"BOLD, ROCKY, AND PICTURESQUE"

ARCHEOLOGICAL IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION STUDY OF
ROCK CREEK PARK

Volume I

PREPARED FOR:

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
1100 OHIO DRIVE, SW
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20242

PREPARED BY:

THE LOUIS BERGER GROUP, INC.
2445 M Street, NW, Suite 400
Washington, D.C. 20037

August 2008 Final Report

"BOLD, ROCKY, AND PICTURESQUE"
ARCHEOLOGICAL OVERVIEW AND ASSESSMENT AND IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION STUDY OF
ROCK CREEK PARK
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

VOLUME I

Final Report

PREPARED FOR:

National Capital Region
National Park Service
1100 Ohio Drive, SW
Washington, D.C. 20242

PREPARED BY:

John Bedell
Stuart Fiedel
Charles LeeDecker

THE LOUIS BERGER GROUP, INC.
2445 M Street NW, Suite 400
Washington, D.C. 20037

August 2008

FOREWORD

Rock Creek Park is known today as a nature preserve, a recreational area, and a wooded refuge within the crowded confines of the nation's capital (Figure 1), but the park landscape has served many uses over thousands of years, from hunting and quarrying stone to farming and milling. For a few days in 1864 it was a battlefield. All of these activities have left traces on the landscape, and as a result the park contains a treasury of archeological sites. Until recently, however, most of those sites were unknown. Many people know Rock Creek Park only by their daily automobile commutes from the Maryland suburbs to downtown, never realizing the wealth of stories in the landscape around them.

Rock Creek Park is administered by the National Park Service (NPS), which has long sought to record the historic and archeological sites on its land so that they can be preserved and interpreted for the public. Part of that policy is the Systemwide Archeological Inventory Program (SAIP), which funds archeological surveys of park lands. Under this program the National Capital Region of the NPS has sponsored a four-year archeological survey of Rock Creek Park (Figure 2). This study was carried out by The Louis Berger Group, Inc. (Berger), from 2003 to 2007. During this project nearly 1,300 acres of park land was surveyed, and 51 archeological sites were identified. Of those sites, 11 were archeological components of previously known historic sites, such as Fort Totten and Peirce Mill, and 40 were entirely new discoveries. These sites include Native American camps and stone quarries, colonial farmsteads and mills, nineteenth-century tenant dwellings, and Civil War sites.

In order to address multiple audiences most effectively—the general public, the park, NPS, review agency staff, and the archeological community—this report is organized in a way that differs from the standard cultural resource study. This volume (I) presents a narrative of the prehistory and history of the park based upon the archival and archeological field investigations; it is intended for the non-technical reader and does not contain specific information about site locations. Volume II provides a more technical description and assessment of the project's research methods and findings. In organization and content, Volume II more closely follows the professional standards of the cultural resource management industry, and it is intended for distribution only within the professional community. Whereas Volume I contains the historical narrative, Volume II concentrates on a presentation of the prehistoric research. Volume III, also intended for limited distribution, contains additional technical materials and appendices, including artifact inventories, transcripts of the archival documents that are most important to the historical narrative contained in Volume I, and other supporting information.

Rock Creek Park is a marvelous place to work, but this project has been made even more enjoyable by the great support we received from the park and the National Capital Region. We would particularly like to thank Chief of Resource Management and Visitor Services Perry Wheelock and Superintendent Adrienne Coleman of Rock Creek Park, and Regional Archeologist Dr. Stephen Potter, who guided this project and gave us invaluable assistance. Other NPS staff who assisted include Assistant Superintendent Cindy Cox, Chief Ranger Laura Illige, Natural Resource Specialist Joe Kish, Supervisory Park Ranger Dwight Madison, and Education Specialist Maggie Zodorzny.

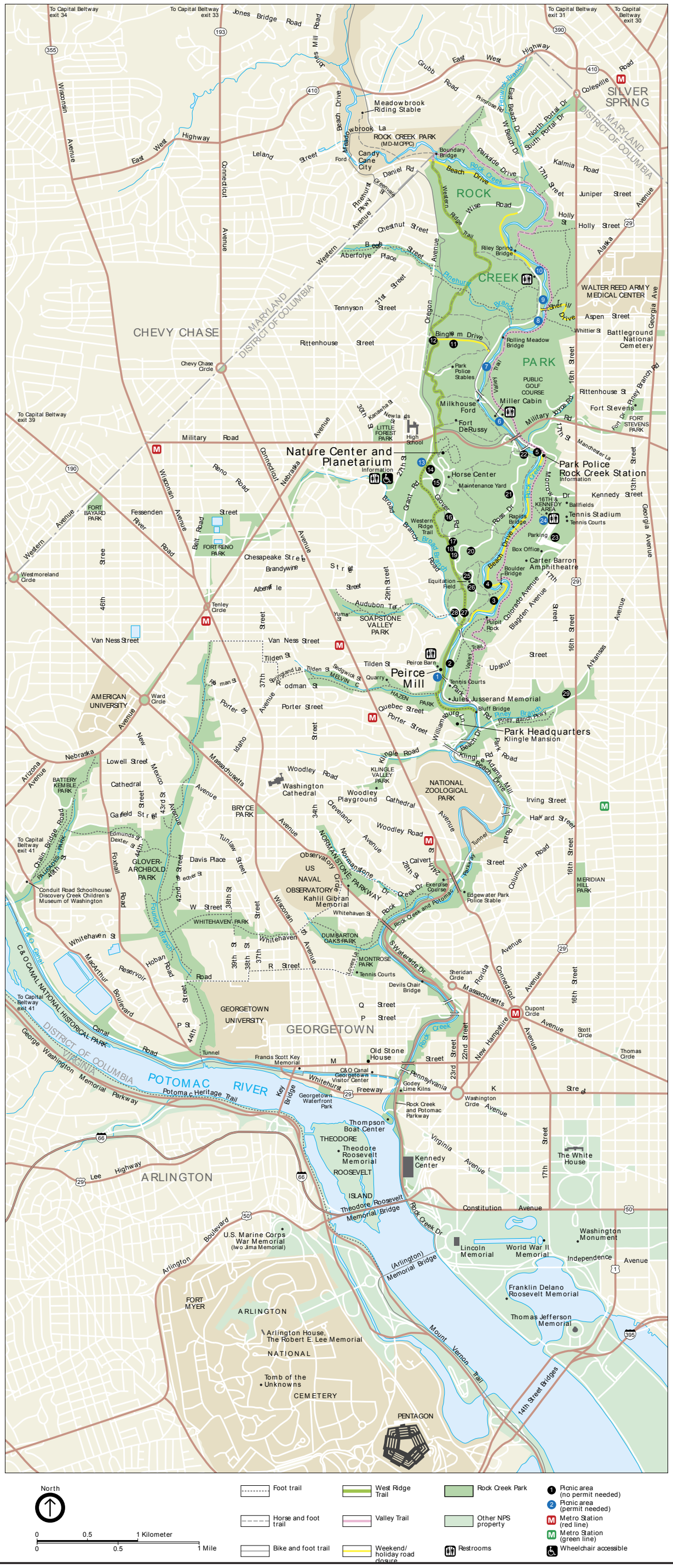


FIGURE 1: Map of Rock Creek Park

SOURCE: NPS

We also wish to thank Nancy Kassner, former City Archaeologist with the D.C. Historic Preservation Office, who guided us during the study, and her replacement Ruth Trocolli, who reviewed these reports.

The project was directed by Dr. Stuart Fiedel and Dr. John Bedell and was managed by Charles LeeDecker. Dr. Daniel Wagner was project geomorphologist. Keith Googins and Jason Shellenhamer served as field supervisors at various times through the program. Eric Griffitts carried out historical research. The artifacts were analyzed by Susan Butler and Todd Hejlik. Artifact photos were taken by Susan Butler, and the figures were drafted by Jacqueline Horsford. Editorial assistance was provided by Anne Moiseev and C. Carol Halitsky. We owe special thanks to the field archeologists whose hard work and care brought all our discoveries to light: Meg Blome, Chelsea Borchini, Mike Gubisch, Elise Kordis, Jackie Maisano, Elizabeth Paynter, Tiffany Raszick, Isaac Shearn, Alexis Smith, Jeremy Smith, and Brian Wenham. GIS assistance was provided by Christopher Faust, Anil Shrestha, Shawn Gravatt, Mike Schuster, Brad Reed, and Andrew Burke.



FIGURE 2: Archeologists at Work in Rock Creek Park, 2005

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	*Page*
FOREWORD	i
INTRODUCTION	1
THE FIRST PEOPLE	3
The Potomac Quarries	3
The Whitehurst Freeway Sites	6
The Palisades	8
THE POTOMAC FRONTIER	14
Indians and Traders	14
The Rangers' Fort	17
Where Was the Potomac Rangers' Garrison?	17
Captain Richard Brightwell	22
Ninian Beall	23
Patents and Tenants	24
SETTLEMENT AND THE CLOUIN COURSE SITE	28
Tenants and the Frontier Landscape	28
Clouin Course: The Park in the Eighteenth Century	31
Carroll's Tenants	31
The Clouin Course Site	31
The Commission	34
FARMING AND MILLING	35
Farmsteads and Mills	35
The Carroll Tenancy Site	36
Eighteenth-Century Milling Along Rock Creek Park	36
Milling in the Nineteenth Century	38
Peirce Mill	39
Argyle Mill	41
The Nineteenth-Century Landscape	41
Peirce Shoemaker Farm	43
Linneaen Hill	44
Thomas Blagden	48
THE CIVIL WAR	50
The Circle Forts	50
Fort DeRussy	50
Fort DeRussy Dump Site	57
Battery Kemble	57
Battle of Fort Stevens	58
Remains of the Battle	63

TABLE OF CONTENTS (continued)

Chapter	*Page*
In the Papers	64
The Guns of Fort DeRussy	65
Battery Kemble Contraband Settlement	67
THE POSTWAR LANDSCAPE	70
The People of the Valley	71
The Sarah Whitby Site	77
The Charles and Jane Dickson Sites	82
The Rock Creek Valley in 1890	82
CONSTRUCTING A GRAND NATIONAL PARK	84
THE PARK IN MODERN TIMES	87
REFERENCES CITED	88

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure		*Page*
1	Map of Rock Creek Park	ii
2	Archeologists at Work in Rock Creek Park, 2005	iii
3	Preforms or Turtlebacks from the Piney Branch Quarry	4
4	Archeologist W.H. Holmes of the Smithsonian Bureau of Ethnology	4
5	Diorama First Displayed at the Grand Columbian Exposition of 1893 Depicting American Indians Quarrying and Working Stone at Piney Branch	5
6	Artifacts from a Middle Woodland Burial at the Whitehurst Freeway Site	8
7	Prehistoric Artifacts from the Maddox Branch Sites	9
8	Grinding Stone from Maddox Branch	10
9	Gorget Fragment from Maddox Branch	11
10	Large Grooved Ax from Maddox Branch	11
11	Selby Bay Points from the Maddox Branch Sites	12
12	Savannah River Points from the Maddox Branch Sites	13
13	A Section of John Smith's 1608 Map Showing the Potomac River	15
14	Augustine Herrman Map of 1673	16
15	A Mounted Soldier of the 1690s	18
16	Land Patents in the Washington Area	20
17	The Likely Location of the Potomac Rangers' Garrison in the 1690s Shown on a Map from 1892	21
18	Graffenreid Map of 1712 Showing Houses at Mouth of Rock Creek	25
19	Approximate Boundaries of the Tomlinson and Hall Tenancies	32
20	Artifacts from the Clouin Course Site	33
21	Loading Tobacco at a Colonial Port	35
22	Artifacts from the Carroll Tenancy Site	37
23	Painting of Peirce Mill in 1840s	38
24	Photograph of Peirce Mill in 1855	39
25	Plat Showing Peirce Mill Buildings in 1864	40
26	Argyle Mill and the Blagden Estate in 1875	42
27	Rock Creek Valley in 1861	43
28	Linnaean Hill Today	45
29	Plan of Linnaean Hill in 1861	46
30	Rock Creek Valley in 1864	51
31	Plan of Fort DeRussy, 1863	53
32	Fort DeRussy, 1863: Plan of Outlying Buildings and Road	54
33	Sketches of Fort DeRussy and the Guard House, 1862	55
34	Military Artifacts from the Fort DeRussy Dump Site	57
35	Plan of Battery Kemble, 1863	59

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS (continued)

Figure		*Page*
36	Contemporary Sketch of the Battle of Fort Stevens by R.K. Sneden	62
37	Bullets and a Shell Fragment from the Battle of Fort Stevens	63
38	Fragments of a Shell from the Largest Gun at Fort DeRussy, a 100-Pounder Parrot Rifle	64
39	Detail of Battery Kemble Area, 1861	67
40	Detail of Battery Kemble Area, 1878	68
41	Battery Kemble Area, 1892	69
42	Crystal Springs and Brightwood Racecourse, 1867	70
43	Crystal Springs and Brightwood (Piney Branch) Racecourse, 1878	71
44	Character of Property Included in the Rock Creek Park (South)	73
45	Character of Property Included in the Rock Creek Park (North)	74
46	DeLancey Gill Drawing of House at 18th and R Streets, 1883	78
47	DeLancey Gill Drawing of House near 23rd and R Streets, 1883	79
48	Sarah Whitby Site Reconstruction	80
49	Artifacts from the Sarah Whitby Site	81
50	Buttons from the Sarah Whitby Site	81
51	Cast-Iron Toy Figurine of Black Cart Driver from the Charles Dickson Site	83
52	Boulder Bridge	86
53	A Postcard of Rock Creek Park from the 1920s	86
54	*Cecilia My Sweet:* Contemporary History Carved on a Tree in the Park	87

LIST OF TABLES

Table		*Page*
1	Early Patents in the Georgetown and Rock Creek Area	26
2	Charles Carroll's Leases	31
3	Slaves of Joshua Peirce in 1862	47
4	African-Americans Living near Battery Kemble in 1880	69
5	Park Properties with Improvements, 1892	72
6	Tenants in Rock Creek Park, December 30, 1894	75
7	Parcels, Tenants, Improvements, Rent, 1895	76
8	Employment in the Whitby and Cross Households, 1900	76

INTRODUCTION

Rock Creek enters the Potomac River at the boundary between the Coastal Plain and the hilly Piedmont. You can travel by boat more than two miles farther west up the Potomac, but along Rock Creek you would be blocked by rapids only a few hundred yards from the river. Here on the hills overlooking the Tidewater lowlands, people have lived for at least the past 4,000 years. The Falls of the Potomac were long a favorite gathering spot for Native Americans who caught the fish that pooled there during the spring runs, and the surrounding hills contain many artifacts that show where they camped. When the colony of Maryland came under Indian attacks in the 1690s, the colonists built a fort at the Falls from which militiamen called Potomac Rangers patrolled the back country with help from Indian guides. After 1750 the town of Georgetown grew up at the mouth of Rock Creek, which was about as far up the Potomac as seagoing ships could sail. To grind grain for the flour trade and to feed the locals, more than a dozen mills were built along Rock Creek. Farmers plowed the hilltops, planted gardens along the stream, and built houses along the bluffs. When the City of Washington was established in 1795, the Rock Creek Valley was a mix of woodlands, fields, and pastures. More than a hundred people lived in the area, including tenants, slaves, property-owning farmers, and a few rich planters who owned hundreds of acres.

During the Civil War forts bristling with cannon were built to defend Washington from Confederate attack. In July 1864 the forts on the north side of the city came to arms to defend the city from Jubal Early's raid. When their initial advance down what is now Georgia Avenue was blocked by Fort Stevens, the Confederates tried to bypass the fort by using the Rock Creek Valley as cover. The guns of Fort DeRussy and a motley force of dismounted cavalry and armed clerks from the War Department held off the rebels until reinforcements arrived from the Army of the Potomac, and Early headed back the way he had come.

After the Civil War the federal government grew, and the cities of Washington and Georgetown grew along with it. Houses were built along both sides of Rock Creek, and plans were made for more. In those years the urban parks movement was gaining strength in America, and people who thought Washingtonians needed a refuge from the heat and crowding of the growing city cast their eyes to the still largely open ground along Rock Creek. Eventually, in the 1890s Congress appropriated funds to create Rock Creek Park and set up the Rock Creek Park Commission to buy land and manage the property. The land bought for the park was mostly pasture or woodland, but a few suburban house lots were bought, along with several parcels where houses had been planned but not built. The future park contained one mansion, known as Linnaean Hill; the Shoemaker family, owners of Linnaean Hill, took their fight against the Park Commission all the way to the Supreme Court, but in the end they lost and were forced to sell. The people who lived within the park were not immediately evicted, however, and some stayed on as tenants until after 1900.

Many notable people have left their marks on this landscape, from Richard Brightwell, the first Captain of the Potomac Rangers, to William Henry Holmes, one of America's first eminent archeologists. The first British settler west of Rock Creek and the owner in 1710 of much of the future park was Ninian Beall, a Scottish prisoner of war who was sent to Barbados as an indentured servant but rose to become one of Maryland's wealthiest planters and most prominent politicians. One of the last full-time residents of the park was Sarah Whitby, a widowed African-

American laundress who raised nine children in a rented house on Broad Branch and made sure that they all learned to read even though she herself was illiterate. In telling the story of this place, we will tell the stories of some of the many men and women who lived in the lands around Rock Creek.

Today Rock Creek Park is an urban oasis containing nearly 3,000 acres of land. Besides the large block of land along Rock Creek, which measures 1,777 acres, the park includes numerous smaller parcels scattered throughout Washington. Some of these parcels are just little patches of grass and trees, but they include larger parks like Meridian Hill Park and several Civil War forts.

THE FIRST PEOPLE

People have lived in the Washington, D.C., area for around 13,000 years. Native Americans have been gathering at the Falls of the Potomac for at least the past 10,000 years, and the hills overlooking the Falls were once covered with ancient artifacts. The Rock Creek Valley seems to have been visited only occasionally until about 4,000 years ago. Hunting parties came through, and other people passed by on their way to somewhere else, but the small number of artifacts shows that they didn't stay long. Around 2000 BC, however, during the Late Archaic period, people began to quarry stone from the huge beds of ancient river cobbles that are exposed along some of the bluffs around Rock Creek. These quarries and the nearby Native American camps are our first evidence of any sort of large-scale or long-term Indian presence along Rock Creek. At around the same time, people began camping along a little stream once known as Maddox Branch, a spot that was used again and again for 3,000 years, leaving extraordinary deposits of artifacts. Other people camped around the mouth of the creek, and archeology completed in association with planned improvements to the Whitehurst Freeway showed that important Indian remains survived the industrial use of the area in the 1800s and still remain amidst the tangle of highway ramps. Small sites left by camping parties are found throughout the park. The record of ancient Indian life in the park is very rich indeed.

THE POTOMAC QUARRIES

The cobbles that one can still see on the bluffs overlooking Rock Creek and Piney Branch were mostly a type of very tough stone known as quartzite. Quartzite was not much used in earlier times, but the Late Archaic residents of coastal Virginia and Maryland preferred it for making a wide, heavy spearpoint known as the Savannah River broadspear. Huge numbers of quartzite cobbles were taken from these hillsides and chipped into roughly oval "blanks" or "preforms" (Figure 3). Those abandoned during the early stages of chipping or flaking are sometimes called "turtlebacks" because of their shape. The roughly shaped stones were carried to campsites nearby, where they were shaped into finished tools. The quarry sites are covered with millions of fragments of waste stone and many thousands of cobbles that were tested and then discarded. The people who made these broadspears also carved tub-shaped cooking vessels out of soapstone (also called steatite). Soapstone was hacked out of the bedrock using axes of harder stone and wooden wedges. Ancient soapstone quarries have been found in the hills of the District of Columbia, northern Virginia, and Maryland, including some near Rock Creek.

The quartzite and soapstone quarries within the Rock Creek Valley have an important place in the history of American archeology. They were studied intensively by William Henry Holmes (Figure 4) of the Bureau of American Ethnology between 1889 and 1894. The rough, oval preforms from the quarries look something like the ancient Acheulian handaxes of Europe, which are now known to date to about 100,000 to 500,000 years ago. Before Holmes's research some American archeologists saw similarities between the local preforms and European sites and thought that people must have lived in North America in Acheulian times. Holmes was able to reconstruct the sequence by which a cobble was chipped into a finished spearpoint, and to show that what were said to be ancient handaxes were actually only the middle stages of this tool-making process. Years later Holmes remained proud of his research at the Piney Branch quarry. His findings at this "sacred spot" had "done more to clear up the story of man in America than any single piece of research in the United States" (Holmes, personal correspondence 1925 and 1932, as quoted by Meltzer and Dunnell 1992:xvii).

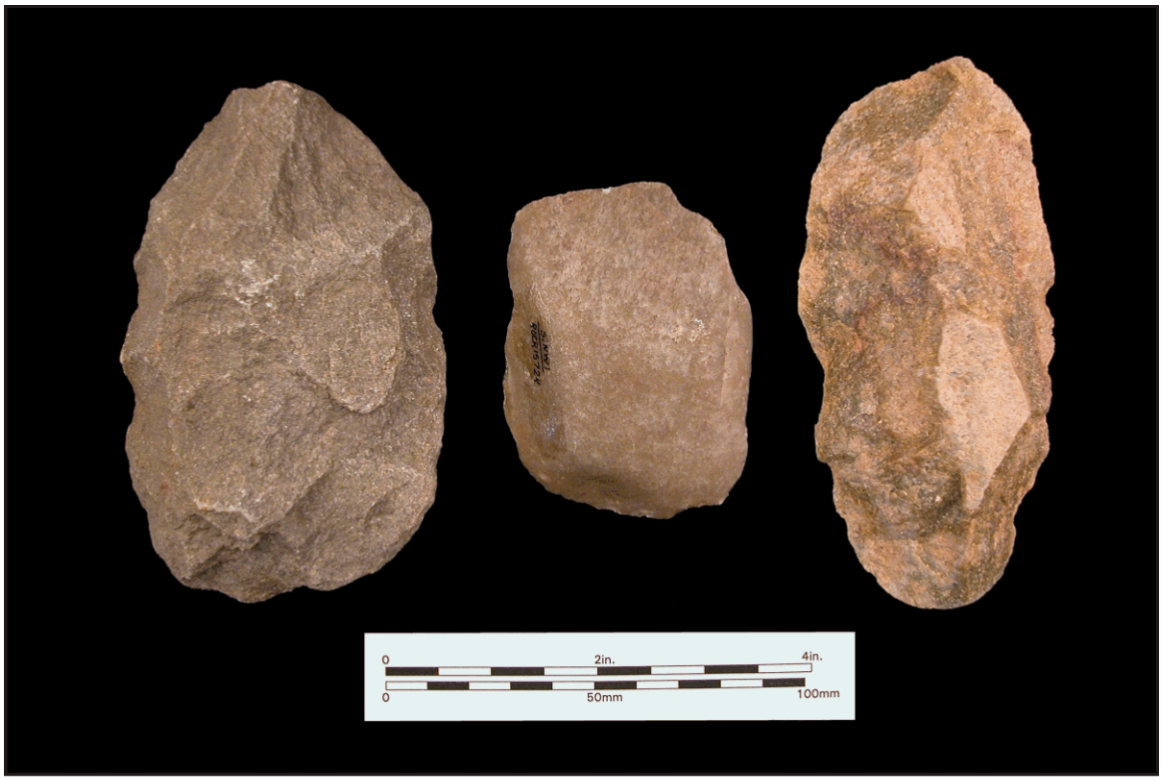


FIGURE 3: Preforms or Turtlebacks from the Piney Branch Quarry

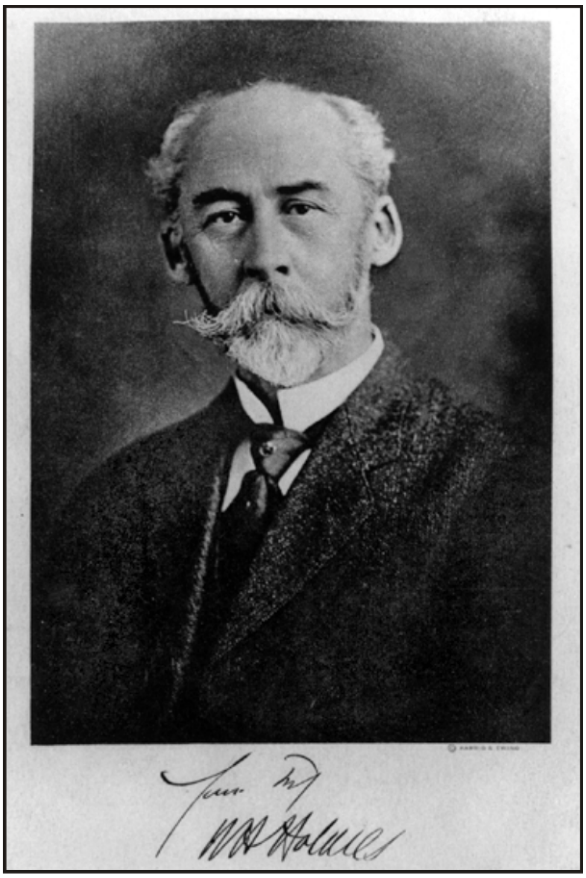


FIGURE 4: Archeologist W.H. Holmes of the Smithsonian Bureau of Ethnology

We think today that Holmes was right about the supposed handaxes not being as old as originally thought, but he underestimated how long people had been in North America. Holmes believed that the original inhabitants were very similar to the people who welcomed the first European explorers and had only been here for at most 5,000 years. When life-sized dioramas of the Piney Branch Quarry were created under Holmes's supervision for display at the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago, the plaster figures were given hairstyles and clothing like those of Algonquian Indians of the 1600s (Holmes 1897:44) (Figure 5). Holmes suggested he was not absolutely convinced of the accuracy of this depiction when he expressed that it had not been his intention "to illustrate a satisfactorily established episode in the history of a particular people." However, he believed that since the diorama "associates with the quarries the only people that have any claim whatsoever to the occupancy of the region and the site, the chances are greatly in favor of the practical correctness of the impressions conveyed" (Holmes 1897:150).

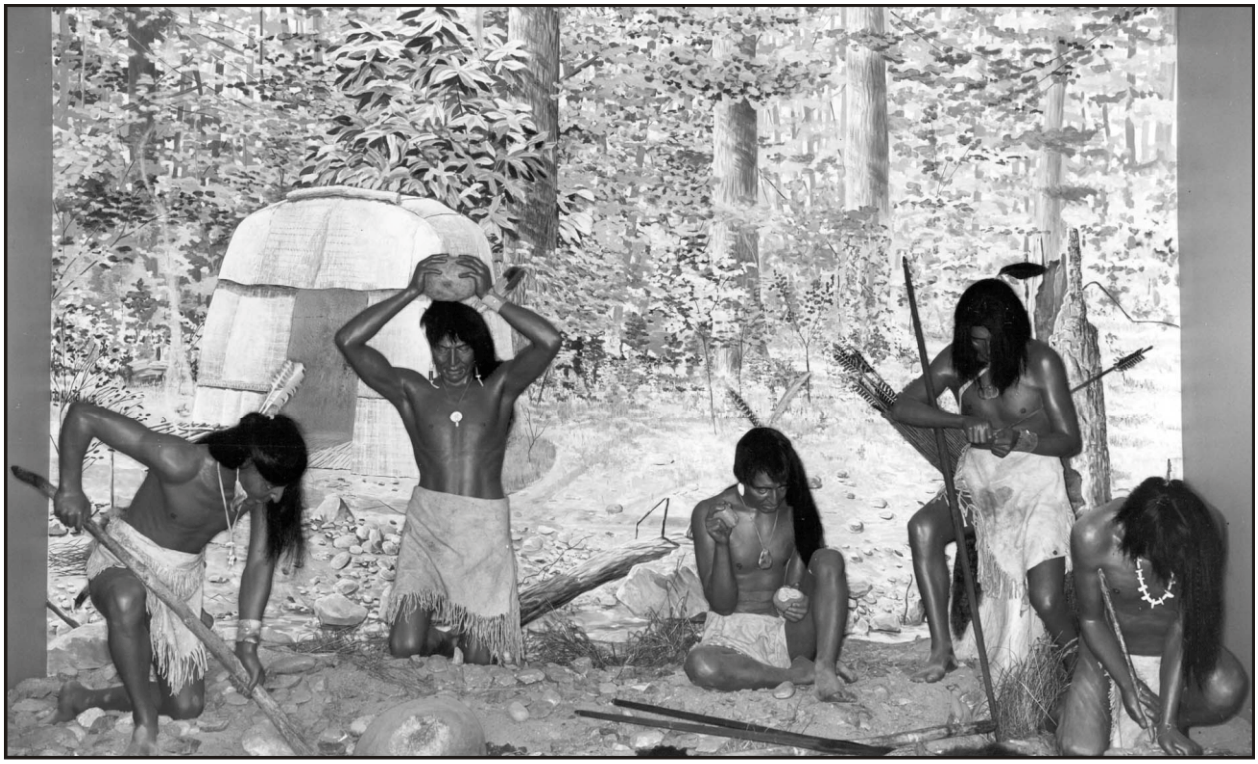


FIGURE 5: Diorama First Displayed at the Grand Columbian Exposition of 1893 Depicting American Indians Quarrying and Working Stone at Piney Branch

Even today we are not certain when or for how long the quartzite quarries were used. Holmes did not find any finished spearpoints in his excavations (which could be approximately dated by their distinctive style), nor have any been found at the sites since. Our best clue is the material of the stones. Quartzite was used for stone tools at many times in the past, but only the Late Archaic Savannah River people used so much of it that they would have needed the enormous quarries along Rock Creek. It is therefore most likely that the quarries were used during the Late Archaic, about 2000 to 1500 BC.

Those dates come from radiocarbon dating of fireplaces found near Savannah River spearpoints on other sites. This dating technique, which only became available to archeologists after 1948, requires organic samples, preferably charcoal. As we have tried to determine the date of the quarries, we have pondered this item in Holmes's account of his work:

> In one of the side trenches a good deal of charcoal was found, and at the depth of about 6 feet a charred log more than 10 feet long and in places a foot in diameter was encountered. It rested on or near the bottom of the ancient excavation, and consisted of a shell of charcoal, the interior uncharred portion having been entirely replaced by sand, which had found its way through the crevices. There is no reason to suppose that it was used by the ancient quarrymen in their work, or that it was anything more than a log which, having fallen into the deserted pit, was burned by forest fires. Charred wood and small masses of charcoal were found, but man's agency was not necessarily involved in their production [Holmes 1897:65].

Not knowing that radiocarbon dating would one day be invented, Holmes saved none of this charcoal. Even if he was right and the log had burned naturally, the date of that burning might have told us a great deal. Since it lay on the bottom of the pit, it apparently fell into the pit after

it had been completely dug. The date of the burning of the log would therefore give us a *terminus ante quem* (a date before which something occurred) for the digging of the pit; that is, it would yield a date before which the pit must have been dug. On the other hand, Holmes may have been wrong about how the log was burned. Prehistoric quarry workers did make fires occasionally, and we do find charcoal in quarry pits that can tell us when the quarrying was done.

Holmes's excavations at the Rock Creek quarries represent the state of the art in late nineteenth-century archeology, and it would be difficult even today to improve upon his techniques or reporting. One of his quartzite boulder quarries still exists within the park. We explored the site on foot, and we found that it remains much as it was when Holmes tested it. We picked up whole and broken turtleback cores at various stages of completion, as well as half of a large, crude axe, possibly used as a quarrying tool. We also did a small amount of testing (two shovel tests) on a level area that seemed to be a good location for a campsite where tools might have been finished. We did find some evidence of tool making, including a complete turtleback and the tip of a nearly finished spearpoint.

Holmes found a few more quartzite boulder quarries in the District of Columbia, both east and west of Rock Creek. He observed that a site near Connecticut Avenue and Peirce Mill Road was the northernmost. All of the quarries are therefore within a few miles of the Potomac River. This fits with what we know about the Savannah River people. The typical sites of this period (2000 to 1500 BC) are large camps along rivers and other large wetlands. Away from rivers in upland areas, we find fewer of the small camp sites that are common from earlier periods. We assume that Savannah River people lived for much of the year in "base camps" along the rivers and spent less time roaming the uplands than earlier groups. We do not know what they did in their river valley base camps. They did not farm (maize was only grown in this region after AD 900), and although fishing seems logical, we have yet to find definitive evidence of this.

