A FIRM FOUNDATION: ARCHIVAL RESEARCH AND INTERPRETATION AT HISTORIC SITES

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ABSTRACT: Archival research provides a firm foundation for interpretation at numerous historic sites throughout the United States. This research assures both the public and museum staff that what is portrayed at the site is historically accurate.

A number of factors influence the type of resources used and their interpretation. Some of the questions addressed in this article include: How has the growth of social history influenced the use of archival materials at historic sites? What role do archival materials play in planning an exhibit? Do researchers favor certain types of archival materials when interpreting historic buildings, interiors, and individuals? How do missing or weak archival sources affect interpretation? What role do archival materials play in the presentation of sensitive or controversial issues? By answering these questions, one gains a better understanding of the complex relationship between archival research and historic interpretation.

Introduction

Isaac Shepard's story brought some members of the crowd to tears. A former slave, he made the long journey from Virginia to Wisconsin in 1850. He outlived his wife and four of his children and recently lost both his daughter and granddaughter in childbirth. He was a strong man and would be known as one of the earliest and most successful African-American pioneers of the small, integrated community of Pleasant Ridge in southwestern Wisconsin.

But the Isaac Shepard that told his story today to the crowd was actually a "character interpreter" at the Pleasant Ridge exhibit at Old World Wisconsin, an outdoor museum that portrays the rural life of Wisconsin immigrants from different ethnic groups. There really was an Isaac Shepard. The stories the interpreter told are based on factual documents and other reliable resources. Chief among these resources are letters, county government records, and newspapers. The church, near where the interpreter gave his presentation, is an accurate reproduction of the original United Brethren Church that

once stood at Pleasant Ridge and was a focal point for the community. The reconstruction of this church was made possible by careful examination of the actual site in Grant County, as well as strong reliance upon early photographs. Though many of the spectators might assume that both Isaac Shepard and the nearby church were based on fact, it is unlikely that they realize the scope and depth of the original research involved in accurately recreating the person and the structure.

Archival materials are crucial underpinnings to the public portrayal of history at numerous "living museums" and historic sites throughout the United States. Archival research assures the public and the museum staff that what is portrayed at the site is an accurate representation—or reasonable facsimile—of what life was like during the historical period portrayed. Most research for historic sites is very site specific and is generally driven by public inquiries or interpretive goals. Furthermore, such research often involves ferreting out the routine details of daily life that were "taken for granted and rarely recorded."[1] The most reputable historic sites today rely upon archival research as an essential component of their public programming and interpretation. Research methodology and sources vary according to the interpretive purpose, but by a close examination of the various ways in which archival materials and research are used at these sites, we can learn more about how we as archivists can better serve our public history colleagues.

Planning

Archival research is essential in the initial planning of a site, exhibit, or program. A close examination of interpretive planning materials at two institutions demonstrates the primacy of documents and archival sources at every stage in the planning process.

For instance, at Old World Wisconsin, the development of the Pleasant Ridge site began with "exploratory" or "discovery" research, in this case, significantly aided by an impressive collection of materials available at the Grant County Historical Society. This exploratory research allowed staff to determine if sufficient documentation existed to support an exhibit by consulting both archival and published sources. In this case, the answer was a resounding "yes."

Next, staff develop a preliminary interpretive plan to identify "potential topics, themes, subthemes, and desired learner outcomes." This is followed by a research plan, which poses several specific, detailed questions related to topics and outcomes presented in the preliminary interpretive plan. These questions guide the research for the exhibit. Research plans also list a few specific sources to be consulted, such as newspapers, court records, land records, and other archival sources. Non-archival sources are mentioned, but only in a general way, such as "sources on ... African-American communities." The emphasis is overwhelmingly on archival resources.[2]

The discovery research, preliminary interpretive plan, and the research plan are beginnings, designed to explore the breadth of the "documentary universe" and propose a suggested route through it. Interpretive plans and research plans result in the creation of full-blown "research reports." For Pleasant Ridge, consultants produced research reports for each of the themes identified in the interpretive plan. Research reports, which are often voluminous, rely on extensive research in primary sources and serve as the

foundation for all aspects of the interpretation of the site. For example, the 200-page report, "The Importance of Religion at Pleasant Ridge," is arranged by the topics and subtopics sketched out in the interpretive plan.

