



Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18HA315

Site Name: Cole Cemetery

Prehistoric

Other name(s)

Historic

Unknown

Brief Description:

19th century cemetery/family burial ground

Site Location and Environmental Data:

Maryland Archaeological Research Unit No. 15

SCS soil & sediment code

Latitude 39.5187

Longitude -76.1719

Physiographic province Eastern Piedmont

Terrestrial site

Underwater site

Elevation m

Site slope 0%

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 Swan

Saltwater

Ocean

Estuary/tidal river

Tidewater/marsh

Spring

Minimum distance to water is 692 m

Freshwater

Stream/river

Swamp

Lake or pond

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 Y

ca. 1630 - 1675 ca. 1860 - 1900 Y

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 Y Other

Hispanic

Y=Confirmed, P=Possible

Site Function Contextual Data:

Prehistoric

Multi-component Misc. ceremonial

Village Rock art

Hamlet Shell midden

Base camp STU/lithic scatter

Rockshelter/cave Quarry/extraction

Earthen mound Fish weir

Cairn Production area

Burial area Unknown

Other context

Historic

Urban/Rural? Rural

Domestic

Homestead

Farmstead

Mansion

Plantation

Row/townhome

Cellar

Privy

Industrial

Mining-related

Quarry-related

Mill

Black/metalsmith

Furnace/forge

Other

Transportation

Canal-related

Road/railroad

Wharf/landing

Maritime-related

Bridge

Ford

Educational

Commercial

Trading post

Store

Tavern/inn

Military

Battlefield

Fortification

Encampment

Townsite

Religious

Church/mtg house

Ch support bldg

Burial area

Cemetery

Sepulchre

Isolated burial

Bldg or foundation

Possible Structure

Post-in-ground

Frame-built

Masonry

Other structure

Slave related

Non-domestic agri

Recreational

Midden/dump

Artifact scatter

Spring or well

Unknown

Other context

Interpretive Sampling Data:

Prehistoric context samples

Soil samples taken

Flotation samples taken

Other samples taken

Historic context samples

Soil samples taken

Flotation samples taken N

Other samples taken



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Diagnostic Artifact Data:

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

Earthenware		Ironstone	<input type="checkbox"/>	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	<input type="checkbox"/>	Eng Dry-bodied	<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			
Flaked stone	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other fired clay	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ground stone	<input type="checkbox"/>	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stone bowls	<input type="checkbox"/>	Modified faunal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fire-cracked rock	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unmod faunal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other lithics (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Oyster shell	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rimsherds	<input type="checkbox"/>	Uncommon Obj.	<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

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

Dated features present at site

19th century burials

Historic Artifacts			
Pottery (all)	1	Tobacco related	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glass (all)	94	Activity item(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Architectural	<input type="checkbox"/>	Human remain(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Furniture	728	Faunal material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arms	<input type="checkbox"/>	Misc. kitchen	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clothing	36	Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal items	1	Misc.	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Historic Features

Const feature	<input type="checkbox"/>	Privy/outhouse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Depression/mound	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foundation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Well/cistern	<input type="checkbox"/>	Burial(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cellar hole/cellar	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trash pit/dump	<input type="checkbox"/>	Railroad bed	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Hearth/chimney	<input 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: 0 +/- 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 Cole Family Cemetery (18HA315) is a 19th century family burial ground in Aberdeen in Harford County. At the time grave recoveries were made at the site (2010), the burial ground was situated on what appears to be a knoll. It may well have occupied a slight rise when it was first used, but gravel quarreling around the site created a pronounced protuberance similar to a small, well-preserved aboriginal burial mound. The appearance, however, is purely coincidental. Soils comprising this artificial mound are clays, silts, and Beltsville and Elkton silt loams...not the kind of material sought by sand and gravel miners. The family may have selected the location because of soil and topographic characteristics that are no longer evident because the surrounding material has been removed.

