



Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18CH94

Site Name: Port Tobacco

Prehistoric

Other name(s)

Historic

Brief Description:

Late Archaic, Early, Middle, & Late Woodland camps; 17th and 18th century Colonial town, Contact trading post

Unknown

Site Location and Environmental Data:

Maryland Archaeological Research Unit No. 11

SCS soil & sediment code EwB, WoA, WoB2

Latitude 38.5177 Longitude -77.0136

Physiographic province Western Shore Coastal

Terrestrial site Underwater site

Elevation 15 m Site slope 0-10%

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

Ownership

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

Nearest Surface Water

Name (if any) Unnamed tributary of Port

- | Saltwater | | Freshwater | |
|--|--|--|--------------------------------|
| Ocean <input type="checkbox"/> | Stream/river <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Estuary/tidal river <input type="checkbox"/> | Swamp <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Tidewater/marsh <input type="checkbox"/> | Lake or pond <input type="checkbox"/> | Spring <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |

Minimum distance to water is 0 m

Temporal & Ethnic Contextual Data:

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| Paleoindian site <input type="checkbox"/> | Woodland site <input type="checkbox"/> | Contact period site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | ca. 1820 - 1860 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Archaic site <input type="checkbox"/> | MD Adena <input type="checkbox"/> | ca. 1630 - 1675 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | ca. 1860 - 1900 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Early archaic <input type="checkbox"/> | Early woodland <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | ca. 1675 - 1720 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | ca. 1900 - 1930 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Middle archaic <input type="checkbox"/> | Mid. woodland <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | ca. 1720 - 1780 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Post 1930 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Late archaic <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Late woodland <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | ca. 1780 - 1820 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| Unknown prehistoric context <input type="checkbox"/> | | Unknown historic context <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | | Unknown context <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Ethnic Associations (historic only)

- | | |
|--|---|
| Native American <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Asian American <input type="checkbox"/> |
| African American <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Anglo-American <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Other <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Y=Confirmed, P=Possible

Site Function Contextual Data:

- ### Prehistoric
- | | |
|---|--|
| Multi-component <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Misc. ceremonial <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Village <input type="checkbox"/> | Rock art <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Hamlet <input type="checkbox"/> | Shell midden <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Base camp <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | STU/lithic scatter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Rockshelter/cave <input type="checkbox"/> | Quarry/extraction <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Earthen mound <input type="checkbox"/> | Fish weir <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Cairn <input type="checkbox"/> | Production area <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Burial area <input type="checkbox"/> | Unknown <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
- Other context
trading post?

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| Historic | Furnace/forge <input type="checkbox"/> | Military | Post-in-ground <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Urban/Rural? Rural | Other <input type="checkbox"/> | Battlefield <input type="checkbox"/> | Frame-built <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Domestic | | Fortification <input type="checkbox"/> | Masonry <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Homestead <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Transportation | Encampment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Other structure <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Farmstead <input type="checkbox"/> | Canal-related <input type="checkbox"/> | Townsite | Slave related <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mansion <input type="checkbox"/> | Road/railroad <input type="checkbox"/> | Religious | Non-domestic agri <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Plantation <input type="checkbox"/> | Wharf/landing <input type="checkbox"/> | Church/mtg house <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Recreational <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Row/townhome <input type="checkbox"/> | Maritime-related <input type="checkbox"/> | Ch support bldg <input type="checkbox"/> | Midden/dump <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Cellar <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Bridge <input type="checkbox"/> | Burial area | Artifact scatter <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Privy <input type="checkbox"/> | Ford <input type="checkbox"/> | Cemetery <input type="checkbox"/> | Spring or well <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Industrial | Educational | Sepulchre <input type="checkbox"/> | Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mining-related <input type="checkbox"/> | Commercial | Isolated burial <input type="checkbox"/> | Other context <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Quarry-related <input type="checkbox"/> | Trading post <input type="checkbox"/> | Bldg or foundation | |
| Mill <input type="checkbox"/> | Store <input type="checkbox"/> | Possible Structure <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | trading post |
| Black/metalsmith <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Tavern/inn <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | | |

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="text"/>	Perkiomen	<input type="text"/>
Hardaway-Dalton	<input type="text"/>	Susquehana	<input type="text"/>
Palmer	<input type="text"/>	Vernon	<input type="text"/>
Kirk (notch)	<input type="text"/>	Piscataway	<input type="text"/>
Kirk (stem)	<input type="text"/>	Calvert	<input type="text"/>
Le Croy	<input type="text"/>	Selby Bay	<input type="text"/>
Morrow Mntn	<input type="text"/>	Jacks Rf (notch)	<input type="text"/>
Guilford	<input type="text"/>	Jacks Rf (pent)	<input type="text"/>
Brewerton	<input type="text"/>	Madison/Potomac	<input type="text"/>
Otter Creek	<input type="text"/>	Levanna	<input type="text"/>

