



Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18AN1062

Site Name: Shah

Prehistoric

Other name(s)

Historic

Unknown

Brief Description:

Late 17th century town site and wharf/landing

Site Location and Environmental Data:

Maryland Archaeological Research Unit No. 7

SCS soil & sediment code MWD3

Latitude 38.9442

Longitude -76.5351

Physiographic province Western Shore Coastal

Terrestrial site

Underwater site

Elevation 9 m

Site slope 10%

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) South River

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

Minimum distance to water is 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. 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

Ethnic Associations (historic only)

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

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
- Flotation samples taken
- Other samples taken

- Historic context samples
- Soil samples taken
- Flotation samples taken
- Other samples taken
- Geophysical Survey



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Diagnostic Artifact Data:

Projectile Point Types			
Clovis	<input type="checkbox"/>	Koens-Crispin	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hardaway-Dalton	<input type="checkbox"/>	Perkiomen	<input type="checkbox"/>
Palmer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Susquehana	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kirk (notch)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vernon	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kirk (stem)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Piscataway	<input type="checkbox"/>
Le Croy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Calvert	<input type="checkbox"/>
Morrow Mntn	<input type="checkbox"/>	Selby Bay	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guilford	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jacks Rf (notch)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brewerton	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jacks Rf (pent)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Otter Creek	<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"/>
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"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tin Glazed	86	English Brown	2
Borderware	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mn Mottled	<input type="checkbox"/>			Whiteware	12	Eng Dry-bodied	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buckley	<input type="checkbox"/>	North Devon	<input type="checkbox"/>			Porcelain	7	Nottingham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creamware	6	Pearlware	<input type="checkbox"/>					Rhenish	3
								Wt Salt-glazed	9

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Other Artifact & Feature Types:

Prehistoric Artifacts			
Flaked stone	8	Other fired clay	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ground stone	<input type="checkbox"/>	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stone bowls	<input type="checkbox"/>	Modified faunal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fire-cracked rock	5	Unmod faunal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other lithics (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Oyster shell	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rimsherds	<input type="checkbox"/>	Uncommon Obj.	<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 type="checkbox"/>	Fer quartzite	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sil sandstone	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chert	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chalcedony	<input type="checkbox"/>	European flint	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rhyolite	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ironstone	<input type="checkbox"/>	Basalt	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quartz	<input type="checkbox"/>	Argilite	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quartzite	<input type="checkbox"/>	Steatite	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Sandstone	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Dated features present at site

17th Century earthfast structure

Historic Artifacts			
Pottery (all)	217	Tobacco related	24
Glass (all)	918	Activity item(s)	98
Architectural	2568	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Furniture	2	Faunal material	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Arms	5	Misc. kitchen	357
Clothing	3	Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal items	<input type="checkbox"/>	Misc.	1467
		Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sheet midden	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Earthworks	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Postholes/molds	<input checked="" 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 Anne Arundel County Planning & Zoning

Additional raw data may be available online

Summary Description:

The Shah site (18AN1062) is located in Edgewater in southern Anne Arundel County, Maryland. The Shah property lies directly adjacent to London Town House and Gardens, a historical and horticultural park owned by Anne Arundel County and operated by the London Town Foundation, Inc. The park consists of 23 acres, approximately one quarter the size of the original town of London, a tobacco port established in 1684. This 100-acre town site occupied the northern tip of narrow peninsular neck of land projecting northeasterly into the South River. The topography is generally flat, with gullies running both along the west and east perimeters. When the Shah property was excavated in early 2003, the site included a 1960s standing structure and a long strip of land covered with manicured lawn, ornamental grasses, shrubbery, and mulch. The site's gentle slope leads to the South River, but it has suffered considerable headland erosion. Also, much of the landscape was likely re-graded during construction of the 1960s-era house. Soils at the site are Monmouth clay loams.

The site was first examined archeologically in January of 2003. In 2001, Anne Arundel County archeologists learned that the Shah family, living adjacent to the London Town House and Gardens, planned to tear down their standing house and construct a new home on the property. Over the ensuing months, the Shah family and County archeologists agreed upon an arrangement in which the crew could test the property before house demolition in an effort to locate remains that might relate directly to the London Town property.

London Town dates back to an Act of the Maryland General Assembly from November of 1683. The "Act for Advancing the Trade of Tobacco" designated official ports of entry throughout the colony, through which all import and export trade must pass. It specifically chartered a town on a portion of the Burgess property on the South River. By 1684, when a Thomas Lynthecombe (or Linthicum) purchased the first lot, this South River town was referred to as the Town of London. The towns were laid out on 100-acre sites and divided into lots of one acre each. The act required lot owners to build a structure of at least 400 square feet or forfeit their property.