The cemetery has long been known, if untended. At least two headstones have been documented and reveal the presence of at least two graves: "Elizabeth Gilbert, wife of James Cole, 1806-1890", and "James Cole, born July 15, 1791, died July 4, 1878". The US Censuses consistently put James Cole's birth year at 1794. Elizabeth and James married December 3, 1823.

Atlas maps for Harford County (1858 and 1878) identify the Cole family as possessors of the surrounding land, but James Cole only appears on the later map. These are subscription maps and are not comprehensive. The Coles may not have had the money or the desire to pay the fee that would have ensured their placement on the earlier map. A review of the agricultural schedules of the 1850-1880 censuses could shed further light on the wealth of the family, as would a review of probate records.

Thomas Cole conveyed a 35-acre tract to his son, James, On April 6, 1822. The metes and bounds description is similar, but not identical to a much later deed, and both stipulate that the 35 acres comprise parts of two tracts: Paradise (sic) and Montreal (or Marcal). Paradise was patented for 1,000 acres in 1684 by Thomas Lytfoot and the McComas family acquired one-third of the tract in 1808. Because the chain of title is not relevant to the current work, it remains unfinished. Clearly, however, James Cole occupied the parcel at least from 1822 until his death in 1878.

The later conveyance alluded to above transferred title of the 35-acre farm from James and Elizabeth Cole to their son, John T. Cole, "excepting a life estate hereby reserved to the said James Cole and Elizabeth Cole, his wife, for and during the term of their natural lives, said estate to revert to said John Cole after their deaths". The land records confirm the census data which indicate that John T. Cole returned to his parents' farm sometime during the 1850s and became head of household in the 1860s.

Census data suggests that John T. Cole returned to his parental home at age 30 in 1860, presumably working with his sister Sarah to aid their aging parents. By 1870, John T Cole and his wife, Fernetta M. Cole, ran the household, probably caring for 77-year-old James and 66-year-old Elizabeth, as well as their own four children. By 1880, James had died, but all six of his grandchildren by son John were alive and resident at the family farm. The census notes only one boarder, an illiterate African-American farm hand named William Jones, aged 40, in 1870.

The first documented archeological work conducted at 18HA315 occurred in 2009 when the threat of potential development led to 3 days of work to attempt to determine the number of graves present in the family cemetery. This work culminated in the mechanical stripping of topsoil and cleaning of the exposed subsoil. As many as six possible graveshafts, as well as a number of field stones were identified. The locations of possible features and the stones were all mapped, but a state site number was not requested at that time.

The following year (2010), grave recovery was carried out at 18HA315. At the time, Merritt Properties, LLC, was proposing development of the abandoned sand and gravel pit surrounding the site, as well as the site itself. Based on the techniques used and the 40-60 years of forest growth, the parcel was quarried sometime after World War II, probably in connection with highway construction or suburban tract development. The miners excavated around the family cemetery lot (18HA315) leaving a the aforementioned "mound" roughly 3.66 m (12 ft) high where members of the Cole family were interred. Prior to development of the lot, the descendants of the Cole family requested respectful disinterment, analysis to determine identity, and re-interment in a maintained cemetery.

The goal of the 2010 effort was to recover the remains from all of the surviving graves of the Cole family cemetery. Because of a very tight time frame (April 9-13) and a very small budget, a two-stage approach was used in the field. On April 7, the surface of the site was carefully cleaned to identify and define graveshafts and other features. Nine possible graveshafts were identified, their perimeters scored and then marked with nails and small strips of flagging tape. A permit for disinterment, transit, and re-interment of remains was also granted by the State of Maryland.

