

ARCHAEOLOGY FIELD BOOK

The Dig at Sappington House

June 1-11, 2016

Thomas Sappington House Museum
1015 S. Sappington Rd.
Saint Louis, MO 63126

Brought to you by:

The Sappington-Concord Historical Society

The Sappington House Foundation

The City of Crestwood, MO, Parks & Recreation

The Archaeological Institute of America (AIA)

St. Louis Society

The Dig!

At Sappington House



YOUR ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD JOURNAL

Archaeologist's Name: _____

Artifact Observation

Closely examine the artifact and record your observations in the spaces below.

Observations

Date artifact was found: _____

Place artifact was found: _____

Description of artifact (shape, color, other characteristics): _____

Materials (what it's made of): _____

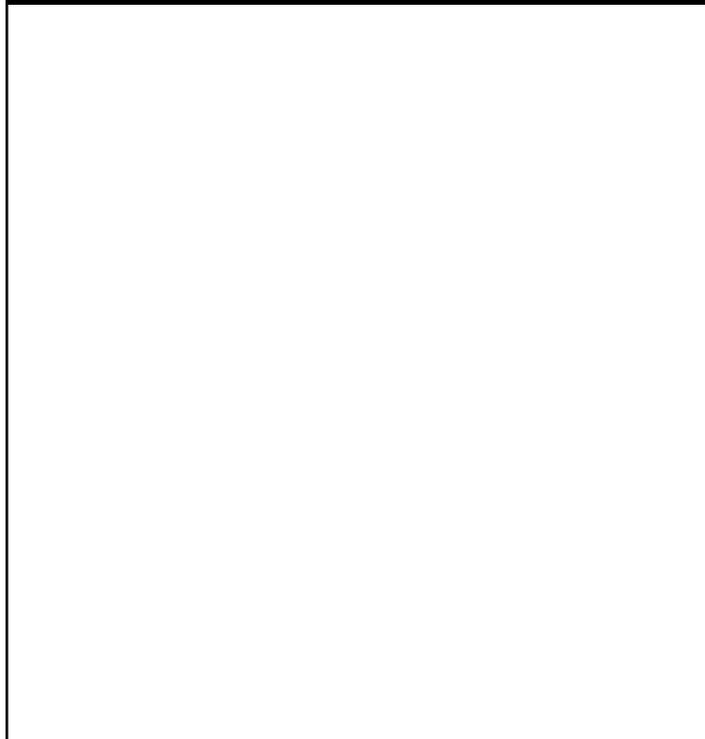
Measurements

Height: _____ Width: _____

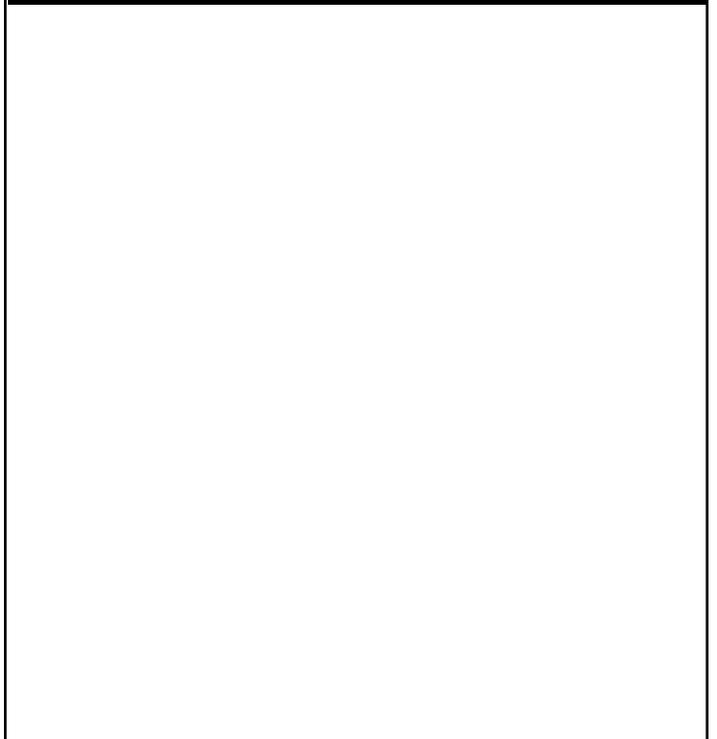
Drawing

Use the space below to draw your artifact:

Front View



Back View



Artifact Analysis

Consider your observations and think about what they tell you about the artifact.

