

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESMENT OF SITE 44FX185
THE EARTHWORK AT FARR'S CROSSROADS
FAIRFAX COUNTY, VIRGINIA**

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ABSTRACT

Site 44FX185 is 0.5-acre Civil War earthwork located on George Mason University (GMU) property north and east of the intersection of Braddock and Ox roads. The site was constructed to defend an important crossroads known historically as Farr's Crossroads prior to the First Battle of Manassas in July 1861. The site was identified during an archaeological survey conducted on GMU property in 1979. Since that time, little research has been conducted on the site. The site is one component of a site complex comprised of four sites, all located near the project area. These sites include camps and earthworks dating to the Civil War. The intensity of the Civil War occupation reflects the project area's location as the strategic high ground overlooking the intersection of two historic roads.

The current archaeological investigations at Site 44FX185 consisted of a pedestrian reconnaissance survey, mapping, photography, and background research. No subsurface testing was conducted. Background research indicates that members of the Fifth Alabama Infantry Regiment constructed the site in late June and early July 1861. Research also shows that the site held strategic importance throughout the war due to its location overlooking a crossroads. Therefore, the site vicinity likely contains the archaeological remains of multiple troop campsites. Field investigations resulted in the determination that the site retained surface integrity. Intact features at the site include the remains of the parapet and the interior ground surface of the earthwork. The landscape to the east and north of the site remains also remains undisturbed and contributes to the interpretation of the site. Site 44FX185 is considered eligible to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under criterion a because the site is "associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history," criterion c because the site embodies "the distinctive characteristics of a type," and criterion d for its likelihood to "yield information important in prehistory or history."

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Description

1.2 Project Setting and Environment

2.0 BACKGROUND RESEARCH

2.1 Prehistoric Context

2.2 Historic Context

2.2.1 Settlement to Society (1607-1750)

2.2.2 Colony to Nation (1750-1789)

2.2.3 Early National Period (1789-1830)

2.2.4 Ante-Bellum Period (1830-1860)

2.2.5 Civil War in Fairfax County (1861-1865)

2.2.6 Reconstruction and Growth (1865-1917)

2.2.7 World War I to World War II (1917-1945)

2.2.8 The New Dominion (1945-present)

2.2.9 Detailed Context for Site 44FX185

3.0 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Purpose and Objectives of the Investigation

3.2 Documentary Research Methods

3.3 Archaeology Field Methods

3.4 Archaeological Sites in the Vicinity

3.5 Expected Results

4.0 RESULTS OF THE FIELDWORK

5.0 ANALYSIS

6.0 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.0 REFERENCES CITED

APPENDIX I Figures

APPENDIX II Qualifications of Investigators

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- Figure 1. Detail of *Fairfax, Virginia*, 7.5-minute series quadrangle, showing the location of Site 44FX185.
- Figure 2. Map showing the location of Site 44FX185, nearby archaeological sites, and modern features.
- Figure 3. Historic map showing the location of Site 44FX185.
- Figure 4. Detail of U.S. Topographical Engineer's map, showing the site vicinity.
- Figure 5. Map showing the location of the Federal cavalry screen in Fairfax County.
- Figure 6. Mapping in progress.
- Figure 7. Overview of the parapet at Site 44FX185, facing south.
- Figure 8. Parapet profiles from Site 44FX185.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Description

Site 44FX185 is a Civil War earthwork located on top of a rise at the southern end of a narrow ridgeline that trends in a north direction paralleling Ox Road (Figures 1 and 2). The site is located 150 feet (ft.) northeast of the intersection of Braddock Road (SR 620) and Ox Road (SR 123) and 400 ft. west of Parking Lot K of George Mason University (GMU). The site area is approximately 0.5 acre. Three additional archaeological sites (44FX137, 44FX2510, and 44FX2765) are located adjacent to the project area (Figure 2). Site 44FX137 is a fortified road trace that extends north from Site 44FX185 and parallels Ox Road for approximately 1200 ft. This site likely represents a trench line associated with 44FX185. Site 44FX2510 is a camp and earthwork located at the north terminus of Site 44FX137. Site 44FX2510 is an earthwork and a late nineteenth-century artifact scatter. Site 44FX2765 is a Civil War camp abutting the northeast corner of Site 44FX185.

The Civil War in Northern Virginia altered the landscape. Occupying troops discarded countless artifacts and created numerous camps, trenches, and other features that we now observe as archaeological sites. Early in the war, Fairfax County was the frontline between the opposing sides. The Confederates occupied and fortified the central and western portions of the county and the Federals occupied Alexandria and the high ground on the western side of the Potomac (Hanson 1951). In the last thirty years, the rapid pace of development in Fairfax County has destroyed most of the county's open space (Rein 2004). As a result, a majority of the Civil War sites in Fairfax County were destroyed prior to archaeological investigations. There are remaining areas containing Civil War features that require evaluation and, if possible, preservation.

Fairfax County has begun a preservation program that involves saving some of its remaining Civil War sites. Although it is too late for many areas of the county, some intact Civil War sites remain. GMU owns property on which a well-preserved earthwork, Site 44FX185, remains intact. Currently, the earthwork contains the intact remnants of the parapet, an interior elevation, and the view shed east and north of the site. The site is not threatened by current development plans, but future campus expansion is eminent and could destroy the site. One of the best ways to preserve this earthwork is to document it through fieldwork and place the site within a historical context. At the conclusion of this work, GMU will be informed of the site's existence, location, and importance and can act appropriately when proposing new development in the vicinity.

Since the 1960s centennial of the Civil War, public interest in all things Civil War has been high as evidenced by the battle re-enactments and heritage tourism. The economic incentive of heritage tourism provides advantages for preserving Civil War sites and enhancing their educational potential. Paralleling the Civil War Centennial is the urban expansion of the Washington DC metro area and the large-scale development of Northern Virginia. In Fairfax County, the old road networks have given way to highways. Agrarian lifestyles practiced by former residents have given way to strip malls and large-scale

housing developments. The county government receives ongoing criticism for allowing too much development and not enough green space and historic preservation. There is a need to preserve the few remnants of the Civil War in the County. Fairfax County is pro-development. As a result, numerous cultural landmarks have been destroyed. Many of the sites that have been destroyed were associated with the Civil War. Federal, state, and local laws help to protect important sites. However, Civil War sites, due to their temporary nature and lack of proper assessment methodologies, can easily be overlooked during the identification and assessment process.

Another goal of this project is to set a precedent for the preservation of historic features and landscapes that still exist on the GMU campus. Currently, construction on the Fairfax campus is continuing at a rapid pace. GMU as an educational institution should realize that a balance between cultural resources and campus expansion could exist concurrently. Efforts to preserve cultural resources and an attempt to interpret and integrate these resources into the educational curriculum would add an additional element to the educational experience of the students.

Bryan Corle conducted the background research. Bryan Corle and Kerri Holland conducted the fieldwork between 3 October and 12 October 2008. Ann Palkovich PhD. (GMU) and Mike Johnson (FCCRD) reviewed the document for quality control. Luis Longoria III, engineering archivist for GMU, prepared the site plan graphics.

1.2 Project Setting and Environment

Site 44FX185 is located in Fairfax County, Virginia (Figure 1). The site is within the Virginia Piedmont region. The Virginia Piedmont is a geologically ancient landscape that is expressed as a series of rolling uplands dissected by narrow stream valleys. More specifically, the Piedmont region represents a transition between the Coastal Plain region to the east and the Blue Ridge Mountains to the west.

The Piedmont can be divided into two general zones, the lowlands adjacent to the Fall Line and the uplands, which lie at the base of the Blue Ridge. In general, the Piedmont Lowlands consist of wide undulating ridges and nearly level areas that are less dissected than the Piedmont Uplands. The bedrock of the Piedmont Lowlands consists primarily of sedimentary rock including shale, sandstone, and conglomerate. The Piedmont contains areas of intrusive granites due to burial and volcanism. As a result, portions of the Piedmont contain formations of quartz, schist, and shale (Zen and Walker 2000:14).

The site is located on a north-to-south-trending ridge top within green space that forms the northeast corner of the intersections of Ox and Braddock roads (Figure 2). Both of these roads were extant during the Civil War. Braddock Road was constructed over a century before the War. By the start of the War, it had fallen into disrepair. The path of Ox Road was known as Fairfax Station Road during the War. This route connected the town of Fairfax with the railroad station on the Orange and Alexandria Railroad. Fairfax Station Road continued south past the station ending at the Potomac port town of Occoquan.

The site is located at a strategically important intersection of two historic roads. The Confederate troops realized that Braddock Road would be used by the Federal Army as a possible route of march when they tried to capture Manassas Junction. Therefore, the Confederates built an earthwork (Site 44FX185) overlooking the eastern approach of Braddock Road. The earthwork was also situated to cover the approach from Fairfax Station Road (Ox Road) if Federal troops were advancing north along that road.

Currently, the site is forested. The trees surrounding the site are primarily mature poplars interspersed with mature oak, cherry, sassafras, and maple. The under story is comprised of a dense thicket of spicebush, multi-flora rose, and greenbrier.

