



# Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18WC25

Site Name: Potts I Lower

Prehistoric

Other name(s)

Historic

Brief Description:

Late Archaic and Late Woodland base camp and 18th & 19th century scatter

Unknown

## Site Location and Environmental Data:

Maryland Archaeological Research Unit No. 3

SCS soil & sediment code SsA

Latitude 38.2915

Longitude -75.7590

Physiographic province Eastern Shore Coastal P

Terrestrial site

Underwater site

Elevation 0 m

Site slope 0-5%

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) Wicomico Creek

#### Saltwater

Ocean

Estuary/tidal river

Tidewater/marsh

#### Freshwater

Stream/river

Swamp

Lake or pond

Spring

Minimum distance to water is 0 m

## Temporal & Ethnic Contextual Data:

Paleoindian site

Woodland site

Contact period site

ca. 1820 - 1860

P

Archaic site

MD Adena

ca. 1630 - 1675

ca. 1860 - 1900

P

Early archaic

Early woodland

ca. 1675 - 1720

ca. 1900 - 1930

Middle archaic

Mid. woodland

ca. 1720 - 1780

Post 1930

Late archaic

Late woodland

ca. 1780 - 1820

P

Unknown historic context

Unknown prehistoric 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

## Interpretive Sampling Data:

### Prehistoric context samples

Soil samples taken U

Flotation samples taken Y

Other samples taken faunal,floral,cerami c,shell

### Historic context samples

Soil samples taken N

Flotation samples taken N

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"/>	Susquehanna	<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	89	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	59	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	3

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

## Other Artifact & Feature Types:

Prehistoric Artifacts		Other fired clay	
Flaked stone	330	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ground stone	<input type="checkbox"/>	Modified faunal	12
Stone bowls	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unmod faunal	342
Fire-cracked rock	1	Oyster shell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other lithics (all)	73	Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics (all)	290	Uncommon Obj.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rimsherds	9	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Prehistoric Features

Mound(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Storage/trash pit	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Lithic reduc area	<input type="checkbox"/>		

### Lithic Material

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

### Dated features present at site

Features 2 & 5 - small pits w/ oyster shell, debitage, charred nuts, & Rappahannock Fabric-impressed sherds

Historic Artifacts		Tobacco related	
Pottery (all)	107	Activity item(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glass (all)	195	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Architectural	75	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.	47
Personal items	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Historic Features

Privy/outhouse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Depression/mound	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Const feature	<input type="checkbox"/>	Burial(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foundation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Well/cistern	<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: 670 +/- 60 years BP Reliability Sample 2: 860 +/- 60 years BP Reliability Sample 3: +/- years BP Reliability

B-17308: sample from small pit (feat.2), assoc. w/ 63 Rappahanock F-I sherds, 7 othr shell-temp sherds, 17 pcs. Debitage, & 228 faunal remains High

B-17309: charred nuts from small pit (feat.5), assoc. w/ 9 Rappahanock F-I shers, 3 shell-temp sherds, 2 othr sherds, 12 pcs. debitage, & 39 faunal High

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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Unknown

## External Samples/Data:

Collection curated at MAC

Additional raw data may be available online

## Summary Description:

The Potts Site (18WC25) is a prehistoric shell midden and base camp with Late Archaic and Late Woodland components near the mouth of Wicomico Creek. The site is situated on a slight rise above the bank of Wicomico County in an agricultural field. The surrounding terrain is level to rolling and consist of poorly to well-drained sandy material with varying amounts of clay and loam. These soils are primarily Hambrook and Woodstown sandy loams.

The site was first recorded in July of 1971 by Chuck Fithian, at the time an amateur archeologist but subsequently becoming a professional archeologist working in Delaware. Prehistoric artifacts reportedly recovered from the plowed surface of the site by Fithian included 1 corner-notched point, 1 side-notched point, 1 leaf-shaped point, 3 untyped points and point fragments, 1 strike-a-light, scrapers, numerous flakes, cores, and potsherds. Historic artifacts included clay pipe fragments, Buckley sherds, Staffordshire Slipware, and Rhenish Stoneware.

