

Summary of Archaeological Testing

at 44NN281

Newport News, Virginia

DHR # 98-3002

Prepared by:

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Prepared for:

Miller-Stephenson & Associates, Inc.

5033 Rouse Drive

Virginia Beach, Virginia 23462-3708

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Introduction

In March of 1999, Cultural Resources, Inc. was contracted by Miller-Stephenson & Associates (MSA) to delineate the boundary of archaeological site 44NN281, located on the Newport News City Prison Farm property near Menchville, Virginia. The project area is located in the City of Newport News, between the Warwick River and Deep Creek. The landform is an upland landscape on a point of old Coastal Plain terrace that sits elevated above both drainages. The specific area of the investigation described below is located in a pasture field lying north and east of the intersection of City Farm Road and a driveway into the property.

The site was originally located and recorded by the College of William and Mary's Center for Archaeological Research (WMCAR) in March of 1992 and determined to be an 18th- and 19th-century occupation (Higgins et al. 1992). The purpose of the site delineation was to mark off the site boundaries so that a Sprint telecommunications tower could be installed without impacting the site. A request for determining site boundaries was made by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR) who stated an archaeologist should determine and mark the archaeological site boundaries, after which the tower could be installed outside of those confirmed limits.

When first recorded by WMCAR, the site was defined by 75-foot-interval shovel tests located mainly in one cow pasture that had been fenced off along the east side of City Farm Road. The southeastern site limits were then defined as running along the edge of a

small group of barns in the pasture, while the western limits ran shortly outside of the pasture on the opposite side of City Farm Road. The eastern and northern limits were estimated as lying south of a disturbed area where a ravine head had been filled previously.

During the present project, the site was visited and it was determined that the proposed telecommunications tower would be installed past (northeast of) the filled ravine head at the far end of the pasture and beyond the archaeological site limits as previously estimated during the WMCAR survey. In an attempt to verify these estimated site limits, the proposed tower location was staked in the field, and survey was conducted to delineate the archaeological site to the southwest of the tower. Using a copy of the shovel-test map presented in the report of the initial Phase I survey, CRI began a shovel-test survey within the site area and then ran transects on arbitrary grid north in the direction of the proposed tower location.

The testing was begun in what was assumed to be the approximate middle of the site, using the map of the Phase I survey as point of reference. A grid north that ran east/northeast of magnetic north was followed and tests were dug on 50-foot centers. The testing ran from this assumed center point of the site and extended as far in every direction as possible along the site grid. The maximum coverage east-west ran from a pasture fence along City Farm Road to a filled ravine to the east. The maximum north-south coverage extended from the area of the existing barns northward to the tree line in the northeast part of the survey grid. The testing stopped about 50 to 75 feet short of the tree line in the northwest part of the field where another disturbed area was encountered. Here, fill had been removed, leaving a depression area that contained sterile clay directly under a sod mat.

Other than these anomalous disturbed areas, typical site profiles showed a plowed and pastured topsoil (Ap horizon) of dark grayish brown (10YR 4/2) loam ranging from 0.4 to 0.8 foot thick, with most profiles showing about 0.65 foot. Beneath this level was a natural leaching zone or "E" soil horizon. 0.4 to 0.7 foot thick, of light yellowish brown (10YR 6/4) loam, in turn, overlying a well developed yellowish brown (10YR 6/8) clay loam B horizon with translocated clays and iron (Bt horizon).

The site is not situated in a topographic setting where sediment deposition would have taken place in Holocene times. In addition, all sub-plowzone horizons were naturally formed on an old, stabilized landform and are far too ancient to contain in-place archaeological deposits unless intruded. Consequently, artifacts were located in the plowzone, and the underlying horizons were sterile.

The horizontal distributions of artifacts in shovel tests showed that the site did not terminate in the area originally defined; instead, positive (artifact-bearing) shovel tests indicated that the site covered the entire pasture, except for the machine-cut area and filled ravine head, both of which were obvious disturbances and thus excluded from survey. Furthermore, testing was arbitrarily stopped at the wood line located grid-north of the site. Here, tests located at the end of the testing area along the field line were also

positive, indicating that the site obviously extended slightly beyond the pasture to the edge of the adjacent wooded ravine.

