



Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18ST564

Site Name: Cherry Fields Wreck

Prehistoric

Other name(s) Cherryfield Point Wreck, 17W

Historic

Unknown

Brief Description:

Late 19th to early 20th century shipwreck, possibly a ram schooner or barge

Site Location and Environmental Data:

Latitude 38.1267 Longitude -76.4571
Elevation m Site slope 0

Maryland Archaeological Research Unit No. 10

SCS soil & sediment code

Physiographic province Western Shore Coastal

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

Ownership

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

Nearest Surface Water

Name (if any) St. Marys River

Saltwater

Ocean

Estuary/tidal river

Tidewater/marsh

Minimum distance to water is 0 m

Freshwater

Stream/river

Swamp

Lake or pond

Spring

Temporal & Ethnic Contextual Data:

- Paleoindian site
- Archaic site
- Early archaic
- Middle archaic
- Late archaic
- Woodland site
- MD Adena
- Early woodland
- Mid. woodland
- Late woodland

- Contact period site
- ca. 1820 - 1860
- ca. 1630 - 1675
- ca. 1675 - 1720
- ca. 1720 - 1780
- ca. 1780 - 1820
- ca. 1860 - 1900
- ca. 1900 - 1930
- Post 1930
- Unknown historic context

Ethnic Associations (historic only)

- Native American
- African American
- Anglo-American
- Hispanic
- Asian American
- Unknown
- Other

Y=Confirmed, P=Possible

Site Function Contextual Data:

Prehistoric

- Multi-component
- Village
- Hamlet
- Base camp
- Rockshelter/cave
- Earthen mound
- Cairn
- Burial area
- Misc. ceremonial
- Rock art
- Shell midden
- STU/lithic scatter
- Quarry/extraction
- Fish weir
- Production area
- Unknown
- Other context

Historic

Urban/Rural? 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

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

Shipwreck

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



Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18ST564

Site Name: Cherry Fields Wreck

Prehistoric

Other name(s) Cherryfield Point Wreck, 17W

Historic

Unknown

Brief Description:

Late 19th to early 20th century shipwreck, possibly a ram schooner or barge

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"/>
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		Ironstone		Staffordshire		Stoneware	
Earthenware		Jackfield	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tin Glazed	<input type="checkbox"/>	English Brown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Astbury	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mn Mottled	<input type="checkbox"/>	Whiteware	<input type="checkbox"/>	Eng Dry-bodied	<input type="checkbox"/>
Borderware	<input type="checkbox"/>	North Devon	<input type="checkbox"/>	Porcelain	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nottingham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buckley	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pearlware	<input type="checkbox"/>			Rhenish	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creamware	<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"/>
Midden	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shell midden	<input type="checkbox"/>
Postholes/molds	<input type="checkbox"/>
House pattern(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Palisade(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hearth(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lithic reduc area	<input type="checkbox"/>
Storage/trash pit	<input type="checkbox"/>
Burial(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ossuary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

Dated features present at site

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

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

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Radiocarbon Data:

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

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

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

Additional radiocarbon results available



Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18ST564

Site Name: Cherry Fields Wreck

Prehistoric

Other name(s) Cherryfield Point Wreck, 17W

Historic

Brief

Description:

Late 19th to early 20th century shipwreck, possibly a ram schooner or barge

Unknown

External Samples/Data:

Collection curated at MAC Lab

Additional raw data may be available online

Summary Description:

Site 18ST564, also known as the Cherry Fields Wreck, is a late 19th to early 20th century shipwreck, possibly a ram schooner or barge on the St. Marys River off Cherryfield Point. The wreck lies in three to four feet of tidal, estuarine water, and sediments surrounding the site are primarily sand that supports heavy plant growth during the summer months.

The Chesapeake Bay region contains over 4600 miles of tidal shoreline and encompasses 48 principal rivers each fed by navigable creeks. It has served as a natural highway for goods and raw materials for both indigenous and immigrant populations for hundreds of years.

Environmental and economic factors have shaped the development of vessel types throughout this period leading to the creation of unique Chesapeake Bay vernacular craft. For many this calls to mind skipjacks, bugeyes, and log canoes. The dimensions of the Chesapeake and Delaware canal constructed in 1829 added yet another influencing variable. Approximately 1.3 million tons of traffic passed through the canal during busiest year in 1872.

