

# **WHERE DIRT WAS DEEP AND HISTORY WAS HIGH: THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE INDIAN QUEEN TAVERN AND 616–622 CAROLINE STREET, FREDERICKSBURG, VIRGINIA (PART II)**

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Note: This is Part II of a two-part series on the Marriott hotel dig. This article was published in Volume 6 (2007) of *Fredericksburg History and Biography*, the journal of the Central Virginia Battlefield Trust (CVBT). Dovetail deeply appreciates their permission to post this article on our webpage. For additional information on the incredible work done by the CVBT, please visit their webpage at <http://www.cvbt.org/>. To purchase a copy of Volume 6 of the Journal, see <http://www.cvbt.org/product-page/cvbt-journal-v6-2007>. Additional information on the Marriott excavation project can also be found in the full project report on file at Dovetail Cultural Resource Group, Fredericksburg, Virginia.<sup>1</sup>

## **Introduction**

When the average person walks down the street in a historic community, they see buildings, backyards, and parking lots. When an archaeologist walks down the same street, they see history and opportunity. Surrounding any historic house and under most parking lots lie centuries worth of remains from past populations. Whether it is a prehistoric projectile point or an early-twentieth century medicine bottle, each artifact retrieved from the earth tells a story. Recent archaeological excavations conducted at the corner of Caroline and Charlotte streets in Fredericksburg told many stories—from consuming high tea at the Indian Queen Tavern to working as an enslaved African-American; from living in an important river port at the height of prosperity to being at a strategic river crossing during an immensely-destructive war. The archaeological remains embodied the history of Fredericksburg.

In early 2006, the City of Fredericksburg entered final negotiations to sell a parking lot in the core of the historic district for the construction of a new hotel. The lot is located at the southwest corner of Caroline and Charlotte streets and was among the first lots to be sold after the founding of Fredericksburg in 1728. It had been continually occupied for almost 300 years, until the construction of the parking lot in 1967. In conjunction with the hotel developers (the Inns of Fredericksburg LLC), the City contracted with Dovetail Cultural Resource Group (Dovetail) to investigate the history of the lot and identify the potential

for intact archaeological remains below the paved surface. The Phase I work comprised extensive archival research and the excavation of seven archaeological trenches to determine if the lot had any physical integrity.

Intact architectural remains and an abundance of artifacts were encountered in all seven trenches. Preservation proved to be excellent, as the research team uncovered evidence of three centuries of past lifeways across the project area. Due to the significance of the archaeological remains and their potential to yield important information about local, state, and national history, Dovetail recommended that the site receive additional archaeological investigations prior to development. The retention of layered occupation is very rare within the archaeological record of not only Fredericksburg, but across Virginia and within urban areas throughout the United States. Recognizing the importance of this site, numerous agencies, groups, and individuals came together to sponsor two months of additional excavations.

This article is the second in a two-part series on the history and archaeological investigations at the proposed hotel development site in downtown Fredericksburg. Part I, published in 2006, included the background of the project, the history of the lots, and the outcome of the preliminary archaeological survey completed at the site. The current article presents the results of the large-scale excavations and the importance of the project to the City's preservation initiatives. Although a complete history of this area was presented in Part I of this article series, it is important to understand the excavation results in context. Therefore, a brief history is presented here followed by a short synthesis of the survey results. A comprehensive examination of the subsequent large-scale excavations follows.

## **Project Area Description**

The hotel project area is located in the City of Fredericksburg, Virginia at the southwest corner of the intersection of Caroline and Charlotte streets and within the Fredericksburg Historic District (Figure 1). The city block that contains the project area is bounded by Caroline Street on the east, Charlotte Street on the north, Princess Anne Street on the west, and Wolfe Street on the south. This block currently contains the Fredericksburg Police Station and Juvenile Court on the northwest corner, the Fredericksburg Fire Department on the southwest corner, and commercial development along the east side of Caroline Street. Directly south of the project area is the City of Fredericksburg Police Records Building, a cinderblock structure built in the late 1960s.

The hotel will cover what is now the parking lot and the area just to the south of the parking area, necessitating the removal of the cinderblock records building. Because the construction will involve subsurface disturbances across the area, the City and the Inns of Fredericksburg LLC agreed to examine the history of the lot and the soils below the pavement prior to any construction activity.



Figure 1: Location of the Hotel Project Area in Downtown Fredericksburg, Virginia.

