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The archaeology of Mr. Jefferson's slaves

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THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF MR. JEFFERSON'S SLAVES

by

Anna Gruber

**A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of
Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of Master of Arts in Early American Culture**


December 1990

THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF MR. JEFFERSON'S SLAVES


by

Anna Gruber

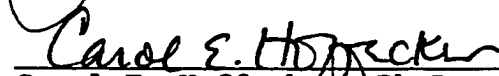
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ABSTRACT

This study examines the archaeological and documentary evidence associated with three slave quarter sites in order to understand more about the material life of the slaves who occupied the three dwellings. Located along the original access road to Thomas Jefferson's Virginia Piedmont plantation, Monticello, these three quarters housed domestic servants, their children and some of the plantation's trained craftsmen from 1792-93 until the 1820s-30s. Excavations revealed the structural remains of the quarters and thousands of artifacts which provide direct evidence of these slaves' lives. Analysis of this evidence establishes Jefferson's home in its proper context as a working plantation dependent on slave labor. This analysis also addresses issues that are central to the field of plantation archaeology: paternalism, acculturation, and ethnicity.

INTRODUCTION

Located in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains in central Virginia's Albemarle County, Thomas Jefferson's mountaintop home Monticello was the center of over five thousand acres of inherited land. [Figure 1] Mostly self-sufficient, the plantation was supported by the cultivation of tobacco and corn, the raising of livestock, and the production of domestic crafts. In 1768, at the age of twenty-five, Jefferson began building his classically inspired home. This project would continue for over forty years with Jefferson overseeing almost every detail of the house's design, construction, remodeling, and furnishing.

Jefferson also devoted as much time and care to the planning and planting of the house's surrounding landscape. Included in this landscaping effort was the establishment of flower and vegetable gardens, an orchard and vineyards, many miles of roadways and fences, and numerous supporting outbuildings. With the mansion as the focal point, Jefferson ultimately envisioned creating on the Monticello landscape a ferme ornee or ornamental farm which would combine the "minor articles of husbandry and...experimental culture" with

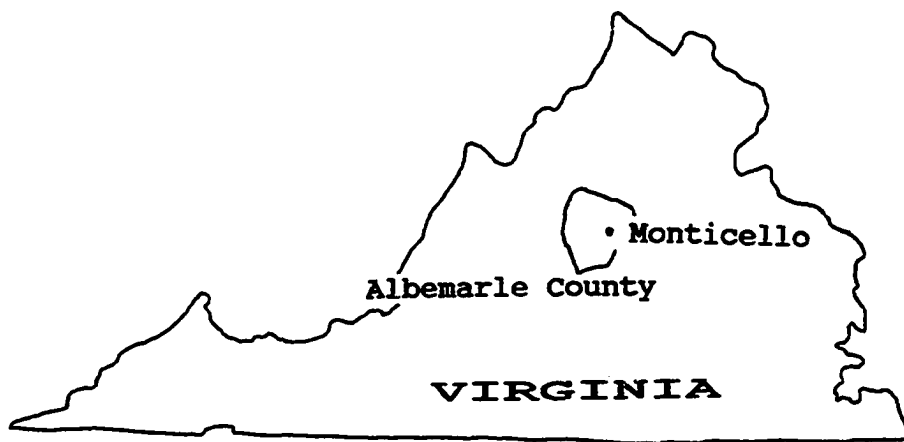


Figure 1 Map of Virginia locating Albemarle County and Monticello

"the attributes of a garden."¹

Consequently, as the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation's restoration of the house neared completion, they undertook to research, restore and interpret the landscape on which Jefferson had lavished so much attention. Guiding this ongoing investigation has been a tremendous volume of documents including Jefferson's garden book, farm book, and account books as well as many drawings, memorandums, and letters. In 1979, archaeological excavations were also begun as part of this research effort. Beginning their work on the southeastern slope of the mountain, excavators were able to define the exact location and nature of Jefferson's vegetable garden, orchard, and vineyard.

By 1981 though, the focus of the archaeological project began to change. In the course of excavating a fenceline that had defined the gardens' boundaries, excavators also discovered several building foundations. Located between the vegetable garden and the mansion along a section of the original plantation access road known as Mulberry Row, these foundations were identified from the documentary sources as the remains of Jefferson's outbuildings--dependency structures that had housed the plantation's light industries and slaves. The most informative of the documents, a 1796 assurance

¹Thomas Jefferson to Edmund Bacon, Feb. 1, 1808; Jefferson's Monticello, William Howard Adams, p. 177.

declaration, located and identified the Mulberry Row buildings. [Figure 2] In all, nineteen outbuildings were shown on this plat including shops, storehouses and five slave quarters. Today only a stone outhouse (building "E" on the insurance plat) and portions of the stable (labeled building "F") still stand.

Over the past eight years archaeological excavations along the Row have uncovered what survives from many of the other structures. With the excavation of these sites, the focus of the archaeological project at Monticello shifted from answering specific questions relating to Jefferson to examining the larger context in which Jefferson had lived and understanding the daily life and activities of the people in that context. The project specifically focused on slave and craft life at Monticello as discovered along Mulberry Row.

This shift in emphasis at Monticello reflected a similar shift that occurred in the field of plantation archaeology. Beginning over thirty years ago, the initial archaeological investigations of plantations concentrated on recovering "artifact and architectural data associated with plantation structures for the interpretation and preservation of planter lifestyles."² By the 1960s though, following the lead of

²Theresa A. Singleton, "Introduction" in The Archaeology of Slavery and Plantation Life, ed. Theresa A. Singleton (New York: Academic Press, Inc., 1985), p. 2.

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social historians, this interest shifted from the elite to the ordinary--from planter sites to slave sites.'

Although Jefferson considered slavery a "hideous evil," he owned at times more than 220 slaves.⁴ Like many planters, Jefferson lived the paradox of an abhorrence of slavery and an acceptance of the use of their labor.⁵ At Monticello, the labor of black slaves was indispensable to the construction of the house and its surrounding landscape as well as the cultivation and manufacturing which supported the plantation economy. It has been the purpose of my study to gain a better understanding of what the lives of these slaves were like. I have examined the artifacts recovered from the archaeological excavations of three of the slave quarters located along Mulberry Row. Through this archaeology, a clearer picture has begun to emerge of how a few of these Jefferson slaves were treated materially: the type of housing they had, the "material objects they used and the food they ate."⁶

⁴Singleton, pp. 2-3.

⁵William M. Kelso, "Mulberry Row: Slave Life at Thomas Jefferson's Monticello," Archaeology, September/October 1986, p. 31.

⁶John C. Miller, "Slavery," in Thomas Jefferson: A Reference Biography, ed. Merrill D. Peterson (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1986), p. 417.

⁷William M. Kelso, "The Archaeology of Slave Life at Thomas Jefferson's Monticello: 'A Wolf By The Ears'," Journal

During the 1983 and 1984 seasons, three of the slave houses, listed on the insurance map as buildings "r", "s" and "t" were excavated. These three dwellings, located in the upper left corner of the insurance plat, were described in the document as follows:

"r. which as well as s. and t. are servants houses of wood with wooden chimneys & earth floors, 12 x 14 feet each and 27 feet apart from one another."

Excavations revealed three sites in different states of preservation with quarters "r" and "t" nearly completely graded away while quarter "s" survived the most intact with portions of several structural features still remaining.⁸

In addition to the structural evidence of the slaves' houses, over 34,000 artifacts were recovered from the three site's occupation levels evidencing the slaves' material life. Most common were fragments of ceramic, glass, animal bone and iron. Combined, these four types of artifacts accounted for over 90% of the artifact assemblages.⁹ Integral to this study and others like it has been the recognition of pattern within

of New World Archaeology, June 1986, p. 5.

⁷1796 insurance plat.

⁸Douglas W. Sanford, "A Report on the Archaeological Excavations of Servant's Houses "r" "s" and "t" and the Related Landscape" (1985), p. 18-49.

⁹Douglas W. Sanford, "A Preliminary Quantitative Analysis of Archaeological Assemblages Associated with Domestic Slave Sites at the Monticello Plantation, Albemarle County, Virginia," (1990), p. 4.

these excavated materials. By arranging artifacts into functional categories, the data might then reveal "behavioral patterns in which social class, site function, cultural change, and temporal and regional distinctions [can be] delineated."¹⁰

The analysis of both the site and artifact remains at Monticello has yielded information about slave life that would have been difficult or impossible to know from the written records alone. While the documents provide some information about the slaves' lifestyles, what they acquired, or were given, the limitation of this source has been that most of the records were the "products of people who either did not directly experience slave life or chose to record only certain aspects of it."¹¹ The importance of the archaeological record is that the information retrieved from it is bound within the slave quarter context.¹² By combining both the archaeological and documentary records, it is possible to create a much

¹⁰Thereasa A. Singleton, The Archaeology of Slavery and Plantation Life, p. 4.

¹¹Charles H. Fairbanks, "The Plantation of the Southeastern Coast," Historical Archaeology, 18(1), 1984, p. 1.

¹²The difficulty with this data is that it represents only what was discarded or lost, and of that, what was able to survive buried in the ground. Additionally, the archaeologist "cannot directly observe behavior and social organization but must attempt to reconstruct those aspects from the more imperishable objects and associations that he uncovers." Fairbanks, p. 1.

"richer picture" of the slaves' material world than either type of evidence would have produced separately.¹³ Therefore, in this study, both the archaeological and documentary evidence associated with the three slave quarter sites along Mulberry Row have been examined.

The excavation of these three slave dwellings has made a valuable contribution to the interpretation of Monticello--it has helped place Jefferson's home in its proper context of a working plantation with functioning outbuildings, hired laborers and slaves. Beyond this, the analysis of the recovered artifacts has provided important information about the slaves lives--their housing, diet, and personal possessions. As well, it comments on how objects were acquired and thereby potentially addressing the issues of status, paternalism, acculturation, and ethnicity within the plantation community. The conclusions from this analysis add to a growing body of information about the material life of slaves. Once large enough, such a body of information might make it possible to define regional variations within the established general pattern of slave material culture. Finally, while it might be expected that the Monticello slaves may have been treated in a better or less typical fashion

¹³James Deetz, Invitation to Archaeology (Garden City, New York: The Natural History Press, 1967), p. 4.

given Jefferson's economic standing and his attitudes towards slavery, understanding all variation, economic as well as regional, is crucial to the development of as complete a picture of slaves' material culture as possible.

CHAPTER 1

THE CONTEXT: VIRGINIA, MONTICELLO AND MULBERRY ROW

The little mountain on which Thomas Jefferson built his home is located on the first rises of the Southwestern Mountains in central Virginia's Albemarle County.¹ To the west lie the Blue Ridge Mountains and to the east is the Piedmont and beyond that the tidewater areas of Virginia. These areas are in turn part of a much larger geographic division known as the Chesapeake region. Described by historian Allan Kulikoff, the region is: "bounded by the Chesapeake Bay on the east, by the Blue Ridge Mountains on the west, by the Patapsco River on the north and by the Nansemond River and North Carolina on the south."² [Figure 3]

During much of the seventeenth century, life in the Chesapeake region was characterized by numerous Indian villages that "surrounded scattered outposts...of white planters and their indentured [white] servants" cultivating

¹William Howard Adams, Jefferson's Monticello (New York: Abbeville Press, 1983), p. 146.

²This is the Chesapeake region as defined by Allan Kulikoff. Allan Kulikoff, Tobacco and Slaves: The Development of Southern Cultures in the Chesapeake, 1680-1800 (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1986), p. 18.

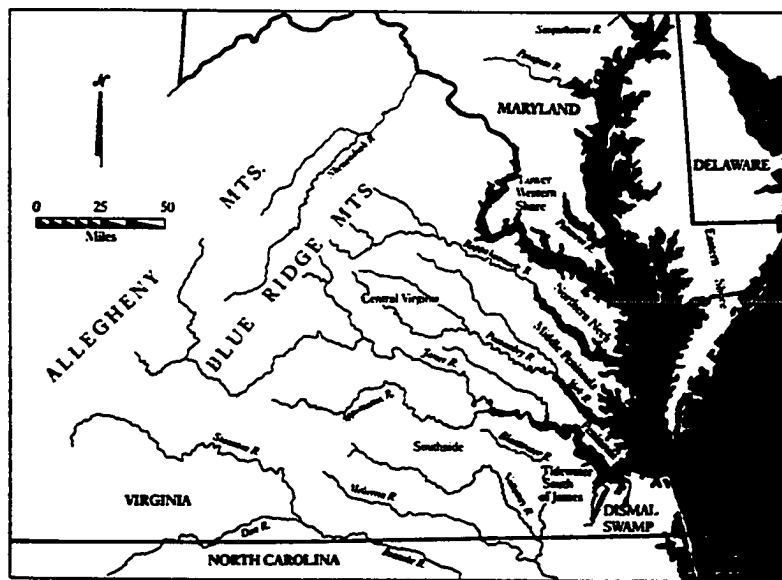


Figure 3 The Chesapeake Region. Map from Allan Kulikoff, Tobacco and Slaves: The Development of Southern Cultures in the Chesapeake, 1680-1800 (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1986), p. 19.

tobacco.³ However, between 1680 and 1800, "an intertwined series of demographic, economic, and social changes transformed this social world" into a slave society where white planters used African slave labor to cultivate more diversified crops in addition to tobacco. The nature and rate of this change varied among the different subregions.⁵ In the Virginia Piedmont, the transition occurred between 1730 and 1770 as settlers, cultivation, and slaves spread westward from the overpopulated tidewater.⁶

With this transformation came profound social and cultural changes for white and black societies. "Among whites, patriarchal families replaced relatively egalitarian families; kin groups replaced neighborhoods as the primary focus of social interaction; and two new classes formed, a gentry ruling class and a class of yeomen planters." Among blacks, a natural increase in their population led to the creation (often between plantations) of extended families,

³Kulikoff, p. 23.

