

# Phase I Archaeological Investigation of the E. E. Meredith Law Office Site on the Tavern Lot, Brentsville Courthouse Historic Centre, Brentsville, Virginia



## ABSTRACT

During December 2005 and January 2006 a Phase I archeological investigation of a 7,000 ft<sup>2</sup> area within the southeastern section of the "Tavern Lot" was conducted at the Brentsville Courthouse Historic Centre (44PW1246) Prince William County, Virginia. Little ground disturbance had occurred within the Phase I project area after ca. 1918. The area was investigated to determine 1) whether a proposed road cut northward from Brentsville road between the Union Church and the Tavern archaeology site would impact any subsurface resources; and 2) to seek evidence of a structure that locally prominent attorney Elisha Edward Meredith occupied from ca. 1872 until 1894. The Phase I project area extended to within 12 feet of the 1822 tavern's subsurface western wall, presenting the possibility that additional features or activity areas associated with the tavern site might be encountered. Two High Probability Zones were identified. High Probability Zone 1 has potential to be the site of E. E. Meredith's law office. High Probability Zone 2 contains a sheet midden associated with the Tavern. One Moderate Probability Zone encompasses the area where evidence of three early-19<sup>th</sup>-century outhouses may exist. At present, none of these cultural resources is threatened. Monitoring of ground disturbance within any High or Moderate Probability Zone is recommended. No subsurface resources were identified in the location of a proposed road cut northward from Brentsville road between the Union Church.

**PHASE I ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF THE  
E. E. MEREDITH LAW OFFICE SITE ON THE TAVERN LOT,  
BRENTSVILLE COURTHOUSE HISTORIC CENTRE,  
BRENTSVILLE, VIRGINIA**

April 2015

Report prepared for Bill Olson and donated to the Citizens of Prince William County and the  
Prince William County Department of Public Works, Historic Preservation Division

Report prepared by Heather A. Hembrey, M.A.A.  
Manassas, Virginia  
hhembrey@verizon.net

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .....	i
TITLE PAGE .....	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	iii
LIST OF FIGURES .....	iv
INTRODUCTION .....	1
HISTORIC OVERVIEW.....	3
PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH CONDUCTED WITHIN PROJECT AREA .....	11
RESEARCH DESIGN .....	16
METHODS .....	17
RESULTS OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION .....	18
ARTIFACT ANALYSIS .....	23
INTERPRETATION .....	26
HIGH AND MODERATE PROBABILITY ZONES .....	28
CONCLUSION .....	33
RECOMMENDATIONS.....	33
ATTRIBUTIONS.....	34
REFERENCES .....	34
APPENDIX A: ARTIFACT CATALOG.....	Presented as a separate document

## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>Figure 1:</b>	2005-2006 Phase I Project Area.....	1
<b>Figure 2:</b>	Thomas Nelson’s Plat of the Town of Brentsville 1822 .....	3
<b>Figure 3:</b>	Thomas Nelson’s Plat of the Brentsville Jail Prison Bounds 1822 .....	4
<b>Figure 4:</b>	Notice for Attorneys Payne & Meredith, November 23, 1872 .....	5
<b>Figure 5:</b>	Elisha Edward Meredith .....	6
<b>Figure 6</b>	Newspaper Advertisement for Meredith & Thornton. September 25, 1886 .....	7
<b>Figure 7</b>	The Brentsville Tavern in Winter 1915 .....	8
<b>Figure 8</b>	Congregation Leaving the Brentsville Union Church ca. 1916 .....	9
<b>Figure 9</b>	Phase I Project Area Laid Over 1937 Aerial Photograph of Tavern Square.....	10
<b>Figure 10</b>	Local Ladies Pose in Front of Union Church in June 1944 .....	10
<b>Figure 11</b>	2002 Aerial photograph Showing Dense Foliage on the Tavern Lot .....	11
<b>Figure 12</b>	Shovel Test Pit Survey Conducted by the Center for Historic Preservation 1999 .....	12
<b>Figure 13</b>	Undergrowth between the Tavern and Union Church on September 10, 2005 .....	13
<b>Figure 14</b>	2002 Union Church Units Near the 2005-2006 Phase I Project Area .....	13
<b>Figure 15</b>	Location of CHP Unit 10 within 2005-2006 Phase I Project Area .....	15
<b>Figure 16</b>	2004 Woods Project Area .....	16
<b>Figure 17</b>	2005-2006 Project Area Grid .....	17
<b>Figure 18</b>	Stratum I Soil Depths .....	19
<b>Figure 19</b>	Correlations Between Stratum I Soil Depths and Artifact Density .....	20
<b>Figure 20</b>	Locations of Possible Posthole Features .....	21
<b>Figure 21</b>	Measured Drawing of Feature 1, STP 25.....	21
<b>Figure 22</b>	Excerpt from Phase I Artifact Catalog Sheet .....	23
<b>Figure 23</b>	Iron Artifacts Excavated From STP 13 .....	23

**LIST OF FIGURES (continued)**

**Figure 24** Distributions of Architectural Materials..... 24

**Figure 25** Kitchen Ceramics Frequency ..... 24

**Figure 26** Kitchen Ceramics Distribution.....25

**Figure 27** Sample of Kitchen Ceramics Excavated from the Phase I Project Area .....25

**Figure 28** Bayonet Tip and Fired, Impacted Three-Ring Minie Ball.....25

**Figure 29** Distributions of Arms, Container Glass and Personal Items..... 26

**Figure 30** Artifact Counts per Square Foot.....27

**Figure 31** High Probability Zone 1: E. E. Meredith Law Office Site..... 29

**Figure 32** High Probability Zone 2: Tavern Sheet Midden ..... 31

**Figure 33** Moderate Probability Zone 1: Potential Locations of Three Early-19<sup>th</sup>-Century Outhouses .32

## INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of a Phase I archeological investigation of a 7,000 ft<sup>2</sup> area within the southeastern section of the "Tavern Lot" at Brentsville Courthouse Historic Centre (44PW1246) Prince William County, Virginia. The Brentsville Courthouse Historic Centre property was archaeologically surveyed in its entirety in 1999-2000 by the Center for Historic Preservation (CHP) at the University of Mary Washington for the Brentsville Trust. In 2001, CHP excavated units along the Union Church, three of which were 25' from the 2005-2006 Phase I project area. Prince William County hired CHP to in 2004 to conduct a survey of the wooded "Tavern Lot", located between the Union Church and the Courthouse Complex.

This report serves as an Addendum to the report of the 2004 investigation, *Archaeological Investigation of the "Tavern Woods", Brentsville Historic Centre, Brentsville, VA* (Lindtveit, et al. 2005).

This Phase I archaeological investigation was undertaken between December 2005 and February 2006. The purposes for this Phase I investigation were 1) to determine whether a proposed road cut northward from Brentsville road between the Union Church and the Tavern archaeology site would impact any subsurface resources; and 2) to seek evidence of a structure occupied by attorney Elisha E. Meredith at least 1883 through 1894. This Phase I project area extended to within 12 feet of the 1822 Tavern's subsurface western wall, presenting the possibility of additional features or activity areas associated with the Tavern site might be identified. All artifacts and field data resulting from this project are retained at the Prince William County Division of Historic Preservation office in Dumfries, Virginia.



**Figure 1**  
2005-2006 Phase I Project Area  
Brentsville Courthouse Historic Centre

Heather A. Hembrey, M.A.A. (Preservationist, Prince William County Historic Preservation Division) and Justin Patton, M.A. A., RPA (Prince William County Archaeologist) conducted the investigation. Heather A. Hembrey authored this report, analyzed recovered artifacts and prepared Figures for this report. Fieldwork and report contents conformed to the guidelines set forth by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) for a Phase III data recovery, as outlined in their 2011 *Guidelines for Conducting Historic Resources Survey in Virginia* (DHR 2011), and the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation*.

The author thanks Morgan Breeden and Freddie Wolfe for their willingness to share their knowledge of Brentsville history.

## HISTORIC OVERVIEW

This Phase I archaeological investigation of the E. E. Meredith law office site, undertaken in 2005-2006, surveyed a 165' x 50' section of the Tavern Lot at Brentsville Courthouse Historic Centre. One purpose of this investigation was to seek evidence of Elisha Edward (E. E.) Meredith's law office, a pre-1871 structure that he occupied between at least 1883 and 1894. Period deeds contemporary to and postdating Meredith's presence in the structure indicate that he maintained his legal practice in a "...certain house and Lot known as the Law Office of E. E. Meredith and now occupied by him being situate in the town of Brentsville Prince William County Virginia the said lot containing or being sixteen feet one and twenty eight the other fronting upon Main Street..." (Prince William County [PWC] Deed Book [DB] 33: 361-362). Meredith purchased this property in July 1883 from George M. Goodwin who had owned the Brentsville Tavern Lot, including the Tavern building complex itself, since December 18, 1867 (PWC DB 27: 251).

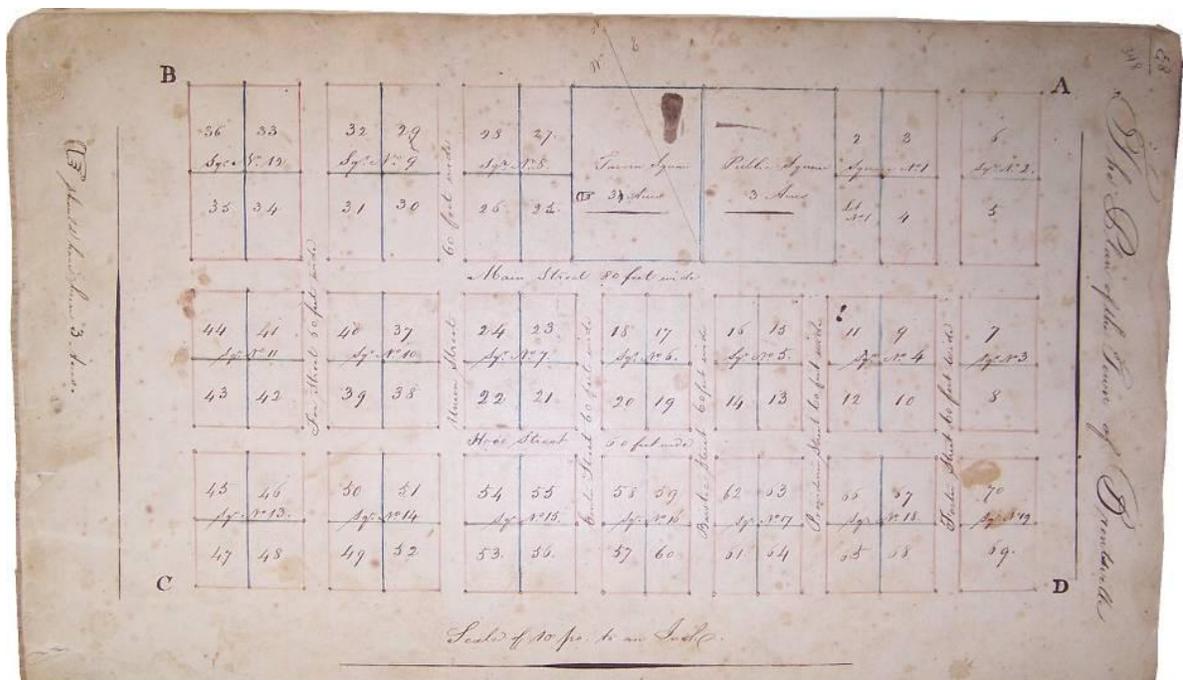


Figure 2

Thomas Nelson's Plat of the Town of Brentsville, Recorded on November 30, 1822.

Research indicates that a number of structures stood on the land that Meredith eventually bought from at least 1822. On November 30, 1822 surveyor Thomas Nelson's plat of the Town of Brentsville was recorded. The plat designated boundaries of the Tavern and Public Squares as well as individual lots. No buildings were depicted (PWC DB 8: 348) (Figure 2). Nelson's plat of the Brentsville Prison bounds was also recorded that day (PWC DB 8:481). The Prison Bounds plat included six structures: The Office, C.H. (Court House) and Goal on the area known as the Public Square; and the Tavern and three Outhouses built west of the Tavern are shown on the Tavern Lot (Figure 3, p. 4).

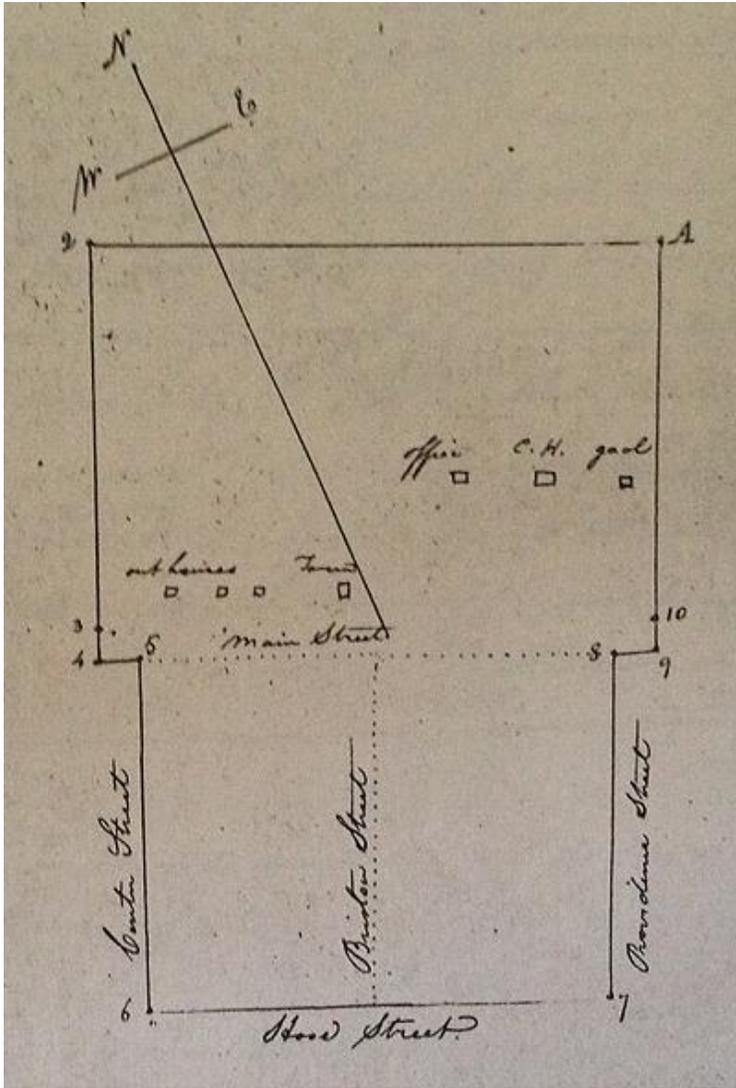


Figure 3

Thomas Nelson's Plat of the Brentsville Jail Prison Bounds,  
Recorded on November 30, 1822.