## History of the Hotel Lot: A Summary

The project area was one of the original lots set out as the 50-acre town of Fredericksburg in 1728. Located along the main street running through town and situated only two blocks from the wharf, Lot 35 was one of the first lots purchased.<sup>2</sup> Although the original occupant is not known, archival research has shown that the lot was used for domestic purposes from the 1730s through the mid-1750s. Around 1752, Roger Dixon opened a mercantile shop on the site. Dixon's Store was one of the largest shops in Fredericksburg and, like many eighteenth century shops, had a very wide range of goods for sale.<sup>3</sup> Dixon repeatedly advertised in the *Virginia Gazette*, published in Williamsburg (Figure 2). Most of Dixon's ads revolved around the sale of Madeira wine, including not only details on the sale of wine but also statements on the benefits of consuming such a beverage: "[Wine] has no other duty...but that of gratifying the palates of generous freemen, to gladden their hearts, and make them of a cheerful countenance..."<sup>4</sup>

To be SOLD by the SUBSCRIBER, in  
Fredericksburg,  
**G E N U I N E**  
**MADEIRA WINE,**

of the best *New York* quality, by the pipe, hoghead, or quarter cask, on the following terms, for ready money, or good bills of exchange, *viz.*

	£. 33-10	sterling per pipe.
	18	do. per hhd.
	9-10	do. per qr. cask.
Or on twelve months credit, - - -	38	do. per pipe.
	20	do. per hhd.
	11	do. per qr. cask.

which is as cheap as can be afforded.

I have also extraordinary good **RUM, SUGAR, and MOLOSSES,** to sell, for cash or wheat, on reasonable terms; also a parcel of good coarse white **LINENS,** and **STATIONARY,** to lump off.

**ROGER DIXON.**

Figure 2: Circa 1768 Ad For Roger Dixon's Store.<sup>5</sup>

Upon the death of Roger Dixon, the use of Lot 35 converted from sales to consumption. In 1771, Jacob Whiteley opened the first tavern on the lot.<sup>6</sup> Whiteley's Tavern was only in operation for a little over two years, before the business and Lot 35 were sold to William Herndon. Herndon renamed the enterprise the Indian Queen Tavern. Often referred to as the Old Indian, it remained in operation on this corner for the next 50 years.

By 1795, Herndon had greatly enlarged the tavern. In a 1795 Mutual Assurance Company insurance policy, the Indian Queen is listed as a two-story frame building facing Caroline Street.<sup>7</sup> The complex also included a kitchen, meat house, well, billiard's house, lumber house, and a very large brick stable. The Indian Queen was one of the largest and most famous taverns in Fredericksburg, and it was frequented by some of our most famous founding fathers, including George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, George Wythe, Archibald Cary, George Mason, and Ludwell Lee.<sup>8</sup> As told by General Dabny Herndon Maury in 1894, George Washington was a repeat visitor to the Indian Queen. When Washington was in Fredericksburg, "a dinner party was usually given to him on his arrival at the old Indian Queen Tavern, where, tradition tells us, drink was deep and play was high." Maury goes on to say: "Washington often dined at the Indian Queen Tavern, at which he was present. A British officer sang a comical song,— a very improper song, but funny as it was improper,—at which Washington laughed till the tears ran down his cheeks, and called upon the singer to repeat it."<sup>9</sup>

Many important public events were also held at the Indian Queen, including glass blowing exhibitions, art exhibits, and balls. The Indian Queen also had some of the best dining in town, with Sea Turtle soup as one of the house specialties.<sup>10</sup> In 1832, the Indian Queen Tavern burned to the ground. The fire decimated the entire hotel complex with the exception of the brick stables to the west.<sup>11</sup>

After the fire, Lot 35 remained fallow for several years. In 1841, the lot was divided into four parcels, all facing Caroline Street. The corner lot was a commercial building occupied by Pritchard and Thornton's Carriage Shop.<sup>12</sup> The remaining three lots comprised dwellings with subsidiary buildings in the long, narrow back lots to the west. The carriage shop was in operation until 1863. All four buildings survived the Battle of Fredericksburg in December 1862. After the war, the corner lot changed hands many times, but it was always used as a commercial venue. One of the final occupants of the corner store was Cassidy's Pharmacy, in operation from 1907 until the early 1950s.<sup>13</sup> The current parking lot was created in 1967 when the City purchased the property.<sup>14</sup> The lot was designed to cater to tourists stopping at the Fredericksburg Visitor's Center located across the street.

## **The Initial Archaeological Survey**

The archival research completed on the project area revealed that the lot has an extensive and extremely diverse history. From Dixon's Store in the mid-eighteenth century through Cassidy's Pharmacy in the twentieth century, the lot has been used for a variety of commercial and residential purposes for hundreds of years prior to its conversion to a parking lot. The question, however, was how much of the below-ground remains were destroyed when the parking lot was created?

