

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Conjurer's Field Archaeological Site

other names/site number 44CF20

### 2. Location

street & number N/A

not for publication

city, town Colonial Heights

N/A vicinity

state Virginia

code VA

county Colonial Heights code 570

zip code [redacted]

### 3. Classification

#### Ownership of Property

private

public-local

public-State

public-Federal

#### Category of Property

building(s)

district

site

structure

object

#### Number of Resources within Property

##### Contributing

0

1

0

0

1

##### Noncontributing

0 buildings

0 sites

0 structures

0 objects

0 Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 38 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official

VA Department of Historic Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau

Date

9/27/89

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

### 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Village site

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURAL/SUBSISTENCE/Agricultural field

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

N/A

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation N/A

walls N/A

roof N/A

other N/A

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

**DESCRIPTION**

The Conjuror's Field Archaeological Site (44CF20),

Excavations conducted in 1966 and 1967 at 44CF20 determined that the site has well-preserved cultural features such as refuse-filled pits and human burials. Principal occupation at the Conjuror's Field Archaeological Site dates to the Middle and Late Woodland periods (500 B.C. - A.D. 1600).

**Background**

This area traditionally has been known as Conjuror's Field since the 17th century.

Representing a village, occupational debris at 44CF20 is concentrated on a low terrace over an area. The site contains cultural material dating primarily from the Middle and Late Woodland periods (500 B.C. - A.D. 1600), although Late Archaic period projectile points (3000 B.C. - 1000 B.C.) have been found at the site (Photo 2).

In 1966 and 1967 Leverette B. Gregory conducted archaeological research at 44CF20, excavating 29 5' squares. Upon removal of the plowzone, a shallow (2/10' thick) but relatively undisturbed midden was observed and excavated in 7 squares. The midden and subsequent cultural features encountered documented that the site is in an excellent state of preservation. Excavated features included 20 refuse-filled pits, 3 human burials, and 1 pit containing a dog burial (Figure 2). The refuse-filled

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

ARCHAEOLOGY; Prehistoric

Period of Significance

500 B.C. - A.D. 1600

Significant Dates

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Late Woodland Period

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Representing a prehistoric village, the Conjuror's Field Archaeological Site (44CF20) in Colonial Heights, Virginia contains an undisturbed prehistoric midden stratum, intact cultural features, and well-preserved faunal remains which upon further investigation could contribute significant information on regional Middle and Late Woodland period subsistence practices, settlement patterns, and environmental adaptations. The documented presence of well-preserved burials datable to the same time periods also should prove important for local studies in demography and mortuary practices. Further indicative of the site's archaeological research significance, the diverse mixture of Middle and Late Woodland period ceramic wares at the Conjuror's Field Archaeological Site should provide valuable data for studies on cultural interactions between people living in the Piedmont and Coastal Plain physiographic provinces and along the fall line separating these two zones.

**Background**

The Conjuror's Field Archaeological Site is one of the very last of the larger Middle and Late Woodland period hamlets and villages along the Appomattox River from Hopewell to Petersburg to have escaped destruction from recent industrial and residential housing development. As such, the site has high archaeological research potential for studies on the Appomattox Indians and their predecessors who occupied this area in the fall line zone separating the Piedmont and Coastal Plain physiographic provinces. Further enhancing the site's significance is the documented presence of an undisturbed prehistoric midden stratum, intact cultural features, and well-preserved faunal and human remains, all in association with a variety of artifacts.

Given this excellent state of preservation, 44CF20 is likely to contain information important to regional studies on Middle and Late Woodland period subsistence practices, settlement patterns, and environmental adaptations. Situated in the fall line zone, site inhabitants were afforded the unusual opportunity to exploit riverine and terrestrial

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Sasser, Ray R., Jr. A Ceramic Analysis of the Comstock Site, Chesterfield County, Virginia. Report on file at Department of Anthropology, College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia. 1972.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

College of William and Mary

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property 2.6 acres

UTM References

A     
Zone Easting Northing

C

B     
Zone Easting Northing

D

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

[REDACTED]

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries for the property nominated are restricted to that area where surface collections and subsurface testing have shown contiguous archaeological deposits to be present.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Keith T. Egloff, Archaeologist; E. Randolph Turner, archaeologist  
organization VA Division of Historic Landmarks date March 1989  
street & number [REDACTED] telephone (804) 786-3143  
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pits were unusually large though rather shallow, commonly ranging in size from 4' to 7' in diameter and less than 1' in depth.

Ray R. Sasser, Jr. in 1971 and 1972 analyzed the large ceramic collection recovered at 44CF20. He described a wide variety of ceramic wares which suggest elaborate regional cultural interactions throughout the Middle and Late Woodland periods. Other artifacts excavated at 44CF20 include an extensive lithic collection of projectile points, preforms, modified flakes, flakeage, celts, chisels, hammerstones, and firecracked rock. A wide variety of exceedingly well-preserved bone and shell artifacts also were recovered such as extensive mammal and fish remains, fish hook debris, turtle shell cups, antler punches, and freshwater clam shells. The entire collection of artifacts from the 1966 and 1967 excavations is currently curated by the Department of Anthropology at the College of William and Mary.

Staff archaeologists with the Virginia Division of Historic Landmarks examined the Conjuror's Field Archaeological Site in 1984 and 1988, finding it to be in a good state of preservation. These inspections indicated that the site's land surface has not been modified since the excavations of 1966 and 1967. Through a combination of surface examinations and subsurface tests, site boundaries were shown to conform to those earlier described and presented in Figure 1.

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resources in two adjacent physiographic provinces, the Piedmont and Coastal Plain. Adaptive strategies for utilization of this area separating the Coastal Plain Algonkian societies and Piedmont Siouan societies is a major research concern in the region, for which applicable data are dependent upon excavations at such sites as 44CF20.

Due to the presence of well-preserved burials at 44CF20, the site also is likely to be significant for local studies on Middle and Late Woodland period demography and mortuary practices. Given major changes in diet toward increased reliance on cultigens and related increased population and sedentism, human skeletal remains should provide significant data on possible dietary stresses and diseases local populations were facing during these two time periods. Related, during the Middle and Late Woodland periods, major changes in socio-cultural complexity were occurring as populations evolved from egalitarian tribal societies into ranked societies known as chiefdoms. This process of centralization of socio-political and religious authority is most easily studied archaeologically through variations in mortuary practices as manifested at sites characterized by well-preserved burial remains such as at 44CF20.

The various ceramic wares recovered from the site and datable to principally the Middle and Late Woodland periods should also provide significant information on cultural interactions existing between the Piedmont and Coastal Plain physiographic provinces. Indian trails emanating from the vicinity of Petersburg and Hopewell and proceeding to the south and west into North Carolina and western Virginia have been documented for the historic period and likely extended back into the Middle and Late Woodland periods. As one of the last remaining villages still extant on the Appomattox River in this area and dating to these time periods, further excavations at the Conjuror's Field Archaeological Site and analysis of ceramic wares present here should aid in better defining such interregional interactions.

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