

century, Christiana was described in the Delaware State and Peninsular Directory for 1897-98 (1987:47) in the following optimistic and glowing terms:

Christiana is pleasantly situated on the banks of the Christiana Creek, in White Clay Creek hundred, and nine miles southwest of Wilmington. It's railroad communication is by the P.W.&B.R.R., the nearest station on which is Stanton, two and one-half miles distant, and also the Delaware branch road at Bear Station, about the same distance. A mail coach runs to Stanton, fare 25 cents. Good water communication is also furnished by the Christina Creek, which is navigable for vessels of moderate draught. The principal farming products are grain and vegetables, which are sent mostly to the Wilmington markets. Christiana is a good opening for manufacturing interests; plenty of room for men of capital. Convenient to banks in Newark and Newport. Population, 500.

Ironically, the "men of capital" have now arrived and are forever changing this small, close-knit community.

RESEARCH CONTEXT AND CONSIDERATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The Phase II historic archaeological investigations of the Patterson Lane Site Complex was guided by several research perspectives which dealt with local and regional historic issues. Because the excavations were performed by two separate organizations at different times, and in separate locations, research perspectives began to take shape after the completion of the initial Phase I testing and considerable background historic research. Broadly defined, the research perspectives employed to interpret the Patterson Lane Site Complex included both historic research and archaeological research perspectives. It should be

noted, however, that neither category is exclusive of the other, and each relies on data generated from the other to be effective. The historical research perspectives presented below should be regarded as part of the broader themes of American history which can be addressed through the historical and archaeological investigations of "the Place at Christeen". On the other hand, the archaeological research perspectives should be viewed as the framework of topics and issues of narrower scope that, combined together, help to shape and define the overall interpretation of larger historical processes.

HISTORICAL RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES

Because they span more than two centuries of historic development in the Christiana area, the Patterson Lane Sites can provide researchers with an opportunity to examine in detail the growth of the village of Christiana Bridge. Patterson Lane's location on the outskirts of the village, its eighteenth and early nineteenth century use as a transportation route to commercial landings, and the subsequent reorientation and division of the landscape in the nineteenth century, make Patterson Lane a focal point from which to study Christiana and its adaptation to local, regional, and perhaps national economic and social developments. Until the construction of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal south of the town, and the later opening of the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad several miles north of Christiana, the cross-roads village figured prominently in local and regional society and economics, and was a nationally known location. The town's demise as an

economic center of importance beginning in the second quarter of the nineteenth century should be reflected in the history and development of the Patterson Lane Site Complex. These sites were utilized for both domestic and commercial functions, ranging from landings, wharves, and storehouses, to tenant houses and owner-occupied dwellings, and changes in the sites' uses, inhabitants, social and economic status, and ethnicity, should be discernible over time in the historic and archaeological research.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES

From a site-specific perspective, each of the sites identified on Patterson Lane can be used to study broad historical research topics that have lately become areas of interest for historical archaeologists. The Patterson Lane Site (7NC-E-53) was the location of a long-term domestic/commercial site, occupied for nearly 200 years. The site inhabitants were generally of upper social status in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, though the use of the site by tenants occurred fairly early in its occupation. For most of its period of use, particularly after the second half of the nineteenth century, the Patterson Lane Site was an agricultural farmstead, and was part of a much larger landholding. Thus, the site should be able to reflect changes in land use, and variations in social and economic factors over time in the Christiana Bridge vicinity.

The William Dickson Site (7NC-E-82) is a unique site type in Delaware historical archaeology in two respects. First, the site represents a commercial store or storehouse occupation

dating from the late eighteenth to early nineteenth century, providing material remains not often recovered archaeologically. The value of this first site attribute is that the artifact assemblage from the Dickson Site can be compared to assemblages from other local domestic sites dating to the same time period, allowing an archaeological examination of consumer choice and economic status.

The study of consumer behavior by historical archaeologists has recently received much attention, and several studies have been published using a consumer-choice framework as a theoretical basis (Spencer-Wood and Heberling 1987; Morin, Klein, and Freidlander 1986; Miller 1980). The majority of these studies draw on the demand-side of economic systems, looking at the market effects on domestic archaeological sites and assemblages. A few authors have been concerned with the supply-side of the economic equation, but few supply-side archaeological sites have been utilized or studied (Adams 1976; Riordan and Adams 1985; Miller and Hurry 1983). The value, then, of the Dickson Site assemblage is that it can provide a needed supply-side archaeological site to complement demand-side studies of consumer choice in historical archaeology.

The second attribute of the Dickson Site which can be examined is the documented presence of Afro-Americans at the site in the second half of the nineteenth century after the commercial occupation of the site. The archaeological study of blacks and black-occupied sites is of special interest to historical archaeologists in their examination of ethnicity and

status in the archaeological record (Schuyler 1980a; Singleton 1985). It is also of importance in Delaware history, where blacks made up a considerable percentage of the State's nineteenth century tenants and farmers (Bausman 1933; Homsey 1979). Some work on antebellum black tenant sites in the Lower South has been conducted (Adams and Smith 1985; Orser and Nekola 1985), and several free black occupations have been examined in Maryland and the Northeast (McDaniel 1982; Geismar 1982; Schuyler 1980b, Baker 1980; Deetz 1977; Bridges and Salwen 1980), but to date little historical archaeological investigation has been carried out on rural black sites in Delaware. The notable archaeological studies in Delaware are the Phase I and II investigations by Lothrop et al. (1987), which identified the locations of two black tenant sites within the proposed right-of-way of Route 896, about 5 miles to the west of Christiana, and the archaeological investigations conducted by Heite and Heite (1985) of the black and mulatto Fork Branch community in Kent County, Delaware.

The artifact assemblage from the black Dickson Site occupation, which dates to the second half of the nineteenth century, can be compared on an intra- and inter-regional basis to known black sites in other locations, and to documented white sites in the vicinity to determine the similarities and differences in the artifact and faunal assemblages. A comparison of this type will greatly aid in the recognition of artifact patterns related to ethnicity and the general study of the archaeology of ethnicity.

The archaeological remains recovered at the Heisler Tenancy Site (7NC-E-83) were found predominantly in the context of a secondary refuse trash midden, and, like the artifact assemblage found at the Patterson Lane Site, span a long period of occupation and disposal. However, the Heisler Site is nearly contemporaneous with the black occupation of the Dickson Site, and in its later years was in fact a black domestic household as well. Thus an inter-site comparison of these two artifact assemblages may prove fruitful and beneficial in the study of late nineteenth century rural households of the Middle Atlantic.

METHODOLOGY

ARCHIVAL METHODS

Background and archival research undertaken by both DelDOT and UDCAR archaeologists was similar, and consisted first of consultation with the staff of the Delaware Bureau of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (BAHP), and a review of all the pertinent inventories of prehistoric and historic cultural resources maintained by the BAHP within the vicinity of the project area. Historic research consisted of an examination of all historic atlases and maps of the Patterson Lane and Christiana Bridge area, interviews with local landholders and persons knowledgeable in local history, and intensive examination of "official" records, such as deeds, probate documents (wills, administrations, inventories, estate sales, etc.), tax assessments from various years for White Clay Creek Hundred, U.S. census data, New Castle County Road Petitions and Returns, and other court records. Other historic records that were utilized