



**Millersville University Archaeology Field School Report on
excavations at the Plank House, Marcus Hook PA Fall 2022**

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Report Submitted to the Marcus Hook Preservation Society and

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

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INTRODUCTION:

The town of Marcus Hook PA lies on the western shore of the Delaware River, roughly 12 miles southwest of Philadelphia Pennsylvania. This town has had a long and fascinating history dating back to the 17th-century, yet the oldest standing structure in the town, known as the Plank House, is shrouded in mystery. Despite its obvious antiquity, it is not known when this structure was originally built, and extensive local lore (some well-established and some less well documented) exists around this structure, which has become the center of historic preservation and interpretation efforts in the community. In the Fall of 2022, the Millersville University Archaeology Program undertook a series of test excavations in and around the Plank House, and within the bounds of Marcus Hook itself, to attempt to shed additional light on this important historic resource. This report is the result of that effort, which doubled as a valuable Archaeological Field School to train undergraduate students in the tenets of hands-on, professional field archaeology.

For ten weeks in the Fall of 2022 Millersville students rode in vans to the excavation site every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday to conduct these excavations. This rather intensive time commitment was augmented by archaeological laboratory work conducted during the Fall of 2022 as well as additional work undertaken during Spring Semester of 2023. During this phase of the project all of the artifacts were cleaned, identified, catalogued, and entered into a database for further analysis. This data is attached to this report as Appendix I. It is hoped that the results of this project will prove useful to the Marcus Hook Preservation Society in their ongoing efforts to interpret this important historic site to the public, and will provide a tangible benefit to them for allowing MU Archaeology to conduct this project. All artifacts recovered will ultimately be housed in the on-site shed built expressly for the purpose of housing the artifact collections of this, and previous, excavations, and thus should be available to other scholars wishing to examine the artifacts for their own study, as well as for public display and interpretation should the Marcus Hook Preservation Society be interested in such programming.

HISTORY OF THE PROPERTY

The following history section is taken from the research provided to the Marcus Hook Preservation Society by researcher Jane Dorchester, in her outstanding 2022 work titled “The Marcus Hook Plank House: A Brief Historical Narrative”. This historical background provides the crucial historical context for the archaeological finds of this project. To understand the research, several notes and historical clarifications are in order.

Early Maps, Cardinal Direction, and Documentary Sources:

Depending on which document is being utilized, where a given tract of land is sited geographically in relation to Magnetic North or True North depends on which direction different tracts of land lie one in relation to the other. In other words, most early and some later sources locate Marcus Hook and all the lands up and down and back from the river as being on the west side of the Delaware River so the land along that side of the Delaware is either north, west, or south in relation to the river and to each other. Some later documents place the Delaware south of Marcus Hook and so the land along that side of the Delaware is either east, north, or west in relation to the river and to each other. In this report, the directionals as they appear in the documents, so in reading them, the reader needs to decide whether he/she considers the Delaware to be east or south of Marcus Hook and translate the directionals in the document accordingly.

Spelling of Surnames: Before the 1850s, there were no really set and agreed upon grammar or spelling rules, especially of given names. So given names, especially surnames, tended to be spelled phonetically, which means in one document you may find a last name spelled more than one way. For instance, in some of the deeds included in the research of this property, the surname “Martin” is spelled both “Martin” and “Marten”. The same is true of “Brown” being spelled with and without a terminal “e”. The point being that just because a surname is spelled different ways, does not mean that you are dealing with different people.

About Women's Property Rights: In Pennsylvania, before the Married Women's Property Rights Act of 1848, single women, either never married or widowed, could inherit, own, buy, and sell property in their own right. However, married women could not. If a woman owned real estate at the time of her marriage, or, if after her marriage she inherited real estate, it automatically became the property of her husband. However, if a husband sold real estate, his wife's name had to appear on the deed and she had to sign off on the deed.

About Land Acquisition in William Penn's Time: In order to acquire land from William Penn, or his representatives, an original purchaser (investor from England, Scotland, or Ireland) had to go through a six-step process. The steps were:

- 1) Deed of Lease and Release: This document was issued as proof that the purchaser was entitled to a certain amount of unlocated land. At this time, at least some, if not all, of the purchase price had to be pay.
- 2) Application: This document was a request to take up land that had already been purchased.
- 3) Warrant: This document was granted if the application was approved and served as an order to survey the amount of land entitled to (as per the Deed of Lease and Release) or requested (as stated in the application).
- 4) Survey: After the Warrant was issued, this document was produced by the deputy surveyor and was either drawn out or written as a verbal description.
- 5) Return of Survey: Was a written rendering of the combined Warrant and Survey and was issued after the Survey was conducted and the remaining purchase money (if any) was paid off.
- 6) Patent: This document was issued after the warrantee (purchaser) had satisfied all fee and purchase requirements. This was the final step and document in the six-step purchase process. Once a purchaser had the Patent in hand, he or she was considered the legal owner of the tract of land.

It should be noted here that later purchasers (not investors) only had to go through steps 2-6 (Donna Bingham Munger, *Pennsylvania Land Records A History and Guide for Research*, p. 40)

In addition, lands that had been legally purchased before William Penn took possession of his colony were honored by William Penn (Munger, ps. 6-7). For example, all lands for which patents were issued by James, Duke of York, were honored by William Penn. Therefore, the owners of previously patented lands did NOT have to go through the six-step process above described.

About Pirates, Privateers, and Smugglers: These three groups of people sometimes get mixed up. So here is an explanation of who they were and what they did as follows:

1. The first group was a collection of men (and some women) who deliberately lived outside all societal, cultural, and political conventions, laws, mores, and norms. These are the people who engaged in robbery on the high seas, raided coastal towns, and had well-deserved reputations for pillaging, raping, killing, and maiming anyone who got in their way. Their goal in life seems to have been to take whatever they wanted, whenever they wanted, by whatever means they felt like, usually violently. This collection of men (and some women) were (and still are) known as “pirates” and Blackbeard is probably the best known of this group.
2. The second group was a collection of men (probably not women) who, in times of conflict, were commissioned by one government to harass that government’s enemies’ shipping. This group was composed of legitimate merchants (not professional sailors). Their commissions distinguished them from pirates. Their goal was to disrupt enemy shipping, and only enemy shipping, by rerouting and confiscating both ships and merchandise being shipped to or from the enemy. This group followed the rules of war. Once the conflict was over, this group was decommissioned. Unfortunately, the chance to become very wealthy lead some privateers to harass any shipping that came their way, to ignore the rules of war, and once peace was achieved, to behave in a lawless manner, continuing to disrupt shipping on the high seas. This group of men were known as “privateers”.

It should be noted that there is a fine line between what constitutes piracy and what constitutes privateering. This situation has led different countries either to condemn or endorse an act of harassment on the high seas, depending on whether the act benefited that country or not.

Also, it should be noted here that during the War of the Grand Alliance (1688-1697) between France and a coalition of European states, England employed privateers to harass French shipping. In 1692, the English navy resoundingly defeated the French navy, thus ending the naval war. The land war continued until 1697. After the naval conflict with France ended, the privateers were decommissioned. However, it is possible that some of them continued with their privateering activities.

3. The third group were legitimate merchants who, for political reasons or economic reasons or both, sought ways to get around England's trading strictures by illegally importing and/or exporting goods and products. It should be said here that England insisted, by law, that all of her colonies trade directly with her. They were not even allowed to trade with each other. So, for example, a merchant from Marcus Hook who had raw timber to sell, had to send it to England and sell it there. Then, if he wanted to buy furniture, China, bolts of fabric, paper, lead, paint, glass, tea, coffee, or any other goods or products, he had to buy it in England. He was not allowed, by law, to go to the country where the merchandise he wanted or needed was produced. However, some merchants decided, for whatever reasons, to by-pass the middle man and trade directly with the country or countries where the merchandise they wanted was made. Generally, that meant that they would trade with the islands in the Caribbean, but sometimes, they would go further afield and trade directly with China, India, Madagascar, and other such places. Unfortunately, the middle man that these merchants were by-passing was England, and she didn't take kindly to their actions, so retaliated by prosecuting this group as strictly as she did pirates and treating them as such, even if they were otherwise legitimate merchants. This group of men were (and still are) called "smugglers".

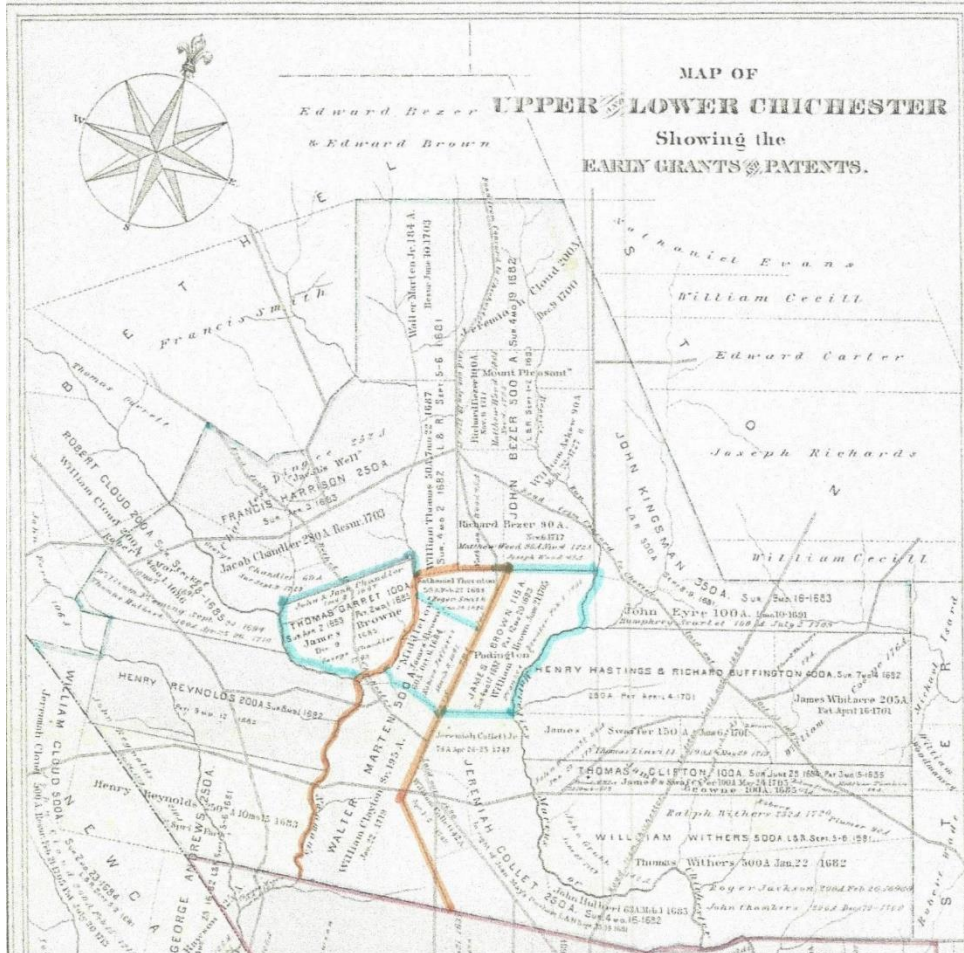
Regarding the James Browns: In researching the history of the Plank House, the name "James Brown" has been encountered in numerous contexts. That name applies to two different men, only one of whom owned the tract upon which the Plank House is located (it can not be ascertained whether or not the Plank House was built during his tenure as owner). We know the name applies to two different men because they were married to two different women at or about the same time, the first James Brown owned only one tract of land, and the second James Brown owned at least seven tracts of land. The first James Brown was the son-in-law of William Markham. He married Markham's daughter, Ann (*Lawmaking and Legislators in Pennsylvania, a Biographical Dictionary*, p. 525). In 1696 or 1697, Brown was jailed on suspicion that he was a member of Captain Henry Every's crew. Every [or Avery] was accused of engaging in various acts of piracy on the Red Sea and Indian Ocean (William Penn Papers, vol. 3, p. 517, fns. 15 & 16). William Penn described Brown as being "a Planter. . ." who had "a Plantation, a Negro, a White, and a Small Stock, all not worth, debts being paid, 200 if the half. . ." (William Penn Papers, vol. 3, ps. 593-594). Presumably, his plantation was located in Kent County because in 1699 he was elected to represent Kent County in the Assembly. He did not attend the first session and was removed from office at the second session because he was suspected of being a pirate (*Lawmaking and Legislators in Pennsylvania*, p. 243). In 1699 or 1700, James Brown was