To answer this question, Dovetail excavated seven backhoe trenches across the lot. The goal of this work was to examine the physical integrity of the subsurface deposits. Dovetail overlaid historic plats onto modern maps to determine the exact location of each trench. Once a trench location had been decided, city staff cut and removed the pavement from seven 5 x 15 foot areas where there was the potential for locating foundations and artifacts. A backhoe with a smooth-edged bucket was then used to scrape away the soils to expose the deposits beneath.

All seven trenches had similar upper stratigraphy: two layers of pavement over a 3 to 5-inch thick dark gravel deposit on top of orange-tan sand fill. The fill was purposefully brought to the site in 1967 to level the lot. When the buildings on the site were destroyed to install the parking lot, the City truncated all of the above-ground elements, leaving the below-ground remains in place. These features included basements, foundations, landscaping, and alley walls.

Amazingly, the team found intact remains in each trench. Archaeologists uncovered the rear wall of the 1841 carriage factory building along with the adjoining alleyway on the northern edge of the project area. The original stoneware sewer pipe was still resting near the foundation along the western edge of the alley. One of the most striking features

uncovered within the trenches were two segments of a mid-nineteenth century brick alley wall, built to separate the domestic lots along Caroline Street from the Hope Iron Foundry, located along Princess Anne Street from the 1840s into the twentieth century.<sup>15</sup>

Like many urban lots, the space was used and reused over its three centuries of occupation. The alley wall found along the western boundary of the parking area was built on top of an earlier brick floor. A test unit placed adjacent to the alley wall uncovered a 3 x 3-foot section of the flooring. A few of the bricks were taken up to examine the stratigraphy below the brick floor, and artifacts were subsequently found up to 20 inches below this flooring. Thus, at least three different uses were found within this one area, all on top of each other.

Artifacts were found across the site and in all seven trenches. These artifacts date from the early-eighteenth through the twentieth century and included domestic artifacts (ceramics, glass, butchered animal bone), architectural remains (brick, plaster, slate roofing, asbestos roofing, nails), and even personal items (pipe stems, buttons, marbles).

In sum, artifacts from three centuries of Fredericksburg living were uncovered in the project area. Evidence included architectural remains such as foundations and floors, landscape features like walls, and an abundance of artifacts of all varieties. The preservation of the historic deposits was excellent and very unique for an east coast urban lot, especially one with such a long and complex history. Materials from all phases of occupation were noted during the work, including items from Dixon's Store, the Indian Queen Tavern, Pritchard and Thorton's Carriage Shop, and Cassidy's Pharmacy—four businesses that are an excellent representation of Fredericksburg's commercial heritage.

## **Archaeological Excavations: Goals and Methodologies**

Because of the integrity of the soils in this area and the potential to uncover intact deposits, additional funding was sought from numerous sources to uncover a larger section of the parking lot. The team hoped that opening a larger area would increase the potential for uncovering intact features, which could show how the lot had been altered through the years. In particular, the team was hoping to uncover part of the foundation of the Indian Queen Tavern dating to the late-eighteenth century, as well as additional information on the antebellum domestic landscape of 616–622 Caroline Street. While numerous late-eighteenth and nineteenth-century dwellings exist in Fredericksburg, few retain their historic landscapes. Since several of the buildings on this lot had rear outbuildings, Dovetail was hoping that their remains might be found under the pavement. In particular, there was a chance that an antebellum slave quarter was located within the project area. Since no slave quarters have been previously excavated in Fredericksburg, the fieldwork included excavations within the potential slave quarter area to uncover the dwelling remains and learn as much as possible from the deposits.

Archaeologists monitored the removal of additional pavement within a 35 x 55 foot area near the center of the parking lot. This area was selected based on the results of the backhoe trenching survey and archival research. A backhoe was then used to strip all

1960s fill deposits brought in to level the parking lot. Dovetail established a 10 x 10-foot grid system across the area, and each unit received a numeric designation. This system helped the archaeologists maintain control over all features and recovered artifacts (Figure 3).



Figure 3: Dovetail Archaeologists Begin to Excavate the Site in 10 x 10 Foot Units.

Within each of the 10 x 10 foot units, archaeologists began the excavations by hand, using flat shovels and trowels until features such as foundations or artifact clusters were exposed. At that time, excavations in the larger units ceased, and smaller units were laid out across the notable features for further exploration. Each feature was hand-excavated using shovels and trowels and sometimes teaspoons and dental picks. The entire process was documented through photographs, written notes, and scaled drawings.

