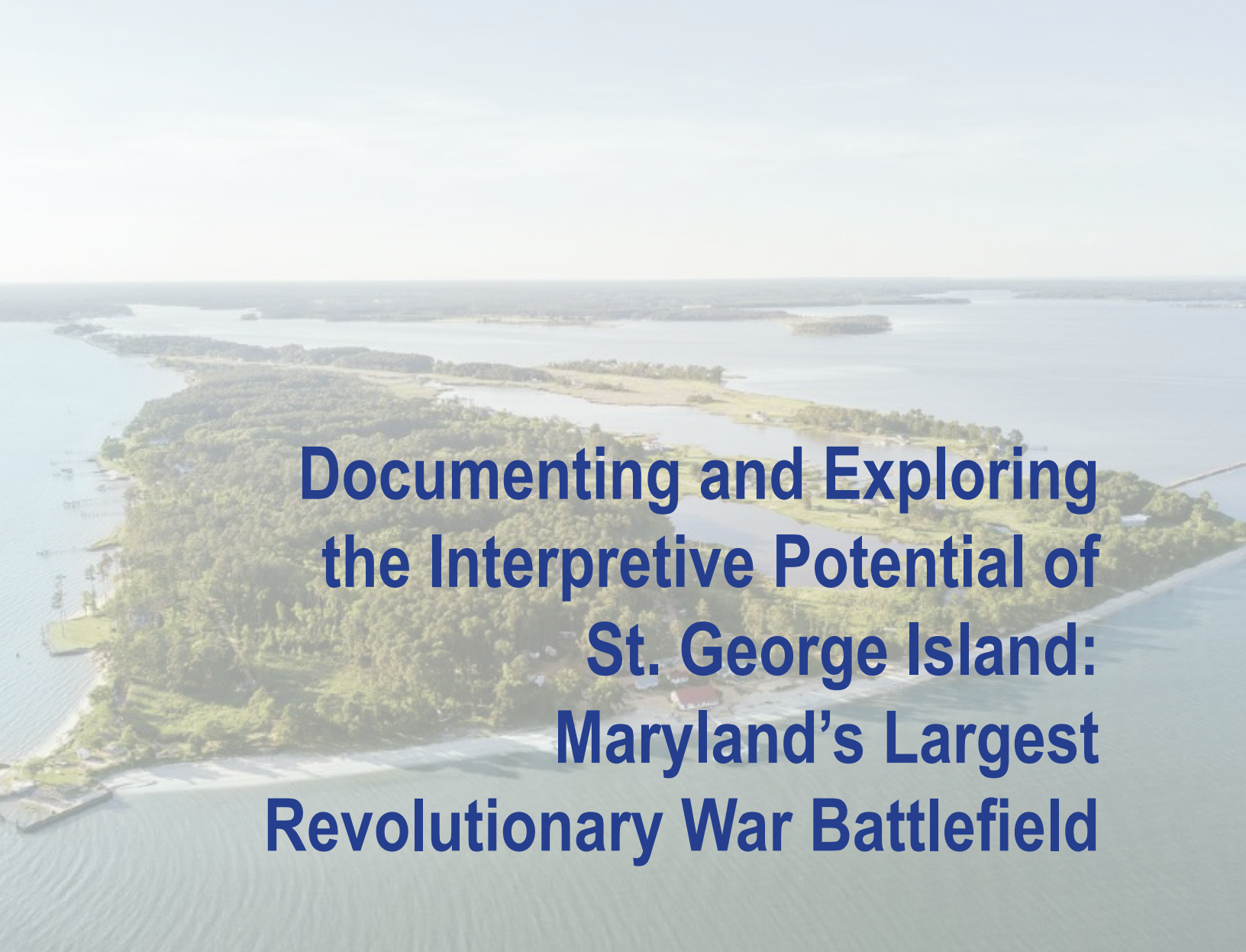




Documenting and Exploring the Interpretive Potential of St. George Island: Maryland's Largest Revolutionary War Battlefield



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PRESERVATION
MARYLAND

Documenting and Exploring the Interpretive Potential of St. George Island: Maryland's Largest Revolutionary War Battlefield

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Executive Summary

The study of battlefields and the larger battlescape requires an interdisciplinary approach. This research involves the interplay of data derived from the landscape, historical documents, and the physical evidence recovered from archaeological investigations. The latter category includes environmental as well as cultural information. The underlying premise of battlefield studies is that contemporary areas and landscapes are palimpsests that retain critical information necessary for understanding past conflicts. This is especially important in the case of St. George Island, Maryland, during the Revolutionary War, where the events pertaining to the arrival of Crown forces under Lord Dunmore and the American response in July to August of 1776 have remained poorly defined and understood. The events that transpired on the island have not been the focus of serious scholarship. Instead, previous studies or mentions of the St. George Island events have been more of a general historical nature, without reference to the island's landscape, military and naval practice, or to defining the military events that took place there.

This project is the first to undertake a fuller examination of the events that occurred on the island and the associated surrounding area and their surviving physical dimensions. It recognizes that the island itself as a battlefield is a component of a much larger battlescape that embraces the surrounding area's landforms and extensive river systems. Utilizing a close interrogation of primary historical documents such as military and naval records, at least eleven key site types or components that comprise the general and military landscapes have been identified. Some locations for these have been identified with a high degree of certainty. Others are less certain, due to gaps in documentation, the vagaries of the historical record and, in some cases, significant changes in the landscape since 1776. All, however, will need archaeological survey, and possibly further investigations, to define extent and integrity of their surviving remains.

Both the Americans and Crown forces deployed significant numbers of military and naval assets during the weeks at St. George Island. Scholars who study military sites have recognized that a thorough knowledge of the forces involved, derived from archaeological and historical sources, is critical to understanding a battle and the larger battlescape of which it is a part. Various factors such as types of organization, socio-economic background, levels of training and experience, morale, tactical methodology, technology, and the weaponry and equipment of the forces involved are as critical a set of variables as terrain, weather, and other environmental conditions.

Earlier discussions of the events at St. George Island have been cursory and have not closely examined the various forces, or have only placed emphasis on the American troops that took part in the different operations and actions at the island. This skewed perspective has hidden the complexity and significance of the events that transpired there in the summer of 1776. This study is the first to examine both sides of this story.

As Dunmore's fleet departed Gwynn's Island, the Americans could not have been certain of British objectives. The sudden appearance of 70-80 vessels in the Potomac River appeared as a serious threat. With the landing of troops and empty water casks on St. George Island, however, one of Dunmore's objectives became obvious, and the Americans reacted quickly. Their objectives were to deny the British access to water and other resources, to threaten their fleet, to do whatever damage they could, whether on land or water, and ultimately to drive them off.

Rather than the quick engagement so often reported in secondary accounts of the Battle of St. George Island (sometimes reported as a one-day battle), we have seen that this was a protracted campaign extending over 24 days (from July 14 to August 6), with American troops remaining in the area after the departure and an even longer salvage effort that stretched into mid-November.

In assessing KOCO variables (**K**ey terrain, **O**bservation and fields of fire, **C**over and concealment, **O**bstacles, and **A**venues of approach/withdrawal), even from the long distance of 246 years, several things are immediately apparent. In a land so deeply dissected by water, the British had an immediate advantage by virtue of their naval superiority and greater mobility. But that advantage was partially negated by the poor condition of so many vessels and their fixation on acquiring fresh water. The island was seen by them as the primary target because of ease of access by ship's boats and because the safety of watering parties could be secured, if access by the Americans could be denied through superior naval power and land forces. This explains the initial British focus on St. George Island, as opposed to inland areas. This was not a British effort to secure ground or establish a long-term foothold in Maryland, but rather a limited target of opportunity. Once it was apparent that water supplies on the island were insufficient, the expedition up the Potomac River was organized to augment these supplies.

Future Interpretation

Typically, on-site interpretation of battle events is driven in part by the known or likely locations of battle events, features and resources that survive from the battle events, and opportunities to access these locations and resources. In addition, interpreting battle events and battlescapes is complicated by the complexity of the events unfolding over time, the movements and maneuvering of troops and vessels, related simultaneous events occurring in different locations, and events occurring at different times and dates within the same locations.

The project team focused on existing publicly accessible sites that likely provide realistic and achievable near-term opportunities for interpreting the battle events and battlescape including:

- Piney Point Landing;
- Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and Historic Park; and
- Chancellor's Point, Historic St. Mary's City.

The project team, through engagement with the St. George Island Improvement Association and community members, learned that people who live and work on the island place an extremely high value on the rural character of the island. Low traffic volumes, slow vehicle speeds, quiet solitude, and the visual character of the island are some of the important factors motivating people to live and work on the island. Consequently, the project team strongly recommends that future interpretation of the battle events and battlescape principally occur off the island to preserve the rural character of the community, to protect islanders who utilize their road and street network for pedestrian and bicycle use, and to protect private property from unwanted access.

Protection of Cultural Resources

To the extent that the community and state and federal agencies are concerned about preserving the knowledge buried in the remaining portions of the battlefield, implementation of a comprehensive archaeological survey is a necessary initial step. Site discovery and assessment is the first step toward preservation. Given the natural forces at work and the inevitability of sea level rise, as well as some level of continued land development, the future loss of physical remains will occur. However, archaeological investigations can extract and preserve the evidence and information that these sites hold.

Even before any systematic investigation is launched, preservation and mitigation steps might include continued and new efforts to control shoreline erosion, which will simultaneously retain valuable land and property values. The community might also wish to consider voluntary archaeological investigations on private property in advance of future construction and development, although funding mechanisms would have to be identified. A formal arrangement might be sought with a local or regional college or university, archaeological center, state agencies, or archaeological and historical societies, but all investigators should also have adequate training and credentials.

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At the request of project team members, Dr. Tyler Putman, Manager for Gallery Interpretation, and Mark Turdo, Curator of Collections and Special Projects, of the Museum of the American Revolution in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, searched the museum's collection for objects related to the events of July-August at St. George Island. While, unfortunately, nothing came to light, the project team was grateful for his time searching the museum's collection.

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1

Introduction

Introduction

Use of Place Names and Maritime Names

St. George Island is typically labeled *St. George's Island* on historic period maps dating to the 19th-century and the common usage of *St. George's Island* continues to the present. It is important to note that the community of St. George Island utilizes *St. George Island* when referring to their community. The local community organization is the St. George Island Improvement Association and signs identifying St. George Island along Piney Point Road at the northwest end of the island utilize *St. George Island*.

St. George Island is listed in the United States Geological Survey (USGS) Geographic Names Information System as *Saint George Island*. The USGS Geographic Names Information System indicates that the name *Saint George Island* was determined by a USGS Board decision effective January 1, 1906 (<https://edits.nationalmap.gov/apps/gaz-domestic/public/summary/594921>. Accessed 11/30/21). The Geographic Names Information System data indicates a variant name of *Saint Georges Island* and references the document *Maryland Geological Survey* published by the Maryland Geological Survey, Baltimore, Maryland, with varying dates, as the source. Consequently, in this report, the name *St. George Island* is used throughout. Quoted spellings and variations of *St. George Island* remain unaltered and references to historic period map names remain as documented on the historic period maps.

For the purposes of clarity, *St. George Creek*, the name utilized on USGS maps for the tidal waters located between the eastern shoreline of St. George Island and the mainland shoreline, is used throughout the report. Quoted spellings and variations of *St. George Creek* remain unaltered and references to historic period map names remain as documented on the referenced historic period maps.

Terminology Referring to Where Military Operations and Combat Actions Occurred

Battlescape is utilized throughout this report when referring to the combined terrestrial and maritime areas of military operations and combat actions.

Project Purpose

To date, very little professional study has been dedicated to this battle. The exact location and extents of the battle have not been determined and available documentation, historic context, and mapping have not been compiled. This planning project marks the first step towards documentation, engaging and building consensus with the stakeholders and the local community regarding possible future interpretation, and eventually interpreting this little known but important site.

Project Location

St. George Island is located at the southern end of St. Mary's County, Maryland, bordered by the Potomac River on the west shoreline and bordered by St. George Creek and the mouth of the St. Mary's River on the east shoreline (See Figure 1.1). The island is accessed via Maryland Route 249 (Piney Point Road) and a bridge that crosses the Strait.



Figure 1.1: Project Location Map.

(Source: <https://stmarys.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=f0010a9a5db04695b37c39c033c33edb>)

Project Study Limits

There are three areas of focus for this project:

- St. George Island which was of primary interest to the British seeking fresh water sources.

The location of military operations and terrestrial combat actions and the broader area encompassing the battlescape of the July-August naval and military operations and combat actions. The area of the battlescape is quite large including both land and water areas. Analysis of primary sources resulted in an approximate area of the battlescape (see Figure 1.2) that includes:

- The entire St. George Island;

-
- Present-day Piney Point community;
 - Cherryfield Point north of St. George Island across St. George Creek;
 - The mouth of the St. Mary's River;
 - The Potomac River extending from Piney Point to the mouth of the St. Mary's River;
 - St. George Creek extending up to or close to the northwest end of St. George Island; and
 - Smith's Creek.

The project team also focused on existing publicly accessible sites (Figure 1.2) that likely provide realistic and achievable near-term opportunities for interpreting the battle events and battlescape including:

- Piney Point Landing;
- Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and Historic Park; and
- Chancellor's Point, Historic St. Mary's City.

Report Contents

Chapter 1 | Introduction

The Introduction includes information on the project location and project study limits, the contents of this report, and an overview of the project scope of work.

Chapter 2 | Public and Stakeholder Engagement

Chapter 2 provides an overview of public and stakeholder engagement including the purpose of engagement and identification of stakeholders, tribes, and the local community association that was directly engaged during the project. Information is provided on the general responses to the project from tribes and the community association.

Chapter 3 | Existing Conditions

Existing conditions information is briefly covered with the purpose of providing physical context of natural and constructed systems and features to support the understanding of battle event and battlescape descriptions as well as the spatial analysis of the battle events and battlescape. This chapter is not intended to provide a comprehensive description of existing conditions.

Chapter 4 | Cultural Context and Historical Significance

An overview of the cultural context and historical significance of the island and environs is provided to place the battle events within a cultural framework that preceded the 1776 military and naval operations and combat actions.

Chapter 5 | Naval and Military Operations | July-August 1776

Chapter 5 includes a detailed day-by-day description of terrestrial and naval operations of British and American forces within identification of operations and combat actions. This chapter includes troop movement maps to support the descriptions of operations and combat actions.

Chapter 6 | Assessment of the Military and Naval Forces | July-August 1776

The units and vessels of British and American forces involved in the military and naval operations and combat actions are documented in this chapter.

Chapter 7 | Inventory of Military and Non-military Sites

An inventory of non-military sites is provided addressing domestic dwellings and plantation, wells and watering area, and roads.

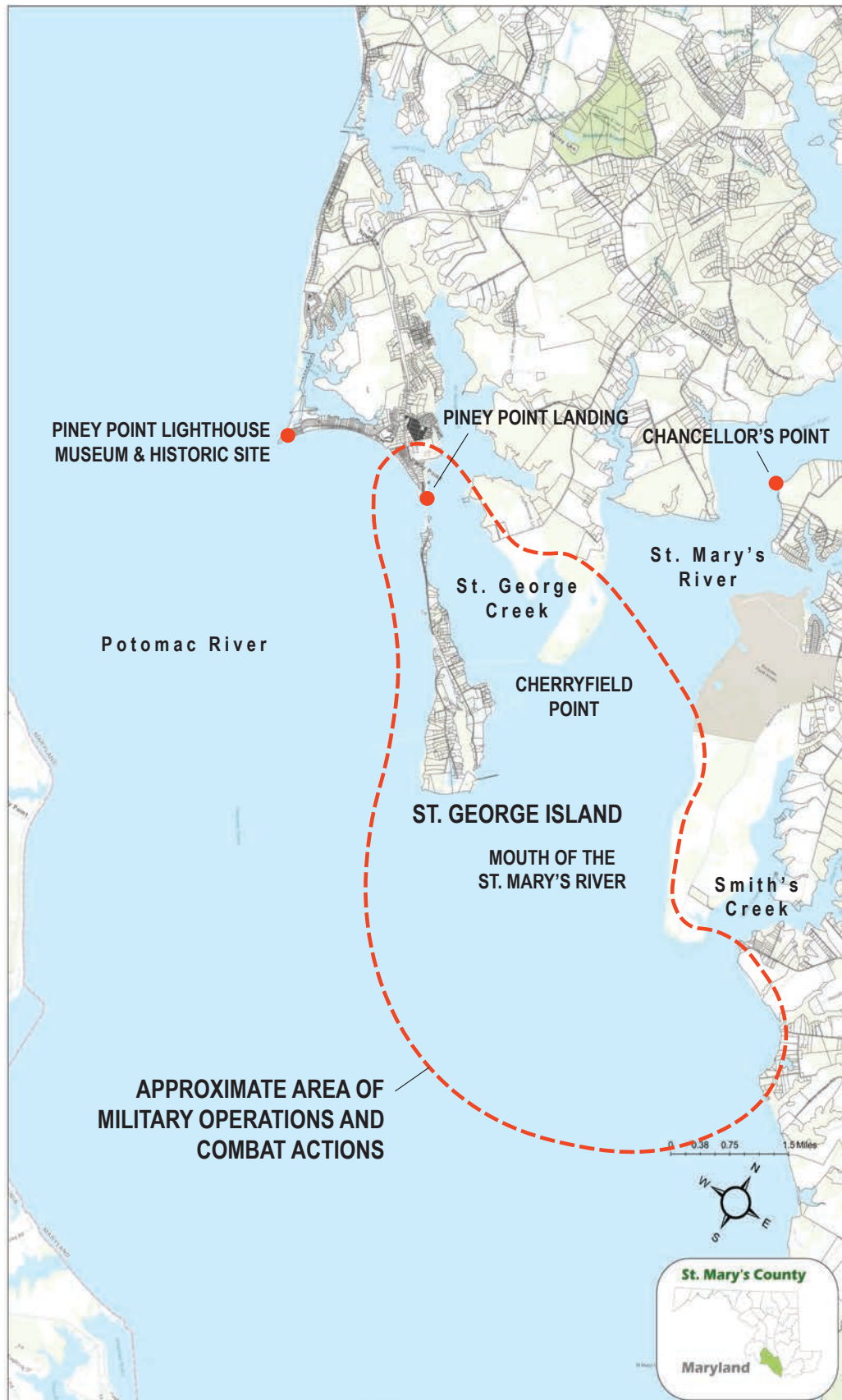


Figure 1.2: Project Study Limits Map.

Maritime military sites documented include:

- Fleet or vessel locations and anchorages
- Landing zones for amphibious movement
- Vessel remains and ship components
- American vessel salvage locations

Terrestrial military sites documented include:

- Fortifications
- Encampments
- Command and control positions
- Logistical positions
- Troop positions and areas of engagement

Chapter 8 | Summary of the Battle and Battlescape Analysis

The focus of this chapter is on the KOCO (or KOCO) analysis (Key terrain, Observation and fields of fire, Cover and concealment, Obstacles, and Avenues of approach/withdrawal). This approach offers a way to understand the important factors that shaped both the decisions of various actors and the outcomes.

Chapter 9 | GIS Management and Cultural Resources Protection

This chapter provides information on the St. George Island Geographic Information System that was developed for this project and how GIS was utilized to support the battlespace analysis. This chapter also addresses cultural resources and provided recommendations concerning future investigation of resources associated with the battle events and battlescape.

Chapter 10 | Locations for Future Interpretation

Based in part on input received during community engagement and an assessment of the capacity of St. George Island to support visitors, recommendations were developed for appropriate off-island sites for learning more about the battle events and battlescape.

Appendix A: Historic Architectural Resources

This appendix includes descriptions of historic architectural properties listed on the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties (MIHP) as well as a description of the MIHP-listed historic district that encompasses the entire island. The purpose of appending this information was to support the existing conditions information in Chapter 3 and to underscore the historical importance of the island and its resources for periods after the Revolutionary War. The island has a long and continuing history that is conveyed in part through surviving historic resources.

Appendix B: Related Planning Programs and Initiatives

Information on related federal, state, and non-governmental planning programs and initiatives is provided to support an understanding of the significance and importance of the natural and constructed resources of the island how these programs and initiatives support the protection and continuity of the rural and scenic character of the island and its maritime setting.

Project Scope of Work

Project Start-up Meeting (virtual)

The project team met with Preservation Maryland to review the scope of work and schedule, request available data, establish reporting and communication procedures.

Work Plan and Report Outline

The project team prepared and submitted a draft work plan and report outline to Preservation Maryland for review. A final work plan and report outline was prepared based on Preservation Maryland's review of the draft work plan and report outline and was submitted to Preservation Maryland.

Public and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

A preliminary public and stakeholder engagement plan was prepared by the project team and submitted to Preservation Maryland for review and comment. The project team prepared a final public and stakeholder engagement plan based on Preservation Maryland's review of the draft plan.

Data Collection and Research

The project team collected materials available from Preservation Maryland, stakeholders, and those involved in providing special historical expertise regarding the project area. The project team also acquired from on-line sources and repositories other materials deemed necessary to undertake the project. The project team geographic information system (GIS) specialist collected GIS data from MERLIN (Maryland's statewide GIS system) and other sources.

For all archaeological resources (terrestrial and maritime), the project researchers reviewed Maryland Historical Trust site files, MEDUSA (MHT's on-line cultural resource database), and reviewed reports on previous archaeological investigations. The project researchers also contacted and consulted with archaeologists and historians who have conducted previous research in the area. For maritime resources, the project researcher reviewed site and survey files and consulted with the MHT Maritime Archaeology Program; reviewed NOAA's wrecks and obstructions database (AWOIS), as well as early Coast Survey records of wrecks; and consulted with experts, including a colleague who had compiled an exhaustive database of historically recorded wrecks in the Chesapeake, including the project area, after decades of research on the Library of Congress, National Archives, and other repositories.

The project researchers sought out personal and military records from those involved in the battle, including figures such as Captain Rezin Beall, Colonel John Dent, and Major Thomas Price. Copies of papers related to John Murray, Lord Dunmore, located in the John D. Rockefeller Library at Colonial Williamsburg were reviewed. Other records that were reviewed include documents that shed light on the battle, its participants, and troop movements include military correspondence, the records of the Maryland Council of Safety, post-war pension records, and historical maps. Although no maps contemporary with the battle are known at present, early 19th century maps of the area were reviewed including highly useful U.S. Coast Survey maps from mid-century on, showing not only hydrography, but details on land such as buildings, roads, fence and field lines, and vegetative land cover (these are far more informative for coastal areas than maps such as the Martenet series [1865 for St. Mary's County]).

These sources were used to construct a likely landscape of the island and surrounding areas, and to identify the likely positions of British and American vessels. Using this as a base, combined with a knowledge of 18th century military practices, the project team reconstructed and mapped the most likely scenarios for troop movements and positions, both on land and across the water.

Other sources that were reviewed include personal journals, naval records, Jesuit records (the island was part of St. Inigoes Manor from the early 17th century in to the mid-19th century) and records related to the 1813 British occupation of the island.

Review of Documentation

The project team reviewed the data collected to gain an understanding of battlescape resources and to support the preparation of the draft and final report and mapping.

Preliminary Base Map

The project team's GIS specialist prepared a preliminary base map for the project area. The base mapping was used to support fieldwork and the preparation of battlescape resources mapping, troop movements, and other mapping.

Stakeholders Meeting (virtual)

The project team prepared for and undertook a stakeholders meeting to brief attendees on the purpose and scope of the project and to gain information from stakeholders regarding research opportunities.

Public Meeting #1 | Informational Meeting with Property Owners and Residents of St. George Island Battlefield (virtual)

The project team prepared for and undertook a meeting with on-island community members to brief attendees on the purpose and scope of the project and to gain an understanding of the property owners' concerns.

Fieldwork

Team members undertook site visits to St. George Island accessing public sites and roads to ground-truth base map data and to observe cultural, natural, and historic resources associated with the 1776 battle events. The team photographically documented representative constructed and natural landscape features and systems for use for referencing in the office, and to include in the draft and final reports as needed. Fieldwork also included visiting the community of Piney Point, the Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and Historic Site, and Chancellor's Point in Historic St. Mary's City.

Historical Documentation and Analysis

The focus of research and documentation was on the 1776 Battle of St. George Island. However, a brief overview of the earlier history of the island was developed to establish a larger context and the broader significance of the area. This chapter did not address the cultural importance and historical significance of the island for periods after the 1776 battle events.

The naval and military operations and combat actions were documented for the period July-August 1776. The team developed troop movement mapping and identified surviving features that were likely associated with military operations and combat actions. This analysis work was highly dependent on the depth of information collected regarding terrestrial and maritime conditions at the time of the battle event. An analysis of key terrain, observation and fields of fire, cover and concealment, obstacles (natural and man-made) and avenues of approach (KOCOAs) was undertaken. This KOCOA terrain analysis was also dependent on the depth of information collected regarding terrestrial and maritime conditions at the time of the battle event as well as information on battle events and troop movement.

Locations for Interpretation

Based in part on input received during community engagement and an assessment of the capacity of St. George Island to support visitors, recommendations were developed for appropriate off-island sites for learning more about the battle events and battlescape.

Public Draft Report

The team prepared a public draft report and submitted the draft report to Preservation Maryland, stakeholder, tribes, and to the St. George Island Improvement Association for review and submission of comments to the project team.

Public Meeting #2 | Presentation of Draft Findings to Property Owners and Residents of St. George Island Battlefield (virtual)

The findings of the public draft report were presented and discussed with members of the St. George

Island Improvement Association with the goal of receiving significant comments and recommendations to support further refinement of the report.

Final Report and Mapping

Taking into consideration the requirements, comments, and suggestions provided by Preservation Maryland, Maryland Historical Trust, and other stakeholders, and through landowner and community engagement, the project team finalized the report and mapping.

All spatial data was developed in GIS. All GIS data files are shapefile (*.shp) or GeoDatabase format. Federal Geographic Data Committee compliant dataset level metadata was submitted to Preservation Maryland for each shapefile or feature class included. All cultural resources delineated with GIS data were submitted in compliance with the National Park Service Cultural Resource Spatial Data Transfer Standards with complete feature level metadata.

Public & Stakeholder Engagement

Public and Stakeholder Engagement

Introduction

Prior to undertaking public and stakeholder engagement, the project team prepared an engagement plan including the identification of the St. George Island Improvement Association as the primary community group and a listing of potential stakeholders. During the stakeholder meeting additional stakeholders were identified as well as others that should be notified and apprised of the project.

Outreach and engagement focused on the leadership and members of the St. George Island Improvement Association, stakeholders including subject matter experts, St. Mary's County, and entities that are involved in historical tourism programs. In addition, the project team engaged the Maryland Historical Trust and federal- and state-recognized tribes with associations with St. George Island.

The purpose of public engagement was to inform the local community of the purpose and scope of the project and to request comments that could inform the project team's work. The purpose of engaging subject matter experts and other stakeholders was to apprise them of the project and to discuss research opportunities and to explore options for future interpretation and future visitor experiences.

Stakeholder and public engagement meetings were held utilizing Preservation Maryland's virtual meeting account platform. The project team prepared draft and final PowerPoint slide decks as the primary means for supporting the presentations and discussions. The project team coordinated with Preservation Maryland staff regarding invitees, invitation messaging, and presentation agendas.

Public Engagement

Public engagement focused on the property owners and residents of St. George Island. The project team contacted the St. George Island Improvement Association (SGIIA) given that that entity is the sole organization representing island homeowners, business owners, and residents. The purpose of the St. George Island Improvement Association is to advance the goals of the Association members regarding quality of life on the island.

The project team contacted the leadership of SGIIA to provide an overview of the purpose of the project and the project scope of work. The project team worked with SGIIA representatives to set up two public meetings. The SGIIA Board identified a SGIIA project representative to serve as the primary point of contact between SGIIA management and members and the project team.

The first meeting was held virtually on June 24, 2021, and was attended by members of SGIIA. The purpose of the first meeting was to:

- Introduce the project team;
- Describe the stakeholders and reviewing organizations;
- Describe the project area;
- Provide a project overview and describe the project scope of work;
- Request community input on the future interpretation of the battlefield; and
- Provide an overview of the next steps for engaging the community.

This first public meeting also assisted the project team in determining the local property owners' concerns regarding public interpretation of the St. George Island battlefield particularly regarding

visitor access to the island. The project team received written comments supporting the research aspects of the project. The project team also received written comments from island residents expressing concerns about possible impacts visitors may or likely will have on the community. Community member comments indicated that the island's roads are narrow and did not provide easy access and opportunities for visitors to turnaround at dead end roads resulting in visitors accessing private drives. In addition, community members commented on how flooding of roads was increasing and that there are no sidewalks or paths with many islanders walking and strolling on roadways.

After the first community meeting, project team members undertook fieldwork on the island and in neighboring off-island areas. During fieldwork project team members accepted invitations from two island property owners to meet with them at their island properties. These property owners provided information on the history of their properties and afforded project team members opportunities to view artifacts recovered from their properties. The project team was accompanied by a representative of SGIIA.

The project team transmitted a draft of this report to the SGIIA representative for distribution to SGIIA members for their review. The project team requested comments on the draft report from community members. The project team convened a second community meeting on March 4, 2022, for the SGIIA community members to receive a summary presentation on the findings of the project as documented in the draft report. Comments received during the community meeting and written comments received from SGIIA community members were reviewed and integrated into the process for revising and completing the final report.

Subsequent to the second community meeting, a SGIIA representatives contacted the project team regarding potential visitor access to the SGIIA community building. The SGIIA representative indicated that SGIIA would welcome future opportunities to participate in future interpretive planning undertaken by Preservation Maryland and would also want to participate in future interpretive planning undertaken by the St. Mary's County Museum Division. The SGIIA representative indicated that SGIIA was very interested in the future possibility of the St. Mary's County Museum Division installing exhibits in the SGIIA community building that would interpret the battle events and battlescape.

Stakeholder Engagement

The project team engaged the following stakeholders:

- Karen Stone, Museum Division Manager, St. Mary's County;
- Lucille Walker, Executive Director, Destination Southern Maryland (Southern Maryland Heritage Area Consortium);
- Dr. Henry Miller, Maryland Heritage Scholar, and Travis Parno, Director of Research and Collections, Historic St. Mary's City;
- Julia King, Professor and Chair, Department of Anthropology, St. Mary's College of Maryland;
- David Howe, Institute of Maritime History;
- Ralph Eshelman, subject matter expert; and
- Silas Hurry, subject matter expert.

Stakeholders were initially contacted via an email that included an invitation to participate in the project as a stakeholder. Stakeholders were later invited to participate in an initial stakeholder meeting on March 19, 2021, to learn more about the purpose and scope of the project. During that meeting stakeholders provided recommendations regarding additional research and identified other potential stakeholders. The Maryland Historical Trust representative provided recommendations for engaging state-recognized tribes.

The project team transmitted a draft of this report to the stakeholder group for their review with a request for comments on the draft report. Comments received during the stakeholder meeting and written comments received from stakeholders were reviewed and integrated into the process for revising and completing the final report.

Consultation with the Delaware Tribe of Indians

Given that this project was funded by a grant from the National Park Service American Battlefield Protection Program, Preservation Maryland, as the grant recipient, agreed to comply with the grant requirements including continuing consultations with the Delaware Tribe of Indians, a federally recognized tribe. The American Battlefield Protection Program grant program is required to undertake an assessment of effects on historic properties in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act as amended. The National Park Service (NPS) consulted directly with the Delaware Tribe of Indians as an official consulting party during the Section 106 review process in the spring and summer of 2020, as the “undertaking” in this case was the Federal funding of Preservation Maryland’s grant proposal. A Delaware Tribe of Indians representative provided consultation to the NPS including a request to be apprised of the project with opportunities to review and comment on the draft and final reports. The NPS made a final effects determination in December of 2020 and confirmed the preliminary determination that this project would have “No Effect” on historic properties, given the project activities are limited to historical research and analysis, interpretative planning, and community outreach. The NPS final determination of effect concluded the Federal responsibility under Section 106 to consider impacts on historic properties, and the NPS transmitted the effects determination letter directly to the Delaware Tribe of Indians representative.

The NPS required that Preservation Maryland coordinate research and communication about Indigenous history in the project area through the life of the grant as a result of the Section 106 process, but as the scope of the project had no potential to impact historic properties, continued collaboration should shape the process outside of that Federal regulatory framework. Consequently, the project team contacted the Delaware Tribe of Indians Historic Preservation Office to apprise that Office of the project scope and timeline.

The project team contacted Dr. Brice Obermeyer, Director, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, and Susan Bachor, a representative of the Tribe’s Historic Preservation office. The project team held a virtual meeting with Susan Bachor on March 23, 2021. The initial response from Susan Bachor after learning of the project scope of work was that the Delaware Tribe of Indians had no objection to the project scope of work. Susan Bachor requested that the Delaware Tribe of Indians be consulted directly since the project location was within their areas of interest as well as in the interest of the State of Maryland. Susan Bachor indicated that the Delaware Tribe of Indians Historic Preservation Office requested the opportunity to learn more about the project and offer comments, if any, regarding potential recommendations. Susan Bachor communicated concerns about project activities associated with soil disturbance given their concerns regarding impacts to archaeological resources including but not limited to buried remains. The project team communicated that the project scope of work did not include soil disturbing activities.

A draft of this report was transmitted to Susan Bachor for review and comment. The project team did not receive comments from the Delaware Tribe of Indians.

Consultation with State-Recognized Tribes

The Maryland Historical Trust recommended that the project team engage state-recognized

tribes that have an association with St. George Island. The project team contacted the Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs (MCIA) to request a list of state-recognized tribes and contact information for those tribes.

The project team received contact information from MCIA for the Piscataway Indian Nation and the Piscataway Conoy Tribe. MCIA did not have a current point of contact for the Accohannock Indian Tribe.

The project team transmitted an introductory email with a draft report attached to a representative of the Tribal Council of the Piscataway Conoy Tribe. The project team did not receive comments from the Tribal Council of the Piscataway Conoy Tribe.

The project team attempted to contact a representative of the Piscataway Indian Nation but was unsuccessful.

The project team communicated with representatives of the Accohannock Indian Tribe and subsequently transmitted the draft report to those representatives for their review. The project team did not receive comments from the Accohannock Indian Tribe.

St. Mary's County

The project team engaged Karen Stone, Museum Division Manager of St. Mary's County's Department of Recreation & Parks via a virtual meeting on September 23, 2021, to apprise her and the County of this study. Karen Stone indicated the Museum Division would serve as the project stakeholder representing the County and also indicated that the Museum Division would consider the future exploration of opportunities to interpret the battle events and battlescape at the Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and Historic Park.

Subsequent to the project team's communications with Karen Stone, the project team indicated to Preservation Maryland that the Museum Division of St. Mary's County would be a strong advocate for interpreting the battle events and the battlescape. The project team recommended that Preservation Maryland directly engage Karen Stone regarding establishing a working relationship concerning future interpretative planning and implementing the recommendations included in an interpretive plan. Preservation Maryland communicated directly with Karen Stone indicating Preservation Maryland's strong interest in collaborating during a future interpretive planning process.

Maryland General Assembly Members Representing St. Mary's County

The project team transmitted emails with the draft report attached to the following elected representatives to apprise them of the project and to request any questions they may have:

- Sen. John D. (Jack) Bailey (R), District 29
- Del. Matt Morgan (R), District 29A
- Del. Brian M. Crosby (D), District 29B
- Del. Gerald W. (Jerry) Clark (R), District 29C

The project team also transmitted PDFs of the final report to the legislators listed above.

Existing Conditions

Existing Conditions

Figures are located at the end of this chapter.

Overview

Existing conditions information is briefly covered with the purpose of providing physical context of natural and constructed systems and features to support the understanding of battle event and battlescape descriptions as well as the spatial analysis of the battle events and battlescape. The focus of this documentation is on surface water and wetlands, landforms, roads, and vegetation, each affecting the military operations and combat actions during July – August 1776.

The land area of St. George is 0.67 square miles and surface water on the island is 0.26 square miles. St. George Island has a predominantly rural character with significant natural systems areas and low-density residential development oriented to the water along the shorelines and along the internal road networks. Figure 3.1 is a map of the landcover of St. George Island. This map shows the island landcover to be a matrix of tidal marshes and surface water, woodlands including non-tidal palustrine wetlands, and a patchwork of developed areas consisting primarily of road and driveway networks, houses and ancillary structures set within house yards, and residential piers and docks. Commercial development is located at the northwest end of the island with various small-scale commercial facilities integrated within the residential areas. In addition, Camp Merryelande's complex of buildings is clustered along the south shore of the island and there are a small number of other non-residential sites including churches and a community association facility. Also see Figures 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4 and see Appendix A for information on inventoried historic buildings and structures.

Soils

The bedrock of the Mid-Atlantic Coastal Plain is underlain by unconsolidated sediments. St. George Island is part of the Maryland's Upper Coastal Plain which extends west of the Chesapeake Bay and the Elk River and continues westward to the Fall Line. Othello silt loams (see Table 3.1 and Figures 3.5 and 3.6) and tidal marsh make up the majority of the island (USGS Soil Survey):

The Othello Silt Loams were formed in silty eolian deposits over fluviomarine deposits. These are considered to be hydric soils that, according to the definition created by The National Technical Committee for Hydric Soils (NTCHS), are soils formed under conditions of saturation, flooding, or ponding long enough during the growing season to develop anaerobic conditions in the upper part.

Table 3.1: USGS Soil Survey Data

Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
Be	Beaches	23.1	3.9%
Cu	Cut and fill land	1.2	0.2%
Ek	Elkton silt loam	4.4	0.7%
KrA	Keyport silt loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	5.1	0.9%
MtA	Mattapex fine sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	38.5	6.5%

MuaA	Mattapex silt loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, northern coastal plain	92.7	15.5%
MuaB	Mattapex silt loam, 2 to 5 percent slopes, northern coastal plain	3.4	0.6%
Ot	Othello silt loams, 0 to 2 percent slopes, northern coastal plain	176.0	29.5%
SfB2	Sassafras loam, 2 to 5 percent slopes	11.6	1.9%
Tm	Tidal marsh	121.6	20.4%
W	Water	119.2	20.0%

Terrestrial and Surface Water

Understanding the extent and characteristics of St. George Island's surface water and terrestrial water systems is important to understanding why the British landed on the island with the purpose of securing drinking water for the fleet. Though the British targeted wells at the farms, research indicates that the need for drinking water was driving the British to search for viable sources of drinking water including ponds, streams, springs, and freshwater reaches of tidal rivers.

In addition, surface water, including the Potomac River, the St. Mary's River, St. George Creek, and Island Creek, is the primary source of changes in the configuration of the shorelines of the island (Figures 3.4 and 3.7) and increasingly, through storm surges and flooding (Figure 3.8), is a continuing threat to archaeological resources including those associated with the battle events during July and August of 1776.

Island Surface Water

Subtle changes in topography roughly following Thomas Road on the south side of the island, divide the island into two main watersheds that flow to opposite shorelines of the island (see Figure 3.9). The south end of the island contains a small pond and adjacent wetlands which clean, hold, and slow water, while the western side flows more directly into the Potomac River. In addition, and associated with surface waters, St. George Island has both palustrine (non-tidal) and estuarine (tidal) wetlands (Figure 3.10). The aerial photograph of the island (Figure 3.4) provides an excellent view of surface water including streams and drainage ditches. These linear drainage ditches are visible in the midsection of the island within wetland areas as well as along road shoulders.

Southern Pond

Located on the southern part of the island between Thomas Road and Camp Merryelande Road, the southern pond occupies an area of 6.57 acres. It is connected to Island Creek by a 20-foot-wide channel that appears to be partially constructed at the road crossing. The pond's perimeter is primarily tidal wetlands. Two storm water pipes flow into the pond from Thomas Road, along the northeast shore.

Island Creek

This tidal creek extends into the island from the southeastern shoreline. Two areas of wetlands extend to the north and northwest to the creek. At the mouth of the creek, a 600-foot-long jetty extends out on the southern inlet to the St. Mary's River. The water depth is sufficient to support smaller vessels accessing residential and commercial piers including a County-owned pier and boat landing.

Landforms

See Figure 3.4 for landforms.

A series of low ridges run along the island from the northwest to the southeast, with the higher areas approximately 6.5 feet above sea level and the lower areas approximately 3 feet above sea level. Along the southern shore, a more steeply sloped ridge runs roughly parallel to the entire shoreline.

Significant sections of the island's shoreline have been built up with riprap. These locations include on the Potomac River shorelines along Piney Point Road at the narrow north end of the island and the Potomac River shoreline where Thomas Road bends and is edged by the river. Other riprap edged shorelines include residential and commercial waterfronts. Riprap is typically used to armor the shorelines to protect against soil erosion.

The largest sand beach system is located along the southern shoreline with shorter sand beach sections located along the Potomac River shoreline. A short sand beach is located on the eastern shoreline just south of Russel Point. Both the south shoreline beach system and the shorter beach south of Russel Point have been identified as possible British landing areas during the July – August 1776 military operations and battle events (see Figure 7.5).

Jimmy Island

Located on the eastern end of the southern shoreline, this residential property was historically connected to the main part of the island by a narrow spit of land (see Figures 7.1 and 7.2). However, in 2021 the island is linked by a land area that is about 300 feet wide at its narrowest point. Jimmy Island is accessed by a causeway crossing wetlands and surface water. Extending northeast from Jimmy Island is a nearly 600-foot-long jetty. Two discernible constructed landforms are located on Jimmy Island. Both of these landforms are reportedly deposited dredge materials.

Indigo Point

Indigo Point is located on the north side of Piney Point Road that runs along the narrow peninsula. To the east is the mouth of the St. Mary's River, on the south is the inlet into the Island Creek, and to the west, the Island Creek.

Russell Point and Bell Point

These two points form a wide peninsula on the lower third of the eastern shoreline of the island. Russel Point is located on the southeast corner of the peninsula and Bell Point is located at the northern corner of the peninsula. Directly south of Russel Point is a sand beach. Just inland of the beach, a shallow ridge runs parallel to the shore.

Deep Point

Deep Point is on the southwestern corner of the island where the river bottom slopes down near the shoreline resulting in deeper water close to the point. This point has been altered through past site construction. See Figure 7.6 which is a historic map with Deep Point falling within a possible British landing zone during the July – August 1776 military operations and battle events.

Dodson Point

Historically the most northern point of the island, Dodson Point has been partly altered to provide the southern terminus for the St. George Island Bridge. The topography is relatively flat with a shallow ridge running northwest to southeast. This area may have been the location of British forces during the July 16, 1776, second phase of action involving combat between American forces likely located at present day Straits Point within the community of Piney Point and the British land forces likely located at Dobson Point (see Figure 5.2).

Vegetation

See Figures 3.1, 3.4, and 3.10 for mapped vegetation.

St. George Island is located in Maryland's lower Western Shore. The island is in the plant hardiness zone 7b, which is characterized by a minimum temperature range of 5 to -10 ° F (-15 to -12.2 ° C). Based on Environmental Protection Agency classification, St. George Island is part of the Chesapeake-Pamlico Lowlands and Tidal Marshes. This ecoregion is characterized by its abundance of wetlands and slow-moving streams which take up large swaths of the relatively flat topography.

Though land development has changed the St. George Island landscape from its farmland character at the time of the July – August 1776 military operations and combat actions, the existing wetlands and the wooded edges of wetlands may contain plant species that were present in the 18th century. See Figure 7.2 for mapped vegetation during the mid-19th century. Given that British forces sought out timber for the repair of vessels and fuel, the presence of native tree species supports landscape analysis regarding the role of terrain and environmental factors prior to, during, and after military operations and combat actions.

List of native and non-native vegetation on Saint George Island USGS Quad (Maryland Plant Atlas https://www.marylandplantatlas.org/viewQuadList.php?quad=38076_A4):

Acer rubrum - Red Maple
Ambrosia artemisiifolia - Annual Ragweed
Aralia spinosa - Devil's Walkingstick
Arthraxon hispidus - Small Carpgrass
Baccharis halimifolia - Eastern Baccharis
Campsis radicans - Trumpet Creeper
Cardamine hirsuta - Hairy Bittercress
Chasmanthium laxum - Slender Woodoats
Commelina communis - Asiatic Dayflower
Diodia virginiana - Virginia Buttonweed
Distichlis spicata - Seashore Saltgrass
Echinochloa crus-galli - Barnyard Grass

Eclipta prostrata - False Daisy
Eleusine indica - Goosegrass
Euonymus americanus - American Strawberry Bush
Eupatorium capillifolium - Dog Fennel
Hypericum hypericoides - St. Andrew's Cross
Ilex opaca - American Holly
Ipomoea lacunosa - Small White Morning-glory
Iva frutescens - Marsh Elder
Juncus roemerianus - Black Needlerush
Juniperus virginiana - Eastern Redcedar
Liquidambar styraciflua - Sweet Gum
Lonicera japonica - Japanese Honeysuckle
Morella cerifera - Wax Myrtle
Morus alba - White Mulberry
Nyssa sylvatica - Black Gum
Onoclea sensibilis - Sensitive Fern
Panicum virgatum - Switchgrass
Parthenocissus quinquefolia - Virginia Creeper
Passiflora lutea - Yellow Passionflower
Phragmites australis - Common Reed
Pinus taeda - Loblolly Pine
Prunus serotina - Black Cherry
Quercus velutina - Black Oak
Ranunculus bulbosus - Bulbous Buttercup
Rhexia mariana - Maryland Meadowbeauty
Rhus copallinum - Winged Sumac
Scirpus cyperinus - Woolgrass
Setaria faberi - Japanese Bristlegrass
Smilax rotundifolia - Common Greenbrier
Solidago sempervirens - Seaside Goldenrod
Sporobolus alterniflorus - Smooth Cordgrass
Strophostyles helvola - Amberique-bean
Tipularia discolor - Cranefly Orchid
Toxicodendron radicans - Eastern Poison Ivy
Trifolium pratense - Red Clover
Veronica persica - Bird's-eye Speedwell

Roads and Drives

See Figures 3.3 and 3.4 for public roads and private drives.

As indicated in the Chapter 7 analysis of the battlescape landscape, British forces would have moved along the length of the island from the landing somewhere near the southern end of the island to the northern end of the island to engage the Americans (see Figure 7.6). Though the 18th century circulation systems are unknown, mid-19th century maps show what are likely farm lanes connecting the few farms on the island. The British forces would likely have accessed farm lanes and pathways. For this reason, the existing road system is of interest. Do current roads and drives follow any of the alignments of 18th century farm lanes and pathways (see Figure 9.5)?

Note that virtually all public roads are subject to flooding owing to storm surges and exceptionally high tides. Also, with few exceptions, all public roads end in dead ends requiring access to private drives to turn around.

Saint George Island Bridge

The bridge connects the Piney Point community to the northern tip of St. George Island. It was constructed in 1957. The bridge maintains a similar width of the 2-lane Piney Point Road, which runs the length of the island. Two narrow sidewalks on either side extend the length of the bridge. Abutments enforced with riprap flank the strait of water connecting the Potomac River and St. George Creek.

Piney Point Road

Piney Point Road, Maryland Route 249, runs from Callaway, Maryland, through the community of Piney Point, and extends down to the St. George Island's Indigo Point. The road on the island is a two-lane asphalt-paved road and is a state road up to the intersection with Thomas Road. From the Thomas Road intersection to Indigo Point, the road is a county road. The road hugs the western shoreline until after crossing O'Connor's Lane, and then bends southeast heading to Indigo Point. Where Piney Point Road and Ball Point Road split, Piney Point Road narrows slightly. The road is fronted by residential development on the east side and the Potomac River on the west side until the road crosses O'Conner's Lane where the west side of the road is fronted by wetlands and Island Creek.

Ball Point Road

Ball Point Road is an asphalt-paved two-lane road starting at Piney Point Road at the north end of Island Creek and heads northeast toward Ball Point. It crosses a small unnamed creek before turning perpendicularly to the southeast. This road provides access for the properties on the wide peninsula between Bell and Russell Point and points beyond.

Thomas Road

Thomas Road departs from Piney Point Road shortly after passing First Saints Community Church. This road provides access to the southern portion of the island including the county's public boat landing at the south end of Island Creek. It is an asphalt paved two-lane road. It terminates proximate the southern pond and Jimmy Island.

Camp Merryelande Road

Camp Merryelande Road departs Thomas Road slightly north of the southern pond and leads to the private Camp Merryelande. The road is narrow with paved and gravel sections.

Private Drives

Virtually all residential, commercial, and institutional developments include drives and parking areas. Many of the drives are single lane gravel surfaces with some that are asphalt paved. Depending on the location of the buildings being accessed, these drives can from very short in length to long drives running through long and deep parcels.



11/25/2021, 11:50:45 AM

Land Cover (2013)

- No Data
- Water
- Wetlands
- Tree Canopy
- Shrubland
- Herbaceous Vegetation

- Barren
- Structures
- Impervious Surfaces
- Impervious Roads
- Tree Canopy over Structures
- Tree Canopy over Impervious Surfaces

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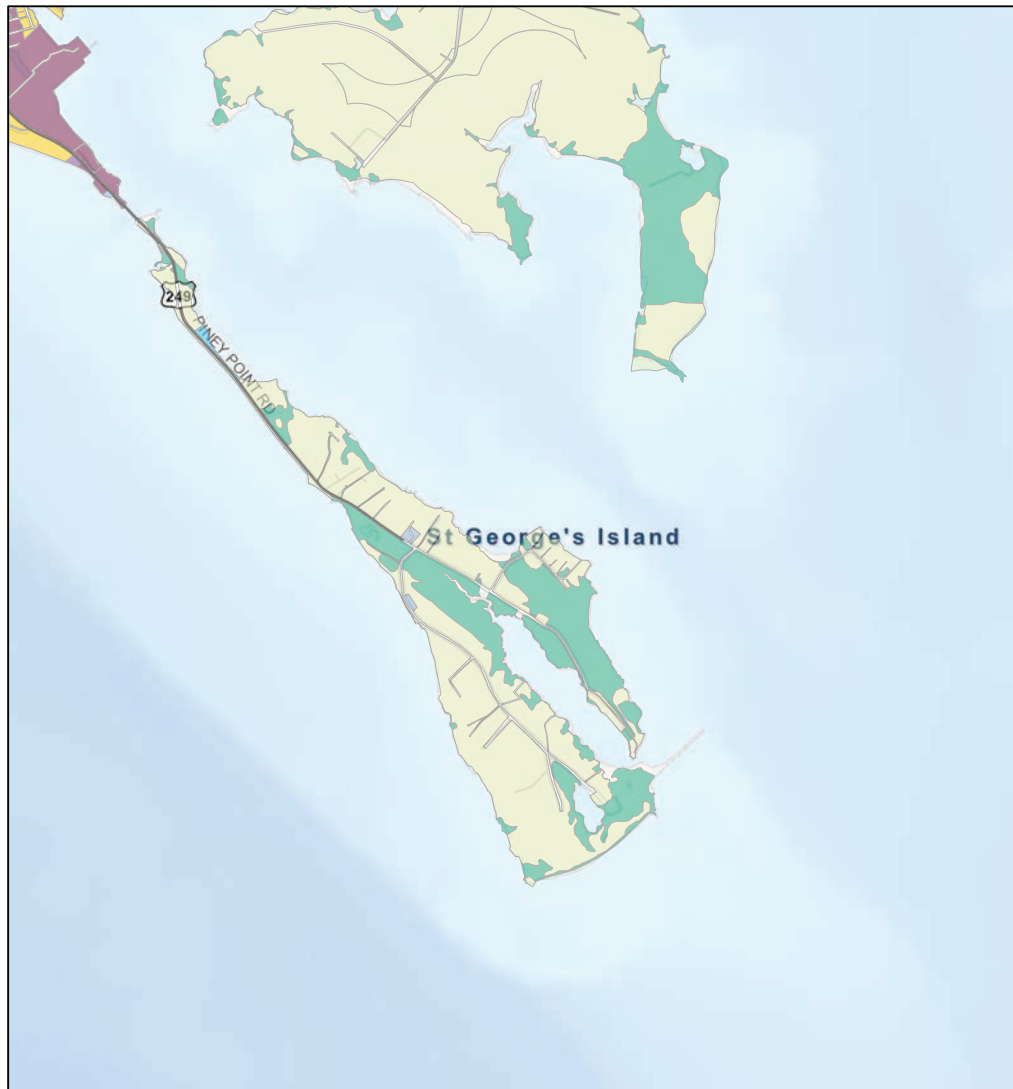
0 0.25 0.5 1 mi

0 0.4 0.8 1.6 km

Chesapeake Conservancy

Printed from the Public GIS Map
Provided by the St Marys County Government

Figure 3.1: Landcover of St. George Island.



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Land Use (May 2018)

Public Lands

Public Lands

Marine Use

Mixed-Use Moderate-Intensity

Mixed-Use Moderate-Intensity

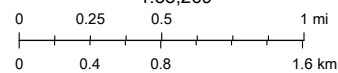
Residential Medium Density

Residential Mixed Use

Rural Preservation

Tidal Wetlands

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Printed from the Public GIS Map
Provided by the St Marys County Government

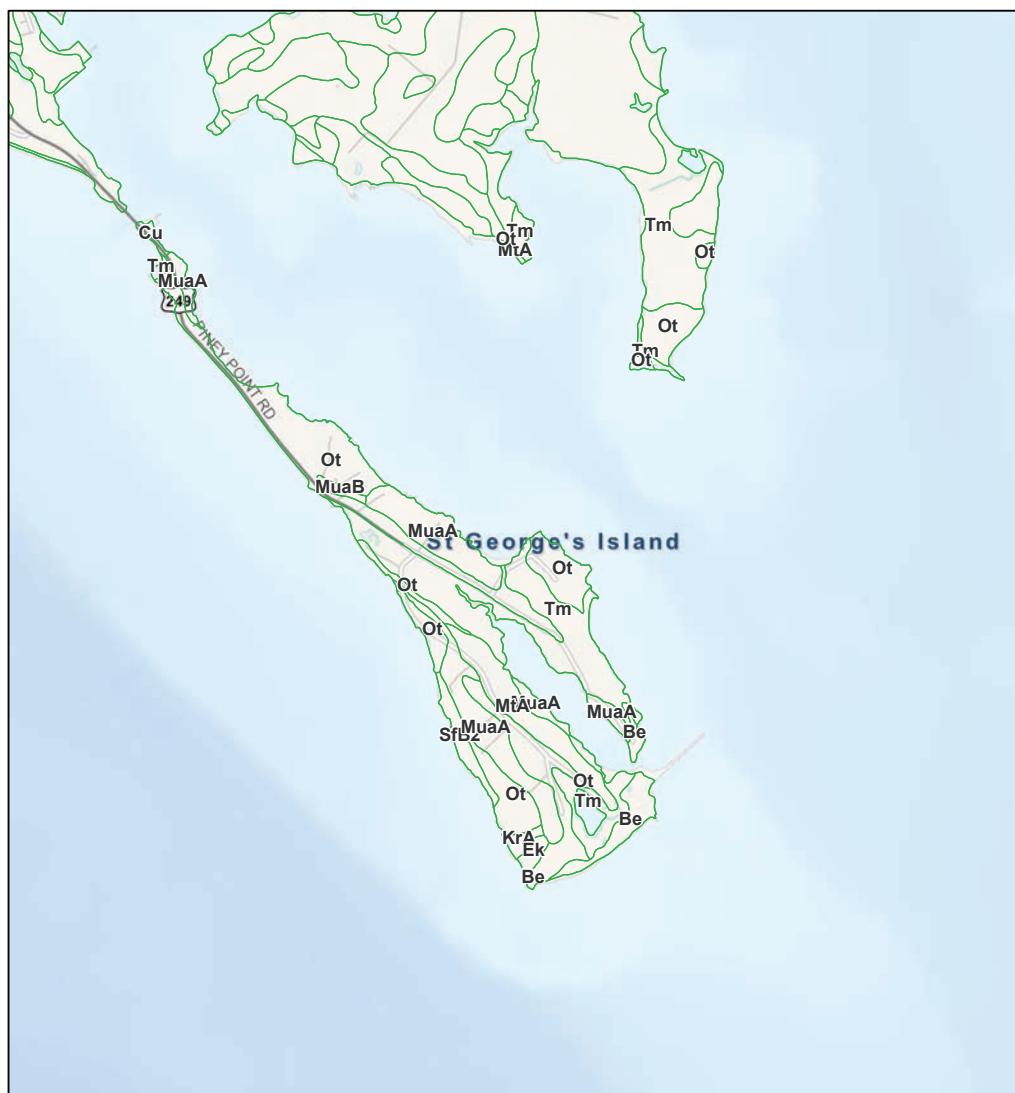
Figure 3.2: Land Use of St. George Island.



