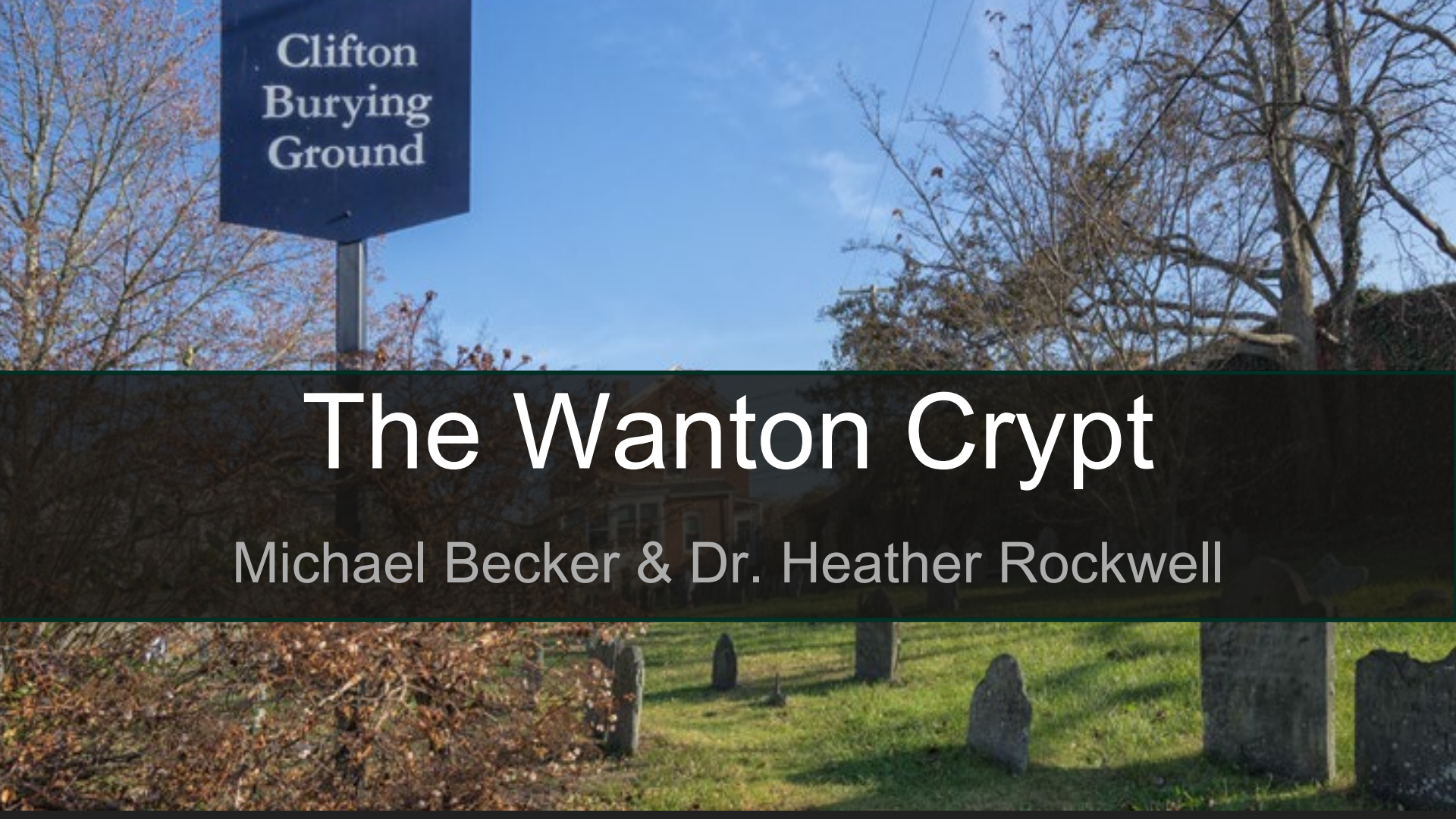


The Wanton Crypt

Michael Becker & Dr. Heather Rockwell

Clifton Burial Ground



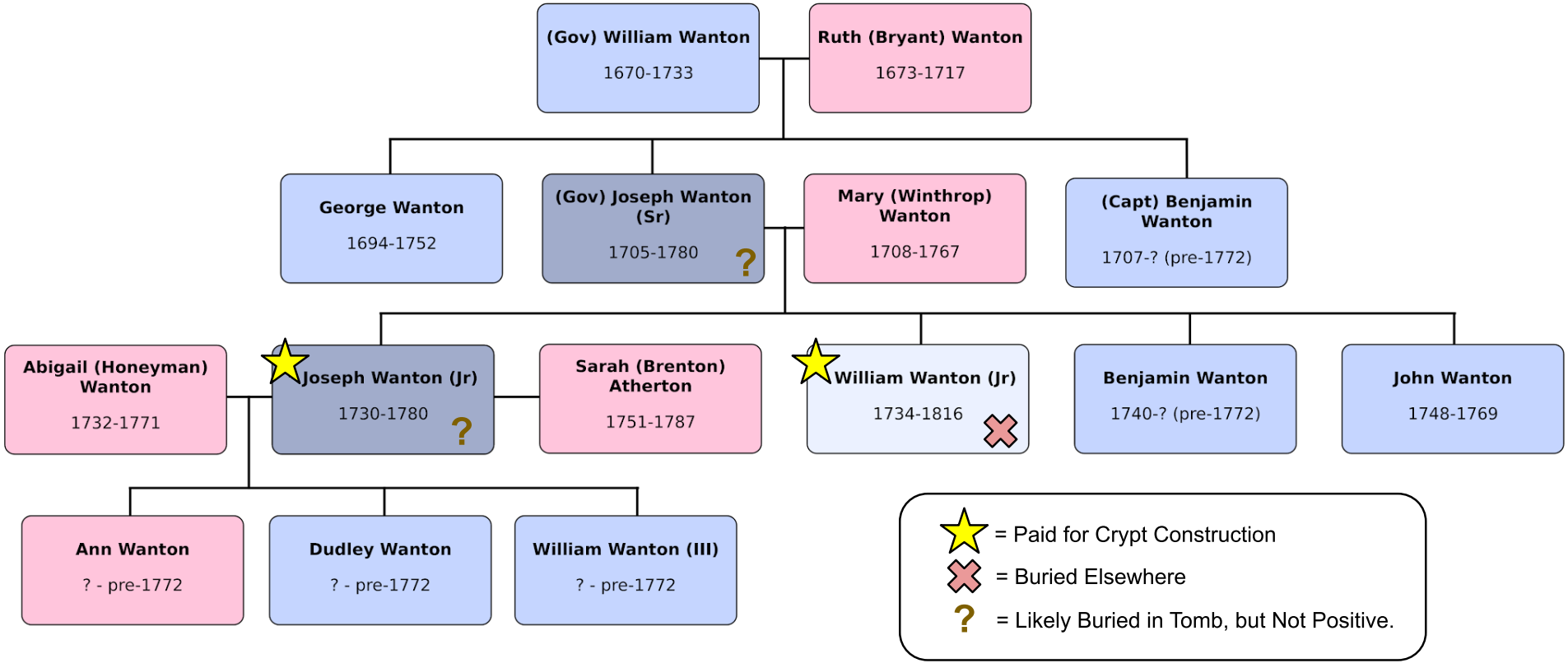
Vault Construction + Wanton Family





Portraits of Governor William Wanton (Left) and his son Governor Joseph Wanton (Right)

