

## 5. PHASE II ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

### Field Methodology

Phase II field testing was performed between June 10-24, 2002 and was conducted to evaluate the potential significance of prehistoric and historical archaeological resources identified during the earlier Phase I Survey in the Valley Road side of the current Elsie Walker Rest Area and park. More specifically these investigations sought to: 1) delineate the subsurface footprint of the former Jackson-Griffith house; 2) determine the horizontal and vertical distributions of artifacts within this site; 3) search for evidence of potentially significant intra-site artifact patterning and/or the presence of intact subsurface features; and 4) examine the integrity of associated artifact deposits.

All site testing was conducted in compliance with the standards established in the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office's *Guidelines for Architectural and Archaeological Surveys in Delaware* (1993) and employed a field strategy based on the excavation of a series of three foot by three foot (ca. one-by-one meter) square test units supplemented by mechanical trenching and stripping operations.

Prior to the start of Phase II testing KSK's field staff established a uniform grid over the entire study area in order to facilitate eventual mapping of all excavations and relevant findings. The grid was created using the eastern edge of Old Lancaster Pike as the primary baseline and was extended across the site in ten-foot increments. To allow the accurate translation of field points to the site plan the site grid was keyed into an existing WRA survey hub (CP 104; N20 E20 in the KSK grid) and all mapping during the investigation was performed using Nikon Total Station survey equipment. It should be noted that throughout the remainder of this report all referential compass directions provided in the text will be made with respect to the established archaeological grid orientation, rather than to magnetic bearings.

Machine assisted excavations were performed by Mr. Rick Hobson of Danrick Construction Services, Inc., and were completed using a Case 590 extending backhoe equipped with a five foot wide toothless bucket. Initial field efforts utilized a pair of crossed backhoe trenches placed near the location of Phase I excavation units 1 and 2 in order to quickly locate and delineate the extent of subsurface foundations for the Jackson-Griffith house. Once identified, associated demolition rubble was excavated by the backhoe to expose the entire basement space and to prepare the structure's interior for further archaeological examination. Subsequent machine-assisted work was also carried out in portions of the former rear yard and involved a combination of shallow, linear trench excavations, along with limited stripping of soils to expose underlying intact B-horizon deposits (Figure 12; Plates 1-2). In these instances machine assistance was employed in order to facilitate and expedite the search for historic features associated with this property, and in particular to identify the locations of any former well or privy shafts. While no machine-excavated soils were screened or otherwise closely inspected for artifact content, trench stratigraphic sequences were documented in hand drawn profile maps and by color slide, black and white, and digital photographs.

Sections of the former house yard situated in closer proximity to the foundations, in areas of the property most likely to contain potentially substantial domestic refuse deposits, were examined in a systematic, controlled fashion through the hand completion of 10 three foot by three foot (one by one meter) square excavation units (EUs). Units were placed along all four sides of the building foundations, with the greatest concentration oriented within areas representing the former side (north) and rear (west) yard spaces. The purpose of these excavations was not only to recover a larger interpretational and analytical sample of artifacts associated with the historical occupants of the house, but also to



**Plate 1.** Overview facing west showing mechanical stripping at backhoe trench #1.



**Plate 2.** Overview facing east showing mechanical stripping of side yard area.

generate data regarding the density, stratigraphic disposition, and horizontal distribution of cultural materials within and throughout the historic property (Figure 13). Given the recovery of a handful of prehistoric artifacts from this area during the Phase I investigation the additional goal of the unit excavations was to determine the precise nature and integrity of any Native American occupation(s) that may also intersect the study area.

After removing and setting aside the sod, soil within all test units was excavated by natural/fill levels to the top of the intact subsoil (B-horizon). Soils in the B-horizon were then excavated in arbitrary 4-inch (10-cm) levels to a point at least 4 inches (10 cm) into sterile deposits. All excavated soil was screened through ¼-in. hardware cloth to ensure uniform recovery of cultural materials. Recovered artifacts were placed in plastic bags labeled with precise horizontal and vertical provenience information. Standardized forms were used to record data relating to the depths, Munsell color and texture, and artifact content for each soil stratum. The resulting stratigraphic profile was documented on hand-drawn maps and documented using black and white print, color slide, and digital photographs. Excavated soils were screened onto plastic tarps and backfilled after recordation was completed.

All subsurface features identified during this investigation were excavated using a standardized methodology, regardless of probable feature age and/or function. Wherever a feature was encountered all overlying soils were first cleared in order to expose its full size and shape. Each feature was then bisected along an arbitrary axis and a selected portion fully excavated to expose any evidence of internal stratification and to recover any associated artifacts. Bisected features were carefully documented on hand-drawn plan and profile maps, in standardized excavation forms, and with black and white print, color slide, and digital photographs. Following the bisection the remaining portions of the features were systematically removed by observed strata. Excavated feature soils were screened through ¼ inch hardware cloth to recover any associated artifacts and, in some instances, soil and other samples were retained for possible future analysis.

All artifacts recovered during this project were taken to KSK's Archaeological Laboratory facilities in Pennsauken, New Jersey for processing and analysis. At the lab, all artifacts were first cleaned with water and allowed to air dry. Subsequent analysis of recovered materials consisted of documenting the raw material type, function, and where possible approximate age of each artifact, as well as the entering of all relevant analytical variables into a computerized database for eventual statistical characterization. Once analysis of the artifacts was completed, all items were prepared for eventual long-term curation in accordance with the DESHPO's *Guidelines*.

## **Phase II Testing Results**

Completion of the Phase II testing regimen resulted in the identification and delineation of the foundations for the former Jackson-Griffith house, as well as in the recovery of a total of 1058 artifacts. The overwhelming majority of collected artifacts were of a historic origin and dated to the nineteenth through mid-twentieth centuries, and derived from former yard areas surrounding the house foundations. Prehistoric artifacts were also recovered from yard areas near the house and served to define the presence of a small Native American occupation tentatively dated to the Archaic/Woodland I and Woodland II Culture Periods (ca. 6,500 – 3,000 B.C.; 3,000 B.C.– A.D. 1650). A total of five features were identified within the Phase II study area, four of which were historic in origin and related to the Jackson-Griffith house, and one that was directly associated with the earlier Native American component. Two additional subsurface anomalies were initially identified as features, but were subsequently found to be non-cultural in origin.