After consultation with VDHR regarding the site configuration, it was agreed that the project could still proceed as long as testing was expanded enough to ensure that the tower could be installed without negative impacts on the site, i.e., without impacting intact deposits and features. This condition was feasible due to the small space needed for the tower and the minimal ground disturbance that would result from its installation: Impacts consisted of installation of a 5.5-foot-diameter tower surrounded by a wire fence. An associated access road to the facility would be restricted to surface work, as it would be laid, at grade, on a mat on top of the existing ground.

Following consultation with VDHR, shovel-testing proceeded over the exact footprint of the tower pole. First, test intervals were pinned down to 25 feet in the northern 50 to 75 feet of the tested area. Subsequently, 12.5-foot intervals were used around the tower footprint.

The center of the proposed tower pole was then staked precisely and, in turn, used as the center of a 10-foot-square excavation unit that completely surrounded the tower pole footprint and the area of any associated disturbance. The goal of this testing was to recover 100 percent of all material found in plowzone context and then to determine whether or not any subsurface features were present below that level.

The 10-foot unit was dug in natural levels to sterile subsoil, but no cultural features were found, and all artifacts were located in the disturbed topsoil. Thus, in the area of the tower pole impact, deposits were in plowzone contexts with no features present. All soils from this effort, as well as those of the shovel testing across the rest of the site, were screened through 0.25-inch mesh.

Description of Site Findings

Artifacts

All but nine of the 50-foot-interval tests excavated on the site contained artifacts. Artifacts ranged in age from prehistoric Native American periods of occupation to the 20th century. All smaller-interval tests excavated in the location of proposed tower installation contained artifacts as well. The attached inventory (Appendix A: artifact catalog) lists artifacts in each shovel test.

The earliest Native American artifacts that can be identified are those belonging to the last ca.-one-half of the Middle Woodland period or from ca. A.D. 200 to ca. A.D. 800. This period is marked by fragments of one or possibly two vessels of the pottery type Mockley Cord-marked, a ceramic ware that is typical of the late Middle Woodland period in the Coastal Plain of the Chesapeake region. Also found on the site were fragments of a later Native American ceramic ware, Roanoke Simple Stamped, a type used during the

more recent part of the Late Woodland period and into the time of early European contact (ca. A.D. 1300 until shortly after A.D. 1600). Other recovered potsherds include: 1) small, eroded, shell-tempered fragments that are probably smaller pieces of similar Middle and Late Woodland period vessels; and 2) several undated sherds consisting of friable, weathered pieces of sand-tempered pottery with eroded surface treatment. Additional prehistoric artifacts consist of fire-cracked cobbles from plow-disturbed hearth features, as well as small, undatable quartzite and quartz flakes from the manufacture and maintenance of stone tools. Although site function can only be tentatively defined at this level of survey, it is likely that the prehistoric component of the site was a series of overlapping camps occupied sporadically and that more permanent settlements associated with these sites are located elsewhere in the general environs, though most likely in a direct riverine/estuarine habitat.

The date ranges of the types of historic, non-aboriginal artifacts on the site range from as early as the last half of the 17th century to the 20th century; however, when the overall ranges of the majority of the most datable ceramic pieces are considered as a whole, they suggest a date from the early-to-mid 18th century. Although the 19th- and 20th-century artifacts recovered from the site suggest simple farm refuse scatter rather than the presence of a dwelling, the artifacts comprising the 18th-century component suggest a small house (or houses) in the central to north end of the property. Artifact types associated with this component consist of a piece of lead shot, ball clay (kaolin) pipe fragments with large stem diameters, and ceramics such as North Devon Gravel-tempered ware (ca. 1650-ca. 1775), Buckley ware (ca. 1700-1775), tin-enameled earthenware/delftware (ca. 1600-1800), Rhenish stoneware (ca. 1700-1775), and black-glazed redware (ca. 1700-1810). A number of pieces of friable, handmade brick are probably also associated with this component.