Figure 3.3: Planimetric Map of St. George Island.



Figure 3.4: Aerial photograph of St. George Island.



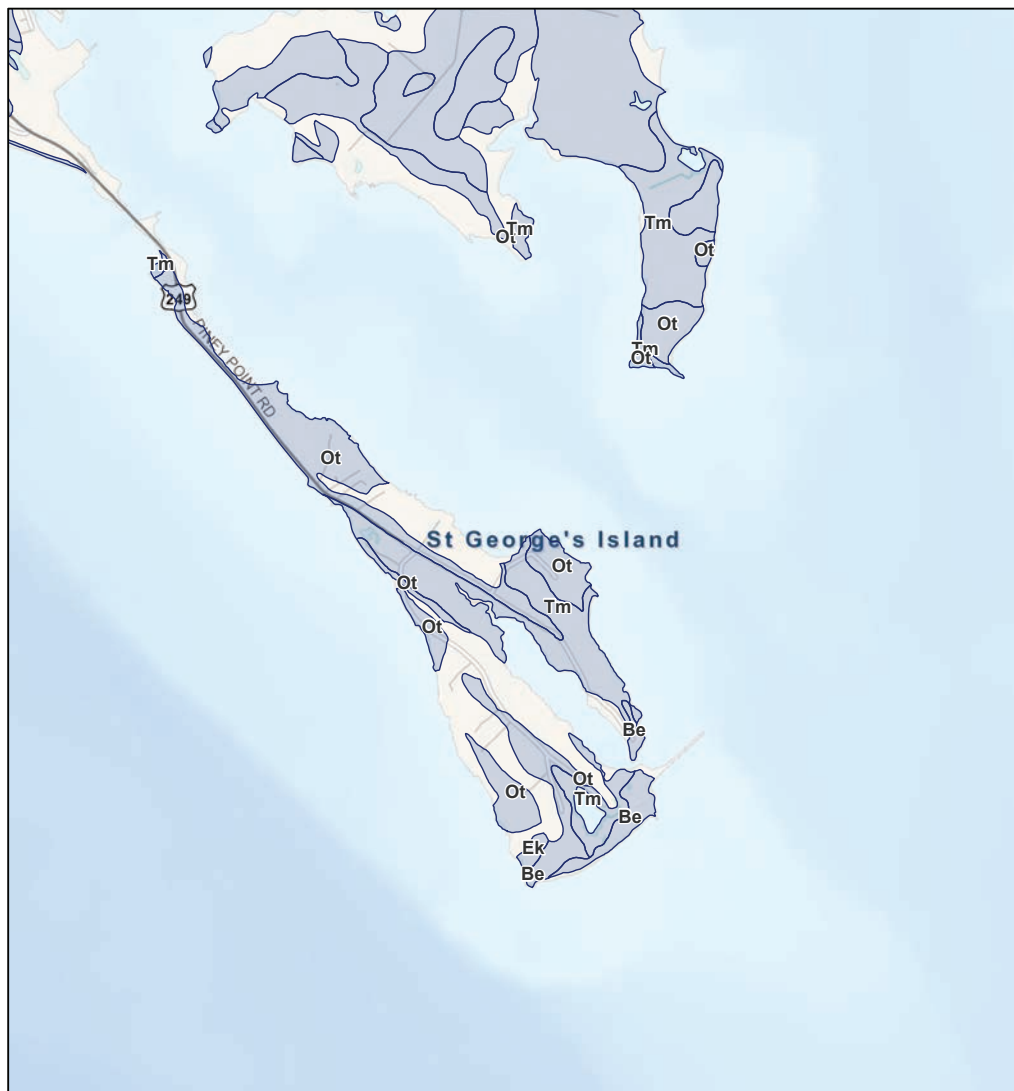
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NRCS Soils (SSURGO) - All

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0 0.25 0.5 1 mi
0 0.4 0.8 1.6 km

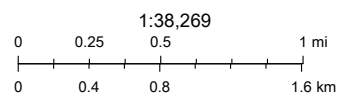
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Provided by the St Marys County Government

Figure 3.5: Soils of St. George Island.



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 NRCS Soils (SSURGO) - Hydric Soils

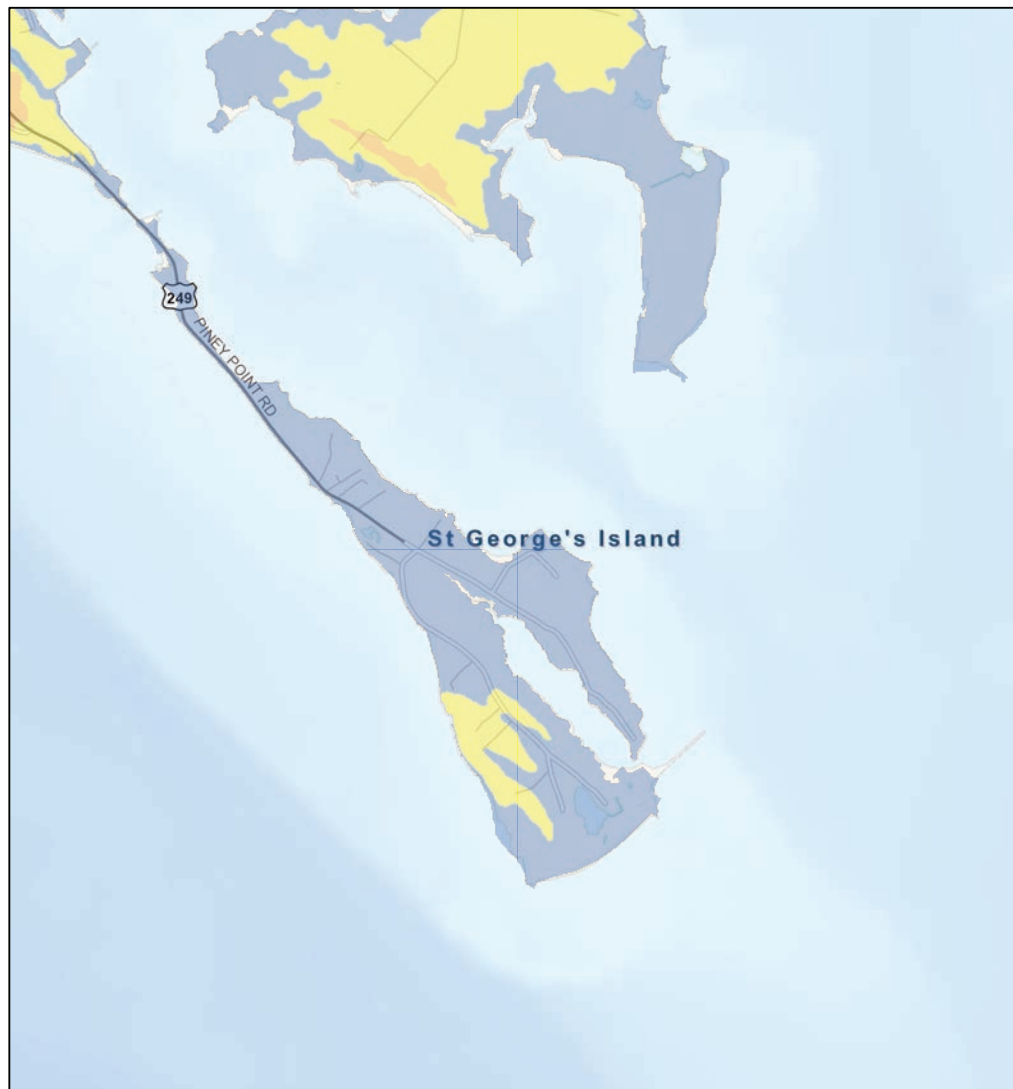


Printed from the Public GIS Map
Provided by the St Marys County Government

Figure 3.6: Hydric Soils of St. George Island.



Figure 3.7: Shoreline Change Over Time of St. George Island.



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Hurricane Storm Surge

 Category 3
 Category 1
 Category 2
 Category 4

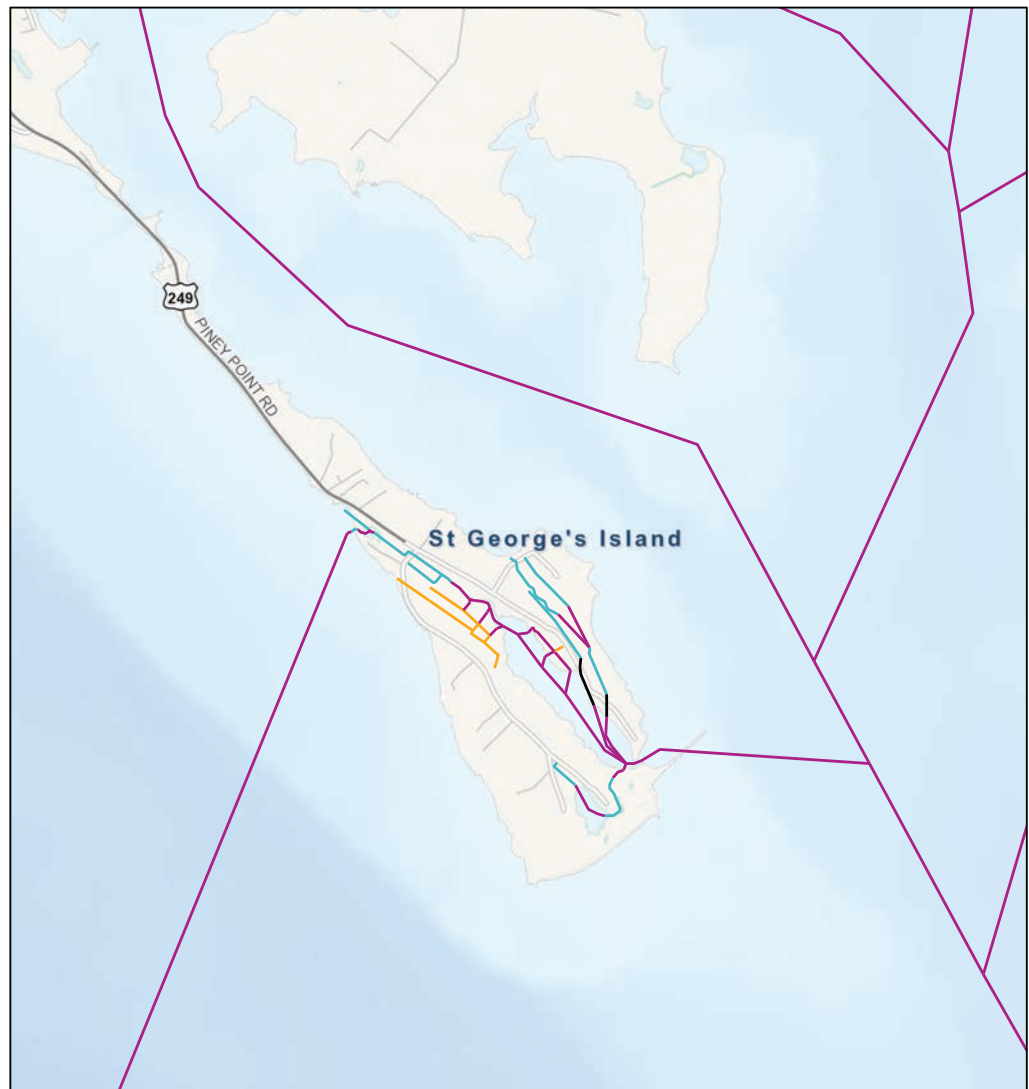
1:38,269

0	0.25	0.5	1 mi
0	0.4	0.8	1.6 km

MD iMAP, USACE, MEMA, NOAA

Printed from the Public GIS Map
Provided by the St Marys County Government

Figure 3.8: Hurricane Storm Surge Areas of St. George Island.



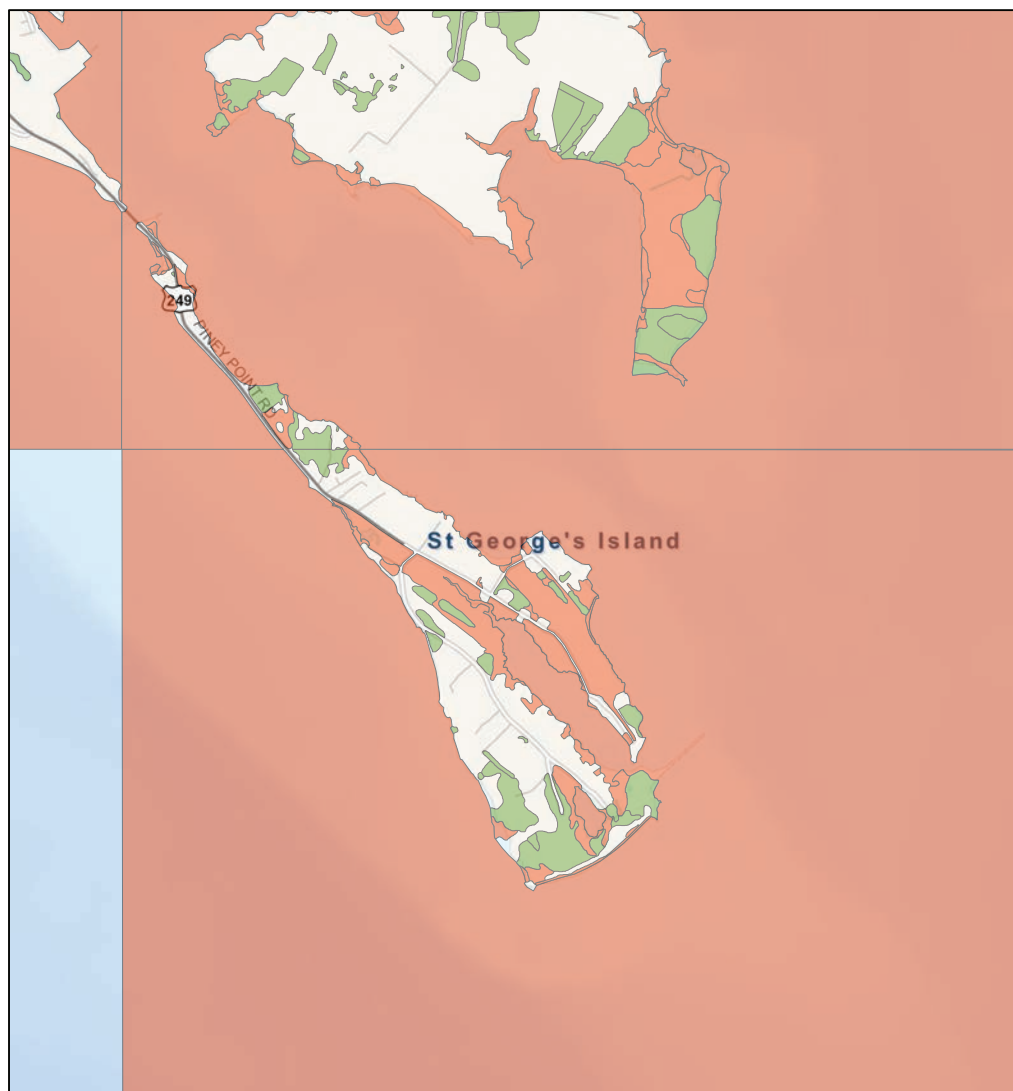
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USGS Streams
 Perennial
 Artificial Path
 Canal Ditch
 Connector

1:38,269
 0 0.25 0.5 1 mi
 0 0.4 0.8 1.6 km

Printed from the Public GIS Map
 Provided by the St Marys County Government

Figure 3.9: Streams and Open Drainage Systems of St. George Island.

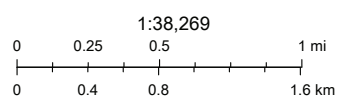


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DNR Wetlands

Estuarine

Palustrine



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Figure 3.10: Wetlands of St. George Island.

4

Context & Cultural Significance

Context and Cultural Significance

Introduction

The study of battlefields and the larger battlescape requires an interdisciplinary approach. This research involves the interplay of data derived from the landscape, historical documents, and the physical evidence recovered from archaeological investigations. The latter category includes environmental as well as cultural information. The underlying premise of battlefield studies is that contemporary areas and landscapes are palimpsests that retain critical information necessary for understanding past conflicts. This is especially important in the case of St. George Island, Maryland, where the events pertaining to the arrival of Crown forces under Lord Dunmore and the American response in July to August of 1776 have remained poorly defined and understood. The events that transpired on the island have not been the focus of serious scholarship. Instead, previous studies or mentions of the St. George Island events have been more of a general historical nature, without reference to the island's landscape, military and naval practice, or to defining of the military events that took place there.

This project is the first to undertake a fuller examination of the events that occurred on the island and the associated surrounding area and their surviving physical dimensions. It recognizes that the island itself as a battlefield is a component of a much larger battlescape that embraces the surrounding area's landforms and extensive river systems. Utilizing a close interrogation of primary historical documents such as military and naval records, at least eleven key site types or components that comprise the general and military landscapes have been identified. Some locations for these have been identified with a high degree of certainty. Others are less certain, due to gaps in documentation, the vagaries of the historical record and, in some cases, significant changes in the landscape since 1776. All, however, will need archaeological survey, and possibly further investigations, to define extent and integrity of their surviving remains.

The clear focus of this project is the 1776 Battle of St. George Island, but an overview of the earlier history of the island is offered to establish a larger context and the broader significance of the area. Except where otherwise noted, the prehistoric overview draws largely on Seidel's contributions to various Maryland Humanities Council projects (especially Maryland Humanities Council 2001) and Seidel et al. (2021). For the historic period, several key sources will be noted below, including the writings and 1612 map of John Smith, an indigenous cultural landscape study prepared for the larger area by Strickland et al. (2015), and historic sites inventory form on file with the Maryland Historical Trust (1994).

Prehistory

Archaeologists have divided North America's prehistory into various periods or phases, each characterized by specific cultural complexes that changed over time. The three major periods are: the Paleoindian period (12000-8000 BC); the Archaic period, which is subdivided into the Early Archaic (8000-6500 BC), Middle Archaic (6500-3000 BC), and Late Archaic (3000-1000 BC); and the Woodland period, which is subdivided into the Early Woodland (1000 BC-200 AD), Middle Woodland (200-900 AD), and Late Woodland (900-1600AD). The period of initial interaction between Native Americans and European explorers and settlers is referred to as the Contact Period (1600-1650 AD in this area).

The Paleoindian and Early Archaic Periods (12000 BC – 8000 BC) were a time of significant environmental changes that accompanied the end of the last ice age. The earliest period was

characterized by much colder temperatures, significantly lower sea levels (the Chesapeake Bay did not exist), and a very different ecology, with life adapted to the cold. Human cultural strategies were shaped to effectively deal with this specific environment. No Paleoindian sites have been excavated in the lower Susquehanna area, although shoreline finds of characteristic lithic artifacts have been found. People at this time seem to have been highly mobile, shifting their location to take advantage of seasonally available plant resources and small game. Riverine environments such as the project area were important, as they attracted a wide variety of game and supported more diverse plant communities. Furthermore, the nearby fall line was the dividing line between two separate physiographic provinces, the coastal plain and the piedmont. The boundary between the different ecosystems in these provinces is known as an ecotone, and ecologists have long recognized ecotones as areas of wide diversity and a relative abundance of flora and fauna.

Global temperatures began to warm toward the end of the Paleoindian Period and into the Early Archaic, with a consequent rise in sea level and changes in plant and animal communities. These changes were not yet significant enough to require major shifts in human subsistence or settlement strategies, although many of the stone tools made and used began to change in form and material.

During the **Middle Archaic** (6500 BC-3000 BC), the climate continued to moderate, eventually reaching modern conditions. Shifts toward deciduous trees from the earlier pine and spruce, along with a spread of grasslands, attracted browsers, grazing animals, and species adapted to denser forests (deer, elk, turkey). Lithic tool styles changed, probably due in part to different hunting strategies, as well as different ways of attaching points to shafts. It is likely that people expanded their reliance upon foraging, taking advantage of the relative abundance of resources compared to earlier periods. This was particularly true of riverine and swampy locales at the margins of rising tributaries. A consequence may have been reduced mobility.

The Late Archaic (3000 BC-1000 BC) may be seen as both an intensification and culmination of developments seen in the earlier Archaic periods. The number and types of ground stone tools expanded, and a wider variety of flaked tools, from new stone sources, are seen. Highly decorated bone tools, such as awls, fish hooks, and harpoons were made, along with stone net sinkers that all point toward an increasing reliance upon fishing. Fish traps and weirs, some of them quite elaborate, were placed along the river. In a pattern that would remain entrenched well into the historic period, people exploited seasonal runs of spawning fish. Fish could be dried for storage, oysters were harvested and smoked, and a wide variety of other foods such as nuts and cereal grains could be stored, relieving the scarcity of the winter months. This in turn would lead to population growth.

Also worth noting is an apparent increase in long-distance trade over this period. This is seen in stone sources (rhyolite from the west; argillite from what is now Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey; and copper). The Susquehanna, with its long reach inland and north, emerged as an important trade corridor. River systems such as the Potomac offered east-west routes into the continent's interior.

By the end of this period, sea levels approximated their current level and the Chesapeake Bay finally reached its modern extent. It is no coincidence that this is paralleled by a major shift in human strategies, recognized by archaeologists as the **Early Woodland** (1000 BC – 200 AD). Perhaps the most significant of these was the introduction of ceramics. A variety of types, with different constituents and tempering additives, as well as different forms, emerged. The most prevalent example from the northern Delmarva was Wolfe Creek ware, in which crushed quartz was used as a temper and the surface was decorated by pressing cord or nets into the clay before it was fired.

Pottery as a technology had a profound effect on people, increasing both life expectancy and birth rates, with a consequent rise in populations. Foods could be softened over the fire in a clay pot

for hours, making it more edible for both older people with bad teeth and infants who were being weaned, while the stews retained more of their nutrients in this method of cooking. Early Woodland Indians ate crabs and shellfish from the Chesapeake Bay. These were particularly abundant in this project area, as evidenced by shell middens and trash on prehistoric and colonial sites.

Many of these trends continued during the **Middle Woodland** (200 AD-900 AD), including the expansion of trade networks. People seem to have clustered in larger groups along waterways, with seasonal inland camps that were smaller. The range of plants used seems to have expanded, along with intentional, preferential treatment of some species (a trend that may have first appeared in the Early Woodland). Skeletal and isotopic analysis of period burials from Delaware's Island Field site suggest an increasingly carbohydrate-rich diet, likely due to an expanded use of plants such as goosefoot, amaranth (an annual herb that produces edible seeds), and perhaps wild rice.

A number of technological shifts distinguish the **Late Woodland** (900 AD– 1600 AD). This includes more sophisticated and durable ceramics, with shell-tempering. A shift to small, triangular stone points also points to the adoption of the bow and arrow at around 900 AD. This was a more effective hunting tool, also useful in hunting waterfowl that was abundant in the Chesapeake. In addition, people in the region began to truly adopt domesticated plants such as squash, beans, and maize. This made flat river bottoms more attractive for settlement, as they were more easily cultivated. With the population shift into the floodplains came a coalescence of people into larger villages.

By about 1500 AD, Native peoples in the region made the shift from tribal groups to what are more accurately called chiefdoms. These were more centralized societies, with internal ranks and “redistributive economies,” in that some of what people produced was collected as tribute by more powerful figures. For the Chesapeake, perhaps the best known of these chiefdoms are the Piscataway, along the Potomac, and the Powhatan, centered on the James River.

The Piscataway, an Algonquian speaking group, were a numerous people centered along the Potomac River. They followed the same subsistence pattern as other groups of the Late Woodland, with a sophisticated system of horticulture and mixed cropping, generating abundant food surpluses that supported a dense population. Strickland et al. (2015) offer a concise overview of the prehistory and history of the Piscataway which will not be replicated here. But highlights drawn from their work are well worth reviewing. The Piscataway controlled the northern shoreline of the Potomac in the late 1500s and early 1600s, while the Patowmack controlled the southern side. As note by Strickland et al. (2015:17):

The Piscataway leader or tayac controlled territory in what would later become Maryland ranging from St. Mary's County north to the fall line. Subject to the tayac were werowances or individual village or town leaders (Hall 1910:125). Matrilineal inheritance of these positions is believed to have been the norm (as suggested by the 1660 oral history), at least until the death of Kittamaquund (Cissna 1986:62-68; Potter 1993:190). Among the other important positions in Piscataway political organization were war leaders, priests, shamans, and great men, who advised the tayac or werowances (Cissna 1986:68-75).

On the eve of the invasion of Piscataway by the Europeans, the indigenous people of southern Maryland were practicing a form of slash-and-burn agriculture to clear land for planting corn, beans, and squash (a method subsequently adapted by the colonists). Tobacco was also cultivated, primarily for ritual or spiritual purposes and not for recreational consumption. Hunting and gathering remained vitally important to the subsistence economy, and when residents left to hunt or fish at various times throughout the year, town populations would decline temporarily. Settlements might be permanently abandoned once the soil in nearby fields was depleted and corn yields declined.

Based on predictive modeling of other parts of the Chesapeake Bay (Seidel 2007), St. George Island would have been an attractive locale for Native Americans from the Archaic through the Late Woodland Piscataway settlement, but for specific kinds of activity. During periods of lower sea level, this upland offered a commanding view and access to several of the then smaller tributaries of the Bay, i.e., the ancestral Potomac and St. Mary's Rivers. Periodic settlement was likely, and is evidenced by artifacts (predominantly Archaic materials – see Figures 4.1 A and 4.1 B) in private collections from the south end of the island (Sanborn and Ko 2021). Its position at the mouth of the St. Mary's River offered a strategic viewpoint and useful place from which to exploit fisheries and estuarine plant foods. However, its exposed location made it less favorable for a longer-term settlement.

Prior to contact with Europeans, movements of people were having an impact on local communities. From the west, Siouxan groups such as the Manahoac and Monocan were moving east. From the northwest, the Iroquoian Massawomek were beginning incursions into the Chesapeake, while in the north the Iroquoian Susquehannock were moving down the Susquehanna River into the upper Chesapeake Bay.

The Contact and Historic Periods

This brings us to the Contact Period (1600 AD -1650 AD). Although the Spanish made several forays into the Chesapeake, the first long-term settlement came at Jamestown beginning in 1607. John Smith's voluminous writings provide a wealth of information on the region at contact (Smith 1986). His map of the Chesapeake offers insight into the settlement patterns of the time (Figures 4.2 and 4.3).



Figure 4.1 A: Lithic materials from the Sanborn Collection, St. George Island.



Figure 4.1 B: Lithic materials from the Sanborn Collection, St. George Island.

Smith faithfully depicted numerous villages, both major and smaller, short-term, seasonal settlement sites. On the north shore of the “Patawomeck,” above “Sparkes Poynt,” he shows no Native American settlements in the location of St. George Island, in fact not really showing the island at all. Nonetheless, the Piscataway were the major force on the north or east side of the Potomac. Smith related various subgroups among the inventory of villages and their fighting men, enumerating them as follows (Strickland et al. 2015: 18):

Secomocomoco	40 men
Potopaco	20
Pamacacack	60
Nacotchtank	80
Moyowances (Moyaones)	100 capital of the Piscataway

Of course, these numbers were not for the total population, estimates for which have varied from 2,000 to 7,000, with a more reliable recent estimate at 3,600-5,760. But the total changed over time and grew smaller with the losses suffered by the Piscataway in conflicts with the Massawomecks and Susquehannocks (Strickland et al. 2015:19).

Strickland et al. (2015:19) appropriately characterize the settlement of St. Mary’s City in 1634 and thereafter as an invasion, for that is precisely what it was. Despite trade and a lack of the open conflict that characterized Virginia’s relationship with indigenous peoples, the relationship in Maryland was tense and often one-sided. Not least in causing uneasiness was Maryland’s effort to codify relationships and bring the Piscataway under colonial law and authority.



Figure 4.2: John Smith's map of the Chesapeake Bay, 161. (north at right)



Figure 4.3: Detail, John Smith's map of the Chesapeake Bay, 1612. (north at right)

By 1670, the Piscataway had been pushed upriver and in 1680 they sought relocation, which led to their move to Zekiah Swamp (or Zekiah Fort). By this time, colonial settlement in the project area had been entrenched for decades, as shown by the spread of plantations depicted on Augustine Herman's 1673 map of Maryland (Figure 4.4). Plantations based on the staple crop of tobacco had spread up the Potomac and St. Mary's Rivers in the dispersed settlement pattern that came to characterize the Chesapeake Tidewater. It is interesting to note that Herman showed no plantation symbol, the location of which archaeologists have generally found fairly accurate, on St. George Island.



Figure 4.4: Detail from Augustine Herman's 1673 map of Maryland, showing St. George Island.

The island was designated as part of St. George's Hundred in 1637/38. The island itself apparently encompassed 1,000 acres in those early years, almost half of which have subsequently been lost to erosion. Through a complex series of transactions that were made necessary by changing laws regarding the ability of the Jesuits to own land, the Jesuits were given and retained rights to its use in one way or another until about 1850 (Maryland Historical Trust 1994).

The predominant land use through the mid-19th century appears to have been grazing for sheep and cattle, with hogs also turned loose to forage. How many individuals and families were resident on the island at any given time has been hard to determine. At least one family was in residence on the island by 1667, as John Hopper recorded marks for his livestock with the Provincial Court. In 1678, two servants are noted as living on the island, caring for livestock (Maryland Historical Trust 1994). During the American Revolution and the events of July and August 1776 that are the primary focus of this project, there were some residences and families present, as the British are reported as "sacking" and burning houses (see below for a thorough discussion of these events). After this destruction and the withdrawal of the British fleet in August of 1776, people returned. Writing to Thomas Sim Lee on 18 February 1781, Col. Richard Barnes said (. Archives 47:75):

The Enemy have constantly landed on St George's Island whenever they have come up Potomack and I am well satisfied the People on the Island give them every information they want, it is supposed that one of them conducted them up Smiths Creek. I therefore think it would tend to the security of the County that they shuld be removed from the Island, and If such a measure can be authorised shuld recommend that it may be done, there are not more than three or four Familys on the Island with hardly any effects.

So, three or four families were in residence in 1781. In 1776, the British objective was fresh water, but in multiple landings in 1781 the resource sought apparently was pine trees on the island for use as replacement masts (. Archives 47:299). This information will be important in later assessments

of the island's landscape and vegetation, as it illustrates that the island was at least partly forested. The British returned during the War of 1812, and at least four houses were burned by Admiral Cockburn on 2 November 1813. A Jesuit priest, Father Neale, described the damage (Beitzell 1976 Jesuit Missions; quoted in Maryland Historical Trust 1994):

Last Wednesday I visited St. George's Island and viewed with affliction [sic] the great devastation made by the British in their last visit.. They have burnt every house... They had cut down 25 or 26 large oaks, all white oaks excepting two or three... They burnt as much fencing as they could, as also the marshes. In a word, they have left sufficient proof that they would have destroyed the whole had it lain in their power...

This adds confirmatory details about the island's vegetation, noting large oaks and extensive marsh.

By 1824, there were at least two houses on the island, as shown on an 1824 map prepared by the Bureau of Topographic Engineers (Figure 4.5). This map will figure prominently in later sections of this report, as it is the earliest detailed and accurate map of the island yet to have been discovered. In 1850, the Jesuits sold the island, and it saw an influx of families from Maryland's Eastern Shore and the Northern Neck of Virginia, many of whom were Methodist. Many of these people worked the water, either in fisheries or as river pilots (Maryland Historical Trust 1994). Most of the existing housing stock on the island dates from this period or later.

The later history of the island, from the Civil War through the 20th century, is summarized in the Maryland Historical Trust historic inventory form (1994). Water-based trades remained dominant, despite a growth in population from 1870-1900. Stores that provided goods for islanders gradually disappeared, especially after WW I, and summer visitors that had provided income also dwindled. As mobility increased on either side of WW II, young islanders here and elsewhere in the Bay gradually left for better paying jobs in urban areas.

Over time, the island's physical contours also have changed. The loss of acreage to erosion was previously noted, and the shorelines have shifted, sometimes extending and then retreating, but with a gradual and steady loss of land mass. GIS mapping will be used in later sections of this report to document some of these changes and track the losses.

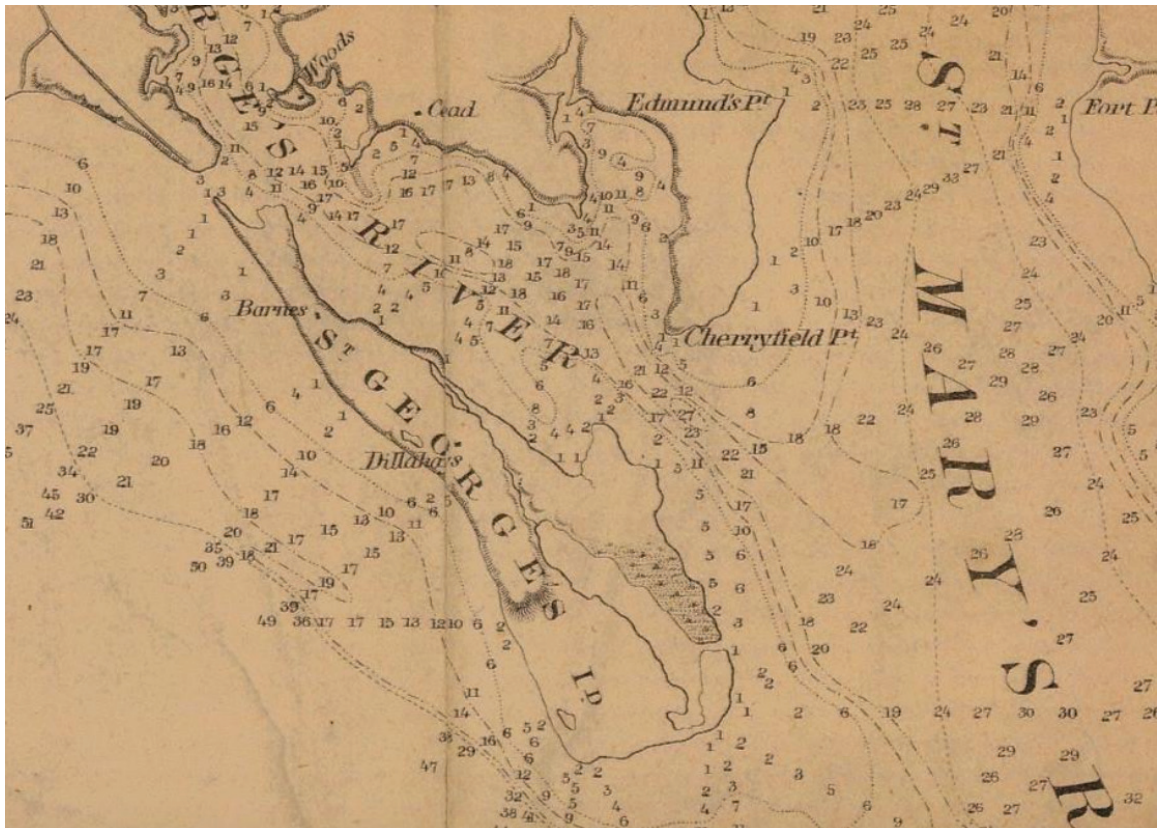


Figure 4.5: 1824 map of St. George Island, showing two residences (Barnes and Dillahays), as well as soundings and some topographic details. (Bureau of Topographic Engineers 1824)

Naval & Military Operations July-August 1776

Naval and Military Operations | July-August 1776

Introduction

In the latter half of 1775 and early 1776, numerous events in Virginia resulted in the collapse of Royal government and its replacement by a Revolutionary government. The colony's last Royal governor, John Murray, the 4th Earl of Dunmore, had been forced to flee Williamsburg and set up the Royal standard aboard a Royal Navy vessel off the colonial port of Norfolk in 1775. After an initial success in an action at Kemp's Landing, Crown forces were defeated at the Battle of Great Bridge and eventually forced to withdraw into Norfolk, where American forces began the investment of the city. In the course of military actions, Crown forces burned the city, and the smoking city was evacuated. From there, Lord Dunmore's fleet of vessels sailed for Gwynn's Island. Located on the north side of Virginia's Piankatank River, near its mouth, this 2,000-acre island was occupied by loyal sympathizer John Grymes. It was seen as a refuge where British forces could establish an anchorage for the fleet and erect fortifications to protect a large camp. This encampment housed the governor's forces, consisting of British Army regulars, Loyalist troops, and the many other loyal Americans seeking safety and the protection of the Crown. Anticipating this movement, the Americans quickly advanced and erected batteries on the nearby mainland close to the island. The ensuing bombardment damaged many of the vessels in the fleet, inflicted numerous casualties, and forced the abandonment of this position on 10 July 1776.

With Virginia firmly in the hands of the Americans, what options did Lord Dunmore have for continuing the Royal presence in the Chesapeake Bay region? The senior naval officer in the region was Captain Andrew Snape Hamond, aboard the 44-gun frigate *Roebuck*, and he laid out the options and the stark conditions that constrained their action (NAVDOCS 5:1079):

I had frequently recommended it to Lord Dunmore in the strongest terms, to use his endeavors to persuade the People that had put themselves under his protection, to sail their Vessels to some place of security, on account of the great inconvenience that arose to His Majtys Service by keeping two ships allways to guard them, but on this occasion I took it upon me to assure his Lordship that I had come to a resolution to get rid of every Vessel except the Transports, and that I should order one of the Ships to convoy them to St. Augustine; accordingly orders were sent to them for that purpose, but as many of them were quite worm eaten, others without sails & Rigging sufficient to Navigate them, and the whole without water, it was absolutely necessary, that we should proceed to some place where the latter could be easily obtained, and where the state of each Vessel could be examined into, and the Familys taken out of those found defective, and distributed on board the others.

The nearest place likely to answer these purposes, was St. George's Island in the River Potowmack, whither we directed our Course the next day.

Hamond makes it clear that he and Dunmore had two primary objectives in moving to St. George Island: (1) to refit the vessels of the fleet and make them more seaworthy, ideally without interference from the Americans; and (2) to obtain the fresh water needed for drinking and other uses in the fleet.

The passage to St. George Island was not an easy one. Hamond further related that the fleet was "roughly handled by a gale of wind" that struck the fleet at the mouth of the Potomac River, causing several vessels to be "driven on Shore" and others to lose "Sails & Rigging" and other vital pieces of ship's fittings and equipage. His assessment of the condition of Lord Dunmore's fleet, "This

Misfortune, to a Fleet ill provided before, was not to be remedyed, so that many Vessels were condemned to be destroyed in consequence of it,” foreshadowed a fate that many of the British vessels would suffer later at St. George Island.

The Fleet's Arrival

Alexander Somerville to the Council of Safety reported the first location of the fleet after entering the Potomac River on 14 July. He stated “The Ships of War, Tenders &c was this morning lying off between St. Mary's River & Point Look Out” (. Archives 12:45). However, late on 14 July, or early on 15 July, the fleet had shifted its location closer to St. George Island and had come to anchor there.

Colonel Jeremiah Jordan reported to the Maryland Council of Safety on 15 July that “there is now lying off the mouth of the St. Mary's River between seventy and eighty sail of vessels” (. Archives 12:51). Brigadier-General Dent also described the location in his 19 July report to the Council of Safety. He stated that he arrived on 16 July and saw that the fleet “continues in the mouth of St. Mary's River opposite the lower end of St. George's Island” (Maryland Archives 12:84). Another reference to the fleet's location dates to 26 July. Writing from “St. George's Camp,” Major Thomas Price indicated to General Andrew Lewis that “The Fleet lays from the North East side of St Georges River a Bout a mile, the depth of water (as I imagine) about three fathom” (Maryland Archives 12:122-123). Taken together, these two references place the fleet's anchorage in the mouth of the St. Mary's River. The general vicinity also was described by Captain Hamond of His Majesty's ship *Roebuck* on 15 July (NAVDOCS 6:172):

George's Island is about 2 ½ miles long, has an excellent Harbour on the East side of it, and a small Haven on the North, sufficiently open at one end for small Vessels to turn in to it, but at the other is not above 100 yards wide nor has above 3 or 4 feet water.

The “Harbour” seems to refer to the mouth of the St. Mary's River, while the “Haven” must refer to St. George Creek, separating the island from the mainland (Figure 5.1). The anchorage is more fully discussed later in the discussion of Site Types.

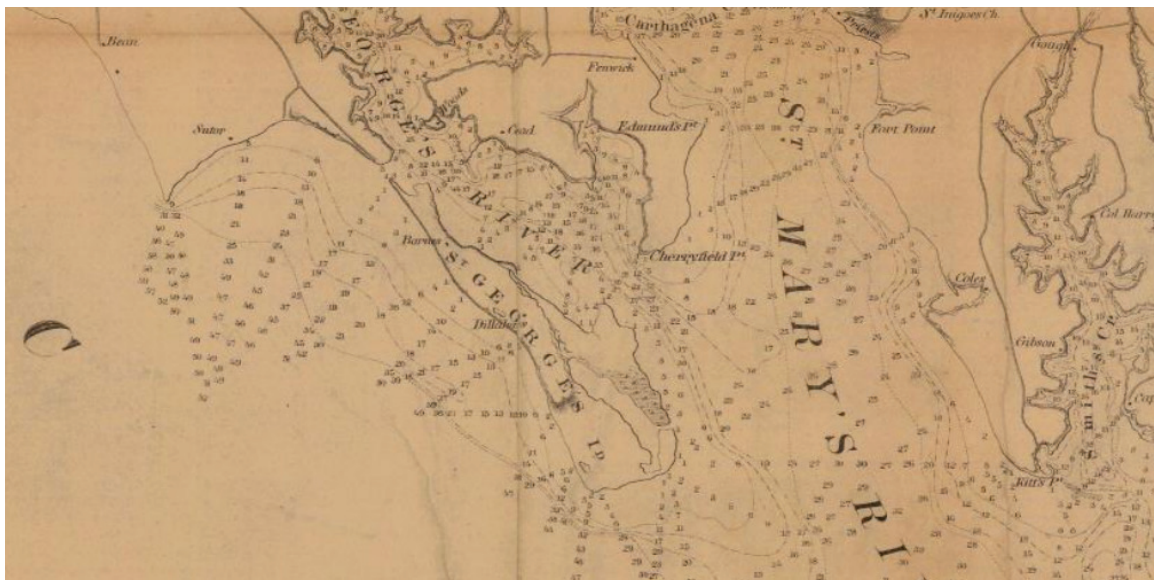


Figure 5.1: Excerpt from the 1824 Bureau of Topographic Engineers Map of the Patuxent and St. Mary's Rivers. (Bureau of Topographic Engineers 1824)

St. George Island as Battlescape: Military and Naval Operations and Actions

As Lord Dunmore's force moved into Maryland waters, state authorities had no small concerns about *landings* that could be conducted by Crown forces at locations of their choosing. The Chesapeake region's numerous small rivers and creeks provided easy access to attacking forces, especially if they had naval superiority. By the time of the American Revolution, the Royal Navy had extensive experience in how to effectively conduct amphibious operations (Gardiner 1996:62), and Captain Hamond, as one of the practitioners and innovators in this form of warfare, was well versed in the methods of projecting men and equipment ashore in an organized fashion. Landings from the fleet would certainly have been under his direction, and possible landing sites were key areas that required careful citing and defense. Amphibious landings were the first and most persistent type of operation that was conducted by Crown forces at St. George Island. The fleet's anchorage served as the base from which these operations were launched. A number of the actions on the island were between American forces and Crown watering and wooding parties projected ashore. Others were between land-based positions and Crown naval vessels, or potentially between American and Crown naval vessels. In the nearly three weeks between 14 July, when the fleet arrived at the island, and 2 August, when the fleet began dispersing and departing the region, numerous maneuvers and no less than five actions took place on the island or in the immediately surrounding areas. In addition, Crown forces penetrated 100 miles up the Potomac, seeking water and burning at least one plantation. Previous research has not recognized the intensive and extensive nature of the different activities that took place on the island between those dates. To better understand the nature of the military events that took place, each operation and action will be discussed in chronological succession. The term *operation* denotes a support function or movement that did not necessarily involve armed combat; the term *action* denotes an event that did involve armed combat.

13 July

Operations. A Spanish spy on board the Crown fleet, Miguel Antonio Eduardo, reported that on this date "The Frigate *Fowey*, with Governor Dunmore and Commandant Hamond on board, left to reconnoiter the Port between St. George's and St. Mary's" (NAVDOCS 5:1346). *Fowey* was a 24-gun sixth rate and the second most powerful vessel in Dunmore's fleet (the most potent ship was the 44-gun *Roebuck*). Eduardo's use of the term "Port" is significant in that it may suggest they were inspecting a prospective anchorage for the fleet. The Americans had also surveilled the arrival of the Crown fleet. Maryland militia officer Richard Barnes reported seeing "on my arrival there I found about forty Sail of Vessels, they were then about twenty five miles off the Point in the Bay, where they continued till in the night. In the Morning about fifty-eight Sail were discovered opposite Smiths Creek in Potomack, & eight in the Bay" (NAVDOCS 5:1066).

14 July

Operations. The Spanish spy Eduardo stated "at midday we anchored off St. George's Island (NAVDOCS 5:1346).

15 July

Operations. The first land operation by Crown forces was the landing of troops on the island. Maryland militia officer Colonel Jeremiah Jordan reported "Ten Boats full of Men landed on St. George's Island and returned for more" (. Archives 12:51). The landing had been observed by Colonel Richard Barnes, who was stationed with the Lower Battalion "on St. Inagoes Neck." The movement and composition of this force was described in the Spanish narrative as "some 350 troops of the 14th Regiment, Queen's Regiment, and the Ethiopians disembarked" (NAVDOCS 5:1346), and that "All of them undertook a grand sack of the few Houses that had been abandoned by their owners that same morning, taking all the cattle with the exception of a small number of sheep and pigs." This "sack" was the first of two that would occur on the island.

Landings to bring troops ashore, such as this one and the others conducted over the next several weeks, required the assembling of resources such as the various ships boats, organizing the forces to be brought ashore, and the expertise of the officers and sailors who did the actual rowing and steering. The ship's boats used came in variety of types (May 1999), and would have been drawn from the Royal Navy vessels, as well as from the civilian vessels. If contested by the Americans, as occurred on more than one occasion, these landings also required covering fire from the fleet. Both the American and Crown Force leadership had at least some familiarity with amphibious operations, even if only through study. Wolfe's widely studied assault on Quebec is but one example, where boats were used to land troops to secure provisions, flank the enemy, or assault fortifications. Some of the landing orders issued by the Crown forces command at St. George Island were no doubt similar to those issued by Wolfe (1780:103-104):

For the flat-bottom boats, with the troops on board, to rendezvous abreast the Sutherland, between her and the south shore, keeping near her; one light in the Sutherlands main-top-mast shrouds.

When they go away from the Sutherland, she will show two lights in the main-top-mast shrouds, one over the other.

The men are to be quite silent, and when they are about to land, must not upon any account fire out of the boats. The officers of the navy are not to be interrupted in their part of the duty. They will receive their orders from the officer appointed to superintend the whole, to whom they are answerable.

Officers of the artillery, and detachments of gunners are put on board the armed sloops to regulate their fire, that in the hurry our own troops may not be hurt by our artillery...the frigates will not fire till broad daylight, so that no mistakes can be made.

16 July

Action 1. On this day there were actually two actions (Figure 5.2). The first was an attack by a Crown vessel against American positions. The second was a combined arms attack involving a naval vessel and troops landed from the fleet. Jeremiah Jordan described the morning action to the Maryland Council of Safety: “about day break yesterday we were Visited by a Row Galley or Row Gondola Carrying 5 Swivels on each Side and a Six pounder in her head and another in her Stern, they Rowed Close along side our Centinels and not a Man to be seen & instantly began a very heavy firing which lasted about One hour but without doing any execution, although their shot raked the ground on every part where the Men were stationed” (NAVDOCS 5:1119).



Figure 5.2: Action 1, 16 July 1776.

Jordan's report also recounted the second phase of this action, which occurred later in the day and involved the return of the galley mentioned above. He stated: "In the evening she returned again and engaged us again for upwards of two hours, and at the same time the Troops landed from the Ships on St. George Island to the amount of about 300 hundred pushed down to the point opposite to us with Swivels & Musketry and kept up a very heavy fire" (NAVDOCS 5;1119). The probable movements of these forces are depicted on an excerpt from the 1824 map of the island in Figure 5.2. According to Brigadier-General Dent the British troops in this action consisted of "50 Regulars of the 14th Regiment, 150 Tories and 100 Negroes that bare arms" (Maryland Archives 12:84). Faced with this enemy force, Jordan referenced his position and a fall back position: "I shall endeavor to keep the post we are at, at present if possible, if not shall retreat to the Woods about half a mile." His "post" was probably the American position on a point of land on the mainland immediately across from the northwestern end of the island. This location became the site of an American entrenchment and later the Four-Pounder Battery on modern-day Strait's Point.

It was in this second phase of the action on 15 July that Colonel Jeremiah Jordan reported that Captain Rezin Beall "was dangerously wounded in the Shoulder with a Ball (as he says) from a Riffle, which has rendered him incap[able] of Duty" (Maryland Archives 12:66) This reference to a rifle ball raises interesting questions about the armaments carried by some of the troops in the Crown forces, most of whom were certainly armed with smooth-bore muskets, rather than rifles. The only reported casualty among Crown forces in this action was a "mate or midshipman of the *Roe Buck*" who was "killed in the action" (Maryland Archives 12:84).

The Master's Log of the *Roebuck* suggests that a third action may have occurred on this day. A log entry recorded "Mr Brice was dangerously wounded in Reconnoitering the River in the galley (NAVDOCS 5:1106). As the galley in this entry is the same as the one in the above actions, Mr. Brice's wounding must have occurred between the two actions described, and represents an unrecorded encounter with Maryland forces. During this time "Colo Barnes with his Battalion is on the other side of the River watching the Motions of the Enemy there" (. Archives 12:66).

After this initial probing of the island, there seems to have been a brief respite in action, with Americans mobilizing troops and assessing the British, while the fleet must have been weighing its options and trying to figure out how serious American opposition would be.

18/19 July

Operations. One of the most extensive operations conducted by Crown forces was the watering expedition up the Potomac River. The narratives of both Eduardo and Captain Hamond indicate that preparations for a watering expedition up the Potomac River were being made ready (NAVDOCS 5:1347; NAVDOCS 6:172). Within a few days of arriving at St. George Island, Crown commanders realized that, despite the wells they sought, water was going to be in short supply. To remedy this situation, Captain Hamond ordered the fleet "to send their empty Casks onboard two of the Transports carrying the detachment of the 14th Regt & a part of the Queens" and further related "and with them, accompanied by Lord Dunmore in his own Ship, we sailed up the Potomac in order to fill the Casks with fresh water." The captain also revealed his other intentions by stating "and at the same time harass and annoy the Enemy by landing at different places." This expedition consisted of several vessels, including the *Roebuck*, Dunmore, and several others vessels for carrying the cooperage, which was probably extensive, and the troops. Also with the force was a small row galley (Allard 1976:423). Departure of this force was probably around 20 July, and the *Fowey* remained at the island with the fleet.

The watering expedition accomplished both of these objectives. Fresh water was obtained by this force traveling as far upriver as Dumfries, Virginia, "where the water is fresh" (NAVDOCS

5:1206), and caused numerous alarms along both sides of the Potomac River. American militia forces were mobilized and a sizable engagement with Virginia militia (Stafford and Prince William Counties Companies) took place at William Brent's plantation (NAVDOCS 5:173; 1206-1207). Crown forces burned most of this plantation's buildings and both sides sustained casualties in dead and wounded. Hamond's row galley proved useful in shallow waters during this exercise. Described as flat-bottomed, with a shallow draft of 18 inches and carrying a 6-pound gun, it was covered so that its occupants were protected from small arms fire (Allard 1976:423). This vessel may have been responsible for capturing one of the detached boats from the Maryland Navy's *Protector*, encountered on the Maryland side of the river during this operation. On 25 July, due to numerous groundings by the expedition's vessels in the shallows of the river as well as favorable winds, Captain Hamond decided to break off any further landings and return to the fleet. The fleet arrived back at the island on 28 July [Hamond stated 29 July], just in time to participate to counter the American attacks on the fleet in Action 5 (see below).

While the watering expedition operation took place well off of St. George Island, it does have a direct relation to Crown forces objectives there. It allowed them to secure of sufficient fresh water and, as Captain Hamond intended, carry the war to the Americans through landings and attacks at critical locations. This watering expedition further places the island within a larger battlescape that embraced the wider Potomac River and its environs.

While this expedition was unfolding, events continued in the St. George Island area.

20 July

Operations. Another reconnaissance is indicated on this date. Captain Hamond reported in the Journal of the *Roebuck* "A.M. at 3 Sent the Galley into Smith's Creek to Reconnoitre" (NAVDOCS 5:1163) A later entry recorded "at 10 the galley Return'd having lost Wm Ward Quarter Master." The usage of the term "lost" suggests that this petty officer was killed in the line of duty and not that he deserted. If the latter were so, the term used to indicate that would have been *run*. This entry may be a reference to an action between Crown naval vessels and American forces, those perhaps being elements of Colonel Barnes's battalion still stationed on St. Inigoes Neck, which borders upon Smith's Creek.

Action 2. Also on July 20, Brigadier-General George Dent informed the Maryland Council of Safety that "There as a brisk and severe Cannonade from two or three tenders and a row galley of Smith's Creek about six o'clock this morning the consequence of wh I have not yet heard." (. Archives 12:87) (Figure 5.3). As no American vessels were present in this area, all the vessels mentioned in this reference would have been Crown naval assets. Dent's and Hamond's entries together point to an action taking place on this date in Smith's Creek. With no American vessels present, it seems likely that the British tenders and galley encountered Colonel Barnes's men that had earlier been positioned on St. Inigoes Neck.

21 July

Operations. The principal movement recorded for this date was the arrival of part of the American artillery (. Archives 12:90). Authorized earlier by the Maryland Council of Safety, this included two 4-pounders, one 3-pounder and one larger 9-pounder. It is interesting to note that the smaller caliber guns were field artillery, however, 9-pounder guns were not considered to be in that category of artillery. The larger caliber cannon, with its greater range and heavier ball, would have been able to inflict more damage on the fleet than the others.

These guns arrived with the return of Captain John A. Thomas's Independent Company, which had been diverted from its march to New York (where the brothers Howe were preparing for a massive

and complex operation against New York City) and ordered to return to Maryland for the defense against Lord Dunmore's forces. Major Thomas Price reported to the Maryland Council of Safety that he arrived at the Upper Camp on the 21st, and brought with him one of the 4-pounders. He further indicated "the other two I left at Leonard Town 'till further orders" and he had "Order'd the other two pieces of Cannon to the Lower Camp & shall as soon as the Nine Pounder arrives order that there" (NAVDOCS 5:1193). As described later in the section of this report considering Site Types, the Upper Camp likely was located on the mainland side of today's Straits Point, opposite the north end of St. George Island, while the Lower Camp was positioned on Cherryfield Point. Referring to Captain Hamond's "mischief" with his covered galley, the Council of Safety informed the Brigadier-General that they had ordered Major Price down with "Three Field Pieces, and one nine pounder, with Captain Thomas's Independent Company, which we rest satisfied are arrived with you by this time. These will enable the Major and you to speak more properly with the Row Gally than you hitherto could do" (. Archives 12:90). It is interesting to note that this most unusual of vessels had acquired a notoriety among American commanders, and that their response was to send a heavier piece of artillery than what might ordinarily have been ordered to southern Maryland.