2.0 BACKGROUND RESEARCH

2.1 Prehistoric Context

The focus of this project is on a Civil War earthwork. A prehistoric context has little relevance on the focus of the project. A brief general overview is presented in this document. The prehistoric cultural sequence for the Piedmont and Inner Coastal Plain of Virginia conforms to that defined for other areas of Virginia and the Middle Atlantic region. This sequence can be divided into seven periods: Paleo-Indian (9000 to 8000 bc, 11,000-9600 cal BC), Early Archaic (8000 to 6500 bc, 9600-7600 cal BC), Middle Archaic (6500 to 3000 bc, 7600-3800 cal BC), Late Archaic (3000 to 1200 bc, 3800-1500 cal BC), Early Woodland (1200 to 500 bc, 1500-400 cal BC), Middle Woodland (500 bc to ad 1000, 400 cal BC-cal AD 1000), and Late Woodland (cal AD 1000 to 1600). The abbreviations bc and ad are used in reference to radiocarbon years, which are usually significantly later than calibrated, calendar years (cal BC or cal AD).

2.2 Historic Context

2.2.1 Settlement to Society (1607-1750)

European settlement of the area that was to become Fairfax County began in the mid-seventeenth century. The first land grant within today's Fairfax County was granted in 1654. During the remainder of the seventeenth century, only 37 other land grants were issued within the county. Most of these early grants were "seated and planted" by tenants and slaves, not by the landowners themselves (Netherton et al. 1978:13).

Settlement did not increase much until the 1720s, when increases in land grants led to the formation of Prince William County from the northern part of Stafford County. In 1732, Truro Parish was established in northern Prince William County. By 1742, the parish's population had doubled, and the state legislature created Fairfax County. At this time, Fairfax County and Truro Parish shared the same boundaries, which encompassed today's Loudoun County (Netherton et al. 1978:19). The county seat was established in the approximate geographic center of the county, Springfield, near the present-day Tyson's Corner, on land donated by William Fairfax (Moore et al. 2007:8).

2.2.2 Colony to Nation (1750-1789)

The tobacco-based agricultural economy was increasingly reliant on slave labor. Significant amounts of wheat were also grown in the region. Alexandria's prosperity was based on wheat export by 1760, and several gristmills began operating in the county in the 1750s (Netherton et al. 1978:61).

In 1752, the Fairfax County seat moved from Springfield to Alexandria, which was becoming the commercial center for the county. This move placed the county seat further from the western portion of the county and western residents petitioned for the creation of a new county. In 1757, Loudoun County was created from the western part of Fairfax County, taking with it half of Fairfax's land area and 40 percent of its residents (Netherton et al. 1978:36).

Braddock Road forms the southern boundary of the project vicinity. The road, in use by the 1750s, follows an historic Indian trail and was known alternatively as Alexandria Road and Mountain Road (in Fairfax County). The road received the name Braddock's Road after 1755. Braddock's Road continued in use throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and was sometimes referred to as Old Braddock's Road. By the advent of the Civil War, the road had fallen into disrepair.

George Mason and George Washington, members of the Fairfax County gentry, played a pivotal role in the political agitation that led to the Revolutionary War (1775-1783). At the war's end, according to a 1784 census, there were 3,687 whites in the county, 3,559 blacks, 594 dwellings, and 1,652 other buildings. Washington and Mason were the largest slave owners (188 and 128, respectively), followed by William Fitzhugh, with 122 (Netherton et al. 1978:135).

2.2.3 Early National Period (1789-1830)

The courthouse in Alexandria had fallen into disrepair by 1788 and there was concern that the town might soon become part of the new federal district. The court did not move from Alexandria until April 1800, when the new courthouse was completed at the crossroads of Ox Road and the planned turnpike west from Alexandria. When this turnpike, the Little River Turnpike, opened in 1806, travel to the county seat was greatly improved (Netherton et al. 1997:9).

The town platted around the courthouse, on 14 acres owned by Richard Ratcliffe, was known as Providence. The post office there, established in 1802, was known as Fairfax Courthouse (Netherton et al. 1997:11).

2.2.4 Ante-Bellum Period (1830-1860)

In 1835, Martin's Gazetteer described Providence/Fairfax Courthouse as a community of 50 dwellings with three mercantile stores, four taverns, and one school. The population of 200 included four attorneys and two physicians (Netherton and Waldeck 1977).

Depletion of the soil in the region after decades of tobacco planting caused the departure of many farmers, resulting in a sharp population decline in the county between 1810 and 1830 (Netherton et al. 1997:12). In the 1840s, use of lime and guano fertilizers and an influx of industrious northern farmers revitalized the agricultural economy, although large areas remained desolate and sparsely inhabited (Netherton et al. 1978:251). These northern migrants entered into a community that was still based on slave labor. Fairfax County, like much of the Old South, was realizing the profitability of exporting slaves into the newer slave states of Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, and Texas. Slave populations in the county saw a gradual decline from 1800 until the outbreak of the Civil War (Netherton et al. 1978:263).

The Orange and Alexandria Railroad was organized in 1848 to connect the Port of Alexandria to Gordonsville in Orange County. The railroad did not pass through the Fairfax Courthouse area. The nearest depot to the county seat was Fairfax Station, three-and-one-half miles south of the county seat and one-and-one-half miles from the project area (Netherton et al. 1997:15-16).

2.2.5 Civil War in Fairfax County (1861-1865)

23 May 1861

May 23 was an important turning point in Virginia. This was the date Virginia voted for secession. Fairfax County, like its counterparts east of the Alleghenies, voted to secede from the Union. Although the county contained many anti-slavery and non-slave holding

northern migrants, voter intimidation ensured that these people would not darken the doors of the polling places (Netherton et al. 1978 318-320).

The following day, 24 May 1861, Federal troops crossed the Potomac and occupied Alexandria and strategic points along the Virginia shore of the Potomac. Prior to the Federal occupation, Confederates had established troop concentrations at Manassas Junction located approximately 20 miles west of Alexandria (Figure 3). The Confederates realized the importance of the Orange and Alexandria Rail line as a vital supply line. In addition, Manassas is west of Bull Run, which forms the western boundary of the county and provided defense against Federal intrusion (Hanson 1957). Confederate forces also established forward positions near Alexandria, Arlington, and Fairfax Courthouse (Figure 3).

The control of the county's rail line, specifically the Orange and Alexandria, was of the utmost strategic importance during the first half of the war (Balicki et al. 2002:12). The Orange and Alexandria rail line began on the western outskirts of Alexandria. From Alexandria, the rail line continued westward across the southern half of the county, crossed Bull Run, and then ran into Manassas Junction. The Orange and Alexandria railroad connected two trunk lines at Gordonsville that eventually lead south into Richmond (Balicki et al. 2002:11). This rail connection could have supplied Federal troops with supplies if an attack on Richmond occurred. The Confederates also maintained a stake in holding the railroad. Besides providing supplies and support to troops in Manassas, the Orange and Alexandria connected to the Manassas Gap Railroad at Manassas Junction. The Manassas Gap railroad extended west from Manassas Junction to Strasburg near the head of the Shenandoah Valley. Keeping these railroads in Confederate hands would allow for the rapid deployment of troops and supplies across the northern tier of Virginia, protecting the state from intrusion from the north (Balicki et al. 2002:12)

Fairfax County also contained a well-established road network at the outbreak of the Civil War. One of the most notable roads was Little River Turnpike (SR 236). The road roughly bisected Fairfax County in an east-to-west direction. Braddock's Road, built in the 1750's, which by the time of the Civil War had fallen into disuse, paralleled the Little River Turnpike to the south. The Warrenton Turnpike (US 29) began in Fairfax Courthouse and proceeded in a southwesterly direction to Warrenton (Figures 3 and 4). Other roads of note include Ox Road (also know as Fairfax Station Road) that lead from the Chain Bridge over the Potomac opposite of Georgetown, westward into the center of the county, and finally southward through Fairfax Courthouse and Fairfax Station ending in Occoquan near the Potomac. The road network leading into Fairfax County created multiple problems for both armies. The dissected topography of the county combined with wide expanses of woods, thicket, abandoned farmland, and working farms did not allow for the efficient overland travel of troops. Essentially, access to the county away from rail lines by troops required use of the road networks. Conversely, the road network, which was so vital to troop placement, also created a defensive nightmare. In general, the roads led to the west were a decidedly pro-Confederate populace resided and a large concentration of Confederate troops was massing.

With the importance of Manassas Junction established, both Federal and Confederate armies began laying plans to acquire or maintain control of it. On 31 May 1861, General Beauregard assumed control of Confederate forces located near and within Fairfax County. Beauregard established his command at Manassas Junction. Beauregard quickly began to outline a plan for the defense of the place. Beauregard commanded approximately 20,000 troops and he quickly set them to work building a three tiered defensive perimeter surrounding Manassas Junction (Balicki et al. 2002:13). Beauregard planned to assemble each tier of the defensive line to be progressively stronger, enabling troops to fall back from the outlying defenses into the next stronger fortifications.

The first line started at Fairfax Courthouse where protection of transportation networks included Little River Turnpike, the Warrenton Pike, Braddock's Road and the Orange and Alexandria Railroad (Figures 3 and 4). It was during this time that the trench (designated Site 44FX185) was constructed in order to protect the intersection of Braddock's Road and Ox Road. The next set of defensive works was located in Centerville, approximately 7 miles west of Fairfax Courthouse. At Centerville, Confederate defensive positions guarded the road network that lead into Manassas Junction. Finally, at Manassas Junction an extensive array of trenches that formed a lunette covered the approach of the Orange and Alexandria Railroad. A second set of trenches covered the road network leading southwest from Centerville to Manassas Junction (Balicki et al. 2002:15).

