



August 31, 2020

David Currey
Encore Interpretive Design, LLC
936 Currey Rd.
Nashville, TN 37217-2721

RE: Management Summary for *Archaeological Excavations at Fort Negley Historical Park (40DV189) in Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee.*

Dear Mr. Currey,

Under contract with the Nashville Metropolitan Parks & Recreation, Tennessee Valley Archaeological Research (TVAR) conducted archaeological investigations at the Fort Negley Historical Park in Nashville, Tennessee (Figure 1). The purpose of this project was to locate and assess buried cultural resources within sections of Fort Negley identified in previous studies as areas possessing a high potential for yielding intact archaeological deposits (Figure 1). Consequently, this work provides supplemental information to a Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) that guides the development of Fort Negley Park as an historic and cultural resource. All work was consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Identification (36 CFR §61; 48 CFR §44720-23), adhered to the requirements established by the Tennessee Division of Archaeology, and met the minimum requirements established by the *Tennessee SHPO Standards And Guidelines For Archaeological Resource Management Studies* (TNSHPO 2018)

Conducted between May 20 and June 25, 2020, field investigations included geophysical exploration, mapping, surface inspection, soil probe and shovel testing, and unit excavation (Figure 2). TVAR utilized this multifaceted approach to maximize field efforts focused on locating and assessing buried cultural deposits associated with African American contraband camps and post-Civil War era occupations, troop encampments, or defensive line earthworks. Field crews began the investigations by visually inspecting all subareas beyond the ring road, and performed 1-inch soil probe tests at high potential locations identified in geophysical datasets collected during previous investigations (Beasley et al. 2018b).

The archival research aspect of the investigations is underway. So far, the research has focused primarily on the pre-war ownership of structural remains identified during the excavations, which were possibly utilized as officer quarters during Union occupation.

The archaeological reconnaissance resulted in the identification of four locations within the subareas where excavation units were placed. The four locations include (1); a historic dumping site within Subarea 1 investigated via surface inspection and shovel testing; (2) an area in the northeastern portion of Fort Negley park which was tested via excavation unit 4; (3) an area downhill from the WPA parking lot in the northern portion of the park which was tested via excavation units 3 and 6; and (4) the location of a non-extant historic structure investigated via geophysical survey and excavation (test) units 1, 2, and 5.

Subarea 1 consisted of a concentration of historical artifacts of varying density identified during surface inspection along the eastern portion of Fort Negley Park downhill from the ring road and above the derelict Hershel Greer Stadium parking lot (see Figure 2). A general surface collection was conducted in this area, which recovered artifacts generally corresponding to the first half of the twentieth century, primarily consisting of personal and kitchen activity related materials such as glass bottles, jars, and ceramic vessel fragments (Figure 3). A shovel test was placed within an area and excavated to a depth of 90 centimeters below surface (cmbs) in order to assess the depth, characteristics, and possible temporal association of the historical dumping area. A single stratigraphy was noted throughout the