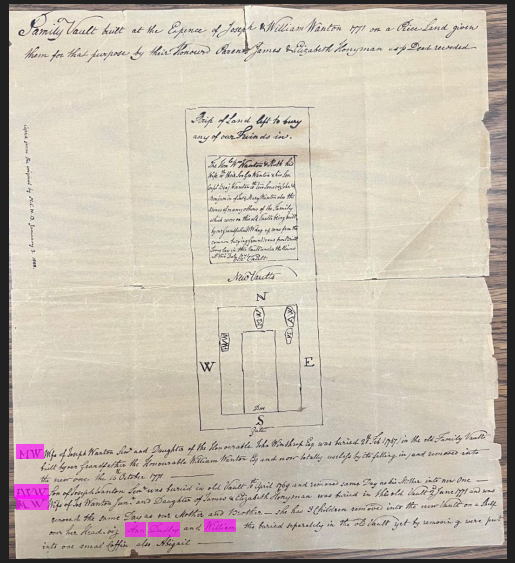
Vault Construction + Wanton Family

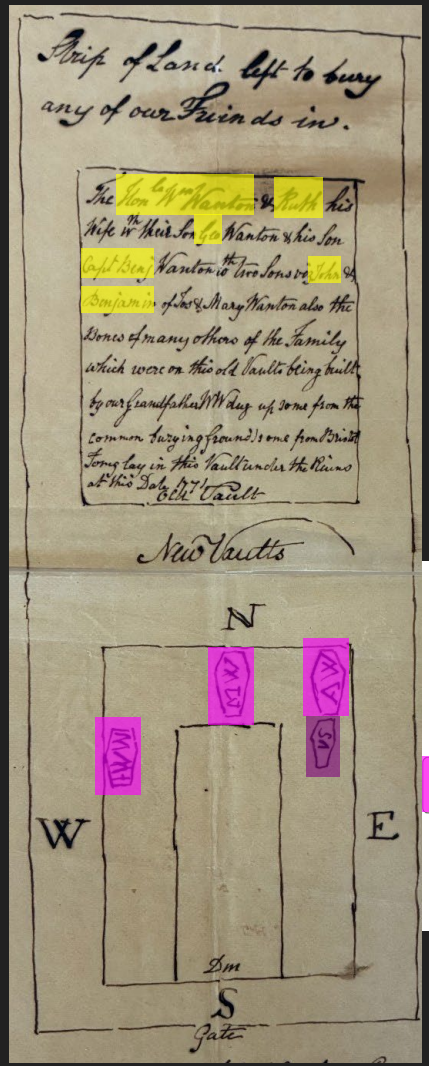


Hand-Drawn Map

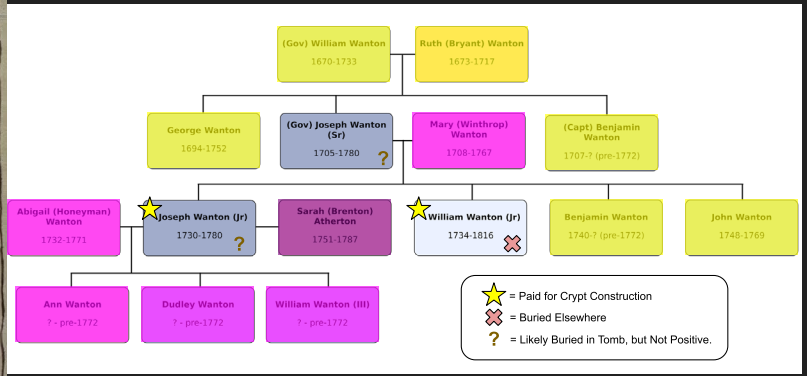


Hand-Drawn Map





"The Hon[orable] W[illiam] Wanton + Ruth his Wife with their Son Geo[rge] Wanton + his Son Capt[ain] Benj[amin] Wanton + his two [grand]Sons viz John + Benjamin of Jos[eph] + Mary Wanton also the Bones of many others of the Family which were on this old Vault's being built by our Grandfather W[illliam]W[anton] dug up some from the common burying Ground / some from Bristol long lay in this Vault under the Ruins at this Date 1771"



MW (Mary Wanton)
IWW (John Winthrop Wanton)
AW (Abigail Wanton)
- 3 of Abigail's children interred on a shelf above her; Ann, Dudley, and William

