Survey Report: African American Historic Resources, City of Chesapeake, Virginia

2010

Virginia Department of Historic Resources
Tidewater Regional Preservation Office
14415 Old Courthouse Way, 2nd Floor
Newport News, Virginia 23608

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WMCAR Project No. 09-19

PREPARED FOR:

Virginia Department of Historic Resources
Tidewater Regional Preservation Office
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Abstract

In the summer and fall of 2009, the William and Mary Center for Archaeological Research conducted reconnaissance and intensive architectural surveys of properties associated with African American history in the City of Chesapeake. Limited to a total of twenty reconnaissance surveys and four intensive surveys, the study is by no means exhaustive. Instead, the documentation effort was intended to provide a baseline of information to accompany a preliminary information form (PIF) for a multiple property thematic National Register listing of African American historic resources within the City of Chesapeake and form a foundation for future research on these resources.

Certainly one of the challenges faced in evaluating these resources lies in the sad fact that, historically, African Americans constructed buildings and structures that have become part of an anonymous landscape, making it difficult to locate and identify such built resources. This hidden history is due in part to the heritage of slavery, but also to the fact that in many respects black and white building traditions have shared many common characteristics with regard to building types, materials, and styles. In a society where black and white were, according to law, two races "separate but equal," African Americans established their own communities whether in an urban neighborhoods or rural crossroads. Generally, these areas included basic institutions such as churches, schools, fraternal lodges, as well as houses, commercial and business districts, and cemeteries. Of the properties documented through reconnaissance and intensive surveys, the survey team found representative examples of various building types such as dwellings, churches, schools, and cemeteries. The report provides recommendations and general guidelines for future research on African American architectural resources in the City of Chesapeake.

Acknowledgments

We are grateful to the citizens of Chesapeake and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR) for their joint sponsorship of this study. Many thanks are due to Chesapeake Senior Planner Mark Shea for his advice and support, which included providing cartographic and previous survey data, facilitating site visits, and introducing us to helpful contacts in the community. We also thank Chesapeake Historical Commission member George Nicholos for input at the initial project meeting. Pat Vredenburg, of the Wallace Room of the Chesapeake Public Library, enthusiastically supported the project and volunteered several hours of research among the cartographic collections and other documentary sources at the library. The staff at VDHR provided useful comments, guidance, and assistance throughout the study. In the Richmond Central Office, we would like to recognize the assistance and guidance of former Survey and Planning Cost-Share Program Manager Susan Smead, Archivist Quatro Hubbard, and Architecture Inventory Manager Jeff Smith. In the Tidewater Regional Preservation Office, we are thankful to Architectural Historian Pamela Schenian for suggestions of documentary sources, helpful review comments, and flexibility in the face of this project's unique challenges. Several individuals shared insights and expertise in the African American history of Chesapeake, including Dr. Tommy Bogger, Director of the Harrison B. Wilson Archives, Norfolk State University; Mae Breckenridge-Haywood, President of the African American Historical Society of Portsmouth, Inc.; John and Gloria Creekmurr; Raymond Jones, radio broadcaster and local historian; Sam Leary, Chesapeake Historic Preservation Commission member; and Victor and Lori Pickett.

At the William and Mary Center for Archaeological Research, Director Joe B. Jones and Project Manager David W. Lewes provided general supervision of the study. Reconnaissance and intensive survey was completed by Architectural Historian Meg Greene Malvasi and Field Assistant Amy Garrett. Ms. Malvasi compiled this survey report as well as a preliminary information form (PIF) for a multiple property listing of African American historic resources in Chesapeake. Project Archaeologist Dr. Elizabeth J. Monroe made significant contributions to this study by conducting background historical research, assessing archaeological research potential, and writing the historical context portion of this report. Mr. Lewes was responsible for production of the report, and GIS Specialist Eric Agin prepared the final illustrations.

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1: Introduction

Background and Purpose

From August 2009 through December 2009, the William and Mary Center for Archaeological Research (WMCAR) conducted reconnaissance-level architectural survey of twenty properties and intensive-level architectural survey of four properties in the City of Chesapeake to document various types of architectural resources associated with African American history in the area dating from approximately 1775 until 1975. (Figures 1 and 2). The project was sponsored by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR) and the City of Chesapeake through a cost-share agreement reached in 2008. This documentation effort was designed to provide a baseline of information to accompany a preliminary information form (PIF) for a multiple property thematic National Register listing of African American historic resources within the City of Chesapeake and form a foundation for future research on these resources. Project findings also provide a foundation for future research and preservation of these resources.

Physical boundaries of the study area were limited to the current political boundary of the City of Chesapeake, encompassing 341 square miles (see Figure 1). Areas surveyed during the course of the project ranged from small rural communities to suburban neighborhoods and urban areas along the northern limits of the city. The overwhelming majority of resources are found near or in small communities or neighborhoods that have historically been associated with African Americans.

Setting

Chesapeake is an independent city located in the Upper Coastal Plain region of southeastern Virginia It is also part of the low-lying area between the Fall Line (upper limit of riverine navigation) and the Atlantic coast known historically as Tidewater. The city is bounded by North Carolina to the south, the City of Suffolk to the west, the Cities of Portsmouth and Norfolk to the north, and the City of Virginia Beach to the east. In the northern portion of Chesapeake, the Elizabeth River, its Western and Eastern Branches, and several tributary creeks, drain into the James River and Chesapeake Bay, while the Northwest River and smaller streams drain from the southern part of the city toward the Albemarle Sound. The Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway traverses Chesapeake up the main (south) branch of the Elizabeth River and then eastward to the North Landing River, which flows southeastward along the Virginia Beach line toward the Albemarle Sound. While the city's diverse landscape comprises few urban areas, numerous clusters of suburban development punctuate large tracts of farmland, forests, and wetlands. The most striking feature of Chesapeake's landscape is the Great Dismal Swamp, 200,000 acres of poorly drained, forested peat that extend across the southwestern quarter of Chesapeake into Suffolk and North Carolina. Most of this unique natural habitat is protected as a national wildlife refuge (Jones et al. 1992:1–2). At its center is 1,300-acre Lake Drummond. Since the eighteenth century, large

portions of the swamp have been drained by the Great Dismal Swamp Canal and other canals and ditches, for use as farmland.

The City of Chesapeake was formed in 1963 by a political consolidation of the City of South Norfolk with former Norfolk County, which was founded in 1691. Chesapeake is the second-largest city by land area in the Commonwealth of Virginia; however, among 95 counties and 39 independent cities, Chesapeake ranked forty-second in population density in 2000. The estimated total population for 2006 was 220,560 persons. In 2000 whites comprised 66.9 percent of the city's population, African Americans 28.5 percent, and other minorities each made up less than 2 percent. Colonial settlement replaced the local Native American population beginning in the late seventeenth century. Despite its lengthy history and proximity of major natural harbors to the north along the Norfolk waterfront, the area of Chesapeake remained largely rural until suburban development accelerated dramatically in the second half of the twentieth century (University of Virginia Geospatial Research Center 2003).

Methods

A number of approaches were taken to conduct this study. In preparation for the field survey, historic maps of the city were studied, as were histories of the city and surrounding area. Meetings with city officials were used to compile a preliminary list of potential resources to visit. Windshield surveys were conducted in order to identify areas where potential African American architectural resources might be still standing and to assess the architectural integrity of available resources in those areas (Figure 3). The survey team also relied on information provided by local residents and researchers that helped to pinpoint specific locations and, in many cases, made possible positive identification of potential resources.

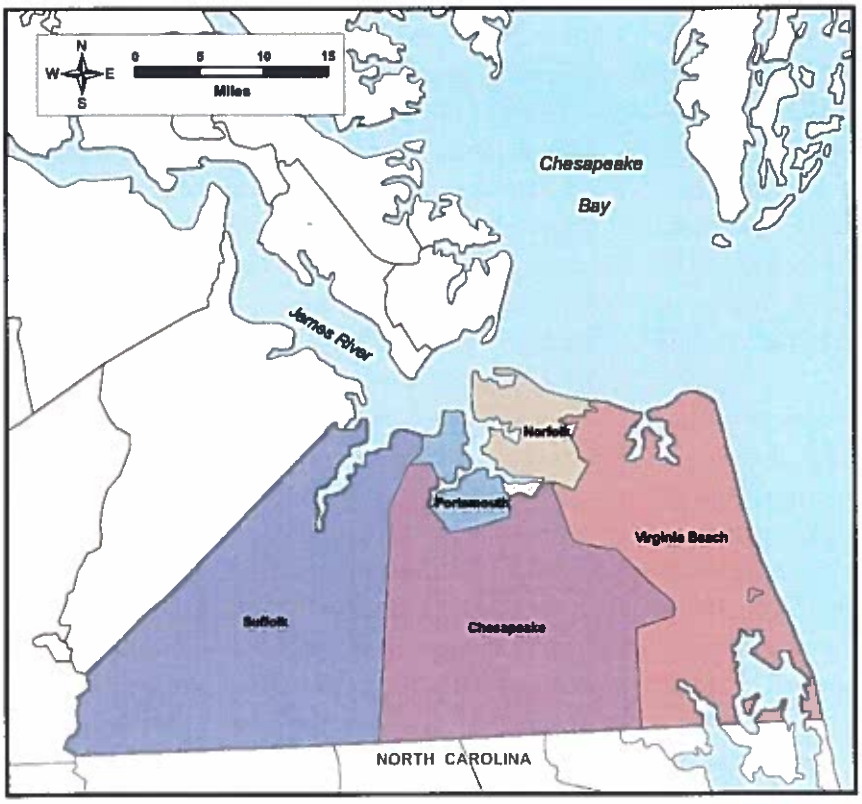

Figure 1. Location of Chesapeake.

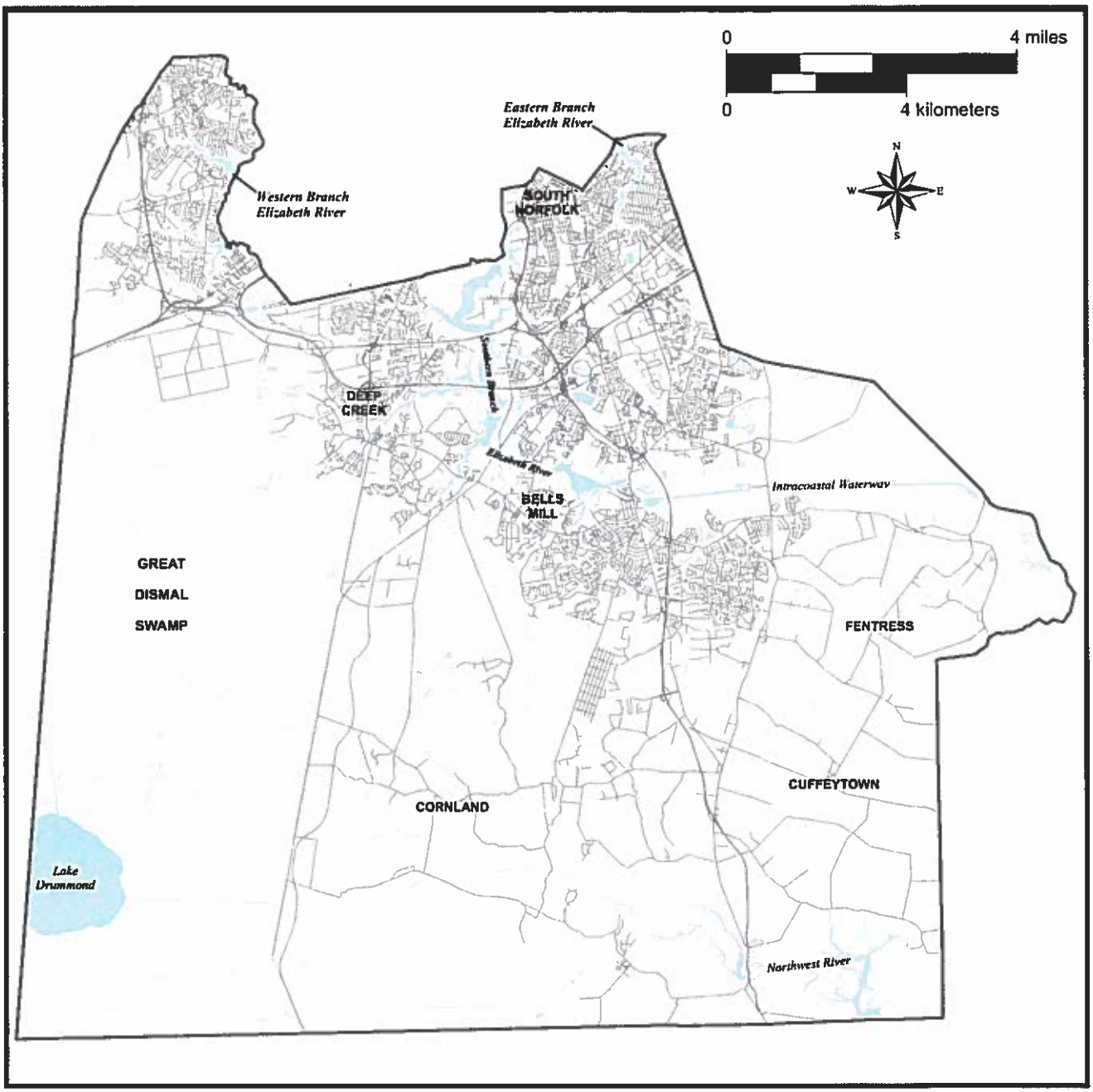

Figure 2. Chesapeake environs and major historic African American communities.

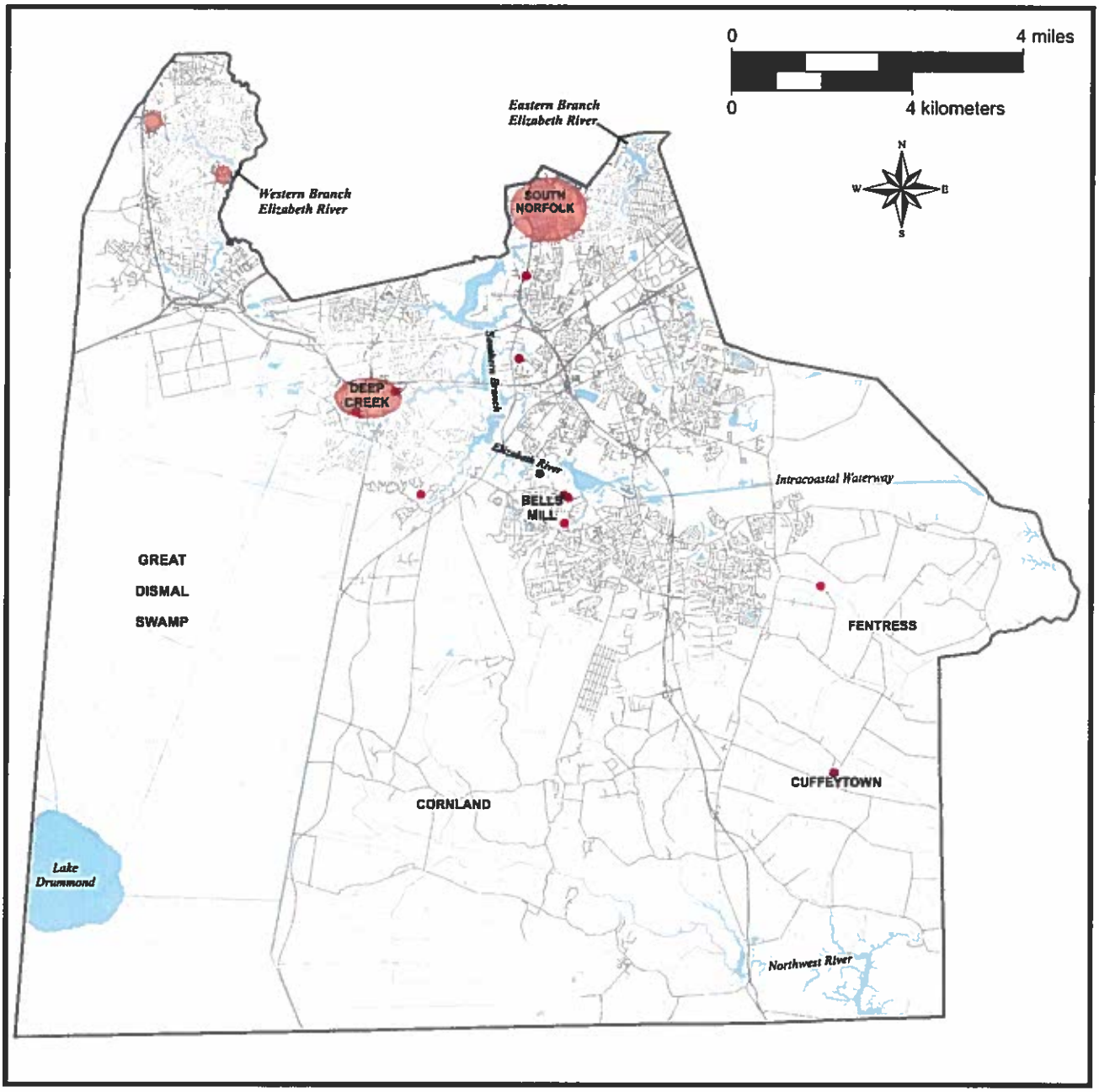

Figure 3. Location of windshield survey areas.

Historical cartographic research supplemented by current aerial photography played a major role in locating schools and other historic public buildings and sites. Documentary sources such as school board records, for example, often referred to a building merely by the name of the community where it was located, without specifying an exact address. In other instances, where addresses were provided in documentary sources, the name of the street and the street address numbering had changed, making identification in the field difficult, especially where later development had obscured the visibility of historic buildings. Using an 1887 map of Norfolk County, early twentieth-century topographic maps, and Sanborn insurance maps and road maps from the 1920s to 1950s, the historical researcher was able to pinpoint precise locations of numerous resources (Figures 4 and 5). The historical map showing the location of a potentially relevant resource then was compared or overlaid with high resolution aerial photography from Google Earth, as well as aerial and parcel coverage in the City of Chesapeake's Property Quicksearch GIS, in order to ascertain whether the historic building still existed and to discover the current address for field survey.

During the course of the project, the scope of work had to be modified to reflect the realities discovered within the survey area. The process of identifying resources was more challenging than anticipated at the outset of the project. Not only were there fewer historic standing resources than expected; it was also difficult to find the precise locations of the ones that survived. Given the amount of historical background research involved, the project sponsors and WMCAR agreed that the field survey and documentation effort would be adjusted accordingly. Between 20 to 28 architectural resources would be recorded at the reconnaissance level and four particularly significant and representative resources would be surveyed at the intensive level.

It was also agreed that the parameters of significance for the PIF also should be modified. Patterns of late twentieth-century suburban development have obscured the early architectural fabric of many historically African American communities. In addition, many examples of significant building types such as schools, early churches, houses, and businesses have been lost to decay or later development. As fewer historic architectural resources with good integrity have survived than anticipated at the outset of the project, the universe of properties that could contribute to the multiple property listing PIF was expanded to include archaeological sites as well as architectural resources less than fifty years of age. The decision to expand the period of significance to 1975 takes into account the importance of the Civil Rights Movement. By including this diverse range of resources, the case for significance of a multiple property nomination is greatly enhanced and more fully reflects the experience and contributions of African Americans in the history of Chesapeake.

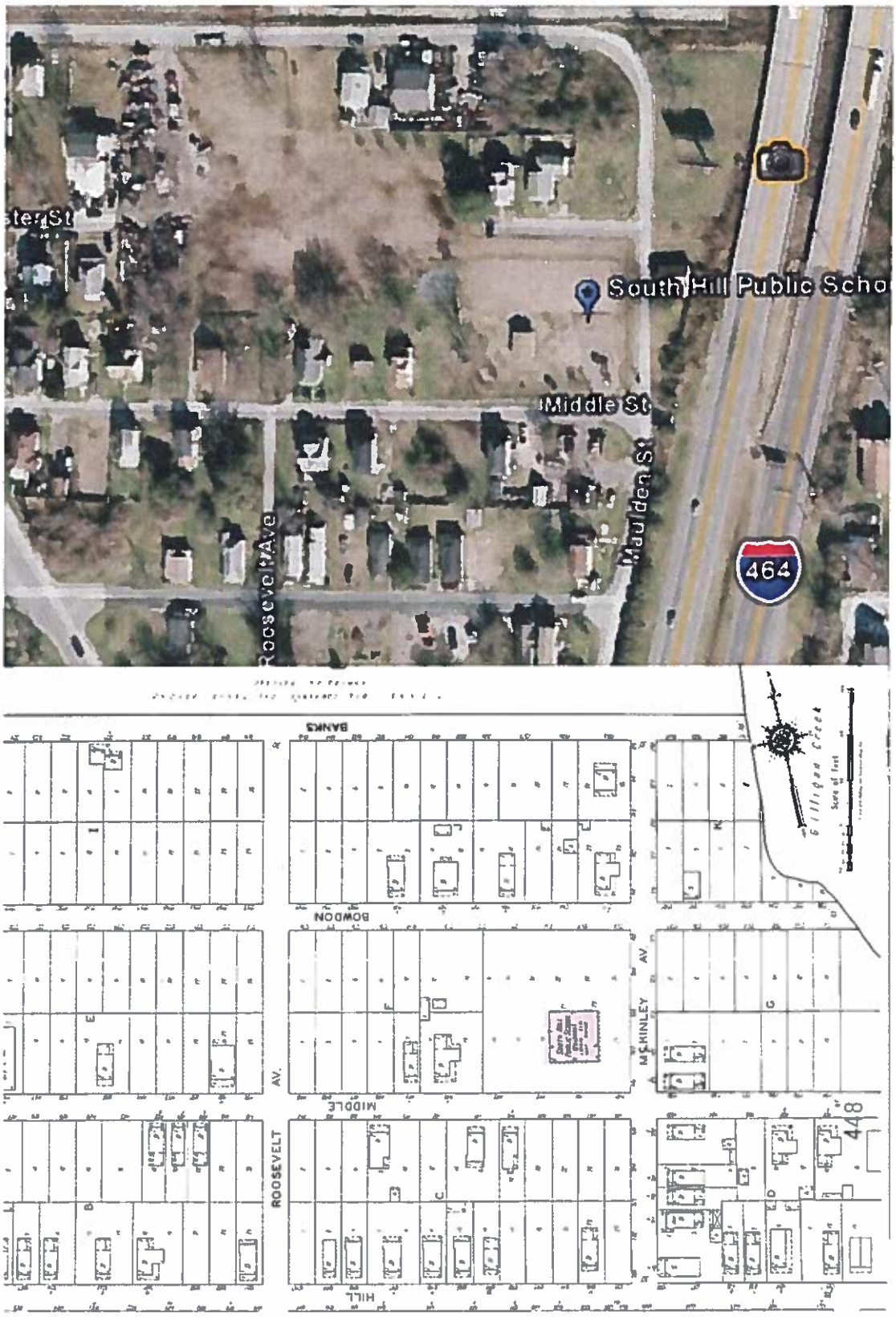

Figure 4. Example of cartographic research using a 1928 Sanborn insurance map and 2010 Google Earth aerial imagery to locate the site of the African American South Hill Public School.

