II.   SITE IDENTIFICATION

A.   PROPERTY TYPES

1.   *Farm*

The most common property type archaeologists deal with in rural settings is the farm. A farm, or agricultural complex (De Cunzo and Catts 1990), consists of a dwelling house and the outbuildings necessary for the operation of a substantial agricultural enterprise. Its distinguishing characteristic is that it is both a residence and a center of agricultural production. A standing farm looks like a small cluster of buildings. Around the dwelling house on a traditional farm stood outbuildings such as kitchens, barns, stables, granaries, dairies, and wells. The usual clustering of the farm buildings is crucial for the archaeological definition of a farm. A "farm," in ordinary language, implies the land as well as the buildings, but archaeological work will usually be limited to the area within and immediately surrounding the building cluster. This area is called the inner yard, or toft. As well as buildings, any gardens, wells, privies, or trash disposal areas will also normally be located within the inner yard. The boundaries of an archaeological site will generally be defined by the presence of either artifacts in the soil or structural or artifact-containing features. The excavation of several farm sites is described in Chapter III, illustrating this concentration of archaeological remains. There may have been other structures on the farm, such as tenant dwellings, that are not located within the inner yard, but these will not normally be considered part of the same archaeological site as the main farm site.

Under some circumstances it may be desirable to expand the definition of "farm" to encompass the whole property under the farmer's control, including his or her fields, woodlands, fences, hedges, boundary ditches, drainage ditches, and lanes. This broader area does not usually enter into archaeological work. Because of the great changes that have taken place in agriculture since 1830, and in our notions of space, very few farm landscapes preserve their pre-1830 arrangements. (See discussions in Chapters III and IV.) Outlying farm features will typically contain few if any artifacts and will therefore be very difficult to identify archaeologically; secondary dwellings such as tenant houses or slave quarters would be an exception, but would typically be considered separate sites. The preservation of rural landscapes, while an important issue, is not a primarily archaeological concern, and it therefore falls beyond the scope of this document.

Although some writers make a distinction between tenant farms and those owned by the farmers themselves, this distinction is not employed here. The idea is sometimes advanced that tenant farms will have fewer outbuildings than those operated by their owners, but this is by no means always so. Experience in Delaware has shown that any farm with a long history is likely to have had at least one period of tenant operation (Bedell et al. 1999, 2002; Grettler et al. 1995). Documentary research also shows that some large farms with full complements of outbuildings were leased to tenants.

2.   *Rural Dwelling*

The rural dwelling is distinguished from the farm by the lack of outbuildings, making it unsuitable to serve as the center of a major agricultural operation. Obviously, there is a gray area between these

two types, especially since many outbuildings leave no trace on plowed archaeological sites. Most rural dwelling sites from the 1730 to 1830 period will have been tenant dwellings. Examples of this site type are discussed in Chapter III.

Sometimes several rural dwellings may be found grouped together into a neighborhood or hamlet. These communities began to form in Delaware in the latter part of our period and became more common later in the nineteenth century (Catts et al. 1986; Heite and Blume 1995). The excavation of a dwelling in one of these communities would raise most of the same issues as the excavation of an isolated dwelling, although the formation of these communities, many of them ethnically based, would be a topic of study in its own right.

3.   Slave Quarter

A slave quarter was a dwelling area maintained by a slave owner for his or her slaves. No slave quarter sites have been archaeologically documented in Delaware, but several "Negro quarters" are listed in Orphans' Court returns. Because a slave quarter site is defined by the identity of its occupants, these sites will generally have to be identified through documentary research. A slave quarter might be a separate complex located some distance away from the master's house and the rest of the farm, or it might be a structure within a large farm complex.

4.   Workshop

Many rural people engaged in trades other than agriculture. Some worked in a trade or craft full time, while others were primarily farmers who did a little coopering or tanning in their spare time. Sites associated with other nonagricultural economic activities will therefore be found in rural areas, sometimes as parts of farms and sometimes as stand-alone entities. Separate workshop buildings have been identified at two Delaware farms, a smithy at the Benjamin Wynn Site (Grettler et al. 1996) and a possible weaving or dyeing shed at the Augustine Creek South Site (Bedell et al. 2001). This context considers only those workshops that were part of the same property as a dwelling, not stand-alone manufactories such as the Mermaid Tavern Blacksmith and Wheelwright Shops (Catts et al. 1994).

5.   Excluded Site Types

Mills, which were a vital part of rural life but are a specialized site type raising issues not closely related to those of farm and dwelling sites, are not considered in this context. Transportation-related sites, such as landings and ferries, are also not covered. Two categories of sites, stores and taverns, are formally excluded from the context but are discussed in some sections. Quite often store and tavern structures also served as dwellings, either at the same time or at different times (De Cunzo et al. 1992; Thompson 1987), in which case they are discussed here. Store and tavern sites also sometimes yield large assemblages of domestic artifacts, making them useful points of comparison for domestic sites.

