



Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18AG9

Site Name: Oldtown I

Prehistoric

Other name(s) Oldtown Colonial Site, Cresap's Fort

Historic

Unknown

Brief Description:

18th century site, early fort/homestead or cabin/trading post

Site Location and Environmental Data:

Maryland Archaeological Research Unit No. 21

SCS soil & sediment code MnA, MnB

Latitude 39.5438

Longitude -78.6059

Physiographic province Ridge and Valley

Terrestrial site

Underwater site

Elevation m

Site slope 0-8%

Ethnobotany profile available

Maritime site

Site setting

-Site Setting restricted

-Lat/Long accurate to within 1 sq. mile, user may need to make slight adjustments in mapping to account for sites near state/county lines or streams

Topography

- Floodplain
- Hilltop/bluff
- Interior flat
- Upland flat
- Ridgetop
- Terrace
- Low terrace
- High terrace
- Rockshelter/cave
- Hillslope
- Unknown
- Other

Ownership

- Private
- Federal
- State of MD
- Regional/county/city
- Unknown

Nearest Surface Water

Name (if any) Mill Run

- | Saltwater | | Freshwater | |
|--|--|--|--------------------------------|
| Ocean <input type="checkbox"/> | Estuary/tidal river <input type="checkbox"/> | Stream/river <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Swamp <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Tidewater/marsh <input type="checkbox"/> | Lake or pond <input type="checkbox"/> | Spring <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Minimum distance to water is 19 m

Temporal & Ethnic Contextual Data:

- Paleoindian site
- Archaic site
- Early archaic
- Middle archaic
- Late archaic
- Woodland site
- MD Adena
- Early woodland
- Mid. woodland
- Late woodland
- Unknown prehistoric context

- Contact period site
- ca. 1820 - 1860
- ca. 1630 - 1675
- ca. 1675 - 1720
- ca. 1720 - 1780
- ca. 1780 - 1820
- Unknown historic context
- Unknown context
- ca. 1820 - 1860
- ca. 1860 - 1900
- ca. 1900 - 1930
- Post 1930
- Y
- Y

Ethnic Associations (historic only)

- Native American
- African American
- Anglo-American
- Hispanic
- Asian American
- Unknown
- Other
- Y

Y=Confirmed, P=Possible

Site Function Contextual Data:

- ### Prehistoric
- Multi-component
 - Village
 - Hamlet
 - Base camp
 - Rockshelter/cave
 - Earthen mound
 - Cairn
 - Burial area
 - Misc. ceremonial
 - Rock art
 - Shell midden
 - STU/lithic scatter
 - Quarry/extraction
 - Fish weir
 - Production area
 - Unknown
 - Other context

- ### Historic
- Urban/Rural? Rural
 - Domestic
 - Homestead
 - Farmstead
 - Mansion
 - Plantation
 - Row/townhome
 - Cellar
 - Privy
 - Industrial
 - Mining-related
 - Quarry-related
 - Mill
 - Black/metalsmith
 - Furnace/forge
 - Other
 - Transportation
 - Canal-related
 - Road/railroad
 - Wharf/landing
 - Maritime-related
 - Bridge
 - Ford
 - Educational
 - Commercial
 - Trading post
 - Store
 - Tavern/inn
 - Military
 - Battlefield
 - Fortification
 - Encampment
 - Townsite
 - Religious
 - Church/mtg house
 - Ch support bldg
 - Burial area
 - Cemetery
 - Sepulchre
 - Isolated burial
 - Bldg or foundation
 - Possible Structure
 - Post-in-ground
 - Frame-built
 - Masonry
 - Other structure
 - Slave related
 - Non-domestic agri
 - Recreational
 - Midden/dump
 - Artifact scatter
 - Spring or well
 - Unknown
 - Other context

Interpretive Sampling Data:

Prehistoric context samples Soil samples taken N

Flotation samples taken N Other samples taken

Historic context samples Soil samples taken N

Flotation samples taken N Other samples taken



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Diagnostic Artifact Data:

Projectile Point Types		
Clovis	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Hardaway-Dalton	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Palmer	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Kirk (notch)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Kirk (stem)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Le Croy	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Morrow Mntn	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Guilford	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Brewerton	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Otter Creek	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Koens-Crispin	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Perkiomen	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Susquehana	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Vernon	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Piscataway	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Calvert	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Selby Bay	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Jacks Rf (notch)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Jacks Rf (pent)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Madison/Potomac	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Levanna	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Prehistoric Sherd Types