By April 1826, the Tavern Lot contained "...said Tavern and other houses, buildings, gardens, ways, profits and appurtenances" (PWC DB 10: 364). The value of the Tavern Lot was not assessed as an individual property until 1830 when Philip D. Dawe owned it and eight other Brentsville lots. The Tavern Lot was grouped with Lots 11 and 12, the total value of the buildings being \$2800 and the land value was \$3000. When the Tavern Lot was assessed one year later, buildings were valued at \$5000 and the land value was 6000, indicating that some level of construction had occurred there (Commissioner 1839).

The Tavern Lot and the buildings thereon changed hands through sale a number of times before George M. Godwin purchased the lot in December 1867 (PWC DB 27: 251). The Tavern Lot's previous owner, Sydney Sinclair, continued to pay tax on the property until 1869. The 1869 records of the Commissioner of Revenue Table of Brentsville Lots 1860-1879 lists George M. Goodwin

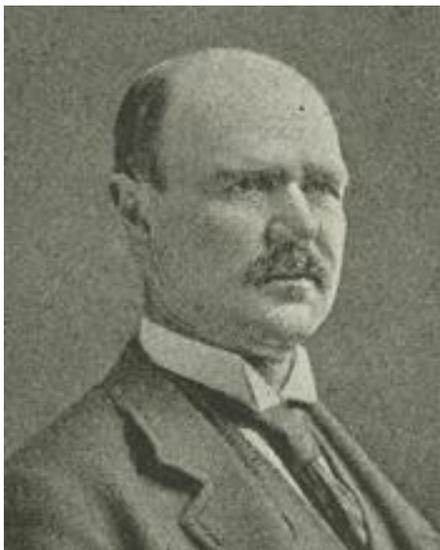
[sic] as the Tavern Lot's owner. At that time, the buildings had decreased in value to \$2700, and the land value to \$3000.

### James F. Clark

A number of attorneys practiced law in Brentsville while the town was the County Seat. One of these attorneys was James F. Clark. Clark was a young, ambitious lawyer who was well known in and beyond Brentsville. On December 23, 1869, the *Alexandria Gazette* published a letter that criticized local politician George C. Round. The letter was signed "James F. Clark, Brentsville" (Turner 2001). Soon thereafter on February 8, 1870 the *Alexandria Gazette* reported that during a meeting of the Conservatives of Prince William County, the body recommend James F. Clark as Commonwealth



On August 4, 1872 the *Alexandria Gazette* reported that "...an attorney for the Commonwealth will be appointed by Judge Nicol in place of James F. Clark who has left the County" (Turner 2001). Within three weeks, Clark was arrested and charged with abducting a young Manassas woman, Fanny Fewell. He was incarcerated in the Brentsville jail. On August 30, Lucian Fewell, Fanny Fewell's brother, entered the jail and shot Clark. When Clark died of his wounds, Fewell was arrested for his murder then acquitted after a sensational trial. William H. Payne, E. E. Meredith's law partner and a respected Confederate veteran, defended Fewell.



**Figure 5**  
Elisha Edward Meredith

### Elisha Edward (E. E.) Meredith

From 1873 through 1883, the James F. Clark estate paid taxes on the "part tavern lot." In 1876, the assessed value of the buildings on that lot jumped from \$100. to \$175. and the total value of the property was increased from \$100. to \$200. (Commissioner 1860). It is possible that the rise in values occurred because Godwin increased the lot size from 12' by 12' to 16' by 28'. Perhaps as early as November 1872 (**Figure 4**, p. 5), Elisha Edward (E. E.) Meredith (**Figure 5**) leased and occupied a house on a 16' x 28' lot that George M. Godwin owned. In a deed dated February 23, 1883 George M. Godwin conveys to E. E. Meredith "... a certain house known as the Law office of E. E. Meredith and lot 16' x 28' fronting Main Street" for \$200. (PWC DB 33:651-652).

Meredith resided in Brentsville since at least 1870 according to the U.S. Census records. At that time he was a 21-year-old single lawyer living with his father, a farmer; his mother who kept house, his three siblings. He studied

law at Hampton-Sydney College in Virginia and was admitted to the bar in 1869 (*Alexandria Gazette* 1900). He established his law practice in Brentsville by 1870 and likely rented an office, formerly occupied by James F. Clark, by November 1872. He married Sylvia Contee ca. 1873, around the time he and William H. Payne opened their law office. The Merediths' first son was born in 1874. They established their own household by October 18, 1875, when the *Alexandria Gazette* reported that: "Mr. E. E. Meredith has purchased the very handsome property of Mr. Wm. E. Lipscomb in Brentsville for \$1,350.00."

The Meredith household grew. The 1880 U.S. Population Schedule records E. E. Meredith, his wife, their two sons as well as their cook Mahala Hedgman (Black), her son Jack (Mulatto) and the Merediths' domestic servant Charles Walker (age 17, Mulatto). At that time, Meredith served as prosecuting attorney for Prince William County (1876-1883). Meredith's professional ambitions extended beyond his Brentsville law office. Months after he purchased the "...certain house...and lot 16' x 18'..." from George W. Goodwin February 1883 (PWC DB 33: 651-652), he was elected to the Virginia State Senate and remained a member until 1887 (Lyon 1896).

Prior to September 25, 1886 J.B.T. (James Bankhead Taylor) Thornton joined Meredith's practice (**Figure 6**, p. 7). The *Manassas Gazette* periodically printed advertisements for the attorneys' Brentsville office until at least November 9, 1894. In 1891, Meredith was elected to the 52<sup>nd</sup> U. S. Congress to replace deceased Representative William H. F. Lee. He was also President of the Buckley Fire Escape Company of Brentsville, Manassas and Haymarket, the license for that business having been granted in September 1891 (Turner 1999:25). Meredith appears to have considered leaving Brentsville as early as July 9, 1892 when the *Alexandria Gazette's* Prince William Notes reported that "Congressman E. E.



**Figure 6**

Newspaper advertisement for Meredith & Thornton. September 25, 1886.

Meredith says that his intention is to shortly make Manassas his place of residence." By that time, he was serving as an attorney for the Manassas Industrial School for Colored Youth, founded in 1893 by Jennie Dean (Turner 1966: 85).

On October 6, 1894 E. E. Meredith and his wife Sylvia C. sold to R. Hillman Keys "a certain house and the ground on which it stands known as the office formerly occupied by E.E. Meredith" for \$200.00. (PWC DB 43:354). He and Thornton moved their practice to Manassas prior to March 1, 1895 when an advertisement for "E. E. Meredith and J. H. T. Thornton, Attorneys-At-Law in Manassas" was published in the *Manassas Gazette*. Meredith, Thornton and many other attorneys from Brentsville eventually moved their practices to Manassas around the time that Prince William County made the decision to move the County seat from Brentsville to Manassas in 1892 (National Register of Historic Places 2003: Section 8, p. 5).

At that time, Meredith was still serving in the U.S. Congress. According to an article titled, "A Statesman's Woes-A Virginia Congressman Who Is Seriously Thinking of Retiring", published in the *Harrisburg (PA) Telegraph* on March 6, 1896, Meredith and his family still lived in Brentsville. The article described Meredith's travails as he commutes to Washington by train every day, attempts to avert constituents who mob him, and secludes himself in the cloakroom to avoid being called upon. The author concluded, "...Mr. Meredith is sore pressed by needy place hunters, and he has not yet decided if life is worth living."

Meredith finished his Congressional service in March 1897 and resumed his full-time law practice with Thornton (Lyon 1896). Between the date that the *Harrisburg Telegraph* article was published and his death on July 19, 1900, Meredith and his family moved to the spacious home that John H. Canner had constructed for them at 9001 Center Street in Manassas (Prince William County Historical Commission 1998:89).

#### **"Part tavern lot" Subsequent Owners**

Physician George Wickliffe Hore next owned the 16' by 28' lot and the office thereon. At some point between October 6, 1894, when Meredith and his wife sold the property to R. Hillman Keys, and Nov. 10, 1904, the date Dr. Hore died), R. Hillman Keyes sold the lot with the office to Hore (lost deed). R. Hillman Keys paid tax on the "part tavern lot" in 1898 and 1899, when the building value was \$60. and the total property value was \$70.00 (Commissioner 1899) . Keys continued to pay the tax on the "part tavern lot" from 1902 through 1905, when the building and total property values fell to \$25. and \$30., respectively (Commissioner 1922).

Keys and Hore's heirs sold the lot and office to Samuel Hale on March 29, 1905. The property was "...all that certain house recently owned and occupied by the late Dr. C. W. Hore in Brentsville, and which was used by the law firm of Meredith and Thornton as an office, together with the ground upon which it stands." (PWC DB: 53: 498). Hale had already bought the "Tavern Lot" in May 1904 (PWC DB 53:2).

Hale sold John F. Donovan two lots in October 1909. The first was the Tavern lot. The second was the lot that E. E. Meredith once owned (PWC DB 59: 245). The deed does not mention an office or house on the 16' x 28' lot, although such may still have stood there. Within four months Donovan and his wife sold the two lots to William J. Bell (PWC DB 59: 278). By the time William H. Breeden purchased the property from Bell and his wife in April 1913, the deed referred only to a parcel of land known as the "Tavern" property (PWC DB 63:373). Neither the 16' x 28' lot nor an office was mentioned. The last assessment that lists the "part tavern lot" was made in 1915 under John F. Donovan's name. At that time William H. Breeden owned the entire Tavern property identified as "1 lot" with a building value of \$200. and a total property value of \$350. (Commissioner 1922). Breeden's will of September 27, 1913, divided his property into twelve equal shares among his heirs. No buildings or lots were mentioned (PWC WB X/484).



**Figure 7**

The Brentsville Tavern in Winter 1915.

Perhaps the only extant photograph of the Tavern was taken by J. Harry Shannon, known as "The Rambler", when he visited Brentsville in 1915 (Figure 7). The Washington D. C. *Sunday Star* published "The Rambler's" musings about Brentsville on January 2, 1916. Shannon described the Tavern as:

A dejected and crestfallen building, the brick walls of which are coated with mortar and which is close by the courthouse lot, was a hotel. For a long time it was known as the Tavenner Hotel, and at one time a man named Breelens [sic] owned it. It is now one of the numerous uninhabited and uninhabitable houses in the settlement.

The Tavern, also known as the Brentsville Hotel and many other names, burned down in late 1917 to early 1918. The only known documentation of this event is a note, "building burned", included with Breeden's 1918 assessment. There, the property was identified as "tavern". Only the land was assessed and its value was \$150. (Commissioner 1922).

Almost twenty years later, Susan R. Morton conducted research on many Prince William County's landmarks for the Works Progress Administration of Virginia Historical Inventory. In May 1937 she prepared a report on the Old Tavern Site in Brentsville. She wrote,

The Tavern lot was directly on the main street and next to the Court House, and the lot originally contained five acres. There is no building on the lot today, the old brick building that was the Tavern having been gone for about thirty years, and the outbuildings long since torn down and carried away.

Meredith's law office may have been one of the outbuildings that to which Morton referred. In the aerial photograph of Tavern Square, taken during the same year that Morton wrote her report, the Union Church is the only visible building (**Figure 8**).

Freddie Wolfe (b. 1932) is a Brentsville native and has lived there for most of his life. On January 30, 2015 Mr. Wolfe recalled details about the Tavern lot. No plank sidewalk existed along Bristow Road (Route 619). There had always been a fence running east from at the Union Church. During the 1930s, John Thomas Keys grew corn on the back 2/3 of the lot. His team of horses pulled a plough that cut between six and eight inches into the ground. Keys did not plough the ground between the Union Church and the old tavern. That part of the land was undisturbed. Both Mr. Wolfe and Morgan Breeden, also a Brentsville native, described large mulberry and maple trees that were removed from the 2005-2006 Phase I project area sometime around 2001. They also remarked that Route 619 (Bristow Road) was cut during the 1940s or early 1950s creating sloped hills on each side of the new road (**Figure 9**, p. 10).

Later photographs of the area show no evidence of a building where Meredith's office stood (**Figures 8 – 11**). The photographs do not directly depict the site, but rather show the Union Church and vegetation that overtook the area. Prince William County purchased "the 4-acres in Brentsville known as 12235 Bristow Road..." from the William H. Breeden Estate in May 1999 to establish, operate and construct the Brentsville Historic Centre Park (PWC DB 2738:1087). The Tavern Lot including the 16' x 28' lot once owned by E. E. Meredith and the tavern foundation remained wooded until the autumn of 2005.



**Figure 8**

Congregation Leaving the Brentsville Union Church ca. 1916. The area near Meredith's office site (right of photograph) is behind the fence and already wooded.



**Figure 9**

In this 1937 aerial photograph of Tavern Square, the 2005-2006 Phase I project area between the Union Church and the tavern ruins is outlined in red.



**Figure 10**

Local ladies Ruth Jean Keys, Mattie Catherine Whetzel and Mammie Lee Joyce Keys pose in June 1944. The land east of the Union Church in the area where Meredith's office likely stood (right side of photograph) is overgrown.



**Figure 11**

2002 Aerial photograph of the Tavern Lot showing dense foliage between the Union Church (outlined in gold) and the Schoolhouse.

## **PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH CONDUCTED WITHIN PROJECT AREA**

Three archaeological studies were undertaken at Brentsville Courthouse Historic Centre prior to the 2005-2006 Phase I archaeological investigation.

***Historical Research and Archaeological-Reconnaissance at the Brentsville Historic Centre, Prince William County, Virginia.*** 2001. Klein, Michael J., Cheryl Shepard, Jessika Reuter, Emily Lindtveit, and Josh Duncan.

The first archaeological investigations at Brentsville Courthouse occurred between July and December 1999. The Center for Historic Preservation (CHP) at the University of Mary Washington conducted the investigation that included the excavation of a random sample of shovel test pits (STPs) across the Courthouse Centre property and a systematic sample of shovel test pits in the high and moderate probability zones. In addition, field workers conducted a walkover survey to locate areas of disturbed or altered ground within the low probability zone. Eleven units with minimum dimensions of two-foot square were excavated within the high probability zone. Finally, a resistivity survey was conducted in the area surrounding the courthouse, jail and schoolhouse. (Klein 2001:45).