Holmes investigated the Rose Hill steatite quarry, which already at that time was in the process of being obliterated by the construction of Connecticut Avenue. This now-vanished site was located at the western end of the present Soapstone Valley Park.

THE WHITEHURST FREEWAY SITES

At the mouth of Rock Creek, just north of the Potomac River, there is a tangle of ramps and embankments at the end of Whitehurst Freeway. This does not seem like a likely place to find a Native American camp site; if you imagine the highway under construction, with cranes, backhoes, and other heavy equipment tearing up the ground, it is easy to assume that any traces of people who once lived here must have been destroyed. Maps from the early 1900s only make this seem more likely since they show that the area was an industrial district where foundries and a brewery operated. But an archeological study of this area found important Native American sites, including one truly spectacular burial (Knepper et al. 2006). It seems that a large amount of earth was dumped on the site before the factories were built, and that this fill protected the Indian site from the later construction of the Whitehurst Freeway.

East of Rock Creek, on what was once a level spot about 30 feet above the creek, was the Peter House Site. Here prehistoric artifacts were found in an old gully that had been filled in with trash—what archeologists call a midden. This midden was stratified, meaning that the artifacts

were found in layers of soil that had built up over time, with the oldest on the bottom and the newest on top. The earliest artifacts from this context were Middle Archaic points, about 6,000 years old. Most of the finds dated to the Middle and Late Woodland periods, 500 BC to AD 1600. Advances in radiocarbon dating allow us to obtain dates from very small amounts of material, such as the thin smears of ash sometimes found on sherds from ceramic pots that were used for cooking. "Residue" on a sherd that had been decorated by pressing a net into the wet clay ("net-impressed") and was found in the upper layers produced radiocarbon dates of around AD 1055 to 1090. Another sherd from the same layer, decorated with small, punched holes ("punctate"), was dated to around AD 975 to 1205. From a lower level of the site, a sherd of a variety we call Popes Creek ware was dated to about 385 to 115 BC. We can therefore see that the site was used again and again for thousands of years. At least some of the time the groups that camped or lived here were fairly large, and they included men and women. Piles of cobbles cracked by heat, what archeologists call "fire-cracked rock," were found in the gully, and from these we know that large fires were built on the site, possibly to smoke fish.

The Whitehurst Freeway Site was closer to the creek than the Peter House Site, only about seven feet above high tide. Most of the artifacts found there dated to around AD 1000. At least 11 triangular stone arrowheads were found, most of them broken. A small pit on this site contained a very interesting array of materials, including wood charcoal, grass leaves, a potato-like root, walnuts, hickory nuts, and seeds of pokeweed, raspberry, and blackberry. No corn or beans were found. The wild foods remind us that although Late Woodland Indians were farmers who grew corn and other crops in their summer villages, they also spent much of the year away from those villages, hunting and gathering. The site at the mouth of Rock Creek was probably not a farming village, but a camp used during those wandering seasons. The potsherds from this feature were of a type called Townsend, used by Indians of the Coastal Plain between AD 800 and 1500. Two of these sherds were radiocarbon dated to AD 885 to 1035 and AD 995 to 1205. Since people of the Piedmont area used different kinds of pottery, these finds show us that Washington was part of the Coastal Plain culture area throughout the Late Woodland period. On top of this small pit were artifacts dating to around the time Europeans first entered the area, with one radiocarbon date of about AD 1640. These artifacts show that traditional Indian life continued in Washington after the Maryland colony had been founded.

The most spectacular find was made where a new ramp was planned, next to both the freeway and Rock Creek Park Parkway. Historical maps show that around 1800, prior to major landfill episodes, the east bank of Rock Creek lay 250 feet west of the site, as it does today. Here the archeologists uncovered a pit that they named Feature 283, an unremarkable name for probably the most important Native American find yet made in the District of Columbia. Feature 283 was a burial containing the remains of an adult, probably a 30- to 40-year-old woman. She had been cremated elsewhere, and then her scattered bone fragments were placed in a shallow pit measuring about 2.3 feet in diameter. Along with the bones were a comb carved from antler; two stone pendants, one slate, one schist, each with a single drilled hole; a carved sandstone phallus; a triangular knife of black chert; 14 great white shark teeth, 12 fossilized and two apparently recent; a bone from a large bird; six antler disks; a wooden bead; and textiles woven of fibers from pawpaw and some kind of grassy plant (Figure 6). Radiocarbon dates put this burial at AD 640 to 790. Most of the artifacts closely resemble objects found in graves in what we call the Kipp Island phase of central New York, part of a culture that stretched from the Great Lakes to the Delmarva Peninsula. Similar artifacts were found at the Island Field Site in Delaware.



FIGURE 6: Artifacts from a Middle Woodland Burial at the Whitehurst Freeway Site

Feature 283 is an important find for archeologists and historians trying to answer a long-standing question. The Indians who lived in coastal Maryland and Virginia in the 1600s spoke Algonquian languages closely related to languages spoken in the Great Lakes region. We therefore suspect that these coastal Algonquians had migrated to the Chesapeake region from the northwest at some time in the past. But when? Because this burial so closely resembles burials made in New York around the same time, it may mean that either the woman who was buried here or her parents had recently come to the area from farther north. This burial, along with those at Island Field, may represent the entry of Algonquian people into the region and therefore date their arrival to around AD 600 to 700.

THE PALISADES

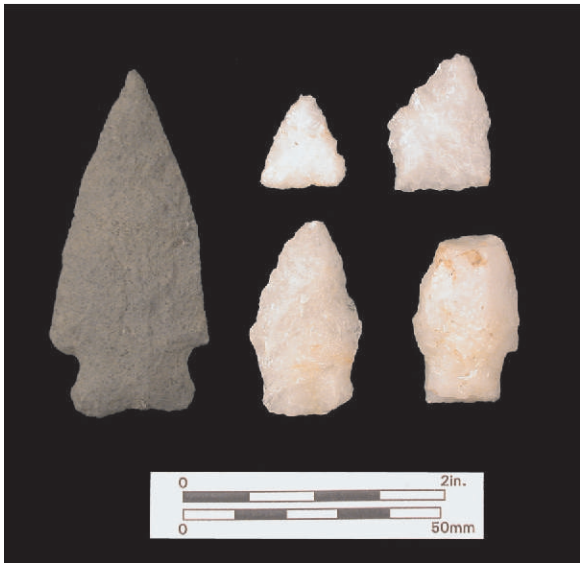
Some of the most important finds in Rock Creek Park were two extremely dense prehistoric sites in the floodplain of a small stream once known as Maddox Branch. We call these the Upper and Lower Maddox Branch Sites. Test excavations in these sites produced hundreds of artifacts, including many stone tools and potsherds (Figure 7) as well as flaking debris. These are rare, surviving sites of the sort that were once seen by early archeologists such as W.H. Holmes. They were used over a period of about 4,000 years, from about 2500 BC to AD 1500.

Why were these sites visited so often over such a long time, leading to this amazing accumulation of cultural material? Maddox Branch enters the Potomac below Little Falls. People traveling upstream by canoe may have landed here and portaged their canoes around the









Above Left: Rappahannock Incised Potsherd, ca. AD 1200-1500

Center Left: Early Woodland Accokeek (ca. 1000 – 400 BC) and Middle Woodland Mockley (AD 300 – 1000) Pottery

Above Right: Miscellaneous Spear Points and Knives from Maddox Branch North

Bottom Left: Miscellaneous Spear Points and Knives from Maddox Branch South. The large point at left is of an unknown type, possibly related to Susquehanna Broad points of ca. 1800 BC.

FIGURE 7: Prehistoric Artifacts from the Maddox Branch Sites

Falls along the stream, which provides a convenient route through the steep bluffs. This location on an important travel route would also help to explain the massive Late Woodland storage pits and earlier cultural components found at Fletcher's Boathouse (Barse 2002), which is on the Potomac floodplain not far away. The Maddox Branch sites were probably not merely short-term camps, however; many ceramic vessels were used, and some were broken and discarded at the Upper Site. These pots suggest that women were part of the band, at least in the Woodland period occupations (about 1200 BC to 1600 AD), and that they prepared food here. A pitted grinding stone (Figure 8) was used for processing nuts. Stone tools were made here, including an unfinished ax, and stone points were discarded, indicating weapon repair. A broken gorget (Figure 9) or pendant—an item of personal adornment and possibly symbolic value—was lost or abandoned at the Lower Site; a large grooved ax (Figure 10) indicates heavy woodworking (tree felling, perhaps dugout canoe manufacture) at the same site.



FIGURE 8: Grinding Stone from Maddox Branch

At most sites in the District, all of the stone tools are made from two types of stone: quartzite and quartz. In contrast, the Maddox Branch Sites produced several different materials. Quartz and quartzite are common in the area, but the rhyolite and chert found at Maddox Branch must have been brought in from the west. The people who visited the site in the Middle Woodland period, 400 BC to AD 1000, preferred to make their crude "Selby Bay" points from rhyolite (Figure 11). These tools, of which nearly a dozen were found on these sites, have a "throwaway" appearance, as if they were made, used, and discarded in a matter of minutes. The people who made these points also made and used a type of pottery called Mockley. We think that these sites were visited often in this period, possibly by family groups; the stone spearpoints imply the presence of men, pottery the presence of women, and the valley is too narrow to have held a large camp or



FIGURE 9: Gorget Fragment from Maddox Branch



FIGURE 10: Large Grooved Ax from Maddox Branch

village. The accounts of John Smith and other early explorers tell us that historic Indians lived in large villages only for part of the year, during the seasons of planting and harvesting corn. In the summer and winter smaller parties left the villages and went on hunting, fishing, and gathering expeditions. The Maddox Branch Sites may have been used mainly by wandering bands in the autumn. The large nut-grinding stone points to the fall, when nuts were most plentiful, and cold weather would also help explain the choice of these sheltered spots, flanked by steep hills.



FIGURE 11: Selby Bay Points from the Maddox Branch Sites

It is fortunate for archeologists that the Maddox Branch Sites happened to be located in a small steep-sided valley that was not worth plowing in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries. Afterward the valley was incorporated into public lands and was therefore protected from the urban development that has destroyed so many of the sites that W.H. Holmes and his colleagues identified a century ago. We can never know with certainty if these small, repeatedly occupied base camps are a unique phenomenon, related to this specific valley, or if many similar sites once existed in the District of Columbia. We suspect some kind of unique circumstances. In all of the previous surveys, none identified any sites with the quantity and diversity of artifacts recovered from the Maddox Branch Sites. The Piney Branch Quarry, despite the staggering quantity of material that is still present, never yielded any finished artifacts that could be confidently assigned to a particular period or culture. In contrast, the Maddox Branch sites contain evidence of the entire sequence of Late Archaic tool production, from the turtleback core to the Savannah River or Holmes point (Figure 12).

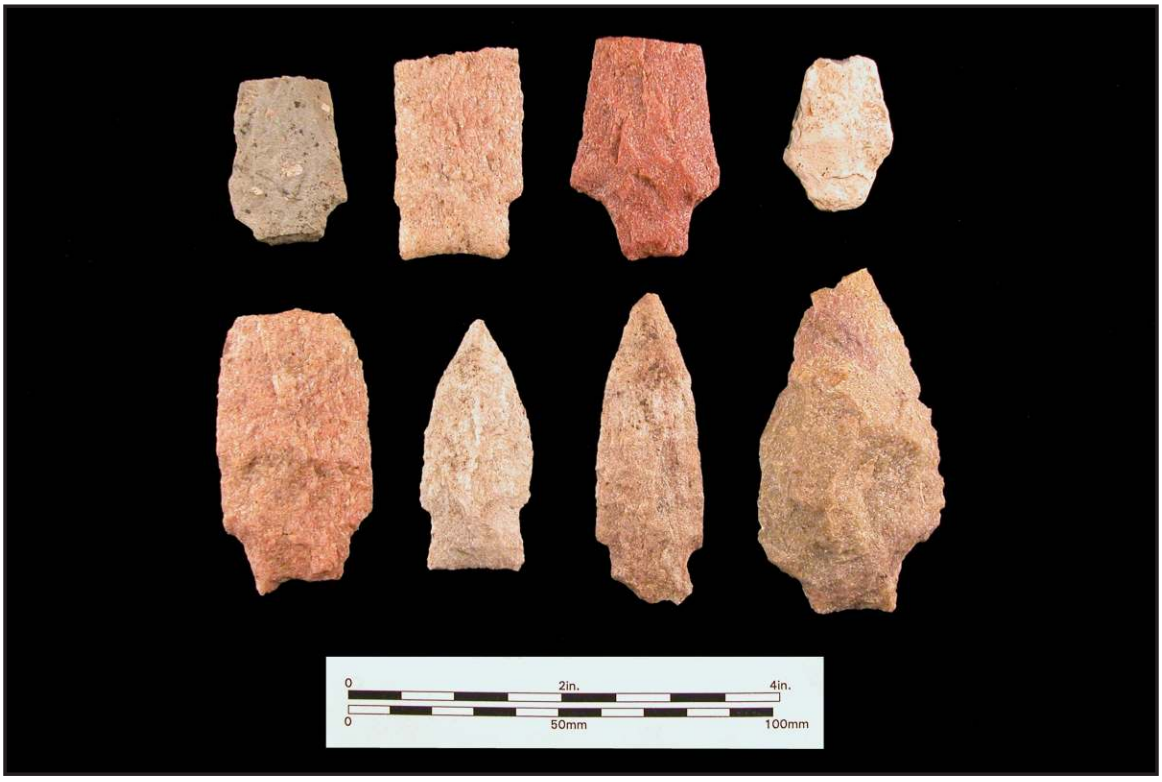


FIGURE 12: Savannah River Points from the Maddox Branch Sites

THE POTOMAC FRONTIER

INDIANS AND TRADERS

So far as we know, the first Europeans to see Rock Creek were the men who accompanied Captain John Smith on his 1608 voyage around Chesapeake Bay. Smith explored the Potomac as far as the Falls. His map (Figure 13) (Smith 1986) shows the Indian town of Nacotchtanck, on the east side of the Anacostia. That river's name is actually an English corruption of the town's Algonquian name. Beyond Nacotchtanck Smith observed and later depicted the river bank, including an inlet that is probably the mouth of Rock Creek. But he saw no more native settlements. Some local histories report that that English explorers found a village at the Falls, but this seems only to be a local legend.

In 1632 a fur trader named Henry Fleet sailed up the Potomac to trade with the Massawomeckes. Smith had met raiding and trading parties of these people in the Chesapeake, but modern historians cannot agree on who they were. The Piscataways and other Indians of the Chesapeake regarded the Massawomeckes as dangerous enemies. They were reported to live somewhere to the northwest, much farther up the Potomac beyond the Falls near a great inland sea. Fleet had heard of four chiefs' villages, and he hoped to reach them directly, cutting out the coastal Indians who were serving as middlemen in the fur trade. Fleet's expedition was first impeded by the Nacotchtancks, who wanted to protect their own profits. By Fleet's account, his brother did reach the Massawomeckes after a week-long journey by canoe, but their enterprise was cut short by the arrival of Maryland officials who arrested him for unauthorized trading.

No more is heard of the mysterious Massawomeckes in colonial records after 1635. There was a great epidemic of smallpox among the interior Indians around that time, and disease or a combination of disease and warfare may explain their disappearance. The town of the Nacotchtancks may have been abandoned around the same time and was certainly gone before 1673, when Augustine Herrman omitted it from his map of the region (Figure 14). The Nacotchtancks evidently had moved in with their allies, the Piscataways. In June 1694 the "Anacostin King," Quassapelagh, appeared with six Piscataway "Great Men" before a judicial council in St. Mary's County to answer charges that they had murdered James Lysle, a settler in Charles County (Archives of Maryland 20:73).

The departure of the Nacotchtancks left the Washington area open for English colonists. This area certainly would have been attractive for settlement. Rock Creek was a source of fast-flowing water, ideal for water-powered milling, and was accessible from the Potomac River. Fertile lands along Rock Creek would also have attracted those who wished to profit from tobacco farming, the regional staple at this time. But the power vacuum left by the Nacotchtancks' departure also allowed periodic forays into the area by potentially hostile Senecas and Susquehannocks, and by Algonquian-speakers displaced from the Chesapeake region, such as the Nanticokes and Conoys. This persistent threat from Indian war parties deterred English settlers for several decades.

In August 1681 the ranger Randolph Brandt wrote to Lord Baltimore in Maryland:

> Here is a report come from Virginia that the forreigne Indians hath a fort above the Eastern branch neere the falls of Pottomock, and that four of Mr George Brents negros Runnaways was taken by them and gives relation thereof having made their Escape [Archives of Maryland 15:400].



FIGURE 13: A Section of John Smith's 1608 Map Showing the Potomac River



FIGURE 14: Augustine Herrman Map of 1673

The "forreigne Indians" would be Iroquois or Susquehannocks, as opposed to the familiar Piscataways of the Eastern Shore. The reported location of the Iroquois fort above the Eastern branch (the Anacostia River) precludes its identification as either the Susquehannock fort on Piscataway Creek (destroyed in the colonists' 1675 attack, in any case) or their later fort, built in 1681 in Zekiah Swamp. If the fort was in fact "neere the falls of Pottomock," it may well have been along the Palisades in the same location as the garrison of the Potomac Rangers (see below). The concern expressed here about runaways harbored by the Indians was to become a recurrent theme in Maryland documents for the next 50 years.

THE RANGERS' FORT

Where Was the Potomac Rangers' Garrison?

Other than that brief 1681 notice of a possible Indian fort, little news came from the upper Potomac into our records between the voyage of Henry Fleet and the 1690s, when European settlement got under way. The area seems to have been a kind of no-man's land, with many different groups passing through but none staying for long. Several Indian nations claimed rights over the land, including the Five Nations Iroquois, the Susquehannocks, and the Shawnee. Groups of Indians seeking refuge from warfare came to the upper Potomac, as did European traders, land speculators, and runaway slaves. At first the traders were mainly Frenchmen from Canada or Swedes from Delaware. On the frontier people of all these cultures met, traded, fought, intermarried, and built a new kind of society that drew from many older ways. The first Maryland settlement west of the Falls was established in 1692, and the building of the Potomac Rangers' garrison makes a convenient point to take up the story.

English settlement had reached the Falls of the Potomac by the 1680s, and in 1688 the first land patents were claimed along Rock Creek. Those early claimants got little use out of their lands for some years because the 1690s were a time of great conflict all along the frontiers. Fighting in Europe between England's new Protestant rulers, William and Mary, and His Catholic Majesty the King of France spilled over into North America, and both kingdoms urged their Indian allies to take up the hatchet. The year 1692 was a particularly bad one in the colonies. There had been attacks by Indians on settlements in Massachusetts and New York, with many captives taken. Hundreds of refugees had fled outlying towns to take refuge in older settlements like Salem, Massachusetts, where a group of refugee girls made the accusations that launched America's worst witch hunt. In Pennsylvania rumors spread that an army of French soldiers and their Indian allies was marching to Maryland, where they would join with English Catholics, overthrow the Protestant governments, and hand the colonies over to France.

In 1692, amidst "dread of Indians" that fed witch scares and invasion fears, the government of Maryland reformed its frontier defense force, the Maryland Rangers. The numbers of these irregular soldiers were increased, their pay was fixed, arrangements were made with friendly tribes to supply them with Indian auxiliaries, and three forts were built at key places along the frontier. One fort was to be built in Charles County (Prince Georges County, including later Montgomery and Frederick counties, was created out of Charles County in 1696), a second in Anne Arundel County, and a third in Baltimore County. Each fort was to contain "a dwelling House sufficient to retain and accommodate a Captain or Commander and nine Souldiers together with a small Cabbin for four Indians to be found and sent thither by the Emperor of Nantecoke the Emperor of Pascattoway and the King of Choptico" (Archives of Maryland 8:461).

The original order for construction of the fort for the Potomac group of the Maryland Rangers was issued in February 1692. The Charles County fort was to be built "by the Direction and appointment of Captain John Addison" but Captain Richard Brightwell would command it. Addison was directed to acquire four Indians from the Piscataway "Emperor" to reside at the fort and hunt deer and other game for the garrison's use. This fort was on the Potomac, probably on the bluffs overlooking the foot of Little Falls. The rangers were sometimes mentioned in the Maryland records, allowing us glimpses of their lives. On October 14, 1692, Brightwell was re-appointed captain, this time with six men under him. During the following year they were to serve as rangers "from the Falls of Pottomuck to the Branches of Pottuxen" (Archives of Maryland 8:398). On December 22 Brightwell and 11 men petitioned the governor's council for their back pay (in tobacco) for their service on the frontier from April 27 to the end of November. Apart from Brightwell, this group included Samuel Peter, James Wapple, Francis Griggs, Thomas Kenniston, George Smith, Francis Warner, Henry Taylor, Wailer (Walter?) Evans, Richard Hyfleid (Hyfield?), Thomas Orton, and John Deakins (Archives of Maryland 8:445).



FIGURE 15: A Mounted Soldier of the 1690s

An incident that took place on September 21, 1697, reminds us how dangerous the frontier still was. According to the account of James Wapples (Archives of Maryland 23:335), John Baker, one of Brightwell's rangers at the garrison, went out of the fort to catch his horse, which had run out of the pasture. About 300 yards away from the fort, he was heard to shout and discharge his gun. When the other soldiers found his body, his head and right forearm had been cut off, and his musket, powder, and shot bag had been taken.

The governor responded quickly, and on September 30 he sent 10 troopers to the garrison, with orders "by turns to Range, one half at a time, betwixt the sd Garrison, and up and down the Eastern Branch" (Archives of Maryland 23:219) (Figure 15).

On October 3, 1697, the Sheriff of Anne Arundel County was ordered to take into custody a Mattapany Indian called Woodcough, who had been arrested for complicity in the recent murder of Baker "committed at the Garrison, at the head of Potomock" (Archives of Maryland 23:220). (The Mattapany or Mattapanient lived before 1600 on the upper Patuxent, and should not be confused with the Mattaponi of Virginia). Governor Nicholson of Virginia referred to the murder on November 20, 1697:

> Neare one of our Garrisons by the falls of Potomock, one of the Souldiers was killed by Indians, his head, & one of his arms carryed away: which, with what was a little before done in Virginia, by Indians hath very much alarmed these parts [Archives of Maryland 23:305].

Fifteen men were raised to "strengthen the Garrison and frontiers at Potomock." The governor recommended

> . . . tht the Honoble Coll Ino (John) Addison who lives convenient to the head of Potomock and has been already very serviceable in those parts, be appointed and have power to go & Vissit the Garrison & said men once a fortnight….
>
> Coll Addison and Mr Hutchins, owners of the land where the Garrison is kept being asked whether the Rangers may have leave to plant Corn in any of those Indian fields & Clear the hill there neer the ffort, Do make Answer that they may ffreely do the same without any disturbance.
>
> Ordered that a fort be built upon the top of the sd Hill near the other fort and tht the said Hill be cleared by the Souldiers at the Garrison; and that the Honoble Coll Ino [John] Addison take care to get a house built there, at the cheapest rate he can; but that he do not actually build the same till he see whether the Indians return thither or not; yet however that he get the timber ready for the Stockadoes and see tht the hill be cleared; and tht he purchase a couple of small Gunns (which are in the possession of Capt George Harris) at the cheapest rate he can, also provide two or three good Canooes, besides a good substantial boat . . . [Archives of Maryland 23:247].

The rangers' request for permission to plant corn in the Indian fields near the fort clearly implies that they were at a place recently occupied by Indians, so their fort may have been in the same place as the Iroquois fort mentioned in 1681.

The Grand Jury of Prince Georges County recommended to the court on November 27, 1697, that the "Garrison at the falls of Potomeck" (also referred to in this context as "the forte at New Scotland") should be maintained with the same number of rangers. They also deemed it "convenient and necessary that a Fort or Garrison, be placed on the hill above the New Forte" (Archives of Maryland 23:327).

These orders from the governor give us important clues to the location of the fort. It was close enough to Addison's residence that he could inspect it regularly, and Addison's extensive land holdings were mainly in present Prince Georges County, east of modern Washington, D.C. (including Oxon Hill and Seat Pleasant). Also, the fort was on land that belonged to John Addison and "Mr Hutchins." "Mr. Hutchins" must be William Hutchinson, a Maryland planter who by 1692 owned at least two tracts in common with John Addison. One of those, Carlyle, was on Eastern Branch, as the Anacostia River was then known. The other was the 759-acre White Haven or Whitehaven tract (Figure 16), which they patented on April 9, 1689. Whitehaven stretched along the north bank of the Potomac from the Key Bridge to Chain Bridge Road, including the ground overlooking Little Falls. Since several documents describe the fort as being "at the falls of the Potomac," the Whitehaven tract is a much more likely location than Eastern Branch.

Another clue to the location of the rangers' garrison has been found among the land acquisition records for the C&O Canal. A 1793 document relating to a land dispute between the Potowmack Company and local property owners refers to the river inlet at what is now Fletchers Boathouse as "a place known as Garrison's Cove or Lock Harbor." We have found no record of the presence in this area of anyone named Garrison at any time before 1793. Absent such evidence, we may assume that the name of this river inlet referred to the rangers' fort (i.e., the garrison) on a nearby hill, very likely the hill on the west side of MacArthur Boulevard, lying partially within Palisades Park (Figure 17).

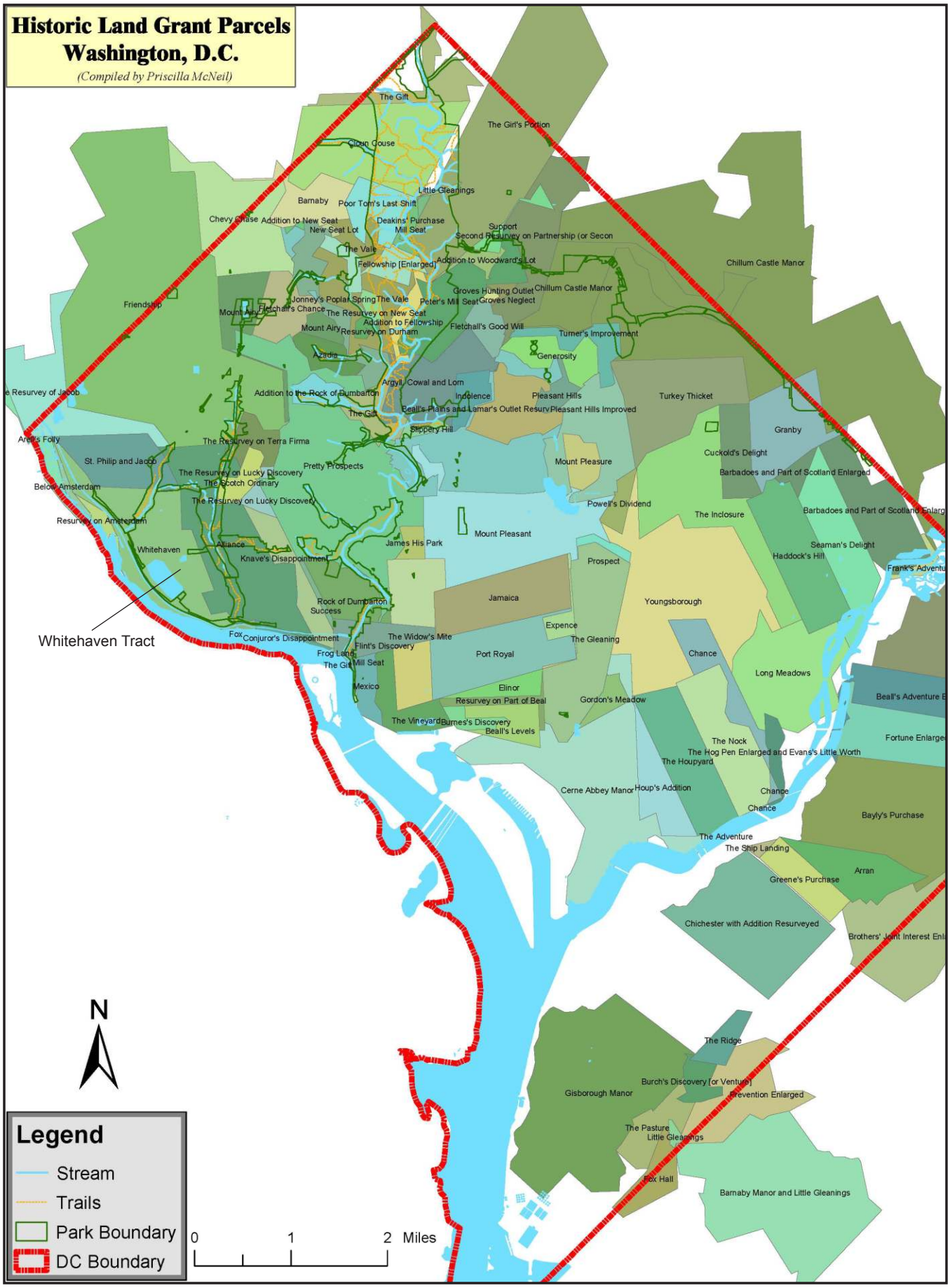


FIGURE 16: Land Patents in the Washington Area

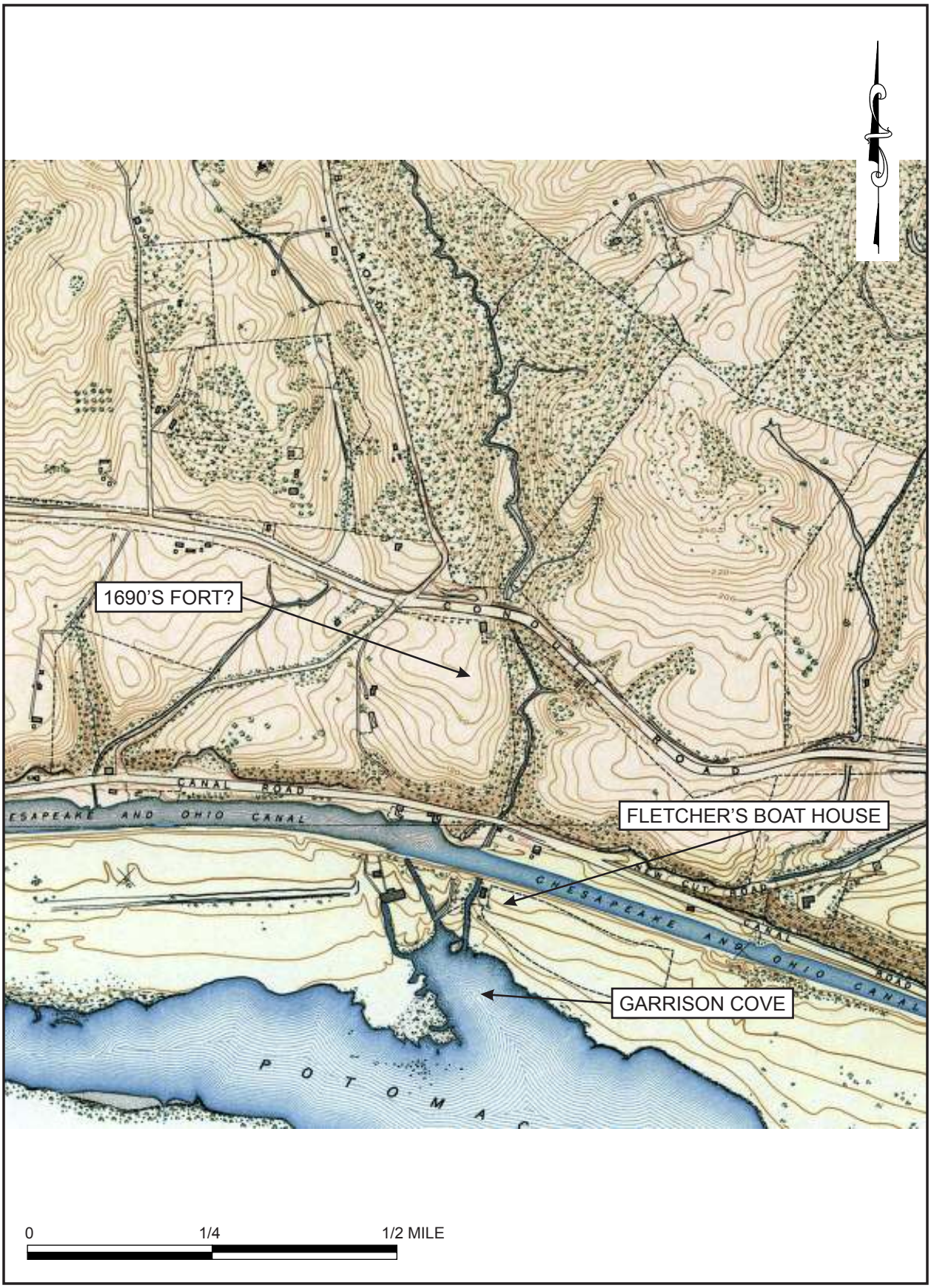


FIGURE 17: The Likely Location of the Potomac Rangers' Garrison in the 1690s Shown on a Map from 1892 *SOURCE: USCGS 1892*

Another interesting detail about the Potomac Rangers' garrison was found in the Maryland State Archives from 1697. The Governor authorized Thomas Addison to seize "any Syder or other Liquors imported into this Province at the head of Potomock and not making due report and entry according to Act of Assembly &ca Information being given that severall quantities of Liquor are Generally brought over from Virgina into those parts & sold to the Rangers at the Garrison, and to the Inhabitants of the upper parts thereabouts" (Archives of Maryland 23:253, October 15, 1697).

