

Community Building After Emancipation: An Anthropological Study of Charles' Corner,
Virginia, 1862-1922

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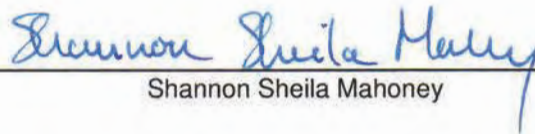
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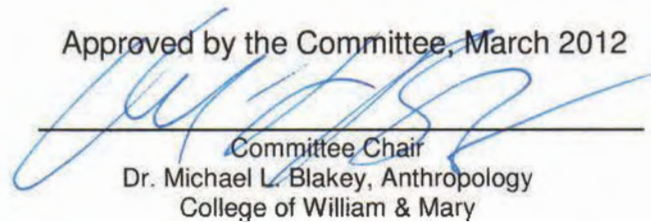
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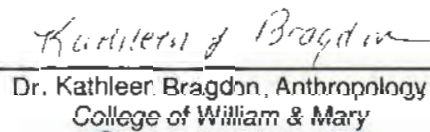
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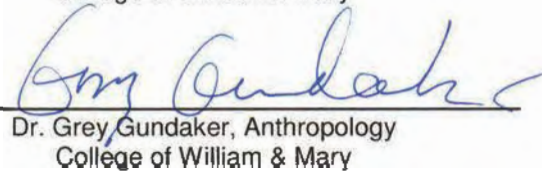
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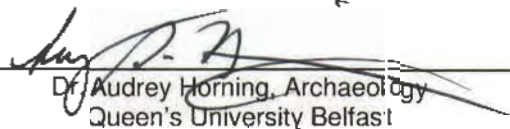

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ABSTRACT

The half-century marked by the end of the Civil War and the beginning of World War I was a critical period of cultural, social, and economic transition for African Americans in the southern United States. During the late nineteenth century, while African Americans were rebuilding communities and networks disrupted by enslavement and the ensuing Civil War, several settlements developed between Williamsburg and Yorktown on Virginia's lower peninsula. One of the settlements, Charles' Corner, is an optimal case study for understanding the gradual process of community building during a particularly challenging period of African American history dominated by systemic racism and legal persecution.

A majority of Charles' Corner residents made their living as self-employed farmers and oysterers, work which provided them with a significant level of economic stability and autonomy. The neighborhood continued to flourish until the United States government commandeered the property in 1918 in order to create a naval facility fronting on the York River. Residents were forced to relocate and abandon the property where they had invested decades of physical labor and built substantial social and economic networks. Fortunately, their farmsteads were preserved as archaeological sites which may be eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places as an archaeological district, due to their integrity and historical significance.

Archaeological assessments at four sites located at Charles' Corner provided an opportunity to address research questions and themes critical to the archaeology of African American life in the South after Emancipation. Questions focus on the establishment of socioeconomic networks after the Civil War, episodic displacement, and their role in the community building process. Addressing these questions through the application of an anthropological model for community building emphasizes the role of a diversified economy and construction of networks on a path of self-determination.

This dissertation is a response to critiques about the need to understand transformative periods in African American history. A study of Charles' Corner demonstrates the process of community building for one neighborhood during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries through the application of data from the archaeological record, historical documents, and oral histories. Furthermore, the residents' compelling narrative demonstrates the ways that rural African Americans contributed to the black freedom movement.

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Dedicated to those who have been displaced,
those who have passed on,
and my family.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The half-century marked by the end of the Civil War and the beginning of World War I was a critical period of cultural, social and economic transition for African Americans in the southern United States (Kerr-Ritchie 1999, Holt and Brown 2000). Socioeconomic relationships throughout the South were strained by historically significant events including the Civil War, Emancipation, Reconstruction (and its deterioration), Jim Crow, industrialization, the acceleration of consumerism, and World War I. In addition, rural Southerners heavily reliant upon agriculture, found postbellum developments to be particularly difficult due to an unstable economy, destruction of property and disruption of agricultural seasons (Virginia Writer's Project (VWP) 1994, Kerr-Ritchie 1999).

Nevertheless, the period following the abolition of slavery and subsequent emancipation of hundreds of thousands of enslaved men, women, and children, undoubtedly one of the most compelling and significant eras in American history, remains under-analyzed and poorly understood. Emancipation laid bare critical questions of race and racism, humanity, and social justice for all Americans to consider without being able to hide behind the thin veil of institutionalized enslavement. As Americans struggled with these social issues during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, African Americans were subject to constant fluctuations in federal and state legislation that affected their citizenship and suffrage, eventually leading to legalized segregation (see Appendix 1) (Horton and Horton 2001). Ultimately, the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s forced Americans to address inequalities that had been lingering in the South

since Reconstruction nearly one hundred years prior. Components that contributed to the success of the Civil Rights Movement, including a high level of social organization as well as the significant amount of economic and political influence wielded by African Americans, had been developing before culminating in an organized national movement.

Social and political conditions on Virginia's lower peninsula¹ during the Civil War and Reconstruction facilitated the establishment of at least six African American settlements. Many of the residents in these settlements became landowners and entrepreneurs who provided an alternate trajectory from the African American sharecroppers, renters, tenants, and wage laborers that became so prominent throughout the South. However, the internal mechanisms that contributed to the development and maintenance of these settlements have not been examined in great detail, partially due to a lack of historical documents originating from the residents themselves. Since the turn of the twentieth century, many of these settlements have been transformed through changing demographics, development, or government acquisition. The establishment of the Yorktown Naval Weapons Station (NWSY) in 1918 forced the relocation of three primarily African American neighborhoods between Yorktown and Williamsburg including an area known as Charles' Corner (Figure 1.1).

Nearly one hundred years after the forced abandonment of the land at Charles' Corner, the homesteads have been preserved as archaeological sites representing nearly sixty years of African American life during a critical period in American history. The sites present an opportunity to examine the socioeconomic processes of establishing and maintaining these neighborhoods from the residents' perspective and provide data on the

¹ Virginia's lower peninsula is bounded by the York and James Rivers and is the southernmost peninsula of the Chesapeake Bay.

ways in which African American families organized and mobilized in the decades immediately following the Civil War and Reconstruction. The application of an anthropological model for community building will emphasize the construction of networks and the role of a diverse economy in a path of self-determination. This analysis will provide an example of action along the continuum of the black freedom movement,² which includes, but transcends, the Civil Rights Movement. In summary, the purpose of the Charles' Corner study is to outline the process of community building for African Americans after Emancipation through the application of data from the archaeological record, historical documents, and oral histories.

² The term African American is used to throughout this dissertation to discuss Americans of African descent unless a commonly used phrase incorporates other titles such as "free blacks," "black freedom movement," "black-owned business," "black nationalism," or "black power." In addition, African American is used to describe freedpeople during Reconstruction although they did not, technically, become citizens until 1868.



Figure 1.1: Location of the project study area on Virginia's lower peninsula between Williamsburg and Yorktown.

Sociohistorical Context

In the century bridging the Civil War and the Civil Rights Movement, American society was involved in constant sociocultural conflict and an ever-changing dialectic between the legal and social status of African Americans. After Emancipation, newly freedpeople carried their own hopes for life after enslavement but were also beset by unrealistic expectations for their social and economic recovery in the South (Figure 1.2).

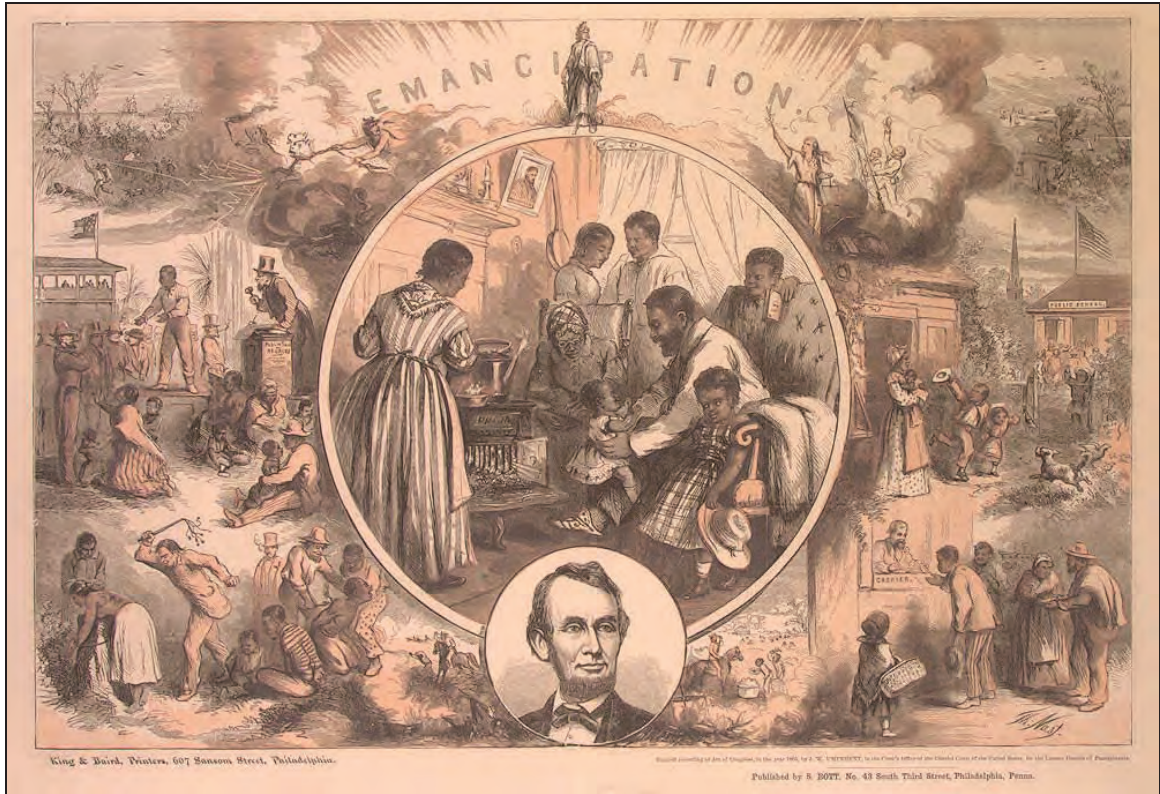


Figure 1.2: *Emancipation* by Thomas Nast, 1863.

American society's scrutiny of African Americans' adaptation to freedom is reflected in late nineteenth- and twentieth-century sociological literature which was consumed with measuring the "progress" of freedpeople although the literature diverged in both tactic and purpose (Bruce 1889, Richings 1903, Pickett 1909, Eggleston 1913). In a similar vein, African American scholars also authored sociocultural studies in order to convey the condition of African Americans in the rural South; however, their studies provided a more humanistic approach by emphasizing the stabilizing elements (e.g. religion, family, and school) established within the community (DuBois 1898, DuBois 1899, Woodson 1930, Frazier 1957).

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, African American communities in the South were becoming actively involved in the political, economic and

educational social spheres, despite constant threats of physical violence, social isolation, and proclamations of biological inferiority (DuBois 1992, Gienapp 2001). Racism affected all aspects of life, binding African Americans to the same social constraints that were mandated during enslavement (i.e., to be “courteous and submissive to whites at all times”) (Woodson 1930:227, also see Dollard 1957). This dichotomy between personal aspiration and public expectations fed the existence of what Du Bois called a “double consciousness” (2003 (1903)). Managing this inherent duality of African American life in the South became necessary for both economic and physical survival.

The transition from enslavement to freedom was rife with legal and social obstacles as well as economic hardship, but experiences among African Americans were not universal (Du Bois 2003 (1903)). Nevertheless, the dominant narrative describes families that became trapped in the debt-ridden systems of sharecropping, tenancy, and wage labor on plantations or sought to escape the antebellum “shadow” by moving north or west (Davis et al., 1941, Bethel 1981). In a 1994 study of fourteen American history survey texts, historians Cha-Jua and Weems found that the textbooks “...inadequately discuss black community building; color, gender and class differentiation within the African-American community; the centrality of African-American nationalism; the significance of radical thought and action; and the continuity of the Black freedom movement” (1994: 1). Until recently, challenging the dominant narrative and demonstrating the inherent diversity of the African American experience in the South after Emancipation has been difficult due to inadequate representation in both archaeological and historical literature (see Orser 1998, Mahoney 2004).

The Charles' Corner study is designed to take this sociohistorical context into consideration and address the proven inadequacy of historical texts. In addition, the study provides a narrative demonstrating the processes of community building for African Americans after Emancipation and prior to World War I. This approach, which emphasizes the dynamism of a living population, is intended to stand in contrast to the descriptive sociocultural studies which provided a snapshot view of a specific communities in one stage of development (e.g. DuBois 1898, Thom 1901a, Thom 1901b). Additionally, the use of a community-building model captures a method of empowerment and autonomy during this period and addresses the role of community within the "continuity of the black freedom movement" (Cha-Jua and Weems 1994: 1). Acknowledgement of the freedom movement³ during this period is particularly critical since it captures an approach to freedom expanding beyond self-liberation during enslavement and the Civil Rights Movement.

Case Study: Charles' Corner

Virginia is a prime location for a study analyzing a specific aspect of African American history within the context of a broader historical continuum. Less than a decade after the end of the Civil War, residents Armstrong and Ludlow demonstrated that they were keenly aware of the unique relationship between the Commonwealth and African American history by stating that:

³ The term "black freedom movement" is used throughout this dissertation to represent the pursuit of freedom within the African Diaspora from exploitation, social injustice, and poverty (Kerr-Ritchie 1999).

In no part of the United States can the history of negro slavery, from its origin to its extinction, be more clearly traced than in Virginia; and as that State was chosen as the scene of bitterest struggle, so it seems likely to attain the earliest and highest development, for within its borders are now being fairly tested the possibilities of the African race, and the results to them and the whites of the new relations of freedom. [1874:8]

Armstrong and Ludlow were particularly concerned with the “new relations of freedom” because they served as teachers at Hampton Agricultural and Normal Institute, where newly freed African Americans, including Booker T. Washington, were educated with an emphasis on vocational training and self-help. The school, now known as Hampton University, is located only twenty-two miles southeast of Charles’ Corner; however, residents would have been exposed to self-sufficiency philosophies from a variety of sources.

In many ways, the geographic location of Charles’ Corner contributed to many of the factors that make it a distinctive settlement. Their proximity to the York River meant that many residents could work in the oyster industry, which promised a reliable source of income year-round. This feature was particularly important since the land at Charles’ Corner was not particularly well-suited for agriculture and did not have a significant yield. Additionally, the York River empties into the Chesapeake Bay, which served as a conduit for information and goods between Maryland and Virginia. Another transportation route, the main road between Yorktown and Williamsburg, ran directly through the settlement and provided relatively easy access to both towns, which served as social hubs. Perhaps most important, Charles’ Corner lies within fifty miles of Hampton, Gloucester, and Richmond. These three cities were strategic locations in the growth and development of African American intellectual thought and advocacy throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Watkinson 1989, Bagby 2000, Engs 2004).

Accordingly, the archaeological sites present an ideal opportunity to explore some of the issues that Cha-Jua and Weems find lacking in the African American historical narrative. Today, the sites are located on the NWSY, which was commandeered by presidential proclamation during World War I and initially utilized as a mine depot.⁴ By 1922, the Navy had destroyed most of the standing structures on the property while modifying the landscape for their own purposes (Miles 1928, Clingan 1961). Razing the standing houses and outbuildings built by the former residents effectively obliterated a significant part of African American history from the landscape. Fortunately, the homesteads survived as archaeological sites and have not been subject to the destructive processes associated with development.

Even though the sites are relatively protected, the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) requires archaeologists to manage cultural resources on Federal property. As a result, Navy archaeologists were obliged to assess the archaeological sites on the NWSY, including the sites directly related to African American heritage. Several sites pertaining to Charles' Corner residents were determined to be potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in 2003 (Underwood et al.). Southeastern Archaeological Research, Inc. (SEARCH) conducted field assessments for four of the sites surrounding Charles' Corner during the summer of 2008 (Austin et al. 2011), and their fieldwork served as a source of data for the analysis and interpretation of life at

⁴ The land encompassed by the Yorktown Naval Weapons Station boundaries is primarily referred to as "NWSY" which is the accepted acronym utilized by the Navy to refer to the property. "NWSY" is used in this dissertation when discussing the land's current management and utilization. The "Yorktown Mine Depot" or "Mine Depot" was the official designation for the property when it was first established in 1918, however this title was eventually modified to the "Yorktown Naval Weapons Station" in order to more accurately reflect its use. "Reservation" is the colloquial term used for the NWSY property by displaced families and I use this term when trying to present information from the point of view of former residents. NAVFAC MIDLANT is the acronym used to describe the Naval Facilities, Engineering Command, Mid-Atlantic and refers to the administrative and operational component that manages Naval Facilities on the Atlantic Ocean.

Charles' Corner presented in this dissertation. SEARCH's fieldwork determined that the secure environment of the naval property has prevented the extensive damage to sites caused by development which has plagued sites from the same time period in surrounding areas.

The sites should be eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) as an archaeological district, given their historical significance and stratigraphic integrity. SEARCH archaeologists determined that all four sites were potentially eligible for the NRHP and would possibly be eligible as an archaeological district. Individually, the sites are likely to provide data that are important to history and qualify for Criterion D of the NRHP. As an archaeological district, the sites collectively represent an example of African American settlement patterns after Emancipation. The recognition of a Charles' Corner archaeological district would contribute immeasurably to the visibility of African American history in York County and would provide a foundation for interpretation of sites during an important period of African American history.



Figure 1.3: Cheesecake Cemetery.

Today, Charles' Corner is a maze of well-maintained dirt and asphalt roads surrounded by oak and pine woods. Relatively new growth of loblolly pine crowds the road, having been planted by the Navy with the intent to use the pine as timber. Beyond the initial 10' deep veil of pine, is a nearly pristine environment of oak and sassafras with dense and thorny undergrowth. Just south of the main intersection at Charles' Corner is a semi-circular clearing on the western side of the road that is consistently maintained and manicured and marks the boundaries of Cheesecake Cemetery (Figure 1.3). The clearing, with only a few remaining headstones, is one of the last visual cues that this now quiet area was once an active neighborhood. The cemetery, which had served as a burial ground for Charles' Corner residents, has remained a critical touchstone between the past and the present. In 2006, the Navy held a commemorative gathering at the cemetery in order to honor Medal of Honor recipient Edward Ratcliff, who fought in the Civil War

for the 38th U.S.C. T. and earned the Medal of Honor for his courage at the Battle of New Market Heights. Sergeant Ratcliff lived at Charles' Corner after the war and was likely buried at Cheesecake Cemetery after he passed away in 1915 (Hanna 2002, Heinatz 2006a, Heinatz 2006b). The gathering was significant because there is normally no public access to the cemetery due to its location in a restricted area of the already secured boundaries of the NWSY. As part of their outreach, the NWSY Public Affairs office maintains contact with the congregations at local Baptist churches historically associated with the property and resident descendants in order to arrange annual visits to the burial site.

Many of the descendants of families that were displaced from the commandeering of the NWSY property live in adjacent neighborhoods (e.g. Lackey, Grove, and Penniman) and have maintained the memory of their family history on the land known colloquially as the "reservation" (McDonald et al. 1992). In oral interviews, former residents and their descendants recall the accomplishments of Charles' Corner residents, emphasizing land ownership, work ethic, and social relationships. Nevertheless, the pride in their ancestors' achievements is tempered by the belief that the families did not receive an appropriate settlement for their respective homesteads during the government acquisition process (Lee 1992, Payne 1992). Each of the topics that residents and their descendants find important and mentioned in interviews provided a foundation when establishing the research questions for the Charles' Corner study.

Research Questions

The research questions for this study were informed by the interests of Charles' Corner residents and their descendants, critiques of historical narratives, and the theoretical approach emphasizing the process of community building. Theresa Singleton, who continues to be one of the most influential figures in African American archaeology due to her astute critiques and contributions, stated that archaeologists in the field "...should attempt both to understand the **social processes** that affected and conditioned the lives of African Americans and to see how the archaeological record is a reflection of those processes" (Singleton and Bograd 1995:31, emphasis added). Accordingly, the primary questions focus on specific conditions related to the founding, existence, and dissolution of Charles' Corner: What socioeconomic networks were established by Charles' Corner residents after Emancipation? What was the community-building process for Charles' Corner residents and what role did socioeconomic networks play in that development? What "community" were they building? What obstacles did residents face and how did these obstacles, and the response to them, change over time? How did displacement affect the community-building process and how did residents' social networks develop and change after displacement?

Secondary questions require the extrapolation of information from the primary responses into broader regional and historical issues: In what ways did African Americans continue to promote social equality in the rural South after Emancipation? How did these actions relate to other activist efforts in the decades leading up to the Civil

Rights Movement? How can this information be useful for the African American residents of York County today?

Addressing these research questions will demonstrate the ability for the archaeological sites at Charles' Corner to provide data about the growth and development of African American communities after Emancipation. In addition, these questions highlight the significance of the sites for African American heritage and their contribution to broader patterns of American history.

Data Collection

Several data sources were consulted in order to address these research questions including the archaeological record, documentary records, oral histories, public engagement, and archaeological reports. Documentary records are extensive during the periods of government involvement in the region during the Civil War and World War I. Records included first-hand accounts of conditions on the lower peninsula during and immediately following the Civil War. Maps and tables kept by The Department of Negro Affairs and the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (Freedmen's Bureau) demonstrate their efforts to provide housing, education, and other basic necessities to freedpeople in the area after the Civil War. The National Archives and Records Administration in Washington D.C. houses all of the original documents generated by the commandeering of the NWSY property in 1918, including assessments of the seized properties and correspondence with residents. Collectively, these manuscripts detail the beginning and end of Charles' Corner as a residential area.

The extraordinary preservation of the archaeological record at Charles' Corner provides invaluable testimony about residents' lives that is not represented in the documentation. Archaeologists from SEARCH created a detailed record of the expansive archaeological sites by highlighting distinctive activity areas and mapping the archaeological features that had been critical components of active homesteads. SEARCH's excavation provided a cross-section of material culture from each site and established the stratigraphic integrity of the sites, which contributes to their significance as a cultural resource. The recorded archaeological features include structural foundations and brick-lined wells. Artifacts recovered from the sites largely reflect the domestic sphere of family life on the farmsteads and include glass and ceramic tablewares, cooking and storage vessels, children's toys, and personal effects.

Public engagement was critical to the Charles' Corner study; and three individuals, in particular, have been instrumental to the entire process, from development to interpretation. Ms. Edith Heard is a direct descendant of the Lee family that resided at Charles' Corner and is related to the Hundley family. Ms. Heard is active in social and political issues in both James City and York County and has been an advocate for recognition of African American history in the area. Mr. Russell Hopson participated in the Civil Rights Movement and, to his knowledge, was the only African American teacher to be hired in the first year of desegregation by the York County Public Schools in 1967. He is also a researcher, genealogist, and a griot of African American history on the lower peninsula. Finally, Mr. Sherman Hill, the president of the Yorktown African American Cultural Society, has been instrumental in supporting the Charles' Corner study. Mr. Hill and his family lived in Uniontown (Slabtown), outside of Yorktown,

which had a similar historical trajectory to Charles' Corner. Uniontown was established during the Civil War and was acquired by the National Park Service in the 1970s in order to create the Yorktown National Historical Park. Hundreds of African Americans, including Mr. Hill, were mandatorily evacuated before their homes were razed and the land was subsequently left for reforestation (Deetz 2002). The destruction of his neighborhood demonstrates one of the ways in which Mr. Hill feels that Yorktown and York County officials have effectively purged the history of African American contributions from their historical narrative. This experience has been the driving force behind the creation of the Yorktown African American Cultural Society and the stated goal to recognize sites important to African Americans history in the county. The dedication of Ms. Heard, Mr. Hopson, and Mr. Hill has served as an inspiration to properly recognize the significance of Charles' Corner residents in York County history.

Assumptions and Limitations

There are inherent limitations to the Charles' Corner study even though the methodology is deliberately structured to address the established research questions and fulfill compliance requirements for NAVFAC MIDLANT. Each archaeological site includes between three and five distinct activity areas distributed across areas measuring between 6 acres (44YO870) to 11 acres (44YO857). In order to promote site preservation, the research design provided a plan for no more than four 1 m by 1 m excavation units at each site; however, characterizing such expansive sites with minimal exposure poses a challenge. Fortunately, the sites also contain a considerable number of

surface-exposed archaeological features and artifact concentrations that were recorded by archaeologists and provided additional data.

In addition, the site boundaries and the NWSY perimeter provide convenient but inaccurate ways of delineating historically-defined households and communities. Even the process of developing a case study constructed around Charles' Corner and employing a community-building model establishes preconceived notions of how residents may have perceived themselves. As a result, the language used in this dissertation was carefully chosen in order to provide the opportunity for interpretation of these concepts in the final chapters. For example, "Charles' Corner residents" is deliberately used in lieu of "Charles' Corner community" in case community was not defined strictly by residency.

Finally, the secured boundaries of the NWSY have provided the sites with unparalleled protection and helped maintain the integrity of the archaeological deposits. However, restricted public access and the inherent time constraints associated with compliance archaeology did not allow for public interpretation and participation in the excavation. In addition, the potential for interpretive signs or site tours are limited by restricted access and confidentiality requirements protecting the sites. Consequently, the process of archaeological excavation which removed artifacts from the NWSY property also repositioned the material record into a more publicly accessible domain. The resulting archaeological reports, including this dissertation, and the potential for display and interpretation of the artifacts have created a public forum whereby reservation descendants can engage with their ancestors' past through artifacts, analysis, and interpretation.

Archaeological Significance

Throughout this dissertation, I highlight the wide array of factors that demonstrate the significance of Charles' Corner within American history. Most importantly, the sites capture a time period of African American history that is poorly understood and present an opportunity to identify and examine the cultural and social process of community building for freedpeople in the South after Emancipation. Second, the representation of turn-of-the-twentieth-century farmsteads are underrepresented in the archaeological record due to encroaching development in rural areas (Wilson 1990) and poor preservation (Cabak et al. 1999). Of course, the preservation of archaeological sites of African American heritage, especially in the South, has been particularly challenging. These sites, including cemeteries, have fallen into decline or been deliberately destroyed due to apathy, benign neglect, insatiable development, and lack of enforcement of existing laws (Jacobs 2004, Joseph 2004, Viglucci 2009). Both historical factors and contemporary prejudices taint the perceived "value" of such sites for commemoration. The Charles' Corner sites have already defied the odds by maintaining their integrity; and that fact, coupled with interpretation, can provide the chance to preserve African American history during the Jim Crow period in the South.

Chapter Summary

In this introduction (Chapter 1), I have provided a statement of need for an anthropological study of African American life during the late nineteenth and early

twentieth centuries and proposed to respond to this need with a case study of Charles' Corner, Virginia, between 1862 and 1922. Chapter 2 is a review of the strengths and weaknesses of theoretical approaches used to interpret the archaeology of African American life during this period. The chapter also includes an outline of the community-building model used for Charles' Corner and a summary of the research questions designed for the study. Chapter 3 is a discussion of methodological issues for archaeological sites pertaining to nineteenth- and twentieth-century African American life and the archaeology of communities. The chapter also contains a summary of the research design and provides the analytical methodology for addressing the established research questions. Chapter 4 focuses on the historical background and development of Charles' Corner after the Peninsula Campaign of the Civil War in 1862 and Chapter 5 discusses the commandeering of the property in 1918 and subsequent displacement of Charles' Corner residents. Chapters 4 and 5 provide symbolic bookends for the history of Charles' Corner and demonstrate the need for archaeology to fill the gap that is presented by the paucity of documentation between the two eras. Chapter 6 is a purely descriptive chapter which provides background information about the archaeological sites selected for the Charles' Corner study. Chapter 7 is a discussion of the data in the context of four analytical categories chosen to support the community-building model. Chapter 8 follows the analysis with interpretation by focusing on the elements that support the concepts of community building and the black freedom movement. It also includes a timeline outlining the social processes evident during the development of Charles' Corner. Chapter 9 provides a summary of the findings and reiterates the significance of the

Charles' Corner study for the field of anthropology, as an archaeological district, and for American history.

Summation

African Americans have consistently been vital contributors to America's history and progress, yet there is an extensive lack of comprehension of their process of community building in a post-Emancipation environment. At the very least, the dominant narratives which focus on sharecropping and tenancy do not present the diversity and range of socioeconomic conditions that existed for African Americans in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Charles' Corner study focuses on the aspects of social organization that proved beneficial for some African Americans right after Emancipation. The study portrays African Americans as active participants in the process of community building with the purpose of social betterment, rather than passive participants in an exploitative economic system.

Although historical documentation is available that describes conditions in the Charles' Corner area in the 1860s and the 1910s, they present disparate images of the living conditions. The archaeological record provides the data needed to understand the transformational processes that lead from one set of observations to another and particularly well-suited to expose those things that have been treated superficially in historical narratives. Unlike many of the written records, the archeological record is also a direct testament from Charles' Corner residents bearing witness to the lives that they had created for themselves.

Historical archaeology pioneer James Deetz emphasized the role of the field in the understanding of African American heritage by stating “if archaeology is a vital contributor to our understanding of all of America’s common folk, and what their life meant to them, it is doubly so in the case of our understanding of the black experience in America (1977:138). In the case of Charles’ Corner the artifacts inform us about a land-owning and entrepreneurial class of African Americans with significant achievements in spite of particularly challenging circumstances. Their story is particularly compelling because of the many experiences they had that are directly comparable to modern issues, including the ongoing disenfranchisement of African American farmers and the influential power of social organization for advocacy. Consequently, the themes presented in this dissertation are intended to provide a medium for applying the past to the present and the present to the past.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Approach

Literature detailing the theoretical history and development of the archaeology of African American life through both critical review and reflexivity is plentiful (Howson 1990, Singleton and Bograd 1995, Orser 1998, DeCorse 1999, Wilkie and Bartoy 2000, Singleton 2001, Wilkie 2004, Joseph 2004, Leone et al. 2005). Theoretical approaches and subsequent interpretation have provided the foundation for several contentious, but productive, debates (Potter 1991, McKee 1994, Wilkie and Bartoy 2000). Rather than provide an exhaustive theoretical review, the first section of this chapter is a brief analysis of specific theoretical issues within the field and a demonstration of how they have informed the Charles' Corner study. The central section of the chapter is a discussion of the theoretical approach designed for this project structured on concepts of community building and the Black freedom movement. An outline of the research themes and questions established for this project is provided at the end of the chapter.

The Archaeology of African American Life

Apart from excavations conducted by the Works Progress Administration (WPA), pre-1960s historical archaeology had been limited primarily to academic endeavors and personal pastimes which disproportionately focused on either the lives of famous and / or wealthy whites. During the middle of the twentieth century, American archaeologists began to adopt theoretical approaches to the past that were significantly influenced by current events in both national politics and international social movements. The synergy of the Pan-African and Civil Rights Movement in the United States as well as the

proliferation of multi-ethnic communities during the 1960s provided the critical catalyst for archaeologists to broaden the scope and depth of their research questions regarding all aspects of American society (Ferguson 1992, Singleton and Bograd 1995, Johnson 2000). Sîan Jones discusses the embracing of post-processual theory as a reaction to previous archaeologists who showed “... very little concern with problems of nationalism, ethnicity and multiculturalism” and “...did not regard ethnicity as an important focus of archaeological inquiry...” (1997:5). The introduction of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) in 1966 and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) in 1977 was bolstered by the effects of social change and contributed to the democratization of site recordation by requiring federal agencies to actively participate in the management and protection of cultural resources. Ultimately, the cumulative effect of social initiatives, federal legislation, and theoretical debates engineered a significant change in the recordation, preservation, and interpretation of all archaeological sites but had the most immediate impact on sites pertaining to African American life (Wilkie 2000, Joseph 2004).

Early theoretical and research themes in the archaeology of African American life were skewed toward addressing conditions of enslavement and analysis of plantation life (see Singleton and Bograd 1995, Leone et al. 2005). These studies were developed concurrently with sociological and anthropological reports which consider the effects of active cultural repression by slaveholders, multiple episodes of displacement, undermining of family structure, and the relative persistence of African culture in African American society (Gutman 1976, Thompson 1983, Herskovits 1990, Mintz and Price

1992). Collectively, this body of literature has proved to be valuable to understanding the African American experience both in captivity and freedom.

Notwithstanding Du Bois' early study of *Black Reconstruction in America: 1860-1880* (1992), examination of the postbellum era as a significant period of national transition in the historical and archaeological literature was lacking until after the Civil Rights Movement (e.g. J. H. Franklin 1967, Reidy 1987, Medford 1992, Kerr-Ritchie 1999). These texts clearly conveyed the systematic victimization of African Americans driven by racist political and socioeconomic policies which persisted after Emancipation throughout the South but rarely discussed empowerment strategies, apart from the Great Migration. Historical studies that do provide evidence of overt social and political activism tend to be regionally isolated to large cities, perhaps due to substantial documentation of such events through newspapers and other media (Watkinson 1989, *Richmond Planet* 2000). Therefore, an opportunity exists to discuss the more subtle methods of advocacy in rural areas, where such documentation would not have been as prolific. Stories of rural activism are more likely to be recorded through oral histories and the archaeological record, although the proper theoretical approach is necessary to extract relevant data.

Presently, the most prominent archaeological research of African American life during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries generally involves one of the following theoretical elements: ethnicity, class and consumerism (Mullins 1999a, Mullins 1999b, Mullins 1999c, Praetzellis and Praetzellis 2004), and identity formation and agency (Askins 1985, Wilkie 2000, Wilkie 2001, Wilkie 2003). Each of these is discussed in further detail in this chapter. While all of these are valid approaches to

socioeconomic transformations occurring during this period, they each have limitations that can be overcome by slightly modifying both the theoretical and methodological approaches in order to address social, economic, and cultural processes within the community.

Ethnicity

Initially, archaeologists working on African American sites were drawn to establishing which artifacts, features, or assemblages could be directly associated with a panoptic array of West African traditions, having been inspired to some extent by Melville Herskovitz's work in the 1930s, which explored expressions of African culture across the Diaspora. Later publications, including *The Birth of African-American Culture: An Anthropological Perspective*, authored by anthropologists Mintz and Price (1992), encouraged archaeologists to continue searching for these connections in the material record. Archaeologists are uniquely well-equipped to demonstrate cultural persistence even though enslavement was designed to minimize, if not eliminate, autonomy and personal expression (Delle 1998). Prior to the excavation of Parting Ways, a late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century freed black community in Plymouth, Massachusetts, James Deetz was most familiar with Anglo-American sites and found that "(t)he occupants of (Parting Ways) constructed their houses differently, disposed of their trash differently, arranged their community differently" (1977 :153). Deetz attributed many of these differences to retention of African cultural traditions in house construction and yard sweeping. Since that time, several archaeologists have attempted to emphasize

those aspects that are unique to African or African American culture, including housing styles (e.g., Glassie 1973, Ferguson 1992, Vlach 1993), pottery (e.g., Garrow and Wheaton 1989, Ferguson 1992), and foodways (e.g., Cheek and Friedlander 1990, Samford 1996, M. Franklin 2001).

However, this approach can also be seen as reductive, essentially limiting cultural retention to particular attributes or artifacts that offer "... little insight into [the artifact's] value or meaning" (Singleton and Bograd 2000: 18). Critics of this approach have emphasized that, without the proper context, studies which strive to establish cultural parallels risk creating a static and inflexible view of ethnicity, thus reifying stereotypes (Schuyler 1980a, Orser 1998, DeCorse 1999). Archaeologists Singleton and Bograd argue that, in cases such as these, "(t)he object comes to define the group rather than the group defining the significance of the artifact" (2000:9). When archaeologists have taken this critique into consideration, expression of African tradition in the archaeological record provides powerful evidence for enslaved resistance and the persistence of memory and practice over the destructive nature of the slave trade (Perry and Paynter 1999, Blakey and Rankin-Hill 2009).

Equating cultural retention with perceptible traits becomes even more troublesome when discussing sites dating to an era of mass production and distribution of consumer goods due to the sheer accessibility of merchandise. Archaeologists examining post-Emancipation sites find that expressions of ethnicity in the material record are more nuanced; they hypothesize that class, or poverty, may have served as an equalizer with respect to material culture (Baker 1980, Cheek and Friedlander 1990, Stine 1991). At least two studies have examined artifact assemblages from adjacent African American

and European American households, only to conclude that the assemblages are nearly indistinguishable when assessed statistically (Stine 1991, Praetzellis and Praetzellis 1992). Although not stated explicitly, such conclusions can elicit the inference that African Americans are either fully assimilated into dominant European American culture or are following a path of emulation. As a result, critics have stated that “...archaeologists need to move beyond searching for African American artifacts and focus more upon understanding what these objects tell us about African American life” (Singleton and Bograd 2000: 18-19). In response, archaeologists modified research questions and strategies to incorporate the role of ethnicity into broader anthropological processes. This approach resulted in archaeologists asking how “ethnic identity served as a dynamic agent of social and cultural negotiation,” (Fesler and Franklin 1999:3) or how “ethnic strategies such as boundary maintenance that find behavioral expression in material form can be studied archaeologically” (Praetzellis et al. 1987:38, also see McGuire 1982). These research questions provide a better platform for drawing out the complexities of interracial social and economic exchanges in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Archaeological analyses of ethnicity outside of African American life have proven to be just as problematic. Through her research, Audrey Horning was able to debunk long-held myths surrounding Appalachian residents that were not dissimilar to the “shiftless” and “ignorant” stereotypes that plagued African Americans following Emancipation. In an analysis of a seemingly etic construction of an “Appalachian ethnicity” for late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century residents of the Blue Ridge, Horning discovered more complex and nuanced “...issues of identity and self-

perception” (Horning 1999:132). By taking a more multifaceted approach to analysis, Horning was able to establish that external perceptions were false and that Appalachian residents utilized these perceptions in their favor. Insightful analyses, such as Horning’s assessment, have provided the impetus needed for most archaeologists to move beyond an exclusive focus on ethnicity and broaden their inquiries.

Class

Charles Orser expressed his frustration with inadequate interpretations of African American life and a recurring focus on ethnicity by stating that archaeologists should be assuming “...a more prominent position in the intellectual enterprise of illuminating the material dimensions of American race and racism” (1998:661). Marxian-influenced theory serves as a popular medium for archaeologists to address the historically - and inextricably - linked social categories of race and class. A Marxian approach provides an opportunity for the interpretation to be a critical analysis of the capitalist system which exploited most African and African Americans throughout the United States from the seventeenth to twentieth century. In particular, Marxian-influenced and critical theory have been instrumental in understanding the exploitative economic and class systems of plantations (Delle 1998, Epperson 1999, Orser 1999) as well as analysis of consumerism and mass production in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Mullins 1999c, Leone et al. 2005). This analytical process allows archaeologists to use the material record as a form of activism and social commentary on both race and class.

Marxian theory also facilitates discussions of resistance to oppressive capitalist systems that exploited workers. However, the inherently repressive nature of sharecropping and tenancy systems has made it difficult to demonstrate resistance through the archaeological record. Orser states that "...evidence for tenant resistance to landlord domination is harder to isolate in archaeological deposits. Plantation tenants had no power to sustain long-term resistance movements; such movements...were short-lived and would leave little readily recognizable archaeological evidence" (1991a: 50-51). Even so, he is still able to reveal the structured hierarchy that existed outside of enslavement and make fine-tuned distinctions between the material culture of tenants and sharecroppers on plantations through a landscape analysis of structure construction and placement (Orser 1991a, 1991b).

Even though resistance is often a component of Marxian interpretations, they tend to place African Americans consistently in a defensive position and with very little decision making ability. In his own words, Orser states that he analyzes the "differential power" and "continued pattern of dominance" sustained through plantation systems after Emancipation (1991a). This language, which places African Americans at a constant disadvantage as that of the *dominated*, attracts critics who find that the application of Marxian-influenced theory in historical archaeology can "...naturalize structures of inequality" (Wilkie and Bartoy 2000:747), and convey a "...lack of agency..." (Wilkie and Bartoy 2000:748). The critiques are particularly poignant given that archaeological interpretation provides a medium for archaeologists to examine African American life as they constructed it on their own terms rather than as subjects of an exploitative system.

One of the inconsistencies of class interpretation is that lower classes could execute acts of resistance against the upper classes and simultaneously seek to emulate the wealthy. This seeming paradox is quite deliberate and intended to be a reflection of the inherent contradiction present in Victorian-era society. Paul Mullins, who specializes in the confluence of race, class, and consumerism acknowledges that, after Emancipation, African Americans were eager to partake in all aspects of American “citizen privilege” including participation in consumer culture. However, he believes that the archaeological record demonstrates that “...African Americans simultaneously aspired to the genteel privileges of consumer space and tactically undermined its anti-black racism through consumption” (Mullins 1999a:23). The emphasis on emulation or aspiration is troubling, especially if African American purchasing power is well represented by the objects they owned indicating that they were acquiring within their means. While assessing the changes in African American households in Oakland from the 1880s to the 1960s, archaeologists Praetzellis and Praetzellis concluded that, by the mid-twentieth century, “(n)ormative ritual had certainly changed, and there may have been less self-conscious emulation of some of the aesthetics of white America.” (Praetzellis and Praetzellis 2004:298). Interestingly, the transition described by the authors was concurrent with an economic depression in the area so that residents were considerably poorer than they had been in the nineteenth century thereby reifying the connection between wealth and European American culture.

As mentioned previously, some archeologists have implied that socioeconomic status is the more dominant feature when assessing race and class (Cheek and Friedlander 1990, Baker 1980, Stine 1991). Archaeologist Linda Stine excavated two adjacent turn-

of-the-twentieth-century homesteads, one occupied by a white family and one occupied by an African American family in North Carolina from 1900-1940. She presumed that “(i)nstitutionalized racism was superseded, in part, by a shared sense of rural community” because the households shared common socioeconomic networks (1991:36). Through statistical tests, she determined that there is “no significant variation” between the assemblages representative of each household. However, she did not acknowledge and interpret the statistics contextually considering that the African American family was living in the midst of the Jim Crow South. Instead, she concluded that “...ethnic factors did not play an important role in the procurement, use, and reuse of material items on these two particular farms, in this specific region” (1991:48). Her interpretation, that these adjacent families led very similar lives simply because their incomes and occupations were comparable, fails to take into consideration the experiential implications and tangible byproducts of racism.

Although class-based analyses have been extremely effective at exposing the inherent racism driving enslavement, labor, and class divisions, they also have limitations. Archaeologists influenced by Marxian theory are still finding the balance that provides a venue for discussing critical issues such as race and racism without objectifying African Americans as passive participants in an exploitative and oppressive system. Historians Cha-Jua and Weems point out that “(t)he construction of a fully inclusive narrative demands analysis of African Americans... as historical agents whose lives were conditioned, but not consumed, by racial oppression.” (1994: 1416). The fact that the dominant social and economic systems played a significant role in the lives of

African Americans is undeniable; however, it is also important to examine the ways in which they negotiated within these systems.

