

Chapter 3

Research on Block 12, Lots 3 and 4

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History Block 12, Lots 3 and 4

Oral history

Oral histories collected from former New Philadelphia residents and neighbors emphasize the significance of Block 12 for the town. A study prepared in the mid-1960s states

According to one or two present-day citizens of the area, there was, in the early days, a schoolhouse for the colored people near the center of the town of Philadelphia on block 12. It was vacated some time before 1881...The old schoolhouse was purchased by George and Martin Kimbrew who installed a partition, and added a shed room and lived there. The building was later torn down. (Matteson 1964)

Analysis performed during the 2008 NSF-REU season indicates that a Martin “Kinebra” was taxed for a town lot (Block 9 Lot 4) in 1888, but there are no documents associating him with Block 12.

A memory map prepared by former occupant Loraine “Larry” Burdick also challenges the account provided in Matteson, saying, “This was land [that] was adjacent [sic] to the home I grew up in. This was a farm field in the 1930’s. No buildings were present. If a school existed in this block it was removed before the mid 1930’s” (Burdick 1992).

The written record

Deed research¹ reveals that Lots 3 and 4 of Block 12 were always conveyed as a unit, and so the following analysis applies to both lots. The first registered sale of Lots 3 and 4 was directly from “Frank McWorter” to George Conrad and D. Kitright in 1858. These two people purchased 72 lots all across the town during that year from what was in actuality McWorter’s estate, given his death in 1854. In these transactions the second purchaser’s name was spelled in a variety of ways.

Later that same year, Conrad sold the lots to Solomon McWorter (Frank McWorter’s fourth child).² Solomon McWorter held Lots 3 and 4 for ten years before selling to William Marion in

1. The deed information has been transcribed and is available in a searchable format online at <http://www.anthro.illinois.edu/faculty/cfennell/NP/1872plat.html>.

2. All of the lots purchased by Conrad and Kitright from Frank McWorter’s estate went to his son Solomon, with the exception of Block 2.

1868. A year later, Marion sold to Louisa Stewart, who owned the lots until she sold them in 1877 to Louisa McWorter, the widow of Squire McWorter, and owner of all of Block 13, immediately to the west. The next listed transaction was in 1883, in which James McKinney is listed as the seller and George McWorter (Louisa McWorter's son) is the purchaser. In 1897, George McWorter sold to Squire McWorter (presumably his brother, who was named Squire, after their father).

In 1916 Thomas McWorter sold the lots to Shelby McWorter, initiating a series of rapid turnovers involving various members of the McWorter family, a few apparently unrelated individuals, and the Barry State Bank. When the dust settled in 1918, Martha McWorter was listed as selling the lots to Frederick Venicombe. In 1924, she and Shelby McWorter had purchased the lots back from the Barry State Bank. Finally, in 1938, F. Venicombe sold the lots to W.H. Strolheker.

No one with either the Conrad or Kitright surname appears in New Philadelphia for the 1850 Federal Census, or the 1858 Illinois Census. A Daniel Kirtwright/Kartwright appears in the 1860 census as a six-year-old boy living in the household of Abraham and Anny Burkhead. A separate Kirtwright household consisted of a young couple in their 20s and a small child. Given the brevity of the Conrad/Kitright ownership, and its replication across much of the town, it appears unlikely that either one would have had a direct impact on sites located on Lots 3 and 4 of Block 12.

According to the Pike County Tax Collector's Books from 1845 to 1854, all of Block 12 was unimproved, and was owned by Frank McWorter. After his death (1855-1864) the lots were assessed to Solomon McWorter, as administrator of his father's estate (Martin 2010). No improvements³ are noted for Lots 3 and 4 until

Tax records⁴ list both Solomon McWorter and William Marion for Lots 3 and 4 of Block 12 in 1868, while only William Marion was charged in 1869. G.W. Stewart, husband of Louisa Stewart, was listed as the "owner" by 1870. Solomon McWorter was never assessed for improvements to the lots, but the 1868 and 1869 tax lists indicate that William Marion, who owned Lots 3, 4, and 6, was assessed based on a value of \$15.00 for the land and \$70.00 for improvements. It therefore seems probable that the first construction on these lots took place in 1868.

Solomon McWorter does not appear as a resident of New Philadelphia proper in any census.

