



Phase II and Phase III Archeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18AN512

Site Name: Belt Residence

Prehistoric

Other name(s)

Historic

Unknown

Brief Description:

Late 19th-Early 20th century African-American tenant house

Site Location and Environmental Data:

Maryland Archeological Research Unit No. 7

SCS soil & sediment code 17) BuB2

Latitude 39.0545

Longitude -76.6507

Physiographic province Western Shore Coastal

Terrestrial site

Underwater site

Elevation 30 m

Site slope 0-5%

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) Unnamed tributary of Jabe

Saltwater

Ocean

Estuary/tidal river

Tidewater/marsh

Minimum distance to water is 68 m

Freshwater

Stream/river

Swamp

Lake or pond

Spring

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

Y

Asian American

African American

Y

Unknown

Anglo-American

Other

Hispanic

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

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

tenant house

Interpretive Sampling Data:

Prehistoric context samples

Soil samples taken

Flotation samples taken

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 Cr	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Historic Sherd Types

Earthenware		Ironstone	26	Staffordshire	<input type="checkbox"/>	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	49	Eng Dry-bodie	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buckley	<input type="checkbox"/>	North Devon	<input type="checkbox"/>	Porcelain	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nottingham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creamware	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pearlware	<input type="checkbox"/>			Rhenish	<input type="checkbox"/>
						Wt Salt-glazed	<input type="checkbox"/>

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Other Artifact & Feature Types:

Prehistoric Artifacts		Other fired clay	
Flaked stone	<input type="checkbox"/>	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	<input type="checkbox"/>	Oyster shell	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other lithics (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	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 type="checkbox"/>	Steatite	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quartzite	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sandstone	<input type="checkbox"/>
		European flint	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Basalt	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Dated features present at site

Historic Artifacts		Tobacco related	
Pottery (all)	93	Activity item(s)	66
Glass (all)	574	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Architectural	319	Faunal material	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Furniture	<input type="checkbox"/>	Misc. kitchen	15
Arms	3	Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clothing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Misc.	86
Personal items	12	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Historic Features

Privy/outhouse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Depression/mound	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Const feature	<input type="checkbox"/>	Burial(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foundation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Railroad bed	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Cellar hole/cellar	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sheet midden	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Earthworks	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hearth/chimney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Planting feature	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mill raceway	<input type="checkbox"/>
Postholes/molds	<input 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 18AN512, also known as the Belt Site, is the archeological remains of a small tenant house constructed ca. 1900, located near Odenton in Anne Arundel County. The occupants were an African-American farm worker and his wife (a domestic). The site is situated on a gentle slope that angles down to the south-southeast in the direction of a tributary of Jabez Branch, just north of the intersection of MD 3 and MD 175. The site is moderately to heavily wooded with secondary growth of hardwood trees and saplings typical of the area. Much of the site and surrounding area is covered with a thick, thorny understory of brush and tall weeds, grasses, and vines. It is heavily covered in poison ivy. The terrain within the boundaries of and in the vicinity of 18AN512 is very uneven due to the presence of several drainages, a possible borrow pit, and erosion related to a nearby railroad bed. The area has been used for heavy garbage dumping into excavated pits, a practice particularly evident north and east of the site.

The Belt Site consists of a roughly 8.5 X 6 meter (27.8 X 19.7 ft) dwelling foundation, a possible well, and a large circular depression of unknown function. Landscaping deposits are present in the yard south of the house. According to informant interviews, the structure had a shallow ironstone basement, gable roof, and board and batten siding. Only the foundation remnants and part of the brick chimney remain visible. The house reportedly had two rooms with a shared chimney.

Informant interviews also reveal that a Joseph H. Sands, the property owner at the time, commissioned the construction of the tenant house at 18AN512. Joseph Sands was also reportedly the owner of the nearby Oak Grove Estate at that time. The house was built for William and Lillie Belt (Born 1873 and 1870 respectively). Mr. Belt was an African American who had been retained to do farm work and train horses, while Mrs. Belt was employed to perform domestic services at the Sands house. Charles and William Sands (descendants of Joseph) reported that Lillie Thomas Belt spoke a Native American language and was a member of the "Brandywine" ethnic group.