If, as alleged here, rum-running boats were making frequent trips across the Potomac in the 1690s, "Garrison's Cove" may have been an important place to the "inhabitants of the upper parts."

Captain Richard Brightwell

Among the first characters in the Rock Creek story with a recognizable personality was Captain Richard Brightwell of the Potomac Rangers. No contemporary description of Brightwell survives, but he would be remembered 150 years later as a rough frontiersman in the style of Davy Crockett: "Brightwell seldom visited the lower settlements, being content with his dogs, pet bears, and deer for companions . . ." (Scharf 1882:65). As for his men, apart from their alleged rum-running, their character can perhaps be judged by the order given to Brightwell "to keep his men out ranging and not let them come to the settlements." Brightwell and his rangers regularly patrolled the whole area from the Potomac River to the Patuxent, venturing perhaps 20 miles west of their fort. They were mainly looking for "strange Indians," that is, Indians other than the Piscataways and Nanticokes who lived in Maryland and had always been friendly with the English.

Although he was prepared for skirmishes with Indian raiders, Brightwell also kept his eyes open for opportunities to do a little business with them, using bolts of red and blue cloth obtained on the Governor's personal account. A document dated March 3, 1697, tells us that Brightwell received saddles, bridles, weapons (carbines, pistols, bayonets) and 41 yards of blue duffels and 21 yards of red duffels "to be disposed off by Capt Brightwell for Skins and ffurs for the Governors use…" (Archives of Maryland 23:75). On October 12, 1697, he reported

> . . . We kept constantly Ranging from our Garrison to the Sugar Lands wch we compute to be about forty miles, being generally Stony Rocky land, near the River, all the way thither, and barrens backwards; but the Sugar Lands extraordinary rich . . . [Archives of Maryland v.23:261].

The Sugarlands were floodplains of the Potomac between the Seneca and the Little Monocacy (where the McKee-Beshers wildlife refuge is located today, along the C&O Canal), where sugar maple trees grew. In 1695 Brightwell had already patented 1,086 acres of the Sugarlands for himself; he called the land "Brightwell's Hunting Quarter." This name alone may be the basis for the portrayal of Brightwell as a rustic recluse. In fact, Brightwell, a self-made man who had arrived in Maryland as an indentured servant, left behind a wife (Katherine) and five young children when he died in August 1698. The then-remote plantation established on Brightwell's claim remained one of the most important outposts of English settlement west of the Falls for the next 30 years.

Ninian Beall

NINIAN BEALL'S LAND IN NEW SCOTLAND HUNDRED

"The Nock"	500 acres
"Meurs"	500 acres originally named "Chance"
"Barbadoe"	250 acres
"Inclosure"	1,503 acres patented in 1687 and located along the Anacostia River
"Rock of Dunbarton"	795 acres along Rock Creek patented in 1703

After Brightwell's death command of the rangers was given to Ninian Beall. Beall, the first European who is known with certainty to have settled along Rock Creek, is one of the more colorful personalities in the area's history. He rose from being a prisoner to become a rich man and a commander in the colonial militia, becoming one of many who remade their lives in the New World. A six-foot, seven-inch, red-headed Scotsman, Beall is believed to have been born in either Fifeshire or Dumbartonshire in Scotland around 1625. On September 3, 1650, he was among the 10,000 Scots captured by Oliver Cromwell's English army in the Battle of Dunbar. The 5,000 prisoners without wounds were to be sold into servitude, but only 1,400 of them survived a forced march and confinement. Ninian Beall was among the few hundred surviving prisoners who were exiled into servitude in Barbados in the West Indies. In 1652 Richard Hall of Calvert County acquired the rights to Beall's service and brought him to Maryland while he was still a prisoner of war.

Beall survived his term of servitude and won his freedom. He began a career as a farmer and land speculator, receiving his first 50 acres in 1657. During his long lifetime in Maryland, he would acquire thousands of acres through land grants. Beall built up his real estate fortune in two ways. First, he may have taken advantage of grants offered by the Calverts for the settlement of the colony. Because of the availability of land within their proprietorship of Maryland, the Calverts offered over 1,000 acres for every five men transported to the colony. If Beall played a role in the settlement of what became New Scotland Hundred, he would have been a beneficiary of this policy. Beall also acquired real estate through the office of Deputy Surveyor for Charles County, a post to which he was appointed in 1684. Proprietors often gave surveyors land grants as compensation for their service (Gelders 1976:4).

New Scotland Hundred was located in what was then Charles County and included that portion of Maryland from Oxon Branch, opposite present-day Alexandria, Virginia, to the Falls of the Potomac. As can be inferred from the name, New Scotland Hundred was heavily populated by Scottish immigrants. Beall, as one of the earliest Scots in Maryland, may have helped other Scottish immigrants to settle in the area, where he himself acquired a great deal of land (see text box).

In addition to the post of Charles County Deputy Surveyor, Beall held several other colonial offices. Possibly because of his military background or just his imposing physical presence, he acquired various colonial military commissions during his lifetime. In 1678 he was appointed Captain of Militia of Calvert County. In 1689 he rose to the rank of Major of Calvert County Militia (Gelders 1976:3).

Beall's political position was further strengthened by his role during the events of the "Glorious Revolution" of 1688. In that year the English Parliament overthrew their Catholic king, James

II, and brought the Protestants William and Mary to the throne. Lord Baltimore, Maryland's Proprietor, was a Catholic, and he was slow to swear allegiance to the new sovereigns. In Maryland a group of leading Protestants christened themselves the "Associators" and marched on St. Mary's to depose the proprietary government. After the coup Beall played an important role in colonial politics. He was not only a member of the Associators' Convention, the assembly elected as the new government of the colony, but was on the Grand Committee of Twelve, the executive committee that guided policy for the Convention. After the establishment of a royal proprietorship, Maryland was governed in conjuncture by a royal governor, who was the appointed representative of the king, and an elected General Assembly very similar to the Virginia House of Burgesses. Beall was a representative of Prince George's County to Maryland's General Assembly between 1696 and 1699. During the 1690s Beall was also appointed to several high offices, including High Sheriff of Calvert County (1692) and Colonel of Militia (1694) (Gelders 1976:3).

One of Beall's last posts was as Colonel of the Rangers, succeeding the deceased Richard Brightwell in this position in 1699. Even in his 70s, Beall was "ranging" the frontier on the lookout for Indian marauders. In 1699 the General Assembly granted him an allowance out of the public revenues for his years of service to the colony (Gelders 1976:6).

By the time Beall patented Rock of Dunbarton in 1703, which was located at the mouth of Rock Creek, he was over 70 and receiving a pension from the colony. He would live at his home on this tract as well as other homes he had built on some of his other holdings until his death in 1717. His lands were thereafter divided among his many heirs.

Christoph von Graffenried's sketch map of the mid-Potomac, drawn in 1712, shows two houses near the mouth of Rock Creek (called the "R. Dore") (Figure 18). One stands on the northwest side of the creek (in present-day Georgetown). The accompanying label is "Col. Belle" (a reference to Ninian Beall). The unnamed second building stands southeast of the creek mouth, but at a greater distance from the stream than the first. Graffenried briefly considered planting his proposed Swiss-German colony at Canavest (near Conoy Island) or alternatively at the mouth of Rock Creek ("very suitable and convenient for our design") (Graffenried 1714). Colonel Beall ("Bell") was offering 800 acres at the latter site for a price of 168 pounds sterling; however, the colonization scheme was soon abandoned.

Patents and Tenants

The published chains of title for some parts of the park trace back to land grants made in the 1680s. A colonial land grant does not necessarily imply that the land was settled at that date, but these grants at least raise the possibility of late seventeenth- or early eighteenth-century occupation in the park. Historians have compiled lists of early patents in the area (Coldham 1996; Taggart 1908) (see Figure 16; Table 1). The names of the patents and the owners provide a starting point for research aimed at discovering who might actually have lived on these properties.

Much land along the frontier areas of Maryland and Virginia was patented by speculators who lived in the eastern parts of the colonies, and these lands were largely settled by poor tenants. Men who had finished their terms of indenture received their traditional small gifts (a suit of clothes and a barrel of corn was one version [Morgan 1975:223]) and set about looking for land they could farm.

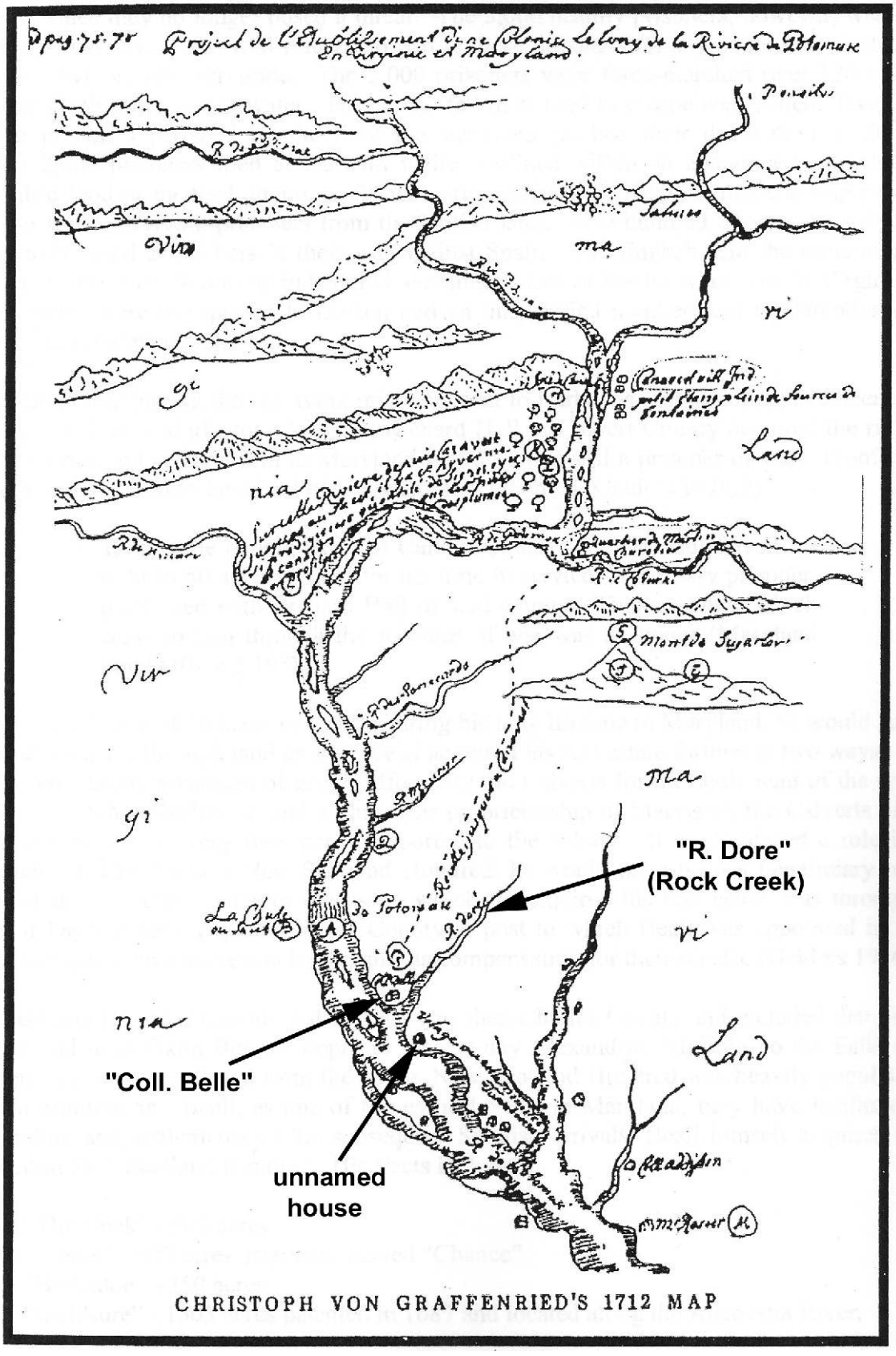


FIGURE 18: Graffenreid Map of 1712 Showing Houses at Mouth of Rock Creek

Table 1: Early Patents in the Georgetown and Rock Creek Area

Patent Name	Date	Remarks/Description
Widows Mite†	October 10, 1664	May be a misprint for 1684; much earlier than any other tract; by John Langworth
Girl's Portion†	June 12, 1688	Patented by Col. Henry Darnell (Darnall)
Pretty Prospect†	1695	
Rock of Dunbarton†	1703	Col. Ninian Beall (this name corrected to "Dumbarton" only in the late eighteenth century)
Beall's Lot †	1703	
Clouin Course (or Cloun Course†)	September 2, 1714	Patented by William Fitzredmond, 923 acres (later [1891-1892] Rock Creek Park Acquisition Tract 17)
Argyle, Cowell and Lorne†	December 8, 1722	Patented by Randall (?) Blake [purchased before 1726 by John Bradford, whose will refers to the seller as Randolph Blake]
Mexico †	(pre-1792)	Located at mouth of creek, east side
Friendship	December 3, 1713	Colonel Thomas Addison, 3,124 acres
Friendship	December 10, 1715	Captain Thomas Fletchall, 1,368 acres
Fletchall's Chance	September 10, 1716	Captain Thomas Fletchall, 253 acres
Jacob	September 10, 1716	Captain Thomas Fletchall, 217 acres
(Poor) Tom's Last Shift	November 17, 1726	Captain Thomas Fletchall, 200 acres

† *listed in Taggart (1908); others from Coldham (1996)*

Unable to buy land for themselves, they sometimes accepted arrangements that made them tenants of wealthy men on newly claimed lands. The owners supplied their tenants with the necessary tools (an ax and a hoe) and seeds, in return for a share of the tobacco crop and (more importantly) ownership of any improvements to the land the tenants would make. The tenants built houses, planted orchards, and cleared fields. Their rents were paid in tobacco, their most important cash crop, and they also grew corn and raised hogs and cattle. They were a vagabond lot, and we know that many of them moved on within a year or two in search of better arrangements.

A NINETEENTH-CENTURY LAW ON THE FREEING OF INDENTURED SERVANTS

And furthermore, for ascertaining what each servant, according to the custom of the country, shall have at the expiration of their servitude, Be it enacted, by the authority, advise and consent aforesaid, That every man servant, shall, at such time of expiration of his servitude as foresaid, have allowed and given him one new hat, a good suit; that is to say, coat and breeches, either of kersey or broad cloth, one new shift of white linen, one new pair of French fall shoes, and stockings, two hoes and one axe, one gun of twenty shillings price, not above four feet by the barrel, no less than three and an half, which said gun shall, by the master or mistress, in the presence of the next justice of the peace, be delivered to such free man, under the penalty of five hundred pounds of tobacco on such master or mistress omitting so to do, and the like penalty on the said free man selling or disposing thereof within the space of twelve months, the one half whereof to our sovereign lord the king, his heirs and successors, the other to the informer; all women servants, at the expiration of their servitude aforesaid, shall have allowed and given a waistcoat and petticoat of new half-thick, or pennistone, a new shift of white linen, shoes and stockings, a blue apron, two caps of white linen, and three barrels of Indian corn" [United States 1862:16-17].

We know very little about the lives of these people because they rarely entered the written records, so the archeology of their home sites is one of the only sources of information about the lives of these pioneers; however, their home sites are not easy to find. At first they had few possessions beyond those necessary for their farm work, so those who moved on quickly left very little behind for archeologists to find: pieces of bottle glass, a few nails, some bricks from the hearths of their stick and mud chimneys. Even those who stayed for several years rarely acquired the number of possessions or built the kinds of houses that render their home sites archeologically obvious. Experience in other parts of Maryland and Virginia tells us that early house sites are most likely on bluffs overlooking large streams. In our search for a tenant farm of this period, we used a metal detector to make an extensive survey of the bluffs overlooking Rock Creek and other streams. Using this method, at least two tenant farm sites were found, but both probably date to later in the 1700s.

We have some idea of what might be found at a tenant farm of the 1730s from a site a few miles down the Potomac. At what we call the Ralph Cotton Site, which overlooks a swampy stream on Marine Corps Base Quantico, we excavated 15 3x3-foot test units and found fewer than 50 artifacts, including potsherds, pieces of dark olive green wine bottle glass, fragments of brick and mortar, rusted nails, a few broken white clay tobacco pipes, and a piece of window glass (Bedell and Fiedel 2003). The site had been abandoned by 1770 at the latest, and the tenants may have lived there for no more than a decade or so. In other situations so few colonial artifacts are found that we hardly know whether or not it represents a farm. At one site in the Prince William Forest Park, five handwrought nails were found by metal detector survey. Handwrought nails were much more expensive than later, machine-made nails, so we would not expect to find nails in a colonial fence or gate out in the corner of a pasture, as one might in the 1800s. A half dozen shovel tests nearby turned up only one other artifact, a piece of dark olive green bottle glass. Was this the short-lived home site of a transient tenant, or just a broken bottle and a board full of nails? The difficulties of finding tenant farms were much on our minds as we began searching for these sites in Rock Creek Park.

SETTLEMENT AND THE CLOUIN COURSE SITE

TENANTS AND THE FRONTIER LANDSCAPE

The first clear indication of how many people had settled in the area west of the Anacostia is given in the *Black Book,* a colonial document kept in the Maryland Hall of Records (Archives of Maryland). This contains lists of taxable individuals (mostly male heads of household) in the Rock Creek and New Scotland Hundreds from 1719 and 1733:

TAXABLE INDIVIDUALS IN ROCK CREEK AND NEW SCOTLAND HUNDREDS, 1719

ROCK CREEK HUNDRED

Maj. John Bradford, Mrs. Phesgarall, Wm. McCoy, Wm. Shepherd, Wm. Hallen, Wm. Ray, ------, Jn. Sulivent, Wm. Deveran, Jn. Neper, Wm. Fitzredman, Michall Denn, Jn. Gath, Nich. Hoaker, James Hooke, -----, Wm. Watford, David Janes, Mich. Orel (?), Jn. Forgeson, Joseph Chew, Adam Miller, Jn. Hetshall (Fletchall?),-------, --------, Thos. Lucas, Robt. Payne, George Bussey, Mr. Rocer (?), Wm. Mattinly, Thos. Stamp, Wm. Ranshaw, Groves Pemlen, Louis Howell, Jn. Williams, George Beall, Henry Penny, -----, Ninian Tannihill, James More, John Allison, Peator Williams, John Ford, John Nelson, Mr. Rite, Charles Walker Jr., Mr. Tylor, Wm. Davis, Wm. Spredox (?), Wm. Tukes, Abraham Lakin, Jn. Jackson, Wm. Beall, Ninian Beall, Jn. Beall, James Beall, Wm. Holle, Thos. Beall, -----, Jn. Williams, John Harden, N. Perey, Thos. Hoskinson, James More, Loronce Morgan, John Chittom, Redmond Cook.

Total No. of taxables 212

NEW SCOTLAND HUNDRED

James Beall, Thos. Gittings, Rich Weaver, Wm.---, ----, Hen----, Mrs. Hambleton, Rich Edwards, Charles Beall, Jn. Thomson, Thos. Harris, Phillip Gittings, Thos. Johnson, Pet. Hayes, Thos. Gath, Henry Cramton, Alex Coats, Mich. Hipsley, John Bradford, Wm. Masters, Col. Addison, James Riggs, Jn. Norris, Jn. Norris Jr., Andrew Ross, Danell Celly, Thos. Nichols, Alex Harbert, Jn. Fraser, Curbert Anderson, Thos. Wilson, Andrew Nichols, Jn. Roads, Edw. Walker, Eliz. Johnson, Thos. Harris, David Trail, Simon Nichols, Ninian Beall, Gary Davis, Thos. Wilson, Thos. Plummer, Thos. Wilson Jr., Edw. Wilson, Robert Brashears, Capt. Edmonston, Arthur Nelson, Thos. Pindall, John Riddel, John Prather, Thos. Prather, Henr. Chamberlin, Daniell Danelson, Wm. Scott, Jos. Coleman.

Total No. of taxables 161 (55 names).

TAXABLE INDIVIDUALS IN ROCK CREEK HUNDRED, 1733

Nicholas Baker, John Pharoah, Daniel Canlar, Thomas Burk, William Beckwith, George Beckwith, Thomas Williams, Daniel Vears, John Magruder, James Turley, John Ball, Samuel Pruitt, James Smith, Richard Robinson, Eleanor Devrons, Daniel Clary, William Joyce, John Rogers, Samuel Jeffcoat, John Boyd, Thomas Bond, Charles Hungerford, John Mason, Terrence Downing, John Jennings, Benjamin Rimer, John Allison, Adam Skinner, John Hardee, Archibald Moore, Mary Harbin, John Harbin, William Renshaw, Edward Wilson, Adam Miller, John Hallsell, Francis Bird, Thomas Lucas, Sr., Thomas Lucas, Jr., William Lucas, Samuel Queen, William Young, David Burns, John Henning, Eliphaz Riley, John Riley, John Flint, John Bradford, William Pickett, George Buchanan, Robert Levett, Thomas Spaull, John Turzard (?), Daniel Carroll, Robert Carroll, Edward Dickason, John Abington, Edward Parker (?), Robert White, Sr., Robert White, Jr., James White, James Holmeard, George Slater, Thomas Lemarr, Sr., Thomas Lemarr, Jr., Samuel Lemarr, Michael Ury, Groves Tomlinson, James Tomlinson, James Gore, Adam Straghon, James Hook, Henry Berry, John Baily, Thomas Willson, Thomas Butler, Edward Cannon, Benjamin Bright, John Walker, James Lee, Jr., Richard Ward, John Lee, Sr., John Cottee (?), Ambros Cook, John Swinnford, David Condon, Richard Condon, Thomas Daceden (?), Samuel Blackmore, Benjamin Thrasher, John Hardin, John Adamson, John Williams, Charles Williams, Ninian Tanyhill, Alexander Barrett, Nicholas Hawker, Philip Hawker, Samuel Beall, Thomas Allton, John Madden, Thomas Harris, Bingley Page, William Tanyhill, Thomas Gore, Thomas Evans, Andrew Hamilton, John Shepherd, William Farquahar, Thomas Haskinson, James Haskinson, George Moore, Thomas Dryden, George Attwood, Philip Lee, Patrick Murphy, William Wofford, Thomas Dunlavy, John Rais, John Wood, William Mauduit, Edward Sprigg, William Howard, Joseph Chew, Roger Chew, Charles Groves, James Gutridge, Michael Taylor, Charles Perry, Jonathan Turner, John Ramsey.

Comparison of these lists tells us several things. First, after an interval of only 14 years, the population had nearly doubled from 67 to 131 names; however, only nine of the 67 names from 1719 are still listed in 1733 (Maj. John Bradford, Nich. Hoaker [Nicholas Hawker], James Hooke [Hook], Wm. Watford [William Wofford], Joseph Chew, Thos. Lucas [Thomas Lucas, Sr.], Jn. Williams [John Williams], Ninian Tannihill [Tanyhill], and John Allison). To some extent the changes must represent only territorial reorganization; obviously, the Beall family, for example, did not leave the area. But the changes also remind us of how frequently some tenants moved.

Robert Brooke's 1737 survey map of the Potomac below the Shenandoah confluence shows two structures in about the same locations, relative to Rock Creek, as on the 1712 Graffenried map (see Figure 18). In place of Beall's residence, however, the building on the northwest side is named "McGee's Ferry," and the one to the southeast is called "Mr Watsons," presumably a reference to John Watson, Jr., whose father, John Watson, elder, patented "Newbottle," 300 acres, on September 27, 1685. This tract later became "Flint's Discovery" and "Addition to Flint's Discovery."

Evidence of other buildings in that period comes from records of 1732. James Smith was then the owner of a tract known as "Saliom" (or Salcom), patented by Thomas Wahop in 1685 (Gahn

1940). In 1732 he patented 300 adjacent acres under the name "Knave's Disappointment," and the patent says that on Saliom he had constructed a 24-foot-long house, a 40-foot-long tobacco barn, and six outbuildings, all of clapboards and all described as "old." It says something about the state of our records that the first description we have of actual houses and barns in what would become Washington comes from this late date, more than 40 years after the first settlement.

Another source of information on early residents of the area is the will of Colonel John Bradford, dated 11 May 1726 (text box). Bradford, a partner of the Annapolis lawyer and land speculator Daniel Dulaney and a cousin of Charles Carroll "the Settler," was a major landowner in the Rock Creek area. "Bradford's Rest" alone encompassed 4,892 acres along the east bank of Rock Creek, in modern Rockville. The will names several tenants on tracts along Rock Creek. The "William Woffort" mentioned here as Bradford's tenant is presumably the "William Wofford" named in the 1719 and 1733 census lists, above. Genealogical sources indicate that William Wofford, Sr. was born in 1674 and died in 1746. The Wm. Deveron named as overseer of the three plantations of "Bradford's Rest" is certainly the Wm. Deveran listed on the 1719 tax list. Neither the 1719 list nor the 1733 list contains the names of Peter Hyatt or William Mackcoy.

THE WILL OF JOHN BRADFORD, PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY, 11 MAY 1726

[Empowers executors to sell various tracts, including:]

Also 7 tracts, viz. 2 islands in Potomac R., "Island of Walnut Trees" and "Fair Isle"; "Concord" and "Progressive" on main land over against afsd. islands; "Sinicar," at mouth of Sinicar Ck., and tract at mouth of Long Acre Br.; the 7th tract lies back of plantation called "Sugarlands"; these 7 tracts cont. 4500 A. taken up with Daniel DULANY, Esq., of Annapolis, testator's share 2250 A. . . . "Jacob," on lower falls of Potomac, in tenure of Henry CHAMBERLIN and William KING; 300 A. "Argile COWELL and Lorn," Piney Br., Rock Ck., bou. of Randolph BLAKE, in tenure of Peter HYATT; . . . "Bradford's Rest," on br. of Rock Ck., cont. 3 plans., now in care of Wm. DEVERON, overseer, and 2 tenements occupied by William WOFFORT, Jr., and Wm. MACKCOY [Maryland Calendar of Wills var.].

The growing community of settlers in Rock Creek Hundred required the services of a church, perhaps as early as 1719. There is very limited information and considerable confusion in sources that describe the sequence of events leading to construction of St. Paul's Anglican Church, now located at the intersection of Rock Creek Church Road and Webster Street in the Brookland neighborhood, northwest of Catholic University and less than two miles east of Rock Creek. One source dates the founding of the church to 1712; however, a petition to Queen Anne's Parish in Prince Georges County requesting a new church for use of the up-country settlers is reported to date to 1719. Among the signers were Joseph, William, and John West. The first actual structure is said to have been built in 1719, using wood from the 100-acre glebe donated (in that year) by John Bradford. The 1719 wooden building is described as a chapel located at the mouth of Rock Creek. By a vote of 49 to 26, the parishioners designated this chapel as the parish church on August 13, 1728, but it is also said that the local settlers were concentrated along the northern reaches of the creek, and they found the chapel near the Potomac to be inconveniently distant. Therefore, they petitioned for a new location, which led to the 1726 (?) construction of the ancestral brick church that became St. Paul's (Anonymous n.d.).

CLOUIN COURSE: THE PARK IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Carroll's Tenants

Land records and the *Black Book* tell us about the slow spread of European settlement up the Potomac, but what was happening on the hills that would become Rock Creek Park? One clue comes from a group of land records and another from a legal dispute. The land records concern the property of Charles Carroll of Annapolis. By 1739 Carroll had become the owner of two tracts of land that lie partly within the park: Girl's Portion and Clouin Course. Girl's Portion, as we have seen, was one of the first patents in the area, claimed in 1688. Clouin Course was patented in 1714 by William Fitzredmond. Clouin Course, also spelled Cloun, Clouen, or Clown Course, was one of the whimsical names Maryland planters often chose for their properties—Conjurer's Disappointment, just to the west, is another—and we have no idea what Fitzredmond had in mind when he chose it.

In 1739 and 1740 Carroll enrolled a series of lease agreements in the Prince George's County land records (Jordan 1996a, 1996b) (Table 2). Most leases made at the time were not recorded in the deed books, and we don't know why Carroll did so. Perhaps he was just a careful landlord. Most of the tracts were about 100 acres, and the rent was one cask of tobacco, or 600 pounds. The standard lease term was 21 years. Each tenant was required to plant 100 apple trees. In 1746 Carroll leased 100 acres of Clouin Course to John Collins for 17 years.

Table 2: Charles Carroll's Leases

Name of Tenant	Property	Size	Date
Norwood Franceway	Girl's Portion	100	Nov. 28, 1739
John Beckett	Girl's Portion	100	Aug. 25, 1740
Thomas Trundle	Girl's Portion	100	June 25, 1745
John Ball	Clouin Course	100	June 25, 1740
Samuel Beall	Clouin Course	50	June 25, 1740
Alexander Hall	Clouin Course	100	June 25, 1740
Thomas Sparke	Clouin Course	100	June 25, 1740
James Tomlinson	Clouin Course	100	Aug. 27, 1740
William Hall	Clouin Course	100	March 26, 1741

The limited descriptions of the leased tracts provide a few bits of information about their locations. For example, James Tomlinson's land was bounded by Rock Creek and John Beckett's by Spring Branch. Tentative mapping based on the leases and the supposed location of the Clouin Course patent (see Figure 16) places James Tomlinson on the high ground north of Pinehurst Branch, and William Hall in the northern part of the park, in the area bounded by Rock Creek on the north and Wise Road on the south (Figure 19). Hugh Tomlinson's tenancy in Girl's Portion may have been partly within the park, most likely under the golf course, which is east of Rock Creek on the north side of Military Road.

The Clouin Course Site

Armed with our map of Carroll's tenancies, we went hunting for the homes of these tenants. Using a metal detector, we checked all the level high ground in the park that was within the leased properties. We eventually found two house sites and tantalizing hints that a third lay just outside the park boundary. The strongest evidence of a colonial tenant farm was a site we called Clouin Course. The site was on a narrow ridge overlooking a small stream, within the land leased to William Hall.

