undoubtedly, this continued until the Civil War ended in 1865. Therefore, it is likely that the slave cemetery contains the most graves.

Willard Jasper Farmer, son of Herbert and Ruth Farmer whose family was living at Shady Grove until they were evicted by the Army in 1941, joined the Army when he grew up; he served for 30 years. Ironically, his last assignment was at Fort AP Hill before he retired. Undoubtedly, he was aware of the cemeteries at Shady Grove and knew exactly where they were located. It is difficult to believe that he did not mention their existence to his superiors at Fort AP Hill.

Summary

Two letters were sent to the Commander of Fort AP Hill, Lt. Colonel Peter Dargle, requesting his help in locating the Shady Grove property and inquiring about the status of the two cemeteries that were located there. Also, it was requested that he take the necessary steps to move or at least protect the cemeteries if it was discovered that they had not been moved. Additionally, requests were made for permission for access to the Shady Grove property by Hord family members in the event that the cemeteries were still on the property. Commander Dargle responded confirming that tract #1284 was the location of Shady Grove and that the cemeteries had not been moved. However, he said that the property is located in their “Impact Area” where there is a danger of the presence of unexploded ordnance and hence, none of the requests made could be permitted. He also stated that since the
cemeteries were detected in 2010 it has been their practice to avoid these areas during training exercises. Furthermore, he stated that the US Army has no plans to take any other action regarding the cemeteries.

John Mullin, Cultural Resource Manager at Fort AP Hill who discovered the cemeteries at Shady Grove, recently sent me a previously classified aerial photo taken in 1937 showing the Shady Grove property. In this photo, shown below, you can see the Shady Grove property outline in light blue, the house and the two cemeteries. The cemetery directly east of the house is the Hord family cemetery; the cemetery northeast of the house, close to the road is the slave cemetery. From the photo it is difficult to discern any “shade” at Shady Grove however a close up shows some trees around the house. John said that many trees on Shady Grove were removed during the mid 1800s. The front of the house faces north.

![Aerial Photo of Shady Grove Property](image)

This photo is extracted from a file with a pdf format which is much clearer. The pdf version can be magnified to a certain extent giving a better view of the property.
You can mail your comments to:

Lt. Col. Peter Dargle
Commander, Fort A.P. Hill
Hq/Public Affairs Office
18436 4th Street
Fort AP Hill, VA 22427

References

1) The Genealogy of the Hord Family - Reverend Arnold Harris Hord, 1893
   http://archive.org/stream/genealogyofhordf00hord#page/n9/mode/2up

2) The Hord Family of Virginia - Reverend Arnold Harris Hord, 1915
   http://archive.org/stream/hordfamilyofvirg00hord#page/n9/mode/2up

   http://fortaphill.files.wordpress.com/2011/05/wealthyinheart.pdf

4) Caroline County WPA Survey of Shady Grove, 1936
   http://www.woodforkgenealogy.com/images/Shady_Grove_-_Hord_Family.PDF
Hord Family Veterans of The Revolutionary War

- Thomas Hord (William Hord, John Hord) d. 1810 Residence: Port Royal and Liberty Hill, Caroline County, Virginia
  
  12/13/1776 Second Lieutenant in the 10th Virginia Infantry
  
  03/01/1777 First Lieutenant in the 10th Virginia Infantry
  
  1777-1778, Winter: Valley Forge, PA - First Lieutenant in the 10th Virginia Infantry under Colonel John Green
  
  09/10/1778 Captain-Lieutenant in the 10th Virginia Infantry
  
  09/14/1778 Captain-Lieutenant in the 6th Virginia Regiment
  
  05/12/1780 Wounded and captured at Charleston; nose was cut off and replaced
  
  02/18/1781 Captain in the 6th Virginia Regiment
  
  1782 & 1808 Awarded 5,221 acres of land for his service by Act of Congress

- Jesse Hord (Thomas Hord, John Hord) Officer in the Virginia Militia

- Ambrose Hord (John Hord II, John Hord)
  
  04/10/1776 Private in the Ninth Virginia Regiment under Captain William Henderson and Colonel George Mathews
  
  10/1777 Discharged

- Peter Hord II (Peter Hord I, John Hord)
  
  Virginia Militia Wounded losing a leg and an eye

- Thomas Hord II (Thomas Hord I, John Hord) b. 7/11/1722 d. 5/11/1778
Corporal  Prince William County, Virginia Militia - French and Indian War

- John Hord (William Hord, John Hord)
  
  01/20/1777  First Lieutenant Fourth Dragoon Continental Army

  08/14/1777  Ensign Caroline County, Virginia Militia under Captain Stern's Company

  01/08/1777  Ensign of Militia, Caroline County, Virginia

  02/12/1778  Second Lieutenant Caroline County, Virginia Militia

  1779  Captain in Lee's Light Dragoons

- James Hord (William Hord, John Hord)
  
  02/13/1777  Ensign in the 7th Virginia Regiment

  08/13/1778  First Lieutenant in Caroline County, Virginia Militia under Captain Sthresly

- Richard Hord (William Hord, John Hord)
  
  1781  Captain in the Caroline County Militia

- James Hord II (James Hord I, John Hord)
  
  Ensign - King George County Militia