Prehistoric Sherd Types

Marcey Creek	<input type="text"/>	Popes Creek	<input type="text"/>	Shepard	<input type="text"/>	Keyser	<input type="text"/>
Dames Qtr	<input type="text"/>	Coulbourn	<input type="text"/>	Townsend	63	Yeocomico	3
Selden Island	<input type="text"/>	Watson	<input type="text"/>	Minguannan	<input type="text"/>	Monongahela	<input type="text"/>
Accokeek	18	Mockley	14	Sullivan Cove	<input type="text"/>	Susquehannock	<input type="text"/>
Wolfe Neck	<input type="text"/>	Clemson Island	<input type="text"/>	Shenks Ferry	<input type="text"/>		
Vinette	<input type="text"/>	Page	<input type="text"/>	Moyaone	240		
				Potomac Crk	138		

Historic Sherd Types

Earthenware		Ironstone		Staffordshire		Stoneware	
Astbury	<input type="text"/>	Jackfield	18	Tin Glazed	4821	English Brown	67
Borderware	<input type="text"/>	Mn Mottled	7	Whiteware	4409	Eng Dry-bodied	<input type="text"/>
Buckley	291	North Devon	4	Porcelain	913	Nottingham	10
Creamware	3255	Pearlware	2532			Rhenish	75
						Wt Salt-glazed	1421

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Other Artifact & Feature Types:

Prehistoric Artifacts		Other fired clay	
Flaked stone	2130	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ground stone	<input type="text"/>	Modified faunal	<input type="text"/>
Stone bowls	<input type="text"/>	Unmod faunal	<input type="text"/>
Fire-cracked rock	165	Oyster shell	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other lithics (all)	9	Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics (all)	527	Uncommon Obj.	<input type="text"/>
Rimsherds	<input type="text"/>	Other <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	glass trade beads

Prehistoric Features

Mound(s)	<input type="text"/>	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

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

Dated features present at site

Historic Artifacts		Tobacco related	
Pottery (all)	22512	Activity item(s)	163
Glass (all)	17462	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Architectural	28244	Faunal material	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Furniture	18	Misc. kitchen	12826
Arms	20	Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clothing	97	Misc.	18863
Personal items	9	Other <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	metal fragments, slag

Historic Features

Privy/outhouse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Depression/mound	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Const feature	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Burial(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foundation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Trash pit/dump	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Railroad bed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cellar hole/cellar	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sheet midden	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Road/walkway	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wheel pit	<input type="checkbox"/>
Paling ditch/fence	<input checked="" 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 Society for the Restoration of Port Tobacco

Additional raw data may be available online

Summary Description:

The Port Tobacco site (18CH94) consists of the various archeological remains associated with the 17th and 18th century colonial town of the same name at the head of the Port Tobacco River in Charles County. A number of standing 18th century dwellings and other structures are situated throughout the town, which served as the seat of Charles County government from 1727 to 1895. The town is situated on the east bank of the river, an area that in colonial times was at the head of the navigable waterway. The river valley was broad and well-defined by moderately sharp rises on both sides of the floodplain. Due to extensive erosion and siltation due to historic farming practices, the historic port is entirely silted in today, a situation which cut off Port Tobacco from the Chesapeake Bay and led to the village's steady decline. There are no obvious traces of period vegetation at the site, most of it having succumbed to town development and post-abandonment agriculture. Soils at the site are predominantly Woodstown sandy loams.

As early as 1634, the English Settlers of Maryland had established a small settlement on the east bank of what was then called the "Potapoco" River, so named for the local Indian inhabitants of the area. The community eventually came to be known as "Chandler's Town", after one of the prominent landowners in the region. English settlement at the time was still largely de-centralized, with large tracts of land held as plantations for the culture of tobacco.

The Lords Baltimore, proprietors of the Maryland colony, had long endeavored to erect towns throughout the colony. These central places would have encouraged tradesmen and promoted economic growth, as well as insure efficient collection of duties, fines, and other Proprietary revenues. Despite a series of laws passed between the 1660s and the early 1700s (the town acts), few towns were ever realized. The tobacco plant as a staple of the economy and the interests of the planters were ill-suited to the village and outfield system of Great Britain and Ireland. Many towns were platted, but never actually settled. Nevertheless, a few towns were established in the 17th century, most surviving only briefly. Port Tobacco was an exception.

