

A PRELIMINARY REPORT
OF
HISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS
AT
900 KING STREET
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA

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Report Prepared
for
Alexandria Archaeology

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ABSTRACT

Tellus Consultants, Inc. under the auspices of Alexandria Archaeology, conducted historic archaeological investigations at 900 King Street in Alexandria, Virginia in October of 1989. Work at this site (44Ax113) was suggested by the property owner, Wellington Goddin, after the discovery of earthenware syrup jars beneath the flooring at the rear of 900 King Street. This report presents a preliminary evaluation of the recovered data.

The section of this building adjacent to the alley will be demolished and plans call for the construction of a building that will match that facing King Street. Mr. Goddin was interested in determining the nature of the feature and its contents.

Alexandria Archaeology determined that the artifacts would have applicability to previous research conducted at the Moore/McLean Sugar House located one-half block north.

Partial excavation of the site located what may have been a brick-lined cellar filled with syrup jars used in sugar production. However, only complete excavation of the feature would allow a definite conclusion to be made. Further analysis and interpretation of the recovered artifacts and additional review of available documents may make the connection between this site and the Moore/McLean sugar factory in Alexandria, Virginia.

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Appreciation is also extended to the volunteers who worked diligently throughout the investigations. Our thanks are extended to Judy Lebio and Gloria Urias (who worked all week), Leta Chappell, Mary Jane Nugent, Bill Reid, Darrell Varney, Veronica Quichvengo, Diana DeStefano, Adelle Moskios, and Janet Gwaltney. Completion of this stage of the archaeological study would not have been possible without their assistance.

Artifact illustrations were prepared by Bonnie Lauber-Westover, editorial comments provided by Keith Barr and Bob Kadwell, president of Tellus Consultants, and word processing was done by Karla Vasquez of the Minneapolis office. The cover was drawn by Katie Kadwell.

INTRODUCTION

Historic archaeological investigations at 900 King Street in Alexandria, Virginia (Figure 1) were conducted following the discovery of a feature filled with hundreds of ceramic sherds lying beneath a modern concrete floor. When construction workers began excavating beneath the west wall for the purpose of pouring a concrete underpinning, this vast number of ceramic sherds was found beneath the floor at the rear of the building (Figures 2 and 3). The pottery was identified by Alexandria Archaeology as fragments of syrup jars used in sugar refining. Underpinning progressed until the artifacts were noticed by Wellington and Wells Goddin (father and son), owners of the building at 900 King Street. Although it was necessary to conduct conversations with the workers in Spanish, Wells became concerned that the feature was of possible historical significance. As a result of this inquiry, a complete sugar jar was recovered and has since been loaned to Alexandria Archaeology by the Goddin family.

Wellington Goddin contacted Pam Cressey, City of Alexandria Archaeologist and Director of Alexandria Archaeology to suggest an inquiry by that office. An agreement was made between Alexandria Archaeology and Mr. Goddin stating that Mr. Goddin would remove a section of the flooring above the concentration of sherds to allow archaeologists to examine the feature below. In April of 1989, Steve Shephard, Assistant Director of Alexandria Archaeology and several volunteers began an exploratory test unit

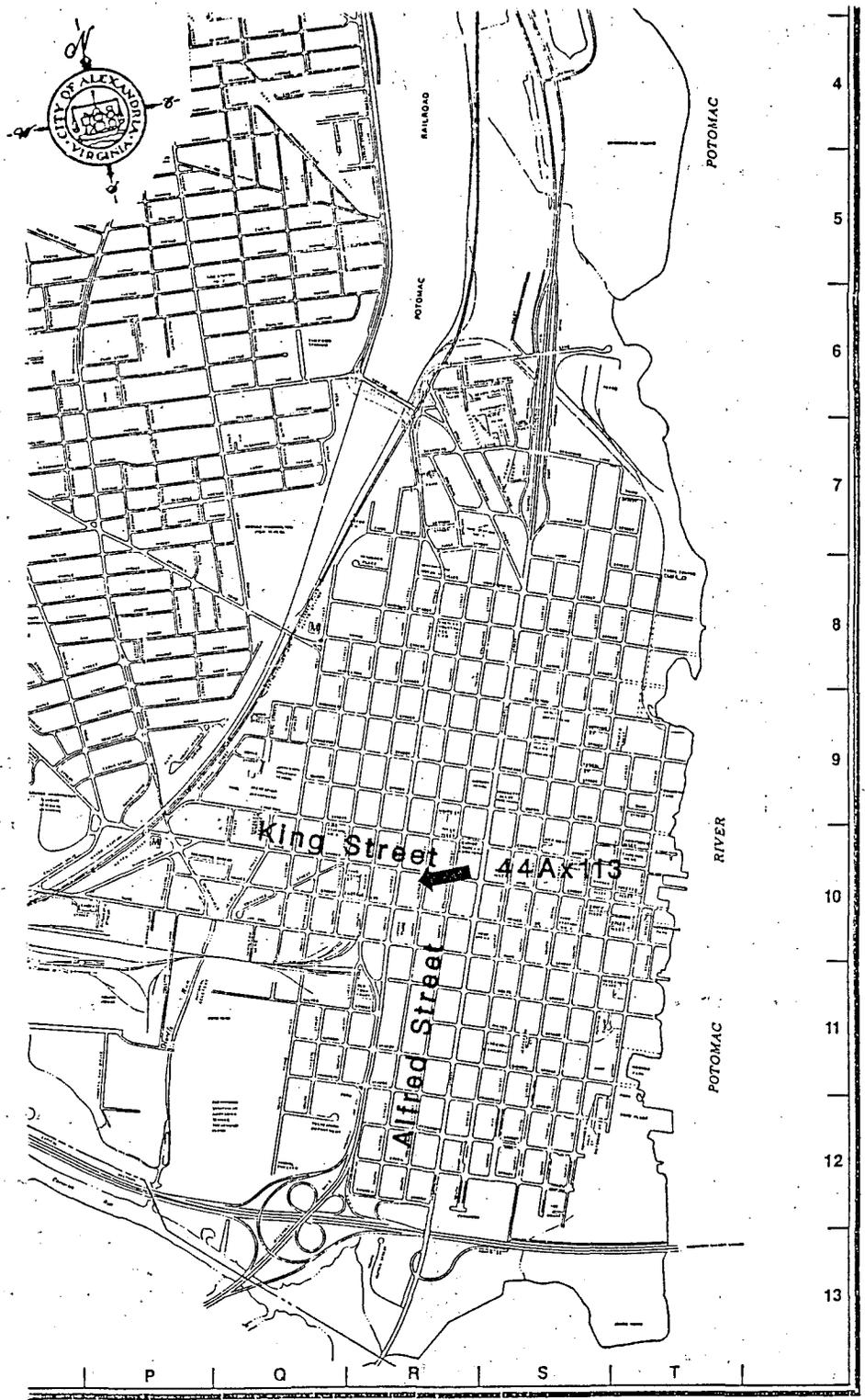


Figure 1. Site Location in Old Town Alexandria



Fig. 2. Rear of 900 King Street



Fig. 3. Underpinning Activity and Feature 1

within the area cleared of debris and flooring. A feature containing a very large number of bricks mixed with ceramic sherds was located and was obviously much larger than the three (3) foot square test unit. The feature extended in all directions, but the western wall had been disturbed by construction of a wooden framework.