seized by William Penn as a suspected pirate. Brown insisted that he was just a passenger on Captain Every's ship and he was backed up by two of Every's crewmembers. Nevertheless, Penn sent him to the Admiralty Court located in New York (William Penn Papers, vol. 3, p. 594). He probably was sent to jail after that.

The second James Brown was granted four tracts of land totaling 117 acres by William Rawson on March 1, 1685. Those tracts included an eighty-seven acre tract which encompassed the present site of the Plank House (*please see "Brief History" starting on page 5 for more details*), a fifteen-acre tract located in the northeast corner of the Swedish Patent Tract and a seven-acre-tract of land and an eight-acre-tract of land located within the boundaries of the Swedish Patent Tract (Deed Book A, vol. 1, p. 158 & Benjamin Smith Patent Map, 1880). Sometime between 1696 and 1699, the second James Brown married a woman named "Honor", last name unknown. We know this because in 1696, James sold two lots and four acres of woodland out of the tracts he had bought from William Rawson. No wife appeared on that deed (Chester County Deed Book A, vol. 1, p. 239), which by law she would have to have if Brown were married. However, sometime between 1696 and 1699, Brown did married. We know that because on May 18, 1699, Brown and his wife Honor sold two lots on Broad Street to John Howell (Chester County Deed Book A, vol. 1, p. 257); these two lots were out of the Rawson eighty-seven-acre tract. From there on out, any time James Brown sold some of his real estate, Honor's name also appeared on the deed. Unfortunately, no will or administration papers are available for the second James Brown.

In addition, a James Brown (it is unclear at this time, which one) was patented one hundred and fifteen acres, known as "Podington" according to the Benjamin Smith Patent Map, on December 20, 1683 (*please see the close-up of the Smith Patent Map below, the James Brown Tracts are highlighted in blue*). Podington was located between Marities Creek on the north and Walter Martin's 500-acre "Middleton" on the south. In 1684, he acquired sixty acres of land in the middle of Martin's "Middleton" and in 1685, he acquire the one-hundred-acre tract of land patented to Thomas Garrett located across Naaman's Creek from the sixty-acre tract he had acquired from Martin (Smith Patent Map, 1880).

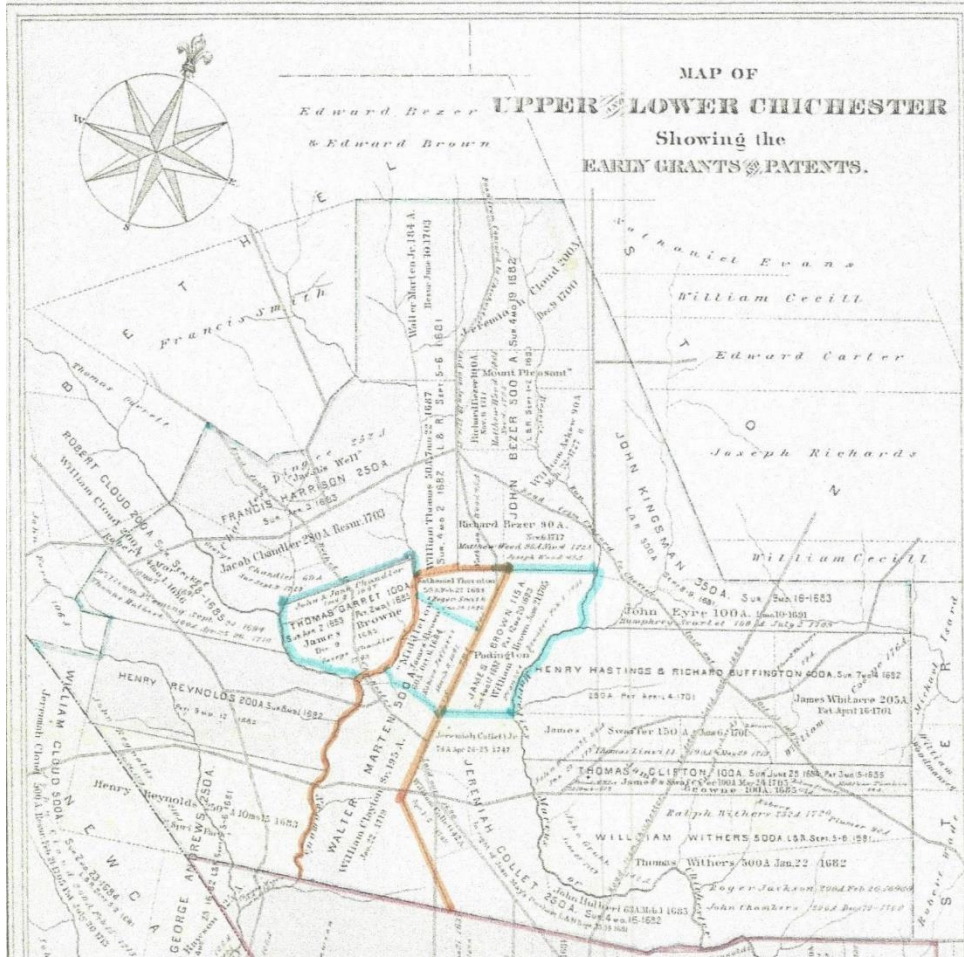
About Walter Martin’s Five-Hundred-Acre Tract: Keeping William Penn’s land purchase process in mind, it would appear that on September 6, 1681, William Penn granted Walter Martin [Sr.] an unlocated five hundred acres in Pennsylvania. In this Grant, it is explained that Penn received the Province of Pennsylvania from King Charles II in a Patent dated March 3,



1680/81 (Deed Book A, vol. 1, p. 159). On April 1, 1682, a warrant was issued and as a result, a five-hundred-acre tract of land, called “Middleton”, was surveyed for Walter Martin [Sr.]. That tract was located on the west side of the Delaware River between the main branch of Naaman’s Creek and the lands of

Jeremiah Collet, James Brown, and John Bezer. The tract was bounded, in part, by “the lands of Chichester” and crossed over or was bounded by several smaller branches and one of the main branches of Naaman’s Creek. The tract was surveyed on April 2, 1682 (Deed Book A, vol. 1, p. 161). According to the Benjamin Smith Patent Map (1880), the Walter Martin five-hundred-acre tract known as “Middleton” was located along the northwest side of the northern boundary of the Swedish Patent Tract (which encompassed Marcus Hook), with Jeremiah Collet’s 250-acre tract of land and James Brown’s 115-acre tract of land to its east, and Naaman’s Creek and Henry Reynolds’ two-hundred-acre tract of land to its west.

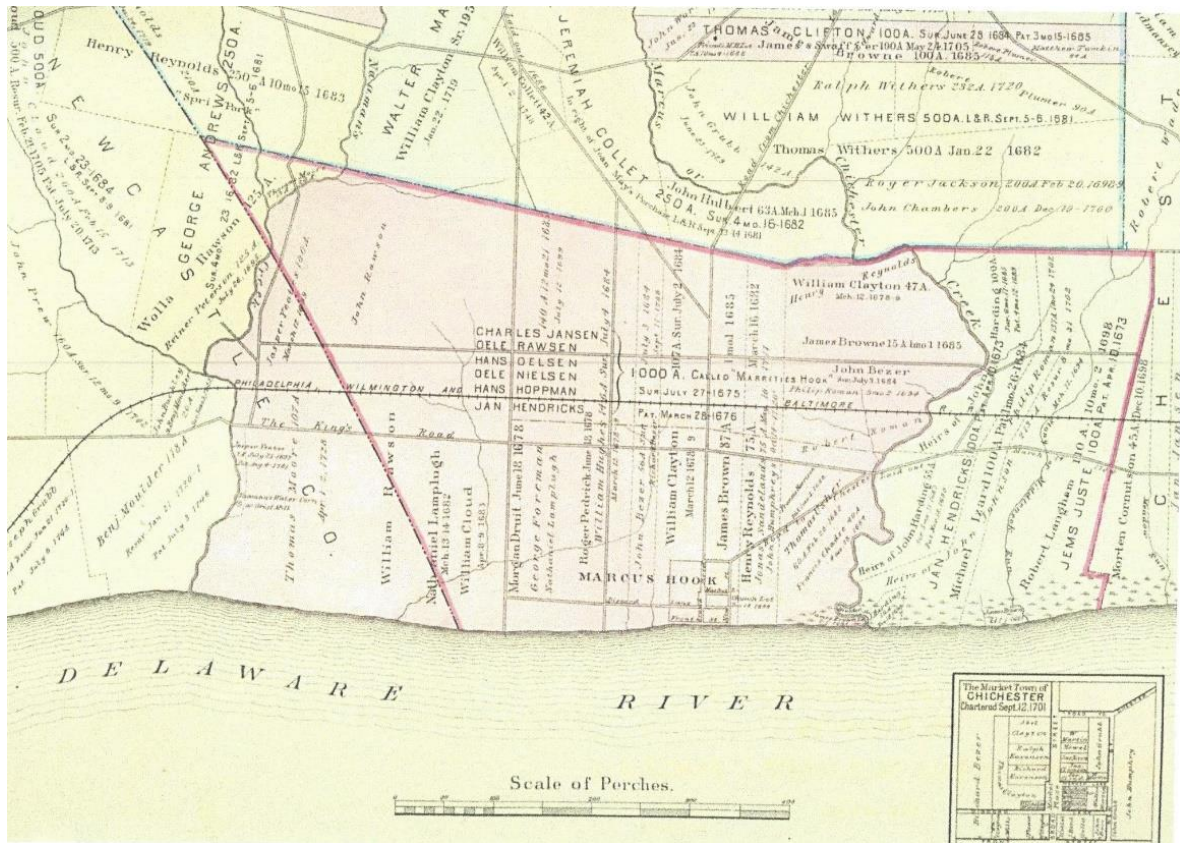
(Note: The Walter Martin five-hundred-acre tract is highlighted in orange on the Smith Patent Map [above]. The pink outline at the lower left of the map is the present-day Marcus Hook municipal boundary.)