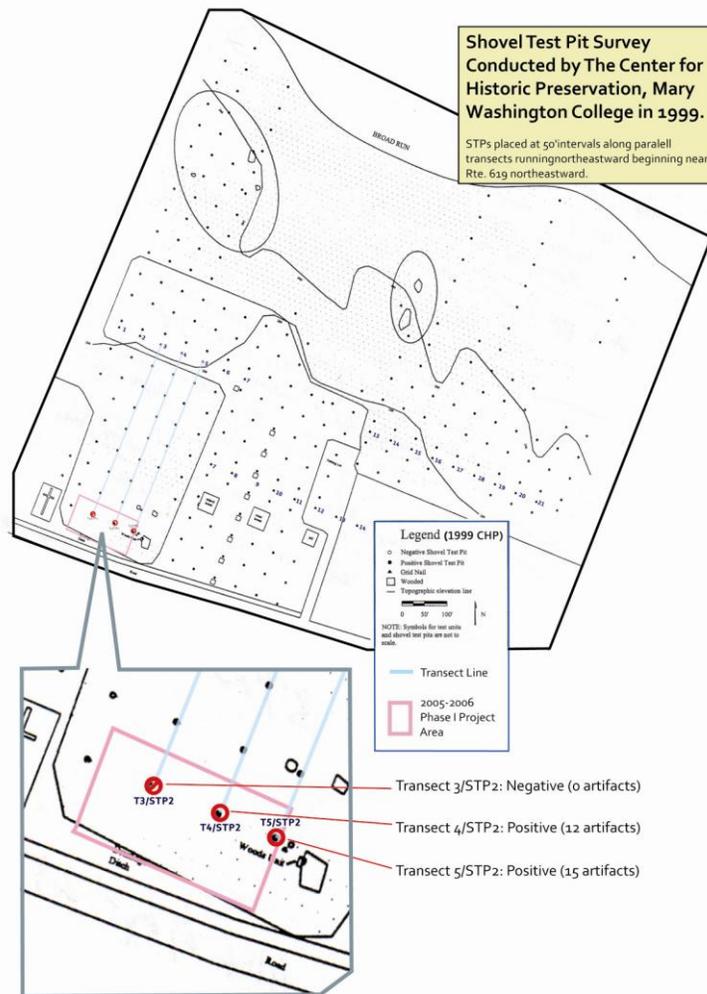


Figure 12

## STP Survey

To effectively survey the large property, CHP established 22 parallel transect lines running perpendicular to Route 619 (Bristow Road) Transect 1 ran along the western edge of the property line and transect 22 along the eastern edge (Figure 12). Archaeologists placed STPs at 50-foot intervals along each of the 22 parallel transects, with STP 1 of each transect at the southern edge of the property (Klein 2001:48). The minimum diameter of all STPs was approximately one foot, while depth varied according to soil conditions. Excavation of all STPs was discontinued when undisturbed clay subsoil or bedrock was encountered, or when the practical limits of excavation were reached (Klein 2001:46).

CHP excavated three STPs within the 2005-2006 Phase I project area. The first was STP 2 on Transect 3 (T3/STP2). The second was STP 2 on Transect 4 (T4/STP2). The third was STP2 on Transect 5 (T5/STP2) (Figure 12 Inset).

T4/STP2 and T5/STP2 lay within one of the two clusters of artifacts that CHP identified. This concentration occurred in close proximity to the road, with the majority of artifacts found in STPs 3 through 5 of transects 4-7. CHP associated this artifact concentration with the former location of the tavern/hotel (Klein 2001: 49). The association between the 1999 CHP STP survey and this Phase I archaeological investigation are discussed in the **INTERPRETATION** section of this report.

## Resistivity Survey

CHP archaeologists employed resistivity testing where possible to identify cultural features. Resistivity survey at Brentsville selected a target depth of two feet to minimize results from twentieth-century landscaping activity, which STP survey and excavation had indicated extended between one and two feet below present ground surface (Klein 2001:67).

Dense undergrowth, considerable evidence of fallen trees, and excessive dumping prevented identification of features in the vicinity of the Tavern (Klein 2001:67) and the Union Church (Figure 13, p. 13). Therefore, resistivity testing did not occur within the 2005-2006 Phase I project area.



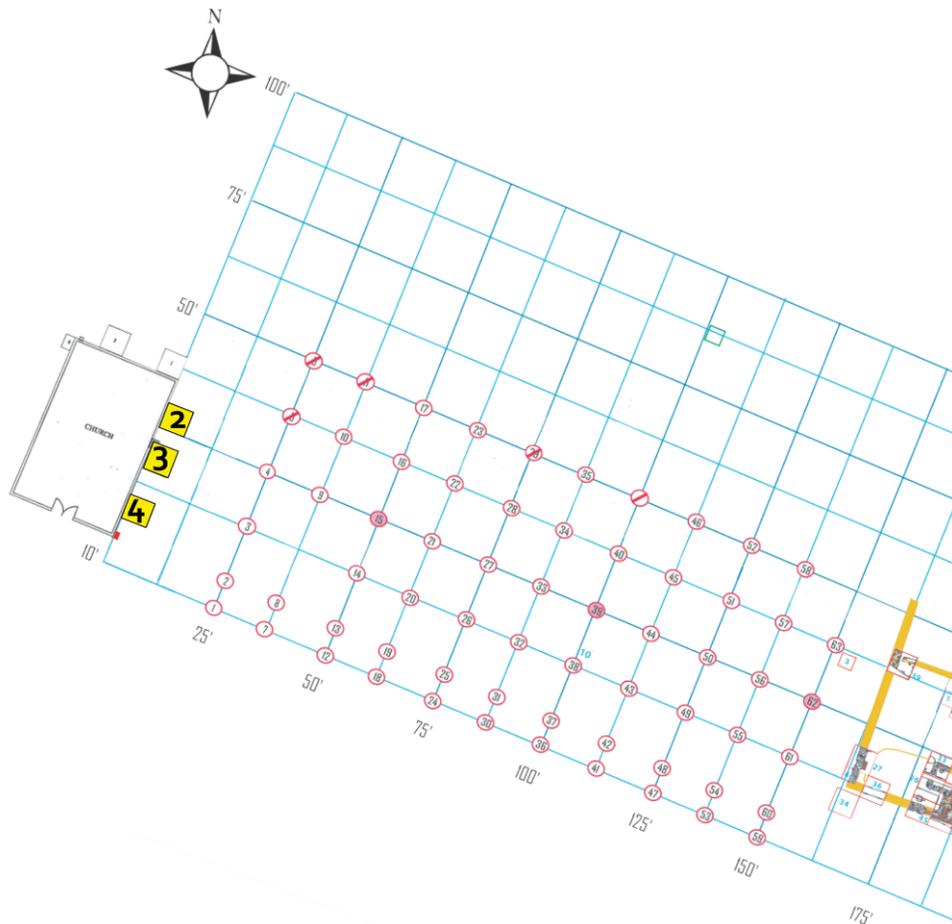
**Figure 13**

Undergrowth between Tavern and Union Church on September 10, 2005.

**Phase II Archaeological Testing of Three Areas at the Brentsville Historic Centre, Prince William County, Virginia.** 2002. Klein, Michael, Jennifer Stringfellow, Emily Lindtveit, and Josh Duncan.

During June 2001, the County of Prince William entered into an agreement with the Center for Historic Preservation (CHP), Mary Washington College, to conduct archaeological research at three locations within the Brentsville Courthouse Complex. One of these locations was the area that would be disturbed by the renovation of the Union Church foundation. Adjacent to the church, a 50% sample of the least disturbed areas near the

foundation was excavated. The fieldwork relied on the excavation 5-x-5-foot units along the eastern and northern elevations of the building, and one 3-x-2-foot unit near the northwest corner of the church, the areas least disturbed by landscaping and tree roots (Klein 2002: 1) (**Figure 14**).



**Figure 14**

2002 Union Church Units near the 2005-2006 Phase I Project Area

**Units 2, 3 and 4** along the eastern elevation of the Church were within 25 feet of the 2005-2006 Phase I project area.

**Unit 2** was located along the East church wall five feet south of the northeast corner of the building. This five-by-five foot unit, along with units three, four, and six, had been subjected to the effects of run off from the church roof. As a consequence, a depression created by water falling from the roof paralleled the building.

**Unit 3** was located along the east church wall, 14 feet south of the northeast corner of the building. One corner of the twentieth-century chimney was located in the northwest corner of unit 3. The chimney extended 1 foot southward and almost 2 feet eastward into the unit. Unit 3 was opened to investigate the possibility that an earlier chimney had existed near the location of the present chimney.

**Unit 4** was located along the east church wall, near the southeast corner of the church. The unit was 15 feet from the building's northeast corner and 4 feet from the Southeast corner.

The association between the 2001 CHP excavation around the Union Church foundation and the 2005-2006 Phase I archaeological investigation is discussed in the **INTERPRETATION** section of this report.

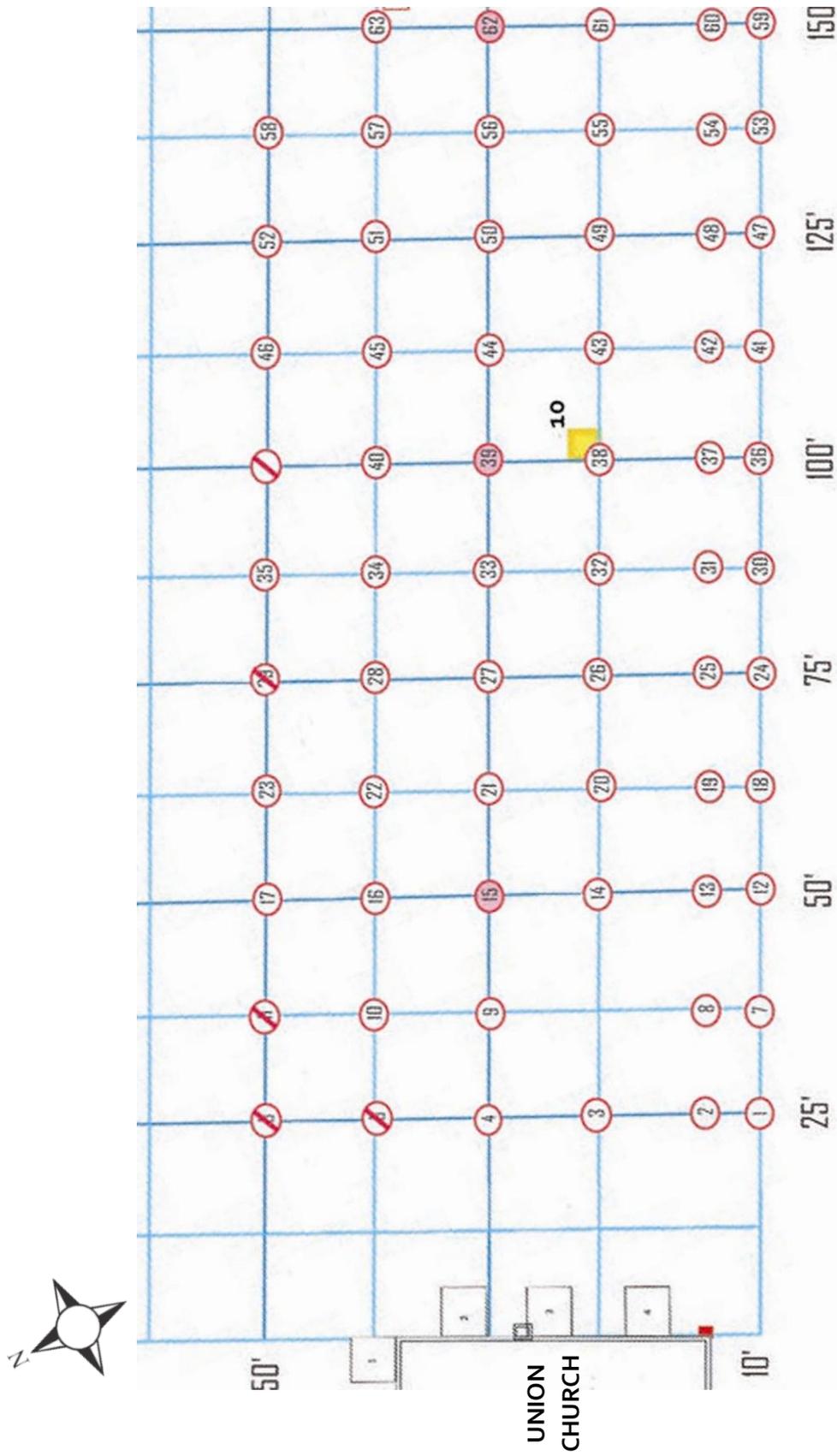
***Archaeological Investigation of the "Tavern Woods", Brentsville Historic Centre, Brentsville, Virginia.*** 2005. Lindtveit, Emily and Michael Klein.

During the 2004 season, CHP was engaged to perform a survey of the wooded "Tavern Lot", located between the Union Church and the Courthouse Complex. The objectives of the archaeological testing were 1) to identify the Tavern site boundaries, 2) to identify any further sites located on the Tavern Lot, 3) to investigate the Tavern remains and 4) to evaluate the impact on subsurface resources of two proposed locations for an access road.

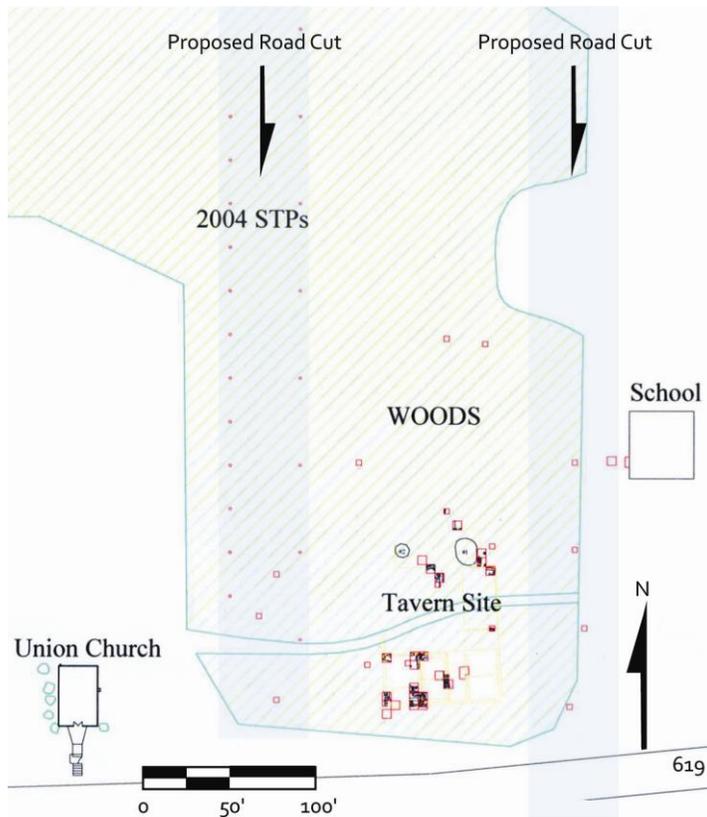
The area's initial investigation was informed by an artifact density map generated by the 2000-2001 STP survey artifact collection and by surface features located during that survey. The artifact concentrations revealed by the distribution map coincided with the surface features related to the Tavern site, and loosely corresponded with the fragmentary description of the Tavern gleaned from documents such as work orders and advertisements (Klein 2001 : 41-43). After negative results from all units placed outside the Tavern site, the focus of the 2004 fieldwork shifted to identifying and investigating the Tavern remains.

One of the units excavated in 2004 was located inside the 2005-2006 Phase I project area. Unit 10 was a 3 x 3' test unit with its southeastern corner located at 14N/100E. Unit 10 was randomly placed to complete an overall comprehensive survey of the woods area. Unit 10 was located to the west of the tavern foundation, in the wooded area between the tavern site and the Union Church (Lindtveit 2005: 68). In 2005, STP 38 was excavated where the southwest corner of where Unit 10 had been excavated in 2004 (**Figure 15**, p. 15).