Recommendations resulting from the previous investigation called for further work to determine the limits, content, context, and significance of the feature. Mr. Goddin then agreed to remove more of the concrete flooring to aid in identifying the nature of the located materials.

Beginning on October 20 of 1989, Keith Barr and volunteers began removing debris from the cleared areas. Allan Westover, Tellus Consultants, Inc. archaeologist, in conjunction with Alexandria Archaeology, continued working through the following week at 900 King Street. The following report provides a preliminary analysis of the work completed to date.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site of the archaeological investigations described in this report is in the interior at the rear of 900 King Street in the Old Town area of Alexandria, Virginia. The present structure is rectangular in shape and lies north to south. The structure, although now one unit, was originally two separate buildings.

The northern section has two stories and is built of brick and the rear section is a single story of cinder block.

The brick section will be left intact while the cinder block portion will be removed and replaced with another brick structure. The flooring in the brick end is of wide, wooden planks while the rear portion's floor was poured concrete. The site is located in one of the most active commercial areas of historic Alexandria and has played an ongoing part in the history of the city.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The following is a partial summation of the historical evolution for this property compiled by Kim Prothro for Ralph Capobianco, a restaurateur planning the development and rebuilding of 900 King Street (1989). It is a relatively thorough examination of the records showing "owners, occupants and uses of the lot as determined from research of historic maps and photos, deed books, city directories, building permits, mutual assurance records and newspaper articles and advertisements" (1989).

The first listing for this property as a sale in the Prothro report is in September of 1795. Transactions previous to that date are not listed. Although several transactions for transfer of this property occur prior to 1803, no structures are mentioned until then.

The Mutual Assurance Records for 1803 (Figure 4) mention, in addition to the two-story grocery store, a "wooden coach house underpinned with brick adjacent to the alley," and a single-story wooden dwelling. The grocery store, dwelling, and a small segment of the eastern wall of the coach house are now part of the property at 900 King Street. A single-story structure is still shown at the rear of the property on the 1864 map of Alexandria (Figure 5). It is possible that a brick cellar or foundation located adjacent to the alley would be associated with the coach house.

According to records located by Ms. Prothro, the dollar amount paid for the 900 King Street property in 1813 might indicate a price more likely paid for a brick structure than a frame building. However, inspection of the sale records indicates that the 1813 transfer included more than just the 900 King Street property, thus explaining a higher purchase price.

William S. Moore, owner and operator of the Sugar House one block to the north, also owned the 900 King Street property from January 1814 to June 1825. In March of 1815, Moore sold the Sugar House. If the cellar was filled while Moore owned both properties, it would have occurred during this fourteen-month period.

A complete chain of title for 900 King Street is on file at the Alexandria Archaeology offices.

