

INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of a reconnaissance and intensive survey conducted by Thunderbird Archeological Associates (TAA) along the proposed Del. Route 141, Centre Road, improvement corridor, extending from north of Prices Corner to Kennett Pike, Del. Route 52, in New Castle County, Delaware. TAA was requested to submit a proposal for the archeological investigations by the Location and Environmental Studies Office of the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT). The purpose of these investigations was to identify any archeological resources that might be present and to evaluate their significance with respect to the criteria for eligibility for nomination in the National Register of Historic Places. This work was carried out in compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Section 106). Compliance with the regulations of the Federal Highway Administration, the Delaware Department of Transportation, the State Historic Preservation Office and appropriate State laws was also undertaken.

The Route 141 improvement plan, which calls for the construction of a four lane corridor along the present right-of-way, can be divided into three separate sections. The first part of the project, the right-of-way from Woodward Avenue north to Lancaster Pike, measures roughly 214' in width and is not, at present, finalized in terms of the exact right-of-way placement. The second part, continuing from Lancaster Pike on north to Kennett Pike, is the same width. The anticipated right-of-way in this part has been established. The third part is the Lancaster Pike interchange, which involves the building of a spur from

Route 141 down Lancaster Pike to Little Mill Creek. The plans for this section are not yet finalized. Figures 1-3 show the location of the project area.

The first section of the right-of-way, the parcel running from Woodward Avenue (Prices Corner) to Lancaster Pike, traverses an area characterized principally by housing complexes and present roadways, although there is a wooded section where Little Mill Creek passes beneath the present Route 141. Beyond, or north of Lancaster Pike, the right-of-way crosses land still in cultivation, although part of the right-of-way is on the lawns of the DuPont (Chestnut Run Site) buildings along Route 141. A small section on the north end of the right-of-way, in the vicinity of Barley Mill Road is wooded. North of Barley Mill Road, the right-of-way reaches a portion of the partially completed section of the Route 141 four lane road.

Background and archival research was conducted in the fall of 1983 in order to identify source materials that might assist in the identification of significant archeological sites. Fieldwork consisted of 15 working days. At the outset, field conditions were hampered by excessive rain, which rendered the excavation of the shovel test units a slow process. Beyond that, field conditions were generally good, with excellent visibility in the cultivated fields. Dr. William M. Gardner served as principal investigator on the project and William P. Barse served as field supervisor. The crew members were drawn from TAA staff.

In terms of the organization of the field procedure, the entire study area was investigated in the course of a

reconnaissance survey in order to assess the nature of any archeological or historical sites that may have been present along the proposed right-of-way. Any sites that were deemed to be potentially intact and containing any contextual integrity were to be investigated in the course of an intensive survey. Only one site was located in the right-of-way that necessitated an intensive investigation in order to determine whether or not it was eligible for nomination in the National Register of Historic Places. This was the historic site located in Field 4 (7NC-B-6) or the H. Grant Tenancy site, along the Lancaster Pike. Two other sites, (7-NC-B-7, Areas A and B) both prehistoric, were located outside of the right-of-way, while only scant, ephemeral traces of prehistoric use of the area were located at two of the study areas in the right-of-way. This report recommends additional work for only one site in the Route 141 study area. These are described in the appropriate sections.

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BACKGROUND RESEARCH

Environmental Setting

The study area of Route 141 lies in the Piedmont physiographic province, just to the north of the Fall Line, which is located roughly parallel to Route 2, Kirkwood Highway. The Piedmont is characterized by a generally high relief topography with narrow and deep stream valleys, associated with relatively limited floodplains. Elevations in the study area range from 130' to 280' above sea level. The study area is drained by two creeks, Little Mill Creek, which borders the study area to the west, and Chestnut Run, bordering the study area to the east. Chestnut Run drains into Little Mill Creek to the southeast of the study area, while Little Mill Creek, where it crosses under Route 141, essentially forms a southern boundary for the study area. Little Mill Creek eventually empties into the Delaware River. The section of the right-of-way north of Lancaster Pike follows a long northwest-southwest trending ridge that follows the drainage divide between the headwaters of Little

Mill Creek and Chestnut Run. The section of the right-of-way that lies to the south of the Lancaster Pike intersection at Route 141 is in the interfluvial area between Little Mill Creek to the west and Willow Run, a small tributary of Chestnut Run, to the east. The vegetation in the study area is characterized by mature deciduous forests with predominant species of oak, beech, poplar and hickory. Much of the area is under cultivation with bordering scrub vegetation. The underlying lithology of the study area consists of micaceous rocks of metamorphic and igneous origin. Soils developed on this show stable, weathered profiles with distinct horizonation.