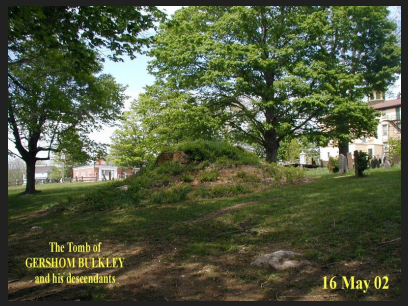
SA (possibly Sarah Atherton),
Or: VS (vidae supra / see above), referring to Abigail's children

Bulkeley Tomb, Colchester, CT



Bulkeley Tomb, Colchester, CT



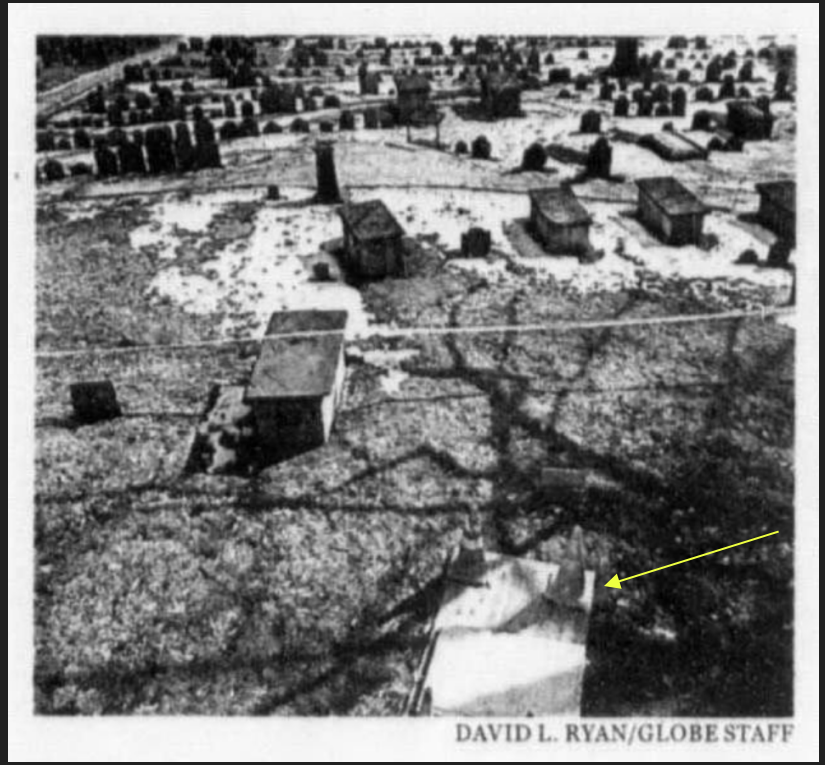


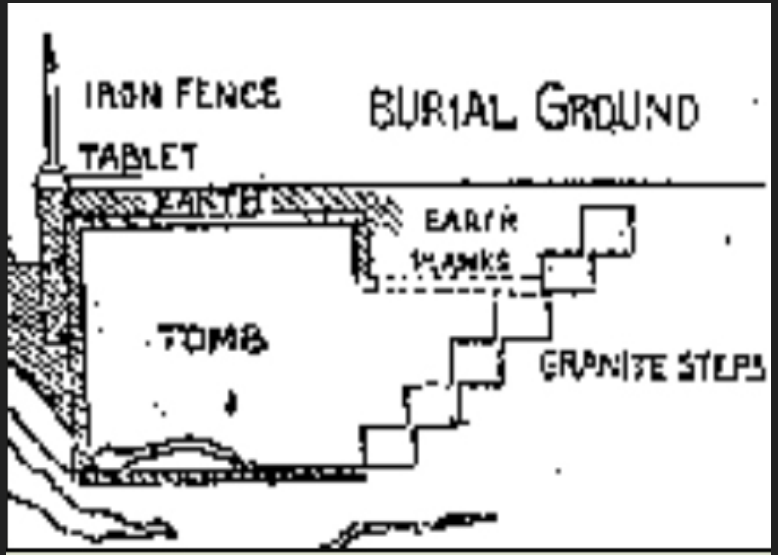




Photos from Colchester Historical Society, "The Discovery and Excavation of the Gershom Bulkeley Tomb"

