

ASSIGNMENT 9

CLASSICAL AND HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

History and archaeology are often thought of as separate pursuits, being divided between the humanities and anthropology respectively. For the former, archaeology was often relegated to a subordinate status as the “handmaiden of history.” In a similar way, anthropologists shunned classical and historical archaeology, with a sense that archaeologists were somehow cheating by using historical records, that they were no longer archaeologists but rather historians. Today, however, there is an increasing interest in pursuing anthropological archaeology in historical settings.



WHAT LIES AHEAD

Assignment Objectives

After completing Assignment 9 you should:

1. Understand the unique benefits and challenges of archaeologists working with historical documentation.
2. Gain a basic appreciation of the potential of archaeology to reveal everyday lives at places like Pompeii and Martin’s Hundred.
3. See how archaeology can challenge myths and lead to a better understanding of the most recent past.



WORK REQUIRED

Assignment 9 requires you to:

1. Readings: The readings for this week all follow the description of the lectures below, the first dealing with Classical Archaeology and Pompeii and the second with Historical Archaeology and the American colonial site of Martin’s Hundred.



Otherwise there are no specific assignments for this week. You should make a start on your Final Essays!



LECTURE 1: CLASSICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

Volcanic eruptions are bad for people but great for archaeologists! This lecture will cover the history of archaeology at Pompeii and the amazing insights it gives us about life among both the wealthy and poor in Roman society. Check out Pompeii's official web site at: <http://www.pompeisites.org/database/pompei/pompei2.nsf>



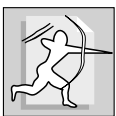
LECTURE 2: HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

Three case studies highlight the insights that historical archaeologists can provide about our own society. Thanksgiving became a national myth in the 19th century. What is the reality behind the myth? Thomas Jefferson documented life at Monticello with painstaking detail, but with one blind spot, his slaves. What can archaeology tell us that Thomas Jefferson didn't. Finally, practitioners of "the oldest profession" are often marginalized in the historical record. Excavations near the Capitol Building help us to understand the social dynamics of life in Mary Ann Hall's First Class House.



FILM: BLACKBEARD'S LOST SHIP

This film follows an underwater archaeological team searching for Blackbeard's ill-fated pirate flagship.



HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

History is a difficult pursuit. It is, in fact, passing difficult, possibly impossible, and for that reason the vanguard of social science has been in full retreat from history for most of our century... Two diseases have crippled and nearly killed the silent artifact as a source for history. Most historians, it seems, continue to view the artifact as only an illustrative adjunct to the literary narrative. Perhaps when the elite is studied, this is not an unintelligent course of research. A knowledge of Thomas Jefferson might be based on his writings and only supplemented by a study of Monticello, but for most people, such as the folks who were chopping farms out of the woods a few miles to the east while Jefferson was writing at his desk, the procedure must be reversed. Their own statements, though made in wood or mud rather than ink, must take precedence over someone else's possibly prejudiced, probably wrong, and certainly superficial comments about them... Any artifact that can be provided with association in space and time, either by being accompanied

by a document or better – as with gravestones or buildings – by being set into the land, is a valuable source of a great quantity of information. When we have learned to read the silent artifact, history will not be an easier pursuit. But if artifacts... can be read, then history will become a philosophically more plausible pursuit.

Henry Glassie, *Folk Housing in Middle Virginia*, pp. 8-12

AD 79: THE ERUPTION OF VESUVIUS



Life must have seemed idyllic along the coast of Italy in the shadow of mount Vesuvius. The cities of Pompeii, Herculaneum and Stabiae were a playground for the Roman rich and famous, who had elaborately decorated villas there, played in their Gymnasia, like the one at Pompeii shown here, and drank in trendy bars along their picturesque streets. That all ended over a period of two days when the mountain exploded, showering hot ash and debris over a wide area, burying the city of

Pompeii. Pliny the younger was there as a teenager, and has left this gripping account of his experiences during the catastrophic eruption. Here is his account excerpted from "The Destruction of Pompeii, 79 AD," EyeWitness to History, www.eyewitnesstohistory.com (1999).

DAY 1

"My uncle was stationed at Misenum, in active command of the fleet. On 24 August, in the early afternoon, my mother drew his attention to a cloud of unusual size and appearance. He had been out in the sun, had taken a cold bath, and lunched while lying down, and was then working at his books. He called for his shoes and climbed up to a place which would give him the best view of the phenomenon. It was not clear at that distance from which mountain the cloud was rising (it was afterwards known to be Vesuvius); its general appearance can best be expressed as being like an umbrella pine, for it rose to a great height on a sort of trunk and then split off into branches, I imagine because it was thrust upwards by the first blast and then left unsupported as the pressure subsided, or else it was borne down by its own weight so that it spread out and gradually dispersed. In places it looked white, elsewhere blotched and dirty, according to the amount of soil

and ashes it carried with it.

My uncle's scholarly acumen saw at once that it was important enough for a closer inspection, and he ordered a boat to be made ready, telling me I could come with him if I wished. I replied that I preferred to go on with my studies, and as it happened he had himself given me some writing to do.

As he was leaving the house he was handed a message from Rectina, wife of Tascus whose house was at the foot of the mountain, so that escape was impossible except by boat. She was terrified by the danger threatening her and implored him to rescue her from her fate. He changed his plans, and what he had begun in a spirit of inquiry he completed as a hero. He gave orders for the warships to be launched and went on board himself with the intention of bringing help to many more people besides Rectina, for this lovely stretch of coast was thickly populated.