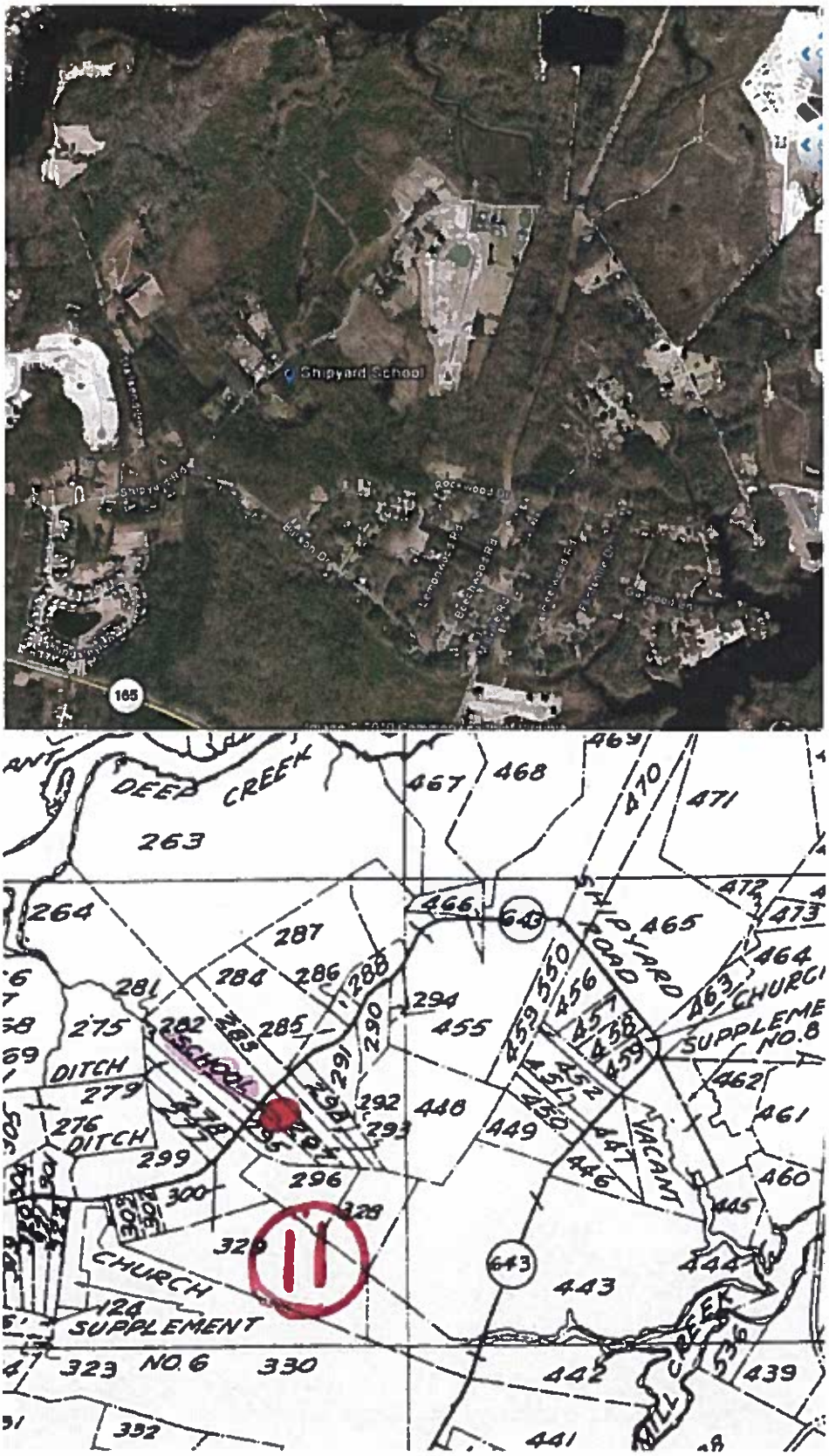

Figure 5. Example of cartographic research using a 1939 Norfolk County road map and 2010 Google Earth aerial imagery to locate the site of the African American Shipyard School.

2: Historical Context

The following historical context for the City of Chesapeake is drawn primarily from two sources. The first is the Crosses' pictorial history, which comprises a brief chronological narrative illuminated with numerous anecdotes, drawings, sketches, maps, and photographs of the City of Chesapeake (Cross and Cross 1985). The second source for much of the following material is Rogers D. Whichard's history of Lower Tidewater Virginia (Whichard 1959). Whichard's history is a three-volume work incorporating the histories of old Norfolk, Princess Anne, Isle of Wight, and Elizabeth City counties, and the Cities of Hampton, Norfolk, Portsmouth, South Norfolk, Virginia Beach, Newport News, and Smithfield. These sources serve as a framework for the history of the region that encompasses Chesapeake. Additional sources have been used to supply details about the African American experience in Chesapeake and its environs. This is not intended to be an exhaustive history of the region, but a historical context tailored to this specific project.

The VDHR has defined seven chronological periods covering the state's history from 1607 to the present. The following overview is organized according to the VDHR headings, but there are subheadings adapted from the Cross and Cross and Whichard histories that allow for the discussion of trends or periods of particular importance to the City of Chesapeake's past.

Settlement to Society (1607–1750)

The Virginia Company and the Establishment of Lower Norfolk County (1607–1637)

In April 1607, the Virginia Company of London established the first permanent English settlement in the Americas at Jamestown Island. Upon arrival, the colonists constructed a triangular-shaped fort with a wooden palisade. Within the enclave stood houses, storage buildings, and a chapel (McCartney 1997). Conditions were difficult in the new settlement. During the first few years, food shortages were continuous, and disease claimed as much as a third of the English population each year (Brown et al. 1986:113).

In 1619, the Virginia Company established Kiccotan/Kiccowtan (Elizabeth City) as one of four corporations or boroughs within the colony. The corporations of Charles City, James City, and Henrico lay to the west of Elizabeth City. The James River was the central corridor of transportation through the young colony, and it divided each corporation into a northern and southern half. (Elizabeth City originally encompassed the cites of Hampton, Chesapeake, Portsmouth, Norfolk, Virginia Beach, and a large portion of Suffolk). The Virginia Company authorized the governor of the colony to set aside within each corporation large tracts of "company" and "common" land as well as 100 acres for a glebe. The company land was intended for use by indentured servants in the employ of the Virginia Company, while common

lands were to be set aside for the support of the magistrate, the church, and the proposed college (McCartney 1997; Nugent 1992:I:xxii; Turner 1984:23–27).

The year 1619 is also notable as the date that a Dutch ship carrying African slaves stopped for provisions, trading slaves for food (Morgan 1975:105). These first African inhabitants of the British colony were incorporated into the community as indentured servants. By 1640, the institution of chattel slavery had been developed in the colony (Morgan 1975).

Prior to the mid-1620s, settlement of Elizabeth City centered around the north side of Hampton Roads, encompassing large portions of present-day Newport News and Hampton. Billings's map of English settlement in Virginia ca. 1607–1624 shows only four settlements contained within the corporate boundaries of Elizabeth City: Elizabeth City (Kecoughtan), Newport News, Blunt Point, and Nansemond, the latter being the only one located south of the James (Billings 1975:8). A census of Virginia settlements taken in 1624–1625 listed the population of the corporation of Elizabeth City at 859 people, a considerable increase from population estimates of the colony in 1616, which listed only 351 individuals (Cross and Cross 1985:16; Turner 1984:23). Despite the apparent growth in this and other corporations, the Virginia Company was beset by a lack of funds, a high mortality rate in the colony, and the division of its shareholders into rival factions. In 1624, the crown dissolved the company and placed the colony under royal control (Morgan 1975:100–101).

Land grant records are contained in the patent books of the Virginia State Land Office, which began in 1623 with the recording of a few miscellaneous grants from previous years. The most complete records begin with the dissolution of the Virginia Company in 1624, and it is at this time that we see the first tracts taken up south of Hampton Roads along the banks of rivers and other navigable waterways (Nugent 1992:I; Stewart 1902:21–22). The sequence of these tracts begins in present-day Norfolk at Willoughby's Spit, proceeds west to Seawell's Point, and then south to the Lafayette River. The records list patents for 100 acres to Thomas Willoughby; 100 acres to Thomas Chapman; 200 acres to Thomas Breewood; 100 acres to John Downman; 250 acres to John Sipsey; and 200 acres to Lt. John Cheesman (Whichard 1959:105). Also included in this list were two earlier references dated to 1620: a patent for 650 acres to Capt. William Tucker (on Seawell's Point adjacent to a creek) and an application for land on the Elizabeth River by John Wood, shipbuilder, because "thereon is timber fitting for trade, and water sufficient to launch such ships as small be built for the use and service of the company" (Whichard 1959:105–106).

By 1632, the population of the Virginia colony was estimated to be about 5,000 persons, and the decision was made to divide the colony into local units of government. In 1634, eight political divisions (shires) were created from the existing corporations, plantations, and hundreds in Virginia: Charles City, Henrico, James City, Elizabeth City, Warwick River, Charles River, Warrosquoyacke, and Accomack (Cross and Cross 1985:17; Nugent 1992:I:xxi). The creation of the Elizabeth City shire spurred a second wave of immigration to this area in 1635, when a substantial number of patents were recorded. Some of the more prominent persons include Thomas Lambert (100 acres), Cornelius Loyd (1,600 acres), Adam Thorowgood (5,950 acres), and Thomas Willoughby (900 acres). Based on the above land grants, it appears that settlement of this area spread from the Western Branch of the Elizabeth River before mid-year, along the river itself by mid-year, at Lynnhaven during the second half of the year, and finally along the Southern Branch of the Elizabeth River and the Bay Shore by the end of the year (Whichard 1959:223–224).

By 1636, the population of the Virginia colony had increased by almost 50% from the previous

estimate in 1632. Since much of this increase had occurred in the southern part of Elizabeth City County, it became necessary to establish a new county for the administration of that area. Its territory was divided along the James River, forming Elizabeth City on the north side of the river, and New Norfolk County on the south side. Only a year after its formation, New Norfolk County was subdivided into Upper and Lower Norfolk counties. Lower Norfolk County included the land located nearest the seacoast and the James River's mouth, while the westerly/upstream portion became Upper Norfolk County (later Nansemond County) (Whichard 1959:223–224).

Cultural resources dating to this period are likely to be rare within the boundaries of the City of Chesapeake; none is currently recorded in the VDHR archives. The continuing concentration of population/development along the shores of the major rivers in the region has likely erased much of the earliest evidence of historic occupation.

The Establishment of Lower Norfolk County (1637–1691)

During the 65 years between the dissolution of the Virginia Company and England's Glorious Revolution, Virginia experienced a period of "expansion, social, political, and economic experimentation, and stabilization" while the colony's population grew from a few thousand to about 50,000 inhabitants. While lands along the major navigable waterways were being rapidly occupied, the interior of Lower Norfolk County, which consisted of land that was somewhat distant from navigable streams, was settled at a slower rate.

Soil fertility and access to transportation were primary factors in determining the location of settlement. Lower Norfolk County, located at the confluence of the many branches of the Elizabeth River, was unusually accessible to the early Virginia settlers. Nonetheless, a great need for roads and highways still existed. The precursor of modern Route 168 was a seventeenth-century road that connected the settlements in Norfolk County to Currituck County, North Carolina. This thoroughfare, called the "Great Road to Carolina," originated at Powder Point directly across the Eastern Branch of the Elizabeth River from the site of the town of Norfolk. The road followed a circuitous path from Powder Point to the Southern Branch of the Elizabeth River, where it was carried across by the "Great Bridge." From Great Bridge, the road would continue southward, meeting the Carolina border near the Northwest River. Although the actual date of its construction is unknown, a reference was made to it in a 1690 letter to the court officials of Norfolk County by Virginia Governor Francis Nicholson, who was concerned that its poor condition could prove detrimental to both the people of Norfolk County and Carolina (Cross and Cross 1985:25, 30, 38).

The initial push into this area was focused around the confluence of the Southern and Western branches of the Elizabeth River. According to Walter's (1972:6–7) published transcripts of Norfolk County land patents, a Robert Martyn was granted some 250 acres on the south side of the Eastern Branch of the Elizabeth River in October 1638, the earliest record of settlement south of present-day Norfolk and Virginia Beach. A more sustained influx of settlers into the region occurred after the Nansemond Indians were driven beyond the Roanoke in 1645 (Traver and Ralph 1989). Beginning in 1648, settlement filtered down the banks of the Southern and Western branches of the Elizabeth River, spreading to its various tributaries such as Deep Creek, St. Julians Creek, and Goose Creek by the early to mid-1670s (Bonney, Massey & Co. 1917; McIntosh 1922; Walter 1972). At this time, we begin to see the first patents for land where the Elizabeth and North Landing rivers meet (near Kempsville), though almost exclusively to the east of the river (Walter 1972).

After English settlement in the area by the mid-seventeenth century, few attempts were made to inhabit the area surrounding the Dismal Swamp

and the adjacent lowlands between Virginia and North Carolina. Early settlers were aware of the swamp's existence, but few attempts were made to settle within it or even to utilize its varied resources (Stewart 1979). In 1665, William Drummond, the governor of North Carolina, explored the swamp during a hunting trip and discovered the lake in its center that now bears his name. Nevertheless, this early visit to the swamp was solely exploratory. No serious thought was given to settling the swamp or exploiting its resources; however, the waters of Lake Drummond were highly prized as a medicinal remedy during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Hobbs and Paquette 1987:45).

The establishment of Lower Norfolk County in 1637 was soon followed by the establishment in 1639/1640 of two distinct parishes: Lynnhaven and Elizabeth River. (*Note: Years separated by slashes in this chapter reflect the discrepancy between the older Julian calendar and the modern Gregorian calendar, which was adopted by the British in the early eighteenth century.*) Their boundaries ran as follows: "beginning at the mouth of Little Creek in Chesapeake Bay (the present railway and vehicular terminal for Cape Charles), running up the main branch of Little Creek past the Municipal Airport to Lake Wright, thence to the head of the Western Branch of Lynnhaven River (the part called Thalia Creek), thence to the head of the Eastern Branch of Elizabeth River (present Kempsville), thence on both sides of that branch to Broad Creek and Indian River" (Whichard 1959:246). Each was originally defined to accommodate the need for an established church in Lower Norfolk County.

For the first quarter-century of its existence, the Lower Norfolk County Court had no permanent seat. The first recorded meeting of the court was held at Adam Thorowgood's home on the eastern portion of the Lynnhaven River in May 1637. Thereafter, its meeting place shifted from various landholder's homes along the Elizabeth River proper. By July 1640, court records began listing regular meetings at the home of William Shipp, situated on the north side of the river between Lambert's Point and Town Point. Thereafter, his name appears with increasing frequency as the seat of the county court. However, records also indicate that court sessions were still held, albeit infrequently, at Thorowgood's home on Lynnhaven River.

Attempts were made in March 1654/1655 to create a port or marketplace within each parish in the county, essentially formalizing both established meeting places. In addition to providing an official courthouse, these ports or marketplaces would have also contained churches, taverns ordinaries, and shops. Unfortunately, this legislation was soon after repealed by the House of Burgesses before the county could embark on the planned building (Whichard 1959:240–241). In early January 1660/1661, court justices struck a compromise and elected to erect an official Lower Norfolk County courthouse at the plantation site of Thomas Harding, located on Broad Creek and corresponding to the most central location between the two parishes. This courthouse, constructed of wood with a brick chimney, was completed in late 1661 and functioned as the county seat until the division of Lower Norfolk County in 1691 (Cross and Cross 1985:21).

When Europeans first began to settle in the area, the Church of England was by law the established denomination for all British subjects. Parish boundaries often defined community orientations and social structures by imposing artificial groupings (Turner 1984:29). Since each parish maintained its own religious jurisdiction, this discussion will focus on the parish that included the present-day City of Chesapeake (Elizabeth River, which later became Norfolk County). In the first years of the parish, services were held in the private homes of the more influential and powerful county citizens. By 1638, however, services were being conducted in a partially built church

located at Seawell's Point. Over the following decades, the rise and dispersal of the Elizabeth River Parish population necessitated the construction of additional chapels of ease along key waterways. The first of these was constructed on William Shipp's land in 1641 (near the future site of Norfolk). Additional chapels were constructed in 1653, 1661, and 1662 along the Western Branch (Western Branch Chapel), Lafayette River (Tanner's Creek Chapel), and Scuffletown Creek (Southern Branch Chapel), respectively (Cross and Cross 1985:32–33; Whichard 1959:248–249).

In 1680, the House of Burgesses convened at Jamestown and passed legislation designed to officially create towns throughout the colony's counties. Under this law, each of the 20 then-existing counties was directed to purchase 50 acres of land and develop a town. Towns established under this law were not given proper names, but were simply called after their counties. The town site was surveyed by the county surveyor, John Ferebee, in 1680 and again in 1681, reserving sites for a courthouse, jail, and church. Through the sale of individual town lots, county officials were able to begin constructing several dwellings and a tobacco warehouse. Plans for the courthouse were modified slightly on September 17, 1687, when court officials decided to replace the existing courthouse on Broad Creek with two county courthouses, one to be built on the town land and a second on the eastern shore of the Lynnhaven River (Cross and Cross 1985:21; Whichard 1959:257–258).

No historic resources dating to this period are recorded within the Chesapeake city limits. It is possible that archaeological sites associated with African Americans are present within the Dismal Swamp, which likely served as a refuge for runaway slaves from the earliest days. The Dismal Swamp was "one of the few places in the United States where geographic conditions made it possible for a large colony of runaways to establish a permanent refuge" (Bogger 1982:2).

The Expansion of Colonial Society and the Formation of Norfolk County (1691–1750)

In 1688, the Glorious Revolution in England resulted in the installation of a dual monarchy under William and Mary. The new era in Virginia was a period of "increased social stratification and economic, political, religious, and social growth" (Brown et al. 1986:143). As a result of the county's steady population increase, Lower Norfolk County was partitioned to form two new counties in 1691: Norfolk, which encompassed the project area, and Princess Anne (Cross and Cross 1985:22; Stewart 1902:21).

By the turn of the eighteenth century, Norfolk County was dominated by large landholders, a situation common throughout colonial Virginia. It has been estimated that one-quarter of the landholders in each county owned half or more of the patented land (Billings et al. 1986:122–123). In 1703, the colony of Virginia was home to an estimated 60,606 inhabitants. Newly formed Norfolk County was credited with a population of 2,279, of which 1,572 were women and children and 717 were tithables (all white males and all African Americans over 16 years of age) (Cross and Cross 1985:30).

Documented eighteenth-century sites in the City of Chesapeake are concentrated near the Southern and Eastern branches of the Elizabeth and Northwest rivers and their larger tributaries and likely represent larger landholders. Generally, archaeological sites in the less desirable agricultural land in the county's interior are more likely to represent the dwellings of small planters and tenant farmers. These early plantations, especially the larger holdings, could not have been successful without the labor of African American slaves. The archaeological remains of domestic occupations associated with enslaved persons may be extant within lands that were formerly plantations. In addition, the populations of free blacks was beginning to grow at this time. Hanah Jackson was a

free black woman who resided in Norfolk County as early as 1690 (Bogger 1997:9). Some of the tenant farms and small holdings in the interior may have been associated with free blacks.

Soon after its formation, Norfolk County began to generate a network of commercial and social centers. In 1691, the House of Burgesses attempted to revive the aborted 1680 act calling for the establishment of towns in the colonies, only to see England again abandon the measure. In spite of England's refusal of both attempts, a small community consisting of several dwellings and warehouses had already been built prior to 1691. Whichard's study of the "town" of Norfolk lists five lot owners in 1691: Peter Smith, mariner; William Porten, clerk of the county court; Mrs. Jane Sawcer; William Knott, mariner; and William Robinson, justice and member of the House of Burgesses (Cross and Cross 1985:23; Whichard 1959).

By the end of the seventeenth century, Anglicanism had begun to decline as several other denominations became established in Virginia. The first to gain a wide following within the project area were the Methodists and Baptists, both of which still have a wide following today. The continued dispersal of settlers combined with the emergence of small communities south of Norfolk necessitated the relocation of the Southern Branch Church from Scuffletown Creek to Great Bridge in 1701 (Cross and Cross 1985:33). At about the same time, public demand also forced the relocation of the official Elizabeth River Parish Church from its site on Seawell's Point (ca. 1638) to William Shipp's land (Norfolk), where the first chapel of ease had been constructed in 1641. According to *The Virginia Landmarks Register*, this old parish church is believed to be located on the southeast corner of the land currently occupied by St. Paul's Episcopal Church, built in 1739, whose burying ground has been in use since that time (Loth 1987:297).