### *House Foundations*

As revealed in trenches and by subsequent machine stripping, foundations for the Jackson-Griffith house are oriented parallel to Old Lancaster Pike, and are situated approximately 20 feet (6 meters) east of that roadway and some 45 feet (ca. 14 meters) north of Valley Road. Consisting of two-foot thick mortared stone walls, the foundations were identified less than one foot below the present rest area ground surface and defined a rectangular space measuring 28 by 20 feet (ca. 8.5 by 6 meters) in size. While the foundation interior was initially found to be filled with a loose jumble of stone construction debris, removal of this material exposed an excavated basement cavity that extended to a maximum depth of some 4.5 feet (ca. 1.4 meters) below ground surface (as measured along the western foundation wall) and that terminated in a poured cement floor. The interior of the basement space was divided by an east-west oriented stone partition wall into two equally sized bays, with a centrally-placed doorway or open passageway allowing free access to and from both rooms. Internal basement walls were retained evidence of having been plastered and whitewashed.

To the east of the basement, backhoe trenching and machine-assisted stripping also identified no fewer than three additional stone foundation segments that may be associated with a later addition to the main house. Unlike the primary house foundations these outlying walls were fairly lightly constructed and consisted of no more than two courses of stone. Based on their mapped location it is estimated that these wall fragments define a space measuring approximately 17 by 20 feet (ca. 5 by 6 meters) in size. Considering their light construction these foundations may represent architectural footers that once supported a frame kitchen addition to the main dwelling (Figure 14; Plate 3).

Very few artifacts were recovered in connection with the house foundations. Those items that were identified consisted entirely of items of a comparatively recent manufacture, including tin and enameled bowl/pan fragments, cast-iron machinery parts (pulley), plastic insulated electrical wire, and machine made glass bottles (milk bottles/canning jars). In all instances these objects were removed from the construction rubble filling the basement void.

### *Yard Stratigraphy*

In yard areas immediately surrounding the house foundations, unit excavations generally confirmed Phase I testing results regarding the nature of stratigraphic relationships within the study area, and revealed a highly variable subsurface sequence. Throughout the yard areas the basic soil sequence encountered consisted of a 0.3 to 2.0 foot (10 to 60 cm) thick strata of stacked fill horizons directly overlying Plowzone (Ap) and undisturbed subsoil deposits (Appendix B). Within this universalized stratigraphy the most pronounced irregularities were observed within the uppermost soil package. General soil sequences within this upper package consisted of a thin layer of dark brown (10YR 3/3) silty loam topsoil fill overlying one or more mixed fill horizons, the exact characteristics and sequence of which varied throughout different sections of the yard (Figures 15-24; Plates 4 and 5). Additional sources of variability related to localized disturbances associated with a series of identified historic features (see below) as well as with the installation of modern subsurface utilities along the margins of Old Lancaster Pike (see Figure 24).

Below the upper, stacked fill package dark brown-brown (10YR 3/2-4/3) silty loam plow zone (Ap horizon) soils were found uniformly distributed throughout the former yard areas and extended up against the house foundations. Variation within this stratum primarily concerned the observed thickness of deposits in any given location, with several excavation units containing a somewhat thinner plow zone than in other areas (see Figures 16 and 23). In these instances plow zone variability is likely the result of the compaction and/or removal of portions of the stratum in association with the emplacement of the



