

New Africa

Understanding the Americanization of African Descent Groups through Archaeology

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This chapter is about convergence between archaeological research, descendant communities in Maryland, and several individual and cultural histories. It begins at the Banneker-Douglass Museum of African American History and Culture in Annapolis, Maryland, and ends at the plantation where Frederick Douglass, the museum's more famous namesake, was enslaved as a boy on Maryland's Eastern Shore. A story is created that is at once remarkably humanistic while founded on archaeology and spirituality. Once considered separate, they are now shown to be linked.

In 1990, Mark Leone formed a collaborative partnership between his Archaeology in Annapolis program and African American institutions and professionals in the city of Annapolis. The impetus for this partnership had developed while Leone was teaching at the University of Cape Town in 1988. He was taught, in turn, the importance of historical archaeology in establishing non-propagandistic explanations for the origins of European claims to the land of South Africa. That exposure to the importance of archaeology in South Africa began a movement toward the archaeology of people of African descent in Maryland. In 1990, then-associate director of the Banneker-Douglass Museum, Barbara Jackson (Nash), asked Leone: "What's left from Africa?" (see

Cuddy 2005). In that question was born “a discursive relationship between past and present peoples and between researchers and community partners” (Wilkie and Bartoy 2000:747). This chapter describes some of the results of that partnership, looking at evidence for past spirituality and racial discourse in African American archaeology.

History is full of holes, and where there are holes, conceptually and literally, the dominant discourse—generally a Eurocentric one—tends to take precedence. Archaeology of African American groups faces the challenges of investigating historically poor or disfranchised people (Barile 2004; Leone 1995; see also chapter 10). However, African American archaeology has come of age in a new era. Archaeologists now prefer to showcase the nature of the people they study and not simply focus on material culture, origins of institutions, or authoritative sciences. We no longer need to reiterate that the past is only meaningful to us today (e.g., Potter 1994) or that archaeologists should work closely with their constituencies (Watkins et al. 2000; Wilkie 2004). The challenge for archaeologists now is the middle ground, understanding the historical contexts of modern African American identities. Nowhere is identity more profoundly expressed than in religious or spiritual settings.

The collaboration that began in 1990 resulted in the Banneker-Douglass Museum’s utilization of Leone and his students’ interests, but the quest among African Americans in Annapolis to use archaeology had begun long before then. Like the South Africans, African Americans in Annapolis wanted to know what was below and beside the houses they and their ancestors had lived in. They wanted to know how long they had been middle class, how their earlier generations had beaten slavery, and how they protected themselves. They wanted to know how the most recent generations had beaten racism, the African parts of their culture, and the origins of their fervent Christianity in the churches so prominent among them.

African American historical archaeology in Maryland begins with nation building, a claim concerning a true identity, the assertion of heritage, and a belief that materials excavated by archaeologists will validate or even proclaim long-sought truths. Among the Africans and African Americans we have worked with, there is a clear understanding that what is in the ground, when used by sympathetic scientists, will right wrongs. The questions to be asked of archaeology have always been clear, and the scientific methods, or ontology,

of archaeological knowledge are accepted. For African Americans in Annapolis and on Maryland’s Eastern Shore, there is a profound acceptance of the ability of archaeology to work for goals of social equity, if the archaeologist wants it that way. The dialogue is not about the meaning of archaeology as a process but of the motivations of the archaeologists who do the work. Once one doesn’t have to negotiate scientific evidence, then one can negotiate race and racism instead. Only through such an understanding can research into closely held aspects of cultural identity like religious and spiritual beliefs be successful.

The recent exhibit *Deep Roots, Rising Waters* at the Banneker-Douglass Museum is an attempt to forge a modern context for African American Annapolis. The museum occupies the historic Mount Moriah African Methodist Episcopal church on Franklin Street. The Museum’s namesakes include Benjamin Banneker, considered the first African American man of science. The more renowned Frederick Douglass is recognized as America’s most distinguished anti-slavery activist. Douglass was born a slave on the Lloyd plantation on Maryland’s Eastern Shore but ultimately escaped to freedom in the North and wrote about it (Douglass 1994 [1845], 1994 [1855]). Douglass’s writings show he was clearly a Christian adherent but also suggest there may be much more to the spiritual world of African Americans and slaves of the nineteenth century.