⁴Kulikoff, p. 4.

⁵In her article "The Problem of Slave Community in the Eighteenth-Century Chesapeake," Jean Lee argues from her analysis of the tax records from Charles County, Maryland, that the "opportunities for family foundation, communal life and slave autonomy developed much more slowly in the Chesapeake" (p. 341) than Kulikoff has suggested.

⁶Philip D. Morgan and Michael L. Nicholls, "Slaves in Piedmont Virginia, 1720-1790," William and Mary Quarterly, XLVI, no. 2 (1989), pp. 211-251.

kinship networks, and communities.⁷

This transition was also expressed on the landscape. Gentlemen planters declared their elevated status by building large, formal residences or 'great houses' that were surrounded by a "profusion of separate structures" giving the appearance of a small village. Often on elevated sites setting them off from the other dependent structures and of an architectural design that stressed proportion, symmetry and specialized spaces, these 'great houses' reflected the changing social values and attitudes that emphasized patriarchy, family, and privacy.⁸

At the heart of this system was money (especially credit) and the use of slave labor. For his position and lifestyle, the great planter was dependent on both. The cluster of buildings surrounding the gentleman's house expressed this dependency as well. Yet the pattern of life in the slave quarters was very different from that in the plantation house. "The quarter was a composite communal living space,

⁷Kulikoff, p. 7. Also, in "Slaves in Piedmont Virginia, 1720-1790," Philip Morgan and Michael Nicholls note that in the Virginia Piedmont, large numbers of women and children were characteristic of the area's growth from the beginning which helped foster opportunities for family life. In addition, slaves in these early settlements found "themselves on middle-sized estates with a fair degree of autonomy from whites" (p. 215) and in enough numbers to "support a measure of community life." (p. 238)

⁸Rhys Isaac, The Transformation of Virginia 1740-1790 (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1982).

encompassing a plurality of married pairs and parent-child combinations as well as unmarried slaves." And while these quarters were "included in the patriarchal structure" of the plantation, they were not "wholly co-opted by it." The gentlemen planter who depended on slave labor and deference "to sustain his exalted role, tacitly recognized that [the slaves] had a social system of their own."⁹

It was into the gentry level of this world of planters and slaves that Thomas Jefferson was born in 1743 at Shadwell in Albemarle County, Virginia. Jefferson's father had been a prosperous planter and land speculator in the region and had married into the prominent Randolph family from the Tidewater. As a consequence, the young Jefferson assumed a privileged position; he was well educated, socially and politically connected, and financial secure.¹⁰

At the death of his father in 1757, Jefferson inherited

⁹Isaac, pp. 30-42. In addition to the gentlemen planters and slaves, yeoman and tenants made up the "great majority of the total population." Living "amid fields and trees along the lesser creeks," their dwellings were typically "one- or one-and-a-half-story frame buildings with two rooms on the ground floor and a chimney on the gable at one or both ends." Implicated in the design of the dwelling was "strictly coded 'grammar'" that controlled the divisions of space reflecting a "need to define boundaries between 'culture' and 'nature.'" (Isaac, p. 33)

The analysis and discovery of the "grammar" of folk architecture is presented by Henry Glassie in Folk Housing in Middle Virginia: A Structural Analysis of Historic Artifacts.

¹⁰Dumas Malone, Jefferson and His Time: Jefferson the Virginian (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1981).

over five thousand acres of land and at least twenty slaves.¹¹ In 1772 Jefferson married, and two years later acquired through his wife's inheritance more than 11,000 acres of land and 135 slaves. The immediate effect of this inheritance was to more than double "the ease of his circumstances." By 1782, Jefferson was one of the largest landowners in Albemarle County, and he had the second largest holding of slaves in the county.¹²

The inheritance from Jefferson's father-in-law also brought with it a proportionate share of a heavy debt. The repayment of this debt (which he ultimately made twice) plagued Jefferson for nearly thirty years and necessitated the selling of over half of the inherited land and some of the slaves. In the early 1790s Jefferson wrote of his debt, "It consequently cripples all my wishes & endeavors to be useful to others, and obliges me to carry on everything starvingly."¹³

On the land Jefferson had inherited from his father was

¹¹Malone, Jefferson the Virginian, p. 439. 2650 acres of this land lay along the Rivanna River in Albemarle County including the one thousand acre Monticello tract.

¹²Malone, Jefferson the Virginian, pp. 439-441.

¹³Malone, Jefferson the Virginian, p. 441-445. In fact, Malone feels that Jefferson's financial difficulties may have been part of the reason why he chose to return to a salaried public life after his wife's death. Malone concludes that "the whole of [Jefferson's] later life was colored by" the inheritance from his father-in-law, "which first enriched and then impoverished him." p. 445.

located the little mountain on top of which Jefferson choose to build his home. Naming his estate Monticello, the Italian translation of "little mountain," Jefferson began working on studies for his home as early as 1767.¹⁴ For inspiration, Jefferson consulted many architectural books, but was ultimately most influenced by the 16th-century Italian architect, Andrea Palladio. In Palladio's drawings, Jefferson found compatible ideas for an ordered domestic architecture that complemented the self-sufficient plantation life he sought to create.

In 1768, Jefferson had the mountain top leveled, and within a year had begun construction of the first "outchamber" at Monticello, the south pavilion.¹⁵ This was to be the start of a building project that would continue for over forty years. The first version of the house, completed by 1782, had a two-story central block and portico flanked by one-story wings with a small octagonal room projecting at either end.¹⁶

¹⁴Frederick Doveton Nichols, Thomas Jefferson's Architectural Drawings: Compiled and with Commentary and a Check List (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society and Charlottesville: Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation and The University Press of Virginia, 1984), p. 3.

¹⁵Edwin Morris Betts, Thomas Jefferson's Garden Book 1766-1824 (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1985), pp. 15-18. The South Pavilion was the first outbuilding to be completed at Monticello.

¹⁶William Howard Adams, Jefferson's Monticello (New York: Abbeville Press, 1983), p. 60.

However, during Jefferson's absence in Paris as Minister to France from 1784-1789, "the academically inspired edifice fell into disrepair and disfavor."¹⁷ By 1796, Jefferson began to remodel and enlarge his house. The enlarged version of the house, completed by 1809, essentially duplicated in mirror image the original rooms, but significantly altered the designated use of the spaces by providing clearly articulated public and private areas.¹⁸

Incorporated into the earliest designs for the house (by 1772) was a Palladian scheme for L-shaped dependency wings that would connect the main house with the south pavilion and a projected north pavilion. This design integrated the service quarters and at the same time enhanced "the monumental aspect" of the owner's dwelling.¹⁹ In assimilating this scheme into his plans, Jefferson created a unique version of the design. He decided to take advantage of the mountain's slope and suppressed "the service rooms below the level of the main structure, covering them with terraces and having them open

¹⁷James A. Bear, "Monticello," in Thomas Jefferson: A Reference Biography, ed. Merrill D. Peterson (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1986), p. 437.

¹⁸Adams, p. 62.

¹⁹Fiske Kimball, Thomas Jefferson, Architect (New York: Da Capo Press, 1968), pp. 23-4.

outward rather than upon the inner court."²⁰ With this adaptation, the surrounding views were not interrupted and the service quarters were concealed from sight. [Figure 4]

While the design for Monticello was unique in eighteenth-century Virginia, the underlying expression of order and control was not. Dell Upton's analysis of vernacular domestic architecture in eighteenth-century Virginia found that the influence of such international models as Palladio was undeniable, but that their use was closely controlled by local builders whose intentions were to assert "local social and political control" in the context of a changing Virginia society. Certainly Jefferson's selection of an elevated site and the construction of a properly proportioned and ordered environment suggests that Monticello, like other gentlemen planters' 'great houses,' reflected this desire for an ordered and controlled world--one that also emphasized patriarchy, family, and privacy.²¹

In addition to overseeing almost every detail of the house's design, construction, remodeling, and furnishing,

²⁰Dumas Malone, Jefferson the Virginian, p. 149. See also, Nichols, p. 4, and Kimball, p. 27.

²¹Dell Upton, "Vernacular Domestic Architecture in Eighteenth-Century Virginia," in Common Places: Readings in American Vernacular Architecture, ed. Dell Upton and John Michael Vlach (London and Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1986), pp. 315-35. See also Rhys Isaac, The Transformation of Virginia 1740-1790.

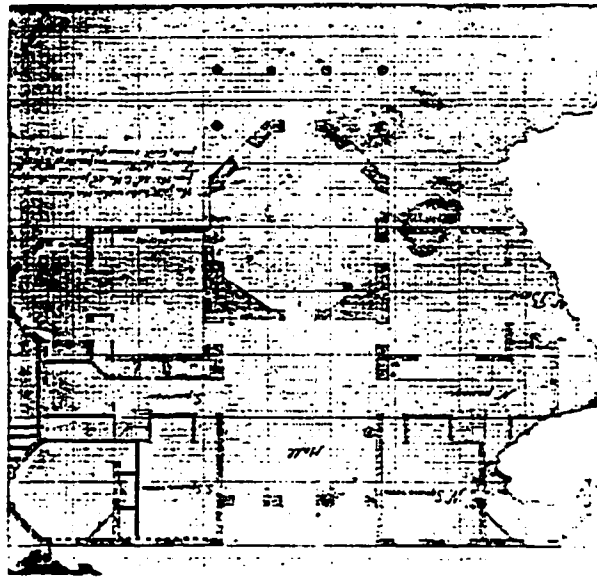
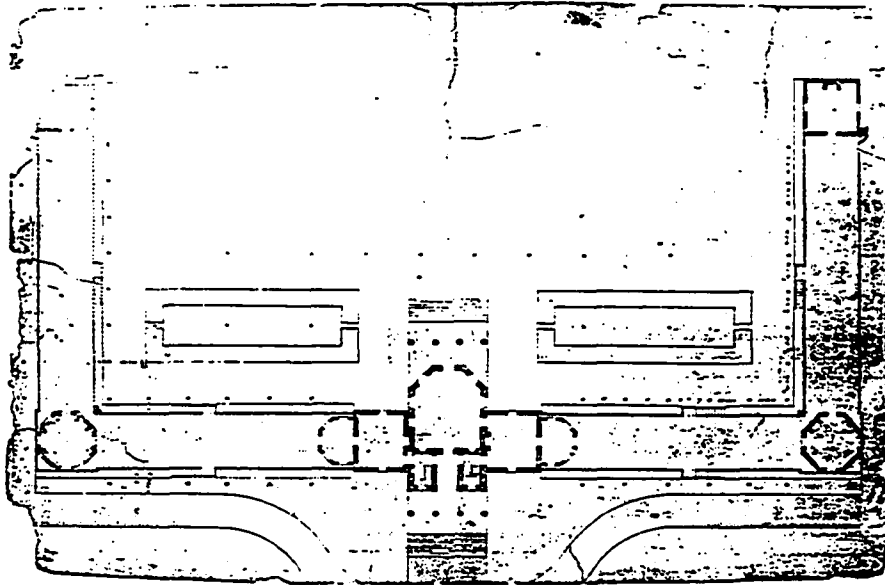


Figure 4 Plan drawings of Monticello showing the first version with L-shaped dependency wings (top) and final version (bottom). Drawings by Thomas Jefferson from Fiske Kimball, Thomas Jefferson Architect (New York: Da Capo Press, 1968), pls. 32, 150.

Jefferson also lavished a great deal of time and care on the planning of Monticello's surrounding landscape. Here too Jefferson created an ordered and controlled environment. The shaping of the landscape included leveling the top of the mountain for the construction of the house; carving a thousand foot long terraced vegetable garden into the hillside; planting ornamental flower gardens, an orchard, and vineyard; creating a pleasure grove; and constructing many miles of roadways and fences around the mountain.

Yet essential to the development of Monticello and an integral aspect of the plantation's landscape was the slave community. Typically, Jefferson owned about 200 slaves.²² These slaves, in addition to helping construct Monticello and its landscape, cultivated Jefferson's cash crops of tobacco and wheat; raised cattle, hogs and sheep; and manufactured goods in the nailery, joinery, blacksmith shop, and weaving shop.²³ The slaves' labor not only generated financial income

²²Stanton, p. 7. About 120 of these slaves lived in Albemarle County and about 80 lived in Bedford County. Almost half of Jefferson's slaves were under the age of sixteen. (Stanton, Facts and Figures, p. 7.) Excluding these children and the aged, Dumas Malone has calculated "that not more than a third of Jefferson's slaves were available as field hands." (Malone, The Sage of Monticello, p. 35.)

²³Jefferson's other crops included: corn, oats, barley, rye, peas, clover, pumpkins, flax, cotton, and hemp. The slaves also produced bricks, lumber, charcoal, shoes, and labored at coopering, brewing, curing tobacco and making flour and meal at Jefferson's mills. See Betts, Thomas Jefferson's Farm Book, pp. viii-ix.

for the plantation but also contributed to the establishment of a nearly self-sufficient plantation.