The association between the 2005 CHP Unit 10 excavation and STP 38 is discussed in the **INTERPRETATION** section of this report.



**Figure 15**  
Location of CHP Unit 10 within 2005-2006 Phase I Project Area



**Figure 16**  
2004 Woods Project Area

An additional STP survey was conducted across the recommended road cut location to further assess the impact of road construction on any subsurface resources (Lindtveit 2005: 119). The STPS were dug at 50' intervals (Figure 16). No intact occupational layers or features were encountered during the STP survey of the road cut. The artifacts were lightly concentrated to the southeast of the road cut (Lindtveit 2005:82-83).

The 2004 project report concludes with two recommendations. The first is to conduct further archaeological work at the tavern site to provide more information upon which to build a comprehensive interpretation of the area. The second is to monitor any grading that would identify any ephemeral traces of E. E. Meredith's office that will be visible only at subsoil. Only widespread stripping of the area would identify a low-impact structure that existed for 23 years (Lindtveit 2005:101).

## RESEARCH DESIGN

The Phase I archaeological investigation was undertaken between December 2005 and February 2006. The project area comprised a 125' x 50' (6,250 square feet) area of open land located between the Union Church and the Tavern archaeology site (Figure 17, p. 17). The purposes for the Phase I investigation were 1) to determine whether a proposed road cut northward from Brentsville road between the Union Church and the Tavern archaeology site would impact any subsurface resources; and 2) to seek evidence of a structure occupied by attorney Elisha E. Meredith at least 1883 through 1894. The Phase I project area extended to within 12 feet of the 1822 Tavern's subsurface western wall, presenting the possibility of additional features or activity areas associated with the Tavern site might be identified.

Historical research informed the research design. Elisha E. Meredith was a local, state and national person of significance. Documents describe his office building as being located on a 16' x 28' lot somewhere within the boundaries of the project area. Further research documented a construction date for the office, its likely dimensions, and a longer period of occupation and use than previously known. Research also presented the likelihood that three outhouses may have stood within the project area.

A grid was established over the area in the exact location of the grid used by CHP during previous excavations. The Cartesian grid was based on the SE corner of the Union Church, and aligned with the Union Church building. Grid North was at the same bearing as the previous excavation grids, aligned with the west elevation of the Courthouse building. The point at the SE corner of the Union church was the origin for the horizontal coordinates across the area (X, Y). During CHP's initial STP survey of the area in 1999, STPs were spaced at a 50' interval. During the 2005-2006 Phase I investigation, STPs were placed at an interval of 10' to 12.5' in order to more thoroughly investigate the project area and increase the probability of encountering ephemeral traces of a 12' x 12' structure and of undefined outhouse locations. A total of 60 STPs were excavated. No other excavation methods were used.



**Figure 17**  
2005-2006 Phase I Project Area Grid

## METHODS

The survey datum point No/Eo was the southeast corner of the Union Church. The CHP grid was re-established along a baseline that ran due east from the datum. Nails were placed at 25' intervals by pulling a measuring tape parallel to Bristow Road (619) and sighting down the tape or aligning the tape with the Church's façade. The baseline was terminated at 250' east from the datum. The perpendicular project area boundary was established from the datum and running due north and perpendicular to Bristow Road. The line was defined by pulling a measuring tape and sighting down the tape or aligning it with the east wall of the Church. Nails were placed at 25' intervals heading north to a distance of 75'. One line of STPs was set 10' south of the baseline to enable excavation as near to Bristow Road as possible.

All measurements were recorded in tenths of feet. All strata in STPs and features were designated with Roman numerals. Features were designated with Arabic numerals. STPs excavated at a 10' or 12.5' distance from a nail were located by sight and offset as little as possible when an obstacle such as a tree root or an impenetrable surface was encountered. STPs were excavated using round shovels and trowels after grass, brush, snow or other ground cover was scraped away. Soils were described using Munsell soil chart color designations. Profile drawings were recorded on STP record forms in some instances. Features were drawn in detail on graph paper.

Artifact collection was accomplished by sifting the soil through 24-inch rocking screen with 1/4 inch wire mesh. All of the soil was screened for artifacts. The artifacts were provisionally identified in the field and then bagged by provenience. Whole bricks and modern artifacts such as plastic and container glass were recorded then discarded.

Field documentation of the excavations consisted of written records, measured drawings, and field notes. Archaeologists used a standardized record form for excavation of STPs. This form records the excavator name, the date, STP number and N/E coordinates, strata depths, soil types, artifacts recovered, comments and STP profile sketches. Measured drawings of features were made on separate sheets of 10:1" graph paper.

Laboratory analysis of artifacts concentrated on the identification of chronologically-sensitive artifacts (e.g., ceramics, pipes, nails) in order to date specific contexts, and the identification of broad functional classes of artifacts (e.g., architectural, kitchen, mineral, hardware, arms, faunal) in order to locate the remains of different types of activities. This required the washing of all artifacts collected.

Artifacts were catalogued individually with a record of the STP number, N/E/ coordinates, strata, level, functional category, material, form, date range, part (e.g., body, rim, element), comments and count. The staff members used the standardized artifact processing and cataloguing systems in use at the Prince William County Historic Preservation Division to process all artifacts. Artifacts were bagged by provenience but not individually labeled. The artifact collection is stored in archival-quality containers along with all records of the excavation (e.g., field forms, measured drawings, artifact catalogue) and is housed at the Prince William County Historic Preservation Division storage facility in Dumfries, Virginia.

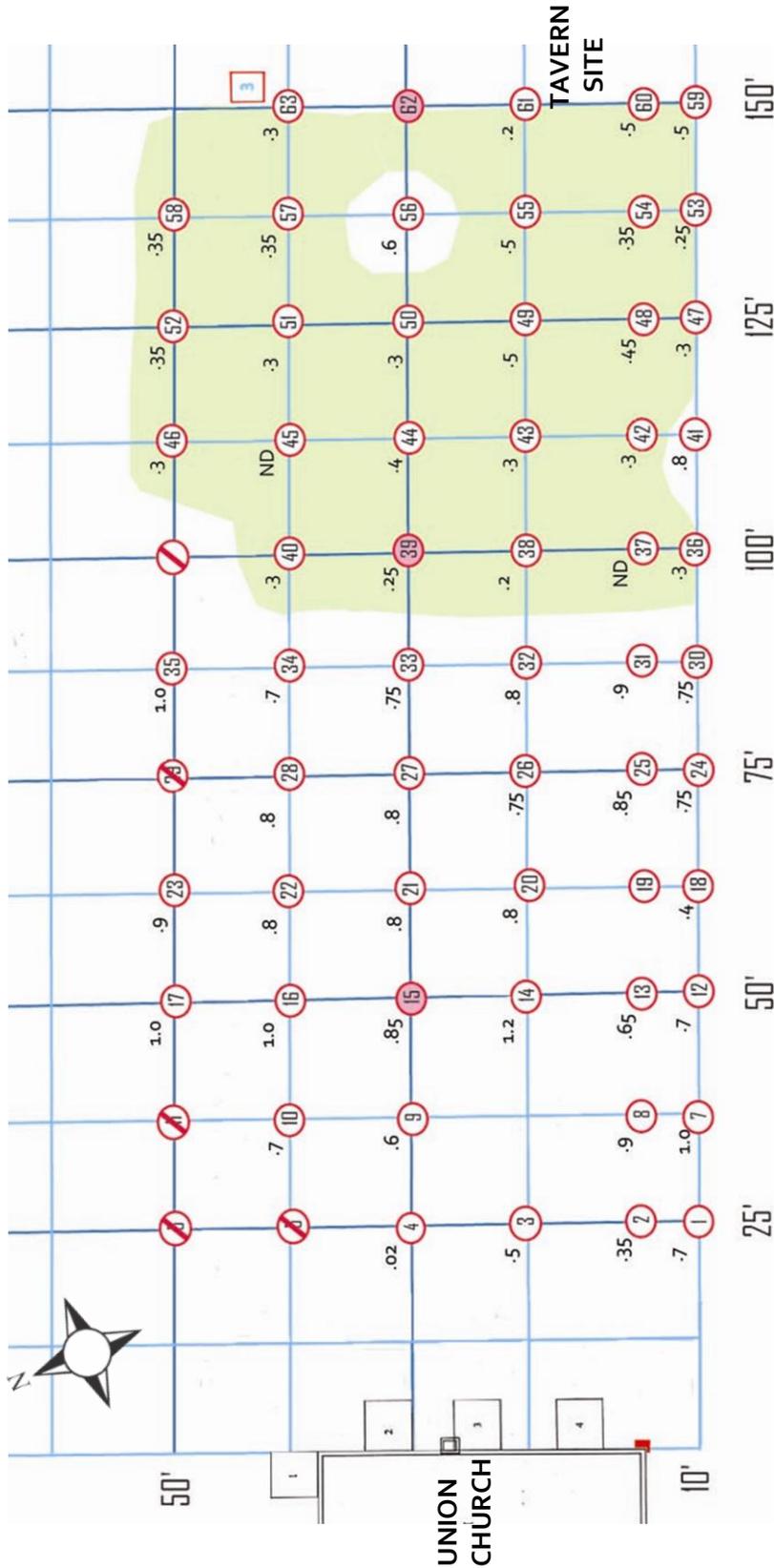
The personnel for the project were Heather A. Hembrey, M.A. A. (Preservationist, Prince William County Historic Preservation Division) and Justin S. Patton, M.A.A., RPA (Prince William County Archaeologist). This report was written by Heather A. Hembrey in February 2015.

## **RESULTS OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION**

The Phase I archaeological survey produced 701 artifacts and three possible posthole features.

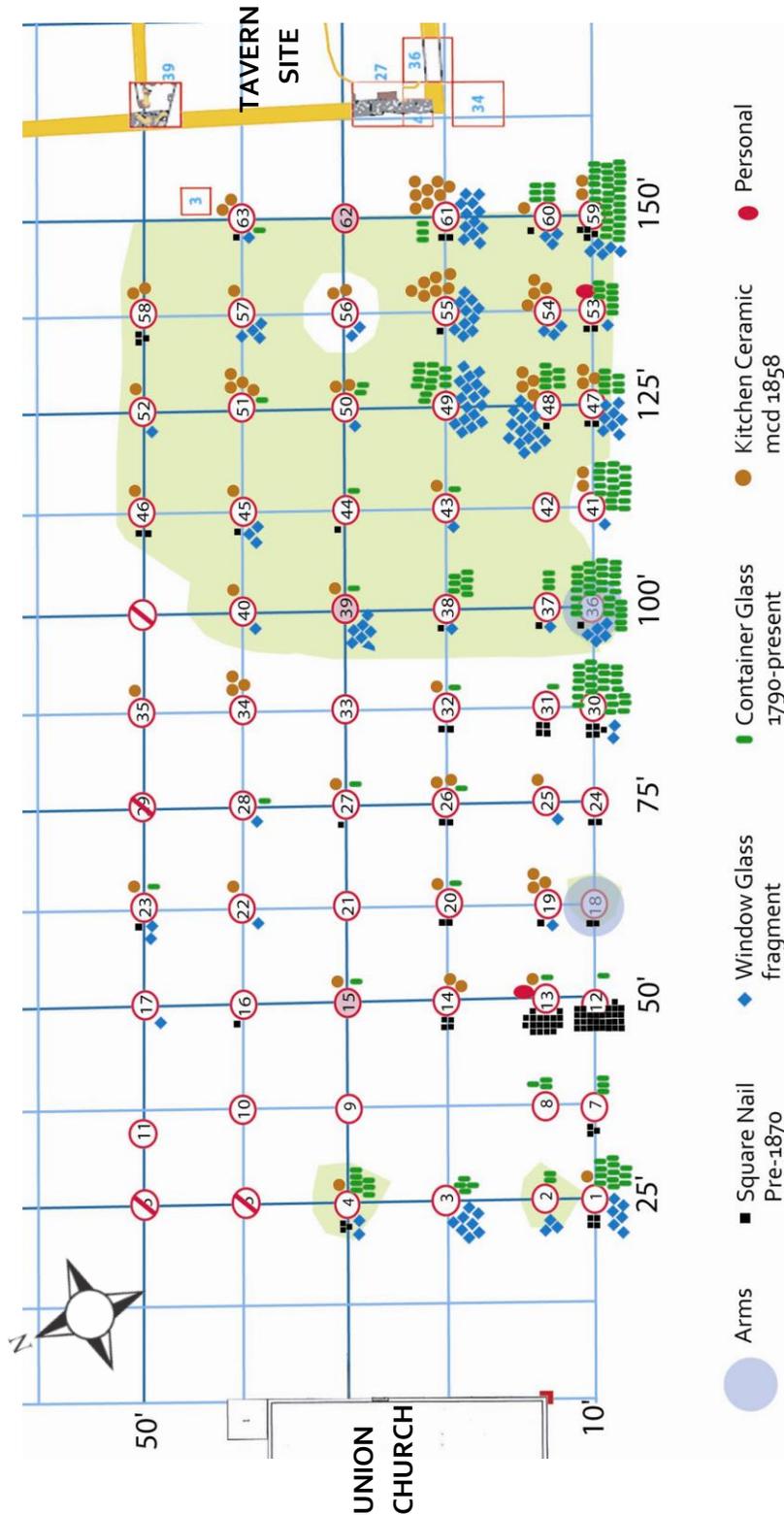
Soil types and strata depth were relatively consistent across the western third of the project area where STPs 1 through 16 were excavated. Stratum I within STPs 1-16 was recorded as Munsell 5YR 3/3 or 5YR 4/4 (reddish brown clay loam) and the stratum depth ranged from .35' to 1.2'. Stratum II within STPs 1 through 16 was described as Munsell 7.5YR4/6 or 7.5YR 5/6 strong brown silty clay loam, and the stratum depth ranged from 1.0' to 1.6'. All artifacts collected from STPs 1-16 came from Stratum I, with two notable exceptions. STPs 12 and 13 contained a large number of iron artifacts in both Strata I and II. These artifacts included a hook, cut and wrought nail fragments (39), one iron bar, and 11 unidentifiable iron artifacts. STP 7, located 12.5' west of STP 12, produced 1 wrought nail and 1 unidentifiable nail. STPs 1-4, located directly east of the Union Church, contained a concentration of window glass and container glass fragments. Architectural materials were the most prominent artifact type excavated in the western third of the project area.

Stratum I soil had different characteristics within the central portion of the project area where STPs 19-38 were excavated. Colors were Munsell 10YR 3/3 dark brown clay loam, 7.5YR4/3 silty, wet, mottled loam, 7.5YR 4/4 brown wet clay loam, or 7.5YR 3/3 dark brown clay loam. Stratum depth ranged from .4' (STP 18 near Bristow Road) to 1.0'. Ceramics (mean ceramic date 1844) were the most prominent artifact type excavated in the central portion of the project area.