The 18th-century component may be related, at least indirectly, to "Warwicktown", a largely unsuccessful late 17th- and 18th-century town that was built along the bluff overlooking the confluence of Deep Creek and the Warwick River. The town was never more than a small rural community and eventually converted back to agricultural land. It was the opinion of the WMCAR researchers that any late 17th- and 18th-century sites found in the City Farm vicinity could be associated with Warwicktown or would be outlying house sites/farmsteads (Higgins et al. 1992:10).

Testing of Tower Location

Excavation of "Unit 1", a 10-foot square placed over the 5.5-foot-diameter tower pole location, produced a number of artifacts in the plow-and-pasture-disturbed A horizon, with a couple of artifacts relocated at the worm-riddled interface. Artifacts in the Ap horizon mirrored those of the shovel tests in terms of both prehistoric materials and historic materials, including the same ceramic types (see pg. 6 and 7 of Appendix A).

No evidence of cultural features or stratigraphy was present in the 10-foot unit. The disturbed topsoil (Ap horizon), a dark grayish brown (10YR 4/2) loam with many fine

grass roots, was about 0.5 foot thick. The underlying layer was the top of a sterile, light yellowish brown (10YR 6/8) E (leaching zone) horizon, the first inch or two of which was mottled with earthworm disturbances. The Ap horizon was removed and the interface was scraped down to clean the worm-mottling off and look for subsurface features. This procedure showed that no manmade features were present and further demonstrated that the sub-plowzone sandy loam was an old, sterile subsoil.

Three small root disturbances were seen, two of which were very obvious. The third, more regular in shape, was removed. The fill was very soft and wet and the configuration indicated the mold of a rotted tap root, probably from a small pine or cedar tree.

Based on these results, the test location was deemed a suitable location where the tower could be placed without impacting intact archaeological materials or features. The result of the testing was then presented to VDHR in a post-fieldwork memorandum. Based on the information provided, VDHR agreed that the project would have no effect on historic resources and that no additional archaeological investigations would be necessary.

Following the fieldwork, surveyors were sent to the site and all archaeological test units were mapped on to the site plan. The shovel tests on the map are designated with sequential numbers preceding by "F". These are, in turn, tabulated to show survey grid points that correlate with grid designations used in the artifact inventories, Appendix A. The site map is reproduced as Appendix B.

Summary

In summary, the following information was obtained during this investigation:

- The site, 44NN281, is larger than once thought, and covers the entire pasture field except where disturbed (e.g., barn locations, filled ravine head, and downcut area).
- The site contains at least two components dating from prehistoric periods (last ca.-one-half of Middle Woodland period, ca. A.D. 200-900, and the more recent part of the late Woodland period, ca. 14th century to contact times), and these are manifested as the superposed remains of former camp sites mixed together through soil deflation and plowing.
- The site contains a colonial period component dating to the early-to-mid-18th century. This component probably consists of a small dwelling. Although artifacts relating to this component were recovered, no features (e.g. pits, postholes, etc.) were found.
- More recent materials may represent simple refuse scatter.
- The investigations demonstrated that the surface deposit/topsoil of the site was plowed and pastured, and no cultural stratigraphy was present.
- The underlying horizon investigated in the 10-foot-square test unit was sterile, with no evidence of any intrusive cultural features. Accordingly, this excavated unit was judged an appropriate location for the proposed tower pole, as installation of the tower in that spot would not impact any subsurface archaeological deposits or features, and all artifacts in the plowed topsoil were recovered.

Reference Cited

Higgins, Thomas F., III, Charles M. Downing, Leslie McFadden, and Scott M. Hudlow
1992 A Phase I Cultural Resource Survey of the Proposed Riverview Farm Park
Property, City of Newport News, Virginia. Prepared by the William and Mary Center for
Archaeological Research. Submitted to the City of Newport News, Virginia.

