2011


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A House But Not A Home? Measuring “Householdness” in the Daily Lives of
Monticello’s “Nail Boys”

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
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Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to the people who have supported me the most throughout both this project and my life. My parents have always encouraged me to achieve my highest goals. They taught me that I can accomplish anything with hard work, self-discipline, and a positive attitude. I am so grateful for their unconditional love and support. My sister is a constant source of inspiration. She encouraged me to keep going through the most frustrating and stressful times during this project. I know I can always depend on her when I need a shoulder to lean on. My fiancé is my best friend. His love has enriched my life in more ways than I can count. He has been so patient, no matter how much I talked about this project. I am so grateful for all the days he helped me to laugh and relax. I hope this thesis makes all of them proud!
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Abstract

Monticello, the plantation home of Thomas Jefferson, was also home to more than 100 African American slaves between 1771 and 1826. As many as 40 members of this community lived and worked on Mulberry Row, once a bustling avenue of residential and industrial activity adjacent to the Palladian mansion. Archaeological excavations in 1957 and 1982-1983 uncovered the remains of Mulberry Row’s nailery, where preteen and teenaged enslaved “nail boys” manufactured nails for internal use and sale. These excavations revealed surprisingly high amounts of domestic artifacts, particularly ceramics and glass, indicating the young nailers also may have lived inside the nailery. This study investigates whether the nail boys maintained some semblance of childhood through ongoing participation in their parents’ households or fully took on the mantle of adulthood by forming a household of their own, independent of their parents, as expressed in the local production and consumption of household goods.

This question is explored within the contexts of the archaeology of slavery, household archaeology, and the archaeology of children. The intersection of these three themes provides a richer and more realistic understanding of the boys’ complex lives. In this study, artifact abundance indices and Pearson residuals are used to compare artifacts from the nailery to artifacts from industrial and dwelling sites across Monticello plantation. I hypothesized that if the nail boys were participating in food production and
consumption, the abundance of refined and utilitarian ceramics and glass would be similar to or higher than the abundance of those artifacts in dwelling sites. If the abundance of the nailery artifacts was lower than those for dwelling sites and was therefore more similar to those for industrial sites, the nail boys probably did not participate in domestic activities. The indices and residuals reveal a high abundance of refined ceramics and glass in the nailery and a low abundance of utilitarian ceramics, which would have been needed to cook and store food. The data suggest the nail boys engaged in the consumption of food and associated artifacts but participated in little or no food production. It is likely that their age and gender prevented them from fully engaging in food production within the nailery. This project adds to the fledgling research into slave children, who have traditionally been ignored by childhood, slave, and household archaeologists.
Chapter 1:

Introduction

The lives of enslaved African Americans in colonial and early America have become a topic of great interest for archaeologists, historians, and the public in recent years. Nowhere is the intersection of these three groups more frequent than at Monticello, providing a wonderful opportunity for new knowledge to be disseminated quickly and widely. Monticello was Thomas Jefferson’s plantation home in Charlottesville, Virginia between 1771 and 1826, and it is an excellent place to study the lives of enslaved people due to good archaeological preservation and extensive historical documentation. Scholars examining slave sites around the country have supplied a wealth of information on slave diet and subsistence, health, religion, labor, identity, gender, resistance, production and consumption of goods, housing, household composition, and other subjects (Crader 1990; Orser 1990; Samford 1996; Hudson 1997; Morgan 1998; Orser and Funari 2001; Fesler 2004; Heath 2004; Samford 2004; Galle 2010). The boom in slavery research has unfortunately neglected the lives of enslaved children. Similarly, children have a limited presence in interpretive and research materials at Monticello. There are numerous opportunities, however, to study enslaved children at Monticello. The center of Monticello’s slave activity was along Mulberry Row, an area of domestic and industrial buildings near the mansion that was used by as
many as 40 slaves. Many of the slave quarters along Mulberry Row were home to slave children whose parents labored in the mansion or the industrial buildings. As they got older, some of these children, along with other youth, also worked in the mansion or industrial buildings (Stanton 2000:105, 132; Stanton 2002:177). In particular, the site of Mulberry Row’s nailery is an excellent candidate for the study of enslaved children, as this was a nail-making workshop staffed by a group of preteen and teenaged “nail boys.” Jefferson’s great interest in the nail-manufacturing business resulted in many documents detailing the nail boys’ daily workload, disobedience, and food and clothing rations. His records also reveal the names of the boys’ parents, siblings, wives, and children, and tracked their adult careers and which of his plantations they lived on in adulthood. Unfortunately we know very little about their daily lives as teenage nailers and the lack of information on other slave children at Monticello makes it hard to speculate what the nail boys’ lives were like. It is important to learn more about the nail boys’ early lives because we know so little about slave childhood at Monticello or the way childhood events affected the adult lives of slaves. Many of the nail boys held some of the most important adult positions, like butler and head gardener, and it is very likely that their childhood experiences shaped their lives as adults (Stanton 1996:23-24).

Contrary to our own modern, Western constructions of childhood as a time of innocence and dependency (Kamp 2001:3), slave children worked long hours at manual labor and some may have lived separately from their parents. In fact, excavations at Mulberry Row’s nailery revealed a surprisingly high amount of domestic artifacts, leading to Kelso and Sanford’s hypothesis that the nail boys may have lived in the nailery at least some of the time (Kelso 1997). Furthermore, Jefferson’s ration lists organize the
slaves into households and many of these lists show the nail boys grouped together, suggesting the boys were considered an individual household (Jefferson 2003b). In this thesis, I will discuss the extent to which the enslaved nail boys created a functioning household of their own inside the nailery. Did the nail boys maintain some semblance of childhood through ongoing participation in their parents’ households or did they fully take on the mantle of adulthood by forming a household of their own, independent of their parents, as expressed in the local production and consumption of household goods?

In this study, I use abundance indices and Pearson residuals to compare amounts of artifacts from the nailery to amounts of artifacts from a variety of domestic and industrial sites at Monticello in order to determine the nail boys’ level of household activity. To measure this, I coined the term “householdness,” meaning the intensity and variety of domestic activities done inside a building. I discuss this term further in Chapter 3. This project is focused on one indicator of householdness: dietary production and consumption as seen through ceramic, glass, and utensil artifacts. I hypothesize that if the nail boys were engaging in food production and consumption and hence had a high level of householdness, the abundance of refined and utilitarian ceramics, glass, and utensils would be similar to or higher than the abundance of those artifacts in domestic sites. If the abundance of the nailery artifacts was lower than those for domestic sites and was more similar to those for industrial sites, the nail boys probably did not participate in domestic activities and therefore had low householdness. In addition, distribution maps can show locations of nail-manufacturing and possible domestic activities inside the nailery, giving further information about the nail boys’ daily activities in the structure.
I consider my research question and results within the frameworks of the archaeology of slavery, household archaeology, and the archaeology of children. The intersection of these three themes provides a more vivid and realistic understanding of the boys’ complex lives. Slave archaeologists have studied many topics of relevance to this thesis, particularly household production and consumption, household composition, and skilled labor. Household archaeologists have debated the definition of “household” and how it can be seen archaeologically. Childhood archaeologists have examined children’s activities, such as apprenticeship, through the archaeological record and have discussed the concept of childhood as a social construction. Using all three themes allows for a more expansive perspective on this project’s results because each provides a different interpretation of the nailery site. Unfortunately, the three themes have overlooked the study of enslaved children, leaving an important group of people out of scholarly awareness and discussion.

This project can shed light on how independent the nail boys were from their families. Modern teens and preteens in Western society do not usually live separately from their parents and they are considered to be incapable of handling this level of independence. Even in early America, most free children lived either with parents, other adult family members, or legally-mandated guardians as in the case of pauper apprenticeship (Herndon and Murray 2009:7). Enslaved children were viewed differently, especially by their masters. These children began working at very young ages and both parents and masters assigned them heavier workloads as they became capable of performing more demanding tasks. Most slave children took on adult workloads and received adult rations around age 10 or 12 and were therefore considered
adults by their masters (Schwartz 2000:14). Slave children experienced a very limited childhood. It is not very farfetched to suggest that some older children were forced to live apart from their families due to the whims of their masters. The incidence of children living apart from parents is just one of many questions yet to be answered about the lives of young slaves. By focusing on the domestic artifacts left behind by a group of Monticello’s enslaved youth, my thesis project will help to fill the gap in knowledge about enslaved children. I hope that this work will inspire others to research the lives of enslaved children in many archaeological contexts.

This thesis is organized into multiple chapters. Chapter Two first explores the history of slavery in North America with a focus on the Chesapeake region. Then I examine the history of Monticello plantation and the nailery, including what is known about the nail boys.

Chapter Three focuses on anthropological and archaeological theoretical perspectives that influence the analyses and conclusions in this study. Specifically, I discuss the archaeology of slavery, household archaeology, and the archaeology of children. I also explore varying definitions and trends within each area of study.

In Chapter Four I first discuss Oriol Pi-Sunyer’s 1957 excavation of the nailery site, which proved that the nailery had actually existed. Then I describe William Kelso and Douglas Sanford’s 1982-1983 nailery excavation, including the excavation methodology and artifacts and features found. The large amount of domestic artifacts found during the 1982-1983 excavation led to the hypothesis that the nail boys lived inside the nailery.
In Chapter Five I analyze data from the nailery and twelve industrial and domestic sites from Monticello plantation. Abundance indices and Pearson residuals are used to learn if the nail boys took part in domestic production or consumption. Artifact distribution maps demonstrate where inside the nailery these domestic activities may have been done.

Chapter Six concludes the study with a brief review of the study’s results. I then present ideas for future research on the nail boys and other enslaved children at Monticello. Additionally, I describe plans for the presentation of my results on the Digital Archaeological Archive of Comparative Slavery.
Chapter 2:

Historical Context

History of Slavery

From the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries, Great Britain, Portugal, France, and other European countries imported West African slaves to various colonies around the world (Taylor 2001:78). The British carried more slaves to colonies than any other country in the eighteenth century; approximately half of these slaves ended up in British colonies, the rest being sent to French and Spanish colonies (Taylor 2001:324). Slaves provided the labor needed to produce important British trade commodities such as tobacco, rice, and sugar (Taylor 2001:324). Africans were first imported into Virginia around 1619, and older children and adolescents were prized because they were old enough to do difficult work but still had many decades of work ahead of them (Morgan 1975; Morgan 1998). The majority of Africans imported to Virginia came from Senegambia and the Bight of Biafra (Morgan 1998:62).

During the seventeenth century, the slave status of transplanted Africans did not hinder them from creating meaningful relationships with white indentured servants, who could claim a similarly low status (Morgan 1998:8, 9). These two groups often ate, made love, ran away, stole, and celebrated together (Morgan 1998:9). As the numbers of new African slaves increased and the numbers of white indentured servants decreased, the
groups became more separate and racial distinctions solidified. The chasm between African-born slaves and white indentured servants expanded because of the foreign status of new slaves, who did not know English and whose appearances seemed so different from those of Anglo-Americans (Morgan 1998:13). Recent research on the early importation of slaves indicates that white Virginians switched to slave labor because slaves were less expensive than indentured servants. Slaves initially worked in the same manner as indentured servants and not in gangs, showing that slave owners did not buy slaves because they wanted to change the mode of labor (Fogel 1989:35-36). The importation of slaves was banned in the United States in 1807, but illegal importation continued with ten to twenty thousand slaves brought in every year until the end of the Civil War (Schneider and Schneider 2007:51).

Early on, most settlement by whites and their slaves occurred in the tidewater region of Virginia. People began settling the piedmont region at the start of the eighteenth century and by the American Revolution approximately 45 percent of the Virginian population lived in that area (Morgan and Nicholls 1989:215). Piedmont soil was ideal for growing oronoco (also spelled orinoco), a popular type of tobacco that provided large profits for farmers and enticed many to move to the area (Morgan 1975:302; Morgan and Nicholls 1989:216). These new settlers to the region brought their slaves and continued to purchase more. After the American Revolution, more slaves lived in the piedmont than in the tidewater (Morgan and Nicholls 1989:217).

Tobacco cultivation was the primary purpose of most Virginia plantations during the colonial and early American periods. Virginia’s long frost-free season and well-drained soils were key to the success of tobacco as the region’s staple crop. Plantations
were generally small because tobacco needed close attention throughout the growing process; most planters owned between one hundred and two hundred acres by the late colonial period (Morgan 1998:36, 43-44). The cultivation of tobacco required such close attention that each slave was expected to work only two acres at a time (Morgan 1998:42). Wealthy planters who owned a large number of slaves, such as Thomas Jefferson, tended to also manufacture needed items at home or diversify crops. The majority of slave owners owned less than twenty slaves (Morgan 1998:41-42). It was more common to have one or two slaves who were fairly familiar with tools but who were not true artisans (Morgan 1998:54).

It was very rare for a plantation to have slaves trained in blacksmithing, shoemaking, or tailoring (Morgan 1998:54). Slaves trained in those three skills or in carpentering had very high market value and retained this value for much of their lives (Marks 1987). Slave artisans’ high market value came from their knowledge and skill combined with the convenience of producing needed goods for the plantation. Masters could also sell the goods made by slave artisans or hire out the slaves for extra profit (Marks 1987:546, 547, 549; Schneider and Schneider 2007:112). If skilled slaves were present on a plantation or farm, they were almost universally men (Berlin and Morgan 1993:19; Morgan 1998:205). Some teenage slaves underwent a “regular apprenticeship” where they learned a trade from a white craftsman, while others learned from previously trained slaves (Morgan 1998:214; Schneider and Schneider 2007:111-112). Only older children and adults who wanted to learn a trade and were likely retain interest were trained because of the high cost (Schwartz 2000:149). Slave artisans, almost always living on very large plantations like Monticello, had a higher rank than field hands.
These skilled slaves often received better quality food, clothing, and shelter and, with their knowledge of the world outside the plantation, sometimes became community leaders (Berlin and Morgan 1993:17-18). Still, skilled slaves were not given lighter labor loads than field hands (Fogel 1989:47). Although female slaves were not trained as artisans, some achieved recognition for their domestic skills, such as dressing hair, cooking, spinning, weaving, and making clothes (Schneider and Schneider 2007:112).

Whether they worked in the fields or as artisans, slaves labored very hard. Both men and women worked six days a week and had duties lasting until late at night. Workdays varied from eleven to twelve hours a day under normal conditions to between thirteen and sixteen hours a day during the busiest periods (Schwartz 2000:53). Slaves received Sundays and the holidays of Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide off of work (Morgan 1998:195). Some slave owners also gave slaves a half day off every Saturday, although the slaves were forced to work a full day if rain postponed work earlier in the week (Fogel 1989:77).

Two systems of labor were used throughout the colonies and young states: tasking and ganging. Tasking, predominantly used in the South Carolina lowcountry, defined a required amount of work to be done by each slave every day. For example, under the task system a slave may have been required to weed a certain number of acres of land, or install a specified length of fence a day (Berlin and Morgan 1993:14-15; Morgan 1998:179-180). Supporters of this system argued that it gave the slaves more freedom; once the allotted work had been completed slaves had the rest of the day to themselves. Although this is theoretically true, the majority of owners purposefully set tasks that would take all day and only the hardest working slaves could achieve any free time
(Berlin and Morgan 1993:15; King 1995:23). The gang system, which was popular in the Chesapeake, called for the arrangement of slaves into small groups that could be easily supervised by an overseer. A slave foreman set the pace for all other slaves in the group and could be punished if work was not done fast enough. These small gangs worked together from dawn until dusk to accomplish an assignment, such as weeding a field or transplanting tobacco seedlings (Morgan 1998:179, 187-188). This type of system worked well on tobacco plantations because each plant required individualized care. Without the incentive of free time at the end of the day, slaves working under the gang system often worked slowly and shirked their duties (Morgan 1998:191). The gang system was good at forcing slaves to work throughout their entire lives. Masters achieved this by rating both the effort required to complete various tasks and the slaves’ physical abilities and then matching tasks to appropriate slaves. Slaves usually held different jobs at different stages of life as their abilities changed (Fogel 1989:52-54).

Slaves were generally better fed and had better overall health in the Chesapeake compared to other regions (Taylor 2001:324). This, combined with the availability of female slaves especially after 1700, caused the Chesapeake slave population to increase primarily by childbirth rather than by the importation of Africans (Morgan 1998:84; Schneider and Schneider 2007:51; Taylor 2001:324). When females began to be imported in large numbers, most were girls who were nearing puberty. These girls were good investments because they would be able to bear children and thereby increase the slave population within a few years of their arrival (Morgan and Nicholls 1989:221; Reinier 1996:159). Owners were pleased when their slave women produced children because children represented the mothers’ fecundity, their contribution to the owner’s
labor force, and their perpetuation of slave society (Schwartz 2000:20). Owners even praised themselves for the birth of slave children since they saw this as proof of their kindness in allowing slaves to have a family life (Schwartz 2000:20). Thomas Jefferson viewed “a woman who brings a child every two years as more valuable than the best man on the farm” (Morgan 1998:94). After the American Revolution, slaves were never again imported to Virginia because slave births exceeded slave deaths (Morgan 1998:62). In fact, this natural increase caused the United States to become the world leader in the use of slave labor (Fogel 1989:33).

Owners and parents of slave children all staked claims in children’s lives. Owners believed that slaves developed habits, such as obedience, discontent, or complacency, while very young. Therefore, owners took a strong interest in young children because they wanted children to develop an allegiance to them and realize that they, and not parents, were in charge of the plantation (Schwartz 2000:77). This extra attention was both a curse and a blessing for slave families. Owners sometimes provided favors or extra supervision for young children, which benefited the family. On the other hand, owners also attempted to change the way slave parents raised their children, interfering with slaves’ ability to define their own cultural space (Schwartz 2000:77). Children were forced to cope with the conflicting desires of their parents and the owner. As Schwartz (2000:78) points out;

For their part, children had to learn how to negotiate a dangerous world, which entailed pleasing two sets of adults with very different expectations.

Their dependence encouraged them to respect whatever adults looked out
for their interests, but children in their early years had difficulty
determining who had their best interests at heart.

Slave children used different strategies to please both their masters and parents. Some
learned good manners and did what they were told. Other slave children used deception
or ran away to escape punishment (Schwartz 2000:113-114). Some children tried to
avoid punishment by going from their parents to the master or vice versa for a pardon.
Some enslaved youth pitted masters and mistresses against one another if they held
differing beliefs about punishing children (Schwartz 2000:113-114).

Slave infants were cared for by an assigned slave caretaker while their parents
worked, and when a little older, children were left by themselves in the dwelling during
the day (King 1995:13; Schwartz 2000:69-70, 79). Children learned to stay in groups of
two or more and look out for each other. Worried about their safety without adult
supervision, some slave parents put bells on their children so they could locate them
when they were out of sight. Adults also told stories of scary men like Bloody Bones and
Raw Head who would “get” children if they were naughty (Schwartz 2000:81).

Unfortunately, slave children were not able to spend much time with their parents during
the work week, since the adults often worked until late at night and children went to bed
early. If parents did not visit their children during the day, children might go a day or
two without seeing their parents (Illick 2002:39; Schwartz 2000:87-88). The
relationships the children developed with their parents, other relatives, and community
members helped them adjust to living in slavery (King 1995:18).

When they reached the age of five, slave children were no longer treated specially
by masters. These children were assigned tasks appropriate to their physical abilities
such as gathering eggs, caring for horses, manuring fields, picking worms off tobacco plants, cleaning silver, and supervising the master’s children (Reinier 1996:156; Schwartz 2000:108). Because these slave children were in the position to harm the master’s property or family members, they were punished if they did not perform up to the expected standards (Schwartz 2000:108). If owners approved of the ways slave parents punished their disobedient children, then parents retained the right to discipline their children. Besides working for the master, children had to do chores at home to help their parents. These chores could be as rigorous as the work they did for the master. Parents made children gather firewood, clean, care for younger siblings and relatives, or cook (Schwartz 2000:123). During middle childhood, some slave children were trained in skills that their parents did not know. These children were placed under the instruction of other trusted slaves, even other child slaves (Schwartz 2000:117). As they took on multiple responsibilities, time for play was greatly reduced. Most were only able to play in the evenings or during holidays (Schwartz 2000:128). Childhood became increasingly filled with work the older a slave boy or girl grew (Schwartz 2000:135).

