A Report Prepared for:
Cultural Resources Program
Tennessee Valley Authority
Norris, Tennessee

A Documentary Survey of a
One Block Parcel in Downtown Chattanooga, Tennessee:
Broad to Chestnut, Twelfth to Thirteenth Streets

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May 1998
Introduction

At the request of the Cultural Resources Program of the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Jeffrey L. Brown Institute of Archaeology, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, has prepared this brief documentary survey of a one-block parcel in downtown Chattanooga, Tennessee (Figure 1). The purpose of the research is to define potential targets for detailed historical research and archaeological testing within a parcel owned by the Tennessee Valley Authority. The project area is bounded on the west by Chestnut Street, on the east by Broad Street, on the south by Thirteenth Street, and on the north by Twelfth.

This document does not represent an exhaustive historical treatment of the block and its residential, commercial and industrial tenants, but rather is a brief survey of historic land uses as gleaned from readily accessible documents. The principal sources examined consisted of city plat books which illustrated the character and precise location of improvements on the property. The objective of the research is to provide data pertinent to an assessment of the archaeological research potential of the property. Consequently, there is a temporal bias in the periods researched, with very recent uses of the property receiving less attention. The research specifically aims at estimating sub-surface survivals of archaeological features or deposits that would contribute to an organized body of information about past urban adaptations or historic technologies. No field investigation was undertaken as part of this project.

Documentary Overview

Historically, Chattanooga was physically organized around two distinct foci of transportation activity: the commercial steamboat wharves at Ross's Landing on the Tennessee River, and the Union Railyards on the south side of town. When the State of Georgia selected Ross's Landing on the Tennessee River as the proposed northern terminus of its main north-south trunk railroad, the Western and Atlantic Railroad, the announcement spurred the incorporation of Chattanooga in 1839.

Following the incorporation of Chattanooga, surveyors laid out the system of streets that comprised the urban core of the village. Set down with an alignment based on the river frontage at Ross's Landing, the core of the settlement was bounded on the south by Ninth Street, now designated Martin Luther King Boulevard. South of this line early settlement patterns initially developed without regard to the later street system. As the city expanded to the east and south in the 1840s and 50s, the original street orientation was altered by about 30 degrees to conform to the baseline grid of the Ocoee District, thus creating a series of triangular blocks where the old and new grids intersected (Council 1989). The new grid system was imposed south of Ninth Street / M. L. King Boulevard and thus includes the project area.

Much of the area south and east of the town was marshy terrain quite suited to industrial uses (Wiltse n.d.). By 1850, the W&A had opened its line to Chattanooga and opened a passenger and freight depot on Market Street at Ninth. The Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad opened service to Chattanooga in 1854, building a freight depot at Chestnut and Twelfth. The Memphis and Charleston Railroad used the N&C tracks from Stevenson, Alabama, and opened service to the city in 1857. Later in the same year, the three railroads concluded to build a common or Union Depot near Ninth Street, and this structure was completed in 1859. By completion, the East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad had joined the others in using the Union Depot for passenger service.
Figure 1. Location map of project area. U.S.G.S./T.V.A. 7.5 minute series topographic map, Chattanooga quadrangle, 105-SE, edition 1969, photorevised 1976. Note: This map does not illustrate current street layout and building locations.
The earliest reliable map of urban Chattanooga was produced by the U.S. Coast Survey during the Civil War (Dorr 1863; Figure 2). This topographic map shows the town as it stood in the fall of 1863, and illustrates, in addition to civilian improvements, the major military fortifications and related features constructed by Federal and Confederate troops prior to the battles of Chattanooga in November 1863. The contour lines document an ante-bellum topography in urban Chattanooga now buried under considerable amounts of fill.

As drawn on the Dorr map, Carter Street is shown with clear margins, but the right of way of Twelfth Street is drawn as dashed, indicating that the road was not improved. Moreover, in the Dorr map, Twelfth is drawn somewhat south of its current position. The data suggest that Twelfth Street was resurveyed after the Civil War, moving this thoroughfare to the north. Chestnut Street is also drawn with dashed margins, indicating the road was not improved. A related map, somewhat cleaner in its rendering, but with slightly less detail than the Dorr map, is "Map of the Battle-field of Chattanooga," compiled in 1864 and evidently using the Dorr map as a basis (O.R. Atlas, Plate 49, Map 1). The 1864 version is nearly identical to the Dorr map, but with simplified detail; only the Hooke homestead cluster of buildings is shown in the project area.