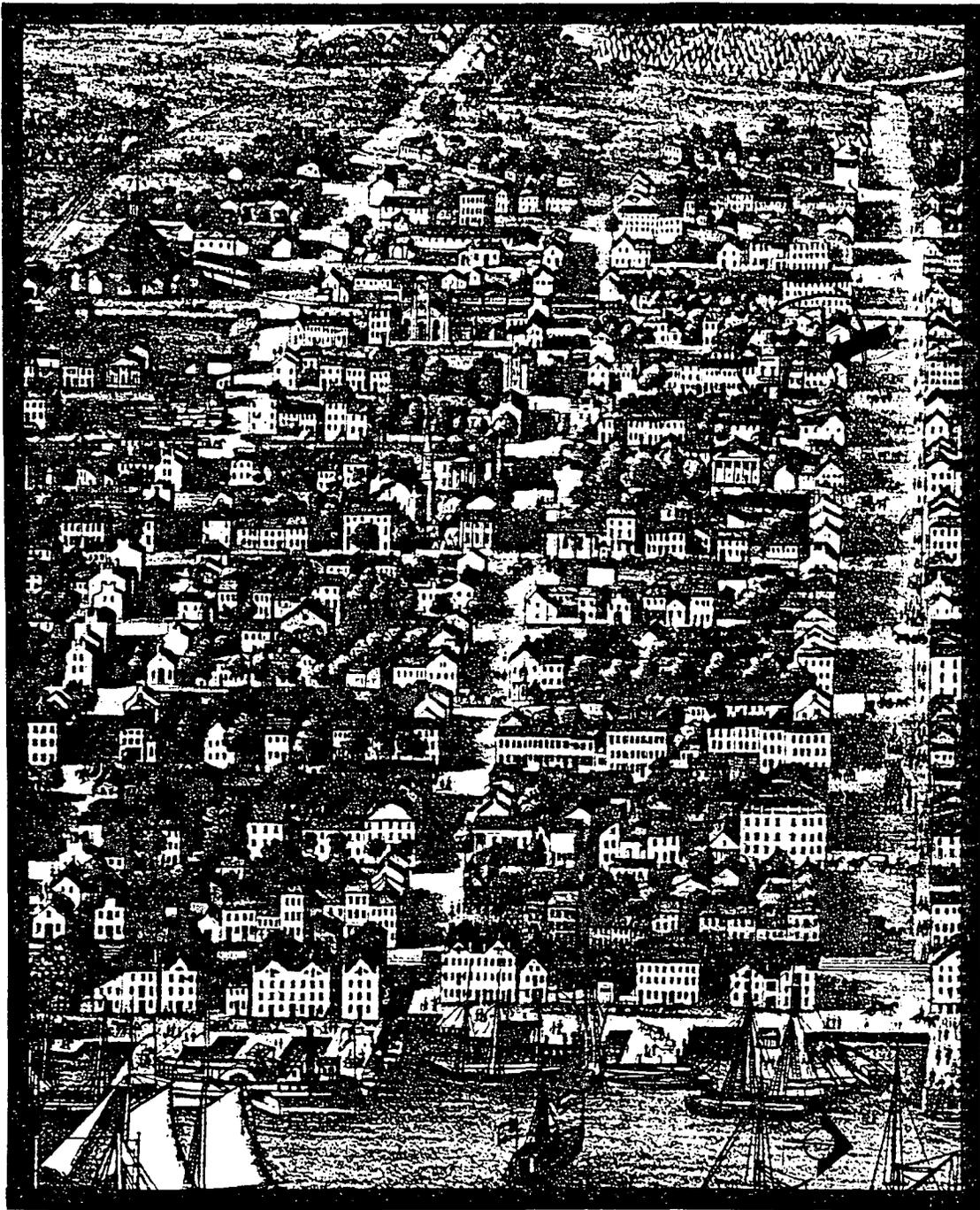


Fig. 5. Bird's Eye View of Alexandria - 1864

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The scope of this project focused on two very specific points: (1) to delineate the limits of Feature 1; and (2) to locate other features in the areas where the flooring had been removed. It was our intent to focus on Feature 1 to determine not only size but content, period or periods of deposition, fill origin, and depth. It was apparent that the primary fill components were bricks and what appeared to be syrup jar sherds. The same questions would be posed for other cultural features located. Once the flooring was removed and the two objectives met, the artifactual materials would then be removed in natural layers and fill soils screened.

EXCAVATION METHODS

Following the initial investigations at the site, Mr. Goddin and Alexandria Archaeology agreed that more of the concrete flooring should be removed. This process required several steps on the part of Mr. Goddin. Men and equipment had to be hired to remove the concrete, the debris needed to be removed from the cleared sections, and then from the building (Figures 2 and 6), and a landfill located that accepted construction debris. Removal from the building took place concurrently with the beginning of the archaeological investigations. The building was bounded by a public sidewalk on the east and a heavily used alley on the south (Figure 2). -Therefore, material could not be discarded outside.



Fig. 6. Removing Flooring from the Building

Debris was hauled outside in wheelbarrows and placed in a truck. Once the excavations and fill dirt removal began, the problem of where to place the backdirt from the screening process had to be resolved. This problem was solved by boarding-up the lower half of the doorway to the easternmost bathroom and throwing the dirt inside. Once it became full, a containment area was constructed outside the bathroom.

Feature fill removal was completed using galvanized buckets (Figure 7). Successive buckets were filled with brick fragments, dirt, and sherds, the bricks tossed away and the soil screened (Figure 8). Because of the lack of space, the screens were set-up inside the building. The volume of dirt far exceeded our expectations. All of the traditional archaeological tools, such as shovels, towels, and wheelbarrows were used but strictly indoors.

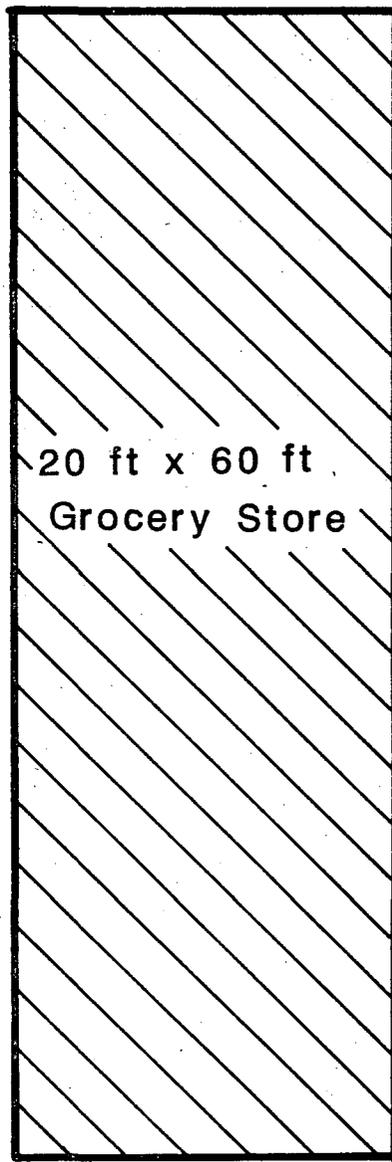
Artifacts collected were placed in properly marked bags denoting the date, site number, address of the building, Context Numbers, and provenience. Planviews of the units were drawn, photos recorded, and level sheets completed for each unit. Context Numbers are a sequence of unique record numbers assigned sequentially as the contexts are first encountered in excavation. All of this information will be entered onto the computerized Field Record and Artifact database at the Alexandria Archaeology Laboratories. Artifact descriptions and level and feature sheet



Figure 7. Feature Fill Removal



Figure 8. Indoor Screening



6 ft alley

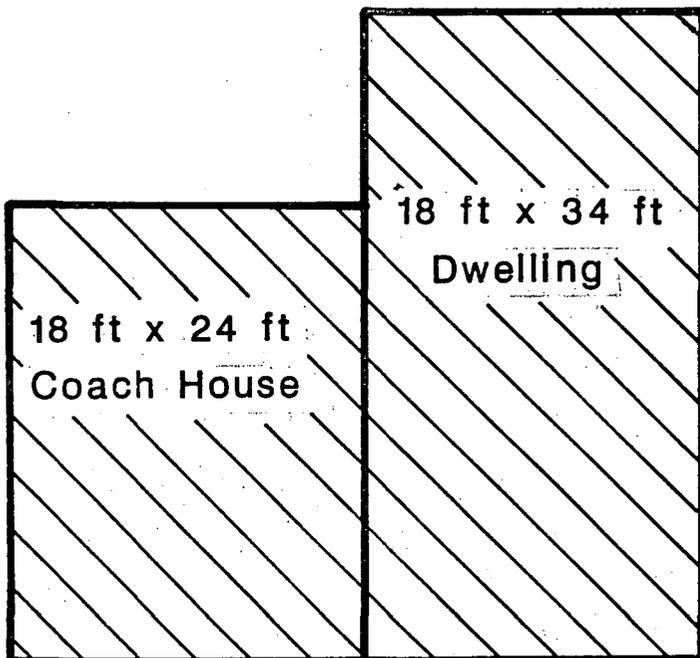


Fig. 9a Overlay Showing
1803 Buildings

900 King Street

Future Restaurant

Alfred Street



NORTH

Stairway

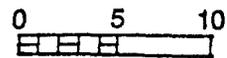
TEST UNIT 2
FEATURE 2

TEST UNIT 3
FEATURE 3

TEST UNIT 1
FEATURE 1

Fig. 9b Present Building Outline

Scale: 1" = 10 feet



information will also be added to this database by context (Magid, 1989).

Artificial lighting was required to work inside the building. Protective masks were provided for excavators due to the dusty conditions. Photographs were taken and Joanna Moyer videotaped portions of the investigation to provide a visual record. In addition, a small display showing recovered artifacts and related illustrations was set-up to be seen from the exterior for public information.

