

X. GOALS, PRIORITIES, AND INFORMATION NEEDS FOR HISTORICAL  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROPERTY TYPES ASSOCIATED WITH THE CONTEXT

A. Information Needs

1. Enhancement of the Historic Context

Additional documentary research will extend and enhance the historic context narrative, especially in three of its four sections: 1830-1880: Sociocultural Context; 1880-1940: Agricultural Production; and 1880-1940: Sociocultural Context. Recommendations for the nature and extent of this research appear at the end of each section of the context narrative. They are summarized below.

a. 1830-1880: Sociocultural Context

The sociocultural context of agriculture in Delaware in the nineteenth century encompasses many things--demography, class, labor practices, the construction and reconstruction of gender roles and relations, the evolution of ethnic cultures, neighborhood and community structures and organizations, political culture, religion and belief systems, and the material culture that facilitated and mediated these components of the culture of agriculture. Much research remains to be done in each of these areas.

Diversity in the size and composition of the groups comprising the agricultural hierarchy characterized New Castle's and Kent's hundreds at any point in time and over time; researchers have so far sketched the outlines of this diversity. More work is needed to fill in the image, and to further illuminate relations between the groups--the small elite of wealthy farm owners, the larger middle group of farmers who owned smaller and/or less expensive farms, the tenants, the farm hands and laborers living in their own houses, in houses owned by others, and in the homes of their employers, and the small group of slaves held by the counties' farmers before 1862.

In recent years, Delaware's African Americans and women have received scholarly attention, beginning to fill other voids in our knowledge. Their voices and those of the children of the state's farming population still need to be more distinctly and fully heard. Much less attention has been given to the social, economic, and spiritual associations and institutions Delaware's farmers established and relied on for support. Little is known of the role of religion and church institutions in the lives of Delaware's farming population; the agricultural societies and educational institutions, though not discussed at length in this context, have been the subject of some study.

b. 1880-1940: Agricultural Production

Supplementary research will be important in delineating geographical regions characterized by differing agricultural economies, production strategies, and thus farm types within each county across the period. Information on individual farms is required to accomplish this as well as to discern the range and nature of variability within the regions. Analysis of probate records, individual farm accounts, and other personal and business papers, along with a program of oral history research, would provide especially significant information. Study of the publications and records of the Delaware State Grange and its affiliated organizations would also enrich our understanding of agricultural production, the agricultural economy, and the many complex factors affecting them. Manuscript and published records of federal agencies have yet to be mined. Their accessibility at the National Archives suggests that a survey of these records should be a high priority in future research plans. Surviving farm buildings and landscapes, and the collections of the Delaware Museum of Agriculture will assist in developing further the material context of agricultural production.

c. 1880-1940: Sociocultural Context

Research to date has demonstrated the central roles of ethnicity, gender, land quality, geographical locations, and status as farm owner, tenant, or laborer in the lives of the counties' farmers and in determining the nature of the relationships among the several sociocultural groups constituting the social order of agriculture. Land tenure, ethnicity, and land quality have been explored in the greatest depth, while there remains much to learn regarding the social geography of agriculture (at a scale smaller than the county), gender, the actual social and class relationships that existed among farm owners, landlords, their tenants, and the laborers working others' farms. Areas such as formal and informal agricultural organizations, education, religion, family strategies, politics, neighborhood and community, and the social relationships among the agricultural producers and the urban and industrial consumers of their produce also need attention.

Analysis of probate records, individual farm accounts, and other personal and business papers, along with a program of oral history research, would provide especially significant information. Study of the publications and records of the Delaware State Grange and its affiliated organizations would also enrich our understanding of the many complex sociocultural factors affecting and in turn influenced by agricultural production and the agricultural economy. The manuscript and published records of federal agencies offer great promise for expanding the sociocultural context of Delaware agriculture and farm life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. An especially rich collection of federal records documents the affects of the

Depression on the nation's farming families. Photographs in the collections of the Historical Society of Delaware, the Delaware State Archives, and the families of New Castle and Kent County farmers, surviving farm buildings and landscapes, and the collections of the Delaware Museum of Agriculture will assist in developing further the social context of agriculture and its material expressions.

Researchers have documented much of the surviving agricultural architecture and landscape of this period, but have not as yet proceeded far in the complex task of unraveling the many social and utilitarian functions and meanings of these buildings and landscapes. Such syntheses and interpretations will complement those resulting from archaeologists' studies of the "culture of agriculture" and its material expressions and constraints.