Who do you think made the artifact?

Is there anything distinguishing about the artifact that might give you clues about the culture it came from?

About how old do you think the artifact is?

What does the place where you found the artifact tell you about the people who used it?

What do you think was the purpose of this artifact?

What other objects might be found with or near this artifact? What other objects might be used with it?

If you could find out anything about this artifact, what would you want to know? How would you try to find out?

YOUR ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD JOURNAL

Archaeologist's Name: _____

Artifact Observation

Closely examine the artifact and record your observations in the spaces below.

Observations

Date artifact was found: _____

Place artifact was found: _____

Description of artifact (shape, color, other characteristics): _____

Materials (what it's made of): _____

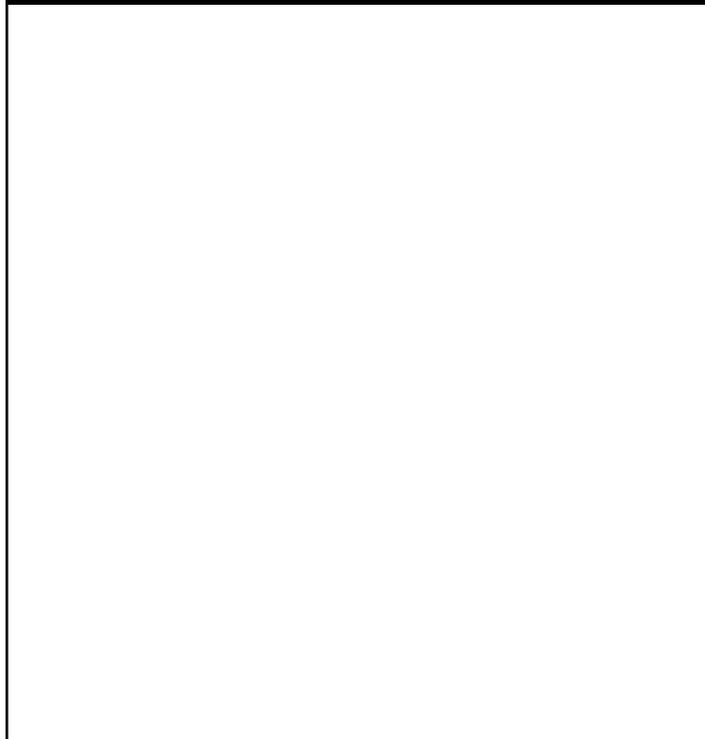
Measurements

Height: _____ Width: _____

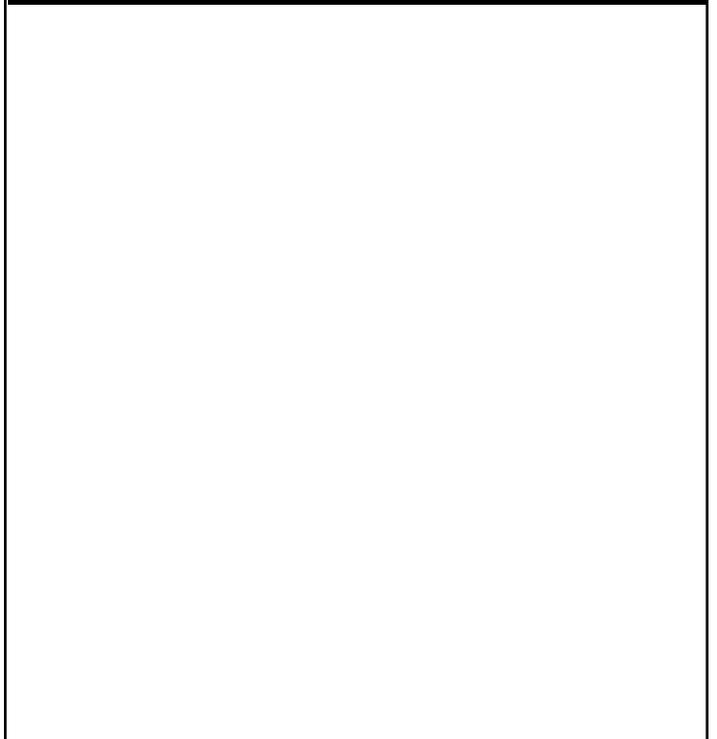
Drawing

Use the space below to draw your artifact:

Front View



Back View



Artifact Analysis

Consider your observations and think about what they tell you about the artifact.