On the south end of town, the major focus of activity was the Union Railyards site, created by a junction of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad and the Western and Atlantic Railroad. The N&C approached the south end of town from the southwest, and the W&A, from the northeast. Just before entering the railyards, the W&A was joined by an extension branch line of the East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad. These three roads, and the M&C, shared a single passenger terminal in a long, arched-roof train shed, the Union Depot, built just south of Ninth Street (MLK Blvd.) between Chestnut and Broad; (in 1963, Broad Street did not extend into the railyards and Chestnut was unimproved).

The alignment of tracks formed an inverted Y, with the stem extending north to the Union Depot and its branches - connected by a gentle curve - extending southwest and southeast (see Figure 2). The project area falls at the southern or opening end of the wye, with the main N&C trunkline running through the west half of the study parcel.

In 1863, no streets ran through the Union Railyards site, but Twelfth Street crossed the southwest leg of the wye on the Ocoee District grid -- unlike its modern alignment, which curves north and east to a junction with Newby Street. The Dorr map shows a small cluster of structures on the west side of Chestnut between Twelfth and Thirteenth streets; two smaller structures on the south side of Twelfth on the west side of the track right of way, and a cluster of structures in a grove of trees south of the wye, in the area now bounded by the track right of way on the west, Broad Street on the East, and south by Thirteenth Street. The complex of structures in the grove of trees was the homestead of Judge R. M. Hooke. Hooke's name was given to the street that was eventually opened to the south of his home: Hooke Street is now known as Thirteenth Street.

The south end of the wye was photographed shortly after the Federal occupation and illustrates the Oakwood estate in the grove of trees and the N&C freight depot and attendant structures, all of which fall within the study parcel (Figure 3).
Figure 2. Detail from the map, "Chattanooga and Its Approaches, showing the Union and Rebel works before and during the Battles of 23rd, 24th and 25th November 1863 . . . surveyed under direction of Brig. Gen. W. F. Smith," F. W. Dorr, U. S. Coast Survey, 1863. The project area, below the wye, is cross hatched.
Figure 3. The lower railyards late in 1863 or early 1864. This view faces southwest across the lower railyards. Beneath the outline of Lookout Mountain is left, the Oakwood mansion of R. M. Hooke, in a grove of oak trees; right, the one-story brick N&G freight depot. Taken by J. B. Linn and Brother, photographers. From a print in the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Bicentennial Library.
Robert McGinley Hooke had resided in Chattanooga since the Cherokee Removal. Prior to the Civil War, Hooke erected an estate complex in a grove of trees south of the wye, as described by Wilson (1980: 56) and excerpted below.

Judge Robert Hooke lived at "Oakwood" in a handsome brick, colonial-style dwelling to the south of town near the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad tracks. This was the old Rush Montgomery place.

The main dwelling at Oakwood had a wide porch and massive white columns in front. It was furnished with the heavy mahogany that was popular during this period.

Like the Brabson house, the Hooke place became a social center. Many happy gatherings were held under the gigantic oak Trees.

Judge Hooke built a small house adjacent to the railroad tracks for use as an office. He was division superintendent of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad and one of its largest stockholders. Judge Hooke also served as the general agent for the railroad in Chattanooga.

As Judge Hooke was a great lover of beauty, the grounds at Oakwood were filled with bright-colored flowers, blooming at every season. The gardens had been planned by a French gardener brought to Chattanooga for this purpose. Seven acres were enclosed in an orchard, which bore fine fruit that was enjoyed in season by members of the Hooke family and their friends.

The Hooke's owned slaves, and the outbuildings in the complex are said to have included a smokehouse. Doubtless, it is proper to describe the Hooke place as an urban estate, complete with great house, slave quarters, and utility outbuildings.

In August, 1863, a Federal force under Col. J. T. Wilder shelled the town from the north bank of the river, prompting an immediate evacuation of many of the inhabitants, including Judge Hooke. Hooke abandoned Oakwood and took from the house what could be carried by boxcar, along with the servants.

In September, 1863, Federal forces occupied Chattanooga and held it through the Rebel siege until the Battles of Chattanooga in November forced the Confederate forces to retire from the area. Thereafter, Chattanooga, with its river and rail connections, became a marshaling yard for the Federal advance toward Atlanta. Central to this mission was the maintenance of the regional railroads that supplied the field operations. The United States Military Railroad (USMR) took over the Union Railyards and in 1864-65, carried out an ambitious construction program to create shops for the repair of locomotives and cars. In addition to shop facilities and office buildings for the USMR engineers, a fortification was erected south of the wye to serve as a strong point within the defenses of Chattanooga.
The N&C freight depot was situated on the east side of Chestnut just above the Twelfth Street right of way. [The current alignment of Twelfth Street cuts across the southern end of the structure and departs from the normal street grid]. This structure was photographed during the Civil War (see Figure 4).