In 1682, Walter Martin [Sr.] conveyed sixty acres to James Brown (Deed Book A, vol. 1, p. 122). This tract was located in the center of Middleton, north of its southern tier (Smith Patent Map, 1880). (Note: The James Brown 60-acre tract is highlighted in blue and is located within the orange

highlighted boundary on the Smith Patent Map [left]. The pink outline at the lower left of the map is the present-day Marcus Hook municipal boundary.)

Sometime around 1699, Walter Martin [Sr.] deeded over a plot of land to Chichester to be used as a burying ground. This deed is unrecorded, but in 1699, a deed was recorded in which the deed from Walter Martin [Sr.] to Chichester for the use of a burying ground was explained (Deed Book A, vol. 1, p. 238). In 1709, Walter Martin, Sr. deeded one tract of land and two lots of land



Close-up of Benjamin Smith Patent Map (1880) showing the Swedish Patent Tract as the area colored pink and the present day boundary of Marcus Hook as outlined in pink.

To his eldest son, Walter Martin, Jr. The tract comprised 184 acres of land. The two lots were located in the Town of Chichester, one lot was bounded by John Grubb’s land and one was bounded by Broad Street (Deed Book B, vol. 2, p. 352). The Broad Street lot was located north of Market Lane (John Taylor 1701 Survey of the Town of Chichester). In the same year, Walter, Sr., deeded to his eldest daughter, Mary, two lots and one woodlot in Chichester Town. One of the lots was on the Delaware and one was on a “back street”. The woodlot was bounded by the Chichester Road (Deed Book B, vol. 2, p. 350). The deeds by which he acquired the 184-acre tract and the lots in Chichester Town were not recorded at the Chester County Courthouse.

HISTORY OF THE PLANK HOUSE

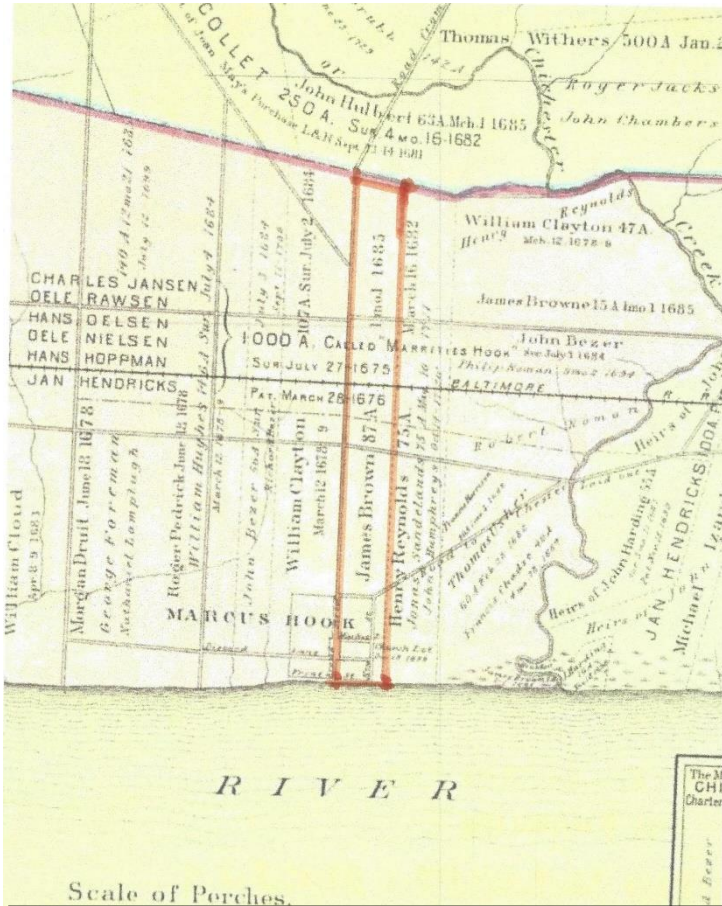
On July 27, 1675, a tract of 1000 acres was surveyed for Charles Jansen, Oele Rawson, Hans Oelson, Oele Nielson, Hans Hoppman, and John [Jan] Hendricks (New York State Archives, Survey Book 20, vol. 101, p. 1). On March 28, 1676, these six men received a Patent for that land from Edward Andros, Governor of New York under the Duke of York (Smith Patent Map, 1880). The tract was located along the west side of the Delaware River between Chichester (Marcus) Creek to the north and Naaman's Creek to the south. It was called "Marreties' Hook". Over the course of the next thirty years, the Patentees and their heirs and assignees, sold off portions of that 1000 acres (*please see Smith Patent Map*).

On March 1, 1685, Wolla als William Rawson granted James Brown four tracts of land located throughout the Swedish Patent Tract. The first one, which is the one pertinent to the history of the Marcus Hook Plank House, was for an eighty-seven-acre tract of land bounded on the east by the Delaware River, on the north by Henry Reynolds' seventy-five-acre tract of land, on the west by Jeremiah Collett's 250-acre tract of land (not part of the Swedish Patent Tract), and on the south by William Clayton, Jr.'s 107-acre tract of land (Deed Book A, vol. 1, p. 158 & Smith Patent Map, 1880). Wolla Rawson is probably Oele Rawson, his first name very well may have been being spelled phonetically. (*Note: The James Brown 87-acre Tract is highlighted in orange on the close-up of the Smith Patent Map (1880) at the top of page 7.*)

Starting in 1696, Brown began selling lots out of his eighty-seven-acre tract. In that year, Brown conveyed a lot of land west of Market Lane to William Flower (Deed Book A, vol. 1, p. 216). In 1699, Brown conveyed three lots west of Market Lane: One to Thomas Baldwin (Deed Book A, vol. 1, p. 254), one to James Clemson (Deed Book A, p. 239), and one to John Howell (Deed Book A, vol. 1, p. 257). In 1700, Brown conveyed one lot west of Market Lane to William Chandler (Deed Book A, vol. 1, p. 258). And in 1704, Brown conveyed one lot west of Market Lane to John Grubb (Deed Book Q, vol. 16, p. 397). Some of these lots are depicted on the John Taylor 1701 Survey of the Town of Chichester. No deeds from James Brown for the lot or lots south of Market Lane were recorded at the Chester County Courthouse.

Because no deeds from James Brown for the Plank House lot were recorded, there is a gap in the deed lineage. The next known owner of the Plank House Property was Margaret Riley Conarro. It is not certain from whom Margaret acquired the Plank House. There are two possibilities. She could have acquired it from her husband, Thomas Conarro, or from her father, Richard

Riley. It is most probable that she acquired it from her father.



Close-up of Benjamin Smith Patent Map (1880) showing the James Brown 87-acre Tract highlighted in orange within the Swedish Patent Tract (area colored pink).

Richard Riley died on August 27, 1820 (Ashmead, p. 241), leaving a widow, Mary, and one daughter, Margaret Conarro. His will was probated sometime in 1820 and in it he left a life-estate to his wife and the rest and residue of his estate, real and personal, to his daughter. He named his son-in-law Thomas Conarro and his daughter Margaret Conarro as his executors (Delaware County Wills and Administration Papers #00536).

Because Margaret was married at the time of her father’s death, her inheritance automatically became the property of her husband Thomas Conarro. Consequently, on March 22, 1821, Thomas Conarro deeded over Margaret’s inheritance to Joseph Trotter in trust for Margaret’s use, allowing Margaret to have a say in how her inheritance should be used and when and if the real estate should be sold (Deed Book O, vol. 14, p. 685).

Margaret Riley Conarroe died on August 16, 1854 (Petition for Partition, Delaware County Wills and Administration Papers #2784) and left a large estate consisting of five lots of land in Marcus Hook. In her Will, she requested that her real estate, which was encumbered (had a debt or debts against it), be kept together until such time as the encumbrance were extinguished. She then requested that her children first pay off her debts, including the encumbrance, before claiming their inheritances. Once the encumbrance was paid off, then her children were to receive the following real estate (among other things) as bequests:

1. Daughter Rebecca Trotter to receive one-eighth part of real estate for her own use;
2. Daughter Anna C. Conarroe to receive one-fourth part of real estate for her own use;
3. Son Richard Riley Conarroe to receive one-eighth part of real estate for his own use;
4. Children of deceased daughter Margaretta E. Tripler to receive [not stated what they are to receive] for their own use;
5. Daughter Eliza C. Marshall to receive one-eighth part of real estate during her natural life and at her decease, to her heirs forever;
6. Daughter Sarah C. Schreiner to receive one-eighth part of real estate during her natural life and at her decease, to her heirs forever;
7. Granddaughter Julie Vanatta to receive one-eighth part of real estate during her natural life and at her decease, to her heirs forever;
8. Daughter Anna C. Conarroe to receive, in consideration of her constant attention on Margaret, and sacrificing many enjoyments for Margaret's sake, all the remainder of Margaret's personal Estate that have not been otherwise disposed of and likewise the use of Margaret's residence in Marcus Hook known as the old homestead with the lawn in front and the orchard and garden in the rear attached and \$50.00 per annum out of the income of Margaret's Estate for her support until the time arrives for the distribution of the property according to the term of Margaret's Will.

Margaret named her son Richard Riley Conarroe and daughter Anna C. Conarroe as her Executives (Margaret Conarroe Will, Delaware County Wills and Administration Papers #2784).

Apparently, it took about thirty years to extinguish the encumbrance on Margaret's real estate since her Estate was not settled until 1885. She had had seven children: Mary, intermarried with Aaron Dickerson, Rebecca, intermarried with William J. Trotter, Anna C. Conarroe, Richard R. Conarroe, Margaretta E., intermarried with Jacob Tripler, Sarah C., intermarried with William H. Schreiner; and Eliza C., intermarried with Joseph Marshall. By the time her Estate was settled, all of her named heirs had died (Petition for Partition, Delaware County Wills and Administration Papers #2784) and most of her grandchildren had grown up. Consequently, her real estate was not distributed to the people she had specifically named in her Will.

