

**A SMALL HISTORY
OF THE
FORGOTTEN
AND
THE
NEVER KNOWN**

by
**William M. Gardner
and
Joan M. Walker**



Delaware

Department of Transportation

Delaware Department of Transportation

Archeology Series No. 84

1990

*Hagley on the Banks of Brandywine State of Delaware
From original fire insurance survey January 5, 1797
Insurance Company of North American Archives*

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**THUNDERBIRD ARCHEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATES
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Division of Highways
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Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs
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**U.S. Department
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*John T. Davis, Director
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1990*

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INTRODUCTION

The story which will unfold in this booklet is no more than a series of glimpses of life during the 18th and 19th century in New Castle County, looking at the area that is now Delaware State Highway 141 and a new intersection at the junction of Limestone Road and the Wilmington-Christiana Pike. It is based on the results of archeological mitigation and studies of deeds, wills, and land transfers. Archeology, alone, can never provide more than an incomplete picture, yet, through its "windows" into the past, the archeologist can "see" events and people (at least their material remains, their technology, their socio-economic positions, and changes in these through time). The archeologist can glimpse other details and processes in a perspective which escapes the social, economic and political historians, and even the social anthropologist. On the other hand, the archeologist must use appropriate data from these and other related disciplines in order to bring into clearer focus what is seen through excavation, artifact collection and analysis.

The archeologist must be something of a "time traveler", moving in and out of the world of current techniques, methodology and theories into the past. Immersion into vanished lifeways, whether through examining documents, histories, or comparative studies of hunters and gatherers, is a necessary step in interpreting the discarded, lost and abandoned residue of human activity. You, the reader of this report, will find yourself playing the role of "historic tourist" along with the archeologists, visiting at various points in the 1800's as well as glancing further back into the sixth millennium B.C.

Before we embark on our trip, however, it might be worthwhile to explain just why this archeological project was done. Federal laws (which include the National Historic Preservation Act and the Federal Highway Transportation Act) stipulate that, when any kind of federal funding is to be used for a project or federal licensing is required or when federally owned land is to be affected, archeological surveys must be carried out as part of the required Environmental Impact Survey process. Delaware laws are, for the most part, similar in their requirements.

These laws, which require archeological studies before bulldozers and other machines begin churning up the earth for the construction of a highway or some other project, became laws because a sufficient number of people, voters and their representatives, realized that progress was inevitably destroying much of our past. And our past includes not only stately homes and estates but also blue collar workers' houses along the Brandywine and sites from the prehistoric past. In many of these instances, archeology is the only way to study the past; what is being undertaken is a kind of a history of the forgotten or, more often, the never known. The word "only" is justification enough for archeology because, without archeology, much of our past would disappear into the black hole of the never-to-be-known past. After all, humankind has only been recording history for under 4,000 years, and this written history has always been rather geographically restrictive and socially selective. It is reasonably safe to say that 95% - and most likely much more - of humankind's endeavors in space and time have gone unrecorded. Of course, not every site warrants archeological investigation. To be eligible for funded excavations, a site must be considered significant enough to warrant inclusion in the *National Register of Historic Places*. Achieving such status means a site must contain information which could contribute to knowledge at the local, state or national level.

Although "time capsule departure" nears, let's take a brief look at what was done to recover the material on which our story is founded. All of the investigations reported on in this booklet were carried out by the Thunderbird Archeological Associates, a Virginia consulting firm, for the Delaware Department of Transportation (DELDOT). The first step in the project involved a survey, or inventory, of known and recorded historic and prehistoric sites. This involved consulting records at the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office in Dover, the Center for Archeological Research in Delaware, and the Hagley Foundation just outside of Delaware, amongst other places. Much of this had been done in advance by archeologists and others associated with the DELDOT. More complicated was a review of old maps and documents to find historically recorded sites which have disappeared or otherwise been forgotten.

Other relevant documents were studied in order to develop an historic, prehistoric and environmental framework from which research designs and testable hypotheses were generated. For instance, history books may refer to the differences in purchasing power between rural and urban residents. This is couched in a hypothesis: "if so, and if wealthy people buy more costly imported dishwares, then we should find this at the sites where they lived". The artifacts are analyzed not only

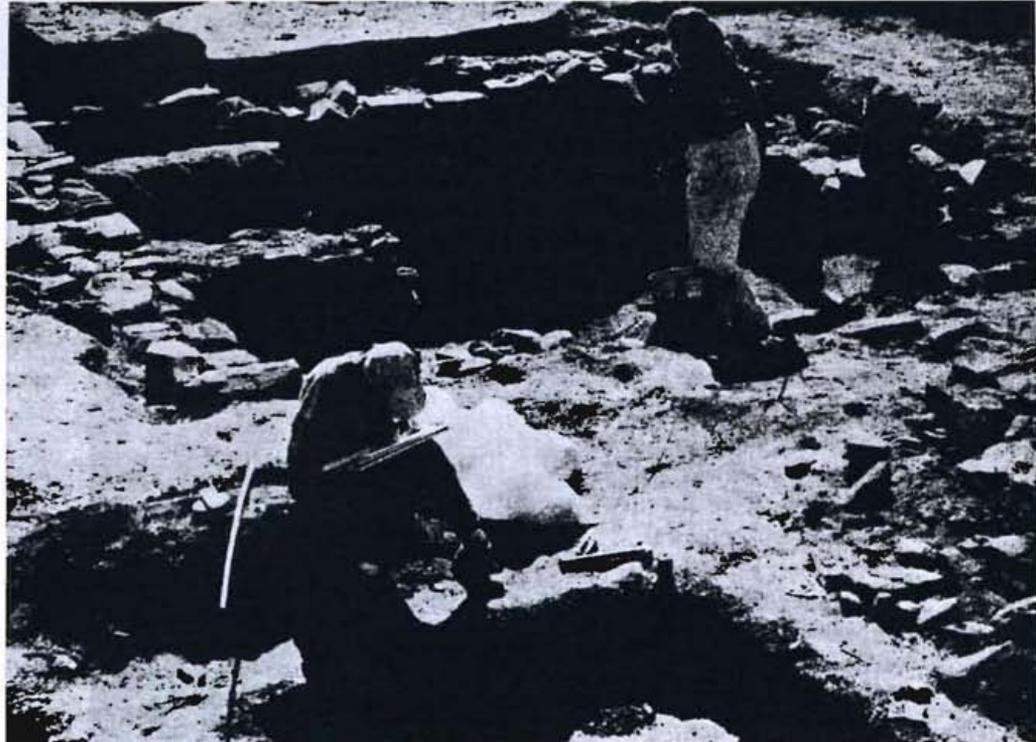
according to type, e.g. Imported China, but also to value.

At some point in this background stage, a driving reconnaissance was completed to determine if standing buildings or ruins of sufficient antiquity to warrant further investigation and not included on any of the maps were present. The auto tour was followed by a walkover of the entire area, with every bit of ground scrutinized for signs of past habitation. If the surface of the ground was obscured by vegetation or development, small "test" holes or pits were dug to see if any archeological remains were contained beneath the inscrutable surface. These may be dug on a systematic basis, e.g. test units every 60 feet, and/or on a predictive basis, e.g. test units put in on areas of well drained ground near water (a type of terrain where past work has shown prehistoric Indian camp sites to have frequently been located).



All of the above activity falls into what is known as a **Phase I** survey, or a preliminary archeological resources reconnaissance. **Phase 2** work consists of site testing or intensive survey; sites located during Phase I are subjected to expanded more intensive archival investigation and field testing. The archeologist then makes recommendations to the appropriate state and federal officials regarding the National Register significance of the site or sites. If such significance is designated, then consideration must be given to either avoiding impact to the site area or to conducting intensive excavations in order to recover sufficient data to interpret the site in terms of a rigidly constructed research design. When excavation proceeds, this is called **Phase 3**, data recovery or mitigation.

The view of the past reported in these pages is based on this type of work, primarily on Phase I investigations but also looking at other projects carried out nearby. The first part of the Route 141 investiga-



Phase III excavations at the Grant Tenancy site

tions took place in the southern half of the project area and a number of small prehistoric sites were discovered. In addition, the remains of a dwelling were encountered near the intersection of the Lancaster Turnpike (Route 48) and Centre Road (Route 141). Because of its importance to the local history and the quantity and type of archeological remains recovered, this latter site, the Grant Tenancy Site, was fully excavated.

The second part of the investigation along the Route 141 corridor covered the area from Montchanin Road (Route 100) to the area around the intersection of the Foulk Road (Route 261) and the Concord Turnpike (Route 202). Several sites already designated historic sites and districts are located adjacent to the route, and the remains of a number of new archeological sites were encountered. Some of these did contain significant remains, but others appeared to have little potential for adding to our knowledge. After the final plans for highway improvement in this area are made and additional evaluative work at these sites has been completed, decisions will be made regarding what sites will be preserved or subjected to data recovery excavations.

**But now sit back and enjoy, just as though we were in H. G.
Well's time machine, as we move back into the past!**

THE NATURAL MILIEU AS IT WAS WAY BACK WHEN

Twelve thousand or so years ago the earliest ancestors of the American Indian trod on what is now Delaware. The climate would have been much cooler at that distant time, the vegetation more parkland-like, with spruce and other northern pines interspersed among the increasing presence of northern hardwood trees. It might even have been possible for us to catch a glimpse of huge elephant-like forms known as mastodons as they roamed the forests. However, we will not push our time machine button so that it takes us back quite that far in time, for going this far into the past would take us well beyond the period for which we have evidence in our work on this particular project, although, to be sure, there are plenty of traces of prehistoric Indians during the eleventh and twelfth millenia elsewhere in Delaware.

The earliest artifacts recovered during our work date closer to 7000-6500 B.C. - still rather ancient - so let us halt at this point for our first glimpse into the past. At this time, the vegetation was similar to that which the Euroamerican settlers were to encounter in the 17th century. One major difference, however, was in sea level, which was considerably lower than it is at present. This would have made the configuration of the Delaware River and Bay considerably different, as well as affecting the Delaware's tributaries, such as the Brandywine and Christiana. It is the continuous sea level rise over the millenia since the lowest sea level (at 18,000-16,000 years ago) which has formed our coastlines and the patterns and composition of the tidal streams and their tributaries with which we are familiar. The configuration we see today appears to have been attained around 5,000 years ago, though sea level continues to rise very slowly.

Much of our project area falls at the interface of the Piedmont and Coastal Plain physiographic provinces. Simply put, the Coastal Plain represents the area of maximum transgression of the ocean during the past several million years, and is mantled with deep sands. The Piedmont edge is essentially the edge of the wave-cut continent. It too is covered with soil, but much less deeply, and bed rock from an ancient land mass is often found above or at the very surface. At the interface between the two provinces, the Piedmont bedrock dives

sharply beneath the Coastal Plain sediments. The rivers and streams are non-tidal and generally more narrow and rapid flowing in the Piedmont, but at the interface they change gradient, tumbling rapidly to meet the lower level of the Coastal Plain streams, and is known as the Fall Line. It is very important in the history of European settlement in North America; the Fall Line, or Fall Zone as it is often called, limits inland navigation and, until the 18th century, limited European expansion into the interior of the Eastern North American landmass.

