



Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18AN1051

Site Name: BWI HCC Site 4

Prehistoric

Other name(s) B. Gaither House

Historic

Brief Description:

early 19th century farmstead, agricultural seasonal picker's camp

Unknown

Site Location and Environmental Data:

Maryland Archaeological Research Unit No. 7

SCS soil & sediment code

Latitude 39.1695

Longitude -76.6958

Physiographic province Western Shore Coastal

Terrestrial site

Underwater site

Elevation 41 m

Site slope

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) Hawkins Branch

Saltwater

Ocean

Estuary/tidal river

Tidewater/marsh

Spring

Freshwater

Stream/river

Swamp

Lake or pond

Spring

Minimum distance to water is 183 m

Temporal & Ethnic Contextual Data:

Paleoindian site

Woodland site

Archaic site

MD Adena

Early archaic

Early woodland

Middle archaic

Mid. woodland

Late archaic

Late woodland

Unknown prehistoric context

Contact period site

ca. 1820 - 1860

ca. 1630 - 1675

ca. 1860 - 1900

ca. 1675 - 1720

ca. 1900 - 1930

ca. 1720 - 1780

Post 1930

ca. 1780 - 1820

Unknown historic context

Unknown context

Ethnic Associations (historic only)

Native American

Asian American

African American

Unknown

Anglo-American

Other

Hispanic

Y=Confirmed, P=Possible

Site Function Contextual Data:

Prehistoric

Multi-component

Misc. ceremonial

Village

Rock art

Hamlet

Shell midden

Base camp

STU/lithic scatter

Rockshelter/cave

Quarry/extraction

Earthen mound

Fish weir

Cairn

Production area

Burial 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		Koens-Crispin	
Clovis	<input type="checkbox"/>	Perkiomen	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hardaway-Dalton	<input type="checkbox"/>	Susquehana	<input type="checkbox"/>
Palmer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vernon	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kirk (notch)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Piscataway	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kirk (stem)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Calvert	<input type="checkbox"/>
Le Croy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Selby Bay	<input type="checkbox"/>
Morrow Mntn	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jacks Rf (notch)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guilford	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jacks Rf (pent)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brewerton	<input type="checkbox"/>	Madison/Potomac	<input type="checkbox"/>
Otter Creek	<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"/>
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	84	Eng Dry-bodied	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buckley	<input type="checkbox"/>	North Devon	<input type="checkbox"/>	Porcelain	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nottingham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creamware	6	Pearlware	13			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	3	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ground stone	<input type="checkbox"/>	Modified faunal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stone bowls	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unmod faunal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fire-cracked rock	7	Oyster shell	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other lithics (all)	1	Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	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

Fer quartzite	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sil sandstone	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jasper	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chalcedony	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chert	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ironstone	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rhyolite	<input type="checkbox"/>	Argilite	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quartz	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Steatite	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quartzite	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sandstone	<input type="checkbox"/>

Dated features present at site

Historic Artifacts		Tobacco related	
Pottery (all)	237	Activity item(s)	2
Glass (all)	390	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Architectural	446	Faunal material	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Furniture	2	Misc. kitchen	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arms	<input type="checkbox"/>	Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clothing	7	Misc.	9
Personal items	4	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Historic Features

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

Additional raw data may be available online

Summary Description:

Site 18AN1051, also known as the B. Gaither House or BWI HCC Site 4, is the archeological remains of an 19th century farmstead and seasonal agricultural harvesting camp on the property of the Baltimore/Washington International Airport (BWI) in Anne Arundel County. The site is situated on a hill southwest of the runways. Vegetation on the hill's summit is composed almost entirely of pine trees with very little undergrowth. Scattered hardwood tree species are present, especially as smaller saplings. Soils at the site are primarily Patapsco and Fort Mott loamy sands and sandy loams.

The site was first identified during a Phase I survey in December of 1996 and January of 1997, based on the presence of a brick-lined well. This work was being carried out within the (then) proposed location for the Midfield Cargo Complex of BWI Airport. These investigations were performed under a contract with the Maryland Aviation Administration (MAA), which was proposing to construct the new cargo complex and associated taxiways, access roads, and support facilities. In addition to the construction of these facilities, two large soil stockpile areas would be created in undeveloped areas south of a runway. As part of the environmental compliance process, Phase I investigations were conducted to identify any archeological sites that may be affected by the project, and assess their potential eligibility for inclusion in the State and National Register of Historic Places. Ultimately, Phase II testing was recommended and carried out at 18AN1051 (one of the identified sites), to determine its eligibility for listing on the State and National Registers.