Following the submission of the research reports, the preliminary interpretive plan is reevaluated and revised. Historians then create an "interpretive manual" to be given directly to interpretive staff members. Though still very detailed, this manual provides interpreters with the "essential" information about the site, the themes to be portrayed, the different interpretive "stations" or locations within the site, and often provides them with photocopies or transcripts of original documents.

The Pleasant Ridge interpretive manual is 50 pages long and provides thematic and interpretive guidance for each of the three stations in the exhibit area. The manual contains stories to be told at each station and includes biographies of various members of the community whose stories can be interwoven into the narrative as each interpreter sees fit. In addition, the manual contains several pages of transcribed documents, including correspondence between a family of runaway slaves and their former owners; individual declarations of emancipation administered by the U.S. Army; court documents; obituaries; wills; and news clippings. Throughout the manual, there are frequent references to original source material, and speculations or educated guesses are clearly indicated as such. The interpreters for Pleasant Ridge should be well prepared and can be confident that the presentation they give for the public has a sound basis in the records of the community.

Colonial Williamsburg appears to follow a similar format. Interpreters are provided with a 400-page "Resource Book" that compiles primary documents and related sources focused on the particular interpretive theme for the year.[3] It also provides copies of documents not easily found elsewhere. For instance, interpreter Carol Dozier searched for years to find a complete, printed version of the Stamp Act in a book, without success. Due to her diligent but ultimately futile search, planners included the complete text of the Stamp Act in the "Choosing Revolution" Resource Book, allowing interpreters to read the full text of this crucial colonial document for themselves.[4]

Building Restoration and Interiors

Research to insure the historical accuracy of sites continues well beyond the planning stages. Archival sources can play a crucial role in the interior design and furnishings of a building, especially when coupled with archeological discoveries.

For instance, at Carter's Grove, a plantation that is part of Colonial Williamsburg, staff began an effort to reconstruct the slave quarters. Archeological work determined the locations and size of the quarters, but it left many questions of particular importance to interpreters unanswered. For example, how well built were the quarters? How many people lived in them? What kinds of furnishings were there? What kinds of possessions did slaves have?

Answers to these questions were found in a combination of archaeological evidence and archival documentation. A 1789 assessment of the property of Robert Carter revealed slave houses worth from 10*s* to £5. His barns, in contrast, were assessed at £10 to £25. This provides one analysis of the quality of his slaves' quarters, but by compar-

ing it to similar documents of other Chesapeake plantation owners, the researchers found that Carter's buildings were equivalent to those of planters of similar station in the area. An examination of travelers' journals and sketches showed that slave quarters were often poorly constructed and provided additional details not available from a straightforward economic analysis.

To furnish the interior of the slave quarters, researchers used many resources, including plantation accounts and inventories, which generally listed what the owners provided for their slaves. Archeology could fill in some gaps by retrieving artifacts from slave quarter sites, though some of these sites were "contaminated" by later use. Inventories of free blacks and overseers also helped to define the "upper end" of the socioeconomic scale of the slaves' world, allowing researchers to make generalizations about what might have been "typical" for slaves on a certain plantation.[5]

Archival sources are also important for interpreting existing buildings and their furnishings. Examining the progression of building restoration at Colonial Williamsburg provides a detailed study of the ways in which documents and historiography are reflected in building reconstruction, reinterpretation, room function, and furnishings. In 1929, during some of the earliest restoration work at Colonial Williamsburg, an engraved copperplate dating from 1740 was discovered at Oxford's Bodleian Library. This plate provided architectural sketches of three buildings of the College of William and Mary, and two prominent buildings of the colonial capital. News of this engraving arrived at Williamsburg just as restoration work was being done on the Wren Building at the college campus. Its timely discovery prevented an error in the reconstruction of the Wren roof. The engraving also was key in the reconstruction of the Governor's Palace and the Capitol. Colonial Williamsburg founder John D. Rockefeller, Jr., acknowledged its importance to the reconstruction effort when he said that the sketch enabled Williamsburg to proceed "with absolute certainty and conviction" about the accuracy of its reconstructions.[6]

