The St. George’s Caye Archaeology Project: Results of the 2014 Field Season

Edited by
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Chapter 1. Introduction

James F. Garber

St. George’s Caye played a vital role in the history and development of Belize as an independent nation. This small caye is one of hundreds of islands off the coast of Belize that are part of large reef system, the second largest in the world. Its predominant role in the early history of the English settlement was due to its position and shape. The reef system forms an offshore barrier that protects the coast. Because of the difficulties of navigation, these waters provided safe haven for merchants, buccaneers, and pirates that sailed the Caribbean. To access the mainland and harbors at the mouths of the rivers, one must navigate narrow passages through the reef and then follow a complex system of channels. In order to reach the Belize River, the country’s main river system, one must pass by St. George’s Caye, thus its strategic location guarding the port (Figure 1.1). Additionally, the caye is crescent shaped making it ideal for careening ships on its leeward side (Figure 1.2).

The Battle of St. George’s Caye on September 10, 1798 represents the end of Spain’s attempts to conquer the territory that is now known as Belize. Although this battle happened over 200 years ago, it is still plays a large role in Belizean culture, as seen during the annual September Celebrations when people all over the country honor the Battle of St. George’s Caye. The fact that the caye is featured on the Belize five-dollar bill is an indicator of its importance (Figure 1.3). The front side depicts a medallion from the tomb of Thomas Potts one of the Bay Settlements early leaders and the back side features a 1764 map of the caye, the Thomas Potts tomb, the Biddle house, and a “bathing crawl”.


While much has been written about the history of St. George’s Caye, the first capital of Belize, there has been little archaeology done on the island. With this in mind, we initiated the St. George’s Caye Archaeology Project in 2009. The results of the 2014 field season are presented in the pages that follow.

Figure 1.1. Map of Belize coast showing location of St. George’s Caye.

Figure 1.2. Satellite image of St. George’s Caye.
Figure 1.3. Belize 5 dollar bill. Front side depicts a medallion from Thomas Potts’ tomb, backside shows a 1764 map of the caye, the Thomas Potts tomb, the Biddle house, and a bathing “crawl”. This style bill was introduced in 1990.
Field investigations during the summer of 2014 began with a continuation of excavations in the St. George’s Caye Cemetery. Excavations were conducted near the entrance of the cemetery in order to further investigate the extent of the presence of human burials, assess their condition and continue the recovery of skeletal material. Investigations continued along the rear (west) cemetery wall in order to further recover and investigate a conglomeration of artifacts that was present in most all of the previous excavation units in that area (Garber et. al. 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014). The summer 2014 field season also included offshore survey that involved shovel testing in shallow water along the coast of the Caye. The main goal was to test the predicted locations of historic docks and turtle corrals depicted on the 1764 map of the Caye and to recover marine turtle bone.

THE ST. GEORGE’S CAYE CEMETERY

The goals for the cemetery excavations during the 2014 field season included continuing investigation of the area just west of the cemetery gate and a separate region along the west wall of the cemetery. Six excavation units (XUs) were established inside the cemetery entrance and two were established in along the back wall.

XU47

XU47 was established just east of the modern monument to the Battle of St. George’s Caye in the front of the cemetery (Figure 2.1) to continue the investigation of a subsurface anomaly located by ground penetrating radar (GPR) in 2011. The unit extended along the southern boundary of XU43, which was excavated during the 2013 field season. XU47
measured 1.5x2 meters. Elevation measurements for XU47 were taken from a subdatum (SD 2014-1) that was established at the northeast corner of XU48.

Level 1 of XU47 included an approximately 5cm humic layer and extended to include a layer of light dried sand with fragmented shell and coral. Artifacts found in this level include glass sherds, fragments of faunal bone, small pieces of wood, metal fragments, a nail, and a modern roof tile. Level 1 terminated about 40 centimeters below the subdatum (cmbd) at a soil change.

Level 2 consisted of gray loamy sand with increased root content and extended to approximately 100 cmbd. Several dark carbon stains of the matrix were found spread through XU47 & XU48 at 94 cmbd. Artifacts recovered from this level included: historic ceramic sherds, historic glass sherds, faunal bone pieces, metal fragments, a whole queen conch shell, a marble and a shell button. A line of brick was identified along the southwestern wall of the unit at 62 cmbs. During excavation of the brick feature, a nearby burial (Burial 33) was identified and is discussed below. Continued excavation revealed that the feature made up the foot of a brick grave, which was designated as Burial 34. The remains of a lower left and lower right leg were found extending beneath the brick grave in the southeast corner of XU47. These remains made up Burial 36, discussed below.

