



# Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18AN1285

Site Name: Camp Lett's 11

Prehistoric

Other name(s)

Historic

Unknown

Brief Description:

Early, Middle, & Late Woodland shell midden; 19th century artifact scatter

## Site Location and Environmental Data:

Maryland Archaeological Research Unit No. 7

SCS soil & sediment code CoC3

Latitude 38.8960

Longitude -76.5327

Physiographic province Western Shore Coastal

Terrestrial site

Underwater site

Elevation m

Site slope 7%

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) Bear Neck Creek

- | Saltwater   |  | Freshwater                            |                                |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Ocean <input type="checkbox"/>                      | Estuary/tidal river <input 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 0 m

## Temporal & Ethnic Contextual Data:

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

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

### 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 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"/>	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	1
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"/>
Dames Qtr	<input type="checkbox"/>	Coulbourn	<input type="checkbox"/>
Selden Island	<input type="checkbox"/>	Watson	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accokeek	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mockley	435
Wolfe Neck	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clemson Island	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vinette	<input type="checkbox"/>	Page	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shepard	<input type="checkbox"/>	Townsend	15
Keyser	<input type="checkbox"/>	Minguannan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yeocomico	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sullivan Cove	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monongahela	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shenks Ferry	<input type="checkbox"/>
Susquehannock	<input type="checkbox"/>	Moyaone	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Potomac Crk	1

Historic Sherd Types					
<b>Earthenware</b>	Ironstone	<input type="checkbox"/>	Staffordshire	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Astbury	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jackfield	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tin Glazed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Borderware	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mn Mottled	<input type="checkbox"/>	Whiteware	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buckley	<input type="checkbox"/>	North Devon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Porcelain</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creamware	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pearlware	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stoneware	<input type="checkbox"/>
				English Brown	<input type="checkbox"/>
				Eng Dry-bodied	<input type="checkbox"/>
				Nottingham	<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			
Flaked stone	48	Other fired clay	264
Ground stone	<input type="checkbox"/>	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stone bowls	<input type="checkbox"/>	Modified faunal	14
Fire-cracked rock	50	Unmod faunal	753
Other lithics (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Oyster shell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics (all)	231	Floral material	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rimsherds	<input type="checkbox"/>	Uncommon Obj.	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

Lithic Material			
Jasper	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fer quartzite	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chert	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sil sandstone	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rhyolite	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Chalcedony	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quartz	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	European flint	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quartzite	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ironstone	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Basalt	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Argilite	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Sandstone	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Dated features present at site

Mockley pit

Historic Artifacts			
Pottery (all)	8	Tobacco related	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glass (all)	5	Activity item(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Architectural	23	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Furniture	<input type="checkbox"/>	Faunal material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arms	<input type="checkbox"/>	Misc. kitchen	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clothing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal items	<input type="checkbox"/>	Misc.	1
		Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Historic Features			
Const feature	<input type="checkbox"/>	Privy/outhouse	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foundation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Depression/mound	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cellar hole/cellar	<input type="checkbox"/>	Burial(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hearth/chimney	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Postholes/molds	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trash pit/dump	<input type="checkbox"/>
Paling ditch/fence	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sheet midden	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Planting feature	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Mill raceway	<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 - Londontowne

Additional raw data may be available online

## Summary Description:

Site 18AN1285, also known as Camp Lett's 11, is an Early, Middle, & Late Woodland shell midden west of Mayo in Anne Arundel County. The site is situated on the low terrace of a small peninsula that juts out into a tributary creek of the Rhode River. The vegetative setting consists of a mixed deciduous and coniferous forest with relatively little undergrowth. A 19th century artifact scatter is also present. Soils at the site are primarily Collington and Wist sandy loams.

The site was first identified in 2005 during a Phase I survey of the north shore of the Rhode River in Anne Arundel County. The survey work was being carried out by archeologists of the Lost Towns Project under an MHT Non-Capital Historic Preservation Grant awarded to the Anne Arundel County Trust for Preservation (ACT) in FY2005. The grant was part of a three-year program to better assess, evaluate, and plan for the cultural resources in this region. A total of 44 archeological sites were examined and preliminarily assessed, 9 of which were targeted for future work. In FY2006, MHT again provided funds to ACT to carry out testing at 5 of the potentially significant sites, 18AN1285 among them. Finally, in 2007, two of the most promising and representative sites in the watershed: 18AN1285 (a Middle Woodland period prehistoric site) and 18AN339 (an expansive multi-component historic plantation) were subjected to Phase III data recovery. The MHT Non-capital Historic Preservations Grants are funded by the state legislature and, as such, represent expenditures of public funds for the purposes of archeological (and historic) research and interpretation.

