

Northeast Historical Archaeology

Volume 31 *Special Issue: Historic Preservation and the Archaeology of Nineteenth-Century Farmsteads in the Northeast*

Article 11

2001

Research Questions for the Archaeology of Rural Places: Experiences from the Middle Atlantic

Wade Catts

Follow this and additional works at: <http://orb.binghamton.edu/neha>



Part of the [Archaeological Anthropology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Catts, Wade (2001) "Research Questions for the Archaeology of Rural Places: Experiences from the Middle Atlantic," *Northeast Historical Archaeology*: Vol. 30-31 31, Article 11.

<https://doi.org/10.22191/neha/vol31/iss1/11> Available at: <http://orb.binghamton.edu/neha/vol31/iss1/11>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by The Open Repository @ Binghamton (The ORB). It has been accepted for inclusion in Northeast Historical Archaeology by an authorized editor of The Open Repository @ Binghamton (The ORB). For more information, please contact ORB@binghamton.edu.

Research Questions for the Archaeology of Rural Places: Experiences from the Middle Atlantic

Cover Page Footnote

The ideas expressed in this paper have been developed over a period of time and in conversation with a number of colleagues. I would like to thank the two anonymous reviewers and the following individuals (in alphabetical order) for influencing my thinking and contributing to the ways that I view the subject of the archaeology of rural places: david Almendinger, Mary Beaudry, Richard Bushman, Charles Cheek, Ellis Coleman, Lu Ann De Cunzo, Katherine Dinnel, Charles Fithian, David Grettler, Juliette J. Gerhardt, Bernard Herman, Terry Klein, Jed Levin, Sara Mascia, George L. Miller, Henry Miller, Edward Morin, David Orr, Daniel G. Roberts, Michael D. Scholl, Mark Shaffer, Barbara Hsiao Silber, Rebecca Yamin. I would also like to acknowledge the strong intellectual debt I owe to the late Douglas Kellogg, whose recent tragic and untimely death has deprived me of a close friend and trusted colleague. While all of these people have influence my thinking, any errors or misinterpretations are solely the responsibility of the author.

Research Questions for the Archaeology of Rural Places: Experiences from the Middle Atlantic

Wade P. Catts

That some 19th-century farmsteads and other rural places have significance is generally conceded as true. Our problem as historical archaeologists is to develop research questions and directions that illuminate and explain to a broad audience the significance of the physical evidence of the cultures of agriculture in American history. This essay looks at some of the writings of early agricultural historians and draws on previous historical and archaeological farmstead studies in the Middle Atlantic region. Ideas about the success (or failure) of field approaches are presented, and suggestions for research directions that could serve as overarching themes to tie the archaeology of rural places to national trends are offered.

Il est généralement admis que certaines fermes et autres endroits ruraux datant du XIXe siècle sont importants. Le problème qui nous préoccupe en tant qu'archéologues de la période historique concerne le développement des questions de recherche et des instructions qui élucident et expliquent à un public vaste l'importance des preuves physiques des cultures associées à l'agriculture dans l'histoire américaine. Cet essai se concentre sur les écrits des premiers historiens de l'agriculture et s'appuie sur des études archéologiques et historiques portant sur des fermes de la région de l'Atlantique centre. Nous y présentons des idées à propos du succès (ou de l'échec) des approches sur le terrain. Nous offrons aussi des suggestions d'instructions de recherche qui pourraient servir de thèmes très importants liant l'archéologie des endroits ruraux aux tendances nationales.

Introduction

The exploration of agricultural history even in considerable detail, is not then, mere antiquarianism; it is indeed much more. It is not only the schoolbook for which we can learn to know ourselves; it also has something to do with the future (Carman and Tugwell 1938: 102).

In recent years, the archaeology of 19th-century farmsteads and rural places has come to the forefront at annual meetings of regional and national archaeologists (Cassell and Mead 1996; De Cunzo and Catts 1996; Baugher and Klein 1998). For the most part, it has been conceded by interested parties that farmsteads and other rural places can play an important role in contributing to the historical narratives of the cultures of agriculture in the Northeast. The precise nature of this role is not as easily defined, and the contributors to this volume, among others, are grappling with defining the significance of rural places. One of our goals as historical archaeologists is to develop theoret-

ical and methodological approaches to the study of 19th-century rural places that serve to illuminate the significance of the farm in North American history.

In any discussion of American agriculture and rural life, it is important to keep in mind that most Americans lived on or near farms through the beginning of the 20th-century. In 1850, the total number of farms in the United States was over 1.4 million; 40 years later, by the end of the 19th-century, that number had increased nationally to over 4.5 million. At the same time, between 1850 and 1890, the average size of U.S. farms declined from 203 acres to 137 acres. One author, writing at the turn of the century, noted that middle class farms were on the rise during the second half of the 19th century (Holmes 1900: 323). While the number of farms was increasing and the average acreage was decreasing, the number of people engaged in agricultural pursuits steadily declined during the second half of the 19th century. At the beginning of the Civil War, 85 of every 100 Americans lived in the rural

areas (Carman and Tugwell 1938). By 1890, about 39% of the U.S. population listed their occupations as agricultural (Holmes 1900: 313). In 1910, 54.2% of the U.S. population was still classified as rural (Schmidt 1940).

