

THE VERNACULAR LANDSCAPE: INTERPRETATION OF THE TOBACCO CULTURE AT STRATFORD HALL

By

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(Under the Direction of Wayde Brown)

ABSTRACT

Landscapes present a unique challenge to the preservation profession in regards to cultural resource management due to the constantly changing nature of the natural environment. The challenge is only intensified when presented with a cultural landscape used for agriculture, where fluctuating social, economic, and environmental conditions often contribute to rapid changes in land-use patterns. When seeking to interpret the Colonial Era tobacco culture that developed along the Northern Neck of Virginia, a peninsula bound by the Potomac and Rappahannock Rivers, one is faced with all these factors. This thesis investigates the methods and implications of site interpretation that have been used on tobacco culture sites and the application of the methods to Stratford Hall Plantation.

Index Words: Cultural Landscapes, Interpretation, Stratford Hall, Northern Neck, Tobacco Culture, Augmented Reality

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DEDICATION:

Dad, who always asks the questions of what next, and what difference have you made?

Mom, who always knows when to listen, when to talk, and when to send chocolate.

And Micah who is a man of few words, but always seems to know what to say to his older brother.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Unlike other cultural resources, landscapes present a unique challenge to those seeking to interpret them, as they are composed of living, ever changing elements. The nature of a landscape is to be in a state of constant flux, continuously changing, evolving, and reacting to natural cycles of growth and decline. A landscape feature, such as a tree, starts as a seedling, grows to sapling, matures, and eventually succumbs to age, reverting back to the soil to support future growth. Similarly, an open expanse of grass can evolve into bramble, supporting first stage growth such as pines, followed by next stage successional oaks, before finally supporting specimens such as magnolias. A landscape, by its very nature, is not static.

Another significant factor in the appearance and form of the landscape is the influence of humans, who often manipulate the land to best suit their needs, desires, and uses. Grand gardens may be designed to display power or provide pleasure for the viewer. Sacred groves may serve as a setting for rituals. A vast field may be the site of a battle or other historical event. Later, these same sites might be transformed by humans to serve as memorials to the events that transpired upon them. It is the melding of these human patterns with the natural landscape that creates the concept known as cultural landscapes.

A cultural landscape can include a variety of landscape types displaying human patterns of behavior. The term 'cultural landscape' also encompasses landscapes that have been used for agricultural production. Agriculture landscapes provide an added challenge to cultural resource management as they are more actively manipulated and more readily changed to suit the complex demands of diet, customs, and market influences. The crop that was in demand last year may no longer

be appropriate to grow, thus forcing a change in land use and pattern. The question this thesis considers is how an evolved agricultural landscape can be interpreted effectively to a contemporary audience as a historic cultural landscape? The question is explored through a focus on one particular agricultural cultural landscape—the Colonial Era tobacco culture of the Northern Neck of Virginia. The results of the research will be applied to the site known as Stratford Hall.

Northern Neck Tobacco Culture Overview

Helping shape the form of the Virginia countryside shortly after the colony was founded in the 1620s, the tobacco culture landscape form resulted from forces, both natural and manmade. Celebrated historian and scholar Lorena Walsh, in her work *Motives of Honor, Pleasures and Profit: Plantation Management in the Colonial Chesapeake 1607-1763*, suggests influences such as geography, soil composition, decrees from Royal Governors, and patterns of settlement in Virginia were all pivotal factors in the spread of the cultivation of tobacco throughout the Tidewater Region.¹ Between 1620 and 1820, the crop flourished due to the fertility of the land, as did the tobacco culture. Land owners often amassed great wealth as they traded with English and other foreign ports exporting the region's tobacco commodities. A 'Golden Age of Tobacco' was experienced by most planters between 1732 and 1765. However, a changing economy, the American Revolutionary War, the loss of influence and financial power of the planter gentry, and the depletion of natural resources eventually led to the collapse of this culture in 1820.²

Tobacco landscapes, with their distinctive forms of field arrangements and settlement, served as the setting where key players of the society performed distinctive roles as either master or worker in the larger pattern of the culture. In addition to the planter gentry, enslaved African Americans were directly

¹ Lorena Walsh, *Motives of Honor, Pleasure, and Profit: Plantation Management in the Colonial Chesapeake, 1607-1763* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 5-24.

² In addition to the work of Lorena Walsh, Albert Tillson's *Accommodating Revolutions*, Rhys Isaac's *The Transformation of Virginia: 1740-1790* and Allan Kulikoff's *Tobacco and Slavery*, have proven crucial to the understanding of the patterns and influences on the Northern Neck tobacco culture.

responsible for the production of the crop that the merchants exported and transported to distant ports. The demands of the cultivation of tobacco created a highly constrained cycle of behavior directly related to the needs of the plant. For example, the step in the production process known as curing required vigilant monitoring of the water content of the tobacco in order to ensure that an adequately moist crop was sent to market. Day- to-day activity, as well as social behavior and constraints, all were directly influenced by the 'tobacco cycle.' As a part of the cycle, a distinct land use pattern emerged around the growing of tobacco, with features integral for preparation of the crop placed adjacent to the fields that grew it.

Located on the Northern Neck of Virginia, on a series of cliffs overlooking the Potomac River, Stratford Hall once served as the home plantation of one of the influential 'First Families of Virginia,' the Lees. Affluent members of Colonial Virginia society, the Lees' life at Stratford conformed to the larger patterns of Virginia tobacco culture. Constructed at the height of the economic success of the Lee family during the 1730s, Stratford Hall served as home to four generations of the family, until its eventual financial demise in the early 1800s, brought on in part by the end of tobacco production at the site. Robert E. Lee was born at Stratford Hall in 1807 with the family leaving the plantation shortly before his third birthday.



Figure 1.1 Stratford Hall from the southwest of the Oval facing north. The image shows the formal entrance of the Great House with the two southern dependencies in the foreground, Photo taken by the author

In 1928, the Robert E. Lee Memorial Foundation, later the Robert E. Lee Memorial Association (RELMA), an exclusive women's society modeled after the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, was established with the intention of maintaining the memory of Confederate General Robert E. Lee. The foundation purchased the property from private ownership in order to convert the property into a public monument. A massive Colonial Revival restoration of the property was undertaken after the acquisition, with the preservation efforts patterned on the activity then occurring at Colonial Williamsburg. Renowned architect Fiske Kimball actively participated in the restoration of the house, with noted landscape architects Morley Jeffers Williams and Umberto Innocenti responsible for the restoration of the formal gardens and other features of the landscape.³ At the end of a multi-decade project, lasting from the 1930s to the 1960s, the house and gardens became the crown feature of the estate having received the majority of the organizations resources and attention.

³ Committee Minutes 1930 Appendix VII, RELMA Director's Annual Minutes, Robert E. Lee Memorial Association Collection, Jessie Ball DuPont Library, Stratford, VA. Williams was hired for the initial restoration of the landscape. Innocenti was hired by the association in the 1940s with continued work on the site through the 1960s. Innocenti work focused on the West Garden and the Vista area.

It was during the era of restoration, 1930-1962, that the interpretation plan of the site began to be formulated. The approach advocated by the association was the complete retrofitting of Stratford to once again become a tobacco-producing site, complete with demonstration areas similar to the work done at Colonial Williamsburg.⁴ The intention of RELMA was to celebrate the legacy of the Lees and the plantation community that existed on the site. However, setbacks with livestock, farm labor, and the lack of funding never allowed these schemes to occur.⁵ Further suppressing the plans were the government restrictions on both labor and resources during World War II.

In the 1960s, plans for interpreting the tobacco culture of the Northern Neck were revived. These newer plans were more manageable following the recommendations of Resident Superintendents Winn and Duke. In 1964, a small exhibition patch of Colonial Era plants including tobacco, cotton, corn and gourds, was planted near the main gate of the property, allowing visitors to 'see' what Stratford Hall could have looked like.⁶ However, accounts of this time from the superintendent reports reveal that the project was more trouble than benefit, with no guarantee of success. The exhibition patch was recreated at the site at various locations and at varying intervals, lacking any consistency until the early 1980s. The exhibition patch appeared one final time in 2003, in the West Garden of the house.⁷

⁴ Letter, June 5, 1930, Box 5, Folder 61, A4-1dce, Robert E. Lee Memorial Association Collection, Jessie Ball DuPont Library, Stratford, VA. The plan details the creation of Stratford cornmeal at the reconstructed mill and the presentation of a working tobacco plantation complete with "slaves" to work the tobacco fields

⁵ Committee Minutes 1932 Appendix XXXIV, RELMA Director's Annual Minutes, Robert E. Lee Memorial Association Collection, Jessie Ball DuPont Library, Stratford, VA. Additional remarks on the subject can be found in the diaries and correspondence of General Cheatham, the Resident Superintendent of Stratford Hall from 1930-1944. Part of the issues that plagued the site during the early days of the foundation was the death of a flock of sheep, the quarantine of a flock of chickens and the lack of proper equipment. Stratford became a modern farm as opposed to a historic reconstructed site after several donations of equipment and cattle.

⁶ Letter, November 4, 1964., Box 1, Folder 17, B1-22d, Robert E. Lee Memorial Association Collection, Jessie Ball DuPont Library, Stratford, VA. The location of the tobacco patch moved from the area near the front gate to the more remote Jenkins field that is located on the road going to the mill. In addition to tobacco, the Jenkins Field patch included corn, peanuts, cotton and gourds.

⁷ Report of the Garden Committee, 2003, Appendix 6, RELMA Director's Annual Minutes, Robert E. Lee Memorial Association Collection, Jessie Ball DuPont Library, Stratford, VA



Figure 1.2 The Tobacco Patch at Stratford Hall in Jenkins Field, Photograph, RELMA Collection, 1964.⁸

With the exception of the exhibition patch, the interpretation of the tobacco culture landscape on the property has been limited. Most interpretive efforts at the site exist at the main house in the form of docent led tours, and through the use of three interpretive signs, one placed at an adjacent outbuilding, another at a reconstructed stone slave quarter, and a third in the Oval. All of these signs celebrate the story of Robert E. Lee on the site. However, should someone wish to explore the rest of the site, they will find only three more interpretive signs for the nearly two thousand acre site, one highlighting the remains of a former plantation house now covered by a road, one at a slave graveyard, and a third at the location of the former wharf. In an attempt to lend an authentic air to the site, heritage livestock breeds are grazed in areas directly surrounding the house. But do these efforts

⁸ Photo, Tobacco Patch, 1964, Box 19A, Robert E. Lee Memorial Association Collection, Jessie Ball DuPont Library, Stratford, VA.

present an accurate image of the tobacco culture to the visitor? If not, how then can the property go forward with accurately representing its tobacco culture legacy?

Methodology

To answer the question, several research methods were employed. First, a literature review was conducted exploring both cultural landscapes and the role of site interpretation as a management tool at cultural sites. Research was also conducted at Stratford Hall and archival research was undertaken at the Jessie Ball du Pont Memorial Library in the quest for Colonial Era records and files related to the stewardship and interpretation of landscapes under the direction of the RELMA. Additional archival research related to the tobacco culture at Stratford Hall was completed in the archives of Duke University.

Site visits were made to Francis 'Lightfoot' Lee's Menokin Plantation, George Washington Birthplace National Monument, and the middle Virginia site of Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, to understand the visitor experience at these locations. Interpretive plans of these three sites, as well as that of the Thomas Stone Historic Site, were evaluated regarding themes and methods of presentation. Other interpretive plans reviewed included plans used by private sites as well as at six National Park Service maintained locations, including Colonial National Historic Park, Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve, Booker T. Washington Birthplace, Herbert Hoover National Site, Weir Farm National Historic Site, and Martin Van Buren National Historic Site.

Thesis Organization

The first two chapters of the thesis consist of background research to aid in the analysis and conclusion presented in the final three chapters. Chapter Two is the literature review, which explores theories and principals of cultural landscapes and interpretation by examining the work of Carl Sauer, J.B. Jackson, Robert Melnick, Charles Birnbaum, Catherine Howett, Freeman Tilden, Marshall McLuhan, Sam H. Ham, David Schaller, Giovanni Saggio and Davide Borra. Chapter Three examines the historical

and physical composition of the tobacco culture on the Northern Neck. To conclude this section, what is known of Stratford Hall during this period of significance is presented.

Chapter Four examines the interpretive plans of four tobacco culture sites that were contemporary to Stratford Hall: Menokin Plantation, Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, the George Washington Birthplace National Monument, and the Thomas Stone National Historic Site. In Chapter Five, analysis and evaluation of the interpretive plans and the patterns that emerged are reviewed. Chapter Six is the conclusion noting how results of the case study findings might be applied to Stratford Hall.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW OF CULTURAL LANDSCAPES AND SITE INTERPRETATION

This chapter reviews literature useful in providing the context for the question of the thesis. First, the subject matter of cultural landscapes is examined. This portion of the literature review explores the work of Carl Sauer in developing the early definition of the term and the subsequent influence of J.B. Jackson, Robert Melnick's identification of challenges with formalized preservation activity of this type of cultural asset, Charles Birnbaum's application of integrity to cultural landscapes, and finally, management critiques and solutions proposed by Catherine Howett.

The second part of the literature review focuses on interpretation at historic sites. Freeman Tilden, a twentieth-century author and journalist, is credited with having had the most profound impact on the practice of interpretation. His National Park Service collaborative *Interpreting Our Heritage* is discussed in this section. Marshall McLuhan, a contemporary of Tilden, proposed a more radical view on interpretation, extolling the virtues of media over that of the message in matters concerned with provoking the audience. In addition, Sam H. Ham, a modern interpretive theorist and practitioner, with views on the significance of theme in the interpretive planning process, is also discussed.

The final portion of the literature review examines the emerging interpretive media of augmented reality. The work of David Schaller explains the potential for the application of technology in the field of interpretation. The collaborative research of Giovanni Saggio and Davide Borra explores the benefits of utilizing an augmented reality interpretive plan, noting the light impact of the technology on a site.

Cultural Landscapes

The National Park Service defines a cultural landscape as, “a geographic area, including both cultural and natural resources and the wildlife or domestic animals therein, associated with an historic event, activity, or person, or exhibiting other cultural or aesthetic values.”⁹ While the National Park Service formally recognized cultural landscapes as a type of cultural resource and hence an area of concern for preservation, in the late-1980s, the concept of a cultural landscape has been a topic of discussion by professionals and academics since the 1920s.

The work of Professor Carl O. Sauer is instrumental to the development of the concept of cultural landscapes, and he is credited with developing the term. After teaching in the 1910s at the University of Michigan, Sauer served as the head of the Geography Department at the University of California at Berkley. Sauer was a historic geographer whose research mainly focused on New World geography and the interactions between Native Americans and their European counterparts. His research included Colonial American expansion and the habitation pattern of the Southwestern Native Americans. While he was at the University of California at Berkley, Sauer received honorary degrees from the Universities of Glasgow, Syracuse, and the University of California at Berkley.¹⁰

The first use of the term cultural landscape occurred in the 1925 essay by Sauer, “The Morphology of Landscape,” in the journal *Geography*. According to Sauer, “the cultural landscape is fashioned from a natural landscape by a culture group. Culture is the agent, the natural area the medium, the cultural landscape the result.”¹¹ Culture is a human construct, therefore, requiring the presence of human activity on a site to elevate a location beyond the classification of a ‘natural’ landscape to that of a cultural landscape. The landscape is shaped by culture, and in some manner the

⁹ National Park Service, “Cultural Landscapes,” *Park Cultural Landscapes*, http://www.nps.gov/cultural_landscapes/ (accessed September 10, 2013).

¹⁰ Carl Sauer, Kent Matthewson, and William K Denevan. *Carl Sauer: On Culture and Lanscapes: Readings and Commentaries*. (Baton Rouge : Louisiana State University Press, 2009), 6.

¹¹ Carl Sauer, "The Morphology of Landscape." *Geography*, no. 2, 1925, 19-54(22).

presence of human interaction must be evident on the site. According to Sauer the landscape serves as the setting upon which the activity occurs and hence is how significance is conveyed.

Later work of Sauer's recognized the effect of landscape on the construction of cultures and patterns of human behavior. His discussion on the role of the landscape is found in the *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*. Sauer argues that culture is a series of behaviors or habits that are learned over a series of generations. He borrows from the environmental geography discussion of the time, stating that habit is affected by habitat. According to Sauer, particular soil types or climatic conditions will cause a series of behaviors to develop in reaction to the conditions of a location. A change in the conditions will lead to the development of a new behavior at a location. A drought can cause mass migrations and diets to change, whereas an abundance of a resource may promote incorporation into a daily routine. Therefore, he concludes landscape is responsible for the shaping of culture.¹² Each force, culture and the landscape, is responsible for shaping and influencing the behavior of the other.

Sauer's background as a geographer insulated the use of the phrase cultural landscape, confining it to the geography academic community, until the term was rediscovered and repurposed by J. B. Jackson in the 1960s. Jackson's career spans from the 1930s to his death in 1996, during which time he served as a professor at the Harvard Graduate Design School, and as a landscape literary critic, theorist, contributor and editor of the magazine *Landscape*. From the 1960s through the 1980s, Jackson was responsible for compiling and collaborating on several volumes of landscape preservation focused essay collections, including *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape*.¹³

Building on the work of Sauer, Jackson expressed in *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape* that the landscape is a human construct. The landscape "is the composition of man-made spaces or man-

¹² Carl Sauer, "Foreword to Historical Geography." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* XXXI, no. 1 (March 1941): 1-25.

¹³ D. W. Meinig, "An Appreciation of W.G. Hoskins and J.B. Jackson," in *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes: Geographical Essays*. Edited by D.W. Meinig.(Oxford, England : Oxford University Press , 1979.),223.

modified spaces to serve as the constructs of our existence.”¹⁴ The idea of different forms of landscape, be they designed, natural, or something in between, arises from a value placed upon the site by humans. Human existence in the landscape is not a solitary exercise; rather it interacts across time and space connecting generations of individuals. The decisions of past generations will have an impact on how future generations interact with a particular space. For example the choice to designate a site as a cemetery would most likely encourage future activity at the location to follow in a similar pattern of land use.¹⁵

Jackson’s work begins to identify different types of cultural landscapes. Vernacular landscapes, according to Jackson, unlike other cultural landscapes that are designed or largely natural in composition, are not derived from the initial desire to create. Rather, the vernacular landscape is a byproduct of wishing to construct a community. A vernacular landscape is most often associated with landscapes having evolved over the course of several generations and may be associated with agricultural enterprise systems. Due to the complexity of human nature, different views and identities emerge on the landscape.¹⁶ These often contrasting identities are guided by different principles and goals. The farm owner is driven to see profit in his enterprise and will manipulate the land in such a manner as to grow the most profitable crop, whereas a worker is focused on completing the task at hand within the landscape. Jackson proposes that the identities never achieve cohesion, but instead always exist in a state of tension. The tension is then made manifest on the landscape in land use patterns. “We cannot expect any landscape to be a perfect blend of the two points of view,” says Jackson, “one of them is always favored over the other, and an interesting aspect of landscape history is how the two can alternate.”¹⁷

¹⁴ John Brinckerhoff Jackson, *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape*. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1975) 8.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 12.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 12.

Jackson was championing the significance of the landscape, while at the same time commenting on the practice of historic preservation. He offered a criticism on the practice of landscape preservation in a 1976 letter to *Landscape Architecture*, inspired by a series of contemporary landscape restorations. When dealing with cultural landscapes, he states that a practitioner should be cognizant that the management of the site should, “create a sense of time,” and should not be a, “sterile reconstruction.”¹⁸ A cultural landscape, much like a city, is created over the course of time with different styles reflecting changes in social values and ideas. It is an evolving process as opposed to the result of a single action. Reconstructing a landscape denies the existence of changes that have transpired in creating the present image of the site.

Robert Melnick’s later writings on cultural landscape characteristics and management follow the example of Jackson. Melnick, a landscape architecture professor at the University of Oregon, developed a crucial relationship with the National Park Service during the 1980s and early 1990s. Melnick is the former Dean of the University of Oregon School of Architecture and Arts and is an American Society of Landscape Architecture Fellow.¹⁹ His commentary on cultural landscapes was featured in the National Park Service Cultural Resource Management bulletins during the formal discussion of including cultural landscapes as cultural resources overseen by the NPS in the early 1990s.

Melnick’s NPS publication *Cultural Landscapes: Rural Historic Districts in the National Park System* was a critical first step in the recognition of a landscape as a cultural construct by the NPS. In 1984, during the era of the NPS partnership, Melnick was responsible for the creation of the Park Service’s *Rural Historic District* publication, which was the first formalized attempt by the NPS to identify cultural landscape types as well as creating a process for understanding, assessing treatment and management options for cultural landscapes. Melnick defined rural landscapes as the everyday

¹⁸ John Brinckerhoff Jackson, “Sterile Restorations Cannot Replace a Sense of the Stream of Time.” *Landscape Architecture* 66, May 1940, (194).

¹⁹ University of Oregon. “Robert Z. Melnick,” *Department of Landscape Architecture Faculty*, <http://landarch.uoregon.edu/people/faculty/melnickr> (accessed February 5, 2014)

landscapes, “which we see today” that “not only represent the integration of natural and human forces, but also a complex collage of landscape elements from a number of historic periods...including contemporary features.”²⁰ The landscape includes both natural features as well as elements of material culture such as structures and spatial arrangements.

Melnick recognized that in addition to culture shaping the form of the landscape, the landscape is undergoing a series of changes based on natural forces. “Inherently, landscapes are dynamic in a time frame recognizable within a single human generation.”²¹ For example, vegetation will evolve according to the life cycle of a plant and can be seen and understood during one person’s lifetime. Melnick writes, “The most important difference between preserving landscapes and preserving structures and objects is the dynamic quality of the land – it continuously changes and grows. Recognizing this quality reveals the fallacy of trying to freeze the landscape at a moment in time.”²² For Melnick, the identification of the type of landscape, as either designed, vernacular, or ethnographic, serves as the basis for determining the appropriate purpose to balancing issues at a site, with the preferred treatment preservation. Preservation of the landscape allows for the site to be read as a series of layers and accommodates both the material culture and living material of the landscape.²³ “In sum, to preserve what we have and to present it with integrity and candor is considered the best and highest application.”²⁴ This philosophy appears to be shaped by the work of J.B. Jackson and his criticism on the practice of reconstructions.

Building from the publication by Melnick, the formalized discussion of cultural landscapes by the National Park Service continued with the work of Charles Birnbaum entitled *Preservation Brief 36 Protecting Cultural Landscapes: Planning, Treatment and Management of Historic Landscapes*. The

²⁰ Robert Z. Melnick, *Cultural Landscapes: Rural Historic Districts in the National Park System*. (Washington D.C.: The National Park Service, 1984), 2

²¹ Robert Z. Melnick, “Nature and Culture in Historic Landscapes,” in *Preserving Cultural Landscapes in America*, ed. Arnold R. Alanen and Robert Z. Melnick (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 23.

²² Catherine Howett. “Integrity as a Value in Cultural Landscape Preservation.” In *Preserving Cultural Landscapes in America*, by Arnold R. Alanen and Robert Z. Melnick, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 190.

²³ Melnick, *Rural Historic Districts*, 10.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 48.

publication shifts the focus from the rural cultural landscapes identified by Melnick to the broader range of cultural landscapes. Birnbaum's credentials include private practice in New York City as well as a fifteen year employment with the National Park Service as the coordinator of the National Park Service Historic Landscape Initiative. He currently serves as the President of The Cultural Landscape Foundation and is an American Society of Landscape Architecture Fellow.²⁵

Preservation Brief 36 was developed in the early 1990s during the height of the discussion of recognition of cultural landscape as a resource by the National Park Service. In order to elevate discussion on the topic, Birnbaum borrowed language used by the National Register of Historic Places and the various iterations of the Secretary of the Interior Standards regarding historic structures. By using the same language, cultural landscapes could be compared to other recognized cultural resources such as architecture and engineering resources. The publication included the recommendation of treatments regarding cultural landscapes. Where Melnick embraced the treatment of preservation in *Rural Historic Districts*, Birnbaum discussed the application of other treatments to cultural landscapes.

Birnbaum suggested that four treatments are acceptable for cultural landscapes; preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction. Each treatment escalates in the intensity of the changes that will be necessary to apply the treatment on the site as well as the use of documentary evidence to support a treatment. The treatment of preservation is defined, "as the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain existing form, integrity, and materials of a historic property."²⁶ Preservation recognizes that cultural landscapes have naturally evolved and that modifications have occurred. The changes create a landscape made of layers from different eras. The treatment of preservation stipulates that each layer is important and significant on its own merit, therefore, the site is maintained.

²⁵ The Cultural Landscape Foundation, "Staff Charles Birnbaum, <http://tclf.org/about/staff> (accessed on March 30, 2014).

²⁶ Preservation Brief 36, "The National Park Service Preservation Brief Series, "http://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/36-cultural-landscapes.htm (accessed on March 28, 2014).

Nature and society are constantly changing, which means that the needs on the landscape are changing as well. Rehabilitation allows for change to continue on a site with the insertion of compatible uses in the landscape while, “retaining features which convey historic or cultural values.”²⁷ The practice of rehabilitation allows for modifications to be made in the landscape to suit the needs of the present inhabitants. Rehabilitation is the most flexible of the available treatments to a cultural landscape, as it allows for the treatments of preservation, restoration, and reconstruction to occur throughout appropriate aspects of the landscape.

Restoration involves the “accurate depiction of a particular period,” through the removal of historic materials from periods later than the approved era of restoration.²⁸ This treatment is contrary to preservation as the evolved layers of the landscape are removed to present an image of a particular period. The decision of engaging in a restoration treatment is a conscious judgment that an era of the site’s history is more important than other eras. In order to justify this treatment, documentary evidence has to be located in order to prove that a historic arrangement did indeed exist in order to initiate this treatment. The final image of the landscape cannot be created from conjecture. Features added after the chosen era of restoration are removed, as is plant material from the era of significance that has evolved beyond its original form which, if not removed, can create a false image. When applying this treatment to cultural landscapes, a specific period is selected as it allows for vegetative material.

Reconstruction encompasses the construction of missing historic features that have not survived from the era of significance. Documentary proof must be found in order to initiate this treatment on the site, as the plan for the site can not involve conjecture. In order to practice reconstruction on a landscape, the evolved layers of the landscape may be removed in order to recreate a particular image from the site’s history.

²⁷ Preservation Brief 36

²⁸ Ibid

Birnbaum emphasizes that like other cultural resources, it is crucial to evaluate a cultural landscape on matters of lifetime significance and the aspects of integrity prior to initiating a treatment of a site. Significance is defined by the National Park Service as the aspect or aspects of a property that make a site important. Significance will address several questions, such as, What makes this property unique, when did the site achieve importance, what historic patterns and events occurred at the site? All told, significance tells us why a site matters. The element of significance is determined after evaluating the site on the aspects of integrity.

Seven aspects of integrity have been identified by the National Park Service: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Integrity is defined by the National Park Service as, "The ability of the property to convey its significance."²⁹ To determine integrity, the existing features of a location are evaluated to determine if they retain historic configurations and contain the values of the era of significance. The retention of any of the seven aspects of integrity at a cultural landscape can allow a site to be declared to have integrity. The evaluation of integrity is admittedly a subjective exercise says the National Park Service. However, it is a necessary element in determining an appropriate management solution for a site. Furthermore, integrity is measure by degree, a site either has integrity or it does not.

The first aspect of integrity is location. Location is defined as the place where an event transpired or the place where a feature was constructed. Location is concerned with the physical and tangible element of a site. The intentional movement of a feature or the loss of an original site will disqualify integrity based on location. To evaluate a site on location the following question must be asked: Does the cultural resource reside at the original location where it was first constructed?

The second aspect of integrity is design, described as the arrangement of forms and features that create the overall image of the property. Design can refer to the exhibition of a formal design by a

²⁹ Aspects of Integrity, "National Park Service: National Register Bulletin," http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb34/nrb34_8.htm (accessed on March 28, 2013).

master designer or the evolved form of a landscape over time. Are the original spatial patterns from the era of significance still present on the landscape? Can a visitor to a site easily determine the intention of use of a space? If yes, then it can be argued that a resource retains integrity regarding its design.

Setting is the third aspect of integrity used to evaluate a cultural resource, defined as the physical composition of the property. Setting can be described as the background in which events and patterns transpired. Where did the historic events or patterns take place? To evaluate setting, one must answer these questions: Has the setting changed in such a way that the site is no longer recognizable from the era of importance? Has the site been meticulously kept in a certain manner since the inception of the resource?

The fourth aspect of integrity identified is material. Materials are the physical elements that are combined in order to create the features on the landscape. Examples include the laying and stacking of bricks to construct a structure or the use of a particular type of wood used for fencing. The aspect of material is concerned with tangible facets of a landscape. To evaluate materials is to determine if the features of the landscape retain their original materials or have they been recreated using more modern materials?

The fifth aspect of integrity is workmanship, or the evidence of human construction and craft on the site. Workmanship is concerned not only with the construction of structures, but also with the manipulation of the landscape into spatial patterns and areas of land use. Similar to material, this aspect is concerned with tangible elements of a site. To assess workmanship the viewer must ask: Can the imprint of man still be read on the site? Do the patterns of the landscape still exist? Do structures from the era of significance still stand on the site?

According to the National Park Service, "Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time."³⁰ Feeling is concerned with intangible, emotional elements

³⁰ Aspects of Integrity, "National Park Service Bulletin"

of the landscape. Feeling can differ from person to person, and can be difficult to quantify. To question whether a site has integrity based on feeling, one must ask: Does the visitor to the site experience a feeling for, or sense the history that transpired on the site?

Association is the direct link of a site to a historic event or person. Similar to feeling, this aspect is concerned with the intangible aspects of a site. Did a historic event or person actually use the site? If yes, are there features that were present during the era of significance that can serve as a physical link between the historic figure and the present-day viewer?

