

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Maryland
COUNTY: Frederick
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Biggs Ford Prehistoric Village Archaeological Site

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Synders #35

NOT TO BE RELEASED

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Three miles north of Frederick within a radius of two miles.

CITY OR TOWN:
Frederick

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
Sixth

STATE: Maryland CODE: 24 COUNTY: Frederick CODE: 021

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____
Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No			

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
William Crum

STREET AND NUMBER:
Route 1

CITY OR TOWN:
Walkersville

STATE: Maryland CODE: 24

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Frederick County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:
Winchester Hall

CITY OR TOWN:
Frederick

STATE: Maryland CODE: 24

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Maryland Archaeological Site Survey, 18 FR 14

DATE OF SURVEY: 1969 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Division of Archaeology, Maryland Geological Survey

STREET AND NUMBER:
208 Latrobe Hall, Johns Hopkins University

CITY OR TOWN:
Baltimore

STATE: Maryland CODE: 24

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Maryland

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ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Biggs Ford site is a large, relatively well-preserved, multicomponent, late prehistoric Indian village site near the Monocacy River in central Frederick County, Maryland.¹ The site is in a cultivated field and has been known to local relic collectors and amateur archaeologists for several decades. Brief testing was conducted by Spencer O. Geasey about 1955 when a few refuse-filled pits were found below the plowzone. Geasey notified the Maryland Geological Survey in October 1969 that a proposed sewer interceptor from Walkersville to Frederick would cross the central portion of the site. Excavations were conducted by the Division of Archaeology of the Maryland Geological Survey with volunteer assistance from October 1969 until July 1970. A road grader was used to push off the 25 to 35 cm. of plow-disturbed top soil in a long strip measuring 7 by 230 meters where the pipe was to cross the site.

Several dark, refuse-filled pits and a few post molds became evident as soon as the grader reached the top of the subsoil. Careful hand scraping with shovels, hoes, or trowels revealed a complex archaeological record. Time permitted cross sectioning of only a few of the post molds, but all other features lying wholly within the trench were completely excavated. A few features not entirely within the trench were partially excavated or left unexcavated.

Although hundreds of stains thought to be post molds were discovered and recorded, relatively few clear patterns emerged. Nevertheless, there were a number of alignments of clear, regularly spaced post molds. On the east edge of the site some curved lines with posts 6 cm in diameter and spaced 60 cm apart may be portions of stockades which surrounded the village. Although not clear in their entirety, two house structures were identified; the post were 30-40 cm. apart and sometimes paired. Both were rectangular in outline with parallel sides and rounded ends. One measured 5 by 9 meters and the other measured 4 by 6 meters. It is likely that most of the post molds are associated with either of the two late prehistoric components represented at the site, but it has not been determined to which late component the alignments may belong.

Over 30 features appearing as dark or disturbed soil in the top of the subsoil were identified; most of the pits are of unknown function but were filled with refuse; 10 were graves. There were generally two shapes of pit outlines: round and elongated. The round pits were scattered at random, but the five elongated pits were arranged end-to-end in an arc which presumably would have proven to be part of a complete circle and a larger area been excavated. As will

¹The report was kindly provided by Tyler Bastian (1974). Only sections pertaining to elaborations of excavational techniques have been extensively omitted.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian; 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
- 15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi- | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | losophy | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human- | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | itarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The well-preserved Biggs Ford site is one of the few known large village sites in the Monocacy Valley. Only a small part of the site has been excavated. The site shows relationships of the archaeology of the Potomac, Susquehanna, and the Ohio valleys. The two major Late Woodland components at the site (ca. A.D. 900-1500) can be stratigraphically separated on the bases of intrusive pits. The excellent preservation of all aspects of the archaeological record and the professional excavations to date makes this one of the potentially important sites for understanding Late Woodland cultural development in the riverine basins of the Piedmont province. Situated in an area of numerous recent subdivisions, the site may eventually be threatened by destruction.