**Plate 3.** Overview facing south showing foundations.

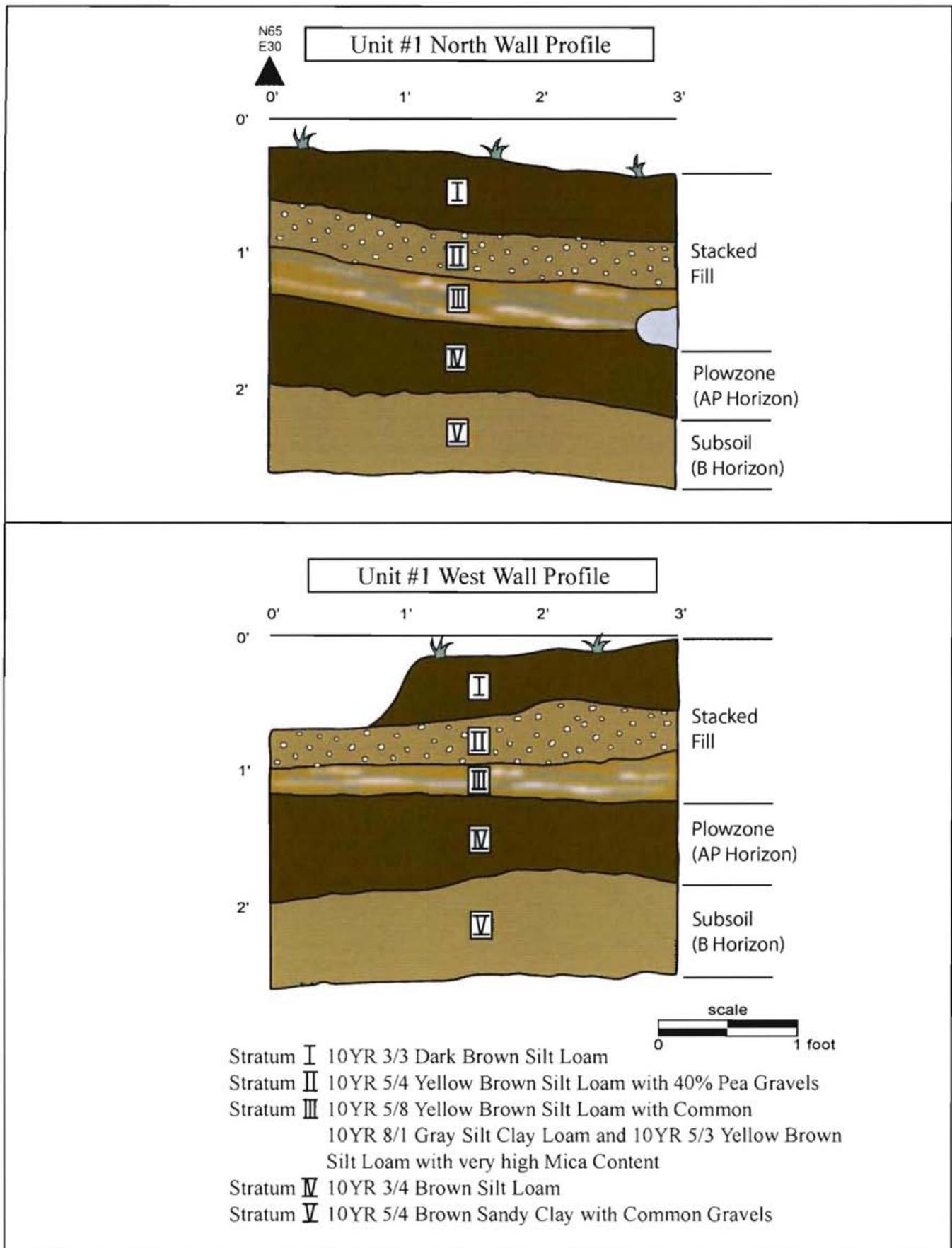
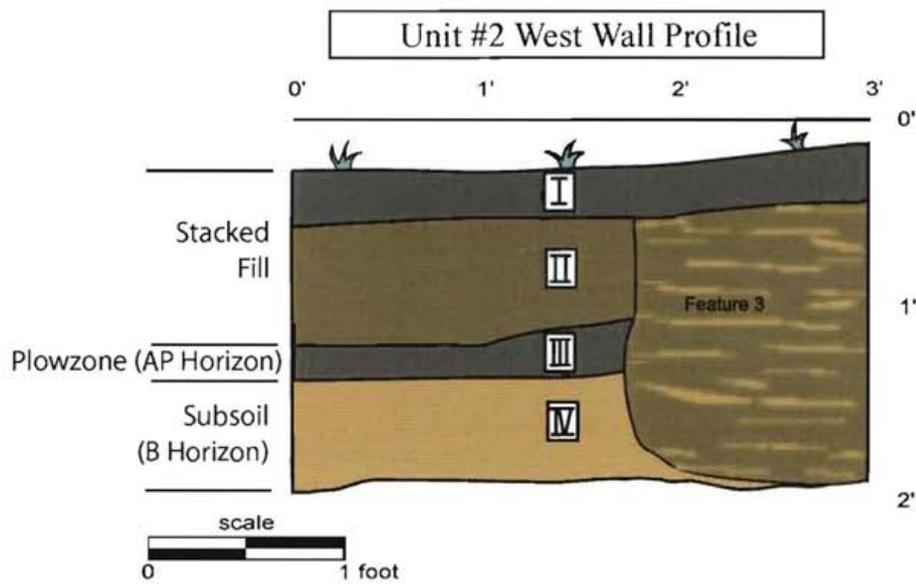