For example, it is crucial to acknowledge that, especially in rural areas, several types of economies were viable during the turn of the century including cash, credit, bartering, and self-sufficiency systems. Consumerism studies and analyses of the capitalist system which are limited to a portion of all socioeconomic exchanges may overemphasize the role of a cash economy. Wilkie has found that the focus on a cash system can result in the "...oversimplification of complex webs of social relations that individuals are constrained by and which they must manipulate as they negotiate the paths of everyday life" (Wilkie 2001:108). Accordingly, analysis of socioeconomic networks would incorporate all aspects of exchange and provide an appropriate approach for studying a group of rural twentieth-century households like Charles' Corner.

Identity

In summary, archaeologists have discovered that a limited focus on ethnicity, race, or class does not provide a well-rounded or representative interpretation of African American life (Singleton and Bograd 1995, Singleton 1998, Wilkie and Bartoy 2000). Instead, Wilkie argues that these categories (ethnicity, class, gender etc.) represent various aspects of identity and that "...archaeological interpretation would be most enriched through the holistic integration of the different facets of identity into one archaeological portrait" (2000:6) Representing these intricacies through the archaeological record is predictably difficult. Increasingly, archaeologists are focusing on

the fact that an individual's identity is also tied to the identity of a broader community. In her book titled *Creating Freedom*, Laurie Wilkie argues that

...the ways that African American families and communities constructed their sense of self, or identity, served as their ultimate means of combating racism. A shared identity, or more accurately, shared identities, allowed African American families the means to create strong communities that offered solidarity, spiritual comfort, and alternative access to goods and services from those controlled by the white population. [2000:4]

Wilkie's description of the function and benefits of cooperative life are neatly encompassed by a community-building model.

Community Building and the Black Freedom Movement

The very concepts that are not addressed by commonly used theoretical models are the same ones that need to be explored in both African American archaeology and history. Additionally, the time period and conditions behind the development of Charles' Corner makes it an ideal study for addressing issues that Cha-Jua and Weems established are lacking in historical narratives including community building and the pursuit of freedom and equality (see Chapter 1). Archaeologists have noted that similar subjects are lacking in archaeological interpretation. In a critique of the archaeology of the African Diaspora, Terry Weik established "themes of relevance" including "...African cultural continuity, culture transformation and change, culture contact, and resistance" (1997:89). Both analyses challenge researchers to address the dialectic between parallel and divergent experiences in the African Diaspora, continuity and change, and the quest for self-determination. Not surprisingly, these topics are frequently addressed in statements made by York County's African American residents when remembering the self-sufficiency of their ancestors during interviews and informal discussions.

Textbook editors and publishers might cite a paucity of studies that focus on such themes as the reason for their absence from the narrative. This supposition is supported by archaeologist Kofi Agorsah, who explains that:

The stories of the struggle for freedom have never been fully narrated within the mainstream histories because of a lack of archaeological evidence from their sites. Where they are told, they are isolated from each other [2001:xx]

Archaeologists studying marronage sites have, perhaps, been the most successful in relating their sites to one another despite spatial and temporal differences and demonstrating their importance to the black freedom movement (Weik 2009).

Nevertheless, community-level analyses have never directly addressed the process of community building which Cha-Jua and Weems state was undoubtedly "...the most daunting task faced by African Americans after the Civil War." (1994:1411) Establishing a viable theoretical model that will engage some, if not all, of the issues raised by Cha-Jua and Weems, Weik, and Agorsah may be easier than it seems given the interrelated nature of community building and the black freedom movement.

The reservation is ideal for a study of physical and social rebuilding after the Civil War, which had exhausted local resources, disrupted existing communities and caused the relocation of thousands of freedpeople. The transformative social process that followed is likely comparable to the three "integral, cohesive components of community building" described by anthropologists Hyland and Bennett including: "...attending to existing community relationships, revitalizing or creating community identity and meaning, and encouraging participation and partnerships..." (2005: 13). Due to the fact that freedpeople were entering an era in which they had to actively demonstrate their humanity and need for basic human rights to white society (Douglass 1999 (1854),

Douglass 1999 (1862), Cobb 1942, Baker 1998), it is no coincidence that these constitutive elements of community building facilitate and complement activities of the black freedom movement.

Nevertheless, efforts by African Americans to build and strengthen social bonds were undermined by several external factors, including episodic displacement, which can compromise and undermine established cultural connections and socioeconomic networks (Césaire 1972). The history of the Diaspora is marked with periods of mass displacement, beginning with enslavement of Africans and the inherent dehumanization of the slave trade (Mannix 1962, Harris 1998); and while post-Emancipation manifestations of mass displacement do not mimic precisely the unique conditions of slavery, certain parallels are evident. Whether the initial impetus for dislocation involves resistance to slavery, the search for better-paying employment, mandatory displacement, or social persecution, they are all rooted in the core societal issues of inequality and racism. In one of the better known historic examples, the mass movement of African Americans to the northern United States during the Great Migration was a direct and deliberate response to social inequality and economic hardship.

The ability to maintain social and familial institutions as stable social centers through tumultuous periods served as a form of resistance to the dominant white power structure (DuBois 2003, Frazier 1957, Gutman 1976) and played an important role in the quest for change, particularly in the South (Cohen 1991, Tolnay 2003). Historian Harold Forsythe found that:

Networks of kin, church congregations, and neighbors were the sinews of the freedpeople's body politic, particularly in the southern countryside. Complexly structured African-American communities had remained hidden during the antebellum period, but freedpeople collectively thrust them into the light, complete with indigenous institutions, during the process of emancipation. [1997:413]

The inherent unity of these social institutions created on their own terms provided a form of empowerment. Accordingly, the construction and maintenance of social networks should serve as a theoretical and analytical focus given that they were so critical to African American social, political, and economic empowerment after Emancipation.

In this context, the goals of the black freedom movement should broadly be conceived of as being similar to those of self-determination, or establishing one's own path free from the social or economic influence and / or restraint of European American society. African American scholars and leaders began promoting self-determination to newly freedpeople immediately after Emancipation, perhaps as a result of their disillusionment with Reconstruction. Self-sufficiency was part of the educational philosophy at nearby Hampton University, whose graduates, such as Booker T. Washington, carried the message to a broader audience (Carroll 2006, Washington 1907, Armstrong and Ludlow 1874). However, the strategy for African Americans to achieve self-sufficiency was the subject of substantial debate framed primarily by the adversarial relationship between Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois (Washington 1907, DuBois 2003, Thompson 2000, Bagby 2000, Carroll 2006).

Acknowledging the conditions wrought by Jim Crow legislation throughout the South, W.E.B Du Bois, "...vigorously supported community-based strategies," and "...encouraged African Americans to take advantage of their segregated and insulated

communities to build stronger, more cohesive, separate economic communities” (Aldridge 1999:185). Du Bois also emphasized the connection between these strategies, education, and the ultimate goal of complete freedom. Historian Derrick P. Aldridge found that “[Du Bois] maintained that with a clear mission of uplift, the African American community school could provide the foundation for the social, economic, and political emancipation of African Americans” (1999:186). These concepts were not only associated with scholarly pursuits but were also promoted in the church. The pastor Alexander Crummell used his sermons as an opportunity to promote self-help and Pan-African racial solidarity (Meier 1991, Peeks 1971).

Nevertheless, these philosophies are most strongly associated with the black power ideology of the 1960s and ‘70s and were present in mission statements for individuals and organizations that promoted equal rights for African Americans. The first tenet of The Black Panther Party’s ten-point platform from the 1960s emphasized that “...Black and oppressed people will not be free until we are able to determine our destinies in our own communities ourselves...” (Huey P. Newton Foundation 2011). In addition, Civil Rights activists Carmichael and Hamilton emphasized that:

Black people must redefine themselves, and only they can do that. Throughout this country, vast segments of the black communities are beginning to recognize the need to assert their own definitions, to reclaim their history, their culture, to create their own sense of community and togetherness. [Carmichael and Hamilton 1992: 37]

Finally, historian Rodney Carlisle observed that “...the most common feature of those advocating black nationalist ideas has been the ideal of overcoming black powerlessness in the American context by setting up mechanisms of self-determination” (Carlisle 1975:6). Comparison of the declaration of civil rights leaders at the turn of the twentieth

century and during the 1960s and 1970s demonstrates that the promotion of community development was consistently recommended as a strategy for achieving equality.

These statements also attest to the fact that self-determination is heavily reliant upon mutual cooperation and organization, key concepts in community building. In *The Long Struggle for Black Power*, Edward Peeks emphasized the historical continuity of black power principles which had always existed as “...the Negro’s traditional belief in self-help. This concept embraces race pride, solidarity and economic enterprises for the group” (1971:7). Words chosen to express the sentiments of the black nationalism may vary among scholars, but the sentiments of the basic components are fairly consistent (Pinkney 1976). Peeks’ description of the self-help ideology bears a striking resemblance to Hyland and Bennett’s components of community building discussed above (Figure 2.1). Examining these models side-by-side demonstrates how mutually beneficial social and economic relationships can be advantageous to achieving self-determination.

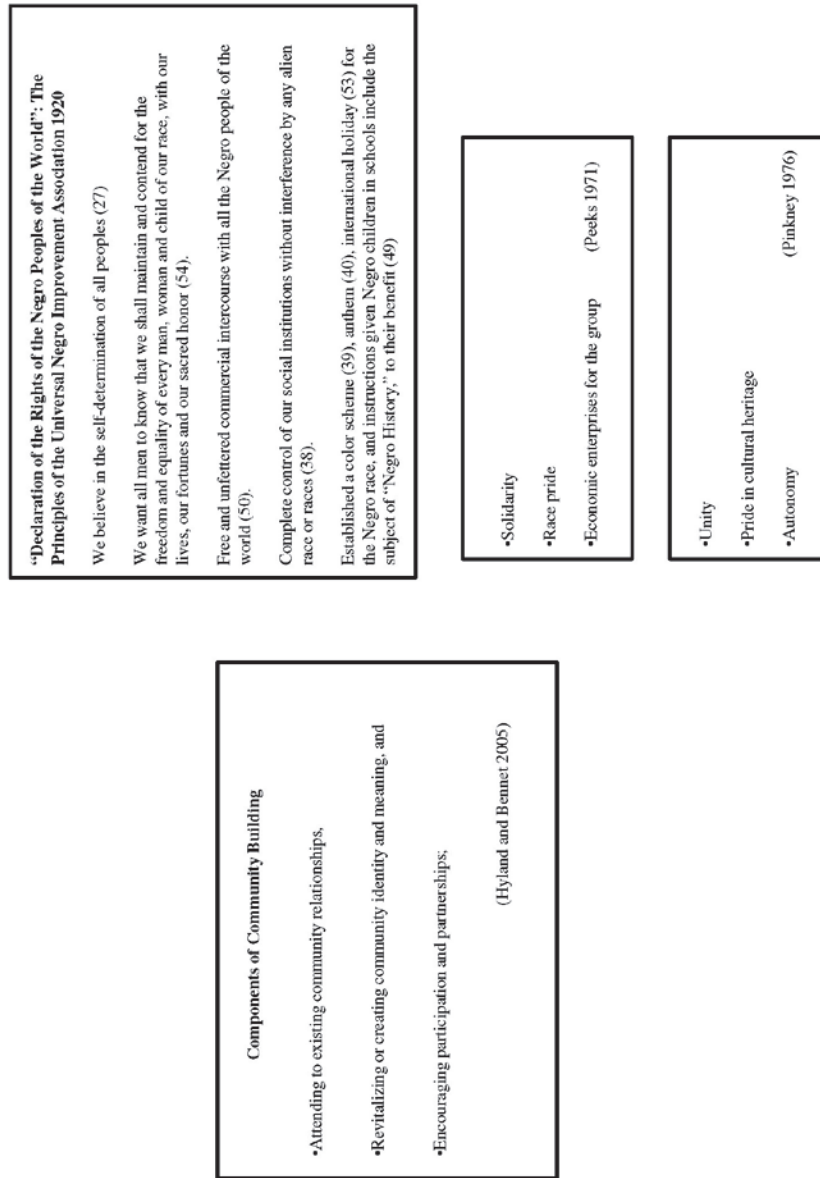


Figure 2.1: Comparison between components of community building and self-help / self-determination.

A discussion of community building merits a definition of “community,” a word which has been used to represent everything from small clusters of households to the African Diaspora as a whole. Using “community” as a unit of analysis can become even more challenging for archaeologists whose area is already generally confined by the boundaries of an archaeological site. In their introduction to “...an archaeology of communities,” Yaeger and Canuto outline four approaches to community studies, one of which they designate as “interactional,” defined by “...how people create communities through their relationships” (2000:3). However, community can also be considered as composite of people and place, incorporating the interactional environment into the characterization (Cusick 1995:61). This is perhaps the most apropos definition to use when discussing the relationship between former occupants of the archaeological sites who would have been neighbors.

In this case, it is both tempting and convenient to restrict the “community” to families living in the immediate area of Charles’ Corner, thereby neatly encompassing the extent of the archaeological sites in the study. Thinking a bit more broadly, the arbitrary and artificial boundary of the Weapons Station also provides an easy format for assessing “community.” However, while both examples may be valid representations of “community” for residents they also may not represent the true extent of their daily interactions. In her study of the Corbin, Weakley, and Nicholson hollows located in the Blue Ridge Mountains, Audrey Horning was faced with a similar residential structure involving clusters of residents (hollows) that were spread across a broader region (Appalachia). Horning found that “(t)he prevalence of kinship ties spanning the three hollows...suggests a wider community network that transcended hollow association”

(1999:130), signifying that it would have been inaccurate to identify each hollow as its own community. Accordingly, I have deliberately refrained from identifying Charles' Corner as a "community" so that the dynamism and flexibility of their social and economic relationships can be more thoroughly addressed in the interpretation (Chapter 8).

Research Questions and Public Engagement

Developing research questions for the Charles' Corner study was dependent upon the input of resident descendants and African American residents of York County. Incorporating public engagement from early research stages is not only an ethical standard and a source of empowerment for the descendants; it also provides valuable feedback and leads to germane interpretations for both archaeologists and descendants (LaRoche and Blakey 1997, McDavid 1997, Holland 1990). It is particularly important for African American history in York County where residents have been displaced and disenfranchised. After failing to find any recorded information on the African American neighborhoods in Vinton, Virginia, oral historian Darlene Richardson attributed the noticeable absence to the fact that "...lingering memories and old wounds from the Jim Crow era had never been acknowledged, much less addressed or resolved" (2002:101). Her interviews provided a record of residents' stories and allowed residents to emphasize the importance of their former neighborhood and the profound impact of its loss. Richardson summarizes that "(a)lthough changes in the neighborhood were hardly noteworthy in various Caucasian resources, the demise of the neighborhood was seen as tragic to African Americans I interviewed. This fact was not recorded in any written

resource” (2002:101). Influenced by her experience, I have chosen to write this dissertation in an attempt to record the Charles’ Corner history *for* York County’s African American residents and emphasizing those aspects that they find most important, rather than simply writing *about* Charles’ Corner.

In advance of any excavation, residents engaged with African American history in York County were contacted to discuss potential research questions and family history. Letters explaining the project location and goals as well as requesting assistance in contacting resident descendants were sent to four local Baptist churches in the surrounding neighborhoods of Grove, Penniman and Lackey. Two of the churches contacted (Rising Sun Baptist Church and St. John’s Baptist Church) had been relocated from the reservation property to their present locations and as a result have an historic association with the reservation. This approach yielded interviews with three individuals who were descendants of reservation residents, two of whom wished to remain anonymous. Others that I spoke to were understandably cautious about sharing their history. This concern, valid under any circumstances, is particularly important for African Americans in York County who have been subject to several displacements and other forms of unfair treatment at the hands of European Americans. For the individuals with whom I spoke, I provided a recording and transcription of the interviews within a month of our meeting for their own personal records, in order to mitigate their concerns. I also used recorded interviews with former residents from other sources (McDonald et al. 1992, Bradshaw 1993) in order to supplement my interviews with resident descendants. Finally, although I never had formal interviews with them, Mr. Hill, Mrs. Heard, and Mr. Hopson were instrumental in the development of this study.

These conversations did not result in an explicit statement of research questions, but did provide four major themes that were consistent throughout people's recollections of Charles' Corner and African American history in York County: land ownership, occupations, family and friends, and displacement. The emphasis placed on these topics indicates that they had been key elements of the family's historical narrative and oral history for a significant amount of time and should be incorporated into the research questions and interpretation. In particular, the stressed importance of being landed and working in the oyster industry was seemingly not only driven by a sense of pride but also by the fact that these attributes were considered uncommon, and certainly remarkable, for rural African Americans during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As a result, the research questions were designed to evaluate what some of the contributing factors were for the more distinctive aspects of Charles' Corner. Additionally, the discussion of displacement is often accompanied by a feeling of latent and unaddressed injustice and could not be left unacknowledged.

The story of reservation residents provides a unique opportunity to identify and examine the cultural and social process of community building for freedpeople in the South after Emancipation. Orser encouraged historical archaeologists to "...couch their research questions mutualistically in broadly conceived terms that fully incorporate the netlike complexities of modern life" (1996:203-204). Several research questions have been established, given the interest of reservation descendants, the established historic trajectory of the project area, and the challenges presented by theoretical models in the field.

- ❖ What socioeconomic networks were established by Charles' Corner residents?
- ❖ What was the community-building process for Charles' Corner residents and what role did socioeconomic networks play in that development? What "community" were they building?
- ❖ What obstacles did residents face and how did these obstacles, and the response to them, change over time?
- ❖ How did displacement affect the community building process and how did residents' social networks develop and change after displacement?
- ❖ In what ways did African Americans continue to promote social equality in the rural South after Emancipation? How did these actions relate to other activist efforts in the decades leading up to the Civil Rights Movement?
- ❖ How can the archaeological record address these research questions?
- ❖ How can this information be useful for the African American residents of York County today?

Like a window, which is simultaneously transparent and reflecting, archaeological interpretation can serve as a method for modern society to explore and understand the past superimposed by our own biases and interests. This theoretical framework intentionally addresses politically controversial issues as a direct response to critiques from those in the field (LaRoche and Blakey 1997, Orser 1998). By theoretically engaging problems of racism and social inequality, we can demonstrate that modern

social issues are not only linked to the history of enslavement but are also likely to be the residue of attenuated Reconstruction. Charles Orser recognized that:

historical archaeologists are afforded the opportunity to show the historic origins and manifestations of racial categorization and the relationship of such pigeonholing to social and material inequality. [Orser 1998:665]

This project is intended to contribute to discussions on modern issues that show clear historical continuity, including urban “revitalization,” relocation, redlining, and displacement, as well as other methods of marginalizing African American communities today.

Summation

This chapter was intended to guide the reader through the reasoning process which culminated in the research questions designed for the Charles’ Corner study. Ultimately, the project design and theoretical approach were heavily influenced by the New York African Burial Ground (NYABG) Project, which provided a theoretical and methodological model for archaeology on African American sites by utilizing public engagement, multiple lines of evidence, and an “... African Diaspora frame of reference” (Blakey 2009:41). In order to establish research questions for a study of Charles’ Corner, theoretical models were considered for their weaknesses and merits, and interested parties were consulted to gauge their research interests. The theoretical approach is designed to accentuate the process of social reconstruction and rebuilding after Emancipation and emphasize residents’ role as active participants in the dynamic process of community building rather than as passive contributors to a capitalist system. In addition, this model dovetails with the tenets of self-help and self-determination that were promoted by the

African American leadership prominent in the pursuit of equal rights throughout the twentieth century. The resulting research questions explore how Charles' Corner residents constructed a community after the Civil War and how their story fits in with the broader mission for equality and freedom in the United States.

Cultural anthropologists, sociologists, and historians have applied the community-building model to both modern diasporic populations (Konadu-Agyemang et al. 2006, Youngstedt 2004) and historical groups (Watkins 1993, Dorsey 2004, Pruitt 2005, Palmer 2005); however, there is no precedent for applying this model to archaeological sites. Nevertheless, in a piece titled *Communities after Catastrophe: Reconstructing the Material, Reconstituting the Social*, anthropologist Oliver-Smith emphasized the inextricable relationship between social relationships and material culture by stating that "...the material and social rebuilding processes must be mutually reinforcing; in some sense, they must be mutually constitutive. The built environment in which we live is a material instantiation of our social relations" (Oliver-Smith 2005). His statement perfectly demonstrates the way in which the archaeological record reflects the living community and can provide data for the process of community building.

Cultural resource management has played an instrumental role in the development of the archaeology of African American life and will continue to serve as the primary means for uncovering and assessing African American sites. General practice dictates that sites and structures that are more than fifty years old are considered "historic" rather than modern. As a result, sites dating to the mid-twentieth century are gradually entering into the archaeological record and require interpretation. Accordingly, archaeologists should begin to anticipate theoretical and methodological approaches for the

identification and interpretation of sites that reflect Jim Crow policies and the Civil Rights Movement. An established framework for community building considered within the context of the black freedom movement is well-situated to provide historical continuity and a continuous narrative between the post-Emancipation sites and the late twentieth century.

Chapter 3: Methodology and Research Design

The methodology for the Charles' Corner study was informed by the community building model, past archaeological projects, and guidelines set forth in the National Historic Preservation Act. The research design utilizes cultural resource management strategies in order to accomplish three goals. First, the research model was designed to address the research questions and themes presented in Chapter 2 and provide an understanding of social and economic process during a critical period of African American history. Second, the research design complies with Section 110 of the NHPA and the requirements for federal authorities to identify, evaluate, and nominate eligible properties to the NRHP (16 U.S.C. 470). Third, this dissertation should provide enough historical and archaeological data for the sites surrounding Charles' Corner in order to demonstrate its eligibility for nomination to the NRHP as an archaeological district. As a means to that end, this chapter begins with an exploration of the archaeological literature that has been influential in developing the research design. A majority of the archaeological sites discussed here address African American life dating to the nineteenth and twentieth century, and / or utilize a community-based approach. The central portion of the chapter is a synthesis of previous archaeological work at the NWSY and a discussion of how these studies have informed the research design. In conclusion, the research design for the Charles' Corner project is presented with a brief discussion of data collection and analytical methods.

Comparative Framework

The significance of the Charles' Corner project to the field of African American archaeology is contingent upon its relationship to comparable projects. Several archaeologists have remarked that, in order for archaeology within the African Diaspora to reach its full potential, sites should be examined in a comparative framework (Singleton and Bograd 1995, Weik 1997, Agorsah 2001). This approach provides archaeologists with a broader understanding of the diasporic experience and builds an appreciation of temporal and spatial variation in the archaeology of African American life. In addition, demonstrating variation within African American archaeological sites should contribute to a more well-rounded representation of their history.

Providing an alternate narrative for post-Emancipation African American life in the South serves as a primary motivation for this project. Comparable archaeological studies of African American life in the rural South during this period have largely focused on the emergence and perpetuation of sharecropping, tenancy, and wage labor systems. Analyses of post-bellum communities on Levi Jordan Plantation in Texas (Brown and Cooper 1990, McDavid 1992, Brown 2004), Millwood Plantation in South Carolina (Orser 1988) and Oakley Plantation in Louisiana (Wilkie 2000) represent the lives of individuals that remained as laborers or tenants on the plantations where they had been enslaved. However, the transitory nature of sharecropping and tenancy has made their archaeological sites difficult to assess and analyze (Anderson and Muse 1983, Trinkley 1983). Archaeologist, Charles Orser points out that "(t)he soil deposits of the tenant's short occupations are usually thin, and one- or two- year occupation levels often can be mixed together by the activities of subsequent inhabitants" (1999:153). In addition, the shallow deposits of the nineteenth- and twentieth- century homesteads are susceptible to the detrimental effects of development and agriculture resulting in disturbed deposits that are less

likely to be eligible for nomination to the NRHP (Trinkley 1983, Wilson 1990, Cabak et al. 1999). This phenomenon should provide an interesting contrast to life at Charles' Corner where families owned their land and had clearly planned to live there for several generations.

The level of autonomy experienced by African Americans at any given site is another key factor to consider during analysis and interpretation. Sharecropping, tenancy, and wage labor all afforded varying amounts of control for freedpeople over their labor and their finances and these differences in autonomy leave telltale indicators in the archaeological record (Orser 1988, Peterson et al. 1995, Mahoney 2004). For example, a sharecropper in Alabama, using the pseudonym "Nate Shaw" for his biography, described his home in the following way:

Just a old plantation style house, built for colored folks, no special care took of how it was built. But it'd keep you out the rain, it'd keep you out the cold; just a old common-built house, board cabin....Whenever a white man built a house for a colored man he just run it up right quick like a box. No seal in that house; just box it up with lumber, didn't never box it up with a tin roof. They'd put doors to the house and sometimes they'd stick a glass window in it, but mostly a wood window. Didn't put you behind no painted wood and glass, just built a house for you to move in then go to work. [Rosengarten 1974:102]

In many ways, the houses were a reflection of the relationship between the landlord and the sharecropper; temporary and practical. It is very clear that, given the opportunity, Mr. Shaw would have constructed a more substantial structure to provide comfort and protection for his family.

The lack of amenities was only one way in which the land owner perpetuated a system of debt and dependence with laborers on their property (see Wilkie 2000). The cash crop system provides only one payout a year during the harvest and laborers were often required to pay the landowner a hefty sum in either cash or crops for rent. This

phenomenon creates an unexpected result in the material culture record which is hinted at in the sociohistorical study titled *Deep South*:

Whereas urban families of the lowest economic level are relatively better fed than they are housed and clothed, owing to relatively high rents which they must pay, rural families of this group are relatively better clothed and housed than fed...A tenant who receives even \$50 at the end of the cotton season has more money in hand than any urban worker is likely ever to have at one time. He is, therefore, able to pay for a suit of clothes or a dress for his wife, even if he is extravagant in so doing. [Davis et al. 1941:388]

Excavations at the homes of tenants and sharecroppers reinforce this observation by finding high rates of manufactured clothing, both in account book records and in the archaeological record (Adams and Smith 1985). Archaeologists also tend to recover higher rates of food cans from tenancy and sharecropping sites when compared with other rural households occupied by landowners (Cabak et al. 1999). This tendency may be a byproduct of the fact that residents were sometimes required, either by contract or social duress, to purchase items from the plantation store or accept rations as form of payment (Wilkie 2000, Mahoney 2004). In addition, the focus on a single cash crop "...resulted in farmers becoming increasingly market oriented and dependent upon factory produced commodities and subsistence products" (Cabak et al. 1999:25). Finally, canned foods may have also provided an opportunity for African Americans to introduce variety into their diet if they were not able to maintain a garden, own livestock, fish, and / or hunt (Dirks and Duran 2001).

The archaeological record also allows archaeologists to assess the extent to which communities utilized regional networks for material acquisition. Laurie Wilkie's study of the Oakley Plantation in Louisiana revealed that rural African American tenants utilized locally-made goods in equal measure, if not more so, than nationally-available goods

(Wilkie 2000). In contrast, Paul Mullins' analysis of turn-of-the-twentieth century urban African American homes in Annapolis found higher percentages of nationally produced goods and lower amounts of locally produced products which he felt were a direct reflection of resistance against "...everyday racist mechanisms of local marketers" (Mullins 1998:25). Reconciling Mullin's interpretation with Wilkie's finding might lead to the inference that Oakley consumers either were not subject to racism by local marketers or did not try to resist this structure. Instead, these variations in the archaeological record may be a distinct regional pattern or, more likely, may have resulted from inherent differences in rural and urban social and economic relationships.

These relationships, especially interactions with Southern white society, proved to be extremely complex. Archaeologist Michael Barber excavated the remains of an African American owned and operated pharmacy in Roanoke, Virginia. Barber was drawn to the juxtaposition in the archaeological record between fragments of porcelain teacups and saucers which represent substantial financial resources and an absence of items used for personal adornment. Barber attributes this to the Burrell family choosing to exhibit their wealth in the private realm of the home rather than in public, perhaps reflecting "...the isolation and cohesion of the black community during this period" (Barber 1995). Certainly, some African American families would have had to monitor outward expressions of wealth for their own safety or to avoid alienation from potential customers.

African Americans who had moved north or west had to remain just as vigilant about other's impressions of them while establishing communities that provided comfort and stability. Archaeological work was conducted at the location of Boston Saloon, a

business that was owned and patronized by African Americans in Nevada during the third quarter of the nineteenth century (Dixon 2005). While other saloons offered comparable amenities, an officer for the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) remarked that the presence of Boston Saloon in Virginia City meant that "...African Americans had a place to go to that was respected and dignified" (Anderson 2003). Allensworth, an African American town in southern California established around the turn-of-the-century, was built on a similar premise and is discussed in more detail on the following page.

Other studies of freed African American communities, analogous to Charles' Corner, in the North include Bastian's (1999) assessment of a 1926 -1930 logging community in Elmwood, Michigan, Schuyler's study of a nineteenth- and twentieth-century oystering community in New York (Schuyler 1974, Schuyler 1980b, Askins 1985) and the eighteenth century community of freedpeople at Parting Ways in Massachusetts (Deetz 1977). Sandy Ground is particularly intriguing due to the commonalities between the settlements in their reliance on oystering. African Americans began to settle at Sandy Ground on Staten Island in the 1820s having worked as free black oysterers in Virginia and Maryland. Schuyler emphasized the distinctive settlement pattern for residents involved in a specialized industry, like oystering, as opposed to the pattern traditionally associated with farming: "(t)he settlement pattern of Sandy Ground stands out...as having tightly clustered sites on small parcels of land as against larger land units with isolated houses" (1974:37-38). Finally, he ends his study by suggesting potential research themes, including an assessment of the clearly discernible economic growth of the community which, he feels, must have been "correlated with the internal and external social patterns of the community" (1974:37). At the time Schulyer was

writing his study, a few African American families still resided at Sandy Ground but their land ownership was being threatened by urban sprawl and encroaching development.

Although it represents the remains of only one homestead, excavation of the Gilmore Farm in northern Virginia is particularly intriguing due to its strikingly similar settlement history to Charles' Corner. George and Polly Gilmore had been enslaved by James Madison at Montpelier in northern Virginia and after Emancipation they leased and settled on a piece of land on the estate. Archaeologists were able to determine that the Gilmore's first cabin was partially constructed from the remains of a nearby Confederate camp that was abandoned after the Civil War. The Gilmores were eventually able to purchase 16.1 acres from the Madison family in 1901 (Reeves 2007); an extraordinary achievement given that they did not appear to live in proximity to other families that would have provided support and share their goals.

Two historical and archaeological sites founded by African American leaders have attracted a considerable amount of public interest due to their compelling histories and contributions to African American history. Frank McWorter, who had been enslaved in South Carolina and Kentucky purchased freedom for himself and his wife and moved to Illinois in 1830. The McWorter family bought several tracts of land, and developed an integrated community called New Philadelphia in 1836. The site, which is listed on the NRHP and has been designated a National Landmark, was the subject of yearly archaeological investigations (Fennell 2011, Shackel 2011). Another townsite, located in southern California, was founded in 1908 by Colonel Allen Allensworth, who had been profoundly influenced by Booker T. Washington's principles to create an entirely African American, self-sustaining community (Royal et al. 2008). The land is now managed and

interpreted as a California State Historic Park but has not been formally tested or excavated. Although Charles' Corner was not *founded*, as were Allensworth and New Philadelphia, all three sites embody similar tenets and philosophies of freedom, entrepreneurship, and self-determination.

Although comparable sites exist, the archaeological sites representing the cultural remains of the African American homesteads at Charles' Corner are unique for several reasons. Charles' Corner residents became homeowners and entrepreneurs during a period when many African American families in the South became entangled in the world of sharecropping and tenancy. Sites such as the Gilmore Cabin may provide intriguing evidence about the creation of a farmstead after Emancipation however Charles' Corner provides the opportunity to study several homesteads in proximity to one another. Other rural African American settlements that provide similar opportunities for analysis, such as Allensworth and New Philadelphia, were planned communities that were deliberately established outside of the South. Fortunately, the Charles' Corner sites have been relatively well-preserved and Navy archaeologists recognize their potential to provide essential information about the adjustment of York County's African American residents to the postbellum south.

Previous Archaeological and Compliance Work

As discussed in the previous chapter, cultural resource management and the archaeology of African American life have had a parallel trajectory. Although African American sites have been subject to the detrimental effects of benign neglect, lack of prioritization, and poor site management (Perry and Paynter 1999, Shackel 2003, Jacobs

2004), the input of interested parties can bring the proper recognition to important sites. Several projects discussed in this chapter, including Elmwood (Bastian 1999), the Cypress Project in Oakland (Praetzellis and Praetzellis 2004), and Freedman's Town in Dallas (Davidson 2004, McDavid 2006) were initiated by Section 106 of the NHPA and prompted community involvement in the project. The interdisciplinary African Burial Ground Project began as a compliance project, stimulated change in theory and methodology, and maintained a high bar for public engagement (LaRoche and Blakey 1997, Blakey 1998). As a result, compliance reports often serve as an optimal medium for archaeologists and the public to recognize and reflect upon the historical importance of African American sites. Certainly, archaeologists working on the NWSY understood and emphasized the significance of the African American history present on the property.

U.S. Navy Archaeologists Pam Anderson and Bruce Larson contracted with four separate cultural resource management companies for comprehensive Phase I surveys of the entire NWSY property in compliance with Section 110 of the NHPA (2006) which requires that "...historic properties under the jurisdiction or control of the (Federal) agency, are identified, evaluated, and nominated to the National Register" (16 U.S.C. 470) (Underwood et al. 2003, Sheehan et al. 1999, Fesler and Lucchetti 1992, Thompson et al. 1989). Through their surveys, archaeologists were able to establish an unanticipated by-product of the Navy's protection of their military resources: the preservation of hundreds of archaeological sites. In their reports, archaeologists consistently expressed their amazement at the number of cultural resources that retain a high level of integrity. Ryder and Mouer emphasized that the lack of development on the property and the presence of sites representing "...every major episode of American history and

prehistory...” which means that the “...Navy has become – perhaps unwittingly – the steward of a major landscape museum of archaeological resources” (1987:5). In their 2003 survey report, the archaeologists at WMCAR recognized that the NWSY “...represents a virtual archaeological preserve where unique archaeological sites have been spared from development that characterizes much of the area” (Underwood et al. 2003:1). As a result, Navy archaeologists are acutely aware of their role in simultaneously protecting and exploring the research potential for these archaeological sites.

An Integrated Cultural Resource Management Plan (ICRMP) was developed by a consulting firm as part of the management protocol for the 366 identified archaeological sites and cultural resources on the NWSY property (R. Christopher Goodwin 1999, Underwood et al. 2003). The historical association of the NWSY with African American land ownership is outlined in the cultural context section of the ICRMP and served as a major focus for both Phase I and Phase II reports (Thompson et al. 1989, Underwood et al. 2003). As part of a Phase III data recovery in the area of Halstead’s Point, archaeologists from Greenhorne & O’Mara excavated an entire house foundation belonging to an African American family prior to its destruction which led them to recommend that a thorough ethnohistorical study be conducted “...focusing on Postbellum sites as part of an overall study of the resources on the base” (Thompson et al. 1989: abstract). Accordingly, Bruce Larson commissioned a report to document the lives of African American residents prior to the government commandeering the property (McDonald et al. 1997) with the knowledge that sites dating to the nineteenth and early twentieth century, especially those pertaining to African American life were

underrepresented in this area of Virginia (Brown and Bragdon 2001, Smart 2001). The report also led to two separate M.A. theses at the College of William & Mary titled *Social Stratification in York County, Virginia, 1860-1919: A Study of Whites and African-Americans on the Lands of the Yorktown Naval Weapons Station* (Stuck 1995) and *African-American Family and Society on the Lands of the Yorktown Naval Weapons Station, 1862-1880* (McDonald 1994) which provided significant contributions to the background and historic significance of the archaeological sites. However, none of the archaeological sites representing the nineteenth- and twentieth- century African American homesteads had been analyzed or interpreted.

The opportunity to provide site interpretation for an important period in American history served as an incentive for a collaborative archaeological project with the Navy based upon mutual research interests. Concurrently, the project would provide assessments of archaeological sites that had been determined to be potentially eligible for the NRHP. In a 2005 memorandum of agreement, Larson cites a cooperative agreement that had been in effect between the College of William & Mary and the NAVFAC MIDLANT since 1999. Since most collaborative projects would be considered work “...performed for the Navy at taxpayer expense” he emphasizes that “(i)t is in both parties’ best interests that the value of this project be widely and clearly communicated” through publicity and scholarly contributions to honor the spirit of federal funding and adhere to the principles outlined in the NHPA and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) (2005:1). The goal of the ARPA is outlined in its text as “...the protection of archaeological resources and sites which are on public lands and Indian lands, and to foster increased cooperation and exchange of information...” (16 U.S.C.

470aa). Ultimately, both parties hoped that the project would prove to be mutually beneficial and, hopefully, of some interest to reservation descendants and their families.

Background Research

Background research was a continuous process throughout the project. Documentary research was conducted at local libraries which archive records pertaining to the Yorktown Naval Weapons Station and African American history of York County including the Earl Gregg Swem Library, the John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Library, and the Yorktown Library. Existing oral histories and historical documents were examined for details that would provide information about the socioeconomic networks inherent to Charles' Corner (Bradshaw 1993, McDonald et al. 1992, Morgan 1985). The York County Court House maintains records on land ownership and deed transfers for the county. The Public Works office at NWSY provided access to, and copies of, maps that detailed the land transfers to the government. Research trips to the National Archives in Washington D.C. provided a wealth of data on the commandeering of the property through access to the records of the Bureau of Ordnance and the U.S. Navy. The records included the landowner's own testimony about the value of their property which included invaluable descriptions of their farms.

Research Design

Site Selection

In preparation for the archaeological fieldwork, several forms of data were entered into Geographical Information System (GIS) software. A modern United States Geographical Survey (USGS) topographical map was geo-referenced with recorded archaeological sites in the area, a 1907 USGS quadrangle with plotted structures, and the 1919 map created by government assessors used for delineating properties and assigning lot numbers. Utilizing the maps in conjunction with census data and county deed records, it is possible to associate archaeological sites and features with specific families and homestead structures.

Phase I archaeological survey data and historic maps were reviewed in order to determine which archaeological sites would be ideal for Phase II assessments. The 1907 USGS map of the area shows three distinct household clusters centered on major crossroads that had all been African American majority neighborhoods (Lackey, Halstead's Point, and Charles' Corner) on the land that had been confiscated by the government in 1918. A community-level study provides ample opportunity for multi-scalar analyses at Charles' Corner using archaeological data, historic documents, and oral histories. It is challenging to address the abstract and complex issues of multi-faceted social networks without substantial data sets. Nevertheless, Cusick argues that "(a)s a research methodology, community study meets many of the demand for proof and synthesis in archaeology that have been at the center of the processual versus postprocessual debate" by providing both intra and inter household assemblages for

comparative studies (1995:59). Community-based archaeological studies prove to be extremely informative and rewarding for both the anthropologists and for the living descendants because their inherent structure represents a broader cross-section of society, (Schuyler 1974, Cusick 1995, Horning 2000).

Lackey

Lackey was located at the intersection of Old Williamsburg Road and Main Road approximately 2 miles from Yorktown. The original Lackey neighborhood in the northeastern portion of the NWSY was named for Thomas Lackey who owned a considerable amount of property in the area and rented out parcels of land to African Americans in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Unfortunately, Lackey was one of the first areas to be developed by the Navy, and Phase I archaeological surveys confirmed the stratigraphic integrity of cultural resources in the area had been disturbed by construction of the existing barracks and surrounding structures immediately following World War I (Ryder and Mouer 1987).

Halstead's Point

Halstead's Point, positioned approximately 3.5 miles from Yorktown, was located at what has become the Main Post area at the intersection of Old Williamsburg Road and Lee Road. Proposed construction in the area of Halstead's Point during the mid- to late 1980s prompted Phase I and Phase II archaeological assessments in accordance with

Section 106 of the NHPA (Mouer and Ryder 1986, Thompson et al. 1989).

Archaeologists determined that four of the sites in their purview (44YO407, 44YO408, 44YO412, and 44YO416) had been African American farmsteads during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In order to mitigate the effects of construction, archaeologists conducted a Phase III excavation at site 44YO412 which exposed an entire house foundation and an adjacent well (Thompson et al. 1989). The information recovered during their project is substantial enough for public presentation even though archaeologists did not present site interpretation with their findings. Although subsequent construction undoubtedly compromised the archaeological integrity of these sites, there are two sites in the Halstead's Point area (44YO963 and 44YO974) that WMCAR deemed potentially eligible for the NRHP and should be included in future Phase II assessments (Underwood et al. 2003).

Charles' Corner

The cluster of homes surrounding Charles' Corner centers on the intersection of Old Williamsburg and Ringfield Road which lies approximately 5 miles from Williamsburg and 6 miles from Yorktown. Unlike Halstead's Point and Lackey, Charles' Corner is not labeled on the 1907 map, however it is clearly identified on modern USGS quadrangles. Since the government's acquisition of the property, the western portion of the Naval Weapons Station has remained relatively undeveloped apart from minor disturbances due to logging activities and military exercises. After assessing each cluster's respective history of disturbance as well as the results of Phase I surveys

conducted by several different agencies it was determined that the most intact archaeological sites dating to the late nineteenth and early twentieth century African American occupation are located in the area of Charles' Corner. As a result, Charles' Corner is an ideal location for Phase II assessments and testing with the goal of recordation and preservation of archaeological sites.

Five archaeological sites that had been identified by WMCAR archaeologists as “potentially eligible” to the NRHP, and are located in proximity to Charles' Corner, were selected for Phase II assessments. Four of the sites selected for this study (44YO318, 44YO319, 44YO850, 44YO857) were highlighted by WMCAR archaeologists as having the *highest potential* for eligibility to the NRHP based on “...large brick and / or concrete surface structural features (i.e. wells or extant foundations), high integrity, and dense subsurface deposits” (Underwood et al 2003:443). Based on our own informal reconnaissance in the Charles' Corner area, site 44YO870 was added to the list of sites for testing due to the presence of an extensive trash deposit and culturally modified landscape features. Each of the selected sites had visible surface artifact scatter including washbasins, brick foundations, and trash scatters (Underwood et al. 2003, Austin et al. 2011). Additional consideration was given to site selection in order to represent a cross-section of Charles' Corner residents based on geographic location, relative acreage of property ownership, as well as proximity to waterways and major roadways. Excavation at the multiple household sites provides an opportunity for inter-household comparative studies and allows us to talk about both continuity and diversity within the confined geographical space known as Charles' Corner.