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bastian, Tyler. Preliminary Notes on the Biggs Ford Site, Frederick County, Maryland. Report on file at Division of Archaeology, Maryland Geological Survey, Baltimore. 1974.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	LATITUDE		LONGITUDE
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	39° 28' 43"	77° 23' 11"	°	'	"
NE	39° 28' 42"	77° 22' 58"	°	'	"
SE	39° 28' 36"	77° 22' 59"	°	'	"
SW	39° 28' 37"	77° 23' 12"	°	'	"

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 16 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Wayne E. Clark, Archaeological Intern

ORGANIZATION: Maryland Historical Trust DATE: August 1974

STREET AND NUMBER:
2525 Riva Road

CITY OR TOWN: Annapolis STATE: Maryland CODE: 24

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name Arthur C. Townsend

Title State Historic Preservation Officer

Date April 17, 1975

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

 Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

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(Continuation Sheet) #1

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STATE	
Maryland	
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Biggs Ford Prehistoric Village Archaeological Site

7. DESCRIPTION, continued

become evident below, all of the elongated pits were associated with the earlier of the two major late components of the site while the round pits can be attributed to at least three separate components. All of the graves (except some skull fragments in one of the elongated pits) were associated with the latest major component: some were intrusive into elongated pits.

Graves seemed to be scattered at random within the area of dense occupation exposed by the trench. There were 10 graves containing a total of 12 skeletons. Two of the graves contained 2 infant skeletons each. There were 8 infants, 2 juveniles, and 2 adults plus some skull fragments of an adult included in on the elongated pits. The adults and juveniles were single flexed burials. The heads of the skeletons were usually to the east or south; none were to the west. Grave goods were found with about half of the burials. Typical artifacts with the graves were shell disk beads and drilled olenella shells. One juvenile was accompanied by a miniature clay vessel which was recovered intact. The exceptional adult grave was a middle-aged male accompanied by a bow and quiver of 10 arrows, 2 celts, a broken and worn 2-hole gorget, a vasiform steatite pipe, 2 bone punches, a beaver incisor, and several bird claws and wing bones. No dog skeletons were found.

Potsherds and triangular unnotched projectile points were the most common artifacts recovered during the excavations at the Biggs Ford site. Two types of pottery comprise over 95 percent of the sherds recovered. About two-thirds of the sherds have cord-roughened surfaces and grit temper. Decoration consists of rows and plats of cord-wrapped-stick impressions and occasional exterior of interior punctations. The rims have squared or splayed-out lips, and some have an added exterior strip or filet which is characteristically decorated with oblique impressions of a cord-wrapped stick. The Biggs Ford sample combines features of the early late prehistoric Shepard Cord-Marked type of the Potomac Valley Late Woodland Montgomery focus and of the central Pennsylvania Late Woodland Clemson pottery type, all of which in turn are related to Late Woodland Owasco types in New York where it is the prehistoric ancestor of the Iroquois pottery.

The other principal kind of pottery found at Biggs Ford has both cord-roughened and smoothed surfaces and is tempered with crushed river mussel shell. Rims are typically underdecorated, but a few are incised or punctated. Some rims have small lugs. The sample is related to Keyser Cord-Marked of the Potomac Shenandoah Valley late prehistoric Luray focus and more

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Biggs Ford Prehistoric Village Archaeological Site

7. DESCRIPTION, continued

generally to the Upper Ohio Valley Late Prehistoric and early contact Monogahela cultures. No contact artifacts were found at Biggs Ford.

Other kinds of pottery comprise a small minority of the total sample. Included are several sherds of steatite tempered Early Woodland Marcey Creek Plain.

Most of the projectile points recovered are triangular unnotched points of which there are two varieties. About half of the triangular points are of medium size (ca. 30 cm long) and made of rhyolite; the other triangular points are smaller (ca. 20 cm long) and made of quartz. About a quarter of the projectile points found are broad-stemmed or shallow side-notched types of unweathered rhyolite and probably of the Middle Woodland affiliation of ca. A.D. 200 to 600. Few other kinds of points occurred.

Organic remains were common in the pits. Bones include deer turtle, turkey, and others. Charred corn kernels were abundant in some of the elongated pits.

Apart from pottery and projectile points, artifacts recovered include turtle shell bowls, bone awls, marginella shell beads, a fragment of a discoidal, etc.

Two major components can be identified. The earlier includes the elongated pits, large triangular rhyolite points, grit tempered pottery, and many of the round pits. On the basis of artifact, especially ceramic, comparisons to dated sites in other areas, this component may date between A.D. 900 and 1300. The later major component includes all of the burials, some of the round pits, small quartz triangular points, and shell tempered pottery. None of the latter kinds of points and pottery were found in the elongated pits, and several of the burial pits were intruded into the elongated pits. The late component may date between A.D. 1300 and 1500.



BIGGS FORD PREHISTORIC VILLAGE ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE
(SNYDERS #35)

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