In addition to identifying features, artifact analysis proved to be another key component to understanding past activities at the site. To assure complete retrieval and accuracy, all soil excavated from the site was screened, by excavation unit and layer, through ¼-inch mesh. This method allowed the archaeologists to retrieve all artifacts that were deposited in each context, big and small, and also to retain the provenience<sup>16</sup> of each item. If an artifact loses its provenience, it can only tell a fraction of the story.

## Archaeological Excavations: Results

In total, archaeologists excavated 29 units at the hotel site, ranging in size from the large 10 x 10 foot units excavated to remove the overburden to smaller 3 x 3 foot units placed within particular features to help understand how they were created. During this work, Dovetail found layers of foundations, features, and artifacts across the entire excavation area. This evidence, spanning three centuries of occupation, included: 1) part of the foundation of an early-mid eighteenth century building foundation; 2) the rear section of the circa 1773–1832 Indian Queen Tavern; 3) a rear work area associated with the Indian Queen; 4) a late-1830s Servant or Slave Quarter built over both the eighteenth century building and the Tavern; 5) the previously mentioned 1840s brick alley wall; and, 6) an early-twentieth century porch stoop (Figure 4).



Figure 4: Overview of the Dig Site Showing All Features and Excavation Units.

The early- to mid-eighteenth century remains included a cut stone foundation fastened with mud mortar. The 18-inch wide foundation measured approximately 12 x 10 feet and was formed of cut blocks of local Berea (colloquially called Aquia) sandstone. The use of Berea sandstone was very common in eighteenth-century Fredericksburg construction. The material was easy to work with, while proving to be a hardy and stable building material. When William Byrd II visited Fredericksburg in 1732, he remarked in his diary: “Just by the wharf is a quarry of white stone that is very soft in the ground and hardens in the air, appearing to be as fair and fine-grained as that of Portland.”<sup>17</sup> The stone he was referring to was Berea/Aquia. The same stone can be found comprising foundations and chimneys throughout Fredericksburg. Archaeological evidence showed that the foundation had been purposefully dismantled, likely to reuse the stones (Figure 5). This salvaging of materials was a common occurrence throughout Fredericksburg’s history. When a building was no longer needed, the usable materials were often robbed from the old feature and used as building material for a new structure.

An abundance of early- to mid-eighteenth century artifacts were found in association with the foundation. These items included Westerwald, Rhenish, tin-glazed earthenware, and white salt glazed stoneware ceramics, along with more ubiquitous eighteenth century items like green wine bottle glass and wrought nails. Based on the artifacts, the construction materials and technology, and the location of the foundation remains, it is believed that the foundation was associated with one of two (or both) occupations: a circa 1730 to 1750 domestic building on the lot or Roger Dixon's Store (circa 1750 to 1770). While the size of the building is too small to be the store building itself, this foundation could represent an associated outbuilding. Because of the fragmented nature of the remains, exact identification was not possible during the study.



Figure 5: The Remains of the Robbed 18th-Century Foundation Under Centuries of Subsequent Occupation.

The stone foundation sat directly under the foundation remains of the Indian Queen Tavern. The soil stratigraphy suggests that the early eighteenth century stone foundation was dismantled purposefully to accommodate construction of the tavern. It is probable that portions of the earlier foundation were reused in the creation of the Indian Queen. There are no known sketches of the Indian Queen Tavern, so only archaeology and historic documents will be able to reveal what this important building looked like.

The tavern was identified by the scale and massing of the foundation remains, the intensive burn layer covering the features (indicative of the 1832 fire), and the date of the artifacts. Like many eighteenth-century buildings constructed along Caroline Street, the Indian Queen had a stone foundation and a brick floor (Figure 6). Insurance policies state

that it had a timber-frame structural system and wood-shingled roof.<sup>18</sup> The portion uncovered during Dovetail's excavation was the rear (west) wall of the southern section. Evidence suggests that this section of the hotel included a brick floor and had an exterior end stone chimney. A comparison with insurance policies revealed that the Indian Queen was situated on Caroline Street, directly across from what is today known as The Chimneys, at 623 Caroline Street. Because the tavern was two stories in height and composed of at least four sections, it would have been an imposing and impressive structure, taking up the entire corner of the intersection. Unfortunately, the foundation of the main section of the tavern was destroyed when residences were built along Caroline Street in 1839. Thus, an exact configuration could no longer be determined.



Figure 6: The Rear Foundation and Interior Brick Flooring of the Indian Queen Tavern. Note the black charcoal residue left from the 1832 fire.

To the rear (west) of the tavern foundation, archaeologists uncovered a brick and stone pad likely used as a work area (Figure 7). This section of the tavern yard also included a well and meat house, and the work area was also likely used for laundry, butchery, and other tasks associated with tavern keeping. Later developments intruded upon the work area, including the 1841 alley wall and a mid-twentieth century telephone pole, but enough of the earlier fabric remained *in situ* to reveal the general composition of the tavern yard during its heyday.