RESULTS OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

A total of three test units were excavated inside the building, their location determined by spaces opened during the floor removal (Figure 9b). Unit 1 was a continuation of the test hole excavated in the spring of 1989 after the first section of flooring was removed. Feature 1 was found in Unit 1. Unit 2 was placed in the cleared area next to the north wall of the building. Feature 2 was located in Unit 2. Unit 3 was placed opposite Unit 1 on the other side of a block wall and Feature 3 was located there.

TEST UNIT 1

Work continued on Unit 1 (Figures 9b, 10a and 10b). This excavation reached a depth of 4.1 feet below the present concrete



Figure 10a. Test Unit 1, Feature 1



Figure 10b. Test Unit 1, Feature 1

floor during the initial investigations. The original methodology called for excavation of the unit by natural levels, the common method used by Alexandria Archaeology, but the fill in this unit was so homogeneous that there was no stratigraphy. Therefore, field decisions modified the original design and the unit was excavated as one level until stratification could be identified. In an attempt to enhance crossmending of the broken vessels, the unit was excavated by quarter sections. When sherds were found in very tight groupings they were bagged together to further aid crossmending.

While cleaning-up the edges of Unit 1, a brick wall two courses wide was located on the northern side (Figure 10a). Another brick wall was located running north to south at the eastern end of the east-west wall (Figure 10c). This wall continued both to the south and the north below the remaining concrete flooring. These walls appear to form two sides of a cellar.

FEATURE 1

Illustrations and Photos. Figures 9a & 9b, 10a-10e, Appendix I

Location. Unit 1

Description.

Feature fill at the level directly below the concrete floor (approximately the first foot) consisted primarily of bricks, brick fragments, and very few ceramic sherds. Because of the



Figure 10c. North-South Brick Wall in Unit 1

large number of bricks near the top of the feature, it looked as though walls above the ground level were pushed inward toward the feature. Bricks and brick fragments were also found throughout the feature but in less concentration.

The juncture of the two walls in Feature 1 was buttressed by a column of brick (Figure 10d). It does not appear that these two walls are contemporaneous because of the different methods of construction and condition of the bricks. The remnants of yet another north-south wall of cinder blocks was found between the modern block wall and the subsurface brick wall. This wall also continued to the north and south beneath the concrete floor. The space between the block walls was filled with mortar.

Removal of the feature fill continued until the floor of the feature was reached. The bottom of Unit 1, Feature 1, was a very light tan, silty sterile clay (Figure 10e). The only section excavated to the bottom of the feature was a one and one-half foot wide trench along the north wall. The sterile clay had a very high moisture content, particularly in the area disturbed by the underpinning activity.

The relatively small amount of fill soil in the feature, approximately 15% of the feature fill, was a dark brown, silty clay. The remaining fill consisted of sherds, metal and glass fragments, bricks, and brick fragments, bone, white clay, and miscellaneous refuse as yet unidentified.



Figure 10d. Brick Support Column at Northeast Corner of Feature 1



Figure 10e. Bottom of Feature 1

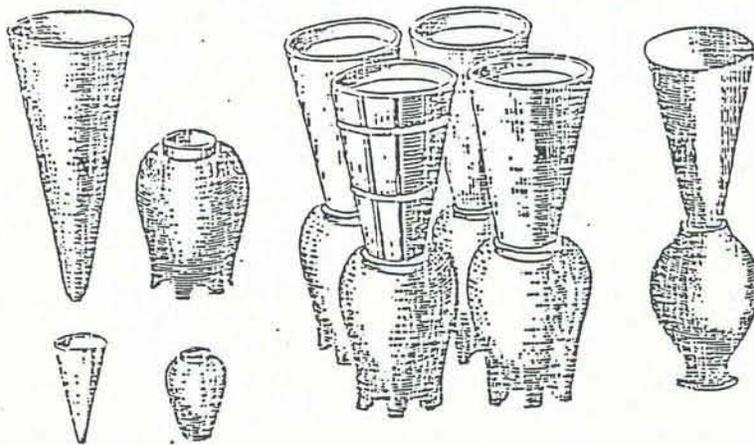
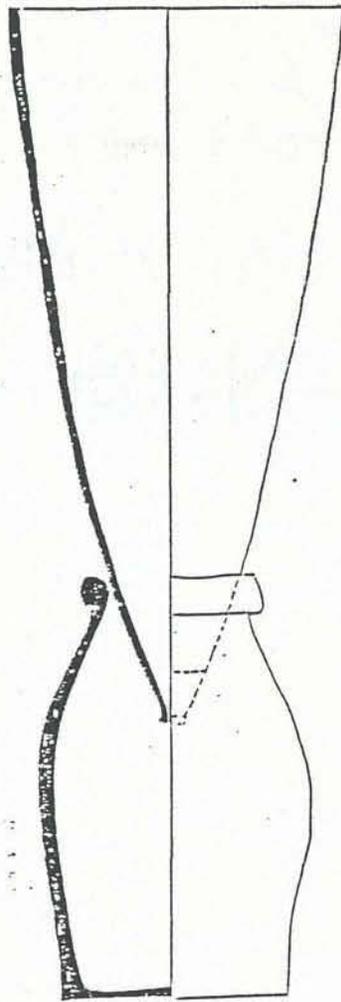
The feature measured at least seven feet wide by ten feet long. The actual length and width can only be estimated since the wall continues beneath the concrete to the south and the western wall is disturbed. A builder's trench was not visible outside the north wall suggesting that the feature walls were laid-up from inside a previously excavated hole. The north-south wall was one course wide and the east to west wall was two courses wide.

Feature 1 was 6.2 feet deep from the bottom of the concrete floor.

ARTIFACTS

The predominant artifact class from Feature 1 was that of the readily identifiable earthenware, interior-glazed syrup jar used in the manufacture of sugar. An exact number of sherds recovered during the excavation has not yet been determined, but an approximate sherd count would reach into the hundreds.

Variations occur in rim shape (Appendix I), glaze composition, glaze color, body shape, the occasional simple decoration, and liquid capacity. Ceramic sherds of this type were recently excavated from the Moore/McLean Sugar House Site one block north of 900 King Street (Magid 1987). Other available sources clearly identify this type of artifact (Cressey, n.d.; Hugill, 1978; Revis, n.d.; Silliman, 1833).



18th century representations of sugar pottery from Aspects of the Sugar-Refining Industry From the 16th to 19th Century. by Catherine M. Brooks.

