



# Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18AN339

Site Name: Contee

Prehistoric

Other name(s) Java Plantation, Sparrows Rest, Squirrel Neck

Historic

Brief Description:

Late 18th century plantation house ruin; Prehistoric lithic scatter

Unknown

## Site Location and Environmental Data:

Maryland Archaeological Research Unit No. 7

SCS soil & sediment code 30) MfC3

Latitude 38.8872 Longitude -76.5406

Physiographic province Western Shore Coastal

Terrestrial site

Underwater site

Elevation 31 m Site slope 6-10%

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) Rhode River

#### Saltwater

Ocean

Estuary/tidal river

Tidewater/marsh

#### Freshwater

Stream/river

Swamp

Lake or pond

Spring

Minimum distance to water is 427 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

<b>Earthenware</b>	Ironstone	5	Staffordshire	6	<b>Stoneware</b>	
Astbury	Jackfield	2	Tin Glazed	809	English Brown	83
Borderware	Mn Mottled	17	Whiteware	247	Eng Dry-bodied	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buckley	North Devon	6	<b>Porcelain</b>	118	Nottingham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creamware	Pearlware	117			Rhenish	93
					Wt Salt-glazed	59

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

## Other Artifact & Feature Types:

Prehistoric Artifacts		Other fired clay	
Flaked stone	131	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	14	Oyster shell	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other lithics (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics (all)	28	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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Chalcedony	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chert	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ironstone	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rhyolite	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Argilite	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quartz	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Steatite	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quartzite	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sandstone	<input type="checkbox"/>

Dated features present at site

17th century earthfast structure

Historic Artifacts		Tobacco related	
Pottery (all)	2058	Activity item(s)	6
Glass (all)	2015	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Architectural	7380	Faunal material	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Furniture	<input type="checkbox"/>	Misc. kitchen	6888
Arms	143	Floral material	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Clothing	35	Misc.	13606
Personal items	7	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Historic Features

Const feature	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Privy/outhouse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Depression/mound	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foundation	<input checked="" 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 checked="" 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:

The Contee Site (18AN339), also known as the Java Plantation, Sparrows Rest, or Squirrel Neck, is the archeological remains associated with a Late 18th century plantation house ruin west of Mayo in Anne Arundel County. The site is situated on a hilltop that slopes down to Fox Creek and the Rhode River. The Georgian mansion originally called Squirrel Neck is a landmark for people traveling the Rhode River, as it has been since its circa 1750 construction. Today, the graceful ruins, consisting of little more than two chimneys, can still be seen for miles. Most of the surrounding landscape is pastureland or overgrown yard areas. Soils at the site are primarily Marr and Dodon sandy loams.

The property on which 18AN339 is situated has been known by many names during its 350 year occupation since European colonization, but was held by only four families for most of its history. In the 17th century, the land was called "Sparrows Rest", "Sparrows Addition", and "Locust Neck". The Thomas Sparrow family owned the property for much of the 17th and early 18th centuries. By the mid 18th century, it was called "Squirrel Neck" and it was possessed by Nicholas Maccubbin and then his son, James (Maccubbin) Carroll. The 19th century brought the ownership of the Contee family, who called it "Java". The ancestors of the Kirkpatrick-Howat family purchased the property in the early 20th century.

The first Englishman to lay claim to the land was Thomas Sparrow (I). Sparrow (I), born circa 1620 in England, immigrated to Virginia by 1635. In 1640, he married Elizabeth Marsh in Lower Norfolk County, VA, who herself had arrived in Virginia before 1637. In 1649, the young couple, along with their servant, John Dennis, and their two young children, Thomas (II) and Elizabeth, came to Anne Arundel County with Puritan Providence settlers. In Maryland, Elizabeth Sparrow would give birth to a second son, Solomon, around 1652. Sparrows Rest, containing 590 acres and the present location of Site 18AN339, was patented on September 22, 1652 on the "West side of Chesapeake Bay and on the West side of Road River" for Thomas Sparrow (I). Sparrow also patented land on the south side of the Patapsco River in 1652, which would later be called Sparrows Point (as it still is today). Sparrow (I) died by September 1659, when Sparrows Rest was granted to "Thomas Sparrow son and heir of the first named Thomas Sparrow".

