

V. BACKGROUND RESEARCH

Prior to field investigations, existing literature was reviewed to establish a historical and cultural baseline of the project APE, and to examine the project APE in relation to regional pre- and postcontact archaeological contexts. Documentary research included a review of previously documented sites in the vicinity for the project APE.

During the research, emphasis was placed on acquiring a thorough understanding of the historic land use of the archaeological survey area. The results of the background research were applied towards assessing the overall archaeological sensitivity of the archaeological survey area and identifying the types of resources that the survey area could, or may have once contained.

A. Previously Documented Cultural Resources

To date, no archaeological sites have been recorded within the archaeological survey area, the broader archaeological project APE, or within a 2,500-foot radius of the project APE. The project APE has not been examined by any previous archaeological studies.

Three previously documented historic standing structures are located in, or on a parcel that abuts, the archaeological project APE (**Figure 4**). These structures are BR 159 (CRS N-4294), the Joseph Tatnall House (CRS N-12807) and the Krebs Pigment & Color Corporation Building A-47 (CRS N- N12806).

BR 159 is the subject c. 1929 bascule bridge of this project undertaking. The bridge is located in the center of the project APE and to the west of the survey area. As noted earlier, BR 159 has been determined not eligible for the NRHP (P.A.C. Spero & Company 1991). The Joseph Tatnall House and the Krebs Pigment & Color Corporation Building A-47 are located in TP 20-003.00-083. Tax parcel 20-003.00-83 is the southernmost Newport tax parcel on the west side of S. James Street. The Joseph Tatnall House (CRS N-12807) is a c. 1750 2 and ½-story brick dwelling. The dwelling is one of ten contributing elements of the *Historic and Architectural Resources of Newport, Delaware* (Kurtze 1992), which has been listed in the NRHP since July 14, 1993. The Krebs Pigment & Color Corporation Building A-47 is a c. 1937 office and research laboratory building that has been recently examined and recommended eligible for the NRHP (Clouse and Richmond 2012).

B. Precontact Context of the Project APE

From a regional perspective, the BR 159 project APE is located within a high probability zone for precontact archaeological sites. Previous studies have discovered a variety of

precontact site types along the Christina River, as well as throughout its watershed. Clusters of sites have been especially noted around the Christina River/White Clay Creek confluence, which is surrounded by a series of diverse wetland settings. One of the largest expanses of wetlands at the waterways' confluence is known as Churchmans Marsh.

One example of a recently and extensively investigated site within the Christina River watershed in the general Churchmans Marsh vicinity is 7NC-E-152, which is located approximately 3.5 miles southwest of the BR 159 project APE. This multi-component site was subjected to Phase I, Phase II, and Phase III studies as part of the Airport Road and Churchmans Road improvement project. The site contains several short-term occupations that span a low bench that overlooks a series of tributary streams and wetlands associated with the Christina River. In addition to occupations that date to the Archaic, Woodland I, and Woodland II periods, 7NC-E-152 also contains archaeological materials associated with a 19th century farmstead (Miller et al. 2010; Mooney et al. 2002; KSK 2001).

Other known sites in the immediate Churchmans Marsh/Christina River vicinity include 7NC-E-4, 7NC-E-35, 7NC-E-36, 7NC-E-37, and 7NC-E-38; all of which are located on the south side of Churchman's Marsh (Custer 1989).

Compared to the Churchman's Marsh end of the Christina River, fewer studies have been performed along the lower reaches of the Christina River near Newport. However, those that have been conducted have also discovered remains of precontact period occupations. These past discoveries is not surprising since prior to European settlement, the segment of the Christina River that runs through Newport would have also contained an assortment of resource abundant environmental settings.

One of the largest recorded sites situated north/northeast of Churchmans Marsh is the Newport Site (7NC-E-1). This site was located on the south side of the Christina River and may have extended from Churchmans Marsh to as far east as SR 141. It is believed that most of the site has since been destroyed or deeply buried by modern development, but documentary records generally place the core area of 7NC-E-1 on the south side of Old Airport Road approximately 0.57 miles south/southwest the project APE. Existing site records and collections imply that the site once contained remains of several Archaic, Woodland I, and Woodland II temporary occupations. The site and its artifact collections exhibit several characteristics that are associated with the Clyde Farm Complex cultural tradition (Custer 1984, 1986, 1989, 1994; Catts et al. 1988; Custer and DeSantis 1986; Miller et al. 2010). Whether or not 7NC-E-1 once extended northward into the portion of the BR 159 project APE on the south side of the Christina River is not known.

Other recorded precontact sites around Newport are 7NC-E-3, 7NC-E-23, and 7NC-E-24, which are three temporary base camps located on the north side of the Christina River downstream of the BR 159 project APE (~1.5 - 1.7 miles northeast). Sites 7NC-E-3, 7NC-E-23, and 7NC-E-24 have also been attributed to the Clyde Farm Complex cultural traditional (Custer 1989).

The closest known precontact sites to the project APE is a cluster of sites that were discovered and examined by John Milner Associates, Inc. (JMA) as part of environmental remediation of the former Koppers Company, Inc. properties (e.g., 7NC-E-137, 7NC-E-140, 7NC-E-141, 7NC-E-168, 7NC-E-184 – DE SHPO site files). These sites are situated on various extant, well-preserved knolls terraces, rises, and other small upland settings located throughout a vast expanse of undeveloped land along the north side of the Christina River near its confluences with the White Clay Creek and Hershey Run. Some of the sites were discovered approximately 0.5-1.5 feet (0.15-0.50 cm) below the surface in a well-preserved upland stratum beneath the modern marsh. The “Kopper Company Property” sites are of varying sizes and complexities ranging from small lithic scatters (e.g., 7NC-E-155) to multi-component encampments. Collectively, the sites include occupations that date from the Archaic through Woodland II Periods (Kellogg and Woodward-Clyde Consultants 1996; Kellogg and Catts 1997a, 1997b, and 1997c; Harris et al. 2008). One of the largest sites is 7NC-E-135 (Boot Road Site), a 5.4+ acre (2.2+ ha) Woodland I-Woodland II base camp with various subsurface features. Excavations at 7NC-E-135 have yielded a diversity of projectile points, ceramic wares, as well as various lithic tools, debitage, and fragments of fire-cracked rock. The two closest “Kopper Property” sites to the project APE are 7NC-E-155 (Marsh Knoll Site) and 7NC-E-156 (Blanco Site). Both sites are small lithic scatters of unknown temporal context and are located approximately 0.6 miles southeast of the project APE.

C. Postcontact Context of the Project APE

Historically, the BR 159 project APE was once part of “Cold Harbor”, an approximate 630-acre tract that was patented to Conrad Constantine in 1683. Several years later, the project APE was included in one hundred acres of land along the Christina River that was removed from Cold Harbor and transferred to Henry Parker. In 1731, John Justis purchased one-half interest in the 100 acres. In 1735, Justis laid out the lots of “Newport Ayre”. Lot sales were successful and by the mid-eighteenth century, Newport was an emergent port town (Kurtz 1993). By the end of the eighteenth century, Newport was well-established as a Christina River port town and also a Kings Highway stage coach stop (Kurtze 1993). According to historical accounts, a ferry line across the Cristina River was in operation at the south terminus of S. James Street by 1790. The construction of the first crossing over the Christina River at S. James Street, a toll drawbridge, was authorized in 1813 (Kurtze 1993) (**Figure 12**). In 1818, the Gap and Newport Turnpike, the predecessor to present-day SR 41, was completed (Kurtze 1993). The original course of the Gap and Newport Turnpike followed the BR 159 project segment of S. James Street.

Most of “Newport Ayre’s” early buildings have since been demolished. The NRHP-listed, c. 1750 Joseph Tatnall House (N-12807) is one of a small handful of buildings from Newport’s eighteenth century past. According to previous studies, it is believed that the construction of the Joseph Tatnall House may have been financed by Joseph Latimer (1719-1897), a Newport merchant and landowner who owned interest in the property (Kurtze 1993). The Christina River crossing at S. James Street was once known as “Latimer’s Wharf”.

The BR 159 project APE has always been part of the core area of Newport. The project APE is located along S. James Street, one of the town's original principal streets laid by Justis (Kurze 1993). S. James Street has been Newport's primary north-south road to the Christina River since the town was founded in 1735. S. James Street at the Christina River has served as a crossing point for nearly three hundred years. Various transportation, domestic, and commercial structures have been constructed along the project segments of S. James Street, Water Street, and the Christina River since the mid-eighteenth century (e.g., c. 1750 Joseph Tatnall House).