On the Federal side, General Irwin McDowell who commanded the troops in and around Fairfax County began forming plans to acquire Manassas Junction. McDowell proposed to proceed in force west into Fairfax Courthouse and then into Centerville. After gaining control of Centerville, McDowell's forces would then proceed southwest crossing Bull Run and then to Manassas Junction. At the same time, a second Federal force would proceed south of the Occoquan and then west in an attempt to outflank the Confederates. By doing so, Confederate forces would have to retreat in order to protect their supply lines and their railroad route to Richmond.

During this time, the area between the Federal lines along the Potomac Heights and the Confederate defenses in Fairfax Courthouse and Centerville became a no man's land (Balicki et al. 2002:13). Farmers were unable to get their crops to the urban markets and the local populace feared for the safety of themselves and their properties (Balicki et al. 2002:13). Some residents fled for safety beyond the respective Federal and Confederate lines.

The relatively green, inexperienced troops within the opposing armies began to settle into the soldiers' life. During this time, some troops engaged in their first state of combat. The combat was in the form of brief skirmishes where, as was usually the case, green troops panicked and the conflicts had little resolve. A reckless cavalry charge by Federal troops into Fairfax Courthouse resulted in the first Confederate officer killed during the war (Balicki et al. 2002:13).

First Manassas

Politicians on both sides began clamoring for the decisive battle that would end the war (Balicki et al. 2002:14). Their desires were realized on 18 July 1861. The events leading up to the Battle of First Manassas are detailed in the site-specific research section of this report. McDowell began marching his troops out of Alexandria on the morning of 16 July. The Federal Army marched west out of Alexandria following on roads that included the Little River Turnpike and Braddock's Road.

Confederate troops insured that the Federal Army would have a slow go at their march. Confederates dropped trees and placed obstacles along the roads, forcing the Federal troops to make frequent stops to clear the debris from the roadways (O.R. Series 1, Volume 2:433). Confederate troops followed Beauregard's plan of brief skirmish and retreat falling backwards into their layered defensive works. The Confederates also received reinforcements with troops that were transported from the Shenandoah Valley via the Manassas Gap railroad.

By 18 July, Federal troops had reached Centerville (Balicki et al. 2002:14). After a sharp rebuke by Confederate troops at Blackburn's Ford (modern-day crossing of SR 28 over Bull Run), McDowell saw a need to change his tactics (Balicki et al. 2002:14). He decided that an attack along the Confederate flank near Sudley Ford (present-day crossing of SR 29 over Bull Run) would turn the Confederate Army. Then subsequent crossing along Bull Run to the south would force a Confederate retreat from Manassas. Unaware of Confederate reinforcement from the Valley and becoming more aware of Confederate forces will to fight on their own soil, McDowell's army retreated in a rout.

A New Man in Charge

After suffering defeat at Manassas, President Lincoln began replacing generals (Balicki et al. 2002:16). George B. McClellan became commander of the Army of the Potomac (Balicki et al. 2002:16). What McClellan found upon assuming command was not an army, but a collection of State Regiments and Militias interspersed with green troops and disillusioned Regular Army soldiers still smarting from their recent defeat at First Manassas (Balicki et al. 2002:16). McClellan quickly enforced camp discipline and drill routines upon his charge. Camps were established according to regulations and men complied to picket duty, policing, and drill.

The Federal Army also began a massive construction campaign to erect a circle of forts and other defensive works in order to protect the US Capitol. The ring of forts not only served to protect the capitol from invasion they also stood as an ominous reminder to secession-oriented citizens that the Federal Army was in charge of the area surrounding the capitol.

At the same time, the Confederate army was free to re-attain some of its former holding in Fairfax County. Aware of the limited access to supplies, the main body of the Confederate Army encamped in Centerville. At this location, nearer to Manassas Junction, a rail spur was constructed to supply the troops. From a tactical standpoint, Centerville was located on easily defended high ground overlooking the road approaches

to the east. The Confederate Army began construction of a series of earthworks surrounding Centerville. The earthworks consisted of an interconnected series of forts, redoubts, and trenches (Balicki et al. 2002:18). Away from Centerville, Confederate outposts were established in locations including Fairfax Courthouse and the heights overlooking the Potomac.

Military action within the county during the winter of 1861-1862 was limited to small-scale engagements, the largest of which occurred in Dranesville in northern Fairfax County. The battle was declared a Federal victory but was barely a newsworthy event (Balicki et al. 2002:21).

The Untenable Front

The winter of 1861-1862 allowed both Federal and Confederate troops to assess their situations. The Confederates were stretched along a tactically, untenable line stretching from Evansport (modern-day Quantico), northwest through Manassas Junction, Centerville, and ending at the Heights of the Potomac at Leesburg. Simply put, Confederate forces did not have enough troops and supplies to maintain the front line. At this time, Beauregard was replaced as Commanding General by Joseph Johnston. Johnston realized that large gaps, most notably between Manassas and Evansport, could allow Federal troops to advance in force across Bull Run and split the Confederate line in half. In March 1862, Federal troops were able to enact the Confederate Army preemptively, then withdrew to the south bank of Rappahannock River and reestablished their camps, waiting for the spring offensives.

The War Moves South

In the spring of 1862, McClellan began to mobilize his newly trained Federal Army for an offensive on Richmond. The Peninsula campaign proposed by McClellan involved the movement of his troops from Washington to Fort Monroe located at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay. President Lincoln approved McClellan's plans but only under the condition that a sufficient number of troops were left behind to protect Washington (Balicki et al. 2002:23). McClellan proposed that the troops stationed in the Shenandoah Valley could quickly respond to the Capitol if an attack occurred. He also stated that 19,000 troops would be left in the capitol for its defense. President Lincoln did not agree to this proposition and required McClellan to leave behind two corps (approximately 24,000 men) to help defend the capitol (Balicki et al. 2002:23).

With the armies away from their home soil, the citizens of Fairfax attempted to return to normalcy. Union-minded citizens petitioned to establish civil government within the county. A functioning county government was established on 22 May 1862, the first time in a year that a local government was instituted (Balicki et al. 2002:23). During this time, Fairfax County was in control of the Federal army. The large-scale troop concentrations at opposing ends of the county did not exist. Rather, smaller Federal patrols, pickets, and cavalry vedettes ensured the Federal domination of the county.

Second Manassas

As McClellan's army bogged down in the Peninsula Campaign, President Lincoln began to fret over the safety of the capitol. His worries were justifiable because Stonewall Jackson and his foot cavalry had been wreaking havoc within the Shenandoah Valley. As a response, Commanding General Halleck brought General John Pope from the western theater of the war into Virginia. Pope was disliked for his arrogance and the way he alienated sympathetic citizens (Faust 1982:336, 593). Pope quickly set about on a series of mistakes that would eventually culminate in the Second Battle of Manassas. Pope moved along the Orange and Alexandria railroad to Manassas Junction then followed the Manassas Gap Railroad westward towards the Shenandoah. By this time, Jackson had left his brief tenure on the Peninsula and was making fast tracks back to Northern Virginia. Jackson quickly outflanked Pope and acquired Pope's poorly guarded supply base at Manassas Junction (Faust 1986:94-95).

Pope's beleaguered army was quickly reinforced by McClellan's troops who were returning from the Peninsula Campaign. The vicious battle that occurred near Manassas Junction resulted in another Federal rout. Pope gathered his defeated army on the heights of Centerville where he turned the former Confederate earthworks from that previous winter into a defensive line in reverse. Pope vainly hoped that the final battle would end at Centerville (Balicki et al. 2002:24).

General Robert E Lee had other plans for attacking Pope's defeated army. Lee proposed that Jackson conduct a flanking maneuver east along Little River Turnpike towards Chantilly. This movement would skirt Pope's army along its north side. Fast maneuvering and reconnaissance by the Federal Army brought troops by a cart path from Bull Run to Chantilly and surprised Jackson's forces at Chantilly. The resulting fierce battle at Ox Hill forced a Confederate retreat from the county.

Cavalry Troops Protect the Transportation Networks

After the battle of Second Manassas, Fairfax County did not see extensive, massive troop occupations until after the war ended. Rather the county experienced lightning-fast Confederate cavalry raids aimed at destroying infrastructure, gathering supplies, and capturing prisoners. This shift of tactics resulted in a Federal response that included the establishment of a Federal cavalry screen (Figure 5). The screen was designed to warn the capitol's defenders of incoming enemy intrusions (Balicki et al. 2002:24). In general, the first Federal cavalry screen extended from Dranesville in the north through Chantilly, Centerville, and then skirted the eastern bank of Bull Run to the Occoquan River, finally ending at the mouth of the Occoquan at the Potomac River (Balicki et al. 2002:28).

During late 1862, the fall of 1863, and the fall of 1864, the Orange and Alexandria Railroad was a ripe fruit for Confederate cavalry (Balicki et al. 2002:25). The railroad provided supplies to Federal troops encamped on the north side of the Rappahannock River and its tributaries. The most notable raid occurred at Burke Station where Confederate General J.E.B. Stuart telegraphed the Quartermaster General in Washington to complain about the poor quality of the Federal mules he requisitioned from the train. In reality, Stuart's cavalry would not have desired to be impeded by a collection of mules

and the telegram was likely a ruse sent by Stuart to misinform Federal authorities into thinking he was still in the county.