Prior to 1727, the county seat for Charles County was situated a little over 3 miles to the east on the Moore's Lodge tract (see synopsis for 18CH777). Both areas are sometimes referred to in the early records of the colony as "Port Tobacco", leading to considerable confusion. "Port Tobacco" was an anglicized version of Potapoco which also emphasized the major export commodity of the region at that time. During the waning decades of the 17th century, Chandler's Town/Port Tobacco grew to become Maryland's second-largest river port (after St. Mary's City). By 1727, the Charles County magistrates had determined that the old courthouse at Moore's Lodge was, "so far impaired, ruined, and decayed, that there is a Necessity for erecting a new One; and that the Place where the Court-house now stands, is so remote from any Landing, that the Charge of bringing Materials together, by Land Carriage, for that End, will be much greater than if the same was to be built at the Head of Port-Tobacco Creek, where they may be easily Waterborn...". The Maryland Assembly soon passed legislation authorizing a new courthouse at Chandler's Town, the purchase of 60 acres from William Chandler for 15,000 pounds of tobacco, and the sale of the government facilities at Moore's Lodge.

After the move of the county seat, Chandler's Town was "officially" renamed "Charles Town", but the name never caught on. The name Charles Town lingered in official documents, including deeds, but most locals appear to have preferred the name Port Tobacco. The courthouse opened between January 1728 and August 1729. The last town act in 1729 specified 60 acres for the town divided into 100 lots with streets, alleys, and a market square. The Anglican Church and the market place each had one acre reserved for their respective uses. Three lots previously had been taken up at the time the county surveyor, Major Robert Hanson, surveyed and lotted the town. Forty-three other lots were taken up over the next two years. Owners of six lots had to reenter their claims because they failed to meet the conditions established in the Act of the General Assembly for the laying out of the town. Each owner was required to erect a dwelling measuring at least 20 ft on a side within 18 months or risk escheatment to Lord Baltimore. By the last quarter of the 18th century, there were anywhere from 20 to 50 houses, a half dozen ordinaries and taverns, and as many stores, mostly run by Scotch firms.

Port Tobacco declined during the post-Revolutionary War economic depression, but seems to have improved after the War of 1812. A spate of public building, including the 1818 courthouse and jail, occurred through the latter part of the first quarter of the 19th century, and the town successfully incorporated in 1860. By the middle of the 19th century, the town had a newspaper and several hotels, and by the end of the century there were as many as 20 commercial establishments, including two newspapers, and 60 to 70 dwellings in and near the town.

Port Tobacco grew as a small town at the intersection of land-based and water-borne transportation networks. As the railroads and, eventually, automobiles became the principal means of moving people and produce, at the expense of boats and steamships, the town's location at the head of the Port Tobacco River became peripheral to the county's growth. On January 1, 1873, the Popes Creek Branch of the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad opened for regular service between Upper Marlboro in Prince George's County to Popes Creek, Maryland. The people of La Plata, a station on the newly erected railroad, sought to move the county seat to their new town. Their efforts finally succeeded after 20 years in 1895, three years after fire destroyed much of the courthouse in Port Tobacco. The town declined afterward. Where La Plata was not even included on an 1861 map, it appears in bolder, larger type than does Port Tobacco on an 1897 map of the area.

Local archeological enthusiasts have undertaken excavations at Port Tobacco since at least the 1960s and 70s (and perhaps as early as the 1930s). The first excavation for which we have any detailed information was that of the early 19th century courthouse, which had largely burned in 1892, the surviving wings subsequently appropriated for other uses. The work was initiated in anticipation of a state-funded reconstruction of the courthouse and was directed by a US Army Captain working on behalf of the Research Committee for the Port Tobacco Court House Restoration Committee. The crew for the project included groups of Boy Scouts, local high school students, and a variety of other volunteers. Work was carried out sporadically from 1966 to 1968 and a total of at least 22 whole, and 11 partial units were excavated. The units are believed to have been 3 X 3 meters (10 X 10 ft) in extent based on the grid size used by the project director. Large portions of the courthouse's masonry foundations (main block, south wing, north wing) were exposed. Field directors noted the recovery of a substantial number of hand-made rosehead nails and foundations in the southwest corner of the courthouse that appeared inconsistent with the rest of the building. It was speculated that this area might represent remnants of an earlier building.

A Gerry Bradley of Annapolis reportedly conducted some sort of excavation work at the site in the early 1970s, uncovering what was thought to be a brick clamp. Also in the 1970s, a local collector named John Wearmouth was active at the site. Several local informants relate that Wearmouth excavated inside the ruins of the St. Charles Hotel, exposing a herringbone-patterned brick floor and removing as much as 60% of the deposits before the property owner requested an end to the work. In December of 1977, an Edith Sprouse conveyed a collection of artifacts from the "chapel area south and adjacent to the Court House" to John and Roberta Wearmouth made by someone named "Curt" or "Curts".



