

*Horace L. Hotchkiss, Jr. Curator  
The Corbit-Sharp House*

OPEN: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.;  
Sundays, 2-5 p.m.; except New Year's Day,  
February 22, May 30, July 4, Thanksgiving,  
December 24, and Christmas. (Closed Mondays)

*Odessa Del. 19730*

ADMISSION: Single admission to either the Corbit-  
Sharp House or the Wilson-Warner House,  
adults \$1.25, children under 16, 50 cents.  
Combined admission to both houses, adults  
\$2.00, children under 16, 75 cents.

Special arrangements for school and college  
tours, and for groups of 25 or more adults  
may be made by writing to the Curator, The  
Corbit-Sharp House, Odessa, Delaware 19730.

Telephone: 302 378-2681

Historic  
**ODESSA**  
Delaware  
on the  
**APPOQUINIMINK CREEK**



**The Corbit-Sharp House**  
**The Wilson-Warner House**  
**The John Janvier Stable**

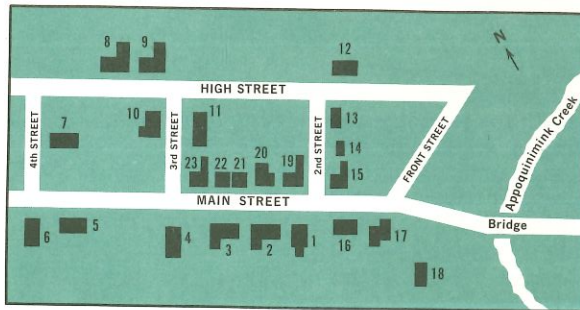
Three buildings administered by  
The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum

## The John Janvier Stable

The stable built in 1791 by John Janvier, Sr., a cabinetmaker who worked at Head of Elk (now Elkton, Maryland) and Odessa, stands behind the Brick Hotel across the street from the Corbit-Sharp House and the Wilson-Warner House. Of unusual architectural interest because of its wood-and-brick construction, the building formerly was on the grounds of St. Paul's Methodist Church parsonage on Main Street, once Janvier's home, and was given by the Church to The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum. The stable was moved to its present site in 1969.

As was the custom in earlier days, the local cabinetmaker, who produced coffins, was also the town undertaker. John Janvier, Jr., served in this capacity, and it is known that the stable once housed a two-wheel horse-drawn hearse.

The Brick Hotel, as yet not fully restored, was built in 1822, and was given to the Winterthur Museum in 1966 by H. Rodney Sharp.



### HISTORIC HOUSES IN ODESSA, DELAWARE

1. Corbit-Sharp House, 1772-1774; administered by the Winterthur Museum
2. Wilson-Warner House, 1769; administered by the Winterthur Museum
3. John Corbit House, remodeled second half of nineteenth century; rear portion eighteenth century.
4. Maily House, front modern, rear portion ca. 1770
5. Judge Lore House, ca. 1830; log side wing, ca. 1740
6. John Janvier House, 1775
7. Community Center, originally Odessa Public School, 1844; reconstructed, 1893
8. Cyrus Polk House, ca. 1852
9. William T. Polk House, 1846
10. Tatman House, 1845
11. Enos House, 1845
12. The Corbit Library and J. C. Calloway Memorial, 1968
13. Collins-Johnson House, ca. 1700; moved from shore of Delaware Bay near Taylor's Bridge, 1962
14. John Janvier Stable, 1791; administered by the Winterthur Museum
15. Brick Hotel, 1822
16. Pump House, ca. 1772; once a store
17. Clapboard house of log construction, ca. 1740; once a store
18. January House, ca. 1780
19. Bank of Delaware; originally New Castle County National Bank of Odessa, 1853
20. Crouch House, 1854
21. Davis Store, ca. 1824; remodeled ca. 1870
22. Residence attached to store, ca. 1830
23. Van Dyke House, 1840

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## The Corbit-Sharp House

The house which William Corbit (1745-1818) built between 1772 and 1774 is distinguished for its architecture and handsomely appointed interiors. This family home, which changed in appearance over the years, was owned by Corbit's descendants until 1938 when H. Rodney Sharp acquired it, restored it carefully, and furnished it with antiques of quality and style. In 1958 Mr. Sharp endowed the house and presented it to The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum to be open to the public.

The Corbit-Sharp House stands near the banks of the Appoquinimink Creek and above the site of the tannery William Corbit operated. On this slight rise, at the age of twenty-seven, he started to build a home which resembled in many ways the elegant pre-Revolutionary houses of the Philadelphia area.

William Corbit was a practical man and kept meticulous records of "Expenses in Building my House . . ." These records were invaluable in the restoration of the building; and the inventory listing Corbit's possessions at the time of his death in 1818 served as a guide to its furnishings. Important pieces by local craftsmen now in the House are a chest of drawers made by John Janvier, Jr., whose house still stands in Odessa, and two tall clocks by Duncan Beard, eighteenth-century clockmaker and silversmith.

Today a spacious lawn in front of the Corbit-Sharp House sweeps down past the former tannery site to the marshes that border the Creek. Next to the house is an herb garden laid out in formal geometric patterns and heart shapes, edged with small evergreens. Two great sycamore trees, planted two hundred years ago, rise above the flowering shrubs and other plantings on the lawn.



## The Wilson-Warner House

The Wilson-Warner House (formerly the David Wilson Mansion) is of the same architectural quality and is as graciously furnished as is the Corbit-Sharp House next to which it stands. The main section was built in 1769 as an addition to an earlier house probably built around 1740. Occupied by Wilson's descendants until 1830, when it was sold out of the family, the house was acquired in 1901 by his great-granddaughter Mrs. Mary Corbit Warner. At her death in 1923 the property was willed to heirs, who, at Mrs. Warner's direction, administered the house as a museum until giving it to The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum in 1969.

David Wilson (1743-1820) was a prosperous merchant whose store was just east of his home and next to that of William Corbit, brother of Wilson's second wife, Mary Corbit. The store no longer stands, but archaeological excavations have revealed its site.

The interior of the Wilson-Warner House contains fine paneling, and the rooms are furnished with antiques, some family pieces of the Wilsons and Corbits, but mostly eighteenth-century furniture bequeathed by Dr. and Mrs. J. Newbury Reynolds, of Princeton, New Jersey. Included is a labeled desk by William Savery, of Philadelphia, as well as pieces by skilled Delaware Valley craftsmen.

Attached to the exterior of the kitchen fireplace is a smokehouse, which provided an enclosed area where the smoke from the cooking fireplace could be used to preserve meats hung from the rafters.

Delaware's first public library, the Corbit Library, was located in the Wilson-Warner House until 1968 when its holdings were transferred to the J. C. Calloway Memorial which opened that year.

## Historic Odessa

Odessa, on the banks of the meandering Appoquinimink Creek, is a quiet Delaware town which today retains much of its nineteenth-century atmosphere. Along its wide tree-bordered Main Street are houses of architectural distinction built by men whose enterprise helped to make their community the economic center of a busy agricultural area. Here are also the homes of the craftsmen and other workers whose industry was important to the town's prosperity.

Known originally as Appoquinimink, the town was renamed Cantwell's Bridge in 1731 in honor of Richard Cantwell, who that year was given authority by the General Court to build a toll bridge over the Creek. Farmers from the countryside nearby brought their produce to the granaries and docks of Cantwell's Bridge to be shipped by shallop down the Appoquinimink to the Delaware River, and from there to coastal and foreign ports. By 1825 there were six large granaries along the Creek, which shipped thousands of bushels of grain annually. By the middle of the nineteenth century the town had become an important grain-shipping port and in 1855, aspiring to the fame of the Russian seaport which exported Ukrainian wheat all over the world, changed its name to Odessa.

When the railroad came to the Delmarva Peninsula, a route through Middletown, four miles west of Odessa, was chosen, and farmers started sending their products to market in this new way. At the same time the Middle West was emerging as the country's major grain-producing area. With less business for the shallops on the Appoquinimink and the granaries on the Creek's banks, Odessa began to decline as a commercial center.

Today Odessa is a community of well-restored and carefully tended eighteenth- and nineteenth-century houses, with neat lawns and gardens. Many of these were preserved by the late H. Rodney Sharp, of Wilmington, and are now privately occupied, but their handsome exteriors may be enjoyed on a walk through the town. (See map.) The two eighteenth-century houses open to the public are the Corbit-Sharp House and the Wilson-Warner House.