A unique and elaborate two-story blockhouse was erected at the north or northwest corner of Hooke's grove (Figure 5). This log structure had a cruciform lower level and an offset second story surmounted by a cupola and four watch towers. Rendered useless as a fortification by other buildings erected in its approaches, the blockhouse was obviously a make-work scheme to keep the troops from being idle.

Figure 4. The N&C freight depot at Chestnut and Twelfth streets. Civil War view, facing north. Structures south of the main depot (i.e., those in the foreground) fall within the study parcel. From an original in the National Archives.

Photographers documented many of the buildings erected by the USMR in the railyards, including the office of the engineers (Figure 6), as well as previously-existing structures, such as the N&C freight depot. Civil War photographs of Chattanooga compiled in Hoobler (1986) include a number of images in the general vicinity of the project area, but it is difficult to place these structures precisely. A list of the improvements built in the depot yard, with building dimensions, is known, but a map showing a location of the structures could not be found in the archives (see Council and Honerkamp 21-22; Table 1). The office of engineers is believed to have been built in the project area.
Figure 5. Federal blockhouse. Built to protect the southern approaches to the railyard, this exuberant structure was rendered useless as a fortification by other structures within its field of fire. Constructed in log palisade style, the lower cruciform level was topped by an offset square floor, surmounted by a series of watch towers, the central one of which mounted a tall flag pole. An office is shown adjoining the blockhouse at left, and in the background is a USMR machine shop in the main railyards. The ornate gardens in the foreground of the troops may be a survival from Hooke's Oakwood estate. Original in the National Archives.

What may be a picture of R. M. Hooke's Oakwood mansion appears in Hoobler's collection of Civil War photographs of Nashville and Chattanooga (Hoobler 1986: 157, Plate 198). Significantly, the house is captioned as being the headquarters of W. W. Wright, chief engineer of the USMR, and is surrounded by trees.

At the end of the Civil War, the fortifications around Chattanooga were demolished. However, many of the more utilitarian structures built by the USMR were left in place and sold or transferred to local businesses. Judge R. M. Hooke returned to Chattanooga and found part of his Oakwood home demolished. A regiment of Federal troops occupied the house and grounds, and the mannerly gardens were laced with rifle pits and other fortifications. Hooke abandoned the estate and moved elsewhere in the city.
Figure 6. Offices of the USMR engineers. These houses are believed to have been erected south of the blockhouse, at the edge of Judge Hooke's grove of trees. Original in the National Archives.

An 1871 aerial view of the city, produced by A. Ruger, illustrates homes and Judge Hooke's grove of trees in the project area (Ruger 1871), as well as the former USMR machine shops in the central railyards converted by the N&C Railroad into engine houses (Figure 7). South of the project area, the Alabama and Chattanooga Railroad constructed a roundhouse for its locomotives. In this view, Chestnut is identified as Boyce Street, named for industrialist Ker Boyce. Interestingly, several of the structures shown in the project area on the 1871 view are reminiscent of the engineers offices built by the USMR; several are two storied with wrap-around porches. On Chestnut Street, west of the track right of way, were two presumably residential structures.

In 1872 the tract of land north of Thirteenth Street and east of the track right-of-way was sold by T. K Wornacut to A. J. Wisdom and O. P. Fouts, as partners (Council and Honerkamp 1984: 119). Soon, these men opened a holding facility for livestock shipped by rail. The Union Stock Yards first appeared in the 1881 Chattanooga city directory (Norwood and Kline Bros. 1881). In that same year, the partners erected a feed stable 40' by 240' along the railroad tracts on the west side of the stockyards (Chattanooga Daily Times, June 9, 1881).
Figure 7. Detail from A. Ruger's "Bird's Eye View of Chattanooga," (1871). Facing southwest. The project area includes the small grove of trees at left of center, and the block to the right, west of the railroad tracks and southwest of the N&C engine house at center. Boyce Street is the modern Chestnut Street. The roundhouse structure near the center of this image is south of the project area, beyond what is now Thirteenth Street. Original in the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Bicentennial Library.
Figure 8. Detail from Sheet 15 of the 1885 fire insurance maps of Chattanooga (Sanborn Map and Publishing Company 1885). This plan shows the Wisdom and Fouts stockyards erected along the railroad tracks and north of Hooke or Thirteenth Street.