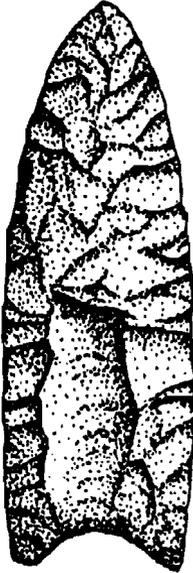
The Coastal Plain was also quite rich in natural food resources, with its streams providing a myriad of aquatic resources. Soils were fertile and game relatively abundant. The character of this habitat changed as sea level rose but, except for salinity and perhaps extreme upper tidal limits, remained relatively constant after 5000 B.C. The richness of this locality, especially the interface between the saline and fresh water estuaries, offered extremely attractive settlement spots for prehistoric Indians, and sites of all time periods and sizes are found in these areas. Away from these localities, natural productivity decreased. As could be expected, the size of prehistoric Indian sites decreases also; site functions are more specialized (i.e. quarry sites, small hunting camps), and the range of artifacts to be found is more restricted. This becomes especially marked in the areas between streams and where streams become quite small; it is this latter situation which characterizes the study area.

In many ways, there are similarities between the prehistoric Indians and the European settlers. The larger and earlier Euroamerican sites are along the Delaware River, reflecting in part the natural abundance of the rivers, but more so the transportation net provided by the Delaware and the Atlantic Ocean. The settlers, after all, were colonists dependent on their respective mother countries for many of their goods and services. Of course, as settlement really developed, there was a move to the interior. The first groups to move inland were agricultural populations who had moved into the nearest areas of the Coastal Plain to grow their crops in the rich soils found there. By the end of the 17th and beginning of the 18th centuries there was a push to settle beyond the Coastal Plain, into the Piedmont. As time passed, there came a need for mills to grind the grain produced by these farmers, and industry grew up along the rapidly flowing streams of the Inner Coastal Plain and Piedmont. The import-export situation, the growth of populations in the interior, the rise of other industries, and the pressures of a new nation free of Colonial domination led to the growth of an internal market system, industrial and socio-economic class diversification, marked contrast between rural and urban settings, interspersed low population density market centers which ultimately became towns,

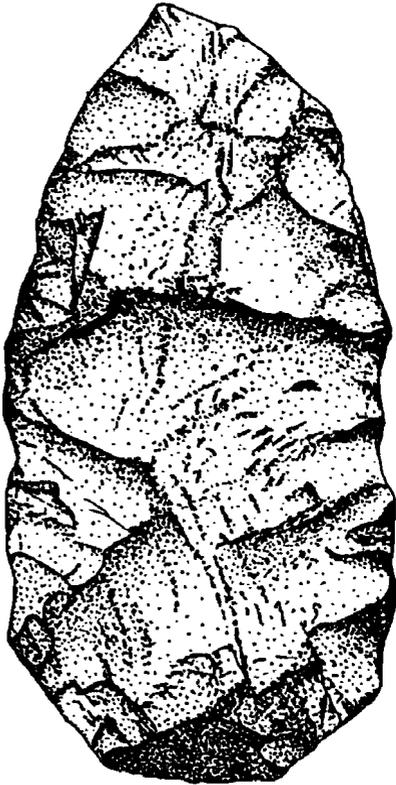
a need for overland transportation systems, and so on. While we cannot stop and study all of this on our trip, it all has a bearing on what we will see.

One of the greatest impacts of all of the activity of the post-Indian population was to the environment. Land clearing for agriculture, housing, industry and roads led to deforestation and a marked erosional cycle. The near pristine forests lived in by the Indians were gone within a few generations, except along the stream margins and in poorly drained areas. The game which abounded in the woods and along the stream edges was soon reduced to a fraction of what it had been in the past. Today, except in minor pockets in the stream valley, the land bears little resemblance to its original forested condition.

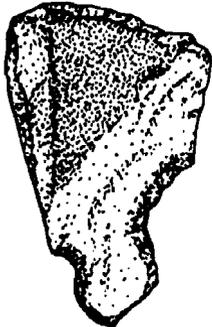
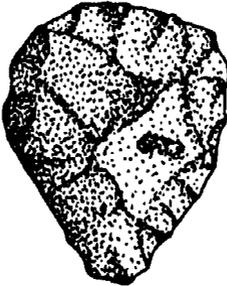
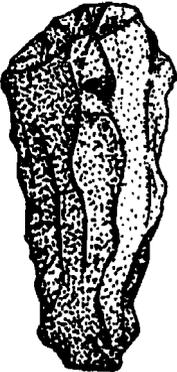
Some Paleoindian tools:



Clovis style spearpoint



Bifacial knife

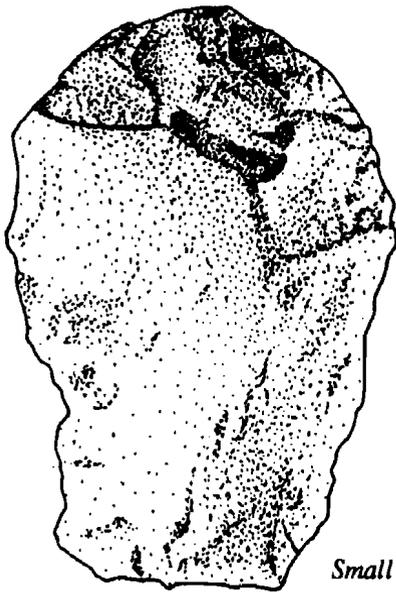


Scraping tools

THE WORLD OF THE PREHISTORIC INDIANS : A BRIEF OVERVIEW

Jay Custer, in his book *Delaware Prehistoric Archaeology* (published by the University of Delaware Press, 1984), has done a thorough study of the archeology of Delaware's prehistoric populations, and no attempt will be made here to replicate that effort. Rather, we shall take a few quick glances through the window of our time machine as we swing toward the present. In the earliest period, appropriately enough called **Paleoindian** (for "Old Indian"), which dates from somewhere around 12,000 years ago to approximately 10,000 years ago, the Indians traveled in small family groups, stopping to camp for varying periods of time at well drained spots near good sources of drinking water. It is assumed that the people of this time, the "Paleoindians", were primarily hunters, based on the types of tools they used, many of which are highly specialized for the processing of meat and the by-products of game animals (such as hides, bone and antler). While they may have emphasized hunting, more likely than not a greater amount of food came from seeds, berries, roots, nuts and plants growing near their camps. These camps, as noted, were always near water and were never too far away from a source of stone, especially the particular types, such as cherts and jaspers, that they preferred. These were fine grained stones which could be readily chipped into their specialized tools. We find many sites of this period concentrated near where this kind of stone was available, and other sites radiating out from such areas, following the major rivers and streams.

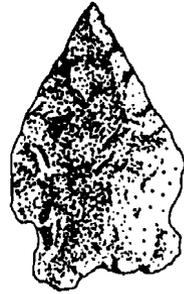
The prehistoric groups of the **Early Archaic** (a term coined many years ago because sites from this time were seen as "Archaic" - old - when contrasted to later agricultural groups), a time period traditionally placed between 8000-6500 B.C., were very similar in many respects to the earlier Paleoindians. Limited types of stone - again, the fine grained materials - were the primary raw material choices. The tool kit continued much as it was before. Some changes, however, can be noted toward the end of the period as the old ways began to be modified. It is thought that this was partially in response to a radically altered post-glacial environment. This is probably true in part, but inventiveness has always been part of the human strategy in coping, and we can see the addition of new tools, such as axes and drills, and



Small chipped stone axe



Twist drill



Notched spearpoint

Three Early Archaic tools

the dropping of the specialized game processing assemblage. It is this latter change which suggests significant shifts in food getting strategies. The archeologist interprets this as a greater generalization in subsistence, with trapping, gathering, and fishing becoming of equal importance to hunting with spears to these peoples from the past. There is also a corresponding move away from dependence on limited types of stone, a growth in numbers of sites, and a spread across the landscape that is now Delaware.

These trends are just beginning during the Early Archaic. It is in the **Middle Archaic** that these trends become easily definable patterns of behavior. The Middle Archaic lasts from around 6500 B.C. to 3000-2500 B.C. A number of new tools are added during the Middle Archaic. Of special note are grinding stones which, although not common, provide evidence for the processing of various types of plant foods, notably seeds. Middle Archaic settlements appear to have been tied into the seasonal availability of different types of foods. These prehistoric groups moved from location to location with the changes in the seasons. Relatively large "base camps", longer term settlement sites, have been reported from a number of inland swamps, but small base camps can occur in any number of well drained and naturally productive habitats such as larger stream junctions and river swamps. Smaller and more transient sites which seem to have served as staging areas for foodgetting activities over a rather wide area occur at varying

distances from these base camps . Partly because of this pattern, and partly because of an overall population increase, Middle Archaic sites are quite numerous.

The **Late Archaic**, dating from circa 3000-2500 B.C. and lasting until the advent of pottery manufacturing (around 1000 B.C.), was a time of considerable change. Movement toward a sedentary lifestyle began at this period and accelerated over the next several hundred years. Trade and exchange, which may have begun slightly earlier, became widespread, resulting in the movement of both finished items of non-local materials as well as the raw material itself over varying distances. This trade may have precipitated the development of status and wealth differences. Subsistence during the Late Archaic seems to have become more focalized, especially along the now stable coastal estuaries. Exploitation of zones away from these estuaries did not stop, and the use of transient camps as well as some seasonal movement continued.

The **Woodland Period**, running from approximately 1000 B.C. to the historic period, was initially a continuation of the basic patterns of the Late Archaic. The major technological addition was the use of ceramics, which tends to indicate an increased move toward sedentary settlements. Around 500 B.C., the incipient status differentiation within the Indian groups, which seems to have begun in the Late Archaic, culminates in preferential treatment for certain members of society at death and interment. Non-local items found in the graves of some groups indicate both an intensification of the exchange networks and the increased complexity of the social systems. By A.D. 900 or shortly thereafter, corn, beans and squash agriculture arrive and hamlet life develops, with people inhabiting small clusters of houses in the floodplains and living sedentary lives. Villages only appear relatively late in the archeological record, and such centralized settlements are less common than the smaller hamlets or even simply isolated farmsteads.

*Late Woodland
cordmarked ceramic jar*



The Indians in the area at the time of **Historic Contact** can be traced back into the latter part of the Woodland period. They belong to branches of the Delaware, which is as much a linguistic definition (e.g. people who spoke a language classified as Delaware by linguists) as it is any kind of tribal or ethnic classification. The Indians of Delaware were rather loosely organized into local groups who shared the same territory, and they tended to only band together into larger groups when there were external stresses. Much later in the historic period, the remnants of these earlier groups organized themselves into the Delaware "tribe". Diseases introduced by the Europeans resulted in a considerably increased death rate among the Indians early in the historic period, and territorial acquisition by European colonists during the English period soon resulted in the removal of virtually all the Indians from the area.