Burial 33. Burial 33 was uncovered 7 cm north of the course of brick at a depth of 93 cmbd. The burial extended east into XU48. The remains of a hexagonal coffin base and partial sidewall were recovered, although the wood was highly decomposed and there were numerous holes in the coffin base. The burial was oriented in an east-west alignment and, in situ, and the skeleton was extended on its back. The left arm was lying to the side and the right arm was not recovered. No remains were found on the right side of the body lateral to
the spine and superior to the pelvis. This portion was likely removed or disturbed by the interments of additional burials. Burial 33 was likely disturbed by the interment of Burial 36, which was uncovered just south of the missing upper right torso and shoulder of Burial 33.

Skeletal analysis of Burial 33 indicated that it likely belongs to an adult male. The individual exhibited slight periosteal infections on the distal shafts of the fibulae and a pronounced periosteal infection on the anterior midshaft of the right tibia. Burial 33 also retained an open metopic suture and moderate occipital bulge.

**Burial 34.** Burial 34 is composed of a brick grave that extends across XUs 47, 49, 50, and 51. Almost no skeletal remains were found in association with the grave. The burial is oriented in an east-west alignment and includes a completed brick floor and partial walls. Four courses of the brick wall remained in situ along the northeast corner of the burial, but most of the walls and/or ceiling were collapsed onto the grave floor. The majority of the bricks are aligned horizontally along the burial floor. Because only the earliest burials in the cemetery were interred in coffins, Burial 34 represents the most recent burial uncovered during the 2014 season. An 1872 map of the cemetery drawn by Rob Hume shows the burial of “J. McNab” that aligns with the position of the brick grave of Burial 34 (Figure 2.2). According to epitaph inscriptions recorded by John Purcell Usher in 1907, James McNab was buried in the cemetery at St. George’s Caye in 1863 (Usher 1907).

One left humeral shaft was recovered extending through the collapsed brick in Burial 34. A bone spur was present on the medial side of the distal humeral shaft. Age and sex were unable to be estimated from the limited remains recovered.

**Burial 36.** Burial 36 consisted of the in situ partial lower legs, ankles, and feet of an otherwise disturbed burial. Other skeletal elements recovered include four possible rib
fragments and one vertebral fragment. The brick enclosure of Burial 34 was situated where the femora, torso, and upper body of Burial 36 should have been located. It is likely that over time and with the aid of storm surges, the brick grave of Burial 34 sank lower in the soil and crushed most of the remains of the individual in Burial 36. There were no coffin remains or soil stains associated with Burial 35.

The left tibial shaft of Burial 36 displayed a slight periosteal reaction on the medial aspect of the shaft just distal to midshaft. Age and sex estimations could not be attempted for the limited skeletal elements recovered.

**XU48**

XU48 was opened at the same time as XU47 as a 2x2 meter unit running along its eastern boundary (Figure 2.1). Elevations for XU48 were taken using SD 2014-1. Level 1 was comprised of a thin humic layer followed by coarse, light sand with fragmented shell inclusions. Charcoal, cement rocks, glass sherds, and a large amount of modern refuse was recovered in the level. An iron gate post was identified near the termination of the level. Level 1 was terminated at a soil change approximately 50 cmbd.

Level 2 was composed of grey loamy sand matrix with dense micro marine shell inclusions. Numerous root systems were uncovered in this level alongside additional modern refuse. The torso and foot of Burial 33 extended into XU48 at this level. A trench was excavated in the northern half of the unit to improve drainage in the rest of the area. The trench was mostly sterile and few artifacts were recovered from it. The carbon stains in the matrix mentioned above continued into XU48 at 94 cmbd.

The remains of a black plastic garbage bag were recovered at the foot of Burial 33 and the contents were scattered throughout the unit. A concentration of refuse was located
near the garbage bag. The bag and associated contents were designated as Level 2, Lot 3. Burial 35 was recovered from a layer beneath the refuse pile. It was located southeast of and roughly parallel to Burial 33. There were additionally numerous loose human skeletal elements found throughout the level. A small shell button and a few loose bricks were recovered in the southwest corner of the unit. Other artifacts recovered throughout Level 2 included a bone button disc, historic ceramic sherds and historic bottle glass sherds.

**Burial 35.** Burial 35 was oriented east to west and although the remains only included portions of the lower appendages and hands, the elements remaining were articulated and in anatomical position. The elements recovered appeared to be in situ. The abrupt lack of in situ skeletal remains in the upper left leg and superior to the distal appendages indicates that the burial was disturbed post-interment. The abundance of modern trash and scattered brick near the burial is consistent with a significant disturbance to the nearby area. There was no coffin present, although a slight dark soil stain remained around portions of the skeleton and is consistent with the staining from a decomposed coffin.

Burial 35 is comprised of a left femur, both lower legs, and partial ankles, wrists, feet, and hands. The burial is highly fragmented. There were not enough skeletal elements recovered to estimate age of sex for the burial and there are no signs of pathology or trauma.