The Sanborn fire insurance plat book of 1885 (Sanborn Map and Publishing Company 1885: Sheet 15) illustrates that the interior of the wye (north of 13th and east of the railroad right of way) was occupied principally by the stockyards of Wisdom and Fouts (Figure 8). This operation included open cattle pens along the tracks, three stables or barns of varying sizes and an office. There were three dwellings on the property, of one and two stories, and a beer storage shed on Thirteenth at the railroad right of way. Near the north end of the wye, C. E. James operated a coal and wood yard that included a small grain warehouse. The tract adjoining Chestnut Street is not covered by the Sanborn plat.
A. J. Wisdom began constructing a row of six cottages and a two-story twelve-room boarding house along the Thirteenth Street frontage of the stockyards in August 1885 (Council and Honerkamp 119). The boarding house and four of the cottages are depicted on the 1886 aerial view of Chattanooga published by Norris, Wellge and Company (Figure 9). Along the east side of Chestnut Street, a large grain elevator occupied the northern end of the block, and houses were present on the southern end.
Mirroring the Union Railyards to the north, the area south of the wye became known as the Union Stockyards, and the area is identified as such on the Sanborn maps from 1889 (Sanborn-Perris Map Co. Ltd. 1889: Sheets 19-20; Figures 10, 11). A large horse and mule barn and a stable along the track right of way were the principal structures. North and east of the stockyards, and perhaps used as an open cattle yard, was the wood and coal yard, enclosed by a fence. On Chestnut Street, then called Boyce, the Central Elevator Company operated its grain elevator on the northern end of the block, and residences and a boarding house were situated on the southern end.

The 1889 G. M. Hopkins Company "Atlas of the City of Chattanooga" is essentially identical to the 1889 Sanborn, but omitting smaller structures such as privies. All of the structures in the Union Stock Yards are shown as frame buildings, including the cottages and boarding house. With the exception of a brick boiler house associated with the grain elevator at Chestnut and Twelfth, and a single brick dwelling at the northeast corner of Chestnut and Thirteenth, all of the architecture west of the railroad tracks is frame construction. As an incidental note, the corner of Chestnut and Thirteenth is designated on the Hopkins 1889 plat as having been the site of the headquarters of Gen. VanDerveer during the Civil War.

The 1890 city directory indicates that the inhabitants of the project area on the southern end of the Chestnut Street block (20-22-24 Boyce) and those along W. Thirteenth 25-27-29-31-33-35-37 Hooke) were white. The railroad right of way passing through Hooke/W. Thirteenth was identified as Sidney Street (Connelly & Fais 1890).

In 1895, construction began on a large, brick flour-milling plant along the northern part of the wye. Designed for veteran miller C. C. Shelton, the plant was a merchant or retail milling operation driven by steam power. The plant is described in a Chattanooga Times article of July 14, 1895:

The New Shelton Mills

The handsome brick structure a short distance west of Market Street, adjoining what is known as the railway "Y" is nearing completion, and when in operation will be known as Shelton's mills. The main structure is 104 by 50 feet, three stories high, seventeen feet each story and there is an enormous brick smoke stack, engine house, boiler house and warehouse. The brickwork has been done in the most substantial manner by Fisher & Brown and the carpenter work has been done by the day under the supervision of John Herdeck. When in running order these mills are expected to turn out about 500 barrels of flour daily. The brick used in the building were manufactured at the Chattanooga River Brick company's works, and from roof to foundation is Chattanooga material.

C. C. Shelton, in operating this mill, will introduce an entirely new system of flour making known as the Bavarian process, which has never been seen in used before south of the Ohio river. The very best results are confidently expected.

The main mill building is shown in Figure 12.
Figure 10. Detail from Sheet 19, Sanborn-Perris Map Company Ltd. fire insurance maps of Chattanooga, Tennessee (1889). Chestnut Street parcel. Facing north. Best available copy from microfilm.
Figure 11. Detail from Sheet 20, Sanborn-Perris Map Company Ltd. fire insurance maps of Chattanooga, Tennessee (1889). Thirteenth Street parcel. Facing north. Best available copy from microfilm.
Figure 12. South facade of the Shelton Mill, as it appeared in 1986. The three-story milling wing and the two-story warehouse wing sat atop a full basement of ashlar-stone foundations. Facing north-northwest.

In June 1900, the Shelton Mills company, formerly C. C. Shelton and Company, was sold to E. M. Smith, who retained the old name. In 1923, the officers of the company were E. B. Thomasson, President; L. L. Peak, Vice-President; and E. M. Thomasson, Treasurer. A letterhead of that date announced its primary product, the "Celebrated Hungarian Purity Flour," manufactured using the Hungarian System of milling (CHCBL Clipping Files, Chattanooga-Industries).

