Raleigh Department of City Planning
One Exchange Plaza
3rd floor
Raleigh, NC 27602
919-516-2626

www.raleighnc.gov/planning

Fee	
Amt Paid	
Check #	
Rec'd Date:	
Rec'd By:	
Completion Date:	

(Processing Fee: $257.00 - valid until June 30, 2009 **- Checks payable to the City of Raleigh.)**

RALEIGH HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION APPLICATION

This application initiates consideration of a property for designation as a Raleigh Historic Landmark by the Raleigh Historic Districts Commission (RHDC) and the Raleigh City Council. It enables evaluation of the resource to determine if it qualifies for designation. The evaluation is made by the Research Committee of the RHDC, which makes its recommendation to the full commission. The historic landmark program was previously administered by the Wake County Historic Preservation Commission but has been transferred back to the city; procedures for administration by the RHDC are outlined in the Raleigh City Code, Section 10-1053.

Please type if possible. Use 8-1/2" x 11" paper for supporting documentation and if additional space is needed. All materials submitted become the property of the RHDC and cannot be returned. Return completed application to the RHDC office at One Exchange Plaza, Suite 300, Raleigh or mail to:

Raleigh Historic Districts Commission
PO Box 829 Century Station
Raleigh, NC 27602

1. Name of Property (if historic name is unknown, give current name or street address):

Historic Name: REV. M.L. LATTA HOUSE AND LATTA UNIVERSITY SITE
Current Name:

2. Location:

Street Address: 1001 PARKER ST
NC PIN No.: 0794948980
(Can be obtained from http://imaps.co.wake.nc.us/imaps/)

3. Legal Owner of Property (If more than one, list primary contact):

Name: CITY OF RALEIGH
Address: 222 W HARGETT ST
City: RALEIGH State: NC Zip: -276011316
Telephone No: (919) (996)-(3100) Fax No. ( ) ( )-( )
E-Mail:

4. Applicant/Contact Person (If other than owner):

Name: ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES, INC
Address: 524 SOUTH NEW HOPE RD
City: RALEIGH State: NC Zip: 27610
Telephone No: (919) (212)-(1760) Fax No. (919) (212)-(1707)
E-Mail: sseibel@esinc.cc

5. General Data/Site Information:

Date of Construction and major additions/alterations: Period Of Significance C. 1905-1922

Number, type, and date of construction of outbuildings: N/A

Approximate lot size or acreage: 1.97 acres

Architect, builder, carpenter, and/or mason: N/A

Original Use: Former location of the Rev. M.L. Latta House and Latta University, a private African American educational institution

Present Use: Site is presently open space used as a low-impact community park

6. Classification:

A. Category (check all that apply):

Building(s) ☐ Structure ☐ Object ☐ Site ☒

B. Ownership

Private ☐

Public ☐ Local ☒ State ☐ Federal ☐

C. Number of contributing and non-contributing resources on the property:

	Contributing	Noncontributing
Buildings	0	0
Structures	0	0
Objects	0	0

D. Previous field documentation (when and by whom): INTENSIVE CULTURAL RESOURCE INVESTIGATION: THE REVEREND M.L. LATTA HOUSE AND LATTA UNIVERSITY SITE, WAKE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA. BY: SCOTT SEIBEL, RPA AND TERRI RUSS, RPA, ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES, INC., REPORT OF INVESTIGATIONS NO. 1320, RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA.

E. National Register of Historic Places Status:

Check One:

Entered ☒ Date: 3/1/2002	Nominated ☐
Determined Eligible ☐ Date:	Determined Not Eligible ☐ Date:
Nomination Not Requested ☐	Removed ☐ Date:

7. Reason for Request: Site was previously designated as a Raleigh Historic Landmark based on the historical significance of the property and the existence of a c. 1905 two-story Queen Anne-style house. The site was automatically delisted when the house was destroyed by fire in 2007. Archaeological investigations have indicated that the site contains intact subsurface deposits, which contribute to the National Register significance of the property and the local historic significance of the property.

8. Is the property income producing? Yes ☐ No ☒

9. Are any interior spaces being included for designation? Yes ☐ No ☒

10. Supporting Documentation (Attach to application on separate sheets. Please type or print):

A. Photographs/Slides:
At least two sets of current exterior archival-grade photographic prints (minimum print size 5"x7") of all facades of the building and at least one photo of all other contributing and non-contributing resources. If interior spaces of the property are being considered for designation, please include two sets of photos for these features. Prints may be created by using archival-grade black and white film photography and processing or digital photography. The minimum standard for a digital print is 5x7 at a resolution of 300 pixels per inch (ppi). This translates into a pixel dimension of 1950 x 1350. Digital images must be printed with an acceptable ink and paper combination as determined by the National Park Service. This list can be found at: *http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/policyexpansion.htm#digital* All photographs must be labeled with the name of the structure, address and date the photograph was taken with pencil or archival-approved photo pen. In addition to prints, all digital images should be submitted on a CD-R in TIF or JPG format. Any additional exterior or interior views and views of other structures on the property (color, black and white, or slides) will be helpful.

B. Map:
Please include a map showing the location of the property. A sketch map is acceptable, but please note street names and number. Any other structures on the property should also be shown. Please include a "North" arrow. Map should be no larger than 11" x 17".
A tax map with boundaries marked is preferred, which can be found at: http://imaps.co.wake.nc.us/imaps/.

C. Architectural Significance:
Describe the property, including exterior architectural features, additions, remodelings, and alterations. Also describe significant outbuildings and landscape features. If the owner is including interior features in the nomination for the purpose of design review protection; describe them in detail and note their locations. Include a statement regarding the architectural significance of the property.

D. Historic Significance:
Note any significant events, people, and/or families associated with the property. Include all major owners. Note if the property has ever been recorded during a historic building survey by the City of Raleigh or by the NC State Historic Preservation Office. If so, who and when? (See application item 6.D.) Please include a bibliography of sources. Information regarding prior designations can be found by contacting the Survey & Planning Branch of the NC State Historic Preservation Office at 919-807-6570, 919-807-6573 or at: http://www.hpo.dcr.state.nc.us/spbranch.htm.