**Figure 18**  
 Stratum I Soil Depths (ND = no data)  
 ■ Stratum I Depth <.5'

STPs 39-63 were excavated between 67.5' and 12.5' from the Tavern's west foundation wall. The depth of Stratum I in this eastern third of the project area was noticeably shallower than elsewhere in the project area. Depth ranged from .25' to .5' in 21 of the 24 STPs excavated (Figure 18, p. 19). Soils were relatively consistent in color and texture at Munsell 7.5YR 3/2 dark brown clay loam or 7.5YR 3/3 dark brown silty clay loam. This area of Stratum I shallow soil depths correlates with the highest artifact concentration within the project area (Figure 19). The number of ceramics excavated in this area was noticeably greater than elsewhere in the project area.



**Figure 19**  
Correlation Between Stratum I Soil Depths and Artifact Density  
Stratum I Depth < .5'

Three features were located during the STP survey. These occurred in STPs 18, 25 and 47 (Figure 20). Each feature was identified as a possible post hole. Feature 1 in STP 25 was the most defined of the three (Figure 21).

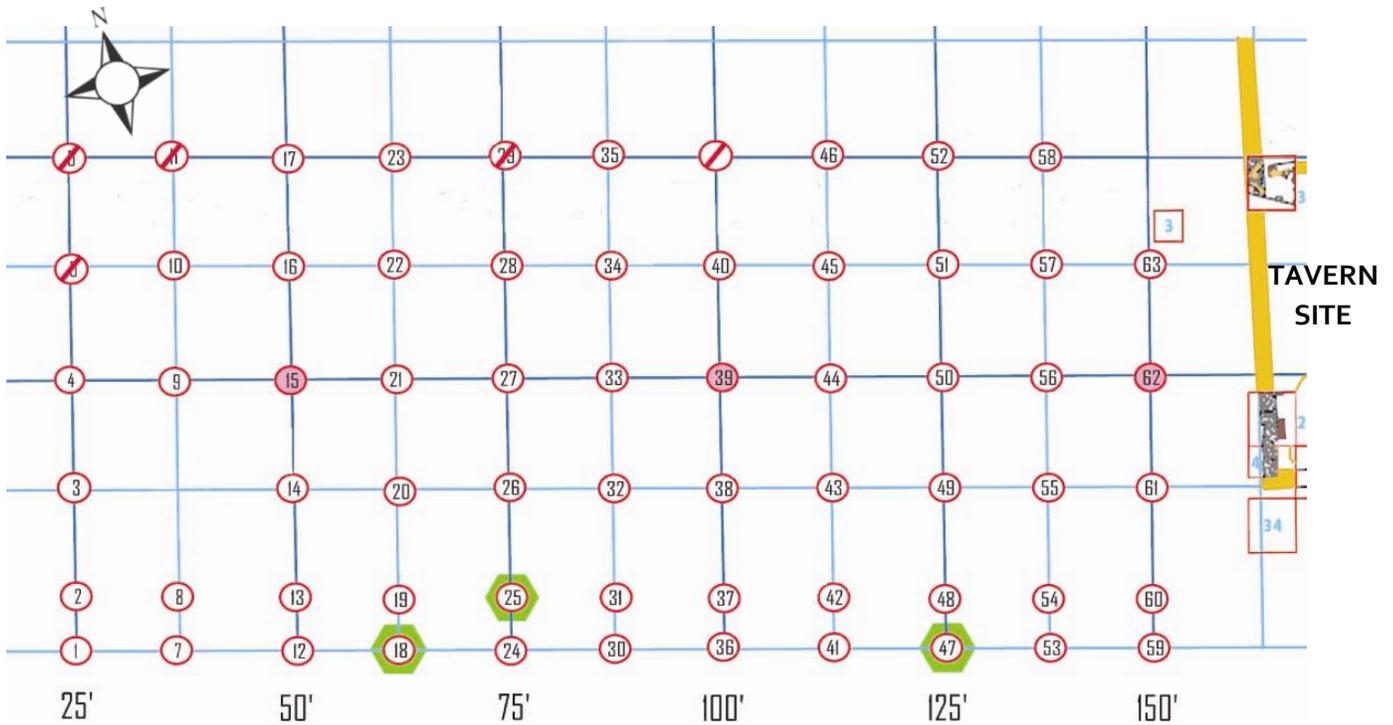


Figure 20  
Locations of Possible Posthole Features

Feature 1 was identified in STP 25 (No/E75). The round edge of the feature was exposed directly under the sod. The edge was well defined as a partial circle with the exposed diameter of approximately .5'. The STP was dug to a depth of 1.25' through two strata. Soil inside the feature was 7.5YR 4/3 brown soft and mottled, which was distinct from the surrounding soil that was 5YR 4/4 orange brown silty clay in Stratum 1 that transitioned at .85' to 5YR 4/4 brown silty clay. The feature comprised most of the STP's north wall and contained no artifacts. It was drawn before a plastic sheet was placed inside the hole to protect the feature and the STP was backfilled. Six artifacts were collected in Stratum I.

The artifact density within the project area increased from the west boundary near the Union Church toward the east boundary adjacent to the Tavern site. Window glass fragments were concentrated in two locations. One concentration was identified in STPs 1-4 adjacent to the Union Church. The other concentration was

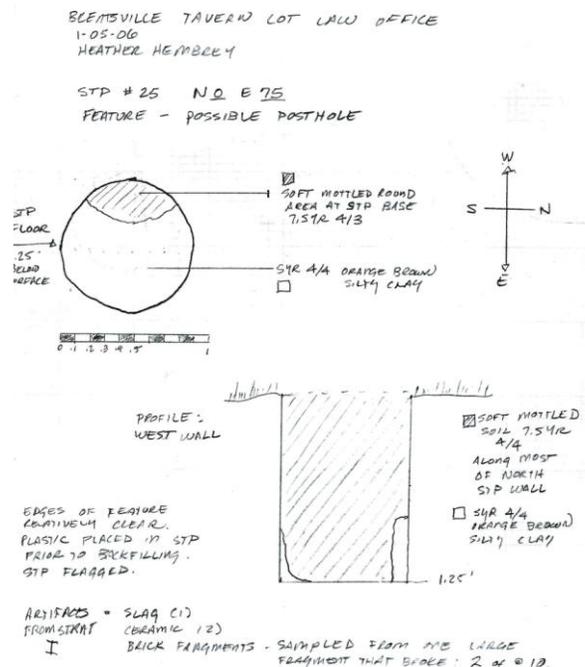


Figure 21  
Measured Drawing of Feature 1, STP 25

located in the southeast corner of the project area, where increased numbers of window glass fragments were excavated from STPs 47, 48, 49, 53, 54, 55, 59, 60 and 61 (**Figure 19**, p. 20).

Container glass fragments clustered along the Union Church in STPs 1, 2, 3, and 4 and along Bristow Road from STP 30 east to STP 59. The fragments came from amber, green, colorless, and in few cases solarized and dark green bottles dated 1790 to the present.

Earthenware shards sharply increased in frequency in the area directly west of the tavern. Within the 1,500 square-foot area containing STPs 47-63, archaeologists excavated 40 earthenware shards versus a total of 32 excavated across the 5,000 square feet of the project area. All refined earthenwares dated from 1762 to 1889. No complete vessels and no 20<sup>th</sup>-century ceramics were excavated.

Window glass and iron hardware comprised the architectural assemblage. Iron hardware was clustered around STPs 12 and 13. These two STPs contained a total of 48 complete or fragmented wrought or cut nails (made before 1870), one forged hook, one forged strap, one wedge and one chain link. Smaller numbers of wrought or cut nails were recovered from STPs surrounding #s 12 and 13 (**Figure 19**, p. 20).

In 1999, CHP conducted the first comprehensive archaeological investigation of the Brentsville Courthouse Historic Centre property. This investigation included an STP survey defined by STPs dug at 50' intervals. Three of these STPs were located within the 2005-2006 Phase I project area (**Figure 12**, p. 12) The first of these STPs was #2 on Transect 3 in the same location as STP 15 excavated in 2005 (N25/E50). While CHP identified no artifacts or features in 1999 (Klein 2001:-2-), archaeologists working in 2005 recovered one pearlware body fragment (1775-1828), one olive/amber bottle fragment (1790-1900) and one piece of clinker/slag.

The second of CHP's STPs within the 2005-2006 project area was #2 on Transect 4. This location was excavated as STP 39 in 2005. CHP recovered 12 artifacts: one brick fragment, four pearlware body fragments (1779-1820), 1 creamware body fragment (1768-1820), one clear bottle glass fragment, two green bottle glass fragments, two siltstone fragments, and one fragment of worked quartz cobble (Klein 2001:-2-). In 2005, 13 artifacts came from STP 39, including pearlware, colorless glass (1915-present), window glass, brick, coal, and one oyster shell—one of only two faunal elements excavated in 2005-2006.

The third of CHP's STPs was #2 on Transect 5. It was near the feature identified in 2004 as a wall of the 1822 Tavern building. The STP produced 15 artifacts: one brick fragment, one wrought pintel, four pearlware body fragments (1779-1820), one kaolin pipe bowl fragment, one aqua flat glass fragment, one green tinted flat glass fragment, and six clear vessel glass bottle fragments (Klein 2001:-4-). In 2005, STP 62 was in the same location, but it was not excavated.

In 2001, CHP excavated six 5' x 5' units around the Union Church foundation. Unit numbers 2, 3, and 4 along the Church's east wall were within 25' of the 2005-2006 Phase I project area. Within each of these units, the majority of artifacts collected from Layers A – E were modern (e. g. wall tile, aqua window glass, plastic). Layers F- K contained a larger number of 19<sup>th</sup>-century artifacts than in previous layers. Each unit was excavated to a depth of approximately 1.2' to subsoil (Klein 2002: Figure 8). The total artifact counts were, in Unit 2:4,007; in Unit 3:2,591; and Unit 4:1,882. In 2005, STPs 2, 3 and 4 were excavated within 25' from the eastern wall of the Union Church where CHP had placed Units 2, 3 and 4 in 2001 (**Figure 14**, p. 13). Each STP was approximately 1' in diameter. STP2 was 1' deep at subsoil and contained eight artifacts (eight per ft<sup>2</sup>). STP 3 was excavated to a depth of 1.5' at subsoil and contained 18 artifacts (18 per ft<sup>2</sup>).

CHP excavated several test units during the investigation of the "Tavern Woods" in 2004. Unit 10 was located inside the 2005-2006 Phase I project area. Unit 10 was a 3 x 3' test unit with its southeastern corner located at 14N/100E (**Figure 1**, p. 1) (Lindtveit 2005: 68). 43 artifacts (4.7 per ft<sup>2</sup>) were collected

from Unit 10 in 2004, 34 of which came from Layer B (correlates with STP Stratum II). In 2005, STP 38 was excavated where the southwest corner of what had been Unit 10 in 2004. Only three artifacts were recovered from STP 38 in Stratum II. Strata I and III were sterile. The association between the 2005 CHP Unit 10 excavation and STP 38 is discussed in the **INTERPRETATION** section of this report.

## ARTIFACT ANALYSIS

Artifacts excavated during the Phase I archaeological investigation of the E. E. Meredith Law Office site were cleaned and catalogued. Each artifact was catalogued based on a number of criteria (**Figure 22**).

STP	N/S	E/W	Total # Artifacts	Strat	Level	Bag #	Functional Category	Material	Form	Date Range	Part	Comments	Count
13	N 0	E 50	24	I	1	11	Clothing	Milk Glass	Button, 4 hole	1869-present		3/8' diameter	1
13	N 0	E 50		I	1	11	Kitchen Ceramic	Earthenware	Pearlware	1819-1835	Rim	Blue tsfr. print, negative dark blue patterns	1
13	N 0	E 50		I	1	11	Architectural	Iron	Wrought nail	Before 1790	complete	Large	1
13	N 0	E 50		I	1	11	Hardware	Iron	Forged strap			Pierced near wide end	1

**Figure 22**

Excerpt from Phase I Artifact Catalog Sheet

Examining the distribution of artifacts within the same functional category reveals distinct artifact clusters across the project area.

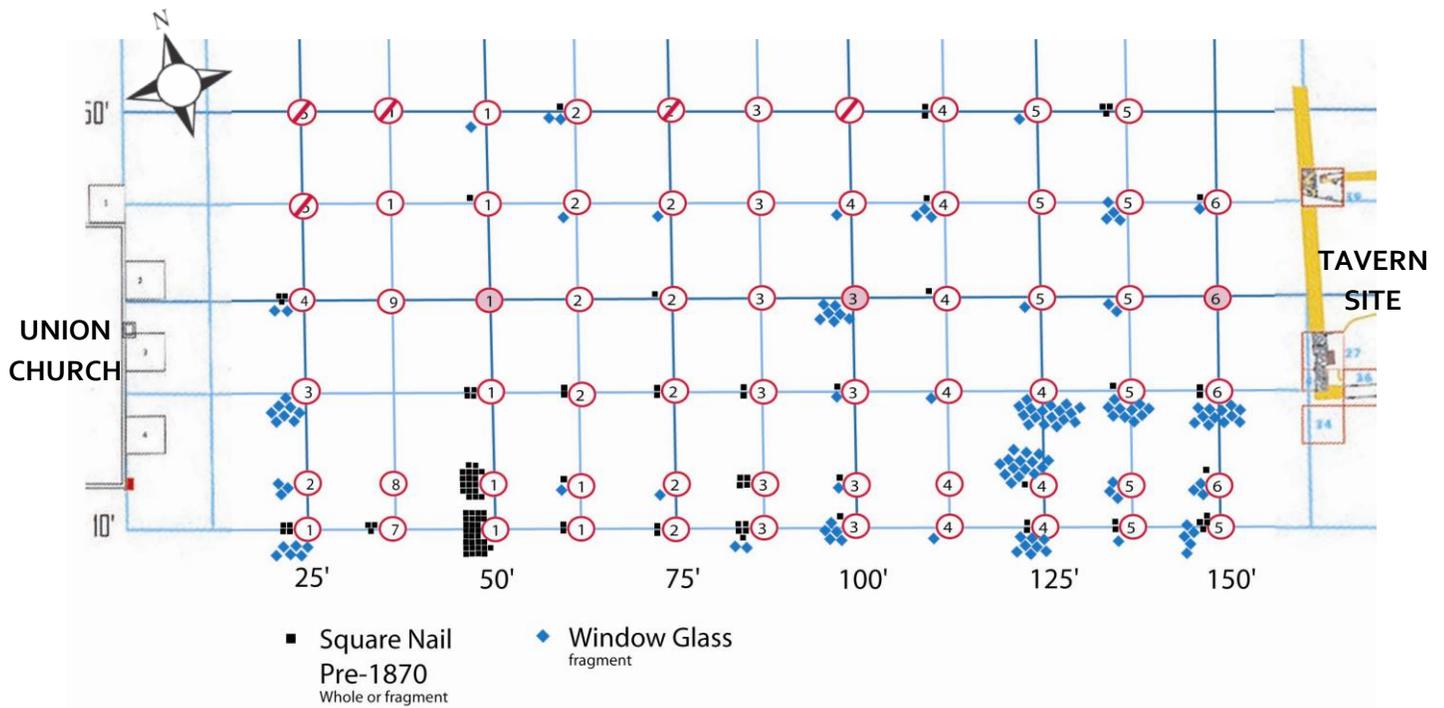


**Figure 23**

Iron Artifacts Excavated From STP 13

The locations and density of square nails may indicate where a structure was located. Wrought nails were the primary nail type used in America through ca. 1790. After ca. 1790, machine-cut nails rapidly replaced wrought nails (Hume 1969: 253). In the Phase I project area, one concentration of square nails was identified at STPs 12 and 13. Some STPs surrounding STPs 12 and 13 did contain wrought or cut nails (whole or fragmented) but in fewer numbers. Iron artifact concentrations in STPs 12 and 13 produced architectural artifacts. These were a wrought hook, a wrought strap, and a wedge (**Figure 23**).