Figure 7: The Indian Queen Work Area With Later Intrusions, Including an 1840s Alley Wall and a Twentieth-Century Telephone Pole.

Artifacts found within the tavern ruins and across the work yard included, as expected, an abundance of bone and serving wares, such as green wine bottle glass, utensils, and stemware from goblets and other drinking vessels (Figure 8). Most of the bone was cut mammal bone, reflecting a typical tavern diet of slabs of cut meat. One of the most interesting artifacts found near the work area was a 1773 Virginia half penny, the first coin type minted that referred to Virginia as a state. The most prevalent artifact by far, however, proved to be willow-pattern pearlware. During excavations at the tavern, Dovetail found plates, bowls, and trenchers all made with this same pattern (Figure 9). Willow-pattern pearlware was available from the late eighteenth century through approximately 1830,<sup>19</sup> the exact use dates of the Indian Queen. Because of the prolific amount of willow-pattern ceramics uncovered in the Indian Queen-era deposits and the types of vessels recovered, it is likely that this was the hotel plate pattern for at least a portion of its operating period.

The Indian Queen burned in April 1832. After the fire, the lot laid empty for about seven years.<sup>20</sup> In 1839, the three domestic buildings and one commercial shop were constructed on the lots facing Caroline Street. One of the most interesting finds of the dig was a circa 1839, 12 x 15 foot foundation built directly on top of the Indian Queen burn layer. The foundation was located in what would have been the rear yard of the home at 618 Caroline Street. On late-nineteenth century insurance maps, the building is labeled as a

“dwelling.”<sup>21</sup> A small, antebellum dwelling located in the rear yard of a home could have very interesting meaning. As such, the discovery of the structure held great interest to the research team.



Figure 8: Bar and Food Artifacts from the Indian Queen, including (clockwise from bottom): the base of a wine bottle, the copper leg to a kettle, a carved bone handle from a utensil, and an etched wine glass stem.



Figure 9: Willow-Pattern Pearlware Plates Used at the Indian Queen Tavern.

This antebellum foundation had an interesting architectural composition. The structural system was post-in-ground with brick infill, and several of the support posts had been replaced with pruned tree trunks (Figure 10). A post-in-ground building constructed in the 1830s is extremely unique. The technique was abundantly popular in the colony during the seventeenth and early eighteenth century,<sup>22</sup> but it was replaced with pier and sill and solid foundation construction in the mid- to late-eighteenth century. The building had a single brick exterior end chimney on the western elevation, thus the entry into the dwelling would have likely been to the east facing the main house on Caroline Street or into the yard to the south. Fragments of a raised wood floor were also recovered. The latter had collapsed within the building sometime prior to deconstruction of the building.



Figure 10: Foundation of the Servant/Slave Quarter, Noted by Arrows.

Artifacts found in association with this small dwelling included fragments of nineteenth-century table wares such as whiteware and yellowware plates, clear vessel glass, and, interestingly, an abundance of personal artifacts such as marbles, buttons, bone toothbrushes, eyeglass pieces, and buckles (Figure 11). Recovery of architectural materials such as cut nails with both cut and wrought heads and pre-industrial window glass confirm an antebellum construction date. Four types of evidence came together to help identify the use of this building: its construction period based on the types of materials used during construction, the methodology of the building construction, the artifact assemblage found surrounding the dwelling remains, and the archival research. Together, they lead to the hypothesis that this dwelling was a slave quarter. The chimney for the building was too small to have operated as a kitchen outbuilding, and the rudimentary construction method is not what would have been employed on the home of an individual from the emerging middle class or burgeoning upper class. The numerous domestic artifacts are indicative of permanent occupation, thus it likely did not function as a temporary outbuilding. Finally, archival evidence shows that enslaved Africans lived on the property at 618 Caroline Street during the antebellum period.<sup>23</sup> What is not known is if these enslaved individuals lived in the main house or in this separate dwelling in the rear yard.



Figure 11: Personal Artifacts Found at the Servant/Slave Quarter including buttons, thimbles, needles, a bone toothbrush, marbles, and glass from eyewear.