The Sparrow family had converted to Quakerism in the 1650s, and Thomas Sparrow (II) was such a devout Friend, he was reportedly fined five hundred pounds of tobacco for refusing to bear arms in the colonial militia in 1661. This Thomas Sparrow married Elizabeth Kinsey in 1659 (who later married Richard Johns, noted Calvert County Quaker and ancestor of the 19th century philanthropist Johns Hopkins). Their children included Charity, Solomon, Thomas (III), and Elizabeth. Sparrow (II) sold a portion of Sparrows Rest, called Locust Neck, to Major Thomas Francis on October 15th, 1667. Francis later patented 42 acres of land called Francis His Addition. Archival research suggests that Locust Neck and Francis His Addition may occupy the same area as the northeastern portions of the 140 acre Sparrows Addition, which was patented by the Sparrow family in 1675. Sparrows Addition encompassed present day Contee's Wharf, Sheepshead Cove, and extended up Sellman Creek to Nettlefolds Branch (today called the Cypress Bog).

Thomas Sparrow wrote his will on January 1, 1674/5, in which he states that his son, Thomas Sparrow, is to receive all of the plantation on which he was then residing, along with his parcels on the Patapsco (Sparrows Point), and he specifically states that the land should stay within the male line of Sparrows forever. He wills his wife, Elizabeth, to have use of half of the plantation until Thomas (III) reaches the age of 21. He was born ca. 1660, which would make him about 14 at the time. He further requests that, "the building now begun upon my dwelling plantation to be finished with all convenient speed". He goes on to will the, "use of that parcel of Land which my sister Elizabeth lives...with the timber house and what else is necessary for her occupation upon the said land from the time of her first going on the said land until eleven years being fully completed and ended...". This document suggests that there were at least two dwellings on Sparrows Rest by 1675, and perhaps more. One may be represented at 18AN339.

The inventory of Thomas Sparrow (II), dated October 25th, 1676 reveals the assemblage of a wealthy 17th century planter. His estate, valued at 27,068 pounds of tobacco, included, among other items, a large collection of farm animals (including "1 old horse"), three feather beds, 12 red leather chairs, three small pewter dishes, one bible, a small silver spoon, and a warrant for 250 acres of land (this valued at 500 pounds), to name a few items. It was neighbors Major Thomas Francis and Richard Tydings (married to Chastity Sparrow) who conducted this inventory.

Following Sparrow's death, his sons, Thomas (III) and Solomon, and his wife, Elizabeth (now married to Richard Johns), contested the land transaction of the 42 acre Locust Neck parcel between Francis and their father. This valuable water access land is likely the eastern-most portion of the Sparrows Rest and Sparrows Addition land located along the shoreline of today's Sellman Creek. The Sparrow heirs claimed that Thomas (II) died before the deed could be finalized. The court ruled in favor of Francis, and Locust Neck would remain in his family until 1699.

Major Thomas Francis (the elder) drowned in a boating accident on March 19th, 1685. He and his wife were reportedly returning from a trip across the river to Tulip Hill (the adjacent plantation owned by the Galloway family). According to local legend, his wife survived because her hoop skirt acted as a life preserver and buoyed her. Francis' headstone was located in a small wooded area east of the Java mansion, but has since been lost. It was, however, transcribed in the 1950s.

Possession of Locust Neck apparently passed from Major Thomas Francis to his son, also called Thomas Francis. This Francis subsequently left Locust Neck (a part of Sparrows Rest) and Francis His Addition to his wife, Mary Francis, in his will dated August 29th, 1698. The following year, on September 12th, 1699, Mary Francis (now living in Cecil County) sold all of Locust Neck and Francis His Addition (totaling 188 acres) to Thomas Sparrow (III), and the original 590 acres of Sparrows Rest and 100 acres of Sparrows Addition were back in the possession of the Sparrow family.