Additional Supporting Information for the Raleigh Historic Landmark Designation Application for the Reverend M. L. Latta House and Latta University Site

1001 Parker Street
Raleigh, North Carolina

Prepared by
Terri Russ, RPA
Environmental Services, Inc.

This following information is intended to supplement the 2009 Raleigh Historic Landmark (RHL) designation report for the Reverend M.L. Latta House and Latta University Site (herein "Latta House") and provide supporting information for the RHL designation application for the proposed redesignation of the Latta House as a RHL based on archaeological, in addition to historical, significance. A brief historical background and summary of the historic significance of the Latta House is followed by a summary of the archaeological investigation of the property and a discussion of the property's current and former historic status. The final section of this report includes a statement of the historical and archaeological significance of the property. Additional historical information, maps, and photos can be found in *An Intensive Cultural Resource Investigation: The Reverend M. L. Latta House and Latta University, Wake County, North Carolina* by Scott Seibel, RPA and Terri Russ, RPA produced for the Raleigh Historic Districts Commission and the City of Raleigh (2009).

Historical Background

A detailed history of Oberlin Village can be found in *Culture Town: Life in Raleigh's African American Communities*, written by Linda Harris Edminsten and Linda Simmons-Henry and published in 1993. The following is summarized from that publication and from Reverend M. L. Latta's autobiography, *The History of My Life and Work: Autobiography of Rev. M .L. Latta, A.M., D.D.*, published in 1903.

Following the end of the Civil War, 149 acres of property northwest of Raleigh owned by Duncan Cameron, a politician and banker who reportedly had owned nearly 1,900 slaves (1,900), were subdivided and sold to freed slaves. In 1866, James E. Harris, a former slave of Cameron's, established Oberlin Village, named for Oberlin College in Ohio, which he had attended. Oberlin Village became a close-knit community of homes, businesses, schools, and churches.

The presence of a strong African-American community in Oberlin Village must have been a major reason why Reverend Latta decided to locate Latta University on a farm in the area.

Morgan London Latta was born into slavery in 1853 at Fishdam, one of the quarters of the Cameron Plantation in Durham County. Although a slave as a child, he was able to attend school, albeit on an irregular basis. A few years after Latta and his family were emancipated, he attended Shaw University in Raleigh where, after years of economic hardship, he obtained

second and first class certificates. Prior to establishing Latta University, Latta spent nearly 20 years teaching at various institutions, including one of the former Cameron plantation quarters as well as various district schools. In addition to his work as a teacher, Latta also worked various jobs including selling sewing machines and canvassing for the proposed Lynchburg and Durham Railroad.

According to the Wake County Marriage Index, Morgan Latta filed for a marriage license with Eliza Evans in 1885. However, this license was not used, and he later married a former student named Laura, though the location where the marriage occurred is not known. They moved to Raleigh in 1890.

Prior to the establishment of the university, Reverend Latta owned four properties, one in Durham, two in Braggtown, and one in Raleigh, some of which were occupied by family members. When beginning his attempts to form Latta University, he wrote that he received positive support from the white community but a large amount of resistance from the "colored" community. Latta University was finally incorporated on 15 February 1894, though the property had been bought in 1891 and the school founded in 1892. By 1903, the property was nearly 300 acres in size.

According to his autobiography, Latta reported that thousands of students had attended the university. According to the book, there were 23 buildings on campus and a capacity to accommodate 1,400 students, though a fire had destroyed three buildings, including the library. However, the *Second Annual Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Latta University, Oberlin, North Carolina, 1893-1894* lists only 92 students during that school year. Men were charged $6.75 per month while women were charged $5.75. Debt was an on-going problem with funding the operations, and the Reverend often had to raise additional funds from friends and the public. The Industrial Department operated an industrial farm where students could work and receive free room and board as well as earn up to $10 per month. Admission was allowed only to those 17 years of age or older. A full session of the Industrial School ran 10 months and taught such skills as carpentry and brick laying for the men and laundry and house work for the women. Students who intended to work their way through school were only allowed to attend Night School. Many of the Latta University graduates went on to obtain Board of Education certification to teach at public schools.

Latta University was closed around 1922, when Latta sold the majority of the property in December to the Parker and Hunter Realty Company. In 1923, Latta purchased the lot on which his house stood, but was forced to give the property up to the Federal Corporation in Richmond, Virginia in 1931, which sold it at auction (see Book 409 Pages 191, 194; Book 414 Page 164; Book 596 Page 490; and Book 648 Page 246). Following this, the Lattas moved to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where Morgan Latta died sometime between 1935 and 1945.

Archaeological Research

An archaeological investigation of the property was undertaken in order to determine if the site retained sufficient archaeological integrity to warrant redesignation of the property as an Historic Landmark under the Raleigh Historic landmark (RHL) designation program.

The archaeological investigation included a study of historic maps and photographs of the property in order to assist in the identification of potential outbuildings and school buildings related to the Latta House and/or Latta University. A complete discussion of this investigation can by found in Seibel and Russ 2009. Relevant maps and photographs can be found at the end of this report.

Archaeological field methods used during the investigation included the excavation of 82 shovel tests and three formal excavation units, the recording of six features, and the collection of 3,025 artifacts. An analysis of the artifacts recovered during the shovel testing shows that spatial patterning exists at the site, suggesting the locations of the Latta House, numerous buildings associated with Latta University, and activity areas. The presence of posthole features revealed in the excavation units shows that the footprints of various Latta University buildings and other physical features (such as fences) are preserved at the site.