The House of Burgesses tried for a third time in 1705 to establish towns in the colony, only to be refused again by the mother country. By this time, however, all but 10 of the original town sites laid out by John Ferebee had been sold, and Norfolk was prospering. Norfolk was reportedly home to numerous private dwellings, the county courthouse, a tobacco warehouse, wharves, and at least eight taverns (Cross and Cross 1985:30). It is also at this time that a new courthouse was reportedly under construction. According to local historian Charles Cross, a new brick courthouse, designed as a scaled down replica of the General Court in Williamsburg, was in use by 1727 (Cross and Cross 1985:30). A charter dated September 15, 1736, incorporating the town of Norfolk into a borough, finally accredited the town with legal status. As a borough, Norfolk was to be governed by a mayor, alderman, and a common council, and imbued with a court system with jurisdiction over minor civil cases (Cross and Cross 1985:31).

Early transportation routes through Norfolk County generally followed the influx of settlers southward away from the town of Norfolk into the less populated areas (Traver and Ralph 1989). The Great Road, mentioned above, quickly developed into Lower Norfolk County's major commercial artery by the early eighteenth century. "Hogs, cattle, shingles, tar, turpentine, and tobacco were being driven or carted overland on the road between Currituck County and Great Bridge" (Cross and Cross 1985:31). Travel was made easier with the construction of a bridge over the Northwest River near the Carolina line by the people of Currituck County. In 1729, the town of Great Bridge (now part of the City of Chesapeake) was formally established around the junction of the Great Road and the Southern Branch of the Elizabeth River. By then, several wharves and warehouses had been constructed for handling freight and produce from eastern North Carolina, the Dismal Swamp, and southern parts of Norfolk County (Cross and Cross 1985:31; Stewart 1902:401).

For the most part, the swamp continued to be largely ignored by Virginians of the surrounding

area throughout the first half of the eighteenth century, making the swamp an inviting refuge for runaway slaves and criminals. Although the swamp contained large amounts of timber suitable for shipbuilding and for making barrel staves and shingles, the logistical obstacles were too great for entrepreneurs who may have perceived the swamp as a rich resource. Some settlement reached the outer edges of the swamp, but its resources were not fully exploited until later. Constant boundary disputes between Virginia and North Carolina residents along these border lands further impeded settlement as both colonies sought to collect monies owed by the settlers. Prior to English settlement within the Dismal Swamp, the Nansemond, Chesapeake, and various groups of the Powhatan paramount chiefdom had small seasonal encampments along its periphery. Previous archaeological investigations suggest that Native Americans were using the area as a hunting and fishing ground, and were also cultivating certain portions of the swamp (Rountree 1989; Stewart 1979:57).

Perhaps the most vivid accounts of the early explorations of the swamp are those of William Byrd II of Westover. Byrd led an expedition into the swamp in 1728 to survey the dividing line between Virginia and North Carolina, which had been a topic of some dispute between the two colonies. Although Byrd's colorful recollections are somewhat misleading, he provides some information concerning the swamp itself.

> The skirts of it [the swamp] were thinly Planted with Dwarf Reeds and Gall-Bushes, but when we got into the Dismal itself, we found the Reeds grew there much taller and closer, and to mend the matter was so interlac'd with bamo-briars, that there was no scuffling thro' them without the help of Pioneers. At the same time, we found the Ground moist and trembling under our feet like a Quagmire... (Boyd 1967:62).

Byrd further commented on the bleak atmosphere of the swamp by stating that, "Since the surveyors had enter'd the Dismal they had laid Eyes on no living Creature; neither Bird nor Beast, Insect nor Reptile came in View. Doubtless the Eternal Shade that broods over this mighty Bog and hinders the sun-beams from blessing the Ground, makes it an uncomfortable Habitation for anything that has life" (Boyd 1967:70). Byrd's mention of lack of bird or beast was certainly incorrect since the swamp was actually teeming with both flora and fauna of all sorts. Despite his grim depiction of the swamp, Byrd suggested draining sections of it for the cultivation of crops such as tobacco and hemp, as well as utilizing the vast quantities of timber available.

Colony to Nation (1750–1789)

As was true throughout much of Tidewater Virginia, Norfolk County's economy was almost wholly dependent upon agriculture. Landowners in this area still frequently employed indentured servants to supplement slave labor in the fields and in the household. The practice of employing white indentured servants, began during the early settlement period, would begin to disappear before the Revolutionary War. Late in this period, county records for 1782 show 526 Caucasians and 542 African Americans residing within the county (Traver and Ralph 1989:I-29).

In 1761, three new parishes were formed in response to local petitions citing the inconvenience of traveling great distances and the administrative difficulties of having a large number of churches within one parish. All of the county lying north and east of Elizabeth River and its Eastern Branch became a parish and retained the name Elizabeth River; the portion of the county lying between the Eastern and Southern branches and running up New Mill Creek to Roghery's Mill and thence down to Carolina became St. Bride's Parish; and the remaining area became Portsmouth Parish (Cross and Cross 1985:33; Stewart 1902:190). The Portsmouth Parish Church was erected in 1764 on the southwest corner of Court and High streets. At about the same time, the vestry also constructed a frame building set on brick piers

for use as a chapel of ease about a mile west of the village of Deep Creek. In 1762, St. Bride's Church was built on the "Great Road" at what is now the southwest corner of the intersection of Battlefield Boulevard (Route 168) and St. Brides Road (Cross and Cross 1985:33; Whichard 1959:296).

In 1763, George Washington led an expedition into the Dismal Swamp after forming the Dismal Swamp Land Company (or "Adventurers for Draining the Dismal Swamp") with several other prominent Virginia planters (Stewart 1979:59). The investors in this land speculation company planned to drain portions of the swamp for agricultural purposes. They also recognized the economic potential of the Dismal Swamp as a source of timber. The Dismal Swamp Land Company received its charter in 1764, and an act was passed by the House of Burgesses "to enable certain adventurers to drain a large tract of marshy grounds in the counties of Nansemond and Norfolk and to permit them to enter upon and . . . make such canal as they saw fit" (Brown 1967:26). For the swamp to be exploited most effectively, a canal was necessary for drainage and as a transportation link between the swamp and outlying areas.

As shown in the 1770 John Henry map, the Dismal Swamp was very close to the Elizabeth River, the Northwest River, and Nansemond Creek. All of these water courses were important links to the Chesapeake Bay and to Albemarle Sound, located to the south in North Carolina. Two of the earliest cuts made through the swamp were Washington Ditch and the later Jericho Ditch, both of which extended from Lake Drummond to the western edge of the swamp (Yarborough 1965).

The Era of the American Revolution in the City of Chesapeake (1775–1789)

With the British navy in control of the sea by early 1775, any attack on the town of Norfolk would have to be by land, and the key to its defense was Great Bridge. In December 1775, a force of Virginia partisans defeated a combined force of British regulars and Tories, including the Royal Ethiopian Regiment. The British, following an easy victory at Kemps Landing in mid-November, were perhaps overconfident and under-prepared (Russell 2000:69). Lord Dunmore, in declaring martial law, stated "all indentured servants, negros, or others free, that are able and willing to bear arms, they joining his Majesty's troops as soon as may be, for the more speedily reducing this colony to a proper sense of their duty to his Majesty's crown and dignity" (Murray, Lord Dunmore, quoted in Russell 2000:69). Inciting the Virginia slaves to flee bondage and join his cause certainly damaged Dunmore's ability to rally additional colonists, particularly plantation owners, to bring the rebellion to heel. Nevertheless, slaves that were able to reach Norfolk were hastily trained and dispatched to Great Bridge (Cross and Cross 1985:41).

At Great Bridge, the opposing forces had fortified their respective ends of the causeway, the partisans commanding the southern end and the combined British forces in control of the northern end. A series of skirmishes led up to a confrontation on December 9, 1775 (Wing 1964:15–18). The British advance on the American works at the southern end of the causeway was repulsed during a 30-minute battle, and the British were forced to withdraw to Norfolk (Stewart 1902:38–51; Whichard 1959:302). Among the American partisans was William Flora, a free black born in Portsmouth (Carey 2000), who also fought at Yorktown in 1781. Though little is known of his early life, it is thought that he was the son of freed blacks and perhaps a descendent of the early Africans who arrived prior to 1640 and lived as indentured servants rather than as slaves. Flora provided his own musket, fought bravely at Great Bridge, and was publicly commended in the *Virginia Gazette* (Carey 2000).

In 1779, the British returned and occupied Norfolk and the nearby towns of Suffolk and Gosport. Two years later, the Great Bridge area

suffered tremendous damage during the British occupation of the town prior to the battle of Yorktown. Benedict Arnold, now in the service of the British, made Portsmouth his headquarters. In the early months of 1781, he sent a force to occupy Great Bridge between Hampton Roads and North Carolina. Arnold's adjutant, Lieutenant Colonel Simcoe, ordered many of the houses at Great Bridge dismantled so the materials could be used in the construction of a British redoubt from which his cannon could completely control the causeway. Simcoe's British troops also tore down the wooden bridge crossing the Southern Branch. The redoubt was abandoned, however, when Cornwallis ordered it evacuated to concentrate his forces at Yorktown (Traver and Ralph 1989: I-32). During the evacuation in February 1781, the entire village of Great Bridge was burned, including the St. Bride's chapel of ease (Cross and Cross 1985:37).

In 1784, Patrick Henry, then governor of Virginia, issued an order to begin construction of the main canal, which was to run north-south through the entire swamp, connecting the Chesapeake Bay to Albemarle Sound in North Carolina. The construction of this main canal was partly an effort to gain better access to the abundant supply of cypress and juniper trees. Both cypress and juniper made excellent barrel staves, shingles, and naval stores for the bustling shipping industry of Norfolk and the Chesapeake Bay. The company proposed to cut a canal that would connect the south branch of the Elizabeth River to the Pasquotank River in North Carolina. Work was slow due to extremely difficult working conditions and the frequent financial problems encountered during this building project (Stewart 1979).

Early National Period (1789–1830)

While most of the area remained rural, several towns had been established by the late eighteenth century, often near streams and transportation routes. Forerunners of Cedar (Route 165), Kempsville (Route 190), and Providence (Route 409) roads were all in use as major thoroughfares for upper Chesapeake by this time (Anonymous 1781); by the 1820s, a forerunner of Ballahack Road had joined Route 168 as a major thoroughfare through the lower portions of Chesapeake near the swamp. Many towns were not incorporated until the end of the nineteenth century (Traver and Ralph 1989). Several attempts were made to foster planned communities that would serve as governmental seats in centrally located sites during this period; however, none of them succeeded despite the continued growth in population. This growth stimulated the development of more diverse social and leisure opportunities for residents. One of the most popular of these during the early nineteenth century was horse racing. Since this time, horse raising and riding have continued to play an important part in the culture of the area (Traver and Ralph 1989:I-30).

During the first half of the nineteenth century, the agricultural systems within the area began to change. Livestock production of both horses and cattle gained popularity, and crop choices were redefined. Tobacco production, although still important, was no longer a major focus for farmers, who slowly changed over to food crops. Wheat was especially popular during this time, and tidal grist mills began to appear throughout southeastern Virginia (Pullins et al. 1991:19). Some were still in production well into the nineteenth century (Cross and Cross 1985:93). Norfolk County records indicate that the early 1790s was also a time of widespread investment in land for timbering in the vicinity of the Great Dismal Swamp. Local entrepreneurs purchased land near the bridge that spanned the Northwest River, erecting stores, warehouses, and service-related facilities for the processing of timber (May and McCartney 1994:26).

After the revolution, the General Assembly passed a law providing for the establishment of public schools in each of the counties in the commonwealth. In decades past, education was

achieved through tutors or private schools for those who had the financial means. The new act entitled all free male and female children to attend for three years free of charge and for any additional years as could be afforded by their parents. In Norfolk County, elections were held in 1798 to select "Aldermen," whose responsibility it was to operate these new public schools. In 1799 and 1802, schools had opened at Hickory Ground (St. Bride's Academy) and Churchland, respectively (Cross and Cross 1985:40).

The Dismal Swamp Canal Company began actual construction of the main canal in 1793. The canal would connect the South Branch of the Elizabeth River to the Pasquotank River in North Carolina (Stewart 1979). The company had acquired some 40,000 acres along the North Carolina-Virginia border and began work on both ends of the canal simultaneously. Hired African American slaves from the area comprised most of the labor force, hired out by their owners for up to a year of service (Brown 1970; Thompson et al. 1987:15–18). By 1805, the main canal cut was completed. As funding allowed, work continued to complete the entire 22-mile course. A road was also built adjacent to the east side of the canal in 1805, joining the canal's two incomplete ends. This road became an important link in the transport of freight and passengers between these regions of North Carolina and Virginia (Brown 1967:37). Tolls collected on this flanking canal road helped defray the cost of the further construction and maintenance of the canal throughout the early nineteenth century. By 1812 the canal had been completed, thanks in large part to the expansion of the Gosport Navy Yard at Portsmouth, the "fever of national canal building which swept the country," and the increased demand for lumber products from the swamp (Davis 1962:64). The canal was upgraded in 1828 to accommodate larger and heavier commercial traffic.

The Jericho Canal was excavated in 1796, connecting Lake Drummond to a point some 2 miles east of Suffolk. The 5-mile Washington Canal, which ran at a right angle to the Jericho Canal, was completed a few years later. These canals served barges that carried baldcypress and white cedar logs for manufacturing shingles. The Dismal Swamp Land Company and other timber companies set up work camps throughout the swamp, providing lodging for some of their workers, many of whom were free African Americans or runaway slaves living in the swamp (Hobbs and Paquette 1987:44). Slaves were hired for $100 per man per year to make shingles in the swamp (Bogger 1997:85). In addition to the work camps, workers built individual dwellings within the swamp and experienced a measure of autonomy. They were expected to meet a quota but could otherwise choose how to spend their time (Olmsted 1861:I:146–148). There is some evidence to suggest that slaves hired runaways living in the swamp to cut lumber, paying them in clothing and food (Bogger 1982:3).

In 1818, the General Assembly passed an act authorizing the building of a 7-mile feeder canal from the main artery to the Northwest River. This cut to the east was to "reach new timber grounds" and furnish "a connection with Currituck Sound, essentially eliminating the need to ship all commodities produced in the region through Norfolk" (Brown 1967:44). It was also intended to help drain the main canal at the point of juncture. Construction on the Northwest Canal began in 1827 and followed a drainage ditch and several natural ravines. When completed in 1830, the canal prism was 4 feet deep; there were three frame locks, including an outfall lock at the junction of the canal with the Northwest River, and a bridge spanning the canal at its junction with the Dismal Swamp Canal (Board of Public Works 1830; Trout 1983).

The canal, though in constant need of repair and maintenance, was still considered important to Norfolk's shipping industry. By the first quarter of the nineteenth century, merchants recognized the potential profits in the transport of agricultural crops, especially tobacco, naval stores, and

timber from North Carolina's coastal interior. To an extent, regions of Virginia also would have benefitted from the canal. Towns and communities began to spring up along the canal bank, especially at the locks. The village of Deep Creek began as one such community, established at the northern terminus of the canal during the first quarter of the nineteenth century (Cross and Cross 1985:52). The timber industry had become quite profitable during the 1820s and 1830s; shingle lighters and timber rafts were frequently seen running the course from Deep Creek to South Mills, North Carolina.

In addition to encampments of shingle-makers (slave or free) and runaway slaves within the boundaries of the Great Dismal Swamp, there are likely archaeological remains of domestic sites associated with free black enclaves such as the Cuffeytown area of Chesapeake, as well as slave occupations at plantation sites. At least four plantation houses have been recorded within Chesapeake, including the Happer Plantation (131-0003), Butts-Holstead Plantation (131-0034), West Plantation (131-0235), and Glencoe (131-0007). While the current property boundaries for these resources are focused around the mansion house (or its remains), each house would have been the focal point for a much larger estate that would have included many outbuildings and quarters. Outbuildings may have served as dwellings or workplaces (or both) for slaves. For example, outbuildings adjacent to the primary residence, such as kitchens, laundries, and stables, likely served as housing for slaves who worked in those buildings (Kelso 1984). In addition, according to records on file with the state, there are 11 archaeological sites identified as farmsteads dating prior to the Civil War, eight of which have been documented within the Northwest Naval Annex. Farmstead sites recorded as dating to this period, particularly ones that have been investigated only at the survey level, could represent small tenant farms or independent holdings as well as slave quarters. It is likely that systematic archaeological survey, similar to that conducted at the Naval facility, will reveal additional resources in other regions of the city, and intensive investigation of farmstead sites may clarify the socioeconomic status of the inhabitants.

Free blacks during this period, particularly women, gravitated toward urban centers such as Norfolk, where opportunities for work and community were greater than available in rural areas (Bogger 1997:21). The numbers of free blacks were increasing during this period as economic opportunities made it possible to earn money to purchase one's freedom and the freedom of loved ones (Bogger 1997:2, 12). Manumission of slaves during this period was also on the rise, perhaps due to a growing religious opposition on the part of owners and/or a desire to extend the ideals of the American Revolution to enslaved persons (Bogger 1997:10). Indeed, a law had been passed in 1783 freeing any slaves who had served in the war. As the population of free blacks grew, however, concerns among whites about uprisings and loss of jobs led to passage in 1806 of a law requiring manumitted slaves to emigrate from the state (Bogger 1997:9).

Antebellum Period (1830–1861)

Although the region had continued to grow throughout the years following its initial settlement, the antebellum period heralded a time of unprecedented development. Agriculture began to diversify as corn, fruits, and vegetables became profitable commodities, and the number of dairy cattle in the region tripled between 1782 and 1859 (Traver and Ralph 1989). New roads were constructed, linking the small communities and farmers to larger markets. Since overland routes were long, especially those leading to the important port of Norfolk, canal routes were built and improved (Traver and Ralph 1989:I-42). When linked with existing waterways, canals provided direct water access to the marketing center. Railroads were also established during this time,

the most important of which were the Norfolk and Petersburg Railroad and the Norfolk and Southern Railroad (Traver and Ralph 1989:I-42). A number of communities were founded adjacent to the important railroad stations.

Public schools within Norfolk County did not become widespread until the mid-nineteenth century. Traditionally, families with the financial means often hired tutors for their children or sent them to privately run institutions. "After the revolution schools were established to provide a three year education for all free people" (Traver and Ralph 1989:I-31). While the system was slow to develop, many parents were regularly enrolling their children by the time of the Civil War (Traver and Ralph 1989:I-31).

In the early 1840s, George T. Wallace moved to the Dismal Swamp and established his plantation along the canal bank and road near the Northwest Canal Lock, just east of the main canal/Northwest Canal intersection. Wallace constructed a two-story house called Glencoe on the property and began a very successful agricultural plantation. The family was well known for its industry and hospitality (Simpson 1990:126–128). The location of Wallace's plantation contributed to the beginnings of a small community at the intersection of the main canal and the Northwest Canal that bears his name. Wallaceton was a typical canal bank community. It included several houses, stores, a post office, and other facilities for travelers transporting their goods through the swamp via the canal or the adjacent toll road. Other communities along the canal provided taverns and ordinaries, stores, and other services for the shippers using the canal from Deep Creek, Virginia, to South Mills, North Carolina. By this time, Deep Creek had reportedly grown to some 50 houses, several taverns, and two general stores (Cross and Cross 1985:52). These communities would have included populations of both free and enslaved blacks who worked as farmers, timber cutters, shingle-makers, and canal workers, among many other professions.

In 1843, the canal was extended north of Deep Creek to a point on the Southern Branch of the Elizabeth River, where a new lock was constructed to connect commercial traffic to Norfolk. The community of Gilmerton soon emerged along the banks of this new canal cut, so named in honor of Thomas Walker Gilmer, a former governor of Virginia, as this point developed into the transfer and storage depot for goods entering or leaving the canal. By the late 1840s, Gilmerton supported a population of nearly 700 (Cross and Cross 1985:52, 58).

Prior to the onset of the Civil War, the canal had lost a great deal of its shipping business to the Albemarle-Chesapeake Canal, which opened in 1859. This new canal ran farther to the east of the Dismal Swamp Canal and connected the Chesapeake Bay to Currituck Sound. The Albemarle-Chesapeake Canal attracted more business than the Dismal Swamp Canal because it was wider, deeper, and shorter and therefore preferable for the larger ships that sailed in and out of Norfolk, and may be credited with stimulating the growth and reemergence of Great Bridge (Cross and Cross 1985:54). Adding to the competition from the Albemarle-Chesapeake Canal were two railroads that were built near the swamp. The Portsmouth and Roanoke line was built in 1834, and the Norfolk and Petersburg in the 1850s. An 1857 map of the Lower Norfolk area includes a proposed railroad, the Southern Air Line, which would cut through the swamp; however, this railroad was never built (Cross and Cross 1985).

The Civil War (1861–1865)

At the onset of the Civil War, the timber and shipping industry came almost to a standstill. After the Union occupation of Norfolk in 1862, "the Confederate effort in the swamp and main canal was one of guerilla skirmish, bridge-burning, and ambush" (Simpson 1990:108). The area suffered a great deal during the war, and the canal was badly damaged in several places. This was primarily

because it was occupied by Federal troops near the beginning of the conflict (Cross and Cross 1985:55; Traver and Ralph 1989:I-32).

During the occupation, the Union army controlled the major roads and railroads, effectively isolating the residents from much of the activity occurring elsewhere in the state. Although no battles were fought within the current City of Chesapeake, the area was not protected from destruction, as Union troops destroyed homes, farms, schools, and churches (Traver and Ralph 1989:I-32). Many public buildings and churches were put to use as hospitals, stables, and barracks. The tollhouse on the highway paralleling the Dismal Swamp Canal became a checkpoint for examining passes and identification of local citizens (Cross and Cross 1985:55). Using Suffolk and Norfolk as staging areas, Union forces periodically invaded the Dismal Swamp in search of renegade Confederates hiding there, much as numerous escaped slaves had done prior to 1861 (Thompson et al. 1987:27). The Civil War altered previous settlement and economic patterns by devastating the area and causing a postwar depression (Traver and Ralph 1989:I-32).