THE WORLD OF 18TH AND 19TH CENTURY NEW CASTLE COUNTY

As our time capsule races forward through the centuries, the Indians fade into the past, leaving behind only imperishable remains and a few descendants. Speeding toward the 18th century, we see the first Europeans, Swedes, settling in Fort Christiana in the vicinity of present-day Wilmington. This was taken over by the Dutch in 1651. During the ensuing years, Dutch settlements, in the form of scattered farmsteads, spread slowly along major drainages such as the Delaware River, White Clay Creek and Christiana Creek. In 1664, a scant 13 years after the Dutch wrested the area from the Swedes, the English took control of Delaware. This was followed in 1682 by the granting of proprietary rights to William Penn, and Delaware fell under the political and economic aegis of Philadelphia. The earliest European populations thus had a diverse ethnic mix, something which continues through the 18th and 19th centuries.

From the time of the first Europeans, there was also considerable change in the reasons for occupying what is now Delaware. Initial concerns were focused on the exploitation of the natural bounty, e.g. fish and furs. This was quickly followed by a need for a colony of settled agriculturists; soon the woodlands of Indian times were being replaced by cultivated fields. This was, of course, a long process and newly developed farms were evident in New Castle County well into the 18th century. Agriculture continued to be one of the mainstays of the economy of New Castle County well into the 19th century. Indeed, agriculture in the county is just now passing into history as growing urbanization and suburbanization move increasing amounts of land out of production.

During our research, three main themes were followed: the roles of roads, agriculture and industry. Let us look at some of the trends we noted.

ROADS

Highways are part of the continuing process of historical change in the landscape. At first, in Colonial times, most communication and commerce was by ship between the plantations, small towns and cities scattered along the shore and the mother country across the Atlantic. The major trade links were between the separate colonies and England, rather than between the colonies. Roads were poor and unreliable avenues of business and travel. During the American Revolution, when the British controlled the sea with their superior navy, the need for better land transportation became evident and, after independence, the growth of trade between the colonies reinforced this need.

During the early years of our country, state and federal governments were poorly funded and there was little support for the transportation system from the government. Private corporations, chartered under strict governmental controls, provided the first means for the construction of the canals and turnpikes that were necessary to speed the flow of goods and people between the new states, the old established market cities, and the rapidly growing frontier lands. In New Castle County, the Newport to Gap, Lancaster, Kennett and Concord turnpikes were all constructed during this period. These turnpikes, for the most part, consisted of improvements to existing roads originally designed for the transport of grain from southeastern Pennsylvania to the many mills located on the Brandywine and the White and Red Clay Creeks.

AGRICULTURE

The growth of the road network occurred, in part at least, in response to the fact that, as the population increased, the people grew more dependent on each other for food, goods, and services. As commerce and, later, industry became the principal occupations for large numbers of people, farmers produced extra food for those who did not produce their own. By selling this food in the commercial and industrial centers, they could use the money obtained to purchase more of the goods being produced by the growing number of factory workers. Of course, except perhaps at the extreme edge of the frontier (and in earliest colonial times every settlement was a frontier), farmers had always produced some food for sale, particularly grain which could be easily transported and stored in the form of flour. As the demand for a larger variety of foodstuffs increased near the factories and cities, food production became more than a sideline, and farmers in New Castle County diversified their production even more to provide fruits, vegetables, and dairy products for sale to these markets, as well as for their own use. This growth and change in the farmers' markets and

production affected not only the farmer and his customers, but also the business men along the highways, business men such as tavern operators, who provided services to the teamsters and traveling merchants who brought the farmer's produce to market and carried goods back to him.

INDUSTRY

Pursuing the industrial theme, the flour mills on the Brandywine had already expanded to industrial proportions by the time of the American Revolution, and employed numerous full-time workers. The war cut off supplies of many manufactured goods that had previously been imported from England. In fact the British Government had forbidden the establishment of certain industries in the colonies in order to insure the continued profitability of those in England, and this was one of the sources for resentment against Britain. New industries that produced textiles, paper, and gunpowder grew up on the Brandywine, joining the large flour mills already established there. The Brandywine, in this location, was a particularly favorable spot for the growth of these factories because it was a fairly large stream that fell rapidly through the Piedmont Fall Line, providing numerous sites for water-powered mills. At the same time it was adjacent to the Delaware River, providing immediate access to the inexpensive water-borne commerce that connected New Castle County with major national commercial centers and foreign markets.

Although it might seem at first glance that the changes in farming and the growth of industry might not be very closely related, in fact there were strong connections between them. The increase in the number of workers producing cloth and other goods, rather than food for themselves, provided a market for the extra food that the farmers could provide. Not only was there a growing market for bulk grain for bread and fodder for the animals that provided transportation and horsepower for farming, pulling plows and wagons, but the demand for fresh fruits, vegetables, and dairy products grew as well. This allowed some farmers near the source of this demand - the cities and factories - to specialize in the production of one or more of these products, rather than to be tied to production for the grain markets.

In addition, much of the labor supply for the new factories came from the farms. The population was increasing rapidly, and although new farm lands were being opened on the western frontiers, not everyone was suited to the hard life of a pioneer. Factories also offered an opportunity for the wives and children of farmers, whose contribution to the production of the farm might be seasonal, to earn additional cash

that could be used, in turn, to purchase many of the new products flowing out of the factories. This created a kind of "feedback" loop, encouraging the growth of industries.

Some of the extra cash being generated by factory work was being put aside to purchase the farm land that represented the ideal of independent subsistence to the workers. This was particularly true for the new immigrants who arrived in the United States with virtually nothing and found in the factories a means to the goal of being a self-sufficient farmer. The workers in the factory, by and large, saw their employment there as only a temporary means to achieve what was then, and still remains, the American Dream - the dream of owning one's own house and land. There was some growth of the labor movement in which consciousness of the status of the industrial worker as an identity was expressed, but this was quite slow and had little major impact until late in the nineteenth century.

It should be emphasized that these changes in farming and industry took place slowly and gradually, which is one of the reasons why the vision of the independent family farmer as the ideal status position maintained its strength for so long. The majority of people in the State of Delaware lived in rural settings and participated in agricultural pursuits until well into the twentieth century, so farming remained the most common experience.

Let us now decelerate and proceed to a more leisurely look through our various windows into the different sites which were investigated, and see just how they fit into the frameworks we have outlined.

THE PREHISTORIC SITES

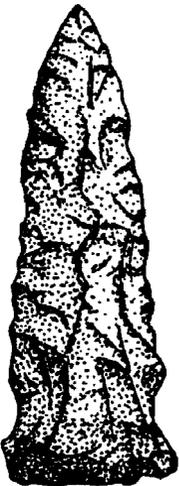
We see only limited use of the area during the prehistoric era, principally because the study area lies in an upland setting near the headwaters of very small streams. Such locations were only minimally productive, supporting only small groups. The archeological remains from the southwestern section of the 141 project are typical of this pattern. Here, on the headwaters of what was known as Little Mill Creek in historic times, two small sites sited high on the uplands near springheads overlooking the creek produced only small amounts of lithic debris, or debitage, from tool manufacturing and a couple of lost or discarded projectile points, or spearpoints. The points provide us clues to at least some of the period of occupation. Their particular style conforms to a rather widespread form which has been radio-carbon dated elsewhere to between 5500-4000 B.C., or in the Middle Archaic. All of the stone chips are from local quartz found in the immediate vicinity. One of the points, however, was made of rhyolite, a volcanic material available in the mountains to the west. This could indicate trade, although it is more likely the material was procured by the Indian who made it during part of his seasonal wanderings. Not far away were found two locations which produced only flakes from limited tool manufacturing or resharpening.

Two similar sites exist on Matson Run, east of the Brandywine. The major difference is that there is evidence for slightly more intensive use of one of the sites discovered. The site produced a variety of tools, including projectile points and contained enough artifacts and a diverse enough range of tools to be interpreted as being a small, short-term base camp. These tools included two spear points, various point fragments and point preforms broken during manufacture, cores from which flakes for making points and other tools had been taken off, a scraper for working hides or wood, and an abraded, pitted stone, apparently used both for sharpening other tools and as an anvil for tool manufacture or cracking nuts. The point styles again date from the Middle Archaic. The projectile point styles from the Rock manor site are from different time periods; the site was reused at various times. One point is a contracting stem, similar to the points from the Mill Creek site. The other is a small stemmed form of unknown date. Not

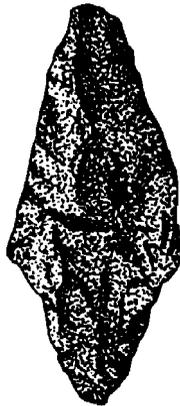
far away on Alapocas Creek, the Concord Pike site produced a similar range of artifacts, although in much less abundance. The significance of the Concord Pike site is that the diagnostic spear point, a notched variant of the Kirk style, pushes the use of the local area back into the latter part of the Early Archaic, or circa 6800 B.

Looking at the scene visible from our time capsule, we can see a small group coming into the area and setting up camp. It is around the seventh millenium before the beginning of our Christian era. The group seems to consist, at best, of a small, perhaps-extended family. After establishing camp, the men begin to gather cobbles from along the stream ridge or in the stream valley, Bringing these back to camp, they begin to make tools for hunting. Some of the women may make tools for use around the camp, or they may simply use some of the flakes which have been struck off from the cobble cores. The women gather plant foods from near the camp, perhaps even setting small traps along the streams. The men move out into the surrounding area to hunt game. While waiting for prey, they may sharpen their points. Sooner or later they return to camp. Because the potential of the area is somewhat limited, the resources are soon exhausted, and the group moves on.

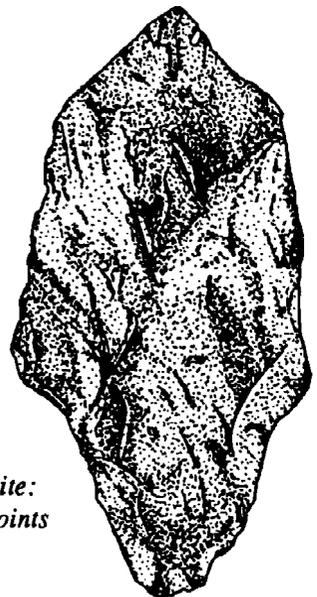
As we move through time, this pattern of moving and setting up short-term camps tends to be repeated, at least up until the beginning of the Late Archaic. Of course, we could be missing other activities which lie beyond the range of our window. Interestingly, what we have seen conforms quite well with observations other archeologists have made for this same time period in similar settings in Delaware and elsewhere.



Kirk spearpoint



*From the Mill Creek Site:
Contracting stemmed points*



THE HISTORIC SITES

THE RISEING SON TAVERN

Moving across the historic time line, our time traveler appears in Cuckold's Town (what is now Stanton) in the middle of the 18th century - in 1752 to be exact. We have arrived just in time to witness a sheriff's sale of a public house or, as described at that time:

" ... the late dwelling-house of Archibald Anderson, situate in Mill—Creek hundred, on the publick road, between Newport and Christiana—Bridge, and at a place where several roads meet coming from the country, to Whiteclay Creek landing, being a very noted tavern with good building stables, etc., thirteen acres and a half of land, with about 170 apple trees growing, and several English cherry trees planted ... There is also a good new kitchen and overn, and a good draw-well and also a large cooper's shop, with a good boarded floor, and a good brick chimney."

Let's examine the results of the archival research to see just what happened over the years since this sale.