**APPENDIX A:
Artifact Catalog**

ARTIFACT INVENTORY

SITE: 44NN281

Phase I

RECORDER: C. Tyrer

DATE: 8 March 1999

Provenience	Quantity	Description
ST N300/E500	1	Bottle glass body fragment, gray
ST N300/E450	1	Bottle glass body fragment, clear, embossed "...ENT..." on exterior, c. 20th century
	2	Brick fragments, reddish orange, machine made
	1	Plastic fragment, red
ST N350/E500	1	Bottle glass body fragment, aqua
	1	Nail fragment, cut
ST N400/E500	1	Bottle glass body fragment, amber
	1	Bottle glass body fragment, clear
ST N450/E400	1	Flake, quartzite, secondary
	1	Brick fragment, reddish brown, handmade
ST N450/E600	1	Bottle glass body fragment, dark green
	5	Brick fragments, reddish orange, handmade
ST N450/E550	9	Brick fragments, reddish orange, handmade
	3	Brick fragments, reddish brown, handmade
	1	Brick fragment, reddish brown, handmade, glazed
ST N450/E500	1	Bottle glass body fragment, aqua
	1	Brick fragment, reddish brown, handmade
ST N500/E400	1	Brick fragment, reddish brown, handmade
ST N500/E500	1	Bottle glass neck ring fragment, dark green
	2	Nail fragments, cut
ST N500/E550	1	Window glass fragment, light green, 1/32" thick
ST N500/E600	1	Flake, quartz, secondary
	1	Bottle glass body fragment, clear, 20th century
	1	Nail fragment, cut
	1	Plastic fragment, yellow

Provenience	Quantity	Description
ST N500/E650	2	Bottle glass body fragments, aqua
	1	Nail fragment, cut
	6	Brick fragments, reddish brown, handmade
ST N500/E700	1	Brick fragment, reddish orange, handmade
ST N550/E400	2	Brick fragments, reddish brown, handmade
ST N550/E450	1	Brick fragment, reddish brown, handmade
	1	Coal fragment
ST N550/E500	1	Flake, quartzite, tertiary
	2	Brick fragments, reddish brown, handmade
ST N550/E550	1	Bottle glass body fragments, clear
	1	Nail fragment, cut
	3	Brick fragments, reddish brown, handmade
ST N550/E600	2	Brick fragments, reddish brown, handmade
ST N550/E650	1	Bottle glass body fragment, dark green
	2	Hurricane lamp globe body fragments, clear
	1	Brick fragment, reddish brown, handmade
ST N600/E350	1	Fire cracked rock, quartzite
ST N600/E450	1	Fire cracked rock, quartzite
	1	Flake, quartzite, secondary
ST N600/E500	1	Flake, quartzite, tertiary
ST N600/E550	1	Brick fragment, reddish brown, handmade
ST N600/E600	1	Flake, quartzite, tertiary
	1	Window glass fragment, aqua, 2/32" thick
	1	Nail fragment, cut
	2	Brick fragments, reddish orange, handmade
ST N650/E300	1	Bottle glass body fragment, dark green
ST N650/E350	2	Window glass body fragments, aqua, 2/32" thick
	4	Nail fragments, cut
	3	Brick fragments, reddish brown, handmade