Figure 11. Illustration of Syrup Jar and Cone

These jars were used in conjunction with molds or cones to produce sugar in a variety of refined states. Simply stated, the sugar syrup, after initial stages of processing, was poured into the cone which was later placed in and on top of the syrup jar (Figure 11). The syrup or molasses would filter through the crystallizing sugar and be collected in the jar (Barr, 1989). Syrup jar fragments at the site far outnumbered mold fragments. An exact number of each will not be available until processing is completed. Silliman (1833) described the molds as conical in shape, made of unglazed earthenware, with a small aperture at the lower end. These are easily distinguished from the interior glazed syrup jar sherds.

There is a sharp contrast between the ceramic vessel types represented at 900 King Street and those at the Sugar House site. Those from the Sugar House were predominantly from the molds or cones with few examples of jars. Barbara Magid (1987) reported that 6,898 fragments of sugar factory ceramic vessels were recovered and only 27 were syrup jars. The exact opposite was found in the Feature 1 fill. In addition, only 50 mold rim sherds and 29 cone (mold) tips (small basal openings) were found at the Sugar House in contrast to a large number of jar rims, many complete, at 900 King Street. Field inspection did not yield a single mold tip from 900 King Street.

One similarity between the two sites is a very large number of very small sherds. Deposits at both sites appear to have been

purposely broken into small bits or may have been moved more than once, causing further breakage. No exact period of deposition could be determined for this artifact class.

DISCUSSION

Feature 1 appears to be a brick-walled cellar filled after abandonment with a large number of sugar refining ceramic vessel sherds. It is possible that these artifacts originated from the Sugar House on North Alfred Street, one block away, but the evidence is, at this time, inconclusive. The Sugar House produced sugar until 1828 and it is unknown where the ceramic vessels, which numbered 5,000 (Magid, 1987), were disposed of when it closed. Although neither the Sugar House site nor 900 King Street will be completely excavated, to date both sites have yielded disproportionate numbers of sugar production ceramic vessel types. Why they would have been discarded by vessel type remains a mystery. It is possible that the jars from the Sugar House are still on the grounds and that the jars at 900 King Street were not part of that inventory but came from a different source.

To the author's knowledge, the only sherd with a maker's mark, and that a partial one, appeared on an unglazed cone body sherd. The impressed letters spelling MILLER with the letters LEX below were clearly visible. An interim report on the field school investigations in 1987 and 1988 at the Sugar House site by

Barbara H. Magid of Alexandria Archaeology, stated that although the jars were of local manufacture, the cones were probably not of local manufacture. Later spectographic analyses by the Ceramics Analytical Laboratory at Oregon State University indicated that both the cones and jars were probably of local manufacture (personal communication, B. Magid 1989). The mark mentioned here identifies the potter as James Miller of Alexandria. Miller is first mentioned as a potter with Thomas Fisher and Thomas Hewes in 1797 in a pottery located on the southwest corner of Washington and Duke Streets in Alexandria.

According to Ms. Magid, the syrup jar rim sherd patterns cannot be positively traced to Mr. Miller because his work is fairly obscure. The rim sherds from 900 King Street present a number of varieties in shape and vessel form (Appendix I). Line drawings representing rim shape and possible vessel shape are provided as a reference for both past and future recovered vessels of this type. Perhaps they will provide the basis for a comparative body of information which would lead to identification of pottery and potter origins of these vessels.

A number of rim forms are readily visible; the straight or vertical rim, the rolled rim, and a combination of rolled and straight. Most rim shapes are variations on a theme but may in fact be distinctive.

Vessel shape (Appendix I) does not appear to be highly variable, most often smaller at the base, expanding near the shoulder and constricting near the neck. One example (Appendix I) appears to be more vertical but in fact may be the lower segment of a much larger jar.

Bases of these jars vary considerably in size, easily explained by the need to produce various sizes of sugar cones. A random sampling of recovered bases showed a number of common sizes ranging from 4.6 to 6.6 inches inside diameter. A very large mold rim having a 1.4 foot outside diameter was recovered from Feature 1. This was possibly used to produce a cone for commercial use, a cone to be re-refined, or other unknown reasons a large cone would be required.

Other artifacts located in Feature 1 represent a wide temporal span, with terminus post quem (Hume 1978) of late 19th to early 20th century. This later date is based on the presence of a Blue & Gray Stoneware jug (Brown 1982). A date range for this type of stoneware is given at 1775-1900, most commonly from the early to mid 19th century. Another late date is provided by the existence of yellow-ware, with a date range of 1827-1922, with a high use period of from 1830-1900 (Garrow 1982). No distinguishing makers marks were located on any of these field inspected sherds.

In addition to the above ceramics located in Feature 1, throughout the fill, the following plain and decorated ceramics

were recovered: Creamware--feather-edge rim (1765-1790), annular (1780-1815), and transfer-printed (1770-1815) (Lofstrom, 1976; Noel-Hume, 1973, 1978; Price, 1979; Towner, 1957); Pearlware--shell-edge rim (1780-1795), transfer-printed (1787-1840), annular (1795-1820) (Lofstrom, 1976; Noel-Hume, 1969, 1973, 1978; South, 1972; Towner, 1957); Whiteware--shell-edge rim (1830-1860), transfer-printed (1830-1860) and Flow Blue (1844-1860) (Noel-Hume, 1978; Miller, 1980); Ironstone--(1840-1885) (Garrow, 1982); Redware--Redwares can date from the 17th century on and were often locally produced. At this point in the investigations it is difficult to provide a date range for the redware; Porcelain and China--field inspection of recovered artifacts noted both porcelain and china but further identification is required to provide manufacture dates. Dates range from the 16th century through modern times.

The present interpretation of Feature 1 is that it represents the brick cellar located beneath a coach house. This coach house is shown on the 1803 Assurance Map (Figure 4) where it clearly lists the structure as having "brick underpinning". It appears that if Feature 1 is indeed the coach house cellar, that it was only a partial cellar. Also, the two brick walls exposed during the excavations do not appear to be contemporaneous. The bricks in the north-south wall are in much worse condition and are laid differently than those in the east-west wall. It is, therefore, possible that the cellar was dug after the outside walls were erected or that the coach house and the dwelling to the east

shared a common wall. Monitoring of the demolition and removal of the modern building, presently above the feature, may reveal significant additional information as to size, shape, and exact location of the cellar.

The total significance of Feature 1 is difficult to determine at this time since the artifacts have not been processed and complete excavation or examination of the feature have not been possible.

FEATURE 2

Illustrations. 9b, 12a and 12b

Location. Test Unit 2

Description.

This feature was irregularly-shaped in planview. It appeared circular on the west end and more elongated on the eastern edge. It measured 1.12 feet, north-south by 1.82 feet, east-west and was 1.74 feet deep. The feature appeared just below a medium brown sandy soil immediately below the concrete floor. This may be a fill soil placed prior to pouring the concrete for the modern floor. The surrounding soil matrix was blue/gray marine clay common to the area. The clay matrix was sterile--contained no artifacts.