The retention of any number of the aspects can classify a cultural landscape as having retained integrity. The National Park Service does not require a standard number of aspects to be present at a site, just a number sufficient to discern significance. However, the concepts of feeling and association both require the retention of physical elements from the period of significance. The presence of these two concepts is not considered sufficient to prove the significance of a site, as they each rely on perception of a site.³¹

After the creation of *Preservation Brief 36*, the term cultural landscape entered into the lexicon of professional preservationists, who continue debating the term's meaning. More recent discussions concerning the problems of interacting with cultural landscapes as a cultural resource can be found in *Preserving Cultural Landscapes in America*, a collection of essays co-edited by Melnick and Arnold R. Alanen. Within the collection is an essay by a second cultural landscape proponent to recognize the inherent challenges of managing the living cultural element of landscapes. Catherine Howett, a contemporary of Melnick, is Professor Emeritus at the University of Georgia, is a registered landscape architect and an American Society of Landscape Architecture Fellow. Her work includes essays and books on landscape architecture, cultural landscapes, garden histories and historic landscapes.³²

³¹ Aspects of Integrity, "National Park Service Bulletin"

³² Landscape Online. "Catherine M. Howett, ASLA," *Profiles*, <https://landscapeonline.com/research/article/4442> (accessed February 5, 2014).

Howett's essay, "Integrity as a Value in Cultural Landscape Preservation," argues that when preserving cultural landscapes and following the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, the matter of integrity is particularly 'tricky' regarding landscapes. Howett argues that the term integrity is an unrealistic term to apply to landscapes as its multiple definitions are concerned with human character or having completeness. The living element of the landscape insures that the rigid construct of integrity can never be adhered to. Howett suggests that even landscapes that were designed will have progressed beyond a point of the designer's original intention from an era of significance, therefore causing even designed spaces, to lack critical integrity. This may over simplify the concept of integrity as the National Park Service uses integrity as an evaluation tool to inform preservation treatments. Howett offers the thought more as a warning of the challenges for cultural landscapes rather than, a justification for reconstructing them. Her point is that returning the landscape back to an era of significance in appearance would eradicate layers and stories that form a collective narrative of the site. Further, maintaining the vegetation fabric specific to an era will prove costly, as constant maintenance is required to maintain an appearance, and specimens must be routinely moved in order to provide an appropriate appearance. Howett questions the honesty of such a presentation to an audience visiting a site.³³

The problems that come with the issue of integrity, Howett suggests, can be overcome by using interpretation as part of site management. In her essay "The Role of the Interpretive Program in the Restoration of Historic Landscapes," Howett proposes that interpretation can be the key to resolving the question of layers versus a single snapshot image when maintaining a historic site. It becomes the responsibility of the interpretive program to stress that the site in its current configuration is the result of changes and that it has evolved over a period of occupation and continues to change. As part of a response to *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and*

³³ Howett, "Integrity as a Value in Cultural Landscape Preservation," 207-209

Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes process, Howett argues that the creation of an interpretive plan is a vital management element that must occur at the beginning of the occupation of the site and not after a treatment has been applied. The interpretation is to provide the stimulation and the provocation for the audience, not the physical environment. The landscape aids in the process of provocation, but this is not its principle purpose.³⁴ If, as Howett suggests, the solution to cultural landscape management can be found in interpretation, what is the practice of interpretation?

Interpretation

Interpretation is not concerned with the presentation of pure data to an audience in the form of facts and figures. Rather, it is the crafting of the information into a narrative that in some manner provokes and engages an audience. The work of Freeman Tilden, Marshall McLuhan, and Sam Hill concerning site interpretation is vital to the later discussion of the thesis. Tilden's work questions why and how interpretation should occur. McLuhan moves beyond why and asks how interpretation should be presented to an audience. Hill stresses the importance of organization in order to make an effective interpretative plan.

One of the most influential individuals on the subject of site interpretation in the twentieth century, Freeman Tilden was responsible for creating the benchmark text *Interpreting Our Heritage*. Prior to the book's publication in 1957, Tilden was an established journalist and novelist whose work had been featured in the *New York Evening Post*, the *Boston Globe*, and the *Saturday Evening Post*. In the early 1940s, Tilden established a relationship with the National Park Service and was tasked by then director, Newton B. Drury, to create a series of articles pertaining to the impact of the National Park Service on American society. The assignment led to a decade— long partnership, with Tilden working as

³⁴ Catherine M. Howett, "The Role of the Interpretive Program in the Restoration of Historic Landscapes." Chap. 4 in *Breaking Ground: Examining the Vision and Practice of Historic Landscape Restoration*, by Old. Salem Inc., (Winston- Salem, NC.: Old Salem, Inc., 1997), 48-62.

a private consultant and public relations entity for the NPS. It was during this period that Tilden wrote his book, *The National Parks: What They Mean to You and Me*.³⁵

In *The National Parks: What They Mean to You and Me*, Tilden explains that the purposes of the National Parks are to serve the public in matters of, “moral, spiritual, and educational welfare” giving the viewer a glimpse into a wilderness unspoiled by development, and a respite from civilization.³⁶ But what are the benefits of having a natural wilderness set aside for the public? According to Tilden, while visitors may come to a location seeking entertainment and activity, that impulse will fail to satisfy and stimulate, until eventually, the environment begins to elicit wonder and curiosity in the visitor. To aid in the “education of the visitor,” the activity of interpretation is practiced by the NPS. The interpreter is present merely to “introduce” the audience to the “instructor,” that is nature. Tilden describes nature as serving as the elderly school ma’am, or an instructor, with the visitor serving as pupil. Nature assumes the role of teacher encouraging explorations during visitations.³⁷ Through interpretation, audiences will make discoveries about the world around them.

The topic of interpretation was formally explored by Tilden in 1955 with the announcement of the *Mission 66* project by Director Conrad L. Wirth. The goal of the *Mission 66* project was to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the NPS. While the NPS had created guides on the subject of interpretation prior to the *Mission 66* initiative, Tilden was assigned the task of identifying the “basic principles underlying historical and natural history interpretation within the National Park Service,” and creating a document to improve the practice within the Park Service.³⁸ To prepare the document, Tilden visited sites across the United States, both within the NPS and those run as private entities, exploring

³⁵ R. Bruce Craig, “Forward,” in *Interpreting Our Heritage*, Freeman Tilden. 4th. (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007),

³⁶ Freeman Tilden, *The National Parks: What They Mean to You and Me* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1951), 18.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 28.

³⁸ Craig, “Forward,” 7.

how significance is conveyed to the visiting public. The product of this cross-country endeavor is the document, *Interpreting Our Heritage*, which outlined six principles that are essential for interpretation.³⁹

For Tilden, the reason for engaging in the activity of interpretation can be found in the often quoted line originally found penciled into a 1930s National Park Service manual, “through interpretation, understanding; through understanding, appreciation; through appreciation, protection.”⁴⁰ While the goal of interpretation is provocation, the use of interpretation is a way to forge connections between an audience and a cultural resource, helping ensure that stewardship is actively occurring at a site. Creating the provocation is an art form, and as such, can use other forms of art in order to be more effective.

The chief aim of interpretation is not instruction, but provocation.⁴¹ With the inclusion of the definition of interpretation, Tilden elevates interpretation above the mere recalling of facts and figures and presentation of data to an audience. Interpretation, as defined by Tilden, requires the interpreter to create a connection with the audience on a much deeper intellectual level of thinking. For Tilden, one of the better examples of what interpretation was to be is illustrated in a text by the nineteenth-century American author and storyteller Mark Twain. Twain, who was respected for his craft and command of the English language, illustrates the importance of interpretation regarding the date 1542 and Hernando De Soto’s “discovery” of the Mississippi River:

To say that De Soto saw it in 1542 is a remark which states a fact without interpreting it. The date by itself means little or nothing to us; but when one groups other dates and facts around it, he adds perspective and color. For instance, when the Mississippi was first seen by a white man, less than a quarter century had elapsed since Francis I’s defeat at Pavia; the death of Raphael, the death of Bayard..⁴²

³⁹ Craig, “Forward,” 7-10.

⁴⁰ Freeman Tilden, *Interpreting Our Heritage*. 4th. (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007) 65.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁴² Tilden, *Interpreting Our Heritage*, 48.

Twain's quote helps explain to the reader the significance of a specific year presenting it within the frame of several other world events. The reader is now more able to formulate images in his or her mind of what was transpiring in the greater world of events. The date is then situated within a context. Provocation encourages the viewer to construct a personal understanding and connection with the interpreted feature.

Interpretation is an art that uses other arts.⁴³ In order to elevate the audience to a level of provocation, interpretation must utilize several arts. This principle must be deconstructed on two different levels to understand the intention of Tilden. First, engaging in effective interpretation is an art form in and of itself. *Interpreting Our Heritage* was originally intended to provide a guide for traditional docent-led tours which rely on the construction of a story or narrative to impart the significance of a site from the interpreter to the audience. Therefore according to Tilden, the practice of interpretation has roots in storytelling, which is an art form. Tilden's example of Twain illustrates the power of words in the construction of mental images. A certain ability to craft stories must be present in the creator of the interpretation. However artfully done, to a degree certain qualities of effective interpretation can be taught.⁴⁴

Second, in order to create the connection between an interpreter and the audience, interpreters can, and perhaps should, go beyond words and embrace the use of other media and art forms to aid in provocation. During the course of interpretation, if the images of former occupants are highlighted for the viewer to see, the viewer can then populate his or her imagination with images of the former occupants and associate changes with the responsible parties. A face coupled with a recording of the individual can help bring to life the story of an individual associated with a landscape. Photos can show how a site has evolved over time. The arts can go beyond people and show what once was. If something from the landscape is missing, and of significance to the story of the site, the arts

⁴³ Tilden, *Interpreting Our Heritage.*, 53.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 55.

could be used to virtually construct an image to allow the viewer to more easily understand how a space functioned historically.⁴⁵

In contrast to Tilden, Marshall McLuhan prescribed to a different theory regarding interpretation. For McLuhan, the medium used in the presentation of the interpretive material was critical due to the type of mental stimulation triggered by different media.⁴⁶ A contemporary of Tilden, McLuhan was a communications professor at the University of Toronto. Known as the 'Prophet of Laugh In,' McLuhan's body of work includes several books discussing the impact of mass media on the modern man. His theories were based on watching reaction to the telecasting of the Vietnam War in living rooms on a nightly basis.

McLuhan states in *Understanding Media: the Extensions of Man*, that how a medium is used is known as the content of a medium. The capabilities of the medium define how it can and cannot be used in the presentation of a material. For example, a single light by itself can only be used for illumination. However, grouped with other lights, it can be used to spell out words and present images. "The medium binds us to the content of the medium."⁴⁷

McLuhan uses the presentation of subjects within Cubist painting to explain how the progression in media has changed perceptions in information. According to McLuhan, Cubism rid three dimensional perceptions of subject matter by presenting the entire image of an object at one time, or total, "sensory awareness of the whole."⁴⁸

In a similar manner, electronic presentation, and subsequently interpretation, has shifted from focusing on the individual aspects of an object to the presentation of entire objects and relationships. Electronic technology has caused a, "Revaluation of interconnection," and has led to the birth of new thought patterns and processes as people are exposed to new images and thoughts more easily.

⁴⁵ Tilden, *Interpreting Our Heritage*, 56.

⁴⁶ Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. (Cambridge, MA : MIT Press, 1964), 7.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 13.

McLuhan illustrates that a child exposed to the alphabet and subsequently words, such as the word dog, would react differently than a child shown an image of the animal. “The alphabet and print technology fostered and encourage a fragmenting process, a process of specialism and of detachment. Electric technology fosters and encourages unification and involvement.”⁴⁹ Due to the impact of the media, it must be acknowledged that by changing the medium, the interpreter is in fact changing how the audience reacts to the presentation of the new information. The presentation of the same data in three different mediums—print, auditory, or digital image—will prompt different thought processes and responses.

McLuhan states that technology is an extension of the man, and that both humans and technologies progress with improvements and advances in technology.⁵⁰ The thought process of humans as a result will continue to evolve, reacting to the new stimuli in ways uniquely different from how data was previously processed. New media cannot be utilized in an old way, says McLuhan, but; must be used in a new manner.⁵¹ Innovation of technology becomes key, specifically for heritage education, according to McLuhan. The technology must be understood in how it promotes thought process and stimulation, to realize the potential for interpretation. New technology serves as a gateway for the emerging generation to experience heritage in a ways related to how it processes information, ways different from those of previous generations.⁵²

For Tilden, interpretation is associated with connections to resources, whereas McLuhan is concerned with the effects of mental stimulation. Sam H. Ham’s work resolves the theories of Tilden and McLuhan by advocating the use of media to make the essential connections. Ham argues that prior to the establishment of connections, effective provocation cannot occur unless understanding is present

⁴⁹ Marshall McLuhan and Quentin Fiore. *The Medium is the Massage: An Inventory of Effects*. (Berkeley, CA: Gingko Press, Inc., 1967), 8.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 94.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 100.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 100.

in the audience. The most effective way of ensuring that understanding happens, he says, is to insure the key element of theme is present in the formation of an interpretive plan. A professor of communication psychology and conservation social sciences at the University of Idaho, Ham is an ardent advocate for the use of thematic interpretation at historical sites. Ham's articles and books include over four hundred publications on the subject of interpretation. He is responsible in part for the molding of the National Association of Interpretations *Best Practices of Interpretation Guidelines*, which was created in 2006.⁵³

In his article "From Interpretation to Protection: Is There a Theoretical Basis?," Ham argues that the practice of interpretation does eventually lead to protection as stated by Tilden in *Interpreting Our Heritage*.⁵⁴ However, according to Ham, the key to the development of cultural asset protection is grounded in the concept of understanding. The idea of understanding is different from knowledge. Knowledge is concerned with the retention of facts whereas understanding is based on personal meanings or, "Personal facts."⁵⁵ Understandings are shaped by an internal set of beliefs and experiences.⁵⁶ Whereas McLuhan poses that different media will provoke an individual in a different manner, Ham suggests that each individual has a different perception of understanding. The more relevant, or personal a message is to an individual, the stronger his or her response to the provocation.⁵⁷

To have an effective interpretive plan and create understanding, Ham's work concludes, a theme must be developed first, which will serve as a guide for how the interpretation will proceed. A theme is not a topic, it is instead an ideal that is used to tie a series of topics together and create a cohesive narrative. Ham draws heavily from a line in *Interpreting Our Heritage* which states that, "The

⁵³ Sam. H. Ham, *Interpretation: Making a Difference on Purpose*. (Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 2013)

⁵⁴ Tilden, *Interpreting Our Heritage*, 32.

⁵⁵ Sam H. Ham, "From Interpretation to Protection: Is There a Theoretical Basis?" *Journal of Interpretation Research* (14, no. 2 (2009),51.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 52.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 52.

story is the thing.”⁵⁸ The creation of a theme requires the interpreter to determine what concepts and topics are relevant in order to have a flowing narrative. The theme is the main point or concept that the interpreter wishes to impart to the audience. Without a theme, an interpretive scheme is simply infotainment, and lacks purpose. Infotainment, according to Ham, is the presentation of educational materials through entertainment. In order to aid in the provocation of the audience the theme must be strong and relatable. A strong theme will motivate the audience to process the information due to relevance to the viewer and ease of understanding.⁵⁹ The use of a well-developed theme will help achieve the provocation supported by Tilden, and organize the technology championed by McLuhan as it provides organization for all aspects of the interpretation.

Augmented Reality

The field of augmented reality has rapidly expanded since entering the academic vocabulary in 1997. The use of augmented reality relies on the interaction of the viewer with the screen of a media device capable of either playing audio files or displaying visual data on a screen.⁶⁰ In order for the device to interact with an augmented reality display, the mobile device must download an augmented reality app. An augmented reality app is associated with either key codes or sensors that trigger the delivery of files, whether illustrations, audio, or video files.⁶¹ The insertion of the key code or proximity to a sensor will then cause a file to be displayed. A second method requires the devices to scan a black and white geometric pattern, known as a marker that will then, upon recognition by the app, play the appropriate file. A third method, known as geolocation, is triggered by latitude and longitude coordinates received from satellites, making this application more appropriate for outdoor settings.⁶²

⁵⁸ Tilden, *Interpreting Our Heritage*, 32.

⁵⁹ Ham, *Interpretation: Making a Difference on Purpose*, 124.

⁶⁰ Chouyin Hsu, and Hai-Chih Shiau. "The Visual Web User Interface Design in Augmented Reality Technology." *International Journal of Advanced Computer Science and Applications* 4, no. 2 (2013): 116- 121.

⁶¹ David T. Schaller, "Augmenting Reality with History." *History News*, 2013: 5

⁶² *Ibid.*, 5.

While mobile devices have been criticized as causing disconnects with reality, Dave Schaller views the technology as a potential tool for sites to forge greater connections with visitors. Schaller holds an MA. in geography and human studies and is the founder of Eduweb, a company that creates learning games for museums and historic sites.⁶³ His guest column for History Bytes, "Augmented Reality with History," serves as commentary of the potential of the application of augmented reality to historic sites. Schaller's view on interpretation builds upon the quote of Charles Angoff, "History is a symphony of echoes heard and unheard." The distractions of cell phones and other mobile devices have the potential to, "tune into that symphony [that is history] so we can hear those echoes and see the world of the people who once walked the very ground we're standing on. Augmented reality merges the virtual and the real in ways that can create powerful immersive experiences in local history."⁶⁴ An interpretive plan that utilizes an augmented reality app can provide an audience with a richer experience by further explaining the significance. The technology can provoke individuals who need to be mentally stimulated with a different thought process.

The collaborative research of Giovanni Saggio and Davide Borra, "Augmented Reality for Restoration/Reconstruction of Artefacts with Artistic or Historic Values," explores the benefits of implementing an augmented reality interpretive plan as it provides for the continued maintenance of the existing fabric without the damages of a physical reconstruction.⁶⁵ Saggio received his Doctorate of Electrical Engineering from University Tor Vergate in Rome where he currently serves as professor. Borra is a founding principal of the NoReal.It 3D Agency, a firm that creates augmented reality apps for use at historic locations.

⁶³ Eduweb, "David T. Schaller," *Company Profiles*, <http://eduweb.com/team.html> (accessed February 13, 2014).

⁶⁴ Schaller, "Augmenting Reality," 5.

⁶⁵ Giovanni Saggio, and Davide Borra. "Augmented Reality for Restoration/ Reconstruction of Artefacts with Artistic or Historical Value." In *Augmented Reality- Some Emerging Application Areas*, by Dr. Andrew Yeh Ching (Nee,Rijeka: InTech, 2011)59.

Interpretation, as presented in Saggio and Borra's research, occurs along a spectrum of pure reality at one end and pure virtuality at the other. In an augmented reality, the real environment takes precedence over virtual insertions. Through use of appropriate media, digital models are inserted into the existing environment. However, an augmented "virtuality" scheme is when a virtual model is constructed with reality augmented in places. A model of this nature would have an appearance similar to a video game and would feel distinguishable from reality, closely akin to fantasy. Saggio and Borra defend the view that the conservation practices of reconstruction and restoration navigate the same line of augmentation and "virtuality." Similarly, interpretation can occur along the same scope.⁶⁶ A virtual reconstruction allows the existing historic fabric to be maintained without physically intruding on the site. An augmented reality reconstruction can show the viewer what is missing from an element without impacting the existing fabric. It is a minimally intrusive reconstructive option. The technology's intended use was to help professionals understand how a site functioned, augmented reality apps soon proved able to play an active role in the interpretation of a site as opposed to simple passive utilization. For cultural landscapes, the technology offers the possibility of recreating a site, in a historic configuration, without damaging the landscape with a physical reconstruction. The layers that have developed and continue to evolve are kept intact.

Conclusions

A review of the selected literature shows that cultural landscapes reflect a merging of human patterns of activity with those of the natural world. Cultural landscapes, due to their compositional make up, are dynamic and evolving. As such, it is preferred to present the significance of the landscape as a layered story instead of restoring the site to a particular frozen moment in time. To celebrate the layered existence or evolution of a site, it becomes the responsibility of an interpretive plan to convey the significance of the site.

⁶⁶ Saggio and Borra, "Augmented Reality for Restoration," 61.

The intention of the interpretation should be to forge a connection with the viewer of a site through the creation of personal and intellectual connections. Interpretation will utilize different means and methods to provoke the viewer, and the interpreter must be aware that every form of media will elicit a different thought process and response from viewers. However, despite the effects of technology on the visitor, the interpretation should be organized along a well-defined theme or narrative that helps shape how an audience experiences a site. A developing means of provoking an individual is the use of an augmented reality app, a tool with the capability of explaining the significance of the site and reconstructing an image of a location historically, without damaging the existing fabric.

CHAPTER 3

TOBACCO CULTURE AND STRATFORD HALL

In this chapter the compositional framework of the Northern Neck tobacco culture is examined. What were the land use patterns of the tobacco culture on the Northern Neck? Who were the people involved in the tobacco culture? What factors led to the rise and fall of the culture? The rise of tobacco cultivation in the early days of the Virginia colony's founding is reviewed, followed by an analysis of factors leading to a flourishing tobacco culture in the middle of the eighteenth century. The process of tobacco production is examined to understand patterns of movement in the landscape. Subsequently, key landscape features that are an essential part of the dialogue in the tobacco culture story are reviewed to show how this enterprise affected the Northern Neck landscape. The behavior and activities of the gentry, merchant, and slave social groups are reviewed. Despite early success, ruin did eventually befall the system in the form of external and internal influences, decimating the structure of society and ending this agricultural experiment. The chapter concludes with an analysis of how Stratford Hall fits within the overall context of the tobacco culture.

Crop Source and Origins

Tobacco, *Nicotiana tabacum*, was first 'discovered' by Hernando Cortez in 1560 upon landing and conquering the Yucatan Peninsula in present day Mexico. The plant was introduced to the English social vocabulary by Sir Walter Raleigh with his presentation of the plant to the court of Queen Elizabeth in 1585.⁶⁷ The cultivation of tobacco as an English commodity, however, did not occur until after the establishment and settling of Jamestown by the Virginia Company on the James Peninsula, in modern day Virginia in 1607. The failure to discover the fabled troves of silver and gold that originally lured the

⁶⁷ Jonathan Carver, *A Treatise on the Culture of the Tobacco Plant; with the manner in which its usually cured*, (London, 1779), 2.

settlers to the New World led to the engagement of agricultural production as an income source. Tobacco, due to ease of exportation and high return values, became the favored cash crop of the burgeoning settlement.⁶⁸ Tobacco was first cultivated in Virginia by John Rolfe in 1612, nearly a decade after the founding of Jamestown along the James River.⁶⁹ The, “wreck less and lustful abandonment,” for which the colonist embraced the cultivation of the ‘precious weed,’ nearly led to the demise of the settlement due to the lack of food crops produced, and forced colonial governors to require the growing of essential staples for sustenance.⁷⁰ Governor Yeardley warned against the folly of solely participating in tobacco cultivation, instead lauding the virtues of agricultural diversification.⁷¹ Subsequent legislation from the House of Burgess forced the cultivation of flax and vines in order to ensure food production.

It is within this context of an emerging Virginia tobacco culture and the early growth of the colony, that the area of the Northern Neck was settled. The development of the Northern Neck as a site for settlement began in 1630 following an internal dispute between English settlers in the colony of Maryland and Lord Baltimore on Kent Island. Reacting to the developments of the English Civil Wars, the Catholic Governor Lord Baltimore clashed with the ideology of a particular group of Protestant colonists, encouraging the separatists to leave Kent Island where they were living. The colonists did so, and following the geography of the Chesapeake Bay, the settlers arrived at the northern most peninsula of the Virginia Colony between the Rappahannock and Potomac Rivers.⁷² This portion of Virginia, despite earlier explorations by Captain John Smith, had largely remained unsettled, even as concentrations of the colony’s population settled along the James and Middle Peninsulas. However, the ready availability

⁶⁸James Blaine Gouger III, *Agricultural Change in the Northern Neck of Virginia 1700-1860: An Historical Geography* (Dissertation: University of Florida 1976), 36.

⁶⁹ Ibid, 37.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 37.

⁷¹ Ibid., 39

⁷² Lyon G. Tyler, "Washington and his Neighbors." *The William and Mary Quarterly* 4, no. 1, July 1895, 28-43 (28).

of land and the status associated with land ownership began to attract additional settlers.⁷³ Families such as the Lees, Fitzhughs, Tayloes, Carters and Washingtons selected portions of the peninsula as their realm for exploitation. These families are a part of the canon of twenty- two Virginia families identified as the First Families of Virginia whose fortunes and land holdings had a major influence on the history of the colony.⁷⁴

The most important geographic reason to settle the Northern Neck can be found in the water that surrounds the peninsula, with the Potomac River to the North, the Atlantic Ocean to the East and the Rappahannock River to the South. The peninsula is characterized by relatively flat or rolling uplands penetrated by a series of steep ravines that connect to the adjacent rivers. It is within the ravines that the fertile bottom land soils are located. Historically, these ravines and uplands supported a diverse flora system that included specimens such as chestnuts, beeches and oak varieties.⁷⁵

The political boundaries of the Northern Neck historically extended to the northern portion of the Virginia Colonial border, located in present -day West Virginia and Kentucky. The present- day area considered to be a part of the Northern Neck includes the land areas found within Virginia’s King George, Westmoreland, Northumberland, Lancaster, Richmond and Essex counties. Origins of these counties date from the Colonial era.⁷⁶ It is in the context of the present- day boundaries that the term Northern Neck is used in the thesis.

⁷³ Tyler, “Washington and his Neighbors,” 29.

⁷⁴ John C. Coombs, “ Planter Oligarchy on Virginia’s Northern Neck, “ hosted by the Virginia Historical Society Banner Lecture Series , October 12, 2012.

⁷⁵ Gouger, *Agricultural Change in the Northern Neck*, 40

⁷⁶ Thomas Wolf, *Historic Sites in Virginia’s Northern Neck and Essex County* (Charlottesville: UVA Press, 2011), 5-6.



Figure 3.1, Map detailing the Northern Neck of Virginia. The Northern Neck is bound by the Potomac River on the north, Chesapeake Bay to the east and the Rappahannock River to the south. The Northern Neck is rendered in the darker color; the map is created by author.

Expansion of the Tobacco Culture

As the colony of Virginia expanded further into the North American continent, the farming of tobacco likewise followed the movement of the population. The crop was everywhere, percolating into all aspects of the social strata of colony. Small yeoman farmers and large land holding members of Virginia's landed gentry actively engaged in the exportation of the plant. Expansion of settlement into the upper Piedmont of Virginia was in part driven by the desire to broaden the crop's geographic range.

The expansion westward bears witness to the soil depleting nature of the plant and its propensity to exhaust the soil in which it grows.

Two main varieties of tobacco were grown, Orinoco and Sweet tobacco. Planters of the Northern Neck favored the Orinoco variety, which has a stronger more pungent burn.⁷⁷ Tobacco is a herbaceous plant with a central stalk, growing to a height between six and nine feet. The stalk produces long leaves that are oval in shape, which are eventually dried and consumed in various methods. At the top of the stalk, a large crown of red and purple flowers emerges as the plant reaches the reproduction phase in its life cycle. The flower evolves into a seed pod which contains multiple seeds at the end of the growing season.⁷⁸ Despite the concentration of two varieties in Virginia, a plethora of variants of the plant were cultivated during colonial times.⁷⁹



Figure 3.2 Tobacco Plant- showing the plant in bloom, illustration, from Jonathan Carver *Treatise on Tobacco Culture*⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Ken Mc Farland, "Tobacco Culture Appendix," in *Stratford Hall Cultural Landscape Report Draft*, ed. Cultural Landscape Lab (Athens: UGA 2012).

⁷⁸ Carver, *Treatise on Tobacco Culture*, 9-11.

⁷⁹ T.H. Breen, *Tobacco Culture: The Mentality of the Great Tidewater Planters on the Eve of Revolution*.(Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 64.

⁸⁰ Carver, *Treatise on Tobacco Culture*, title page.

Production Cycle

‘There is no plant in the world that requires richer land, or more manure than tobacco. It will grow on poorer fields, but will not yield crops that are sufficiently profitable to pay the expenses of the Negroes,’ states the anonymous author of the Colonial Era American Husbandry pamphlet.⁸¹ The tobacco cycle lasted a total of fifteen months from the time of planting to the moment of embarkation to foreign markets. This long period led to an overlap in the crops on a tobacco growing site, and helps explain the dominating nature associated with the crop’s production. The tobacco crop was planted in a series of raised beds during the month of January. Fertilizer in the form of either animal manure or wood ash was used to enrich the fields. After fertilization, a protective layer of branches and bramble were placed on top of the seedlings to ensure protection from frost. Planters actively planted ten times the amount of tobacco they expected to produce, as they were aware that the elements and other factors could decimate various portions of the planted crop.⁸² Surviving seedlings were moved from the beds in late April to a larger field, ensuring that the plant received ample space to develop into an ideal specimen. This phase in the cycle is known as transplanting. The ideal conditions for transfer depended on geographic location and the occurrence of the last seasonal frost. In some instances, transplanting was not done until May or June.

As spring gave way to summer, the attention of the planter, overseers, and slaves focused on weeding and inspecting the individual plants in the field. A process known as topping was the next phase in the cycle. Workers actively removed the tops of the plants, preventing the tobacco from blooming and therefore concentrating the plants energies in producing a more fully flavored leaf.⁸³ Thomas Jefferson noted in a paper entitled “On Tobacco Culture” that each planter had a version of what an ideal specimen was, shaped by his experience in the field. “After eight to twelve leaves had appeared on

⁸¹ Allan Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slaves: The Development of Southern Cultures in the Chesapeake, 1680-1800*.(Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1986) Kulikoff, 45.