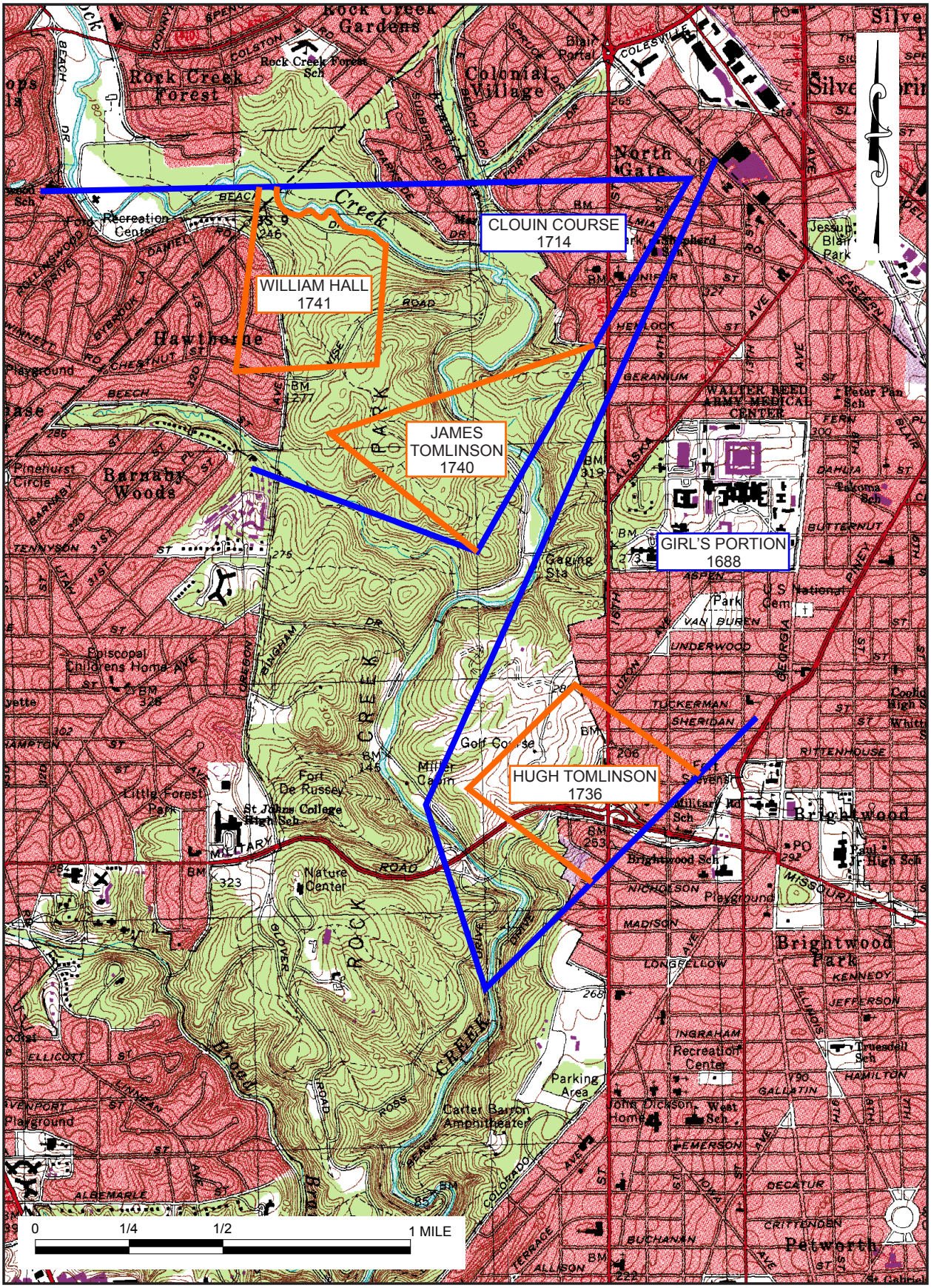


FIGURE 19: Approximate Boundaries of the Tomlinson and Hall Tenancies

The artifacts at this site were just what one expects at a small farm: nails, fragments of an iron kettle, pieces of clay tobacco pipes, and sherds of pottery (Figure 20). The pottery included coarse redware from crocks or bowls and refined ware used for plates and teacups. All but one sherd of the refined pottery can be dated to between 1762 and 1820; the exception, a sherd of delftware, could date to any time in the colonial period. It is still possible, though, that the Clouin Course Site is one of the tenancies mentioned in 1740. For a tenant site it produced a large number of artifacts, suggesting that the site was occupied for a long time, perhaps as much as a century. As we have seen, some tenant farms of the early eighteenth century produce very few artifacts.

Whether it was founded in 1740 or 1760, the Clouin Course Site does tell us that tenant farm sites in the park were much like others in the region. There was no sign of a well, so water presumably came from the nearby creek. More than 60 nails were found, so the site must have included at least one frame building. However, many of the identifiable nails were machine-cut and therefore date to after 1790, so it may be that the first buildings on the site were built of logs. Only a few pieces of brick were found—not enough for a complete chimney. Most likely the house had a hearth made of brick but a chimney made of wood and lined with mud.



FIGURE 20: Artifacts from the Clouin Course Site

Clockwise from upper left: bowl of a white clay tobacco pipe; sherd of slip-decorated redware pottery; handle section from a large iron cooking pot; rimsherd from a slip-decorated redware pan; a stem fragment from a white clay

The Commission

The legalistic caution of Charles Carroll, who recorded the leases that helped us to find Clouin Course, also allows us to get a glimpse of life along Rock Creek in the 1730s. In July 1762 a commission delegated by the Justices of the Prince George's County Court met at Rock Creek to "perpetuate the memory of the bounds" of the tracts called "Cloes Purchase" (i.e., Clouin Course) and "Girls Portion." The commissioners took depositions from several residents of the area. The first noteworthy item is the number of old men testifying who had lived in the area for at least 20 years. Hugh Tomlinson, then about 70 years old, recalled that 23 to 24 years before (i.e., 1738 to 1739), Thomas Wilson had laid off all of Charles Carroll's tenants' lands from a chestnut tree on the Girl's Portion patent. James Hughes, about 37 in 1762, had been a carpenter about 20 years before (circa 1742). He reported that he had been looking for a "rafter tree," accompanied by Thomas Hoskins, Jr. He had seen a white oak tree that he was told, by Grove Thomlonson [*sic*], was a tree of Girl's Portion. Both Tomlinson and Hughes signed by mark (i.e., they were illiterate).

These old men had seen the corner trees while they were looking for timber, which tells us that the Rock Creek Valley had been heavily wooded. But not entirely; the commissioners met at William Tannehill's house and proceeded from there to "a place formerly deemed and known to be an Indian Old Field" somewhere near the confluence of Broad Branch (then known as Darnall's Branch) and Rock Creek (Andersen 1995b:Liber J Abstracts, p. 5). "Indian old fields" mentioned in eighteenth-century descriptions were cleared fields, which apparently remained treeless for decades, perhaps centuries, after abandonment. Although local soil and water conditions may have played some role in the formation of such open areas, it is generally assumed that most clearings were created artificially by Native Americans, who burned off trees to encourage new growth of grass and shrubs conducive to deer browsing. Late Woodland people would also have used fire to clear areas for maize cultivation. John Davidson recalled that many years earlier he had seen a bounded oak tree "when he was getting a frame for old Hugh Thomlinson." According to James Gore, Hugh Tomlinson had been a tenant of Carroll when the land was surveyed by Thomas Wilson. Samuel Beall recalled that in 1745 he had gone to Grove Tomlinson's house to look at some tobacco when they had gone together to look at the chestnut tree—"the second tree of Girls Portion and the beginning of his [Tomlinson's] land."

FARMING AND MILLING

FARMSTEADS AND MILLS

After the signing of the 1722 Treaty of Albany with the Iroquois Five Nations, political conditions on the frontier of the English colonies stabilized, and settlers poured into western areas like Frederick County and the Great Valley. Many of the interior settlers were newly arrived immigrants from Germany and the Scottish borderlands. The population of the older parts of Maryland and Virginia also continued to increase as more intensive forms of agriculture brought more land under cultivation and increasing commerce created more opportunities for profit and work. Tobacco cultivation declined in importance, and grain production increased. The important new towns of the mid-eighteenth century, such as Baltimore, Alexandria, and Georgetown, emphasized the wheat trade as well as tobacco exports. Land in central Maryland, including the upland tracts around Rock Creek, was pressed into wheat cultivation. Wheat farming, of course, requires flour milling, and after 1750 mills were built by the hundreds throughout the Chesapeake region and westward. Mills were often part of larger plantation complexes, which were sometimes sited to take advantage of good mill sites. Since Rock Creek provided several excellent mill sites, we can assume that mills and associated mill plantations had been constructed along the creek by the mid- to late 1700s. Mills and their associated farms continued to operate on a large scale until the Civil War, and the Peirce Mill is an important remnant of that era.



FIGURE 21: Loading Tobacco at a Colonial Port
SOURCE: NPS

In 1734 a merchant named George Gordon bought 300 acres near the mouth of Rock Creek. Gordon did not buy this land to farm it but as a spot to carry on other businesses. In 1738 Gordon set up a ferry crossing to Virginia. In 1744 he applied for a license to construct a "rolling house" or tobacco warehouse on the property. In 1747 Maryland enacted the Tobacco Inspection Act to regulate tobacco exports; all tobacco was to be inspected by licensed merchants, and the inspection was to be done at tobacco warehouses. Gordon's warehouse was one of the inspection points. This presence of the inspection warehouse helped encourage trade at the mouth of Rock Creek, and in 1751 a new town was platted on 60 acres of George Gordon's property. Gordon named the new settlement Georgetown. The significance of the name is not certain, but Gordon may have taken advantage of the coincidence that he shared the king's name to name the town after himself.

The construction of George Gordon's tobacco warehouse near the mouth of Rock Creek certainly made it more convenient for those planters already located further inland to get their product to market (Figure 21). During the mid-eighteenth century there were still few good roads, and navigable waterways remained the principal commercial highways. The construction of the warehouse at Georgetown may even have encouraged tobacco farming along Rock Creek; however, detailed records of the local farms of this period have not been identified.

In 1783 the tobacco trade was still thriving around Georgetown. A tax assessment of Montgomery County taken in that year provides for the first time a detailed view of the landscape. The tracts located in the vicinity of Rock Creek, north of Georgetown, included "Fellowship," "Widow's Mite," "The Gift," "Deakins Mill Seat," "Girl's Portion," "Little Gleanings," "Pretty Prospects," "Indolence," "Rock of Dunbarton," and "Clouin Course" (see Figure 16). By then most of the larger patented tracts had been subdivided into smaller holdings, and many of these parcels also contained improvements of some kind, mostly log-constructed buildings. Most common among the buildings described were dwellings, tobacco houses, barns, and "quarters" (which denotes slave quarters). Some of the dwellings were identified as tenant houses, indicating that tenant-farming practices were still common. The Clouin Course tract, 926 acres located near the north end of modern Rock Creek Park, contained 12 small tenant houses; half of these acres were noted as being cleared (Montgomery County Commissioners of the Tax 1783). In 1783 this tract was owned by Ignatius Fenwick; Fenwick Branch, which flows into Rock Creek at the northern end of the park, presumably was named for him (or a descendant; there were Fenwicks in this area in the 1860s through the 1890s, as maps of that period attest).

The 1783 assessment records note that many of the farms contain "thin soil." This could be an indication that tobacco cultivation was exhausting the soil, but more likely it simply means that this soil was never well suited for tobacco cultivation to begin with. Acreage is also often described as "thin sapling land." Under the "long fallow" system used to grow tobacco in the Colonial Chesapeake, land was planted for only three to five years before being left fallow for up to 20 years, during which time it slowly reforested (Montgomery County Commissioners of the Tax 1783). When these descriptions were written, tobacco cultivation was already in decline in this area, and by the beginning of the nineteenth century, most farmers along Rock Creek would have switched to other crops.

The Carroll Tenancy Site

One of the 12 tenant houses on the Clouin Course tract must have been the Clouin Course Site, which was occupied until about 1820. Another was found on a ridge along the north side of Piney Branch, and we called this the Carroll Tenancy Site. The Carroll Tenancy was much smaller than Clouin Course and produced fewer artifacts, so it was probably occupied for only a decade or two some time around 1790. The artifacts were of the same types as found at Clouin Course: pieces of metal pots and clay tobacco pipes, olive green glass from wine bottles, coarse red earthenware, and finer ceramics from plates and teacups (Figure 22). (One thing archeology tells us about the late 1700s is that even poor tenants drank tea.) No nails were found, so the house at the Carroll Tenancy was almost certainly built of logs.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY MILLING ALONG ROCK CREEK

Rock Creek was an ideal setting for building water mills, and we know that at least one mill had already been built by 1749. In that year a tract known as "Widows Mite," along the east side of Rock Creek near its mouth, was sold to Cornelius Eltinge by James Holmead. According to the deed, Eltinge had already constructed a gristmill on the property (Andersen 1995a). This mill is mentioned again in the will of Cornelius Eltinge's son, Isaac, made on March, 18, 1756, which directed his wife "to sell the land at Rock Creek where the mill is."

Another early mill is one we know as Beall's Mill. In 1760 Samuel Beall patented a parcel of land known as "The Gift." This property, which stretched along Rock Creek from Georgetown to Piney



FIGURE 22: Artifacts from the Carroll Tenancy Site

Rimsherd from a Creamware or Queensware plate, 1762-1820; sherd from a handpainted Pearlware saucer (1795-1825); two fragments of white clay tobacco pipe stems; a piece of a large iron cooking pot; a pewter utensil handle.

Branch, was originally part of the holdings of Ninian Beall. By the time Samuel Beall acquired the property or shortly thereafter, a number of improvements had been recorded during a survey of the 520-acre property. The survey records note a mill and other buildings (text box; McCormick 1967) on the tract at the time Samuel Beall acquired the property, including a millhouse, a barn, a dwelling, and a log quarter. The mixture of frame and log construction is interesting. Frame building was the old English tradition; log building had been introduced into the new world by Finns in the Swedish colony on the Delaware River. In the 1700s settlers spreading out from Pennsylvania took the technology of log building with them throughout the frontier zone, and English settlers began to use it wherever wood was plentiful, especially for outbuildings such as corn houses. The presence of a log quarter (slave home) on Beall's property in 1760 shows us that log building had spread into long-settled parts of the Chesapeake colonies by that time.

NINIAN BEALL'S IMPROVEMENTS

- a 20x16-foot old millhouse, boarded and lap shingled
- a 30x16-foot old barn, boarded and shingled
- a 16-foot-square old house
- a 30x12-foot new corn house
- a 20x16-foot dwelling with an earthen floor and brick chimney
- a 25x14-foot log quarter

The sizes of the buildings are also interesting. The "old house," 16-foot-square, is a typical size for a house in eighteenth-century America, especially among the poor and in newly settled areas. This had been replaced at some point by a slightly larger house with a brick chimney; since no brick chimney is mentioned for the "old house," it presumably had a

wooden chimney. But even the new house had a dirt floor. The finest structure on the site seems to have been the mill house. Samuel Beall was investing his time and money in the working capital of the mill rather than in comfortable lodgings. The log quarter reminds us that African slaves were an important part of this community.

MILLING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Conditions for milling along Rock Creek only improved in the nineteenth century. As tobacco growing declined in the Piedmont, wheat assumed ever greater importance in the local economy, and Rock Creek continued to be a grain milling center. Local mills also diversified, producing paper and fertilizer as well as flour and lumber. The opening of the C&O Canal gave access to western markets, further increasing business among the Rock Creek mills. The mills operated at peak production during the mid-nineteenth century, and they even prospered after the Civil War; however, the rise of western wheat farming, the railroads, and new milling processes led to a major decline after 1870.



FIGURE 23: Painting of Peirce Mill in 1840s

Peirce Mill

Samuel Beall's old wooden mill seems to have stood until the 1820s, when Isaac Peirce rebuilt the mill in stone (National Park Service 2000:1:1). This mill, known as Peirce's Mill (sometimes spelled Pierce's), is still standing in the park, and its corner stone bears the date 1829. The mill was part of a complex that included a house for the miller, a cow barn, a distillery, a carriage house, a potato house, and an ice house.

A painting believed to date to circa 1840 is the first visual record of the mill (Figure 23 above). The first photographic view of the mill dates to 1855 (Figure 24). The anonymous watercolor painting, although very romantic in its conception of the mill seat, correctly shows the approximate size and style of the mill building. The log building is the miller's house. A plat of the mill property made in 1864 labels this structure "overseer" (Figure 25). The 1855 photograph shows the mill along with the carriage house and cow barn that Peirce constructed around 1811. By 1867 a sawmill had been added that is not shown on earlier maps. Perhaps this mill was built to take advantage of the great demand for lumber in Washington during and after the war. The continued value of the mill in this period is shown by the installation in 1878 of a new turbine system, replacing the old-style water wheels (McCormick 1967:37).

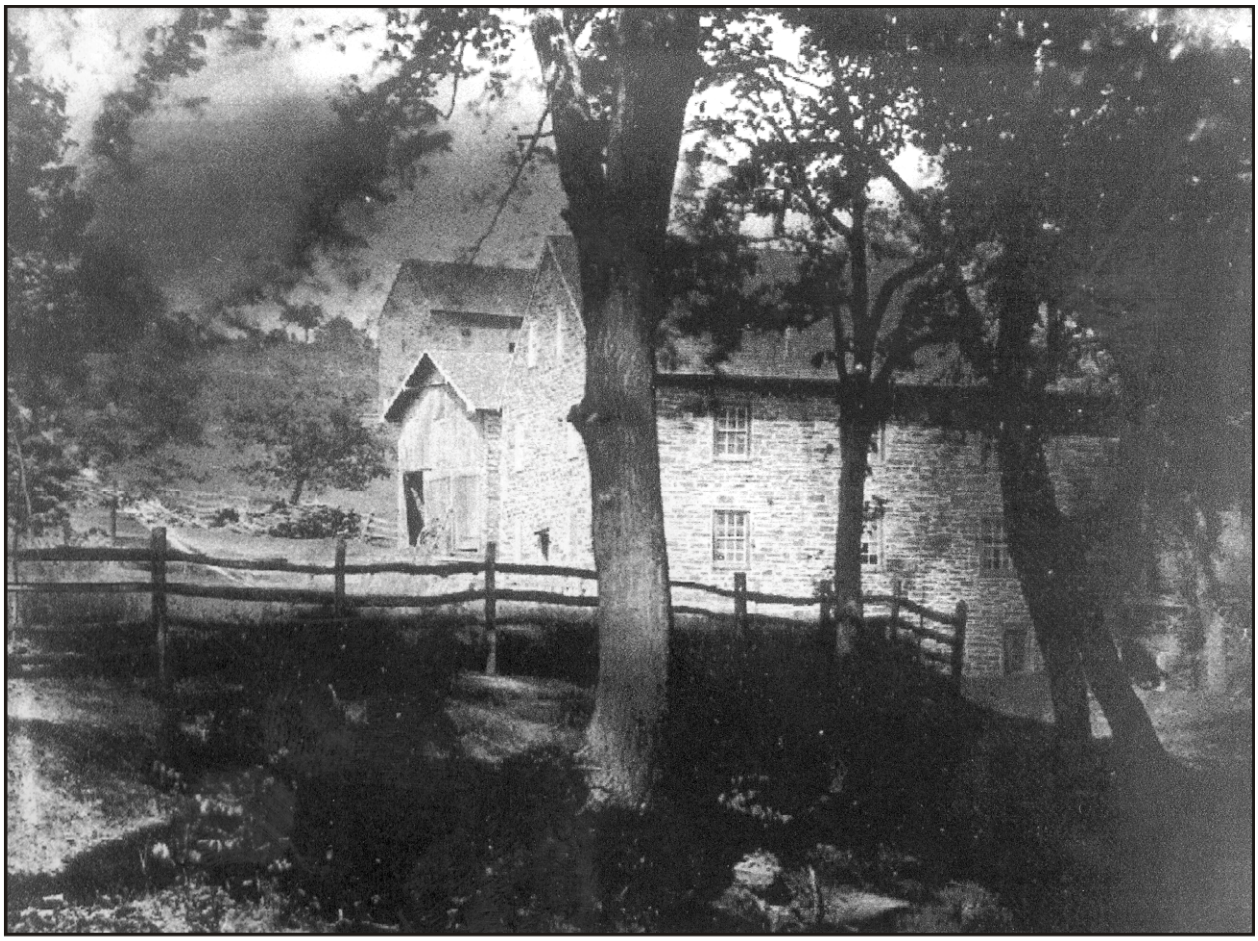


FIGURE 24: Photograph of Peirce Mill in 1855

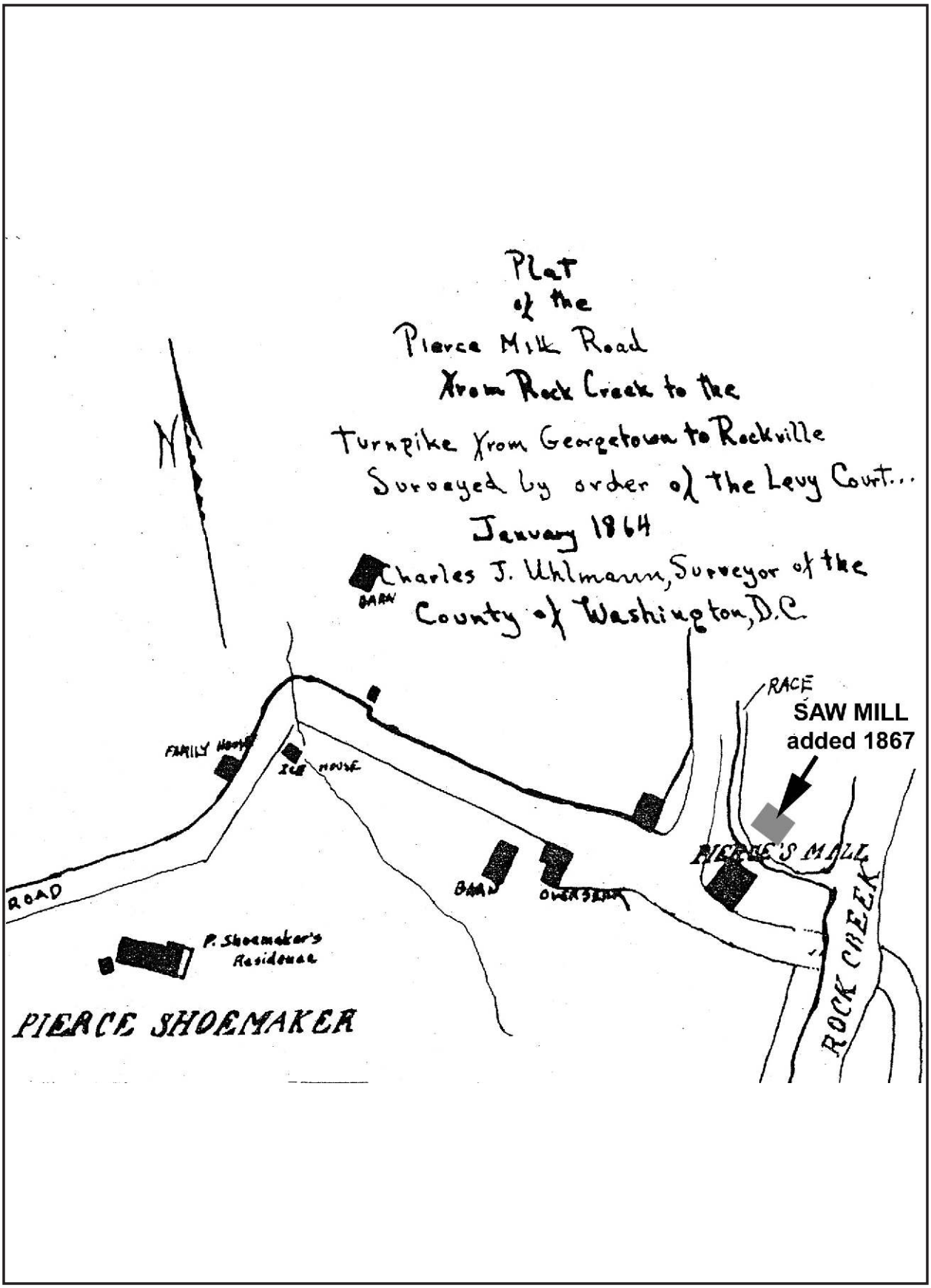


FIGURE 25: Plat Showing Peirce Mill Buildings in 1864 *SOURCE: McCormick 1967*

The profitability of milling along Rock Creek rapidly declined after 1870, as illustrated by the financial records of the Peirce Mill for 1879 to 1880. By that time the mill was operating primarily as a feed mill. Only 50 bushels of wheat were ground in the year, as compared to 13,000 bushels of other grains. In 1880 the total value of products from the mill fell to $8,250. The mill closed in 1897 (McCormick 1967:38).

Archeological investigation around the mill to look for remains dating to the colonial period found little. The extensive rebuilding episodes of the 1800s seem to have obscured the mill's early history. The site was heavily graded when the park was established and the Park road built, making it even harder to find traces of Samuel Beall's mill.

Argyle Mill

Another important milling complex in operation along Rock Creek during the nineteenth century was the Argyle Mill. The Argyle milling complex, north of the Peirce Mill near the present location of Boulder Bridge, contained both a flour mill and a paper mill that produced rag paper. The exact date of construction is uncertain, but it has been reported that Isaac Peirce built both the Argyle and Federal mills. It is likely, if this information is correct, that the Argyle Mill dates to the late eighteenth or very early nineteenth century (Hazen n.d.). The mill presumably took its name from the original patent in this area, which was called "Argyle, Cowell and Lorne." The Argyle complex consisted of two mills and a miller's house located on each side of a mill race that extended a quarter of a mile (Figure 26). Both mills were two- to three-story stone buildings with side-gabled roofs. The mills operated until 1889.

THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY LANDSCAPE

The rich documentary record of the nineteenth century, including many detailed maps, allows us to recreate the landscape of the period in some detail. Before the Civil War the land that would become Rock Creek Park was heavily wooded, with many fields and pastures (Figure 27). About a dozen farmers worked the land. The character of agriculture in the area had changed since colonial times. After 1819, when the world price of tobacco plummeted, tobacco farming nearly disappeared from the District, and instead farmers concentrated on dairying and growing wheat, other grains, and potatoes. Later in the century, as the city grew, the nursery trade and other forms of horticulture supplemented or even replaced traditional farming.

There were large and small farms in the Rock Creek Valley. In 1860 the smaller farms were mostly in the area north of Military Road. The smallest belonged to James Pilling, who raised corn, oats, potatoes, and hay on 20 acres. One of the larger farms belonged to the Claggetts, who had 175 acres in the center of the park, north of Fort DeRussy. The level parts of their land, 131 acres, were "improved" and the steep slopes and ravines were wooded. George Hoyle's farm can perhaps be considered typical. It contained less than 100 acres of land, half or more of which was cleared, along with two or three buildings. Hoyle settled on this farm around 1830. He owned no slaves, and his entire farm was valued at $3,000 in 1850. His livestock consisted of three horses and three cows, and he produced 150 bushels of Indian corn, 50 bushels of wheat, and 100 bushels of potatoes. In addition, he probably had a small vegetable garden (United States Bureau of the Census, Agricultural Schedule 1850).

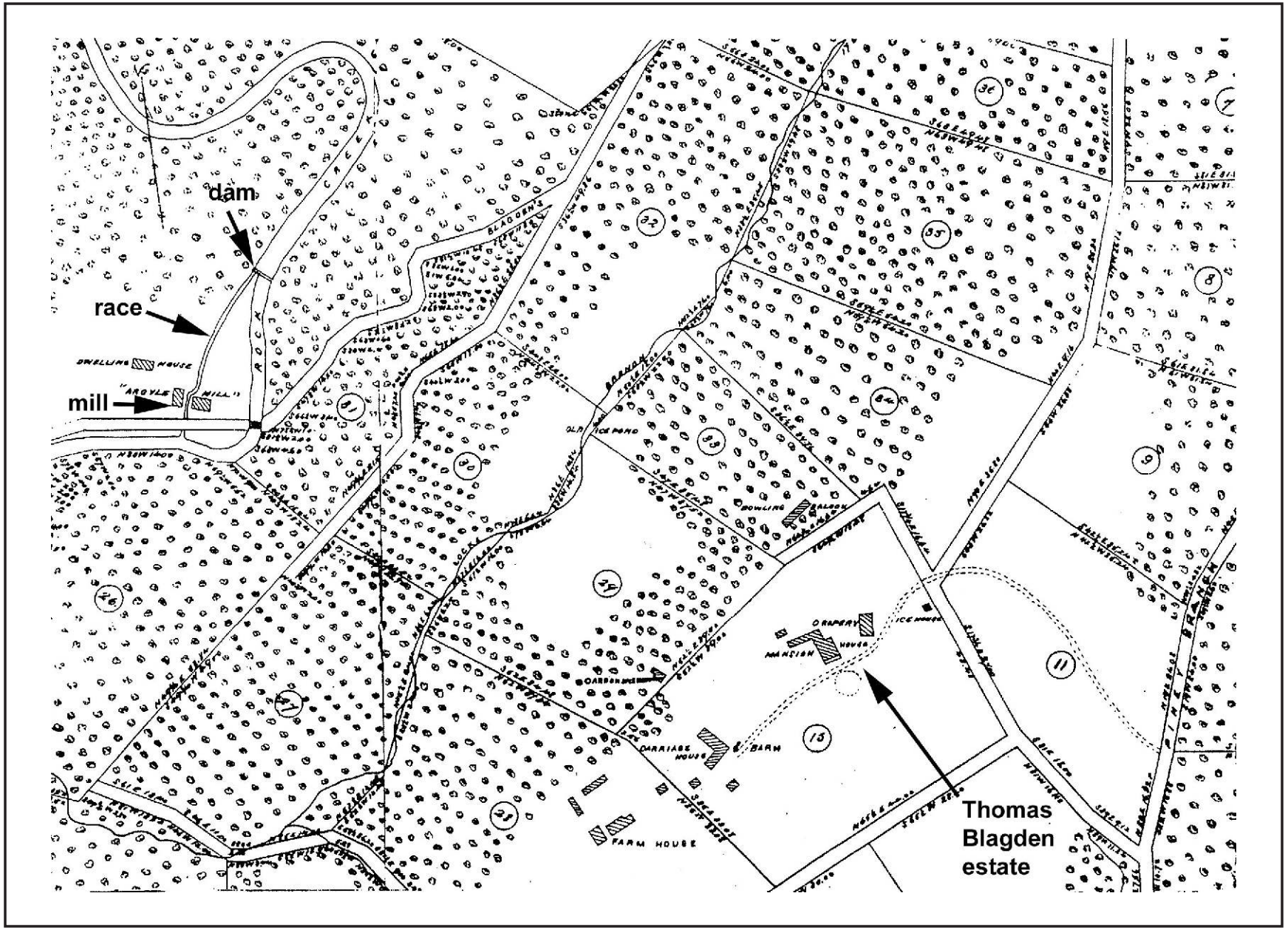


FIGURE 26: Argyle Mill and the Blagden Estate in 1875

SOURCE: Carpenter 1875



FIGURE 27: Rock Creek Valley in 1861

The largest landowners in the Rock Creek Valley were the Peirce/Shoemaker family and Thomas Blagden. Their lands were to the south, and they were separated from the smaller farms to the north by a belt of woodlands. Both of these families also owned mill complexes along the creek as well as other business interests.

Peirce Shoemaker Farm

At the time of the Civil War, Peirce Shoemaker was the largest landowner in what later became Rock Creek Park. Shoemaker acquired the Peirce Mill and the homestead of his uncle, Abner Peirce, following the latter's death in 1851. This property had been under cultivation when it was owned by Shoemaker's grandfather, Isaac Peirce. By 1800 Isaac Peirce had amassed a personal estate that included between 1,200 and 2,000 acres in what is now the portion of Rock Creek Park between Military Road and the National Zoo. This estate included the Peirce Mill and a sizable tree nursery. In 1805 Uriah Forrest ordered some 700 thorn bushes from Isaac Peirce, and as early as 1814, advertisements in the *National Intelligencer* offered for sale "20,000 engrafted apple trees . . . at the nursery, of the subscriber (Isaac Peirce) on Rock-Creek, three miles from Georgetown" (National Park Service 2002:2).

After acquiring Abner Peirce's property, Shoemaker expanded his holdings during the period from 1851 to 1860. He reportedly owned approximately 4,000 acres in northwest Washington. The agricultural census records from 1860 describe a much smaller farm, containing only 120

improved acres. Most likely this is because most of the land was leased to tenants, and Shoemaker described to the census only his home farm (Shaw 2003:8). In 1860 he valued that at $12,000. His crop yields included 200 bushels of Irish potatoes, 100 bushels of Indian corn, 80 bushels of rye, 20 bushels of buckwheat, and six bushels of peas and beans. Shoemaker's grasslands produced 20 tons of hay that was used as feed for his livestock, which included four horses, two asses/mules, three milk cows, four other cows, and five swine (United States Bureau of the Census, Agricultural Schedule, 1860).