Of particular local importance was the creation of all-black volunteer units by the Union Army, primarily following January 1, 1863, when the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect (Paquette 1982:18). In May 1861, General Benjamin F. Butler, Commandant of Fort Monroe, declared that slaves from Confederate States were "contraband" of war and free, which encouraged many Tidewater-area slaves to seek freedom at Fort Monroe (Paquette 1982:17–18). African Americans who had joined the Union cause prior to this time served primarily as "teamsters, laborers, camp attendants, factory workers, miners, waiters, and cooks" (Paquette 1982:17). Tidewater-area African Americans were incorporated into several Union army units: the 1st and 2nd U.S. Colored Cavalry [USCC], the 2nd U.S. Light Artillery, Battery B, as well as the 36th, 37th, and 38th U.S. Colored Troops [USCT] (Paquette 1982:19–20). Of the 178,895 African American men who joined the Union Army, 40,000 died in the service. Tidewater-area soldiers saw action in North Carolina, Petersburg, and Richmond, among other places. Cemeteries in Chesapeake containing interments of African American Union Army veterans include St. Bride's cemetery, a cemetery located on the Northwest Naval Annex, the Sergeant March Corprew family cemetery off Bells Mill Road, and the Cuffeytown cemetery.

Reconstruction and Growth (1865–1914)

At the close of the Civil War, new social institutions were created to accommodate the newly freed slaves. Churches were established and the state-wide school system was reformulated to provide free public education for white and "colored" children, in separate facilities (Harper and Jones 2003). Public education in what is now Chesapeake came to a halt with the Union occupation of Norfolk in 1862. Following ratification of the fourth Virginia constitution in 1869, then-Governor Gilbert C. Walter commissioned Captain John T. West as superintendent of schools for Norfolk County. He was to hold this position almost continuously for 35 years. West convened a school board consisting of three members from six districts whose mission was to raise funds through a property tax to supplement state funds, and build the necessary schools. By April 1, 1870, 30 schools, 11 of which were for African American children, were completed.

Numerous churches were also founded at this time, particularly in the growing African American urban enclaves in South Norfolk. For example, Providence United Church of Christ, which once stood at 2558 Vicker Avenue, was formed following the war when African Americans asked to worship with a white congregation (Anonymous, n.d.). While Federal officials confiscated lands belonging to some Confederate sympathizers and redistributed it to newly freed

slaves, the lands in question lay primarily outside the boundaries of what is now Chesapeake. Many African Americans sought work in the more urban sections of Norfolk County, or near large industrial operations, such as the Richmond Cedar Works mill near the Bells Mill community. The locations of African American neighborhoods during this time can be identified though careful examination of Sanborn insurance maps. Many of these neighborhoods have undergone significant modification through construction of major highways, expansion of industrial operations, or programs of urban renewal.

Following the war, leadership opportunities were, at least briefly, open to African Americans for the first time, at local, state, and national levels. Several African Americans with ties to the region served in the Virginia House of Delegates, including Miles Connor, Charles E. Hodges, and Richard G. L. Paige. John C. Asbury, a native of Norfolk, served as the Commonwealth Attorney for Virginia. He was the prosecuting attorney for Norfolk County for perhaps four years (Woodson 1920:244). George Teamoh, a former slave who had fled to the north, returned to Virginia and served as a State Senator for the Portsmouth area (Teamoh1990). John Mercer Langston, a native of Louisa County and the first African American elected to the U.S. Congress, served in the U.S. House of Representatives for the 4th District for one term (1888–1890). Due to questions of fraud and voter intimidation during the election, Langston was not confirmed until 18 months had passed, and therefore only held office for six months (Cheek and Cheek 1989). There were greater opportunities for leadership at the local level, as magistrates, justices of the peace, and members of school boards and the board of supervisors.

After the Civil War, the Dismal Swamp Canal suffered a great deal from not only the cumulative effects of neglect caused by the war, but also the general lack of maintenance and upkeep necessary to fully operate the canal. Commercial traffic resumed after the war, but it was dramatically decreased from prewar levels, with use of the Northwest Canal almost completely ceasing (Board of Public Works 1866). The railroads that had entered the region shortly before the conflict continued to expand. They flourished from the impetus provided by the increase of commerce and agriculture within the region and the burgeoning population. As the need for better transportation to markets and seaports such as Norfolk increased, road construction also accelerated. All of these developments in transportation, played an important role in the growth of truck farms in southeastern Virginia and the development of small communities along these routes (Traver and Ralph 1989).

During the second half of the nineteenth century, the truck farming of fruits and vegetables became a major agricultural pursuit (Traver and Ralph 1989:I-30). Crops such as corn, used previously for local subsistence, were sold at roadside stands and produced for sale at grocery stores across the eastern half of the United States (Cross and Cross 1985:68, 93; Traver and Ralph 1989:I-30). The fact that local crops matured one to two months earlier than those raised near the northern cities assured county farmers of a stable and reliable market and high prices (Cross and Cross 1985:68). Dairy farming and sawmills also continued to increase. Both truck farming and dairying have continued into the twentieth century. Getting the products to market was made profitable due to the canals and rivers of the area. Produce could be carried by small boat to Norfolk and by steamboat to the larger markets. The many small boats were known as "The Mosquito Fleet" and were largely owned and operated by African Americans (Cross and Cross 1985:68).

The Dismal Swamp Canal was sold to the Lake Drummond Canal & Water Company in 1892, after the canal had sunk into disrepair and the Dismal Swamp Canal Company had become practically bankrupt. Nevertheless, the canal and some of its locks continued in light use through

the turn of the century. The Northwest Canal Lock was closed and filled in sometime during the second half of the nineteenth century, probably after the Civil War but before 1900. According to Brown (1967:93), a dam was built across the Northwest Canal Lock in 1871 in an effort to conserve water and alleviate the water problems of the main canal. Unfortunately, this dam cut off all traffic to and from Currituck Sound.

Work began in 1890 on a new highway that was to run alongside the canal and replace the earlier stagecoach road (Cross and Cross 1985). Between 1896 and 1899, the Lake Drummond Company widened and deepened the canal along its entire length (Brown 1970:137). Due to these improvements, the Dismal Swamp Canal temporarily outpaced the competing Albemarle-Chesapeake Canal during the first decade of this century. As noted in a contemporary newspaper account of the time,

> the Dismal Swamp Canal is doing an unusually heavy business having handled hundreds of schooners, barges and tugs during the past week. It is not an unusual event in these busy days for one tug to come through with a tow of as many as 17 schooners . . . loaded to the gunwales with farm products of the trucking section around the Carolina Sounds. The barges are carrying lumber for Philadelphia and New York, while the truck is discharged here and shipped to the northern markets" (Brown 1967:111).

This indicates how successful the Dismal Swamp Canal had become by the turn of the century. For the year 1906, its earnings were $3,301,000 compared to the Albemarle-Chesapeake Canal's $1,151,849 (Brown 1967:111). However, this success was short-lived due to drastic changes in the early 1910s.

In 1912, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers purchased the Albemarle-Chesapeake Canal, eliminating almost all of the Dismal Swamp Canal's business. Improvements were made on the Albemarle-Chesapeake Canal, and it also became toll free (Yarborough 1965). Shipping companies avoided the Dismal Swamp Canal since they had the better, toll-free access to the Albemarle-Chesapeake Canal.

World War I to World War II and New Dominion (1917–Present)

In 1917, Josephus Daniels, secretary of the navy, acquired the land and buildings of the 1907 Jamestown Exposition (Seawell's Point) for use as a naval base. The Hampton Roads Naval Operating Center (now the U.S. Naval Reservation), commissioned in October 1917, became the training ground for thousands of sailors and marines. As a result, the port of Hampton Roads became one of America's most important shipping and embarkation ports. Economic depression during the 1930s severely curbed the agricultural and industrial expansion that began during the World War I boom. Norfolk County began to recover by 1940, coinciding with a second and larger buildup of armed forces for World War II. The rapid influx of both civilian and military personnel severely overtaxed the available supply of housing and services, necessitating numerous public and private projects that transformed several areas of Norfolk County practically overnight. The employment level in the Norfolk Naval Yard, for example, which was 7,625 in 1939, ballooned to 42,893 by February 1943 (Cross and Cross 1985:130).

Social institutions for African Americans continued to expand and flourish in southeastern Virginia. By 1930, over 25 separate black lodge organizations had been created in Virginia (Hughes 1982:40). In addition to familiar organizations such as the Masons, Elks, and Odd Fellows, there were more exotic-sounding organizations such as the Grand United Order of Tents and the Royal Order of Menelik and Princess of Abyssinia in America. Fraternal organizations such as these provided, among other things, mutual aid as well community cohesion similar to that provided by churches (Skocpol and Oser 2004). Sanborn insurance maps of South Norfolk show a handful

of locations labeled as "Colored Hall" or "Odd Fellows (Colored)" (Sanborn 1928).

By 1950, the entire county had grown to some 99,000 inhabitants, with most of this growth occurring on the county's northern fringes, adjacent to Portsmouth and Norfolk. Within 10 years, however, the population had fallen to 51,000 because of annexation suits prosecuted by the neighboring cities. In these suits the county lost 33 square miles, 110,448 people, $92,579,000 in assessed property values, and $1,881,218 in annual revenue. In 1963, the City of Chesapeake was formed as a result of the merger of old Norfolk County and the City of South Norfolk. This consolidation was possible due to amendments to state statutes whereby consolidation was made applicable to any and all units of local government that might find the process helpful (Cross and Cross 1985:172).

In 1940, the Navy established a naval air field south of the town of Oceana; two years later, the field was designated Naval Auxiliary Air Station Oceana. That same year, four satellite fields were also established: Fentress, Pungo, Monogram, and Creeds. At each of these airfields, 132-man barracks were constructed. The airfields at Fentress and Pungo were provided with concrete runaways as well.

As the century progressed, the county's nature slowly began to change. The large influx of military personnel and civilian defense employees to the military bases in the immediate area and the influence of Norfolk and Virginia Beach during World War II altered the formerly rural, agricultural nature of the area. The area's growth trend continued as heightened activities at the area's military facilities such as the Naval Auxiliary Landing Field (NALF) Fentress led to the construction of residential housing to serve installation personnel. Following World War II and continuing to the present, the facilities at NALF Fentress have been used for training missions in support of the main operations conducted at NAS Oceana (Hornum et al. 1994:29).

The U.S. Naval Radio Station Northwest was established in 1951 as a radio receiving station under the command of the Norfolk naval complex. Formally commissioned in January 1954, the installation was established to relay messages from ships at sea and communication bases throughout the world. In May 1955, the Naval Radio Station (R) Northwest became part of the U.S. Naval Communications Station (NAVCOMMSTA). The following year, Northwest initiated Communication Security (COMSEC) monitoring operations, which is responsible for keeping the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Atlantic Fleet (CINCLANFLT), and other commanders up-to-date on the state of security of U.S. Naval Communications. In September 1971, the station was formally disestablished and became a component activity of NAVCOMMSTA at the Navy's Sewell Point complex in Norfolk. Northwest became independent in 1975 when it was redesignated as the Naval Security Group Activity (NSGA) Northwest. Its revised mission was to "operate those facilities and systems necessary to provide communications for the Department of the Navy and the Defense Communications System" (Hornum et al. 1997:26).

The Dismal Swamp Canal was finally purchased in 1929 by the federal government. Improvements were made that deepened the canal and gave it a uniform depth. By this time, however, virtually all canal traffic was recreational; commercial traffic had all but ceased. Bankside communities that had been prosperous during the canal's heyday were quickly diminishing in size and importance. From the mid-1950s to the present, the canal has been used for recreational purposes. On several occasions, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers made plans to close the canal permanently because of the lack of commercial use and the costs of upkeep and maintenance. Some farms and communities still exist within the swamp, but their importance has diminished over time. The Dismal Swamp Canal was listed

on the National Register of Historic Places in 1988. The historic district consists of the canal and associated structures at the ends of the canal in Deep Creek, Virginia, and South Mills, North Carolina. At the present time, it is used strictly for recreational purposes.

In the 1950s and in the 1970s, programs of urban renewal were carried out in various areas of the city. Bells Mill and Fentress were historically African American communities. Federal grants were sought to bring infrastructure improvements to these areas in 1976 (Nichols 1976). In 1978, new brick ranch-style houses were built on Strawberry Lane, while older homes were torn down (Hurlbut 1978).

Today the City of Chesapeake's economy is still partially based on agriculture, although commerce and industry have become increasingly important. The lumber business, which had its beginning in the eighteenth century, has continued to play an important role in the economy. Much of the timber for this enterprise is found in the surrounding marshlands (Traver and Ralph 1989). Truck farming, which suffered during World War II as the available supply of farm labor was drastically reduced, is still an important part of the economy, but has in recent years shifted toward the cultivation of soybeans, corn, wheat, and other grains (Cross and Cross 1985:130, 192).

3: The Architecture of Segregation

The City of Chesapeake's African American Historic Resources District comprises a diverse assortment of buildings, structures, and sites that have played a vital role in African American history from the late eighteenth century until the late twentieth century. The proposed district does not follow traditional boundaries as such, but instead consists of resources distributed across the entire city. Unfortunately, a number of African American resources in the area have been lost due to time, neglect, and development. These resources include archaeological resources, a summer camp, cemeteries, churches, dwellings, a fraternal order lodge, and schools. Extant, contributing resources are located throughout the city, including in small urban neighborhoods, traditionally historic African American communities such as Bells Mill and Cuffeytown, and the rural countryside.

With the 1896 Supreme Court's decisions mandating "separate but equal" facilities for blacks and whites, the foundation was set for white Americans to construct an exclusive and unequal built landscape. Even with the inroads made by various pieces of legislation such as the Civil Rights, Voting Rights, and Fair Housing acts of the 1960s, this discriminatory landscape was not dismantled completely. This segregation of races plays an important role in the understanding of African American architecture. While the interplay between white and black overlapped in many aspects of daily life, at the same time, both visible and invisible means of keeping the races separate pervaded. In studying this "architecture of segregation, two themes emerge: the use of architecture as a means of isolating African Americans through minimal contact, and the use of architecture as a means of resistance on the part of African Americans" (Weyeneth 2005). It is this latter response that is most applicable to the study of African American architectural resources in Chesapeake.

The architecture of segregation is not a monolithic entity. Rather, this landscape took on different forms that were the result of white and black reactions to the Jim Crow society in which they lived. For whites, architectural spaces for blacks were created through isolation, that is, restricting or keeping out African Americans from "white only" built spaces or building "duplicate," though not necessarily equal, types of buildings to restrict the movements of African Americans. Architectural partitioning, whereby facilities in a building were separated to keep the races apart, was another device used to maintain a Jim Crow built landscape (Weyeneth 2005).

Faced with unrelenting attitudes of racism and exclusivity from the white world, African Americans responded through the construction of "alternative spaces." These spaces were the same everyday types of buildings that whites used: churches, schools, houses, businesses, theaters, motels, and other building types. These alternative African American built spaces are different from what has been called an "architecture of isolation," the white response to the "separate but equal" doctrine through the construction or casting-off of facilities deemed unacceptable for white use. Where the architecture of isolation symbolized exclusion and racism, the architecture of alternative spaces symbolized hope and energy.

Through innovation and drive, these architectural expressions also helped provide African Americans with the ability to construct their own buildings to meet their needs and wants (Weyeneth 2005). In Chesapeake, one of the best examples of these "alternative spaces" can be seen at Camp E. W. Young, a summer camp for black youths built in the early 1950s.

In the case of Chesapeake, the alternative spaces that have survived tend to be institutional buildings, i.e., churches, fraternal organizations, and schools. These types of buildings have been termed "heroic architecture" in that African Americans, sometimes against great odds, were able to construct institutional buildings that allowed the black community to organize, educate, and resist against the segregated world where they lived. Rosenwald schools, in particular, have been termed heroic architecture for their role in helping thousands of black children receive an education, but the same label could be applied to almost any building that helped maintain the continuity of everyday life.

On another level, one of the challenges in evaluating these resources lies in the fact that, historically, African Americans constructed buildings and structures have become part of an anonymous landscape, where they are difficult to locate and identify. This hidden history is due to the fact that, in many respects, black and white building traditions have shared many common characteristics with regard to building types, materials, and styles. In Chesapeake, the search can be even more difficult because of the largely rural nature of the area and because many significant buildings have been lost to the passage of time, later development, and neglect.

The dilemma today for many preservationists and historians is how to adequately tell the story of the Jim Crow landscape. Does one preserve representative examples of the history of segregation? This moves the discussion well beyond the realm of alternative spaces and into the area of white response to segregation. This includes documenting buildings that still maintain elements of segregation, i.e., separate entrances, waiting rooms, bathrooms, signage, or galleries. Buildings that illustrate the courage and the triumphs of the African American community against racial segregation are likewise significant. It is important to think systematically about preserving the architecture of segregation in all its forms. This allows an entire story to be told and demonstrates how a built landscape can reflect important passages of time, place, and thought.

4: Thematic Contexts

The reality of segregation, both *de jure* (legal) and *de facto* (socially accepted) meant that African Americans in Chesapeake established their own communities and institutions. This did not mean, however, that African Americans broke with established architectural styles, ways of building, or construction. On the contrary, both black and white architecture and building traditions are almost interchangeable. In that sense, then, African American architectural resources can be evaluated in much the same way as other architectural resources.

Domestic

Chesapeake's early history did not lend itself to the establishment of African American neighborhoods or urban centers as such; the majority of blacks still lived in rural areas or small communities, some of which, such as Bells Mill, have lost much of their integrity. During the 1950s and 1960s, as whites began moving out of the older neighborhoods in South Norfolk, now a part of Chesapeake, African Americans began moving in. Lacking historic black neighborhoods or communities to evaluate, the survey team instead concentrated on individual dwellings that were important not just because of their architecture, but also because of the persons who lived in them (Figure 6).

A ca. 1900 Queen Anne dwelling on Shell Road was the birthplace of one of Chesapeake's civil-rights leaders, Dr. Hugo Owens, Sr. One interesting architectural feature is the Palladian-style window grouping in the central gable (Figure 7). Dr. Owens was one of the first two African Americans to serve on the Chesapeake City Council, elected with Mr. W. P. Clarke, Sr. in 1969. Owens also was the City's first African American Vice-Mayor. The W. P. Clarke House, located at 764 Bells Mill Road in the historic African American community of Bells Mill, falls short of the traditional 50-year minimum age for historic properties. However, the ca. 1970 one-story, six-bay, single-family ranch-style house is significant both as the home of the pioneering African American councilor, W. P. Clarke, but also for its association with his wife, Florine R. Clarke, the first African American woman to serve on the City Council (Figure 8). Mrs. Clarke took over her husband's seat after he died in 1977. Another ca. 1970 ranch-style house was the home of another prominent African American Chesapeake resident, Willa Bazemore, distinguished as the first African American appointed to the Chesapeake Board of Education, the longest-serving woman on the Chesapeake City Council, and the city's first black female to serve as Vice Mayor (Figure 9).

One of the most prevalent sights throughout the rural area at one time was the small tenant houses built by African Americans. Today, many of these small frame structures have disappeared, which makes the task of documenting them even more important. One remnant of this once prevalent house form is seen on the north side of West Road. An exterior chimney is all that survives of a former tenant house (Figure 10). This exterior brick chimney is laid in stretcher bond brick, has stepped shoulders and a corbelled cap. The east side of the chimney features an open hearth.

Few archaeological resources currently identified within the City of Chesapeake have been

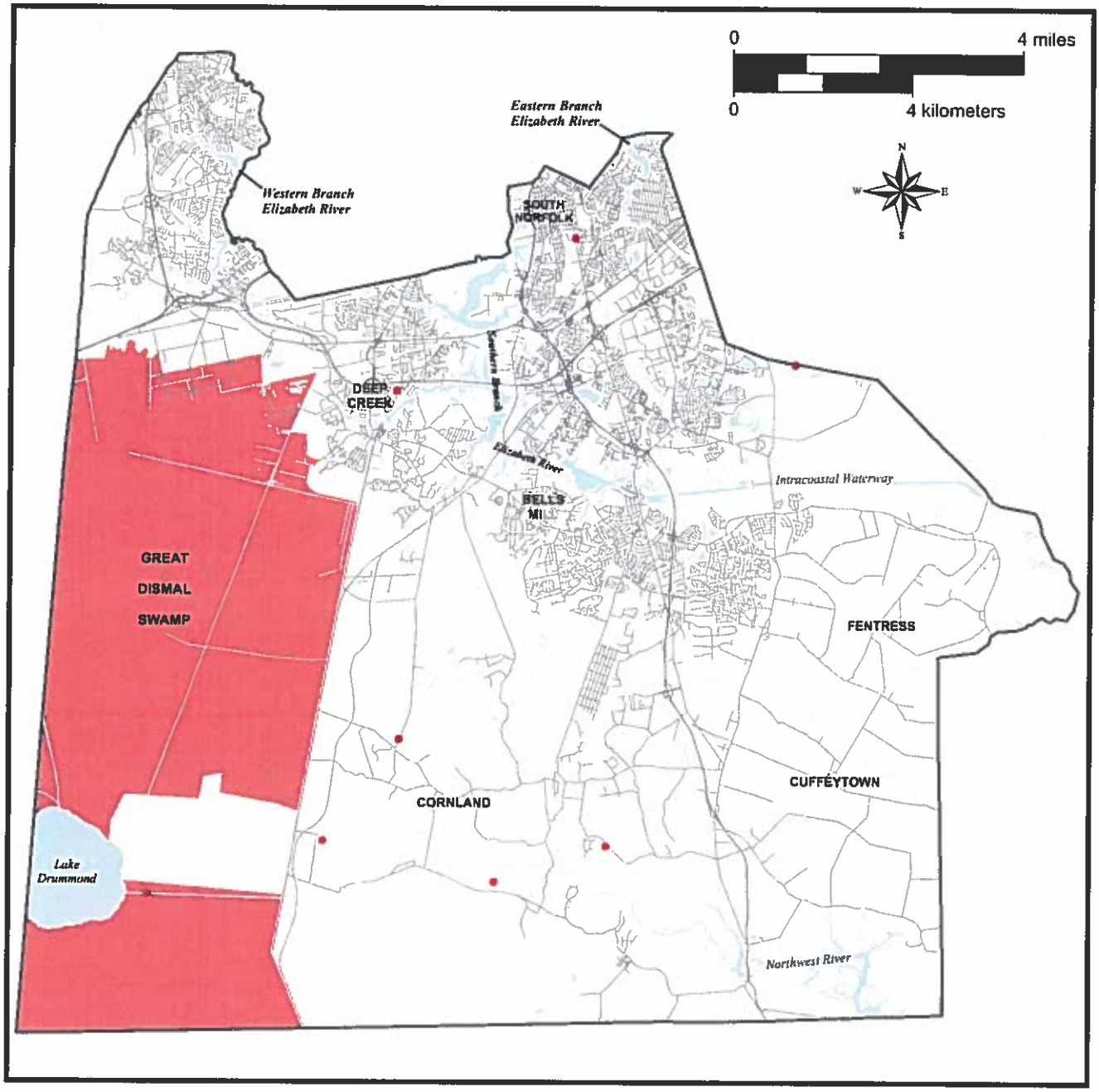

Figure 6. Distribution of Domestic resources.