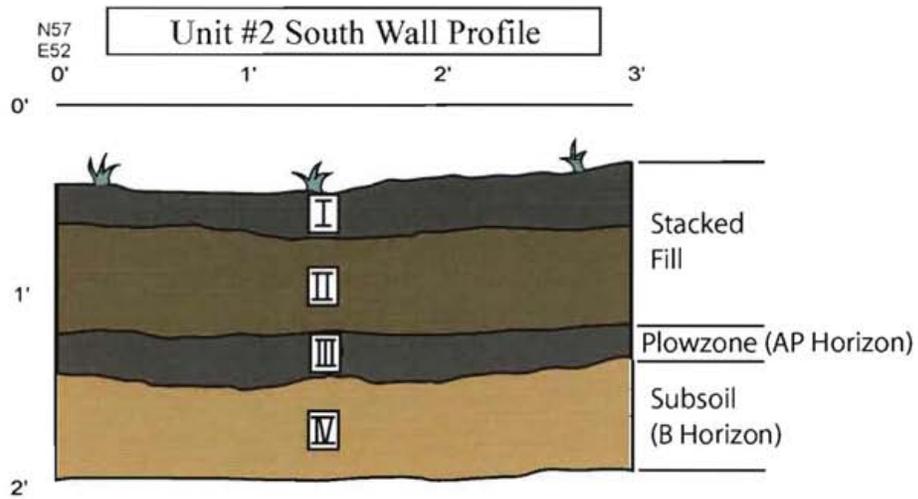
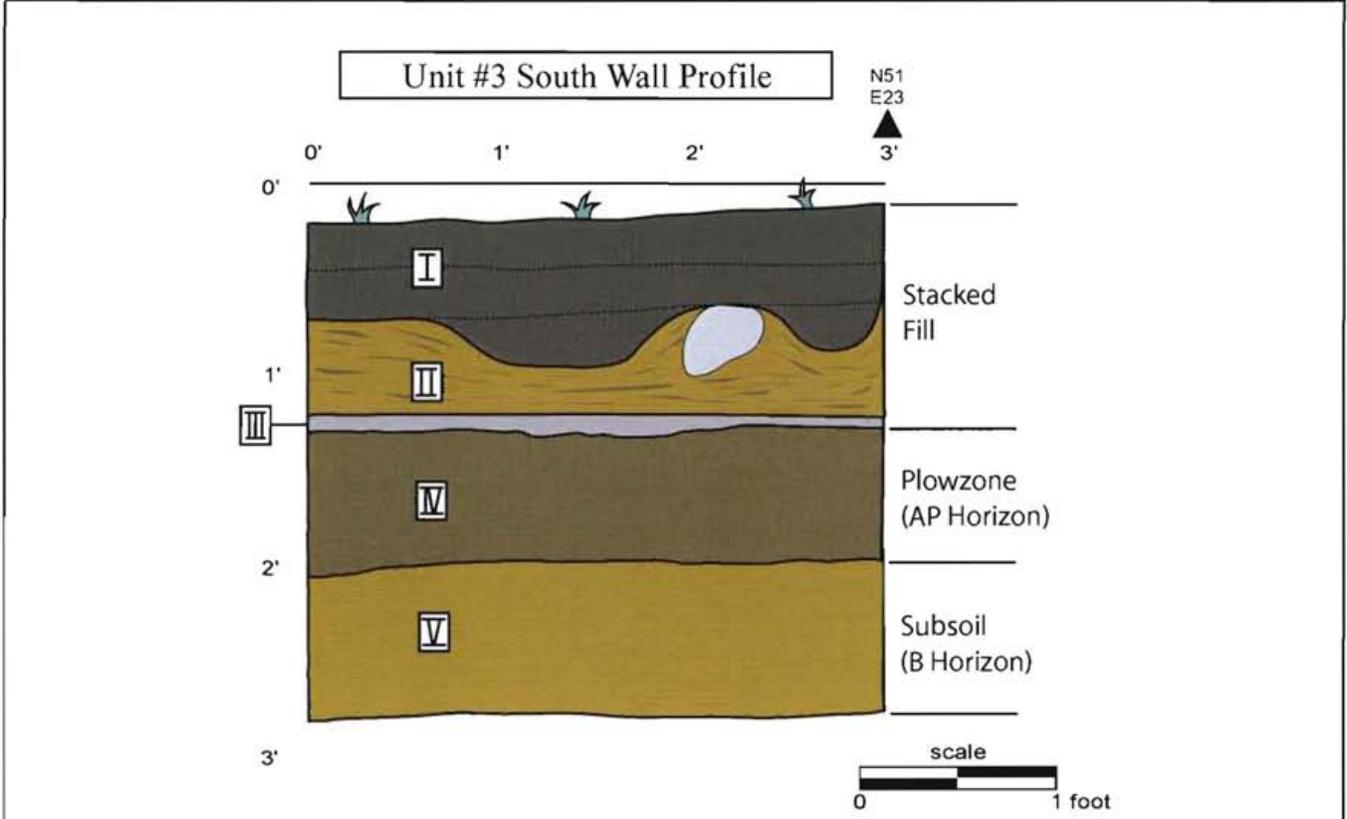
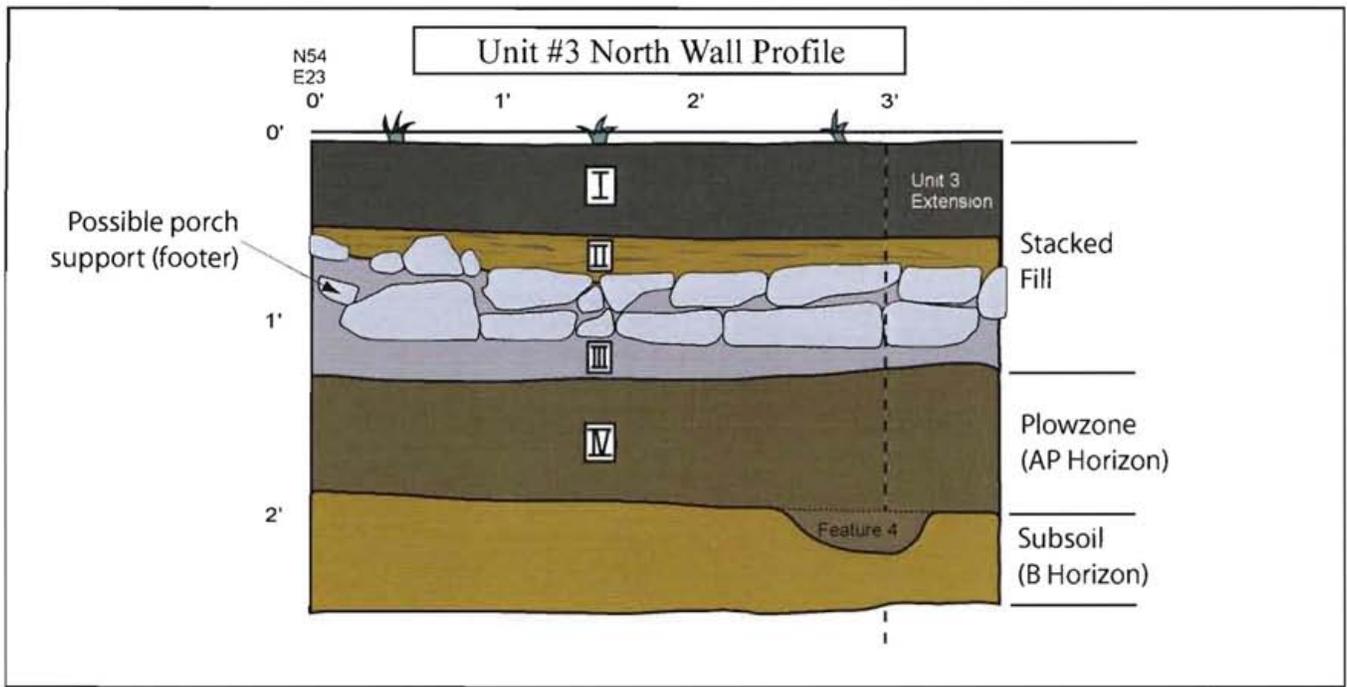


