

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

WASH HOUSE ARCHITECTURE

While oral history and photographic evidence revealed much about the architecture of the washhouse, some important information is lacking. For instance, the exact location and size of the building could not be determined from these resources. Three sides of the building could not be seen in the photograph and thus, little was known about window and door locations. The foundation and framing system used in the construction of the building also was not known. Therefore, the archaeological investigations of the washhouse had the potential to provide insights into the construction and use of the washhouse.

Architectural Features

Several architectural features were located during the washhouse excavations, including piers, a mortared door threshold, a drainage system, a cistern, paths, and a hearth. A total of three ephemeral pier locations was identified during the excavations. It appears that all were collapsed and severely deteriorated piers made of unmortared brick and stone. The pier locations indicate that the building measured approximately 6.1 m (20 feet) along the east and west sides and 4.6 m (15 feet) along the north and south sides. A row of mortared brick along the east wall of the building most likely represents a threshold for a doorway. This feature indicates that there was a door on this side of the building.

Other architectural features were associated with the building's water supply and drainage. A prominent feature of the washhouse is the brick water cistern located within the north half of the building, which provided access to water in the building. The overhead gutter visible in a historic photograph appears to have emptied into this cistern (Figure 40). Also located inside the structure was a drainage system. This system consisted of clay pipe segments, a brick drain/gutter, and a metal trough. The pipe segments extend from beyond the west end of the excavation area to an area just east of the building location. They were probably located under the floor of the building and based on the direction from which the pipe originated, the pipe most likely drained the second detached kitchen that was once located to the west of the washhouse near the main house. The pipes appear to originate at the location of the second detached kitchen, which later became the location of the attached kitchen.

The brick drain/gutter is directly associated with the washhouse. Its open top would have allowed wastewater from activities in the washhouse to drain into the system and out of the building. The metal trough connected to the brick gutter would have directed the water out of the building. The trough was primarily open at the top, except for a small metal plate that covered a portion of it. The position of this plate corresponds to the line of mortared brick that forms the door threshold. The sill of the building most likely sat on top of the metal plate to help support the building where the drainage system

exited. The trough led the wastewater to a shallow depression, which served as a cesspool, located southeast of the building. Based on the presence of the cistern and the drainage system, the building was designed to supply water and drain wastewater, which is consistent with the needs for domestic washing activities.



Figure 40. Enlarged View of the Washhouse ca. 1890.

The architectural features identified outside of the washhouse building consisted of a brick hearth, paths, and postholes. The presence of the associated brick hearth and a posthole for a kettle crane suggests that large kettles were used to boil water for laundry or soapmaking outside and behind the washhouse building. Another posthole and pier situated closer to the washhouse building may represent a support for a rear porch or overhang.

A brick pavement located near the hearth appears to form part of a path that extended east from the building to the hearth and then to the north towards the location of an early twentieth century yard fence line. This fence line was found during the detached kitchen excavations and appears in a historic photograph of the washhouse (Figure 40) (Stottman and Watts-Roy 2000). The presence of this path suggests that the washhouse building and the other features situated outside of the building were connected through the activities that took place there. The path extends to the fence indicating that there may have been a gate in the area, which provided access from the hearth area to other parts of the yard. A posthole and a shallow trench like feature located at the north end of the brick pavement could represent the location of such a gate.

Strata 10 and 12 (layers of pea gravel), which were situated at the front of the washhouse building (west side), likely represent a path or paved work area that likely connected the washhouse to the main house. The area in front of the washhouse (west side) contained architectural features identified during the washhouse excavations, such as a building, paths, and a hearth that together functioned as an activity area, most likely dedicated to washing and/or soapmaking.

Architecture Artifacts

Analysis of artifacts related to the architecture of the washhouse can provide details about the building that are not available from historic photographs. The location of windows and doors can be identified and insights into how the building was constructed can be obtained through an analysis of window glass, nails, and architectural hardware.

Door Hardware

The historic photograph of the washhouse shows that a double swinging door was located on the west wall of the building. However, other doors also may have been present (Figure 40). A total of six artifacts related to door hardware was found. They consisted of a metal doorknob, a ceramic doorknob, and four metal hinges. This hardware was recovered primarily from units located along the west wall of the building and units situated just beyond the east wall of the building. One hinge was found near the cistern. The presence of door hardware along the west wall verifies the location of the door depicted in the historic photograph. The distribution of door hardware beyond the east wall supports other evidence for a door at that location, as represented by the previously discussed mortared brick threshold and a brick path.

Window Glass

Though the historic photograph of the washhouse does not show any window locations on the west side of the building, it is likely some windows were associated with this structure (Figure 40). Examination of the distribution of window glass within the excavation area resulted in the identification of four large concentrations to the east of the building and a smaller concentration along its west side (Figure 41). Of these, three (C-1, C-2, C-5) may correspond to the location of windows associated with the washhouse. Concentration C-1 could indicate the location of a window along the east wall near the cistern. Concentration C-2 points to the presence of a window near the southeast corner of the building, either on the east or south walls. Concentration C-5 may represent a small window located near the southwestern corner of the building. Other window glass concentrations (C-3 and C-4) could be associated with the detached kitchen, which was located nearby. Concentration C-3 could be associated with a window located in the south wall of the detached kitchen. Concentration C-4 may represent a dumpsite for architectural debris, such as old or broken windows.

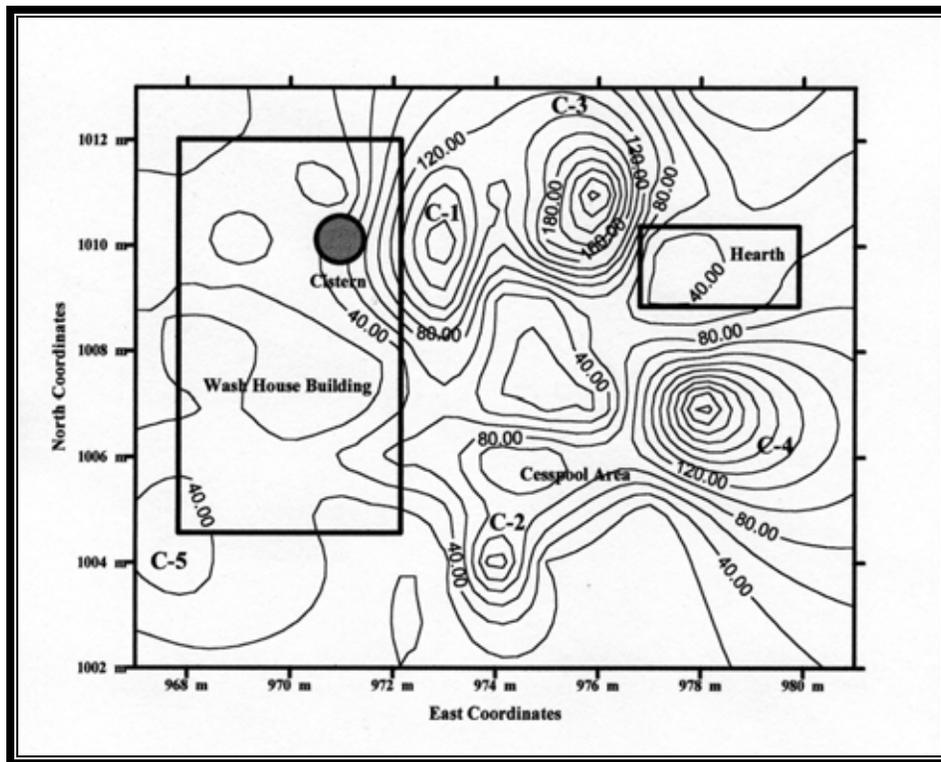


Figure 41. Distribution of All Window Glass at The Washhouse Area.

The distribution of window glass by thickness can provide some chronological information concerning the placement or replacement of the washhouse windows (see discussion of window glass thickness in the Research Methods section). The distribution of the thinnest window glass (≤ 1.19 mm) recovered from the washhouse area, shows one large concentration and two small concentrations (Figure 42). The large concentration corresponds to C-1, a possible window location along the east wall in the north half of the building. Smaller concentrations of this glass size were located along the east wall in the south half of the building near C-2 and just north of the hearth near the location of Concentration C-3 (Figure 42). This distribution of window glass ≤ 1.19 mm in thickness indicates that the window represented by Concentrations C-1 and C-2 were manufactured prior to 1845. This date is much earlier than the construction of the washhouse, which suggests that these windows were salvaged from earlier outbuildings, possibly the detached kitchen (constructed ca. 1840 and demolished ca. 1880). It also confirms that Concentration C-3 was probably associated with the detached kitchen.

The distribution of window glass thicker than 1.58 mm shows two main concentrations that correspond to Concentrations (C-1 and C-4) and a light previously undefined concentration (C-6) (Figure 43). This distribution indicates that these concentrations contain glass that was manufactured after 1845. Since Concentration C-1 also contains window glass that dates prior to 1845, the distribution of window glass thicker than 1.58 mm suggests that an early window in that location could have contained replacement glass from a much later time period. The second main concentration was

identified near Concentration C-4 in the possible dump area of the cesspool (Figure 43). This distribution suggests that glass deposited in the dump was made after 1845.

The light concentration of glass thicker than 1.58 mm does not correspond to any previously identified concentration and was thus, designated C-6. It could represent a small window that dates sometime after 1845.