A series of deeds, dating between 1685 and 1715, indicates that several tavern/inn keepers purchased property in London. These tavern keepers were attracted by the ferry and colonial roads, no less than five of which converged at London. Private individuals had operated a ferry from the peninsula as early as 1673. By 1709, the ferry was a public operation requiring a license.

By 1715, merchants began moving to London Town. By the late 1730s, London Town was a thriving port town. Merchants who would play a role in the blossoming of the Annapolis economy in the 1760s arrived in London Town in the 1730s. A large variety of business was conducted at London Town. Men, and occasionally women, were ferry owners, tavern owners, shipwrights, rope manufacturers, carpenters, sail makers, mariners, and storeowners engaged in the import/export business. In the late 1740s and early 1750s, a number of London Town merchants branched out and set up additional stores in Annapolis. Eventually, over the course of the 18th century, the center of commerce would transition from London Town to Annapolis, Baltimore, Upper Marlborough, and Bladensburg.

Several economic depressions during the 17th and 18th centuries prompted the Maryland General Assembly to establish standards for the exportation of tobacco. During these depressions, tobacco planters frequently resorted to the shipping of large quantities of inferior tobacco to make up the depressed prices for tobacco. This inferior tobacco turned European buyers toward other sources, such as Virginia, which had instituted a tobacco inspection act in 1730. By the 1740s, Virginia's product achieved a superior reputation to that of Maryland, further depressing the price Maryland planters could charge. Finally, in 1747, Lord Baltimore pushed through legislation establishing quality standards for Maryland tobacco, in part through the creation of public inspection sites. London Town was not selected as an official inspection site and as the tobacco market continued to flounder with the wars of the second half of the 18th century, London Town grew stagnant. While Annapolis was growing, London Town declined, the earthfast houses fell into decay, and outside investors began to buy up and consolidate town lots turning some sections of the town into small farms.

Eighteenth century London Town was a platted town with streets, lots, and designated public spaces. Scott Street, a major thoroughfare running through the town and ending at what was once a main ferry crossing is believed to lay along the western edge of the Shah Property. It seems logical, therefore, that much activity would have occurred on this land because of its accessibility and probable centrality. In fact, historic records revealed that this locale might be the site of a house that was used as an early Anne Arundel County court building during the last decades of the 17th century. Thus, much of the fieldwork activity in 2003, was undertaken with the hope of locating evidence for this house/courthouse.

Fieldwork began by extending the existing survey grid for the London Town Park property onto the Shaw property. Field crews then excavated a total of twenty-five 1.524 X 1.524 m (5 X 5 ft) units and three 76.2 cm X 1.524 m (2.5 X 5 ft) units throughout the agreed upon excavation area. Initial units were spaced 4.57 m (15 ft) apart to test the soils spanning the area. Other units were judgmentally placed based on topography and artifact and feature concentrations. Sod and approximately 3 cm (.10 ft) of topsoil had to be removed with digging bars and pick axes due to the frozen condition of the soil in January (and during record-setting cold temperatures). Mulch-covered areas were avoided when placing test units because the frozen soil beneath was too thick to penetrate, even with digging bars. Three excavation loci had to be expanded beyond the original scope due to the result of preliminary investigation.

After the removal of sod, plowzone was removed with shovels. This first layer was excavated until there was a soil change. In most cases, the stratum beneath this first level was sterile clay, or subsoil. Excavated soils were screened through hardware cloth, saving all artifacts except where there were dense levels of coal and oyster. In these circumstances, only samples were saved. Due to the extreme cold, the screening area was located on county park property in a heated shelter.

As mentioned above, 28 units were excavated on the Shah Property. Just over half of these units yielded a small number of artifacts and no cultural features. It was clear that the majority of the area designated for excavation was graded and therefore stripped of any colonial features or trash representative of London Town's zenith. Four units contained a concentration of oyster shells and a concrete wall, probably related to modern-day landscaping. Two units unearthed a shallow pit containing late 19th century debris. The remaining units were placed near the standing 20th century house to better understand a few fragmentary stains found in the bottom of units initially placed in the area.