By the late nineteenth century the canal, connecting the waters of the upper Chesapeake and the Delaware River, restricted vessels to a beam of no greater than 24 feet. Canal barges and ram schooners were two of the vessel types built specifically to pass through the canal locks. Rams from this period had, on average, a 5.3 to 1 length to beam ratio.

Similar dimensions for the wreck at Cherryfield Point lead to the early consideration that she might be a ram schooner. Indigenous to the Chesapeake Bay approximately thirty Ram schooners were built between the years 1889 and 1911, many of which were constructed in Bethel, Delaware. While ram schooner's lengths varied from 113 to 136 feet, beam measurements prior to 1890 were consistently just shy of 24 feet, which allowed them passage through the Chesapeake and Delaware canal. Their straight sides and cargo space made them commercially successful to the extent that after 1899 other rams were built with larger beams that may have prompted some to make transatlantic crossings to European ports such as Lisbon, Spain. Most rams, however, sailed the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic coastal trade with cargoes of lumber, fertilizer, coal, cement, and salt. Rams sailed as far south as the Gulf of Mexico and as far north as Halifax. The last ram schooner built was the Granville Bacon in 1911. She measured 133.6 feet long and 31.6 feet in beam.

She was built by JMC Moore, who coincidentally built the first ram schooner in 1889, the J. Dallas Marvil. Granville Bacon ended her career as other rams had, stranded and broken up in the surf 22 years after her launching. Other rams were lost in hurricanes, collisions, fire, and in at least one case by hostile action with German U-boats in World War 1. Rams enjoyed somewhat of a renaissance in the late 1940s and early 1950s as passenger cruisers in the Chesapeake Bay. The last surviving Ram, the Victory Chimes, formerly Edwin and Maud built in 1900, is still employed in that capacity in Rockland, Maine. Barges and barge schooners were often built to similar dimensions albeit slightly different length to beam ratios. At least one source lists Cherryfield Point as the final resting place for the barge Patapsco. Further research may yield construction data on this vessel. Comparing these measurements along with line drawings provided by the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum offered a baseline for comparisons with the Cherryfield Point wreck. Research questions and mapping objectives were developed from these sources and incorporated into the field schools conducted on site.

In 2001, 2002, and 2003, weekend field schools for the Maritime Archaeological and Historical Society attempted to record the extent of the wreckage and gather the general dimensions to aid in identifying the vessel's type.

The wreckage is distributed over 145 by 35-foot area. While most of the wreck is buried, frame tips appear just above the sediment in some areas. Nothing is left beyond the turn of the bilge. There are large sections where the vessel is completely buried. At the northeast end of the baseline a timber is visible that may be a portion of the stem with attached outer hull planking and what might be deadwood on the interior side of the vessel. There are sporadic portions of the keelson visible throughout the length of the wreck. More complete sections of framing are visible rising above the sediment as you approach the stern. Just aft of the last remaining section of keelson lies additional, as yet unidentified, wreckage that might be related to the stern area. The original position of the sternpost has not yet been identified.

Students recorded sample measurements and plotted the frame tips to view the overall shape of the wreck with regard to length and beam. The vessel appears to have been approximately 125 to 135 feet in length with a beam measurement of just less than 24 feet. The dimensions corresponded with the Maryland Historical Trust's suggestion that the wreck might be a Chesapeake Bay Ram schooner. This class of vessel had a length to beam ratio of roughly 5.3 to one, as does the Cherryfield Point wreck. The timber protruding from the seabed at the northeast end of the baseline was tentatively identified as a stem post. It contained rabbets for the exterior hull planking attached to it, a small wooden cap on the exterior side, and a two centimeter iron pin with associated wood that disappears into the sediment on the interior side. The curvature of the hull from the bow on the port side was recorded and plotted in a CAD program by a MAHS member. Frames near the bow measured 15 cm wide spaced 20 cm apart with 5cm thick hull planking and 7 cm thick ceiling planking.

Moving aft the framing pattern changed. Those examined just aft of amidships showed the connection of the floors and frames and what might be knees. A chine log and bilge keelson set 55 centimeters apart, were also present but unlike the bow area no ceiling planking was found. Framing in the stern section narrows but abruptly ends prior to reaching the stern. The keelson however continues for another two meters past this point before ending. Notches in the keelson were found in this area that are not present elsewhere in the wreck.