D. Review of Historic Mapping

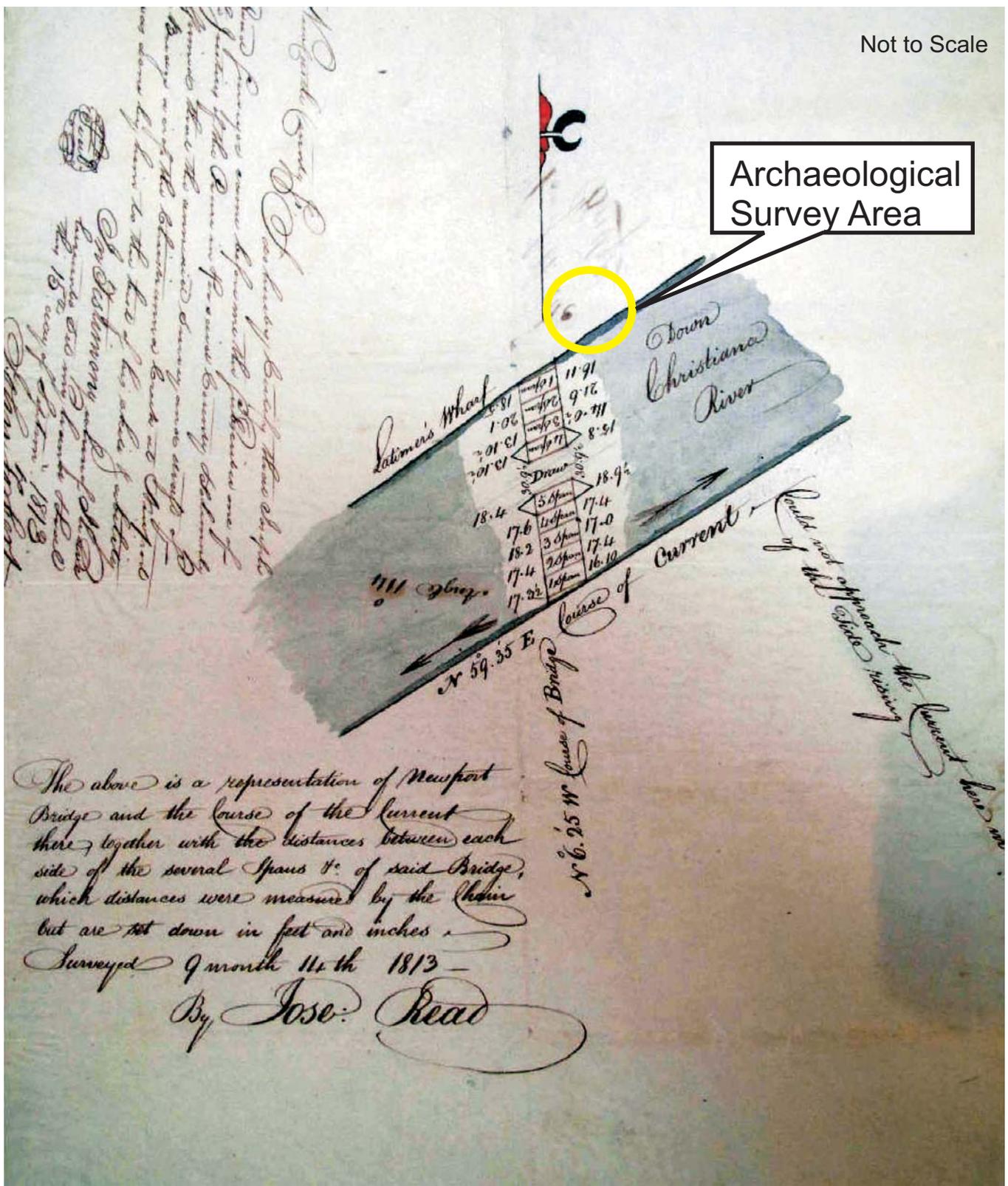
Detailed pre-1840 mapping does not provide any cartographic evidence to suggest that the project APE coincides with the location of any buildings at that time (**Figure 9** and **Figure 12**).

Mid-nineteenth century mapping depict four structures in the immediate vicinity of the project APE. Only one of these structures, a structure at the southeast corner of the S. James Street/Water Street intersection, was located within the archaeological survey area. Background research revealed that the main block of the structure, a two-story brick house with a basement, was constructed sometime during the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Later modifications included addition of an attached 30' x 60', one-story frame boathouse to the rear (south) elevation of the house; expansion of the boat house into a 60' x 60' building; division of the house/boathouse into a duplex residence, and conversion of the composite building into a recreational boating "club" facility. Depictions of the brick house are present on Rea and Price (1849), Beers (1868), Hopkins (1881), Baist (1893), historic USGS topographic mapping (1906) Sanborn Fire Insurance mapping (1912, 1921, 1937, 1942), Delaware State Highway Department "as built" plans (1928), as well as various pre-1959 historic photographs (**Figures 13- 21; Appendix I**). The building was demolished during the late 1950s.

The three historic structures that are not located in the archaeological survey area are the Joseph Tatnall House, a structure due south of the Joseph Tatnall House along the north bank of the Christina River, and a structure on the west side of S. James Street on the New Castle Hundred side of the project corridor. The Joseph Tatnall House and the structure due south of it are labeled jointly on Beers (1868) as "Tatnall and Richardson" (**Figure 14**). The southern structure was likely a warehouse building that is noted as having stood on the Joseph Tatnall House/Tatnall and Richardson property (Kurtze 1993). According to Beers (1868), the structure on the New Castle Hundred (south) side of the Christina River was a "County House" that stood on the west side of the terrestrial crossing at Christina River (**Figure 14**). The "County House" coincides with a two--story frame house shown on late 1920s "as built" plans and in pre-1930 photographs of this location (**Figure 20; Appendix I**). This survey did not pursue retained research on Joseph Tatnall House/Tatnall and Richardson structures and the "County House" since these structures were located near portions of the project APE that were dismissed from further examination.

Not to Scale

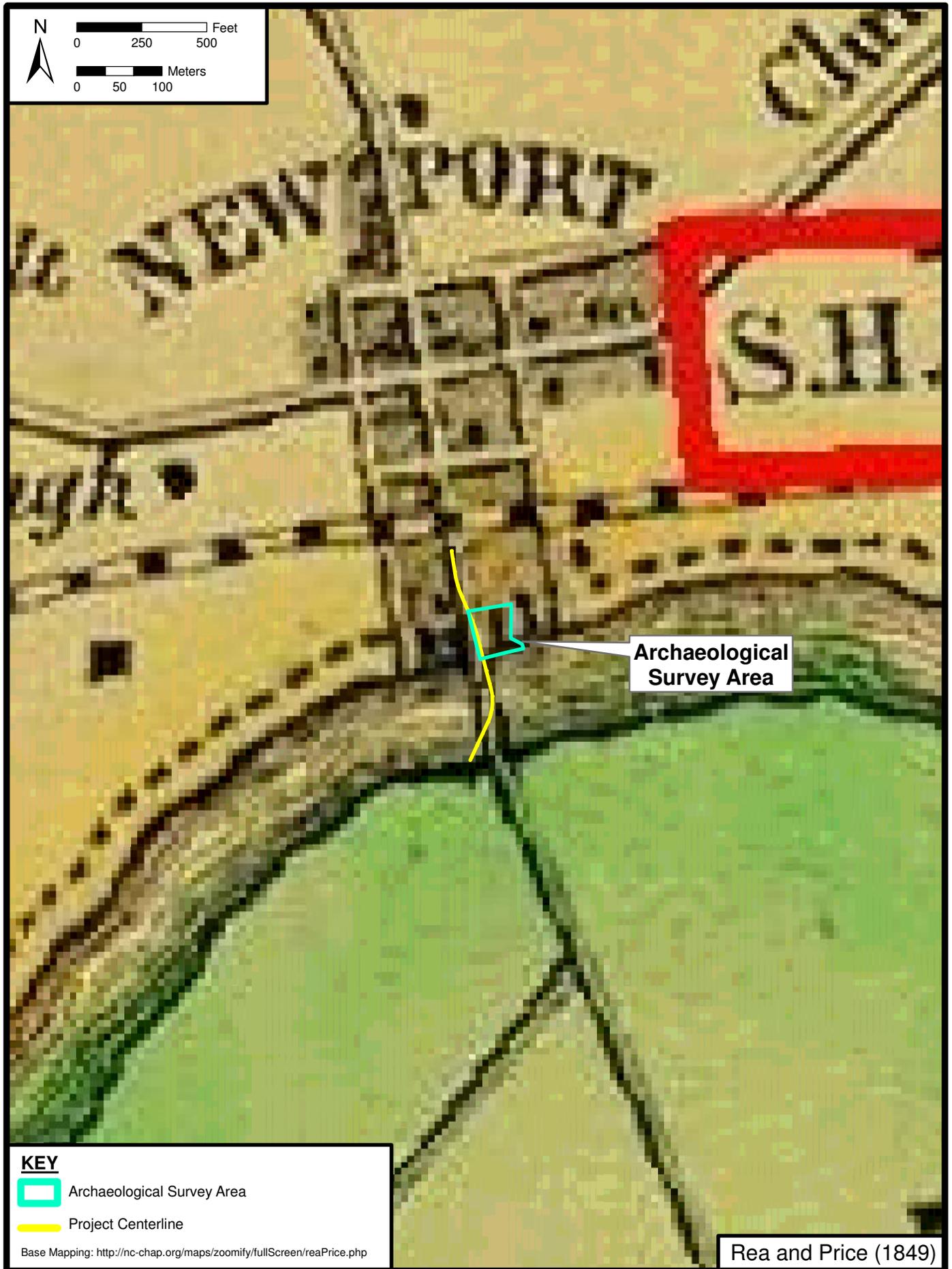
Archaeological Survey Area



Source: Delaware Historical Society

Joseph Read Plan of Newport Bridge (1813)