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June 13, 1974

Mr. Horace L. Hotchkiss, Jr. Curator  
The Corbit-Sharp House  
Odessa, Delaware 19730

Dear Mr. Corbit:

Bruce Bevan has prepared two chort reports and has plotted the results of the resistivity survey. The latter are not really conclusive, but as he pointed out, may represent real anomalies. The aerial photos, however, do give more definite indications of the tannery road, etc.

Our magnetometer is scheduled to be repaired and returned by July 1st. When we have it back and are sure that it is working, we shall get in touch with you.

We enjoyed our visit to the Corbit House on May 28th.

Sincerely yours,

Elizabeth K. Ralph

Beth,

2 PM Wed.

A Horace Hodgkins (sp?)  
associated with  
Winterthur called about  
the possibility of your  
doing a resistivity or  
magnetometer survey to  
determine the layout of  
an 18th cent. garden in  
Odessa, Del. He was  
referred to you by a  
Dr. Wilkinson of Hagley.  
He can be reached at  
302-378-2681.

378-2249  
Rick

Ta Wheeler

LA 5-7105

Mary Virginia Harris

Near East

---

Stable left - stable  
stone -- 1812

New soil over it

150 x 400'

< end May

Pay expenses

Tues. May, 28<sup>th</sup>

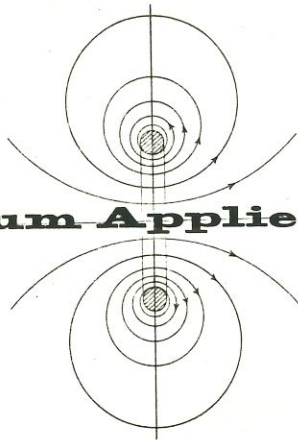
rt. 40 or rt. 13

10 miles beyond canal

Odessa - KO sta.

left at light -

all way to Corbitt Hse.



**Museum Applied Science Center for Archaeology**

Froelich Rainey, Director

Elizabeth K. Ralph, Associate Director

THE UNIVERSITY MUSEUM F1 • UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA  
33rd & SPRUCE STREETS • PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19174  
386-7400 (Area Code 215) Cable Address "Antique"

November 13, 1974

Mr. Horace Hotchkiss, Jr.  
Curator, The Corbit-Sharp House  
Odessa, Delaware 19730

Dear Mr. Hotchkiss:

Enclosed are two photos which Dorothy Greer may use if she wishes in your report. Since the quality is not as good as I had wished for and I did the printing myself, there is no charge for them.

The magnetic maps resulting from our latest survey are enclosed also, along with a short analysis of them.

If you have any questions about them, please give Beth or me a call.

Very best regards,

*Bruce Bevan*

Bruce Bevan

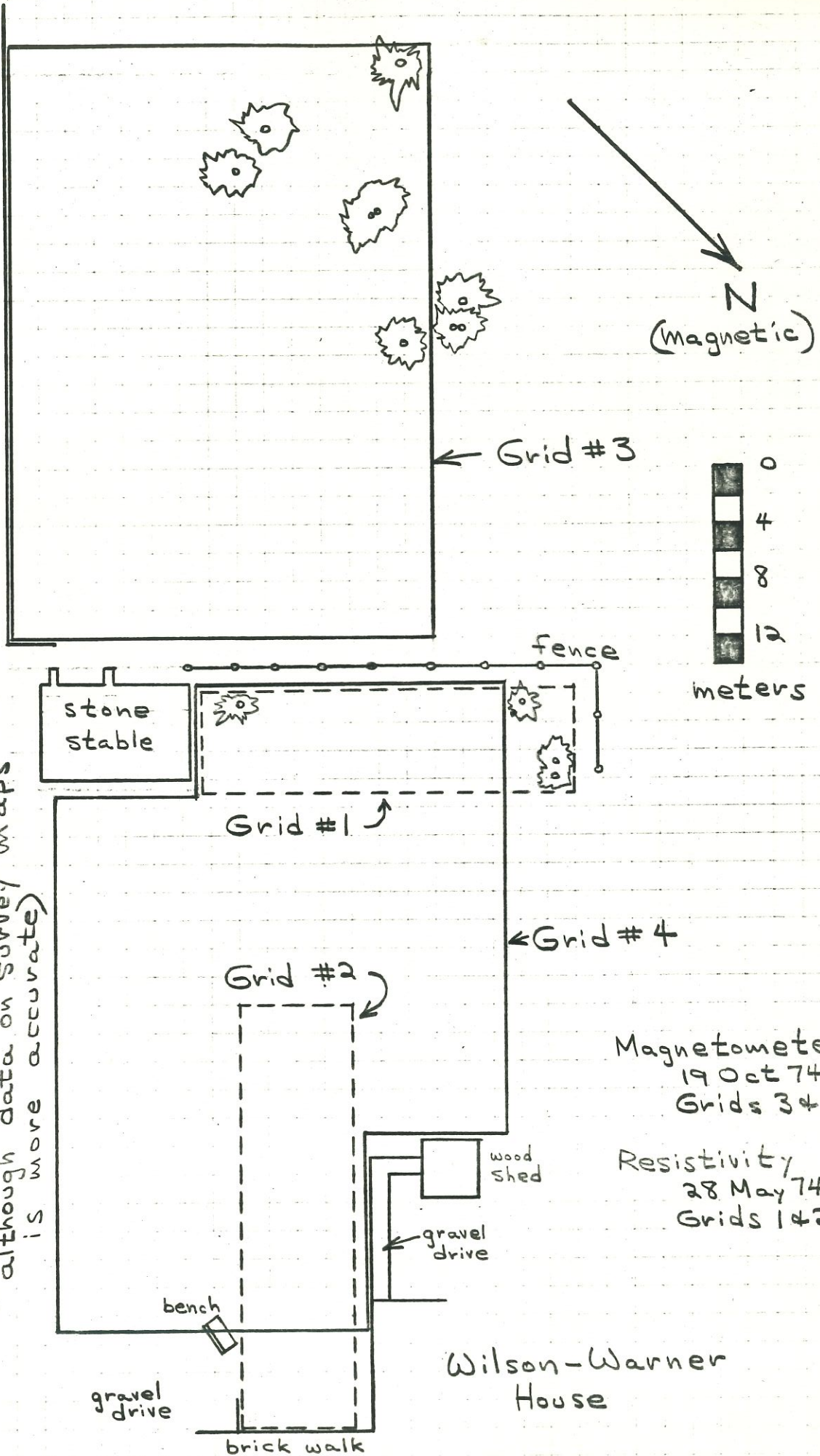
## MAGNETIC MAPS

The contour lines on these maps indicate the shape and amplitude of anomalous patterns in the magnetic field. The two most pronounced patterns are probably the result of buried iron, although they could be due to fire hearths also. Each location probably has over a kilogram buried at a depth of less than a meter; these are marked by the word "Iron" on the maps. There are also three possible additional iron concentrations marked on the two maps.

While there were no definite clues to buried structures such as foundations, the three somewhat rectangular patterns marked on Grid #4 are a possibility. If, during an excavation, you find that one of these patterns is significant, the others may then be important to test also. Since it is possible that these three patterns may be the result of instrument malfunctions, do not put too much confidence in them.

# Sketch Map of Survey Locations

(accuracy sometimes no better than 2m, although data on survey maps is more accurate)



