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Sara Bon-Harper
Ash Lawn-Highland, sara@ashlawnhighland.org

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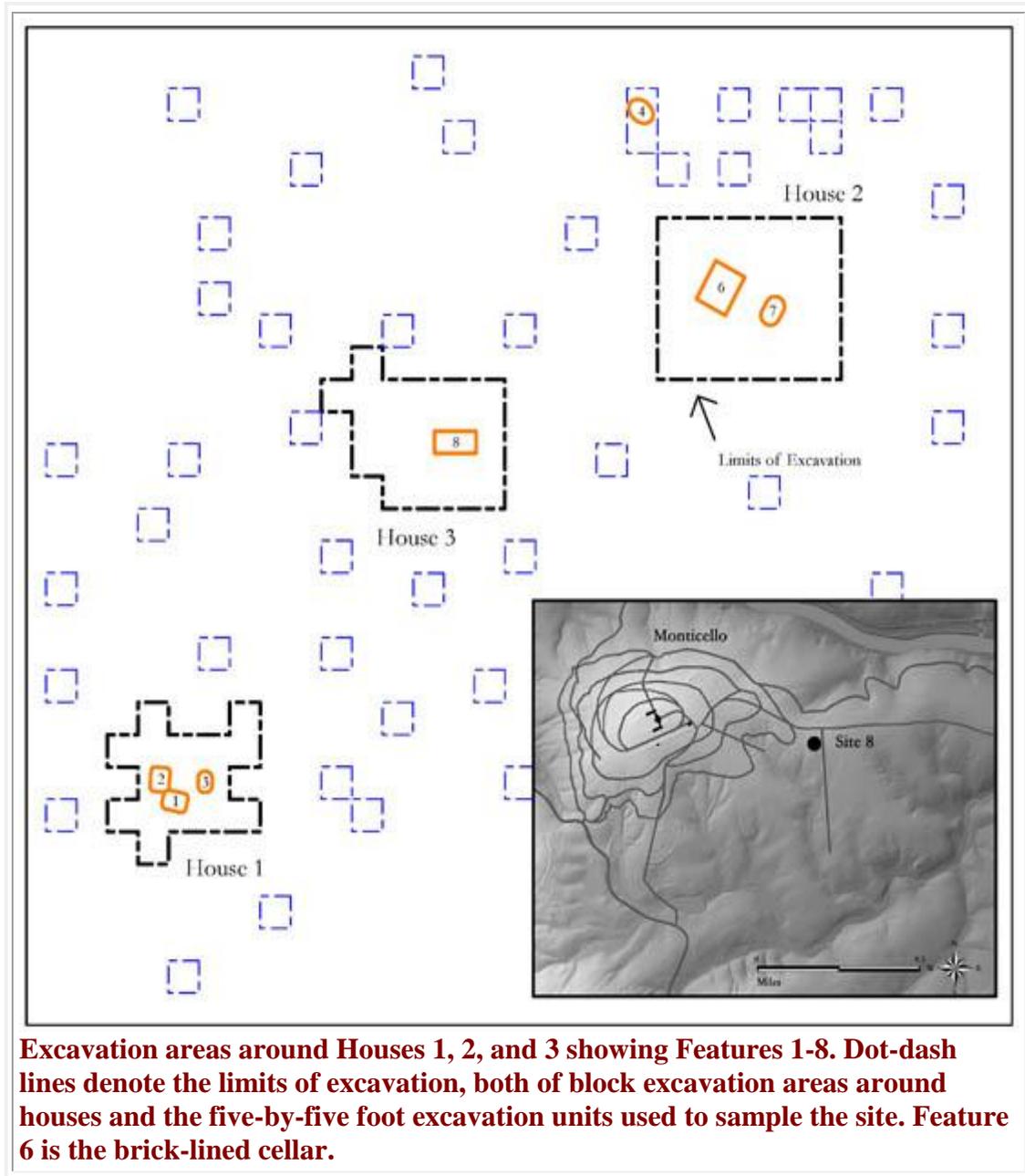
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Updated Analysis of Home Farm Quarter Data at Monticello, Virginia

**By Sara Bon-Harper
Monticello Department of Archaeology**

The 2005 Monticello-University of Virginia Archaeological Field School continued excavation on two dwellings of enslaved field hands at Site 8, located a half mile east of the Monticello mansion and occupied in the late eighteenth century. The most unexpected discovery of the season was that a storage feature at one of the houses was a brick-lined cellar.

The cellar belongs to House 2, one of three houses discovered on Site 8, all of which have at least one storage feature. The other features are smaller, unlined sub-floor pits. Among these, the brick-lined cellar stands out in the significant investment of resources -- effort and materials -- it required. Bricks, in this case drawn from multiple building projects on the plantation, would have been a scarce commodity. Their use in the cellar contrasts with the smaller sub-floor pits whose construction was much simpler and did not require hard-to-get supplies. A layer of sand covering the cellar's floor, indicating that a primary use of the feature was for food storage, particularly the storage of root crops. The cellar may have been built by a household that hoped to use it for the long term, or for enough food to make it worthy of the investment. This would imply stability in slaves' housing, almost certainly in families during the later part of site occupation, and a significant production of root crops for winter storage.



Excavation areas around Houses 1, 2, and 3 showing Features 1-8. Dot-dash lines denote the limits of excavation, both of block excavation areas around houses and the five-by-five foot excavation units used to sample the site. Feature 6 is the brick-lined cellar.

The discovery of the three known houses on Site 8 is a result of an extensive sampling of the plowzone across the site and the further testing of areas with high artifact density. Analysis of the artifact scatters over the three dwellings indicate that House 1 is the earliest of the three, and Houses 2 and 3 are slightly later (for more about that analysis see <http://www.monticello.org/archaeology/publications/2005-SAAposter-NeimanSmith/index.html>).



Excavation of brick-lined cellar.

Site 8 provides an opportunity to examine the areas around three houses. Variation in the artifact scatter across the site suggests that the use of exterior domestic space was different among the three houses. These data reveal much less debris in the area around House 1, while the spaces around Houses 2 and 3 contained more refuse (for illustration of the artifact densities, see <http://www.monticello.org/archaeology/publications/2005-SAAposter-BonHarperWheeler/index.html>). Current research on the assemblage is examining the makeup of the artifact scatters to determine whether this is a result of an occupation at House 1 that was of shorter duration or lesser intensity, or whether House 1's yard was one of the maintained spaces on the site. The latter would indicate sweeping or clearing of trash from the area, likely to keep it free for domestic activities such as food processing, tool maintenance, raising poultry and small livestock, and social activities.



Field school students during excavation.

For more about the annual Monticello-University of Virginia Archaeological Field School, see <http://www.monticello.org/archaeology/fieldschool/index.html>.