Window glass concentrations also suggest a prior building's location. The majority of flat glass fragments recovered from the Phase I project area were identified as window glass. Two concentrations of window glass were apparent (**Figure 24**, p. 24). The first was identified through STPs placed 25' east of the Union Church. The second concentration was directly west of the Tavern in the project area's southeast corner. Klein, et al. were able to calculate the estimated manufacture dates of flat glass fragments excavated from the Courthouse and Union Church foundations based on glass thickness.

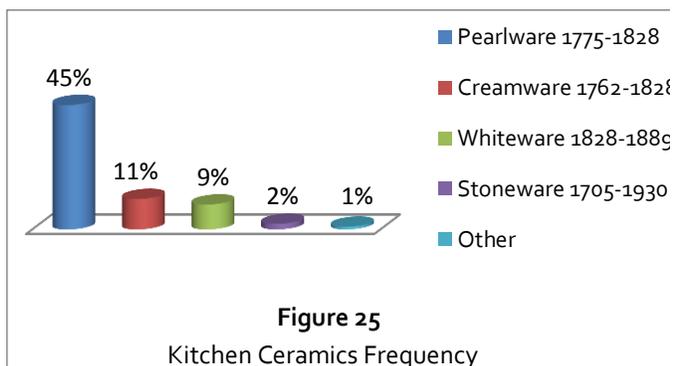


**Figure 24**  
Distributions of Architectural Materials

Courthouse Units 12 (layer M) and 13 (layer ZIII) contained glass fragments estimated to have been manufactured as early as 1818 (Klein 2002: Table 1). The thickness of flat glass fragments recovered from the 2005-2006 Phase I project were not measured. Therefore, archaeologists did not estimate manufacture dates of flat glass recovered during the Phase I archaeological investigation.

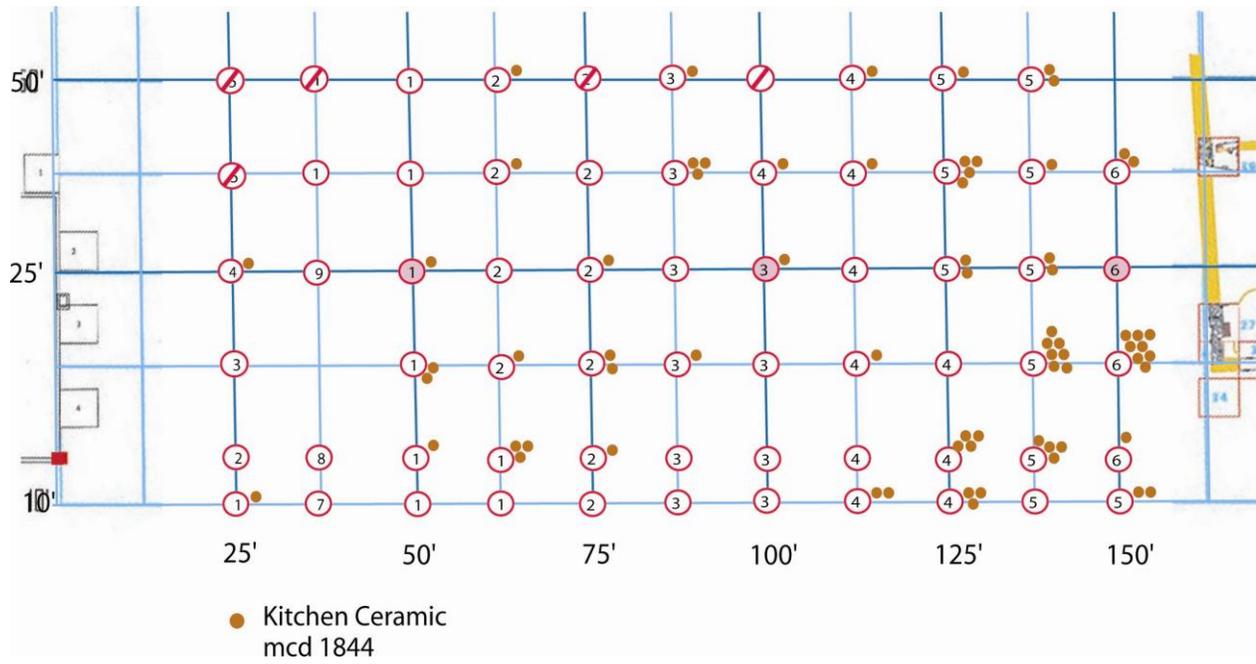
Square nail and flat glass clusters do not merge at a particular point (**Figure 24**). This may indicate that architectural materials were removed with topsoil in 2005. Topsoil removal may explain the lack of window glass near the nail cluster at STPs 12 and 13. Square nails are sparse in the window glass cluster between 125' and 150' near the Tavern and elsewhere across the project area.

Kitchen ceramics are defined in this report as earthenware vessels used to prepare, serve or display foods. A distinct cluster of kitchen ceramic shards was located in STPs excavated nearest the Tavern (**Figure 26**, p. 25). All shards were fragmented. Some were burned. No shards mended. More pearlware was collected than all other kitchen ceramics combined (**Figure 25**).



**Figure 25**  
Kitchen Ceramics Frequency

Refined earthenwares were imported from England. Creamware was available in America by 1770. Pearlware replaced creamware in popularity by ca. 1780 and was widely available in numerous forms and patterns well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century. After 1828, whiteware became the dominant ceramic type purchased in the United States. Everyday plates, cups, saucers, bowls, teapots and other items were made from these refined earthenwares (Hume 1970: 128-132). Their frequency near the Brentsville Tavern is to be expected (**Figure 27**, p. 25).



**Figure 26**  
Kitchen Ceramics Distribution



**Figure 27**  
Sample of Kitchen Ceramics Excavated  
From this Phase I Project Area

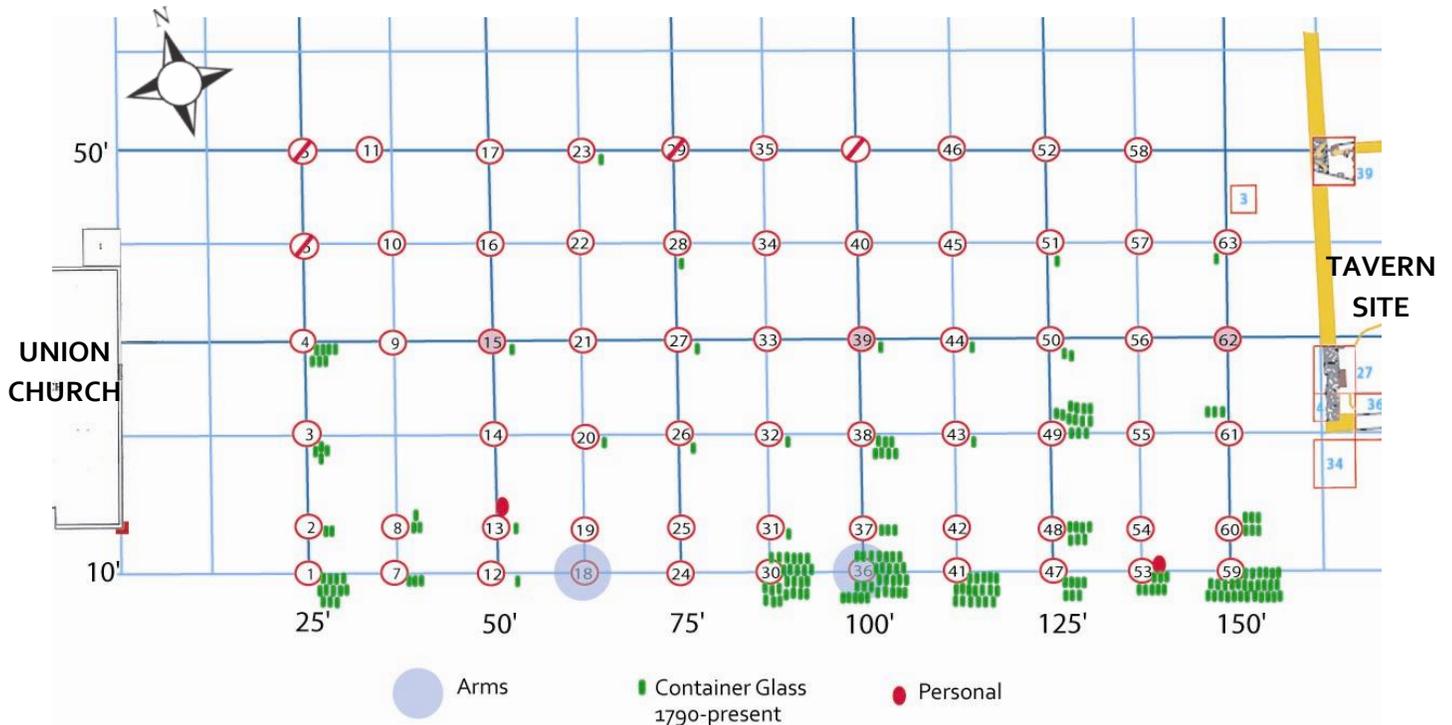


**Figure 28**  
Bayonet Tip and Fired, Impacted  
Three-Ring Minie Ball

Most container glass collected within the project area was 20<sup>th</sup>-century clear container or lamp glass. 52% of container glass fragments were colorless glass post-dating 1915. Three fragments were “7-Up” green produced after 1940. 13% of the fragments were solarized amethyst glass produced after 1880. 3% were milk glass post-dating 1869. 18% of the fragments were aqua container glass made after 1850 and largely used for medicine bottles. 11% of fragments were amber in color, a characteristic of liquor produced after 1850. 3% of fragments were dark olive in color produced after ca. 1790.

Most container glass fragments were excavated in STPs nearest to Bristow Road at N10 (**Figure 29**, p. 26). These fragments concentrated in the southeast corner of the project area in STPs nearest the Tavern. 19<sup>th</sup>- and 20<sup>th</sup>-century glass fragments were mixed and dispersed, suggesting the presence of a midden. Archaeologists excavated two personal artifacts, each a glass button. One button was collected near the Tavern site. The other button was located in STP 13 where a high concentration of iron artifacts occurred.

One bayonet tip (length 4.5”) and one fired and impacted three-ring Minie ball were collected from STPs at 10N along Bristow Road. These arms are likely associated with Federal and Confederate troops who moved through Brentsville during the American Civil War, particularly in October 1863 during the nearby Battle of Bristoe Station (**Figure 28**).



**Figure 29**  
Distributions of Arms, Container Glass and Personal Items

## INTERPRETATION

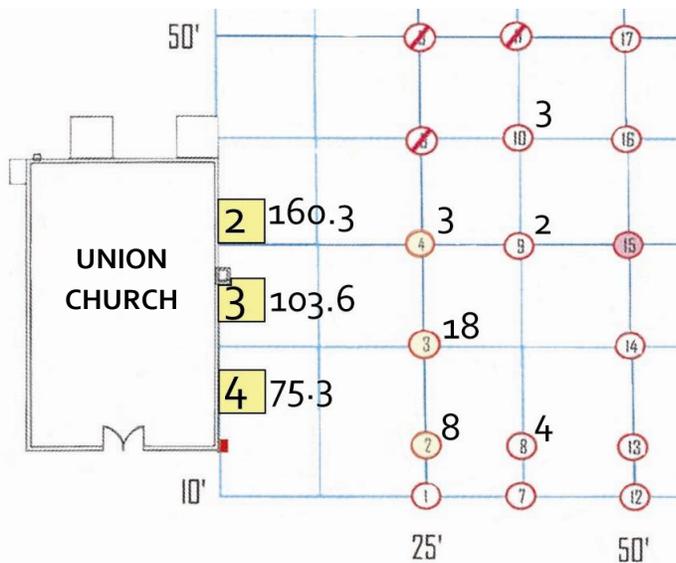
The artifact types recovered during the 2005-2006 Phase I survey were identical to artifact types identified during archaeological investigations previously undertaken within the Phase I project area. While late-20<sup>th</sup>-century artifacts were recovered over the entire project area, the majority of diagnostic artifacts collected date to the late 18<sup>th</sup> century through the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. The three features identified during the Phase I survey were most likely postholes. Artifacts clustered within the project area in a pattern that defines two High Probability Zones and one Moderate Probability Zone. **High Probability Zone 1** has potential for being the location of E. E. Meredith's law office. **High Probability Zone 2** contains a midden associated with the Tavern. An extension of the midden and other features may exist between the eastern boundary of **High Probability Zone 2** and the Tavern foundation excavated in 2004. One **Moderate Probability Zone** is delineated in the northern third of the project area where early 19<sup>th</sup>-century outhouses were likely present. Each Probability Zone may be interpreted as an area where activities occurred or resources existed that relate directly to the known history of the area. Artifacts excavated outside these High and Moderate Probability Zones during previous archaeological investigations and the Phase I investigation contribute to the interpretation of the archaeological resources within the Phase I project area.

In 1999, CHP excavated three STPs within the 2005-2006 Phase I project area (**Figure 12**, p. 12). The artifact numbers and types obtained from each of these STPs are consistent with the artifact numbers and types recovered during the 2005 STP survey. In 2005, archaeologists dug STPs in two of the three locations where CHP had excavated STPs in 1999. The first of CHP's STPs was #2 on Transect 3 in the same location as STP 15 excavated in 2005 (N25/E50). While CHP identified no artifacts or features in 1999 (Klein 2001:-2-), archaeologists working in 2005 recovered one pearlware body fragment (1775-1828), one olive/amber bottle fragment (1790-1900) and one piece of clinker/slag.

The second of CHP's STPs within the 2005-2006 project area was #2 on Transect 4. This location was excavated as STP 39 in 2005. CHP recovered 12 artifacts: one brick fragment, four pearlware body fragments (1779-1820), 1 creamware body fragment (1768-1820), one clear bottle glass fragment, two green bottle glass fragments, two siltstone fragments, and one fragment of worked quartz cobble (Klein 2001:-2-). In 2005, 13 artifacts came from STP 39, including pearlware, colorless glass (1915-present), window glass, brick, coal, and one oyster shell—one of only two faunal elements excavated in 2005-2006. Creamware and pearlware were the only types of earthenwares taken from this location, thus confirming that some activity and/or resource occurred in the east side of the project area as early as 1768. The presence of pearlware in both STPs indicates some activity and/or resource occurred until at least 1820. Colorless glass in this location affirms use of the area beyond 1915. Research shows that the area was not occupied as late as 1915. Therefore, discarded bottles and other refuse likely collected in this and other locations within the project area.