Figure 7. Dr. Hugo Owens, Sr. House (131-0501), south elevation.

Figure 8. W. P. Clarke House (131-5392), south and east elevations.

Figure 9. Willa Bazemore House (131-5065-0009).

conclusively identified as being associated exclusively with African Americans. These sites consist of four cemeteries and one domestic occupation. Site 44CS0172 was recorded in 1994 as a probable free black household (Higgins et al. 1994). The site, identified during a survey for the Southeastern Expressway project, is in a location consistent with the map-projected location of one of the abandoned farms confiscated by the federal government during the Civil War (Figure 11) (Berlin et al. 1993). There are other known, though unrecorded, domestic sites within the city. According to Bland Simpson, an African American man named George Dyer, who was the spillway operator for the Lake Drummond Canal and Water Company in the early twentieth century, had a house near the spillway where he lived with his wife and children (Simpson 1990:119–120). The house is no longer extant, but there are likely archaeological traces of the domestic occupation (Figure 12).

Because so much of the land encompassed by the City of Chesapeake has remained rural, most domestic sites are also likely to be found in rural settings. Other domestic sites include worker housing near factories or associated with canal-oriented businesses. Urban domestic sites are more difficult to locate due to programs of urban renewal and frequent construction, reconfiguration, and expansion of commercial, transportation, and/or industrial projects into areas that were previously residential. The earliest urban areas in the region were located in Berkley, now part of the City of Norfolk. Sanborn insurance maps from the late 1800s show a variety of social institutions, churches, and businesses in the Berkley area that were associated with African American residents of the city, particularly along Liberty Street (Sanborn Map and Publishing Company 1887; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1898).

Figure 10. West Plantation site (131-0235), chimney of tenant house.

According to VDHR's cultural resource database, there are 39 farmstead sites recorded in Chesapeake, 11 of which predate the Civil War. Eight of these antebellum farmsteads are recorded within the Northwest Naval Annex, suggesting they may represent a series of domestic occupations all tied to one or two larger plantation complexes. Systematic archaeological survey is likely to result in the identification of more such sites in other parts of the city. It will require more intensive investigation, however, to determine the cultural and socioeconomic status of the inhabitants of these sites. Farmsteads identified at the survey level may include small independent holdings owned by whites or free blacks, tenant farms occupied by whites or free blacks, field slave quarters, or the central domestic occupations of much larger agricultural complexes or plantations.

Domestic sites can provide a wealth of information about settlement patterns, site organization, access to markets/commercialism, as well as participation in social institutions such as religious organizations, mutual aid societies, schools, and social movements. For example, George Dyer is said to have built a monument to Prohibition near his home along the Dismal Swamp Canal feeder (Simpson 1990:120). If several sites in a region are adequately investigated, temporal trends for any of these themes, as well as cross-cultural/ethnic/socio-economic comparisons can be explored.

Research at Site 44PG0317, a free black farmstead located in Prince George County, provides an example of the kind of information available from such sites. Documentary and archaeological research indicates that, in spite of the humble appearance of the Gilliam family dwelling (which included a mud-and-stick chimney), the Gilliams were relatively prosperous. Tax records indicate that the property was valued at $1,000, and domestic ceramics recovered from the house site were high status wares (Ryder and Schwartz 1990; Ryder 1991).

Previously recorded architectural resources in the area may also yield potential archaeological finds. The Happer Plantation, the Butts-Holstead Plantation, and the Glencoe Ruins site all were previously recorded as architectural resources (Figure 13). Since then, the Butts-Holstead and

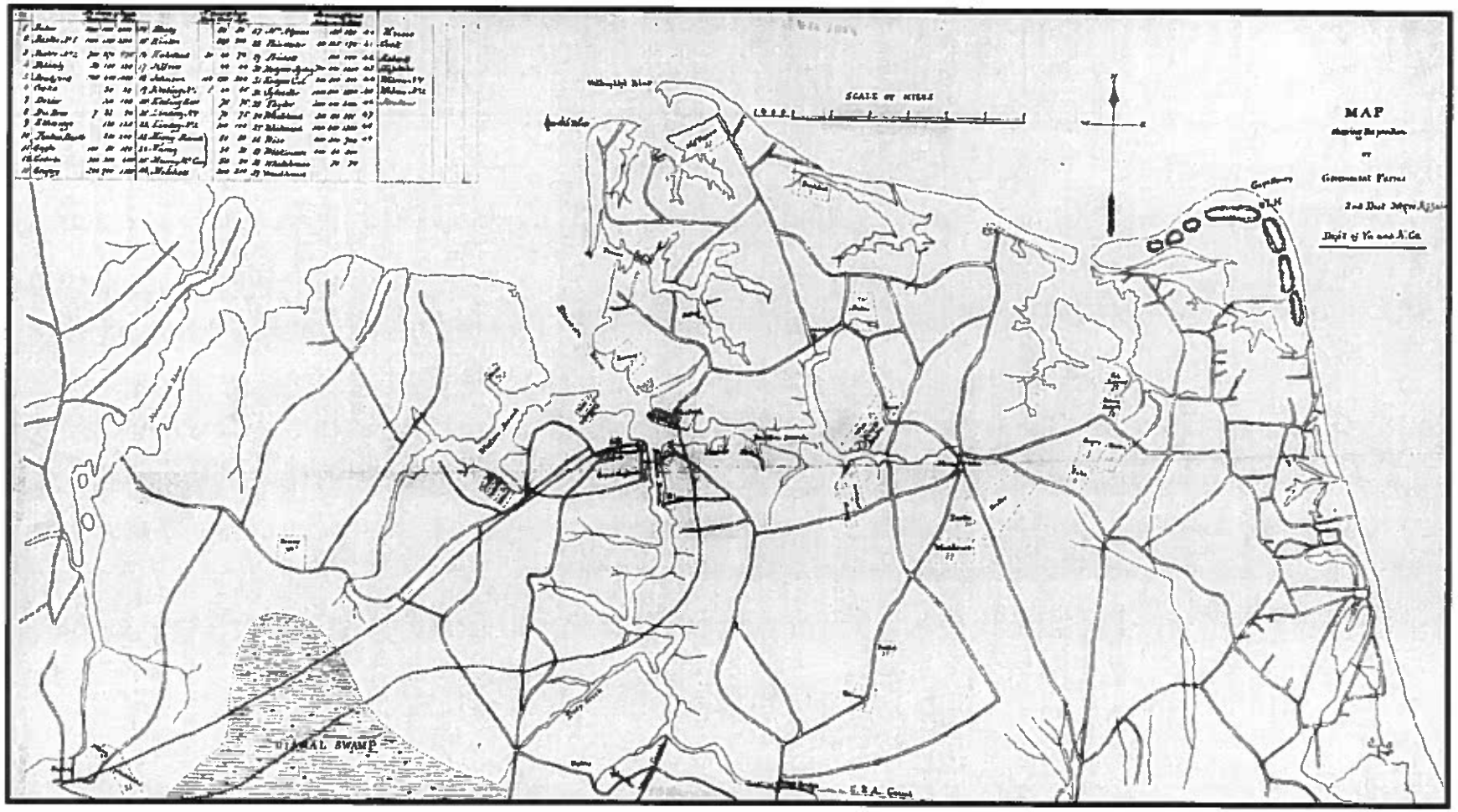

Figure 11. Map of portions of south Hampton Roads in 1866 showing abandoned farms granted to African Americans by U.S. Government (Berlin et al. 1993:194; Department of Negro Affairs 1866). See facing page for more detailed view of area encompassed by present City of Chesapeake.

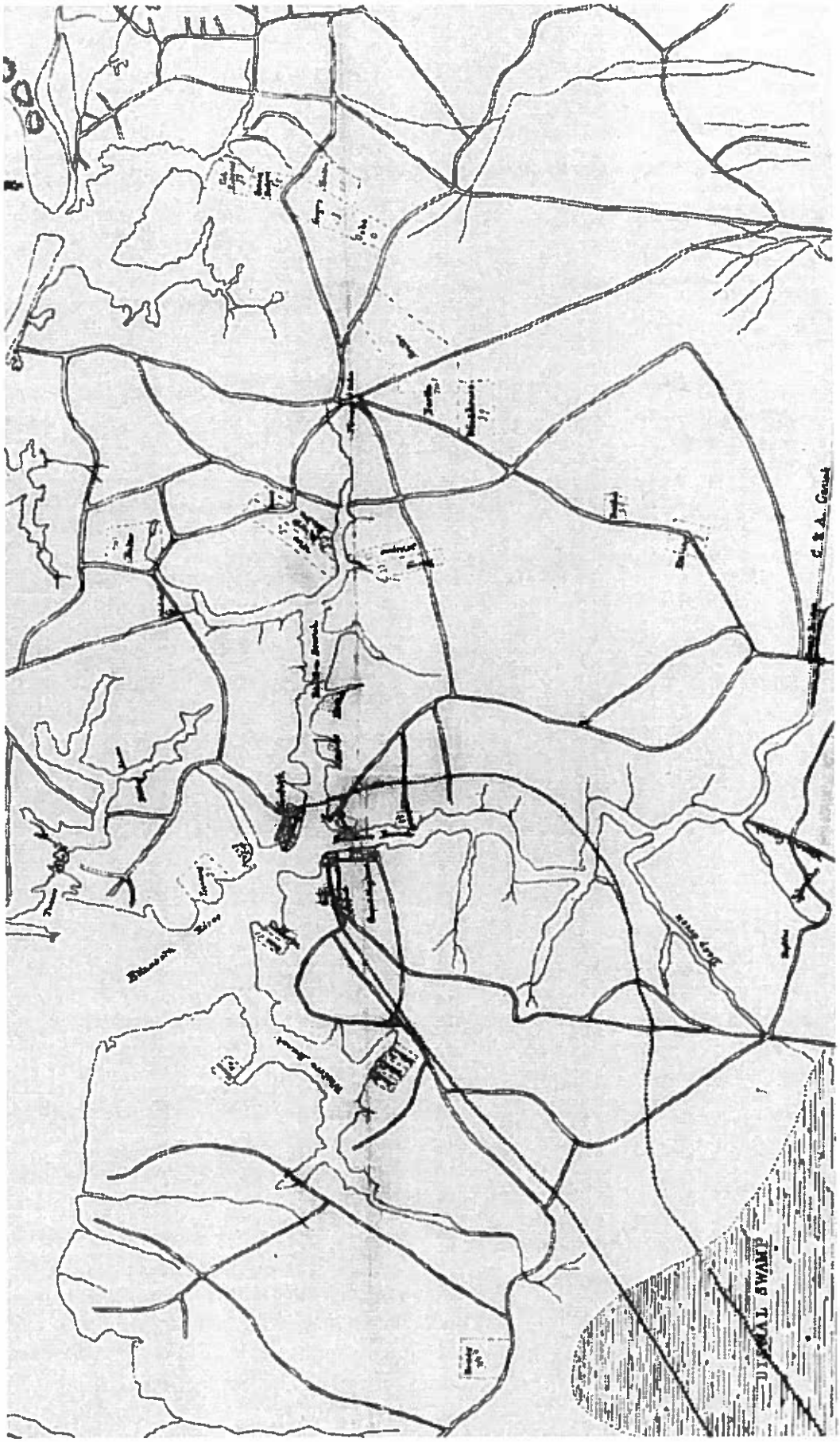
DISMAL SWAMP

Figure 12. View of George Dyer House near Lake Drummond in the 1920s (Simpson 1990:119).

Figure 13. Happer Plantation (131-0003), view of south and east elevations of plantation house and surrounding landscape.

the Glencoe Ruins sites have lost their aboveground resources. However, archaeological deposits associated with these resources may still contain valuable information pertaining to the daily lives and work of African American slaves and free tenants.

Education

With emancipation, African Americans pushed hard to leave the legacy of slavery behind. Abandoning plantations and farms, many moved away to establish their own communities, their own churches, businesses, and schools. As slaves, African Americans were often forbidden to receive an education of any sort; now, as free men and women, black Americans hungered for schooling, at first attending the small schools created by Northerners who came south after the Civil War. For many African American parents, the opportunities to send their children to school offered possibilities for helping their children achieve more in their lives.

Many African Americans believed that their children would be best educated in all-black schools taught by African American teachers. However, African Americans found themselves at the mercy of white school administrators and school boards, who, while agreeing and mandating separate schools, did little to ensure adequate funding for them. The burden, then, of provid-

ing schools and teachers often fell to the black communities (Figure 14). In Chesapeake, the Cornland School is perhaps the only extant example of an African American one-room school that was administered by the Norfolk County Board of Education (Figure 15). Built in 1902, the existing schoolhouse replaced an earlier building that had been constructed in the small crossroads community of Benefit in 1885. The Cornland School, located on Benefit Road in southern Chesapeake, was built on land owned by a white family, the Grimes; however, the Norfolk County School Board administered the school's day-to-day activities, hiring of teachers, and maintenance of the school building. The school occupied a half-acre of land, was still heated by a stove, and had no indoor plumbing. Compared to other schools, which were assessed as having anywhere from four to thirty years of usefulness, the Cornland School was deemed as having none. Despite that grim assessment, the school continued to provide education for local students until 1953, when a new school was constructed. The Cornland School is typical of the small vernacular Colonial Revival schoolhouses found throughout the South. The architectural style was a popular choice or institutional buildings, both large and small, and not only celebrated early colonial influences, but also symbolized the American ideals of democracy and good citizenship. In spite of the vast disparity between white and black schools and prevailing attitudes that segregated schools would prepare black children for a segregated life, the Cornland School illustrates that the ideals of learning and striving knew no racial boundaries (Chesapeake Planning Office 2009; Committee Appointed by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction 1949; Norfolk County School Board 1902–1922, 1944–1956; Sykes & Gwathmey 1887).

In the first decades of the twentieth century, an educational experiment began under the leadership of what seemed to be an unlikely team. African American educator and former slave Booker T. Washington, in conjunction with the architectural school at Tuskeegee Institute, partnered with Sears, Roebuck & Company chairman and philanthropist Julius Rosenwald to construct school buildings for African American children based on standardized plans. These so-called Rosenwald Schools transformed African American rural education throughout the south (Hanchett 2004). The premise of the Rosenwald Schools was simple: a black community pledged a contribution to the construction of a school and if a white school board would agree to oversee the facility, Rosenwald would pledge a certain amount of money. In most cases, Rosenwald's contribution came to roughly one-fifth of the construction costs. It was, as one Rosenwald official wrote; "not merely a series of schoolhouses, but...a community enterprise in cooperation between citizens and officials, white and colored" (Hanchett 2004).

For African Americans, the Rosenwald schools were the answer to a dream, and many communities enthusiastically came up with ways to fund their portions, despite the added financial burden it placed on them. To raise money, women held "box parties" in which boxed lunches were auctioned off. Some families planted an extra acre of cotton, or raised additional livestock to be sold specifically for money to build the schools. Blacks who did own land might donate an acre or two for the building site or donate lumber from trees cut from their land. And in most cases, the labor to construct the schools was provided by the community. By 1932, when the construction grants ended, 5,357 new buildings stood in 883 counties throughout 15 Southern states. In Virginia 381 Rosenwald schools were built. In Chesapeake, then Norfolk County, four schools were constructed: Bells Mill, Deep Creek, Fentress, and Gilmerton (Fisk University, 2000). The schools were built during the period 1923–1932 and were all two-teacher schools. However, existing photographs of the schools do show that the buildings drew from different plans that were available for

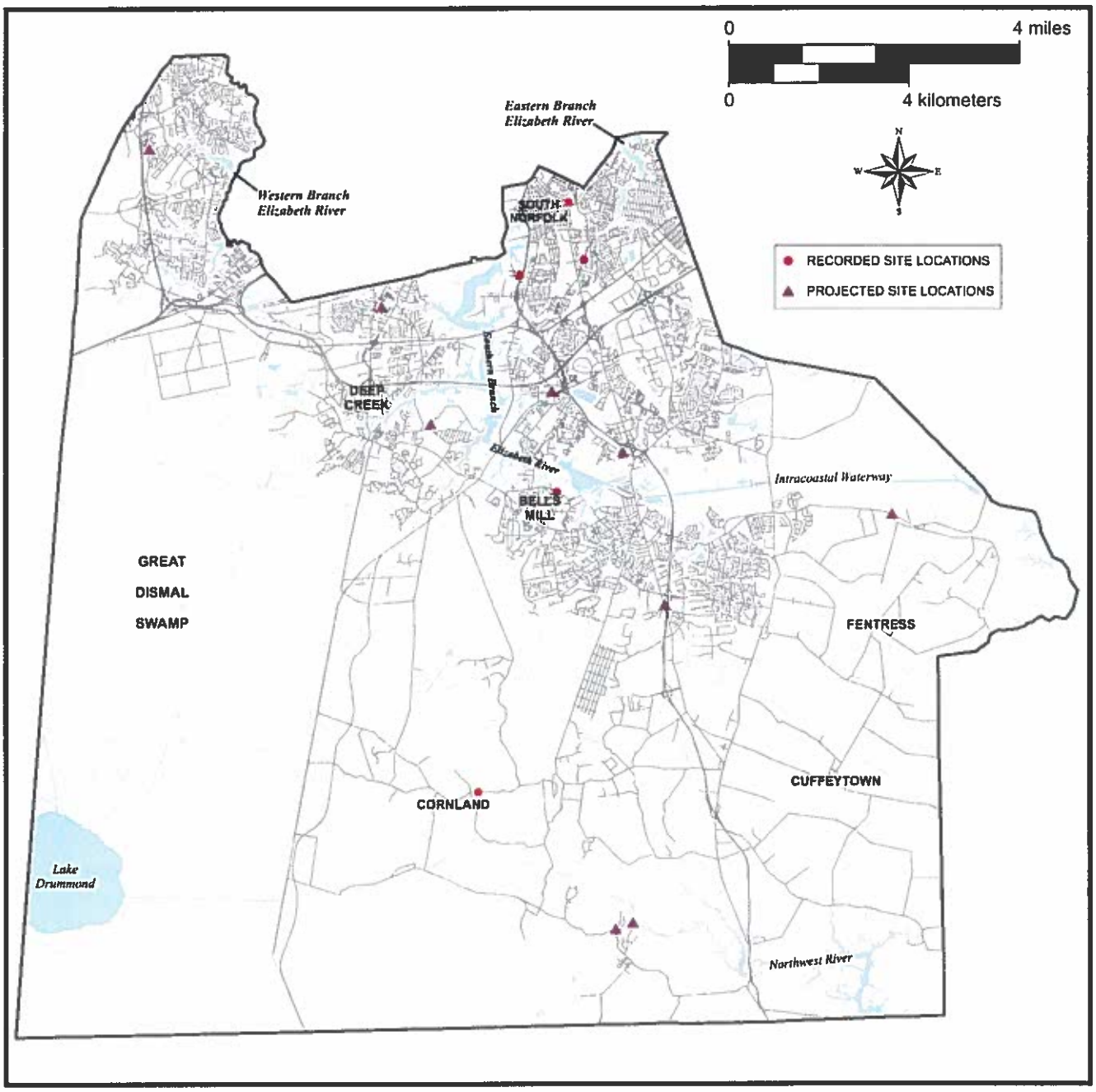

Figure 14. Distribution of Education resources.

Figure 15. Cornland School (131-0111), north and west elevations.

the two teacher school buildings. None appear to have survived; however, a historic marker is found at the site of Bells Mill school location (Hanchett 2004).

South Hill Colored Elementary, located at Middle and Maulden streets, was partially funded with Rosenwald monies, but was not a Rosenwald School. The site of the school is identified by a historical marker on the property now known as the South Hill Play Area (Figure 16). On the marker, the school is described as an "A-frame brick" building where Grades 1 through 7 were taught by an average of four teachers. With the advent of desegregation in the county in 1964, the school was closed and later torn down. The site may hold archaeological research potential for information about education in the City of Chesapeake.

Funerary

African American cemeteries are a unique resource in this study, for they not only represent slices of American funerary and landscape history, but an intimate view of African American attitudes toward death. Unfortunately, these cemeteries are also rapidly being lost to development and neglect. One result of the Chesapeake survey was the discovery of a rich resource in its surviving African American cemeteries, which illustrate some interesting and poignant chapters in the area's history (Figure 17).

Almost from the beginning, African American burial grounds were considered to be insignificant, much like the people themselves. As slaves, African Americans were forced to bury their dead on land considered marginal such as edges

Figure 16. South Hill School (131-5401), marker and site, looking north.