He hurried to the place which everyone else was hastily leaving, steering his course straight for the danger zone. He was entirely fearless, describing each new movement and phase of the portent to be noted down exactly as he observed them. Ashes were already falling, hotter and thicker as the ships drew near, followed by bits of pumice and blackened stones, charred and cracked by the flames: then suddenly they were in shallow water, and the shore was blocked by the debris from the mountain.

For a moment my uncle wondered whether to turn back, but when the helmsman advised this he refused, telling him that Fortune stood by the courageous and they must make for Pomponianus at Stabiae. He was cut off there by the breadth of the bay (for the shore gradually curves round a basin filled by the sea) so that he was not as yet in danger, though it was clear that this would come nearer as it spread. Pomponianus had therefore already put his belongings on board ship, intending to escape if the contrary wind fell. This wind was of course full in my uncle's favour, and he was able to bring his ship in. He embraced his terrified friend, cheered and encouraged him, and thinking he could calm his fears by showing his own composure, gave orders that he was to be carried to the bathroom. After his bath he lay down and dined; he was quite cheerful, or at any rate he pretended he was, which was no less courageous.

Meanwhile on Mount Vesuvius broad sheets of fire and leaping flames blazed at several points, their bright glare emphasized by the darkness of night. My uncle tried to allay the fears of his companions by repeatedly declaring that these were nothing but bonfires left by the peasants in their terror, or else empty houses on fire in the districts they had abandoned. Then he went to rest and certainly slept, for as he was a stout man his breathing was rather loud and heavy and could be heard by people coming and going outside his door. By this time the courtyard giving access to his room was full of ashes mixed with pumice stones, so that its level had risen, and if he had stayed in the room any longer he would never have got out. He was wakened, came out and joined Pomponianus and the rest of the household who had sat up all night.

They debated whether to stay indoors or take their chance in the open, for the buildings were now shaking with violent shocks, and seemed to be swaying to and fro as if they were torn from their foundations. Outside, on the other hand, there was the danger of falling pumice stones, even though these were light and porous; however, after comparing the risks they chose the latter. In my uncle's case one reason outweighed the other, but for the others it was a choice of fears. As a protection against falling objects they put pillows on their heads tied down with cloths.

Elsewhere there was daylight by this time, but they were still in darkness, blacker and denser than any ordinary night, which they relieved by lighting torches and various kinds of lamp. My uncle decided to go down to the shore and investigate on the spot the possibility of any escape by sea, but he found the waves still wild and dangerous. A sheet was spread on the ground for him to lie down, and he repeatedly asked for cold water to drink.

Then the flames and smell of sulphur which gave warning of the approaching fire drove the others to take flight and roused him to stand up. He stood leaning on two slaves and then suddenly collapsed, I imagine because the dense fumes choked his breathing by blocking his windpipe which was constitutionally weak and narrow and often inflamed. When daylight returned on the 26th - two days after the last day he had been seen - his body was found intact and uninjured, still fully clothed and looking more like sleep than death.

DAY 2

Ashes were already falling, not as yet very thickly. I looked round: a dense black cloud was coming up behind us, spreading over the earth like a flood.' Let us leave the road while we can still see, 'I said,' or we shall be knocked down and trampled underfoot in the dark by the crowd behind.' We had scarcely sat down to rest when darkness fell, not the dark of a moonless or cloudy night, but as if the lamp had been put out in a closed room.

You could hear the shrieks of women, the wailing of infants, and the shouting of men; some were calling their parents, others their children or their wives, trying to recognize them by their voices. People bewailed their own fate or that of their relatives, and there were some who prayed for death in their terror of dying. Many besought the aid of the gods, but still more imagined there were no gods left, and that the universe was plunged into eternal darkness for evermore. There were people, too, who added to the real perils by inventing fictitious dangers: some reported that part of Misenum had collapsed or another part was on fire, and though their tales were false they found others to believe them. A gleam of light returned, but we took this to be a warning of the approaching flames rather than daylight. However, the flames remained some distance off; then darkness came on once more and ashes began to fall again, this time in heavy showers. We rose from time to time and shook them off, otherwise we should have been buried and crushed beneath their weight. I could boast that not a groan or cry of fear escaped me in these perils, but I admit that I derived some poor consolation in my mortal lot from the belief that the whole world was dying with me and I with it."





AMERICAN HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

Archaeology is concerned with the material remains of the past, with human behavior revealed through artifacts, structures, food residues, and so on. As such, it offers a dispassionate window into the past, one that looks at minute details of daily life, at people regardless of rank and status in life. It comes

into its own with Historical Archaeology, where historical documents provide a wealth of information about peoples' lives. But there are limitations. We know much of the doings of the Thomas Jefferson's of this world, but precious little about the common person, the humble farmer, artisan working in field or cottage, or the slaves who toiled in plantations like Monticello. There is some information about them, especially in later times. Someone recorded their birth, marriage, and death, the taxes they paid, the inventory of their estate at death. But we know precious little from written records of their day-to-day lives, of their houses, diets, and artifacts. It never occurred to anyone to set these down at the time. American historical archaeology started out as an investigation of European colonialism at places like Plymouth and Jamestown, and while historical archaeologists have expanded their work to include 19th century brothels, early 20th century camps of striking laborers, and even modern trash, the excavation of colonial sites like our own Presidio, shown here, remains an important part of American historical archaeology. Here are some excerpts from Ivor Noel Hume, one of the founding figures in the discipline, who has focused on the 17th century colonization of Virginia at sites like Martin's Hundred.