The 1901 Sanborn plat illustrates the Shelton mill, with its three-story processing wing with attached two-story warehouse structure (Figure 13). The power plant was segregated from the milling operation, and power was presumably mechanically transferred by line shaft from the power plant to the mill. South of the mill, the Union Stock Yards remained essentially as it had in the late 1880s. Water mains were present in Boyce (Chestnut) and Hooke (Thirteenth) streets.

The G. M. Hopkins real estate plat book of 1904 (Hopkins Company 1904, sheet 11) shows the same general detail as the 1901 Sanborn, but also notes the presence of sewers in Chestnut and Thirteenth streets. The northeast corner of Chestnut and Thirteenth streets is again noted as having been the site of the headquarters of General VanDerveer during the Civil War.
In January 1905, the Crystal Ice Company was organized by an agent of the Atlantic Ice and Coal Company and announced plans to construct a major ice manufacturing plant in the former stock yards. Commentary in the Chattanooga Times for January 5, 1905 notes:

The plant will be erected on the old site of the Union stockyard on Hooke street, near the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis railroad tracks. A lot 200 x 80 feet, fronting Hooke Street, has been purchased and work has already begun. Laborers have been at work for about three weeks digging a well and have about completed the work.
The capacity of the plant will be 150 tons daily. About fifty cars will be loaded daily. Icing refrigerator cars will be made a specialty by the new company, which has already made contracts to supply the Fruit Growers' Express company, and Swift & Co., for the next ten years.

Between 1905 and 1910, the creamery and wholesale department of the Sprague Dairy had constructed a facility at 37-39 W. Thirteenth, adjoining the ice plant (G. M. Connelly 1910).

Sheet 6 of the G. M. Hopkins Company Real-Estate Plat Book of the city of Chattanooga, 1914, notes the presence of major new businesses on the tract east of the railroad tracks and north of Thirteenth. The Atlantic Ice and Coal Storage Company and the Sprague Dairy on Thirteenth occupied a strip of land adjacent to the railroad tracks. This construction required the demolition of the western-most two cottages in the row of six built by A. J. Wisdom in 1885.

This is essentially the same detail shown on the Sanborn insurance sheets for 1917 (Figure 14). A portion of the large barn in the interior of the stockyards had been retained to house the stables for the Atlantic Ice and Coal Corporation and the Clover Leaf Dairy Company, (the successor to the Sprague Dairy).

On the west side of the project area, along Chestnut Street F. Carroll and Company operated a grain elevator and Southern Bag Company ran a bag storage warehouse on the northern end of the block. South of an alleyway, a masonry structure had been erected north of two houses at the corner with Thirteenth. The Hooke Street Warehouse Company ran a grain storage warehouse off the tracks.

The Chadwick plat book of Chattanooga (1928) documents a major reorganization of the Union Railyard and former stock yards areas by the construction of Broad Street through these parcels. Opened after 1925 by the city following a confrontation with the railroads, Broad Street ran the length of the yards and passed immediately east of the Shelton Mill building, where it curved to the southwest, paralleling Chestnut Street to the west. The last of the residential units built by A. J. Wisdom in 1885 were demolished, and along the new Broad Street frontage was a building owned by the Century Company.

The Burkart - Schier Chemical company had taken over the site of the grain elevator and grain storage warehouse along the tracks. The Orr Transfer Company occupied a small facility on Chestnut Street, and a Mr. T. T. Whitaker owned the last brick residence on the block, at the northeast corner of Chestnut and Thirteenth. After 1928, Burkart - Schier Chemical Company consolidated its holdings and took over the entire triangular parcel southwest of the tracks, east of Chestnut, and north of Thirteenth.

The Southeastern Brewing Company, makers of a pilsner beer, broke ground for a new plant adjoining the Atlantic Ice and Coal Company plant in September 1933. The brewing company was a subsidiary of the Atlantic company (Chattanooga Times September 15, 1933, p. 5). Little is known of their operations after that date. The 1951 Sanborn maps cited below still list the Southeastern Brewing Company as occupying part of the Atlantic plant, but the beer operation is not cited on the 1955 edition of the Sanborn maps.
Figure 14. Detail from Sheet 56, Sanborn Map Company "Fire Insurance Maps of Chattanooga, Tennessee," (1917). Best available copy from microfilm.
In 1936, along Broad Street, south of the Shelton Mills buildings, were the Woco Pep Servicircle filling station at 1217 Broad; Community Motors Inc. at 1219-25 Broad; Adams Lithography Company and Co-operative Supply Co. at 1231 Broad; and the Cadillac-Oldsmobile Co. of Chattanooga at 1235-43 Broad (Rothberger Directory Company 1936). In subsequent years, a series of car dealerships moved in and out of these Broad Street buildings. In 1945, Valley Motors and Ayers Motor Company occupied the frontage, joined by the Broadway Esso station at 1243 Broad, at the corner with Thirteenth (Rothberger Directory Company 1945). By 1955, the Servicircle and Broadway Esso stations still were in business at either end of the block, and Citizen's Motor Co. had moved into 1219-31 Broad. General Beverage Canning Co. of Tenn. occupied 1235-41 Broad (Rothberger Directory Company 1955).