Figure 5.3: Action 2, 20 July 1776.

It should be noted that the movement and deployment of these guns represents a considerable amount of effort and logistical planning on the part of the Marylanders. The Maryland Convention made great efforts to locate and acquire large ordnance. This even included trying to find cannon salvaged from a Spanish shipwreck in Worcester County that had "lain there for some years" (. Archives 12:119). The four weapons sent to southern Maryland were likely iron guns of British pattern, mounted on field carriages, and would have conformed to patterns and dimensions prescribed in John Muller's *Treatise of Artillery* (1780). The lengths and weights of these guns were considerable. Based on McConnell's study of preserved artillery pieces and period manuals and treatises, such as Muller's, (1988: 84, 92), the dimensions and weights of these guns (exclusive of the carriage) were as follows:

	Length	Weight
Nine-Pounder	7 feet	23 CWT (2576 Pounds)
Four-Pounder	5 1/2 feet	11 1/4 CWT (1260 Pounds)
Three-Pounder	4 1/2 feet	7 1/4 CWT (812 Pounds)

For transport by boat, the barrels had to have been taken off their carriages for loading aboard ship. They were sent by water to St. Mary's County where they were unshipped, re-assembled, and then moved by horses across the county. A limber for storing and carrying ammunition would have accompanied each gun. Gunnery implements included a rammer and sponge, handspikes, drag ropes, a linstock or portfire, and possibly instruments for sighting and firing the piece. Munitions included solid round shot, separate or as fixed rounds, rope wadding, and prepared cartridges (Caruana 1979). Although solid round shot and antipersonnel projectiles, such as grapeshot, canister, and langrage, may have been included in the munitions sent with these guns, only the use of solid shot has been identified in the account for Action 5.

While it is possible that some artillerymen were sent along with these guns, militiamen would have been assigned to move these guns and their associated supplies and materiel into position and then to serve them. Fifteen men was the typical gun crew for a 6-pounder at this time (Peterson 1969:66), while a 4-pound gun required eight men. Information on the range of various field pieces of this period is surprisingly hard to find. The maximum range of 18th century artillery was about a mile (Manucy 1949), but this varied by the size of the field piece – larger caliber guns had greater range (Muller 1988). The effective range of a 4-pounder in the French Gribeauval system of the 1760s was about 770 yards, with a maximum range of about 1,300 yards; the effective range of an 8-pounder was 870 yards, although maximum range was closer to 1,600 yards (Chandler 1966). The range of the American 9-pounder at St. George Island was similar to that of the 8-pound gun, but perhaps bit longer. At maximum range, accuracy was greatly diminished, as was the damage a projectile could do to the target. A 9-pounder had a longer effective range of perhaps as much as 1,400 yards (Royal Canadian Artillery Museum). For the actions around St. George Island, we can safely assume that a range of between 800 to 1000 yards was the maximum effective range, although the guns could potentially hit and inconvenience vessels that were a greater distance away, the 9-pounder potentially reaching out 1,600 yards. This put the entire mouth of St. George Creek within reach of the Cherryfield Point Battery, which could reach the eastern side of the island (as measured by GIS, the mouth was about 733 yards wide) (Figure 5.4).

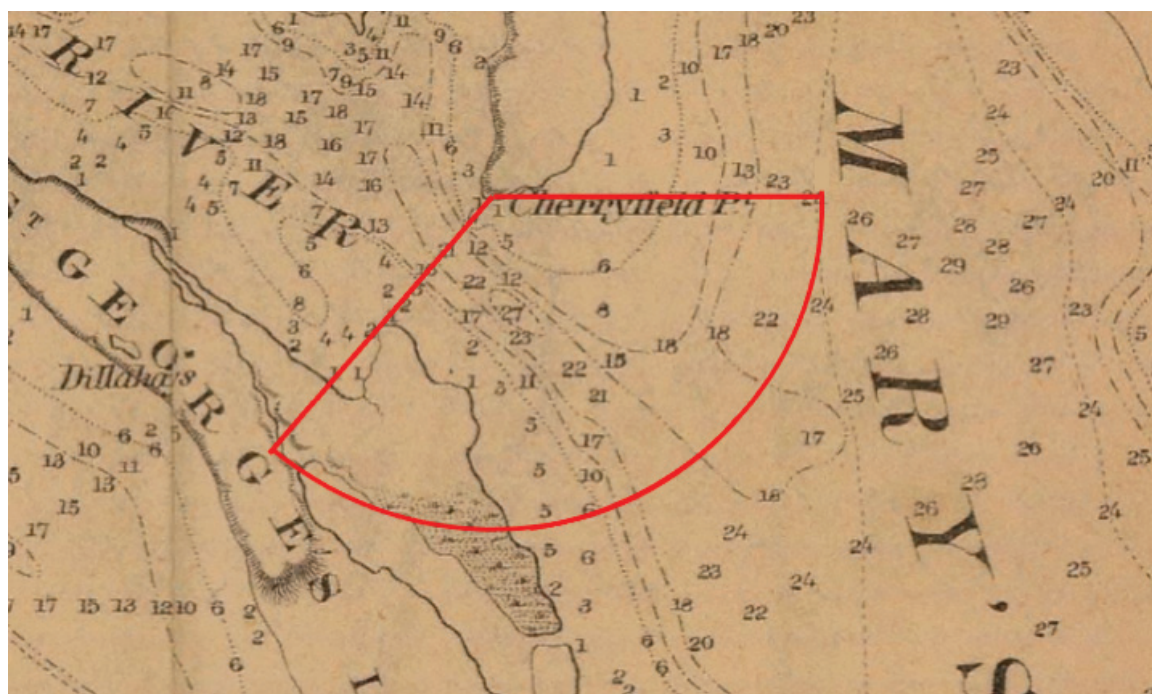


Figure 5.4: 9-pounder field of fire from Cherryfield Point at 1600 yards. (1824 base map)

These pieces of artillery were a form of loan, and the Council of Safety expected them to be returned to Annapolis when the threat was ended. Efforts to return the 9-pounder cannon were still underway as late as the end of September 1776 (. Archives 12:307).

23 July

Action 3. Information on this action comes only from the Spanish spy narrative. Eduardo stated that “The Americans invaded St. George’s Island and caused all those who were there taking water to retreat precipitously, abandoning the Containers, and with the loss of some dead, various wounded and other Prisoners” (NAVDOCS 5:1347). In this case, the Americans initiated an attack, with forces that had to have been prepositioned on the island to drive a Crown forces watering party back to their ships with losses. It seems probable that the American troops crossed over from Straits Point to the island and moved south to engage the landing party (Figure 5.5).



Figure 5.5: Action 3 (23 July 1776), with two possible landing points and overland routes.



Figure 5.6: Action 4, Phase 1 (25 July 1776).

25 July

Action 4. Similar to the action of 16 July, there were actually two separate engagements on this date. The first was an ambush set up by American forces and described in an American letter (NAVDOCS 5:1249). The writer was relating information from Major Thomas Price. He [Price] stated that “at two o’clock thursday Morning he sent 100 Men over to the Island who he ordered to lay an ambush till Dunmores Men came on the island to get Water which they did every day

& go of in the eveng. His Men discovered themselves too soon which Sat them to their heals our Men pursued them to their Boats killed 3 or 4 wounded several & took one Prisoner” (NAVDOCS 5:1249). His description depicted what must have been a running fight across a portion of the island with Crown forces withdrawing back to the fleet. The major also stated that he had “400 men” with him, indicating that a sizable American force had been positioned on the island (Figure 5.6).

The second phase of the action, again recorded by Eduardo, relates an attack by Crown forces. This action was described as “The Royalists returned to St. George’s Island for water (they did not have any more to drink), supported by a Sloop of 10 guns that drew near it, as well as a battery of the *Fowey* which continuously bombarded that part where the Americans could be seen” (NAVDOCS 5:1347). He further related “The Royalists avenged themselves on the Americans by setting fire to all the Houses, fields, and Woods on the island.” This action was the second occasion civilian property and resources on the island were put to the torch, although it makes one wonder how effective the first “sack” had been. What made this operation unusual was that there was apparently no encounter between Crown and American forces on land. Neither Eduardo, Crown, nor American sources made any comment about any fighting at this time. That American forces were on the island is indicated by *Fowey*’s firing upon them “where they could be seen,” but they apparently chose not to engage the Crown troops and let them burn down the remaining buildings. Considering the American willingness to engage over the preceding days, this inaction must have been a command decision on the part of the American commanders. It may have reflected the danger posed by naval artillery. Two possible landing zones and overland routes are depicted for this phase of the action in Figure 5.7.



Figure 5.7: Action 4, Phase 2 (25 July 1776).

26 July

Operations. Major Price related to General Andrew Lewis a general statement regarding Crown forces operations: “The enemy come on St. George’s Island in the day time to get water and wood and in the evening retire on board their ships” (. Archives: 12:122). The context of his statement suggests that such a landing had taken place on this day. The major stated “they [Crown forces] have no manner of Fortification on the Island.” Despite earlier comments that indicated Crown forces had established some type of fortified position, by this stage of the events they likely had abandoned the use of a fixed position in support of their daily landings.

At this time the Americans had undertaken the fortifying of Cherryfield Point, while also adding the Four-Pounder Battery on a point of land on the mainland that was nearest the northwestern end of the island (today’s Straits Point). The construction of these positions marks an important stage in the American’s response to Dunmore’s forces, bringing their artillery assets to bear in a way that would

constrain Crown Force movements and also support American operations. The Cherryfield Point Battery (Lower Camp) effectively covered the channel leading into the St. George Creek, between the island and the mainland (Figure 2.4). As measured via GIS on the 1824 chart of the area, the distance between Cherryfield Point and the island was only 2,200 feet (733 yards). It was thus well within the effective range of both the four-pound and nine-pound guns at Cherryfield Point. Vessel movements or troop landings inside the St. George Creek, and along the east side of the island, thus became far more dangerous for the Crown forces. The 9-pounder also threatened the portions of the fleet riding at anchor within 1400 yards of the battery. The location of the upper of Four-Pounder Battery at Straits Point protected the easiest point of access for American troops onto the island, while also restricting Crown landings on the northwestern side of the island.

During this period, new American militia units also began to arrive to take the place of other units that had been in the field earlier. For example, portions of the Charles County companies of Captains John Parnham and John Hanson were ordered “down to St. George’s or within a small distance of it” and were in position by 26 July (. Archives 12:125-126).

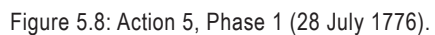
27 July

Operations. On this day the vessels that went on the watering expedition up the Potomac River, including the *Roebuck*, were returning to the fleet. Writing from the Upper Camp, Major Price informed the Council of Safety [on the 29th] that “The day before yesterday in the Evening the *Roebuck* and the other Ships returned down the river and came to about 5 Miles from this Place at two o’clock yesterday morning” (. Archives 120). Additionally, some movement of the fleet was underway, or had started, by this date. Eduardo related that “The remainder of the Convoy continued to retire with the exception of eight ships destined to be burned which remained stranded at the Island” (NAVDOCS 5:1347). This movement may have been initial preparations needed for the fleet’s departure, but might also have been partially in response to the potential threat posed by a 9-pound gun on Cherryfield Point. This possibility is reinforced by the fact that Eduardo noted that the American fortifications on the point had been observed from the fleet. He wrote “The formation of an entrenchment on the Mainland was observed from which distance the *Fowey* was closely watched.”

At this time the Americans brought to bear another important asset, vessels of the Maryland State Navy. Captain George Montagu recorded in the journal of the *Fowey*, “the Pirate Anchr about [3] miles from us *Roebuck* in sight” (NAVDOCS 5:1263). This “Pirate” vessel was the *Defence* (22 guns), commanded by Captain Nicholson, along with her tenders. One of these smaller vessels was the *Resolution* (12 guns) which had also been fitted out by the state (NAVDOCS 6:979). A second tender appears to have been present, but the records are not clear as to its identity. Samuel Purviance of Baltimore, writing to Joseph Hewes, related the movement by the Maryland State Navy in a letter on 27 July (NAVDOCS 5:1246). During what they thought to be the *Roebuck*’s absence while on the watering expedition up the Potomac River, Captain Nicholson was ordered to proceed to the Potomac River “in expectation of being able to make a haul amongst Ld Dunmore’s fleet which is supposed to have no other Escort at present but the *Fowey* a very heavy Sailer weakly Mannd.”

Captain Montagu also recorded in the *Fowey*’s journal that in the afternoon “the Rebels opened a Battery and fired on us: But did no harm” (NAVDOCS 5:1263). A more significant action would take place the next day, and this firing was most likely the American gunners attempting to determine the range for the newly placed guns at Cherryfield to strike the fleet. One other account describing the various operations and events at the island described *Fowey*’s distance from shore as “a Musket shot” (Maryland Archives 12:74), or approximately 100 yards, so far within the range of the guns in the battery that ranging shots might not have been necessary as far as she was concerned.

Action 5. On this day the Americans conducted a combined arms action involving land and naval forces. This was a complex action against Crown forces that required American commanders to exercise a close coordination of these assets (Figure 5.8).



Eduardo again provided additional detail of the action. Regarding the effectiveness of the American artillery fire, he related “some of the Shots falling very close to the *Fowey*, but of the seven shots, none reached her.” While there is general agreement as to the number of shots fired, the American and Crown accounts differ on this point. Conversely, Major Price indicated the American cannon

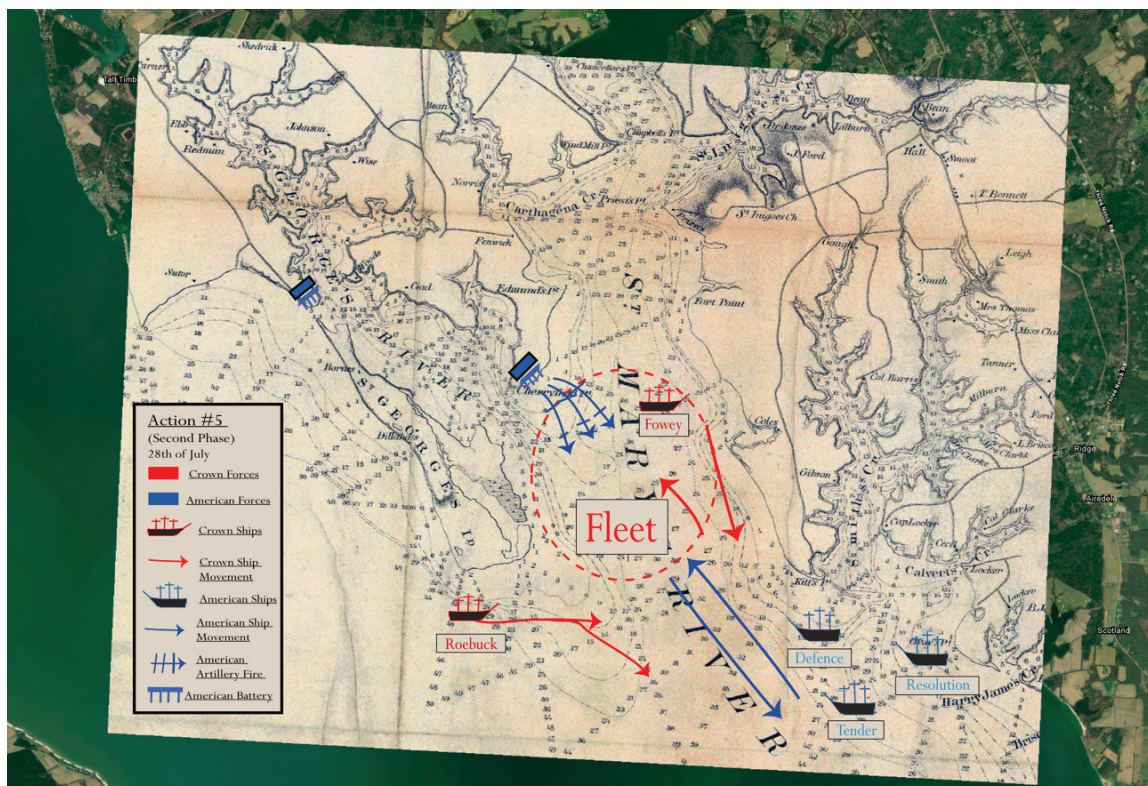


Figure 5.9: Action 5, Phase 2 (28 July 1776), involving the Crown and American fleets.

fire inflicted a considerable amount of damage. He related that a nine-pound shot “huld her” and “the other struck a boat laying at her Stern with I Beleave Men in her.” Despite the damage, *Fowey* continued to get under way, and as the *Roebuck* arrived on the scene from her successful watering expedition upstream, both vessels gave chase to the *Defence*. Major Price then “Observed the *Defence* put about and stand down the River.” With the *Roebuck* and *Fowey* in pursuit, *Defence* escaped to the more open waters of the Chesapeake Bay. Despite Captain Nicholson’s spirited effort and willingness to engage the Royal Navy ships, the Maryland State Navy vessels would have been significantly out-gunned both in the number guns and in broadside weight in any close action that may have resulted. Other sources, including Council of Safety correspondence, however, provide a different perspective on *Defence* and why she may have broken off the attack on Crown fleet vessels. Members of the Council recognized that several of Major Price’s officers attempted to notify Captain Nicholson of the *Roebuck*’s return from the expedition up the Potomac River, however, because these officers were “not being able to overtake him had very nearly occasioned a loss of the *Defence*, she was becalmed & obliged to come to an anchor, Tide agt her; the English fleet had a wind, which brought them down Potowmack within three miles of her, where she lay becalmed, when fortunately a Breese sprung up, which enabled her to escape; they heard no firing at your camp” (Maryland Archives 12:149.) The Council’s comments seem to be critical of the officers who were not able to contact Captain Nicholson on board the *Defence*, and to cast blame on them for a potential, but avoided, loss of the ship. That *Defence* was becalmed may provide a further explanation as to why Captain Nicholson broke off the action. The loss of maneuverability would have made the Maryland vessel particularly vulnerable to the oncoming frigates. Their final remark that “they heard no firing at your camp” is the most curious. That the Cherryfield Point Battery fired on the fleet is corroborated by two sources, and why that was not heard aboard *Defence* is something of a mystery, unless the three mile distance and an easterly wind prevented the sound from traveling that far.

Relating the action on 28 July to Colonel George Plater, Captain Thomas indicated that no Crown troops were present on the island. He stated “I went on the Island yesterday morning a little before

day with a party of forty men, but could not find none of the Enemy there. We waited till eight o'clock but none came on shore" (. Archives 12:137). Despite the rallying of Crown naval assets and the departure of the *Defence*, Major Price indicated the American attack had been successful, and stated "upon the whole the Enemy Appears to be a Good Deal Alarmed and I am in hopes will leave this in a short time." Captain Thomas seconded the major's comments in the above letter: "P.S. I forgot to mention that we yesterday morning opened our Battery which played 'tis thought with success on the *Fowey*." While relating the service of American troops under his command on the 28th, a pleased Major Price also said "I had almost forgot to Inform you that the Nine Pound Cannon turns out Extraordinary Good Perhaps none Better we all here are much pleased with her" (. Archives 12:139).

The action of 28 July was the last period of active combat between Crown and American forces at St. George Island.

29 July

This day appears to have been relatively quiet. The records were silent as to the occurrence of any military or naval action.

Operation. Writing on this date, Captain Thomas suggests some part of the fleet had left the island at this time. In his letter of 28 July, mentioned above, he indicated "nearly half of the Fleet have gone."

30 July

Operations. Sometime around this date Hamond reported that the *Otter* "sailed and convoyed about 50 Sail of vessels to St. Augustine & Bermuda" (NAVDOCS 6:173). Eduardo also indicated he was called by "Commandant Hamond" and was told "the Convoy was going to break up the following day and that we might go to Halifax or to St. Augustine, Florida" (NAVDOCS 5:1348).

This date seems to be the beginning of the destruction of those vessels determined to be unseaworthy. An entry on Wednesday, 31 July in the *Fowey's* journal stated "PM Employed setting fire to the Condemned Vessels" (NAVDOCS 5:1316). In a letter dated 5 August, written to Hans Stanley, Captain Hamond recounted "I am sending all that is able & in condition to go to Sea to St. Augustine, after having destroyed about twenty sail, and put the people that inhabited them into other Vessels." (NAVDOCS 6:67-68). The figure of "20 Sail of Vessels" he had used earlier (29 July) in a narrative (NAVDOCS 6:173).

Also at this time, American units, such as Captain Thomas's company, were being ordered away from the area for new duties. This necessitated the bringing in of other militia commands to take their place or reordering those remaining in the area. For example, on 9 August Uriah Forrest's company received orders from the Council of Safety to remain in St. Mary's County and to "supply the place of Thomas' Independent Company" (Maryland Archives 12: 189, 190).

31 July

Operations. The Master's log of the *Roebuck* recorded the last known landing on the island by Crown forces. The entry stated that at "5 AM Sent Gally & *Ranger* to cover landing of Some Troops on George's Island" (NAVDOCS 5:1316). The "Gally" was probably the covered row galley *Hamond* had constructed earlier and which was prominent in several of the other actions and operations at the island. The *Ranger* had not been mentioned in earlier accounts, and was a relatively new ship to become involved in the St. George Island events. It would seem that this vessel was on assignment elsewhere and arrived late in the events at the island.

The above entry recorded other preparations for the fleet's departure. *Roebuck's* Master provided evidence for other activities that may have archaeological ramifications. The morning entry stated:

AM got a Brig along side & begun to cut up for Fire wood
PM Employed in Cutting up the Brig & Supplying the Fleet with Water

American operations also were under way. For example, Captain Peter Mantz's company from Frederick, Maryland, was ordered by the Council of Safety to southern Maryland. On 31 July, this company, which was described as "well armed, and accoutered," and "good marksmen" began its march "to relieve Captn Thomas & his company," who were again ordered northward (Maryland Archives 12: 148-149; 190). He was to occupy "the posts and places, where Captn Thomas's were stationed until further orders." Mantz's company arrived sometime prior to 7 August. These men did not stay in southern Maryland for very long, as they too were ordered to march northward around 9 August (Maryland Archives 12:191).

1 August

Operations. The Spanish spy narrative relates again the events of the day: "The Order to the Convoy to make Sail was repeated, but it had no effect because of contrary winds. That night 16 Ships were burned and another three or four were driven ashore by the high Seas, because they lacked Cables, the Wind having risen about midnight" (NAVDOKS 5:1348).

The Master's Log of the *Roebuck* affirms the preparations of the next two days, and is in agreement with Edurado. The log entry for 1 August stated "AM at 11 The Fowey made the Signl to Weigh" and recorded the weather as "Part Squally with rain Thunder & Lightning. Later Modt & Cloudy" (NAVDOKS 6:65).

2 August

Operations. By early August a shift in all or part of the fleet's location was underway. Reported by the Council of Safety to Brigadier-General Henry Hooper on the Eastern Shore, and likely as part of the preparations for the fleet's departure, by 2 August "the British Fleet lay near the mouth of Smith's creek in Potowmack" (NAVDOKS 6:23).

Edurado's narrative further stated "At midday all the Convoy made Sail, after six more Ships had been burned. The first night we all anchored 8 leagues from St. George's to the Southwest in the lee of the capes and the entrance to Virginia." The *Roebuck's* Master's log recorded the day also – "Am at 8 the Fowey & Otter with Part of the Fleet Weigh'd & made sail, at 9 Made the Signal for sailing, & Set the Remainder of the Brig we had Cut Wood from, On fire unserviceable Vessels, & made the Signl & Weigh'd with the Remainder of the Fleet" (NAVDOKS 6:65-66). By 3 August, the fleet was in Chesapeake Bay and off the Virginia shore ,as it was moving toward the lower Chesapeake Bay.

From 2 August to 7 August, the fleet worked its way down the Chesapeake Bay toward the mouth of the Bay, where it came to anchor for a period of time. While recapping the events of the past several weeks in a 24 September letter to Hans Stanley, Hamond revealed his frustrations with the nature of the campaigning in the Chesapeake region. He stated pointedly that "being myself most heartily tired of carrying on a sort of Piratical War, that tended in no degree to benefit his Majesty's service, I consulted with Lord Dunmore, and found his Lordship equally desirous of quitting a situation that was every day growing more & more distressing; we therefore disposed of our Floating Town in the best manner we could, by sending them to places of security, and with the few Troops we had left, set sail for New York, & arrived just as the operations against the place were beginning" (NAVDOKS 6:973).

On 6 August, *Fowey* was recorded as departing with "7 Sail of Vessels bound to England, onboard one of which was Govr Eden" (NAVDOKS 6:173). Heading out to the open sea, groups of vessels

set their course to their destinations in the Caribbean, Florida, and New York. The portion of Lord Dunmore's fleet that sailed with Captain Hamond arrived at New York City on 13 August. Their arrival coincided with the build up of Crown forces under Generals Cornwallis and Howe after their repulse by American arms at Charleston, South Carolina.

American sources align with Eduardo's comments and Royal Navy log entries. The Council of Safety, reporting to Maryland's Delegates to the Continental Congress on 2 August, informed them that letters received from Major Price indicated "they are not yet gone off, several vessels are dismasted and on the shore at the point of St. George's Island with the intention to burn them" (. Archives 12:161). Noting that a pilot boat that had arrived the previous day (1 August) reported on the fleet's imminent departure from St. George Island, they related that "Middleton thinks they are going off down the Bay, and we hope to be able to write you to that effect, altho' we apprehend a visit to the Eastern shore, and are preparing accordingly" (. Archives 12:161-162).

The last remaining activities do seem to have occurred on 2 August. Three days later, on 5 August, the Council of Safety would report "Dunmore's fleet is gone off from the mouth of Potowmack very sickly and in great distress- perhaps our Bay will be clearer of ships of war then it has been" (. Archives 12:172). Reports dating to 10-11 August provide more clarity on the fleet's departure. One Philadelphia letter stated "Governor Dunmore and his ragamuffins it is said have left Virginia" (NAVDOCS 6:147). Another published account was that of a ship captain who saw the fleet "standing out to sea, in two divisions, one to the southward, and the other to the northward. They have been several days in Lynnhaven Bay, and have burnt some small vessels, which probably had not men to manage, or were unfit for a voyage- May they never return" (NAVDOCS 6:142).

American Recovery and Salvage Operations

The fleet's departure during the first week of August 1776 is not the end of this story. Instead, it represents the beginning of a second phase of events at St. George Island. Many of the American military units began to depart the area, some men returning home, while others resumed their march to New York to support Washington's army and participate in the ensuing campaign in the late summer and fall of 1776.

For those Americans remaining at St. George Island, it did not take long to begin an assessment of what Lord Dunmore had left behind in the waters surrounding the island. On 9 August, the Maryland Council of Safety informed Maryland's Deputies to the Continental Congress, that "they had collected a number of small vessels which they [Crown forces] had dismasted and left on the point of St. George Island with the intention to set fire to them, but a high Tide floated them off, and they were driven on Shore near our Guard, who have taken possession of them and have found sundry goods and other effects on board to the value of three or four hundred Pounds currency; some of the Hulks may be repaired, and made fit for service" (. Archives 12:190).

American salvage and recovery operations around St. George Island became extensive and involved numerous individuals. It may have been paralleled by a similar effort at the fleet's earlier location in Virginia, given the dates of a "A List of People, employed in Saving the Wrecks, from the fleet, from 13 to 24 July 1776" (NAVDOCS 6:1417, n. 2). It lists "William Richardson[,] 3 Negroes belonging to Do., Thomas Richardson, James Richardson, Peter Smith, James Smith, Jesse Tennison, John Standfast, Nicholas Byrn, and George Rymer" as helping "Save" the wrecks from the fleet (NAVDOCS 6:1417, n. 2). In Maryland, Captain Vernon Hebb and Mr. Timothy Bowes were selected and ordered by the Council of Safety, to "dispose of, for the use of this state such Part of the Captures lately made out of Dunmores's fleet, that may be deemed perishable or wasting

(Maryland Archives 12:287), and also were involved with settling cases pertaining to individual vessels (Maryland Archives 12:401). In addition, on 17 October, the Council of Safety related to Hebb and Bowes a resolve of the Maryland Convention by letting them know that “We are informed that some of the vessels may be easily got up to Mr. Stephen Steward’s Shipyard [on the West River, just south of Annapolis] to be repaired. We should be glad if you will have them fitted with Jury masts for that purpose as soon as possible, and procure hands for them, all the sails belonging to them, or any others that came ashore, may be sent by them” (. Archives 12:357). The same Council instructions stated “Those vessels that cannot be raised, and fitted out, you will have disposed of in the best manner for the use of the State, the expense attending the execution of this resolve, will be repaid you with thanks.”

The removal of wrecks from the area continued into the late fall. A 4 November report to the Council of Safety provides an idea of the operations underway and the types of vessels the two men were salvaging. Hebb and Bowes reported (. Archives 12:421):

we examined into the state and condition of the vessels drifted on shore, or made Captures of from Lord Dunmore’s Fleet, and are of the opinion that of the following vessels lying at Kitts Point (To wit)

- 1 very large Pilot Boat
- 1 Schooner of about 1400 Bushs Burthen
- 1 Sloop of about 2000 Bushs (do wthsome Rigging)

The Sloop only in a condition to be removed, and in order to do that, it will be necessary to send hands down with an anchor and cable, no hands to be hired here.

At Cherry Fields

- 1 Sloop about 1400 Bushs Burthen
- 1 Schooner of about 1200 Bushs Do much repairs necessary before either can be removed

The liquidation of these vessels and apparel continued to mid-November. Hebb and Bowes were again authorized to “sell all the Vessels with their tackle, Apparel and furniture belonging to this State, lying in or near St Mary’s River in St Mary’s County, drifted on Shore or made Captures of from Lord Dunmore’s fleet; they first giving due notice of the Time and Place of such sale” The order further stipulated they were to “make Return of their Proceedings, and the money arising from such Sale to the Council of Safety or other executive Power of the State; reserving to themselves a reasonable Commission for their Trouble.”

Clearly the state laid legal claim to the “wrecks” and proceeds from their disposal. Despite Hebb and Bowes activities, it is unlikely all vessels or vessel remains, particularly those that were burned, were removed and some remain as significant cultural resources.

**Assessment of the
Military & Naval Forces
July-August 1776**

American “Regulars” and Dunmore’s “Hell-Hounds”: An Assessment of the Military and Naval Forces | July-August 1776

Introduction

Both the Americans and Crown forces deployed significant numbers of military and naval assets during the weeks at St. George Island. Scholars who study military sites have recognized that a thorough knowledge of the forces involved, derived from archaeological and historical sources, is critical to understanding a battle and the larger battlescape of which it is a part. Various factors such as types of organization, socio-economic background, levels of training and experience, morale, tactical methodology, technology, and the weaponry and equipment of the forces involved are as critical a set of variables as terrain, weather, and other environmental conditions.

Earlier discussions of the events at St. George Island have been cursory and have not closely examined the various forces, or have only placed emphasis on the American troops that took part in the different operations and actions at the island. This skewed perspective has hidden the complexity and significance of the events that transpired there in the summer of 1776. This study is first to examine both sides of this story.

The American forces present in the campaign will be assessed first, followed by the Crown forces involved.

American Forces

Before Lord Dunmore’s forces arrived at St. George Island, Maryland’s revolutionary government had begun to prepare for the coming war and to mobilize state military organizations and resources. State leaders were monitoring the unfolding of events in Virginia and, while there was great uncertainty as to what Virginia’s Royal governor was going to do or which direction he was to head, they had begun the initial mobilization of forces in St. Mary’s County. Alarming and dangerous as it was, Lord Dunmore’s arrival was not unexpected. But what military units did the Maryland government have to deploy?

The units involved included:

- Maryland Militia
- Independent Companies
- The Flying Camp
- Artillery
- Maryland State Navy
- Virginia State Navy

Each of these will be examined in turn, along with some forces raised by Maryland that do not seem to have been engaged in this campaign.

In 1775, the Maryland Convention, responding to resolutions of the Continental Congress for the raising of numbers of troops by the states, began a reorganization and expansion of the state’s military forces. These soldiers would be used not only for state defense, but were also part of a much larger “Continental” effort in the developing response to British arms. Throughout the winter and spring of 1776, five different types of military forces and one naval force came into existence and entered service. One was long established through provincial law, while the others

were comparatively new commands recently organized and added to the state's force structure. In its push to organize these forces, one of the first actions of the Convention was the adoption of the *Rules and Articles, for the better Government of the troops raised, or to be raised, and kept in pay, by an at the joint expence, of the Twelve United English Colonies of North America* (. Archives 11:53-64) that had been established by the Continental Congress in May 1775. In that document were the sixty-seven articles that would provide guidance for the officers and men of the Maryland militia and others units being raised and soon to be in service. The adoption of the *Rules and Articles* reflects the growing sense of a "Continental" perspective and purpose, and an understanding that the role of these soldiers, while important for local defense, was not going to be strictly parochial in application.

Maryland Enrolled Militia

As the oldest of the state's military organizations, the enrolled militia had been in existence since 1638. Grounded in English military tradition and established by legislative act (. Archives 1:77-78), the militia was composed of all able-bodied, generally white, men of military age. Each man was to provide himself with the necessary arms and equipment, was expected to drill regularly, be subject to military discipline, and was expected to be ready for service when the need arose. The 17th century militia was not a static organization, and throughout the century it adapted to New World conditions of warfare, developed a more complex organization, and before the end of the century had become a county-based organization. While its various companies were organized for service, the militia also was a manpower reserve that could be utilized to create separate, larger provincial commands that would fight in the campaigns of various imperial and national struggles of the late 17th and 18th centuries, such as King George's War, Queen Anne's War, and the French and Indian War. In the absence of such external threats, the militia also functioned as a means of reinforcing social hierarchies, while protecting against the internal threat of a slave uprising. During the American Revolution, it would evolve into a first-response force and a powerful tool to control Loyalists (Seidel 1995).

Like previous practice, the organization of the militia in 1776 was based on the county. Companies were composed of "every able-bodied effective Freeman within this Province between Sixteen and fifty years of age," and these men were required to enroll in a company by September (. Archives 11:19). Militia companies were to consist of the officers and no less than sixty-eight, but no more than seventy-four, private men. Interestingly, an innovative change was that the county Committees of Observation were to "divide the Militia of their County into Battalions or Companies of Light Infantry, each of which Battalions to consist of such eight Companies of Militia, as the same Committee shall appoint; and the same Committee also assigning to each Battalion one Company of Light Infantry, which Light Infantry shall be armed in such manner" (. Archives 11:20). These directives indicate the militia were to take on a more specialized and mobile role than what had been expected previously, and represents a long process of English institutions (the militia in this case) adapting to the conditions of warfare in North America (Fithian 2021:146). Officers of the battalions were to consist of one colonel, one lieutenant-colonel, two majors, one quarter master, and one adjutant. The "exercising," or training, of the companies was to be "one day in every week," and the battalions were to be mustered "at such times and places as the Field Officers of the Battalion shall appoint, not oftener then once a month, nor seldomer than once every two months." It was the adjutant's responsibility to ensure the training of the larger battalion formations.

The Convention also provided for additional organization for the militia battalions (Clements and Wright 2006:9). Five districts were created across the state. The Third District consisted of the battalions from St. Mary's, Charles, Calvert and Prince George's counties and was under the command of Brigadier-General

John Dent. In each county, the companies were then divided geographically into larger formations, such as an “Upper” battalion and a “Lower” battalion. This organization was as follows (Clements and Wright 2006:10):

St. Mary’s County	6th Battalion or Upper Battalion 21st Battalion or Lower Battalion
Charles County	12th Battalion or Lower Battalion 26th Battalion or Upper Battalion
Calvert County	15th Battalion (other designation unknown)
Prince Georges County	11th Battalion or Lower Battalion 25th Battalion or Upper Battalion

Unfortunately, a more complete knowledge of the men who were actually participating in these battalions and companies is generally not possible. This is due to an 1831 courthouse fire in Leonardtown that destroyed most of the military records, including the muster rolls of the St. Mary’s County companies.

In July 1776, it was the men of enrolled companies of the Maryland militia who were the first to respond to the arrival of Lord Dunmore’s fleet. On 15 July, barely one day after the arrival of the fleet at St. George Island, Colonel Jeremiah Jordan of the Upper Battalion reported to the Council of Safety that he was “now at Leonard Town on my way down with part of the 6th Battalion under my command, where I received an Express from Colo Barnes (who is now at St. Inegoe’s Neck with the lower Battalion” (. Archives: 12:51). Colonel Barnes was one of the first militia officers to sight the fleet and mobilize his battalion. Barnes had ordered several of his companies to march “to Potomack in order to prevent their landing in the District of the 21st Battalion” (NAVDOCS 5:1066). From the records, St. Mary’s County men were the first to turn out in response to Lord Dunmore’s arrival.

Other militiamen arrived over the ensuing days. Brigadier-General John Dent (Figure 6.1) reported from “Headquarters” on 19 July to the Council of Safety that “Our strength at present is about 400 Militia exclusive of the Independent and Capt’n Forrest’s company” (. Archives 12:84). He stated further that “I made bold immediately on my arrival (the strength of the Enemy being much magnified) to order to our assistance three full companies of Militia from Col Hawkins Battalion, to be selected from the interior part of the County, which I expect to arrive about to morrow evening, when, I shall discharge an equal number of the most necessitous of those now on duty.” The Colonel Hawkins mentioned was Josiah Hawkins of the 12th Battalion (Lower Battalion) from Charles County (Clements and Wright 2006:86). The brigadier general’s comments indicate that a rotation system for the militia was in place, and reveals the pressure placed on these citizen soldiers when military service called them away from their plantations and shops. Later in July, other Charles County men were ordered to St. George Island area to replace those who had already spent time in the field (. Archives 12:125-126).

In addition to the men from St. Mary’s and Charles counties, men from Prince George’s County were among the militiamen assembled to counter Lord Dunmore’s forces. Writing on 7 August, Joseph Sim apprised the Council of Safety that “On the late alarm of Lord Dunmore’s fleet coming up the River Potowmack, it was thought necessary that the neighboring militia should be called out for the defence of the inhabitants,” and that the companies of “ Capt Marbury’s, Capt Wheeler’s, Capt Baynes, Capt. Wades and Cpt Learan’s” had been ordered “to march which they did and continued on the banks of the Potowmack until discharged” (Maryland Archives 12:185). The location and positions these men occupied are not clear, but it was likely in St. Mary’s County.

Estimates indicate that several hundred men of Maryland militia forces were in the field in St. Mary’s County. For example, Jeremiah Jordan stated “With what assistance we can give in this

quarter, I think 500 of the Militia of the upper battalions will be full enough to oppose the enemy. We have now at different posts about 600 men (. Archives 12:66). Despite some men leaving, other men were staying in service in the field for long periods of time. For example, a Major Eden delivered Colonel Jordan's 19th July letter discussed above. This was 1st Major James Eden of the 6th Battalion (Clements and Wright 2006:73), who later occupied the Four-Pounder Battery positioned on the island with his men during the fighting in the action of 28 July.

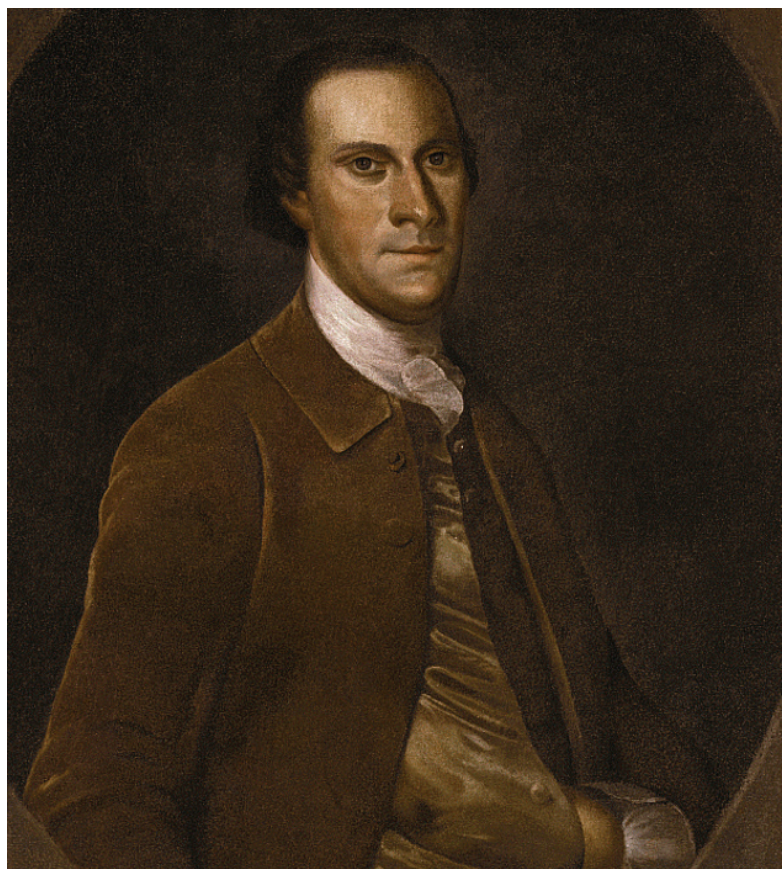


Figure 6.1: Brigadier General John Dent, ca. 1770, by John Hesselius.
(Nelson Atkins Museum of Art: <https://art.nelson-atkins.org/objects/29537/brigadier-general-john-dent>)

In general, the militia made a good showing while in the field. Accounts indicate this was arduous service. They were the first to be sent to counter Lord Dunmore's forces and entered into the field without a full knowledge of their enemy's disposition or strength. Their officers were proficient and aggressive in the field. On the other hand, some sources suggest that some men were not as enthusiastic about military service as others and parted with their arms as quickly as possible. This may, however, be a distinction between these part-time soldiers, who had significant interests at home, and those with weaker ties who later became the "Regulars." Other problems faced by militia officers in service at this time can be seen in a letter from Colonel Hawkins to Daniel Jenifer. He reported some of his men were sick and needed to return to their home, and went on to request cash to buy provisions, stating that the area "is a shocking place to be at especially without mony and many of his company are very poor." His comments reveal the need of maintaining proper levels of supply in remote areas, and the problem of the poverty of some men who were called into service. Officers frequently commented upon a lack of economic means of these citizen-soldiers in their commands, and the disruptions to the agricultural cycle by men being pulled away from their farms at critical times of the season both enhanced economic loss and made them less enthusiastic and prolonged service.

Minute Men Companies

At the same time as the militia companies were being organized, the state formed another type of organization referred to as the “Minute Men.” Forty companies of these men were authorized to be raised throughout the province: two from St. Mary’s County, one from Calvert County, three from Charles County, and three from Prince Georges County (. Archives 11:16). Each company was to consist of “one Captain, two Lieutenants, one Ensign, four Sergeants, four Corporals, one Drummer, one Fifer and 68 privates.” The men were to be trained in similar fashion to the militia, and the men were to provide their own arms until the state could furnish them. Some of the Minute Men companies entered field service early in 1776, having been ordered to Virginia’s Eastern Shore to quell Loyalist activities in Accomac and Northampton Counties (Maryland Archives 11:149). The Minute Men companies were disbanded in June of 1776, and therefore did not participate in the events at St. George Island. After their discharge from these companies, it is possible that some of these men were on the island as members of the other units.

The “Regulars”

On 1 January 1776, the Maryland Convention resolved “that this province be immediately put into the best state of defence,” and that a total of 1,444 men “with proper officers, be immediately raised in the pay and for the defence of this province” (. Archives 11:4). That these men were to have a more “Continental” role can be seen in the fact that, if necessary, they could be ordered into Virginia, Delaware, and Pennsylvania. This directive created two distinct groups of soldiers that would be named the “Regulars” in period records. These included Smallwood’s Battalion and a number of independent companies.

Smallwood’s Battalion

Authorized in January 1776, this battalion was one of several units that the Province considered “Regular Troops.” These men were enlisted for three years of service and became some of the most highly trained soldiers from Maryland. The battalion was composed of eight line companies and one light infantry company (Steuart 1969:3).

After its initial raising and receipt of clothing and arms, the unit marched for New York, where it arrived in late July 1776. Smallwood’s men would distinguish themselves in the Battle of Long Island and the following campaign around New York City. This battalion became the basis of the Maryland Line when it was organized in late 1776 and early 1777.

A review of the primary sources indicates the men of this unit were not involved in the events of July-August at St. George Island. Some of the men who served in other Maryland commands may have enlisted in Smallwood’s Battalion later, but this unit was not present at St. George Island.

The Independent Companies

In January of 1776, at the same time that Smallwood’s Battalion was being raised, the Maryland Convention further resolved that seven independent companies also be raised for service. Similar to Smallwood’s Battalion, these men were expected to acquire a high degree of military proficiency and training. Their performance in the New York campaign shows they did so.

Of the seven companies, two were composed of men from the southern Maryland counties. These companies were the 1st Independent Company under Captain Rezin Beall, and the 5th Independent

Company under Captain John Allen Thomas. Based on the records and their activities, both of these men were highly motivated and proficient company officers. Captain Thomas's company was one of the first to be deployed on field service. Writing to the Council of Safety on 9 March 1776, he reported that he had "stationed Part of my Company at the Mouth of Patuxent River, and the rest will go to the Lower Part of the County on Potomack" (. Archives 11:228). He also made a comment that revealed a problem that the American forces confronting Lord Dunmore would face on many occasions: a shortage of necessary supplies in this rural area. He advised that his plans for his men would be undertaken "as soon as Provision can be made for them, which is extremely difficult to be done." Captain Beall's company engaged Crown forces on 16 July, and it was in the second action of that day that he was seriously wounded. Captain Thomas's company was on its march northward to join the main army at New York when the Council of Safety stopped them, and ordered them back to southern Maryland (. Archives 12: 50). His company was present throughout the weeks around the island, where it would see action several times. Along with about forty of his men, Thomas moved onto the island and was to push forward "to Alarm the Enemy on that Quarter" during the action of 28 July. After the events at St. George Island, Captain Thomas's company was again ordered north to join the Main Army around New York.

The Flying Camp

In addition to the men raised for the Regular companies, Maryland also raised another 3,405 men for the so-called Flying Camp. Authorized on 25 June 1776, with men drawn from the militia, this formation was intended for rapid movement and was to act in concert with other flying camps from Pennsylvania and Delaware and "was to serve in Maryland and New York (Steuart 1969:5) Most of the battalion participated in the New York campaign.

The Flying Camp was comprised of four battalions, with companies drawn from the each of counties (Steuart 1969: 5-9). The Third Battalion was drawn from St. Mary's, Calvert, Charles, Prince George's, and Anne Arundel Counties (Steuart 1969:8). Its 1st Company, under the command of Captain Uriah Forrest (Figure 6.2), may have been on the island. Brigadier-General John Dent mentioned this company in his 19 July report to the Council of Safety (. Archives 12:84). Other companies arrived toward the end of July when the Regulars, such as those of Captain Thomas's Independent Company, were again ordered northward for service with the main army. The positions left vacant by the Regulars had to be infilled by other units. One such company was that of Captain Peter Mantz, a Flying Camp company from Frederick County. On 30 July, Mantz and his men were ordered to "march to Leonard Town in St. Mary's County and be stationed in that County to supply the place of Capt. John Allen Thomas' Company who are to march to the Northward, or other location as Major Thomas Price was to direct" (. Archives 12: 140, 142).

Cavalry Units

No militia cavalry units were recognized in the records as serving in southern Maryland at St. George Island.

Artillery Units

In 1776, the Maryland Convention authorized the raising of artillery companies in the state. On 1 January, it was resolved that "two companies of the said troops, to consist of 100 men each, be companies of matrosses, and trained as such" (. Archives 18:4). These men were selected from

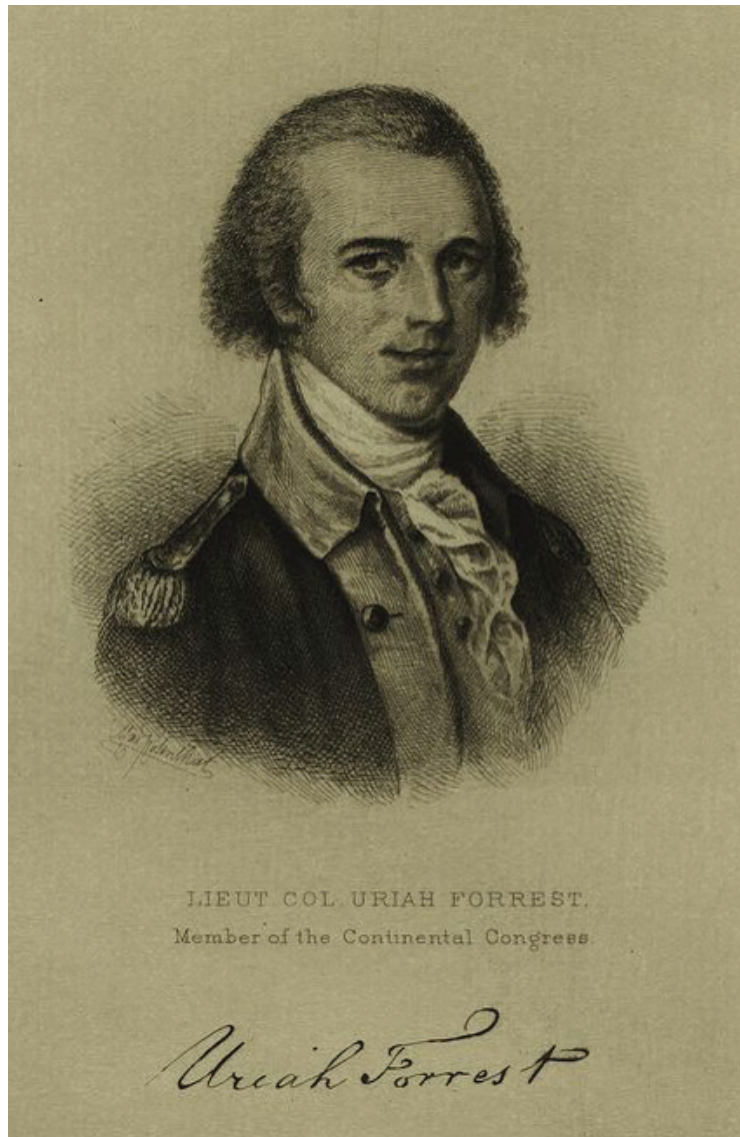


Figure 6.2: Uriah Forrest, 1st Company, 3rd Battalion, Maryland Flying Camp.
(https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Uriah_Forrest.jpg)

among the other troops raised for service and were instructed in the science of gunnery. They were responsible for manning the artillery used in the fortifications at Annapolis and Baltimore, as well as for field service. The Maryland units would eventually be integrated in the Continental Artillery as the war progressed.

While no records for any specific artillery unit being assigned to accompany the guns or march to St. Mary's County have been found, Council of Safety correspondence suggests that some artillerymen may have done so. On 23 August, 1776 the Council ordered the "Western Shore Treasurer" to "pay to Captn Forrest for use of Henry Sewell for thirty three shillings for Traveling Expenses for part of the Artillery Compy going to St George's" (Maryland Archives 12:232). As recognized early in the war by Henry Knox and others, the use of artillery was a complex service that required training and highly specialized knowledge (Knox 1776; Seidel 2012). It seems highly unlikely that valuable field artillery would simply have been handed over to untrained troops for use in this campaign, so the presence of at least some trained artillery units may be inferred.

Maryland State Navy

A naval organization not mentioned in previous studies of the events at the island was the Maryland State Navy. Formed for the defense of the Chesapeake Bay, this naval force was composed of a variety of vessel types. It had earlier in 1776 attempted to counter the movement of the *Fowey* and *Otter* into the upper Chesapeake Bay, during their attempted attacks against Annapolis and Baltimore.

A principal vessel in the state fleet was the *Defence*, often supported by a smaller vessel, or tender, named the *Resolution*. Both vessels were fitted out earlier during 1776. A third, smaller vessel is sometimes mentioned, but the sources are not clear regarding its identity. The participation of the state naval forces took place late in the events at the island, as these vessels did not arrive until 27 July. They did, however, participate in the American combined arms attack on Lord Dunmore's fleet on 28 July. Surviving muster tables dating to July and September 1776 provide information on the composition of the *Defence's* crew (NAVDOCS 5:1310-1312; NAVDOCS 6:905-907). Between 150 and 153 men served aboard the ship during this period, including commissioned officers, midshipmen, warrant officers, petty officers, able and ordinary seamen, and marines. Her captain during the time *Defence* was at St. George Island was James Nicholson. Men for the crew of the *Resolution* were drawn from the *Defence's* ship's company (NAVDOCS 5:1312).

Defence mounted twenty-two carriage guns, so she roughly matched the British *Fowey* in size, and the *Resolution* was to be armed with eight to ten guns, although twelve were sometimes mentioned. Nicholson attempted to add riflemen among his marines (NAVDOCS 4:355), however it is uncertain if he did so. The addition of these men, with their more accurate and longer-range weapons, would have added substantially to his vessel's capabilities. The use of rifles in sea service has been noted aboard other American ships during the war (Gilkerson 1993:217).

Virginia State Navy

Elements of a second state-based naval force, the Virginia State Navy, also were present. The genesis of Virginia's navy was in December of 1775, and during the war this force gradually became one of the largest of the naval forces created by the states (Allard 1976; Cross 1981). Known as the "Potowmack Navy," the first vessels were row galleys and "arm'd cutters." Work on these vessels was under the direction of George Mason of Gunston Hall and John Dalton in Alexandria. The galleys were seventy to eighty feet in length, had a crew of forty-five men, and mounted a single 18-pounder long gun in the bow; the cutters were converted civilian vessels (Allard 1976:412). The galleys were the *Protector* and *Safeguard*. This small group of vessels was operational by the early summer of 1776, and was under the command of Commodore John Thomas Boucher. An intrepid and proficient sea officer, Boucher had served earlier as a lieutenant aboard the Maryland state vessel *Defence*.

Elements of the Virginia navy arrived in the St. George Island on 28 July. Writing to the Maryland Council of Safety on 29 July, Major Price indicated "Captn Boucher came to Camp last Night he left two Roe Gallys about 15 Miles above this Place I furnished him with a Boat and some Hands to go Back by Water he Expects to be down with the Gally this evening I am Collecting all the Boats and Cannoes to give him all the Assistance in my power" (NAVDOCS 5:1275). The two "Roe Gallys" were likely the *Protector* and *Safeguard*, although that is unclear. The timing of Major Price's correspondence suggests these vessels did not participate in the combined-arms attack of 28 July, but it does seem clear that Boucher intended to assist Price in a subsequent later attack on the fleet. No evidence was found in the records that any further action took place after 28 July.

Crown Forces

In previous historical discussions about St. George Island, the composition of the forces Lord Dunmore brought to St. George Island has received little attention. Usually incidents involving capital ships, such as the *Roebuck* and the *Fowey*, are mentioned, but for the most part the Crown forces have remained a foreboding, yet undefined, entity in all of the previous histories. This is unfortunate, as there is a great deal of information available on their make-up. The forces included:

- Royal Navy vessels and crews
- Civilian vessels
- The 14th Regiment of Foot
- The Ethiopian Regiment
- The Queen's Loyal Regiment of Virginia
- Dragoons

The large and motley fleet that entered the Potomac River in July 1776, sometimes referred to as “Dunmore's Floating Town,” had come together during the months and weeks while Crown or Royal forces were at Norfolk, Portsmouth, and then Gwynn's Island. It was a complex assemblage of vessels and military assets, including Royal Navy warships, civilian vessels, a regiment of the British Army, Loyalist military units, and civilian Loyalists who had fled Virginia seeking the protection of Lord Dunmore.