"If it is important to know our country intimately, then it is important that our acquaintance with the rural past should be deeper than it now is" (Carman and Tugwell 1938: 99). These words, written over six decades ago, are as timely for our profession's discussion today as they were when they were penned. At the turn of the last century, concern for America's agricultural heritage led a number of historians and geographers to argue for the significance of agriculture (Carman and Tugwell 1938; Schmidt 1940; Wilson 1938). Many of the issues historical archaeologists are currently trying to identify and many of the reasons for the significance of rural history and material culture were addressed by these agricultural historians in the 1930s. Noting that "agriculture is more than an occupation; it is a way of living," these scholars suggested that rural places be examined not just for physical factors, such as soil, topography, and climate, but also that "houses and surroundings, furnishings, conveniences, rural manners, morals, social customs, and religious practices" should be studied (Carman and Tugwell 1938: 101). One pioneer in the study of agricultural life, Louis Bernard Schmidt, suggested several reasons for the fundamental significance of the history of American agriculture, especially pointing out that detailed and careful studies of rural America are (or should be) an integral part of a well-balanced history of the nation (Schmidt 1940). Agricultural historian M. L. Wilson, quoting anthropologist Ruth Benedict's then recently published *Patterns of Culture* (1934), suggested that searching for cultural patterns within the field of American agriculture would be a fruitful line of inquiry (Wilson 1938). While the study of American agricultural history has advanced far beyond the thoughts and writings of these early practitioners, it is, I think, important to remember that much of

our discussion and debate has been covered by other scholars in other disciplines, long before the archaeological study of 19th-century farms and rural sites ever became an issue. Some of these ideas have entered archaeology, for example, one of the authors in this volume (De Cunzo) has approached the archaeological study of 19th-century rural life in Delaware from the perspective of the "cultures of agriculture."

The CNEHA farmstead workshop held in 1998 (Klein et al., this volume) outlined an action agenda, including developing broader, and perhaps less traditional, approaches to the study of farmsteads. This call for action serves, in essence, as a sort of "put-up or shut-up" mandate. This essay draws on a number of the archaeological and historical studies of farmsteads in the Middle Atlantic region, including investigations at rural sites in Delaware, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. Not surprisingly, the sites vary in environmental setting, geographic location, current condition, and history. The essay discusses the methods, rationale, and research issues applied to the investigations of these rural places. Ideas concerning the success (or failure) of these various methods and issues are presented, and several directions for future research are offered.

I have chosen to refer to the sites in question as rural places, rather than simply as farmsteads. While certain overarching historical events, such as the development of grain farming, arrival of mechanization, economic depressions, etc., are applicable to all (or most) farmsteads in the Middle Atlantic, each farmstead is a unique place, with its own history, patterns of land use, heyday, and demise. There is a broad range of site types that are related to "farmsteads," including shops, stores, mills, and other rural "industrial" sites, such as blacksmith shops, potteries, tanneries, quarries, and mines, all of which must be considered. Taken together, these other site types comprise parts of integrated and interconnected rural communities that need explanation and investigation and should not be ignored in our studies of 19th-century farm-

steads. Only through the investigation of individual sites can we begin to piece together the community connections among a region's mills, farms, shops, schools, and even fields, forests, and watercourses.

What follows is a discussion of topics related to the study of rural places of the 19th century. Several of these are offered as research directions, others are related to specific methodologies that have been or may be applied to the study of agricultural sites. Topics considered include farmstead longevity and its associated archaeological component, land-use history, local history, the effect of mechanization and technology on farms, field methods for sites with above ground resources, the value of oral histories in our studies of farmsteads, and the research potential of warfare on rural places. All should be viewed as subject to refinement and change.

The Long Durée (with apologies to Fernand Braudel)

Perhaps paramount among these research topics is the idea that the physical above-ground or archaeological evidence of today's farmsteads represents the culmination of years of occupation, adaptation, and change, or the long durée (Braudel 1981: 27-29). Just as rural places have present-day histories, they may also have pre-19th-century roots. The rendering of a farmstead on an atlas dating to the middle of the 19th century does not mean the site sprang from the ground full-blown at that time. At several recent CRM projects at 19th-century rural places in the Middle Atlantic where standing structures clearly indicated a 19th-century occupation, archaeological evidence of earlier dwellings and farmstead layouts has been revealed. While we as archaeologists recognize the evolution, adaptability, and uniqueness of rural places, those who we have to convince (government officials, land managers, private developers) do not often see what we see. In most instances, there will likely be an earlier archaeological component where there is still an existing historical farmstead or standing structure, and that archaeological component may contribute data that

detail the growth and development of the farm.