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In 1971 a study was made of a series of Ektachrome transparencies, or slides, taken during flyovers of Port Tobacco. He identified 85 anomalies in the town, some of which could be seen on the ground. None appear to have been ground-truthed through excavation. A report from 1971 survives, but the whereabouts of the original slides is no known. Most of these anomalies match up with the various structures/loci documented with Maryland Inventory of Historic Places (MIHP) site numbers within 18CH94 by MHT.

Beginning in 2006, a multi-year research program began at Port Tobacco. The work was funded by a variety of sources and with the assistance of numerous volunteers and crewmembers (primarily members of the Archeological Society of Maryland), but has been collectively referred to as the "Port Tobacco Archaeological Project" (PTAP).

In the fall of 2006, a Phase I survey was carried out over 9 acres in the southern portion of Port Tobacco to determine the approximate historical layout of this portion of the town of Port Tobacco. The work was carried out on portions of 3 different family lots, as well as on the lot of the 18th century Burch House, the restoration of which was being planned at the time. Though portions of the 2006 work fell within the boundaries of 18CH765 (the Burch House/MIHP# CH-23), all of the collection is cataloged here as part of 18CH94 (Port Tobacco) because the two sites are not disentangled in the original site reports. A Non-Capital grant for archeological survey, awarded to the Archeological Society of Maryland by the Maryland Historical Trust, underwrote a large part of the effort. The membership of the Society and other volunteers from around Maryland and neighboring states assisted in the field and laboratory work.

The 2006 fieldwork entailed the excavation of 349 shovel test pits (STPs) and three test units at Port Tobacco. STPs were excavated at 7.62 m (25 ft) intervals throughout most of the southern half of Port Tobacco and at 6.1 m (20 ft) intervals across the yard of the Burch House. STPs were excavated by hand and ranged in diameter from 36.6-45.7 cm (1.2-1.5 ft) and reached depths of 15.2-106.7 cm (.5-3.5 ft) below grade. Prolonged drought and, in most units, dense gravelly sediments, made penetration with a shovel difficult. Digging bars had to be used on most STPs. Thus, artifacts recovered from the STPs were not recorded by stratigraphic layer and STPs were treated as a single unit. Soils were meticulously described in terms of textures, colors, etc. and all soils were screened through hardware cloth. Precise STP locations were recorded using a total station.

Two of the test units were 91 X 91 cm (3 X 3 ft) in extent, while the other unit was 152 X 152 cm (5 X 5 ft). The larger unit and one of the smaller units were situated in the Burch House yard. The other smaller unit was placed in front of the reconstructed courthouse building. The two smaller units were excavated stratigraphically and the artifacts were bagged by natural stratum and levels (depth of levels not described) within strata. Excavation of the larger units involved only sod removal above a brick pavement and foundation segments of a probable house addition and no artifacts were recovered from the unit. All soils were screened through hardware cloth. Brick, oyster, and coal were weighed, counted, and discarded in the field, but all other materials were retained.

Shovel testing at the site revealed rich artifact deposits, complex stratigraphy, architectural features, and aboriginal occupations. Initial results suggest that Native Americans occupied the banks of the Port Tobacco River during the Woodland periods and possibly earlier. The distribution of aboriginal material, chiefly lithics and pottery with some fire-cracked rock, suggests one or more shifts in the river's course.

Shovel testing identified 20 areas with intact brick foundations, masonry rubble, or (in one case) a posthole. As many as 10 building sites have been identified, provisionally, and a number of them can be characterized with confidence as 18th century buildings occupied well into the 19th century.

Distributions of handwrought and machine-cut nails also betray the locations of several buildings, and these distributions also suggest settlement stability. Building sites characterized by brick and machine-cut nails (later) mirror those of brick and handwrought nails (earlier). The distributions of Colonial vs. Antebellum ceramics, coupled with the brick and nails data, suggest stability in the spatial organization of the village, with 18th century locales occupied well into the 19th century. This suggests that an 1888 survey of the property may fairly accurately reflect the spatial layout of the town in earlier decades.

