

## ABSTRACT

During the winter of 1987, the John Ruth Inn site (7NC-D-126), located at the southwest corner of Red Mill Road and Routes 4 and 273 in northern New Castle County, was the subject of intensive Phase II investigations. Fieldwork and laboratory analysis were conducted by personnel from the University of Delaware Center for Archaeological Research. Funding was provided by the Delaware Department of Transportation. The purpose of the research was to provide compliance information to satisfy Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The research design governing the documentary and archaeological research was focused on an early to late eighteenth century component located by previous research within the Ogletown Interchange project area. Archaeological testing was confined to a 50'X 25' or 1250 square foot area, because previous archaeological research had indicated extensive subsurface disturbance over most of the 1/2 acre acre lot. Archaeological remains of a 18'X 15'cellar infilled ca. 1780, walkways, and approximately 50 features of eighteenth and nineteenth century origin including structural features, trash pits, and postholes were uncovered and excavated. These were found to be preserved beneath extensive historic filling, grading, and paving.

Documentary research on the function and occupants of the site through the eighteenth century indicated that the structure, located on land owned by Thomas Ogle, functioned as a tavern/inn and was operated by a succession of innkeepers including James Broom and Thomas Ogle. A detailed ceramic and faunal analysis of the assemblage was conducted. The results identified what has been previously called a 'tavern assemblage'. Intersite artifact comparisons with ten sites of similar function and/or occupation period were also conducted. An architectural and material culture reconstruction of the site was completed through extensive use of eighteenth century orphan's court, probate, newspaper, and manuscript records. The overall results of research at the site show the valuable economic and social position of taverns in the eighteenth century and how this condition was archaeologically manifested in semi-rural northern Delaware.

Because of the partially disturbed context and unclear historical association, the John Ruth Inn site is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and no further work is recommended.