The wide array of artifacts recovered from the site speaks to the diverse activities that occurred at the site. Artifacts represented activity groups relating to foodways, architecture, personal/recreational, and household/agricultural labor. Many of the recovered artifacts could be directly dated to the occupation of the property by the Latta family and Latta University. Based on the study of the historic photographs of the university as well as the types of artifacts recovered, it is believed that the portion of the university that is preserved on the 1.97-acre lot is the Manual Training Department.

Recommendations

Based on the results of this investigation, the project area appears to contain intact archaeological deposits that appear to date to the use of the property as the residence of the Latta family and as Latta University. The deposits date to the historically significant occupation of the property by the Reverend M. L. Latta and Latta University and thus make the site eligible for redesignation as a Raleigh Historic Landmark (discussed below).

Latta House Historic Landmark History

The Raleigh Historic Districts Commission (RHDC), created in 1973 (from a predecessor organization established in 1961), serves as the City of Raleigh's (City's) official historic preservation advisory body. The RHDC is charged with recommending properties or areas within Raleigh's city limits to be designated by ordinance as local historic landmarks to the City Council, as well as reviewing exterior changes to designated landmarks. A local historic landmark site may include individual buildings, above-ground or subsurface remains, archaeological sites, areas, or objects that have historical, architectural, archeological, or cultural significance.

Under Raleigh Municipal Code of Ordinances Part 10 (*Planning and Development*), Chapter 1 (*General Provisions*), Article E (*Historic Districts Commission*), Section 10-1053 (*Adoption of Ordinances Designating Historic Landmarks When the Historic Districts Commission has Jurisdiction*),

> *No building, structure, site, area, or object* shall *be recommended for designation as an* historic landmark *unless it is deemed and found by the Historic Districts Commission to be of special significance in terms of its historical, prehistorical, architectural, archaeological, and/or cultural importance, and to possess integrity of design, setting, workmanship, materials, feeling and/or association*.

While the City Code recognizes the significance of archaeological resources with respect to historic sites and districts, guidance for RHL designation based predominantly on archaeological significance has not been formally established. Although the legal standard for RHL listing is the City Code, the following recommendations are also based on the National Register criteria for evaluating archaeological sites' eligibility within the criteria of the City Code. By definition, City Code criteria take precedence in evaluating a RHL designation; National Register guidelines are referenced to supplement this evaluation.

While the existing RHDC *Design Guidelines for Raleigh Historic Districts* (*Guidelines*; 2001) provide extensive guidelines for the planning and review of changes to properties, these guidelines and the corresponding COA application are more applicable to above ground historic resources, such as individual structures and landscapes, than subsurface archaeological remains. This chapter addresses COA review and identifies those activities listed in Article XV of the RHDC Bylaws that have the potential to disturb significant archaeological resources.

Latta House

In 1988, the Latta House was included as part of the *African-American Communities Survey* conducted by the RHDC. In 1993, the Latta House Site was declared a RHL by the City Council (Ordinance No. [1993] 305) and formally recognized as an Historic Property by the Wake County Historic Preservation Commission, who at that time administered properties now under the jurisdiction of the RHDC. In 1993, the RHDC authored an application for the property to receive a RHL designation on the basis of its architectural and historical significance (RHDC 1993). In January 2002, the RHDC found that the nomination for the Latta House met National Register criteria and recommended that it be submitted to the National Register Advisory Committee for listing (RHDC Business Meeting Minutes, 15 January 2002). The property was listed in the National Register on 5 March 2002 under Criteria A, B, and C (discussed below). According to RHL provisions, the property was automatically de-listed after the house was destroyed by fire in 2007; however, the property remains listed in the National Register.

To be designated a RHL, a property must typically exhibit "special significance" in terms of historical, prehistorical, architectural, archaeological, and/or cultural importance. A property must also retain integrity of design, setting, workmanship, materials, feeling and/or association (City Code Section 10-1053[a]). As the above-ground architectural remains associated with the Latta House are no longer standing, the evaluation of the RHL designation of the Latta House site is dependent on historical, archaeological, and cultural significance, as well as the archaeological integrity of the property.

The initial RHL designation was based, in large part, on the historical significance of the Reverend M.L. Latta and Latta University (RHDC 1999). While the architectural significance of the property no longer can be considered, the historical significance of the property remains unchanged. The current investigations suggest that the archaeological significance of the property should also be considered in the evaluation of the RHL designation.

Archaeological Significance

Archaeological investigations of the Latta House site revealed the presence of intact subsurface deposits dating from the late nineteenth to early twentieth century, the same time period as it was utilized by the Latta University.

City Code Section 10-1053(a) can be interpreted to provide that an archaeological site can be recommended for designation as an historic landmark if it is considered to be of "special significance" with regards to archaeological integrity and/or historical association. As part of the City Code provisions, any application for designation of the property should include an investigation and report on the historical, archaeological, and/or cultural significance of the site or area proposed for designation, including an archaeological site description and an historical discussion of the property. City Code Section 10-1053(b) more fully describes the elements of ordinances designating historic landmarks.

National Register Criteria for Evaluating Archaeological Sites

The evaluation of an archaeological site for inclusion in the National Register rests largely on its research potential, that is, its ability to contribute important information through preservation and/or additional study (Criterion D). In the case of the Latta House, this National Register category was used to supplement the evaluation of the archaeological remains with regards to the redesignation of the site as an historic landmark under a RHL designation.

The National Register criteria for evaluation are stated as follows:

> *The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and;*
>
> *Criterion A: Properties that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of our history;*
>
> *Criterion B: Properties that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;*
>
> *Criterion C: Properties that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; and*

Criterion D: Properties that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, important information in prehistory or history.