While the many activities performed by Jefferson's slaves were recorded in numerous letters, the Farm Book, the Garden Book, and the plantation's account books, how these slaves lived and the material objects they lived with were rarely described. Historians and architectural historians have extensively studied and written about Jefferson's life and the home he built at Monticello. Comparatively little has been written which describes the homes and daily lives of the numerous slaves who made Jefferson's life at Monticello possible. It is therefore the purpose of this study to gain a fuller understanding of the material life of these slaves. Specifically, I have examined the documents related to and the artifacts recovered from the archaeological excavations of three slave dwellings which stood along the plantation's original access road, Mulberry Row. Through this examination, a clearer picture has begun to emerge of the material life associated with a few of Jefferson's slaves--it has revealed the type of houses they lived in, the type of food they ate, and the material objects they used in their daily life."

Lined by mulberry trees, Mulberry Row was located by

"William M. Kelso, "The Archaeology of Slave Life at Monticello: 'A Wolf by the Ears'," The Journal of New World Archaeology, p. 5.

Jefferson just south of the mansion on the crest of a terraced slope which descended to the vegetable garden. [Figure 5] On this row were located the outbuildings and servants' quarters necessary for the practical demands of the plantation. About forty slaves lived along Mulberry Row. Most of these slaves were domestic servants, their spouses and children, and some of the trained artisans who worked in the Row's craft shops.²⁵ With one exception, all of the slaves who lived at the top of the mountain were members of a single slave family.²⁶ It is not known (with the exception of one slave) which slaves lived in which buildings, nor is it known how many slaves occupied a single structure.

Early in his planning of Monticello, between 1768-1770, Jefferson had conceived the novel arrangement of having these dependencies and slave dwellings incorporated into the house in the terraced, L-shaped wings. However, construction of the wings was not begun until 1796 and not completed until 1802.²⁷

²⁵Lucia S. Goodwin, "Monticello Facts and Figures," (Charlottesville: Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation, 1985), p. 8. The field labors lived at the base of the mountain or on the outlying farms.

²⁶This family, the Hemings family, was part of the inheritance from the estate of Jefferson's father-in-law. Several of the members of this family were "probably" the illegitimate children of Jefferson's father-in-law. John C. Miller, "Slavery," Thomas Jefferson: A Reference Biography, ed. Merrill D. Peterson, p. 429.

²⁷Due to a shortage of cash and Jefferson's absences from Monticello, construction of the wings was delayed. With their

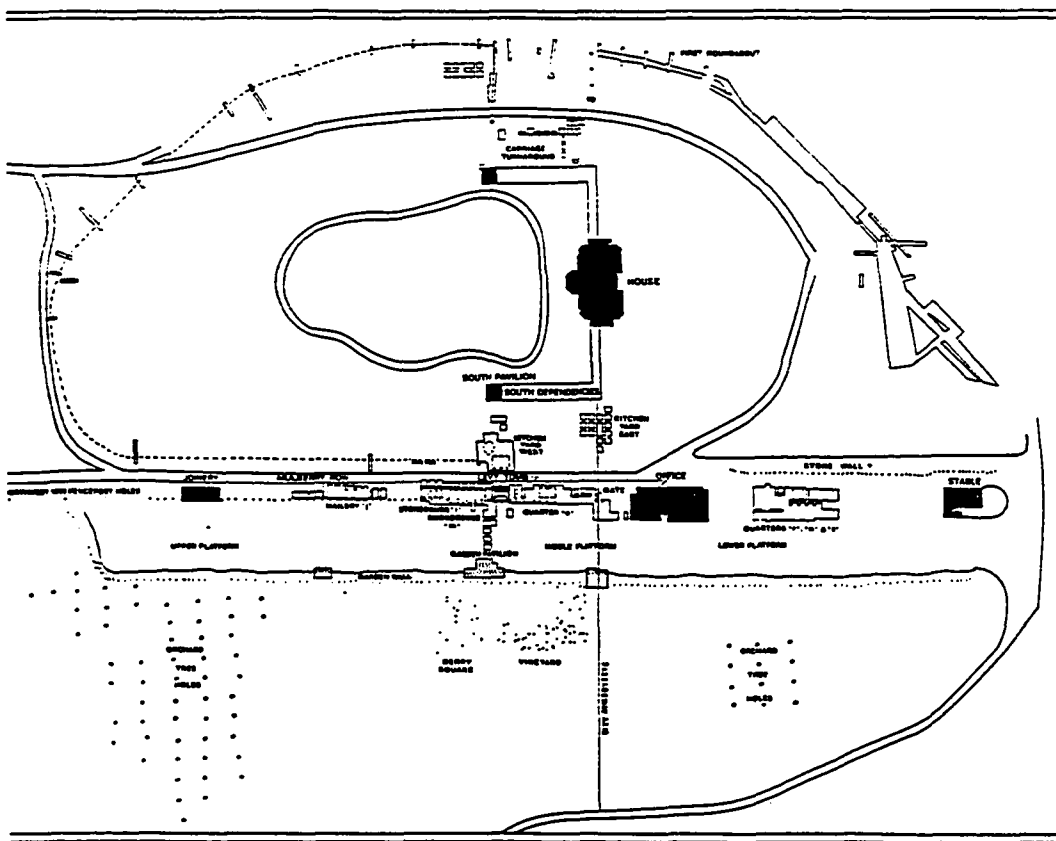


Figure 5 Map of Monticello locating Mulberry Row. Drawing by the author, Monticello Department of Archaeology, 1984.

Instead, by 1776 Jefferson had begun plans to locate the dependencies adjacent to the house along a carefully ordered row. Not surprisingly, the earliest plans for Mulberry Row incorporated classical design elements, but the use of a row and its ultimate appearance represented the much more typical Virginia plantation arrangement of dependencies. Located on half of the row were storage and craft buildings, and on the other half were houses for workmen and slaves, as well as Jefferson's stable. Like similar rows or "streets" found on other plantations, it formed part of the "working landscape" which was carefully arranged and situated by the planter as part of his self-enhancing, hierarchically ordered landscape.²⁸

In 1796, Jefferson insured the Mulberry Row outbuildings and the mansion against fire. This declaration of assurance survives and provides the location and a description of all the structures along the Row. [Figure 6] In the declaration, each building was given an alphabetical designation then followed by a brief description which included the building's function, construction materials, size and the distance to the next structure. On the plat, Jefferson's house is labeled with the letter "A" and the Mulberry Row buildings are shown

completion in 1802, Jefferson moved many of the Mulberry Row functions, including slave quarters, into the new rooms under the terraces. See Nichols and Griswold, Thomas Jefferson Landscape Architect, p. 108.

²⁸Upton, White and Black Landscapes, pp. 63-64.

The foregoing valuation sworn to in due form before me, a magistrate for the said county—of Albemarle—
Given under my hand this day of in the year 1796




























[B]



Jefferson's drawing, 1796, to show the location of the mansion house, and the outhouses on Mulberry Row, which were just above the vegetable garden, at Monticello. These outhouses are often mentioned in the *Farm Book*. (*Jefferson Papers*, M.H.S. and used by permission)

Plat of the buildings referred to in the above Declaration of Thomas Jefferson.

A. is the dwelling house 90. feet long 40. f. broad in the middle exclusive of porticos, two story high except the two bows at the ends, the walls entirely built of stone and brick, the floors above ground & the roof of wood.

B. is an Outchamber, with a kitchen below ground 142 feet from the dwelling house one story high, the walls of brick, the floor above ground & roof of wood. 20. f. square.

C. is a joiner's shop, 57. feet by 18. feet, the underpinning and chimney of stone, the walls and roof of wood.

D. is a smith and nailer's shop 37. by 18. f. the walls & roof of wood.

E. is a stone outhouse 34. by 17. f. the floor of brick, the walls & chimney of stone, the roof of wood, one story high.

F. is a stable 105. feet long and 12. f. wide. one story high. all of wood.

the following houses are not included in the insurance, but as they are in a line with those ensured, and in their neighborhood they are described as follows.

G. G. are 2 coal sheds of wood 20. by 15 f. and 22 f. apart, and it is proposed to build 4. others G. G. G. about 25. f. apart for coal also, they are to contain about 3000. bushels of charcoal, from the nearest of them is 7 poles 15 links to

H. a saw pit where a considerable quantity of timber usually lies. from the pit is 47. feet to

I. a house 30 by 15½ f. all of wood, the floor of earth, in which is stored plank & such things, it is used at times as a carpenter's shop, and sometimes a little fire is made on the floor. from this house is 56. feet to

C. the joiner's shop before mentioned, one of the ensured buildings. from C. is 98 f. to D. the smith and nailer's shop before mentioned, one of the ensured buildings.

J. is to be added to D. 50. feet by 18. f. for the nailers, to be built immediately, and

making one building with D. it is included in the valuation of D. as if it were already built, & is a part of the ensured property. this addition will extend to within 3. or 4. feet of K. a necessary house of wood 8. feet square. from K. it is 67. feet to

L. a house 16. by 10½ feet, of wood, used as a storehouse for nailrod & other iron. from L. it is 8. feet to

M. a house 43½ f. by 16. f. of wood, the floors of earth, used as a smoke house for meat, and a dairy. from M. it is 24. f. to

N. a wash house 16½ f. square of wood, the chimney also wood, the floor earth. from N. it is 38½. to

O. a servant's house 20½ f. by 12 f. of wood, with a wooden chimney, & earth floor. from O. it is 103. feet to

E. the stone out house before described, being part of the ensured property. from E. it is 7. feet to

P. a shed 25 f. by 12½ f. of wood, the floor of brick, used as a stone house for joiner's work. from P. it is 3. f. to

Q. a servant's house 14. f. by 17. f. of wood, with a wooden chimney, the floor of earth. from Q. it is 75. feet to

R. which as well as S. and T. are servants houses of wood with wooden chimnies, & earth floors, 12. by 14. feet, each and 27. feet apart from one another. from T. it is 85. feet to

F. the stable before described, being one of the ensured buildings. this line of buildings from G. to F. is a straight one, & in it's nearest parts to A. & B. passes 277. feet from A. and 142. feet from B. the whole line I. to F. is shortly to be connected by a row of palling either touching or passing very near to every house between those points in the said line.

Figure 6 1796 Declaration of Assurance. Plat from Edwin Morris Betts, ed., *Thomas Jefferson's Farm Book* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, [1957] 1987), p. 6.

in relation to it at the top of the drawing. In all, nineteen outbuildings are shown: store houses, craft shops, a stable, smokehouse, dairy, wash house and five "servant's houses."²⁹

In 1983 and 1984, the sites of three of the Mulberry Row slave quarters were excavated. The location of the three structures was estimated using the 1796 insurance plat. In this document, Jefferson labeled these three buildings as "r," "s" and "t" and described them as "servants houses of wood with wooden chimnies, & earth floors, 12. by 14. feet, each and 27. feet apart from one another."³⁰ Located on the eastern end of the Row, the quarters were situated approximately 300 feet southwest of Jefferson's house.

The archaeological excavations revealed three sites in varying states of preservation.³¹ [Figure 7] Quarter "r" was the least well preserved having been almost completely graded away by the construction of a parking lot in 1934. The only remaining structural evidence for the quarter was "a concentration of large-sized stones uncovered near what was

²⁹Kimball, Thomas Jefferson Architect, pl. 136.

³⁰Betts, Farm Book, p. 6.

³¹The excavations were directed by Dr. William M. Kelso, Resident Archaeologist and Project Director for the Monticello Archaeology Project, and were supervised by Douglas W. Sanford, Assistant Archaeologist for the project. A complete description of the excavations can be found in the site report, "Monticello Black History/Craft Life Archaeology Project, 1984-1985 Progress Report."

[illegible]

Figure 7 Site map illustrating the excavations of quarters "r," "s," and "t." Drawing by Scott Shumate, Monticello Department of Archaeology, 1985.

estimated to be either the southeast section of the structure's foundation or part of the chimney's base."³²

Building "t", like quarter "r", had limited structural remains. While there were no foundation or chimney stones uncovered, the quarter's former existence was verified by the discovery of the bottommost fill (2-9") of a three foot by three and a half foot root cellar.³³ This root cellar would have been covered with boards and was used to store food and personal possessions.³⁴

Quarter "s" survived the most intact with several structural features remaining. These features helped to indicate the type of quarter constructed and its plan. The discovered features also served to suggest what the plans may have been for the other two quarters "since the insurance plat indicated that the three buildings were identical."³⁵ What survived at building "s" included:

³²Douglas W. Sanford, "A Report on the Archaeological Excavations of Servant's Houses "r" "s" and "t" and the Related Landscape," in "Monticello Black History/Craft Life Archaeological Project, 1984-1985 Progress Report," (1985), p. 21.

³³Sanford, "A Report on the Archaeological Excavations," p. 24.

³⁴Dell Upton, "New Views of the Virginia Landscape," The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, vol. 96, no. 4 (1988), p. 439.

³⁵Kelso, "The Archaeology of Slave Life at Thomas Jefferson's Monticello: 'A Wolf by the Ears'," p. 10.