William Marion owned the lots only briefly in 1868 and 1869, but remained in New Philadelphia long enough to appear in the 1870 Federal Census. He is listed as the head of a farming household that included only his wife Cassie, "keeping house." They were both in their early

3. During those years, no improvements were assessed on any of the lots other than Lot 5 (1859, 1861 and 1862). In 1864, Lot 4 is listed as "improved," but Lot 5 is not, so this may be an error (Martin 2010).

4. Tax records are transcribed and available on-line at <http://www.anthro.illinois.edu/faculty/cfennell/NP/taxmenu.html>

20s and were listed as “white.” He was born in New York; she was a native of Illinois. It does not appear that Marion owned any real estate at the time of the enumeration.

The Stewart family consisted of George (22) and Louisa (21) and their three-month-old daughter, Elena. He was born in Tennessee, while both his wife and daughter were born in Illinois. They are all identified as “mulatto.” The head of household was a minister; no occupation was given for the other members of the family. According to the census George Stewart’s real property was valued at \$250.00 and his personal property at \$150.00, however, it should be noted that Louisa’s name is the one recorded in the deed book.

Neither the Marion nor the Stewart household appears in the 1880 census for New Philadelphia.

It seems that the improvements remained viable following the transfer of ownership from Louisa Stewart to Louisa McWorter, as indicated by the 1878 tax rolls.⁵ However, it is unlikely that she lived there, given the evidence placing her home on Block 13. At the time of the 1870 census, Louisa McWorter (45) was listed as the head of a household that included her grown children, daughter Lucy (24) and son George (21). Lucy was “at home” and George was a “farmer.” Their mother, despite the notation that she possessed \$6,500.00 in real estate was simply “keeping house.” All were identified by the enumerator as “mulatto.” Louisa was born in Kentucky, and her children in Illinois. The information in the 1880 census, after Louisa’s acquisition of Lots 3 and 4 of Block 12 offers much of the same information, but lists George as 28 in that year, and adds Kasiah Clark (Louisa’s widowed mother, 76) and Charles Jones (an “abandoned child,” 15) to the household.

It is possible that Louisa McWorter was simply holding the property for her son George, as he was listed as the taxpayer in 1878, before he became the official owner in 1883. In any event, it is not certain that George ever occupied these lots, given the number of lots he owned elsewhere in the town, and the fact that the 1880 census lists him as a single member of his mother’s household. The lots remained “improved” in the 1888 listing, the last available. We should also note that in 1885, Lots 3 and 4 became the edge of town, as the lots on the eastern side of town were removed from the tax rolls -- including Block 12 Lots 1 and 2.

In summary, Lots 3 and 4 of Block 12 were unimproved until ca. 1868 and the only owners likely to have resided on the lots were the Marion and Stewart households (1868-1877). Available records do not indicate if these lots were leased to other occupants after 1877, but do suggest that the improvements remained at least until 1888. However, any structures had been razed, and the land returned to farm fields, by the 1930s.

5. George McWorter is listed as the owner in that document.

Table 3.1. Block 12 Lots 3 & 4

<u>DATE</u>	<u>SELLER LAST</u>	<u>FIRST</u>	<u>CO- SELLER LAST</u>	<u>FIRST</u>	<u>PURCHASER LAST</u>	<u>FIRST</u>	<u>CO- PURCHASER LAST</u>	<u>FIRST</u>	<u>PAGE</u>	<u>LINE #</u>
1858	McWorter	Frank			Conrad	George	Kirtright	D.	57	4
1858	Conrad	George			McWorter	Solomon			57	5
1868	McWorter	Solomon			Marion	William			57	7
1869	Marion	William			Stewart	Louisa			57	6
1877	Stewart	Louisa			McWorter	Louisa			57	8
1883	McKinney	James			McWorter	George			57	13
1897	McWorter	George			McWorter	Squire			57	14
1916	McWorter	Thomas			McWorter	Shelby			57	15
1916	Gibbens	G. W.			McWorter	Martha	McWorter	Shelby	57	16
1916	McWorter	Martha	McWorter	Shelby	BSB				57	17
1917	McWorter	Shelby			Jones	Oliver			57	18
1917	McWorter	Martha			BSB				57	19
1918	McWorter	Martha			Venicombe	Frederick			57	20
1924	BSB				McWorter	Martha	McWorter	S.	57	21
1938	Venicombe	F.			Strolheker	W. H.			57	22