Prior to the sheriff's sale, Archibald Anderson had apparently acquired the property from a woman named Love Burgess in 1742. She was married to John Burgess, a Lieutenant in Captain Robert Hill's "Independent Company in the Island of Jamaica", which suggests the possibility that he was a privateer. It is not clear whether the Burgesses had developed the tavern here, or if Anderson was responsible for its construction after he acquired the property.

If we take a look at the area in which the tavern was located, we find that another important road intersected the Newport and Christiana Bridge "publick" road: this was the Limestone Road. This provided an easily travelled access route for teamsters bringing grain to be ground at the merchant mills on White Clay Creek, grain that would be shipped down the Christiana, and up the Delaware to Philadelphia and beyond. It is not surprising that a tavern would be found at the cross-roads of two such important transportation arteries. A mill had been present at

Bread and Cheese Island, just to the south of the cross-road, since 1679. Because produce could be processed and readily shipped, either by water or land, from this location it was inevitable that a community should grow up here. By 1768 there is a reference to a village located here, known by the inauspicious name of "Cuckolds Town". This implies the presence of a commercial activity, common enough in traveler's depots, that is not often mentioned in polite reminiscence. Whether this was going on at the tavern, we cannot say!

We do know that by the time of the American Revolution the British General Howe's aide-de-camp was able to record the presence of a "Rising Son" tavern at Cuckold's Town. It is not clear who maintained possession of the property at this time, although it may have been Alexander Montgomery, Senior, or his descendants. After the war the county court claimed title to it, suggesting that the terms of the sale advertised by the sheriff years earlier were not successfully completed. A thirteen-and-a-half acre tract of land was acquired from the court trustee in 1792 by James Stroud, who also acquired a small lot at the northwest corner of the property from Stephen Stapler, who owned the land adjacent on the west. Stapler's occupation is given as merchant miller; his principal business interest was probably in the "mill land" below the tavern, known as "Bymes Mill". A year later (1793), Stapler sold four-and-a-half acres of the property containing the tavern to Peter Springer, keeping the remainder of the land to the south toward the mills. Springer was obviously quite interested in the tavern, and when he applied to the court for a license to operate it, he eschewed the small printed form and submitted the following elaborately worded petition:

*To the honorable Judges of the Court of Common pleas
Now held For the County of New Castle in the Dellaware state, May
term 1794*

*The Remonstrance and petition of us: the subscribers being
Inhabitants of the County afforesaid, humbly sheweth - - - - -*

*That the Dwelling house in Stanton [text lined out, illeg.] heretofore
Commonly Known and Distinguished by the Name of the Rising son
Tavern; For Many Years Now passed, hath been occupyed and used as
and for a publick Tavern or Inn, until in the last Spring season, When
Peter Springer [the present posseser thereof] did Enter into the
possession of the Same, and Whereas the afforesaid house is Verry
Conveniently Situate for the Entertainment of Travellers in General,
and particularly such as May be Traveling from Christiana Bridge
&ca., towards the Northward, as Lancaster Pa. as they have not any
place of publick Entertainment on said Rou, within less than seven or*

Eight Miles distance which often happens to be of disagreeable Consequences to Individuals, and Whereas the afforesaid Peter Springer hath been and Now is: Acquainted with us [the said subscribers] and we also hath been acquainted with him: the said Springer; For or during a Number of Years Now last passed, And at this time are of the oppinion that he is a proper and fit person for to Keep such a house of Entertainment as above Mentioned -----

Therefore [as We apprehend] a house of publick Entertainment in Stanton afforesd is Necessarily Wanted, on account of the Reasons above mentioned &ca. SO please your honours to take the Matter under Your Consideration, and Rcomend him the afforesaid Peter Springer, so that he may obtain a lycence for to Keep a publick house of Entertainment at & in his afforesaid present dwelling house lined out., illeg., and your petitioners: as in Duty bound Shall So say. -----

Signer's Names

*[Thomas Latimer]
[N. Delaplain]
[Joseph Thomas]
[Chas. Paulson]
[Jacob Ball]*

*[JaStroud]
[illeg. Springer]
[Joseph Ball]
[Jacob Robinson]
[illeg. Reynold]
[George Reynold]*

Springer's occupation was given as "saddler" on the deed, and he was no doubt acquainted with the needs of travelers who depended on riding or driving horses to deliver their produce and goods. By operating a tavern he was diversifying the services that he could supply to such people. James Stroud, from whom he had acquired the property, was a merchant miller and had an interest in seeing his customers well-accomodated; note that his name appears first on Springer's petition.

The petition provides us with additional insight into the conditions of travel in the early days of the Republic. While a loaded wagon with a fresh team might make twelve or fifteen miles on a good road in a good day, it was clearly desirable to have accomodations available at closer intervals. The petition indicates that seven or eight miles between accomodations was an "inconvenience", and this might have reflected the needs of local society for a convenient place of entertainment as well. By the time of the Revolution farmers in northern Delaware and southeastern Pennsylvania had come to depend on the cash income that they obtained by selling their surplus grain, and getting the grain to market involved a trip to the mill.

the facilities offered by the log house mentioned in the earlier 1803 tax assessment, which must have functioned as the tavern house prior to the completion of the stone house by Hannah Springer, and it would have been the original "Riseing Son Tavern".

Hannah Springer married Soloman Hersey in 1816, and the management of the tavern now fell to Joseph Springer, who was apparently her brother, and the son of Peter Springer. Joseph Springer had died by 1831 and the inventory of his estate showed only the linens and equipment to be expected in a farmer's household, so it is possible the Tavern was being managed by tenants at that time, and may already have been known as the "Fountain Hotel".

At some point, then, the management of the tavern is apparently let out to tenants, and by 1860 it is in the care of "Levi Workman", whose name appears in the "Business Directory" listing for Stanton P.O. under the map of the village included on the Lake and Beers "Map of the Vicinity of Philadelphia". The directory lists Workman as the "Post M. & Prpt of Fountain Hotel", and, since the location of the Old Stone Hotel on the accompanying map is labeled "Hotel & P.O., Mrs. Hersey", his place of occupation is clear, as is his residence a short ways to the northeast.

A cotton mill appears on the Lake and Beers map, in addition to the "Mercht Mill" which now bears the name "Tatnall & Lee". The Tatnall family had been active in the development of the mills on the Brandywine, and were expanding their interests to include other locations. The name "C. I. Dupont" also appears on buildings near White Clay Creek, indicating the expanding business interests of another family whose industrial fortunes were being built along the Brandywine. These businesses, no doubt, provided additional incentive to merchants and travelers to visit the community. By the time the Beer's Atlas Map was published in 1868, a woolen mill has replaced the cotton mill on the west side of town, but the merchant mill and cooper shop are still to be found near the junction of White Clay and Red Clay Creeks, suggesting that the farmers were still bringing their grain down Limestone Road from Pennsylvania. One scholar has suggested that part of the continuing appeal of this route was the fact that it was always maintained as a free public road, while the roads serving Newport and the Brandywine Mills had been converted to Toll Roads, or Turnpikes, early in the century. The hotel was still operating on the corner, only now it is known as the "Wm. Anthony Hotel".

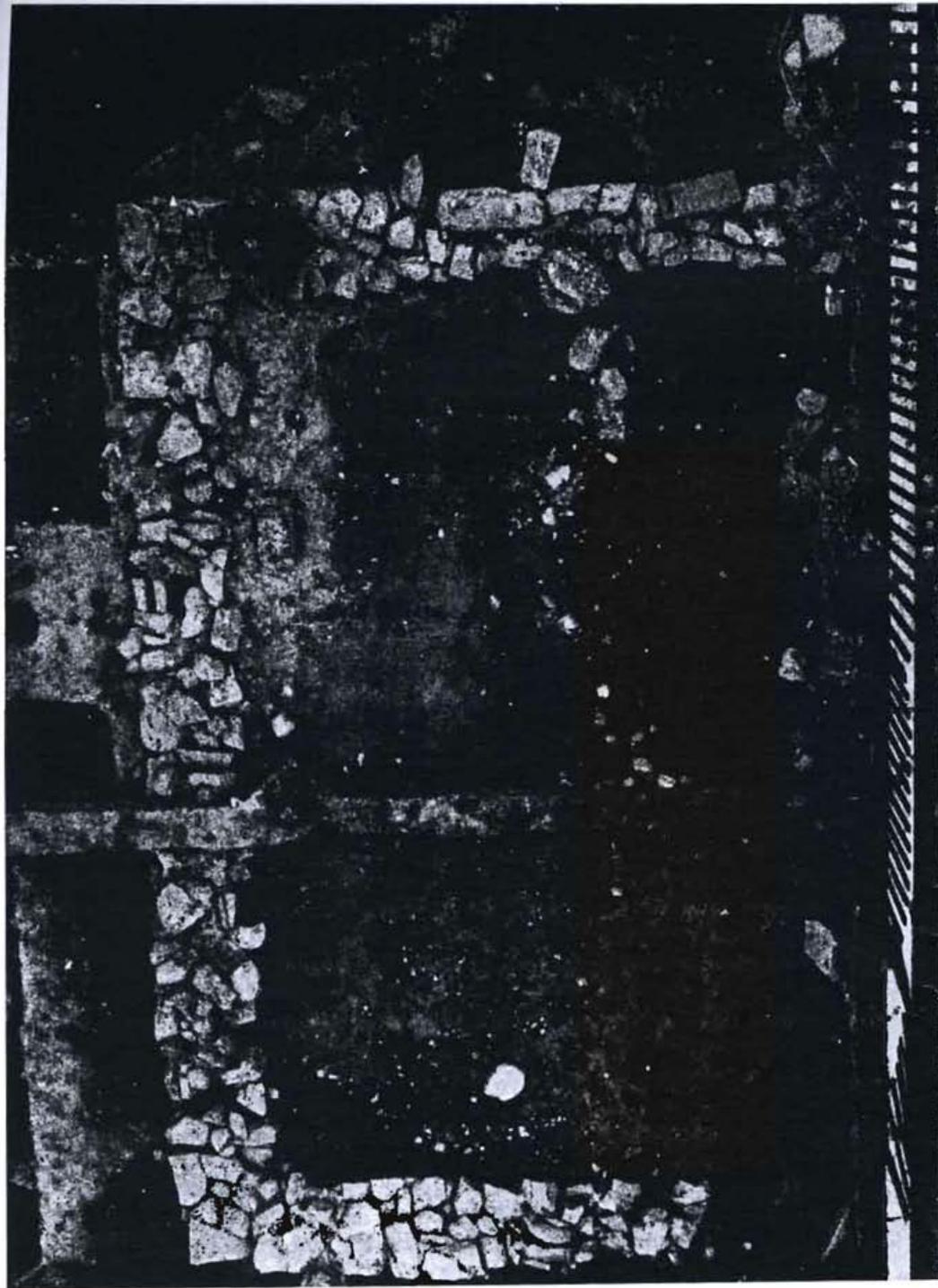
William Anthony was listed in the 1860 Census as a farm tenant in Mill Creek Hundred. The 1870 census lists him as a "hotel keeper",

undoubtedly at the Old Stone Hotel, and indicates that he possesses \$4,000 worth of real estate. This certainly could not have included the tavern, or hotel, since the property records clearly indicate that it was still in the possession of the heirs of Joseph Springer; Anthony must have been renting it. By 1888, when Scharf writes his compendium of Delaware History, the building is no longer functioning as a tavern or hotel, although the hotel across the street is still operating. By this time the railroads and steam mills have eroded Stanton's milling and shipping businesses, but the Old Stone Hotel apparently still sustained some commercial functions, including that of cigar factory. Shade tobacco was brought down the Limestone Road, like the wagons of wheat in older days, and converted to a more useful commodity.