Phase I fieldwork in this area involved the excavation of 53 shovel test pits (STPs) placed on a 20 meter grid. In addition, two supplementary STP transects were placed the 20 m lines in one area to better clarify the historic artifact distribution on the hill's summit. STPs were approximately 40 cm in diameter and were excavated stratigraphically according to natural soil horizons. Excavations were carried into culturally sterile C or B/C horizon contexts. Soil removed from each STP was sifted through mesh hardware cloth. Artifacts were then bagged by provenience, with the exception of coal, shell, brick, and glass which were sampled, but not collected in their entirety. Soil profiles were recorded for each STP on standardized shovel test log forms. Descriptions of soils exposed in profile were provided using standard USDA pedological terminology and soil colors recorded using standard methods and nomenclature.

Forty-seven of the 53 shovel tests contained historic artifacts. Five of the STPs also contained minor amounts of prehistoric materials, while one contained only prehistoric artifacts. Five of the STPs were entirely sterile. The shovel tests excavated on the summit of the hill included a moderate quantity of both architectural and domestic debris. Since the hill was just south of the aforementioned well, it was thought that likely indicated the location of a domestic structure. The historic materials largely dated to the third quarter of the 19th century. The prehistoric artifacts recovered from the site did not cluster in any significant way and are, thus, not thought to represent a significant component.

The site encompassed most of a prominent hilltop, including the brick-lined well that was identified prior to shovel test excavation. The well, located within the drainage swale immediately north of the hill's summit, had been partially filled by heavy machinery. North of the well was a linear berm and two small depression. The berm is possibly a field boundary (or hedgerow remnant), one of many found throughout the area. Close to the berm was a wide and shallow depression adjacent to the linear berm. A more prominent depression, perhaps a gravel borrow pit, was located on the northern slope of the hill beyond the well. A second and minor concentration of historic materials was defined just northeast of the well. It was thought that it might point to the location of an outbuilding. Thus, Site 18AN1051 was interpreted to represent remnants of a 19th century farmstead.

Phase II investigations at Site 18AN1051 were conducted in February of 1997. These investigations focused on sampling the area of greatest artifact density defined during the Phase I, to determine if any features (apart from the well) were preserved within the site. After establishing a transit-placed grid across the site, 14 supplemental shovel tests were excavated in the core of the site to supplement the artifact distribution map generated during Phase I work. After completion of these units, three narrow trenches were excavated along the site's north-south axis. These trenches measured 50 cm wide and 20 to 25 meters in length. After completion of these linear units, two additional trenches were excavated to expand definition of several features.

Larger block excavations, totaling 12.5 square meters, were opened along the most centrally located trench. One block, ultimately measuring 9.5 m², was excavated to expose the stain exposed in this trench and designated Feature 1. Two other blocks, a 1 X 2 meter unit and a 1 X 1 m square, were excavated further south along the central trench to expose two other stains designated Feature 2 and Feature 3.

Plowzone soil was removed from each trench and stockpiled to the side, with sifted samples removed at 5 meter intervals. Trench floors were hand-troweled clean to expose any features in plan view. Soil from these units was sifted through mesh hardware cloth. Features were mapped in plan and photographed. Cross-sections were excavated to determine feature depth and content.

Phase II excavations exposed three features and 34 postmolds. Unfortunately, no features that would pertain to a structural foundation, such as linear stains or trenches, were identified during the excavations. It is probable that if a structure was present at the site, it was supported on stone or brick piers, or perhaps a log sill placed on the surface. Feature 1 was an irregular, oval-shaped stain measuring 280 cm north-south and at least 200 cm wide in some areas. The dark feature fill included several bottle fragments, nails, a brass bell section, a whiteware sherd, and several bricks. Cross-sectioning revealed that the feature extended at least 40 cm below the base of the plowzone. Three separate, but poorly defined layers were present within the feature, likely representing separate in-filling episodes. Feature 2 and 3 consisted of irregularly shaped, but shallow stains. Several postmolds were identified in the vicinity of these features. It was thought that these stains might be the result of an animal wallow. A line of 34 postmolds south of all three features. Most of the posts were circular with a diameter of about 10 cm and appear to represent a section of an enclosure or fence. They might also represent the wall posts to an outbuilding.

During the Phase II investigation, the brush in the vicinity of the brick-lined well was cut back and the overburden was removed from the east half to expose the well in plan. Removal of the loose overburden revealed an oval-shaped shaft measuring 108 cm north-south and 85 cm east-west. The bricks were dry-laid, with all courses of brick placed lengthwise, with a single row of headers placed immediately below the uppermost course. An excavation unit measuring 75 X 50 cm was placed into the northeast portion of the well wall. This unit exposed a rectangular pad composed of mortared brick and quartz cobbles. This probably represents a footing for a well-shed or cover. The use of mortar and the cobbles suggests that this may be a later addition to the well shaft. The western half of the well shaft was exposed to a depth of 160 cm and then probed. Since probing suggested that the brick shaft continued, an auger was used to extend to an additional 185 cm, or 3.45 meter below the top of the well. The base of the well shaft was still not reached and sampling was aborted.