**XU49**

XU49 was opened to uncover the remainder of Burial 34. The 2x2 meter unit was opened just south of XU47 and extending one-half meter beyond the western boundary of XU47 (Figure 2.1). The local subdatum for XU49 was set to SD 2014-2, which was established near the northwest corner of XU51.
Level 1 included a grassy humic layer just superior to a layer of sandy soil with shell inclusions. Level 1 artifacts included numerous modern roof tiles, a small amount of burnt wood, and a whole conch shell. The level was terminated approximately 25 cmbd due to a matrix change.

Level 2 extended to about 75 cmbd. The matrix was sandy with marine shell inclusions and lightened in color towards the lowest depths of the level. The remainder of the collapsed brick grave for Burial 34 was uncovered (Figure 2.3) in the north half of the unit. There were limited skeletal remains found within the burial feature and no remains were in situ. This is likely the result of the skeleton being crushed and shifted during the collapse.

A large collection of collapsed brick was identified along the southeast corner of the unit. Small human and faunal bone fragments were recovered in the collapsed brick and surrounding matrix. There were additionally two intact human femoral shafts recovered within the brick pile from the northeastern and southeastern corners. Based on robusticity and shape, it is unlikely that the femoral shafts belonged to the same individual. The level was terminated once the base of Burial 34 and the collapsed brick along the southeast sidewall were uncovered.

XU50

XU50 was established as a 1x2 meter unit bordering the west wall of XU49 (Figure 2.1). Level 1 terminated at about 30cmbd and was composed of a shallow humic layer, a layer of loose, white sand fill, and a deeper layer of dark grey, coarse sand mixed with clay deposits. Elevations for XU50 were taken from SD 2014-2. Level 1 contained mostly modern plastic trash, roofing tiles, glass sherds, and faunal bone fragments.
Level 2 soil matrix consisted of grey sand with shell fragments. A dark carbon stain was encountered at 38 cm bd, and covered the southern quarter of the unit, and extended partially into the southwest corner of XU49. Artifacts recovered at this level included modern refuse, historic ceramic sherds, metal fragments, historic bottle glass sherds, a copper nail, a bone button disc and an iron nail head. The southwest corner of Burial 34 extended into northwest margin of the unit and a pile of collapsed brick was uncovered in the southwest corner. The base of a historic glass rum bottle was found on top of the collapsed brick.

**XU51**

XU51 was opened at the corner of XU47 and XU49 (Figure 2.1). It is a 0.5x1.5 meter unit that was established to fully uncover Burial 34. Elevations were measured off of SD 2014-1. The matrix consisted of very loose sand with shell inclusions and a few patches of clay. The only artifacts recovered in this level included broken glass. The level terminated at an average of 20 cm bd with a soil change.

Level 2 included the north wall of brick from Burial 34 as well as pieces of metal and broken glass and ceramics. At the base of Level 2 and extending into the north sidewall the leg of an additional burial (designated Burial 37) was uncovered.

**Burial 37.** Burial 37 was identified but not fully excavated during the 2014 season. The burial was located between Burial 34 and the modern cemetery monument at the base of Level 2. No coffin remains were recovered. The remains of Burial 37 included the right distal femur, tibia, fibula, and talus. The remains appear to be in situ and oriented east to west. Because the majority of the burial extended into the northwest corner sidewalls of the unit, all elements were left in situ to be excavated at a later date.
**XU52**

XU52 was opened to investigate the extent of the refuse pile in XU48 and to uncover the remainder of Burial 35 (Figure 2.1). XU52 was set up as a 2x1 meter unit south of XU48 and elevations for the unit were oriented to SD 2014-1. Level 1 included a sandy soil matrix with shell inclusions under a brief humic layer. Clay inclusions became apparent at the lower depths of the level. Level 1 contained fragments of faunal bone, modern glass and plastic, bottle caps, a piece of decorated ceramic, and multiple conch shells. Level 1 was terminated at a soil change at around 48 cmbd. 

Level 2 included higher concentrations of clay in upper layers of the soil matrix and significant large root obstructions. A large mangrove stump was found near the east wall of the unit. The top of the stump was 64 cmbd and extended down until the unit’s termination. A small collection of human teeth with an accompanying skull fragment was found isolated from other material 64 cmbd. Two pieces of lead grape shot were also recovered from this level. Level 2 produced plenty of modern trash, loose faunal and human bone fragments, and the southern half of Burial 35. The shaft and neck of a left femur was found among collapsed brick in the unit. The femoral shaft does not appear to be consistent in size or shape with those found in XU49, and is believed to belong to another individual.