MARTIN'S HUNDRED, VIRGINIA

The first English colonists to settle in North America were mainly humble farmers and yeomen, people of rural backgrounds who possessed a low-tech agriculture culture that was little changed from the Middle Ages. Hardly surprisingly, their society was based on their rural roots back in the Old World. It was only a half a century or more later that colonial culture became more elaborate, as more immigrants arrived, and later generations adapted more closely to American conditions, in isolation from their original homeland.

Most colonists lived in tiny hamlets, inconspicuous settlements of just a few houses, a place of worship, some common structures, and perhaps a palisaded fort. Most of these have vanished without trace, or lie under the foundations of modern cities. This is why the colonial village at Martin's Hundred, Virginia, is so important, for it lay close to the surface in unencumbered land.

Martin's Hundred came to light in 1976, when historical archaeologist Ivor Noel Hume was looking for the outhouses of an eighteenth-century plantation. Instead, he stumbled across portholes and structures of an early seventeenth-century hamlet named Wolstenholme Towne, built by settlers who opened the Martin's Hundred tract along the nearby St. James River in 1519. Martin's Hundred was a tiny village of a few thatched houses, overlooked by a strong, palisaded fort with a watch tower, designed to protect the inhabitants against Indians and Spanish ships. In the event it was useless, for Indian raiders overran the hamlet in 1521, killing most of the inhabitants and burning Wolstenholme to the ground. Only a few survivors remained, and they soon abandoned the village, which was forgotten for more than four centuries.

Ivor Noel Hume's excavations were a remarkable achievement, not only in terms of clean, meticulous excavation, but of archaeological detective work as well.

We start our exploration of Martin's Hundred with four readings, which follow. They give you useful insights into Noel Hume's approach to this complex site. They are carefully selected to give you not so much an impression of the settlement, but to show you some of the processes involved in reconstructing it. In short, they give you insights into Noel Hume's archaeological and historical detective work, into his thinking about the site.

Please settle down for a period of undisturbed, intensive reading of the four passages that follow, all of them written by the excavator, Ivor Noel Hume:

- A general description of the fort and how it was reconstructed from postholes and other archaeological features,
- The story of William Harwood and his house, a superb piece of archaeological detective work,
- The archaeology of the massacre,
- Finally, a description of how art can give insights into Colonial life.

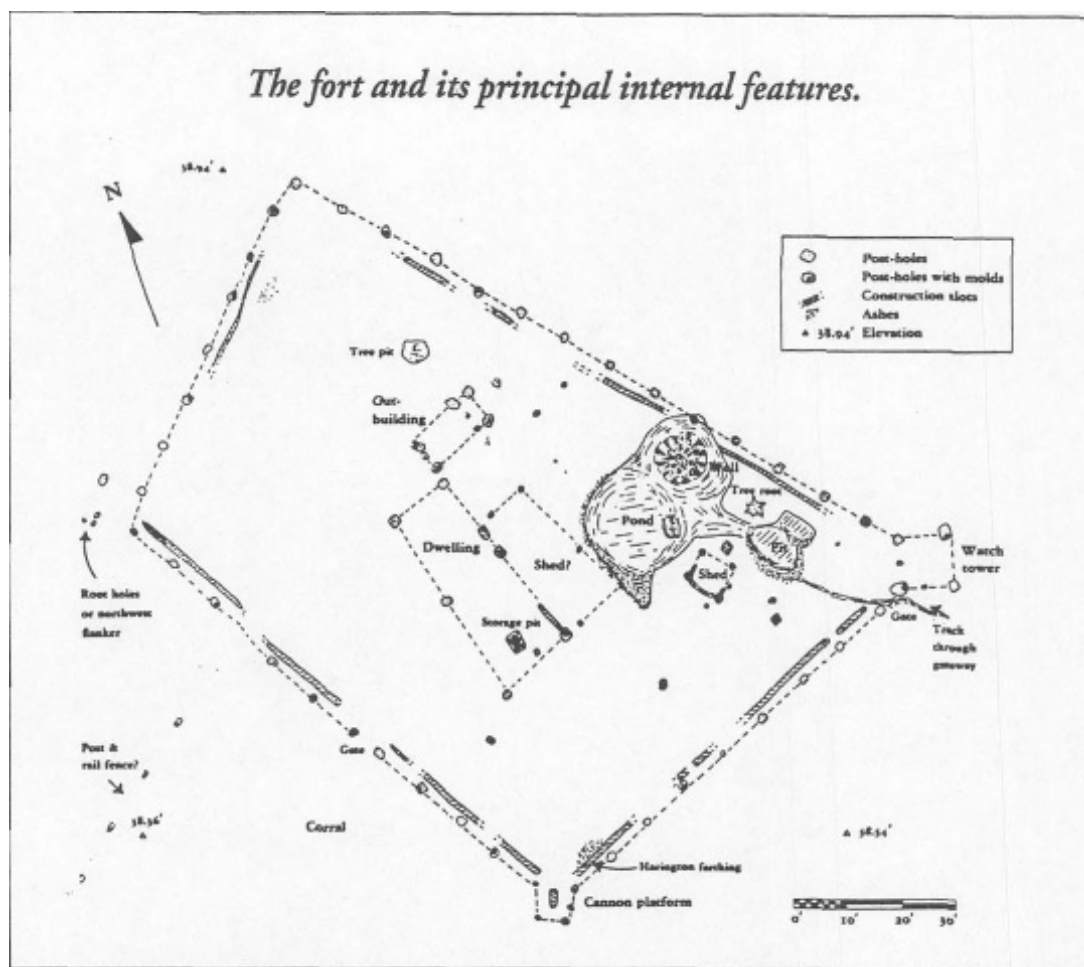
THE FORT

The fort's greatest width and length measured 93 by 130 feet, and the clearly defined watchtower we had found at the southeast corner was duplicated at no other. We had known since the autumn of 1977 that no bastion projected from the northeast corner, but for several weeks I remained convinced that another had stood at the northwest. Eventually, however, I was wooed to Eric Klingelhofer's argument that the very irregular and shallow holes at that corner were really no more than the ghosts of fortuitously located roots. I have never been happy about my capitulation, for the "roots" created a projecting box measuring 7 feet, 6 inches square — more or less what was needed to protect the fort's vulnerable north wall (see Plan Map). Being closest to the nearest tree-flanked ravine, this was the direction from which any Indian attack