Who do you think made the artifact?

Is there anything distinguishing about the artifact that might give you clues about the culture it came from?

About how old do you think the artifact is?

What does the place where you found the artifact tell you about the people who used it?

What do you think was the purpose of this artifact?

What other objects might be found with or near this artifact? What other objects might be used with it?

If you could find out anything about this artifact, what would you want to know? How would you try to find out?

YOUR ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD JOURNAL

Archaeologist's Name: _____

Artifact Observation

Closely examine the artifact and record your observations in the spaces below.

Observations

Date artifact was found: _____

Place artifact was found: _____

Description of artifact (shape, color, other characteristics): _____

Materials (what it's made of): _____

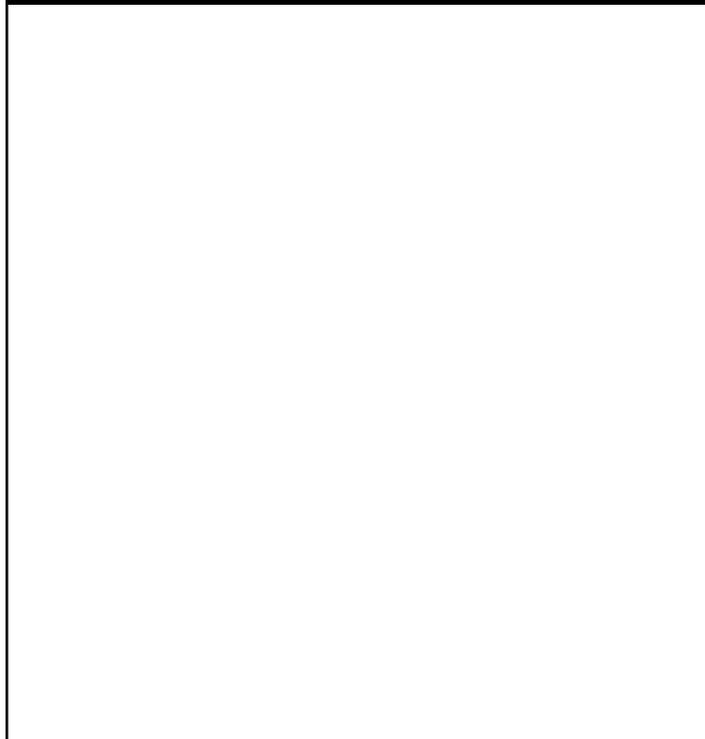
Measurements

Height: _____ Width: _____

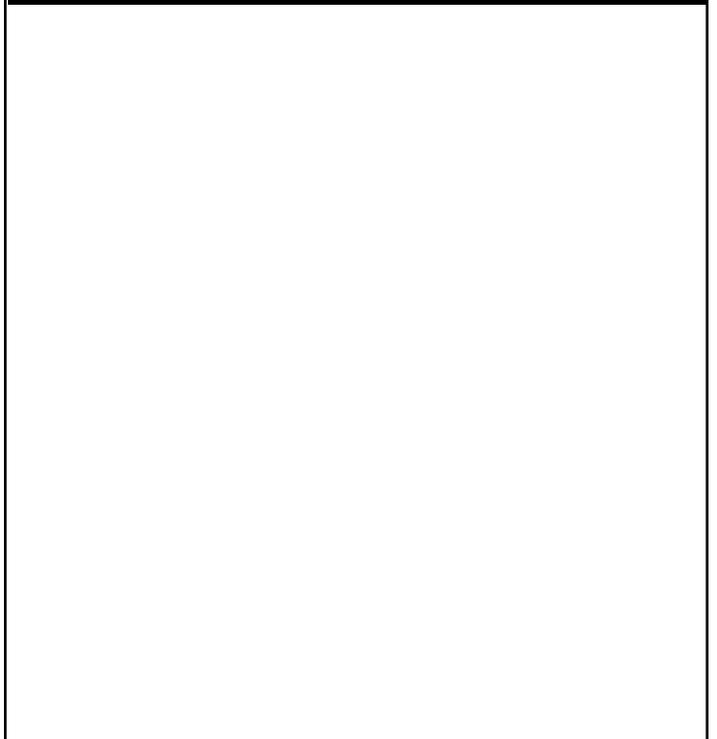
Drawing

Use the space below to draw your artifact:

