

**Documentary Archeological Investigations**

1456 Duke Street, Proposed Marriott Residence Inn  
Alexandria, Virginia

**John Milner Associates**  
Architects • Archeologists • Planners

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Alexandria, Virginia**

Prepared for

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## INTRODUCTION

John Milner Associates, Inc. (JMA), conducted documentary research and prepared ground-impact maps to assess the archeological resource potential of 1456 Duke Street, the site of the proposed Marriott Residence Inn. The property (which is the project area for this study) is located on the south side of Duke Street, adjacent to Hooff's Run. The property's proximity to fresh water made it attractive for human settlement in the historic period, when it was occupied by a tanyard and later by residential and commercial buildings. It may have also been occupied by, or used by, Native Americans in prehistoric times. Although there has been twentieth-century disturbance to the property, it is likely that below-grade historic resources exist, particularly remains of tanning vats. Although Native American resources may exist, it is likely that they have been disturbed by the nineteenth-century use of the property as a tanyard

In accordance with our scope of services, all research was undertaken in the office of Alexandria Archaeology. Primary and secondary sources, including copies of historic maps and reports of previous research in the vicinity, were consulted. Early tax records for Alexandria do not include the project area, as it was not part of Alexandria in the early nineteenth century. Research at Alexandria Archaeology was undertaken on September 9, when the JMA project team met with staff, and on September 14.

### **Description of the Project Area and General Background Information**

Number 1456 Duke Street (project area) is located at the southeast corner of the historic junction of the Little River Turnpike (Duke Street) and Hooff's Run (Figure 1). At the time of its development in the late eighteenth century, the project area was located at the eastern margins of the burgeoning West End, an unincorporated working-class community located just beyond the Alexandria limits (Schweigert n.d.:i). The Little River Turnpike, known as Duke Street through Alexandria, was an important trade route along which livestock and agricultural products were conveyed to port. Hooff's Run, a small tributary of the Hunting Creek, provided a dependable and navigable watercourse and was key to the development of the West End community. Small craft were floated down the run to Hunting Creek, and then east to port (Cressey 1999). The project area was historically bisected by the early District of Columbia boundary line and the city of Alexandria limits. The project area corresponds to lots 114 and 115 of the Spring Garden Farm subdivision of 1796 (Figure 2). When the City of Alexandria was chartered in 1852, the boundary line extended "ten feet west of the western bank of Hooffs or Mushpot Run," which included the project area in the city limits (Acts of Assembly 1852:Chapter 358, p.241 as cited in Cheek and Zatz 1986:12). The boundary community of West End remained perched at the outskirts of the city until annexed into the city in 1915 (Schweigert n.d.:i).

The West End's location along a major trade route and its unincorporated status made it a prime transshipment center and the location of processing facilities for livestock, agricultural products, and other trade goods (Cressey 1999). The processing of meats and leather were essential to eighteenth and nineteenth century society; however, due to the smell and unpleasant nature of slaughtering, Alexandria enacted an ordinance banning this activity from the city in 1803 (Hon 1996:179; Cromwell and Hills 1989:58-59). The 1803 ordinance positioned West End as the logical and convenient point of processing for perishables bound for port. Lack of adequate means of long-term storage of fresh meats necessitated the processing of animals close to market or port. Drovers herded animals to the processor where the animals were pastured until slaughter.



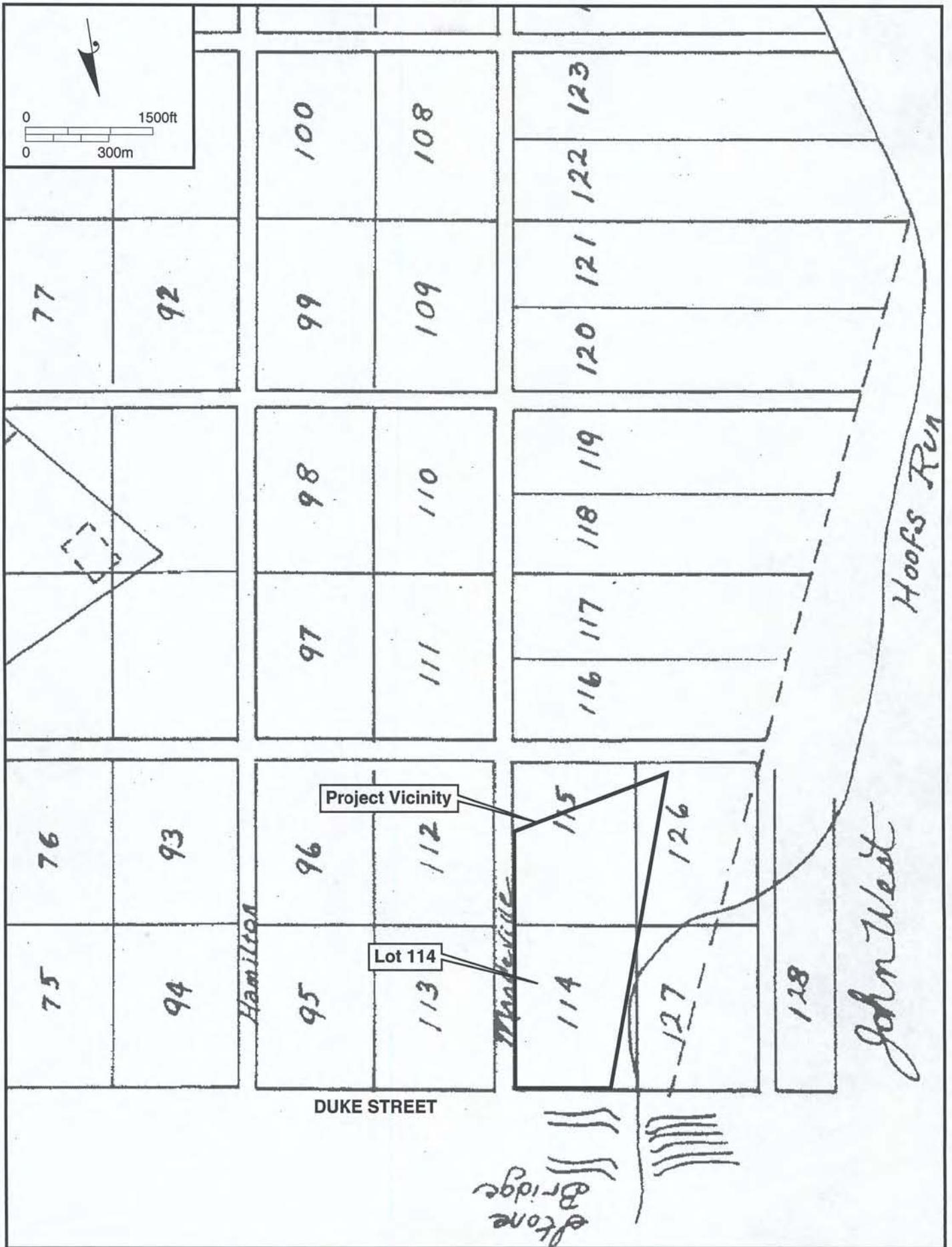


Figure 2. Lot 114 depicted on a plan of the Spring Garden Farm subdivision (Spring Garden Farm n.d.).

The by-products of slaughter were hides, which were tanned and curried into leather goods for a variety of uses. The complementary industries of butchering and tanning developed this thriving neighborhood at the city limits (Schweigert n.d.)

### **Duke Street Tanyard**

The project area was historically associated with the Duke Street Tannery or Tanyard. The tanyard was operated by several different tanners from its inception ca. 1796 until the mid-nineteenth century. The original five-acre parcel was developed from lots 112-115 of the Spring Garden Farm subdivision (Figure 2). Over the ensuing two centuries, the parcel has been divided and subdivided. The current 1.3-acre parcel represents the northern and western extent of the tanyard, or lot 114 of Spring Garden Farm. The tanyard was located at the boundary line between the corporate limits of the Alexandria, then part of the District of Columbia, and the county of Fairfax. In fact, the district line bisected the property. The western portion was located on the fringe of the unincorporated community of West End, while the eastern section fell into Alexandria. The property's location on a navigable and dependable waterway, along a major eighteenth and nineteenth-century turnpike, and straddling the boundary line, were all important factors in the development of the property as a commercial tanyard.