FIGURE 12



N
0 250 500 Feet
0 50 100 Meters

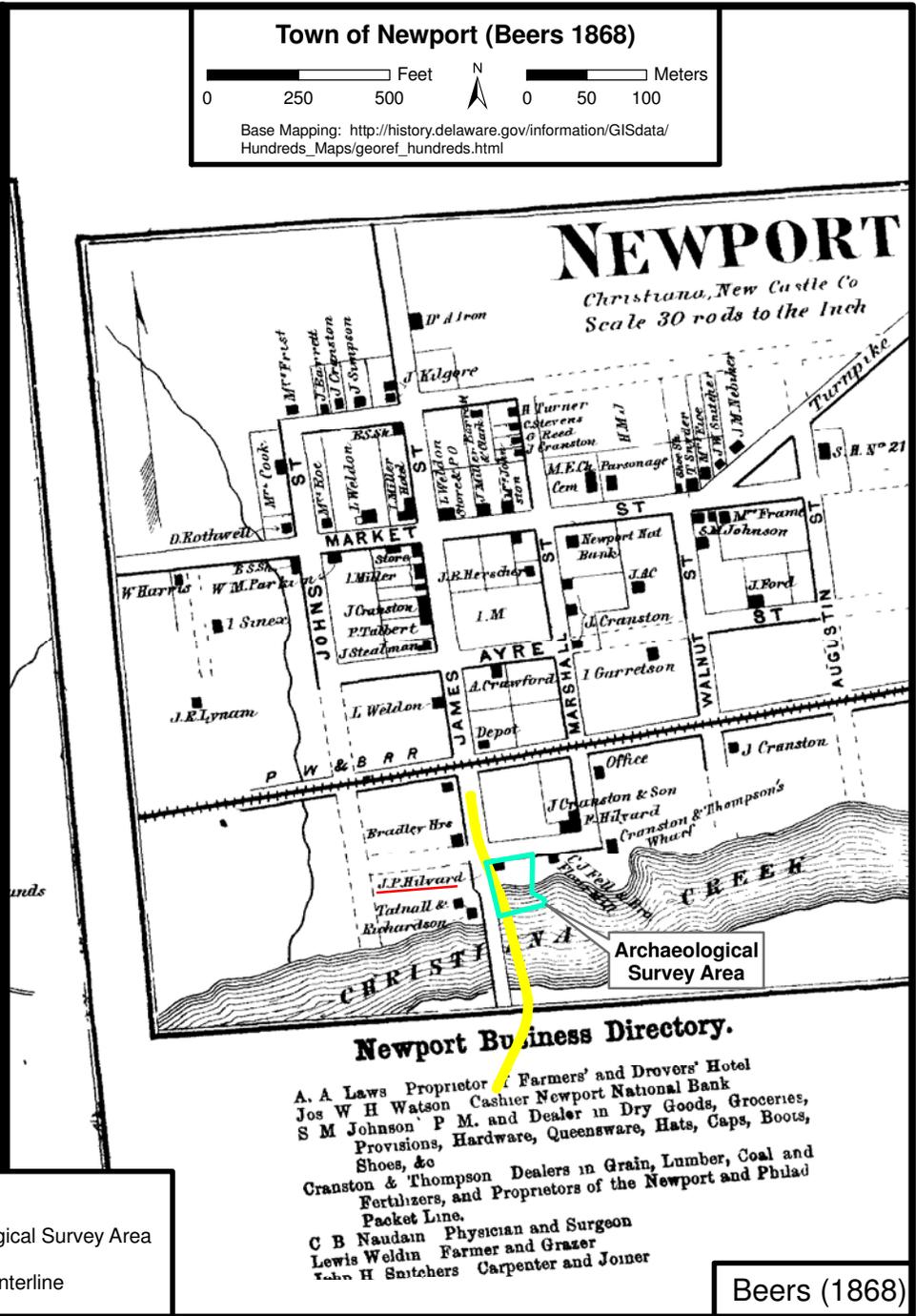
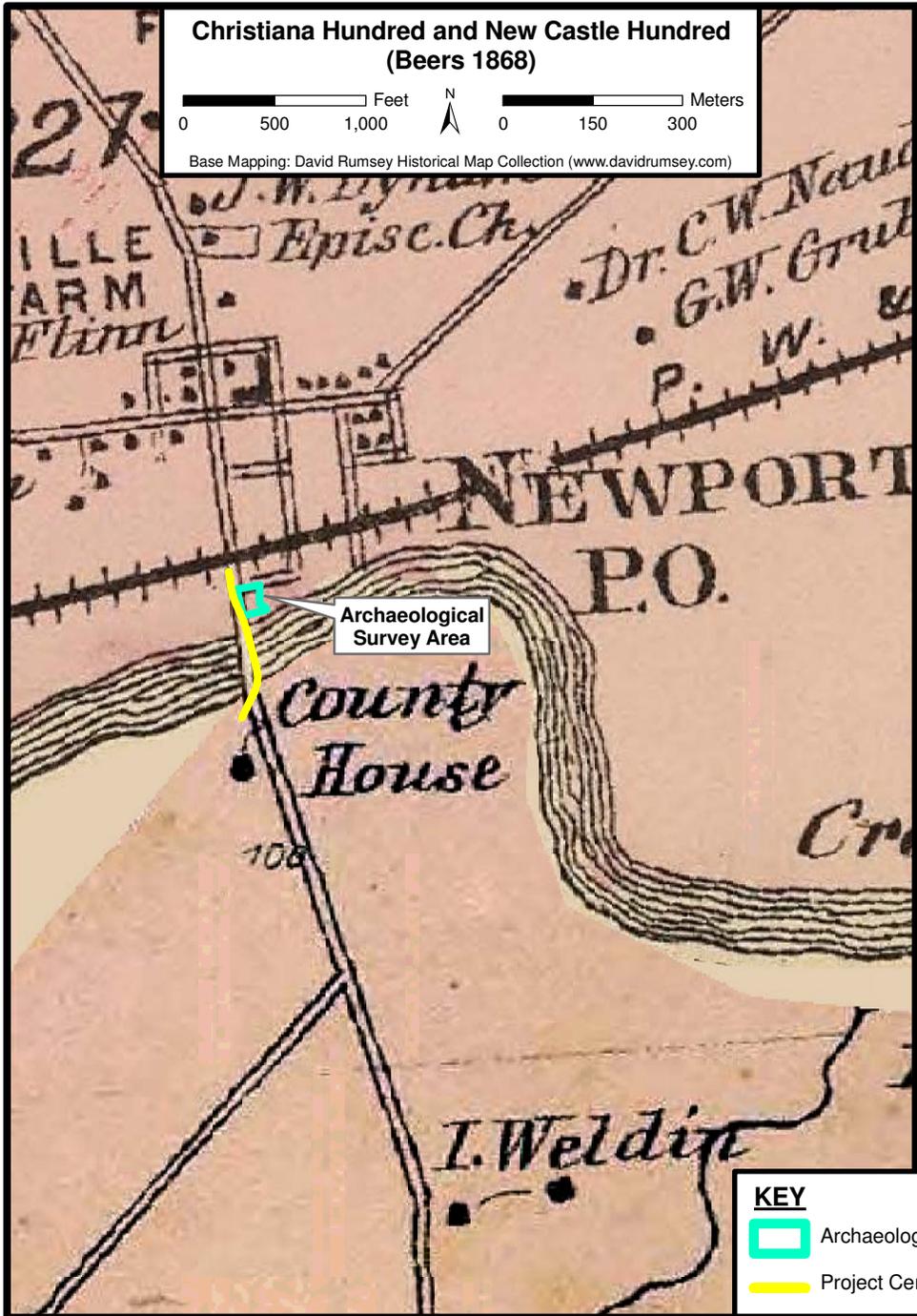
Archaeological Survey Area

KEY
Archaeological Survey Area
Project Centerline

Base Mapping: <http://nc-chap.org/maps/zoomify/fullScreen/reaPrice.php>

Rea and Price (1849)

FIGURE 13



KEY

- Archaeological Survey Area
- Project Centerline

Beers (1868)