Marcey Creek	<input type="checkbox"/>	Popes Creek	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shepard	<input type="checkbox"/>	Keyser	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Dames Qtr	<input type="checkbox"/>	Coulbourn	<input type="checkbox"/>	Townsend	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yeocomico	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Selden Island	<input type="checkbox"/>	Watson	<input type="checkbox"/>	Minguannan	<input type="checkbox"/>	Monongahela	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Accokeek	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mockley	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sullivan Cove	<input type="checkbox"/>	Susquehannock	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Wolfe Neck	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clemson Island	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shenks Ferry	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Vinette	<input type="checkbox"/>	Page	<input type="checkbox"/>	Moyaone	<input type="checkbox"/>			
				Potomac Crk	<input type="checkbox"/>			

Historic Sherd Types

Earthenware			Ironstone			Staffordshire			Stoneware	
Astbury	<input type="checkbox"/>		Jackfield	<input type="checkbox"/>		Tin Glazed	<input type="checkbox"/>		English Brown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Borderware	<input type="checkbox"/>		Mn Mottled	<input type="checkbox"/>		Whiteware	<input type="checkbox"/>		Eng Dry-bodied	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buckley	<input type="checkbox"/>		North Devon	<input type="checkbox"/>		Porcelain	<input type="checkbox"/>		Nottingham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creamware	<input type="checkbox"/>		Pearlware	<input type="checkbox"/>					Rhenish	<input type="checkbox"/>
									Wt Salt-glazed	<input type="checkbox"/>

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Other Artifact & Feature Types:

Prehistoric Artifacts			Other fired clay		
Flaked stone	<input type="checkbox"/>	459	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ground stone	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Modified faunal	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Stone bowls	<input type="checkbox"/>		Unmod faunal	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Fire-cracked rock	<input type="checkbox"/>	109	Oyster shell	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other lithics (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>		Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ceramics (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	Uncommon Obj.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Rimsherds	<input type="checkbox"/>		Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Prehistoric Features

Mound(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Storage/trash pit	<input type="checkbox"/>
Midden	<input type="checkbox"/>	Burial(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shell midden	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ossuary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Postholes/molds	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>
House pattern(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Palisade(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Hearth(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Lithic reduc area	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Lithic Material

Jasper	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Chalcedony	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sil sandstone	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chert	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ironstone	<input type="checkbox"/>	European flint	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rhyolite	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Argilite	<input type="checkbox"/>	Basalt	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quartz	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Steatite	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quartzite	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sandstone	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
				metamorphic, s	

Dated features present at site

Historic Artifacts			Tobacco related		
Pottery (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	48	Activity item(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Glass (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	201	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Architectural	<input type="checkbox"/>	53	Faunal material	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Furniture	<input type="checkbox"/>		Misc. kitchen	<input type="checkbox"/>	364
Arms	<input type="checkbox"/>		Floral material	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Clothing	<input type="checkbox"/>		Misc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Personal items	<input type="checkbox"/>		Other	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	fossil/manuport

Historic Features

Const feature	<input type="checkbox"/>	Privy/outhouse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Depression/mound	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foundation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Well/cistern	<input type="checkbox"/>	Burial(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cellar hole/cellar	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Trash pit/dump	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Railroad bed	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Hearth/chimney	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sheet midden	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Earthworks	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Postholes/molds	<input type="checkbox"/>	Planting feature	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mill raceway	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Paling ditch/fence	<input type="checkbox"/>	Road/walkway	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wheel pit	<input type="checkbox"/>		

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Radiocarbon Data:

Sample 1: +/- years BP Reliability Sample 2: +/- years BP Reliability Sample 3: +/- years BP Reliability

Sample 4: +/- years BP Reliability Sample 5: +/- years BP Reliability Sample 6: +/- years BP Reliability

Sample 7: +/- years BP Reliability Sample 8: +/- years BP Reliability Sample 9: +/- years BP Reliability

Additional radiocarbon results available



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External Samples/Data:

Collection curated at MAC Lab (TBD)

Additional raw data may be available online

Summary Description:

Site 18AG9 (known variously as the Oldtown I site, the Oldtown Colonial site, and the Cresap's Fort site) is situated on the eastern edge of a low terrace overlooking Seven Springs Run, a small tributary of the Potomac River in Allegany County, Maryland. It is located approximately 530 meters (1,739 feet) east-southeast of Lock 69 in the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal (C&O Canal) National Historical Park, and about 400 meters (1,312 feet) from the Potomac. The site today is maintained as a hayfield, but was plowed historically. Past archaeological work, coupled with archival background research strongly suggests that this site contains the buried remains of the mid-late 18th-century fortified home of Colonel Thomas Cresap.