Magnetometer  
19 Oct 74  
Grids 3 & 4

Resistivity  
28 May 74  
Grids 1 & 2

# Grid #3

meters



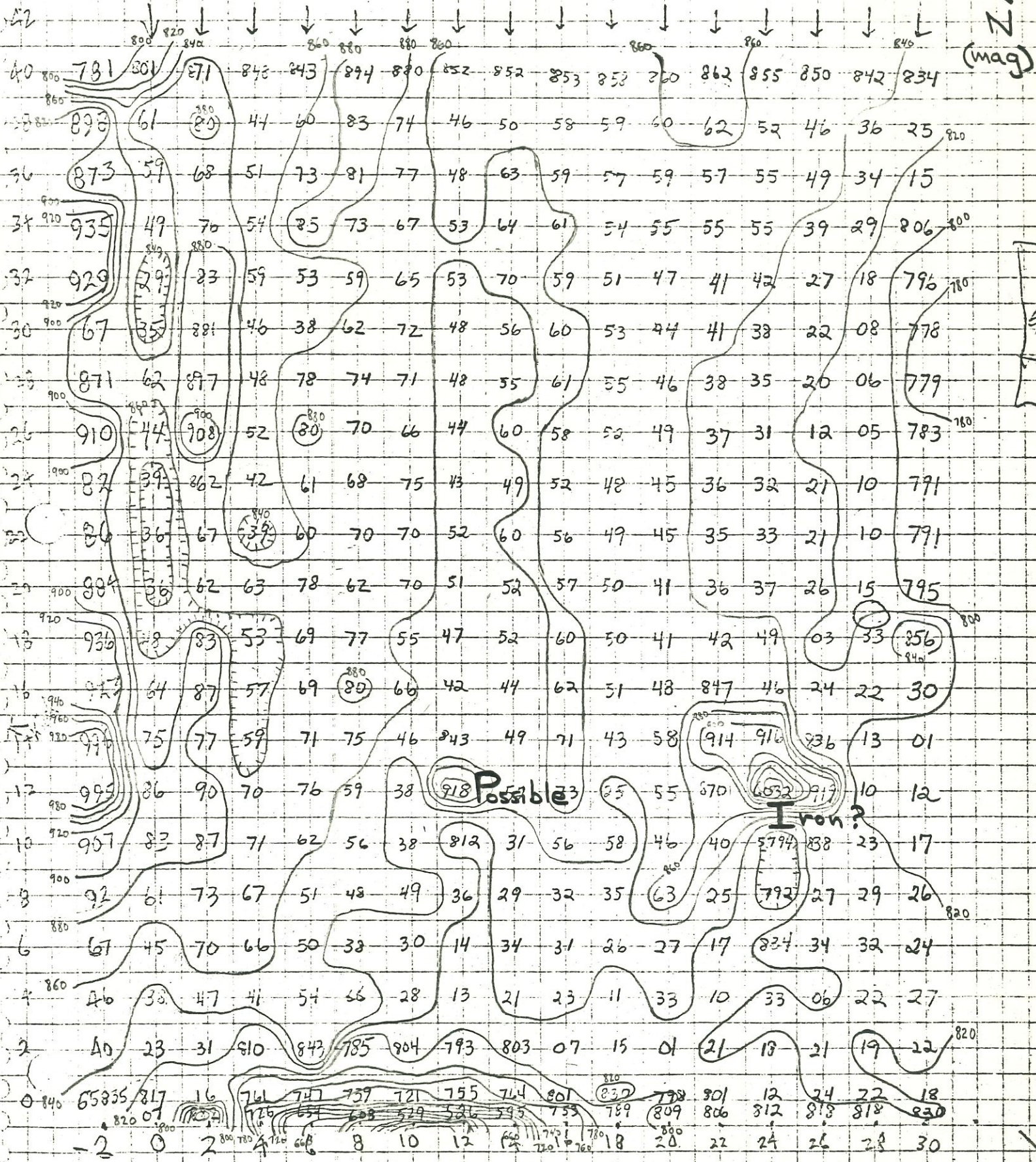
## Magnetometer Survey, Odessa, Delaware

tree



(mag)