**XU9**

XU9 was a 2x2 m unit along the back wall of the cemetery that was first excavated during the 2010 field season (Figure 2.1)(Garber et. al. 2011). This year, the unit was reopened and used to insert the pump hose in order to draw water to lower the water table for the excavation of XU53 and XU54. This required removing matrix deeper than had
previously been excavated. This light colored sand was screened and yielded a few small fragments of historic glass and faunal bone.

**XU53**

XU53 was a 2x2 meter excavation unit set up to recover and document the cultural material in the back of the cemetery (Figure 2.1). It was established along a north-south baseline that runs 50 cm east of and parallel to the west cemetery wall. XU53 joins a line of 12 2x2 meter units that were excavated in the previous years of this project (Garber et. al. 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013). It was established toward the southern end of the cemetery between XU9 and XU11. Level elevations for this unit were taken from ground surface of its northeast corner.

Level 1 began at ground surface and continued for approximately 20 cm. This level included a high concentration of rootlets throughout and several large tree roots from nearby trees. The matrix was dark and high in organic content and consisted of sand with 25% micro marine shell inclusions. A minimal amount of modern refuse was recovered intermixed with moderate quantities of historic glass sherds and metal fragments. A brown glass bottle bottom with a maker’s make, a green glass bottle seal, a square nail and a button of the 7th West India Regiment were recovered. A moderate amount of faunal bone including marine turtle carapace and several large queen conch shell fragments were recovered before this level was terminated at a matrix change.

Level 2 consisted of light colored sand with 60% micro marine shell inclusions. Large tree roots and a moderate amount of rootlets were present throughout Level 2. A minimal quantity of modern refuse was present in the upper 10 cm of this level. A single large piece of marine turtle carapace was recovered midway along the southern boundary of the unit 33.
cm below surface. A high quantity of artifacts were recovered at this level and these included: a moderate quantity of historic bottle glass sherds that included bottle necks and bottoms, ceramic sherds, metal fragments, multiple large and small fragments of queen conch, several ceramic pipe fragments and a moderate quantity of faunal bone pieces. A button of the 5th West India Regiment, a bone button disc, a lead musket ball, one 1797 silver Spanish real coin and a metal button back were recovered in this level. There was a high quantity of faunal bone pieces and historic glass sherds that included rum and gin bottle bottoms. Level 2 was terminated approximately 45 cm below surface at a visible matrix change to lighter colored sand.

Level 3 consisted of sand with 90% micro marine shell inclusions. A large quantity of faunal bone, a minimal quantity of historic glass and human bone fragments and a single ceramic pipe stem were recovered throughout this level. A large quartz crystal was recovered from the north unit sidewall at this level. Two burials were excavated at the bottom of Level 3. These were labeled Burial 38 and Burial 39 and were excavated but skeletal material was not removed from the unit. These will be discussed in detail below. A carbon stain in the matrix that was roughly 11 cm in diameter was present in the northeast corner of the unit approximately 12 cm northwest of the west extent of the west extent of Burial 38. A second carbon stain was present along the east unit boundary 50 cm below surface. This stain was oriented north to south and was 28 cm long. A small chert flake was present within this stained matrix. A partial wood barrel was located at the base of Level 3 along the southern boundary and 105 cm west of the east boundary of XU53. The barrel is 37 cm in diameter is composed of a series of vertical wood slats that are roughly 13 cm tall.
It is widest at the top, slightly contracting towards the bottom and has no horizontal top or bottom. The barrel was located between 63 and 76 cm below surface.

Burial 38. The head of Burial 38 was located in the east margin of XU53 and the majority of the burial extended into the eastern sidewall of the unit. The visible portion of the burial included the skull and displaced elements of the chest, hands, and feet resting on a wooden coffin base. The loose elements of the hands and feet were collected during excavation to prevent loss but the skull and remaining skeleton were left in situ for later excavation.

Burial 39. The toe of Burial 39 was uncovered at the southwest corner of XU53. The visible portion of the burial consists of the toe of a wooden coffin with no associated skeletal elements. The coffin extends into the west sidewall of the unit and likely underneath the current cemetery fence.

XU53 was terminated after Level 3 reached the bottom of the two burials and the level became sterile of artifacts.

XU54

This 2x2 meter excavation unit was established 50 cm off of the west cemetery wall and runs parallel to it. The southwest corner of the unit is approximately 1.2 meters north of the south cemetery wall. The unit was excavated in order to continue to recover and document cultural material along the rear cemetery wall and investigate its presence at the south end of the cemetery. Elevations for this unit were taken from its northeast corner.