A comparison between the artifact densities of units excavated around the Union Church foundation in 2001 to those recovered from nearby STPs in 2005 yields additional information. Klein suggested that an antebellum building or refuse dump may have existed on the site where the Union Church was built in the early 1870s (Klein 2002:16). The recovery of a significant amount of pearlware throughout the area also supports this assertion. The recovery of slag from the units indicates that some type of ironworking occurred on the site, possibly associated with a blacksmith operating near the tavern (Klein 2002:53). Window glass, wall tiles, plastic and other 20<sup>th</sup>-century materials represent renovations to the Church during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

CHP placed Units 2, 3 and 4 along the east wall of the Union Church. Each 5' x 5' unit was excavated to a depth of approximately 1.2' to subsoil (Klein 2002: Figure 8). STPs 2, 3 and 4 were excavated within 25' of the Church wall and as close as 17' from the eastern edges of CHP's units. The STPs average depth was 1.3', a depth comparable to the Unit 2, 3 and 4 depths. The difference between the numbers of artifacts excavated per square foot in the units versus in the STPs demonstrates that activity decreased



**Figure 30**

Artifact Counts per Square Foot

The total artifact counts were, in Unit 2: 4,007;  
in Unit 3: 2,591 and in Unit 4: 1,882.

considerably within just a few feet from the Church foundation. Artifact counts per square foot continued to be low in STPs 8, 9 and 10 (Figure 30, p. 27) and did not significantly increase for 100', where STPs 47-50 were placed at approximately 34' from the tavern's west wall.

Data collected from STP38 concurred with that resulting from the excavation of Unit 10 in 2004 (Figure 15, p. 15). The majority of artifacts found in both Unit 10 and STP 38 came from Level B/Stratum II. Four artifacts were collected from Unit 10, Level C while no artifacts were present in STP 38, Stratum III.

Unit 10 was located in the section of the 2005-2006 project area where Stratum I soils were shallower than elsewhere in the project area (Figure 18, p. 19) The depth of Level A in Unit 10 was .45'. In STP 38, Stratum I was .2' deep. While a shallow dark brown, clay loam topsoil (7.5YR 3/3) was present in all STPs dug

east of the 100' line, little or no such stratum or topsoil remained in STPs excavated west of 100'. This discrepancy in Level A/Stratum I soil depths and characteristics may be due in part to natural erosion and soil compaction following tree and brush removal that occurred after June 14, 2004, when Unit 10 was closed and January 6, 2006 when STP 38 was excavated. During that interim period, greenbrier, poison ivy, creeping vine, locust trees and other invasive foliage overtook the area. To make Brentsville Courthouse Historic Centre an accessible and manageable historic site, the Historic Preservation Division cleared the foliage from the area while taking all precautions to avoid a negative impact on the known and unknown archaeological resources. Natural soil erosion and compaction that occurred may have contributed to Stratum I being truncated. Artifact density within the western half of the project area was far less than the artifact density within the eastern half of the project area in the vicinity of the Tavern site. This difference may be expected since only non-domestic and non-industrial structures (the Law Office and outhouses) stood within the project area. (Figure 19, p. 20).

## HIGH AND MODERATE PROBABILITY ZONES

**High Probability Zone 1 (Figure 31, p. 29)** has potential for being the location of E. E. Meredith's law office. A deed dated May 1, 1870 records that attorney James F. Clark leased a lot "...the space of twelve feet square of the said Godwin's lot in the Town of Brentsville and on that portion of the lot fronting the property of Joseph B. Reid...on the main thoroughfare of said Brentsville Village...erection by the same James F. Clark at once an office on said twelve square feet of ground..." Joseph B. Reid owned Lot 18. In **Figure 32** (p. 31), the area between the two green dashed lines depicts the width of Joseph B. Reid's lot extended across Main Street into the Phase I project area. The red rectangle marks High Probability Zone 1. High Probability Zone 1 is 25.0' (E/W) by 24.5' (N/S) and contains 612.5 ft<sup>2</sup>. High Probability Zone 1 corners are located at 1) S12.5/E37.5; 2) N12.5/E37.5; 3) N12.5/E62.5; and 4) S12.5/E62.5. Zone 1 is centered on the location of STP13 (No/E50).

The concentration of architectural iron artifacts recovered from STPs 13 and 14 and the 12' x 12' dimensions of the 1870 office determine the size of High Probability Zone 1. STPs 12 and 13 could lie within any section of the 12' x 12' office location. Therefore, High Probability Zone 1 extends outward from STP13 (No/E50) for 12.5' in all cardinal directions to increase the probability of identifying the entire 12' x 12' office footprint.

The construction of the office's foundation is unknown. Post in ground, sill on ground, sill on stone or brick foundation, or sill on stone or brick piers are all possible construction techniques. Each type of foundation has unique features that could be identified archaeologically if the foundation site is undisturbed. These features may be ephemeral and visible only at subsoil. A metal detector survey of High Probability Zone 1 is recommended to delineate the concentration of nails and other iron artifacts associated with the 1870 office building.

**High Probability Zone 2 (Figure 32, p. 31)** contains a sheet midden associated with the Tavern. The red rectangle seen in Figure 33 depicts High Probability Zone 2. This Zone is 41.25' (E/W) by 43.75' (N/S) and contains 1,804 ft<sup>2</sup>. High Probability Zone 2 corners are located at 1) S12.5/E118.75; 2) N31.25/E118.75; 3) N31.25/E160; and 4) S12.5/E160 and includes the sites of STPs 47-50, 50-62, 62-59 and 59-47.

The numbers of artifacts excavated from STPs 47-50, 50-62, 62-59 and 59-47 was higher than the numbers of artifacts collected from STPs surrounding High Probability Zone 2 (**Appendix A: Artifact Catalog**). The majority of diagnostic artifacts were manufactured before 1870. Creamware, pearlware, whiteware and hard paste porcelain were the only ceramics found within the Zone. STPs also contained post-1915 colorless glass, indicating early-20<sup>th</sup>-century refuse deposition in the area. Three mammal bone fragments (STP47) and four oyster shell fragments (STP55) were excavated within Zone 2. Faunal

elements represent a very small percentage of objects collected from within Zone 2 and from the entire Phase I project area. The lack of faunal remains suggests that butchering activities and food waste disposal occurred in areas outside the Phase I project area, most likely in the kitchen outbuilding behind the Tavern (Lindtveit 2005:99).

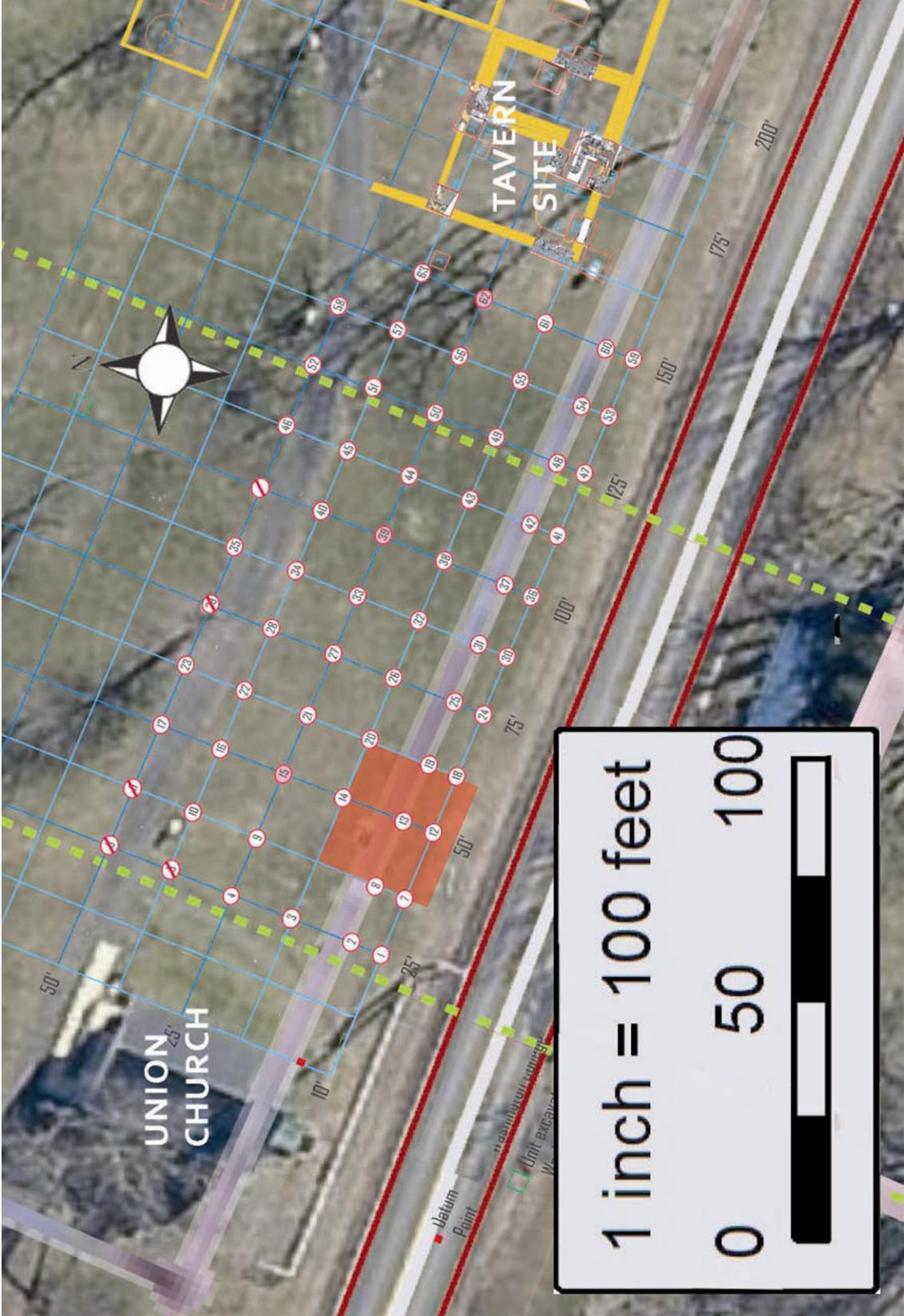


Figure 31  
High Probability Zone 1  
E. E. Meredith Law Office Site

High Probability Zone 2 is located directly adjacent to the Tavern's southwest corner, the foundation of which archaeologists identified in 2004. At that time, archaeologists reported that stone blocks forming the Tavern's southwest foundation corner were wider than those in other sections of the Tavern's foundation. They suggested that the wider foundation might represent a later building phase, possibly an addition to the original Tavern building. They found no evidence of a cellar in the southwest section of the Tavern (Lindtveit 2005:25), nor did they suggest a particular function or activity associated with that portion of the building. Lindtveit et al. did not include the 1915 "Rambler" photograph of the Tavern (**Figure 7**, p. 8) in their interpretation of the site, most likely because they were not aware that the photograph existed. It is difficult to determine from the photograph whether the southwest section of the Tavern building is an addition to the portion of the building visible east of the porch. The sheet midden comprising High Probability Zone 2 includes the open area abutting the Tavern's west wall as seen in the photograph's foreground.

**Moderate Probability Zone 1** (**Figure 33**, p. 32) encompasses the area where evidence of three early-19<sup>th</sup>-century outhouses may exist. While the Phase I archaeological investigation did not produce artifacts to suggest the presence of outhouses in this location, the inclusion of three buildings identified as "Outhouses" in Thomas Nelson's 1822 Plat of the Brentsville Jail Prison Bounds (**Figure 3**, p. 4) is ample justification for identifying Moderate Probability Zone 1. The orange rectangle seen in **Figure 34** depicts Moderate Probability Zone 1. This Zone is 137.5' (E/W) by 42' (N/S) and contains 5,775 ft<sup>2</sup>. Medium Probability Zone 1 corners are located at 1) N12.5/E150; 2) N62.5/E12.5; 3) N62.5/E150; and 4) S62.5/E150 and includes the sites of STPs 3-4; 9-10; 14-17; 20-23; 26-29; 32-35; 38-40; 43-46; 49-52; 55-58; and 61-63.

In **Figure 33** (p. 32), a detail from Nelson's plat is placed over a map of the Phase I project area. On the plat, the locations of the three Outhouses, the Tavern and the Clerk's Office\*, Courthouse\* and Jail\* (\*not included in **Figure 34**) are approximate, are not in scale, and do not clearly align with the actual locations of the buildings. However, the Jail Prison Bounds do align with present-day lots. Although the scale and locations of the three outhouses depicted on Nelson's plat are not exact, they do fall within this Phase I project area.

It is highly likely that the three outhouses were abandoned and filled before Clark's office and the Union Church were constructed in 1870-1874. George W. Goodwin would have had difficulty leasing or selling lots so close to active outhouses. Neither the deed for Clark's lease nor the deed for the Union Church trustees' purchase mentions outhouses. The three outhouses depicted on Nelson's plat were presumably in use in 1822 and served the Tavern, the Clerk's Office, and the Courthouse. The Jail would have had a separate outhouse. Over time, new outhouses were likely to have been excavated at other locations on the Tavern Lot and/or the Public Lot and the older outhouses abandoned and backfilled. Typically, an outhouse's wooden superstructure (sitting box and shed) was demolished and the debris thrown down the shaft. The shaft was then capped with non-organic layers such as coal ash and lime. Finally, workers dumped clean soil to completely fill the shaft (Wheeler 2000: 12).

Regarding the possible dimensions of an outhouse feature, Maplewood (44AM0057) represents the archeological remnants of a circa 1743 ordinary in Amelia County, Virginia. One feature was a privy that measured approximately 8 feet by 3 feet (Sipe 2012:255).

The use of ground-penetrating radar to locate consecutive anomalies that may locate abandoned and filled outhouse shafts. A closely monitored backhoe operator could remove topsoil and subsoil to expose the first layer of shaft fill. Excavation would determine whether or not a filled shaft is present if the shaft is unlined or lined with wood or stone. Further excavation would identify each layer's composition and contents.