The Reverend M.L. Latta House was listed in the National Register in 2002 under Criteria A, B, and C. As the destruction of the house has compromised the property's significance under Criterion C, one of the goals of this investigation was to determine if archaeological deposits on the property would potentially render the property eligible for designation as an RHL according to National Register Criterion D. In order to better evaluate the significance of the Latta House archaeological site under National Register Criterion D, the following questions were posed:

a. Site Integrity – Does the site contain intact, undisturbed cultural deposits?

b. Preservation – Does the site contain material suited to in-depth analysis?

c. Uniqueness – Is the information contained in the site redundant in comparison to that available from similar sites, or do the remains provide a unique or insightful perspective on research concerns of regional importance?

d. Relevance to Current and Future Research – Would additional work at this site contribute to our knowledge of the past? Would preservation of the site protect valuable information for future studies? While this category is partly a summary of the above considerations, it also recognizes that a site may provide valuable information regardless of its integrity, preservation, or uniqueness.

The evaluation of Criterion D under these four categories could allow for an objective assessment of the significance of an archaeological site. In the case of the Latta House, these categories were used to supplement the evaluation of the significance of the archaeological remains with regards to the redesignation of the site as an historic landmark under a RHL designation and per City Code Section 10-1053(a).

Site Integrity

The site contains areas of intact cultural deposits. While the destruction and subsequent demolition of the house destroyed the archaeological deposits directly associated with the footprint of the house, artifact patterning was identified around and to the north, south, and west of the house. The site contains intact cultural features dating to the period of significance, including a stone lined well and posthole features from Latta University buildings.

Preservation

Many of the artifacts recovered from the site during the current investigation can be associated with a specific temporal range. Items such as a wrought iron padlock, a shoe polish bottle, a shotgun shell, amethyst glass shards, fragments of milk glass canning lids, and cut nails all date to the Latta occupation between

1892 and ca. 1930. Numerous animal bone fragments were recovered during the excavations. The presence of preserved faunal remains can inform on the types of animals and cuts of meat consumed by the Latta family and the Latta University students. Not only are Latta-period features present on the property, these features are well preserved and exhibit little disturbance from later occupations.

Uniqueness

The property is unique in its association with the historic Latta University, the Reverend Latta, and African-American cultural history in Wake County and the larger region. As the only remaining property associated with the historic university, the archaeological remains have the potential to yield valuable and unique information regarding the Latta University and African-American culture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Relevance to Current and Future Research

Preservation of this site will protect this information for future investigations. Additional research investigations could contribute to the limited written record regarding the university and offer a greater understanding of the daily life and activities of the Latta family and the Latta University students. Specifically, posthole patterns appear to be present that would aid in reconstruction of the physical layout of the university buildings, while artifact patterns would aid in identifying the activities associated with these buildings. Also, the recovery of items of daily use such as tablewares, personal items such as jewelry and toys, and food remains such as animal bones would give insight into the personal lives of the former inhabitants of the site.

Summary of Recommendations

As stated previously, the initial RHL designation was based on both the architectural significance of the standing structure as well as the historical significance of the property's association with the Reverend M.L. Latta and Latta University (RHDC 1993). While the architectural significance of the property no longer can be considered, the historical significance of the property remains unchanged and should serve as the basis for the redesignation of the property as a RHL.

Archaeological investigations suggest that the property contains intact subsurface deposits dating to the period of significance (ca. 1892 to 1930). Though there are currently no specific guidelines set forth by the RHDC regarding the evaluation of archaeological significance with regards to RHL designation, the National Register evaluation criteria could provide the framework for the evaluation of this and future archaeological sites under the RHL process. Under these criteria, the archaeological deposits at the Latta House site could be considered a RHL.

Bibliography

Edmisten, Linda Harris, and Linda Simmons-Henry

1993 *Culture Town: Life in Raleigh's African American Communities*. Raleigh Historic Districts Commission, Raleigh, North Carolina.

Lally, K.A.

1994 *The Historic Architecture of Wake County, North Carolina*. Wake County Government, Raleigh, North Carolina.

Latta, Morgan L.

1903 *The History of My Life and Work. Autobiography*. Rev. M.L. Latta, A.M., D.D., Raleigh, North Carolina.

National Park Service

2001 *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form – The Rev. M. L. Latta House, Wake County, North Carolina*. On File, North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources.