"a partial, dry-laid stone foundation with a preserved sill log on the west wall; the remnants of a stone chimney base abutting the south wall; the surviving portion of a clay and stone (earth) floor construction; and a wood-lined root cellar centered on the south wall and fronting the chimney area."³⁶

To this information can be added more documentary evidence which describes the construction of the three buildings. In 1792, Jefferson wrote to the Monticello overseer instructing that:

"five log houses are to be built at the places I have marked out of chestnut logs, hewed on two sides and split with the saw and dovetailed. Mr. Randolph [Jefferson's son-in-law] will show the places, and direct the kind of houses. They are to be covered and lofted with slabs...."³⁷

That these houses were built and located along Mulberry Row is confirmed by Jefferson's letter to Randolph in May of 1793 in which he discusses moving the slaves from the stone house on Mulberry Row (building "E" on the 1796 insurance plat) to "the two nearest of the new log-houses which were intended for them, Kritty [a slave] taking the nearest of the whole, as oftenest wanted about the house."³⁸

From the evidence then it seems that quarters "r," "s"

³⁶Sanford, "A Report on the Archaeological Excavations," p.26.

³⁷Thomas Jefferson, "Memorandum for Mr. Clarkson," 23 September, 1792, University of Virginia.

³⁸Thomas Jefferson to Thomas Mann Randolph, May 19, 1793, Library of Congress.

and "t" were built during the 1792-93 period, and were twelve-by fourteen-foot, one-room log structures covered with board siding. An exterior clay chimney was centered on the southern wall, and inside the cabin, located near the hearth and cut into the earth floor was a subterranean root cellar.³⁹ These three log houses were occupied by the slaves at least until 1796 when they were described on the assurance declaration. How long they stood after that date is still undocumented, but the stratigraphic record and the artifact analysis suggests that building "s" was occupied into the 1820s, quarter "t" had a slightly shorter occupation period, while quarter "r" had the shortest life span, perhaps being demolished as early as 1809.⁴⁰

In that same year, a visitor to Monticello commented on the Mulberry Row slave quarters: "They are all much better than I have seen on any other plantation, but to an eye unaccustomed to such sights, they appear poor and their cabins form a most unpleasant contrast with the place that rises so near them."⁴¹ In fact however, Jefferson planned slave

³⁹Kelso, "The Archaeology of Slave Life at Monticello: 'A Wolf by the Ears'," p. 10.

⁴⁰Sanford, "A Report on the Archaeological Excavations," pp. 21-30.

⁴¹Margaret Bayard Smith, "The Haven of Domestic Life" in Monticello, ed. Merrill D. Peterson (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1989), p. 47.

dwellingings that were far more integrated in design with the main dwelling. From the early 1770s, a Jefferson drawing survives which shows two floor plans and an elevation with a neoclassical facade for housing to be erected on Mulberry Row. [Figure 8] These dwellingings were intended for selected slave families as well as for some of the white construction workers--the accompanying notations indicating which type was to be built for which occupants.⁴² Although the ornamentation of the planned buildings is on a less elaborate scale than that of the mansion, the elevation with its pedimented facade, Tuscan molding, and fan-shaped window over the doorway indicates Jefferson's early intentions of creating a unified architectural appearance for the mountain top structures. In all, eight of these dwellingings were envisioned, but over time the number of dwellingings and their proposed occupants were all crossed out except for two.

Of the proposed two, it seems that only one house was actually built--the "stone outhouse" labeled building "E" on the 1796 insurance plat. It appears that none of the houses

⁴²McLaughlin, Jefferson and Monticello, p. 143. Some of the names listed are those of slaves acquired by Jefferson through his wife's inheritance dating the drawing to the period after May, 1773. Interestingly, the listing of occupants for each proposed dwelling indicates a variety of occupant groupings some based on nuclear or extended families, and some groups composed of non-related individuals.

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planned for slaves was ever built."⁴³ Economic realities seem to have set in and by 1776-1778, Jefferson's plans for Mulberry Row and the slave housing along it reflect a desire for a "cheaper and better way of building."⁴⁴ Jefferson was absent from Monticello during much of the 1780s and early 1790s, but with the construction of the three quarters "r," "s" and "t" by 1796, his plans for the Mulberry Row slave dwellings had changed to resemble the more typical eighteenth-century Virginia slave house of one-room plan out of log.⁴⁵ These cabins could be constructed comparatively cheaply and in a short amount of time as Jefferson observed: "Davy and Lewis and Abram (slaves) have done the carpenters work of Bagwells house in 6. days getting the stuff and putting it together."⁴⁶

The economic feasibility of these one-room, log houses also meant that they were characteristic of housing for many poor people, both black and white, who were not great

⁴³Kelso suggests that four additional root cellars found on the quarter "t" site may relate to a "negro quarter" built according to the 1770s design by Jefferson. These four cellars pre-date the root cellar associated with quarter "t".

⁴⁴Kimball, Thomas Jefferson Architect, pl. 57.

⁴⁵Dell Upton, "White and Black Landscapes in Eighteenth-Century Virginia" Places, 2:2 (1985), pp.319-323.

⁴⁶Jefferson, Farm Book, pl.67. Recorded before 1810.

planters."⁷ In his Notes on the State of Virginia, Jefferson noted that: "The poorest people build huts of logs, laid horizontally in pens, stopping the interstices with mud. These are warmer in winter, and cooler in summer, than the more expensive constructions of scantling and plank." Of the houses built of scantling and board, Jefferson felt it was "impossible to devise things more ugly, uncomfortable, and happily more perishable." Instead, Jefferson argued for the use of brick or stone in construction, citing in their favor comfort, economy, "wholesomeness", durability and ornament.⁸ In fact, the one outbuilding constructed following the early 1770s neoclassical design (buildings "E" on the 1796 plat) was built of stone.

By 1804, perhaps anticipating his return to Monticello after four years in Washington as President, Jefferson recorded some "general ideas for the improvement of Monticello." His plans included removing "all of the houses on the Mulberry walk...except the stone house" (building "E").⁹ While this plan appears not to have been carried out, the completion in 1802 of the brick dependency wings with their quarters for slaves may have reduced the necessity for

⁷Upton, "Black and White Landscapes," pp. 321-323.

⁸Thomas Jefferson, Notes on the State of Virginia, pp. 152-154.

⁹Nichols and Griswold, p. 107.

slave housing along Mulberry Row. Thus with the completion of the L-shaped terraces, Jefferson's earliest plans for housing slaves were realized.

Not surprisingly, much of the documentary evidence indicates Jefferson's ideas for housing his slaves. As Jefferson's plans changed over time from the novel solution of terraced dependency wings to the more conventional construction of log houses, what remained consistent were his efforts to impress his sense of order and management onto his environment. His attention focused on nearly every detail of this planning as evidenced in the design of the early 1770s neoclassical slave dwellings in which Jefferson carefully considered the exterior molding and he even arranged the quarters interior space.

However, some of the documentary evidence as well as the archaeological remains suggest that at times Jefferson took into consideration the desires and needs of his slaves. In 1818, presumably at the request of his slave Maria, Jefferson instructed his overseer in Bedford County to build Maria a new house: "Place it along the garden fence on the road Eastward from Hannah's house."⁵⁰ Hannah and Maria were sisters, and as historian Mechal Sobel feels, the two "no

⁵⁰Thomas Jefferson to Joel Yancey, November 10, 1818, Betts, Thomas Jefferson's Farm Book, p. 41.

doubt wanted houses next to each other."⁵¹ Sobel suggests that the slaves "wanted small proximate housing" since "it fit their own inner language of building and space."⁵² Equally important to the slaves, proximate housing seems also to have met their cultural and social needs for community and family.⁵³ Perhaps the closeness of the three quarters "r," "s" and "t" may have been arranged by Jefferson with the slaves' needs taken into consideration.

In addition to reflecting "the importance of African proxemic tendencies,"⁵⁴ Sobel and other architectural historians have suggested that slave quarters exhibit other possible African or at least distinct African-American traits.⁵⁵ These scholars feel that a "black inner language" or an "Afro-American mind-set" was at work in the selection

⁵¹Mechal Sobel, The World They Made Together: Black and White Values in Eighteenth-Century Virginia (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), p. 111.

⁵²Sobel, p. 111.

⁵³Herbert Gutman in The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom 1750-1925 finds that familial and kin networks were extensive and clearly important for slaves although their development often depended on "the adaptive capacities of several closely related slave generations." (p. 45)

⁵⁴John Michael Vlach, The Afro-American Tradition in Decorative Arts (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press for The Cleveland Museum of Art, 1978), p. 125.

⁵⁵Robert L. Schuyler, ed. Archaeological Perspectives on Ethnicity in America: Afro-American and Asian American Cultural History (Farmingdale, New York: Baywood Publishing company, Inc., 1980), p. 1.

of a "basic twelve-foot dimension" in the construction of slave quarters.⁵⁶ Therefore, since many of these quarters were built by the slaves, the selection of this size seems to have been a deliberate choice on the part of the maker and one that might reflect his cultural heritage.⁵⁷ Accordingly, even though the materials, plan and placement of the "r," "s" and "t" quarters were determined by Jefferson, Sobel argues that Jefferson seems to have taken into consideration "the twelve-foot African protoform."⁵⁸

While it has been shown that an inner logic can in fact guide the construction of buildings,⁵⁹ historian George McDaniel found "that there was a rich diversity of traditional house forms in West Africa -- round, oval, square, rectangular -- with rooms varying in size usually from ten to twenty feet or more" from which slaves might have drawn.⁶⁰ McDaniel found that these diverse African construction traditions were then blended with those of the Anglo-Americans in the building of

⁵⁶see Sobel, p. 112 and James Deetz, In Small Things Forgotten (Garden City, New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1977), p. 149.

⁵⁷see Vlach, p. 135 and Deetz, p. 151.

⁵⁸Sobel, The World They Made Together, p. 112.

⁵⁹Henry Glassie convincingly argues for the idea of an internal "grammar" of design in his structural analysis of Folk Housing in Middle Virginia.

⁶⁰George McDaniel, Hearth and Home, p. 33

slave quarters.

However, while not diminishing the influence that the "traditional African housing forms may have had on slave dwellings," folklorist Bernard Herman found in examining extant slave housing in Virginia that ultimately "the sources for the formal development of the vast body of slave houses [were] plainly drawn from Anglo-American traditions." More important, Herman's analysis proceeds to examine what slave housing reveals about the relationship between the plantation owner and his slaves. Herman concludes that the owner's use of one-room cabins for housing a single slave family resulted from the planter's "preconceptions of an Anglo-American cabin tradition of shelter befitting the lower classes." For Herman, the design of slave dwellings expresses far more about the owner's expectations for social and economic control than it does about the slaves' cultural building traditions.⁶¹

This perspective applies well to the interpretation of Mulberry Row's slave quarters which also seem to have more to say about Jefferson and his design needs as well as his strained economic circumstances than they do about the slaves that lived in them. Perhaps Jefferson may have taken into

⁶¹Bernard L. Herman, "Slave Quarters in Virginia: The Persona Behind Historic Artifacts," in The Scope of Historical Archaeology: Essays in Honor of John L. Cotter, ed. David G. Orr and Daniel G. Crozier (Philadelphia: Department of Anthropology, Temple University, 1984), pp. 253-283.

consideration the slaves' proxemic and kinship needs when possible, but his carefully measured plans and ordered arranging of the row clearly took precedence. Even though several of the row's structures use a twelve or twelve-and-a-half foot dimension, it is significant that this measurement is often in the buildings depth (running away from the row) and not in its length. From his earliest plans for the row which show a carefully measured spacing of structures alternating with open yards to the less formal final arrangement, it is the length of a building or its measurement along the axis of Mulberry Row, that is crucial in Jefferson's calculations for creating an organized row.

Yet while the quarters' appearance and placement indicate more about Jefferson's desire for an ordered landscape, how the quarters' interior space was structured and used seems not to have been influenced by Jefferson but was instead determined by the slaves themselves. Here the slaves had a measure of autonomy. Exactly how this space was shaped though is difficult to determine. Comparatively little information on this aspect of slave housing is found in the period descriptions or ex-slave narratives.⁶² Archaeology, however, has helped to provided some clues. Excavations of slave houses have typically revealed small root cellars, like those

⁶²Herman, "Slave Quarters in Virginia," p. 273.

at the Monticello quarters, which served for the storage of food and personal possessions. These root cellars were also commonly used as hiding places for stolen goods.⁶³ John Hemmings, a member of the favored slave family at Monticello wrote to Jefferson concerning pilfering by another slave and the use of a root cellar: "the very moment your back is turned from the place, Nace takes everything out of the garden and carries them to his cabin and buries them in the ground."⁶⁴ Although root cellars were not unique to slave dwellings, their significance is in the fact that their construction and used were determined and controlled by the slaves.

Examining the structural evidence associated with these three quarters has revealed much about Jefferson and his intention and much less about the slaves that lived in these buildings. As a slave master, Jefferson attempted adequately to shelter his slaves. He instructed his overseer to attend to the repair of their houses,⁶⁵ and visitors described the quarters as "much better" than those seen on other

⁶³Kelso, "The Archaeology of Slave Life at Thomas Jefferson's Monticello," p. 14. See also Kelso, "Mulberry Row: Slave Life at Thomas Jefferson's Monticello," p. 34.

⁶⁴John Hemmings to Thomas Jefferson, November 29, 1821, Massachusetts Historical Society.