Enter Mosby's Confederacy

John Singleton Mosby and his troops, Company A, 43 Battalion/Partisan Rangers created legends for themselves with their incursions into Fairfax County. Mosby and his troops enjoyed many luxurious privileges that other Confederate troops did not have. The main privilege was the fact that all materials they plundered were sold to the Confederate Government with Mosby's men realizing the profits (Balicki et al. 2002:27). Mosby and his troops effectiveness was likely motivated to some extent by these benefits.

Mosby and his troops brought into Fairfax County a new kind of warfare consisting of rapid strikes and immediate disappearance. His presence and the threat of his attacks kept Federal troops on edge and stationed near the outskirts of the capitol. Mosby established his legend during a daring night raid into Fairfax Courthouse where he captured Federal Brigadier General Edwin H. Stoughton while sleeping in the Truro Church rectory. Although being one of Mosby's men had its benefits, his success also succeeded in placing a mark of death on his troops. Lieutenant General U.S. Grant issued order that Mosby's troops could be hanged without trial if captured (Balicki et al. 2002:27).

Mosby's successful intrusions into Fairfax County demanded a Federal tactical response. The Federal cavalry screen that existed at the onset of Mosby's campaign was withdrawn partially because of its ineffectiveness against Mosby and because cavalry troops were pulled from the screen and sent to other theaters of the war (Balicki et al. 2002:27). By 1864, the cavalry screen was shortened to the east and was comprised of a series of stockades and pickets extending from Lewinsville in the northeast part of the county to just south of Annandale, located in the east central part of the county (Figure 5). This line of defense protected the road network, including the Leesburg Alexandria Turnpike, the Little River Turnpike, and Braddock's Road. By late 1864 and into 1865, the cavalry screen was expanded westward where it extended from Prospect Hill on the north, through Vienna and Fairfax Courthouse in the central portion of the county, and ending at Fairfax Station along the Orange and Alexandria Railroad (Ramage 1999:252). The portion of the cavalry screen between Fairfax Courthouse and Fairfax Station traverses the intersections of Ox and Braddock roads the location of Site 44FX185 (Figure 5).

Although Mosby was successful in his raids, the remainder of the Confederacy was not. On 9 April 1865, Robert E. Lee surrendered at Appomattox Courthouse. The following day, Mosby and his troops staged their last incursion into Fairfax County. They were met by Federal cavalry troops at Arundel's Tavern south of Fairfax Station and exchanged fire. Mosby and his troops quickly turned and fled west back across the Occoquan. This ended the history of armed conflict in Fairfax County.

2.2.6 Reconstruction and Growth (1865-1917)

After the war, Fairfax County like most of the seat of war was devastated. The county's infrastructure bore the burdens of countless troops traversing its roads, destroying and

rebuilding its bridges. The county's populace, their businesses, and farms were laid to waste by four years of conflict. During the war, woodlots and forested areas were cleared to provide wood for the railroads and soldier's campfires.

Though the county was slow to rebound, the agricultural renaissance experienced during the antebellum period gradually revived the Fairfax area. During the decades preceding the war, the citizens of the county began to gradually accept and adapt to their new environment. Among these people were many African Americans who, for the first time in their lives, experienced limited freedom and the right to own property.

By 1870, Fairfax County's economy had largely recovered from the havoc wreaked by the Civil War, and the population, numbering 12,952, was nine percent greater than it had been in 1860. Cheap land enticed a new wave of Northern settlers to the county (Netherton et al. 1978:386). In 1874, Providence officially became Fairfax. During this time, several African American families occupied the project vicinity and a store was created to serve the local African American population (Palkovich 1996). The late nineteenth century was a period of economic stagnation and population loss for the town. There were 376 residents in 1880, but only 200 in 1892, with about one-third of these African American (Netherton et al. 1978:434-435).

Fairfax finally received a direct rail connection to Washington in 1904 with the completion of the Washington, Alexandria, and Falls Church Railway trolley line. This line ended at the courthouse, coming to the town from the north and roughly paralleling Chain Bridge Road (Netherton et al. 1997:52).

2.2.7 World War I to World War II (1917 - 1945)

In response to the increase in size of the federal government during World War I, Fairfax began to serve as a commuter community for those working in Washington (Netherton et al. 1997:59). Throughout the early twentieth century, the dairy industry remained the most important agricultural enterprise serving the growing Washington region. In 1930, the town still included six farms within its boundaries, even though the population (618 residents) had increased over 20 percent from 1920. In response to the growing population pressures, the town began requiring that all subdivision plats be submitted to the Town Council for approval (Netherton et al. 1997:65).

2.2.8 The New Dominion (1945-present)

Rapid suburban growth came to the town of Fairfax after World War II. The county's population more than doubled between 1940 and 1950, growing from 40,929 to 98,557 (Netherton et al. 1997:76). Development within the town of Fairfax largely took place on the town's farms. The lack of subdivision or zoning laws for the town helped to spur development within it (Netherton et al. 1997:78). In 1950, the town's population was 1,946, but by 1960 had grown to 14,045 due to development and the annexation of adjacent property to increase the town's size to 5,070 acres in 1958. Fairfax became an independent city in June 1961 (Netherton et al. 1997:82). In 1960, land was deeded to

create the College of Northern Virginia that eventually became GMU (Palkovich 1996). Construction began on the campus in 1960 and has progressed ever since. The campus now contains 81 academic, dormitory, and infrastructure buildings catering to approximately 20,000 students.

2.2.9 Detailed Context for Site 44FX185

Site 44FX185 is a small earthwork situated on the northeast corner of the intersection Braddock Road and Ox Road. The site was constructed in June and July 1861 as part of the Confederate defenses of Fairfax Courthouse (Roman 1884:79). During the Civil War, this intersection connected Fairfax Courthouse Road to the north with Fairfax Station Road to the south. Braddock's Road, which by 1861 was over a century old and in poor repair, crossed this portion of Fairfax County in an east-to-west direction connecting Alexandria to Centerville (Figures 3 and 4).

Site 44FX185 was constructed when both Confederate and Federal troops believed that the war would be brief and men from both sides rushed to enlist to acquire their own piece of glory. On 13 May 1861, General P.G.T. Beauregard assumed command of all Confederate troops in Northern Virginia (Roman 1884:69). Beauregard quickly began to assay the tactical readiness of his troops and evaluate the topography of the area. What Beauregard found was troops that were poorly equipped and supplies spread across a defensive line that could easily be overrun by a superior Federal force (Roman 1884:70). Although the land about Bull Run provided a natural barrier, the eastern side of the stream valley commanded the western side. If the west side of Bull Run was occupied by Federal troops, they would have a superior artillery command over the eastern side of the stream. Beauregard had only 6,000 troops after assuming command over the lower east side of Bull Run. Beauregard sent a request to President Davis for more troops in order to properly secure and build defensive works surrounding Manassas Junction. Manassas Junction was of great strategic importance to the Confederate Army as its lines connected to both Richmond in the south and Strasburg in the Shenandoah Valley. Additionally, the junction was the home to the Confederate army's only supply point in Northern Virginia and Beauregard hoped to use it as a depot for supplies (Roman 1884:70).

On 12 June 1861, Beauregard constructed a bold plan that involved pulling back J.E. Johnston's forces at Harpers Ferry and combining them with his force at Manassas Junction (Roman 1884:77). The plan called for a swift attack through Fairfax County that would push the Federal troops to the Potomac forcing the Federals to cross the river and defend the capitol (Roman 1884:77). President Davis quickly rejected Beauregard's proposal stating that Johnston's departure would create a vacuum in the Shenandoah Valley that would quickly be filled by Federal forces (Roman 1884:77).

Prior to Beauregard assuming command, small numbers of troops were located along Bull Run, and in Centerville. A few detached companies of infantry and cavalry were located at Fairfax Courthouse (Roman 1884:69). By 20 June 1861, Beauregard had received adequate troops to reinforce the Confederate easternmost positions in Fairfax County (O.R. Series 1 Vol. 2:947, Figure 3). Beauregard realized the urgency of

strengthening his advanced positions as Confederate intelligence sources were reporting that the Federal Army was ready to advance (Roman 1884:75). At the same time, Federal General Irwin McDowell was assembling a large well-equipped army in Alexandria and Arlington Heights, only a day's march from the Confederate advanced positions at Fairfax Courthouse.

In order to secure Fairfax Courthouse and Fairfax Station, Beauregard sent three brigades to Germantown, Fairfax Courthouse, Fairfax Station, and Sangster's Crossroads (O.R. Series 1 Vol. 2:947). The Second Brigade commanded by Brigadier General R.S. Ewell was ordered to occupy the crossings of Fairfax Station Road with one brigade assigned to protect Braddock's Road, including the current project area (Roman 1884:79, O.R. Series 1 Vol. 2:947). Beauregard situated his advanced guard so that ease of communication with each other and with his headquarters could be easily maintained (O.R. Series 1 Vol. 2:947). Short on light artillery, only one battery was assigned to the brigades in an around Fairfax Courthouse (O.R. Series 1 Vol. 2:947). Presumably, the artillery was staged where needed most in the case of Federal attack.

Attached to Ewell's Brigade was the Fifth Alabama Infantry Regiment (Hubbs 2003a:4). The regiment was composed of 10 Companies of local militia from the west central portion of Alabama (Hubbs 2003b:107). On 12 May, the regiment boarded a train bound for Pensacola, Florida to assist on a proposed assault on Fort Pickens then held by the Federal Army. Once in Pensacola, the regiment chafed to go to Virginia in order to escape the oppressive heat of coastal Florida. The proposed assault of Fort Pickens never happened and on 2 June, the regiment received their orders to proceed to Virginia (Hubbs 2003a:6). The regiment arrived at Manassas Junction on the 19 June after a train journey that lead first to Richmond and then on to Manassas Junction (Hubbs 2003a:7). After their arrival, the regiment marched to their assigned encampment along Bull Run.