## 2. Data Base of Archaeological Sites Associated with this Historic Context

The archaeological property type designation assigned to each archaeological site associated with this historic context must be revised to correspond to the property types proposed in this context. The data base of these archaeological sites, currently in dBase III+, must also be kept up-to-date as new sites are identified, evaluated, registered, and treated. Moreover, additional documentary and archaeological research is required to assign property types to sites currently designated "Unknown," to refine Site Function designations, to refine Date Range assignments, to determine level of site treatment, and to determine the condition of the site. Many of these sites in need of supplementary research are those identified during surveys completed many years ago and for which collections exist at the Delaware State Museums' Island Field Research Center. This information will aid in evaluating these sites and in planning for their treatment.

## 3. Data Base of Potential Archaeological Sites Associated with this Historic Context

Another data base is needed to parallel the one for inventoried archaeological sites associated with this historic context. It would contain comparable information about all the potential archaeological sites that may be associated with this context but that have not yet been tested to verify the presence of intact archaeological remains. These potential archaeological sites include 1) all the standing buildings and structures associated with this historic context already listed in the state standing building inventory, 2) all the potential standing buildings not yet inventoried but for which documentary information suggests a potential association with the context, and 3) all potential archaeological sites identified through documentary research that do not contain standing buildings and that have not

yet been subject to archaeological investigation to verify the presence of intact archaeological resources. The latter two categories are continually expanded through cultural resource management projects. Once created, the data base would also have to be updated regularly. The information in this data base would contribute to enhancing the historic context narrative, facilitate archaeological resource identification efforts, and provide a corpus of information upon which to base decisions regarding site evaluation, registration, and treatment.

## **B. Prioritized Goals**

### **1. Committee of Delaware Archaeologists**

#### **Planning, Identification, Evaluation, Registration, and Treatment**

#### **All Property Types**

The authors recommend a Committee of archaeologists working in Delaware be convened by staff of the State Historic Preservation Office. The Committee's objectives would be to:

- 1) Review the archaeological property types proposed here, consider their adequacy, and perhaps propose revisions. This should be accomplished before the Data Base of Archaeological Sites associated with this Historic Context is updated, and before the Data Base of Potential Archaeological Sites associated with this Historic Context is created.
- 2) Develop standards to ensure the adequacy and consistency of documentary research, field research, and evaluation techniques at all levels of investigation of sites associated with this context. A special concern at this time are the property types associated with this historic context that in many cases are characterized by minimal, ephemeral archaeological remains: Agricultural Outbuildings, Agricultural Structures, and Agricultural Dwellings and Complexes occupied for short periods of time and/or by especially poor folks.

This Committee should be convened immediately so that the first objective can be met by April 1993. The second objective should be met by December 1993. It is anticipated that the Committee would require several meetings, and that members would receive assignments to complete between meetings.

2. Create Data Base of Potential Archaeological Sites Associated with this Historic Context

Planning, Identification, Evaluation, Registration, and Treatment

All Property Types

Information presented in this historic context (see above and IX. EVALUATION OF INVENTORIED HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES ASSOCIATED WITH THE HISTORIC CONTEXT) has demonstrated the need for this data base. It is recommended the data base project be carried out by an intern in the State Historic Preservation Office under the direction of a trained staff member. Assuming the intern would work over the summer, the schedule for completion of the data base would be September 1993. Once created, State Historic Preservation Office staff members would be responsible for updating it.

3. Update Data Base of Archaeological Sites Associated with this Historic Context

Planning, Identification, Evaluation, Registration, and Treatment

All Property Types

This project has several components:

- 1) Revise the property type designation assigned to each archaeological site associated with this historic context to correspond to the property types proposed in this context and/or by the Committee proposed above;
- 2) Conduct additional documentary research on sites in the data base as needed to assign property types to sites currently designated "Unknown," to refine Site Function designations, to refine Date Range assignments, to determine level of Site Treatment, and to determine the Condition of the site;
- 3) Conduct additional research on the collections of the Delaware State Museums from sites associated with this context as needed to assign property types to sites currently designated "Unknown," to refine Site Function designations, to refine Date Range assignments, to determine level of Site Treatment, and to determine the Condition of the site;
- 4) Conduct additional Reconnaissance and/or Intensive Archaeological Surveys of sites in the data base as needed to assign property types to sites currently designated "Unknown," to refine Site Function designations, to refine Date Range assignments, and to determine the Condition of the site;

- 5) Keep the data base updated.