Level 1 began at ground surface and extended down approximately 20 cm. Its matrix consisted of dark loamy sand with high organic content with 20% micro marine shell inclusions and a scattered charcoal deposits and a high presence of rootlets and large tree
roots from a nearby tree. Artifacts recovered at this level include: a high quantity of historic glass sherds, ceramic pipe stems and ceramic sherds, several pieces of queen conch shell, a manatee rib and a moderate amount of other faunal bone. A concentration of charcoal was located in the northwest corner of the unit. The lower 10 cm of Level 1 contained an increased concentration of historic bottle glass sherds and faunal bone pieces scattered throughout. The lower 10 cm also included 1 whole brick and 4 half bricks scattered throughout in no particular alignment. Level 1 also featured the bottom of a shot glass, a chert gun flint, a Maya ceramic sherd, a thermally altered chert flake and a button.

Level 2 consisted of a matrix consistent with the lower 10 cm of Level 1 and had a decreased presence of tree roots and rootlets from Level 1. A few scattered chunks of brick were located in the upper 10 cm of Level 2. Artifacts recovered from this level included a whole ceramic jar, 14 ceramic pipe stem fragments, and high quantities of historic ceramic sherds, faunal bone pieces, metal fragments and historic bottle glass sherds. A metal bar was also recovered in the southeast corner of the unit. A Maya ceramic sherd, chert gunflint, large button, and perforated jaguar tooth were also recovered from this level. Level 2 was terminated approximately 40 cm below surface.

Level 3 consisted of a matrix consistent with that of Level 2 with an increased presence of micro marine shell inclusions at 50%. The presence of tree roots remained consistent with that of Level 2. Artifacts recovered from Level 3 included: 2 ceramic pipe bowl fragments, 23 ceramic pipe stem fragments, a high quantity of metal fragments, moderate quantities of historic glass sherds, ceramic sherds and queen conch shell fragments. Several large faunal bone pieces were recovered including a large marine turtle bone located in the north sidewall. Two partial bricks were recovered at the bottom of Level 3. A
concentration of burned faunal bone was located in the center of the unit in the lower 10 cm. A whole rum bottle was recovered from the south sidewall of this unit. Other artifacts included 2 bone button discs, chert gun flint, bone die, large pewter button and a partial fractured jaguar tooth. Level 3 ended approximately 58 cm below surface.

Level 4 began with a matrix change to light colored sand with 90% micro marine shell inclusions. Circular to oval blue carbon stains of the matrix were located sporadically throughout the east area of the unit. Artifacts recovered from this level included: a moderate quantity of small faunal bone fragments, moderate quantity of small historic glass and ceramic pieces, 7 ceramic pipe stems, moderate quantity of small metal fragments and 3 metal spikes. A metal object, that was possibly a coffin handle was found near the top of the level along the south unit boundary 40 cm east of the west unit boundary. Other artifacts recovered include: a large blank pewter button, 2 buttons of the 5th West India Regiment, bone button and 2 lead grape shot balls. The size, quantity, and density of fractured artifacts decreased from that of Level 3 and continued to decrease with depth throughout Level 4. Level 4 was terminated when it became sterile of cultural material at approximately 90 cm below surface.

OFFSHORE TESTING

A series of 24 offshore shovel test pits were implemented in order to test the predicted locations of two docks and four turtle corrals that are depicted on the 1764 map of Belize (Figure 2.4). These locations were predicted based on a new map that was created by overlaying the 1764 map with current Google Earth satellite imagery, and aligning them based on identifiable contours in the Caye’s shoreline (Figure 2.5). The proposed locations of the turtle corrals were given the title “TC” and the docks were labeled “D” each with a
corresponding number. The tests pits were dug in roughly waist to chest-deep water and the matrix was water screened using a box screen with ¼ inch mesh. Test pits were titled “OT” for Offshore Test and assigned a number in order of excavation. Offshore tests were placed systematically within the predicted boundaries of the historic features in order to recover historic artifacts, primarily marine turtle bone. The goal was to test the presence and absence of artifact and faunal bone deposits across the proposed boundaries of the historic docks and turtle corrals in order to determine the accuracy of the map overlay. This included the placement of multiple test pits outside of the proposed locations in order to accurately narrow the locations of historic cultural deposits and compare them against the proposed outlines of the feature locations.

The results of these tests varied with each dock and turtle corral. Historic artifacts were present at every location, and some of the material aligned with the proposed location, and others did not. GPS coordinates were taken for each offshore test pit and these were plotted on the map (Figure 2.5). Test pits that did not produce any historic cultural material are labeled as negative tests. The offshore test pits that did produce historic artifacts and faunal material are labeled as positive tests. A description of the area tested around each proposed turtle corral follows below.

**TC1**

TC1 is located in the area between the Roe, Eyles and McNabb docks. Three test pits were placed within the boundaries of the proposed corral and four additional tests were placed outside of it in order delineate the feature. In comparison to the other locations, the highest quantity and concentration of marine turtle carapace and other bone was recovered from within this proposed corral. All of this material came from two test pits placed east of
the end of the Eyles dock. All units placed outside of the boundaries of the predicted corral produced no significant cultural material and were counted as negative tests. The seafloor consisted of a thick bed of turtle grass, *Thalassia testudinum*, the roots of which extended through the upper 10 cm of matrix. This zone was composed of white sandy clay.