The Alabama regiment camped on the land of a recent émigré from Pennsylvania. The landowner was a Union man and the troops were fast to acquire as much foodstuffs as they could from his farm (Hubbs 2003a:7). Their camp near Bull Run was intensely disliked by the troops. Rations were scarce and the only available source of drinkable water was over a mile away. The regiment did not stay at their first encampment for very long. By 22 June, they received orders to march to Fairfax Courthouse as part of Ewell's Second Brigade (Hubbs 2003a:7). Upon arriving at Fairfax Courthouse, the regiment set about the task of soldiers. The reality of becoming soldiers was in some respects forged in their training and reflected by their leaders. The regiment was put through drill everyday and R.E. Rodes. Although known as a taskmaster during drill, the Colonel was also quick to reward his troops with praise at their accomplishments, earning their profound respect (Hubbs 2003a:9). The regiment also took their round on picket duty and suffered through the tense boredom of standing picket on the advanced guard, as Private John Henry Cowin of Company D wrote:

“The Sun is now sinking behind the western hill, and soon the stilly night will clothe the world in darkness and in invite sweet sleep to the millions, but not for me, for here I must sit with my gun across my

knees, and keep a sharp lookout throughout the long and dreary night, to prevent the lurking foe from surprising our gallant little band, and taking us prisoners. I had almost as soon die as to be a prisoner in the hands of such villains as are at the head of affairs in the United States” (Hubbs 2003a:8).

Camp life for the regiment early in the war was not one of hardship. As was typical in the early war the well-to-do soldiers brought slaves with them to serve as camp attendants. The Fifth Alabama was no different. Slaves served their masters carrying heavy loads, doing laundry tasks, and serving as mess cooks. Private Cowin stated:

“Seve (our cook) was taken sick this evening and we are in a bad fix in the way of cooking as no one of us know anything about it” (Hubbs 2003a:10).

For these soldiers, camp life was still an adventure and the idyllic life recorded in their diaries. At this time, they were not yet subjected to the horrors of combat. The troops of the regiment did not suffer for lack of food and rations. To these new soldiers, war was still an abstraction, something they had not yet experienced. For most soldiers, their slave-supported way of life was brought with them, even to the front lines at Fairfax Courthouse. During the early part of the war, soldiering in the local militia was one aspect of civic duty that was a part of life (Hubbs 2003b:78).

During late June and into mid-July, both Federal and Confederate forces reconnoitered the no-man’s land between their respective advanced positions. The Fifth Alabama’s forward picket posts, according to soldier’s diaries, were approximately four-miles distance from their camp (Hubbs 2003a:8). On 6 July, the regiment began constructing defensive works located approximately a half a mile from their camp (Hubbs 2003a:11). John Henry Cowin’s journal entry for 6 July states as follows:

“Another days work before me. We have to build a barricade about a half mile from here on the old Braddock’s Road. Men are detailed daily to work on it. There were about forty or fifty of us out to day and did a very good days work. We threw up works for almost a quarter of a mile and made them quite strong, almost bullet proof” (Hubbs 2003a:12-13).

The following day found Private Cowin and the rest of his company training in their recently constructed earthworks. They truly believed that their works would hold and that a chance to fight for their cause would begin at that place (Hubbs 2003a:12). The previous diary entry also provides insight into the location of the regiment’s camp.

After his plans for an offensive to push the Federals back into Washington was out rightly rejected by President Davis, Beauregard continued to strengthen his advance guards but also made provisions for their orderly retreat from Fairfax Courthouse in light of the advance of a numerically superior Federal force (O.R. Series 1 Vol. 2:447-448). In

Special Order 100, Beauregard set forth a plan of orderly retreat from the advanced positions at Fairfax Courthouse and Fairfax Station to behind Bull Run. His retreat plan was designed to consolidate his outer forces to protect the lower fords across Bull Run, insure adequate defense of Manassas Junction, and have on hand a prudent reserve of troops. Beauregard's plan called for Ewell's Second Brigade to fall back along the Orange and Alexandria Railroad to Union Mills ford, and at that juncture, burn the railroad bridge crossing Bull Run (O.R. Series 1, Vol. 2:447). The Fifth Alabama Infantry Regiment was not included in the general retreat followed by the rest of Ewell's Brigade. The Alabama troops were to hold the intersection of Braddock's Road for as long as possible then retreat west on Braddock's Road and follow a side road to Bull Run (O.R. Series 1 Vol.2:447).

General Irvin McDowell was assembling his army and preparing for an attack on Manassas Junction. McDowell was veteran of twenty-seven years in the regular army and was ill prepared to assume command of 35,000 troops (Rafuse 2002:52). McDowell was not particularly sociable and he carried favor with Regular Army soldiers, did not care for the volunteers troops who comprised most of his command, and he had complete disdain for politically appointed officers (Rafuse 2002:52). For McDowell, putting together a trained functional army was no small task. At every point of the way, he was undersupplied, including too few trained officers to form a competent staff. As a result, functions normally handled by staff fell upon the shoulders of McDowell. Lacking a competent cavalry, he did not have trained soldiers to ride reconnaissance in the countryside (Rafuse 2002:53). His offensive assault was further compounded by his lack of adequate Fairfax County maps.

Regardless of his army's shortfalls, McDowell submitted on 3 June a plan to move on Manassas Junction. He proposed that the junction could be taken with 12,000 troops, 5,000 troops held in reserve, two batteries of artillery, and a regiment of cavalry (Davis 1977:69). However, two days later intelligence reports began coming in that Beauregard had 20,000 troops located between Manassas Junction and Fairfax Courthouse (Davis 1977:70). In light of these new developments, McDowell had to redesign his strategy. The new plan would involve marching to the north of Fairfax County near the Potomac and then moving south to Centerville effectively bypassing the concentrated Confederate forces at Fairfax Courthouse and along Bull Run near the Orange and Alexandria railroad (Davis 1977:70). General Scott quickly dismissed this plan and ordered McDowell to formulate another. McDowell's new plan proposed a march leading through the center of Fairfax County (Detzer 2004:76). The plan called for the army to be divided into three columns each with enough ordinance, soldiers, and provisions to defend itself (Detzer 2004:75, Rafuse 2002:73). On 29 June, McDowell's new plan was approved without question by General Scott and then by Lincoln's cabinet (Davis 1977:74). McDowell also expressed his concern about the untrained and undisciplined condition of the army, since his plan's success hinged on the Confederates in Manassas not receiving reinforcement by Johnston's troops in the Shenandoah (Rafuse 2002:74). McDowell assured General Scott and the cabinet that his plan would work, that the Confederate troops were just as untrained as his and that Federal troops under General Patterson would hold Johnston's troops in check in the Shenandoah (Rafuse 2002:74).

Although still hesitant, McDowell began to refine his plan and assign men to be in charge. Finally, on 8 July, McDowell was able to put his plan in place. The columns would move through Fairfax County by way of Vienna to the north, along Little River Turnpike, with troops splitting off in Annandale to follow Braddock's Road, and the southern column following the course of the Orange and Alexandria railroad (Davis 1977:74). McDowell hoped that a rapid march on Fairfax Courthouse would force Confederate troops there to surrender.

To accomplish his plans, McDowell set about to organize the army into five divisions. Assigning varying numbers of brigades to each division, McDowell anticipated that divisions more likely to be engaged in combat would require more troops. He also massed the more competent brigades into the larger divisions (Davis 1977:77). McDowell hoped that swift action on Fairfax Courthouse would force Confederate troops there under Generals Ewell and Bonham to surrender (Rafuse 2002:81). With his columns on the south McDowell hoped that he could outflank Beauregard on the Orange and Alexandria south of Manassas Junction and effectively cut the Confederate supply and retreat line at Bristoe Station several miles south of Manassas (Davis 1977:76).

The proposed plan called for McDowell's Fifth Division led by Colonel Dixon S. Miles to march along the Little River Turnpike to Annandale where they would then move south, gain Braddock's Road, and proceed to the south side of Fairfax Courthouse. Miles' division was only comprised of two brigades, one led by Colonel Lewis Blenker and the other commanded by Colonel Thomas A Davies (O.R. Series 1 Vol.51:414). The addition of Miles' Division represented an alteration of McDowell's original plan. McDowell hoped that by adding an additional division, his left flank (south of Fairfax Courthouse) would be stronger allowing for a more efficient massing of troops to the south of Manassas Junction (Davis 1977:76). It was within the march of Miles' Division and Davies Brigade that Site 44FX185 would play a role.

On the Morning of 16 July, McDowell's Army began its march out of Alexandria. The Federal Army bore with it an assurance that upon firing a few shots, the Confederate Army would turn its tail and flee south to Richmond (Hennessy 1989:7). Although the first days march went well and all of McDowell's Divisions reached their appointed destinations, the second day of the march proved to be slow and frustrating. The Federal troops began the next day marching into the no-man's land portion of Fairfax County near the Confederate front line. The new and undisciplined soldiers would often break march to capture "secesh" livestock, pick ripe blackberries, and fill their canteens. Fear among the solders also compounded the march. To the mostly green soldiers and officers of the Federal Army, every fallen tree, embankment, or turn in the road preceding the march became a potential masked Confederate battery or breastwork (Hennessy 1989:7). Fueling this fear was a concealed artillery position (masked battery) near Vienna that caused some casualties and a hasty Federal retreat. McDowell's officers were warned that unknowingly advancing on an enemy position was considered an unpardonable act (O.R. Series 1, Vol. 2:305).