The immediate area of the Piedmont contains only a limited range of lithic raw materials, used by prehistoric population primarily quartz, which is part of the underlying bedrock. Quartz, quartzite and chert are available in cobble form a short distance away in the Coastal Plain sediments, while Iron Hill, just east of Newark, provided a source for brown jasper and chert (Custer and Gallasso 1981). Farther to the west of the study area in the Hockessin Lowlands, various cryptocrystalline rocks were available from the limestone bedrock formations.

Regional Culture History

Delaware's regional prehistory has been subdivided by Custer (1980, 1983) into four massive time blocks. They are the Paleo Indian Period (ca 12,000 B.C. - 6500 B.C.), the Archaic Period (6500 B.C. - 3000 B.C.), the Woodland I Period (3000 B.C. - A.D. 1000), and the Woodland II Period (A.D. 1000 - 1650). Appended to these four subdivisions is the Contact Period, dating from A.D. 1650 to 1750, after which the aboriginal population of

Delaware had ceased to exist in a relatively unacculturated way of life. Below are present brief descriptions of these chronological subdivisions of Delaware's prehistory.

Paleo Indian Period

This time period dates to the terminal Late Pleistocene and early Holocene climatic eras, a time that marks the final retreat of the glaciers and the gradual development of modern climatic conditions. The climate of the Paleo Indian period consisted of alternately wet and dry conditions characteristic of the Late Pleistocene and early Holocene, and which supported the various extinct species of large game mammals such as mastodon, mammoth and moose. These animals were adapted to the varied vegetational communities that existed at that time, a mixed mosaic of deciduous and boreal forests, as well as grassland environments.

The tool kit of the Paleo Indian was oriented primarily toward the hunting of the various large game animals. Diagnostics are fluted and notched projectile points, (the latter characterizing the Early Archaic), as well as several kinds of side and end scrapers. A preference for a high quality cryptocrystalline lithic material is one of the diagnostic features of the Paleo Indian tool kit. This reliance on such high quality lithics had important implications for Paleo Indian settlement patterns; base camps were located in the vicinity of quarries, with radiating hunting camps and special procurement sites located away from the base camp/quarry locale (Gardner 1974).

Archaic Period

A continuation of changes in the climate led to the emergence of essentially modern conditions by approximately 6500 B.C. There was a corresponding change in the adaptive pattern of the aboriginal groups inhabiting the Middle Atlantic. Most important was the demise of the large game species, probably, in part, caused by the reduction of the grassland type environments and the development of closed mesic forests of oak and hemlock. Radiating into their place were solitary browsing species such as deer, elk and moose. Increasing rise in the sea level led to the development of swamp environments, e.g. Churchmans Marsh, with an associated community of various plant resources. Adaptive patterns were geared to the hunting of the more solitary species and the collecting of plant foods. This adaptive change is marked by the presence in the archeological record of various grinding tools, a new technology and a variety of new projectile point forms made from a wide array of lithic types. Settlement patterns were characterized by small base camps organized around seasonally available resources with smaller groups fissioning off in the pursuit of other seasonally and locally available kinds of plant and animal foods. In the New Castle County area, sites such as the Clyde Farm and Delaware Park are representative of base camps of this time period, and the following Woodland I period.