Slave children were provided with a one-piece garment, called a shirt-tail for boys and a shift for girls, as their only clothing until they were able to perform adult work and were therefore given adult clothing. As they grew, the one-piece garment covered less and less of the body. Children’s need for more bodily coverage and their need for larger amounts of food generally coincided with them reaching the ages of ten to twelve (King 1995:16, 22).

By the ages of ten to twelve, most young slaves began performing adult work (Illick 2002:41; King 1995:25; Schwartz 2000:14). Older children and adolescents also
continued to gain responsibilities in the home, including laundering, manufacturing cloth, and supplying food for the family (Schwartz 2000:133). Girls and boys were separated and taught “gender-appropriate” tasks. Both owners and parents had ideas of appropriate work for each gender, and they delegated chores accordingly (Schwartz 2000:137, 138). Slave parents needed to monitor and control their adolescent child’s rebelliousness so that the owners would not punish the child, the parents, or the entire slave community (Schwartz 2000:154). As children reached adolescence and learned adult tasks, they were more likely to be sold away from their families (Illick 2002:42; Reinier 1996:159; Schwartz 2000:163). Not only was this an emotionally traumatic experience, but it was economically disadvantageous for the child’s family, who could no longer depend on the child to supply food or complete needed chores (Schwartz 2000:163).

Slaves labored into old age. Elderly male slaves moved from working as field hands to being gardeners or watchmen. Older females worked as nurses for the young and the sick, spun cotton, wove cloth, and sewed clothing. Elderly skilled slaves may have been sold or hired out to work for someone else. Most slave owners viewed older slaves as a burden and some stopped providing for them once they could no longer work (Covey and Eisnach 2009:22; Fogel 1989:55). These slaves were left to depend on the generosity of other slaves for food, shelter, clothing, and other items (Fogel 1989:55).

In early Virginia, slaves were housed in dormitories or barracks. Over time, slave housing became more private, with single family homes and duplexes becoming the most common types of slave quarters (Morgan 1998:104). Housing also improved in quality; early slave quarters were made of clapboards but by the mid-eighteenth century, log construction, which was more economical and efficient than clapboards, was popular.
Eventually some slave quarters even had sills and brick underpinnings (Morgan 1998:109). Nevertheless, the majority of single family quarters were one room buildings with dirt floors, one window, and one door. Duplexes housed two families and were two room structures with one door at each end and a wall separating the rooms (Jewett and Allen 2004:264). The interiors of slave dwellings were sparsely furnished, but most were equipped with an iron pot, an iron pail or kettle, possibly a frying pan, and ceramics (Morgan 1998:114). Bowls and jars were generally used instead of plates because slaves usually ate one-pot meals like stews (Morgan 1998:114). Mattresses were made of ticking stuffed with grass, hay, corn shucks, or pine needles (Schwartz 2000:83). Many domestic activities occurred outside around a fire because of the restricted space and lack of indoor lighting common to most slave cabins (Morgan 1998:121). Most slave dwellings were located very close to the slaves’ work locations. Some slaves, especially in the Chesapeake, even lived inside work or storage buildings (Morgan 1998:107, 123).

The heads of slave families and unmarried slave adults were given food rations once a week. The rations, which often consisted of cornmeal, salt pork, rice, potatoes, and fatback, were sometimes the minimum amount of food necessary for the slaves to keep up their productivity (Covey and Eisnach 2009:11; Schneider and Schneider 2007:83). Some masters gave extra food as reward for good work or withheld food as a punishment for disobedience or running away (Schneider and Schneider 2007:80; Schwartz 2001:37). Slaves enhanced their rations with food they grew, gathered, hunted, or fished themselves. Studies have found faunal and archaeobotanical remains of many types of wild food sources, such as opossum, turtle, nuts, fruits, and legumes, in slave domestic deposits (Mrozowski et al. 2008; Scott 2001). Slaves who were allowed to
maintain their own garden often grew vegetables, such as beans, cabbage, and collard greens, that supplemented their rations (Covey and Eisnach 2009:73, 78-79). Enslaved African Americans also sold handmade crafts and extra food in order to supplement their rations and earn their own money (King 1995:16; Schwartz 2001:38). Slave children may have been assigned chores to improve their family’s subsistence including feeding chickens, gathering eggs, pounding rice with a pestle and mortar, and checking rabbit traps (Schwartz 2001:37). Some slaves, including children, resorted to stealing from the master’s stores (Schneider and Schneider 2007:80; Schwartz 2001:37). House servants may also have been able to eat food leftover from the white family’s meals, although the amount of leftovers would be limited in quantity (Covey and Eisnach 2009:19 and Schneider 2007:80).

The lack of variety in slave diets caused numerous health issues. Slaves were more susceptible to blindness, rickets, pellagra, toothaches, scurvy, beriberi, and skin and eye irritations because of malnutrition (Schneider and Schneider 2007:80). Combining this issue with poor sanitary and working conditions and weather exposure, slaves were sick quite frequently. Fever, rheumatism, and the above-mentioned malnutrition illnesses were extremely common. Other illnesses like venereal diseases, lockjaw, tuberculosis, pleurisy, pneumonia, leprosy, cholera, and yellow fever also affected slaves. Pregnant women were very vulnerable to illness and other physical problems if they were worked too hard during late pregnancy or while nursing or were not cared for properly during childbirth (Schneider and Schneider 2007:81). Enslaved children often had stunted growth due to a poor diet that frequently did not include meat (Covey and Eisnach 2009:25; Illick 2002:41; Steckel 1986:726, 732-734).
History of Monticello and the Nailery

Monticello Plantation is located in near the city of Charlottesville in Albemarle County, Virginia (Figure 2.1). It was the plantation home of Thomas Jefferson, and is currently owned and operated by the Thomas Jefferson Foundation, a private, nonprofit organization committed to running Monticello in a manner consistent with Thomas Jefferson’s legacy.

Figure 2.1 The location of Monticello in the Eastern United States.
It is unknown why Jefferson chose the location of Monticello for his primary plantation. By placing his home at the top of an 867-foot mountain, he gave up the benefits of living next to the Rivanna River and he had to construct roads and cut down forests to get to the top of the mountain (McLaughlin 1988:34). He may have been enchanted by the view; while studying law he often hiked to the top of Monticello for quiet reflection (McLaughlin 1988:34). The land had been passed on to him from his father, and Jefferson decided to move there from his childhood home at Shadwell, which is approximately four miles away (Bernstein 2003:10; Thomas Jefferson Foundation 2005). He may have moved to get away from his mother, to try out his architectural ideas, or to create a home for a future wife (Bernstein 2003:9-10). Construction began in 1769 when he was twenty-five years old (McLaughlin 1988:33). Two weeks after their marriage in 1772, Jefferson and his new wife Martha Wayles Jefferson moved into the one habitable room at Monticello and waited for the main portion of the house to be completed (Bernstein 2003:10; Thomas Jefferson Foundation 2005). Besides the Monticello plantation (also known as the home farm), Jefferson owned outlying lands, known as quarter farms, named Tufton, Lego, and Shadwell. His total landholdings, including Monticello and the quarter farms, were approximately 5,000 acres. These quarter farms were run by resident overseers (Thomas Jefferson Foundation 2003b). Additionally, he owned a plantation near Bedford, Virginia called Poplar Forest, which he used as a personal retreat from busy Monticello until 1823, when he sold it to his grandson (Corporation for Jefferson’s Poplar Forest 2010).

Jefferson inherited slaves after both his father’s and his father-in-law’s deaths. Subsequent births and deaths caused the number of slaves to fluctuate around 200 living
at Monticello at a time, although Jefferson owned 619 individual enslaved people throughout his life (Reed 2007:301; Stanton 2000). The first slave to live full time at Monticello was Betty Brown, who moved to the plantation around 1771 or 1772 and was twelve years old at the time. She was a member of the large Hemings family and worked as the personal servant of Martha Wayles Jefferson (Reed 2007). Interestingly, Betty survived into the 1830s when she was in her seventies (Stanton 2000:156). Jefferson rarely purchased or sold slaves. The purchase of slaves was only done to reunite families or to allow two slaves to marry. The sale of slaves was only done to relieve debt or get rid of a rebellious individual (Reed 2007). Robert Hemings, a personal attendant to Jefferson and brother to Sally Hemings, was allowed to purchase his freedom in 1794. He did this by borrowing money from a Fredericksburg, Virginia doctor who owned Robert’s wife (Reed 2007:5). Jefferson only freed six other slaves, either while he was alive or in his will (Stanton 2002:187). Harriet and Beverly Hemings, daughter and son of Sally Hemings, were allowed to run away without pursuit after they each turned twenty-one. Jefferson may have allowed this because he is believed to have been their biological father (Reed 2007:6). Jefferson’s granddaughter Ellen Coolidge remembered his policy in an 1858 letter to her husband, “It was [Jefferson’s] principle…to allow such of his slaves as were sufficiently white to pass for white men, to withdraw quietly from the plantation; it was called running away, but they were never reclaimed” (Stanton 2000:116). James Hemings, son of Sally Hemings’ sister Critta, also ran away, was caught, and just before going back to Charlottesville, he ran away again and was not pursued (Stanton 2000:116).
During Monticello’s early years the slaves lived in large buildings in groups of unrelated individuals. Starting in the 1790s, it was common for parents and their children to occupy their own dwelling (Stanton 2000:43). Slaves were provided with weekly food rations consisting of a peck of cornmeal, four salted fish, and a half pound of pork or pickled beef (Stanton 2000:29). The annual clothing allotment was a winter and summer suit of clothes, with blankets provided every three years. Hats, socks, and burlap sacks used as beds were distributed occasionally (Stanton 2000:29). Every slave household had a poultry yard and many had a garden where vegetables were raised (Stanton 1996:38). The slaves were allowed to sell their fowl and vegetables to Jefferson’s family in exchange for silver or take these goods to the Sunday market in Charlottesville (Stanton 2000:29). Slaves also earned money by completing particularly difficult or unpleasant tasks. The money was usually used to obtain goods, such as colorful cloth, sugar, tea, and coffee, which were not provided by Jefferson (Stanton 2000:29).

Like the majority of plantation owners, Jefferson worked his slaves very hard. House servants were constantly “on call,” and farm workers likely worked from dawn until sundown. Jefferson used the task system to assign work to skilled slaves, and these tasks were designed to last throughout the daylight hours. Evenings, Sundays, and some holidays were free from work. Jefferson’s records indicate that the Christmas holiday was several days long (Stanton et al. 2008). At Monticello, child slaves began working at very young ages. In his Farm Book, Jefferson (2003a:77) listed the types of work that children did, "Children till 10. years old to serve as nurses. From 10. to 16. the boys make nails, the girls spin. At 16. go into the ground [work in the field] or learn trades"
Once they reached age 16, slave children were considered adult laborers and were assigned full-size workloads (Stanton et al. 2008).

Like most slaves, Monticello slaves had a great deal of work to do after the sun went down. Clothes needed to be repaired, children needed to be cared for, food had to be prepared, and supplemental subsistence activities had to be done. Evenings were also a time to relax and enjoy the company of friends and family. Former Monticello slave Isaac Jefferson recalled nighttime slave gatherings centered around music and dancing (Stanton 2000:31). Story-telling and prayer gatherings may also have played an important role in Monticello slave life. One document suggests that Christian slaves at Monticello were allowed to hold prayer meetings within slave dwellings (Stanton 2000:32). The children probably occupied their free time by playing with toys, which were mostly handmade, playing both object-centered games like dominoes and marbles and games of concealment such as “I Spy,” “Peep, Squirrel, Peep,” and “You Can’t Catch Me,” dancing, and holding informal athletic competitions (The Plantation Community: Questions and Answers, General Slavery Information File, Jefferson Library, Charlottesville, Virginia). They may have let their imaginations run wild as they explored the fields, forests, and river on the plantation.

Besides the well-known mansion, Monticello plantation consisted of numerous slave dwellings, work-buildings, roads, gardens, orchards, fields, storehouses, a stable, overseer’s houses, and a fish pond (Thomas Jefferson Foundation 2005). Many of the work-buildings were located along Mulberry Row, which was a trail just to the south of the mansion. Seventeen structures, mainly slave dwellings and work-buildings, were situated along this 1,000-foot path (Thomas Jefferson Foundation 2003b). The number
and types of buildings on Mulberry Row changed multiple times as Jefferson designed and redesigned his plantation. The earliest phase of Mulberry Row construction, corresponding to the period of 1770 to 1790, consisted of the duplex “negro quarter”, a stone dwelling for free workers and/or slaves (Building E), a wooden slave quarter (Building o), and the joinery (Building C) (Figure 2.2) (Clites and McCray 2010). The second phase of Mulberry Row, between 1791 and 1810, was the heyday of construction (Figure 2.3). The only building from the first phase that was no longer standing at this time was the “negro quarter.” Buildings new to this phase were the carpenter’s shop (Building i), the blacksmith’s shop (Building D), the nailery (Building j), the nailrod and iron storehouse (Building l), the smokehouse/dairy (Building m), the wash house (Building n), two never-documented buildings that may have housed free workers or slaves (Mulberry Row Structure 1 (MRS-1) and Mulberry Row Structure 2 (MRS-2)), a shed (Building p), a slave dwelling (Building q), three identical single family slave quarters (Buildings r, s, t), and a stable (Building F) (Clites and McCray 2010). The third and final phase, representing the years 1811-1830, featured only two new buildings and the removal of many others (Figure 2.4). The new buildings were the 1809 Stone House, used as a slave dwelling, and Building E, now used as the weaver’s shop. Only six buildings from the previous phases were left standing – the joinery, the nailrod and iron storehouse, Buildings r, s, and t, and the stable. This phase coincided with the construction of the north and south wings of the mansion, where many activities previously located on Mulberry Row were then housed (Clites and McCray 2010).
Phase 1  
c. 1770-1790

Figure 2.2 Phase 1 of Mulberry Row (Clites and McCray 2010). Image reproduced with permission of the authors.
Figure 2.3 Phase 2 of Mulberry Row (Clites and McCray 2010). Image reproduced with permission of the authors.
Figure 2.4 Phase 3 of Mulberry Row (Clites and McCray 2010). Image reproduced with permission of the authors.
The manufacture of nails began in 1794 as a source of income as Jefferson revitalized the farming function of the plantation after his long absence when he was the Minister to France and the Secretary of State (Thomas Jefferson Foundation 2010; Stanton 1996:22). Jefferson decided on manufacture as the best source of income over selling slaves or land (Shayt 1983:59). During this time he also switched the plantation from tobacco to wheat cultivation, which temporarily decreased farm production (Stanton 1996:23). In 1795 Jefferson (2000c:341) wrote to a friend:

I concluded at length however to begin a manufacture of nails, which needs little or no capital, and I now employ a dozen little boys from 10. to 16. years of age, overlooking all the details of their business myself and drawing from it a profit on which I can get along till I can put my farms into a course of yielding profit.

Jefferson selected nail production because it required very little money up front and it was an activity that put to work the male child slaves who, at 10 years of age, were not yet strong enough to take on adult workloads in the fields (Shayt 1983:65). The combination of cheap supplies and free labor made this venture promising. Jefferson (2000a:305) remarked;

My proper object then you will observe is to confine myself to those branches of the nail business, which being beyond the performance of the cutting machine, has no competition but from human labor. In this the cheapness of my means gives me the advantage of others.

He purchased nailrod, which was usually shipped by water from Philadelphia to Richmond, then on to Milton, a small town along the Rivanna River. From there it was
brought by wagon to Monticello (Bear 1967:16). Nails were forged from nailrod, which were long thin bars of rolled or hammered iron (Shayt 1983:22). The nailrod was made into nails of seven sizes ranging between six-pennies and twenty-pennies (Thomas Jefferson Foundation 2003a, b). The term “penny” may be a derivative of “pence” and had a few different meanings: number of nails per pound, price in pence for one hundred nails, or the number of nails that could be bought for a “dinar” or penny (Shayt 1983:13; Wells 1998:88). The penny size of nails was indicated with the letter “d,” which is derived from “dinar” (Wells 1998:97). For example, a 6d nail was two inches long while a 20d nail was four inches long (Shayt 1983:14). Today the term “penny” means only the size of the nail (Wells 1998:88). Monticello’s nail production was enhanced in 1796 with the purchase of a nail-cutting machine that used hoop iron to create four-penny brads; yet even with this new technology the heads of the cut nails were still made by hand (Thomas Jefferson Foundation 2003b). Interestingly, the money used to purchase the nailrod used to start up nail manufacture was actually the interest payments on Jefferson’s friend’s stocks. In 1793 William Short made Jefferson his “attorney in fact” while Short was abroad. Jefferson used the interest money on Short’s stocks for various purchases, including this nailrod. Jefferson stopped this practice in 1798, but did not draw up his account with Short until 1800, when he discovered that he owed his friend $9,000 plus interest. By making monthly payments he was able to pay off the debt by July 1807 (Bear and Stanton 1997:908).
The first nail production probably took place inside the blacksmith’s shop on Mulberry Row. It is unknown exactly when the Mulberry Row nailery building was constructed. There are two conflicting views on this issue, which is further complicated by the presence of at least three other naileries around the plantation that have been identified either in documents or archaeologically (Figure 2.5).

In 1796, Jefferson began filling out a declaration for fire insurance for the mansion and the buildings on Mulberry Row from the Mutual Assurance Society; he never turned this declaration in and finally completed another declaration in 1800 that was filed with the Society (Oberg 2002:244). The 1796 insurance document includes Building j, which is the Mulberry Row nailery, and states, “j. is a shed to be added to D [the blacksmith’s shop]. 50. feet by 18. f. for the nailers, to be built immediately, and making one building with D it is included in the valuation of D. as if it were already built, and is a part of the ensured property” (Jefferson 2002:243) (punctuation in original). The first view is that the nailery on Mulberry Row was constructed soon after the insurance document was written.
Figure 2.5 Locations of all possible nail-making activities on Monticello plantation are shown in purple. The location of Site 17, overseer Edmund Bacon’s house, is shown in orange.
It is currently hypothesized that the nailery building was in use from 1796 to around 1800, and may have been destroyed by 1803 (Hill 2003:76). This view is supported by the presence of nails made by the nail-cutting machine bought in 1796 and the nailery’s mean ceramic date of 1795. Unfortunately, there are no historical documents that describe the construction or use-timeline of this structure, so the actual dates of the Mulberry Row nailery’s occupation may never be known. In 1799, it is known that Jefferson began discussing the possibility of building a new shop located elsewhere on the plantation (Hill 2003:75). Perhaps the Mulberry Row nailery became structurally unsound or was too far away from the man who would supervise the nail boys after Jefferson left in 1801 to be the President. In a letter dated to December 1800, Jefferson wrote that “…the first work in the spring shall be to build a good nailery,” indicating that this new nailery structure had not yet been built (T. Jefferson to J. W. Eppes, letter, 13 December 1800, L. Stanton Files, Monticello Department of Archaeology, Charlottesville, Virginia). These two references may be talking about a nailery/smith shop built for a hired white blacksmith, William Stewart, who was supposed to take over the job of supervising nail production and also teach blacksmithing skills to some slaves. This workshop/nailery was supposedly located just down the mountain slope from and to the northeast of the mansion and below the first roundabout, but archaeologists have yet to locate it (Hill 2003:75) (see Figure 2.5). Archaeological evidence from the Stewart-Watkins site, the location of the home of Stewart and later workman Elisha Watkins, revealed the second highest abundance of wrought and cut nails on the plantation after the Mulberry Row nailery (Figure 2.6). One explanation for this interesting find suggests that Stewart may have been stockpiling metal scraps and
unfinished tools for his own use or removing wasted scrap material so Jefferson did not see it, as Jefferson closely monitored the amount of waste made during nail manufacture (Heath 1999:210).

