

An Annotated Bibliography Archeology of Black American Culture

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With the growing interest in Black history has come an increasing awareness that the traditional written records offer little about the past of the American Blacks. Because of this, over the past decade the use of archeology has become a valuable technique for providing information about the Black history and culture. To aid future researchers in building on widely scattered earlier works the IAS staff compiled this annotated bibliography which is extensive but not comprehensive. IAS also plans to publish other material on this subject.



Ruins of slave cabins, Stafford Plantation,
Cumberland Island National Seashore, Georgia.

Photo: Paul McCrary, Cumberland Island
National Seashore, GA.

I. SLAVE HABITATIONS

A. Florida, Kingsley Plantation

Fairbanks, Charles H.

1972 The Kingsley Slave Cabins in Duval County Florida, 1968. *The Conference on Historic Sites Archaeology Papers* 7:62-93. The Institute of Archeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina, Columbia.

A lengthy archeological report on the excavation of a tabby slave cabin and foreman's cabin.

1968 Florida. *The Society for Historical Archeology Newsletter* 1(2):13

Briefly describes the excavation which is reported in detail in the paper listed above.

B. Georgia, Cumberland Island, Rayfield

Ascher, Robert and Charles H. Fairbanks

1971 Excavation of a Slave Cabin: Georgia, U.S.A. *Historical Archaeology* 5:3-17.

A highly readable and scholarly report on the excavation of a slave cabin. Selection of documents suitable for reading aloud are alternated with descriptions of the archeological excavation and its findings. It is an attempt to discover and convey a sense of daily life as it may have been experienced by the cabin occupants.

C. Georgia, Saint Simons Island, Cannon's Point Plantation (Couper Plantation)

Fairbanks, Charles F.

1976 Spaniards, Planters, Ships and Slaves: Historical Archaeology in Florida and Georgia, *Archaeology* 29:164-172.

Includes a three-page summary of a study of status differences among planter, overseer, and slave, as revealed in the archeological record at Cannon's Point Plantation.

McFarlane, Suzanne S.

1975 The Ethnohistory of a Slave Community: The Couper Plantation Site. M.A. Thesis, University of Florida, Gainesville.

Otto, John Solomon

1977 Artifacts and Status Differences: A Comparison of Ceramics from Planter, Overseer, and Slave Sites on an Antebellum Plantation. *Research Strategies in Historical Archaeology*, edited by Stanley South. Academic Press, New York.

Through the method of hypothesis testing and quantitative analysis, Otto demonstrates that attributes of ceramics are reliable indicators of social class on an antebellum plantation occupied by an upper-class planter family, middle-class white overseers, and Black slaves. The planter family provided the slaves and overseers with a special class of wares, perhaps judged more durable and suitable for laborers. Dif-

ferences in ceramic shapes are related to differences in diet.

1975 Status Differences and the Archaeological Record: A Comparison of Planter, Overseer, and Slave Sites from Cannon's Point Plantation (1794-1861, St. Simon's Island, Georgia). Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Florida, Gainesville.

D. Georgia, near Savannah, Mulberry Grove Plantation

Jackson, Susan
1976 Current Research: Southeast. *Society for Historical Archaeology Newsletter* 9(3):15-19.

Includes reference to testing, by Nicholas Honerkamp and Robin Smith in connection with the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement which revealed subsurface evidence of the slave quarters.

E. Louisiana, New Iberia, Shadows-on-the-Teche

Shenkel, J. Richard and Jack Hudson
1971 Historic Archaeology in New Orleans. *The Conference on Historic Site Archaeology Papers* 6:40-44. The Institute of Archeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina, Columbia.

Refers to excavations in the slave quarters area of this National Trust property.

F. North Carolina, Latimer House

Jackson, Susan
1977 Current Research: Southeast. *Society for Historical Archaeology Newsletter* 10(2):21-24.

Briefly describes the excavations undertaken by Dr. Thomas Loftfield of the University of North Carolina at Wilmington in preparation for the restoration of the slave quarters.

G. South Carolina, near Charleston, Archdale Hall

Jackson, Susan
1977 Current Research: Southeast. *Society for Historical Archaeology Newsletter* 10(1):42-45.

Includes reference to work by high school students, under the direction of Kay Scruggs, designed to locate and excavate possible slave cabins endangered by suburban development on the plantation. The Charleston Museum sponsored the project.

H. Tennessee, The Hermitage

Jackson, Susan
1977 Current Research: Southeast. *Society for Historical Archaeology Newsletter* 10(1):42-45.

Refers to tests at two slave cabin sites by Samuel D. Smith of the Tennessee Division of Archaeology.

I. Virginia, Kingsmill

Abbitt Outlaw, Merry, Beverley A. Bogley and Alain C. Outlaw
1977 Rich Man, Poor Man: Status Definition in Two 17th-Century Ceramic Assemblages from Kingsmill. Unpublished paper delivered at 1977 annual meeting of the Society for Historical Archaeology.

A quantitative comparison of the ceramics of a household known from documentary evidence to be high on the social and economic scale with the ceramics of a slave household. Greater quantity, the presence of specialized vessels, higher quality wares, and greater storage ability were found to correlate with higher social status.

Kelso, William M.
1976 The Colonial Silent Majority: Tenant, Servant and Slave Settlement Sites at Kingsmill, Virginia. Paper delivered at the American Anthropological Association 75th annual meeting, Washington, DC.