In 1980 (when the site was first identified), the Brandywine ethnic group numbered approximately 5,000 in the local area, and had mixed Caucasian, African American, and Native American ancestry. The group centered around six original family names, plus another 10 "marginal" family lines that were absorbed into the group after ca. 1870. Marriages tended to be within the group. Marriages outside the group, as in Lillie Belt's case, were generally with African American partners.

Lillie and William Belt were married in 1892. The cabin was reportedly constructed around the turn of the 20th century, and the 1905 USGS Relay 15 minute quadrangle shows a structure in this location. The household is recorded in the 1900 Federal Census as renters, indicating that the house was likely constructed by this time. The couple at that time had two sons and two daughters: Willie (born in 1892), Eugie (a daughter born in 1893), Lillian (born in 1897), and William Jr. (born in 1898). By the time of the 1920 Census, the household consisted of William, Lillie, and five children: Thomas (21), William (28), Joseph (14), Rachel (17), and Eugie (26). Eugie's husband, George Dorsey, and their children Mattie (7), and Lilly (3) were also part of the household. In addition, Florence Thomas (Lillie's 50 year-old sister), was also recorded as residing with the family. The two sons, Thomas and William Jr., were listed as single. William was a blacksmith, while Thomas Belt and George Dorsey worked as laborers. All members of the household over age 14, except for William and Lillie, could read and write. William and Lillie had been recorded as illiterate in 1900, and Joseph was listed as being "at school." William Sr. was now recorded as a "truck farmer". In addition, William now owned a house outright. This may indicate that the family had left the sharecropper cabin at 18AN512 and had acquired sufficient funds to purchase real estate. Charles Sands stated that the house had been abandoned by the 1940s and burned down ca. 1949.

The site was first identified in 1980, during the course of a Phase I survey of the MD Highway 3 construction corridor. The 1980 study employed both systematic and judgmental strategies in order to survey the project area. Because of the preliminary nature of the survey, the large size of the highway project area, extensive development, and generally poor ground visibility, it was decided that complete survey coverage would be impractical. As a result, a 10% interval transect sample was employed and combined with documentary research, oral interviews, and judgmental and site-specific examinations. The interval transect sampling scheme entailed a 100 meter wide transect across the highway project corridor at each kilometer, resulting in 18 transects. Survey methods included surface examination and shovel testing. Areas adjacent to the transects were, in some cases, also examined. The interval transect sampling yielded negative results, but judgmental sampling and documentary research resulted in the discovery of 2 new prehistoric sites, 6 new historic sites (including 18AN512), and 1 isolated historic find.

The Phase I work in 1980 related to 18AN512 consisted of surface reconnaissance and documentation of the presence of the Belt House foundation, as well as informant interviews and documentary research to flesh out the backstory of the site. No excavation is documented to have taken place.

The first and only documented excavation to occur at the site was carried out in August and September of 2003. This work was carried out for (then) proposed improvements to Maryland Route 3 (MD 3), from MD 32 to US Route 50. The investigated region consisted of two design corridors covering approximately 68 acres. Phase II testing was only carried out at 18AN512. The work was carried out under contract to the Maryland State Highway Administration, which is subject to the provisions of both the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as well as Article §§ 5A- 325 and 5A-326 of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

In addition to systematic, 10 meter interval shovel testing within the site area, researchers also collected a larger sample of the stratigraphy and artifacts present at the Belt Site through the excavation of 6 formal test units. The number, placement, and interval between 1 X 1 m test units depended on information obtained from the 10 m interval shovel testing. Shovel test pits (STPs) were 40 cm in diameter, excavated according to natural soil horizons to a depth of 76.2 cm (2.5 ft). The test units were excavated by natural soil strata or in 10 cm levels within natural or cultural strata. All excavated soil was sifted through hardware cloth.