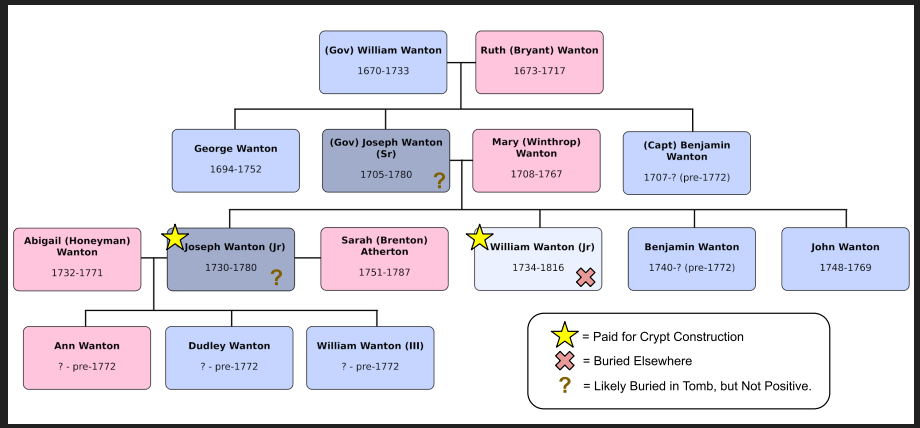
Armitage Tomb, Granary Burying Ground, Boston





A diagram of an underground tomb in the Granary Burying Ground an 1897 *Boston Herald* article.

What Do (and Don't) We Know?



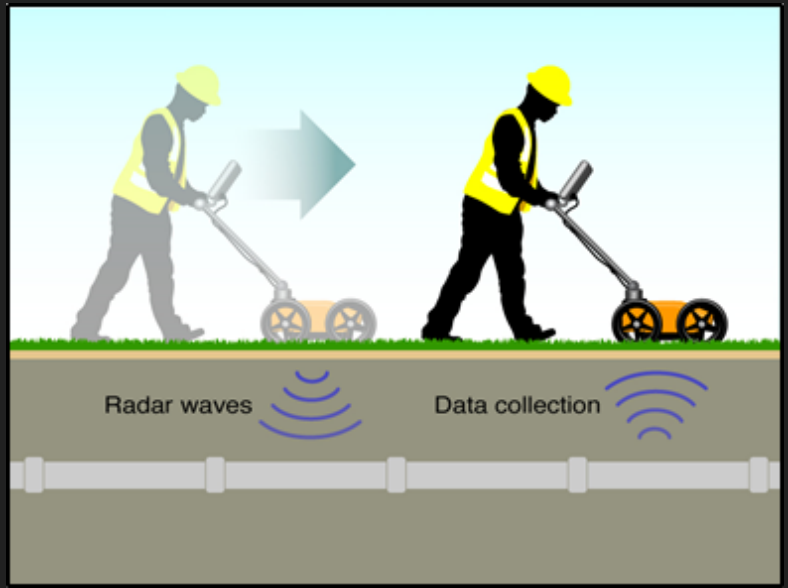


William & Ruth Wanton's Descendants: Documented in Wanton Crypt (Top); FamilySearch (Bottom)

What is GPR?