On April 9 and 11, researchers returned to the site and began undertaking grave recovery with the assistance of several volunteers and students. Each feature was drawn to scale relative to nails set at each end of each feature's long axis. Those points and the rest of the site were measured using a total station set up at the base of the mound. Once drawn, the fill was removed from each shaft with hand tools (mostly shovels and trowels) and discarded without screening. As soon as coffin hardware was encountered, deposits were removed with greater care, typically exposing deteriorated casket wood and rusted machine-cut nails and wire nails with rowels. Photographs were taken to document excavation. Human remains were cleared of soil with bamboo splints and brushes and then removed to boxes for transportation to the laboratory where they were cleaned and packaged for delivery to the Smithsonian Institution for forensic analysis.

The fieldstones mapped in 2009 appear to be unrelated to the graveshafts. A single posthole and mold complex appears to represent part of an encircling fence. The only other evidence of such a fence was some barbed wire noted on the surface near the trees on the west edge of the knoll top.

Nine features were encountered during excavation, including 7 grave shafts. The remains in Grave 3 were only partially preserved. Those in Grave 7 were largely preserved. One grave produced no skeletal material and the remaining three produced only traces. "Grave 1" appears to have started as a grave shaft but was abandoned when the undertakers encountered dense, partially cemented sediment. One small feature appeared to be the remains of a shallow groundhog den and the 9th feature was the aforementioned posthole and mold.

Artifacts recovered from the graves fall into three classes: coffin/casket hardware and parts (wood, fabric, decorative handles, decorative closures, nails and screws), clothing and personal items, and aboriginal lithic artifacts (a quartz flake and a rhyolite projectile point). The latter are indicative of an Archaic site that



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probably extended beyond, and is wholly unrelated to, the much later cemetery.

In addition to the human remains, the historic/grave assemblage from the 2010 excavations consisted of 36 clothing items (6 metal and cloth buttons, 22 glass buttons, and 8 shell buttons), 728 pieces of funerary furniture (87 pieces of coffin wood, 545 pieces of coffin hardware, 2 pieces of coffin fabric, 94 pieces of viewing window glass), 1 piece of pearlware, and 1 personal item (a vulcanized rubber comb).

Clothing had largely disintegrated, the only surviving fragments of cloth being heavy woven tapes that probably edged the fabric lining of the casket in Grave 2. Buttons were recovered from 4 graves. Those from Grave 7 were recovered from around and beneath the cervical vertebrae suggesting collar buttons. A vulcanized rubber comb was recovered from Grave 3. It was in contact with the right parietal and suggested to the field crew that the decedent was a woman. Lack of lower teeth and reabsorption of the mandible suggested an elderly person. The use of wire nails as well as machine-cut nails indicated a later burial, the other graveshafts producing only machine-cut nails. The three lines of evidence suggested that Elizabeth Cole was buried in Grave 3.

Some wood was recovered from several graves. An infant's grave (Grave 2) yielded side panels from a scow-shaped coffin, the head and foot portions rising at an obtuse angle to the horizontal plane. Horseshoe-shaped wooden handles were attached to both ends indicating that the decedent was carried to the grave between two individuals, one at each end, rather than 2 or 4 pall bearers grasping handles on the sides. Given the shortness of the coffin (around 122 cm), the end handles likely were more appropriate. The coffin probably was lined with fabric, although only heavy, woven fabric tape that edged and attached the lighter fabric survives. Excavation of Grave 3 exposed the lid and sides of a coffin in what may well be the grave of Elizabeth Cole (see above). Shattered plate glass above the cranium and upper body indicate that the coffin had a viewing window. Copper alloy decorative studs also were recovered. Grave 7 also yielded wood: a painted lid and sides encasing the remains of an individual who appears to be James Cole. Excavators recovered a variety of copper alloy studs, white metal ball swing handles, and white metal escutcheons. The box was assembled with machine-cut nails.

The 2010 excavations at 18HA315 cleared the way for development of the parcel. Consequently, the site is not a significant site. Any remaining research potential lies with the forensic work being carried out by the Smithsonian Institution. A final report by the Smithsonian is presumably forthcoming, in keeping with the wishes of the Cole family.

External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

95001436