Immediately below this area, the matrix changed to white sand with 60% micro marine shell inclusions and continued through beyond the termination of each test pit. All historic artifacts were recovered from throughout this lower zone.

**OT1**

OT1 was located 3.39 meters east of the end of the Eyles dock. This was an approximately 2x5 meter test pit that extended roughly 37 cm below surface. A high quantity of marine turtle bone, 199 individual pieces, were recovered from this pit. Some of the turtle bone was large in size and composed the greater majority of the faunal bone recovered from this pit. This was the highest concentration of turtle bone found in any of the offshore tests thus far. Various other fragments of faunal bone were recovered which included various bird and mammal bones, several fish vertebrate and a manatee vertebrate. Other material included: 2 ceramic pipe bowl fragments, 1 additional pipe bowl with a maker’s mark, ceramic pipe stems, a few large pieces of non-native stone that was likely ship ballast, sections of wood pilings, a modern rum bottle neck, a partial black ceramic dish with a foot, a metal bolt, 3 nails, a high quantity of other metal fragments and historic green glass sherds. OT1 was terminated due to time constraints, though it continued to produce historic material.

**OT2**
This test pit was placed roughly 19.8 meters south of the Roe dock and 18.4 meters east of the end of the Eyles dock. This circular pit was 1.03 by 1.13 meters in diameter and extended down 40 cm below the seafloor surface. No faunal material was recovered from this test. A moderate amount of metal fragments were recovered throughout. A iron pin and a section of a wood piling were recovered roughly 30 cm below ground surface. A sherd of modern glass was recovered at the bottom of this pit and it was terminated and counted as a negative test.

OT3

This 1.93x1.19 meter test pit was placed north of OT1, 3.96 meters northeast of the Eyles dock. It extended down 47 cm and produced the second greatest quantity of marine turtle bone of all the offshore test pits, with 91 individual identifiable pieces. This included two marine turtle vertebrae and a phalange. A small quantity of fish, bird and mammal bone were also recovered along with a high quantity of small unidentifiable faunal bone fragments. Additionally, 4 pieces of hickatee (*Dermatemys mawii*) carapace were present here. Other material recovered included: wood piling segments, 1 iron bolt, 1 ceramic pipe stem, 2 historic ceramic sherds, a moderate quantity of metal fragments, 2 modern glass sherds and an aluminum Schlitz can. Modern and historic material was dispersed and intermixed throughout the depth of the test pit and the presence of material continued until its termination. This test was abandoned due to time constraints.

OT4

This test pit measured 51x96 cm and was established 2.31 meters north of the Roe dock outside of the TC1 boundary. It extended down for 54 cm and no cultural material was recovered so it was counted as a negative test.
OT5

This 91x172 cm test pit was placed 4.67 meters north of the Mussa dock, outside of the TC1 boundary. It extended down 46 cm below ground surface and included the recovery of 2 small, unidentifiable faunal bone fragments, 10 sherds of modern window glass, 2 fragments of metal, a modern plate sherd, a ceramic pipe stem and a modern beer bottle. All artifacts were intermixed and this unit ceased to produce artifacts at its lowest 15 cm. This test pit was terminated at this point and labeled as a negative test due to its lack of significant historic material.

OT6/7

These two test pits were placed side-by-side 3.7 meters south of the McNabb dock outside of the perimeter of TC1. OT6 measured 76x135 cm and produced a modern cut queen conch shell, 3 small metal fragments and an aluminum bottle cap. OT7 was 118x138 cm and produced 1 ceramic pipe stem segment. Both of these tests extended 42 cm below the seafloor and were terminated when they no longer produced any modern or historic material. These two test pits were labeled as negative tests due to their lack of significant historic material.

TC2

This proposed turtle corral is located alongside the location of a historic dock, D1. TC2’s predicted location is east of the shore along current Fred Good’s property. The adjacent D1 is located east of the seawall at the Mistre property. A large subsurface ballast stone pile was discovered in the summer of 2009 south of the proposed location of D1. This test pit, XU4 was excavated to the surface of the large collection of dark, non-native stone at approximately 1 meter below the seafloor. It produced a several pieces of marine turtle
carapace, a ceramic pipe bowl fragment, and historic bottle glass sherds (Garber et. al 2010). TC2 is located east of a mangrove patch along shore. Much of the area east of this mangrove patch and the north section of the Mistre seawall had a swampy seafloor with a soft, mucky clay matrix that was easily penetrable and slightly colloid and continued to roughly 120 cm below the seafloor. This matrix constituted approximately 50% of the TC2 and D1 predicted areas and limited the range of stable matrix that could be excavated. The matrix was consistent throughout the area that was tested and included a bed of turtle grass with roots in sandy clay that composed the upper 10 cm of matrix. A strict change to sand with 60% micro marine shell inclusions occurred below the previous level and extended beyond the termination on each test pit. The quantity of historic material encountered in the 2014 test pits was sparse and minimal in comparison to the faunal bone recovered from XU4 during the 2009 field season. The positive test pits from the 2014 field season were all located near the edges of predicted D1, one of which was located within the TC2 boundary.