A total of 24,279 artifacts were recovered during the 2006 survey of 18CH94. The assemblage included 151 activity items (hardware), 8,638 architectural artifacts, 34 clothing items, 16 furniture artifacts, 12,188 kitchen-related items (including 17 tin-glazed earthenware sherds, 6 creamware sherds, 19 pearlware sherds, 56 whiteware sherds, 1 redware sherd, 3 yellowware sherds, 1 Westerwald stoneware sherd, 18 other ceramic sherds, 11 pieces of wine bottle glass, 51 machine-molded glass vessels, and 9,160 vessels), 238 tobacco-related artifacts, 8 arms objects (including 1 English flint flake), and 3,006 miscellaneous objects (including 1,443 fuel objects, 3 ecofacts, 566 lithic items, 66 indeterminate objects). It should be noted that the full site report does not distinguish between historic lithics or prehistoric lithics, or (with a few diagnostic exceptions) between various vessel types (historic, prehistoric, glass, ceramics, etc.), so the materials are cataloged here and in the tables above simply as miscellaneous or kitchen items respectively.

Recovery of a considerable quantity of bone, including fish scales and other fragile specimens, suggests excellent preservation of the site deposits. This observation is further supported by the discovery of intact brick foundations and at least one posthole. The high degree of preservation may be due to the cumulative (as opposed to deflationary) nature of the deposits. Erosion and deep plowing have taken a toll on archeological sites throughout Maryland, particularly in the uplands. Ironically, the same forces that have contributed to the degradation and destruction of upland sites have contributed to the preservation of Port Tobacco in the floodplain. Many shovel tests revealed deep gravelly sediments, sediments known to have been cultivated in the 1930s and within the past 20 years. And those deposits appear to contain a mixture of Colonial and later artifacts. However, underlying sediments also have yielded artifacts that appear to date to the 18th and early 19th centuries.

In the summer and fall of 2007 another survey was carried out at Port Tobacco, this time focusing on the northern portion of the site and the village core. Shovel testing was carried out in the general vicinity of two 18th century standing structures: the Volman (or Chimney House) property and the Barbour (or Stagg Hall) property. Additional survey (controlled surface collection) was carried out in the fields south of the town as part of the larger project, but this work fell outside the boundaries of 18CH94. Fieldwork was carried out by volunteers with the Archeological Society of Maryland and with support (funding and some staff time) from the Maryland Historical Trust. Additional funding was provided by Preservation Maryland and the Southern Maryland Heritage Area Consortium.

Shovel testing in 2007 was carried out at 7.62 m (25 ft) intervals at the Chimney House (MIHP# CH-14) and Stagg Hall (MIHP# CH-13) properties. This area encompasses what an 1888 survey of the town identified as the "core" of the village. Shovel testing utilized the same methods as were employed during the 2006 study. Twenty-two STPs were excavated in the yard of Stagg Hall and 40 were excavated in the vicinity of the Chimney House.

The 2007 STPs at 18CH94 produced 2,382 artifacts. Large quantities of brick rubble, an especially deep cultural deposit, and an oyster shell midden 73 and more cm below grade were encountered on the Chimney House property. It was noted that very few artifacts were found in the front yard of the Chimney House compared to the front yard of Stagg Hall, though the composition of the two assemblages (in terms of artifact types) was similar. The rear yard of the



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Chimney House was surprisingly unproductive. This proved disappointing insofar as the Atzerodt carriage shop was long held to be just behind the Chimney House on what was known as the marsh road. The setting, however, is unsuitable for any buildings.

The 2007 excavations produced 2,325 historic artifacts and 57 prehistoric artifacts. The prehistoric assemblage consisted of 2 projectile points, 38 flakes, 16 fire-cracked rocks, and 1 sherd of prehistoric pottery. The historic assemblage included 4 activity items (a glass marble, 2 horseshoes, and a staple), 952 architectural artifacts (284 pieces of brick, 169 window glass fragments, 14 wire nails, 12 handwrought nails, 184 machine-cut nails, and 289 unidentified nails), 3 clothing objects (a metal button, a pin, and a snap), 1 furniture object (a tack), 1,333 kitchen-related artifacts (423 ceramic sherds, 639 glass fragments, a spoon, 100 animal bones, and 170 pieces of oyster shell), 5 personal objects (coins), and 27 tobacco-related artifacts/pipe fragments. The kitchen ceramic assemblage included 21 tin-glazed sherds, 68 creamware, 52 pearlware, 13 miscellaneous earthenware, 21 Chinese export porcelain, 2 other porcelain, 148 whiteware, 20 yellowware, 21 redware, 5 English Brown stoneware, 1 Nottingham stoneware, 4 Rhenish stoneware, 20 white salt-glazed stoneware, 2 Westerwald, and 25 miscellaneous stoneware sherds. The kitchen glass included 11 hand-tooled vessel fragments, 20 machine-made vessel fragments, 8 wine bottle glass fragments, and 600 other vessel glass pieces.