Answers to what is left from Africa can be found in African American spirituality. This chapter centers on discoveries of unique creations African Americans have produced in their search for spiritual empowerment and meaning (Chireau 2003). Human spirituality is complex, encompassing people’s fears, needs, and desires about the world and their place in it. Spirituality can operate at many levels—personal and public, intellectual and emotional—and often serves to explain phenomena that defy ready understanding. In the modern world, religion and beliefs about life and death are formative elements of social identity, and an active force in the social reproduction of reality. For many African Americans in the past, the experience of religion also encompassed dimensions of medical healing as well. These processes were accomplished through a “vernacular religion” that combined Christianity with an interactive supernatural and pharmacological component. Understanding the ethnohistoric development of social beliefs is critical

in situating a modern social discourse. Few accounts such as Douglass's autobiography exist, and Douglass admits that he intentionally omitted from his writings information that may have had repercussions for others. Religious or spiritual matters were closely guarded. Without ethnohistorical texts, many questions about African American lives during colonialism and slavery have typically been addressed through a standard set of Eurocentric assumptions.

Archaeological answers to the question of what is left from Africa have been found literally below the Banneker-Douglass Museum in Annapolis (Warner and Mullins 1993; Larsen 2005) as well as down the street, across town (Harmon and Neuwirth 2000), across the Chesapeake Bay (Ruppel et al. 2003), and seemingly throughout the Chesapeake Tidewater area (Leone and Fry 1999). The most distinctive aspect of the archaeological data has been its association with spiritual beliefs. Archaeologists now regularly recognize collections of objects, generally called hoodoo caches, the results of African spiritual traditions (Leone et al. 2001). These caches are groups of objects that were deposited in the ground in rituals with curative intent. It is clear that the practices emanate from West African religious traditions (Achebe 1994; Chireau 2003; Hurston 1931; Leone et al. 2001; Smith 1994). The universe of these discoveries is expanding, and research into understanding their meaning represents continuing reverberations of the ideas of Barbara Jackson (Nash) at the Banneker-Douglass Museum and the continued discovery of the context of modern America. This chapter describes two caches found in Annapolis at Reynolds' Tavern and an example of specific community involvement in the work at Douglass's childhood plantation on Maryland's Eastern Shore. A more holistic perspective on African American belief systems and practices is revealed and demonstrates how an active discourse with descendant communities leads to a richer understanding of society.

REYNOLDS' TAVERN

Across the street in Annapolis from the Banneker-Douglass Museum is Reynolds' Tavern (18AP23), an intact two-and-a-half story Georgian tavern located at 4 Church Circle that was built in 1747. Two of the most distinctive African ritual caches yet discovered were found in the basement. Taverns of the eighteenth century were not simply places for food, lodging, and liquors. They were an integral part of the active social community, serving as a place

where news was disseminated, business conducted, clubs and civic organizations met, and where public auctions were held (Historic Annapolis Foundation 1977). Reynolds' Tavern was the site of several slave sales in the 1750s and 1760s, and numerous African Americans used its spaces regularly. It has had three principal tenants that comprise the social history of the property: William Reynolds and his family, John Davidson and family, and the presidents of the Farmer's National Bank of Maryland.

In 1747, William Reynolds leased Lot 60 in Annapolis and a portion of Lot 61 from St. Anne's Parish, for £4 sterling. It was former glebe land directly across from the Anglican church, which had been given sanction to lease the land for 63 years. Reynolds built the structure that became the tavern soon afterwards as a residence and a location for his businesses, which included hat making and tavern operation. It was only a tavern for 10 or 11 years, but Reynolds lived there for nearly 30 years and had several businesses in his lifetime.

Customers at Reynolds' Tavern ran the gamut from small farmers to businessmen to soldiers. Gentlemen came to go to court or to the Maryland Assembly or to attend the races, fairs, or theater. Its location was also right for political meetings. Among Reynolds' steady clients were the Corporation of the City of Annapolis and the Mayor's Court. The Tavern was the setting for numerous public auctions. William Reynolds sat on lottery commissions at least three times, and hosted lottery manager meetings at his house. Reynolds also sold various goods, including Jesuit's Bark and Seneca Rattlesnake Root, as well as teas, liquors, fruit, and other goods, in his store.

The role of Reynolds' Tavern for African American culture is only just being revealed. Soon after building the Tavern, Reynolds ran a newspaper advertisement to sell an African American woman "about 18 or 19 years of age, who is a good spinner; with a child, about 18 months old" (Maryland Gazette [MG], April 27, 1748). In 1752 he reported a runaway named Milford (MG, February 13, 1752). There were other individual sales (MG, September 17, 1761), and at least one group sale advertised as "About fifteen valuable negroes, men, women, boys and girls" (MG, March 26, 1767). Reynolds quit inn-keeping in 1768 and died in 1777.