⁶⁵Jefferson to Jeremiah A. Goodman, December, 1811. Edwin Morris Betts, Thomas Jefferson's Garden Book 1766-1824 (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1985), pp. 466-467.

plantations. Yet in addition to and seemingly overshadowing this paternalistic concern for the slaves' care, was a stronger concern for the order and practical management of his plantation. For Jefferson, it was clearly convenient to locate the quarters "near together" in order "that the fewer nurses may serve & that the children may be more easily attended to by the superannuated women."⁶⁶ In searching for evidence of the slaves who built and lived in these cabins, historians have identified the retention of ethnic traditions in the use of African building protoforms and in proxemic analyses. However these three quarters indicate much more about a blending of these traditions with Anglo-American traditions or acculturation than they do solely about ethnicity. It is in the use of these structures and their spaces that the clearest evidence for the strong maintenance of ethnic traditions is found.

⁶⁶Recorded by Jefferson in his farm book. Betts, Thomas Jefferson's Farm Book, pl. 77.

CHAPTER 2

THE ARTIFACTS

In addition to the structural evidence of the slaves' houses, over 34,000 artifacts were recovered from the three sites' occupation levels evidencing the slaves' material life. Fragments of ceramic, glass, animal bone, and iron were most common comprising over 93% of the total artifact assemblages. Specifically, the fragments were excavated from in and around the quarters at the top of the slope along Mulberry Row and from the areas directly below each quarter at the base of the slope along the garden's edge.¹ For the purpose of analysis, the entire excavated area was divided into three distinct units based on approximately equal divisions of the area between the cabins. These three sections were labeled "r," "s" and "t" respectively as they corresponded with each slave quarter. An artifact catalogue for each of the three sites is listed in Appendix A. This study focuses on two of the

¹Crossmending of artifacts recovered from the top of the slope with fragments from the bottom of the slope established the relationship between the two areas. The downslope area of the site was part of Jefferson's terraced vegetable garden which was not constructed until late in 1808. Therefore, the accumulation of debris from the quarters above post dates the 1808 construction.

largest artifact categories--ceramic and faunal material. In addition to being the most commonly recovered types of artifacts, these two categories were selected because they are perhaps the most thoroughly studied by archaeologists and because they offer the most sensitive evidence of the slaves' material culture in terms of ethnicity and social and economic status.²

Consider first the ceramics. Over 9,000 ceramic fragments were excavated from the three slave quarter sites. Due to the size of this collection, a representative sample from each site was considered.³ This sample nonetheless represented over 93% of the entire collection of excavated ceramic vessels. For the archaeologist, ceramics are an important source of information. Since it is possible to identify specific types of ceramic ware, dates of manufacture and the location of manufacture, ceramics have been useful in dating sites. But beyond the chronological information, current research into the cost and use of ceramic vessels

²George L. Miller, "Classification and Economic Scaling of 19th Century Ceramics," Historical Archaeology, 14 (1980), pp. 1-40. See also Singleton, ed., The Archaeology of Slavery and Plantation Life and Suzanne M. Spencer-Wood, ed., Consumer Choice in Historical Archaeology (New York: Plenum Press, 1987).

³The sample from each site included all ceramic fragments from all the occupation levels from the primary excavation units (in and around the quarters and at the base of the slope) within the larger excavation block.

allows for an analysis and interpretation of ceramics which offers valuable insight into the slaves' everyday life.

From slave quarter "r," a total of 199 fragments representing 39 different vessels were recovered (Table 1). Six different types of ware were identified: stoneware (three vessels), coarse earthenware (one vessel), creamware (eleven vessels), pearlware (fifteen vessels), Chinese porcelain (eight vessels) and whiteware (one vessel). A total of eleven different form types occurred: storage jar, storage pot, jug, plate, platter, tea bowl, saucer, bowl, can, cup and chamber pot.

Sorting these vessels into categories based on function revealed three were for storage (there were no preparation vessels), twenty-two were for serving food, twelve were for serving tea, and two were for hygiene. A broader sorting of these vessels by whether they were flat forms (such as plates and platters) or hollow forms (such as cups and bowls) showed that twenty-three were flat and sixteen were hollow forms.

An examination of decorative technique used on the refined earthenwares showed variety. The creamware forms were either undecorated or in the case of two plates, had molded rim patterns. The range of decoration on pearlware vessels was greater. There were blue and green shell-edged plates, polychrome and blue painted tea wares and two blue transfer printed vessels. Among these refined earthenwares, there was

Table 1 Ceramics Excavated from Slave Quarter "r"

<u>Ware</u>	<u>Form</u>	<u>Number of Vessels</u>
Coarse earthenware	storage jar	1
Stoneware	jug	1
	storage jar	1
	storage pot	1
Creamware	bowl	1
	can	1
	chamber pot	2
	plate	3
	platter	1
	saucer	1
	tea bowl	2
Pearlware	bowl	2
	cup	1
	plate	4
	saucer	6
	tea bowl	2
Chinese porcelain	bowl	1
	plate	7
Whiteware	plate	1
Total		39

only one matching set: a blue painted tea bowl and saucer. Two other blue painted saucers matched the patterns of vessels recovered from other Monticello sites. And, while there were several shelledged plates, none of the edged patterns matched exactly.

The sample area of quarter "s" was slightly smaller than that examined at either quarter "r" or "t," but yielded the largest collection of the three quarters with a minimum of 311 vessels (Table 2). A wider variety of ware type was found: tin glazed earthenware (two vessels), coarse earthenware (thirteen vessels), stoneware (twenty-seven vessels), refined stoneware (seventeen vessels), creamware (forty-one vessels), pearlware (one hundred and thirty-three vessels), whiteware (seventeen vessels), Chinese porcelain (fifty-two vessels) and European porcelain (nine vessels).

Considering the function of the recovered vessels, very few storage or preparation forms could be identified. Among the coarse earthenware and the stoneware, the forms that were identified were a coarse earthenware milk pan, four coarse earthenware storage jars, one coarse earthenware storage pot, thirteen stoneware storage jars and nine stoneware bottles.

The majority of the vessels recovered from quarter "s" were table or teawares made of creamware, pearlware, whiteware or Chinese porcelain. The majority of the vessel forms were plates, bowls, tea bowls and saucers. The vessels show an

Table 2 Ceramics Excavated from Slave Quarter "s"

Ware	Form	Number of Vessels
Coarse earthenware	hollow	7
	milk pan (?)	1
	storage jar (?)	4
	storage pot	1
Delft	hollow	1
	ointment pot	1
Stoneware	bottle	9
	bottle-small	2
	hollow	1
	sea kale pot	1
	sea kale pot lid	1
	storage jar	1
	storage jar (?)	12
Refined stoneware	hollow	14
	tea bowl	2
	toy tea bowl	1
Creamware	bowl	3
	can/mug	1
	chamber pot	8
	hollow	3
	lid	1
	plate	13
	platter	1
	saucer	7
	tea bowl	4
	bowl	13
Pearlware	can/tankard	2
	chamber pot	2
	covered dish	2
	creamer	1
	flat	7
	hollow	11
	jug	1
	mug	13
	pitcher (?)	2
	plate	43
	platter	2
	saucer	12
	tea bowl	19
	tea pot	1
	tureen	2
Whiteware	cup	5
	hollow	2
Chinese porcelain	plate	10
	cup	4

Table 2 (Continued)

<u>Ware</u>	<u>Form</u>	<u>Number of Vessels</u>
Chinese porcelain	dish	3
	dish (?)	2
	flat	1
	hollow	1
	lid	1
	plate	11
	platter	3
	saucer	12
	tea bowl (?)	1
	tea bowl/cup	13
European porcelain	bowl	1
	cup	2
	darning egg	1
	dish	1
	hollow	3
	tea bowl	1
Total		311

almost equal distribution of decorative type with a little more than a quarter of the vessels either undecorated or transfer printed and slightly less than a quarter of the vessels having hand painted motifs or minimal decoration such as edged, banded or sponged designs. Among these decorated wares there were several repeated patterns, but there were never more than two pairs of saucer and tea bowl that had a matching decorative motif.

Sampling at quarter "t" yielded fragments from a minimum of 275 vessels (Table 3). Once sorted, these artifacts revealed a distribution pattern similar to that found at both quarters "r" and "s." Once again, the majority of the collection, 76%, was refined tableware and teaware composed of creamware, pearlware, whiteware, Chinese porcelain and refined stoneware.

Noticeably absent were storage and preparation vessels that were made from the less refined stonewares and coarse earthenwares. Only thirteen coarse earthenware vessels and twenty-nine stoneware forms were represented. The vessel forms identified were storage jars, bottles, pots, and a milk pan. The majority of the ceramic collection was composed of three refined wares: creamware (15%), pearlware (36%) and Chinese porcelain (22%). The porcelain forms recovered were: platters, plates, a bowl, serving dishes, a mustard jar, a tea bowl, cups and saucers. A closer look at the porcelain

Table 3 Ceramics Excavated from Slave Quarter "t"

Ware	Form	Number of Vessels
Coarse earthenware	hollow	11
	milk pan	1
	pot	1
Delft	hollow	9
Stoneware	bottle	7
	hollow	5
	pot	1
	sea kale pot lid	7
	storage jar	3
	storage jar (?)	6
	hollow	9
Refined stoneware	mug (?)	1
	pitcher	1
	plate	1
	teaware	3
	bowl	3
Creamware	chamber pot	5
	cup	1
	dish	1
	hollow	8
	milk pot	3
	mug	5
	plate	9
	saucer	5
	tea bowl	2
	bowl (?)	3
	can	1
	chamber pot	1
	dish	1
	hollow	17
	lid	2
Pearlware	mug	10
	mug (?)	4
	plate	34
	pitcher	1
	saucer	17
	saucer (?)	1
	tea bowl	8
	plate	2
Whiteware		
Chinese porcelain	bowl	1
	cup	6
	dish	1
	hollow	2
	mustard jar	1
	plate	24

Table 3 (Continued)

<u>Ware</u>	<u>Form</u>	<u>Number of Vessels</u>
European porcelain	platter	7
	saucer	15
	serving dish	4
	tea bowl	1
	flat	1
	hollow	1
	saucer	1
	Total	<u>275</u>

assemblage shows no matched sets or patterns among the plates or between cups/tea bowls and saucers.

This same pattern of unmatched decorative motifs was also found upon examination of the creamware and pearlware table and tea wares. The nine creamware plates have three different rim patterns and the twenty-one shelledged pearlware plates show twenty different edged patterns. Pearlware teaware shows that tea bowl and saucer patterns do match; however, while there are several pairs of matched tea bowl and saucer, only one matched pair of any one pattern exists.

In all, 625 vessels representing 23 different forms were identified with the majority of the fragments being refined English tablewares and Chinese porcelain. Not surprisingly, the manufacture dates of these fragments suggest a date range for the sites' occupation level ranging from the second half of the eighteenth century through the first quarter of the nineteenth century--a range corresponding closely with Jefferson's occupation of the mountain top.

Yet beyond this temporal information, current research has indicated that ceramic fragments also are effective in suggesting the social and economic standing of the sites' occupants. By examining potters' price fixing lists, bills of lading, and account books from the nineteenth century, George Miller discovered a correlation between the cost of ceramics and their type of decoration. Miller argued in his

article "Classification and Economic Scaling of 19th Century Ceramics," that how English white earthenwares were decorated and not the ware type determined ceramic's cost. Miller identified four "levels" or groups of ceramic wares based on decoration and increasing cost. The first or lowest level were undecorated earthenwares, typically referred to as CC ware which stood for cream-colored or creamware. These wares were the cheapest type available. The second level included wares with minimal decoration such as shell-edged, mocha, banded, or sponge decoration. These wares were more expensive than those in the first level but were the cheapest decorated ceramics available. In the third level were hand painted wares, and in the fourth and most expensive level were vessels decorated by transfer printing.⁴

By determining the cost of plain or undecorated creamware plates, cups, and bowls over time, Miller was able to generate index values which related the cost of these undecorated vessels to the cost of the other decorative types. Tables 4-6 show the results of applying Miller's index values to the

⁴See Miller, "Classification and Economic Scaling of 19th Century Ceramics," pp. 1-40; George L. Miller, "George M. Coates, Pottery Merchant of Philadelphia, 1817-1831," Winterthur Portfolio, 19:1 (1984), pp. 37-49; George L. Miller, "A Revised Set of CC Index Values for Classification and Economic Scaling of English Ceramics from 1787-1880," Historical Archaeology, in press; Meredith C. Moodey, "Ceramics From the Franklin Glassworks: Acquisition Patterns and Economic Stress," Master of Arts Thesis, The College of William and Mary, (1988), pp. 78-79.