The Archeological Society of Maryland returned to 18CH94 in June of 2008 as part of the Society's Annual Field Session in Archeology. Based on the results of the 2007 shovel testing survey as well as archival research, four loci within the village core were chosen for further investigation through the excavation of test units. The locations chosen corresponded to the former locale of the Wade House/Centennial Hotel complex (MIHP# CH-263), a locus of apparent aboriginal activity, a possible historic cemetery, and the location of the 1859-1896 jailhouse (MIHP# CH-172).

The field team excavated 24 units, all of which were 1.524 X 1.524 m in extent with the exception of a 61 cm (2 ft) by 3 m (10 ft) trench excavated in search of the jailhouse foundations. Units were excavated stratigraphically and all soils were screened through hardware cloth and the artifacts retained by unit and stratum. The volunteers recorded all soil colors and textures, with particular attention to the constituent textures as data on sedimentation. All units were established, and the levels subsequently measured, with a total station.

Seven test units were situated in the aboriginal locus identified during the 2007 shovel testing. Beneath the plowzone in this area was a thin layer of dark yellowish brown and dark brown sandy clay (interpreted as a buried A-horizon). Beneath this a brick and mortar rubble layer was identified in 6 of the 7 units. This brick feature was nearly fully exposed, but was not excavated, instead it was covered with plastic and the units were backfilled. It was posited that the feature might represent cellar fill or fill within a series of overlapping barrow pits. The seventh unit, which was situated just to the west of the 6 adjacent units that exposed the feature, also revealed a feature and produced the greatest number of prehistoric artifacts. The unit revealed a single posthole and mold complex along its west wall.

A total of 16,041 artifacts were recovered from the "aboriginal locus", 1,058 of which were aboriginal in origin. The aboriginal assemblage included 8 projectile points, 9 other bifaces, 697 flakes, 2 hammerstones, 49 pieces of fire-cracked rock, and 293 pottery sherds (10 Accokeek, 8 Mockley, 149 Moyaone, 73 Potomac Creek, 20 Townsend, 3 Yeocomico, and 30 indeterminate). Historic materials included 1,862 nails (49 handwrought, 484 machine-cut, 4 wire, 1,325 indeterminate), 1,995 window glass fragments, 4,842 ceramic sherds (108 Buckley, 3 North Devon, 42 North Italian earthenware, 144 Staffordshire slipware, 904 tin-glazed earthenware, 703 creamware, 627 pearlware, 1,114 other earthenware, 260 redware, 196 whiteware, 22 yellowware, 189 Chinese export porcelain, 8 other porcelain, 14 British Brown stoneware, 1 Nottingham stoneware, 4 Rhenish stoneware, 4 Westerwald, 419 white salt-glazed stoneware, and 80 miscellaneous stoneware), 208 pipestems, and 6,076 miscellaneous objects. Diagnostics range from the early 18th century into the 19th.

During the shovel testing work in 2007, a shovel test revealed a soil anomaly in an area where relatively few artifacts were recovered in nearby STPs. The soil anomaly appeared to be quite deep, but the paucity of domestic and architectural materials in the vicinity was inconsistent with a cellar, boorow pit, or posthole. Researchers suspected it was a graveshaft. During the June 2008 field session, volunteers excavated 3 test units in the area of the potential cemetery. These units exposed four possible partial graveshafts and a likely paling fence ditch defining the eastern edge of a cemetery of unknown extent.

Artifacts in this cemetery locus were few, highly fragmented, and largely historic (1,045 of 1,371 objects). The prehistoric artifact assemblage in the cemetery locus included 3 projectile points, 3 aboriginal sherds, 312 flakes, and 11 pieces of fire-cracked rock. One of only three aboriginal sherds was identifiable (Townsend Cord-marked). Two of the three projectile points were stemmed and likely of Archaic vintage. The presence of fire-cracked rock suggests aboriginal activities beyond simple knapping. Most of the debitage comprised locally avialbale quartz and quartzite.

The historic assemblage consisted of 18 pieces of daub, 122 indeterminate nails, 5 pieces of roofing slate, 20 tin-glazed earthenware, 59 creamware, 45 pearlware, 134 other earthenware, 11 Chinese porcelain, 20 redware, 25 whiteware, 1 British Brown stoneware, 4 Rhenish Brown stoneware, 8 white salt-glazed stoneware sherds, 18 unidentified stoneware, 79 wine bottle fragments, 114 machine-molded vessel glass fragments, 347 other vessel glass fragments, 7 tobacco-related items, and 5 pieces of coal. The historic ceramic and glass vessel sherds suggest occupation through the late 18th and 19th centuries. Based on shovel test data from the previous year, these materials probably relate to the nearby Swann House, a 19th century dwelling south of the locus. The earlier materials could point to an entirely distinct house lot. The discovery of graveshafts in this locus suggests the proximity of the 1727 Anglican Church at Port Tobacco, a lot for which was laid out in the Town Act of 1727, or perhaps an earlier church. Either way, it was likely of earthfast construction.