In January 1801, Jefferson wrote about his plans for the construction of Stewart’s nailery, “I shall then [in April] be at home, and shall engage Whateley [a workman] to undertake to build the new shop, out & out, on his own terms, immediately” (Oberg and Looney 2008). A notation in Jefferson’s Memorandum Books, in which he recorded all his business and financial accounts and legal records, states that in September 1802 he paid two stonemasons, Joseph Moran and William Maddox, for their work on both the L-shaped wings of the mansion and the “Nail house” (Bear and Stanton 1997:1080). Again, this probably refers to Stewart’s nailery, which may have been fully constructed by 1803 (Betts 1944:283). Soon after Stewart’s nailery was constructed, Jefferson decided to move the nail-making operation near overseer Gabriel Lilly’s residence, “on the whole I think it will be best for them [nail boys] also to be removed to mr. Lilly’s” (Jefferson 1802). The reason for this move, after all the work and money put into constructing the new building, was Stewart’s inability to control the rebellious nail boys. Unfortunately, Stewart was a notorious drunkard. Edmund Bacon, hired as overseer in 1806, complained about him to Jefferson, “…with respect of the three jobs Stewart was to do I beleave it will be impossopple to get him to do them The old man has never done one or not more than one days work since you left heare. He is eternally drunk and like a mad man” (Bacon 1807) (spelling and punctuation in original). Jefferson replied that “Stewart must be immediately dismissed” (Betts 1987:426).
Figure 2.6 Location of Stewart-Watkins site to the south and west of the mansion.

Once Stewart was fired in 1807, Jefferson suggested moving the nail-making operation closer to Bacon’s house, located to the south and east of the mansion in Bell
Field (see Figure 2.5). This would allow Bacon to more easily supervise the nail boys.

Letters between Jefferson and Bacon record their discussions about the potential location of the nailery; Jefferson (Betts 1987:447) (capitalization in original) wrote;

> indeed after further reflection I think I can fix a place for the nailery more convenient to you, and as much so to myself; or perhaps indeed let it remain where it is. this we will decide on when I come home which will be in two months from this time…

Bacon (1807) (spelling in original) also made suggestions based on his experiences running the plantation;

> In case you should moove the shop would it not be best sir to have the nailing and shop at one house then Joe [foreman of nail boys and blacksmith] would all ways be in place where he could get assistance from the nailry and do the nail tools without any ill conveniency  Also it would be more convenient to haul coal to one place than twoo.

Archaeologists have discovered two nailery/smith shop sites near Bacon’s house – one to the south and a smaller one to the west, called Site 18 and Site 15 respectively (see Figure 2.5). Full excavation has not yet been done and ceramics found in shovel test pits were not adequate to determine which site was used first (Hill 2003:75). Large numbers of nails, nailrod, and nailrod binder were found at Bacon’s house (Site 17), and it is believed that he may have been storing these items for later use in the nailery/naileries.

Archaeologists have also located a possible nailery/blacksmith shop along with a domestic structure at the bottom of the mountain slope near the Rivanna River, called Site 29 (Figure 2.5). Jefferson referred to this as the “old shop” in August, 1795,
indicating that by that time it was no longer in use (Jefferson 1793-1795). When in use, it was likely the main blacksmith shop for the entire plantation.

The second view of the dating of the Mulberry Row nailery argues that the structure was built in 1809 or later. At the time of excavation, the archaeological evidence suggested that this may be the case because the back wall of the structure coincided perfectly with a fence installed in 1809 (Sanford 1984:30). If this view is correct, then the other naileries around the plantation predated the Mulberry Row structure. A competing explanation for the post holes argues that the nailery posts were reused for the fence line; this explanation supports an earlier construction date for the nailery (Hill 2002:5).

Nail-making was done by up to 14 slave boys, ranging in age from 10 to 16, and sometimes up to age 21 (Thomas Jefferson Foundation 2003a,b). In a 1795 letter, Jefferson (2000a:304-305) (punctuation in original) commented;

I am engaged in a nail manufactory, which I carry on altogether with my own boys, and am enlarging it as more and more of these grow up. I have 9 now at work, and in the course of the year shall have 16. under the care of a smith of my own, so that I have not a single hired hand.

The names of the nail boys are known because of Jefferson’s detailed records: Barnaby Gillette, Bartlet, Ben Hix, Ben Snowden, Brown Colbert, Burwell Colbert, Cary, Davy Hern, Jr., Moses Hern, Isaac Jefferson, James/Jamey Hubbard, Phill Hubbard, (Bedford) John, (Bedford) Davy, Joseph Fossett, Lewis, Shepherd, and Wormley Hughes (Reed 2007:34). Four of these boys, James and Phill Hubbard, (Bedford) John and (Bedford) Davy, were brought from Poplar Forest expressly for the purpose of making nails
These youths worked at two forges for six days a week, twelve hours a day, under the supervision of a slave foreman (McLaughlin 1988:111). The nail boys were required to work very hard; for example, in one day in April 1796, thirteen-year-old James Hubbard made seven pounds of eight-penny nails. This means that he swung his hammer more than twenty thousand times that day (Stanton et al. 2008).

The general nail-making process was composed of a number of steps. To begin, a nailer would put one nailrod into the forge fire, using the bellows to pump air in and make the fire hotter if needed. The hot end of the nailrod was then removed from the fire and placed on an anvil (Sanford 1984:50; Shayt 1983:23). Next, the hot end was beaten until it tapered into a point. The rod was then placed on a hardy (a triangular-shaped chisel that was set into the anvil) and a deep notch was cut above the taper. Next the entire rod was placed into a heading tool, where the taper was twisted or snapped off at the notched site. The broken end of the tapered rod was then hit with the hammer to form a head, and the finished nail was tossed into a pile of cooling nails (Sanford 1984:50; Shayt 1983:23). At Monticello’s nailery, each boy was responsible for making one size of nail (Sanford 1984:43; Shayt 1983:75).

In February 1796, a nail cutting machine Jefferson had ordered arrived, as he noted in a letter to his son-in-law, “My nail machine with the hoop iron is safe arrived…” (Jefferson 2000g). This machine was used to cut four-penny brads from hoop iron. One nail boy was then responsible for making this type of nail, as recorded in one of Jefferson’s letters, “My nailers are employed in hammering nails, except one cutter for four pennies only, our neighborhood requiring no other cut nail, so that is it but a small business with me…” (Thomas Jefferson Foundation 2008). Sometimes these nails had
hand-made heads, but most were headless and likely were used for finishing work or any woodworking that used thin, lightweight woods (Chris Mundy, personal communication 2010).

Jefferson visited the blacksmith’s shop/nailery daily for the first three years in order to oversee production, and during this time he kept very detailed records (Figure 2.7). He provided daily production minimums based on the average production of the boys (Stanton 1996:23, 2000:47). After rising at dawn, he weighed out the amount of nailrod that was to be made into nails that day, and at dusk he returned to weigh the nails produced by each boy. He then recorded how much nailrod was wasted by each nail boy that day (Stanton 1996:23). This may have caused competition among the boys and would have provided Jefferson with feedback control and a way to reward or punish the boys (Shayt 1983:75-76).

Jefferson’s consistent presence helped make the business profitable and kept the boys on their best behavior. The nailery also provided Jefferson the opportunity to observe the skills of the boys so he could choose an appropriate future career for them. The nail boys were able to influence their future career by either working hard or not working hard. Most were generally industrious and later held the most important artisan and household positions on the plantation, although those few who resisted their work became field hands (Stanton 1996:23-24). For example, at age 16 Joe Fossett, a former nail boy, became the foremen of the nailery while also learning to be a blacksmith (Stanton 1996:25). This matches with Jefferson’s statement that children “At 16. go into the ground or learn trades” (Jefferson 2003a:77).
Jefferson threw himself into the daily work of running both the farming and industrial sections of his plantation. In a 1794 letter he remarked, “…I am so much immersed in farming & nail-making (for I have set up a Nailery) that politics are entirely banished from my mind…” (Betts 1944:219). Writing to John Adams in 1795 about his busy days running the plantation, Jefferson (2000d:363) stated, “What with my farming and my nail manufactory I have my hands full. I am on horseback half the day, and counting and measuring nails the other half.” Jefferson was very proud of the nailery project. He bragged to a French friend, “My new trade of nail-making is to me in this country what an additional title of nobility or the ensigns of a new order are in Europe” (Jefferson 2000b:341).

The nail manufacture business was very successful during the first three years while Jefferson visited regularly. "A nailery which I have established with my own negro boys now provides completely for the maintenance of my family, as we make from 8. to 10,000 nails a day and it is on the increase" (Jefferson 2000a:405-406). Additionally, in
1795 Jefferson wrote, “Finding the nail making profitable and convenient, I am getting more and more into it. I have a dozen hands employed now, and shall increase them” (Jefferson 2000h:388). In his Farm Book, he recorded expected nail production. He estimated that after six months of experience, a nail boy could make 500 nails a day and with a year of experience the boy could make 800 nails a day (Jefferson 2003a:110). The best nail boy would make 884 nails a day, while a hired hand would make 1000 nails a day (Jefferson 2003a:110). Jefferson’s Naiery Account book, which dates to 1796-1800, records much information about the nail business. Besides the daily production information, Jefferson made charts detailing the nail boys’ production over periods of time. These charts showed the amount of nailrod used and nails produced over that time, the overall profit obtained from each boy’s work, the number of days each boy worked during the time period, and a calculation of the average daily profit Jefferson earned from each boy’s work (Jefferson 1796-1800). Jefferson also wrote down all the nail sales that occurred, the size and amount of each type of nail on hand, and the orders and received shipments of nailrod (Jefferson 1796-1800). Even when away, he required that detailed records be kept of the nailery’s production. Writing from Philadelphia, Jefferson (2008b) (spelling in original) gave exact instructions as to the contents and timing of the overseer’s future letters;

I should like to receive the weekly report of the boys work whenever you write to me, and also a journal of the nails sold. If you would write to me always the day after you receive a letter from me, so that it might come by return of the same post, I would do the same here, so that a letter written
by each about every three weeks would keep one possessed of the progress
of the several works & enable me to give directions.

In 1805, while in Washington serving as President, he sent a letter to a different overseer
at Monticello, instructing, “I pray you to keep a very exact account of all the nails sold, &
a separate one of those delivered for my use, this being essential to show what the nailery
turns out” (Betts 1987:446).

A white man was almost always in charge of the nailery operations. Some of
these men were overseers, such as Gabriel Lilly and Edmund Bacon, while others were
hired workmen, such as William Stewart. Great George, a trusted slave, was overseer
from 1796 to 1799 and was the only slave owned by Jefferson to rise to this position
(McEwan 1991:139; Stanton 2000:36). Foremen were slaves who were in charge of
groups of slave laborers. They often worked alongside their charges to ensure the work
was done correctly, and their authority ranked just under the overseer’s (McLaughlin
1988:141). Little George, also known as Smith George, was the son of Great George and
was first foreman of the nailery. He retained that position until he died in 1799 (Stanton
2000:34). Little George was very dependable, as recorded by Jefferson’s son-in-law
Thomas Mann Randolph, “I scarcely look to the Nailery at all – George I am sure could
not stoop to my authority & I hope and believe he pushes your interests as well as I
could” (Betts 1987:436). One of the overseers, Richard Richardson, wrote to Jefferson
about the current leadership in the nailery, “I…told the Boys they was to Be under his
[Gabriel Lilly, another overseer] direction and Joe [Joseph Fossett, a former nail boy who
became foreman] to say when their nails was made tow Big or too Small…” (Jefferson
2008a) (capitalization and spelling in original).
While the nailery was profitable, the boys were rewarded with new clothes (Stanton 1996:27). Additionally, Isaac Jefferson, a former nail boy, recalled in his memoir that Jefferson provided the boys with a large weekly food ration that may have been twice the size of the rations given to a field worker (Bear 1967:23; McLaughlin 1988:112). This recollection is supported by ration lists in Jefferson’s Farm Book. For example, one meat ration shows the nail boys received a ration of “4” fish and “½” beef each, while Davy, Isabel, and their six children received a ration of “16” fish and “2” beef to share (Jefferson 2003c).

Once Jefferson left Monticello to return to public life, the nailery’s profits dropped. At this time, cheaper British nails became available to Virginians, and, combined with a rise in the price of iron and a drop in the price of nails, Jefferson’s profits decreased by twenty percent (Jefferson 2000f:580). Problems were compounded because without daily supervision by Jefferson, the cooped-up nail boys became unruly (Stanton 1996:28).

The nail boys often caused Jefferson problems, probably out of boredom from their monotonous job. One can imagine the difficulty in forcing pubescent and post-pubescent energetic boys to work twelve hours a day, six days a week at the same repetitive, boring job (McLaughlin 1988:111). Jefferson considered the nailery to be a hotbed of “idleness,” “mischief,” and discontent (McLaughlin 1988:112). When the most dependable foreman, Little George, became seriously ill and could not oversee the nailery, the nail boys stopped working (Jefferson 2000e; McLaughlin 1988:111-112). A few years later, Jefferson (T. Jefferson to J. Dinsmore, letter, 1 December 1802,
Workmen Long File, Jefferson Library, Charlottesville, Virginia) (spelling in original)
voiced frustration to his hired white carpenter;

I am quite at a loss about the nailboys remaining with Mr. Stewart. They
have long been a dead expense instead of a profit to me. in truth they
require a rigour of discipline to make them do reasonable work, to which
he cannot bring himself.

A typical day in the nailery turned dangerous in May 1803 when one eighteen-
year-old nail boy, named Cary, attacked Brown Colbert, a fellow nail boy, with a
hammer. The attack was instigated when Brown hid Cary’s nailrod as a joke (Miller et
al. 2007). Cary fractured Brown’s skull and almost killed him (Stanton 1996:30,
that the law shall inflict no punishment on Cary, it will be necessary for me to make an
example of him in terrorem to others, in order to maintain the police so rigorously
necessary among the nail-boys” (Stanton 1996:30). Jefferson ordered that Cary was to be
sold either to “negro purchasers from Georgia” or “in any other quarter so distant as
never more to be heard of among us,” so that Cary would essentially be dead to the
remaining Monticello slaves (Stanton 1996:30). In fact, Jefferson was willing to take a
financial loss in order to send Cary away, “I should regard price but little in comparison
with so distant an exile of his as to cut him off compleatly from ever again being heard
of’ (Stanton 1996:30) (spelling in original).

Edmund Bacon, who worked as one of Jefferson’s overseers for twenty years,
later recalled another incident of disobedience at the nailery. In 1807, Bacon entered the
nailery to fill a nail order. Knowing that the nailery always kept a stock of each kind of
nail on hand, he noticed that all the eight-penny nails were gone, although all the other nail types were present (Pierson 1971:104). For reasons unknown to us, he suspected a nail boy named James Hubbard, Jr. (also known as Jamey or Jim) of stealing the nails. Bacon searched James’ house and other likely locations, but could not find the missing nails. After a rain, Bacon saw muddy tracks veering off of a path and leading into the woods. He followed the tracks until he found a large, buried box filled with nails. He immediately reported the find and his suspicions of James to Jefferson. The next day, Jefferson sent for James and confronted him with the find. Bacon recalled that James was “mortified and distressed beyond measure” and apologized profusely and cried. Jefferson, feeling bad, decided not to punish James, and instead gave him “a heap of good advice” and sent him back to work (Pierson 1971:105). When James returned to the nailery, he told the nailery overseer “Well, I’ve been a-seeking religion a long time, but I never heard anything before that sounded so, or made me feel so, as I did when master said, ‘Go and don’t do so any more’; and now I’ve determined to seek religion till I find it…” (Pierson 1971:105). Bacon remembered that soon after the incident James requested a permit to go and get baptized and that afterward he was always a good servant (Pierson 1971:105). Recent researchers believe that Bacon may have misremembered the name of the accused nail boy. James Hubbard was a rebellious slave who ran away twice, once before and once after the stolen nail incident, and would not have been considered a good servant. It is possible that the nail thief was actually James’ brother Phill Hubbard (Stanton 2000:79-80).
The nail boys did not work solely in the nailery. A large section of land needed to be cleared of trees and brush in 1801 so Thomas Mann Randolph (Betts 1987:160), in the absence of Jefferson, ordered some nail boys to do this:

…I directed him [John Craven, a white man who leased Jefferson’s farm fields] to take the lads from the shop, leaving 3 full fires of the boys with Burwell at their head… they will be better employed, such as are fit for it, at the axe than, wholly without control, in idleness & mischief, about the Shop. They will soon make excellent Axemen…

Jefferson (Library of Congress 2010) approved of this change in plans:

You have done exactly what I would have wished, and as I place the compliance with my contract with Mr. Craven before any other object, we must take every person from the nailery able to cut and keep them at it till the clearing is completed. The following therefore must be so employed. Davy, John, Abram, Shepherd, Moses, Joe, Wormly, Jame Hubard, with the one hired by Lilly making 9. Besides these, if Barnaby, Ben, Cary, and Isabel’s Davy are able to cut, as I suppose they are, let them also join…There will remain for the nailery Burwell, Jamy, Bedf. John, Bedf. Davy, Phill Hub. Lewis, Bartlet and Brown, enough for two fires…

Jefferson (Betts 1987:443) continued on in another letter;

…I still think it will be better that such of the nailers as may be able to handle the axe should be employed with it till April…It will be useful to them morally and physically, and I have work enough of that kind, with the canal & road to give them full employment…There should be force
enough kept in the nailery to supply our standing customers. There is another reason for employing only the weaker hands in the nailery. I do not believe there is rod to employ the whole any length of time; and none can be got to them till April.

Besides group tasks, individual nail boys helped out in other areas of plantation work. Wormley Hughes worked part of the time as a doorman, assisting guests with their horses and getting items and running errands (Reed 2007:7). Before he started training as a blacksmith, Joseph Fossett did chores around the mansion such as waiting tables, getting water, making fires, and running errands (Reed 2007:10). Burwell Colbert also worked in the house, probably in the kitchen and dining room, during his years as a nail boy (Stanton 2000; Stanton et al. 2008:121). Barnaby Gillette worked part of the year in the nailery and the other part as an apprentice to the enslaved shoemaker on the plantation (Stanton 2000:89).

The eventual end of nail manufacture was not due to a decline in orders for nails; rather, Jefferson’s lack of capital to buy supplies like nailrod was the chief problem. Jefferson did not have the money or credit necessary to purchase nailrod because of his poor business choices, which included not collecting payments owed to him and trading nails for other services (Bear 1961:4). The nailery was closed temporarily around 1810 or 1811, but manufacture began again in 1815, once the War of 1812 ended (Bear 1961; Shayt 1983:90). The last mention of nail-making activities was in 1823, when Jefferson received a letter from a friend and business associate that referenced an order of nailrod that was being shipped to Monticello (Bear 1961; Shayt 1983:92). The large nailrod
order suggests that nails were again being sold, possibly to alleviate some of the debt Jefferson was facing in his last years (Shayt 1983:92).

Thomas Jefferson was about $107,000 in debt when he died on July 4, 1826 (Reed 2007). In his will he freed five slaves, including two former nail boys: Burwell Colbert (former nail boy), Joseph Fossett (former nail boy and nail foreman), Madison Hemings, Eston Hemings (both of whom may have been Jefferson’s sons by Sally Hemings), and John Hemings (Sally Hemings’ brother). All of Jefferson’s possessions, including his mansion, land, and 130 slaves were sold at an estate auction to pay off his debts (Reed 2007:3).
Chapter 3:

The Archaeology of Slavery, Households, and Children

Archaeologists often focus on one topic of interest and privilege its perspective over other topics. For example, an archaeologist most interested in studying the landscape might interpret a mansion and garden complex differently than an archaeologist interested in examining domestic activities. Similarly, an archaeologist focused on gender issues may come up with different responses to a factory site than an archaeologist studying the manufacturing process. Although focusing in one field of concentration allows an archaeologist to make significant contributions to that specialty, it also greatly increases the likelihood of neglecting the complexity inherent in every person’s life. Individuals must deal with varying cultural constructions and social institutions daily and archaeologists should try to address as many of these cultural influences as possible in their studies. Three themes that all provide different insights into the lives of the nail boys are the archaeology of slavery, household archaeology, and the archaeology of children. For the nail boys, their status as slaves may have been their most important identity when in the presence of Jefferson or the overseer, but their status as children/youths or their household membership may have been most important when dealing with other slaves. The intersection of the archaeology of slavery, household
archaeology, and the archaeology of children provides a richer and more realistic understanding of the complex lives of Jefferson’s nail boys.