was likely to come. Furthermore, although we were finding traces of slots parallel to the four interior sides of the palisades of the fort, and were reading them as evidence of a parapet step or platform on which musketeers could stand to fire over the walls, muskets (as previously noted) could not be fired at an angle below the horizontal without the ball rolling out. Thus an area extending at least 20 feet from the palisades was safe from musketry unless, at a minimum of two corners — of which the northwest corner could have been one — there were projecting flankers enabling enfilade fire to rake the walls from the outside.

A flanker or bastion at the southwest corner of the fort was undisputed. The holes there were clearly left by posts and not by roots, but unlike the big watchtower at the southeast corner (or my imagined flanker at the northwest), this one tapered from an interior width of 7 feet, 6 inches to an exterior dimension 2 feet narrower. Much of the inside was occupied by a shallow, loam-filled trough nestling in the subsoil, which we believed to be the remains of a large piece of wood 4 feet, 4 inches long, 1 foot, 6 inches wide, and of unknown thickness. We interpreted it as a block to support and carry the downward thrust of a large post reinforcing the floor of the flanker. If this interpretation was correct, it could have had but one purpose — to help support the weight of a cannon.

Standing on a pair of tall steps and sighting along the lines suggested by the tapering

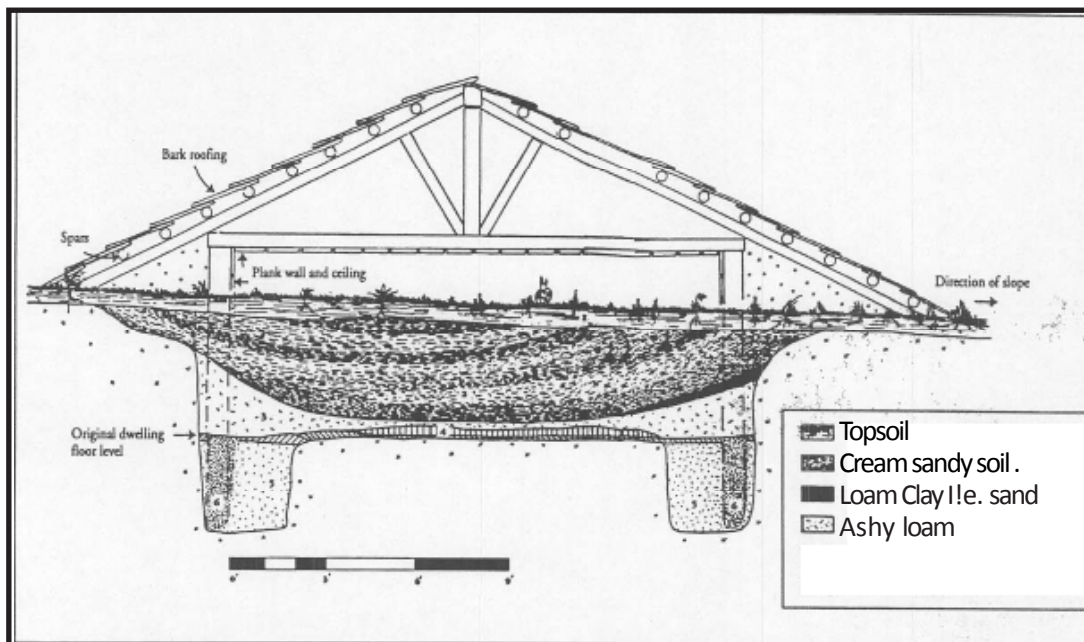


structure, I could see that the gun must have been mounted to fire downriver, narrowly missing the corner of the Company Compound storehouse. To reach any effective distance out into the river, the cannon had to be large, and we had a single clue that in Martins Hundred there had been such a weapon. The cannon ball found on Site A, which we had associated with Governor Harwood and his "Peece of Ordnance," now assumed new importance. The ball, as previously noted, weighed 6 3/4 lbs., and had a diameter of 3 3/4 inches. Standard wisdom has it that shot 3 1/2 to 4 inches in diameter were fired from two types of cannon, sakers and demi-culverins. They were heavy guns, ranging in weight from 1,500 to 3,000 pounds, and at a 10-degree elevation a saker had a useful range of 2,170 yards and a demi-culverin of up to 2,400 yards, an ample distance to hit shipping in a river whose channel sweeps relatively close to shore as it passes Carter's Grove. Clearly, the gun platform was not built to defend against the Indians but against England's long-time bogeyman, the Spaniard.