The evidence thus suggests that the building uncovered during the excavations was very likely a slave quarter, but this conclusion cannot be completely confirmed. Therefore, the interpretation of the building must be listed as a servant's quarter, not a slave quarter, as the occupant's standing as chattel cannot be validated. If this building is indeed a slave

quarter, though, it is the first urban slave quarter uncovered in Fredericksburg—an interesting development considering that over one-half of the population of Fredericksburg was enslaved in 1850.<sup>24</sup>

The town of Fredericksburg included 730 households in 1860,<sup>25</sup> all of which would soon become directly embroiled in one of the most monumental events in Fredericksburg history: the Civil War. Located along one of the main thoroughfares through town, Union and Confederate troops repeatedly passed this lot on Caroline Street at various times during the four-year war period. Fighting occurred in town during the First and Second Battles of Fredericksburg, and Union troops camped across the Rappahannock in Stafford County and the nearby community of Falmouth during the winter of 1862–1863, a presence that ravaged the built environment and disrupted daily lifeways of town inhabitants.

Besides the evidence of above-ground physical destruction, the Civil War usually left only a small mark in the archaeological record at urban sites due to its relatively-short duration. At the hotel site, though, archaeologists uncovered a unique feature with direct ties to the war. Behind the servants quarter, in an area that would have been located to the west of Caroline Street and along a wooden boundary fence, archaeologists uncovered a small refuse pit. Within the pit were several green wine bottles dating to the third quarter of the nineteenth century, whole and butchered animal bones, and the remains of a wooden ammunition box (Figure 12). The latter contained twenty-six 0.58 caliber minnie balls made at the Washington Arsenal just outside of Washington D.C. during the war. In addition to the ammunition box, Dovetail also recovered an exploded mortar shell on the site, which also related to the catastrophic events of December 1862.



Figure 12: Civil-War Era Refuse Deposit, including wine bottles, animal bone, and the remains of an ammunition box with 0.58 Calibur bullets (center).

Remains from the post-war period were also encountered during the excavations. The areas to the rear of the homes on Caroline Street continued to be used as back yard space for general household activities and even refuse deposit. A cement stoop was uncovered along the eastern edge of the excavation area, which would have functioned as a rear step for the home at 620 Caroline Street. An abundance of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century artifacts were found across the area, including ceramics, bottle glass, hurricane glass from gas light covers, and medicine bottles. The latter could have even been sold by Cassidy's Drug Store (Figure 13), which occupied 622 Caroline Street from 1907 until the 1950s.



Figure 13: Pharmacy Label from Cassidy's Drug Store.

## The Dig in Context

In sum, the hotel dig uncovered remains from the early- and late-eighteenth century, the early-nineteenth century, and the antebellum and post-war periods—over 300 years of occupation. The excavation allowed archaeologists to explore not only hidden transcripts on physical remains of the past but also untapped resources of today. When archaeologists explore a historic site, they have the ability to shed light on areas of the past that are not illuminated in written records. This includes marginalized groups such as woman, African-Americans, and artisan classes, to name a few, and also unmentioned areas of life. A daily activity that seemed mundane and uninteresting to the historic actor sometimes is exciting and interesting to the modern-day scholar. For example, archaeologists working in the backyard of the Indian Queen hotel were able to discern the inner-workings of this urban “hot spot” including ideas on refuse disposal, organization of daily chores, and the types of vessels and plates used to serve the guests.

One of the highlights of the excavation was the identification of the 1830s servant/slave quarter. Although half of the population of Fredericksburg was African American in 1860, very little is known about this entire segment of society. Little is also written about other household servants employed in town. The recovery of such a large collection of personal artifacts surrounding the home allows archaeologists to look at details on their lives that would otherwise go unnoticed. The presence of eyeglasses and medicine bottles shows their access to health care. The availability of such goods and services is likely because of their occupation in an urban area, as similar findings are nowhere near as

common on slave quarter sites in rural areas such as on plantations. Also recovered from the quarter was a diversity of ceramics and glass. This pattern is actually very common on many slave quarter sites, as servants used the items at their disposal including old dishes no longer used by the primary household or wine bottles no longer needed by the slave-holding family. This resulted in a hodgepodge of plates, drinking vessels, and utensils used in enslaved households.

Over the past 20 years, archaeologists have been working to overcome the sometimes negative academic and public perception of their field. While some view archaeologists as rogue relic hunters (i.e., the Indiana Jones theory), others view them as a closed, secretive network that keeps information close at hand. Still others embrace the decades-old trope of archaeologists as “handmaidens to history”. In reality, archaeologists conduct multidisciplinary studies to highlight areas that can only be examined through a combination of physical remains, archival documents, and oral histories, along with several other avenues of inquiry. The hotel site is an ideal example of this concept.