Field Methodology

Apart from infrequent military use, there is no planned development of the Charles' Corner area and no identified threat to the integrity of the sites. Consequently, site preservation was a primary consideration when determining the testing strategy for the research design, so archaeological investigations were limited to four test units per archaeological site equivalent to a standard Phase II project. The proposal for this dissertation which outlined the research questions and goals as well as the site selection and testing strategy for the project was modified into a scope-of-work by Navy archaeologist, Bruce Larson, which was then presented to a cultural resource management consulting company, Southeastern Archaeological Research, Inc. (SEARCH). After assessing the amount of work involved, one of the sites (44YO850) was removed from the scope-of-work in order to properly concentrate efforts onto the remaining four sites.

Based on the scope-of-work, SEARCH archaeologists outlined their project goals in three parts:

- ♦ relocate and evaluate four archaeological sites associated with the historically documented mid-nineteenth and early twentieth century African American community of Charles' Corner...
- ♦ establish horizontal and vertical boundaries and determine the nature and extent of intact archaeological deposits at each site; and
- ♦ evaluate the four sites in terms of NRHP criteria for establishing cultural significance. [Austin et al. 2011:1]

The Phase II assessment took place during the summer of 2008 under the field direction of Deborah Mullins from SEARCH. In order to accomplish the goals outlined above,

fieldwork at each site included identification of activity areas, extensive mapping, additional shovel tests, and archaeological test units. A full report detailing the archaeological work and laboratory analysis of artifacts was provided to the Navy in 2011 (Austin et al. 2011).

As a result of SEARCH's Phase II assessment at Charles' Corner, archaeologists recommended that all four of the assessed sites were potentially eligible for nomination to the National Register under Criterion D, which provides for "sites... that have yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory" (Austin et al. 2011). However, nineteenth- and twentieth-century farmstead sites are rarely considered eligible for nomination to the NRHP individually even though the archaeological sites merit consideration due to their unique historic and cultural significance (Wilson 1990, ICRMP 1997). Following their excavations at Halstead's Point, archaeologists Thompson et al. (1989) emphasized that the cluster of sites would be more likely to be eligible to the NRHP as an archaeological district. While stating their case for this approach, the authors cite a cultural resource management plan designed for York County which states that archaeological sites are one of the most important resources for studying African American history in York County and emphasizes that "(b)lack communities as focal points for ties of kinship and community spirit should...be preserved" (Smart 2001:95). Emphasizing the history of community building at Charles' Corner addresses the requirement that multiple sites share a common history based on "function, theme, or physical development or aesthetically by plan" in order to be considered eligible for nomination to the NRHP as an archaeological district (Little et al. 2000:43). This dissertation is, precisely, an explication of the shared history at Charles' Corner based on

location and values. Thus, in concert with SEARCH’s assessment, this study should provide the needed background and additional analysis that are outside the scope of a typical compliance report but would establish the sites’ eligibility as a district.

Analytical Methodology

In Chapter 2, I demonstrated the connection between the self-help philosophy and a community-building model. This section of Chapter 3 illustrates how the data will be analyzed in four categories in order to support the hypothesis of a community-building model being present at Charles’ Corner. Multiple lines of evidence will be analyzed for information on socioeconomic networks, economic diversification, communal activities, and self-identification (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: The process of analysis and interpretation from data (far left) to interpretation (far right).

Multiple Lines of Evidence	Analytical Categories	Community-Building Model	Self-help (Peeks 1971)
Maps Deeds / Titles Newspaper Articles Oral Histories Artifacts Letters Botanical Remains	Social and Economic Networks Economic Diversification Communal Activities Self Identification	Attending to existing relationships Encouraging participation and partnerships Revitalizing or creating community identity and meaning	Solidarity Economic Enterprises for the Group Race Pride

Socioeconomic Networks

The methodology is designed to extract information about the social and economic networks of the area. The analysis of socioeconomic networks should encompass all of the avenues through which residents acquired information and / or material. One of the research questions posed by archaeologists at Sandy Ground focused on the extent of trade patterns or “logistic networks” for residents. The analysis involved recording the manufacturing location for bottles recovered from the site and plotting those loci in relation Sandy Ground. They found that a majority of the bottles (73%) were manufactured within a twenty-mile radius of the archaeological site (Schuyler 1974). A similar analysis is designed for the Charles’ Corner study and utilizes the known manufacturing origin for other artifacts including a button and stoneware in addition to bottles. In addition, oral history interviews will be examined for evidence of social relationships that played an important role for residents.

Self-Identification

The assessment of archaeological features at Charles’ Corner in contrast to the ephemeral deposits at sharecropping and tenancy sites will provide information about how residents viewed their status on the property. The relative permanency with which Charles’ Corner residents established their homesteads should be particularly indicative of how they viewed their place and space on the landscape since residents had been through tumultuous periods during the Civil War and Reconstruction and were displaced several times. One of the most remarkable aspects of the Charles’ Corner area is the

abundance of intact cultural features, many of which are visible on the surface including portions of building foundations or footings, wells, refuse pits, and roads providing ample material for analysis. The state of preservation presents an opportunity for a study similar to Audrey Horning's analysis between households and hollows which allowed her to draw out distinctive characteristics of each site (Horning 2004). The manifestation of cultural features on the landscape can provide data about the social and economic factors that contributed to their creation and they convey information about utilization of space and concepts of ownership.

Artifacts are probably the most revealing form of self-identification present on the sites. Through his work on a post-Emancipation site on Curaçao, archaeologist Jay Haviser determined that "...the symbolic communication of material possessions for African descendants in the immediate post-Emancipation was an adaptive strategy to create and maintain a new socio-cultural order through an individual and collective self-definition of shared symbolic meanings" (1999:222). The ability for individuals to purchase items of their own choosing rather than relying on plantation rations of clothing, food, and household goods is a significant context for interpretation. This concept is best approached through examination of items for personal adornment including jewelry and buttons. Decorative patterns and symbols present on the glassware, ceramics, and figurines that Charles' Corner residents chose to surround themselves should also provide information for how residents identified themselves. The concept of multivalency, or the many and varied meanings of an artifact (Gundaker 1998, Perry and Paynter 1999, Fennell 2003, Gundaker and McWillie 2005), will also be explored in this category of analysis in order to unravel some of the complex social issues that residents were coping

with during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In summary, a qualitative analysis of artifacts and features will provide information about the role of “community identity and meaning” at Charles’ Corner.

Communal Activities

The identification of communal activities is a significant part of determining the extent to which Charles’ Corner residents attended to “existing relationships.” Oral histories and the documentary record may provide the most explicit evidence of communal activities through descriptions of gatherings for funerals, marriages, or baptisms. Archaeological sites such as cemeteries, churches, and saloons also provide proof of collective activity. The archaeological record can also provide evidence of more quotidian communal activity that may not be recounted in oral histories as a grand event. The placement and construction of archaeological features, such as wells, can provide information on whether they were constructed and / or used communally. The archaeological remains of collective gathering are also represented in musical instruments, beverage containers, and large serving or cooking vessels.

Economic Diversification

As discussed in Chapter 2, it is important to represent the full range of economic diversification in a rural household which would incorporate a cash economy, bartering, credit, and self-sufficiency. The ubiquitous presence of mass-produced items on

nineteenth and twentieth century sites are often the best representation that residents participated in a cash economy (Mullins 1999 a-c). Bartering and credit are more difficult to assess archaeologically so oral histories and general history texts may provide more information about their role in rural households. The most obvious representations of self-sufficiency are glass canning jars, lids, and seals as well as other tools for processing foods at home (Seibert and Parsons 2000). Artifacts related to specialized labor and diversity of specializations on site speak to the potential for bartering, trade, and self-sufficiency having been a crucial component to the living community. Brown and Cooper (1990) found evidence of occupational specialization in a post-Emancipation tenant community at Levi-Jordan Plantation including a tool for making lead-shot. The archaeologists posit that these specializations (carpenter, healer, hunter, seamstress, and blacksmith) were important to the tenants “internal economic system” by providing food and / or end products for the community and therefore reducing their reliance on rations or a need to purchase on credit from the plantation owner. One would expect to see tools for specialized occupations at the archaeological sites at Charles’ Corner given the history and economic development of the area.

These four analytical categories are intended to provide an analytical step between the recovered data and the interpretation of community building and its broader role in the pursuit of economic independence and social equality. The reader should be able to recognize supporting elements of these four categories as the data is presented in the following chapters. Analysis of the data and their significance within the context of these four categories is presented in Chapter 7. Interpretation of these four categories and

their importance to community building and its role in the black freedom movement are presented in Chapter 8.

Summation

A review of excavations at similar sites in the United States demonstrates the rarity of a place like Charles' Corner. Community-level studies at African American sites have been conducted at plantation sites where freedpeople stayed on to work as wage laborers, tenants, or sharecroppers (Adams et al. 1985, Brown and Cooper 1990). Urban environments have also provided an opportunity to explore largely African American neighborhoods from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Praetzellis and Praetzellis 2004, McDavid 2006) but the role of a rural economy in the household has proven to be distinct from city life. The African American oystering neighborhood at Sandy Ground is perhaps the most directly comparable to Charles' Corner even though there is a longer occupation period and New York had abolished slavery much earlier than Virginia (Schuyler 1974, Schulyer 1980, Askins 1985). It is uncommon to have the opportunity preserve and interpret archaeological sites representing multiple southern, rural, self-employed and landowning African American households during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. As a result, it is critical that the recovered data be presented in a way that encourages comparative studies.

Designing the proper methodology was an exercise in striking balance between collecting enough data to develop an interpretation and preserving the sites. Excavation at multiple sites was necessary in order to provide a foundation for the community-building

hypothesis and, hopefully, to capture various stages of development within the neighborhood. It was necessary to limit the number of sites selected for assessment in order to keep the data set manageable, yet it was important to reflect as broad a cross-section of Charles' Corner residents as possible. The excavations had to provide enough data to address research questions and characterize each site independently and simultaneously remain minimal in order to maintain the integrity of the sites. The methodology provided in this chapter has been informed by multiple factors including the theoretical approach outlined in Chapter 2, previous archaeological work conducted in this area of specialization, as well as prior archaeological work performed on the NWSY. Ultimately, the research design served as the core of a Phase II assessment of the archaeological sites for compliance purposes.

Finally, the analytical methodology requires a set of four categories to assist in the translation between the raw data and the interpretation for a community-building model. Economic stability, households that share resources, neighborhoods that build and contribute to local institutions, and the perpetuation of communal activities are all dynamic activities of community building which contributed to accumulation of wealth and increased political power (see Baker 1998). Collectively, the archaeological record, maps, oral histories, and historical accounts all provide data for analysis of socioeconomic networks, forms of self-identification, economic diversification, and communal activities. The manifestation of these factors can help determine if a philosophy of self-determination was an underlying tenet of daily life at Charles' Corner.

Chapter 4: Historical Background – Enslavement, Emancipation, and Reconstruction at Charles’ Corner

For nearly 250 years, the Commonwealth of Virginia maintained a historically close connection to the Atlantic Slave Trade and a high level of investment in enslavement until the institution’s demise. Subsequently, the state played a key role in the Civil War with Richmond serving as the capital of the Confederacy from 1861-1865, and General Lee’s surrender taking place near Appomattox on April 12, 1865. Ultimately, after years of indiscriminate violence, the Civil War and the end of enslavement rendered numerous changes to the social, economical, and political fabric of the Commonwealth; and adaptation by resident Virginians to the processes of Emancipation and Reconstruction was variable. In his autobiography, Booker T. Washington remarked that “(t)he slave system...took the spirit of self-reliance and self-help out of the white people” leaving them poorly prepared for Emancipation, whereas “...the slaves were almost as well fitted to begin life anew as the master, except in the matter of book-learning and ownership of property” (1907:17-18). Although Washington’s summary of a very complex situation may seem reductionist, it also bears a fundamental truth. This chapter is an exploration of the intricacies as they manifested on the lower peninsula.

Antebellum

Although Virginia was located in the geographical middle-ground between North and South during America’s Civil War, a majority of residents were ideologically allied with the Confederacy in the clash between fundamental beliefs about states’ rights and

the institution of slavery (see Virginia's Secession Ordinance ratified May 23, 1861). The planting elite had too much history, wealth, and leisure tied up in the enslavement of Africans and African Americans to relinquish their power without a fight. The record of African Americans in Virginia and, more specifically, the lower peninsula and the Historic Triangle, reads like a primer of United States history. The first Africans forcibly brought to North America for labor alighted at Jamestown in 1619 (Johnson et al. 1998); fifty percent of Williamsburg's population in the mid-eighteenth century was of African descent (Tate 1965); and enslaved Virginians were entangled in the colony's battle for freedom from British rule during the American Revolution at Yorktown (Morgan 1998, Johnson et al. 1998). Despite their role in the founding and nation-building of the United States, African Americans were consistently treated as less than human in order to justify and sustain the institution of enslavement (Douglass 1999(1854), Hunt 1866).

The region's reliance on enslavement to sustain the economy is particularly evident in the demographic profile in 1860, when sixty percent of the population on the lower peninsula was African American. In addition, the peninsula's antebellum landscape was dominated by large plantations profiting through the use of enslaved labor. The Tinsley family owned one of these plantations fronting on the York River between King's Creek and Felgate's Creek immediately adjacent to Charles' Corner. Collectively, the Tinsley properties amounted to 1,161 acres, split evenly between cultivated and wooded land (Wilder 1865). The 1850 slave schedule lists 39 men, women, and children enslaved by Thomas G. Tinsley and another 5 men and women enslaved by Thomas Tinsley on an adjacent property. Unfortunately, the age and sex of each individual may represent the full extent of recorded information for those who were enslaved by the

Tinsleys. However, they may have had close relationships with free blacks living in the county for whom more information was recorded.

York County had a comparatively large free black population which had steadily increased from 1790 to 1830 resulting in small settlements throughout the area (McDonald et al. 1992, Medford 1992, Quarstein and Rouse 1996, Walsh 1997, Butts 2006). Although free blacks were able to establish relatively stable families, enjoy relatively good health, receive pay for labor, as well as save and spend the finances at their discretion, they were subject to severe limitations on their liberty (Guild 1936, Bodenhorn 1999). Archaeologist Andrew Butts analyzed the register used to identify and track the free black population in York County and determined that:

...the register was used as a panoptic device by a white population class that, while socially dominant, was numerically outnumbered by the black residents of the county. This numerical imbalance was indicative of the American antebellum south due to the region's reliance on enslaved Africans and African Americans for labor. The racial imbalance was magnified by the mass exodus of whites from the area..., which was the result of the state capital moving to Richmond and the depletion of the local soils forced many whites to search for better economic opportunities to the west. While both the white and enslaved black populations declined during the early national period, the free black population of York County slowly but steadily increased. The numerical dominance of the black population caused the dwindling white population in the region to feel unsafe both numerically and economically. [2006:64]

Fear among white Virginians was primarily fueled by an evident increase in both planned and executed insurrections following the Haitian Revolution, including two in southeastern Virginia: Nat Turner's Rebellion in 1831 and Gabriel Prosser's Rebellion in 1800 (Morgan 1998, Johnson et al. 1998, Butts 2006). Accordingly, the free black register provided a record of physical attributes and personality characteristics comparable to those in contemporary runaway slave ads (Butts 2006). The high level of

surveillance of free blacks in York County in concert with requirements to carry identification papers and present them upon request, undeniably limited the possibility of experiencing liberty and autonomy outside of enslavement. In addition, they were subject to "...a web of legal restrictions..." that inhibited their ability to conduct business and produce capital (Schweninger 1992). Clearly, African Americans were subject to a high level of control by white Virginians whether they were considered free or not (see Guild 1936).

Nevertheless, both enslaved and free watermen (including oysterman) enjoyed some liberties simply due to the nature of their work. Through their labor on the York River and its adjacent creeks, they gained entree to a social network that extended along the full length of the Chesapeake Bay spanning two states (Maryland and Virginia). As will be discussed in Chapter 7, the material culture at Charles' Corner demonstrates that this mid-Atlantic connection continued well into the twentieth century. The watermen's access to boats as a form of transportation also made them ideal participants in the Underground Railroad (Morgan 1998, Johnson et al. 1998) and their role as conveyers of information, people, and material, and their skills as watermen remained just as essential after Emancipation.

Charles' Corner and the Civil War

The Peninsula Campaign of the Civil War was initiated by the Union Army in March 1862 in order to capture Richmond, the capital of the Confederacy, by moving up the peninsula from Fort Monroe in Hampton. Williamsburg Road served as the main

transportation route between Yorktown and Williamsburg and also forms one-half of the intersection that defines Charles' Corner (Figure 4.1). In May, this passage proved to be a stumbling block for both the Union and Confederate armies due to spring rains which had saturated the road and slowed advancing soldiers in the mire (Marks 1864).



Figure 4.1: Map showing a representation of Charles' Corner as it existed during the Civil War. Structures marked with an "N" represent African American settlements on Dr. Tinsley's (written here as "Tinsler") former plantation. Note the location of Charles' property and Cheesecake Church later to become Cheesecake Cemetery (Worret c.1864).

During the war, the precarious conditions on Williamsburg Road ultimately required Confederate soldiers to leave cumbersome tools of war behind in order to make headway (Cudworth 1866, Marks 1864, Wittenberg 1999). A report by the *New York Daily Tribune* described the following scene upon the retreat of Confederate soldiers from Yorktown:

It was not until after sunrise that the last of the Rebel army, composed of cavalry, passed through Williamsburg. They left one large gun in their works; abandoned a splendid brass piece on the road, with two caissons; strewn every rod of their path with muskets, bayonets, knapsacks, blankets, and overcoats; littered the way with all the wreck and ruin of a beaten and demoralized army in full flight from imaginary as well as real terrors. There was a harvest for the blacks who had not been driven in coffles by their owners to Richmond. From all parts they alighted upon this abandoned property, much of it new and valuable, fresh from the Commissary's stores, and left upon the roadside in wagons only because it impeded flight. The blacks of Williamsburg are rich in "portable property" to-day. [1862]

Although the movement of soldiers on both sides was hindered by environmental factors, the Confederate Army managed to retreat to Richmond and the Union army steadily gained control of strategic areas along Virginia's lower peninsula (Voegeli 2003, Morton 1953).

As Confederate and Union soldiers passed through towns, residents were subject to a change in occupation overnight as well as destructive fires set by both armies, most prominently in Hampton and Richmond (Marten 2000:144). The *New York Daily Tribune* passage also highlights the fact that many enslaved laborers were abandoned on the plantations by landowners, leaving them with little to no provisions which required them to find resources at any cost. In November of 1862, Mrs. Munford, a resident of Williamsburg, wrote to Union General Naglee asking for assistance, stating "I have been deprived by the soldiers, and negroes, of all means of obtaining fuel for myself, and family. The soldiers took my wagon, and mules; and the negroes my yoke and oxen." She also expresses concern that unless there is "...radical change made in the government of these people [runaway negroes] before the winter sets in, that the white inhabitants, particularly defenseless ladies like myself, will suffer severely." Similar personal letters and historical accounts from this time period emphasize the general lawlessness that

followed both Confederate and Union soldiers through the lower peninsula, leaving residents both resentful and unstable in their wake.

However, this time was also an opportune one for African American families to exercise their ability to move about freely outside of the plantation. It is estimated that between 40,000 to 70,000 slaves fled to Union-held areas on the peninsula possibly to take advantage of available resources but also with the promised hope of freedom (Philadelphia Inquirer 1866, Engs 2004) (Figure 4.2). Some young enslaved men, such as Edward Radcliff, left plantations on the lower peninsula and enlisted in the Union army (Heinatz 2006a, Fuke 1994). African American families seeking refuge established temporary camps on the outskirts of Union strongholds, which included Hampton, Yorktown, Fort Monroe and Fort Magruder (Armstrong 1874, Talbot 1969) although their fate remained unclear until President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863. Even though the Emancipation Proclamation signaled the President's intent, slavery was not legally abolished until the thirteenth amendment was passed in 1865 (Hays 1908, Morton 1953, Engs 2004).



Figure 4.2: *Yorktown, Virginia (vicinity). Group of contrabands at Allen's farm house near Williamsburg Road, May 1862.*

The Union army was ill-prepared for the flood of formerly enslaved families seeking refuge on the Peninsula, and struggled to provide food and housing, albeit temporary (Jordan 1995). Generals with the Union Army seized plantation properties surrounding Williamsburg and Yorktown, classifying them as either “abandoned” or “confiscated” under the rubric of Reconstruction’s Confiscation Acts, and began to relocate freedpeople into housing on designated lots (Cope 1863, Quarstein and Rouse 1996). The housing was hastily constructed with whatever materials were available:

...General Isaac J. Wistar, the commanding officer, and his engineers laid out and constructed a village of about four hundred crude cabins for the freedmen. This village, near the national cemetery [Yorktown] was constructed of slabs and logs from the nearby woods and bore the appropriate name, Slabtown. By the end of 1863 another town, with a school and meeting house, was under construction about four miles above Yorktown on the York River. An acre or more of land was assigned with each house, a fact which gave to the town the name of Acreville (now Lackey). By 1865 there were in this place 1,001 people engaged chiefly in gardening, fishing and oystering. [Morton 1953:419]

These small settlements were intended to serve as “government farms” similar to those in Maryland, Hampton, and Alexandria (Reidy 1987, Fuke 1994, Engs 2004). Records indicate that property surrounding Yorktown was rented or leased in acre lots to freedpeople by the government in exchange for money or a portion of their crops (Wilder 1865, Armstrong and Ludlow 1864).

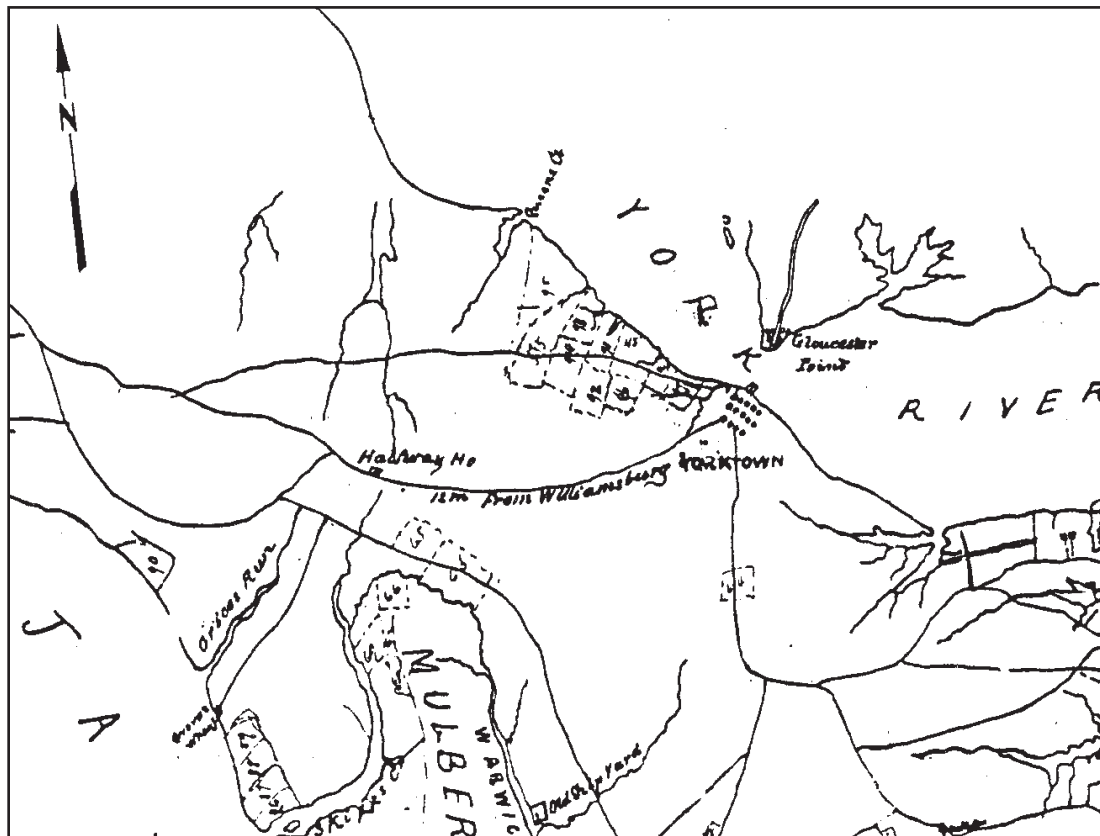


Figure 4.3: Map Showing the Position of Government Farms. 1st District Negro Affairs, Department of Virginia and North Carolina. Lots 91 and 92 are identified as the Tinsley's property. (c.1864).

Two of the confiscated plantations were owned by the Tinsley family; and on February 12, 1864, the properties were officially listed as “abandoned” and seized by General Butler (Anonymous 1865) (Figure 4.3). By this time, freedpeople were either already living on the land or were directed to settle on the property. Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (Freedmen’s Bureau) records from September 1865 show that the 78 tenants were residing on Tinsley farm in exchange for cash and / or bushels of shelled corn (Anonymous 1865). An 1865 Census of the Colored Population in York County recorded 367 women, men, and children living on the Tinsley farms, none of whom used Tinsley as their last name (Freedmen’s Bureau) (Figure 4.4).

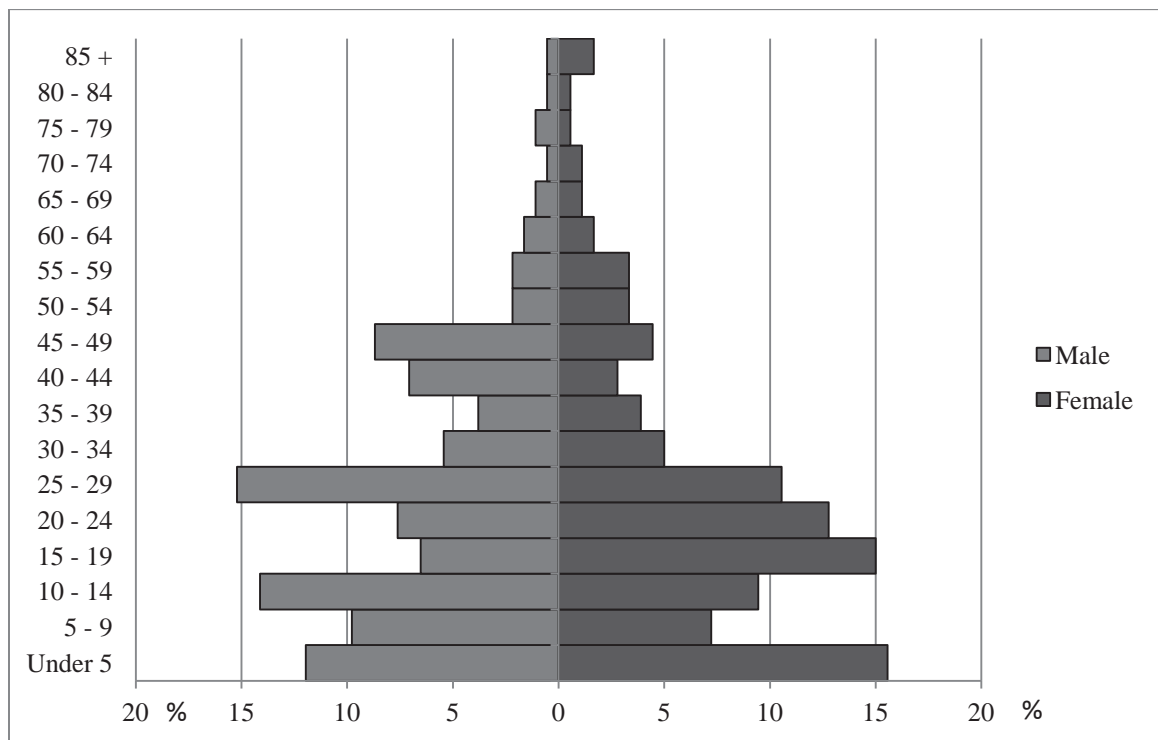


Figure 4.4: Demographic Profile of residents at Tinsley Farm in 1865 (source: Freedmen’s Bureau 1865).

Several factors make it impossible to definitively tie those who had been enslaved at Tinsley plantation to the settlement that was established in the area after Emancipation. The slave censuses of 1850 and 1860 did not record individuals' names and there was a high rate of mobility among freedpeople after the Peninsula Campaign. Common last names recorded on the census for Tinsley farms in 1865 include Roberts, Randall (Randal), Banks, Wallace, Payne, Redcross, Hunley, and Washington. Many of these family names were still present in the area fifty years later and will be discussed further in Chapter 6. The census also provides a record of occupations for 108 people, only three of whom were women (Table 4.1). Undoubtedly, women directly contributed to the household economy through wage labor (e.g. as oyster shuckers, laundresses, seamstresses) or through food preparation, child care, and gardening although the census takers were likely preoccupied with men as the "head of household."

Table 4.1: Recorded Occupations at Tinsley Farm from the *Census of the Colored Population in York County, 1865* (Freedmen's Bureau).

Occupation	Number of Individuals
Farmer	67
Oysterman	20
Farmer + Oysterman	6
Carpenter	4
Blacksmith	2
Engineer	2
Barkeeper	1
Seamstress	1 (female)
School Teacher	1
Laborer	1 (female)
Works Land	1 (female)
Shoemaker	1
School Teacher	1

The camps continued to provide a modicum of safety and security for freedpeople for nearly five years until the end of the Civil War and the onset of Reconstruction. During this period, the status of former slaves remained uncertain, and they were referred to variously as “refugees,” “fugitives,” “contrabands,” or “runaways” (Jordan 1995, Morton 1953, Fuke 1994, Talbot 1969, Reidy 1987). It was not until the fourteenth amendment was adopted in 1868 that African Americans were considered citizens of the United States (Appendix 1). However, conditions in the camps and on government farms contributed to a general decline in health for residents due to inadequate sanitation, insufficient access to clean water, poor diet, and crowded living quarters. At least two sources state that, during this time, newly freedpeople subsisted solely on a diet of pork and corn (Reyburn 1893, Thorpe 1907, Washington 1907). Dr. Reyburn, reporting on diseases for those who sought medical help through the Freedmen’s Bureau in northern Virginia and Washington D.C., cited typhoid as being the most frequently fatal, while malaria, especially in cases near Yorktown, was the most common. The camp environment undoubtedly contributed to the recorded high rates of smallpox, typhoid, diarrhea, and dysentery. Reyburn attributed the noticeable decline in illness to the fact that people began to move out of the camps either voluntarily or by force.

The need to supply freedpeople with basic necessities was also greatly underestimated. Charitable Quaker organizations in Philadelphia were anxious to donate books, slate, and other items for education but, in return, received letters from teachers that people were in desperate need of clothing (Howland 1863, The Friend 1863, Collins 1863, Thorpe 1907). Margaret Newbold Thorpe remarked on the lack of resources at the settlement surrounding Fort Magruder, whose population she estimated to be around 300

people. In order to compensate for a lack of garments available for distribution, the teachers cut up wool blankets and fashioned them into clothes (Thorpe 1907).

Conditions in the camps and settlements were difficult at best but there is ample evidence in the historical narratives that residents made due with the resources at hand. The repurposing of materials was a key aspect of the freed families' resourcefulness after the war. Sara Carter, a visitor to the area in March 1866 traveled from Fort Monroe to Acretown and recorded her observations. As she entered one of the cabins near Yorktown, Carter describes:

...one -roomed huts, often no window and the door, low. Saw aunt Lethe and pitied uncle Jesse whose heap of ragged bed clothes took up small space on the earth-floor, a box completing this furniture.... It may have been aunt Lethe whose bed was nicely draped with a coverlid made of pieces of soldiers' overcoats, picked up when opportunity offered... Their accommodations were superior to those elsewhere in the settlement; the woman was a tailoress ... [1866:6]

In this case, the seamstress was able to use her skills in order to create basic necessities from the scraps of war.

Even when freed families were constructing a home, the limited availability of supplies required practicality above all else. Before erecting a home, families first had to establish a suitable location for a hearth and chimney, allowing families to cook meals and stay warm. Carter remarked upon this necessity as she arrived in another nearby settlement:

As we drew near Acre-Town..., the appearance of the country could be described by no more fitting word than "desolation." Acre Town is built on sandy soil, in acre lots, hence its name. As we curiously observed the rude houses here the driver informed us that the chimney (not infrequently made of barrels, one above another) was built first, and if it drew well, the house was added. [1866:3]

A similar decision-making process developed in Hampton, where families established temporary structures and lean-tos adjacent to the still-standing chimneys remaining after the city was burned by both Confederate and Union armies (Figure 4.5) (Cope 1863, Quarstein 1997, Carter 1866, Marten 2000:138).



Figure 4.5: Slabtown in Hampton, 1864

Newly freed families were now able to use their skills, which had been exploited during enslavement, in order to provide for their families and establish their own homes. The versatility of African Americans was not lost on Reverend Marks who stated that “...the negro has ... a shrewd aptitude for acquiring useful arts which throws the whites into the shade” (1864:90). These trades included oystering, blacksmithing, sewing, carpentry, construction, agriculture, and laundering. Sarah Carter’s observation of “...plenty of oyster and vegetable stands” run by African Americans throughout

Hampton (Carter 1866:3) demonstrates that even small gardens served as a form of subsistence and provided a means for cash income. Yet they were still beset by opportunists who exploited the circumstances of war. In his description of a free black family in northern Virginia (Alexandria), Marks states that they had bought:

...ten acres of land upon which they were living; and after clearing it, planted some trees, and made the garden. Before the war they succeeded very well in sustaining themselves by raising vegetables for the market; but now the soldiers stole at night their tomatoes, cabbages, potatoes, and fruit, and reduced them to the necessity of selling pies and cakes in camps, and washing for officers. [Marks 1864:92-93]

Overall, freedpeople were demonstrating an outstandingly strong-willed resolve to recover and persevere. In 1866, the Philadelphia Inquirer reported that “(t)he capacity of the freedmen to take care of themselves, even under adverse circumstances, is best shown in the southeastern part of the State [Virginia]”, citing the extremely low rate of reliance on Government aid.

Reconstruction

The establishment of the Freedmen’s Bureau in March 1865 began to alleviate some of the difficult conditions (Du Bois 1992 (1935):225). The Freedmen’s Bureau coordinated with Northern institutions, including a Quaker organization called The Friends’ Association of Philadelphia, to provide education for both adults and children on the lower peninsula. Beginning in 1865, the Friends’ Association sent young women to teach at four schools between Williamsburg and Yorktown along the York River (Table 4.2) (Brown 1865a-c, Brown 1866a-b, Thorpe 1907, Morton 1953). Two of these schools

(Indian Field Farm and Warren Farm) would have been readily accessible to, and thus the most likely to be attended by, the residents of Tinsley Farm.

Table 4.2: Statistics from schools led by the Friends’ Society of Philadelphia, located near Tinsley Farm from November 1865 – February 1866 (source: Brown 1865 a-c, Brown 1866 a-b).

Location of School	Number of Teachers	Whole Number of Scholars	Average Attendance
Indian Field Farm	1	105	72
Slabtown	4	388	349
Acretown	2	176	183
Warren Farm	1	50	47

Both the Freedmen’s Bureau and the Quaker teachers were driven to instill a “...feeling of self-respect and independence...” in newly freedpeople that they were certain did not already exist (Thorpe 1907:51, also see Reidy 1987). General Samuel Armstrong who had served in the Civil War as a Colonel and led the 8th United States Colored Troops (UCST) eventually worked for the Freedmen’s Bureau and was assigned to the district that included York County (Talbot 1969). The wife of General Armstrong, observed that just after the war...“(t)he physical destitution was so great that no charity, however broad, could do more than afford superficial relief, and it soon became evident that, on every account, the best help for these people was that which soonest taught them to help themselves” (Armstrong 1874: 20). Armstrong eventually went on to found the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute and developed the curriculum in order to perpetuate a system of self-reliance.

Even so, those who were charged with educating freedpeople often spoke despairingly of their students. Margaret Newbold Thorpe, who served as a teacher at Fort Magruder, kept a journal of her experiences which provides an enlightening description of the peninsula after the war. Upon her arrival, Thorpe observed that the children were polite and obedient with her "...but with each other they were like snarling puppies, not so much from ill humor as the result of a training that has taught them neither self respect or respect for anyone but those with white skin" (Thorpe 1907:7). Comparisons between freedpeople and animals, similar to Thorpes', are pervasive in post-Emancipation literature even among those who would be considered benefactors.

Still, it is clear that African Americans were genuinely grateful for access to resources denied to them during enslavement and were anxious to exercise opportunities afforded to them in freedom. Thorpe also described one of her night scholars, an older man who walked six miles daily to and from the school:

After the Ku Klux came into our neighborhood, this old man always came armed with sword and gun, both so large, clumsy and rusty we concluded they were relics of the Revolution. The weapons would be carefully placed in the corner of the room, the Primer taken from the pocket, and the poor old white head bent over its pages as he patiently spelled the words over and over, and his triumph when he mastered one was most touching. Often he would say "Isn't this a blessed privilege? Many a time I have been whipped for being found with a book, for I always wanted to learn to read." [1907:13]

The constant threat of violence continued to weigh heavily over Reconstruction and educators as well as educational institutions were often targets. Freedmen's Bureau agents and visitors from the North providing services were also subject to harassment and violent vengeance by white Virginians (Philadelphia Inquirer 1866, Thorpe 1907).

In 1865, under President Andrew Johnson, antebellum plantation landholders began appealing the government for the return of their property. One of these properties, “Indian Field” on the York River, had been used by the by the Freedmen’s Bureau and Friends’ Society to educate and house over 100 freedpeople (Brown 1865a-c, Brown 1866a-b, Morton 1953). After the landowner signed a statement attesting to the fact that he understood and acknowledged the President’s Emancipation Proclamation (Winfield 1865), the antebellum ownership was restored. Freedman Bureau records indicate that Tinsley Farms was returned to the Tinsleys, likely through the same process, on October 20, 1865 by order of Colonel O. Brown (Wilder 1865). Estimates from the Freedmen’s Bureau in 1866 estimated that they had restored antebellum ownership for 2,198 acres in York County alone (Wilder 1866).

For some freedpeople this outcome meant that they could stay if they paid rent, but others were forced to move off of the property altogether. However, the antebellum landowners likely found themselves financially unable to manage their plantations without enslaved labor and were forced to rent or sell property to the African American families that had already settled in the area. Mrs. Matilda Carter, who had been enslaved in Newport News, was interviewed for the WPA projects in 1937 and explained the process by which President Johnson returned land to the antebellum owners:

After Lincoln, Johnson went in office. Things sho change den. Johnson give de rebels’ lan’ back to em an’ give em all dey privileges what dey had fo’ de war. One day a committee of three men came around. Twas Jeff Sinclair, a big red rebel, Rev’en Taylor, de firs’ Negro preacher of de Firs’ Baptis’ Church. Rev’en Taylor he was de mos’ powerful colored man in town, an’ a officer too. Dese men went to all de Negroes houses – mine too, an’ made de people sign a paper sayin’ dey property wasn’t deirs. Dey couldn’t buy it, so dey had to pay ten dollars a year rent fo’ livin’ on de lan. Rev’en Taylor was dar to help to make folks sign. What he said to a Negro was law. [Perdue et al. 1976:69]

Those who had been enslaved on the same land that they were now being evicted from expressed a deep sense of injustice (Talbot 1969). Freed families being evicted from Warren Farm in March 1867 balked, stating that they did not want to leave because “...the land was theirs, they had toiled on it all of their lives, without wages” (Thorpe 1907:57). Residents of Edisto Island in South Carolina recognized the inherent power differential of land ownership and petitioned President Andrew Johnson to convey its importance:

...we who have been abused and oppressed For many long years not to be allowed the Privilege (sic) of purchasing land But be subject To the will of these large Land owners? God forbid, Land monopoly (sic) is injurious to the advancement of the course of freedom, and if Government Does not make some provision by which we as Freedmen can obtain a Homestead, we have not bettered our condition. [Berlin et al. 2000 (1986):40]

However, Southern white society was reluctant to see land ownership among African Americans due to its direct relationship with social betterment, voting, and economic advancement.

For many African Americans in the South, the end of Emancipation would have been the beginning of a lifetime of sharecropping, tenancy, and debt. However, the residents of the lower peninsula were afforded a brief period of time starting when Union soldiers passed through the area in 1862 before antebellum land ownership began to be restored in 1865 and 1866 that may have allowed just enough time for African Americans to gain a financial foothold. By 1869, a Virginia Gazette article remarked that “(u)pwards of 500 farms, varying in size, are now offered for sale in Virginia. Prices from \$5 to \$40 per acre. Many of these farms are situate (sic) on the York, James, Mattopony, and Pamunkey rivers. Every conceivable soil is represented. The lands are adapted to the

growth of wheat, corn, cotton, tobacco, peanuts, grass, etc.” Although many families may not have been prepared to buy land at this point, they were certainly renting and, more importantly, saving.

While newly freed families were scrambling to support themselves financially, they were bombarded with advice and information on assimilation into American citizenry. Several groups, such as the True Reformers, advocated a policy of self-reliance and emphasized that African Americans should not look to white society for assistance. The True Reformers, created and sustained by members of the Baptist Church encouraged temperance and emphasized that the amount of money spent on alcohol would be better off saved and used in another fashion (Watkinson 1989). The *True Southerner*, a Hampton-based newspaper intended for African American audiences and edited by a “...former Union officer and Methodist minister...” (Quartstein and Rouse 1996:49, also see Penn 1891, Hucles 1992) issued the following “word of advice” to newly freed families in 1865:

Corn is now ripe and ready for market and the oyster and fish season have just commenced and we advise our colored friend to go to work with renewed energy. Let your corn be saved, sold and your money taken care of. By hard work and energy you can make and save money. Those who have crops should go to work and save them. Those who have not should catch oysters and fish and sell them and above all things, do not invest your hard earned money on ginger cakes, or worse, in whisky. If you expect to hold any position in society you must save your own money to provide for your families and to educate yourselves and children. If you would have the rights of freedmen, you must make yourselves worthy of these rights. Many of you are industrious and frugal. Many of you have stores or have entered business in some other way for yourselves and have made money. See that you save what you have made and that you increase your business and do not neglect to lend a helping hand to your brother who has been less fortunate than yourself. But remember that the best assistance you can give him is to give him work. Advise the shoemakers and other mechanics to go to work at their trades. If they have not tools,

furnish them for them and let them pay you when they can but do not hand your money to shiftless drunken fellows to whom it will be of no service and who will never make you a return. Keep constantly in view the fact that freedom means to labor for yourselves and that your future success depends more upon your own exertions than upon anything the white man can do for you. Work hard; save your money; educate yourselves, and trust in God who has delivered you from bondage to provide you the further rights and privileges (sic) to make you men among men and independent citizens of America.