Sanborn fire insurance maps of 1951 and 1955 (Sanborn Map Co. 1951, 1955) contain essentially the same detail, documenting the block as it stood prior to the 1980s, when the parcel underwent major changes associated with the construction of the TVA Chattanooga Office Complex north of Twelfth Street (see Figure 15). In 1955, Burkart-Schier operated its chemical company on the triangular parcel off Chestnut and Hooke. The Atlantic Ice and Coal Company still operated its refrigeration facility on the east side of the railroad tracks and north of Thirteenth Street. A gas station and automobile sales and service company operated from its one-story building along Broad Street to Thirteenth. A small filling station was present at the north end of the dealership. Security Feed and Seed owned the old Shelton Mills buildings. Figure 16 shows the block as it appeared in 1961.

Security Feed and Seed maintained its operations in the old Shelton Mills plant until 1958, when the facility was sold to the S&M Building Supply Company, who opened a building supply merchandising showroom in the buildings. S&M remained in this plant until 1981, when it moved to a new facility on Amnicola Highway (Chattanooga News-Free Press February 13, 1983, p. D1). This relocation was forced by TVA's plans to construct the Chattanooga Office Complex north of Twelfth Street [a right-of-way that did not exist prior to 1981]. The Shelton Mill property was evidently owned by the L&N Railroad (Chattanooga Times October 3, 1979, p. D2).

By 1965, the buildings on Chestnut Street were occupied by Wayne L. Bowman Co. Inc., produce brokers at 1204 Chestnut, and the remainder of the block was occupied by Burkart-Schier Chemical Co., with Southeast Polymers Inc., latex manufacturers. On Broad Street, the S&M Supply Co., Citizens Motor Co., and the Broadway Esso station at Thirteenth remained. The Atlantic Ice and Coal Co. no longer fronted on W. Thirteenth by this date (Rothberger Directory Company 1965). Citizens Motor Company moved from its Broad Street showrooms in 1966 (CHCBL Clipping Files, Chattanooga Businesses).

Chattanooga flood control sheet 1-3, drawn in 1969, documents that the bulk of the Atlantic Ice and Coal Co. plant had been demolished, leaving a parking lot in its place; a small facility remained in the interior of the lot, to the southwest of Shelton Mills (Figure 17). This operation, known as the Atlantic Ice Division of Munford Inc., was sold to the Spencer Companies Inc. in 1978 (Chattanooga News-Free Press June 12, 1978, p. A7). Gone were the filling stations at the corner of Broad and Thirteenth and just south of the old Shelton Mills. On the parcel west of the railroad tracks, the buildings in the central portion of the block had been demolished; these included components from the old grain elevator that had been built in the 1880s.
The S&M Supply Company, a building supplies merchandising firm, occupied the old Shelton Mill building in 1958. In 1979, the Tennessee Valley Authority began an ambitious building program that engulfed all of the former Union Railyards property; a new Chattanooga Office Complex was proposed for the tract between Chestnut and Market streets, from Eleventh south to an extension of Twelfth Street east to Newby Street at its junction with Market (see Council and Honerkamp 1984: 2). The land on which the mill was erected was said to be owned by the L&N Railroad. The S&M Supply Co. was forced to relocate to a new site on Amnicola Highway in September, 1981 (CHCBL Clipping Files, "Chattanooga-Industries"). Structures in the S&M Supply Co. complex outside of the 1895 mill building were demolished, leaving the mill proper abandoned and empty.