As one agricultural historian remarked six decades ago, "There is no universal rural pattern in American agricultural history" (Wilson 1938). The histories of rural places are not static, monolithic, one-moment-in-time events, but instead span generations. Farmers and farms change and adapt readily and quickly to fluctuating markets, new or improved transportation routes, and population trends. Often those changes will leave archaeological signatures, at the farmhouse and farm buildings, in the fields and fencelines, in the woodlot, along the stream course and mill pond.

Dell Upton, in his discussion of research directions in American vernacular architecture, noted that the study of past landscapes is an examination of the material culture of the "winners" (Upton 1983: 278). The buildings that architectural historians study are examples of the "successful" buildings, the best, most substantial, and most adaptable to their present surroundings. Ironically, these same structures may not be the most representative of past life ways. It is the much larger and inclusive category of unsuccessful buildings, those that have not withstood time and change and that have little documentary history that historical archaeologists are able to examine and that yield important data.

Land-Use Histories and Local History

The goal of rural archaeology is to reconstruct land-use histories of local places. Over a century ago, Woodrow Wilson, then professor of History at Princeton, stated that "local history is the ultimate substance of national history" (Wilson 1895: 369). He went on to describe national history as the history of its rural places and villages written on a large scale, but that "the detail of the pattern, the individual threads of the great fabric, are only to be found in local history" (Wilson 1895: 372). Historical archaeology by its nature provides a microcosm of the historical birth, life, and death of rural places. In the CRM field, the archaeological investigation of a rural place results in the production of a site report,

detailing the goals, methods, results, and history of that place. The site histories we prepare for the reports provide the basis for much of the archaeological work.

For many rural places, especially farmsteads, we often conclude that nothing of national significance happened there, but that the site holds local significance. Over the last several years, my experience serving on a county-wide historic preservation review board has led me to believe that arguing for local vs. national significance is a major difficulty in cultural resource management. It is generally easy to explain the importance of a house or farm where a nationally-significant person lived, slept, or died, but it is much more difficult to convince landholders, developers, and government officials that the farmstead of a "common" farm family has significance. This difficulty is encountered on a regular basis when the review board considers extant historic structures; i.e., places where above-ground physical evidence is readily apparent. The task is even more daunting when the cultural resources in question are archaeological—out-of-sight and underground.

Land use and land development are currently hot topics in the Middle Atlantic and throughout much of the Northeast. Rural places are currently being altered at a pace and scale not previously experienced in American history. The study of the suburbanization of the hinterlands of U.S. and Canadian cities itself offers archaeologists an important field of investigation and a focus for research. The conversion of fields sprouting grain to fields sprouting houses is not a recent development in American history (Jackson 1985), but to date few historical archaeologists have studied the history of farmsteads as part of this suburban trend. A notable archaeological study of the effect of suburbanization on 19th-century farms was the work undertaken at the Hopper House in Bergen County, New Jersey (Yamin and Klein 1991; Yamin and Bridges 1996). Approaching the study of rural places from the research perspective of suburbanization provides not just a way to interpret the early history of the site, but also a vehicle to bring its story into the present, where connections to the local, and on a broader scale, the national

community can be made. In 1976, agricultural scholar James Malin called for an integrated multi-disciplinary approach for the study of rural America, in which rural histories (or narratives) examine and explore the interrelationship between the countryside, market towns, suburbanization, and urban centers (Swierenga 1983: 94). The archaeological study of rural places should be grounded in the historical context of larger rural communities, and historical archaeologists should focus their research on the "tale of the development—and often, decline—of rural communities as they have interacted with expanding urban centers" (Swierenga 1983: 93). Archaeology can play a significant role in the creation of these agricultural narratives, through the development of explanatory studies about rural communities as ecological, social, and cultural systems.

A recent land study has reported "the vast American countryside, the fountainhead of national myth, memory, and identity, is beginning to lose its distinctiveness" (Diamond and Noonan 1996: 1). Much of the distinctiveness of the countryside derives from the historic landscape, with its farmsteads, houses, fields, woodlands, roadways, mills, and waterways. These settlement features provide local communities with physical links to their past, and these links reinforce the communities with a sense of uniqueness and place. Without these links to the past, the retention of historical roots is difficult (Diamond and Noonan 1996: 55–57). Agricultural historians Harry Carman and Rexford Tugwell recognized the uncertain fate of rural places as early as 1938 when they asked how the nation "which apparently is becoming increasingly urban, [will] shape its policy towards what is left of agriculture?" (Carman and Tugwell 1938: 102).

Effects of Technology and Mechanization on Rural Places

Mechanization during the second half of the 19th century affected many aspects of the farm, from the way the agricultural land was treated to the daily tasks of women around the farmstead. The advent of domestic and farming mechanization varied from rural place to rural place throughout the region, but the

result was significant for the farm, the farmer, draft animals, land use practices, and rural places. For example, a northeastern Pennsylvania farmboy describes the coming of motorized tractors to his farm in the early 20th-century and how it changed farming practices (Alger 1961). While the tractor benefited farms tremendously, it also had important limitations. Fear of tipping prevented farmers from plowing sloping land, forcing them to cultivate bottom land. Previously bottom land had served as pasture for the pre-tractor "horse" power, the farm's mules. Mules were gradually phased out, the bottom land cultivated, and the slopes began to regenerate into forest land, creating the late 20th-century wooded landscapes we see today in northeastern Pennsylvania.

