



# Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18WA461

Site Name: Locher-A. Poffenberger Farm

Prehistoric

Other name(s)

Historic

Unknown

Brief Description:

late 18th-early 20th century standing farmstead, military encampment, battlefield

## Site Location and Environmental Data:

Maryland Archaeological Research Unit No. 19

SCS soil & sediment code

Latitude 39.4705

Longitude -77.7619

Physiographic province Great Valley

Terrestrial site

Underwater site

Elevation 140 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

### Ownership

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

### Nearest Surface Water

Name (if any) Stone Lined Well

- | Saltwater                                |  | Freshwater                                       |                                |
|--|--|--|--------------------------------|
| Ocean <input type="checkbox"/>           | Estuary/tidal river <input type="checkbox"/> | Stream/river <input checked="" 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
- Archaic site
- Early archaic
- Middle archaic
- Late archaic
- Woodland site
- MD Adena
- Early woodland
- Mid. woodland
- Late woodland
- Unknown prehistoric context

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

### 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
  - 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  Other samples taken



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## 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"/>	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		Staffordshire		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	946	Eng Dry-bodied	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buckley	1	North Devon	<input type="checkbox"/>	Porcelain	7	Nottingham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creamware	4	Pearlware	292			Rhenish	<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)	1	Uncommon Obj.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rimsherds	<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

Numerous features containing diagnostic historic artifacts

Historic Artifacts		Tobacco related	
Pottery (all)	2922	Activity item(s)	294
Glass (all)	3584	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Architectural	3429	Faunal material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Furniture	<input type="checkbox"/>	Misc. kitchen	453
Arms	31	Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clothing	83	Misc.	155
Personal items	36	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Historic Features

Const feature	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Privy/outhouse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Depression/mound	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foundation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Well/cistern	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Burial(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Cellar hole/cellar	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Trash pit/dump	<input type="checkbox"/>	Railroad bed	<input type="checkbox"/>	post,	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hearth/chimney	<input checked="" 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:  +/-  years BP Reliability  Sample 8:  +/-  years BP Reliability  Sample 9:  +/-  years BP Reliability

Additional radiocarbon results available



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Description:

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Unknown

## External Samples/Data:

Collection curated at NPS (MARS)

Additional raw data may be available online

## Summary Description:

The Locher/Poffenberger (18WA461) site is an early 19th century rural farmstead and cabin located in the West Woods within the Antietam National Battlefield near Sharpsburg, Maryland. The West Woods was the site of a major and bloody portion of the Antietam Battle which took place on the morning of September 17th, 1862. Situated on the edge of the woods, the Locher/Poffenberger cabin bore witness to the carnage which resulted in over 23,000 casualties in the one day battle. The cabin and farmyard were used by the Confederate forces as a bivouac prior to the conflict and as a field hospital during the height of the confrontation. The farmhouse, which has undergone various building episodes throughout the 19th century, presently stands as a two-room log cabin, one and ½ stories in height. The cabin was constructed on an unmortared-limestone block foundation. It is situated on a small limestone knoll to the west of an orchard, overlooking a farm lane and well. The log house, yard, and orchard were encompassed by a post-and-rail fence. A stone cold cellar with a corbelled-and-vaulted stone roof is built into the hillside south of the cabin. The cellar was covered with earth and sod, and contained a doorway to the north that was accessible to the cabin, and a doorway to the south that opened to the farm lane. A stone-lined well is located west of the root cellar adjacent to the old farm lane.

The property was originally situated on a 2,617-acre tract of land called "Resurvey on the Addition to Piles Delight" that was claimed and registered by Colonel Edward Sprigg in 1750. From this earliest recorded sale of the property until the very late 19th century, the portion of the property known as the Locher/Poffenberger farmstead was sold to numerous individuals, none ever occupying the farm. The wealthy owners of these lands kept this parcel as an investment, but resided in larger houses elsewhere on the property, in Sharpsburg, or in other states. The cabin site is known by the name of both the owner and the tenant at the time of the 1862 battle. In the 1860 census, Alfred Poffenberger was listed as the resident farmer of the property. According to the census, Alfred Poffenberger, aged 26, lived near the edge of the West Woods, with his wife, Harriet, a young son and daughter, a male farmhand, and a twelve-year-old male slave. He had a personal estate worth \$500, and he rented his house and farmland from Mary Locher. Prior to the battle, Alfred and his family abandoned their home. The farmstead was solely occupied by Confederate forces the night before and the day of the battle. Several soldiers attested that portions of the battle were fought on and near the farmstead. The farm was also used during and after the morning battle as a field hospital. The farm's location and resources would have made this a prime hospital locale. The cabin would provide shelter for the wounded, and the well would supply fresh water. The farm lay behind Confederate lines, and the road that led from the West Woods toward the Potomac, where the retreating Confederates and their wounded would have headed, was located directly south of the cabin. After Lee and his army retreated across the Potomac, Union soldiers occupied the farm for approximately four weeks.