sw of stable



# GRID #4

## Magnetometer Survey

Wilson-Warner House

Odessa, Delaware

19 October 1974

Measurement spacing = 2m

Contour interval = 20  $\gamma$

average field = 65,800  $\gamma$

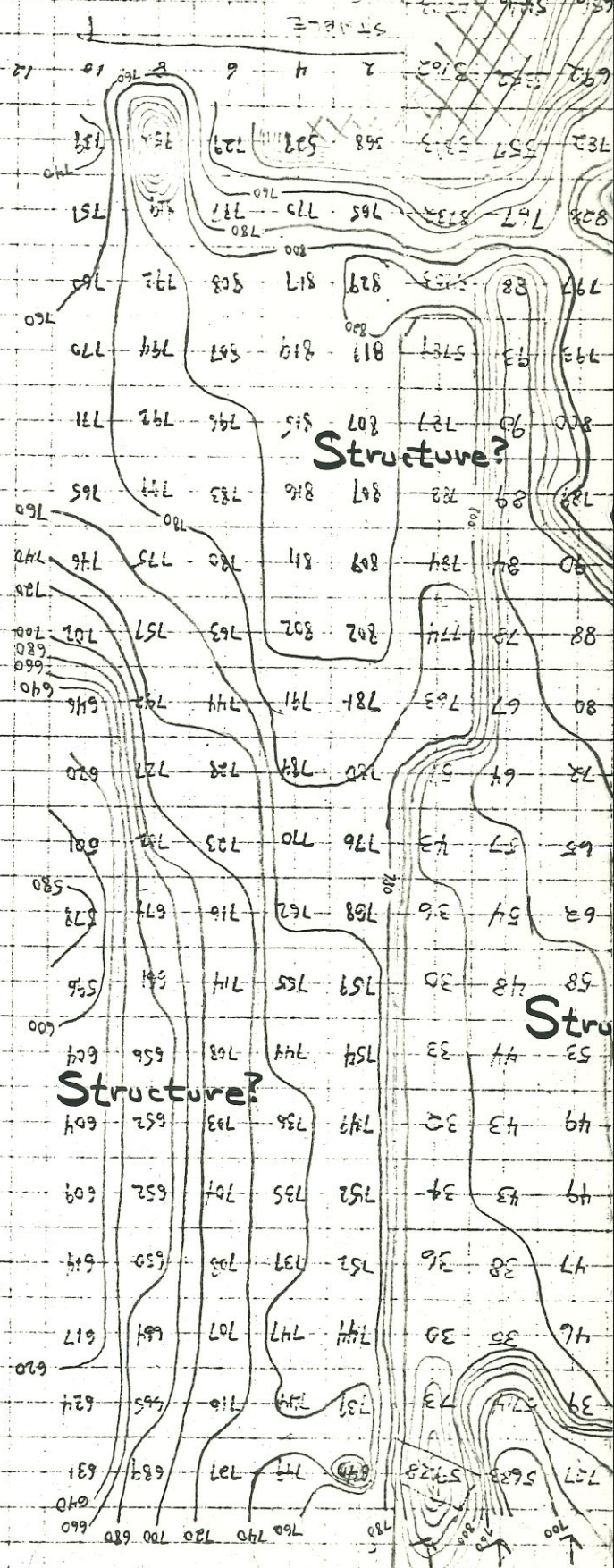
sensor height = 3/4 m

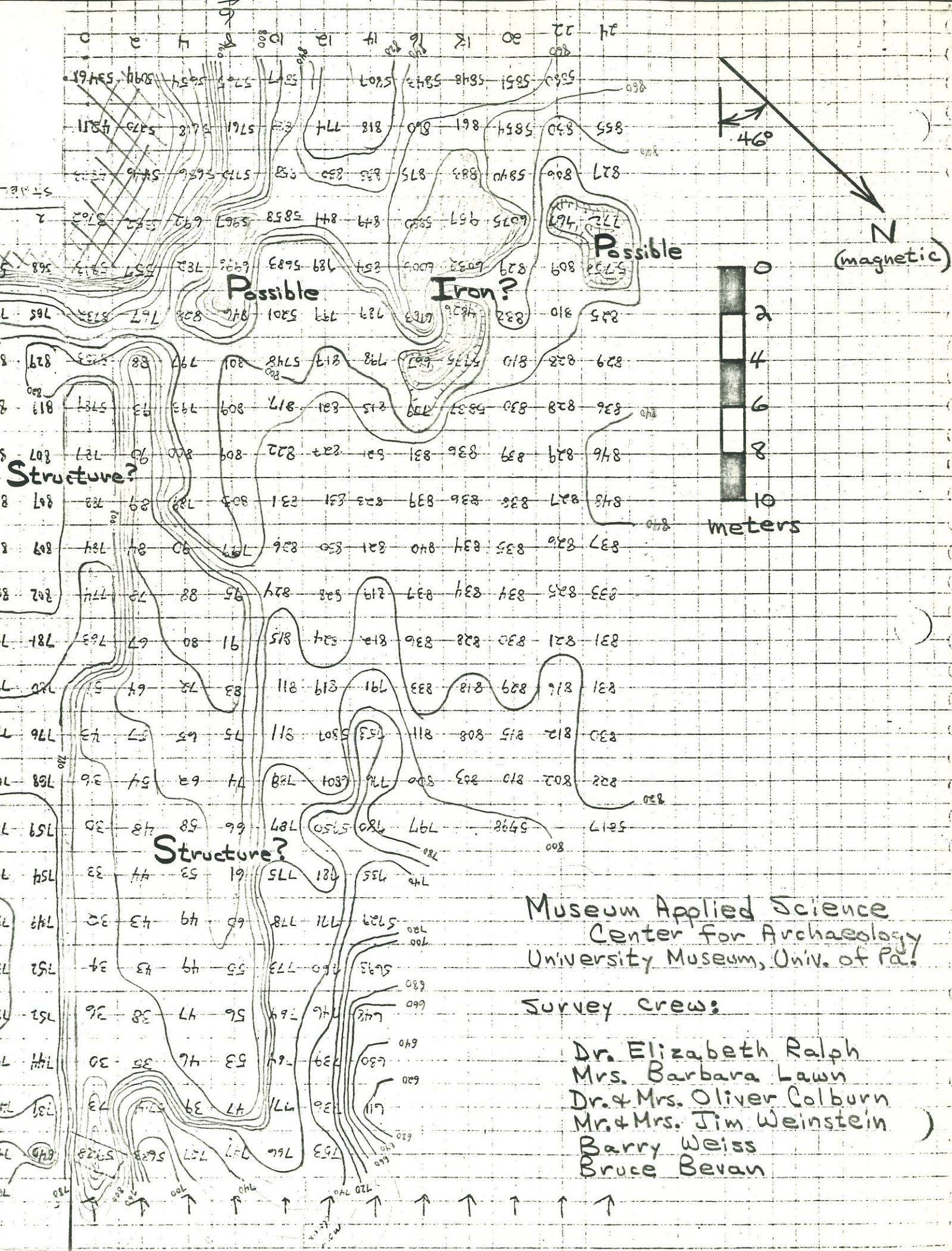
traverse direction = NE-SW

Varian Cesium Magnetometer

absolute readings, no  
correction for diurnal change

N of stable





Museum Applied Science  
 Center for Archaeology  
 University Museum, Univ. of Pa.

Survey crew:

- Dr. Elizabeth Ralph
- Mrs. Barbara Lawn
- Dr. & Mrs. Oliver Colburn
- Mr. & Mrs. Jim Weinstein
- Barry Weiss
- Bruce Bevan

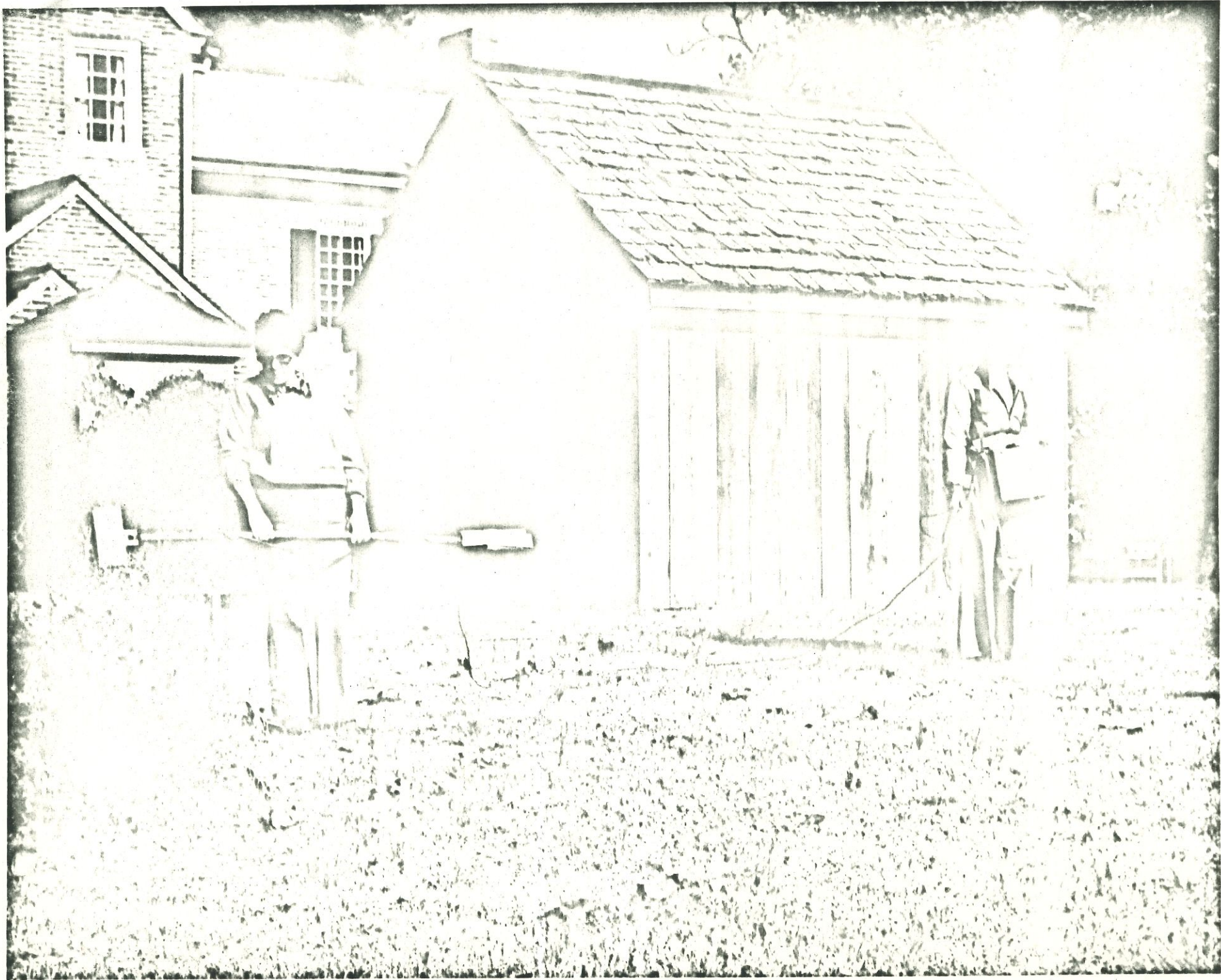
CAPTION INFORMATION

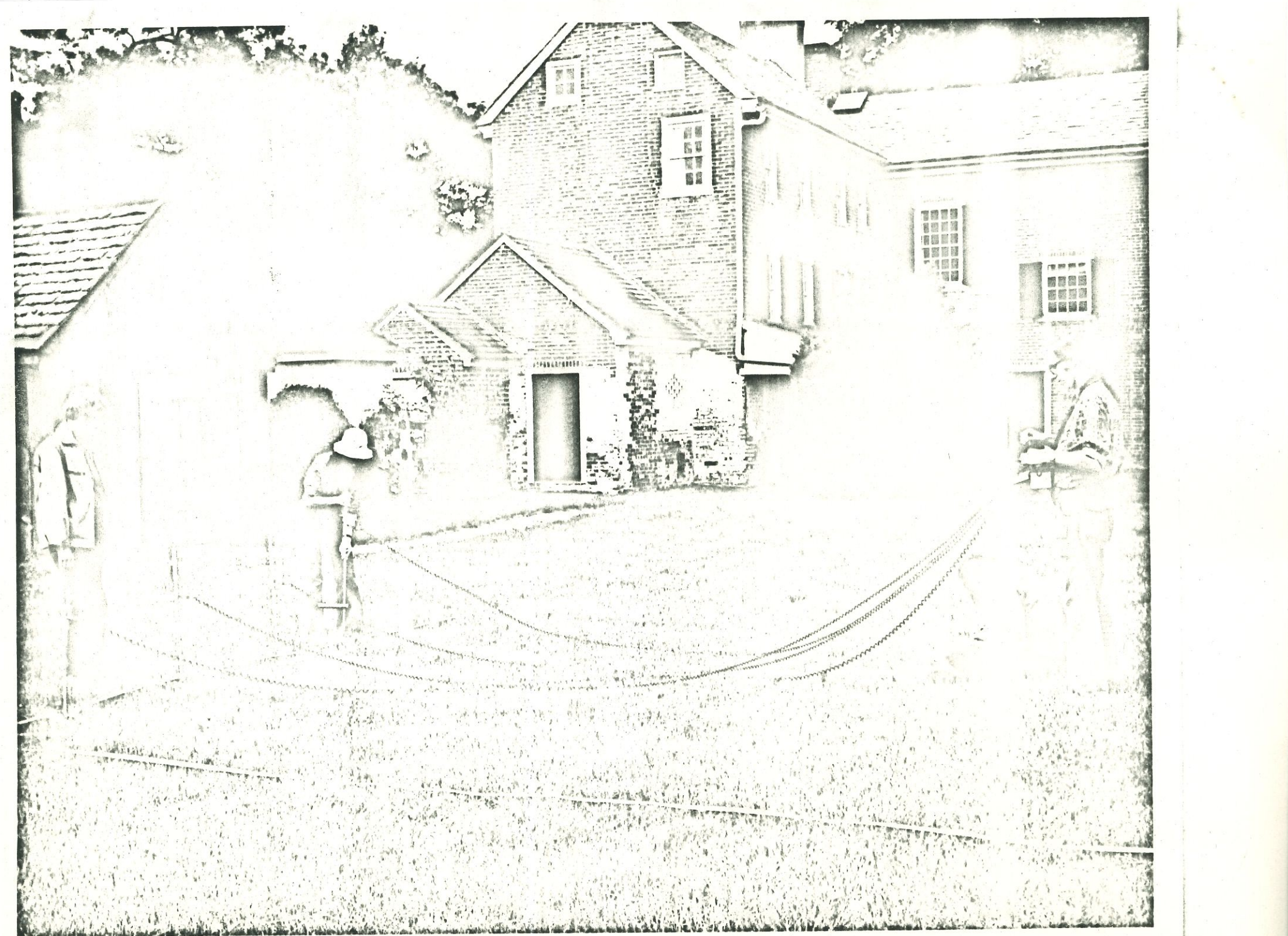
Magnetometer Survey: October 19, 1974

Mrs. Barbara Lawn on the left holds cesium sensor while Mrs. Gail Weinstein reads the numerical indication of the magnetic field intensity.