Thomas Cresap is one of the most important frontiersmen in Maryland and American history. He played a major role in land speculation, both at the northern and western boundaries of Maryland. He played a role, along with the Delaware Indian, Nemaocolin, in blazing a settler's road across the Alleghany Mountains west to the Ohio Valley. He was heavily involved in the fur trade and sometime friend and sometime foe of the Native American inhabitants of western Maryland and the Ohio Valley. He played host at his home in Oldtown to General Edward Braddock, George Washington, and other important dignitaries from the three English colonies of Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, as well as from numerous Indian Nations. His home was a refuge for colonists fleeing Indian attacks during both the French and Indian War and Pontiac's War that followed. And he was an early opponent of British policy in the west, opposition to which would eventually play a role in the American Revolution (in which his son Michael Cresap would play a major role).

Cresap was likely born around the year 1700 at Skipton in Craven, England. His precise year of birth is not known, and several depositions which list out his age appear to be in disagreement, placing his year of birth anywhere between 1692 and 1703.

According to an account published by a family friend and contemporary of both the Colonel and his son, Michael Cresap, Thomas came to America when he was about 15 years old. He married Hannah Johnson of Baltimore County and settled in the Conejohela Valley on the Susquehanna River by March of 1730.

The land on which he initially settled is, today, a part of Pennsylvania, but at that time was disputed territory between Lord Baltimore and Sir William Penn. Beginning around the time of Cresap's arrival, a series of border disputes and skirmishes broke out between supporters of Penn and supporters of Lord Baltimore, which would eventually come to be called the Conojocular War. The dispute arose largely because of discrepancies in the charters of the two colonies as well as inaccurate mapping. Cresap was a major agitator in these disputes, being attacked several times by Penn's agents while he, likewise, was raiding or evicting those he considered to be Pennsylvania squatters.

Several attempts were made to dislodge Cresap and his family from their homestead on the Susquehanna. Cresap was finally captured during his escape from the burning blockhouse and hauled to Philadelphia in chains. Cresap's capture was not the end of hostilities in the Conojocular War, but it was the end of Cresap's involvement in the skirmishing. King George II issued a proclamation in 1737 that effectively ended the fighting and ordered the Penns and the Calverts to reach a solution. Cresap appealed his imprisonment to the King and would eventually win his release in 1738. After release, Cresap abandoned his holdings along the Susquehanna, leaving the border dispute to the courts to decide, and moved west to Antietam Creek. He established a new homestead in 1739 along Antietam Creek in modern-day Washington County, Maryland. Here, Cresap established another fortified, but very short-lived home named Long Meadows. It appears that, despite setbacks during his time at Long Meadows, Cresap successfully was able to parlay what assets he did have into a new venture: his removal to the far western edge of the Maryland colony to the tract at Oldtown that is the focus of the present study, and which was "home" to Cresap for the remainder of his life.

Whether to discharge debts incurred by his losses to French privateers, or simply to gain a better vantage point from which to engage in his trade with the Indians, by April of 1743 Cresap appears to have been well along in the process of establishing himself in the future Allegany County. While multiple authors place his removal to Oldtown between 1740 and 1742, the earliest historical documentation of Cresap dwelling near Oldtown appears to be a series of letters from the early spring of 1743. Despite the fact that Cresap may have been settled on these lands, he did not yet hold clear title to them.

In July of 1743 a mortgage was recorded in the Prince George's County land records. This mortgage record, for a lot named Indian Seat, describes a loan of 269 pounds, 9 shillings and 1 pence to Thomas Cresap from a James Wardrop. It seems possible that Cresap and Charlton had recently come to an arrangement about the land, but it would not be until 1746 that the sale would be finalized. Cresap would go on to expand his landholdings in far western Maryland considerably, acquiring thousands of acres which he frequently traded and sold to new arrivals from the east.

Allowing for some remodeling of the north bank of the Potomac in the last 250 years, the best fit to the Potomac River in the vicinity of Oldtown is the major bend east of C&O Canal Lock 69. Placing this bend along the southeast margin of Resurvey on Good Hope reveals the proper placement of the 1750 Good Hope tract and the 1740 Indian Seat tract on which Cresap would have originally settled. It is worth noting that this placement results in large portions of Cresap's original parcel lying either in the Potomac River or even in Virginia! However, the patent certificate for Good Hope records the attestation of the surveyor that he had discovered, "...that Thirty Eight acres thereof [i.e. of the original tract] lye in the River & Virginia..." (PG Certificates 1750). Thus, we can say with a fairly high degree of certainty that Site 18AG9 corresponds roughly to the northwestern portion of the original Indian Seat patent.

As was the case with his previous homes, Cresap established a formidable outpost at Oldtown. Several first-hand journal entries and letters provide details regarding Cresap's fortified homestead, which are useful for understanding what the geophysical "fingerprint" of Skipton (i.e. Cresap's home at Oldtown) might look like. Again, the earliest record comes from the 1744 Treaty of Lancaster, which describes a simple hunting or trading cabin near the uppermost fork of the Potomac River.