⁸² Breen, *Tobacco Culture*, 47.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 48.

each plant—the number depends upon” the fertility of the earth—the planter ordered his laborers to begin topping.”⁸⁴

Harvesting occurred in September, when the plants in the field were removed at the discretion of the planter. This final step in the cycle had to be timed to transpire prior to first seasonal frost of fall, yet not before the plants have reached maturity. An indication of full maturity is the exhibition of wilting. Writings surviving from the Colonial Era prove that little rhyme or reason informed the planter as to when harvesting was appropriate, with each planter prescribing to his own method.⁸⁵ A gentleman by the name of Tatham waited to begin harvesting until after the tobacco, “appeared grey.” Richard Henry Lee, on the other hand, stated that once, “spots appear on the leaves,” the best specimen of the tobacco plant would be obtained.⁸⁶

From the fields, the plants were then placed in the drying barns. The time in the drying barn was marked by a constant monitoring of heat and humidity to ensure that the final product was palatable to be sent to markets. After desired water content was achieved, slaves stripped the leaves from the stems and then packaged the leaves into hogshead, in a process known as prizing. The hogsheads were then stored in warehouses where they cured further. Hogsheads are wooden barrels with an appearance similar to wine casks. The process was completed upon the transportation of the hogsheads of cured tobacco from the warehouse to awaiting ships. The ships, typically loaded in late March and early May, were the responsibility of the merchants and bound for either England or the Continent.⁸⁷

By the 1660s, the colonies of Virginia and Maryland were producing 15,000,000 pounds of tobacco in total. This amount expanded to 28,000,000 pounds by the 1680s.⁸⁸ Tobacco was the main

⁸⁴ Breen, *Tobacco Culture*, 48.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 48.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 49.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 49-50.

⁸⁸ Orlando Ridout V., "Agricultural Buildings." In *The Chesapeake House: Architectural Investigation by Colonial Williamsburg*, edited by Cary Carson and Carl R. Lounsbury, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press 2013),181.

export of the colony of Virginia. However, from 1680 to the 1730s, a long economic depression settled over the region, creating a climate of tension in the industry and a drop in tobacco prices. During this period, wealthy growers advocated regulating the crop to ensure a product of high –quality was shipped. This in theory would raise the price of returns. The then Governor, Gooch, proposed the installation of a mandatory tobacco inspection program that would destroy all low quality products, effectively raising the standard of the goods sold at markets.⁸⁹ A series of approved tobacco inspection warehouses were constructed at strategic ports associated with tobacco shipping. Consistently subpar shipments during the era of depression led to a decline in the reputation of Virginia tobacco, causing even lower returns.⁹⁰ Smaller yeoman farmers protested the inspection legislation, stating that the inspection system favored the landed gentry. Tensions rose in the colony, leading to a series of clashes between small farmers and tobacco officials in response to the 1720 and the 1730s tobacco inspection laws enacted by Royal Governor Gooch.⁹¹ However, the efforts to raise the quality of the product finally succeeded in 1735. The depression ended and with that came profitable returns to all strata of growers.

The period between 1730 and 1763 was an era noted by historians as the Golden Age of Tobacco in the Tidewater colonies.⁹² The time was marked with general political and military stability, which led to a flourishing of the imperial endeavors and enterprise of Britain. The combination of improved trade conditions and higher returns due to a restored Virginia tobacco reputation caused an appreciation of the value of the colonial export. By 1758 Virginia alone was responsible for exporting 70,000 hogsheads, or approximately 70,000,000 pounds of tobacco.⁹³ With the appreciation of

⁸⁹ Stacy L. Lorenz, “To Do Justice to His Majesty, the Merchant and the Planter”: Governor William Gooch and the Virginia Tobacco Inspection Act of 1730,” *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 108, no.4 (2000): 345.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 350

⁹¹ Allan Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slaves: The Development of Southern Cultures in the Chesapeake, 1680-1800*. (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1986) ,281.

⁹² Lorena H. Walsh, *Motives of Honor, Pleasure, and Profit*. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 398

⁹³ Ridout, “Agricultural Buildings, “ 181.

tobacco, its value began to approach that of imported goods, creating more equitable trade for the colony.⁹⁴

Despite the cultivation of other agricultural commodities such as corn, cereal grains, cotton and limited amounts of silk, by the middle of the eighteenth century tobacco was “synonymous” with Virginia.⁹⁵ It had become, “the grand staple of Virginia.”⁹⁶ Planters actively acknowledged in correspondence from the era that tobacco was, “our staple,” which led to plantations to focus almost exclusively on tobacco production, cultivating only enough food staples to sustain the needs of the plantation’s inhabitants.⁹⁷ Shipping manifests and accounts surviving from the pre American Revolutionary War estimate that the exportation of tobacco from Virginia and Maryland totaled 96,000 hogshead of tobacco per year.⁹⁸

Land Patterns: English Husbandry method

Despite the rigorous daily patterns generally experienced by those involved in the tobacco production, two distinctive variations of land use pattern existed. The first land use pattern resulted from the more labor and time intensive English Husbandry method, which was based on how agricultural production methods used on English estates. Despite requiring more time, this method was a more efficient use of the land than the second most common variation, the twenty year field rotation method, which used a cyclical pattern of growing.

Between 1765 and 1766, Charles Carter Sr., a King George County plantation owner on the Northern Neck, recorded his experimentation with the English Husbandry method, a system known for producing a higher quality tobacco crop. Due to the depleting nature of tobacco on the land, Carter, from the months of September to April, penned livestock on the portions of his fields that were

⁹⁴ Lorena H. Walsh, *Motives of Honor*, 398.

⁹⁵ Breen, *Tobacco Culture*, 57.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 57.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 57.

⁹⁸ Carver, *Treatise on Tobacco Culture*, 7

responsible for growing the maturing tobacco. This ensured that nutrients were added back into the soil. A requirement of the slave labor under this method included the constant tilling of the manure back into the soil to ensure maximum nutrient penetration. At the same time a series of grains including rye and wheat were in rotation to recharge the nutrient levels of the soil. The practice appears to have been common in the Rappahannock basin and on properties located along the Potomac River.⁹⁹ This practice increased agricultural production in the region through the use of land for multiple purposes with benefits of both improving crop yield as well as livestock breed quality, as livestock were more closely monitored.¹⁰⁰

Similarly, in the mid-1750s Landon Carter, a relative to Charles Carter, is credited with introducing the same system of land use management onto his plantation holdings along the Rappahannock River. More sophisticated and refined than the slash and burn practices of his neighbors, his variation of the English Husbandry method relied upon cultivating fields through row plowing. Landon Carter's property was divided into fifty-acre units, with tobacco and other rotated crops laid out in straight lines. During the fallow months, livestock was placed in these fifty-acre units to naturally fertilize the land. The result was a higher production of tobacco per acre, but this method was even more labor intensive than other contemporary productions methods, as it required the continually tilling of the land to ensure the maintenance of the rows. This diverted attention from other facets of the agricultural production, rendering the process no more cost efficient than that of other neighboring plantations.¹⁰¹ However, despite the success of this method, the original intention of the English Husbandry method was meant for properties of no more than 150 acres, a stark difference from the 1500 acre plantations under Carter's care.

⁹⁹ Walsh, *Motives of Honor*, 536.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 473.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 529.

In addition to supplying of manure used to fertilize the tobacco fields, livestock filled another a crucial role in the plantation system as illustrated on the plantation of Richard Corbin. In 1760, Corbin's records indicate that on his various farms, between seventy and ninety heads of cattle were present, and with between thirty and fifty hogs, along with various other livestock. After the family, overseers and slaves were given their allotment of meat, between twenty and 150 surplus hogs were sold to the market to be butchered. This sale accounted for twenty percent of the income produced by the plantations that year.¹⁰² At Stratford Hall, the ledger of Philip Ludwell Lee indicates that the stores at the plantation port complex supplied a constant supply of salt pork and beef to local buyers.¹⁰³

Land Patterns: Twenty year rotation

The second major land use management pattern present in the Northern Neck during the Colonial Era was the twenty-year field rotation system. Planters sought out fresh land to cultivate tobacco as new lands produced a superior tobacco leaf. After a period of three years, the tobacco had exhausted the soil and depleted the land of most nutrients. The planter at this time allowed the field to be left fallow while new portions of his property were cultivated. No other crops were grown on this field, nor were livestock actively grazed on these fallow portions of the property to naturally fertilize the soil. In twenty years, the fallow land began to sustain a variety of tree known as, "old field pine." The planter would once again exploit this land for tobacco production after the growth of these trees. The yield was significantly less than upon the virgin land, but the cycle could be continued by successive generations on the same property.¹⁰⁴

Tobacco Houses

Despite the variety of land use patterns associated with tobacco cultivation, distinct landscape features were incorporated into all of them. The process of curing the harvested tobacco occurred in a

¹⁰² Walsh, *Motives of Honor*, 529.

¹⁰³ Philip Ludwell Lee Ledger, 1743-1783, M 2235, Rubenstein Library, Duke University

¹⁰⁴ Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slavery*, 47.

structure that during the Colonial Era was called a tobacco house, but is known today as a tobacco barn. The structures were traditionally a width of twenty feet with a length of forty feet with specimen examples upwards of one hundred feet.¹⁰⁵ The structures were divided into five foot bays with exposed rafters and post and beams that allowed the tobacco plants to be hung in order to achieve the desired water content consistency. An earthen dirt floor ran the length of the structure allowing the use of small heap fires, used to regulate the humidity and temperature consistency of the space. Further regulatory methods consisted of the use of a series of doors and windows that could be opened to encourage air circulation through a cross ventilation.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ Riduot, "Agricultural Buildings," 184.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 184.

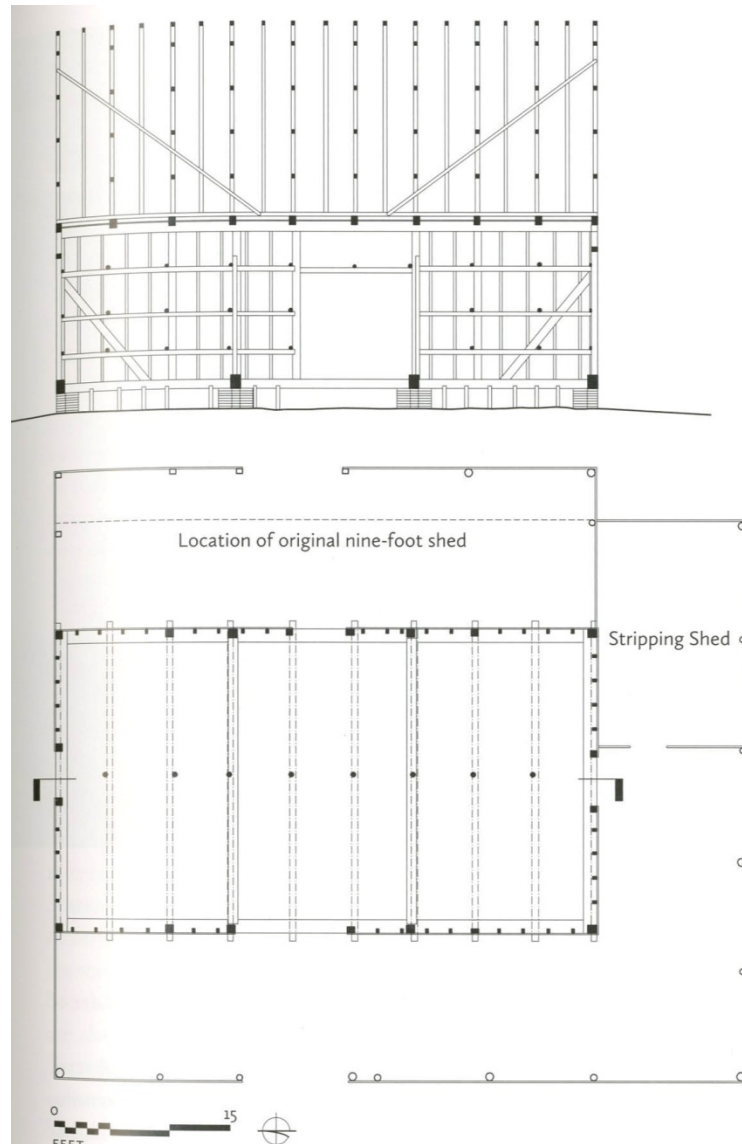


Figure 3.3 Jeffery Klee after Orland Ridout V, Tobacco House, found in "Agricultural Buildings," 185. The tobacco house was made of a series of columns that supported rafters that allowed the tobacco to be hung from during the drying process.

Rolling Roads

Another tobacco-growing landscape feature present on successful Northern Neck Plantations, were "Rolling Roads." These means of circulation were intended for the private use of the plantation proprietor to transport tobacco products to wharfs that dotted the Potomac and Rappahannock Rivers. The character of the roads were described as being smooth and dry, as vehicular conveyance was not

allowed to occur on these particular paths.¹⁰⁷ The rolling road was used solely as a means to transport the hogsheads of tobacco. The barrels of tobacco were rolled down the road to the warehouses prior to the crop being shipped. Legislation from the House of Burgess passed in the 1730s dictated that these rolling roads could be located no more than one mile from the ports that were designated as tobacco inspection points.¹⁰⁸

Warehouses

In 1712, legislation originating in the House of Burgess dictated requirements for warehouses that were integral to the storage of Virginia tobacco. According to the legislation these structures could be located no more than one-half mile from the wharves used for exporting the tobacco to international markets.¹⁰⁹ Placement of new structures not adhering to the legislation violated the law and resulted in the payment of a fine to the legislative body. Pre-existing warehouses could be exempted from the legislation if deemed appropriate through inspection. All new warehouses were to have access to tobacco rolling roads in order to allow for the ease of transportation of the goods. The warehouse was to be situated on a half-acre of land free from the interference of livestock, and kept separate through the use of appropriate fencing.¹¹⁰

The Impact of Society on Landscape

Growing tobacco and preparing the crop for shipment created distinct patterns on the landscape. The behaviors and motivations of three distinct social groups, the landed gentry, merchants, and the enslaved population, had further impacts in shaping the spatial configuration of the land and its uses at the tobacco culture sites.

¹⁰⁷ Gouger, *Agricultural Changes on the Northern Neck*, 95.

¹⁰⁸ Hening, *Laws of Virginia Vol. IV 1711-1738*, 38.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 38.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 40.

The Landed Gentry

Unlike planters of such crops as cotton and indigo in colonial South Carolina, who had the luxury of leaving their Ashley and Charles River plantations to winter in Charleston, the Virginia gentry were involved in the daily production of their agricultural crop and had to remain at the plantations for most of the year.¹¹¹ The attention necessary to ensure a successful harvest created what has been identified by historians as a mindset known as “tobacco mentality.” All actions were dictated by tobacco cultivation, which served as the main source of income for the landed gentry.¹¹² The production established a series of routines that were vital to the success of a crop.¹¹³ In his 1760 essay, “The State of the Constitution of Virginea,” Richard Henry Lee diverts his attention from the status of the colonial government to explain the tobacco culture to those who are, “unacquainted with the process.” The laborious nature of production is described in detail in order to engender sympathy and prevent the continuation of taxes on the enterprise. Lee describes a routine that includes details of each step in the production process, “sowing, transplanting, weeding, topping, cutting, curing and packing,” and stresses the necessity of mastering the technique of timing to create a successful product.¹¹⁴

The success or failure of a crop established a reputation amongst sellers and peers and caused a sense of pride to develop within the planter at his work. Literature capturing this titillation of ego survives; including Landon Carter’s self-congratulating diary entry on the results of his 1770 crop, stating that, “by being careful... I have produced I believe as to goodness as fine tobacco as ever was seen.”¹¹⁵ Echoing the sentiments of Carter, in a 1771 letter addressing his brother William Lee, Philip Ludwell Lee,

¹¹¹ Breen, *Tobacco Culture*, 17.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 22.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 22.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 40.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 75.

master of Stratford Hall, states “that the tobacco crop produced at Stratford was as fine as ever was made.”¹¹⁶

Another behavior exhibited by landed gentry and influenced by tobacco mentality was conspicuous consumption. Displaying one’s wealth for the benefit of others was an indication of superior taste, often gained through formal education in England. Motivation for practicing this behavior was rooted in a desire to emulate the appearance and behaviors of genteel counterparts on English estates. If English aristocrats were constructing certain features on their landscape, such as pleasure gardens and follies, the Virginia gentry likewise were constructing these features in an effort to be compared to their English cousins. The Virginia Plantation emulated the appearance of an English Estate. As Georgian architecture became the preferred style in England, Virginians developed a voracious appetite for the same. The arrival of Wren’s plans for William and Mary College in Williamsburg, Virginia, and the introduction of English architectural pattern books that included the work of Inigo Jones and Andrea Palladio, sparked a more formal Georgian aesthetic in Virginia.¹¹⁷

A desire behind adopting the, “Classical conventions of design,” appears in part to express a “maturity” in the character in the colony.¹¹⁸ Virginia wasn’t a colonial backwater, but rather a center of culture much like Britain. The “Classical conventions” inspired an association amongst the gentry with the classical farming figures of Horace and Cincinnatus, each with his country villa retreats carrying the symbolism of a former affluent culture. The concept of dominance and submission is physically manifested in architectural form through the execution of design schemes consisting of a high central form supported by subservient members.¹¹⁹ The great houses were constructed in the classical style and placed at prominent locations in the landscape, starkly different from the structures that were used in

¹¹⁶ Breen, *Tobacco Culture*, 67.

¹¹⁷ Gerald Foster, *American Houses: A Field Guide to the Architecture of the Home* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company 2004)120-122

¹¹⁸ Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia: 1740-1760* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982),36.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 38.

agricultural production or to house slaves. The influences of such classical connections were evident at the Northern Neck plantation, Mount Airy, built by the Tayloes in the 1760's. A symmetrical two story Georgian central block connects to a pair of shorter symmetrical flankers through identical curved arcades creating a defined symmetrical forecourt entrance into the structure.¹²⁰ Other structures on the plantation were constructed from lesser materials than those used in the main house.

Ideas of formal expression inherent in the architecture of the era also permeated the surrounding landscaped gardens. George Mason's Gunston Hall, a 1750's Northern Neck periphery construction, exemplifies the formalized behavior and control on the landscape. A central allee grounds the design, with axial emphasis expressed in the form of box hedges and flower beds on either side, leading the eye to the Potomac River beyond.¹²¹ Gardens at the plantations of Westover and Carter's Grove similarly expressed principals of formality with the use of such landscape features as terraces, symmetry and the insertion of classical ornaments in the landscape, all in an attempt to emulate the Neo-Classical Villa concepts then in vogue on English estates, and further reinforcing an association with figures from the Classical past as inspiration for present- day behavior.¹²²

As a further display of dominance and power over the landscape, the estates of the gentry were positioned at high points overlooking the waterways which were key transit routes for crops and goods.¹²³ Locating the estates in such a manner required both a formal river entrance and land approach.¹²⁴ These locations allowed for observance of both the agricultural cultivations as well as the movement of associated ships. This pattern led to relative isolation of estates, with often several miles

¹²⁰ Carl R Lounsbury, "Plantation Housing: Seventeenth Century," in *The Chesapeake House: Architectural Investigation by Colonial Williamsburg*, ed. Cary Carson and Carl Lounsbury (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 83.

¹²¹ Wenger, "Town House Country House," 138

¹²² C. Allan Brown, "Eighteenth-Century Virginia Plantation Gardens: Translating an Ancient Idyll," in *Regional Garden Design in the United States*, ed. Therese O'Malley and Marc Treib (Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1995), 136-138.

¹²³ Breen, *Tobacco Culture*, 45.

¹²⁴ Wenger, "Town House Country House," 138.

between planter houses. Such vast land holdings and isolation made it necessary for each plantation to function as a self-sustained entity.¹²⁵

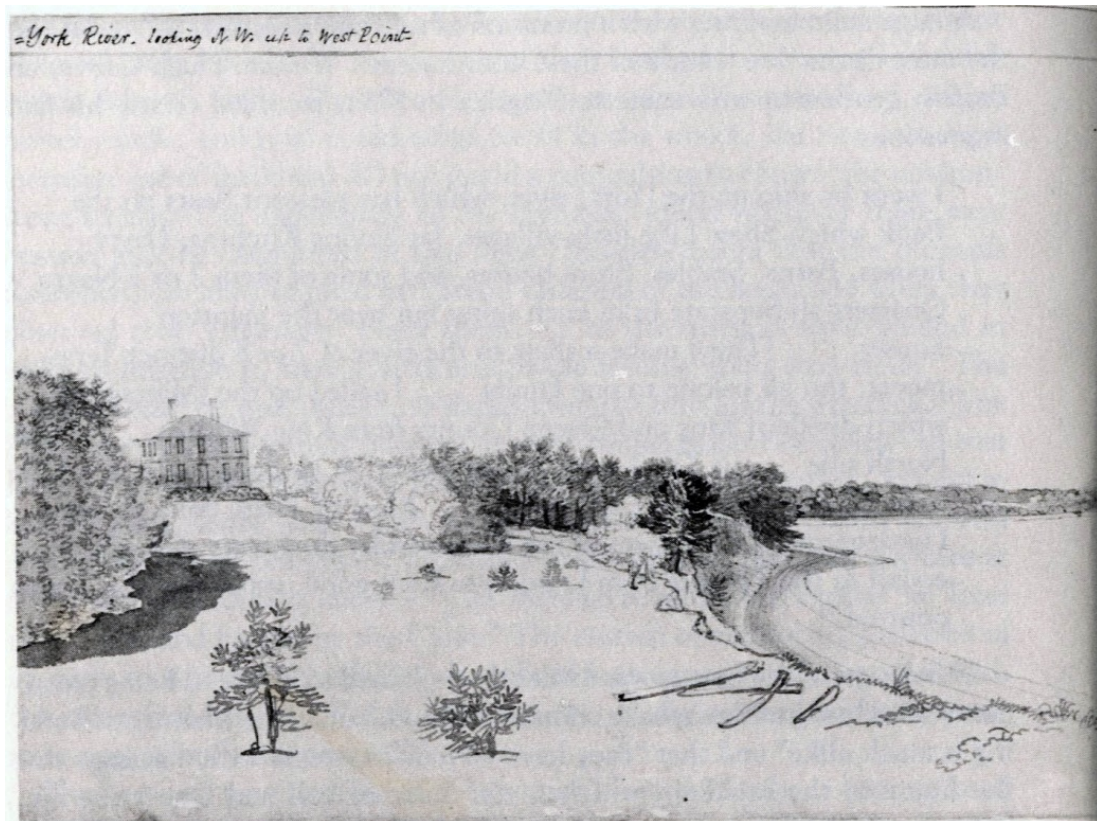


Figure 3.4 Benjamin Latrobe, *York River View*, 1797, watercolor, Maryland Historical Society.¹²⁶ The image created by Latrobe depicts the positioning of the mansion house in the landscape so as to have a vantage point to view the river.

Merchants

Also helping fuel the tobacco mentality and conspicuous consumption was the complex and often contentious relationship between the gentry and the British tobacco merchants, who on the return journey from foreign ports were able to transport goods that were highly desired by the landed gentry. The route of trade traditionally followed that of the Atlantic Triangle, with goods departing from Virginia, bound for London with a return stop in the Western Caribbean. Records surviving from the 1750s through the 1770s at Stratford Hall indicate a habit on the part of owners Thomas and Philip

¹²⁵ Breen, *Tobacco Culture*, 45.

¹²⁶ Benjamin Latrobe, *York River View*, 1797, watercolor, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, Maryland.

Ludwell Lee of importing British furniture, silks, books and other goods. Necklaces, cloth and instruments were also imported for the delight and instruction of the Lee children. In 1775, an inventory of the estate of Philip Ludwell Lee indicates that he had over 600 volumes within his personal library.¹²⁷ Arguably his most extravagant import was of a thoroughbred horse from England called the Dotterel.¹²⁸ The habit of consumption also infected much of the rest of the Northern Neck gentry. One “John Mercer own[ed] in excess of 1600 volumes at the time of his death,” and planter Robert Carter is acknowledged as having kept a substantial literary collection among his many possessions.

Due to the reliance on the merchants as both exporter and importer, the gentry viewed these individuals as much as business partners as they did friends.¹²⁹ A skewed view of enterprise arose in the minds of the gentry, who came to believe that if the merchants viewed economic exchanges with them as acts of friendship, the merchants would willingly extend the lines of credit so desperately needed by planters to feed their excessive lifestyles.¹³⁰ This mixed dynamic is illustrated by Philip Ludwell Lee and his contemporary Richard Lingan Hall who, in exchanges with merchants expressed willingness to “assist” their “friends” by placing their tobacco on a certain merchant’s ships.¹³¹ This close association between the gentry and the merchant class is shown further in a letter written by Lee dating from 1770, in which he asks for harmony between his merchant brother, William Lee, and rival merchant, William Molleson, who were competing to transport tobacco. Lee’s letter expresses his wish for the two to “love one another as he loved them both.”¹³²

¹²⁷ *Estate of Philip Ludwell Lee 1775* (Westmoreland County VA Court Records, 1775)

¹²⁸ Albert H. Tillson Jr., *Accommodating Revolution: Virginia's Northern Neck in an Era of Transformations, 1760-1810*. (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2010), 17.

¹²⁹ Albert H. Tillson Jr., "Friendship and Commerce: The Conflict and Coexistence of Values on Virginia's Northern Neck in the Revolutionary Era." *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 111, no. 3, 2003, 221-262 (225).

¹³⁰ Tillson, *Accommodating Revolution*, 33.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 228.

¹³² Tillson, "Friendship and Commerce," 230.



Figure 3.5 Joshua Fry and Peter Jefferson, *Virginia Port*, 1751, cartouche, in New York Public Library Arents Collection¹³³ The barrels in the image depict hogsheads which were to be loaded on to the ships in the background. The gentleman sitting depicts a member of gentry class with the gentleman with arms extended is a merchant.

Despite these “bonds” of friendship, merchants did remind planters of the debts they were owed resulting from extended lines of credit given them. William Lee is noted for berating George Tuberville, an indebted planter, saying that he will, “send down a hurricane on the planter unless a substantial increase of tobacco is sent on his ships.”¹³⁴ Demands of this nature were common from merchants who often had excessively indebted planters in their control.¹³⁵ From exchanges like these, it appears that the merchants, as much as the planters, dictated the continued production of tobacco on

¹³³ Joshua Fry and Peter Jefferson, *Virginia Port*, 1751, cartouche, in Arents Collection, New York Public Library, New York

¹³⁴ Tillson, *Accommodating Revolution*, 40

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 44.

the Northern Neck. Philip Ludwell Lee expressed remorse to his brother William that he could not send additional tobacco on William's ships due to demands of the Hanbury exporters, who required additional Lee tobacco products for their own cargo manifest. Debtors were reminded of the amounts that were owed and were chastised for their belief in the existence of, "the romantic bill drawer' who attempts to gain credit advances for amounts of currency not justified by the volume tobacco they supplied for shipment."¹³⁶ A similar statement was sent to William's brother, Richard Henry Lee, complaining of the unreasonable logic of individuals who believed that unlimited credit, consistently high tobacco prices, and free shipping of goods to England should be a part of the tobacco enterprise with all costs incurred at the expense of the merchant.¹³⁷

In order to support the expenses associated with this form of lifestyle, planters need collateral, and used property, including land, slaves, and crops produced, to receive credit from merchants. The practice of crop return speculation of the 1760s and 1770s led to a doubling of the total debt of the Chesapeake area planters, including those on the Northern Neck. In 1775 residents of this portion of the British colonies owed 1,000,000 pounds sterling to British merchants. By 1776, prior to the American Revolution, the total had reached 2,000,000 pounds sterling. A similar pattern had occurred between 1766 and 1772. Scottish merchants of that period noted an increase in debts owed from 500,000 pounds sterling to 1,100,000 pounds sterling owed by the planters.¹³⁸ An explanation for the exponential rise in debt can be explained by the rate of exchange that was placed on Virginia transactions. For example, if a Virginia planter wished to have credit to purchase goods from London sellers, a rate of exchange was placed on his transaction for the conversion of the value of the crops into cash. 100 pounds sterling worth of English goods purchased would be given with a premium conversion

¹³⁶ Tillson, *Accommodating Revolution*, 40.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 40. Despite the protest of "free shipping" on the part of William Lee, the surviving ledger of Philip Ludwell Lee indicates that planters were in fact paying a shipping fee, around 20 pounds per shipment.

¹³⁸ Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slavery*, 122

rate of thirty three pounds sterling, resulting in an amount owed of 133 pounds sterling.¹³⁹ The vast majority of this debt was held by the landed gentry with property consisting of several thousand acres with total assets including slaves totaling more than 5,000 pounds.¹⁴⁰

Unlike their Middle Neck and James Peninsula counterparts to the south, Northern Neck planters exportation endeavors included exchanges with multiple international ports including: Liverpool, Bristol, Dublin and Whitehaven, as well as the principal port of London.¹⁴¹ This pattern of diverse trade can be explained in part by the Navigation Acts, which limited the sale of Virginia products outside of those ports associated with the British Empire, a matter that did develop contention between the planters and their merchant counterparts.¹⁴² However, some trading did occur in limited cases with the Dutch and French markets at Amsterdam as well as Le Havre. These instances represent the more dire by planters to sell a tobacco crop and make a profit.

The relationship between the merchants and the planters did include an element of mannered civility on the part of the merchants. In order to gain additional planters and tobacco shipments, the merchants practiced the language and behavior of friendship, using established connections and exacting influence on relatives and peers to gain additional clients. William Molleson, who relied upon the patronage of Philip Ludwell Lee, exhorts the lord of Stratford to use his influence in an effort to gain additional consignments.¹⁴³ Similarly, William Lee implored the influence and benevolence of Richard “Squire” Lee to convince John Tayloe to persuade Charles Carter to use William as his preferred merchant to the Great Britain.¹⁴⁴

¹³⁹ “Virginia Colonial Money, and tobacco’s part therein- Tobacco Warehouses,” *The Virginia Law Journal* (August 1877) : 449

¹⁴⁰ Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slavery*, 128

¹⁴¹ Walsh, *Motives of Honor*, 472

¹⁴² Tillson, “Friendship and Commerce,” 226.