Front View



Back View



Artifact Analysis

Consider your observations and think about what they tell you about the artifact.

Who do you think made the artifact?

Is there anything distinguishing about the artifact that might give you clues about the culture it came from?

About how old do you think the artifact is?

What does the place where you found the artifact tell you about the people who used it?

What do you think was the purpose of this artifact?

What other objects might be found with or near this artifact? What other objects might be used with it?

If you could find out anything about this artifact, what would you want to know? How would you try to find out?

History of the Thomas Sappington House

Thomas Sappington

Thomas Sappington, the builder of the house, lived in it until his death in May of 1860, at the age of 77. He had come to Missouri from Lexington, Kentucky as a young man of 21 in 1804 with his parents, John and Jemima Sappington and 17 brothers and sisters. John, born in Maryland, moved west gradually into Pennsylvania and into the disputed Ohio County of Virginia. From here, he and two brothers served under Washington in the Revolutionary War. Evidently, John Sappington gave his son Thomas the 200 arpents of land that this house was built on as a wedding present in 1808, when Thomas married Mary Ann Kinkead. The gift was not legalized until it was mentioned in John's will when it was probated in 1815. It is interesting to note that possible improvements on it are referred to in the will. Thomas and Mary Ann had one daughter, Lucinda, who married Granville O. Eades. Thomas served in the War of 1812 and was a first Lieutenant under General (later Missouri Governor) Alexander McNair in 1814-1815 at Cap Au Grist, Fort Mason, etc...in Illinois. In 1843 when he was 60 years old, he married a Miss Houser. They had four children, Fountain, Therese, Washington, and Marshall, all of whom were still minors at the time of his death. Their mother having died, he left these four undivided equal interests in the house and land. By 1875, the land had been divided among them and the house and 25.5 acres was owned by Marshall Sappington. Marshall sold it in 1877.

The Building of the House

Just 18 years after the Federal Period began, Sappington House was built in this new style...a simplified version of the elegant homes in the East and the new government buildings, resembling Greek and Roman temples. It was rectangular in shape with classic proportions, brick exterior, three stories high, topped with a low-hipped roof above a cornice, where roof and walls meet. It had matching chimneys at either end, doors and windows symmetrically arranged. There was little exterior decoration...but an interior mantel with carved pilasters and an oval decoration that could have come directly from the Adam Brothers' book of designs.

Considering the methods and materials available at that time (remember this was the "frontier") the building of the Sappington House was a monumental task. Many others must have helped the slaves. Perhaps there were many skilled craftsmen among the forty families who settled this area. After the selection of the site for the house, the excavation was dug with shovels by hand. The stones of the foundation were set below and above ground. Trees were felled for the lumber, the logs cut with an axe, hewn by hand and then sawed with the grain with a whipsaw for the beams. No nails were available so each joint was notched and pegged. Some time later, after the house was built, Zephaniah's son, George, established a blacksmith shop in the area and handmade nails were obtainable. Oldtimers remember when Sappington was called Georgetown because of the prominence of George Sappington and his blacksmith shop. Lumber was also needed for scaffolding for the brickwork, and for the flooring, stairway and wood trim of the doorways, windows and mantels. Bricks were made from clay gathered and prepared to the proper consistency. Sand from the river