The distribution of window glass that measures between 1.19 and 1.58 mm shows three main concentrations, corresponding to Concentrations (C-2, C-3, and C-5) (Figure 44). Window glass within this thickness range has no specific date range, but is considered to be rather thin and likely date to at least to the mid-1800s or earlier. These concentrations indicate that some of the representative glass probably dates to the mid-1800s. This distribution suggests that the washhouse windows represented by Concentrations C-2 and C-5 were salvaged from an earlier outbuilding, such as the detached kitchen. It also confirms that window glass represented by Concentration C-3 was likely associated with the detached kitchen.

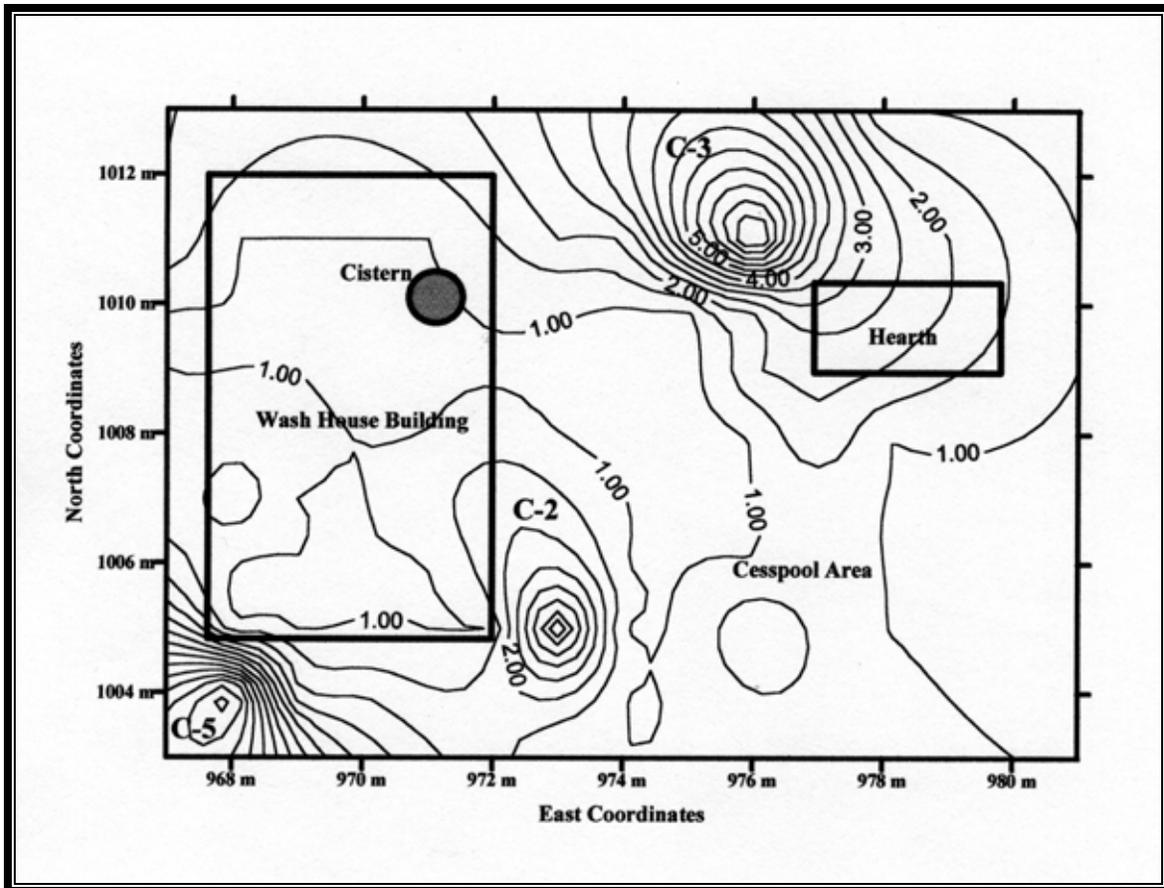


Figure 42. Distribution of Window Glass \leq 1.19 mm Thick.

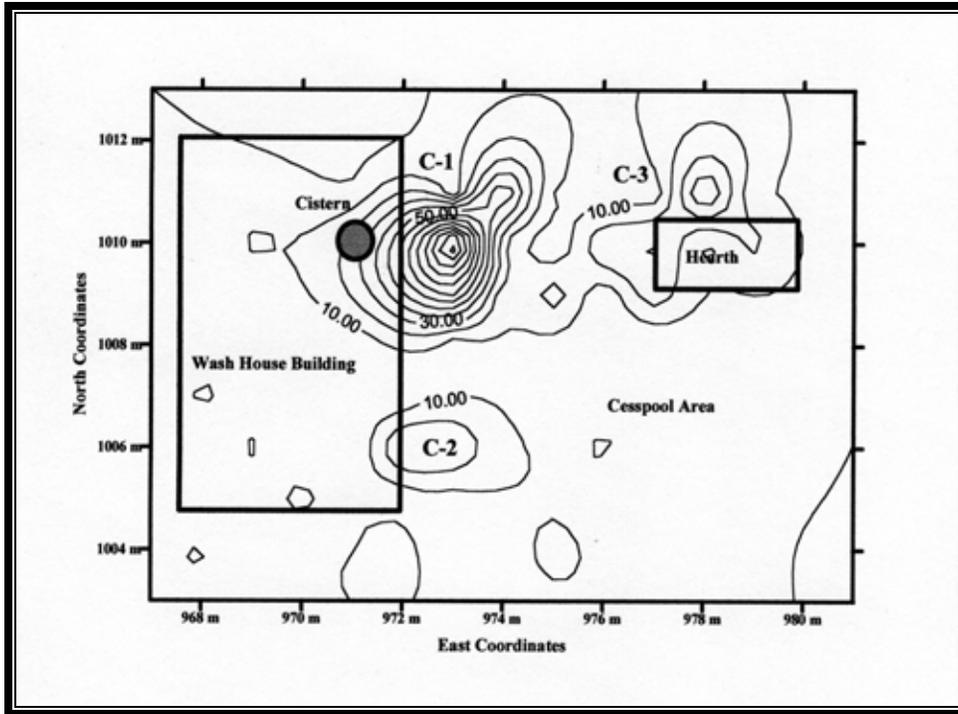


Figure 43. Distribution of Window Glass ≥ 1.58 mm Thick.

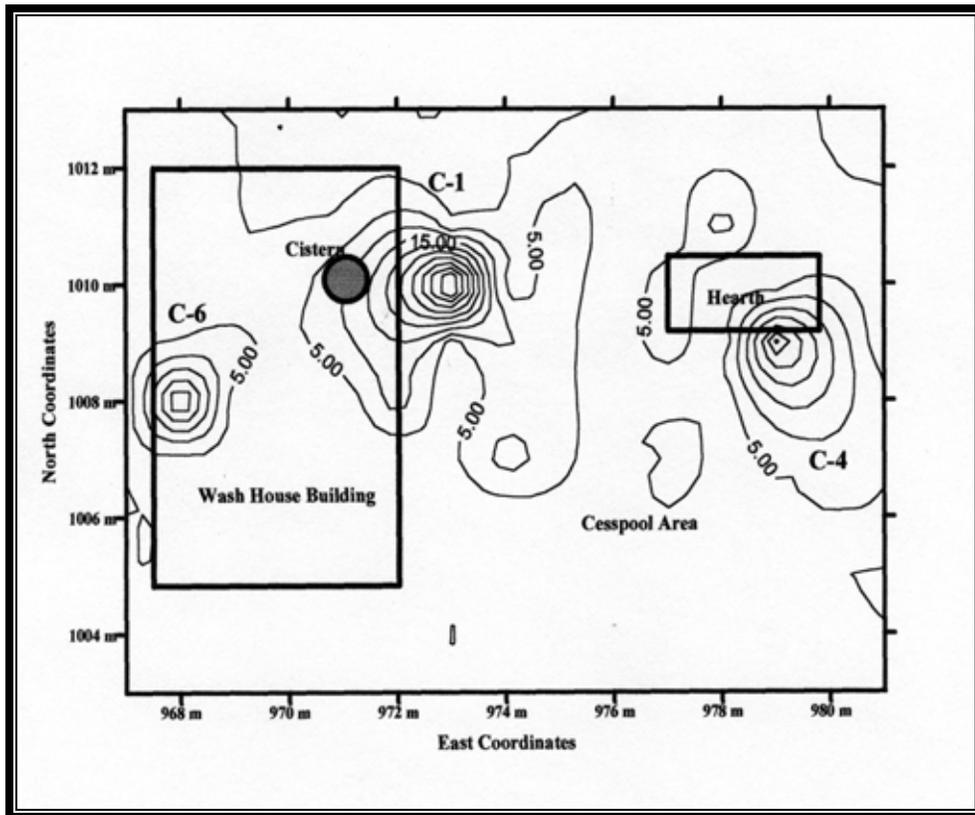


Figure 44. Distribution of Window Glass Between 1.19 and 1.58 mm Thick.

The distribution of the glass by thickness provides information about window chronology and replacements or repairs. A very large concentration (C-1) of window glass was located along the east wall of the building to the north of the doorway defined by the brick threshold near the location of the cistern. Based on the large concentration of thin window glass (<1.19 mm) it is likely that rather early window glass dating prior to 1845 was used in a window at this location. However, based on a large concentration of much thicker window glass (>1.58 mm) at that same location, the window was either replaced entirely or many of the panes had been replaced to repair it later in time (McKelway 1992).

Another large concentration of window glass (C-2) was located along the east wall on the south side of the doorway. Most of the glass in this concentration was rather thin (<1.58 mm), indicating that glass dating to the mid-1800s was used in this window. However, very little thick window glass (>1.58 mm) was found, which suggests that few of the panes had been replaced.