Her daughter Eliza C. Marshall had died intestate on or about January 19, 1857, leaving to survive her six children: Alexander M. Marshall, Mahlon D. Marshall, Mary M., intermarried with George Becker, Margarette C. Marshall, Anna R. Marshall, and Sara G. Marshall (Order of Inquest, Delaware County Wills and Administration Papers #2784).

Margaret Riley Conarroe's real estate comprised five tracts of land. Tract Number Four consisted of "all that certain messuage and lot or piece of land, situate on the East side of Market Street in the Borough of Marcus Hook aforesaid, containing in front on said Market Street forty feet and in depth to the Eastwardly between parallel lines about 150 feet, bounded on the Northwest by Market Lane and on the Northeast, and Southeast, by lands of Mrs. S. M. Way" (Schedule of Real Estate, Delaware County Wills and Administration Papers #2784).

Because both of Margaret's Executors were deceased, her Estate was administered by the Delaware County Orphan's Court. The Court gave each of her remaining heirs the chance to accept or refuse any or all of the tracts of land for the amount of the valuation for each tract. Anna R. Marshall appeared in court and offered to buy Tract Number Four for \$66.00 above the sum of \$440.00 at which the tract had been valued (in other words, she offered \$506.00 for the tract). Her bid was the highest, so the Court adjudged

the tract to her and ordered that she pay the rest of the heirs their proportionate parts of the sum of her bid (Order of Sale and Return, Delaware County Wills and Administration Papers #2784).

As a consequence of the Court's order and in acknowledgment of the payment of their proportionate parts, Anna's fellow heirs released their right and title in Tract Number Four to Anna Marshall on September 2, 1887 (Delaware County Deed Book M6, p. 575). In February

1888, Anna conveyed one-half part of Tract Number Four to her sister, Sarah C. Marshall (Delaware County Deed Book P6, p. 132). Anna R. Marshall died intestate and unmarried on or about October 7, 1902, leaving to survive her five siblings: Mary M. Becker, Sara C. Marshall, Margaretta P. Marshall, Mahlon D. Marshall, and Alexander M. Marshall. Margaretta died on April 21, 1909, Sarah died on April 27, 1910, Mary died on June 4, 1916, and Alexander died on January 10, 1920. With their deaths, the ownership of Tract

Number Four became invested solely in Mahlon Marshall. Mahlon then died on January 8, 1923. He left a Last Will and Testament in which he directed his Executor to sell his real estate. On February 11, 1927, William B. Harvey, the Executor of both Alexander's and Mahlon's Last Wills and Testaments, conveyed Tract Number Four to Kate Wanner of Marcus Hook. Tract Number Four at this point consisted of:

All that lot or piece of land with the messuage thereon erected.

Situate at the Southeasterly corner of Market Street and Market Lane.

Beginning at the Southeasterly corner of the said Market Street and said Market Lane;

Thence extending along the said Market Lane North 60 degrees, 27 minutes, 8 seconds, East 216 $\frac{17}{100}$ feet to a point, a corner of lands of John R. Way;

Thence extending by said lands South 27 degrees 15 minutes 22 seconds East 44 $\frac{35}{100}$ feet to a corner of lands belonging to the Estate of Sarah M. Way;

Thence extending by said lands South 66 degrees 12 minutes 48 seconds West 216 $\frac{18}{100}$ feet to the Easterly side of the said Market Street;

Thence extending along the said Market Street 45 $\frac{25}{100}$ feet to the place of beginning (Delaware County Deed Book 656, p. 286).

On or about February 14, 1941, Kate Wanner died intestate, leaving three sons and three daughters to survive her: Samuel Wanner, Harry Wanner, Caroline W. Conroy, Daniel Wanner, Virginia W. Fullerton, and Ruth W. Helm. None of her children accepted her real estate in whole or in part, so the Court appointed the Delaware County Trust Company to sell Kate's real

estate. On September 27, 1945, the Trust Company exposed the real estate to sale and sold the lot of land with the Plank House on it to Samuel Wanner. The Court confirmed the sale on October 1, 1945 and on November 24, 1945, the Trust Company formally deeded over the lot to Samuel Wanner (Delaware County Deed Book 1278, p. 54). The following year, on November 12, 1946, Samuel added his wife, Edna, to the deed (Delaware County Deed Book 1351, p. 276).

Samuel Wanner [Sr.] died on December 27, 1965 whereupon Edna Wanner became the sole owner of the Plank House and its lot. Edna then had the lot subdivided into two lots and conveyed to her son Samuel F. Wanner, Jr. the eastern portion of the lot, which consisted of land only, on November 15, 1967 (Delaware County Deed Book 2289, p. 579). On March 2, 1982, Edna conveyed the western portion of the lot, which contained the Plank House, to her son (Delaware County Deed Book 10, p. 1526). On September 16, 1988, Samuel F. Wanner, Jr. died and left a Last Will and Testament wherein he appointed Jennifer Ward (his daughter) as Executrix of his Will. He also bequeathed to Jennifer his “Bungalow, together with the household contents, and the lot on which the house at 221 Market Street, Marcus Hook, Pennsylvania” stands (Delaware County Deed Book 1631, p. 1078).

On August 30, 2004, Jennifer Ward conveyed to Michael and Patricia Manerchia the premises at 221 Market Street, Marcus Hook, Pennsylvania (Delaware County Deed Book 3284, p. 0237). On May 31, 2007, the Manerchias conveyed the Plank House property to Chichester Historical Society (Delaware County Deed Book 4138, p. 1174). On January 21, 2010, the Chichester Historical Society conveyed the same property back to the Manerchias (Delaware County Deed Book 4691, p. 2277). And finally, on January 21, 2010, the Manerchias conveyed to Marcus Hook Preservation Society the Marcus Hook Plank House property (Delaware County Deed Book 4691, p. 2281)

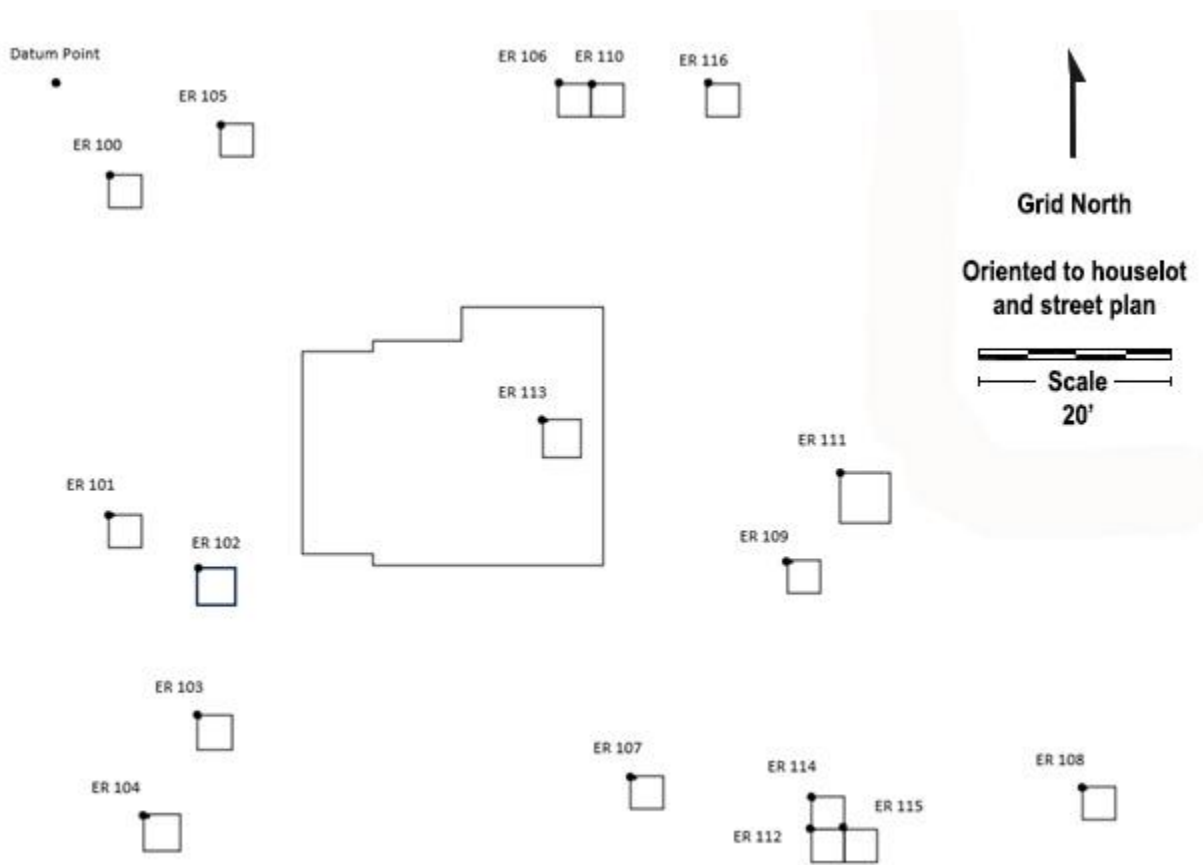
ARCHAEOLOGY AT THE PLANK HOUSE, FALL 2022

The Millersville University Archaeology Field School took on this excavation as part of broader research into Atlantic World Piracy and Pennsylvania's broader role in the Atlantic World during the 17th and 18th centuries. Excavation at Marcus Hook took place in two separate areas, one on Discord Lane and the other on the lot surrounding the Plank House. For the purposes of this report, the Plank House will be the focus as the archaeological finds at Discord Lane were unrelated historically, and the ground was almost entirely disturbed, yielding little information of value.

The Plank House appears to have been built at some point between roughly 1700 and 1735, based on both historical documents and on the artifacts recovered during excavation. Marcus Hook was a maritime town that was linked to the wider Atlantic World through shipbuilding, trading voyages, and was often the first port-of-call for Philadelphia-bound vessels. Because of this proximity to Philadelphia (while still being far enough away from customs officers), Marcus Hook may have become somewhat of a pirate haven as well. Local oral history tells of Edward Teach (Blackbeard) going to the Plank House to visit his mistress who lived there, a detail of local lore that is at least partially supported by the fact that, prior to his career in Piracy, the North Carolina-born Beard was a sailor's apprentice on a Philadelphia-based ship, so he would have been thoroughly familiar with these waters and ports of call. Later, during the Revolutionary War, Marcus Hook became the first line of naval defense for Philadelphia and a training center for the militia. The Continental Army also camped there in the fall of 1777 before their historic encampment at nearby Valley Forge. British naval ships fired at Marcus Hook continually, which is why the Plank House remains the only pre-Revolutionary house in the town. Marcus Hook served once more as a defensive post in the War of 1812 before becoming a large, commercial fishing center. This came to a halt, however, in 1901 when Sun Oil Company established an oil refinery, followed by Union Petroleum in 1910.