Thomas Sparrow (III) had three wives, a total of eight children, was a devout Quaker, an Annapolis merchant, and owned property in both Maryland and North Carolina. He married Anne Burgess on June 8th, 1697 and buried her just a month and a half later, on July 25th, 1697. Later that same year, he married Sophia Richardson on November 11th, 1697. Sophia was the mother of Thomas (IV) and Solomon, and after she died in 1705, he contracted William Coale (possibly his uncle, married to his Aunt Elizabeth) and Daniel Richardson to care for his children for 15 years in exchange for use of Sparrows Rest and Sparrows Addition for 21 years. The land totaled 690 acres "together with all houses Edifices gardens orchards pastures Emolumnets appendances & appurtenances" and Coale and Richardson would owe Sparrow 100 pounds of "good merchantable wool" yearly for the rent. They were also charged with providing Thomas (IV) and Solomon "good and sufficient meate Drinke Cloathes lodging and washing and also shall and will cause ye said Children to be Educated in such Schoole learning as can conveniently be procured in ye Province of Maryland". This document suggests that this Thomas Sparrow (III) did not reside at 18AN339 during this time.



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Unknown

Sparrow (III) remarried a woman named Ann West by the end of 1705, and they eventually had five children together. During this time, it appears that he acquired at least two more parcels of land in the Rhode River area, called Squirrel Neck and Thomas's Quarter Plantation, probably located to the south of Site 18AN339. In 1712, he leased these two parcels to William Coale for 21 years for the "sum of fifty pounds current money", and stated that rent of "one Barrell of Indian Corn" should be paid to Sparrow yearly "at his Mansion house upon the plantation whereon he now lives". What is not clear in this document is where Sparrow and his family were living at the time. If the agreement with Coale from 1705 (now 7 years prior) still stands at this point, the Sparrow family were living somewhere other than 18AN339 and Sparrows Rest. His wife, Ann West, was a wealthy woman in her own right (she was the daughter of Col. John West), and it is possible they were living on her family estate or on another landholding. Sparrow is, however, referred to as "Thomas Sparrow of Road River", so this suggests he might have been living on Sparrows Rest at the time.

Also during this time, Thomas Sparrow (III) was apparently spending time on his plantations near the Pamlico River in North Carolina. He held over 3,000 acres in that state and in 1706 became one of the original landholders in the town of Bath, the oldest incorporated town in North Carolina. In 1711, he participated in Cary's Rebellion, a religious conflict led by Thomas Cary. Cary, a South Carolinian and supporter of the Quaker party, served as North Carolina's governor for a short time in the early 18th century, during which time Bath was the impromptu seat of the colony's government. His rebellion centered on Quaker rights in North Carolina after Cary was removed from office by the English Crown and replaced by Edward Hyde, and member of the Church of England. During the summer of 1711, Cary assembled a group of men, including Thomas Sparrow (III), and fought numerous armed skirmishes for Quaker rights. Eventually, the Royal Marines from Virginia sided with Hyde's forces and overtook Cary and his followers. Cary was arrested and sent back to England and his men were deemed traitors. By 1713, however, the English crown granted them full pardon.

Sparrow (III) wrote his will on June 15th, 1713. He would live for many years after he wrote this document, and it was not endorsed until May 12th, 1719. There is also evidence that he wrote a second will in North Carolina in 1717. He began his will by living his island called Crany Island (located near the southern tip of the Outer Banks) in North Carolina to his sons Solomon and John, and follows by giving his son Kinsey, "all that parcel of land I purchased of Mary Frances being one hundred & forty six acres Part of Sparrows Rest formerly sold by my father to Tho Francis lying on Road River". This is the only mention of Sparrows Rest in the document, and interestingly, his eldest son, Thomas (IV) is only specifically given "one Cow & Calfe with Seven Years Priviledge of them & their Increase on Crany Island". His father does, however, specify that his four sons should divide all of his lands, rights, titles, and interest equally.

Sparrow's failure to mention the remaining portions of Sparrows Rest and Sparrows Addition in his will could stem from the fact that only 7 days prior to the drafting of his will (on June 8th, 1713), he leased approximately 100 acres of Sparrows Rest to John Gresham for 30 pounds current Maryland money. This document indicates that Gresham was the then-owner of the neighboring plantation called Shaw's Folly (located north of Sparrow's Rest), and this lease document was enacted for 21 years. The document was revisited on June 10th, 1723 when it appears the lease agreement was further endorsed.