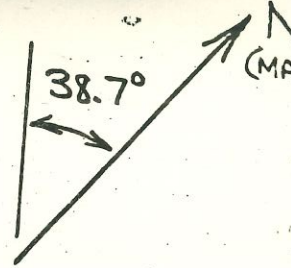
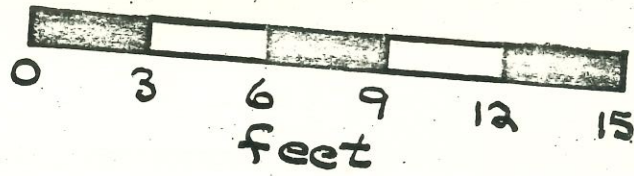
Resistivity Survey: May 28, 1974

Left to right: Dr. Elizabeth Ralph, Miss Kathleen Ryan, Michael Rosenberg, and Jerry Schaeffer. The four metal posts are connected by the coiled cables to the box that Jerry is holding; this instrument measures the electrical resistance of the soil.





Grid #1

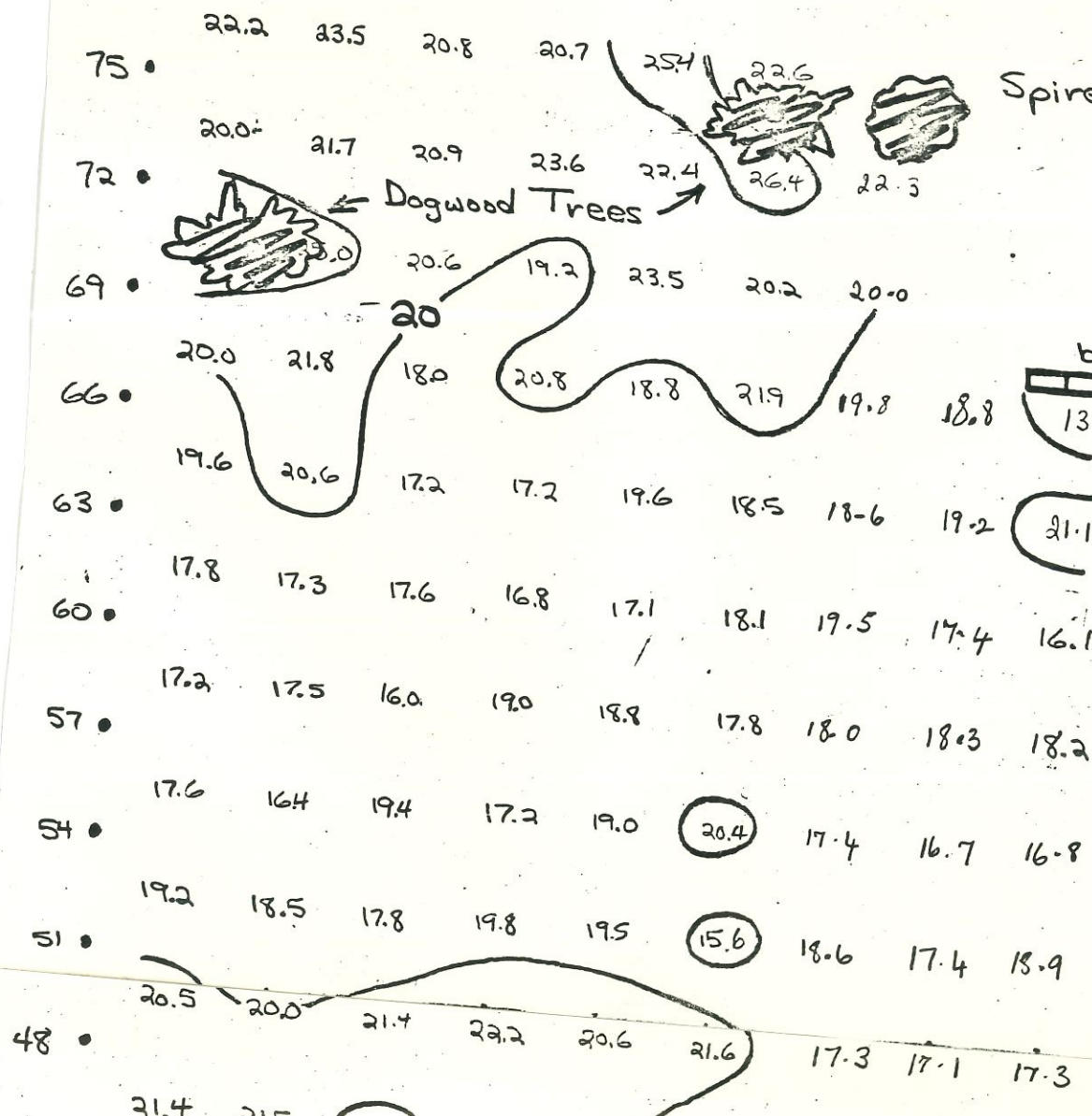
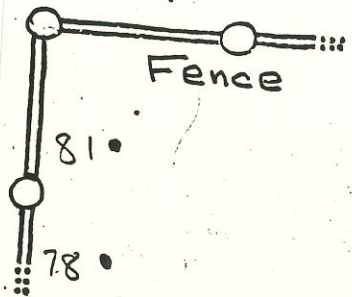


# Resistivity Survey

28 May 1974

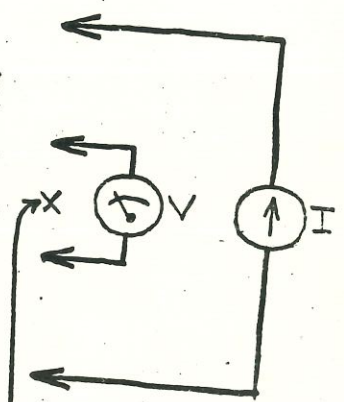
Wilson-Warner House; Odessa, Del.

measurement spacing = 3 ft.  
 contour interval = 4 ohm  
 resistivity high resistivity low  
 instrument: Gossen Geohm (#3518)