**Archaeology of Slavery**

African American archaeology and the archaeology of slavery are relatively recent developments within historical archaeology (Ferguson 1992:xxxv, xxxvi; Orser and Funari 2001:62). In the mid-twentieth century, plantation archaeologists focused on the “big house” or planter’s mansion. Many archaeological investigations were done in order to learn about the planter’s socioeconomic status or with the ultimate goal of building reconstruction (Orser 1990:119,123). Nevertheless, some archaeologists did investigate the lives of blacks outside the plantation setting. In 1943, Ripley Bullen and Adelaide Bullen excavated the Black Lucy’s Garden site, the home of a formerly enslaved woman in Andover, Massachusetts (Baker 1978:1).

The Civil Rights Movement encouraged the majority of archaeologists to take another look at sites related to African Americans (Ferguson 1992:xxxv; Genovese 1970:474, 483; Orser and Funari 2001:62). It became a moral mission to reveal the lives of those who had been left out of the written record, and although this applies to many groups of people, it was seen as especially relevant to the study of African Americans (Singleton 1999:1). Although these studies provided new information on the lives of African Americans, many of the conclusions were simplistic; complex social relations necessary to maintain African American cultural identity were ignored and researchers assumed that these communities were able to reproduce African material culture (Singleton 1999:2). The structure of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966,
along with pressure from African American activists, continued to push archaeologists to investigate African American sites (Ferguson 1992:xxxviii). In 1967, Charles Fairbanks undertook the first slave archaeology done on plantations by excavating the slave cabins at Kingsley Plantation (Ferguson 1992:xxxvi; Orser 1990:123). Fairbanks followed this research by partnering with Jerald Milanich in the early 1970s to excavate slave cabins, an overseer’s house, and the planter’s home at the threatened Cannon’s Point Plantation (Otto 1984:2). John Solomon Otto brought the results of the Cannon’s Point Plantation excavations to the public in his important 1984 book named *Cannon’s Point Plantation, 1794-1860: Living Conditions and Status Patterns in the Old South*. From 1975 to 1978, the Columbia University Department of Anthropology Field School excavated New Jersey’s Skunk Hollow site, the former location of a small community of freed African Americans dating from the early nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries (Geismar 1980:60, 64). Similarly, other archaeologists excavated freed African American and slave sites during the 1960s and 1970s (Bridges and Salwen 1980; Jackson 1977; Schuyler 1980; Smith 1977). In spite of the work by these archaeologists, by 1980 there was still no defined sub-field of African American archaeology (Ferguson 1992). Even today, those that study African American and slave archaeology do not usually have specialized training in black history or social issues (Ferguson 1992:xl).

Archaeologists have generally focused on only a few topics within the realm of slave archaeology. Scholars have supplied a wealth of information on slave diet and subsistence, health, religion, labor, identity, gender, power relations and resistance, production and consumption of goods, housing, household composition, socioeconomic status, and other subjects (Crader 1990; Fesler 2004; Galle 2010; Heath 2004; Hudson
Housing, diet, material possessions, and evidence of “Africanisms” have been investigated in order to find evidence of ethnic identity with the ultimate goal of developing a way to identify African Americans in the past (Sanford 1996:134). This research area can be problematic, as it focuses on certain ethnic markers and ignores the social complexity that explains why these markers exist, change, and remain (Singleton 1999:8). It can also be very hard to determine a specific cultural provenance for African American traditions. It is likely that traditions did not have the same meaning in the Americas as they did in Africa because the social systems were not the same (Singleton 1999:8). Some studies have successfully shown connections between African heritage and the development of African American music, folklore, aesthetics, crafts, language, and religion (Singleton 1999:8).

Archaeologists have usually centered on slave sites located on the large plantations of wealthy planters and political leaders that date to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. For example, Oakley Plantation (Wilkie 2000a), the Hermitage (Thomas 1998), Monticello (Crader 1990; Galle 2010; Kelso 1997), and Saragossa Plantation (Young et al. 2001), are just a few of the large plantations that archaeologists have investigated. In these studies, archaeologists furthered our understanding of slaves by examining identity construction, diet, consumption of material goods, daily life, coping strategies, and power relations between masters and slaves.

One understudied topic that has relevance to this study is the incidence of slaves living in work or storage buildings. Many historical documents describe slave cabins used throughout the South to house slaves. Few, if any, discuss slaves who lived in their
place of work. Archaeologists have the potential to discover and investigate this phenomenon through the domestic materials found in these structures. The kitchens at the Kingsmill Plantations doubled as slave dwellings (Kelso 1984:129). The same may have been true for other more permanent outbuildings there (Kelso 1984:203). Similarly, archaeological and photographic remains indicate that the second floor of the Willcox detached kitchen, located on Flowerdew Hundred, may have housed slaves (Deetz 1993:145). A slave may have lived at the “race ground” in the Hampton Key area of Kingsmill in order to attend to the horses and the race track, if one existed there (Kelso 1984:127-128). One nineteenth-century visitor to a Maryland farm recorded that the farmer’s three slaves lived in an outbuilding that served as the kitchen and general work-building (King 1994:285). Many more similar situations are likely to be revealed through archaeological and historical research.

More research needs to center on both slave and free African American sites from the early and mid-eighteenth century, free African American sites in general, urban slave sites, and slave sites located on small farms and middling plantations (Sanford 1996:136). Other topics, such as slave childhood and child labor, the daily life and work of elderly slaves, and the incidence of slaves living in work or storage buildings, have been overlooked or neglected and should be investigated in the future.

*Household Archaeology*

As a discipline, household archaeology examines the “nature and spatial patterning of domestic architecture and associated features and artifacts” (Bermann 1994:30). The specific field of household archaeology is primarily a North American
phenomenon, although domestic sites are studied everywhere (King 2006:295). This field rose out of settlement archaeology, which focuses on the distribution of the vestiges of human actions on the landscape. Students of settlement archaeology, who were primarily Mesoamerican archaeologists, realized that past cultures could not be fully understood without research on the places where everyday people lived out their lives (Ashmore and Wilk 1988:7; Pluckhahn 2010:333). The appearance of “new social history,” an aspiration to study domestic sites as locations of past household activities, and theoretical concepts from Mesoamerican archaeology also influenced the development of this field (King 2006:295).

In the 1930s, household archaeology got its start in the Chesapeake region through the New Deal programs. During this time the homes of the Founding Fathers began to be restored with the help of archaeological evidence for the architectural spaces and domestic furnishings (King 2006:295). The development of “new social history” during the 1960s turned historical archaeologists toward studying the lives of ordinary people, rather than focusing on the lives of well-known or wealthy people like the Founding Fathers. The continuously growing literature on Mesoamerican household archaeology has provided examples of how household evidence can be useful. Mesoamerican archaeologists were some of the first to connect the definition of a household as a social unit with archaeological evidence, and forty years ago they were using the disparities in households to learn about the evolution of villages, craft activity, subsistence, and division of labor (Flannery and Winter 1976; King 2006:296). More recently, Mesoamerican archaeologists have investigated the role of children in prehistoric households and archaeologists’ ability to distinguish household patterns in
archaeological data, and cultural site formation processes that can affect the makeup and condition of a household, among other topics (De Lucia 2010; Santley and Hirth 1993). Household archaeology began to take off in the 1960s all around the world (Ashmore and Wilk 1988:7). Historical archaeologists became fully aware of the advantages of studying households in the 1980s, and historical household archaeology has grown steadily since (Brandon and Barile 2004:5).

Household archaeology can offer important points of view. Households are the most basic social unit in the majority of communities and they can give insights into the lives of everyday people in the past, who spent much of their time acting as members of households (Ashmore and Wilk 1988:1; Gerritsen 2004:143; Netting et al. 1984:xxii; Pluckhahn 2010:332). Households provide archaeologists with another explanation for cultural change, reducing their dependence on large-scale systems as explanations (Pluckhahn 2010:332). They can also contribute to studies of agency, as most people’s agency is directed at their daily, domestic life (Gerritsen 2004:143). The material remains of households can support, refute, or give new evidence not found in related texts and ethnographic data (Allison 1999:7). Investigation of households is considered by some to be an inappropriate topic for archaeology because there are important questions that cannot be addressed archaeologically; however, one should keep in mind that household archaeology answers different questions than anthropology and history, and in fact the questions that anthropology, history, and archaeology ask can be complementary and mutually supportive (Allison 1999:5). According to King (2006:312), one of household archaeology’s biggest strengths is the field’s “tradition of shifting between
individual lives and wider social contexts, identifying the complexities of particular situations that are invisible in conventional normative models of everyday life.”

Archaeologists’ inquiries into past households led to ongoing debates about how to define the word ‘household.’ Defining a household depends greatly on the time period and the cultural context, as the roles, functions, and memberships of a household change based on the setting and the activity occurring in that structure (Ashmore and Wilk 1988; Bermann 1994:23; Wilk and Netting 1984:1). A major problem is the potential for confusing the term ‘household’ with ‘family,’ as these two terms are generally synonymous in modern Western culture. To combat this issue, archaeologists have focused on what households do instead of what a household is (Hendon 1996:45-46; King 2006:297). Definitions of the term ‘household’ vary from study to study depending on the research questions and culture(s) being examined. Definitions can be very vague, such as “a co-residential, social, or economic unit within a particular culture” (Stewart-Abernathy 2004:53), or “…a group of people coresiding in a dwelling or residential compound, and who, to some degree, share householding activities and decision making” (Blanton 1994:5). Anderson (2004:111) provides a more specific definition of a household:

A household is a person or a group of people who live together in one or more structures, who carry out daily activities necessary for the maintenance and social reproduction of the group within a specific space associated with the residence, and who interact with other households. These activities are the necessary daily maintenance activities that sustain members of the household and their shared space, including food.
preparation, refuse disposal, raising children, growing food provisions within the yard, cleaning, bathing, doing laundry, and socializing. Also, these activities include working in some capacity to provide basic necessities for life, which may not occur within the household space.

Some scholars have decided to subscribe to a three-component definition of a household by focusing on social, behavioral, and material aspects. Social refers to the demographic unit, behavioral reflects the activities performed, and material describes the structure, activity areas, and possessions (Wesson 2008:12; Wilk and Rathje 1982:618). A problem with this definition is archaeologists’ ability to recognize the social and behavioral facets of a household. Some argue that it is difficult, but possible (Wesson 2008:12).

Wilk and Netting (1984:5) describe another way of designating a household. They argue that households should be defined by “activity groups,” and activities consistently associated with households are labeled as “spheres.” They list the most frequent types of spheres as production, distribution, transmission, reproduction, and co-residence. Other spheres, such as banking and political action, can occur in the household but most of the time do not. Households then are defined as the point where these spheres overlap the most (visualized as a Venn diagram). Each household is made up of a unique group of individuals so not every household will contain the same spheres (Bermann 1994:23; Wilk 1991:37; Wilk and Netting 1984:5).

Most scholars agree that co-residence is a requirement of a household, and some go further to argue that there can be differing levels of co-residence in households; for example, some household members may not reside with the other household members
because they have moved away for employment but they still support the other members by sending money back (Anderson 2004; Wilk and Netting 1984:17-19). Ethnographic studies have shown some people may co-reside but regard themselves as parts of different residences, or people who live in separate structures may consider themselves a part of a larger, aggregate household (Wesson 2008:10). However, co-residence is not the deciding factor in all definitions of a household, and some researchers focus on the relationships among the residents. Wesson (2008:10) points out that “…at the very heart of the household concept is a social group that shares a culturally defined set of kinship relations.” This, unfortunately, can cause confusion when non-kin residents or fictive kin are studied (Anderson 2004:109). If co-residence is used as the defining characteristic of households, what happens when there are guests or people who live in the same building but do not share living areas or food stores (Netting et al. 1984:xxvi)?

Basing the definition of a household solely on co-residence can cause a problem when studying slave households because of the incidence of ‘abroad marriages.’ This type of marriage occurred when enslaved spouses lived on different plantations (Fesler 2004:184; Pluckhahn 2010:334). Often the husband would travel to visit his wife and children once or twice a week (Burke 2003:63; Fesler 2004:184). Abroad marriages were more common in areas where slaveholders owned few slaves, allowing slaves little opportunity to find a suitable partner at the home plantation (Burke 2003:58; Pluckhahn 2010:334). However, this is not always the case, and abroad marriages have been documented at larger plantations, including Monticello (Stanton 1996:14). Individuals engaged in an abroad marriage would have considered themselves to be a family unit, but they did not share a household, and may or may not have pooled resources. Without
strong historical documentation linking the residents of two households by abroad marriage, archaeologists may never be able to tell that this type of relationship occurred.

Ashmore and Wilk (1988) make a distinction between a household and a co-residential group. They define a household as a “group of people that shares in a maximum definable number of activities, including one or more of the following: production, consumption, pooling of resources, reproduction, coresidence, and shared ownership” (Ashmore and Wilk 1988:6). This includes those living in one area or people who are far away from one another. On the other hand, they define a co-residential group as a “group of people who regularly share living quarters. This group need not be equivalent to a household, in that people often live in the same building without sharing in the activities that normally define a household” (Ashmore and Wilk 1988:6). This group of people can be a part of a larger household, or be members of separate households.

Nash (2009:224) makes a different distinction, “The archaeological household is the coresidential group that used the occupation surface, features, and the artifact assemblage of a dwelling.” Without documents describing the relationships of the individuals who lived in the dwelling and how activities were portioned out, it can be impossible for archaeologists to determine whether the residents fit the definition of a ‘true household.’ Instead, defining an archaeological household is useful in these situations.

In this study, I use Ashmore and Wilk’s (1988:6) definitions of a household and a co-residential group during my determination of the “householdness” of the nail boys. Ashmore and Wilk’s (1988:6) definition of a household implies that archaeologists’
determination of what constitutes a household is actually a matter of degrees and is not fixed. The archaeological and historical evidence for the nail boys’ time in the nailery does not allow for all the components of Ashmore and Wilk’s (1988:6) definition to be examined here. Historical documentation does not indicate whether or not the nail boys pooled resources or shared ownership of objects. We cannot know for sure if the nail boys were co-resident because it is not addressed in documents, although it seems likely. The nail boys probably did engage in social reproduction as they learned how to make nails from the enslaved foreman and older nail boys. This study does not address reproduction, but it could be examined in a study of the many mistake nails, called anvil wasters and hardy wasters, found in abundance throughout the nailery site. The only components of Ashmore and Wilk’s (1988:6) examined in this study are production and consumption because artifactual evidence is able to address whether or not these occurred. In this project, evidence of household production will suggest that the nail boys were working together as members of their own independent household, while evidence of only consumption will imply they were still acting as members of their parents’ or relatives’ households.

Archaeology of Children

The archaeology of children, which examines the roles of children in past societies, is a relatively new field that developed out of gender archaeology. The seminal work in this field is considered to be Grete Lillehammer’s 1989 article “A Child is Born: The Child’s World in an Archaeological Perspective” (Baxter 2008:160; Lillehammer 1989). Since this article’s publication, many articles and books on the topic of children,
childhood, and archaeology have been published, especially after the year 2000 (Baxter 2008:160). Before this field emerged, archaeologists thought children were invisible in the archaeological record, especially due to an alleged difficulty in knowing what types of deposits could result from past children’s activities (Sofaer Derevenski 1994:8).

Children have primarily been studied as part of gender archaeology due to the association of women and children and the prevailing idea that children belong in the home (Kamp 2001:3; Lillehammer 2000:17, 18). Researchers can easily fall into the trap of considering children as “passive appendages to women,” and therefore discount the importance of their contributions to their communities (Lillehammer 2000:17). Reasons for not studying children archaeologically are strikingly similar to previously stated reasons for not studying women. As Sofaer Derevenski (1994:10) points out;

…there are close parallels between the previous ‘invisibility’ of women and the current ‘invisibility’ of children in terms of the marginalisation of their activities, uncertainty as to how to see their activities in the archaeological record and the tendency towards artefact association in an attempt to ‘find’ this hidden history.

Archaeologists’ lack of interest in children may stem from the fact that children “exist at the weaker end of the dichotomized dimensions of male/female, adult/child,” and are therefore placed in a category with other marginalized groups (Rothschild 2002:1). Even researchers who focus solely on the archaeology of children interpret the material culture of children through adults; children are not studied as people with individual social identities (Sofaer Derevenski 2000:8).
In archaeology, children are designated physiologically, often in relation to chronological age (Sofaer Derevenski 2000:8). Archaeological investigations of children have frequently centered on burials and grave goods (Lucy 2005:44; Roveland 2001:40). The remains are examined for information about age, nutrition, and disease, while grave goods are studied as indicators of social status (Roveland 2001:41; Sofaer Derevenski 2000:6).

In addition, labor, craft specialization, and the acquisition of technological competence are popular topics in the study of children, especially as more and more researchers become aware of the economic potential of young workers (Baxter 2005:4). Archaeological evidence of unskilled artifact production may indicate the presence of child apprentices (Baxter 2008:167; Roveland 2001:47). Although this idea has mainly been used by prehistoric archaeologists to study flintknapping, it may be applicable to future research on Monticello’s nail boys because it is based on the premise that artifacts that show evidence of unskilled workmanship would have been made by novice artisans (Kamp 2001:13). The nail boys had to be trained in order to become competent nailers and many “mistake” nails, called hardy wasters and anvil wasters, were found during excavation.

Small or miniature artifacts have also been used to study children (Baxter 2008:167; Lucy 2005:45; Roveland 2001:42; Sofaer Derevenski 2000:7). These objects are considered toys because of their small size and this designation reduces their interpretational value through the dismissal of the object’s social significance (Sofaer Derevenski 2000:7). Nonetheless, the fact that children throughout history constantly interacted with adult-sized objects should not be overlooked (Sofaer Derevenski
Archaeologists who want to study children also need to understand the past adult world because children’s material remains point toward the process of learning adult cultural traditions (Lillehammer 1989:90).

The concept of childhood is a social construction used to understand the first part of a human’s life (Baxter 2008:161; Kamp 2001:3; Lucy 2005:43; Marten 2007:8; Rothschild 2002:2). Although biological changes do occur as a young person matures, the meanings attributed to these changes depend on the culture to which the young person belongs (Kamp 2001:3). Being a social construction, childhood cannot be removed from other constructions like race, class, and gender (James and Prout 1990; Lucy 2005:44; Marten 2007:8). Age is very often used as a way to organize societies and this must be taken into account when studying the past. In fact, children have specific roles to play that are established by the society and culture they live in (James 2007:270). Today, children in Western cultures are viewed as passive and unable to fully participate in modern society (James and Prout 1990; Roveland 2001:39; Sofaer Derevenski 2000:7). They are considered unproductive, vulnerable, innocent, and dependent upon adults (Kamp 2001:3; Lucy 2005:56). The contributions of children to their economic and social spheres are undervalued. This is not, however, how children were viewed for all of history. Archaeologists cannot assume that the category of “child” had the same meaning over time and or the same meaning or significance for different cultures, classes, ethnicities, ages, and genders of young people (Lucy 2005:14; Roveland 1997). The modern view of children is culturally specific, yet unfortunately has influenced our views on past children’s activities (Baxter 2008:161; Kamp 2001:3; Lucy 2005:66; Sofaer Derevenski 2000:11). Archaeologists must be careful not to impose our modern beliefs
and expectations, even those based on ethnography or history, on past children, as this can cause bias (Rothschild 2002:3-4). More specifically, making assumptions about past children’s work prevents us from learning about the construction of socioeconomic models of the division of labor and from gaining new understandings of artifacts (Sofaer Derevenski 1994:13). We must also take care not to create distinct stages where none existed in past cultures; although every child follows the same basic biological development, the cultural recognition of their increasing maturity differs (Rothschild 2002:4).

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, established in 1989, defines a child as anyone under the age of 18 (Bluebond-Lagner and Korbin 2007:242). Biologically, childhood is the time of life between infancy and puberty (Lillehammer 1989:90). Nevertheless, anthropologists generally resist a universal definition of “child” because childhood varies according to the location, culture, ethnicity, gender, history, and time period in question (Bluebond-Lagner and Korbin 2007:242). In anthropology and archaeology, the terms “child,” “youth,” and “childhood,” are still vague and problematic; this is an issue that further research into children can illuminate (Bluebond-Lagner and Korbin 2007:245).