Phase II investigations at the Belt Site (18AN512) identified the remains of a dwelling, a possible well, a large, circular depression, and what appear to be landscaping deposits in the yard south of the house. The house, which measured 8.5 X 6.0 meters (27.8 X 19.7 ft), encompassed roughly 51 square meters (548 square feet) of floor space on the first floor and may have been constructed with a loft. Although small by most modern standards, the Belt Site house seems to fall near the upper range for tenant dwellings in the Middle Atlantic region.

Shovel testing indicated that artifacts had been discarded in the yards around the dwelling, particularly to the east, west, and south. Shovel testing and test unit excavation in the south yard suggest that close to half a meter of fill was deposited in this area, perhaps to fill in a low spot in the yard. This portion of the



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site yielded the largest collection of artifacts recovered during Phase II investigations. The small size and heavily fragmented nature of the glass and ceramic artifacts, in particular, support the notion that the deposits from which they were recovered represent filling episodes, possibly using material taken from elsewhere on the site. The artifacts recovered from the STPs and test units consist mainly of container glass and architectural items, the latter represented primarily by nails and window glass. Although ceramics are present, they are overall poorly represented in the site collection. Faunal remains, with the exception of two bone fragments recovered from inside the dwelling, appear to be virtually absent. In general, artifacts tend to be highly fragmented, reminiscent of sheet refuse deposits common on domestic sites.

The full artifact assemblage consisted of 66 activity items (1 mouth harp, 6 toys, 52 lamp glass fragments, 5 pieces of hardware and 2 automotive-related objects), 319 architectural artifacts (209 nails, 88 window glass fragments, and 22 other objects), 93 ceramic sherds (including 26 ironstone and 49 whiteware), 486 container glass fragments, 15 other kitchen-related artifacts, 12 personal items (4 porcelain ash tray fragments, 7 pieces of flask, and a pocket watch), 3 arms objects (shotgun shells), and 86 miscellaneous objects.

The date ranges of the recovered artifacts span the period from the mid 19th century to the mid 20th century. Most of the dateable artifacts, however, tend to cluster between the late 1880s and the first decades of the 20th century, roughly corresponding to the William and Lillie Belt household's occupation of the site. The recovery of a few artifacts post-dating the 1920s suggests that the site may have been occupied for perhaps another decade, and would be consistent with the testimony of Charles Sands that the house was abandoned by the 1940s.

The artifacts recovered from the Belt Site provide some evidence concerning the consumer behavior of the site's occupants during the first decades of the 20th century. Like many households of the period, the Belts appear to have acquired and used a variety of bottled products. Canning jar fragments and sherds of several lid liners suggest that the household was putting up fruits or vegetables for later consumption. The ceramics recovered from the site are varied and, due to the small size of the sherds, it is difficult to draw any firm conclusions regarding the household's use of tableware and teaware. Nonetheless, it appears that the Belts acquired a number of cups and saucers of ironstone and whiteware, decorated with blue transfer printing. Other examples occur with gilt decoration, and still others appear to have been undecorated, or simply represent the undecorated portions of ceramic vessels. The activities of children, of which the Belts had five, are evidenced in the recovery of several marbles, a portion of a toy gun, and part of a child's tea set.

Based on the Phase II excavations at 18AN512 in 2003, the site was considered by the excavators to have the potential to yield significant information concerning the lives of early 20th century tenant farmers of African descent, and was recommended as eligible for the NRHP under Criterion D. However, MHT did not concur with this opinion. While the site does contain intact features, the Phase II testing revealed numerous fill deposits in the yard area and disturbance from the railroad embankment. Furthermore, the full site report states that ceramics are poorly represented, faunal remains are absent, artifacts present in the sheet midden are very fragmented, and the site lacks buried deposits. The Phase II testing has not demonstrated that the site contains the data needed to address important questions. It is the Trust's opinion that 18AN512 does not meet the criteria for eligibility in the National Register of Historic Places.

External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

97001889, Site Files