¹⁴³ Tillson, *Accommodating Revolution*, 41.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 41.

Slaves

A third and equally critical group within the dynamic of the tobacco culture, was the enslaved Africans who were responsible for the labor associated with tobacco cultivation production as well as the manipulation of the physical character of the landscape. Records indicate that Northern Neck slaves were predominately housed in larger plantation communities consisting of twenty or more individuals.¹⁴⁵ The introduction of slaves into the tobacco culture production system began in mass around 1700 with the depletion and noted unreliability of the white indentured servant force.¹⁴⁶ According to Colonial Era practices, a single male worker, whether white or enslaved, could manage three acres of land in tobacco and turn a profit.¹⁴⁷ This roughly translates into each worker being responsible for the production of 900 pounds of tobacco. Under ideal growing conditions however, the amount could increase to as much as 1300 pounds of tobacco.¹⁴⁸ At the age of ten, both enslaved women and men would be made part of the labor force responsible for the care of the tobacco plants during the labor intensive process.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁵ Tillson, *Accommodating Revolution*, 102.

¹⁴⁶ Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slavery*, 65

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 47

¹⁴⁸ Ken Mc Farland, "Tobacco Culture Appendix," 1.

¹⁴⁹ Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slavery*, 64.



Figure 3.6. Benjamin Latrobe, *Slaves in the Field*, 1796, drawing, Maryland Historical Society¹⁵⁰
The image depicts two female slaves working to clear a field that was recently created. Either an overseer or member of the gentry class is watching the actions of the slaves.

The original intention behind the importing enslaved Africans was to provide a cheap, efficient labor for the growing and harvesting of tobacco, but as time passed this trend changed. With the end of indentured white servitude, slaves began to be trained to replace that labor force for more domestic duties. Trained Africans could be responsible for a range of tasks including that of nurse maid and nanny to the planter's children, cook, or foot servant. Due to the division of labor on a plantation, a slave hierarchy began to emerge between that of field slaves, house slaves and a third artisan group. Artisans had completed apprenticeships to a master craftsman, and created a new source of revenue for their

¹⁵⁰ Benjamin Latrobe, *Slaves in the Field*, 1796, drawing, in Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, Maryland.

owners with their ability to be hired out to perform specialized tasks. Slaves trained as skilled artisans also increased in value as property, thus increasing the wealth of slave owners.¹⁵¹ Records from Stratford Hall indicate that, under the direction of Philip Ludwell Lee, two postilions, Titus and Caesar, lived on the plantation and were charged with caring for the thoroughbred horses in Lee's ownership. Records indicate that because of the skills involved, these that these individuals had a higher value as property than their field and house slave counterparts.¹⁵²

The arrangement of the slave housing, or quarters, on a site helped determine the shape of the landscape. Slave quarter configurations, and indeed even the use and meaning of language used to name them, varied throughout the Northern Neck. The location of field laborer quarters generally were adjacent to the fields the laborers were responsible for maintaining, an arrangement plantation owners to extract maximum efficiency on investments of labor to crop outcome.¹⁵³ The physical form of these structures varied from plantation to plantation in matters of size, material, and form. Robert Bolling on his Sampson Plantation adhered to barrack- style housing, which used a single structure sixteen feet by twenty feet to house fifteen enslaved people.¹⁵⁴ Other owners, such as Robert Carter, provided single averaging 300 square feet to house family—based units, each consisting of two rooms.¹⁵⁵ No one clear pattern, form, or configuration of slave housing can be used to explain all tobacco culture sites.

¹⁵¹ Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slavery*, 399.

¹⁵² Jeanne A. Calhoun, "African American Experience at Stratford Hall:1782," Robert E. Lee Memorial Association, Jessie Ball Dupont Memorial Library, Stratford Hall, VA, 5.

¹⁵³ Edward A. Chappell, "Housing Slavery," in *The Chesapeake House: Architectural Investigation by Colonial Williamsburg*, ed. Cary Carson and Carl R. Lounsbury (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press 2013),157.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 157.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 158.

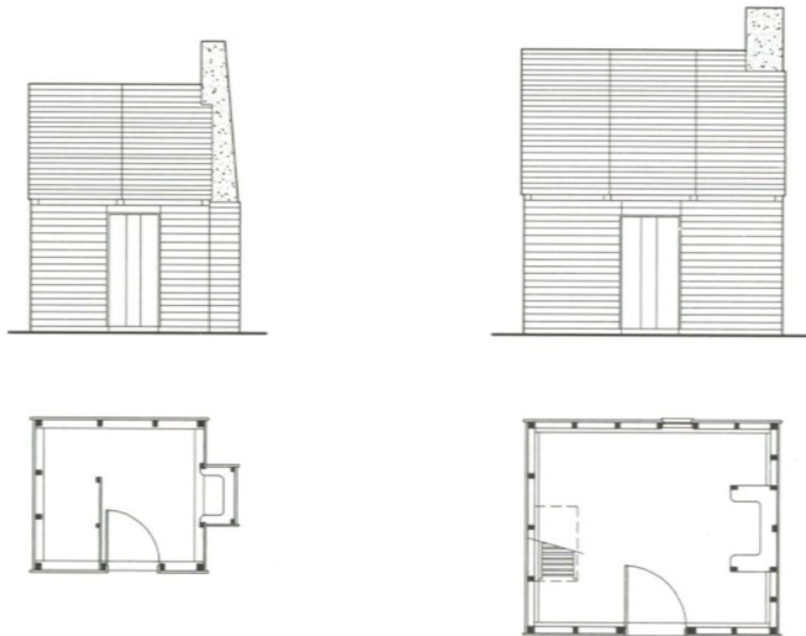


Figure 3.7 Edward Chappell, *Slave Quarters*, found in “Housing Slavery,” 161.¹⁵⁶ Despite differences in slave housing structures, most were simple one room shelters consisting of a fire place and a door.

Corn was grown as the primary dietary staple of northern Virginia slaves. According to Virginia historian Rhys Isaac, “Corn and tobacco were the twin staffs of life.”¹⁵⁷ During the era of tobacco culture, slaves consumed corn in the form of raw corn, cornmeal, or cornbread, all usually administered and rationed by the master. The generosity and benevolence of the owner would dictate whether or not the slave diet would include meat or other products such as dairy. To supplement dietary needs, enslaved workers grew gardens and vegetable plots, which surrounded the slave housing structures.¹⁵⁸

Decline of the Tobacco Culture

In general the tobacco culture of Virginia began to decline in the post-Revolutionary War years. However, the decline of the Northern Neck tobacco culture predates this trend and was caused by a unique set of factors including the rise of a more diversified agricultural system and a changing

¹⁵⁶ Chappell, “Housing Slavery,” 161.

¹⁵⁷ Isaac, *Transformations of Virginia*, 24.

¹⁵⁸ Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slavery*, 392

commercial ethic of the landed gentry. This diversification was manifested in the mass introduction of grains to the same agricultural landscape where tobacco was grown. Cultivation of grains filled the demand of markets in Europe and the Caribbean for a reliable food source, demand which began in the late 1750s and continued through the 1760s. A series of crop failures in Europe produced ready markets to purchase Virginia goods other than tobacco.¹⁵⁹ Growers positioned directly on the Rappahannock River portion of the Northern Neck now grew twice as much corn as was necessary for the plantation in order to sell the excess at market.¹⁶⁰ Wheat became the second major staple in Virginia with production exports totaling 600,000 bushels by the 1770s.¹⁶¹

Coupled with the growth in grain production was a rise in construction of mills. Twenty three mills were constructed in Westmoreland County alone for the sole purpose of converting grains to flour.¹⁶² The behavior of Robert Carter embodied changing thoughts in agricultural production in this area of the colony. Prior to his return from the James Peninsula to Westmoreland County, Carter limited and restricted the cultivation of tobacco on his properties, while at the same time increasing the planting of wheat. By 1772, he dominated the Virginian market in the sale of flour transported on vessels bound for foreign locales.¹⁶³ Carter's efforts reflected the overall shifts of the economic market toward grain production, with grain accounting for ten percent of the tobacco planter income by 1760.¹⁶⁴

Several of the tobacco planters failed to diversify their crops, adamantly clinging to the established systems of the tobacco culture. Instead of limiting the overall tobacco output, planters in fact increased production, rationalizing that the increased output would lead to increased pay by the

¹⁵⁹ Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slavery*, 120.

¹⁶⁰ Walsh, *Motives of Honor*, 473.

¹⁶¹ Gill, Harold B., Jr, "Wheat Culture in Colonial Virginia." *Agricultural History* 52, no. 3 (July 1978):382.

¹⁶² Tillson, *Accommodating Revolution*, 36.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 37.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 37.

merchants per the existing system of agreement in the society.¹⁶⁵ Trash tobaccos, or tobacco leaves of the lowest possible material value, began to fill the hogsheads. As experienced earlier in the century, the reputation of Virginia tobacco again declined, spurring the adverse effects associated with lower quality product. Subsequently, prices again began to fall.

Despite the often shrewd business behavior of at least some of the planter gentry, agricultural diversification was in part due to the loss of tobacco sales in foreign markets. Prior to the American Revolution, a series of low prices for Orinoco tobacco forced the majority of the Northern Neck planters to in fact abandon the crop, a move partly offset by a shift to wheat production.¹⁶⁶ Hopes for selling tobacco to different international ports were shattered with The Seven's Year War, which effectively closed French ports as a secondary market for the Virginia commodity. Only two thirds of planters actively cultivated tobacco in 1775.¹⁶⁷ A counter observation is made by Lorena Walsh, that at the same time that tobacco prices were indeed falling, the profitability of growing wheat and corn began to eclipse that of tobacco, thus allowing the gentry to leave the plantation system in place by merely switching crops.¹⁶⁸

During the time of British port monopoly, British merchants called-in the colonial gentry's debts and began ending the lines of credit, thus severing the ties of a system that had been endemic of the tobacco culture.¹⁶⁹ The lavish lifestyles were no longer feasible, yet planters were forced to grow tobacco to cover debts. When tobacco was no longer profitable, large properties had to be sold, piece by piece, with the funds raised used for covering debts. Court cases indicate that some merchants went as far as to bring legal actions against planters, and seized plantations as payment of debts.¹⁷⁰ This

¹⁶⁵ Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slavery*, 103.

¹⁶⁶ Breen, *Tobacco Culture*, 31.

¹⁶⁷ Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slavery*, 120.

¹⁶⁸ Walsh, *Motives of Honor*, 410

¹⁶⁹ Breen, *Tobacco Culture*, 31.

¹⁷⁰ Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slavery*, 130-131

naturally created hostility among the gentry toward merchants, and in part is viewed as an influence for the pro-independence nature that manifests on the Northern Neck prior to the Revolution.

While the economic climate may have fostered demands for change and revolution from such planters as George Washington and the patriot brothers Richard Henry Lee and Francis 'Lightfoot' Lee, the reaction was not without consequence to the livelihood of the tobacco growers. The impacts of the Revolutionary War decimated tobacco production along the Northern Neck. Trade during the period fell to a low level of exportation with the majority of planters along the Rappahannock River portion of the peninsula completely ceasing tobacco cultivation or exportation.¹⁷¹ Agriculture for commercial exportation evolved to subsistence production out of necessity. Few planters wished to participate in the labor intensive production of tobacco without the guarantee of a buying market, with economic returns only occurring after the signing of the Constitution.¹⁷²

The physical state of the land appears to have supported the conversion from tobacco to grains. Commentary by Colonial era author Hugh Jones in his 1724 work *The Present State of Virginia*, says that after exploiting the land to its capacity with tobacco, "It will bear Indian corn, or English wheat, or European grain or seed, with wonderful increase."¹⁷³ A similar sentiment is stated by the anonymous author of the 1776 work *American Husbandry*. "Exhaust the lands in these colonies as much as you will with tobacco, you will leave it in order for grain, which is a matter of great consequence to the settlers."¹⁷⁴ Planters could in fact realize a level of success equal to their progenitors if they engaged in mixed agricultural production, including the growing of both grains and tobacco.¹⁷⁵ Despite the efforts of planters, the watershed moment of exhaustion appears to have occurred in the late 1770s.

¹⁷¹ Gouger, *Agricultural Changes in the Northern Neck*, 110.

¹⁷² Lorena S. Walsh, "Plantation Management in the Chesapeake, 1620-1820." *The Journal of Economic History* 49, no. 2: The Tasks of Economic History (1989): 401.

¹⁷³ Gill, "Wheat Culture," 383.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 383.

¹⁷⁵ Walsh, "Plantation Management," 400.

Support for the abandonment of a system revolving around tobacco appears to center on the time investment associated with the crop. As noted earlier, the production of tobacco was a fifteen month process with a set of tedious timing factors, requiring the planter's constant attention and guidance to serve as leader of the plantation. After switching from tobacco to cereal productions, George Washington is noted as having more time for leisurely pursuits, including that of the sport of fox hunting.¹⁷⁶

The geographic shift of tobacco production in the colony from the coast to the interior of Virginia eclipsed the importance of the Northern Neck. The economic depressions of the 1700 to 1730s established a pattern of planters moving westward in search of cheaper land and labor.¹⁷⁷ With the recovery in the middle and later portions of the eighteenth century, production was already established near present -day Richmond and in the Shenandoah Valley.¹⁷⁸ On the eve of the Revolutionary War, the area of the Shenandoah Valley outperformed the Northern Neck, producing a far superior product in regards to quality and quantity.¹⁷⁹ By 1795, the tobacco inspection warehouse in Alexandria, Virginia, responsible for inspecting the tobacco of the Northern Neck closed. The Golden Age of Tobacco ended production on the Northern Neck, and the region languished in economic depression for the next half century.¹⁸⁰

Stratford Hall

Situated within the forms, patterns, systems, shifts, and traditions of the Northern Neck tobacco culture is the prominent plantation of Stratford Hall. Written accounts and documentation describing the physical character of Stratford Hall are scarce, as the Lees appear not to have kept accounts of their daily life, or if they did, these records are lost. The details that are known come from accounts from

¹⁷⁶ Breen, *Tobacco Culture*, 55.

¹⁷⁷ Gouger, *Agricultural Transformation on the Northern Neck*, 107.

¹⁷⁸ Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slavery*, 78.

¹⁷⁹ Gouger, *Agricultural Transformation on the Northern Neck*, 90-95

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 116.

contemporary colonial visitors, architectural evidence, archeological surveys, court records, deeds, limited personal correspondence, remnants found in the landscape, tax records, wills, and evidence in the records relating to the established context of the tobacco culture society.



Figure 3.8 Map of critical locations at Stratford Hall. Map made by author. Darker green on the map represents the present tree canopy and lighter green represents the current fields at the plantation.

Pope Landscape

The development of Stratford Hall as a plantation began shortly after the settling of the region by Maryland dissidents. In 1651, British merchant Nathaniel Pope established a land patent for 1050 acres in the area of the Northern Neck, “along a series of high bluffs along the Potomac’s south shores,” including parts of the current landscape of Stratford Hall Planation. A renewal of the land patent in 1656 created the property known as the Clifts Plantation.¹⁸¹ Pope’s son Thomas renewed the patent in 1664, adding approximately 850 more acres, situated west of the original land patent.¹⁸² Following the death of Nathaniel Pope, the land is then purchased by Thomas Lee in 1717.¹⁸³

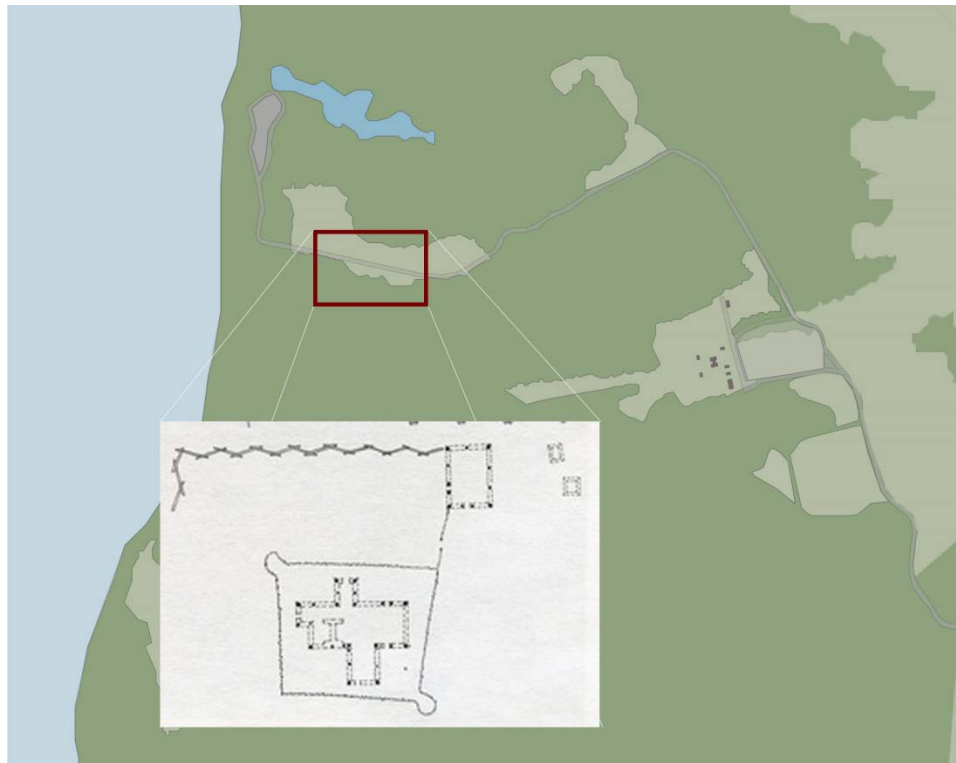


Figure 3.9 Pope Era Landscape, map by author. The majority of Pope Era activity was in the Clift Plantation Field. The insert shows the remains of Manner House.

¹⁸¹ Frazer D. Neiman, *The “Manner House” Before Stratford: Discovering The Clifts Planation* (Stratford: A Stratford Handbook, 1980), 2.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 3

¹⁸³ Tyler, “Washington and his neighbors,” 37

The deed of ownership transfer to Thomas Lee indicates only one structure, the Clifts Manner house, which existed on the property during the Pope occupation. The deed does not specify what means or methods of agricultural production were in practice on the site. It can reasonably be assumed that the occupants of the site from the Pope era engaged at the very least in subsistence farming production. However, evidence gathered through archaeological excavations conducted in 1976 provides the basis of more definitive knowledge of the era. The archaeological survey revealed the Clifts Plantation complex had once consisted of a central “Manner House” of timber frame construction, various versions of surrounding wooden palisades from different eras, two auxiliary dwellings for servants or slaves, an early eighteenth century dairy, a small barn, an arc of six successive smoke house structures and the remains of a graveyard.¹⁸⁴ It is postulated that the wooden post and hole construction of the Clifts Plantation would have occurred if the labor intensive tobacco production had been practiced on the site, but the definitive proof of that activity is yet to be found.¹⁸⁵

Thomas Lee Landscape

The construction of Stratford Hall can in part be linked to the destruction of another plantation house, Machodic, which until its arson in 1729, had served as the home and center of operations for a growing Thomas Lee empire. The fire appears to have been intended as cover for a robbery of the valuables of the gentry land owner, but quickly decimated the entire structure along with several of the ancillary buildings.¹⁸⁶ Thomas Lee, despite his status as a younger son, achieved in his lifetime the distinction of appointments to the House of Burgess, Council, President and Commander-in-chief of the colony as well as being named acting Governor of the Colony prior to his death in 1750.¹⁸⁷ The

¹⁸⁴ Neiman, *The Manner House Before Stratford*, 7.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹⁸⁶ Tillson, *Accommodating Revolutions*, 83.

¹⁸⁷ Frederick Warren Alexander, *Stratford Hall and the Lees Connected with Its History: Biographical, Genealogical and Historical* (Oak Grove, VA: Historical Society of Virginia, 1912), 48.

affluence Lee achieved secured the generosity of Queen Caroline to help finance the building of Stratford Hall according to some sources.

The consummate business man, Thomas Lee was responsible for expanding his land holdings to include property in Virginia along the Northern Neck in Westmoreland County, Northumberland County, in present- day Georgetown, the eastern shore of Maryland, and two islands in the Potomac River.¹⁸⁸ Thomas Lee's real estate gains can be attributed to him holding a post responsible for the granting of land on the behalf of Lady Fairfax. At the time of his death his land holdings totaled 40,000 acres, rivaling that of the legendary "King" Robert Carter, who had used a similar post and tactics to amass another large land holding in the colony.¹⁸⁹ Included under Thomas Lee's ownership was the property that became known as Stratford Hall. In 1718 the land holdings that were to become Stratford totaled approximately one thousand four hundred acres. In 1732 an additional 2400 acres of adjoining property were added to the plantation.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁸ Alexander, *Stratford Hall and the Lees.*, 71.

¹⁸⁹ Connie H. Wyrick, "Stratford and the Lees," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 30, no.1 (March 1971): 75.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 76.



Figure 3.10 Thomas Lee Landscape, map by author. Thomas Lee is responsible for constructing the Great House complex at A and turning the road at B

In March of 1729 Thomas Lee petitioned the courts of Westmoreland County to have the road running near his property turned to approach the site of his yet to be built mansion. The record states

that he was “designing to build a Dwelling house on the Top of the hill near where the road now passes.”¹⁹¹ Robert Carter and Jeremiah Rust inspected and approved the measures to be undertaken to change the course of the road. A follow-up report with the court stated that the configuration of the present road adjacent to an orchard owned by Thomas Lee could indeed be moved, and that the proposed new course would remain sufficient for travel.¹⁹² It was during this road- turning project that the Clifts Plantation Manner House was destroyed.¹⁹³

Lee had selected a site on the property one mile inland from the Potomac River, situated on a ridge as the site to construct Stratford Hall. He named the structure in honor of an ancestral estate in England. The house position afforded the owner grand views of the river and the ability to oversee the activities of the plantation. Construction on the main house is believed to have begun in 1729 and continued into the 1730s.¹⁹⁴ The date of construction is a contentious subject matter among historians, with some placing the date of construction as late as 1736. Lee, guided by the influence of his wife Hannah Corbin Lee, constructed a unique two story “H” shaped brick structure to serve as his home. The “H” shape structure is two stories tall and consists of a piano noble that sits atop a significantly shorter lower service level. The central hyphen of the piano noble houses the grand hall, with four smaller rooms on either side of the space. The lower level of the structure serves as the main storage space and had additional sleeping quarters. Philip Ludwell Lee is attributed with complaining of the influence of his mother, Hannah Lee on the construction of Stratford Hall, stating in reference to his father, ““See what it is to be ruled by a woman. That I should have to live in a place such as this.”¹⁹⁵

¹⁹¹ Ethel Armes, “ Notes on Roads and Gates In and Adjacent to Stratford Plantation,” Robert E. Lee Memorial Association 1933, 2.

¹⁹² Ibid, 2.

¹⁹³ Neiman, *The Manner house before Stratford*, 4.

¹⁹⁴ Wyrick, “Stratford and the Lees” 74.

¹⁹⁵ Tillson, *Accommodating Revolution*, 51.



Figure 3.11, The South façade of the Great House, Photo taken by author.

Adhering to design principles of the era, the rear and front facades of the structure were identical, suggesting that entry could occur from either the river or the land sides of the house.¹⁹⁶ Adjacent to the four corners of the grand structure, were four auxiliary structures. The arrangement of these structures created two courtyard spaces. The southern outbuildings are believed to have been constructed first with the northern flankers added later.¹⁹⁷ These buildings served as the locations of kitchen spaces, and are believed to be have been used as offices, stables, storage spaces, or additional sleeping quarter spaces.¹⁹⁸

An inventory of the estate of Thomas Lee indicates that in addition to the main house at Stratford Hall, structures concerned with agricultural enterprises were also constructed. These included an apple loft, barn, coach house, dairy, horse mill, meat house, and smith's shop. Unlike the mansion, the details of the construction materials for these agricultural outbuildings were not listed on the 1758

¹⁹⁶ Alexander, *Stratford Hall and the Lees*, 62.

¹⁹⁷ Wyrick, "Stratford and the Lees," 76.

¹⁹⁸ Alexander, *Stratford Hall and the Lees*, 62.

inventory.¹⁹⁹ A stone lawn roller is marked on the inventory, indicative of a large expanse of lawn somewhere on the site.

Surviving records from the inventory indicate that Thomas Lee possessed extensive livestock on his three abutting plantations. Stratford Hall Plantation alone had 128 sheep, with twenty-five heads of cattle and five horses consisting of both mares and colts. Additional horses were mentioned as being stabled nearby with specific location unspecified, as were twelve oxen, listed in association with an unspecified barn on the property.²⁰⁰ The Upper Clifts and Hallow Marsh plantations also had extensive livestock holdings indicative of practices associated with the previously described English Husbandry method of tobacco production.²⁰¹ To best utilize the land for the grazing of livestock and the cultivation of tobacco, the livestock may have grazed in the ravines during the summer months and in enclosed pens during the winter months. If so, this would have produced the manure needed to replenish the fields for the production of tobacco. Records indicating that Thomas Lee engaged in the cultivation of tobacco lend credence to this conjecture. Court records of the Hanbury's Exors vs. Lee's Admin note a the amount of 1000 pounds sterling due to the Hanbury's from debt incurred in association with tobacco production and business associated with the Ohio Company.²⁰² Even so, exactly where on Lee's land holdings the growing of tobacco occurred remains unknown.

Archaeological evidence has uncovered the remains of a slave housing group located along the road to the mill, adjacent to the area currently known as Jenkins Field. The 1976 dig revealed the remains of small stone pier foundations, and can be said with some confidence to most likely have been constructed from wood. A cemetery with the remains of slaves was also located in this space. Though

¹⁹⁹ *Inventory of the Estates of Thomas Lee 1758*, (Westmoreland County Va Records, 1758).

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁰¹ *Ibid.* The Upper Clifts Plantation has an additional fifty-three heads of cattle, two oxen and thirty-three hogs. Hallow Marsh plantation livestock census consisted of one hundred and eight heads of cattle, fifty-seven hogs, six oxen, and thirty-five old field horses

²⁰² Calhoun, "Philip Ludwell Lee"

the exact era of construction remains unknown, the slave quarters are believed to have been occupied in the era of either Thomas or his son Philip Ludwell Lee.²⁰³

Philip Ludwell Lee Landscape

Following the death of Thomas Lee in 1751, his son Philip Ludwell Lee was entailed the largest portion of his father's estate, including the property of Stratford Hall, and also charged with caring for the educational needs of his younger brothers.²⁰⁴ Philip, as heir apparent to his father's fortune, was raised in a manner becoming of the gentry class, receiving a classical education at Eton in Great Britain. Philip Ludwell Lee's life followed a course similar to that of his father's. After receiving his formal law education from the Inner Temple Courts of London in 1749, he too served in the House of Burgess.²⁰⁵ In a manner also similar to his father, Philip Ludwell Lee expanded his land holdings to over 6,000 acres, covering an area that included the Clifts, Stratford and All Hallows plantations.²⁰⁶

²⁰³ Andrew Wilkins, "Elements of a landscape: a soil chemistry at Stratford Hall Plantation," *Journal of Middle Atlantic Archaeology* 26 (2010): 162.

²⁰⁴ Alexander, *Stratford Hall and the Lees*, 70.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 6.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 72.



Figure 3.12 Philip Ludwell Lee Landscape, Map by author. Philip Ludwell Lee was responsible for changes on the plantation during the height of the Lee family ownership

Under the supervision of Philip Ludwell Lee, changes were made to the mansion of Stratford Hall. Passageways were widened and doorways removed, creating more private and constructed spaces. Book presses or library storage were integrated within the space of the great hall. Lee engaged the services of local architect John Ariss during 1761, which likely resulted in the introduction of more intricate interior paneling in the great hall. During Philip's tenure as master of Stratford Hall, the twin summer house chimneys that dominate the roofline of the great house were added. All were changes made to accommodate the various parties that Lee was responsible for hosting.²⁰⁷

Philip Ludwell Lee continued to make changes to the estate until his death in 1775.²⁰⁸ In order to make the estate more to his liking, he engaged in an extensive renovation project that spanned the final years of his life. Under Lee's oversight, new finishes were added to the interior of the house, and substantial changes were made to the surrounding gardens. Seven years after his the death, Philip Ludwell Lee's estate was still indebted to artisans and craftsman who were responsible for making the changes in the estate's appearance that had occurred under his guidance.²⁰⁹ Evidence suggests that English creditors continued to press for repayment as late as 1820, some forty-five years after Lee's death.²¹⁰

The more leisurely of Lee's endeavors included writing a natural history of flora of the Colony of Virginia. Between 1766 and 1772, he retained the services of Thomas Carter as a gardener at Stratford Hall. Although this established fact suggests the existence of a more formal designed space, the extent of the garden or its composition are unknown.²¹¹

Court orders dating from 1758 to 1761 indicate that Philip Ludwell Lee was charged by the Westmoreland Courts with the task of maintaining two roads leading to the Stratford Tobacco

²⁰⁷ Calhoun, "Philip Ludwell Lee," 16.

²⁰⁸ Wyrick, "Stratford and the Lees," 74.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 78.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 78.

²¹¹ Calhoun, "Phillip Ludwell Lee," 15.