Like adults, children have agency yet also must work within social constraints and in relation to the actions of others (Bluebond-Lagner and Korbin 2007:242; Lucy 2005:60). Children are able to contribute to and even change their culture by interacting with its institutional and social structures (Lucy 2005:59). They initiate actions by choice, not instinct, and through their actions they are able to construct their own lives (Sofaer Derevenski 2000:11). Archaeologists must be aware that children are “creative,
active participants and producers” in all societies and that they may be sources of cultural
innovation and change (Roveland 1997:14). This is especially relevant for those
interested in socialization or transmission of cultural norms. In some research, children’s
cultural influence has been given a negative connotation; children have been described as
“randomizing agents” who remove objects from their appropriate context and therefore
make site interpretation harder for archaeologists (Hammond and Hammond 1981:636;
Lucy 2005:46). The effects of children’s play have even been equated with the effects of
animals or other post-depositional activity on a site (Lucy 2005:46; Sofaer Derevenski
1994:8). Children also have the ability to use objects in different ways than originally
intended by adults. This observation has been used as an excuse to push children aside as
“unknowable” (Baxter 2008:162). On the other hand, some studies have shown that
historical children’s activities produced patterns that were different from the artifact
patterns of the overall assemblage, meaning that children are visible archaeologically
(Baxter 2008:169).

It is important to note that children’s views should not be privileged over the
views of other groups of people. Rather, children should be included as one of many
equally important groups in a multi-perspective view of culture (Bluebond-Lagner and
Korbin 2007:242). Regarding children as social actors can stimulate interest in others
who may not ordinarily view children as worthy of study (Bluebond-Lagner and Korbin

Anthropology and archaeology have great potential to provide new information
and ideas about children’s roles in culture. First, anthropologists are skilled in
researching and writing about “the other,” making them ideal candidates to study
children, whose “otherness to adults makes them conceptually strange” (James 2007:262). Second, anthropology investigated the concept of “voice” in the 1980s, and this research can alleviate the problem of children’s lack of representation by providing them with a “voice” (James 2007:262). Third, archaeologists can provide new insights into children’s experiences in the past, which is important because:

Definitions of what it means to be a child, for a child and as a child, is of central concern in anthropological discussions of childhood.

Documenting childhood experiences in the past becomes an essential contribution to understanding childhood as a social construction [Baxter 2005:6].

Similarly, studying children can lead to insights into individuality, gender, and life stages as other important social constructions (Wilkie 2000b:111). Fourth, archaeologists have a “diachronic perspective on culture and culture change” that can assist in understanding the processes of socialization (Baxter 2005:6). All researchers must be aware, however, of the potential to further disempower children by simplifying the diversity in their experiences into a single category of “the child” (James 2007:262).

Archaeologists do not usually consider the impact children had on their household and community. Households that include children must organize all household activities around the needs of the children. As they get older, children take on higher workloads and greater responsibilities within the household. Archaeological investigations of household sites should consider the adjustments made in order to accommodate child care and the activities of children who acted with agency (Wilkie 2000a:148-149).
Archaeologists should be attuned to the possibility of the presence of children at the sites they study since children were present at all past times and locations (Baxter 2008:171-172). Indeed, archaeologists do not need to be trained in any new methodology in order to study children; they only have to alter their understanding of how diverse people of different ages and age groups lived in the past (Baxter 2005:3). Studying children can help to answer questions that archaeologists have traditionally viewed as important, and can tie archaeology to significant conversations going on in various subfields of anthropology (Baxter 2005:6). Including children in the interpretation of archaeological sites will provide a richer, more complete understanding of past cultures and communities.

Enslaved children lived in situations very different from what most modern children experience. Enslaved children also had lives far removed from those of their free peers. Slave children were generally considered to be miniature adults who just had to be taught how to work; the idea of childhood as a special time had not yet appeared and in fact would have seemed ridiculous to early Americans (McLaughlin 1988:109). Slaves had a shorter “childhood” and were put to hard labor much earlier than other children in colonial and early America (Marten 2007:3). Slave children lived in “a world of poverty, privation, punishment, and early physical labor” (Mintz 2004:94). Of course, the experience of free, especially white and wealthy, children during this time was very different from enslaved children. Although she makes this point about ancient Greek children, Lesley Beaumont’s (2000:45) statement is very applicable to the lives of American slave children;
It is therefore very likely that the children of poor…or slave families were, through the necessity of being put out to work as soon as they were physically able, integrated into the adult world at a much earlier age than their more socially and economically favoured counterparts.

After the Revolutionary War, the dominant ideology regarding children, particularly free white children, began to change. Education replaced training and work as the primary avenue for white children to become successful in life (Brewer 2009:184). The education of enslaved African Americans was illegal, so enslaved children often could not take advantage of the shift in thought. Similarly, very few schools were available to free African American children (Reef 2002:31). On the other hand, wealthy white children filled their days with formal schooling (Schulz 1985:71). Urban middle class adults in early America began to release their children from work responsibilities to focus more on education (Mintz 2004:76). Some counties provided free education for poor children, although many of these children were not able to benefit from that opportunity because their families needed their income or help at home (Reef 2002:27; Schulz 1985:72, 80).

Many poor and middling parents needed their children’s help to fulfill the family’s financial needs. Children began assisting their parents in gender-related tasks around age 5 or 6, and by age 12 or 14 they were expected to work almost as hard as adults (Herndon 2001:30). White yeomen farmers, who owned few or no slaves, needed their children at home to help with farm-related labor (Reef 2002:xi, 27; Reinier 1996:151, 176-177). Farmer’s children performed many of
the same chores as slave children, and on some farms they often worked alongside their enslaved counterparts (Reinier 1996:176). Boys aged 7 or 8 assisted their fathers in agricultural work like plowing, sowing seeds, and weeding (Reef 2002:2). They also engaged in other necessary tasks like washing laundry, hauling water, and churning butter (Mintz 2004:135). Although they worked beside slaves, the white children benefited from their elevated status through various privileges, such as drinking from the communal water gourd before the African Americans (Reinier 1996:176). Urban working-class children ran errands, engaged in street trades, gathered wood, delivered dairy products, and scavenged (Mintz 2004:135; Schulz 1985:70). Many poor children were bound out through an apprenticeship (Herndon and Murray 2009:5; Schulz 1985:70).

Pauper apprenticeship, also known as indenture, was a common method of dealing with problematic free children in colonial and early America. Indentured children were legal servants to masters for a period of years. During that time they would serve the master and in return receive clothing, food, shelter, rudimentary education in reading, writing, and arithmetic, and training in a craft or skill, such as farming or “housewifery” (Herndon and Murray 2009:4-5, 8, 12-13; Illick 2002:29; Reinier 1996:129-130). Children most likely to be bound out were poor, orphaned, abandoned, known to be “bastards,” or their parents were notorious in the community for being troublemakers (Herndon and Murray 2009:3, 9). Indentured children were in fact considered property, similar to the status of slaves (Herndon and Murray 2009:14). Unlike the nail boys and other enslaved children, apprenticed children could look forward to the day when their
indenture ended and they became officially free (Herndon and Murray 2009:17). At the end of their apprenticeship, indentured children often received freedom dues, many times in the form of clothing, money, furniture, livestock, land, or tools (Herndon and Murray 2009:16). Slave children who later ran away, were manumitted by their owners, or purchased their own freedom could not expect any type of parting gift from their masters.

Although Jefferson’s only surviving children were female, we can compare their experiences in youth with those of the nail boys to learn how Jefferson may have treated the nail boys if they were white and free. Jefferson’s wife bore six children, only two of whom survived past the age of two. Jefferson’s two daughters, Martha “Patsy” Jefferson Randolph and Maria “Polly” Jefferson Eppes were unusually well educated compared to other women of the period (McLaughlin 1988:188). Jefferson noted in a letter that the education of his grandchildren would likely fall into the hands of his daughters and he wanted them to be prepared (McLaughlin 1988:188-191). Jefferson brought his daughters along when he lived in Paris and he enrolled them in a highly respected convent to ensure their continued education. At the convent the girls studied topics considered appropriate for females, including music, literature, languages, dance, needlework, and drawing (Gordon-Reed 2008:279; McLaughlin 1988:191). Upon returning to America, Maria lived with her aunt, Elizabeth Eppes, in order to learn domestic skills like cooking and household management. Had she not gotten married soon after arriving in America, Martha would probably also have moved in with Elizabeth Eppes for instruction in “domestic economy” because Jefferson wrote to Eppes from France that Martha needed help in this area (McLaughlin 1988:191). Interestingly,
Jefferson may have recognized the importance of fun in the girls’ lives. While living in France, Martha was old enough to attend balls and other fashionable social events. Jefferson spent quite a bit of money for new clothes for her to wear to these events. She also received an allowance to spend as she pleased (Gordon-Reed 2008:259-260). Maria was not yet old enough to attend social events and so Jefferson did not spend as much money on her.

With such a strong focus on his daughters’ education, it is fairly safe to assume that had Jefferson had legitimate, living, white sons they would have received a high quality education too. Obviously, the Jefferson daughters’ experiences as children were very different from the nail boys’ experiences. Jefferson did not plan for the nail boys to be highly educated; he instead focused on their ability to follow instructions and perform manual labor. The only education mandated by Jefferson was in nail-making, and, for some boys, in a skilled trade later on. Jefferson’s differing treatment of these two groups of children clearly shows early American society’s racialized beliefs and expectations about how young people should be raised. Like Jefferson, most slaveowners did not care about the education of the child slaves on their plantations. Owners’ attitudes toward slave children were based on the idea of keeping them healthy and well-fed until they could be put to work (McLaughlin 1988:109). Owners then reaped the benefit of this “good” treatment when slaves were able to work their entire lives (King 1995:9). In the past, children all around the world were often used for labor, but unfortunately the experiences of slave children have only rarely been contextualized within the history of childhood and child labor (Diptee 2007:49). Researchers may be more inclined to
overlook the work of slave children because they “contribute[d] to a process that [was] primarily controlled by adults” (Kamp 2002:76).

Children were and continue to be a vital part of every society (Roveland 1997:14). Their actions influence the economic and cultural development of their communities. The experiences of children differ widely, and not all children have a “childhood” as we know it today. The nail boys are excellent examples of individuals who would be considered dependent children today, but who had likely left their childhood behind years ago. They were not the only young people to experience this, and further research into the responsibilities and labor of children throughout time may lead to exciting new insights into past communities. Children are an important group of people to study; not only were children present in every community, they grew up to be the adults archaeologists often focus on. How did people’s experiences as children affect their adult lives? What influences did children have on the culture of the adults in the community? The more archaeologists know about past children, the better they can reach their goal of fully understanding historic and prehistoric cultures.

The themes of archaeology of slavery, household archaeology, and archaeology of children all provide important insights to this thesis. Together, they create a well-rounded theoretical perspective that is able to address the complexity in the nail boys’ lives. Although these themes are useful, another important area of study has been neglected by researchers. Archaeologists studying slavery have extensively examined slave households yet have rarely considered the lives of enslaved children and the multiple roles they fulfilled. Household archaeologists have studied slave households and also children in various societies, but they have not researched slave children.
Childhood archaeologists have researched children from many time periods and locales but have virtually ignored slave children. This thesis looks at the intersection of these three themes, therefore making an important contribution to each. This project brings awareness of the lack of information on the lives of enslaved children and also demonstrates that these three themes can be combined to provide new perspectives.
Chapter 4:

Previous Archaeological Work

The first archaeological investigation of Monticello’s nailery took place in 1957. Oriol Pi-Sunyer (1957) directed excavations along a section of Mulberry Row in order to locate and identify the original buildings used during Jefferson’s life. Two, two-foot-wide (0.6 m) parallel trenches were excavated along the length of Mulberry Row, with smaller trenches intersecting the long ones at right angles. The long trenches were set seven and a half feet (2.2 m) apart (Pi-Sunyer 1957:11). Initially the long trenches were divided into four sections so that the artifacts could be classified more easily: A and B, A1 and B1, A2 and B2, A3 and B3 (Pi-Sunyer 1957:6). Once structures were found and identified, the artifacts were relabeled according to the structure to which they related.

All trenches were excavated to a depth of two feet (0.6 m) because undisturbed soil was located at most about 18 inches (45.6 cm) down (Pi-Sunyer 1957:7).

Pi-Sunyer’s excavation of the blacksmith’s shop (Structure II) and nailery (Structure IIA) confirmed that the nailery had actually been built and used; this fact was never explicitly stated in historical documents (Pi-Sunyer 1957; Sanford 1984). He found that the nailery was constructed out of wood and had a dirt floor that was covered in ash, charcoal, and burned soil (Pi-Sunyer 1957; Sanford 1984). The structure was laid out in a rectangle of 50 feet by 18 feet (15.2 m by 5.5 m), and these dimensions match those recorded in Jefferson’s 1796 insurance document (Pi-Sunyer 1957:29). The
insurance document also calls for the nailery to be built directly next to the blacksmith’s shop, and Pi-Sunyer’s excavation showed that this did occur. A large number of iron artifacts along with many artifacts hinting at domestic occupation, such as glass, ceramics, and tools were recovered from the nailery (Pi-Sunyer 1957:12). The diversity and number of artifacts indicated that a more controlled excavation was needed.

In 1982-1983, William M. Kelso and Douglas W. Sanford led a full excavation of the nailery site (Figure 4.1). The excavation began with a grid system of eight foot (2.4 m) squares separated by two foot (0.6 m) balk walls. This grid system was used to take out the modern strata and backfill from Pi-Sunyer’s excavation and a 1979 excavation of the fence line which borders the nailery to the south (Sanford 1984:28). After the modern fill was removed, a smaller size grid system was used in order to obtain better control of artifact location. Initially piece-plotting was used to record artifact location, but it was quickly dropped due to the high artifact density and logistics and cost of this way of recording (Sanford 1984:28). Thereafter, only some diagnostic artifacts were plotted.

Figure 4.1 Photograph of the completed nailery excavation in 1983. Note that the rectangular area of stones on the far right belongs to the blacksmith’s shop and the postholes outline the dimensions of the nailery (Courtesy of Monticello Department of Archaeology). The excavated area measures approximately 60 ft by 20 ft (18.3 m by 6.1 m).
The excavation of the occupation layer was done with four foot (1.2 m) squares separated by 2-x-4-ft (0.6-x-1.2-m) balk walls. The high artifact quantities found in this zone corresponded to a “working floor” that may have been left totally in situ (Sanford 1984:29). The smaller grid was useful in obtaining more precise provenience data and helped the excavation to be completed within the time frame planned in the research design. The 1982-1983 excavations revealed that the nailery (also known as Building j) was “a wooden structure built on posts” (Sanford 1984:30). The west wall of the nailery was actually the eastern wall of the blacksmith’s shop (Building D), and the southern wall is best represented by postholes corresponding to the 1809 fence line (a solid wooden paling), making it possible that fence line made up one wall of the building. If true, it could mean that the nailery was not constructed until 1809 or later, although this is currently a source of debate (see Chapter 2 for an explanation of the competing hypotheses) (Sanford 1984:30). The numerous postholes on the northern end of the building may represent, besides the building’s wall, structural posts, repairs, and later fence lines. Rectangular postholes suggest that a door was likely positioned in the southeast corner of the structure (Sanford 1984:35). Window glass fragments were concentrated on the southeast and east sides of the structure, demonstrating the probable locations of windows (Sanford 1984:46).

The occupation zones were split into three strata: the upper zone, named AA, which designated later occupation, the lower zone, named AB, which designated earlier occupation, and a third zone, named AC, which was only described in the eastern half of the site. The AC zone was essentially a large, dense charcoal deposit associated with a number of circular pit-like features that were interpreted as the holes where the anvil
posts (supports) sat (Sanford 1984:30). The anvil posts outlined two U-shapes around some empty space where the forges sat. The purpose of the forges was to hold the fire that the nailrod was heated in. The open end of the “U” may have been the location of the bellows. A lack of evidence for bellows support posts may mean that the bellows were suspended from the upper framing of the building (Sanford 1984:48). The western third of the excavation area was characterized by a darker color and higher concentrations of charcoal, slag, and waste iron. The stone and brick remnants of three forges were also discovered in this area (Sanford 1984:31). The nail cutting machine Jefferson bought in 1795 may have been stationed in the southwest corner, as evidenced by the many small triangular machine-cut nails found there. The central area of the site was essentially empty and therefore was believed to have been used for a different purpose than both the far ends, where the forges and nail-making evidence were found (Sanford 1984:31). It was hypothesized that this area may have been used as a work and storage space (Sanford 1984:37-38).

In the southwestern end of the structure was a dense concentration of charcoal, slag, and iron artifacts, such as nailrod, hoop iron, a padlock, and a carriage/wagon jack arm. This pile may represent artifacts made or repaired in the shop or objects that were to be recycled. This discovery also reinforced Pi-Sunyer’s idea that the nailery was used for other work than just nail manufacture (Sanford 1984:36). Significantly, the hoop iron was found near the triangular nails made by the nail cutting machine. Hoop iron was the material from which these nails were cut. Unfortunately, no part of the nail cutting machine has ever been found (Sanford 1984:36-37).
Fourteen types of nails were found in the nailery site, and Jefferson recorded eight of these types as made there by the nail boys. Those made there include rosehead wrought nails, clasp/T-head wrought nails, wrought brads, tacks, horseshoe nails, wheel or tire nails, scupper nails (used to nail leather to wood, especially for bellows), and triangular machine-cut nails (Sanford 1984:40-41). The other types of nails found during the excavation were machine-cut nails made elsewhere and purchased, and nails used during the nailery’s construction. Additionally, two types of wrought nails found represent mistakes made by the nail boys. Hardy wasters were those nails that were incorrectly cut off from the nailrod with a chisel (known as a hardy), and anvil wasters were those nails that had misshapen heads. When too much nail body, called shank, was used to make the head, it would bend and the bent nail, now known as an anvil waster, was unusable (Sanford 1984:41).

Analysis of distribution maps showed that nail production was done at both the western and eastern ends of the nailery, although the eastern end showed longer and/or more intense nail production. Even though Jefferson’s detailed records show that certain slaves made certain sizes of nails, distribution maps did not show large differences in the locations of different nail sizes (Sanford 1984:43). Two concentrations of nailrod were present in the AA level; a large one was located along the center and eastern portions of the southern wall in what is a possible storage area/refuse pile, and the other was situated in the southwest corner (Sanford 1984:42). The AB zone showed different locations of nailrod concentration, one in the northeast corner and one in the southeast corner. The AB southeast corner concentration was in the same area as part of the south-central/southeast AA concentration, although it was much smaller (Sanford 1984:43).
The AA zone also revealed a concentration of chain links, farrier-related objects, and bar iron in the open, central area of the site, implying that this area was used for non-nail-making, blacksmithing activities later in the building’s life (Sanford 1984:46).

The excavation showed that the plan for the structure was similar to that of Jefferson’s plan for a nailery (Figure 4.2). There is some controversy as the exact building drawn in this plan. The undated drawing may have actually been a design for the blacksmith’s shop because the plan has the same dimensions as this shop (Sanford 1984:47). Some speculate that the drawing reflects Jefferson’s intentions rather than fact. The details of the structure have never been verified archaeologically or in other historical documents (Sanford 1984:47). It is possible that this drawing predates the construction of the adjacent nailery and depicts the layout of the blacksmith shop when it was also used for nail-making. Another suggestion is that the plan depicts one of the other naileries on the plantation instead of the one on Mulberry Row.
Objects related to nail-making were not the only artifact types found in the nailery. Glass of all types, animal bones, buttons, pipes, utensils, gunflint, and many kinds of ceramic sherds were unearthed (see Appendix A for the variety of ceramics). Domestic material was found in both the AA and AB levels, leading to the hypothesis that the nail boys lived in the nailery at least some of the time (Kelso 1997). The earlier AB layer had a more scattered distribution of these artifacts, but with a general eastern orientation. The ceramic, bone, and wine bottle glass found in this layer had the highest densities near the doorway, in what may be a trash midden area (Sanford 1984:46). The domestic artifacts found in the AA layer were higher in number and were spread over a
slightly larger area in the eastern part of the structure. Very small amounts of these materials were found in the western end of the site. This may mean that the nail boys only ate meals in one area of the building (Sanford 1984:46-47). No post-1820s ceramic types were found in the nailery, perhaps supporting the documentary evidence that nail-making activity stopped in the 1820s, likely around 1823 when the last recorded shipment of nailrod occurred (Sanford 1984:54).