Figure 12a. Test Unit 2, Feature 2



Figure 12b. Test Unit 2, Feature 2

Feature fill soils consisted of a gray/brown mottled sandy loam. The soils were very compact, unlike the fill dirt in the other features at the site.

ARTIFACTS

The artifacts recovered from Feature 2 included a wide variety of plain and decorated ceramic sherds, glass fragments, bone, fish scales and metal fragments. It appears that Feature 2 is a refuse pit and was originally dug for the purpose of discarding trash. Laboratory analysis of this material is in progress.

DISCUSSION

Test Unit 2 and Feature 2 lie in an area formerly beneath the dwelling indicated on the 1803 Assurance Map (Figures 9a and 9b). At this point in the investigations, however, it is difficult to draw a correlation between that structure and Feature 2.

FEATURE 3

Illustrations. Figures 9b, 13, 14 and 15

Location. Test Unit 3

Description.

Test Unit 3 is a three foot by three foot square excavated east of Test Unit 1 on the other side of a cinder block wall (Figure

13). The unit was placed here because it was one area cleared of the concrete and the investigator wanted to see if the east-west brick wall of Feature 1 continued to the east.

The soils in Test Unit 3 just below the concrete floor consisted of a black, sandy/gravelly silt. The top of this unit resembled a gravel parking lot surface. It was very hard-packed and included a number of fist-sized stones that could be river cobbles. Picks were required to excavate through the top level. Soil and rock encountered in this test unit did not differ from the surrounding soil matrix. There were no stratified layers.

Test Unit 3 was excavated to a depth of 2.73 feet below the top of the gravel surface. Excavations did not continue to sterile soil due to a lack of available time. However, the investigators dug below the level of the marine clay in other units and artifacts were still revealed.

Feature 3 is the footing for the modern cinder block wall running north to south between Test Units 1 and 3. This feature was encountered at a depth of 1.75 feet below the top of the gravel.

ARTIFACTS

Below the hard-packed gravel the soil became less compact. Throughout the test unit below the six inch deep gravel a number



Figure 13. Test Unit 3



Figure 14. Test Unit 3, Feature 3

of artifacts including bone (cut ribs and rodent bones), plain and decorated ceramic sherds (including a number of syrup jar sherds), unidentifiable metal objects, and glass were recovered. A glass container fragment identified in the field as part of a coke bottle, may provide a terminus post quem from the present. However, these artifacts are still being processed at Alexandria Archaeology Laboratories and little can be said concerning end dates for artifact deposition at this time.

DISCUSSION

Unit 3 is directly below the location given for a single story wood frame house on the 1803 Mutual Assurance Map (Figure 9a & 9b). This structure is not shown on the 1877 Hopkins Map of Alexandria. It is not clear if a building was still there in 1918 when Richard Gibson applied for a permit to make repairs and alterations to 900 King Street, including the construction of an outside stairway "in the rear yard" (Prothro, 1989).

One possible explanation for the compacted gravel beneath the floor might be that the area was once used for parking. Little mention is made of this section of the lot at 900 King Street in the architectural history for the property. The fact that there is no stratigraphy in this unit and that artifacts were found well below the level of sterile clay in the other parts of the building, suggests the possibility of another large feature filled with a variety of refuse.

Structures were located here at least between 1803 and 1864, time enough for a wide range of materials to "fall between the cracks". There were no visible stratified levels and no discernible difference in deposited materials by zones, hence little opportunity to make statements concerning the specific period of deposition.

Feature 3 was a modern intrusion in the form of a concrete wall footing and the full dimensions were not determined.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Historic archaeological investigations at 900 King Street in Alexandria, Virginia, were initiated as the result of discoveries made during construction activities in the adjacent building. It was clear that a number of artifacts were located beneath the concrete floor at 900 King Street. A complete sugar jar was recovered at that time, sugar jars used in the production of sugar products in Alexandria.

A subsequent agreement between Wellington Goddin, owner of the building, and Alexandria Archaeology, paved the way for excavations at the rear of 900 King Street, the section scheduled for demolition. Mr. Goddin agreed to arrange for removal of the concrete flooring above the concentration of artifacts. Alexandria Archaeology agreed to investigate the area and to assess the possible significance of the discovery. Alexandria

Archaeology also agreed to retrieve, process, analyze and interpret any and all artifacts prior to building demolition. The materials would remain the property of Mr. Goddin. Tellus Consultants, Inc. then agreed to provide additional manpower, expertise, and a preliminary report discussing the results of the investigation.

A total of three archaeological features were located. One of these, Feature 1, was a brick-walled cellar, filled with sugar jars. The feature fill consisted of several hundred ceramic sherds, the majority of which were identified as syrup jars used in conjunction with the sugar mold. A very small number of mold body fragments and rim sherds were identified. Sherd counts and analysis will be performed at a later date by Alexandria Archaeology laboratory personnel under the direction of Barbara Magid, laboratory director.

Preliminary assessments as to the origin of so many sugar-producing vessels is at best speculative at this point, but it is possible that these were discarded from the former sugar factory one block north of the site. William S. Moore, owner of the sugar factory until 1815, also owned the property now under investigation until 1825. He may have used the cellar to discard damaged vessels. However, records indicate that a structure stood on this site until long after Moore owned this property. It is not likely that they would fill the cellar of an existing structure.

The Moore/McLean Sugar House was closed in 1828 and at some point between then and 1839 it was destroyed. Revis (1988) states that sometime shortly thereafter a dwelling was built over the former sugar factory site. According to Barr (1989) the remainder of the site was heavily disturbed by the erection of a large Victorian dwelling in the 1880's. It might be possible that during this period an excavation for the cellar of the dwelling would have required that the discarded sherds be moved and it was then that they were re-deposited in their present location at 900 King Street. The second dumping might account for the large number of very small sherds. Barbara Magid (1987) stated that the front of the present WJD Realty building was probably built over the Sugar House site in the 1840's. If this date is accurate, it is possible that the cellar was filled with sherds at that time. More precise identification of the date when the brick cellar was filled rests on the final analysis and interpretation of the non-sugar refining materials found in the feature. Laboratory processing may locate identifiable maker's marks or other forms of traceable decorations to aid in determining an end date for deposition of the artifacts in Feature 1.

Similar cultural materials were located in both Test Unit 2 and Test Unit 3. Feature 2 artifacts have not been processed but field observations place this trash pit feature at a slightly earlier period. However, this location also would have been covered by the single story dwelling from 1803 to approximately

1877. Feature 3 was a modern concrete footing, but the artifacts in Unit 3 included the largest number of cut bones (primarily ribs) located at the site. In addition, this unit contained artifacts at a much deeper level than the sterile clay floor in the rest of the building. As stated earlier, this may be yet another feature relating to occupancy of the site.