J. Virginia, Tutter's Neck

Noel Hume, Ivor
1966 Excavations at Tutter's Neck in James City County, Virginia, 1960-1961. *United States National Museum Bulletin* 249; *Contributions from the Museum of History and Technology* 53. Washington.

Briefly describes the excavation of several trash pits associated with slave quarters.

II. NORTHERN FREE BLACK HABITATIONS

A. HOUSES

1. Massachusetts, Andover

Bullen, A. K. and R. P.
1945 Black Lucy's Garden. *Bulletin of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society* 6(2):17-28.

Describes the excavation of a cellar hole, large dump, well, and a possible vegetable cellar at site occupied by a free Black woman in the first half of the 19th century.

2. Massachusetts, Concord

Snow, Cordelia Thomas
1969 Excavations at Casey's House. National Park Service. Minute Man National Park, Massachusetts, Mimeographed, 39 pp.

Describes test excavations at site of a small house in Concord, Massachusetts, thought to have been occupied by a former slave freed after military service in the Revolution. No conclusive evidence was obtained.

3. Delaware, near Wilmington

Ascher, Robert
1974 How to Build a Time Capsule. *Journal of Popular Culture* 8:241-253.

Using Weslager's report (1954) of the excavation of a colonial log cabin near Wilmington, Delaware, which was last occupied by a Black

man, Ascher turns the list of artifacts into an evocative piece of poetry.

Weslager, C. A.

1954 The Excavation of a Colonial Log Cabin Near Wilmington, Delaware. *Bulletin of the Archaeological Society of Delaware* 6(1).

B. COMMUNITIES

1. Massachusetts, Plymouth, Parting Ways

Deetz, James

1976 Black Settlement at Plymouth. *Archaeology* 29:207.

One page summary of the excavations results at Parting Ways, a small community located near Plymouth on land granted to four freed slaves after their service in the Continental Army during the American Revolution. Archeological evidence showed that these men retained much of their African cultural background.

1977 *In Small Things Forgotten*. Doubleday. New York.

Includes a chapter-length report of the archeological, documentary, and oral history investigation of this free

Black community. Significant findings included high quality but old-fashioned ceramics possibly acquired from the wealthy townspeople of Plymouth, and jars probably made in the West Indies that resemble the shape of West African pottery. The architecture and grouping of the houses reflected the residents' African heritage.

2. New York, Staten Island, Sandy Ground

Schuyler, Robert L.

1972 Sandy Ground: Archaeological Sampling in a Black Community in Metropolitan New York. *Conference on Historic Sites Archaeology Papers* 7:13-52. The Institute of Archeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina, Columbia.

Lengthy summary of the archeological investigations of a Black oystermen's community on Staten Island that has only recently been engulfed by the greater New York metropolitan area. Several house foundations and trash deposits were excavated and a cemetery was studied. The evolution of the community and its economic collapse are discussed.

1972 Archaeological Dig. *City College Alumnus* 67(5):12-13. New York.

1977 Archaeology of the New York Metropolis. *The Bulletin of the New York State Archaeological Association* 69:1-19.

3. New York, Brooklyn, Weeksville

Anonymous

1970 Digging It. *Newsweek*. March 30, p. 97.

1971 Weeksville Now Haven for History. *New York Post* Tuesday, October 5, pp. 2, 7.

Contains a brief summary of the history of this mid-19th century Black community



and the interest it has inspired in the mid-20th century.

Gutman, Judith Mara

1976 Uncovering a Long-Lost Village. *New York Times*, February 22, p. D31.

Briefly describes a show at the Metropolitan Museum of Art on Weeksville and discusses its history and the Weeksville project.

Hurley, James

1970 Weeksville: A Community Dig. *Northeast Historical Archaeology* Vol. 1.

Salwen, Bert and Sarah Bridges

1974 The Ceramics from the Weeksville Excavations, Brooklyn, New York. *Northeast Historical Archaeology* 3(1):4-29.

Brief summary of the history of this Black community, its growth and decline during the mid-19th century on what was then the edge of the greater New York metropolitan area. The quantitative analysis of ceramics from the site provided this information. The article also summarizes the community interest in this historical and archeological project in the late 1960s and the 1970s.

III. MISCELLANEOUS

A. African Meetinghouse, Boston

Bower, Beth Anne

1977 Historical Archeology Investigations: A Methodology for Developing Insights into Colonial/Early American Life. *Technology and Conservation* 2(3):32-37.

Briefly mentions the archeological excavations accompanying the restoration of a 1806 church built for the Black community.

Cotter, John L.

1976 Current Research: Northeast. *Society for Historical Archaeology Newsletter* 9(2):8-13.

Briefly mentions the work of Beth Bower of the Department of Anthropology, Brown University who undertook excavations in connection with the restoration project discussed in the paper listed above.

B. Afro-Caribbean Pottery

Vescelius, Gary S.

1977 Office of the Territorial Archaeologist. *Information* 2(3):1-3. Newsletter of the Virgin Islands Bureau of Libraries Museums and Archaeological Services.

This short article identifies a type of pottery found in the Virgin Islands that was probably made by Black potters, mainly if not exclusively, for use in Black households. It seems to have been fashioned in keeping with an African tradition.

C. Cemeteries

Combes, John D.

1972 Ethnography, Archaeology and Burial Practices Among Coastal South Carolina Blacks. *Conference on Historic Sites Archaeology Papers* 7:52-61.

Describes Black burial practices in the Southeast that are characterized by irregular grave orientation, frequent absence of grave markers, and presence of grave offerings on the surface. The article also discusses associated beliefs and customs.