Since the archaeological data and the oral history has placed the construction of the washhouse in the 1880s, it is possible that the windows that date to the early to mid 1800s were salvaged from an earlier outbuilding elsewhere on the property, such as the detached kitchen, and reused in the washhouse. The two windows in the east wall of the building also were likely salvaged from another structure. Furthermore, a window located at the southwest corner of the building, which dates to the mid 1800s, also could have been a window salvaged from an earlier outbuilding.

Summary

Overall, the window glass data indicates the possible locations for several windows in the washhouse and provides a chronology for them. Although no windows are visible along the west wall of the building in the historic photograph, windows do appear to have been located along the east and possibly south wall. It is most likely that a window was located along the east wall near the northeast corner of the building adjacent to the cistern. It also is possible that other windows were located near the southeast corner of the building along the east wall and along the south wall. A small window also may have been located on the west wall near the door, according to Concentration C-6, but it was not visible in the historic photograph.

The window glass data also suggests that most of the window glass used in the washhouse was probably recycled from older outbuildings in the area, most likely the detached kitchen. However, the presence of some late nineteenth century window glass indicates that perhaps some of the panes in the window were replaced at that time.

Some of the window glass concentrations may not be directly associated with the washhouse. A window glass concentration located near the area of the detached kitchen (C-3) was probably associated with that structure and not the washhouse. Also, a concentration near the brick hearth (C-4) suggests that the cesspool may have been used as a dump for some window glass during demolition of the washhouse.

Nails

The historic photograph of the washhouse provides abundant information about the construction and look of the washhouse (Figure 40). Examination of this photograph indicates that the washhouse was a wood frame building with horizontal clapboard siding and possibly a wood shake roof. An analysis of the nails recovered from the washhouse area provides additional information concerning when and how the building was constructed.

A total of 13,417 nails and nail fragments was recovered. Sixty-three percent of the nails were identified for type, while 37 percent were unidentified. The identified nails consisted of nearly an equal amount of wire nails (52 percent) and machine cut nails (47 percent). A small amount (1%) of the nails were identified as wrought. The large amount of wire and machine cut nails indicate that both types were extensively used to construct the washhouse.

Machine cut nail production drastically dropped from the 1880s to 1905, as the production of wire nails increased (Adams 2002). Based on the high percentages of machine cut and wire nails associated with the washhouse, it is likely that the construction of the building took place during the transition between the two types in the late nineteenth century. This date is consistent with the oral history, which indicates that it was built in the 1880s.

Another explanation for the high percentages of both nail types is that the machine cut nails originated from the detached kitchen located next to the washhouse. It is possible that the debris field from the demolition of the detached kitchen extended into the area where the washhouse was built. However, the percentages of machine cut (50%) and wire nails (50%) from the northern portion of the washhouse area were nearly identical to the percentages for the entire washhouse area, with slightly more machine cut nails. The percentages of nail types from the washhouse area were drastically different than percentages for the detached kitchen area, which consisted overwhelmingly of machine cut nails (94%) (Stottman and Watts-Roy 2000). These proportions suggest that most of the nails recovered from the washhouse area were associated with the washhouse building.

The spatial distribution of machine cut nails shows high concentrations within the location of the washhouse building toward the south half of the building and to the east of the building near the brick hearth (Figure 45). The distribution of wire nails indicate that the highest concentrations are located within and southwest of the washhouse (Figure 46). The concentration within and south of the washhouse is most likely associated with debris from the demolition of the building. This distribution indicates that debris from the washhouse was likely deposited in a southward direction when it was demolished. The concentrations of machine cut nails in this area indicate that these nails were likely used in the construction of the washhouse. The concentration of machine cut nails

located east of the washhouse near the brick hearth also was likely associated with the washhouse building, but also could have originated from the debris associated with the demolition of the detached kitchen, which may account for the slightly elevated percentages of machine cut nails in that area. The distribution of wire nails shows no concentration in that area of the site, which suggests that they were primarily associated with the washhouse.

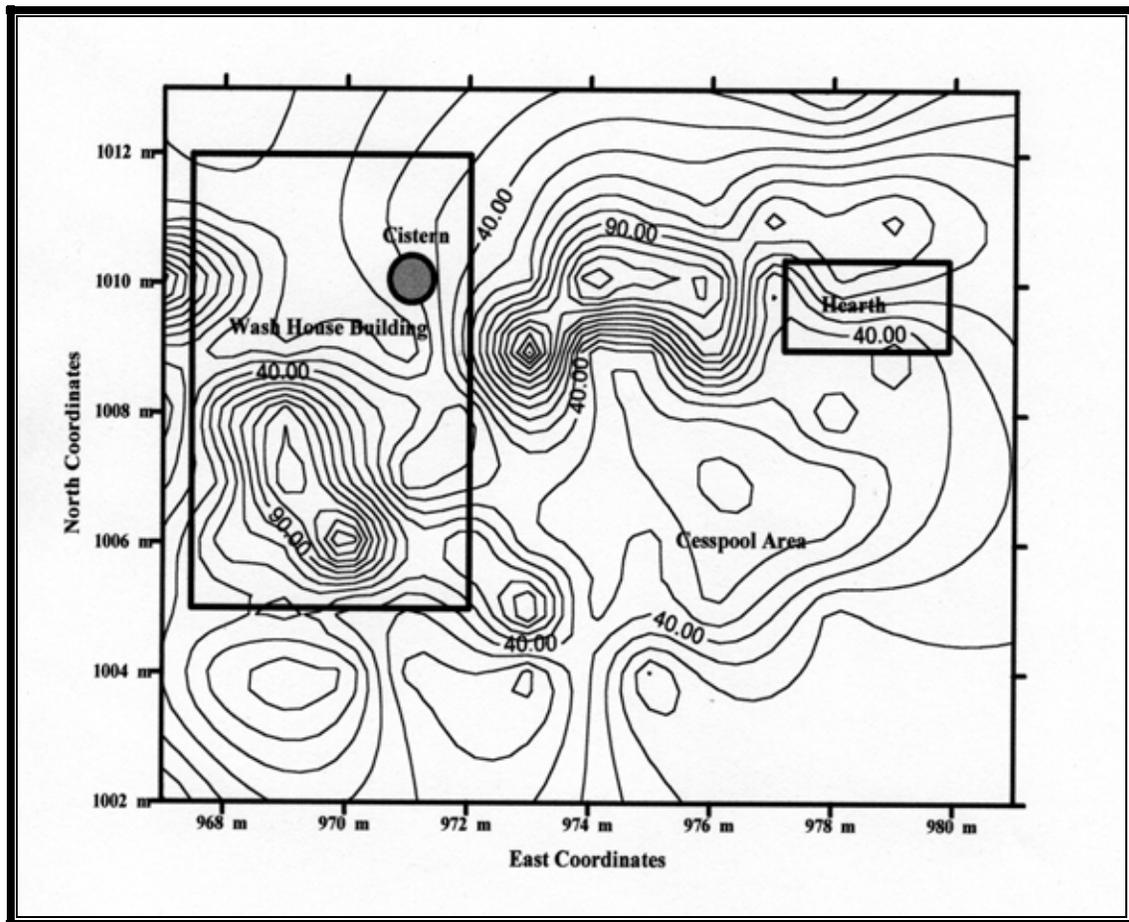


Figure 45. Distribution of Machine Cut Nails.

Examination of the spatial distribution of whole nails by functional categories provided important information concerning the construction of the washhouse building. A total of 2,981 whole nails was recovered from the washhouse excavations. They ranged in size from less than 2d to 80d (Table 39). Almost one third of the nails were classified as siding nails and about one quarter were roofing nails. The remaining nails were associated with framing and flooring (Table 40).

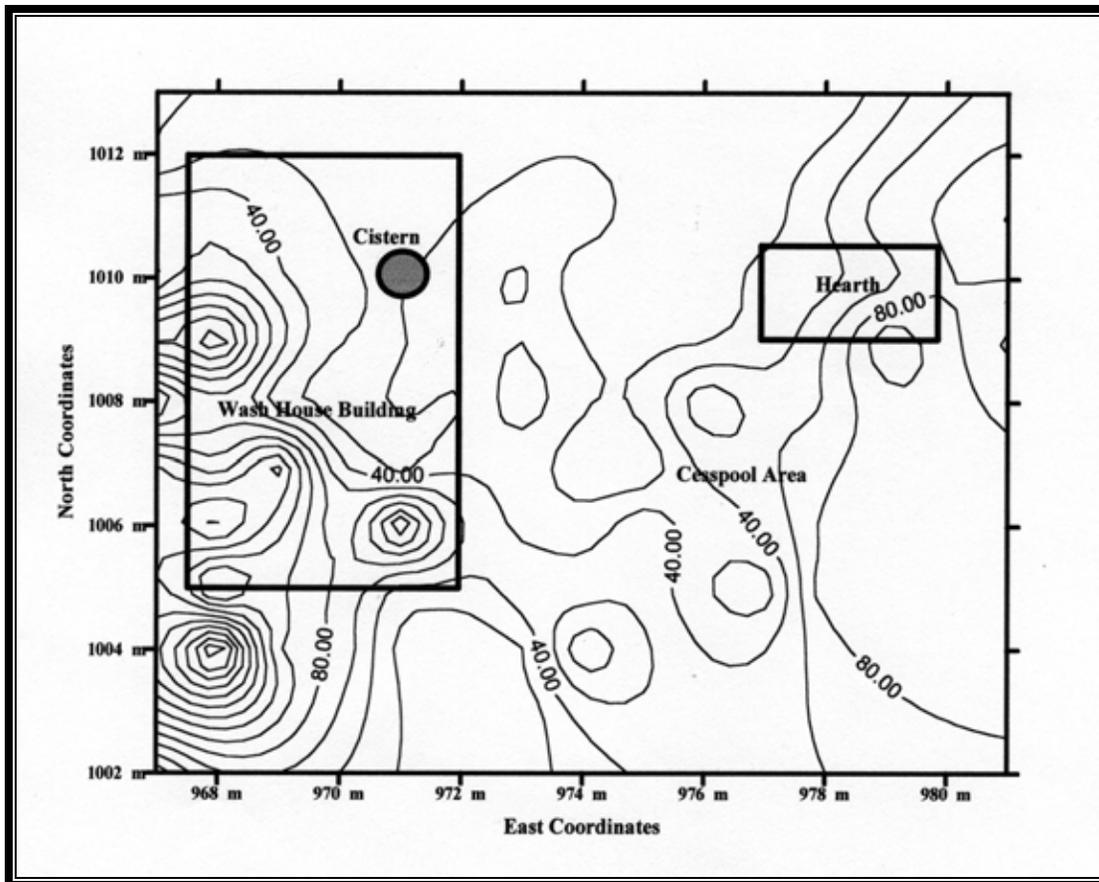


Figure 46. Distribution of Wire Nails.