Table 3.2. Summary of Block 12 Lots 3&4 Hadley Township Tax Assessments

Year	Name Assessed	Owner	Lot(s)	Unimproved Lots	Value of Improvements	Value of Improved Lots	Value of Unimproved Lots	Total Value
1867	S. McWorter	-	1,2,3,4,5	-	\$0.00	-	\$16.00	\$16.00
1868	-	W.H. Marion	3,4,6	-	\$70.00	\$15.00	\$0.00	\$85.00
1869	W.H. Marion	-	3,4,6	-	\$70.00	\$15.00	\$0.00	\$85.00
1870	W.H. Marion	G.W. Stewart	3,4,6	-	\$50.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$50.00
1871	G.W. Stewart	-	3,4,6	-	\$50.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$50.00
1872	G.W. Stewart	-	3,4,6	-	\$50.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$50.00
1875	G.W. Stewart	-	3,4,6	-	-	\$200.00	\$0.00	\$200.00 ⁶
1878	George McWorter	-	3,4,6	-	-	\$75.00	\$0.00	\$75.00
1883	Geo. McWorter	-	3,4,5,6	-	-	\$85.00	\$0.00	\$85.00
1888	Geo. McWorter	-	3,4,5,6	4	-	\$40.00	\$0.00	\$40.00

6. This sharp jump in property value appears to be the result of inflation or changes in the assessment formula, rather than additional development of the lot, as similar changes appear simultaneously in other parts of the town.

Table 3.3. Household composition for owners of Block 12 Lots 3&4

1870 Census								
<u>Name</u>	<u>First name</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>Race</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Real Estate Value</u>	<u>Personal Property Value</u>	<u>Origin</u>
Marion	Wm	25	male	white	Farmer		100	New York
	Cassie	20	female	white	Keeping house			Illinois
Stewart	George	22	male	mulatto	Minister	250	150	Tennessee
	Louisa	21	female	mulatto	-			Illinois
	Elena	3 mos.	female	mulatto	-			Illinois
1880 Census								
<u>Name</u>	<u>First</u>	<u>Race</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Relation</u>	<u>Marital</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Origin</u>
McWorter	Louise	mulatto	female	54	Head	Widow	Keeping house	Kentucky
	Lucy J.	mulatto	female	34	Daughter	Single	At home	Illinois
	George	mulatto	male	28	Son	Single	Farm laborer	Illinois
Clark	Kasihah	mulatto	female	76	Mother	Widow	Boarding	Kentucky
Jones	Charles W.	mulatto	male	15	Abandoned child	Single	Laborer	Missouri

Archaeology on Block 12

Lot 3

No surface survey took place on either Lot 3 or 4 of Block 12 during the initial phase of field research in 2002-2003, as landowner permission could not be obtained (Gwaltney 2004). Likewise geophysical investigations commenced only with the 2010 field season, with results forthcoming (Carlson-Drexler pers. com. 2010). Preliminary geophysical findings are presented in Chapter 2: Surveys, Geophysical Methods, Soil Core Sampling, and Shovel Test Pits.

Archaeologists initiated a shovel test survey of Lot 3 in 2005, when it became available for examination. The density of the vegetation and low surface visibility ruled out surface collection as a method for identifying artifact scatters (Fennell 2006). The shovel test pits (STPs) were 1 ft. in diameter and sediments were removed in arbitrary levels of 0.5 ft. Screening through one-quarter inch mesh allowed for the recovery of artifacts as well as floral and faunal specimens. Excavators placed the STPs at 20 foot intervals across Lots 1-6 of Block 12 as well as portions of Block 19.

The 16 STPs placed on Lot 3 were located in the northern portion of the lot (Figure 3.1). Only one STP was “negative,” containing no artifacts at all. Test pits with significant numbers of both architectural artifacts and nineteenth-century ceramics clustered along the northern and western edges of the lot.

In these STPs (4-7, 15-18), excavators encountered subsoil at a slightly deeper level below the surface (around 1.5-2 ft.) than other STPs on the lot. Every one of these STPs contained brick, and most contained either cut nails or window glass. Such finds may indicate a structure in the vicinity. The other artifacts included whiteware, Bennington/Rockingham earthenware, and machine molded bottle glass. The manufacturing date ranges for these artifacts, along with the cut nails, point to an occupation date range in the mid- to late-nineteenth century. This range correlates with what the written record suggests about when the lots may have first been occupied (ca. 1860s).