The first and last components would be the responsibility of staff members in the State Historic Preservation Office and could be accomplished in the context of their regular activities. Components 2) and 3) could be undertaken as a single project funded in part through a FY 94 State Historic Preservation Fund Survey and Planning Grant. These activities could be completed by a consultant-grantee in a one-year project. The assistance of the Curator of Archaeology of the Delaware State Museums would be required to complete the research on the Museums' collections. Component 4) should be a separate project initiated after completion of Components 2) and 3). The documentary and collections research offer a much more cost effective means of obtaining the incomplete data. An FY 95 State Historic Preservation Fund Survey and Planning Grant could then support Reconnaissance and/or Intensive Surveys of those sites for which the needed information was not obtainable through the documentary and collections research. This project could be completed by a consultant-grantee in a one-year project.

4. Program of Public Education, Survey of Documentary Records and Material Culture in Private Collections, Oral History Survey, and Reconnaissance and Intensive Archaeological Surveys

Planning, Identification, Evaluation, Registration, and Treatment

All Property Types

Farming families and their descendants remain a virtually untapped source of documentary records, material culture, memories, and orally transmitted history relating to New Castle and Kent counties' farms of the 1830-1940 period. At the same time, the activities of farmers and other owners of archaeological sites (with or without standing buildings) associated with this historic context threaten their integrity on a regular basis. Activities such as plowing, replacing farm buildings, installing paved drives and parking areas, gardening, laying underground drainage systems, sprinkler systems, and other utilities, and waterproofing building foundations all disturb or destroy archaeological resources. This program is designed to address both of these important issues.

This public education program would consist of several components phased over three years:

- 1) FY 94: Series of lectures and meetings with target audiences, such as the participants in the Century Farm Program, Delaware State Grange members, the community of developers, and others whose families have historically been involved in farming in Delaware's two northern counties. In addition to beginning

to educate these audiences about the significant archaeological sites some of their members may steward, this program would identify sympathetic property owners, result in creation of data files on documentary, oral, and material culture materials in the possession of these property owners and others that relate to the counties' nineteenth and early twentieth-century farms and farming families, and provide additional information to supplement that in the state inventory files and data bases on individual sites. At the end of the project, a sample of potential archaeological sites would be selected as the focus of the following year's project. This project could be completed by a consultant with the support of a State Historic Preservation Fund Survey and Planning Grant. Supplementary funds would be required to support a full-time intern for the grant period. The intern would focus on contacting and meeting with individual families in order to create the data files on documentary records and material culture in private collections and on oral history sources. Research drawing on these files could then begin, funded independently of the State Historic Preservation Fund.

- 2) FY 95: Program of Reconnaissance Survey at selected potential archaeological sites identified during the previous year's project. These sites, contained in the Data Base of Potential Archaeological Sites associated with this Historic Context, would be selected on the basis of several factors: 1) Willingness of property owner to participate in the project; 2) Site's representativeness, as discussed in VII. **ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS** and VIII. **CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES**; 3) Site's location outside of cultural resource management project corridors but within a threatened area; 4) Immediate threats to site. This survey would result in the addition of several sites to the Data Base of Archaeological Sites associated with this Historic Context, would provide needed information on the integrity of sites of different "types" occupied during different periods and for varying lengths of time, and would in many cases result in planning for the site's preservation by its owners. With the consent of the owner, tours of the work at these sites would be given to interested members of the public, and the media engaged to help publicize the project and the benefits of site preservation. At the end of the project, a sample of potential archaeological sites would be selected as the focus of the following year's project. This project could be completed by a consultant with the support of a State Historic Preservation Fund Survey and Planning Grant.
- 3) FY 96: Program of Intensive Survey at selected archaeological sites identified during the previous year's project. These sites, contained in the Data Base of Archaeological Sites associated with this Historic Context, would be selected on

the basis of several factors: 1) Willingness of property owner to participate in the project; 2) Site's representativeness, as discussed in VII. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS and VIII. CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES; 3) Site's location outside of cultural resource management project corridors but within a threatened area; 4) Immediate threats to site. This survey would provide needed information on the integrity, boundaries, and significance of sites of different "types" occupied during different periods and for varying lengths of time, and would in many cases result in planning for the site's preservation by its owners. With the consent of the owner, tours of the work at these sites would be given to interested members of the public, and the media engaged to help publicize the project and the benefits of site preservation. This project could be completed by a consultant with the support of a State Historic Preservation Fund Survey and Planning Grant.

As a result of the continuity of this project over several years, it is expected a good working relationship will have developed between the archaeological and preservation communities, the owners of archaeological sites associated with this historic context, Delawares' farming families, and organizations such as the Delaware State Grange and 4-H. In this way, the education and preservation process can continue without the direct financial support of the State Historic Preservation Office.