Table 39. Whole Nail Sizes.

Nail Size (Penny Weight)	Number of Whole Nails	Percentage
2d	213	7.1
3d	147	4.9
4d	201	6.7
5d	226	7.6
6d	390	13.0
7d	231	7.7
8d	362	12.1
9d	399	13.4
10d	183	6.1
12d	177	5.9
16d	155	5.2
20d	163	5.5
30d	83	2.8
40d	19	0.6
50d	20	0.7
60d	1	<.1
70d	9	0.3
80d	2	0.1
Total	2,981	99.8

Table 40. Whole Nail Categories.

Nail Category	Number of Whole Nails	Percentage
Roofing (2d-5d)	787	26.4
Siding (6d-8d)	983	33.0
Flooring (9d-10d)	582	19.5
Framing (12d-80d)	629	21.1
Total	2,981	100.0

The large amount of siding nails verifies the presence of siding, as depicted in the historic photograph (Figure 40). In the nineteenth century it was common for frame outbuildings to have wood siding, particularly horizontal or vertical siding. The large amount of roofing nails was expected, as most buildings required a large number of nails to hold individual roof shingles in place. It is also possible that roofing type nails are over represented in the whole nail assemblage, as shorter nails would probably be less likely to break than longer nails. However, the abundance of roofing nails suggest that the roof was most likely made from wood shingles, as they required a large number of nails to attach each small shingle to the roof. This evidence verifies the roof type depicted in the historic photograph.

While the percentage of flooring nails is less than the roofing or siding types, it still represents a large number (n=582) of nails. The large number of flooring nails, coupled with the absence of a hard packed dirt floor surface, and the lack of a brick floor suggests that the washhouse had a wood floor. Also the style of construction, with the building supported by piers, suggests the presence of a wood floor. This type of floor also would be necessary to cover the clay drainpipe that ran under the building.

The historic photograph of the washhouse suggests that it was a frame structure. The large amount of framing nails recovered from the washhouse area indicates that the building was constructed using the balloon framing technique.

The spatial distribution of whole nails can provide information that aids the interpretation of nail category percentages. Concentrations of nails representative of particular nail categories may be indicative of specific building features, such as a door or window framing (McKelway 1994). Also, the distribution of nail size categories could provide additional information concerning the presence of flooring, siding, and roofing. During this discussion, it must be kept in mind that the observed nail distribution patterns are representative of the time after the washhouse was demolished. The process of demolition certainly has an effect on where nails are discovered in the archaeological record. Thus, the spatial distribution of nails may provide some insight into the demolition of the building.

The spatial distribution of roofing nails is consistent with the placement and use of nails on the roof of a structure. Roofing nails recovered during the excavations were distributed fairly evenly throughout the washhouse area, except along its northern edge, which had fewer roofing nails (Figure 47). The smaller number of roofing nails located along the northern edge tends to confirm the orientation and style of roof used on the structure, as depicted in the historic photograph (Figure 40). It shows that the roof was

slanted from the north to south. It is possible that the orientation of the roof would have produced higher concentration of nails towards the south, down the slant during demolition. The observed pattern could indicate that the structure collapsed towards the south during demolition. A similar distribution of roofing nails was documented in association with the detached kitchen (Stottman and Watts-Roy 2000).

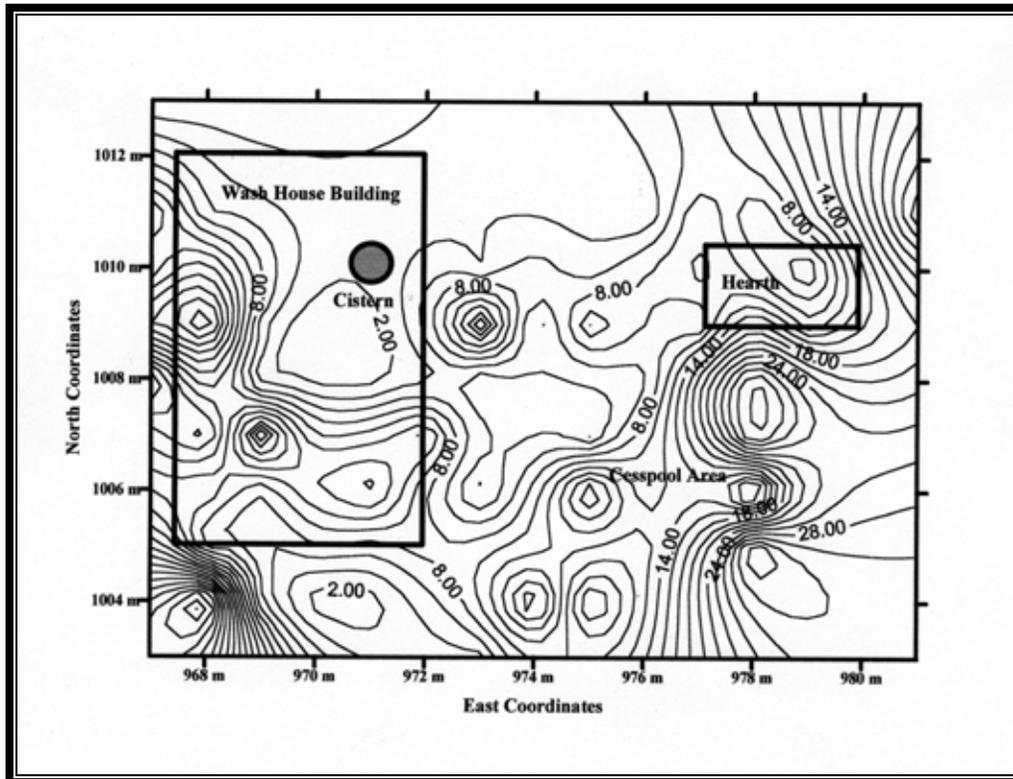


Figure 47. Distribution of Roofing Nails.

The distribution of siding nails across the washhouse area indicates that most of these nails were concentrated around the location of the building's walls, particularly along the western and southwestern sides (Figure 48). Like the roofing nails, it was expected that siding nails would be widely distributed across the site because of their use around the entire structure. The higher concentrations of siding nails close to the washhouse location and towards the southwest may be a result of the demolition of the building. It is likely that the washhouse collapsed towards the southwest, which resulted in the depositing of the siding nails in that area. However, a concentration of siding nails along the eastern wall of the building suggests that parts of that wall may have collapsed in place. The distribution also shows a large amount of siding nails in the southeastern portion of the washhouse site away from the location of the washhouse building. It is possible that these nails were associated with a dump area or even another outbuilding. A nineteenth century smokehouse was located near this portion of the washhouse area. This building appears in the historic photograph, which shows that it had wood siding (Figure 4). A large number of roofing nails found in this area also may be associated with the smokehouse (Figure 47).

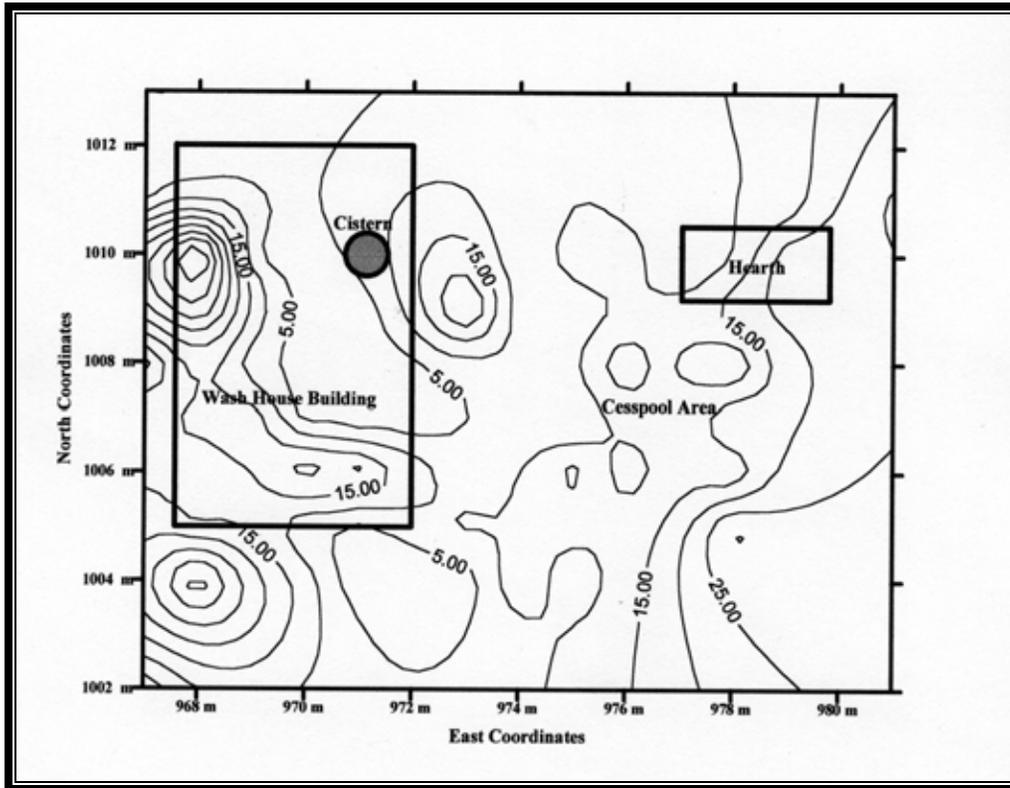


Figure 48. Distribution of Siding Nails.