### **The Tourism of Tourism**

In addition to the abundance of information obtained by archaeologists from the excavation and research, Fredericksburg and its city officials got to witness other very important benefits of public archaeology, namely an increase in tourism and a larger awareness of historic events by city residents. In general, the public has a fascination with archaeology. Even when they realize that archaeologists don't find gold, buried treasure, or dinosaur bones, they are still enamored with the idea of uncovering the past through tangible remains. Archaeology can then be used as a very important tool to educate school children and adults alike on the history of a community. It has the ability to make the past come alive for some—a marble uncovered at a site was last played with by a child hundreds of years earlier. Numerous school groups visited the hotel site during the summer of 2006, from preschoolers to college students. All hopefully took away something new from their experience watching, and even participating in, part of the dig.

In addition, to local residents, an abundance of tourists visited the site every day. Ironically, while archaeologists were digging up a tavern—one of the most popular tourist hostelrys in Fredericksburg during the colonial and federalist periods—scores of tourists visited the Indian Queen for the first time in 175 years. Word on the finds was spread through on-site signage as well as media outlets. Several articles on the site were published in the Fredericksburg *Free Lance-Star* newspaper, and the local news station did a story on the dig. There were also two stories written in the “Travel Tourism” section of *Travel Host* magazine, a quarterly magazine that appears in all of the hotel rooms in the area. General publicity such as this is another method that archaeologists are starting to tap into to share the information garnered from their excavations.

The hotel dig, and similar large-scale excavations in other cities, have benefits beyond expanding our knowledge base and extending the information to the general public. It helped to highlight the presence and importance of subsurface remains to understanding our past. In New York City, when workers started uncovering bones while excavating for

a foundation in lower Manhattan, locals were shocked at the presence of intact soils. Archaeologists uncovered over 400 African-American slave burials in what is likely one of the most urbanized areas in the world—an area that most thought would have absolutely no probability to contain archaeological materials. In actuality, intact subsurface remains are everywhere. Like many urban areas, Fredericksburg has been used and reused for centuries. Each occupation left an indelible print on the material legacy of our community, and archeology can help fill in the gaps on many aspects of our past where little information is known.

## **The Hotel Dig and Fredericksburg: A Summary**

Moving beyond the physical, digs such as that at the hotel site can aid in the creation of preservation legislation and the exploration of theoretical issues related to cultural resources. In part because of the hotel dig, the City of Fredericksburg recently reconvened their Historic Preservation Task Force. One of the goals of the Preservation Plan being developed by the Task Force is to add an archaeological component to the City's comprehensive plan. Such a goal would allow for more digs across the city, increasing the potential for our community to learn more about our past through below-ground material remains.

The archaeological excavations at the hotel site comprised a multifaceted study on centuries of Fredericksburg's history. In total, historians and archaeologists uncovered details on one of the original lots in early-eighteenth century Fredericksburg, a mid-eighteenth century mercantile shop, a notable and notorious federal-period tavern, an antebellum servant's quarter, the Civil War, and post-war domestic and commercial occupation. All told, over 70,000 artifacts were retrieved from the 35 x 55 foot dig area. If an artifact indeed tells a story, then the hotel site shared thousands of stories spanning centuries of Fredericksburg history, to reveal much about the lives of countless individuals who lived and worked in this area.

## **Acknowledgements**

First and foremost, Dovetail would like to thank all of the groups who financially contributed to the work at the Marriott site. This includes the City of Fredericksburg, the Inns of Fredericksburg LLC, the Sunshine Foundation, the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, the Silver Company, the Fredericksburg Economic Development Authority, the Downtown Merchant's Association, Mr. Matt Kelly, Mr. Tom Byrnes, and an anonymous donor. At the City of Fredericksburg, Mr. Phil Rodenberg, Mr. Doug Fawcett, Mr. Erik Nelson, and Ms. Brenda Martin were extremely helpful in dealing with site logistics and arranging for an amazing group of city employees to help clear the site. Volunteers who helped dig at the site were also directly instrumental in completing this project. We profusely thank all of them, especially Mr. Brian Hyland, Mr. Matt Kelly, Mr. Billy Withers, and Ms. Holly Bisbee who gave up many days to help us in the field. The Dovetail crew included Mike Carmody, Kerry Schamel-Gonzalez, Marco Gonzalez, Jackie Maisano, Kristen Bloss, Andrew Deci, Missy Celi, and myself, who worked in the hot sun and in the pouring rain to get the project completed on time. Sean Maroney,

Kerry Schamel-Gonzalez, and Mike Carmody were also gracious to provide comments on this article prior to publication.

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<sup>1</sup> Kerri S. Barile, Kerry Schamel-González, and Sean P. Maroney. “*Inferior to None in the State*”: *The History, Archaeology, and Architecture of the Marriott Hotel Site in Fredericksburg, Virginia*. Fredericksburg, Virginia: Dovetail Cultural Resource Group.