Spirea Bush

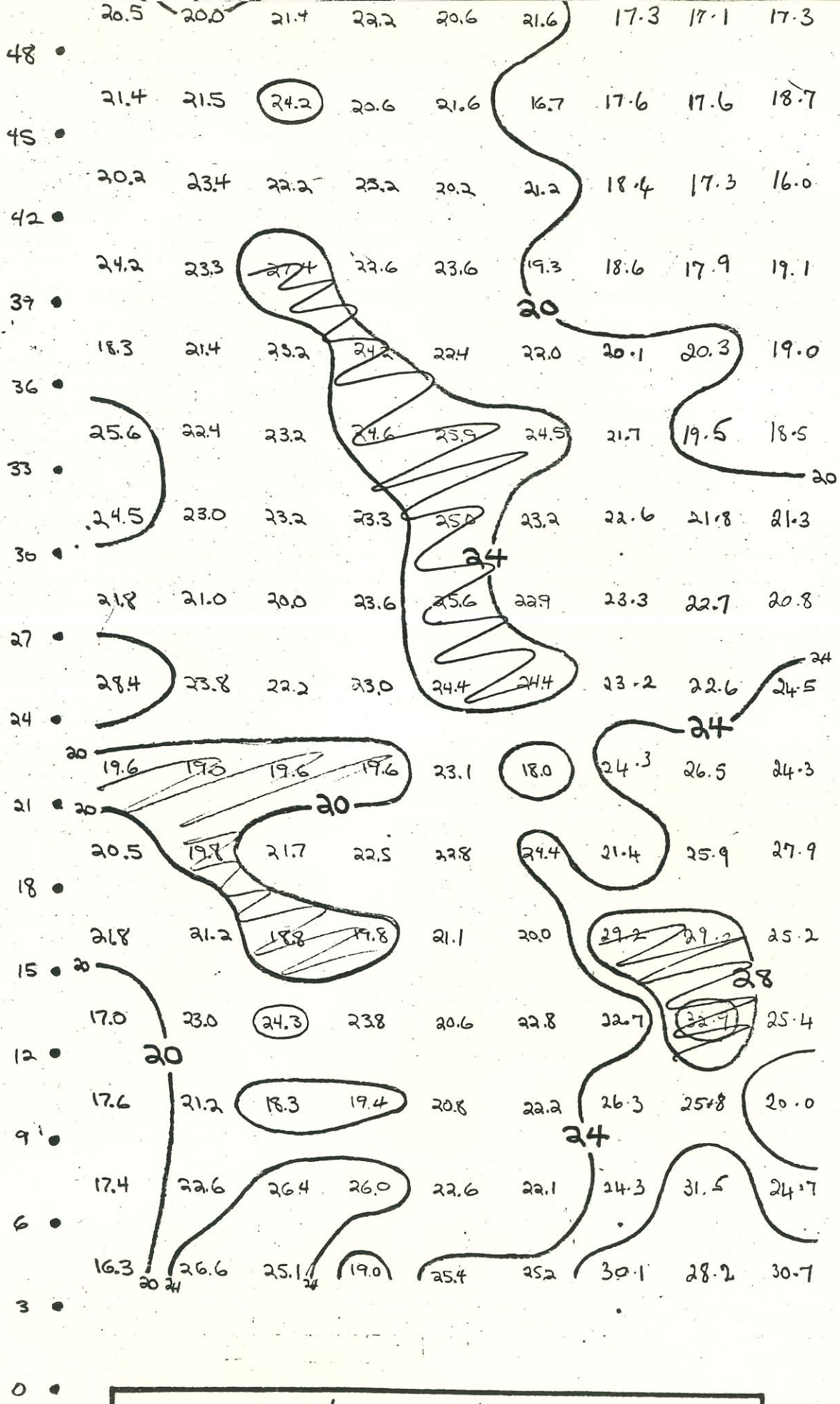
Dogwood Trees



$$R = \frac{V}{I}$$

measurement put here

measurements put here



↑  
traverse  
direction  
↓

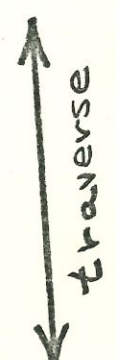
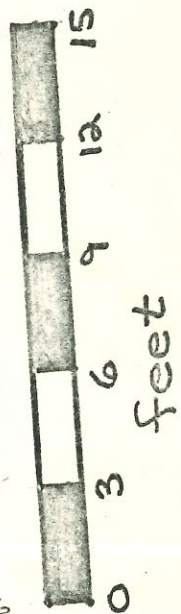
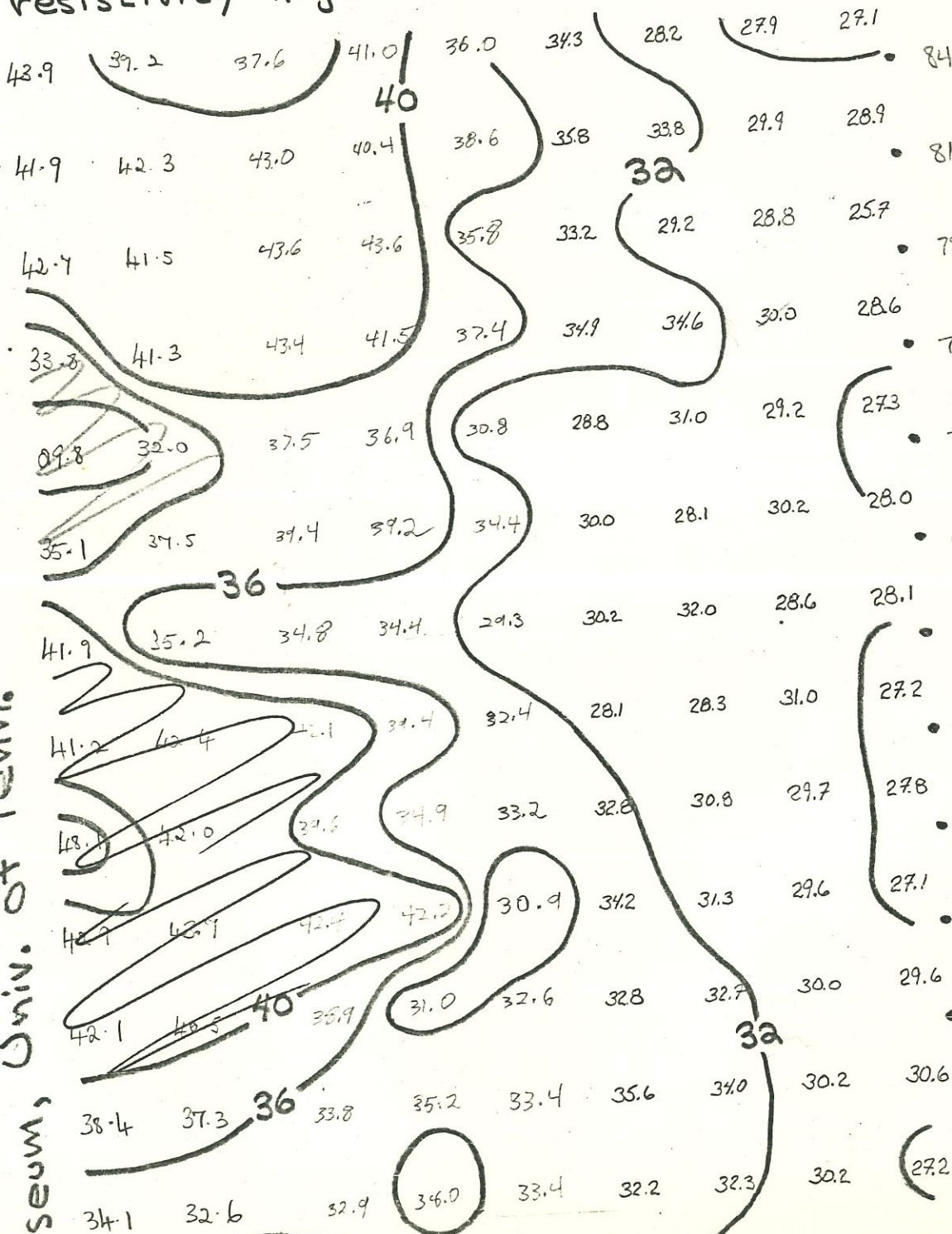
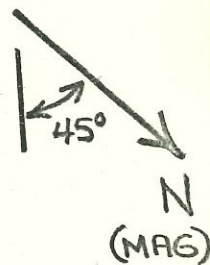
Museum Applied Science Center for Archaeology  
University Museum, Univ. of Pennsylvania