This same concern for detail apparently did not carry over to the interior furnishings of the buildings. When the Governor's Palace opened in 1934, the rooms were completely bare. Gradually, rooms at the palace and elsewhere were furnished with 18th-century antiques. These antiques were not based on documentary evidence that linked them to the Williamsburg site. Instead, there were such anachronisms as a portrait of King James I gazing upon diners at the Governor's Palace, an edifice representing the rule of King George III, and an elaborate sleeping chair in the Brush-Everard house, in a room that probably did not see upholstered furniture until after 1800 (beyond the period portrayed at Williamsburg). In addition, the plethora of exquisite antiques and furnishings were arranged in rooms in a very 20th-century manner. Even into the 1970s, curators continued to furnish buildings "more on the basis of traditional aesthetic judgments than for their congruence with the documentary and archaeological record of the colonial town."[7]

In 1981, the Governor's Palace was redecorated and documents were used to reinterpret the interior design. A reexamination of the 1770 inventory of household goods, taken at the time of Governor Botetourt's death, was essential to the reinterpretation of the furnishings and decor of the palace. The inventory revealed that one room, long portrayed as a small yet elegant family dining room, had actually been a butler's pantry

and listed over 1,600 items stored there, including a large quantity of silverware, glasses, and candles, in addition to a small sleeping couch and a writing table. Colonial Williamsburg soon began renovating and restoring the room to a closer approximation of its original furnishings and function. Though some frequent visitors to Williamsburg were dismayed with the change, staffers were quick to point to the documentary evidence as a foundation for the reinterpretation.[8]

Even if furnishings and functions have remained essentially the same as in previous years at Colonial Williamsburg, room layouts may have been changed as a result of closer study of visual sources such as prints and engravings. Modern visitors often comment that the rooms seem bare. This is a result of new research indicating that when a room was "at rest," or not being used, the furniture would be moved towards the walls of the room, leaving a large open space in the center of the room. For today's visitors, such a look creates a "bare" impression.[9]

Documents and visual materials are similarly used at other "living museums" in recreating buildings and their environment, both external and internal. For instance, at Old World Wisconsin, the focal point of the new Pleasant Ridge exhibit is a reconstruction of the United Brethren Church. Two photographs were essential to this undertaking. One dated from the creation of the original building in 1884. The second was taken during the late 1910s and provided a view of the church from a different angle. Computer analysis of these two photos enabled architects to determine the dimensions and measurements of the church. In addition, different types of information were gleaned from each of the photos. The earlier photo shows details of roof construction as well as information about the geographical location of the church: how close it was to the road and the second-growth forest that was behind it. The later photo also revealed landscaping details that provided points of reference. The locations of certain trees, fences, and gates in the photos showed the situation of the church on the site. In addition, the same photo provided limited information about the church's interior: window shades can be glimpsed through one window. All of these aspects of the church, which are "not documented elsewhere," have been faithfully recreated in the exhibit at Old World Wisconsin.[10]

At a site such as Old World, documenting agricultural matters is also a concern. The agricultural holdings of an individual are often documented in great detail in personal inventories or estate settlements. Such items can include tools and farm implements as well as stock and crops. Agricultural censuses can document whether individuals were typical or atypical for their region, and indicate the quantity of stock or produce they owned. Account books from the local seed company or general store may reveal the kinds of plants grown in the area, as well as purchases by specific individuals.