Provenience	Quantity	Description
ST N650/E400	1	Creamware base sherd, c. 1775-1820
ST N650/E500	3	Brick fragments, reddish brown, handmade
ST N650/E550	1	Brick fragment, reddish brown, handmade
ST N670/E600	1	Biface, rose quartz
	1	Cobble, quartzite, probably used as a hammerstone
	29	Native American pottery body sherds, shell temper, Mockley cord marked
	1	Coarse earthenware body sherd, grainy red body with a caramel brown lead glaze on interior, North Devon gravel temper, c. 1650-1775
	1	Bottle glass body fragment, aqua
	1	Nail fragment, cut
	1	Brick fragment, reddish brown, handmade
	5	Shell fragments, oyster
ST N675/E650	1	Bottle glass body fragment, dark green
ST N675/E675	1	Flake, quartzite, secondary
ST N700/E450	1	Nail fragment, cut
	2	Brick fragments, reddish orange, handmade
ST N700/E500	1	Cobble, quartzite, possibly used as a hammerstone
	1	Bottle glass body fragment, clear
	1	Brick fragment, reddish orange, handmade
ST N700/E525	2	Flakes, quartzite, secondary
	1	Whiteware body sherd, red and blue sponged design
	1	White ball clay pipe bowl fragment
	1	Bottle glass body fragment, clear
	1	Bottle glass body fragment, dark green
	1	Nail fragment, cut
	6	Brick fragments, reddish orange, handmade
	1	Brick fragment, reddish brown, handmade
ST N700/E550	4	Brick fragments, reddish brown, handmade
ST N700/E575	1	Flake, chert, tertiary
	1	White ball clay pipe stem, 9/64" diam., c. 1620-1650

Provenience	Quantity	Description
ST N700/E600	1	Cobble, quartzite, possibly used as a smoothing stone
	1	Bottle glass body fragment, gray
	3	Shell fragments, oyster
ST N700/E625	2	Coarse earthenware body sherd, grainy red body with traces of clear lead (appears caramel brown) on interior, Redware, c. 18th century
	2	Nail fragments, wrought
	2	Shell fragments, oyster
ST N700/E650	1	Flake, quartzite, tertiary
ST N700/E675	1	Iron fragment, possibly a strap?
ST N725/E525	1	Brick fragment, reddish brown, handmade
ST N725/E550	1	Brick fragment, reddish orange, handmade
ST N725/E575	1	Flake, chert, secondary
	1	Brick fragment, reddish brown, handmade
ST N725/E587	4	Brick fragment, reddish brown, handmade
ST N725/E600	2	Brick fragments, reddish orange, handmade
ST N725/E612.5	8	Brick fragment, red, machine made
	1	Shell fragment, oyster
ST N725/E625	1	Nail fragment, cut
	1	Brick fragment, red, machine made
ST N725/E650	1	Staple, fencing
	3	Brick fragments, red, machine made
ST N725/E675	1	Bottle glass body fragment, clear
	8	Nail fragments, cut
	2	Brick fragments, reddish brown, handmade
	1	Shell fragment, oyster
ST N725/E700	1	Fire cracked rock, quartzite

Provenience	Quantity	Description
ST N737.5/E587.5	1	Fire cracked rock, quartzite
	1	Coarse earthenware body sherd, pinkish gray body with traces of an apple green lead glaze on interior, exterior unglazed, North Devon gravel tempered, c. 1650-1775
	1	Coarse earthenware body sherd, red body with a thick black lead glaze on interior and exterior, Black glazed Redware, c. 1700-1810
	1	Nail fragment, cut
	2	Brick fragments, reddish brown, handmade
ST N737.5/E600	1	Native American pottery body sherd, shell tempered, indeterminate surface treatment, Middle or Late Woodland
	1	White ball clay pipe stem fragment
	1	Nail fragment, cut
	1	Brick fragment, reddish brown, handmade
ST N737.5/E612.5	1	Native American pottery sherd, indeterminate surface and temper treatment
	1	Nail fragment, cut
	2	Shell fragments, oyster
ST N750/E500	2	Flakes, quartzite, secondary
	1	Flakes, quartzite, tertiary
	1	Brick fragment, reddish brown, handmade
ST N750/E525	1	Coarse earthenware body sherd, red body with a thick black lead glaze on interior, Black glazed redware, c. 1700-1710
	25	Brick fragments, reddish brown, handmade
	5	Coal clinkers
	1	Sewer tile fragment
ST N750/E587	1	Native American pottery body sherd, indeterminate temper and surface treatment
	1	Brick fragment, reddish orange, handmade
ST N750/E575	1	Nail fragment, cut
	3	Brick fragments, reddish orange, handmade
ST N750/E550	1	Flake, quartzite, tertiary
	1	Nail fragment, cut
	1	Brick fragment, reddish brown, handmade

