



Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18ST643

Site Name: Swan Cove Wreck

Prehistoric

Other name(s) CSS Favorite? AWOIS #10475

Historic

Unknown

Brief Description:

Mid 19th century shipwreck with anthracite coal cargo

Site Location and Environmental Data:

Maryland Archaeological Research Unit No. 10

SCS soil & sediment code

Latitude 38.1202

Longitude -76.5188

Physiographic province Western Shore Coastal

Terrestrial site

Underwater site

Elevation m Site slope

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
- Submerged

Ownership

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

Nearest Surface Water

Name (if any) Potomac 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

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

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

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



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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		Stoneware	
Earthenware	Ironstone <input type="checkbox"/>	Staffordshire <input type="checkbox"/>	English Brown <input type="checkbox"/>
Astbury <input type="checkbox"/>	Jackfield <input type="checkbox"/>	Tin Glazed <input type="checkbox"/>	Eng Dry-bodied <input type="checkbox"/>
Borderware <input type="checkbox"/>	Mn Mottled <input type="checkbox"/>	Whiteware <input type="checkbox"/>	Nottingham <input type="checkbox"/>
Buckley <input type="checkbox"/>	North Devon <input type="checkbox"/>	Porcelain <input type="checkbox"/>	Rhenish <input type="checkbox"/>
Creamware <input type="checkbox"/>	Pearlware <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"/>
Chert	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sil sandstone	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rhyolite	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chalcedony	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quartz	<input 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

19th century schooner

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 type="checkbox"/>
Furniture	<input type="checkbox"/>	Faunal material	<input 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"/>
		Anthracite	<input type="checkbox"/>

Historic Features			
Const feature	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Privy/outhouse	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foundation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Depression/mound	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cellar hole/cellar	<input type="checkbox"/>	Burial(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hearth/chimney	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trash pit/dump	<input type="checkbox"/>
Postholes/molds	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sheet midden	<input type="checkbox"/>
Paling ditch/fence	<input type="checkbox"/>	Planting feature	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Mill raceway	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Road/walkway	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Wheel pit	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Other	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Shipwreck	<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 MAC (currently listed as MISSING)

Additional raw data may be available online

Summary Description:

The Swan Cove Wreck Site (18ST643) is the archeological remains of a mid 19th century cargo ship in the Potomac River south of Piney Point and west of St. Georges Island (i.e. Swan Cove) in St. Mary's County. The site lies in about 11.3 m (37 ft) of water and rises as much as 3.4 m (11 ft) off the river bottom due to the large load of anthracite coal deposited by the sinking of the ship. Visibility in these tidal waters is typically 3-10 cm and the area is heavily trafficked by modern vessels.

Archival evidence points to the loss of an anthracite-laden Confederate schooner, the CSS Favorite, somewhere inside Swan Cove on the Potomac River. On July 14th, 1861, the crew of the USS Yankee, a vessel of the Potomac Flotilla established to protect the Federal City of Washington and disrupt Confederate supply channels, captured the schooner Favorite on the Yeocomico River in Virginia. After being towed to Swan Cove, the CSS Favorite was placed at anchor and her crew was taken off the ship on July 18th, 1861. Later that night the vessel took on water and sank at anchor. The commander of the USS Yankee, Captain T. Craven, reported that the vessel might have been accidentally hit by another vessel in the night. Even so, he admitted the possibility that it was his fault for not leaving men onboard overnight.

The Union's Potomac Flotilla would go on to destroy or capture dozens of Confederate vessels in the following years. The targets of the Union's steam-powered flotilla gunboats typically were schooner plying the rivers and streams of Virginia. One time fishing vessels, merchant ships and lumber carriers, these shallow draft schooners were being utilized in smuggling supplies, fuel, troops, and spies, more often than not during the night.

Confederate forces were responsible for destroying more of their own ships than was the Union. At least 200 warships and 26 commercial ships were burned, sunk, or scuttled by the Confederacy to prevent capture by Union forces or to act as obstructions to Union transports. Only 80 warships and around 100 commercial vessels were burned, sunk, and/or scuttled by the Union over the same time period. These observations proffer evidence of the frustration of the Confederate navy and the effectiveness of the blockading Union flotillas.

Site 18ST643 was discovered by Maryland Maritime Archeology Program (MMAP) staff and volunteers on April 23rd, 1994, while conducting a remote sensing survey of the lower Potomac River and St. Mary's River. The site was one of five EG&G analog side-scan sonar anomalies: two of which turned out to be oyster shell middens, while the other three displayed the characteristics of shipwrecks. Preliminary dives were carried out at 18ST643 in 1995 to confirm that it was indeed a shipwreck and obtain a basic assessment of the age and structure of the vessel. The results of that work suggested a mid 19th century schooner wreck, with in-situ wooden structural remains from stem to stern (overall length is 32.3 m) and from keel to turn of the bilge on both the port and the starboard. A portion of the mast and a complete centerboard box with centerboard protruded up through the ship's cargo area, which was clearly loaded with anthracite coal. Though uninvestigated, two linear objects off the bow of the wreck appeared to be masts or booms.

Additional diving on the site was conducted in 1999, 2001, and 2002. Detailed measurements were made in 1999 and divers also identified and recorded two anchors taking precise measurements of them as well. A cache of ceramic artifacts was discovered in the stern port area of the wreck and after triangulating their location, divers recovered a whiteware saucer, whiteware pitcher, and salt-glazed stoneware jug. The work carried out in 2001 was an underwater video survey of the site. The wreck was video-recorded from stern to stern (port side) and from stern to centerboard. In the fall of 2002, remote sensing and diver testing were carried out. The site was relocated utilizing an Edgetech digital side scan unit with Triton ISIS software and Hypack Max navigation software. Once plotted, the team ran 10 magnetometer lanes over the survey area with a Geometrics 881 cesium magnetometer. A second underwater video survey was also conducted at that time to get close-up shots of the bow, centerboard and centerboard box. Divers also returned to the artifact cache area and recovered a brown stoneware jug, a salt-glazed earthenware preserve jar, and two earthenware saucers. A small whiteware dish and a ceramic handle were left on-site due to weather concerns.

Details of the construction of the vessel at 18ST643 are provided in the full site report. In short, the wrecked remains indicate a mid 19th century double-mast schooner with a raking bow, featuring a center fitted keel-board and box. The hardware (gammoning iron), anchor forms, and ceramics are all indicative of an 1840 to 1860 date range for the vessel. In addition, it was a vessel clearly loaded down with coal. All of these details strongly suggested that the wreck is the remains of the CSS Favorite, which sank at anchor in 1861 while loaded down with anthracite.

Based on the work conducted to date at 18ST643, the site appears to be a significant cultural resource. The site bears information relevant to Maryland and American history and is one of a relatively rare site class: Civil War Period wreck sites. The site should be preserved and monitored to facilitate any future need for data recovery.

External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

95000616