The big gun interpretation had its problems. Unless the platform extended inside the fort in some manner not revealed by the archaeological evidence, it had a floor length of only 6 feet, 6 inches; yet a saker (the smaller of the two guns) had an average barrel length of 8 feet and required a run-back or recoil distance of about half its barrel length. Mounted on a four-wheeled naval carriage, and with its muzzle assumedly projecting out from the flanker as far as the front wheels would allow, the gun's crew barely had room to draw it back far enough for loading. On the other hand, if the gun was of a size to fit comfortably on the platform, its ball size and range would have been insufficient to keep enemy ships at bay. We were left to draw what comfort we could from the Tower of London's ordnance expert, Howard Blackmore, who admitted that the documents hint at greater variations in barrel lengths to bore measurements than surviving seventeenth-century guns suggest. Thus, we cannot discount the argument that guns of saker bore and shorter length were made, but have not survived.

As noted earlier, we had fewer problems with the evidence provided by our fort's palisade post-holes than we did with its cannon; they equated well with Strachey's description of Jamestown's "Planckes and strong Posts," and with Ralph Hamor's portrayal of Henrico, the new town further up the James River, as being defended by a palisade of "pales posts and railes." The character of the pales was revealed in a 1613 intelligence report smuggled out of Virginia in a shoe, and sent to the Spanish ambassador in London. The British defenses were described as being "of boards and so weak that a kick would break them down." Although the pales may have rotted and been parting company from their rails, it is hard to believe that the supporting posts were ready to fall. Strachey had told us that those at Jamestown were set 4 feet into the ground. Our fort's post-holes were nowhere near as deep, and even allowing for loss of depth through subsequent erosion and land use, the evidence clearly pointed to a lighter and therefore less tall defense work. But how much lighter, and to what degree less tall?

The Jamestown palisades were said to be 14 feet high, but there was no mention of



any platform inside for musketeers to fire over the top. Protection must have been provided by enfilade fire from the large bastions at each of the three corners. I felt certain that we should be thinking of palings only tall enough to prevent an enemy from scaling them and to provide chest-high protection for defenders standing on our parapet step. We knew that instructions issued in London to the settlers of Berkeley Plantation (another, Martin's Hundred-like venture further upriver) called on them to build a palisade 7 feet, 6 inches high around their 400 acres. No mention was made of whether this wall was to give protection from an enemy or was merely a deterrent to wild animals; but from much further away, at Ferryland on the Newfoundland coast, came more specific information. There, that colony's governor, Captain Edward Wynne, wrote to his employer Sir George Calvert in July 1622, reporting that:

We got home as much or as many trees as served us to palizndo into the Plantation about four Acres of ground, for the keeping off of both man & beast, with post and rayle seven foot high, sharpened in the toppe, the trees being pitched upright and fastened with spikes and nayles.

At Ferryland, therefore, the pales were 7 feet high, and pointed. Taken at face value, Captain Wynne's description suggests that his pales were made from tree trunks fastened to the rails; but that is difficult to do if the trees have not first been split to provide one flat face. Even then the "spikes and nayles" needed to secure half a tree to a rail would have to be long enough to pass through both and still project far enough to be clenched — very large nails. So far, we had found relatively few of any size along our palisade lines.

Remembering that John Smith's list of equipment needed by an emigrant family included "2 frowes to cleave pale," I concluded that even the Ferryland "trees" would have been split, and that the Virginia evidence was sufficient to justify interpreting our pales as flat surfaced. We had no justification, however, for our parapet step, though logic dictated that if the pales were tall enough to keep attackers out, defenders would have to stand on something to see and shoot over the top. I estimated the height of my step as being close to 3 feet. Taking an average male height from the skeletons on Site A as being about 5 feet, 6 inches, I asked artist Pat Kidd to be a musketeer and stand with a matchlock musket in the firing position. Measuring down from the underside of the gun to her feet gave us an estimated distance from the top of a 7-foot, 6-inch pale ("sharpened in the toppe" a distance of 6 inches) to the top of the parapet step. I deduced that the back of the step was supported by vertical timbers and that it had been filled with dirt. The only problem was that when standing to fire, Pat needed a width of 2 feet, 5 inches, and the platform would have given a maximum of 2 feet, 9 inches — no room for stepping back to reload. That flaw in my interpretation bothered me for several years, just as did the lack of depth to the gun platform. A published report of a surviving parapet platform in a ruined village fort in Northern Ireland led us to Dungiven in County Londonderry, but when we got there the platform had been torn down to enlarge a parking lot. Eventually the evidence I was seeking came to light closer to home, on Southampton Island at Bermuda. Protecting one side of the entrance to the harbor stands a small stone fort reputedly built in 1620 by Governor Nathaniel Butler (the man whose uncharitable report hastened the demise of the Virginia Company), and having a parapet step edged with stone and filled behind with rubble. Tidewater Virginia has no natural stone, while Bermuda has virtually nothing else. I had little doubt therefore that the Southampton Fort construction (though probably an eighteenth-century addition) was the stone-built version of our wood-supported step. It was only 2 feet wide.

THE STORY OF WILLIAM HARWOOD

Those in New Netherlands and in New England who have no means to build farm-houses at first according to their wishes, dig a square pit in the ground, cellar fashion, six or seven feet deep, as long and as broad as they think proper, case the earth inside all around the wall with timber, which they line with the bark of trees or something else to prevent the caving in of the earth, floor this cellar with plank and wainscott overhead for a ceiling, raise a roof of spars clear up and cover the spars with bark or green sods, so that they can live dry and warm in these houses with their entire families for two, three, and four years...