The names of some of the African American occupants of the Tavern come from William Reynolds' will and inventory. Among a long list of household

possessions, under the category of "Articles in the Yard," are (Anne Arundel County Inventories [AACI] Liber E.V. #1, May 17, 1777):

1 Servant Man James Obryan 2 Years to Serve	£15
1 Servant Man John Christian 9 months to Serve	£6
1 Servant Woman Mary Robinson 2 Years to Serve	£10
Negro Tom 29 Years Old	£90
Negro Grace 28 Years Old	£60
Negro Poll 22 Years Old	£70
Negro George 10 Years Old	£60
Negro Charlotte 9 Years Old	£45
Negro Jim 3 Years Old	£30
Negro Sall 3 Years Old	£25
Negro Nan 2 Years Old	£20
Negro Nell 3 months Old	£10

Reynolds' daughter and son-in-law, Margaret and Alexander Trueman, inherited the property, and it was rented to John Davidson (1737–1794), a prominent Annapolis merchant (Papenfuse 1975). In addition to his merchant business, Davidson had been made a Customs Officer in 1767, which proved a lucrative post throughout the Revolutionary War. In 1792, Davidson's son came home from the west to report that their landlord, Alexander Trueman, was getting well from his war injuries (Letzer and Russo 2003:103), however, Trueman was soon found killed in Ohio. In those same years, Davidson's collection of import duties in Annapolis had dwindled to a fraction of what they once were, and in March 1793, Davidson resigned (Papenfuse 1975). In July of that year, Eleanor Davidson (1746–1815) apparently attempted suicide, as recorded in the Diary of William Faris:

and it is reported that on Wednesday last that the Wife of Mr. John Davidson Hanged herself, it is told as follows, a negro woman observed her to be very meloncolly, saw her take the key of the garrot and go up thare (an thing she never knew her to do before). After she went up a little wile, the woman followed her very softly. When she came to the garrot doore it was shut. Shee peep'd through the keyhole and saw her mistress hanging clear of the flore. She Immediately Burst open the doore, and luckely haveing a knife, she cut her down, and for the present saved her life. (Letzer and Russo 2003:157)

When the Reynolds' Tavern building finally went up for sale in 1794, Davidson bought it for £1,020 (Cuddy n.d.). He died in October of that year, but the building was conveyed to his wife. Davidson's inventory of possessions lists, among titles like *History of Algiers* and other material objects, "negro Betty 36 years of age & her child 7 months" as well as "Anna 20 years old" (AACI Liber J. G. #6, pp. 306–310, June 1807). Also in October of 1794, "Mrs. Davidson buried a little negro" (Letzer and Russo 2003:194). Mrs. Davidson kept a boarding house at the old Reynolds' Tavern for many years. In 1811, she renewed the 63-year lease that William Reynolds had originally made with St. Anne's Church, but only a year later she sold the property to the Farmers National Bank of Maryland.

THE REYNOLDS CACHES

The caches found during excavations of the basement floor of the Tavern are from sometime during the Reynolds or Davidson occupations. One was found in Unit 8 at the base of the basement stairs, and the other in Unit 6, in the northeast corner of the central basement hall (figure 9.1).

The materials found in Unit 6 were found beneath two bricks. They included the "mulchy remains of wood," probably a root. The cache also contained at least two and possibly three glass vessels. One was found whole and was a decanter for serving. Excavators described it as a bottle on its side containing red powder. The other was a glass canister with a pontil base. It was found crushed in place but in large fragments. These were probably all contained within a bundle, along with the other objects. The complete set of artifacts from the cache is listed in table 9.1.

The cache includes such intriguing artifacts as a pink quartz crystal, red sea coral, and red slate along with many rounded objects of metal, glass, and stone. Ceramics found associated with the cache include creamware, pearlware, other refined white earthenwares, blue-on-white Chinese porcelain, and coarse blue-gray stoneware. In conjunction with the glass objects, an effective estimate of date appears to be the turn of the nineteenth century, give or take a few years.

At the base of the stairs, in Unit 8, a second cache was encountered (table 9.2). This cache was initially identified as a posthole with a ring of medium packed dirt around it. The objects were probably originally in a bundle and include a significant amount of brass and copper. The association of the