**OT8**

This 1.7x1.8 meter test pit was located in the southeast corner of TC2 and 41.15 meters east of the mangrove patch. It extended 101 cm below the seabed and included the recovery of 2 marine turtle carapace pieces, 2 large dark non-native stones, 5 modern glass sherds, 1 historic glass sherd, 14 metal fragments, 1 burned shell, 3 historic ceramic sherds and 1 historic pipe stem segment. This unit ceased to produce artifacts before it was terminated.

**OT9**

This 102x148 cm test pit was placed on the edge of predicted D1, 28.57 meters east of the seawall. This pit extended 47 cm below the seafloor and included the recovery of 1
indeterminate faunal bone, 1 burned historic ceramic sherd and 1 metal fragment. This test pit was considered positive and was terminated after the matrix became sterile of cultural material.

**OT10**

This 113x171 cm test pit was located inside the west edge of TC2, 18.8 meters east of the shore. This pit extended 77 cm below the seafloor and only produced 2 small indeterminate faunal bone fragments and a burned sherd of modern glass widely dispersed vertically. This test pit was considered negative due to its lack of historic material.

**OT11**

This 96x75 cm test pit was established inside the west edge of TC2, 14 meters east of the shore. It extended 59 cm below the seafloor and did not produce any cultural material. Therefore, this was considered a negative test.

**TC3**

This predicted corral is located toward the north end of the island and straddles Bruce Bowen’s dock and the dock located directly north of it. Very little historic material was recovered from only 2 of the 6 test pits implemented here. Of these, only one produced historic marine turtle bone. Modern refuse was encountered near the surface in most test pits the few historic artifacts that were recovered were followed vertically by a zone that was sterile of cultural material, with the exception of OT24. This area had a constant flowing, clear water with a continuous bed of turtle grass across the seafloor. The grass roots continued through the upper 10 cm of matrix, which was white sandy clay. Directly below this layer was white sand with 40-50% micro marine shell inclusions that continued beyond the depth of the test pits’ termination.
OT19

This 126x34 cm ovular test pit was established 23 meters east of a seawall and 10
meters and extended vertically 68 cm below the seafloor, within the boundaries of TC3. This
test pit produced a minimal amount of modern refuse that included a beer can a modern
faunal bone. This unit was terminated and labeled as a negative test due to its lack of historic
material.

OT20

This 138x155 meter test unit was located 36 meters east of the seawall and 8 meters
north of the Bowen dock, within the boundaries of TC3. This pit extended 48 cm below the
seafloor and only produced a small amount of modern garbage. This unit was then labeled
as a negative test and was terminated.

OT21

This 94x73 cm test pit was established 15 meters north of the Bowen dock, within the
boundaries of TC3. It extended for 74 cm below the sea floor and produced 2 small historic
ceramic sherds.

OT22

This 118x84 cm test unit was established 17 meters north of the Bowen dock, within
the boundary of TC3. It extended 72 cm below the sea floor and did not produce any cultural
material. Therefore, this test pit was labeled negative.

OT23

This 87x43 cm test pit was implemented 18.5 meters east of the seawall and 2.2
meters north of the Gallaty dock, south of TC3. This test pit extended down 74 cm below
surface and did not produce any cultural material, so it was terminated and labeled as a negative test.

**OT24**

This test pit measured 71x108 cm and was established 19 meters north of the Gegg dock and 29 meters east of the seawall, north of TC3. It extended down 57 cm below the sea floor where it encountered a dense collection of coral rock. From this pit, 11 large pieces of white coral rock, 1 large piece of brick ware, 1 historic black rum bottle bottom, 1 historic glass sherd and 1 piece of marine turtle carapace were recovered. This collection of stone was continued down beneath the point of unit termination. Through subsurface probing with a copper grounding rod it was determined that this subsurface collection of stone continues out horizontally beyond the limits of the test pit. This subsurface obstruction was 3 meters long on its north-south axis and 6 meters wide on its east-west axis.