FIGURE 14

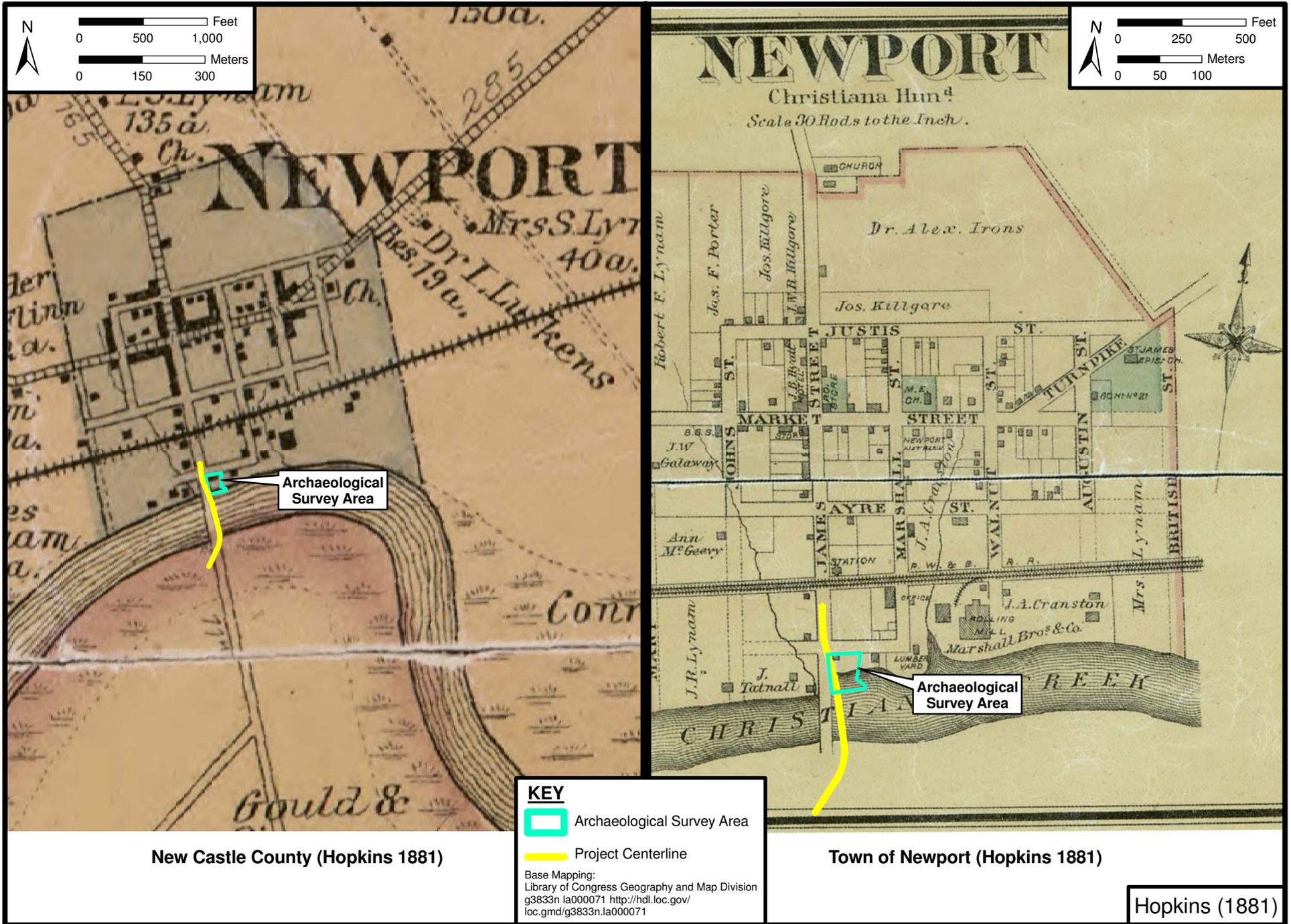


FIGURE 15



FIGURE 16

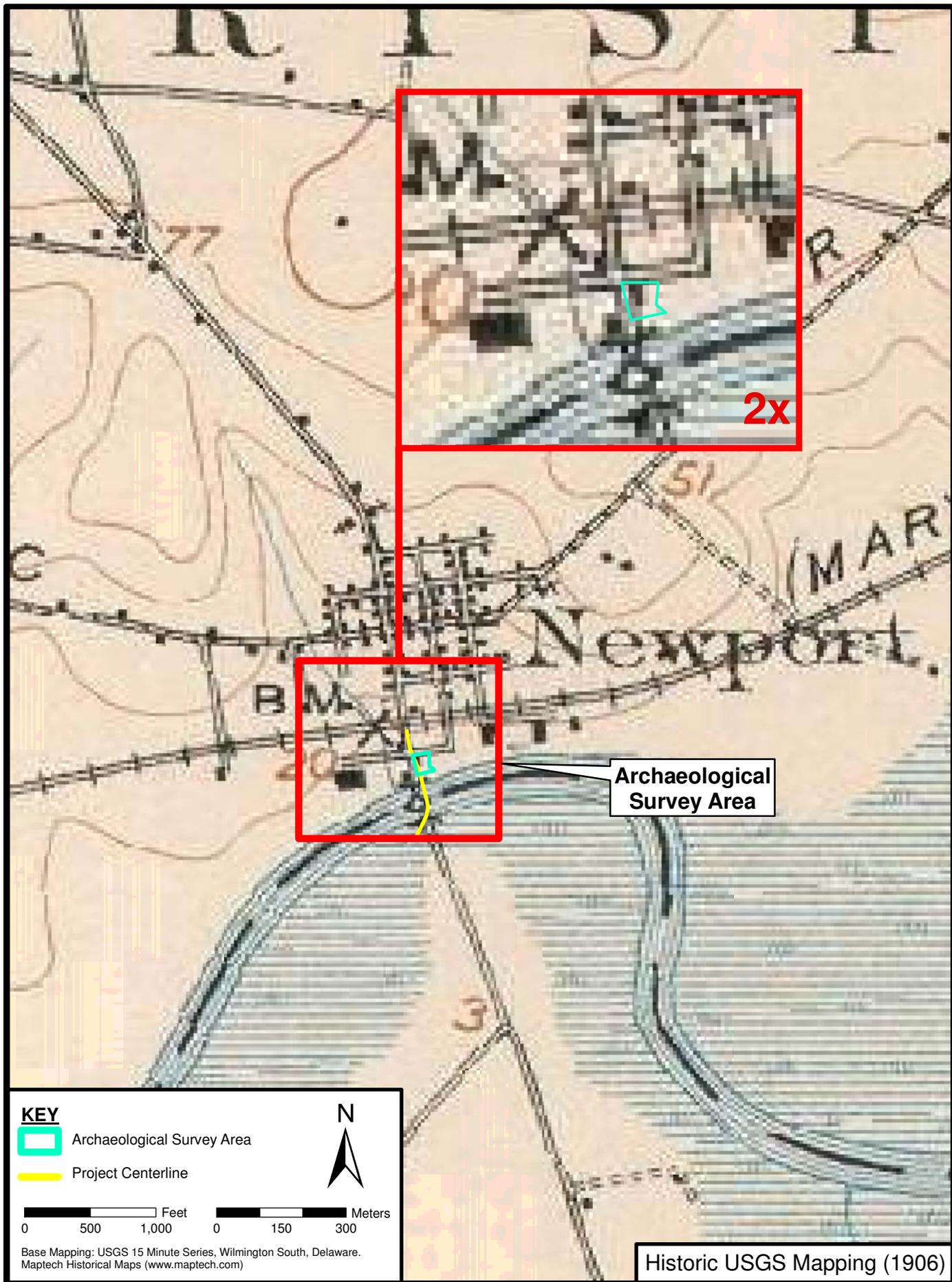


FIGURE 17

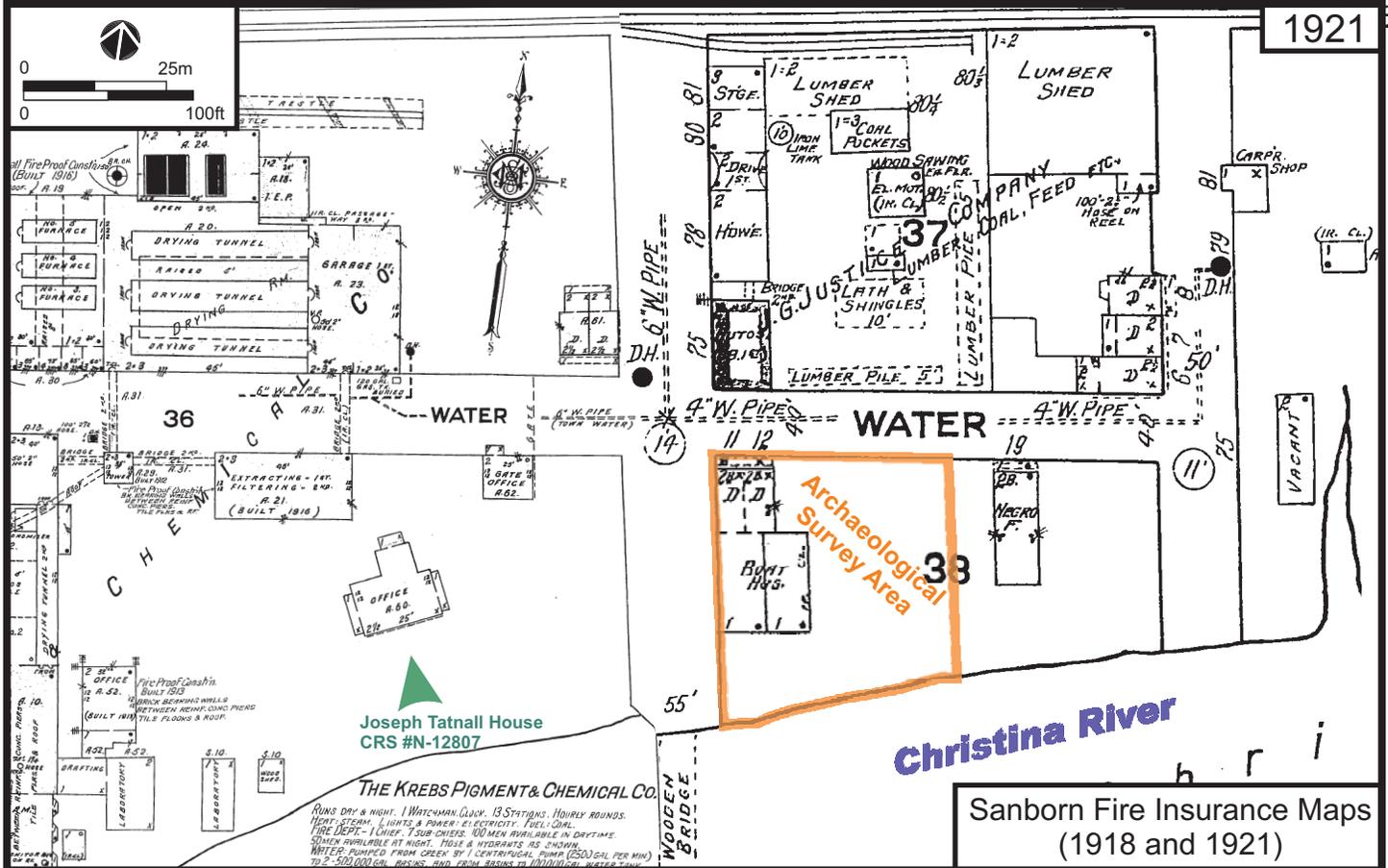