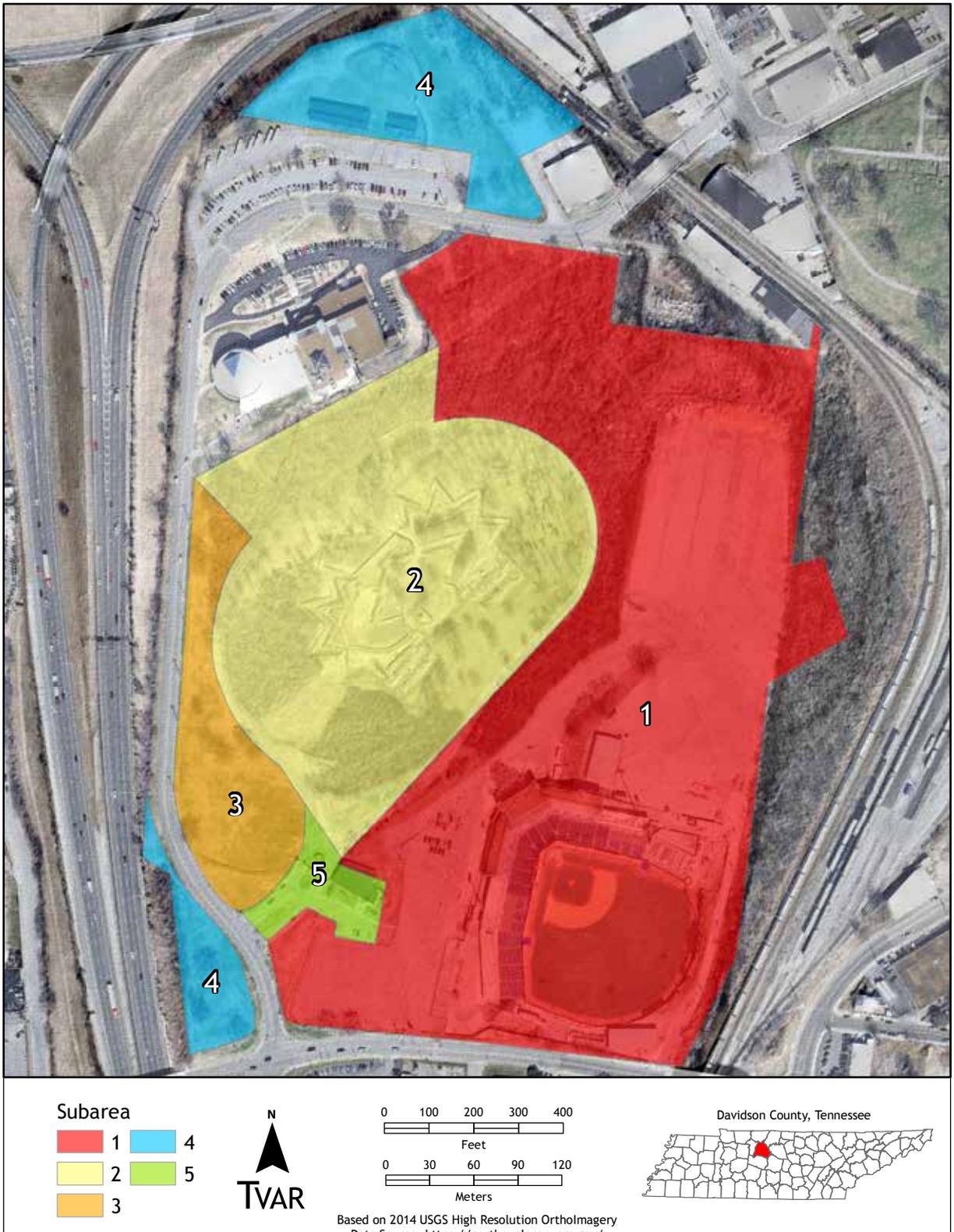


Figure 1. Previously defined subareas .