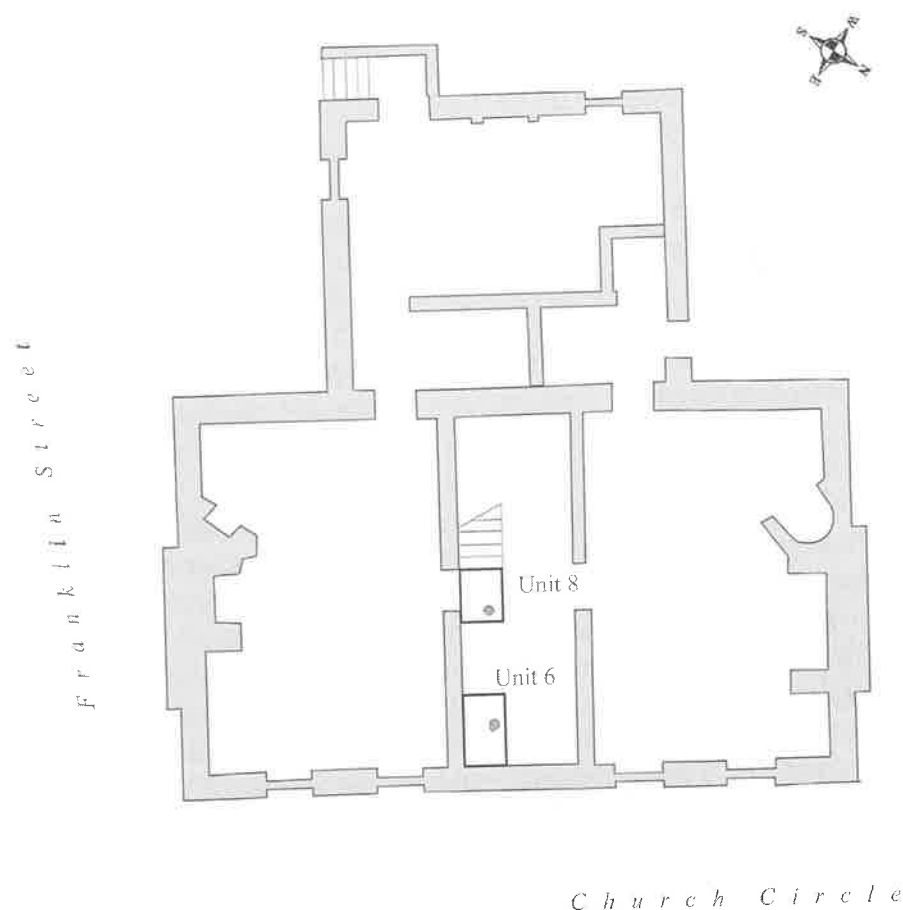


FIGURE 9.1

Plan view of Reynolds' Tavern basement, showing locations of caches. Map by Thomas W. Cuddy.

ceramic fragments found with this cache is unclear, but most of the objects had probably been contained in the tin-glazed bowl.

These caches are tangible evidence of African American belief systems during the time of slavery in Maryland. As curator of archaeology for the Historic Annapolis Foundation, Tom Cuddy oversaw the archaeological materials from Reynolds' Tavern. Cuddy analyzed the physical properties and contexts of the materials and undertook extensive historical background research, while also conducting public presentations of the material for school and community programs.

Table 9.1. Objects in Cache 481, Basement Unit 6

Material	Item	Description	Quantity
Bone	Bird bone	Fragments	64
		Fragments	81
	Fish bone	Scale	1
		Butcher cut-sawn	4
	Mammal bone	Fragments	212
		Skull fragments—large	3
		2 mandibles included	6
	Teeth	Fragments	2
Ceramic	Earthenware	Red bodied, dark brown glaze, int. PG glaze	1
Glass	Bottle, blown-in-mold fragments	Amber-olive green	3
		Aqua	3
	Drinking glass	Clear, 6 rims	17
	Glass canister	Aqua	9
	Glass decanter	Whole	1
	Glass, general	Aqua chimney glass	11
		Aqua, slightly curved	2
		Clear, curved	2
	Glass, round bottle pieces	Dark olive green	23
	Window glass	Aqua, flat	13
	Wine glass base	Clear, fragments	1
	Wine glass fragment	Clear	1
Metal	Metal	Brass	70
		Brass, strap	1
		Iron	1
		Iron, flat-thin	1
		Lead shot	1
		Lead, inside to bullet?	1
		—	9
	Nails/general	—	9
Organic	Charcoal	—	4
	Organic materials	Eggshell	4
	Plant remains	Peach seeds	8
Shell	Blue Crab Shell	Claws	16
		Shell fragments	4
	Coral	Red Sea Coral	3
	Oyster Shell	Whole	3
Stone	Stone, architectural or worked	Flint pebble	1
		Quartz pebble	1
		Red slate	1
		Sandstone	1
	Worked stone	Grey stones, different sizes	5
Total			595