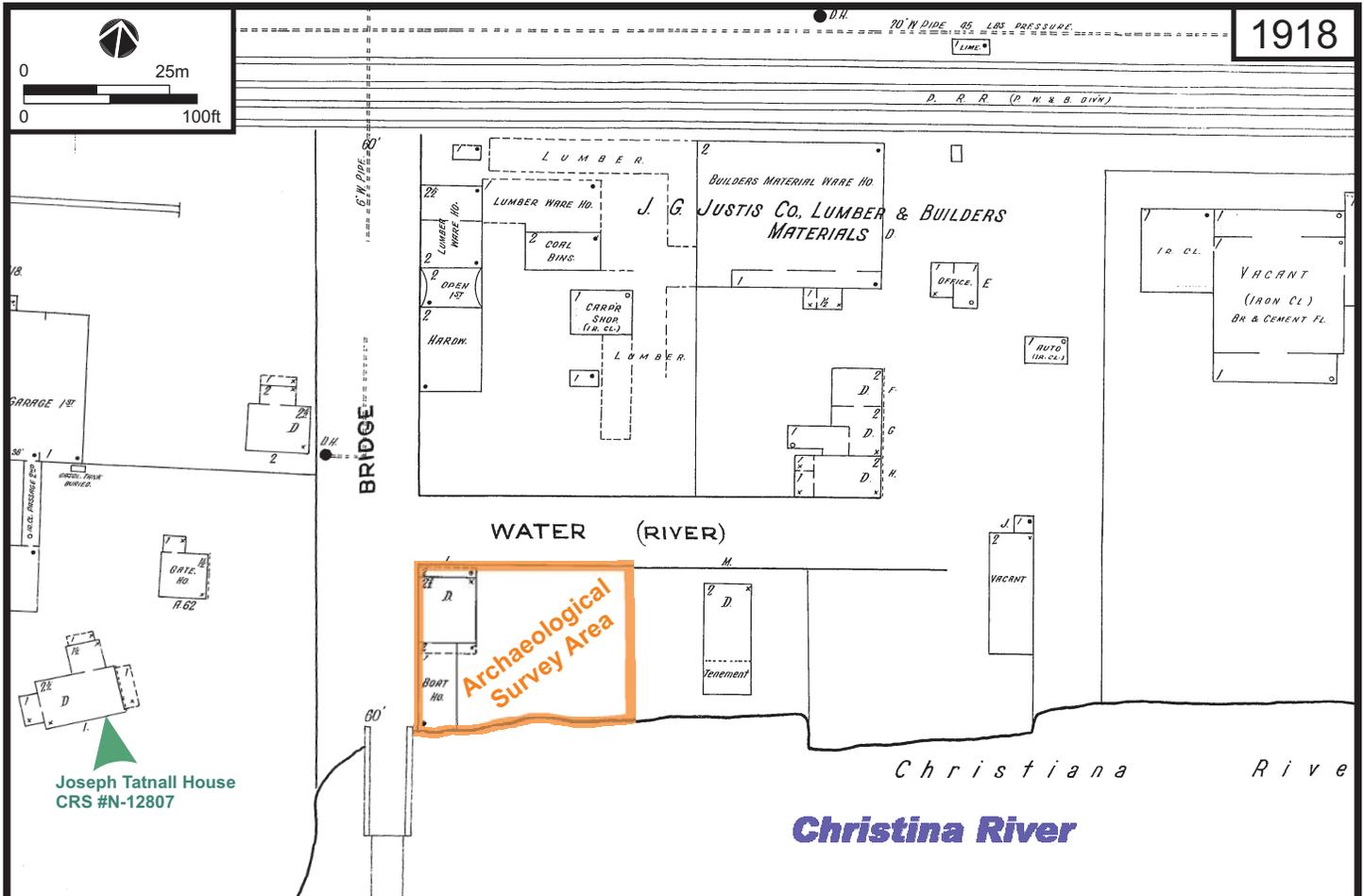
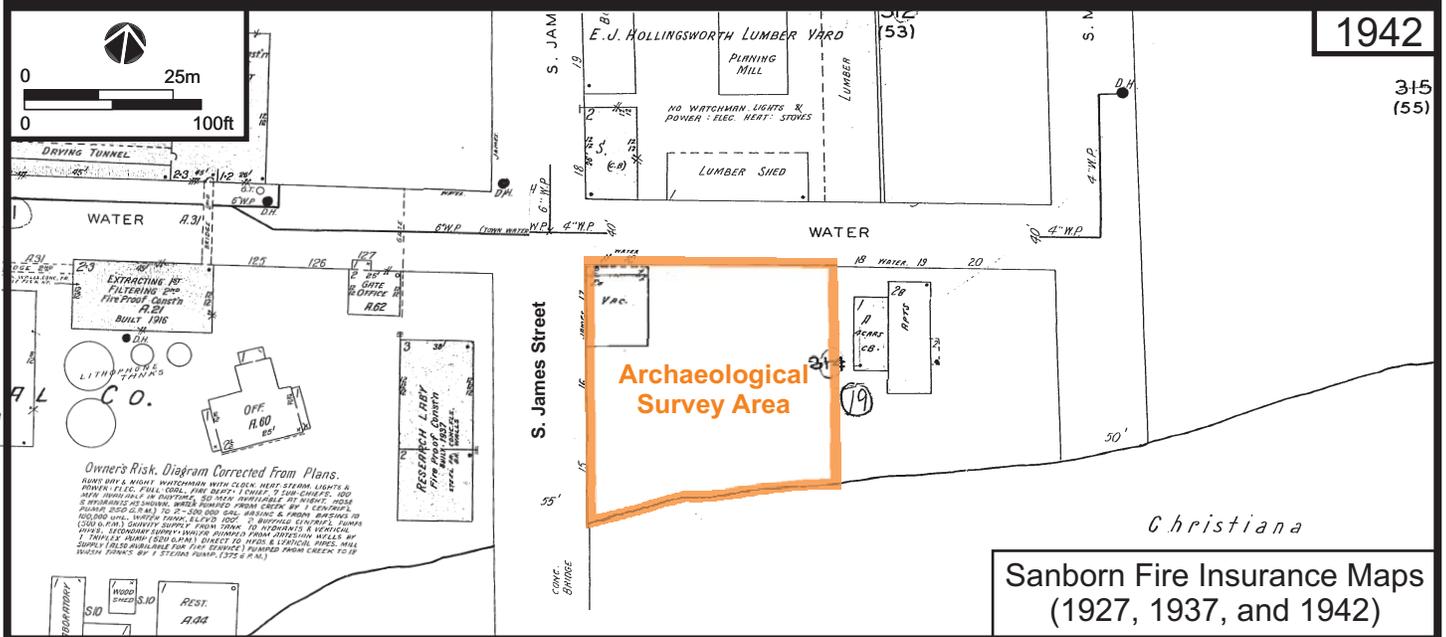
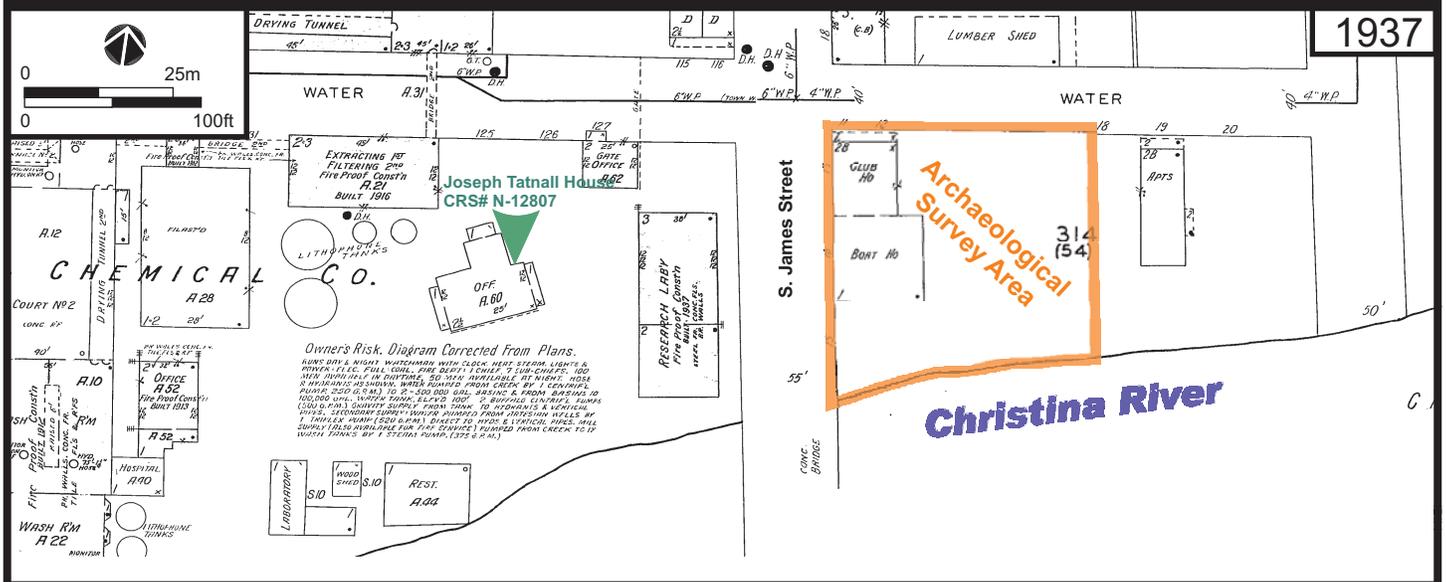
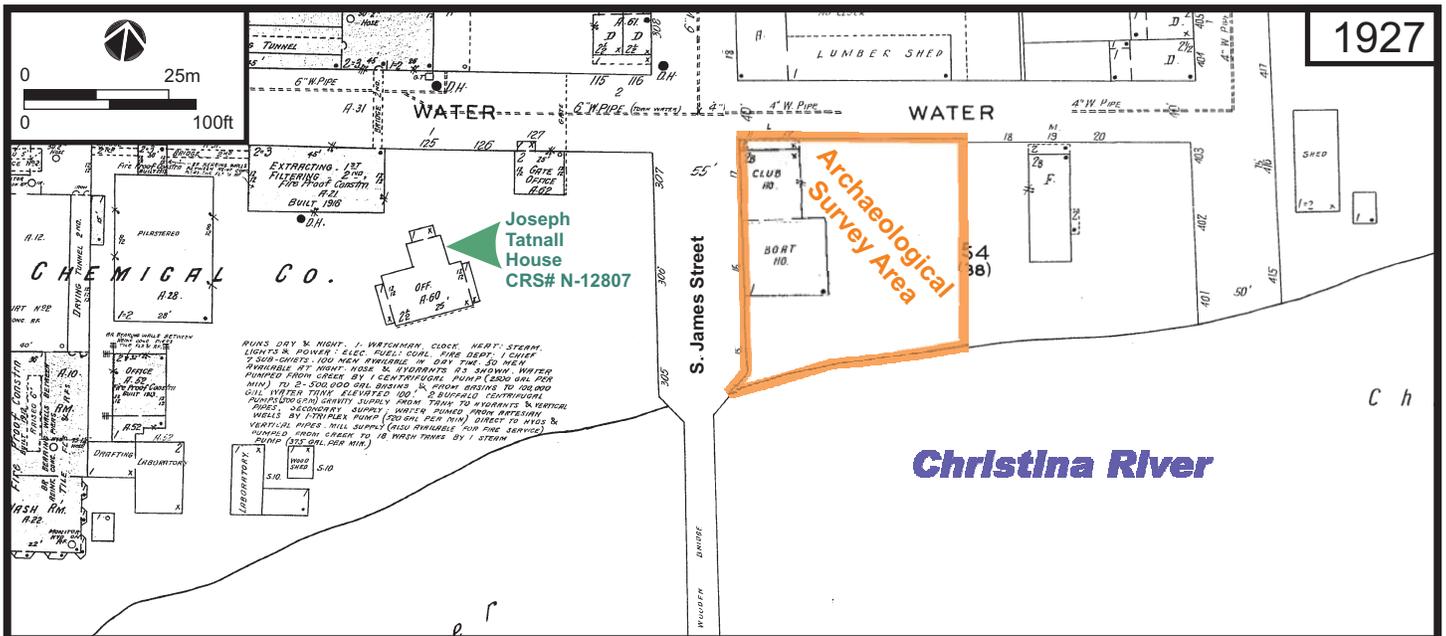