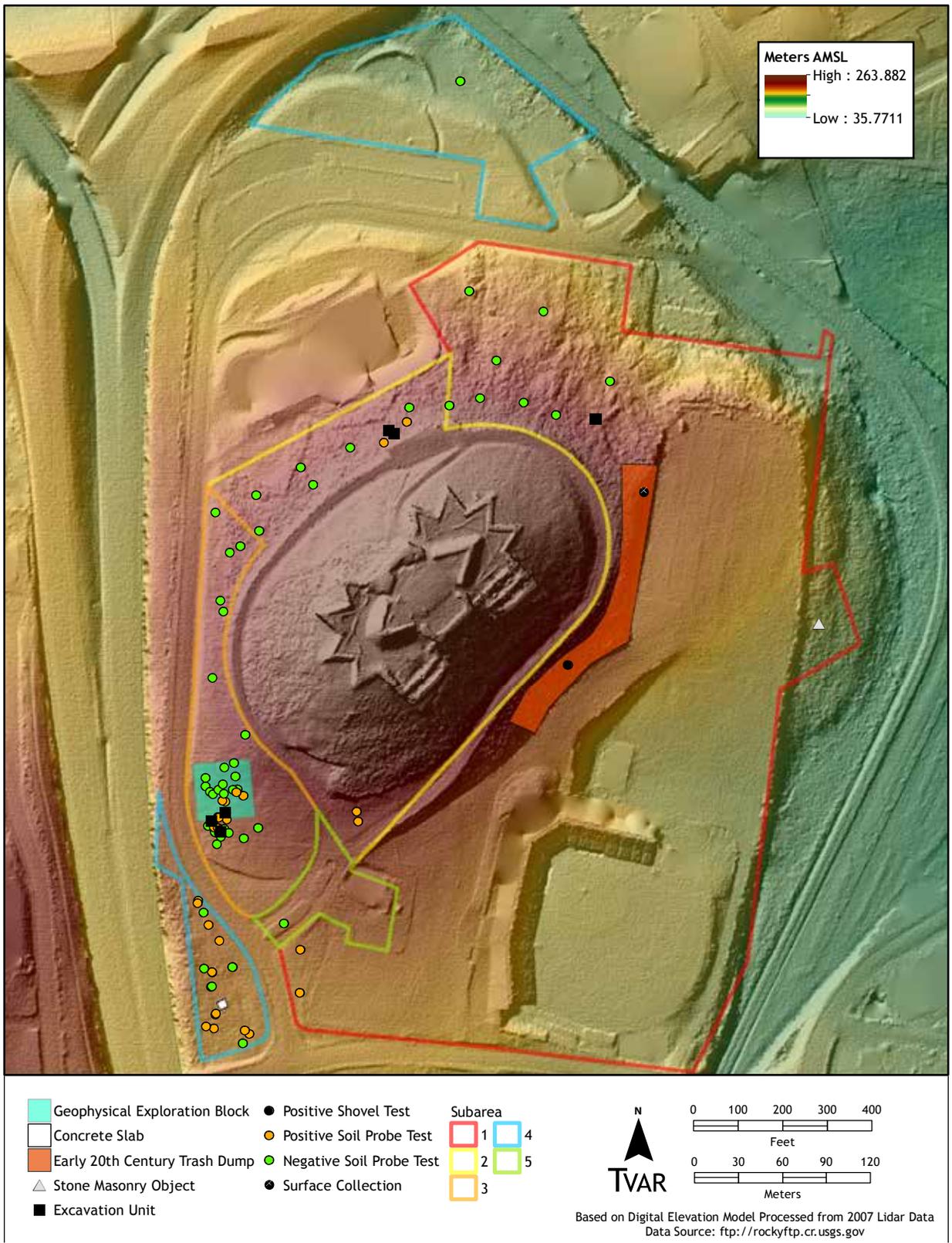


Figure 2. TVAR's archaeological reconnaissance and excavations at 40DV189

shovel test, and a dense concentration of historical artifacts similar to those noted on the surface was identified throughout. There does not appear to be temporal variation corresponding to depth within the shovel test, suggesting a limited period of depositional activity dating to the first half of the twentieth century.

Excavation Unit 4 was investigated to assess an additional location within Subarea 1 possessing potential subsurface cultural resources on the hillslopes surrounding the stone fortification. Therefore, a 1-x-2 m test unit was excavated in the northeastern portion of Fort Negley on a relatively flat location with no noted surface bedrocks (see Figure 2). Artifacts were primarily limited to modern materials, and soils in this location presented evidence of deflation and a low probability for subsurface deposits. Disturbances from mechanized land clearing and vegetation management were also present within this portion of Subarea 1, the absence of subsurface features or significant artifact concentrations, and the presence of limestone bedrock in the vicinity suggests that there is a low likelihood for intact cultural resources in this locale.

Subarea 2 was investigated in order to locate areas of possible African American contraband camp locations in the northern portion of Fort Negley using surface inspection, core testing, and unit excavation. Excavation units 3 and 6 consisted of two 1-x-1 m squares (see Figure 2). Although pre-twentieth century artifacts, primarily consisting of container glass, were recovered during investigations into Subarea 2, modern materials recovered from corresponding levels suggest a high level of disturbance, likely caused by land clearing and the use of vegetation management equipment and bioturbation. However, despite the noted disturbances, there remains a potential for additional subsurface cultural resources present within the vicinity of Subarea 3 dating to the Civil War and post-war periods.

Subarea 3 was initially investigated via geophysical survey in the southwestern portion of Fort Negley, which identified numerous subsurface anomalies, some of which correspond to potential historic structures. Core testing confirmed the likely presence of subsurface deposits in this locale, and three test units were conducted to more thoroughly investigate the deposits (Figure 4). Investigation efforts were focused on a rectangular anomaly, which roughly corresponds to an historic structure attributed to John Reid on an historic map produced on an unspecified date in the 1860s for the United States Army Military Division of the Mississippi Chief Engineers Office by Brigadier General Orlando M. Poe (Figure 5). Test Units 1, 2, and 5 were placed on the approximate locations of southwestern, northeastern, and northwestern corners of the structure, respectively. Stratigraphic and artifactual compositions of the excavation units were relatively uniform with a low density of artifacts recovered from the upper stratigraphic level, underlain by a dense concentration of architectural activity related artifacts including brick and mortar, personal and kitchen activity related artifacts such as container glass, ceramic sherds as well as other materials such as butchered bone, cinder, slag, and unmodified limestone among others (Figures 7-11). Datable artifacts recovered from this context provide an unexpectedly early date range of the first half of the nineteenth century, including a blue-edged pearlware vessel fragment with a “dot and acanthus” molded motif scalloped rim (Figure 10). Underlying the artifact-dense second stratum, the excavation units in Subarea 3 encountered architectural remnants including stacked limestone foundational stones. Overall, investigations within Subarea 3 indicate that there are significant intact cultural deposits dating to the periods preceding the Civil War, including architectural remains capped by a layer of disturbed fill, likely caused by reconstruction activities during the WPA period or other land-maintenance activities.