Table 4

Index Values for Slave Quarter "r"

Form	Dec.	1793 Index val.		Number Recovered		Product
Plates	CC	1.0	x	3	=	3.0
	Edged	1.35	x	4	=	5.4
	Printed	4.33	x	1	=	4.33
	Porcelain	[6.0]	x	[7]	=	[42.0]
				<u>Average value = 1.59 [3.65]</u>		
Cups & Saucers	CC	1.0	x	3	=	3.0
	Painted	1.8	x	9	=	16.2
				<u>Average value = 1.60 [--]</u>		
Bowls	CC	1.0	x	1	=	1.0
	Painted	2.0	x	1	=	2.0
	Printed	4.32	x	1	=	4.32
	Porcelain	[6.0]	x	1	=	6.0
				<u>Average value = 2.44 [3.33]</u>		

Table 5

Index Values for Slave Quarter "s"

Form	Dec.	1793 Index val.		Number Recovered		Product
Plates	CC	1.0	x	23	=	23.0
	Edged	1.35	x	21	=	28.35
	Printed	4.33	x	15	=	64.95
	Willow	4.0	x	7	=	28.0
	Porcelain	[6.0]	x	11	=	[66.0]
				<u>Average value = 2.18 [2.73]</u>		
Cups & Saucers	CC	1.0	x	9	=	9.0
	CC-simple handle	1.8	x	5	=	9.0
	Painted	1.8	x	29	=	52.2
	Printed	4.09	x	3	=	12.27
	Porcelain	[4.33]	x	33	=	[142.89]
				<u>Average value = 1.79 [2.85]</u>		
Bowls	Annular	1.6	x	7	=	11.2
	Painted	2.0	x	7	=	14.0
	Printed	4.32	x	2	=	8.64
	Porcelain	[6.0]	x	1	=	[6.0]
				<u>Average value = 2.11 [2.34]</u>		

Table 6
Index Values for Slave Quarter "t"

Form	Dec.	1793 Index val.		Number Recovered		Product
Plates	CC	1.0	x	10	=	10.0
	Edged	1.35	x	21	=	28.35
	Printed	4.33	x	13	=	56.29
	Overglazed	2.33	x	1	=	2.33
	Porcelain	[6.0]	x	24	=	[144.0]
Muffins	Printed	4.22	x	2	=	8.44
<u>Average value =</u>						<u>2.24 [3.51]</u>
Cups & Saucers	CC	1.0	x	2	=	2.0
	CC-simple handle	1.8	x	1	=	1.8
	Painted	1.8	x	26	=	46.8
	Porcelain	[5.8]	x	23	=	[133.4]
<u>Average value =</u>						<u>1.74 [3.54]</u>
Bowls	CC	1.0	x	1	=	1.0
	Annular	1.6	x	2	=	3.2
	Painted	2.0	x	6	=	6.0
	Porcelain	[6.0]	x	1	=	[6.0]
<u>Average value =</u>						<u>1.7 [2.31]</u>

assemblages from each of the three Monticello quarters. Since the three dwellings were constructed during 1792-3, the index values for 1793 (or the next closest available index date) were used in this application.

A disadvantage to Miller's indexing system is that it accounts only for refined white earthenware and English porcelain and excludes European and Chinese porcelains, less refined stonewares, and coarse earthenwares. In calculating the average index values for the Monticello quarters, excluding the coarse stoneware and earthenware vessels would not strongly affect the results since these wares combined represent on average only six percent of each quarter's ceramic collection. On the other hand, porcelain vessels comprise at least twenty percent of each sites' ceramic assemblage. Including these vessels would greatly affect the average index values because of the quantity of vessels and also because porcelain represented "the top of the line in price."⁵ Therefore, in this analysis, porcelains were included "by the simple expedient of assigning it a value equal to the highest refined-body-earthenware in [Miller's] index."⁶ These adjusted values for porcelain are included in

⁵Miller, "Classification and Economic Scaling," p. 32.

⁶Bernard L. Herman, "Multiple Materials, Multiple Meanings: The Fortunes of Thomas Mendenhall," Winterthur Portfolio, 19:1 (1984), p. 80.

the calculations in brackets.

A comparison among the three sites indicates differences in expenditure between quarter "r" and quarters "s" and "t" which have similar patterns (Table 7). Quarter "r's" shorter life span might account for this difference which as well indicates a change over time in the expenditure on different vessel forms. Table 8 compares the index values from the three Monticello sites with the values from several other late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century sites. Using a mean index value from each site provides a single comparison that also provides a way of ranking each sites' status: a mean over 2.0 indicating a higher or wealthier group, a mean between 1.5-2.0 representing a middle group, and a mean less than 1.5 equivalent to the lowest or a lower class group.⁷

Surprisingly, the value of the ceramics recovered from the Monticello slave quarters indicates a middle to high status level. In addition, the analysis of the forms,⁸ the

⁷William H. Adams, ed., Historical Archaeology of Plantations at Kings Bay, Camden County, Georgia (Gainesville, Florida: Department of Anthropology University of Florida, 1987), p. 301-310.

⁸John Otto, "Artifact and Status Differences--A Comparison of Ceramics from Planter, Overseer, and Slave Sites on an Antebellum Plantation," in Research Strategies in Historical Archaeology, ed. Stanley South (New York: Academic Press, 1977), pp. 91-118. Otto found the planter's house had a high percentage of flatware forms while the slaves had more bowls. These differences were attributed to differences in diet. All three Monticello slave quarters had a high percentage of flatware forms compared to bowls (4:1)

Table 7

Comparison of Index Values from Slave Quarters "r," "s," and "t"

<u>Form</u>	<u>"r"</u>	<u>"s"</u>	<u>"t"</u>
Plate	1.59 [3.65]	2.18 [2.73]	2.24 [3.51]
Cups & Saucers	1.6 [--]	1.79 [2.85]	1.74 [3.54]
Bowls	2.44 [3.33]	2.11 [2.34]	1.7 [2.31]

Table 8

Comparison of Index Values for Plates, Saucers, Cups and Bowls

Site	Plates	Saucer & Cups	Bowls	Mean
John Richardson * Wilmington, DE 1810-ca. 1816? status: wealthy index date: 1814	1.93	3.40	2.53	2.31
Kings Bay-All Slaves * Camden Co., GA 1791-1832 status: slaves index date: 1796	1.77	2.23	1.93	1.88
Thomas Hamlin * Warren Co., NJ ca. 1790-1810 status: farmer index date: 1796	1.19	1.67	2.14	1.68
John King * Camden Co., GA status: sawyer index date: 1796	1.37	2.10	1.85	1.64
Kings Bay Plantation * Camden Co., GA 1791-ca. 1815 status: slave index date: 1796	1.37	1.80	1.76	1.52
Slave quarter "r" Monticello, VA 1792-1809 status: slave index date: 1793	1.59 [3.65]	1.6 [--]	2.44 [3.33]	1.70 [3.58]
Slave quarter "s" Monticello, VA 1792-1830 status: slave index date: 1793	2.18 [2.73]	1.79 [2.85]	2.11 [2.34]	2.03 [2.74]

Table 8 (Continued)

<u>Site</u>	<u>Plates</u>	<u>Saucer & Cups</u>	<u>Bowls</u>	<u>Mean</u>
Slave quarter "t"				
Monticello, VA	2.24	1.74	1.7	2.02
1792-1820(30)?	[3.51]	[3.54]	[2.31]	[3.45]
status: slave				
index date: 1793				

[] Adjusted value which includes porcelain.

* From Historical Archaeology of Plantations at Kings Bay, Camden County, Georgia, William Hampton Adams, ed. (Gainesville, FL: Department of Anthropology, University of Florida, 1987), p. 301.

variety of forms within the collection, and the large quantity of vessels also correlate with a middle to high socioeconomic status.⁹ A possible explanation for this has been that these slaves, given their proximity to the house and their more favored position as house servants, received the out-of-date or broken hand-me-down ceramics from Jefferson's house. This conclusion is supported by the results of a comparison between the mean ceramic date and the median historical date for the three quarters which shows that the ceramics are in fact out of date.

By considering both ceramic frequency as well as ceramic presence and absence, archaeologist Stanley South's mean ceramic dating formula offers a useful way of determining a site's approximate occupation date. This formula multiplies the number of fragments of a ceramic type by the type's mean manufacture date. The resulting products are added and then divided by the total number of sherds producing a mean ceramic date that closely coincides with the site's median occupation date or the mid-point of the site's occupation.¹⁰

indicating, according to Otto's conclusions, a high status level.

⁹Steven J. Shephard, "Status Variation in Antebellum Alexandria: An Archaeological Study of Ceramic Tableware," in Consumer Choice in Historical Archaeology, ed. Suzanne M. Spencer-Wood (New York: Plenum Press, 1987), pp. 163-198.

¹⁰Stanley South, Method and theory in Historical Archaeology (New York: Academic Press, 1977), pp. 214-218.

Table 9 compares the mean ceramic date of each slave quarter with the site's median historical date.¹¹ The historical dates are based on the documentary records and the terminus post quem dates of the artifacts.¹² The comparison indicates that at all three sites, the mean ceramic date precedes the median historical date by more than ten years. Archaeologist James Deetz discovered a similar pattern in analyzing the ceramics excavated from a site occupied by freed slaves. Deetz suggested that the disagreement between the mean ceramic date and the site's historical date was the result of the occupants acquiring ceramics in a secondhand way--by purchasing less expensive out-of-date ceramics or receiving hand-me-downs.

The difference then between the historical dates and the mean ceramic dates at each of the Monticello quarters, as well as the high status level of the ceramics, suggests that these slaves were acquiring, at least in part, out-of-date or broken

While South has found "a remarkable degree of similarity between the mean ceramic date derived from the use of the formula and the historically known median occupation date" (p. 218) on sites in which the formula has been used, other archaeologists have noted factors which South does not consider which influence the methods outcome.

¹¹The mean ceramic dates were calculated using vessel count rather than fragment count. Vessel count seems to more accurately reflect the quantity of a ceramic type present where as sherd count weights more heavily a vessel that breaks into twenty fragments than one that breaks into two.

¹²Sanford, "A Preliminary Quantitative Analysis," p. 7.

Table 9 Comparison of the Mean Ceramic Date and the Median Historical Date from Quarters "r," "s," and "t"

<u>QUARTER</u>	<u>DATE RANGE</u>	<u>MEDIAN HISTORICAL DATE</u>	<u>MEAN CERAMIC DATE</u>	<u>MCD/ MHD DIFFERENCE</u>
"r"	1792-1809	1800	1783.4	16.6
"s"	1792-1830	1811	1798.7	12.3
"t"	1792-1820?	1806	1790.9	15.1
	-1830?	1811		20.1

hand-me-down ceramics from Jefferson's household. While several of the slaves did have access to a small cash income¹³ and might have acquired out-of-date ceramics, it seems unlikely that they would have spent this small income on ceramics. More probable would have been the purchase of food or clothing as an Albemarle County merchant's account book indicates "Negro Davy" and "Negro Jesse" bought in 1806. It also seems unlikely that Jefferson purchased these wares specifically for his slaves--the slaves' rations and provisions were carefully recorded in Jefferson's farm and account books and ceramics for the slaves were never listed. In addition, many of the specialized ceramic forms, less common wares (particularly French porcelain), and decorative patterns matched those excavated from Jefferson's kitchen yard--strongly indicating that the slaves received Jefferson's discarded ceramics.

A final observation concerning the ceramic assemblages was the lack of food preparation and storage vessels. While it was expected that there would be a greater proportion of

¹³Jefferson's and the household accounts indicate that produce and handicrafts were purchased from some of the Monticello slaves. Incentive pay was offered to some of the slaves to encourage increased production and for unpleasant tasks. In addition, the stores in Charlottesville were open on Sundays "to traffic and trade with the slaves, who came to town...to dispose of their garden truck." Mary Rawlings, ed., "Early Charlottesville: Recollections of James Alexander 1828-1874," (Charlottesville: Albemarle County Historical Society, 1942), p. 2.

storage vessels to tableware because of the slaves' lower socioeconomic standing, the high percentage of tablewares at all three sites indicates a higher class standing.¹⁴ This lack of ceramic storage and preparation vessels more closely reflects the purchasing patterns of someone of Jefferson's standing--further supporting the conclusion that these slaves were acquiring their ceramics from the Jefferson household.¹⁵ This lack also highlights the problem of "food-related objects not found in the archaeological record."¹⁶ That these forms were not present does not necessarily mean the forms were not part of the slaves life; rather it suggests that the forms were made of other materials such as pewter, wood, or tinware that have a low archaeological survival rate. The recovery of an intact pewter basin and an almost complete tinware colander from the root cellar of slave quarter "s," indicates that these materials were present at the slave quarters and perhaps accounted for some of the storage and preparation

¹⁴Shephard, "Status Variety in Antebellum Alexandria," pp. 163-198.

¹⁵It is also interesting that in two inventories of Jefferson's kitchen (one done by James Hemings in 1796 and the other at Jefferson's death in 1826), the majority of preparation vessels are made of iron, tin, copper, or brass. Only a few stoneware vessels are listed as are a few utensils made of wood. The household accounts also indicate the use of wooden barrels for food storage.

¹⁶Ann Smart Martin, "The Role of Pewter as Missing Artifact: Consumer Attitudes Toward Tablewares in Late 18th Century Virginia," Historical Archaeology, 23:2 (1989), p. 1.

forms. While no wooden vessels were excavated, Jefferson noted in his account book for June 13, 1773, that he "pd. negro for wooden bowl..."; and the iron hoop uncovered in the root cellar of quarter "t" may have come from a wooden barrel.

The excavated ceramics have described only one aspect of the material objects possessed by the slaves. Just as the structural evidence of the quarters indicated as much if not more about Jefferson than the slaves who lived in the cabins, the ceramics excavated from the slave quarters have also reflected Jefferson's preferences. The analysis of the slaves' ceramics has indicated that the ceramics were probably acquired from Jefferson with the result that the recovered wares, patterns, and forms reflect Jefferson's purchasing pattern and not the slaves'. However, the subsequent possession and use of the ceramics by the slaves indicates not only a level of acculturation, but also might alternatively reflect the slaves' ethnic traditions. Understanding how the slaves would have used or perceived these high status ceramics is difficult to determine. As an example, the Anglo-American use of teaware carried with it strong connotations of social and economic status, but what function would teaware have had in the slave quarters if the slaves did not have tea? As in the analysis of the structural evidence of the slave quarters, the ceramic evidence illustrates not only the material culture of these slaves' lives but also the interdependent

relationship between master and slave.