Lot 114 of the Spring Garden Farms subdivision was bought in 1796 by Peter Wise, councilman and tanner. One year later, Wise advertised the lease of "part of Spring Garden Farm, with 3 acres including tanyard with good spring, dwelling, bark and tan house, two stories, 30 vats, 20 more in frame," indicating that he had developed a viable tannery on the site (AA 12/16/1797 as cited in Miller n.d.). In 1798, Wise took on a partner, Jacob Geiger, who purchased half of the business (Miller n.d.). At the time, the yard and its improvements were valued at £1000 (Hills 1993:66). In September 1798, a notice in the Alexandria paper stated that Wise & Geiger's tanning and currying business was in operation at the "new tanyard of Duke Street and at the old yard on King Street (AA 9/26/1798 as cited in Miller n.d.). Though substantial in description and assessment, the Wise & Geiger tanyard was short-lived. In 1800, the partners advertised the sale of their operation; in October 1800, the partnership was dissolved (Miller n.d.).

Tanner Robert Kirk took over the tannery from Wise and Geiger, purchasing the property outright in the spring of 1804 (Cromwell and Hills 1989:55; Hills 1993:66). Beginning in 1809, Kirk leased the tannery on upper Duke Street to Elisha Talbott, a tanner and lumber man, and Peter Saunders, tanner and director of the Merchant's Bank. Brothers-in-law Talbott and Saunders were both Quakers (Alexandria Archaeology Tannery Files; Miller n.d.). Talbott married Sarah Sanders (Saunders) at the Friends Meeting house in 1806 (Alexandria Archaeology Tannery Files). In 1810, Saunders married Hannah McPherson, whose brother or brothers would later join Talbott in business (Alexandria Archaeology Tannery File).

After the assumption of the business by Talbott and Saunders, the tannery underwent a rapid succession of name changes, with Elisha Talbott as constant. After operating as Talbott & Saunders (1809-1811), then Elisha Talbott & Company (1811-1812), the tannery was operated under the name Talbott, Wilson & Company starting in 1812 or 1813, reflecting the arrival of Oliver Wilson, a Quaker from Baltimore. Daniel McPherson, also a Quaker, joined the firm in 1816 (Alexandria Archaeology Tannery File; Miller n.d.). McPherson was the head of the Merchant's Bank, of which Peter Saunders was a director (Alexandria Archaeology Tannery File). During this period of constant reorganization, two apprentice tanners joined the Duke

Street tannery. Thomas Devaughn, a 16 year old, was accepted in March 1811. Aloyious Mudd, an 18 year old orphan, joined the company in April of 1812 (Miller n.d.).

The ownership history and official operating name of the company is complex in the 1810s. In 1817, John McPherson & Son advertised the sale of the "large and extensive tannery situated on Duke Street containing 4 acres of ground" (AG 3/18/1817 as cited in Miller n.d.). The advertisement listed the improvements as a "dwelling, beam and bark house, 100 lying away vats and handlers in conjunctions with fountain pumps, mills, etc." (AG 3/18/1817 as cited in Miller n.d.). The same year, Elisha Talbott and Daniel McPherson advertised for the return to the tannery of two runaway apprentices (Miller n.d.). By 1819, Talbott was listed as owner in the sale of tannery (AG 3/25/1819 as cited in Miller n.d.). Talbott & McPherson mortgaged the tanyard to Mordecai Miller, another member of Alexandria's Quaker community, in 1819 (Cressey 1999; Miller n.d.). According to Cromwell and Hills (1989:58), Miller purchased the tanyard by agent for \$6,000 in 1819.

However the tanyard came into the Miller family, Mordecai Miller died in 1832, leaving the tanyard to his son, Joseph H. Miller (Cromwell and Hills 1989:58). After a series of mortgages and broken trusts, the yard was bought at public auction by his brother, John S. Miller (Cromwell and Hills 1989:58). The sale was advertised in the *Alexandria Gazette* in the early spring of 1844. Of the three lots corresponding to the original tannery parcel, Lot 12 was described as

that valuable Tannery, with the buildings, improvements and appurtenances thereto, including the water from a never-failing spring in Spring Garden Lot. The improvements are a substantial brick beam house for breaking hides; a brick stable; a brick bark house, with one of frame adjoining, holding 250 cords of bark; 2 pools with a head of water constantly flowing into them; 87 laying-away vats; 4 limes; 10 leaches; 14 handlers, the last all or nearly all, under cover; one steam engine of 6 horse power, for grinding bark; —this property is subject to an annuity of \$33-1/2 per annum, during the life of a person aged about 60 years, and ceases at her death (AG 3/2/1844).

Listed next in the sale inventory was No. 13, "a small frame tenement and lot of ground on the south side of Duke Street extended, being part of the original Tannery lot, and East of the Tanyard . . ." Number 14 was described as "a brick tenement on the South side of Duke Street, extended, next to the Stone Bridge, including a frame Slaughter-house . . . bounded on the west by Hooff's Run" (AG 3/2/1844). The advertisement of sale touted the additional benefit of the location of lots 12, 13, and 14 as being "beyond the Corporation limits, and . . . of course, exempt from taxation" (AG 3/2/1844). The 1845 Ewing map of Alexandria illustrates the property, labeled the Miller Estate. Extant buildings on the tannery property include a small building fronting Duke Street east of the Run (Figure 3). A grouping of buildings located near the center of the property may correspond to those described in the 1844 notice of sale.

An untitled and undated map drawn in 1852 or 1853 illustrates the tanyard, though by that time it was apparently in disuse (Figure 4). The tannery came into the ownership of brother Samuel Miller at some point between 1844 and 1853. The 1850 tax assessments list Samuel Miller as the owner of a piece of property on Duke Street valued at only \$450, too low for the extensive tannery property (Tax Assessment 1850). By comparison, neighbor Phineas Janney, who