Figure 15. Excavation unit 1 north and west wall profiles.



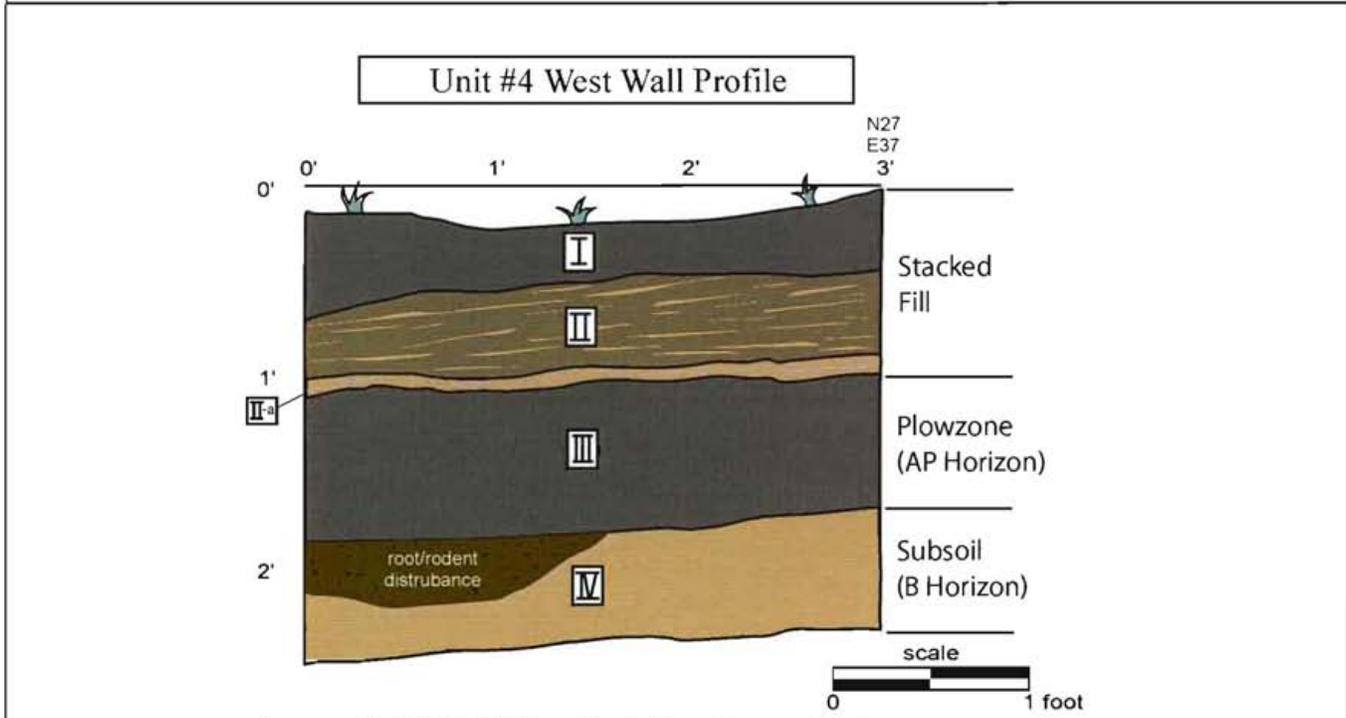
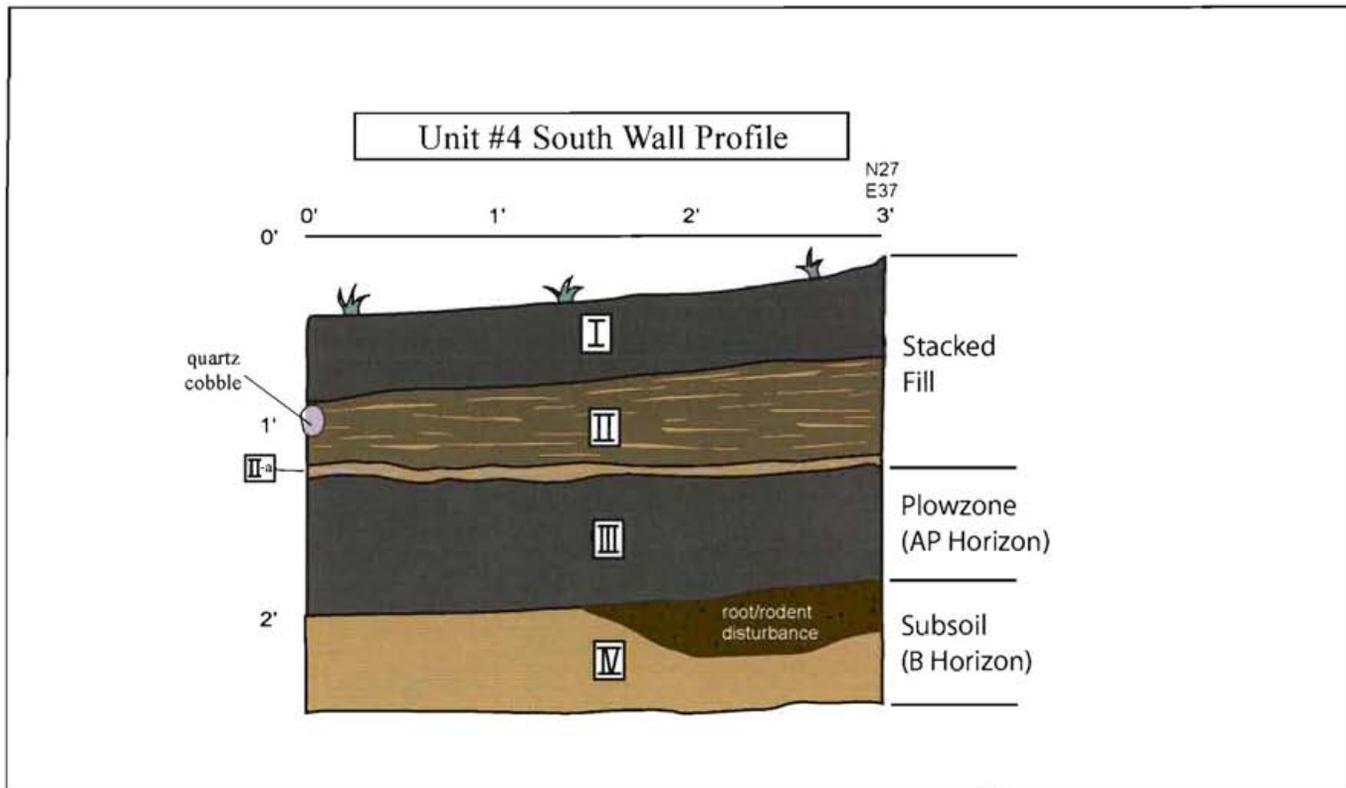
- Stratum I 10YR 3/2 Very Dark Brown Silt Loam with 10YR 3/2 Silt Loam
- Stratum II 10YR 4/3 Brown Compact Clay Silt with  
10YR 6/6 Brownish Yellow Compact Clay Silt
- Stratum III 10YR 3/2 Very Dark Gray Brown Silt Loam
- Stratum IV 10YR 6/6 Brownish Yellow Loamy Clay

Figure 16. Excavation unit 2 south and west wall profiles.