Flooring nails were found throughout the washhouse area, with concentrations located within the washhouse and near its southwest corner (Figure 49). Flooring nails would be expected within the building, but not outside of it, as was the case for the siding and roofing nails. Since flooring nails are predominately used for the floor, they were placed rather low on the building and concentrations within the immediate washhouse area are directed towards the south and southwest, as were the other nail groups. The concentration of flooring nails within the building lends more evidence to the possibility of the washhouse having a wood floor. As with other nail category distributions, the primary concentrations were towards the southwest, possibly indicating that the washhouse collapsed in that direction during demolition. However, as with the roofing and siding nails a large number of flooring nails were located in the southeastern portion of the washhouse area, which may be associated with dump area for architectural debris from the demolition of the washhouse or with smokehouse.

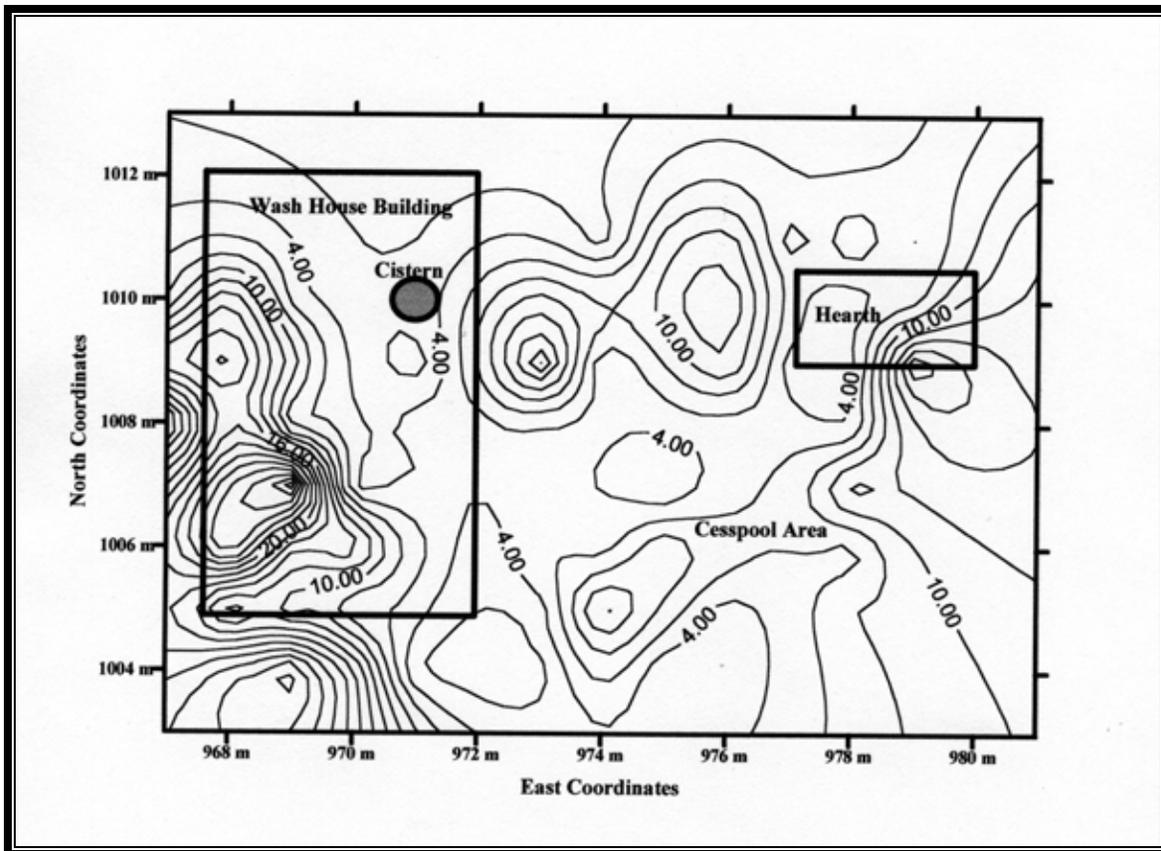


Figure 49. Distribution of Flooring Nails.

The distribution of framing nails shows that concentrations were located along the western wall, southwestern corner, and south wall of the washhouse building (Figure 50). A large number of the framing nails were likely used in the framing of the building, particularly at the corners and along the walls. However, the distribution of the nails is likely more indicative of the collapse of the building towards the south and southwest during its demolition. The concentration of framing nails along the east wall of the building may represent the location of a door or window, which would have been framed out within the wall, most likely using larger framing nails.

A large concentration of framing nails also was located adjacent to the hearth located to the east of the washhouse. This concentration may be representative of a wooden kettle crane or other apparatus used in washing activities. As with the other discussed nail types, a relatively large number of framing nails were found in the southeastern portion of the washhouse area. They also may have originated from a dump area or the nearby smokehouse.

Summary

Overall, the nail data recovered from the washhouse area has provided important information concerning the construction and demolition of the washhouse. The nail types recorded indicate that the washhouse was constructed sometime from the 1880s to 1900 with both machine cut and wire nails. It is possible that some of the older machine cut nails were recycled from other outbuildings. Some of the machine cut nails could have been associated with the demolition of the detached kitchen and possibly the smoke house both located nearby. However, it is possible that the southeastern portion of the washhouse area was used as dump site for architectural debris during the demolition of the washhouse.

Based on the nail functional category data, the washhouse building was probably a balloon frame structure, with a wood floor, siding, and shake roof. This data confirms what is known from the historic photograph of the building. Spatial concentrations of some of the framing nails may correspond to a kettle crane in the area of the brick hearth and the presence of a door or window along the east wall, which corroborates the interpretations from other archaeological data.

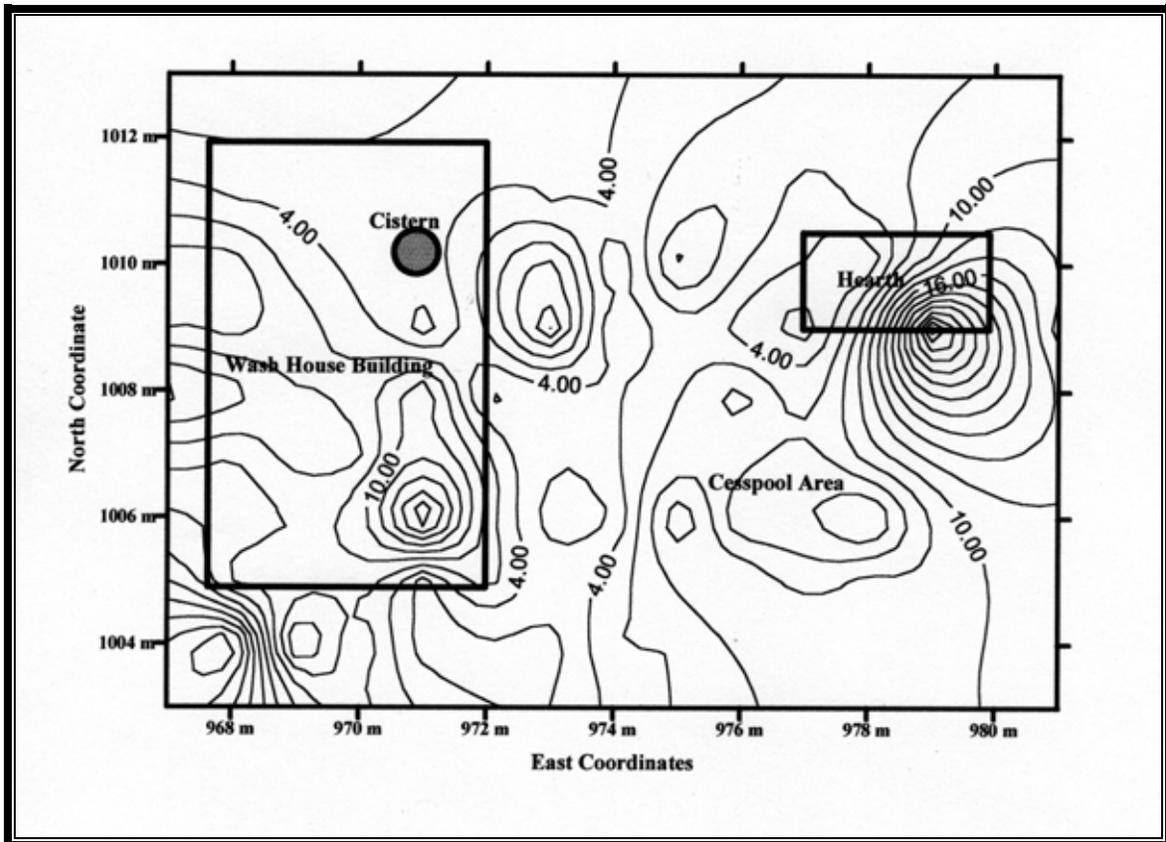


Figure 50. Distribution of Framing Nails.