At some point after the death of Thomas Sparrow (III), his eldest son, Thomas Sparrow (IV) acquired Sparrows Rest, Sparrows Addition, and Squirrel Neck, among other parcels of land. This Thomas Sparrow had a "crippling disability" and was unable to farm. He instead made his living as an inn holder in Annapolis, and became the crier of the provincial and Anne Arundel County courts, and later acted as doorkeeper of the General Assembly. Apparently, he also invented a machine to catch and cure fish for export. There is also court documentation from November 1747 that he fathered an illegitimate child with a woman named Martha Freeman, and was fined 30 shillings for the act.

Thomas Sparrow (IV) was convinced by his guardian, Thomas Gassaway, to convey Sparrows Rest and Sparrows Addition to him in 1720. However, Sparrow later decided to take Gassaway to court to reacquire the parcels. On February 4th, 1724, the Chancery Court granted Sparrow ownership of the two parcels, totaling 490 acres.

It appears, however, that by 1746, Sparrow (IV) is finally ready to permanently part with his ancestral lands. On September 9th, 1746, he sold a portion of Sparrows Rest to Richard Tydings, (probably related by marriage) for 10,000 pounds of tobacco. This portion of Sparrows Rest seems to be further west and inland, west of Muddy Branch. In May of the following year he sold the remainder of Sparrows Rest and Sparrows Addition to Nicholas Maccubbin for 1,000 pounds current Maryland money. A total of 690 acres were sold to Maccubbin, including the easternmost, waterfront portions of the land along the Rhode River. Site 18AN339 is located in the eastern portion of Sparrows Rest sold to Maccubbin. This ended the 94 year Sparrow possession of the land.

Nicolas (Nicholas) Maccubbin was a wealthy merchant-planter from Annapolis, who married Mary Clare Carroll, also of Annapolis, on July 21st, 1747 (just two months after his acquisition of the Sparrow land). This was a marriage of great wealth. Mary's dowry included 1,500 acres of Prince George's County land and waterfront property in Annapolis. Upon her father's death, her brother, Charles Carrol (known as the Barrister), became one of the six richest men in Maryland due to his inheritance.

While there is little documentary evidence to pinpoint exactly when the mansion at Java was built, it is safe to assume that it was erected during the Maccubbin ownership of the land. The mansion at Squirrel Neck (as it was called at the time) is very similar in design to Mount Clare, the home built by Charles Carrol the Barrister. Historians generally believe that they were constructed by the same builder, most likely Patrick Creagh. Whoever designed both mansions had an eye toward classic Georgian architecture. The Squirrel Neck house was constructed of brick and had five parts. The center section was two and a half storeys tall with a gambrel roof, while the two hyphens were only one storey tall with gable roofs. Two storey brick pilasters flanked the central portion of the house, and glazed header bricks running up the center of them were a design element used at both Mount Clare and Squirrel Neck. The Squirrel Neck mansion lacked a water table or belt course, typical elements of a Georgian period house. A gambrel roof at Squirrel Neck also set it apart.

While Maccubbin acquired Sparrows Rest and Sparrows Addition in his 1747 agreement with Thomas Sparrow (IV), he did not file a patent certificate for the parcel of land called Squirrel Neck until 1765. During this time, the Maccubbin family was probably spending most of their time in Annapolis, at the ancestral home of Mary Clare Carroll Maccubbin, purchased by her husband in 1746. The family grew in the mid 18th century with the birth of Nicholas in 1751, Charles (ca. 1755), James in 1761, and Samuel in 1763. Additional children included John Henry, Mary, and Susanna. The 1776 Census listed the slaves possessed by Maccubbin at the time, including 11 black males, 11 black females, and 25 black children (all 22 adults were taxable).

Charles Carroll the Barrister died in 1783 and left his estate to his two nephews, Nicholas and James Maccubbin, under the assumption that they would change their names to Carroll. James would eventually inherit Mount Clare upon his Aunt's death in 1817, and also inherited the brick mansion at Squirrel Neck upon his father's death in 1787. The will of Nicholas Maccubbin, written on May 28th, 1784 (and endorsed on March 15, 1787), states "I give and bequeath to my son James Carroll formerly called Maccubbin the following lands, Squirrel Neck containing fifty acres more or less, Sparrows Addition containing one hundred acres more or less, Sparrows Rest containing five hundred and ninety acres more or less". James (MacCubbin) Carroll was now the



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owner of what was once the entire Sparrow family landholdings, including "all my Horses, Cattle, Hogs, Sheep, Plantation Utensils, Household furniture, and all other things..." on the land when the elder Maccubbin died. Interestingly, his father specified that James was not to receive all of the slaves on the 740 acres, as he had when distributing his other plantations to his other sons. Instead, he specifies at least 12 slaves by name (along with their children) for James to own, and gives the "Nigro woman named Jenny at Squirel Neck and all her Children" to his daughter Mary (Maccubbin) Brice.