Keenly aware of the visual cues provided by material culture, the American Tract Society issued a series of pamphlets containing “advice to freedmen” urging them not to spend unwisely by purchasing “expensive clothes or rich food” (Brinckerhoff 1980 (1864): 9) but to focus on those items that would send a message to visitors of “freedom”:

Now, when a stranger approaches your house, let him notice a pretty gardenspot, with flowers and vegetables, all well kept. When he enters, let his eye be cheered by seeing how nice everything looks, how well swept the floor is, how the tin things shine. Let him notice a few books, with marks of study or reading upon them....As he glances around, it would be pleasant if he could see a little picture here and there hanging upon the wall, or a flower-pot with a pretty pink or rose blooming in it, showing that you have a liking for such things. He would say “Well, this looks like freedom. I think you must be quite a happy family. [Waterbury 1980(1864): 26]

The text is simultaneously condescending and paternalistic and brutally frank in demonstrating that freedpeople's lives would be scrutinized for evidence of adaptation to free society and that their lives would be proof of Emancipation's justification and success. An additional subtext also reminds freedpeople not to play into the “lazy” and “shiftless” stereotype, thus vindicating critics of Emancipation.

This period of history, in particular, is beset by a series of long-awaited advancements and drastic setbacks for African Americans. James Alvord, the Freedman's

Bureau's Superintendent of Education, clearly felt that Reconstruction was serving its intended purpose based on his observations of the increasing purchasing power among African Americans. In 1870, Alvord relayed: "I have found the following history of the Freedmen's labor: The first year they worked for bare subsistence; second year they bought stock – mules, implements, &c.; third year many rented lands; and now, the fourth year, large numbers are prepared to buy" (19). Just as there were instances of economic progress, freedpeople were simultaneously becoming ensnared in the sharecropping and tenancy system throughout the South. In addition, legislators in Virginia sparred over the right for African American men to vote. Free men in Virginia were able to vote for the first time in the 1867 election, and their right to vote was upheld by the Underwood Constitution in 1869. Nevertheless, the poll tax was reinstated soon after, which required voters to be landowners, with the intent to disenfranchise African Americans. Ultimately, the poll tax prerequisite was removed from the Constitution in 1882.

Faith and religion provided a significant amount of solace in disheartening times. Thorpe ended the account of her time in Virginia with a tribute to the freed families that she worked with, stating that "(u)nder a mountain load of discouragement, sickness and poverty they constantly pressed forward on the road to learning and right living, and they taught us many a lesson in patience, faith, hope, and trust" (1907:111). However, economic advancement and independence were only two facets of freedom's manifestation. Joyous community events including marriages, marches, and baptisms offered an ideal distraction from some of the difficulties encountered and provided an opportunity for solidarity.

Records demonstrate that Emancipation Day parades were an important celebratory event for African Americans in the South. Longtime Yorktown resident Lucy O'Hara provided her recollection of the annual procession:

To begin the celebration, a tall stately man riding horseback would lead a parade up Yorktown Hill along Ballard Street. He was followed by other men, women and children – keeping step to the music of a local band and carrying picnic baskets. They were always dressed up in their Sunday-best clothes, and I often remember thinking I never had seen so much red, yellow and pink ribbon on heads and hats in all my life!...Everything was very orderly on 'Emancipation Day,' though, and the citizens of the town cheerfully gave way to the marchers and spectators knowing it to be their day to celebrate and enjoy. After the parade and ceremonies were over on Main Street, the participants would go on to their own cemetery back of the U.S. National Cemetery. They would hold a memorial service and lay flowers on the graves. [O'Hara and James 1981:30-31]

Historian Martha McCartney describes a similar scene in Williamsburg, where the parade route started and ended at the Odd Fellows Hall and passed by the College of William and Mary along the way (McCartney 1997). However, the parades clearly served as much more than a method of commemoration but also provided an opportunity for African Americans to affirm their freedom and unity in a public display. Frederick Douglass understood the significance of the event and emphasized that "Emancipation Day...ought to be a national celebration in which all blacks – the low and the mighty – could claim a new and secure social identity" (Blight 2000: 15).

The significance of these demonstrations was not lost on white residents either. Hucles (1992) describes a riot in nearby Norfolk in April 1866 that surrounded "...a parade celebrating the passage of the Civil Rights Act...As the marchers made their way to a field where they planned to hear speeches, they encountered angry whites who jeered and threw bricks." The incident quickly escalated resulting in death and retaliatory

violence (1992:551). With the importance of the events as a means for demonstrating solidarity, pride, and humanity against a hostile environment, it is not surprising that the celebratory atmosphere of Emancipation Day Parades gradually gave way to the solemn protest marches and civil rights demonstrations in the 1960s.

Post-Reconstruction

As Reconstruction came to an end in 1877 (Foner 1988), property claims had been settled and Freedmen's Bureau offices disappeared, the landscape and social organization on Virginia's lower peninsula had been permanently transformed. Some of the men who had served in the United States Colored Troops returned to the area including Edward Ratcliffe, who settled at Charles' Corner after his return (Heinatz 2006b). Gradually, African American neighborhoods developed at several loci between Williamsburg and Yorktown including Lackey, Halstead's Point, Magruder, Charles' Corner, Slabtown (Uniontown) and Grove (McDonald et al. 1992, Deetz 2002). In addition, the absence of beneficent organizations and federal officials meant an end to the detailed regional assessments provided by Bureau offices, field agents, and educational envoys. As a result, there is an abrupt decline in documents providing information about the lives of African American residents of the lower peninsula.

Emerging in the place of such documents were generalized texts about the "Negro Problem" in the United States authored by sociologists, scientists, and historians. Authors attributed the "problem" to various causes but could generally found it to be attributable to either an inherent biological inferiority of African Americans (Bruce 1889,

Washington 1903, Pickett 1909, Eggleston 1913) or social causes such as poverty and a lack of education (DuBois 1899). These books and articles demonstrate America's concern with the "...adjustment, adaptation, and the compatibility of Afro-Americans with the white world in which they were compelled to live" (J. H. Franklin 2000:11). Well-known African American scholars E. Franklin Frazier, W.E.B. DuBois, and Frederick Douglass also provided analyses of the social and economic conditions. Du Bois framed the "real Negro problem" as "...the poverty of and degradation of the country Negro, which means the mass of Negroes in the United States" (1899:401). Often, these assessments were intended to advocate for better and more extensive education. However, some of these texts were authored by budding eugenicists in an overt attempt to demonstrate racial inferiority and incite fear in the white population. In his book on the *Plantation Negro as a Freeman: Observations on his Character, Condition, and Prospects in Virginia*, Philip Bruce (1889) simultaneously emphasized an increase in the population of freedpeople and their continued moral degradation.

Such oppressive social scrutiny undoubtedly contributed to the "double consciousness," identified by W.E.B. Du Bois, as endemic to African American society (2003(1903)). It also clearly fueled various manifestations of creative resistance that simultaneously met, exceeded, and defied the expectations of white Americans. While discussing the legacy of enslaved Africans buried in New York, Michael Blakey emphasizes that:

...those American progenitors adapted to survive by affecting European and Euro-American expectations of them with one hand while transforming those cultural expressions into more traditional and rebellious meanings that only they could fully understand and use with the other hand. At such a nexus we find the spark of creativity, transformative culture, and the struggle for self-determination under adverse conditions. [1998:58]

Freedpeople, faced with similar expectations to remain subservient and agreeable, likely used the same coping mechanisms outside of enslavement.

Summation

The end of the war and the end of slavery provided both long-awaited opportunities and undesirable consequences for Virginia residents. As is usual in the case of war, the 1862 Peninsula Campaign exhausted local resources, disrupted existing communities, and caused the relocation of thousands of freedpeople. Firsthand accounts from journalists, army personnel, and white residents describe the situation on the Peninsula as disrupted and chaotic (Munford 1862, New York Daily Tribune 1862, Cudworth 1866). Eyewitness statements depict freedpeople scavenging items for reuse from the detritus of war and relying on the federal government for necessary assistance. These conditions continued for another three years while the Civil War dragged on, and before governmental aid and relief arrived, albeit short-lived, in the form of Reconstruction and the Freedmen's Bureau.

The war and ensuing Reconstruction helped cultivate a long-held resentment among some southern whites regarding the "war of aggression" that effectively eliminated family wealth and lands that were generated from, and sustained through,

centuries of enslaved labor. During Reconstruction, the government and several charitable organizations had provided essential resources to African American families on the lower peninsula, allowing them to establish homes with small gardens and transition into a life of pay for labor. The attenuation of Reconstruction and subsequent withdrawal of Federal protection and aid from the South dealt a devastating blow to newly freed families just starting to get hold of the essential items of daily life, leaving them vulnerable to an openly antagonistic and racist climate.

Following Emancipation, African Americans were subject to intense public scrutiny for signs of integration into free society. Observers clearly used material culture as one of the standards by which to assess economic conditions and provide a barometer for “success,” an approach that is similar to many of the archaeological studies discussed in Chapters 2 and 3. Artifacts do tell us about living conditions and the extent to which residents’ participated in consumerism. Nevertheless, the absence of material culture in a person’s life can be representative of both oppressive control and liberated expression. For example, self-liberated African Americans living in the Great Dismal Swamp were able to create a community yet left a nearly imperceptible record on the landscape perhaps with the intent of rejecting manufactured goods (Sayers 2008). In other cases, the archaeological record abounds with evidence of participation in American popular culture (Mullins 1999c, Singleton 2001a). Collectively, artifacts and archaeological features can provide compelling stories about the manipulation of observers’ expectations.

Ultimately, the Civil War was a monumental battle that helped define the ideological and ethical trajectory of the United States. After Emancipation, Frederick Douglass emphasized that the social issues compelling the Civil War should not be

forgotten and believed that history serves as "... a primary source of identity, meaning, and motivation" (Blight 2000: 17). However, identity, meaning, and motivation can manifest themselves in bitter and complicated ways. Fifty years after Emancipation, and at the onset of the United States' involvement in World War I, Charles' Corner began to re-enter the documentary record. Although Charles' Corner residents had made dramatic accomplishments, they were also forced to relive experiences that they probably hoped they had left behind.

Chapter 5: Historical Background: The Progressive Era, World War I, and Displacement

Relocation determined the alpha and omega of Charles' Corner's existence. In 1918, after creating a neighborhood together over the course of fifty years, residents of Charles' Corner were notified that the government was commandeering their property. Land owners had been continually improving and investing in their properties with the intention of keeping it in the family for future generations. Regardless of the monetary compensation provided by the government for their material loss, residents were subject to long-term social, economic, and emotional effects. Consequently, the forced eviction was undoubtedly disheartening and traumatic and it caused additional negative repercussions when considered within the historical context provided in this chapter.

The settlement around Charles' Corner gradually expanded after Reconstruction, incorporating families with members that had been free before the war as well as those that had been enslaved. The overall increase in African American land ownership in York County is reflected in the property purchases at Charles' Corner, which appears to have had two waves of land purchases in the area between the 1880s, and the 1900s (McDonald 1994). Oystering was crucial for economic stability for the area (Figure 5.1), but the once prolific oyster industry began to decline in the decade leading up to the turn of the twentieth century due to a combination of pollution, diseases, and the destructive effects of dredging on the beds (Thom 1901, Wennersten 1981). Historian John Wennersten found that in the area of Newport News and Hampton:

...the decline of the oyster harvest affected the entire region, intensified competition on the water, and accelerated conflicts between tongers and dredgers, watermen and packers, and watermen and police. By 1900 more packing houses on the Chesapeake closed annually than opened...[Wennersten 1981:90]

This downturn may not have had a significant financial impact on Charles' Corner residents who diversified their economy and maintained a cooperative support system. Although they had developed a community that provided many of their needs, they were undoubtedly affected by the broader social issues associated with the Progressive Era.



Figure 5.1: *Hut of oyster fisherman, Chesapeake Bay, near Sherwood, MD USA taken c. November 13, 1905 (Keystone View Company).*

Despite the progress achieved by African Americans in the decades following Emancipation, the incongruously-titled Progressive Era ushered in another onslaught of other social ills, particularly in the South. Families eagerly participated in educational opportunities and acquired land when possible but were abruptly met with systemic racism and legalized segregation. In particular, African American civil rights were met with a series of legal defeats during the late nineteenth century. In 1883, the Supreme Court declared that the Civil Rights Act of 1875 was unconstitutional. Then, in 1896, the Supreme Court decision in the case of *Plessy v. Ferguson* upheld legalized segregation and bolstered the “separate but equal” doctrine (Appendix 1). After Emancipation, African Americans quickly realized that “(t)he issue was no longer freedom and emancipation, but the exercise of that freedom under the law – in short, the conferral of citizenship and the rights appertaining to that status” (Thompson 2000: 167). Churches and social organizations facilitated organized protests in order to agitate for equal rights, including a boycott of segregated streetcars in Richmond, Virginia, in 1904 (Richmond Planet 2000 (1904), also see Brown 2000); however, not all methods of resistance were always so deliberate or transparent (Coclanis and Simon 2003).

At the beginning of the twentieth century, African Americans were subject to a significant number of relocations through the Great Migration, sundown towns, and government acquisition of land. As sociologist Stewart Tolnay explains, the juxtaposition of the start of the Great Migration with World War I was not mere coincidence. The northern labor force was significantly impacted by newly initiated immigration restrictions on eastern Europeans and thus opened up the job market for southerners (2003, see also Heywood and Reidy 2001). Of course, economic and educational

opportunities (Grossman 1991) did not serve as the sole impetus for migration since African Americans were faced with several social factors that potentially prevented them from achieving the quality of life that they would have preferred. Tolnay also notes that in his study of African American migration from southern states between 1910 and 1930 that "...migration was significantly higher in counties that had experienced more black lynchings" (2003:215). In their migration northward, they may have met better conditions in some respects but were still subject to overt hostility and, in some case, race riots resulted from a mutually growing tension (Embree 1942).

Residential segregation provided other means for coping with animosity in the South. Some towns with a dominant white population maintained their status through deliberate exclusion, intimidation, and brutality, particularly after sunset, thus earning the ominous title of "sundown towns" (Loewen 2005). Accordingly, African American settlements similar to Charles' Corner were fairly common throughout the South (see Robinson 1997). During the early twentieth century, the U.S. Department of Labor enlisted W.E. B. Du Bois and William Taylor Thom to provide descriptive reports on the status of specific African American communities in Maryland and Virginia. Their reports included three settlements within 200 miles of Charles' Corner, including an oystering community at Sandy Spring, Maryland (Thom 1901a), Farmville, Virginia (Du Bois 1898), and Litwalton, Virginia (Thom 1901b). In Farmville, Du Bois noted that "... they have their own churches and organizations and their own social life, they read their own books and papers, and their group life touches that of the white people only in economic matters" (1898: 34). All three reports also attempted to gauge the level of hopefulness in each community and their reports varied between optimism, apathy, and despair. At

Sandy Spring, Thom found that “(t)he struggle for existence in the midst of economically competitive and socially antagonistic surroundings has had its saddening- perhaps its hardening- effect upon these people” (1901:101). Although Thom was talking about residents in Maryland, it is clear that they were certainly not isolated from sentiments commonly associated with the South.

The mid-1910s marked the fiftieth anniversary of the Civil War and brought renewed vigor to the persecution of African Americans. *The Birth of a Nation*, a film glorifying the role of the Ku Klux Klan’s vigilante justice in the post-war South, was released to theaters in 1915 and most notably became the first motion picture screened at the White House, for President Woodrow Wilson. The private movie screening likely served as an acknowledgment that the movie drew from President Wilson’s *A History of the American People* (1902) as well as the play *The Clansman*, which was written by a college friend of President Wilson named Thomas Dixon. Dixon wrote the play while living in Gloucester (Dixon 1905, Rouse 1992), located just across the York River from Charles’ Corner. When describing the sociopolitical atmosphere into which *The Birth of a Nation* was released, historian Thomas Cripps states that “(d)espite the Negro’s rising wealth and literacy and the emergence of black reformers, the Wilson years seemed to celebrate racial discrimination, residential segregation, closed ballot boxes, and Jim Crow accommodations” (1993:42). The threat of African American success in addition to political policies that condoned and upheld racist ideologies also seemed to encourage even more brazen attacks on the humanity of African Americans.

Although the health of tenants and sharecroppers remained somewhat tenuous (Rose 1984), the overall health for the African American population had improved and

stabilized since Reconstruction. Of course, the decrease of infant mortality and increase in longevity in the African American population was quickly followed by a latent, if not overt, nervousness and anxiety within white society. It was around this time that eugenics emerged as a modern and scientific way to “...define and control people...” and provided a medium for racist ideologies of biological inferiority to be scientifically validated (Dorr 2006:390). Gregory Dorr, a scholar of both law and history, explains that “(s)outhern physicians found a convenient therapeutic model in eugenics, because it used the imprimaturs of science, preventive medicine, and public health to justify traditional southern social hierarchies based on race, class, and gender distinctions” (2006:363). African Americans were often the explicit or implicit targets of pro-Eugenic arguments since scientists and doctors effectively conflated the byproducts of social and economic ills with inherent biological attributes.

Defending against assaults triggered by science, politics, and popular culture proved difficult due to several deaths and conflicts in African American leadership. After Sojourner Truth passed away in 1883, followed by Frederick Douglass in 1895, and Alexander Crummell in 1898, African Americans turned to two prominent advocates with opposing viewpoints on whether the best path to success was, simply put, vocation or education. Washington, who was educated in Hampton, promoted vocational and technical training in order for African Americans to fill the growing need for workers in the industrial sector. Although his opponents considered him to be an accommodationist, historian John Hope Franklin felt that Washington’s passing in 1915 left a large void in African American leadership that could “...counsel patience and moderation” (1967:455, also see Carroll 2006). W.E. B. Du Bois endorsed higher education and challenged ideas

of racial inferiority through “scientific method and pragmatism” since he felt that “ignorance...was the primary cause of racism and discrimination” (Aldridge 1999:184). Du Bois also served as one of the founders for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909, whose mission statement included securing suffrage, education, and equal rights for African Americans. This kind of political organization was desperately needed to lobby for civil rights, considering the conspicuous lack of African American representatives holding political office. Although Virginia had managed to elect a handful of African American men in the late nineteenth century, those opportunities were effectively eliminated by the turn of the twentieth century (Virginia Writer’s Project 1956).

Essentially, Emancipation had ushered in an era when a racist society attempted to manage African Americans through legislation, science, violence, segregation, and intimidation. However, a lack of consistent leadership at a national level did not prevent opposition or resistance to these attacks. Young African American men on leave or returning from service in World War I were rightfully indignant about having fought for their country only to return to segregated conditions, and they took the opportunity to agitate for equal rights (Heywood and Reidy 2001). In her book, *Passed On*, Karla Holloway reminds readers that “(f)rom 1915 to 1919, more than twenty cities erupted in violence and mayhem, their tragic link being race. These trends forged an ironic cultural relationship between ethnic identity, military service, heroism, and death” (Holloway 2002:67). All of these factors, culminating in riots and demonstrations in favor of equal rights, made white society nervous and uneasy.

This apprehension is very clear on Virginia's lower peninsula, which served as a place of departure and return for several of the armed forces during the war. After reporting on a violent encounter in which a white sailor shot and injured a black sailor in Yorktown, the *Virginia Gazette* offered the commentary that "Negroes around York are said to be growing more impudent and unruly daily.... The returned soldiers appear to be ringleaders in disturbances of this sort, and both white and colored of the better class fear that a serious difficulty will arise soon unless conditions change" (October 9, 1919). There can be no doubt that the author was predicting that a serious violent episode would erupt unless preventative measures were taken, but the question remains regarding the "conditions" that required change.

Presidential Proclamation #1472

Change did impact York County residents via a presidential order just as World War I was nearing its end. President Woodrow Wilson signed a proclamation on 7 August 1918, "...to take over immediately for the United States possession of and title to each and all of the parcels of land..." on the nearly 11,000 acres contained within the described boundaries in order to establish the Yorktown Navy Mine Depot, now known as the Yorktown Naval Weapons Station (Wilson 1918:1) (Appendix 2). An amended version of the proclamation signed on November 2, 1918 describes the appropriation as a "military necessity" to facilitate mine storage and declares that the United States government would provide "just compensation" for the acquired property. Although the extent of the appropriated land was modified during the first four years, it was quickly

finalized as it stands today. The Yorktown Naval Weapons Station property is roughly bounded by the York River to the northeast, King's Creek to the northwest, Route 143 to the southwest, and Old Williamsburg Road to the southeast. These boundaries encompassed the majority African American neighborhoods of Lackey, Halstead's Point, and Charles' Corner (Figure 5.2). Although the Treaty of Versailles (widely recognized as the end of World War I) was signed in June 1919, the Navy continued the process of establishing the Mine Depot and displacing homeowners, citing a long-term need for weapons storage (Bloch 1920).



Figure 5.2: A 1921 USGS quadrangle map of the area between Yorktown and Williamsburg on the lower peninsula with an outline of the established border for the Yorktown Mine Depot. Clusters of homes are visible at Lackey and Halstead's Point in the lower right hand quadrant. Charles' Corner (not labeled) spans both quadrants on the left hand side. All three neighborhoods were primarily African American.

It is difficult to follow the decision-making processes which led to the selection of this specific area of the lower peninsula to house mines. Clearly, the area's strategic location and ease of accessibility were huge draws for the Navy. A.H. Miles, who served as commander of the Naval Mine Depot in the 1920s, authored a detailed history and description of the base in which he stated that the land was:

...conveniently located with respect to the Naval Operating Base at Hampton Roads, the Norfolk Navy Yard, and the fuel bases of the Fifth Naval District. Transportation facilities are unexcelled. The northwest boundary of the depot is formed by the main line of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway and the northeast by the navigable York River accessible to the largest ocean-going vessels. Its location to the westward of Chesapeake Bay, ten miles within the winding mouth of the York River, particularly lends itself to protection from air, land and sea. [ca.1927:229]

Since the arrival of Europeans, the lower peninsula has consistently served as an attractive location for military forts, camps, and installations due to its strategic location and ease of access via land or water. Yorktown's location was a tactical advantage in both the Revolutionary War and the Civil War; and shipyards at Newport News and Norfolk provided safe harbor for battleships used in World War I and World War II. To this day, peninsula residents are still keenly aware of their socioeconomic reliance on the existing active military and intelligence installations, including Camp Peary, Cheatham Annex, Langley Air Force Base, and Fort Eustis.

Undoubtedly, economic factors were part of the location selection process for the Mine Depot. During the early twentieth century, the region's inhabitants were financially struggling through the transition from an agrarian to an industrial economy, and the potential for the Mine Depot to provide jobs proved irresistible. An article in the *Virginia Gazette* demonstrates that the Chamber of Commerce and residents of Williamsburg were

eager for the rumored government installation to be located nearby in order to stimulate the economy and provide employment (August 22, 1918). Moreover, according to Paul Smith, who authored an appendix in the *History of the Yorktown Naval Weapons Station*, the low cost of the land was a significant incentive (1961).

Ultimately, the appropriation of the property had the desired economic impact for the region by providing work and facilitating the transition to an industrial economy. However, it also produced unforeseen consequences for many Peninsula residents. The placement of the Mine Depot effectively cut off the main road between Williamsburg and Yorktown, forcing the thoroughfare to be rerouted around the boundary. It also blocked access to a four-mile swath of the York River shoreline and several hundred acres of hunting grounds that had been publicly accessible. The Bureau of Ordnance received letters from citizens on the lower peninsula asking for camping or fishing rights on the land, which were customarily denied (Daniels 1919), and adjoining neighbors of the Mine Depot became increasingly concerned about the amount of explosives housed on the property (H. Con. Res. 20 1928).

Although nearby residents may have occasionally experienced inconvenience or irritation with the Mine Depot, the displaced property owners and their descendants undoubtedly felt the long-term socioeconomic ripple effect of the government's decision. Consequently, analysis of the disenfranchisement process is critical since African Americans have been, and continue to be, disproportionately affected by displacement on the lower peninsula. Although the remainder of this chapter is a review of the immediate consequences experienced by the Charles' Corner residents, these experiences can be

extrapolated to other communities who have undergone a similar rending from their property.

Assessment and Compensation

The presidential order stipulated that nearly one hundred families, a majority of whom were African American, were obligated to move off of their land within thirty days upon notification of the proclamation (Roosevelt 1918, Virginia Gazette 1918, McDonald et al. 1992). Residents on the commandeered property, which included Charles' Corner, hired attorneys and responded with a petition to the government on 15 November 1918 including signatures representing seventy-six households, asking for an extension of stay through winter until spring (Appendix 3). The petition includes a typed preface stating the purpose for the petition as well as a hand-written letter from a community committee. Both letters describe the hardships created by such a hasty expulsion from the property, including:

- ❖ Unavailability of housing and lumber in the area;
- ❖ Difficulty of moving their families, crops and household materials in winter; and
- ❖ The absence of young men from the households who were in service to the government (Roberts et al. 1918).

One of the most pressing reasons for hardship is not mentioned in the petition but is illustrated in the cover letter provided by their attorney, Frank Armistead, who stated that:

(t)he larger number of these petitioners are negroes, and their homes represent their life savings and it will be a great hardship to them, to have to give up their homes and to be turned out without being first paid for their property...(f)or they will not have anything to secure a new home with until they are paid by the Government. [1918:1]

After receiving the resident's petition, the Secretary of the Navy and the Bureau of Ordnance extended the date of the eviction to April 1919 (Roosevelt 1918). Nevertheless, African American residents must have found the government-initiated eviction to be infuriatingly reminiscent of the property reclamation enforced by President Johnson nearly 50 years earlier as remembered by Ms. Matilda Carter and the residents of Warren Farm (see Chapter 4).

Government assessors were immediately dispatched to appraise properties and provide residents with the perceived value of their property for reimbursement (Figure 5.3). This value was based, in part, on whether the structures were thought to be suitable for Naval officers. In order to arrive at a sum total of worth, assessors considered each structure independently and ascribed a monetary value to each improvement to the property, including hog pens and fruit trees. The detailed property descriptions provide a record of the dimensions for houses and outbuildings as well as the surrounding orchards and gardens. At the time, assessors did not acknowledge timber and oyster beds, which were not only valuable additions to the property but also provided supplementary sources of income. The importance of these resources was made apparent by residents who filed claims for reimbursement of the value for timber on the property as well as oyster beds in adjacent waterways that would no longer be readily accessible.

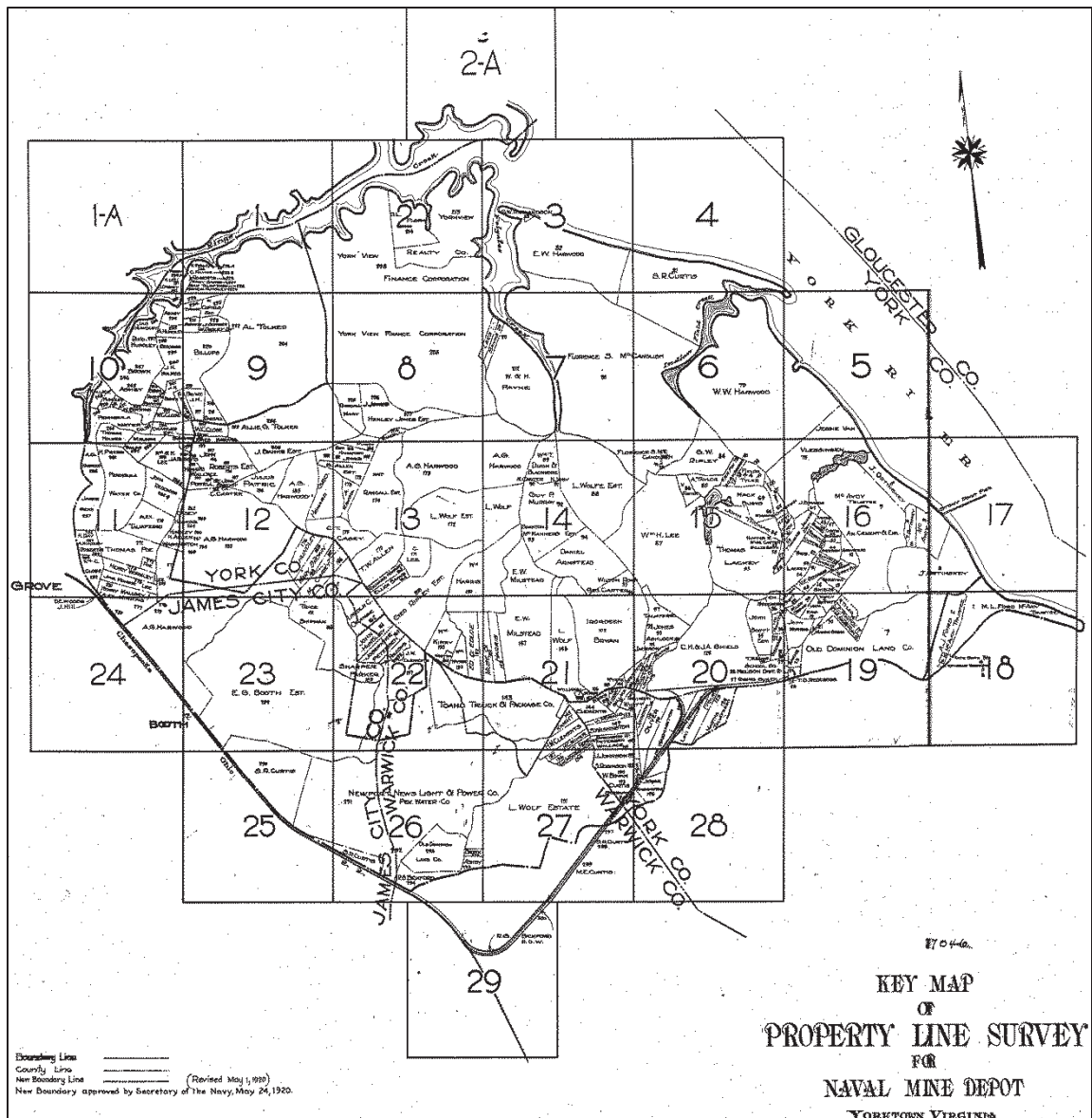


Figure 5.3: Key Map of Property Line Survey for Naval Mine Depot, Yorktown Virginia. Charles' Corner properties are concentrated in sections 9, 10, 11, and 12 (NWSY Public Works).

Among the privately owned homesteads were properties that were intended for public use by the residents of Charles Corner including a church, school, store, cemetery, and fraternal organizations. St. John Baptist Church (Lot #187) (Figure 5.4), was managed by five trustees and claimed a congregation of 500-600 people. The church also claimed purview over Cheesecake Cemetery (Lot #258-C) although they were not

adjacent to each other. Bruton District School House (Lot #253) was located at Charles' Corner; however, it was part of the segregated public school system, which did not provide adequate financial support to schools serving African American students (Morgan 1985). At the time the government took over the property, residents had created the Patron League of Charles' Corner School, saved \$1,000 and bought property from W.H. Roberts (Lot #307) in order to construct a school for African American children, perhaps as a means of accommodating the growing population in the area. A store located on the southwest corner of the main intersection was owned and operated by a white family. Fraternal organizations are also well-represented among the properties. A two-story lodge was constructed for the Knights and Daughters of Tabor (Lot #201) in 1916, although the lodge was communally used for meetings and social events. The United Order of Oddfellows and Household of Ruth purchased $\frac{1}{4}$ acre in 1914 (Lot #193) but had not constructed the planned lodge, so they held their meetings in the lodge on Lot #201.

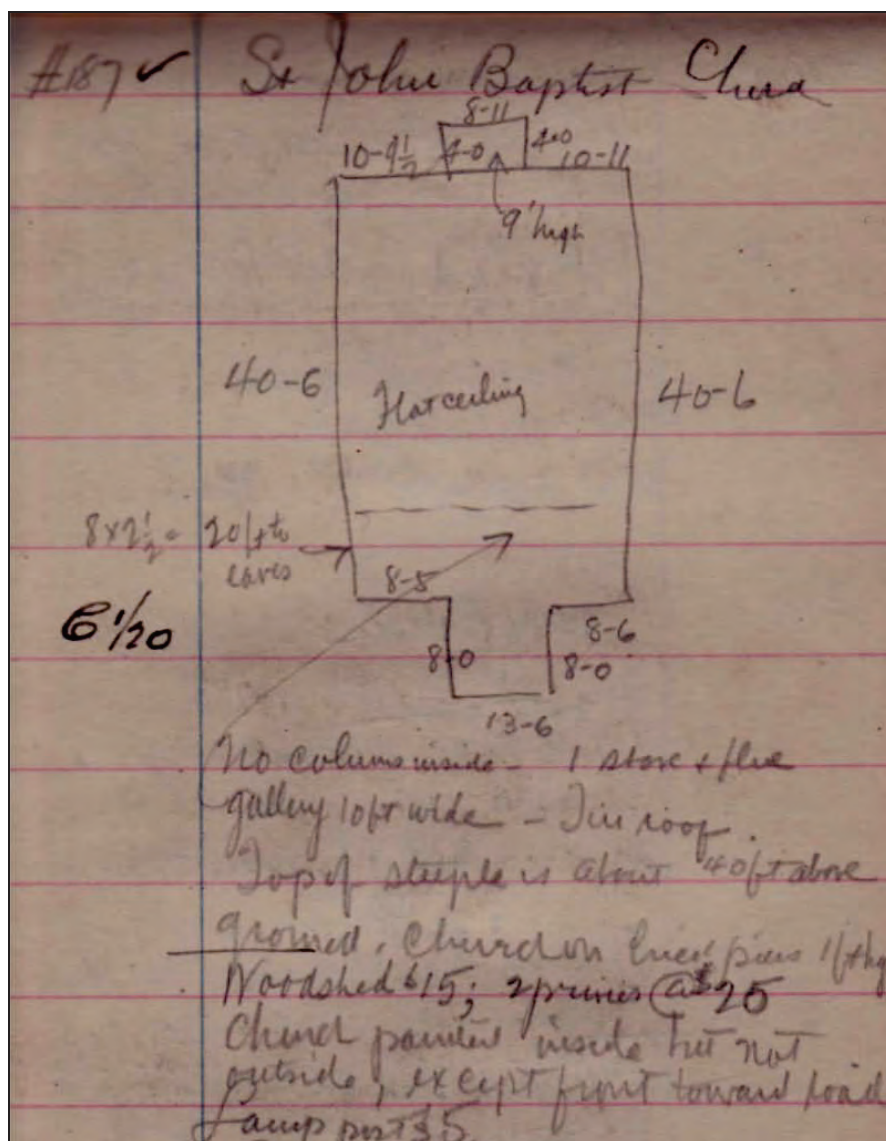


Figure 5.4: Assessor's notes for St. John Baptist Church (Lot #187) at Charles' Corner. Notes indicate that the top of the church steeple reached 40 ft. above ground surface (Cooke 1918:88).

The Board on Valuation of Commandeered Property (BVCP) provided a report to the Secretary of the Navy on March 11, 1920, which stated that approximately 300 parcels had been commandeered and, of those, 235 parcels were owned by African Americans. They also provide the following description of the former residents of Mine Depot property:

A number of these negroes, particularly in the western portion of the tract, have constituted what is known as a free settlement that has been in existence for many years prior to the Civil War. The negro inhabitants within the Mine Depot area are an exceptionally well behaved class of citizens and appear to be genuinely attached to their small holdings...The majority of the tracts in negro ownership are improved with dwellings and the usual out-buildings of a somewhat better character than is generally found among Southern negroes. [BVCP 1920b:7]

In a section titled “Removal of Claimants” the BVCP states that “...the great majority of claimants are negroes that will undoubtedly experience considerable difficulty in locating other places in case they should be removed” because property owners surrounding the mine depot were keenly aware that several hundred families were seeking new places to live and sought to exploit the situation. In the BVCP’s report, they recommended that the “negro claimants” be allowed to stay on their property through the end of the year so that they could plant in spring and harvest in fall. “A plan of this character” would, they state, “...go far towards enabling the various claimants to look around and negotiate for the purchase of new properties without being made the victims of exorbitant prices that they are now being asked for properties suitable for their new homes” (BVCP 1920b:19 – 20). It is clear that the residents who lost their property were not able to purchase the same amount of acreage at a comparable price and thus were moving into a deficit of land and money (Lee 1992, Payne 1992). This clear disadvantage represents only one of the many ways in which the compensation was not providing an equal exchange to landowners.

Although some residents were focused on how and where to relocate, the more pressing issue for others was whether they would be compensated in a timely manner (or compensated at all) for their property. The BVCP also found it difficult to determine compensation for multiple family members improving and living on the same lot. The

Board stated in their report that they had to take into consideration homesteads that had been willed to numerous heirs who, in turn, provided improvements to their portion of the property. In such cases, general agreement and mutual understanding about the division of property clearly took precedent over a formal assessment of property lines or acreage. Instead, families were required to specify, or evenly apportion, the acreage for each heir who would then receive compensation for improvements (BVCP 1920b).

In addition, residents who did not have paper copies of deeds or titles faced the possibility that they might not receive compensation without proof of ownership. York County deed records for 1918 through 1920 include a few antedated deeds for properties which clearly provided an ad hoc record for families who had never registered the land transfer with the county and had access to previous owners. In a November 11, 1922, memorandum, the Bureau of Ordnance states that all property owners would have vacated their properties by the first of January 1923 "...except about a dozen individuals who have not yet been paid for their property – the delay being due to securing clear titles to the land...It happens that those involved are poor negroes without the money in hand to secure new homes, and their eviction would cause some hardship." It is clear that there were, at the very least, a few families who had no savings except for the investments that they made in their property and ran a high risk of becoming unlanded.

A majority of the negotiations for property reimbursement and land access between the government and the residents were resolved by 1922 (Appendix 1) but the acquisition process still remains a bitter memory among reservation descendants. Ultimately, the most persistent sentiment among reservation descendants seems to be that the government did not adequately compensate their families (Lee 1992, Payne 1992).

Some avenues of recourse were open to residents including the opportunity to testify in front of the BCVP regarding the value of their property. In addition, letters providing the assessment and compensation amounts also included a provision from the original proclamation stating that individuals who felt the compensation amount was “unsatisfactory” would be eligible to receive 75% of the total assessment value and still remain “...entitled to sue the United States to recover such further sum...” (Wilson 1918:1). However, this would not have been an appealing option, given the amount of time and financing that would have been involved.

The creation of the Weapons Station represents only a fraction of land that was commandeered by the government on the Peninsula. African Americans on Virginia’s lower peninsula continued to be negatively, and disproportionately, impacted by removal and displacement throughout the twentieth century (Paust 2002). In addition to the 10,624 acres of the NWSY, the government also commandeered lands for what would become Fort Eustis in 1918 (10,300 acres) and Camp Peary in 1942 (9,275 acres). Over the course of several years in the 1970s, the National Park Service displaced African American families from the area known as Uniontown, also originated as a post-bellum settlement, in order to create the Colonial National Historic Park which includes Yorktown Battlefield (10,221 acres) (Deetz 2002).

During the mid-1920s, the Rockefellers funded a “restoration” of Colonial Williamsburg (301 acres) that not only displaced several African American families living in the area but also initially developed an exclusively Eurocentric historical narrative (Foster 1993, Paust 2002). Individuals who had been involved with the restoration were interviewed as part of an oral history project at Colonial Williamsburg in

1930. The subject of one of the interviews was Gardiner T. Brooks, a real estate insurance agent who bought and sold property for the restoration in what Brooks called an “unusual system of purchase.” The interviewer asks him about his difficulty buying properties from African American families:

Interviewer: Did you have much trouble buying property from niggers?

Gardiner T. Brooks: Yes we did, in some instances.

Interviewer: Why did you have more troubles buying properties from niggers than white people?

Gardiner T. Brooks: I consider every nigger suspicious of the purchasing power of the white man’s money.

Interviewer: He also feels, doesn’t he, that he knows that he owns his house and he don’t know what will happen if he sells it? Is that so?

Gardiner T. Brooks: That’s true. It’s also true that, the fact that when a nigger owns a piece of property, in all instances it’s hard to get him to turn it loose. [Colonial Williamsburg Oral History Project 1930]

This short exchange between Gardiner T. Brooks and his interviewer illustrates many of the difficulties that African Americans faced when trying to maintain ownership of their property. Families were often subject to surreptitious land sales designed to hinder their bargaining power and / or were forced out via eminent domain or government commandeering that resulted in inadequate compensation for their property.

For the reservation residents, the emotional and psychological impacts of leaving the land served as an additional disincentive to the economic setback for selling their property (McDonald et al. 1992). Nowhere is this more apparent than in their personal testimonies to the BVCP on the value of their property. It is clear that some residents found it difficult to monetize their loss and to confront the prospect of leaving behind the fruits of labor that cannot be moved: a garden, a farm, an oyster bed, a timber business, and the actual homes, which were often built by the occupants themselves. The Charles Redcross family, who had lived in the Lackey area of the reservation since 1863, stated

on their questionnaire that the land "...had been used as a home only for a good many years for our aged mother, and because of that and the sentiment attached it cannot be duplicated at the present cost of material for less than \$7,000" (Redcross Estate 1919:4). In the questionnaire for Rising Sun Church, the church trustees ask that they "...should be reimbursed so that we will not suffer loss from the Government having taken over our property. All we ask or expect is to be restored as far as possible to the same condition we were in before our Church was taken from us" (Pointer and Washington 1919:4). Not only did these statements serve as a way to challenge the value ascribed to their property; they also provided an opportunity for the residents to express their sentimental attachments to the land as well as their resentment of a forced evacuation.

The Reservation

Residents began to refer to the military property, colloquially, as the "reservation" during the appropriation, and their descendants have continued to use the term in reference to the NWSY to this day (Terry 1919, Bradshaw 1993, McDonald et al. 1994). The origin of the title is not clear although a few resident descendants felt that the name originated with the pre-contact Native American village (Kiskiak) on the property and / or the government farms established by the Union Army for African Americans there during the Civil War (Anonymous 2006). These explanations are strongly rooted in the history of the land, and the significance of the word's historical and emotional association with the forced relocation of Native Americans to reservations is not coincidental (Heinatz 2006a). It is possible that the term, as used presently, may represent an extension of its historical use for the more discrete locations (the village site and the post-

bellum settlement) on the NWSY property. However, the reasoning is not entirely satisfying, given that the term “reservation” is used in reference to the entirety of land enclosed within the NWSY boundary.