During the 2010 season, excavators decided to place units in an area delimited by STPs 4, 5, 15, and 16. This decision was based on the artifact content, stratigraphic profile, and proximity of these STPs to Main Street, a major thoroughfare in New Philadelphia. The precise location of the two Excavation Units (EUs) within this area was also selected with the use of dowsing rods, in the form of two thin, high tensile steel pins, held in equipoise and parallel to one another while walking across the target area. Atypical movement of the pins toward one another while in motion over the ground surface was interpreted as an indication of an in-ground anomaly. This dowsing technique was implemented and interpreted by archaeologist Eric Deetz, based on his decades of experience in field work and a desire to experiment with this technique in a setting with comparative data sets available. Such dowsing approaches have been viewed as controversial by some commentators and yet have also proven effective in the identification of archaeological features for others (Noël Hume 1969:37-40). The excavators at New Philadelphia viewed this as an opportunity to further test such methods.

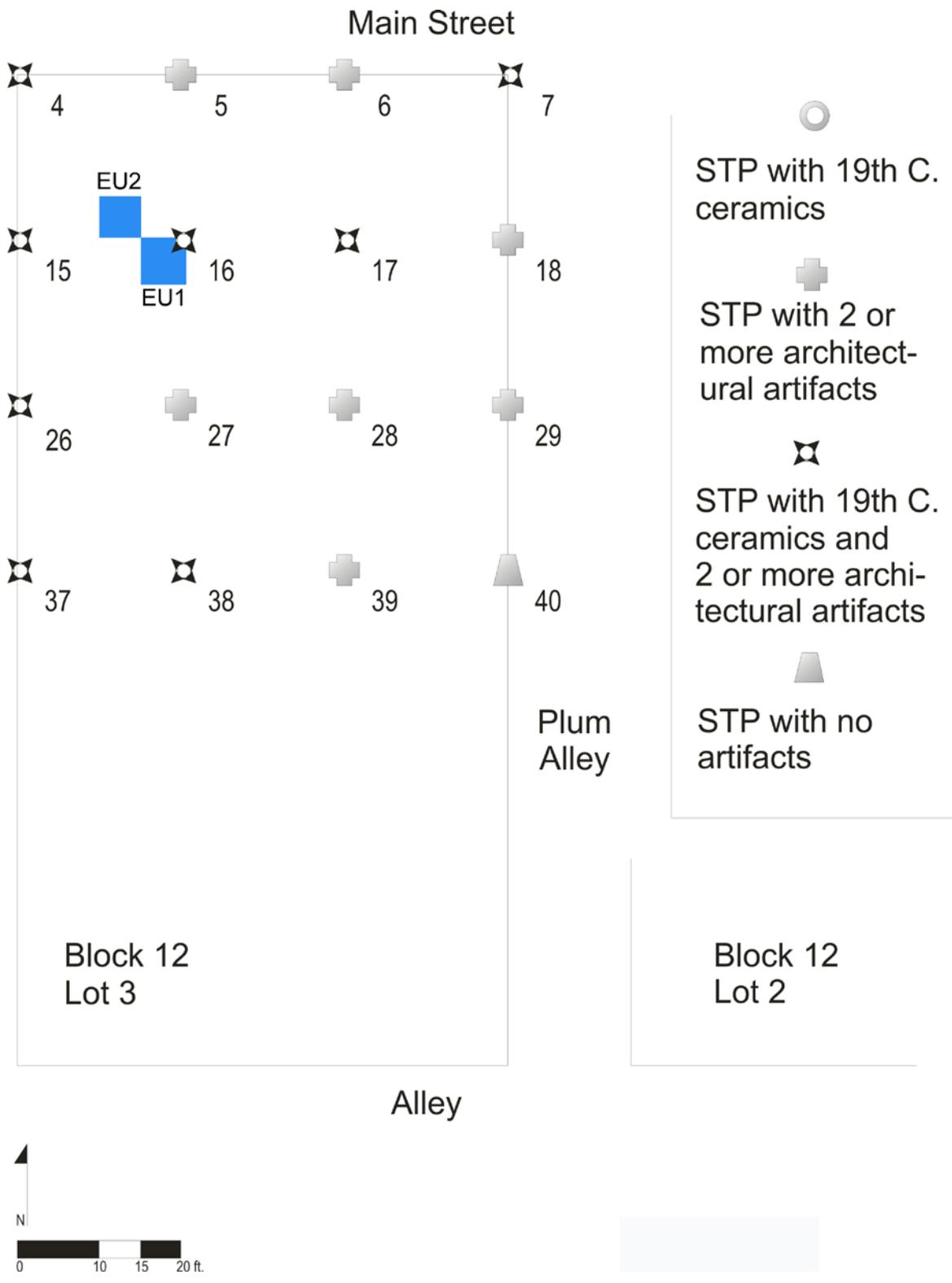


Figure 3.1. 2005 Shovel test pit survey data and location of 2010 EU1 and EU2 in Block 12, Lot 3. Illustration by C. Fennell.