Unfortunately, the excavation of the nailery did not provide evidence to suggest how the building was destroyed. Fire is not thought to be the culprit as no charring was noticed around the postholes, and any burned fragments could easily be explained by the presence of at least three forges in the building. More likely, the building was either dismantled or abandoned and later collapsed. The large amounts of iron and potentially useable tools found in the occupation layers lend credence to the abandonment idea (Sanford 1984:54-55).

This thesis will investigate Kelso and Sanford’s hypothesis that the nail boys may have lived inside the nailery. Both the 1957 and 1982-1983 excavations of the nailery recovered large amounts of domestic artifacts. Kelso and Sanford assumed that these artifacts indicate the nail boys ate in the nailery, but they never tested this belief or the possibility of the boys engaging in other domestic activities. What were the nail boys doing in the nailery?
Chapter 5:  
Measuring “Householdness”

Kelso and Sanford’s nailery excavation revealed a large number of domestic artifacts, causing them to hypothesize that the nail boys lived in the nailery. Documentary evidence like Jefferson’s ration lists also indicates the boys were semi-independent of their parents’ households. I will investigate this issue further to better determine whether the boys engaged in any domestic activities in the nailery, which would indicate a level of independence from their parents’ households. The purpose of this thesis is to determine the level of householdness among the nail boys. I use the term “householdness” to mean the variety and intensity of domestic activities going on inside a structure. As discussed in Chapter 3, I examine only one aspect of householdness: artifactual evidence of dietary production and consumption. Were the nail boys working together to create a fully functioning independent household, complete with the production and consumption of household goods, especially food and food-related items? This would indicate the young boys were taking on the household responsibilities of adults and therefore were engaging in a high level of householdness. Or, were they still acting as child members of their parents’ households by obtaining food and food-related artifacts individually from their own families? This would mean they were engaging in a low level of householdness.
Statistical analyses of the types, numbers, and distributions of artifacts can shed light on the daily lives of enslaved people, a topic that historical documents often do not discuss. Archaeological remains allow us to estimate per-capita discard rates that show the flow of goods through time (Galle 2006:26). These discard rates can reveal the quantities of various artifact types in buildings, which provides information on the kinds of activities that took place there. More specifically, I will use discard rate comparisons among various sites to understand the level of household production activities, or householdness, that took place inside the nailery. Determining if the nail boys created a fully functioning household of their own requires two statistical analyses. Abundance indices and Pearson residuals are used to establish the level of dietary household production, or householdness, in the nailery in relation to other sites at Monticello. These sites include other industrial structures, slave dwellings, an overseer’s home, the home of two white skilled laborers, and a drywell/refuse pit. Some sites were able to be broken into phases, which were studied separately in order to better differentiate separate periods of occupation. I hypothesize that if the nail boys were creating a high level of householdness, analyses would show large amounts of utilitarian ceramics, which would have been needed to cook and store food. On the other hand, if the nail boys were creating a low level of householdness in the nailery, very few utilitarian ceramics would be seen because the amount of food production would have been minimal.

All data were obtained from the Digital Archaeological Archive of Comparative Slavery (DAACS) database (www.daacs.org) and are accessible to anyone. Counts of the ceramic ware types used during the analysis can be found in Appendix A. I used the statistical program SAS 9.2 to perform all the analyses and create the resulting graphs.
As with many archaeological datasets, there are limitations to the data used in the analysis below. All analyses in this thesis are based on counts of artifacts. While using counts of artifacts can be useful, it is also prone to bias because of the different sizes of the artifact fragments (Byrd and Owens 1997:316). This is particularly true of ceramics, which are the main focus of the analyses in this thesis. Ceramic sherd counts have a low degree of validity in abundance analyses (Byrd and Owens 1997:315; Nance 1987:280). Validity means how well an analysis measures what it is supposed to measure. Of course, archaeologists want the highest validity possible in their analyses. When they break, ceramics fragment into a variable number of small pieces. As this breakage occurs, the number of sherds increases exponentially as the size of sherds decreases. This exponential rise in number of sherds as they shrink in overall size causes distortion in assemblages with sherds of various sizes. The distortion compromises the validity of sherd counts during relative abundance analysis (Byrd and Owens 1997:316). In addition, ceramic sherd counts are affected by “the original production methods, the usage, the disposal, and the post-depositional history of the vessels” (Egloff 1973:352). All of these factors can inject bias into the ceramic analysis.

One way to correct for the bias inherent in using ceramic sherd counts for relative abundance analysis is to use sherd surface area. Surface area of sherds is not affected by the breakage of ceramics into pieces of different sizes. Unfortunately, measuring the surface area of every sherd is not practical and therefore is not likely to be a method used in archaeological analyses (Byrd and Owens 1997:317; Chase 1985:218). Byrd and Owens (1997:317) suggest that effective area can be used as a close substitute for surface area. They argue that sherds can be separated into different size groupings by putting
them through nested screens. Then the number of sherds in each screen is multiplied by the square of the screen size and then summed (Byrd and Owens 1997:317). Relative abundance analysis based on effective area removes the distortion created when only sherd counts are used (Byrd and Owens 1997:319).

A second way to correct for the bias created when using sherd counts for abundance analysis is to use sherd weight. Solheim (1960:325) points out that using both counts and weights during analysis and then comparing the two results can provide more information about the assemblage than either one alone. After analyzing ceramics by both sherd count and sherd weight, Gifford (1951:223) stated, “Weighing sherds seems to give more accurate statistical results than counting them…no matter how large or small the sherds are in a given block, their total weight remains the same.” One problem with using sherd weight in ceramic analysis is that the density of sherds can vary depending on the materials, like temper, used to make the vessel. The variability of sherd density means that the weight of a group of sherds is only partly determined by the number of sherds in the sample (Byrd and Owens 1997:316; Orton et al. 1993:169).

A third option to correct for bias in ceramic analysis is to use estimated vessel equivalents, or EVE. In this type of analysis, distinctive features like rims, bases, and handles are used to estimate the proportion of the vessel that is represented. The proportions are then added together (Orton 1982:2).

The fourth way to correct for bias is to use the minimum number of vessels, also known as MNV. In this method, ceramic vessels are reconstructed as much as possible. Sherds that could possibly have come from the same vessel but do not cross-mend with other pieces are included as part of that vessel. Variations of this method use diagnostic
features like base sherds, rim sherds, and handles (Orton 1982:1). The MNV method is
very useful, but it does depend upon the skill of the archaeologist doing the
reconstruction (Orton 1982:2). Another problem with MNV is its tendency to
underestimate the number of vessels represented by the sherds (Orton 1982:2). Both
EVE and MNV work toward understanding how ceramics were actually used in past
societies, since people generally use ceramics in vessel, not sherd, form (Egloff
1973:352, 353). In spite of the biases of count data and the other options available, count
data were used in this thesis due to the availability of count data, the lack of weight data
for the smallest sherds, and the very small number of diagnostic sherds and sherds that
cross-mended from the nailery site.

The artifacts studied in this project come from the three zones, named AA, AB, and AC, discussed in Chapter 4. These levels are believed to be the original, undisturbed
occupation layers relating to the nail boys. The archaeologists who worked on the 1982-
1983 excavation considered these to be primary deposits, not fill from the 1957
evacuation. Current archaeologists at Monticello created a Harris Matrix that
demonstrates the AA, AB, and AC contexts were located beneath the known disturbed
zones (Karen Smith, personal communication 2011). The AA, AB, and AC layers
revealed heavy organic-charcoal deposits in close association with structural features,
nail-making tools, and manufacturing waste, further indicating that the contexts were
original (Sanford 1984:30). In addition, the level of admixture with artifacts dating to
post-Jefferson periods is extremely minimal at the nailery site, quite unlike other sites on
Monticello plantation where occupation continued after Jefferson’s death.
Abundance Indices and Pearson Residuals

In order to determine if the nail boys were creating a high or low level of householdness, I needed a statistical test that would allow comparison of the nailery’s artifact assemblage to the artifact assemblages of other known domestic and industrial sites on Monticello. This test should compare utilitarian, tableware, and teaware ceramics, along with other domestic remains, to determine if there are differences in the abundance of these items among the structures. Following Galle (2004, 2006, 2010), abundance indices were calculated to learn about the discard rates of certain artifact types. Many archaeologists, including Markin (1997), Knight (2004), Kent (1992), Neiman et al. (2000), and Hill (2007), have used abundance indices in a variety of contexts. Abundance indices allow researchers to estimate the discard rate of one artifact type in relation to the discard rate of a second artifact type. The discard rate of the second artifact type is used as a baseline rate because it must either remain constant over time or change in a predictable way (Galle 2006:172-173). For this thesis the equation for the abundance index is:

\[
\frac{(\text{Artifact Group 1})}{(\text{Artifact Group 1} + \text{Artifact Group 2})}
\]

where Artifact Group 1 is the artifact type I am interested in while Artifact Group 2 is the artifact type that represents the baseline discard rate (Galle 2004:46, 2006:173). Two different artifact types were used as the baseline discard rate – wine bottle glass and total ceramic form. Galle (2006:175-176) determined that the discard rate of wine bottle glass is constant over time at Monticello. Total ceramic form is the combination of discard rates for every shape of ceramic vessel found at Monticello. Ceramic vessel forms are divided into three categories based on their function: utilitarian, tableware, and teaware
(Table 5.1). For example, a ceramic with the form “milk pan” would be placed in the utilitarian category, while a ceramic with the form “platter” would be placed in the tableware category (Aultman et al. 2010). Using this as the baseline discard rate allowed me to compare the discard rate of an individual vessel category, such as utilitarian, against the discard rate of all vessels.

Graphs are used to illustrate the abundance indices. The Y-axis consists of the abundance index values, which were calculated with the equation mentioned above. The equation results in values that range from 0 to 1.0, with higher values indicating a greater representation of the type of artifact being examined (Hill 2007:424). Mean ceramic dates are used as the X-axis to show changes in artifact discard rates over time. These dates were calculated using the Digital Archaeological Archive of Comparative Slavery (DAACS) MCD-Type list, which compiles all possible combinations of ware type, decorative technique, and applied color that occur in the DAACS ceramic table and assigns each combination a date range (Thomas Jefferson Foundation 2004). Sherds exhibiting multiple decorative elements, which each have a specific date range, are dated based on the decorative type with the shortest length of manufacture. The DAACS MCD-Type list may be found on the DAACS website, www.daacs.org (Thomas Jefferson Foundation 2004). Each abundance index graph has a red trend line that shows estimated index values across the time periods for each analysis. It is interesting to see how actual index values compare to the estimated values represented by the trend line.

Pearson residuals were calculated for most abundance indices in order to better differentiate the nailery from the other sites. Residuals that show the nailery as an outlier
indicate that there is a large difference among the nailery and other sites for those artifact
types. The formula for Pearson residuals used in this study is:

\[
(y_i - \mu_i) \frac{w_i}{\sqrt{V(\mu_i)}}
\]

where \(y_i\) is the \(i\)th response and \(\mu_i\) is the corresponding predicted mean. (SAS Institute Inc. 2002-2010).

The data on the nailery were compared to data on a variety of sites on Monticello plantation. These sites included industrial sites such as the blacksmith shop and Building \(l\), the storehouse for iron, and domestic sites like the Stewart-Watkins site, the home of free white workers and their families, and Building \(s\), a slave quarter site (Table 5.2). By comparing the nailery to many different sites, I can better determine whether the nailery is more similar to industrial sites, domestic sites, or lies somewhere in between. If the nailery’s abundance index values lie near or higher than the Index values of domestic sites, it is very likely that domestic tasks were being done by the nail boys. If the nailery’s abundance index values lie closer to those of industrial sites and far from those of domestic sites, it is likely that little to no domestic activity was being done by the nail boys.
Table 5.1 List of Ceramic Vessel Forms and their Categorization as Tableware, Teaware, or Utilitarian.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ceramic Vessel Form</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basket</td>
<td>Tableware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berry Dish</td>
<td>Tableware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottle</td>
<td>Utilitarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottle, Blacking</td>
<td>Utilitarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowl</td>
<td>Tableware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box</td>
<td>Tableware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castor</td>
<td>Tableware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chamberpot</td>
<td>Utilitarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coffee Pot</td>
<td>Teaware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colander</td>
<td>Utilitarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cup</td>
<td>Teaware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cup, Lidded</td>
<td>Tableware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug Jar/Salve Pot</td>
<td>Utilitarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flower Pot</td>
<td>Utilitarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Griddle</td>
<td>Utilitarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jar</td>
<td>Utilitarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jar, Mustard</td>
<td>Utilitarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jug</td>
<td>Utilitarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milkpan</td>
<td>Utilitarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mold, Jelly</td>
<td>Tableware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mug/Can</td>
<td>Tableware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pipkin</td>
<td>Utilitarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitcher/Ewer</td>
<td>Teaware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plate</td>
<td>Tableware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Platter</td>
<td>Tableware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porringer</td>
<td>Tableware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saucer</td>
<td>Teaware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sea Kale Pot</td>
<td>Utilitarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serving Dish, misc.</td>
<td>Tableware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storage Vessel</td>
<td>Utilitarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tankard</td>
<td>Tableware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea Caddy</td>
<td>Teaware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teabowl</td>
<td>Teaware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacup</td>
<td>Teaware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teapot</td>
<td>Teaware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tureen</td>
<td>Tableware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unid. Tableware</td>
<td>Tableware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unid. Teaware</td>
<td>Teaware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unid. Utilitarian</td>
<td>Utilitarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetable Dish</td>
<td>Tableware</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.2 Mean Ceramic Date, Function, and Occupant data for comparative sites. See Appendix B for more detailed discussion of each site.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure and Phase</th>
<th>Mean Ceramic Dates for Phases</th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Occupant</th>
<th>Source of Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Site 7 P3</td>
<td>1786</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>White Overseer</td>
<td><a href="http://www.daacs.org">www.daacs.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site 8 H1, P3a, P3b</td>
<td>1789, 1807, 1792</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>Slaves</td>
<td><a href="http://www.daacs.org">www.daacs.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site 17</td>
<td>1797</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>White Overseer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building l PM</td>
<td>1797</td>
<td>Industrial, Domestic</td>
<td>Slaves</td>
<td><a href="http://www.daacs.org">www.daacs.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building o P2, P3</td>
<td>1785, 1792</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>Slaves</td>
<td><a href="http://www.daacs.org">www.daacs.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building r PE</td>
<td>1799</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>Slaves</td>
<td><a href="http://www.daacs.org">www.daacs.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building s P1, P2</td>
<td>1798, 1812</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>Slaves</td>
<td><a href="http://www.daacs.org">www.daacs.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRS-2 P1, P2</td>
<td>1789, 1811</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>Slaves or White Workers</td>
<td>Clites and McCray 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacksmith Shop</td>
<td>1792</td>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>Slaves</td>
<td>Kelso et al. 1984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Hemings</td>
<td>1797</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>Slaves</td>
<td><a href="http://www.daacs.org">www.daacs.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stewart-Watkins</td>
<td>1796</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>White Workers</td>
<td><a href="http://www.daacs.org">www.daacs.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry Well P1, P2</td>
<td>1776, 1782</td>
<td>Food Storage and Trash</td>
<td>Jefferson Household</td>
<td><a href="http://www.daacs.org">www.daacs.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ware Type Groups**

First, ceramics were split into two categories: coarse and refined. Coarse ceramics include all ware types used in the preparation, cooking, and storage of food, while refined ceramics were those ware types that sat on the table. The baseline discard rate for the abundance indices is wine bottle glass. The formula for the abundance index of the coarse ceramic ware types is:

\[
\frac{\text{(Coarse Ware Types)}}{\text{(Coarse Ware Types + Wine Bottle Glass)}}
\]

and the formula for the abundance index of the refined ceramic ware types is:
The coarse ware index revealed a positive curve with a p value of 0.1608 (Figure 5.1). This trend shows an increase in discard of coarse ware types over time, although there is variation among sites with similar mean ceramic dates. The nailery has the second lowest abundance index value, indicating a very low coarse ceramic discard rate compared to wine bottle glass discard. Its index value is lower than the values of all the domestic sites, suggesting that less dietary production was occurring there compared to domestic sites. The site with the lowest index value is the blacksmith shop, which makes sense as this structure does seem to have housed slaves. The use of this structure was likely limited to industrial activity. The blacksmith shop is one end of the continuum from no domestic activity to only domestic activity and therefore is a good site for comparison with the nailery.
The refined ware index showed a positive curve with overall high abundance index values and a p value of 0.0149 (Figure 5.2). Located slightly above the curve, the nailery has an intermediate abundance index value, meaning that its discard rate of refined wares was neither extremely high nor extremely low when compared to other sites at Monticello. The nailery’s abundance index value is close to the index values for six slave dwelling phases: Building s Phases 1 and 2, Site 7 Phase 3, Site 8 Phases 3a and 3b, and MRS-2 Phase 2. The similar values demonstrate a comparable variety and intensity of domestic activities, or householdness, among the nailery and the dwellings of enslaved people. This result is very different from the result of the coarse ware index, where the nailery showed a much lower level of householdness than domestic structures.
Clearly there were some differences in the activities taking place in the nailery and domestic sites. Interestingly, Building 1, the storehouse for iron, also has a refined ware index value very close to the nailery and some dwelling sites. This similarity may indicate a domestic use for Building 1, an idea that has been recently hypothesized (Galle 2010:34). Future research should continue to investigate this issue.

Pearson residuals were computed and plotted. The plotted residuals (Figure 5.3) show that the nailery does not have the same ratio of coarse ware to refined ware ceramics as most of the other structures on Monticello. The nailery has results that are most like Building 1 Middle Phase, which is the storehouse for iron, and Building 5 Phase 1, which is a slave quarter on Mulberry Row. Figure 5.3 supports the previous results that the nailery does share similarities with other dwelling sites. Still, the nailery’s low abundance of coarse ware ceramics shows that some differences exist.
Next, abundance indices and Pearson residuals were computed on the basis of ceramic form. As noted above, the form of a ceramic vessel is categorized into one of three groups: utilitarian, tableware, and teaware (Table 5.1). One set of abundance indices and Pearson residuals was calculated with the denominator as “all ceramic forms,” meaning utilitarian + tableware + teaware. Another set of abundance indices and Pearson residuals was done with wine bottle glass in the denominator.
The formula for the Utilitarian Abundance Index by All Ceramic Forms (Figure 5.4) is:

$$\frac{\text{(Utilitarian)}}{\text{(Utilitarian + Tableware + Teaware)}}$$

This index provides a p value of 0.8932 and shows a slightly positive curve with the nailery having the second lowest abundance index value and only the Elizabeth Hemings site having a lower value. The Elizabeth Hemings site is unusual because it has very few utilitarian ceramics. It has been suggested that Elizabeth Hemings was the only occupant in the house, which, along with the relatively short occupation span, may explain the small amount of utilitarian ceramics (Neiman et al. 2000:45). The Utilitarian Abundance Index by All Ceramic Forms shows that the nailery’s ratio of utilitarian ceramics to other
ceramics is very low compared to the other sites, supporting the results of the previous indices. The nailery has fewer utilitarian ceramics than most dwelling sites, indicating that less food preparation, cooking, and storage was done by the nail boys.

Figure 5.4 Abundance Index for Utilitarian Form by All Ceramic Forms (Teaware + Tableware + Utilitarian).
The abundance index for Utilitarian Form by Wine Bottle Glass showed relatively similar results. The formula for this index is:

\[
\frac{\text{Utilitarian}}{\text{Utilitarian} + \text{Wine Bottle Glass}}
\]

The p value is 0.0246 and the curve is strongly positive. The overall abundance index values are slightly lower on this graph than the previous one (Figure 5.5). The nailery again has the second lowest abundance index value and the blacksmith shop has the lowest. The nailery’s low index value supports the previous conclusions that the nail boys were only rarely participating in dietary production tasks. The slave quarter sites analyzed here all have higher index values because more production activity was being done in those structures.