Slave laborers are known to have worked the Peirce lands prior to emancipation. There had been slaves working these lands since the mid-eighteenth century. The 1760 Samuel Beall patent of "The Gift" described the property as containing many buildings, including a 25x14-foot "quarter" for slaves. Isaac Peirce owned nine slaves in 1820, ranging in age between 14 and 45. Theseslaves worked as domestic servants, mill workers, and field hands. According to Isaac Peirce's slave inventory, some of these slaves were named George Dover, James Dover, Charles Simmes, and Joseph Simmes (Shaw 2003:6).

Isaac's son, Abner Peirce, inherited most of these slaves upon his father's death in 1841. Abner Peirce also owned 12 other slaves in addition to those he inherited. These slaves all bore the surname Liles. The appraisal of Abner Peirce's estate lists all of these slaves, including those that he inherited from his father. When Abner Peirce died in 1851, his nephew, Peirce Shoemaker, acquired most of his slaves. Shoemaker also owned other slaves, all of whom are identified under the surname of Foster. These additional slaves were needed as field laborers, since Shoemaker increased the improved acreage of the farm by 40 acres. At the time of emancipation, Shoemaker owned a total of 21 slaves (Shaw 2003:8).

Following the Civil War Shoemaker's land holdings decreased to 608 acres (Shaw 2003:9). In 1880 he owned 100 acres of improved land on which he grew 250 bushels of wheat, 150 bushels of Irish potatoes, and 120 bushels of rye. His orchard contained 30 apple trees that produced 20 bushels of apples a year. Farm products produced $1,800 of income, with an additional $200 coming from the sale of orchard items. Shoemaker's outlay for hired labor was $1,200 in 1879. Shoemaker kept 52 men employed in operating his enterprises at that time (United States Bureau of the Census, 1880 Agricultural Schedule).

In addition to the farm and gristmill, there is evidence that Shoemaker also profited from forest products. Census records indicate that in 1879 he produced 30 cords of wood valued at $225 from the timber available on his land (United States Bureau of the Census, 1880 Agricultural Schedule). He also opened a new sawmill around 1860, replacing an earlier mill located south of the stone gristmill. The circa 1860 sawmill was a wood-frame building located between the mill race and creek, northeast of the gristmill.

Linnaean Hill

Linnaean Hill was the home of Joshua Peirce, son of Isaac Peirce. Joshua was born in 1795. In 1823, when Joshua was only 28, Isaac gave him 82 acres of his Rock Creek property located south of his mill seat. In that same year Joshua constructed a stone I-house with Georgian details on a bluff overlooking Rock Creek, situated less than a half mile south of the Peirce Mill. Peirce constructed the house on land that was part of the original "Pretty Prospects" eighteenth-century patent (Figure 28). The house, which now serves as park headquarters, has a three-story façade facing south and a two-story façade that faces north (National Park Service 2002:1-2).



FIGURE 28: Linnaean Hill Today

Joshua Peirce's residence was surrounded by several outbuildings. A stable/barn was located on a terrace just below the main dwelling, and two additional outbuildings were located northwest of the dwelling (Figure 29). A stone barn and a spring house were located south of the residence, beside the road that extended toward the house. Farther southwest of these buildings stood a gatehouse, situated near the southern end of the property (National Park Service 2002:3). A greenhouse or conservatory was close by the house; shovel tests dug there during this project produced broken glass and sherds of flowerpots.

Some of the outbuildings on Peirce's estate were specifically devoted to horticultural purposes. Two utility sheds were constructed on a terrace south of the dwelling; locally quarried granite was used in their construction as in the foundation of the main house and many of the other outbuildings. Both buildings were symmetrically aligned with a stone retaining wall that connected them. The exact function of these buildings is not certain, but they may have been used as potting sheds or for some other horticultural purpose since both essentially formed wings or dependencies of the greenhouse. The greenhouse, built along the front of the retaining wall between the two sheds, was set on a low brick foundation and contained a wood-frame structural system sheeted with glass panels and a shed roof, also covered with glass panels. The greenhouse/conservatory was an important part of the estate because Joshua Peirce's profession was horticulture. He had become interested in horticulture at an early age. Already in 1823, Peirce wrote a friend that "for sometime past [I] have been engaged in the nursery business in this place." Exactly what "place" Peirce was referring to is not certain, but it is generally believed to be his father Isaac's property. Although it probably was not a major part of his business enterprise, Isaac Peirce is known to have engaged in commercial horticulture to some degree (National Park Service 2002:2).



FIGURE 29: Plan of Linnaean Hill in 1861 *SOURCE: Boschke 1861*

Joshua Peirce took his interest in commercial horticulture beyond that of his father, establishing a nursery business that became his main economic focus. Peirce's nursery is said to have been the first of its kind in the District of Columbia and was one of only three such businesses in the District in 1850. It is not certain whether Joshua acquired any portion of his father's orchard in the 82 acres Isaac granted him. What is known is that Joshua Peirce would establish a nursery on the property more diverse than the orchards of his father's estate. Records of the period show that, like his father, Joshua sold orchard trees, but his nursery on Linnaean Hill also offered a wider range of plants. In 1824 Peirce published a catalog of plants for sale that featured various fruit trees, shrubs, greenhouse plants, grapes, and rose bushes. Some of his letters and other personal records indicate that Joshua bought various plants and trees that included white flowering horse chestnut, silverbell, laburnum, lindens, magnolia, Frankliniana, kalmia, peonies, and several types of roses. Joshua's love of horticulture and botany is also shown in the name he chose for his estate, Linnaean Hill, which he named after the Swedish botanist, Carl von Linné (or Linnaeus) (Bushong 1990:30; National Park Service 2002:2-5).

Landscape design was also one of Joshua Peirce's interests. He was probably influenced in the 1840s by the "Picturesque" movement and particularly the work of Andrew Jackson Downing, the foremost American landscape architect of his time. Downing believed that landscapes should be naturally inspired, designed in accordance with natural conditions of a site. In other words, he believed landscape elements should be designed to give the impression that they occurred naturally. Downing's basic concept of the natural environment was typical of Picturesque thought of the mid-nineteenth century, which accentuated the sublime or enhanced natural elements as they appeared in nature while rejecting formal ordered planning. Peirce seems to

have redesigned the landscape at Linnaean Hill to be consistent with these principles. He installed circular, meandering drives and paths within the existing landscape and winding around the existing buildings. Peirce lined the roads with trees and also planted ornamental trees and shrubs throughout his property, conveying an idealized natural setting (Bushong 1990:32-33).

Although designed to aesthetic standards, the landscape at Linnaean Hill also met functional needs as a nursery. The orchards located northwest of the dwelling countered any notion of a totally naturalistic landscape. Here Peirce ensured that everything was carefully ordered. The orchard trees were laid out in carefully aligned rows, each placed 40 feet apart. The areas surrounding the orchard were also planned as cultivated fields, where oats, rye, corn, potatoes, peas, beans, hay, and buckwheat were grown. In addition, Peirce produced 60 gallons of wine in 1860, indicating that he had a vineyard somewhere on the property (United States Bureau of the Census, Agricultural Schedules 1860).

By 1860 Peirce had become wealthy from his horticulture business. Census records list his profession as "Horticulturalist," with his real estate valued at $90,000 and personal property at to $12,500 (Bushong 1990:31). His "market gardens" were worth $4,000, a large sum for that time considering that his nearest neighbors had gardens worth at most $500 (United States Bureau of the Census, Agricultural Schedule, 1860). However, Peirce's estate included additional real estate besides Linnaean Hill. He developed tree nurseries on other property he acquired on squares in northwest Washington between 14th and 16th streets and R and S streets (Bushong 1990:30).

Although he married, Peirce and his wife had no children of their own, and he relied heavily upon his slaves to run his household and business. By the time of emancipation in the District of Columbia in 1862, Peirce owned 11 slaves (Table 3). These slaves included four with the last name Carrole, three with the last name Beckett, and two with the last name Rustin. Peirce owned four female slaves, three of whom were of working age. All of them were responsible for household duties and are identified as "house worker." Peirce trained his male slaves to operate his horticulture business and his farm. Existing records indicate that he placed a great deal of trust in the slaves he used in his business endeavors (Shaw 2003:10-11).

Table 3: Slaves of Joshua Peirce in 1862

Last Name	First Name	Age	Occupation
Beckett	Ellen	23	House worker
Beckett	James	20	Unknown
Beckett	William	29	Foreman of nursery
Carrole	Anthony S.	14	Unknown
Carrole	Charles S.	9 months	None
Carrole	Charolette R.	17	House worker
Carrole	Nancy	45	housekeeper/cook
Gibson	Jeremiah	48	Market salesman
Rhodes	Thomas	25?	Farm hand
Rustin	Anne Marie	23	House worker
Rustin	William N.	3 months	None

Source: Shaw (2003)

Two principal slaves in his operation were William H. Beckett and Jeremiah Gibson. Beckett was only 29 when freed, but by that time Peirce had already made him the foreman in the operation of the garden, greenhouse, and nursery. Peirce notes in the emancipation records that Gibson could "read and write well." A literate slave was very uncommon during the antebellum period. We can infer from the record that Peirce considered Beckett to be very bright and able, but it is not known whether he learned to read and write from Peirce or if Becket learned on his own (Shaw 2003:22). Jeremiah Gibson was 43 years old by the time of emancipation, considerably older than William Beckett, and was among Joshua Peirce's longest-held slaves, having been purchased in 1821 from Thomas Offut of Montgomery County. After many years of service, Gibson had earned Peirce's trust and assumed some responsibility for marketing the products of the estate. In the emancipation record Peirce describes Gibson as a good market salesman (Shaw 2003:23-24).

Joshua Peirce retained strong ties to his emancipated slaves even after they were freed (Shaw 2003:10-11). He made generous arrangements in his will for many of his former slaves. Peirce's two oldest servants at the time of emancipation, Jerry (Jeremiah) Gibson and Nancy Rhodes (the Carrole slaves changed their names to Rhodes after emancipation), were granted an annuity of $48 to be paid every year after Peirce's death. Peirce bequeathed to William Beckett the sum of $1,000 and to Thomas Rhodes, Anthony Rhodes (formerly Carrole), Charles Rhodes, and Maria (Anne Marie) Rustin the sum of $300 each.

Joshua Peirce bequeathed all of the Linnaean Hill estate to his nephew, Joshua Peirce Klingle, a young nurseryman who was living with his uncle to learn the trade. However, after inheriting Linnaean Hill when Peirce died in 1869, Klingle showed little interest in expanding his uncle's business. Klingle made very few changes to the Linnaean Hill estate, but he subdivided the squares in the city where his uncle had other nurseries and sold them for residential development (National Park Service 2002:8). The Linnaean Hill estate remained under the ownership of Joshua Peirce Klingle until the establishment of Rock Creek Park in 1890.

Thomas Blagden

After the Peirce family, Thomas Blagden was the most prominent large land owner along Rock Creek during the nineteenth century. Blagden was a successful lumber merchant and proprietor of the Argyle milling complex, commonly called Blagden Mill, and he purchased a 375-acre farm in 1853 (Bushong 1990:33). The farm was adjacent to the land of Abner Peirce and later Peirce Shoemaker. In 1860 Blagden's farm was valued at $50,000 and contained 100 acres of "improved" land. Unlike his neighbors, Blagden did not cultivate a variety of crops, which was the practice of the time. Instead, he grew Irish potatoes and sweet potatoes, but no grains, and derived most of his income from livestock. Census data show that he owned six horses, four asses/mules, and 20 swine. His total livestock was valued at $1,200, outpacing any of his closest neighbors, including Peirce Shoemaker, whose livestock was valued at $1,000. Blagden also had three milk cows that produced more than 100 pounds of butter (United States Bureau of the Census, Agricultural Schedule 1860).

Most of the Blagden farm was located in what is today the Crestwood neighborhood, east of Rock Creek (see Figure 26). On this property Blagden built a large, wood-frame Georgian home (demolished in the 1930s). He lived there with his wife, Laura, and his daughters, Mary and Harriet, and sons, Tillman and Thomas, Jr. Blagden's wealth is shown by the fact that he also

had many servants, including a white housekeeper from Rhode Island and free African-Americans who worked as domestic and field hands. Unlike the Peirces, Blagden did not own slaves (Bushong 1990:33). Thomas Blagden died in 1870 leaving no will. After a protracted lawsuit among his heirs, the property was divided into 40 lots of 4 to 12 acres. Blagden's widow continued living in his house until her death in 1907. One of Blagden's sons, also named Thomas, gave some of his land for the creation of Rock Creek Park in 1890.

THE CIVIL WAR

THE CIRCLE FORTS

Washington was poorly defended when the war began in 1861. Fort Washington, 12 miles down the Potomac River, was the city's only fortification. The capital's vulnerability was exposed after the routing of Union forces at the First Battle of Manassas. Following the battle President Lincoln appointed Major General George G. McClellan as commander of Federal troops for the military district containing Washington. Facing a large Confederate army less than 30 miles from Washington, McClellan decided that an elaborate defensive system was needed to protect the city. He appointed Major John G. Barnard of the Corps of Engineers to design and build a fort system that would surround the entire city. Barnard built an integrated defensive system of forts, batteries, and rifle trenches. He sited the forts, the principal features of the system, on high ground at principal roadways, railroads, waterways, and fords crossing the Potomac River. When completed, the city's defenses totaled 68 forts and 93 batteries connected by over 20 miles of rifle trenches, making Washington the most heavily fortified city in the world (Cooling and Owen 1988; National Park Service 2001).

Construction of the fort system had a profound impact upon the physical character of the northern portion of what is now Rock Creek Park. The Boschke map of 1861 shows this area as still predominantly rural. What later became the northern half of the park was heavily wooded at that time, but it also contained clustered and sporadic pockets of land cleared for farming (see Figure 27). Fort DeRussy and Battery Kingsbury were built to defend Rock Creek and Milkhouse Ford Road. Clear fields of view and fire required the removal of tree cover located in front of these and the other defenses of the city. By 1864 land had been cleared in front of these defenses for distances of greater than one mile. A War Department Map of 1864 (Figure 30) shows a treeless, barren landscape between today's Georgia and Oregon avenues, with hundreds of stumps a visual reminder of where dense forests previously stood. The army also constructed a road linking the forts that defended the northern portions of the District. This Military Road extended east-west across the Rock Creek Valley just south of Fort DeRussy, providing another crossing of the creek. Military Road is still known by that name today.

The government hired teams of laborers, carpenters, teamsters, and blacksmiths to build the fortification system. When fugitive slaves, whom the military referred to as contraband, poured into the district, the military used them as a labor force. Given the extent to which fields of fire around the fort were cleared, these individuals may have been put to work clearing woodland, among other tasks.

Fort DeRussy

Fort DeRussy (its original spelling) was the principal fortification defending the Rock Creek Valley. It was constructed on the property of Bernett Swart, on the west side of Rock Creek, north of Peirce Shoemaker's estates. This fort, along with Batteries Kingsbury, Sill, and the "Battery to the Left of Rock Creek," formed a defensive perimeter against any enemy advance down the Rock Creek Valley. The "Battery to the Left of Rock Creek," also on the west bank, was an earthen fortification that contained six gun positions. Batteries Kingsbury and Sill were east of Rock Creek. Battery Sill contained nine gun positions and was named after Brigadier General J.W. Sill, who was killed at the Battle of Stones River. Battery Kingsbury contained nine gun positions and was named after

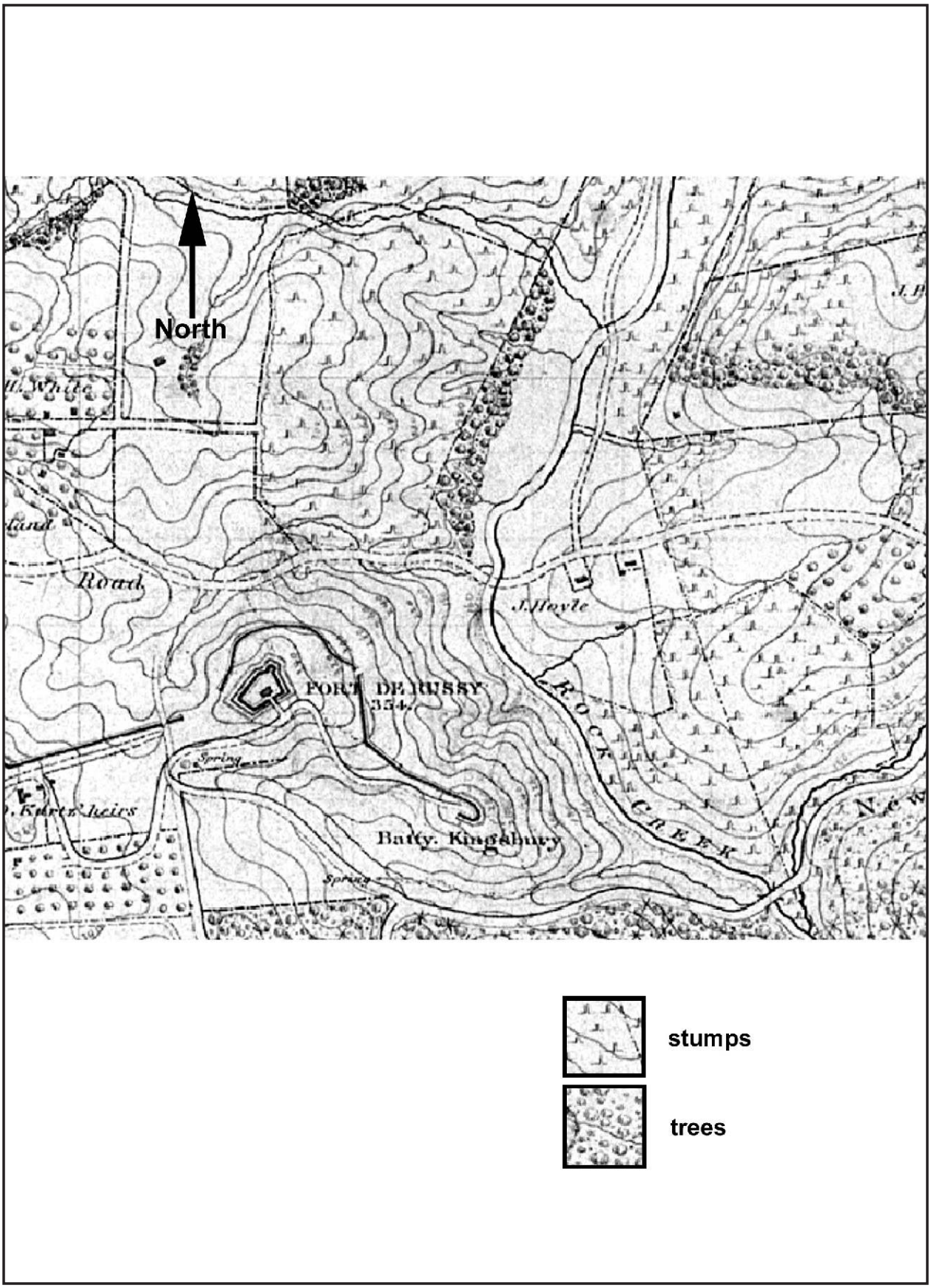


FIGURE 30: Rock Creek Valley in 1864

SOURCE: War Department

Lieutenant Henry Kingsbury of the 5th U.S. Artillery, who was mortally wounded at the Battle of Antietam (Cooling and Owen 1988; Miller 1976).

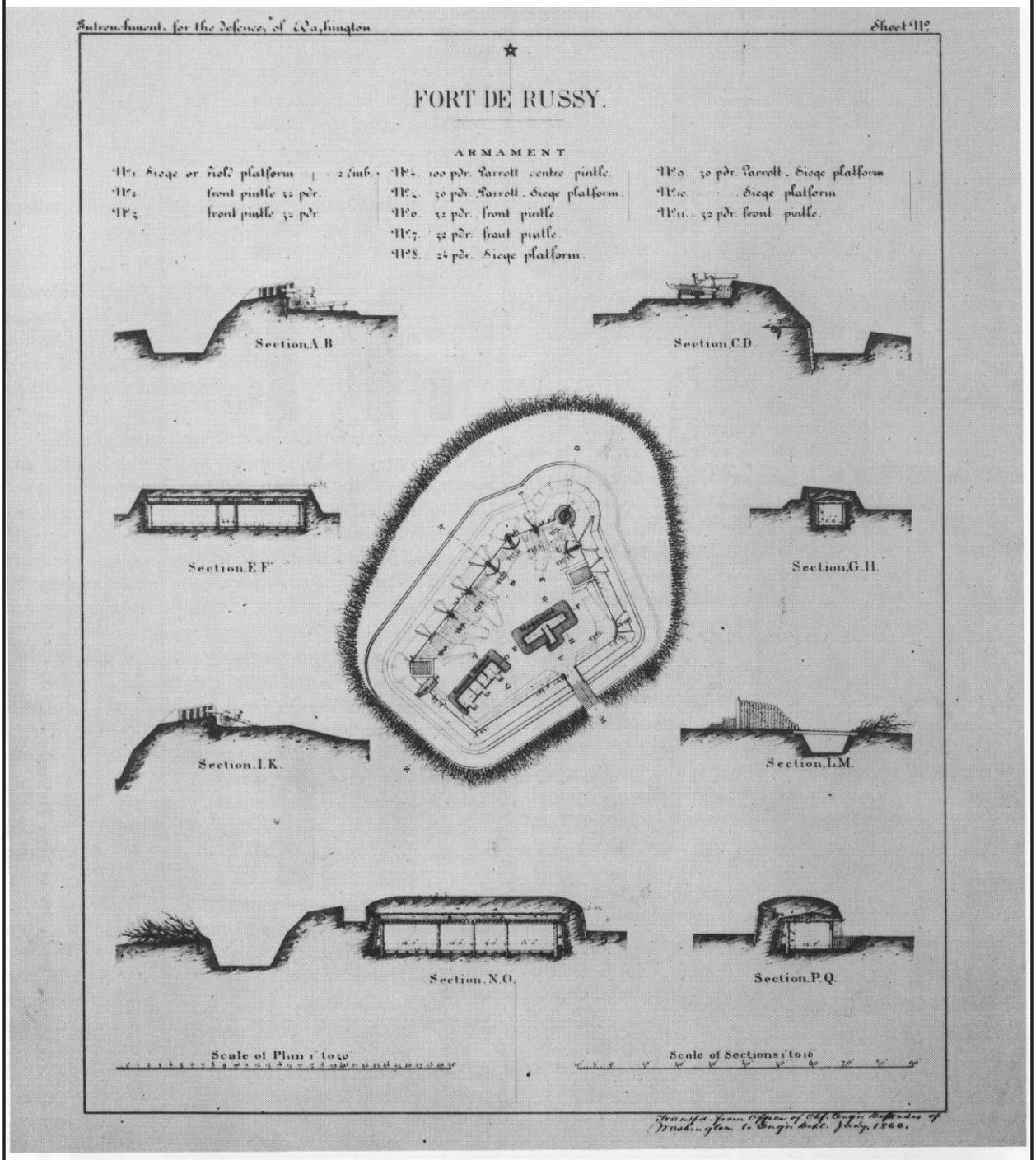
Fort DeRussy was an earthen fort, trapezoidal in plan. It was built on high ground overlooking Milkhouse Ford Road to the north. Originally known as Camp Holt, the fort was built by the 4th New York Heavy Artillery. According to some sources it was named after Colonel Gustavus A. DeRussy, one of the regiment's commanders, but other sources say it was named after his father, Rene DeRussy, who was superintendent of West Point in the 1830s. The DeRussys were one of the military families split by the war. Rene DeRussy's brother, Lewis, served in the Confederate army, and a Confederate Fort DeRussy on the Red River in Louisiana was named after him.

When completed, the Fort DeRussy in Washington contained three 32-pounder seacoast guns, one 100-pounder Parrott, five 30-pounder Parrotts, and one 10-inch and one 24-pound Coehorn mortar. In 1863 a 100-pounder center pintle Parrott rifle was added for more firepower. In addition, 190 yards of frontal rifle pits were strategically designed around the fort. Support buildings outside the fort included two wood-frame barracks measuring 20x100 feet, two wood-frame mess halls measuring 20x52 feet, five log officers' quarters, two log stables, a wood-frame ordnance sergeant's quarters, and a log 12x18-foot guardhouse. These buildings were located behind or south of the fort (Figures 31 and 32) (Bushong 1990:42; Cooling and Owen 1988:151).

A number of units garrisoned Fort DeRussy during the war. The fort was the primary garrison of the 4th New York Heavy Artillery. Companies of the 76th, 113th, and 117th New York Infantry spent time at DeRussy, as did portions of the 7th New York Heavy Artillery, 1st Maine Heavy Artillery, and 10th Rhode Island Battery (Cooling and Owen 1988:151).

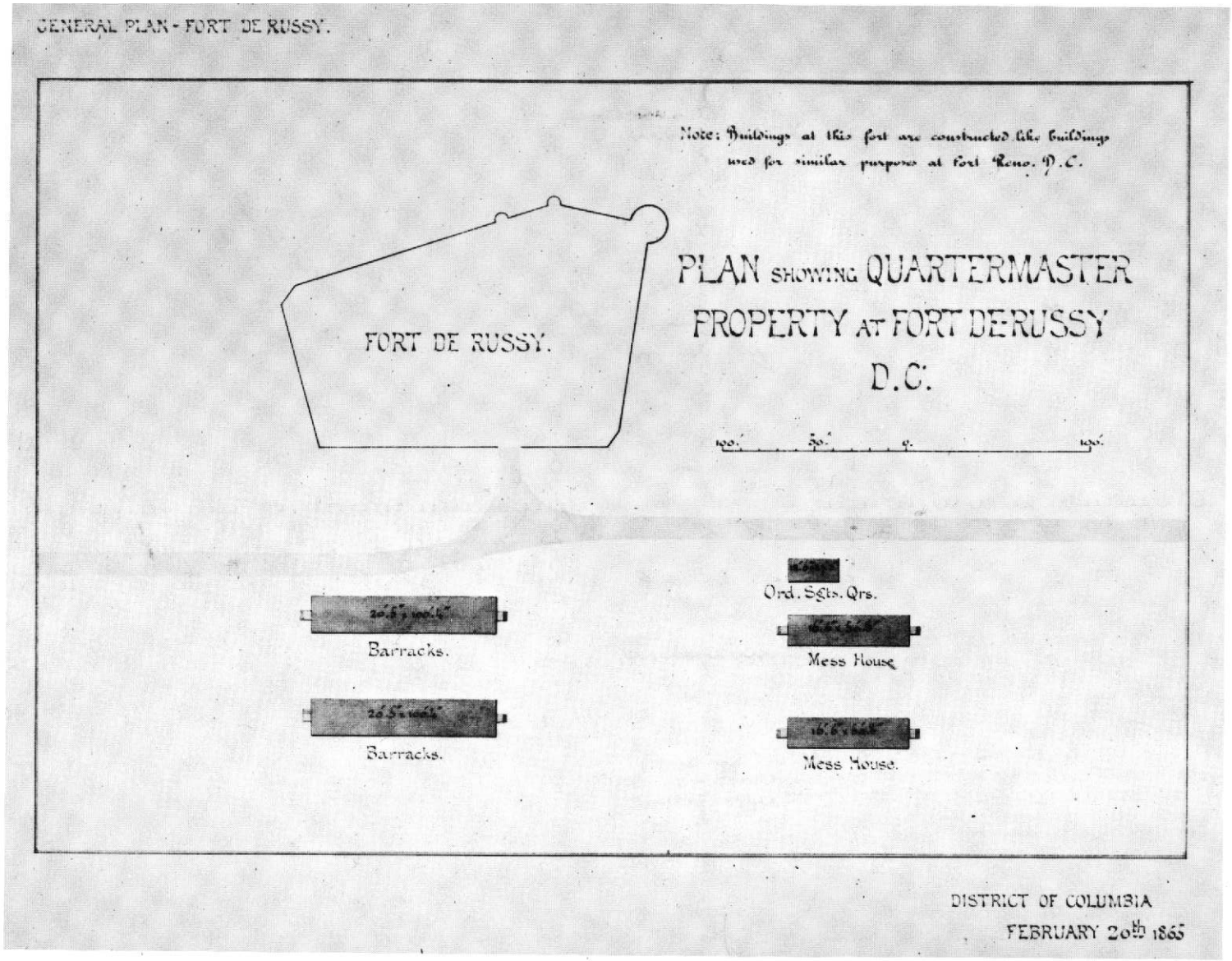
Many accounts of life at Fort DeRussy are contained in a history of the 10th Rhode Island Regiment published in 1892 by William Spicer (Figure 33). The 10th took up positions in the Washington defenses in July 1862, and one company occupied Fort DeRussy:

> "Fort De Russy the headquarters of Company D," says Lieutenant DeWolf, "is situated two miles east of Tennallytown, upon a high knoll in the midst of farms cultivated with more than usual care. With a short amount of labor, guided by engineering talent of a high order, our camp was first laid out upon an adjacent knoll, tents pitched, floors leveled, trenches dug, everything in apple-pie order, when a one-armed gentleman of critical aspect, known as Colonel Haskin, of the Engineers, come round, and told us to move nearer the fort. Now it seemed to us that in case of attack we could get there at least as soon as the enemy could, but the colonel didn't think so, and somehow the minority rule prevailed. We now occupy a narrow terrace just under the walls, very strong, very stumpy, and rather buggy. Before many hours, however, the stones had been removed, the stumps transformed to seats and writing desks, and the bugs well, the bugs, the spiders, the lizards, *et id omne genis*, still roam through their accustomed haunts, the ants build catacombs beneath our beds, the mosquitoes hum playfully about our ears, the wood-ticks climb up the tent walls, and by the light of our solitary candle, gaze curiously upon our little group, selecting the most promising victim." The best remedy we found for getting rid of bugs was the liberal use of Pennyroyal.
>
> July 7th, H.T. Chace wrote: "Some of the boys call our tent the Smithsonian Institute, on account of the variety of bugs and insects it contains. In reference to the proposed trip to Washington, one said there was no use to spend any time at the Smithsonian there, as we have all the specimens of ants, flies, bugs, and lizards, in our own quarters" [Spicer 1892:259-261].