Living History

Accurate landscaping, proper furnishings, and meticulous reconstruction and restoration of buildings are not the complete picture of the past that visitors seek. Still missing are the individuals who peopled such places, portrayed by living history interpreters. Incorporating individuals' narratives into the historic site is sometimes made easier—or more difficult—through an exploration of existing documentation.

Isaac Shepard, whose story moved some members of the listening crowd to tears, is one example of a well-documented individual. Extant letters, local government records such as tax, land, court and estate records, land plats, and newspaper accounts help tell his story. Historian Tom Woods says Shepard's character, as portrayed by an interpreter, is a way to "unite all of those archival sources" and essentially "brings archives to life."[11]

How important are archival documents in developing living history interpretations? "We don't do it if we don't have the sources," says Christy Coleman, former Director of African-American Programs at Colonial Williamsburg. Other historians made similar strong statements. Yet, there are obviously limitations. Like other historians, Coleman admits, "Where we really didn't know, we say, 'We really don't know, but here's what the current thinking is.'" Kevin Kelly, a historian who has worked at Williamsburg for over 20 years and is involved in training new interpreters at the museum, says that a lot of the essential knowledge for interpreters starts with archival research. Even at places such as Conner Prairie, where historically accurate but still fictional characters people the recreated 1836 Indiana village, archival research is essential. Historian Tim Crumrin says, "Nothing goes on in our public programming that's not backed up by primary research."[12]

Archival research goes beyond creating believable individuals by portraying a "society in miniature." Research beyond the level of the individual helps create an accurate representation of the time, providing information about dress, social customs, trades, political issues, and more. For instance, research in early inventories of Plymouth Colony dispels the stereotype of Pilgrims wearing only somber grays and browns; in fact, most of them possessed quite colorful clothing.[13]

A court case at Williamsburg, in which a widow seeks her share of her husband's estate although their marriage was never consummated, provides excellent, detailed commentary on how people viewed gender roles and the institution of marriage in 1770s Virginia. The case is extremely well documented, not just in court records, but also through letters of family members and prominent townspeople. Historian Kevin Kelly believes that the socio-historical richness of the case is in part due to the growth of social history at Williamsburg, as well as to changing times in our present-day culture. The recent growth of women's history and gender studies, in particular, helps researchers ask new questions. "Ten or 15 years ago," Kelly says, "I think we would've looked at that information differently."[14]

At Conner Prairie, special events explore various social issues of 1836 Indiana. For instance, a Colonization Society debate considers the issues of slavery, abolition, and colonizing former slaves in Africa. The debate presents three or four varying points of view. Archival documentation backs up both the types of characters presented and what they say. Temperance rallies, camp meetings, and other staged events are based upon similar documentation.[15]

Sometimes, specific documentation is used to create interactive activities. For instance, several times a week, Old World Wisconsin holds a town meeting where character interpreters discuss issues of the day "drawn directly from the pages of the Harmony Township Hall record books, beginning with 1848." The public is invited to voice their views on the topics as well. At Conner Prairie, an interactive program entitled "Follow

the North Star" puts visitors in the role of escaping slaves on the Underground Railroad. During the course of their one-and-a-half-hour experience, visitors will be yelled at, have guns fired over their heads, and encounter townspeople eager to help—or to turn them over to the slave catchers. "With a program like that," says Crumrin, "it's very important to have your 'I's dotted and your 'T's crossed. It's important to be able to say, 'Yes, this kind of thing did happen.'"[16]

Period Interpretation

When archival sources are weak or missing altogether, it becomes necessary to generalize and extrapolate based on the material that does exist. David Pamperin, administrator of historic sites at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin (now the Wisconsin Historical Society), calls this method "period interpretation," defining it as reliance upon "other documented interpretive features known to exist elsewhere that can reasonably be applied to another program that lacks the documentary evidence."[17]

The use of stumps as a type of low fencing on a recreated Finnish farmstead at Old World Wisconsin is one rather straightforward version of period interpretation. The actual farm on the original property where they obtained the house and buildings had no such stump fence. However, a photograph of a Finnish farm located elsewhere in Wisconsin did show such a fence, and administrators decided to incorporate that into the exhibit at Old World.[18]