Architectural Summary and Interpretation

The archaeological architectural data corroborated what was already known about the building from photographic and oral history sources. The washhouse was probably constructed sometime during the 1880s and demolished by the 1920s, with much of the debris falling towards the southwest. The washhouse was a balloon frame building with a wood floor, horizontal siding, and wood shake roof. The building measured approximately 6.1 x 4.6 m (20 x 15 feet). It had a primary foundation of dry-laid brick and stone piers, but also included a partial lime mortared brick foundation.

Doors were located in the middle of the west and east walls. Examination of the photograph indicates that the west wall door was a double swinging door with strap hinges. Based on the length of the mortared brick threshold, the door in the middle of the east wall also was a double door entrance. Windows were located along the east wall near the northeast and southeast corners. A small window also may have been located along the south wall near the southwest corner of the building. A water cistern was located inside of the building, which according to the photograph was fed by an overhead gutter from the main house.

The building included a subfloor drainage system that served not only the washhouse, but also another unknown outbuilding that was located to the west of the washhouse. Though this building may have been the second detached kitchen, this could not be determined. A shallow depression located south of the hearth and east of the building seems to have been an important part of the washhouse complex. This depression was most likely a cesspool that retained wastewater from the drainage system under the washhouse. A subfloor drainage gutter was found at a washhouse excavated at Shakertown of Pleasant Hill (McBride 1995), which represents the only other known washhouse excavation in Kentucky. Perhaps, such drainage systems were common features of washhouses in the Ohio Valley.

Recycled materials obtained from other outbuildings were probably used to construct the washhouse including nails, windows, hardware, wood, and brick. Many of these materials were probably recycled from the detached kitchen, which was demolished just prior to the construction of the washhouse.

Among the other architectural features associated with the washhouse were a brick outdoor hearth and areas of brick pavement. While the brick pavement would have been a walkway that connected different buildings and work areas, the presence of the hearth indicates that outdoor work activities were associated with the building. The brick hearth was rectangular with a brick pavement at the east end. It was large enough to accommodate a very large kettle or possibly two smaller kettles. A pavement at the east end of the hearth may have been a standing pad for workers or could have been a foundation for a small chimney. A posthole located adjacent to the northeast corner of the hearth is most likely the remains of a wooden kettle crane, which indicates the use of

large kettles. A concentration of framing nails located in this same area may be associated with the crane or another wooden apparatus used near the hearth. The brick pavement connected the east doorway of the building to the outdoor hearth. The pavement extended from the hearth towards the north and the location of a fence. A small trench feature with a posthole was found at the terminus of the brick pavement. This feature may be related to fencing visible in the photograph of the washhouse and smoke house, possibly representing the location of a gate.

THE WASH HOUSE COMPLEX

While oral history has always referred to the building in the historic photograph as the “washhouse,” the archaeological excavations conducted at the site suggest that in addition to washing activities it also was used for other activities.

The historically known and most obvious function of the washhouse complex is as a laundry. The artifacts associated with this function were assigned primarily to the clothing functional group. This group includes not only parts of clothing, but also items related to the manufacture, repair, and embellishment of clothing. Most of the clothing group artifacts (n=182) were buttons (n=72). The buttons were very diverse in materials, styles, and function. Materials used in their manufacture included bone (n=9), ceramic (n=25), glass (n=4), shell (n=9), metal (n=5), rubber (n=1), and plastic (n=19). Most of the ceramic and glass buttons were probably associated with under garments or women’s garments, while others were likely associated with men’s shirts, pants, and coats. The variety of buttons may be an indication of the laundry function of the washhouse complex, as clothing from all members of the Moremen household would have been washed, pressed, and mended there. Other clothing artifacts recovered included buckles, clasps, hook and eyes, belt fragments, straight pins, safety pins, part of a clothes iron, and a thimble.

The recovery of other artifact groups, suggests that other domestic activities were undertaken in the washhouse area. The large amount of kitchen group artifacts (n=2,783) is somewhat unexpected at a laundry. These artifacts included mostly glass bottle and jar fragments, and ceramic sherds. Large amounts of these artifacts are typically associated with kitchens and other areas of houses, where dining and food preparation took place. Perhaps some of the kitchen items, such as stoneware crocks or glass bottles and jars, were used in association with a laundry to store soaps, detergents, or sewing supplies. However, the large amount of kitchen group artifacts is probably more indicative of the area’s use for washing dishes. In fact, it is likely that most washing activities took place in the washhouse area, including washing clothes and dishes, and possibly personal bathing. It also is possible that many kitchen group artifacts were dumped in the washhouse area when the building was demolished.

Other artifacts, such as personal and entertainment items, which included marbles and doll parts, were recovered from the washhouse area. The presence of these artifacts suggests that perhaps activities related to childcare also took place in the vicinity of the washhouse. Overall, the artifacts from the washhouse seem to represent a wide range of

activities and functions, which are probably more indicative of a work yard, than a building with a specific function. The archaeological evidence indicates that the washhouse had several functions and was not dedicated solely to washing. In essence, the washhouse is most viewed as a domestic outbuilding that served a variety of functions.

To summarize, the archaeological evidence indicates that washing activities at Riverside during the late nineteenth century were not confined solely to the building and extended to the yard spaces around it. The outdoor hearth suggests that a large part of the washing duties, such as heating water, took place beyond the building. The large amount of domestic artifacts, such as kitchen, personal, and activities group artifacts, suggests that the area was used for much more than a laundry. It is likely more appropriate to refer to the washhouse and its yard area as the washhouse complex.

This lack of an exclusive washhouse building seems to be common in the historical literature concerning washing and laundry activities (Kennedy and Macintire 1999). As previously mentioned, a small frame outbuilding was identified as a possible washhouse on the Issac Miller Farm in Spencer County, but buildings labeled as such are rare. Even at the Pleasant Hill Shaker community in Mercer County, where each family group had its own washhouse, other activities, such as making soap and candles, are indicated in the documentary and anthropological records as having taken place at the washhouse (McBride 1995). Washing and laundry activities were usually incorporated into other outbuildings, like kitchens and springhouses. The previously mentioned springhouse at the John Herr House in Jefferson County is a prime example of an outbuilding with an incorporated laundry (Figure 5). Vlach (1993) illustrated several examples of laundries in his discussion of plantation outbuildings, but he makes no mention of buildings specifically used for that purpose. Instead Vlach (1993:34) discusses laundry activities in the context of the plantation yard. He states:

Because the structures surrounding the yard routinely included at least the kitchen, dairy, smokehouse, and well, it follows that cooking meals and cleaning up were the most common chores performed there. Furthermore, given the scale of cooking and cleaning on the larger plantations, much of that work had to be done in the yard. The yard, then, served as an extension of the kitchen and laundry.

At nineteenth century domestic sites, it is likely that the laundry activities were conducted just about anywhere water and a place to heat it was available. This may answer a question that arose when conducting this research, where was the washing done at Riverside prior to the construction of the washhouse in the 1880s? The detached kitchen and surrounding yard most likely served as the Antebellum laundry facility. The kitchen provided a place to heat water and the adjacent yard the space to do the work. Artifacts associated with this activity, such as, a large amount of clothing artifacts (buttons, pins, clasps, and buckles) and a part of a clothes iron was recovered from the detached kitchen site (Stottman and Watts-Roy 2000). After the demolition of the detached kitchen the cooking and cleaning aspects of domestic work were separated, as a

new detached kitchen was built south of the main house and the former kitchen area became the washhouse complex.

With this in mind, it is unlikely that the so-called washhouse at Riverside was dedicated exclusively for laundry activities. It is more likely that the structure was an elaborate superstructure for the cistern, where occasionally some washing could be done. The bulk of the laundry activities probably took place behind the structure in the yard. Rachel Moremen, the daughter of Israel and Nannie Moremen, described her home at Riverside in the early 1900s. Her description provides a rather romanticized view of work undertaken in the vicinity of the washhouse:

As one rides down the lane, one can catch a glimpse of the red roof of the house over the green tree tops and the many outhouses, which give one the idea that there is a little village, or that the time before the Civil War has come back, with the pickininnies playing about the door steps and their mothers crooning a doleful melody over their washtubs (Moremen 1904).

Inherently connected to laundry activities and the yard was the task of making soap. “The yard was the place where big jobs, such as, soapmaking and candlemaking was done” (Vlach 1993:34). “Soapmaking also required a collective effort; a gang of slaves was needed to lift the kettles, to keep fires burning, and to carry out the various stages of production.” A former slave (Marie Askins Simpson) in Missouri, recalled the process (Rawick et al. 1977:231-232; Vlach 1993:34):

The ash-hopper was made of boards, a sort of trough that was set slant-wise over a big iron kettle. The wood ashes from the fireplace were dumped into this hopper. Hot water was poured over the ashes and they drained down into the kettle. It dripped slowly. When we though the lye was strong enough, we got a turkey feather...and if the lye from the hopper was strong enough it would eat up the turkey feather. Then the fire was started under the kettle. Into this big kettle of boiling ash-lye, we stirred in “cracklin”. This was the fried out fats left over from hog killin’. Old meat rinds, old meats that had turned strong, any kind of fat meat that was not used to eat, was thrown in to this hot boiling lye. When the meat did not melt any more we know that there was enough fat in the lye to make soap. This was boiled down until it got “ropey”. We tested it by dripping some of it in cold water. If it floated on top, it wasn’t done. If it sunk to the bottom, we pulled the fire from under it and let get cold. That was called hard soap. Next day, it was cut into chunks, placed on boards and put in the smoke house or attic to dry.