Table 9.2. Objects in Caches 496-99, Basement Unit 8

Material	Item	Description	Quantity
Bone	Bird bone	—	24
		Scales	3
	Fish bone	—	49
		—	128
	Mammal bone	—	3
	Teeth	—	2
	Worked bone	Backs of 2-piece buttons	2
		Button backs from 2-piece buttons	2
Ceramic	Creamware	Saucer w/overglaze transfer print	1
		Twisted decoration, hand-painted gold gilding	1
		One underglaze blue transfer print	13
		—	1
	Coarse gray bodied	—	1
	Coarse interior lead glaze	Red bodied, brown interior	1
		Red bodied, brown oxide interior	1
	Porcelain—Chinese	One underglaze color transfer print	2
	Porcelain—Chinese blue on white	Blue on white overglaze	1
		—	12
	Porcelain	Blanc de Chine—like	1
	Pearlware—annular	Speckled decoration	1
	Pearlware—shell edge	General	1
	Pearlware—shell edge	Blue and white, w/overglaze transfer print	2
		—	2
	Pearlware	Underglaze transfer print	1
		—	1
	Refined earthenware w/ blue-white tin glaze	Bowl w/overglaze decoration	1
		Large bowl frag. w/overglaze transfer print	1
		Large plate frag. w/overglaze transfer print	1
		—	3
	Nottingham	—	1
		—	1
Glass	Bottle	Dark olive green, round fragments	13
		Dark olive green	1
		Clear vial base	1
		Aqua	1
	Aqua vial neck	Dark olive green fragment	6
		Aqua, flat	14
	Square case bottle	Aqua chimney glass	3
	Window glass	Chimney glass	1
	Glass—general	Clear drinking	12
		Clear	2
	Wine glass stem	Clear	2
		—	1
Metal	Brass	Button eye	1
		Straight pins	2
		Large furniture tack	1
		Small ring	1
		Small ring w/ fabric	2

Table 9.2. (continued)

Material	Item	Description	Quantity
		Tack	1
		Button w/bone backing	1
		—	61
		1-piece buttons, 1 very ornate	3
	Copper	2-piece button, fragment	1
		3 coins, 3 1-piece buttons	6
	Iron	Button	1
		Hinge	3
		Links	2
		—	11
	Nail—general	—	19
		—	4
	Nail—hand wrought	—	4
		—	4
Organic	Charcoal	—	5
	Leather	Small fragments	5
	Organic material	Eggshell	13
	Plant remains	Bark	25
		Corks	2
		Peach seeds	26
		—	1
Shell	Blue crab	Claws	8
	Clam	Whole	2
	Mussel	Fragment	1
	Oyster	Whole	8
	Worked shell	2-piece button w/glass inset and brass tang	1
		—	1
Stone	Stone—natural	—	1
	Worked stone	Gray marbles	2
		—	1
Tobacco	Pipe-stem 4/64ths	—	7
	Pipe-stem 5/64ths	—	3
	Pipe-stem—immeasurable	Broken	1
Total			547

THE SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY

If African culture was not all lost, then how many communities are there, or were there, with it? How many spiritual communities are we dealing with? We are going to say one in the Chesapeake region of Maryland in order to get to the larger issue of plurality within the African American religious tradition.

Over the years of studying the remains of West African spirit traditions through archaeology, Leone has read three explanations for the origins of cached materials such as those just now discovered by Cuddy at Reynolds' Tavern. The most traditional and most strongly held came from Gladys-Marie Fry,

Professor Emerita of the English Department at the University of Maryland, College Park. Her position, derived from Melville Horkowitz, sees the bundles of objects buried in the ground as African survivals. They are the result of African rituals used in North America. They are shorn of much of their social structural apparatus, but they are African and thus affirm that African culture was not wholly lost in the enslavement process.

In an attempt to reconcile African and American elements in African American religious traditions, Theosophus Smith (1994) argues for an African-derived conjuring tradition that was amalgamated into Christianity through the recognition of the importance of spirits in African traditions as well as in Christianity. African Americans created a blend of the two that Smith includes in Afro-Christianity. The place of the spirit in Afro-Christian churches appears as Christ, Moses, the saints, and those who move God. The use of ritual, medical pharmacopeias, including tricks, mojos, hands, toby's, and charms, is part of this amalgamation but remains African. It was not antithetical to Christian belief and practice in the minds of believers. Good Baptists could fix or be fixed and still be Christian; however this was not part of Christianity in the user's eyes. This is where Smith left the matter.