<sup>2</sup> Spotsylvania County Deed Book (SCDB). Deed Book C, p. 140. Spotsylvania, Virginia: Spotsylvania County Circuit Court.

<sup>3</sup> *Virginia Gazette*, April 25, 1766. Page 3, column 1.; *Virginia Gazette*, March 31, 1768, Page 3, column 1.

<sup>4</sup> *Virginia Gazette*, June 15, 1769. Page 2, column 3.

<sup>5</sup> *Virginia Gazette*, March 31, 1768, Page 3, column 1.

<sup>6</sup> *Virginia Gazette*, May 6, 1773. Page 2, column 2.

<sup>7</sup> Mutual Assurance Company. Mutual Assurance Company Insurance Policy Records (On file, microfilm. Virginianna Room, Central Rappahannock Regional Library, Fredericksburg, Virginia.)

<sup>8</sup> Works Progress Administration Inventory (WPA). Cassidy’s Drug Store, formerly known as Indian Queen Tavern. Volume I, pp. 206–210. (Fredericksburg, Virginia: Central Rappahannock Regional Library, 1937), p. 209.

<sup>9</sup> Dabney Herndon Maury. *Recollections of a Virginian in the Mexican, Indian, and Civil Wars*. [http://www.ibiblio.org/pub/academic/history/marshall/military/civil\\_war\\_usa/D\\_H\\_Maury/DHM\\_01.txt](http://www.ibiblio.org/pub/academic/history/marshall/military/civil_war_usa/D_H_Maury/DHM_01.txt). Originally published in 1893. Accessed August 26, 2006.

<sup>10</sup> *Virginia Herald*. July 12, 1808. Page 3, column 3.

<sup>11</sup> *Virginia Herald*. April 28, 1832. Page 3, column 1.

<sup>12</sup> SCDB L, p. 226.

<sup>13</sup> *Fredericksburg Daily Star*. July 29, 1919. Page 1, column 1.; 1922; *Fredericksburg Daily Star*. May 18, 1922. Page 20, column 5.

<sup>14</sup> Fredericksburg Deed Book (FDB). Deed Book 134, p. 43 and 529 (Fredericksburg: City of Fredericksburg Circuit Court).

<sup>15</sup> Sanborn Insurance Maps. Sanborn Insurance Company Maps. (On file, Virginianna Room, Central Rappahannock Regional Library, Fredericksburg, Virginia.)

<sup>16</sup> Whereas many purveyors and disciplines of cultural materials refer to a piece’s “provenance”, American archaeologists use the term “provenience”. The change in spelling and pronunciation came about in the 1960s, when American archaeologists sought to move their field from a humanity to a science. As such, a group of theorists and related practitioners modified the spelling of a large group of terms to remove all connections with European social theory. For example, “archaeology” began to be spelled “archeology” and “provenance” was switched to “provenience”. Thus, the term “provenience” is not a spelling error in this case, but is the generally-accepted archaeological terminology for this concept.

<sup>17</sup> William Byrd. *The Westover Manuscripts: Containing the History of the Dividing Line Betwixt Virginia and North Carolina; a Journey to the Land of Eden, A.D. 1733; and a Progress to the Mines*. (Petersburg, Virginia: Edmund and Julian Ruffin, Petersburg, Virginia, 1966), p. 367–368.

<sup>18</sup> Mutual Assurance Company.

<sup>19</sup> Ivor Noel-Hume. *A Guide to Artifacts of Colonial America*. Reprinted from 1969. (New York: Vintage Books, 1991); Stanley South. *Methods and Theory in Historical Archaeology*. (New York: Academic Press, 1977).

<sup>20</sup> SCDB K, p. 181; SCDB L, p. 3.

<sup>21</sup> Sanborn Insurance Maps.

<sup>22</sup> Cary Carson, Norman F. Barka, William M. Kelso, Garry Wheeler Stone, and Dell Upton. *Impermanent Architecture in the Southern American Colonies*. (Winterthur Portfolio 16, nos. 2–3. Summer/Autumn 1981), p. 135–196.

<sup>23</sup> Fredericksburg List of Slave Inhabitants. List of Slave Inhabitants of Fredericksburg, Virginia. (Database created by the Department of Historic Preservation, University of Mary Washington, Fredericksburg, Virginia. <http://departments.umw.edu/hipr/www/Fredericksburg/census/1850USs2.htm>.)

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<sup>24</sup> Gary Stanton. How Fire Changed Fredericksburg, Virginia. In *Shaping Communities: Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture, VI*, edited by C. L. Hudgins and E. C. Cromley, pp. 122–134. (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1997), p. 127.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.