Oral history and archival research provided an approximate location for the former Port Tobacco jailhouse. A local resident, James Barbour, had recounted to the field crew how his cousin had died from a fall while dismantling the jail. Another local resident, Calvin Compton, Jr., recalled the structure still standing in the 1940s. The 2007 shovel testing had failed to definitively identify the location of the jail, so placement of two initial test units was based on estimates from a photograph. Both units encountered a septic drain field. Since this area was highly disturbed, volunteers began scouring a patch of woods about 15 meters away from the drain field in search of the former jail. They discovered brick, mortar, plaster, and portions of a decorative iron fence on the surface.

Clearing of the brush from this wooded area revealed a large mound of masonry rubble, and several shovel probes revealed deep deposits of rubble as well as 18th, 19th, and 20th century artifacts. A 76 X 305 cm (2.5 X 10 ft) trench exposed only demolition debris. A series of four contiguous units was then excavated to the west of the trench, each exposing a portion of masonry foundation. At one point, the foundation seemed to reach a corner and so STPs were dug as 1.524 m (5 ft) intervals beginning 4.6 m (15 ft) from the southernmost foundation exposure. The STPs hit foundation remnants at each location. An additional two test units were then dug in the vicinity of the furthest STP. The wall, strangely, appeared to terminate there.

This locus yielded 2,160 artifacts, the vast majority being historic in origin. Of 377 identifiable nails in the assemblage, only two are handwrought, supporting the hypothesis that the foundations revealed were those of the ca. 1859 jailhouse. However, numerous 18th and early 19th century ceramic sherds were recovered. It is possible that the site of the 1859 jail occupied the site of an earlier trash midden that may have been associated with the jail. According to



Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18CH94

Site Name: Port Tobacco

Prehistoric

Other name(s)

Historic

Brief Description:

Late Archaic, Early, Middle, & Late Woodland camps; 17th and 18th century Colonial town, Contact trading post

Unknown

county records, a jail built in 1811 stood until the 1859 jail was finished. The County Commissioners ordered the demolition of the 1811 jailhouse in September 1861. Local resident James Barbour noted that a Clayton Rice had added to the dilapidated 1859 jailhouse in the 20th century and moved into it, having abandoned his "shack" in front of the courthouse ruin. The 40 wire nails and 71 sherds of modern vessel glass may have been left by Rice.

The full assemblage from this area consisted of 2 handwrought nails, 335 machine-cut nails, 40 wire nails, 186 other nails, 32 pieces of roofing slate, 508 pieces of window glass, 499 ceramic sherds (1 Buckley, 18 tin-glazed earthenware, 14 creamware, 195 pearlware, 12 Chinese-export porcelain, 3 later porcelain, 39 other earthenware, 30 redware, 118 whiteware, 10 yellowware, 1 ironstone, 1 British-brown stoneware, 1 Rhenish Brown stoneware, 6 white salt-glazed stoneware, and 50 other stoneware), 19 pieces of wine bottle, 2 pieces of milk glass, 72 machine-molded bottle glass fragments, 411 other vessel glass fragments, 16 tobacco pipe fragments, 1 stone projectile point, and 35 lithic flakes.

The final area tested in June of 2008 was in the vicinity of the former Wade House and Centennial Hotel. It was tested with six formal test units. Photographs of the Wade House depict a frame structure with exterior double chimneys of brick at each end, suggesting that it was built in the 18th or early 19th century and was demolished in the early 20th century. The Centennial Hotel was a frame addition to the Wade House, presumably built in the late 19th century. Two test units were situated in the Wade House area (in a presumed cellar hole) and four test units were situated in the vicinity of the hotel addition.

The two test units in the Wade House cellar hole encountered dense deposits of masonry rubble. A total of 4,878 artifacts were recovered from atop the rubble. The assemblage consisted of 1 lightbulb, 25 pieces of asbestos tile, 9 handwrought nails, 148 machine cut nails, 19 wire nails, 620 other nails, 4 metal buckles, 1 bone button, 3 metal buttons, 5 plastic buttons, 3 shell buttons, 416 ceramic sherds (38 tin-glazed earthenware, 1 North Devon earthenware, 9 Buckley, 77 creamware, 82 pearlware, 51 other earthenware, 17 Chinese export porcelain, 3 other porcelain, 103 whiteware, 6 redware, 1 yellowware, 5 white salt-glazed stoneware, 23 other stoneware), 55 glass jar fragments, 110 wine bottle fragments, 189 machine-molded vessel fragments, 1,331 other vessel glass fragments, 13 metal can fragments, 1 spoon, 129 bone fragments, 3 coins, 1 pair of eyeglasses, 2 keys, and 1,785 miscellaneous objects.