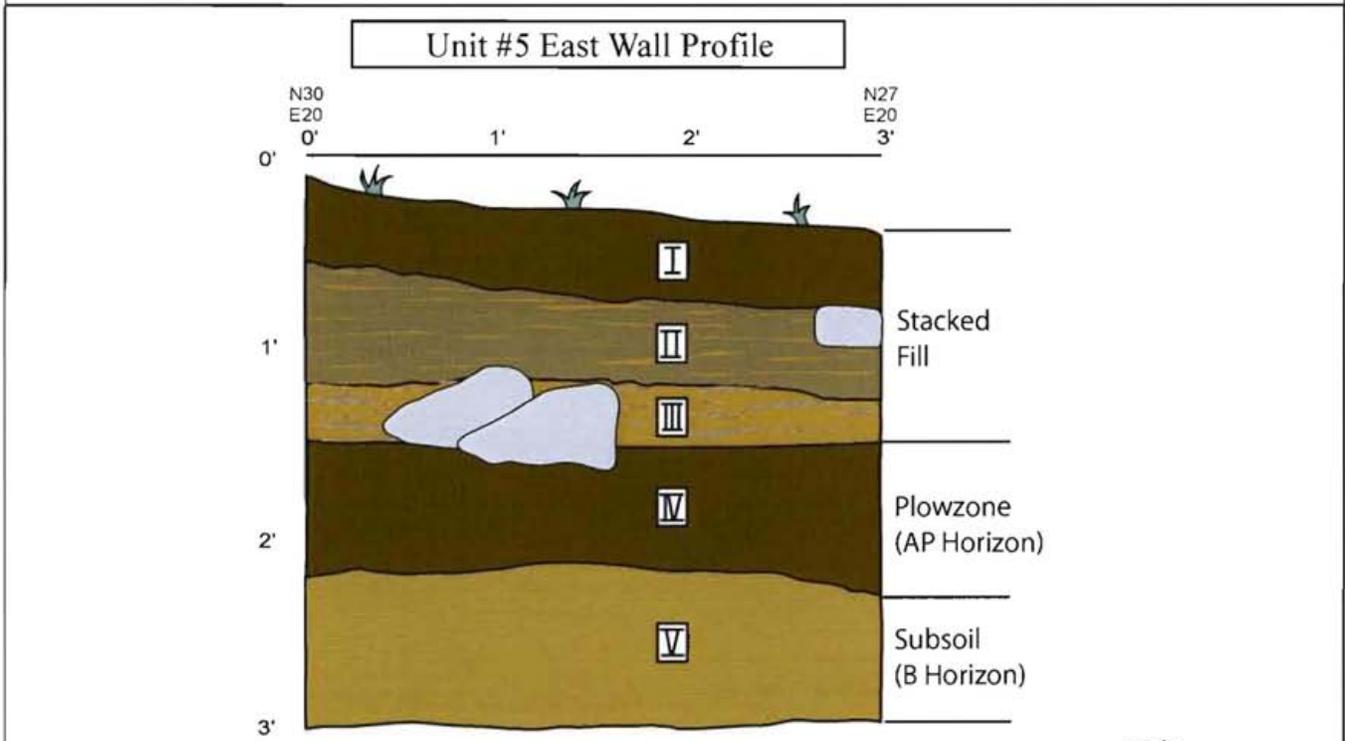
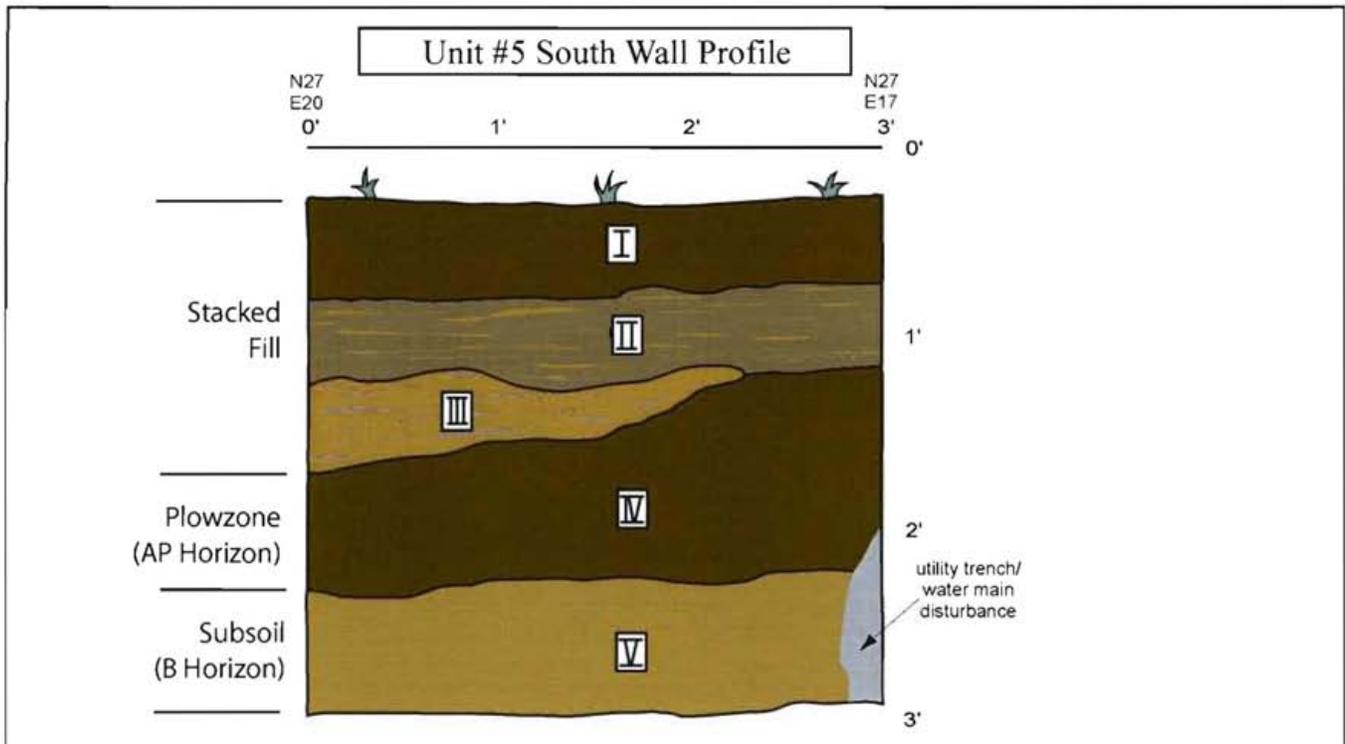
- Stratum I 10YR 3/2 Very Dark Gray Silt Loam with Common Pea Gravels
- Stratum II 10YR 5/6 Yellow Brown Silt Loam with 10YR 4/3 Brown with Common Gravels
- Stratum III 10YR 6/1 Gray Silt Loam Very Micacious
- Stratum IV 10YR 4/3 Brown Silt Loam with few Gravels
- Stratum V 10YR 5/6 Yellow Brown Subsoil with Common Concretions

Figure 17. Excavation unit 3 north and south wall profiles.

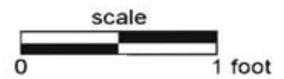


- Stratum I 10YR 3/2 Very Dark Gray Brown Silt Loam
- Stratum II 10YR 4/3 Brown Silt Loam Mottled with  
10YR 6/6 Brownish Yellow Compact Clay Silt
- Stratum IIa 10YR 6/6 Brownish Yellow Compact Clay Silt
- Stratum III 10YR 3/2 Very Dark Gray Brown Silt Loam
- Stratum IV 10YR 6/6 Brownish Yellow Compact Silt Clay

**Figure 18.** Excavation unit 4 south and west wall profiles.



- Stratum I 10YR 3/3 Dark Gray Brown Silt Loam with Common Gravels
- Stratum II 10YR 4/4 Brown with 10YR 5/8 Yellow Brown Silt Loam and Common Gravels
- Stratum III 10YR 5/8 Yellow Brown Silt Loam and 10YR 5/3 Yellow Brown with Common Gravels and High Mica Content
- Stratum IV 10YR 3/4 Dark Gray Brown Silt Loam
- Stratum V 10YR 5/6 Yellow Brown Silty Clay Loam