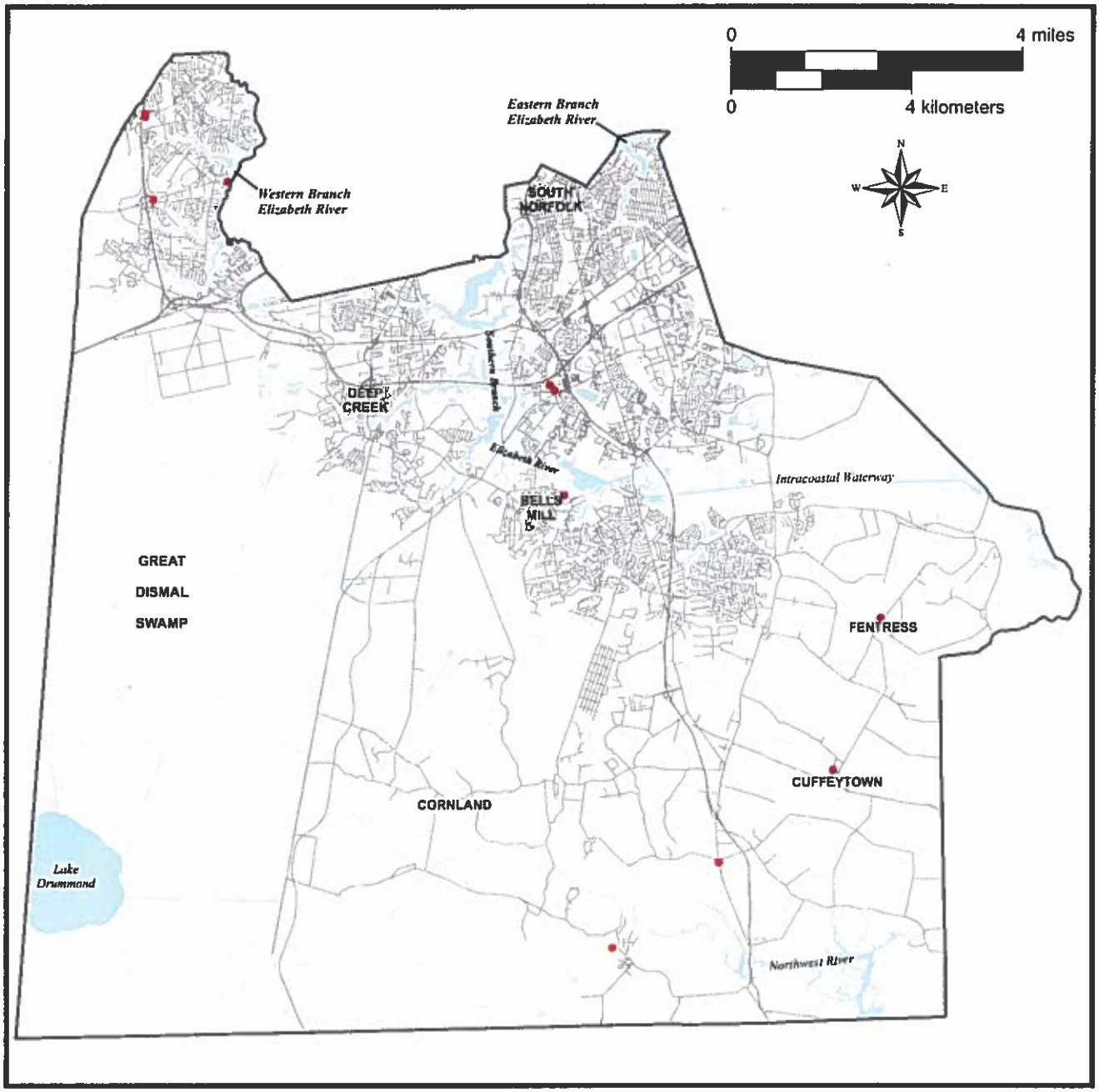

Figure 17. Distribution of Funerary resources.

of plantation property, woods, or the margins of swamps. The placement of the burial grounds also illustrated the power of the white plantation owner over slaves. Graves were almost always unmarked, though slabs of wood, rock, or plants might be used. Overall, the temporary nature of these markers suggests that it was not important for future family members to know the exact location of a loved one's grave. This idea also emphasized that no matter how small the burial ground, there would always be room for another person in the graveyard (Chicora Foundation 1996; Young 1996).

One cemetery surveyed would seem to dispute the widely held notion that white and black burials are always found in separate burial grounds. The DeFord Family Cemetery located at 3531 Bunch Walnuts Road on the grounds of the Triple R Ranch is a family cemetery that contains the graves of both the white plantation owners' family and African American slaves (Figure 18). Enclosed by a chainlink fence, the small burial site is marked by a large magnolia tree in the area of the slave graves. Although black and white persons are buried in the same plot, the cemetery is clearly delineated along racial lines. The graves belonging to white family members are marked with finished and inscribed granite and marble stones. To the north of this group are approximately eleven rough, uninscribed stones of varying sizes that serve as markers for slaves of the DeFord family (Figure 19). The DeFord Family Cemetery is typical of the small family burial grounds found throughout the South. What marks the site as notable is the grouping of both white and African American graves within a single graveyard. Even though reports of such cemeteries are found in oral history accounts, the DeFord Family Cemetery provides rare physical evidence of a mixed-race plantation graveyard.

As was common during the period of Jim Crow segregation, African Americans continued to establish their own cemeteries to serve their communities. Unlike white cemeteries though, many African American cemeteries dispensed with park-like or romanticized landscapes with special trees and plantings. Many African American cemeteries have grave depressions and mounded graves; grave placement appears random. There are no family plots as such, though family members can be buried near each other. There is no attempt to make grass grow over the graves or create special vegetation. Trees, typically, are neither encouraged nor discouraged. Cemeteries can appear "neglected" or even "abandoned" in contrast to the neat, tidy rows of a white cemetery. The lack of elaborate markers is typical of many African American cemeteries in that it reinforces the belief that death is inevitable and that elaborate markers do not take away death's power. More importantly, spending money on elaborate tributes to a death is considered unnecessary or even wasteful, particularly when the living may be more in need (Chicora 2006).

The Cuffeytown Cemetery is one of the oldest extant African American family cemeteries in the Chesapeake area, dating from just after the Civil War. The burial ground is also one of the best examples of an African American funerary resource. The cemetery is sited on a large open piece of land surrounded by farm fields (Figure 20). The placement of graves in the cemetery appears random, although the somewhat irregular groupings suggest that family members were located relatively near each other. Markers in the cemetery are diverse; while some of the early twentieth-century markers appear to be mass-produced, there are many stones that appear to be home-made as well as improvised markers consisting of metal pipes (Figures 21 and 22). Although the majority of graves face the east, as is traditional in Euro-American cemeteries, the small grouping of stones that face the northeast reflects the more random orientation of early African American cemeteries.

The cemetery is also notable for having the largest number of interments of African American Union Army Civil War veterans from

Figure 18. DeFord Family Cemetery at Triple R Ranch (131-0132), white plantation family headstones in foreground and rough stone markers of slave interments in background.

Figure 19. DeFord Family Cemetery at Triple R Ranch (131-0132), detail of rough stone slave grave marker.

Figure 20. Cuffeytown Historic Cemetery (131-5387), looking northwest.

Figure 21. Cuffeytown Historic Cemetery (131-5387), mass-produced headstone.

Figure 22. Cuffeytown Historic Cemetery (131-5387), improvised concrete and metal pipe grave markers.

Figure 23. Cuffeytown Historic Cemetery (131-5387), Cuffeytown 13 plaque at base of flagpole.

Virginia (Figure 23). Known as the "Cuffeytown Thirteen," these soldiers served in the 5th, 10th, and 36th USCT infantry regiments. The units were established in 1863 and 1864 after the Emancipation Proclamation that not only freed slaves but allowed them to serve in the United States Army and Navy. The Cuffeytown Thirteen fought at Petersburg, New Market, Fort Pocahontas, and Appomattox. The markers of the Cuffeytown Thirteen, distinguished by their red tops, are identical stones in shape and size and stand in straight rows.

In part through the efforts of local African American historian Dr. E. Curtis Alexander, a number of African American Civil War cemetery sites have been recognized. In addition to the "Cuffeytown Thirteen" graves at the Cuffeytown Cemetery is the Northwest Annex/Bethel Baptist Church Cemetery (Figure 24). The site lies within a wooded area away from the main Naval Base buildings and is reached by an unmarked dirt and gravel road. This small cemetery consists of approximately eighteen graves consisting of marked, modern granite tombstones as well as older markers and a number of simple painted white wood crosses, measuring approximately three feet tall. The Northwest Annex Cemetery contains the graves of African American men and a single woman affiliated with Company E, 10th Regiment, USCT, organized in Virginia during the Civil War on November 18, 1863 (Alexander 2003).

The St. Bride's Church Cemetery, near the intersection of Battlefield Boulevard and St. Bride's Road, consists of a small raised area near the road with three granite tombstones (Figure 25). Among the three gravestones is that of Private Adda Smith, Company H, 10th Regiment of the United States Colored Troops, which was organized in Virginia during the Civil War on November 18, 1863. Smith was killed during the Battle of Plymouth in Washington County, North Carolina in April 1864 (Alexander, 2003).

One of the more fascinating burial grounds associated with African American Union Army veterans is the Sergeant March Corprew Family Cemetery/Unknown and Known Afro-Union Civil War Soldiers Memorial located in the Bells Mill community (Figure 26). This burial ground contains approximately 70 to 80 graves with dates ranging from 1872 to 2005. Markers exhibit a wide variety of materials and types, including inscribed concrete, marble, and granite markers and plain wood boards and pieces of slate (Figure 27) In the northwest section of the cemetery is a memorial to African American soldiers who fought for the Union Army during the Civil War. This cemetery is the oldest active cemetery in the Chesapeake area. An African American Civil War veteran, Sergeant March Corprew, who served in Company L, 2nd Regiment, USCC from 1863 to 1866, established the cemetery in the late nineteenth century (Alexander 2003).

African American churches also had their own burial grounds such as the one seen at the site of the New Hope Baptist Church Cemetery located at Station House Road. The New Hope Baptist Church cemetery consists of approximately one hundred markers of varying types and materials including granite, marble, slate, and concrete (Figure 28). The oldest stones appear to date from the late nineteenth to the early twenty-first centuries. Located in the center of the cemetery is a large brick monument with a marble plaque noting the establishment of the New Hope Baptist Church in 1894; the building on this site was destroyed by fire in 1960 (Figure 29).

Military

African Americans in the Chesapeake area fought with distinction during the American Revolution and Civil War. A granite marker alongside Highway 168, Battlefield Boulevard South marks the site of the Battle of Great Bridge, fought on December 7, 1775. During this battle, William "Billy" Flora, a slave, along with approximately

Figure 24. Northwest Annex Cemetery (131-5395), looking northwest.

Figure 25. St. Bride's Cemetery (131-0041), graves of African American Union Army veterans.

Figure 26. Sergeant March Corprew Cemetery (131-5390), looking west.

Figure 27. Sergeant March Corprew Cemetery (131-5390), memorial markers for African American Union Army veterans.

Figure 28. New Hope Cemetery (131-5386), looking west.

Figure 29. New Hope Cemetery (131-5386), brick memorial and marble plaque at former church location.

7,000 other African Americans, fought alongside American rebel forces against British troops. The British also were aided by a number of slaves who made up the "Royal Ethiopian Regiment." The battle was pivotal, for it helped to break the British hold on Virginia during the war (Alexander 2003). Several archaeological sites related to the battle and with associated defensive works survive (Figure 30).

Recreation

During segregation in the Chesapeake area, few outdoor recreational opportunities were offered to African Americans. This rather bleak picture was brightened considerably with the creation of one of the few surviving African American camps in the area and possible in the state (Figure 31). Camp E. W. Young is located in the historically African American Bells Mill community (Figures 32–34). The camp encompasses 30 acres along the Intracoastal Waterway. The camp is fairly compact, with the original grouping of buildings clustered close together. The camp not only had residential cabins, but offered a wide variety of activities which today includes a recreation hall, the dining hall, clinic, photography building, offices, and probably one of the few natatorium buildings in the state. The camp also offered a diverse number of outdoor activities such as baseball fields, outdoor bowling, ping-pong tables, a small miniature golf course, and volley ball courts. Camp E. W. Young is one of Chesapeake's most unique African American resources. Not only is the camp an excellent example of mid-twentieth-century standardized design but may be one of the few historic African American camps still in use today. At a time when the term "separate but equal" meant little with regard to segregated facilities, Camp E. W. Young is all the more remarkable for its offerings. The camp is now operated for day use by groups of Norfolk Public Schools elementary students.

Religion

No single institution was of greater importance to the African American community than the church (Figure 35). As one black journalist wrote, these buildings "were institution(s) managed and owned by black people," which "by its very existence and democratic nature imparted racial pride and dignity, providing parishioners of all classes the opportunity to participate in its meeting and rituals and to exercise roles denied them in the larger society." Almost from slavery's beginnings in the United States, the African American church offered hope, comfort, and a sense of community—roles that the institution still fills today. Founding churches offered African Americans some of their first opportunities to create their own institutions. Churches offered much more than sermons and religious instruction; they were instrumental in forming community and social organizations, helping mobilize political activity, and helping to educate and provide for the poor (Center for Historic Preservation 2000).

During the period 1890–1945, when the majority of African American churches were built, the designs of these churches took on distinctive characteristics. More established congregations began building more imposing buildings, with brick or concrete replacing the traditional frame and weatherboard. These churches borrowed their design elements from the Gothic Revival style initially, and later the Colonial Revival style. One notable element that began appearing on many churches was the dedication stones. These stones serve as important historical documents, for not only do they record the construction date of the building, but quite often the individuals involved and the dates of the congregation's origins. Some churches may have more than one dedication stone, taken from existing buildings that have been rebuilt (Center for Historic Preservation 2000).

In some cases, the religious affiliation of a church might offer clues to exterior ornament

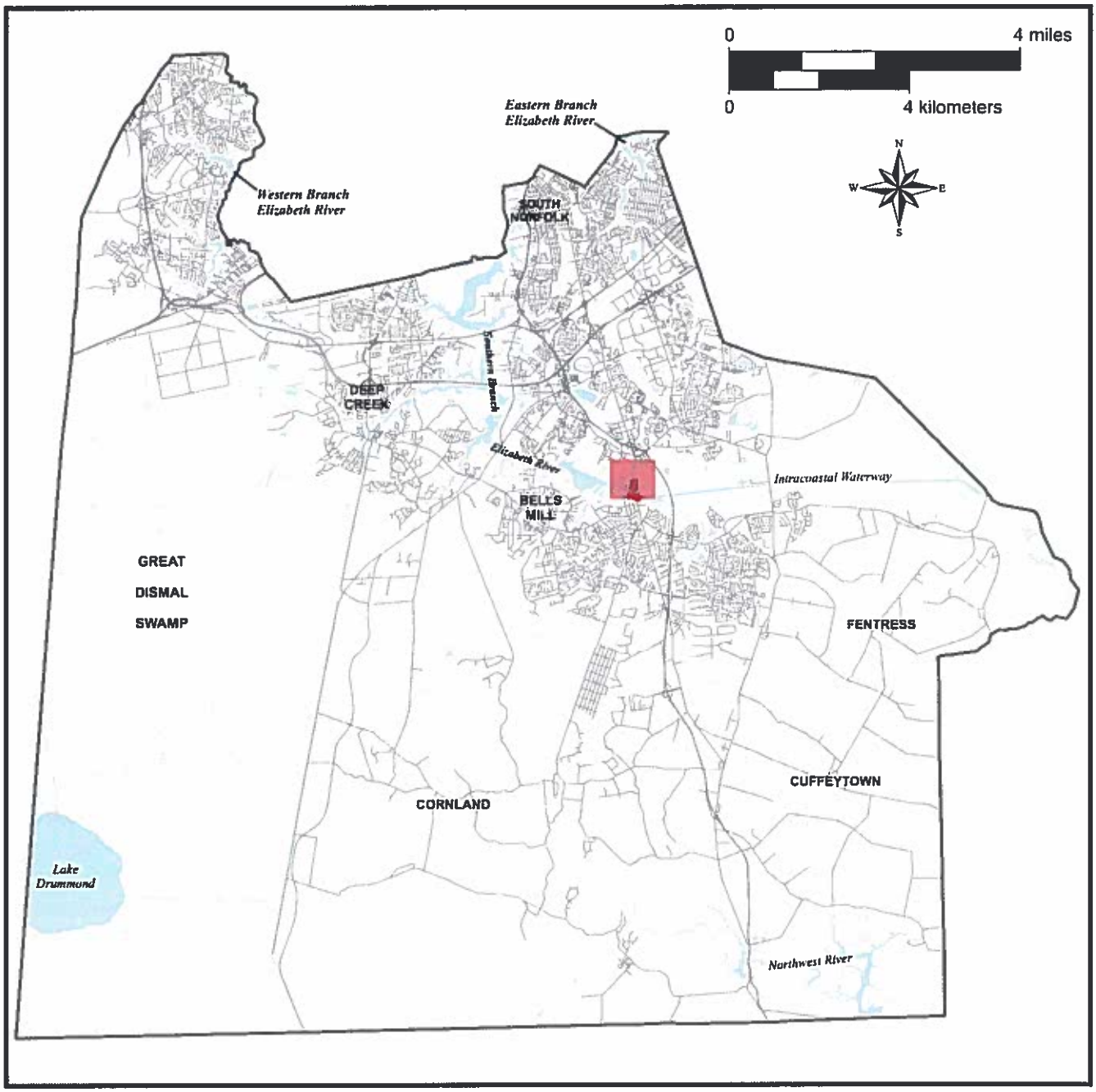

Figure 30. Distribution of Military resources.

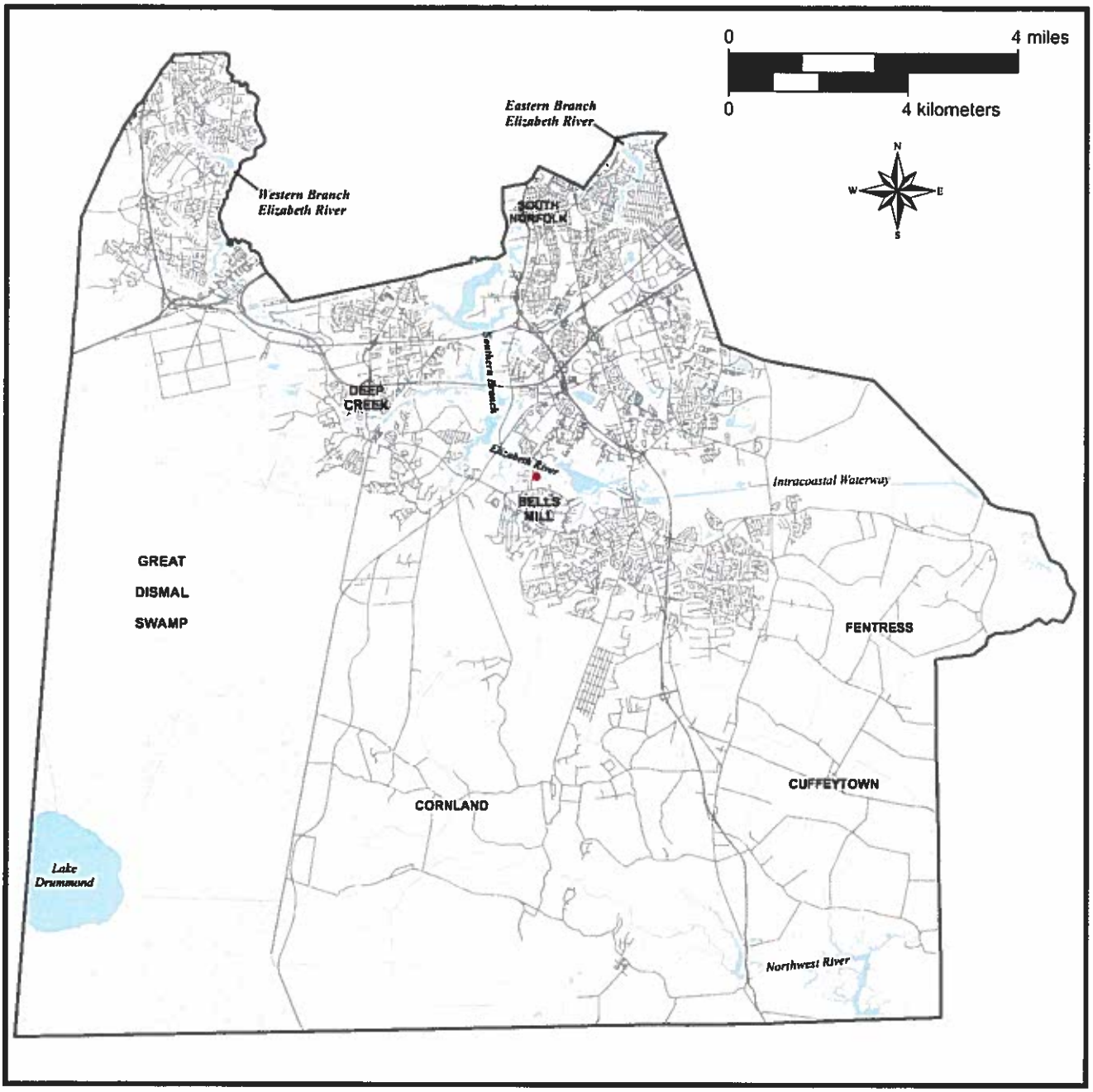

Figure 31. Distribution of Recreation resources.

Figure 32. Camp E. W. Young (131-5388), cabins P, R, and S, looking northeast.

Figure 33. Camp E. W. Young (131-5388), natatorium, south elevation.

Figure 34. Camp E. W. Young (131-5388), cabin EE, south and west elevations.