was added. Each brick was molded by hand, stacked and dried, probably by air which took three to six weeks (it is doubtful there was any kind of kiln available to bake the bricks). Native limestone was ground and mixed with sand to make the mortar. Then the bricks were laid one by one with mortar spread between them, each row of bricks lapping another, which is essential to making a sturdy wall. On the front of the house, the lapping pattern is Flemish bond...on the sides and rear, it is Common or English bond. the roof was probably covered with handmade wooden shingles. Details of finishing the interior included cutting and setting of the hearthstones, shaping lumber into molding for the woodwork, carving the mantels, the banister and the scrolls for the stairway. Hardware and window glass were shipped from the East, coming either overland or from New Orleans by river. Walls were plastered and painted...the paint made by mixing buttermilk or clay with powdered lime or natural pigments for color. The basic four room house was completed and occupied, probably by the time Thomas and Mary Ann were married in October, 1808. The kitchen was added no later than 1820, according to the architects who worked on the restoration. The original fireplace in the kitchen was naturally much deeper than the present restored one, though it is in the same location. Today the cellar still has a dirt floor. In the unfinished attic, the north chimney has a structural opening to utilize the attic for smoking meats when the fires were lit for heat in cold weather.

The Restoration

Sampling of the old layers of paints have given us the original decorator colors used in each room as well as those used down through the various periods of the house. Originally all the materials were either black or very dark green depending on the other colors in the room. The living room woodwork and walls were always some shade or other of white through the years except for the mantel which was black. The dining room and south bedroom originally had woodwork of a rich olive green with a darker green on the mantels. The north bedroom was an off-white like the unpainted plaster walls, with the olive green repeated on the attic stairs enclosure.

The original color on the kitchen woodwork was an olive tan, probably a mixture of yellow ocher, green and white. Indications are that the walls throughout the house were left plaster white. Some rooms were white-washed later when they became too dirty. When the Nickels bought the place in 1884, the dining room and kitchen were wall-papered but no other rooms. There is some evidence of a brown and white striped wallpaper in the little closet of the north bedroom but nothing to indicate it was used in the room itself.

Mrs. McDonnell has made several trips east and has done much searching in Missouri gathering the furnishings needed for the restoration. They include furniture, rugs, silver, curtains, pictures and fireplace equipment. Plans call for the library to be in the old kitchen, the largest room, where it is hoped the practical needs for library use will blend with a number of historic items used in kitchens of that day.

Miss Mason's garden has authentic plants of the day set in traditional patterns. The garden clubs of Crestwood have seen her plans through to reality.

Early spring found most of the work completed and the garden planted. some 150 invited guests gathered to help Crestwood dedicate the restoration on a hot July 10 in the presence of County Supervisor Roos. The garden was in full bloom, the house beautifully furnished and all of the original colors back on the walls and woodwork. Two days later the Sappington House was opened to the public with Crestwood ladies as volunteer guides. We congratulate the Crestwood community for seeing this difficult job through to completion.

Archaeological Process

Archaeology is practiced and processed in many different ways!
Our methods change as new technologies are introduced!
Check it out:

1

Survey the Site: Archaeologists can use satellite images, lasers, aerial photographs, and surface combing to check to see if a site should be excavated. The methods used depends on many different factors. Lots of samples are gathered for archaeologists to make recommendations.



2

Excavate: Everyone loves to dig in the dirt, but archaeologists do it professionally! They are careful to record all the different layers as they dig deeper into the ground. Small areas are excavated little by little, so that all the data can be recorded. Ask me why the Law of Superposition is so important!



3

Caring for Artifacts: Artifacts need to be cared for immediately. Archaeologists clean, photograph, and record the provenience data before storing the artifacts. Once artifacts are excavated it is necessary to properly study them. This process is known as post-excavation analysis, and is usually the most time-consuming part of an archaeological investigation. It is not uncommon for final excavation reports for major sites to take years to be published.



Current Issues in Archaeology

Public Archaeology

Private artifact collecting started as a harmless amusement. As time has passed, archaeology has become greatly diversified and professionalized. Whether they be professional, amateur or collector, people like to study prehistory. People like to find evidence of previous people and take mementos of that prehistory.

Archaeologists increasingly realize that their work can benefit non-academic and non-archaeological audiences, and that they have a responsibility to educate and inform the public about archaeology. Local heritage awareness is aimed at increasing civic and individual pride through projects such as community excavation projects, and better public presentations of archaeological sites and knowledge.

Looting

Looting of archaeological sites is an ancient problem. For instance, looting at Cahokia mounds still exists.