Warehouse from the upper and lower property gates.²¹² One of these is believed to be the same surviving main road that enters the site and proceeds thru the heart of the historic site to the mill, the second being the surviving road, located near an edge of the property known historically as Stratford Mill Road. In 1759, Lee used his political influence to have Stratford selected as the location of a tobacco inspection warehouse.²¹³ A decade later the warehouse was destroyed by an infamous September hurricane, and the legislature refused to allow the structure to be rebuilt.²¹⁴ The same hurricane was responsible for destroying $\frac{3}{4}$ of the tobacco crop at Stratford according to correspondence between Phillip Ludwell Lee and William Lee.²¹⁵

Phillip Ludwell Lee's ledger indicates the exportation of tobacco occurred in 1768, with more shipments leaving the plantation in 1771 and 1772.²¹⁶ A 1773 letter from Philip Ludwell Lee to William Lee explains that due to the demands of the Hanbury merchants he cannot send any of his tobacco on William's ships.²¹⁷ Records of the estate of Philip Ludwell Lee indicate that in 1779 tobacco was grown and used as payment to Reverend Mr. Wilson and a Mr. Williams for lessons for Matilda and Letitia Lee. A similar payment is made in 1780 for Mrs. Matilda lessons on the harpsichord, the amount totaling 3043 pounds of the tobacco.²¹⁸ The last note regarding use of tobacco as a form of payment occurred in March of 1781, indicating that the product is grown in 1780 and had achieved a final cured state during the course of the early spring.²¹⁹ This behavior was unusual, as the majority of Northern Neck planters had stopped cultivating tobacco by this time, which was during the height of the American Revolution.

²¹² Armes, "Roads In Plantation," 3.

²¹³ Calhoun, "Phillip Ludwell Lee," 17.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 19.

²¹⁵ Phillip Ludwell Lee, "Accounts of the Hurricane of 1769," Virginia Historical Society.

²¹⁶ Phillip Ludwell Lee, Ledger, 1743-1783, M 2235 Rubenstein Library, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina. The records indicated that in 1768, Philip L. Lee paid William Lee 16 pounds for the transportation of his tobacco and an additional 25 pounds to cover other debts incurred from purchases

²¹⁷ Calhoun, "Phillip Ludwell Lee," 9.

²¹⁸ *Estate of Philip Ludwell Lee 1780*

²¹⁹ *Estate of Philip Ludwell Lee 1781*, (Westmoreland County VA Court Records, 1781.)

Philip Ludwell Lee appears to have followed the English Husbandry method of tobacco production used by Landon Carter. A 1775 evaluation of Lee's estate indicates that at Stratford, he possessed two harrows, four yokes and two ox chains that were used for plowing of the fields in preparation to plant tobacco. Eighteen oxen are assigned to the Stratford portion of the plantation along with eighty-three slaves that are responsible for both domestic and agricultural production during this time. To provide the necessary manure for the English Husbandry method was a herd of ninety-seven sheep.²²⁰ Interestingly, a series of tools not associated with the production of tobacco are also included on the survey. These include eight scythes and twenty trowels. These tools, connected with colonial grain production, are an indication that the diversification of crops occurring at other Northern Neck locations was in fact occurring at Stratford as well.²²¹ These grains may have been grown in the former tobacco fields or as part of the cycle of moving the grazing acreage.

Further evidence of the English Husbandry method is evident on the Clifts Plantation portion of the estate. Some forty enslaved people lived on this plantation and under their care were ninety-six heads of cattle, thirty-one hogs, sixteen sheep and eight oxen. Tobacco-growing equipment inventoried at Clifts Plantation included, two ox chains, three yokes and two ploughs. However, unlike the Stratford plantation, no tools associated with grain production were listed, leading to speculation that the Clifts Plantation was solely focused on tobacco endeavors.²²² A comment on Philip Ludwell Lee's tobacco-growing methods survives from his contemporary, Landon Carter, "Lee was perfectly satisfied of the disservice introduced by Carts and plows and really the impossibility of their doing any service. He had one Pritchard for his Overseer who without Carts or plows always made large fine Crops of Corn and Tobacco."²²³

²²⁰ *Estate of Philip Ludwell Lee 1780*, (Westmoreland County VA Court Records, 1775).

²²¹ *Ibid.*

²²² *Estate of Lee 1781*.

²²³ Andrew Wilkins, "Elements of a landscape: soil chemistry at Stratford Hall Plantation," *Journal of Middle Atlantic archaeology* 26(2010): 162.

Archaeological excavations conducted in 1976 and 1977 by Fraser D. Neiman and the Virginia Research Center for Archaeology identified the remains of brick rubble in an area of the present-day south Oval. A re-evaluation of the site conducted from 2001 through the 2008 dig seasons by the University Of Mary Washington Field School revealed that three structures dating from between the 1740 and 1780 existed on this portion of the property. Evidence uncovered at the site revealed an eight feet by sixteen feet structure with a brick basement as well as a sixteen feet by twenty feet earth fast structure, mostly likely the residence of overseers or white farm hands.²²⁴ A third earth fast structure twenty feet by forty feet was also discovered. The lack of chimney or rubbish found in the area surrounding the third structure, and the high phosphorus levels of the outlying soil, suggest that this was either an agricultural storage shed for tools and crops or a tobacco house.²²⁵ A fourth structure identified as a slave cabin was uncovered during the 2013 season. It is believed that this concentration of structures represents only a portion of what might have been a larger concentration of the enslaved worker population of the plantation.

A 1776 advertisement in the Virginia Gazette indicates that Philip Ludwell Lee was diversifying his agricultural enterprises to include animal husbandry with the use of the Dotterel as the centerpiece of a horse stud service operation. The operation occurred within a set of sweeping pastures according to the advertisement. The rate included in the ad indicates, "Six pounds for the season, or thirty-six shillings for the season."²²⁶ The profitability of the endeavor remains unknown at this time. Westmoreland County Court mandated an evaluation of the estate of Philip Ludwell Lee in 1775, and records made at the time indicated the endeavors of breeding thoroughbreds at Stratford had greatly expanded since the importation of the Dotterel in 1765. Twenty-two thoroughbred, horses, mares, and foals, including the Dotterel, are listed as possessions of the estate of Philip Ludwell Lee. The horses

²²⁴ Wilkins, "Elements of a landscape,"155

²²⁵ Ibid 156-158

²²⁶ *Virginia Gazette*, June 6, 1766. Advertisement

were also given names, indicating a higher pedigree than previously mentioned horses on other estate records.²²⁷ It can be assumed that these most-prized assets were housed in the stables of Stratford rather than being allowed to graze ad hoc in the fields.

'Light Horse' Harry Lee Landscape

After the death of Philip Ludwell Lee, ownership of the property passed to his eldest daughter, Matilda Lee. Following her death in 1790, her husband, Revolutionary War hero General 'Light Horse' Harry Lee, was allowed to remain at Stratford Hall, but did not own the property outright due to a trust situation made in favor of the couple's eldest son.²²⁸

²²⁷ "Evaluation of Horses," (Westmoreland County Virginia Court Records, 1775.)

²²⁸ Alexander, Stratford Hall and the Lees, 166.

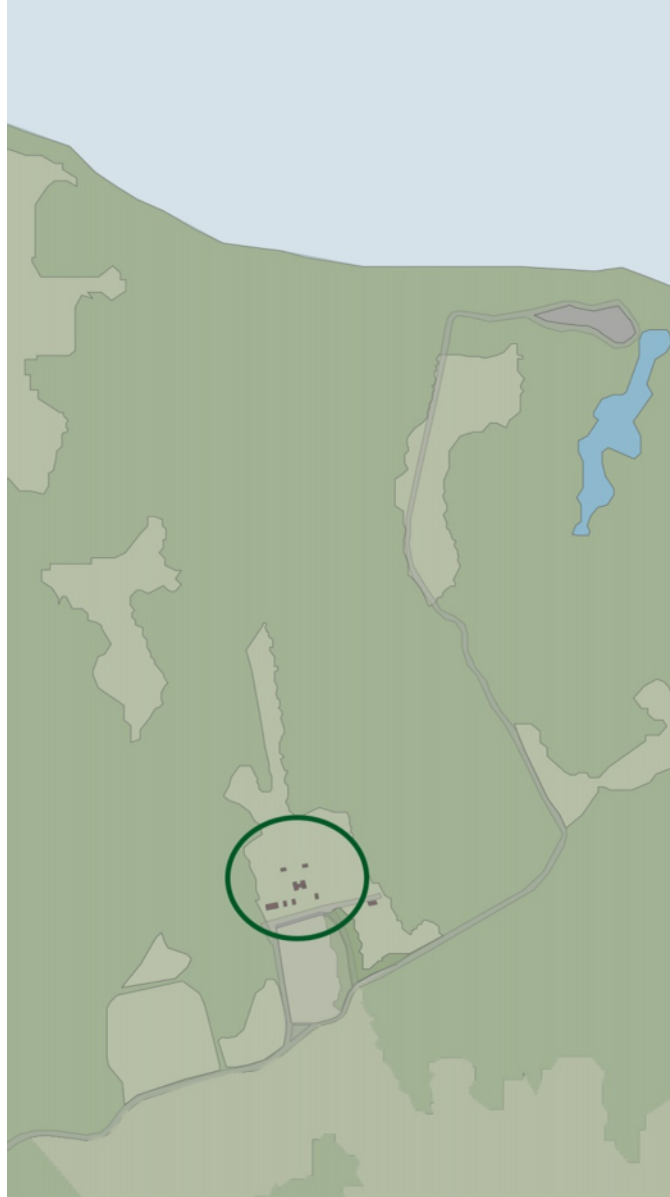


Figure 3.13, 'Light Horse' Harry Lee Landscape, Map by author. This era is marked with the consolidation of the plantation activity.

In 1801, 'Light Horse' Harry Lee drew an 'assurance claim' on the property of Stratford with the Mutual Assurance Society of Virginia. The signers of the agreement were John Maund and John Murphy. The policy was concerned only with structures on the property, of which twelve were identified in the claim: a Dwelling House, Kitchen, Smoke and Meat house, Workshop, two Stables, two Negro Quarters, Coach and Lumber houses, Lumber House, Garden House, and Barn. At the time of the agreement the structures had a combined value of only \$16,700 dollars due to decay and ruin of some of the

structures.²²⁹ Materials and dimensions are given for the majority of the structures, with most composed of brick, including the lumber houses. The exceptions to the brick material pallet are two stone slave quarters and two wooden barns.

Archeological digs in 1976 and 1977, corroborated by a 1997 dig conducted by the University of Mary Washington, indicate structures dating from between 1770 to 1815 were constructed north east of the Stratford Great House in what may have been a field. Archaeologists Neiman and Sanford concur that the buildings were associated with housing slave labor. Evidence suggests that the features were associated with the downsizing of the plantation under 'Light Horse' Harry Lee and the moving away from the tobacco enterprises that had previously dominated the plantation.²³⁰ As early as 1786, the conversion from tobacco notes to a paper money based system was lamented by 'Light Horse' Harry Lee for causing economic hardship and disrupting the traditional systems in place in the Northern Neck.²³¹ Recall that during this era, the Northern Neck was on the precipices of a depression due to the end of tobacco cultivation.

Little is known of the landscape surrounding the house during this era, as there are few surviving written accounts. Lucinda Lee, who visited Stratford in 1782, recalled that the gardens had, "butifull shade trees and fig trees."²³² Correspondence between Thomas Lee Shippen and his father Dr. William Shippen of Philadelphia, recalls the landscape surrounding the house, "gardens, orangeries, and lawns."²³³ Ann Carter Lee would write to Mrs. Richard Bland Lee that Stratford had, "three kinds of

²²⁹ Light Horse Harry Lee Assurance Policy of Stratford, 1801.

²³⁰ Douglas W. Sanford, Alison K. Bell, and Michael Smith, " Archaeology at Stratford : The Old Orchard Field, The 1998 Field School Season," Mary Washington College (1998), 4.

²³¹ Tilson, *Accommodating Revolutions*, 278.

²³² Lucinda Lee, "Journal of a Young Lady of Virginia," Robert E. Lee Memorial Association, 1782.

²³³ Thomas Lee Shippen, "Letter from Thomas Lee Shippen to Doctor William Shippen," Robert E. Lee Memorial Association, 1790.

plums.”²³⁴ These particular remarks are significant as they give us the few details describing the site that have survived from this era of the Lee ownership.

After the conversion from tobacco to grains, more debts were incurred against the plantation, with the ownership passing to ‘Light Horse’ Harry Lee’s eldest son, ‘Black Horse’ Harry Lee. Due to ‘Black Horse’ Lee’s lack of financial prowess, the Lees loose Stratford Hall in 1820.²³⁵

Conclusion

In this chapter the start, rise, and decline of the Northern Neck tobacco culture was reviewed from 1630s to 1796. When the promises of discovery of gold and riches proved false, the settlers of Virginia Colony cultivated tobacco as a means of income. Legislature from the Royal Governors of the Colony would prove critical in the creation of the ‘Golden Age of Tobacco.’ However, environmental, political and economic factors would lead to the abandonment of the crop in favor of the cultivation of grains by the planters of the peninsula. The key groups, made up of gentry, merchants, and enslaved workers were responsible for the cultivation and exportation of the crop from Virginia to foreign markets. The cultivation of tobacco influenced a series of behaviors that manifested on the landscape such as the orientation of the field arrangements, the placement of slave housing and the location of the gentry’s mansions.

Stratford Hall served as the seat of the influential Lee family. The Lees participated in the tobacco culture of the Northern Neck and manipulated the landscape to accommodate the needs of tobacco cultivation as well as their personal needs. However, the site serves as the setting for more than just their story; it was also the home to an enslaved population made to work the fields. Due to the limited writings surviving from the Colonial Era, much of the knowledge of the cultural landscape beyond the area of the great house relies upon the archaeological digs, court records, and writings from

²³⁴ Anne Carter Lee, “ Letter to Mrs. Richard Bland Lee, “ Robert E. Lee Memorial Association, 1799

²³⁵ Tillson, *Accommodating Revolutions*, 50.

Colonial visitors and neighbors. However, based on the information that is known, it can be determined how the plantation behaved within the context of the tobacco culture.

CHAPTER 4

TOBACCO CULTURE LANDSCAPE INTERPRETIVE CASE STUDIES

This chapter discusses the methodology employed to identify and assess sites that could act as representative case studies for tobacco landscape interpretation. First, this chapter reviews the process of selection for the examined interpretive plans. Next, the interpretive plans and interpretive programs of the four selected sites are analyzed in terms of themes used on the site as well as the media used to convey significance.

A targeted selection process was initiated to locate historic sites to serve as case studies for interpretation. Like Stratford, the sites had to be related to the Colonial Virginia Tidewater Region tobacco culture, with the tobacco enterprise occurring between 1650 and 1800. Each site also had to have ended tobacco production around the same time it ended at Stratford Hall. Finally, the effects of the tobacco culture on the landscape had to be visible, and each site had to have accessible interpretive plans or be available to be visited by the researcher. Independent privately owned and managed sites that are open to the public as well as publicly managed sites were evaluated. These two types of sites were selected due to their different approaches to the creation of an interpretive plan, leading each site toward creating its own interpretive scheme. Four sites, all directly related to the Virginia Colonial tobacco culture were selected: Menokin Plantation in Warsaw, Virginia, Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, the Thomas Stone National Historic Site in Port Tobacco, Maryland, and George Washington's Birthplace in Pope's Creek Colonial Beach, Virginia.

The intention of the interpretation plan reviews for each site was to gain an understanding of the interpretive scheme presented to visitors. How is the significance of the site conveyed to the visitor? Which story lines are highlighted to provoke the audience? Are general tobacco culture patterns used,

or are more specific narratives used to tell the story of the site? Second, the media in which the material is presented to the audience is reviewed, as different methods will elicit different responses to the presentation. Did the site employ a nontraditional method to tell the significance of the tobacco cultural or did they use traditional methods?

In order to better compare the case study sites to Stratford Hall, statistical data was collected concerning the compositional framework of the plantations' governance. This information included the authoritative set-up of each site, how each site creates interpretive plans and the general budget for the fiscal year. The sites were also evaluated based on their integrity of the tobacco culture.

Three of the sites—Menokin, Monticello, and George Washington Birthplace—were visited by the author. All four of the sites have an interpretive plan, accessible on a website or provided in a written document. Further, all of the sites have a website that could be analyzed and which displays the examples of activities on the site. While writing the thesis, Monticello announced a restoration and reconstruction plan for the Mulberry Row portion of the estate. The material reviewed here does not focus on the content or effects of that new plan for the site.

Menokin Plantation

Menokin Plantation is located four miles Northwest of Warsaw, Virginia in Richmond County on the southern portion of the Northern Neck peninsula. The remains of the Georgian mansion sit on a terraced bluff overlooking Cat Point Creek, a navigable tributary of the Rappahannock River. The five hundred acres associated with the site are under the care of the Menokin Foundation, a preservation organization founded in 1995 for the protection of the ruins and the site associated with Revolutionary Patriot Francis 'Lightfoot' Lee. The Menokin Foundation is a Non-Profit 501 (c) (3) that has a governing board consisting of four executive officers and seven trustees. The Menokin Foundation employs three full-time staff at the site; Executive Director Sarah Pope, Assistant Director Leslie Rennolds, and

Education Coordinator Alice French. The visitor center at Menokin was formally opened in 2004 with the site currently operating with a budget of \$600,000 dollars per year.²³⁶



Figure 4.1 Menokin, photo taken by the author. A large metal superstructure protects the ruins of the mansion.

Site History and Aspects of Integrity

The era of significance celebrated at the site by the Menokin Foundation is the era of Lee occupation, which lasted from 1769 to 1794. Menokin Plantation was established by Francis ‘Lightfoot’ Lee, a son of Stratford Hall’s Thomas Lee, in 1769 upon his marriage to Rebecca Tayloe, a daughter from the neighboring Tayloe plantation, called Mount Airy. As a gift to the newlywed couple, Rebecca Tayloe’s father, John Tayloe, bequeathed the couple a portion of the Mount Airy land holdings totaling 1,000 acres. The plantation house at Menokin consisted of a simple two story Georgian structure with two two-story flanker wings, serving as library and office space, as well as a storage facility. The house was positioned in such a manner that the Lee’s had a view of the cultivated fields that originally grew

²³⁶ About Us, “Menokin Foundation,” <http://menokin.org/about.htm> (accessed March 25, 2014).

tobacco, but later were shifted to the cultivation of wheat and barley.²³⁷ Agricultural buildings dotted the landscape. Placing the house on the bluff afforded breezes from the creek, but also the ability to watch the exportation of goods to and from the plantation.²³⁸ After the death of both husband and wife in 1794, the plantation reverted back to the Tayloe family, with subsequent generations selling pieces of the property until it was purchased by the Menokin Foundation in 1995.²³⁹

Due to neglect during the mid-twentieth century, weather decimated the house and ancillary structures, so that only one quarter of the exterior walls of the mansion remain standing today. Since the purchase of the property by the Menokin Foundation, a stabilization and rehabilitation plan has been implemented. To prevent further decay of the structure from moisture, the management plan included the erection of a large metal canopy over the ruins as a means of preventing the permeation of more water. A series of platforms and walkways were constructed in order to allow visitors the opportunity to experience the ruins and understand the space. However, this is not a permanent solution, nor is the conducting of docent-led tours of the site the final goal of the Menokin Foundation.²⁴⁰

The ruinous state of the plantation house and the lack of ancillary structures have raised questions regarding the overall integrity of the site. However, an analysis shows that Menokin retains integrity in all seven categories identified by the National Park Service. Setting, location, and design are present at Menokin due to the historic field patterns and relationships of historic features such as the mansion and their relationship to the Rappahannock River. While the structures may be lost, the agricultural spaces that were once occupied by the structures remain. The patterns of design are still visible on the landscape, as are examples of workmanship, evidenced by the surviving forms of the field,

²³⁷ Machado and Silveti Associates, LLC. "The Menokin Glass Concept Project." Final Concept Design Report: Volume 4 , (Boston, Massachusetts , 2013).8-9.

²³⁸ Ibid., 22-23.

²³⁹ Menokin Foundation, " The History of Menokin"

²⁴⁰ Machado and Silveti, " The Menokin Glass Project," 90.

the remains of the garden terrace remains, and those of the mansion. Regarding materiality, the agricultural plant material present is of wheat and corn, which differs from the tobacco that was historically grown. Examples of the historic building materials remain in the form of the ruins of the plantation house. While the house is in a ruined state, the surviving portions of the structure exhibit the workmanship of the Colonial Era craftsman. Concerning the aspect of association, the site was connected to a figure of the tobacco culture, Francis ‘Lightfoot’ Lee. The maintained spatial arrangements and relationships of the site allow visitors to imagine a feeling of how the site operated during the era of tobacco cultivation. However, this feeling is highly subjective.

The configuration of the site has led to a proposed unique architectural reconstruction, which would rebuild the missing pieces of the house with glass. Documentary evidence exists to support this treatment decision on the site. This innovation has led to a revision of the interpretive plan. Upon completion of the project, the foundation’s property will house part of the collection of the Virginia Commission for the Arts, a feature that is significant to the new interpretive plan of the site.²⁴¹ The new Machado and Silvetti plan for the site now in place will spread across the entire site to allow visitors the opportunity to explore most of the plantation. While the ruins of the house are still the main draw to the location, interpretation begins at the visitor center on the opposite edge of the property from the ruins. After leaving the visitor center, the interpretation continues as the visitor transverses the field towards the mansion ruins. With the new interpretive plan, these locations, as well as portions of the creek, fields, and surrounding woods will be incorporated into an expanded interpretive effort.²⁴²

Interpretive Plan

Machado and Silvetti, an architectural firm from Boston, is responsible for the reconstruction of missing elements with structural glass in order to make the structure a viable entity once again and able to house part of the Virginia Commission of the Art collection on the site. The firm’s previous work

²⁴¹ Machado and Silvetti. "The Menokin Glass Concept" 38.

²⁴² Ibid., 40.

focuses primarily on urban planning, new building design, and projects involving historic sites. The recreation of elements at Menokin Plantation will allow for implement a new different type of interpretation to occur on the site, also created by Machado and Silveti. As a part of the new plan, interpretation will expand beyond the house to tell the story of the entire site.²⁴³



Figure 4.2 Machado and Silveti, *Rendering of Menokin Glass House*, found in “The Menokin Glass Project,” pg. 1. The missing elements of the feature will be recreated in glass

The direction and goals of the Menokin Foundation have shifted from focusing primarily on the structure and ruins, to including the story of the landscape and the entire plantation property. The guiding philosophy of the site is viewing Menokin Plantation with several layers of significance, which arose over a period of centuries, as opposed to a complete restoration of the property to the era of

²⁴³ Machado and Silveti Associates, “Selected Works,” *Machado and Silveti Associates*, http://www.machado-silveti.com/projects/recent_work/index.php (accessed January 12, 2015).

significance under the ownership of Francis ‘Lightfoot’ Lee.²⁴⁴ Seven interpretive themes have now been identified to be implemented on the site, with three focusing particularly on cultural landscape topics including Plantation Life, Indigenous Cultural Landscapes, and Natural Heritage.²⁴⁵

Plantation Life

‘Plantation Life’ explores how the site was used during the era of Lee occupation. Like Stratford Hall, the financial and agricultural successes that occurred on the site, as well as the configurations of the structures, remain largely unknown due to the limited survival of records. Because the specifics are not known, the theme focuses on generalizations. Through archaeological data, inventories, the writings of neighbors and family members as well as evidence on the land, it is known that Menokin was actively involved in the Northern Neck tobacco trade. Therefore the focus of this theme relates the site and the viewer to the patterns of the tobacco culture as it was experienced by slaves. The Plantation Life narrative highlights key events such as the importing of slaves to the site, the cycles of tobacco production, as well as loading of tobacco onto the ships at Cat Point Creek.²⁴⁶

Indigenous Cultural Landscapes

The theme of Indigenous Cultural Landscapes explores Native occupation of the site prior to occupation of the land by English settlers. The theme is based heavily on archaeological data that has been recovered from the site. The Native American origin of the name of ‘Menokin’ is analyzed. This theme also explores Native spirituality, which is one of the larger interpretive narratives employed at the site.²⁴⁷

Natural Heritage

The final landscape-oriented theme being explored at Menokin focuses on the effect the land had on its inhabitants. Menokin’s location along a tributary of the Rappahannock River provided fertile

²⁴⁴ Machado and Silvetti, “The Menokin Glass Project,” 91.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., 84.

²⁴⁶ Ibid., 87.

²⁴⁷ Ibid., 88.

soil used in the production of crops by the Native Americans, the Lee's, and farmers who came after them. These same conditions allowed for the flourishing of a diverse flora and fauna population. The interaction between the Lees and the natural environment is still visible on the site, in the form of roads and terraces. Despite the construction of such features, nature has reclaimed part of them, exerting its own influence on the site. The Natural Heritage theme explores the utilization of the natural assets present at Menokin and the designation of the property as a natural preserve. The intention of this theme is to bring awareness to the visitor through the use and exploration of the site beyond that of a historic setting.²⁴⁸

Methods/Media

At Menokin, interpretation is placed across the entire site, rather than concentrating the interpretive efforts at a single location.²⁴⁹ The intention is to move visitors through the entirety of the plantation, allowing them to experience the total site. To aid in interpreting the themes previously discussed, Menokin identified three overarching 'narrative webs'; the evidential, the living landscape, and the spiritual. The site uses each of these to help guide the visitor through the site.²⁵⁰ The interpretive plan is innovative, deviating from standard docents and interpretive panels as the primary means of interpreting the site. The three narratives are placed on the landscape with identified nodes and paths that serve as locations where interpretation will occur.²⁵¹

²⁴⁸ Machado and Silvetti, "The Menokin Glass Project," 89.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 94.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 91-93.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 94.

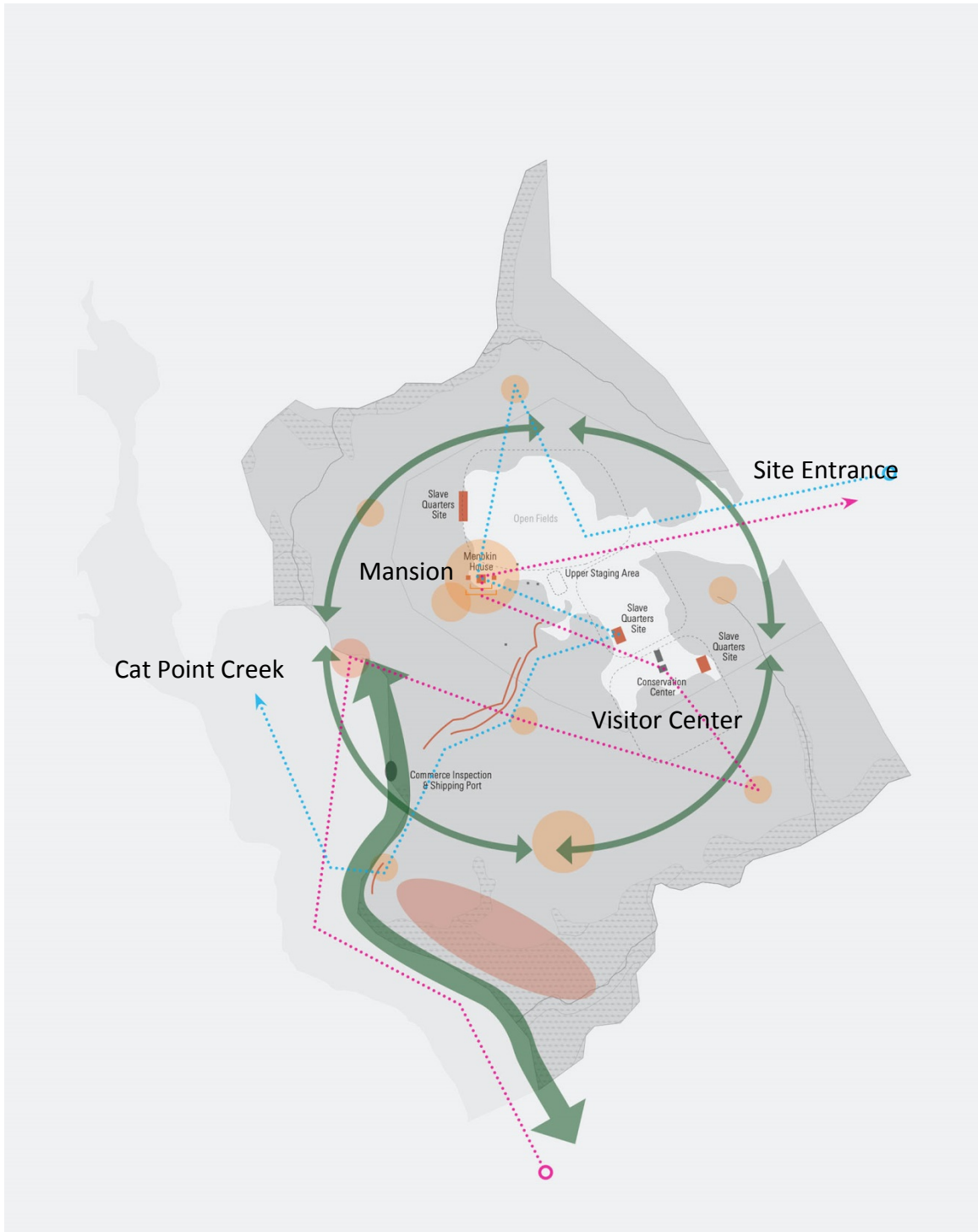


Figure 4.3. Machado and Silveti, *Master Plan for the Menokin Landscape*, in “The Menokin Glass Project”, 94.²⁵²

²⁵² Machado and Silveti, “The Menokin Glass Project,” 94.