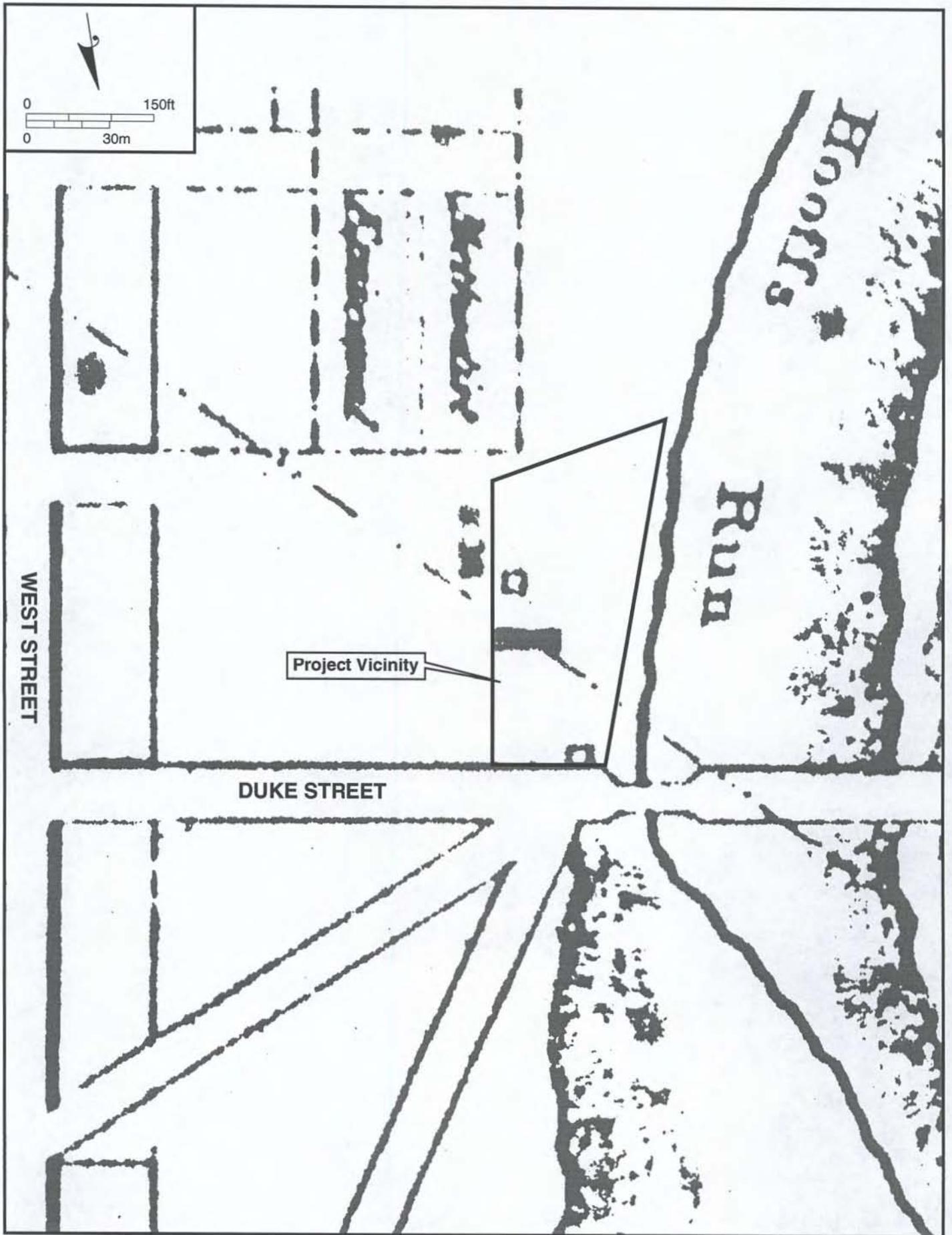


Figure 3. Tannery depicted with four associated buildings (Ewing 1845).

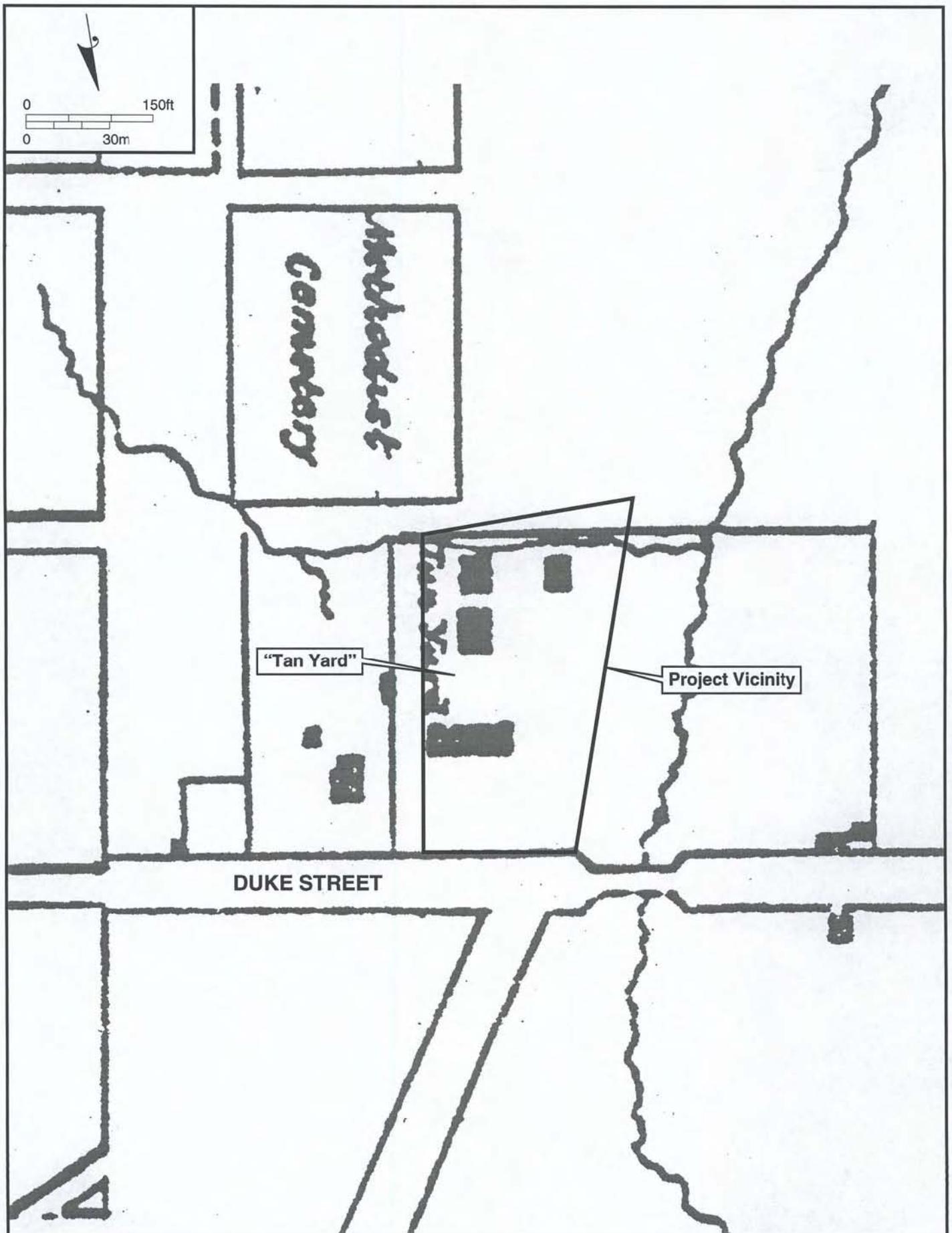


Figure 4. "Tan Yard" depicted with four associated buildings (*Plan of Alexandria* [185-]).

who held the property on either side of Miller, was assessed for property worth \$9,000 and \$1,000. It is yet unclear whether Janney held a mortgage on the tannery property for the Millers. The tannery and associated buildings would have had a comparable value to the Janney assessments. Regardless of the ambiguous tax assessments, Samuel Miller was the owner of record of the tannery property in December 1853, when the old and vacant tannery burned (Cromwell 1989:30; Cromwell and Hills 1989:58).

In 1912, after the tannery fire, the disposition of the property is unknown. The Hopkins atlas of 1877 illustrated standing structures towards the rear of the lot, but is not detailed enough to indicate which buildings and of what type of construction were extant at that time (Figure 5).

Though the project area became part of Alexandria in 1852, the first representation of the area on Sanborn maps is in 1902. A two-story frame store numbered 1456 Duke Street is depicted at the eastern edge of the (current) property (Acts of Assembly 1852: Chapter 358, p. 241). The 1921 Sanborn map illustrates the same structure (Figure 6). A building at 1460 Duke Street (now part of the property east of the project area) is depicted as a two-story brick dwelling. The location and construction material suggest that this is the brick tenement listed in the 1844 notice of sale and illustrated on the Ewing map of 1845 (*AG 3/2/1844*; Ewing 1845) (Figure 3). The brick building has since been replaced by a modern office building.

The series of Sanborn maps from the 1930s illustrates additions and alterations to the structure within the project area, and the addition of a two-story frame dwelling and a frame garage at the rear of the lot (Sanborn 1937) (Figure 7). In 1955, a concrete block and brick warehouse was constructed on the eastern lot line of the project area (Sanborn 1977) (Figure 8). Presumably, the parking area was surfaced at this time. In 1960, the one-and-one-half-story brick and block warehouse was constructed at the rear of the lot (Sanborn 1977) (Figure 8). The Sanborn Maps do not indicate subgrade-level disturbance, though there was likely some surficial disturbance associated with construction. The frame store (Santullo's Market) stood until sometime within the past decade (Sanborn 1988) (Figure 9).

### **Archeological Potential and Recommendations**

Previous assessments of the property have concluded that it is likely to include preserved archeological resources. According to Cheek and Zatz, the western half of the 1400 block of Duke Street, sealed under an asphalt surface, appears to have been relatively undisturbed by historic activity and, therefore, likely to retain intact prehistoric archaeological deposits (Cheek & Zatz 1986:51). The property's access to fresh water (in Hooff's Run and the spring at or near the south end of the property) would have made it an attractive site for prehistoric activity and occupation. Historic activities on the property, including operation of the early-nineteenth-century tannery, residential and commercial use in the twentieth-century, and modern utilities (Figure 10) however, are likely to have disturbed prehistoric resources unless they have been deeply buried by sediment or fill.

