



# Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18AP61

Site Name: Public Well

Prehistoric

Other name(s) State Circle Project Area 18

Historic

Unknown

Brief Description: 18th-19th century public well

## Site Location and Environmental Data:

Maryland Archaeological Research Unit No. 7

SCS soil & sediment code

Latitude 38.9766

Longitude -76.4926

Physiographic province Western Shore Coastal

Terrestrial site

Underwater site

Elevation m Site slope

Ethnobotany profile available  Maritime site

Site setting

-Site Setting restricted  
-Lat/Long accurate to within 1 sq. mile, user may need to make slight adjustments in mapping to account for sites near state/county lines or streams

### Topography

- Floodplain
- Hilltop/bluff
- Interior flat
- Upland flat
- Ridgetop
- Terrace
- Low terrace
- High terrace
- Rockshelter/cave
- Hillslope
- Unknown
- Other

### Ownership

- Private
- Federal
- State of MD
- Regional/county/city
- Unknown

### Nearest Surface Water

Name (if any) Annapolis Harbor

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 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. 1820 - 1860  Y
- ca. 1630 - 1675
- ca. 1675 - 1720
- ca. 1720 - 1780
- ca. 1780 - 1820  Y
- Unknown historic context
- Unknown context

### Ethnic Associations (historic only)

- Native American
- African American
- Anglo-American  Y
- 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? Urban

### Domestic

- Homestead
- Farmstead
- Mansion
- Plantation
- Row/townhome
- Cellar
- Privy

### Industrial

- Mining-related
- Quarry-related
- Mill
- Black/metalsmith
- Furnace/forge
- Other

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



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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	<input type="checkbox"/>	Staffordshire	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Stoneware</b>	
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	<input type="checkbox"/>	Eng Dry-bodied	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buckley	<input type="checkbox"/>	North Devon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Porcelain</b>	<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)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Activity item(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glass (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Architectural	<input type="checkbox"/>	Faunal material	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Furniture	<input type="checkbox"/>	Misc. kitchen	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arms	<input type="checkbox"/>	Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clothing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Misc.	738
Personal items	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Historic Features

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

Brief Description:

18th-19th century public well

Unknown

## External Samples/Data:

Collection curated at University of Maryland - College Park

Additional raw data may be available online

## Summary Description:

The Public Well Site, or 18AP61, is the archeological deposits associated with a filled-in public well constructed in the 18th century and used throughout the 18th and 19th century in downtown Annapolis, Maryland. The site is situated along State Circle, midway between the street's intersections with Francis Street and Cornhill. The landscape of the site is heavily developed as an urban area. Soils at the site are Collington and Wist sandy loams as well as some human transported soils.

The first documented archeological work to occur at the site occurred in the winter of 1989-1990. Archaeology in Annapolis, a cooperative program between the University of Maryland, College Park and the Historic Annapolis Foundation, conducted the excavations in order to satisfy the conditions for compliance set forth in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 83b, sections 5-617 and 5-618, prior to the undergrounding of electrical wires by the City of Annapolis. Funding for what was known as the State Circle Archaeological Project was provided by a matching grant from the Maryland State Department of General Services and the City of Annapolis. In the vicinity of 18AP61, the construction work was to entail the installation of an electrical vault and some alterations to the curb lines in the area.

The discovery of the well at 18AP61 was unexpected, but public wells are documented historically throughout Annapolis. The area of the site was the location of many businesses and residences (located around the Maryland State House) at an early date. The public well at 18AP61 may well have been an initially private well dug in the 18th century and later brought under the City's jurisdiction.

A by-law passed on March 7, 1806 allowed the City of Annapolis to claim all pumps set along the streets as public property. This by-law also gave the City Commissioners the power to make regulations to keep these pumps in constant repair. Numerous historical records of the Annapolis City Commissioners attest to the sinking of new wells, repairs to existing wells, and appropriations for maintenance of the public well system over the course of the 19th century.