The first written documentation using “reservation” as a designation for the property begins with paperwork associated with the 1918 Atlas maps created by the Navy in order to assign lot numbers to landowners and arrange for repayment. There are several references on the Atlas section maps to the “Reservation Boundary,” and residents authored letters to the Navy asking for access to the “reservation.” In all likelihood, the designation was initiated by government officials in order to emphasize that the land was, in effect, “reserved” for government use although they had not completed the process of compensating landowners and claiming deeds and titles to the land. The protracted course of communication between the Navy and the residents clearly redefined how both parties identified the land. Nevertheless, it is clear that the association of the NWSY property with Kiskiak and the government farm plays a role in reinforcing the colloquial title of the property.

Ultimately, the reservation boundary created a new facet of identity for groups of people that had been geographically disconnected by separate neighborhoods (i.e. Halstead’s Point, Lackey, and Charles’ Corner). The force of the social upheaval and the unified front required to receive proper compensation caused residents and their descendants to use this event as a marker and identifier in their lives. As a result, families began identifying themselves as having lived on the reservation, regardless of the way they had identified where they were from prior to government intervention, be it by neighborhood (e.g. Charles’ Corner) or body of water (e.g. King Creek). Consequently,

as residents relocated, they carried a new method of identification with them based on the restructuring of the landscape.

Resettlement

Although residents received monetary reimbursement for their property they were subject to both immediate and long-term repercussions of displacement for which they were not compensated. Residents discovered several obstacles as they began to examine their options for leaving Charles' Corner and plan for resettlement, most of which are mentioned in their petition. Property in the area was scarce due to an influx of people on the Peninsula for war-related activities including the construction of the mine depot. In an effort to exploit the situation, opportunistic landowners surrounding the depot raised the selling prices on their properties with the knowledge that there would be a surplus of people in the market for land. Furthermore, for some residents, there was a substantial gap between the time they moved off of the property and when they received their compensation from the government. As a result, they either had to rely on savings to purchase the property, rent, or live with relatives until their payment arrived. Letters to the Bureau of Ordnance asking for property compensation indicate that some former residents moved in with neighbors or extended family while they awaited compensation from the government. Lackey had reestablished itself outside of the NWSY boundary and, along with Grove, became a harbor for former reservation residents. Both neighborhoods, which were immediately adjacent to the NWSY, were later augmented by

African American families displaced by the creation of other nearby military installations including Cheatham Annex, Camp Peary, and Fort Eustis.

Since residents were losing access to arable land as well as oyster beds, the displacement also required a reassessment of how families would continue to provide their own subsistence and income. Given that the regional economy was undergoing a change from agricultural to industrial labor, residents may have been obliged to join the ranks of hourly wage laborers populating the peninsula or heading north with the Great Migration. Simultaneously, strong social ties and the relative financial security that the reservation residents had been able to establish likely put them in better stead than many of the migrants to the North who may have been trying to escape the landless and debt-ridden life of sharecropping and tenancy. Oral histories of reservation residents and their descendants indicate that, while some family members moved as far away as Boston in search of better economic opportunities, a significant number of families relocated across the lower peninsula in order to work at the many shipyards located nearby (Anonymous 2006, McDonald et al. 1992). The economic impact of a transition to wage labor is also tainted by the loss of autonomy and self-sufficiency to the whims of an employer. In addition, both the regional and intra-state migration disrupted social networks which helped African American families cope with an openly racist and hostile environment. After leaving homes to which they had been emotionally attached, residents undoubtedly felt a lack of belonging and a compromised identity which is so often tied to a *place*.

Still, they retained their ability to mobilize quickly for issues that were deemed important for the community. Residents at Charles' Corner had access to educational opportunities for their children, but once they were displaced they found themselves with

no established place for educating African American children in the immediate vicinity. In his review of Black education in Williamsburg and James City County, Phillip Morgan found that “(b)ecause there was no school in Grove, the black parents bought a bus and paid \$1.35 a month for their children to be taken to Williamsburg to attend the Training School” until the County agreed to provide transportation (Morgan 1985:16). Parents had clearly maintained a high priority for education as well as the organization needed to pool their money and collectively seek transportation for the students.

Summation

Charles’ Corner provides a unique window into the history of African Americans in a post-Reconstruction South and an opportunity to examine this socioeconomic transition as an incremental process. Comparing the representation of Charles’ Corner residents in government acquisition documents with the descriptions of conditions in the area only fifty years prior (see Chapter 4) illuminates several unmistakable socioeconomic changes, particularly with regard to their economic autonomy and general quality of life. However, a paucity of documents for the intervening years (1865 – 1918) prevents a reliance on the written word to follow the development of Charles’ Corner.

Fortunately, the unexpected, and somewhat paradoxical, byproducts of commandeering the property and forcing relocation were the preservation of the homesteads as archaeological sites and providing protection from encroaching development. Due to the fact that the Navy did not develop the area of Charles’ Corner immediately, homesteads were left undisturbed, and unmaintained, for several years. An

informal survey of the woods on the NWSY property where Charles' Corner families once lived reveals the remains of the families' daily life still resting on the ground surface. A wash basin left unattended by a dry creek bed, a fragment of a phonograph record that once filled a home with music, and an empty brick-lined well that once provided water for several households are the evocative remains of a thriving community.

If former residents had been allowed on the reservation to visit their homes, they might have had a similar experience to Rose Millirons Gros, who describes an opportunity she had to visit nearby Camp Peary soon after her family was displaced. At the time, she said: "(w)e could actually drive up to the farm, and we were just looking around to see if we could find anything that held a memory. We found – it was like a little spade or a little something that was lying on the ground. It had been ours" (Bradshaw 1993:24). Ms. Gros's experience demonstrates that the material culture remaining at these once thriving homesteads provides an opportunity for archaeologists to discuss the processes through which the objects acquire meaning.

The late nineteenth and early twentieth century homestead sites, archaeological features, and artifacts at Charles' Corner represent a critically important, yet underrepresented period of African American history. They reflect freedom's first generation, beyond the grip of enslavement, who were exploring expressions of freedom and yet still fighting for basic civil rights. They were simultaneously being scrupulously observed for signs of integration into free society and subject to entrenched and enforced segregation. Not only does the archaeological record provide documentation of the families' lives over the course of fifty years as they work to create a life in freedom, but it

also captures the relatively hasty process of relocation which signified the end of Charles' Corner.

While Charles' Corner's characteristics are distinctive, it was neither an archetype nor an anomaly of African American settlements in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Rather, their story contributes to the vast and diverse African American narrative by providing both familiar themes and unique elements which are discussed further in the following chapters. Certainly, the level of archaeological integrity at these homesteads is exceedingly rare for the time period and demographic they represent (see Wilson 1990, Singleton 1985). The four archaeological sites discussed in this dissertation reflect the multi-scalar complexity of Charles' Corner although they represent only a small portion of the entire neighborhood. Through an examination of these sites, it is possible to ascertain common elements and individual distinctions.

Chapter 6: Archaeological Site Descriptions

This chapter serves as a review of the four archaeological sites (44YO318, 44YO319, 44YO857, and 44YO870) that were assessed by SEARCH during the summer of 2008 and serve as the basis for analysis and interpretation in this dissertation. The primary goal of the investigations was to assess the sites' eligibility for the NRHP by determining the stratigraphic integrity of subsurface deposits. In order to facilitate fieldwork and site management, SEARCH archaeologist Deborah Mullins assigned an Activity Area number to each cluster of nineteenth- and twentieth-century artifacts since the archaeological sites are quite extensive, often represent more than one homestead, and include multiple temporal components. Subsequently, archaeological test units and shovel tests were strategically placed across the site in order to provide the best possible characterization of the sites and activity areas. The details of SEARCH's fieldwork and laboratory results are presented in their technical report (Austin et al. 2011).

This dissertation provides analysis and interpretation of the data recovered by SEARCH during their field assessments. In this chapter, each archaeological site is summarized briefly, and descriptions of the property's occupants at the time of displacement are provided along with available representations of the structures on the property. Mullins's designation of Activity Areas provides convenient units for analysis and determination of each area's use and function (e.g. main house, outbuilding, or garden). The characterization of each Activity Area was determined through recording of surface deposits and archaeological features as well as excavation of shovel tests and test units. In the laboratory, SEARCH archaeologist Debra Wells assessed manufacturing dates for artifacts recovered from each Activity Area. By compiling data from multiple

artifacts, she was able to attribute a mean date range for production of materials in each Activity Area (Austin et al. 2011). In turn, the mean date range is an approximation of the years that the Activity Area was in use and / or occupied. In addition, a brief summary of Cheesecake Cemetery is provided due to its crucial role in Charles' Corner history although it was not included in the Phase II assessments.

General Environment

The surrounding environment is central to understanding the historical occupation and use of the land. As it exists today, the Charles' Corner area is heavily wooded with black walnut, black oak, chestnut, pawpaw, sassafras, sweetgum, and hickory trees; however, historical documents might provide a more accurate representation of the landscape in the early twentieth century. A.H. Miles authored a synthesis of NWSY history and the general environment during his service as a commanding officer for the Weapons Station in the 1920s. Miles does not mention the African American families that had occupied the property prior to his arrival in the 1920s, although he clearly relied on their knowledge of the land to provide information concerning the colonial-era buildings highlighted in his manuscript. Nevertheless, his depiction of the general environment inadvertently detailed elements that have both been introduced by human occupation and encouraged habitation.

Undoubtedly speaking of the homesteads which had been occupied by African American residents, Miles described how a wide variety of fruit trees are found “(o)n the abandoned farm lands...” and adds that “(i)n springtime a riot of dogwood, wild plum,

and other blossoms beautify the woods” (Miles 1927:300). He also details the wild game available for hunting, including squirrel, rabbit, raccoon, opossum, wild turkey, mallards and canvas back ducks as well as the sea life provided by the nearby York River and its tributaries, including striped bass (rock), oysters, and clams. Soil analyses indicated that the land sold to African Americans after the Civil War was not as arable as land owned by whites (BVCP 1920b, Stuck 1995), but residents were able to grow some crops and tend gardens for both subsistence and sale. A 1905 soil survey provides information on the agricultural yields for the Charles’ Corner area, including corn, potatoes, sweet potatoes, peas, and peanuts (Burke and Root 1905). According to the questionnaires, residents also raised hogs and chickens on their farmsteads. The livestock, crops, and gardens on farmsteads in conjunction with the riverine peninsula environment provided the Charles’ Corner residents with a perennial food supply.

Cheesecake Cemetery (44YO869)

As mentioned previously, Cheesecake Cemetery is the only archaeological site at Charles’ Corner that has been maintained for the last century and serves as a location for reservation residents and their descendants to commemorate their history. The cemetery is clearly a contributing element to the Charles’ Corner complex of archaeological sites. Before the site served solely as a cemetery, it was the location for a parish church and cemetery, constructed circa 1700 A.D., close to the main highway between Yorktown and Williamsburg. The church’s designation as the “Kiskiak” or “Chiskiak” parish church likely developed from the name for the large Late Woodland and proto-historic

Algonquian village site nearby. Gradually, it came to be known as “Cheesecake” Church (see Figure 4.1) and it is generally assumed that the name is a derivative of “Chiskiak” based on the similarity in pronunciation.

Only a few headstones and markers remain in the well-manicured half-circle, and one of the standing posts was erected by the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (APVA) in 1941 in order to mark the northeastern corner of the colonial church foundation. The only headstone that predates the Civil War is one for a white man, Thomas Sands, who passed away on July 6th, 1842 and was buried in what had been the churchyard. The most comprehensive history of the transition of Cheesecake from a functioning eighteenth-century parish church to its exclusive use as a cemetery is provided in a historical review of tidewater churches published in 1945:

...Old Cheesecake [sic] Church survived in a ruinous condition until the Civil War, when it was torn down to furnish bricks for the chimneys of Federal officers’ winter quarters at Williamsburg. The site of this old church now lies within the Naval Mine Depot, which includes about half of the old Williamsburg-Yorktown highway. The churchyard is located a quarter mile south of the crossroads known in modern times as Charles Corner...Like many other ancient church cites in Virginia, the churchyard is carpeted with white-flowering periwinkle (*vinca minor*). It is filled with unmarked graves and there are a few tombstones dated around the year 1900. It was used as a burying ground by negroes after the Civil War, and their graves have markers of plank, crudely carved into the shape of a human head and shoulders....[Mason 1945:229]

The wooden headstones described by Mason are visible in the photograph taken for his book (Figure 6.1) but are no longer present on the site. The other headstones that postdate the Civil War are undoubtedly burials of Charles’ Corner’s African American residents including Emily Williams (d. 1919), William Hundley (d. 1895), Octavia Hundley (d. 1912), and Fleming Brown (d. 1906). At the time of the government assessment, the

cemetery was located on the property of the Lee family and they did not request compensation for the three-quarters of an acre that clearly served as a communal burial area.



Figure 6.1: Photograph of Cheesecake Cemetery taken ca. 1945 (Mason).

Archaeological Site Descriptions

As discussed in Chapter 5, the BVCP created an index map of the 1919 property lines and assigned lot numbers in order to facilitate compensation to residents for their property (see Figure 5.3). The historic roads throughout Charles' Corner roughly correspond to the paved roads still in use by the Navy today and provide convenient landmarks for determining the property locations. Family properties were associated with specific archaeological sites and activity areas by creating an overlay of the 1919

property lines onto modern USGS quadrangles along with the archaeological site boundaries (Table 6.1). The following descriptions include summaries for each of the sites covered in the Phase II assessments by combining the historic information with the data recorded in the field.

Table 6.1: Archaeological Sites and Corresponding Lot Numbers and Family Names Recorded on the 1919 Navy Key Map.

Site Number	Lot Number	Occupant
44YO0318	241	J.H. Brown
44YO0318	240	James Holmes
44YO0318	239	Henry Redcross
44YO0319	215	William Randall
44YO0319	216	J.H. Randall
44YO0319	217	J.H. Payne
44YO0319	218	Richard Roberts
44YO0857	248	Jane Wallace
44YO0857	250	John Hundley, Sr.
44YO0857	251	John Hundley, Jr.
44YO0857	252	Elizabeth Hundley
44YO0870	258	William and Humphrey Lee
44YO0870	265	Moses Holmes

44YO318

Archaeological site 44YO318 encompasses most of John H. Brown's property (Lot #241) on the northwestern corner of Charles' Corner, and his property would have been readily visible by people travelling on the main road between Yorktown and

Williamsburg. At the time the presidential proclamation was ordered, Mr. Brown lived on the property with his wife Catherine and their daughter Pearl (Roberts et al. 1918, U.S. Census Bureau 1920). In the 1910 census, Mr. Brown listed his occupation as an oyster dealer, but in 1920 he identified himself as a farmer. During the valuation, the BCVP assessors noted that his home was a “nice looking place” (Cooke 1918:116) (Figure 6.2) which must have been a prideful moment for the Brown family since, as Mr. Brown later testified, he had “built the house himself” at a cost of \$1500 as well as the stable and barn at a cost of \$100 and \$75 respectively (BVCP 1920a). Consequently, the family must have been crestfallen when they saw the assessed value for the main home at \$900 (Appendix 4). Brown’s attorney, J.W. Geddy, contested the government’s offer, stating that the property “... is one of the best situated negro properties in the reservation and has on it one of the best dwellings” (Geddy 1922:3). In addition, Mr. Brown also requested remuneration from the U.S. government for ½ acre worth of oyster beds that he maintained in nearby Felgate’s Creek.

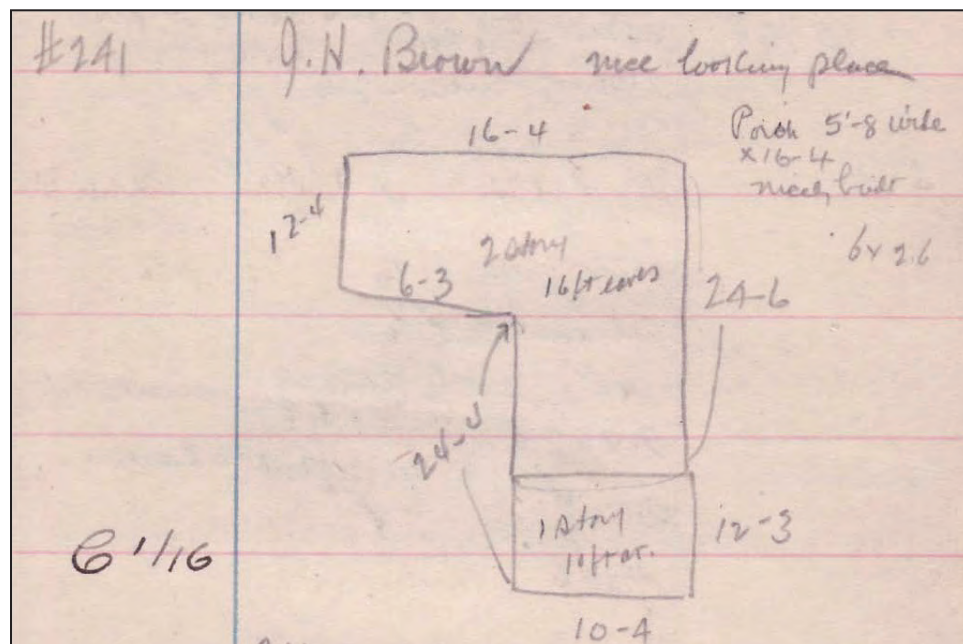


Figure 6.2: Assessor’s sketch of the Brown family home (Cooke 1918:116).

The northern portion of 44YO318 includes portions of James Holmes' property (Lot #240) and the Henry Redcross estate (Lot #239). Henry Redcross is listed on the 1865 Census (Freedmen's Bureau) as being 49 years old and living with his two children Mary and William. At the time of the acquisition, Henry Redcross had passed away and his daughter, Mary, served as the property's agent since there were no occupants on the land (BVCP 1920a). The central portion of the archaeological site overlaps with James Holmes's property, where he lived with his wife Sarah and their daughter Louise. He listed his occupation on the 1920 Census as a farm laborer.

Table 6.2: Characterization of Activity Areas at 44YO318.

Activity Area	Characterization
Activity Area 1	Brick-lined well (Feature 5) and a burned, buried deposit (Feature 6). Location for Test Units 5 and 7.
Activity Area 2	Brick and mortar scatter (Feature 4) and postmold (Feature 7). Location for Test Unit 6.
Activity Area 3	Large Depression (Feature 14) and associated sparse scatter of oyster shell.
Activity Area 4	Artifact scatter.
Activity Area 5	Historic shell midden. Location for Test Unit 8.

SEARCH archaeologists excavated 4 test units and 18 shovel tests, and identified five activity areas and five archaeological features within 44YO318 (Figure 6.3, Table 6.2). Activity Areas 1 and 2 are situated on the Brown family property, and the concentration of brick and mortar at Activity Area 2 most likely represents the remains of their family home. Activity Area 1 includes a brick-lined well and associated artifact scatter. A large

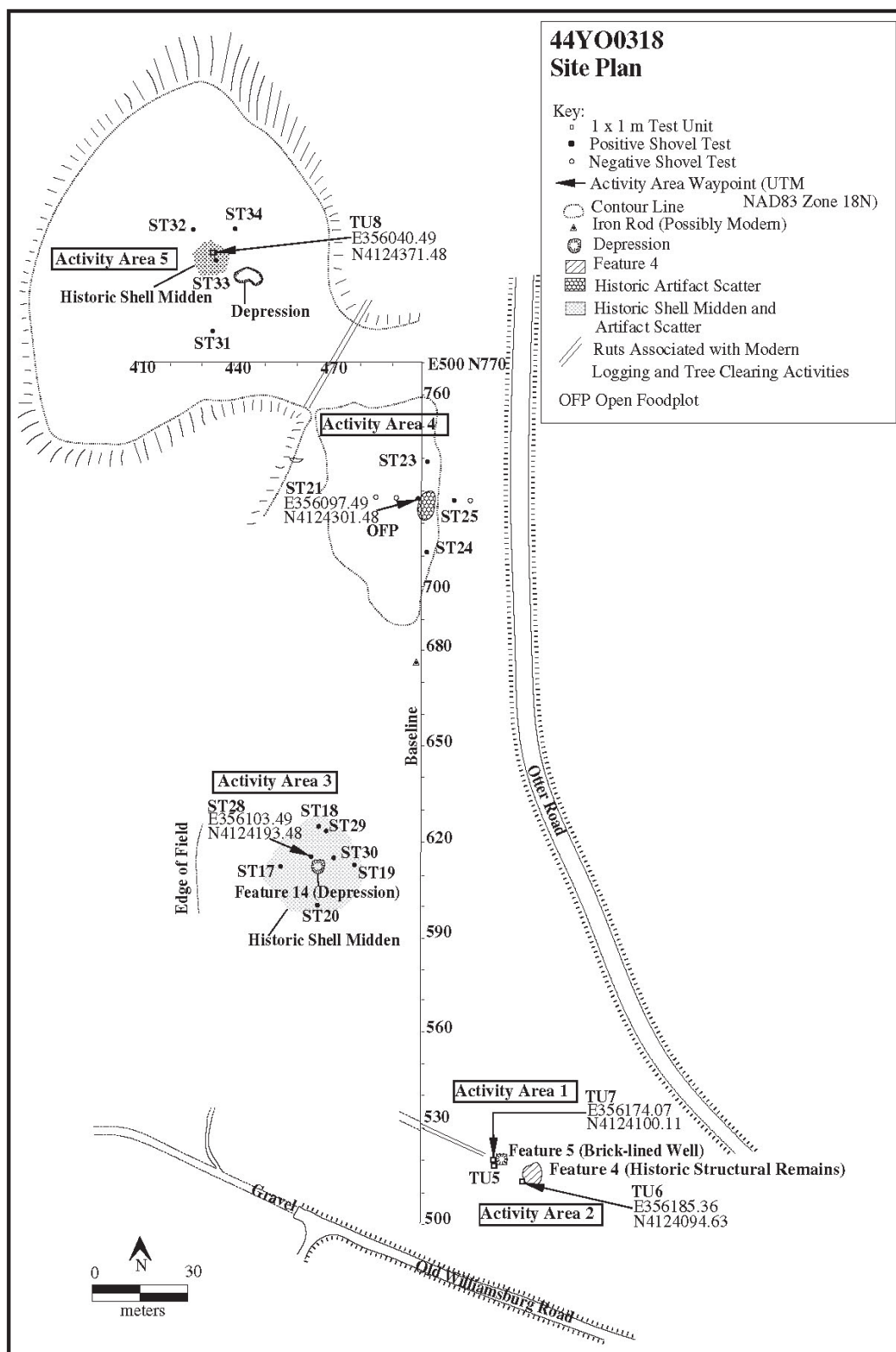


Figure 6.3: 44YO318 Archaeological Site Map provided courtesy of SEARCH, Inc.(Austin et al. 2011).

grazing lot⁵ dominates the central portion of the site where redeposited artifacts were observed, possibly representing the remains of the Holmes' property. The northernmost portion of the site is located on a terrace above several drainages and is located in the area of Henry Redcross's property.

44YO318 Activity Areas

Activity Area 1

Activity Area 1 includes a brick-lined well (Feature 5) and an associated deposit of artifacts surrounding the lip of the well. The well is located on John H. Brown's property but was constructed only 30 meters from the main road, in an area that is easy for surrounding residents to access. It is also substantially built, measuring over 1 meter in diameter and more than 2 meters in depth in its present state. Two test units were placed immediately adjacent to the lip of the well (Test Units 5 and 7) where surface artifacts had been observed. During the excavation, a thin, buried, burned deposit was uncovered and recorded (Feature 6). Eighty-one nail fragments were recovered from TU5 and TU7, indicating that the well was surrounded by a wood curb and / or shelter. Bottle and jar glass was the most abundant artifact at Activity Area 1 ($n = 236$) and included fragments of a Virginia Dare wine bottle, two whiskey bottles, and a canning jar. Other artifacts recovered from the test units include fragments of shell ($n = 113$), ceramic

⁵ Manicured grazing lots were established, and are presently maintained, by the U.S. Navy, presumably in order to facilitate hunting and / or serve as training areas. Grazing lots were present at 44YO318 and 44YO857.

tablewares ($n = 5$), and clay smoking pipe ($n = 3$). The mean artifact date for Activity Area 1 is 1891 ± 19 years (Austin et al. 2011).

Activity Area 2

Activity Area 2 was identified by a concentration of brick and mortar (Feature 4) which most likely represents the Brown family home. Test Unit 6 (TU6) was placed on the southern most edge of the brick scatter and uncovered a post mold feature below the brick (Feature 7). The assessor's notes state that a single story addition was constructed on wood posts as opposed to the rest of the structure which was supported by brick piers (Appendix 4, see Figure 6.2). Therefore, the test unit may have uncovered the interface between the main house and the single story addition or the porch.

Fourteen fragments of terra cotta pots were recovered from TU6, indicating that potted plants and / or flowers were kept close to the main house. A flotation sample taken from this area included non-carbonized remains of blackberry or raspberry (*Rubus sp.*) and grape (*Vitis sp.*) seeds (McKnight 2009). Excavation of TU6 also uncovered fragments of bottle glass ($n = 113$), ceramics ($n = 78$), clay smoking pipes ($n = 2$), a porcelain doll part ($n = 1$), and a 1900 Indian Head penny ($n = 1$). The mean artifact date for Activity Area 2 is 1863 ± 26 (Austin et al. 2011), which is slightly earlier than the Brown family's occupation of the site. This may be due to the presence of ceramics with a broad manufacturing range (e.g. refined earthenware and ironstone), which skewed the mean date to be slightly earlier than the actual occupation.

Activity Area 3

Activity Area 3 is identified by a fairly large and deep open depression (Feature 14) measuring approximately 2 meters in diameter with a sparse scatter of shell on the surrounding surface. This area is located near the property boundary for John Brown and may be associated with a neighbor's land instead. Shovel tests in the area of the depression yielded bottle glass, window glass, and oyster shell but only two ceramic fragments. A 1919 map created by the Navy shows a structure in the vicinity of this depression which means that it may have served as building for cool, subterranean storage (see Kelso 1984 for examples). The mean artifact date for Activity Area 3 is 1890 \pm 38 (Austin et al. 2011).

Activity Area 4

Activity Area 4 is represented by a small surface scatter of artifacts, including milk glass, canning jar fragments, Bristol slip stoneware, and whiteware in an open grazing lot. These artifacts are likely associated with James Holmes' property (Lot # 240), and the 1906 USGS map shows a structure in this area; however, the artifacts appear to represent a secondary deposit. Several shovel tests were located in this area, and it was determined that the maintenance of the open grazing lot compromised the integrity of surface deposits. The mean artifact date for Activity Area 4 is 1883 \pm 30 (Austin et al. 2011)

Activity Area 5

Activity Area 5 is characterized by the presence of a sparse historic shell midden and several large depressions scattered across a terrace which is most likely associated with part of Henry Redcross's homestead (Lot #239). The 1906 USGS quadrangle (see Figure 5.2) places a structure in this general area; however, no architectural remains were observed and relatively few architecture-related artifacts were recovered. This is not surprising, given the description of the structure on the property as a log shack with a mud chimney (Appendix 4). A 1 x 1 m test unit (TU 8) was placed over a visible concentration of oyster and clam shell. The unit yielded whiteware ($n = 4$), a stoneware handle ($n = 1$), yellowware ($n = 1$) and no glass fragments. The ceramics from TU8 provided a mean artifact date of 1856 ± 38 for this area of the site (Austin et al. 2011). Activity Area 5 represents one of the earliest occupied areas among the four sites tested, and it is probable that neither of Mr. Redcross's children lived on the property after he passed away.

44YO0319

Site 44YO319 is located across the street from 44YO318 and would have been situated on the northeastern corner of the Charles' Corner intersection. Traces of the original dirt road that led into the intersection are still visible in the southern quarter of 44YO319. Four lots occupied this corner, including the property of Richard Roberts (#218), James H. Payne (#217), William Randall (#216), and J.H Randall (#215). The

westernmost section of the site was Richard Roberts's property, where he lived with his wife and their two children Ethel and Nelson (U.S. Census Bureau 1910, Roberts et al. 1918). On the 1910 Census, Mr. Roberts stated that he worked as an oysterman and owned his property. The central portion of the site was difficult to access due to a significant amount of treefall during Hurricane Isabel. Consequently, no archaeological features could be observed in this area where James Payne's property was situated (Figure 6.4). James Payne and Richard Roberts claimed twenty cords and ten cords respectively as reimbursement for timber.

The easternmost portion of the property was owned by brothers J.H. Randall and William Randall. John H. Randall purchased 1.65 acres from his older brother William in 1913 for \$120 (BVCP 1920a). At the time of government acquisition, John H. Randall's family included his wife and three children. His brother William lived with his wife and one child (Roberts et al. 1918). The 1900 Census shows that William and John grew up in this area where their father, John Randall, had been renting property. The elder Randall was born prior to the Civil War and was likely one of the many Randalls settling the area after 1862 (Freedmen's Bureau 1865). John H. and William also claimed ¼ acre of oyster beds located in Felgate's Creek but made no timber claims.

During the 2008 field season, archaeologists from SEARCH, Inc. expanded a portion of the original site boundary assigned by WMCAR (Underwood et al. 2003) to include an additional activity area. Altogether, SEARCH archaeologists identified three separate activity areas and excavated two test units and fifty shovel tests (Table 6.3). Controlled excavation of four shovel tests into the refuse pit (Feature 10) associated with Activity Area 1 assisted with characterization of the deposit.

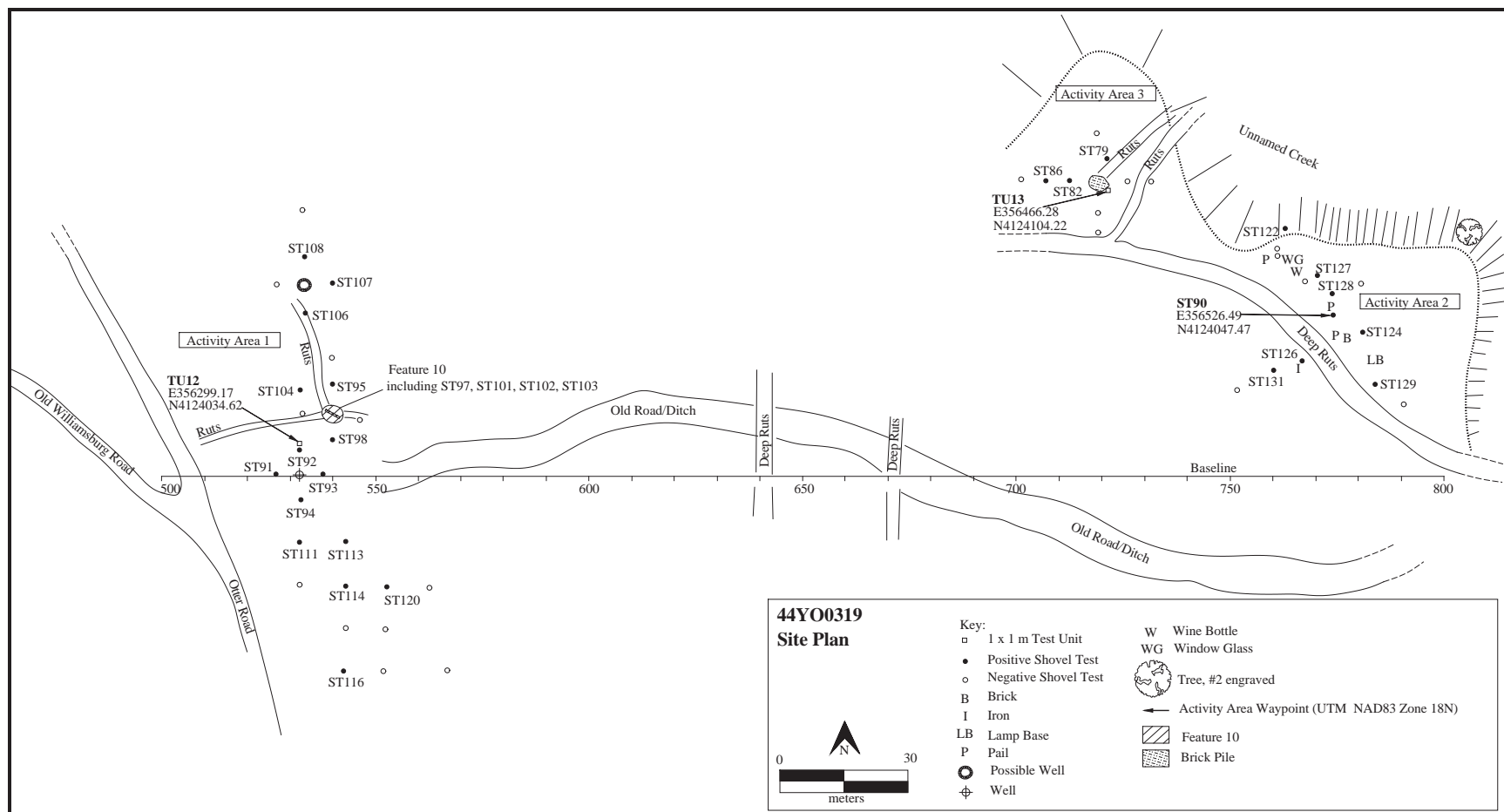


Figure 6.4: 44YO0319 Archaeological Site Map provided courtesy of SEARCH, Inc. (Austin et al. 2011).

Table 6.3: Characterization of Activity Areas at 44YO319.

Activity Area	Characterization
Activity Area 1	Brick-lined well and a refuse pit (Feature 10). Location for Test Unit 12.
Activity Area 2	Diffuse refuse scatter including several pails and a rake.
Activity Area 3	Brick concentration (Feature 11) and postmold (Feature 12). Location for Test Unit 13.

44YO319 Activity Areas

Activity Area 1

Activity Area 1 is located on the western edge of the archaeological site and would have been located directly on the northeastern corner of the Charles' Corner intersection. This area of the site almost certainly represents the remains of the Roberts family household (Lot #218). Activity Area 1 is characterized by the presence of a large, brick-lined well and a shallow refuse pit (Feature 10). The well's construction is very similar to the one recorded at 44YO318 across the street; however, the well on the Roberts property was recorded in the assessor's notes and described as 20 ft. to the water table and sheathed with a curb at the top (Appendix 5).

A 1 x 1 m test unit (TU12) was positioned midway between the well and the refuse pit in order to assess the function of this area. A distinct layer of coarse sand visible in the stratigraphic profile of the unit is a redeposited, deeper horizon which was probably unearthed during excavation for the well. Artifacts recovered from TU12

include a significant amount of bottle and jar glass ($n = 228$) and a wide variety of ceramic fragments, including whiteware ($n = 167$), stoneware ($n = 24$), ironstone ($n = 12$), pearlware ($n = 7$), and porcelain ($n = 4$). The unit also included fragments of mammal bone ($n = 11$) and pig teeth ($n = 7$). The assessor's notes (Appendix 5) indicate that the Roberts family maintained a hog pen, so they were undoubtedly raising pigs, in part, for their own consumption. Personal and activity-related items were also recovered, including fragments of brass jewelry ($n = 4$), harmonica reed ($n = 3$), a porcelain doll ($n = 2$), a safety pin ($n = 1$), and two .22 rimfire cartridges. Overall, the assemblage is representative of a domestic deposit rather than an ancillary structure or outbuilding.

An oval-shaped refuse pit (Feature 10) is located approximately 15 m northwest of the well. The pit contained a significant amount of ash, but not all of the artifacts were burned, indicating that the trash deposit is an accumulation of sweepings from the house and / or yard. Stratum A included fragments of OK baking soda bottles, a red transferprint bowl, a teacup, and part of a metal clasp for jewelry or other form of adornment. Flotation from the feature yielded non-carbonized seeds for grapes and a cherry as well as the remains of pine, yellow poplar, and hornbeam (McKnight 2009). The fragments of several Febriline bottles, a quinine-based fever treatment, were recovered from Feature 10 and were not recorded at any of the other sites or Activity Areas. At least two of the Febriline bottles bear a maker's mark that was in use from 1916 – 1929, indicating that the relatively shallow deposit was created within the last five years of the Charles' Corner occupation. SEARCH established the mean artifact date for Feature 10 as 1899 ± 18 (Austin et al. 2011).

This area did not include any discernible concentrations of brick even though Cooke's description of the Roberts' home described a small brick flue attached to the house (Appendix 5). The mean artifact date for Activity Area 1 (excluding Feature 10) is 1885 ± 19 (Austin et al. 2011).

Activity Area 2 (Possible Garden Area)



Figure 6.5: Rake head recorded on surface of 44YO319, Activity Area 2.

Activity Areas 2 and 3 are located on the Randall's property (Lots #215 and #216). Activity Area 2 sits on a terrace above an unnamed seasonal creek and is distinctive because of the presence of three galvanized steel pails, the fuel regulator for a kerosene lamp, and the head of one rake (Figure 6.5). There is no visible evidence of a structure within the activity area and no discernible concentration of artifacts on the surface. Although oyster shell is visible in varying concentrations across the terrace, it is not as dense as other areas which represent kitchen middens (44YO857, Activity Area 4

and 44YO318, Activity Area 5). Instead, the oyster shell may have been deliberately incorporated into the clayey soil in this area to improve drainage and soil productivity. Although a test unit was not excavated in this area, shovel tests yielded fragments of bottle glass and tablewares. Considering that the brothers co-owned and farmed an oyster bed together, this area would have been a convenient place for the families to share a garden. The mean artifact date for Activity Area 2 is 1892 ± 15 (Austin et al. 2011).

Activity Area 3

Activity Area 3 is located at the northern edge of the site and immediately adjacent to deep ruts likely created by logging and / or military activities. The activity area was identified by a small concentration of red bricks (Feature 11) observed on the ground surface. A test unit (TU13) positioned on the edge of the brick cluster uncovered a postmold (Feature 12) in the sidewall of the excavation unit beneath the brick. A flotation sample was recovered from Feature 12 and yielded morning glory seed (*ipomoea sp.*) as well as carbonized fragments of maple (*acer sp.*), oak (*quercus spp.*), and acorn fragments (*quercus sp*) (McKnight 2009). No adjacent artifact or brick scatters were observed in the immediate area; they may have been obliterated by the deep road ruts running through this part of the site, or the isolated collection of brick may represent a smaller, ancillary structure. The mean artifact date for Activity Area 3 is 1898 ± 32 (Austin et al. 2011).

44YO857

Of the four sites examined here, site 44YO857 is the furthest from the main intersection and is located near where Old Williamsburg Road crossed King Creek. The westernmost portion of the property adjacent to King Creek (Lot #248) is part of the Jane Wallace Estate. At the time the government commandeered the property, Jane Wallace had passed away, although the estate remained in her name. According to the 1920 Census, her son Thomas Wallace was living on the property, by himself and listed his occupation as farmer. The government assessor recorded two houses on the property including the main house (Figure 6.6), which he described as a “mere shell,” and a rear house (Appendix 6).

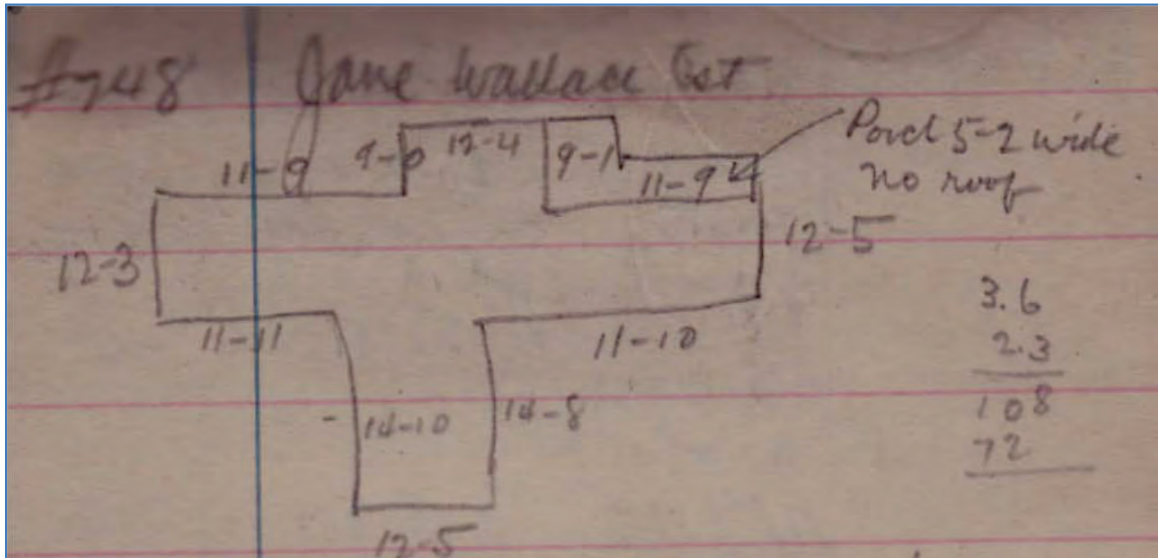


Figure 6.6: Assessor's sketch of the house located on the Jane Wallace estate (Lot #248).

The lots in the central portion of the site are part of the Nancy Hundley Estate (Lots #250 and #251). John Hundley, Sr. (Nancy Roberts Hundley's widow) had been living on Lot #250 until he passed away, and the assessor's notes state that his house was

being used for storage (Appendix 6). John Hundley Jr. was living on Lot #251 but had also allowed his two sons to build their own houses on his property. The testimony provided about the property states in no uncertain terms that reimbursements for the land should be returned to Nancy Roberts Hundley's Estate and that her sons and grandsons should only receive compensation for their improvements. In addition to the value of improvements, the Hundleys requested reimbursement for timber sales on Lot 250 (8,000 ft for 80 dollars) and Lot 251 (6,000 ft for \$60).

Finally, the eastern portion of the site may overlap slightly with Elizabeth Hundley's property (Lot #252). Elizabeth Hundley passed away before the government acquisition, although the property remained in her name. Her son Robert Hundley filled out the questionnaire as her only living heir and stated that a blacksmith and barbershop were among the outbuildings on her property.

Site 44YO857 comprises multiple temporal components. During their 2003 survey, WMCAR archaeologists identified artifacts dating to the Early Woodland period in addition to cultural components from the eighteenth through the twentieth century (Underwood et al 2003: 166). SEARCH archaeologists relocated the mid- to late nineteenth- and twentieth-century cultural features identified during WMCAR's survey, identified four activity loci and excavated 15 shovel tests and 4 test units (Figure 6.7, Table 6.4).