Demolition of the structures along Chestnut Street also occurred in the same time period, leaving most of the tract south of Twelfth Street from Chestnut to Broad as TVA employee parking lots. Finally, the Shelton Mill building was demolished in November 1991 (CHCBL Clipping Files, Chattanooga Businesses).
Figure 17. Detail from Sheet 1-3, Chattanooga Flood Control maps, Tennessee Valley Authority.
Previous Archaeological Research

When the Tennessee Valley Authority began demolition activities associated with its construction of the Chattanooga Office Complex north of Twelfth Street in 1979, the Institute of Archaeology at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga was awarded contracts to conduct Section 106 compliance excavations at the secondary testing and data recovery levels. This operation continued through 1980. Results of the excavation program undertaken in the Union Railyards Site were described in Council and Honerkamp (1984). Although north of the project area described in this report, the depositional environments are closely related. Work in the main railyards documented an aggrading environment in which the combustion by-products of locomotives - cinders and coal clinkers - had been deliberately used to raise the grade of the railyards through time, burying and preserving a wealth of features and artifacts associated with the use of the yards from ante-bellum to modern times. Remains of the Civil War period were particularly in evidence, including extensive wooden construction elements abandoned in place and preserved beneath the local water table.

While testing of the Union Railyards site was outside the project area discussed within this report, a subsequent excavation was conducted within the study parcel. In 1981, the Institute was asked by TVA to test at the Phase I survey level a 60' by 110' tract of land off Thirteenth Street for the site of a structural mockup of a prototype solar-heating facility. This excavation, reported in Council and Honerkamp (1984: 118-132), documented twenty structural features within six backhoe-excavated trenches. Most of the features were associated with the Crystal Ice Company / Atlantic Ice and Coal Storage Company refrigeration plant built in 1905, and no specific features noted on 19th-century Sanborn or other maps were deliberately targeted. The TVA mock-up was not constructed and no further testing on the site occurred.

In 1986, the Institute of Archaeology conducted a very limited exploratory excavation at the site of the old Shelton Mill, documenting some of the site's industrial history, but being of so limited scope as to be inconclusive; the excavation lasted one day and was conducted by high school students (Council 1986). None of the three search trenches was carried to sterile. The excavation did document considerable aggradation of the local ground surface, as particularly evidenced by bricked-in basement windows in the old mill structure.
Archaeological Research Potential

Determination of the archaeological research potential for most of the project area is made largely on the basis of the documented improvements to the property as evidenced in the series of plat books of Chattanooga. Field investigations have taken place at two small areas within the study area: the Mock-Up Site (Council and Honerkamp 1984: 118-132) and the Shelton Mill Site (Council 1986). Major excavations have been undertaken on the adjoining property to the north, the Union Railyards Site (Council and Honerkamp 1984).

Estimation of the archaeological potential of the block must take into account demolition and grading activities, modern or in the past, that would have removed or otherwise disorganized the archaeological record on the block. With the likelihood that shallow deposits (sheet refuse deposits) would have been removed or disturbed during modern demolition activities, our interest is thus narrowly focused on archaeological features that possessed some depth below surface. Sub-surface features of interest would include wells, privies, cisterns and other constructions resting, in part, below grade.

Urban Chattanooga has never been systematically surveyed for prehistoric sites, and site potential can only be estimated. Commentaries from the early historic period note that much of the land south of town was low-lying and at least seasonally marshy (see Wiltse n.d.). Chattanooga Flood Control Sheet 1-3 puts the elevation of the project area at around of 670' to 672' ASL as of the late 1960s (TVA 1969). In the flood of March 1867, locomotives in the nearby Union Railyards were largely submerged by ponding flood water (Council and Honerkamp 1984: 29). The project area, at its modern elevation, would have been under seven to nine feet of water in the flood of 1867, and would also have been under three to five feet of water during the flood of 1875. These data suggest that the project area is unlikely to contain substantial, permanent prehistoric settlements due to poor drainage and frequent flooding.

Despite documentary evidence of historic Cherokee occupation in the vicinity of Ross's Landing prior to the Removal, archaeological remains from this period remain elusive. Archaeological sites from the late 1830s and 1840s may be present in the project area, but only very vague verbal descriptions of this area of town are available (e.g. Wiltse n.d.). Ante-bellum historic components are documented in the block: maps drawn in 1863 and 1864 show several structures in the project area, most notably the Oakwood estate of Judge R. M. Hooke. This complex included the "great house" and at least five contiguous dependencies. Such an estate was like to have had a well or cistern, spring house, and several privies associated with it. Additional ante-bellum structures were present along the Chestnut Street frontage of the study area and others along Twelfth Street (as laid out in the ante-bellum period). Some structures which attended the N&C freight depot above Twelfth Street at Chestnut also fall within the project area.