The results of the archaeological investigations at Fort Negley Park indicate that the areas surrounding the stone fortification at the center of the park contain varying levels of cultural resource density and integrity. While areas in the northern and northeastern portion of the park provide some evidence of nineteenth century occupation, soil conditions and previous disturbances limit the potential for future



Figure 3. Early to mid-twentieth-century dump area within Subarea 1.

investigations. Areas on the eastern and southeastern portion of the park, specifically the hillside between the walking path and the former Hershel Greer Stadium parking lot, provide a significant concentration of early- to mid-twentieth century artifacts. However, these artifacts represent the activity of trash dumping, rather than human occupation, and are therefore relatively limited in their future research potential. The investigated areas in the southwestern portion of the park provide the highest potential for future research, with evidence for historical structures and occupation dating to at least the mid-nineteenth century with significant intact cultural deposits below a thin layer of disturbed soils.

Future research would benefit from additional investigations into areas that were beyond the limitations of the present project. Specifically, two areas were identified as possessing potential for intact cultural deposits. First, is the area to the east and downhill from Subarea 4. This area was occupied by a homeless encampment at the time of the project and was therefore not fully investigated aside from a surface inspection. The second area with a potential for future research is the area to the west of Fort Negley Blvd. in the far southwestern portion of the park. Surface evidence for non-extant residential home were noted in this area, and extensive core testing indicated that relatively deep and intact soils characterize this locale and contain cultural materials.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide these services. If you should have any questions, please contact me at (256) 705-4545.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Travis Rael in cursive script.