The historic potential of the property has also been noted by previous researchers. Cheek and Zatz also state that the 1400 block on the south side of Duke Street (at the site of Santullo's Market, now demolished) has the potential for historic archaeological resources relating to the early residents of 1456 Duke Street (Cheek and Zatz 1986:58). The Santullo's Market site, located near the eastern edge of the property fronting Duke Street, may correspond to the site of

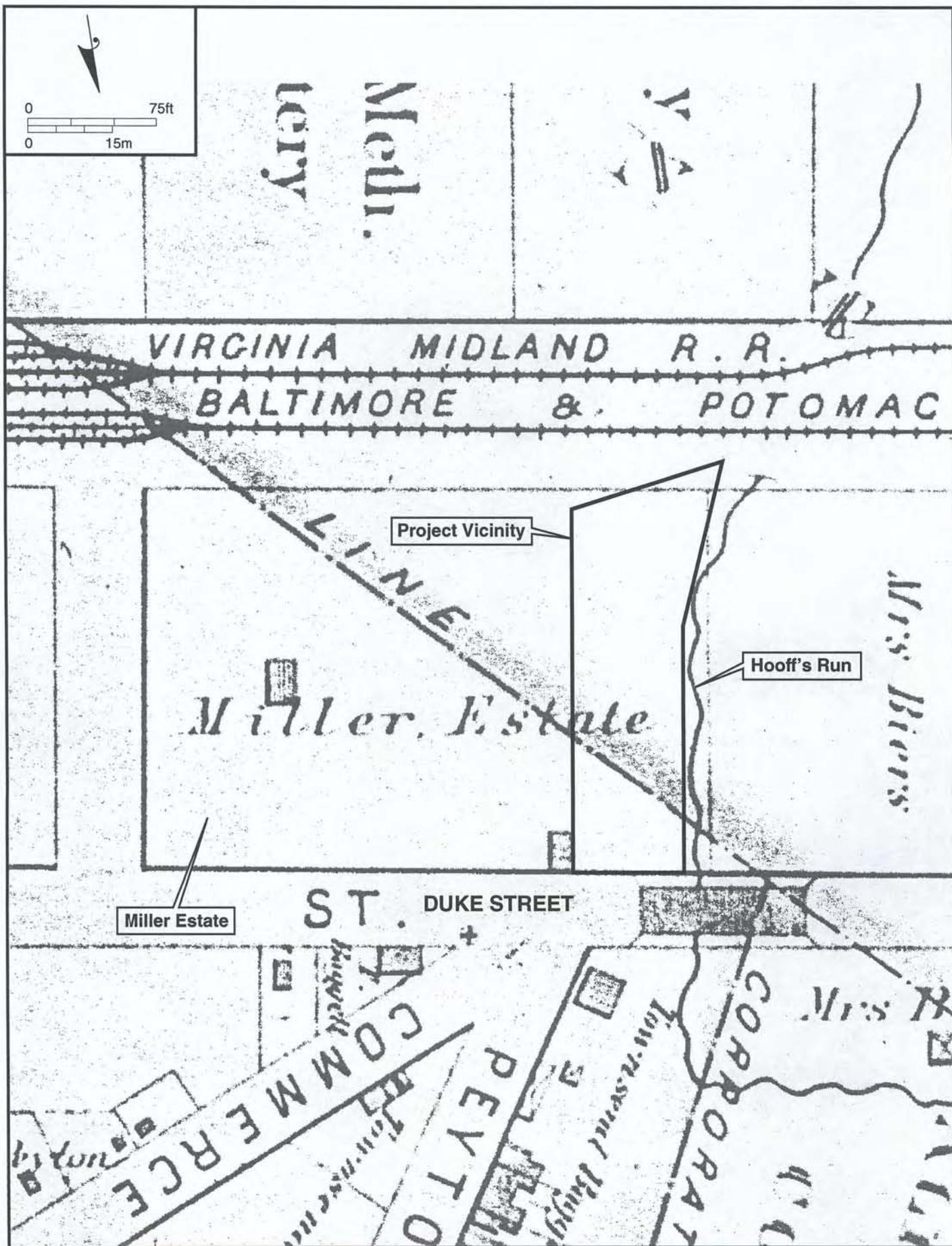


Figure 5. Miller Estate (Hopkins 1877).

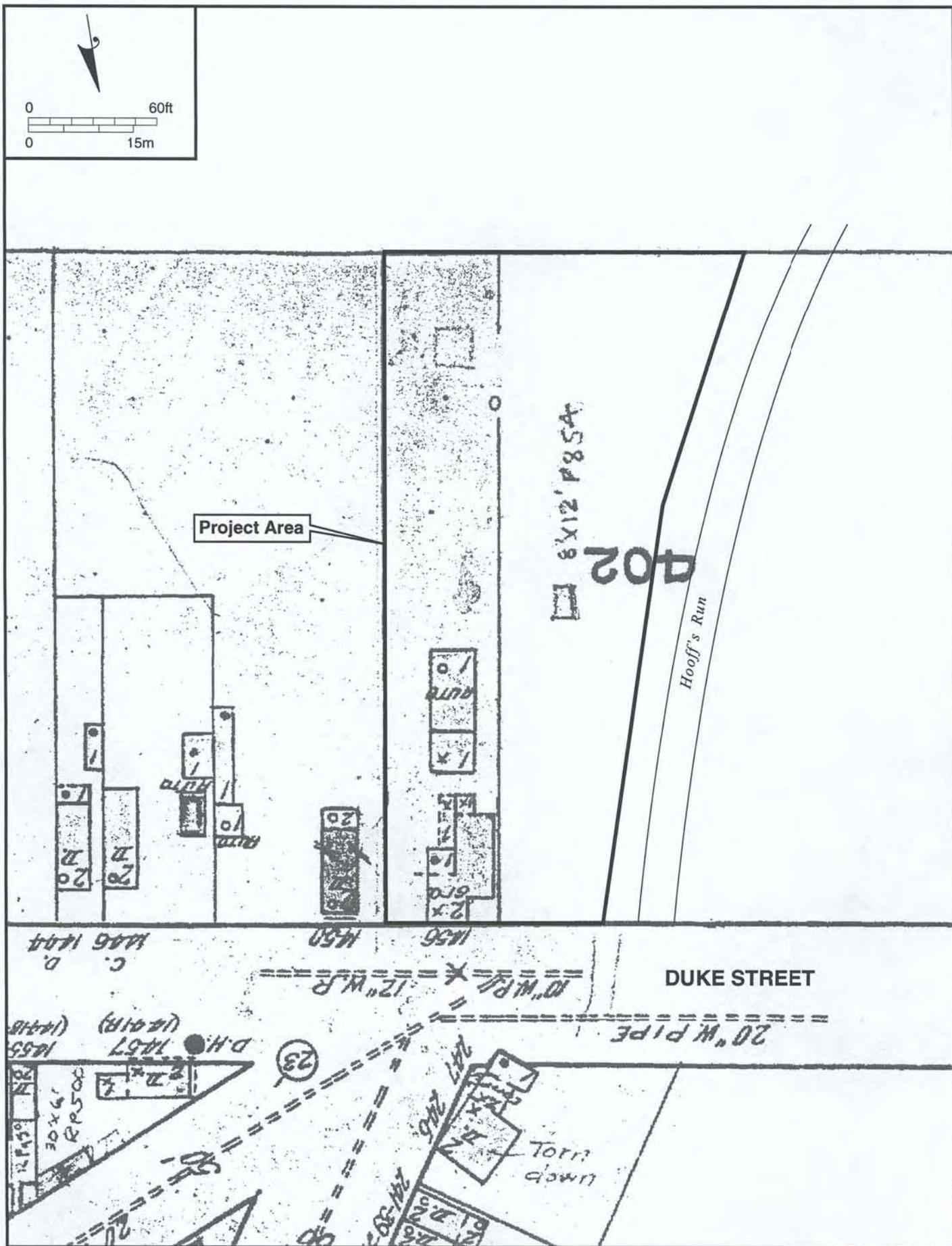


Figure 6. Development of project area as of 1921 (Sanborn 1921).