**Figure 19.** Excavation unit 5 south and east wall profiles.

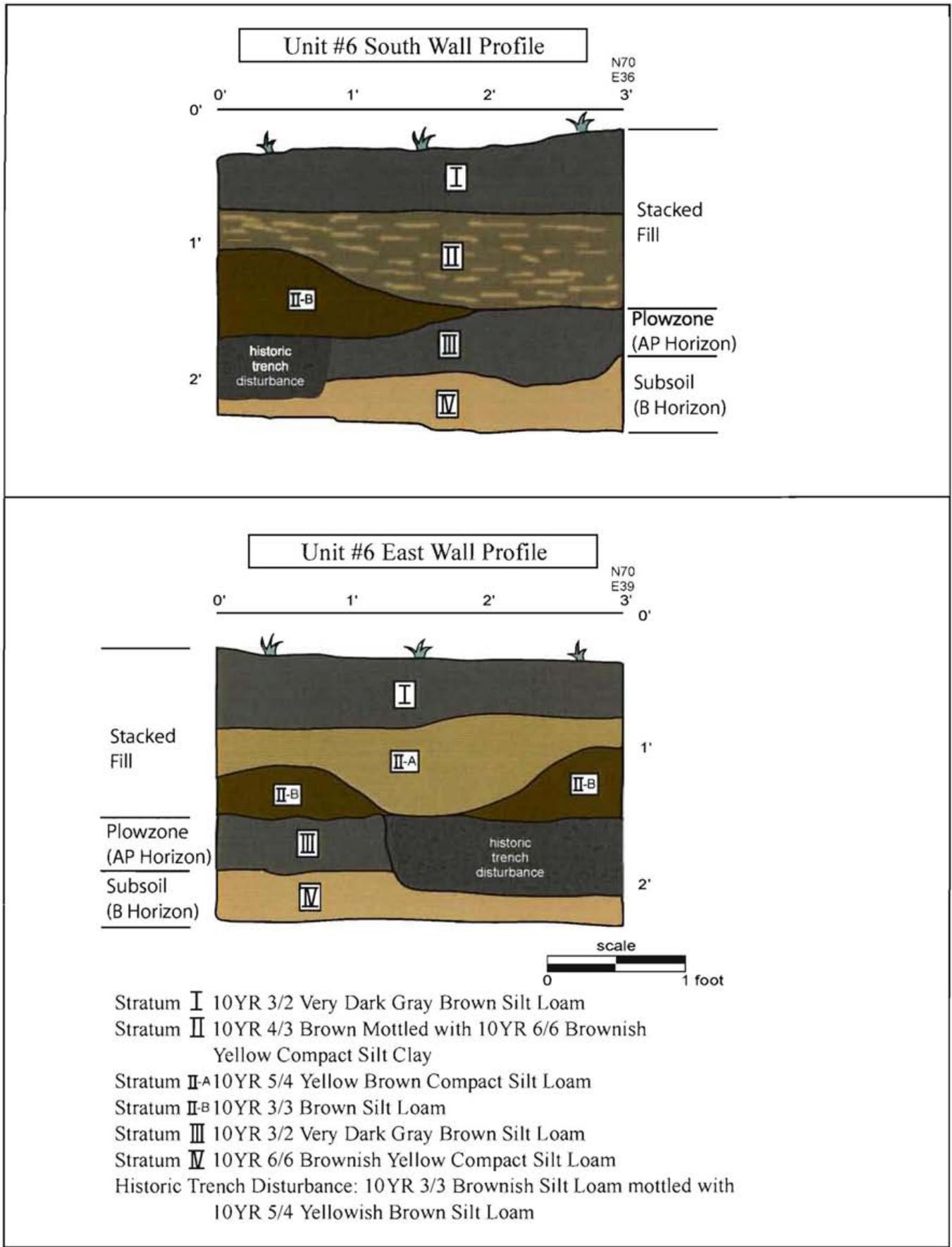
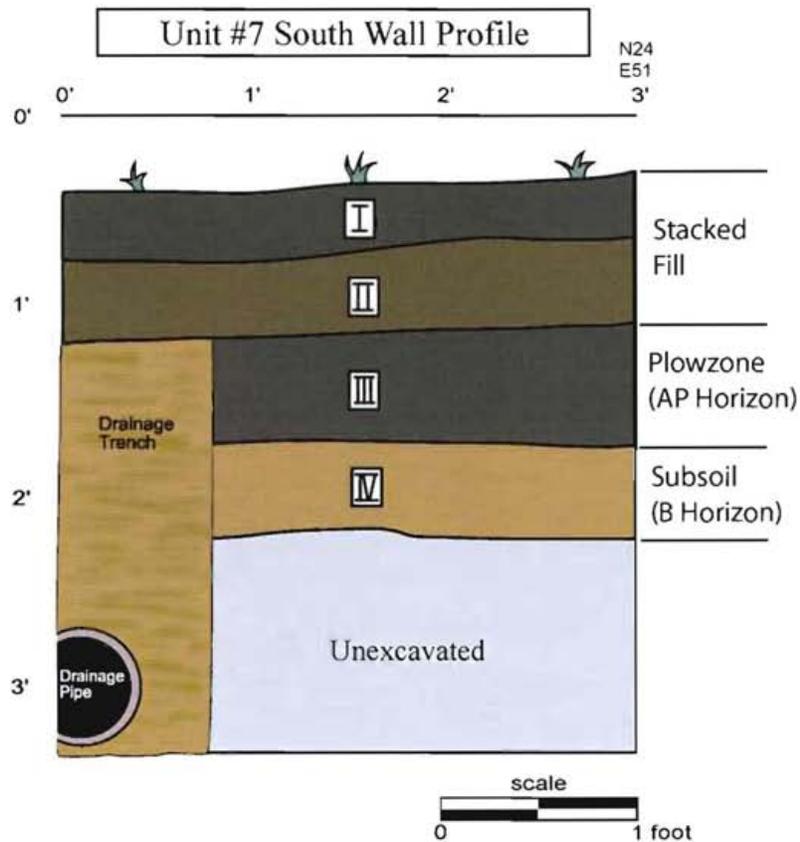
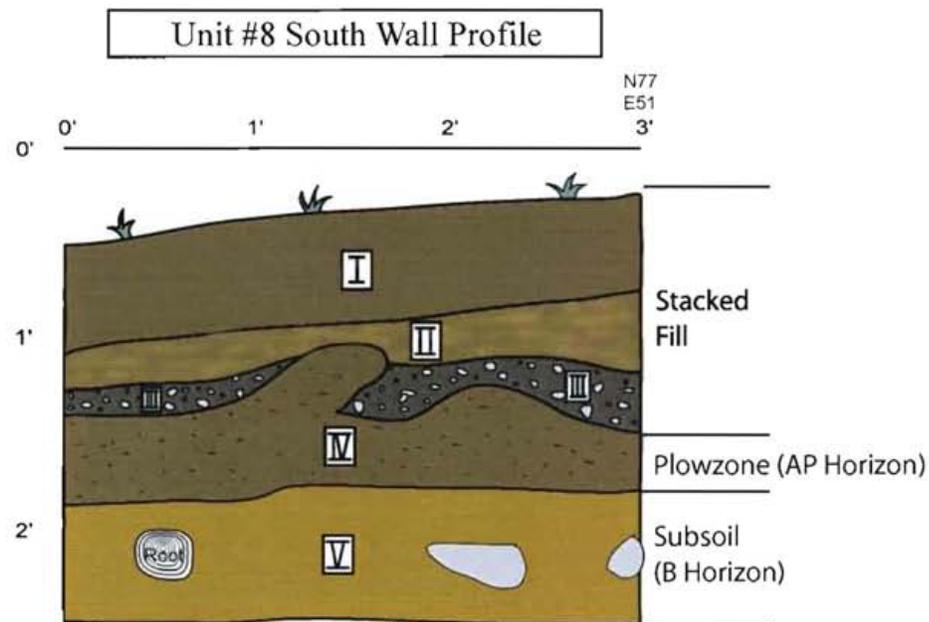


Figure 20. Excavation unit 6 south and east wall profiles.