The arrival of farm machinery is also closely tied to the American Civil War. In many parts of the country, (e.g., Maryland, Ohio, Iowa, and Wisconsin), the decline in the male labor force caused by the war hastened mechanization on the farm (Lee 1982; Rasmussen 1965). We should keep in mind that, just like sherds of ceramics or glass, abandoned farming equipment is an artifact, physical evidence of changes in farming technologies, and can thus be used to tell a site's story (Borgstrom 1967; Fitzgerald 1991; Garard 1980; Garvan 1967; Wik 1967).

Above Ground Resources versus Below Ground Resources

We currently have archaeological field methods that serve us well if the site is all below-ground and situated in a plowed or fallow field, but when long-term research is not the goal, as it is at the Spencer-Peirce-Little farm (see Beaudry, this volume), our methods are not as clear-cut where above-ground evidence exists. What is the importance of ruins or architectural remains and landscape features and do we as archaeologists have the ability to "read" these resources? Conversely, do architectural historians have the ability to "write-off" a site because it has ruins that have no architectural "integrity"?

In cultural resource management, the methods of site investigation we choose when investigating rural places are based on current land conditions, the historical record, archaeological potential, the public or private character of the client, and the overall goal of the project. These last two (client and goals) are probably the most important determining factors guiding our field methods. Field investigations at rural sites most often take the form of shovel testing at an established gridded interval, followed by the excavation of measured units. Our general assumption in employing these techniques is that densities and distributions of artifacts and features will be revealed and we will be able to make meaningful interpretations about rural lifeways.

In some cases, the sheer volume of physical data alters, or perhaps should alter, the methods. In projects where above-ground evidence of structures and site layout is abundant, the identification of foundations and cellar holes through excavation is unnecessary and redundant. Often at sites such as this, the surface evidence for wells (characterized by stone-lined shafts or depressions), trash middens (represented by a concentration of surface debris), and other potentially backfilled pits is obvious, suggesting that systematic excavation may be unprofitable. Difficulties arise when the site is overgrown, as is often the case with recently abandoned (within the last 50 years) farmsteads and rural sites that initially date from the 19th century. For example, at the Freas site (36MG302) in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania; the Carrell farmstead (36BU300) in Bucks County, Pennsylvania; and the Hartman/Rohrer Farmstead (36LA1238) in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, the farmsteads were located in thickly wooded settings with clear above-ground architectural evidence (in ruins) of houses, barns, wells, other outbuildings, tree lines, fence lines, road traces, and ornamental plantings (Benedict et al. 1998; Catts, Kingsley and Jessup 1997; Catts et al. 1999). Archaeological testing methods devised for these sites used a limited number of shovel tests, placed randomly rather than systematically to gather information about potential

subsurface features and site chronology, followed by mapping of all current landscape characteristics. Further excavations, in the form of measured units, were conducted to gather specific information regarding architectural details of dwellings, outbuildings, and barns, and mechanical trenching was used to examine deep features such as wells and other subsurface features. The results of the investigations at these sites provided information about pre-abandonment land-use patterns, the use of the farmsteads during the 19th and early 20th centuries, and in the case of the Hartman/Rohrer and Carrell farms, the locations of earlier dwelling houses and occupations.

Also noteworthy at the Carrell farmstead was the evidence of artifact disposal patterns. The yard area associated with the house (dating to 1897) was virtually clear of artifacts that could provide significant information about the ways the house yard was used. Instead, several early-to-mid-20th-century dumps were discovered at a considerable distance from the farmstead core itself. At the Carrell farm, the highest density of artifacts was associated with the first dwelling house on the property, built in the 1850s (Benedict et al. 1998). A similar pattern of debris disposal has been observed by the author at both tenant and owner-occupied sites that contain standing structures in the Middle Atlantic, suggesting that a change in the practice of discarding garbage became widespread in the region during the second half of the 19th-century. The timing of this practice and whether it was readily accepted could provide a useful avenue of archaeological inquiry. The practice of off-site or remote location dumping also points to the importance of considering the entire farm as the site, where possible, as suggested elsewhere in this volume (Beaudry this volume; De Cunzo this volume). Consideration may not require complete archaeological survey of the farmstead, but should entail examination of historical documentation, such as plats, aerial photographs (available, for example, from the U.S. Soil Conservation Service), and court and census records, related to the overall farm.