Some of the other numerous artifacts excavated also indicative of the slaves' material world included dozens of straight pins and buttons related to sewing activities; toothbrushes, a comb, a French ointment pot, and a pharmaceutical bottle associated with the slaves' personal hygiene; and bone dominoes, marble marbles, a brass jew's harp, a pocket knife and writing slates possibly used by the slaves during their time free from work. But perhaps one of the most valuable collections excavated from the site was the nearly 8,000 animal bones, providing direct evidence of the slaves' meat diet.

The 7,880 bones recovered from the occupation levels of the three slave quarters were analyzed by Diana C. Crader of the University of Southern Maine. An analysis of faunal material can identify species, specific body part, the number of individual animals represented (although this does not indicate a **complete** carcass), the age of those animals, and the types of butcher marks on the bones which might indicate the methods of preparation. While the documentary record provides some clues concerning the slaves' meat diet, the analysis of the faunal remains can add significant details about the dietary and culinary practices of the slaves living in these quarters. Further, faunal analysis has become an

important component in defining social and economic status.¹⁷

In 1796, a French visitor to Monticello wrote of the negroes he had observed while in Virginia that they "...eat but little meat, and this little is pork."¹⁸ For Jefferson's slaves, the documentary records indicate that pork as well as fish and some beef seem to have been the important meats. The slaves were given weekly rations per person that included "1 pound of pickled beef or pork, [and] four salt herring...."¹⁹ However, concerned about the agriculturally destructive effects of pigs²⁰, Jefferson seems to have tried to incorporate lamb into these rations. In 1794, Jefferson wrote:

"The first step towards the recovery of our lands is to find substitutes for corn & bacon. I count on potatoes, clover and sheep. The former to feed every animal on the farm except my negroes, & the latter to feed them, diversified with rations of salted fish and molasses, both of them wholesome,

¹⁷Lesley M. Drucker, "Socioeconomic Patterning at an Undocumented Late 18th Century Lowcountry Site: Spiers Landing, South Carolina," Historical Archaeology 15:2 (1981), p. 62. See also Henry Miller, "Pettus and Utopia: A Comparison of the Faunal Remains from Two Late Seventeenth Century Virginia Households," Conference on Historic Site Archaeology Papers 13 (1979), pp. 158-179.

¹⁸Peterson, Visitors to Monticello, p. 27.

¹⁹Kelso, "The Archaeology of Slave Life at Thomas Jefferson's Monticello: 'A Wolf by the Ears'," p. 14.

²⁰On December 12, 1792, Jefferson wrote to Samuel Biddle (who became the Monticello overseer in 1793), "It is usual with us to give a fixed allowance of pork; I shall much rather substitute beef & mutton, as I consider pork to be as destructive an article in a farm as Indian corn." Betts, Thomas Jefferson's Garden Book, p. 183.

agreeable, & cheap articles of food."²¹

Exactly what percentage of the slaves' diet was composed of lamb or for how long it was included is not known, but by 1815 it seems that salt pork was still part of their diets.²²

In addition to the meat rations provided by Jefferson, the slaves supplemented their meat diet in several ways. They caught fish and small game locally, and they were encouraged to raise poultry.²³ These practices while providing the slaves with another source of meat were also, in some cases, a source of income; Jefferson's account books and the household accounts record numerous payments for chickens and eggs as well as some ducks and fish purchased from various slaves (Table 10). Additionally, since the occupants of these quarters were house servants, they may have had better food since they could supplement their diet with the "left-overs" from the meals served at Jefferson's table.²⁴ Finally, theft was also another way in which slaves might have acquired food.

Other zooarchaeological studies using documentary sources

²¹Betts, Thomas Jefferson's Garden Book, p. 222.

²² See Jefferson's letter to Jeremiah Goodman, Thomas Jefferson's Garden Book, p. 539. See also Jefferson's letter to Joel Yancey, November 10, 1818, Thomas Jefferson's Farm-Book, p. 41.

²³McLaughlin, Jefferson and Monticello: The Biography of a Builder, p. 105.

²⁴McLaughlin, Jefferson and Monticello: The Biography of a Builder, p. 106.

Table 10 Goods Purchased by Jefferson from His Slaves

chickens	clover seed	grass seed
watermelon	broom	gourd
hominy beans	eggs	tub
corn	potatoes	hops
fish	mocking bird	wooden bowl
ladle	partridges	cotton
pullet	melons	brush
cask	tumblers	squire skins
thread	beef	candlestock
pelts	dressing	tar

Goods Purchased by Mrs. Jefferson from the Slaves

potatoes	eggs	soap
corn	chickens	pails
ducks	peas	pullets
potato seed	hops	trays
cucumbers	cherries	watermelons

and/or archaeological information have begun to consolidate this information and determine what might be expected in the meat component of slaves' diet. While incomplete, the results of these studies have been summarized by Crader as indicating in general that the slaves' meat diet had the following characteristics:

- 1.) Pig was the predominant species. Cattle were also important while sheep and wild supplements (such as rabbit, racoon and opossum) were relatively rare;
- 2.) Because slaves were frequently given the poorer quality meat, old and diseased animals were probably common;
- 3.) Less meaty body parts and poorer quality cuts of meat were also often consumed because slaves received the butchering waste;
- 4.) The bones should be broken up into smaller pieces because the slaves standard fare were stews or one-pot meals. The preparation of roasts would result in relatively larger bone fragments and more burned specimens;
- 5.) And the bones should have primarily chop and scrape types of butchery marks from initial butchery and from subsequent meat removal. "Tiny, parallel cuts so characteristic of carving a roast" would not

be expected often.²⁵

In analyzing the faunal material excavated from the slave quarters at Monticello, researchers anticipated that a similar pattern would emerge. Surprisingly, the faunal remains did not conform to the expected lower quality meat pattern. Instead, the analysis revealed a more affluent meat quality and variety among the quarters' faunal remains that "probably reflect status differences within the slave community."²⁶ A list of the statistical results from the faunal analysis as reported by Crader are shown in Appendix B.

Crader's analysis indicated that all three quarter sites contained the three major domestic species of pig, cattle, and sheep. Pork, as suggested by the farm records and the listed slave rations, was a significant part of the slaves' diet. In total, the actual amount of pork consumed by the slaves may have been even higher than indicated by the faunal remains since the rations of salt pork or bacon contained no bones. The analysis also showed that beef seems to have been "more important than previously thought." While there were fewer

²⁵Diana C. Crader, "Faunal Remains from Slave Quarter Sites at Monticello, Charlottesville, Virginia," Archaeozoologia, III (1989), pp. 1-10.

²⁶Crader, "Faunal Remains from Slave Quarter Sites at Monticello, Charlottesville, Virginia," Archaeozoologia, 3:1989, p. 5.

minimum number of individual animals identified, cows represent four times as much meat per individual as pigs.²⁷

An unexpected occurrence was the large quantity of sheep present at quarter "s." While sheep were uncommon at quarter "r" and "t," twenty-six animals represented primarily by half-mandibles were identified from quarter "s." Crader has suggested that this may indicate a higher status level for these slaves since lamb was "more commonly associated with meals served in the mansion." However, Crader also suggests that the presence of so many mandibles may indicate that the slaves at quarter "s" were receiving butchering waste. Further, this pattern, seen only at quarter "s," may associate these slaves with a specialized activity--butchering or processing sheep. The presence of sheep may also reflect the implementation of Jefferson's agricultural reforms of 1794.²⁸

The species which comprised the remainder of the identifiable faunal collections were various wild animals (most frequently rabbit, squirrel and opossum), fish, and fowl. However, collectively they represented on average less than 14% of the identified fragments. A notable characteristic of all three collections was the high

²⁷Crader, "Faunal Remains from Slave Quarter Sites at Monticello, Charlottesville, Virginia," p. 4.

²⁸Crader, "Faunal Remains from Slave Quarter Sites at Monticello, Charlottesville, Virginia," p. 4.

percentage (from 55% to 70%) of bones that were so fragmented they could not be identified. While this pattern is consistent with the preparation of stews, it may also reflect the fact that these bones were recovered from high traffic areas and consequently were subject to trampling. In terms of both the age of the animals and the body parts identified the analysis indicated variety. While the less meaty body parts of the head, jaw, and feet appeared to be most common, quarter "t's" collection in particular included the more meaty elements. Evidence of butcher marks on the bones was uncommon, but their presence does at least suggest some variety in the preparation of the meat.²⁹

Collectively, the faunal material excavated from the three quarters indicated a meat diet consisting primarily of pork, beef, and lamb supplemented with small amounts of poultry and locally available wild animals and fish. While this diet was expected, it is difficult to determine if it is distinctly African-American or instead reflects the slaves social and economic class.³⁰ Yet among the three sites there were distinguishable differences, particularly in the quantity

²⁹Crader, "Faunal Remains from Slave Quarter Sites at Monticello, Charlottesville, Virginia," p. 4-5.

³⁰Pam J. Crabtree, "Zooarchaeology and Complex Societies: Some Uses of Faunal Analysis for the Study of Trade, Social Status, and Ethnicity," in Archaeological Method and Theory, ed. Michael B. Schiffer (Tucson, Arizona: University of Arizona Press, 1989), p. 180.

of specific species and in the quality of meat. These differences, perhaps again the result of these slaves' proximity to the house and their more favored position as house servants, may also reflect status variations within even this select segment of the slave community.

CONCLUSION

For Jefferson, the issue of slavery generated a conflicting response: as a Virginia planter, he accepted slavery as a way of life; but as an enlightened gentleman, he thought slavery inconsistent with his ideals of "republican virtue." It presented a dilemma which Jefferson compared to "having a wolf by the ears...we can neither hold him, nor safely let him go. Justice is in the one scale, and self-preservation in the other."³¹ Ultimately, Jefferson was not able to free himself from "the prejudices and the fears which he had absorbed from his surroundings toward people of color."³²

In accepting slavery as a necessary evil Jefferson sought to create a balance between providing a sensitive level of treatment for his slaves and maintaining a level of productivity that would insure the economic stability of his plantations. In 1796, a visitor described the care Jefferson gave his slaves:

³¹Thomas Jefferson to John Holmes, April 22, 1820.

³²John Chester Miller, The Wolf by the Ears: Thomas Jefferson and Slavery (New York: Collier Macmillan Publishers, 1977), p.3.

His negroes are nourished, clothed, and treated as well as white servants could be. As he can not expect any assistance from the two small neighboring towns, every article is made on his farm: his negroes are cabinetmakers, carpenters, masons, bricklayers, smiths, etc. The children he employs in a nail factory, which yields already a considerable profit. The young and old negresses spin for the clothing of the rest. He animates them by rewards and distinctions...."³³

Each adult slave received a weekly food ration of "one peck of cornmeal, one pound of pickled beef or pork, four salt herring, and a gill of molasses."³⁴ These allotments were supplemented with food from the slaves' own gardens or hunting. In addition, Jefferson recorded in his Farm Book the distribution of cloth, thread, stockings, shoes, hats, blankets, beds, and sifters given to his slaves at varying intervals. Slaves were also offered a pot and a bed as incentive to marry within the plantation community and were offered cash incentives to increase production or to undertake unpleasant tasks.

Combined with the documentary sources has been the archaeological evidence of the slaves' material lives. This evidence has added an important human element to the records;

³³Description by the duc de la Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, June 1796. Sarah N. Randolph, The Domestic Life of Thomas Jefferson (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1985), p. 238.

³⁴William M. Kelso, "Mulberry Row: Slave Life at Thomas Jefferson's Monticello," Archaeology September/October 1986, p. 32.

this evidence visually evokes a variety of the slaves' activities. A fundamental concern of many archaeological studies conducted on slave sites has been to identify artifact patterns suggestive of the slaves' African heritage. However, the excavation of these three sites indicates that the slaves had an assimilated material life based on the use of Anglo-American objects influenced strongly by Jefferson. Of the many thousands of objects uncovered at these sites, only one object was found which might possibly relate to an African tradition: an Indo-Pacific cowrie shell.

Yet the maintenance of African traditions remains a possibility. The artifacts recovered represent only those objects discarded. Objects not thrown away, object use, and organic objects which have not survived might indicate African traditions. That information, however, is difficult or impossible to know from the archaeological record. Ex-slave narratives offer a rare source of evidence for these types of African survivals. But even these, like the artifacts, indicate that the slaves' material life has less to say about ethnicity and more about status.

Given the fairly high status indicated by the ceramics and the range of quality and variety in some of the meat diet, it seems that these slaves received better treatment. Their proximity to the house and their position as house servants appear also to have influenced this status. Expanding this

comparison by excavating other slave quarters farther away from the house and on the out-lying farms as well as white tenants' and overseers' quarters would make these results even more meaningful since it would place them in the broader context of the entire plantation. In the final analysis though, the most important result from the archaeology of slave sites along Mulberry Row has been to return the slave community to the Monticello landscape.

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APPENDIX A

ARTIFACT FINDSLISTS FROM SLAVE QUARTERS "r," "s" AND "t"

* Artifact findslists exclude ceramics and the counts represent a total fragment count or a total of all occupation levels' minimum vessel count with in each material/form category.