At daybreak, Miles' Division left Annandale and proceeded south to Braddock's Road. Once across Accotink Creek, the Federal forces began to encounter the real Confederate barricades along Braddock's Road. The condition of the road slowed the march and as the troops crossed Accotink Creek they began to encounter fallen trees across the road, log barricades, and finally the advanced picket post manned by the members of the Fifth Alabama (O.R. Series 1 Vol.52:19). By 8:30 am, the Sixteenth New York (the advance regiment of Miles' Division) began skirmishing with the Confederate pickets (O.R. Series 1 Vol.2:433). The New Yorkers formed their skirmish lines and began a protracted skirmish with the retreating pickets of the Fifth Alabama. The Confederate pickets would pause and fire as the New Yorkers pursued them with neither side inflicting damage. The following account written by Colonel Davies gives a good approximation of what the New Yorkers encountered on that morning.

“[I] took the advance of the Fifth Division, moving on Fairfax-Courthouse by way of the Old Braddock Road south of the turnpike road. I found the road very difficult for heavy artillery and barricade by trees felled across the road as often as once a quarter mile, requiring the constant use of pioneer corps. After passing many of these barricades, we came to a blind barricade directly across the road and evidently intended for artillery. After making reconnaissance we found a small picket posted behind it, when my advanced pickets were ordered to charge and fire upon them--which they did, dispersing it under running fire. No one on our side was injured, and we never turned aside to ascertain whether any of the enemy were killed or not. The pickets reported, however, seeing several men fall. This running fire continued and reconnaissance was continued to within one mile of the Fairfax-Courthouse, the enemy continuing retreating and firing upon our pickets at every convenient opportunity. After the exchange of fires a reconnaissance was made, discovering many masked batteries, and at last quite an extensive temporary fortification about one mile and a half from Fairfax-Courthouse” (O.R. Series 1 Vol.51:20).

For the Confederate Advanced Guard, the arrival of the Federal Army came as a surprise. The advance company led by Captain Shelley had abandoned their posts in order to return to camp and get some breakfast. When they were three quarters of a mile from Farr's Crossroads, a scout arrived with a Federal prisoner and informed them of the Federal Advance (O.R. Series 1 Vol.2:460). Shelley's Company quickly returned to their posts.

The members of the Fifth Alabama also provide an account of the skirmish near their trench. For, private John Henry Cowin of Company D, this was his first taste of actual combat and in his writing, one gets a sense of what occurred with the Alabamians at Farr's Crossroads on the morning of the 17 July.

“About eight o’clock a couple of scouts came in, one having a Yankee behind him captured by the pickets. The regiment was immediately put in order of battle and marched down to the breastwork. Tents were struck and the wagons loaded...When we got to the breastworks Capt. Shelley’s Company was sent out as skirmishers, and soon we heard them open fire upon the enemy. The firing was kept up for about an hour. The balls whistling over our heads, I have often heard of balls whistling around a fellow’s head, but never knew what tune they played until this morning. They came in thick and fast, some falling within a few feet of us. The pickets were driven in, but they came orderly, displaying great coolness and bravery...They came upon us with a large force and tried to flank us, and would have succeeded had we not received orders from the commanding General to retreat. I think Col. Rodes intended to give them a fight, but had to obey orders to retreat. We left our breastworks with great reluctance, for there was all our work to be abandoned to the enemy without a fight” (Hubbs 2003a:19).

For Colonel Rodes of the Fifth Alabama General, Ewell had not yet sent him orders to retreat from Farr’s Crossroads (O.R. Series 1, Vol. 2:460). Rodes sent a courier to locate General Bonham. The courier soon discovered that Bonham’s command had already abandoned Fairfax Courthouse. Finally locating Bonham, the courier was told that Rodes should retreat from the crossroads (O.R. Series 1, Vol. 2:460). In the meantime, Rodes finally received order from Ewell to retreat. The Fifth Alabama retreated from their breastworks down Braddock’s Road towards Centerville, joining Ewell’s Brigade at Union Mills. For Colonel Rodes, the order to retreat could not have come sooner, for his main body of his regiment at Farr’s Crossroads was being outflanked by Federal troops on their right side. Rodes’ description of that morning describes the anxiety that he felt.

“They had outflanked my position to the right during the skirmish, for they could be seen crossing the clearing along the edge of which we were posted in large numbers. Up to and after the close of the skirmish I had received no definite orders to retreat, but had learned that General Bonham’s command was retreating, and that the troops at Fairfax Station were about to retreat” (O.R. Series 1 Vol.2:460).

The Fifth Alabama made a hasty retreat from Farr’s Crossroads never to return. Some companies of Davies’ Regiment camped at the site of their skirmish with the Alabamians. The remainder went further beyond the crossroads and found the camp of the Fifth Alabama. In the camp, Federal troops found cooked meals by the fire, camp equipage including backpacks, all abandoned by the Alabamians (O.R. Series 1, Vol. 51:20). For Colonel Rodes, the retreat west along Braddock’s Road was a precipitous one. His troops, who were quickly summoned to the earthworks, did not return to their camp to gather their belongings.

Although the skirmish at Farr's Crossroads was over, the location of the site was still of great importance during the remaining years of the War. Federal troops who traversed Fairfax County after the winter of 1861 and 1862 also found Farr's Crossroads as a convenient and strategically located place to camp. The location on the high ground, overlooking the intersection of Braddock's and Fairfax Station roads, allowing troops access to communications, rations, and defensibility.

After the Confederates retreated from Fairfax Courthouse in March 1862, Federal troops began to reconnoiter the Fairfax countryside. The First New Jersey Volunteers were ordered to encamp at Farr's Crossroads since the place was considered to be of strategic importance (O.R. Series 1 Vol.5:538). Although not recorded in the O.R., Farr's Crossroads continued to function as a cavalry camp. Local relic hunters reported that the most common artifacts found at 44FX185 were cavalry equipage. These artifacts included saddle items, carbine rifle slings, and carbine bullets. These artifact types are commonly associated with mounted troops and provides evidence that the site vicinity was occupied by Cavalry troops assigned to protect the road networks leading into eastern Fairfax County (Figure 5).

The earthworks at Farr's Crossroads (44FX185) were among the initial front line positions abandoned by Confederate forces during the general advance of Federal forces prior to the Battle of First Manassas. The site was constructed to protect the road networks leading to Manassas Junction and to provide the green Confederate troops with knowledge of constructing defensive positions. Although a skirmish was fought at the site, the intention of the Confederates was not to stand and fight but rather, hold ground as long as possible without direct battle, and then withdraw. This tactic functioned to slow the Federal advance on Manassas Junction allowing the forward Confederate troops to assume defensive positions nearer to Manassas. After the Battle of First Manassas, Confederate troops returned to Fairfax County and once again occupied the site vicinity. When Federal troops later regained control of Fairfax County, the site was reoriented to defend the approaches to the eastern portion of Fairfax County. The site had been continually occupied throughout the war because of its strategic topography and access to the transportation networks, occupying the high ground overlooking the intersection of two roads. Site 44FX185 is also part of a larger Civil War site complex comprised of sites 44FX137, 44FX2510, and 44FX2765. These sites include a camp, trench lines and other earthworks. The presence of these sites at this location indicates the strategic importance of the landscape.

3.0 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Purpose and Objectives of the Investigation

The objective of the project is to conduct detailed recording of the earthwork and possibly identify associated features that may include camp locations, road traces, and pathways. Detailed background research will place the site within its appropriate historical context. It is hoped that the completion of the project will accomplish three objectives. First, this project will serve as my senior project, fulfilling a graduation requirement for my Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Individualized Studies from GMU. Second, this project aims to place the site within the historic context during which it was constructed, occupied, and abandoned. The final goal is to evaluate the site for inclusion on the NRHP and make practical recommendations intended to preserve, and perhaps interpret the site.

3.2 Documentary Research Methods

Archival research was conducted in order to assemble a historical context for Site 44FX185. The archival research consisted of a review of historic records including, the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies (O.R. 1997), soldier's diaries, and historic maps. Archival information concerning Farr's Crossroads was located at Fairfax County Library. Existing site forms and cultural resource reports located at the FCCRD library were reviewed. Local relic hunters were consulted. Though these individuals willingly reported their findings, they wish to remain anonymous. Artifacts recovered by relic hunters provided valuable information about the troops that occupied the site help identify the regional identity of the troops who constructed and occupied the site.

3.3 Archaeology Field Methods

The fieldwork at Site 44FX185 included a pedestrian reconnaissance survey and cross section drawing of selected areas of the earthwork. The site and its vicinity were walked over along transects spaced approximately 50 ft. apart. Fieldwork was limited to an existing conditions assessment. No excavations were conducted. The location of the earthwork is shown on campus plat maps (Figure 2). Therefore mapping of the earthwork was not necessary and not undertaken. Both historic and modern features in the site vicinity were recorded on the plat maps. These campus plat maps were checked for accuracy using nearby landmarks. This assured that the location of Site 44FX185 was placed accurately on the maps. Cross section profiles were drawn across two areas of the parapets (Figure 6). The cross sections help to assess site integrity and record subtle features of the parapets. The site was photographed using black and white photography and digital media. All field measurements were taken using Engineers scale (10 units to the foot). Fieldwork at the site was conducted with permission from the VDHR. The result of the fieldwork is presented using the current VDHR standards (VDHR 2001).