A more elaborate type of period interpretation is when researchers must "fill in gaps" in the documentary record based on what they believe likely or probable. At an agricultural museum such as Old World Wisconsin, the particular breed of sheep raised by a certain family represented at the site may not be known. However, based upon a study of other families of the same ethnic group, social standing, and region, a "best guess" can be developed. In addition, documents created for the U.S. Patent Office (the predecessor to the Department of Agriculture) provide summaries of county agriculture, including the kinds, quantity, and value of different stock and produce. Reports from the State Agricultural Society and state and county fairs can also aid in identifying appropriate stock breeds to incorporate in an interpretive exhibit.[19]

Historical Accuracy and Public Controversy

Although certain gaps in documentation can be filled in through period interpretation, having solid documentation is essential when approaching controversial topics. Nearly a decade ago, when Colonial Williamsburg staged an estate sale that featured the sale of slaves right along with cattle and tools, there were understandable cries of protest and dismay. Members from nearby chapters of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) showed up to picket the event, which drew over 2,000 spectators.

The event, developed and coordinated by Christy Coleman just a few months after her appointment as director of the African-American Interpretations and Programs Department, was staged to be representative of estate sales of the 18th century. Auctioned slaves were based on actual individuals, though not all of them were documented as

belonging to the same owner or sold at the same time. The details of their names and individual situations were also taken from original documents and, in this case, Coleman relied mostly on estate lists appearing in the *Virginia Gazette.* Here, she found Lucy, a slave seven months pregnant; Lucy's husband, Daniel; Sukie, a laundress; and Billy, a carpenter sold together with his tools as a "set." The presentation showed Sukie being bought by her free black husband; the dehumanizing portrayal of Billy being a mere extension of his tools; and the wrenching heartache as pregnant Lucy was sold to an owner different from that of her husband Daniel.[20]

Coleman, who is herself African-American and portrayed Lucy, acknowledged the challenges of presenting such an event to the public: "I recognize that this is a very, very sensitive and emotional issue. But it is also very real history, and it distresses me, personally and professionally, that there are those who would have us hide this or keep it under the rug."[21] She lamented the protests: "Today is a very, very real tragedy."[22]

The protesters expressed concern that the presentation would trivialize the suffering of slavery in a brief "sideshow." But at least one of the most vocal critics before the event, Jack Gravely, had a change of heart afterwards, saying, "Pain had a face .... Suffering had tears."[23] In his view, "the presentation was passionate, moving and educational."[24] The event captured headlines and editorials across the nation and the next day, Coleman's answering machine was full of messages, 10 to 1 in support of the presentation.[25]

Having the documentary basis for presenting an accurate portrayal of slaves on the auction block was essential to Coleman in developing the script for the event. In fact, many of the comments from protesters revolved around the issue of accuracy. "We've been told the auction will portray history as it happened," said one. "Whether it will or not is for us to see." Another wary protester said, "Whenever entertainment is used to teach history, there is the possibility for error or insensitivity and historical inaccuracy."[26] After the presentation, Curtis Harris, president of the Virginia branch of the SCLC, said definitively, "It was not authentic history. They just wanted to have a show."[27]

Coleman feels strong that the history portrayed at Colonial Williamsburg and, in particular, the history portrayed at the estate sale, is educational and authentic. "People have images in their mind about how something should look," she said. "Anything that is different from that image gets labeled as 'inaccurate'... People have this idea that people should be in chains, half-naked, with other people prodding them, poking them in their mouths, ears, and other parts of their body, because that's what we've been told. So anything that doesn't fit that image gets labeled as 'inaccurate.'" After the presentation at Williamsburg, Fath Davis Ruffins, a historian at the Smithsonian, commented that though "People say they want the truth ... what they really want is a confirmation of what they already believe."[28]

Although the estate sale involving slaves at Colonial Williamsburg is probably one of the most dramatic examples of controversial portrayals based on documented fact at living history museums, other museums have experienced similar situations. In many cases, the overall issues remain accuracy and authenticity; the presence or absence of supporting documentation; and the public's preconceived notions about the nature of "accurate" history.