B.   SITE DISTRIBUTION

How many eighteenth-century sites are there in Delaware, and where are they? These questions, of great importance for the management of historical resources, are hard to answer from the available data. De Cunzo and Catts (1990) supplied a tabulation of all the sites that had been identified in Delaware as of 1990, which is summarized in Table 12. However, these numbers reflect only the sites that have been recorded, and there are many reasons for suspecting

Table 12. Recorded Archaeological Sites in Delaware by Time Period, as of 1990

| County | Time Period | | | |
	1630-1730	1730-1770	1770-1830	1830-1880
New Castle	4	17	46	88
Kent	5	17	32	50
Sussex	10	16	48	45
Total	19	40	126	183

Source: De Cunzo and Catts 1990

that the number of recorded sites in each category does not reflect the overall number of sites. For example, many of the early sites in Sussex and Kent counties were found by amateur archaeologists investigating American Indian sites, and it may well be that seventeenth-century sites are more common than nineteenth-century sites in those settings. Also, many archaeologists would be more likely to record and report an early site than a later one. For these reasons, early sites are probably over-represented in the sample. Despite this bias, the number of recorded sites increases greatly over time, with a particularly large increase occurring after 1770.

To form some notion of what the overall number of sites in the state might be it is necessary to use other data. The Delaware Department of Transportation has funded a number of systematic archaeological surveys in the state, providing good information on the historic sites in some areas. In particular, a very useful transect is provided by the thorough survey of the State Route (SR) 1 corridor, which stretches about 50 miles down the state from central New Castle County to just south of Dover, spanning a large area of early settlement (Bachman et al. 1988; Bedell et al. 1997; Grettler et al. 1991; Hodny et al. 1989). Table 13 shows the sites located in the SR 1 corridor and two other highway corridors; these sites are listed in Appendix A. For the SR 1 project, the table includes only sites in the highway right-of-way, not sites in the associated wetland replacement areas (such as Bloomsbury, the John Powell Plantation, or the Richard Whitehart Plantation) or along the Puncheon Run Connector. Sites of all types are listed, although farms and dwellings are by far the most common type. State Route 1 was an entirely new highway and the corridor did not follow any

Table 13. Archaeological Sites Located in Selected Delaware Surveys, by Time Period

| Transect | Time Period | | | |
	1630-1730	1730-1770	1770-1830	1830-1880
SR 1	0	5	8	18
SR 896	0	0	1	4
SR 7	0	2	5	12
Total	0	7	14	34

Sources: Bachman et al. 1988; Bedell et al. 1997; Grettler et al. 1991; Hodny et al. 1989

existing road. The SR 896 project was located west of SR 1, around Glasgow in New Castle County, an area where settlement was not so early (Lothrop et al. 1987). The corridor was 6.3 miles long, and the project included both the widening of an existing road dating to the late 1700s and some areas of completely new corridor. The SR 7 North project involved the expansion of Limestone Road in northern New Castle County, a road that has been in existence since the mid-1700s (Catts and Bachman 1987; Catts et al. 1986). The corridor was 5.3 miles long. These three project areas provide fairly good geographical coverage of New Castle and Kent counties, and they include both areas adjacent to existing roads and new corridors that provide more random transects across the countryside (Figure 3).

Both the SR 1 and SR 896 corridors are within the "Upper Peninsula" geographic zone defined by the state plan, and SR 7 is within the Piedmont zone (see Figure 3) (Ames et al. 1989). Most of the archaeological sites in New Castle and Kent counties are within one of those zones, which make up most of the geographic area of the counties. In New Castle County, in 1990, 27 out of a total of 107 recorded historic archaeological sites were in the Piedmont zone, and 77 were in the Upper Peninsula (De Cunzo and Catts 1990:109). In Kent County, 48 out of 71 historical archaeological sites recorded by 1990 were in the Upper Peninsula zone. All of the excavated sites discussed in this document are in one of these two zones. The other zones present in the counties are the Urban, Coastal, and Lower/Peninsula Cypress Swamp Zones. The Urban zone is limited to the City of Wilmington, and few rural archaeological sites are likely to survive undisturbed within the city. A number of sites are found in the Coastal zone, but the authors of the state plan admit that this zone lacks clear boundaries, which makes precision about site density difficult. In any case, few large, detailed surveys of the type that accompany DelDOT projects have been carried out in the coastal area. Only a small part of southwestern Kent County is within the Lower Peninsula zone, most of which lies within Sussex County.