Yvonne Chireau (2003) moves a step closer to seeing only one religion, while she sees plural components to African American religious phenomena, with African and Christian parts variously employed. She sees a complementary unity of magical practices adapted from Africa and used within the concepts of Christianity. She does not see two parts, let alone two historically distinct components; she sees one tradition coming out of distinct New World circumstances in North America. In this way, she attempts to abolish any pagan component in Afro-Christianity, seeing instead a combination of magic in ritual practices and standard Christian theology. She has pushed the argument forward by attempting to eliminate the ability of those who compare Christianities against each other, finding as they go some variants with pagan components left within Christianity and thus inferior to all others.

Our hypothesis, based on a recitation of these arguments, finds that there was likely only one faith community historically in African American Maryland, and there may have been only one Christian community overall among whites and blacks. There may be much variety, many traditions, much survival from Africa, but only one vibrant Christian community.

That vibrant community can still be found today at St. Stephen's African Methodist Episcopal Church in Unionville, near Easton, Maryland. Unionville

is one of several African American communities that are near Easton and near two former large plantations—Wye Hall and Wye House, where researchers from Archaeology in Annapolis have excavated. Even though excavations are carried out for many reasons, historical archaeology in eastern Maryland is almost always going to attempt to understand plantations and slavery and their historic results. Wye House is famous. It was founded by the Lloyd family in the 1660s and was composed of numerous large farms. It has a large and famous house with an orangery. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the plantation held many slaves, including Frederick Douglass, who described the family and property in his two autobiographies (Douglass 1994 [1845], 1994 [1855]). Wye House is still there and is still owned by the Lloyd descendants. Our archaeology at Wye House began in 2005 with the invitation and permission of the owners. We have treated the congregation of nearby St. Stephen's as essential to our archaeological work.

Leone and his graduate students went to a Sunday service at St. Stephen's on May 15, 2005. They approached the congregation through a student of American Studies at the George Washington University who was doing a dissertation on Unionville. In the course of the church visit, Leone met and talked with a senior member of the congregation who had lived in the community for many years. Leone explained that Archaeology in Annapolis was going to excavate at Wye House in the area of the quarters and slave-run industries, and he ultimately asked what she would like to know about the slaves and slave life at Wye House. "I would like to know about slave spirituality," she responded. She also asked, "What did the Lloyds do for freedom," meaning how did the owning family help with freeing and with free life during and after emancipation. A few hours later, Leone went back to the Lloyd house by invitation to meet more of the family. The senior congregant's questions were related to the family who occupies the Wye House.

Upon hearing the questions, the senior family member remembered materials that came out of the attic of the old kitchen, near the large house, when it was being renovated as a modern cottage. Near the chimney, in the attic, workers found a small artifact made of wood and carved with two faces of a person, one on either side. They also found several shoes/boots. The shoes/boots have since disappeared. The term "two-headed man" was common among African Americans and often referred to healers who cured using natural remedies and spiritual power (Chireau 2003). The two-headed doctor was someone who knew both kinds of medicine, African and European, spiritual and scientific.

The two-faced wooden figure at the Wye House is hand-carved, about two inches long, and less than an inch wide.

Leone and the owner of Wye House never doubted that this was a potential answer to St. Stephen's senior congregant's first question. But the question is not really answered; rather an exploration is started that might properly be called the education of an anthropologist. The owner of Wye House had read *Albion's Seed* and understood that English witchcraft was a potential, good explanation for these items. This argument, which is acknowledged by Chireau and many other scholars, is that there can be a convergence between English pagan practices and African ritual practices for controlling the spirits of the deceased.

To Leone, the description of these items was simpler and more basic. These remains meant that African spirit practices existed on the plantation, and the long, indirect, tortuous search that had lead to this simple conclusion after over ten years' work in Annapolis had taken only three hours of work on the Eastern Shore.

The next part of the thread is Frederick Douglass, who wrote a brief and a longer autobiography, each of which contains short, early, pointed views of the Lloyds and the very spot—the exact spots—the archaeologists were working in and on at Wye House. The Long Green is near the great 1785 Lloyd house and 50 feet from the cottage in which Douglass may have lived as a slave boy and in which the two-faced man and shoes/boots were found.

Douglass's writings make it clear he was a Christian. He used Christianity so well and frequently as an abolitionist that it is obvious he had a deep understanding of and commitment to the religion and its social implications. It therefore comes as a surprise when he tells of being given a protective root by a doctor near Easton, Maryland.