Travis Rael
Archaeologist

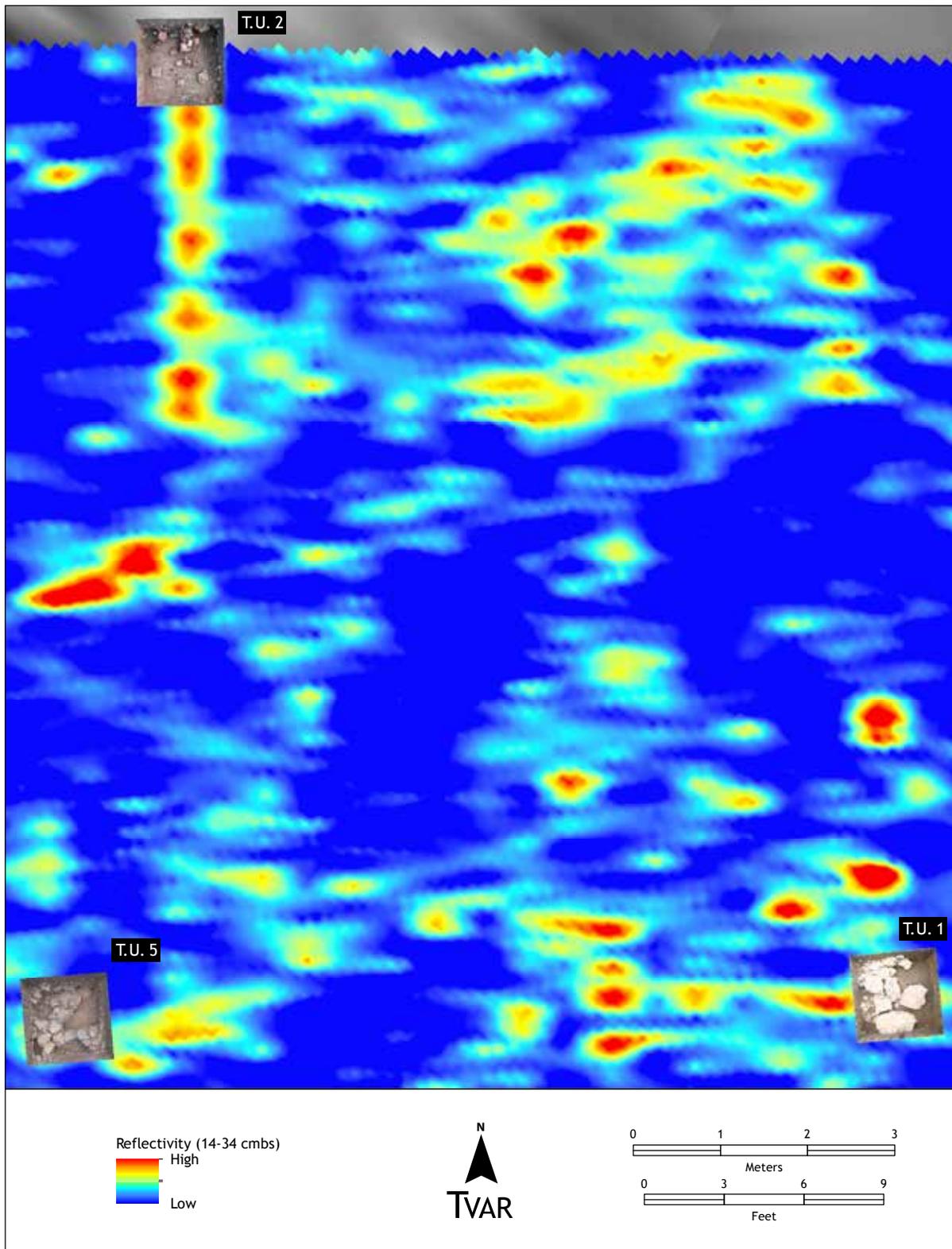


Figure 4. Excavation Units 1, 2, and 5 overlaid on ground penetrating radar data in Subarea 2.

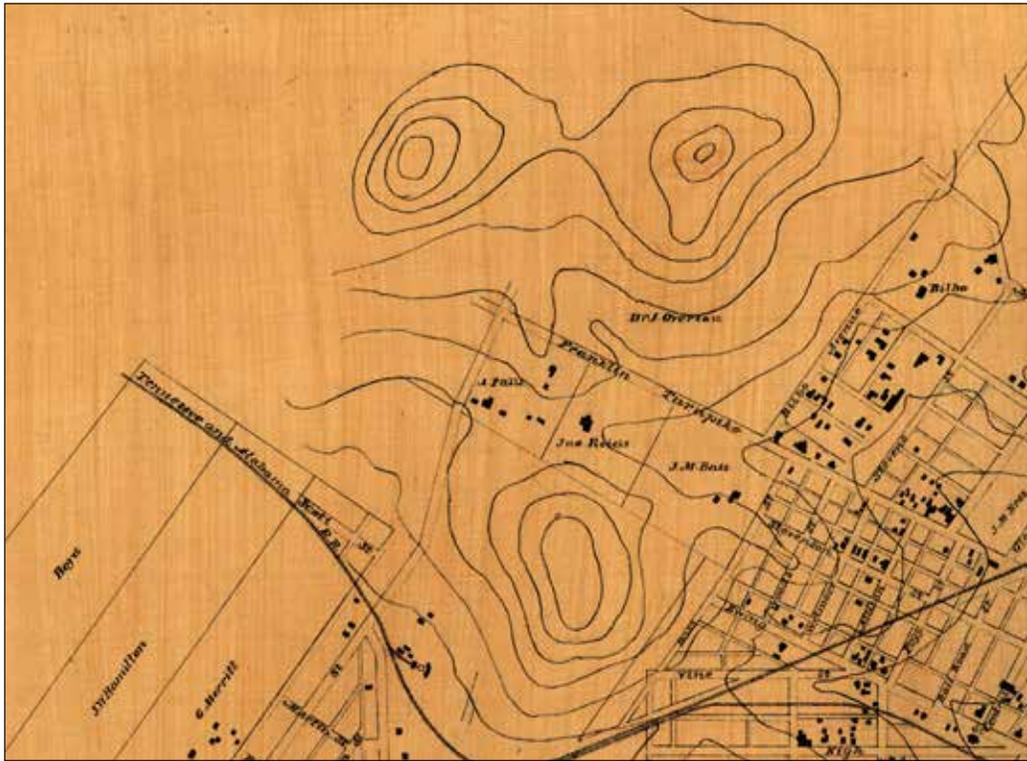


Figure 5. Portion of ca. 1860s United States Army Military Division of the Mississippi Chief Engineers Office Map of Nashville, Tennessee, showing St. Cloud Hill and a house labeled with the name John Reid within the general vicinity of the identified structure remains.