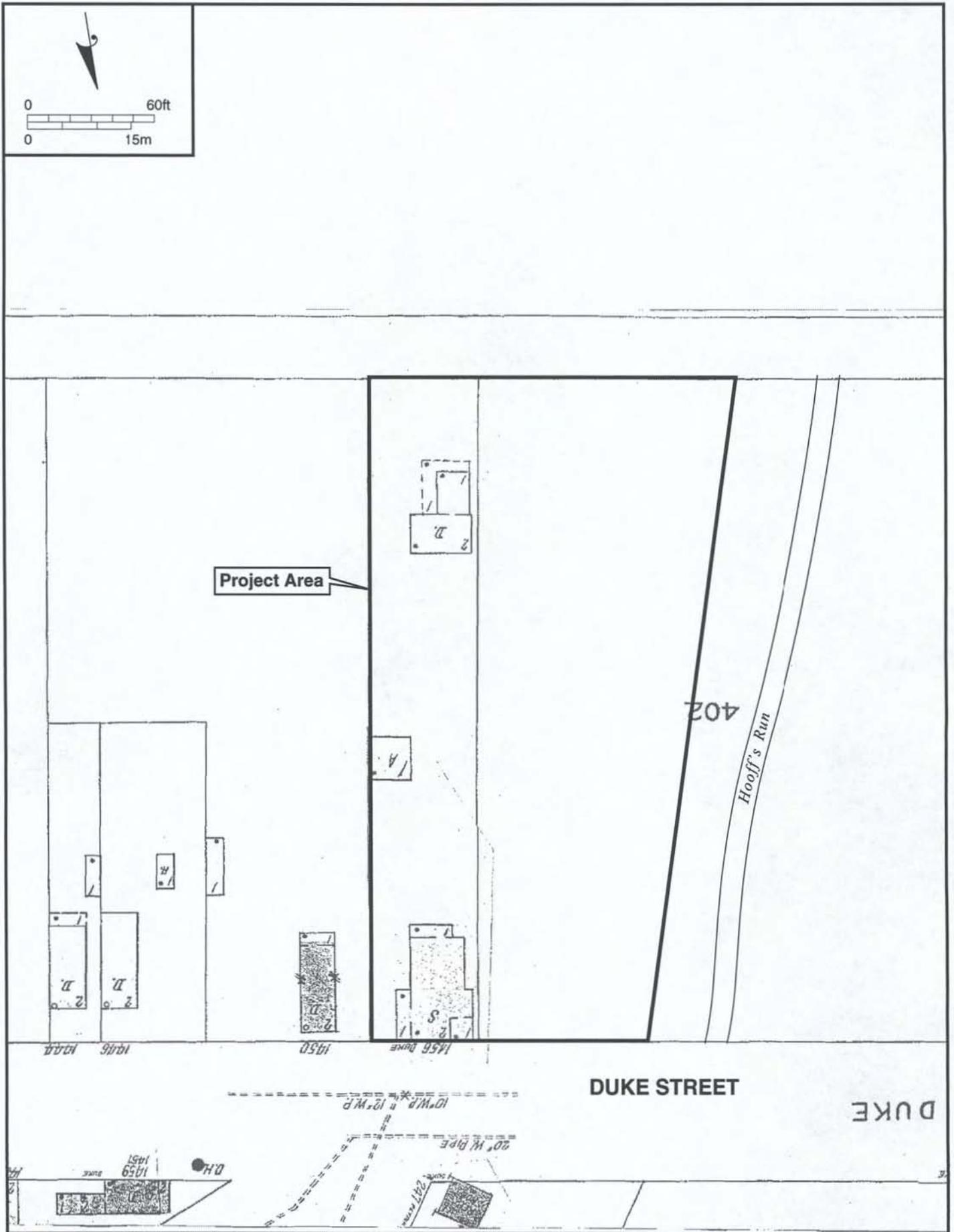


Figure 7. Development in project area between 1931-1937 (Sanborn 1937).

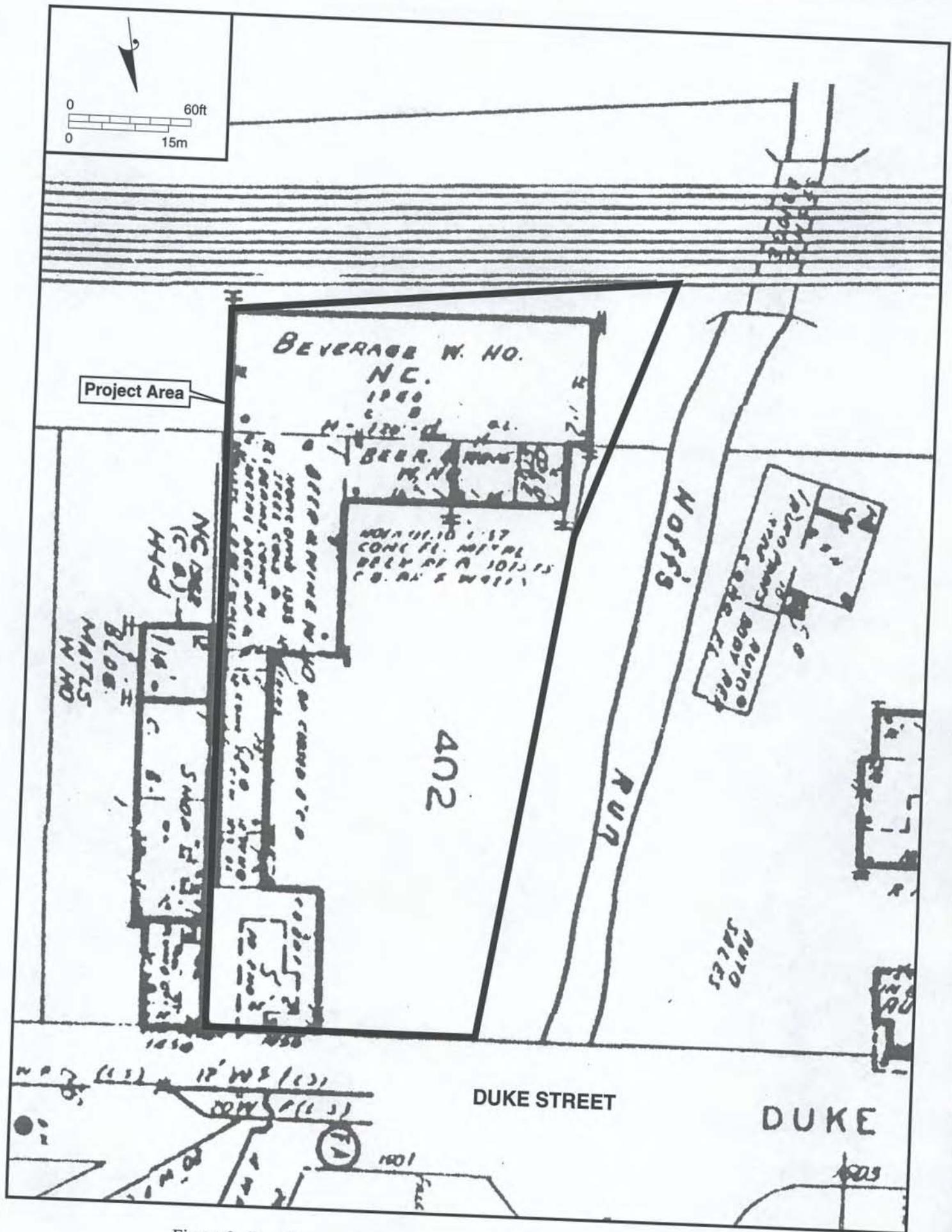


Figure 8. Development in project area between 1955-1977 (Sanborn 1977).