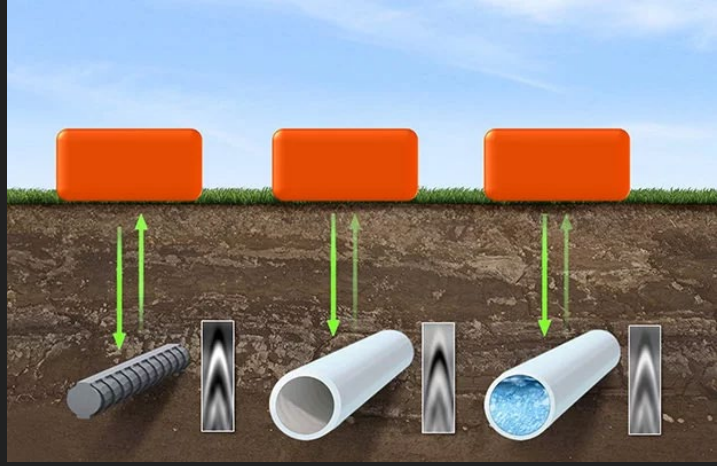


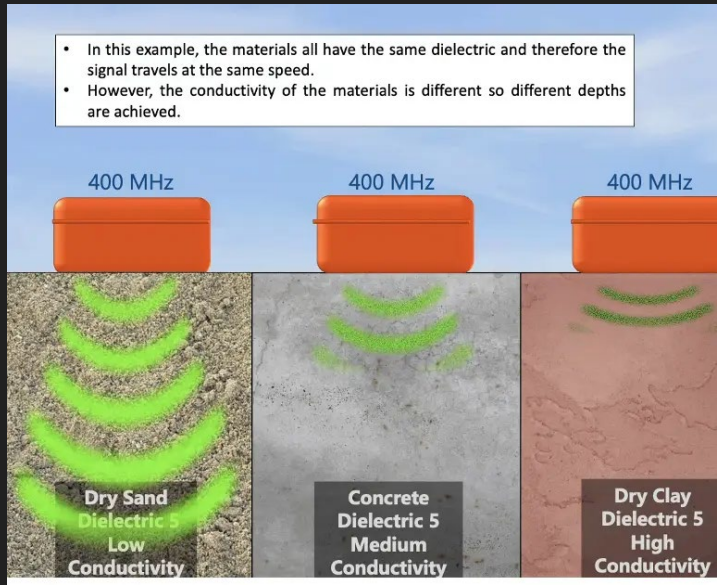
- Ground Penetrating Radar
- Originally developed for construction



How does it work?

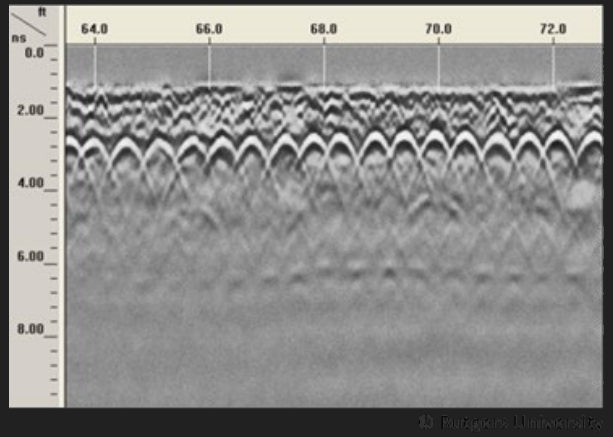
- Pulse of energy into material and then recording the strength and the time required for the return.
- If there is nothing to “bounce off of” the signal dissipates
  - Dissipates at different rates depending on the material

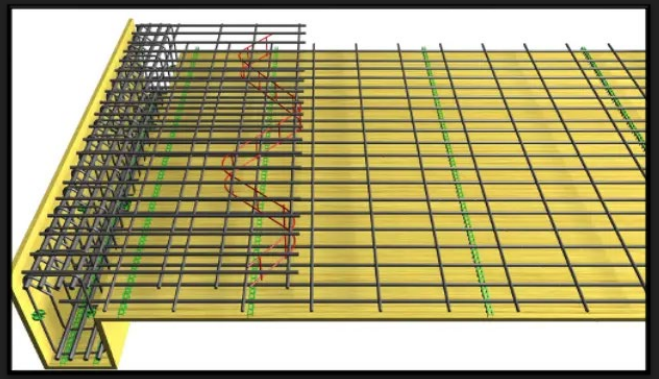




What does it look like?

