

ARCHIVAL RESEARCH AND PREVIOUS ARCHEOLOGICAL WORK

Much of the archival information for this project was taken from research completed on the Blue Ball Tavern (7NC-B-22/N-542) site carried out during the 1989 study of Route 141 (Taylor et al. 1989) and 1996-98 (Wholey et al. n.d.). Additional research included a survey of aerial photographs at the Delaware Historical Society, Wilmington, and a review of documents from the Nemours and Alfred I. DuPont Papers at Washington and Lee University, Lexington, Virginia.

As mentioned earlier in this report, an Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS No. DE-283-A) document for the Nemours estate was written in 1994 by the architectural firm of Kise Franks and Straw (KFS) of Philadelphia. The Blue Ball Dairy and the Blue Ball Tavern Site were part of Alfred I. DuPont's Nemours Estate, and the standing dairy buildings were documented during that survey. The dairy served the Nemours Estate from its construction in 1914, probably until DuPont's death in 1935, and perhaps until as late as 1943, after which it was leased to Harvey and Ruthford Gooden, father and son, who ran the dairy and sold its produce on the market. Ruthford Gooden left the dairy in 1977, shortly after which the house (the old Blue Ball Tavern) and most of the outbuildings were torn down. The barn, milk house and stone wall remain today; while they and the tavern/house site are included within the Nemours historic district, they are no longer part of the Estate (KFS 1994).

Although extensive research has been carried out at several archives and institutions where other documents about the Nemours Estate were found, the architect of the Blue Ball Dairy buildings is unknown. Even a search of the papers of Carrere and Hastings, architects of the Nemours mansion and still in the employ of DuPont in 1914, failed to reveal any drawings of the dairy buildings. Another possibility is that his contractor, James M. Smyth & Son of Wilmington, helped DuPont design the structures and then to build them. Again, no documentation has been found to substantiate this hypothesis. It has also been speculated by Brizzolara (1989) that many of the structural elements are modeled after the specifications of Alfred Hopkins, a preeminent early twentieth century architect; these specifications were described in his book, *Modern Farm Buildings*, published in 1913. Hopkins' work represents the most modern construction techniques of that time. Brizzolara's speculation is based on the apparent application of features recommended in the Hopkins' publication such as the use of stucco, plans for refrigerators, the use of concrete and galvanized iron sinks, the elimination of projections and moldings, and the installation of iron window and door frames.

Correspondence indicated that A. E. Whittington managed the farming and dairying for the estate in 1919 and possibly earlier, and that E. M. Davis was manager from 1920 to 1926. Correspondences dating from 1926 to 1932 indicate that Maxey Bland was the farm manager at that time. At least two supervisors, Andrew Fullerton and Mr. Bishop, ran various aspects of the farms operation under Davis' management. Tenant supervision reflects a trend that represented 41-46% of the farms in the county at the time (Passmore et al. 1978). Correspondences between DuPont and Davis suggest that workers or their immediate supervisors may have resided in the farmhouse at various times, and that supervisors may have been granted permission to grow crops of their own for market. Ruthford Gooden was the last to run the dairy. Although he was interviewed about changes to the farm that took place during his tenure, his comments were limited to information concerning the interior of the Dairy Barn and its adjacent yard (KFS 1994).

This project area overlaps with a previously conducted preliminary walkover with limited shovel testing connected with the Route 141 (Centre Road) archeological study reported on by Taylor et al. in 1989. That study included work on the Bird-Husbands House (N-494)

located adjacent to wetland mitigation area D, the Smithy Site (7NC-B-10/N-10939) on the east side of Concord Pike and the Weldin Plantation Site (7NC-B-11/N-9453). A large area had been paved adjacent to the Bird-Husbands house, and no intact features or contexts were found within the remaining yard; therefore, no further archeological work was recommended. The Smithy Site was found to have been disturbed by the construction of a cinder block gasoline station and no additional work was recommended. The Weldin Plantation had both above ground and subsurface remains that were thought to have the potential to provide information on tenant and owner occupied farms and additional work was recommended. A low density lithic scatter, the Alapocus Run Site (7NC-B-13/N-10941), was identified adjacent to (or partially within) wetland mitigation area B; no further work was recommended.

The area near the intersection of Rockland Road and Concord Pike (the proposed Augustine Cut-Off) has been examined recently in connection with the excavation of the Blue Ball Tavern Site (Thomas et al. 1980; Wholey et al. n.d.). This field has been used as a disposal area for rock and soil, and the fill layer is several feet deep. Backhoe trenches showed that this fill overlies a plowzone, and artifacts recovered from the part of the field near the tavern show that it had been plowed up to at least the 1950s. Based on this work, it appears unlikely that intact archeological deposits would be found in this field.