Often the archaeological evidence at rural places, such as the Carrell farmstead (Benedict

et al. 1998), the Buchanan-Savin farm (Scholl et al. 1994; De Cunzo this volume), and the Spencer-Peirce-Little farm (Beaudry this volume; Mascia 1996), is contained in an unplowed setting with either ruins or occupied standing structures. As such the archaeological remains are a record of past cultural landscapes, their creation and alteration (Beaudry 1986; Deetz 1990; Ostrogorsky 1987; Samuels 1979; Zierden 1996; Zierden and Herman 1996). The residents of the site occupied, used, and created these landscapes in a planned and orderly fashion to accommodate daily and seasonal activities, ranging from housing to gardens, and from cooking to sanitation. The idea of cultural landscape holds that land is modified according to cultural plans, "embodying often inseparable technological, social, and ideological dimensions" (Zierden 1996: 287). Archaeologists working in both rural and urban settings have shown that yard deposits are actually an artifact of the landscape formation process and therefore constitute an important data set (Beaudry 1987; Brown 1987; Gundaker 1993; Honerkamp and Fairbanks 1984; Ostrogorsky 1987; Zierden 1996: 292). For many CRM projects, our methods of investigating the cultural landscape surrounding rural places may not be adequate due to funding and project goals. More to the point, in rural settings, cultural landscapes such as house yards may be interpreted by archaeologists as disturbed or lacking any archaeological integrity because of the accessional character of the yard.

Oral Histories

Historical archaeologists have long recognized the great value in compiling oral histories of sites. As we start a new century, oral sources are fast disappearing, and should be tapped (and taped) whenever possible. The technique is already used on many projects in the Middle Atlantic. At the Carrell Farmstead discussed above, our best historical data and link with the past came from oral sources that were able to extend our investigations back

into the 19th century (Benedict et al. 1998). Not only were the sources able to provide a rich oral context in which to view the farmstead, the descendants of the last farmers at the site also provided unique visual images of the property, including watercolors prepared in the 1940s that illustrated, as no other source could, the layout and use of the property earlier. The oral histories that are available can serve to link our archaeological research, often considered by some to be remote or of little value, with the most recent past at a particular site location. That link can be a point of entry for the local public into the history and archaeology of their neighborhood, thereby providing some meaning, other than regulatory, to the investigations we undertake.

The Effect of Warfare on Rural Places

Past warfare effects the archaeology of rural places through its impact on the social and environmental landscape of the Middle Atlantic and Northeast. It is important to understand that what is suggested here is not simply battle-related effects, but includes broader, longer-term effects on farming practices, farm layouts, and social structure. The most obvious of these conflicts was the American Civil War, but other conflicts should also be considered, such as the French and Indian war, the American Revolution, the War of 1812, and the frontier wars. For several of these wars, levels of destruction, displacement of populations, and length of time for recovery are documented in government damages claims, diaries, and other official reports. Archaeologically these events should leave a signature in the ground that can serve as signposts for dating features, site improvements, alterations in site layout, and reasons for site abandonment. This is not a new idea or concept; it has been applied on several studies of Civil War-era archaeological sites (Geier 1994; Orr 1994; Orser 1994).

In the case of the American Civil War, I believe this is a widespread effect with untapped archaeological potential. Consider the number of rural places that were dramatically and physically altered or reworked in the southern U.S. from the Mason-Dixon Line to

the Mississippi River. Contemporary accounts recorded during and after the war provide written descriptions of the extent of the damage and the scarring of the land. One correspondent traveling over the area of tide-water Virginia that played host to the Peninsula campaign in 1862 noted, "... the houses are riddled with rifle-balls and of course, deserted, fences torn up, the by-roads strewn with castaway accouterments," and "residences were all or nearly all deserted, many partially burnt—all showing evidence of the use of artillery or small-arms; and every trace of gates, fences, stacks, cattle, and all the usual abundance of the Virginia farmer's homestead gone, stolen, or wantonly destroyed" (Corsan 1996: 88-89). This is found throughout the southern United States. Anywhere that armies campaigned, woodlands, farmlands, and fences were devastated; livestock herds were decimated or gone; and housing, along with its attendant furnishing, was destroyed (Gallagher 1997:160-162). Long-term effects were not only physical but also economic and demographic. In many areas, the advent of mechanization on farms was directly related to labor shortages caused by military service during the war and by the high casualty rates and lack of manpower after the war.

Archaeological investigations at sites such as these could provide a tremendous source of data concerning the material culture of a large portion of the U.S. at a very specific period of time (1861-1865). The impact of the war on the agricultural landscape of the United States lasted far beyond the five years of combat. For example, an examination of the census records for the period 1860 to 1880 for Spotsylvania County, Virginia, reveals that on the eve of the Civil War about 116,000 acres of land were improved or under cultivation, or about half of all the available land in the county (Seigel, Catts, and Wuellner 1995: 11). Twenty years later slightly less than 53,000 acres were improved, or less than a quarter of the county's total acreage; 68 percent of the unimproved lands was composed of woodland (Seigel, Catts, and Wuellner 1995: 11).