The key to understanding this force, and the single and most thorough account providing any knowledge of the ships, vessels, and the people aboard them at St. George Island, is a list compiled on July 10th, 1776, just prior to the departure of the Crown fleet from Gwynn's Island, Virginia (NAVDOCS 5:1021-1022). The person who compiled the list is unknown, however the list records forty-four ships and vessels by name. It also provides an important human record, as it recorded individuals and groups associated with and aboard the fleet. These forty-four vessels, however, are not the only ships and vessels comprising the fleet. The last entry in the list stated, “Most of the other Vessels are Small Craft and occupied by Trades people & negroes. Vessels that are not fit to go to sea.” Because they were not enumerated, exactly what comprised the other “Small Craft” is not clear, but among them must have been a variety of traditional vessel types seen in the Chesapeake region during the colonial period.

There are, however, some caveats to using this data. It is important to note that some of these vessels may have been lost in the storm that struck the fleet while on its way to the Potomac River. Additionally, other vessels, such as the *Adonis*, were known to have joined the fleet sometime after July 10th, and therefore are not on the original list. It is possible that other vessels joined along the way or during the weeks at the island and therefore were not listed. For example, the *Ranger* made its first appearance in the records during a final action at the island, and not before.

The ships and vessels comprising the list break down into three basic categories: Royal Navy warships; private vessels being used as tenders that had been taken into Crown service through capture or by being commandeered; and those owned by civilians accompanying Lord Dunmore. Some final notes are in order regarding the terms used here to discuss Royal Navy warships. The Royal prefix “HMS,” commonly in use today, is avoided here. This title was not in common usage in ship's names until the late 18th or early 19th centuries, so it was not used in this study. The principal dimensions provided here are length and beam. A ship's weight is expressed in builder's measurement (bm), and not in displacement tonnage, which did not come into use until 1873. Lastly, for Royal Navy vessels, the reader will see the term *rate*. This has nothing to do with a ship or vessel's quality or performance. Instead, the Navy classified its vessels by the number of guns it

carried and by the rank of the officer who commanded it. Simply put, the rating system described vessels of 1st through 6th Rates. For example, a 1st Rate carried 100 guns or more, a 6th Rate was armed only with twenty. Sometimes the armament of a ship or vessel could vary, and could be changed at the discretion of its commanding officer, but generally the numbers tended to stay within the amount established for a ship or a particular rate. As to rank, post-captains did not command vessels with less than twenty guns. Unrated vessels, those of less than twenty guns, were under the command of commanders, lieutenants, and sometimes other junior officers. The term *ship*, when used by naval personnel, usually was restricted to vessels with three masts, although there were exceptions and civilians might not use such distinctions. In conventional parlance, sloops had a single mast and fore and aft sails, while a schooner had two masts. However, in naval terms, any unrated vessel (i.e. less than 20 guns) with a single gun deck might be termed a sloop-of-war. These could range from single-masted vessels to brig-sloops with two masts and even three-masted ship-sloops. Galleys typically were flatter bottomed boats propelled by oars, but might also have a single mast with a sail.

Royal Navy Vessels and Forces

Roebuck

The largest of the Royal Navy vessels at the island was the *Roebuck* (Figure 6.3). As a 5th Rate frigate, she carried forty-four guns. *Roebuck* was 140 feet in length, thirty-eight feet at her beam, and weighed 886 tons (bm) (Colledge 1987:293). Constructed in Chatham in 1774, *Roebuck* was a very new warship. The armament of a 5th Rate consisted of twenty 18-pounder long guns, twenty-two 9-pounder long guns, and two 6-pounder long guns, providing a total broadside weight of 570 pounds. Crew complement for a frigate of this rate would number about 300 officers, sailors, and marines (Gardiner 1996:56). This was a very powerful vessel, especially compared to other naval ships in the region.

Roebuck was under the command of Captain Andrew Snape Hamond (Figure 6.4), who served as the senior naval commander with Lord Dunmore. Under his command, *Roebuck* saw service around New York, in the Delaware Bay, and in the Chesapeake Bay, arriving at Norfolk in 1776. After the events at St. George Island, *Roebuck* would see continued and active service throughout the American Revolution, returning to the Chesapeake and Delaware bays in 1777 during the Philadelphia Campaign.

Fowey

Fowey was among the smallest group of frigates (see Figure 6.5) in the Royal Navy. As a 6th Rate frigate, she mounted twenty-four guns. Constructed by Janvrin at Lepe in 1749, her length was 113 ½ feet, thirty-two feet at her beam, weighed 513 tons (bm) (Colledge 1987:141). Her armament would have been similar to the *Seahorse*, also in service during the American war, and consisted of twenty-two 9-pounder long guns and two 4-pounder long guns, providing a broadside weight of 206 pounds (Goodwin 2002:39). Crew complement typically would have numbered 160 officers, sailors, and marines.

The commanding officer of *Fowey* was Captain George Montagu (Figure 6.6), who was apparently highly respected by the Americans for his conduct as an officer. Prior to St. George Island, *Fowey* had operated in the upper Chesapeake Bay, threatening Annapolis and Baltimore, and attempting to capture Maryland State Navy vessels being fitted out. During the siege at Yorktown, *Fowey* would be among the Royal Navy vessels scuttled to avoid capture by the Americans (Sands 1983:199). The vessel was not salvaged after the war, and her remains have been identified among the shipwreck sites at Yorktown, Virginia.



Figure 6.3: The Roebuck (right foreground) in action off Fort Mud, in the Delaware in 1777. (Elliot 1787)

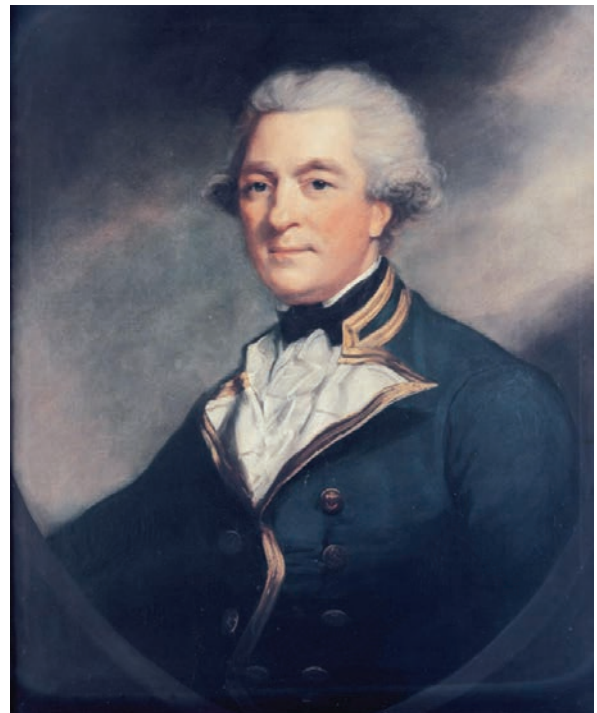


Figure 6.4: Portrait of Sir Andrew Snape Hamond (1738-1828), by James Northcote. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Andrew_Snape_Hamond.jpg)

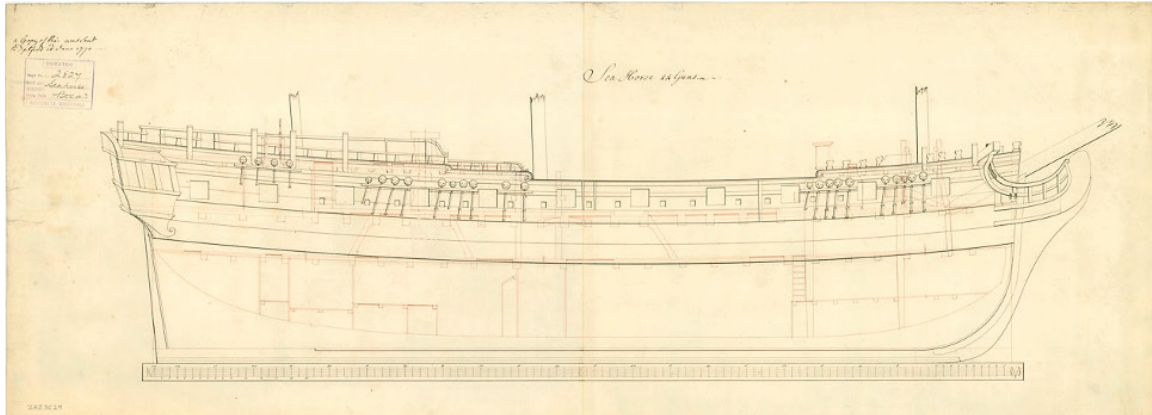


Figure 6.5: Plan of Seahorse (1748), a 6th rate similar to *Fowey*. (National Maritime Museum 1770)



Figure 6.6: Captain George Montagu, portrait attributed to Thomas Beach or Lemmuel Francis Abbott.
(https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sir_George_Montagu.jpg)

Otter

This sloop-of-war (see Figure 6.7) was the smallest of the Royal Navy vessels at the island. As an “unrated vessel,” she carried only fourteen guns. She was ninety-five feet in length, had a beam of twenty-seven feet, and weighed 302 tons (bm) (Colledge 1987:251). She was built at the Deptford

Yard in 1767, and her armament consisted of fourteen 6-pounder long guns. Sloops-of-war were built in several forms, including ship-sloops and brig-sloops. The distinctions between the two was that ship-sloops had a third mast and were capable of carrying two more guns. According to Gardiner (1987:56), the *Otter* was a ship-sloop. A crew complement would have numbered approximately 125 officers, sailors, and marines.

Although small in comparison to *Roebuck* and *Fowey*, the *Otter* was not insignificant and had an important role. Vessels such as *Otter* combined speed, maneuverability, shallow draft, and sea keeping capabilities that were important in reconnaissance, fleet communications, and operations in shallow water areas. Under the command of Captain Mathew Squire, previous to entering Dunmore's fleet, *Otter* had been active in Virginia's river systems and in the Chesapeake Bay, having cruised with *Fowey* in the upper Chesapeake. *Otter's* naval career ended when she was wrecked on the coast of Florida in 1778. (Colledge 1987:251)

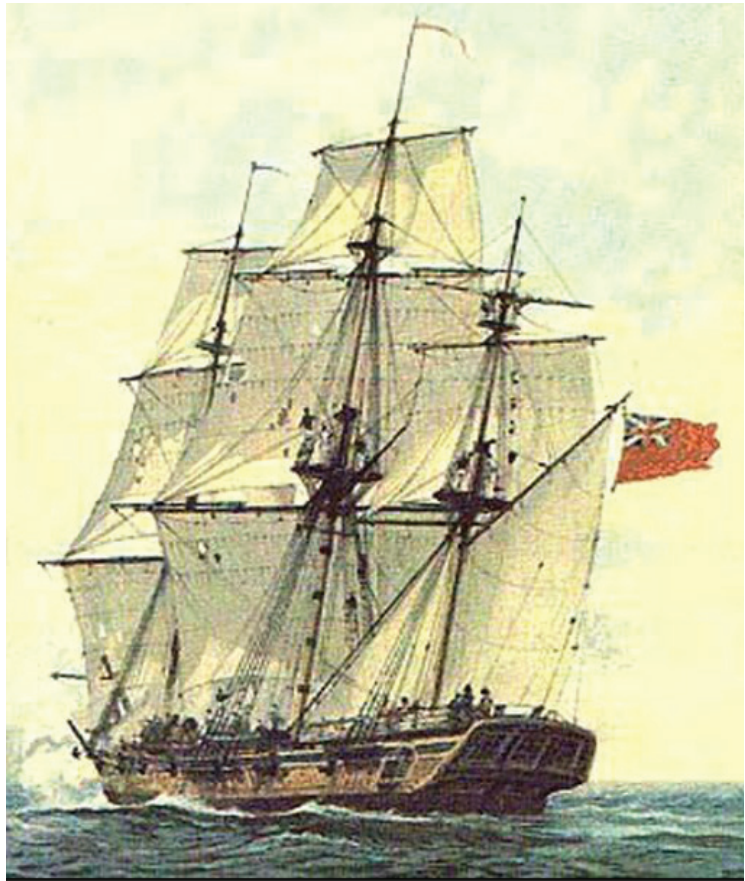


Figure 6.7: 18th century sloop-of-war. (Naval History Archive)

Tenders

While technically not Royal Navy vessels, tenders did enter into naval service and provided valuable, additional capabilities to a fleet. A group of five tenders were recorded in the 10 July ship list: *Lady Gower*, *Lady Stanly*, *Lady Susan*, *Gaze*, and *Fincastle*. Usually acquired through capture by a Royal Navy warship, a vessel could be refitted for naval operations depending on the exigencies of the service. In the case of several of the tenders here, considering that their captains (Wilkie, Younghusband, and Goodrich) were known Loyalists, they could have been commandeered or

voluntarily offered to the King's service. Each of these had likely been a merchant vessel engaged in the regional, coastal, and Caribbean trade. As a force multiplier attached to a fleet or a single-rated vessel, they could independently cruise and engage in the capture and/or destruction of other enemy vessels, then return to the main ship. Additionally, as locally built vessels they would have been ideally adapted to operating in the Chesapeake Bay's complex river systems, helping to collect and transport both supplies and troops. While an asset, these vessels also posed a logistical problem for Lord Dunmore, and more directly, to Captain Hamond. Crews for these support vessels were drawn from those aboard the other naval vessels, thus reducing and weakening their shipboard manpower. The problem of crews thinly dispersed among the ships and their tenders was a problem commented upon by Captain Hamond and other officers. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, these vessels were probably among those riding at anchor off St. George Island.

A vessel not on the 10 July ship list, but definitely at the island, was the *Ranger*. Making its first recorded, but sudden, appearance at St. George Island on 31 July, while covering the last major landing of Crown forces, this vessel was something of a mystery. However, an examination of the records pertaining to the *Roebuck* and Captain Hamond helped identify this vessel. Writing from aboard the *Roebuck* at Gwynn's Island on 10 June 1776, Captain Hamond gave orders to an Edward James to proceed to the Delaware River to deliver dispatches to Captain Bellew of the *Liverpool*, a frigate then on station there. After delivery, James was to return to Virginia. Hamond's letter was addressed to "Mr Edward James commander of the Roebuck's Tender the *Ranger*" (NAVDOCS 5:462-463). Apparently, Mr. James completed his mission, and the tender *Ranger* returned in time to reunite with the *Roebuck* and participate in one of the late actions at the island. The rig and armament of *Ranger* is unknown.

The Covered Row Galley

Probably one of the more unusual vessels to be deployed at the island was a flat that was converted into a covered galley (see Figure 6.8). Galleys were frequently part of navies during the war; however, this one seems to have been one of Captain Hamond's own design. Started at Gwynn's Island and brought with the fleet to St. George Island, the 20 July entry in Captain Hamond's narrative described the process: "While the Fleet lay at Gwin's Island the Carpenters had been employed in fitting up one of the Flats, which we found there, to carry a Cannon, and to Row with 14 Oars: I put a Six Pounder into it, and kept it constantly employed in the little creeks and bays about George's Id by being in a great measure covered over, the People were quite sheltered, could go close to the shore with safety, and by that means did great mischief among the Enemy" (NAVDOCS 6:172-173). Flats or "flat Bottom Boats" generally were used for transporting large quantities of material or bulky materials, and in military contexts were an ideal vessel type for transporting troops.

Captain Hamond did not provide any information on the converted flat's dimensions or other particulars. However, an order in the Journal of the Virginia Navy Board provides some information on basic dimensions of these craft. In September of 1776, several contractors were to construct flats that had a "Forty foot keel, fourteen Feet Beam, three feet four Inches Deep to the top of the Gunnall, eight Inches Wash Board, and to be Ceiled in the same manner as the Boat lately Built by Mr. Herbert" (NAVDOCS 6:1016-1017). They were also to be constructed of oak and pine and fitted with "Twenty Oars fixed upon Iron Swivels." The covering over the top of the galley was its most unusual feature, greatly adding to the crew's protection from enemy fire.

This was the only known galley with Crown forces, and is unquestionably "the" galley that was used in reconnaissance, in some of the actions at the island, and in Smith's Creek (NAVDOCS 5:1119;



Figure 6.8: American line of Battle at Valcour Island, showing several row galleys, second from left and far right. Randle ND)

1163-1164). Jeremiah Jordan described the action of 16 July and this galley's movements [Action 1] (NAVDOCS 5:1119). Jordan also indicated that the construction of a second, similar galley was being attempted. He reported to the Council of Safety "From a report we had given us yesterday [16 July] they are constructing another vessel like the one above and that they intend attacking us on the Potowmac side." This most unusual vessel was also among those on the watering expedition up the Potomac River, and participated in the landings on the Virginia side of the river. In an account of the Crown forces landing at William Brent's plantation on 22 July, a "gondola covered" was sighted as it helped cover the landing by soldiers of the 14th Foot and marines (NAVDOCS 5:1206). The writer further related that, drawing but sixteen inches of water, it ran close to the shore and with a nine pounder [actually only a 6-pounder] and grape shot, obliged the militia to retreat."

The covered galley remained with the fleet, but was probably capsized and lost at its departure. Apparently in tow by the *Roebuck*, the Saturday, 3 August entry in the Master's log reported "A M at 5 Made the Signl & Weigh'd as did the Fleet the Galley fill'd halld a Longside & took the 6 Pounder out of her and what Arms we could find & Veer'd her a Stern again." (NAVDOCS 6:66)

Ship's Companies: Sailors and Marines

An important component of naval assets were the ship's companies that manned the Royal Navy vessels of the fleet. While not working the vessels when sailing, the sailors would have done other important tasks and accompanied the daily landings on the island. They would have manned the ships boats used to row troops ashore and would have been a part of the landing force. The marine detachments that were aboard all of the principal Royal Navy vessels would have seen similar service. In addition to their shipboard duties, they would have participated in the landings, such as the one at William Brent's plantation discussed earlier, and helped to secure any landing areas while the other troops were ashore. Armed sailors and marines most certainly were involved in the several actions that took place on and around the island.

The Fleet's Civilian Vessels

The remaining approximately thirty-five vessels comprise the civilian vessels that made up Lord Dunmore's fleet. This group was composed of sloops, schooners, snows, brigs, and brigantines. Frequently seen among colonial trading vessels, brigs and brigantines would have been familiar sights in Chesapeake waters. The group of sloops and schooners would have been a highly varied group of traditionally built vessels, and could have included a new type of topsail pilot schooner emerging among Chesapeake-built vessels. Later on, these innovative vessels would become the

famed “Baltimore clipper” (Footner 1998). Two snows were present, and one, the *Santa Barbara*, was an unwilling member of the “Floating Town.” The story of this ship and the “spy” on board were related in the diary kept by Miguel Antonio Eduardo (NAVDOCS 5:1339-1351). Eduardo had been sent north on a covert mission by the Marquis de la Torre, Governor of Havana, to find out more about the developing conflict between the Crown and the Americans. He embarked on the *Santa Barbara*, which also was transporting 12,500 silver pesos to the Americans in Philadelphia, but the vessel was captured at the mouth of the Delaware Bay by the *Liverpool* (28 guns). Ordered to Virginia by *Liverpool*’s commanding officer, Captain Henry Bellew, the *Santa Barbara* joined the fleet at Gwynn’s Island on 30 May 1776. Acting as a sort of spy, Eduardo’s narrative provides one of the essential narratives that captured the events in Virginia and at St. George Island. The British never discovered his secret mission, but Eduardo gained a first-hand look at the conflict as it emerged in the Chesapeake and left a remarkably informative record of the events.

While these vessels can be classed as civilian, several were used for functions critical to the fleet. The *Dunmore* was Lord Dunmore’s flagship, the brigantine *Helena* served as a prison, the snow *Unicorn* housed a “black smith shop,” and the *William*, *Anna*, *Dun Luce*, and *John Grymes* served as transports carrying troops. Another vessel not found on the ship list was the *Adonis*. Records pertaining to this vessel are scant. However, a log entry of the *Roebuck* shows she supplied the *Adonis* brig with “5 tons of Water on 30 July” (NAVDOCS 5:1316). An unusual source revealed the identity of this vessel. Found among papers at Gwynn’s Island when taken by the Americans, and later published in the Virginia Gazette on 31 August, was a group of morning reports for the Ethiopian Regiment that recorded the return of men from the “Hospital Brig Adonis” (Virginia Gazette, August 31st, 1776). The large volume of water supplied by the *Roebuck* is explained by this vessel’s medical role.

Military Forces

Along with his naval and maritime assets, Lord Dunmore’s forces included a significant military component comprised by a detachment of professional soldiers from the British Army and two, or possibly, three Loyalist units that had been raised in Virginia. Due to the absence of muster rolls for the Loyalist commands, the actual size of this force can only be estimated. A conservative estimate is that this entire Crown force of foot soldiers numbered between 400 and 500 men of all ranks. The majority of these units were infantry, however, one of the Loyalist units was initially raised as a mounted force.

British Army | The 14th Regiment of Foot

The professional soldiers under Dunmore were drawn from a single regiment, the 14th Regiment of Foot. Raised in 1685 as Hales’s Regiment, the men saw service during Monmouth’s Rebellion and in the Flanders campaigns of the Duke of Marlborough, where the regiment received its first battle honor (Namur). In 1694, the regiment took its precedence in the line as the 14th Regiment of Foot. The regiment’s following service included the War of Austrian Succession, both the 1715 and 1745 Jacobite Rebellions, and a period of time in the Gibraltar garrison.

The regiment’s American service began in 1766, when it embarked for garrison duty in Canada (Cannon 1845:34). In 1768, the regiment was part of the Boston garrison. It was present during the 1770 “Boston Massacre,” but did not participate in the street fighting against the Americans.

In 1772, the 14th’s service dramatically changed. It spent the next two years in a “bush fighting” campaign against the Maroons and Caribe Indians on the island of St. Vincent in the eastern

Caribbean Sea. The regiment's planned return to England from its posts in Florida and the West Indies in 1774 was put on hold as tensions increased in the North American colonies.

As the conditions in Virginia deteriorated, Lord Dunmore appealed to Crown authorities for military assistance in stabilizing the colony's Royal government. Responding to his Lordship's appeal, General Gage ordered the Providence Island company and a detachment of "not less than 60 men" to be drawn from the regiment at St. Augustine, Florida, and sent to Virginia.

These troops began arriving in Virginia by late July of 1775. On 31 July 1775, William Davies, of the Norfolk Borough Committee, informed Peyton Randolph of "the arrival of troops this day in this harbor in the sloop lately belonging to Mr. Bowdoin. They are said to be from St. Augustine, and are about sixty in number, under the command of one Captain and two Lieutenants: the Ensign it is said, is coming by land. From good authority we learn, that another vessel with more troops may be hourly expected" (RVRI 3:378). The arrival of these troops also was recorded in the Captain's journal of the *Otter*. Captain Squire wrote "Monday, July 1775, Monday 31 AM arrived here the Betsey Sloop with part of the 14th Regiment of light infantry from St. Augustine" (NAVDOCS 1:1025). At about the same time, additional officers for the regiment were sent from Boston (RVRI 3:425, Note 24). These sources confirm that the detachment of the regiment was in Virginia by early August. The numbers of men from the regiment vary in the different documents, but likely numbered between 150 and 350 of all ranks. Commanding officers were Captain Charles Fordyce, a grenadier company officer, and Captain Samuel Leslie, a light infantry company officer. At least two lieutenants and an ensign supported them. It appears that this detachment was composed largely, if not entirely, of men drawn from the grenadier and light infantry companies of the regiment. In British service at this time these companies were the elite flank companies, composed of the regiment's best and most capable soldiers.

It is possible the regiment's appearance upon arrival in Virginia departed from the current dress regulations of 1768 as a result of its campaigning and service in the Caribbean islands. Although dating to the 1791, when the regiment was stationed in Jamaica, inspection returns show the regiment was wearing clothing suited to tropical environments. They were described as wearing "linen waistcoats and long trouser-breeches of the West Indies" (Strachan 1975:209-210). Such alterations were likely to have taken place earlier as well, and may have been brought to Virginia and Maryland with the regiment.

In the fall of 1775, these troops were seeing active service. On 15 November 1775, they successfully defeated Virginia militia forces at Kemp's Landing, destroying a number of arms captured there, as well as other structures. The next engagement, the Battle of Great Bridge on 8 December, was a defeat for Crown forces and resulted in heavy casualties in the regiment. During the attack on the American fortifications, Captain Fordyce was killed in action, two lieutenants were wounded, and between fifty and seventy privates were killed, wounded, or taken prisoner (NAVDOCS 3:29, 141). By 10 December, Captain Leslie was in command of the detachment in Virginia (NAVDOCS 3:141). In 1776, the regiment was part of the movement to Gwynn's Island, participating in the defense of the island when attacked by American forces and in the forced evacuation of the island on 11 July. During the different actions in the previous months, the regiment sustained numerous losses, although desertion was not present.

In addition to these actions, the 14th Foot also served aboard some of Lord Dunmore's tenders as a type of marine. Describing some of the activities and successful operations of his loyal supporters the Goodriches, his Lordship stated "I generally send a few of the 14th Regiment with them" (Cross 1981:13).

The "regulars" of the 14th Foot arrived at St. George Island aboard the transports *William* and *Anna*. These troops took part in the landings and actions that followed in the next few weeks. Their

first engagement was the action on 16 July, where they engaged Maryland forces positioned on the island. The 14th, along with Loyalist troops, also took part in the watering expedition and the landings and actions along the Virginia side of the river, notably the fight at “Mr. Brents” where they engaged Virginia militia (NAVDOCS 5:1206-1207).

The unit returned to New York with the fleet in August, and in early 1777 the remaining men were absorbed into other British Army regiments and the officers returned to England to recruit. Some of the regiment’s soldiers, likely some of those that had served in the Chesapeake Bay, entered into Patrick Ferguson’s Corps of British Riflemen (Moss 2018). Returning to North America in 1777, this elite corps would fight with distinction at the Battle of Brandywine (11 September), and in the night action of the Battle of Paoli (20-21 September).

The 14th Foot continued to serve the Crown after its American experience, seeing service in the wars with Revolutionary France and Napoleon, in the Crimea, around the globe in the various colonial campaigns of the 19th century, and in both the Great War and World War II. From its beginnings in southeastern England, and enduring numerous amalgamations and reforms, the regiment continues to serve today as part of the Yorkshire Regiment based in York, England.

Archaeological traces of the 14th Regiment’s North American service have been found. Their distinctive numbered uniform buttons have been found in Florida (Troiani and Kochan 2012:56), and in excavations at British campsites in New York City (Calver and Bolton 1950). The New York sites represent the regiment’s occupation after their return from St. George Island, but before its return to England in 1777. No military material culture related to the regiment has been recorded from Virginia or Maryland to date.

Loyalist Units

After his success in the fighting at Kemp’s Landing, Lord Dunmore authorized the raising of two military units from the Loyalist population of Virginia. Beginning on 25 November 1775, one regiment, composed of white troops, and a second of Black troops was started to be recruited (Gara 2005:32). These were the Queen’s Loyal Regiment of Virginia and the Ethiopian Regiment.

The Ethiopian Regiment

Known variously as the “Regiment of Black Fusiliers” and sometimes the “Regiment of Sables” in period documents, this unit was recruited from among African-Americans who had sought their freedom through service to the Crown (see Figure 6.9). This force was formed into two companies and served under white officers. Initial officers were Captain John Collet and Captain John McKay (Clark 1981:165). Later, Thomas Byrd (formerly an officer in the 16th Regiment of Foot, and the son of William Byrd III) would serve as major, and John McKay continued as captain (Gara 2005:38). The absence of muster roll data makes estimating the number of men in this regiment difficult, however the number likely was considerable. About the time when the unit was at Gwynn’s Island, the Spanish spy Edurado recorded that among the forces there were “300 Negroes who fled the Americans to their freedom, called the Etiope Regiment” (NAVDOCS 5:1344).

The Ethiopian’s first action was at the Battle of Great Bridge. In that fighting, the Americans inflicted serious casualties among these men. In addition to battle deaths and wounds, disease was just as serious a killer among these soldiers. On 19 May 1776, Captain Hamond reported “At this time the small Pox made its appearance among the Black Troops, and in order to save them, the Surgeons



Figure 6.9: Royal Ethiopian Regiment soldier, by Don Troiani. (courtesy Don Troiani)

recommended that the whole should be inoculated” (NAVDOCS 5:321). Recognizing what the side effects of inoculation would be, Hamond expressed his concern about its effect on Crown forces being able to defend themselves, stating “This was likely to be a great reduction of our force.” Smallpox seems not have been the only disease affecting the regiment. Hamond indicated “The Negro Troops, which had been inoculated before they left Norfolk, got thro’ the disorder with great success, but the Fever which had been so fatal to them there, followed them also to the Island” (NAVDOCS 5:840). What this “Fever” was is not clear, but candidates include epidemic typhus, typhoid fever, yellow fever, and malaria (although most loyalists, Black and white, probably would have been exposed to malaria previously and would have had some immunity).

The surviving members of the regiment departed Gwynn’s Island during the evacuation and arrived off St. George Island. Unfortunately, the names of the vessels they were on were not recorded in the

10 July ship list. However, it is possible these soldiers were aboard the *Dun Luce*, *Dunmore* and the *Adonis* as they and their wives were on these three vessels in May (Loyalist Studies).

Nevertheless, on 15 July they participated in their first operation on the island. Eduardo recorded “some 350 troops of the 14th Regiment, Queen’s Regiment, and the Ethiopians disembarked” (NAVDOCS 5:1346). They undoubtedly would have been involved in the other actions and operations that followed, including the water expedition up the Potomac River. Their first action was on the following day, when they engaged American forces on St. George Island. This unit numbered approximately 100 men able to “bare” arms at this point.

The Ethiopians left the island with the departure of the fleet to New York. There they were disbanded in 1776, but were granted their freedom. Gara (2005) suggests many may have enrolled in another British corps, the Black Pioneers. After the war, many of these Loyalists would resettle in new communities established at Freetown and Birchtown in the wilderness of Nova Scotia. The decision made by African-Americans who decided to serve in this unit is representative of the hard choices that people of color faced with the coming of the American War for Independence.

The Queen’s Loyal Regiment of Virginia

Referred to as the “Queen’s” or the “Loyals” in period sources, this regiment served at the same time as the Ethiopian Regiment and had a shared military experience. Similar to the Ethiopians, the absence of regimental records makes understanding the formation and composition of this regiment difficult. Initial recruiting by the officers seems to have brought in about 330 men (Gara 2005:33). Jacob Ellegood was commissioned lieutenant colonel, John Saunders, Stair Agnew, George Blair received commissions as captain, and Thomas Hall served as ensign (Clark 1981:165). A Captain Hunter is also recorded as one of the captains “in a new regiment of Levies,” another term used to designate this unit (NAVDOCS 5:40). Ellegood was captured early by the Americans, and would not rejoin his regiment for the remainder of the war. It is probable that the other officers served with the Loyals for the remainder of its service in the Chesapeake Bay.

A significant addition to the strength of the Loyals was the arrival of a group of Marylanders from the Eastern Shore. In correspondence to Lord Germain, Lord Dunmore reported on 24 June that “Hearing a few days ago that there were a Number of well affected Subjects to His Majesty, on the eastern Shore of Maryland, I sent immediately three of the Tenders there to bring off as many as were willing to come, they last night brought me between fifty and Sixty, and would have brought many more had they room for them; directly on hearing this I sent off five small Tenders and a Ship to bring as many more as wish to Serve His Majesty, I have enlisted those that came in the Queen’s own Loyal Virginia Regiment” (NAVDOCS 5:757).

The Loyals saw action in the Battle of Great Bridge and again at Gwynn’s Island. Recorded in the 10 July ship list, the “Queens loyals” arrived at St. George Island onboard the *Dun Luce*. (NAVDOCS 5:1021). There they numbered about 150 men (Gara 2005: 39). They disembarked from the ship in the first landing on the island the next day, along with the 14th Foot and Ethiopians. Like the other soldiers with Lord Dunmore, their first action against Maryland forces was on 16 July. They numbered approximately 150 men under arms. These soldiers would have participated in all the subsequent operations and actions of the Crown forces.

Departing the island with the fleet, the Loyals sailed for New York, where they would be disbanded in November 1776. But for many of these soldiers, the war was just beginning. Several of the officers and many of the men enlisted into the Queen’s American Rangers, otherwise known as Queen’s

Rangers (Gara 2015). As one of the most distinguished of the war's Loyalist commands, they would serve for the remainder of the war, finally surrendering at Yorktown. Like many American Loyalists afterwards, they would start new lives in Canada.

Dragoons

A third unit of Loyalist troops may have been at St. George Island. In the 10 July ship list, following the entry for the "Queens loyals" on board the *Dun Luce*, was the comment "a Regt of Ds raising." This abbreviation indicates dragoons, but the compiler of the 10 July ship list incorrectly identified the Queens Loyals as a mounted unit. Nevertheless, further down on the list was the sloop *John Grymes*, said to be "occupied by said Grymes and some Dragoons" (NAVDOCS 5:1021-1022). The latter comment was clearly referring to a mounted unit. John Randolph Grymes was a prominent landowner, whose holdings consisted mainly of Gwynn's Island, where he had a major plantation. Writing on 26 June 1776, while at Gwynn's Island, Lord Dunmore informed Lord Germain "I advised Mr Grymes to form a little Troop, and take the command of it, which he has done, by which he (being posted in the Middle of the Island) is able to give assistance to either End that should be attacked" (NAVDOCS 5:758). There are no references to any horses or mounted men in the Crown forces operations or actions at the island, so it is unlikely these men, while recognized as dragoons, actually served in that capacity. More likely, they attached themselves to the Queen's Loyals and functioned as infantry.

Leaving the island and arriving at New York with the fleet, Grymes saw further service. Entering the Queen's American Rangers, he was posted with the provincial rank of major (Gara 2015: 20), and served with along with John Saunders and Stair Agnew, formerly of the Queen's Loyal Regiment of Virginia. Grymes would leave the service in November 1776 due to injuries sustained at the Battle of Brandywine (Gara 2015:95).

Inventory of Military & Non-Military Sites

Inventory of Military and Non-Military Sites

Introduction

Based on the foregoing narrative, a variety of potential site types are associated with the Battle of St. George Island. These include: non-military sites such as:

- Domestic dwellings and plantations
- Wells and watering areas
- Roads

Military sites may be broken into maritime and terrestrial sites. Maritime military sites include:

- Fleet or vessel locations and anchorages
- Landing zones for amphibious movement
- Vessel remains and ship components

Terrestrial military sites include:

- Fortifications
- Encampments
- Command and control positions
- Logistical positions
- Troop positions and areas of engagement

All of these may be further divided into sites associated with Crown forces and those associated with American forces. The following discussion examines each of these types of sites.

Non-Military Sites

Domestic Plantations

The historic occupation of St. George Island began in the 17th century. Originally a tract of land owned by the Jesuits, beginning in the 1640s tracts of land on the island were leased out to individual planters. These plantations and the planter's households were engaged in the cultivation of tobacco similar to those found elsewhere throughout St. Mary's County. The community on the island became part of St. Inigoes parish, and this pattern of land ownership and agriculture continued through the 18th century and did not change until 1806.

In July of 1776, the records indicate several plantations were situated on the island. In his diary entry for 15 July, the first day after the arrival the fleet, the Spanish spy Miguel Antonio Eduardo indicates individual plantations were present on the island. He did not provide an exact number of plantations, or the names of the occupants or their locations, but he does indicate that upon the first landing of Crown forces some (or all) of these became a target. Eduardo reported that soldiers from the 14th Regiment and Loyalists from the Ethiopian Regiment and Queen's Own Loyal Regiment of Virginia "undertook a grand sack of the few Houses that had been abandoned by their owners that same morning, taking all the Cattle with the exception of a small number of sheep and pigs" (NAVDPCS 5:1346) Despite the lack of location provided by the diarist, the locations and any surviving remains of these farms represent a significant archaeological resource on the

island. In previous boundary surveys, concentrations of brick have been identified at the surface (S. Strickland, personal communication, March 22, 2021). Further archaeological investigations are needed to verify whether or not these locations are related to the domestic buildings and farms destroyed in during Action 1 (16 July) or Action 4 (25 July). It is possible that some of the destroyed houses were rebuilt after the engagement. If so, these may be in the location of the two houses noted on the 1824 chart (Bureau of Topographical Engineers). In Figure 7.1, these are labeled “Barnes” and “Dillahays.” Dillahays is the most southern of these households, located roughly at the mid-point of the island, and no structures are shown in the southern half of St. George Island. Even by 1862 (Figure 7.2), there was relatively little settlement in this southern area, suggesting that the same was likely true in 1776.

Both the 1824 and 1862 maps (Figures 7.1 and 7.2) will become important in the later analysis of the battlefield landscape. In an area that is low and with relatively little topographic relief, the 1824 map shows some important elevation differences, with slight hills and shoreline banks that could have been important features impacting troop movements. By contrast, the 1862 chart shows much greater detail in terms of vegetation and marsh than the 1824 map, features that also would impact troop movements and visibility.

Wells and Watering Areas

The need for fresh water was one of the stated objectives for Crown forces going to and using St. George Island. The search for good, potable water was a significant factor in naval operations of sailing navies, and the fleet at the island was no exception. The demand for this resource would have been enormous considering the size of the ship’s companies of the Royal Navy vessels, their tenders, and the large number of crew and Loyalist families that occupied the civilian vessels under Lord Dunmore’s protection. Modern medical literature counsels the need for 3.7 liters (125 fluid oz) per day for men and 2.7 liters (91.3 oz) for women (Sawka et. al. 2005). If we take a conservative average of 3.2 liters (108.2 oz) per day, a force of 1,700 people would require 5,440 liters (1,437 gallons) a day just for drinking, without accounting for cooking, washing and other needs. A two-week supply of drinking water would have been upwards of 76,000 liters (over 20,000 gallons, or 74 tons of water). Although rum and beer rations took the place of some of these water needs, a British naval sloop of the period, with a crew of 135, typically carried 40 tons of fresh water for a three-month voyage, and expected to use it at a rate of about a half ton a day (Pope 1996:171).

The critical need for water by Crown forces was recognized in one of the first orders issued immediately after arrival at the island. Eduardo, again on 15 July, stated that “A general order was given for all to go to the Island for water” (NAVDOCS, Vol. 5:1346). That “all,” and not just military personnel, were ordered to go points to the importance of securing sufficient quantities of water to meet the needs of the fleet. Eduardo made a further comment of significance. In the above diary entry, he stated that on the island “there were only three Wells.” The search for water and access to wells was the objective of the repeated landings made by Crown forces during the period when the fleet was at the island during July 1776. These operations were largely intended for the securing of water and not the maintaining of military posts or positions on the island.

The wells are again mentioned directly in the relation of an action between American and Crown forces, this time in an American letter later in the month. On 25 July, Major Thomas Price, writing to General Andrew Lewis, related the incidents of an American ambush and repulse of a watering party from the fleet (Maryland Archives 12:122-123). Price indicated an American force “compelled them to retire after destroying their water casks and filling up a well, the best on the Island.” Major Price’s letter also reveals another significant aspect about the island water resources. As a sort

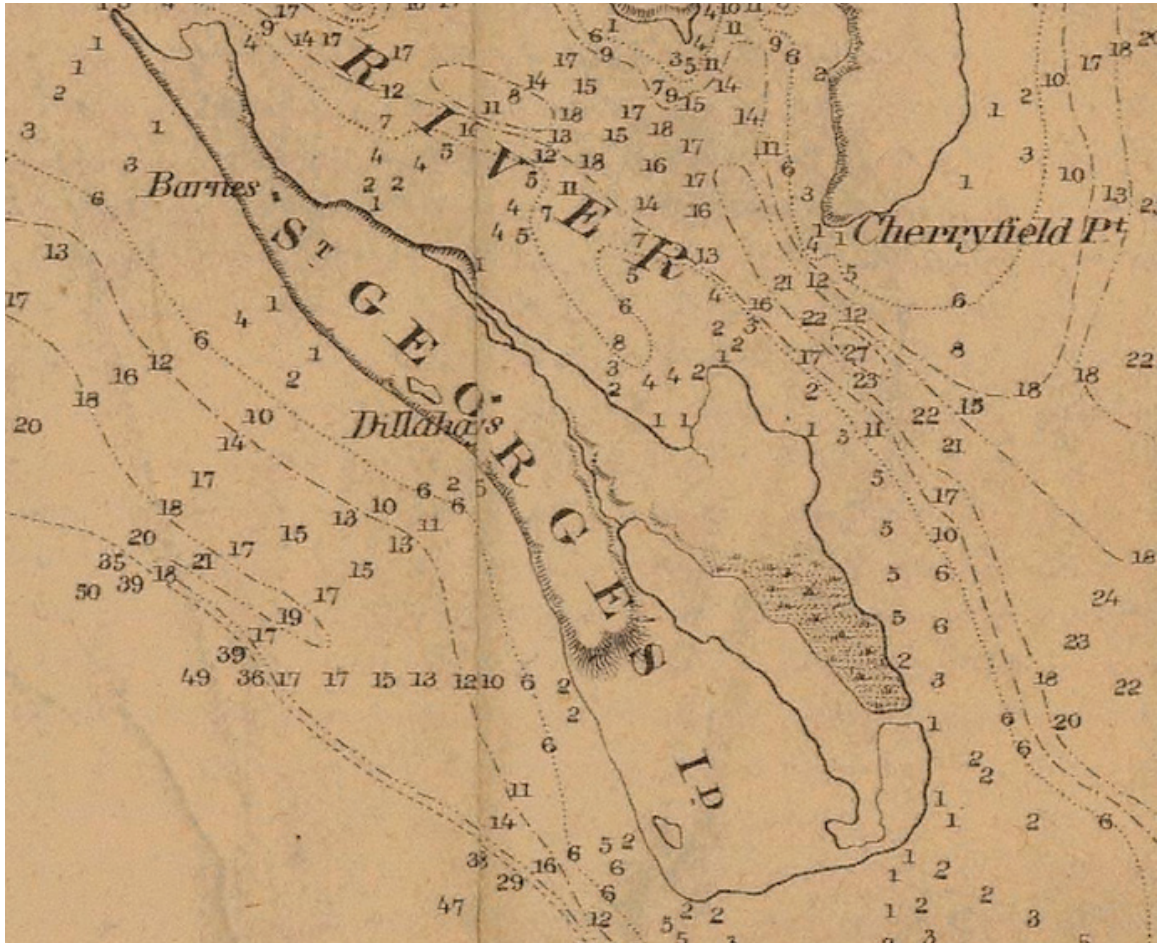


Figure 7.1: Excerpt from the 1824 Bureau of Topographic Engineers Map of the Patuxent and St. Mary's Rivers. (Bureau of Topographic Engineers 1824)

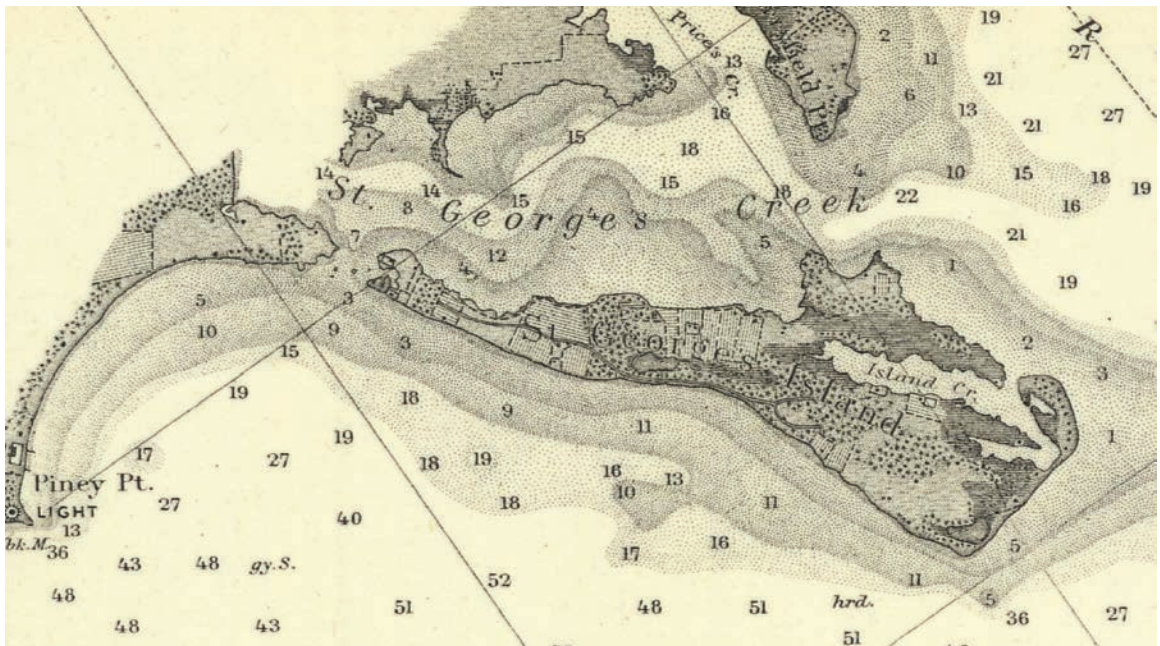


Figure 7.2: Excerpt from Potomac River in Four Sheets, Sheet Number 1 from Entrance to Piney Point. (U.S. Coast Survey 1862).

of justification for the destruction of the best well on the island, he further stated “for they have no springs.” Major Price’s comments indicate the American’s decision to destroy a productive well was a tactical consideration intended to deny Crown forces access to a water source and was a loss heightened by the absence of any naturally occurring springs. Springs were a common source of surface water throughout St. Mary’s County, and have been recognized as one of the most important environmental variables associated with the location of 17th and 18th century plantations (Smolek 1982). However, Hamond himself noted that it was exceptionally dry: “we searched everywhere for water, but on Account of the dryness of the season, very little prospect appeared of being able to supply the fleet with a sufficient quantity of their Voyage from thence” (NAVDOCS 6:172). Hamond then immediately organized an expedition up the Potomac River to seek other sources of water.

It is unclear in the records if the wells under discussion were features located on individual plantations for the needs of its human and animal occupants or were they sunk in general locations that would have been accessed and used by the larger island community. Most likely, the wells were on individual plantations, close to the houses that were burned, as carrying water for any distance on a daily basis would have been unnecessarily onerous. If so, then Crown forces would likely have been landing on the more protected southern half of the island and then moving north to secure water at wells. When combined with information on terrain and obstacles such as marsh, this helps in sketching out the likely movements of troops at both local and regional scales. The amelioration of water shortages was certainly behind the group of ships that sailed up river toward the “freshes” of the Potomac River. The role of water at St. George Island reveals the important roles of natural resources and their availability in affecting the outcomes of military operations.

Our reconstruction of the situation, based on various documents and an understanding of the history and hydrology of the area, is that wells were the primary water source during the July-August time period of this campaign. Although two ponds are depicted on the island in the 1824 map (Figure 4.1), these were likely brackish, and we have no reason to doubt Price’s observation that there were no springs. Furthermore, it is highly probable that the wells were adjacent to few domestic structures on St. George Island at the time, located on the upper, or northern half of the island. These were the objective of Crown forces.

Road Networks

The identification of the presence of road networks on the historic landscape of a battlefield or battlescape is critical to understanding the lead-up to an action, the action itself, and its aftermath. Roads served as access routes that facilitated the movement of men, equipment, and supplies to critical locations, as well as egress routes for a withdrawal or retreat, should that be necessary. Any consideration of an action of any scale requires knowledge of not only the major roads, but also the existence of smaller farm lanes, paths, and cartways. These smaller components can play significant roles in an engagement, such as the famous Sunken Road on the Antietam battlefield during the U.S. Civil War. This obscure shortcut between local farms and roads became a major focal point during one of the phases of that battle.

No specific record of the use of any single road or road network was found in the historical narratives of either Crown or American forces. The examination of period cartography therefore is essential, in the absence of references in the narratives. Of the period maps, the 1824 map is the only one that shows any of the area’s roads in sufficient detail, and although changes may have occurred between 1776 and 1824, it may show roads that played a role in the 1776 actions and operations. One road is shown leading to St. George Island. It extends over the mainland in a southeasterly direction, terminating at modern day Straits Point, immediately across from the northwest end of the island. This road follows the approximate alignment of today’s State Route 249. The point of land it

connects to was the likely location of an American entrenchment and the Four-Pounder Battery discussed below. Another portion of a road is shown north of St. George Creek and terminating at a plantation with the name of “Fenwick,” along the shore of the St. Mary’s River. No road was shown extending southward across the peninsula, past Edmund’s Point, towards Cherryfield Point. Smaller farm lanes may have been present (but not shown), however, the movement of the American artillery and equipment and supplies for the Lower Camp, and especially for the construction of the Cherryfield Point Battery, would also have been conducted over an unbroken, natural, and probably wooded landscape.

Of particular importance, no road is shown on the island proper. Any troop actions and movements on the island proper would largely have been over pathways and an unbroken, natural landscape that must have been a mix of woods and grasses. However, it seems highly likely that a lane would have linked the two houses shown on the 1824 map (Barnes and Dillehay residences as noted on Figure 4.1) to one another and the mainland, probably over a ford at the northern end of the island, linking to today’s Straits Point. This lane probably followed the path delineated on the 1862 map shown as Figure 4.2. That road ruminates in two prongs short of the southern end of the island. Their terminus likely corresponds to the drop in elevation shown via hachures on the 1824 map.

Further research utilizing land records may reveal the presence of these smaller roads and provide information to better understand their roles in 1776.

Military Sites - Maritime

Fleet/Vessel Anchorages

Crown Forces

Captain Hamond, aboard *Roebuck*, described the setting around St. George Island on 15 July (NAVDOCS 6:172):

George’s Island is about 2 ½ miles long, has an excellent Harbour on the East side of it, and a small Haven on the North, sufficiently open at one end for small Vessels to turn in to it, but at the other is not above 100 yards wide nor has above 3 or 4 feet of water depth.

One of the first sites sought by the arrival of Lord Dunmore’s fleet was a proper anchorage for its many types of vessels, and the “harbour” to which Hamond referred was important. Considerations for a safe anchorage include sufficient water depths to accommodate the different drafts of the larger vessels (such as the deeper drafts of the Royal Navy frigates covering the fleet), the type of river bottom and its holding properties for anchors, space for the larger number of vessels involved, protection and defense of the fleet, and the ability to conduct landings as well as potential offensive operations.

What, then, do the sources indicate about the location of the Crown force’s anchorage? First, all are in agreement that Dunmore’s vessels were anchored in the mouth of the St. Mary’s River. This suggests the vessels were anchored in a relatively concentrated area and not scattered around the island or in other locations. A concentration such as this would have been necessary for an effective defense of the fleet by Royal Navy vessels. Other considerations would have been water depth and exposure to wind and tide. Period maps (1824, 1859, 1862) show a shoal area extending out south from the island that gradually deepens towards the Potomac River. At its southernmost end water depths increase and would have been sufficient for the drafts of larger vessels.

Price's statement that the fleet "lays from the North East side of St Georges River a Bout a mile, the depth of water (as I imagine) about three fathom" (18 feet) suggests an anchorage that is not inside St. George Creek, along the northeast side of the island, but rather outside of that area, east of Cherryfield Point and in the St. Mary's River.

The fleet must have extended over an extensive area. Ground tackle was not as sophisticated or reliable as it is today. For example, the transition from hemp anchor rodes (ropes for securing anchors) to chain took place after 1812 (Harland 2013). As a result, both the lighter weight of hemp cable and less efficient anchors meant that more scope was needed (scope refers to the amount of cable paid out relative to water depth, usually expressed as a ratio of rode let out relative to water depth, such as 4:1 or 7:1). Steele (1807:36) notes that the water shouldn't be so shallow that the ship could be damaged by grounding, but that the water also should not be too deep, "because the cable, when out, should approach as near as possible to a horizontal direction." Both Steele (1807) and Gower (1797) also note the practice of "mooring" when at anchor for any length of time, meaning that two anchors are used. As Steele (1807:57) describes it, about a cable's worth (608 ft) of anchor line was let out from each anchor, putting the ship equidistant from them. In an anchorage with a tide, such as off St. Georges Island, the vessel and its anchors and cables would be aligned with the tide, with "one anchor riding to the flood, and the best anchor and cable to the ebb" (Steele 1807:57). Gower (1797:84) offers the same advice. This method of mooring is depicted in Figure 7.3.

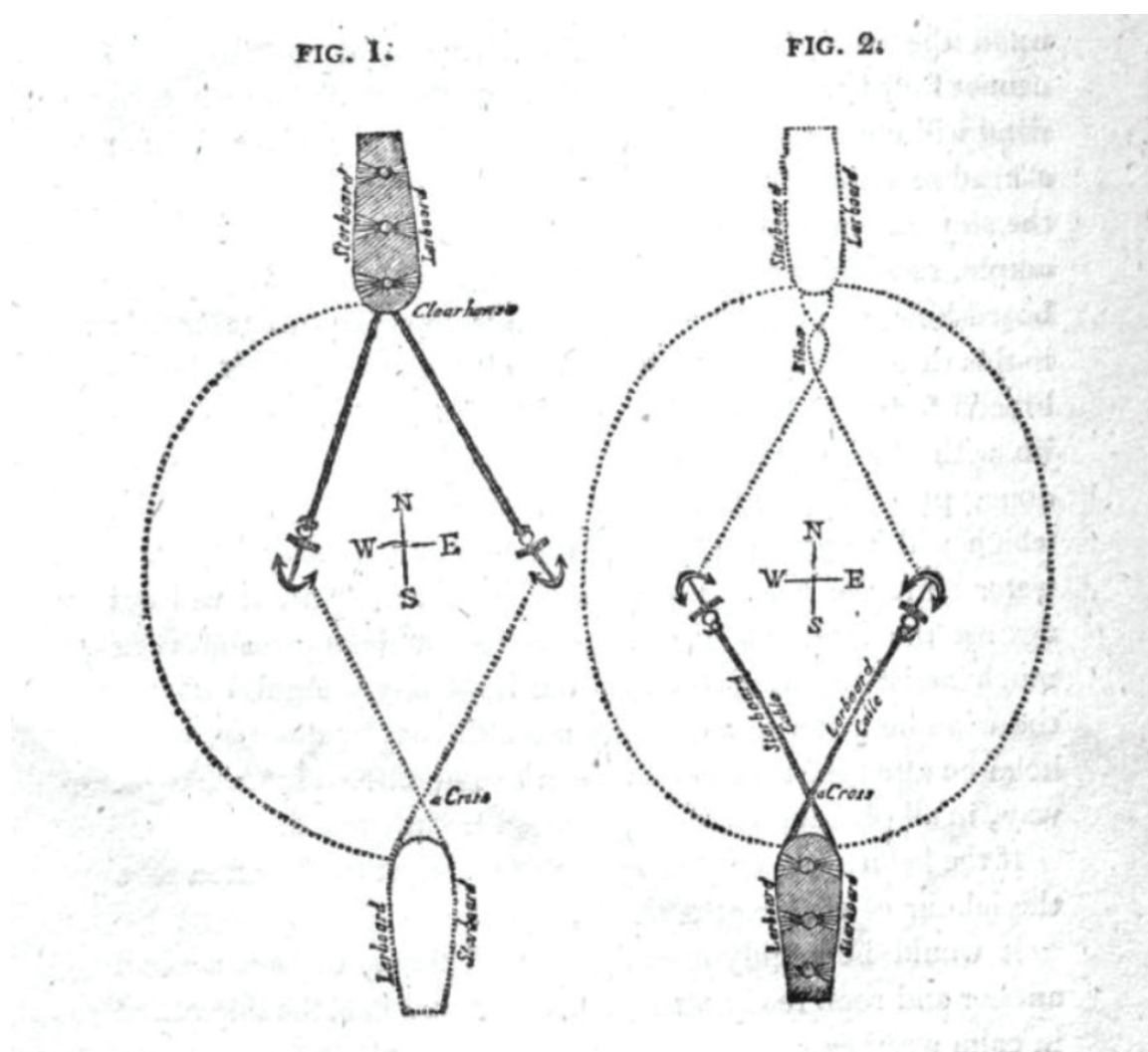


Figure 7.3: Method of mooring with two anchors. (Steele 1807:62)

Using these descriptions of period practice, each ship in such an anchorage would require a minimum area of roughly 1200-1300 feet by 600-700 feet, with the long axis oriented with current and tide. Even safer would be a circle with a diameter of about 1200-1300 feet allocated to each vessel. As we have seen, accounts of the number of vessels in Dunmore's fleet vary from 60 to 90, but using the lower number and spacing out mooring allocations for 60 vessels on the 1824 chart suggests an anchorage area of at least 6,000 by 7,200 feet, extending over the entire mouth of the St. Mary's River, as shown in Figure 4.4. This assumes a very precise mooring pattern, which was unlikely. Along with the more probable number of 70-80 vessels, the mooring area denoted in Figure 7.4 is almost smaller than that used in practice by the British fleet.