James (Maccubbin) Carroll was an absentee landowner and left Squirrel Neck under the care of a superintendent named Willam Johnson. The 1798 Federal Tax Assessment lists a five part mansion valued at \$12,000, eight small dwellings, and 40 slaves on the property. This suggests a very large farming operation was being undertaken on the plantation, but it is not clear if anyone was actually living in the Squirrel Neck mansion during this time.

On February 1, 1819, James Carroll sold his entire 740 acres of Sparrow lands to Dennis Boyd, who immediately endorsed the land to John Contee. This left Contee as the owner of the three parcels, although he still owed \$30,000 on the sale to James Carroll. The lands were resurveyed on June 15, 1825, and a patent was issued to John Contee three years later on August 12th, 1828. It was this patent document that first called the property "Java". It would not be until November 10th, 1832 that Contee finished paying his debt in full (to the heirs of James Carroll, who died in January of that year), at which point he finally received the deed.

John Contee was a wealthy landowner from Prince George's County and served in the US Navy during the War of 1812. He was an officer on the USS Constitution when it captured and destroyed the HMS Guerriere on August 19, 1812 off the coast of Nova Scotia and the HMS Java on December 29, 1812 off the coast of Brazil. He is believed to have named the property "Java" because the battle and his service aboard the Constitution left a lasting impression.

John Contee probably did not reside at Java full time, as he maintained a life-long residence in Prince George's County. He apparently left the daily operations of the plantation in the hands of an overseer, continuing the tradition started by James (Maccubbin) Carroll. He died in 1839, and willed Java to his second wife, Ann Snowden Contee. The inventory of his landholdings, made in February, 1840, shed some light on the immense size of the farming operations that were taking place on Java at the time. There were 84 slaves listed as living on the property, which would provide a labor force of approximately 40 people. These slaves produced 70,000 pounds of tobacco in 1839, a tremendous amount relative to the other farms in the region. In the stores, there were listed 1,500 pounds of bacon, 1,000 pounds of pork, and four barrels of herring (which would have probably been used to feed all of the slaves). There were few essential items listed as being in the main house (suggesting it was not furnished for day to day living), and the overseer was probably living in a different dwelling on the plantation.

However, Anne Contee and her two young sons were listed on the 1840 census as residents of the First District of Anne Arundel County (the Rhode River area), so she must have moved her family to Java soon after her husband's death. Evidently, she and her boys moved back to Prince George's County by 1850, as she is not listed in the Rhode River area census for that year. She is, however, listed in the 1850 Slave Schedule as the owner of 76 slaves residing in the First District, suggesting she was the absentee landlord of a thriving plantation. Contee's Wharf, located on her property on the Rhode River, must have been an integral part of this plantation system, and it is shown for the first time on the detailed 1846 US Coastal and Geodetic Survey map.

Ann Contee conveyed her interests in Java to her two sons, Charles and Richard, on July 28, 1859. The Contee boys divided the land into a south section belonging to Charles (totaling 360 acres) and a north section belonging to Richard (totaling 380 acres) along the course of an old road. It is in Richard's northern section where 18AN339 and the Java mansion ruins are located. On the same day he obtained the land from his mother, Richard Contee mortgaged his portion to his father-in-law for \$23,500 to be repaid in 10 years. He and his brother also borrowed money from the Farmers Bank of Maryland at about the same time.