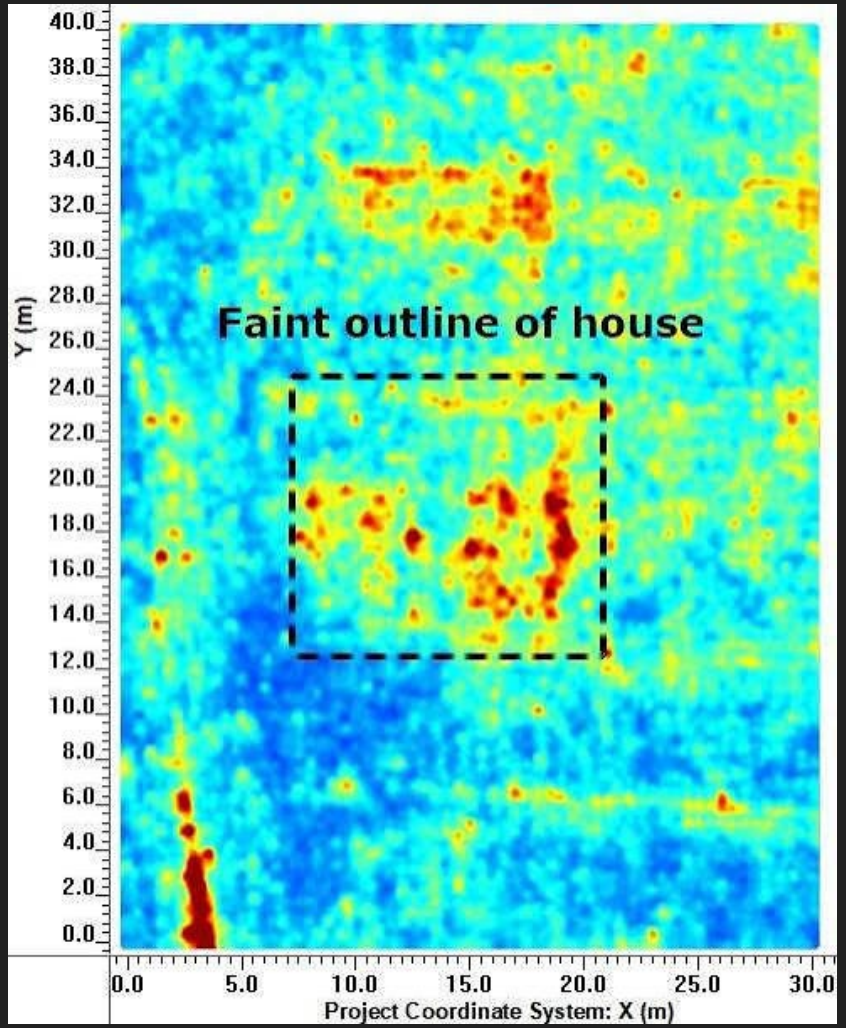
- Hyperbola
- “Slice”
- Right, scan of rebar in concrete





What can it find?

- Identifies sub-surface anomalies
  - Buried Structures, foundations, pit features, etc.
  - Graves and Crypts
  - Underground tunnels, chambers, wells, cisterns, trenches