There is a long history of soapmaking at Riverside. The Moremen family was known to make large amounts of soap to trade with passing riverboats, which inspired Riverside’s nickname of “Soap Landing.” A 1890s family cookbook featured two recipes for making soap (Linn and Neary 1999). In a memoir, Horace Moremen (n.d.:2)

describes his mother Rachel's soap making operation at Glen Fount, the Moremen's first home in Brandenburg.

We had what was called an ash hopper in a little house to itself and all the ashes from all the fires were brought and put in that ash hopper. It was wide at the top and came to a point at the bottom and under it was a trough to catch the lye and carry it to a barrel and at the proper time for making soap, water was poured on the ashes and the lye was boiled in the kettle till it was strong enough to make soap and my mother always had barrels of soap, both hard and soft.

It is probable that the hearth behind the washhouse served as the main soap making area at Riverside, as Rachel continued the Moremen soap making tradition. However, it is also possible that the two fire pit features (Features 12 and 13) could have served as hearths for kettles used in soapmaking. Vlach (1993:34) notes: "the soap made on plantations was, of course, intended to be used for washing clothes or dirty dishes. Much of this washing would be done in the same iron kettles used to make the soap or in large wooden tubs kept in the yard." The fire pits were both linear and featured a line of burned clay, indicating that they were used to contain fire. The northern most fire pit (Feature 12) contained remains of a large charred log, and bricks arranged in such a manner as to support the burning wood. Figure 51 is a photograph of a plantation yard in Texas, which shows how kettles could have been hung over linear fire pits.



Figure 51. Kettles Over a Linear Fire Pit at Seward Home in Texas (Vlach 1993).

The fire pits may have been used in addition to the brick outdoor hearth to accommodate the large volume of soap that was to be made. However, since these features date to the twentieth century, they also could have been used to produce wood ash to make lye as part of the soap making process. At that time, coal was the main fuel for Riverside's fireplaces and wood ash may not have been as plentiful on the farm as it was during the nineteenth century. These two features illustrate the continual evolution and use of the yard as a laundry and soapmaking facility.

Washhouse Complex Summary

While the archaeological investigations of the Riverside washhouse area have generated new information concerning the architecture of the washhouse, this research also indicated that the task of washing was not exclusive to this building. Several features, such as the brick hearth (Feature 1) and two fire pits (Features 12 and 13), suggest that washing activities also took place outside. The washhouse and associated activity area might be more appropriately referred to as the washhouse complex, which included a building, water source, a heat source, and space to do the work. Architectural studies of plantation outbuildings indicate that it was rare for washing activities to be housed in a structure dedicated for that purpose (Kennedy and Macintire 1999; Vlach 1993). Washing activities or laundries were often housed in buildings used for other purposes, such as kitchens or springhouses, or took place in the yard (Vlach 1993). It appears that washing activities at Riverside took place within a building and in the yard. However, it is not likely that the washhouse was exclusively used for washing. This building was probably a multipurpose work building that was mainly used for washing, hence its designation as "washhouse" by generations of Moremen family members.

Aside from washing tasks, such as washing clothes and dishes, the washhouse complex was the location for a variety of other work. The outdoor hearth and fire pits were likely associated with soapmaking, as well as, washing. The Moremen family was known for their soapmaking and it is believed that it was an important activity at Riverside. Furthermore, clothing related artifacts found in the washhouse area suggests that the mending and pressing of clothes was done there. The presence of children's toys indicates that the washhouse area also functioned as a regular yard where children played or were minded by workers. Based on the historic photograph of the washhouse (Figure 40), it appears that the yard around the building also was used for keeping fowl.

WORKING AT THE WASHHOUSE

Historical accounts indicate that washing was one of the most arduous chores on a plantation. A slave from Georgia recalled: "We took the clothes out'n the suds, soaped'em good and put'em on the block and beat'em with a battlin' stick, which waz made lak a paddle. On wash days you could hear them battlin' sticks pundin' every which way" (Fox-Genovese 1988:168; Vlach 1993:35). The task of doing laundry on a plantation was typically assigned to slave women. In many cases, the work of washing and ironing clothes was so demanding that it left little time for other tasks and had its

own title. The title laundress was commonly used for those who performed the washing and ironing duties. Ironing clothes was a particularly skilled task. Buttons were easily broken off during ironing and it was demanding work to press clothing to the standards of the plantation mistress (Fox-Genovese 1988:165). The duties of the laundress also included sewing on buttons and mending clothing in general. While the plantation mistress participated in many aspects of the domestic work, particularly the manufacturing of clothing, they did not typically do laundry or wash dishes (Clinton 1982:26).

In the Antebellum South, the task of washing was the work of enslaved African-American women. This was likely the case at Riverside prior to the construction of the washhouse. Riverside's slaves likely performed washing in or around the detached kitchen and associated yard. Several of Farnsley's (n=14) and later Moremen's (n=23) enslaved African Americans probably did this work. After the demise of the detached kitchen, sometime in the 1870s, the task of washing at Riverside changed. The washhouse complex was created, and there were no longer slaves to do the unwanted chore of washing. However, the title and work of the laundress often followed slaves into the world of Postbellum America. African-American women washed clothes for a living in the cities, farms, and occasionally on their former plantations. Despite being paid for the work, washing was still a task that was not desired by most women and it was very difficult to make a living by doing it.

Although laundering involved little in the way of equipment or initial investment, it hardly paid a woman a reasonable wage for her considerable expenditure of energy. Most women made no more than a couple of dollars a week for work that was exceedingly heavy and hot, and especially unpleasant in the South's already steamy climate. A woman would usually collect clothes on a Monday from two or three families. She set up a large pot in the yard of her house and instructed the children to help her draw water. The clothes had to be boiled in the pot, scrubbed on a washboard, rinsed, starched, wrung out, hung up and ironed (Jones 1985:125).

Paid servants or tenants likely did washing at Postbellum Riverside. However, it is unclear to what extent the former plantation mistress, Rachel Moremen, participated in this activity (Figure 52). There is evidence that Mrs. Moremen did not shy from the domestic tasks at Riverside. In the 1880 U.S. Census, Rachel Moremen was listed as 68 years old and keeping house. Moremen family members recalled her domestic abilities. "My mother was not quite sixteen when she married but she knew about cooking, weaving, and spinning, knitting, and sewing" (Horace Moremen n.d.:1). Rachel also had recipes for making soap. These recollections demonstrate that Rachel, at least had knowledge of the domestic work. Whether she actually performed much of the work herself or not, she at least wanted to give the impression that she did. The family history and photographs seem to suggest that domestic work was a part of life for Moremen women and that it was a part of her identity. The photograph of Rachel in the yard with

her fowl, and the washhouse and smokehouse in the background (Figures 4 and 40) certainly give the impression of her domestic work.

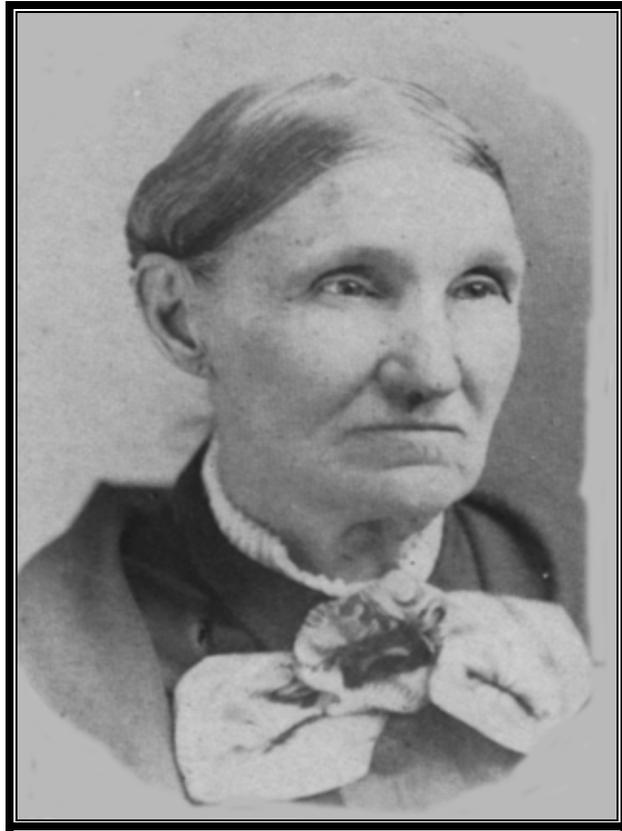


Figure 52. Photograph of Rachel Moremen ca. 1870.

Historical records and oral history suggest that Mrs. Moremen enlisted the help of family members and servants to help with the daily domestic and agricultural tasks associated with running a farm. In 1880, there were a variety of people who could have assisted her (Table 41). Although Alanson and Rachel were rather elderly (76 and 68 years old, respectively) at this point in time, some of their children and grandchildren were living at Riverside. Son, Israel Putnam Moremen helped, if not, ran the agricultural operation. He eventually owned the property by 1886 shortly after his marriage to Nannie Storts in December of 1885. Elizabeth Graham, a daughter of Alanson and Rachel, also lived on the farm. Her husband Robert was listed in the 1870 U.S. Census as a tobacco grower on Moremen's property. It is possible that Robert passed away and Elizabeth stayed with her parents at Riverside, along with her youngest child Roberta. It is likely that both Elizabeth and Roberta would have helped with the daily domestic chores. Additionally, Nannie Storts also would have helped and even taken charge of the domestic chores, as Israel took control of the farm. A ca. 1900 photograph of Nannie with a mixing bowl near the icehouse (Figure 53) implies that she too participated in the domestic work. The photographs of both Rachel and Nannie present a domestic image for the Moremen family women, which seem to be a part of their identity on the farm.