The Contee brothers married two sisters of the John Bowling family (Richard married Ann in 1858 and Charles married Betty in 1860) and both couples settled on their respective parcels of Java land. The 1860 Slave Schedule for the First District lists Richard as owner of 34 slaves and Charles as owner of 40 slaves, making them the two largest slave owners in the Rhode River watershed. The 1860 Census lists Richard (age 24) as having \$23,000 in real estate and \$19,770 in personal estate. By the close of the Civil War, Richard Contee (and Charles as well) was in serious financial trouble. The labor-intensive approach to farming he utilized prior to the abolition of slavery proved un-economical after the war. Both Richard and Charles defaulted on the loans they took out from Farmers Bank of Maryland, and the county sheriff was instructed to sell both parcels to the highest bidder. Their father-in-law, John Bowling, purchased the notes on both farms, so while the Contees were no longer owners of the parcels, they were still permitted to live there.

The 1870 Census lists Richard Contee (age 34), his wife Ann (age 29), and two additional Contee women (possibly cousins), Eloise (age 19) and Sylvia (age 17) on the First District Census. There is no sign of Charles or Betty Contee. Richard's real estate value was listed at \$20,000 (only \$3,000 less than in 1860), but his personal estate is listed as only \$2,300 (\$17,400 less than in 1860). According to the 1870 Agricultural Census, he paid \$1,000 in wages to farm laborers that year, giving him just about \$1,300 in profits.

Richard Contee was still living at Java in 1875 when his father-in-law, John Bowling, died. But, he had started to lease out portions of the property to tenants. Bowling forgave Contee the debt he was owed for purchasing the mortgage, and willed him back his original northern portion of Java. By 1877, Contee and his wife Ann were living in Baltimore and the entire farm had been turned over to tenants. Ann was apparently in poor health by this time. In 1877 they filed a petition with the Anne Arundel County courts to have the land sold, rather than retain it under the direction of Bowling's will, asserting that, "under the system of tenancy the place [was] rapidly declining in value...from want of proper cultivation and attention [and the buildings were] falling to pieces and there were no means with which to repair them, the proceeds of the place not being sufficient for that purpose even". Richard and Ann reportedly later moved to the Snowden family mansion, Oakland, in Prince George's County by 1887. This was the ancestral home of Richard's mother's family.

A Chicago resident named John V. Lemoyne obtained Richard's northern portion of Java sometime after 1882. He apparently left the farm in the hands of managers or tenants, apparently using the Java mansion (about 150 years old by this time) as a summer house. He was apparently not present in 1890 when the mansion was struck by lightning and partially destroyed. The roof and interior framing of the house fell, and portions of the front and rear walls collapsed. The house was apparently rebuilt using the fire-damaged brick, a fact that would heavily contribute to its slow demise. A number of architectural changes were also made to the house and landscaping at this time.

Lemoyne sold the land to Jasperson Smith of New York City in 1897 and eventually Mrs. Elizabeth Gordon bought the land in 1917. Mrs. Gordon later married a Mr. Kirkpatrick-Howat, and their son and his wife retained this portion of Java until 2008. Apparently, soon after buying the land, Mrs. Gordon lived in the reconstructed Java mansion during summer. But even at this time (ca. 1916) the house is described as "Dwelling Ruins" on a plat of the parcel. She was determined to rebuild the old mansion, even going so far as to have bricks delivered. However, a nearby 19th century brick mansion came on the market in



# Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18AN339

Site Name: Contee

Prehistoric

Other name(s) Java Plantation, Sparrows Rest, Squirrel Neck

Historic

Brief Description:

Late 18th century plantation house ruin; Prehistoric lithic scatter

Unknown

1923 and Mrs. Gordon abandoned her plans to restore the old Contee house. Today, all that remains of the old Squirrel Neck mansion that Nicholas Maccubbin built around 1750 are two chimneys and a portion of the northern hyphen. Since 2008, the land has been owned by the Smithsonian Land Trust and is part of the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center (or SERC).

The site was first recorded in the Maryland Archeological Site Files in 1974 when Henry T. Wright (who had discovered the Java house ruins in 1967) reported the resource to Tyler Bastian of the Maryland Geological Survey, Division of Archeology (since absorbed into MHT). Wright had been contracted by the Smithsonian Institution to conduct a reconnaissance survey of the Chesapeake Bay Center for Field Biology property in 1968. While this site is not mentioned in the report itself (it was not at the time on Smithsonian property), Tyler Bastian did record the site per information from Wright. Wright noted standing brick walls, but most of the wooden parts of the building had fallen down.

