



Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18SO317

Site Name: Twitch Cove Burial

Prehistoric

Other name(s) USFWS MRN 2P and MRN 3H

Historic

Brief Description:

early 19th century African-American grave, Late Woodland shell midden, possible base camp

Unknown

Site Location and Environmental Data:

Latitude 37.9788 Longitude -75.9898
Elevation m Site slope

Maryland Archaeological Research Unit No. 3

SCS soil & sediment code

Physiographic province Eastern Shore Coastal P

Terrestrial site

Underwater 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 Tidal marsh, Shoreline
- Low terrace

Ownership

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

Nearest Surface Water

Name (if any) Twitch Cove, Tangier Sound

- | 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 0 m | | | |

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? Rural

Domestic

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

Industrial

- Mining-related
- Quarry-related
- Mill
- Black/metalsmith

Furnace/forge

Other historic shell

Transportation

- Canal-related
- Road/railroad
- Wharf/landing
- Maritime-related
- Bridge
- Ford

Educational

Commercial

- Trading post
- Store
- Tavern/inn

Military

- Battlefield
- Fortification
- Encampment

Townsite

- Church/mtg house
- Ch support bldg

Burial area

- Cemetery
- Sepulchre
- Isolated burial

Bldg or foundation

Possible Structure

Post-in-ground

Frame-built

Masonry

Other structure

Slave related

Non-domestic agri

Recreational

Midden/dump

Artifact scatter

Spring or well

Unknown

Other context

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 skeletal analysis



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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"/>
Dames Qtr	<input type="checkbox"/>	Coulbourn	<input type="checkbox"/>
Selden Island	<input type="checkbox"/>	Watson	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accokeek	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mockley	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wolfe Neck	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clemson Island	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vinette	<input type="checkbox"/>	Page	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shepard	<input type="checkbox"/>	Townsend	<input type="checkbox"/>
Minguannan	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sullivan Cove	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shenks Ferry	<input type="checkbox"/>	Moyaone	<input type="checkbox"/>
Potomac Crk	<input type="checkbox"/>	Keyser	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yeocomico	<input type="checkbox"/>	Monongahela	<input type="checkbox"/>
Susquehannock	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Historic Sherd Types			
Earthenware		Ironstone	<input type="checkbox"/>
Astbury	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jackfield	<input type="checkbox"/>
Borderware	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mn Mottled	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buckley	<input type="checkbox"/>	North Devon	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creamware	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pearlware	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staffordshire	<input type="checkbox"/>	Porcelain	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tin Glazed	<input type="checkbox"/>	English Brown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Whiteware	<input type="checkbox"/>	Eng Dry-bodied	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Nottingham	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rimsherds	<input type="checkbox"/>	Uncommon Obj.	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Other <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Also clam and mussel shell; all shell may be historic

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

Dated features present at site

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

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

Additional raw data may be available online

Summary Description:

The Twitch Cove Site (18SO317) is located on a small point in a cove on Smith Island, Somerset County and within the Martin Natural Wildlife Reserve. The environmental setting is a combination of tidal flat and inundated marsh. The area is subsiding and concomitant with sea level rise and erosion, even the marsh is disappearing. The site is a shell midden into which an historic grave was inserted. The grave is dated to the early 19th century and is that of a woman of African descent aged between 34-45 years old.

The project was necessitated by salvage efforts in 1996 to recover information about the gravesite, which was eroding out of the bank due to tidal action that is affecting most of the island. Work was carried by an intern from the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) under the supervision of Dr. Susan Langley, Maryland State Underwater Archeologist, MHT, and in conjunction with employees of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The goal of the investigation was to establish the historical and cultural setting of the burial and to evaluate the significance of the grave for Smith Island and Maryland archeology. Research interests included determining if the grave was an anomaly or part of an as yet unidentified cemetery and if the person in the grave was connected to the landowners of the time as a slave or free black. Detailed background research to establish chain of title and an examination of past archeological research in the area was executed prior to field work.

At the site a 12 meter X 12 meter grid was established running north-south along the shoreline. The most prominent feature identified inside the grid was a prehistoric oyster shell midden that the burial was dug into, from which the majority of the artifacts were collected. Systematic probing within the grid was employed from the NE corner to the NW corner and from the NE corner to the SW corner with no success. Burial-related artifacts include coffin wood (2) and hardware (2). The badly eroded grave was removed with US Fish and Wildlife Service cooperation and supervision. The skeletal remains were analyzed by the Smithsonian and reburied at a cemetery in Tylerton. There were also 22 architectural items (20 brick fragments and 2 nails), 3 clothing items (1 piece of linen and 2 buttons), 29 kitchen items (2 glass, 20 earthenware, 5 stoneware, and 2 animal bone), 2 pieces of unidentified miscellaneous metal, and 1 personal item (a chamber pot handle). Prehistoric items included 1 Late Woodland projectile point, 2 fire-cracked rock, and 2 pieces of debitage. All the numbers of items represent minimum counts except for single (1) items, which are an absolute count. There were no definite counts within the texts and the numbers above are based on a standardized minimum set.

A surface collection of artifacts was done outside of the established grid. A number of items were collected. These include 22 architectural items (20 brick fragments and 2 nails), 13 kitchen items (5 stoneware, 2 whiteware, 5 redware, and 2 animal bone fragments), and 5 pieces of unidentified miscellaneous metal. Three prehistoric items were also collected (2 fire-cracked rock and 1 ceramic sherd).

It seems likely that the Twitch Cove Site (18SO 317) represents an anomalous, or single burial, rather than being a part of larger cemetery. The presence of brick concentrations suggests that there may have been a structure in the vicinity at one time. Additional archival and systematic survey of the project area could potentially provided invaluable information to the body of knowledge regarding slave and free black cemeteries and lifeways in Maryland.

External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

Site Files (18SO317 SF)