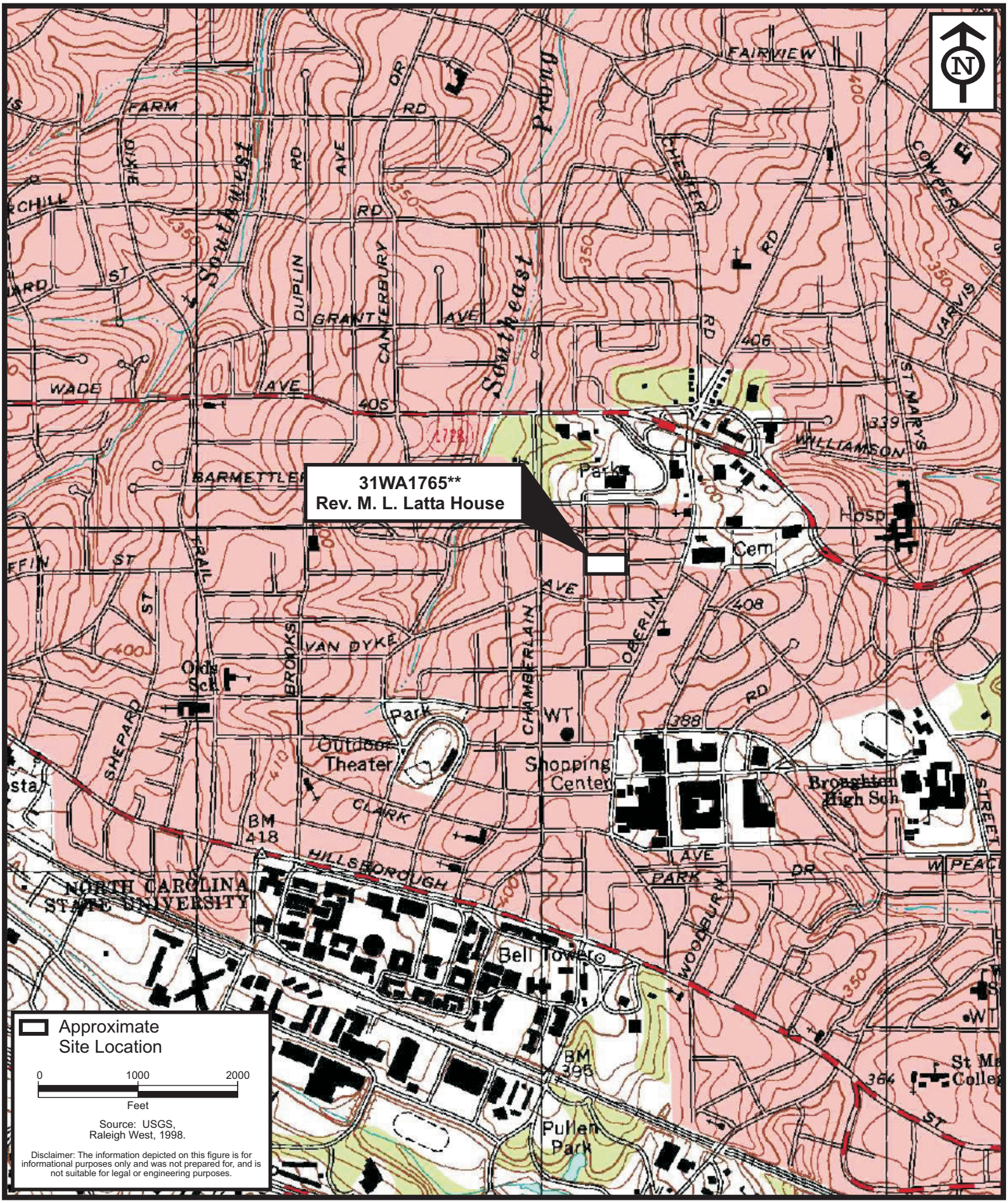
Raleigh Historic Districts Commission

1999 *Raleigh Historic Landmark Designation Application- The Rev. M. L. Latta House.* On file, Raleigh Historic Districts Commission.

2002 *Design Guidelines for Raleigh Historic Districts.* Raleigh, North Carolina.

Seibel, S., and T. Russ

2009 *An Intensive Cultural Resource Investigation: The Reverend M. L. Latta House and Latta University Site, Wake County, North Carolina.* Environmental Services, Inc., Report of Investigations No. 1320, Raleigh.



Project Location

Rev. M. L. Latta House

Wake County, North Carolina

View of property from Parker Street, facing northwest.

View of interior of property, facing southwest.

Project Area Photos

Rev. M. L. Latta House

Wake County, North Carolina

South and east elevations.

East and north elevation.

Photos of the Latta House

Rev. M. L. Latta House

Wake County, North Carolina

East elevation.

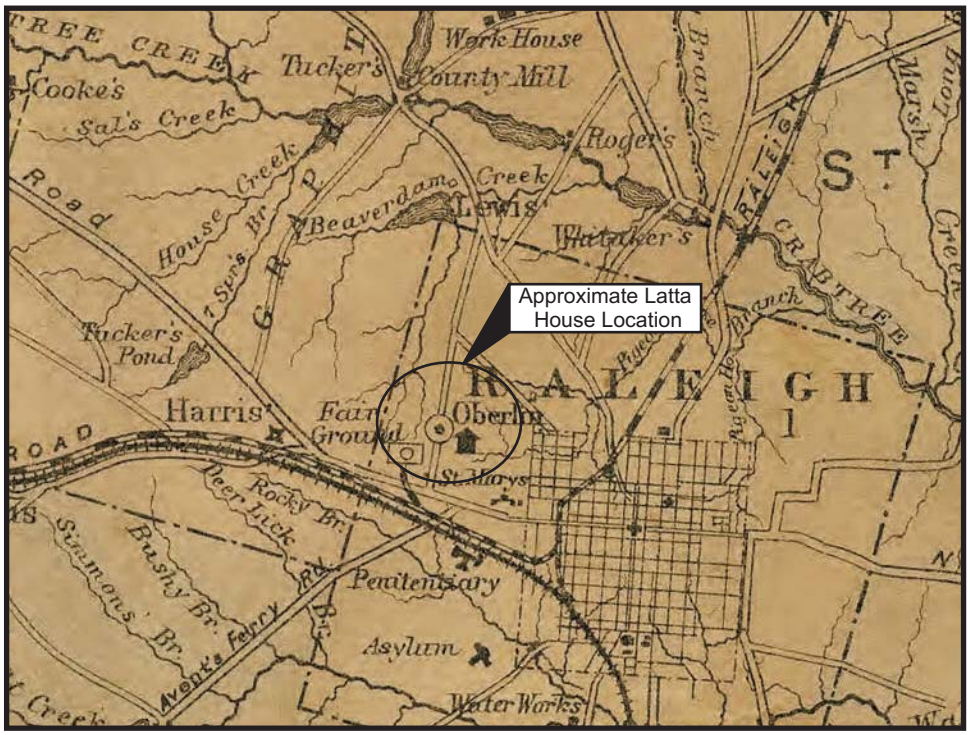
South and east elevations after fire.

Photos of the Latta House

Rev. M. L. Latta House

Wake County, North Carolina

Fendol Bevers 1878 Map of Wake County.

