



# Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18BC14

Site Name: Front Street

Prehistoric

Other name(s) 9 North Front Street/Shot Tower

Historic

Brief Description:

late 18th century brick house and adjoining house site, early 19th century lead shot factory

Unknown

## Site Location and Environmental Data:

Maryland Archaeological Research Unit No. 14

SCS soil & sediment code Ub

Latitude 39.2952

Longitude -76.6077

Physiographic province Eastern Piedmont

Terrestrial site

Underwater site

Elevation 5 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
- Made land

### Ownership

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

### Nearest Surface Water

Name (if any) Jones Falls

#### Saltwater

Ocean

Estuary/tidal river

Tidewater/marsh

Minimum distance to water is 61 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

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? Urban

#### Domestic

Homestead

Farmstead

Mansion

Plantation

Row/townhome

Cellar

Privy

#### Industrial

Mining-related

Quarry-related

Mill

Black/metalsmith

Furnace/forge

Other  lead shot fa

#### 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

townhouses,

## 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)	155	Activity item(s)	184
Glass (all)	948	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Architectural	1164	Faunal material	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Furniture	<input type="checkbox"/>	Misc. kitchen	209
Arms	<input type="checkbox"/>	Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clothing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Misc.	417
Personal items	1	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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Cellar hole/cellar	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Trash pit/dump	<input type="checkbox"/>	Railroad bed	<input type="checkbox"/>	brick floor	
Hearth/chimney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sheet midden	<input type="checkbox"/>	Earthworks	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Postholes/molds	<input type="checkbox"/>	Planting feature	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mill raceway	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Paling ditch/fence	<input type="checkbox"/>	Road/walkway	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wheel pit	<input type="checkbox"/>		

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

## Radiocarbon Data:

Sample 1:  +/-  years BP Reliability  Sample 2:  +/-  years BP Reliability  Sample 3:  +/-  years BP Reliability

Sample 4:  +/-  years BP Reliability  Sample 5:  +/-  years BP Reliability  Sample 6:  +/-  years BP Reliability

Sample 7:  +/-  years BP Reliability  Sample 8:  +/-  years BP Reliability  Sample 9:  +/-  years BP Reliability

Additional radiocarbon results available



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## External Samples/Data:

Collection curated at

Additional raw data may be available online

## Summary Description:

The Front Street Site (18BC14) is the location of two adjoining late 18th century brick houses as well as part of an early 19th century lead shot factory in downtown Baltimore. The site is situated across from the "Shot Tower Park" on the east side of Front Street between Fayette and Baltimore Streets. It is within that portion of Baltimore known either as Jones Town or Old Town. Two historic structures are situated at the site: the 18th century house at 9 North Front Street (MIHP# B-3716) and the Old Baltimore Shot Tower (MIHP# B-16). Vegetation at the site consists of landscaped shrubs, greenery, and lawn, with cobblestone sidewalks and paths in some areas. Most of the area surrounding the site is heavily developed. Soils mapped for the area are classified as "Urban Land" meaning that 80% of the surface is covered either by buildings or by impervious surfaces such as asphalt or concrete.

Within the block in which the site is situated, the most prominent feature has been, since 1828, the "Shot Tower". This 71.4 m tall red brick tower (also known as the Phoenix Shot Tower) was built by Jacob Wolfe and was used to manufacture lead shot ammunition. Molten lead would be run through a sieve and dropped from a platform at the top of the tower into a pool of cold water. The action of dropping the lead helped it to form into spheres as the exterior of the lead cooled quickly when tumbling through the air. The tower produced lead shot for pistols, long guns, and cannons from 1828 until 1892.

Freestanding houses stood near the shot tower by the late 18th century, with a cabinet maker living and working on the block in 1796. It would appear that the freestanding houses were joined and absorbed into organized blocks during the great growth period in Baltimore in the early 19th century. From its earliest beginnings, the block was a mixture of tradesmen's shops and dwellings, with an occasional boarding house or similar structure. Represented among the residents of this block from the earliest records through 1880 are such diversified vocations as corset makers, tax collectors, an "intelligence officer", a musical instrument maker, a podiatrist, a toy merchant, grocers, dry goods merchants, and tavern owners.