Table 13 lists no sites in the 1630-1730 period. However, there are three sites in these project areas that were probably established in the 1720s: the William Strickland Plantation and Augustine Creek South sites in the SR 1 corridor, and the Mermaid Tavern Site along SR 7. Because these sites did not predate 1730 by much, and because most of the remains at these sites dated to after 1730, it would seem a distortion to list them in the earlier period. The only rural sites DelDOT has encountered that date primarily to the 1630 to 1730 period are the Richard Whitehart (1681-1701) and John Powell (1691-1735) plantations, both located in a wetland replacement area at the confluence of the Leipsic River and Allston Branch in Kent County (Grettler et al. 1995). Farm or rural dwelling sites dating to that early period are obviously very rare. The area around Odessa is known to have been settled by the Dutch in the 1650s, but a determined effort to locate seventeenth-century sites in the area turned up none, and none were found in the nearby segment of the SR 1 corridor (Bedell et al. 1997; De Cunzo 1993). Nor were any sites dating to before 1730 found in the SR 7 South corridor, which crosses the Christina River near the town of Christiana (Catts et al. 1988).

In some parts of the state, farm and rural dwelling sites become more common after 1730. Five farm sites dating to the 1730 to 1770 period were found in the SR 1 corridor; since the corridor covered about 2,500 acres, the site density is roughly one site per 500 acres. Other mid-eighteenth-century sites were found in the wetland replacement areas associated with SR 1 (Bloomsbury) and along the

Puncheon Run Connector (Thomas Dawson). Two sites dating to this period, the Mermaid Tavern and the Armor House, were found along SR 7, and none were found along SR 896. The SR 7 corridor measured about 65 acres, and the SR 896 corridor about 150 acres. Overall, the density of mid-eighteenth-century sites indicated by these three surveys is about one per 350 to 400 acres.

Twice as many sites dating to the 1770 to 1830 period were found in these surveys. The overall site density is about one per 175 to 200 acres, one per 300 acres in the SR 1 corridor and higher along the old roads. After 1830, sites become much more common in all of the project areas. Site density increases to more than one per 100 acres. As predicted, these thorough surveys find a much larger proportion of later sites than are registered with the SHPO.

The data clearly show that eighteenth-century sites are more likely along old roads and streams. The corridor along SR 7 had the highest density of sites. Three of the five mid-eighteenth-century sites in the SR 1 corridor (Augustine Creek North and South and Loockerman's Range), and the only site dating to before 1830 in the SR 896 corridor (Thomas Williams), were located within 150 feet of streams. The streams involved (Augustine Creek and two different Muddy Branches) are not navigable, and were probably valuable as a source of water, particularly for livestock. The remaining two mid-eighteenth-century sites in the SR 1 corridor, the William Strickland Plantation and the McKean/Cochran Farm, are both associated with streams but are not particularly close to them. These two sites are located on high ground at the crest of long slopes that lead down to creeks navigable by small craft (Figure 4). These prominent positions were probably appealing to eighteenth-century farmers for the same reasons they would be appealing today: they were visible from far off, commanded impressive views, and had easy access to water without excessive mosquito problems or danger of flooding.
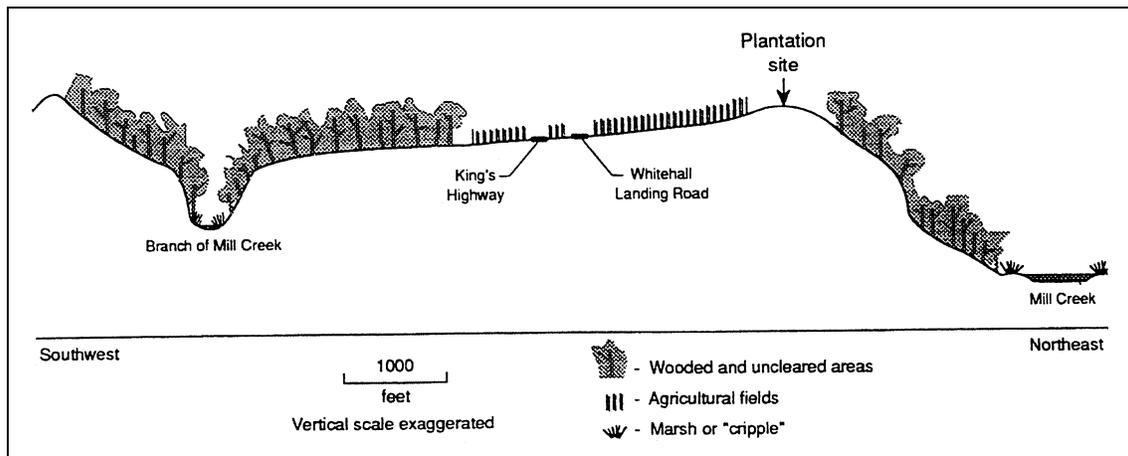

FIGURE 4: Topographical Transect Across the Wm Strickland Property, circa 1750

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