The Phase I work at 18AN1285 in 2005 entailed both surface reconnaissance/pedestrian survey and the placement of 12 shovel test pits (STPs). STPs were placed judgmentally and yielded prehistoric ceramics, debitage, and burnt animal bone.

Phase II work was carried out at the site in May and June of 2006 during the second year of the Rhode River Survey. Two 1.52 X 1.52 m (5 X 5 ft) test units and a single 152 X 76.2 cm (5 X 2.5 ft) test window were excavated. The two larger units were placed in the northern portion of the site, while the smaller unit was placed near the southern tip of the peninsula. Three strata were identified in the northern units. The unit to the northeast produced an undiagnostic rhyolite projectile point, thermally-altered quartzite and chert, and shell-tempered and Potomac Creek ceramics dating to the Late Woodland period. The unit to the southwest produced a quartz Selby Bay knife, shell-tempered and Potomac Creek ceramics, and a quartz flake. The smaller unit was placed at the southern tip of the peninsula to investigate potential shell midden deposits noted here during Phase I work. Three sherds of Mockley ware were recovered from Stratum 1. No artifacts were recovered from the shell midden itself, which was represented by Stratum 2.

The artifact assemblage suggested that Site 18AN1285 dated to the late Middle Woodland through Late Woodland time periods of prehistory. This peninsula was most likely used as a temporary campsite that was returned to seasonally, primarily for oyster procurement. Based on the wealth of data recovered, and the potential for better understanding such sites (very typical along the shorelines of the Rhode River and throughout Anne Arundel County's riverine-rich environment), further testing was recommended.

Researchers returned to the site in 2007 to conducted data recovery excavations. The first step in that process was to reestablish the 2006 grid and preform a magnetometer survey. Considering the relatively pristine and unpolluted condition of the site, and the fact that previous investigations revealed little historic activity on the point, the magnetometer data held the potential for pinpointing possible prehistoric features, such as a hearth or fire-cracked rock concentration. While the overgrowth and density of tree cover did present a surveying challenge, the magnetometry data suggested a few areas of higher potential for such features. However, only the northern half of the site was tested in this manner. The promising anomalies were ground-truthed as discussed below.

A total of five 1.52 X 1.52 m (5 X 5 ft) test units were excavated at the site in 2007. Three of the units were clustered in a block roughly in the center of the site, which had produced a higher number of ceramics and lithics in 2006. One unit was placed near the southern point to further investigate the oyster midden noted in 2006. The final unit was placed on the northern end of the site to ground-truth the location of a major magnetic anomaly recorded during the magnetometer survey.

All units were hand-excavated using shovels, spades, and trowels. All soils were screened through hardware cloth and all artifacts (except oyster shell) were retained. Oyster shells with "female" hinges were retained. Plan views were hand-drawn in the field of the base of excavations in all units, and plans were drawn on separate graph paper of all significant features. Profiles of significant walls were also drawn on graph paper. These images were later digitized using AutoCAD software. Digital photographs were taken of all plan views and profiles and stored on Anne Arundel County government servers.

Camp Lett's 11 appears to have been occupied periodically and seasonally, and the heaviest period of site occupation seems to have occurred during the Selby Bay (or Mockley) phase of the Middle Woodland period (ca. AD 200-900). The people who inhabited this area thousands of years ago were mostly interested in exploiting the rich natural resources of the Rhode River. The most overt remains of their time on this small peninsula are the thousands of discarded oyster shells resulting in at least two discreet middens. Oysters were an abundant resource in the area, and the meat could be smoked and preserved for transportation back to the larger base camp. Some have speculated that surplus from the abundant oysters harvested from these Coastal Plain sites could have been used as trade items in the vast exchange networks that were in place during the Selby Bay phase.

The native inhabitants were also engaged in attempted pottery manufacture during their stay at Site 18AN1285. Over 260 sherds of crumbly, friable, shell-tempered bits of material that seem to be mid-way between clay and pottery were recovered from the shell midden. The presence of these partially-fired pottery fragments strongly suggests there was an effort at producing ceramic vessels here on the peninsula. All of these sherds came from the same unit, suggesting a single manufacturing event.