Fort DeRussy — Engineer Drawing *National Archives*

FIGURE 31: Plan of Fort DeRussy, 1863

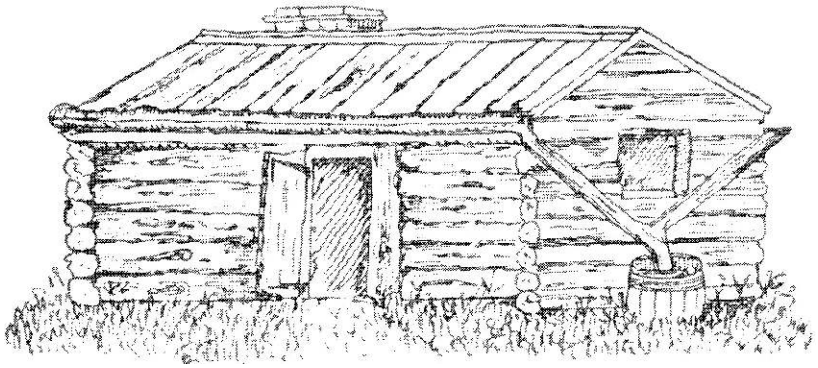


Plan for Quartermaster Property at Fort DeRussy

National Archives

FIGURE 32: Fort DeRussy, 1863: Plan of Outlying Buildings and Road

Guard House



Fort DeRussy

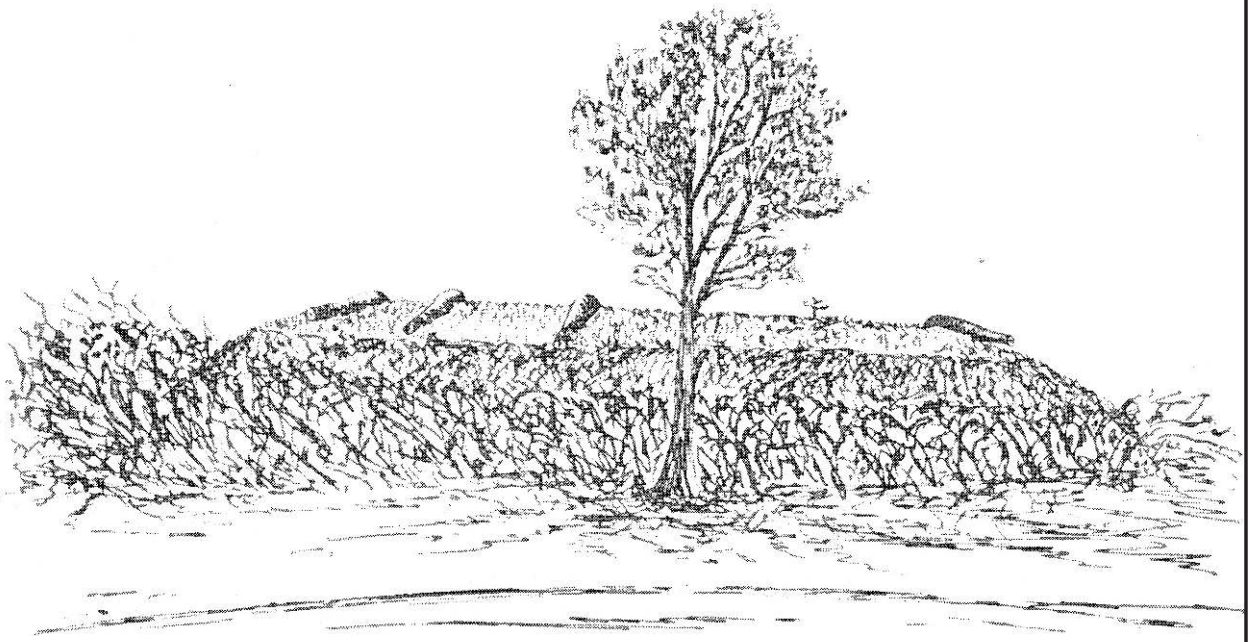


FIGURE 33: Sketches of Fort DeRussy and the Guard House, 1862

SOURCE: Spicer 1892

The published letters from men of the 4th New York Heavy Artillery all concern their postings in other parts of the defenses, but the lives of the men were probably much the same whichever fort they were defending. One New Yorker wrote home from Fort Marcy near the southern end of Chain Bridge:

> We have been at work almost continually on our fort and Fort Marcy and have, with the assistance of other regiments, dug long lines of rifle pits, built several strong redoubts and we have things so fixed that if Johnny Reb. should ever attempt to enter Washington by this way he would find another Gettysburg in his path. . . . We have been at work, during the past month or two, building barracks for ourselves, and now we have got just as good quarters as any regiment in the U. S. service, and better than we have yet had since we have been a regiment [National Park Service 2001].

The "daily routine of garrison duty" was rigidly fixed:

> Reveille at sunrise; breakfast 7 A. M.; foot artillery drill 7 1/2 A. M.; dinner 12 M.; heavy artillery practice 2 P.M.; dress parade 4 1/2 P. M.; supper 5 P. M.; and taps 9 o'clock, when all soldiers of the garrison are supposed to be in their quarters unless on duty [Rorison 1863].

Sergeant George Coffin of the 1st Maine Heavy Artillery tells us what "heavy artillery practice" was like in his memoirs:

> The principle Battery at Fort Sumner was composed of what were called "Sea Coast 32 pounders". They were cast iron guns of 6 inches bore and the solid cast iron shot weighed 32 lbs. The gun weighed about 7,000 lbs. and was mounted on a wooden carriage on a platform made of 3 inch pine plank. The end of the carriage next to the parapet turned on a pivot, the rear end was on two cast iron wheels that ran on an iron rail in a circular form, so that the gun could be pointed to the right or left as the occasion should require to hit the target.
>
> There was a detail from my company about twice each week to learn the Artillery drill. Whenever I was in the detail my station was at one of the Seacoast guns. I was gunner and had command of the gun while in practice. The sights of the 32 pounders were white chalk marks on the top of the muzzle and breach. We went through the motions of loading and firing same as in battle with the exception that we did not handle the powder and ball. I remember of firing my gun only once, that time I aimed for a target on the side of a hill 1,000 yards away, hit the ground under it.
>
> There was one 100 lb. Parrott Rifle Gun, this was the largest gun in the fort. It was of six inch bore and the shell was about 16 inches long and weighed 100 lbs. This gun was 16 feet long and weighed 17000 lbs. Mounted on a steel carriage. The first time they fired this big gun at a target up on the north side of the Potomac three miles away it rebounded and slid off the rear of the carriage and tumbled over into the middle of the fort. Had to send to Washington for a derrick and crew to get her back on the carriage. Nobody hurt. Did not hit the target. Don't remember whether the shell landed in Maryland or Virginia [Coffin 2002].

Fort DeRussy Dump Site

Fort DeRussy was garrisoned by hundreds of men for three years, and such a concentration of humanity always leaves an archeological signature. In this case the garrison left a trash dump that included hundreds of pieces of bottle glass as well as ironstone dishes, buttons, and unfired bullets. We also found hundreds of nails, suggesting that after the war some wood from the barracks or other buildings was tossed into the dump with the nails still in it.

Among the finds were a bayonet scabbard tip and two military buttons (Figure 34). One of the two metal military buttons is a gilt, 3-piece-construction officer's button. It has a barely discernible embossed design of a shield and perched eagle. Although eroded, this design seems to denote a unit from New York; the thin projecting tips of the shield are a distinctive visible attribute.



FIGURE 34: Military Artifacts from the Fort DeRussy Dump Site

Battery Kemble

Battery Kemble was located about three miles from Fort DeRussy. The army constructed Battery Kemble as the primary defensive point guarding Chain Bridge Road. This road crossed Chain Bridge, which was built in 1797, and intersected with the Georgetown/Rockville Pike and roads that led to Alexandria, Virginia. Chain Bridge was of vital importance during the Civil War as it was one of three crossings of the Potomac River from Virginia into Washington, D.C. To prevent any possible enemy force from using this crossing, the United States Army constructed a battery on a bluff overlooking the bridge.

The army constructed Battery Kemble on land that belonged to W.I. Maddox. This battery consisted of rounded earthen parapets protecting two 100-pounder Parrott rifles. The guns were mounted on swivels to fire over the parapets. Additional buildings at the site (Figure 35), located behind the battery, included a mess hall, barracks, captain's quarters, and ordnance sergeant's quarters. Soldiers garrisoned at the battery during the course of the war included portions of the 2nd U.S. Artillery, 9th New York Heavy Artillery, and Company A of the 1st New Hampshire Heavy Artillery. Battery Kemble was not involved in any combat action during the war; those stationed at the battery led a mundane existence of constant drills (Cooling and Owen 1988). This battery seems to have become the focus of a settlement of "contrabands," or slaves who had escaped from Confederate owners (see discussion of contraband settlement, below).

BATTLE OF FORT STEVENS

The defenses of Washington had been built during the early part of the war, when a Union defeat seemed a real possibility, but they were not used until July 1864, when victory seemed close at hand. Grant's army had bogged down in front of Petersburg, and Lee sought to take advantage of the situation by launching a bold raid on the north. Confederate Lieutenant General Jubal Early, in command of 14,000 soldiers, marched down the Shenandoah Valley and forded the Potomac at Shepherdstown on July 5, then proceeded toward the capital. The Confederates defeated a small Union force under Major General Lew Wallace (the author of *Ben Hur*) along the Monocacy River at Frederick, and then advanced toward Washington. At that time few soldiers manned the defenses of Washington because Grant had stripped the garrisons to reinforce his army in Virginia. The Battle of Monocacy delayed the Confederates long enough that Grant was able to send troops of the VI and XIX Corps to reinforce the defenses of Washington (Bushong 1990:44).

PROTECT OUR SITES

The Archeological Resource Protection Act makes it a federal crime to damage archeological sites on federal lands or to remove artifacts from federal property. Unauthorized metal detecting and artifact collecting are strictly forbidden in the park and on all other federal property.

It had been commonly assumed that the only surviving remains of the battle were those portions of Fort Stevens that still exist in the midst of a developed area along 13th Street, along with the Battleground Cemetery. As the National Park Service's own history of the capital defenses puts it, "little remains of the original battlefield" (National Park Service 2001:I:9). However, while looking for remains of colonial tenant houses, we began to find Civil War bullets and fragments of artillery shells. These discoveries led us to take a close look at the accounts of the fighting to figure out what we had found. We looked at both the official reports from the fighting and newspaper accounts, as well as Benjamin Cooling's description of the fighting in his *Jubal Early's Raid on Washington* (1989). Using what we learned from these accounts, we were able to find even more artifacts and show that much of the battlefield does survive, within Rock Creek Park.

When the Confederates pushed past a hastily assembled Union force near the Monocacy River on July 9, there seemed to be little between them and the capital. The forts were undermanned, and their guns, though impressive enough on paper, had never been fired at an enemy. But Washington, like the rest of the nation, had been at war for three years, and the many veterans on hand did not panic. Among the many wounded soldiers recuperating in the city was a cavalryman named Major William Fry. Fry made the rounds of the city's military hospitals and

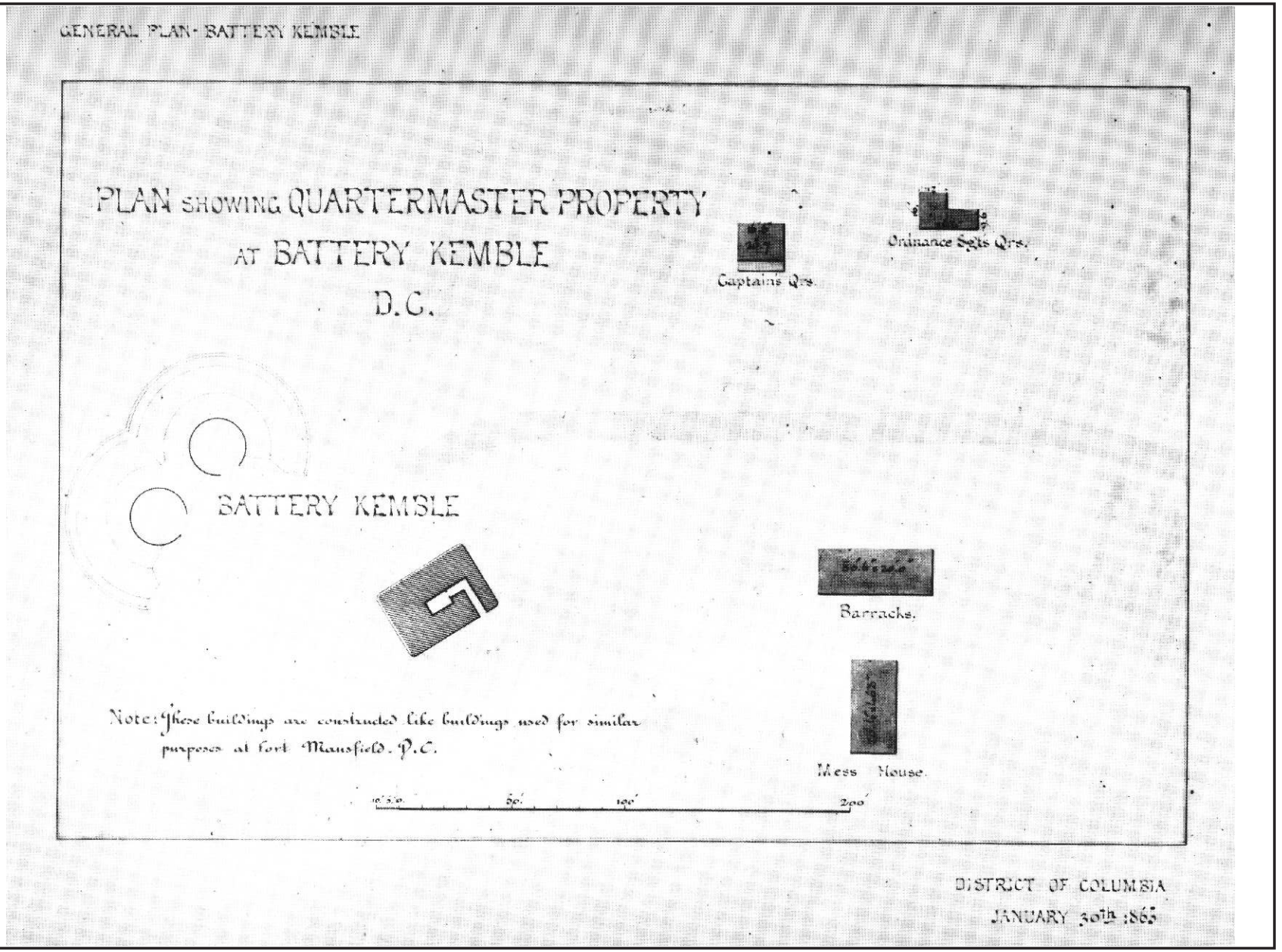


FIGURE 35: Plan of Battery Kemble, 1863

SOURCE: Cooling and Owen 1988

depots and assembled nearly 500 troopers by commandeering every man well enough to ride. They requisitioned horses and set out on the road to Rockville, where they joined up with some companies of the 8th Illinois Cavalry. Meeting the Confederates' own horsemen somewhere near Gerrardsville, three miles north of Rockville, they skirmished all through the day on the 10th. Meanwhile the Veteran Reserve Corps was called to arms, a force of older men, semi-invalids, and clerks from the War Department, most of whom had not been in combat since the Mexican War, if ever. After a great deal of command confusion—reading accounts of these days, it sometimes seems that there were more generals in Washington than soldiers—Major General Alexander McCook was put in command of the defense. Grant had sent two divisions of veterans northward by ship, so McCook's first job was to delay Lieutenant General Jubal Early's Confederates until the reinforcements arrived.

Early's men, hurrying to press their advantage, advanced toward the capital. In the lead was McCausland's cavalry, which came down the Georgetown Pike through Tenallytown. There they came under artillery fire from Fort Reno and encountered the Union picket line. They easily drove back the dismounted cavalrymen and Veterans Reserve troops who opposed them, but after surveying the terrain, McCausland decided that they would do better to concentrate their forces on the east side of Rock Creek. He therefore crossed the creek and joined up with the main infantry force, which was marching down Rockville Pike through the town now called Wheaton but then known as Leesborough. Skirmishing all the way, the lead elements of Rhodes's Division passed through Silver Spring on the Seventh Street Turnpike, now Georgia Avenue. Early, riding ahead of his men, arrived in front of Fort Stevens about noon on July 11. Here he noted that the fort seemed undermanned, but, impressed by what the Confederate engineer Jedediah Hotchkiss called the "very formidable character of the works," he did not order an immediate assault (O.R. 43:1021). Some of his men thought he had made a mistake; one wrote later, "a quick charge, a Rebel yell, and Washington would have been ours." But Early suspected that Union reinforcements were on the way, and he knew that his own men were tired from a long march on a hot, dry day (O.R. 37:348). He wanted to make a careful reconnaissance, to give his men a rest, and to form up his strung-out units properly for the attack. As it turned out, he was probably wise to hesitate, since at the very moment he reached Fort Stevens steamers carrying thousands of Grant's veterans were tying up downtown, and within a few minutes men of VI Corps were marching into the city to the cheers of the residents. Had Early attacked, he might have found getting out of the city much harder than getting in.

Meanwhile, Confederate infantry pickets worked their way forward and began probing at the defenses around Fort Stevens. At first the Federals fell back, abandoning their picket posts and retreating to the prepared rifle pits under the guns of the fort; however, when it became clear that the Confederates were not really pushing their attack, McCook ordered his dismounted cavalrymen to reclaim their posts, which was "smartly done" by 1:30 in the afternoon (O.R. 37:231). The Confederates shifted their attention away from Fort Stevens to its flanks, probing for a weak spot. Colonel John Marble of the 151st Ohio infantry arrived to take command of Fort DeRussy at 2:30 P.M. and found that "operations had already commenced in front of the fort" (O.R. 37:241). Rebel skirmishers were "in close proximity" to the fort, and Marble was worried about the "ravine to our right"—the valley of Rock Creek. He sent 300 men of the Veterans Reserve down into the valley to block that route. They were helped by a screen of trees that had been cut down so that their branches pointed toward the north, forming a dense barrier across the valley. The guns in the fort kept up a steady fire at any targets that presented themselves. Later in the evening Marble sent a whole brigade of the Veterans Reserve under Colonel Gile forward

to push the Confederate skirmishers back. "The regiment promptly formed their line and advanced, firing rapidly, and, under a heavy fire, driving the enemy's right back, occupying their ground" along a ridge north of the fort. The Confederates formed a line along the next ridge to the north, and both sides held their positions as night fell. The Confederates also tried the east side of Fort Stevens, but they had no more luck in that direction, encountering lines of Union infantry and heavy artillery fire from Forts Stevens, Slocum, and Totten. If they were to win passage into Washington, they would have to do so by assaulting the Union works.

Early later reported that on the 11th he had decided to order an assault on Fort Stevens during the morning of the 12th, but when he scanned the defenses through his field glasses he changed his mind. During the night the lead elements of the Union reinforcements had come up, and the Union trenches now bristled with men flying the flags of the veteran VI Corps. Early did not attack, but neither did he immediately withdraw. Skirmishing and occasional artillery fire continued throughout the day on the 12th. Confederate sharpshooters were keeping Forts Stevens and DeRussy under galling fire, so McCook gave the order to drive them back out of range. In front of Fort Stevens this action was undertaken at 7 P.M. on the 12th by men from the 2nd Division of VI Corps under Brigadier Frank Wheaton. Six veteran regiments led the charge, but they met "stubborn resistance" and advanced only a few hundred yards before the attack was halted. The Union attackers lost 59 men killed and 145 wounded in three hours of fighting.

In front of Fort DeRussy the heaviest fire came from the Claggett farmstead, where snipers had occupied the house, and infantry had taken positions in the yard. Artillery fire failed to dislodge the Confederates, so Gile's Veterans Reserve Corps troops were ordered to clear the position. According to Marble, "They advanced gallantly until very near the building, when they were opened on by the enemy from behind a breastwork of logs and brush. They were compelled to retire, the enemy being in such force" (O.R. 37:242). Their attack did serve the purpose of bringing another Confederate regiment out into the open as they marched to reinforce the men at the Claggett farm, allowing the big guns of the fort to bring them under attack and drive them back.

According to Early, he met with his division commanders during the morning of the 12th and decided to return to Virginia the next day. When heavy fighting broke out in the afternoon, preparations for the withdrawal were already under way, and the "stubborn resistance" put up by Rhodes's Division had the character of a rear-guard action. The Confederates pulled out during the night, and by the morning of the 13th the Battle of Fort Stevens was over.

During the afternoon of July 12, Abraham Lincoln visited Fort Stevens and stood up on the parapet to get a view of the fighting. Bullets flew around him, and a Union officer who did not recognize him snapped at him to get down before he was killed. Lincoln did get down, but he had just become the only sitting U.S. president to come under enemy fire in wartime. Robert K. Sneden, a private who served as a mapmaker with the Union army, drew a sketch of the battle (Figure 36). The sketch says that it is a "Copy of Official Plan in the Office of Alexander, USA, Chief Engineer of the Defenses of Washington." If so, it is not a very good copy, since the geography of the city is badly distorted and the forts are not properly positioned; however, the map does give some sense of who was where and how the battle developed.



FIGURE 36: Contemporary Sketch of the Battle of Fort Stevens by R.K. Sneden

Remains of the Battle

Using the detailed accounts of the fighting provided by the officers' accounts, we were able to understand the archeological finds that had first sparked our interest in the battle. Our first finds were on a southwest-facing slope on the east side of Rock Creek, an area shown as heavily wooded on pre-war maps. Both fired and dropped bullets were found here. Dropped unfired bullets indicate where soldiers were standing while they were trying to load and fire their weapons, whereas fired bullets land where people were aiming. We can therefore tell that somebody was firing from this slope, and that somebody was firing back at them. Almost certainly the men firing from this spot were Confederate pickets working their way into the valley from the east, probing for a way around the guns of Fort Stevens. The fired bullets and shell fragments show that they did not have an easy time of it. The fired bullets were a mixture of .58 caliber rounds of the type used in the war's most common infantry arms and .52 caliber rounds from Sharps and Burnside carbines. The carbine bullets are interesting because these weapons were most often used by the cavalry, and we know that many of the Union pickets at the opening of the battle were dismounted cavalrymen.



FIGURE 37: Bullets and a Shell Fragment from the Battle of Fort Stevens

After we had read the descriptions of the fighting north of Fort DeRussy, on the west side of the creek, we extended our search into that area. We think we have identified both the ridge where the Confederates built their breastwork, around the Claggett farmstead, and the ridge to the south where the Veterans Reserve Corps set up their line. The area around the Claggett homestead was too heavily overgrown for effective use of a metal detector, and nothing was found there, but a large number of bullets and shell fragments were found on the south-facing slopes just south of that position (Figure 37). Among these were two fragments of a shell from the largest gun at

Fort DeRussy, a 100-pounder Parrot rifle (Figure 38). Both fired and unfired bullets were also found on the ridge to the south where the Federals formed their line. Archeology therefore supports the obvious interpretation of the officers' reports, and confirms that significant fighting took place within the park. The entire battlefield has not disappeared, as was feared.



FIGURE 38: Fragments of a Shell from the Largest Gun at Fort DeRussy, a 100-Pounder Parrot Rifle

In the Papers

The fighting at Fort Stevens was conducted only a couple of miles from the usual haunts of the Washington press corps, and the newspaper accounts of the battle extend the perspective given in the officers' reports. We therefore turned to the microfilm reels where the major Washington papers are preserved for fresh insights into the events of July 1864.

Perhaps the most striking thing about the newspaper accounts of Early's raid on Washington is their blasé tone. The raid was the lead item in Washington's *Daily National Intelligencer* (1864a) only once, on Monday, July 11, the day it was confirmed that Jubal Early's men had in fact entered Maryland. At that time wild rumors were swirling—that Frederick had been burned, that Confederate Cavalry had entered Baltimore—and the sense of uncertainty must have heightened tensions in the capital. But the level of anxiety fell as the real scope and direction of Early's attack became clear. By July 13, the day after the height of what we now know as the Battle of Fort Stevens, the news had dropped to third place, with a much smaller headline than an account of the sinking of the famous Confederate raider CSS *Alabama* in the English Channel. In a separate column the editors remarked that

> [t]he annual invasion of Maryland, which, next to the weather, supplies the 'sensation' of this week, does not excite any very disturbing apprehension for the safety of Baltimore and Washington. The country has learned to preserve a degree of equanimity, strangely unlike the excitement when Jackson came down the Shenandoah Valley two years ago and more. The fear of receiving any heavy blow from these irruptions has been removed by repeated escape: there is a general feeling that the business will end as other raids have ended, and that the chief point to be looked after is to intercept the retreat, if possible [*Daily National Intelligencer* 1864b].

An even better sign of the unfazed attitude of the Washington press is the small notice in the box at right, which was printed in the lower right-hand corner of the front page (*Daily National Intelligencer* 1864b).

> Subscribers and customers who failed to receive their papers of yesterday can be supplied by calling at the office today.

The local papers did cover the fighting at Fort Stevens, and in this case their reports, based on first-hand observation of familiar ground, are probably more accurate than the standard newspaper battle accounts of the time. The fullest contemporary account, excerpted below, was printed on the front page of *The Union* (Washington) on July 13, and then picked up by several other papers.

SKIRMISHING NEAR FORT STEVENS

> When within a mile of the fort, we could begin to hear the picket firing, with its peculiar sound, like unto chip-chip, as though some woodsman was cutting down a tree. We soon reached a line of sentry, placed across the road to stop civilians. We got by without much trouble, and soon reached the top of the hill, at the side of the fort, and, about three hundred yards down in the valley, we could see the opposing skirmishers banging away at each other, at times very vigorously: then again lulling, with only an occasional shot. Here we could see the ruins of the houses destroyed on Monday, so that the Confederates could not use them for cover. The chimneys were all standing, reminding us much of the burnt chimneys near Richmond. . . . The houses near Seventh Street destroyed by our forces are those of Richard Butts, W. Bell, J.H. McCheney, Abner Shoemaker, and the residence of the late W.M. Morrison. . . .
>
> About daylight this (Tuesday) morning skirmishing again commenced, the Confederates appearing in good force on the left, between Fort Stevens and Fort DeRussy, in widow Carberry's woods. The gunners in the fort, 13th Michigan artillery, threw a few shells in this direction, which had the effect of driving the Confederates out, and when they worked around to the right, endeavoring to get in between Fort Stevens and Fort Slocum [*The Union* 1864].

The "widow Carberry's woods" seem to be the very location where shell fragments and bullets first turned up. Because those artifacts were found on a steep, southwest-facing slope, they were undoubtedly fired from Fort DeRussy, but this account shows that shells were also fired in that direction from Fort Stevens

The Guns of Fort DeRussy

Fort DeRussy is an obvious focus for interpretation of the battle, since it remains largely intact within the heart of Rock Creek Park, and we therefore gave particular attention to the records of its part in the fighting. As it happens, the fort's chief artillery officer made a very detailed report of his part in the battle.

Captain John Norris of the 2nd Provisional Pennsylvania Heavy Artillery filed his report from Fort DeRussy on July 16, 1864. He described in detail the number of shots fired by each cannon at the fort, their ranges, and their effects on the enemy, evidently determined by inspecting the field after the battle. The guns were manned by troops of Battery A, 1st Wisconsin Heavy Artillery, under Captain Spear, and Battery L, 9th New York Heavy Artillery, commanded by Lieutenant Howe. The total number of rounds fired was tallied by Norris as 109, consisting of 18 case-shot, 10 shells, and four solid shot from the 100-pounder Parrott; 49 percussion-shells, 17 fuse-shells, and three case-shot from the 30-pounder Parrott; and eight spherical case from the 32-pounder seacoast gun. Twenty-two shots had been fired from the 100-pounder Parrott when the Confederate troops and their "trains" were about 4,200 to 4,500 yards distant, on and adjacent to the Brookeville Turnpike.

> Two shells had exploded and struck the outbuildings of Mr. John Wilson, just to the right of the turnpike, about half a mile beyond Silver Spring; one had entered the ground half a mile farther to the north and exploded; others exploded just this side of the turnpike. . . . Ten 100-pounder shells were thrown at a house about 1,700 yards to the north and this side of Rock Creek for the purpose of firing it, as the enemy's sharpshooters were reported there in great numbers. Two shells exploded a little short from defective fuses.
>
> Seventeen time shells, 39 percussion-shells, and 3 case-shot were fired at squads of the enemy as they emerged from the woods and charged across grain fields at the time of the advance of our skirmish line on the afternoon of Tuesday, and at squad of cavalry in lane beyond, and had the effect to drive them back. These shells were thrown at ranges from 2,200 to 2,400 and up to 2,800 yards, but few of the percussion-shells exploded. With few exceptions the time shells with paper fuses exploded at desired points [O.R., Series 1, Volume 37, Chapter 49:238-239].

Norris noted that eight spherical case shells were fired from the 32-pounder seacoast gun at the enemy's skirmish line, at ranges of 1,600 and 1,700 yards. They exploded in the air over the Confederate line.

Norris's report makes the artillery fire from the forts sound impressive, but historian Benjamin Cooling found accounts from witnesses who questioned its effectiveness. Most of the men manning the forts had seen little or no combat, and their efforts were dismissed by both the Confederate veterans in Early's force and the Union veterans who arrived from Petersburg just in time to watch the Confederates head back the way they had come. One of the reserve artillerymen "declared solemnly:"

> "We are assured by citizens . . . that the enemy was surprised at the accuracy of our fire at such distance, and from information since obtained we are led to conclude that the accuracy and activity of our artillery and skirmish line contributed large to deter them from making the intended assault on Monday night." But skeptical rebels recalled that the shells ("which made a roaring noise like the passing of a railroad train") simply passed over their heads at "great altitude and burst to our rear, doing no damage to anyone." I.G. Bradwell was more perceptive in that his fellow Georgians decided that the Federal gunners were after the Confederate wagon train. Yet he too dismissed the shelling as producing nothing more than "a great contempt for the 'melish.'" Lieutenant Frank Wilkeson, Battery A, 4th United States Artillery, temporarily assigned to Fort Totten, declared the shooting to be the worst he ever saw and echoed Bradwell's contention that it was all the militia and department clerks' doing and that the enemy "did not pay the slightest attention to it [Cooling 1989:121]."

Yet Early's attack was stopped, so the men in the forts did their job, even if they did not measure up to the standards of the top field professionals.

Battery Kemble Contraband Settlement

Sometime during the course of the war, Battery Kemble became the site of a contraband settlement. *Contraband* was a term used for slaves who escaped from or were abandoned by their owners. This term derived from early war policies that confiscated as "contraband" slaves who were used in any way to assist the Confederacy's war effort. The contraband situation was exacerbated first with the emancipation of slaves in the District of Columbia and then with the Emancipation Proclamation. As the war continued, more and more of these people took refuge within the District of Columbia and were put under the protection of the military's provost guard. Most of these people had no means to acquire work, food, or shelter, so the government had to provide for them. The government opened many contraband camps, the largest being the Freedman's Village located at Arlington. The army provided employment for them at 40 cents per day. Many of the contraband worked at menial jobs at hospitals and corrals. Others worked on farms raising vegetables for the army, and still others cleared woodlands. In 1863 over 10,000 former slaves lived in the District of Columbia, and by the end of the war this number had grown to over 40,000 (Foreman 1995:45).

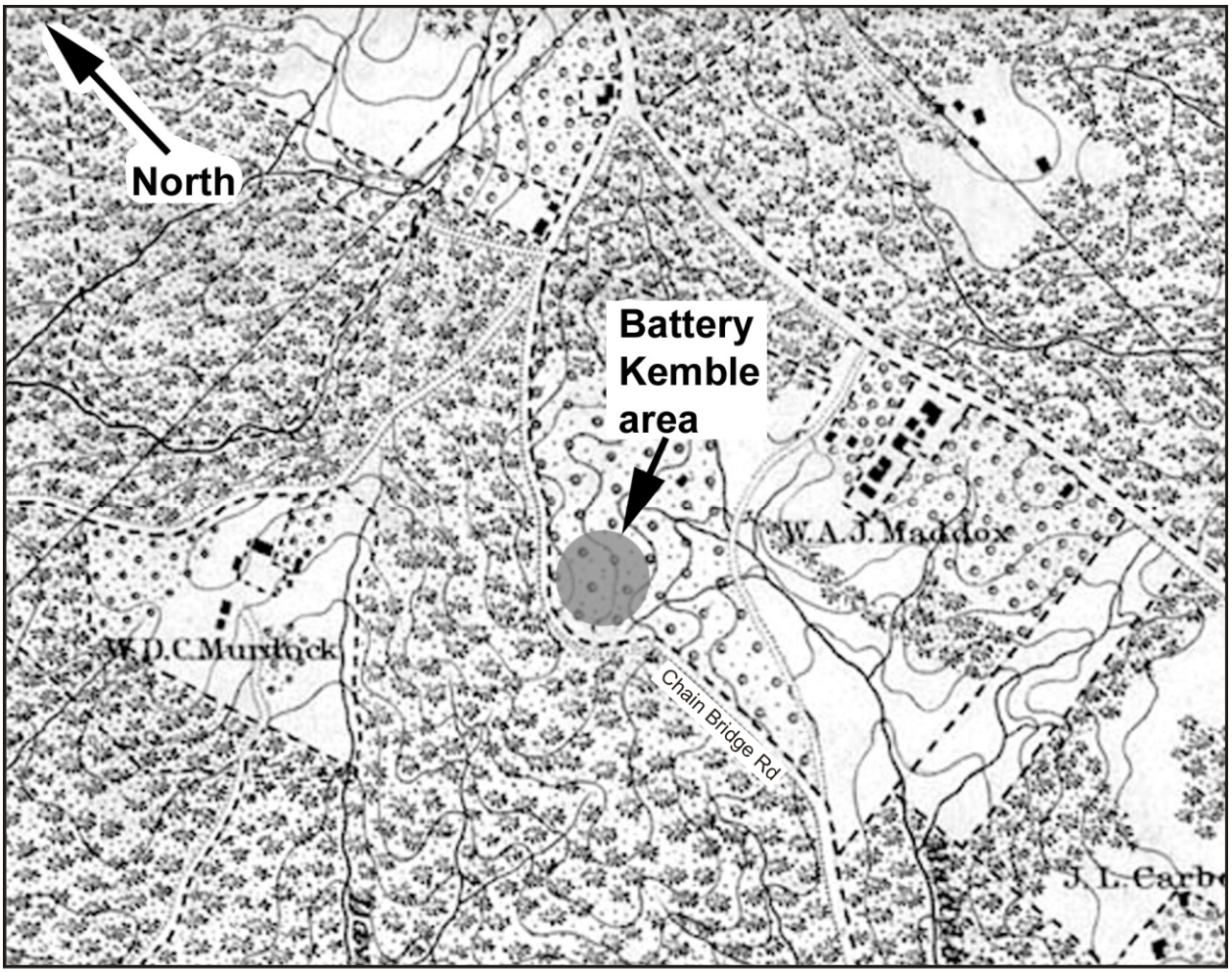


FIGURE 39: Detail of Battery Kemble Area, 1861 *SOURCE: Boschke 1861*

A few of the former slaves lived outside the camps and eventually established communities like Hillsdale, located in present-day Anacostia. Many also settled near the forts because of the military presence there. Former slaves are said to have squatted and farmed the base of the hill containing Battery Kemble. Analysis of period maps supports the truth of this tradition. The Boschke map of 1861 shows only the houses of W. Murdock and W. Maddox in that area; Murdock's estate was located west of Chain Bridge Road (Figure 39 above). In 1878 this landscape is shown as cleared, and there are about 15 dwellings located east of Murdock's former property that were not there in 1861 (Hopkins 1878). Among the people identified at this location by Hopkins in his 1878 atlas are William Peters, John Sephes, Daniel Cusberd, Jacob Hayes, and Blackwood (Figure 40). Census records for 1880 note five individuals with the same or similar names as neighbors. All are identified as either "black" or "mulatto," all were living at the time of the Civil War, and all came from slave-holding states (Table 4); Jacob Hayes and Daniel Cuthbert came from the Carolinas. Given their age, race, and origin, these people were probably freedmen who had immigrated to Washington.