In the memoirs of two Annapolis residents during the 1800's, the specific locations of nine of the many town pumps located around Annapolis and utilized during the 19th century are recorded. Among those town pumps listed is one on State Circle and Francis St. between Wiegard's Confectionary Store and Bond's Restaurant, now the YWCA (see synopsis report for 18AP62). This location seems to fit the location of the well at 18AP61 and suggests that the pump was still in use in the late 19th century when the memoirs were recorded.

Aside from this above historical reference (from the late 19th century), there is no mention in the historical record of a well between Francis and Cornhill Streets on State Circle until 1842. At that time, repairs were ordered by the city and document the well's existence on that portion of State Circle. There are no petitions requesting that a well be dug at this location in the historical record. The records do mention a well being dug and a pump erected on the inside of State Circle opposite North St. in 1837. Again, all of the pumps set along the public streets in Annapolis were not claimed as public property until March of 1806. All of this suggests that the well at 18AP61 was indeed a private well dug in the 18th century (and thus not documented) and later brought under the City's jurisdiction.

The work at the site in 1989-1990 began with the excavation of a single 91 X 152 cm (3 X 5 ft) test unit. This unit was opened to look for possible early edges of State Circle or early sidewalks and to recover information about earlier levels of the street. The herringbone brick paving covering the surface of the excavated unit was removed using a jackhammer, and then any underlying concrete was removed by the same means or with sledge hammers. Following this, the unit was excavated by shovel skimming and troweling in natural stratigraphic levels: allowing for precise definition of chronological sequences and feature identification. However, if a stratigraphic level was greater than 15 cm (6 in) in depth, the layer was excavated in arbitrary levels. Soil removed during hand excavation was screened through hardware cloth with the exception of substantial fill levels primarily of 20th century origin. These were sampled, with approximately 33% of fill being screened. The excavated unit was then backfilled in several 15 cm levels which were each tamped by a mechanical tamper before additional fill was added. Features and profiles exposed during excavation were mapped in place. Both soil samples and flotation samples were taken from all intact cultural layers, but no report of their analysis is available at MHT.

Excavation soon revealed a brick feature covered by 3 pieces of wood. The brick feature straddled the area of the sidewalk and was immediately suspected to be a well or cistern within the public right-of-way, despite the fact that only one small section was exposed. Three additional units were then opened up adjacent to the original 91 X 152 cm unit, which confirmed that the feature was, indeed, a relict well. In addition to the well (which was revealed in all 4 units), a repair trench (Features 2, 3, and 5) was uncovered surrounding the well which dated to post 1840 (based in the presence of sponged whiteware within the trench fill). The repair trench is probably associated with an 1842 Annapolis City Commission order for a new top piece and pump for a well on State Circle in the area between Francis and Cornhill. A robber's trench (Feature 1) was later dug into the well which removed at least one foot of the brick liner around the well, likely during the 20th century. A 1902 photograph documents that the well and pump were still extant in the early 20th century. Feature 6 was the builder's trench for the modern curb between the sidewalk and street in this location.

Because of time constraints, several 7.62 cm (3 in) diameter core samples were extracted from the well shaft to determine if intact 18th and 19th century cultural deposits made up the well fill. The cores extended to a depth of 10.67 m (35 ft) below the modern ground surface. These cores indicated that the well shaft had been filled in sometime in the early 20th century with soil brought in from elsewhere. Further excavation of the shaft cannot provide any information pertaining to the everyday life in 18th or 19th century Annapolis. This is not surprising as documentary evidence suggests that public wells in Annapolis in the 19th century were covered by pumps throughout their use, and therefore would contain few domestic deposits.

The artifact catalogs provided in the full site reports for the State Circle project and the Public Well excavation are coded. Unfortunately, a legend is not provided. A total of 738 miscellaneous objects were retained from the excavations.

While a historically significant, and intact feature was encountered at 18AP61, coring of the public well revealed that the fill consists of secondary deposits of 20th century soil and debris. Ultimately, beyond the documentation of the actual location of one of the public wells of Annapolis, this site is not a significant historical resource capable of addressing archeological research questions.

## External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

MARYLAND  
HISTORICAL



TRUST

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Prehistoric

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Historic

Brief  
Description:

18th-19th century public well

Unknown

00000132, 00000134