To tell the stories associated with the landscape, a variety of media will be engaged to provoke the audience. Interactive art, an element brought to the site by the Virginia Commission of the Arts, will be installed at strategic locations and directly relate to the narrative found at that portion of the site. From the plan, it appears that the site will be commissioning original artwork to tell the story of Menokin. The plans for the interactive art include the creation of displays that invite viewer participation, and statuary figures that react to both the audience and the weather. The ways in which the viewers interact with the objects should provoke the audience and reveal what occurred on each part of the site. This method continues into the house with the positioning of artwork relating directly to how the space was used or how it relates to views visible from openings in the structure.²⁵³

After interpretive art, a second proposed method of interpretation involves activities directly related to the site. These include workshops involving architecture, archaeology, and nature.²⁵⁴ These new workshops will build on the success of the Menokin Foundation's Building Material Conservation workshops.²⁵⁵ The workshops will be held at various locations on the site which have been identified as places of reflection, due either to their natural beauty or to specific material at the location, such as the slave graveyard. The workshops range from one afternoon to week-long events. In addition, Menokin plans to host workshops on interpretation.²⁵⁶

Because of the layered nature of the site, a third interpretive proposal recommended by the plan, is the creation of an app on a portable guide device. The feature would allow the stories to be more easily told and revealed to the audience. As the standard docent tour is not a part of the plan for the site, this would serve in the place of human interaction with a docent. The content of this portable guide app is in the development stages.²⁵⁷

²⁵³ Machado and Silvetti, "The Menokin Glass Project," 104.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 108.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 103.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 109-110.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 111-112.

Thomas Jefferson's Monticello

Thomas Jefferson's Monticello is located in Charlottesville, Virginia in the Blue Ridge Piedmont region. A tobacco culture site contemporary to Stratford Hall, Monticello is an example of a plantation that developed due to tobacco growers expanding westward in colonial Virginia. Tobacco was grown at Monticello during a period close to when the crop was grown at Stratford Hall, with Jefferson ending tobacco cultivation in 1800. Monticello sits on a low ridge overlooking the valley below.²⁵⁸



Figure 4.4 Monticello, photo taken by author

Thomas Jefferson's Monticello is owned and operated by The Thomas Jefferson Foundation, a Non-Profit 501(c)(3) organization. The Thomas Jefferson Foundation is run by a board consisting of four executive officers and thirteen trustees. The Thomas Jefferson Foundation first opened the site to the public in 1924, and oversees the entire property, totaling 2,500 acres. The daily activities on the site are overseen by thirteen specialized departments, each consisting of a head director with a varying number of employees within each department. While the Thomas Jefferson Foundation does not have an interpretive department per se, observation of interpretive material suggests that responsibility for creating interpretation is overseen by the Curatorial Department. Data obtained from the Center for

²⁵⁸ Lucia Stanton, "The Plantation: A Day in the Life," in *Thomas Jefferson's Monticello* edited by Beth L. Cheuk (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina 2009), 159-191.

Nonprofit Excellence indicates that the Thomas Jefferson Foundation has an operating budget of over \$2,000,000 dollars per year.²⁵⁹

Site History

Upon the death of his father in 1764, Jefferson inherited two plantations that together formed the basis of his landholding in the vicinity of Charlottesville, Virginia. He further divided these two land holdings into four quarter farms. Consisting of 5,000 acres, the property was made up of four plantation sites; Monticello, Shadwell, Tufton, and Lego. Like the plantations on the Northern Neck, the crop of tobacco was later switched to staple cereals and grains.²⁶⁰ The most famous of the plantations is his home plantation of Monticello. During Jefferson's occupation, the portion of the property known as Mulberry Row was the center of plantation life as well as the residential space of the enslaved workers, white overseers, and visiting artisans and hired help. Over the span of fifty years, twenty structures including cabins, stores and other auxiliary buildings were constructed and moved about the landscape to suit the needs of Jefferson and those of the plantation. The site achieved its final architectural form in 1809 with the completion of the last major addition to the house, the dome.²⁶¹

Jefferson was a meticulous individual, known for recording the minutia of the everyday. As such, the stories presented at Monticello are site specific and provide a more well-rounded interpretation than commonly found at similar sites.²⁶² Following Jefferson's death in 1826, the house was purchased by Uriah P. Levy in 1834. Members of the Levy family owned the property until 1923 and invested in the preservation and restoration of the house to the era of Jefferson's occupation.²⁶³ With the purchase of the property by the Thomas Jefferson Foundation in 1923, the foundation identified the era of 1790s to

²⁵⁹Center for Nonprofit Experience , "Thomas Jefferson Foundation, "http://www.thecne.org/ (accessed on March 25, 2013).

²⁶⁰Thomas Jefferson's Monticello , "Site History" <http://www.monticello.org/site/about/thomas-jefferson-foundation> (accessed February 17, 2014).

²⁶¹ Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, "The House" <http://www.monticello.org/site/house-and-gardens/monticello-house> (accessed February 17, 2014).

²⁶² Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, "View Places," *Landscape of Slavery Mulberry Row at Monticello*, <http://www.monticello.org/mulberry-row/places> (accessed on October 13,2013).

²⁶³ Thomas Jefferson's Monticello Site history

1826 as the period of significance for the site. It was during this time when the plantation was most physically complete and the mansion reached its final configuration. This period of significance was chosen based on analysis of the physical condition of the property at the time of purchase.

The investments of the Levys ensured that the configuration of the mansion remained similar to the time of construction and retained integrity. However, during their tenure on the property, other elements of the landscape were lost, including the gardens and ancillary structures. The loss of these features means that the site has little integrity from the time of Jefferson's ownership. With the exception of the mansion, material and workmanship from the Colonial Era are not present on the site. However, in 1936, the Thomas Jefferson Foundation began a restoration project under the direction of Fiske Kimball. At that time, the foundation, with the aid of the Virginia Garden Society, recreated the lost garden spaces based Jefferson's original plans. The details and plans drawn by Jefferson allowed for a recreation of the site reflecting the original design and setting of mansion complex at Monticello. These early reconstructions have been well-maintained and have gained significance in their own right. Archeological digs in the 1970s and 1980s uncovered the remains of the missing ancillary structures of Mulberry Row. Through locating and exposing these elements, visitors are able to experience more fully the design of the space. More reconstructive efforts on the site in the 1990s recreated missing terrace and garden elements that defined Mulberry Row, thus enhancing further the visitor experience.



Figure 4.5 Monticello Overview, found on *Thomas Jefferson's Monticello*²⁶⁴

Theme

Of the interpretive themes present at Monticello, the theme pertaining most to cultural landscapes of the tobacco culture is the theme associated with Mulberry Row. The goal of the theme is to convey the story of the individuals who were directly responsible for the building of the plantation as well as the daily upkeep of Monticello. The theme serves as a snapshot of what Monticello looked like during Jefferson's era.²⁶⁵ The general public is given a choice of several ways to experience the site of Mulberry Row. Both guided and self-guided tours are available, as is an online exhibition called *Landscapes of Slavery: Mulberry Row at Monticello*.

²⁶⁴ Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, "Map of the area around the house," *Visitor Information*, <http://www.monticello.org/sites/default/files/inline-pdfs/MountaintopMap1.pdf> (accessed on October 13, 2013).

²⁶⁵ Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, "Meet People," *Landscapes of Slavery Mulberry Row at Monticello*, <http://www.monticello.org/mulberry-row/people> (accessed on October 13, 2013).

Methods/ Media

The first interpretation method option for those visiting the site is to engage in a self-guided tour of Mulberry Row. This area of the property consists of an avenue positioned with the Main house on one side, with the remains of auxiliary structures on the other. These remains include foundations of blacksmith facilities, slave quarters, stables and other necessary buildings. Beyond these structures are the restored gardens of Jefferson that overlook the bluff to the valley below. A series of interpretive panels are strategically located along the pathway of Mulberry Row explaining the remains of the structures and the activities that occurred within these spaces. The story presented starts by emphasizing that the current configuration is a representation of a decades- long period. The current arrangement reflects the changing dynamic of the plantation and events leading to its agricultural conversion from tobacco to grain.²⁶⁶

Guided Tours

Visitors to Monticello have the option to participate in a private, guided tour of Mulberry Row. Meeting at a designated portion of the property, the interpreter greets the guest and begins to explain the story of Monticello. The guide stresses that Monticello in its present state is the result of an evolved process. The interpreter stresses that just as the main house underwent a series of changes to reach its present state, so did the configuration of Mulberry Row, reflecting the requirements of the plantation over time. The guide walks the audience along the row, explaining the different activities and the people who would have worked within these spaces. The guide adds to the information found along the panels by sharing the names of individuals as well as stories, if applicable. Upon reaching the spinning house, the interpreter notes that this structure served as the center for spinning production on the site and

²⁶⁶ "Mulberry Row Tour," Self-Guided Tour, Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, July 2, 2013.

that during the course of the year enough material was produced to clothe 140 individuals.²⁶⁷ The tour continues down the length of Mulberry Row.

Online Tour

Following the same trajectory as the on-site Mulberry Row Tour, Monticello has also created an online version of the tour. Although the online tour includes elements of the existing on-site tours, it is also designed as an interactive experience, allowing a viewer to manipulate a set of animations showing the physical evolution of the site under Jefferson. The animation includes zoomed-in links to buildings, showing how these structures looked in the past as well as how they were used on the site.²⁶⁸

Beyond showing the physical arrangement of Monticello, the website offers stories that are not a part of the discussion on on-site tours. The number of individuals represented on the website is far more extensive than at the physical site, including nearly ninety individuals instead of the four discussed during the on-site tour. In addition to discussing the enslaved African Americans who lived at Monticello, the website includes information about white workers that were also present on the plantation. To help the online visitor connect to the stories of the site, the names of the plantation's residents are shown on a series of notecards, each describing the status of the person and naming his or her role or occupation on the plantation.²⁶⁹ For those about whom more information is available, the website offers links to a person's image, or shows an example of his or her signature. These links also provide more in-depth information concerning the actual work done by a given individual on the plantation. For example, the link to woodworker John Hemmings provides his vital statistics, including birth and death dates, status and occupation. An example of his signature is included, as is information discussing the range of wood work he completed. Because the Joiner's Shop is associated with Hemmings, images of the remains of the building are included, thus associating the structure with the

²⁶⁷ "Slavery at Monticello Tour," Docent led tour, Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, July 2, 2013.

²⁶⁸ Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, "View Places."

²⁶⁹ Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, "Meet People."

individual. A collection of sketches of enslaved individuals is also included on the website to aid in the understanding of appearance and the manner in which activity would occur.²⁷⁰

To aid in the understanding of the plantation, the website offers a more in- depth look at the industries that were present on the plantation. Activities such as sawing, joinery, dairying, spinning, and laundering are all discussed as vital jobs necessary to ensure the continuation of the plantation.²⁷¹ When exploring the topic of labor at Monticello, online visitors can find discussion of each job, along with an illustration of each one, helping them visualize the requirements and demands of each enterprise. The online audience gains an understanding of the spatial requirements for each enterprise as well as the process and final product that the labor produced.

George Washington Birthplace National Monument

The George Washington Birthplace National Monument (GWBNM) is the case study physically closest to Stratford Hall, with a distance of only nine miles separating the two sites. Consisting of nearly 600 acres, the property is adjacent to a small tributary of the Potomac River called Popes Creek. Like Stratford Hall, the site is located on the Potomac River Bank of the Northern Neck. Both commemorative sites exist due partly to efforts made by memorial associations during the Colonial Revival era.

Despite its status as a NPS site, GWBNM relies on a joint partnership with the George Washington Birthplace Association, which provides volunteers to help with the daily functions of the site. A review of the site from 2008 indicated that at that time, the site employed twenty–nine permanent full-time and part- time paid staff, and had a total of eighty–two part- time volunteers. For the 2008 fiscal year, the operating budget for the site was 1.3 million dollars.²⁷² As a NPS site, the

²⁷⁰ Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, "Meet People: John Hemmings" *Landscape of Slavery : Mulberry Row at Monticello*, <http://www.monticello.org/mulberry-row/people/john-hemmings?back=%2Fmulberry-row%2Fpeople> (access October 14,2013).

²⁷¹ Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, "Skills," *Landscape of Slavery: Mulberry Row at Monticello*, <http://www.monticello.org/mulberry-row/topics/skills> (accessed October 14, 2013).

²⁷² National Park Service, *George Washington Birthplace National Monument: 2008 Accomplishments* (Washington D.C., 2009).

GWBNM has the opportunity to utilize the Harper's Ferry Center of Interpretation to create an interpretive plan. Based on a review of the materials, though, it appears that the interpretive plan currently at the site was created in a piecemeal manner at the site.



Figure 4. 6 George Washington Birthplace, photo taken by the author

Site History

The founding of the Northern Neck occurred following the emergence of a dissident group of settlers in Maryland migrating to the southern bank of the Potomac River. This group of settlers included John Washington, great grandfather of President George Washington. He established a farm in the 1657 in the portion of the Northern Neck known as Pope's Creek. Four generations of the Washington family were responsible for the cultivation of the site prior to the purchase of the property by individuals outside the Washington family.²⁷³ George Washington Parke Custis, adopted son of George Washington, was responsible for the early memorialization efforts at the site, but after the departure of the Washington family, in 1732, the site deteriorated until little remained of the original

²⁷³ The National Park Service . "George Washington Birthplace: From Tobacco Plantation to National Shrine ." Westmoreland County : The National Park Service , n.d.

historic material.²⁷⁴ In 1922, the Wakefield Memorial Association began reconstructing the birthplace of George Washington. Debate surrounded the form and location of the reconstruction from its beginning. While reconstructing the house, the remains of the house of George Washington's birth were discovered elsewhere. Excavations in 1930 and 1936 revealed the reconstruction was oriented in a different direction than the original house, and also had a different spatial configuration.²⁷⁵ The remains of the original house have been an issue of debate since the discovery of the actual foundations. The National Park Service took control of the site in 1932.²⁷⁶ In 1968, a demonstration farm was added to the site in an effort to interpret the birthplace.²⁷⁷

The legacy of the site has led to challenging issues, especially around determining the era of significance and questions regarding integrity. While the intention of the site is to celebrate the story of George Washington, no historic features from the era of Washington ownership survive. Therefore, there is no integrity for this era of significance. A lack of documentation has raised questions concerning how the site was used and how it was laid out during the Colonial Era. The reconstruction of the house at a location and orientation that is dramatically different from the original creates a different feeling and setting from the original.

Despite these criticisms concerning the current configuration of the site, GWBNM retains significant integrity from the era of the Colonial- Revival. The site serves as a window into the early preservation efforts of the twentieth century. The form and orientation of the "recreated" materials have maintained their "original" setting, materiality, workmanship, location, and design since their erection in the 1930s. Despite the uncovering of evidence, the "birth house" has maintained its original position as have the ancillary structures on the site. The overall design reflects the prevailing thinking

²⁷⁴ Seth C. Bruggeman, *Here, George Washington Was Born: Memory, Material Culture, and the Public History of a National Monument*. (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 2008), 52.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 95-99.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 85.

²⁷⁷ Seth C. Bruggeman, *National Park Service: George Washington Birthplace National Monument. Administrative History Report*, (Williamsburg, VA: College of William and Mary, 2006), 173-174.

that influenced preservation efforts during the time, which focused on creating an idealized image. To present an idealized image of the site, conjecture was part of the process. Even so, the addition of the demonstration farm in the 1960s is the only major intrusion onto the site, which has now achieved significance in its own right based on the criteria of the National Register of Historic Places. The maintained configuration of the site's features since the reconstruction has led to a consistent feeling of the site.

Themes

The most significant theme at the GWBNM is that of Colonial agriculture. It is acknowledged that the site was once a working farm managed by the Washington Family. The theme is rather general in display, focusing on the trends of Colonial Era agriculture as opposed to any particular enterprise that the Washington's performed during their occupation of the property. Matters of large-scale crop production and slave labor are glossed over at the site in favor of, creating an image of a small Colonial Era farm. The goal is to transport the viewer back to the historic time period to capture an image of the site. However, as internal critique of the site by the NPS staff notes, the current composition of the site is the result of Colonial Revival ideas.²⁷⁸

Methods/ Media

Directly related to the historic landscape, the GWBNM engages in three interpretive efforts to provoke visitors; a self-guided walking tour, a video presentation at the visitor center, and a demonstration farm area on the site.²⁷⁹ At the time of the author's visit, docent-led tours of the house and grounds were not offered as an option to visitors. To complete the interpretation, the media that is used includes a printed brochure, illustrated panels, and physical exploration of the spaces.

²⁷⁸ "George Washington Birthplace Self Guided Tour," GWBNM, taken by author, June 8, 2013.

²⁷⁹ National Park Service, "Things to Do," *George Washington Birthplace National Monument*, <http://www.nps.gov/gewa/planyourvisit/things2do.htm> (accessed September 7, 2013).

Self-Guided Walking Tour

The main interpretive method at the GWBNM is the self-guided tour that circumnavigates the site. Upon arrival, visitors are given brochures with maps highlighting key features of the historic farm. A pathway winds through the property with signs placed strategically for optimal information to the viewer. As a visitor enters the area where the reconstructed farm is located, an interpretive panel explains that this site is the result of Colonial Revival efforts as opposed to the use of pre-existing material from the Colonial Era.²⁸⁰



Figure 4.7 Panel at GWBNM, photo taken by author

To aid in the understanding of the site and the spaces, demonstrations of strategic activities, such as blacksmithing and practices related to the shearing of sheep, occur in designated areas.²⁸¹ Despite notes indicating that interpreters would be engaging in Colonial era practices at locations along the tour, no interpreters were actually present at the site during the visit by the author. On-site staff indicated that cooking demonstrations were planned for the site, and that they would be the extent of interpretive demonstrations for the near future.²⁸²

²⁸⁰ "George Washington Birthplace Tour," Self-Guided, GWBNM, June 8, 2013.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*

²⁸² *Ibid.*

Video Presentation

A NPS- document, “The George Washington Birthplace Administrative History,” suggests that the video available to visitors was made in the 1970s, and is indicative of a stagnant interpretive effort. In the video, the virtues instilled on Washington from the landscape are extolled, explaining how the moral character of Washington was shaped during his time at the site. The video also shows reenactments, filmed at the location, which explain the patterns of life that would have been experienced on the site during the seasons.²⁸³ However, the document and interpreters are quick to point out that Washington’s tenure at the site was less than three years, a period not unlike that of Robert E. Lee at Stratford Hall. While the influence of nature on Washington is debatable, the film celebrates this limited period in the history of the site and in the legacy of George Washington.²⁸⁴ The film fails to acknowledge landscape changes that have occurred at the site and leaves the viewer with the impression that the present landscape configuration is the same as at the time of Washington.²⁸⁵

Demonstration Farm Site

A third method of interpreting the Washington farmstead is the demonstration farm located on a portion of the property north of the visitor center and west of the recreated “home” of George Washington. At this area of the property, heritage livestock breeds from the Colonial Era, including Devon cattle, sheep, and horses, are present in order to give a feeling of authenticity to the setting. Demonstration patches of herbs and tobacco are grown in adjacent spaces to show visitors what crops were grown historically on the site. The demonstration farm does incorporate part of the colonial period tobacco cycle by displaying the crop in various stages, such as the drying process. There is no explanation of the process, however, and little indication of its historic importance to the site. The scale at which these agricultural enterprises were originally undertaken on the site is not explored, nor is

²⁸³ Bruggeman, *George Washington Administrative History*, 186.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 236.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 237.

there an indication of how they may have intersected with the lives of those who lived at the site. Despite the utilization of signage on the auxiliary agricultural structures, no signage explains why the livestock or crops are present on the site.²⁸⁶



Figure 4.8 Cattle at GWBNM, photo taken by author.

Thomas Stone National Historic Site

Eighteenth- century Virginia tobacco culture had impacts beyond its borders, particularly on the neighboring colony of Maryland. The land use forms, shipping patterns, and production cycles utilized by the Virginian gentry were largely shared by their Maryland counterparts. The rise and fall of the tobacco enterprises in Maryland coincided with the same pattern in Virginia. Reacting to these changes in societal and agricultural ways, the Thomas Stone National Historic Site, a Maryland plantation complex contemporary to Stratford Hall, has similarly undergone a series of developmental changes impacting the present form of the site.

²⁸⁶ "George Washington Birthplace Tour."



Figure 4.9 NPS, “Thomas Stone Historic Site,” found on park webpage.²⁸⁷

Located in Port Tobacco, Maryland, the Thomas Stone National Historic Site (TSNHS) is situated on an estuary of the Potomac River on the Maryland bank, once providing ease of the shipment of the tobacco crops to foreign ports. The site, historically known as ‘Haber –de - Venture,’ served as the home of Thomas Stone, one of Maryland’s four signers of the Declaration of Independence, from 1773 until Stone relocated to Annapolis, Maryland in 1786. During this time the property was expanded from 300 acres to 1077 acres, with the active cultivation of tobacco by Stone’s enslaved workers.²⁸⁸ The property remained in the Stone family until 1936, and was largely managed by tenant farmers. After Thomas Stones ownership of the site, the plantation switched away from tobacco production and changed crops, reflecting larger changes in Tidewater agricultural productions.²⁸⁹ In 1981 the NPS purchased the

²⁸⁷ National Park Service, “Photos and Multimedia,” *Thomas Stone Historic Site*, <http://www.nps.gov/thst/photosmultimedia/index.htm> (accessed December 18,2013).

²⁸⁸ John Milner Architects. *Thomas Stone Historic Site . Cultural Landscape Report* , (The National Park Service , n.d.), 22.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 22-24.

property, with the 300 acre site opening to the public in 1992.²⁹⁰ TSNHS is maintained by a staff consisting of seven full-time and seasonal members. An operating budget of \$600,000 dollars was reported in a 2012 report on the sites finances.

After the establishment of the site as an NPS entity, the period from 1773 to 1786 was determined the period of significance for the site due to the property's association with Thomas Stone. Instead of reconstructing missing elements, the NPS opted for a policy of preservation at the site, with the exception of reconstructing the house, which had burned shortly after the NPS purchased the property. Preservation was the selected treatment as the landscape reflects the changes of the site after tobacco cultivation. The design and setting of the field patterns and agricultural buildings are indicative of later Maryland Tidewater agriculture instead of tobacco cultivation. However, the ancillary structures that remain on the site include a tobacco barn from Stone's ownership indicative of material, workmanship and arguably integrity of setting.

Interpretive Plan

After the site was opened to the public in 1992, the NPS instituted an interpretive plan that remained largely intact, but was viewed as unsatisfactory until the creation of a Long Range Interpretive Plan in 2005. The evaluation of the site is based on a critique of the 2005 plan as well as a 2006 assessment of the plan conducted by the NPS. Data from the plan and content that forms the background alludes to the creation of the document by the National Park Service, with the assumed influence of the Harper's Ferry Interpretive Center; however, this is unclear as the name does not appear on the plan, which is standard for most of the plans. The plan is intended to serve as a guide for the site for five to seven years. At the time of the completion of this thesis, it remains unknown if a follow-up plan is being developed. In lieu of a mission statement, the included objectives for the site in the plan are:

²⁹⁰ National Park Service, "Frequently Asked Questions," *Thomas Stone Historic Site*, <http://www.nps.gov/thst/faqs.htm> (accessed October 22, 2013).

1. To preserve and protect the resources of Thomas Stone National Historic Site that are essential for commemorating Thomas Stone; a member of the Continental Congress, signer of the Declaration of Independence, Maryland State Senator, and prominent lawyer.
2. To manage and protect the natural resources of the site consistent with the need to interpret agrarian lifestyles and re-establish historic landscapes.
3. To rehabilitate those structures and landscape elements which are essential for interpreting “Habre –de -Venture,” the home of Thomas Stone, as well as 19th century farming practices and buildings which lend to the history of the site.²⁹¹

Themes

Despite the continued changes that impacted the composition of the landscape, the era of significance selected to guide the management of the site, including the interpretive plan, is the era of Thomas Stone occupation. The intention of the NPS is not to create a working farm on the Thomas Stone site, due to the close proximity of the National Colonial Farm and the richly layered appearance of the TSHNHS farm. According to the Long Range Interpretive Plan for TSHNHS, four overarching themes were created in order to convey the significance of the site: Signing, Consequences, Symbolism, and Sense of Place. Of these four themes, only one, “Sense of Place,” directly ties into the significance of the landscape to the overall story of the site and the impact on the inhabitants of the site. The focus of the themes is, “the effects of geography and changing economic realities that offer tangible evidence of colonial and revolutionary era life in Southern Maryland.”²⁹²

The intention of the interpretive plan is for the area of Haber- de -Venture and Port Tobacco is to serve as a case study of the larger Maryland tobacco culture and colonial agricultural evolution. “Insight into matters of shifting patterns of global trade, evolving agrarian practices, and the impacts and legacy of slavery and slave economy,” will be explored on the site through the use of physical

²⁹¹ National Park Service . *Thomas Stone National Historic Site*. Long Range Interpretive Plan, (National Park Service, 2005), 8.

²⁹² *Ibid.* , 17.

artifacts and collective cultural memory. However, a lack of tangible material from the Colonial era proves to place the site in a precarious situation of achieving interpretive goals.²⁹³

Methods/Media

In order to accomplish the interpretive goals specifically related to the significance of the cultural landscapes of TSNHS, a multi-medium approach is used on the site. The site employs two main methods of interpretation. Of these, the more technologically- based interpretation is concentrated and maintained in the visitor center. A video is used to orient the visitor to the site and the significance beyond the center. In 2005, it was decided the then-present video site would be a sufficient presentation to the visitor.²⁹⁴

To help supplement the orientation video, the TSNHS maintains an active web presence, using the National Park Service website as host to part of the material associated with the site. This site includes limited information about the composition of the site as well as what can be expected by a visitor. A second web presence is exhibited through the use of a Facebook page which updates the visitor of events that are occurring on the site.²⁹⁵

In addition to the media interpretations, a series of lower technology options are used to provoke the audience, including a docent led tour and a self-guided tour of the property. The most direct interaction with interpreters at the site is the docent- led tours of the house. From reviewing the interpretive plan it is clear that the focus of the tour is on Thomas Stone and the circumstances leading to his signing of the Declaration of Independence. The hyphen space of the house serves as personal reflection and provocation from the limited material culture that is available for the site.²⁹⁶

²⁹³ National Park Service. *Thomas Stone National Historic Site* , 17.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 12.

²⁹⁵ National Park Service, "Park Home Site," *Thomas Stone National Historic Site*, <http://www.nps.gov/thst/index.htm> (accessed November 1, 2013).

²⁹⁶ National Park Service. *Thomas Stone National Historic Site* , 39-40.

The final method of interpretation used is a series of self-guided trails. The trails allow visitors to traverse the expanse of the site. A series of wayside exhibits populate the trails in order to explain further what the visitor is seeing. Sites included on the trails include a tenant house, a cemetery, and agricultural buildings, which include a tobacco house. Remarks from the 2006 review of the interpretive plan indicate that the audio tour equipment was purchased with the possibility of integrating it on the trail system. Originally, discovery areas were concentrated closely together on the site. However, after the evaluation it was decided that in order to encourage greater interaction with the site, dispersing the assets would be best. Interpretive activities were then added to the tobacco house.²⁹⁷

²⁹⁷National Park Service. *Thomas Stone National Historic Site*, 39.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS OF INTERPRETIVE THEMES AND MEDIA

This chapter examines the patterns of interpretive themes and media that emerged from reviewing the four case study sites. Despite the different historical events that occurred on each sites, and the different authors of the interpretive plans, common themes emerged regarding the interpretation of the tobacco culture. The themes evident from the research are:

1. The use of biography;
2. The illustration of Colonial Era land-use patterns;
3. The presentation of the landscape as a “multilayered” story;
4. Interpretive efforts occur at multiple locations across the sites;
5. The use of multiple media; and
6. The potential of augmented reality.

The first three themes are concerned with topics covered in the interpretive plans. The later three are concerned with how the interpretation occurs at the historic sites.

Biography

The first theme to emerge when analyzing the interpretive plans is the use of biography. To paraphrase Sauer, the human element is crucial for the construction of a cultural landscape. This human, or biographical element, is present at all four of the historic site case studies. Monticello has the most intact historical record and uses the data to construct a narrative around human activity. At Monticello, when biographical details of those associated with tobacco culture era are known, the daily activities of these individuals are related to the patterns of the production of the tobacco crop and other

vital plantation activities. Historically, in order to ensure that Monticello was self-sufficient, the cultivation of tobacco occurred alongside the production of food crops, cloth production, and the fabrication of essential tools. This led to a division of labor and the specialization of jobs on the plantation. At Monticello, when the location of a production activity is known, the stories associated with the location are shared in order to enrich the experience at the place.

As stated previously, John Hemmings biography on the Monticello website visual depicts key facts about his life, his role on the plantation, and locations that are associated with him, as well as examples of his handiwork. Selected biographies are included on the panels at Mulberry Row. Like Hemmings, other individuals associated with the site during this era are included on Monticello's website. Where possible, signatures of individuals are included on the web pages, serving as a visual link between the historic figure and the present day viewer.²⁹⁸ Interpretation that is presented in this manner is possible because of Monticello's surviving integrity concerned with association.

Because of the lack of surviving images of individual slaves from the tobacco culture era, Monticello uses Colonial Era paintings and illustrations to depict its slave population. The images are found on the interpretive panels at the site as well as in the online exhibit. The images are particularly effective in illustrating the patterns of activity associated at the remains of Mulberry Row. The images aid in the understanding of how locations on the property were utilized, but they fail to celebrate the legacy of any particular individual. While it may not be known what the individuals actually looked like, this presentation conveys a generalized understanding of slavery on the plantation as opposed to presenting a site specific image of the place. This interpretive presentation is most directly linked to Monticello's integrity associated with setting and location, and aids in the evoking "feelings" within the visitor.

²⁹⁸ Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, "Meet People: John Hemmings."