With this concentration of units in the northern loci of the site, archeologists discovered an early 18th century earthfast structure. Two of its corner posts were uncovered, the southeastern-most of which was excavated. The hearth area was also identified, complete with evidence of posts that supported the chimney, the scorched earth where the fire burned (including faunal remains such as oyster shell and animal bone) and a storage pit that possibly was used to store



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root vegetables or other valuable goods at the time. Other pits such as this have been discovered in sites around Anne Arundel County.

Onion-shaped bottles found in the pit next to the hearth, along with a tin-glazed earthenware punchbowl, help date the trash to the end of the first quarter of the 18th century. Across the ravine on the Historic London Town and Gardens property, archeologists excavated a cellar that was full of similarly shaped bottles dating to the same period. This cellar was once beneath a local tavern. Perhaps these two structures gazed upon each other in competition for those wanting to drink and gossip about the politics of the time. It is unclear if this structure represents the colonial period house where court was held or if it is one of the many buildings documented to line Scott Street from 1684 until the early 1800s.

The artifact assemblage recovered during the course of the 2003 excavations on the Shah Property (18AN1062) included 98 activity items, 2,568 architectural artifacts, 3 clothing items, 2 furniture artifacts, 1,251 kitchen-related artifacts, 24 tobacco-related artifacts, 5 arms objects, 1,467 miscellaneous historic and modern objects, and 13 prehistoric artifacts. The activity items were 27 pieces of non-electrical wire, 2 iron rings, 11 miscellaneous hardware items, a worked mammal bone, a piece of barbed wire, 3 flowerpot fragments, and 53 fragments of landscaping cloth. The architectural artifacts were 902 brick fragments, 26 pieces of daub, 83 fragments of tarpaper, 21 pieces of mortar, 61 other masonry-related objects, a piece of plaster, 2 possible electrical wire fragments, 1,440 nails (237 square, 115 cut, 127 wire, 151 rosehead wrought, 105 other wrought, and 705 unidentified), 1 hinge, 8 screws, 3 stoneware sewer pipe fragments, and 20 other sewer pipe fragments. Clothing items were 2 pewter buttons and a copper alloy buckle. The 2 furniture items were copper alloy hardware items. Kitchen-related artifacts include 217 ceramic sherds (86 white tin-glazed earthenware, 32 buff-bodied earthenware, 5 creamware, 1 Whieldonware, 17 miscellaneous earthenware, 7 porcelain, 1 ironstone, 12 whiteware, 32 redware, 2 English Brown stoneware, 9 white salt-glazed stoneware, 3 Rhenish stoneware, 7 miscellaneous stoneware, and 3 unidentified ceramics), 677 glass fragments (482 olive bottle glass fragments, 55 other bottle glass fragments, and 140 other glass vessel fragments), 11 animal bones, 345 pieces of oyster shell, and a seed. Tobacco-related artifacts consisted of 13 pipe stems and 11 pipe bowls. Arms objects were 3 pieces of lead shot and 2 gunflints. Miscellaneous items included 241 pieces of unidentified glass, 3 aluminum objects, 309 unidentified iron objects, 13 other pieces of metal, 1 piece of shale, 14 pieces of slate, 108 wood fragments, 2 unidentified lithics, 23 fragments of lime, 459 pieces of coal, 251 pieces of charcoal, 27 slag fragments, and 16 other objects. The prehistoric items were 4 chert flakes, a jasper flake, 3 quartz flakes, and 5 pieces of fire-cracked rock.

The Shah Property represents the evolution of the London Town Peninsula from colonial times up to the present day. It started with an early town-period structure that was heated probably operated as a fairly public facility, based on its central location and proximity to a major transportation network, in addition to the large number of bottles and punchbowl in a pit used for refuse, probably dumped over a short period of time. This structure was torn down and replaced by later structures, as the debris in the 19th century pit can testify. Lastly, archeologists were given the opportunity to investigate this area because the cycle continues – the owners were tearing their house down and replacing it once again.

Unfortunately, access to the Shah Property was limited to the southwestern section of the 3.15 acre parcel. Excavations took place only in front of the 20th century structure and in areas disturbed by landscaping and driveway construction. Historic structural elements (postholes, hearth, and a storage pit) were discovered during this investigation but the remainder of the structure lay under the modern foundation and could not be fully documented. Thus, it is difficult to state anything with regard to the research potential of 18AN1062. Much of the site could be disturbed or destroyed, particularly in light of the construction that would have taken place following the 2003 excavations. Alternatively, significant deposits could remain preserved beneath the current house or elsewhere in the un-tested portions of the property.

External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

97002005