Figure 5.5 Abundance Index for Utilitarian Form by Wine Bottle Glass.
Tableware is the next ceramic form to be studied. The abundance index for Tableware by All Ceramic Forms was created using the formula:

\[
\frac{\text{Tableware}}{\text{Tableware} + \text{Tableware} + \text{Teaware}}
\]

and revealed a negative curve with a p value of 0.4052 (Figure 5.6). The nailery has the third highest abundance index value. Sites with similar values are Site 17, which is overseer Edmund Bacon’s home, the slave dwelling MRS-2 Phases 1 and 2, and the blacksmith shop. The nailery has higher amounts of tableware than most of the domestic sites, demonstrating that the nail boys engaged in food production activities. The blacksmith shop also has a high index value for tableware probably because most of the few ceramics that were found there were of tableware or teaware form.

![Figure 5.6 Abundance Index for Tableware Form by All Ceramic Forms (Teaware + Tableware + Utilitarian).](image)
An abundance index for Tableware Form by Wine Bottle Glass was calculated with the formula:

\[
\frac{(\text{Tableware})}{(\text{Tableware} + \text{Wine Bottle Glass})}
\]

and produced a positive curve with overall lower values than the previous graph (Figure 5.7). The p value is 0.0198. The nailery is again located high above the curve and is the fifth largest abundance index value among the sites analyzed here. Sites with similar values are Stewart-Watkins, known to be the home of white hired workmen and their families, Site 17, once the home of white overseer Edmund Bacon, MRS-2 Phase 2, a slave quarter on Mulberry Row, Site 7 Phase 1, recognized as the home of another white overseer, Building r Early Phase, another Mulberry Row slave quarter, and Building l Middle Phase, recorded as the storehouse for iron. The similar results continue to support the notion that some domestic activities were occurring in the nailery because the nailery’s index value is close to that of multiple house sites.
Teaware is the final ceramic form to be analyzed. The formula for the abundance index for Teaware by All Ceramic Forms is:

\[
\frac{(\text{Teaware})}{(\text{Utilitarian} + \text{Tableware} + \text{Teaware})}
\]

and the resulting curve is almost flat with a p value of 0.9690 (Figure 5.8). The nailery is located just above, but touching, the curve and is in the middle of abundance index values. Dwelling sites are located both above and below the nailery, showing that the nailery’s value is within the range of domestic activities. This abundance index points to the nail boys’ participation in a higher intensity of teaware use than some slaves who lived in a structure that functioned solely as a dwelling. The two sites with the most
similar index values to the nailery are the blacksmith shop and Building o Phase 3, once a slave quarter on Mulberry Row. The blacksmith shop’s ceramic assemblage has a high percentage of teaware and tableware compared to utilitarian ceramics, providing an explanation for the blacksmith shop’s high index value in this calculation.

Figure 5.8 Abundance Index for Teaware Form by All Ceramic Forms (Teaware + Tableware + Utilitarian).
The abundance index for Teaware by Wine Bottle Glass was calculated with the formula:

\[
\frac{\text{(Teaware)}}{\text{(Teaware + Wine Bottle Glass)}}
\]

and has a p value of 0.0934 (Figure 5.9). The nailery is touching the positive curve and again is located in the middle of the abundance index values, suggesting a domestic use for the structure. Dry Well Phase 2, originally a food storage hole and later trash pit used by the Jefferson household, has the closest value to the nailery. The similarity between the Dry Well and the nailery is very interesting because it shows that the Jefferson household was discarding teaware at nearly the same rate as the nail boys were discarding teaware.

The Pearson residual comparing Utilitarian by Teaware Forms from the All Ceramic Forms abundance indices shows the nailery near some of the domestic sites (Figure 5.10). It is located within the high Teaware/low Utilitarian section of the graph. Many of the other domestic sites, such as MRS-2 Phase 2 and Building s Phase 2, are located in the high Utilitarian half of the graph. This means that the nailery had less food preparation and storage activity but the same or higher teaware-based food consumption activity when compared to the other domestic sites.
Figure 5.9 Abundance Index for Teaware Form by Wine Bottle Glass.
The Utilitarian by Tableware Pearson Residual from the All Ceramic Forms abundance indices places the nailery in the high tableware/low utilitarian section of the graph (Figure 5.11). As shown on this plot, the nailery is slightly separated from the other sites and has the highest residual for tableware but the second lowest residual for utilitarian ware. Figures 5.10 and 5.11 support the results from the coarse ware versus refined ware Pearson residual (Figure 5.3) because all three show that utilitarian wares were only rarely used in the nailery when compared to domestic sites.
The final Pearson residual for the All Ceramic Forms abundance indices compares Teaware and Tableware forms. The nailery is located in the high Tableware/high Teaware section and is near the zero Teaware line (Figure 5.12). It has one of the highest Tableware residuals on the chart. MRS-2 Phases 1 and 2 and Site 17, both domestic sites, have similarly high Tableware residuals, although their Teaware residuals are lower than that of the nailery. This calculation supports the hypothesis that domestic tasks were occurring in the nailery. Combined with the previous Pearson residual plots, the dominance of the nailery’s teaware and tableware over its utilitarian ware indicates that food consumption was happening regularly in the nailery but food production may not have occurred as frequently.
The Pearson residual for Utilitarian by Teaware Form for the Wine Bottle Glass Abundance Indices shows the nailery located in the high Teaware/low Utilitarian quarter of the graph (Figure 5.13). The nailery lies next to the zero Teaware line, indicating a medium amount of teaware. Site 8 House 1, MRS-2 Phase 1, Building o Phase 2, Building o Phase 3, and Dry Well Phase 1, all domestic sites, are also placed in this section, further demonstrating similar activities taking place among the nailery and those structures. The nailery has a similar utilitarian residual to the blacksmith shop, suggesting that the level of food production in the nailery was akin to that in buildings used solely for industrial purposes.
The Utilitarian by Tableware Pearson residual for the Wine Bottle Glass Abundance Indices shows the nailery in the high Tableware/low Utilitarian section (Figure 5.14). The other sites in this section are Stewart-Watkins, Dry Well Phase 2, and Building / Middle Phase, all either domestic sites or sites with a domestic component. The nailery has the lowest Utilitarian residual in this section and the second lowest Utilitarian residual overall, again suggesting low food production tasks. Interestingly, the nailery is separated from all the other comparative sites, demonstrating that although the nailery shows activity levels comparable to those at many of the other sites, it does not conform to either a fully domestic or a fully industrial pattern.
The Teaware by Tableware Pearson Residual for the Wine Bottle Glass Abundance Indices placed the nailery inside the high Tableware/low Teaware quarter although it is touching the zero Teaware line (Figure 5.15). Other sites in this section of the graph are the domestic sites of slaves or white overseers, namely MRS-2 Phases 1 and 2, Site 17, and Site 7 Phase 3. The nailery has a higher Tableware and Teaware residual than many of the comparative sites, including the domestic sites Building o Phases 2 and 3 and Site 8 Phases H1, 3a, and 3b. This Pearson residual shows that Tableware was slightly more abundant than Teaware in the nailery.
Figure 5.15 Pearson Residual for Teaware by Tableware Forms for the Wine Bottle Glass Abundance Indices.

**Utilitarian Ceramic Material**

The next step was to understand where the nailery stood in terms of utilitarian ceramics as defined by ceramic material. In this context, utilitarian ceramic material includes all coarse earthenwares and stonewares, with a few exceptions. Most exceptions are those stonewares that were used for table or teawares: White Salt Glaze Stoneware, Jasperware, Rosso Antico, Black Basalt, Staffordshire Brown stoneware, Turner-type stoneware, Westerwald/Rhenish stoneware, and Nottingham stoneware. Other material types excluded from this analysis were Native American ceramics and redware identified to be of “flowerpot” form. When the remaining material types were plotted in an abundance index with wine bottle glass as the denominator, the nailery again has a very
low abundance index value, very close to that of the blacksmith shop and Dry Well Phase 1 (Figure 5.16). The Elizabeth Hemings site has the lowest index value because it has no ceramic sherds that fall into the utilitarian category. All other slave dwellings have higher abundance index values than the nailery, a sign that more food production and storage was done at those dwellings than at the nailery. Surprisingly, Building l, the storehouse for iron, has an index value that is higher than the nailery and is very similar to those of the slave dwellings. Again, future research should address the hypothesis that Building l doubled as a slave quarter. The trend line in this abundance index graph, with a p value of 0.0018, shows a statistically significant increase in the amount of utilitarian materials being discarded over time at Monticello.

Figure 5.16 Abundance Index for Utilitarian Ceramic Material.
Specific Ware Types

The final ceramic analysis examined the three most numerous ware types at the nailery: creamware, pearlware, and Chinese porcelain. Abundance indices for these ware types were calculated using the formulas:

\[
\frac{\text{Creamware}}{\text{Creamware} + \text{Wine Bottle Glass}}
\]

\[
\frac{\text{Pearlware}}{\text{Pearlware} + \text{Wine Bottle Glass}}
\]

\[
\frac{\text{Chinese Porcelain}}{\text{Chinese Porcelain} + \text{Wine Bottle Glass}}
\]

The Creamware index, with a p value of 0.1078, reveals that the nailery lies on the line of expected values (Figure 5.17). It has a higher abundance index value than most of the comparison sites, including MRS-2 Phases 1 and 2, Site 8 Phases 3a and 3b, Building o Phases 2 and 3, and Building s Phase 1, all domestic slave structures. Evidence again may suggest an occupation in Building l, which has an index value only slightly lower than that of the nailery and MRS-2 Phases 1 and 2.
The abundance index for Pearlware shows a statistically significant increase in the discard rate of pearlware over time, with a p value of 0.0052 (Figure 5.18). In this plot, the nailery has a larger abundance index value than all but one of the domestic slave sites, the Elizabeth Hemings site. Both phases of the Dry Well also have lower index values, which may indicate less pearlware discard by the Jefferson family compared to the nail boys. As with the Creamware index, the nailery’s index value is a little higher than Building l’s value.
The Chinese porcelain abundance index, with a p value of 0.0639, produced the most striking result of the specific ware type indices (Figure 5.19). This plot demonstrates that the nailery has the second highest abundance index value of all the sites, with the Elizabeth Hemings site being higher. All other slave domestic sites, the overseer and white laborer sites, and Dry Well phases discarded less Chinese porcelain than the nailery. It is possible that because of his daily presence and keen interest in the nail boys, Jefferson gave these expensive ceramics to the boys when he no longer had any need for them in his own home. Another possibility is that the boys’ families allowed them to use the porcelain because it was a way to display the families’ level of wealth in a more public space. Yet another possibility is that the nail boys stole the Chinese
porcelain from Jefferson’s household or other slave households. They might have resorted to theft if they did not have enough ceramics for their daily needs, to gain respect from their peers, to rebel against their enslaved status, or a variety of other reasons. Further research should investigate these and other possibilities to determine why there is so much Chinese porcelain at the nailery site.

Glass Containers and Tableware Glass

Although ceramic analyses form the basis of this thesis, other artifact types can provide additional evidence for or against the presence of production and consumption. The next analysis examines glass artifacts with food-based functions, with the exception of wine bottle glass as this forms the denominator of the abundance index equation.

Figure 5.19 Abundance Index for Chinese Porcelain.
Window glass, glass beads, and other glass artifacts not related to food production and consumption were not analyzed in this thesis. All glass artifacts with possible food-related functions were divided into two groups: Glass Containers and Tableware Glass. Glass artifacts classified as Glass Containers include jars and various types of bottles, while glass artifacts with, for example, the forms of bowls or tumblers are placed in the Tableware Glass group. The abundance index equation for the Glass Containers is:

\[
\frac{(\text{Glass Container})}{(\text{Glass Container} + \text{Wine Bottle Glass})}
\]

and the equation for Table Glass is:

\[
\frac{(\text{Tableware Glass})}{(\text{Tableware Glass} + \text{Wine Bottle Glass})}
\]

The Glass Container abundance index has a p value of 0.1821 and shows that the nailery’s index value is close to the middle of the group (Figure 5.20). Four domestic sites, namely Site 17, Site 7 Phase 3, Site 8 H1 and Phase 3a, and Buildings Phase 2, along with one industrial site, the blacksmith shop, have very similar index values to the nailery. Many other sites’ values are only slightly farther away. It is interesting that both domestic and industrial sites have abundance index values near the nailery. In fact, the blacksmith shop has higher index values than some domestic sites, such as MRS-2 Phase 1 and Buildings Phases 2 and 3. Future investigations should examine why glass container fragments are so prevalent in the blacksmith shop.
The abundance index for Tableware Glass reveals the nailery’s place near the center of the abundance index values (Figure 5.21). This graph, with a p value of 0.1613, illustrates that the nailery’s index value is close to or higher than most of the comparative sites. In this index, the Stewart-Watkins site, the home of former white skilled laborers, has the closest index value to the nailery. Site 7 Phase 3, the home of an overseer, Dry Well Phase 2, the Jefferson’s food storage and trash pit, and Building l Middle Phase, the storehouse for iron and possibly a dwelling, all have similar values as well. This abundance index suggests the nail boys used tableware glass equal to or more than other people in their dwellings.
Figure 5.21 Abundance Index for Tableware Glass.

The Pearson residual comparing glass container and tableware glass data reveals that Building r Early Phase, a slave quarter, and Site 17, the home of overseer Edmund Bacon, have the most similar residuals to the nailery (Figure 5.22). The nailery is located in the low Glass Container/high Tableware Glass section of the graph, but is touching the zero line for Glass Containers. The calculation depicted in this plot makes very apparent that the nailery has a higher abundance of Glass Container and Tableware Glass fragments than many other domestic sites at Monticello and supports a hypothesis of domestic activities taking place in that building.
Utensils

Utensils, defined as flatware used for eating or cooking, are the final artifact type analyzed in this thesis. The equation used for this analysis is:

\[
\frac{(\text{Utensils})}{(\text{Utensils} + \text{Wine Bottle Glass})}
\]

The Utensil abundance index produced the overall lowest index values of all the analyses and had a p value of 0.4503 (Figure 5.23). Again, the nailery’s index value places it near the middle of the comparative sites. The known slave domestic sites MRS-2 Phase 1, Building o Phase 3, Site 7 Phase 3, Site 8 Phases H1, 3a, and 3b, and the Elizabeth Hemings site all fall below the nailery. Additionally, Site 17, the house of white overseer
Edmund Bacon, also has a lower index value than the nailery. The nailery’s index value demonstrates that domestic tasks were occurring in the nailery in varieties and intensities similar to those of other domestic sites. In this abundance index, Building I, the storehouse for iron, has a higher index value than the nailery, again suggesting domestic activities taking place there as well.

![Abundance Index for Utensils](image-url)

Figure 5.23 Abundance Index for Utensils.
Building I: The Storehouse for Iron

Although Building I is not the focus of this thesis, it is important to note that the structure, a storehouse also used briefly as a tin shop, had abundance index and Pearson residual results that were close to and sometimes higher than the nailery. This evidence supports the hypothesis that this structure was used as a slave dwelling at some point. As with the nailery, Jefferson documented Building I on the 1796 Mutual Assurance Society plat, describing it as “a house 16 by 10 ½ f., of wood, used as a storehouse for nail rod and other iron” (Jefferson 2002:243). During his investigation of Mulberry Row, Pi-Sunyer located Building I, which he called Structure III, and undertook limited excavation at that locale (Scholnick et al. 2001). In 1981, Kelso and Sanford carried out the full excavation of this building, revealing a brick and greenstone cobble paving and the base of what was then thought to be a chimney, but more recently has been determined to be a small forge (Scholnick et al. 2001:7). Based on the presence of annular pearlware and documentation showing the first shipment of nail rod in 1794, Kelso dated the construction of Building I to between 1790 and 1796 (Scholnick et al. 2001:10). The layout of the 1809 fence line, also excavated by Kelso, suggests that Building I was still standing when the fence was installed (Scholnick et al. 2001). In fact, ceramic types dating to the 1810s and 1820s suggest that the structure was standing and in use until Jefferson’s death in 1826 (Scholnick et al. 2001:39). Although nail rod and assorted iron artifacts were found in large numbers during excavation, the presence of other artifact types, like ceramics, glass, and faunal remains, indicate a possible domestic use for the structure. Based on documentary analysis, some hypothesize that the nail boys may have lived in Building I, as it is next door to the nailery (Galle 2010:34). If
Building l was indeed occupied by nail boys for at least part of its life, there are a number of possibilities that may explain the need to use it for domestic purposes. There may have been too many nail boys for them all to occupy the nailery, so adjacent Building l would have provided a convenient place to house them. Another possibility is that Building l was used as a secondary nailery and domestic site while the nailery was in use; perhaps the most trustworthy nail boys were allowed to work there under less supervision. Building l may have replaced the nailery as the center for nail-making and nail-boy occupation after the nailery was dismantled. Similarly, after the nailery was abandoned, Building l may have housed nail boys who made nails for mansion use or sale, while nail boys at other locations, such as those who worked at Sites 15 and 18, may have made nails for plantation-wide use (Figure 2.5). Unfortunately, the occupants of Building l may never be concretely identified.

*Distribution Maps*

Distribution maps of the nailery were made in order to study the location of ceramics within the nailery compared to the location of nails. Where inside the nailery did the domestic activities indicated by the abundance indices and Pearson residuals take place? Where do concentrations of domestic artifacts lie in relation to nails? This research is preliminary and should be used as a basis for more in-depth studies of the nailery. Distribution maps were created using ArcGIS. A map of the quadrats was digitized to create two layers showing the upper and lower quadrats. The quadrats shown on the map are those that were excavated during Kelso and Sanford’s 1982-1983 excavation. The upper quadrats are those that include levels that may have been
disturbed by Pi-Sunyer’s excavation, including surface and near-surface levels. The lower quadrats are those that consist exclusively of undisturbed occupation layers found at deeper levels.

Figure 5.24 shows the distribution of ceramics in the lower quadrats. Two images are shown. The top image, in red, was created using the counts of ceramics from each quadrat. The bottom image, in green, shows the density of ceramics, meaning that the number of sherds in a quadrat was divided by the area (in feet) of that quadrat. The different levels, represented by darkening colors, were created using natural breaks. Both images show a concentration, shown in the darkest colors, of ceramics near the south-central and southeastern section of the nailery. Analysis of the results of the 1980s excavation indicates that the eastern half of the nailery was dominated by anvils, while the western half housed the forges. It is possible that the eastern half had more space because anvils are much smaller than forges and can be moved to make even more room for domestic activities. Postholes found during the 1982-1983 excavation suggested the location of a door in the southeast corner of the nailery. Were the nail boys leaving their trash at and around the doorway? Did they eat near the doorway in order to get fresh air?

The next figure (Figure 5.25) shows the distribution of ceramics in the upper quadrats. As before, the top image, in purple, is the distribution by ceramic count, and the bottom image, in blue, is the distribution by ceramic density. The color classifications were created using natural breaks. The ceramic count revealed a higher concentration of sherds in the two southern quadrats, while ceramic density revealed the highest concentration in the southernmost quadrat and the second highest concentration in one of the northern quadrats.
The next two figures represent the distribution of nails in the nailery. Figure 5.26 depicts the distribution of nails in the lower quadrats. Only complete (i.e. unbroken) wrought nails were used in the distribution maps. Complete machine-cut nails were not included because the majority, 95 percent, of them were found in four units in the southwestern corner of the nailery site (Sanford 1984:44). As before, the top, red, image represents counts of nails in each quadrat and the bottom, green, image represents the density of nails in each quadrat. Although nails seem to be more spread out throughout the structure, there is a higher concentration in the eastern half, where, according to Sanford (1984:38, 48) most of the anvils were likely located. The nails are concentrated against both the northern and southern walls of the nailery, whereas the ceramics were primarily found next to the southern wall. This spatial pattern showing a north-south contrast could be a reflection of the dominance of nail-making activities in the building or of the placement of the nail boys as they worked. Based on both the ceramic and nail distributions in the lower quadrats, trash may have been pushed against the walls of the buildings so that it was out of the way.

