



Figure 15. Historical tracts, roads, and paths.

Cornwallis never took up residence on the property, instead living at Cross Manor in St. Mary’s County. The Posey archaeological site (18CH281), located on Mattawoman or Cornwallis Neck and described in Chapter III, appears to have been occupied by a werowance or great man from about 1660 to 1680. Augustine Herman’s 1673 Map of Maryland and Virginia (see Figure 10) shows this area with Indian longhouses depicted and a label marking “Pamunky Indian land.”

Reserving the land between Mattawoman and Piscataway creeks was precipitated in 1665 when Nancotamon, one of the great men of the Mattawoman, inquired “what was the Governor’s pleasure to do with [Nancotamon’s] nacion – whether he would have them remove further into the woods or to remayne upon the land where they now or lately lived.” A proclamation in 1663 by the Maryland government had already declared that no white men could settle within three miles of an Indian settlement (Archives Md. 3:489), but the law was regularly ignored. The Maryland Council decided “it was most for the safety of the Province to Continue them [the Mattawoman] neere us as being more under our Command” and ordered the Mattawoman to remain on their old habitations until further notice. The Council also called for the creation of a reservation “within which noe English man shall take up any land” (Archives Md. 3:534). This temporarily secured continued Indigenous occupation of the land, at least until the later part of the 17th century. At that time, English encroachment in Native territory had dramatically increased. Significantly, the colonial government fully understood that at least three miles was needed outside of a “core” settlement or “Indian town” to allow for indigenous activities and practices, and that friction would ensue if colonists also used the areas (Busby 2010:51).

Land records with references to Native places provide more accurate location data that can be mapped with relative confidence (Figure 15). Specific tracts of land, including those set aside for Natives as well as roads deriving from pre-Contact Indian paths, were often mentioned in land records. Fortunately, Charles County has one of the best surviving set of county court and land records from anywhere in the Chesapeake. One important tract for the purpose of this project includes the reservation at Piscataway or Calvert Manor. This land was reserved for Natives and the reservation was formally recorded in 1669 as “Indian Lands,” including the land between Mattawoman and Piscataway creeks (Patent Rec. 12/339)