Graphic evidence of the level of destruction and social displacement can be found in the plats prepared in the years following the

war by federal topographic engineers. Maps of such battles as Chancellorsville, the Wilderness, and Gettysburg, surveyed after the battles, depict structures marked as "ruins." An examination of the 1860 census and other documentation reveals that these rural places were dwellings and farmsteads at the start of the war. In other cases, the names associated with these places on the post-war maps do not match the names of residents known to have occupied the farms before the war, clearly indicating the displacement and relocation of the southern population.

While the American Civil War is the most obvious conflict that affected the rural places of the eastern United States, the impact of earlier wars on the landscape and layout of farmsteads may also hold promise for providing explanations of why and when particular changes were undertaken at particular sites. The campaigns in the "Old Northwest," along the Niagara frontier, along the Chesapeake, and in eastern Canada during the War of 1812 not only left military sites in their wake, such as battlefields, forts, and encampments, but damaged or destroyed towns (Washington DC, and Kingston, Ontario, for example), razed farms. The effects of these conflicts have left documentary evidence that can be combined with archaeological evidence. In seeking to place blame for the folly and destruction of war, for example, damage claims were filed by landholders in Pennsylvania and Delaware after the American War of Independence, requesting remuneration for the destruction of real estate and personal property. The battle of Brandywine (11 September 1777) and the encampment of the British army in the vicinity for five days severely damaged the lands of Charles Dilworth, who among his real estate losses counted such items as the burning of a "31 pannel post and rail fence," destruction of an "81 pannel worm fence," "8 apple trees in the orchard cut down," "damage done to dwelling house by breaking doors, stair case and pulling down an oven," the destruction of the paling fence surrounding the garden and yard, and the entire destruction of a frame

house in Wilmington, Delaware (Futhey and Cope 1881:105–106).

Conclusion

CRM and academic archaeologists involved in the study of rural places have an opportunity to contribute to the policy and dialog concerning the fate of these rural spaces, and we can provide information that no other group of professionals is compiling, whether they are environmentalists, engineers, or landscape historians. Focusing on the people of a place and change over time at that place, our work can contribute to the environmental and settlement history of a particular property or location. The detailed study that we bring to a particular site can provide the basis for renewed interest in the historical roots of a local community or population. In conjunction with environmental review, the work of CRM archaeologists can help local government and county planners in land use decisions. I believe there is an opportunity for archaeologists to make meaningful and timely contributions in the area of land use planning.

Several research directions, questions, and problems have been offered in the course of this essay. The topics presented are necessarily broad, so that they can be applied to rural places throughout the Northeast. Primary among these topics is the realization that 19th-century rural places should be examined for the evidence of long-term change. Landscapes have been altered and settlement patterns have changed, and the archaeological record preserves these changes at rural sites. The use of oral histories is already well-known and well-established and can be particularly useful when examining farm-related sites of the recent past. Other areas of investigation that have not been commonly addressed by archaeologists include the advent of mechanization on farms and the long-term effect of warfare on rural places. Finally, the role of historical archaeologists in developing land-use histories of particular places is important, and this role is one that our profession is especially well-suited to fill.

References

- Alger, Hugh W.
1961 Crops and Chores: Pennsylvania Farm Life in the 1890s. *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 85(4): 367-410.
- Baughner, Sherene, and Terry H. Klein, organizers
1998 The Archaeology of 19th-Century Farmsteads: The Dialogue Continues. Session for the Annual Meeting of the Council for Northeast Historical Archaeology, Montréal, Québec.
- Beaudry, Mary C.
1986 The Archaeology of Historical Land Use in Massachusetts. *Historical Archaeology* 20(2): 38-46.
1987 Analytical Scale and Methods for the Archaeological Study of Urban Households. *The Society for Historical Archaeology Newsletter* 20(1): 22-25.
- Benedict, Tod L., Juliette J. Gerhardt, Wade P. Catts, and Robert G. Kingsley
1998 Phase I Archaeological Survey and Phase II Archaeological Evaluations in Conjunction with the Proposed Street Road Commercial Development, Warrington Township, Bucks County, Pennsylvania. Report for Newman Development Group of Warrington, L.L.C., from John Milner Associates, Inc., West Chester, PA.
- Borgstrom, Georg
1967 Food and Agriculture in the 19th-Century. In *Technology and Civilization*, Volume 2, ed. by Melvin Kranzberg and Carroll W. Pursell, Jr., pp. 546-559. Oxford University Press, New York.
- Braudel, Fernand
1981 *The Structures of Everyday Life: The Limits of the Possible*. Harper and Row, New York.
- Brown, Marley, III
1987 Issues of Scale Revisited. *The Society for Historical Archaeology Newsletter* 20(1): 25-27.
- Carman, Harry J., and Rexford G. Tugwell
1938 The Significance of American Agricultural History. *Agricultural History* 12(2): 99-106.
- Cassell, Mark, and Leslie Mead, organizers
1996 Archaeological Perspectives on Regional Agrarian Development in 19th and Early 20th Century America. Session for the Annual Meeting of the Society for Historical Archaeology, Cincinnati, Ohio.
- Catts, Wade P., Robert G. Kingsley, and Amy R. Jessup
1997 A Phase II Archaeological Evaluation of the Freas Site (36MG302), Andorra Glen Apartment Complex, Whitmarsh Township, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. Report for The Andorra Group, from John Milner Associates, Inc., West Chester, PA.
- Catts, Wade P., Tod L. Benedict, Robert G. Kingsley, and Kathryn L. Wood
1999 A Phase I Survey and Phase II Archaeological evaluation of the Proposed East Lampeter Township Development, East Lampeter Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Report for Pitney Road Partners, L.L.C., from John Milner Associates, Inc., West Chester, PA.
- Corsan, W.C.
1996 *Two Months in the Confederate States: An Englishman's Travels Through the South*. B.H. Trask, editor. Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge.
- De Cunzo, Lu Ann, and Wade P. Catts, organizers
1996 Explorations in the Archaeology of Agriculture and Farm Life in the Middle Atlantic Region, 1800-1950. Session for the Annual Meeting of the Middle Atlantic Archaeological Conference, Ocean City, Maryland.
- Deetz, James
1990 Prologue: Landscapes as Cultural Statements. In *Earth Patterns: Essays in Landscape Archaeology*, ed. by William M. Kelso and Rachel Most, pp. 1-4.