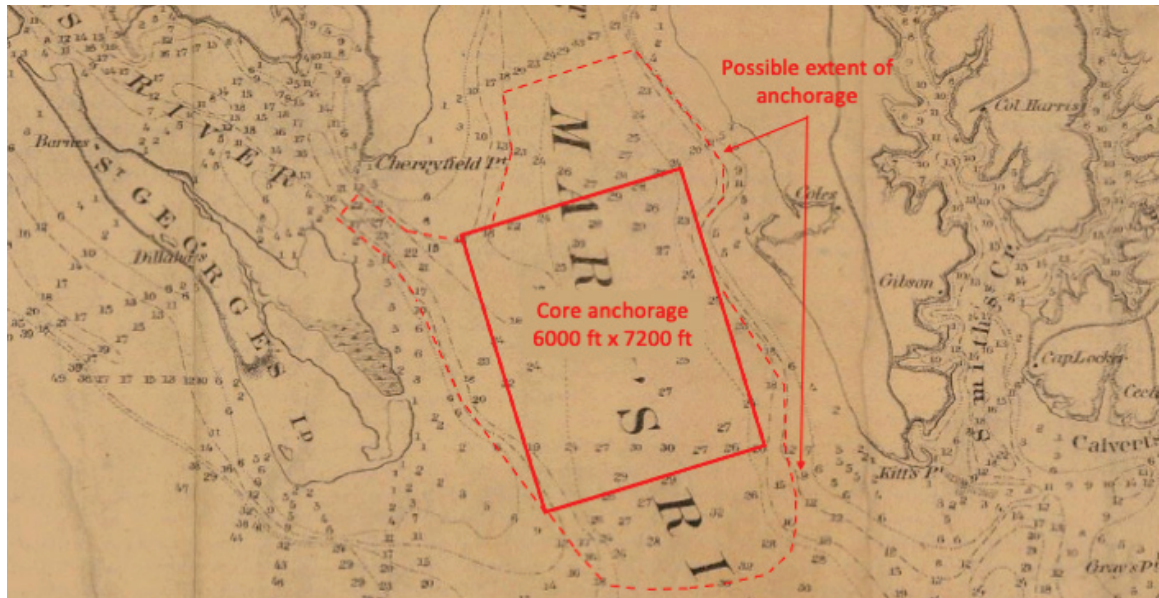


Figure 7.4: Projected Crown fleet anchorage area on the 1824 chart.

American Forces

While American naval vessels were in the area, their participation was minimal during most of the period when Lord Dunmore's fleet was at St. George Island. The major exception was the arrival of Maryland State Navy vessel *Defence*, her tender *Resolution*, and one other unnamed vessel, also a tender, on 28 July. Moving west toward the anchorage from lower down the Potomac, they attempted to engage Dunmore's fleet in a coordinated attack with American forces on the island and the American battery on Cherryfield Point (see Figure 5.9), taking advantage of the absence of the *Roebuck* and other vessels that were then on a watering expedition upriver.

Landing Areas

Crown Forces

In accounts pertaining to the landings or associated actions, no specific location or locations were mentioned or described by the writers. Available cartography therefore was examined to determine where the likely location or locations for an amphibious operation may have been. The 1824 map provides the most detailed view of the island's geography and topography, closest in time to the events. Indicated by black hachures, prominent on the island's interior is an elevated plateau that connects to bluffs that line the island's waterfront along both the Potomac River and St. George Creek. A smaller stretch of bluffs overlook a small drainage that runs into a body of water now

known as Island Creek, behind the north side of the island. Such a series of bluffs represents a more secure military position and would have made waterborne landings and attacks more difficult and potentially costly. Two other areas, however, do not have these obstacles and would have afforded areas for small boats to land troops. Potential landing area 1 is on the island's northeastern end and is on a point of land forming the entrance to the St. George Creek. A marsh area would secure the flank of a landing force, and soundings show similar water depths and gradual rise to a beach area. A creek, now known as Island Creek, bordered the southern side of this area. Potential landing area 2 is the southern end of the island itself extending from below the southern end of the elevated plateau to the beaches along the Potomac and St. Mary's River, and includes a small peninsula, now Jimmy's Island. Soundings along these areas indicate a sloping gradient rising towards the beach.. A marsh area would secure the flank of a landing force, and soundings show similar water depths and gradual rise to a beach area. A creek, now known as Island Creek, bordered the southern side of this area. In our initial analyses, we determined that both of these potential landing areas easily could have been accessed by small boat crews coming from the anchorage, and they are depicted in Figure 7.5.

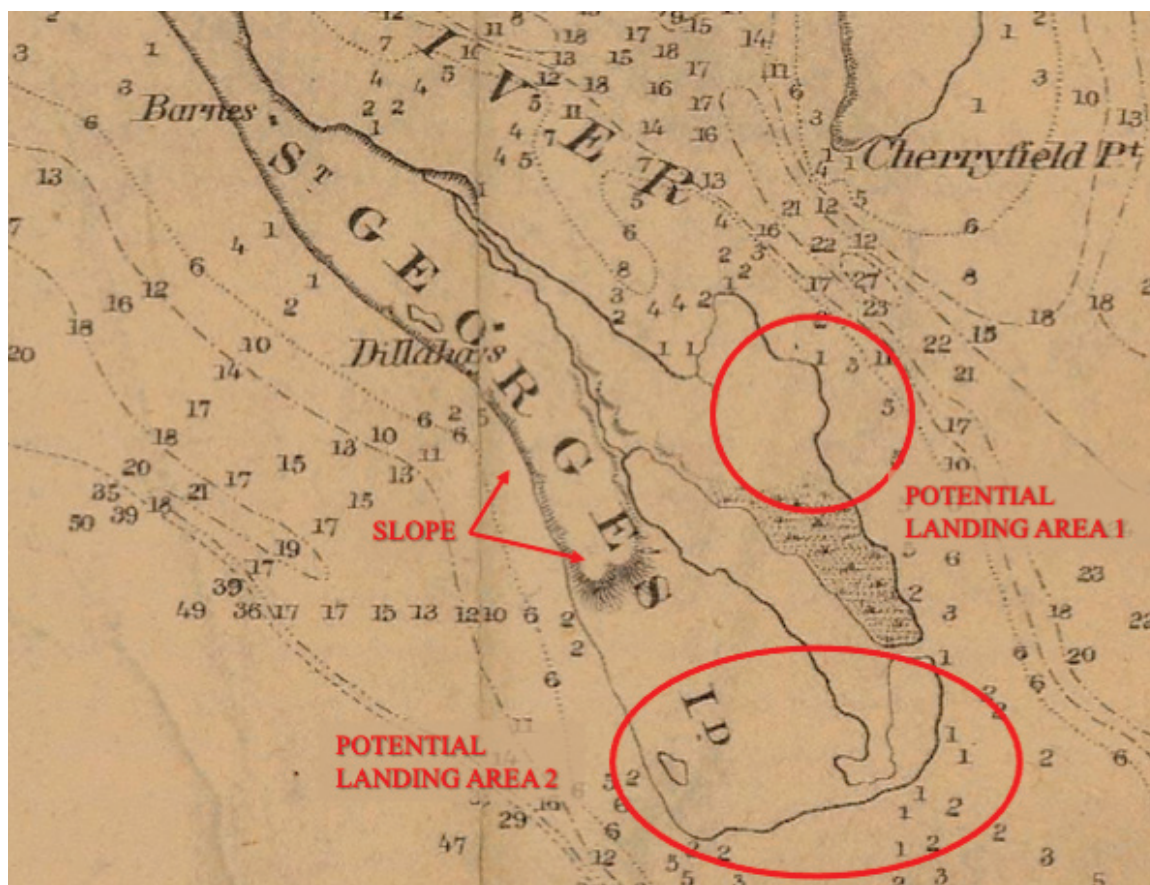


Figure 7.5: Possible Crown Force landing areas on an excerpt from the 1824 map.

Examination of later maps and charts reveals additional information on topography and vegetation that may be useful and alter our assessment. In particular, the U.S. Coast Survey chart of 1862 (U.S. Coast Survey 1862) depicts vegetation, including woods and marshy areas as they existed in the mid-19th century. It seems likely that these marshes, in particular, had not changed much since 1776. These would have presented obstacles to troop movement and thus shaped Crown force decisions as to where to land. Referring to Figure 7.6, it appears that the area to the north of Island Creek would have been a poor landing place, as this point is essentially cut off from the main island by marshes (shown in Figure 7.6 by horizontal shading). Likewise, despite a fringing beach

at the southern extremity of the island, marshes just inland from the beach extended from present-day Jimmy's Island and would have impeded the inland movement of troops landing along those beaches. The more likely landing points along the southern and western sides of St. George Island would appear to run from the extreme southwest corner of the island to the north, along the western shoreline. Given that the Americans seem to have placed artillery at the point just opposite the north end of St. George Island (the Four-Pounder Battery) however, the landing zones would more likely have been in the southern half of the island, requiring a march to access the wells and fresh water in the north half of the island. The alternative on the east side of the island would have required ships boats to have traversed the channel between St. George Island and Cherryfield Point. The American battery on Cherryfield Point eventually made this a less safe and therefore less likely alternative.

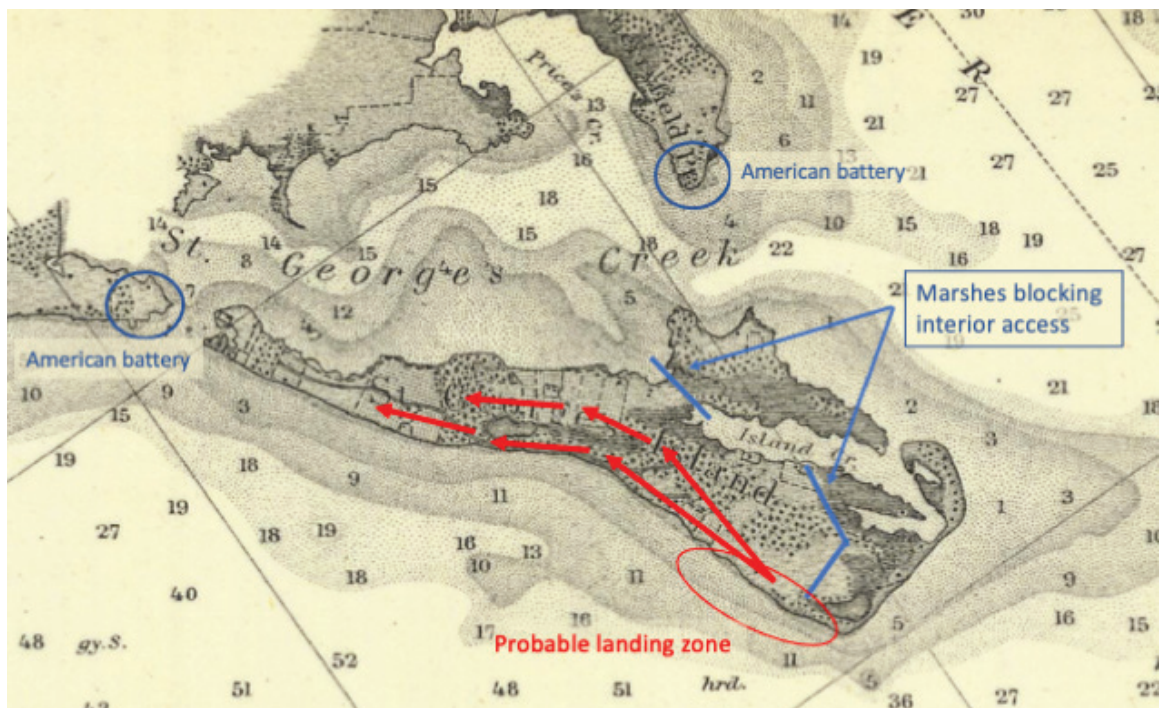


Figure 7.6: Probable landing area and barriers to landing and troop movement, shown on excerpt from the 1862 map. (U.S. Coast Survey 1862)

American Forces

No landing areas have been identified for American forces, either on the island or at nearby locations on the mainland. It seems most likely that they accessed the island across the narrow channel at its north end.

Vessel Remains and Ship Components

Crown Forces

Shipwreck sites related to Lord Dunmore's fleet have long been of interest to local historians and maritime archaeologists. Many of the vessels in the fleet were deemed unseaworthy and were destroyed at the island. Crown and American sources mentioned burned vessels, wrecked vessels, sunken vessels that had not been burned, or those that drifted on the tide and came ashore at other locations in the St. Mary's River. Among the accounts are references to the intentional destruction of individual vessels or groups of vessels, and others provide some estimate of the overall number of

losses. However, the numbers vary. Given that Captain Hamond, as the senior naval commander, and his officers, were the ones most likely to determine a vessel's condition and disposition, his statement that thirty vessels were burned is likely the most accurate accounting of ships and vessels destroyed by Crown forces before their early August departure.

Captain Hamond's figure suggests that a remarkable assemblage of vessel remains should survive around the island. These remains have the potential to provide critical information on the composition of the fleet, as well as on 18th century ship construction techniques and the materiality of the broader patterns of colonial shipbuilding in the Chesapeake Bay region. Considering that many of Lord Dunmore's vessels were traditionally built, without the use of plans, archaeology may be the only way to understand these vessels, their construction, and how they worked.

However, previous archaeological investigations have failed to identify any surviving remains of the fleet. Several factors may have contributed to this absence of data: (1) the limited nature of the investigation; (2) water conditions; and (3) a lack of accurate information pertaining to the area where actions and operations took place. Another factor making this population of wreck sites difficult to see would be American salvage operations in the months immediately after the fleet left the Bay. The salvage work of Vernon Hebb and Timothy Bowes appears to have potentially removed a significant number of the wrecked and sunken vessels. While their operations seem thorough, they likely did not remove all wrecks. Despite being burned, vessels can survive well in Chesapeake Bay environments. For example, information potential and a significant level of preservation for this type of archaeological resource has been demonstrated by the investigations of a War of 1812 vessel in the Elk River, Maryland (Hughes 2003; Plakos 2003). Two areas that may hold potential are submerged remains discovered in Phase I surveys around Cherryfield Point, an area where salvage operations took place (see below). Both sites are noted in Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) Quad Files for St. Mary's County. Quad File Item 17 is a multi-component sidescan sonar anomaly possibly indicating substantially buried wreck remains. Discovered in a survey by MHT's Bruce Thompson in 1994, the exposed features were 20 meters long by 15 meters wide. No diver investigation has been recorded. Quad File Item 18 is a sonar anomaly that displayed considerable relief above bottom, comprising a linear object that may represent wreck remains known to expose during northeasters. Discovered in the same 1994 survey as QF 17, diver testing in 2000 confirmed wreckage, but did not ascribe a date or identity to the anomaly. Details of these anomalies are recorded in the MHT online GIS system Medusa and Thompson (2001).

Cultural factors may also contribute to the difficulty in recognizing and identifying these sites. For example, many of these vessels were traditionally built and would likely not have large amounts of metal fasteners, thus reducing their visibility with a magnetometer. Environmental and depositional variables may also contribute to reducing a vessel's electromagnetic visibility. Additionally, the passage of time and burial under marine deposited sediments would likely reduce visibility during a survey by divers or via sidescan sonar. Furthermore, the sidescan sonar surveys conducted by Thompson in this vicinity were done over very large areas, often with a single transect that curved to mirror the shoreline. This kind of survey pattern, as opposed to multiple, straight and parallel survey lines, can result in significant gaps in survey data.

Another complicating factor may be the dispersed or disarticulated nature of some sites. The brig that was taken alongside the *Roebuck* and chopped up for firewood is an example revealing the possibility of disarticulated and fragmented ship architectural components also being present and dispersed at the site. A site such as this may resemble the Roosevelt Inlet Shipwreck Site near Lewes, Delaware (Krivor, et. al. 2010). In that case, a vessel's architectural remains were a collection of disarticulated components found along with a large artifact assemblage representing material discarded during salvage efforts.

Despite the challenges that these sites may present, more extensive archaeological survey and investigation is warranted. Other work in the Chesapeake Bay, such as the Elk River investigations discussed above, indicate that the archaeological potential of the wrecks remaining at St. George Island could be significant and could provide an important perspective on the War for American Independence in the Mid-Atlantic region.

American Forces

The records examined do not indicate that any American vessels were lost or destroyed at St. George Island in 1776.

American Salvage Area

Any future archaeological investigation should consider the possibility of remains pertaining to the salvage operations of Hebb and Bowes. Evidence of their work could survive offshore or be present as a site on land.

Military Sites - Terrestrial

Fortifications

Crown Forces

Fortifications can enclose cities or smaller defensive positions. These can be simple barricades, or even simple field fortifications such as a single line of rifle pits. Regardless of scale, their construction requires a knowledge of terrain, engineering, military practice, and logistics. Evidence from historical sources indicate both Crown forces and the Americans employed some level of fortification during the weeks Lord Dunmore was at St. George Island. Two fortification types have been identified: entrenchments and gun batteries.

The earliest direct reference to the presence of a fortification is found in correspondence from the Council of Safety to John Page, President of the Council of Virginia. Dating to 19 July, only five days after the arrival of Dunmore's forces, the Council reported receiving information that "They [the British] have arrived in Potowmack and Landed some Men on St. George's Island, at the mouth of Saint Mary's River where they have thrown up Entrenchments. We are making preparations to dislodge them as soon as possible" (Maryland Archives 12:78). The process of fortifying a position thus started early, within days of the initial landing, and this suggests that Lord Dunmore may have originally intended to establish a substantial presence on the island. Writing to the Council of Safety on 17 July, Colonel Jeremiah Jordan indicated "I think from all appearances the fleet will continue some time, if so, Cannon and Swivels will be absolutely necessary to dislodge the men they have landed on the Island" (Maryland Archives 12:66). The colonel's statement that large ordnance will be necessary to "dislodge" men on the island suggests that at that early date Crown forces appeared to be in the process of establishing more substantial and defended areas or positions on the island.

Locations for these fortifications have not been identified in either documentary sources or on the ground. However, they were likely associated with the landing areas and served as a means of security for those key locations. No sources indicate how they were constructed. As a form of

earthwork, they would have consisted of an earthen embankment or berm with a trench, created by excavating the earth used in the embankment, running along its front. Perhaps obstructions, such as abatis of felled trees and branches, were positioned in front of the embankment. The excavation and construction for even this relatively simple form of field fortification would have taken considerable energy and time for Crown forces to establish, but would have been within the capabilities of the types of forces known to be at the island. How long these were in use is not known, and considering the British practice of landing in the morning and returning to the ships in the evening, they may not have been used for very long. Certainly this effort seems to have been abandoned by the end of July. Writing to General Lewis on 26 July, Major Price related him that “The enemy come on St. George’s Island in the day time to get water and wood and in the evening retire on board their ships: they have no manner of Fortification on the Island” (Maryland Archives 12:122). However transitory in use, it is possible that despite their impermanent nature, traces of these fortifications may survive archaeologically and could be identified in future fieldwork.

No evidence has been found that indicates Crown forces constructed any gun batteries or redoubts on St. George Island or in the surrounding areas, or that they brought any artillery ashore. Any use of large ordnance by these forces was only from aboard ships or a row galley.

American Forces

During the weeks of military operations on and around St. George Island, the American forces constructed two types of fortifications, entrenchments and gun batteries (although their usage may be synonymous). Major Price’s letter of 26 July to the Council of Safety provides the best evidence for the existence of these fortifications. Written mostly in the past tense, his letter suggests that the construction of some of these had begun at some time prior to 26 July: “The Island lays from the main about a hundred yards. The water at low tide about knee deep where we threw up a small Intrenchment” (Maryland Archives 12:123). An examination of the 1824 map offers evidence for the possible location of this entrenchment. The breadth of the St. George Creek vastly exceeds this distance for the most part. However, the distance across the water from the northernmost tip of St. George Island to the mainland at today’s Straits Point was about 560 feet in 1824 (as measured by GIS overlays undertaken for this project), reasonably close to the major’s stated distance of “a hundred yards” if one takes into account the potential for erosion over the intervening 48 years. The recorded water depths there of 1-3 feet agree with his estimate of “knee deep.” An “Intrenchment” at this location on the mainland would secure the northwestern end of the island by blocking any enemy movement at this end of the island or attempts to pass through the small inlet between the island and into the St. George Creek. In addition, any troops positioned there would have had the additional protection of the bluffs that lined both sides, while the position was supported by a road leading inland that would have allowed supplies to be moved into the position or nearby areas. It also provides an avenue of retreat, should that be necessary.

American forces constructed two artillery batteries. Construction would not have commenced on these works until after the four pieces of artillery sent by the Council of Safety in Annapolis had arrived in St. Mary’s County. One battery was on Cherryfield Point and the second was located farther up the St. George Creek. Major Price’s correspondence of 26 July again provides the best evidence as to where these batteries were located (Maryland Archives 12:123). Describing how he allocated the different artillery pieces, he stated one was “on the South West side of the river, the narrowest water between the land and main is a four pounder.” The most likely position for this gun would have been in a battery near the “Intrenchment” on the point of land (Straits Point) immediately across from the northwest end of St. George Island discussed above, which would have been the “narrowest water between the land and main.” An artillery piece in that position would have commanded the approaches via the St.

George Creek and would have covered the inlet between the island and the mainland. For purposes of this study this position has been named the “Four-Pounder Battery.”

The second battery was the more complex of the two fortifications. Recognized for its tactical importance shortly after the fleet arrived at St. George Island, Cherryfield Point was recommended by Brigadier General Dent to the Council of Safety as a place to fortify (NAVDOCS 5:1146). He stated “Had we a few great Guns at a Place called Cherry Fields Point: well planted & served we might annoy the fleet so as to oblige them to quit their Station.” This site was selected by Major Price after going to Cherryfield Point and meeting with Colonel Barnes on 23 July (Maryland Archives 12:97-98). He further indicated that “I have order’d the other two pieces of Cannon to the Lower Camp and shall as soon as the nine pounder arrives order that there and if intrenching tools which I have sent after can be had thro up an Intrenchment as near the *Fowey* as possible.” The Cherryfield Point Battery was comprised of three pieces of artillery, “one a nine pounder, one a four, the other a three.” This battery was constructed on the night of 27-28 July. Writing on 29 July, the major related, “I went across to the Point [Cherryfield Point] where our People from the Lower Camp had been at work all night and by the time the sun was rising Mounted the two Largest Cannon.” These guns and all their necessary implements had to have been in position by that morning, as this battery was prominent in the American attack on the fleet on the 28 July, when it also received the fire from the frigate *Fowey*. This defensible position was well chosen, having been sited on a bluff on the point that overlooked the entrance to the St. George Creek and Dunmore’s fleet. The Cherryfield Point battery was also sited to threaten portions of the Crown fleet anchorage. In his 23 July correspondence, Price noted “I think a nine pounder could reach The Fowey from one of the points, tho’ I doubt our doing her much damage. The rest of the fleet lay out side of her, they are quiet and give us no disturbance” (Maryland Archives 12:97-98). The construction of this battery seems to have surprised Crown forces when it opened fire (Action 5), as they made no effort to stop its construction or capture this location beforehand.

The use in American correspondence of the term “entrenchment” reveals that cover was provided for both foot soldiers and the field pieces. Typically, a battery during this period was:

a defence made of earth faced with green sods or fascines, and sometimes made of gabions filled with earth: it consists of a breast-work, parapet, or epaulment, of 18 or 20 feet thick at top, and of 22 or 24 at the foundation; of a ditch 12 feet broad at the bottom, and 18 feet at the top, and seven feet deep. They must be seven and a half feet high. (Smith 1779:22)

American officers often were well-read and current with military treatises from England, so this approach to field fortification was well known. Following Smith (1779) and other manuals, embrasures were cut into the wall, two feet wide on the inside and flaring out to nine feet on the outside, allowing the guns to be traversed, with about two and a half feet of wall protecting the gun carriage below the barrel. The gun carriages typically rested on a platform of planks underlain by larger sleepers, often sloping down toward the wall so that the recoil of the gun was reduced on discharge, and backward momentum was arrested by a larger “hurter,” a six-inch square timber placed at the back edge of the platform, preventing the gun from recoiling off of the finished platform. The embrasures and guns typically were spaced 18 feet apart (Smith 1779:22), suggesting a work that was at least seventy to eighty feet in length.

The batteries or entrenchments covering St. George Island were constructed quickly, and probably were what were termed “horizontal batteries,” having only a parapet and ditch, with gun platforms at ground level behind the parapet and embrasure, as opposed to more substantial, raised batteries with complex outworks (Smith 1779:23). Rapidly throwing up this kind of fortification was entirely possible with the right officers, men, tools, and knowledge. Earlier in 1776, on March 4, Henry Knox

had performed a similar overnight defensive miracle, extensively fortifying Dorchester Heights, overlooking Boston Harbor and making the British positions there untenable. The American leadership at St. George Island undoubtedly knew not only the theory, but were aware of what had been done by their compatriots at Boston. Seizing these strong points and fortifying them was a logical and intelligent response to Crown Force movements.

These fortifications and their potential archaeological value should be considered in future work in the vicinity. Even after such a battery is abandoned and the wall leveled and ditch filled in, fortifications leave easily discerned archaeological remains, if not later disturbed by activities such as grading or erosion.

Encampments

Crown Forces

No direct references to Crown forces encampments on land were encountered in the available primary records. However, it is possible that one may have been begun near their early “Entrenchment” discussed above. Given the fact that this entrenchment would have created a fixed position, Dunmore and Hamond may have intended to post some of their forces on the island. If so, they later changed their operations to the morning landings and later returns to the fleet at the end of each day.

American Forces

As American forces concentrated in the areas near St. George Island, encampments were established on the landscape. These forces had mobilized and arrived in the area close to the time when Lord Dunmore’s fleet arrived (14 July), and likely formed initial camps, although none are mentioned bearing a date that early. However, later American correspondence does mention locations and occupation dates.

Two, or possibly three, encampments were established by American forces as they began to concentrate near the island. When did these camps become established military positions and where were they located? A comparison of the dates of written correspondence that also mentioned where the writer was located provides some clues as to the number of camps and when they were occupied. American officers made reference to the “St. George’s Camp,” the “Upper Camp,” and another as the “Lower Camp.” The dates on which these camps were referenced tend to cluster, and they overlap within a relatively narrow date range. They also suggest that the “St. George’s Camp” and the “Upper Camp” were one and the same, and that the “Lower Camp” was clearly a different camp located elsewhere. Internal references within a piece of Major Price’s correspondence provided important clues that help clarify things.

Writing from the “Upper Camp St. George’s” on 23 July, Price stated that he “arrived at this place the 21st Inst” (Maryland Archives 12:97). The Upper Camp then was occupied and in operation sometime during the week between 14 July and 21 July. An occupation predating 22 July also is indicated by a letter from Brigadier General Dent to the Council of Safety, written on 24 July from his home in Charles County, where he stated “On the evening of my return home from the Camp at St. George’s yours of the 22nd inst. came to hand” (Maryland Archives 12:111). The occupation of the Upper Camp continued through the period of active operations of both sides, as indicated by the later dates found on American correspondence (Maryland Archives, 12:122, 133, 138). While the date of occupation of this camp can be determined, its exact location has not previously been

identified. The fact that it was differentiated as the “Upper Camp” suggests it was located to the northwest, at a location up the St. George Creek, probably near the battery at Straits Point. This interpretation is further supported by Major Price’s statement that on 23 July that after inspecting the Upper Camp and then “giving the necessary orders I went over to the Lower Camp commanded by Colo Barnes who is stationed much nearer the fleet than this camp” (. Archives 12:97). Clearly the Lower Camp was some distance away from the Upper Camp, and was farther down the St. George Creek, closer to where the British fleet was anchored.

Where then was the “Lower Camp,” and when was it occupied? Returning to Major Price’s 23 July letter where he stated he had arrived “at this place” (Upper Camp) on 21 July, he quickly “went over” to the Lower Camp. His statement clearly establishes the Lower Camp as being in existence at that time, and like the Upper Camp, it was established sometime in the period between 14 and 21 July. Two letters provide the evidence for the Lower Camp’s location. First, Major Price clearly stated the Lower Camp was “nearer” to the fleet than the Upper Camp, indicating its location was down the St. George Creek towards the St. Mary’s River, and that Colonel Barnes was in command there. His letter put Colonel Barnes in close proximity to the island by 23 July, whereas he had earlier been with his battalion on St. Inigoes Neck, across the St. Mary’s River. Colonel Barnes adds the final piece of information himself. Writing to the Council of Safety on 26 July, his letter was addressed from the “Camp at Cherry Fields,” clearly placing the Lower Camp on Cherryfield Point. This means the Lower Camp and the Cherryfield Point Battery were close together, and further clarifies Price’s comment regarding the building of the battery on 27-28 July, where he stated he “went a Cross to the Point where our People from the Lower camp had been at Work all night” (. Archives 12:138). The camp and battery together represent a substantial American military position on Cherryfield Point, consisting of a three-gun battery and a camp for a sizable number of troops. The need to differentiate the two camps may have taken place after the Lower Camp on Cherryfield Point was established.

Archaeological investigations would be needed to confirm the location, as well as to determine the extent and integrity of any surviving military remains on Cherryfield Point. The camps, while occupied for only a few weeks, were intensely occupied by significant numbers of men and should therefore have a visible archaeological signature. A large and extant collection from this area is curated at Historic St. Mary’s City and should be examined for the presence of any 18th century materials. However, GIS map overlays suggest that there has been substantial erosion of this point over time, and the location of the battery itself is likely gone. Presumably the encampment would have been farther inland, but close enough to support the battery in the event of a Crown Force attack, so it is possible that evidence of this site remains.

Command and Control Positions

Crown Forces

While the landings of Crown forces on the island were controlled and organized operations, there is no evidence of any shore-based command and control, or headquarters area. Activities would have been coordinated first in the fleet, and then the officers leading the forces ashore would likely have established a position in the landing areas to direct troops to their positions. These may not have been fixed positions, but rather were utilized only as long as the landing parties were ashore. Central to the coordination of amphibious movements were the *Roebuck*, with Captain A. S. Hamond in command, and the *Dunmore*, with Lord Dunmore. References to meetings with the principal officers and the issuance of orders are found in the records. For example, Eduardo mentions being called to the *Roebuck* to discuss plans with Captain Hamond.

American Forces

With large numbers of Maryland militia and state forces arriving in the area, American officers had to have some sort of centralized area of command. Otherwise, troop movements would have been chaotic and less effective as they appear to have been. The Council of Safety in Annapolis was an initial source for orders and directions, and it remained a principal command center throughout the time when Lord Dunmore's forces were at the island. However, a location much closer to St. George Island was needed, especially when more American officers arrived in St. Mary's County. Several references to a headquarters were found in American correspondence. The earliest indication that a headquarters post had been established can be found in Brigadier General George Dent's 19 July letter to the Council of Safety. In that letter, written from "Charles River Head Quarters" he related the first action on the island and the wounding of Rezin Beall (NAVDOCS 5:1145-1146), and on the next day, the 20th, he used a similar heading "St. George's Head Quarters" (NAVDOCS 5:1162-1163) in another letter. A much later reference can be seen in Captain John Allen Thomas writing to Colonel George Plater on 29 July, as he noted that he was writing from "Head Quarters St. George" (. Archives 12:136). These pieces of correspondence indicate that the Americans had established a clearly defined command area within only a few days of the fleet's arrival, and operations against it had commenced. However, no location for this site was stated in either of the sources consulted for this study. It could possibly be a separate location from the Upper or Lower camps, but that is uncertain and seems unlikely. A headquarters site would not have been sited on the island, and the Lower Camp is unlikely as it was too close to enemy forces at the fleet anchorage. A more likely location is the Upper Camp, which was farther up the St. George Creek where it would have been secure, but not so far away as to be unable to quickly respond to any movement of Crown forces.

Logistical Positions

Crown Forces

Potential British logistical sites are those related to communications and marshaling/storage areas for supplies, provisions, equipment and munitions, or medical services. No reference to any shore-based facility or position was found in the primary sources. With Crown forces repeatedly landing and then retiring to the fleet during the day, it is unlikely any such position was established or maintained during the campaign. The fleet, with some of its vessels being used for specialized functions such as blacksmithing and hospital needs, would have provided these necessary functions. Any communications would have been through small boats that accompanied the fleet, such as pilot boats, or through the signaling system established by the Royal Navy. For example, the departure of the fleet in August was made by "Signal" from the principal ships (NAVDOCS 6:65-66).

American Forces

American sources also offer only sparse references to specific locations for logistical functions. The two camps certainly would have served in this capacity. Provisions, as well as equipment and munitions, would have been brought to and stored at the camps. The town of Leonardtown seems to have served as an initial marshaling area for equipment and supplies. Some of the large ordnance ordered down from Annapolis with Major Price initially was stored there. He stated that when he arrived at the Upper Camp "I arrived at this place the 21st Inst with one of the four Pounders, the other two I left at Leonard Town, 'till further orders" (. Archives 12:97). Artillery was scarce and valuable, so hazarding all of his assets before knowing the disposition and intent of Crown forces would have been dangerous. Earlier, the Council of Safety informed Brigadier General Dent that

“Powder, Lead and Flints are sent off this Morning to Leonard Town and we hope will arrive there to morrow Night or Friday morning” (Maryland Archives 12:64).

For communications, American officers used dispatch riders to carry messages from one location to another, with way points established at intervals along longer lines of communication. Dispatches from Annapolis, for example, would be sent with a rider who would stop at such a waypoint. Upon arrival, a fresh rider would then carry the correspondence to the next location and the process was repeated until arrival at the destination. The stops made by the riders were at were predetermined locations.

Another way to communicate was via signal beacons. While a site type that is ancillary to the St. George Island events, these beacons, or signal fires, were established up and down the shoreline of the Potomac River. Beacons were used primarily as an alarm system to spread the word of British movements, and the amount of information conveyed was necessarily very limited. Their creation was a joint effort between the states of Virginia and Maryland, each state agreeing to construct a certain number. In a 30 April 1776 letter, John Dent explained to the Council of Safety that he and George Plater had worked with the “Commissioner of Virginia” in the “erecting Beacons on the River Potomack; we have fixed the different Stations for the same, to the Number of twenty, where of sixteen are in Maryland Viz: one in Prince George’s, Nine in Charles and three in St. Mary’s averaging about five Miles from each other” (NAVDOCS 4:1344). For these places, Dent went on to describe a specific type to be constructed. He stated the “form of the Alarm-Post,” which is to be a kind of Iron Grate suspended by a Chain on the End of a Sweep fixed with a Swivel so as to be turned agreeable to the Wind.” Some, or all, of the Maryland beacons may have been established by the summer of 1776, as on 19 June the Treasurer of the Western Shore was ordered to pay Colonel George Plater “eight Pounds four Shillings and six Pence for Expences incurred in erecting Beacons on the River Patowmack” (Maryland Archives 11:499). None of the narratives examined here mention the use of any of these beacons. For beacons to have worked they would have been situated on promontories or other high, visible locations. This selection process represents the use of the landscape and natural environment for military purposes.

Troop Positions and Engagement/Battle Areas

Crown Force’s Position

Only one position for Crown forces can be located with any real certainty. Relating the particulars of Action 1, Brigadier General Dent indicated “about 300 hundred [troops] pushed down to the point opposite to us with Swivels & Musketry and kept up a very heavy fire” (NAVDOCS 5:1119). Only one point along the mainland was close enough to the island for the British to have engaged it with musket fire, and that is the Four-Pounder Battery at today’s Straits Point. Crown forces appear to have landed on the island to the south and pushed up to its northwest end, immediately across the strait from the American entrenchment.

Other Crown positions would have been near the landing areas. Troops had to be quickly deployed upon landing to the secure the landing areas from attack while other troops were being brought ashore. As will be seen in later discussions, it seems most likely that these sites were located on the southwestern corner of the island.

It appears that Colonel Jordan, at this early stage of the St. George Island operations and actions, was anticipating that Crown forces intended to establish a position or post on the island. In describing

the events of 16 July, he stated “I think from all appearances the Fleet will continue some time, if so, some Cannon and Swivels, will be absolutely necessary to dislodge the Men they have landed on the island.” His statement that artillery will be needed to “dislodge” Crown forces on the island, suggests that, at least from his perspective, at this early stage and not knowing Hamond’s and Dunmore’s strategy or intentions, he anticipated that they intended to create a position on the island at some location.

American Forces Positions

Several American troop positions were mentioned in the sources. One was the location on St. Inigoes Neck, where Colonel Richard Barnes and his men initially were stationed. Positioned there prior to the fleet’s arrival, they surveilled fleet operations from this position across the St. Mary’s River. Other, similar areas are also suggested. Colonel Jeremiah Jordan made reference to “centinels” in his description of the fighting in Action 1 (16 July). These outpost locations, probably on the island (likely its north side) and possibly on the mainland bordering St. George Creek, were the ones attacked by Captain Hamond’s covered galley (NAVDPCS 5:1119). That they were close to the water is indicated by Colonel Jordan’s statement that “they Rowed Close along side our centinels...and instantly began a very heavy firing which lasted about One hour but without doing any execution, although their shot raked the ground on every part where the Men were stationed.” Colonel Jordan also provides a clue that this action (Action 1) took place along the north side of the island and along the mainland bordering St. George Creek. In discussing the possible construction of a second Crown forces row galley, he indicated that he anticipated Dunmore’s forces “intend to attack us on the Potowmac side,” suggesting that the previous actions had taken place in areas other than on the Potomac River (or west) side of the island.

In the same action, Crown forces moved up to engage American forces that probably were positioned on the mainland across modern-day Strait’s Point. Another different, but undetermined, location may also be possible. However, it is clear that the position the colonel referred to was occupied by a large enough body of American troops to draw the “very heavy fire” from Crown forces.

Another American position would have been the occupied during the ambush of Action 4, on 25 July. Possible locations will be posited later in this report, but it must have occurred reasonably close to the landing area, which likely would have been on the south end of the island. Also, the positions occupied by Captain Thomas’s men and Lieutenant Addams’s men in Action 5 on 28 July must have been close enough to the fleet’s location to be able to “cause alarm” and take advantage of any “confusion” that would be caused when the Cherryfield Point Battery open up on the *Fowey* and the fleet.

Engagement/Battle Areas

The actual engagements or battles can be organized into three categories: (1) those that took place on the island (Actions 1, 3, and 4), one off the island (Action 2), and more complex engagements that combined operations both on and off the island (Action 5). While the records have provided clues to these complex actions, landscape analysis and archaeological investigations will be needed bring them into greater clarity. Archaeological site investigations were beyond the scope of this project, but additional clues and landscape analysis will be discussed in the summary and analysis of the battle below, yielding some greater assurance of where some of these actions took place.

Human Burials and Human Remains

Crown Forces

During the several distinct actions that took place on St. George Island, Crown forces sustained numerous casualties. Some were killed in action on the ships, such as when the *Fowey* was fired upon by the Cherryfield Point Battery, on the row galley in a reconnaissance, and in the action in Smith's Creek. Other casualties were sustained during the landings and actions on the island. In the latter category, a mate or midshipman on the *Roebuck* was killed along with several other men in Action 4, on 25 July.

More numerous than battle casualties were those sustained through diseases that raged in the fleet before its arrival and lasting throughout the period when it was anchored at the island. As early as 13 July, just prior to the fleet anchoring at St. George Island, Colonel Barnes related that "We have had two small Vessels drove on shore from the Fleet, on board one of them was three Whites & two Negroes, three of which now have the small Pox on them" (NAVDOCS 5:1066). In addition to small pox, diseases included another fever and scurvy. Captain Hamond's narrative provides the most extensive assessment of the effects of diseases among the Crown forces. He stated "a violent bilious intermitting fever [probably malaria], together with a most inveterate scurvy had for these two months past raged with great violence both in the men of war & Transports, and was so mortal the *Roebuck* had lost 30 of her best seamen and had 76 on the Surgeon's list" (NAVDOCS 6:174). In the same account, he further commented that a similar state existed among Lord Dunmore's troops, thus reducing the number of his effectives. Hamond had actually stated his concerns about the reduction in force strength of Crown forces by "small Pox and an epidemic fever" before they set sail from Gwynn's Island for the Potomac River (NAVDOCS 5:1078).

American sources also testify to the rampant nature of diseases at the island. In relating to the Council of Safety the conditions at the island, Major Thomas Price stated that "we have several deserters from the Enemy most of them in the small Pox - the shores are full of dead bodies, chiefly negroes" (Maryland Archives 12:97). Another source indicated that so many bodies were washing ashore they began to pose toxic health risks. Writing near the end of July, Captain James Thomas stated a "Numbers of dead bodies come on shore every day, that we are poisoned with the stench" (Maryland Archives 12:136-137).

What can be said about how the dead were treated at St. George Island? For those in the Crown forces who were killed in action, it is highly likely that they were interred on the island. Even in smaller actions such as these, there generally was an effort to provide proper burial for men of both sides who were killed in action.

Generally speaking, in maritime contexts the dead were disposed of through burial at sea. The procedure was for the body to be sewn up in a weighted hammock and disposed over the side of the vessel. An American letter dated 24 July, recounting the landing and fighting at "Mr. Brents" when the *Roebuck* and other ships were up the Potomac on the watering expedition, stated that after the action "Three white men and four negroes were found dead on the shore; two of the whites were sewed up in hammocks" (NAVDOCS 5:1207). While not described in the log, this process almost certainly would have been used for two Marines aboard the *Roebuck*, whose crew had been ravaged by disease during the weeks at the island. When the fleet was in the process of departing the Chesapeake Bay on August 6-7 "Serjt Tenham of Marines" and "Jno Johnson Corpl" were reported in the Master's Log as having "Departed this Life" (NAVDOCS 6:106). They would have been buried in their hammocks in the above fashion while the ship was anchored off Cape Henry. It is possible that others in the fleet who perished during the period under consideration were buried in

this manner. For those bodies that floated ashore, the Americans could have buried them if possible. It was a generally accepted practice that the burial of the dead of an opposing force was accorded the honors of a proper burial. While not specifically mentioned in either Crown or American records, it is possible that some burials of personnel from Crown forces took place on the island while the fleet was there or after it departed the area. The remains of those not recovered and interred would have gradually have been deposited into the archaeological record through natural processes.

American Forces

Few battle casualties were reported among the American forces. No battle deaths were reported, and only one wounding, that of Captain Rezin Beall on 16 July. These numbers could be a function of deliberate omission in an effort to conceal that information from enemy forces (it was well known that there were many loyalist sympathizers in places like Annapolis, and secrets were hard to keep). While some references were made to small pox or other sickness being present among American forces in the field, no deaths from disease were mentioned in American sources.

Any archaeological investigations or land development projects on St. George Island or in the immediate surrounding area should take into account the possibility of the discovery of human remains associated with the events of July to August 1776. This includes not only intact burials, but also disassociated skeletal elements from individuals who floated ashore and were not formally interred. Protocols should be put into place for the proper notification to relevant officials of federal and state agencies, as well as those of the British government, and plans devised for the proper handling of these remains in the advent of their discovery.

Summary of the Battle & Battlescape Analysis

Summary of the Battle and Battlescape Analysis

Summary of the Battle

Rather than the quick engagement so often reported in secondary accounts of the Battle of St. George Island (sometimes reported as a one-day battle), this was a protracted campaign extending over 24 days (from July 14 to August 6), with American troops remaining in the area after the departure and an even longer salvage effort that stretched into mid-November. The complex series of events can be summarized as follows.

Table 8.1: Summary of Events

July 10, 1776	British fleet abandons Gwynn's Island, Virginia, heads for to St. George Island
July 11, 1776	British fleet damaged by a storm in the Chesapeake Bay
July 14, 1776	British fleet of 70-80 vessels anchors off St. George Island
July 14-21, 1776	American Upper Camp and Lower Camp established
July 15, 1776	350 British troops are put ashore on the island, unopposed by American forces, and "sack" houses
July 16, 1776	Action 1 – Americans oppose British landings, American Capt. Rezin Beall wounded
	British row galley goes up the St. George Creek, fires on American troops
July 20, 1776	Action 2 – American troops oppose a British landing on St. George Island and drive British forces off; British row galley fires at American positions
July 20-27, 1776	British expedition up the Potomac River in search of water; Brent plantation burned on July 23
July 21, 1776	American Capt. Thomas's Independent Company arrives, with artillery; American Four-Pounder Battery established at Straits Point
July 23, 1776	Action 3 – Americans drive off a British watering party on the island
July 25, 1776	Action 4 - American troops ambush a British landing party on the island and fill in the best well on the island; later in the day, British troops, supported by ships, land unopposed and burn the remaining houses on the island
July 27, 1776	Americans fortify Cherryfield Point, installing 3 cannon, including a 9-pounder
July 28, 1776	Cherryfield Point Battery completed, threatening the British fleet
	Action 5 – American troops move south on the island, while the <i>Defence</i> and her consorts move toward the British fleet and the Cherryfield Point Battery fires on <i>Fowey</i> , but is then becalmed and retreats when <i>Roebuck</i> returns to the anchorage
July 29, 1776	Departure of British fleet begins
July 30, 1776	<i>Otter</i> reported sailing with 50 vessels
July 30-31, 1776	British destruction of their excess and damaged vessels American Capt. Thomas's company ordered north, departs the area

July 31, 1776	Capt. Peter Mantz's Frederick company ordered to the area to replace lost troops; last British landing on the island
August 1, 1776	16 more British vessels burned, another 3-4 ships run aground due to high winds
August 2-7, 1776	Remainder of the British fleet departs toward the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay
August 6, 1776	<i>Fowey</i> departs for England with Gov. Eden and 7 sail
August 7, 1776	Mantz's Frederick company arrives in the area
August 12, 1776	Americans begin salvage and removal of abandoned British vessels
August to mid-November 1776	American salvage efforts continue

Battlescape Analysis

These complex movements, with large number of vessels and men, have left us with a complicated story and a battlescape that was broad and saw varied activities. It was noted earlier that the study of battlefields and the larger battlescape requires an interdisciplinary approach, with sites of historical significance offering a multi-layered landscape that sometimes has changed dramatically since the events of interest. A key objective is to sort through these layers and reconstruct what the scene must have looked like at the time. Once that is accomplished, the aims and objectives of the protagonists must be considered, along with the key variables that shaped their actions.

Some of these critical factors include:

- The key terrain variables, such as dominant heights, slope, vegetation, and constraints or choke points from features such as water and marsh;
- Observation and the visibility of forces and fields of fire, as well as observation both of the current and past landscapes and a consideration of how primary actors at the time would have observed things;
- The amount of cover available to mask troop movements or fortifications - related to cover is the level of concealment that can be exercised by key actors and forces;
- Obstacles to movement or reaching objectives, often as a result of terrain features; and
- Approaches to targets of interest and ingress-egress avenues, the latter in case of a need for withdrawal.

Drawing on the key words in the above list of variables, an analytical approach has emerged known as KOCO (or KOCO) analysis (Key terrain, Observation and fields of fire, Cover and concealment, Obstacles, and Avenues of approach/withdrawal). This approach offers a way to understand the important factors that shaped both the decisions of various actors and the outcomes (Elliott & Elliott 2009; Maio et al. 2013).

Such an analysis must start with a consideration of the objectives of the forces that were opposed to one another. For the British, we have seen that there were two primary objectives. The first aim was to find a place to consolidate vessels, refit, and make those vessels that were salvageable ready for a long voyage out of the Chesapeake Bay, and into the Atlantic. From there they would head south to Florida, north to New York City, or home to England. The second goal was to find a critical resource that was in desperately short supply in the fleet: fresh water. Based on Hamond's knowledge of the Chesapeake, he saw St. George Island as the

closest place to Gwynn's Island that could meet these dual purposes. The British also probably calculated that American military strength in that area was low and that an immediate response by their opponents would be difficult.

As Dunmore's fleet departed Gwynn's Island, the Americans could not have been certain of British objectives. The sudden appearance of 70-80 vessels in the Potomac appeared as a serious threat. With the landing of troops and empty water casks on St. George Island, however, one of Dunmore's objectives became obvious, and the Americans reacted quickly. Their objectives were to deny the British access to water and other resources, to threaten their fleet, to do whatever damage they could, whether on land or water, and ultimately to drive them off.

In assessing KOCOA variables, even from the long distance of 245 years, several things are immediately apparent. In a land so deeply dissected by water, the British had an immediate advantage by virtue of their naval superiority and greater mobility. But that advantage was partially negated by the poor condition of so many vessels and their fixation on acquiring fresh water. The island was seen by them as the primary target because of ease of access by ships boats and because the safety of watering parties could be secured, if access by the Americans could be denied through superior naval power and land forces. This explains the initial British focus on St. George Island, as opposed to inland areas. This was not a British effort to secure ground or establish a long-term foothold in Maryland, but rather a limited target of opportunity. Once it was apparent that water supplies on the island were insufficient, the expedition up the Potomac River was organized to augment these supplies.

With regard to terrain, then, the waters of the Potomac and its tributaries were an important variable. But so too was topography. The land in this area has relatively little relief, but the 1824 map (Figure 8.1) shows that some higher features existed on the island. These could be used by either side to advantage. In addition, certain natural features such as Cherryfield Point offered the Americans command over some water routes, as long as they had weapons with adequate range.



Figure 8.1: Terrain and water depths around St. George Island, 1824. (Bureau of Topographic Engineers 1824)

This leads to the observation and fields of fire portion of KOCOA analysis. Via their war ships, the British had mobile observation platforms, some with masts that towered above the flat landscape and offered a useful vantage point. The range of vision at various heights can be calculated as 1.17 times the square root of eye height (Fortey 2021). At a height of 50 feet above the water, the range of vision to the horizon is 9.35 miles; from 100 feet, 12.33 miles; from 150 feet, 16.22 miles; and at 200 feet, the range is 18.72 miles. The heights of the mainmast on various vessels in the British fleet are unknown, but the mainmast of the later frigate *USS Constitution* was 220 feet (Military Analysis Network). This provides an idea of the powerful advantage that naval vessels offered a commander when it came to observation, especially in a region of flat terrain. The fact that Leonardtown, for example, is only 15 miles from the British anchorage gives an idea of this observational advantage.

These ships also could project firepower wherever they went. The major constraints at first were water depths, as their most powerful ships had a relatively deep draft of around 16 feet for *Roebuck* (based on the draft of the *Roebuck*-class *Charon*; Steffy 1981). Water depths in 1824 probably were much the same as those of 1776, so the soundings on the 1824 chart of the area offer an idea of both the limitations and opportunities (Figure 8.1). For shallower areas, Hamond's covered row galley offered a means of projecting fire power even in water depths as shallow as two feet. This being the case, the more powerful, deep draft vessels could easily cover the western, or Potomac side of St. George Island and portions of the St. George Creek, while the row galley could range at will throughout the St. George Creek and cover the eastern side of the island.

In any conflict, however, opponents will work to neutralize an enemy's advantage. Brigadier General Dent clearly recognized the importance of land-based artillery for the Americans, as well as the optimal sites for both observation and good fields of fire. Not knowing where the British might range, he initially had troops both around St. George Island and on the east side of the St. Mary's River (between the river and Smith's Creek). As British intentions became clear, he withdrew from the east and concentrated on the west side of the St. Mary's River and St. George Island. The first place that offered tactical advantage was Straits Point, which was easily defensible and controlled the best access point to the island from the mainland, a gap of about 100 yards with knee deep water that could be waded. A field piece on that point, along with entrenchments or earthworks that protected the gun and soldiers, covered the ford and the norther shoreline of the island.

Equally important was Cherryfield Point, as Dent pointed out in his correspondence of 19 July 1776 (NAVDOKS 5:1146). As previously shown (Figure 5.4), the three guns placed there, especially the 9-pounder, effectively denied British access to St. George Creek, while also threatening the eastern side of the island and even the closer parts of the fleet anchorage.

Cover and concealment are important elements in battlescape analysis, and the fortifications erected at Cherryfield Point and Straits Point certainly offered cover to important American assets. Natural cover and landscape features also could be used to offer cover and concealment to troop movements. These features may at the same time constitute obstacles to troop movements or define avenues of approach and withdrawal (the last elements of KOCOA analysis). In this regard, terrain variables on the island are extremely important, as are water depths. We will first view this from the British perspective, and then offer a likely American response.

Crown forces at St. George Island moved primarily by water, and landings on the island were repeatedly made. Looking at the 1824 water depths around the southern portion of the island is revealing. With only a few exceptions, most of the shoreline of the island had adjacent water depths of only one foot, extending out some distance from shore. This would have made landings and withdrawal more difficult, especially on the return to the fleet with a heavy burden of water casks that increased boat draft. Most prominent among the exceptions to the one-foot depth are a five-foot

depth on the west side, near Dillahays house, and a fairly long stretch of 2-foot depths along the southwest corner of the island. The five-foot depth is isolated, and given the absence of detailed charts at the time, it is unlikely that the British would have been aware of it. There is another five-foot depth to the southeast, above present-day Jimmy's Island, but it is adjacent to a marsh that would have made a poor landing area. The most obvious landing spot therefore is the southwest corner, with its 2-foot depths.

The notion that this area was the primary British landing area is reinforced when considering other terrain variables and obstacles. Later 19th century charts that show additional details of vegetation are useful in this regard. Particularly helpful is an 1868 U.S. Coast Survey chart. The only significant difference between this chart and the 1862 chart that we saw previously in Figure 7.2 is that features on land are more clearly visible on the 1868 version.

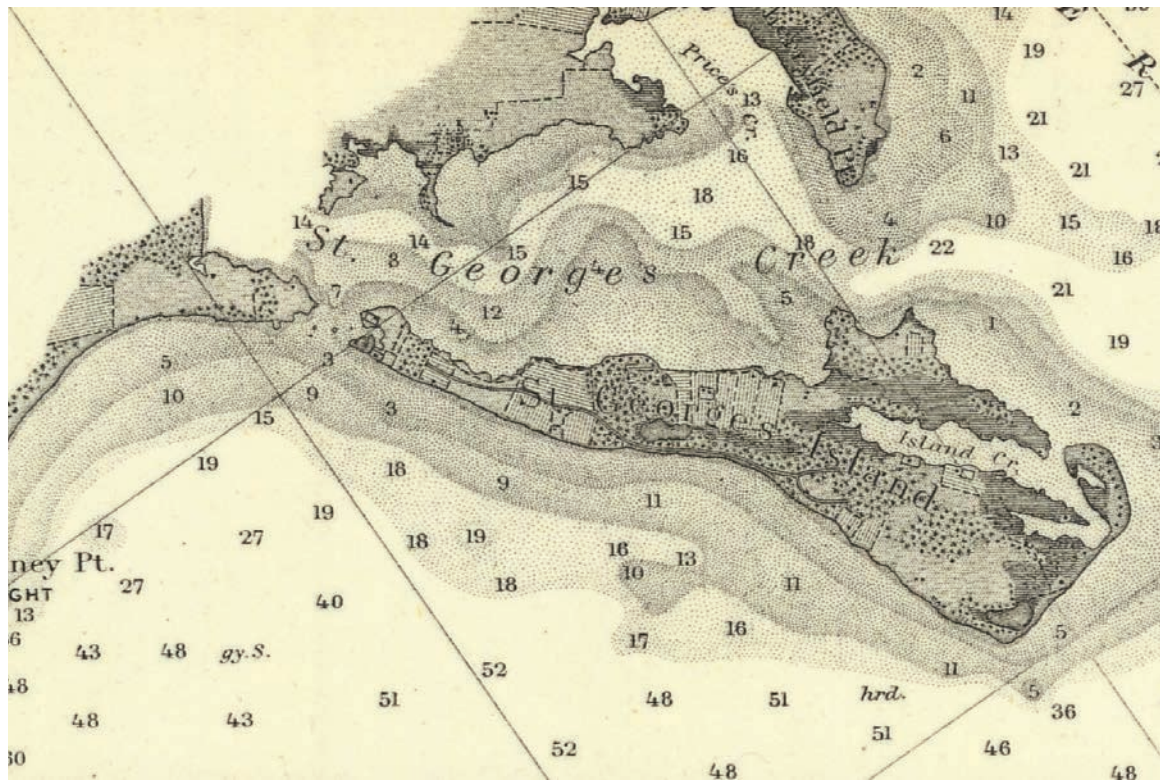


Figure 8.2: Landscape features on St. George Island, 1868 – north is to the upper left. (U.S. Coast Survey 1868)

The dark, horizontal lines in Figure 8.2 represent marsh. Trees are denoted by stippled clusters, while fields are shown by parallel dashed lines. This map is particularly enlightening, as it suggests that marshes were more extensive than shown in the Figure 7.1 1824 map. As noted previously, this is more likely a function of mapping detail and cartographic decisions, as opposed to changes in the actual landscape. It seems unlikely that these marshes had grown since 1776, as marshes were more often drained during this time period, through ditching. Both marshes and trees were obstacles to troop movements and would have channeled their progress, defining routes and movement. This offers a means of assessing both landing zones and the likely routes from those landing areas to water sources.