Fieldwork began with the datum point being at a northing and easting of 2000 with Magnetic North being just 28 degrees off from this (see map). From here, students began excavating a

series of 3' by 3' units one by one, and sifted the back soil through sifters with ¼" mesh screens. All excavation units were 3x3', with the exception of one 5x5 unit, ER111. Students were instructed and taught to keep their floors flat and walls straight so as to appropriately see the stratigraphy and to carefully note when changes in stratigraphic soil layers occurred (which obviously denotes a new or different depositional episode, and thus time period). All artifacts found were kept temporarily in clearly labelled paper bags which were then taken to the lab where they were meticulously cleaned and catalogued, and entered into the project database.



Overall Site Map, 2022 Excavations

MILLERSVILLE EXCAVATION FINDINGS

For the geographic location of the following excavation units, please refer to the overall site map. All units were stratigraphically excavated and field notes were completed for each layer within each unit, recording the depth of the layer, the artifacts recovered, and all pertinent excavation data. Researchers can access these original site notes on-request, but the following brief summary explains the finds and results of each excavation unit.

ER 100 was situated 5 feet east and 10 feet south of the datum point (1990 northing, 2005 easting), alongside the current sidewalk paralleling Market Street. The simple stratigraphy in this pit represents an area with a high level of disturbance, as would be expected in such a high-traffic area with numerous building episodes, particularly the construction of the modern roadway and sidewalk in this area.

Strata	Opening Depth	Closing Depth	
A	0	0.3-0.5'	
B	0.3-0.5'	1.1-1.3'	
C	1.1-1.3'	1.33-1.7'	

The stratigraphy in this pit showed a degree of disturbance down to the subsoil level. Evidence for this included plastic items, which were found throughout all three layers and mixed in with artifacts from the 17th and 18th centuries. Despite this degree of disturbance, there was some hint of original stratigraphy being present, particularly a rough (though not perfect) indication of older ceramics being more frequent in the lower layers. This may suggest that the plastic could have been deposited through rodent burrowing action. Interestingly, an extremely early ceramic (Borderware) was found in this unit, showing that late 17th-century occupation of this land during the early Proprietorship era left some clear archaeological evidence.

Table 2: Artifact Summary				
ER 100				
Level	Architecture	Ceramics	Glass	Other
A	2 Wire-Drawn Nail, 1 Brick	1 Transitional Whiteware, 1 Pearlware, 1 Whiteware, 2 Redware	1 Hand Blown Glass, 7 Machine Made Glass	1 Shell, 1 Charcoal, 1 Textile, 6 Plastic, 1 Metal
B	5 Wire-Drawn Nail, 1 Brick	4 Whiteware, 2 Pearlware, 5 Redware, 3 Porcelain, 2 Borderware, 1 Jackfield	19 Machine Made Glass	2 Composite, 1 Charcoal, 1 Shell, 1 Plastic, 2 Metal
C	4 Nail	1 Staffordshire Slipware, 1 Redware, 1 Stoneware	1 Machine Made Glass	6 Plastic, 1 Metal

The earliest manufacturing date of an artifact in this unit is 1640 based on Borderware, which roughly coincides with the period that European settlers were first arriving to the area.

Borderware, however was common in the late 17th-century, and that is the era from which this fragment likely was deposited. The pit as a whole suggests occupation from the 17th-century onwards to the present day. Several ceramic types were found in this unit including Staffordshire Slipware and pearlware. In addition to the ceramics, several other types of artifacts were found including a few building materials and glass fragments. As stated previously, plastic artifacts were found in each stratigraphic layer within this unit among, the other discovered artifacts, showing soil disturbance.

One common feature shown by this unit that was found over most of the site was that a great deal of ground disturbing activity has taken place over the several centuries this building has stood in Marcus Hook. The soil itself has a tremendous paucity of organic material, meaning that this land has been cleared of most vegetation, and very little organic deposition has occurred, for perhaps several centuries. The soil was so hard that in multiple areas, skim shoveling with a flat-nosed shovel (to maintain flat floors and stratigraphic separation) was impractical and had to be augmented by using either round-nosed shovels or in some cases small



Shell-edged pearlware (1785-1840), Penny (1914), and Nottingham Stoneware (1683-1810)

hand picks to get through the hard soils. Nonetheless, great attention to careful excavation was enforced throughout the field school, and hand-trowelling was carefully done to determine different soil layers and to maintain control at all times.

ER 101 was 5 feet east and 45 feet south of the datum point (1955 northing, 2005 easting). This pit was disturbed, as artifacts from multiple time periods were found in differing layers, and the soil was incredibly compacted. At one point, students had to use a pick to excavate, as it was impossible to get even a round-nose shovel into the compacted soil. The artifacts found had overlap between the two layers. A fragment of Borderware was found in Layer A, but Layer B contained artifacts dating to 1762 and later, once again showing disturbance of the soils during various time periods. On the right is a picture of the finished pit. The majority of artifacts in both layers date back to the colonial period.



ER 101, excavated to undisturbed subsoil

Table 3: Strata			
ER 101			
Strata	Opening Depth	Closing Depth	
A	0'	0.29-0.45'	
B	0.29-0.45'	0.55-0.9'	
C	0.55-0.9'	0.82-1.5'	

ER 102 was right next to the southwest corner of the Plank House with a northing of 1950 and an easting of 2015. It was situated 15 feet east and 50 feet south of the datum point. Unit 102 had a fair amount of soil disturbance. The dates of artifacts ranged widely, from the 18th to the 20th centuries. However, more recent materials were found mainly in the first layer, so much of the stratigraphic disturbance likely happened previous to the 20th century. Many artifacts were found



ER 102: Pipe Stem (1750-1780), Hand-Painted Whiteware (1820-Present), Porcelain (1640-1900)

in this unit, which contained primarily ceramics but also bone and charcoal. It is also important to note the amount of artifacts associated with construction or building (nails, brick fragments, etc) were much higher in Layer A than the other three underlying layers, suggesting some kind of construction or destruction event took place more recently and overlaid the original deposition. There was also a significant amount of animal bone, representing the remains of meals.

Table 4: Artifact Summary

ER 102				
Level	Architecture	Ceramics	Glass	Other
A	3 Hand-Wrought Nail, 2 Wire-Drawn Nail, 16 Brick Fragments, 4 Mortar Fragments, 1 Plaster	1 Creamware, 2 Pearlware, 1 Whiteware, 2 Redware, 36 Stoneware, 2 Porcelain, 1 Pipe Stem	9 Hand Blown Glass, 12 Machine Made Glass	8 Coal, 3 Shell, 3 Textile, 2 Plastic
B	15 Machine Cut Nail, 3 Wire-Drawn Nail	4 Delftware, 4 Pearlware, 1 Whiteware, 10 Stoneware, 3 Porcelain, 8 Pipe Stem	18 Machine Made Glass	
C	2 Machine-Cut Nail	1 Pearlware, 18 Redware, 1 Stoneware, 1 Porcelain, 1 Pipe Bowl	3 Hand Blown Glass, 1 Machine Made Glass	5 Bone
D	2 Machine-Cut Nail	2 Redware	1 Machine Made Glass	9 Bone

ER 103

Unit 103 was placed directly south of Unit 102. It was situated 15 feet east and 65 feet south of the datum point (1935 northing, 2015 easting). As in other units at this site, the soil was incredibly hard and compacted, with little organic matter

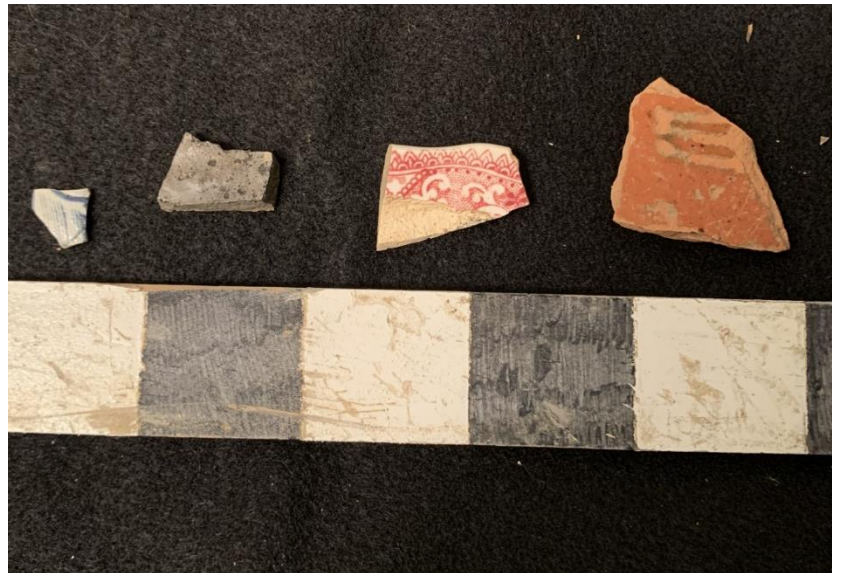
Strata	Opening Depth	Closing Depth	
A	0	0.3-0.45'	
B	0.3-0.45'	0.54-0.73'	
C	0.54-0.73'	0.54-0.91'	

present. This feature of the soils around the Plank House was common throughout the site, and is interesting in its own right. The authors believe this extremely hard, compacted soil is indicative of an extremely low percentage of organic matter, and this in turn indicates that the ground around the plank house has been cleared, with little but surface grasses and/or weeds growing around the house for upwards of three centuries.

Three indistinct layers were found stratigraphically in unit 103, with rubber and wire-drawn nails being the most recent artifacts. Most of the rest of the assemblage dated to the 19th century, but included creamware and at least some glass fragments were present, dating to the 18th century.

Level	Architecture	Ceramics	Glass	Other
A	2 Mortar, 1 Brick, 1 Washer	1 Ironstone, 1 Terracotta	4 Mold-Blown Glass, 8 Machine Made Glass, 2 Hand Blown Glass	
B	1 Asbestos, 2 Wire-Drawn Nail	4 Creamware, 2 Whiteware, 1 Ironstone	10 Machine Made Glass, 6 Hand Blown Glass	2 Vulcanized Rubber
C			2 Mold Blown Glass	

Solidly datable artifacts in this unit were somewhat scarce. There were many undatable glass and redware fragments, but a few datable ceramics were found. Of these artifacts most datable items were found in Layer B. The unit likely contains primary deposition dating to the 19th century, but nothing earlier.