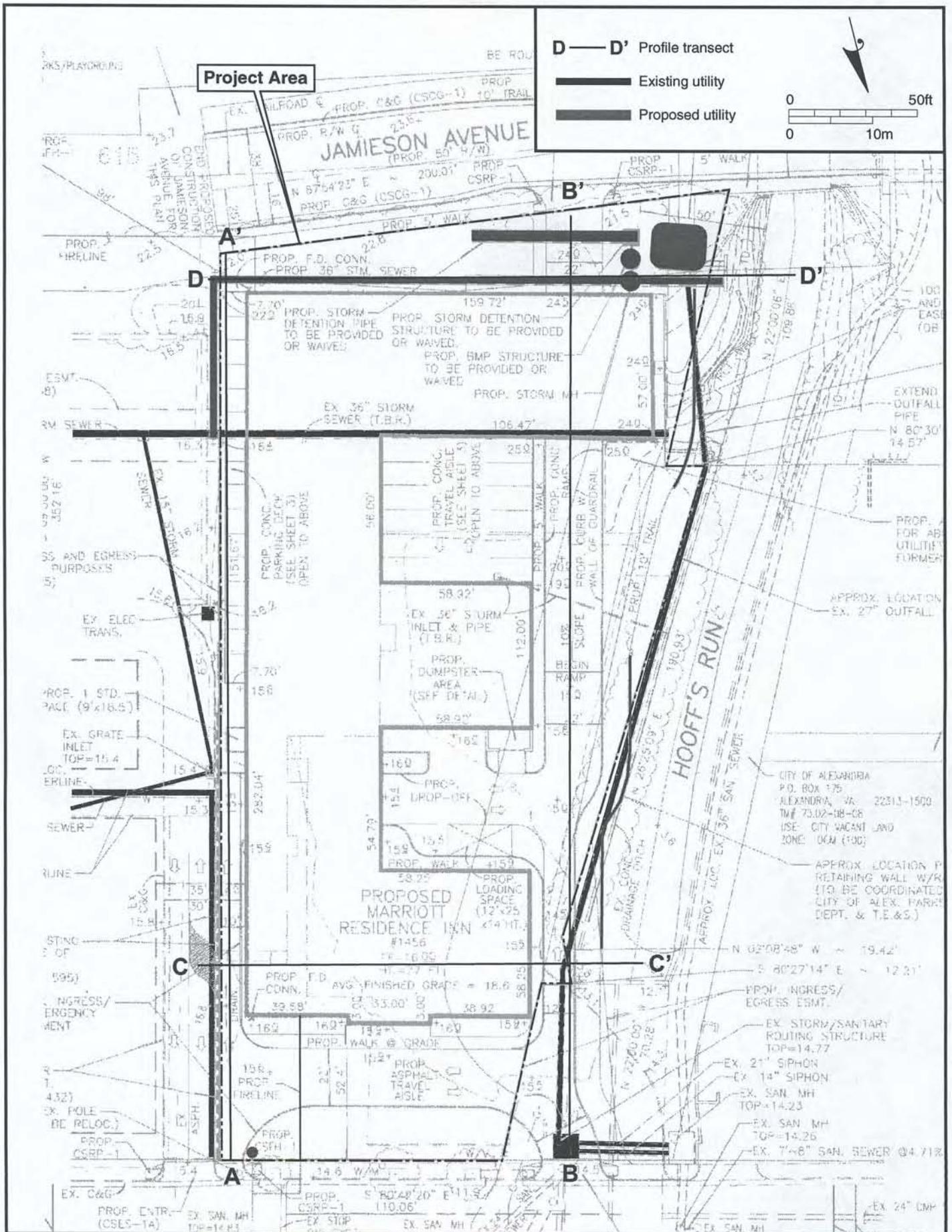


Figure 10. Site development plan showing existing and proposed utilities and profile transects (R.C. Fields, Jr., and Associates 1999).

the frame tenement listed in the 1844 notice of sale. Cromwell (1989:30) indicates that the frame building was in place by the early twentieth century, but does not specify when it was built. The first conclusive map evidence of the location and presence of the building is the 1912 Sanborn map cited in Cheek and Zatz (1986:44). This site may have the potential to yield domestic artifacts relating to the nineteenth-and early-twentieth-century occupation of the property.

Descriptions of the tannery's structures and improvements indicate a large-scale, substantial impact primarily towards the south end of the project area, the portion of the site currently located beneath standing structures. Several brick structures and at one point over 100 vats, including bates, leaches, handlers, and limes, are known to have been built on the property. It is likely that many of the vats were brick and brick-lined frame structures that were built into the ground partially or wholly, and may have been filled rather than removed after the closure of the tannery (Hills 1993:64-66). Based on research performed by JMA, the information compiled in Cromwell and Hills (1989), Hills (1993), the Alexandria Archaeology Tannery File, and map analysis, it is likely that archaeological testing in the project area would yield features or artifacts related to the early tanning industry of the West End and Spring Garden district, now part of the City of Alexandria.

Analysis of the historic use of the property suggests that nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century archeological resources may survive below the paved parking area and even below the existing building. Little information on the nineteenth-century elevation of the property was found in the Alexandria Archaeology sources. A single nineteenth-century map provides elevations. The only contour line near the property is a 20-foot contour that may cross the southeast corner of the property. Current elevations at the southeast corner are between 20 and 22 feet, suggesting that present grade at that corner may be close to the nineteenth-century grade. Existing grade is lower at the northern side of the property, along Duke Street, and at the edge of Hooff's Run (Figures 10 and 11). Such lower elevations are likely to have existed in the past as well, as the ground sloped down to the run. The present grade in the parking lot area appears to have been lowered, perhaps by as much as 1-2 feet. Even if upper levels of soil have been disturbed or removed, it is likely that features that were historically below grade (such as building foundations and tanning vats) survive. Figure 12 shows the historically documented buildings on the property and the area most likely to included undisturbed resources. The building locations from the 1888, 1937, and 1921 maps can be reliably correlated with the current property boundaries and improvements. The building locations drawn from the nineteenth-century maps are less reliable, and these buildings may have been located on the adjacent lot. Nevertheless, associated activity areas and tanning vats are likely to have been on the property. The area now under the paved parking lot is most likely to be preserved. However, foundations, features, and artifacts may also be preserved under the building that currently occupies the property.

The proposed development on the property is expected to disturb all soils likely to contain archeological resources. The finished level of the lowest level (which will underlay the above-grade building as well as paved surface areas along the west side) will be at an elevation of 7 feet, 5 to 15 feet below current grade. Utilities (Figure 10) and landscaping will disturb areas outside the building footprint. Thus, any surviving resources in the property are likely to be disturbed by the proposed developments.

Below-grade testing will be necessary to determine whether preserved archeological resources survive and the assess the importance of such resources in understanding Alexandria's past. The ground surface of the property is currently covered by a warehouse and paved parking lot. Testing is recommended for areas under both the parking lot as undisturbed features or artifact deposits are most likely under the parking lot. A proposal for archeological services to test both areas is included as a separate document.