Eleven years later, by May of 1755, a palisade had been installed around Cresap's cabin. An entry in the Seaman's or Morris Journal of the Braddock Expedition records that: "He hath built a little Fort round his House, and is resolved to keep his Ground". The statement that the fort was built "round his House" strongly suggests that "Cresap's fort", was in fact a palisade built surrounding his cabin and NOT a place of refuge separate from his home as has been suggested elsewhere. His home and his fort were one and the same. Cresap himself leaves no doubt. In a letter written in July of 1763 during Pontiac's War he mentions, "...Desolate men women & Children who have fled to my House which is Inclosed by a small stockade for safety..."

The most detailed accounts of Cresap's home come from a petition by Cresap and depositions taken in a 1757 case investigating a break in at Skipton during the fall of 1756. At that time, Thomas Cresap fled Oldtown, "thro' Fear of the Indians" and stayed for a time with one of his sons, then living at



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Conococheague. His plantation and his possessions were left undefended for a time and this situation proved too tempting for several Virginians who crossed the river to see what could be easily pilfered.

Cresap's petition, as well as the depositions of those accused of committing or witnessing the break-in are in remarkable agreement about the infrastructure at Skipton, while simultaneously anarchic about who committed the crime (they all pointed fingers at each other). All accounts relate the presence of a cellar or cellar hole within Cresap's house, as well as a separate structure referred to as the "storehouse". Some of the accounts also refer to a shed with a cellar, but this may be the same structure as the "storehouse". Finally, some of the deponents make a distinction between Cresap's "upper fort" and his "lower fort". It is difficult to discern whether these are references to upper and lower stories in Cresap's house (possibly a blockhouse with a projecting upper story), two enclosed areas of the palisade at different elevations, or some other configuration. Cresap's home appears to be synonymous with the "upper fort" however.

One final point that needs to be gleaned from the historical record before moving on to a discussion of the remote sensing work at 18AG9: Cresap's Fort at Oldtown was not merely a staging area that supported troop and supply movements during the French and Indian War, it was also a site of armed conflict. A letter penned from Montreal and dated August 8th, 1756 from the French Governor-General, Pierre de Rigaud de Vaudreuil de Cavagnial to the Secretary of the French Navy, Jean-Baptiste de Machault d'Arnouville, states that a party under the command of a Monsignor de Celeron had recently attempted an attack on Cresap's Fort. The letter states that French skirmishers and their Native American allies, "...had a fight near Cresap's fort, in the rear of Cumberland. They killed eight Englishmen, whose scalps the Indians were unable to take, as they found themselves, in the dusk of the evening, within musketfire of the fort. We had two savages killed and one wounded".

Oldtown was again the scene of fighting during Pontiac's War in 1763. In his July 1763 letter to Governor Horatio Sharpe, Cresap describes a chaotic scene:

"On this Instant as Mr. Saml Wilder was going to a house of his about 300 yards Distant from mine with men & several women the Indians Rushed on them from a Rising Ground but they perceiving their coming Run towards my House hollowing which being heard by those at my house they Run to their assistance & met them & the Indians at the Entrance of my lane [elsewhere in the letter described as 100 yards from Cresap's House] on which the Indians Immediately fired on them to the amount of 18 or Twenty & Killd Mr. Wilder. The party of white men returned their fire & Killd one of them dead on the spot & wounded severall of the others as appeared by Considerable Quantity of Blood strewed on the Ground as they Run off which they Immediately did..." (Correspondence 1895: 104).

Not only does this letter provide a second account of skirmishing at Oldtown, but it also provides additional details about the landscape, including a road or lane leading to Cresap's and the home of a neighbor (or perhaps even a tenant) just 300 yards distant from his own.

From these various historical accounts, the following picture of mid-18th Century Skipton emerges:

- 1) Cresap resides in a modest but "comfortable" cabin, situated on a piece of low "cleared" ground near the Potomac.
- 2) Within this cabin is a "cellar hole" or subfloor pit and a separate storehouse or shed is nearby.
- 3) The cabin is surrounded by a small stockade with a road or "lane" leading up to it.
- 4) Skipton/Oldtown is a site of frequent visitation by various American Indian groups.
- 5) Cabins or wigwams for use by visiting Native Americans are also present on the landscape.
- 6) Skirmishing occurred within eye and/or earshot of Cresap's home and fort on at least two occasions during the mid-18th century unrest on the English frontier.

According to the gravestone situated at the western edge of Thomas Cresap's Good Hope tract, now on C&O Canal Park property, the Colonel died on January 31st, 1787. He is believed to have been between 86 and 95 years old. Suffice it to say, he is one of the most prominent frontiersmen in Maryland history and his major base of operations on the frontier is but scarcely documented archaeologically.