Here was a thoroughly reasonable answer. With the eaves of the roof extending far beyond the walls and resting on the ground, any water approaching the building would thus be channeled around it before it could reach the hole in which the subterranean home was seated. That we failed to find any trace of such channeling is readily

explained: All evidence of it had long since been eradicated by plowing. Recalling Dutch colonial secretary Van Tienhoven's statement that these cavernous structures were occupied until such times as the farmers could afford something better, we deduced that ours, too, marked the first phase in the evolution of Site A. Remembering, too, the woodworking tools found on the floor, we conjectured that it may have been the temporary home of carpenters sent to construct other, more conventional buildings. But sent by whom and for whom?

Back we came to the fundamental questions upon whose correct answers all our archaeological interpretations depended: Who owned this property; what did he do there, and for how long? Was he perhaps the sixty-year-old occupant of the isolated coffin, or the much younger man who lay beside an older woman closer to the house? I doubted whether we could ever be sure, but we had been left a few tantalizing hints, some almost microscopically small but one as large and as solid as a cannonball — all pointing to an unmarried man, one who managed to survive longer than virtually all his contemporaries who knew him as the "Governor" of Martin's Hundred.

From the upper filling of the cellar hole had come two short strands of silver wire and another of gold, each about as thick as sewing thread, the kind of wire used in the early seventeenth century to decorate better-quality clothing. More revealing was the discovery of a short length of woven gold twisted and glued into a point, a sartorial embellishment which was called just that — a point. They hung from the ends of shoulder laces and in rows dangling from men's garters. Here, therefore, were the remains of once elegant clothing such as the Dutch artist Thomas de Keyser depicted in his famous 1627 portrait of the diplomat and poet Constantijn Huygens. He is shown seated with gold woven in patterns through his coat and breeches, and with gold points hanging from his garters. Beside Huygens stands his clerk, his clothes bordered with silver — gold for the master and silver for the clerk.

Englishmen, too, dressed according to the dictates of fashion and wealth. Thus, in 1621, several military captains leaving for service in Europe had themselves immortalized by the celebrated court painter Daniel Mytens, each veritably ablaze with gold threads and dangling points. We are safe in assuming that plantation "governors" and military lieutenants heading for America would have appeared similarly resplendent as they boarded their ships at Deptford or Portsmouth. How they looked when they disembarked after weeks of insanitary confinement aboard small and uncomfortable ships may have been somewhat different. It is clear, nonetheless, that clothing continued to define social stratification just as it had done through the Middle Ages. Although in England the last of the medieval sumptuary laws was repealed by order of James I, in Virginia, in July 1621, the governor and his council had passed a resolution to "Suppress drunkenness gameing & excess in cloaths [and] not to permit any but ye Council & heads of hundreds to wear gold in their cloaths." One of the council members endorsing the resolution was

the head of Martin's Hundred, and therefore the only man there legally permitted to wear gold in his clothes. His name was William Harwood.

We know that William Harwood was living in the Hundred between 1623 and 1625, a fact of no little importance to us, since his name was absent from the Virginia Company records in 1622, when the plantation faced its greatest challenge.

Linking Harwood to our Site A by means of a few gold and silver threads was tenuous at best. One garter does not a governor make. Indeed, we could (and did) argue that because Virginia's legislative council found it necessary to enact its own sumptuary law, people other than councillors and heads of hundreds were wearing gold in their clothing. Then, too, with most clothes being imported, and their owners dying with alarming rapidity, hand-me-downs must have been commonplace. An old pair of breeches with gold threads at the thigh and a hole at the seat was still an old pair of breeches, and no archaeologist studying a few threads can be sure whether he is looking at the remains of rags or riches. Fortunately, William Harwood's immortality does not hang solely by a thread. We found another, more substantial link in the form of an iron cannonball, 3 3/4 inches in diameter and weighing 6 3/4 pounds — a relatively big ball, for a large gun. In the 1625 census, Harwood was the only person in Martin's Hundred listed as possessing a "peece of Ordnance, I wth all things thereto belonging", and nothing belonged more than a cannonball. On the other hand, does one ball make a cannon? Who can say that someone did not borrow the ball from Harwood's magazine and use it to grind wheat into flour?

In archaeology so much is built on foundations of conjecture that invariably there are alternative scenarios for just about everything. The best we can do is to attack them all and endorse only those that most stoutly withstand the buffeting of cynical colleagues. William Harwood is one such survivor. For about nine years he was the dominant figure in Martin's Hundred, although we have no evidence that he was ever given the official title of "Governor" by the London based society.

THE MASSACRE AND ARCHAEOLOGY

Beyond the little house (which we named the Domestic Unit) were fourteen more graves, arranged in two rows, as though the occupants had been decanted from a cart standing on a roadway and buried in holes dug on either side of it. The bones proved to be in dreadful condition, several skeletons barely more than brown stains in the ground. In some cases only the enamel of the teeth survived, and in others there was nothing at all. One of the latter group offered us something else instead: the ghost image of a horizontal timber, a loam-filled slot sunk into the grave floor, running the full length of it and in section measuring 6 inches by 6 inches. Although no wood fibers survived in the slot, nails driven into the original timber from three

sides remained in position, indicating that the wood had been used for some other purpose before being laid on the bottom of the grave and subsequently pushed down into the wet clay by overlying ground pressure. But why had it been put there?

Audrey suggested that the grave was waterlogged before the corpse arrived for burial, and that some considerate soul thought it would be respectful to lay a timber on the floor to keep the body out of the wet. I found that hard to swallow for all sorts of reasons, not the least of them the fact that the timber was too narrow for the corpse to have been balanced on top of it. Besides, the early Virginia colonists not only took death in their stride, those doing the sexton's work would have known that once they began shoveling dirt into the hole they would displace the water and the loved one would get wet anyway. My explanation was more dramatic. Audrey called it melodramatic and would have none of it.