The northwest corner of EU 1 is located 20 ft. south and 15 ft. east of the northwest corner of Block 12 Lot 3. Excavation Unit 2 adjoins EU 1. The northwest corner of EU 2 is located 15 ft. south and 10 ft. east of the northwest corner of Block 12 Lot 3. The disturbance indicated by the dowsing rods was located at the center of EU 2 and extending towards the south, beyond the excavated area.

We have reason to speculate that any dwelling or other substantial building on Block 12 was located on Lot 3, given the notation in the 1888 tax assessment records indicating that Lot 4 was unimproved, while the combined parcel retained significant value.

Excavators began work in EUs 1 and 2 with the removal of the plowzone in arbitrary levels of 0.5 ft. The plowzone was generally a 10YR 3/2 (very dark grayish brown) sandy loam. Artifacts were similar to those encountered during the STP survey: architectural fragments and nineteenth-century ceramics and bottle glass.

Excavation Units 1 and 2 are located at the foot of a moderate slope, and so received significant run-off and seepage from frequent rains. The constant soaking meant that excavation could not proceed without likely damage to any intact deposits below the plowzone, so after four weeks of trying, the units were abandoned, shortly after commencing excavation of the second arbitrary level of plowzone, A2 (Figure 3.2). Our full exploration of these excavation units and an assessment of the results of our experimentation with dowsing in comparison with other data sets will have to await a future field season.



Figure 3.2. Water-filled excavation units 1 and 2 in Block 12, Lot 3. Photo by Anna Agbe-Davies.

Architectural fragments (brick, mortar, window glass, nails) predominated over other household artifacts, such as container glass and ceramics. Other than an anomalous piece of plastic, the artifacts point to an occupation date in the second half of the 19th century, with cut nails, bottle glass with embossed lettering, and whiteware fragments (including one transfer printed shard). The artifacts from the second arbitrary level of the plowzone (A2) were much the same, with the addition of a fragment of a glass jar lid liner, confirming the mid-late 19th century date.

Given the very limited nature of exploration on Lot 3, further interpretation of the finds will be postponed until the excavation units can be completed.

Lot 4

As noted above, in the discussion of Block 12 Lot 3, there was no surface collection survey of Block 12 Lot 4 in 2002-2003, nor was there any geophysical survey until the present field season (2010). A shovel test pit (STP) survey undertaken in 2005 provided the information necessary to plan the placement of excavation units (EU) on Lot 4.

Archaeologists were interested in exploring deposits along Ann Street, given that so much prior attention had been directed toward features along the principal thoroughfares of the town (Broad and Main). The two most promising STPs near Ann Street proved to be STPs 46 and 48, each with concentrations of architectural fragments and nineteenth-century ceramics (Figure 3.3).

The precise location of EU 1 was established by selecting an area between these two STPs, but slightly closer to Ann St. The northwest corner of EU 1 is 25 ft. north and 15 ft. east of the southwest corner of Lot 4, Block 12.

Excavators removed the plowzone in three arbitrary levels of 0.5 ft. each. The sediment was a 10YR 3/2 (very dark grayish brown) sandy loam that contained large numbers of architectural and household artifacts.

Subsoil was identified at approximately 1.25 ft. below the surface, but Level A3 was excavated to a full 0.5 ft. in order to ensure that the excavators were indeed in sterile soil. The transition to subsoil was much more apparent in the sidewalls of the excavation unit, particularly after a number of soaking rains. No features were identified in EU 1.