**TC4**

The predicted location of this turtle corral is a historic dock, designated D2, on the north end of St. George’s Caye in what is Fisherman Town today. A conversation with a local resident indicated that several historic bottles had been recovered during the construction of one of the docks in between the predicted locations of TC4 and D2. Seven offshore test pits were across this area and encountered variation in the stability of the sea floor and the matrix composition as they approached a mangrove patch. Historic artifacts were discovered to have a fairly wide distribution across this area, with the highest concentration of material coming from within the predicted turtle corral boundaries.
This 94x84 cm test pit was placed 6 meters west of Carl Bischof’s dock, in between TC4 and D2. Its upper layer was composed of slightly colloid sandy clay that continued down for approximately 40-50 cm. Modern faunal bone pieces and modern refuse were recovered throughout this zone. This included several sherds of modern bottle glass and a plastic toy truck. Directly below this layer, the matrix composition changed to solid white sand with 70% micro marine shell inclusions. This layer continued down 85 cm below the seafloor and produced a burned ceramic pipe stem segment and 8 small pieces of turtle bone. The test pit stopped producing cultural material slightly before its abandonment.

**OT13**

This 118x90 cm test pit was excavated north of a path of mangrove and 5.5 meters west of the Coy dock, inside the southern boundary of TC4. It began over a bed of turtle grass with roots that extended into sandy clay in the upper 10 cm. Directly below this layer, the matrix consisted of white sand with 60% micro marine shell inclusions. Modern glass sherds and metal fragments were recovered throughout the upper 50 cm of matrix. Historic artifacts were recovered from 50 cm below the sea floor up to the termination of the pit. These included: 9 pieces of loggerhead turtle bone, 8 smaller pieces of indeterminate turtle bone, a small quantity of other faunal bone fragments, 2 historic ceramic sherds, 1 complete ceramic pipe stem with a partial bowl and 2 ceramic pipe stem segments. Artifacts were not recovered in the lower 10 cm of the pit and OT13 was abandoned 74 cm below the surface of the sea floor.

**OT14**

This 212x170 cm test pit was located 2 meters north of the Coy dock within the boundaries of TC4. The matrix consisted of white sand with 60% micro marine shell
inclusions that began at the surface and continued beyond the test’s termination at 65 cm below the sea floor. Recovered artifacts included: 2 ceramic pipe stem segments, a modern Belize coin, a modern metal key, a piece of modern faunal bone refuse and 21 pieces of faunal bone. Most of the faunal pieces were too small to determine what species they belonged to, but at least 1 was assigned to loggerhead sea turtle and 2 others indeterminate turtle. OT14 was abandoned after it became sterile of artifacts.

**OT15**

This 72x95 cm test pit was placed west of TC4, approximately 22 meters north of the shore. It began over a bed of turtle grass with roots that extended into sandy clay in the upper 10 cm. Directly below this layer, the matrix consisted of white sand with 60% micro marine shell inclusions. No cultural material was recovered in the upper 50 cm below the sea floor. Beneath this point, 2 small historic ceramic sherds, and 39 pieces of loggerhead turtle bone were recovered. This test pit was abandoned 76 cm below the sea floor when it stopped producing material.

**OT16**

This 183x100 cm test pit was established west of OT15, approximately 15.5 meters north of the shore. It began over a bed of turtle grass with roots that extended into sandy clay in the upper 10 cm. Directly below this layer, the matrix consisted of white sand with 60% micro marine shell inclusions. Material recovered from this test pit included: 2 modern bottle glass sherds, a rodent mandible, 2 small historic ceramic sherds, a historic glass bottle bottom with a maker’s mark and 6 small faunal bone pieces, 2 of which belonged to fish and 4 were too small to determine. This pit was abandoned 76 cm below the sea floor after it stopped producing cultural material.
OT17

This 172x95 cm test pit was located 18.5 meters west of the swimming corral on the end of the Coy dock, inside the TC4 boundaries. It began over a bed of turtle grass with roots that extended into sandy clay in the upper 10 cm. Directly below this layer, the matrix consisted of white sand with 60% micro marine shell inclusions. A small historic glass sherd, 1 small piece of turtle exoskeleton, and 4 small pieces of faunal bone that were deemed indeterminate were recovered from this pit. This test pit was abandoned 76 cm below surface after it stopped producing material.

OT18

This 80x95 cm test pit was established 10 meters west of the public dock, on the edge of predicted D2. It started over a bed of turtle grass with roots that extended into sandy clay in the upper 10 cm. Directly below this layer, the matrix consisted of white sand with 60% micro marine shell inclusions. This test pit only produced one 10 cm long iron bar. It continued down 84 cm below the sea floor and was abandoned and labeled negative after it failed to produce historic material.
Figure 2.1. St. George’s Caye Cemetery Plan Map.
Figure 2. 1872 plan map of the St. George’s Caye Cemetery by Robert Hume
Figure 3. Brick sarcophagus of Burial 34
Figure 4. 1764 Map of St. George’s Caye
Figure 5. Map of predicted historic locations and the results of offshore testing on St. George’s Caye
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