We knew from the report of the massacre published in London in 1622 that survivors charged the Indians with the most heinous atrocities. The more I thought about it, the more reasonable I thought it that our buried timber had been a product of the massacre's aftermath. The grave lay only 2 feet from the southwest corner of the Domestic Unit — much too close, if the house was inhabited. I argued that it was not, and that ashes in some of the post-holes pointed to its having burned in the Indian attack. Afterwards, according to the official account, they

Fell againe upon the dead, making as well as they could, a fresh murder, defacing, dragging, and mangling the dead carkasses into many pieces, and carrying some parts away in derision, with base and brutish triumph.

Suppose, I argued, that the main posts of the little house still stood when the Indians returned to finish their work. The body of a colonist found nearby was scalped, dismembered, and then tied to one of the posts and left there to be found by returning survivors. Rather than trying to untie the rotting cadaver, the survivors cut down the post and buried them as one. We kept quiet about these new graves and my grim interpretation of them even though the supporting evidence did exist. It told a tale infinitely more gruesome than anything I had imagined. Describing Chief Powhatan's own treatment of prisoners, John Smith wrote this:

He caused certaine malefactors to be bound hand and foot, then having of many fires gathered great store of burning coales, they rake these coales round in the form of a cock pit, and in the midst they cast the offenders to broil to death. Sometimes he causeth the heads of them that offend him, to be laid upon the altar or sacrificing stone, and one with clubbes beates out their brains. When he would punish any notorious enemy or malefactor, he causeth him to be tyed to a tree, and with Mizell shels or reeds, the executioner cutteth off his joynts one after another, ever casting what they cut off into the fire; then cloth he proceed with shels and reeds to case the skinne from his head and face; then doe they rip his belly and so burne him with the tree and all. Thus themselves reported they executed George Cassen.

Cassen had been one of twelve laborers who arrived in Virginia with the first settlers, and had made the mistake of going off on his own in defiance of Smith's orders.

While I had been away in Ireland, conservator Gary McQuillen continued the slow and difficult job of reassembling our supposed massacre victim's skull. Soon after he began, it became clear that we had been wrong in concluding that the man had been killed by a blow to the side of the head. The skull had suffered another even more massive blow to the back which had driven fragments of its occipital bone forward almost into the eye sockets. There also was a short, sharp, and wide fracture just above the right eye beside the nose. I had seen this while the skull lay in the ground and had supposed that it was another of the many breaks caused by the blow to the right side of the head. I was wrong.

Virginia's chief medical examiner, Dr. David K Wiecking, and his deputy, Dr. Marcella F. Fierro, joined Larry Angel in a collective examination and interpretation of what we had found. All three felt certain that the first blow had been a hard slicing one to the forehead, and that the other, crushing blow or blows followed after the victim had fallen to the ground. Only with blows struck in that order could the natural pressure within have been released to allow the cranial fragments to be driven inside the skull. That explanation posed a question for which no one had a truly convincing answer. Since virtually all the skull fragments survived, we wondered how so monstrously damaged a head could have remained together while the man was being moved from the murder scene to the grave. We had two suggestions: Either the broken head had dried and congealed before the burial party moved the corpse, or the man was wearing a stocking type Monmouth cap that held his skull together.

Countering the latter argument was the evidence of a narrow scratch in the bone, running from a point close to the left ear and extending up across the brow on a line $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches above the left eye as far as the nose. Larry Angel agreed that this might have been caused by a right-handed assailant beginning the scalping process from behind, and added that the scar was consistent with later scalping evidence from Georgia. But our man could hardly have been scalped while wearing a hat; further-more, it would almost certainly have been done before the skull was battered to pieces.

We were left with other loose ends, not the least of them being the type of weapon used to strike the first blow. The cut was too short for an iron ax (unless the attacker badly misjudged his range), and too sharp to have been caused by an Indian's stone or wooden tomahawk. Remembering that according to survivors' testimony, the Indians "in some places, sate downe at Breakfast with our people at their tables, whom immediately with their owne tooles and weapons, eyther laid downe, or standing in their houses, they basely and barbarously murthered," I deduced that the weapon was indeed a European's tool — specifically, a garden spade.

Most seventeenth-century spades were of wood shod at the blade edge with a sandwiching strip of tempered iron. We had found such a spade shoe in the nearby potter's pond, and its corner neatly fitted the gash in the skull. Once again the gap between conjecture and proof seemed impossible to bridge. Drs. Angel, Wiecking, and Fierro all agreed that the damage might have been caused by such a weapon; but although they had examined scores of homicide victims, none had been killed with a garden spade. Thus I was left with that always unsatisfactory Scottish verdict of "not proven."

ART AND ARCHAEOLOGY



The only way to determine which artists are working from memory and which from life is to study their pictures in such detail that you get to know their work by the back of a chair, the placement of a candlestick, or the color of a cap. Sometimes they blatantly gave away the tricks of their trade. When other inspiration failed, they painted themselves in their studios. A landscape painter is revealed briskly at work on a country scene with nothing more inspiring in front of him than a blank studio wall. Immediately he is struck from our list of depicors of barns and fences, for even if he is masterful in his rendering of them, we can never be sure that this barn went with that fence, or that a window really would have been in precisely the relationship to that artist's door. Relying less on memory, but

no less suspect, are Maes-style artists like Joos van Craesbeeck, who showed himself in his studio painting as rigid a group of models in the role of revelers as you can expect to find in a department store window. Common to this picture and to several others by better-known artists is a flagon set in the foreground, beside a seated toper, but with its handle pointing away from him and in the direction of the artist, who put it there after his models had taken their positions.