ER 103: Scratch Blue Stoneware (1744-1775), Jackfield (1740-1780), Transfer-Printed Whiteware (1820-Present), Philadelphia Slipware (1740-1820)

ER 104



Unit 104 was situated 10 feet east and 75 feet south of the datum point (1925 northing, 2010 easting). This was one of the most artifact-rich units excavated during the entire project at the Plank House. The majority of these artifacts were datable ceramics, allowing us to determine that the stratigraphy was relatively undisturbed. In addition, this area of the site appears to have been near a 17th-century habitation, as layers B-D all contained artifacts dating to the 17th century, representing some of the earliest artifacts at this site and corresponding to the time when the area was first being settled by Europeans.

Layer D also contained significant amounts of redwares and other earthenwares, which are then followed by more refined earthenwares. Going through the layers from here, a pattern can be determined with the ceramics becoming more recent and/or more diverse, showing long-term settlement.

Strata	Opening Depth	Closing Depth	
A	0	0.4'	
B	0.4'	0.9'	
C	0.9'	1.2'	
D	1.2'	1.9'	
E (feature)	1.9'	2.2'	
F	1.9-2.2'	2.2'	

Though plastic is present in Layer B and Asbestos is present in Layer C, the small amounts of these suggest intrusions likely through rodent burrowing, and a rough stratigraphy is still clearly present. Layer A appears to date from the late 19th and early 20th centuries with some earlier artifacts, while layers B and C appear to have been deposited between 1780 to 1850 or so. Layer D is likely an original 18th century deposition, containing early ceramics such as Borderware, Creamware, Delft, and Staffordshire slipware. This layer also contained Jasper flint flakes, debitage from prehistoric flintknapping.

Level	Architecture	Ceramics	Glass	Other
A	4 Brick	1 Pearlware, 3 Whiteware, 6 Redware, 1 Stoneware, 1 Yellowware	33 Machine Made Glass	2 Shell, 6 Coal, 1 Plastic
B	4 Brick, 1 Mortar	3 Creamware, 4 Pearlware, 9 Whiteware, 23 Redware, 1 Staffordshire Slipware, 1 Pipe Stem, 3 Delftware, 1 Terracotta	2 Hand Blown Glass, 30 Machine Made Glass	1 Bone, 1 Shell, 12 Coal, 3 Plastic
C		5 Whiteware, 9 Redware, 1 Pipe Stem, 2 Porcelain	11 Machine Made Glass	6 Bone, 1 Coal, 1 Asbestos

D	3 Brick, 1 Mortar, 1 Machine Cut Nail	2 Stoneware, 5 Creamware, 6 Whiteware, 28 Redware, 3 Staffordshire Slipware, 2 Borderware, 2 Porcelain, 1 Delftware	20 Machine Made Glass, 1 Hand Blown Glass	1 Composite, 1 Fabric, 2 Jasper Flake, 1 Plastic, 4 Slag, 2 Brass/Copper, 1 Coal, 6 Bone
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ER 105

Unit 105 was situated in the northwest corner of the property 15 feet east and 5 feet south of the datum point (1995 northing, 2015 easting).

Table 9: Strata			
ER 105			
Strata	Opening Depth	Closing Depth	
A	0	0.3-0.53'	
B	0.3-0.53'	1.16-1.4'	
C	1.16-1.4'	1.35-1.51'	

While the first two contained early ceramics (Borderware) and a native American projectile point was found in Layer B. Layer C was nearly sterile, but had a wire drawn nail, again suggesting recent rodent burrowing activity. This projectile point is a corner-notched, early to middle



ER 105



Dendritic Mocha (1780-1895), Salt-Glazed Stoneware (1720-1770), Charleston Corner Notched-Style Projectile Point (Early/Middle Archaic Period, roughly 9,000-7,000 B.P.)

Archaic point, and its being in Layer B further supports the fact that the stratigraphy in this pit was very disturbed, with by human or by rodent burrowing activity, despite the observation of stratigraphic layers. Below is a picture of the pit and sample of the artifacts found, including the projectile point . The stratigraphy and thin deposition suggests that this area may have been regraded or the original land surface altered in some way, possibly during landscaping activities.

Level	Architecture	Ceramics	Glass	Other
A	21 Brick, 14 Mortar	2 Creamware, 7 Pearlware, 1 Whiteware, 4 Redware, 1 Stoneware, 1 Porcelain	23 Machine Made Glass	4 Shell, 20 Plastic, 13 Slate
B	1 Wire Drawn Nail, 2 Nail, 10 Brick, 1 Mortar	8 Creamware, 8 Whiteware, 6 Redware, 1 Yellowware, 1 Porcelain, 1 Delftware	14 Hand Blown Glass, 58 Machine Made Glass	1 Bone, 1 Jasper Tool, 9 Shell, 4 Plastic, 7 Coal
C	1 Wire Drawn Nail	1 Stoneware		

ER 106

Unit 106 produced such a plethora of finds that we expanded it with the excavation of Unit 110 to the east,. It was located on the north side of the site and was 50 feet east and 1 foot south of the datum point (northing 1999, easting 2050).

Strata	Opening Depth	Closing Depth	
A	0'	0.45-0.63'	
B	0.45-0.63'	8.3-13.2"	
C	8.3-13.2"	11.5-20.1"	

Table 12: Artifact Summary				
ER 106				
Level	Architecture	Ceramics	Glass	Other
A	7 Brick, 2 Machine-Cut Nail, 2 Unknown Building Material	19 Creamware, 39 Pearlware, 28 Whiteware, 21 Redware, 5 Stoneware, 1 Porcelain	6 Hand Blown Glass, 58 Machine Made Glass	1 Bone, 1 Shell, 3 Coal
B	13 Brick Fragment, 6 Machine-Cut Nail, 9 Wire-Drawn Nail	46 Creamware, 99 Pearlware, 52 Whiteware, 117 Redware, 12 Stoneware, 4 Yellowware, 9 Porcelain, 1 Pipe Stem, 1 Pipe Barrel	27 Hand Blown Glass, 1 Mold Blown Glass, 123 Machine Made Glass	2 Jasper Flakes, 1 Tooth, 18 Bone, 1 Spoon, 1 Projectile Point
C	8 Machine-Cut Nail, 8 Wire-Drawn Nail, 1 Screw	60 Creamware, 1 Faience, 80 Pearlware, 340 Redware, 4 Stoneware, 4 Yellowware, 6 Pipe Stem	74 Machine Made Glass	42 Bone, 11 Teeth, 6 Coal

This pit represented the most significant deposition and largest number of artifacts found during our excavations. The unit appears to contain a significant amount of what was likely a trash midden associated with the house and deposited primarily during the late 18th through the middle 19th century. Creamware, Pearlware, and Whiteware were the main ceramics found in this unit. This unit also had a very well-used 18th-century pewter spoon that is possibly a “sailors spoon”,



kept as the personal belongings of sailors while on-board a ship. This artifact is very likely maritime in nature, indicating what documents suggest; that sailors were living in the area. The stratigraphy of this unit

ER 106: Sailors Spoon, Borderware (1640-1715), Borderware, Transfer-Printed Pearlware (1775-1830)

was only somewhat disturbed, but seems to mix 18th-century and 19th century materials. In addition, a single fragment of French Faience was found, again suggesting the Atlantic World connections of this port town to a broader Atlantic historical context. The pipe stems found in this unit also dated to the 18th and early 19th centuries, confirming the ceramics dates.

ER 107

Unit 107 was situated 57 feet east and 70 feet south of the datum point (1930 northing, 2057 easting).

Strata	Opening Depth	Closing Depth	
A	0	0.4-0.6'	
B	0.4-0.6'	0.7-0.9'	
C (feature)	0.7-0.9'	1-1.25'	

Level	Architecture	Ceramics	Glass	Other
A	1 Brick, 1 Tile	2 Staffordshire Slipware, 16 Whiteware, 13 Redware, 5 Stoneware, 9 Porcelain, 2 Pipe Stem	5 Hand Blown Glass, 72 Mold Blown Glass, 32 Machine Made Glass	2 Coal
B	3 Wire-Drawn Nail	1 Rockingham, 3 Whiteware, 15 Redware, 5 Stoneware	42 Hand Blown Glass, 33 Mold Blown Glass, 26 Machine Made Glass	1 Bone
C	1 Brick, 1 Mortar	2 Whiteware, 1 Porcelain	7 Mold Blown Glass, 63 Machine Made Glass	1 Bone, 1 Composite

This pit showed evidence of a significant degree of disturbance. This unit contained a significant amount of ceramic fragments, in addition to various building materials suggesting either a building or deconstruction episode, as well as a couple miscellaneous artifacts. Many glass

fragments were found including hand blown, machine made, and mold blown glass. Based on the date-range of the ceramics found, the earliest artifacts in this pit can be dated solidly to around the early 18th century but 19th and 20th century materials predominated.

ER 108

Unit 108 was situated 70 feet east and 102 feet south of the datum point (1930 northing, 2102 easting).

Table 15: Strata			
ER 108			
Strata	Opening Depth	Closing Depth	
A	0	0.2-0.4'	

Table 16: Artifact Summary				
ER 108				
Level	Architecture	Ceramics	Glass	Other
A	1 Hand Wrought Nail, 1 Wire-Drawn Nail	2 Pearlware, 23 Whiteware, 5 Redware	24 Machine Made Glass	



Borderware (1640-1715), Jackfield (1740-1780)

ER 108

During the mid-20th century a large concrete pad for parking equipment was poured behind the house in the southeast area of the property. This pad was broken up mechanically for this project and removed, in order to assess a local rumor that it covered some subterranean feature, either a

well, privy, or subterranean tunnel (for which rumors abound in the community). The mechanical removal of the concrete pad showed clearly that no such features were present, but small scale testing was done within this area including unit ER 108, which was a small, shallow pit excavated within the concrete pad area. Very few artifacts found within the broader shallow area left by bulldozing activity. The pit itself contained fragments of Borderware dating to as early as 1640, but also contained several later artifacts showing once again a stratigraphic disturbance. Since there was only one layer, it was difficult to tell the degree to which the soil was disturbed stratigraphically. Below is a sample of what was found and the pit. Nonetheless, our testing units showed that when it was originally poured, the large concrete pad was poured into a shallow basin excavated to just above subsoil, and that no large middens or features were present in this area.

This is perhaps as good a place as any to address the persistent rumors or “local lore” regarding hidden tunnels, shafts, or secret chambers that are said to be hidden underneath Marcus Hook. During our excavations, we were visited by many local townspeople, and they were quite interested in their local history. Many times, however, they would share stories of underground tunnels or hidden chambers, which is a common idea that persists in many port or coastal towns on a riverfront. The idea, apparently, is that people were either smuggling goods, or if the site is associated with Civil War-era history, then with Underground Railroad activities.