Professional documentation of the site occurred in the mid 1980s. In December of 1985 and March of 1986 the US Army Corps of Engineers (COE) – Baltimore District performed testing at the Potts site. At the time, the shoreline site was threatened by the proposed construction of a bulkhead and tie-back for erosion control. The investigation was undertaken as the result of a letter from the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) to the COE which indicated that the previously investigated Potts Site was within the area of the planned construction.

Investigation of the site began with pedestrian survey of the area to be impacted by the erosion control construction activities. The upstream reach of the bulkheading project area, referred to as Segment 1 - Reach 1, had very good ground visibility, however only scant recovery of artifacts was achieved. The creek bank in this area appeared to be low, eroding, wind deflated, and heavily disturbed. Segment 1 – Reach 1 was not explored archeologically any further.

Segment 1 - Reach 2, was situated to the west along the creek bank on a slight rise of ground, but the lawn of a nearby farmhouse obscured the ground surface prohibiting any surface investigation of that area. Segment 2, the westernmost section examined, was also considerably obscured, but pebbles and shell were marginally visible through the thick cover of winter wheat planted at that time. Crushed shell was observed extending back some 61 m (200 ft) from the bank.

In Segment 1 - Reach 2, ten shovel test pits (STPs) were excavated every 3 meters in locations one meter landward of the bank. STPs were 40 cm square in size. Historic brick, historic ceramics, glass, and iron, along with prehistoric sherds, lithic flakes, and miscellaneous lithics were recovered from the upper brown sandy loam lens and lower brown sandy loam and shell lens above a tan sand subsoil. An apparently intact remnant prehistoric shell midden lens was encountered from 20 to 30 cm deep. In order to explore this lens further, six one meter test squares were excavated. Artifact recover was scant, but did reveal the extent of the midden soils, which did not extend far past the bank area.

The STPs and 1 X 1 m test squares were excavated in December of 1985. When researchers returned to the site in March of 2006 to complete the excavation work for the bulkheading, the placed a single 2 X 2 m units and two test trenches (1 X 6 m) in Segment 1 – Reach 2. These units revealed 5 intact prehistoric features. Features 1, 2 and 5 were small pits containing primarily oyster shells. Feature 1 was a small pit containing only oyster shell. In Feature 2 and 5, Rappahannock Fabric-impressed pottery sherds, charred nuts, and a small amount of faunal material and lithic debitage were mixed with the pit fill. Feature 3 was a small hearth area defined by fire-reddened soils and containing a few pieces of charcoal and a single ceramic sherd. In Feature 4, a small pit consisting of burnt earth, a number of charred nuts were recovered. As the various features were excavated, small flotation samples were taken which produced several vials of small bone and charred nuts. Though not enough area was excavated to delineate intra-site patterns, a large sample of wood charcoal was collected in direct association with the fabric-impressed ceramics.

Two samples of charred nuts were submitted for radiocarbon analysis: one sample from Feature 2 and one sample from Feature 5, both of which contained Rappahannock Fabric-impressed pottery sherds. The charred nuts from Feature 2 produced a date of  $670 \pm 60$  radiocarbon years before present. When calibrated, this corresponds to a calendrical date (2 sigma) of AD 1254-1410. The nuts from Feature 5 produced a date of  $860 \pm 60$  radiocarbon years before present. When calibrated, this corresponds to a calendrical date of AD 1039-1263. Both dates are within the general range for Rappahannock Fabric-impressed pottery.

In Segment 2, fifteen 40 cm square STPs were dug every three meters, one meter landward of the creek bank. Historic brick, ceramics and glass, prehistoric ceramics, and lithic flakes and tools were recovered from the upper brown sandy loam lens, lower brown sandy loam, and shell concentration above a tan sand subsoil. Artifacts were concentrated at the base of the A Horizon towards the eastern end of Segment 2. Four 1 X 1 m test units were dug in a line perpendicular to the creek bank to investigate the bank for buried and intact cultural habitation features. At the base of the lower brown sandy loam A Horizon soil, plow scars were evident on the surface of the tan sand subsoil in all units. A moderate quantity of historic ceramics, glass, coal, brick, and prehistoric flakes and ceramics were recovered, but the plow scars clearly indicate that any archeological deposits in this area have been disturbed.