The artifacts recovered were consistent with those found during the shovel test survey as reported in Fennell (2006). Architectural fragments such as brick, mortar, window glass, and nails were found in A1, A2, and A3. The nails were either cut or unidentifiable, suggesting a 19th century date for construction. Ceramics included tablewares and storage vessels, predominantly whiteware and assorted coarse stonewares, again, suggesting a 19th century

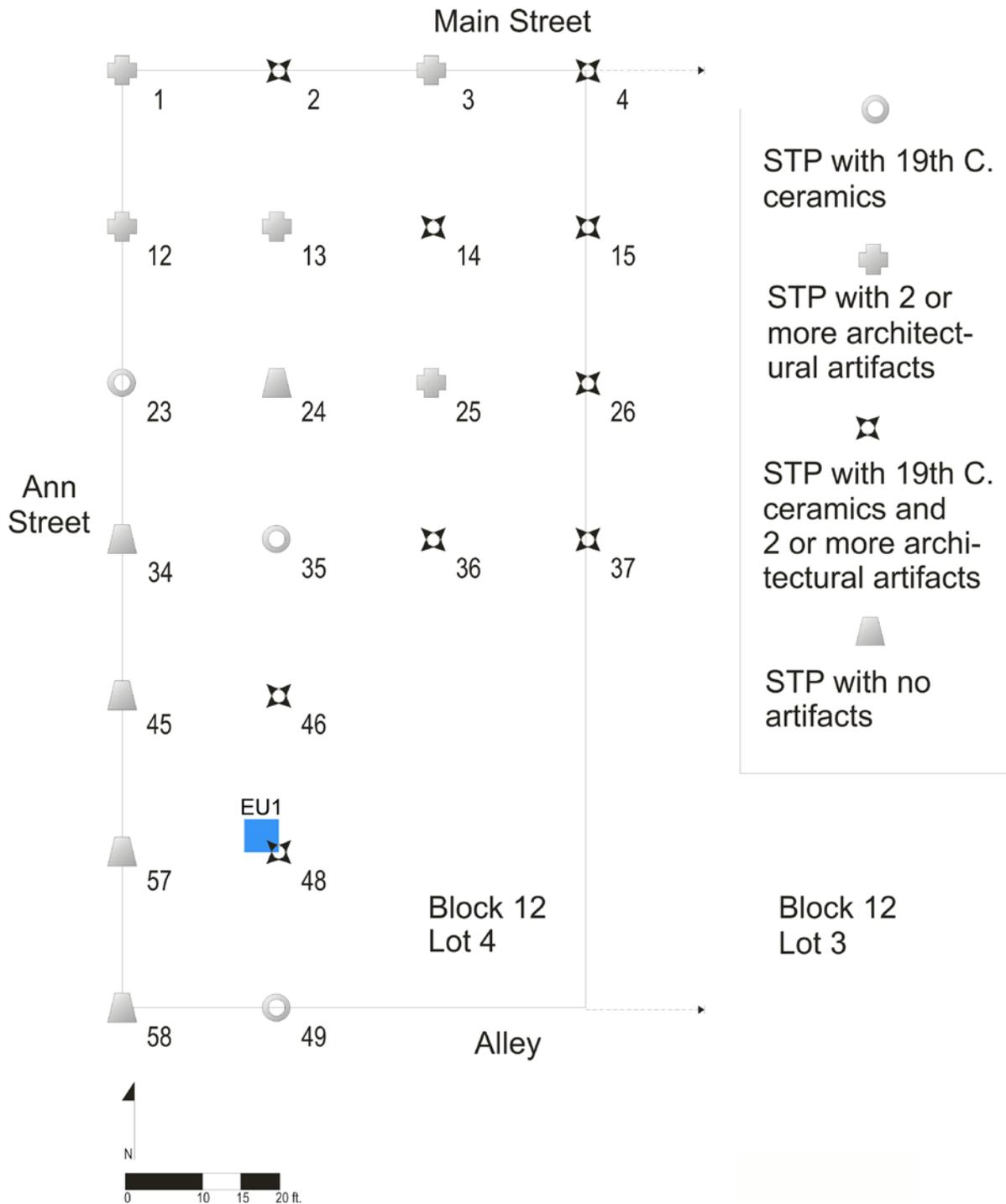


Figure 3.3. 2005 Shovel test pit survey data and location of 2010 EU1 in Block 12, Lot 4. Illustration by C. Fennell.

occupation date. A few fragments of colorless container glass had few distinguishing manufacturing characteristics and could not be precisely dated. The general date range could correspond to the years during which there were improvements noted on the lot, during the Marion and Stewart ownership periods.

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