One piece, which may be related to the stern area, lies at the southwestern end of the base line beyond the last intact section of keelson. Five, two centimeter thick iron pins protrude from one side. The wood is attached to a metal plate with a concreted protrusion. Like much of the wood on the wreck this piece is badly deteriorated. The function of the large section of wood lying next to it is also uncertain. While the pieces appear to have been connected to each other at one time, they are not currently solidly attached to each other as can be seen by the gap between upper sections. While measuring this section we observed that the pieces could move freely independent of each other, if pushed. Sufficiently strong wave action could possibly move the whole assembly. This cast some doubt as to its context. An examination of the wreck's visible fasteners revealed iron spikes, through bolts, and drift pins. Other metal objects were heavily corroded and may include chain plate. While difficult to tell for certain due to the scarcity of remains, the iron work, means of assembly, size and overall condition point to the late 19th or early 20th century as a possible date for this vessel's construction.

As of yet, no non-structural artifacts have been found that would aid in determining a more exact date. The Cherryfield Point wreck likely dates to the late 19th



Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18ST564

Site Name: Cherry Fields Wreck

Prehistoric

Other name(s) Cherryfield Point Wreck, 17W

Historic

Brief Description:

Late 19th to early 20th century shipwreck, possibly a ram schooner or barge

Unknown

or early 20th century. It is similar to traditional ram schooners in length and beam but appears to be built of lighter materials. No conclusive statements can be made regarding the system of keelsons or the centerboard and trunk. Although not yet found there is sufficient sediment depth over the critical area of the wreck that those timbers or the centerboard well may be covered. One possibility is that this wreck is in fact a barge built in the same manner as rams were to pass through the Chesapeake and Delaware canal. This would explain why the centerboard and mast steps have yet to be found since barges did not typically have those structures. More research on barges needs to be done to provide data for comparisons with the wreck.

The MAHS team observed that the site lacked much material in general. While the brackish environment is not conducive to long-term preservation of wooden timbers one might expect that after what is likely to be less than 100 years in a shallow protected area there should be evidence of machinery and more structure. Probing did suggest some material is buried beneath the sandy bottom but no evidence whatsoever of framing exists at all above the turn of the bilge. Considering the vessel's size this is somewhat surprising. One possible answer lies in the geography of the area. While the wreck lies several hundred feet off shore in four feet of water, analysis of historic maps of the area, conducted by James Stein of the National Park Service, showed that in 1904 the shoreline extended much further out than it does today. When the wreck site location is overlaid with the 1904 map we see it was almost on shore. Erosion in the past 98 years has greatly changed the shoreline. If this vessel was either stranded or purposefully beached in this area it would have presented an excellent opportunity for salvage of the ship's timbers, machinery and tackle, all of which seems to be either missing or found only in small quantities. One can easily imagine wagonloads of material being hauled off from the beach as the ship is dismantled. This might explain why only the lowest portions of the vessel remain which would still have been underwater even in 1904. One other clue was noted in the stern area. A small amount of burned timber was seen partially buried in the sand. Except for the single loose timber with trunnels described earlier, this is the only burned material found on the wreck so far. It is not clear if this is structural material or perhaps fuel for wood stoves.

Iron fasteners such as drift pins, possible chain plates and spikes are the only artifacts found to date. This lack of collateral material in a vessel of this size lends further support to the theory that the vessel was dismantled. Future research in newspapers of the area may yet reveal such an incident. While the final fates of many of ram schooners are documented, there are some whose final resting-place is not yet known. The Cherryfield Point wreck may prove to be one of those rams. If further site examination disproves the ram schooner theory then additional research needs to be conducted, but it seems likely, given the known width of the wreck that it was designed to pass through the Chesapeake and Delaware canal. This should help narrow down the list of possible vessel types. There remains much more that can be done at the site including limited excavation to prepare cross sections for profiling and or a trench to confirm the presence or absence of any centerboard well.

The Cherryfield Point wreck is likely a late 19th to early 20th century shipwreck, possibly a ram schooner or barge on the St. Marys River off Cherryfield Point. The wreck lies in three to four feet of tidal, estuarine water, and sees relative wave action. This area sees erosion from one side and accretion on the opposite, putting this wreck in a high impact area. Further excavation may assist with identifying the wreck and preservation.

External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

95009475, 18ST564 SF