I found Sandy an old adviser. He told me, with great solemnity, I must go back to Covey; but that before I went, I must go with him into another part of the woods, where there was a certain *root* which, if I would take some with me, carrying it *always on my right side*, would render it impossible for Mr. Covey, or any other white man, to whip me. He said he had carried it for years; and since he had done so, he had never received a blow, and never expected to while he carried it. I at first rejected the idea, that the simple carrying of a root in my pocket would have any such effect as he had said, and was not disposed to take it; but

Sandy impressed the necessity with much earnestness, telling me it could do no harm, if it did no good. To please him I at length took the root, and, according to his direction, carried it upon my right side. This was Sunday morning. I immediately started for home; and upon entering the yard gate, out came Mr. Covey on his way to meeting. He spoke to me very kindly, bade me drive the pigs from a lot near by, and passed on towards the church. Now, that singular conduct of Mr. Covey really made me begin to think that there was something in the *root* which Sandy had given me; and had it been on any other day than Sunday, I could have attributed the conduct to no other cause than the influence of that root; and as it was, I was half inclined to think the *root* to be something more than I at first had taken it to be. All went well till Monday morning. On this morning, the virtue of the *root* was fully tested. Long before daylight, I was called to go and rub, curry, and feed, the horses. I obeyed, and was glad to obey. But whilst thus engaged, whilst in the act of throwing down some blades from the loft, Mr. Covey entered the stable with a long rope; and just as I was half out of the loft, he caught hold of my legs, and was about tying me. As soon as I found what he was up to, I gave a sudden spring, and as I did so, he holding to my legs, I was brought sprawling on the stable floor. Mr. Covey seemed now to think he had me, and could do what he pleased; but at this moment—from whence came the spirit I don't know—I resolved to fight; and, suiting my action to resolution, I seized Covey hard by the throat; and as I did so, I rose. He held on to me, and I to him. My resistance was so entirely unexpected, that Covey seemed taken all aback. He trembled like a leaf. This gave me assurance, and I held him uneasy, causing the blood to run where I touched him with the ends of my fingers. Mr. Covey soon called out to Hughes for help. Hughes came, and, while Covey held me, attempted to tie my right hand. While he was in the act of doing so, I watched my chance, and gave him a heavy kick close under the ribs. This kick fairly sickened Hughes, so that he left me in the hands of Mr. Covey. This kick had the effect of not only weakening Hughes, but Covey also. When he saw Hughes bending over with pain, his courage quailed. He asked me if I meant to persist in my resistance. I told him I did, come what might; that he had used me like a brute for six months, and that I was determined to be used so no longer. With that, he strove to drag me to a stick that was lying just out of the stable door. He meant to knock me down. But just as he was leaning over to get the stick, I seized him with both hands by his collar, and brought him by a sudden snatch to the ground. By this time, Bill came. Covey called upon him for assistance. Bill wanted to know what he could do. Covey said, "Take hold of him,

take hold of him!" Bill said his master hired him out to work, and not to help to whip me; so he left Covey and myself to fight our own battle out. We were at it for nearly two hours. Covey at length let me go, puffing and blowing at a great rate, saying that if I had not resisted, he would not have whipped me half so much. The truth was, that he had not whipped me at all. I considered him as getting entirely the worst end of the bargain; for he had drawn no blood from me, but I had from him. The whole six months afterwards, that I spent with Mr. Covey, he never laid the weight of his finger upon me in anger. He would occasionally say, he didn't want to get hold of me again. "No," thought I, "you need not; for you will come off worse than you did before." This battle with Mr. Covey was the turning-point in my career as a slave. It rekindled the few expiring embers of freedom, and revived within me a sense of my own manhood. (Douglass 1994 [1845]:63–65, italics in original)

With Douglass's use of a root and respect for his friend the root doctor, it was beginning to be possible to establish how an answer to the question about slave spirituality might look. The main part of the answer is not going to come from archaeology, however. The main response is Frederick Douglass's own commitment to Christianity, which is intense and ever present, judging from his autobiographies. But, it is through archaeological questions and material answers that we can come to this conclusion. In order to get there we will have to deal with the two-headed man, the shoes/boots, African practices, and their integration into Christian lives.

DISCUSSION

African American religion included ritual-like caching of objects, which archaeologists can recover and which approach an understanding of beliefs during and after the time of slavery. We can now imagine a fairly robust African American belief system. It includes conjures focused on specific cures or protections. Maybe Grace, one of Reynolds's slaves, or perhaps Betty, the housemaid for John Davidson, buried a cache. Maybe the bottle cache was designed for Mrs. Davidson, a troubled widow, or for the child who died at the Tavern. Likewise, a young Frederick Douglass may have been influenced by encounters with the two-headed man, the carving of which a Lloyd descendant pulled down from her attic. There is, however, a bigger picture. Discovery of a patterned and widespread practice indicates a cogent African American belief system, with systematic meanings as well as social dimensions.