Landing zones: As noted earlier, water depths were one constraint on landings. Another would have been the land itself. The neck of land east of Island Creek would have been a poor landing place for British watering parties, as their route inland and up the island would have been blocked by marshes and a stream cutting across the peninsula. The same is true of the southern and southeastern tip of

the island, with its inland marsh and a pond in the southwest corner. Once around that southwestern corner, however, not only are water depths more conducive to a landing, but the landing area itself is clear of both marsh and trees. A landing point inside Island Creek would have been potentially dangerous, as the encircling terrain offered overlapping fields of fire for concealed American troops. For these reasons, the southwestern corner of St. George Island is the most likely landing place for British shore parties, with a very high probability that they were restricted to this area.

We can confidently assume that British and American troops would have avoided moving through the marshes and ponds on the island. If the vegetation in 1868 was anything like it was in 1776, and there were undoubtedly similarities, then trees also would have been an obstacle to avoid where possible. Sizable pine trees were present on the island in this period, as the British would land multiple times in 1781, seeking straight pine trees on the island for use as replacement masts (. Archives 47:299). In 1813, the presence of large white oak trees was documented in a description of the British destruction from a later war (Beitzell 1976 Jesuit Missions). These sources make it clear that the island was not simply marsh and grazing areas from 1776 to 1813, but rather that older growth trees were a component of the landscape.

To make the constraints posed by marsh and trees more readily visible, they have been shown in greater detail in Figure 8.3 and highlighted with color in Figure 8.4.

The features highlighted in Figure 8.4 are important in delineating areas of constriction and concealment. If the British were landing in the southwest corner of the island and then moving north to the wells near Barnes and Dillahays, then their movements were channeled by the marshes, and parts of their route might have been through scattered trees. From the American perspective, these created predictability in British movements, while also offering places of concealment, greater defensive strength, and possible ambush.

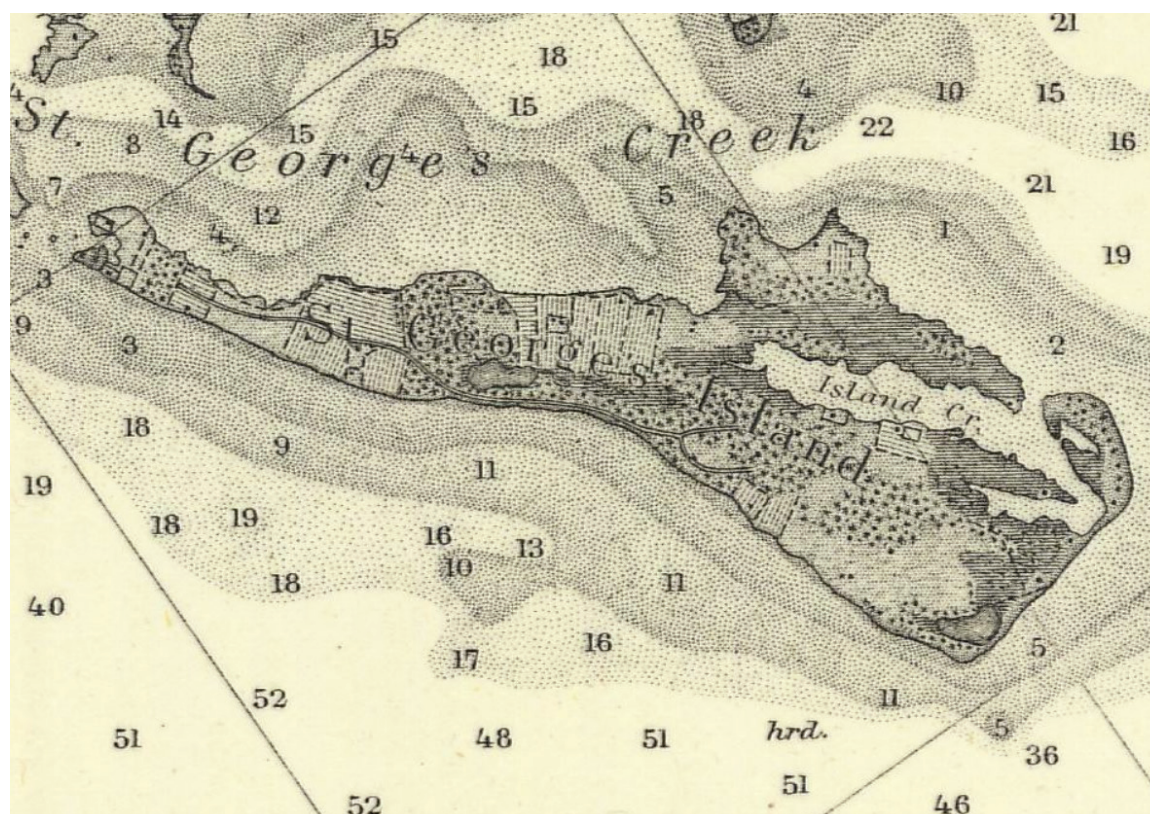


Figure 8.3: Landscape features on St. George Island – north is to the upper left. (U.S. Coast Survey 1868 base map)

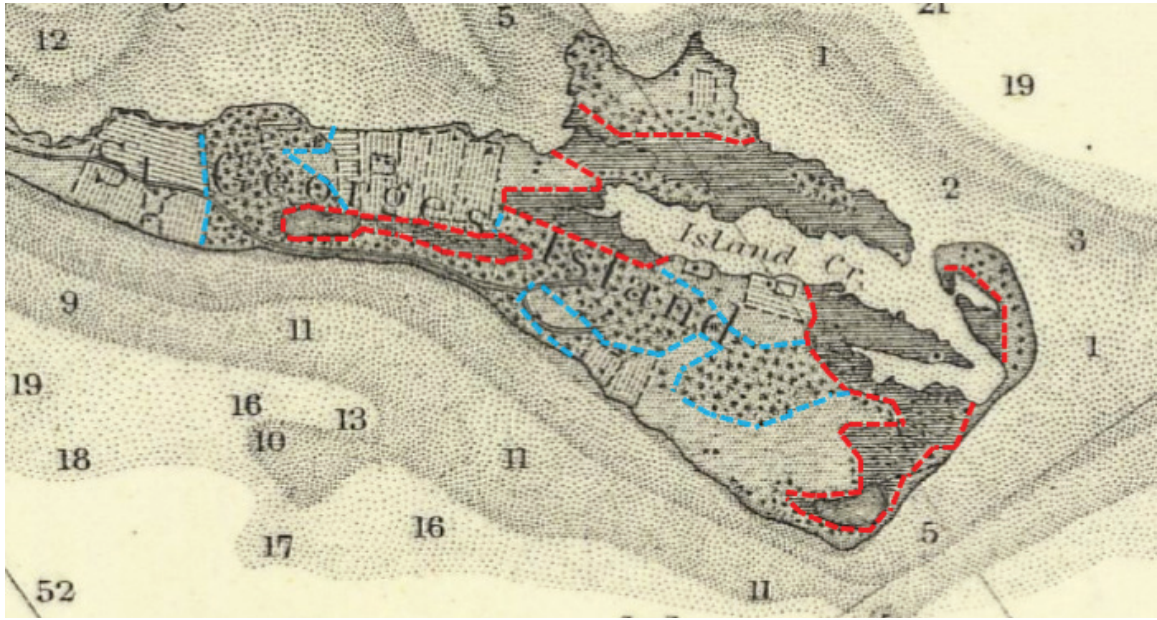


Figure 8.4: Landscape features on St. George Island – marsh edges in red, forest edges in blue - north is to the upper left. (U.S. Coast Survey 1868 base map)

The stronger positions, choke points, and restricted routes are depicted in Figures 8.5 and 8.6.

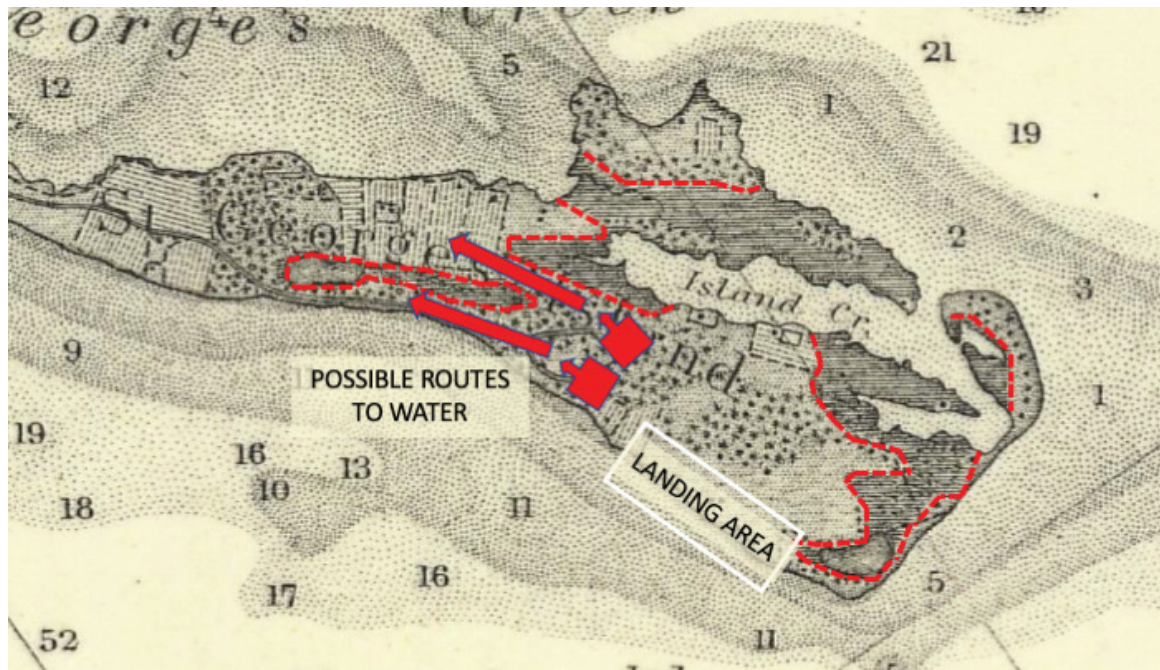


Figure 8.5: Possible British routes to water sources on St. George Island - north is to the upper left. (U.S. Coast Survey 1868 base map)

Based on this analysis, marshes alone would have constrained British movements northward on the island, forcing them to use one of two routes between the marshes. Both the marshes and trees would have offered advantages to the Americans. Any trees would have impeded normal linear tactics, while offering cover and concealment to the Americans. The channelized routes between the marshes would have reduced the British front and negated any superiority in numbers by preventing flanking movements. At the same time, marsh edges and woods offered the opportunity for concealment.

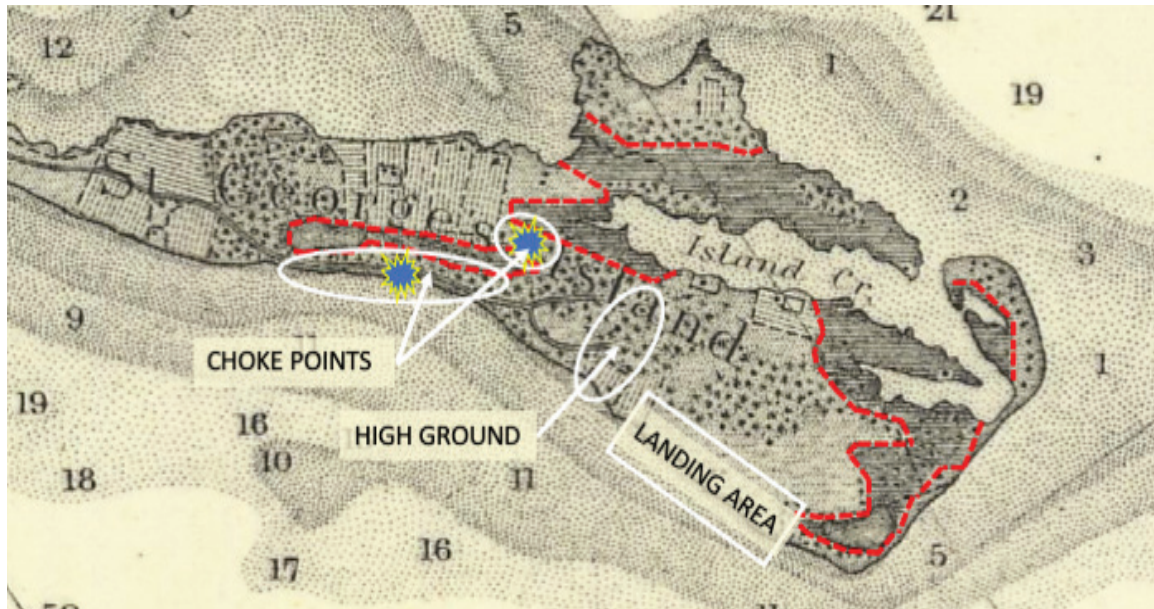


Figure 8.6: Choke points and strong points on St. George Island - north is to the upper left. (U.S. Coast Survey 1868 basemap)

This analysis explains British movements and the American responses described in the primary sources. In Actions 1 and 2, on 16 and 20 July 1776, American forces opposed Crown force landings with some success. The availability of strong positions and choke points probably contributed to this success (Figure 8.6). The British responded with a row galley moving into the St. George Creek, suggesting that some of this action took place on the eastern side of the island, leaving American troops exposed to this fire.

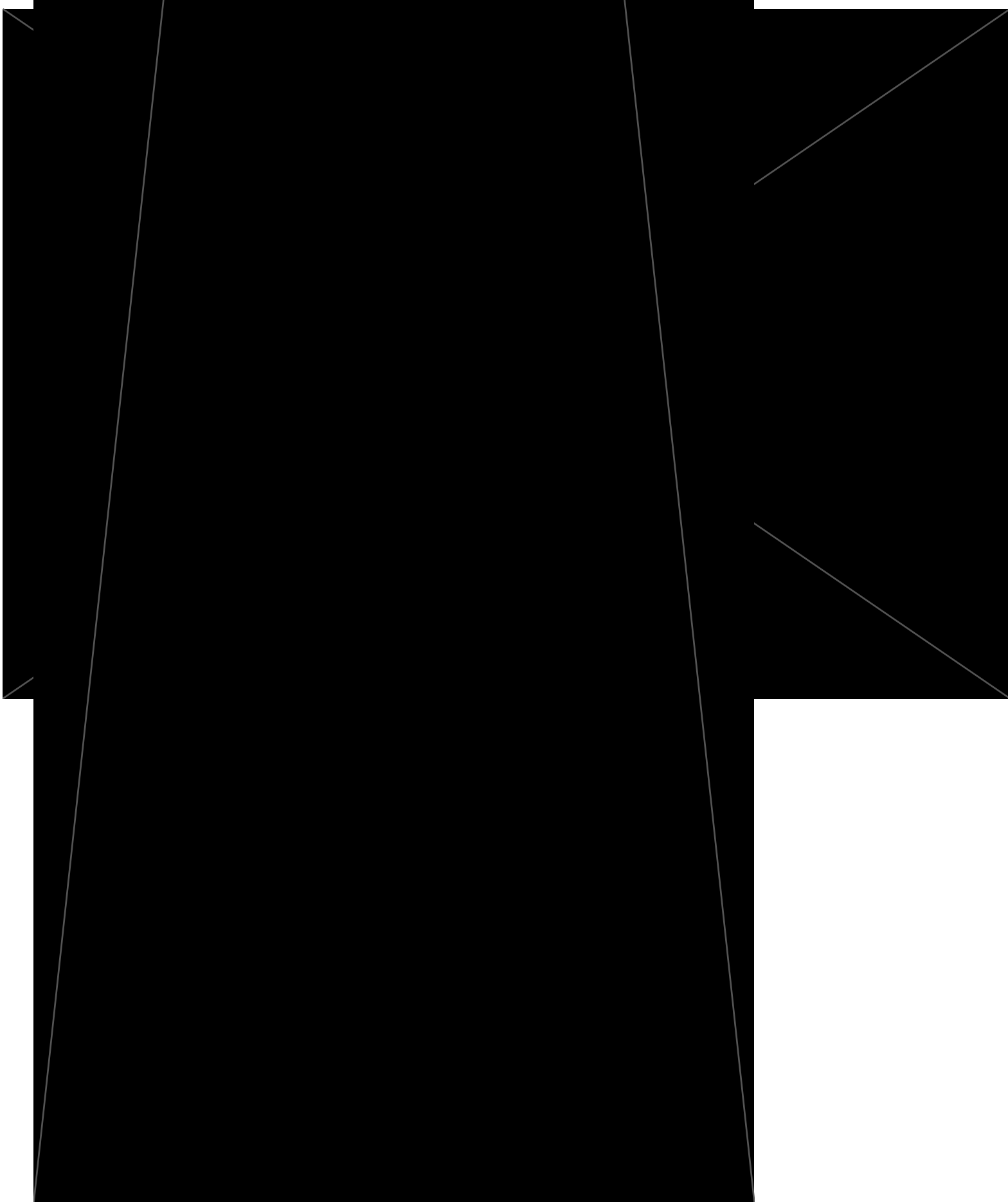
On 23 July, the Americans again drove off a British landing party, and by this time the actions of both sides were likely becoming predictable, although the Americans did not always mount opposition to the landings. This predictability was used to advantage by American forces on 25 July 1776, when they mounted a successful ambush (Action 4). By definition, this tactic requires concealment, and the Americans must have used marsh and tree cover to their advantage, concealing themselves until a complacent enemy was in a vulnerable position. It is hard to conceive of very many places of concealment on this flat terrain, other than the choke points defined on Figure 8.6. It is quite probable that the ambush took place in one of these two locales (as opposed to the more generalized location shown in Figure 5.6).

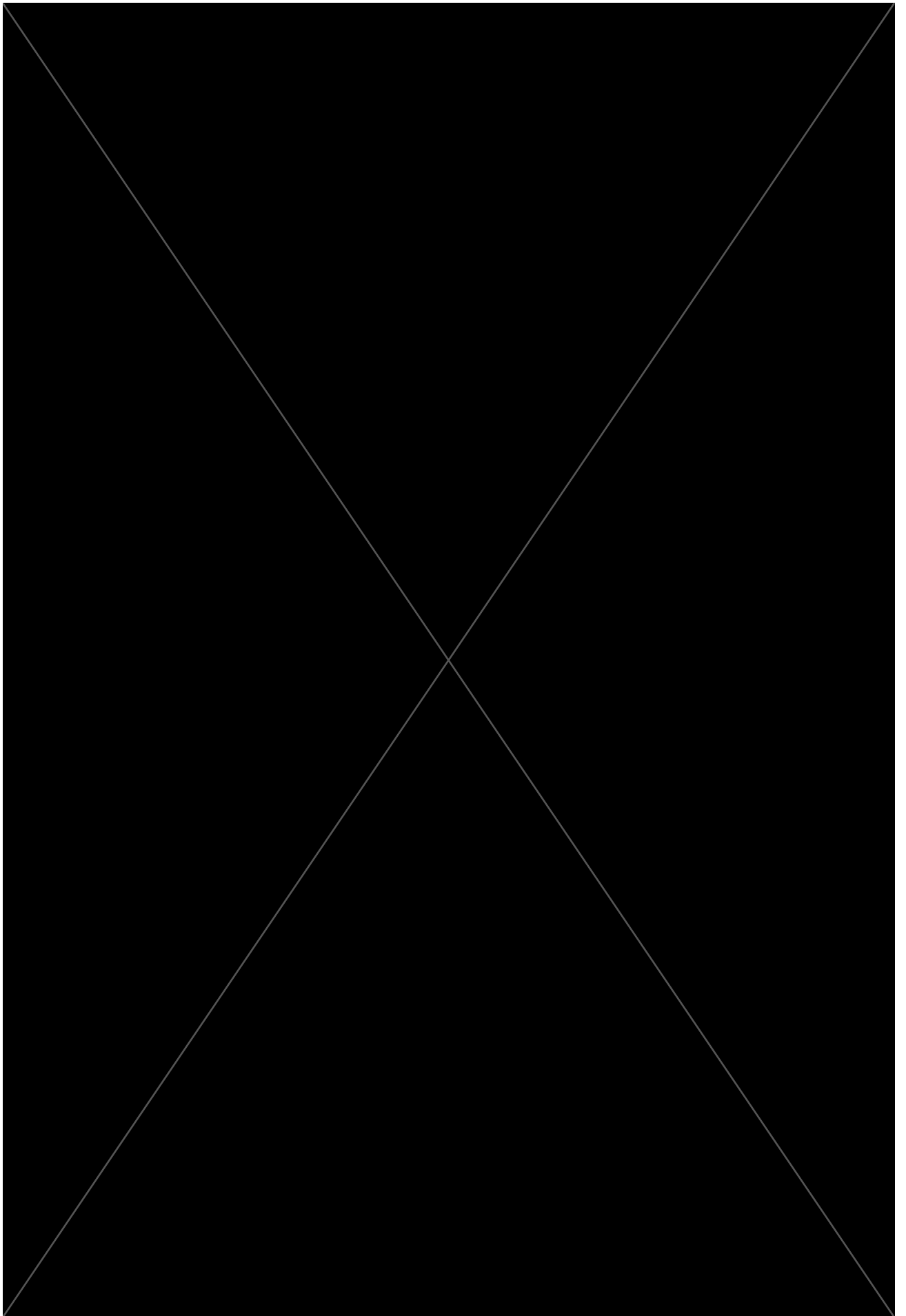
On the morning of 28 July 1776, American troops conducted a two-pronged movement south on the island, with Adams moving south along the eastern portion of the island and Thomas in the west Action 5 (Figure 5.8). The reason for this dual approach is clear by virtue of the choke points depicted in Figure 8.6.

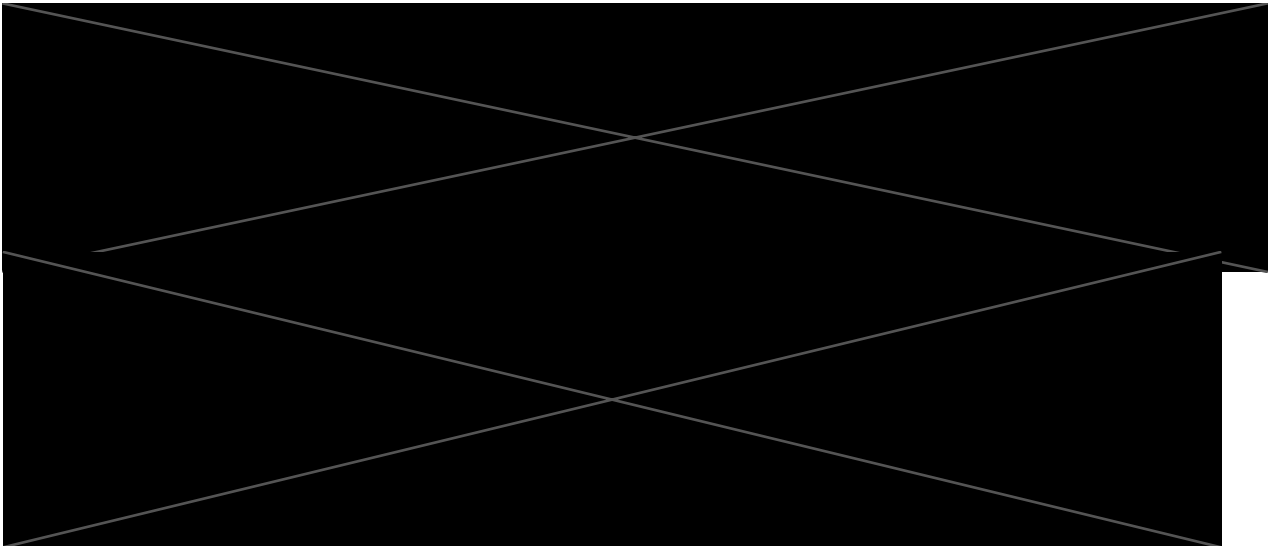
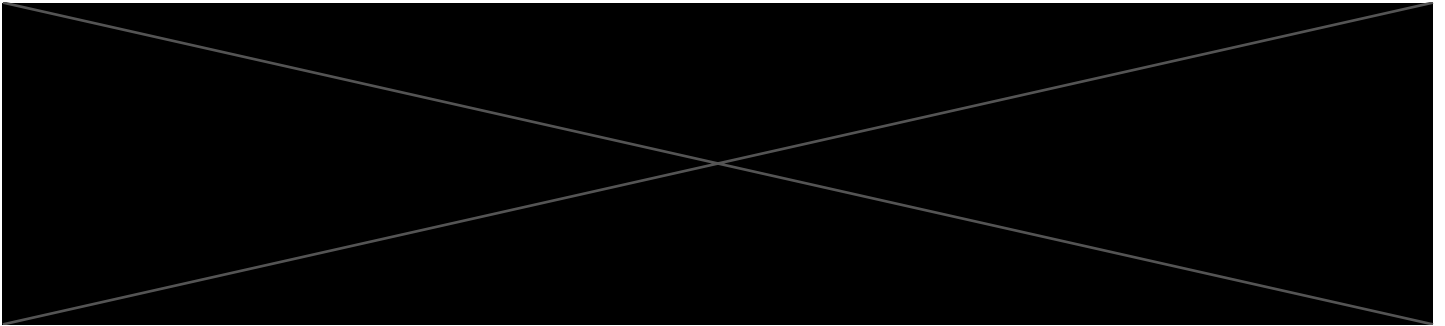
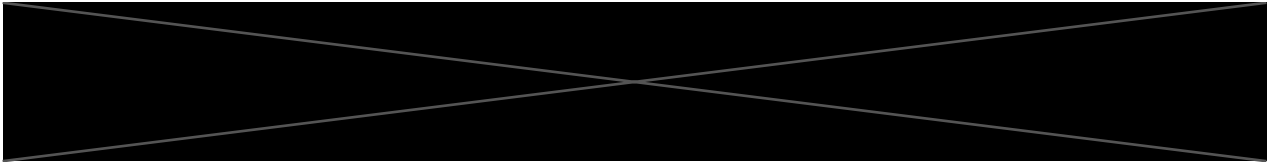
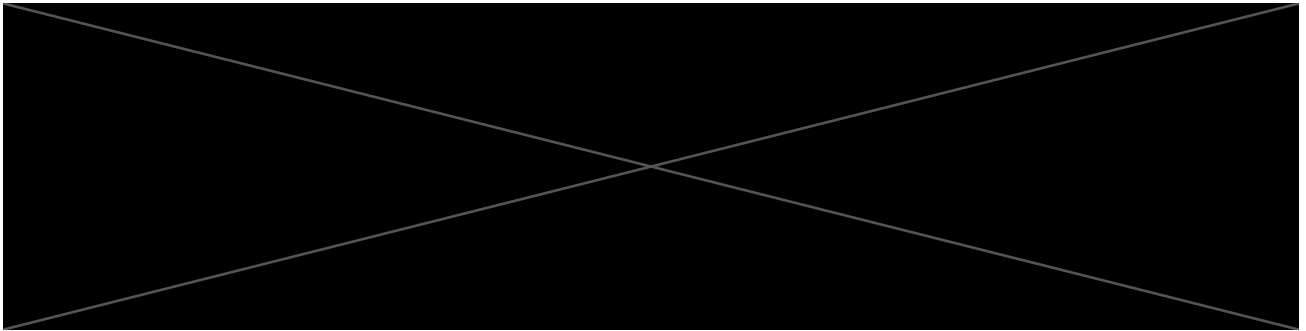
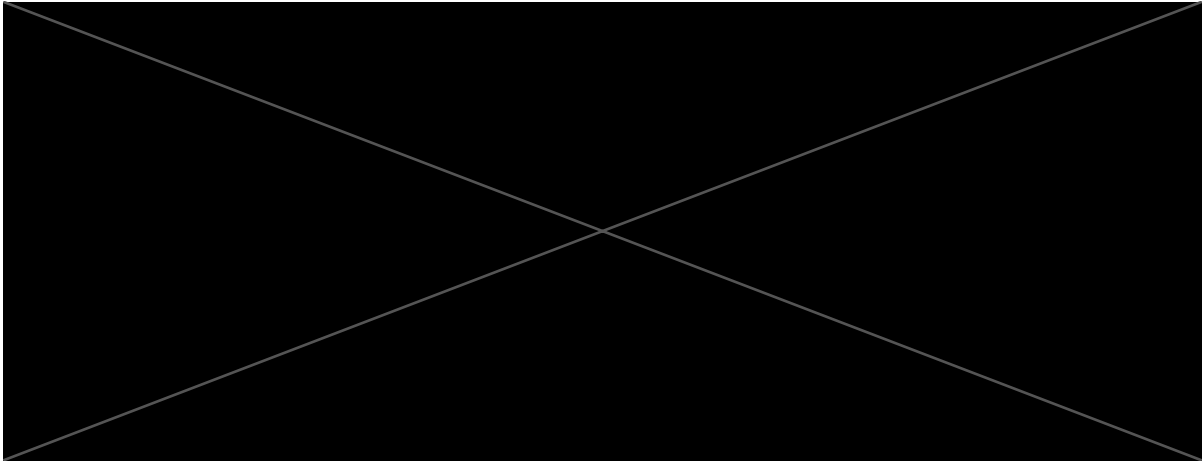
The movements on the morning of 28 July coincided with other American movements that require us to look at the broader area around the island. By this time, an American battery with a 9-pound cannon had been completed on Cherryfield Point. This closed off British access to the St. George Creek, while also threatening portions of the British anchorage and, in particular, *Fowey*. This had been an American objective since at least 19 July. When completed, this artillery battery opened fire on the fleet while the *Defence* and several other vessels moved toward the British ships from the east. The Americans were thus attacking the British on three fronts, simultaneously: on the island; with artillery at Cherryfield Point; and on the water with the Maryland State Navy.

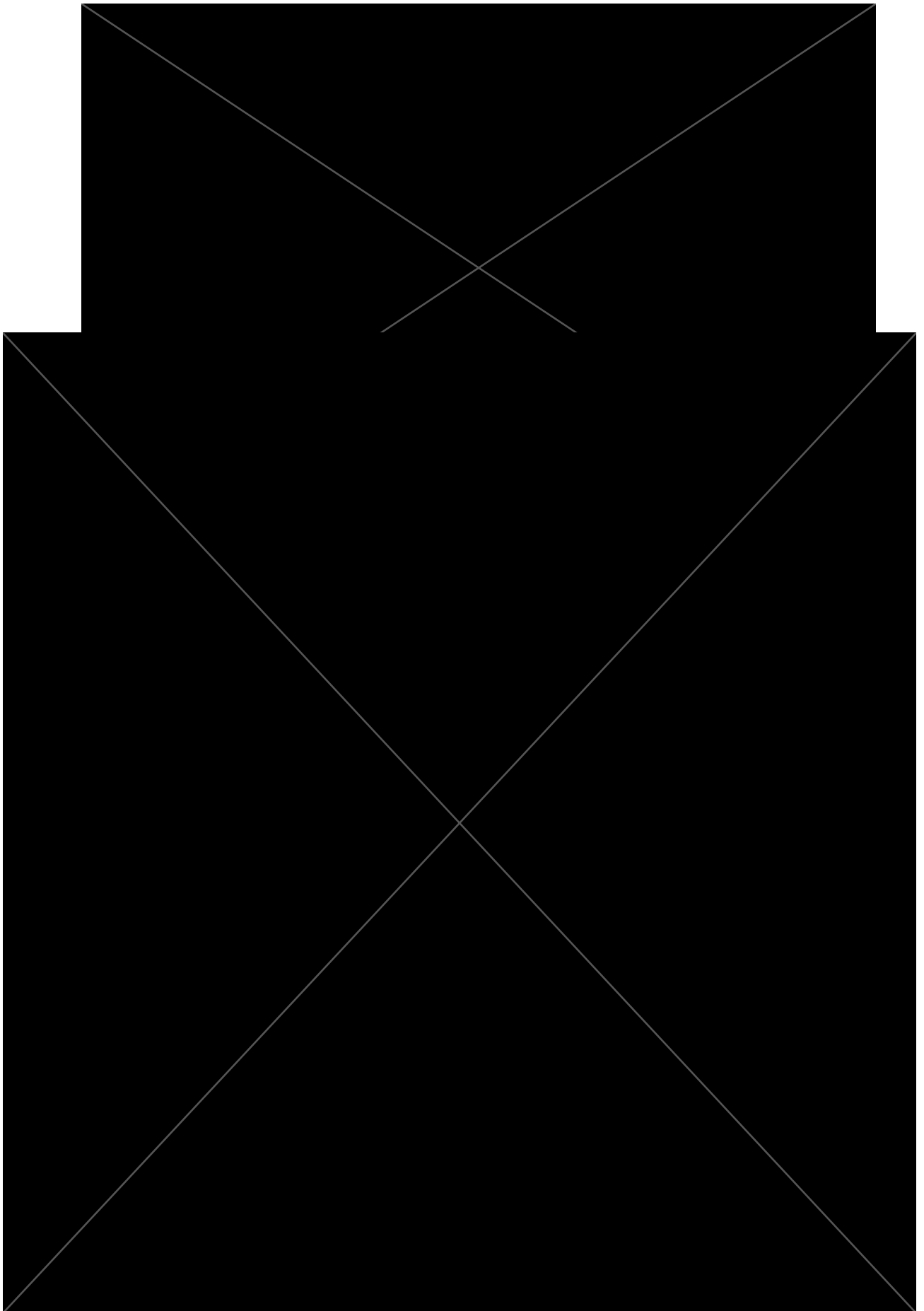
This combined arms approach was successful, despite Adams and Thomas not opposing another British landing on the island later in the day and the fact that the *Defence* was driven off by the threat of *Roebuck* and *Fowey*. The Americans had clearly demonstrated the tenuous position of the British. At the same time, it must have been clear to Hamond and Dunmore that water was limited on the island, especially after American troops filled in the best well on 25 July. But they had been more successful in their search for water farther up the Potomac. After the return of *Roebuck* and the watering expedition on 27-28 July, there was little to be gained by staying in the area while they consumed more of their hard-won supply of fresh water or by trying to outflank or destroy the American strong points. It was time to depart.

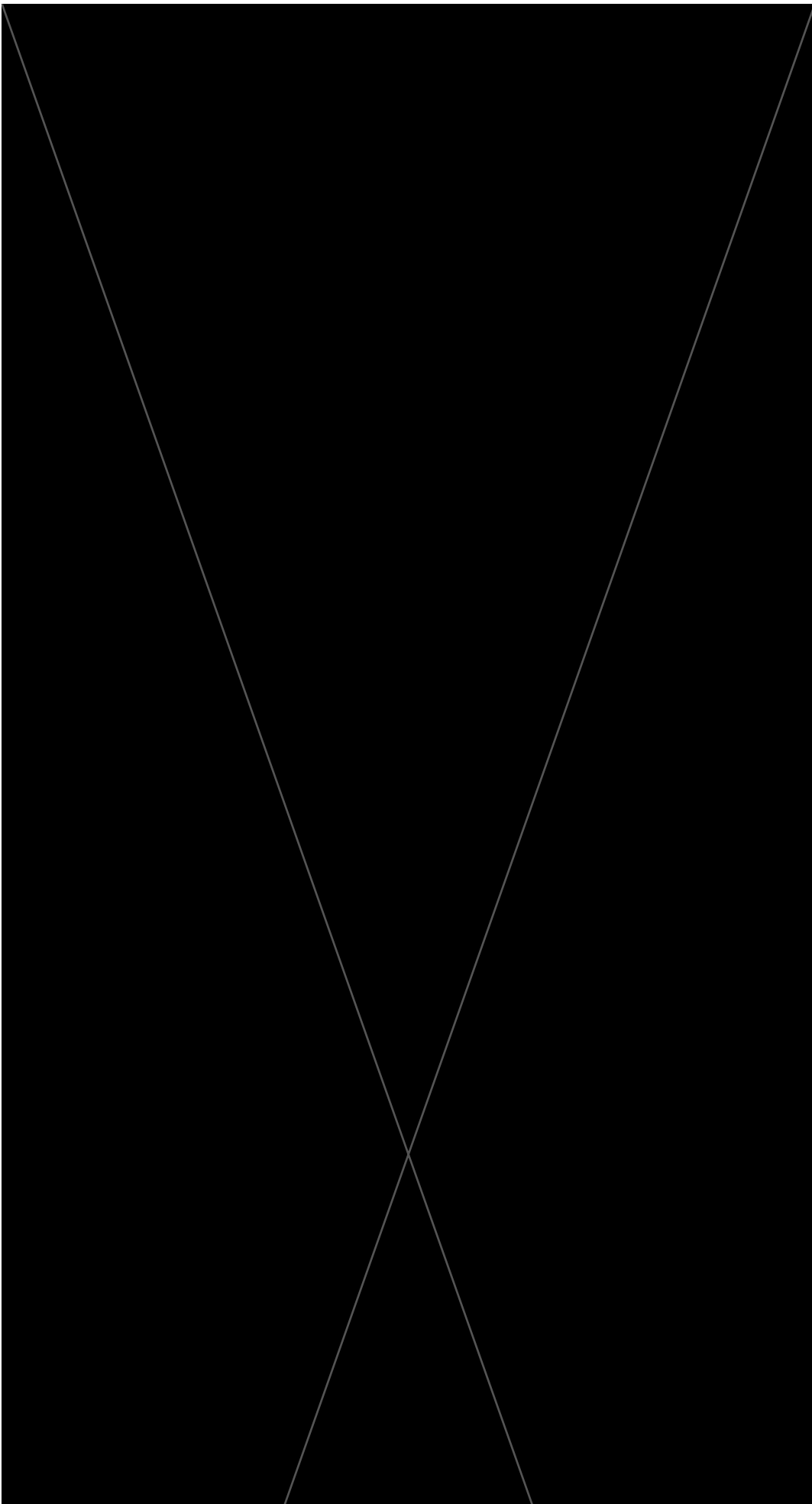
CH. 9 REDACTED TO PROTECT ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

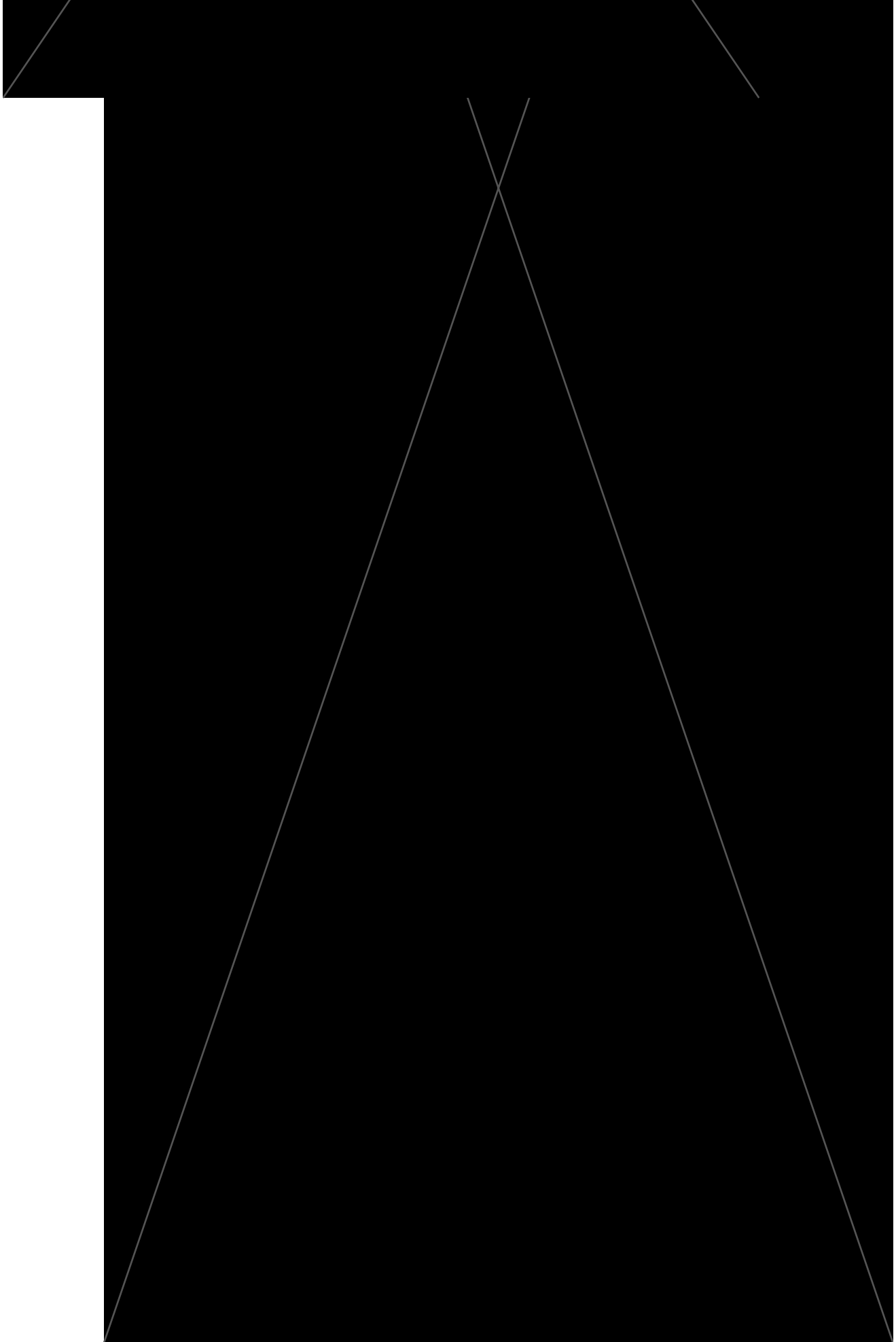


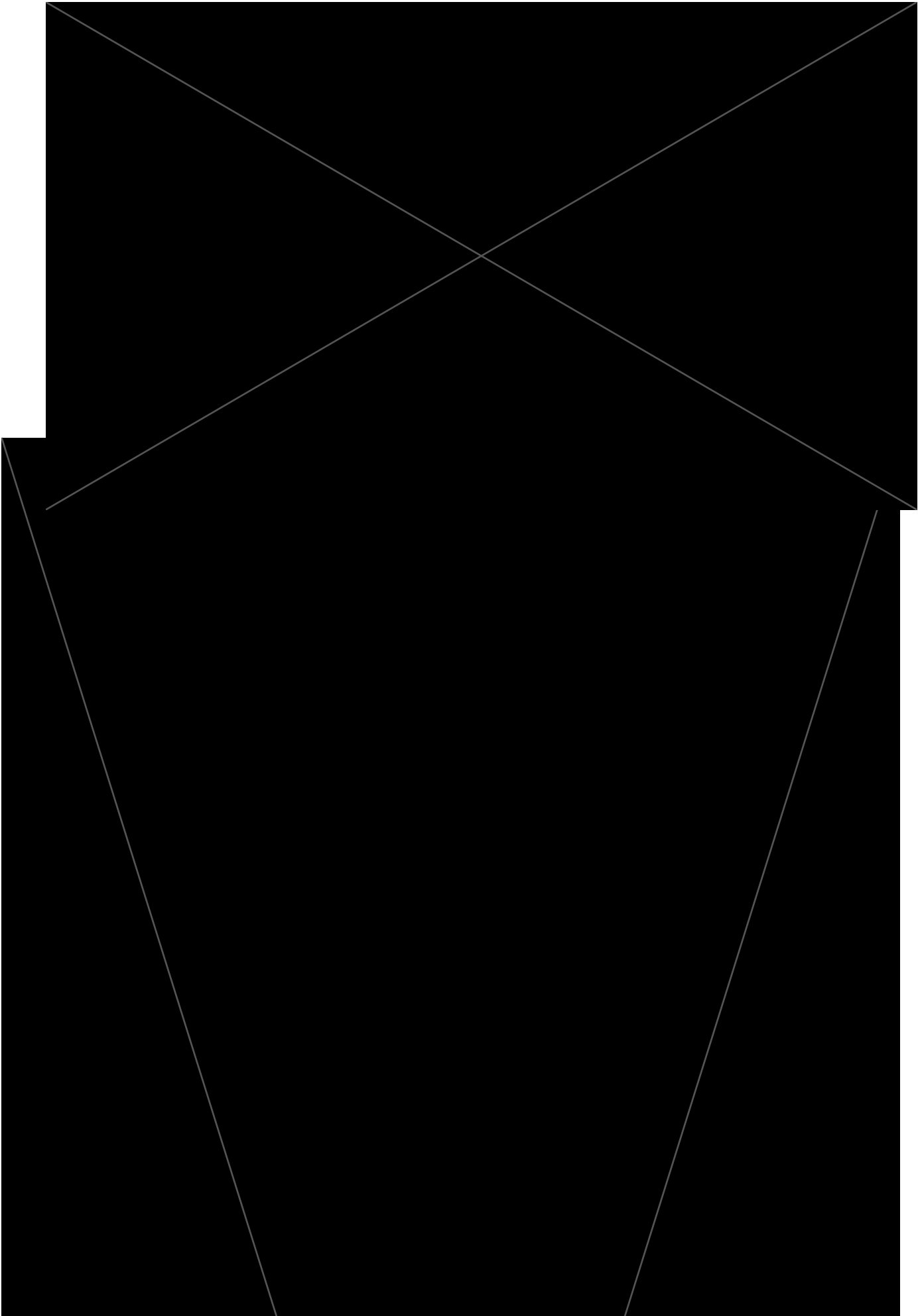


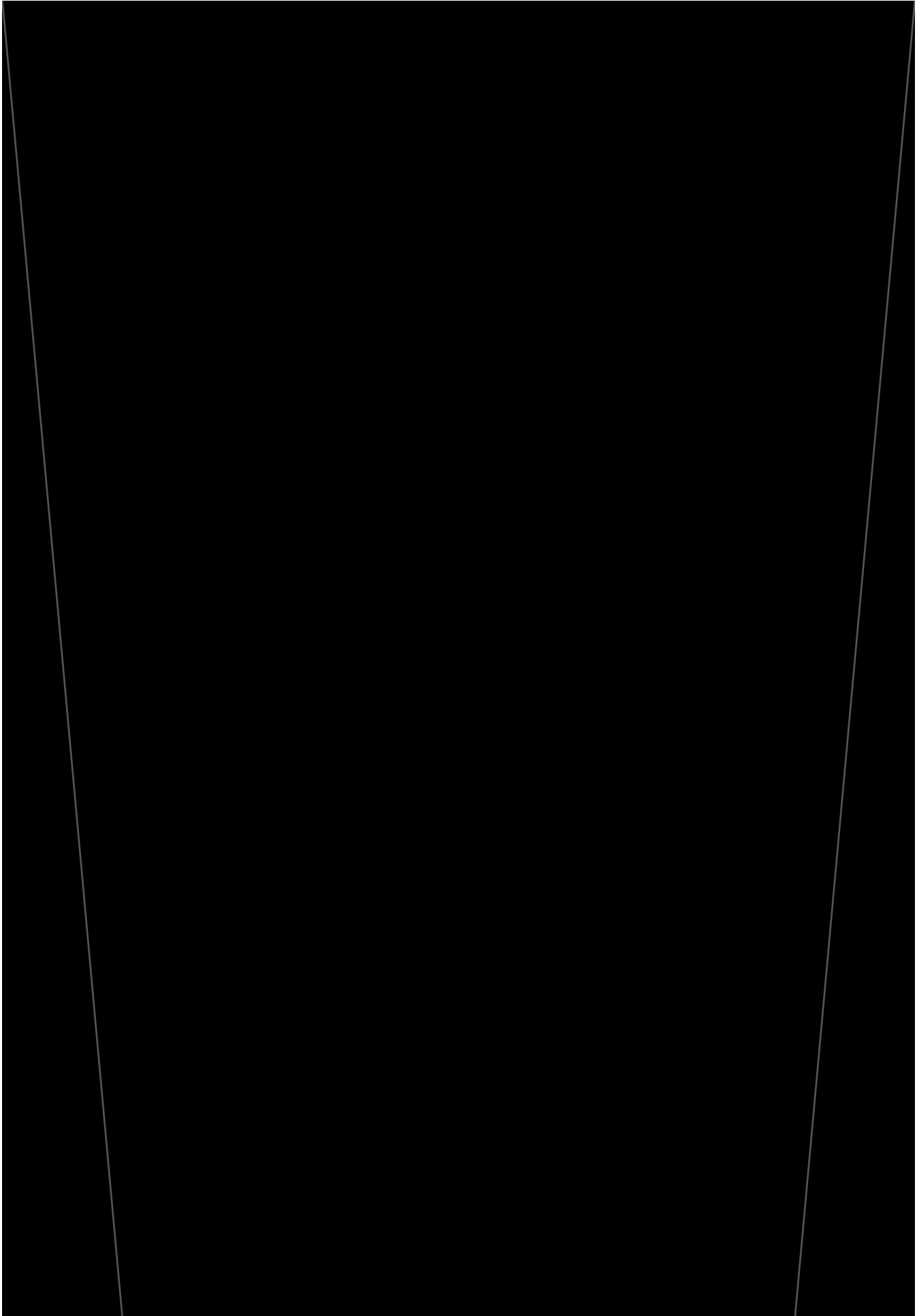


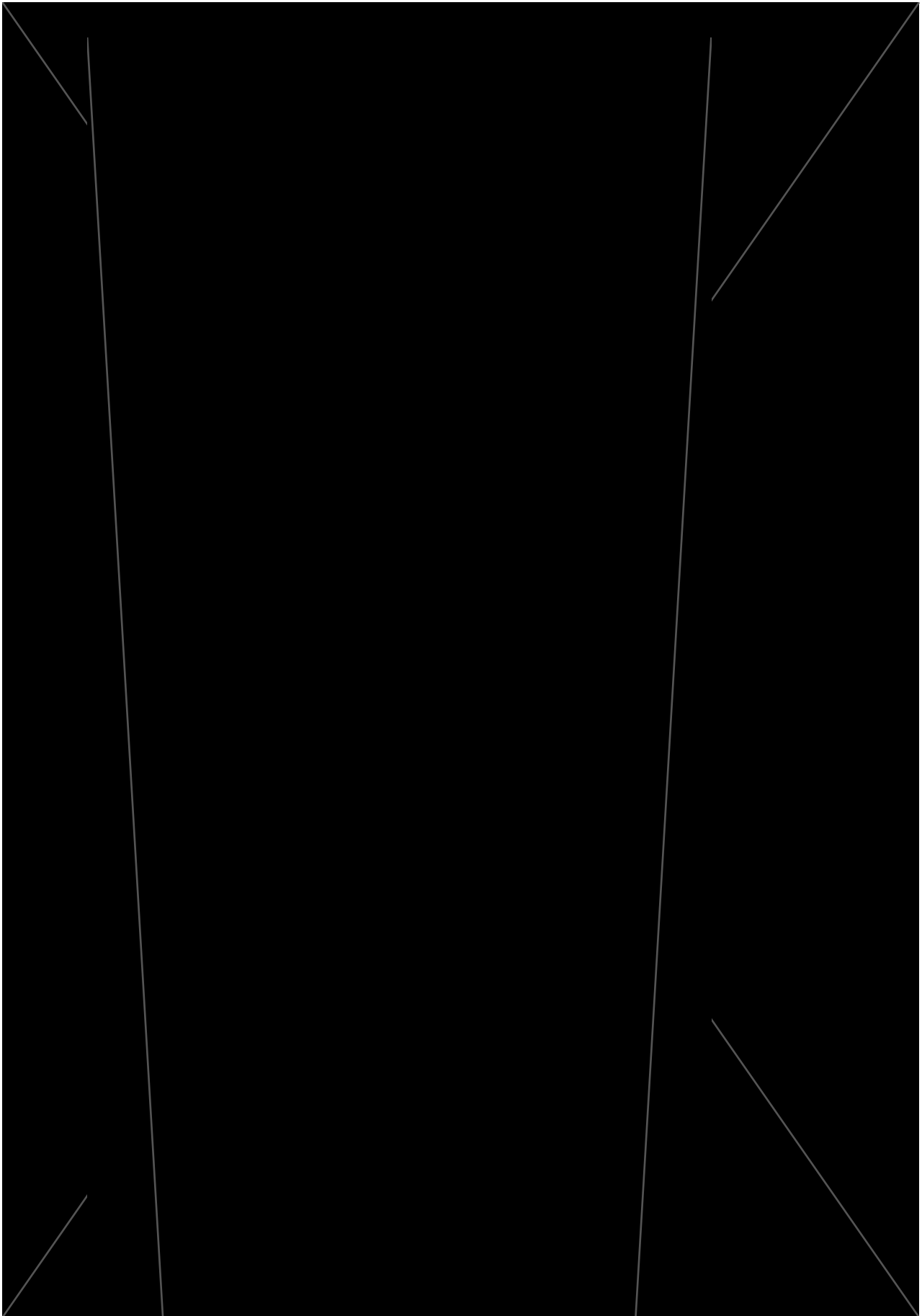


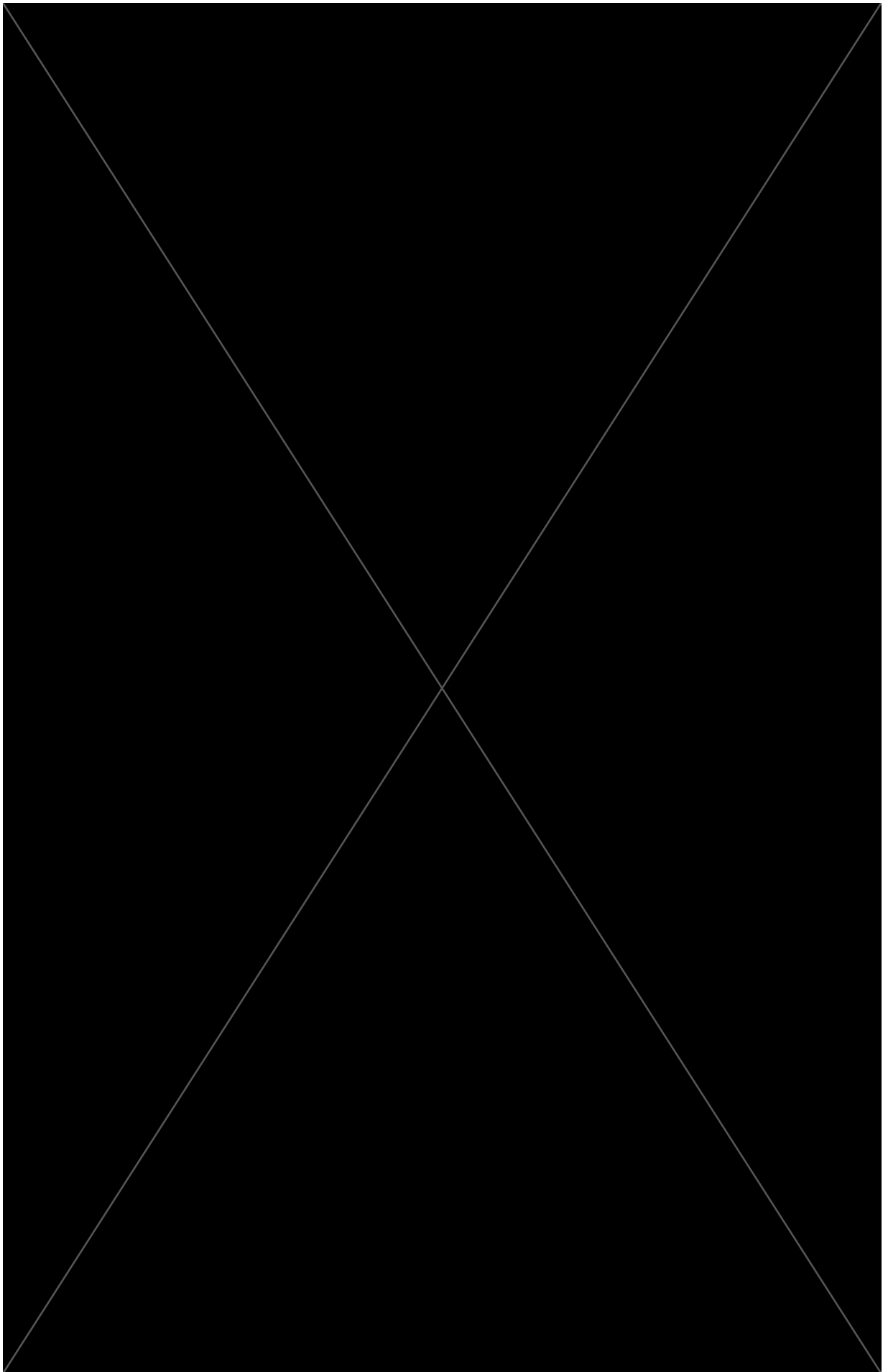


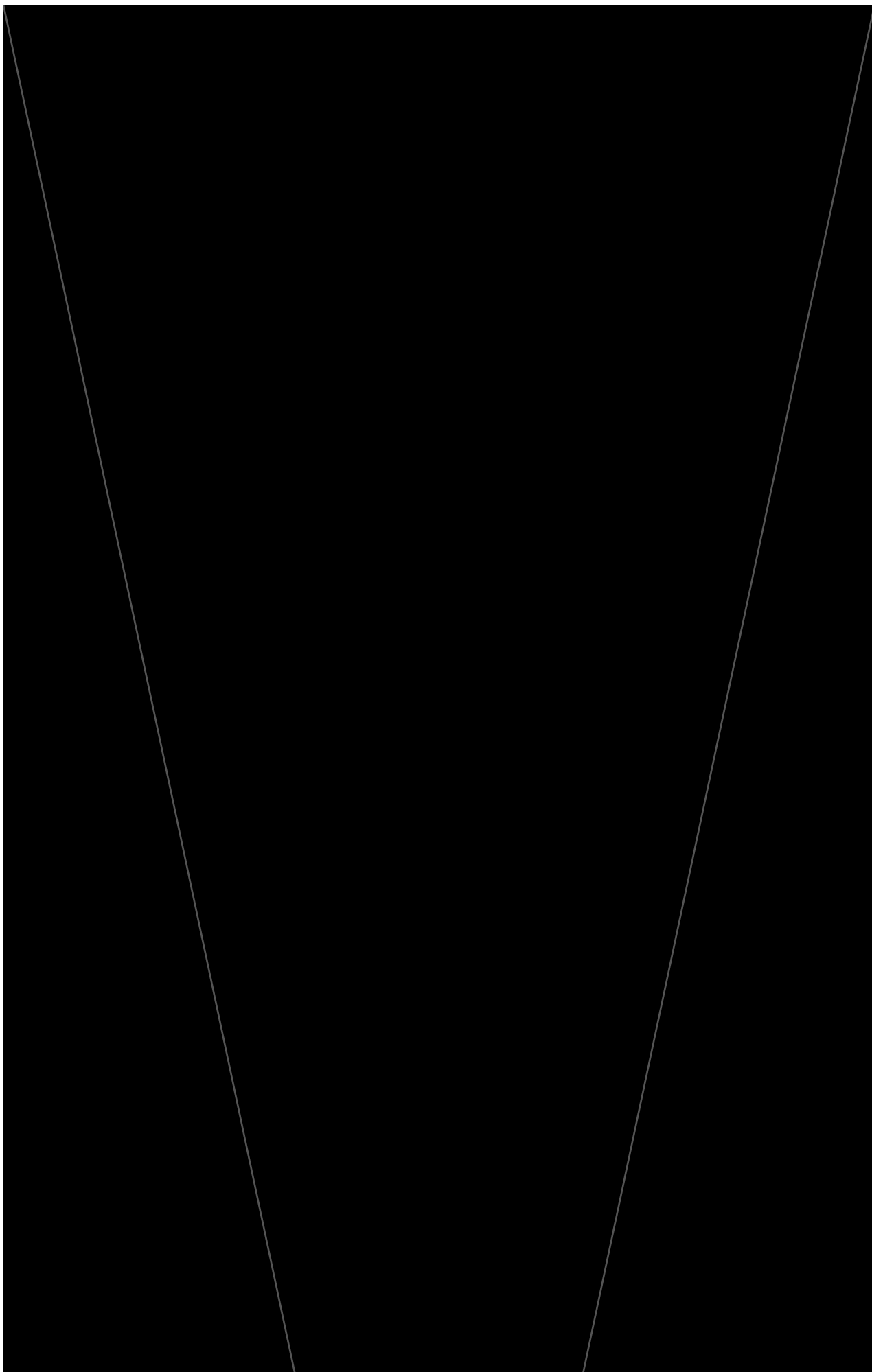












10

Locations for Future Interpretation

Locations for Future Interpretation

Figures are located at the end of this chapter.