EVALUATION OF RESEARCH

Archaeological investigations such as these at 900 King Street allow the researcher an opportunity to look at a very small piece of the historical puzzle. Projects of this type are not possible without the cooperation of public-spirited property owners curious about the past.

The structures on the lot at 900 King Street have played an ongoing role in the events of Alexandria's past and the document research has shown activity at the site since at least 1795. Demolition of the present block structure at the rear of the property has presented the opportunity to examine a portion of that past.

As a result of the artifacts located in Feature 1, the brick-walled cellar, the investigators have made a historical connection between this site and former sugar-producing activities in Alexandria. Although the exact nature of that connection has not been determined, the archaeological record has

provided researchers with the empirical evidence, some of the pieces to the puzzle.

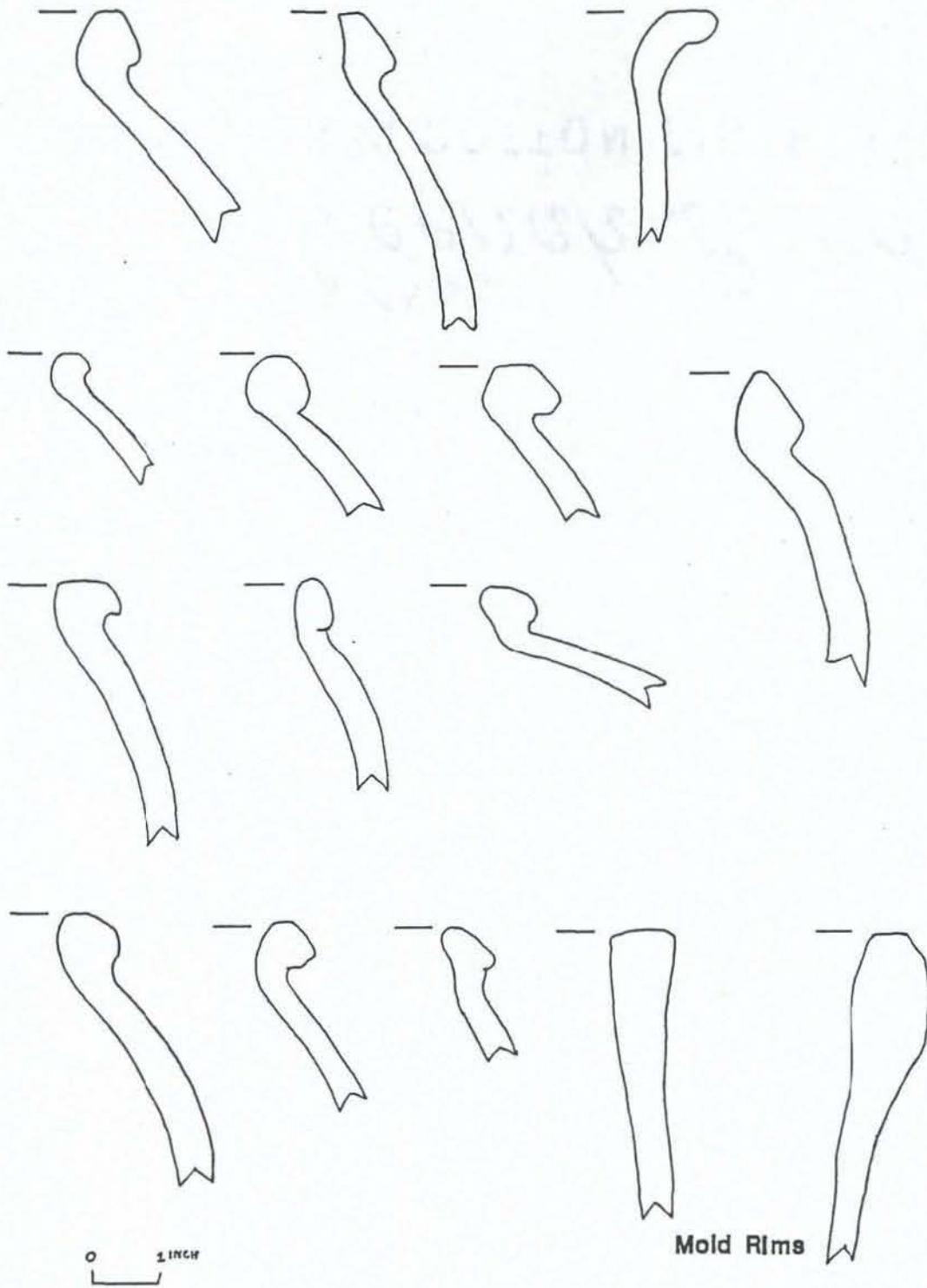
It is difficult to leave a site that has not been completely exposed and at the very least totally recorded, but monitoring the demolition of the structure on the site and further laboratory processing and analysis of the recovered artifacts may yet make sense of data which presently poses more questions than answers.

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APPENDIX I
ARTIFACT ILLUSTRATIONS