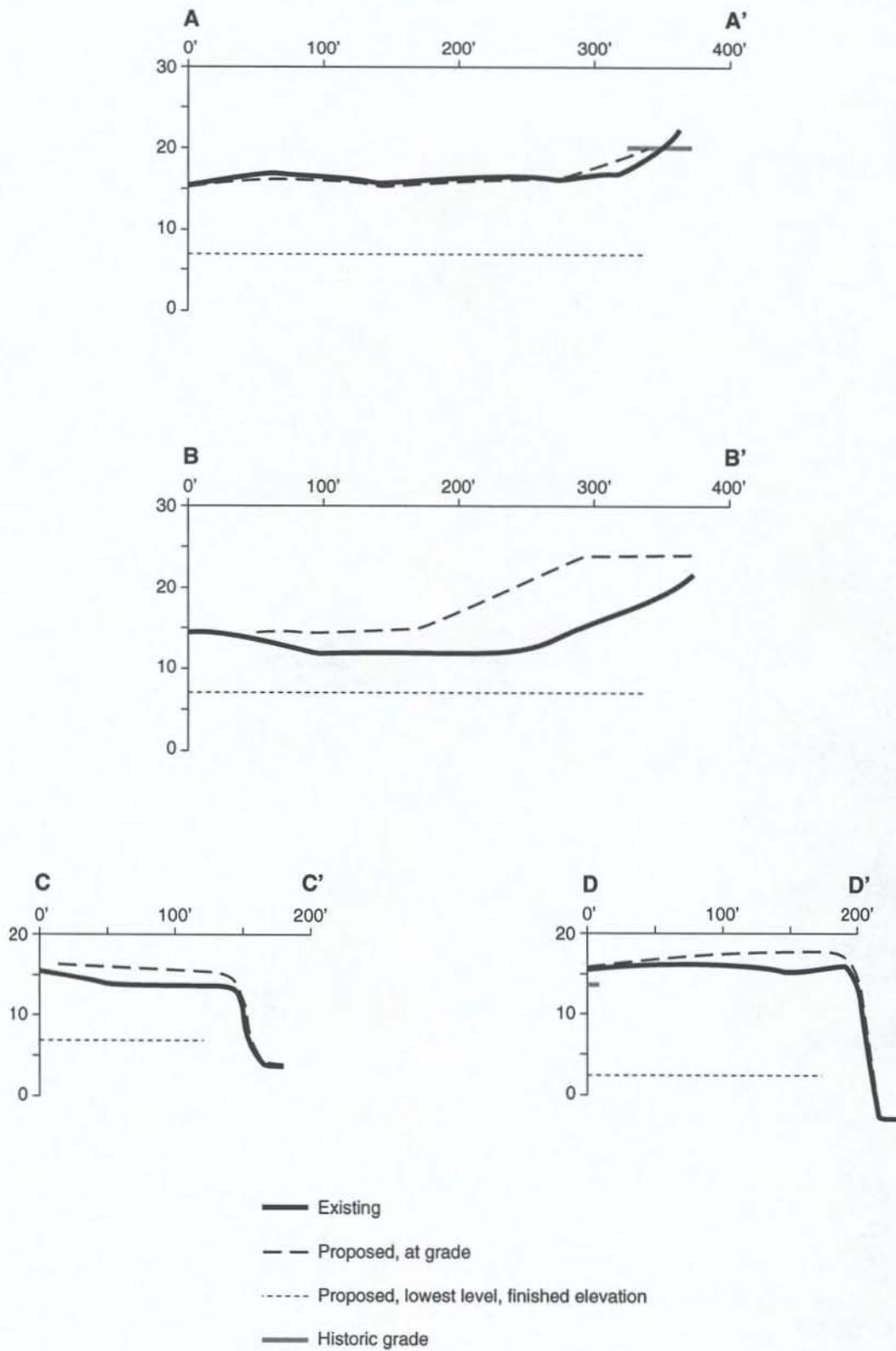


Figure 11. Profiles of the project area.

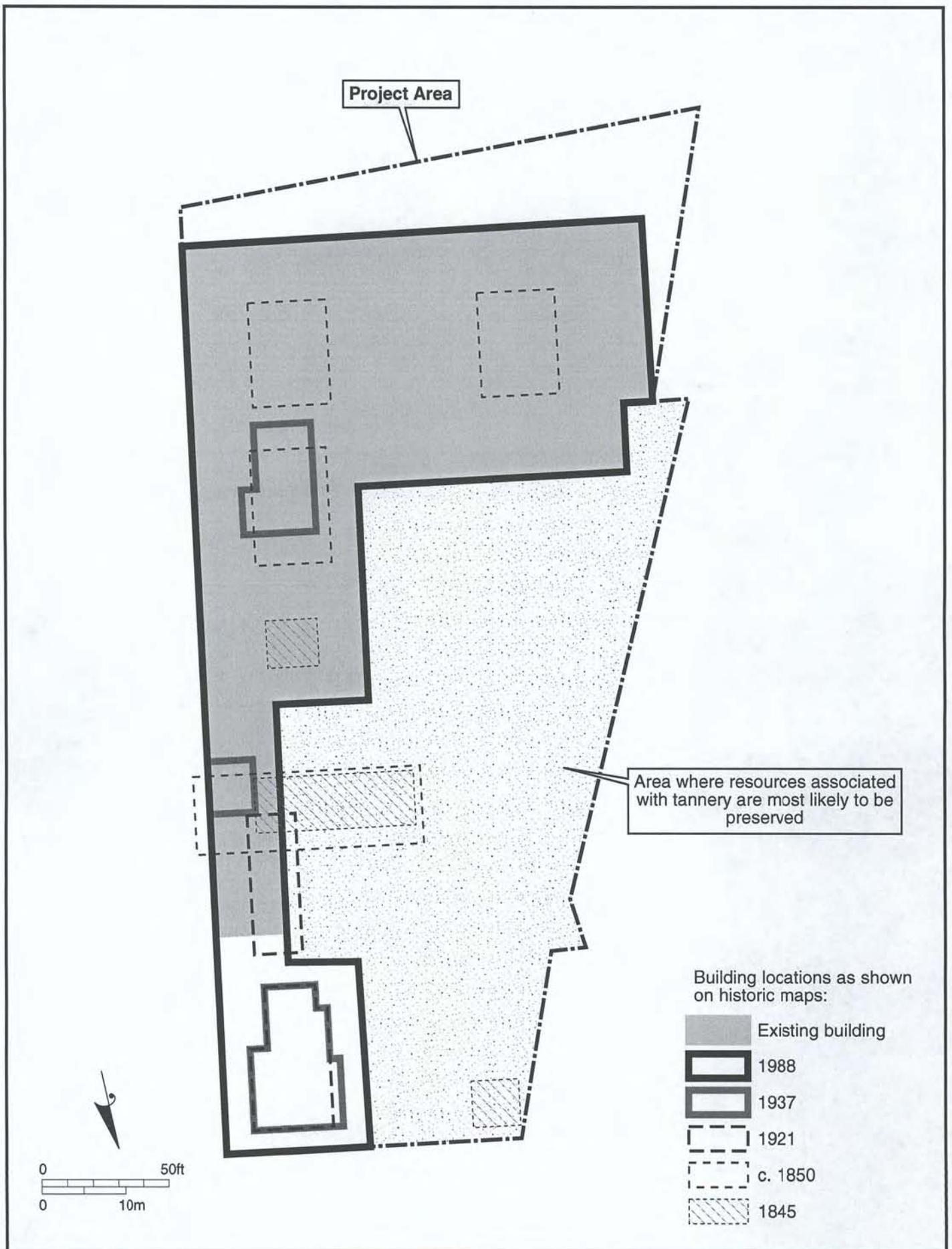


Figure 12. Plan view of the project area showing potential archeological resource locations (R.C. Fields, Jr., and Associates 1999).

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Plan of Alexandria

- [185-] Untitled map of Alexandria, drawn between 1852 and 1853. Copy on file in the offices of Alexandria Archaeology, Alexandria, Virginia.