Military fortifications and buildings erected by the United States Military Railroad during 1864-65 are numerous in the project area, although their precise footprints cannot be established with ease. Lists of these improvements are available (see Council and Honerkamp 1984: 23), and include reference to at least one 8' by 16' privy. Modern reconstructions of the location of some these buildings have been published (Hoobler 1986: 128). Most distinctive of the military constructions is the cruciform blockhouse erected near the top of the wye (Figure 5). This elaborate log construction may have left a footprint in the form of a palisade ditch for its vertical timber outer wall. Other fortifications are more problematic: one Civil War map, "The Defenses of Chattanooga, Tenn.," printed in the "Atlas to Accompany the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies" (O.R. 1891-1895: Plate CXI, #10) shows a line of fortifications crossing the N&C tracks near Thirteenth and running east-northeast across Twelfth, crossing the project area on a
diagonal. The nature of this line (rifle pit or breastwork) is not known. Postwar
descriptions indicate that Federal troops were garrisoned on the grounds of the Oakwood
estate.

Views from 1871 and 1886, and Sanborn and Hopkins plat books from 1885,
1889, 1901, 1904, 1914 and 1917 document numerous residential, commercial and
industrial improvements in the study parcel through the latter half of the nineteenth century
and early 20th century. Accompanying residential units and businesses prior to c. 1890-
1900 would potentially be such features as wells, cisterns and privies. Residential units on
Chestnut and along Thirteenth are depicted on the Sanborn maps as having small detached
outbuildings at mid- or rear-lot distances; these features are doubtless privies.

Sub-surface features associated with domestic habitations constructed prior to 1917
may be present below grade, and may useful in the reconstruction of residential adaptations
to urban environments in the late-nineteenth century as explored by the Institute at other
southern towns such as Charleston (Honerkamp, Council and Will 1982) and Savannah
(Honerkamp, Council and Fairbanks 1983). In such settings, the transition from
individual household-level to municipal-level adaptations can be observed (Honerkamp and
Council 1984). For example, the shift from individual wells to city water lines, and from
privies to central sewerage systems, mark the change in scale of the response to sanitation
needs as occupation density increases in the urban setting. In the project area, more
detailed documentary research (such as lot by lot chain of title reconstruction) would be
needed to isolate the location of features that could then be targeted for sub-surface
exploration. Frequently, such improvements are neither discussed nor platted, however, in
land deeds.

As Chattanooga grew and the need for municipal water supplies and sanitation
increased with the population density, water and sanitary mains were slowly extended
throughout the city. City plat maps do not depict wells, and there is little anecdotal
information about urban water supplies at the householder level. Sanborn plats document
the presence of water pipes in Chestnut and Thirteenth streets by 1889. Presumably after
this date, occupants of the block would have accessed this supply, obviating the necessity
for cisterns and wells. Sanitary mains were in place around the block by 1904, and local
ordinances dictated tie-ins where mains were present in contiguous streets. Any surviving
privies in detached sheds may have been plumbed retro-actively into the sewerage system
and converted into water closets. Still, as late as 1918, there were an estimated 500 privies
of the "Kentucky" variety in the city. These brick-vaulted facilities were periodically
cleaned out by horse-drawn scavenger carts and later by gas-powered sanitation trucks
(CHCBL, Local History Section, Clipping File "Sewage," Folder 1).

Structurally-discrete features such as wells, cisterns and privies, being deep
structures, tend to survive all but the most intense clearing operations. Their archaeological
value is as time capsules that contain temporally-discrete deposits of material culture.
Consequently, they are valuable urban historic archaeological resources. Any examination
of historic urban Chattanooga would be a baseline study, since there is currently no
archaeological data base for these types of residential and light commercial sites.
Recommendations

The block bounded by Broad, Chestnut, Twelfth and Thirteenth streets may contain discrete archaeological features and deposits associated with urban life in Chattanooga in the last half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. While superficial deposits of cultural material may have been significantly degraded by modern clearing and construction, deep, abandoned features such as wells, cisterns and privies may contain artifact collections documenting urban adaptations.

Specific targets for subsurface testing may be extracted from detailed Sanborn fire insurance plats such as those published in 1885, 1889, 1901 and 1917, and displayed within. In addition to mapped features in rear-lot areas (privies), mid-lot range features (wells, cisterns) might be intercepted in a testing program employing machine-assisted excavation. Accompanying a program of fieldwork on the block would be more detailed documentary research to identify the inhabitants of individual lots.

In addition to domestic features, significant military features from the Civil War may be present in the project area, buried and preserved under aggrading ground surfaces. Previous excavations on neighboring tracts of land have yielded a rich array of structural features and artifacts from this period.

The study parcel may contain significant archaeological remains associated with ante-bellum urban estates, Civil War fortifications and activities, and late-19th century urban adaptations.
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