28 May 1974

# Grid #2 Resistivity Survey Wilson-Warner House; Odessa, Delaware

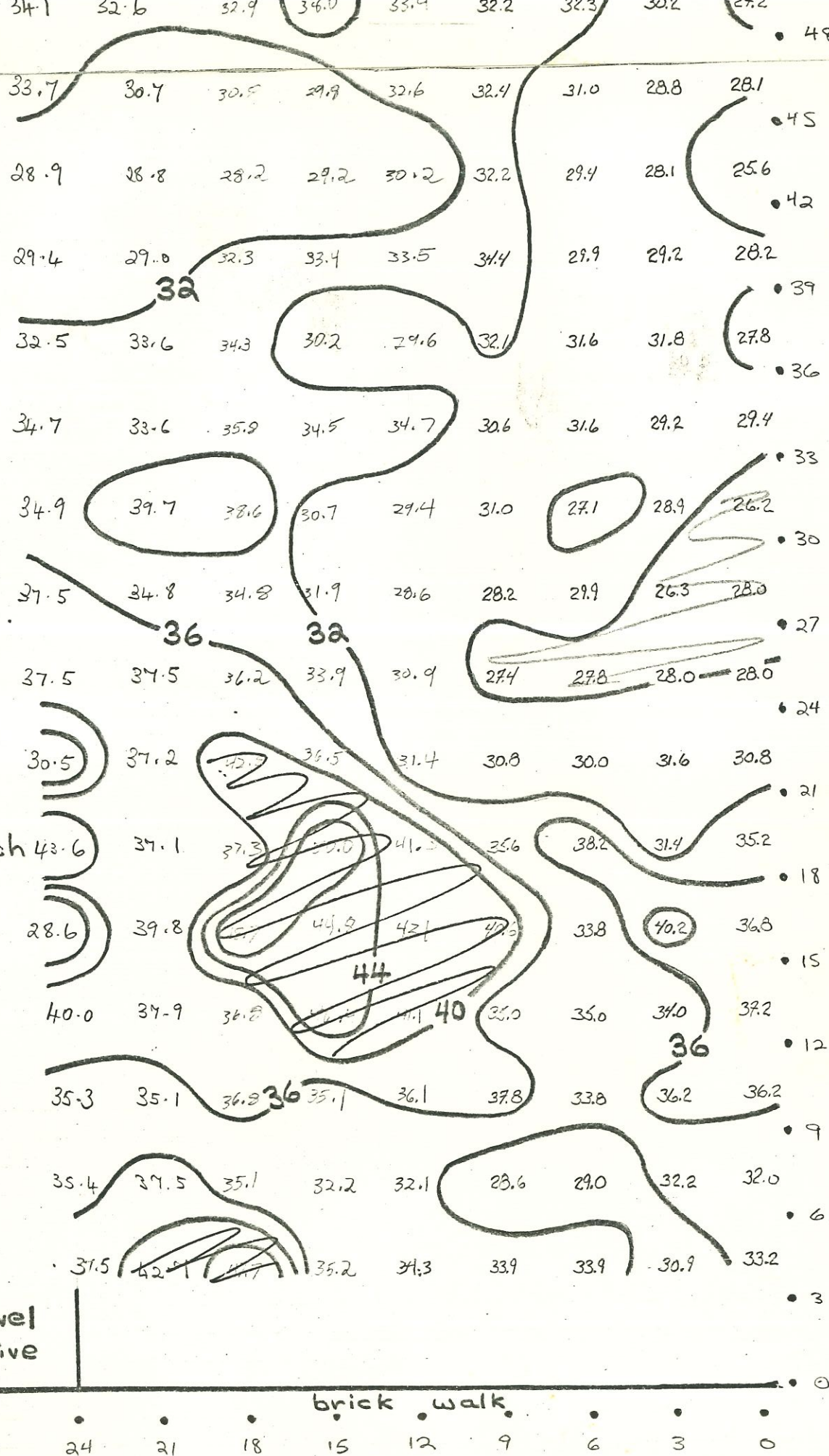
measurement spacing = 3ft.  
contour interval = 4 ohm

resistivity high      resistivity low



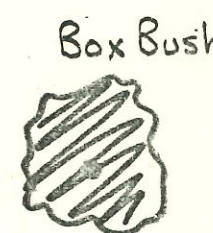
Univ. of Penn.  
Museum,

MASCA, The University Mus



Dr. Elizabeth Ralph  
 Kathleen Ryan  
 Michael Rosenberg  
 Jerry Schaefer  
 Bruce Bevan

Survey crew:



48

46

44

42

40 6007

38 795 640 749 727 689 631

36 759 739 744 716 665 624

34 769 744 747 707 664 617

32 770 752 739 708 650 614

30 771 752 735 704 652 609

28 770 749 736 703 652 604

26 777 754 744 708 656 604

24 777 759 755 714 661 596

22 787 768 762 716 674 578

20 791 776 770 723 702 601

18 803 780 784 728 727 620

16 804 781 791 744 742 646

14 816 802 802 763 757 702

12 819 809 811 780 775 746

10 816 807 816 783 799 765

8 814 807 815 796 792 771

6 814 817 819 807 794 770

4 5818 829 817 808 792 760

2 5702 765 770 797 819 751

0 5260 568 528 729 952 739

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16  
STABLE

Magnetometer Survey at Odessa, Delaware, 19 Oct 74

	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	
							753	766	747	727	5683	5928	46	
							611	736	771	47	39	5711	73	44
							630	739	764	53	46	35	30	42
							648	746	764	56	47	38	36	40
							5693	760	773	55	49	43	34	38
							5727	771	778	60	49	43	32	36
							735	781	775	61	53	44	33	34
5617		5498		797	780	5750	787	66	58	48	30	32		
828	802	810	803	806	776	6801	788	74	62	54	36	30		
830	812	815	808	811	753	5807	811	75	65	57	43	28		
831	816	829	818	833	791	819	811	83	72	64	51	26		
831	821	830	828	836	812	824	815	91	80	67	763	24		
833	825	834	834	837	819	828	824	95	88	78	774	22		
837	826	835	834	840	821	830	826	799	90	84	784	20		
848	827	838	836	839	823	831	831	803	789	89	788	18		
846	829	837	836	831	821	827	822	809	800	90	787	16		
836	828	830	5837	779	813	821	817	809	793	93	5789	14		
829	828	810	5775	667	798	817	5748	801	797	88	5803	12		
825	810	832	4826	6163	789	799	5201	846	828	767	5732	10		
5752	809	829	6032	6006	854	789	5683	6996	782	557	5313	8		
772	767	6075	957	5880	849	844	5858	5967	692	5352	3762	6		
827	806	5840	883	875	833	830	858	5770	5656	5446	4823	4		
855	830	5854	861	860	818	774	828	5761	5618	5270	4211	2		
	5860	5851	5848	5843	5807		5847	5765	5654	5094	53461	0		
24	22	20	18	16	14	12	10	8	4	2	0			