Where Monticello has the benefit of being able to tell the story of individual workers, the remaining sites tell the story of the planters, as most of the known information is about these individuals. An interpretive panel at GWBNM tells the role of John Washington in founding the family's property. According to the panel John Washington lived at the site for sixteen years and expanded the family's landholdings in Virginia. During his life time he served in the Virginia Legislature. The details on the panel are facts gathered from Colonial Era records. The panel fails, however, to relate the character of John Washington. The viewer is left wondering what Washington's impact on the landscape may have been during his lifetime.²⁹⁹

At TSNHS the interpretive theme of "Signing" explores the moral character of Thomas Stone. Why did this Maryland tobacco planter sign the Declaration of Independence? What were the implications of signing this document? Neighbors and contemporaries of Stone described him as "an ordinary gentleman farmer," so why would he commit what was viewed by many an act of treason? The theme analyzes the decisions that Stone made regarding his plantation and his activity in the community of Port Tobacco. The theme explains Stone's behavior as being impacted by his surroundings, both natural and from the community of Port Tobacco.³⁰⁰

The interpretation at Menokin acknowledges the role that Francis 'Lightfoot' Lee contributed to the founding of the United States. Similar to Thomas Stone, Francis 'Lightfoot' Lee signed the Declaration of Independence. However, instead of focusing only on the signing of the document, the interpretive theme here looks at the influence that Lee exerted in Virginia in the thirty years leading up to the signing of the Declaration of Independence. In order to describe the character and demeanor of Lee, the writings of his contemporaries and his surviving papers and correspondence are reviewed. The theme presents an individual that was a well-respected and quiet man with deep convictions regarding

²⁹⁹ "The John Washington House," George Washington Birthplace National Monument. 1732 Pope Creek Road Washington's Birthplace, VA 22443. June 8, 2013.

³⁰⁰ National Park Service. *Thomas Stone National Historic Site*, 17.

the sovereignty of the American State. His motivation appears to be grounded in the influence of his parents, Thomas and Hannah Lee, as well as his brother Richard Henry Lee.³⁰¹

In addition to looking at Lee the politician, the interpretation at Menokin looks at Lee the planter. Through records pertaining to the plantation from the era of Lee's ownership did not survive to the present day, at Menokin the interpretation depicts how the planter would have behaved when at the plantation. Audiences are presented with the patterns and activities that would have been necessary for Francis 'Lightfoot' Lee to perform to ensure a successful plantation. Letters from William Lee reveal the success of his older brother in furnishing his house entirely of English furniture. To produce tobacco crops capable of providing this financial security, a planter would have had to have played a skilled, active role in the daily routine of the tobacco culture.³⁰²

The use of biography as an interpretive theme has the potential to explain the significance of a site based on association with a historic figure or figures by addressing the question of who inhabited this site. Through use of the biographical theme, visitors begin to truly understand those responsible for shaping these historic locations. In its current capacity, Menokin relies on this theme to explain the significance of the site to the viewer with a docent led tour. The carefully crafted narrative of Lee brings the site alive and leaves one with the impression that once other forms of media are introduced to the site, the biographical theme will only be enhanced. The presentation of biography explains various influences that motivated behaviors and how these influences may still be present on the landscape. How did a historic figure view the landscape? The visitor will understand what role the individual played in the greater context of the landscape.

Colonial Era Land Use Patterns

The second theme to emerge from the review of the interpretive plans is the presentation of Colonial Era land use patterns at the properties. Thomas Jefferson's written accounts and insurance

³⁰¹ Machado and Silvetti, "The Menokin Glass Project," 85.

³⁰² Machado and Silvetti, "The Menokin Glass Project," 87.

claims on Monticello provide a level of certainty to the composition of Monticello during the tobacco culture era. However, at the other three case study sites, the historic configuration is largely unknown. The agricultural significance of these sites is explained through connecting them to the land use patterns of the era. Due to a lack of surviving records at Menokin, exact details are unknown. Menokin tells the story of the era of the Lee occupation within the context of broad patterns. Visitors are told that the areas of the property that are cultivated today were likely also cultivated during the Lee occupation of the site. Historically, the field now growing corn would have grown tobacco in the same spatial arrangement. In addition to the plants, a series of structures would have been in the field in order to support the enterprise of tobacco production on the plantation.³⁰³ Similarly, information from GWBNM during the tobacco culture era is limited, but the site is explained by illustrating the daily patterns that would have occurred on a typical Colonial era farm. Barns and sheds in the farm area are filled with tobacco plants and tools that would have been common during the Washington ownership of the site.³⁰⁴ TSNHS is presented to the audience as just one of a larger network of Maryland tobacco plantations that shipped goods through Port Tobacco. The interpretation explains that the site cultivated tobacco and the activities that occurred at TSNHS would have occurred at other plantations in the area. This is shared with the visiting audience as part of the overall context exploring the character of Thomas Stone. Physically, the story of the landscape is told through the use of a trail that connects to the town of Port Tobacco. Aiding in this interpretive theme is a surviving tobacco house complex that is located on the trail.³⁰⁵

The theme of land use patterns has the advantage of addressing all seven aspects of integrity. By exploring the land use patterns of a landscape, the theme explains what features are still present on the landscape as well as what is missing from the landscape. How do the existing features contribute to

³⁰³ Alice French, "Menokin Tour," Site Tour, Warsaw, Virginia, June, 28, 2013.

³⁰⁴ "George Washington Birthplace Tour."

³⁰⁵ National Park Service. *Thomas Stone National Historic Site*, 39.

the overall significance of the site? Can the viewer understand the historic setting with what remains or are missing elements vital? The presentation of patterns explains why certain aspects of the landscape were developed for agricultural enterprises and others were not. The theme is able to explain how a site would have been utilized, who was using the space, and what actions these individuals were performing.

Landscape is a 'multilayered' story

The third theme to emerge is presentation of the story of the landscape as a multilayered resource having evolved over the course of successive generations of land use. According to J.B. Jackson, vernacular landscapes are not designed, but evolve over a series of generations. Each of the case study sites states that the current configuration of the landscape is the result of changes during multiple owners across several centuries. TSNHS informs the audience that after the end of tobacco cultivation on the site, other agricultural practices were implemented, making the landscape behave differently under new land use requirements. The multiple layers present on the site include changes in landscape features such as field configurations and structures. To highlight the evolution of the site, the main interactive interpretive space at TSNHS is intentionally placed in a portion of the historic house that was built after Stone's occupation. Other spaces in the house feature guided tours through the spaces that were present when Stone owned the property. The portion of the house post-dating Thomas Stone's ownership holds interactive exhibits and items used for provocation, making a clear divide in the significance of spaces based on how these spaces were used and treated.³⁰⁶

At Monticello, the story of the transition from tobacco to wheat is part of the docent-led Mulberry Row tour. Jefferson stopped growing tobacco in favor of wheat because he was convinced that an impending English Civil War would create a demand for the crop. His predictions proved to be only partially accurate, as there was Civil War in Europe, but it was in France not England. Even so, with the conversion of the land to grow a different crop, workers who had previously worked in tobacco fields

³⁰⁶ National Park Service. *Thomas Stone National Historic Site*, 39-40.

now labored in wheat fields. Structures needed to cure and store tobacco were removed and grain storage buildings were erected. The cultivation of wheat led to increased erosion at the site, changing the form of the property by causing deep gullies to form which marred the hillside.³⁰⁷

The interpretation at GWBNM presents the viewer with the reality that the site is the result of the Colonial Revival reconstruction and not a surviving historical configuration. Illustrations on the wayside signage throughout the park present conjecture of what the site may have actually looked like during the period of the Washington family's ownership of the plantation.³⁰⁸ At the actual location of the historic Washington house, an outline of the building is exposed and the site is being prepared for an archaeological dig. An adjacent panel explains that the original house bore little resemblance to the reconstruction that is currently interpreted as the Washington house.

At Menokin, it is acknowledged that the site has changed since the Colonial Era. Crops currently growing in the field are planted in the space that tobacco formerly occupied. Menokin has undergone nearly 200 years of changing agricultural conditions since the time of the Lees, and continues to change. The conversion of a portion of the land to a nature preserve and conservation zone in the mid-1990s has impacted the historic integrity of the land, and the configuration of the plantation. Native species and a riparian buffer now flourish within a portion of the property adjacent to Cat Point Creek, creating a dense canopy. This creates a different feeling from what would have been experienced during the tobacco culture era when this space was kept clear to allow for views of incoming ships and used as a site for loading tobacco onto ships moored in Cat Point Creek.³⁰⁹

The presentation of the landscape as multilayered story exposes the viewer to the reality that changes have occurred in the landscape due to the evolving social and ecological fabric. As a result, the

³⁰⁷ Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, "Plantation Economy" *Landscape of Slavery: Mulberry Row at Monticello*, <http://www.monticello.org/mulberry-row/topics/economy> (access October 14, 2013).

³⁰⁸ "The Memorial Area," George Washington Birthplace National Monument. 1732 Pope Creek Road Washington's Birthplace, VA 22443. June 8, 2013.

³⁰⁹ Alice French, "Menokin Tour," Menokin, tour taken by author June, 28, 2013.

setting and material that is integral to the site has changed from the era of significance. Subsequently, these changes will have an effect on the feeling of a site, as it may not be possible to experience an aspect of site's character in quite the same way that historic figures may have done. The theme serves to clarify what is being viewed. For example view sheds may have disappeared due to canopy growth and as a result, portions of a site that were once visible are now secluded.

Multiple location interpretation

The fourth theme to be noted from reviewing the interpretive plans is the use of multiple locations on the property to interpret the significance of the site. All four case study sites disperse the interpretive scheme instead of focusing interpretive efforts on a single portion of the property. The use of multiple locations allows the viewer to explore the site and understand it more broadly, making clear that elements such as tobacco culture occurred on the entire site and not only on isolated portion of it. The area experienced near the great house will evoke a different feeling than a location adjacent to a river that was used for shipping, or one at a field where tobacco was grown..

As stated in the previous chapter, Menokin's present interpretation begins at the visitor's center, continues across the field, and concludes at the ruins of the mansion. The Machado and Silvetti plan will expand the interpretation to include the wooded areas surrounding the field, the banks of Cat Point Creek, and portions of the field. In order to encourage use of the entire site, a number of places have been identified to serve as interpretive locations. These areas offer the visitor the opportunity to either participate in a series of activities, such as archaeological digs, wildlife watching, or interpretation activities. Several spaces are also identified to invite visitors to reflect on the natural beauty of the site, or on a story that relates to the history of the site. Prominent art installations will be inserted in the landscape in order to visually call attention to certain areas of the property.³¹⁰

³¹⁰ Machado and Silvetti, "The Menokin Glass Project," 82; 94.

GWBNM allows the visitor to explore the entirety of the property. While the interpretation begins at the visitor center, the plan continues into the landscape, through the historic farm area and along a trail that follows the course of Pope Creek. The trail and interpretation continues for a one- half mile beyond the farmstead to the family graveyard, and on to the bank of the Potomac River.

TSNHS utilizes a series of trails in order to circulate visitors through the site. Like GWBNM, panels and markers are used on the trails to encourage exploration of the site.³¹¹ While Monticello has a more concentrated interpretive scheme for Mulberry Row, the story of slavery is highlighted across the entire site. The areas beneath the galleries and the mansion have interpretive panels that match those found at Mulberry Row, creating a cohesive visual template throughout the site. The panels explain the activities that were performed at the locations, such as cooking and food preparation.

Multiple Media Methods

A common feature of all the case study interpretive programs is the utilization of multiple media to interpret the tobacco culture. None of the sites rely on a single medium to convey the significance of the site. According to McLuhan, the use of different media will cause a viewer to react differently and have a different thought process to digest the interpretive presentation. A variety of media is used in an attempt to connect with a broader range of visitors. GWBNM offers a self-guided tour that uses a series of printed materials to aid in exploring the site. At selected times, demonstrations are performed at the site to explain the daily activity on the property and show how the spaces would have been used during the Washington family's ownership of the farm. The video tour in the visitor center gives an overview of the property while suggesting how the landscape impacted the development of George Washington's moral character.³¹² Monticello relies on a docent led tour at Mulberry Row to explain the role of slavery at the site. For the visitor choosing not to participate in a guided tour, interpretive signs are placed along

³¹¹ National Park Service, *Thomas Stone National Historic Site*, 41.

³¹² National Park Service, "Things to Do," <http://www.nps.gov/gewa/planyourvisit/things2do.htm> (accessed September 7, 2013).

Mulberry Row to allow self-guided visitors to understand the story of the location.³¹³ To explore the significance of TSNHS, docents provide tours of the home site. Interpretive signs serve as guides along the site's many trails.³¹⁴

Menokin's plan explicitly states that the intention of the interpretation scheme is to not use traditional methods, but rather to be innovative with interpretive techniques. This stance is inspired by the unique treatment of the reconstruction of the ruins.³¹⁵ Menokin has plans to incorporate strategically placed art, interactive installations and interpretive activities in the house and the landscape. To illustrate, inside the house a 'modern cabinet of curiosity' is being constructed. The plan for this art piece is to allow visitors to explore the objects in the cabinet. The installation will explain both the hobby of collecting that was prevalent among the gentry class as well as aspects of the site based on the objects that are displayed. Visitors will be able examine the specimens in the display. The art work found in the rooms will relate to the historic function of the space or to the views seen from the windows.³¹⁶

Beyond the house, 'bespoke' art work will be placed in the landscape.³¹⁷ Menokin will also have 'showcase' art that will visually attract the viewer to explore the landscape. A second set of 'discovery' art installations will be more discretely inserted into the landscape with visitors discovering the artwork as they explore the site. Such artwork will have a natural appearance intended to blend into the surroundings. Audio devices will populate the art installations and play sounds evoking those of a working plantation.³¹⁸ More importantly the artwork will relate to some facet of the plantation that occurred on the site upon which the art work is placed.

³¹³ Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, "Mulberry Row" *Landscape of Slavery: Mulberry Row at Monticello*, <http://www.monticello.org/site/visit/tours/slavery-monticello-tours> (access October 14,2013).

³¹⁴ National Park Service, *Thomas Stone National Historic Site*, 38.

³¹⁵ Machado and Silveti, "The Menokin Glass Project," 76.

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 101.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 104.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 104.

A final non-traditional interpretive activity occurring at Menokin is the use of participatory workshops intended to engage visitors and help explain the significance of the site. At this time Menokin is planning to have two types of activities at the site; heritage conservation and archaeology. Building off the success of the current heritage conservation lab that is located at the site, Menokin plans to host workshops on plantation as well. Visitors will learn essential preservation skills and fundamentals of undertaking archaeological digs. These workshops will be designed to accommodate a range of skill sets, from the non-experienced to the expert, and activities will last from half a day to several days. The activities are meant to serve both Menokin and the visitor; the visitor gains experience with a cultural heritage practice while Menokin will collect and maintain artifacts uncovered during the course of the workshop.

Augmented Reality

The final theme identified during the case study review of interpretive plans is the use of augmented reality as a tool for interpretation. David Schaller states that augmented reality has the potential to help audiences connect with the past. This theme is only present at two of the sites, Menokin, and to a lesser degree, Monticello. Stemming from the desire to be innovative, the interpretive plan for Menokin includes the utilization of an augmented reality app to be a part of the interpretive scheme for the site. Because Menokin will not use docent-led tours at the site, the app will serve as a guide for visitors as they explore the site. As the app is being developed at this time, it remains unclear as to the final form and content of the product.³¹⁹

Monticello has a more in-depth version of the Mulberry Row tour online. Visitors at Monticello can access the Mulberry Row gallery from their smart phone. In addition to viewing the panels that are at the site, a series of animations and audio files can be uploaded to add to the experience of the space. Visitors to the gallery can see how the space evolved over time and hear the sounds that would have

³¹⁹ Machado and Silvetti, "The Menokin Glass Project," 111-112.

echoed across this portion of the plantation.³²⁰ The Mulberry Row online gallery has even more stories of individuals and locations on the property. A second asset of interpretation for the viewer is a virtual tour, the Monticello Explorer. The explorer depicts the entire site of Monticello and populates some of the buildings on the tour with content from the Mulberry Row tour.³²¹

Incorporating an augmented reality app into an interpretive program has the benefit of allowing for virtual reconstructions of lost historic features on a site without disrupting the continuum of the landscapes evolution. Similar to the discussion of land patterns, this theme of interpretation will address all seven aspects of integrity. Recall that reconstruction is considered to be the most intense of all the preservation treatments to be implemented on a site. However, the benefit of such an action is the clarity that a reconstructed image can provide to a visitor regarding the historic configuration of a location. Interaction with an augmented reality can convey to the viewer a similar clarity of feeling for a site and its setting. The recreation of the physical spaces with a virtual model can show original design intention and workmanship on the landscape. While materiality can't be physically recreated, augmentation can explain what the original material composition was. Augmentation also has the ability to explain how those who were associated with the site during the era of significance would have utilized the recreated feature or space on the landscape.

³²⁰ Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, "Mulberry Row," (accessed on October 14, 2013).

³²¹ Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, "Monticello Explorer," <http://explorer.monticello.org/?s1=0> (accessed on October 20, 2013).

CHAPTER 6

TOBACCO CULTURE LANDSCAPES INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSIONS: PROPOSALS FOR STRATFORD

HALL

From the analysis of the case studies, six distinctive themes emerged regarding how sites have interpreted the tobacco culture. The themes can be divided into two categories: themes pertaining to interpretive content and themes that are concerned with presentation strategies. This chapter poses how the interpretation at Stratford Hall would change if the six interpretive themes were utilized. The present interpretive plan for Stratford Hall confines interpretive efforts to the area surrounding the mansion with a few panels scattered about the other 1800 acres of the site. The legacy of the tobacco culture on the landscape is largely interpreted by focusing on the story of the changes the Lees made to the mansion.

According to Sam H. Ham, a key requirement of an effective interpretation plan is the identification of an overarching theme prior to the creation of the interpretation, ensuring that all narratives and media interact in an appropriate manner to present the theme to the audience.³²² An overarching theme serves as a guide to determine where sub themes and topics fit into the overall interpretation. The overarching theme for Stratford Hall should be: Stratford Hall is a Colonial Era tobacco culture site that has reacted to a series of influences and has evolved into its present form. This particular theme has the potential to accommodate the story of the site during the tobacco culture as well as subsequent eras of significance. This theme allows for topics related to agricultural practices, people, architecture, and economy to be told at the site.

³²² Ham, *Interpretation: Making a Difference*, 20

Similar to the review of the case studies, it is necessary to understand the governance framework, financial standing, and the integrity of Stratford Hall before discussing the implementation of new interpretive elements at the site. Stratford Hall is overseen by the Robert E. Lee Memorial Association, a ladies preservation society made up of six executive officers and a board consisting of thirty-one directors representing states with chapters of the Robert E. Lee Memorial Association. The governing board meets twice yearly, with the daily management of the plantation overseen by an Executive Director. Beneath the Executive Director, an administrative staff of twenty-two is in charge of the departments of the plantation, with an additional support staff of fifty individuals. This includes a part-time interpretive staff of twenty individuals who report to the Director of Education and Interpretation. Stratford Hall is classified as a Non-Profit 501 (c) (3) with the IRS with a reported operating budget of \$3,000,000 dollars for the 2012 fiscal year. Funding to operate the plantation was derived from charitable contributions, private donations, endowments, and the collection of visitors' fees.

Stated previously in the thesis, the landscape of Stratford Hall has changed since the era of the tobacco culture, which raises questions of what integrity exists on the site from the era of significance. Similar to all the other case study sites, it is documented that the plantation was a tobacco plantation and was used as the home of tobacco culture figures. The areas of the landscape that retain the most integrity from the era of the tobacco culture include the area of the landscape surrounding the Great House and the large fields on the property including the Mill Pond Field, and the Kanzler Log House Fields. Based on observations and evidence, the landscape features of the Great House complex and the field clearings at the top of the ravines retain the orientation that was most likely exhibited by these spaces during the era of significance. While these spaces have retained their historic setting, the surrounding woodland spaces have since grown, creating a different sense of space along their periphery.

The survival of the Great House complex is a testament to the material and workmanship that occurred on the site during the Colonial Era. Unlike Menokin or GWBNM, the Great House at Stratford has remained intact, along with its retention of historic building fabric and its historic position in the landscape. The relationships of the ancillary structures to the Great House have maintained Thomas Lee's original design intention for the complex. Specimens of Shellbark Hickories planted prior to Lee occupation on the property remain in their historic locations. This retention of integrity allows the visitor to imagine the site as it was during the era of Lee occupation. While, the Great House complex has survived, the loss of ancillary structures on the landscape, including the buildings of the tobacco production cycle as well as the slave housing, has caused an overall loss of integrity regarding feeling and workmanship of the site.

However, it must be stated that like GWBNM, Stratford Hall retains the most integrity from the era of the Colonial Revival. The landscape still exhibits the reconstruction efforts of RELMA, which includes the arrangement of the East and West Gardens designed by Morely Jeffers Williams and Umberto Innocenti. These landscape designs retain original features, including circulation paths, walls, and planting arrangements. It is during the Colonial Revival era of Stratford's history that missing elements such as the stone slave cabins, bank barn, stables were recreated. Lost architectural details of the Great House were also recreated. In addition to the series of reconstructions, Stratford Plantation was intentionally manipulated to create a modern working farm and to support visitation. Buildings, such as the Superintendent's House, the Director's cabins, farm cluster, and the modern farm field patterns have achieved significance in their own right and represent a different era than that of the Colonial Virginia.

Biography

Currently at Stratford Hall the use of biography in the interpretation of the site is limited to the members of the Lee family. This interpretation occurs within the mansion where visitors are shown how

the family used and manipulated the spaces in order to accommodate the needs and social requirements of the era. Docents share anecdotes of the family members derived from surviving archival information as well as family legends. Stories include the drunken rants of ‘Light Horse’ Harry Lee. The “sweet” interactions of baby Robert E. Lee with the angels in his nursery fireplace are recounted to visitors as they move through the house.³²³ Whether or not the stories are true, the underlying goal is to create an image of the character of the inhabitants of the house for the visitor.



Figure 6.1 Biography, identification of locations for the interpretive theme of biography, map by author

³²³ “Stratford Hall Tour,” Docent led, Stratford Hall, May 12, 2013.

Based on surviving records at Stratford Hall, limited details about the daily routine of the plantation are known. However, from correspondence, remarks from Colonial Era visitors, court records, and inventories, it can be discerned how the plantation fits within the larger context of the tobacco culture and the patterns of behavior that were transpiring on, and shaping the site. Stratford Hall was an affluent plantation that followed the patterns of agricultural and social behavior that were practiced at other Northern Neck tobacco cultural sites. Similar to Menokin's presentation of Francis 'Lightfoot' Lee, the interpretation of the Lees influence on the landscape at Stratford is representative of the role of the plantation owner in shaping the landscape. The interpretation would pose the following questions and begin to provide answers to the audience: What were the decisions that the planter had to make in order to ensure that the plantation was successful? What role did the planter play in the tobacco cycle? What were the motivations of a plantation owner's behavior?

It should be kept in mind that the planters were only one group affecting the landscape. Arguably, enslaved workers had the most direct impact on shaping the landscape. During the latter decades of Lee ownership of the plantation, a set of records existed listing the slaves on the plantation. The lists are organized by location on the property and family group, and include the names of each of the individuals. Also, each individual is assigned a monetary value. Reviewing the lists gives an understanding of where individuals were grouped on the site and the composition of the family groups. The interpretation for slavery would highlight these groups of individuals and present the activities that formed a part of their daily life within the tobacco cycle.

Inspired by Mulberry Row's presentation of specific individuals' roles at the plantation, Stratford Hall has the opportunity to tell the story of at least some of the enslaved people at the site. For example, two individuals, Caesar and Titus, were known to have served Philip Ludwell Lee as postilions in the stables. These men were responsible for the care of the horses that were owned by the family as

well as horses kept at the plantation for stud services.³²⁴ The ideal location to tell the story of the postilions would be at the stable. The interpretation could describe the daily routines and methods of Colonial Era horse care and how they compare to modern day equine management, as well as the roles that were expected by the Lee family to be filled by Caesar and Titus. This narrative would introduce the ideal of different slave classes on the plantation, and begin to describe the requirements and behavior of each group. The easiest means of implementing this theme at the site would be through the expansion of the docent- led tours into the barn space or through the addition of interpretive panels in this space.

Expanding beyond the area of Great House landscape, the presentation of slavery has the ability to be further interpreted in the areas of the Oval archaeological digs, the Director's cabins, Jenkins Field, and the Mill Pond field. These locations were selected based on archaeological data as well as the surviving slave lists that exist from the era of Lee ownership. As stated previously, the details of these individuals' daily lives are largely unknown, though certain patterns of behavior can be reasonably assumed. Based on the inclusion of values, the individual slaves can be divided into different classes, with the duties required of these classes explained to the audience. Again, the expansion of the docent led tours into the greater landscape, or the addition of more informed interpretive signage in these locations would help to activate the theme. The use of the archaeological dig site as a part of this theme presentation has the potential to be presented to the audience through the use of interpretive activities at the location in a manner similar to those at TSNHS. Visitors could, with supervision and instruction, participate in the digs occurring at this site, allowing for a better understanding of the site.

Yet, a third group was also responsible for shaping the form of the landscape at Stratford Hall, the merchant class. The logical location to present the merchant story at Stratford Hall is at the mill landing, which historically was the wharf at Stratford Hall. One individual to highlight on this portion of

³²⁴ Jeanne A. Calhoun, "African American Experience at Stratford," 5-6.

the plantation would be William Lee, the merchant son of Thomas Lee. Since records exist indicating the shipping of tobacco from Stratford Hall on William Lee's ship, the mill landing area has a direct association with William Lee. The inclusion of interpretation in this area of the plantation would require the presence of staff beyond the once -monthly demonstrations that take place at the mill.

Colonial Era Land Use

Unlike Monticello, the definitive spatial arrangement of Stratford Hall during the Colonial Era remains relatively unknown. However, from information gathered during archaeological digs, Colonial Era court records, extant features, limited descriptions of the plantation in correspondence, and the patterns of the tobacco cycle, it can be determined how land use patterns would have affected and formed the landscape of Stratford Hall. Continued research will need to be conducted to answer remaining questions about the landscape's composition. The general uncertainty of land use arrangements leads to the conclusion that the most practical way to depict Stratford Hall composition is through the broad land use patterns of the tobacco culture. Beyond the need for further verification, ideal locations on the property to explain these patterns, minus the discovery of new, more conclusive evidence, are the Oval, the adjacent pastures, and the Mill Pond Field.

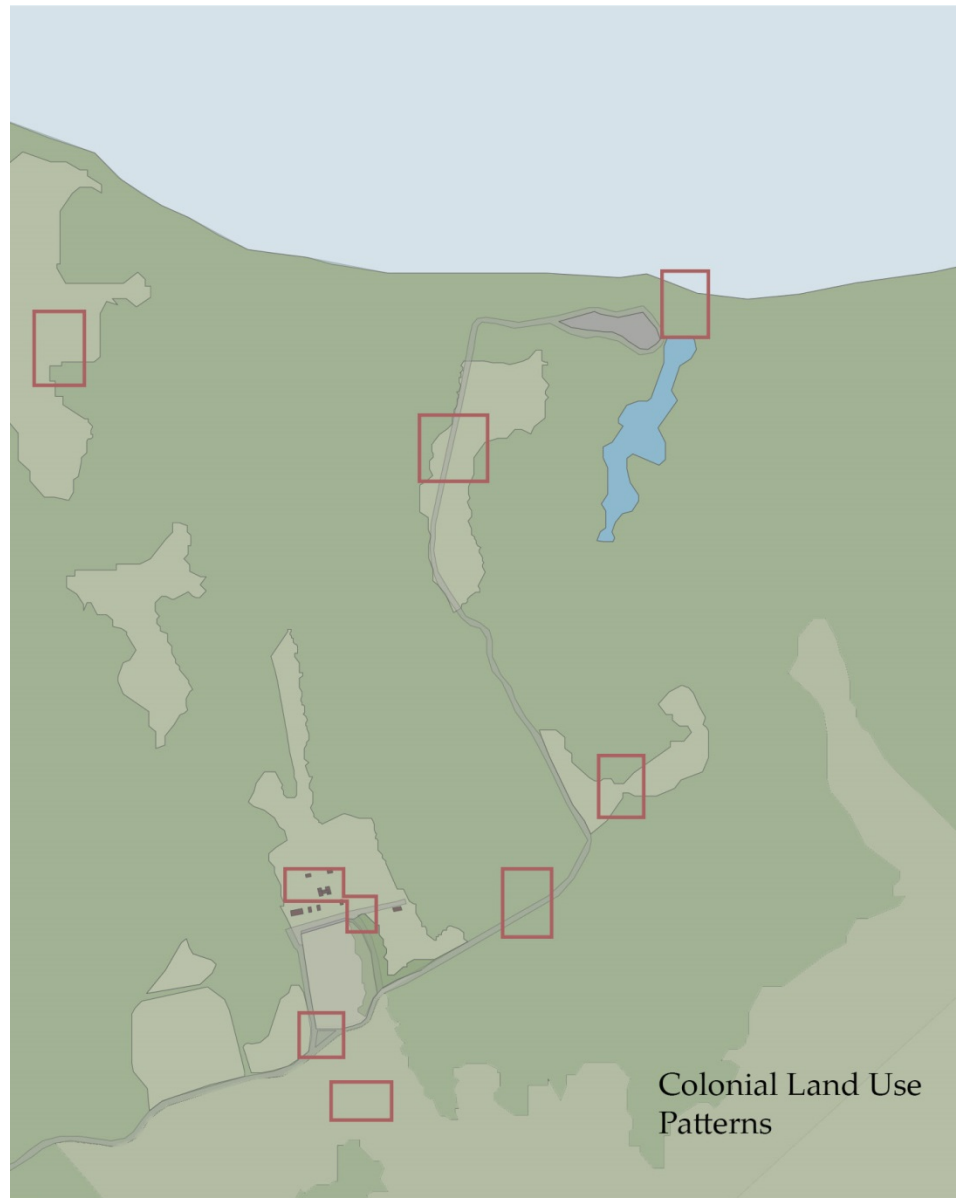


Figure 6.2 Land Use, locations for depicting land use, map by author

Another topic for possible inclusion in the theme of Colonial Era Land Use is the narrative of the tobacco cycle. Tobacco was planted, grown, harvested, cured, and shipped from the land holdings of the Lees. Interpretation of the tobacco cycle should explain the growth of the plant and the likely configuration of the fields. The following are examples of questions that should be answered by this narrative: Why was tobacco an important crop to the Lees? What were the physical demands required of the field hands at each step of the process? What were the roles of the planters during the process?