Woodland I

Again, increasing sea level brought about climatic/environmental changes that led to a reorganization of prehistoric adaptive patterns. By 3000 B.C., this increase in

sea level had resulted in the development of brackish water estuaries. The mesic forest community was replaced by a xeric type characterized by oak and hickory species, with an increase in grassland. Temperatures were warmer and drier than previously. The development of the estuaries created a rich environmental zone that could support large base camps on a seasonal schedule, which was, in part, probably semi-sedentary for a large part of the year. A definite increase in the overall population of the region is witnessed at this time.

The tool kits representative of this period are characterized by the broad bladed Savannah River point forms and their derivatives, as well as solid container technology. The latter is first noticed in the forms of soapstone bowls in the first phases of the Woodland I period, and subsequently by ceramic containers of numerous types. Ground stone tools continue to be part of the tool kit, functioning in the processing of plant foods.

Changes in the social organization lead to more complex societies than the egalitarian band characteristic of previous periods. Various exchange systems are present, functioning to procure items important in the reification of status among incipiently ranked groups. A notable example of this is the Delmarva Adena manifestation with its associated exotic trade goods occurring in burial contexts.

Woodland II

The main characteristic marking the emergence of the Woodland II period is the development of a stable agricultural

adaptation in many parts of the Middle Atlantic. Research in Delaware indicates that such a shift is not as manifest as in other parts of the Middle Atlantic, and that the Woodland I adaptive systems continued to function, a system characterized by intensive plant cultivation and hunting. Various complexly decorated ceramics mark the Woodland II in Delaware, ceramics that evolved locally out of earlier wares of the Woodland I period. Small triangular projectile points are ubiquitous, and indicated the use of the bow and arrow.

Contact Period

The Contact Period in Delaware refers to the time when the Indians were in active contact with the newly arrived European settlers and traders. Most of the available information must be extracted from ethnohistorical accounts. These accounts indicated rapid deculturation brought about by the expulsion of the Indians from their land, as well as the rapid spread of epidemic disease.

Regional History

Delaware was settled by the Dutch in 1630, with the establishment near Lewes of a whaling station which was soon destroyed by the Indians. The Swedes settled in the vicinity of Wilmington with the establishment of Fort Christina in 1638. This was captured by the Dutch in 1651. Settlement was characterized by scattered farmsteads along the major drainages, the Delaware River, White Clay Creek and Christina Creek (Weslager 1961).

The English obtained control of Delaware in 1664, which was followed by the granting of proprietary rights to William Penn in

1682. This placed Delaware under control of Philadelphia, both economically and politically. Although subsistence farming continued, commercial centers were beginning to be established to channel goods to Philadelphia. Such centers were Christina, Stanton and Ogletown. Throughout the 18th century, the increasing population stimulated the development of new towns and the development of more effective communication networks. This was especially apparent after the development of the towns of Baltimore and Annapolis.

The 19th century saw the development of canals and railroads to accommodate the commercial trade between these towns. The Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad was begun in 1839. However, the road system of Delaware lagged considerably behind the railroads as a means of transportation. Settlement in the 19th century was characterized by the large plantations and associated small tenant farms, as well as with the urban areas associated with the commercial towns.

A gradual change in the role of the farm occurred from the 18th through to the 19th centuries. During the 18th century, farming was primarily oriented to the production of goods for subsistence, a pattern that Fletcher suggests changes gradually to one involving production of goods for consumption on the growing national market (Fletcher 1950). This change ties in with the growing industrial and urban centers in the Philadelphia-Wilmington-Baltimore corridor that were under way in the early 19th century noted above. While this scenario is known on a large scale, how the changing economic framework of the area

affected the local household in terms of the organization of material culture is unknown and accessible only archeologically. One would expect to witness a changing access to goods and the development of differing patterns of consumption based on economic status, as well as a growing diversity in patterns of land usage. Questions concerning what percentage of the population remained on a subsistence level as opposed to those engaged in production for market consumption are unknown, and would be most accessible through archeological investigations.