Introduction

This chapter provides information concerning possible opportunities for future interpretation with a focus on locations and sites that are feasible for supporting visitor access and learning about the 1776 battlescape and the 1776 battle events. This chapter does not provide a *plan for interpretation* with specific recommendations. Rather, what is offered are considerations regarding interpretation that may be useful for an entity or organization undertaking future interpretive planning.

At the time this project was undertaken, an organization or entity with a mission to interpret the 1776 battle events and battlescape did not exist. However, it is important to point out that the Museum Division of the St. Mary's County Department of Recreation and Parks administers and operates the Piney Point Lighthouse and Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and Historic Park proximate St. George Island. The Piney Point Lighthouse and Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and Historic Park, through its facilities and staffing, offers an important future opportunity for developing programs and media supporting the interpretation of the battle events and the battlescape.

Visitor Access and Potential Sites for Interpretation

The area of the battlescape is quite large including both land and water areas. Analysis of primary sources resulted in an approximate area of the battlescape (see Figure 10.1) that includes:

- The entire St. George Island;
- Present day Piney Point community;
- Cherryfield Point north of St. George Island across St. George Creek;
- The mouth of the St. Mary's River;
- The Potomac River extending from Piney Point to the mouth of the St. Mary's River;
- Smith's Creek; and
- St. George Creek extending up to or close to the northwest end of St. George Island.

Typically, on-site interpretation of battle events is driven in part by the known or likely locations of battle events, features and resources that survive from the battle events, and access to these locations and resources. In addition, interpreting battle events and battlescapes is complicated by the complexity of the events unfolding over time, the movements and maneuvering of troops and vessels, related simultaneous events occurring in different locations, and events occurring at different times and dates within the same locations.

The project team focused on existing publicly accessible sites (Figure 10.1) that likely provide realistic and achievable near-term opportunities for interpreting the battle events and battlescape including:

- Piney Point Landing;
- Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and Historic Park; and
- Chancellor's Point, Historic St. Mary's City.

St. George Island

Military operations and combat actions that occurred on the island include the actions of July 15, 1776, action at the northwest end of the island that also involved the south end of the current Piney Point community, and combat actions that occurred on the island on July 20, 23, 25, 28, 1776. In addition, military operations associated with combat actions occurred extending the length of the island.

St. George Island includes a single public two-lane road system accessing the island via a two-lane bridge extending from the Piney Point community to the northwest end of the island. The state and county road network includes two-lane paved roads and narrow paved streets with some sections of roads and streets with very narrow shoulders or no shoulders. The island roads and streets are very rural in character and do not include sidewalks, paved pedestrian trails, or bike lanes (Figures 10.2 - 10.4). In some areas surface water is located immediately adjacent to road pavement edges (Figure 10.5). In addition, owing to the low elevation above sea level, storm surges, and high tides, roads and streets are subject to flooding. As is the case with many rural communities, the road and street network includes dead ends with no practical way to turn around cars or larger vehicles such as trucks, RVs, and buses (Figure 10.6). The project team had to utilize private driveways to turn around vehicles during fieldwork. The project team observed people, including children and pets, walking along the edges of roads and streets and people cycling along the roads and streets. With the road and street widths being narrow, pedestrians and cyclists utilizing the roads and streets could be endangered by increases in traffic and an influx of visitors who may not be familiar with the road and street network.

The project team, through engagement with the St. George Island Improvement Association and community members, learned that people who live and work on the island place an extremely high value on the rural character of the island. Low traffic volumes, low vehicle speeds, quiet solitude, and the natural and built character of the island are some of the particularly important reasons why people move to the island and retain their residence on the island. Consequently, the project team strongly recommends that future interpretation of the battle events and battlescape occur off the island to preserve the rural character of the community, to protect islanders who utilize their road and street network for pedestrian and bicycle use, and to protect private property from unwanted access.

Piney Point Landing, St. Mary's County Department of Recreation & Parks

The combat actions that occurred on July 15, 1776, involved the south end of the Piney Point community and the northwest end of St. George Island.

Piney Point Landing is administered and operated by the St. Mary's County Department of Recreation and Parks. This facility is located in the community of Piney Point and flanks both sides of State Route 249 (Piney Point Road) at the north end of the bridge accessing St. George Island (Figures 10.7 and 10.8). This public site includes a boat ramp, dock, boat trailer parking, car and RV parking, and picnic areas.

This facility appears to provide ample parking for visitors wanting to learn about and experience the 1776 battle events and battlescape (Figures 10.9 and 10.10). Locations on the shoreline of the Potomac River and St. George Creek could support interpretive exhibit panels and visitor pedestrian access. These locations offer views of St. George Island (Figure 10.11), the Piney Point community, the St. Mary's River reach extending up to or close to the northwest end of St. George Island (Figure 10.12); and areas of the Potomac River (Figure 10.13).

This site also could serve as a water access point for persons wanting to experience the battlescape via water craft.

Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and Historic Park, Museum Division, St. Mary's County Department of Recreation & Parks

The six-acre Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and Historic Park, located at the west end of Lighthouse Road a short distance from central portion of the Piney Point community and State Route 249 (Piney Point Road), is a property owned by St. Mary's County and administered and operated by the County's Museum Division as a historic site with extensive historic resources and visitor facilities including (see Figure 10.14):

- Historic buildings and structures: Piney Point Lighthouse, Keeper's Quarters, and Fuel Building for the Lighthouse and 1940s US Navy Machine Shop;
- Educational Facilities and Resources: Education Pavilion, Museum Building, Dory Boat Exhibit, WWII Torpedo Exhibit, Potomac River Maritime Exhibit Building, interpreted bio-retention ponds; and
- Visitor Services Facilities: Gift Shop and visitor services (in the Museum Building), picnic area, parking for cars, buses, and RVs, kayak launch, and a public pier.

The mission of this public museum site is to provide interpretation, education, and other visitor programs focusing on the 1836 Piney Point Lighthouse and associated structures including subsequent use and operation by the US Coast Guard beginning in 1939 and decommissioned in 1964. In addition, the site provides opportunities to learn about the history and significance of waterman and local maritime history including WWII German U-Boat operations in the Potomac River. Opportunities to learn about the area's important natural resources and the management of these resources are also provided and are supplemented by water and beach access.

The location and facilities of the Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and Historic Park offer very compelling opportunities for interpreting the battle events and battlescape. The site is currently managed and operated as a public historic site with parking, visitor services facilities, and a pier extending into the Potomac River (Figure 10.15). The existing pier currently provides interpretive experiences through exhibit panels and views of the Potomac River, shorelines and beaches, and St. George Island. The pier offers outstanding opportunities to view and observe portions of the battlescape and associated resources including the western shoreline of St. George Island (Figure 10.16), the south end of what is currently known as the community of Piney Point (Figure 10.17), and the Potomac River with distant views of the mouth of the St. Mary's River (Figure 10.18).

The project team engaged the director of the Museum Division of St. Mary's County's Department of Recreation & Parks to apprise the County of this study. The director indicated that the Museum Division would serve as a project stakeholder representing the County and also indicated that the Museum Division would be strongly interested in the future exploration of opportunities to interpret the battle events and battlescape at the Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and Historic Park.

Chancellor's Point, Historic St. Mary's City

Chancellor's Point is a 66-acre Historic St. Mary's City property that is accessed by vehicle and the Historic St. Mary's City trail system and offers opportunities for hiking, camping, and boating. Interpretive exhibits provide information on the natural and cultural history of the property including information on Chesapeake Bay ecology. The trail system provides access to the shoreline of the St. Mary's River via an accessible boardwalk.

Owing to its location on the St. Mary's River, Chancellor's Point offers opportunities for interpreting the battle events and battlescape. The site is currently managed and operated as a publicly accessible

recreational and education site. The existing vehicle access and parking and the existing accessible boardwalk trail that takes visitors to the river's edge can easily support visitors interested in learning about the battle events and battlescape. That location offers an outstanding opportunity to view and observe portions of the battlescape and associated resources including the mouth of the St. Mary's River, the east end of St. George Island, the end of Cherryfield Point, and the far shoreline of Virginia. Within this view is virtually the entire anchorage of Dunmore's fleet.

The project team engaged research staff at Historic St. Mary's City to provide information on this study and to invite Historic St. Mary's City to serve as a stakeholder. Henry Miller, Historic St. Mary's City's Maryland Heritage Scholar served as the project stakeholder representing Historic St. Mary's City. He also indicated that the Chancellor's Point site includes an exhibit panel that interprets the various wars that involved the St. Mary's River including the July 1776 battle events involving St. George Island. The location of this site with views of the battlescape should be considered for future opportunities to interpret the battle events and battlescape.



Figure 10.1: Approximate area of military operations and combat actions and potential locations for interpretation.



Figure 10.2: A primary two-lane road accessing the length of the island.



Figure 10.3: Some sections of the roadways have very narrow shoulders or do not have shoulders.



Figure 10.4: Many of the island roads are narrow with limited space for vehicles to pass other vehicles.



Figure 10.5: Sections of roads are flanked by water and are subject to flooding.



Figure 10.6: Many roads are terminated with private drives requiring access to these private drives to turnaround vehicles.



Figure 10.7: Piney Point Landing with access to the St. Mary's River.



Figure 10.8: Piney Point Landing flanked by the Potomac River.



Figure 10.9: Parking at Piney Point Landing.



Figure 10.10: Boat trailer parking and vehicle parking at Piney Point Landing.



Figure 10.11: View of the northern end of St. George Island from the Piney Point Landing boat launch area.



Figure 10.12: This area of the landing may be the approximate area of military operations and combat actions and potential locations for interpretation.



Figure 10.13: View of the Potomac River and the northern end of St. George Island from Piney Point Landing.



Figure 10.16: View of western shoreline of St. George Island from the Public Pier at the Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and Historic Site.



Figure 10.17: View of the Piney Point community from the Public Pier at Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and Historic Site.



Figure 10.18: The Potomac River and western shoreline of St. George Island visible beyond the Public Pier at the Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and Historic Site.

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Abbreviations

. Archives	Archives of Maryland
NAVDOCS	Naval Documents of the American Revolution
RVRI	<i>Revolutionary Virginia: The Road to Independence</i>

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Appendix A: Historic Architectural Resources

Historic Architectural Resources of St. George Island

See Figure A-1 at the end of this section for the locations of Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties located on St. George Island.

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties (MIHP) lists twelve (12) individual sites on St. George Island as well as the St. George Island Survey District. These significant structures date from between 1860 and 1938, of which nine (9) are residential along with two (2) churches and a summer camp. According to the documentation in the MIHP for the St. George Island Survey District in SM-143, almost all of the historic buildings that still remain on the island have been modernized and are occupied residences.¹

Two of these houses, the Thomas B. Adams House (SM-465) and the George Trice House (SM-469), both appear to date to the 1860s and share a similarity in that both have side passage/double-pile plans. The Adams House is not in its original location since it was moved in the early twentieth century as the river encroached on the property.² Other remarkable homes are the Walter F. Crowder House (SM-471) and the William Biscoe House (SM-473) because both have two entrance doors on the front elevation but are not duplexes. The St. George Island Survey District notes that:

While this particular plan is also found in houses on the mainland of St. Mary's County, it appears there in a lesser degree than on the island. There may be some link between this house plan and the origin of St. George Island settlers from the Eastern Shore of Maryland and Virginia [sic].³

Most of the houses built on St. George Island in the early twentieth century can be attributed to three local carpenters. "These men were Captain Ben Brown, his brother Ed Brown and James McKenny. In the 1920s, they built the hipped-roof Millard B. Twilley House (SM-470) and G. Edward Thomas House (SM-467). They also constructed the cabins at Camp Merryland (SM-472) in the 1930s."⁴

The St. George Island Survey District in SM-143 notes that the island's population grew considerably between 1870 and 1900. During this time, the islanders had places of worship constructed, including the first St. George Island Methodist Church (SM-461) built in 1876 and the St. Francis Xavier Chapel (SM-460) in 1896. "An Episcopal chapel, since removed, was built around 1892."⁵ And, the island started to become popular as a summer resort with the construction of both the Potomac Hotel and the Hobbs Hotel. Visitors from Washington D.C., Baltimore, and Alexandria reached the island by steamboat, which docked at a 100-foot wharf that extended into the Potomac River. The hotel season began in June and ended on September 30th. "Although both hotels have been demolished, the Thomas B. Adams House (SM-465) and the Edward T. Adams House (SM-452) stand on the Potomac Hotel property."⁶

The Potomac Hotel is attributed to the Adams. Thomas B. Adams purchased a 100-acre part of the tract "St. George's Island" from the Roman Catholic Church in 1855. And the St. George Island Survey District MIHP form notes that an article in the St. Mary's Beacon dated August 26, 1875, suggests that Adams helped his sons construct a hotel on the property sometime around 1873 or 1874. The MIHP elaborates that:

¹ MIHP SM-143, St. George Island Survey District

² MIHP SM-143, St. George Island Survey District

³ MIHP SM-143, St. George Island Survey District

⁴ MIHP SM-143, St. George Island Survey District

⁵ MIHP SM-143, St. George Island Survey District

⁶ MIHP SM-143, St. George Island Survey District

By 1875 he and his four sons had established a hotel equipped with a bar-room, bath-houses, a wharf, and a store on the property. By 1891 the “Potomac Hotel” consisted of 37 rooms and twelve additional guest cottages.⁷

The hotel accommodated 75 to 100 guests. The hotel also offered a dance pavilion as well as a bowling alley. “Visitors could lounge in the summer houses and on the pier located on the hotel property along the St. George’s Creek shore.” Swimming, boating, fishing, and crabbing were also recreational options for the guests. “In the evening, guests would dance to a violin, piano, and drum trio from Alexandria. Often, local residents came to the hotel to watch.”⁸

It is noted in the MIHP for the St. George Island Survey District that:

While the hotel was generally well received by Islanders, some Methodist residents objected to the existence of the hotel bar room. As a result, the Adams brothers arranged for the construction of an Episcopal chapel to accommodate their Protestant guests. In 1892, the Adams brothers transferred a one acre parcel to the Vestry of William and Mary Parish. Here an Episcopal chapel stood until the 1940s when it was deconstructed and moved to Charles County.

...and

The Potomac Hotel ceased operation in the early twentieth century, and in the 1930s the hotel was demolished. Over time, the steamboat wharf deteriorated, guest cottages were sold and moved from the property, and outbuildings such as the dance pavilion were taken down or adapted for other uses. All that remains of this once active resort are the homes of two of its founders: Thomas B. Adams (SM-452) and Edward T. Adams.⁹

The island’s population in the early 1900s also supported four stores that sold groceries, dry goods, and general merchandise. These were the Adams Brothers’ Store, the J.C. Hobbs’ Store, the G. Edward Thomas Store, and the Burton Graham Store. “Still, periodic shopping trips to Swann’s Store (SM-446) at Piney Point and J. W. Dent’s Store in Drayden remained a necessity.”¹⁰ None of these St. George Island stores still stand.

Table A-1. Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties listings for St. George Island

<i>MIHP #</i>			<i>Chronological/ Developmental Period</i>	<i>Historic Function and Use</i>
SM-143	St. George Island Survey District			
SM-452	Edward T. Adams House	Circa 1890	Industrial/Urban Dominance, 1870 - 1930	House
SM-460	St. Francis Xavier Chapel	1893	Industrial/Urban Dominance, 1870 - 1930	Church

⁷ MIHP SM-143, St. George Island Survey District

⁸ MIHP SM-143, St. George Island Survey District

⁹ MIHP SM-143, St. George Island Survey District

¹⁰ MIHP SM-143, St. George Island Survey District

<i>MIHP #</i>			<i>Chronological/ Developmental Period</i>	<i>Historic Function and Use</i>
SM-461	St. George Island United Methodist Church	1925	Industrial/Urban Dominance, 1870 - 1930	Church
SM-465	Thomas B. Adams House (Grandmother's or Mothers Cottage)	Circa 1860	Agricultural- Industrial Transition, 1815- 1870	Residence
SM-466	Thomas L. Crowder House	Circa 1865	Industrial Transition, 1815- 1870	Residence
SM-467	G. Edward Thomas House	Circa 1927	Industrial/Urban Dominance, 1870 -1930	Residence
SM-468	Howard J. Chesser House	1916; circa 1920	Industrial/Urban Dominance, 1870 - 1930	Residence
SM-469	George J. Trice House	Circa 1870	Industrial/Urban Dominance, 1870 - 1930	Residence
SM-470	Millard 8. Twilley House	Circa 1920	Industrial/Urban Dominance, 1870 -1930	Residence
SM-471	Walter F. Crowder House	Circa 1870 - 1890	Industrial/Urban Dominance, 1870 - 1930	Residence
SM-472	Camp Merryelande	1938 and later	Modern Period, 1930 -	Summer Camp for Girls
SM-473	William Biscoe House	Circa 1925	Industrial/Urban Dominance, 1870 -1930	Residence

The following descriptions are all based on the MIHP forms for each inventory, and the information and status of the structures as they were documented at the time of listing. This summary does not purport to be an update of these MIHP listings, and such an undertaking was outside the scope of this report.

SM-452: Edwards T. Adams House

Around 1890, Edwards T. Adams, one of the Adams brothers who at the time were the proprietors of the Potomac Hotel, had his house built by a local carpenter by the name of Jack Forrester. The Potomac Hotel was the first hotel constructed on the island sometime around 1873 or 1874. The significance of the Potomac Hotel and the Adams House is their association with St. George Island as a summer resort.

The Edwards T. Adams House is one of the largest remaining historic houses on the island. Located on the east side of Route 249, its setting is unique in that it “faces north towards an old road bed that

originally extended from the steamboat wharf to St. George Creek.”¹¹ It is noted in the MIHP that,

According to one source, the house consisted only of the main two-and-a-half story block and a one-story kitchen wing. The two-story southern wing was supposedly added at a later date.¹²

The frame structure sits on a brick pier foundation, situated in “large open field except for a small cluster of trees and a two-car [cinderblock] garage.”¹³ At the time of MIHP documentation, there was weatherboard siding was on the exterior of the house and the roof had wood shingles.

A two-story porch on the front of the house, with square post supports and balusters, has been enclosed with louvered windows, which conceals the front elevation of the main structure. The two-and-a-half story structure has a “cross gable at the roofline that extends the width of each elevation.”¹⁴ An interior brick chimney extends from the center of the roof on the main portion of the house. The six-panel front door with four-light sidelights and an arched fanlight is centered on the north elevation. A single two-over-two sash window is on either side of the door. On the second floor at the front of the house is “a central fifteen-light door flanked by one two-over-two sash window on either side. The eave is pierced by a six-light window with plain, plank shutters.”¹⁵

The two-story southern wing addition obscures the south side elevation of the original structure, on which there are two-over-two sash windows on both the first and second floor. A two-story porch is attached to the west side of this addition. “The first story of the porch is enclosed with louvered windows. The second story is screened.”¹⁶ The interior has one room on each floor; the second floor is a bedroom. The rooms on each floor have direct access to the porch. Another interior brick chimney projects from the roof of this addition. The one-story wing that housed the initial kitchen extends from the south side of this two-story addition, although, a modern kitchen has been installed in the first-floor room of the two-story addition.

The MIHP documentation provides the following description for the interior of the main block of the house:

The interior of the main block consists of a north entrance door which opens into an interior stair hall running east to west. A bathroom has been inserted into the east end of the hall. The stair rises from the west to the east and has turned balusters, a molded handrail, and a turned newell [sic] post. The stair is finished with scroll sawn brackets. A four-panel door at the west end of the hall opens into the west parlor. This door, like all interior doors in the main block of the house, has a molded surround with bulls-eye cornerblocks [sic]. In addition, the interior of the door jamb is finished with a fluted molding. Shelving has been built into the northeast corner of the parlor. A mantel located on the east partition wall consists of fluted pilasters mounted on large, bulls-eye cornerblocks [sic]. The mantel frieze is fluted and has a shelf supported by turned brackets. A door opens from the west parlor to the east parlor which is identically finished. Two closets have been built into the east parlor. The second floor of the main block is identical to the first floor with a bathroom built into the east end of the stairhall [sic] and an east and west bedroom. The mantels in these bedrooms consist of tapered pilasters with a flat frieze and a molded band along the top of the frieze. The mantel in the east bedroom is finished with a mantel shelf.¹⁷

On the first floor of west side of the house only one two-over-two sash window with louvered shutters remains, because a second window was infilled. There are two two-over-two sash windows

¹¹ MIHP SM-143, St. George Island Survey District

¹² MIHP SM-452, Edwards T. Adams House

¹³ MIHP SM-452, Edwards T. Adams House

¹⁴ MIHP SM-452, Edwards T. Adams House

¹⁵ MIHP SM-452, Edwards T. Adams House

¹⁶ MIHP SM-452, Edwards T. Adams House

¹⁷ MIHP SM-452, Edwards T. Adams House

with louvered shutters on the second floor of this side of the house. “The eave is pierced by one six-light window with plain, plank shutters. This gable end is finished with cornice returns supported by decorative sawn brackets.”¹⁸

There is also a two-over-two sash window with louvered shutters on the first floor of the east side of the house, as well as a pair of louvered shutters on a door that is no longer accessible from the interior. Mirroring the west side, on the second floor of the east side, the “eave is [also] pierced by one six-light window with plain, plank shutters and finished with cornice returns supported by decorative, sawn brackets.”¹⁹ The second floor of the east side also has two two-over-two sash windows with louvered shutters.

SM-460: St. Francis Xavier Chapel

Construction of Saint Francis Xavier Chapel commenced in 1892 on an approximate 0.20-acre parcel of land that was donated in 1889 to the Corporation of Roman Catholic Clergymen. The land was adjacent to an existing old graveyard on the island. Efforts to raise the funds to build the chapel had commenced several years earlier, in 1887.

The chapel was completed and dedicated on September 24, 1893. The MIHP listing notes that:

A letter describing the events of the dedication has been published in Edwina Beitzell’s *The Jesuit Missions of St. Mary’s County, Maryland*. According to Beitzell, the church’s membership numbered around 100 in the 1890s and was about equally divided between white and African-American parishioners. Graves on the right side of the church were reserved for whites, and those on the left were reserved for blacks.²⁰

Saint Francis Xavier Chapel is located on the east side of Thomas Road. There are grave markers on both the north and south sides of the chapel, with some of these south side graves being part of the “old graveyard” that existed before construction of the chapel.

The chapel is a frame structure, which has been modernized with vinyl siding and asphalt shingles on the roof. The roof is oriented on an east/west axis. The foundation is not visible, but the MIHP form notes that it “probably consists of brick piers.”²¹ The chapel faces the Potomac River, and there is a two-story entrance vestibule on the front that once was the bell tower. The original front doors have been replaced. When the chapel was documented, it was noted that “[c]entered above this entrance is a double hung lancet window with a colored glass image of the Virgin Mary.”²²

At the time when the Saint Francis Xavier Chapel was documented for the MIHP listing in October of 1994, it was noted then that the chapel had recently been restored and “[e]xcept for the modified bell tower, the building is little altered in exterior form and interior finish. The chapel continues to be used for Saturday evening services during the summer months.”²³

The MIHP listing further notes that:

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- ¹⁸ MIHP SM-452, Edwards T. Adams House
 - ¹⁹ MIHP SM-452, Edwards T. Adams House
 - ²⁰ MIHP SM-460, St. Francis Xavier Chapel
 - ²¹ MIHP SM-460, St. Francis Xavier Chapel
 - ²² MIHP SM-460, St. Francis Xavier Chapel
 - ²³ MIHP SM-460, St. Francis Xavier Chapel

Sometime during the 1950s, the church belfry was struck by lightning. The damage was so great that the front of the church was reworked as it appears today. The original bell sat on the lawn in front of the church for many years and then disappeared. The bell currently located on the grounds was purchased from a dealer in antique bells in Michigan. Prior to its relocation to Maryland the bell was used by a church in Philadelphia.²⁴

This replacement bell is sitting on concrete blocks located adjacent to the front entrance of the chapel. There is an inscription on one of the bells that states “McShane Bell Foundry, Baltimore, 1893” and another inscription on the opposite side that states “Presented by Sarah W. Gillian. To the glory of God. And in memory of her beloved son.”²⁵

Saint Francis Xavier Chapel is significant as one of only two historic places of worship that still stands on St. George Island; the other is a Methodist Church. St. Francis was closed in 1974 after being determined to be an unsafe structure. Not long afterwards the roof caved in, and the chapel started to fill with debris. The good news is that in 1980 a group was formed to restore the chapel. Saint Francis Xavier Chapel was reopened in 1987 as a mission of St. George’s Church, which is located in Valley Lee.

SM-461: St. George Island Methodist Church

The Roman Catholic Church owned St. George Island until 1852, and in the ensuing decades of the 1850s and 1860s the island was divided into parcels that were sold to the public. Waterman from the Eastern Shore of Maryland and Virginia were among those who purchased these parcels, and many of these new “island settlers” were members of the Christian Protestant denomination of Methodism.

According to local tradition, the St. George Island Methodists worshiped in a one-room log schoolhouse before they were able to construct the first Methodist church in 1876 “using materials imported from Salisbury, Maryland.”²⁶ In 1925 this original church building was demolished and replaced by the current church, which is the second Methodist church structure to occupy the property and is still in use.

The St. George Island Methodist Church that is documented in SM-461 is the church that was built in 1925 and is significant as one of two surviving historic churches located on St. George Island; the other church being St. Francis Xavier Chapel (SM-460).

The 1925 St. George Island Methodist Church remains largely unaltered; however, it has been modernized with the placement of vinyl siding over the original weatherboard exterior, and asphalt shingles on the roof. The church faces to the west with its roof oriented on a north/south axis. It is supported by concrete piers which have been infilled with brick.

Located on the east side of Route 249 near its intersection with Thomas Road, the church is situated within a grove of trees set back from the road and is surrounded by the grave markers in the adjacent cemetery. It is a “picturesque island landmark.”²⁷ The Fellowship Hall was built in 1965 between the road and the church. The parsonage is located south of the Fellowship Hall, and both of these structures are cinderblock buildings. The parsonage is no longer a dwelling but is used for Sunday School classes. As noted in the MIHP form,

²⁴ MIHP SM-460, St. Francis Xavier Chapel

²⁵ MIHP SM-460, St. Francis Xavier Chapel

²⁶ MIHP SM-461, St. George Island Methodist Church

²⁷ MIHP SM-461, St. George Island Methodist Church

The interior of the church vestibule is sheathed with modern wood paneling. The door and window surrounds are plain except for a modest crown molding. The vestibule was originally separated from the main block of the church by a pair of double doors which have been removed.

...and

The main block of the church is sheathed with wainscoting from the floor to the chair rail. Above the chair rail, the wall is covered with modern wood paneling. The ceiling of the church is wainscoted. Three rows of wooden pews extend from east to west across the church interior creating two major aisles and two minor aisles. Twenty-one pews fill the main block of the church. Nine additional pews are located at the south end of the church in an area which, at one time, could have been separated from the main block by a series of sliding wooden doors. These doors have been removed. The north end of the church consists of a central altar raised two steps above ground level. The altar is separated from the seating area by an altar rail. The pulpit is located to the west of the altar. The choir, now occupied by an organ, is located to the east of the altar.²⁸

The front of the church is “a six-bay main block with a two-story entrance vestibule and bell tower wing which acts as the southernmost bay. This wing is capped by a pyramidal roof surmounted by a metal cross.”²⁹ On the south elevation of the bell tower wing is a “one nine-light-over-three-panel door with a four-light transom. The door and transom are bordered by a wide, plain surround with a triangular head.”³⁰ One four-over-four sash window with wide surrounds, a triangular head, and louvered shutters is on the north side of the bell tower. Located above this window are three louvered vents with wide surrounds.

On the first floor of the bell-tower wing is a double six-panel door entrance from which a metal awning extends. A series of three louvered vents with wide surrounds and triangular heads are located above the door. Across the main block of the church are four six-over-six sash colored glass windows with wide surrounds and triangular heads. There are also louvered shutters on these windows. A modern door is on the northernmost bay. Handicap access to the church is provided by a wheelchair ramp to an entrance door on the west side. Three louvered vents with wide surrounds and triangular heads are located above the door. An interior brick chimney protrudes from the west roof slope of the church. The six windows on the east side of the church are six-over-six sash colored glass with wide surrounds and triangular heads.

Historically, the St. George Island Methodist Church “has been an important part of the spiritual and social fabric of the lives of island residents.”³¹

SM-465: Thomas B. Adams House

One of the earliest surviving houses on the island is the home of Thomas B. Adams House, who was also one of the founders of the Potomac Hotel; one of the first boarding houses on St. George Island. The house was built in the 1860s as a two-story, ell-shaped, frame structure. Although enlarged with modern additions on the south and west side, the house is “generally well preserved and retains most of its original interior finishes.”³²

²⁸ MIHP SM-461, St. George Island Methodist Church

²⁹ MIHP SM-461, St. George Island Methodist Church

³⁰ MIHP SM-461, St. George Island Methodist Church

³¹ MIHP SM-461, St. George Island Methodist Church

³² MIHP SM-465, Thomas B. Adams House

The property is on St. George Creek, on the east side of Route 249. The house does not stand in its original location. It had to be shifted about 400 feet west of the present sea wall sometime around 1901 due to the encroachment of the river. As documented by the MIHP,

The house faces St. George's Creek on the east and is bordered by a stand of tall pine trees on the north. The Edward T. Adams House (SM-452) property borders the Thomas B. Adams House on the south side. Originally, these two houses were separated by a carriage road that led from the Adams steamboat wharf on the Potomac River to St. George's Creek. A slight rise in the landscape, which constitutes the old road bed, is still visible.³³

A brick pier foundation supports the house in its present location, with both weatherboard and vinyl siding on the exterior, and six-over-six sash windows with louvered shutters on the main block of the house. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The east side of the house is the front, which "consists of a two-bay gable end main block" with the gable end "covered by a substantial two-story, gable roof porch with a cement pad floor, square post supports and a square post balustrade."³⁴ The first floor of the two-story porch is enclosed, and an entrance is set off to one side. From inside the porch the interior of the house is accessed through a modern entrance door and a six-over-six sash window with narrow, molded surrounds.

Access to the second floor of the porch is from the interior of the second floor of the house through a four-panel door. Sometime around 1970 a one-story addition was constructed to the west of the gable end block and conceals the south side of the original section of the house. The two windows on this addition are six-over-six sash windows with louvered shutters. "The second floor of the ell rises above the one-story addition"³⁵ on which there are also two six-over-six sash windows that have narrow surrounds with an interior bead and louvered shutters, and a louvered vent is on the eave. "This gable end is finished with molded cornice returns" and a brick chimney from the interior brick chimney extends from the roof ridgeline.

On the rear of the house, the west side, is another modern one-story shed roof addition with a wood deck on the back. A four-light over-three-panel door in on the north side of the addition, and the windows are also six-over-six sash with louvered shutters. The furnace is located in another small shed roof addition.

"The northern two bays of the house are capped by the gable end of the main block. This gable is finished with molded cornice returns. A louvered vent pierces the eave."³⁶ An exterior cinderblock chimney is against the wall of this elevation

In the MIHP documentation, the interior of the house is described as follows:

The interior of the main block originally consisted of a side hall, double pile plan. The wall separating the two parlors on the north side of the house has been removed to create one large room. The windows in this room are surrounded by an interior bead and an exterior cyma curve. The open string hall stair is paneled and finished with a turned newel post, turned balusters, and scroll sawn brackets. A four panel door opens to a closet underneath the stair revealing circular sawn lumber and mature machine cut nails. This door, and all original doors in the house, are hung on decorative metal hinges. At the west end of the hall, a four-panel door opens to a bathroom added in the late 1940s. The ell consists of one room on the first floor and one room on the second floor. Three bedrooms and one bathroom are located on the second floor. The original plaster walls remain in place on the second floor. Four panel doors with a beveled interior surround open off of the hall into the bedrooms.³⁷

³³ MIHP SM-465, Thomas B. Adams House

³⁴ MIHP SM-465, Thomas B. Adams House

³⁵ MIHP SM-465, Thomas B. Adams House

³⁶ MIHP SM-465, Thomas B. Adams House

³⁷ MIHP SM-465, Thomas B. Adams House

Located closest to the house is a cinderblock garage with an asphalt shingle roof. The second outbuilding, situated west of the garage, is a small shed-roof chicken house with vinyl siding and asphalt shingles on the roof. The chicken house is accessed by a four-panel door with eight-light casement windows on either side. A garden shed is north of the chicken house and has a gable roof covered in asphalt shingles and artificial siding on the exterior.

SM-466: Thomas L. Crowder House

The MIHP for the St. George Island Survey District (SM-143) notes that Thomas L. House was probably constructed around 1865 and is significant as one of the older houses still standing on the island. Although the house has been enlarged over time, in its earliest form this one-and-a-half story dwelling was likely comprised of a single room on the first floor with a single room in the upper half story.³⁸ The MIHP documentation offers that:

According to local tradition, this dwelling originally housed shepherders who lived here during the Jesuit ownership of the Island. Based on the size and form of the house, it is plausible that the dwelling housed tenants and that it dates to the 1850s or 1860s. However, it is difficult to substantiate a building date for the house since the roof construction is completely sheathed with modern materials and the underside of the house is not accessible.³⁹

Located on the west side of Island Creek, this waterfront property is at the end of an unpaved road that extends from the east side of Thomas Road. There's wooden pier on the creek. The one-and-a-half story, ell-shaped frame house is supported by concrete piers, however, the MIHP notes the "original foundation probably consisted of wood piers which deteriorated over time." Modern features on the exterior include asphalt shingles on the roof and the installation of vinyl siding over the original weatherboard exterior.

The front of the house, which is the south elevation, faces towards the mouth of Island Creek with the principal gable oriented on an east/west axis. The original entrance was on this south side of the house and a "plat dating to the 1930s shows two spruce trees flanking this entrance."⁴⁰ During the mid-twentieth century a series of additions were constructed to increase the amount of livable space in house. The MIHP notes:

It seems likely that in its earliest form, the house consisted of the southern section alone. The house would have had one room on the first floor and one room in the upper half story. Access to the upper half story would have been possible by means of a hole in the ceiling of the first floor room. A ladder, rather than a stair, probably provided access to the original sleeping loft. The northern ell was probably added at a later date. The ell, of the same size and form as the southern block, may even have been a separate house that was moved to this site to enlarge the dwelling.⁴¹

Prior to the mid-twentieth century additions, there were two rooms on the first floor. In the southwest corner of the south room there was a retractable stair that was used to access to the upper half story. In the 1960s and a narrow, enclosed stairway was added in the ell of the first floor to the two bedrooms and a storage space at the head of the stairs in the upper half story. "A louvered door hung on a 'Bommer Spring Hinge' hides the storage area from view."⁴² In the 1960s enclosed shed roof porches were added to the front and east sides of the house. Each enclosed porch has an exterior door and a series of one-over-one sash windows across the front and a single light window on the end.

³⁸ MIHP SM-143, St. George Island Survey District

³⁹ MIHP SM-466, Thomas L. Crowder House

⁴⁰ MIHP SM-466, Thomas L. Crowder House

⁴¹ MIHP SM-466, Thomas L. Crowder House

⁴² MIHP SM-466, Thomas L. Crowder House

A one-story addition constructed in the late 1970s was added to the north side of the house. The addition has two banks of three one-over-one sash windows. Another late 1970s addition attached to the west side of the house was a one-story utility room with a shed roof, a door, and one one-over-one sash window.

The sole outbuilding is a modern structure with a gable roof, artificial siding, and asphalt shingles.

SM-467: G. Edward Thomas House

Located on the east side of Thomas Road, the G. Edward Thomas House is not only significant because it was built around 1927 by the local carpenters Captain Ben Brown and David McKenny, but it “is also the only Italian Renaissance style dwelling on St. George Island.”⁴³ This well-preserved dwelling is a rectangular block building. Because of its distinctive hipped roof, the structure “stands out among the island’s more traditional house forms.”⁴⁴ There is an empty lot south of the Thomas House, where once stood the Thomas’s store.

The store was the first building on the property, predating the house. The family, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas and their three children, lived on second story of the store until Ed Thomas hired the local carpenters Brown and McKenny to build the house in 1927. One of three stores that were on the island at the time, in addition to offering general merchandise, the store building included a millinery shop and was also the location of the post office. Ed Thomas operated this store from the early 1900s until sometime in the 1950s, after which it was demolished.

This waterfront property is on the west side of Island Creek, and the house faces west towards the road. The building’s exterior is clad with German style vinyl siding with asphalt shingles on the roof. A central entrance door is at the front of the house with a bank of three one-over-one sash windows with narrow surrounds set on each side of the door. The entrance is “flanked by six light-over-one-panel sidelights” and, a “portico with a cement pad floor shelters the door.”⁴⁵ In the center of second floor is a bank of three one-over-one sash windows with two one-over-one sash windows on either side. A one-story addition on the south side of the house has four one-over-one sash windows, a flat roof, and an entrance door on the east side. A shed roof supported by two wood posts provides shelter at the door. An interior brick chimney is located at the south end of the house.

The MIHP form describes the interior of the house as follows:

The interior consists of a center hall, single pile plan. The hall stair is an open string with a square newel post and square balusters. A bathroom has been inserted at the east end of the hall opposite the entrance door. French doors open off of the hall into both the parlor and the dining room. Only the north parlor retains the original mantel. The mantel consists of fluted pilasters mounted on square block plinths, a plain frieze, and a mantel shelf. The interior window and door surrounds consist of an interior bead and a wide, plain molding crowned by a molded cornice. The second floor consists of four bedrooms and a bath. Five-panel doors and the original wood flooring remain in place throughout the house.⁴⁶

The only outbuilding is a cinderblock garage with asphalt shingles. The detached garage is north of the house.

⁴³ MIHP SM-467, G. Edward Thomas House

⁴⁴ MIHP SM-467, G. Edward Thomas House

⁴⁵ MIHP SM-467, G. Edward Thomas House

⁴⁶ MIHP SM-467, G. Edward Thomas House

SM-468: Howard J. Chesser House

Howard J. Chesser purchased the 0.17 of an acre from Tyler D. Chesser in 1916 on which to build a small house. According the MIHP, Howard Chesser was a boat captain, and the house remained in the Chesser family until 1977.

The Howard Chesser House is on the east side of Route 249 and this two-story frame dwelling originally consisted of single room and a hall on the first floor with two bedrooms on the second floor. It is “significant as a well-preserved example of a modest, late Victorian waterman’s home on St. George Island”⁴⁷ and is representative of several other residences on the island.⁴⁸ This house is built in a traditional form that has a “center hall/single pile plan, with a decorative shingled cross gable on the front elevation”⁴⁹ and moreover, “[t]he shingled cross gable and bracketed cornice returns are decorative details that survive intact” with gable being “sheathed with saw-tooth and square butt shingles and pierced by a diamond pane window.”⁵⁰

The kitchen was initially built in 1916 as a separate structure, and sometime in the 1920s it was connected to the east side of the house. During this time, the house was further enlarged by also adding two rooms to both the first and second floors at the south end of the structure. When documented for the MIHP, there were two bedrooms, a hall, and a bathroom on the second floor; because what at one time had been a third bedroom was converted into the bathroom.

The house faces west and is set on a brick pier foundation that has been infilled with cinderblocks, with the roof on a north/south axis. Doric columns support the porch that extends across the entire front of the house, and the porch has been enclosed with glass. Vinyl siding covers the original weatherboards, and there are asphalt shingles on the roof. When surveyed for the MIHP, the house consisted of a “two-story, five-bay main block with a one-story kitchen now attached by an enclosed hyphen on the east elevation”⁵¹ and throughout the house the heart pine floors were exposed. The kitchen also has gable roof and the modern, three-sided, bay window on the north side replaced two small windows. On the kitchen’s east is a small “shed roof addition.” A modern sliding glass door provides access from the south side of the kitchen to a side porch that extends the full width of the kitchen and the hyphen. There is a seamed metal roof on the hyphen, or hall, with single six-over-six sash window. A carport is on the south side of this side porch.

According to the MIHP:

The north parlor is accessible through a pair of French doors. The original window and door moldings with bull’s eye corner blocks remain in place here. The partition wall between the hall and the south parlor has been removed. The narrow stair to the second floor is located in the southeast corner of the south parlor. Only four steps of the open string stair are visible. The remainder of the stair is enclosed.⁵²

A central, partially glazed entrance door is on the front of the house, with a pair of two-over-two sash windows with wide, plain surrounds on both the north and south sides of the front door. Across the second floor are five six-over-six sash windows with louvered shutters.

⁴⁷ MIHP SM-468, Howard J. Chesser House

⁴⁸ MIHP SM-143, St. George Island Survey District

⁴⁹ MIHP SM-143, St. George Island Survey District

⁵⁰ MIHP SM-468, Howard J. Chesser House

⁵¹ MIHP SM-468, Howard J. Chesser House

⁵² MIHP SM-468, Howard J. Chesser House

The north side of the main area of the house is “a blind gable end finished with cornice returns” which are “trimmed with decorative brackets.”⁵³ A brick chimney from the interior extends from the roof at this north end of the house.

On the east side of the main section, as described in the MIHP, there are:

...two six-over-six sash windows to the north of the hyphen and by a door to the south of the hyphen. The door provides access between the main block and a porch attached to the south side of the kitchen. The second floor of the main block is pierced by five six-over-six sash windows. The gable end of the kitchen is blind and finished with cornice returns. A cinderblock chimney stands against the exterior of the wing. An interior brick chimney pierces the roof ridgeline of the wing at the east end.⁵⁴

The two modern outbuildings are both one-story structures clad with artificial siding and have gable roofs. They are located east of the house.

SM-469: George J. Trice House

Oriented towards St. George Creek rather than an interior road, the George J. Trice House is among the structures that demonstrates the importance of the water for the residents of St. George Island during the nineteenth century. It is a “significant as a well-preserved example of the type of house constructed by Islanders...”⁵⁵

The MIHP notes that the house was probably built around 1870. The property is at the end of an unpaved road on the east side of Route 249, and the Trice House is the only structure on the property. It is a two-story, frame structure that is supported by a brick pier foundation.

Although the exterior has been modernized with vinyl siding and enlarged with a modern one-story addition to the south side, the roof on the original section of the house is covered with seamed metal and the exterior otherwise remains largely intact. As noted in the MIHP listing,

According to the current owner, the kitchen wing was detached from the house at the time of their purchase in 1978. They attached the kitchen to the rear elevation of the house in the late 1970s. The current owner noted that a street, called “Waterside,” extended in front of the house paralleling {sic} the St. George Creek shore at one time. No evidence of this road remains today due to erosion.⁵⁶

On the north side of the kitchen “addition” is a small one-light window. “A slightly shorter hyphen, which connects the ell to the kitchen, is pierced by a small two-over-two sash window. The ell is pierced by one two-over-two sash window and a two-light-over-two-panel door with a two-light transom window on the first floor.”⁵⁷ There are no doors or windows on the west side of the kitchen wing. “The roofs of the rear kitchen wing and hyphen are covered with asphalt shingles.”⁵⁸ Sliding glass doors from the kitchen provide access to an exterior wood deck.

There is a two-over-two sash window with louvered shutters on the second floor of the south side of the house. A two-story ell extends to the west, with the first floor being obscured by a one-story,

⁵³ MIHP SM-468, Howard J. Chesser House

⁵⁴ MIHP SM-468, Howard J. Chesser House

⁵⁵ MIHP SM-469, George J. Trice House

⁵⁶ MIHP SM-469, George J. Trice House

⁵⁷ MIHP SM-469, George J. Trice House

⁵⁸ MIHP SM-469, George J. Trice House

shed roof addition that has a modern bay window with louvered shutters. On the second floor of the ell are two two-over-two sash windows with louvered shutters. “An interior brick chimney pierces the roof ridgeline at the west end of this wing.”⁵⁹

A screened porch extends across the entire front of the first floor of the house. The porch has a shed roof that is supported by cinderblock piers. The front entrance to the house is a six-light-over-four-panel door with a three-light transom window. “The door is flanked by two two-over-two sash windows with louvered shutters.”⁶⁰ Across the second story are also two-over-two sash windows with louvered shutters. There is also an interior brick chimney at the north end of the house, and the roofline is broken by a central cross gable.

SM-470: Millard B. Twilley House

Built by local carpenters David McKenny and Captain Ben Brown and his brother Ed Brown during the 1920s, the Millard B. Twilley house is a small late-Victorian cottage located on the east side of Thomas Road. Island Creek flows next to the eastern border of the property. Across the street, the Browns and McKenny also built an almost identical house for Raymond Twilley, and a “third house of the same design was built around the same time for Russell Henderson on a lot that faces the Island Creek.”⁶¹

The Millard Twilley House is a one-story, frame structure with an unfinished attic that originally consisted of a center hall, double pile plan and hipped roof. The house faces west and is set on concrete piers, which have been infilled with cinderblocks. The exterior is well-preserved with weatherboard siding, although the roof has asphalt shingles. Exposed rafter feet project from the roofline. Modern one-over-one sash windows were installed to replace all the original six-over-one sash windows.

Renovations that have occurred over time include removal of the partition wall between the south parlor east kitchen as well as the hall. A staircase has been added into the hallway providing access to the now finished attic space. And, “[e]xcept for the molded surrounds and corner-blocks that comprise the window architrave in the northwest room, most of the original interior finishes have been replaced. Some of the plaster walls remain intact.”⁶²

Across the front of the house is a porch that “is supported by square posts with square bases and capitals that are trimmed with decorative moldings. The posts are also finished with scroll sawn brackets.”⁶³ In the center is a six-panel door, which is a replacement, although the transom is original. On either side of the front door are one-over-one sash windows with louvered shutters on either side. As described in the MIHP listing;

The roofline of the house is broken by a cross gable sheathed with scalloped and square-butt shingles. A shuttered one-over-one sash window, which was probably inserted to replace an earlier diamond pane window, lights the cross gable.⁶⁴

The entrance on the south side of the house is a modern door, and two one-over-one sash windows. “The two eastern bays of this elevation are obscured from view by an enclosed porch.”⁶⁵

⁵⁹ MIHP SM-469, George J. Trice House
⁶⁰ MIHP SM-469, George J. Trice House
⁶¹ MIHP SM-470, Millard B. Twilley House
⁶² MIHP SM-470, Millard B. Twilley House
⁶³ MIHP SM-470, Millard B. Twilley House
⁶⁴ MIHP SM-470, Millard B. Twilley House
⁶⁵ MIHP SM-470, Millard B. Twilley House

A small one-story wing was added on the east side. Initially constructed sometime during 1960s the first stage of this addition was for the laundry, furnace, and bathroom. “The modern extension, pierced by a door and a shuttered tri-partite window, was built in 1987. A skylight pierces the roof slope of the addition.”⁶⁶ Further documentation of the Millard Twilley House in the MIHP states that:

The east elevation of the main block is pierced by two one-over-one sash windows with louvered shutters. The roofline of the east elevation is broken by a flush cross gable lighted by a pair of one-over-one sash windows. The gable may have been added in 1987... The north elevation is pierced by two one-over-one sash windows with louvered shutters. A cinderblock chimney projects from the north roof slope.⁶⁷

Of the three outbuildings on the property, only the oldest is notable. This is the milk house because it dates to the construction of the dwelling. The milk house is a small frame structure with a door on the north side. It is set on a cement pad and faces north with the principal gable oriented on an east/west axis. “A decorative louvered ventilation shaft projects from the center of the roof ridgeline.”⁶⁸ There is weatherboard siding on the exterior, and the roof has asphalt shingles. The other two outbuildings consist of a “rectangular structure sheathed with plywood and roofed with asphalt shingles”⁶⁹ and a two-car garage that was constructed in 1987.

SM-471: Walter F. Crowder House

It is estimated that the Walter F. Crowder House was more than likely built around 1890. “Based on land record research it seems likely that Walter Crowder built the dwelling for his family.”⁷⁰ It is located on the east side of Thomas Road, with the rear yard of the property extending to the shoreline of Island Creek. Other residential lots are located to the north and south.

The Walter F. Crowder House has a distinctive plan that consists of two front rooms accessible by means of two separate exterior entry doors; a design similar to the William Biscoe House (SM-473) which is noted as being “significant as a late, one-story variation of a particular St. George Island house type.”⁷¹ A brick pier foundation supports the Crowder House, which has been modernized with asphalt shingles on the roof and the original weatherboard siding has also been covered with asphalt shingles.

The west elevation of the Crowder House is the front of the house, on which there are:

two central fifteen-light entrance doors on the first floor. These doors are sheltered by a shed roof addition that has been enclosed with glass windows. One two-over-two sash shuttered window flanks this pair of doors on both the north and south sides of the entrance. The second floor is pierced by four two-over-two sash shuttered windows.⁷²

The main section of the house has two rooms on each of the first and second floors. The two rooms on the first floor are separated by a partition wall, with a doorway at the east end of the wall allowing access between the “north and south parlor.” At the west end of the wall is an enclosed stairway to the second floor of house. “It appears that both the north and south ends of the house were originally fitted with interior brick chimneys.”⁷³

⁶⁶ MIHP SM-470, Millard B. Twilley House

⁶⁷ MIHP SM-470, Millard B. Twilley House

⁶⁸ MIHP SM-470, Millard B. Twilley House

⁶⁹ MIHP SM-470, Millard B. Twilley House

⁷⁰ MHIP SM-471, Walter F. Crowder House

⁷¹ MIHP SM-473, William Biscoe House

⁷² MHIP SM-471, Walter F. Crowder House

⁷³ MHIP SM-471, Walter F. Crowder House

The original two-story, four-bay frame structure was enlarged by the addition of two one-story wings on the west side of the main block of the house, both of which are on cinderblock piers. The small wing was previously a bathroom with a single window. The kitchen is in the larger one-story addition, which has a gable roof from which a stove pipe extends. A porch extends across the first floor of the kitchen wing, and there is a four-light-over-three panel entrance door and two two-over-two sash shuttered windows on the north side of the kitchen addition.

On the east side of the original structure is a single two-over-two sash window. There are four two-over-two sash windows on the second floor of the main block of the Crowder House.