GPR Results



50 centimeters below surface

GPR Results



1 meter below surface

GPR Results

Interior open space

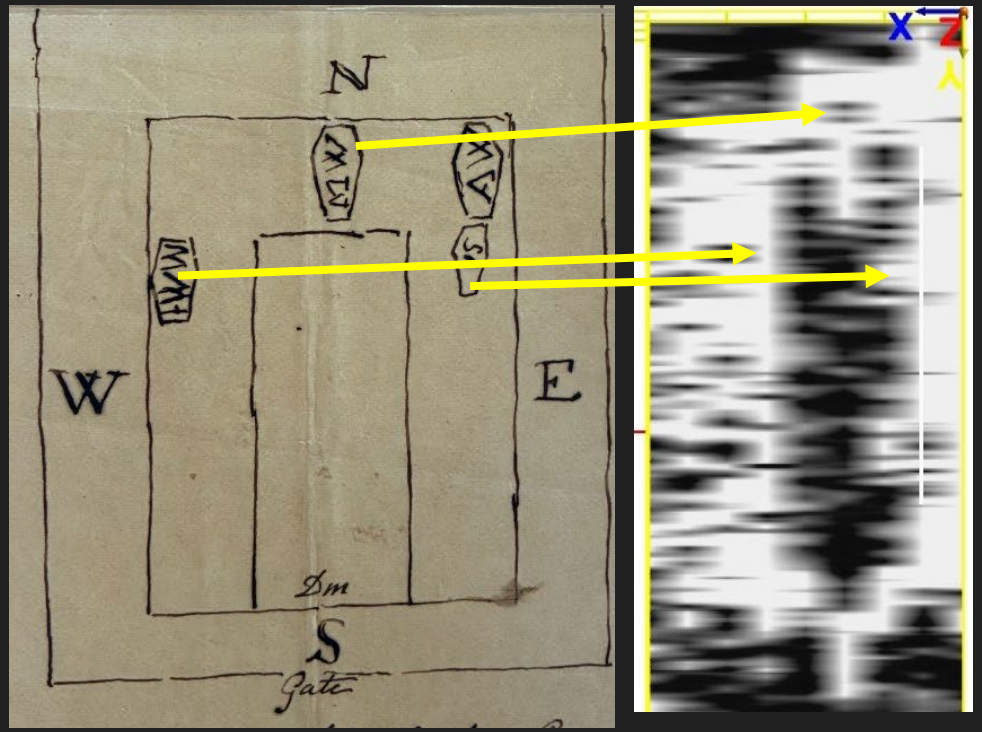
Crypt wall with possible Alcoves

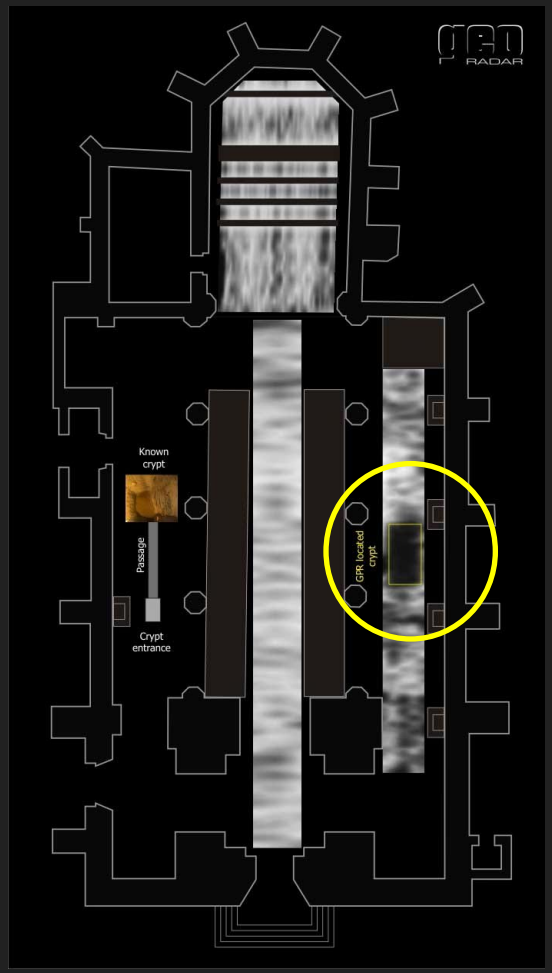
Stairs?



1.2 meter below surface, Largely stable until 2.2 meters

Comparison to Drawn Image





Conclusion

- Crypt likely extends from the cap going north
- Large tree on the north end of the crypt may have roots infiltrating into the northern ceiling or walls
- Overall crypt walls appear intact but structural stability cannot be assessed.