History of Centre Road

Route 141 is presently known as "Centre Road" between Prices Corner (Route 2) and the Kennett Pike (Route 52) (see Figures 2 and 3). Some preliminary research was conducted into the origins and function of this thoroughfare. The earliest map that clearly shows a road in the present location of Route 141 is the Heald Map of the roads of New Castle County, 1820 (Figure 4). The road retains essentially its same configuration from then up until the present. The Shallus Verle map, surveyed in 1801, shows a road crossing Christiana Hundred from Red Clay Creek to the Brandywine River in a northeast direction, but the scale of this map is too small to indicate the present location (Figure 5). The presence of a road, or roads, called "Centre Road" near Red Clay Creek and the Brandywine River was established for slightly earlier points in time. A map in the Delaware Historical Society Library, titled "Draught of land Called Poplar Point, Bread and Cheese Island, Red and White Clay Creeks, Newport Neighborhood" by William Gillihan (1788), shows the intersection of several roads near where the Old Capitol Trail presently crosses Red Clay Creek

(Figure 6). The northernmost of these heads off the map in a northeasterly direction toward what is now Prices Corner, and it is labeled "Center Road". On the other side of Christiana Hundred, near Brandywine Mills, a number of sources indicate that Montchanin Road (now Route 100) north of the DuPont Mills was known as "Center Road" (e.g. the Longwood Manuscripts, Group 9, series C (11), the Hagley Library). This road led south from the Center Meeting House, and turned southwest near the present entrance to the Hagley Foundation on Route 100, to intersect the Kennett Pike (Route 52) at Bucks Tavern (in the early 19th century). In 1795 and 1796, some citizens of New Castle County petitioned the Court of General Sessions to relocate "Center Road". A plat of the proposed relocation indicates that the road would extend straight south from the point where it had formerly turned west toward Bucks Tavern cross the Kennett Pike, and end at the "Ockessin Road", now the Lancaster Pike (Route 48) (Figure 7). When the petition was approved, a survey of the actual route of the road was made (which varied slightly from that submitted with the petition), and a plat of this survey compares most closely with the present configuration of Route 100 (the DuPont Road) between the Kennett Pike and the Lancaster Pike (see New Castle County Road Book, 1794-1809, pp. 19, 20, 27, 39, 40, 41, 97, and 98, microfilm, Hall of Records, Dover, Delaware). This lies to the east of what is now called Centre Road (Route 141) between the Kennett Pike and Lancaster Pike. No other information on the present location of Centre Road, prior to the 1820 Heald Map, was developed in this study, but an exhaustive

examination of the road books (cited above) might (or might not) be productive.

The eighteenth century documents do provide some insight into the purpose of the relocated Center Road, which probably applies to some degree to the road to the northwest that appears in 1820. The petitioners indicate the need to provide better access to the markets in Wilmington, and, probably more to the point, since even the relocated road does not go directly toward Wilmington, some of them possessed "marshes" on Christiana Creek. This, in turn, implies that there was in fact some connection to the Center Road shown on the 1788 "Draught of Land called Poplar Point, etc." Intervening connections between that point and the "Okession Road" (Lancaster Pike) were not discovered prior to the Heald Map, however, and must remain in speculation.

Previous Archeological Work

No previous work has been conducted in the immediate confines of the Route 141 study area. However, a considerable amount has been conducted in the general New Castle County area, particularly at the Fall Line/Coastal Plain transition, and in the inner Coastal Plain. Significant are the excavations at the Delaware Park site (Thomas 1981), a large base camp site containing components from the Woodland I period. Phase II investigations conducted at 7NC-D-70 and 7NC-D-72 (Custer et al. 1982) and at 7NC-E-43, 7NC-E-45, and 7NC-D-75 (Bachman and Custer 1983) provide some comparative information on components dating to the Paleo Indian, Archaic, and Woodland I and II periods. A reconnaissance and intensive survey of the proposed dualization of New Churchmans Road in New Castle County (O'Conner, Cunningham

et al. 1983) revealed evidence of a Woodland I component, as well as a 19th century farmstead. These investigations form a framework in which to organize the information forthcoming from the results of the Route 141 Phase I and II investigations.