University Press of Virginia,
Charlottesville.

Department of Agriculture, 1899, ed. by
George W. Hill, pp. 307–334. Government
Printing Office, Washington, DC.

Diamond, Henry, and Patrick F. Noonan

1996 *Land Use in America*. Island Press,
Washington, DC.

Fitzgerald, Deborah

1991 *Beyond Tractors: The History of
Technology in American Agriculture*.
Technology and Culture 32(1): 114–126.

Futhey, J. Smith, and Gilbert Cope

1881 *History of Chester County, Pennsylvania*.
Louis H. Everts, Philadelphia.

Gallagher, Gary W.

1997 *The Confederate War*. Harvard University
Press, Cambridge, MA.

Garard, Ira D.

1980 *Growing Up in Greene County, 1890-1918*.
Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine
63(2): 141–154; 63(3): 231–245.

Garvan, Anthony N. B.

1967 *Effects of Technology on Domestic Life,
1830-1880*. In *Technology and Civilization*,
Volume 2, ed. by Melvin Kranzberg and
Carroll W. Pursell, Jr., pp. 546–559. Oxford
University Press, New York.

Geier, Clarence R., Jr.

1994 *Toward a Social History of the Civil War:
The Hatcher-Cheatham Site*. In *Look To The
Earth: Historical Archaeology and the
American Civil War*, ed. by Clarence R.
Geier, Jr. and Susan B. Winter, pp. 191–214.
The University of Tennessee Press,
Knoxville.

Gundaker, Grey

1993 *Tradition and Innovation in African-
American Yards*. *African Arts* 26(2): 58–71.

Holmes, George K.

1900 *Progress of Agriculture in the United
States*. In *Yearbook of the United States*,

Honerkamp, Nicholas, and Charles H. Fairbanks

1984 *Definition of Site Formatin Processes in
Urban Contexts*. *American Archaeology*
4(1): 60–66.

Jackson, Kenneth T.

1985 *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of
the United States*. Oxford University Press,
New York.

Lee, Carol

1982 *Legacy of the Land: 250 Years of Agriculture
in Carroll County, Maryland*. The Carroll
County Commissioners, Westminster,
Maryland.

Mascia, Sarah F.

1996 "One of the Best Farms in Essex County":
The Changing Domestic Landscape of a
Tenant Who Became an Owner. In
*Landscape Archaeology: Reading and
Interpreting the American Historical
Landscape*, ed. by Rebecca Yamin and
Karen Bescherer Metheny, pp. 147–174.
The University of Tennessee Press,
Knoxville.

Orr, David G.

1994 *The Archaeology of Trauma: An
Introduction to the Archaeology of the
American Civil War*. In *Look To The Earth:
Historical Archaeology and the American Civil
War*, ed. by Clarence R. Geier, Jr. and
Susan B. Winter, pp. 21–36. The University
of Tennessee Press, Knoxville.

Orser, Charles E., Jr.

1994 *Corn-Belt Agriculture during the Civil War
Period, 1850–1870: A Research Prospectus
for Historical Archaeology*. In *Look To The
Earth: Historical Archaeology and the
American Civil War*, ed. by Clarence R.
Geier, Jr. and Susan B. Winter, pp. 173–190.
The University of Tennessee Press,
Knoxville.