In summary, the historical records have provided us with some interesting information about a site that provided important services to those engaged in agriculture, industry and commerce. With these facts in mind we can now begin to examine the archeological record to see what it can add to our knowledge of the historical themes chosen for our study.

Three of the four corners of the intersection at Stanton were investigated in 1983. Remains of earlier occupation in the village were found on the northwest and southwest corners of the intersection, but they had been disturbed fairly recently and were mixed with artifacts from the twentieth century. The Old Stone Hotel building had been removed from the northeast corner when the Alert Filling Station had been built, and the area around it thoroughly disturbed by the installation of large-capacity holding tanks for gasoline. Further to the south, and on the lower part of the lot, the remains of foundations were encountered in the test excavations; these suggest the presence of outbuildings associated with the hotel. Although the upper levels of soil showed some disturbance, the foundations were in soil that did not appear to have been recently disturbed. Since significant remains were present, even though the tavern building itself was gone, data recovery activities were recommended.

These data recovery excavations were carried out in the spring of 1985, at which time a considerable area of undisturbed soil was exposed in the back of the hotel lot, as well as extensive remains of the foundations of two buildings. It appeared as though the top of the lot, where the Old Stone Hotel building had once stood, had been graded, and that some of this material, as well as additional fill, had been placed onto the lower part of the lot, covering the old land surfaces and reducing the downhill slope toward the south to a gentler grade than had originally been present. In addition to the two foundations, artifacts mixed



"Upper Foundation" excavated at the Site of the Rising Son Tavern

with soil appeared in layers that the archeologist refers to as "middens" west of the foundations.

It is unclear what the foundations represent, although it is evident that they represent the remains of structures associated with the main building. The lack of clarity stems, in part at least, from the spatial constraints placed on the excavations by the location of the right-of-way, the presence of the current road and service station, and the prior destruction and ground modification. The current best guess is that what was referred to as the "Lower Structure" (because it was at the lower end of the lot) represents a barn, while the "Upper Structure" was a stable or, less likely, a kitchen. A "stone barn" is noted on the property in the 1803 and 1816 Tax Assessments, and a stable is referred to in this latter document. The "Lower Structure" was the larger of the two, with a complete interior dimension of 28 feet north and south, and was cut into the bank on its north side. Such construction was typical in the early 1800's, and allowed for entrance into the barn at two different levels. Barns were generally also at the back of properties, something which would probably be even more true of a hotel or tavern. Stables would have also been a necessary item for places offering accommodations, for overland travel was either by foot or horse. Archeological evidence in the form of charred timbers shows that the larger structure burned, which is indicated in the archival data.

There was little which was particularly suggestive in the artifacts to clearly point to the function of the two buildings. To be sure, horse shoes were found, but not enough to say that this was indeed where horses were shod or lost their shoes. A pitchfork was found resting against the outside foundation of the barn, resting there almost as if it were left to tell archeologists that this was indeed a place where hay was pitched and stored. On the other hand, a lot of other artifacts indicative of cooking, sewing, smoking, clothing, building and the like were also found. It is, of course, well known that, prior to trash collection and knowledge of sanitation, debris was scattered about the yards and the property of our ancestors, so it is not surprising to find general midden debris around barns or stables. Certainly, the smaller building did not produce enough garbage to suggest a kitchen. A pile of cinders near the larger foundation was, however, suggestive of a forge in the vicinity.

Considerable effort was put into comparing the data recovered from the Riseing Son Tavern excavations with data from taverns excavated elsewhere. Not many similarities were seen, since the other reported taverns were, by and large, from a somewhat earlier time period. The vessel fragments were also too fragmentary to allow us to talk about the



Embossed bottles from Riseing Son Tavern excavations

proportion of serving and cooking dishes over the wider range of ceramics which could be expected from a place which had served exclusively as a residence. Smoking pipes and wine bottles, favorite items of taverns around the world and often seen in other reported tavern excavations, were not particularly abundant. The animal bones from the Riseing Son excavations were interesting in that there were cow, pig and sheep bones present, and these were primarily from cuts used in stews and pot roasts. Another food remnant, oyster shells, showed evidence of having been stewed rather than shucked. The oyster analysis indicated they came from low salinity mudflats which aptly describes the Christiana River in the immediate locale and other tributaries of the Delaware Bay.

Our view of life at the Rising Son Tavern, while clear in some respects, was murky in others. Unfortunately, that is what happens when the view the archeologist has is restricted by prior disturbances, right-of-way boundaries and other externally imposed limitations. Nevertheless, what we were able to see does allow us a new insight into the history of the Stanton area. Now we must leave behind our tavern complex, where its ghost now must suffer cars and trucks running over it, a far cry from the tavern in its heyday when it stood beside the road welcoming the weary traveler, and its barn and stables housed the horses and sheltered the carriages of those long gone days.

THE HOUSE ON THE LANCASTER PIKE

Leaving Stanton, we steer our time machine northeast and pick up the Centre Road. As the Henry Heald map shows, Centre Road was in its present position by 1820 and has remained in essentially the same location, between Prices Corner and the Kennett Pike, since that time.

The historic occupation on the Grant Tenancy Site was discovered during the initial Phase I study and was further investigated during the Phase II. The artifacts included a range of items such as pottery fragments, broken pipes, bone and shell, nails, bricks, glass, and the like, all of which indicated the presence of a house. Further work was recommended, and the Phase III excavations did indeed uncover the remains of a house foundation, basement, and other features.

The site lay at the northern corner of the current intersection of Route 141, or Centre Road and Route 48 (Lancaster Pike). There is no evidence of a house at this location until the Lake and Beers Atlas of 1860, and a structure at this location is not noted on later maps. The map prior to that, the 1849 Rea and Price map, also does not show a structure located in this area, although there is one situated near where there is a current "manor house" of the appropriate vintage. On the 1860 map, this property belongs to H. Grant. The hypothesis developed after the Phase II investigation was that the house near the junction of Centre Road and Lancaster Pike was a tenant house associated with one of the larger houses. Hence, the site became known as the H. Grant Tenancy. The tenancy hypothesis was developed from several lines of reasoning, but the main argument was that the primary residence for the property was still standing and other dwellings on it would not have been occupied by the owner. It was assumed that the people who lived in the house were employed on the larger landholding as tenant farmers. Subsequent analysis, however, failed to provide any support for this hypothesis and the tenancy part of the site name becomes something of a questionable label.

The following takes us on the search for the history of "The House on the Lancaster Pike".

Deeds, orphans court records, wills, tax records, and all the other paper work of the governmental systems at all levels can often provide information of considerable importance to the historian and archeologist, and many a scholar, contrary to most of us, feels kindly toward the paper work of bureaucracy. Considerable effort was expended in attempting to determine who lived in The House. Although some inter-

esting information came to light, none of it proved to be of significance in determining who actually lived there. Archival research revealed a rather complex ownership history for the properties most likely to have contained the excavated site. One of the problems with the records is that the land in question is located at the boundary of more than one holding. Because the margin of error in the metes and bounds was such that, at any particular time in the past, the site location might have been on any one of three or four different tracts, it is difficult to trace ownership very far back in time.

We do know that Henry Grant had received one plantation from Edward Tatnall in 1852 - a tract of slightly more than 187 acres. This tract was comprised of five separate pieces of property assembled by Tatnall between 1830 and 1851 - one of which was described in the deed as a "messuage or tenement", which means that the property contained a dwelling. Grant acquired the other tract in 1864 from Samuel Grant, who had received it at a sheriff's sale in 1852. This property, also described as a "messuage" - implying the presence of a dwelling - was 24 acres, 70 perches in size.

Unfortunately, the archival research does not reveal strong enough evidence to allow a firm statement to be made about when the House on Lancaster Pike was built. The reader might think it should be easy enough to say that the messuage which first appears in the records in 1852 contained the house which was archeologically investigated. This would coincide with the historic maps. As archeologists have often seen in the past, the early mapmakers were not always exhaustive in what they put on their maps: indeed, they were often quite selective. Furthermore, deeds, wills and other records do not always list improvements. We can determine with some confidence that the house was built by the 1852 date above, and was standing in 1860 at the time of the Lake and Beers Atlas. It is possible the house was not standing during 1820 when the Heald map was made, and we can be reasonably assured it was not there earlier.

The archeology is of some interest in this respect. In the contexts definitely associated with the structure the artifacts seem to suggest that the dwelling was probably not built and occupied before 1820. For instance, in the builder's trench associated with construction of the house, whiteware ceramics are present in the fill. Whiteware was not commonly manufactured until 1820. Immediately outside of the house in another midden deposit, whiteware also occurred, again placing this deposit at 1820 or later. The material dumped in after the structure was razed to fill the cellar, on the other hand, could not have been present until 1867 or later, based on a particular type of bottle not manufac-

tured until that date. There was also a buried plow zone which lay over the foundation. This deposit could also have not dated until after 1867. We, of course, know from the maps the structure was still standing in 1860, and the artifacts show that it continued to do so until at least 1867. The youngest artifacts from this deposit were bottles which were not commonly made after 1903. Of course, these bottles could have been around after 1903, but it is probable the house was torn down and filled in before this. The temporal range of the datable bottles in this deposit are 1810-1903 and 1867-1903. In sum, the archeology indicates the house was probably built after 1820 and not demolished before 1867.

As noted above, before the final full scale excavations were carried out the original premise was that the house was inhabited by a tenant and, in 1860, this would have been a tenant of Henry Grant. Given the fact that Henry Grant owned several houses in the area, including the two "manor houses", it seems unlikely that he and his family would have resided in the much smaller house. Tenants do not necessarily equate with farmers but, in this period of the 19th century, other kinds of renters seem less likely, unless they were perhaps relatives of Henry Grant, or were even the previous owners. The initial assumption was that of tenant farmers, renting farmland for cash or shares. The historic documents indicate that farming tenancies grew considerably more frequent during the early and middle parts of the 19th century with the growth of urban areas, increased consolidation of land into the hands of fewer people and the rise of absentee landlords, and the demands of the agricultural market place all combined to make tenant farming a common economic option.

Archeological investigations elsewhere in New Castle County by the University of Delaware have suggested that tenants were generally poorer than the land owners, and that this is reflected in their material culture; in addition, tenant farms generally have fewer outbuildings than the owner's farm. With the former observation in mind, an economic scaling analysis of the ceramics from the H. Grant Tenancy was conducted. An economic scaling analysis of historic ceramics, simply put, is a cost index of the dishes in use by people who occupied a site. As we are all aware, costs vary in table and kitchen wares, and peoples' purchasing power is controlled by the amount of money they have. Determining 19th century costs has been accomplished by analyzing catalogues, newspaper advertisements and the like. The ceramic remains discarded by the residents of "The House on Lancaster Pike" (it is interesting to muse over what these folks would have thought of future college educated people analyzing their trash!) were compared to cost indices calculated at other 19th century archeological

sites, ranging from manor houses and hotels to tenant farms and slave owners. The result was that the people who inhabited the H. Grant tenant house did not possess cheap ceramics and do not seem to have been an average tenant farm family. The grounds did have limited outbuildings: indeed, only one definite shed could be accounted for. This is such a low number that the possibility is raised that the property was not even an operating farm. The best guess now is that the residents were relatively well off people.