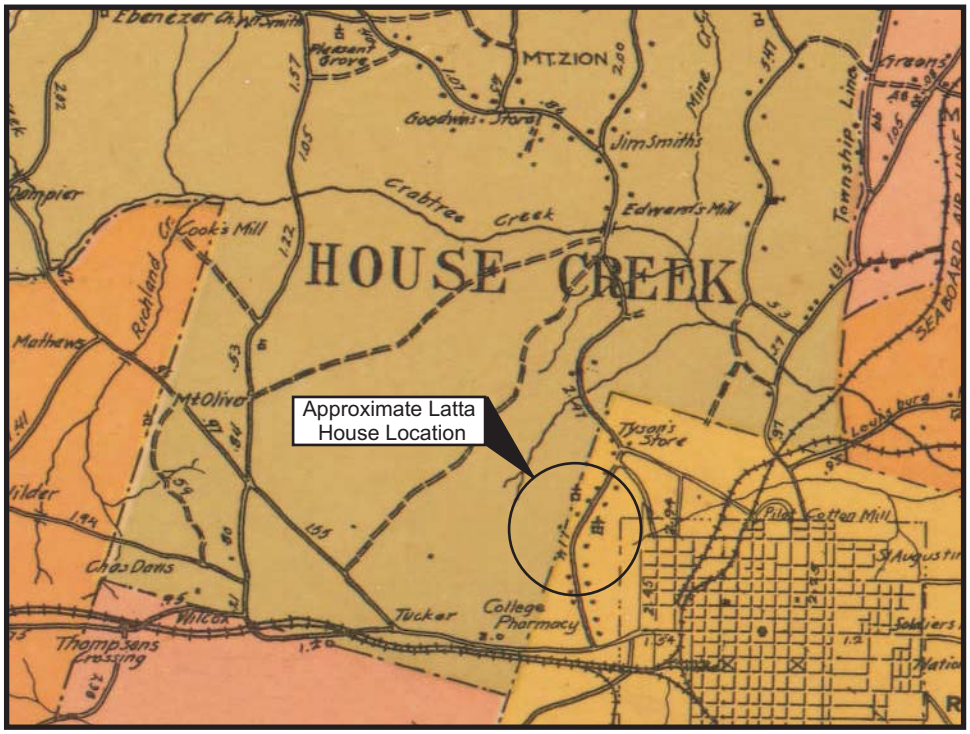


Shaffer's 1887 Map of Wake County.

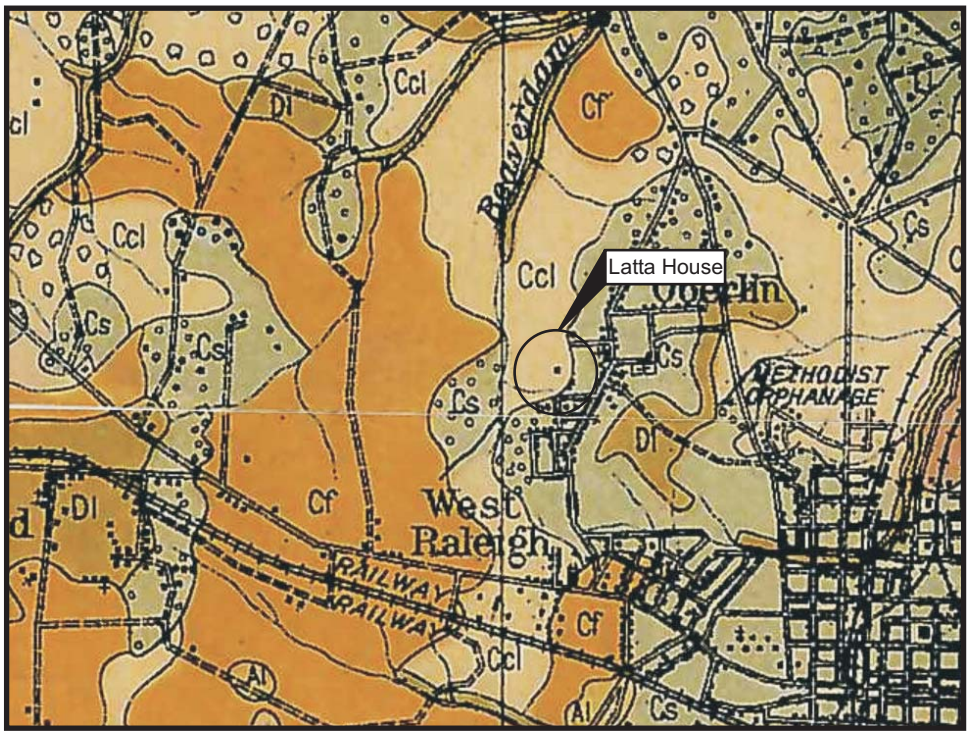
Historic Maps

Rev. M. L. Latta House

Wake County, North Carolina



Spoon 1911 Map of Wake County.