The four contiguous units at the Centennial Hotel encountered no cellar holes or other features. Instead they exposed a complex series of soils suggesting considerable earthmoving. It is possible that this area may have provided some of the fill that was used in the early to mid 20th century to fill the depression left by the Wade House cellar and possibly a cellar for the Centennial Hotel. The excavation crew recovered 5,903 artifacts. The 2008 assemblage from this locus consisted of 2 dice, 1 lock, 1 ceramic doll fragment, 1 metal buckle, 2 bone buttons, 3 metal buttons, 2 plastic buttons, 15 handwrought nails, 203 machine-cut nails, 1 wire nail, 486 other nails, 1,819 ceramic sherds (620 tin-glazed earthenware, 37 Buckley, 40 Staffordshire slipware, 38 North Italian earthenwares, 102 creamware, 202 pearlware, 391 other earthenware, 51 redware, 36 whiteware, 3 yellowware, 82 Chinese export porcelain, 23 other porcelain, 10 English Brown stoneware, 2 Nottingham stoneware, 7 Rhenish stoneware, 5 Westerwald stoneware, 136 white salt-glazed stoneware, 34 other stoneware), 744 wine bottle fragments, 714 other vessel glass fragments, 456 bone fragments, and 1408 miscellaneous objects. Aboriginal objects included 1 glass trade bead (counted as a historic personal item), and 43 ceramic sherds (4 Accokeek, 13 Moyaone, 8 Potomac Creek, 13 Townsend, and 5 other).

Volunteers with the ASM returned to Port Tobacco in 2009 to conduct additional fieldwork, returning to some of the locations that had been tested in previous years. Fieldwork in 2009 continued excavation work in the aboriginal and cemetery loci (the latter determined not to be a cemetery, but a structure location), and new excavations at the Swann House and two test loci in a field east of the Swann House.

Excavations at the "aboriginal locus" involved the re-opening of six previously excavated units to expose the aforementioned brick rubble feature and the addition of 4 additional test units. In this locus, each test unit was excavated stratigraphically and independent of the other units. Only one of the new units was excavated completely as excavations of the other 3 units stopped, as planned, upon exposure of the brick rubble. This brick rubble feature is associated with 9 of the 11 units excavated in this area. Two possible postmolds and one definite posthole/mold complex was found in the area. The results suggest a possible 18th century earthfast structure with a chimney collapse covering a series of borrow pits. More evidence of the Contact Period aboriginal component was found in the forms of pottery and lithics.

A total of 11,789 artifacts were recovered from the "aboriginal locus" during 2009, 730 of which were aboriginal in origin and 11,059 of historic origin. The aboriginal assemblage included 3 projectile points, 9 other bifaces, 1 core, 493 flakes, 50 pieces of fire-cracked rock, 1 other lithic, and 173 pottery sherds (4 Accokeek, 6 Mockley, 77 Moyaone, 48 Potomac Creek, 27 Townsend/Rappahannock, and 11 indeterminate). Historic materials recovered from this locus included 1,264 nails (692 handwrought, 233 machine-cut nails, 1 machine-cut/hand-headed nail, 10 wire, and 328 indeterminate), 3,254 ceramic sherds (93 Buckley, 3 Jackfield, 1 North Devon, 75 Staffordshire Slipware, 566 tin-glazed earthenware, 595 creamware, 290 pearlware, 192 other earthenware, 60 redware, 658 whiteware, 16 ironstone, 29 yellowware, 52 Chinese export porcelain, 85 other porcelain, 9 British Brown stoneware, 2 Nottingham stoneware, 7 Rhenish stoneware, 4 Westerwald stoneware, 313 white salt-glazed stoneware, 64 miscellaneous stoneware, and 140 other sherds), and 6,541 miscellaneous objects.

Upon further examination of the cemetery locus (3 re-opened units and 20 additional units), the features found during the 2008 fieldwork, thought to be graveshafts, were in fact a series of six very large postholes and molds. These postholes indicate the presence of a substantial structure, as do the many nails recovered. The paucity of brick recovered, argues against the presence of a chimney. Just east of this structure, another block of units (to the north) exposed a midden area containing many large butchered mammal bones, and large oyster shells. All soils excavated from the midden had to be water-screened through nylon window screen and the residuu

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95001242, 95001243, 95001244, 95001612, 95001581