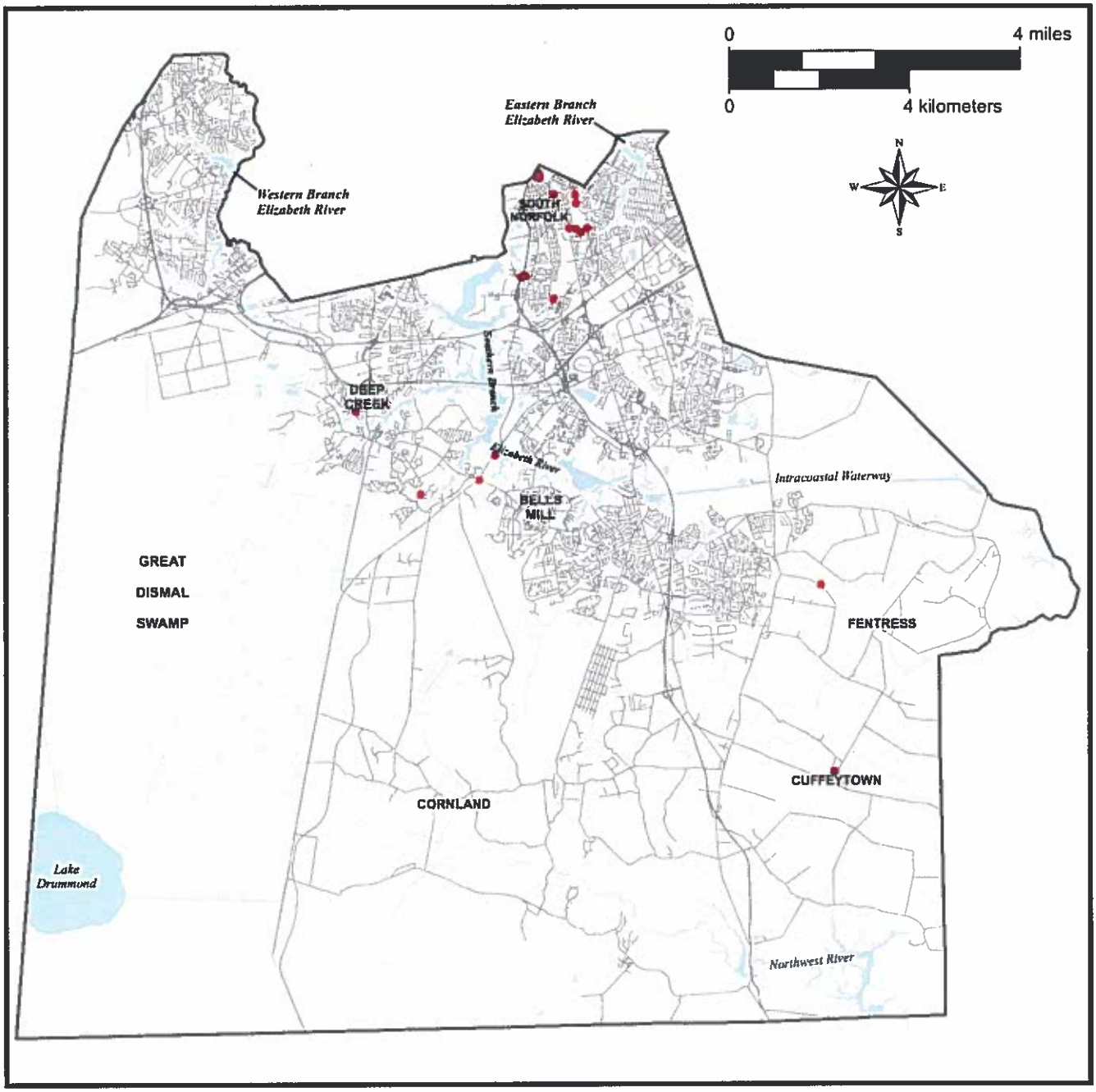

Figure 35. Distribution of Religious resources.

Figure 36. Church of the Advent (131-5389), north elevation.

or plan. Churches in the Baptist tradition, for example, may have a simple rectangular plan and modest exteriors. Churches of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) tradition may employ greater architectural grandeur and feature exterior ornamentation in the form of towers and parapet crenellations that hint at the influences of European religious architecture. Some independent churches such as the United House of Prayer have "signature" elements found in almost all of their churches no matter the location. In addition, many African American churches over time made alterations or added to their church buildings. While at one time, the addition of brick veneer or the construction of a large education wing might have prevented these churches from being designated as architecturally significant, it is now necessary to recognize these modifications as reflecting growth, change, and attention to differing styles and materials.

In Chesapeake, the AME churches, though modest in many respects, still tended to reflect European influences, especially in the use of end towers. For instance, Lee's Chapel AME Church, now the Church of the Advent in Bells Mill, is a Gothic Revival–styled church built of coursed rusticated ashlar and tooled ashlar block and is distinguished by crenellated end towers of coursed rusticated ashlar block (Figure 36). The original church building was constructed in 1907, rebuilt in 1924, and rebuilt again in 1954. The building is an interesting example of a vernacular expression of the Gothic Revival style with its crenellated towers and is distinctive for its use of ashlar and tooled block construction. The Gabriel Chapel AME Zion Church located in the African American community of Cuffeytown features brick construction and brick end towers (Figure 37). The two-tower design is also present in some of the Colonial Revival African American

churches in Chesapeake. Mount Olive Church, now Deliverance Tabernacle, is a small urban neighborhood church located at 916 Middle Street in South Norfolk. This ca. 1928 Colonial Revival–style one-story, five-bay, church is constructed of concrete block with concrete block towers (Figure 38).

One of the few churches that retains its Gothic Revival features is the Little Zion Baptist Church at 142 Kempsville Road (Figure 39). This ca. 1900 Gothic Revival church is one of the few frame churches seen during the survey. Instead of the two corner towers seen in many of the area's churches, Little Zion is marked by a single tall corner tower with a nearly conical spire; each elevation wall of the tower has a gable front.

More restrained expressions of the Colonial Revival style can be seen in Mount Zion Baptist Church, another small neighborhood church at 1608 East Liberty Street in South Norfolk (Figure 40). This ca. 1955 Colonial Revival–style one-story, three-bay church is constructed of variegated brick laid in stretcher bond. The First Baptist Church, now known as the Strait Gate Evangelistic Church and located at 1010 Hill Street, is a ca. 1955 Colonial Revival–style neighborhood church constructed of brick laid in stretcher bond (Figure 41).

One of the more distinctive architectural expressions is found at the United House of Prayer of all People/Church of the Rock of the Apostolic Faith, located at 1433 Whittamore Road (Figure 42). Two imposing Lions of Judah mark the entrance to this newer brick African American church in Chesapeake. It is possible that the interior of the original 1931 church is still intact. The church was among the first of several that Bishop C. M. "Sweet Daddy" Grace built across the South in the 1920s and 1930s. Grace's denomination, known as the United House of Prayer of all People, was established in 1919. The United House of Prayer has much in common with the Pentecostal tradition.

Divine Baptist Church at 2917 Old Galberry Road is the oldest African American church in the Chesapeake area; it also was the first church built for the African American community (Figure 43). The original community, which consisted of slaves, met in secret in an area known as a "bush harbor," which offered safety and privacy from whites. The group went on to formally establish the Divine Baptist Church in 1863; Reverend E. G. Corprew, a former slave who became one of the first African Americans to serve in the Virginia House of Representatives during the Reconstruction period, donated the land for the church. On April 14, 1945, the church was struck by lightning and burned to the ground. By 1948, the current brick church was completed and marked a dramatic departure from its previous form. Divine Baptist Church is an excellent example of an African American church built during the period 1890–1965. The church was heavily involved in community affairs, helping to purchase the land for the Deep Creek Colored School. The church also served as a "mother" church in the establishment of three other African American Baptist churches in the area during the 1950s and 1960s.

Divine is also notable for its design. African American churches were breaking away from the traditional Gothic Revival–inspired designs that marked so many rural religious buildings. By the end of World War II, some churches began incorporating Colonial Revival massing and materials in addition to late Gothic Revival ornament, as seen in Divine's windows and interior. The use of brick for the church not only suggests a resilience of the community in rebuilding, but also in creating a distinctive landmark in what was still a largely rural area. Another important design characteristic of Divine Baptist Church is the dedication stones. These stones not only marked the dedication of a new church building; they also provide important historical information about the church, its founding, and its members.

Figure 37. Gabriel Chapel AME Zion Church (131-0147), south elevation.

Figure 38. Mount Olive Church/Deliverance Tabernacle (131-5400), north elevation.

Figure 39. Little Zion Baptist Church (131-0050), south and east elevations.

Figure 40. Mount Zion Baptist Church (131-5399), north and east elevations.

Figure 41. Strait Gate Evangelistic Church (131-5402), north and east elevations.

Figure 42. United House of Prayer for All People (131-5393), west elevation.

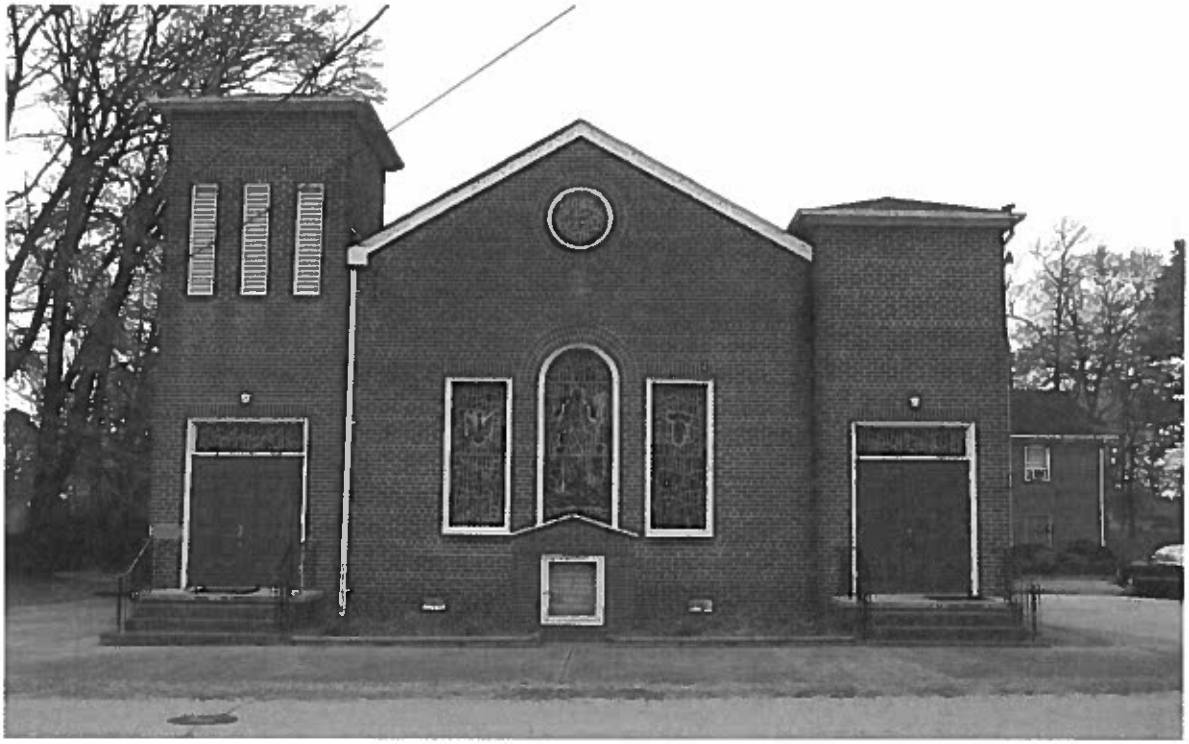

Figure 43. Divine Baptist Church (131-5397), north elevation.

Social

Fraternal organizations in the African American community are sometimes overshadowed by churches. However, these groups also played an important role in African American society. In order to circumvent racially exclusive social organizations, African Americans sought and often received charters from European fraternal orders such as the English-based Prince Hall Masons and Odd Fellows. Even more than their white counterparts, black secret societies (like the black churches) served multiple functions. As historian Joe Trotter wrote, these organizations "helped to shape African American identity through rituals of brotherhood; protected members against poverty and other misfortunes." These groups also helped to spearhead social change, first during the slavery abolition struggle, then throughout the Civil Rights and Black Power movements. Black secret societies also offered more opportunities for prospective members to join, as there were fewer restrictions based on class or income (Trotter 2004).

In Chesapeake, a number of African American fraternal organizations flourished including the Odd Fellows, the Knights of Pythias, and the Masons (Figure 44). The W. G. Alexander Lodge, located in the community of Bells Mill, was organized in 1792 and is the oldest Masonic Lodge in the City of Chesapeake (Figure 45). The lodge is part of a branch of Freemasonry tracing its origins back to a lodge established in Boston by Mason Prince Hall and fourteen other free blacks. The current building was chartered in 1945. It is named after Reverend W. G. Alexander, a local black minister, and remains one of the few surviving fraternal lodges associated with the Chesapeake African American community.

Transportation

In the area of transportation, African Americans played a vital role. One of the larger engineering

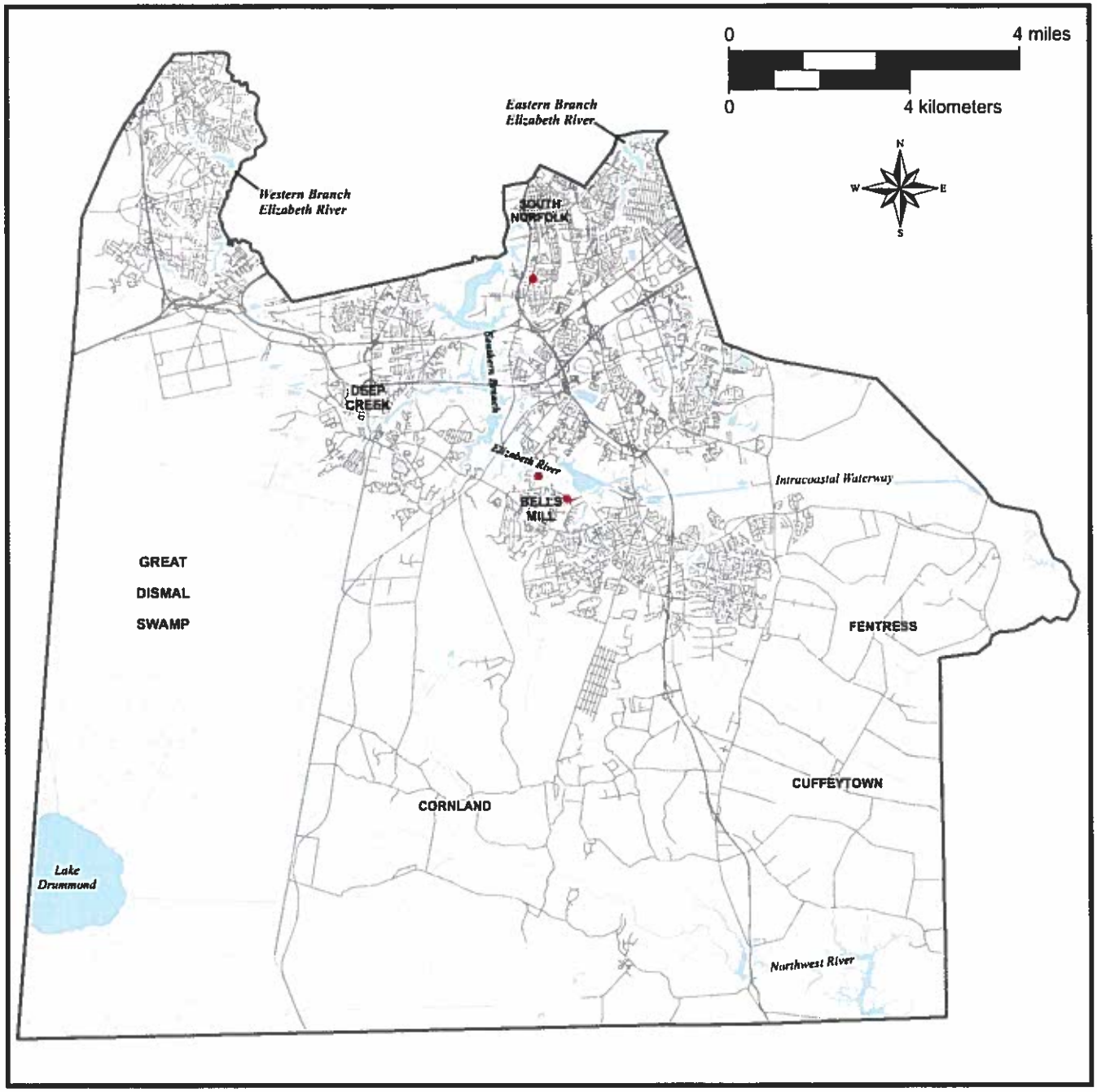

Figure 44. Distribution of Social resources.

Figure 45. W. G. Alexander Lodge (131-5391), south and east elevations.

efforts during the late eighteenth century was the construction of the Dismal Swamp Canal. It is doubtful that the canal would have ever been built were it not for the labor of African Americans, both free and enslaved. Beginning in the early eighteenth century, the need for a navigable waterway the area had been debated by colonists in Virginia and North Carolina. Such an undertaking would connect the various waterways of Hampton Roads: Elizabeth River and Deep Creek in the north with Joyce's (Joy's) Creek, Turner Cut, Pasquotank River, and Albemarle Sound to the south. Although several routes were suggested, little was done until 1784 when the Dismal Swamp Canal was surveyed. In 1787 the Virginia General Assembly passed an act to construct a navigable canal. However, the legislation could not take effect until North Carolina passed a similar act in 1790 (Royster 2000).

The Dismal Swamp Canal Company was then formed and chartered in both states. The work of clearing and digging by "well disposed, able Negroes and Laborers, such as Ditchers, Sawyers and Shingle Gatherers" began from both ends in 1792. Two 11-mile-long trenches, one beginning in North Carolina and the other in Virginia, were completed by slaves using axes, saws, shovels, and picks. The work was exhausting and dangerous as men battled mosquitoes, snakes, and disease. The canal continued to be important to African Americans from the late eighteenth through twentieth centuries. Both free persons and slaves worked along the canal and in the swamp as boat tenders, lock keepers, makers of shingles (in 1808, hired slaves had made over one million, 3-foot-wide cedar shingles) and staves, and as laborers (Royster 2000).

A number of canal-related resources and extant canals or canal remnants may provide important information with regard to the work life of African Americans during this period (Figure 46). These include the Dismal Swamp Canal and nineteenth-century resources found at the Tazewell Canal Lock, lock remnants alongside the north side of Glencoe Street where African American worker housing was located, Skiff Ditch (part of

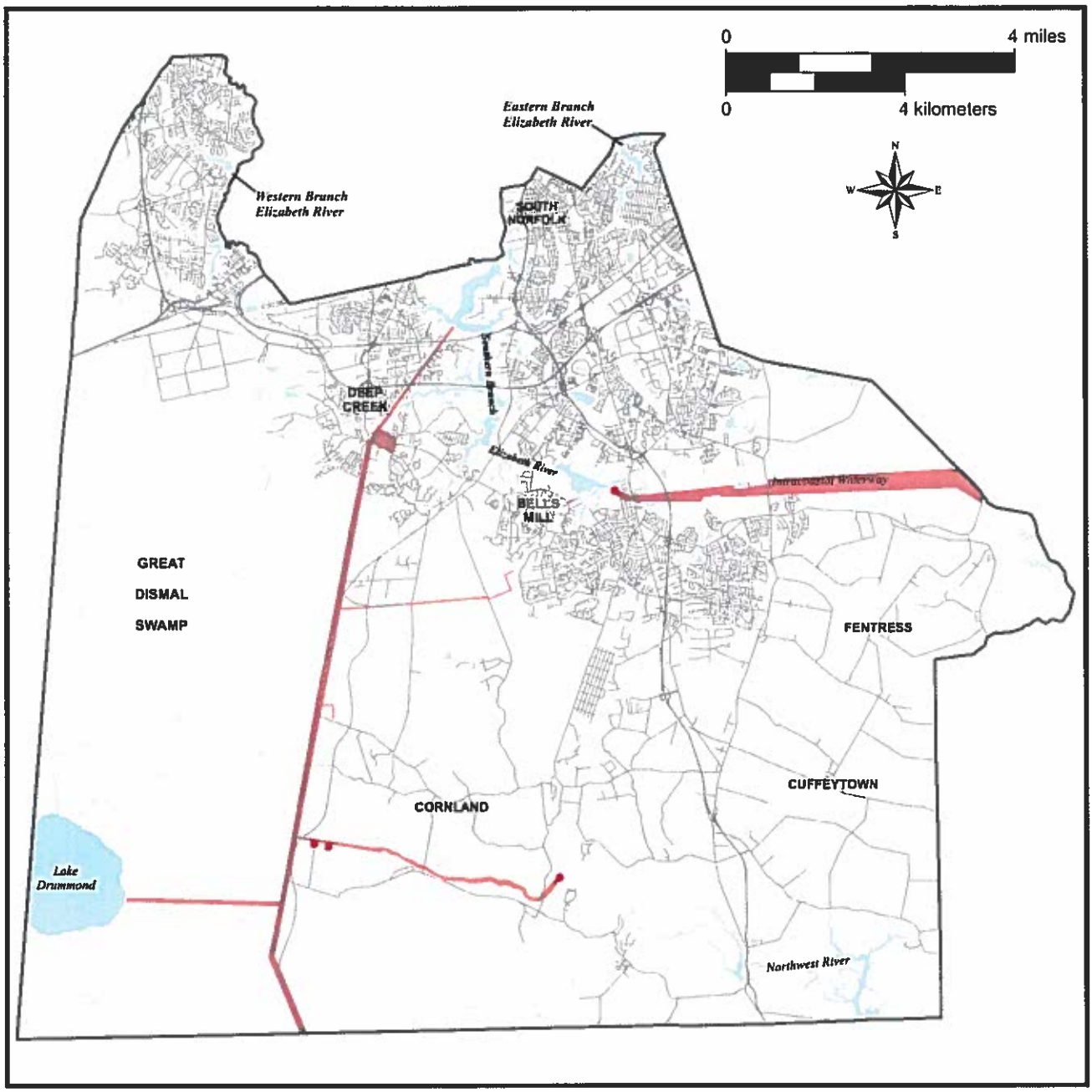

Figure 46. Distribution of Transportation resources 1. Location of Chesapeake.

the Dismal Swamp Canal), and the Northwest Canal which ran from the Northwest River to the Dismal Swamp Canal, and a canal lock (currently submerged) associated with the Northwest Canal, located at the Triple R Ranch.