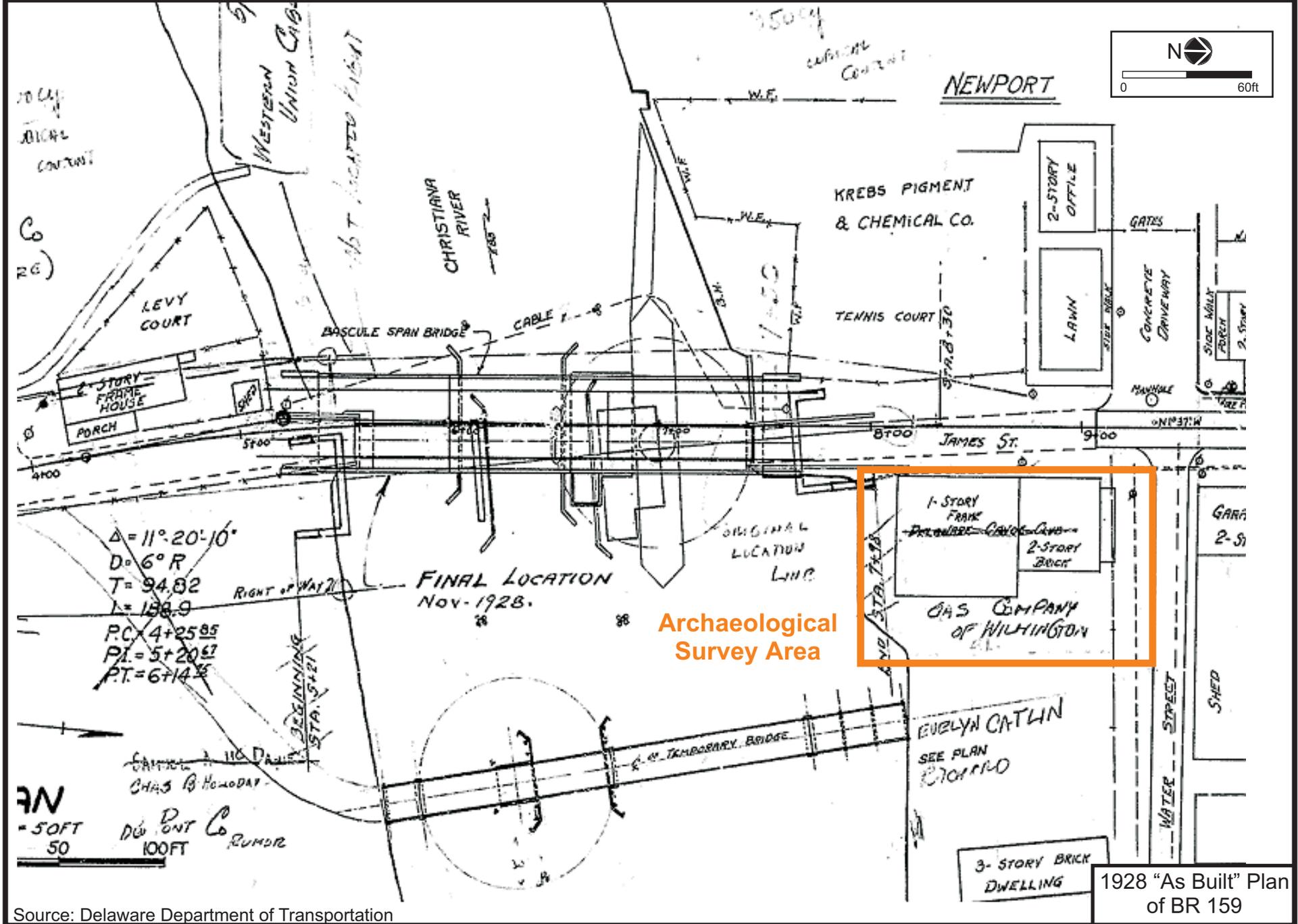
FIGURE 18



Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps (1927, 1937, and 1942)