At Old World Wisconsin, the Polish exhibit features a "house-barn," a structure where people and animals are sheltered in different rooms under the same roof. The structure itself is an original, belonging to an elderly Polish couple, Barbara and August Kruza. Such structures, according to the Old World Wisconsin Visitors' Guide, were "a relatively common building tradition among immigrants." The exhibit is not as well documented as some of the other displays. Much of the history associated with the house and family is based on oral tradition. However, the building clearly is a "house-barn" structure and is definitely linked to the Kruzas, so the essential facts remain.[29]

But some visitors, particularly those of Polish ancestry, object to the exhibit. Some feel it is offensive and demeaning to their heritage to portray people living under the same roof as animals. Others feel there is not enough religious iconography inside. Still others want the Polish role in Wisconsin to be portrayed in more of a "High Victorian" style, or something resembling a straight transplantation of European styles. Tom Woods, former director of Old World Wisconsin, said that the Victorian style was something done only among the most successful of the Poles and that such a presentation would be inappropriate for an elderly couple of meager means, such as the Kruzas. Woods also said that straight transplantation of European styles generally did not take place in Wisconsin. They were always slightly changed in some way.

Woods feels that one explanation for some visitors' reactions is simply that Old World "did not present it in the way in which they wanted it to be presented."[30] In response to the criticism, Old World formed a Polish Advisory Committee in the mid-1990s and began planning a research project to better document the Kruzas as well as Poles in similar settings in Wisconsin, but changing institutional priorities since that time have placed the reinterpretation on hold.[31] Woods reinforced the role that research would play in any such undertaking: "We won't do it [make changes] until the research report is in and that takes us back to the sources."[32]

Implications for Archivists

By looking closely at the types of materials used for historic site interpretation, common themes and resources in interpretation, and the desire for accuracy and authenticity in detail, archivists can become more aware of ways in which they can help their colleagues in the public history field. Three methods present themselves immediately: archivists should note the types of resources most likely to be used for certain types of research; make careful inquiry during the course of the reference interview; and improve access to historical documents through finding aids and catalogs.

Table 1 outlines common sources used by historic sites for different interpretive purposes. For instance, knowing that estate inventories are used frequently by historic sites for determining social class, furnishings of rooms, agricultural concerns, and occupations of individuals can help archivists when approached by public historians.

In addition, it may be worthwhile to spend significant time in the reference interview to determine what level of research public historians are conducting. Are they at the preliminary stage of exploratory research when they may need only to examine subject headings in a catalog or become aware of large holdings (or gaps) in an institution's collections to determine if there is adequate information for their project? Are they

documenting individuals of a certain class, residential location, occupation, or ethnic group for purposes of creating roles for living history interpreters? Are they trying to furnish an 18th-century dining room with the proper artifacts? Knowing the level of detail and the purpose to which the research is directed helps the archivist inform them of sources that may be of assistance in their research.

How can finding aids and catalogs be improved to enable public historians to find the information they seek, especially since much of it is of an extremely detailed nature? In some cases, item-level description may be merited. It may be worthwhile to provide item-level description for significant items noted during the course of processing, preservation work, or when providing reference services for other patrons. Such serendipitous discoveries can pay large dividends later when, for instance, an obscure letter buried in a large quantity of a politician's papers mentioning "a certain railroad" is used to tell the story of anti-slavery activity in Kansas. The repository itself may gain additional publicity if such a document is loaned for exhibit or otherwise directly incorporated into interpretation at the historic site. Strengthening partnerships between historic sites and manuscript repositories may be a secondary benefit of improved access to collections.