And, speaking of garbage, the **animal bones** from the site contributed some interesting information. The major domestic food sources were cow, pig and sheep with the occasional chicken. This differed little from the other sites to which Grant Tenancy was compared and was not unexpected. As with many of the houses in rural settings, the bones which were recovered came from all parts of the animals, indicating that the animals were most likely raised at the site and then butchered, rather than being selected cuts from animals butchered elsewhere. A surprise, however, came in the frequency of wild food sources such as rabbit and box turtle. What this says about the occupants is unclear. Use of such food sources could be an indication of economic status or perhaps simply personal taste. These remains may also say something about the nature of the countryside, for the absence of such foods in other areas of Delaware at a comparable time is often linked to densely populated areas and the resulting landscape alteration. It is therefore probable the area around the junction of Lancaster Pike and Centre Road was undisturbed enough at the time to support wildlife. Oyster and hard shell clam were also found. Since these were not available in the immediately local setting, they were either purchased at some market by the residents or else gathered by them in the tidal streams.

Artifacts recovered from the site included a wide range of ceramics. Some of the more interesting were fragments of a large pitcher with a Chinoiserie scene and a redware pie plate. Fragments of an almost complete stoneware bottle were recovered and mended; this was marked "J. B. Bryant, 1847", although it is unclear whether this refers to the



Chinoiserie pitcher, mended



*Redware
pie
plate,
mended*

maker of the bottle, the bottler of the contents, a local tavern owner or a private citizen. In a buried plow zone which concealed the foundation a button was recovered, a button which was marked with an eagle and "A. H. Horstman and Allien". Records show that this button must date to or after 1850 because this was the year when Henry V. Allien became a partner in the New York branch of William H. Horstman and

Co. Coins from the fill within the cellar included an 1839 copper cent, a large "Coronet" cent (1816-1834) and a copper half cent (1800-1808). Coins from the general surface around the house included an 1859 Indian Head Cent, an 1858 Flying Eagle Cent and an 1852 Silver Cent. The religious medal had the words "Mere de dieu priez pour nous" (Mother of God pray for us) on one side while the reverse side had a peaked hat and what appeared to be a symbol of Calvary.



Stoneware bottle, mended

The structural features present at Grant Tenancy consisted of the remains of the house foundation and the associated basement, a well, and what was interpreted as a shed. The remaining foundation walls measured 18 by 15 feet. If this comprised the entire structure, it was indeed small! Most likely, the foundation walls and the cellar were linked, and there was



Well excavated at Grant Tenancy Site

another room or rooms which had been totally demolished and all traces, except artifacts, plowed out. The cellar walls were made of stone and varied in depth from 3-4 feet. The cellar had been filled in with rubble. There was insufficient stone within the cellar to account for a second floor made of stone. Any above ground stone may have been recycled, so any above ground construction was probably of frame.

The well stood about 10 feet from the northeast corner of the house. It was lined with stone and reached a depth of 13 feet below the current surface. The stone wall of the well rested on bedrock, and the bedrock had been chiseled out at the base of the well to an additional six inches. After excavation, the water table was measured; there were two feet of standing water. The well had been filled in and was full of a variety of discarded junk. One object, a wooden bucket with a chain fragment attached to the metal handle, was recovered from the bottom of the well; this was probably the bucket actually used to draw water from the well at one time.

As we begin to move away from the House on Lancaster Pike, we can reflect on what we have seen. Although our "window" was larger than that at the Stanton Hotel, and we achieved somewhat greater clarity in our view of the past, there is still a lot we do not know. What we do know is that sometime between 1820 and 1860, a house was built on this lot. The house was not large, probably at best two rooms. There

was a substantial basement and a hand dug, stone lined well a little over 10 feet away from the main structure. There was also a small shed of unknown function. The people who lived here were not poor because they had sufficient funds to purchase relatively high priced dishes, and this purchasing power seems to have remained constant throughout the period of use of the house. The residents reared and butchered their own livestock, but the absence of barns and other farm related outbuildings suggest that they were not tenant farmers. As we finally leave them behind, their ghostly traces becoming even more dim, the best guess we have of their identity is that they were not engaged in agriculture at all.



*Wooden bucket and chain, reassembled,
from excavated well at Grant Tenancy Site*



*Grant Tenancy Site:
Well profile after excavation*

ALONG 141 TO THE BRANDYWINE AND BEYOND

The final phase of this trip through northern New Castle County's past takes us from Kennett Pike across the Brandywine to Concord Pike. On this segment of our journey our views will be somewhat limited, for at this point in time only Phase I and expanded Phase I excavations have taken place. The road we travel today, of course, did not exist until relatively recently in the historic past. Indeed, the map and archival studies conducted during the archeological investigations show that what became Barley Mill Road (the section of 141 between Kennett Pike and the western edge of the Brandywine) was not built until sometime between 1820 and 1849. Rather than say there was no road, it would be better perhaps to suggest that this road did not become public prior to this date, for undoubtedly there was some kind of road which led to the mill located between the mouth of Squirrel Run and Pancake Run. River crossings in the early days were provided by shallow places along the stream known as fords. It was not until some time between 1820 and 1849 when a bridge, appropriately known as New Bridge (now Sunset Bridge, constructed in 1952), was built.

Returning to our starting point, the first site of potential archeological interest encountered during our studies was the "Yellow School House." This school first appears in the map records in 1849 and is consistently represented until 1892. The location was on the north side of 141 between Montchanin Road and a presently maintained cemetery. Our excavations failed to locate any traces of the school house. It would seem that, after abandonment, the school was demolished, and the widening of Route 141 perhaps removed any remaining traces.

Following Barley Mill Road down beneath the present 141 bridge to where it turns south and follows the Brandywine, we come to the site where excavations took place at two 19th century residential units for mill workers, units known respectively as Pigeon Row and Long Row. These were typical of row houses which were built to attract married workers. It is difficult to determine from the records when they were actually built. It is known that Charles I. DuPont (CID), who acquired a complex of mills in this area in 1839, also acquired 25 tenements. These, however, may have been single family dwellings, some of

which are still standing. There is also a notation in the DuPont records of “row houses” in 1844, but these are between Breck’s Mill and New Bridge. While certainly not the ones we are seeking, this record does show that row houses were being built at this early date. An 1849 map does show structures in the area where our excavations took place. The first mention of Long Row is in the Brandywine Manufacturer’s Sunday School “Receiving Books”, when the presence is recorded of two children with the last name of Murray whose residence was “Long Row”. These new houses could, of course, have gone under other names. Pigeon Row, for instance, was once referred to as Diamond Row. Long Row may have been called Beggar’s Row in 1861.

At this juncture, only Phase I and expanded Phase I excavations have taken place, so there are limitations on what can be said. Interestingly, the temporal range of the artifacts, while extending into the 20th century (the structures apparently stood until the 1940’s), also produced sufficiently early ceramics to suggest activity in the first quarter of the 19th century. These artifacts may be related to earlier structures which stood where Long and Pigeon Rows were later built, or perhaps to the CID house which is purported to have been built in the 1820’s, or even to a miller’s house which stood where the 141 bridge is now. The expanded Phase I testing also revealed a jumble of building and trenching which disturbed a lot of contexts but, at the same time, showed the presence of undisturbed deposits which will allow future studies to unravel household refuse deposits from discrete households. The interpretive possibilities of this are exciting because the records and

household inventories from this time that are in repository in the Hagley Foundation can be cross-correlated with the archeology, providing excellent windows into the lives of 19th century mill workers.

On the east side of the Brandywine there is another complex of mills and workers' houses. The only one still standing, Walker's Mill, lies just downstream from the study area. Within the study area are workers' houses associated with this mill and, in a separate tract, the Keg Mill and its associated workers' houses. Keg Mill was a DuPont enterprise which came into being by at least 1838. Prior to this, the E. I. DuPont company had purchased its kegs from outside sources. Alfred V. DuPont, however, thought it would be a good idea - as well as a profitable idea - if the company could control the entire powder production process, including the manufacture of the special kegs. These kegs, by the way, were wooden, with wooden bands, and continued to be made of wood for a long time after metal containers were introduced. Avoiding the use of metal was done as a precaution to prevent sparks which might ignite the powder - with disastrous consequences! The Keg Factory seems to have been turned into workers' houses at some time just prior to or after the turn of the 20th century.

Our work in the Keg Factory area was confined to one dwelling, designated in the field as dwelling "H". Again, while the results are only preliminary, they are sufficient to show that more work would allow isolation of 19th century mill workers' material culture, which, in turn, would prove to be an invaluable comparative base for the Long and Pigeon Row Houses. "H" was not a row house but a detached unit. Whether or not it was a single family dwelling or any more "elite" an accomodation than the row houses is unknown. One of the excavation units inside the structure managed to penetrate three feet of fill overlying a cellar. In this cellar are artifacts which date to before the destruction of the house, and it is here where we would expect future excavations to find artifacts associated with the period(s) of use of "H". Among the artifacts recovered were several portions of shoe heels with wooden pegs; these types of shoes were required in the powder factory, for sparks might be struck by metal nails and cause an explosion.



*Wooden pegged shoe heels recovered in excavations
at Keg Factory site*

During the walkover survey of the area encompassing Walker's Bank and the Keg Factory property, a cistern, which lies almost directly below the 141 bridge, was noted. Cisterns are well known in historic sites archeology as being rewarding locations for the recovery of artifacts. Our cistern was not informed of this, and the artifact yield was quite low! Our assumption is that this cistern was a water catchment basin associated with the dwelling structures, which, of course, we knew before excavation. You cannot win them all.

Walker's Mill has an interesting history. Way back, sometime before 1710, the property, apparently also including the tract on which Keg Factory was built, was known as Horse Hook Plantation. Through the decades, the tract was broken up and in 1812, E. I. DuPont acquired 92 and 3/4 acres. DuPont sub-divided and sold 10 and 1/4 acres to Peter Bauduy. Bauduy was of French extraction and had preceeded E. I. DuPont to the Wilmington area. He and forty other families in the Wilmington area had arrived in Delaware after a successful slave revolt in Haiti had driven them out of the country. Bauduy and others were fellow countrymen to whom E. I. DuPont gravitated on his arrival in the area, and Bauduy became an early partner with DuPont in the powder mills. Ultimately there was a falling out between these two men of French extraction; Bauduy became lost to history, but DuPont came down through time as a local living legend.