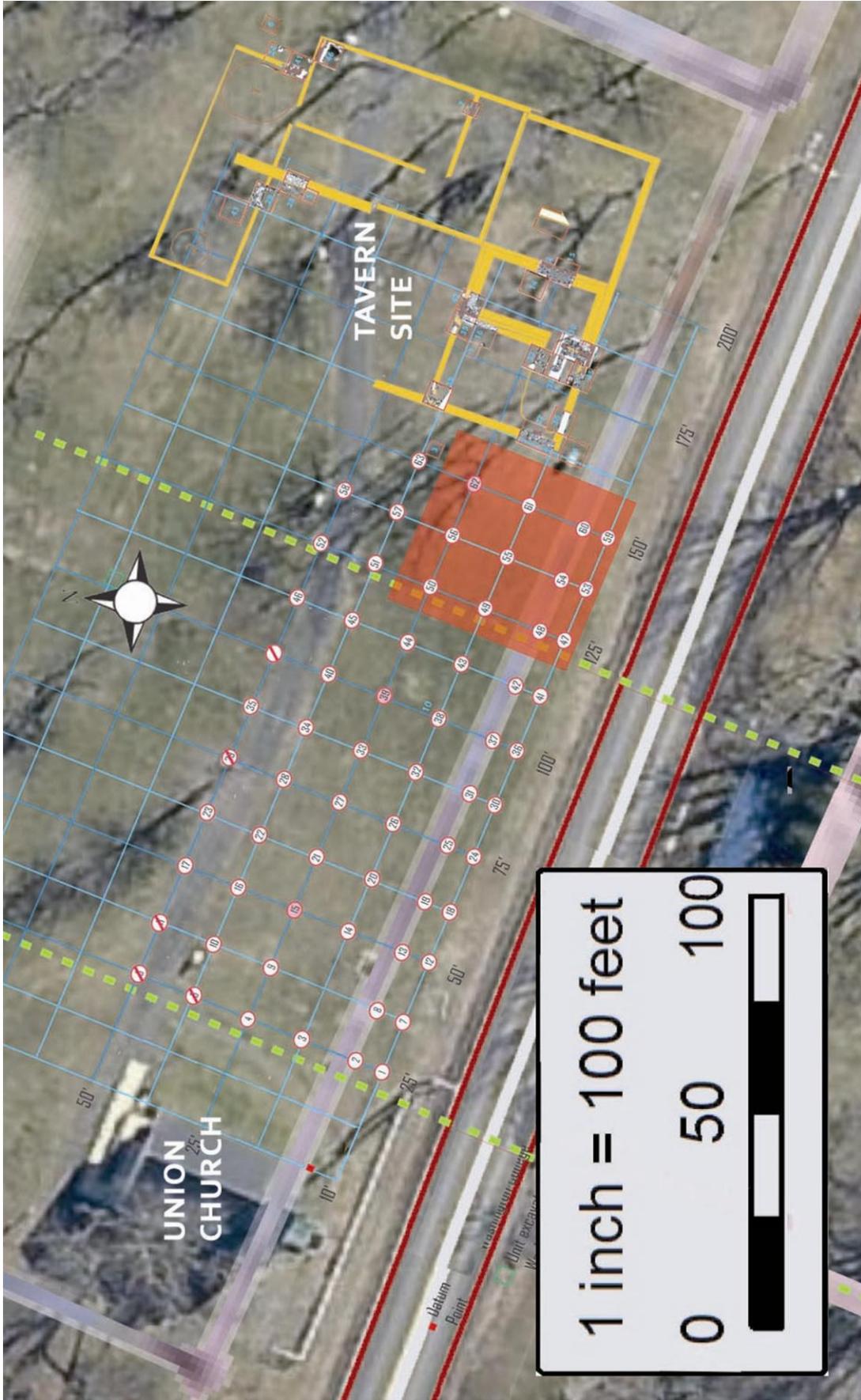
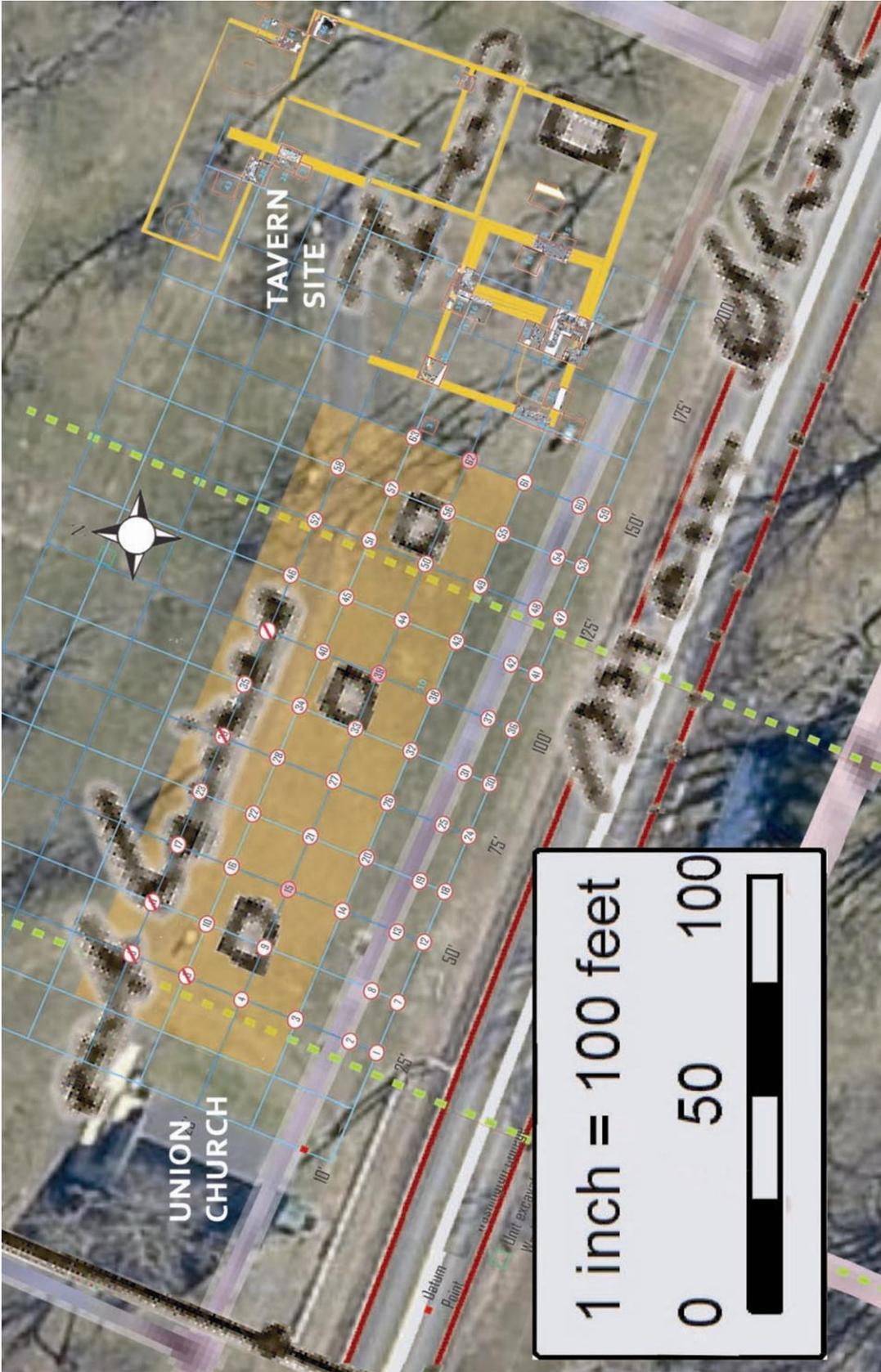


Figure 32  
 High Probability Zone 2  
 Tavern Sheet Midden



**Figure 33**  
 Moderate Probability Zone 1  
 Potential Location of Three Early-19<sup>th</sup>-Century Outhouses

## CONCLUSION

This Phase I Archaeological Investigation of the E. E. Meredith Law Office occurred between December 2005 and February 2006. The purposes for this investigation were 1) to determine whether a proposed road cut northward from Brentsville road between the Union Church and the Tavern archaeology site would impact any subsurface resources; and 2) to seek evidence of a structure occupied by attorney Elisha E. Meredith from ca. 1883 through 1894. This Phase I project area extended to within 12 feet of the 1822 Tavern's subsurface western wall, presenting the possibility of additional features or activity areas associated with the Tavern site might be identified. Data collected during this archaeological investigation concurs with data resulting from three previous archaeological investigations of Brentsville Courthouse Historic Centre.

Historical research presented information about the Meredith office construction date and use. Research also identified other resources that could exist within the project area. This investigation identified three Probability Zones that merit further archaeological research. **High Probability Zone 1** has potential for being the location of E. E. Meredith's law office. **High Probability Zone 2** contains a sheet midden associated with the Tavern. **Moderate Probability Zone 1** encompasses the area where evidence of three early-19<sup>th</sup>-century outhouses may exist. No subsurface resources were identified in the location of a proposed road cut northward from Brentsville road between the Union Church.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Cultural resources are present within this Phase I project area. The Prince William County Historic Preservation Division has no plans to disturb or impact these resources. However, should any need to compromise any location within this Phase I project area arise, particularly within the three Probability Zones identified in this report, all activity should be as minimally invasive as possible and closely monitored by a qualified archaeologist who is familiar with the contents of this report. Should the interpretation of the site expand in the future, targeted archaeological research within this Phase I project area would yield important information that would contribute to interpretative efforts at Brentsville Courthouse Historic Centre.

**High Probability Zone 1** has potential for being the location of E. E. Meredith's law office. The concentration of architectural iron artifacts recovered from STPs 13 and 14 and the 12' x 12' dimensions of the 1870 office determine the size of High Probability Zone 1. Features associated with the building's foundation may be ephemeral and visible only at subsoil. A metal detector survey of High Probability Zone 1 is recommended to delineate the concentration of nails and other iron artifacts associated with the 1870 office building.

**High Probability Zone 2** contains a sheet midden associated with the Tavern. High Probability Zone 2 is located adjacent to the Tavern's southwest corner, the foundation of which archaeologists identified in 2004. A qualified archaeologist should closely monitor any ground disturbance within this Zone.

**Moderate Probability Zone 1** contains the area where evidence of three early-19<sup>th</sup>-century outhouses may exist. When Nelson's 1822 Plat of the Brentsville Prison Bounds is laid over a map of this Phase I project area, three buildings identified as "Outhouses" in Nelson's Plat fall within Moderate Probability Zone 1. If ground within Moderate Probability Zone 1 must be disturbed or if archaeological research within the Zone occurs, ground-penetrating radar may locate consecutive anomalies that could be abandoned and filled outhouse shafts. A closely monitored Grade-All operator could remove topsoil and subsoil to expose the first layer of shaft fill. Subsequent excavations would identify each fill layer's composition and contents.

## ATTRIBUTIONS

<b>Figure 5</b>	Collection of the U.S. House of Representatives .....	6
<b>Figure 7</b>	Courtesy of the Washington D. C. Historical Society .....	8
<b>Figure 8</b>	Prince William County Historic Preservation Division.....	9
<b>Figure 9</b>	Prince William County Department of Information Technology, GIS, Aerial Photograph ....	10
<b>Figure 10</b>	Courtesy of Patricia (Keys) Blake. The picture shows Ruth Jean Keys, Mattie Catherine Whetzel and Mammie Lee Joyce Keys (Jean's sister) standing in the Whetzel driveway in June 1944.....	10
<b>Figure 11</b>	Prince William County Department of Information Technology, GIS, Aerial Photographs...	11
<b>Figure 13</b>	Courtesy of Morgan Breeden .....	13

## REFERENCES

- 1872 *Alexandria Gazette*, Alexandria, VA. August 4.
- 1900 *Alexandria Gazette*, Alexandria, VA. July 30.
- 1839 *Commissioner of Revenue Table of Brentsville Town Lots 1824 - 1839*. Transcribed by Ronald R. Turner, Manassas, VA.
- 1879 *Commissioner of Revenue Table of Brentsville Town Lots 1860 – 1879*. Transcribed by Ronald R. Turner, Manassas, VA.
- 1899 *Commissioner of Revenue Table of Brentsville Town Lots 1880 – 1899*. Transcribed by Ronald Ray Turner, Manassas, VA.
- 1922 *Commissioner of Revenue Table of Brentsville Town Lots 1900-1922* , Transcribed by Ronald Ray Turner, Manassas, VA.
- 1896 *Harrisburg Telegraph*, Harrisburg, PA. March 6.
- 1969 Hume, Ivor Noël. *A Guide to Artifacts of Colonial America*. Alfred A. Knoph, New York.
- 2005 Lindtveit, Emily and Michael J. Klein. *Archaeological Investigation of the "Tavern Woods", Brentsville Historic Centre, Prince William County, Virginia*. Center for Historic Preservation, Mary Washington College, Fredericksburg, VA.

- 1896 Lyon, James B., ed. *An Illustrated Congressional Manual, The United States Red Book*. Collection of the U.S. House of Representatives.
- 1895 *Manassas Gazette*, Manassas, VA. March 1.
- 1913 *Manassas Journal*, Manassas, VA. Obituary for Jennie Seriepta Dean. May 9.
- 1937 Morton, Susan. *Works Progress Administration of Virginia, Historical Inventory, 'Old Tavern Site', Prince William County*. Survey Report, Library of Virginia, Richmond, VA.
- 1998 Prince William County Historical Commission. *Prince William: A Past to Preserve*. Keith Adam Jacobson, publisher.
- 2001 Klein, Michael J., Cheryl Shepard, Jessika Reuter, Emily Lindtveit, and Josh Duncan. *Historical Research and Archaeological-Reconnaissance at the Brentsville Historic Centre, Prince William County, Virginia*. Report submitted to Prince William County and the Brentsville Historic Trust, Brentsville VA.
- 2002 Klein, Michael, Jennifer Stringfellow, Emily Lindtveit, and Josh Duncan. *Phase II Archaeological Testing of Three Areas at Brentsville Historic Centre, Prince William County, Virginia*. Report submitted to Prince William County, Woodbridge, VA.
- 2003 National Register of Historic Places, Prince William County Courthouse, Manassas, Prince William County, Virginia, National Register #04000039
- 2012 Sipe, Boyd, M.A. and Andres Garzon Oeschle. *An Ordinary on the Potomac Path at Broad Run: Archeological Data Recovery at Site 44LD0729, Loudoun County, Virginia*. Thunderbird Archaeology, Gainesville, VA.
- 2000 Stottman, M. J. "Out of Sight, Out of Mind: Privy Architecture and the Perception of Sanitation. *Historical Archaeology*, Volume 43, Number 1 2000. Society for Historical Archaeology, California, PA.
- 1996 Turner, Ronald R. Obituary for Jennie Seriepta Dean, *Manassas Journal*, May 9, 1913. *Prince William County 1900-1930 Obituaries*. Manassas, VA.
- 1999 Turner, Ronald R. *Prince William County Virginia 1805-1955 Businesses Licenses*. Manassas, VA.
- 2001 Turner, Ronald R. *Prince William County Virginia 1865-1875 Newspaper Transcripts*. Manassas, VA
- 1870 U.S. Population Schedule, Brentsville District, Prince William County, Virginia.
- 1880 U.S. Population Schedule, Brentsville District, Prince William County, Virginia.
- 2000 Wheeler, Kathleen. "View From the Outhouse: What We Can Learn from the Excavation of Privies". *Historical Archaeology*, Volume 43, Number 1 2000. Society for Historical Archaeology, California, PA.

**APPENDIX A: ARTIFACT CATALOG** is presented as a separate document.