Site 18AG9 was first identified in the 1960s as the possible location of Thomas Cresap's mid 18th-century home and fort of Skipton. In 1961 Edward Larrabee reported finding colonial artifacts on what is known as the "Moore Farm Property" during surface collection of a plowed field between the C&O Canal and the Potomac River near Oldtown, MD. He speculated that these materials might be related to either Cresap's Fort or Charles Anderson's cabin. In his report, Larrabee mentions that Henry T. Wright was believed to have collected material dating to around 1760 from this location, but no description of either Larrabee's or Wright's collections is provided.

The site was revisited in August of 1976 by Russell Handsman of the University of Maryland, College Park. Handsman carried out a Phase I shovel test pit (STP) survey of the entire Moore Farm area. Ninety-eight shovel tests were excavated at 20 meter intervals in what Handsman called Locus III, which roughly corresponds to Site 18AG9 and its surrounds. Forty-one of the STPs produced non-diagnostic aboriginal materials. Historic materials were recovered from 9 of the STPs, with 7 of these also yielding additional indigenous artifacts. Three of these historic STPs were concentrated on the eastern margin of Locus III and produced diagnostic colonial artifacts and chert debitage. The materials from this area included 3 olive bottle glass fragments, 6 white clay tobacco pipe fragments (5 stems and 1 bowl), 1 later Rhenish blue and gray stoneware sherd, and a musketball.

By far the most extensive archaeological work conducted at 18AG9 is the 2009-2010 study by the Louis Berger Group. Berger excavated a total of 24 STPs at 15.24 m (50 ft) intervals situated in 3 transects spaced 15.24 m apart. Four additional STPs were added in areas of historic artifact concentration. Thirteen of the shovel tests produced prehistoric debitage, but 12 shovel tests produced historic artifacts and, notably, several mid-late 18th-century finds.

Additional shovel testing by Berger in 2010 was largely negative and the site boundaries appeared (at that time) to be largely confined to the area of positive 2009 STPs: a roughly 61 X 46 m area along the edge of a Pleistocene terrace overlooking Seven Springs Run. Seven 91 X 91 cm (3 X 3 ft) test units were excavated within this area, producing additional prehistoric and historic artifacts.

The Berger report concluded, "The historic artifacts...include a few pieces of modern bottle glass but otherwise date to the mid-eighteenth century. Artifact counts are not high, ranging from four to 47 per test unit, but given how few eighteenth-century artifacts have been found in western Maryland, this is clearly a major site."

The ceramic assemblage included numerous types that date to the correct time range for Cresap's Fort including, 11 sherds of Delft (1640-1800), 7 sherds of white salt-glazed stoneware (1720-1805), 2 sherds of English Brown stoneware (1690-1775), 1 Nottingham sherd (1700-1810), 2 sherds of Westerwald (1620-1775), and 2 sherds of Chinese Porcelain with an apparent trellis motif (1690-1797). The 11 remaining sherds have very long usage spans, with the exception



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of a whiteware sherd that would post-date 1820.

All of the artifacts were recovered either from the plowzone or from the plowzone/subsoil interface. Some bedrock fragments were noted and it was surmised that these could be spalls from buried foundations made of cut bedrock stone. However, no intact features were encountered. This is not terribly surprising as shovel testing and widely-spaced test unit excavation are not ideally suited techniques for feature identification. However, geophysical remote sensing IS ideally suited to feature identification. Moreover, it is ideally suited to open field settings (such as is present at 18AG9) and it is entirely noninvasive.

The primary objective of the Fall 2020 remote sensing survey at 18AG9 was to obtain detailed imaging of the subsurface features suspected to be yielding the surficial and plowzone artifact finds of mid-18th century vintage previously discussed. The first stage of examination involved an effort to refine the extent of the site using a combination of magnetic susceptibility and fluxgate gradiometry (i.e. magnetometry). The second stage of examination involved an effort to obtain more detailed images of individual features in three dimensions using high-resolution ground-penetrating radar (GPR). The data collectively provide a detailed picture of the architectural footprint of a feature complex that appears to comport well with the 18th-century descriptions of Cresap's homestead of Skipton.

For the 2020 magnetic susceptibility (or MagSusc) survey, the corner points for eleven 50 X 50 meter squares were laid out using the Emlid Reach RS2 Survey kit. These survey squares encompassed the easternmost 6.75 acres of the roughly 10.37 acre area within the MHT site boundaries for 18AG9 (about 65% of the site). This area incorporated the entirety of the area shovel tested by the Louis Berger Group. Grid cells were sampled using a Bartington MS-2 Magnetic Susceptibility Meter fitted with a MS2D Surface Scanning Search Loop.

