

4.1 Research Goals

The research goals for the Phase II survey of the World War I railroad were to determine when the railroad was built, who owned and operated it, and when it went out of service and was dismantled. Detailed information to determine the physical state of the corridor as it was built was also a goal. This would include details as to whether the line was single or double tracked, whether there were stops, passing sidings, or platform sidings, and the frequency, type, and speed of trains. Information on the types of military supplies and other goods, if any, the railroad hauled was sought to help determine this line's specific role in the greater World War I supply network.

Such detailed information would allow the railroad to be put into a broader context in terms of how it functioned within the regional railroad network and how military supplies were routed over it. Its overall significance in the World War I effort would be determined through the research of more general information on the military buildup for the war, how the U.S. wartime economy was organized, and what role the railroad played in national military supply networks.

4.2 Research Methods

The studies for the terminal Phase II archaeological survey of the World War I railroad consisted of background research, field survey, and photo documentation.

Background Research

Background research included interviews with local farmers, review of historic maps and atlases, inspection of aerial photography, review of Congressional Subcommittee hearings on war expenditures, contact with organizations and agencies that might have pertinent World War I records, and visits to the National Archive branches in College Park, Maryland and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Conversations with local farmers, Lee Emerson and George Lynam, indicated that the landscape feature discovered during Phase Ib survey was a railroad corridor for a World War I U.S. Army installation, but they provided no other information about the history of the line. Review of historic maps and atlases provided no information on the railroad due its brief existence between 1918 and the mid-1920s. Aerial photography from 1932 (accessed online from the Digital Collections of the University of Delaware) and 1937 (accessed online at Delaware's DataMIL) was extremely helpful in siting the route of the railroad between Port Penn and Mt. Pleasant. Although the railroad had been dismantled prior to the 1932 photography, its former route was still plainly visible on many parts of the landscape. For the purposes of this report, the 1937 photography was included since the earlier 1932 photography did not cover the entire corridor.

The most pertinent information about the construction of the railroad was derived from Congressional Subcommittee hearing records accessed online at www.books.google.com. These hearings took place in the summer of 1919 to investigate the contracts and expenditures of the

Ordnance Department during and after the war. According to the Subcommittee, the proposed Marlin-Rockwell bomb loading plant was one of the Army's worst contracts and the biggest waste of federal money spent during the war (US. Select Committee 1921:624). Included in the hearings were the testimonies of Lieut. Col. R. H. Hawkins, Contracting Officer of the Ordnance Department, Maj. William B. Gray, Army Construction Division, Mr. R. H. Tobey, Vice President of Marlin-Rockwell Loading Company, and Mr. Kinnear, engineer with Marlin-Rockwell Loading Company. These testimonies provided first-hand information about choosing the route, acquisition of right-of-way, construction of the railroad, and its overall use.

Numerous organizations and agencies were contacted to determine if they possessed archived information concerning the construction of the proposed Marlin-Rockwell bomb loading plant and its access railroad, including the Port Penn Area Historical Society in Port Penn, DE; the Corbit-Calloway Memorial Library in Odessa, DE; the Delaware Public Archives in Dover, DE; the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Philadelphia District; the Army Heritage and Education Center, Military History Institute at Carlisle, PA; the Aberdeen Proving Ground near Aberdeen, MD; National Archive branches in Washington, D.C., College Park, MD, and Philadelphia, PA; and the Cartographic Branch of the National Archives, College Park, MD. No information about the plant and its access line was obtained from any of these facilities.

Field Survey and Photo Documentation

During the preparation of this report, the project area was field surveyed to acquire more physical information about the railroad remnant located within the project's APE. As part of the field survey, notes were collected about the general condition of the grade and corridor, measurements were taken to provide a cross-section of the grade at one representative location, and a single unscreened shovel test was excavated to provide information on the composition of the grade. Digital photographs were taken of the grade to illustrate its structure, corridor, and the general vicinity of the railroad within and just outside the APE.