In general, it seems unlikely that collecting policies and the majority of appraisal decisions would be influenced by the needs of public historians unless there is an active partnership between an area historic site and a local repository. Many historic sites are based upon places of local historical importance, so the resources they are interested in are probably already being collected by area repositories. In the Nashville, Tennessee, area, for instance, there are many historic houses and plantations that are preserved as historic sites. Institutions such as the Tennessee State Library and Archives, the Nashville Room of the Nashville Public Library, and area universities already include letters, diaries, and journals regarding some of these houses in their collections, and they will continue to collect similar materials when available. Recent trends in historical studies, such as the explosive growth of women's history and ethnic studies, seem much more likely than the specific needs of historic sites to influence collecting policies. These trends cut across institutional lines and are reflected in the reinterpretations occurring at Colonial Williamsburg and Old World Wisconsin.

An active partnership between sites and repositories, especially when they are part of the same organization, may have some impact on collecting practices. For instance, the Kansas State Historical Society recently acquired the William Allen White house in Emporia, Kansas, as its newest historic site. Documentation on William Allen White was extensive, with a plethora of resources available at the Kansas State Historical Society, although the majority of his papers resides at the Library of Congress. Documentation concerning his house was sparse by comparison. Ten years ago, a donation of 30 photographs that showed the interior and exterior of his house might have been weeded out or viewed as unnecessarily duplicative. Since the acquisition of the house as a historic site, however, details that may have seemed insignificant before—such as the kinds of flowers planted in the yard or the organization and decor of his office—now play a role in the development of the house as a historic site. White's descendants have played an important role in this process by sharing family photographs and their memories of White with historical society staff.

Conclusion

Far from being mere incidental materials or occasional objects for a display, archival materials are essential to the work of historic sites. Archival materials are used at every stage of a site's planning and development, ranging from the reconstruction of buildings, to recreating historically correct furnishings, to accurate representations of individuals—either actual historic figures or "period interpretations" of "typical" yet fictional people. Archival research can enable sites to portray even the most controversial and uncomfortable subjects if they have sufficient documentation to back them up. Being aware of the particular types of resources and the ways in which detailed research finds expression in exhibits and programming at historic sites can help archivists provide better reference assistance and can serve, in turn, to strengthen archivists' reputation as a profession, not only with their colleagues in the public history field, but also with the general public who visits historic sites.

Table 1: Common Sources Consulted

DOCUMENTING	SOURCES CONSULTED
Individuals	Correspondence, diaries, government records (deeds, court records, censuses, estate settlements)
Sites and locations	Maps, deeds, journals, newspapers, visual materials (engravings, photographs)
Interpretive themes	Secondary sources; studying similar places or groups in same region or elsewhere
Buildings	Visual materials (engravings, photographs), architectural plans, archeology, tax lists
Material culture	Estate inventories, magazines and ads, newspapers, photographs
Agriculture	Newspapers, farm journals, agricultural censuses, inventories, tax lists, account books, photographs, county fair materials
Issues contemporary to time portrayed	Newspapers, court records, correspondence, diaries, publications of advocacy organizations