FIGURE 19

Delaware State Highway Department "As Built" Plan of Newport Bridge, Contract C-103A (1928)



Source: Delaware Department of Transportation

1928 "As Built" Plan of BR 159

FIGURE 20

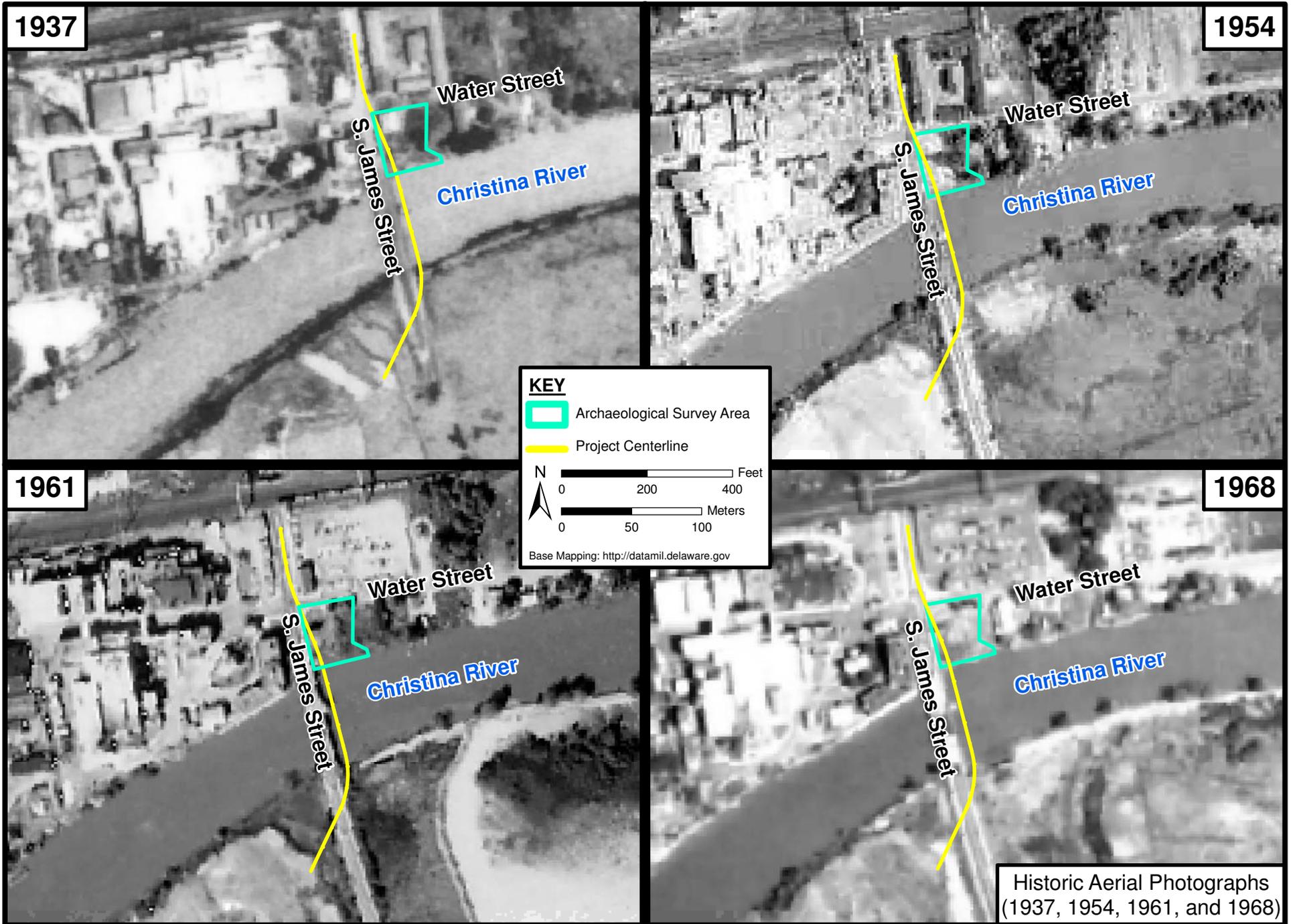


FIGURE 21

E. Land Use History of the Archaeological Survey Area

The following presents a summary of the ownership history and past built environment of the archaeological survey area. A summary chain-of-title of the survey area is presented in **Table 2**.

The archaeological survey area was originally part of a multi-lot property owned by Thomas Duff, a late eighteenth-early nineteenth century owner/operator of a ferry at the foot of James Street. Duff is often credited with having established one of Newport's earliest ferry enterprises and it is believed that Duff's service was already established by 1790. Around 1800, Duff's ferry was replaced with a larger, public, three-commissioner enterprise (Kurtze 1983).

Around 1813, the natural environment of the general survey area was subjected to substantial direct and secondary impacts when marshland was filled to construct the approaches of the first overland crossing at S. James Street, a 20-foot wide toll drawbridge.

After Duff's death, property from his estate was seized and sold at public auction to reconcile Duff's \$877 debt to James McCallmont, a noted regional shipper (NCC Deed W3:399). The archaeological survey area was contained in one of two lots that were purchased by Elizabeth Boys for the total sum of \$408.00. The 1819 deed for this transaction is of interest in that it notes that Elizabeth's two-lot purchase consisted of one lot with a house and one lot with a stable. The wording of the metes and bounds in the deed imply that the lot with the house, Lot 3#, was located north of Water Street and that the lot with the stable, Lot #2, stood south of Water Street. The archaeological survey area, which was then part of Lot #2, does not appear to coincide with the environs of the stable. Elizabeth Boys died intestate and the property was passed to her daughter Hannah S. Boys.

Rea and Price's (1849) map of New Castle County is contemporaneous with the Boys' ownership of the property (**Figure 13**). Like all of the structures within the town limits of Newport, the building at the southeast corner of the James Street/Water Street intersection is unnamed.

In 1854, Hannah Boys sold the property to Frederick Hilyard and John P. Hilyard for the sum of \$1000 (NCC Deed P6:323). The presence of a brick house on the property is documented in the 1854 Hilyard-Boys deed. Given the increased value of the property, from one of two lots less than \$408 collectively in 1819 to \$1000 on its own right in 1854, it is apparent that the Boys' had made several improvements to Lot #2 during their 35+ years of ownership. The construction of the brick house was no doubt one of them. Based on comparative analysis of proportionally-scaled mapping and measured plans spanning the property's history, it is estimated that the original two-story main block of the brick house was approximate 40- by 40 feet in size.

The Hilyards' use of the property at the southeast corner of S. James Street and Water Street during their ownership of it are also vague. The financial relationships general living arrangements of the two men who purchased the property from Hannah Boys are not clear. The Newport 1860 census contains the best record match of the censuses that span the Hilyard ownership period. In 1860, a John P. Hilyard and a Frederick Hilyard are listed as living in the same household. According to the listing, in 1860, John P. and Frederick were 30 years and 36 years of age, respectively. A John P. Hilyard is also in 1865 and 1866 Newport tax assessment records (www.ancestry.com).

On Beers (1868), the structure in the survey area property is attributed "J. P. Hilyard". The map also depicts a building denoted "F. Hilyard" to the northeast of the survey area property. The "F. Hilyard" building is located on the north side of Water Street at the northwest corner of Water and Marshall Streets (**Figure 14**).

City directories provide little firm evidence as to whether a Hilyard actually resided on the survey area property. An 1865-1866 directory for the greater Wilmington area lists John P. Hilyard as having a banking/brokerage firm, Hilyard and Company, based at 616 Market Street in Wilmington and a home in Newport. The directory listing does not provide a street address of Hilyard's Newport home (Boyd 1865). John's residency in Newport may have been relatively short-lived. In subsequent 1866 through 1873 directories, John P. Hilyard's name appears only in association with addresses inside the Wilmington city limits (E.A. Milliken & Co. 1866; www.ancestry.com). It can be surmised that the survey area property was maintained as rental property, possibly even managed by "Hilyard and Company".