3.4 Archaeological Sites in the Vicinity

There are seven archaeological sites in the project vicinity. Four of these sites, 44FX435, 44FX516, 44FX592, and 44FX3189, date from the prehistoric, and the late nineteenth century. Three sites, 44FX137, 44FX2765, and 44FX2765, date to the Civil War. Site 44FX137 is a fortified road trace that extends north of Site 44FX185 and parallels Ox Road for approximately 1200 ft. (Figure 2). This site likely represents a trench line associated with 44FX185. Site 44FX2510 is a camp and earthwork located at the north terminus of Site 44FX137. Site 44FX2510 is an earthwork with a late nineteenth-century artifact scatter. Site 44FX2765 is a Civil War camp abutting the northeast corner of Site 44FX185 (Figure 2). In addition to the sites in the project vicinity, two additional sites 44FX186 and 44FX239 are associated with Site 44FX185. Both of these sites are Civil War earthworks located along Braddock Road, approximately three quarters of a mile east of Site 44ST185. These sites are also attributed to the Confederate occupation of the area prior to the First Battle of Manassas.

3.5 Expected Results

Site 44FX185 is located on a rise overlooking the intersection of two historic roads, Braddock and Ox roads. Historically, this area was known as Farr's Crossroads. The site is comprised of an earthwork constructed to provide sweeping rifle and artillery fire along these two roads (Figures 2, 3, and 4). The site afforded protection to nearby Fairfax Courthouse. After 1861, the site was used by Confederate and Federal troops as a temporary camp location. During the summer of 1861, Fairfax Courthouse was the frontline home to Confederate forces. After the Civil War, the vicinity of the site was the location of a crossroads store that served the surrounding African American community. The site was also near the home of two African American families (Palkovich 1996).

Currently the site is forested in a mix of deciduous and evergreen trees with an under story of greenbrier, holly, and blackberry thickets. The age of the trees appears to be 50 years and older, indicating that the site was likely abandoned prior to the mid-twentieth century.

Expected results include finding the remains of an earthwork. The earthwork should be situated near the historic crossroads. The earthwork may contain associated subtle features including firing platforms for cannon, trails, and embrasures. The site location may also contain the remains of Civil War soldiers' campsites. Features associated with the camp occupation may include stone or earthen tent platforms, the location of the camps sinks (latrines), drainage features, and pathways.

After the war, the site was occupied by newly freed black families. One structure, a store, served the black community surrounding the site. In addition, an historic map shows additional structures in the vicinity of Farr's Crossroads (Palkovich 1996). Archaeological features related to this occupation will likely include foundation remains, surface artifact scatters, wells and cisterns, road traces, and yard areas defined by changes in vegetation.

The configuration of the intersections of Ox and Braddock roads has seen extensive modification since historic times. These modifications involved both cutting and filling along the historic road grades. Therefore, it is expected that a belt of disturbance border the roadways. On the east boundary of the site vicinity the construction of Parking Lot K has created similar disturbance as a result of grading and filling therefore a belt of disturbance is expected along the east side of the site as a result of parking lot construction (Figure 2).

The site has been subjected to both legal and illegal relic hunting since the 1950's. The use of metal detectors for relic hunting has selectively removed Civil War-era artifacts from the ground to an effective depth of approximately 0.7 ft. Advances in technology have improved increased the depth and accuracy at which metal detectors locate buried metallic objects. Fortunately, the ground cover and campus parking lot security may have deterred recent relic hunting. It is likely that artifacts buried deep in the soil remain *in situ*. Relic hunters tend discard iron artifacts such as nails, spikes, horseshoes, and cast

iron pot fragments. These iron artifacts are often left *in situ* or excavated and discarded at the base of trees. It is expected that many of these artifact types remain at the site.

4.0 RESULTS OF THE FIELDWORK

Site 44FX185 is a Civil War earthwork located on top of a rise at the southern end of a narrow ridgeline that trends in a north direction paralleling Ox Road (Figure 2). The site is located 150 ft. northeast of the intersection of Braddock and Ox roads and 400 ft. west of Parking Lot K. The site area is approximately 0.5 acre in size. The ridge top on which the site is located is at approximately 470 ft. above mean sea level (amsl). The earthwork displays a circular plan with a diameter of approximately 80 ft. (Figure 2). The interior of the earthwork is approximately 40 ft. in diameter. The site is in excellent condition. The earthwork is covered in dense brush and surrounded by large poplar trees. The ground cover at the site is primarily greenbrier that covers the ground in great profusion. The brush and trees covering the parapets has effectively limited erosion to the site (Figure 7). The nearly impenetrable thicket of greenbrier also has served to protect the site from illegal relic hunting. There are no signs of recent relic hunter activity at the site.

The exterior sides of the parapet vary in height. On the western side of the earthwork, the parapet is 2.5 ft. high (Figures 7 and 8). On the exterior of east side of the earthwork, the parapet is 2 ft. high. The interior depth of the earthwork is 3 ft. below the top of the parapet and 1 ft. lower than the surrounding ground surface on the exterior. The interior of the earthwork is flat. No signs of cannon platforms or embrasures for cannon were noted. On the west side of the parapet, a slight cut on the interior was recorded (Figure 8). The cut may represent the eroded remains of a firing banquette. The firing banquette was a narrow shelf excavated on the interior of the parapet that would allow a soldier to stand and fire over the parapet. The parapet is approximately 24 ft. in width along the earthwork.

As a result of the pedestrian survey, an historic road trace modified into a trench line was relocated. This feature is recorded as Site 44FX137. The approximately 10 ft.-wide road trace is located approximately 50 ft. east of Site 44FX185 and runs northward along the eastern edge of the ridge top for approximately 1200 ft. (Figure 2). Based on its proximity to Site 44FX185, the trench line of Site 44FX137 was used to guard the advance to Site 44FX185 and to protect Site 44FX185 along its right flank.

A home site was also located and identified. The home site is approximately 75 ft. south of Site 44FX185 (Figure 2). The home site remains consist of a scatter of brick and rough-cut stone covering a 50-by-50 ft. area. The site also includes domestic vegetation comprised of yucca plants and coral bells. The home site is likely one of the residences of the African American community that populated at Farr's Crossroads after the Civil War.

The terrain surrounding the site was agricultural fields during the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. Soldiers' diaries indicate that there were additional trenches in the area surrounding Site 44FX185. In order to facilitate plowing, the farmer may have filled in some of the trenches in the area near Site 44FX185. It is likely the existing earthwork at the site was too large to grade so it was simply left intact. The fortified road trace, Site 44FX137, was retained and used by the post-war residents for transportation and access to agricultural fields.

5.0 ANALYSIS

The analysis of Site 44FX185 focuses on the site's location within the terrain and how the terrain dictated the location of the site. The modern roadbeds of Ox and Braddock roads have been graded to compensate for traffic volume. A large shopping complex currently forms the southeast corner of the roads intersection. Residential housing lines the west side of Ox Road. Approximately 300 ft. east of the site, grading associated with the construction of Parking Lot K has removed the natural terrain (Figure 2). The historic topography is preserved in a tree line paralleling the west side of Ox Road and in a thin strip of ground between Braddock Road and Parking Lot K.

The intact historic topography can give insight into the why the site was constructed at its location. Site 44FX185 commanded the east slope of the ridge on which it was constructed. To command, in military terminology, means to rule an area by acquiring and fortifying a particular section of ground that would afford the maximum delivery of effective killing fire in the event of attack (Lowe 2003). In the dissected topography of the Virginia Piedmont, areas of command were located on the high ground, often near the intersections of roads or along railroads. Another important aspect of command was concealment. Concealment served two purposes. The first purpose was to ensure that the enemy was not aware of the works. This created an element of surprise and prohibited the enemy from flanking the earthworks with an advanced knowledge of opponent's position. It also limits evasive maneuvers by the enemy that could potentially cut off the opponent. The second reason for concealment was to avoid silhouette. Silhouette occurs when the human form is framed against the horizon, which provides for an easy target. To avoid silhouette, defensive earthworks were placed at the military crest of a landform (Lowe 2003). The military crest of a landform was not centered at the top of a hill, but rather located on the sides of the crest.

Other important considerations when constructing defensive earthworks were support and reinforcements. Although command is one of the most important aspects of strategy, no earthwork can be supported unless it can be sufficiently operated and receive continual support of reserve troops and munitions. Although an area may be commanded by an earthwork, another essential element is cover. Cover is defined as protection from fire or view (Lowe 2003). Cover necessitates the construction of embankments or trenches to provide the defending soldier from fire. The excavation of a ditch on the interior of an earthwork allowed for additional cover without making the parapet higher, thus increasing the element of concealment.

Some of these elements are still extant at Site 44FX185. The earthwork was constructed to protect an advance along Braddock Road from the east and a possible advance from Fairfax Station from the south. The site is located in a position that gives an excellent command of the eastern approach along and adjacent to Braddock Road. Fortunately, some segments of the historic topography remain undisturbed allowing for an elevation analysis of Site 44FX185 to ascertain the placement of the site on the landscape. Cover at Site 44FX185 included the height of the parapets and the lower interior within the earthwork. The presence of a possible firing banquette on the western side indicates that

the interior depth of the earthwork was deep enough that soldiers would have to stand on the banquette in order to fire over the parapet.