In 1994 archeological test excavations were carried out in the Locher/A. Poffenberger yard and surrounding areas as part of the SAIP work by the NPS. The initial archeological survey of this property involved the excavation of 20 shovel test pits on the knoll where the cabin is situated, including the yard area to the north; in the young growth of trees to the east; on the lower bedrock benches to the west; and down the slope near the old farm lane and stone-lined well to the south. During the second phase of testing, 50 cm square units were excavated on a ten meter grid. Larger 1 meter units were then excavated, their location based on the presence of artifact concentrations and features. The assemblage as a whole contains sherds and artifacts small in size, consistent with sheet refuse and material thrown into the yard and subsequently traversed by the cabin occupants. The excavations identified several subsurface features in the cabin yard, including a cellar hole with earthen steps (Feature 3), two small pits (Features 5 and 6), an above ground architectural feature, and a stone root cellar.

The testing at 18WA461 yielded a total of 9,753 artifacts. Two-hundred and ninety-four of these are activity items, much of it hardware. The activity item assemblage includes 36 metal nuts/bolts, 5 pieces of chain, a gimlet screw, 1 tool, 4 metal washers, 64 fragments of metal wire, 3 metal grommets, a metal ring, 2 metal fragments, 21 miscellaneous metal hardware fragments, 105 lighting-related items (blown-in-mold chimney glass fragments), 8 writing-related items (2 pieces of paper and 6 fragments of pencil lead), 7 toys (a ceramic doll part and 6 glass marbles), and 47 stable related items (12 horseshoe nails and 35 tack rivets). A total of 3,429 architectural objects were encountered at the site (in addition to the standing structures). The assemblage includes 1,154 plate window glass fragments, 6 pieces of roofing slate, 8 parts from metal door lock(s), 9 hinge parts, a hook, 1156 cut nails, 5 roofing nails, 461 wire nails, 2 pieces of pipe, 9 screws, 6 spikes, 36 staples, 388 fragments of brick and 188 pieces of mortar. Clothing items were also excavated, including 2 thimbles, 11 metal buckles, 53 buttons, and 17 shoe parts. The great number of buttons is thought to be related to the functions of the house as a field hospital, in which numerous buttons could be lost as garments are removed to reveal wounds. A considerable number of kitchen-related objects were recovered, many of which were ceramic sherds. One of the sherds is Agateware, 1 is Buckley, 4 are creamware, 292 are pearlware, 12 are unidentified earthenware sherds, 7 are porcelain, 1249 are redware, 1 is Rockingham, 143 are stoneware, 230 are white granite, 946 are whiteware, and 36 are yellowware. Kitchen glass included 24 blown-in-mold container/bottle glass fragments, 1 free-blown fragment, 137 machine made bottle glass fragments, 57 pressed container glass fragments, and 2103 unidentifiable glass container/bottle shards. Other kitchen items include 4 pieces of cooking pot, 4 metal dish pieces, 9 utensil parts, 4 pig bones, 341 unidentified mammal bones, and 95 oyster shell fragments. Personal objects from the site are 31 mirror fragments, 2 coins, 2 harmonicas, and a piece of jewelry. Fifteen white ball clay (kaolin) pipe stem fragments and 31 arms-related objects (3 bullets, 25 cartridges, and 3 shotgun shells) were found throughout the site. And finally, 155 miscellaneous items were recovered from the site; a carbon rod, 89 pieces of coal ash, 8 metal fragments, 7 plastic pieces, 57 rubber pieces.

In addition to the historic objects described above, a prehistoric ceramic sherd and a lithic flake were also recovered.

The Locher/Poffenberger site is unique, as it appears to be relatively intact even though it is located within the West Woods, which has been heavily pothunted since the battle. There is a substantial amount of farm and architectural metal items throughout the farm yard area, which would have hindered Civil War relic hunter's use of metal detectors. In addition, the soils are relatively intact, most likely a result of the presence of large bedrock outcrops, which precluded plowing. The history of the site is not limited to its role in the battle, but extends to its use by tenant farmers from the time of its construction early in the 19th century, to its abandonment as a domestic structure around 1900. The research potential from the investigation of this farmstead is substantial, as it may be possible to retrieve data relevant not only to the battle related occupations, but also a sense of day to day life in 19th century rural Maryland.

## External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

00006368, 00006370, 97000504