Gradiometer data was collected from six 30 X 30 m survey blocks during the November 2020 remote sensing survey at 18AG9. This study was carried out using a Bartington Grad601-2 Dual Fluxgate gradiometer. The location selected for gradiometric survey was centered over the 1.5 acre area of heightened magnetic susceptibility readings and also prior investigation by the Louis Berger Group. These same survey blocks would also be utilized for the ground-penetrating radar work, save the southwestern-most block which had to be eliminated from GPR survey due to time constraints.

At least 29 potentially significant magnetic anomalies were detected through gradiometer survey, ranging from weak to very strong. Most of these anomalies were clustered in the eastern portion of the survey area. Higher magnetic readings are depicted with a red blush color and lower readings with green. Background readings near the mid-range are depicted in yellow. The highest anomalous readings show up as white "flares" in the data. Many of these are coupled with adjacent very low (green) readings indicative that strong magnetic dipoles (likely metallic objects) are buried in the soil.

A long linear anomaly consisting of alternating dipole signals (alternating white/green in the figure) in the southeastern portion of the survey area is almost certainly remnants of electrical fencing wire. Segments of this fencing wire were discovered and removed from this area during the early stages of survey work, however it appears that buried or semi-buried portions were not visible or identified by the field crew. Farther to the east and stretching from the northern limits of the survey area to its southern extent is a second linear anomaly represented by a continuous white/high magnetic flare alongside a stretch of continuous green/low readings. This may be a second fence line or a geologic anomaly along the field's margin. The general trend of historic plowing can also be discerned by the west-to-east trending lines running throughout the survey area.

None of the aforementioned anomalies present much interest from an archaeological standpoint. However, a dense cluster of very high magnetic readings was identified in the northeastern portion of the survey block (1) which is of interest. One of the anomalies in this cluster is fairly rectilinear in shape (2), suggestive of a historic structure. Both are on or just outside the eastern margin of the site boundary as currently defined in MHT site files. Additional - much more isolated - magnetic anomalies (some weaker and some stronger) occur to the west of this northeast cluster. Several of the Berger 91 X 91 cm test units were easily identified by the gradiometer - typically presenting as anomalies with low or weak magnetic signatures.

A second, albeit much smaller, cluster of high magnetic readings was detected near the southern margin of the survey area (3). This area was located just south of Berger unit 5. Unit 5 was one of the more productive for presumed indigenous artifacts, but also produced some historic finds. Finally, the soils extending west from the electric fencing for a distance of between 6 and 10 meters appeared to produce slightly elevated magnetic readings. These slightly higher signatures extended all the way from the Northeast Cluster south to the edge of the survey area (4). It was speculated that these readings might be indicative of a road trace (either historic or modern) that may have run along the former fenceline. Additional interpretations of the gradiometric survey are provided below alongside discussion of the ground-penetrating radar results.

The GPR survey at 18AG9 made use of the 30 X 30 m survey blocks previously established for gradiometer work. Five of the six survey blocks were sampled; all except the southwestern-most block, which was eliminated due to time constraints. During the survey, the 350-MHz antenna achieved approximately 1.6 meters of depth penetration based on digital correction of the GPR data through migration processing. Three-dimensional time slices through the GPR data revealed horizontal and vertical relationships amongst radar anomalies including potential anthropogenic features, potential modern disturbances, and natural occurrences likely consisting of rocks and bioturbation from plant roots and animal burrows.

The time slice from 20cm to 40cm below ground surface reveals anomalies located below the plowzone suggesting that these anomalies include preserved historic and prehistoric archaeological features. In addition to some anomalies likely caused by natural disturbances, there are potential anthropogenic anomalies suggestive of trenches, postholes, living surfaces/activity areas, pits, and cellars. In the northeastern portion of the survey area a high-amplitude amorphous anomaly approximately 15 feet long by 12 feet wide appears, which is suggestive of an in-filled historic cellar (Cellar A). Ovoid anomalies suggestive of postholes occur surrounding the Cellar A anomaly. In the southwestern portion of the survey area, an approximately 13 foot long and 2.5 foot wide trench anomaly occurs.

The timeslice from 40 to 60 cm below surface illustrates that the Cellar A anomaly in the northeastern portion of the survey area persists with depth. Two additional amorphous anomalies suggestive of a buried living surface or activity area appear approximately 5 feet to the west of Cellar A. An approximately 14ft by 14 ft rectanguloid anomaly suggestive of a historic foundation (Cellar B) appears approximately 35 feet to the south of the Cellar A anomaly. Many ovoid anomalies suggestive of postholes (perhaps associated with a palisade) appear immediately west of the Cellar A and Cellar B anomalies. A cluster of small amorphous anomalies also suggestive of an approximately 20ft long and 10ft wide buried living surface or activity area occurs approximately 70 feet to the west of the Cellar A anomaly (Living Surface C). The trench feature in the southwestern portion of the survey area persists with depth and another approximately 13 foot long and 2.5 foot wide trench-like feature occurs approximately 60 feet to the northeast. The timeslice from 60 to 80 cm below surface shows that the Cellar A anomaly does not persist to this depth, however a pit-like anomaly appears approximately 10 feet north of where the Cellar A anomaly was previously located. The rectanguloid Cellar B anomaly persists with depth and shows additional evidence of infilling, which is strongly suggestive of a



Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

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Site Name: Oldtown I

Prehistoric

Other name(s) Oldtown Colonial Site, Cresap's Fort

Historic

Brief

Description:

18th century site, early fort/homestead or cabin/trading post

Unknown

buried cellar. Additional small ovoid anomalies appear to the west of the Cellar B anomaly and could be postholes. Potential Living Surface C does not persist with depth and is no longer visible. An amorphous anomaly appears in the northwestern portion of the survey area and a second amorphous anomaly occurs in the west-central portion of the survey area. These anomalies are suggestive of natural phenomena, likely in-filled rodent burrows.

The timeslices from 80 cm to 100 cm below surface and 100 cm to 120 cm below surface show that the likely anthropogenic anomalies in the eastern portion of the survey area do not persist to these depths. Amorphous anomalies likely with natural causes continue to be seen throughout the survey area.

First, it should be noted that there is considerable agreement between the various remote sensing datasets. Magnetic Susceptibility detected a general area of soils with enhanced magnetizability encompassing an area approximately 6,070 square meters (1.5 Acres) in size. Both the gradiometry and the GPR data reveal several anomalies that are suggestive of buried architectural elements within the area of soils with enhanced magnetizability identified by the MagSusc. Even more intriguing, four of the GPR anomalies overlap directly with discrete clusters of anomalous magnetism identified through gradiometry. This likely indicates the presence of buried architectural features, such as trenches, cellars, shafts, or storage pits, likely containing metallic objects like nails.

Initial interpretations of these anomalies were generated through the comparison of three-dimensional (GPR) and two-dimensional (GPR and gradiometry) data combined with historical background research for Cresap's fortified house at Old Town. In the area identified on the gradiometer map as the "Northeast Cluster" (1), an approximately 75 m² magnetic anomaly overlaps with the western portion of the cluster of GPR anomalies associated with the approximately 15 feet long by 12 feet wide likely in-filled cellar anomaly (Cellar A) and surrounding living surfaces. Based on the 2D GPR profiles, the Cellar A feature seems to be preserved immediately below the plowzone (~25 cmbs) and continues to around 55 cm below surface. The very shallow potential living surfaces or activity areas are indicated in the 2D GPR profiles by a bedded reflection occurring between 40 to 45 cm below surface. This may represent something like a packed earth floor or workspace repeatedly used and compacted. A pit-like anomaly, perhaps a storage pit occurs approximately 10 feet north of the Cellar A anomaly. This likely storage pit is first identified below the plowzone and extends to around 75 cm below surface. South of Cellar A, along the eastern margin of the Northeast Cluster (1) and survey area is a likely 14ft by 14ft rectangular in-filled cellar anomaly (B), which is recognized by an approximately 17m² magnetic anomaly (2) which overlaps directly with high-amplitude reflections in the GPR data. Based on the 2D GPR profiles, the Cellar B feature seems to be preserved immediately below the plowzone (~25 cmbs) and continues to around 70 cm below surface. The profile of the Cellar B anomaly also suggests that its margins are lined with stone or brick.

Magnetic anomalies also overlap with two trench-like features identified in the southwestern portion of the survey area (3 and D). Based on the 2D GPR profiles, the trench features appear to be preserved beneath the plowzone and extend to around 40 cm below surface. Their function is difficult to interpret, but they are substantial enough to have served as either temporary hearth trenches or latrine trenches.

A second possible living surface or activity area was identified via the GPR, but does not overlap with the gradiometry data. This possible living surface consists of a cluster of small amorphous anomalies (C) approximately 20ft long and 10ft wide northwest of the Northeast Cluster. Based on the 2D GPR profiles, the living surface presents as a reflective layer approximately 40 to 45 cm below surface. The linear magnetized soil anomaly perhaps indicative of a road trace (either historic or modern) does not overlap with GPR anomalies of interest. Many shaft features suggestive of postholes, postmolds, or small pits were identified via the GPR survey. However, interpretation of the natural and anthropogenic features causing such anomalies is conditional and should be investigated further via ground-truthing.