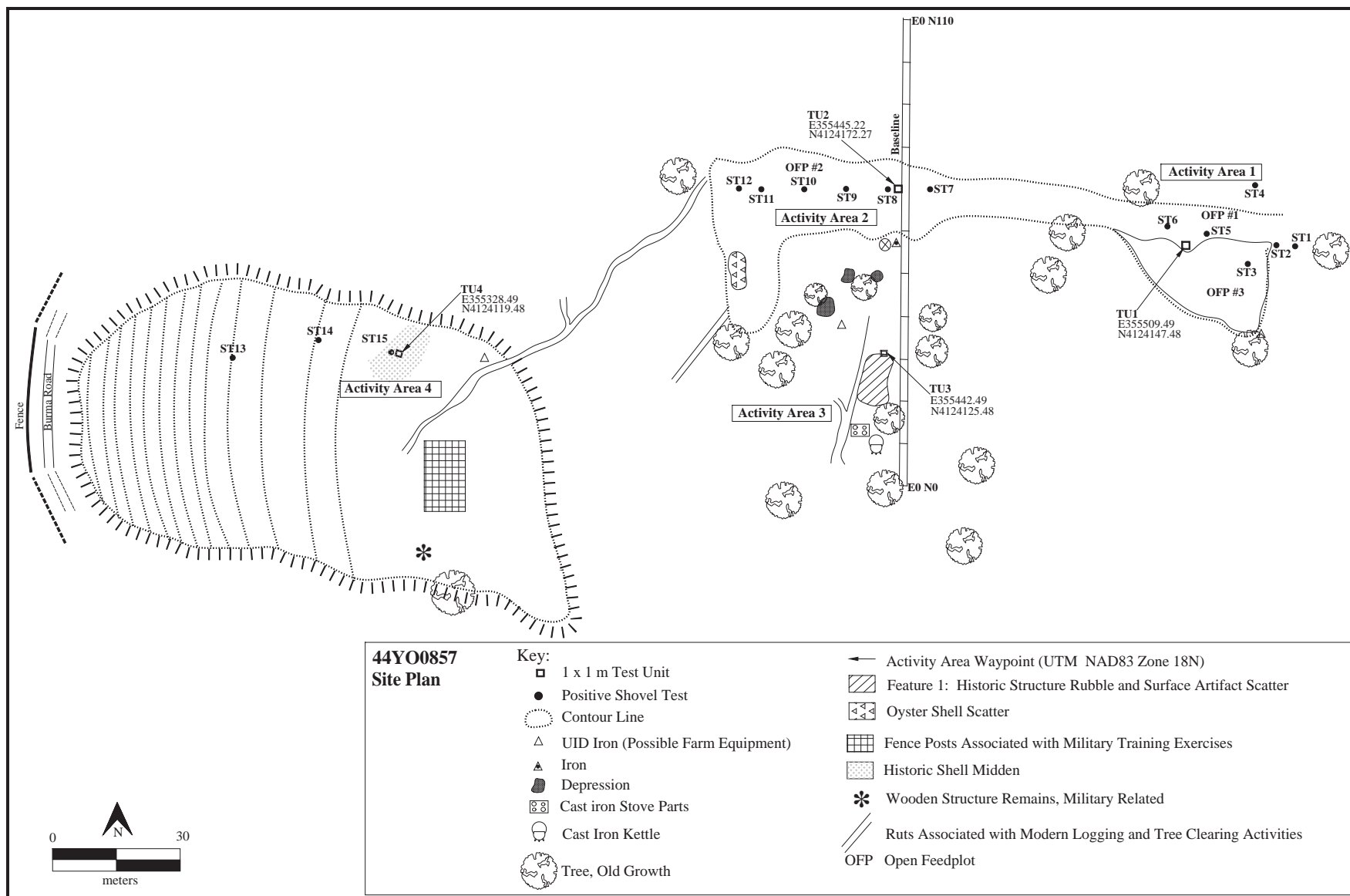


Figure 6.7: 44YO857 Archaeological Site Map provided courtesy of SEARCH, Inc. (Austin et al. 2011).

Table 6.4: Characterization of Activity Areas at 44YO857.

Activity Area	Characterization
Activity Area 1	Area of diffuse trash scatter. Location for Test Unit 1
Activity Area 2	Area of diffuse trash scatter. Location for Test Unit 2
Activity Area 3	Remains of a brick foundation or piers (Feature 1) and associated refuse scatter (Feature 2) including fragments of a cast-iron kettle and stove. Location for Test Unit 3.
Activity Area 4	Dense historic shell midden (Feature 3). Location for Test Unit 4.

44YO857 Activity Areas

Activity Area 1

Activity Area 1 may correspond with the western edge of Elizabeth Hundley's estate (Lot #252) or the eastern edge of the Nancy Hundley Estate (Lot #251). Several shovel tests and a test unit were located in this area and it was determined that the maintenance of the open grazing lot compromised the integrity of surface deposits. The mean artifact date for Activity Area 1 is 1875 ± 36 (Austin et al. 2011).

Activity Area 2

Activity Area 2 corresponds with the area designated for Lots #250 and #251, both of which are listed as part of Nancy Roberts Hundley's estate. Several shovel tests and a test unit were located in this area and it was determined that the maintenance of the open

grazing lot compromised the integrity of surface deposits. The mean artifact date for Activity Area 2 is 1841 ± 43 (Austin et al. 2011).

Activity Area 3

Activity Area 3 corresponds with the area designated as Lot #251. This area is dominated by two visible features including a cluster of bricks (Feature 1) and a collection of refuse located 10 m to the south (Feature 2). TU3 revealed that the bricks were highly variable in terms of the paste texture and color (Figure 6.8) and that some of the bricks had a partially vitrified surface indicating that they had been exposed to high heat. The lack of uniformity among the bricks indicated that they were potentially repurposed from another location. The mean artifact date for Activity Area 3 is 1871 ± 39 (Austin et al. 2011).



Figure 6.8: South wall profile for TU3, 44YO857, Activity Area 3 (image provided courtesy of SEARCH, Inc.).

Activity Area 4

Activity Area 4 is located on a gently sloping terrace on the westernmost portion of the site and is situated approximately 0.1 mile from Kings Creek. The area corresponds with the location for Lot #248 which was Jane Wallace's Estate. The government assessors described the Wallace home as being supported by wood posts and in poor condition (see Figure 6.6). Oyster and clam shell was visible in varying concentrations across the terrace surface and a test unit (TU4) was placed over a particularly dense section of shell (Feature 3). Based on their observations in the field, archaeologists determined that the shell midden was historic and likely associated with a kitchen or

oyster processing area (Figure 6.9). Flotation samples recovered from within the concentration of shell and the surrounding soil included fish bone and scales, bird and mammal bone, and seeds from yellow poplar, American pokeweed, and grape seed (*Vitis sp.*) (McKnight 2009). Sixteen fragments of turtle bone and shell, including mud turtle and box turtle, were recovered from TU4 and a nearby shovel test (ST15). TU4 also contained fragments of bottle glass ($n = 53$), pearlware ($n = 13$), whiteware ($n = 9$), stoneware ($n = 1$), part of a kaolin pipe bowl ($n = 1$). The mean artifact date for Activity Area 4 is 1859 ± 41 (Austin et al. 2011).



Figure 6.9: North wall profile for TU4, 44YO857, Activity Area 4 (image provided courtesy of SEARCH, Inc.).

44YO870

Archaeological site 44YO870 roughly corresponds with the southern portion of Lot #265 owned by William Moses Lee and Humphrey Lee who were brothers and

shared the property (Appendix 7). The Lee property was one of the largest African American owned properties at Charles' Corner and was assessed at 47.87 acres. Their property was located south of the main intersection at Charles' Corner and was adjacent to the road leading into the settlement from the Grove Station railroad depot. Cheesecake Cemetery was technically located on the northern portion of the Lee's land although they claimed no value for it stating that it was a free and public cemetery (BVCP 1920a). On the 1910 Census, both brothers listed their occupations as farmers. W.M. Lee lived on the property with his wife Laura and their son. Humphrey Lee lived on the property with his wife Mary and their four sons. The southern portion of the site immediately adjacent to the seasonal creek is most closely associated with Moses Holmes who lived on the property with his wife Catherine and their six children. In the 1910 Census, Mr. Holmes listed his occupation as a laborer for the railroad.

WMCAR archaeologists did not include 44YO870 in their list of sites with the highest potential although they did characterize the site as potentially eligible to the NRHP. Nevertheless, the site was included in the selection for a Phase II assessment due to the visible presence of an extensive trash scatter and culturally modified landscape features in the northwestern corner of the site. A review of shovel test results also confirmed that test excavations would provide enough data during a Phase II assessment to determine eligibility. The site is largely contained on a broad, flat terrace bounded on

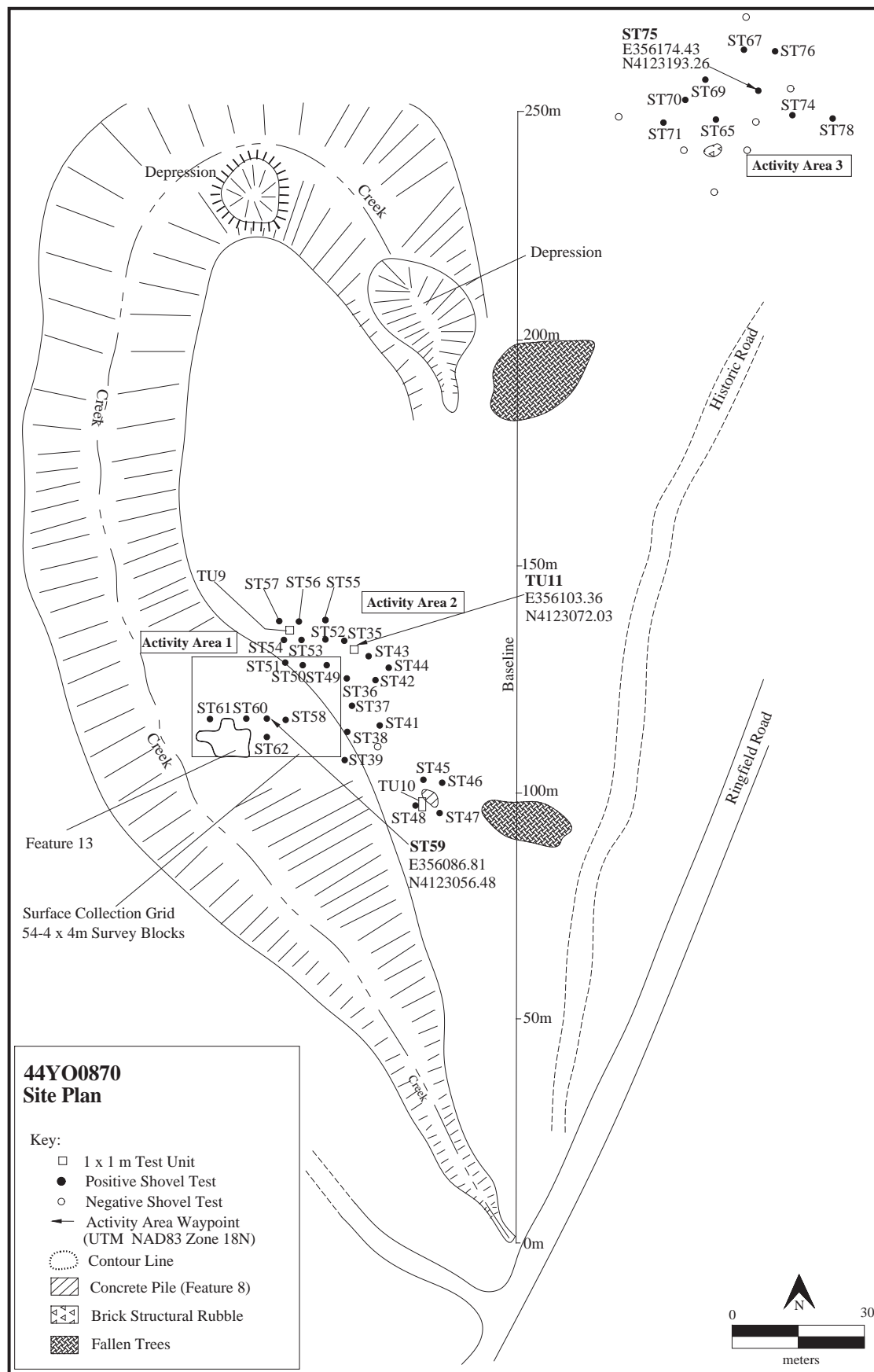


Figure 6.10: 44YO0870 Archaeological Site Map provided courtesy of SEARCH, Inc. (Austin et al. 2011).

the east by Ringfield Road, to the north by an access road, and to the south and west by an unnamed seasonal creek (Figure 6.10). In 2008, SEARCH archaeologists excavated 3 test units and 44 shovel tests and identified three separate activity areas at the site (Table 6.5).

Table 6.5: Characterization of Activity Areas at 44YO870

Activity Area	Characterization
Activity Area 1	Creekside household refuse deposit (Feature 3).
Activity Area 2	Domestic refuse including a pile of concrete rubble (Feature 8) and a refuse pit uncovered during excavation (Feature 9). Location for Test Units 9, 10, and 11.
Activity Area 3	Concentration of brick and domestic refuse.

44YO870 Activity Areas

Activity Area 1

Activity Areas 1 and 2 correspond to the location of Moses Holmes's homestead, where he lived with his wife and seven children at the time of displacement (Roberts et al. 1918). Activity Area 1 was isolated to a broad scatter of trash on a creekside slope located below a terrace where there had clearly been a residence. This deposit included artifacts that reflected a transition in technology and popular culture during the early twentieth century, including a glass Hemingray insulator for utility lines, a fragment of a phonograph record, and parts of a carbon core battery, none of which were located at any

of the other activity areas or sites. The scatter also included several condiment bottles and jars, a harmonica reed, and fragments of a stoneware crock. The mean artifact date for Activity Area 1 is 1891 ± 26 (Austin et al. 2011).

Activity Area 2

Activity Area 2 is located on the terrace immediately above Activity Area 1 and the two are clearly associated with the same household. Two test units were located on the terrace (TU9 and TU11), and the assemblages from both units clearly reflected a domestic deposit. TU11 yielded the highest count of porcelain tableware fragments ($n = 20$) when compared with the assemblages from other test units at all four sites. The unit also included two fragments of cow teeth which were recorded in only one other location (44YO857, TU3). TU9 yielded fragments of flat glass ($n = 24$), bottle and jar glass ($n = 24$), whiteware ($n = 22$), porcelain ($n = 6$), ironstone ($n = 3$), shoe fragments ($n = 4$), buttons ($n = 4$), porcelain doll parts ($n = 2$), a black prism-shaped bead ($n = 1$), and a 1920 wheat penny. The mean artifact date for Activity Area 2 is 1887 ± 24 (Austin et al. 2011).

Activity Area 2 also included a pile of concrete rubble (Feature 8) resting on the ground surface between the terrace and the road. A test unit adjacent to the rubble pile (TU10) yielded fragments of bottle glass ($n = 12$), ceramics ($n = 7$), nails ($n = 2$), and shell ($n = 2$), but did not provide any indication of its origin or use and may be related to military activities.

Activity Area 3

Activity Area 3 is represented by a visible concentration of brick on the surface; however, several collapsed trees made it difficult to investigate the area. Shovel tests were utilized to establish the boundaries for cultural material in the area. Artifacts recovered from this area include nails ($n = 27$), flat glass ($n = 5$), shoe parts ($n = 4$), brick ($n = 3$), bottle and jar glass ($n = 2$), and ceramics ($n = 2$). In addition, an ornate iron sewing-table leg was lying just below the surface near the brick concentration. Based on shovel test results with a limited recovery, the mean artifact date for Activity Area 3 is 1890 ± 8 (Austin et al. 2011). A spring and associated walking path is located approximately 70 m to the southwest of Activity Area 3 (Figure 6.11), and the western portion of the spring has been built up with fill in order to separate it from the creek that marks the western boundary of the site (Underwood et al. 2003). The area surrounding Activity Area 3 was most likely occupied by Humphrey Lee and his family, since he noted on his questionnaire that there was “1 good spring” on his property (1919:2).



Figure 6.11:

Pathway leading down to natural spring at 44YO870.

Summation

There are 48 archaeological sites with late nineteenth- and / or early twentieth-century components, including Cheesecake Cemetery, that are located within one mile of the historic Charles' Corner intersection. The four sites discussed in this chapter were selected to serve as a representative cross section of the historic neighborhood. Upon completion of the Phase II assessments, SEARCH, Inc. archaeologists recommended that all of the sites be considered eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places for "...their potential to provide important information on the Charles' Corner community during the mid-nineteenth through early twentieth centuries" (Austin et al. 2010:135). Additionally, they recommended that the sites be considered for nomination

as an archaeological district in order to facilitate site management and acknowledge the sites' historical relationship to one another. In order to represent accurately the true extent of Charles' Corner, the composition of such an archaeological district should encompass a more extensive part of the landscape and include at least a dozen additional sites that possess the same potential for contributing to an understanding of the settlement.

Although SEARCH's archaeological research was executed in compliance with and fulfillment of federal legislation it was also designed to address academically-driven research questions and engage the concerns of historians, archaeologists, and descendant family members. The research questions presented for this dissertation focus on the interconnected social and economic networks at Charles' Corner and their relationship to broader patterns of national history in order to encourage consideration of the sites as an archaeological district. Even though there is a cohesive theme that unifies the sites historically, the individual assemblages and archaeological features demonstrate that each site and activity area has its own unique characteristics. It is evident that residents were very versatile and maximized the advantages of their particular geographic location thus contributing to the lack of uniformity between sites.

By the mid-1920s, most of the structures associated with the former residents had been demolished in a "farm to forest" effort in order to encourage tree growth for lumber sales as well as eliminate potential fire hazards in the areas of weapons storage (Miles 1927). The demolition marked a definitive end to residential life at Charles' Corner and left only a few visible reminders of its former occupants. While the records of the reservation residents, their lawyers, and the U.S. Navy provide detailed descriptions of the farmsteads, they only depict a brief moment in time immediately prior to

displacement. The archaeological record, which captured the undocumented elements of residents' daily lives, serves as a more fitting representation of the families that lived and worked together for nearly sixty years.

Chapter 7: Analysis

Through analysis and interpretation, archaeologists attempt to characterize and convey the nature of people's existence at each site based on the data. The breadth and diversity of the archaeological evidence from the four archaeological sites represented in this study are remarkable, given that all of the sites are located no more than one mile from one another. Nevertheless, residents had shared histories and experiences, attended the same church and the same schools, and, in some cases, worked together. Among sites with common historical references such as the ones at Charles' Corner, archaeologists have established that artifact assemblages recovered at a household level develop additional levels of meaning when they are analyzed as a unit of creation by the community (Wilson 1990). Therefore, this chapter will examine the commonalities of life at Charles' Corner through an analysis of the artifacts and features collectively.

Although some of the artifacts and archaeological features discussed in Chapter 6 may seem to be logical extensions of life on any rural homestead at the turn of the twentieth century, it is important to consider them within the social and historical context of the African American families that lived there. Archaeologists and sociocultural anthropologists have demonstrated that understanding the role of multivalency in common objects is a crucial element for the interpretation of African American life (Gundaker 1998, Perry and Paynter 2001, Gundaker and McWillie 2005). Paynter and Perry explain that

(o)bjects, social relations, even bodies take on different meanings and participate in different structures, depending on one's temporal, spatial, and social position in the societal formation of the Western Hemisphere. An awareness of this contextual multivalency is a necessary tool for countering the stultifying effects of the veil of racism. [1999:309]

Accordingly, this analysis takes the concept of multi-valency into consideration when discussing the role of artifacts and archaeological features at Charles' Corner.

Analysis of the archaeological record, in conjunction with documents and oral histories, provides an opportunity to consider the Charles' Corner sites collectively within the context of community building. Utilizing multiple lines of evidence is especially critical for an African American settlement like Charles' Corner. First-hand accounts and the documentary record effectively capture the settlement at its inception and dissolution and provide the essential sociopolitical background that facilitates multivalent interpretations. In contrast, the archaeological record encapsulates the sixty years of occupation and, although it represents a relatively short period of time, reflects the process of transition and transformation that were not recorded in the documentary record.

In Chapter 6, the archaeological sites were presented and described independently in order to emphasize the distinctive characteristics of each site and Activity Area. In this chapter, analysis of the relevant data for Charles' Corner is presented collectively in four analytical categories: socioeconomic networks, economic diversification, forms of self-identification, and evidence for communal activities. As discussed in Chapter 3, these four categories relate directly to the components of community building outlined by Hyland and Bennett (2005).

SOCIOECONOMIC NETWORKS

The dendritic structure of roads and homes at Charles' Corner (see Figure 5.2) is partially attributable to the underlying topography, but it also relays information about the residents' social and economic networks. The main road that runs north-south through Charles' Corner extends from the York River to Grove Station on the Chesapeake and Ohio railroad line. The road running east-west through the intersection extends from Williamsburg to Yorktown. Consequently, residents had convenient access to waterways, roadways, and a railway system which provided them with autonomy over how and where they acquired their goods and information. Oral histories tend to emphasize the residents' local connections, whereas the artifacts and documentary records demonstrate that residents were also actively involved in a regional distribution system and national organizations.

Mid-Atlantic Goods Distribution

Artifacts recovered from all four sites provide tangible evidence of the economic and trade networks that residents had access to during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The collection and analysis of data were modeled after Schuyler's study of locations for manufacturing of bottled materials at Sandy Ground (1974). Bottles embossed with city names that reflected the manufacturing location of the contents, rather than a bottle itself, were identified and grouped by location ($n = 28$) (Table 7.1). This is a relatively small but representative sample size which provides an accurate indication of the avenues through which residents were acquiring their goods. Half of the bottles ($n = 14$) were distributed

from Norfolk, Virginia or Baltimore, Maryland, both of which are located directly on the Chesapeake Bay. An Albion whiskey bottle distributed through Baltimore and recovered from 44YO870 is a reminder that the Chesapeake Bay also served as a convenient medium for transporting liquor during Prohibition (Wennersten 1981) and would have been ideal for moving alcohol from the “wet” state of Maryland to the “dry” state of Virginia in the year before Prohibition was nationalized (see Appendix 1). Overall, ninety-three percent of the bottles ($n = 26$) originated from the mid-Atlantic region extending from New York to Virginia.

Table 7.1: Manufacturing locations for bottled contents recovered from Charles’ Corner.

Location	Count	Distance from Charles’ Corner
Norfolk, VA	9	30 miles
Baltimore, MD	5	140 miles
New York, NY	3	270 miles
Alexandria, VA	2	110 miles
Newport News, VA	2	15 miles
Greeneville, TN	2	350 miles
Richmond, VA	1	50 miles
Roanoke, VA	1	180 miles
Williamsburg, VA	1	5 miles
Washington, DC	1	115 miles
Philadelphia, PA	1	200 miles

In addition to the bottles, archaeologists recorded or collected a few household objects with traceable manufacturing origins. The cast-iron stove and kettle recorded at 44YO857, Activity Area 3, are advertised in the 1897-1898 Richmond Stove Company catalog (Figure 7.1). The door to a stove manufactured by Southard, Robertson & Co. in

New York was recorded at 44YO319 near Activity Area 2. Two buttons from Blue Buckle work overalls, manufactured in Lynchburg, Virginia, were recovered from the Holmes property (44YO870, Activity Area 2). Fragments of a large stoneware crock were recovered from the Holmes' creekside trash scatter (44YO870, Activity Area 1) and had been painted with a clover design that was commonly used by potters in Baltimore (Zipp 2006, Mueller-Heubach, personal communication, February 19th, 2012).



Figure 7.1: Comparison of stove and kettle recorded at 44YO857, Activity Area 3 with the Richmond Stove Company's 1897-1898 catalog.

These data indicate that Charles' Corner residents were well-connected with the mid-Atlantic distribution system and that the York River and Chesapeake Bay continued to serve as significant conduits of products and people just as it had prior to the Civil War. Undoubtedly, the residents' participation in oystering linked them to a broader Chesapeake Bay economy and their proximity to the river facilitated the exchange of goods by ship or boat. Additionally, documents and oral histories establish that residents patronized local stores which, undoubtedly, stocked products produced in the mid-Atlantic region.

Transportation and Travel

The roadways traversing Charles' Corner provided residents with convenient access to Williamsburg and Yorktown or the nearby waterways of Felgate's Creek, King Creek, or the York River. Once on the water, residents could easily travel to Gloucester on the neighboring peninsula or the Chesapeake Bay. Transportation and the relative ease of travel were critical to the residents' sense of autonomy because it allowed them to maintain socioeconomic networks outside of their immediate residential area and facilitated self-sufficiency. These factors may be the reason that wheels are interpreted as "...signs of progress and accomplishment" and "a reminder of the defeat of complacency through progressive action" in African American domestic contexts (Gundaker and McWillie 2005:31).

Perhaps one of the most compelling by-products of the ease of travel for residents was the ability to patronize businesses of their choice. This factor is significant and

distinct from the lifestyles of sharecroppers and tenants who were often committed to using a plantation store. Claudia Holland conducted an ethnoarchaeological study of tenant farms and found that “(p)roximity and credit were the two most important features about the [plantation] store to their tenants who had no transportation and little money” (1990:67). In fact, there was a general store at Charles’ Corner which would have been convenient for purchases; yet, as former resident Alexander Lee explained,

(p)eople down on the lower end went to Yorktown to shop; people on the upper end would go to Williamsburg... We had what was known as a country store, but the majority of the groceries that we bought, were bought in Williamsburg which is about eight miles. [1992: 74-75]

The “country store” described by Mr. Lee is undoubtedly the one that was owned and operated by a white family and was located on one of the corners of the main intersection. However, residents may have made an effort to shop outside of Charles’ Corner in order to patronize the black-owned businesses operating in Yorktown and Williamsburg.

Residents undoubtedly took their modes of transportation with them when they were displaced from the property, but there are a few indications about how they travelled. The metal frame for a covered buggy is visible on the surface between Activity Area 2 and 3 at 44YO857 (Figure 7.2), and a harness ring was recovered from 44YO319, Activity Area 3. James Payne recalled his uncles having motorboats for their work as oysterers (1992) and Alexander Lee remembered that his grandfather and his great-uncle built sailboats (1992). Boats would have served as the most convenient means for travel, especially for oystermen, given the notorious state of dirt roads in the area in winter and

spring (see Chapter 4), but they were most likely kept on the waterways away from the homesteads.



Figure 7.2: Buggy frame at 44YO857, Activity Area 3.

National Organizations

According to the assessor's documentation, residents at Charles' Corner built and maintained a lodge for meetings of fraternal organizations and women's auxiliaries, including the True Reformers, United Order of Oddfellows, Household of Ruth, and the Knights and Daughters of Tabor. These organizations were popular with African Americans throughout the United States at the turn of the century and provided the opportunity to participate in a national coalition in advance of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Not only did they encourage investing in local

communities and advocated self-reliance, the fraternal organizations also served as burial associations, allowing residents provide the deceased with a proper and respectful burial even through financial hardship (Holloway 2002). Additionally, the Household of Ruth and other women's auxiliaries provided a means for women to participate actively in community decision-making before the nineteenth amendment established their right to vote.

Although a substantial portion of the residents' time and finances was concentrated in their immediate neighborhood, a wide range of social and economic networks were critical to establishing, supplying, and maintaining the settlement at Charles' Corner. The benefits of their extensive social connections became evident when their property was commandeered by the United States government. Within months of the presidential proclamation, the residents at Charles' Corner signed and submitted a petition to the government and hired lawyers to represent their interests. Unlike the case in some planned towns, such as Allensworth, the self-sufficiency of residents at Charles' Corner did not result in an insular community. Rather, residents pursued extended networks which ultimately ended up benefitting them politically and economically.

ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION

One of the most practical and advantageous achievements by Charles' Corner residents was their development of a diversified household economy which allowed them establish and sustain their economic independence. In turn, fiscal stability made it possible for renters to become landowners and improve their properties. The unique

geographical location of Charles' Corner facilitated a diverse economy due to a wide range of occupational choices, including seasonal work in agriculture, oystering and fishing as well as year-round labor at the shipyards, odd jobs, laundering and other home services (Medford 1992). In addition to hourly pay, residents could work of their own accord either oystering or farming and selling products in one of the nearby towns (Lee 1992, Payne 1992). Moreover, occupational diversification among residents at Charles' Corner meant that individuals with specialized skills, such as James Monroe Lee, a carpenter, could provide services for cash or barter (1992). Additionally, residents were able to establish perennial food sources, allowing them to use cash that would have been spent on commercially-produced food products for other purposes.

Food Procurement

The recovery of faunal material was extremely limited, due to poor preservation of bone in the soil matrix. Additionally, the ¼" screen size used during the assessment phase would not have allowed for adequate recovery of fish bone although fish were described as one of the primary dietary elements for African Americans in the Hampton area in 1898 (Dirks and Duran 2001). Flotation samples were collected and processed from three of the sites in order to capture small fragments of bone and seeds, but data from the samples indicated a surprising lack of edible foods (seeds, nuts etc.) (McKnight 2009). This may be due, in part, to residents repurposing household food waste to feed livestock. The universal presence of Eastern Oyster (*Crassostrea virginica*) and Northern Quahog (*Mercenaria mercenaria*) shells at all four sites indicate that there was at least

some consumption of shellfish in addition to their use as a source of income. Turtle remains were recovered from 44YO857 and 44YO318 although a majority ($n = 16$) were recovered from the shell midden at 44YO857, Activity Area 4, which has been interpreted as a by-product of food processing (Table 7.2). Turtles were recorded as a supplementary food source for African American diets in Virginia into the late 1890s (Dirks and Duran 2001) which is consistent with the established date for the deposit.

Table 7.2: Presence of turtle genera and species at 44YO318 and 44YO857 by count and weight.

	YO318, Activity Area 1		YO857, Activity Area 4	
	Count	Weight (g)	Count	Weight (g)
<i>Pseudemys</i> spp. (sliders, cooters)	1	2.35	-	-
Kinosternidae/Kinosternon sp. (mud turtle)	-	-	2	1.06
<i>Terrepenne Carolina</i> (box turtle)	-	-	1	0.46
Testudines (turtles, general)	-	-	13	51.05

Overall, faunal remains were not well-preserved, resulting in very general identifications except for a few fragments that could be clearly attributed to turtles, pigs, or cows. The questionnaires and assessor's notes clearly indicate that most residents had pigs and chickens on their property, and Alexander Lee mentions that both hogs and cows were raised at Charles' Corner (1992). Pig and / or cow teeth were present at three of the four sites (Table 7.3) and provide confirmation that residents partially relied on domesticates as a food source in addition to seafood and wild animals.

Table 7.3: Presence of pig and cow teeth at Charles' Corner by count and weight.

	YO319, Activity Area 1		YO857, Activity Area 3		YO870, Activity Area 2	
	Count	Weight (g)	Count	Weight (g)	Count	Weight (g)
Pig	7	10.95	54	157.10	-	-
Cow	-	-	2	1.69	2	17.17

Hunting

Ammunition manufactured during the late nineteenth or early twentieth century was recovered from three of the sites including a shotgun shell from 44YO318, two rimfire cartridges from 44YO319, and one lead bullet from 44YO870. These types of ammunition, used for shotguns and rifles, are often associated with hunting. In conjunction with Miles' description of wild game in the area (see Chapter 6) one can logically assume that families would hunt and trap for food. Rifles and shotguns could also be used to scare predators away from livestock. However, the presence of a firearm as a method of defense is especially important for an African American community in the segregated South and would have provided a form of protection and a visible warning to anyone considering harm to the neighborhood and residents.

Cans and Jars

The canning process is closely tied to self-sufficient practices and served as one of the ways in which tenants and sharecroppers could reduce their reliance on the company stores. In her ethnoarchaeological analysis of tenant farms, Claudia Holland

found that “(m)any tenants recognized the financial bondage that often resulted from the purchases they made at the plantation store, so they strove for self-sufficiency” (1990:68). One of the primary ways for tenant families to become less dependent on the company store was to grow, can, and preserve their own food; however, there would have been few resources to dedicate to canning if the entire family was tasked with growing and harvesting a cash crop. Cabak et al. conducted a comparative archeological analysis of tenant and operator sites in South Carolina, in which operators represented individuals who were directly responsible for the farm enterprise. By comparing the presence of canning jars and metal cans, the authors found that

...operator households maintained self-sufficient subsistence practices into the 20th century. Conversely, tenant households may have become dependent on commercially produced subsistence goods much earlier than operator families [1999:36]

Their findings provide some insight into a rural family’s decision-making process and their relative autonomy in deciding how to provide sustenance.

Canning-related artifacts including fragments of jars and milk-glass seals were present at three of the four sites at Charles’ Corner (Table 7.4). Although the sample size is relatively small, their distribution was far more ubiquitous than the can fragments observed during the site assessments.

Table 7.4: Counts for canning-related artifacts at Charles’ Corner.

Archaeological Site	Jar Fragments	Milk Glass Seals	Canning Jar Lids
44YO318	2	-	1
44YO319	4	1	1
44YO870	7	19	4

SEARCH recorded ferrous can fragments at two locations, including the refuse pit at 44YO319 ($n = 33$), and 44YO870, Activity Area 2 ($n = 1$), and it is not clear if they represent food cans, given their deteriorated state. Nevertheless, both of these areas were in active use while the government was acquiring the property, and the presence of can fragments in these deposits may reflect the period between 1918 and 1922, when residents were reluctant to plant gardens and crops without knowing if they would be able to harvest the following year. Otherwise, can fragments are noticeably absent from the excavated portions of the sites, and there are several reasons why canned goods may not have been necessary at Charles' Corner. A study of dietary habits for African Americans living in Franklin County, Virginia, during the turn of the twentieth century implied that canned foods were used to introduce dietary variety. In contrast, they found that canned goods were not used as often in the Hampton area since residents had ready access to a diverse array of sustenance, including seafood (Dirks and Duran 2001). Based on the archaeological evidence, Charles' Corner residents did not rely on commercially sold goods, and instead chose to grow and can for themselves in an effort to maintain their self-sufficiency.

These four sites have yielded proof of economic diversification at Charles' Corner. Ammunition demonstrates that residents were almost certainly hunting in addition to using the hogs and chickens on their farmsteads as recorded in the residents' questionnaires. The presence of oyster and clam shell, as well as the faunal remains of turtle and fish, links the residents to oystering and the incorporation of marine resources into their diet. Additionally, the Randall brothers appear to have maintained a gardening area on their property (44YO319, Activity Area 2), and there is evidence that the families

cultivated grapes and fruit trees for their own use (Appendix 4 – 7). Produce from the orchards and gardens were undoubtedly preserved for use throughout the year based on the numerous canning jars and lids recovered at three of the archaeological sites.

Additionally, residents avoided relying on a single resource for their cash income and instead diversified with timber, oyster, and corn. Oystering provided a cash income during the winter, an agricultural off-season, and proved to be crucial for economic stability. Alexander Lee's description of his relatives also demonstrate that at least one resident with specialized skills as a carpenter would provide services for other residents by manufacturing coffins and, most likely, the wooden headstones photographed at Cheesecake Cemetery. Overall, their deft negotiation of self-sufficiency, cash transactions, and bartering assured a relatively stable economy for residents; and although it was a labor-intensive lifestyle, they could rely on each other for mutual aid.

COMMUNAL ACTIVITIES

Many of the activities associated with providing food for the family were mutually beneficial collective work projects. Charles' Corner resident James Payne recalled that

most of the people were very close neighbors. They worked together...When the time came to harvest, they would go to each other's farm, and assist them in harvesting, and butchering, and things like that [1993:81]

Social gatherings, including funerals, were restricted if not forbidden during enslavement (Edwards-Ingram 2001, Blakey 1998) rendering post-Emancipation community get-togethers momentous occasions and genuine expressions of freedom. Joyous occasions like weddings, baptisms (O'Hara and James 1981), and Emancipation Day parades (see Chapter 4) allowed

people to come together in celebration. Regardless of whether the function was practical or celebratory, these events provided an opportunity for togetherness that strengthened social bonds.

Wells and Springs

It is unusual to find wells in archaeological contexts that have not been filled in and covered. The substantially constructed brick-lined wells at both 44YO318 and 44YO319 were relatively undisturbed and undoubtedly used as a water source until the day that residents were forced to abandon their property. The surrounding structures are no longer present but likely included a wood or brick apron as well as a system for lowering and raising a bucket. The wells, which were at least 20 feet deep and lined with brick, represent a substantial amount of work (Figure 7.3).



Figure 7.3:

Interior of the brick-lined well at 44YO319.

It is significant that both of the wells were constructed in proximity to the historic roads that comprised the Charles' Corner intersection, making the water sources easy for surrounding residents to access. Similarly, brick-lined wells were not recorded in the assessor's notes or in the archaeological survey and assessments for surrounding properties suggesting that neighbors may have jointly used the wells on the Brown (44YO318, Activity Area 1) and Roberts (44YO319, Activity Area 1) property as their water source (Appendix 4 and 5). Historians Sharyn Kane and Richard Keeton recalled speaking with a resident who had lived in an African American community on the Savannah River in Georgia during the early twentieth century:

Driving through rural Elbert County with researchers, Randolph Davis pointed out an area called Rose Hill where residents used to gather to swap both conversation and goods. "This is, ah, Rose Hill. I'm fixing to show you that well. They called (it) the Rabbit Well. They had a rabbit on top of that thing. We used to go and meet together and have a store or something like that down in here. Public wells they had there. That's where they get the water from. [1994: 65]

Mr. Davis's memories confirm that wells were not just communally constructed but were also communally utilized and served as convenient congregation spots. At Charles' Corner, use of the well as a gathering area might be reflected in the high count of bottle and jar fragments recovered from the test units surrounding the well at 44YO318 ($n = 236$). The count is higher than might be expected if the well were used solely by the Brown family, indicating that people may have brought empty glass containers to reuse and fill with water or congregated and drank around the well, using it as a space for socialization.

Considerable effort was involved in providing communal access to potable water. Construction of the substantial earthen barrier that separated the seasonal creek from the

spring on the Lee property at 44YO870 would have required the work of several people and, based on the well-worn path leading down to the spring (see Figure 6.11), it was continually being used by members of the Lee family and perhaps by their adjoining neighbors as well.

Entertainment and Recreation

Music is often played at social gatherings, but instruments are rarely recovered archaeologically. Fortunately, harmonica reed fragments were recovered from the Roberts (44YO319, Activity Area 1) and the Holmes property (YO870, Activity Area 1) (Figure 7.4). A phonograph record fragment was also recovered from the creekside scatter on the Holmes property. In both areas, the music-related artifacts were found in the same archaeological context as alcohol containers.

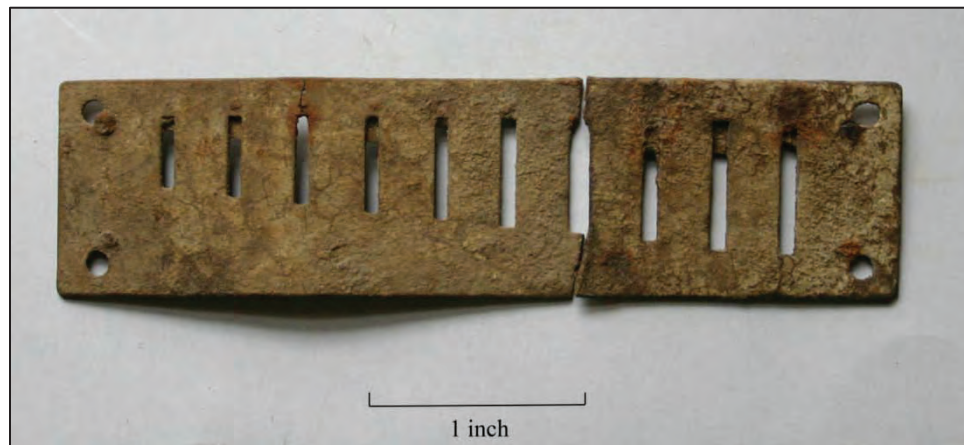


Figure 7.4: Harmonica reed recovered from 44YO870, Activity Area 1.

African Americans on the lower peninsula had been steadily exposed to pro-temperance messages since Emancipation. Margaret Newbold Thorpe, the Quaker who taught at Fort Magruder, warned her adult male pupils to maintain their sobriety if they

earned the right to vote (1907). In 1865, an article in the *True Southerner* encouraged newly freedpeople not to waste their hard-earned money on alcohol (see Chapter 4). The *Peninsula Churchman*, a newspaper operated by African American Baptist pastors in the Williamsburg area, published an opinion piece in 1904 encouraging temperance. Finally, Virginia became a dry state a full year in advance of national Prohibition. Although there was a significant amount of social pressure to avoid drinking, alcohol bottles were present at three of the four sites (44YO318, 44YO319, and 44YO870). The tension created by the evidence of alcohol consumption among residents and the prevalent messages of abstinence may have resulted in some conflict at Charles' Corner. Even so, social drinking provided a source of enjoyment and an opportunity to relieve stress. Historians Coclanis and Simon found that sharecroppers and tenants used their social gatherings to express their autonomy and independence from employers and landlords:

On Saturday nights...black women and men took control over their time and their bodies. At rural bars, juke joints, and house parties, they shook, sang, danced, gambled, drank, and boogied...What's more, they rejected – at least symbolically – the values of their white employers. [2003: 203-204]

Even though most Charles' Corner residents were self-employed, social gatherings undoubtedly served much the same purpose as they did for sharecroppers. Specifically, such occasions allowed them to challenge at least one of the expectations (i.e. temperance) that was deemed essential to a virtuous and successful life.

Social Institutions and Events

In addition to gatherings at private homes, there were several social institutions at Charles' Corner located in proximity to the main intersection. Buildings included St. John

Baptist Church, a lodge used for social functions, and the Bruton District School. A lot reserved for Charles' Corner graded school. Ultimately, the church served as the center of most social functions and provided an important source for social cohesion (Payne 1992).

A resident of Yorktown during the early twentieth century recalls,

When I was small, the colored people in Yorktown also had a custom of holding their baptism ceremonies every summer down on the beach. These ceremonies would follow revival meetings held in their church. As I recall, there would be many days of 'seeking' and 'meditating,' and then suddenly the people would appear on the street shaking hands with everyone they met, and singing with great joy such words of repentance as : "Thank God Almighty, my soul is free from the very thoughts of sin!" [O'Hara and James 1981:30-31]

Baptisms and other communal events were not only opportunities to congregate with friends, family, and neighbors but also provided a way for residents to express their identities.

SELF-IDENTIFICATION

Finally, the ways in which Charles' Corner residents identified themselves is critical to understanding the community-building process since these would have been the characteristics around which residents unified. In addition, they provided a way for residents to challenge preconceived notions of rural African Americans.

Land Owners

The residents' sense of ownership and permanence on the landscape is reflected in the substantial amount of time and effort they invested in improvements on their property. Activity Areas that represent the earliest occupations (44YO318, Activity Area 5 and 44YO857, Activity Area 4) date to the mid- to late nineteenth century. These two areas include distinct historic kitchen middens indicating an extensive period of use, yet there are no distinguishable architectural remains visible on the surface. This may be due, in part, to a paucity of available building materials but is also reflective of the transient nature of life for African Americans during this period.