It should also be noted that in the Segment 2 area a partially exposed log canoe was found lying on the beach. The slumping bank of the creek and wetland plants cover half of the canoe. It was situated outside of the area to be bulkheaded by the COE and the vessel was not investigated further.

Artifacts recovered during fieldwork at 18WC25 included 799 prehistoric artifacts and 420 historic artifacts. It should be noted that the most abundant categories of artifacts, including oyster shell, brick, cobbles, and pebbles were not collected but were only sampled. Floral and flotation samples are not included in the tally in the full site report. The historic assemblage included 75 architectural artifacts (42 brick fragments, 13 window glass, 6 square nails, and 14 wire nails), 289 kitchen-related artifacts (39 earthenware sherds, 59 whiteware sherds, 1 yellowware, 3 white salt-glazed stoneware, 5 miscellaneous stoneware sherds, 4 18th century dark bottle glass fragments, and 178 other glass bottle fragments), 9 kaolin tobacco pipe stems, and 47 miscellaneous objects (21 pieces of iron and 26 pieces of coal). The prehistoric assemblage included 2 bifaces, 2 scrapers, 3 utilized flakes, 1 core, 7 worked cobbles, 218 flakes, 57 chunks, 40 split pebbles, 1 hammerstone, 72 other lithics, 1 piece of fire-cracked rock, 2 cord-wrapped stick-impressed sherds, 88 Rappahannock Fabric-impressed sherds, 1 Rappahannock Incised sherd, 129 miscellaneous shell-tempered sherds (including at least 9 rims), 16 san-tempered sherds, 54 other ceramic sherds, 1 prehistoric ceramic pipe fragment, 3 pieces of turtle shell, and 100 animal bone and teeth fragments. A human incisor was also recovered. In addition, a sample of 251 oyster shells from the pit features was analyzed to determine the seasonality of oyster harvest. Of the oysters that bore evidence of seasonality, 50 oysters were harvested in the fall, 41 were harvested in the spring, and 7 were harvested in the summer.



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Unknown

The COE's analysis indicates that Segment 1 (Reach 2), or the central portion of the site, was the most significant part of the site due to the presence of features, well preserved floral and faunal remains, and ceramics with radiocarbon sample associations. The investigation reconfirmed the presence of a prehistoric shell midden and possible base camp originally recorded in the 1970s.

The faunal assemblage from 18WC25 was submitted for faunal analysis in 1987, to obtain basic taxonomic identifications and examine any evidence of alterations to the bone. Most of the bones that were modified in some way were burned (10), calcined (2), or gnawed by carnivores. However, 2 large mammal long bones bore evidence of cutting and 1 piece of turtle shell had its interior scraped. The general test units at the site produced 3 cow bones, 3 pig bones, 19 large mammal bones, 3 sheep/deer/goat bones, 1 fish bone, 2 indeterminable bones, and a human tooth. Feature 2 at the site produced 27 deer bones, 174 large mammal bones, 11 medium mammal bones, 4 bird bones, 1 box turtle bone, 6 oyster shells, 1 soft shell clam, and 4 indeterminable bones. Feature 5 produced 6 deer bones, 1 raccoon bone, 18 large mammal bones, 1 medium mammal bone, 1 bird bone, 2 gar bones, 1 oyster shell, and 5 indeterminable bones.

The faunal material indicates a use of the river and near river environments for food procurement during Late Woodland times. It appears that the site was more than a transient camp due to the presence of indications of bone industry at the site and the secondary nature of the pit material. This is bolstered by the oyster shell analysis mentioned earlier that showed roughly equivalent use of oysters harvested in both the spring and fall, with less use in the summer.

The material culture from Site 18WC25, situated on a slight rise above the bank of Wicomico Creek is indicative of Late Woodland prehistoric sites and principal features. Testing has provided sufficient data for National Register eligibility. It is highly probable that portions of the site were not impacted by the bulkhead construction of the 1980s. Thus, 18WC25 should still be considered a significant archeological resource.

## External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

00005110, Site Files