When the property was inspected for the listing in the MIHP, there was a sole outbuilding that was set on a cement pad. This particle board structure was simply a storage building at that time.

SM-472: Camp Merryelande

At the end of an unpaved road off of Camp Merryelande Road is where one will find Camp Merryelande. A pier from the beach extends into the Potomac River, which is the southern boundary of the camp.

The property that comprises this camp was acquired in the 1920s as two separate parcels by a married couple who resided in Washington, D.C. They established a hunting lodge and built a three-room cottage, a garage as well as various outbuildings. In 1937 the property was sold to St. Mary's Academy, which was a school based in Washington, D.C., operated by the Sisters of the Holy Cross.

This summer camp for girls opened in 1938 and had accommodations for approximately 55 campers. The original structures included an Administration building, four cabins, shower building, pump house, a dining room with accompanying kitchen, the recreation hall, tool shed, and the chapel. Local carpenters, David McKenny and Ed and Ben Brown built most of these buildings.

The cabins have been winterized and equipped with kitchenettes and expanded to comprise five such "cottages" along with a bunk house and there are two small storage structures. An area for tent camping is within the woods to the east of these camp buildings.

The MIHP listing identifies the five cottages as #1, #4, #7, #8 and #9; but does not explain the reasons for the gaps between the numbering, leaving one to question whether there were additional cottages 2, 3, 5 & 6 and what became of them.

Cottages #1, #7, #8, and #9 are all one-story structures that face north. The principal gable is oriented on an east/west axis. The exteriors are board and batten siding, with asphalt shingles on the roof. They all have been updated with modern doors and windows.

Cottage #4, located east of the office building, is also one-story. Its frame structure is sheathed with weatherboard siding and roofed with tar paper, which also has been updated with modern doors and window. Unlike the other cottages, #4 was divided into two units, each with an exterior wood deck. In the MIHP listing the two-story office is identified as the being the centerpiece of the campground since it is the largest structure. It functions as both the campground office as well as the caretaker's residence. Although the MIHP listing is not clear as to whether this office is the original 1938 administration building from when the camp was operated by the Sisters of the Holy Cross, it does

document this building as follows:

The Office faces north with the principal gable oriented on an east/west axis. The Office is supported by a cement pier foundation and sheathed with cement and German siding. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles and the roofline is finished with exposed rafter feet.

The north (main) elevation of the Office consists of a central, gable roof vestibule that projects from the main block of the building. The vestibule is pierced by a one-light-over-three-panel door flanked by a single light window on either side. The main block of the Office is pierced by two pairs of shuttered three-light casement windows and one two-over-two sash window with shutters. The second floor is pierced by four pairs of shuttered casement windows. A one-story, shed roof addition extends to the west of the main block.

The west elevation of the shed roof addition is pierced by a one-light window. The second floor of the main block gable end is pierced by a pair of shuttered three-light casement windows.

The south elevation of the Office is completely obscured by a two-story, screened porch. The first floor is pierced by a series of windows and a central door. An exterior stair provides access between the first and second floors of the porch. The second floor is pierced by three shuttered windows and a door.

The east elevation is pierced by two pairs of three-light casement windows on the second floor.⁷⁴

To the north of the cottages is the one-story bunk house. It is a frame structure with board and batten siding and asphalt shingles. The bunk house faces east with the principal gable oriented on an east/west axis. A screened porch along the east elevation extends across the first floor, on which there is a central door and four shuttered window openings. A louvered vent is on the eave. The west elevation is identical to the east side of the structure. Both the north and south sides also have a door and series of windows. The bunk house interior is divided into two separate units. Each unit is one large room with bunkbeds along with facilities for cooking comprised of a stove, sink, and refrigerator, and an accompanying bathroom.

The recreation hall stands south of the row of cottages. Located close to the water, it faces south with the principal gable oriented on an east/west axis. The main elevation is its south side on which there is a central door and six windows fitted with screens and shutters. A screened porch extends across the first floor of the entire south side. There are two shuttered windows on the east side, with a louvered vent in the eave of this gable end. The west elevation is identical to the east side of the building. On the north side is another door along with six shuttered windows.

The “Rec Hall” is a large one-story building with weatherboard siding and asphalt shingles. In the MIHP listing, it is documented as follows:

The interior is one large room, five bays in width, on the west end of the building and a smaller room, two bays in width, on the east end. Originally, the larger room was used for Sunday mass. It is still used by guests of the campground for lectures, church services, and meetings. The smaller room is currently occupied by ping pong tables.⁷⁵

The bath house is used by tent campers and is divided into male and female sections. It has weatherboard siding and asphalt shingles.

At the western border of the property are two unoccupied buildings.

⁷⁴ MIHP SM-472, Camp Merryelande

⁷⁵ MIHP SM-472, Camp Merryelande

Camp Merryelande was closed as a girls camp in 1963, although it remained in use by the Sisters of the Holy Cross as a retreat from 1963 to 1981. The Sisters sold the property in 1981. Subsequent purchasers turned the property into a year-round campground. “Although most of the original buildings have been significantly altered, Camp Merryelande remains the only St. Mary’s County property that continues to serve as a campground.”⁷⁶

SM-473: William Biscoe House

The William Biscoe House is found at the terminus of an unpaved road that stems off from Ball Point Road.

St. George Creek borders the property along the northern and eastern boundaries. The creek has considerably eroded the shoreline of a dwelling lot that was originally located east of the Biscoe House, considerably changing the setting of the property over time.

The Biscoe House is little altered and in good condition. The house faces to the south and this front “elevation is pierced by two doors and two windows.”⁷⁷ With respect to the main elevation of the house, the MIHP form further notes that:

Two five-panel doors serve as the central bays, flanked on the east and west by a shuttered two-over-two sash window. A screened porch, supported by Doric columns, extends across the first floor of the house. The roofline of this elevation is broken by a central cross gable sheathed with sawtooth shingles and pierced by a diamond shaped window. The center of the roof ridgeline is pierced by an interior brick chimney.⁷⁸

A cement pier foundation supports this one-story frame structure. Modern features include weatherboard siding and asphalt shingles.

Constructed around 1925, the Biscoe House “is significant as a late, one-story variation of a particular St. George Island house type. The plan of the house, consisting of two front rooms each accessible by means of a separate entrance door, is typical of a handful of houses found on the island.”⁷⁹ In the William Biscoe House, the parlor occupied one of the front rooms – which was the on the west side – and the eastern front room was a bedroom. “Notably, there is no access between these two front rooms.”⁸⁰

On the east wall of the parlor is a chimney stack, where originally there was a kerosene stove. A door on the north side of the parlor leads to the dining room. A hall behind the other front room, which was the bedroom, leads to the kitchen, where the second of two kerosene stoves that originally heated the house is located. At the time of MIHP documentation, hardwood floors were still in place throughout the house.

The east side of the house consists of “the gable end of the main block as the southern bay and the longitudinal elevation of the rear wing as the northern bay.”⁸¹ There’s a two-over-two sash window as well as a six-over-six sash window on the end of the southern gable. Both windows are shuttered. On the eave is a small three-over-three sash window and a louvered vent. As described in the MIHP documentation,

⁷⁶ MIHP SM-472, Camp Merryelande
⁷⁷ MIHP SM-473, William Biscoe House
⁷⁸ MIHP SM-473, William Biscoe House
⁷⁹ MIHP SM-473, William Biscoe House
⁸⁰ MIHP SM-473, William Biscoe House
⁸¹ MIHP SM-473, William Biscoe House

The longitudinal wing is pierced by a four-light-over-two-panel entrance door. An interior brick chimney pierces the ridgeline of the longitudinal roof where it joins the main block of the house.

...and,

The west elevation of the longitudinal wing is pierced by a pair of large shuttered one-over-one sash windows.⁸²

The north side of the house is comprised of a one-story gable end, on which there is a singled six-over-six sash window that is also shuttered. There is a hand pump adjacent to this side of the Biscoe House.

When documented for listing in the MIHP, there were three outbuildings on the property, all located to the north of the Biscoe House. The outbuildings consisted of a one-story storage shed, a privy, and a garage.

⁸² MIHP SM-473, William Biscoe House



Figure A-1: Locations of Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties on St. George Island.

Appendix B: Related Planning Programs and Initiatives

Related Planning Programs and Initiatives

Figures are located at the end of this section.

County-Level Resource Protection and Conservation

As provided in their Comprehensive Plan, St. Mary's County has articulated its goal to "[p]reserve the natural, historical and cultural heritage of the County in conjunction with economic and social well-being to maintain and enhance the quality of life."¹ The County's Comprehensive Plan lays out the specific policies, objectives, and action strategies that it will seek to implement in order to maintain and enhance the quality of life in St. Mary's County so it remains an attractive community in which to live, work, and recreate.²

The preservation and conservation goals, strategies, and objectives are addressed in Section 5.13 of the Resource Protection Element, which is Chapter 5 of the *St. Mary's County, Maryland, Comprehensive Plan, Quality of Life in St. Mary's County – A Strategy 21st Century* that was adopted by the Board of County Commissioners on March 23, 2010. Implementation of this preservation goal is through the development and maintenance of an "inventory of natural, recreational, historical, and cultural resources in the County (noting the physical, biological and cultural connections between public and private sites) as a resource for tourism and recreation; education and research; preservation and conservation; and economic development."³ Among the actions to accomplish this include identification of historically significant properties eligible for the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties (MIHP), identification of archaeological sites prior to disturbance of a site, and protection and preservation of historic and archaeological materials. The Comprehensive Plan recognizes that this requires inventorying historic resources within the County, which includes archaeological sites as well as cemeteries and burial grounds. And, not only crafting protective measures but also enforcement of such regulations. Historic preservation action steps include designating historic sites and districts, encouraging compatible development in such designated historic districts through performance standards, promoting adaptive reuse of historic structures, and, if it occurs, then a delay of demolition to provide the opportunity to document historic structures (defined as fifty years or older in the Comprehensive Plan) prior to being razed.⁴

The County's Comprehensive Plan also recognizes that historic preservation presents economic opportunities, especially as it relates to tourism. Therefore, additional action strategies recommended by the Comprehensive Plan include developing heritage tourism resources, implementation of scenic byway management plans, offering local tax incentives for historic preservation, promotion of financial investments in heritage resources, education and public awareness of historic and cultural preservation, supporting all levels (private, public, local, regional, state, and federal) of heritage programs including the National Register of Historic Places and the MIHP, various grant programs for the preservation and restoration of historic structures and properties, along with maintaining the County's Certified Local Government status through the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT), and the implementation of the Southern Maryland Heritage Plan with the other Southern Maryland Counties and state and federal partners.

¹ St. Mary's, Maryland, Comprehensive Plan, "Quality of Life in St. Mary's County – A Strategy for the 21st Century – Prepared and adopted in accordance with Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland," Adopted: March 23, 2010, Effective: April 6, 2010, Chapter 5.13.1 p. 5-23.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid, Section 5.13.1.A.i.a; p. 5-23.

⁴ Ibid, Section 5.13.1.A.i.a; p. 5-23 to 5-24.

St. Mary's County has been a Certified Local Government since 2015⁵. Certified Local Governments (CLG) are jointly administered by the National Park Service and State Historic Preservation Offices. The program recognizes local jurisdictions that have made a special commitment to preservation. Its enabling legislation is found in the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (54 USC 300100 et seq.).⁶

Each state has *Procedures for Certification* that may establish additional requirements for becoming a CLG. The National Park Service requires that:

A Certified Local Government must meet the following minimum goals:

- Establish a qualified historic preservation commission;
- Enforce appropriate State or local legislation for the designation and protection of historic properties. In most cases this is done in the form of a local ordinance;
- Maintain a system for the survey and inventory of local historic resources; and
- Facilitate public participation in the local preservation, including participation in the National Register listing process.⁷

Maryland's CLG program is administered by the Maryland Historical Trust in partnership with the National Park Service. Recognition as a CLG in Maryland requires that the local government:

- Appoint a qualified historic preservation commission;
- Enact legislation for the designation and protection of historic properties;
- Maintain a system for the survey and inventory of historic properties; and
- Provide for adequate public participation in local historic preservation programs.⁸

The specific requirements, process for certification, and annual reporting criteria are available through MHT's *Maryland Certified Local Government Program Procedures Manual*.⁹ One of the benefits of being a Certified Local Government is the ability to apply for CLG subgrants available through MHT. A minimum of ten percent of the annual funding that MHT receives from the federal Historic Preservation Fund is awarded to CLG projects through the subgrants.¹⁰ Continued participation in the CLG program and its eligibility to seek grant funding and other benefits requires that "CLGs must satisfactorily perform both the responsibilities listed above, and those specifically delegated to it by MHT" which includes periodic evaluations.¹¹

The St. Mary's County Board of County Commissioners adopted a historic preservation plan on March 7, 2000, titled *Painting A Self Portrait: A Historic Preservation Plan for St. Mary's County*. Composed of five chapters and accompanied by informative appendices, the Historic Preservation Plan outlines the County's preservation framework, and explains the priorities and programs of the preservation organizations active in the County that includes federal agencies and non-profits. An account of the background efforts by individuals and groups for historic preservation in the County

⁵ St. Mary's County, Maryland, "Historic Preservation Commission Annual Report January – December 2020, A Certified Local Government." Reviewed and approved by the Historic Preservation Commission, January 28, 2021.

⁶ "Maryland Certified Local Government Program Procedures Manual." Revised 2019 (draft awaiting approval by National Park Service), Maryland Historical Trust, Maryland Department of Planning, <https://mht.maryland.gov/documents/PDF/grants/CLG-Procedures-Manual.pdf>. Accessed July 2021.

⁷ "Becoming a Certified Local Government (CLG)," National Park Service, <https://www.nps.gov/clg/become-clg.html>. Accessed June 20210.

⁸ "Maryland Certified Local Government Program Procedures Manual." Revised 2019 (draft awaiting approval by National Park Service), Maryland Department of Planning, Maryland Historical Trust, <https://mht.maryland.gov/documents/PDF/grants/CLG-Procedures-Manual.pdf>. Accessed July 2021.

⁹ <https://mht.maryland.gov/documents/PDF/grants/CLG-Procedures-Manual.pdf>. Accessed July 2021.

¹⁰ <https://mht.maryland.gov/documents/PDF/grants/CLG-Procedures-Manual.pdf>. Accessed July 2021, p. 10.

¹¹ <https://mht.maryland.gov/documents/PDF/grants/CLG-Procedures-Manual.pdf>. Accessed July 2021, p. 8.

is also chronicled in the Plan. A chapter is devoted to discussing the historical resources, events, and places that have contributed to defining the St. Mary's County, which establishes the framework for the chapter that presents the "possibilities of the future and the benefits that preservation has to offer the county's community."¹² In the concluding chapter there are eight goals and accompanying strategies. These goals are:

- Continuing survey, research, education, and public outreach activities;
- Continuing preservation planning and review;
- Pursuing financial and regulatory incentives to attract applicants to the local Historic District (HD) program;
- Formally adopt design guidelines for local Historic Districts;
- Pursue local easement and grant programming;
- Encourage identification and preservation of archaeological sites;
- Promote heritage tourism, greenways, and scenic roadways; and
- Outline criteria for public acquisition and maintenance of historic sites.¹³

The St. Mary's County Historic District Commission was created on June 4, 1975. However, due to subsequent public opposition it was disbanded in 1986. Subsequently, it was reestablished in 1993, and renamed to the St. Mary's County Historic Preservation Commission.¹⁴ In 2011, by Resolution No. 2011-22, the St. Mary's County Board of County Commissioners amended Chapter 162 of its County Code and "restated the establishment of St. Mary's County Historic Preservation Commission."

In the implementation of the County's Comprehensive Plan that was adopted in March of 2010, the County updated its zoning ordinance and maps, and on August 31, 2010, the St. Mary's County Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance was adopted by the Board of County Commissioners by Ordinance No. Z-10-02. Historic District Zoning is an overlay district as provided for in Chapter 42, Historic Landmarks and Districts Overlay (H), of Article 4 of the County's Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance. As described in Section 40.2 (Chapter 40 of Article 4 of the Zoning Ordinance), the Purpose of the Historic Landmarks and Districts Overlay is:

The Historic Landmarks and Districts Overlay implements Comprehensive Plan policies to recognize the unique contribution of St. Mary's County to state and national history, including recognition of the County's distinct rural historic landscape. This overlay promotes the conservation, preservation, protection, and enhancement of historic resources, including sites, structures, and districts significant in history, architecture, archaeology, or culture that serve as visible reminders of the County's heritage. This overlay district seeks to deter demolition, destruction, alteration, misuse, or neglect of historically, architecturally, archaeologically, or culturally significant sites or structures. By conserving historic resources, the district will preserve and enhance the quality of life and promote the economic prosperity and welfare of the County.

The criteria and process for designation of a historic landmark or historic district designation is provided for in Chapter 42 of the St. Mary's County Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance.

The St. George Island Survey District is MIHP SM-143, which is listed in the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties since "St. George Island is significant both because of its early history as a Jesuit property and because of its more recent history as a community dominated by families of

¹² Ranzetta, Kirk, Historic Sites Surveyor, in cooperation with St. Mary's County Department of Planning & Zoning, "Painting A Self Portrait: A Historic Preservation Plan for St. Mary's County," Approved March 7, 2000, p. iii.

¹³ Ibid, p. iii – iv.

¹⁴ St. Mary's County, Maryland, "Historic Preservation Commission Annual Report January – December 2020, A Certified Local Government." Reviewed and approved by the Historic Preservation Commission, January 28, 2021.

oystermen and river pilots.”¹⁵ Although, in addition to the MIHP Survey District, there are twelve individual sites on St. George Island that are also listed in the MIHP, the island is not a county zoning historic overlay district.

See Figure B-1 at the end of this document. Also, see Appendix A: Historic Architectural Resources of St. George Island for more detailed information on the MIHP Survey District and significant individual architectural resources.

St. Mary’s County Zoning

See Figure B-2 at the end of this document.

The enabling legislation for St. Mary’s County zoning is found in the Maryland Land Use Article, LAND USE Code Ann. § 1-401. The County has placed the majority of St. George Island in the Rural Preservation District. The purpose of the Rural Preservation District (RPD) (Section 31.1 of Chapter 31 of the Zoning Ordinance) is as follows:

The regulations of Rural Preservation Districts are intended to foster agricultural, forestry, mineral resource extraction, and aquacultural uses and protect the land base necessary to support these activities. Low density residential development in this type of district is permitted subject to performance standards that maintain the rural character of the district in recognition of the fact that a full range of public facilities is not provided or planned. The farmer has the right to farm without being restricted by neighboring residential areas. Restricted hours of operation for farm equipment, restricted odor-producing fertilizers, or mandatory noise reductions may not be imposed on farmers in an RPD zoning district. The general intent of the district is to encourage farming without undue burden on the landowner. In accordance with these intentions, the following provisions for the protection of agricultural uses will apply:

- (1) Any farm use of land is permitted.
- (2) Operation, at any time, of machinery used in farm production or the primary processing of agricultural products is permitted.
- (3) Normal agricultural activities and operations in accordance with good husbandry practices, which do not cause bodily injury or directly endanger human health, are permitted and preferred activities, including activities that may produce normal agriculture related noise and odors.
- (4) The sale of farm products produced on the farm where the sales are made is permitted.

A few parcels near the northern tip of St. George Island are in the Commercial Marine District (CM), the purpose of which is (Section 31.16 of Chapter 31 of the Zoning Ordinance):

The Commercial Marine District provides and protects shoreline sites for a full range of marine sales and services, including marinas, dry boat storage, boat-yards, boat and equipment sales and rentals, marine-related retail sales, yacht clubs, visitor accommodations, food and beverage sales and eating and drinking establishments.

Critical Areas

See Figures B-3 and B-4 at the end of this document.

¹⁵ MIHP Capsule Summary, SM-143, St. George Island Survey District, St. George Island.

The Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Protection Program was enacted by the Maryland General Assembly in 1984 to protect the resource that is the Chesapeake Bay from the adverse impacts of intense development by limiting and restricting the development of land within 1000 feet of tidal influence. The Critical Area Law (Natural Resources Article, Title 8, Subtitle 18) established a “Resource Protection Program for the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays and their tributaries by fostering more sensitive development activity for certain shorelines area so as to minimize damage to water quality and natural habitats.”¹⁶ The Critical Area program is implemented in a cooperative manner between the Maryland Critical Area Commission and its staff and local governments with jurisdictions that include tidal waters. The local governments adopt Critical Area Regulations that are consistent with the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR), Title 27, and that are approved by the Critical Area Commission. The intent is that the criteria for activities within the Critical Area is fairly uniform throughout the state. All land within Critical Areas is regulated by state law or local Critical Area Programs, with most development approvals and enforcement occurring at the local level.

The St. Mary’s County Critical Area Program was adopted on March 27, 1990. The County’s Critical Area designations are comprised of the following three districts, which are shown on the official Zoning Maps:

- Intensely Developed Areas (IDA);
- Limited Development Areas (LDA), and
- Resource Conservation Areas (RCA).

These are overlay zones placed on top of the base underlying zoning districts with their accompanying regulations, such that the Critical Area Overlay zones comprise another layer of land use regulations for these areas.¹⁷

All of St. George Island is overlaid by the Critical Area and is either in the RCA or LDA designation. None of the island is in the Critical Area IDA Overlay zone. Generally, only agricultural and residential uses are permitted within the RCA and the density is one dwelling unit per 20 acres, such that this limitation sufficiently restricts development to preserve land and habitat and protect water quality. Within the LDA the permitted residential density or non-residential intensity is governed by the underlying zoning. State tidal wetlands cannot be counted for purpose of density calculations, however, on-site private tidal wetlands and nontidal wetlands may be used for density calculations in accordance with provisions of the County’s zoning ordinance. In addition to a myriad of regulations designed to prevent degradation in water quality from development of the lands in these LDA Critical Areas, there are also impervious coverage limitation ranging from 15% to 25% depending on the size of the parcel, with smaller properties allowed to have a greater degree of imperviousness than larger.

State-Level Resource Protection and Conservation

There are several land preservation tools in Maryland that are utilized in St. Mary’s County that preserve the land by extinguishing development rights and placing the land under a perpetual easement. All of these programs are implemented in cooperation with willing landowners, and the property remains in private ownership subject to the provisions of the individual Deed of Conservation Easement. These are briefly described below and include:

¹⁶ “Critical Area 101 & Local Project Review,” Local Planner Training Information, Critical Area Planning for Local Planners, PowerPoint Presentation, <https://dnr.maryland.gov/criticalarea/Documents/CriticalArea101-LocalProjectReview.pdf>. Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Critical Area Commission. Accessed June 2021.

¹⁷ “The St. Mary’s County Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance,” Adopted August 31, 2010, Effective September 14, 2010, last Amended December 28, 2016, Chapter 41 Chesapeake Bay Critical Area (IDA, LDA, RCA), St. Mary’s County, Maryland, <https://www.stmarys.com/docs/CZO.pdf>. Accessed June 2021.

- Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation which is managed through the Maryland Department of Agriculture; and,
- Administered by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) are Maryland's Rural Legacy Program, the Maryland Environmental Trust conservation easements, and Maryland's Program Open Space (POS) Stateside conservation easements. Fee-simple property acquisitions by the Maryland DNR are also implemented through POS.

Easements can be drafted to suit a specific property and to delineate specific terms and rights. The sale or donation of an easement may offer reduced property and estate taxes since the development rights are extinguished and land uses are restricted.

Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation

The Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) that the Maryland General Assembly established in 1977 preserves prime farmland and woodlands in perpetuity through the voluntary purchase of development rights. MALPF is part of the Maryland Department of Agriculture, and its mission is “to preserve productive farmland and woodland for the continued production of food and fiber for all of Maryland’s citizens (statutory goal); to curb the expansion of random urban development (statutory goal); to help curb the spread of urban blight and deterioration (statutory goal); to help protect agricultural land and woodland as open space (statutory goal); to protect wildlife habitat (ancillary goal); and to enhance the environmental quality of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries (ancillary goal).”¹⁸

The property must meet certain size, location, and soil requirements as the intent is to protect prime agricultural land as well as forested acres for timber production. Generally, the property must be at least 50-acres in size to be eligible for the MALPF program in order to create large contiguous blocks of prime productive lands so that farming remains a viable industry.

The program is administered at the local level and is competitive among the applications submitted for each easement cycle. Almost all of the individual parcels on St. George Island appear to be less than the typical 50-acre minimum threshold for a MALPF easement acquisition.

Rural Legacy Program

Created twenty years after MALPF, the goal of the Rural Legacy Program is the protection of areas that are rich in agricultural, natural, and cultural resources, thereby preserving working lands and resource-based economies. Administered through the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, the Rural Legacy Program provides the funding necessary to protect large contiguous tracts of farms, forests, and natural areas through cooperative grant agreements with the state and a local sponsor, such as land trusts or a county government. The Rural Legacy Program was created to discourage sprawl development and protect working lands (farms and forests) by retiring/extinguishing development rights. The land is encumbered by a perpetual easement, with the landowner retaining ownership to continue growing crops, or raising livestock, or maintaining the woodlands. Land conservation investments of the Rural Legacy Program are targeted to protect the most ecologically valuable properties that most directly impact the Chesapeake Bay and local waterway health.

¹⁸ “Our Mission,” Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation, <https://a.maryland.gov/malpf/Pages/Overview.aspx>. Accessed June 2021.

Potential easement acquisitions are brought to the Rural Legacy Program by the local Sponsors. Each local Sponsor has criteria for evaluating and ranking properties from interested landowners in order to determine which are listed in their annual grant applications that are submitted to the Rural Legacy Program for funding of the easement acquisition. To be eligible for the Rural Legacy Program, the property must be located within a geographically designated Rural Legacy Area (RLA).

Although there are two Rural Legacy Areas in St. Mary's County, neither encompass St. George Island. The Huntersville RLA is located on the northern end of St. Mary's County and includes approximately twelve miles of shoreline along the Patuxent River. The Patuxent Tidewater Land Trust is the local Sponsor for the Huntersville RLA. Land preservation in the Mattapany RLA, which encompasses land on the peninsular portion of St. Mary's County south of Lexington Park, serves to create an open space buffer to the Naval Air Station Patuxent River and Webster Field. The local Sponsor for the Mattapany RLA is the Southern Maryland Resource Conservation & Development.¹⁹

Program Open Space Stateside

In 1969, the Maryland General Assembly created Maryland's Program Open Space (POS), which is administered through the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and funded through a 0.5% property transfer tax on every real estate transaction in the state. POS has two components, a local grant component often referred to as local side POS, and the stateside component.

POS stateside easements preserve natural resources, working farms and woodlands, and watershed and wildlife protection through the voluntary acquisition of conservation easements. POS investments are targeted to protect the most ecologically valuable properties that most directly impact Chesapeake Bay and local waterway health. The "Program Open Space Targeting System" utilizes an ecological baseline to identify "Targeted Ecological Areas" by which properties are assessed, scored, and prioritized for easement acquisitions.

Another portion of Program Open Space Stateside funds are used for fee-simple acquisitions of high priority ecological, recreational, cultural, and historic sites. These land purchases are added to parks, forests, or fisheries and wildlife management areas. DNR acquires these types of properties to provide key Chesapeake Bay access points, trails connections, and in-holdings. Fee simple purchases are managed by the department as State Parks, Forests, and Wildlife and Fisheries Management Areas.

Local jurisdictions receive financial and technical assistance through the POS local side component for planning, acquisition, and/or development of recreation land or open space areas. Maryland DNR, through POS, also administers funds made available to local communities for open and recreational space by the Outdoor Recreation Land Loan of 1969 and from the Land and Water Conservation Fund of the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior.

Maryland Environmental Trust

The state's primary recipient of donated conservation easements in the Maryland Environmental Trust (MET). Established in 1967, MET's mission is to conserve, improve, stimulate, and perpetuate the aesthetic, natural, scenic, and cultural aspects of Maryland's environment. The Maryland Environmental Trust (MET) is a quasi-public body affiliated with the Maryland Department of

¹⁹ Land Acquisition and Planning, Maryland's Rural Legacy Areas," Maryland Department of Planning, <https://dnr.maryland.gov/land/Pages/RuralLegacy/All-Rural-Legacy-Areas.aspx> . Accessed June 2021.

Natural Resources and governed by a citizen board of trustees. The MET also includes a Land Trust Assistance Program that works closely with local land trusts and provides publications, training, technical assistance, and the option for holding joint easements. MET's work over the years has focused on open space and land preservation through its Conservation Easements Program.

Maryland Historical Trust

The Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) was established in 1961 and is a unit of the Maryland Department of Planning. MHT is governed by a 15-member Board of Trustees, comprised of the Governor, the Senate President, and the House Speaker or their designees, and twelve members appointed by the Governor.

MHT manages state and federal preservation programs, which includes serving as the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). In accordance with Section 101 of the National Historic Preservation Act, the SHPO implements federal preservation programs at the state level. This consists of reviewing nominations for historic designation through the National Register of Historic Places, surveying and recognizing historic properties, and ensuring that federal and state projects avoid, reduce, or mitigate harm to archaeological and historic resources that are listed or eligible for listing in the National Register through the consultation process known as "Section 106" reviews.²⁰

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 (Public Law 102-575) established a comprehensive program to preserve the historical and cultural foundations of the nation. The historic preservation review process required by Section 106 is outlined in the regulations (36 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) Part 800, Protecting Historic Properties) issued by Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP). The ACHP is an independent federal agency established by the NHPA in 1966 to promote the preservation, enhancement, and productive use of the nation's historic resources. Rather than mandating preservation, the purpose of the Section 106 review process is to ensure that the historic value is considered during project planning and decision-making, and then to seek ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate any adverse effects to historic properties.²¹

Furthermore, MHT supports and promotes heritage tourism development, architectural and archaeological surveys, property acquisition and rehabilitation, educational programs, and accepting and monitoring easements on historic places.

Property listed on, or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, or located in a locally certified historic district, may be eligible to donate an easement donation to MHT to the Trust. In addition to protecting historic structures by conveying an easement to MHT, and conservation easement on the land preserves the historic setting and integrity of the surrounding landscape.

As part of its mission, MHT works with partner agencies and organizations along with volunteers in identifying, evaluating, protecting, preserving, and interpreting the state's heritage. This includes surveying and documenting archaeological sites, issuing permits for archaeology, and offering programs to encourage public participation in archaeology, as well as technical assistance and grant funds. MHT maintains archaeological data in Medusa, which is the state's online cultural resource information system. MHT's archaeology programs are organized into terrestrial archaeology (land-based survey and lab research), and maritime archaeology (which focuses on underwater/submerged cultural resources in state waters).²²

²⁰ "Historic Preservation Review for State and Federal Projects," Maryland Department of Planning, Maryland Historical Trust, <https://mht.maryland.gov/projectreview.shtml>. Accessed June 2021.

²¹ "Overview of Sections 106 & 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act," National Park Service, <https://www.nps.gov/dscw/cr-nhpa.htm>. Accessed June 2021.

²² "Archeology," Maryland Department of Planning, Maryland Historical Trust, <https://mht.maryland.gov/>

MHT's Research and Survey program takes the lead in identifying important historic resources through an investigative process that may include archival research, field survey of archaeological sites and historic structures, or analysis of the historic fabric. "While some research and survey projects are developed and undertaken by Trust staff, the majority are joint projects in partnership with local government agencies, private nonprofit organizations, or museums." The data collected is maintained in the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties, the Maryland Historical Trust library, and is also incorporated into MHT's Geographic Information System."²³

MHT also offers financial assistance in the form of tax credits for private commercial and residential rehabilitation projects for qualified historic properties; capital grants for "bricks-and-mortar" preservation projects; non-capital grants to support research, documentation, interpretation, and planning for historic properties and archaeological sites; as well as loans for "bricks-and-mortar" preservation projects that includes acquisition and rehabilitation.

The variety of historic preservation activities supported by grants administered by MHT include funding available through the Maryland Heritage Areas, the CLG, African American Heritage, and the Historic Preservation Capital as well as the Historic Preservation Non-Capital Grant Programs. There are different eligibility criteria for applicants and the types of projects that can be awarded funding, program requirements, application forms, deadlines, and process for each program. Therefore, MHT recommends contacting the appropriate MHT staff person prior to submitting an application.²⁴

The majority of historic preservation efforts and particularly the regulation is implemented at the local level through zoning and Historic District Commissions (HDC). MHT serves as a resource for local governments, including partnering with the Maryland Association of Historic District Commissions, to provide training and education.²⁵

Southern Maryland Heritage Area

St. Mary's County is part of the Southern Maryland Heritage Area (SMHAC), which also consists of substantial portions of Calvert and Charles Counties. The Maryland Heritage Areas Program is governed by the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA) and administered by the Maryland Historical Trust.

Each of the thirteen locally-designated Heritage Areas throughout the state have their own distinct focus or theme based on defining characteristics of that region. Targeted financial and technical assistance is available within these locally designated Heritage Areas.

The Southern Maryland Heritage Area Consortium (SMHAC) was formed as a Certified State Heritage Area in 2003. Identified as "Destination Southern Maryland" with the catchphrase of "Where Time & Tide Meet," its mission is "to enhance Southern Maryland through innovative heritage tourism experiences, comprehensive cultural and natural resource conservation, and excellence in educational opportunities."²⁶

archeology.shtml. Accessed June 2021.

²³ "Research and Survey," Maryland Department of Planning, Maryland Historical Trust https://mht.maryland.gov/research_survey.shtml. Accessed June 2021.

²⁴ "Grant," Maryland Department of Planning, Maryland Historical Trust, <https://mht.maryland.gov/grants.shtml>. Accessed June 2021.

²⁵ "Planning," Department of Planning, Maryland Historical Trust, <https://mht.maryland.gov/planning.shtml>. Accessed June 2021.

²⁶ "Our Mission," Destination Southern Maryland, <https://destinationsouthernmaryland.com/support/>. Accessed June 2021.

Within the SMHAC are specific areas that are targeted as key investment zones including the Piney Point/St. George Island Target Investment Zone.²⁷

Designation of the “Target Investment Zones” is intended to stimulate public investment in rehabilitation and reinvestment to improve the resources within the heritage area with the goal that it will that serves as a catalyst for further public and private investment. See Figure B-5 at the end of this document.

The Southern Maryland Heritage Tourism Management Plan also sets forth preservation and resource stewardship goals, articulated as follows:

Preservation and resource stewardship pertain to the protection, preservation, enhancement, and management of the natural, cultural, and historic resources within the heritage area for future generations. In general, these functions are the responsibility of the county and municipal governments, public entities, and private interests that control and manage buildings and land use. The Heritage Management Plan should encourage public and private organizations within the heritage region to recognize the value of historic resources, as well as the region’s natural settings and its recreational resources. The entity(s) responsible for implementing the plan should advocate enactment by responsible local government of measures for effective resource protection. In general, actions and strategies under this program will be aimed at enhancing the climate for preservation and rehabilitation of historic buildings and conservation of natural and cultural resources. These actions together preserve the setting which serves as a prerequisite for promoting heritage tourism in the region.

GOAL 1: Encourage the preservation and conservation of heritage resources Objectives:

1.1 Expand and promote heritage education, using natural and cultural resources within the region to communicate the importance of the resources to the quality of life for residents of Southern Maryland and to educate them about threats to those resources and opportunities for action.

1.2 Create an environment for a stronger public policy foundation to support resource preservation and conservation by broadening public understanding of the value of heritage resources.

1.3 Assist the counties, towns, and private interests in their efforts to protect, preserve, enhance, and manage the heritage resources of the region for future generations.

1.4 Encourage the adaptive reuse of historic sites and structures.

Federal Programs

The U.S. Department of the Interior, through the National Park Service, is the federal government’s lead agency for the conservation and preservation of the nation’s historic and cultural sites. The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 articulates the historic preservation responsibilities for federal agencies. The National Park Service oversees two federal designation programs. Properties in the National Historic Landmarks Program must possess a high level of historic integrity and are important to the history of the nation overall. The other program, the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) is administered in concert with the State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs).²⁸ The National Register includes districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects important for their significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, as well as culture. Properties

²⁷ “Southern Maryland Heritage Area Tourism Management Plan,” Prepared for the Southern Maryland Heritage Area Tourism Management Plan Steering Committee; By: Redman/Johnston Associates, Ltd., April 2003.

²⁸ “Preservation Programs: Overview of Preservation Programs,” National Park Service, National Historic Landmarks, <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalhistoriclandmarks/preservation-programs.htm#:~:text=Overview%20of%20Preservation%20Programs.%20The%20federal%20government%2C%20state,programs%20vary%2C%20designated%20sites%20must%20possess%20historic%20integrity>. Accessed July 2021.

listed in the National Register can have significance for a local community, the state, an Indian tribe, or the nation.²⁹

The National Park Service (NPS) offers grant programs for heritage preservation projects. This includes the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Water Trails Initiative, which provide assistance to projects that enhance education and interpretation of the Chesapeake Bay, increase public access, and conserve natural and cultural resource sites. In partnership with the Maryland Historical Trust, the National Park Service also administers designation programs, including the National Register of Historic Places.

Historic properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register may apply for grant funds for rehabilitation or restoration work. Funds may also be used to initiate short-term studies, surveys, planning, architectural, engineering, or other preconstruction evaluations. This requires encumbering the property with a perpetual historic easement that is conveyed to the MHT.

Although relevant federal funds are often channeled through state programs,³⁰ several other federal programs have funded and continue to support land and easement acquisition of historic sites. These include the U.S. Department of Transportation's Transportation Enhancement Program, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farmland Protection Program, and the Internal Revenue Code for qualified conservation contributions.³¹

American Battlefield Protection Program

The National Park Service's American Battlefield Protection Program (NPS ABPP) promotes the preservation and interpretation of these places. NPS ABPP administers four grant programs:

- Preservation Planning;
- Battlefield Land Acquisition;
- Battlefield Restoration; and
- Battlefield Interpretation grant programs.³²

At the direction of Congress, the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the National Park Service, prepared a Report to Congress on the Historic Preservation of Revolutionary War and War of 1812. This study identified 3,000 sites associated with the two wars, including sixty sites within the National Park System, for further analysis on the scale of significance for those sites. The results were listing 677 sites associated with events that had a "demonstrable influence on the course, conduct, and results of the Revolutionary War or the War of 1812."³³ This report also listed "Other Sites of Interest" to assist communities with identifying places with potential local connections to the Revolutionary War or War of 1812. St. George Island in St. Mary's County, Maryland is listed among these "Other Sites of Interest."

²⁹ "Overview of Sections 106 & 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act, National Park Service," <https://home.nps.gov/dscw/cr-nhpa.htm>. Accessed July 2021.

³⁰ "Public Consensus Building Plan for the South Mountain Battlefield American Battlefield Protection Program Grant Agreement No. 2287-17-012," prepared for Preservation Maryland; prepared by Hanbury Preservation Consulting and William & Mary Center for Archaeological Research; authors – Mary Ruffin Hanbury, and David W. Lewes; August 14, 2019, p. 31.

³¹ "Report to Congress on the Historic Preservation of Revolutionary and War of 1812 Sites in the United States." Prepared for The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate, The Committee on Resources, United States House of Representatives; Prepared by American Battlefield Protection Program, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, DC, September 2007.

³² "American Battlefield Protection Program," National Park Service, <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/2287/index.htm>. Accessed June 2021.

³³ "Report to Congress on the Historic Preservation of Revolutionary and War of 1812 Sites in the United States." Prepared for The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate, The Committee on Resources, United States House of Representatives; Prepared by American Battlefield Protection Program, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, DC, September 2007.

Private Programs and Initiatives

Preservation Maryland

In 1931, the Society for the Preservation of Maryland Antiquities (SPMA) was founded; and, as mentioned on its webpage, this was in part due to the focus on the commemorative activities associated with the bicentennial of George Washington's birth. The SPMA's initial focus in preserving the state's heritage was maintaining and operating several historic properties. As the 1980s approached, the board and membership reoriented the mission towards providing innovative funding, education, outreach, and advocacy for preservation. Concomitantly, the organization was renamed with the shortened Preservation Maryland.³⁴ Preservation Maryland's strategic and targeted efforts are:

- Advocacy: speaking up and making the case for the policies, programs and funding that makes preservation possible.
- Outreach & Education: support and empower preservation efforts statewide through coordination, training, and direct engagement via Maryland's Six-to-Fix.
- Funding: directly investing in preservation projects through their Heritage Fund and by working to secure additional private philanthropy in Maryland's historic resources.
- Property Redevelopment: making direct investments in historic places through the restoration, rehabilitation, and revitalization of historic structures and the communities in which they reside.
- Workforce Development: increasing opportunities for all Americans to enter the high-demand field of skilled traditional trades through the Campaign for Historic Trades.

Preservation Maryland also offers technical assistance to individuals and organizations in need of such resources in their endeavors to protect historic sites. Moreover, in continuing pursuit of its mission, Preservation Maryland also seeks to form effective partnership and capacity building.

American Battlefield Trust

Preserving significant battlefields is the mission of the American Battlefield Trust. These lands are protected in perpetuity through acquisition of conservation easements and fee simple transactions from willing landowners. The process commences with consulting the landmark studies prepared by the American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP), a National Park Service program (see above).

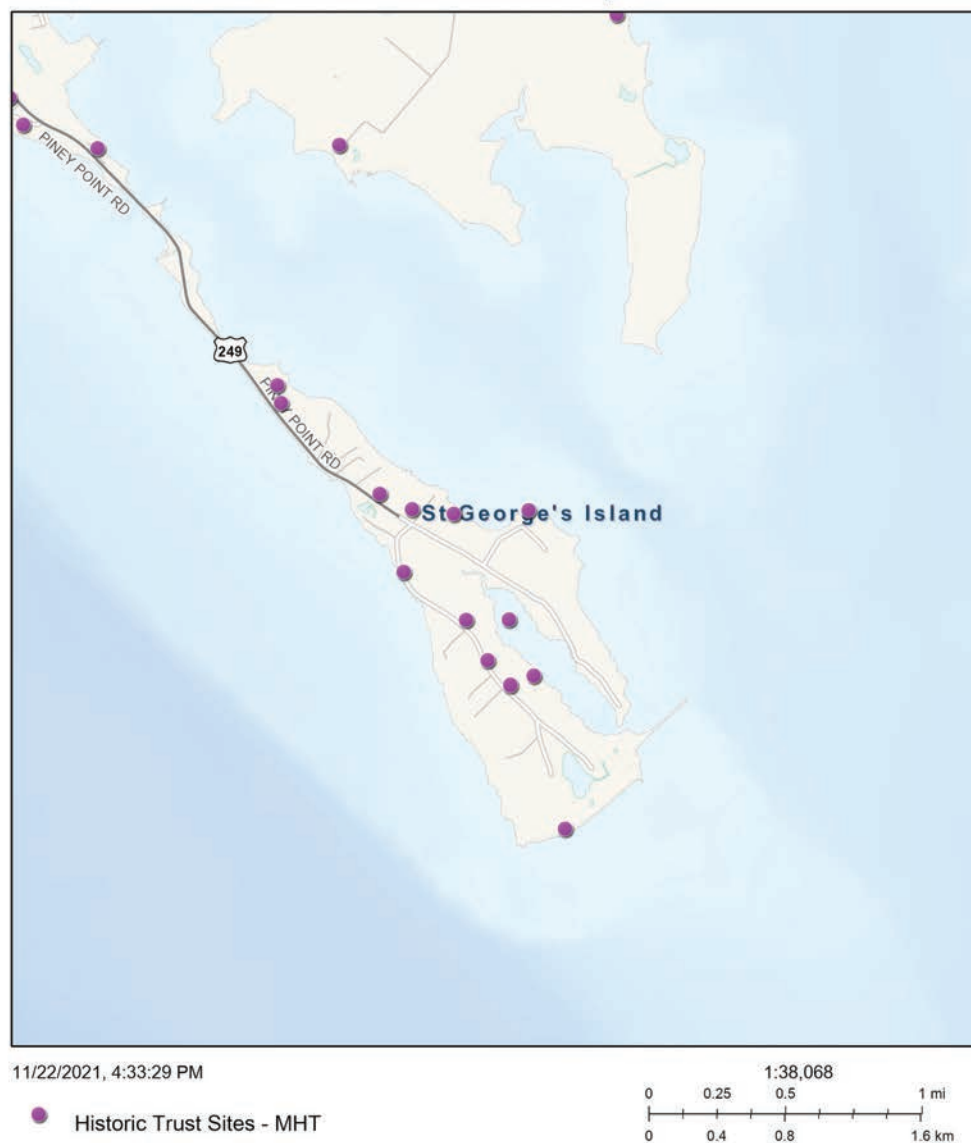
If a property is an ABPP-listed site, the American Battlefield Trust will locate it in relation to the historic battlefield landscape. If a property is within the recognized boundary of an eligible battlefield, then their next step is to "determine what conservation strategy is best suited to the project, recognizing that each opportunity presents a unique situation."³⁵

Land Trusts and Other Private Preservation & Conservation Efforts

Local land trusts can play a key role in land protection by serving as local sponsors of Rural Legacy Areas, partnering with MET, as well as through purchasing and directly accepting donations of land and easements that retire development rights. The land trusts that are active in St. Mary's County are the Southern Maryland Resource Conservation & Development, as well as the Patuxent Tidewater Land Trust.

³⁴ "75 Years with Preservation Maryland: Saving the Past, Shaping the Future," Preservation Maryland, <https://www.preservationmaryland.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/preservation-maryland-75th-anniversary-book.pdf>. Accessed July 2021.

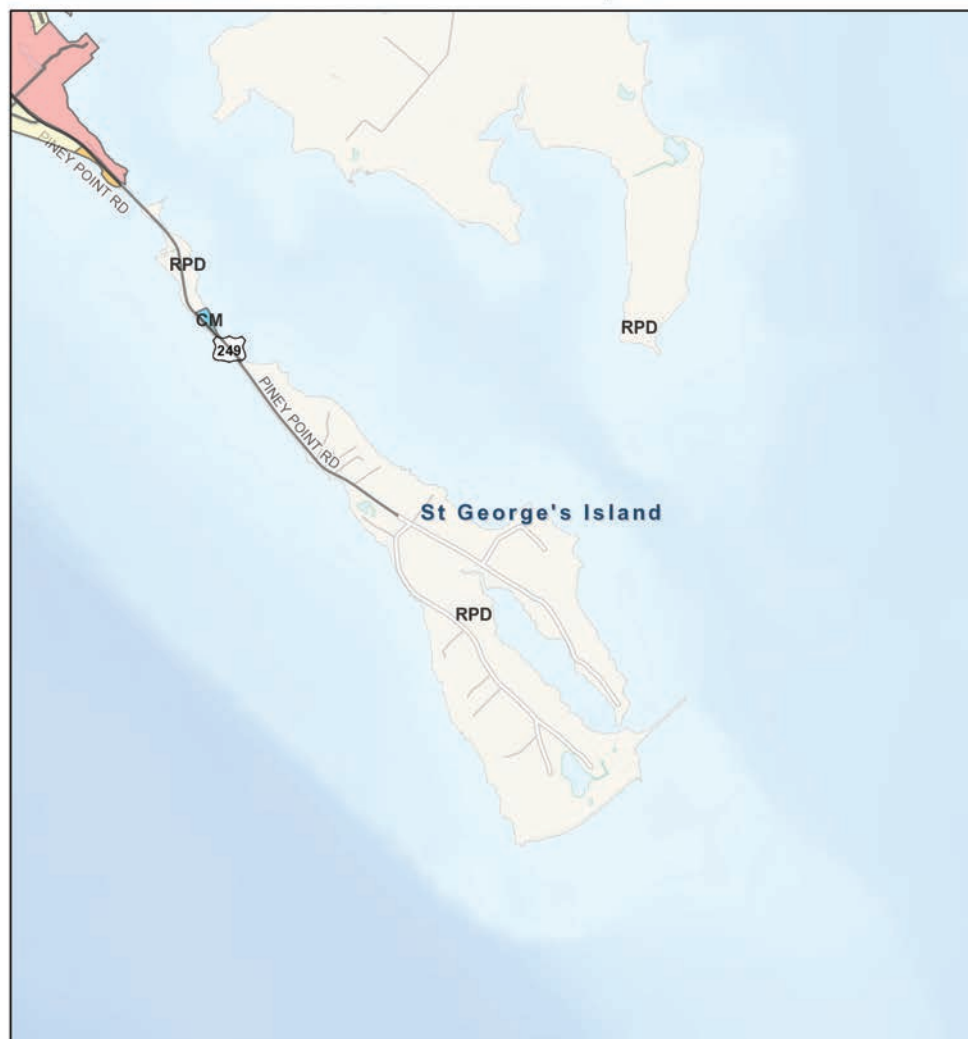
³⁵ "How We Work," American Battlefield Trust, <https://www.battlefields.org/about/how-we-work>. Accessed July 2021.



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Provided by the St Marys County Government

Figure B-1: Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties (MIHP) on St. George Island.

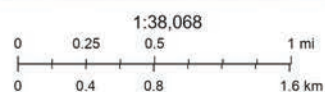
(Source: <https://stmarys.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=f0010a9a5db04695b37c39c033c33edb>)



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Zoning (Sep 2019)

 RL	 RPD
 TMX	 CM
 RMX	



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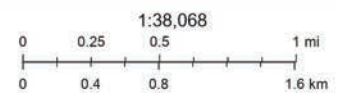
Figure B-2: St. Mary's County Zoning on St. George Island.

(Source: <https://stmarys.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=f0010a9a5db04695b37c39c033c33edb>)



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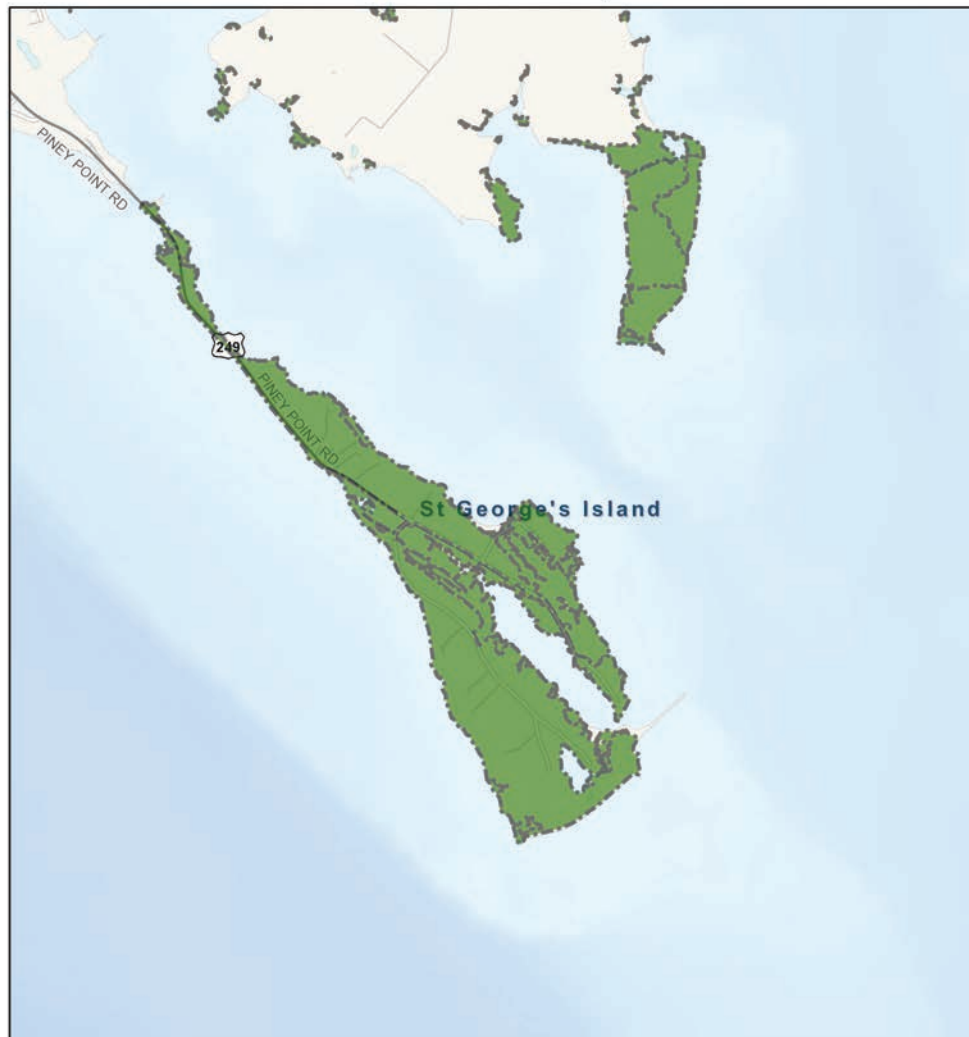
Critical Area (Adopted May 2021)



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Provided by the St. Marys County Government

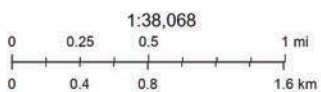
Figure B-3: St. George Island Critical Area Districts.

(Source: <https://stmarys.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=f0010a9a5db04695b37c39c033c33edb>)



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 Critical Area Wetlands Overlay (Adopted May 2021)



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Figure B-4: Critical Area Wetlands.

(Source: <https://stmarys.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=f0010a9a5db04695b37c39c033c33edb>)

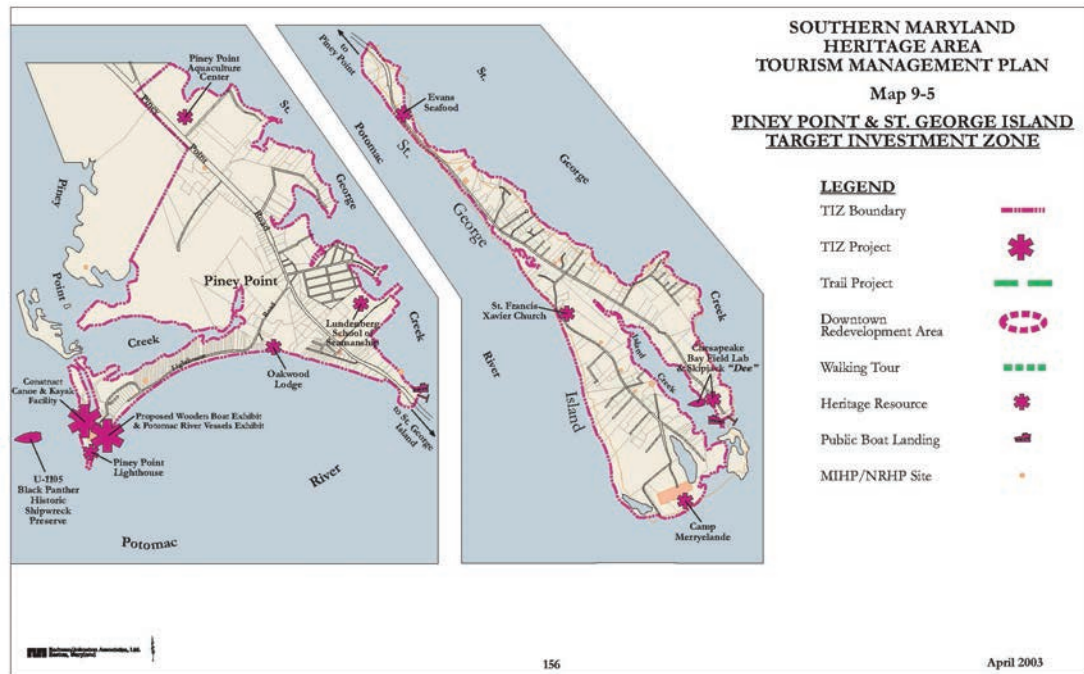


Figure B-5: Southern Maryland Heritage Area Tourism Management Plan, Piney Point & St. George Island Target Investment Zone.

(Source: "Southern Maryland Heritage Area Tourism Management Plan," Prepared for the Southern Maryland Heritage Area Tourism Management Plan Steering Committee; By: Redman/Johnston Associates, Ltd., April 2003; Map on page 156)



**PRESERVATION
MARYLAND**