

October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012 was the first full day of excavation at the Quiet Green site on the west face of Hope College for the Archaeology of College Hill class. It was decided that we would form two groups for the day. The first group would begin excavation on our first trench, QG#1, and the second would work with both the total station and do geophysical survey with the ground penetrating radar.



We began excavating our first small, 1m x 1m trench, labeled QG#1. It is located just north of the central stairs leading to a now inactive door on the west side of the building facing the Quiet Green and is situated right next to a window egress. It had been raining the previous weekend so the soil was damp and dark. The team began by clearing off the trench of debris, including leaves, trash, and weeds.

After clearing the trench, we opened context #1 by initially taking points of the trench with the total station. The total station measures using laser refraction. To operate the total station, we measured the total



station's distance from a known location (obtained from the Rhode Island state government) to establish the location of the total station in three dimensions. From there we measured the distance to specific trench locations.



We began unearthing context 1 through trowelling which revealed lots of broken glass. We also uncovered some ceramic fragments and a metal bullet casing. Finally, we cleared the context by cutting many of the small roots. We then closed context 1, the topsoil layer. All fill from this layer was sifted with  $\frac{1}{4}$ " mesh.

Context 2 was the layer beneath the topsoil and similarly had a dark brown color and was characterized by a change in consistency a few layers down because of the wetness. The context was trowelled to begin with for approximately 2-3cm. There



were continued glass finds and much removal of roots. After trowelling a few (2-3cm) further it had become apparent that the northeast corner of the trench had drier soil and created a crevice next to the window egress foundation. Fragments of brick construction material and a penny with a mint date of 1976 were discovered in the fill. At this point we shovel shaved further into the context noticing no





apparent change in soil composition. We cut out a large root running north to south in the middle of the unit and found several pieces of numbered ceramic. One piece had the letters "AUG" which someone on the team suggested could be the fragmentary word "AUGUST," the numbers indicating a calendar. All fill from this layer was sifted with  $\frac{1}{4}$ " mesh and bags for metal, ceramic, and glass were collected. Finally, we closed the context as we did previously, and finished excavating for the day.





The group operating the Ground Penetrating Radar worked with Tommy Urban to try to determine the location of the original President's House. First we set up two parallel lines, squaring them off of one another using the Pythagorean Theorem and 3-4-5 triangles. Then we took turns dragging the GPR back and forth between the lines. The person pulling the GPR wore a harness with a screen, displaying the results of the GPR in real time. We moved back and forth in  $\frac{1}{2}$  meter transects covering an 18m X 18m area. After we completed collecting the data, we measured the four corners of the area using the total station.





This data was then analyzed using software associated with the GPR and converted into a video file (which can be found on the course wiki). In this video file, a quadrilateral object appears at the approximate location given for the President's House on the Plat used in our initial research. It was located approximately 1.5 meters underground. We hope to open a test pit in this location in a future class meeting.

**10/20**

Excavation resumed on October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012 in conjunction with Brown University's Family Weekend and National Archaeology Day. Some members of the class volunteered to continue excavating while community members could stop by to learn about the project and participate.



It had been raining fairly heavily and the trench had puddle and the soil was extremely muddy, dark brown and wet. Context #3 was opened and it is the same muddy soil layer with frequent as Context #2. Thus Context #2=Context#3. Context #3 was trowelled and fill was shifted with ¼" mesh. Finds were fairly similar, including glass, ceramic, and metal



to Context #2. There were some corroded nails, a faunal bone, another bullet casing of the same type found previously, as well as shale or slate and charcoal. One point to note is the discovered of slate concentrated along the edge of the stairway, the southern side of the trench, running throughout east to west. One suggestion was that this was part of the old walkway. A bag of slate samples was saved and the rest discarded. The context was closed with points from the total station.

Next, Context #4 was opened with the soil drier than the previous context and yellowish red gritty soil. There was a similar artifact distribution as Context #4 and bags were collected for glass, ceramic, charcoal, and metal. One artifact of note was a piece of ceramic, which was thought to be a pipe fragment. All fill was sifted with ¼" mesh. In the northeast corner a small spot of greenish-grey chalky crumbling soil was noted. The concentration of shale continued to be present on the





southern edge of the trench and a deeper area in the middle in the trench, tending towards the eastern side was becoming defined. The context was closed at the end of the day, although not completely finished and work would resume in context #4 the following Monday.