In December of 1989, a Phase I survey of a 55-acre parcel of land proposed for the Java History Trail was undertaken. Although the survey of the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center's grounds took place south of the site, the site's presence in proximity to the planned trail was noted in a section on background research. An updated site form was also produced, which noted a foundation, hearth, and driveway as visible features, and stated that, "Although the site is essentially an above-ground ruin, the plantation was associated with slave cabins and numerous outbuildings which are no longer standing. Therefore, this form is to record the archaeological remains."

Beginning in 2005, Anne Arundel County began to undertake a major survey of the north shore of the Rhode River. 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, 18AN339 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 18AN339 in 2005 entailed little more than pedestrian survey and recordation of the ruins' presence. No shovel test pits (STPs) were excavated and no artifacts were collected at that time.

In the fall of 2006, Lost Towns Project archeologists began subsurface testing at the site entailing both shovel test pit and formal test unit excavation, which continued through January of 2007. The STPs and units were excavated following natural stratigraphy with shovels and trowels. The soil was screened through hardware mesh and all cultural artifacts were retained and placed in bags labeled with the appropriate provenience information. A total of 31 STPs were excavated at 15.24 m (50 ft) intervals in the central portion of the site (i.e. the mansion ruins). An additional six STPs were excavated on a knoll to the east of the mansion ruins where it was thought that a tenant house may have been located. No strong evidence for a domestic occupation was identified in the eastern portion of the site, but a light scatter of architectural materials was identified and may warrant further investigation in the future.

Artifacts spanning the entire historic occupation of the property were recovered from the 31 STPs excavated in the area surrounding the mansion ruins. However, distinct concentrations of kitchen and architectural artifacts were identified in the west, rear yard of the mansion. These concentration not only revealed a backyard activity area related to the 17th, 18th, and 19th century occupation of the site, but also suggested the potential for an activity area that predated the construction of the ca. 1747 Maccubbin house.

The locations of three excavation units were then selected. One unit was placed at the base of the eastern façade of the mansion ruins, between the main block and the hyphen or passage leading to the northern wing. The dimensions of the unit measured approximately 1 X 1.5 meters (3.5 X 5 ft) as the unit abutted the standing brick foundation. The unit revealed four episodes of construction and destruction spanning the occupation of 18AN339. "Episode 1" represented the 20th century deposits that followed the 1890s rebuilding of the structure after it burned. "Episode 2" represented the 1890s reconstruction. "Episode 3" represented the original mid-18th century construction of the house. And finally, "Episode 4" represented the original ground surface that existed before the construction of the mansion. The strata associated with this episode may also represent the Sparrow occupation of the site in the Late 17th and early 18th centuries.

A second unit was placed to the south of the mansion ruins, on approximately the same line as the eastern façade to test for subsurface features related to a formerly extant southern passage. Only the northern half of the 1.52 X 1.52 m (5 X 5 ft) unit was excavated due to the presence of dense brick rubble located immediately below the sod. A robbed foundation trench, called Feature 1, was identified subsurface in the western portion of the unit related to the southern hyphen that was most likely destroyed during the fire that burned most of the structure in the 1890s. The hyphen was most likely constructed of brick and did not have a basement, as does the corresponding hyphen on the northern end of the building.

The third unit was placed to the rear and northwest of the Maccubbin house ruins, based on a concentration of artifacts recovered in the vicinity during the STP survey. The unit measured 1.52 X 1.52 m and produced several 17th and 18th century diagnostic artifacts. This included a significant assemblage of faunal remains and large quantities of kitchen and architecture-related objects. This suggested a highly trafficked area, perhaps a kitchen, initially utilized before the mid 18th century construction of the mansion. Excavation of this unit was halted at a dense lens of fire-cracked ironstone, possibly indicating an intact structural feature associated with an earlier structure.

Based on these findings, researchers returned to the site in 2007 to conduct extensive data recovery excavations. The first step in the Phase III investigations was to conduct a magnetometer survey in the west, inland yard of the mansion ruins in the vicinity of the third test unit described above, where numerous 17th and 18th century artifact were encountered. A number of anomalies were initially detected about 30.5 m (100 ft) away from the mansion ruins. Students and interns conducted a second magnetometer survey

## External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

95001575, 95001576, Site Files