Archaeological inquiry is meaningful in its ability to address salient social issues. Articulating appropriate questions is sometimes the more difficult element of the process. Cuddy found the two caches in Reynolds' Tavern because it had been established where to look for them and what was in them. Our collective team has worked from 1990 to 2003 to isolate the likely contents of caches and their locations. That knowledge allowed an immediate understanding of the importance of things being close to stairs or a chimney and—possibly—the rows of eyelets on shoes or boots that slow down spirits because they must count the holes before traveling further. But not the two-headed man. We had not found one of those before, although they are a well-known element of hoodoo/conjure/West African spirit practice (Chireau 2003: 81, 98, 99). Like Barbara Jackson (Nash) 16 years ago, critical dialogue has been generated by questions, this time from St. Stephen's Church. By repeating the question at the Wye House, we established the existence of items known to be connected to African religious practice of the nineteenth century.

The caches at Reynolds' Tavern are important the way the caches at Carroll, Slayton, and Brice Houses in Annapolis are. They are indisputable remains of African Americans. They constitute an important archaeological discovery because they are not accidental. They are the only systematic and readily identifiable remains of the long-term African American residents of these buildings that are so important in themselves to the identity of white Annapolis. The main discovery here is the African identity of the famous buildings, and not so much the existence of West African spirit practices.

The second meaning of these discoveries is their religious nature, which becomes clearest when coupling Frederick Douglass and Yvonne Chireau. Douglass was a Christian and takes a studied attitude to the use and power of roots. We propose that the roots should stand for all or most of the ritual traditions found among people of African descent, such as the Reynolds' caches. Douglass does not define the tradition; he exemplifies it. He does not deny the practice; he defines it by use and action. It is part of him but is neither within nor outside of his Christianity. Therefore, the occupants of all of these buildings are not African pagans. Nobody ever said they were, of course, but the question to most Annapolitans who care is: how can people be both African and Christian. All scholars see that the practitioners are not only Christian, but devoutly so. This observation comes from reading autobiographies of former slaves (Hyatt 1970–1978; Rawick 1972). Then, were these caches and

charms, including roots, used by others who exempted themselves from Christianity? Or were they used by Christians who practiced black magic on the side, not recognizing that what they put under a doorstep at midnight was different and potentially antagonistic to what they said and heard on Sunday morning in church? Or was there one tradition? If one, was it a new version of Christianity, Afro Christianity, as Theosophus Smith (1994) argues? Or was it and does it remain mainline Christianity with some magical elements attached like those found throughout sectarian Christianity but derived from African American folk traditions?

Only in the first explanation would one conclude that these are separate and secret African traditions alive in American communities like Annapolis and Maryland's Eastern Shore that resulted in two worlds living with each other. There is no doubt that the bigotry, racism, and social hatred of the time can be argued as having made a secret religion necessary. But this is probably not the right conclusion. Both Theosophus Smith (1994) and Yvonne Chireau (2003) make it possible to see that we now have a substantial African American presence in some of Maryland's **most famous buildings, and that we can now see what we never knew before: that the evidence from material culture is African but was very likely to have operated within Christianity. Therefore, we have stopped seeing these famous locales as White and begun to see them as African also, but with the acknowledgment that the people in them belonged to one large believing community coming from several traditions.**

Through the experiences described here, and with the new knowledge that is the end product, it is apparent now that we are equal fellow and sister citizens of the United States. We are dealing with richer equals and poorer equals but always with equals—citizens with commonalities. Our research has dealt with people who know what archaeology is and what it can accomplish, and who accept it just as we do. The process of archaeology, in this case, is like modern medicine and law; it is a given in the world we operate in. Archaeology is not foreign, suspect, or dangerous for us. In fact, everyone we deal with takes archaeology for granted. The same with science. It is not evil; nor is it an unmitigated good.

The greatest commonality we have here goes far beyond the notions behind the term collaboration, and that is Christianity. Everyone we work with is part of a Christian community just as we as authors exist within the American foundations of Christianity. We are not divorced from our own histories or the

past, but instead have been able to make it a central feature of collaboration and research. The final point, therefore, is that this work is most appropriately seen within a tradition of equality, searching for greater expressions of it. We are not protecting differences so much as we are working among equals.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Archaeology in Annapolis program has received continuing support for 25 years from the City of Annapolis and the University of Maryland at College Park. Tom Cuddy would like to thank Mark Leone and the students and volunteers of the Archaeology in Annapolis laboratory for facilitating the research on Reynolds' Tavern. We are grateful to the owners of Wye House for their welcome. We are grateful to the parishioners of St. Stephen's African Methodist Episcopal Church for their welcome, as well.

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