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NOTES

1. As quoted in John D. Krugler, "Behind the Public Presentations: Research and Scholarship at Living History Museums of Early America," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser. 48:3 (1991): 363.
2. This and following paragraphs in this section are based upon a personal interview by the author with Tom Woods, Director, Old World Wisconsin, Eagle, Wisconsin, 28 October 1998, and on the following materials, which were graciously provided to the author by Old World Wisconsin: "Old World Wisconsin Pleasant Ridge African-American Exhibit" ([Eagle, WI]: Old World Wisconsin, n.d.); Thomas A. Woods, "Isaac Shepard Script," Lamplight Tour ([Eagle, WI]: Old World Wisconsin, October 1998); Thomas A. Woods, "Request for a Research Proposal for Old World Wisconsin's Pleasant Ridge African-American Exhibit" ([Eagle, WI]: OWW [Old World Wisconsin] 28 October 1997); Susan Zickel, "Pleasant Ridge Interpretive Manual" ([Eagle, WI]: Old World Wisconsin, September 1998); and Susan Zickel, "Pleasant Ridge Interpretive Plan" (n.p.: September 1998). The director of Old World Wisconsin, as of this writing (May 2003), is Peter Arnold.
3. Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, "Freedom, Equality, and Collaborative History at Colonial Williamsburg," review of *Becoming Americans: Our Struggle to Be Both Free and Equal. A Plan of Thematic Interpretation,* ed. Cary Carson, *Public Historian* 20:3 (summer 1998): 99.
4. Marie Tyler-McGraw, "Becoming Americans Again: Re-envisioning and Revising Thematic Interpretation at Colonial Williamsburg," *Public Historian* 20:3 (summer 1998): 66.
5. Edward A. Chappell, "Social Responsibility and the American History Museum," *Winterthur Portfolio* 24:4 (winter 1989): 261–262.
6. As quoted in George Humphrey Yetter, *Williamsburg Before and After: The Rebirth of Virginia's Colonial Capital* (Williamsburg, VA: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1988): 66.
7. Camille Wells, "Interior Designs: Room Furnishings and Historical Interpretations at Colonial Williamsburg," *Southern Quarterly* 31:3 (spring 1993): 91.
8. Wells, 93, 95.
9. Jan Kirsten Gilliam and Betty Crowe Leviner, *Furnishing Williamsburg's Historic Buildings* (Williamsburg, VA: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1991): 4–5.
10. Woods, interview.
11. Woods, interview.
12. Christy Coleman, Director, Department of African-American Programs, Colonial Williamsburg, Williamsburg, Virginia, telephone interview by the author, 23 October 1998. Since the time of the interview, Ms. Coleman became President and Chief Executive Officer of the Charles H. Wright Museum of African-American History, Detroit, Michigan. Tyler-McGraw, 61; Kevin Kelly, historian, Colonial Williamsburg, Williamsburg, Virginia, telephone interview by the author, 23 October 1998; Tim Crumrin, historian and archivist, Conner Prairie, Fishers, Indiana, telephone interview by the author, 10 November 1998.
13. James Deetz, "The Reality of the Pilgrim Fathers," *Natural History* 78:9 (November 1969): 42.
14. Kelly, interview.
15. Crumrin, interview.
16. Old World Wisconsin 1998 Special Events brochure; Crumrin, interview.
17. David Pamperin, clarifying comments upon earlier draft of this article, 3 January 2000.
18. David Pamperin, Administrator, Historic Sites Division, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin, personal interview by the author, 3 November 1998.
19. Woods, interview.
20. Coleman, interview.

21. As quoted in Michael Janofsky, "Mock Auction of Slaves: Education or Outrage?" *New York Times*, 8 October 1994, late edition, final, sec. 1, p. 7, col. 1.
22. As quoted in "'Slave Auction' Divides Crowd in Williamsburg," *Baltimore Sun*, 11 October 1994, Carrol edition, p. 3A.
23. As quoted in "Giving Pain a Human Face," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 14 October 1994, five-star edition, p. 14D.
24. As quoted in "'Slave Auction' Divides Crowd."
25. Bentley Boyd, "'She Has Always Had a Fearlessness': Historian Inspired Slave Re-enactment," *Houston Chronicle,* 12 November 1994, two-star edition, sec. A, p. 14.
26. As quoted in Jonathan Yardley, "The Colony's True Colors," *Washington Post*, 17 October 1994, final edition, p. B2.
27. As quoted in "'Slave Auction' Divides Crowd."
28. Coleman, interview; Ruffins, as quoted in Stephanie Schorow, "Yoke of Slavery: Bitter History Weighs Heavy on Americans and Those Debating How to Best Remember It—If at All," *Boston Herald*, 28 February 1997, "Arts & Life," p. 045.
29. Material in this and the following paragraph from Woods, interview.
30. Woods, interview.
31. Marty Perkins, curator of research and interpretation, Old World Wisconsin, Eagle, Wisconsin, telephone interview by the author, 19 May 2003.
32. Woods, interview.