Archaeology stimulates interest in ancient objects, and people in search of artifacts or treasure cause damage to archaeological sites. The commercial and academic demand for artifacts unfortunately contributes directly to the illicit antiquities trade.

Smuggling of antiquities abroad to private collectors has caused great cultural and economic damage in many countries whose governments lack the resources and or the will to deter it.

Looters damage and destroy archaeological sites, denying future generations information about their ethnic and cultural heritage. Indigenous peoples especially lose access to and control over their 'cultural resources', ultimately denying them the opportunity to know their past.

Archaeologists trying to protect artifacts are often put in danger.

What do I do if I Find an Artifact?

You've found an artifact and you just know you're going to take it home to display it, learn about it, and share it with others. Awesome, now do the right thing:

Help Archaeology

If you surface-collect artifacts, keep them separated by site. These archaeological sites can then be registered with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), MoDNR. Site locations are confidential. The SHPO will send you the site number to keep with the artifacts, or better yet, the artifacts can be labeled with the site number. These will still be your artifacts, but you will have done what is ethical and responsible to contribute to the archaeological record of Missouri.

Contact the SHPO@ (573) 751-7858

Or Get Local Help:

The St. Louis Society of the AIA Office @(314) 432-3900

REMEMBER:

An artifact out of context does not give the information needed. For this reason, archaeologists ask people to refrain from digging for artifacts.

Information comes not only from the artifacts, but from the context in which they are found. The association of an artifact with other stone tools and food remains, its depth below the surface, and the type, chemistry, and color of the soil surrounding it are some of the things archaeologists need to know.

Most people do not realize that they are contributing to the destruction of archaeological sites when they dig to "see what's there" in caves or elsewhere. These are *non-renewable resources*; once destroyed, they are gone forever.



Why is Historic Preservation Important?

Types of Historic Places

- Structures
- Neighborhoods
- Landscapes
- Building or Landscape features

Ways We Preserve Historic Places

- Preservation
- Rehabilitation
- Restoration
- Reconstruction

Why We Preserve Historic Places

- To preserve the historic, architectural, and aesthetic character and heritage of a community or area, and help to provide a sense of place and continuity
- To use resources efficiently
- To preserve old methods of craftsmanship
- To add character to a community and emphasize its uniqueness
- To attract investment and change the nature of a deteriorating neighborhood or area
- To creatively repurpose derelict or empty buildings to meet current community needs and problems
- To provide good investment opportunities for commercial business
- Did you know?...historic preservation can help prevent urban sprawl—utilizing existing buildings in the city reduces new construction in the outlying areas!

When Should We Preserve Historic Places

- When the community is engaged in creating a comprehensive plan for growth and development.
- When there's a neighborhood planning effort.
- When there's a neighborhood revitalization effort under way.
- When affordable housing or another specific need is clear in an area and historic buildings are available to meet it.
- When development is planned in an area that includes a historic structure or neighborhood.
- When there's a celebration of community history.
- When a historic property is threatened.
- When the community is engaged in a heritage tourism effort.
- As part of a job training effort aimed at at-risk populations or individuals.

Archaeology resources for kids and adults

For kids and adults

Archaeological Institute of America – <https://www.archaeological.org/education/archaeology>

For kids

[Project Arch-ae-o](http://www.projectarchaeo.com/) is a web site for kids to have fun with the archaeology of Cahokia Mounds.

<http://www.projectarchaeo.com/>

Find us on social media

Sappington House

<https://www.facebook.com/SappingtonHouseFoundation/?fref=ts>

Sappington-Concord Historical Society

<https://www.facebook.com/SappingtonConcordHistoricalSociety/>

Twitter: @SCHS1992

Contact information

Sappington House

<http://sappingtonhouse.org/>

Sappington-Concord Historical Society

<http://www.schs.ws/schs2/about-us/schs-community/thomas-sappington-house/>

<http://www.schs.ws/schs2/the-dig-at-sappington-house/>

schs.webmanager@gmail.com

Stephen Hanpeter
314-9181617

Archaeology Field Book

Produced by

Rachel Azzara Murphy, Eyreka Peterson Grider, Valentina Emiliani, Stephen Hanpeter

Archaeology notes