STABLE



BENCH

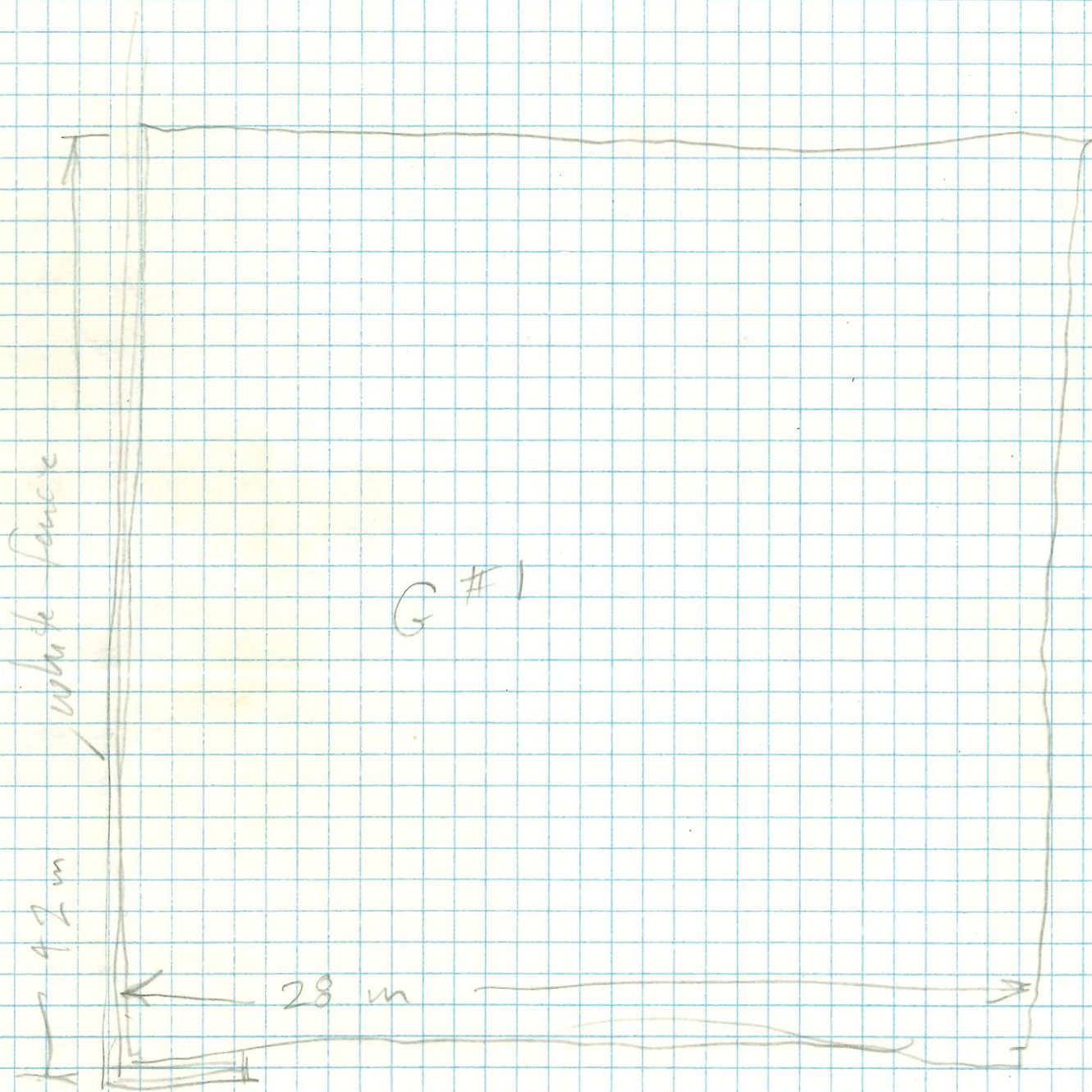
max  
min

○ = tree

42		↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
40	781	801	871	848	843	894	880	852	852	853	858	860	862	855	850	842	834
38	898	61	80	44	60	83	74	46	50	58	59	60	62	52	46	36	25
36	873	59	68	51	73	81	77	48	63	59	57	59	57	55	49	34	15
34	935	49	76	54	85	73	67	53	64	61	54	55	55	55	39	29	806
32	929	29	83	59	53	59	65	53	70	59	51	47	41	42	27	18	796
30	67	35	881	46	38	62	72	48	56	60	53	44	41	38	22	08	778
28	871	62	897	48	78	74	71	48	55	61	55	46	38	35	20	06	779
26	910	44	908	52	80	70	66	44	60	58	52	49	37	31	12	05	783
24	82	39	862	42	61	68	75	43	49	52	48	45	36	32	21	10	791
22	86	36	67	39	60	70	70	52	60	56	49	45	35	33	21	10	791
20	884	36	62	63	78	62	70	51	52	57	50	41	36	37	26	15	795
18	936	48	83	53	69	77	55	47	52	60	50	41	42	49	03	33	856
16	923	64	87	57	69	80	66	42	44	62	51	48	847	46	24	22	30
14	996	75	77	59	71	75	46	243	49	71	43	58	914	916	836	13	01
12	995	86	90	70	76	59	38	918	52	73	25	55	870	6032	919	10	12
10	907	83	87	71	62	56	38	812	31	56	58	46	40	5794	838	23	17
8	92	61	73	67	51	48	49	36	29	32	35	63	25	792	27	29	26
6	67	45	70	66	50	38	30	14	34	31	26	27	17	834	34	32	24
4	46	38	47	41	54	66	28	13	21	23	11	33	10	33	06	22	27
2	40	23	31	810	843	785	804	793	803	07	15	01	21	18	21	19	22
0	85835	817	16	761	747	739	721	755	764	801	830	798	801	12	24	22	18
	07	892	726	634	608	529	526	595	753	789	809	806	812	818	818	820	
	-2	0	2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28	30

b/d.g.  
v.s.

G1 10/10/79

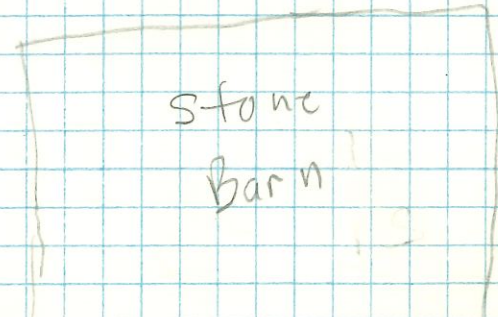


G #1

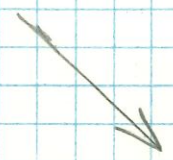
white fence

42 m

28 m



Stone  
Barn



48

46

44

42

40 6007

38 865 640 749 727 689 631

36 816 739 724 716 665 624

34 800 744 747 767 681 617

32 803 752 737 708 650 614

30 802 752 735 704 652 609

28 801 749 736 703 652 604

26 805 754 744 708 656 604

24 804 751 755 714 661 596

22 812 768 762 716 674 578

20 817 776 770 723 702 601

18 808 780 784 728 727 620

16 804 781 791 741 742 646

14 815 802 802 763 757 702

12 819 807 811 780 775 746

10 808 807 816 783 791 765

8 804 807 815 796 792 771

6 802 817 817 807 794 770

4 5818 829 817 808 792 760

2 5762 765 770 777 819 751

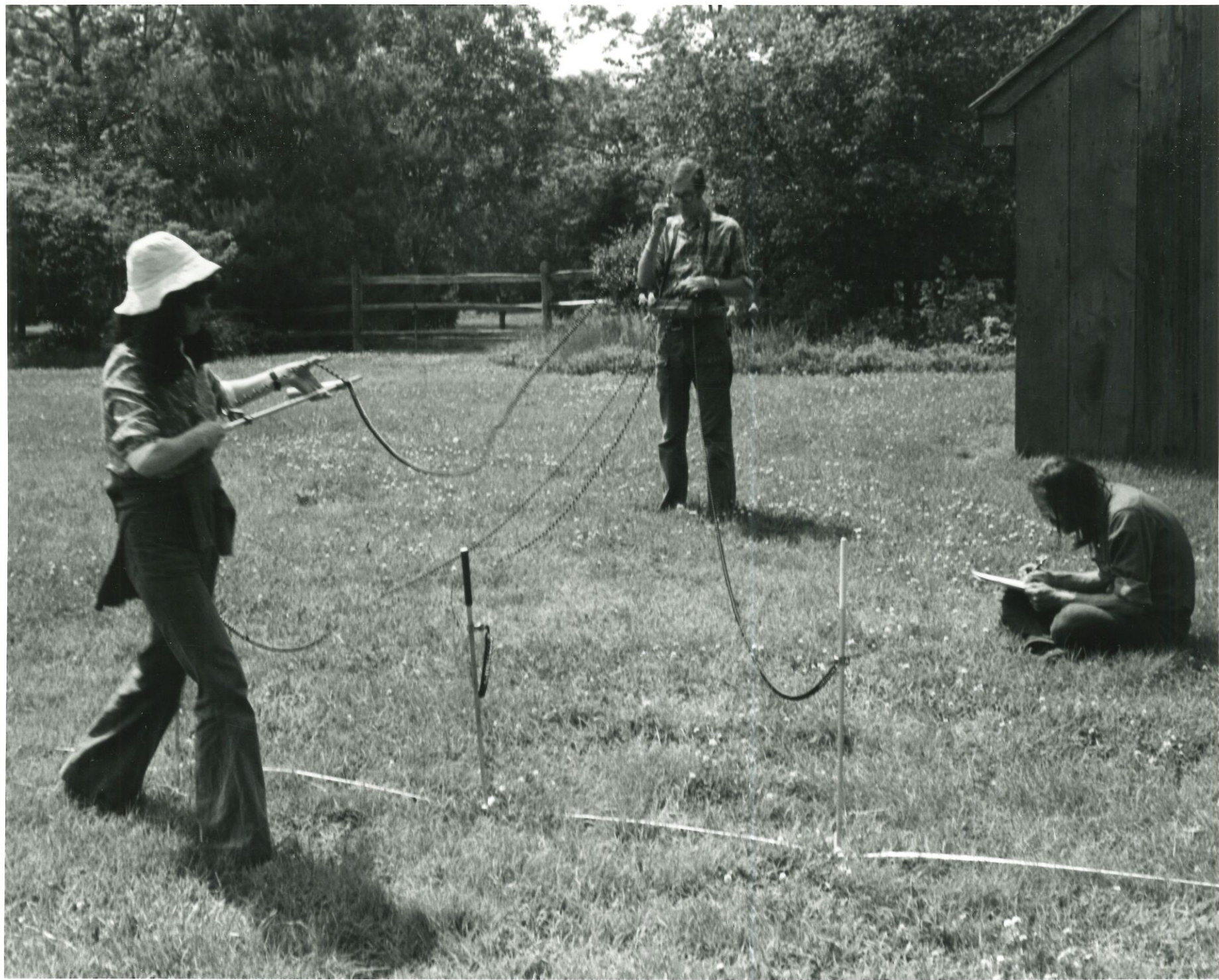
0 5287 568 528 729 752 759

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16  
STABLE

Walkways, trees, buildings, and fence lines indicate the location of the two areas which were surveyed in the back yard of the Wilson-Warner house. Note that the average electrical resistivity of Grid #2 is about 50% greater than Grid #1; this indicates an overall difference in the soil or its drainage at these two nearby locations.

The enclosed copy of a section from the book, Physics and Archaeology, has a short description of the interpretation of the anomalous changes in soil resistivity which show on the two survey maps. While the accuracy of the measurements was probably better than 0.5 ohm, natural and small man-made inhomogeneities in the soil yield a random fluctuation of about 2 ohms; patterns of changes greater than this amount can be significant.

In Grid #1, the most pronounced anomaly is in the high resistance region in the east corner of the mapped area. The two largest high resistance regions in Grid #2 could also be archaeologically significant, as may be the low toward the south corner. Since no pronounced patterns such as lineaments appear in either map, test excavation of one anomaly may indicate if the others might be important.



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