Activity Areas that reflect occupation during the 1890s through the 1910s, when land ownership was more common, include brick foundations or piers and collapsed brick flues. In addition to housing, the archaeological record provides evidence of improvements on the property that would have been beneficial for long-term habitation. The two meticulously constructed, brick-lined wells at 44YO318 and 44YO319 are ideal representations of the amount of effort dedicated to utilities that were intended for long-term use. Finally, Cooke's notes indicate that each homestead included several outlying structures, such as sheds, barns, hog pens, and privies (see Appendices 5 - 8). Residents were also dedicated to the construction of community resources, including St. John Baptist Church and a lodge for meetings and celebrations. Collectively, the data demonstrate that residents were attached to their property and invested time and resources to make them comfortable and functioning homesteads.

The ability for residents to decide where their homes and outlying structures were located was a distinct advantage that landowners at Charles' Corner had over sharecroppers and tenants throughout the South. When Alexander Lee was asked if he knew of any tenants in the area, he emphatically replied "No, no, no!" (1992: 75). Lee's forceful declaration demonstrates the pride residents felt in ownership. They were also acutely aware of the relationship between ownership and autonomy and conscientiously sold or apportioned parts of their property to their children, other African American families, or social institutions (BVCP 1920a). Land ownership also had broader implications in the political world and would have provided a cautionary measure against any attempts at disenfranchisement and unjust prerequisites for voting.

Farmers and Oysterers

It would have been understandable for African Americans to try and escape the agricultural realm as freedpeople, due to its association with the strenuous nature of enslaved labor and the dependency inherent to sharecropping (Kirby 1987). However, Charles' Corner residents appear to have embraced their role as farmers and oystering because those occupations provided the means for residents to be entrepreneurial and independent. During their interviews, Alexander Lee and James Payne (1992) expressed pride in their family connection to oystering. In addition, a locally-produced newspaper edited by an African American committee and titled the *Peninsula Churchman* ran an article by E.J. Waterstripe in January 1904, in which Waterstripe advises readers that:

Farming as a business is the highest occupation that a man can fill, and every farmer should think so. He should know that farming is the most independent of all trades. The farmer feeds the whole population of the globe, and so all are depending upon him for food and if agriculture supplies food for all the vast number of people in the large cities, is it not worthy of being called a business? [1904]

The editors' choice to publish this statement for an African American readership in the early twentieth century served as an endorsement of the philosophy espoused by Booker T. Washington and nearby Hampton Institute. In his 1895 address to the Atlanta Cotton States and International Exposition, Washington emphasized that Americans should "learn to dignify and glorify common labour and put brains and skills into the common occupations of life" (1907:220). It would be logical for Charles' Corner residents to identify with statements that afforded the proper dignity to their livelihood, and they undoubtedly appreciated Washington's support even though his remarks at the Atlanta Exposition were met with a great deal of controversy (Carroll 2006).

Determining from the oral and written accounts how residents felt about their occupations is difficult. However, the fact that some of the decorative objects recovered from the sites include images of fruit, flowers, or leaves is telling. Fruit and floral motifs were popular around the turn of the twentieth century, and at Charles' Corner the imagery is present on lamp bodies (Figure 7.5), buttons, dishes, and the terracotta pots at 44YO318. The pressed glass lamp bodies are particularly interesting because they depict grapes and cherries, both of which were grown in the fruit orchards at Charles' Corner. In her historical review of rural African American culture at the turn of the century, Valerie Grim explains that "(m)any of the rural traditions and the heritage of blacks in the fields and living off the land appeared in their art and language" (2003:119). Although these particular examples were not produced by the residents, they surely reflect a conscious choice of rurally-themed designs.



Figure 7.5: Pressed glass lamp bodies from 44YO870, Activity Area 1 depicting grapes on the vine (left) and cherries (right).

Free Citizens

Many of the artifacts that one would take for granted in a European American context are particularly significant when recovered from post-Emancipation African American households. The presence of artifacts reflecting activities that were restricted, if not forbidden, during enslavement signify that African Americans readily adopted the rights of free citizens and reinforced these rights with their children. Historian Michael Hucles describes the ways in which African Americans embraced the rights of citizenship after Emancipation:

They therefore attempted to gain control of their lives through a vigorous affirmation of their rights. They began to record their antebellum marriages and normalize family relations, obtain an education, establish a base for economic prosperity, and participate in the political process. Through their actions they hope to give a true meaning to their freedom. [1992:543]

This philosophy undoubtedly underlies all of the analytical categories presented here, but there are a few artifacts that are particularly evocative of the sentiment attached to freedom.

Writing implements, including an ink bottle (44YO870, Activity Area 1), a slate pencil (44YO319, Activity Area 1), a pencil's brass ferrule (44YO870, Activity Area 2), and writing slate (44YO319, Activity Area 1 and 44YO870, Activity Area 2) are especially important given the emphasis on education after Emancipation. Additionally, receiving pay in exchange for labor, services, and goods meant that people could purchase items for themselves and their families that would have been difficult, if not impossible, to obtain in enslavement including jewelry (44YO870 Activity Area 2, 44YO319 Activity Area 1), decorative beads (44YO870, Activity Area 2), and dolls for children (44YO319, Activity Area 1).

Christians

Spiritual beliefs and religious practices are particularly challenging to recognize and interpret strictly through material culture and archaeological features. Based on oral interviews with former Charles' Corner residents, St. John Baptist Church was a keystone for the community and served as a hub for social events (Payne 1992). In addition, the surrounding Baptist churches also played a role in disseminating information through *The Peninsula Churchman*. However, only one item recovered from the homestead sites provides an indication of the residents' faith. A shovel test at the Holmes' family

property (44YO870, Activity Area 2) yielded fragments of a small porcelain figurine that may represent baby Jesus (Figure 7.6).



Figure 7.6:

Porcelain figurine and possible representation of baby Jesus.

Cheesecake Cemetery provides the means to explore residents' beliefs based on how they chose to commemorate those who had passed away. Archaeologist Edwards-Ingram has described the many ways in which mortuary practices provide information on “communal behavior, negotiations, disputes, cooperation, racial tensions, creativity, persistence, and resistance” (2001:45). The role of cemeteries as a space for the living to recognize and honor the deceased is one reason that they were an integral facet of Emancipation Day parades (see Chapter 4). At Cheesecake Cemetery, Christian traditions are represented in tandem with African American influences. The inscription on Fleming Brown's headstone follows his age at death with a phrase used in a Christian hymn, “Asleep in Jesus.” In the photograph of Cheesecake Cemetery, taken in the 1940s, traditional western headstones made from marble or stone are interspersed with the wooden, torso-shaped headstones (see Figure 6.1), and the burials are all facing east in

accordance with Christian tradition allowing the deceased to rise and meet Christ during the Resurrection. In addition to facing east, the silhouetted headstones are particularly evocative because they give the appearance of the individual rising from the grave, perhaps in anticipation of the Resurrection.

Nevertheless, Mason's description of the cemetery indicates that he recognized the wooden headstones invoking the human image as an African American tradition (see Chapter 6). Similar examples of torso-shaped, wooden burial markers have also been recorded at an African American cemetery in South Carolina (Vlach 1990). The wooden markers at Cheesecake Cemetery were undoubtedly manufactured locally, probably by a member of the Lee family who built coffins (Lee 1993). Although the wooden headstones are no longer present, one of the remaining concrete headstones marks the gravesite for Emily Williams and was designed with a similar silhouette (Figure 7.7). The deliberate location of the cemetery at the southern portion of the Charles' Corner intersection may have been a deliberate acknowledgement of the fact that crossroads are often used in African and African American cultures to represent the junction between the living and the deceased (Thompson 1983, Gundaker 1998). The intersection also had to have been a point of vulnerability for Charles' Corner as a place where strangers with unknown intentions passed through the settlement. In this context, the headstones also appear to be standing guard as silent witnesses.



Figure 7.7:

Headstone for Emily Williams,
Died Feb. 24, 1919.

Summation

These analytical categories were designed to demonstrate the ways in which Hyland and Bennett's components of community building, including "...attending to existing community relationships, revitalizing or creating community identity and meaning, and encouraging participation and partnerships....," (2005: 13) manifested at Charles' Corner. Based on evidence provided by the archaeological record, oral histories, and documentary records, Charles' Corner residents actively participated in methods of community building between 1862 and 1922. By banding together, residents were able to establish a modicum of financial and social stability denied to them before Emancipation.

Residents maintained their community relationships through communal activities by attending church, working with each other to provide improvements to each other's property, and playing music and drinking together at social events. Residents developed

“community identity and meaning” by focusing on the elements of social life that they found most important. The church and school were clearly a priority for residents since they appear to be the first community structures built in the area. Additionally, their occupations as oysterers and farmers were keenly important to their identity since it provided them with the means to own land and remain autonomous.

Finally, Charles’ Corner residents encouraged participation and partnerships by extending their social and economic networks outside of the immediate neighborhood. They supplied their family homes with materials acquired in a mid-Atlantic distribution network. The networks also facilitated economic diversification which was critical to maintaining economic stability. It also set them apart from many of the tenant and sharecroppers in the South who focused their efforts on a single cash crop. Rather than remaining insular, residents associated themselves with national organizations that promoted self-sufficiency and collective organization among African Americans. Such organizations reinforced long-held beliefs about self-help and prompted residents to reinvest in their own neighborhoods.

Ultimately, community building was not merely an exercise for Charles’ Corner residents but provided the means to the end of establishing their rights as citizens on a path of social betterment. Cohesive social organization helped residents cope with the significant obstacles facing African Americans during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and their socioeconomic strategies succeeded in creating a legacy of home ownership for residents and their descendants. As a result, Charles’ Corner residents were able to live relatively autonomously and construct their own interpretation of freedom.

Chapter 8: Interpretation

This chapter addresses the research questions designed for the Charles' Corner study by weaving together strands of information from oral histories, the archaeological record, and historical documents in order to provide an understanding of the complexities of life at Charles' Corner. The research questions were constructed to situate the places, people, and events of Charles' Corner within the context of broader national patterns and to demonstrate their historical relevance. Additionally, the analytical and interpretive processes contributed to the development of five discernible phases of community building at Charles' Corner which are outlined in this chapter.

What socioeconomic networks were established by Charles' Corner residents?

Socioeconomic networks for Charles' Corner residents were facilitated by their proximity to a main thoroughfare (Williamsburg Road), a railroad line, and a major waterway (York River) all within three miles of the main intersection. Residents' connection to these transportation routes as well as a mid-Atlantic distribution network provided access to goods produced as nearby as Williamsburg and as far away as New York. The ability for residents to conveniently travel to nearby cities and towns provided crucial opportunities for congregation and social exchange. Anthropologist Kelley Deetz noticed a similar social pattern in Slabtown, just outside of Yorktown. In her historical review of the neighborhood, Deetz states that:

Slabtown remained a self-sufficient community long after the Quakers left in 1866. Its residents continued to support themselves on their own land and by their various trades. The community at Slabtown was not isolated, however; they interacted with surrounding black settlements, such as the ones at Lackey, Acreville, and Williamsburg's Grove. [Deetz 2002]

Additionally, both Williamsburg and Yorktown had well-established black-owned businesses for residents to patronize in a demonstration of support and solidarity. These trips also provided an opportunity for residents from all of the nearby African American settlements including Slabtown, Lackey, Halstead's Point and Magruder to interact and exchange information. The black-owned business in these towns served as a convenient location to coordinate political action and generate interest in social issues.

One of the most successful and well-known black-owned stores in the area during the 1880s and 1890s, Sam Harris' Cheap Store in Williamsburg (Oxrieder 1998), undoubtedly served as a touchstone for African American families from surrounding settlements. Although the store closed upon his death in 1904, it was apparent that Sam Harris had helped set a precedent for local African American business owners. Ten years after Harris's passing, "A Friend to Progress" wrote to the *Richmond Planet* explaining that there were "three to four" African American merchants in Williamsburg who read the Planet each week (March 15, 1915). In the same letter, the author emphasized that African Americans in Williamsburg were making: "...a more strenuous effort than ever before to find out what our people are doing elsewhere...to push forward the line of progress." This letter demonstrates that business owners understood their role as important conduits of information, in addition to goods, between major city centers, like Richmond, and rural settlements like Charles' Corner.

Sunday church services were also very effective at delivering messages of uplift and faith. Not only did St. John Baptist Church serve as a place of worship for the local congregation but the building was also used as a schoolhouse on weekdays before the residents left the property (Lee 1992, Payne 1992). St. John connected residents to other churches in the area including Rising Sun Baptist Church at Lackey and Mt. Ararat Baptist Church in Williamsburg. During the first decade of the nineteenth century, reverends from several Baptist churches between Williamsburg and Yorktown with African American congregations collaborated on a newspaper called the *Peninsula Churchman*. The mission statement provided on the front page of the newspaper stated that it was “devoted to the intellectual, moral, religious, and industrial development of the race” (1904). As noted in Chapter 7, these stated goals corresponded with Booker T. Washington’s philosophy of uplift which focused on industrial training and skilled labor in the trades. Through the newspaper, churches could also promote similar objectives to African American fraternal organizations that were popular at the turn of the twentieth century.

The fraternal organizations and women’s auxiliaries established at Charles’ Corner connected residents with national movements that were dedicated to African American progress and self-sufficiency. Organizations like the True Reformers, United Order of the Odd Fellows, Household of Ruth, and Knights and Daughters of Tabor provided a social structure for collecting and dispersing funds for local needs-based aid and collective projects. Although these were national associations, they provided the framework for members to invest in their local communities. The self-help philosophy

advocated by their churches and fraternal organizations is a reflection of life at Charles' Corner.

The ability for Charles' Corner residents to support each other was reliant upon each household developing their own secure access to resources. Accordingly, residents created a diversified household economy in order to establish financial security and maintain perennial stability. The reservation's unique geographical location provided seasonal work in agriculture, oystering, and fishing as well as year-round labor in odd jobs, railroad labor, sewing, laundering and other home services (Census 1870). Multi-functional farmsteads provided the means for residents to raise chickens and hogs for consumption, trade, and / or sale. Artifacts like the rakes and pails at 44YO319, the sewing table leg at 44YO870, or the ubiquity of canning jars are indicators of the residents' range of skills and are indicative of their self-reliance. The ability to diversify their income and resources mitigated the effects of a poor agricultural yield or a decline in the oyster industry (Medford 1992). Nevertheless, the achievement of self-sufficiency had broader implications outside of its immediate practicality. Historian Edna Medford noted that:

The degree of economic independence that blacks enjoyed as a result of the lower peninsula's economy spilled over into the political sphere. The variety of employment options limited the extent to which whites could coerce deference from blacks or keep them away from the polls. [1992: 581]

A diversified household economy not only provided economic independence but also allowed residents a level of autonomy over their purchases, family distribution of labor, food selection, and freedom of movement that sharecroppers and tenants were not able to

attain (Mahoney 2004). Consequently, this autonomy also afforded a significant amount of political leverage that was uncommon for rural African Americans.

Charles' Corner residents maintained a delicate balance between their local, regional, and national networks. Although residents maintained extensive socioeconomic networks, their economic and social stability were rooted in local transactions. Residents may have placed a priority on their immediate neighbors but they were neither insular nor isolated. Instead, residents deliberately developed national and regional levels of social and economic interaction facilitated by the many avenues and methods of transportation that were available to them.

What was the community-building process for Charles' Corner residents? What "community" were they building?

Before discussing the community building process, it is important to return to the discussion initiated in Chapter 2 regarding the definition of community and how it might apply to the residents of Charles' Corner. In areas where religion and faith are integral to one's identity, people often identify fellow congregants as their community. At Charles' Corner, St. John Baptist Church is located ½ mile from the main intersection. The 1906 map shows a distinguishable cluster of homes surrounding the intersection (see Figure 5.2). Based on the data presented in Chapters 6 and 7, it is evident that Charles' Corner residents invested a considerable amount of time and finances into their surrounding residential area indicating that they felt strong ties to their neighbors who were also their fellow congregants. In his 1992 interview, Alexander Lee was asked if their family was

emotionally close with their neighbors. He responded, “We weren’t all relatives, but we all lived in that area,” intimating that the ties with neighbors were just as strong as blood relationships. Collectively, these factors make a strong argument for Cusick’s use of community as “locale linked with social interaction” (1995:61).

An understanding of the Charles’ Corner community as being principally defined by the cluster of homes surrounding the main intersection facilitates a discussion of the community building process in that area over the course of nearly sixty years. A summary of the specific ways in which Hyland and Bennett’s three components of community building are represented at Charles’ Corner was presented in Chapter 7. In order to demonstrate the gradual process of community building, it is possible to build an approximate timeline outlining the phases of development and change for Charles’ Corner residents between 1862 and 1922 using the data presented in this dissertation.

Phase I (1862 – 1867)

The Peninsula Campaign of the Civil War (March 1862) served as the progenitor for Charles’ Corner by redefining social and landscape boundaries. The plantation lands that once occupied the area between Charles’ Corner and the York River were temporarily confiscated by the government and served as resettlement lands for newly freed slaves. Based on historical documents and eyewitness accounts, those that had not abandoned the area scavenged and repurposed materials during a period when resources were scarce on the lower peninsula. Even the colonial-era Cheesecake Church was dismantled by the Union Army who used the bricks to construct officer’s quarters.

Although it is a phase marked by extreme poverty, lack of resources, and great uncertainty it is also a period of great opportunity for African Americans. They were able to seek out an education, earn cash for their labor, and (albeit temporarily) vote in an election. These five years provided a short window of opportunity to gain an economic foothold, accumulate savings, plant crops, harvest oysters, and provide services to the Union Army. Social organization among African Americans on the lower peninsula was, perhaps, most apparent to those involved with politics during this time period. Historian John Forsythe found that “(p)olitical mobilization among freedpeople was to a great degree an extension of social order, which in the 1860s had already experienced the initial stages of institutionalization” (1997:413). The end of this phase is marked by the restoration of antebellum land ownership forcing the relocation of African Americans who had settled on government farms along the York River.

Phase II (1867 – 1880)

After antebellum land ownership was restored, African American residents undoubtedly had to move inland and away from the shoreline where cultivated and improved parts of the plantation were maintained. Cash-strapped plantation holders probably started to rent out wooded and unimproved portions of land to the African American families that had been displaced yet again. For freedpeople, this served as a period to establish small farms, acquire oystering and farming equipment, and save money. African Americans who had been free prior to Emancipation were better situated to purchase, rather than rent, land during this phase (Medford 1992). Documentation for

this era becomes increasingly scarce due to the removal of federal assistance and the eventual end of Reconstruction in 1877, but the archaeological record indicates that many of the homes built during this phase were probably post-in-ground or wooden pier foundations with wattle-and-daub chimneys since the southern economy was still struggling, resources were scarce, and families were still unsure about their status on the land.

During this period, the area around Charles' Corner was not densely inhabited and may have included at least a dozen homesteads. Even so, residents began to establish their own local social institutions. Historian Joseph Reidy noted that "...churches and schools grew apace with the development of a core community" at Freedmen's Village near Washington D.C. and the priority of those two institutions emphasize their importance to residents (1987:412). At Charles' Corner, St. John Baptist Church was established in two wings in 1879, one of which was the Black Swamp wing located ½ mile from the main intersection (History of St. John Baptist Church, nd).

Phase III (1880-1900)

The period between 1880 and 1900 seems to have been a time of significant growth for the Charles' Corner area. Not only was it a peak period for oyster cultivation and distribution (Medford 1992), but the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad company constructed a lower peninsula extension to the railroad line establishing a Grove Station depot (1.5 miles from Charles' Corner) and providing wage labor jobs for people in the area. The earliest land purchases surrounding Charles' Corner appear to have occurred

between 1880 and 1900 (McDonald 1994) and a majority of the mean artifact dates for the activity areas in the four sites used for the case study fall within this category. Land ownership undoubtedly contributed to a sense of security and permanency which is reflected in the construction of substantial wells, brick flues and pier foundations, several outbuildings, and garden areas. During this period, the first generation born after Emancipation was growing into adulthood, establishing their own homes, getting married, and having their own children. By this time, residents were participating in local and regional socioeconomic networks and acquiring goods from a mid-Atlantic distribution system.

Nevertheless, African Americans were met with a series of legal injustices during the last two decades of the nineteenth century. In 1883, the Supreme Court determined that the Civil Rights Act of 1875 was unconstitutional and upheld legalized segregation in the case of *Plessy v. Ferguson* in 1896. These decisions undoubtedly had a profound effect on the residents of Charles' Corner, a number of whom were landowning, successful, and self-employed. In fact, the legal decisions in conjunction with an increasing population and a stable economy may have served as an impetus for Charles' Corner residents to strengthen and develop their social organizations and emphasize their self-sufficiency and autonomy. In 1884, the Black Swamp wing of St. John Baptist Church established itself as an independent church (History of St. John Baptist Church, nd) which was, undoubtedly, a significant decision for Charles' Corner residents and the St. John congregation who closely identified with their church. Residents also started to turn to fraternal societies which were growing in popularity and offered structure and

clearly stated goals for collective organization. The end of this phase is marked by the transition into the twentieth century.

Phase IV (1900-1918)

During the first two decades of the twentieth century, residents must have felt relatively confident due to their stable economy and growing community. The Bruton District School was constructed sometime between 1900 and 1905, probably in response to the burgeoning population (BVCP 1920a). However, former residents Alexander Lee and James Payne recall attending school in the church building in the 1910s, possibly because the district school was either in a state of disrepair or not providing adequate resources for students. Consequently, residents collected funds to purchase land and construct a building for their own Charles' Corner Graded School.

The demographic profile of Charles' Corner was undoubtedly changed toward the end of this time period due to young men enlisting or being drafted into service for World War I, or looking for wage labor jobs on the shipyards in Newport News. It appears as if there was a second wave of property purchases and construction of new houses during the 1910s as sons and daughters inherited property from their parents or purchased land on their own. Several of the main houses recorded during the commandeering of the property were constructed during this time period and the assessor's notes sometimes included the description of an "old house" on the same land (see Appendix 5, Lot #218). The local churches collaborated on the newspaper publication, *Peninsula Churchman*,

which printed articles about social betterment for their African American readers. The end of this phase is marked by the issuance of Presidential Proclamation #1472.

Phase V (1918-1922)

The final phase of Charles' Corner begins with the government order commandeering the property on November 18, 1918. The level of community organization is evident by the rapidity with which residents retained an attorney and responded to the presidential order with a petition representing seventy-six households asking that the eviction be delayed until the following spring. The families clearly recognized the inevitability of their eviction yet they still advocated for proper compensation and expressed genuine distress and sorrow at having to leave their homes. While looking for new accommodations, most residents opted to follow their respective churches to new locations in the surrounding area including Grove and Lackey while Charles' Corner residents and St. John Baptist Church moved to the Penniman area located across King Creek. By 1922, most of the residents had moved off of the property and resettled elsewhere but the experience results in people identifying themselves as having lived on the "reservation."

Representing the development, existence, and dissolution of Charles' Corner in phases demonstrates the gradual, yet distinctive, process of community building over the course of sixty years. The data suggest that residents invested in one another's comfort and success rather than living together merely as neighbors. Ultimately, the residents' pursuit for independence and equality was dependent upon their solidarity.

In what ways did African Americans continue to promote social equality in the rural South after Emancipation? How did these actions relate to other activist efforts in the decades leading up to the Civil Rights Movement?

Through an examination of the community building process at Charles' Corner, its role in the broader continuum in the black freedom movement becomes apparent. In a quest economic independence and autonomy, residents were chronologically situated between the self-emancipation movements and maroon communities established by enslaved Africans and African Americans, and the Civil Rights Movement. Based on the documentary record, it is clear that residents of Charles' Corner were, at the very least, exposed to self-help messages that emphasized the link between social betterment and civil rights. However, their actions indicate that they were deeply involved in the self-help process as well.

While conducting research for his book, *Evidences of Progress Among Colored People*, G. F Richings wrote a biographical piece on Samuel Harris, the successful entrepreneur in Williamsburg. Richings reported that Harris was doing \$55,000 worth of business a year, owned ninety-six properties, four farms, and owned his own vessel for shipments to stock his businesses (Richings 1903, Oxrieder 1998). Based on his actions, Mr. Harris clearly understood that he was viewed, both by African Americans and European Americans, as representing the best of what African Americans could achieve in freedom. In 1902, Harris deliver a paper in Richmond to the Colored Men's Business League titled *My 32 Years Experience and its Results and the Things that will make the Negro the Highest Type of an American Citizen* (Oxreider 1998:17). Additionally, Mr.

Harris must have been acutely aware of the texts assessing African American progress since Emancipation (see Chapter 4), because he signed his son's autograph album on March 29th, 1891 by stating: "Solution of The Negro Problem of America; - Intelligence and wealth" (Oxrieder 1998:53).

Harris was undoubtedly influenced by W.E.B. Du Bois philosophy of uplift which was focused on higher education but Charles' Corner residents may have found very little room for themselves in Du Bois's emphasis on "...the sciences, history, political science, economics, law, and other professional fields" during the early twentieth century (Aldridge 1999:185). Booker T. Washington, on the other hand, advocated that African Americans learn trades and provide services so as to be rendered invaluable to society and proposed this approach as a way to achieve economic independence. Although Washington's historic link to nearby Hampton Institute also undoubtedly influenced residents approach to achieving equality, they were also exposed to opposing points of view. In Gloucester, just across the York River from Charles' Corner, there were two separate training institutions for African Americans, one of which adopted the educational philosophy of Washington and the other of Du Bois, fueling an already divisive social issue (Pruitt 2013).

At Charles' Corner, residents focused on achieving and maintaining financial stability, investing in their own community, and pursuing an education. These factors, coupled with land ownership, contributed to social and political power for residents even though they were subject to the restrictions of Jim Crow legislation. This stands in stark contrast to the experience of African Americans in Oakland from 1860s to the 1960s

which was summarized for the Cypress Project archaeological report. Praetzellis and Praetzellis concluded that:

optimism had retreated before the hard reality of continued racial injustice. Self-determination, as symbolized by homeownership, had been in reach of the skilled workers...By the 1970s, it was impossible for most, whose homes were likely replaced by concrete blockhouses. [2004:303-304]

Contributing factors included a dramatic population increase in the mid-twentieth century precipitated a housing issue, a decrease in skilled and well-paid jobs (ie. shipyard), construction of a freeway that bisected the neighborhood, redevelopment, concept of “blight,” lack of political influence, and no relocation plan for displaced landowners (Praetzellis and Praetzellis 2004). These conditions also prompted the founding of the Black Panther Party in Oakland in the 1960s and the renewed pursuit of self-determination.

Charles’ Corner existed within a time period that many would consider a historical void for advancements in African American civil rights. However, the *Peninsula Churchman* published a statement on equality and justice in 1904:

The Negro will never be content with unfair treatment. The grumbling habit, which is a divine right of man, will continue to grow with the increase of the uneven and unfair treatment that is meted out to him so often by society. Nothing is so destructive of the peace of the community or so clogs its wheels of progress as an element that is possessed of the conviction, right or wrong, that they are not treated with exact justice.

It was not a period of apathy or quiet contentment but an era of persistent resistance. Some of the basic methodology associated with the Civil Rights Movement was already present during this time period. Protest marches were preceded by Emancipation Day parades demonstrating solidarity and unity. Petitions and letters of protest, which served

as a way "...to declare their concerns and to define their visions of the future," (Hucles 1992: 545) were utilized in conjunction with boycotts and letters to the editor. Charles' Corner residents created their own school with the understanding that the government would not provide them with adequate resources for educational institutions equal to those of whites. All of these actions were expressions of autonomy and served as statements in the pursuit of equal rights.

What obstacles did residents face and how did these obstacles, and the response to them, change over time?

Obstacles encountered by Charles' Corner residents were driven almost exclusively by racism. Immediately after Emancipation, African Americans in the South were faced with widespread poverty, landlessness, and a lack of formal education. The Freedmen's Bureau attempted to address these formidable social crises but was severely limited by an overwhelming hostility from southern white society resulting in the premature departure of Bureau officials from the former Confederacy (Talbot 1969). Those who founded the African American settlement of Charles' Corner knew that land ownership was critical to avoiding the pitfalls of poverty and landlessness and set about to save money and purchase property.

Although white property holders restricted the quality of land African Americans could purchase (Woodson 1930; Stuck 1995) their land was a tangible asset that could be handed down to future generations. Unlike some of the other agricultural workers (sharecroppers, tenants and wage laborers) throughout the South, landowners were not

contractually required to purchase goods through cash or credit at a plantation store, nor were they obligated to turn over two-thirds of their crops to a white landholder. As a result, African American landholding families had a greater degree of autonomy in purchases, family distribution of labor, food selection and freedom of movement (Mahoney 2004).

Consequently, Charles' Corner residents were well-positioned as Virginia started to legalize segregation during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. African American communities developed and financially supported their own local institutions including a church, a cemetery, a barbershop, a blacksmith, a lodge, and a school. Finally, faced with having to move from Charles' Corner altogether after the Presidential proclamation was issued, residents were able to mobilize and respond quickly by hiring attorneys to represent their interests. The petition filed with the Navy, and signed by seventy-six families, demonstrates their unity when faced with adversity. This alliance undoubtedly contributed to the successful outcome of the petition and convinced the Navy to delay displacement.

How did displacement affect the community-building process and how did residents' social networks develop and change after displacement?

The forced displacement by the government restructured former residents' relationship with the land. Perhaps the most significant transformation caused by the relocation is evident when former residents and their descendants refer to themselves or their family as having lived on the "reservation," referring to the confiscated land in its

entirety, rather than identifying with Charles' Corner, Halstead's Point, or Lackey specifically. Nevertheless, as residents moved into the surrounding neighborhoods of Grove, Penniman, and the post-displacement iteration of Lackey they remained associated with their respective churches. Additionally, the disruption in community building at Charles' Corner did not prevent former residents from applying self-help tenets to their new neighborhood. After moving to Grove, former reservation residents found that there was no school for African American children so they collected money for the purchase of a bus that would take the children to school in Williamsburg (see Chapter 5).

As disruptive as displacement proved to be, it also had a unifying effect for former residents who remained in negotiations with the government for nearly four years after the presidential proclamation. This sentiment also extends to first generation descendants who continue to refer to the NWSY as the "reservation" and are well aware of their families' struggle for proper compensation. Archaeologist Audrey Horning found a similar sentiment among Blue Ridge residents who were evicted in order to create Shenandoah Park. She observed that "(d)escendants of members of geographically distant pre-Park communities now feel a kinship with one another..." (1999:132). Multiple generations later, locations and archaeological sites like Blue Ridge and Charles' Corner can serve as a powerful rallying point for engagement and stewardship. Following years of community engagement for the New York African Burial Ground, Michael Blakey found that the site:

...has come to represent part of the common heritage and group identity of African Americans who came together as a distinctive group in order to preserve and respect a plot of land that they consider *their* collective, sacred ground. [Blakey 1998:54]

Archaeological sites like these continue to serve as effective bridges between the past and the present. Not only do they provide educational opportunities but they can serve as a historical anchor in modern understandings of identity and belonging.

How can the archaeological record address these research questions?

The archaeological record is one of the few data sources supplied by the residents themselves. The artifacts and features provided data on the socioeconomic networks maintained by Charles' Corner residents and recorded the work that they had invested in their property. Given that the area was predominantly African American, it would have been relatively easy for the Charles' Corner area to have maintained a relatively insular protocol. However, it is clear that residents utilized the transportation routes available to them in an advantageous fashion. Collectively, the artifacts and features at these sites demonstrate that families had taken great strides, both socially and economically, in the fifty years following Emancipation. Deposits associated with the Holmes family (44YO870, Activity Area 2) and the Roberts family (44YO319, Activity Area 1) included household and personal amenities such as a phonograph record fragment, harmonica reeds, jewelry, and pressed glass tablewares that indicate considerable economic stability. Most importantly, the archaeological record chronicles the residents' remarkable transformation over sixty years.

How can this information be useful for the African American residents of York County today?

As stated in the introduction, Mr. Sherman Hill started the Yorktown African American Cultural Society because he felt that African American history was underrepresented in York County. This dissertation was intended to address the inherent disparity in historical interpretation by drawing attention to the compelling story of African American settlements during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the York County area. The fact that the Charles' Corner narrative is inextricably intertwined with both national and local historical events facilitates its adaptation into existing interpretations and educational lesson plans.

The research process made it clear that there was a limited written record regarding the formation and maintenance of Charles' Corner. In addition, the archaeological record, which remains as a testimony to the residents' history, is located in a restricted area of the NWSY and is not readily accessible to the public. The excavation and recordation process eases the information from a private realm into a public sphere, making it available to descendants and the general public alike.

Summation

Certainly, there were several factors that proved beneficial to the residents of Charles' Corner and served as a catalyst for self-sufficiency. The lower peninsula, including York County, had an antebellum history of free blacks owning property and

operating businesses. The Union Army and the Freedmen's Bureau were able to provide land, schooling, and a modicum of protection immediately following the Peninsula Campaign. Nearby waterways afforded access to socioeconomic networks along the Chesapeake Bay offering an alternate source of information and a greater deal of liberty. Residents diversified their source of income which provided perennial revenue and increased their economic stability (Medford 1992); combined with their thriftiness and resourcefulness residents were able to save money and purchase property. Once they established homes, residents focused on developing community institutions with a priority on faith and education.

Ultimately, the development of Charles' Corner was largely dependent upon the sophistication and savvy of residents who managed to acquire land and a stable economy during an era of segregation and violent racism. Anthropologist Audrey Smedley explains that the apparent dichotomy existed outside of Charles' Corner:

Many historians note how strong and vibrant black communities and families were after the Civil War, despite the threats of lynching and the other barriers imposed by laws, practices, and customs stemming from racial ideology. Freed blacks anticipated opportunities to be educated, to obtain jobs, to work hard and make the same advances that whites made. They were Americans and saw themselves as participants in the American dream. [1999:698]

Charles' Corner may not have been a planned community in the same vein as Freedmen's Village (Reidy 1987), Allensworth (Royal 2008) and New Philadelphia (Shackel 2011), yet these communities embodied similar principles and goals for equality in America.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

The sixty years of occupation represented by the archaeological sites at Charles' Corner are a critical and compelling part of African American history. Immediately following the Civil War, African Americans on Virginia's lower peninsula struggled to acquire the basic necessities of life including food, housing, and clothing. Simultaneously, they were bombarded with advice and expectations for their role in a free and democratic American society. The Supreme Court upheld legalized segregation as African Americans established settlements, developed stable family lives, and worked to earn and save money. These accomplishments contradicted what several scholars assumed, or asserted, would occur after Emancipation and ran contrary to the "shiftless" and "lazy" stereotype. Although community building among rural African Americans, like the residents of Charles' Corner, helped set the stage for the Civil Rights Movement, their achievements in the Jim Crow South often go unrecognized. The Charles' Corner study presents an example of the community-building process for African Americans after Emancipation in order to emphasize the role of rural communities within the broader context of the black freedom movement.



Figure 9.1: Charles' Corner as it exists presently.

In many ways, Charles' Corner was an auspicious location for an African American settlement. In *Flash of the Spirit: African and Afro-American Art & Philosophy*, author Robert Farris Thompson describes a set of ideographs used by multiple ethnic groups in Nigeria and Cameroon to convey important ideas. One of these symbols is composed of several lines converging on a single point, similar to the spokes of a wheel, and can be used to convey “word, speech, meeting, (or) congress” (1983:245). This ideograph comes to mind when discussing the critical role of the Charles' Corner crossroads (Figure 9.1) in connecting residents to one another as well as to the railways, roadways, and waterways of the lower peninsula. The authors of *Virginia: A Guide to the Old Dominion* understood the importance of centralized locations for African Americans to gather while living in the Jim Crow South:

The lure of the crowd is strong among Virginia Negroes; every city and town has a 'street' that serves as the social and business center of Negro life. Here negroes from every walk of life congregate to purchase from negro merchants, to ply their trades, to discuss the latest developments in Negro America, or simply to see who else is abroad. Here race pride is triumphant; drug stores, cafes, barber shops, pool rooms, grocery stores, theaters, beauty parlors, and garages are operated by and for Negroes. To the uninitiated, the crowd is a group of idlers wasting time in meaningless banter. That banter, however, is the Negro's escape from a day of labor in the white man's world. No matter how carefree the outward appearance of Negroes may be, behind their happy dispositions is the imprint of poverty, disease, and suffering – birthmarks of a people living precariously, but a people wholly Virginian. [Virginia Writer's Project 1956:86]

The author's astute observation not only demonstrates the beneficial effects of communal gatherings for African Americans but also unintentionally highlights the social organization that would bolster the impending Civil Rights Movement. Nevertheless, the authors may have underestimated the economic and political importance of such congregations for participants in both rural and urban settings.

Discussion of Findings

The Charles' Corner study provides an outline of the community-building process for a rural, southern, African American neighborhood during the half-century following Emancipation as residents navigated through one of the most difficult transitions in American history. Fortunately, the archaeological sites at Charles' Corner representing this period of history are relatively well-preserved and provide a material record as a testament from the residents themselves. The sites have been recommended as eligible for nomination to the NRHP based on their proven potential for providing valuable data and may be eligible as an archaeological district (Underwood et al. 2003, Austin et al.

2011). Commemoration of the sites surrounding Charles' Corner as an archaeological district would promote the historic contributions of African Americans in York County and provide an understanding of community building after Emancipation.

Faced with a lack of resources after the Civil War, African American families rented property, constructed post-in-ground homes, established farms and gardens, and worked for pay. Charles' Corner residents established a self-sufficient lifestyle by raising and preserving their own food, and developing multiple business ventures. The diversified household economies maintained by Charles' Corner residents provided them with a modicum of economic stability unlike sharecroppers and tenants who relied on a single cash crop and were bound by exploitative contracts. They also participated in extensive socioeconomic networks and invested a significant amount of time and finances into their own residential neighborhood.

Based on analyses of the archaeological record, oral histories, and the documentary record, it is apparent that the three components of community building, as described by anthropologists Hyland and Bennett, were in operation at Charles' Corner. These factors are also directly comparable and complementary to long-standing tenets of the black freedom movement and black nationalism. In short, residents were meeting goals associated with economic and social freedom and maintaining a remarkable level of autonomy in the Jim Crow South.

Archaeological Significance of Findings

In 2004, archaeologist Terrence Epperson challenged archaeologists to “...construct an African Diaspora archaeology that is simultaneously race-conscious and anti-essentialist” (2004: 105, also see Blakey 1995). This approach is especially critical when presenting the archaeology of segregation-era African American communities in the South for which the interpretation could be as politically charged today as their existence was eighty years ago (see Orser 2001). The Charles’ Corner study was deliberately structured to address the concerns and critiques of archaeologists in the field by establishing a theoretical approach and methodology that emphasizes the strength and dynamism of a residential community. This study also provided an opportunity to challenge the preconceived notions of “rural negroes” (Bruce 1889, Woodson 1930) with a narrative that emphasizes diversity, activism, and achievement (Blakey 1995, Perry and Paynter 1999).

Some of the findings from the Charles’ Corner study might be considered surprising when contrasted with traditional portrayals of African American rural life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Preconceived notions of African American oysterers and farmers during this time period may not include land ownership, a significant level of social organization, and a number of household and personal amenities including phonographs, jewelry, and pressed glass tablewares. Additionally, their achievements required political, economic, and social savvy as well as the support of a unified and unwavering community.

Historical archaeologists have already explored the dynamics of community building without the use of a model (e.g. New Philadelphia, Sandy Ground, and Buxton Townsite) and these studies demonstrate that community building is recognizable in various forms although its manifestation varies by gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or dominant occupation. Rather than treating each case as an anomaly, it is crucial that archaeologists start linking these sites together through their commonalities (Agorsah 2001). This approach would address a void in the historical narrative of African American history which, as Cha-Jua and Weeems state, requires "...the incorporation of Black resistance and struggle for community development..." (1994:1416). Focusing on community building and its role in the black freedom movement will also aid archaeologists in their interpretation of African American sites dating to the 1960s and the Civil Rights Movement as they enter the archaeological record.

Opportunities for Application

This study has outlined the ways in which the Charles' Corner archaeological sites are unique, valuable, and irreplaceable cultural resources. Accordingly, it is important to consider what steps can be taken to encourage their preservation and relay the accompanying historic narrative to the public. The primary step, initiated through the cultural resource management and compliance process, involves recommending the sites as eligible to the NRHP as an archaeological district. A simultaneous, and not entirely mutually exclusive, process would involve the development and implementation of a public interpretation strategy.

Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places

Archaeologists for NAVFAC MIDLANT are obliged to maintain a cultural resource management plan for all of the archaeological sites under their purview even though there are no plans for construction or development in the area of Charles' Corner. SEARCH's assessment demonstrated that each individual site is eligible for nomination to the NRHP and may be eligible for nomination as an archaeological district (Austin et al. 2011). This dissertation provides complimentary analysis and interpretation to encourage consideration of the sites as a district including the regional and local sociohistorical contexts as well as the multiple historical and cultural themes that unify the sites.

Although data recovery was limited, the sites provided a remarkable amount of information and allowed archaeologists to define and characterize discrete Activity Areas. Collectively, these sites reflect some of the earliest settlements by African Americans in the area following the Civil War (44YO318, Activity Area 5 and 44YO857, Activity Area 4) as well as homesteads dating to the first two decades of the twentieth century (44YO870, Activity Areas 1 and 2, and 44YO318, Activity Area 1). Even though the period of occupation was relatively short, there is a distinguishable transition in the archaeological record between the nineteenth- and twentieth-century Activity Areas which provides the opportunity to discuss change over time. The data also have the potential to inspire and address a host of additional research questions within several areas of significance as established by the NRHP, including African American heritage, social history, agriculture, and community planning and development.

The four archaeological sites discussed here are a small, but illustrative, cross section of the remains of nineteenth- and twentieth-century African American households surrounding Charles' Corner. There are 48 archaeological sites with late nineteenth- and / or early twentieth-century components within a one-mile radius of the main intersection. Fourteen of these sites were determined to be potentially eligible for the NRHP (including the four sites assessed by SEARCH) based on their potential to impart information about the past (Underwood et al. 2003, Austin et al. 2011). Although 44YO898 was recommended as not eligible for the NRHP, the site may be the location for St. John Baptist Church which was a cornerstone of the Charles' Corner community and the potential association merits further investigation. Fifteen sites could be considered contributing elements for a Charles' Corner archaeological district (Table 9.1).