Table 41. 1880 U.S. Census for Riverside.

Name	Race	Sex	Age	Notes
Alanson Moremen	W	M	76	Farmer
Rachel Moremen	W	F	68	Wife, keeping house
I.P. Moremen	W	M	24	Son, Farmer
Elizabeth Graham	W	F	47	At home
Roberta Graham	W	F	12	Daughter of Elizabeth
Kittie Thomas	B	F	41	Servant, Illiterate
Dick Thomas	B	M	44	Farm Laborer, Illiterate
Bettie Thomas	B	F	15	Daughter at home
Ana Thomas	B	F	13	N/A
Willis Thomas	B	M	11	Illiterate, has tuberculosis
Lulu Bell Thomas	B	F	9	Illiterate
Charlie Thomas	B	M	5	Illiterate
Kate Thomas	B	F	4	Illiterate
Rosaela Thomas	B	F	2	Illiterate

According to the Census, several of Alanson and Rachel’s oldest children lived and farmed on other parts of the Moremen Family’s sprawling 1,500-acre farm. While these children were important to the agricultural operation, they probably had little to do with the domestic activities at their parent’s house. Although the Moremen women likely performed domestic work, African-American servants likely performed the bulk of the domestic chores at Riverside.



Figure 53. Ca. 1900 Photograph of Nannie Storts Moremen in the Yard Near the Icehouse.

According to the 1880 U.S. Census, there were nine African-Americans living with the Moremen family at that time. All of them were members of the Thomas family headed by Dick and Kittie (Table 41). It is possible that Dick and Kittie were once slaves owned by the Moremen family (Figure 54). Moremen family oral history refers to Kittie as Kittie (Kitty) “Moremen” Thomas, which is an indication of her close connection to the family. She also appears in the signature Moremen family photograph from ca. 1870 (Figure 3) and a subsequent family photo (Figure 55). This information demonstrates that there was a long connection between the Thomas and Moremen families that may have been established through slavery. Kittie was listed as a servant in the Census records and likely performed domestic work, such as cooking and washing. While Dick Thomas was listed in the Census as a farm laborer and probably worked with Israel in the agricultural operation, he also may have been a servant. A 1890s photograph of an African-American male servant at Riverside could have been Dick Thomas or one of his sons (Figure 56). According to Rachel Nannie Moremen, her mother (Nannie Storts Moremen) described the man pictured as the “cook” who made meals for the Moremen family from the 1880s to the turn of the century.

In sum, the reality of domestic work, particularly washing, at Riverside after slavery required the work of non slaves. Servants and family members likely performed the domestic duties and the most undesirable of those was probably washing. It is quite possible that Kittie Thomas and perhaps some of her children took on washing tasks. Kittie was possibly a former slave at Riverside who ascended to family status amongst the Moremen family. However, such status did not preclude the Thomas family from doing the most undesirable work on the farm.



Figure 54. Ca. 1910s Photograph of Possibly Dick and Kittie Moremen Thomas.



Figure 55. The Moremen Family in 1907, Kittie Moremen Thomas is Seated at Far Left.



Figure 56. Ca. 1890s Photograph of an African-American "Cook" or Servant.

CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological research conducted at the Riverside washhouse has produced important information about the architecture of this building. During the course of this study much more was learned about the function of the building, the use of the associated yard, and the people who once worked in this area. Furthermore, this research generated new insights into the transition from plantation and slavery to Postbellum farm life without slavery. The washhouse excavation represents the second phase of a long-term research project that is focused on understanding and interpreting Riverside's outbuilding complex.

Based on the architectural features found, such as pier supports and a brick door threshold, and the analysis of nails and window glass, the washhouse building was a wood frame structure that measured 6.1 x 4.6 m (20 x 15 feet). It was built in the 1880s and was probably demolished in the 1920s. A sub-floor drainage system and a cistern within the building are indicative of its function for washing. However, other outdoor features, such as linear fire pits, a brick path, brick hearth, post holes, and cesspool, indicate that washing and other activities, such as soapmaking also took place in the yard surrounding the building. In essence, the washhouse and associated yard was a washhouse complex that included the building, outdoor hearth, a cesspool, and workspace.

Furthermore, the information indicates that members of the Moremen family and their African-American tenants performed the many duties that took place in the washhouse complex.

With the abundance of information available, it seems that it would be relatively easy to reconstruct an accurate facsimile of the washhouse at its original location. The abundant archaeological data and a photograph of the building provide enough information to accurately represent not only the size, materials, and construction of the washhouse building, but also its look and style. However, there are some issues that make the reconstruction and interpretation of this structure more difficult within the context of the Riverside outbuilding complex. The proximity of the detached kitchen to the washhouse complex, the dates of the building, and multifunctional aspects of the complex will need to be considered in deciding how to reconstruct and interpret the washhouse area.

Based on the archaeological data, the washhouse building and its yard features were not contemporaneous with the nearby detached kitchen. The washhouse complex post-dates the detached kitchen and archaeological evidence. The window glass and nail analysis, suggests that parts of the washhouse were likely constructed with salvaged materials from the detached kitchen. So, this begs the question of should the washhouse building be reconstructed and how should the washhouse complex be interpreted?

Issues that should be considered in deciding whether or not to reconstruct and interpret the washhouse complex are presented here:

1. The detached kitchen and washhouse building never existed contemporaneously. Should their reconstructions exist contemporaneously?
2. Should these two buildings be reconstructed in their original location, which would essentially put the buildings very close to each other?
3. Can and should the washhouse complex outdoor brick hearth be displayed and interpreted, although it is located very close to the reconstructed detached kitchen's south wall?
4. If nothing from the washhouse complex is reconstructed, how can it be interpreted and presented to the public?
5. Since the washhouse complex represents the post-1880s period, how does it fit with Riverside's overall interpretation? How should this period be interpreted and presented, if at all?
6. The washhouse complex contains evidence of soapmaking at Riverside. Should this evidence, and soapmaking in general at Riverside, be interpreted for the public?

While there is a precedent for the interpretation of non-contemporaneous buildings or structures at Riverside (kitchen and windmill are examples), the close proximity of the washhouse to the reconstructed detached kitchen presents some major logistical and interpretive problems. If reconstructed, the washhouse would be located in very close proximity to the reconstructed detached kitchen and may in places obscure the kitchen. This would present problems during the reconstruction and the result could affect the condition of the detached kitchen. The close proximity of the detached kitchen could inhibit the construction of the washhouse. Conversely, the reconstruction of the washhouse could affect drainage in the area and promote water wicking and rot in the detached kitchen.

The reconstruction also would affect the interpretive context of the detached kitchen. With the washhouse so close to the kitchen, sight lines would be obscured and the awkward appearance of the structures together would have to be explained to the public. Thus, the reconstruction of the washhouse may not contribute to the interpretation and presentation of the Riverside's outbuilding complex.

As with the reconstruction of the washhouse building, the display of the outdoor brick hearth also presents some logistical problems. While its close proximity to the south wall of the detached kitchen does not significantly affect the sight lines and interpretive context of the kitchen, it could affect drainage and the condition of the structure. Furthermore, the close proximity to the kitchen's drip line may adversely affect the display of the hearth through erosion and degradation of the brick. However,

despite some potential problems, it is possible to display the outdoor brick hearth, if the logistical concerns are addressed.

With regards to the interpretation of the washhouse complex, it is quite possible to interpret and exhibit the washhouse area and its rich history without reconstructing the building or displaying archaeological features. An effective method for discussing the washhouse complex is through the use of signage. A well-conceived and constructed sign in the area of the washhouse could utilize simple text and interesting images to tell the story of the washhouse, the Postbellum period, and the people who worked there. It is important to tell the whole story of the outbuildings, although the turn of the twentieth century period may not be the focus of Riverside's interpretation. A sign could help visitors understand how Riverside changed following the end of the Civil War, without disturbing the Antebellum feel of the detached kitchen. The highlight of the signage could be soapmaking, which has historical and archaeological correlates. Riverside was known, as "soap landing" for a time in the late nineteenth century and soapmaking seems to be an important feature of the Moremen family's tenure at the site. This aspect of Riverside's history could be enhanced with soapmaking demonstrations in the washhouse area, where it historically took place. Supplemental signage could focus on the soapmaking process. Furthermore, modern signage would be consistent and could be complimentary to the modern pathway system installed between the kitchen and main house. It is hoped that the information presented in this report will help assist everyone involved with Riverside in making informed decisions concerning how to interpret and manage this important historic and archaeological property.

Although this report is focused on the research conducted in the washhouse area, archaeology at Riverside is as much about public involvement as it is about recovering information. As with the detached kitchen archaeological research and architectural reconstruction project, the investigation of the washhouse involved the public. The entire washhouse was excavated during archaeology weekends, heritage festivals, and the Building Blocks of History educational program. Thousands of school children and adult volunteers worked diligently to complete the excavations. Through the project, the public developed a vested interest in the washhouse and the Kentucky Archaeological Survey's research. The washhouse project demonstrates that the innovative public programming developed during the detached kitchen project can be continued and expanded upon with great success. The public continues to be an integral part of the research conducted at Riverside, which in turn connects them with their history.

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