It should be noted that such stories almost never prove to be true, likely because excavating a tunnel is an extremely labor-intensive and expensive process, especially when one includes not just the enormous labor involved but the high cost of large amounts of brick or timber that would be needed to shore-up such tunnels. The extreme cost and labor requirements for such tunnels would almost never be justified by the returns, which, after all, would only get goods or people a block or two from the waterfront; a task far more easily undertaken by simply sneaking away at night. In short, absent a future discovery, it is highly unlikely that the widespread rumors of underground tunnels coming from the waterfront at Marcus Hook are true, and such tales should be avoided during historical tours or docent presentations in the name of accuracy.

ER 109

Unit 109 was situated 74.25 feet east and 47.75 feet south of the datum point (1952.25 northing, 2074.25 easting).

Table 17: Strata			
ER 109			
Strata	Opening Depth	Closing Depth	
A	0	0.78-0.95'	
B	0.78-0.95'	1.29-1.39'	
C	1.29-1.39'	1.79-1.89'	
D	1.79-1.89'	1.97-2.09'	

Table 18: Artifact Summary				
ER 109				
Level	Architecture	Ceramics	Glass	Other
A	56 Wire Drawn Nail, 17 Machine Cut Nail	6 Creamware, 1 Delftware, 17 Pearlware, 2 Whiteware, 7 Redware, 14 Stoneware, 5 Porcelain, 1 Pipe Stem	5 Hand Blown Glass, 124 Machine Made Glass	2 Vulcanized Rubber
B		29 Creamware, 36 Pearlware, 20 Whiteware, 22 Redware, 4 Stoneware, 7 Porcelain, 6 Staffordshire Slipware, 1 Rockingham	7 Hand Blown Glass, 30 Machine Made Glass	1 Bone
C	6 Wire Drawn Nail, 6 Machine Cut Nail, 6 Brick	50 Whiteware, 37 Creamware, 12 Pearlware, 35 Redware, 7 Stoneware, 3 Porcelain, 4 Pipe Stem Barrel	5 Hand Blown Glass, 19 Machine Made Glass, 1 Mold Blown Glass	15 Bone, 2 Composite
D	1 Brick	4 Pearlware, 15 Redware, 5 Staffordshire Slipware, 8 Creamware, 4 Stoneware, 3 Pipe Stem	2 Machine Made Glass	7 Bone, 1 Tooth

This unit was productive in terms of the sheer numbers of artifacts, however it also indicated that the soil in this unit was very disturbed. The artifact dates among the layers seem to go backwards from what they would normally be which is the oldest layer being at the top and the youngest at the bottom. Significant numbers of ceramic artifacts assisted with this dating, as they make up the bulk of the artifacts found. Glass was the next biggest group of artifacts found, most of it being machine made. Below is a picture of the finished unit and a sample of the artifacts found.



ER 109



ER 109: Transfer Printed Pearlware (1775-1830), Philadelphia Slipware (1740-1820), Scratch Blue Stoneware (1744-1775), Jackfield (1740-1780)

ER 110

Unit 110 was Attached to Unit 106, and was 53 feet east and 1 foot south of the datum point (1999 northing, 2053 easting). This unit was excavated in order to continue to recover a meaningful sample from the trash midden exposed in Unit 106, and its stratigraphy was a continuation of that found in the previous unit.

Strata	Opening Depth	Closing Depth	
A	0	2.4-7.7"	
B	2.4-7.7"	0.7-1.4'	
C	0.7-1.4'	1-1.9'	
D	1-1.9'	1.1-1.7'	

Table 20: Artifact Summary

ER 110

Level	Architecture	Ceramics	Glass	Other
A	4 Machine-Cut Nail, 58 Nail, 8 Brick, 5 Mortar	47 Creamware, 95 Pearlware, 23 Whiteware, 94 Redware, 9 Stoneware, 3 Porcelain, 1 Yellowware, 20 Pipe Stem	74 Hand Blown Glass, 38 Mold Blown Glass, 100 Machine Made Glass, 6 Milk Glass	31 Bone, 3 Coal, 2 Plastic, 1 Composite
B	9 Machine-Cut Nail, 52 Nail, 17 Wire Drawn Nail, 4 Stake, 27 Brick, 1 Mortar	91 Creamware, 126 Pearlware, 36 Whiteware, 320 Redware, 6 Stoneware, 11 Porcelain, 12 Yellowware, 45 Pipe Stem, 16 Pipe Bowl	18 Hand Blown Glass, 64 Machine Made Glass, 7 Milk Glass	50 Bone, 2 Slate, 3 Teeth, 3 Wood, 1 Shell, 2 Charcoal
C	6 Machine-Cut Nail, 22 Nail, 1 Mortar, 3 Wire-Drawn Nail	26 Creamware, 20 Pearlware, 9 Whiteware, 206 Redware, 6 Stoneware, 1 Porcelain, 4 Yellowware, 2 Pipe Stem, 1 Pipe Bowl	2 Hand Blown Glass, 56 Machine Made Glass, 1 Milk Glass	16 Bone, 1 Tooth
D	1 Wire Drawn Nail	1 Redware		



The artifact assemblage and dates for each layer in this pit was very similar to that of 106, as would be expected, and generally showed a crude stratigraphy indicating that the trash midden was in use from the late 18th through the 19th century. As in Unit 106, large amounts of oyster shells showed the remains of numerous meals and formed a significant part of the soil profile. At left is a photograph of the the completed pit. Note the layer of rocks and shells in Layer C, which is the point at which the amount of artifacts found in this unit dropped dramatically.



ER 110: Corroded Glass, Hand-Painted Pearlware (1775-1830), Pipe Bowls, Transfer-Printed Pearlware (1775-1830)

ER 111

Unit 111 was situated 79.5 feet east and 39.8 feet south of the datum point (1960.2 northing, 2079.5 easting).

Table 21: Artifact Summary				
ER 111				
Level	Architecture	Ceramics	Glass	Other
A	2 Wire-Drawn Nail	2 Creamware, 26 Whiteware, 31 Redware, 1 Stoneware		1 Shell
B	4 Wire Drawn Nail, 37 Nail, 1 Nut, 1 Mortar	1 Pearlware, 7 Whiteware, 1 Redware, 1 Pipe Stem	1 Hand Blown Glass, 27 Machine Made Glass, 2 Mold Blown Glass	1 Bone, 1 Tooth, 2 Coal
C	1 Machine-Cut Nail	2 Faience, 23 Whiteware, 4 Creamware, 14 Redware, 3 Stoneware, 1 Porcelain	2 Hand Blown Glass, 63 Machine Made Glass, 1 Milk Glass	3 Bone, 3 Shell, 1 Coal

There was significant soil disturbance in this pit as shown by the fact that Layer B contained newer artifacts than Layers A. This pit was somewhat artifact poor compared to other units at the site, but did provide some French Faience (the French version of Delftware and an early ceramic).



ER 111: Pipe Stem (1710-1750), Faience (1675-1780), Whiteware (1820-Present), Green 1920's tableware.

The French Faience again suggests trade of some sort with French ships or settlements early on in the history of Marcus Hook. It might also represent the fruits of piracy against the French, though there is no way of knowing that for certain. Interestingly, no glass was found in Layer A, unlike nearly every other layer at the site.

ER 112

Unit 112 was also an expanded pit with Units 114 and 115 at its north and east sides. It was southeast from the southeast corner of the Plank House and was situated 77 yards east and 65 yards south of the datum point (northing 1935, easting 2077).

Table 22: Strata			
ER 112			
Strata	Opening Depth	Closing Depth	TPQ
A	0'	0.45-0.75'	1575
B	0.45-0.75'	0.8-1'	1720
C	0.8-1'	1.6'	1640

Table 23: Artifact Summary				
ER 112				
Level	Architecture	Ceramics	Glass	Other
A	15 Machine-Cut Nail, 4 Wire-Drawn Nail, 2 Brick	2 Creamware, 1 Delftware, 7 Pearlware, 11 Whiteware, 45 Redware, 6 Stoneware, 2 Porcelain, 1 Pipe Stem	74 Hand Blown Glass, 38 Mold Blown Glass, 100 Machine Made Glass, 6 Milk Glass	1 Shell, 1 Wood
B	5 Machine-Cut Nail, 2 Nail	3 Creamware, 3 Whiteware, 5 Redware, 1 Stoneware, 1 Porcelain	18 Hand Blown Glass, 64 Machine Made Glass, 7 Milk Glass	2 Bone, 1 Slate, 2 Leather
C	10 Machine-Cut Nail, 6 Nail	1 Whiteware, 2 Redware, 4 Stoneware, 1 Porcelain	2 Hand Blown Glass, 56 Machine Made Glass, 1 Milk Glass	1 Bone, 2 Leather

Soil disturbance in this pit is a strong probability, despite the fact that separate stratigraphic layers appeared visually during excavation. There was one very small piece of German Westerwald Stoneware in Layer A, but despite the early date of this type of ceramic it is likely from earlier soils brought to this level through some of the heavy ground disturbing activities that characterized this entire site. The artifacts do include items dating to the 17th and 18th centuries, so some early occupation is again suggested. There was also a portion of a stone foundation found in this pit, suggesting a structure other than the Plank House at this site.



ER 112: Dendritic Mocha (1780-1895), Brown Salt Glazed Stoneware (1720), Hand Painted Whiteware (1820-Present)

ER 113 Unit 113 was situated inside the house along the eastern wall. It was 49.5 yards east and 65 yards south of the datum point (2035 northing, 2049.5 easting). Surprisingly little was found within the house in terms of artifacts. The assemblage was largely construction materials such as brick fragments and nails, but a few ceramics dating to various eras were also found, showing again this area in constant use for hundreds of years. This unit showed that very little original soil or stratigraphy was left intact in this area of the

Table 24: Strata			
ER 113			
Strata	Opening Depth	Closing Depth	
A	0	0.29-0.66'	
B	0.29-0.66'	0.51-0.93'	



ER 113: Delft Sherd (1640-1800)

house. In fact, the paucity of artifacts suggests that this area was likely “cleaned out” with significant soil removal at some point during the history of the property.

Level	Architecture	Ceramics	Glass	Other
A	9 Machine-Cut Nail, 4 Wire-Drawn Nail, 1 Brick, 3 Screw, 1 Washer	1 Delftware, 1 Redware, 1 Stoneware, 1.5 Pipe Stem Barrel	1 Hand Blown Glass, 9 Machine Made Glass	4 Bone, 1 Plastic, 1 Composite
B	1 Brick, 1 Mortar		1 Machine Made Glass	

ER 114

Unit 114 was attached to the north side of unit 112, as an extension of that unit. It was 77 feet east and 62 feet south of the datum point (1938 northing, 2077 easting). This pit contained mainly ceramics and is indicative of a domestic

Strata	Opening Depth	Closing Depth	
A	0	0.45-0.55'	
B	0.45-0.55'	0.59-0.7'	
C (feature)	0.59-0.7'	1.5'	
D	0.59-0.7'	0.75-0.85'	

artifact scatter found across the property. These ceramics make it possible to determine that the soil is largely disturbed in terms of the stratigraphy, as shown by the fact that the mean artifact dates of the last two layers were more recent than Layer A. Layer A contained a greater diversity of artifact types and materials, as well.. It is the only layer that contained ceramics, building materials, and glass, among other items.