The historic artifact assemblage numbered approximately 1000 artifacts from the combined Phase I and II investigations. The combined Phase I and II assemblage consisted of 2 activity items (a harmonica reed and part of a porcelain doll), 2 pieces of furniture hardware, 446 architectural artifacts (211 pieces



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of window glass, 144 nails and screws, 75 pieces of brick, and 16 other items), 7 clothing items (a shoe heel plate and 6 buttons), 237 ceramic sherds (90 white graniteware sherds, 84 whiteware sherds, 6 creamware sherds, 13 pearlware sherds, 22 redware sherds, 12 stoneware sherds and 10 other sherds), 179 pieces of domestic glass, 4 personal items (a knife and 3 comb fragments), 3 tobacco-related artifacts (pipe fragments), and 9 miscellaneous objects (metal fragments).

The prehistoric assemblage consisted of 3 quartz flakes, a cobble hammerstone, and 7 pieces of fire-cracked rock.

The history of the area south of Baltimore and the lands which are now encompassed by the BWI Airport was a patchwork of farmland prior to the 20th century and the construction of the airport. In the decade following the Civil War, at about the same time Site 18AN1051 appears to have been first occupied (based on the artifact assemblage), a new picker system was developing on the farms in the area. From the 1870s through the Great Depression, local farmers hired and brought in families of pickers to their farms where they assisted in the harvest. The advent of the picker system was fostered by the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad line, erected in the area between 1867 and 1872, about a quarter of a mile west of the site. The B&P Railroad, with refrigerated rail cars, promoted the development and production of cash crops to be transported to urban areas, known as truck products. These truck products, including the most common strawberries, as well as other fruits and vegetables could then be safely and efficiently transported to the large markets of Baltimore and other urban areas as far north as Canada and west as Cincinnati. The railroad was a boon to truck farmers with easy access to the railroad. Local farmers, to house their new seasonal workers, reportedly built barracks-like structures known as "picker shanties". They also provided brick and stone for the pickers (most of whom were immigrant Poles and Czechs) to erect outdoor brick ovens.

In view of the fact that the site is not shown on any of the available historic maps or plats of the area, 18AN1051 may be the remains of one of these "picker shanties" or a former tenant farmstead house which was occupied by the itinerant hired seasonal farm workers. Historic descriptions of these shanties, probably from the 1920s or 1930s, describe two storey, open-plan, frame buildings, with straw for bedding that were divided into rooms by sheets and drapes. They reportedly did not have running water or electricity and meals were cooked and eaten outside.

Conclusive archeological evidence that this site was associated with seasonal laborers would be the recovery of brass tokens called "picker's checks: which were used by farmers to pay their pickers. These checks were redeemable at local stores. No such token was recovered during the Phase I or II investigations. Other lines of evidence will have to be considered to support the hypothesis that this site may be associated with a seasonal picker occupation.

Other artifact types that may indicate a seasonal or temporary laborer occupation are missing from the assemblage of 18AN1051. One important artifact common to the second half of the 19th century and the early 20th century which is nearly absent from this assemblage is the glass Mason jar. Only one identifiable shard from a Mason jar is present in the assemblage. No fragments of the more readily fragile (and disposable) lid rings were recovered. Mason jars, developed in 1858 and in common use after the Civil War, are still in use today. The lack of these jars may indicate that occupants of the site were not preserving their own food, at least not in the common, inexpensive container of the period. The use of mason jars indicates home food preservation (a common practice on farmsteads). If the site was occupied by seasonal pickers who left the site at the end of the harvest, food preservation may not have been practiced.

No artifacts, such as horseshoes, saddle parts, strap buckles, or clasps were recovered. These would be common items on a working farm, but would not be expected in assemblages from sites occupied by seasonal laborers. The only other artifact type which appears under-represented in the assemblage is faunal material. This may be attributable to the poor preservation qualities of the soil, which is highly acidic. It is possible that there was a specific area, or midden, for the deposit of food and animal refuse, as yet undetected.

The presence of a brick-lined well is somewhat anomalous. The construction of this well represents a significant investment in both labor and capital. Hundreds of bricks would have been needed to construct this well, a relatively expensive venture compared to that of digging a barrel well. Such an investment in infrastructure does not fit well with the possible context of either a tenant farm or picker's shanty.

Phase II investigations at 18AN1051 suggests that the site represents components of a late 19th century farmstead. The site may represent a seasonal, agricultural picker's camp (though this contention has not yet been proven). The site has intact artifact bearing features and the potential to provide important historical information on the physical layout of 19th century farms and the socioeconomic relationship between Baltimore City and agricultural northern Anne Arundel County. For these reasons, Site 18AN1051 has been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

00005326