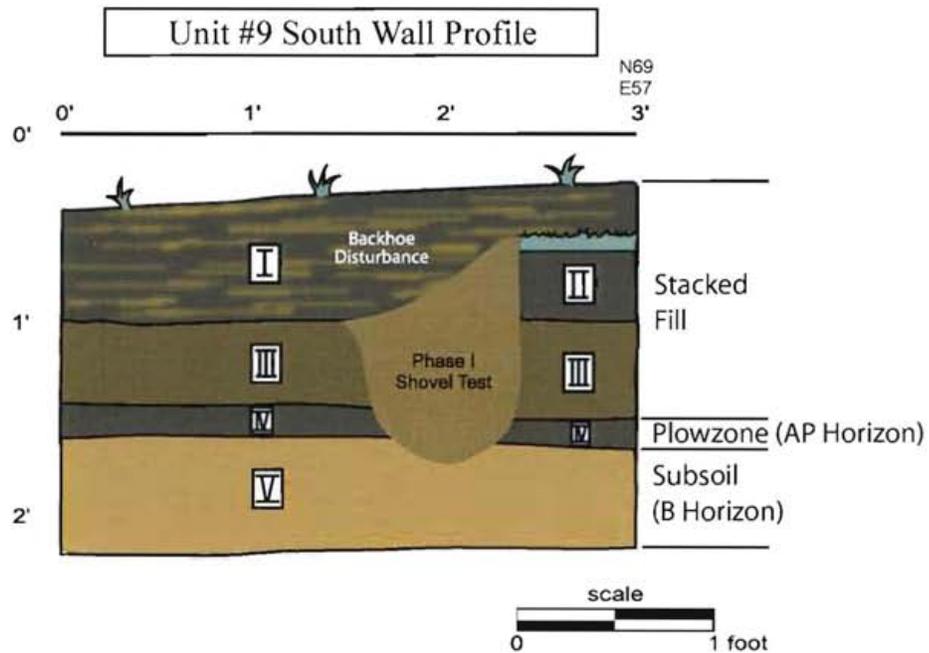
- Stratum **I** 10YR 3/2 Very Dark Gray Brown Silt Loam
- Stratum **II** 10YR 4/3 Brown Mottled with  
10YR 6/6 Brownish Yellow Compact Silt Clay
- Stratum **III** 10YR 3/2 Very Dark Gray Brown Silt Loam
- Stratum **IV** 10YR 6/6 Brownish Yellow Compact Silt Clay

**Figure 21.** Excavation unit 7 south wall profile showing historic trench and terra cotta drainage pipe.



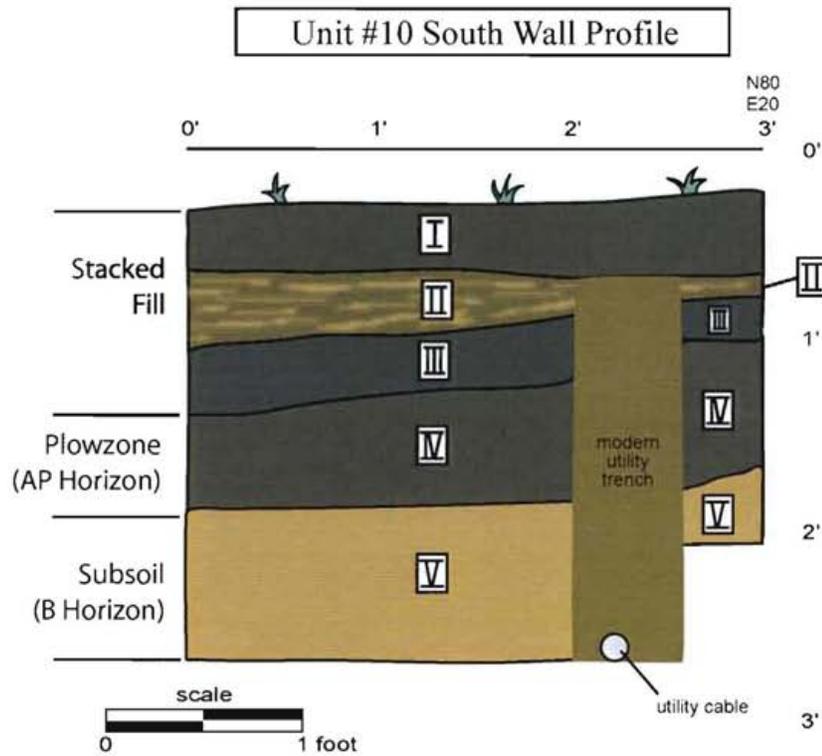
- Stratum I 10YR 4/3 Brown Silt Loam
- Stratum II 10YR 4/4 Brown Mottled with  
10YR 5/4 Yellowish Brown Silt Loam
- Stratum III 10YR 3/2 Dark Gray Brown Compact Silt Loam with Dense Gravels
- Stratum IV 10YR 4/3 Brown Silt Loam with Sparse Charcoal Flecking
- Stratum V 10YR 5/6 Yellow Brown Compact Silt Clay
- scale  
0 1 foot

**Figure 22.** Excavation unit 8 south wall profile.



- Stratum **I** 10YR 3/2 Very Dark Gray Brown Mottled with  
10YR 5/6 Yellow Brown Silt Loam (Backhoe Disturbance)
- Stratum **II** 10YR 3/2 Very Dark Gray Brown Silt Loam
- Stratum **III** 10YR 4/3 Brown Mottled with 10YR 6/6  
Brownish Yellow Compact Silt Loam
- Stratum **IV** 10YR 3/2 Very Dark Gray Brown Silt Loam
- Stratum **V** 10YR 6/6 Brownish Yellow Compact Silt Loam

**Figure 23.** Excavation unit 9 south wall profile



- Stratum I 10YR 3/2 Very Dark Gray Brown Mottled with  
 Stratum II 10YR 4/3 Brown Mottled with 10YR 6/6  
 Brownish Yellow Compact Silt Loam  
 Stratum III 10YR 3/1 Very Dark Gray Sand Loam  
 Stratum IV 10YR 3/2 Very Dark Gray Brown Silt Loam  
 Stratum V 10YR 6/6 Brownish Yellow Compact Silt Loam

**Figure 24.** Excavation unit 10 south wall profile showing intrusive modern utility trench.