Figure 5.27 shows the distribution of nails in the upper quadrats. Like Figure 5.25, the top, purple, color reflects the distribution pattern of nails by count and the bottom, blue, color shows the distribution pattern of nails through nail density. The highest count of nails was found in the southernmost quadrat and the number of nails decreases as one looks north. The highest density of nails was found in the southernmost and northernmost quadrats, mimicking the dual southern and northern concentrations found in the lower quadrat nail distributions. Again, this could be suggestive of the removal of garbage away from the central activity area.
Figure 5.24 Count (top) and density (bottom) of ceramics in the lower quadrats.
Figure 5.25 Count (top) and density (bottom) of ceramics in the upper quadrats.
Figure 5.26 Count (top) and density (bottom) of nails in lower quadrats.
Figure 5.27 Count (top) and density (bottom) of nails in the upper quadrats.
Discussion

Households are made up of groups of people who work together to perform various activities, including production, consumption, co-residence, pooling resources, and reproduction (Ashmore and Wilk 1988:6). This thesis focuses on production and consumption because these are the most easily visible in the archaeological record. The analyses presented in this thesis demonstrate that some domestic activity was taking place at the nailery. The nailery had abundance index values near those of known enslaved and free person domestic sites, pointing to a similarity in the types and levels of activities taking place at these domestic sites and at the nailery. Analysis of the statistical tests suggests that while the nail boys were eating food in the nailery at the same rate as other enslaved people ate food in their dwellings, the boys were not processing, cooking, and storing food at the same rate as others. In fact they were barely processing, cooking, or storing food at all. This makes logical sense, as 10 to 16-year-old boys were not expected to process, cook, and store food; these activities were the purview of the female, even in slave households (Schwartz 2000:172). Although the nail boys did not participate in dietary production, they did engage in the consumption of food and related objects, an activity routinely done in households.

These data, combined with historical documentation, suggest that the nail boys were eating in the nailery during the work week, but were still participating in their parents’ or relatives’ households as consumers of the dietary production work done in those households. The boys were not creating a fully functioning household of their own; if they had been, a much stronger presence of utilitarian ceramics would have been seen in the archaeological record. The nail boys may have also been sleeping in the nailery.
although this is not likely to be proven archaeologically due to the loss of direct lines of evidence. Perishable materials, like the cloth sacks that were used as bedding, have not survived in the archaeological record of the nailery.

Further evidence of the nail boys living in the nailery may come from Jefferson’s records in his Farm Book. Jefferson cataloged handouts of meat and bread rations, clothing, blankets, and shoes, and often grouped the slaves by household and sometimes denoted this with brackets. In many of these inventories the nail boys are listed together and are sometimes bracketed separately from other households. The bread list of May 1797 (Figure 5.28) shows the names of 15 nail boys together in one bracket. Next to the bracket is the number 15, indicating one ration of bread per nail boy (Jefferson 2003b).

The boys engaged in some activities characteristic of households, particularly the consumption of food and associated goods. Perhaps relatives brought food, and therefore tableware and teaware ceramics, glass, and utensils, to the boys at mealtimes, or the boys went to their relatives’ homes and brought the food and food-related artifacts back. Future research should investigate the variety of wares and decorations found in the nailery to determine if the ceramics were coming from multiple households. Perhaps cross-mends or decoration matches between the nailery and other domestic sites can also support the suggestion that ceramics were coming into the nailery from a variety of dwellings. Cross-mends between ceramics from the nailery and Building 1 may lend credence to the hypothesis that some nail boys lived in the storehouse. Other statistical analyses may show more similarities in the activities taking place in both the nailery and Building 1, further supporting the idea of a connection between the buildings. In addition, analysis of the distribution maps shows that domestic activities were taking place
primarily in the eastern half of the nailery. Future research should investigate the
distribution of glass, utensils, and different ceramic ware types within the nailery to learn
if there are any strong differences in their locations.

Figure 5.28 Jefferson’s 1797 Bread List from page 52 of his Farm Book. The nail boys
are listed together and bracketed separately from other households in the “Monticello”
column. Original manuscript from The Coolidge Collection of Thomas Jefferson
Manuscripts at the Massachusetts Historical Society. Image courtesy of the
There is likely no one definitive reason why the nail boys did not engage in a higher level of householdness in the nailery; instead, a complex combination of many different factors is likely the cause. The boys’ young ages and gender were probably strong influences on their activities, just as the age and gender of modern people affect their actions today. This hypothesis could be tested by comparing these results to information about food production in Mulberry Row’s Weaver’s Cottage, a standing structure once used as a workshop by a group of young enslaved women. Archaeological data cannot be obtained for this structure because it is still standing today, so any analyses are limited to historical documents. Another hypothesis is that because Jefferson provisioned the boys with food, they may not have needed to participate in food production. Jefferson may have even recognized that with their high workload they would not have had time to procure and prepare food. The boys may have taken the unprocessed food back to their families so it could be turned into an edible meal. Although direct evidence of this is not likely to be found in any documents, further documentary research could reveal similar situations at Monticello or other contemporary plantations.
Chapter 6:

Conclusion

The analyses presented in this thesis demonstrate that the boys who labored in Monticello’s nailery engaged in the consumption of food and associated ceramic, glass, and utensil goods. The consumption of food and goods suggests that the boys spent a great deal of time in the workshop, ate several meals a day there, and as a result had to participate in some household tasks. In this sense, they engaged in a low, but important, level of householdness. Our modern society views the idea of children living apart from their guardians as inappropriate but it may have been quite common in colonial and early America.

The nail boys were likely transitioning from being children dependent on their parents and relatives to young adults who took on the pressure of learning to live apart from the family group. All children must go through a similar transition, but slave children had to learn to live more independently much earlier than modern children. Enslaved people were considered adults around age 12, which greatly limited any sort of “childhood” that they might have had. Unfortunately, archaeological studies of slave children are very scarce, leading to an incomplete understanding of their daily lives and labor.
Much is known about the lives of the individual nail boys because of Jefferson’s detailed records and letters. We know the names of many of the boys’ parents and siblings, what occupations the boys had as adults, who they married, the names of their children and grandchildren, and which of Jefferson’s plantations they lived on during adulthood. Very little, however, is known about their lives as nailers. What we know comes mostly from letters written by Jefferson, his relatives, and his overseers. These accounts do not discuss the boys’ living arrangements, involvement in domestic tasks, or participation in children’s activities, such as playing. This research is the first to investigate what these individuals experienced in their youth and helps flush out the fascinating story of Monticello’s slaves that began with a review of historical documents.

This thesis has given rise to many new questions and avenues for future research. As mentioned previously, much work can be done to better illuminate the relationship between the nailery and Building I, the storehouse for iron and a possible slave dwelling. The high abundance of Chinese porcelain at the nailery should be explored to better understand why young boys used such fancy ceramics in a workshop. Documentary references to food production at Monticello’s Weaver’s Cottage can be examined to learn if the gender of the nail boys influenced their participation in domestic tasks. Further study of historical documents at Monticello and other contemporary plantations may provide insight into the occurrence of enslaved children living away from adult relatives but who continue to participate in the domestic production done by their relatives. The distribution of artifacts within and around the nailery should be studied in more detail to find patterns related to the domestic use of the structure. New research should study the abundances of nailery artifacts based on artifact weight, estimated vessel equivalents, or
minimum number of vessels. The results of that research should be compared to the analyses presented in this thesis to correct for biases in the count data used here. With more time, weight data can be collected for the smallest nailery sherds and perhaps more cross-mends can be found among the nailery sherds, allowing for weight, EVE, and MNV analyses. Finally, future research should focus on identifying other domestic activities that took place in and around the nailery. Recent studies at Monticello have examined archaeological evidence for the sweeping of the yards surrounding slave dwellings (Elizabeth Sawyer, personal communication 2011). Slaves on many plantations used the yard surrounding their dwellings for a variety of activities, including food preparation, cleaning, and gardening (Armstrong 1990; Battle 2004; Edwards 1998; Heath and Bennett 2000). Perhaps the nail boys used the yard around the nailery for domestic activities or play. A study focusing on what, if any, activities took place in the yard surrounding the nailery could help further our understanding of the activities and lifeways of enslaved children.

The results of this research will be uploaded to The Digital Archaeological Archive of Comparative Slavery (DAACS), a web-based initiative developed by Monticello archaeologists with the goal of enhancing inter-site archaeological research. The website, www.daacs.org, offers access to historical background, explanations of previous archaeological fieldwork and interpretation, site maps, chronologies, and the descriptions and measurements of every single artifact from 33 individual sites located in the Chesapeake, Carolinas, and the Caribbean. In mid-2011, the nailery data will be uploaded to DAACS. During spring 2011 I will write the historical background and excavation and interpretive history sections for the nailery and adjacent blacksmith shop
and help prepare the rest of the data to be put online. Writing and posting this information on the DAACS website is the last step of this thesis project. The availability of the data presented above will make the results of this thesis more readily accessible to researchers and other interested people, and foster more interest in the roles and lives of enslaved children.

This thesis project has the potential to not only provide new information about a part of Monticello’s history, but also to enhance understanding of the great variety in the level of household activity among past groups. It will also shed light on the lives of slave children, who are rarely studied and are underrepresented in interpretive materials. Since the results of this project will be available on DAACS, I hope that this research can serve as a catalyst for future interest in slave children and their roles in households.
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Wilkie, Laurie


Young, Amy L., Michael Tuma and Cliff Jenkins
Appendix A: Counts of Ceramics by Ware Type

Table A1.1 Counts of Creamware, Chinese Porcelain, Pearlware, and Dutch/British Delftware.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Creamware</th>
<th>Chinese Porcelain</th>
<th>Pearlware</th>
<th>Delftware, Dutch/British</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nailery</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacksmith Shop</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building r, Early Phase</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>516</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRS-2, Phase 1</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRS-2, Phase 2</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site 17</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>424</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building s, Phase 1</td>
<td>916</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>1560</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building s, Phase 2</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>641</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site 7, Phase 1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site 7, Phase 2</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>46</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Site 7, Phase 3</td>
<td>716</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
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<td>Building l, Middle Phase</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>569</td>
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<td>Drywell, Phase 1</td>
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<td>164</td>
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<td>Drywell, Phase 2</td>
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<td>114</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site 8, House 1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site 8, Phase 3a</td>
<td>455</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site 8, Phase 3b</td>
<td>644</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Building o, Phase 2</td>
<td>1530</td>
<td>802</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building o, Phase 3</td>
<td>548</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>347</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Hemings</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stewart-Watkins</td>
<td>1680</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>1535</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Appendix A (Continued)

Table A1.2 Counts of White Salt Glaze, English Bone China Porcelain, Porcellaneous English Hard Paste, and Westerwald.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>White Salt Glaze</th>
<th>English Bone China Porcelain</th>
<th>Porcellaneous English Hard Paste</th>
<th>Westerwald</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nailery</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacksmith Shop</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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Appendix A (Continued)

Table A1.3 Counts of Whieldon-Type Ware, Black Basalt, Astbury-Type, Faience.

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<th>Site</th>
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<th>Astbury-Type</th>
<th>Faience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
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<td>Blacksmith Shop</td>
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<td>0</td>
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</tr>
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<td>9</td>
</tr>
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<td>0</td>
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</tr>
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Appendix A (Continued)

Table A1.4 Counts of Staffordshire Brown Stoneware, Jasperware, Jackfield Type, and Canary Ware.

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<th>Staffordshire Brown Stoneware</th>
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<th>Canary Ware</th>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacksmith Shop</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
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<td>MRS-2, Phase 1</td>
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<td>0</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
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<td>Site 8, Phase 3b</td>
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Appendix A (Continued)

Table A1.5 Counts of Whiteware, Nottingham, Rosso Antico, and Wedgwood Green.

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<th>Whiteware</th>
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<th>Rosso Antico</th>
<th>Wedgwood Green</th>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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### Table A1.6 Counts of American Stoneware, British Stoneware, Redware, and Buckley.

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<th>Buckley</th>
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Appendix A (Continued)

Table A1.7 Counts of Fulham Type, German Stoneware, and Staffordshire Mottled Glaze.

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<td>Blacksmith Shop</td>
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<td>Site 8, House 1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site 8, Phase 3a</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Hemings</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
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</table>
Appendix A (Continued)

Table A1.8 Counts of Iberian Ware, North Midlands/Staffordshire Slipware, and Frechen Brown.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Iberian Ware</th>
<th>North Midlands/Staffordshire Slipware</th>
<th>Frechen Brown</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacksmith Shop</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building r, Early Phase</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
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Table A1.9 Counts of Yellow Ware, Ironstone/White Granite, and Bennington/Rockingham.

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Appendix B: Comparative Sites

Site 7 – Site 7 was an overseer’s home located on the ridge of Monticello mountain as it slopes down toward the east. It made up one settlement with Site 8, located only feet away. It was in use as the quarter farm’s single domestic site, used by both overseers and slaves, during the era of Peter Jefferson’s (Thomas Jefferson’s father) Shadwell Plantation. As mentioned, the area was home to an overseer during the Monticello Plantation period, and was in use from c. 1770 until c. 1805. Documentary evidence suggests Samuel Biddle, overseer from 1793-1794, lived in that structure. Site 7 was discovered in 1997 during the Monticello Plantation Archaeological Survey and excavations were done in 1997-1999 and 2004 and 2006 by Monticello Department of Archaeology staff. The deposits for this site were located in the plowzone, so the site could not be split into phases using the DAACS method. However, the site was phased for the purposes of this research and Phase 3, with an MCD of 1786, was included as a comparison site (Karen Smith, personal communication 2010).
Site 8 – Site 8 was a domestic site located 130 feet from Site 7. This site once housed enslaved field hands and was occupied between 1770 and 1800. Although this site was not phased using the DAACS formula because it only had one stratigraphic group (plowzone), it was phased by Monticello archaeologists through Correspondence Analysis. Phases H1 (House 1), 3a, and 3b were used for this research. Phase H1 had an MCD of 1789, and Phase 3a had an MCD of 1807 and Phase 3b showed an MCD of 1792.

Building o – Building o is a Mulberry Row slave quarter site dating to c. 1770-1800, a period that coincides with the construction and occupation of the first Monticello mansion. Evidence also indicates a possible post-1800 occupation. Fragments of stone foundation provide evidence for two distinct construction phases. The first phase consisted of a log cabin built in the 1770s and used until its destruction in the 1790s, after which Building o, as described in the 1796 Mutual Assurance Society plat, was constructed. This slave quarter was also made of wood and had a large stone-lined cellar and a small brick root cellar. Building o was excavated in 1981-1982 by Kelso. The site was divided into five DAACS phases. During this study, Phases 2 and 3 were used for comparison to the nailery. The MCD of Phase 2 is 1785, and the MCD of Phase 3 is 1792.
Dry Well – This deep pit was located between the mansion’s South Dependency and Mulberry Row, in the area known as the West Kitchen Yard. The dry well was used as a cool, dry food storage pit. This feature was initially discovered by Kelso in 1979 and he led the full excavation in 1980-1981. West Kitchen Yard Phases 1 and 2, which represent the dry well and several other deposits, were relabeled as Dry Well Phases 1 and 2 for the purposes of this research. The MCD of Phase 1 is 1776 and the Phase 2 MCD is 1782.

MRS-2 – Mulberry Row Structure 2, known as MRS-2, was a domestic structure that was not located on any of Jefferson’s maps and not mentioned in any other letters or documents. It was probably occupied during the late 1780s and 1790s, and possibly into the early 1800s. A large sub-floor pit or small cellar was found, along with domestic debris. It is currently unknown whether MRS-2 housed slaves or free white workers; the sub-floor pit/cellar was much larger than other sub-floor pits found in known slave dwellings on Mulberry Row, possibly indicating a free-person occupation (Clites and McCray 2010). Phases 1 and 2 were used in this analysis. Phase 1 has an MCD of 1789 and Phase 2 has an MCD of 1811 (Karen Smith, personal communication 2010).
Blacksmith Shop – The blacksmith shop on Mulberry Row was identified in 1957 by Pi-Sunyer. Kelso led the complete excavation in 1982-1983. The blacksmith’s shop was excavated as one site with the attached nailery. The excavation revealed a cobble floor and many metal artifacts. For this research, the blacksmith shop’s quadrats were separated from the nailery’s quadrats in order to isolate both structures. The MCD for this site is 1792.

Stewart-Watkins – The Stewart-Watkins site is the remnants of a log home with a stone foundation, brick and stone chimney base, stone hearth, and a cellar. It is located approximately 650 feet south-southwest of the western edge of Mulberry Row on the southern slope of Monticello mountain. The building may have been constructed around 1799 or 1800 for blacksmith Mr. Powel, who never actually resided at Monticello. William Stewart, a blacksmith, began living there in 1801 with his family, and he lived there until his dismissal around 1807. Elisha Watkins, a carpenter, was the next occupant of the site and lived in the house between Autumn 1808 and 1810. The house appears to have been abandoned and building dismantled after Watkins left. The site was initially investigated by William Boyer in 1981 and Kelso directed a more complete excavation in 1989-1991. The MCD of this site is 1796; the early date of the MCD compared to known occupation dates is caused by the well-used ceramics found at the site, which demonstrate the low economic position that white laborers had.
Appendix B (Continued)

Building r – Building r was a log slave quarter built c. 1794 on Mulberry Row and occupied until the sale of Monticello in 1831. The building was intended to house a single family and probably looked very similar to Buildings s and t. Interestingly, documents point to Critta Hemings (sister to Sally Hemings) and John Hemings (brother to Sally Hemings) and his wife Priscilla as residents of Building r. The remains of this structure, excavated by Kelso in 1983, were heavily disturbed during the construction of twentieth-century parking lots. For the abundance index analysis the Early Phase (Phase E) was used. This phase was created by combining Phases 1 and 2, which had the same MCD. The MCD for Phase E in this analysis was calculated to be 1799.

Building s – Building s was another single family log slave quarter on Mulberry Row and built in the mid-1790s. It may have stood until Jefferson’s death in 1826. The excellent preservation of this structure revealed a 12’ by 14’ stone foundation, a packed-earth floor, a stone chimney base, and a wood-lined subfloor pit. Sally Hemings may have lived in Building s upon her return from France; this would have enabled her to be close to her sister Critta (resident of Building r). A French delft medicine jar found at Building s supports this hypothesis. Kelso led the excavation of this building in 1983 and noted some damage from twentieth-century road grading, although enough of the structure remained to provide evidence of its layout and appearance. Phases 1 and 2 were used as comparison sites in the abundance indices. The MCD of Phase 1 is 1798 and the MCD of Phase 2 is 1812.
Site 17 – This is an overseer’s house located down the mountain slope in Bell Field. Jefferson’s documents and maps suggest that this site was occupied by Edmund Bacon, who was overseer from 1806-1822. Site 17 was excavated in 2009 and 2010 by a joint partnership between Washington and Lee University and Monticello Department of Archaeology. The excavation was led by Alison Bell and no significant architectural remains were found. The short occupation of the site and the site’s single plowzone stratigraphic layer prevented it from being separated into phases for this study. The MCD for Site 17 is 1797.

Building I – Building I, the storehouse for nailrod and iron, was used for multiple purposes over its lifetime from the mid-1790s to 1826. Evidence indicates that this Mulberry Row structure was used as a tinsmithing shop, a nailery, a slave quarter, and place to store nailrod. This log building was excavated partially by Pi-Sunyer in 1957 and fully by Kelso in 1981. The excavations revealed a partial cobble and brick floor and the base of a forge. The “Middle” Phase was used for comparison in the Abundance Indices and it has an MCD of 1797. This phase was created by a combination of DAACS Phases 3, 4, and 5, which had very close MCD dates of 1795, 1797, and 1796 consecutively.
Elizabeth Hemings – The Elizabeth Hemings site represents the home where the enslaved matriarch of the Hemings clan spent the last 10 years of her life from c. 1795 to her death in 1807. The house, located on southern slopes about 350 feet south of Mulberry Row, was constructed of logs and had a brick and stone chimney. It was excavated during three field schools in 1981, 1995, and 1996. These field schools were led by William Boyer, Susan Kern, and Fraser Neiman, respectively. The MCD of this site is 1797.