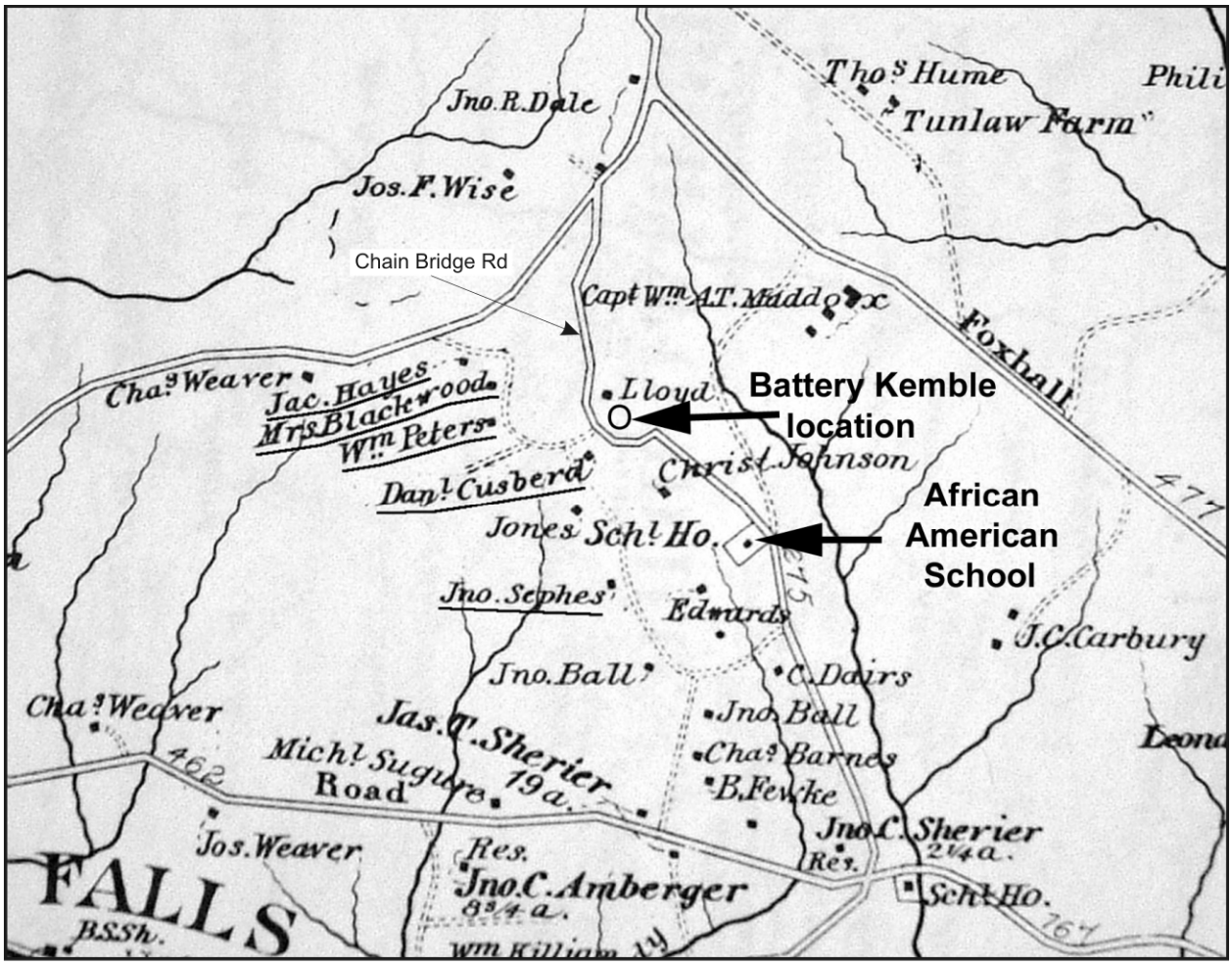


FIGURE 40: Detail of Battery Kemble Area, 1878 *SOURCE: Hopkins 1878*

Table 4: African-Americans Living near Battery Kemble in 1880

Name	Age	Race	Occupation	Place of Birth
Americus Blackwell (Blackwood)	27	Black	Laborer	Virginia
William Peters	36	Mulatto	Laborer	District of Columbia
Jacob Hayes	55	Black	Carpenter	North Carolina
Daniel Cuthbert (Cusberd)	50	Black	Cook	South Carolina
John Cefus (Sephes)	29	Black	Gardening	Maryland

Source: 1880 U.S. Population Census, District of Columbia, and Enumeration District No.1

The Hopkins 1878 atlas identifies only one person, one "Lloyd," living on the east side of Chain Bridge Road, where the battery was located. The 1880 census does not include anyone named Lloyd residing in that vicinity. Perhaps Lloyd had departed by the time of the census, or maybe Hopkins had placed this house on the wrong side of the road. Other maps of the era, including the Greene 1884 Topographical Map of the District of Columbia and the 1892 United States Coast and Geodetic Survey (USCGS) map of the District, do show a house nearby but on the west side of the road (Figure 41).



FIGURE 41: Battery Kemble Area, 1892 *SOURCE: USCGS 1892*

THE POSTWAR LANDSCAPE

Life returned to normal in the years after the Civil War. Local residents continued farming areas around Rock Creek as they had for years. The milling industry also continued despite the fact that it was already in decline. These developments preserved the pastoral and scenic beauty of the Rock Creek area, making the area attractive for recreation purposes.

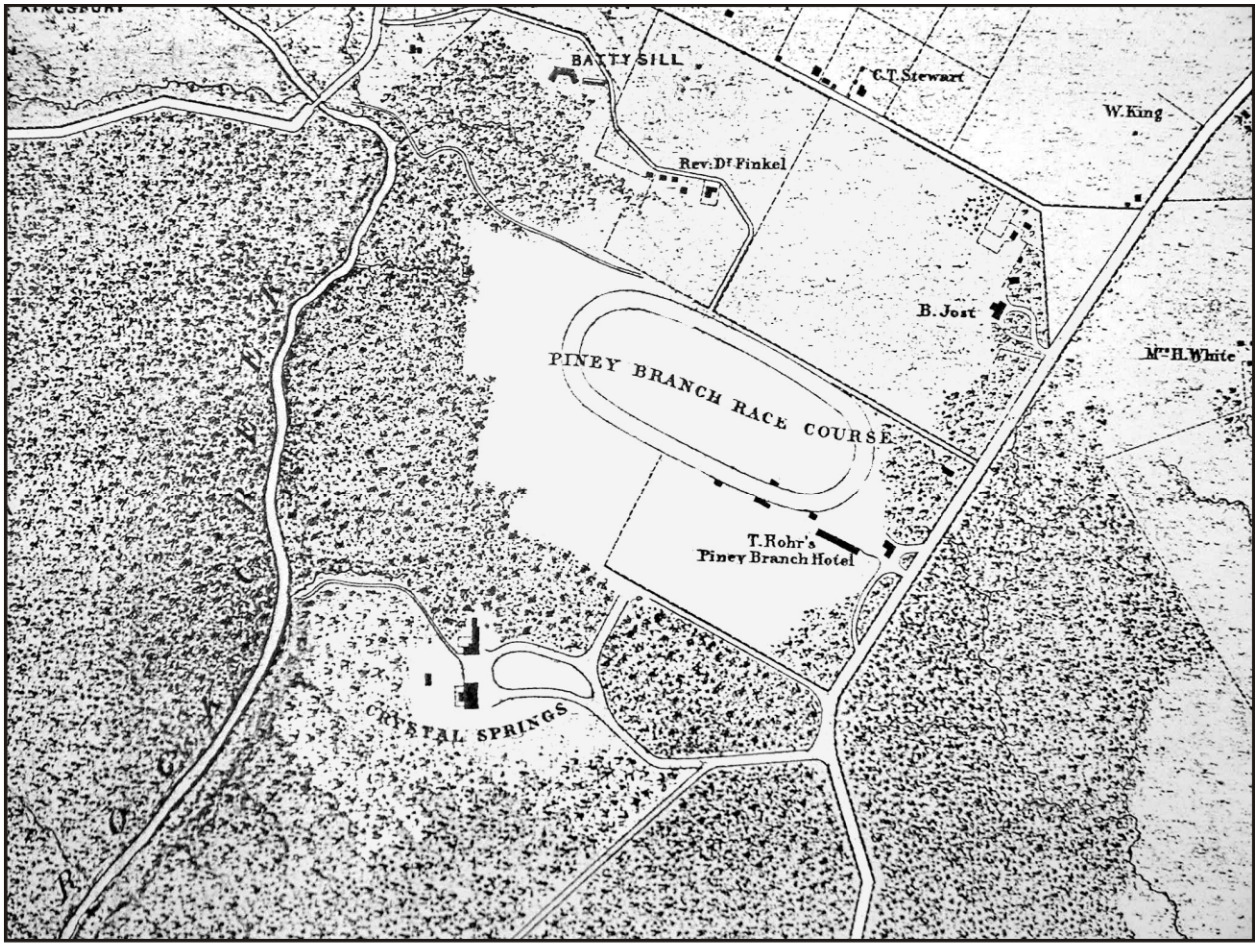


FIGURE 42: Crystal Springs and Brightwood Racecourse, 1867 *SOURCE: Michler 1867a*

Sometime shortly before the Civil War, Peirce Shoemaker built a small resort known as Crystal Springs on a portion of his property located on the east side of Rock Creek, near the site where White's Mill once stood. The Michler map of 1867 (Figure 42) shows the resort as consisting of three buildings situated about a half-mile south of the present park police headquarters on Beach Drive. By 1878 the site was labeled Crystal Springs, at the end of a short lane, and no buildings were depicted at that location on the map (Figure 43) (Hopkins 1878). No buildings are shown for the resort on the Greene map of 1884, and the area has reverted to woodland (Greene 1884). The resort had been intended to take advantage of Rock Creek's picturesque features and to serve as a natural retreat for those who worked and lived in the city. It was located near the Piney Branch racecourse, another of Peirce Shoemaker's business ventures, which he established in 1857. The course was later called the Brightwood Driving Park, a popular horse-racing venue

located south of Military Road, between Blagden's Mill Road and Rock Creek. The race track was located east of present-day 16th Street, just outside the eastern boundary of the present-day park (Bushong 1990:48).

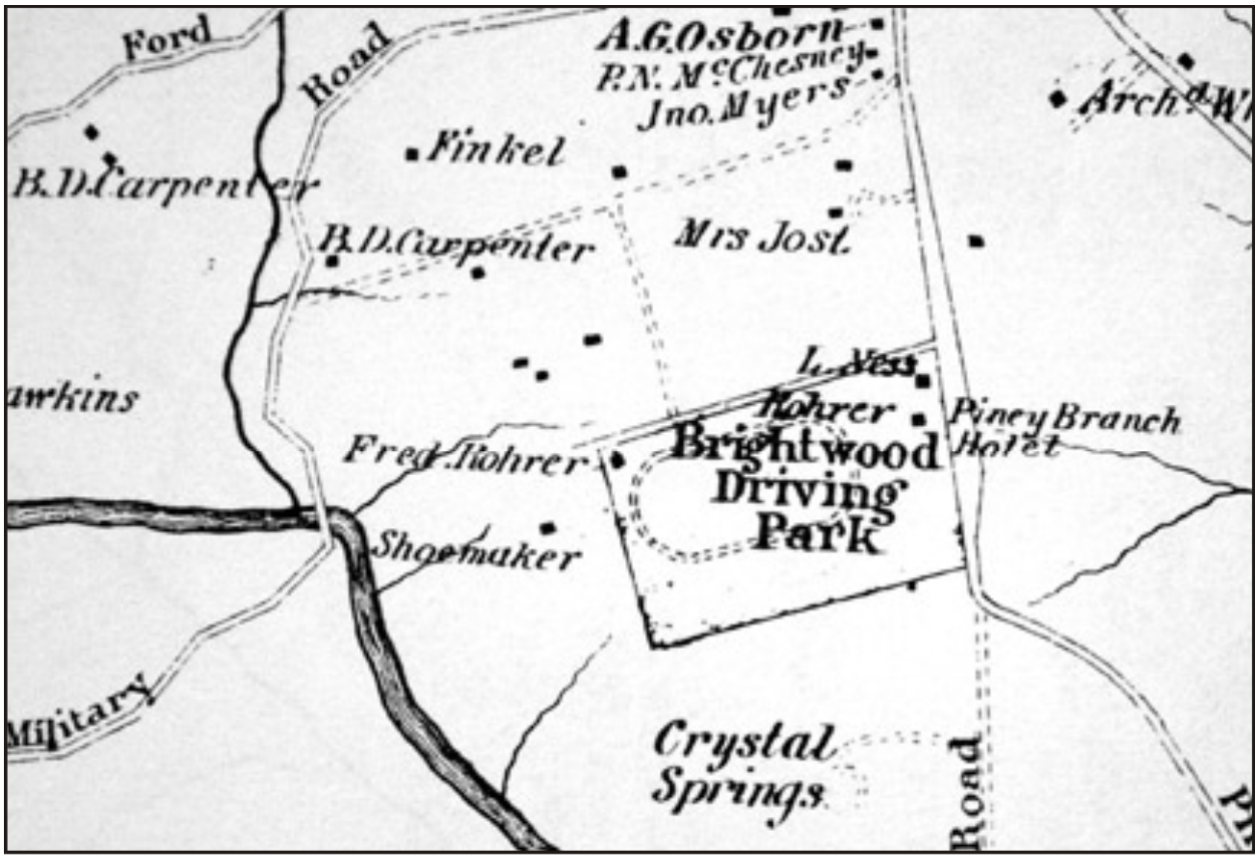


FIGURE 43: Crystal Springs and Brightwood (Piney Branch) Racecourse, 1878 *SOURCE: Hopkins 1878*

The People of the Valley

When the park was established in 1890, the Rock Creek Valley was not vacant land. Dozens of people lived within the future park boundaries, including property-owning farmers, tenants, and even a few pioneering suburbanites. The most accessible source of information about the settlement of the area is the many detailed maps that are available beginning in the mid-nineteenth century. Although these maps are a marvelous resource for history and archeology, they can also be misleading. They look complete, but they are not. The maps we have of the park were not intended to note the location of every structure on the landscape. Property ownership maps were mainly intended for owners and would-be owners, and they show the residences of people who were likely to buy the maps. Maps like the *Atlas of 15 Miles around Washington* (Hopkins 1878) show a landscape made up of farms and the families that owned them, and they reduce the importance of natural features like streams and hills. On the other hand, the 1892 USCGS map, in many ways the most detailed nineteenth-century depiction of the park, is a topographical document primarily concerned with the physical landscape. Neither kind of map gave utmost attention to the homes of the tenants who actually accounted for most of the park's residents. To judge from some of these maps, the park lands were nearly empty, which is misleading.

Other kinds of records show that many people lived in the park, including some whose homes are not shown on any of the extant maps. The descriptions of the lands purchased for the park state the number and kind of structures that stood on them, sometimes in detail and sometimes in general terms. A few of the houses on land bought for the park were torn down within a few years, but many survived and were rented out until at least 1900. Lists of the renters survive, and these provide both another look at the landscape of the park and a glimpse at some of the people who lived there.

A map made at the time the park was established, titled *Character of Property Included in the Rock Creek Park*, lists 21 park properties with buildings (Figures 44 and 45; Table 5). Further details on some of these properties are provided by the rent lists. Two such documents have been located, one dated April 1, 1895, which is reproduced in Inashima (1985:70-71), and a less elaborate document dated December 30, 1894. The December 1894 list (Table 6) includes only the parcel number and the name of the renter, and it lumps all of the former Shoemaker properties together. The list does not say what was being rented, and in some cases it was probably land rather than buildings. For example, there were no structures mentioned on Parcel 36 when it was purchased, so the tenant was probably not living there but using the property for farming or grazing.

The April 1, 1895, document actually consists of two independent, overlapping lists, neither complete; by combining them (Table 7) one can obtain a detailed picture of the housing stock in the park. The notes reading *torn down* were added later in pencil, and there is no indication of when the demolition occurred.

Table 5: Park Properties with Improvements, 1892

Parcel No.	Owner	Size (acres)	Improvements
21	William Riley	100.1	Small dwelling and outbuildings
23	Archibald White	75.4	2 small dwellings
26	August Burgdorf	25.2	Small dwelling
27	E.T. Meeds	20.0	Small dwelling
28	Mary Henderson	22.5	Small dwelling
29	Frederick Bex	23.0	Dwelling
33	Samuel Freas	40.3	Small dwelling
34	J.W. Cowden	79.7	Dwelling and outbuildings
38	J.R. Dos Passos	71.5	Small dwelling
39	Pierce Shoemaker	245.1	Several small dwellings
40	E.E. Gist	1.3	Small dwelling
62	McKeown heirs	35.3	Small dwelling and stable
63	Pierce Shoemaker	89.3	Quarry, small dwelling
65	Charles Dickson	.28	Small dwelling and garden
66	Jane Dickson	.26	Small dwelling and garden
67	B.H. Warder	39.3	Small house, outbuildings and ruins of stone mills
69	Pierce Shoemaker	5.2	Small dwelling and gardens
70	J.W. Willis	5.5	Dwelling, stable and greenhouse
79	J.P. Klingle	31.3	Stone dwelling
80	Mary Beall	2.1	Small dwelling
84	Harvey Page	6.7	Frame house and stables

Source: National Archives, Records of the Rock Creek Park Commission

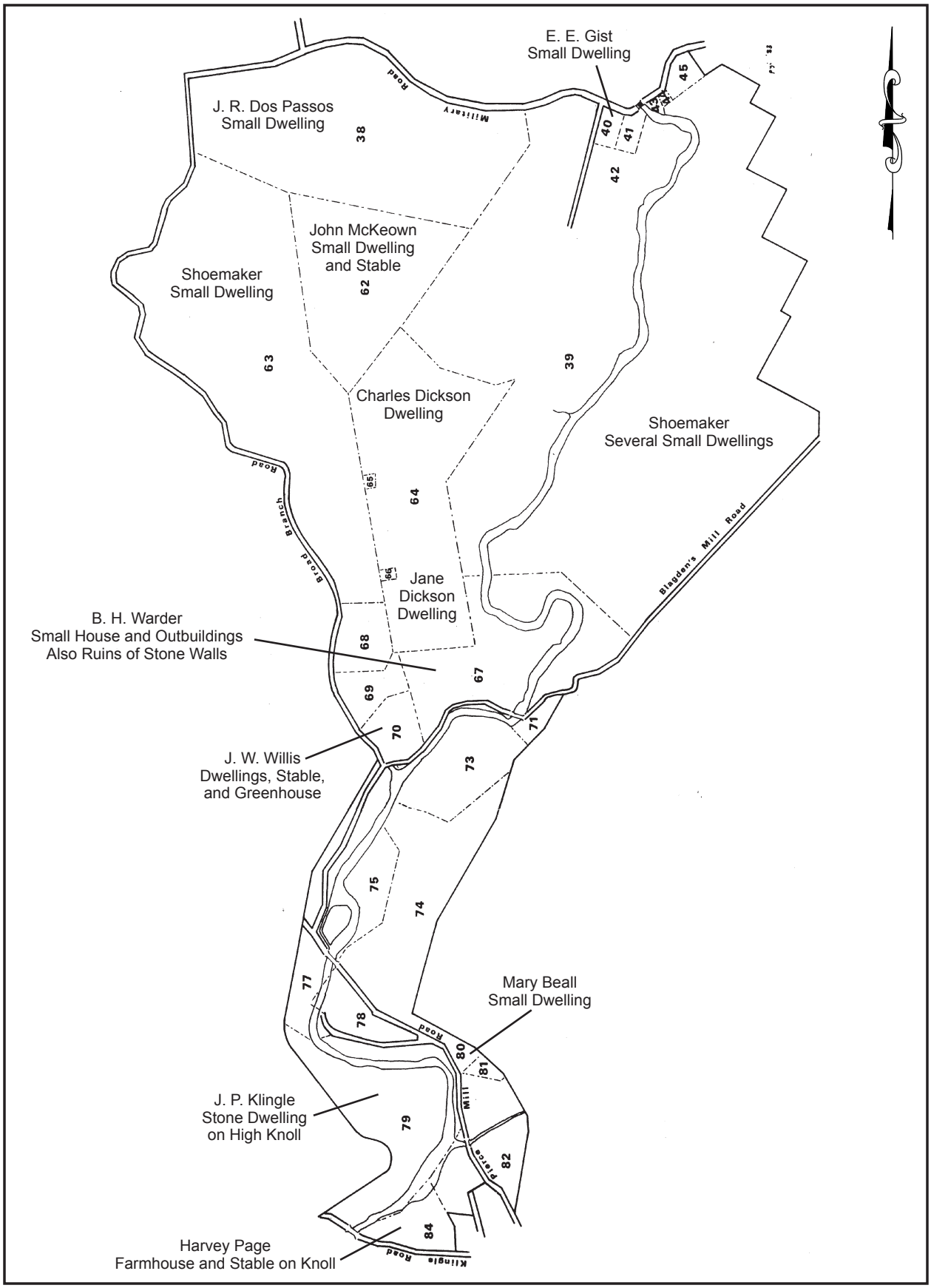


FIGURE 44: Character of Property Included in the Rock Creek Park (South) *SOURCE: Inashima 1985*

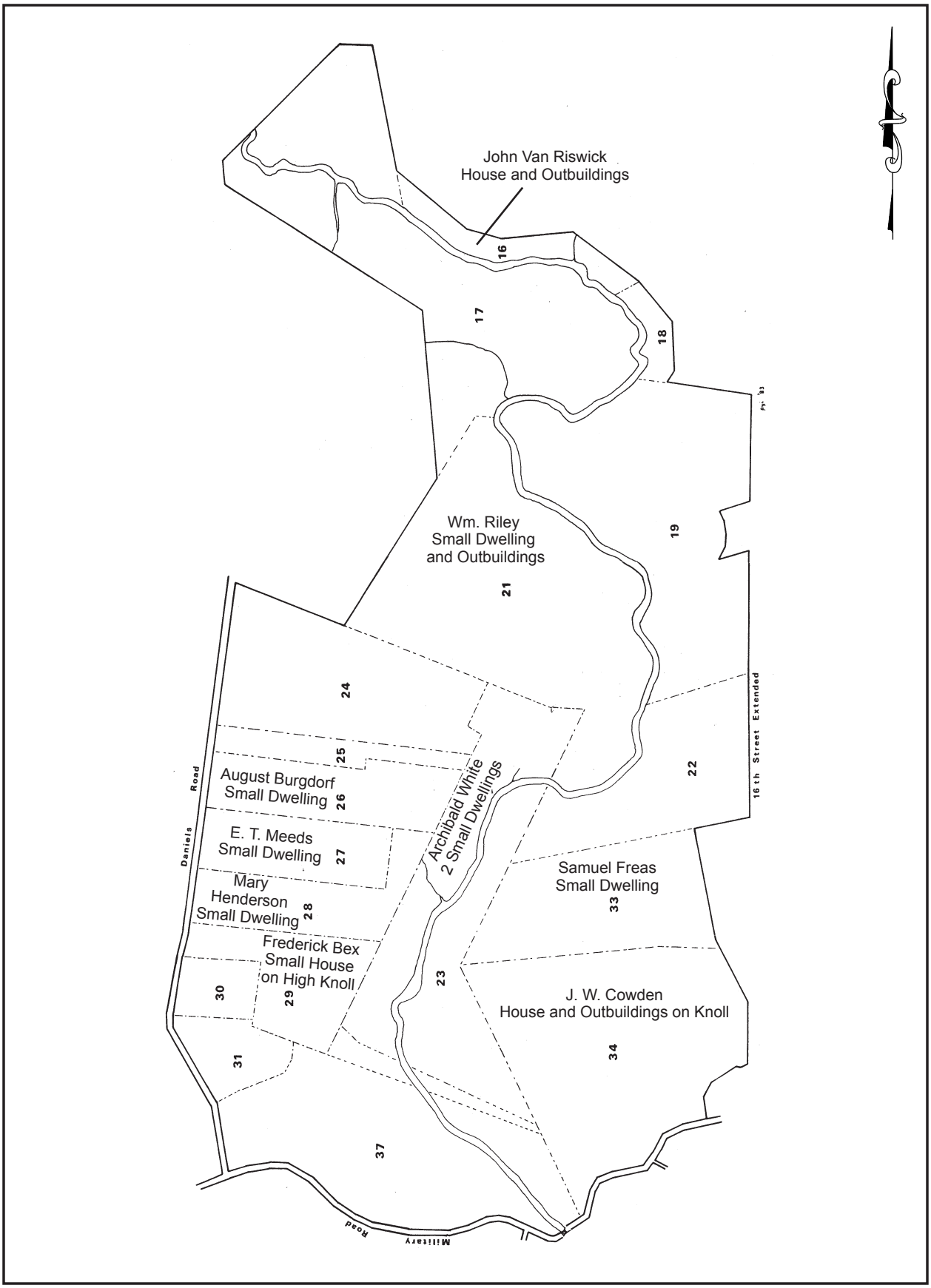


FIGURE 45: Character of Property Included in the Rock Creek Park (North) *SOURCE: Inashima 1985*

Table 6: Tenants in Rock Creek Park, December 30, 1894

Parcel No.	Tenant	Parcel No.	Tenant
21	F. Paton	80	G. Powell
23 & 36	B. White	83	J.J. Kramer
26	J. Fegan	84	Foundling Home
27	M. Osborn	Shoemaker	Elijah Widby
29	William McCone	Parcels, 39,	Samuel Dominess
33	David Duley	44, 48, 63,	S.F. Reddick
	Mrs. G. Perry	69, 75, 76, 77	Fannie Bouldin
	Louis Savoy		G. Southern
34	W.W. Stuart		H. Rigney
38	S. Olden		J. Clarke
40	Mason Anderson		F. Smith
62	Frank Winters		Hugh McMahon
65	Charles Dickson		R. Cross
66	Jane Dickson		John Williams
67	George Hall		C.H. White
70	J.C. Heide		James Scott

Source: National Archives, Records of the Rock Creek Park Commission

Comparison of these two lists with each other, other park records, and the U.S. Census allows us to identify some of these people as long-term residents of the area. For example, Hugh McMahon appears on both lists, and he wrote a letter to the Park Commissioners protesting an increase in his rent in which he said he had lived in his house for 15 years. Samuel Dominess appears on both lists and in both the 1870 and 1900 censuses for the area although he does not appear to be listed in the 1880 census (the 1890 census was destroyed in a fire). Aside from Dominess, the tenant population seems to have been for the most part quite transient, since most of the names on the rentals have not been identified in any census of the area.

The census shows that the tenant population of the park was racially diverse. Samuel Dominess, Charles and Jane Dickson (Dixon), Elijah and Sarah Whitby, and Hannah Williams were African-Americans. Neither Fannie Bouldin nor Louis Savoy has yet been found in the census, but in 1870 all of the people bearing both family names in the District of Columbia were black or mulatto. Hugh McMahon was an immigrant from Ireland, and James Fegan was the son of Irish immigrants, while Mason Anderson and David Duley were white men born in the District. An interesting segment of the 1880 census, which could represent a line of tenant houses along Blagden Road, lists in order Robert Cross, Augustus Johnson, and Thomas Sharp, who were all black, and then Hugh McMahon and Patrick Ryan, both immigrants from Ireland.

The most common occupation for male tenants in the area, according to the census, was “laborer” (United States Bureau of the Census 1900). Hugh McMahon was a dairyman, David Duley was a horse shoer, Samuel Dominess was a teamster, and Marion Osborn was a stone cutter. Aaron Dickson, the husband of Jane, was listed as a blacksmith in 1880. Among the women, Sarah Whitby and Ella Clark (wife of James Clark) were laundresses, and Mary Ryan was a seamstress. The jobs listed for the children in the Whitby and Cross families give some idea of what was available for uneducated black and Irish workers in rural D.C. in 1900 (Table 8).

Table 7: Parcels, Tenants, Improvements, Rent, 1895

Parcel No.	Tenant	Improvements	Rent ($)
9	Mrs. Eli Pinkney	Frame house, 1 room, poor	Free
21		Frame house, 4 rooms, poor	3.00
23	*Torn down*	Frame house, 4 rooms and out house, poor	
26	*Torn down*	Frame house, 3 rooms, stable, fair	5.00
27	Marion Osborn	Frame house, 6 rooms and stable, good	Free
29	William McCrone	Frame house, 6 rooms and stable, good	8.00
33	Policeman Hess	Frame house, 10 rooms and barn, good	Free
	L.D. Jones	Frame house, 4 rooms and small barn, good	5.00
	Torn down	Frame house, 4 rooms and outhouse, poor	5.00
34	J.T. Morgan MP in charge of Park	Frame house, 10 rooms, barn, cow-shed & outbuildings, fair	Free
38	*Torn down*	Frame house, 2 rooms and out house	4.00
39	Robert Cross	Frame house, 1 room and out house, poor, 3 acres of ground	3.75
	Hugh McMahon	Frame house, 4 rooms, fair, dilapidated barn	10.00
	Hannah Williams	Small house on Blagden Mill Road, bad condition	Free
	Thomas Riggs	Frame house, 3 rooms, fair	4.00
	Thomas Smith	Frame house, 3 rooms, fair	4.00
		Frame house, 3 rooms, fair	4.00
	Torn down	Frame house, 2 rooms, fair	4.00
40	D.C. Duley	Frame house, 4 rooms, stable and out-house, good	5.00
63	Samuel Dominess	Frame house, 3 rooms, stable, poor	4.00
65	Charles Dixon	Frame house, 1 room, stable, poor	3.00
66	Jane Dixon	Frame house, 4 rooms, out house, fair	6.00
69	Sarah Whitby	Frame house, 2 rooms, stable, poor	3.00
75		Stone mill, building good, race poor	10.00
76		Stone barn, fair	2.00
79	Lizzie D. Larkin	Stone house, 7 rooms and stable, fair	20.00
84	Floyd Harleston	Frame house, 14 rooms, stable and carriage house, fair	14.00

Source: National Archives, Records of the Rock Creek Park Commission

Table 8: Employment in the Whitby and Cross Households, 1900

Cross Household			Whitby Household		
Name	**Age**	**Employment**	**Name**	**Age**	**Employment**
Sarah	52	laundress	Albert	28	day laborer
Eli	29	day laborer	Hannah	22	washing and ironing
Moses	25	day laborer	Corah	21	servant
Julie	22	cook	Sarah	20	servant
Israel	17	cart driver	Elijah	18	day laborer
Robert	15	cart driver			
Henry	11	at school			

Source: U.S. Census 1900

We have a good idea of the kind of houses occupied by black migrants to Washington in the 1880s because of a series of remarkable drawings by DeLancey Gill (Figures 46 and 47). Gill was an artist with the Smithsonian's Bureau of Ethnography, and his professional specialty was drawing Hopi pueblos, Navaho hogans, and other Indian structures from the Southwest. But while he was in Washington, Gill made at least a dozen studies of the homes occupied by black migrants, all of them built around the fringe of the city.