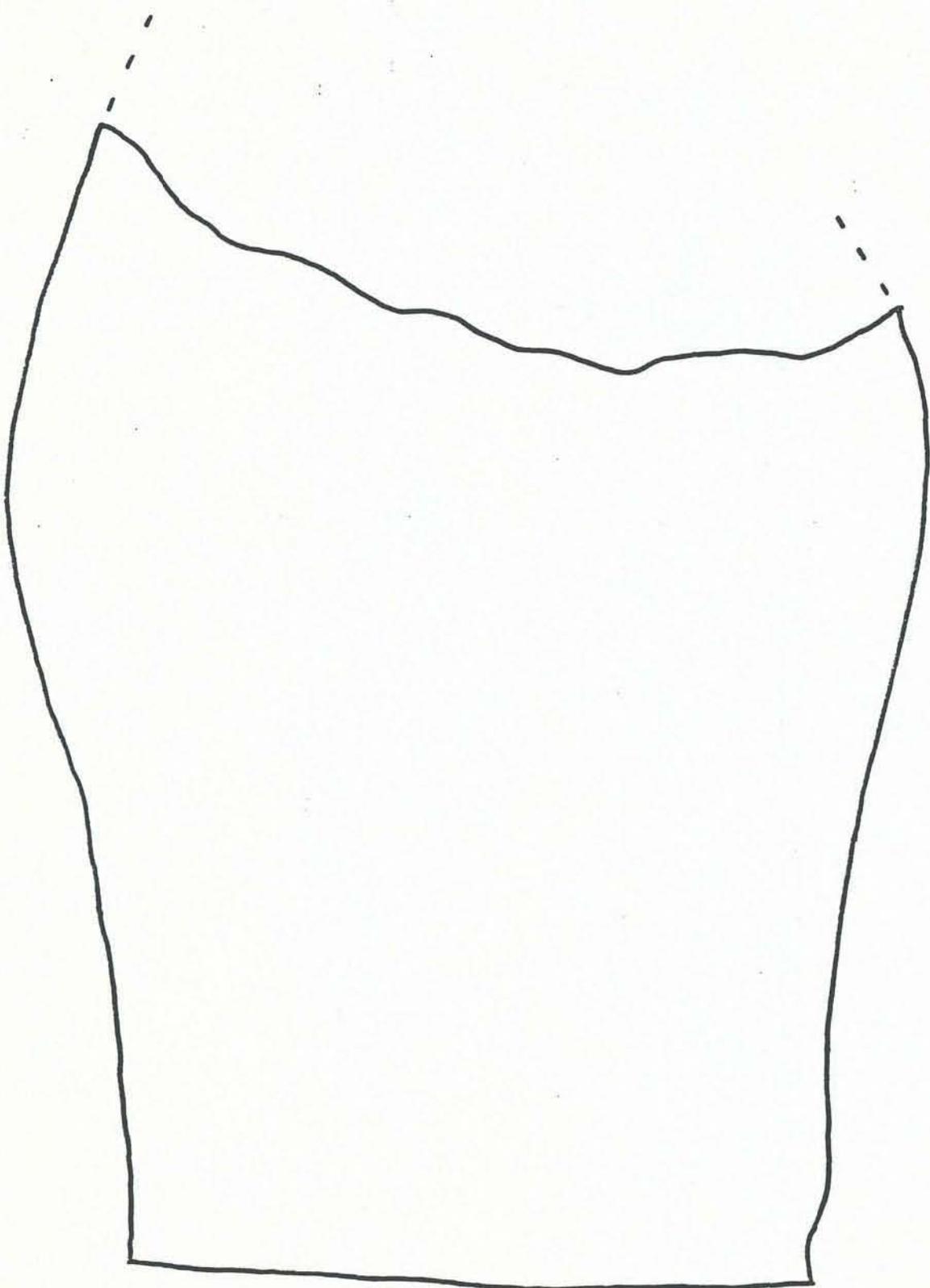
Examples of Syrup Jar and Sugar Mold Rim Profiles



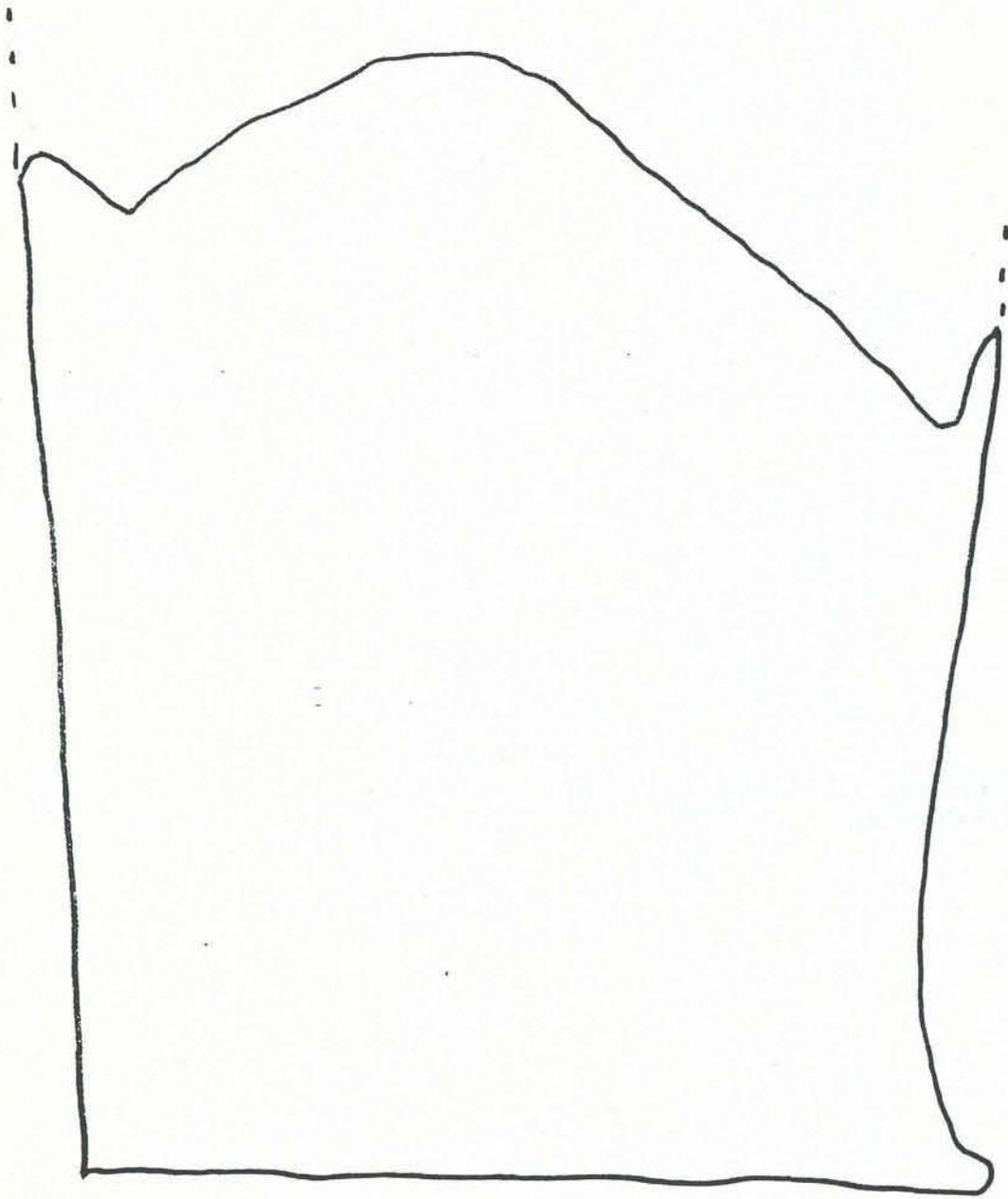
Rim Shape Variations



Common Glaze Color for Jar Interior



Syrup Jar with Constricted Base



Straight-Sided Syrup Jar Base



Rim and Body Shape Variations



Processing Clay Adhering to Jar Exterior



Unidentified Ceramic Artifact



Lip, Rim, and Body Section of a Syrup Jar



Syrup Jar Basal Section