Table 27: Artifact Summary				
ER 114				
Level	Architecture	Ceramics	Glass	Other
A	8 Wire-Drawn Nail, 3 Brick, 1 Asbestos	4 Creamware, 1 Delftware, 9 Pearlware, 26 Whiteware, 32 Redware, 14 Stoneware, 11 Porcelain, 1 Pipe Stem	38 Hand Blown Glass, 20 Machine Made Glass	2 Bone, 1 Composite
B		1 Creamware, 1 Whiteware, 1 Redware, 1 Pearlware	4 Hand Blown Glass, 3 Machine Made Glass	
C		1 Creamware, 1 Whiteware, 2 Redware, 4 Stoneware	1 Machine Made Glass	1 Coal

ER 115

Unit 115 was attached to the eastern side of unit 112. It was situated 50 feet east and 65 feet south of the datum point (1953 northing, 2050 easting). Unit 115 was

Table 28: Strata			
ER 115			
Strata	Opening Depth	Closing Depth	
A	0	0.4-0.7'	
B	0.4-0.7'	0.5-0.75'	

another small unit with very little depth and disturbed soil. Layer A contained significantly older materials than Layer B, often by over a century. Ceramic and glass were the main artifacts found in this pit, with Layer A containing the largest number artifacts, again suggesting an earth-moving event (likely during the 20th century) that moved earlier soils from some parts of the land and pushed them over other areas.

Table 29: Artifact Summary				
ER 115				
Level	Architecture	Ceramics	Glass	Other
A	3 Wire-Drawn Nail, 2 Brick, 1 Mortar	12 Creamware, 16 Pearlware, 40 Whiteware, 55 Redware, 7 Stoneware, 1 Porcelain, 2 Pipe Stem	21 Hand Blown Glass, 130 Machine Made Glass	1 Shell, 7 Leather, 1 Charcoal, 2 Coal, 4 Plastic, 1 Slate
B		1 Creamware, 1 Pearlware, 2 Redware	1 Machine Made Glass	1 Plastic

With the lack of artifactual diversity in Layer B, it is possible in this area that the soil is not disturbed. Rather, that some of the artifacts found are undatable and therefore could have been around when Layer A was being formed as well.



ER 115: Machine Made Glass, Annular Banded Whiteware (1820-1900)

ER 116

Unit 116 was situated 65 feet east and 1 foot south of the datum point (1999 northing, 2065 easting).

The mean artifact dates of this unit's layers show intrusion of several artifacts into earlier layers to some degree and it is possible to label this stratigraphy as disturbed. Significant amounts of Creamware (18th century) as well as Pearlware and pipe stems dating to the late 18th through the early 19th century generally date the early occupation shown in this unit, however 19th century wares predominate.

Table 30: Strata			
ER 116			
Strata	Opening Depth	Closing Depth	
A	0	0.23-0.46'	
B	0.23-0.46'	0.65-1.15'	
C	0.65-1.15'	0.85-1.45'	

Table 31: Artifact Summary				
ER 116				
Level	Architecture	Ceramics	Glass	Other
A	1 Machine-Cut Nail, 3 Wire-Drawn Nail, 5 Brick, 7 Mortar	9 Creamware, 3 Pearlware, 9 Whiteware, 10 Redware, 1 Pipe Stem	47 Machine Made Glass	3 Plastic, 1 Bone, 1 Coal
B	6 Machine-Cut Nail, 7 Wire-Drawn Nail, 21 Nail, 6 Brick	8 Creamware, 136 Pearlware, 3 Whiteware, 111 Redware, 7 Stoneware, 13 Porcelain, 10 Pipe Stem	54 Hand Blown Glass, 68 Machine Made Glass, 11 Mold Blown Glass	23 Bone, 1 Tooth, 2 Marble
C		7 Whiteware, 5 Pearlware, 31 Redware, 6 Stoneware, 2 Porcelain, 4 Yellowware	10 Hand Blown Glass, 14 Machine Made Glass	9 Bone



Artifacts from ER 116 included several fragments of an 18th century engine-turned Ellers-type stoneware teapot, along with 19th century yellowware and sponge decorated whiteware, shown at left.

ER 116: Yellowware (1840-1900) Sponged Whiteware (1820-1830), Red Ellers-Type Stoneware (1690-1800).

CONCLUSIONS AND MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:

The artifacts and documents suggest that the area where Plank House was later built had been in use from its initial settlement, likely sometime in the 1640-1650 period. Significant amounts of Borderware, a classic 17th century ceramic, along with Delft and Faience, all suggest the early period of occupation of Marcus Hook, and it is evident that early colonial occupation left a clear archaeological signature on this property. The Plank House itself could date as early as 1700, but the lack of intact stratigraphy in and around the structure precludes any firm date for its construction. The house was certainly standing by 1735, but may date earlier than that, leaving open the possibility that it could, in fact, have been the home of Blackbeard's mistress during the early 1720's. However, it should be noted that this woman could have lived in any other house in Marcus Hook at that time, and no documentation exists to prove that this particular house was, indeed, hers.



Students from Millersville University discussing finds from the excavation with members of the public during the Annual Pirate Festival, Fall 2022

Far more historically significant than the tenuous link to Blackbeard is the fact, born out clearly by the artifact assemblage, that Marcus Hook was indeed a place connected directly to a much broader and historically significant maritime and Atlantic World history. Artifacts and documents both suggest that this was a site linked quite directly via trade and the interactions of diverse peoples to Europe, the Caribbean, and the entire eastern seaboard of North America. It is of course highly probable that pirates in various eras, from the Red Sea pirate period of the late 1600's, to the "Great Pirate Rebellion" era post-dating the War of Spanish Succession and lasting from the 1710's through the mid-1720's could very likely have visited this town. Some members of pirate crews could very likely have come from Marcus Hook. The fact that Marcus Hook hosts an annual Pirate Festival is appropriate, as this is just one of many Atlantic World connections and stories that the Plank House is well-positioned to tell in their ongoing efforts to bring history education to the local community. This festival offers an excellent opportunity to interpret the fascinating history of both the Plank House and of Marcus Hook to the community.

Due to the antiquity and history of the Plank House, its association with important trends in Pennsylvania and American history, and to the public nature of the site today (with its potential for outreach and education), the archaeological assemblage at the Plank House should be viewed in a somewhat different light than other, similar sites. Though largely disturbed, this is still a very important assemblage that reflects the history and development of the broader community in interesting and important ways.

The obvious conclusion from our testing is that there is very little original archaeological strata in the core area that is still undisturbed. Given the geographic spread of our test units across the area, and the great efforts we made in breaking up the concrete pad installed during the 20th century and testing beneath it, we can form the conclusion that intact archaeological soils are highly unlikely to be found on this property. It is significant to note that every area we tested showed rather massive disturbance and mixing of 20th-century materials with earlier artifacts. This unfortunately limits what we can learn from archaeological work alone, and greatly complicates attempts to study or learn new information about the property during early occupation.

This does not mean, however, that future archaeology in the core area at the Plank House has no value, or that nothing can be learned from future study. As shown in the preceding analysis, it is still possible to obtain significant information from disturbed soils and contexts, but that information may reflect a broader, community history perhaps more than simply a site-specific history. Primarily, it means that the information that can be obtained must reside within the artifacts themselves (their type, date of manufacture, use, form, etc) rather than from the (stratigraphic) context of their discovery. This presents both challenges and opportunities for the Marcus Hook Preservation Society, and has several implications for responsible management of this historic cultural resource. Thus, this report will recommend several approaches to managing the archaeology and history at the Plank House for the board, staff, and volunteers to consider.

Preservation of the original structure and surrounding areas

The extent of disturbance found throughout the core area of the property, and the total lack of undisturbed soils in virtually every area studied, has one important implication: Any area within the core that is found to be undisturbed in the future is an extremely rare and valuable resource, and should be protected against disturbance or construction of any kind. For this reason, the house foundation area is unquestionably the most valuable archaeological resource known on the property to date. It's preservation, and at some point future archaeological study, should be a top priority of managing and curating the historic legacy of the Plank House. Excavations within the foundation and basement might be considered for future study.

Establishment of preservation protocols for ground-disturbing activity

The large-scale disturbance of soils in the core area does not necessarily mean that nothing of archaeological value remains. For instance, it is entirely possible that subsurface features (root cellars, old drainages filled-in through siltation, etc) may have escaped the ground disturbing activities that have occurred through the centuries. An intact privy, for example, could easily be fitted between almost any of the units in our test pit grid, and might therefore still exist undisturbed in areas we did not excavate. Any historic pit, cellar, foundation, or other feature that was originally dug deeply into the ground could therefore still be hiding in the large area around the house and grounds. The protection of unknown, yet potentially valuable

archaeological resources should be a high priority for a site as historically significant as the Plank House.

For this reason, from a management standpoint, such protection means that whenever any ground disturbing activity (digging trenches for water or electrical lines, construction of new buildings, etc.) is done in the core area, it should be carefully monitored during the process for the potential to reveal buried features that may still exist beneath the disturbed soil overlying the site today. It is therefore recommended that the Plank House adopt as policy a practice of having any excavation activity monitored by a trained archaeologist, and no “digging to see what is there” should occur on the grounds from this point forward.

Funding graduate work

In addition, the rather extensive archaeological assemblage, from this and other excavations at the Plank house, now represent an exceptional “record of material culture” not only for the Plank house, but for the entire town of Marcus Hook. These artifacts represent, in a very real way, the entire history of the town. It is therefore recommended that these artifacts be made available to any researcher or graduate students who might be interested, and it is further suggested that this entire assemblage would make a genuinely excellent basis for an MA thesis or PhD dissertation, using the material assemblage and documentary record to piece together an archaeologically-derived history of Marcus Hook through, and based upon, these materials. It might be advantageous for the Marcus Hook Preservation Society to begin fundraising in order to support a fund that, once it grows large enough, could support graduate research towards an advanced degree for a student willing to take on the task of a full and thorough analysis of the entire assemblage. If such funding was available, I believe it would only be a matter of time before an aspiring graduate student would be willing to undertake such a project, and their work would benefit both the Plank House and the community at-large. The archaeological assemblage recovered during our excavations, housed in the storage facility on-site, are a contribution to this future project and to the history of the Plank House itself.

In conclusion, Millersville University, the MU Archaeology Program, its students and professors, all wish to thank the Marcus Hook Preservation Society for allowing us to conduct

our field school at the Plank House, and for their exceptional support during the project. We wish you great success in preserving and promoting the fascinating history of Marcus Hook.

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