Before this, however, Bauduy sold the ten acre tract on which Walker's Mill was built to Joseph B. Sims. In 1814, Sims built a textile mill which he rented to John Siddall and Company for the manufacture of cotton yarn, muslin, check and plaid. There are at least three tenements listed in the tax records associated with the mill. As with the other cotton mills in the area, Siddall went bankrupt in 1817, and E. I. DuPont acquired the Walker Mill property in 1831 from the Wilmington and Brandywine Bank. Over the next several decades, the DuPont Company continued as owners, but a number of other textile manufacturers are seen to come and go, all seemingly ending up in financial disaster. Despite this, the mill continued to produce until 1938, thus becoming the last mill operating on this section of the Brandywine.

A large map was made of the property by the Delaware Department of Transportation. On this map were plotted the location of several houses, at least two wells and a long retaining wall bordering the road which runs parallel to the Brandywine. Our excavations were limited to the retaining walls, under the assumption that this is where debris would have accumulated over the years; in actual fact, this did turn out to be the case. Also, as expected, a melange of time was represented: to wit, an 19? Lincoln Head penny, a 1975 Roosevelt dime and an 1856

Seated Liberty Half Dime. Some of the test pits in this area were stratified and, once the overlying 20th century trash deposits were removed, relatively uncontaminated 19th century trash was found; there is some indication the lowest deposits take us back to the first tenement houses, circa 1816. This would be exciting for future studies, for archeologists may be able, through excavation and analysis of these deposits, to track changes in fashion, purchasing power and perhaps even ethnic preferences as the European origins of the millworkers change through time.

The study corridor moves up from the Brandywine and follows what is now New Bridge Road, still Route 141. This, of course, is not the New Bridge Road of the 18th century, although the old New Bridge Road (probably at least two rebuildings) lies to the east.

Route 141 becomes New Murphy Road at the intersection of Rockland Road. As we can see from the vantage point of our time machine, there has been a road following the route of Rockland road since at least 1820. Considering there was a ford at Rockland very early, then the "ancestor" of Rockland Road was probably even earlier. At this intersection, which did not exist in the past, was a house which the 1869 Beers map shows to have been owned by T. Husbands. This particular piece of property was acquired in 1804 by William Husbands from Adam Williamson, passing through the hands of a successive William Husbands into the hands of Thomas Husbands in 1855. The first indication of a dwelling is a reference in the tax records to a small log house. This log house and 48 acres were assessed at \$144. By 1816, a small wooden dwelling and stable are noted and the property is assessed at \$1000. The farm complex remained in the Husbands family until 1925, when it passed into the hands of a DuPont holding company.

A wide range of household artifacts dating from almost the entire time span of the known occupation of the site were encountered. Further work at this location should provide a range of artifacts which will allow us to trace material culture changes on a farm throughout the 19th century. Comparisons may then be made to changes in the economic history. Before leaving this property, the inventory of the property owned by William Husbands at his death in 1809 is intriguing. Although it is too long for full replication here, a partial listing, complete with spellings and evaluations of the time, is given below:

<i>Bed and bedding and bedsted</i>	\$4.75
<i>a lot of books</i>	.75
<i>walnut dining table</i>	1.50

<i>teakettle and tea ware</i>	4.00
<i>five rush bottom chairs</i>	.75
<i>six knives and six forks</i>	.50
<i>4 1/2 bu of wheat</i>	5.50
<i>tray and saddle and bridle</i>	2.00
<i>1 side saddle</i>	1.00
<i>beef and bacon</i>	10.00
<i>pail red cow and calf</i>	15.00
<i>white face brindled cow</i>	12.00
<i>one sow</i>	5.00
<i>one bay mare</i>	12.00
<i>a black mare with a bald face</i>	40.00
<i>one plow: clevis and ???</i>	4.50
<i>2 dung shovels and mattock</i>	.75

Having poked our noses sufficiently deep into the William Husbands family history, let us move on to that portion of the road that lies along Old Murphy Road and Rockland Road. Old Murphy Road appears to have been the continuation of New Bridge Road between Rockland Road and the Concord Pike back in the good old days of 1849 and, indeed, on into the 20th century. At the onset of our investigations, there were two standing structures along Old Murphy Road and another on Rockland Road. These were the William Murphy House, the Sweeny house and the Bird-Husbands House. Excavations could not be conducted at the William Murphy house, but archival investigations were done.

The Murphy House sits on 15 acres which were part of three tracts bought by George W. Murphy prior to 1851. These tracts were all part of a larger parcel of 61-plus acres transferred from Adam Williamson in 1804 to one William Young. As our fellow travelers will remember, Adam Williamson also sold land to William Husbands in 1804, so it appears that Mr. Williamson was unloading considerable real estate about this time. One of the tracts was bought by George W. Murphy in 1841; no buildings are mentioned in this transaction. However, by 1849, as indicated on the Rea and Price map, a structure with no name attached is shown at the juncture of the two roads. There is some other interesting archival data on George W. Murphy. For instance, in the Delaware State Census of 1850 he is listed as a "gardener", 43 years of age with a 41 year old wife and four children ranging in age from 13-4. He had one milk cow and 2 swine, and the cow produced 100 pounds of butter during the year. The only field crops noted are 10 bushels of corn and 70 bushels of Irish potatoes. The census valued his market produce at \$300, considerably higher than the 1860 average farm produce of \$77.71. The property was acquired in 1916 by A.I. DuPont,

and then occupied by employees of the Nemours estate. The other lots have a much more complicated history. Of interest (without bogging ourselves down in great detail) is that William Young sub-divided part of his original purchase into lots of less than one acre as early as the first decade of the 19th century. Already, over a hundred years ago, we can see sub-divisions! The lots apparently sold for \$120 apiece, which is certainly not up to contemporary prices.

The Sweeny House is first mentioned in the 1852 tax assessment records. Since the house does not appear on the Rea and Price map of 1849, it is very likely that the house was built just after this. The tax records described the house as frame and it is valued at \$2000. The house plus 40 acres and a barn were owned by Sara Coleman and her husband John. Census records indicated that they resided in Wilmington. John Coleman was listed as a blacksmith who owned a blacksmith shop between Shipley and Orange Street. The evidence suggests the property which came into John Sweeny's hands in 1878 was built by the Colemans as a rental house. John Sweeny was an Irish emigrant who was listed as a "laborer" in the 1870 census. After acquiring the property, his status becomes that of "farmer". Sweeny paid \$4500 for the property in 1878. In 1970, it was sold to A.I. DuPont for \$40,000. As noted, the building was demolished after our work had begun. Test excavations indicated that prior disturbance was so extensive that little information of value could be recovered.

The Bird-Husbands house is situated on a 15 acre tract which first appears in the archival records in 1793 as part of a larger tract which the records note was "Newark now called Pisgah." William Bird bought the piece from one Gunning Bedford, Jr. William Bird was a carpenter who bought land and became a farmer. In the 1816 tax records we find he had one small dwelling house, one horse and three acres, which suggests he was only a part-time farmer. In 1837, he added ten more acres, built a barn and added more stock. Amos Bird farmed with his father and ultimately inherited the land. In 1868, he sold the farm to Andrew J. Husbands, and the will of William Murphy indicates Amos left for Illinois soon after this transaction. A. I. DuPont bought the property in 1908. Excavations showed the grounds to be so severely disturbed that no further work was recommended.

For frequent travelers on the Concord Pike, the Blue Ball which stands on the right hand side of the road as they head toward Concord may be a familiar landmark. A property we pursued in our study bears direct resemblance to this fixture. On the 1849 Rea and Price there appears a structure labeled "Smithy." Oddly, neither the name nor the structure

appears on any maps again until a 1917 U.S. Geological Survey map, and then only a structure is indicated. The documentary records were also silent until the 1905 tax assessment of J. Atwood Weldin, who owned the property from 1896-1919. In that record, Weldin was assessed \$350 each for a blacksmith and a wheelwright shop. In Weldin's will, made in 1914, these buildings are described as being situated at "Blue Ball Corner" on Atwood Road. Records indicate that Charles A. Rotthouse (or Rothouse) operated these shops in the early 1900's. The Wilmington City Directory gave Rothouse's home residence as Washington Street in that city and noted he was a wagon-builder or blacksmith on Blue Ball Road. Relatives of Charles Rotthouse who still live in the area confirm that he was the one who constructed the blue ball which is seen by the many drivers who pass along the pike. Much to our disappointment, excavations failed to find any remains of this shop. A number of artifacts were recovered, but few of these could be associated with either a smith or wheelwright shop, and, indeed, most dated to the 20th century. Either all remains of the shops have been long destroyed, or else they lay outside the study area. Well, at least the blue ball emblem constructed by Mr. Rotthouse still survives!

The next property to be studied contains the extensive remains of Chestnut Hill, a very large plantation site consisting of multiple ruined structures, among which are a large stone residence, a small stone building which is perhaps a summer kitchen, a barn and adjoining stable/corral area, in addition to several other structures of unknown function but of considerable size. Chestnut Hill as an entity has a history which extends back to 1680 when a survey was conducted for the property's owner, Ephraim Herman, for Han(s) Peterson. The Empson family may have built the house after their acquisition of the property in 1700 because a house is mentioned in a will in 1710. The property passed through several owners during the next century or so. From 1849-1860, John Bradford, a tenant, lived on and farmed the property. In his household, besides himself, was his wife, nine children, a 12 year old boy, a female domestic servant from Ireland and a male farm laborer born in Pennsylvania. Bradford grew wheat, corn, oats, Irish potatoes and hay. Livestock included horses, milk cows, other cows and swine. In 1850, Bradford produced 2000 pounds of butter from the milk of 15 cows.

Jacob R. Weldin married Hannah Talley, thereby becoming part of the long-lived and numerous Talley family. Prior to 1862, Weldin farmed 35 acres left to him by his grandfather and caught shad in the Delaware River to supplement his income. In that year, he bought Chesnut Hill. According to a genealogy of the Talley family, the "land was impover-

ished and the farm looked large and dilapidated” and the purchase, despite the low price of \$75 per acre, was “a gamble for a young farmer”. Jacob never looked back and ultimately became one of the most successful dairy farmers in the area, and with 25 cows produced, in 1870, 11,250 pounds of butter. He was also a well rounded and somewhat learned man as the “several history books and telescope” inventoried in his will attest. His son, Jacob Atwood Weldin, continued to operate the farm, and it was this Jacob Atwood Weldin who owned the blacksmith and wheelwright shops discussed previously. In 1934, the plantation was acquired by a Florida based holding company.

Investigating this site was a major undertaking because of the size and the number of different buildings. The first step was to make a map, and an accurate one was produced by surveyors from DELDOT. The main structure is located within 25 feet of Weldin Road. It was at least a 2 story, perhaps more, structure with a full basement; it measured 44 by 30 feet, and was built entirely of stone. References to it as a frame structure in the tax records indicate it was probably covered by wood siding at some point. This could be seen in the ruins. A good stratigraphic sequence was noted from the limited excavations conducted at the site and it is reasonable to expect that expanded excavations would be able to isolate a full developmental sequence. One impression gained from these limited excavations is the relative wealth represented in the dishware assemblage from the Weldin Plantation as opposed to anywhere else that we excavated in the 141 extended project. This is especially evident in the relatively high frequency of porcelain. Jacob A. Weldin’s will inventory attests to some of this wealth with its listing of marble top tables, silver spoons and feather beds. As an aside, and mainly for car buffs, Jacob Atwood Weldin’s will in 1919 noted a Hupmobile valued at \$800 and a “Ford car” valued at \$75. Wealth differences are, of course, expected, but data recovered from expanded excavations at Weldin and other locations in the 141 extended project area will allow firm comparisons about the material culture differences between factory and mill workers, truck gardeners, small scale farmers and the richer farmers with greater land holdings. The potential of this type of analysis and others which will be conducted with any future work is exciting!