- Ostrogorsky, Michael
 1987 Economic Organization and Landscape: Physical and Social Terrain Alteration in Seattle. In *Living in Cities: Current Research in Urban Archaeology*, ed. by Edward Staski. Special Publication Series, Number 5: 10-18. The Society for Historical Archaeology. Tucson.
- Rasmussen, Wayne D.
 1965 The Civil War: A Catalyst of Agricultural Revolution. *Agricultural History* 39(4): 187-195.
- Samuels, Marwyn S.
 1979 The Biography of Landscape: Cause and Culpability. In *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes: Geographical Essays*, ed. by D.W. Meinig, pp. 51-88. Oxford University Press, New York.
- Schmidt, Louis Bernard
 1940 The History of American Agriculture as a Field of Research. *Agricultural History* 14(3): 117-126.
- Scholl, Michael D., Angela Hoseth, and David J. Grettler
 1994 *Transportation and Agricultural Changes in Blackbird Hundred: Final Archaeological Investigations at the Buchanan-Savin Farmstead, State Route 1 Corridor, Green Spring, New Castle County, Delaware*. Delaware Department of Transportation Archaeology Series No. 106. Dover, DE.
- Siegel, Peter E., Wade P. Catts, and Marguerita J. Wuellner
 1995 Phase II Archaeological Evaluations of Nine Sites in the Proposed Hunting Run Reservoir Area, Spotsylvania, County, Virginia. Report for Hayes, Seay, Mattern & Mattern, Inc., from John Milner Associates, Inc., West Chester, PA.
- Swierenga, Robert P.
 1983 Agriculture and Rural Life: The New Rural History. In *Ordinary People and Everyday Life: Perspectives on the New Social History*, ed. by James B. Gardner and George Rollie Adams, pp. 91-114. American Association for State and Local History, Nashville.
- Upton, Dell
 1983 The Power of Things: Recent Studies in American Vernacular Architecture. *American Quarterly* 35(3): 262-279.
- Wik, Reynold M.
 1967 Mechanization of the American Farm. In *Technology in Western Civilization*, Volume 2, ed. by Melvin Kranzberg and Carroll W. Pursell, Jr., pp. 353-368. Oxford University Press, New York.
- Wilson, M. L.
 1938 Cultural Pattern in Agricultural History. *Agricultural History* 12(1): 3-10.
- Wilson, Woodrow
 1895 The Course of American History. *Proceedings of the New Jersey Historical Society*, 2nd Series 13: 369-373.
- Yamin, Rebecca, and Joel I. Klein
 1991 The Henry A. Hopper House: An Archaeological Study of 19th-Century Suburbanization in Bergen County, New Jersey. Report for the New Jersey Department of Transportation, from EBASCO Services, Inc., Lyndhurst, NJ.
- Yamin, Rebecca, and Sarah T. Bridges
 1996 Farmers and Gentlemen Farmers; The 19th-Century Suburban Landscape. In *Landscape Archaeology: Reading and Interpreting the American Historical Landscape*, ed. by Rebecca Yamin and Karen Bescherer Metheny, pp. 147-174. The University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville.
- Zierden, Martha A.
 1996 The Urban Landscape, the Work Yard, and Archaeological Site Formation Processes in Charleston, South Carolina. In *Historical*

Archaeology and the Study of American Culture, ed. by Lu Ann De Cunzo and Bernard L. Herman, pp. 285–318. The University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville.

Zierden, Martha A., and Bernard L. Herman

1996 Charleston Townhouses: Archaeology, Architecture, and the Urban Landscape, 1750–1850. In *Landscape Archaeology: Studies in Reading and Interpreting the American Historical Landscape*. ed. by Rebecca Yamin and Karen B. Metheny, pp. 193–227. The University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville.

Acknowledgments

The ideas expressed in this paper have been developed over a period of time and in conversation with a number of colleagues. I would like to thank the two anonymous reviewers and the following individuals (in alphabetical order) for influencing my thinking and contributing to the ways that I have view the subject of the archaeology of rural places: David Almendinger, Mary Beaudry, Richard Bushman, Charles Cheek, Ellis Coleman, Lu Ann De Cunzo, Katherine Dinnel, Charles Fithian, David Grettler, Juliette J. Gerhardt, Bernard Herman, Terry Klein, Jed Levin, Sara Mascia, George L. Miller, Henry Miller, Edward Morin, David Orr, Daniel G.

Roberts, Michael D. Scholl, Mark Shaffer, Barbara Hsiao Silber, Rebecca Yamin. I would also like to acknowledge the strong intellectual debt I owe to the late Douglas Kellogg, whose recent tragic and untimely death has deprived me of a close friend and trusted colleague. While all of these people have influenced my thinking, any errors or misinterpretations are solely the responsibility of the author.

Wade P. Catts is a Principal Archeologist/Historian with John Milner Associates, Inc. He holds a Master's degree in American History from the University of Delaware. He has over 20 years of experience conducting historical and archeological investigations at historic sites in Pennsylvania, Maryland, New Jersey, Delaware, and Virginia. Research interests include the history of farmsteads and agricultural landscapes, military history and archeology, environmental history, African-American studies, and Middle Atlantic regional history and historic preservation.

Wade P. Catts

John Milner Associates, Inc.
535 North Church Street
West Chester, Pennsylvania 19380
wcatts@johnmilnerassociates.com