I began the archaeological anatomizing of paintings early in the 1960s, when I found myself questioning the often heard claim that England's superb genre painter, William Hogarth, was a reliable source for virtually every aspect of English life in the second quarter of the eighteenth century. The more I studied his pictures (and the engravings copied from them), the most distrustful I became. The bonding of his brick walls was often architecturally incorrect; a table knife looked more like a miniature scimitar (his eighteenth-century biographer and pictorial analyst, razor), and wine bottles Hogarth

put on his tables in the 1750s were the same as he had drawn decades earlier. Clearly, in later life, Hogarth was drawing from memory, ignoring the fact that objects he had learned to paint in the 1720s had changed their shapes during the ensuing years.

Having learned to treat Hogarth's visual statements with caution, I came to the Netherlandish artists more wanting than willing to believe them, and as it turned out, with good reason. Perhaps most prolific of the Flemings was David Teniers the Younger (1610 — 1690), who began painting in his twenties and lived to be eighty. Specializing in scenes set in taverns, military guardrooms, and apothecaries' and alchemists' shops, he preserved for us an endless array of scruffy people in less than elegant surroundings. In many of these pictures we find a shelf anchored to a back wall, and on it a pot closely resembling one found at our Site A, and considered by us to be a chamber pot. Teniers's version, however, invariably has what may be either a spoon or a pestle protruding from it — raising fair questions about the validity of our chamberpot interpretation. At the same time, we have good reason to doubt whether Teniers's pot ever stood on that shelf. Not only does it turn up in several pictures, it is usually accompanied by a glass flask having a twist of paper stuffed in its mouth. Peering about in these same paintings we find other similarities: a split wooden block used as a seat or footstool, a split-ended bench (often with a broom leaning against it), a colander-shaped, earthenware dish being used as a brazier from which to light a pipe or warm an old man's hands. Then there are Teniers's people: a man with his back to us whose posture leaves no doubt about what he is doing (sometimes into a tub or simply against a wall), a red-capped fellow in a window or peering out of a crowd, and someone entering or leaving a room, a stock trick to create a sense of movement and to suggest that more is going on just beyond the frame.

In the foreground of one of his tavern scenes [shown here], this Flemish Hogarth shows a blue and gray stoneware bottle decorated on its sides with three medallions. This is no fictional pot; on the contrary, it is of a distinctive type whose medallion fragments have been unearthed at Jamestown, on another Virginia site in northern Tidewater, on a fort site in the Virgin Islands, and from a dirt pile flanking a roadside utility trench in Frankfurt, Germany. In each case the medallion bore the date 1632 or 1622. Recalling, therefore, that Teniers's earliest paintings date from around 1622, we had grounds to argue that this was one of them. The date was important to us, because on a bench to the left of the picture stands a delicate drinking glass whose stem elements resembled some very small fragments we had found on Site A. Taking the picture at its face value, our critics might argue that the artist was showing us that we were wrong in concluding that the presence of delicate drinking glasses pointed to an affluent household (as the previously quoted comment by David DeVries, about being received by the Governor with a Venice glass of sack, seemed to suggest), for in Teniers's painting the glass is precariously perched on a bench in the tackiest of taverns.

I concluded that Teniers had drawn the glass from his stock of real or imaginary props, and had put it on his bench without giving any thought to its cultural implications 350

years later. A glass was synonymous with drinking, and it made a pleasant change from painting earthen beer-pots and stoneware bottles. Nevertheless, David Teniers's picture did have something to tell us; it said that this type of glass was in use as late as the 1630s, otherwise he would not have learned to paint it with such fidelity. Furthermore, even if the picture had been painted several years later than the dates suggested by the stoneware bottle, its evidence still fitted well alongside our persisting sense that Site A was occupied in the 1630s and 1640s, thus placing most of its life in the post-Harwood period.

The fragility of glass was such in the seventeenth century that although it was not costly to make, and when broken had no value at all, it may well have had a far higher value in Virginia than it would where the factories producing drinking glasses were within easy reach. Goblets of silver or silver-gilt had greater intrinsic worth, and while it is quite likely that Harwood and his successors owned such things, their value as bullion made sure that they were not left behind to fall into the hands of archaeologists. We must therefore seek evidence of status, if not in the glass, in the top-of-the-line imported ceramics. Immediately, however, we find ourselves in danger of confusing the desirability and price of today's antiques with their original worth.

That problem was brought home to me after we found fragments of a large, brown stoneware Bellarmine bottle in the rubbish-filled cellar. Decorated with three medallions and of pleasing shape, it would, intact, have been a highly desirable antique. Later I learned just how desirable; in London's Chelsea Antiques Fair I found a very close parallel for our three-medallion bottle, the first of its kind I had seen in thirty years of collecting German stonewares. It cost us more than \$1,200, and today the price would be higher still. With that in mind, it was easy to see our sherds as evidence of wealth. I was able to put this discovery in a more sober perspective when, in the Brussels Royal Museum of Fine Arts, I found a small panel painting by the Dutch genre painter Adriaen van Ostade (he was born in the same year as David Teniers, lived almost as long, and painted as much), and in it an even closer parallel for our bottle than I had bought at the Chelsea fair. Van Ostade's setting for the bottle was not the home of men with golden garters, but a beat-up table outside a rural tavern, where two rustic musicians were playing while a third sang, the bottle aspiring only to keep him in voice. Like wine bottles today, the Rhenish stoneware bottles of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were valued for their contents, not for themselves.

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