Artifacts recovered from prior surveys at 18AG9, coupled with detailed archival research on the property suggest that the buried complex of features might be associated with Thomas Cresap's fortified home, known as Skipton or Oldtown, which dates to the mid-18th century. However, as is always the case with remote sensing data, these potential features are just that: potential features. Without archaeological ground-truthing through excavation it is not possible to conclude with absolute certainty what the various anomalies identified at Site 18AG9 represent. MHT will continue to work with the NPS to explore the potential for ground-truthing the anomalies to determine if such features are intact and capable of answering significant research questions about Maryland's colonial early history.

In October 2023, the Maryland Historical Trust opened three 2 X 2 meter test units over 2 of the aforementioned anomalies suggestive of buried structural remnants. Upon reaching the base of the plowzone, trowels were used to clean up surfaces and to expose any intact cultural features intruding on the subsoil. All artifacts recovered in the excavation were collected and will be processed at the MHT Artifact Processing Laboratory in Crownsville in preparation for permanent curation at the NPS Museum Resource Center (MRCE). However, due to the high quantity of fire-cracked rock (FCR) present in all units, only a representative sample of FCR was retained.

After the removal of plowscars, excavation was not extended below the plowzone/subsoil interface except in Unit 3. At the base of the plowzone in Unit 3, excavators believed they could see a faint soil stain that might represent the potential structural anomaly in the northeast corner of the unit. Thus, a 1 X 1 m sampling window was dug 5 cm below the interface, which was successful in better defining the edge of a crosscutting feature. Soil probing with a 1 inch split spoon auger confirmed that this feature extended an additional 30 cm below the plowzone/subsoil interface. Upon the exposure of all features in Units 1, 2, and 3, perforated black plastic sheeting was placed in the base of each unit and all excavated soils were backfilled. The preserved sod was placed on top of tamped down soils in an effort to return conditions at CHOH close to the condition in which they were found.

Remarkably intact cultural features likely dating to the period from AD 1750-1800 were identified in all three Test Units. Feature 1 was identified at a depth of approximately 26 cmbs in the northeast corner of Test Unit 3. Plowzone soils in TU3 consisted of a 7.5 YR 4/3 brown silty loam, which sat atop a 7.5 YR 5/3 brown silty loam subsoil. The straight-sided edge of Feature 1 appeared as a 7.5 YR 3/2 dark brown silty loam that extended to a depth of approximately 30 cm below the plowzone/subsoil interface (based on probing). The surface of this feature appeared to be relatively devoid of artifacts, but artifact recoveries in the plowzone above consisted of both pre-contact Native-derived artifacts and historic finds dating from about 1750-1800. Diagnostic historic sherds included Chinese Export hard-paste porcelains including one sherd with a trellis in blue decorative pattern (ca. 1690-1797), tin-glazed earthenwares (most popular ca. 1645-1790), and white salt-glazed stoneware (most popular ca. 1720-1770). In addition, all five measurable tobacco pipe stems from Unit 3 had bore diameters of 4/64th inch, suggesting a date range of 1750-1800. Feature 1's continued depth below surface suggests a deep shaft feature like a cellar or subfloor pit. Test Units 1 and 2 exposed Feature 2 at a depth of approximately 24.5 cmbs across most of the northern half of both units. Plowzone soils in TU 1 and 2 consisted of a 10YR 4/4 dark yellowish brown silty loam, which sat atop a 10YR 3/3 dark brown silty loam subsoil.

Feature 2 was found to be quite amorphous in shape, but easily discernible as a 10YR 3/4 dark yellowish brown stain containing substantial quantities of animal bone and colonial pipe fragments. Between the two units, some 361 animal bone/tooth fragments were recovered, the vast majority coming from the plowzone/feature interface. Preliminary analysis reveals the presence of bear, pig, deer, turtle, and other animals. Diagnostic artifacts at the plowzone/feature



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interface also included white salt-glazed stoneware sherds (most popular ca. 1720-1770), and tobacco pipe stems with both 4/64th and 5/64th inch bore diameters. While 5/64th stems date from ca. 1710-1750, the 4/64th stems (ca. 1750-1800) predominate. Artifacts from this feature and the soils above it were demonstrably domestic in nature, suggesting that a dwelling was formerly located at or near this location. The feature itself is suggestive of either a kitchen refuse midden or a packed earth living surface. The presence of intact cultural features suggestive of structures dating to the period of Colonel Thomas Cresap's occupation of this tract of land is confirmed at both tested locations. Feature 1 appears to be the remains of an in-filled cellar. We speculate that the roughly 15 X 15 foot (4.6 X 4.6 m) structure may represent the "storehouse" mentioned in a petition by Cresap and several depositions by witnesses taken in a 1757 case investigating a break-in at Skipton during the fall of 1756. Researchers proposed that Feature 2 (situated approximately 8.4 meters from Feature 1) may represent the location of Cresap's dwelling house.

External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

95008703, 18AG9 SF