5: Survey Overview

Among the goals outlined for the City of Chesapeake's African American Architectural Resource survey were: first, the completion of a building inventory; second, evaluations of the properties documented, including recommendations for properties deserving intensive-level documentation but not documented at this level for the current study; identifying properties with potential for local historic designation or for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register; and designating properties that would contribute to a multiple property listing of African American historic resources within the city. Taken into consideration, too, were the potential recommendations for archaeological surveys in particular areas; recommendations for significant historic view sheds that should be taken into account in planning for development; and recommendations for additional work to be considered for future survey and planning efforts.

The National Register standards for evaluating the significance of properties were developed to recognize all peoples who have made a significant contribution to the history and heritage of the United States. The criteria are designed to guide state and local governments, federal agencies, and others in evaluating potential entries in the National Register. In evaluating properties, the following criteria were applied to determine whether further study was merited:

A. Properties that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of American history; or

B. Properties that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or

C. Properties that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic value, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

D. Properties that have yielded, or are likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Surviving African American historic resources in Chesapeake appear to be rare, and the eligibility requirements for these properties including integrity must be considered carefully. These properties must retain sufficient character to convey their importance historically. However, the deciding components that determine integrity such as location, design, setting materials, workmanship, feeling, and association may be weighted in light of comparable resources. For instance, location in this case would be critical in light of the fact that in Chesapeake, African Americans were largely segregated to specific areas of the city and county, so resources must remain within these historic and cultural boundaries, where setting, because of development and urban renewal, may have altered the historic landscape. It becomes vitally important then, that these resources still maintain some sense of connection, whether through design or materials or location to their historic roots. Association is critical to determining the importance of these resources too, for generally

with African American architectural resources, it is the historical and cultural importance that lends these properties their significance. Also to be considered are the more controversial associations that many of these resources hold as symbols of a time and place when African Americans were treated as chattel or second-class citizens and of their enduring quest for equality.

Potential Individual National Register Nominations

Additional resources may be determined eligible after development of a multiple property document indicating specific eligibility criteria for the African American resources of Chesapeake and with further research.

Camp E. W. Young

One of the area's most unique and intact resources is Camp E. W. Young which was established in 1951 by the prominent African American Young family who were newspaper publishers. The camp is notable for its layout and architecture, which, although institutional in nature, presents an interesting glimpse into how blacks circumnavigated the restrictions of Jim Crow in creating their own distinctive institutions. The camp is now owned by the Norfolk Public Schools and educates children of all races. This resource is potentially eligible under Criteria A, B, and C.

Cuffeytown Cemetery

The Cuffeytown Cemetery is one of the oldest extant African American family cemeteries in the Chesapeake area and illustrates some of the prevailing burial practices found in African American communities. This resource is potentially eligible under Criteria A, B, C, and D.

Cornland School

The Cornland School, a small one-story, frame and weatherboard building constructed in 1902, may be the only surviving African American one-room schoolhouse in the Chesapeake area. The Cornland School is typical of the small vernacular Colonial Revival schoolhouses found throughout the South. This resource is potentially eligible under Criterion A, C, and D.

Future Survey Recommendations

One of the most pressing problems facing the city of Chesapeake in documenting African American resources is the lack of written accounts or oral histories about the area and its residents. It is recommended that the City of Chesapeake continue in its efforts to research and document African American architectural resources. This objective can be accomplished in a number of ways: continued solicitation of information through newspaper articles; compilation of oral histories, particularly in the historic African American neighborhoods and communities where information might be gained by talking with people who are familiar with local history; and in talks, roundtables, and other forums where an exchange of information and ideas may contribute to a growing knowledge of black history and buildings. Exhibits in libraries and other public buildings may also stir interest in African American architectural resources.

In specifically documenting local African American architectural history, a priority should be placed on researching African Americans in the building trades such as architects, builders, craftsman, construction companies, and contractors. Because much of African American architecture is by nature, largely interchangeable with white architecture, being able to establish the role of black builders in constructing buildings, neighborhoods or other types of buildings and structures would be very helpful.

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Appendix A:
Inventory of Resources Surveyed for Current Project

Archaeological Sites

131-0003 (Happer Plantation)

The Happer Plantation was a successful working plantation complex; the family held slaves who lived and worked on the property. Archaeological Potential.

131-0034 (Butts-Holstead Plantation; 3162 Ballahack Road)

The Butts Holstead Plantation was a successful working plantation complex; the family held slaves who lived and worked on the property. Archaeological Potential.

131-0007 (Glencoe Ruins Site; Glencoe and Bellhaven Roads)

The Glencoe Ruins site was resurveyed with the possibility that the property may contain potential archaeological resources that would contribute to the African American history of the City of Chesapeake and the surrounding area.

Domestic

131-0501 (Dr. Hugo Owens House; 732 Shell Road)

This ca. 1900, Queen Anne–style, two-and-a-half-story, three-bay, frame dwelling rests on a foundation of brick piers with brick infill. Vinyl siding covers the original weatherboard. The side-gable roof is covered with asphalt shingles and has a raking cornice and heavy, molded cornice returns. A single 3/1 wood sash window is found in each gable end. A distinctive feature of the house is the second-story, front-gable-roof canted-bay block. The roof is marked by a pedimented pent with a molded raking cornice; a Palladian-style window grouping is found in the gable center. A one-story, hipped-roof, three-bay porch is supported by Tuscan columns. The off-center entrance consists of a single-leaf, wood paneled door. Other openings consist of 9/9 wood sash windows on the first floor and 6/6 wood sash windows on the second floor. Located on the east wall are modern French-style doors. Attached to the rear of the house is a one-story, frame, side-gable-roof addition that may have originally been a kitchen; attached to this is a one-story, frame garage addition. This dwelling is the birthplace of Dr. Hugo Owens, the first African American to serve on the Chesapeake City Council as well as the City's first African American Vice-Mayor. The house appears to be the oldest house in the immediate area and may have been part of a farmstead at one time.

131-5392 (W. P. Clarke House; 764 Bells Mill Road)

This ca. 1970 one-story, six-bay ranch-style dwelling sits on a solid brick foundation laid in stretcher course bond and is constructed of variegated brick laid in stretcher course bond. The complex roof has composition shingles and

a boxed cornice. Located on the rear slope is an interior brick chimney with corbelled cap. The slightly inset single-leaf wood paneled entrance door is marked by a concrete stoop with wrought iron railings and balustrade. On the south wall is a large paneled garage door bay. To the south of the entrance door is a large wood 15-light window. Other openings include small rectangular sliding 1/1 metal windows and large paired one-light fixed windows. A screened porch is attached to the rear of the house. This dwelling was the homeplace of W. P. Clarke, Sr., one of the first two African Americans to be elected to the City of Chesapeake City Council in 1969 (Clarke was elected in the same year as Dr. Hugo Owens, Sr.). The house also was the residence of the first African American woman to serve on the City Council, Florine R. Clarke, who took over her husband's seat after he died in 1977.

131-5065-0009 (Dr. Willa Bazemore House; 1600 Great Bridge Road)

This ca. 1970, one-story, seven bay, masonry, single-family dwelling is constructed of stretcher bond brick and rests on a stretcher bond brick foundation. The side-gable roof is covered with composition shingle and has an interior brick chimney with corbelled cap. The single-leaf wood paneled entrance door is marked by a one-story, thee bay shed roof porch supported by turned posts. Window openings are 1/1 vinyl sash and are further articulated by large wood panels with decorative shutters.

131-0235 (West Plantation [Historic]; Tenant House Chimney, 2216 West Road [Current])

An exterior chimney is all that remains of a tenant house located on the north side of West Road. The structure stands alone in an open field. This exterior brick chimney is laid in stretcher bond and has stepped shoulders and a corbelled cap. The east side of the chimney features an open hearth. The chimney is the surviving element of an African American tenant house, once a common sight throughout the rural south.

Education

131-0111 (Cornland School; 2309 Benefit Road)

The Cornland School may be the earliest surviving African American one-room schoolhouse in the Chesapeake area. This ca. 1920, Colonial Revival one-story, one-bay schoolhouse rests on brick piers and is sheathed with weatherboard. The timber sill plate, though deteriorating, is still intact. The front-gable roof is sheathed in standing seam metal and has a raking cornice and heavy cornice returns; a central interior brick flue pierces the roof ridge. Marking the central entrance is a single-leaf paneled door with a single light, shielded by a small shed roof supported by wood brackets. Other openings consist of wood sash 6/6 windows with simple surrounds. The interior of the schoolhouse consists of one large room. At the rear of the room is a wooden teacher's platform measuring approximately fifteen feet long and ten feet wide. The original walls were covered with beaded board, which was later covered over with wood paneling. The ceiling's original beaded board is still intact. Underneath heavy sheets of plywood flooring is a tongue and groove pine floor.

131-5401 (South Hill Colored Elementary School [Historic]; South Hill Play Area, Middle St. and Maulden St. [Function/ Location]

This park is the site of the South Hill Colored Elementary School, which opened in 1921. A ca. 1990 modern playground with swings, slides, and other recreational equipment is located at the east end of the park area. The playground sits on pea gravel; its boundaries are outlined with pressure-treated wood landscaping ties. The school was

built with monies from the South Hill School League, the Julius Rosenwald Fund, and the Norfolk County Board of Education. The building is described as an "A-frame brick." The school offered grades 1 through 7 and had an average of four teachers. The site may hold archaeological research potential for information about education in the City of Chesapeake.

Fraternal/Social

131-5391 (W. G. Alexander Lodge; 969 Bells Mill Road)

Organized in 1792 and the oldest Masonic Lodge in the City of Chesapeake, this ca. 1945, Minimal Traditional two-story, three-bay, masonry fraternal lodge rests on a stretcher bond brick foundation and is sheathed with stretcher bond brick. The front-gable roof is covered with asphalt shingles and has a boxed cornice, overhanging eaves, and simple frieze. The gable ends are covered with horizontal board; small, rectangular louvered vents are located in the center of each gable. A belt course of soldier brick wraps around the top of the second story near the roofline. A one-story, three-bay projecting front-gable porch, which appears to be a more recent addition, is supported by turned wood posts. A double-leaf wood door flanked by narrow, fixed sidelights marks the central entrance. Other openings consist of metal, 2/2 vertical sliding windows with brick rowlock sills. A second-story wood fire escape stairway is located at the rear, northwest corner of the building.

Funerary

131-5387 (Cuffeytown Cemetery; Cuffeytown Street)

The Cuffeytown Cemetery is one of the oldest extant African American family cemeteries in the Chesapeake area, dating from just after the Civil War. It is distinguished for having the largest number of interments of African American Union Army Civil War veterans from Virginia. The location, setting, and interesting assortment of gravestones and markers offers visitors an intriguing and powerful glimpse into African American burial traditions.

131-5395 (Northwest Annex/Bethel Baptist Church Cemetery; Naval Support Activity Norfolk-Northwest Annex)

This small cemetery measures approximately 62 by 46 feet and is surrounded by an enclosure of square wood posts and metal chain and has approximately eighteen graves, all marked. Modern granite tombstones noting names and birth dates mark six of the graves. There are also older markers consisting of tombstones and smaller markers. Four of the graves note the deceased's military rank and affiliation. The remaining grave markers consist of simple painted white wood crosses, measuring approximately three feet tall. The Northwest Annex Cemetery contains the graves of African American men and a single woman affiliated with Company E, 10th Regiment, United States Colored Troops, organized in Virginia during the Civil War on November 18, 1863.

131-0132 (Triple R Ranch Homestead [DeFord Family Cemetery]; 3531 Bunch Walnuts Road)

This cemetery is located on the grounds of the Triple R Ranch. The cemetery is found to the west of the main buildings and is enclosed by a chainlink fence. The site is well-tended with a large magnolia tree found in the area of the slave graves. This small cemetery, measuring approximately 10 feet square, marks the graves of the DeFord Family and their slaves. Although black and white persons are buried in the same area, the cemetery is clearly delineated along racial lines. What marks the site as notable is the grouping of both white and African American graves within a single graveyard. Even though reports of such cemeteries are found in oral history accounts, the DeFord Family Cemetery provides rare physical

evidence of a mixed-race cemetery containing burials of a slave-owning family and its slaves.

131-0041 (St. Bride's Church Cemetery; near Intersection of Battlefield Boulevard and St. Bride's Road)

This cemetery is located on the west side of Battlefield Boulevard. It consists of a small raised area near the road with three older tombstones. This small cemetery consists of three old granite gravestones. Virginia State Marker WP10, erected by the State Library in 1964, marks the site of St. Bride's Church, built in 1762 and destroyed in 1953. Among the three gravestones is that of Private Adda Smith, Company H, 10th Regiment of the United States Colored Troops, which was organized in Virginia during the Civil War on November 18, 1863. Smith was killed during the Battle of Plymouth in Washington County, North Carolina in April 1864.

131-5390 (Sergeant March Corprew Family Cemetery/Unknown and Known Afro-Union Civil War Soldiers Memorial; Bells Mill and Progress Roads)

This burial ground contains approximately seventy to eighty graves with dates ranging from 1872 to 2005. Markers range exhibit a wide variety of materials and types, including inscribed concrete, marble, and granite markers and plain chunks of wood and pieces of slate. In the northwest section of the cemetery is a memorial to African American soldiers who fought for the Union Army during the Civil War. This cemetery is the oldest active cemetery in the Chesapeake area.

131-5386/44CS0093 (New Hope Baptist Church Cemetery; Station House Road)

The New Hope Baptist Church cemetery consists of approximately one hundred markers of varying types and materials including granite, marble, slate, and concrete. The oldest stones appear to date from the late nineteenth to the early twenty-first centuries. Located in the center of the cemetery is a large marble marker noting the establishment of the New Hope Baptist Church in 1894; the building on this site was destroyed by fire in 1960. The majority of markers appear to be mass-produced, although a few are poured concrete inscribed with a stylus or similar tool. The cemetery is associated with the New Hope Baptist Church, an African American church established in 1894.

Recreation

131-5388 (Camp E. W. Young; 145 Deepwater Drive)

Camp E. W. Young is part of the historically African American Bells Mill community in southwestern Chesapeake. The camp encompasses 30 acres and includes an intact grouping of buildings which includes camp cabins, a recreation hall, a dining hall, a clinic, a photography building, offices, and a natatorium as well as a number of recreational facilities such as playing fields and an outdoor bowling alley. Not only is the camp an excellent example of mid-twentieth-century standardized design but may be one of the few historic African American camps still in use today.

Religion

131-5389 (Lee's Chapel AME Church [Historic]; Church of the Advent [Current]; Bells Mill Road and Ash Hill Landing)

This ca. 1954, Gothic Revival style one-story, five-bay, masonry church rests on a rusticated ashlar block foundation and is constructed of coursed rusticated ashlar and tooled ashlar block. The front-gable roof is covered with asphalt shingles and has a raking cornice. A cross, made of glass blocks, is located in the center of the facade. An exterior brick flue is attached to the rear, southeast corner of the church. Located at each end of the facade are crenellated towers of coursed rusticated ashlar block. Located in each tower are double-

leaf wood paneled entrance doors topped by stained glass transoms. Each entrance is marked by a concrete stoop with wrought iron banisters. Articulating each bay on the east and west walls are ashlar buttresses with beveled tops. Centered on the facade is a large round-arched, fixed glass window, flanked by two smaller round-arched windows. A similar window is found on both the east and west walls of the church. All of these windows are covered with colored contact paper that resembles stained glass patterns. A small one-story, concrete block addition with a side-gable roof is attached to the rear of the church. Attached to the east wall of this addition is a one-story, concrete block, side-gable addition with 1/1 metal sash windows and two single-leaf entrance doors.

131-0147 (Gabriel Chapel AME Zion Church; 2216 Long Ridge Road)

The church and parsonage are located in the small community of Cuffeytown, founded in the period following the Revolutionary War by a group of free blacks. This ca. 1961, Gothic Revival style, one-story, five-bay, masonry church rests on a solid foundation laid in stretcher bond brick and is sheathed with stretcher bond brick veneer. The front-gable roof is covered with composition shingles and has a raking cornice; the rear gable end is covered with vinyl siding. An engaged brick flue is attached to the east wall, and a rectangular vent is located directly below the roofline. Located at each corner end of the facade is a slightly projecting brick tower. The southwest tower is topped by a conical roof with flared eaves, and the southeast tower is marked by a taller conical roof with flared eaves and a finial. At the center of each tower block is a double-leaf paneled wood entrance door topped by a Gothic arched stained glass transom. Brick stoops with wrought iron banisters also mark the entrances. Located in the central gable area is a round stained glass window. Directly below this light is a three-light Gothic arched stained glass window. Located on the east and west sides of the building are Gothic arched stained glass casement windows with arches of footer brick and rowlock sills. Attached to the rear of the main building is a one-story shed roof brick veneer addition; four brick buttresses are located along the north, rear wall of the addition. The former parsonage, now known as the J. J. Moore Visitor Center Archive and Family Life Center is ca. 1935, vernacular, frame bungalow.

131-5397 (Divine Baptist Church; 2917 Old Galberry Road)

This one-story, five-bay, masonry, ca. 1948, Gothic Revival styled church rests on a solid foundation laid in 6/1 brick and is constructed of brick laid in a 6/1 bond. The front-gable roof is covered with asphalt shingles and has a raking cornice and an interior brick flue located on the west wall. Located at each corner end of the facade is a slightly projecting brick tower topped by a pyramidal roof; the northeastern tower is slightly taller and has three narrow, rectangular louvered vents on the upper part of the north and east walls. Each tower block has a double-leaf paneled wood entrance door topped by a rectangular leaded stained glass transom and is accessed by brick stoops with wrought iron banisters. Located in the central gable area is a round leaded stained glass window. Directly below this light are three larger leaded stained glass windows consisting of a center round-arched window flanked by two rectangular windows. Located on the east and west sides of the building are rectangular window openings with flat arches of soldier brick and rowlock brick sills; each is lighted with two square, fixed stained glass windows. The church has a number of additions. Attached to the west wall is a one-story brick addition with an off-center paneled single-leaf door topped by a segmental multi-light transom. Attached to the rear of this addition is a one-story brick, flat roof block. Attached to the rear of the church is a two-story, side-gable brick addition used for classrooms and offices.

131-5400 (Mount Olive Church [Historic]; Deliverance Tabernacle [Current]; 916 Middle Street

This ca. 1928, Colonial Revival–style one-story, five-bay, masonry church rests on a solid foundation of concrete block and is constructed of concrete block. The front-gable roof is covered with asphalt shingles and has a raking cornice; a small, rectangular louvered vent with a rowlock sill is located in the center of the gable end. Located at each corner end of the facade is a slightly projecting concrete block tower, each with a front-gable roof with a simple frieze; the eastern tower is a few block courses higher than the western tower. Each tower block has a central entrance with a double-leaf, paneled wood door. In front of these entrance doors are brick and concrete stoops with wrought iron banisters and front-gable roofs supported by simple wood posts. Located in the central block of the facade are three fixed 5-light windows of colored glass. Fixed 3-light windows of colored glass pierce the east and west sides of the building. All the windows have concrete sills. Located on the southeast wall is a small shed roof concrete block addition.

131-5399 (Mount Zion Baptist Church; 1608 East Liberty Street)

This ca. 1955, Colonial Revival–style one-story, three-bay, masonry, church rests on a solid foundation of stretcher bond brick and is constructed of variegated brick laid in a stretcher bond pattern. The front-gable roof is covered with asphalt shingles and has a raking cornice. Located in the gable end is a circular panel with three incised wood crosses with a round arch rowlock brick surround. Sitting atop the roof ridge is a small frame steeple covered with vinyl siding; rectangular louvered vents are located on each wall. A flared pyramidal roof with a small cross tops the steeple. The double metal entrance doors are marked by a slightly projecting, one-bay, front-gable roof vestibule. The entrance surround consists of wood pilasters topped by an open gable with a small overhang. Openings consist of wood 9/9 and 6/6 art glass windows with brick rowlock sills. Attached to the east wall is a one-story, shed roof brick addition. Attached to the rear west is a two-story, brick addition with a flat roof. A one-story concrete block addition is located on the rear south of the church.

131-5402 (First Baptist Church [Historic]; Strait Gate Evangelistic Church [Current]; 1010 Hill Street)

This ca. 1955, Colonial Revival–style one-story, four-bay, masonry church rests on a solid foundation of stretcher bond brick and is constructed of brick laid in a stretcher bond pattern. The front-gable roof is covered with asphalt shingles and has a raking cornice. Located in the gable ends are small triangular louvered vents with brick rowlock sills. An engaged brick flue with metal hood is attached to the rear east wall of the church. Brick buttresses with concrete caps articulate the side bays of the building. Double-leaf wood paneled entrance doors are located at the east and west ends of the facade. Two large four-light fixed windows are located in the center of the facade with a large metal cross between the openings. Other windows include four-light hinged glass with brick rowlock sills. Attached to the rear south wall is a one-story, side-gable, stretcher bond brick addition.

131-5393 (Church of the Rock of the Apostolic Faith [Historic]; United House of Prayer for All People [Current]; 1433 Whittamore Road)

Two imposing Lions of Judah mark the entrance to this newer stretcher bond brick African American church in Chesapeake. The one-story, three-bay building is constructed of variegated brick resting on a solid stretcher bond brick foundation.

The front-gable roof is covered with composition shingles. The facade is marked by two projecting one-story, front-gable blocks constructed of red and buff-colored brick with decorative brick elements which provide recessed covered entrances to the church. The central entrance doors are accessed through another recessed entrance area. Flanking this entrance are large angel figures. Above the entrance are three large crosses and the church's name. It is possible that the interior of the original 1931 church is still intact. The church was among the first established in the South by Bishop C. M. "Sweet Daddy" Grace in the South. Grace's church, known as the United House of Prayer of all People.

131-0050 (Little Zion Baptist Church; 142 Kempsville Road)

This ca. 1900 Gothic Revival one-story, frame and vinyl sided church is another example of the facade tower arrangement that proved a popular form in black churches in the Chesapeake area.