SLAVE QUARTER "r":

<u>Material</u>	<u>Form/ Design</u>	<u>Count</u>
bone	button	1
	handle	1
	faunal	815
clay	brick	
	bat	3
	fragment	144
	molded fragment	2
	tile	1
glass	bead	3
	bottle	
	amber blown	12
	amber mold blown	7
	amber press molded	1
	aquamarine blown	7
	aquamarine mold blown	7
	clear blown	83
	clear mold blown	39
	clear press molded	16
	cobalt blown	3
	dark green blown (wine)	111
	pale amethyst blown	2
	pale amethyst mold blown	2
	pale green blown	57
	pale green mold blown	23
	pale green press molded	2
	button	5

<u>Material</u>	<u>Form/ Design</u>	<u>Count</u>
glass	case bottle	
	clear blown	1
	globe	
	clear blown	3
	hollow	
	clear blown	2
	clear mold blown	1
	hollow	
	clear press molded	1
	object	1
	phial	
	amber blown	1
	clear blown	27
	clear mold blown	2
	clear press molded	3
	pale green blown	4
	stemware	
	clear blown	12
	clear mold blown	3
	tumbler	
	clear blown	8
	clear blown etched	1
	clear mold blown	2
	clear press molded	3
	vessel	
	clear blown	9
	clear press molded	1
	window	1,002
metal, alloy	object	1
	shot	1
	spoon	
	silver plated	1
metal, brass	bar	1
	boss	1
	button	13
	drawer pull	1
	escutcheon	1
	eye & hook	1
	hinge	1
	lock	1
	nail (tack)	1
	object, unidentified	10
	plate (sheet)	1
	ring	4
	rivet	1

<u>Material</u>	<u>Form/ Design</u>	<u>Count</u>
metal, brass	sheet	2
	spring	1
	straight pin	3
	strip	1
	washer	1
metal, copper	coin	1
	object	1
	wire	1
metal, iron	andiron	1
	bar	76
	bit, solid-mouthed	1
	blade	2
	bolt	1
	bookclasp	1
	brace	1
	buckle	2
	button	4
	chain link, cut	7
	collar	1
	file	1
	gear	1
	handle	3
	hinge	4
	hook	2
	hoop iron	13
	horseshoe	5
	loop	1
	nail	
	brad	27
	clasp	100
	horseshoe	27
	machine cut	1,309
	rosehead	519
	scupper	7
	tack	3
	triangular machine cut	4
	wire	304
	wrought	1,111
	waster	8
	nail rod	80
	nut	2
	object, unidentified	80
	pin	1
	pintle	1
	plate (sheet)	1

<u>Material</u>	<u>Form/ Design</u>	<u>Count</u>
metal, iron	ring	1
	scrap	1
	screw	9
	slag	90
	spike	9
	staple	15
	stock	4
	strap	14
	strip	5
	trim	84
	washer	1
	wedge	1
	wire	23
metal, lead	object	18
	sheet	2
	shot	32
	button	1
	spoon	1
	unidentified	7
metal, silver	coin	2
metal, tinned sheet	iron	
	can/cup	2
	foil	2
	object, unidentified	19
	vessel	1
organic, coal	fragment	18
organic, coke	fragment	4
organic, charcoal	fragment	16
organic, leather	fragment	3
organic, seed	peach	1
	walnut	1
	unidentified	1
organic, shell	egg	2
	oyster	6
	unidentified	1
organic, wood	fragment	6
	object	2

<u>Material</u>	<u>Form/ Design</u>	<u>Count</u>
organic, wood	timber	8
stone, lime	fragment	1
stone, mortar	fragment	161
	fragment with white wash	1
stone, quartz	cobble	1
stone, slate	fragment	29
	pencil	1

SLAVE QUARTER "s":

<u>Material</u>	<u>Form/ Design</u>	<u>Count</u>	
bone	brush handle	2	
	button	14	
	collar stud	1	
	comb	1	
	penknife handle	2	
	object, unidentified	2	
	toothbrush	7	
	utensil handle	13	
	faunal	5,776	
	clay	brick	
	molded	2	
	bat	15	
	bat, molded	6	
	bat, machine molded	3	
	fragment	202	
glass	bead	16	
	bottle		
		amber blown	18
		amber mold blown	20
		amber press molded	2
		amethyst blown	3
		amethyst press molded	1
		aquamarine blown	9
		aquamarine mold blown	3
		cobalt blown	5
		cobalt mold blown	5
		cobalt press molded	1
		clear blown	74
		clear burned	7
		clear mold blown	57
		clear press molded	22
		dark green blown (wine)	341
		green blown	24
		pale green blown	46
		pale green mold blown	47
		pale green press molded	3
		bottle stopper	1
		bowl	
		clear mold blown	1
		button	19
	globe		
	clear blown	15	

<u>Material</u>	<u>Form/ Design</u>	<u>Count</u>
glass	globe	
	clear mold blown	8
	hollow	
	amber press molded	1
	clear blown	26
	clear burned	2
	clear mold blown	23
	clear press molded	25
	pale green blown	5
	pale green mold blown	2
	jar	
	clear mold blown	3
	clear press molded	2
	jelly glass	
	clear blown	1
	clear mold blown	2
	lens	
	cobalt	1
	paste jewel	1
	phial	
	amber blown	1
	clear blown	30
	clear mold blown	12
	clear press molded	3
	cobalt blown	1
	pale green blown	25
	pale green mold blown	2
	stemware	
	clear blown	39
	clear mold blown	5
	clear press molded	5
	clear blown, air twist	1
	tube	
	clear press molded	1
	tumbler	
	clear blown	51
	clear mold blown	17
	clear press molded	2
	vessel, unidentified	19
	window	N/A
metal, alloy	button	1
	object, unidentified	1
	pan handle	1
	seal	1

<u>Material</u>	<u>Form/ Design</u>	<u>Count</u>
metal, brass	buckle	4
	button	76
	chain	1
	clamp	1
	clasp knife	1
	eye & hook	4
	harmonica	1
	jew's harp	1
	nail (tack)	5
	needle	1
	object, unidentified	16
	ornamental pin	1
	padlock	1
	pocket knife	1
	ring	7
	rivet	5
	screw	2
	sheet	12
	straight pin	106
	shot	2
	spigot	1
	spring	1
	staple	1
	thimble	3
	washer	1
	wire	2
metal, cast iron	object, unidentified	8
metal, copper	coin	5
metal, iron	bar	29
	bolt	1
	brace	4
	buckle	8
	button	6
	chain link	4
	chisel	2
	collar	1
	ferrule	1
	file	1
	fish hook	1
	fork	4
	harness buckle	1
	hasp	3
	hatchet	1
	hinge	3

<u>Material</u>	<u>Form/ Design</u>	<u>Count</u>
metal, iron	hook	6
	hoop iron	16
	horseshoe	4
	key	1
	knife blade	4
	latch	5
	lid	1
	lock plate	1
	nail	
	brad	141
	clasp	855
	horseshoe	31
	machine cut	1,261
	rosehead	2,018
	scupper	3
	tack	9
	triangular machine cut	35
	wire	168
	wrought	1,952
	nail rod binder	3
	nail rod	269
	object, unidentified	90
	padlock	1
	pin	1
	pintle	4
	pot hook	2
	ring	5
	scrap	2
	screw	12
	sheet	6
	sickle	2
	sifter	1
	slag	
	spike	25
	spoon	1
	staple	11
	stirrup	1
	stock lock	1
	strap	31
	strip	18
	trim	31
	vessel	5
	washer	4
	waster	118
	wedge	1
	wire	23
	wrench	1

<u>Material</u>	<u>Form/ Design</u>	<u>Count</u>
metal, lead	button	2
	foil	1
	object, unidentified	30
	scrap	16
	shot	87
metal, pewter	basin	1
	bookclasp	1
	button	8
	object, unidentified	7
	spoon	4
metal, silver	coin	1
	spoon	2
metal, tinned sheet iron	lid	1
	object, unidentified	62
	vessel	12
organic, wood	charcoal	16
organic, cloth	fragment	1
organic, leather	fragment	4
organic, seed	chestnut	1
	peach	3
	pumpkin	1
	unidentified	10
	walnut	2
organic, shell	button	2
	egg	26
	oyster	
organic, wood	charcoal	
	fragment	17
	timber	3
organic, coal	fragment	21
stone, chert	flake	1
	object	1
stone, flint	French gun flint	2

<u>Material</u>	<u>Form/ Design</u>	<u>Count</u>
stone, lime	fragment	11
stone, marble	child's marble	1
	slab	1
stone, mortar	fragment	
stone, plaster	fragment	1
stone, quartz	cobble	2
	crystal	1
	flake	2
	projectile point	1
stone, slate	fragment	
	object	1
	pencil	4
	child's slate	1

SLAVE QUARTER "t":

<u>Material</u>	<u>Form/ Design</u>	<u>Count</u>
bone	button	3
	toothbrush	3
	faunal	1,289
clay	brick	
	molded	4
	undecorated	7
	bat	7
	fragment	25
	molded fragment	3
glass	bead	2
	bottle	
	amber mold blown	1
	clear blown	2
	clear mold blown	4
	clear press molded	2
	dark green blown (wine)	106
	pale green blown	5
	pale green mold blown	4
	pale green press molded	2
	button	1
	globe	
	clear blown	1
	hollow	
	clear blown	28
	clear burned	7
	clear mold blown	9
	clear press molded	3
	cobalt blown	1
	dark amethyst mold blown	1
	pale amethyst blown	1
	pale amethyst press molded	1
	pale green blown	2
	pale green mold blown	4
	pale green press molded	1
	phial	
	amber blown	1
	clear blown	10
	clear mold blown	2
	pale cobalt blown	1
	pale green blown	15
	pale green mold blown	2

<u>Material</u>	<u>Form/ Design</u>	<u>Count</u>
glass	pitcher	
	clear blown	1
	stemware	
	clear blown	19
	clear mold blown	3
	clear press molded	1
	tumbler	
	clear blown	23
	clear blown etched	9
	clear blown fluted	2
	clear mold blown	23
	window	N/A
metal, brass	brace	1
	buckle	2
	button	18
	eye & hook	3
	nail (tack)	1
	object, unidentified	2
	ring	1
	sheet	4
	straight pin	44
	thimble	1
metal, iron	bar	8
	barrel stay	1
	bit, solid-mouthed	1
	button	1
	chain link, cut	1
	collar	1
	curry comb	1
	hinge	1
	hook	1
	hoop iron	12
	horseshoe	4
	key	1
	latch	1
	nail	
	brad	83
	clasp	407
	horseshoe	4
	machine cut	113
	rosehead	998
	scupper	3
	tack	4
	triangular machine cut	19
	wire	16

<u>Material</u>	<u>Form/ Design</u>	<u>Count</u>
metal, iron	nail	
	wrought	532
	waster	68
	nail rod	21
	object, unidentified	11
	pin	2
	sheet	3
	screw	3
	slag	8
	spike	2
	strap	23
	trim	3
metal, lead	pellet	14
	scrap	5
	shot	4
metal, pewter	unidentified	1
metal, tinned sheet	iron	
	fragment	10
	object, unidentified	8
organic, coal	fragment	1
organic, charcoal	fragment	28
organic, leather	fragment	2
organic, rope	fragment	2
organic, seed	legume	1
	chestnut	1
	peach	3
	walnut	2
	watermelon	2
organic, shell	clam	2
	cowrie	1
	egg	4
	oyster	39
organic, wood	board fragment	3
	fragment	9
stone, chert	fragment	1
stone, flint	French gunflint	1

<u>Material</u>	<u>Form/ Design</u>	<u>Count</u>
stone, lime	fragment	11
stone, marble	child's marble	1
stone, mortar	fragment	45
stone, quartz	cobble	4
	object	4
stone, slate	fragment	8
	child's slate	3

APPENDIX B

FAUNAL ASSEMBLAGES FROM SLAVE QUARTERS "r," "s," AND "t"

Figures taken from Diana C. Crader, "Faunal Remains from Slave Quarter Sites at Monticello, Charlottesville, Virginia," *Archaeozoologia*, III:1,2 (1989), pp. 1-10.

Type of animal	Quarter "r"		Quarter "s"		Quarter "t"	
	N(%)	MNI	N(%)	MNI	N(%)	MNI
Pig	7.8	3	11.1	11	10.2	6
Sheep	0.7	1	6.3	26	3.6	3
Artiodactyl 2, med.	8.1	-	11.2	-	11.5	-
Cattle	4.9	1	2.9	4	3.2	1
Horse/mule	-	-	.05	1	-	-
Ungulate 3, large	1.8	-	2.3	-	1.9	-
Deer	-	-	-	-	-	-
Medium/large mammal	-	-	1.3	-	0.9	-
Opossum	-	-	0.3	3	0.2	1
Rabbit	1.6	1	2.8	14	1.0	1
Woodchuck	-	-	.03	1	-	-
Squirrel	0.8	1	0.4	4	0.2	1
Cotton rat	0.1	1	0.1	1	-	-
Muskrat	-	-	-	-	0.5	1
Cat	-	-	.03	1	-	-
Small mammal	1.6	-	1.5	-	1.4	-
Bird	1.6	1	3.3	8	5.8	4
Turtle	-	-	0.5	1	-	-
Fish	-	-	0.5	1	-	-
Non-identifiable	70.8	-	55.5	-	59.6	-
Total	815	9	5776	76	1289	18

N(%) = percent of the total number of fragments

MNI = minimum number of individuals (animals)