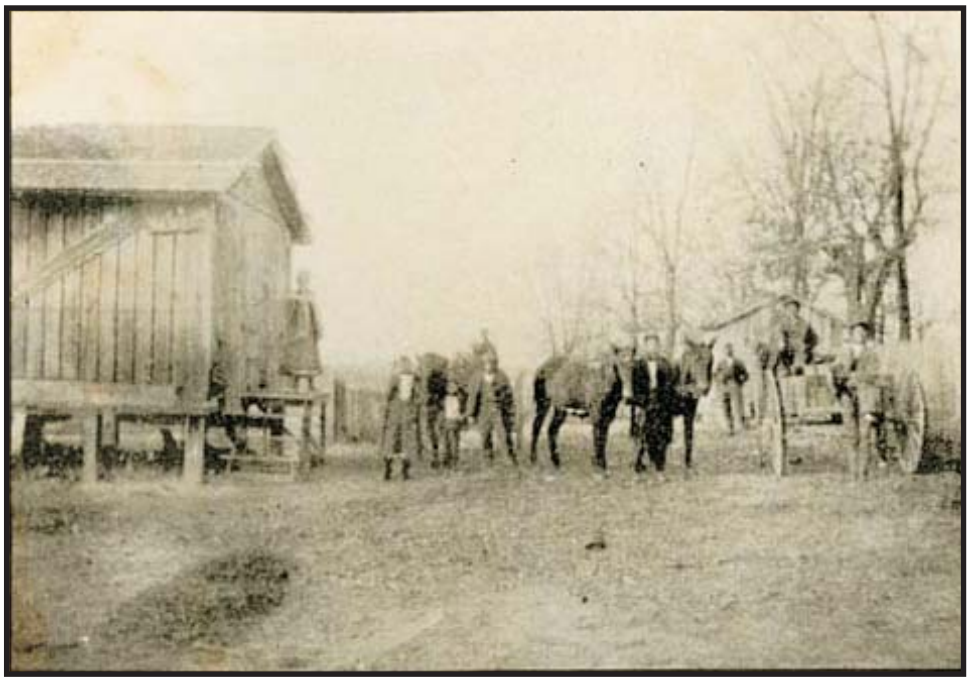


1914 Soil Map of Wake County (USGS 1914).

Historic Maps

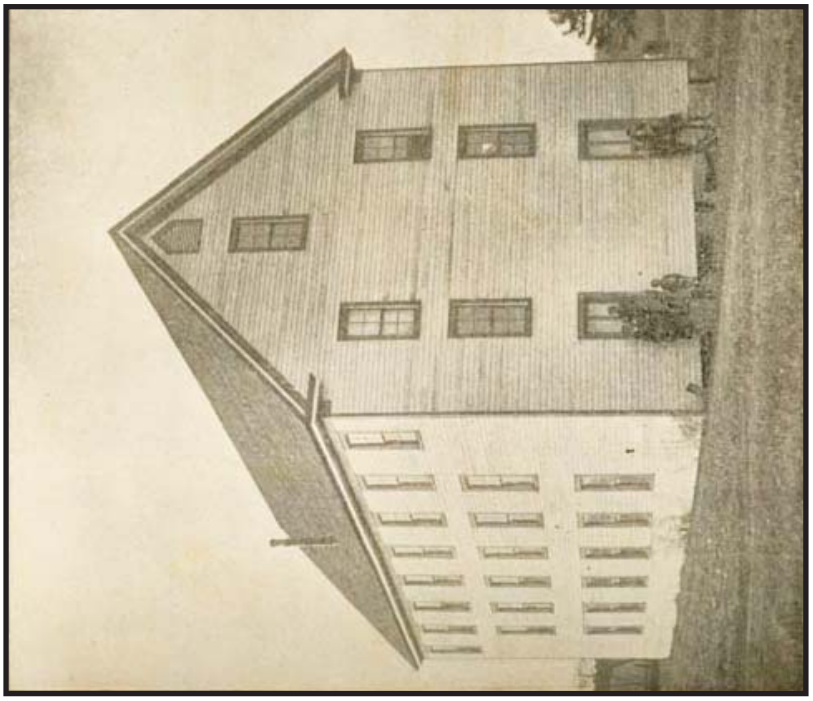
Rev. M. L. Latta House

Wake County, North Carolina



Industrial Training Department.

Kindergarten Department.



Chapel and Young Men's Dormitory.

Young Ladies' Dormitory.

Autobiographical Pictures

Rev. M. L. Latta House

Wake County, North Carolina

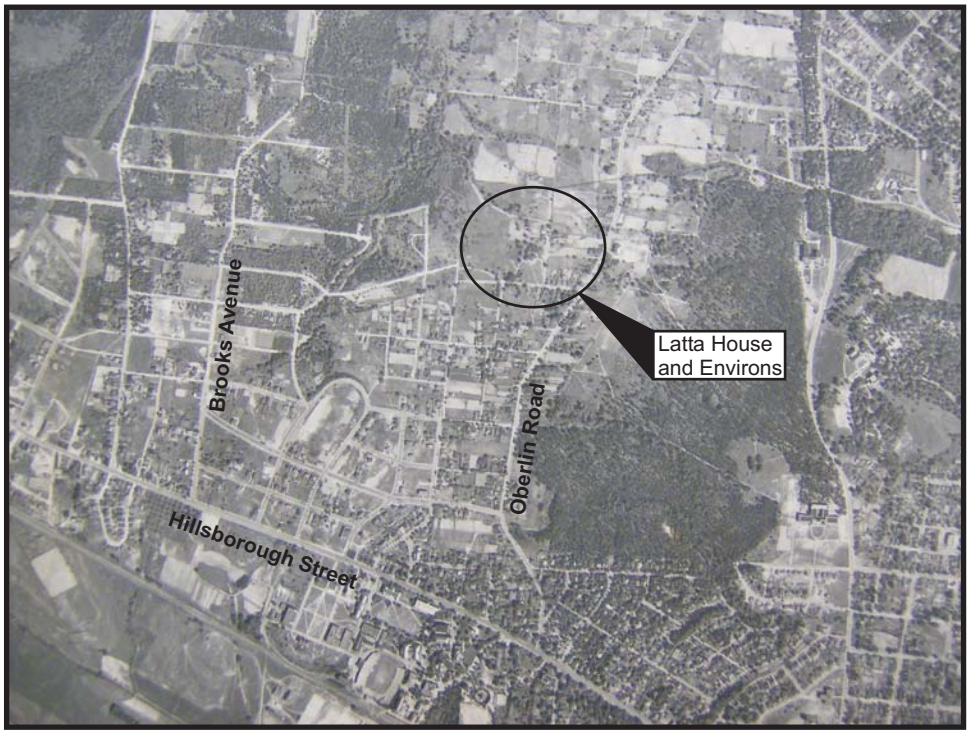
Manual Training Department.

Residence of Rev. M. L. Latta.