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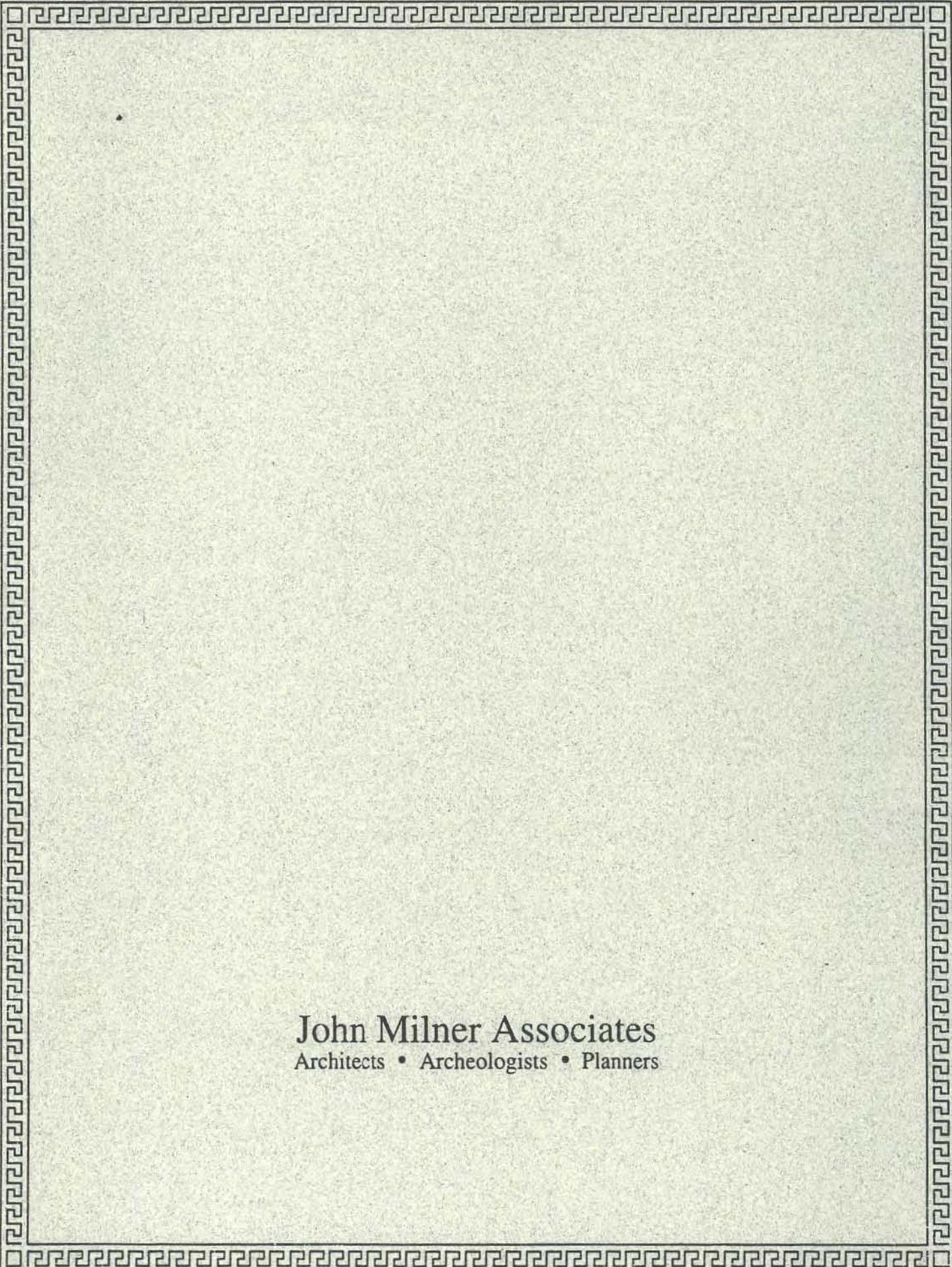
Table 1. Lot History, 1456 Duke Street

Date	Owner, Occupation	Property Use/Activity	Source
mid-eighteenth century-1796	John West	Project Area corresponds to Lot 114 and 115, Spring Garden Farm Subdivision, sold in 1796. The lot is located on the south side of Duke Street, bounded on the west by Hooff's Run	Cromwell 1989:72; Cromwell et al. 1989b:3; Figure 5
1796-1798	Peter Wise, tanner	Two-story bark and tan house, 30 vats, 20 frame vats, dwelling, and spring on three acre lot (dwelling on eastern portion of lot; tanyard on western section). Wise was one of Alexandria's first city councilmen.	<i>Alexandria Gazette</i> 2/27/1798 as cited in Cromwell et al. 1989:55; Hills 1993:64
1799	Peter Wise	Assessment of value of tanyard at £1000	Hills 1993:66
1798-1800	Peter Wise & Jacob Geiger, tanners	Geiger pays £500 for half-share in tannery. Sell operation to Robert Kirk, spring 1804	Cromwell et al. 1989:55; Hills 1993:66
ca. 1800-1809	Robert Kirk, tanner	Kirk operates tanyard; leases property to Elisha Talbott and Peter Saunders, 1809	A.A. Tannery File
1809-ca. 1811	Elisha Talbott & Peter Saunders, tanners	Tanyard operated by brothers-in-law Talbott and Saunders	Cromwell et al. 1989:55; Hills 1993:66; A.A. Tannery File
1810	Elisha Talbot & Peter Saunders	Talbott and Saunders appear in the 1810 Census as tanners whose primary residences are on King and Prince Streets, respectively. Each occupies a household containing 6 whites and no blacks or slaves. Both are Quakers.	USBC 1810; A.A. Tannery File
1811-1812	Elisha Talbott	Elisha Talbott & Company tanyard under sole proprietorship of Elisha Talbott	Miller n.d.
1813-ca. 1816	Elisha Talbott and Oliver Wilson	Talbott, Wilson, & Company, tanyard	A.A. Tannery File; Miller n.d.

Date	Owner, Occupation	Property Use/Activity	Source
1816	Elisha Talbott, Oliver Wilson, and Daniel McPherson	Interest in yard bought by Daniel McPherson.	A.A. Tannery File; Miller n.d.
1817	Talbott & McPherson, tanners	Tanyard conveyed in trust to Phineas Janney.	A.A. Tannery File; Miller n.d.
1817	John McPherson & Son	McPherson insolvent. Tanyard inventory includes: dwelling, beam and bark house, 100 laying away vats, liners, bates and handlers in proportion, with fountain pumps, mills, and all the stock in trade.	Gazette 3/18/1817 as cited in Cromwell et al. 1989:57
1819-1832	Mordecai Miller	Purchases tanyard at auction (1819) for \$6,000; purchases dwelling from Jonah Isabelle in 1824	Cromwell et al. 1989; Hills 1993:118
1832-1844	Joseph H. Miller	Acquires property after father Mordecai Miller's death	
1844	John S. Miller	Bought brother's tanyard at auction. Property described as: " Spring Garden lot . . . substantial brick beam house, two stories high, with four vats, a brick house for breaking hides; a brick stable; a brick bark house, with one of frame adjoining 250 cords of bark; two pools with a head of water constantly flowing into them; 87 lay-away vats; 4 limes; 10 leaches; 14 handlers, the last, all or nearly all, under cover; one steam engine of 6-horse power for grinding bark" plus a brick tenement next to the stone bridge and a slaughter house bounded on the west by Hooff's Run. This is the first mention of a slaughterhouse associated with the property	Various sources as cited in Cromwell et al. 1989:58
1845		Map of Alexandria illustrates Miller Estate corresponding to property.	Ewing 1845

Date	Owner, Occupation	Property Use/Activity	Source
1850	Samuel Miller	Taxed on property on Duke Street, Ward 4, City of Alexandria.. Property assessed at \$450. By comparison, Phineas Janney, assessed before and after Miller in the assessments, holds property worth \$9,000 and \$1,000 on either side of Miller.	Tax Assessment 1850
1852	Samuel Miller	Property annexed into Alexandria	Acts of Assembly 1852
1853	Samuel Miller	Tannery burned. Building vacant at the time.	various sources as cited in Cromwell et al. 1989:58
1877	Miller Estate	Hopkins atlas illustrates Miller Estate corresponding to tanyard and dwelling parcels. Two structures are indicated: one east of current lot and one fronting Duke Street at eastern edge of current lot. Same position and relative size as pictured on 1845 Ewing map.	Hopkins 1877
1912-1921		Frame grocery store and garage located at eastern edge of property. Two-story brick building at 1456 Duke Street (east of current property line) may correspond to brick tenement listed in 1844 inventory	Cheek and Zatz 1986:44; Sanborn 1921
1938-1946		Mandeville Lane bisects former dwelling/tanyard parcel sometime between 1938 and 1946.	Watkins 1946
1931-1937		Two-story frame store located on eastern portion of lot. Two-story frame dwelling and one-story building located on south end of lot	Sanborn 1937
1955-1960		Store still located on eastern section at Duke Street; large L-shaped masonry structure erected along south and east boundary lines	Sanborn 1961

Key: A.A. Tannery Files: Alexandria Archaeology Tannery Files  
 USBC: U.S. Bureau of the Census



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