How would the field look during the different stages of the plant's life cycle? What were the methods of growing tobacco?

Other than tobacco, another crop having impact on the composition and form of the landscape at Stratford was corn. Corn was raised on the site as the main food staple for the slaves. Recalling Landon Carter's description of the property, tobacco and corn were both grown at the same time at Stratford Hall. Part of the interpretation of the land use should needs to include the role of the corn crop in the everyday life of the plantation. The demands of growing corn are different from those of growing tobacco. Did the two crops have similar planting schedules? Since corn is a versatile food crop, how did the people of the Colonial Era typically consume corn?

In addition to crop cultivation, large amounts of livestock were present on the landscape. The Lees owned several sizable herds of sheep, cattle, pigs, and a collection of thoroughbred horses. Each of these animals would have provided a product or products for the plantation. In turn, each breed of animal would require a certain amount of care and maintenance. For example, dairy cows would have provided milk, while other cattle provided beef which could be consumed or sold. The interpretation should begin to answer what roles the livestock played in the daily lives of the plantation's population.

The livestock would have had a direct impact on the landscape with their need to graze and the manure they produced. The thoroughbreds were allowed to graze in an open pasture space if the 1760s advertisement is true.³²⁵ If the other breeds of livestock were allowed to graze in the ravines during the summer, what would these spaces have looked like? Most assuredly they would not resemble the densely wooded forest that is presently at the site. If the Lees did in fact prescribe to the English Husbandry method, the livestock would have been involved in the tobacco cycle in the latter months of the year by naturally fertilizing the fields. In addition, pastures would have been set aside to grow hay to

³²⁵ *Virginia Gazette*, June 6, 1766. Advertisement

help feed the livestock during the winter months. This would have further dictated how the landscapes would have looked at Stratford Hall as well as the work required of the enslaved population.

The interpretation of Stratford's land use should stress that in addition to zones of agricultural production, there were areas of habitation that dictated certain patterns of behavior and restricted the movement of people on the plantation. At Stratford Hall there is evidence of various areas of the plantation housing diverse groups in different styles of structures ranging from the mansion of the Lees to the simple cabins and earth fast structures of the slaves. The Lees occupied the area of the mansion and its adjacent landscape, and area also shared by a set of stone slave cabins used by the house slaves. However, in the latter years of Lee occupation, archaeological evidence suggests barrack- style earthen building was erected in the portion adjacent to what today is known as the East Garden. Beyond the Lees and the mansion area, clusters of slave housing existed scattered across the landscape. The area along the mill road was the site of yet another slave housing cluster.³²⁶

Landscape is a multilayered resource

In some capacity, the case study sites each describe to the visitor that the present landscape is the result of a series of changes over the course of time. A revised interpretive plan for Stratford Hall must acknowledge that the present configuration is the result of multiple centuries of change. Prior to the Lee family ownership, generations of the Pope family used the landscape. The Lees manipulated the landscape to suit the needs of their tobacco enterprise. After Lee family ownership of the site ended, agricultural practices there continued. A series of owners made changes to reflect patterns of land use in each of their respective eras. After the period of private ownership, the property passed into the care of RELMA, where it has remained since 1929. After RELMA purchased the property, contemporary crops of wheat, corn, and soybeans were grown on the site, and cattle and horses were reintroduced onto the

³²⁶ Douglas W. Sanford, "Landscape, Change and Community at Stratford Hall Plantation: An Archaeological and Cultural Perspective." Conference Paper, Williamsburg, VA 1998.

landscape.³²⁷ Like the GWBNM, much of the area around the mansion was the product of Colonial Revival efforts to present an image of the Colonial Era to visitors. This effort has led to discussions on whether to remove the Colonial Revival material to present a completely accurate yet representative Lee era configuration or to leave the designs in place and celebrate the authenticity of the Colonial Revival and this era of preservation efforts. Changes continue on the landscape today with ongoing discussion of how to proceed in the formal garden spaces.

³²⁷ Committee Minutes 1962 Appendix 12, RELMA Director's Annual Minutes, Robert E. Lee Memorial Association Collection, Jessie Ball DuPont Library, Stratford, VA.

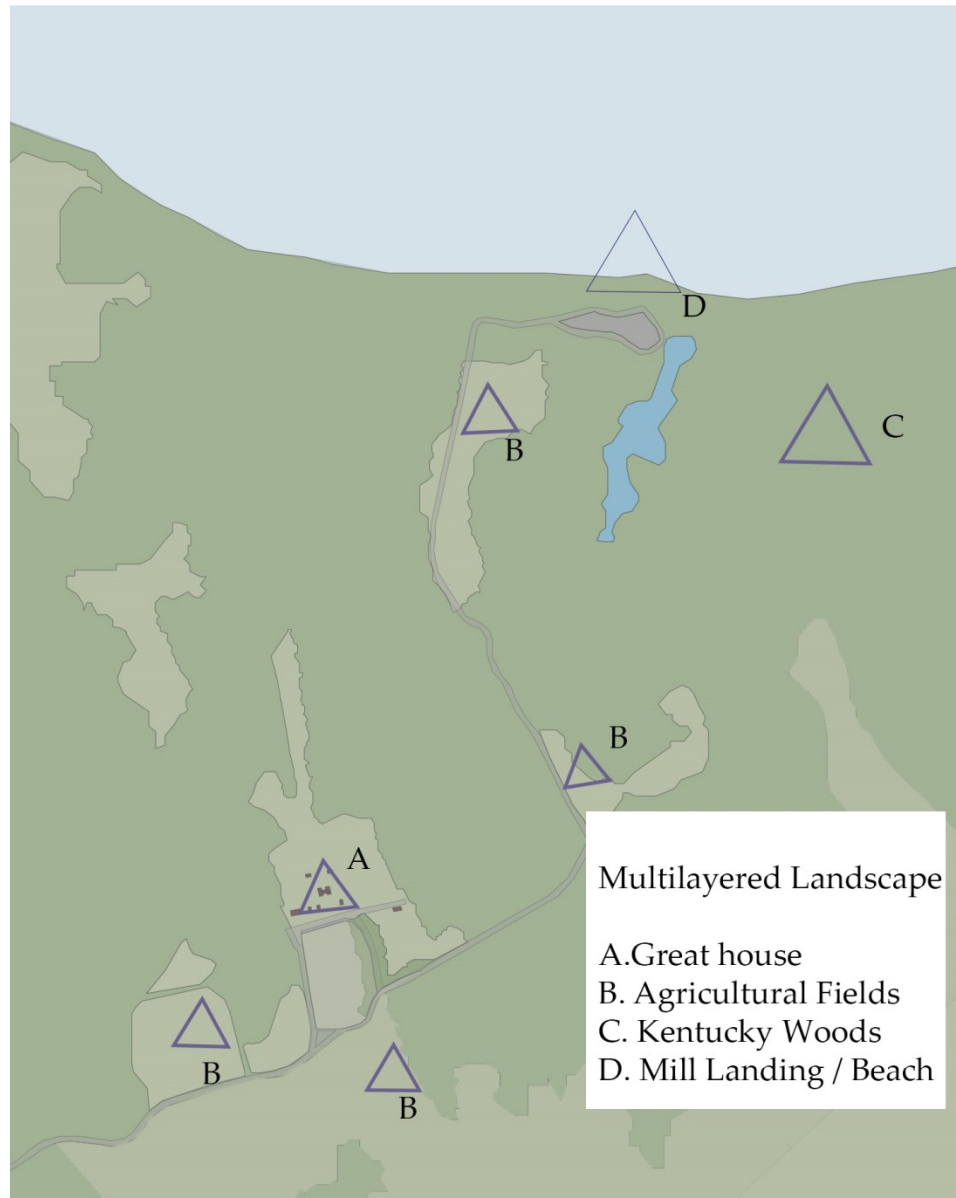


Figure 6.3 Multilayered Landscape, locations for depicting the layers of the landscape, map by author

The presentation of this interpretive theme seeks to reconcile the two eras of integrity present on the site. While elements from the Colonial Era still remain at Stratford Hall, the present configuration of the site is largely the result of the Colonial Revival reconstruction. The site's evolution cannot be entirely explained through the current docent-led tours on the site. To do so, the docents would be required to move out in the landscape beyond the Great House. The most opportune location

to describe the layers of the landscape history are in the gardens that surround the house and in the area of the Director's cabins, formerly a slave settlement. In order to present the theme in the more remote locations on the property, including the areas on the far side of the Mill Pond, an update and expansion of the interpretive signage will be necessary. Another approach to presenting this theme is through the use of the augmented reality app which will be discussed later in this section.

The presentation of a multilayered landscape affords Stratford Hall the opportunity to acknowledge that in addition to the changed agricultural environment, the natural heritage of the site has evolved since the Colonial Era. Recalling the later work of Sauer, the natural environment affects the patterns of behavior that can develop. The constant change of nature ensures that there is evolution. Following the example of the Menokin interpretive theme identified in the case study section, this theme should address that while culture was developing at the site, the ecological environment was also changing. The ecological conditions that were present on the site during the era of the plantation cannot be recreated; it is physically impossible to do so. The site relied on a large resident slave population and a vast holding of livestock. These two elements ensured that the fields were maintained and that the proper nutrients were in the soil to allow the tobacco to grow. The tree species that are presently on the site are different from those that would have dominated the landscape during the Lee era. Factors of climate change have led to a dramatically different biodiversity to flourish on the site than was present at the Pre-Industrial Revolution site.

An area of the plantation that is positioned to tell the changes of the natural environment and their impact on the land use patterns is the beach along the Potomac River. Historically this feature was much wider, allowing for a wharf and other structures to be erected. The natural course of the Potomac River, as well as rises in the water levels, has significantly eroded the space so that only a tiny fraction of the beach remains, with the shore twelve feet at its widest point. This feature, while present from the era of the tobacco culture, has changed dramatically, and cannot be physically reconstructed at this

time. One method which could be used as a solution to presenting the diversity of activity that would have occurred on this portion of the site is a digital reconstruction.

Multiple sites of interpretation

Prior to the creation of a new interpretive plan, it would be beneficial for additional archaeological digs to be performed at other locations on the property to determine how those areas were used historically. The evidence uncovered in the digs to date has led to a much better understanding of how the plantation worked. The remains of structures have been uncovered and the existence of road beds has been confirmed. The digs have proven that significant activity occurred at the plantation well beyond the area of the great house. As a result, the interpretive plan for Stratford Hall must go beyond the area of the Great House. Stratford has at its disposal nearly 2,000 acres of property ranging from open pastures defined by wooded spaces and to tall cliffs adjacent to the Potomac River to forested ravines and swampy bottom land.

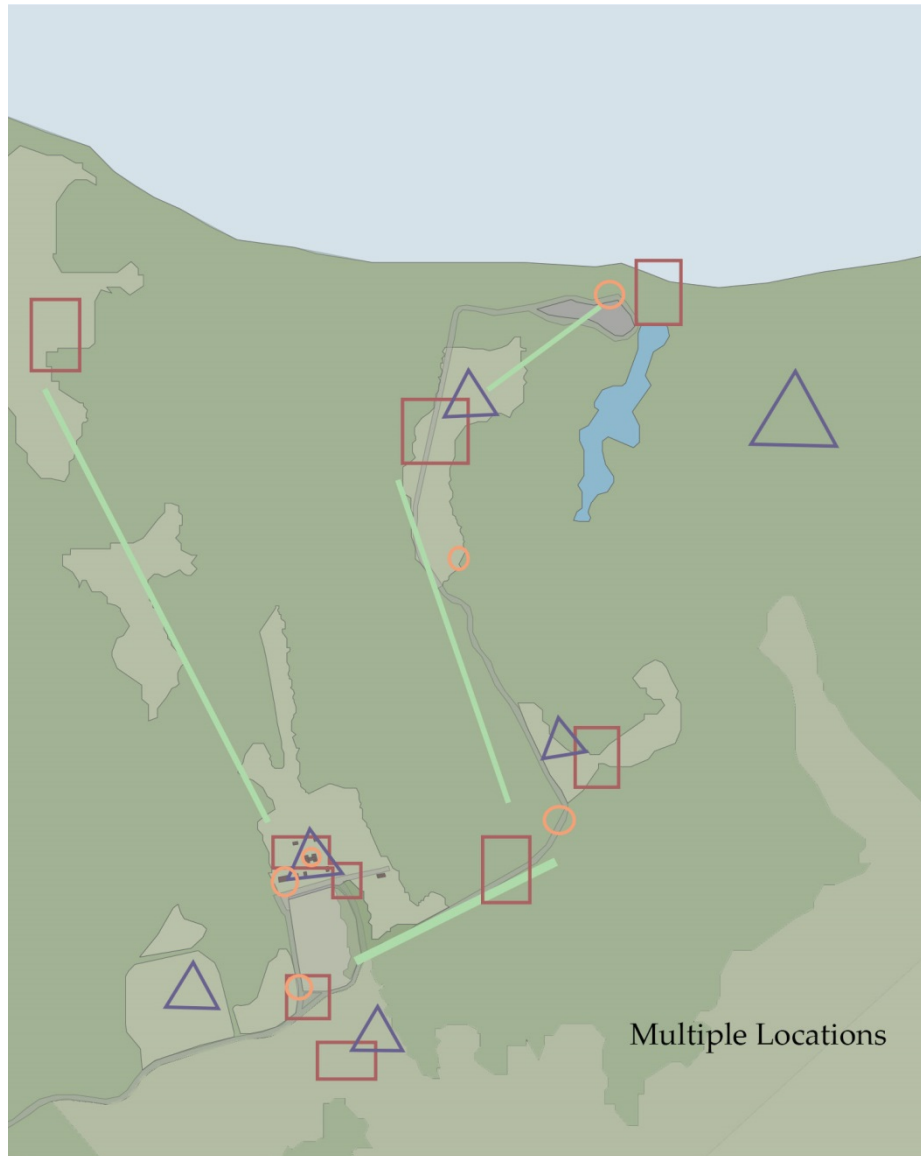


Figure 6.4 Multiple Locations, the map locates the areas of the plantation where interpretation can be expanded to explain the legacy of the tobacco culture. Map by author.

With an expanded interpretive presentation, a location to be utilized is the Southwest portion of the Oval. This location is the site of the most recent University of Mary Washington's archaeological digs, which has uncovered the remains of an agricultural complex dating from the time of Philip Ludwell Lee and 'Light Horse' Harry Lee. The discovery of the building remains found at the site makes the area an ideal location to interpret and discuss the patterns of tobacco culture habitation. The findings uncovered a group of structures including an overseer's quarter and a building that fits the typology of a

tobacco house. The discovery has also yielded artifacts that were a part of the daily life of the people who inhabited this portion of the plantation, such as bottles and buckles.³²⁸

Another location on the property to focus interpretive efforts on is the historic slave cemetery located in the Director's cabin cluster. Relatively little is known about the location, other than the remnants of slave housing was found in the area surrounding the slave cemetery. Presently, a few of the tombstones are scattered in a thickly covered ivy patch in the middle of the Directors' cabins on the Mill Road. The building of the Director's cabins over the remains of former slave quarters has been interpreted by some as an act of social oppression of one class and race over another.³²⁹ The historic treatment and relative lack of interpretation of the space reflects the inherent tensions that J.B. Jackson says are present within vernacular landscapes with different groups having different goals. Historically, the space was a community of slaves and now is the location of leisure cabins.³³⁰

Additional locations that are ideal for interpreting the agricultural history of the site are the Cliff and Mill Pond Fields. These portions of the property consist of relatively flat topography defined by ravines along the eastern and western edges of the fields. As the topography of the fields has remained relatively flat and intact since the Colonial Era, these spaces presented ideal locations for crop cultivation. The space would have been relatively easy to plow and manage as opposed to the more sloping topography on the site.

Multiple Media used in interpretation

All of the case studies reviewed have interpretive plans that use multiple forms of media in order to tell the significance of a site. As suggested by McLuhan, different media will cause a different reaction by the audience and cause a different thought process to occur. An advantage of having multiple forms of interpretive media at a site is the assurance of reaching a wider audience with

³²⁸ Wilkins, "Elements of a Landscape," 156-157.

³²⁹ Ibid., 162-163.

³³⁰ Ibid., 163.

different thought processes and understandings. In its present capacity Stratford Hall uses docents to interpret the area of the mansion. These efforts can be extended out into the surrounding garden spaces as well as the remainder of the site. Like Monticello, the docents could continue the tour through the garden spaces as well as to the Oval dig site.

Monticello's Mulberry Row has interpretive signage to explain to the viewer the significance of the location on the property. In a similar manner Stratford could invest in, and benefit from, a more extensive interpretive sign system for the site. Newer signs could be placed and arranged on the site to construct a narrative along a defined pathway through the site. During the 1970s, a series of trails were constructed on the site, which today are largely overgrown. If the paths were focused on a particular interpretive narrative, the pathways could be cleared and posted with appropriate signage in order to encourage exploration through the site.

Beyond the traditional approach of interpretive signage and docent-led tours, Stratford has the ability to follow the example of Menokin and implement non-traditional interpretive methods at the site. One non-traditional approach would be the implementation of interpretive activities on the site in a manner similar to the work that is being done at Menokin. Activities could include discussions on the Colonial Revival landscape, preservation laboratories, strategically placed props and artwork on the landscape, and the use of archaeological digs that involve visitors. Stratford has the advantage of actively supporting archaeological digs with the University of Mary Washington. Part of a new interpretive element could incorporate visitors actively participating in dig workshops or in bringing interpretation to a dig site to explain how the process works. Archaeological digs involving visitors could focus on basic instruction of the process of conducting a dig. Visitors with experience in archaeological research, could be presented the opportunity to participate in more intensive digs at designated locations at the property. Similar to Menokin, Stratford would reap the benefit of having digs completed and information about the site gathered.

Augmented Reality

At the sites of Menokin and Monticello, augmented reality apps are being utilized to interpret aspects of the sites' character to the audience. In order to use this technology, a visitor will need access to a mobile device to download a program app. Stratford Hall has the potential to use this technology to improve the interpretation of the plantation. The plantation has evolved significantly since the tobacco culture era. To show this evolution, and to aid in the provocation of the audience, a digital model overlaid on portions of the present site could show what the space would have looked like during the historic era. As the seasons change, the image of the site would reflect various stages in the tobacco cycle to aid in the interpretive program.

In addition to presenting the overall picture of the site, sensors and triggers can be placed in the landscape to show in detail various steps in the process of the plant cycle. The steps of initial planting, transplanting, topping, harvesting, and then the drying process could each comprise a separate stop along a new interpretive route. However, beyond the vegetation, the model should also feature reconstructions depicting buildings as they would have looked at locations where evidence of them has been uncovered. Narration of objects of archaeological importance can help show how these structures fit into the process of tobacco production. The relative ease of building a digital model of structures can allow for revisions or additions as future finds are made.

Because of the many unknowns of the site, and the ever-changing understanding of it, an augmented reality app, with the flexibility it can offer, would be an appropriate means to interpret the site. While Stratford Hall has a legacy of reconstructing missing elements of the landscape, an augmented reality tour can more easily, in a virtual, minimally intrusive way, reconstruct the landscape. Time and money that would be necessary to physically reconstruct a landscape physically could be used in for other aspects of the plantation's interpretation.

A site at Stratford Hall that illustrates the possible benefits of introducing augmented reality into the interpretive scheme is the Oval dig site. Visitors exploring the plantation would enter into the space of the Oval and be prompted by a sign to further explore the location through the use of their smart phones to download an app. The app's use of a digital model would recreate the former farming cluster that existed at the Southern end of the Oval during the Lee period. The visitor would then see representations of the structures at the location and virtually witness the activities related to the tobacco cycle that were thought to have occurred at the site. Beyond this location, the visitor would see literally the adjacent fields where tobacco once defined the landscape.

After selecting augmented reality as an interpretive medium option for the site, questions concerning the final appearance of the app, as well as which program platform would host the app will have to be answered. Different design programs will create different final products and are capable of integrating different types of files. What is wished to be covered in the interpretive theme will dictate the best program to use.

An issue that will have to be addressed is the logistics of transmitting the interpretation to a mobile device. The area near Stratford Hall is known to have unreliable cell phone reception, which is a key form of delivering augmented reality apps to smart phones. However, an augmented reality app can be also be accessed through the use of a wi-fi connection. Despite the weak cell reception, the plantation does have a surprising well equipped wi-fi signal at the Visitor Center, Great House, and the Astor Guest House. A solution to reliably deliver an augmented reality app would be to install wi-fi terminals into the landscape at strategic the areas, specifically the Oval, the Director's cabins, and the Mill Landing. Further connectivity at the site could be expanded with the expansion of the app.

A project hosted by the Layar platform entitled, "The Berlin Wall is back," recreates virtually the missing historic element of the Berlin Wall on the modern cityscape. The project allows viewers to realize the visual impact of the feature on the city without physically recreating it. The project shows the

capabilities of recreating lost elements of the landscape.³³¹ A similar project, the Hisham Palace Reconstruction in Jordan, allows viewers to experience the ruins as if the palace were still intact. The sixth century site is digitally reconstructed and uses a series of strategically placed screens and projectors to allow viewers the virtual experience of walking through the historic spaces of the palace.³³² The Olbrich House project in Vienna goes beyond recreating the building with a digital model and has created a model with strategically placed hotspots. The hotspots link to files that include original architectural drawings, photographs, perspectives and other data. The hotspots change and react to the viewer's location in the landscape, encouraging the viewer to explore the site.³³³

The limitation of interpretive efforts relegated to a relatively small screen with visual constraints has led to criticism of using this media as a form of interpretation, as it is a limited window to interact with an augmented environment.³³⁴ The size of the screen limits the amount of data and information that can be presented to the viewer. If the interpretation includes audio files, participants are required to be connected to the device, thus limiting one's ability to experience the sounds of the environment or to interact with other members of a tour group. A 2012 study conducted in Bradly's Head Park in Australia showed that participants of an augmented reality tour spent more time exploring the landscape than their non-augmented reality tour counterparts.³³⁵ Similarly, the findings of a 2005 study

³³¹ Groenhart, Maurice. "The Berlin Wall is Back." Layar . April 16, 2010.

<https://www.layar.com/news/blog/2010/04/16/the-berlin-wall-is-back/> (accessed February 14, 2014).

³³² Shadi Ghadban, Ramzi Hassan, Omar Aboudi, and Yousef Khateeb. "The Development of an Interactive Virtual Environment for Hisham Palace in Jericho, Palestine." *International Journal of Architectural Research* (Archnet 7, no. 2 July 2013) 118-135.

³³³ Jens Keil, Michael Zollner, Mario Becker , Folker Wientapper, Timo Engelke, and Harald Wuest. "The House of Olbrich-An Augmented Reality Tour through Architectural History." *IEEE International Symposium on Mixed and Augmented Reality*.(Basel, Switzerland: IEEE, 2011), 15-18.

³³⁴ Dunleavy, Matt. "Design Principles for Augmented Reality Learning." *TechTrends* 58, no. 1 (January/February 2014), 28-34.

³³⁵ Isabelle D. Wolf, Heidi K Stricker, and Gerald Hagenloh. "Interpretive media that attract park visitors and enhance their experiences: A comparison of modern and traditional tools using GPS tracking and GIS technology." (*Tourism Management Perspectives* 7 2013), 59-72.

conducted in Carlsbad Cavern concluded that participants of augmented reality tours spent additional time exploring their environment while also engaging with other members of the cavern tours.³³⁶

However, according to Saggio and Borra, augmented reality occurs with the insertion of any form of information over a pre-existing element, making a mobile app only the start of the capabilities possible for interpretation in this form. The augmentation can become more substantial than a singular flat screen and theoretically can fully engage an audience. A landscape could be populated with sound clips, digital reconstructions, illustrations, and smells to further provoke the visitor. Moving beyond the limits of a mobile device, an audience could hear sounds approximating those made by slaves in the fields even as they explore the site in the present -day. An audience could walk through recreated three dimensional spaces to feel what it was like to circulate through the plantation's lost spaces. The smell of tobacco could permeate through the fields in order to aid in the understanding of what the conditions of the space were like historically.

The question shifts to how can reality be augmented in such a way that it moves beyond the limitation of small screen? One solution is the use of Google Glass. The development of the Google Glass is seen as the next development in augmented reality interpretation.³³⁷ According to McLuhan, new technology must be used in a new way in interpretive efforts. Google Glass is designed to look like a pair of glasses with built in screen projections. Google Glass moves the interaction and augmentation from a small screen to the eye level of the viewer. An interpretive scheme utilizing this technology has the capability to allow for the participant to make discoveries throughout the landscape and the augmented reality at the same time, allowing the viewer to see both environments at the same time.

But what are the options for augmented interpretation beyond asking visitors to use a device to serve as a medium for communication? The next progression in augmenting reality entails inserting

³³⁶ Levi T Novey. and Hall, Troy E. "The Effects of Audio Tours on Learning and Social Interaction: An Evaluation at Carlsbad Caverns National Park," *Science Education*, 2006, 260-277.

³³⁷ Ian Ruder, "Google Glass: The Future Arrives?" *New Mobility*, (October 2013), 19-23.

digital technology directly into the landscape, technology that would interact with the viewer. The Showroom Richti Areal project manipulates and animates a static physical model by projecting animations and lights on the model to display information. For a landscape interpretation, fields and spatial arrangements could be recreated in a digital form on the landscape without physically changing the form of the landscape. Animations could show the phases of the tobacco cycle. The movement of historic individuals through the landscape could also be projected to help the visitor understand how the space was used.³³⁸

The insertion of this form of augmentation into the environment is made possible by a system of sensors, cameras, and projectors placed in the environment. The technological capabilities are currently in place in larger cities in the form of actively changing displays and signs in the cityscape. The technology that allows this changing display to occur is the surveillance systems that are employed by larger metropolitan areas. By using surveillance system technology to present the interpretation, the scheme could be modified and manipulated to be more effective based on monitored reactions to the presentation.³³⁹

While these technologies interact with the visual and auditory senses, the sense of smell is neglected by the technology. The cultivation of tobacco produces an all-encompassing smell that engulfs the area surrounding tobacco fields. At this time examples of the insertion of smells as a part of the visitor experience is limited to utilization by hotels and department stores, the Walt Disney Company in its theme parks, the Smithsonian Institute, and private art installations. Walt Disney World's Animal Kingdom Park's 2001 attraction "It's Tough to be a Bug" blurred the lines of augmentation and real life by incorporating three dimensional animation and a series of smells during portions of the show. The Smithsonian Institute uses smells as a part of its display pertaining to rockets in order to demonstrate to

³³⁸ "SHOWROOM RICHTI-AREAL." Vimeo. 2012. <http://vimeo.com/22946428> (accessed February 14, 2014).

³³⁹ Carl Skelton. "Who's Your Data?" The Design Observer Group. June 25, 2013. <http://places.designobserver.com/feature/urban-design-in-the-new-soft-city/37904/> (accessed February 14, 2014).

visitors the smells associated with space technology.³⁴⁰ The Green Aria project, a multi experiential project hosted by the Guggenheim Museum, featured the work of perfume expert Christophe Laudamiel. Laudamiel's project stimulated the senses of smell and hearing by combining an opera with thirty-three different scents. During the playing of a recording of the opera, the varying scents were timed and released at prescribed moments in the musical composition using long tubes. These examples show a limited application of smell introduction within a controlled indoor setting.³⁴¹

However, sight, sound, and smell are but three of the five major senses. The senses of touch and taste should also be addressed in the new interpretive scheme. Touch can be stimulated through the use of interpretive props on the site, similar to TSNHS. Colonial farming tools can be placed at locations that are a part of the interpretation. By having these features in the landscape, visitors can feel like how it would be to use the features. However, this would be a low technological solution and would likely not lend itself to the use of augmented reality. At this time, the research of the tobacco culture has not uncovered any particular taste that is unique to that era that could be included as a part of the interpretation.

Augmented Reality technology offers the possibility of recreating lost elements and forms in the landscape. The possibilities of interpretation using augmented reality appear to be limited only by the creativity of the developer of the tour and the current technology platforms. The use of the program offers visitors an opportunity to be challenged with new discoveries on a site and with new themes for telling the story of a site. New model reconstructions and topics can be added with relative ease without having to physically impact the landscape. Reviews of the interpretive plan should regularly occur to determine what the most effective narratives are for the audience, with elements continually monitored to insure their effectiveness.

³⁴⁰ Ross Plesset, "It's Tough to be a Bug." *Cinefantastique* 33(no. 3 2001), 58-60.

³⁴¹ Peter Born, "Agent Provocateur." *Women's Wear Daily* 204 (no. 52 September 2012), 30-31.

Despite the possibilities of augmented reality, it should only be a portion of the overall interpretive scheme for a site. To create a much richer experience at the site additional aspects of interpretation present at other tobacco culture sites should to be implemented in the interpretive plan of Stratford Hall. The application of biography could expand beyond the story of the Lees to include other members of the plantation's population. To explain how these individuals interacted with the site, the theme of the Colonial Era land use should be presented to the visitor. Because the appearance of the landscape today is different from the era of historic significance, the visitor should be made aware that the landscape has evolved over a series of centuries to arrive in its current configuration. Interpretation of Stratford Hall should expand beyond the confines of the mansion out into the landscape of the property. Multiple media should be used to help impart the significance of the site to those who visit the Northern Neck plantation.

Future research on the topic should focus on a better utilization of smell as an agent of provocation. If more time was allotted for the development of the research, a full interpretive plan could be created for Stratford Hall that explored more fully the topics in the conclusion. As new technologies emerge, they must be evaluated as potential means for interpreting the tobacco culture of the Northern Neck.

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