Provenience	Quantity	Description
ST N750/E600	1	Native American pottery body sherd, shell temper, indeterminate surface treatment
	6	Brick fragments, reddish orange, handmade
	2	Shell fragments, oyster
ST N750/E612.5	1	Native American pottery body sherd, shell temper possibly Roanoke simple stamped, Late Woodland to Contact
ST N775/E525	1	Bottle glass body fragment, aqua
	4	Brick fragments, reddish brown, handmade
	1	Coal fragment
	1	Shell fragment, oyster
ST N775/E550	1	Bottle glass body fragment, aqua
	1	Brick fragment, reddish brown, machine made
	1	Brick fragment, reddish brown, machine made
	1	Brick fragment, reddish brown, machine made
ST N775/E575	1	Native American pottery body sherd, indeterminate temper and surface treatment
ST N775/E600	1	Cobble, quartzite
	3	Native American pottery body sherd, shell temper, Roanoke simple stamped, c. Late Woodland to Contact
	22	Shell fragments, oyster
	3	Brick fragments, red, machine
Unit 1	1	Fire cracked rock, quartz
	14	Fire cracked rocks, quartzite
	9	Flakes, quartz, secondary
	10	Flakes, quartzite, secondary
	3	Flakes, chert, tertiary
	7	Flakes, quartzite, tertiary
	35	Native American pottery body sherds, sand tempered, indeterminate surface treatment
	5	Native American pottery body sherds, sand tempered simple stamped exterior, Late Woodland
	15	Native American pottery body sherds, shell tempered surface treatment indeterminate
	10	Native American pottery body sherds, shell tempered, simple stamped exterior, Roanoke simple stamped, Late Woodland to Contact Period

Provenience	Quantity	Description
Unit 1 cont.	2	Coarse earthenware body sherd, dark reddish body with yellow clay streaks, thick black lead glaze on interior and exterior, Buckley, c. 1700-1775
	1	Coarse earthenware rim sherd, brick red body, unglazed interior and exterior, Redware
	9	Coarse earthenware body sherds, grayish pink body with a caramel brown lead glaze on interior, exterior unglazed, North Devon gravel tempered, c. 1650-1775
	9	Delftware body sherds, buff body with the glaze missing from interior and exterior, c. 1600-1800
	1	Delftware body sherd, buff body with a hand painted blue design on interior, c. 1600-1800
	1	Stoneware body sherd, gray body with a gray salt glaze on interior and exterior, cordoning on exterior, Rhenish, c. 1700-1775
	1	Stoneware rim sherd, gray body with a gray salt glaze on interior and exterior, Rhenish, c. 1700-1775
	13	White ball clay pipe bowl fragments
	8	White ball clay pipe stem fragments
	1	White ball clay pipe stem, 6/64" diam., c. 1680-1710
	12	White ball clay pipe stems, 7/64" diam., c. 1650-1680
	1	Locally made pipe stem, 9/64" diam.
	1	Bottle glass body fragment, amber
	2	Bottle glass body fragments, aqua
	3	Bottle glass body fragments, clear
	3	Window glass fragments, aqua, 2/32" thick
	121	Nail fragments, cut
	8	Nail fragments, wire
	2	Nails, cut, 3" L
	3	Nails, wire, 3" L
	3	Staples, fencing
	3	Bolt fragments, iron
	1	Nut, iron
	2	Lead shot, 1/8" diam.
	7	Brick fragments, red, machine made
	219	Brick fragments, reddish orange, handmade
	49	Brick fragments, reddish brown, handmade
	3	Charred wood fragments
	1	Mortar fragment, sand tempered
	71	Shell fragments, oyster
	9	Tile fragments, ceramic
	5	Tiles fragments, asbestos (discarded)

**APPENDIX B:
Project Map**