Figure 6. Portion of 1862 Confederate map of Union fortifications with “...HOUSE QUARTERS CAPT MORTON ?? OF ENGINEER BUELL'S STAFF.” written at the location of Reid's house.



Figure 7. Limestone (rubble masonry) foundation segment exposed within Excavation Unit 1.



Figure 8. Excavation Unit 1 southwest profile.



Figure 9. In situ nineteenth-century ceramics within Excavation Unit 1.



Figure 10. Blue-edged pearlware plate fragment with a "dot and acanthus" scalloped rim recovered from Excavation Unit 1.

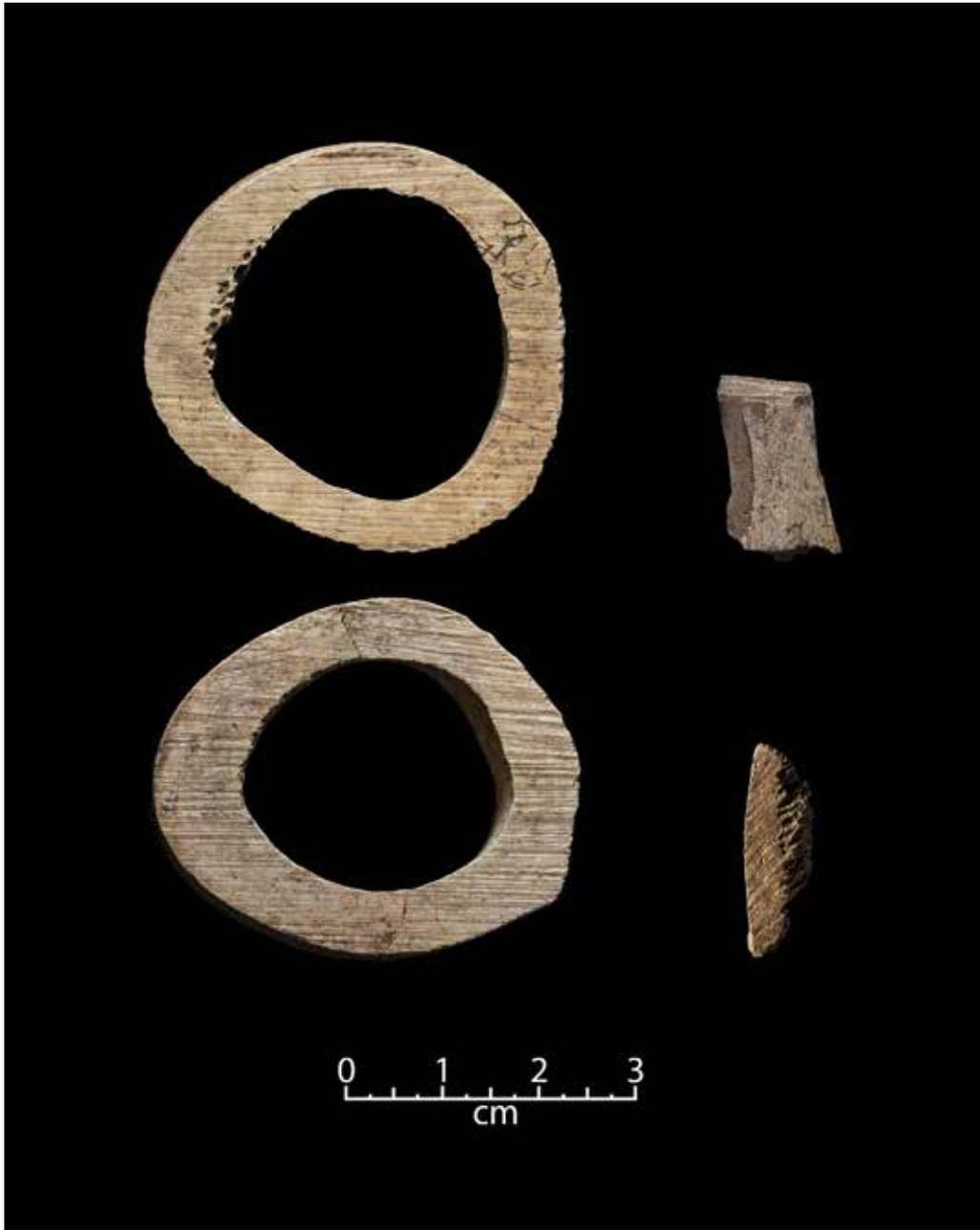


Figure 11. Butchered bone recovered from excavation units at non-extant structure.