One of the original 18th century houses on the block, 9 North Front Street, still stands today, next to the shot towers and across the street from Shot Tower Park. This 2½ storey brick townhouse has a 2 storey rear wing, both of which have been restored to their original late 18th century appearance. Early records pertaining to the house show its sale by John Beale Bordley to Charles Torrence in 1794. In 1802 and 1804, the Baltimore City Directory listed "Thorowgood Smith, merchant" as the occupant. Smith was the second mayor of Baltimore (1804-1808). He was a successful merchant and the owner of the "Willowbrook" estate whose oval room is now in the Baltimore Museum of Art. Smith suffered financial losses and sold "Willowbrook" just prior to the period when he occupied 9 North Front Street. In the years following Smith's occupancy, the building was owned and occupied by the heirs of Charles Torrence. In 1875, it was sold to William Suess who turned it into a hotel and restaurant. Fragments of Suess' painted advertisement are still visible on the south wall. Samuel Nechamkin purchased the building from the Suess estate in 1940 and the structure was used as an automobile parts shop until 1971 when it was acquired by Baltimore City.

The only documented archeological work to occur at 18BC14 occurred in the spring of 1975. Around the time of the block's purchase by the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore in 1971, much of the area was cleared out, resulting in increased exposure of the site and its features. In early February 1975, a brick-lined pit was mostly dug out by bottle collectors, prompting the attention of both the preservation and archeological communities as well as the Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks. In the spring of that year a teacher of Physical and Cultural Anthropology at Catonsville Community College, organized about 15 students to conduct weekend test excavations at the site. The work was funded with public monies provided by Baltimore City.

A 1.524 m (5 ft) grid was established across the site tied to a permanent datum. Four 1.524 X 3.05 m (5 X 10 ft) test unit and one 3.05 m (10 ft) test square were laid out and excavated. The sod was removed and screened and excavation below the sod layer was carried out with shovels and trowels. One test unit was placed to reveal any remains associated with the basement/cellar of the former 11 Front Street, shown on Sanborn Maps as a 2½ storey brick building with basement. Three test units were placed in areas to the north of this where evidence of other former houses and industrial establishments was expected. The large test square was placed where available historic maps showed no former structures. Its purpose was to test for depth and sequence of occupation. It was hoped that in view of the proximity of the site to the Jones Falls, prehistoric remains might also be found, underlying historic debris.

In the unit at 11 Front Street, the nature of the fill in the basement prevented the exposure of the former basement floor(s), which might have offered information about the nature of the occupational history of the house. The brick rubble fill created unsafe working conditions and excavation in this unit had to be abandoned prematurely. The former house and basement here are believed to be contemporary with the house at 9 Front Street. Two architectural features were uncovered in this unit: a portion of the stone north basement wall, and an interior brick dividing wall running parallel to Front Street.

In the two most centrally located units (both 1.524 X 3.05 m in size), a series of footing were uncovered. These were very fragmentary in nature and did not harmonize well with the projected footprint of any of the documented structures to have existed in that area. Excavations in this portion of the site raised a number of questions which could only be resolved by more extensive fieldwork. The fourth 1.524 X 3.05 m unit was situated to the north of these two units and revealed no significant material.

The large 3.05 m test square was thought to be situated in an area where features would not be encountered. Instead, a probable fireplace was uncovered. It associated with possible living floors and soil layers surrounding it was unclear. It appeared to be related either to the structure(s) with the fragmentary footing just to the east or to the former house at 11 Front Street. Again, the questions raised by this feature could only be resolved by more extensive excavations.

No evidence of prehistoric deposits was found.

Artifacts encountered during the 1975 excavation at 18BC14 included 184 pieces of lead shot (counted as activity items rather than arms considering the context), 1,164 architectural artifacts (110 pieces of brick and mortar, 249 architectural "fixtures", 8 pieces of molding, 497 window glass fragments, 284 pieces of hardware, and 16 other building materials), 815 kitchen-related artifacts (155 ceramic sherds, 451 pieces of kitchen glass, 15 animal bones, and 194 pieces of shell), 1 personal item (a coin), and 417 miscellaneous objects (80 unidentified metal objects and 337 unidentified items).

The features recovered during the test excavations at 18BC14 indicate significant potential for recovery of both architectural remains and artifacts in the area between the Shot Tower and 9 Front Street. Demolition, filling and leveling of the site have not destroyed the evidence relating to historic occupation of the site. No additional work has been conducted at the site and it remains a significant resource for future archeological work.

MARYLAND  
HISTORICAL



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External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

00005578