Table 9.1: Potential Contributing Elements for a Charles' Corner Archaeological District

Archaeological Site Numbers	
44YO318	44YO870
44YO319	44YO890
44YO850	44YO895
44YO857	44YO896
44YO861	44YO898 (St. John Baptist Church)
44YO864	44YO911
44YO865	44YO914
44YO869 (Cheesecake Cemetery)	

The archaeological sites must be connected by a unifying theme in order to be considered for nomination National Register of Historic Places as an archaeological

district. The most comparable complex of sites currently listed on the NRHP is the Anderson Hollow Archaeological District located in western Virginia. The nineteenth-century historic sites, which were occupied by "... relatively poor but independent families...", are described in the *Virginia Landmarks Register*, as "... particularly significant because of the limited knowledge of the cultural adaptations that developed in this sort of environment" (Loth 1999:462). Accordingly, the archaeological sites at Charles' Corner are equally as important for their potential contribution to the understanding of post-Emancipation, African American settlements in the Tidewater region of Virginia. Perhaps more important is the role of cooperative community-building in the neighborhood and its role in minimizing the impact of Jim Crow legislation for Charles' Corner residents.

Other archaeological sites representing African American settlements during this time period are also present at Camp Peary and Fort Eustis but may not be as well-preserved. In 2003, archaeologists found that the Magruder District, a combination of standing structures and associated deposits on Camp Peary, was not eligible for nomination to the NRHP as a historical district due to poor preservation of the archaeological deposits (Fesler and Laird 2003). Mr. Hill's hometown of Uniontown / Slabtown has not been archaeologically investigated and the integrity of the sites is unknown. As a result, Charles' Corner may represent one of the few remaining archaeological complexes in the area of Williamsburg and Yorktown to preserve African American history following Emancipation.

Public Access and Interpretation

As mentioned in the introductory chapter of this dissertation, collaboration with the Yorktown African American Cultural Society and resident descendants highlighted the fact that historic interpretation in York County rarely acknowledges African American presence and achievements in the area during the last four centuries. The recognition of Charles' Corner as an archaeological district would serve as a critical step toward developing a comprehensive public interpretation plan for African American history on the NWSY. The Public Affairs office has already established a dialogue with reservation descendants in order to provide access to Cheesecake Cemetery for visitation and memorial events. After learning that a Medal of Honor recipient was likely buried at Cheesecake Cemetery, the Navy facilitated the placement of a headstone commemorating 1st Sergeant Edward Ratcliff who served in the 38th United States Colored Troops and earned his Medal of Honor at the Battle of New Market Heights during the Civil War (Hanna 2002). In 2006, the Public Affairs office arranged for a commemorative service and invited reservation descendants and the congregation of Lackey's Rising Sun Baptist Church (Heinatz 2006c). Nevertheless, public interpretation and education will always be limited by the high level of security at the NWSY.

It would be ideal for a museum and interpretation center to be constructed in a publicly accessible space so that the public can learn about, and interact with, the extensive cultural history confined within the NWSY. Part of the process has been facilitated through archaeological excavation which moved artifacts from property with restricted access to a public sphere. Such a venue would not only provide an educational

opportunity for local schools but would also serve as a way for reservation descendants to engage with their ancestors' past. A similar approach was used by James City County after archaeological work at Freedom Park in Williamsburg uncovered a free black settlement dating to the nineteenth century. As part of a plan for public interpretation, James City County financed the construction of three cabins reflective of that time period and installed interpretive signs on a walking path adjacent to the archaeological site. Taking the necessary steps toward recognition of the achievements of residents at Charles' Corner and other African American residents living on the peninsula after Emancipation would serve as a fitting and long overdue justice.

Present Connections: Disenfranchisement, Displacement, and Reparations

It is an uncomfortable truth that many of the social issues that Charles' Corner residents had to cope with over one hundred years ago, including disenfranchisement and displacement, are still affecting African Americans today. During the last one hundred years, African American farmers and landowners have been confronted by systematic disenfranchisement and substantial obstacles to becoming and remaining landed. A journalist reporting on the situation in 2003 stated:

Black farmers are in peril, losing their farms at an alarming rate. Within 90 years, their numbers have fallen from nearly 1 million to about 18,000, according to USDA officials. Through those years, black farmers complained that they were routinely denied federal loans provided to white farmers, even after weather-related disasters destroyed their crops. As a result, they sank deep into debt. [Fears 2003:A25]

In 1997, hundreds of African American farmers filed a class action lawsuit against the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) in an attempt to rectify, and draw

attention to, discriminatory lending practices (Haygood 2004, Hoffman 2009). Decades of USDA mismanagement and blatantly prejudicial loan decisions have contributed to a staggering loss of farm land and acreage among African Americans. These facts are particularly significant considering the interconnected relationship of land ownership, autonomy, and economic and social power; something that Charles' Corner residents were keenly aware of during the Jim Crow era.

Accordingly, the Black Farmers & Agriculturists Association (BFAA) holds an annual Land Loss Summit and named "self sufficiency" as their theme for the 2005 conference. After trying to fight the issue in court and enduring years of delays while waiting for the settlement payments, some farmers may have become discouraged from seeking justice in the judicial system and found solace in self-sufficiency. The Nation of Islam, which has advocated economic independence since its founding in the 1930s, maintains a farm in Georgia with the express purpose "...of fostering self-reliance in the black community" (Alcindor 2005). Regardless, African American farmers face numerous and formidable obstacles when trying to maintain ownership of their property.

Displacement is another recurrent and troublesome theme in African American history (see Chapter 5). The story of Charles' Corner provides an example of some of the causes and effects of multiple displacements starting with the Civil War and ending with World War I. Still, forced relocation continues to significantly impact African American communities. One of the most memorable and widely broadcast example of modern mass displacement occurred during Hurricane Katrina which disproportionately affected African Americans. Although a natural disaster was the immediate cause of displacement, scholars questioned the underlying social and economic factors that

resulted in African Americans comprising a majority of the evacuees. When some politicians and news organizations referred to evacuees as “refugees,” hurricane survivors were rightfully infuriated by the word’s social, historical, and political connotations (Daunt and Abcarian 2005, Masquelier 2006). The term, commonly used to refer to individuals seeking sanctuary in another country, was as an added insult to people who had already lost their homes.

Ultimately, the consequences rather than the causes of displacement have the most significant long-term effect including financial setbacks and the disruption of social and economic relationships. Archaeologist David Gradwohl describes the effects of displacement on the African American residents of the Buxton townsite in Iowa during the 1920s:

...the fortune of Buxton’s African-Americans was reversed upon the demise of that coal mining town. From a town where blacks were either in a numerical or perceived majority, they moved on to Cedar Rapids, Des Moines, Chicago, Detroit and elsewhere where they were in a distinct minority. In interviews and conversations, former residents related, with great sadness, the fact that in many cities to which they moved after Buxton, they could not find as good employment, had to live in racially segregated neighborhoods, and they were often excluded from public swimming pools, restaurants, and even the fitting rooms of department stores...Buxton’s residents were forced to move away, but many of them literally mourned the lifestyle they had enjoyed in Buxton - not only their economic well being but their gratification of having lived in a community characterized by a high degree of racial and inter-ethnic harmony.
[2001:110]

Buxton exemplifies the difficulty that displaced residents have in reestablishing the same socioeconomic status after relocation. In the case of Charles’ Corner, residents received compensation for the perceived value of their property and structures but were unable to purchase the same amount of acreage or establish a comparable lifestyle.

Reparations are a contentious social issue due, in part, to a poor understanding of the underlying historical, social, and economic issues as well as the potential manifestations of compensation. Proponents of reparations often reference a broader history of systemic disenfranchisement after the Civil War in addition to the great injustice of enslavement. The exploitative systems of sharecropping and tenancy kept African American families in perpetual debt. For those that managed to save money and utilize the systems put in place by Reconstruction, millions of dollars in savings were lost when the Freedman's Savings Bank closed down in 1874 due to improprieties (Du Bois 1992 (1935)). The residents of Charles' Corner provide a solid example of African Americans who were financially, politically, and socially savvy but suffered both economic and social losses during displacement even though a compensation system was in place. These injustices continue to fuel the need for, and participation in, a black freedom movement. Sociologist Alphonso Pinkney postulates that it is "...possible that at the end of the Civil War, if the society had moved forthrightly to make amends for past injustices, the nationalist movement might not have persisted" (1976:8).

Reparations come in many incarnations and universities, in particular, have been exploring various ways to atone for their participation in the enslavement of Africans and African Americans. In 2007, Brown University officials recognized their college's participation in enslavement and created a Center for Slavery and Justice. The Center will provide an opportunity for research and dissemination of information on the history of enslavement (Brown University 2007). The College of William & Mary instituted the Lemon Project in 2009 as part of a "Journey of Reconciliation." The process includes an acknowledgement of the college's reliance upon enslavement to build and financially

support the institution for 170 years as well as their discriminatory practices against African American employees following Emancipation. The Lemon Project has started to host annual symposia that focus on African American history in the Hampton Roads area.

The presentation of the Charles' Corner story is not designed merely to present a story of past injustices and the mechanisms for mitigating their effects but is also intended to provide cautionary tales for the present and future. Frederick Douglass ruminated on the practical potential and application of the social sciences and the humanities in an 1881 speech:

What the masters in natural science have done for man in the physical world, the masters of social science may yet do for him in the moral world. Science now tells us when storms are in the sky, and when and where their violence will be most felt. Why may we not yet know with equal certainty when storms are in the moral sky, and how to avoid their desolating force. [Douglass 1999 (1881): 635]

The legality of federal agencies commandeering private lands along the lower peninsula during the twentieth century is not in question. Rather, the discussion in this dissertation is intended to encourage an assessment of the moral and ethical considerations for such events within a broader historical context. The Charles' Corner narrative provides concrete examples of the effects of national policy on their relatively small settlement whether it was the Emancipation Proclamation and the establishment of government farms, Andrew Johnson's recall of federal troops and return of land to antebellum owners, or Presidential Proclamation #1472 which commandeered their property and forced relocation. In hindsight, a distinctive pattern of disruption and displacement is evident. Moving forward, it is critical for federal agencies to acknowledge their role in

the displacement of thousands of African American families and consider these effects as they continue to acquire properties.

Conclusion

In his examination of *Freedom's First Generation* after the Civil War, historian Robert Engs found that the priority for newly freedpeople in York County “second only to defense of freedom itself, became greater social responsibility and stability within their communities” (2004: 71). Charles’ Corner demonstrates that these principles, far from being mutually exclusive, were entirely dependent upon one another. Additionally, the archaeological record demonstrates how residents worked toward these priorities and put them into practice on a daily basis. Archaeologist Jean Howson astutely observed that one of the ways in which material culture provides information is through an interpretation that provides “...an understanding of how material things come to have meaning through specific and historically definable contexts of action” (1990:90). This concept is especially appropriate when developing an understanding of life at Charles’ Corner. Superficially, the archaeological sites might appear to be typical turn-of-the-century farmsteads but, after consideration, capture a unique and valuable period of African American history.

Many of the African American families were landowners, flourishing entrepreneurs and skilled artisans in spite of economic adversity and institutionalized racism. Internal to the community, however, was a sense of joy. The authors of *Cast Down Your Bucket* noted that “(w)hen residents of the reservation are asked to reflect on

their childhood there, most recall with happiness their family and circle of friends”
(McDonald et al. 1992:23). Du Bois gleaned a similar sentiment from the residents of Farmville during the late nineteenth century. He noticed:

...a particular hopefulness on the part of the people themselves. No one of them doubts in the least but that one day black people will have all rights they are now striving for, and that the Negro will be recognized among the earth's great peoples. Perhaps this simple faith is, of all products of emancipation, the one of the greatest social and economic value. [1898:38]

Through this dissertation, I have tried to highlight the ways in which Charles' Corner fits into a broader continuum of the black freedom movement in the United States. In fact, residents utilized strategies associated with both maroon communities and the Civil Rights Movement.

The historic trajectory of Charles' Corner is analogous to many of the other African American settlements that took root after Emancipation on Virginia's lower peninsula. A unique convergence of social, economic, intellectual, and political conditions in the area contributed to an environment where insightful and prudent African Americans could plan for the future, buy land, and build homes. Nevertheless, recordation and recognition of their history has been compromised by displacement, development, and neglect of cultural resources. At Charles' Corner, the remarkable level of preservation of the archaeological sites has protected an extraordinarily dynamic and transitional period of American history. These sites are not only a physical testament to the work, hopes, and accomplishments of the residents but they also encapsulate the conditions that made their achievements possible.

Appendix 1: Timeline of Events Pertinent to Charles' Corner

April 5 – May 4, 1862	Civil War – Peninsula Campaign - Battle of Yorktown
May 5, 1862	Civil War – Peninsula Campaign - Battle of Williamsburg
January 1, 1863	President Lincoln signs the Emancipation Proclamation
March 3, 1865	Establishment of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands
April 9, 1865	General Robert E. Lee’s surrender
April 14, 1865	President Lincoln is assassinated and Andrew Johnson becomes President.
December 6, 1865	Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution abolishing slavery is adopted.
1866	President Andrew Johnson helps curtail the extent and presence of the Bureau.
1867	Restoration of lands to antebellum ownership.
July 9, 1868	Fourteenth Amendment adopted guaranteeing due process, citizenship, and equal protection to African Americans grants citizenship to all those born or naturalized in the United States.
February 3, 1870	African American men granted the right to vote by the Fifteenth Amendment.
June 1872	Congress terminates the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands.
1874	The Freedman’s Saving and Trust Company (Freedman’s Savings Bank) closes.
1875	Civil Rights Act gave President power to, among other things, “put down conspiracies aimed at intimidating voters.”
1876 - 1965	Legalized segregation of public places (known as Jim Crow).
1877	Reconstruction ends and troops withdraw from the South.
1883	The Supreme Court outlaws the Civil Rights act of 1875.
1896	<i>Plessy v. Ferguson</i> before the Supreme Court upholds segregation and the ‘separate but equal’ doctrine.
1900	Virginia law requires railroad companies to “separate coaches for the transportation of white and colored passengers.”
November 1916 – October 1933	Prohibition in Virginia begins one year earlier than national Prohibition.
1917	The United States enters into World War I.
August 7, 1918	Presidential Proclamation #1472 commandeers property for the Yorktown Mine Depot.
October 1918 – Summer 1919	Influenza Pandemic hits Virginia and starts in Norfolk.
November 1, 1918	Residents begin to receive notice of proclamation and notice to leave in 30 days.
November 2, 1918	Presidential Proclamation #1492- redefining the boundaries of the mine depot.
November 15, 1918	Petition signed by residents.
December 1918	Government appraisers sent to the property.
April 1919	Revised date for evacuation in response to the York County Citizens Petition.
May 1919	Residents fill out questionnaires describing the value of their property.
October 21, 1919 – January 14, 1920	Public hearings for claimants in Yorktown, VA and Williamsburg, VA.
April 1920 – December 1922	Letters are sent to reservation residents reflecting the government’s final appraised value of their homesteads.
May 1920	Government begins payout to residents and deed exchange begins.
January 1923	Most of the reservation residents had relocated by January 1923.
1922- 1927	Oyster bed and timber claims continue until 1927.

Appendix 2: Presidential Proclamation #1492

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the Act of Congress approved July 1, 1918 (Public No. 182-65th Congress), making appropriations for the Naval Service for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1919, and for other purposes, provides that:

The President is hereby authorized and empowered, within the amounts herein appropriated therefor, to take over immediately for the United States possession of and title to each and all of the parcels of land, including appurtenances and improvements for the acquisition of which authority is herein granted and for which appropriations are herein made; Provided, That if said lands and appurtenances and improvements shall be taken over as aforesaid, the United States shall make just compensation therefor, to be determined by the President, and if the amount thereof, so determined by the President is unsatisfactory to the person entitled to receive the same, such person shall be paid seventy-five percentum of the amount so determined by the President and shall be entitled to sue the United States to recover such further sum as added to said seventy-five percentum will make up such amount as will be just compensation therefor, in the manner provided for by section 24, paragraph 20 (and) section 145, of the Judicial Code; Provided, further, that upon the taking over of said property by the President as aforesaid the title to all property so taken over shall immediately vest in the United States.

And, WHEREAS, there was taken over in accordance with the provisions of the said above described act by proclamation dated August 7, 1918 (1472) a certain tract of land as a site for the Navy Mine Depot near Yorktown, Va., which tract of land is described in said proclamation as "Tract #7", and

WHEREAS, it is a military necessity for the United States to take possession of and title to a certain tract of land for the purpose of affording an adequate and satisfactory railroad connection for said "Tract #7" as described in the proclamation aforesaid,

NOW, THEREFORE, KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS, that I, Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the power and authority vested in me by the said Act of Congress approved July 1, 1918, do hereby on behalf of the United States, take title to and authorize the Secretary of the Navy to take possession of the following tract of land:

Being all that certain tract of land situate, lying and being part in the County of Warwick and part in the County of York, both in the State of Virginia, as the same is shown on a map on file in the Office of the Solicitor, Department of the Navy, which bears the legend, "Department of the Navy, Bureau of Yards & Docks, Navy Mine Depot, Yorktown, Va. Map showing right of way from C. & O. R.R. to Navy Mine Depot Reservation. Approved Oct. 30, 1918. C.W. Parks, Chief of Bureau. Kirby Smith, Project Commander. Refer to Y & D #81324"; which said certain tract of land is more definitely described as follows:

Beginning for the same at an iron stake in the northeast boundary line of the right of way of the Chesapeake & Ohio R.R. Co. between the stations of Lee Hall and Grove, Virginia, and opposite a certain point which point is distance, measured along the center line of the said right of way of the Chesapeake & Ohio R.R. Co. three thousand three hundred and seventy-seven and seventy hundredths feet (3377.70') more or less northwest of mile post #28 as enumerated from Fortress Monroe, Va.; thence north fifty-one degrees thirty minutes east a distance of seventy-one feet (71') more or less; thence

in a southeasterly and then northeasterly direction a distance of one thousand four hundred and seventy-eight feet (1478') more or less along a circular arc of eight hundred and fifty-five and thirty-six hundredths feet (855.36') radius; thence north forty-two degrees thirty minutes east a distance of twenty-five hundred feet (2500') more or less; thence south forty-seven degrees thirty minutes east a distance of fifty feet (50') more or less; thence north forty-two degrees thirty minutes east a distance of one hundred and ten and sixty hundredths feet (110.60') more or less; thence in a northeasterly direction a distance of five hundred and thirty-one and ninety hundredths feet (531.90') more or less along a circular arc of five thousand six hundred and seventy-nine and sixty hundredths feet (5679.60') radius; thence north thirty-seven degrees no minutes east a distance of two thousand feet (2,000') more or less to a point in the boundary line of the Navy Mine Depot Reservation as said boundary line is described in Tract #7 of the proclamation of the President dated August 7th, 1918; thence north eighty-five degrees no minutes east following the boundary line of said Navy Reservation a distance of one hundred and thirty-five feet (135') more or less; thence south thirty-seven degrees no minutes west a distance of two thousand one hundred and fifty feet (2150') more or less; thence in a general southwesterly direction in a distance of five hundred and forty-one and forty-hundredths feet (541.40') more or less measured along a circular arc of five thousand seven hundred and seventy-nine and sixty hundredths (5779.60') radius; thence south forty-two degrees thirty minutes west a distance of one hundred and ten and sixty hundredths feet (110.60') more or less; thence south forty-seven degrees thirty minutes east a distance of fifty feet (50') more or less; thence south forty-two degrees thirty minutes west a distance of two thousand five hundred feet (2500') more or less; thence in a general southwesterly and then northwesterly direction a distance of one thousand three hundred and thirty-six and eighty hundredths feet (1336.80') more or less measured along an arc of one thousand and fifty-five and thirty-six hundredths feet (1055.36') radius to the point of intersection with the said above mentioned northeast boundary line of the right of way of the Chesapeake & Ohio R.R. Co.; thence northwesterly following said northeasterly boundary line of the right of way of the Chesapeake & Ohio R.R. Co. a distance of four hundred and seventy feet (470') more or less to the point of beginning. Containing in all twenty-five acres more or less. Together with improvements and all rights, easements and privileges whatsoever, appurtenant or appertaining in any way to said above described tract of land.

The said above described tract of land, together with all improvements thereon and together with all rights and privileges appurtenant or appertaining in any way thereto is hereby declared to be and the same is set aside for the Naval purposes aforesaid and is placed under the exclusive control of the Secretary of the Navy who is authorized and directed to take immediate possession thereof in accordance with the terms of said act on behalf of the United States.

The Secretary of the Navy is authorized and directed to take such steps as may in his judgment be necessary for the purpose of conducting negotiations with the owners of property or rights whatsoever therein within the said above described tract of land for the purpose of ascertaining the just compensation to which said owners are entitled in order that compensation therefor may be made in accordance with the provisions of the Act aforesaid. All owners of land and improvements title and possession of which are taken hereunder in accordance with the provisions of the Act aforesaid and all persons having claims or liens in respect thereto are hereby notified to appear before the Board appointed by the Secretary of the Navy and present their claims for compensation for consideration by said Board in accordance with the provisions of the Act aforesaid.

All persons residing within said above described tract of land or owning movable property situate thereon are hereby notified to vacate the said tract of land and to remove therefrom all moveable property within thirty (30) days from the date of this proclamation.

It being desirable in the public interest to make a slight re-adjustment of the boundaries of that certain tract of land described in the proclamation of August 7, 1918, (#1472) as "Tract #7", being the site selected for navy Mine Depot near Yorktown, Va., the said boundary line as described in said proclamation of August 7, 1918 is hereby modified to read as follows:

Beginning for the same at a point in the low water line on the southern shore of the York River in York County, State of Virginia, said point being the point of intersection of Parallel N. $37^{\circ} -16' -54''$ with Meridian $76^{\circ} -35' -00''$ west of Greenwich; thence southwesterly across the certain sand spit at the mouth of King Creek, York County, to the point of intersection with the center line of said King Creek, a distance of eight hundred ten (810) feet more or less; thence continuing in a general southwesterly and then southerly direction following the center line of said King Creek to the point of intersection with the south line of the certain road shown on the said map as running in a general northerly and then easterly direction from or in the vicinity of the Village of Grove, a distance of twenty-four thousand ninety (24090) feet more or less; thence in a general southwesterly and then southerly direction following the southerly and then easterly line of said above described road to its point of intersection with the northerly line of the main road extending from the Village of Grove to the Village of Halstead's Point a distance of thirty-two hundred and ninety (3290) feet more or less; thence in a southeasterly direction following the northerly line of said last described road to its point of intersection with the northerly line of the right of way of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad Company between Williamsburg and Newport News, Virginia, a distance of four hundred seventy (470) feet more or less; thence in a general southeasterly direction following the northerly line of the said right of way to the point of intersection with the northerly line of the certain road shown on said map as crossing the said right of way at a point to the eastward of the railroad bridge over Blows Mill Run, a distance of fifteen thousand four hundred twenty (15,420) feet more or less; thence in a general northeasterly direction following the northerly line of said last described road to a certain point which point is distant one thousand feet more or less westerly from the intersection of said road with the westerly line of the certain road shown on said map as running between the villages of Halstead's Point and Lee Hall, Virginia, which point of intersection is also the location of a certain bench mark as shown on said map a distance of four thousand six hundred and eight feet (4680') more or less; thence in a general northerly direction parallel to the westerly line of said last described road a distance of one thousand feet (1000') more or less; thence easterly and parallel to the road crossing the right of way aforesaid of the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad Company at a point to the eastward of the railroad bridge over Blown Mill Run to its intersection with the westerly line of the certain road shown on said map as running between the Villages of Halstead's Point and Lee Hall, Virginia, a distance of one thousand feet (1,000') more or less; thence in a general northerly direction following the westerly line of said last described road to the point of intersection with the north line of the second road shown on said map to the north of said bench mark a distance of six hundred and twenty feet (620') more or less; thence in a general northeasterly direction following the northerly line of said last described road to the point of intersection with the northerly line of the road shown on said map as running from the village of Halstead's Point to Yorktown, Virginia, a distance of eight thousand three hundred sixty (8360) feet more or less; thence in a general northeasterly, then south-easterly and again in a northeasterly, then in an easterly

direction following the northerly line of the said last described road to the point of intersection with the center line of an unnamed creek or run, entering the York River at longitude 76°-30'-49" west of Greenwich, a distance of twelve thousand nine hundred sixty (12,960) feet more or less; thence in a general northerly direction following the center line of said creek or run to the point of intersection with the low water line of the York River, a distance of one hundred and seventy (170) feet more or less; thence in a general northwesterly direction following the low water line of the York River to the point of beginning, a distance of twenty-nine thousand one hundred sixty (29160) feet more or less; containing in all eleven thousand four hundred and eight (11408) acres (inclusive of water areas) more or less; together with all riparian rights, privileges, easements and other rights whatsoever, appurtenant or appertaining in any way to said above described tract of land and all privately owned rights in the waters lying between the low water line of said tract and the bulkhead or pier head line in the York River as such line or lines may be hereafter established.

The modification in the said boundary line being made for the purpose of excluding from the area title to which was vested in the United States in accordance with the said proclamation of August 7, 1918 on September 7, 1918, that certain tract of land containing twenty-five acres more or less, known as the Lebanon Church & Cemetery. It being understood that the United States hereby relinquishes any title it may have had to the said tract hereby excluded by reason of the proclamation and taking over as aforesaid.

All other provisions of the said proclamation of August 7, 1918 are to be and remain in full force and effect.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done in the District of Columbia this 2nd
day of November in the year of our
Lord, one thousand nine hundred and
eighteen and of the Independence of the
United States of America the one
hundred and forty-third.

By the President: Woodrow Wilson
Robert Landsing, Secretary of State

Appendix 3: Petition from the Citizens of York County

TO THE HONORABLE JOSEPHUS DANIELS, SECRETARY OF THE NAVY:-

We the undersigned petitioners, respectfully represent to you the following case:-

We are owners and residents of the land in York County, Virginia, which has recently been taken over by the Government, by the President's proclamation of August 7th, 1918, and reside on the part of said land lying between what is known as the "Half-Way House" to Queen's Creek, on and adjoining the road leading from Williamsburg to Yorktown, and about two and one half miles from York River, and in the south-western end of the area of land so taken over by the Government.

We are perfectly willing to make any sacrifice that may be necessary for the good of the Government in this time of necessity, but as we believe that the portion of the ~~Forbes~~ Navy Mine Depot ~~area~~ that will have to be developed first will be along the river, we respectfully request that if the Government can without injury to its interest, that it will allow us to remain in possession of our homes until next spring.

The majority of the heads of the families are old and past middle age, and most of the people in this district are old men and women and young children. A majority of the young men, and in many instances the ones that were the bread winners of the family, are now in the service of the Government.

As you know the winter season is coming on and it would be a great hardship for us to have to break up our homes and move in the winter, and to carry what small crops we have with us if we had anywhere to go, but it is almost impossible for us to either rent or buy a shelter of any kind to move in, as there are practically no vacant houses anywhere within a radius of ten miles of us, as the Government has already taken over a large part of the Peninsula, causing a number of families on this Peninsula to give up their homes, and on account of the

Original to be led 12/7 for report.

large number of Camps and the ammunition factory in this neighborhood, it has brought in a large number of people and greatly increased the population, and the housing facilities are already inadequate.

We respectfully pray that we will not be turned out of doors at this season of the year, and if it is possible to do so, that we will be allowed to remain in possession of the south-western area of the land that has been taken by the Government until next spring.

NAME

NUMBER OF CHILDREN.

Cyrus Jones and Wife +	1
J. A. Roberts +, Wife +	9
Wm. M. Lee & wife &	1
Lemuel Redcross. wife	3
Robert Hundley wife &	2
Nathan Reed Wife and	7 Children
W. A. Roberts Wife and	9 Children
John H. Billups Wife	
John H. Brown Wife and	1 Child
Wally Brown and Wife	
H. Schofield Wife and	3 Children
Anthony Roberts Wife &	4 Children
Joseph Hundley Wife &	3 Children
William Randall Wife and	1 Child
Richard H. Roberts Wife and	2 Children
Martha Wallis Widaw	5 Children
Emmit Roberts Wife and	1 Child

Philip Tolafens Wife ~~and 1 child~~
 John H. Randall Wife and 3 children
 Arthur Williams Wife and 2 children
 Flemen Brown Wife and 1 child
 Walter Roberts Wife and 10 children
 Herbert Wallace Wife and 1 child
 James H. Payne Wife and 3 children
 Peter party Widower.
 James Davis Wife and 2 children
 Cassie Banks Widow 3 children
 Henry Day Wife and 8 children
 Moses Holmes Wife and 4 children
 Humphrey Lee Wife and 7 children
 William Ashby Wife and 7 children
 Alphonso Payne and Wife
 John Red Cross Wife and 6 children
 Daniel Allen Wife and 10 children
 W. R. Burbanks Wife and 1 child
 E. C. Sanders Wife and 4 children
 Wm Washington Wife and 8 children
 Elizabeth Banks Widow 7 children
 J. H. Lee Wife 6 children
 Elizabeth Bauer Widow 2 children
 Lee Roberts Wife and 1 child
 J. Jones Wife 3 children
 Anthony Hardy Wife and 1 child
 F. Holmes Wife and 3 children
 Alexander Rorate Wife and 15 children
 Jay Schaeffeld Wife and 2 children
 Sam Roberts Wife and 8 children
 J. A. Crump Wife and 1 child
 Robert Hardy Wife and 2 children

Joshua Banks Wedder 4 children
 James & Lee Wife and 2 children
 W. H. Washington Jr Wife 2 children
 Alex Meekins Wife and 7 children
 James Thomas Wife and 1 child
 Harrison Meekins Wife and 1 child
 Samuel Carter & Wife
 James Holmes Wife and 1 child
 W. Henry Patrick Wife and 15 children
 Charles Rutchiff Wife and 5 children
 Anthony Roberts Jr. Wife
 Alex Hendley Widower 2 children
 Thomas Allen Wife and 4 children
 Thomas Banks Wife 4 children
 J. S. Dahmy Wife and 4 children
 William Ware & Wife
 Moses Jones Wife and 3 children
 Addison Hendly Wife and 8 children
 Lincoln Orange Wife and 10 children
 Carrie Ashby Orphan
 W. L. Taliferro Wife and 1 child
 Chas Carter and Wife
 Eliza Taliferro Envelid
 James Jones Wife and 8 children
 Meritt Hendly Wife and 1 child
 John Wallace and Wife
 Eliza Wallace ~~Widow~~ 10 children
 Eliza Lee Widow and 3 children
 Mary Harris Widow and 1 child
 Jack Redcross Wife and 2 children
 Francis Washington Widow 6 children

York Co. Va

Nov 1918

We the Citizens named in the
Petition of Prayer lives from the
halfway house in York Co Va
Nelson district some of us
2 1/2 miles from York River
and on the Main road leading
from Williamsburg to Yorktown,
and on the public road leading
to Grove Station,
from the mile that is the upper line
of the land taken over by the
Government, and in the neighborhood
of Grove Va. There ~~are~~ many of us
are Invalids, Orphans, Wives
expecting to be confined thru the
Winter, many young babies not
old enough to go out. Husbands
already in Camp and no one to look
after them at all,

Not more than that We can not
buy land + lumber, no lumber
at all, at any price that We know
of, on account of the government
requiring same for building
Camp can monuments, We

We your Committee

John A. Roberts, J. R.

Chosea Lee,

Annie E. Roberts, Baptist Missionary,
founder and pres. of Aged and
Orphan Children Asylum,
Cyrus Jones, and L. Redcross.

Appendix 4: Assessor's Notes For Properties Associated with 44YO318

Lot	241	240	239
Owner	John H. Brown	James Holmes	Henry Redcross
Occupants	John H., Catherine, and Pearl Brown	James, Sarah, and Louise Holmes	Henry Redcross (deceased)
Acres	5.73 acres	5.00 acres	13.20 acres
Property Description	<p>Nice looking place 2 story on brick piers, 1 story on wood posts House nicely finished, wall load etc. Porch 5-8 wide x 16-4. Nicely built. 16 ft. eaves, 1 brick flue</p> <p>Class B, 5% dep. He had it nearly finished when proclam.</p> <p>Shed 10-8 x 20-10 x 8 \$35 Stable 10-3 x 13-8 x 11 -2nd floor \$35 Lean-to \$15 Privy \$15 Hog yard \$10 12 fruits \$100 Flowers \$5 Henhouse 6 x 8 x 5.5 \$20 Hog pen \$7</p>	<p>18-4 x 23-10 x 10.5 eaves Porch 6 ft. wide x 18 ft. Very well built. No railing. Inside of house not so good, sheathed + wall board in one room.</p> <p>Class C, 10% dep, on wood blocks, 1 brick flue, not 3 yrs. old But of 2nd hand material largely</p> <p>Had started a wing 12 x 25 but only sill laid</p> <p>Shed 5 x 10 x 5 \$10 Hog pen \$10 Privy \$15 2 fruits \$15</p>	<p>Class X 14-8 x 20-2 x 13 av. Old log shack, boarded outside and new paper roof, mud chimney, 1 room, 50% dep,</p> <p>Hog pen \$10 10 fruits \$75 1 walnut \$5</p>

Appendix 4: Assessor's description of properties that correspond to site 44YO318 (Lots 239, 240, and 241) (Cooke 1918: 116-118)

Appendix 5: Assessor's Notes for Properties Associated with 44YO319

Lot	215	216	217	218
Owner	John H., Randall	William Randall	James H. Payne	Richard Roberts
Occupants	John H., Ethel, Annie, John, and Wilferd Randall	William and Mary Randall, and Etrice Howard	James H., Sarah, Victoria, and James Payne	Richard Roberts, Elnora, Ethel, and Nelson Roberts
Acres	1.65 acres	1.65 acres	3.98 acres	3.53 acres
Property Description	<p>Main house: 14-10 x 18-4 2-story with 15 foot eaves Porch 6-4, fair, has railing 1 Brick flue, front part sheathed and 1 room downstairs nicely papered. All on wood blocks. 1 story addition 24-4 x 10-4 all unfinished, no 2nd floor built</p> <p>Class C+, 15% dep</p> <p>Fencing, some broken down, \$40 Stable 10-2 x 15-8 x 9 \$25 Lean-to \$10 Privy \$20 Hogpen \$10 Henhouse 5 x 7 x 5 \$15 7 fruits \$40 Remnants of brick walk \$5 Flowers \$10</p>	<p>Front 14-4 x 18-4 x 13.5 eaves Nicely sheathed downstairs with tongue and groove Old sheathing up Porch 10 x 6 – poor + old Covered passage 3.5 wide between Rear 10-3 x 14-4 x 12.5 eaves Nicely sheathed tongue and groove downstairs wall t + g Not sheathed up(stairs) 1 brick flue in front On wood blocks</p> <p>Class C+, 10% dep</p> <p>Privy \$15 Shed 8 x 10 x 7 \$25 Hog pens \$10; Stable 10 x 14 x 10 \$25 Shed lean-to 9 x 11 x 6 \$15 Wagon shed lean-to \$10, Fencing \$25 Flowers \$25 15 small fruits \$60 2 larger (fruit trees) \$15 Small coops and sheds \$15</p>	<p>2 story 22-3 x 18-4 x 17 ft. eaves Brick piers 1 ft. high Porch 6 ft. wide 1 Brick flue No railing, tar roof 2 rooms + hall, down + up, of which 1 is plastered on each floor, rest is lathed Platform in rear 4 x 5</p> <p>Class C+, 20% dep a/c not finished</p> <p>Corn house 10-3 x 12 x 12 av. 2nd floor \$40 Stable 9-8 x 15-3 x 10 av. \$25 Privy \$10 Hog pens \$15 Shed 5 x 7 x 5 \$15; Coops \$5 Fencing \$35 10 small fruits \$40 1 grapevine \$5</p>	<p>12-3 x 20-3 x 10 av 1 room + hall down, ladder + garret, 1 small brick flue</p> <p>Class E, 25% dep.</p> <p>Stable 10-6 x 16-4 x 9 av. poor \$20</p> <p>Old house 10-3 x 17-6 x 9 av (unlined) \$40</p> <p>Shed 9-8 x 13 x 10 \$25 Hog pen \$10 Henhouse 6 x 7 x 6 \$20 9 fruits \$90, Well 20 ft. to water sheathed, curb at top \$70; Coops \$5 Flowers \$5</p>

Appendix 5: Assessor's description of properties that correspond to site 44YO319 (Lots 215, 216, 217, and 218) (Cooke 1918: 113-117)

Appendix 6: Assessor's Notes for Properties Associated With 44YO857

Lot	248	250
Owner	Jane Wallace Est.	Nancy Roberts Hundley Est.
Occupants	Thomas Wallace	John Hundley Sr. (deceased)
Acres	7.41 acres	4.0 acres
Property Description	<p>All 1 story 8.5 to eaves, tar roof, on wood posts 1 ft above ground, very poor house – a mere shell, inside lined with brown paper no sheathing – 1 tin flue – outer wall and roof and framing good and well built</p> <p>Class D, 10% dep</p> <p>Barn 18-6 x 35 x 12 ft av. No 2nd floor, tar roof 20% off \$150</p> <p>15 fruits ± \$120 Coops \$5 Nests \$5 Henhouse 4 x 5 x 4 \$12 Shed 10-3 x 12-3 x 8 \$25 Well 35 ft ± to water, wood lined, little house over, good wood curb \$130 Grapevines \$25 Fencing \$50 Privy \$15</p> <p>Rear House 2-story 12-4 x 16-6 x 12.5 eaves on wood posts, sheathed old paper, 1 story 16-8 x 10-2 old paper, 2 tin flues</p> <p>Class C, 20% dep.</p> <p>Log crib 10-8 x 13-6 x 9 \$25 Shed 6 x 6 x 6, rough \$10 Pigpen \$10 Woodshed \$10 12 more fruits \$100 2 black walnuts \$30 more fencing \$20 flowers \$15</p>	<p>Old House 12-4 x 16-4 x 11 average plus old kitchen 8-8 x 12-3 x 7 average, 1 large brick chimney, 1 brick flue, used as storage</p> <p>Class D, 60% dep</p> <p>Stable 13-10 x 18 x 9 of slabs etc. \$25</p> <p>Fencing \$10 30 fruits ± \$200 Hogpen \$10</p>

Appendix 6: Assessor's Notes for Lot #248, Lot #250, Lot #251, and Lot #252 (Cooke 1918:107-108), Lot #252 (Cooke 1918:)

Lot	251	252
Owner	Nancy Roberts Hundley Est.	Elizabeth Hundley Est.
Occupants	John Jr., Louise, Lulelf, Polly, and Joseph Hundley	Elizabeth Hundley
Acres	3.0 acres	10.0 acres
Property Description	<p>1) west house 2 story 16'4" x 20-4 x 16 eaves Porch 14-4 x 6-0 light + plain ¾ interior plastered (cheap) rest is sheathed 1 story 12-4 x 16-3 x 10 av Including porch 9-4 x 6-1 sheathed</p> <p>Class C+ 10% dep. 1 brick flue</p> <p>Well about 40 ft. to water, not lined. Good well house over \$150</p> <p>Shed + wagon shed 9 x 20 x 8 \$35</p> <p>Shed 14'8" x 29' x 9' \$40 (log, includes 2 leantos)</p> <p>Shed 10-9 x 19-3 x 11 \$30</p> <p>4 Hogpens \$35</p> <p>Henhouse 4 x 4 x 5 \$10</p> <p>Stable 23 x 28-8 x 12, no mud floor \$60; Fencing \$50; 12 fruits \$75; Privy \$10</p> <p>2) middle house (Merritt)</p> <p>12-4 x 16-10 x 13 ft. eaves Whitewashed outside On wood blocks 1 brick flue – wholly unfinished up 1 room +hall downst. Room plastered Class C allow 20% dep for not being furnished Tar roof</p> <p>3) east house</p> <p>On wood blocks Cottage built 12 ft. eaves 1 brick, 1 tile flue – white washed New house – not yet finished 1 Room wall board Class B- Well enough framed – charge 15% a/c not built 5 small fruits \$30</p>	<p>2-story L-shaped house 28'7" x 20'6" at widest points, 2 brick flues</p> <p>12'6" wide porch –fairly built</p> <p>Class C – about 60% plastered, rest sheathed – 20% dep.</p> <p>30 fruits ± \$225</p> <p>Well 30 ft. deep ± not lined small house over \$100</p> <p>Shed 4'x5' x 5' \$10</p>

Appendix 6 (cont'd): Assessor's Notes for Lot #248, Lot #250, Lot #251, and Lot #252 (Cooke 1918:107-108), Lot #252 (Cooke 1918:109)

Appendix 7: Assessor's Notes for Properties Associated With 44YO870

Lot	265-A	258	258
Owner	Moses Holmes	W.M. Lee & Humphrey Lee	W.M. Lee & Humphrey Lee
Occupants	Moses, Catherine, Ernest, Major, Lillie, Rose, Moses, and Helen Holmes	Humphrey, Mary, Eugene, Humphrey, Robert, Harry, Edith, William, and Hattie Lee and Mary Harris	Moses, Laura, and Edward Lee
Acres	2.0 Acres	47.87 Acres jointly	47.87 Acres jointly
Property Description	<p>16-5 x 20-5 x 15 ft eaves Porch 6 ft wide Substantially built on brick piers Nice wall....all sheathed up. Nicely white washed Class B, no dep. 1 brick flue</p> <p>Shack 7-3 x 10-3 x 6 \$20 Shack 11-3 x 12-6 x 8 \$30 Hogpen \$20 18 fruits \$125 12 flowers \$30</p>	<p>22-5 x 14-4 x 13 Brick piers, 1 brick flue Porch 17-2 x 6-2 substantial no railing ¾ sheathed + ¼ plaster Class C, 15% dep</p> <p>Corn crib 8-3 x 10-8 x 10 – crude \$25 Stable 10-7 x 12-6 x 10, earth floor + 2nd floor – solid roof \$30 Lean-to 10 x 12 x 5, galv'd roof \$20 Privy \$15 Henhouse 5 x 6 x 5 \$10 12 fruits, generally small \$65 Flowers \$5</p>	<p>Unfinished part has 1 brick flue, roof on 1st + 2nd floor framing, Class B+, 35 % dep 1 ½ story is Class C, sheathed but rough, with manila paper and newspaper, 1 brick flue, Porch as 2 x 4 posts Old kitchen 8 x 10-3 x 6 \$20 Stable 11-4 x 14-9 x 16 (2 floors) \$50 Coops \$5 Hogpen \$15 Henhouse 5 x 7 x 5 rough \$15 Privy \$15, Fencing \$30, 30 fruits \$200, 12 small \$35</p>

Appendix 7: Assessor's description of properties that correspond to site 44YO870 (Cooke 1918: 126, 127, and 129).

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