In the years just before the park was established, suburbanization was entering the Rock Creek Valley. Parcels 26, 27, and 28 were carved out in the 1880s, and the houses were occupied by professionals or skilled tradesmen like Frederick Bex, a carriage maker born in England. Several such developments had been or were being completed south of Broad Branch and Blagden Mill Roads, which is one reason the park narrows dramatically in that area.

The Sarah Whitby Site

One of the African-American names that appears in the park rentals is Widby or Whitby. In 1895 the Whitbys rented a house on a small parcel of land that had belonged to Isaac Shoemaker. According to the census, the family came from North Carolina. One part of the 1895 rental lists the family under the name Elijah Widby, but in the other part of the rental and in the 1900 census the family is headed by Sarah Whitby, probably Elijah's widow. According to the census, Sarah Whitby worked as a laundress. She had nine children, and although she was herself illiterate, all of her children could read. Because the property was small and included only one house, we thought it gave us a good chance to find the home of an identifiable African-American family.

We also had a suspicion that the Whitbys' house might be quite old. It was not small by the standards of the time, since it had two rooms and a stable, but its condition was listed as "poor" and it rented for the very small sum of $3.00 a month. Using the archeological evidence from the excavation of the cellar, the description of the house given in the rental ("two-room"), and the DeLancey Gill drawings, we have been able to reconstruct what the Whitby house may have looked like (Figure 48).

When we took a close look at the 5-acre property where the Whitbys' house should have been, we noticed a depression in the ground close to a large walnut tree. Using a shovel, we dug a small hole in the center of the depression, and underneath about half a foot of sod and recent fill we found bricks, corrugated roofing metal, and artifacts dating to around 1900. These finds encouraged us to go back to the site and do a larger dig. We uncovered a cellar hole measuring about 10x12 feet, with stone foundations and a stone floor. Most of the artifacts found in the cellar date to around 1900, but a few are older, including two sherds of Colonoware, a kind of pottery made by slaves before the Civil War. The discovery of these sherds confirmed our guess that the Whitbys' house was quite old. It may have been built as far back as the early 1800s, and it was probably occupied by African-Americans for many decades. We found more than 500 artifacts in the cellar (Figure 49), including more than 50 buttons (Figure 50). It is very unusual to find so many buttons in such a small excavation, and we suspect that the buttons are related to Sarah Whitby's work as a laundress. One of the buttons was inscribed "Saville Row," the street where London's finest tailors plied their trade, and if it really came from Saville Row, it shows that at least one of Sarah Whitby's clients was very well dressed indeed.

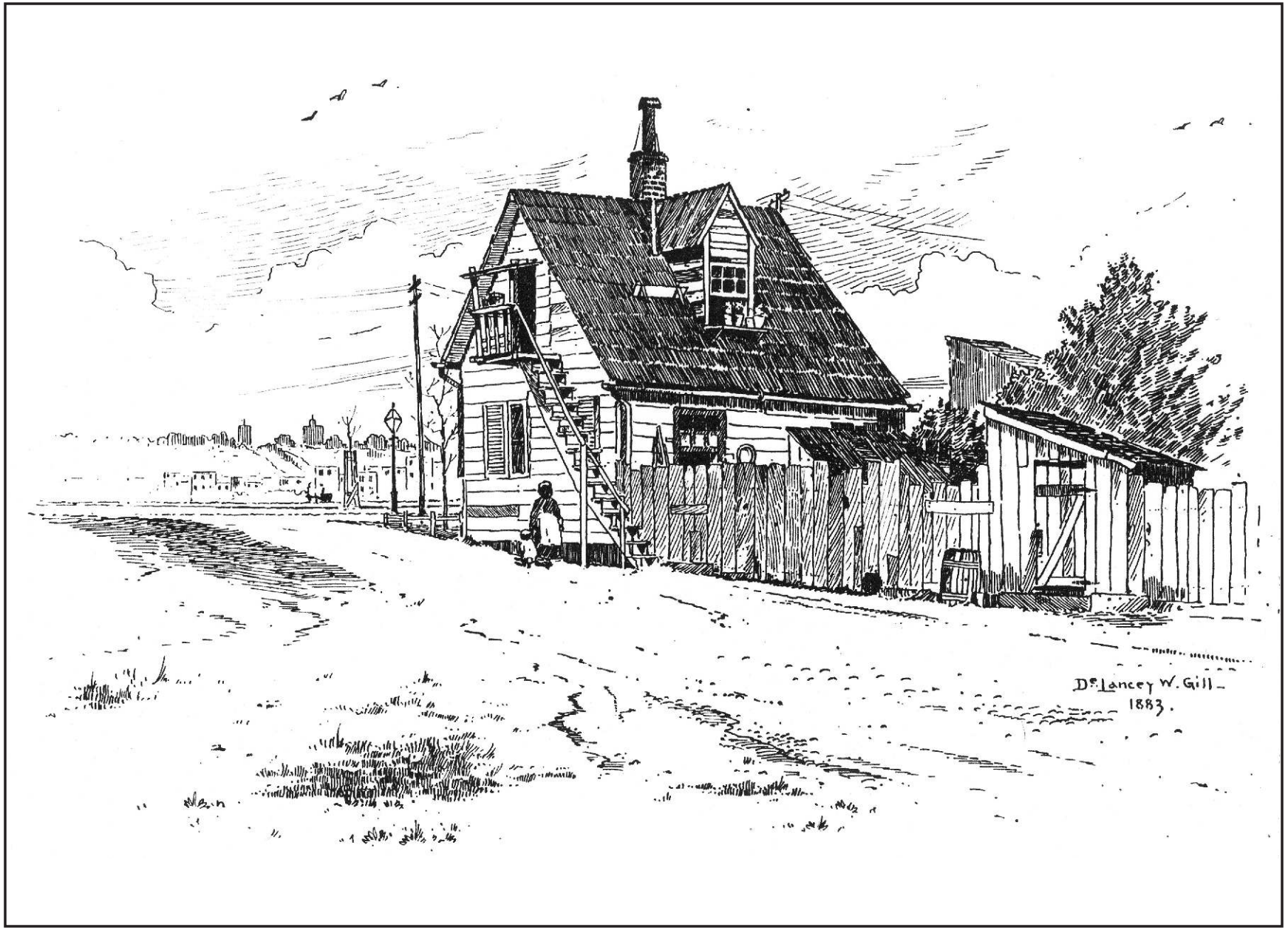


FIGURE 46: DeLancey Gill Drawing of House at 18th and R Streets, 1883

SOURCE: Library of Congress

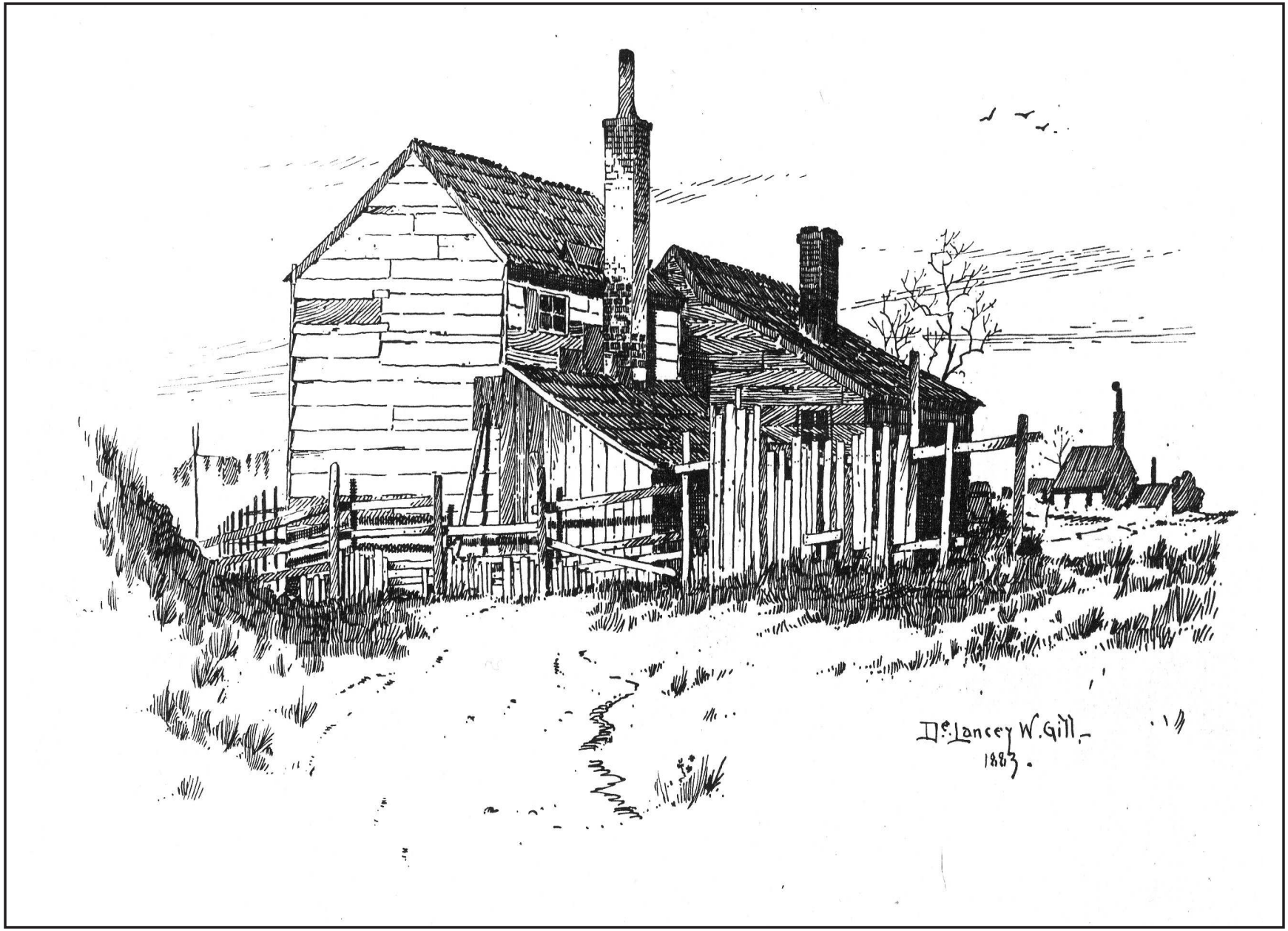


FIGURE 47: DeLancey Gill Drawing of House near 23rd and R Streets, 1883

SOURCE: Library of Congress



FIGURE 48: Sarah Whitby Site Reconstruction



FIGURE 49: Artifacts from the Sarah Whitby Site

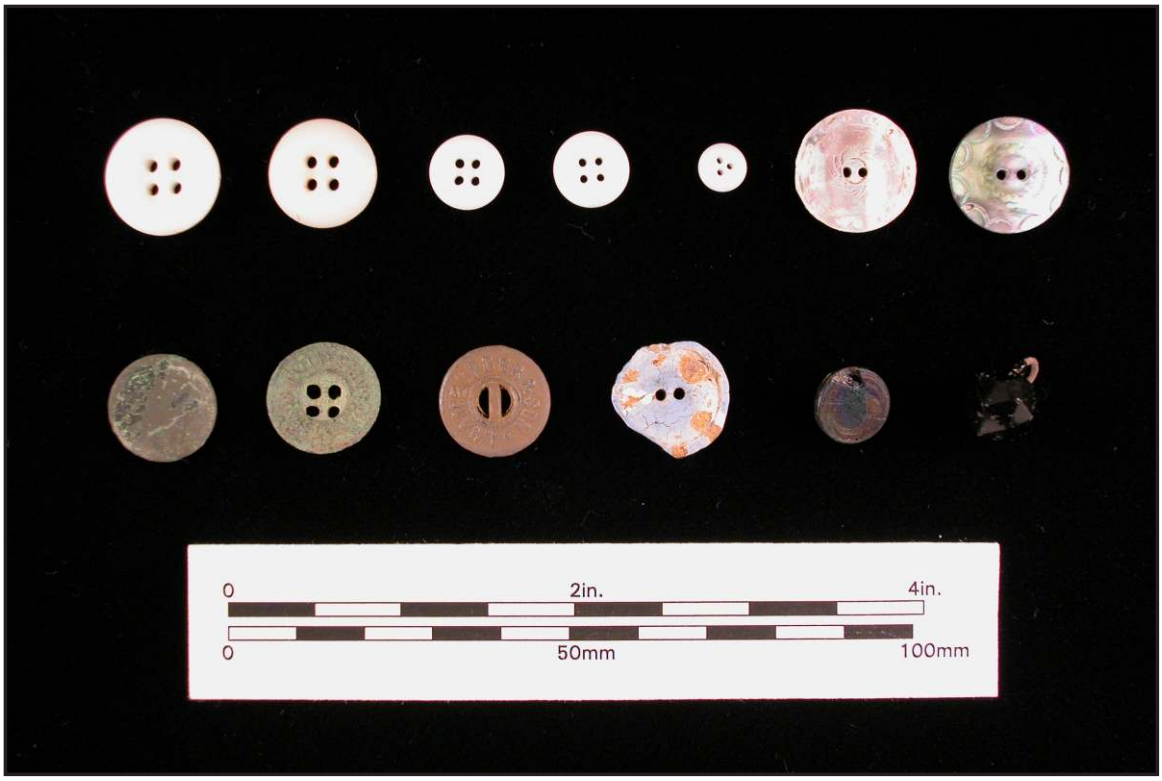


FIGURE 50: Buttons from the Sarah Whitby Site

The Charles and Jane Dickson Sites

Of all the property owners who sold land for the park, only two were African-Americans: Jane Dickson and Charles Dickson. The two Dicksons owned nearly identical lots, each consisting of a quarter acre of land, a small house, and a garden. These properties caught our eye because they represent the type of provision some slave owners made for freed slaves, and we thought that they might represent old slave quarter sites. However, the name Dickson (or Dixon) does not appear among the slaves of the Peirce family, who owned the surrounding land, and though the chain of title for these properties is obscure, it seems that the Dicksons purchased these lots from an Arianna J. Lyles in the 1870s. Since the park's very accurate property map gave us nearly exact locations for these houses, we had no great difficulty in finding them.

The Jane Dickson Site was on a small wooded hilltop. Here we dug shovel tests in a grid pattern across the hilltop and found a scattering of artifacts in the soil. These included nails, brick fragments, window glass, bottle glass, a small china button, and a piece of a white ceramic plate.

The Charles Dickson Site was in a picnic area a few hundred yards away from Jane Dickson's house. Here we found almost nothing in our first shovel tests, probably because the area had been graded with heavy machinery when the picnic area was built. But we noticed a small depression at the edge of the grassy lawn, and a test placed in the center of that depression produced brick pieces and a handful of artifacts. One of those was a rusted iron figurine that proved upon cleaning to be a Negro cart driver from an old donkey cart toy (Figure 51). We expanded that test into a 3x3-foot excavation and found more artifacts, including bottle glass, pieces of ceramic dishes, a glass bead, and a railroad spike.

The Rock Creek Valley in 1890

By combining documentary history with archeology, we can get a good idea of what the Rock Creek Valley was like with when Rock Creek Park was established. Maps show us that the landscape was largely wooded, with some pastures and farm fields. The census records the diversity of the population, black and white, immigrant and native-born, and it tells us what kind of work some of the people did. The rentals tell us something about the houses in the park, and archeology tells us more. Archeology also shows us some of the things people used in those houses, such dishes and bottles and toys. In all of these ways, the lives of Sarah Whitby and her neighbors are preserved.

COLLECTIBLE OBJECT



OBJECT BEFORE CONSERVATION



OBJECT AFTER CONSERVATION



FIGURE 51: Cast-Iron Toy Figurine of Black Cart Driver from Charles Dickson Site

CONSTRUCTING A GRAND NATIONAL PARK

The beginnings of Rock Creek Park can be traced to the years immediately following the Civil War, when attention was turned to beautifying the city and developing park lands. Many of the public lands in the downtown area were taken for wartime uses, such as drill grounds and encampments; in the heart of the city, the Washington Monument Grounds was converted to a cattle yard. In the years immediately following the war, there was a major drive to landscape the District's public reservations. The largest public reservation in the downtown area, today known as the National Mall, was flanked by the Washington City Canal, which in turn followed the ancient course of Tiber Creek. Originally designed to facilitate commerce and trade, the canal had never functioned well, being subject to tidal fluctuations and silting. As the city grew, the canal became little more than an open sewer, and by 1860 a third of the city's sewage emptied into it, such that it became a serious health hazard, aptly characterized as "an immense laboratory of mephitic gas" (French 1864).

After hearing repeated requests for funds to repair the canal, Congress instead authorized a search for nearby lands that could be used for a new public park and a new presidential mansion. Major Nathaniel Michler was assigned this task, and he quickly identified the Rock Creek Valley as an ideal site for a large park. In his first report to Congress (Michler 1867b; see text box), Michler called attention to the valley's natural features and picturesque scenery, at one point referring to Rock Creek as "bold, rocky, and picturesque."

> *In no place has nature been more bountiful of her charms than in the vicinity of this city, and all can be found so near and accessible; the valley of the Rock creek and its tributaries, the Broad and Piney branches and the several minor rivulets, with the adjoining hills overlooking these beautiful streams, present the capital of the nation advantages not be lightly disregarded in providing a park worthy of a great people. All the elements which constitute a public resort of the kind can be found in this wild and romantic tract of country. With its charming drives and walks, its hills and dales, its pleasant valleys and deep ravines, its primeval forest, and cultivated fields, its running waters, its rocks clothed with rich fern and mosses, its repose and tranquility, its light and shade, its ever-varying shrubbery, its beautiful and extensive views, the locality is already possessed with all the features necessary for the object in view. There you can find nature diversified in almost every hue and form, needing but the taste of the artists and the skill of the engineer to enhance its beauty and usefulness; gentle pruning and removing what may be distasteful, improving the roads and paths and the construction of new ones, and increasing the already large growth of trees and shrubs, deciduous and evergreen, by adding to them those of climes and countries. . . . Rock creek winds for more than four miles through the centre of the proposed grounds, receiving at the convenient points the waters of the Broad and Piney branches, and several smaller tributaries. For a short distance it courses through a narrow but beautiful valley, then wildly dashes for a mile over a succession of falls and rapids, with a descent of some eight feet, the banks on both sides being bold, rocky, and picturesque. . . .*

Michler suggested that the park lands might encompass an area of more than 2,500 acres or, less ambitiously, roughly 1,800 acres. He also proposed that several of the Civil War forts be included in the public park lands, arguing that they had already become historic sites worthy of preservation. But the initial proposal to create the public park failed to attract the interest of Congress (Mackintosh 1985:3). Michler's vision proved to be farsighted, but his time in Washington was short. When Congress created the territorial government in 1871, effectively ceding responsibility for public works to local control, Michler was transferred to the Military Division of the Pacific with only 12 days' notice (Historic American Buildings Survey 1993).

Ideas about creating a public park within the District of Columbia were revived during the early 1880s. By that time urban conditions had deteriorated to such an extent that reform efforts gained new momentum. These efforts culminated in the nationwide City Beautiful Movement, which reached its peak in final decades of the nineteenth century. This movement sought to ameliorate the social ills of the inner city through civic improvements, including public parks. Civic leaders in Washington lent their support to the creation of a public park, which was also advanced by Congress. In 1884 Senator Thomas Bayard of Delaware introduced legislation to further review the Michler report for the creation of a public park. After further studies on the feasibility and benefits of establishing a public park, Representative John Hemphill of South Carolina brought a bill to Congress for the establishment of a 2,500-acre park along Rock Creek. The bill outlined acquisition plans that included eminent domain. In March 1889 Congress approved the bill creating Rock Creek Park and the National Zoological Park (Mackintosh 1985:section1:2).

Congress formed the Rock Creek Park Commission for the sole purpose of setting the boundaries and purchasing land for the park. Captain William T. Russell, the Assistant Engineer Commissioner for the District of Columbia, headed the commission, which also included General Thomas A. Casey, Chief of Engineers of the U.S. Army; Lieutenant Colonel Henry Robert, Engineer Commissioner of the District of Columbia; Samuel P. Langley, the Smithsonian Secretary; attorney Richard Ross Perry; and journalist Henry Van Ness Boynton. After making several visits to the area, an acquisition plan was set forth for 1,960 acres. The Commission estimated that the cost could range as high as $500 per acre. Next, the Commission had to negotiate a land purchase with each individual landowner. Most owners were willing to sell their land at the market price, but a few, such as Peirce Shoemaker, insisted that the land was undervalued because it had gold-bearing potential. Others refused outright to sell their land at all. Eventually, the commission came to terms with all but two property owners. The final cost exceeded the original appropriation by $230,000, even after omitting 300 acres from the northeast end of the proposed park. On January 1, 1895, the Commission transferred the entire 1,605.976 acres of parkland to the Rock Creek Board of Control (Bushong 1990:73-77).

Among the early improvements to the park were new access roads, bridges, and trails, which included Beach Drive (1897-1900), Glover Road (1899-1901), Ross Drive (1902-1903), and Morrow Road (1911) (Figures 52 and 53). The engineers who built these roads were criticized because their construction damaged the scenic beauty of the park, but the roads allow many more people to experience the "bold, rocky, and picturesque" scenery that enamored Michler more than a century ago.



FIGURE 52: Boulder Bridge



FIGURE 53: A Postcard of Rock Creek Park from the 1920s

THE PARK IN MODERN TIMES

The history of the Rock Creek Valley did not end with the establishment of the park. People continue to visit the valley and to leave traces of their passage behind. They come for recreation, for education, or just to get outside under the trees for a while. In the park people run, walk, ride horses and bicycles, hold family reunions, celebrate their love (Figure 54). Buildings have been built, picnic groves set up, trails blazed. Some of the older pieces of infrastructure in the park, like the Boulder Bridge, have become historical monuments in their own right. The park even has its own political history, as people and groups with different visions of how the land should be used have clashed over issues like closing the roads and building more playgrounds. Just recently a fish ladder has been built to help spawning herring get past the Peirce Mill dam, a monument to our concern for our environment and a small step among many others in our efforts to restore some of the natural glories lost over the past 300 years. The future no doubt holds more changes, but we can be sure that the beauty of the landscape will continue to draw people to Rock Creek, so that more stories will be added to the history of this marvelous place.



FIGURE 54: *Cecilia My Sweet*: Contemporary History Carved on a Tree in the Park

REFERENCES CITED

Andersen, Patricia A.

1995a *Frederick County, Maryland, Land Records, Liber B Abstracts, 1748-1752*. Genlaw Resources, Damascus, Maryland.

1995b *Frederick County, MD, Land Records Liber J Abstracts 1763-1767*. Privately published, Montgomery Village, Maryland.

Anonymous

n.d. So Come to Him - The Choir of St. Paul's Rock Creek Parish, Washington D.C., USA. Martin Luther King Library, Washington, D.C.

Archives of Maryland

var. Colonial land grants, deeds, wills. Archives of Maryland, Annapolis. Accessed online at <http://www.mdarchives.state.md.us/megafile/msa/speccol/sc2900/sc2908/html/index.html>.

Barse, William P.

2002 *An Archeological Survey, Inventory and Evaluation Study, and Data Recovery for the Fletcher's Boathouse Site (51NW13), C&O Canal National Historical Park, Washington, DC.* Report submitted to National Park Service, National Capital Region, by URS Corporation.

Bedell, John, and Stuart Fiedel

2003 *Phase I and Phase II Cultural Resource Investigations, Russell Road, Marine Corps Base Quantico, Prince William County, Virginia.* Submitted to the Department of the Navy by The Louis Berger Group, Inc., Washington, D.C.

Boschke, A.

1857 *Map of Washington City, District of Columbia, Seat of the Federal Government*. A. Boschke, New York.

1861 *Topographical Map of the District of Columbia*. Surveyed in the Years 1856, 1857, 1858, and 1859. D. McClelland, Blanchard & Mohun, Washington, D.C.

Bushong, William

1990 *Historic Resource Study, Rock Creek Park, District of Columbia*. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Washington, D.C.

Carpenter, D.H.

1875 Plat of the Subdivision of Argyle, Cowell, and Lorn. NCP-0-56-58, Record Group 42, National Archives.

Coffin, George

2002 *Three Years in the Army.* Edited by Stewart T. Coffin. The First Maine Heavy Artillery, a Regimental History Website based on the book of the same name by

Horace A. Shaw and Charles J. House, 2006. Accessed online at <http://www.cwoodcock.com/firstmaine/3years.html>.

Coldham, Peter W.
1996 *Settlers of Maryland 1701-1730.* Genealogical Publishing Company, Baltimore.

Cooling, Benjamin Franklin III
1989 *Jubal Early's Raid on Washington, 1864.* The Nautical & Aviation Publishing Company of America, Baltimore.

Cooling, Benjamin Franklin III and Walton H. Owen II
1988 *Mr. Lincoln's Forts: A Guide to the Civil War Defenses of Washington.* White Main Publishing Company, Shippensburg, Pennsylvania.

Daily National Intelligencer (Washington, D.C.)
1864a The Invasion of Maryland, July 11. On microfilm, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

1864b The Late Raid in Maryland, July 13. On microfilm, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Foreman, Stephen M.
1995 *A Guide to Civil War Washington.* Elliott & Clark Publishing, Washington D.C.

Frederick County Land Records
var. On microfilm at the Maryland State Archives, Annapolis.

French, Benjamin
1864 *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Public Grounds.* Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.

Gahn, Bessie W.
1940 "George Washington's Headquarters" in *Georgetown and Colonial Days, Rock Creek to the Falls*. Press of Westland, Silver Spring, Maryland.

Gelders, Ruth Beall
1976 *Colonel Ninian Beall*. Beall family history home page (Kim Beall, 1996). Accessed online 24 March 2004 at<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/5568/ninian1.html>.

Graffenried, Christoph von
1714 [1920] *Christoph von Graffenried's Account of the Founding of New Bern*. Edited by Vincent H. Todd. North Carolina Historical Commission, Raleigh.

Greene, F.V.
1884 *Topographic Map of the District of Columbia and a Portion of Virginia*. Topographic Map complied under the Direction of Major G.J. Lydecker, Army Corps of Engineers, Washington, D.C.

Hazen, Theodore R.
n.d. *Architectural Analysis of Peirce Mill and Argyle Mill*. Pond Lily Mill Restorations, Theodore R. Hazen, 1996. Information obtained online at <http://www.angelfire.com/folk/molinologist/analysis.html>.

Historic American Buildings Survey [HABS]
1993 *L'Enfant-McMillan Plan of Washington, DC, Washington, District of Columbia.* Historic American Buildings Survey, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C.

Holmes, William H.
1897 Stone Implements of the Potomac-Chesapeake Tidewater Province. *Fifteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution*, 1893- 94:13-152. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.

Hopkins, G.M.
1878 *Atlas of Fifteen Miles Around Washington.* Compiled, drawn, and published by G.M. Hopkins, Philadelphia.

Inashima, Paul Y.
1985 *An Archeological Investigation of Thirty-One Erosion Control and Bank Stabilization Sites along Rock Creek and Its Tributaries*. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Denver Service Center, Denver.

Jordan, Elise Greenup (editor)
1996a *Land Records of Prince George's County, Maryland, 1733-1739.* Knoxville, Tennessee.

1996b *Land Records of Prince George's County, Maryland, 1739-1743.* Knoxville, Tennessee.

Knepper, Dennis, John M. Rutherford, Daniel R. Hayes, Carter Shields, and Christopher L. Bowen
2006 *The Archaeology of an Urban Landscape, The Whitehurst Freeway Project. Volume I: Prehistoric Sites.* Prepared for the District of Columbia Department of Transportation by Parson, Washington, D.C., and Versar, Inc., Springfield, Virginia.

Mackintosh, Barry
1985 Whence the Park. *Rock Creek Park: An Administrative History.* National Park Service, Washington, D.C. Online copy accessed March 31, 2004, at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/rocr/adhi1b.htm>.

Maryland Calendar of Wills
var. Maryland Calendar of Wills 18:464. Archives of Maryland, Annapolis.

McCormick, Charles H.
1967 *Milling in Rock Creek Park: General Background.* Division of History, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service, Washington, D.C.

Meltzer, David J., and Robert C. Dunnell (editors)
1992 *The Archaeology of William Henry Holmes*. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C., and London.

Michler, Nathaniel
1867a *Topographical Sketch of the Environs of Washington, D.C.*. National Archives, College Park, Maryland.

1867b Communication of N. Micher, Major, of Engineers, Office of Public Buildings and Grounds, to the Chairman of the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds. 39th Congress, 2nd Session. U.S. Senate. Miscellaneous Document No. 21. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.

Miller, David V.
1976 *The Defenses of Washington During the Civil War*. Mr. Copy, Inc., Buffalo, New York.

Montgomery County Commissioners of the Tax
1783 Land Assessment. Microfilm copy on file, Maryland State Archives, Annapolis.

Morgan, Edmund S.
1975 *American Slavery, American Freedom*. W.W. Norton, New York.

National Archives
various Records of the Rock Creek Park Commission. Record Group 47. Washington, DC.

National Park Service
2000 *Peirce Mill Historic Structures Report*. Report on file, Rock Creek Park Headquarters, Peirce-Lingle Mansion, Washington, D.C.

2001 Fort information, nps.gov, National Park Service, Washington, D.C. Accessed online at <www.nps.gov/rocr/ftcircle/index.html>.

2002 Cultural Landscape Inventory: Linnaean Hill Component Landscape Report Inventory. On file, Rock Creek Park Headquarters, Peirce-Klingle Mansion, Washington, D.C.

O.R. (see *The War of the Rebellion*)

Rorison, Charles E.
1863 Letter of Charles E. Rorison, November 22, 1863. On file, New-York Historical Society, New York. Accessed online at <http://www.dmna.state.ny.us/historic/reghist/civil/artillery/4thArtHvy/4thArtHvyCWN.htm>.

Scharf, J. Thomas
1882 *History of Western Maryland* (reprinted 1968). Regional Publishing Co., Baltimore.

Shaw, Izola T.
2003 *The Link Revealed: A History of the Peirces' Enslaved Population.* Unpublished paper prepared for Rock Creek Park, National Park Service, Washington, D.C.

Smith, John
1624 *Virginia* [map]. London. On file, Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Available online at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/mdbquery.html>.

1986 *The Complete Works of Captain John Smith (1580-1631)*. Edited by Philip L. Barbour. University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill.

Sneden, R.K.
1864 Sketch of the Battle of Fort Stevens. Geography and Maps Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Spicer, William A.
1892 *History of the Ninth and Tenth Regiments, Rhode Island Volunteers, and the Tenth Rhode Island Battery, in the Union Army in 1862.* Snow & Farnham, Providence.

Taggart, Hugh T.
1908 Old Georgetown. *Records of the Columbia Historical Society* 11:120-224.

The Union (Washington, D.C.)
1864 Skirmishing Near Fort Stevens. July 13. On microfilm, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

United States
1862 *The Slavery Code of the District of Columbia, together with Notes and Judicial Decisions Explanatory of the Same.* L. Towers & Co., Washington, D.C.

United States Bureau of the Census
1850-1880 Agricultural Schedules for District of Columbia. Microfilm copy on file, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

1870-1900 Population Schedule for District of Columbia. Microfilm copy on file, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

United States Coast and Geodetic Survey
1892 *Topographic Map of the District of Columbia.* United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, Washington, D.C.

United States Geological Survey [USGS]
1965 *Washington West.* 7.5-Minute Topographic Quadrangle. Photorevised 1983. United States Geological Survey, Reston, Virginia.

War Department
1864 *Environs of Washington*. Prepared from Original Surveys in the Engineers Department, Washington, D.C.

The War of the Rebellion, A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies [O.R]
var. 37:231, 242, 242, 348; 43:1021. Available on CD-Rom, Guild Press of Indiana, Inc., Zionsville, Indiana.