As we bring our trip to a close, we will stop at the Blue Ball Tavern for a look around. The land on which the tavern was located was part of Chestnut Hill tract mentioned earlier, and the owner of Chestnut Hill from 1749-1771, Joshua Mortonson, was, appropriately enough, an innkeeper. Whether or not there was a tavern on the property at this juncture is not known, but by 1804 we could certainly have purchased some ale to slake our thirst. The innkeeper serving us would have been

Thomas McKee, who must have been kin to Andrew McKee, Jr., who bought 10 acres of land from Mortonson in 1777. Andrew McKee was a weaver. He only held title for 10 years, but, even today, local residents refer to a hill on this tract as "McKee's Hill" (we should all have such immortality for so little an effort!). In 1811, we would have bought drinks and food from George Miller. That same year, the Blue Ball Tavern was also used as a polling place. By 1852, innkeeper's fare and hospitality would have been hard to come by because the inn had now become the Blue Ball Farm. Ah, how transient are the pleasures of this life! Even more poignant is that, by 1888, the original Blue Ball Tavern building was converted and enlarged into a farmhouse. Charles Rotthouse, however, a true romantic, commemorated the old tavern, as noted in the discussion of the "smithy", with his concrete blue ball "sculpture".

THE END OF THE JOURNEY

As we pull back into our home port, we can reflect on what we have been able to glimpse. We have seen the expansion of settlement into the interior part of New Castle County, with very large land holdings appearing in the 17th century. Of these, we only had the briefest glimpse. The windows become somewhat more clear in the 18th century as the landholdings, still relatively large, become smaller and have names attached. Roads show up, but these are small roads, apparently in bad shape. In the late 1700's, along the more heavily traveled of these roads, we see taverns and inns spring up.

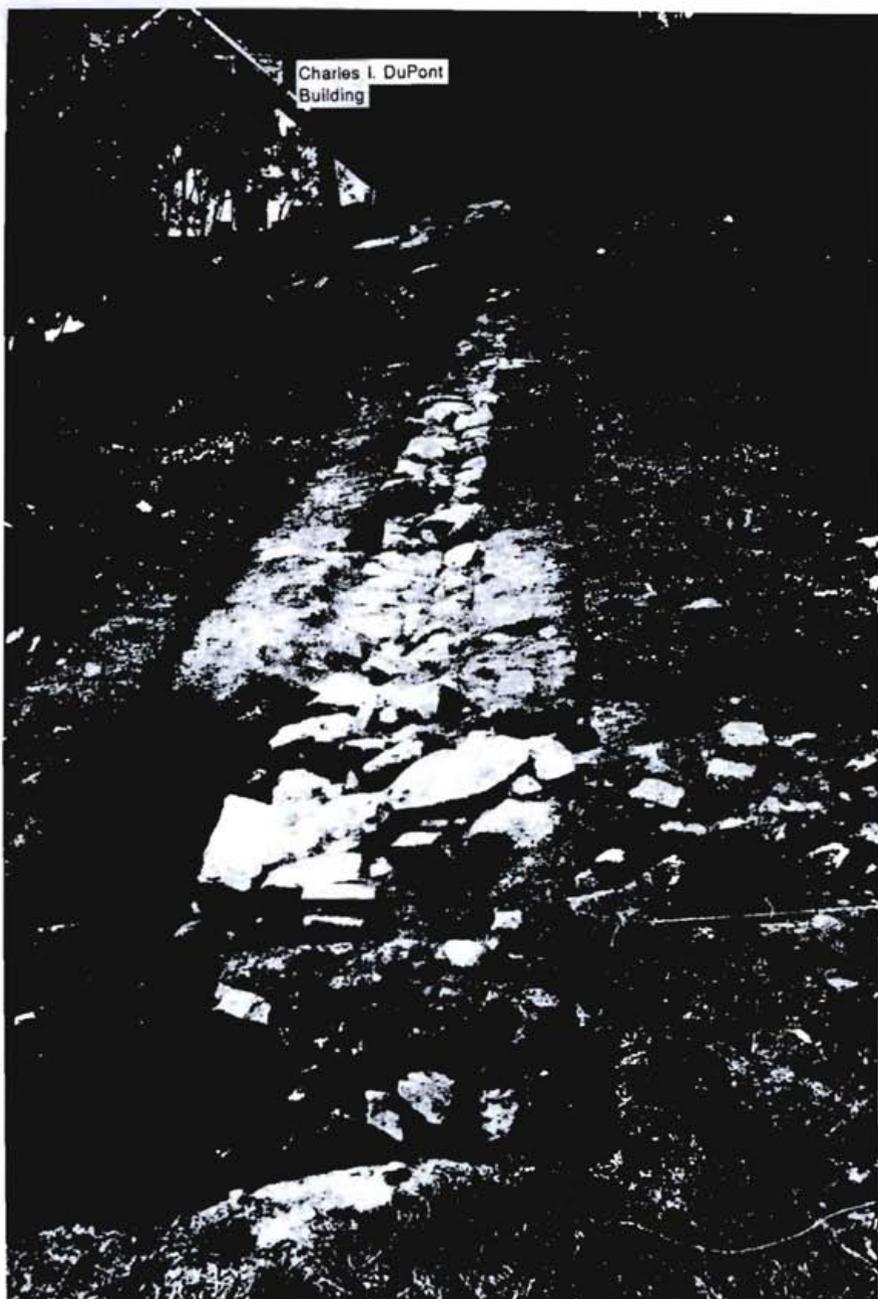
In the 1800's major changes occurred. We caught glimpses of the growing mill complexes on the Brandywine, a stream sought after by incipient industry because of its water power. As these mills grew and farming intensified, we caught our first glimpses of houses. Roads were improved and, as travel along these roads increased, more taverns and inns appeared. All of these developments intensified as the years rolled by during the 19th century. Although farms seem to have decreased in size, production increased. A number of farms, especially those close to Wilmington, as well as the growing Brandywine industries, switched to commercial production, especially in dairying. This kind of change in farm production is understandable because the products of dairy farms are perishable and need to be near the cities and good routes of transportation. A companion type of agricultural production to dairy farming at this time was truck gardening, and we saw a number of small landholdings with people who specialized in vegetable crops destined for the mill families and the city of Wilmington. A number of these people were probably former industrial workers along the Brandywine who saved to buy a plot of land. We even caught a glimpse of a hardworking farm family who took a

gamble on a run-down plantation and turned it into one of the more productive dairy farms. Absentee landlords become more common, and even lower level workers like millwrights, blacksmiths and wheelwrights came into possession of small farms, leasing them to tenants. Mills and related industries grew more numerous. Some rose and fell with the vagaries in the market place. One family, the DuPonts, continued to be successful and their business (like the classic American “rags to riches” story) grew and grew until they became the major landholders in the area.

Indeed, our whole trip has been a slice of American history over the past three centuries. We have had tantalizing glimpses into the windows of hotels and inns, tenant farmers, mill workers, dairy farmers, truck gardeners, industrialists, and artisans. They are all gone now; their inheritance lies in names like the DuPont Company, Murphy Road, Barley Mill Road, Weldin Road, Husbands Creek or Mckee’s Hill, or in a symbol like the Blue Ball, visible to all who pass but meaningless to those not aware of its history. We also have the tumbled down structures, the buried stone foundations and sidewalks, the discarded broken bottles and dishes, the lost coins - the refuse of life. There are many more windows and stories here, generations of them in the records housed in the various repositories throughout the state. Thank goodness for an efficient bureaucracy and for the ceramic shards, bottle fragments, animal bones, and arrowheads! Together, the archeologists and the State, through archeological projects such as this one, are allowing us to open these windows and write the stories of the DuPonts, Weldins, Grants, Husbands and Murphys, the great, the near great, the not-so-great, and the anonymous.

Until the next trip, we turn off the lights and shut down the engines. Goodbye!

Glossary of Terms



*Pigeon Row Tenement Foundation
DuPont Co. Workers Housing ca. 1870*

Archeology —

The scientific recovery of material evidence remaining from human life and culture in past ages; the study of this evidence.

Artifacts —

Objects produced or shaped by human workmanship.

Base Camp —

In prehistoric archeology, a site that was inhabited by a group for an extended period of time, sometimes permanently; a site of activities associated with day-to-day living.

Cooper —

A craftsman who makes wooden tubs and casks.

Deed —

A contract that legally transfers ownership of property from one person or group to another.

Estuary —

The wide, lower part of a river where fresh water mixes with salt water from the sea; an area rich in natural resources such as plants, fish, animals, and fowl.

Hamlet —

In prehistoric archeology, a grouping of several small houses lived in by families that were possibly related.

Historic —

In archeology, the period beginning with the arrival of Europeans in America; the period of recorded history.

Hundred —

An English administrative division of land used by early settlers in some American colonies.

Hypothesis —

In science, a statement that must be tested through research before it can be accepted as true.

Linguist —

A scholar who studies the structure of human speech; archeologists rely on linguists to interpret Native American languages and to trace similarities between them.

Midden —

In archeology, a layer of trash left by the people who lived at a site, often covering large areas of the site. At a prehistoric site a midden may contain pieces of broken pottery, animal bones and other food remains; at a historic site a midden may contain pieces of broken plates, glass, nails, and so forth.

National Register of Historic Places —

A list of prehistoric and historic archeological sites and structures deemed to be significant and worthy of intense investigation and/or preservation. This list is kept by the National Park Service and includes sites that meet one of three criteria: few sites like them are known to exist in the area; an important person was associated with them; and they yield important scientific information.

Perch —

In English land measurement, a unit of length equal to 5.5 yards; also called a 'pole' or 'rod'.

Prehistoric —

In archeology, the period of Native American habitation before the arrival of the Europeans. In the Middle Atlantic, this began at roughly 9500 B.C. (almost 12,000 years ago) and continued to roughly 1500 A.D. (almost 500 years ago).

Privateer —

The commander of a privately owned ship authorized by the government during war time to attack and capture enemy vessels.

Quarry Site —

In prehistoric archeology, a site where stone for making tools was gathered. Sometimes tools were also made at these sites, fashioned through a process known as 'flint knapping' which involved hitting the stone with another rock and systematically chipping off pieces.

Research Design —

The plan developed by archeologists before they undertake their field work; an outline that guides research based on the goals of the project.

Tenancy —

Lands and buildings that are rented; property that is occupied and used by someone other than the owner in exchange for rent.

Transient Camp —

In prehistoric archeology, a small site briefly occupied by only a few people who left the base camp for necessities that could not be acquired there; a hunting camp, for example, is a transient camp.

Will —

A legal document detailing the way a person wished his/her possessions disposed of at death.



Concord Pike - U.S. Route 202 Ncr

Courtesy Hagley Museum and Library

Blue Ball Tavern ca. 1804

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