A number of historic period archeological sites have been investigated in New Castle County in connection with cultural resource assessment and mitigation for highway construction projects. An 18th, 19th and 20th century farmstead (and associated prehistoric site) was investigated on New Churchman's Road (O'Conner et al. 1983), another farmstead was excavated near Ogletown (Coleman et al. 1983), and a 19th century schoolhouse was investigated near Newark (Catts et al. 1983).

RESEARCH DESIGN

Theoretical Orientation, State Plan and Hypotheses

The methodology and field procedures utilized during this project were developed in light of the expectations of the State Plan for prehistoric resources currently under development by Custer (1979, 1980, 1981). Custer has divided the State of Delaware into a number of study areas based on physiographic and environmental factors and has delineated their potential for aboriginal exploitation and settlement. The Route 141 study area falls into the Piedmont Uplands study area (as defined in Custer's State Plan). Expectations for the location of a base camp dating to any time period in this area are low, except for areas such as the Hockessin Lowlands, which lies a short distance to the west of the Route 141 study area. Probability for the location of procurement sites/camps are high for the Archaic,

Woodland I, Woodland II and Contact periods. However, these sites can be expected to be quite shallow and to have little remaining contextual integrity, except for subsurface features. Most will have been disturbed by plowing. These small procurement sites will have small artifact inventories and will be immediately visible only within areas having good surface visibility, e.g. plowed fields. These sites will be more difficult to detect in areas masked by heavy ground vegetation because of their low artifact density, hence, the need for extensive shovel testing in wooded areas and pastures.

It was expected that the results of the survey could serve to confirm (or reject, disprove, etc.) settlement models proposed by previous research on site distributions in the Piedmont Uplands from various prehistoric periods and, possibly, add data for the refinement of these models. Custer's research suggests that the quality of data for the Piedmont Uplands ranges from fair to good, and that the use of this land form was largely restricted to short term procurement activities. Sites there represent only a portion of the subsistence round, with more intensive utilization of other environmental settings. The increase in the number of data points which may be generated by this study may ultimately allow a more refined analysis of such phenomena as "distance decay" relationships between these short term occupations and the more intensively used site settings for each time period. This, in turn, may allow a more refined characterization, in processual terms, of the differences between the procurement patterns practiced at various times in the prehistoric past.

It is expected that the research conducted during this survey would add only incrementally to the data base necessary to achieve the aforementioned research goals, and the research and analysis for this project concentrated on the evaluation of resources discovered by this survey within the existing research context. No major elaboration of this context was expected at this phase of assessment.

No formalized State Plan for the management of historic period archeological resources is currently in existence, although Ms. Alice Guerrant of the Delaware Bureau of Archaeology and Historic Preservation is currently assembling such a document. Based on discussions with Ms. Guerrant, it is expected that the identification and conservation of at least a sample of resources reflecting the social and economic diversity of Delaware history is likely to be an objective. Of particular interest is the relationship between Delaware's resources and those of the larger region in which it is located and with which its history is so closely intertwined.

Susan Henry has prepared a draft plan entitled Historic Research Design for the Delaware Department of Transportation (1981). This document also expresses concern with the inter-regional trade network and its relationship to the development and use of the transportation network. General research objectives indicated by the Research Design include the retrieval and interpretation of data that will elucidate the relationship between community types and types and rankings of transportation arteries.

Prior to beginning the fieldwork, maps and documents supplied by the Delaware Bureau of Archaeology and Historic Preservation suggested that there may be three possible historic period sites that may be affected by the proposed construction. The first two of these had been identified from maps dating to the last quarter of the 19th century. One, the Armstrong site, is identified on the Baist (1893) map as containing three brick or stone structures, and the other, the Hollingsworth site, is indicated as a frame structure on the same map. The third historic period site that may be affected by the proposed construction was the Cleremont (N-478) site. A residence with outbuildings had been located at this site, however, they had recently been destroyed. It was felt that significant archeological remains associated with this 1846 (and possibly earlier) structure may be present at the site.