Two small pit-like features were excavated that were located at either edge of this central midden. Feature 1 was located to the east of the midden and was the deeper of the two, diving approximately 30 cm into subsoil. This small pit was lined with a very shallow layer of sterile, fire-reddened soil, and it is not clear if this fire-reddening was intentional or not. The inner, thicker layer of soil contained burned bone, fire-cracked rock, and both burned and unburned Mockley-ware pottery. The burned ceramics showed signs of charring on the interior and exterior, as well as broken edges, suggesting a vessel broke and continued to char in the pit. The pit apparently later filled with oyster shells, possibly the result of the nearby midden slumping and settling. Feature 2 was located on the opposite side of the shell midden, to the west. It was very shallow (less than 5 cm deep), circular, and small (only about 15 cm in diameter). The only artifacts recovered from this feature were five sherds of net-impressed Mockley ceramics. The use or function of either of these pits is uncertain, but given their proximity to the midden, it stands to reason that their purpose was directly related to the processing of oysters.



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Unknown

The southern midden, identified near the point of the peninsula, produced very few artifacts. Only quartz, quartzite, and rhyolite debitage and fire-cracked rock were recovered, and no evidence of the soft, friable ceramics were found in this area. However, a number of fire-cracked rocks and Mockley ceramics recovered from just outside the midden could possibly speak to activities taking place at the midden's edge during the Selby Bay phase of prehistory. The highest number of debitage fragments anywhere on the site came from this area. This, coupled with the thicker and denser nature of the shell midden, seems to suggest a greater degree of oyster processing and tool manufacture on this side of the site (though no features were noted in the vicinity). The possibility should be noted, however, that the artifacts found outside the midden were deposited well before creation of the midden (no diagnostics were found within the midden itself).

Very few prehistoric artifacts were recovered from the single unit placed at the northern end of the site to investigate a magnetic anomaly. While no prehistoric ceramics were found, four tertiary quartz flakes were recovered, clearly indicating tool manufacture was taking place across all of Site 18AN1285. This unit did possess very dense, clay-rich subsoil only about 30 cm below the ground surface. Such clay could provide a source for the raw materials needed for the attempted pottery manufacture seen on the site. The presence of these differing activity areas further reinforces the notion that this site was utilized periodically.

A total of 1,698 artifacts were recovered from all three years of excavations at the site. Of these, only 37 were historic artifacts. The historic assemblage consisted of 8 ceramic sherds (refined white earthenwares and porcelain), 5 fragments of vessel glass, 2 nails, 21 pieces of brick/daub, and 1 piece of slag. The prehistoric assemblage consisted of 48 flaked lithics (1 Selby Bay knife, 1 rhyolite point fragment, 3 cores, 1 possible scraper, 30 flakes, 5 pieces of shatter, and 7 chunks), 50 pieces of fire-cracked rock or other lithics (counted as FCR in the tables above), 495 ceramic sherds (435 Mockley, 15 Townsend/Rappahannock, 1 Potomac Creek, 15 sand-tempered, and 29 shell-tempered), 16 pieces of bone (1 bird bone, 14 burned mammal bones, and 1 very small unidentified bone fragment), 30 snail shells, 3 freshwater periwinkle shells, 718 oyster shell fragments, and 301 pieces of charcoal. Some 264 of the Mockley and shell-tempered sherds were only partially fired.

Investigations at Camp Lett's 11 (18AN1285) revealed exciting and unexpected information about the Selby Bay Phase of the Middle Woodland period (ca. AD 200 – AD 900). After careful analysis of the artifact assemblage and consultation with prehistoric pottery experts, it was determined that the site exhibited evidence of attempted pottery manufacture on the Rhode River. Hundreds of partially fired, crumbly, friable, shell-tempered, near-pottery sherds were recovered from one of the shell middens on site, clearly demonstrating a failed attempt at making coiled clay pots in the vicinity. This, coupled with a relative dearth of rhyolite recovered from the site (a non-local lithic type usually found in abundance on sites of this time period), demonstrated that 18AN1285 offers a new perspective on the presumably transient and temporary nature of a short-term resource procurement camp from the Middle Woodland time period. Sampling at the site covered only a fraction of it. From an academic perspective, further consideration of the pottery-making component may be of great interest. Acquiring clay samples from the region, and conducting clay sourcing studies would allow archeologists to further explore prehistoric pottery making. Site 18AN1285 retains significant research potential.

## External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

95001575, 95001576, Site Files