In 1869, the survey area property at S. James Street and Water Street, was sold as part of a complicated multi-owner, multi-property transaction that involved land on both sides of Water Street (NCC Deed B9:385). The purchaser of the transaction was John A. Cranston, the owner of a prosperous milling and wharf enterprise centered on a large parcel adjacent to the east side of the survey area. The 1869 deed noted the presence of a brick house on the survey area property, but no details regarding its occupancy or about any of other structures on the property (NCC Deed B9:385). The deed does contain back history narrative about Hilyards' 1854 purchase of the property and about the Hilyard family that is not readily found in other public documents.

The 1869 deed explains that after Frederick Hilyard's death, his half-interest in the property was passed to his five children, George D., William, Mary Elizabeth, Sarah Ann, John P., and the heirs' respective spouses. Unlike John A. Cranston and the survey area property, none of Frederick's heirs were cited as being of, or in, "the Village of Newport". Three heirs (George, William, and Mary Elizabeth) were cited as residents of Christiana Hundred and one heir (Sarah Ann) lived in the City of Wilmington. This lack of association subtly reflects aforementioned heirs' level of activity within the Newport town limits. The residency of the fifth heir, Frederick's son John P., is of most interest. In the 1869 deed, John P. Hilyard was cited as an Iowa resident (Ottumwan, Wapello County) who granted John J. Wyatt (his brother-in-law through his sister Sarah Ann) Power of Attorney to act on his behalf. The exact date of Frederick Hilyard's death is not known.

Obviously, the 1869 deed confirms that John P. Hilyard purchased the parcel with his father Frederick in 1854 since John A. Cranston purchased the property from the Hilyards free and clear. However, the mention of John P. Hilyard's Iowa residency is discrepant with other public records. The recurrent use of the names John, Frederick, and William by the Hilyard family, notwithstanding spelling variations of "Hilyard", adds further complexity to defining the relationships amongst the Hilyards associated with the survey area property.

Initially, it would be logical to deduce that the 1869 John P. Hilyard of Iowa and the 1860-1870s "John P. Hilyard of Newport/Wilmington represent more than one person and generation. In addition to the 1860 census co-listing of a John P. Hilyard and Frederic [sic] of similar age (ages 30 and 36, respectively) in the same household (www.ancestry.com), there is also a lack of name/age matches between the 1860 census roster of the Hilyard household and 1869 deed roster of Frederick Hilyard's named descendants.

That said, an equally valid argument could also be made to support that the Frederick Hilyard's son John P. Hilyard of Iowa and the 1865-1873 John P. Hilyard of Newport/Wilmington were indeed one in the same. Obviously, the consistent listing of the name John P. Hilyard in 1860s-1870s Wilmington/Newport directories does not confirm that the listed person was actually physically present in Delaware during those years. Despite concerted efforts, project researcher did not encounter any readily-available documents (e.g., military, census, financial, or land records) that definitively verifies the 1860s-1870s whereabouts of any one particular John P. Hilyard with direct ties to the survey area property.

Various factors could explain the co-occurrence of a John P. Hilyard and a Frederic [sic] Hilyard similar in age in the same household in the 1860 census. Examples include enumeration of another Hilyard relative also named John or Frederick or a simple enumeration (or historic transcription) error of Frederick's age in 1860. The two men could easily be father and son with the addition of 20 years to Frederick's listed age. Regardless, by 1869, most (if not all) of Frederick Hilyard's named heirs to the survey area property were married adults. A logical explanation for the roster discrepancies between the 1860 census and 1869 deed may be that by 1860 census, most (if not all) of Frederick Hilyard's descendants were already living in their own individual households.

The exact relationships amongst the members of the greater Newport area Hilyards as they relate to the survey area property are difficult to reconstruct without substantial archival research. Intensive biographical and genealogical research on the Hilyard family was determined to be beyond the scope of this survey and thus not pursued. Nonetheless, as a final note, based on the information encountered during the course of this project, it is strongly suspected that Frederick Hilyard who purchased could very well have been "Captain Fred Hilyard" who was an owner/operator of a late eighteenth-early nineteenth century Newport ferry named "Elizabeth" (Scharf 1888:894).

Little is also known about the 1869-1919 Cranston ownership of the property. Late nineteenth century Newport directories and the ambiguities of preceding Hilyard occupancy, imply that Cranston likely maintained the survey area as a tenant property. For example, an

1885 Newport directory lists three laborers, a boatman, and a miller with address listings that could represent the property on the southeast corner of S. James and Water Street (University of Delaware Center for Historical Architecture and Design: Stevens transcription). None of the aforementioned residents are named Cranston. Although the property is shown with a building on Hopkins (1893) and Baist (1893), the maps not include any accompanying notations, remarks, or names.

Substantial modifications were made to the built environment of the survey area property during the last decades of its existence. Depicted building proportions of late nineteenth and early twentieth century maps, as well as historic photographs, indicate that the one-story frame boat house off of rear elevation of the brick house was constructed sometime between 1893 and 1918 (**Figures 18** and **Figure 19**). As noted earlier, the original boat house was a 30' (east-west) by 60' (north-south) building constructed with its west wall flush with the west wall of the brick house.

In 1919, Cranston sold the survey area property to the Delaware Canoe Club. Between 1918 and 1921, probably shortly after the Delaware Canoe Club acquired the property, the boat house was enlarged into a 60' x 60' building by constructing a 30-foot wide addition to the east. Under the ownership of the Delaware Canoe Club, the brick house and its attached boathouse were divided along their north-south axes to create a duplex property (**Figure 18**). In March 1921, the Delaware Canoe Club sold the property to Thomas and Getrude (w) Logan, who sold it back to the Delaware Canoe Club two days later. Between 1921 and 1927, the Delaware Canoe Club converted the building from a double residence into a "club" facility (**Figure 19**). In October 1929, the Delaware Canoe Club property was purchased by Ralph and Lina Richardson, who then sold it to the Wilmington Gas Works in December of that same year. Between 1937 and 1942, the boat house was demolished. By 1942, the brick house was a vacant structure. Historic photographs show that the main building was razed sometime during the late 1950s (**Appendix I**).

**Table 2:
New Castle County Tax Parcel 20-003.00-084, Summary Chain of Title**

Grantee	Price	Date	Ref. Bk:Pg.	Building Mentioned
Wilmington Gas Works <i>From Ralph B. Richardson & Lina H.</i>	\$4500.00	3 Dec. 1929	T36:218	Brick House
Ralph B. Richardson & Lina H. <i>From Delaware Canoe Club</i>	\$4500.00	14 Oct. 1928	S36:324	Brick House
Delaware Canoe Club <i>From Thomas Logan & Gertrude J.</i>	\$1.00	7 Mar. 1921	F30:371	Brick House
Thomas Logan & Gertrude J. <i>From Delaware Canoe Club</i>	\$1.00	5 Mar. 1921	F30:369	Brick House
Delaware Canoe Club <i>From John A. Cranston & Martha S.</i>	\$3000.00	22 Jul. 1919	K28:526	Brick House
John A. Cranston & Martha S <i>From George D. Hillyard & Martha, William Hillyard & Sarah Jane, Joseph Boughman & Mary Elizabeth, John J. Wyatt & Sarah Ann, John P Hillyard*</i> <u>Note:</u> Frederick Hilyard's ½-interest in property was conveyed to his five children after his death. The deed does not specify if Frederick Hilyard died testate or intestate.	\$790.00	27 Dec. 1869	B9:385	Brick House
Fredrick Hillyard and John P Hillyard <i>From Hannah S. Boys</i>	\$1000.00	7 Jan. 7 1854	P6:323	Brick House
Hannah S. Boys <i>From Elizabeth Boys</i>	Died intestate.	N/D	N/D	Brick House
Elizabeth Boys <i>From J. John Moody Esquire, High Sherriff of New Castle County Delaware</i>	\$408.00	20 Oct. 1819 (public auction) 7 Jan. 1820 (deed)	W3:399	Mention of a lot with a house and a lot with a stable. Wording suggests house and stable were north and south of Water St., respectively
J. John Moody Esquire, High Sherriff of New Castle County Delaware <i>From Thomas Duff</i> <u>Note:</u> Property was seized from the estate of the late Thomas Duff to pay James McCallmont a debt of \$887.00 and damages of \$4.05 levied against Thomas Duff by the New Castle Court of Common Pleas.	seized	4 Jun. 1819 (writ)	W3:399	

* John J. Wyatt (attorney and husband of Sarah Ann nee Hilyard) was granted Power of Attorney for John P. Hilyard, resident in Ottumwa, Wapello Co, IA. Power of Attorney was filed in Deed Book S, Vol. 8, Page 428.