These three sites represent rural occupations whose remains may be compared to those from the Hawthorn Homestead site (O'Connor et al 1983 & Coleman et al. 1984a), the Ferguson Homestead site (Coleman et al. 1983) and the Wilson-Slack complex (Coleman et al. 1984b). Of particular research interest will be the comparison of economic status among these sites and between them and the sites investigated at the Stanton intersection (Thompson 1984). It was thought that the differential effects of processes of urbanization and industrialization on rural contexts could possibly be examined at these sites.

As in the case of the prehistoric resources, the data developed at the site identification and testing stage was not expected to result in a major elaboration of existing research

models. The current survey was expected to concentrate on the evaluation of any identified resources.

RESEARCH METHODS

The preliminary efforts of the background research portion of the reconnaissance involved an archival study of the possible historic sites along the Route 141 corridor. An examination of maps and deeds on file in the Delaware Archives, the Delaware Historical Society Library, and the Hagley Museum was carried out, as well as examination of the site maps in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Delaware.

Prior to the commencement of the fieldwork, a driving and pedestrian survey of the entire right-of-way was conducted in order to determine the areas that had and were likely to sustain evidence of historic and prehistoric occupation. This resulted in the division of the right-of-way into five distinct areas which, in part, overlap with the sensitive areas denoted by the Department of Transportation and the Delaware Bureau of Archaeology and Historic Preservation. These areas, indicated on Figure 8, are Fields 1-4, as well as the Hollingsworth tract.

Field investigation involved a complete surface reconnaissance of the fields in order to detect any artifact concentrations. Surface visibility was good to excellent at the time of the investigations, thus reducing the need for extensive shovel testing on the upland knoll areas, which are usually deflated. The exception to this was in Field 4, which was in pasture and in Field 2, Woods, which as the name implies, was forested. There, as well as in the Hollingsworth Tract, which is

NO INFORMATION
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also wooded, the procedure was to employ shovel tests.

Shovel tests were employed in Fields 1, 2, and 3 after the surface reconnaissance to detect the presence of any buried archeological horizons. Shovel tests measured 2' by 2', and were excavated in natural soil horizons subdivided into smaller arbitrary units of 3". All soil was sifted through $\frac{1}{4}$ " mesh hardware screen unless otherwise noted in the individual site descriptions. Profiles were drawn for one wall of each shovel test excavated, and all soil colors were recorded with a Munsell chart. All of the shovel tests were mapped with transit and stadia; other significant landscape features were mapped as well in order to provide a plat map that could be transferred to the DOT right-of-way plan maps.

The purpose of the intensive survey, carried out in Field 4, was to evaluate the significance and site integrity of the historic component that was present, in order to determine its eligibility for nomination in the National Register of Historic Places. The guidelines followed in this determination were those established by the Department of the Interior (36 CFR Part 60.6).

The strategy involved the excavation of five by five foot squares to test for the presence of any features that could have been associated with the site, and to determine if any significant contextual associations were still present that would permit the recovery of archeological information pertaining to the historic component. The intensified shovel testing to recover artifact distribution is described in more detail under the Field 4 site description.

Following completion of the field investigations, the

artifacts were washed and marked and the soil profiles, maps and other field data were analyzed to aid in the interpretation of the contexts present at the site. An initial inventory of the artifacts was completed, following a descriptive attribute format. The prehistoric debitage was analyzed according to raw material and flake type. Diagnostic lithic artifacts were classified according to existing typologies. No prehistoric ceramics were recovered. The historic ceramics were classified according to ware type and decorative attributes. Non-ceramic historic artifacts were also examined for items relevant to the dating of the context, on the basis of terminus post quem.

RESULTS OF THE INVESTIGATIONS

Introduction

The following section presents the results of the background study and fieldwork conducted during this investigation. As was stated in the previous chapter, the study area was divided into five distinct areas. These areas have been designated as Fields 1-4 and the Hollingsworth Property (Figure 8). A description of the survey area is presented first, followed by descriptions of the specific methodology used in that survey area and the results of the investigation. A statement of significance and recommendations, if any, for further investigation are contained within the section for each survey area.

Field 1 (Ferris School Property)

Field 1 refers to the high upland knoll north of the Ferris School building that is bordered by Route 141 to the east, and overlooking a bend of Little Mill Creek to the north. The