The site location is shown on Figure 4. Although the earthwork is not depicted on this map, the approach from the east shows the area was a cleared field. The map also shows the approach to the west side of the site as forested. During the War, the cleared areas around the site would have provided an excellent field of fire to the east and southeast. The earthwork at Site 44FX185 is located at 471 ft. amsl. The interior of the earthwork is at 468 ft. amsl. On the west side of the site, the slope drops 31 ft. over a 150 ft. distance to the tree line along the west side of Ox Road. To the south, the slope drops from 471 ft. amsl to 460 ft. amsl where the modern road cut for Braddock Road truncates the south end of the landform. To the east and southeast, the slope is gentle with a drop from 471 ft. amsl to 450 ft. amsl across a distance of approximately 300 ft. From the southwest corner of Lot K and the undisturbed tree line along Braddock Road, the topography is somewhat flat at 450-to-451 ft. amsl (Figure 2). The flat ground continues along Braddock Road for a distance of approximately 400 ft.

The steeper slope on the west side of the earthwork was not intended to be commanded by occupants of the site. The sharp drop of 31 ft. from the site to the tree line across Ox Road would have allowed an enemy assault to have cover from fire under the crest of the slope. The slope would have provided dead ground in which the assaulting force could hide from fire. Forest on the west side of the site, depicted on Figure 4, would have provided tree cover and concealment for troops attacking along the west side. The western side of the site however, did have advantages for the troops occupying the earthwork. The steep slope flanked by Ox Road would have provided cover for supporting troops and offered a defended access for supplies and materials delivered along Ox or Braddock roads. The location of the site near the intersection also provided troops with two avenues of retreat in case their earthwork was over run.

Approximately 500 ft. northeast of the site is a natural drainage that forms the north boundary of Parking Lot K (Figure 2). This drainage is steep enough to provide natural cover for troops assaulting from the east. The construction of Site 44FX137 was likely facilitated by the presence of this drainage. This natural feature was exploited by Federal troops who flanked the earthwork along its north (right) side and facilitated the retreat of the Fifth Alabama. It is likely that the Federal assault was strong enough to force the Confederates to withdraw from the trench and abandon Site 44FX185. Although their retreat was hasty, the Alabamians took advantage of the cover of the steep hill west of the site to assemble and march down Braddock Road.

The archaeological potential of this site is considered here as well. Site 44FX185 cannot be viewed as part of a one-time occupation early in the Civil War. The site is located at a strategic intersection and was occupied by various troops during the entire duration of the war. Holding the site and maintaining guard of the intersection of the roads was paramount to the success or failure of defending the approaches to Washington, particularly during the winters of 1861 and 1862. Simply put, the site vicinity was likely camped on repeatedly due to the strategic importance of this location. For Confederate

troops in the winter of 1861-1862, the site was held as defense against a repeat of Federal advance along Braddock Road or Fairfax Station Road. Later in the war after the spring of 1862, Federal troops would have occupied the site vicinity. Their intent would have been to guard the approaches to Alexandria and Arlington. These multiple occupations would have resulted in troops camping in positions relevant to what they were defending. The application of cover and concealment applies to camp locations. Based on the landform one would expect to find Confederate camps on the west and northwest side of the site. Along the west side, evidence for this has been destroyed by grading associated with the construction of Ox Road. However to the north of Site 44FX185 and slightly west of the center of the ridge, a natural draw drops down to Ox Road. The location of this draw would have afforded encamped Confederates natural cover provided by the crest of the ridge. Just the opposite is true for Federal Troops who encamped at the site. For these troops, concealment of their camp would have placed them east of the site where their camp could be concealed by the ridge top. The presence of Site 44FX2765 located on the east side of slope confirms this interpretation (Figure 2). At the location of Site 44FX2765, local relic hunters found military artifacts associated with Federal troops. Fieldwork also noted that the western parapets at the site are slightly higher than those on the east. This may be a result of differential erosion where the east side was subjected to more weather. Alternatively, the western side of the parapets may have been raised by Federal troops to afford greater cover for their position on top of the hill.

The site and its vicinity have been extensively relic hunted in the past. Relic hunters report finding materials related to cavalry and infantry camps spread across the ridgeline and the slopes on either side of the site. The cooperating relic hunters interviewed by the author have stated that the site was “hunted-out” by the late 1970’s. That means that due to relic hunting activities, Civil War metallic artifacts have been removed to the effective operating depth of older metal detectors (approximately 0.7 ft. below the ground surface). At site 44FX185, the likelihood of Civil War artifacts below this depth is considered high. Camp locations often contain buried trash pits and a light scatter of metal artifacts often spread across a considerable distance. The mature forest and the thick under brush that began to develop in the early twentieth century have created a thick O horizon across the site vicinity. The thickness of the O horizon and the tangled vegetation it supports limit the depth and accuracy of a metal detector. Another factor to consider is the home site located south of the site. The yard area surrounding the former structure likely contains a large amount of architectural metal. The presence of large amounts of iron can mask Civil War-related artifacts. Therefore, it is likely that artifacts related to the Civil War occupation remain at Site 44FX185.

6.0 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Site 44FX185 is an earthwork constructed by members of the Fifth Alabama Regiment during the first few weeks of July 1861. Site 44FX185 is one component of a larger Civil War-era site complex located within the northeast corner of Braddock and Ox roads. Related to Site 44F185 is site 44FX137, a fortified road trace. Both these sites were built to protect the strategically important crossroads of Braddock and Fairfax Station roads. Site 44FX185 was the apex of a running skirmish between troops of the Fifth Alabama and detachments of the Sixteenth New York Infantry during the Federal Army's advance upon Manassas Junction prior to the First Battle of Manassas. The skirmish around the site resulted in the Federal Troops outflanking the earthwork on its north side. The Confederate troops retreated in haste and Federal Troops took command of the earthwork. The strategic importance of the site did not cease with the end of the skirmish. Although no direct archival evidence was found, the site was likely occupied during the winter of 1861-1862 when Confederate troops reoccupied Fairfax Courthouse after the First Battle of Manassas. During this period, the site would have retained its strategic importance and necessitated guarding in the case of a Federal troop advance on Braddock Road. After the Confederates abandoned Fairfax Courthouse in March of 1862, Federal troops once again occupied central Fairfax County. During this time and during the rest of the war, the strategic importance of the site was reversed. Rather than defending approaches to Arlington and Alexandria, Federal troops guarded the approaches from the west, in this case Braddock Road. During this time, Federal troops camped on the east side of Site 44FX185 resulting in the formation of Site 44FX2765. After the theater of the war in the east shifted to areas away from Fairfax County, Colonel John Singleton Mosby and his raiders were a continual threat in Fairfax County. In response to Mosby's raids, Federal Cavalry screens were posted along roads that led into the county. At this time, the location of Site 44FX185 provided Federal troops with a location of high ground overlooking Braddock and Fairfax Station roads and direct access to these roadways.

The site has retained integrity. The remains of the site include an earthwork displaying a circular plan with a diameter of approximately 80 ft. The heights of the parapets that form the earthwork are approximately 2-to-2.5 ft. high. The added height of the parapet may be a result of the site's use by Federal troops who improved the earthwork to provide better cover for troops guarding against Confederate advance from the west along Braddock Road. In addition, the historic ground surface within the earthwork is intact and may contain artifacts and subsurface features related to the site's use. Although the area surrounding Site 44FX185 was plowed after the War, the site vicinity may still contain subsurface features related to the construction and use of Site 44FX185. These features may include posts, buried trenches, and trash pits. Therefore, the area surrounding the site is considered to contain a high archaeological potential.

The archaeological potential of Site 44FX185 is noted in the form of parapets and the landscape to the north east and south. Although excavations were not conducted to assess subsurface integrity, the likelihood of subsurface features and artifact deposits is considered high. Field investigations documented the parapet. Analysis showed that the site covered the terrain east, and south along at the intersection of two historic roads. Site

44FX185 is considered eligible to the NRHP under criterion a because it is “associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history,” criterion c because the site embodies “the distinctive characteristics of a type,” and criterion d for its likelihood to “yield information important in prehistory or history.”

Given the current rate of expansion within the GMU campus, impacts to Site 44FX185 are likely. The primary recommendation is to preserve the site in place through avoidance. The site and its surrounding landscape contain excellent educational opportunities offering an on-site educational experience for GMU students and faculty. In addition, the GMU as an institute of higher learning should put forth an effort to preserve and interpret this irreplaceable cultural resource for future generations. Possible suggestions are the erection of an historic sign detailing the area’s significance during the Civil War or inclusion of the site area as part of the Civil War Trails. If avoidance is not an option, then archaeological investigations are warranted. The site should be cleared of all brush and debris to allow for a detailed assessment of the parapets. Detailed mapping of the site should also be conducted. Investigations should be focused on an intensive metal detector survey in conjunction with short-interval shovel testing. Shovel testing will help define site stratigraphy and possibly identify the location of discreet artifact deposits including buried trash pits. In conjunction with the survey, mechanical stripping may be conducted in the area surrounding the site. By removing the O horizon, the effective depth of a metal detector is increased. Mechanical stripping may also be used to confirm that additional trenches that may have been graded over for farming over are still present in sub-plowzone contexts.

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APPENDIX I

Figures

APPENDIX II

Qualifications of Investigators