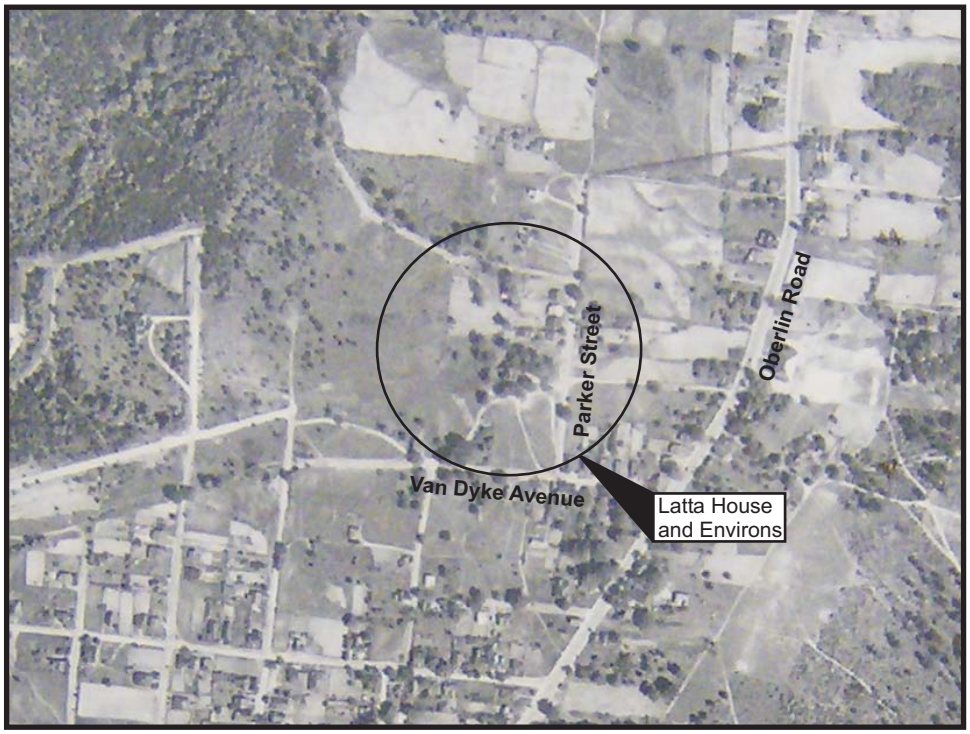
Autobiography Pictures

Rev. M. L. Latta House

Wake County, North Carolina



1938 Aerial of Wake County.

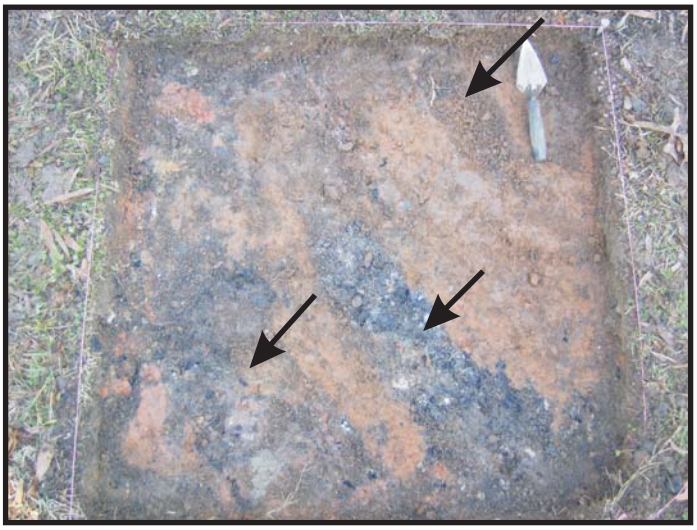


Closeup of Latta House vicinity.

1938 Aerial Photograph of the Latta House

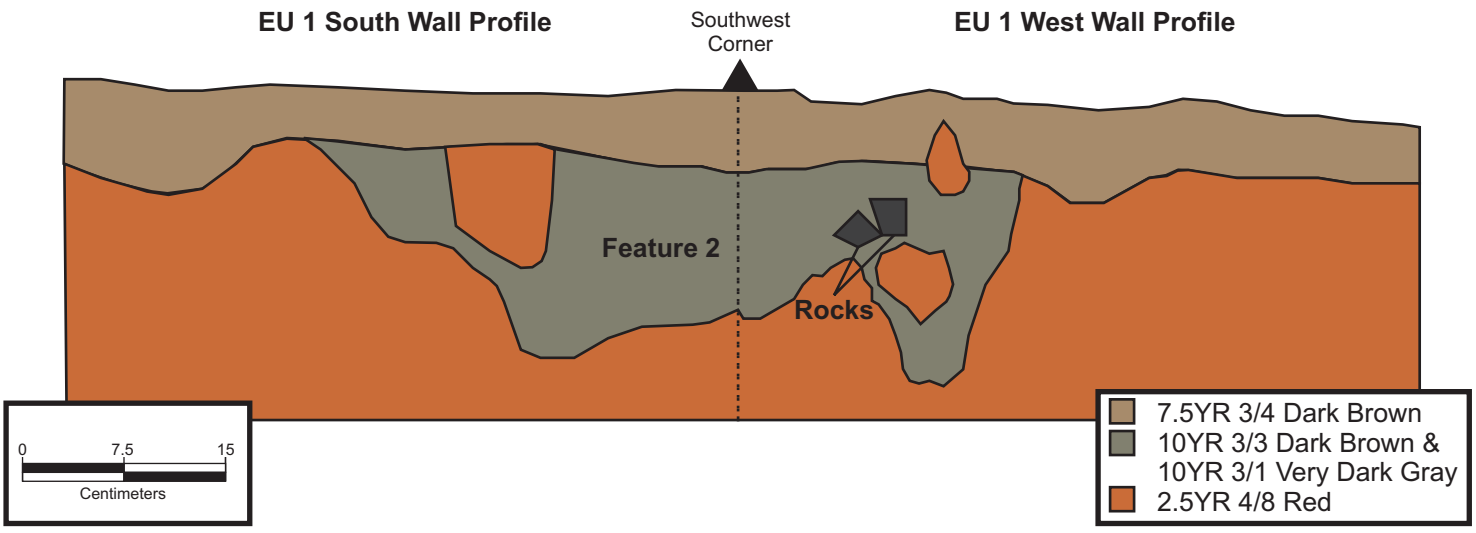
Rev. M. L. Latta House

Wake County, North Carolina



Plan photo of Feature 1 (EU 1).

Plan photo of Feature 2 (EU 1).

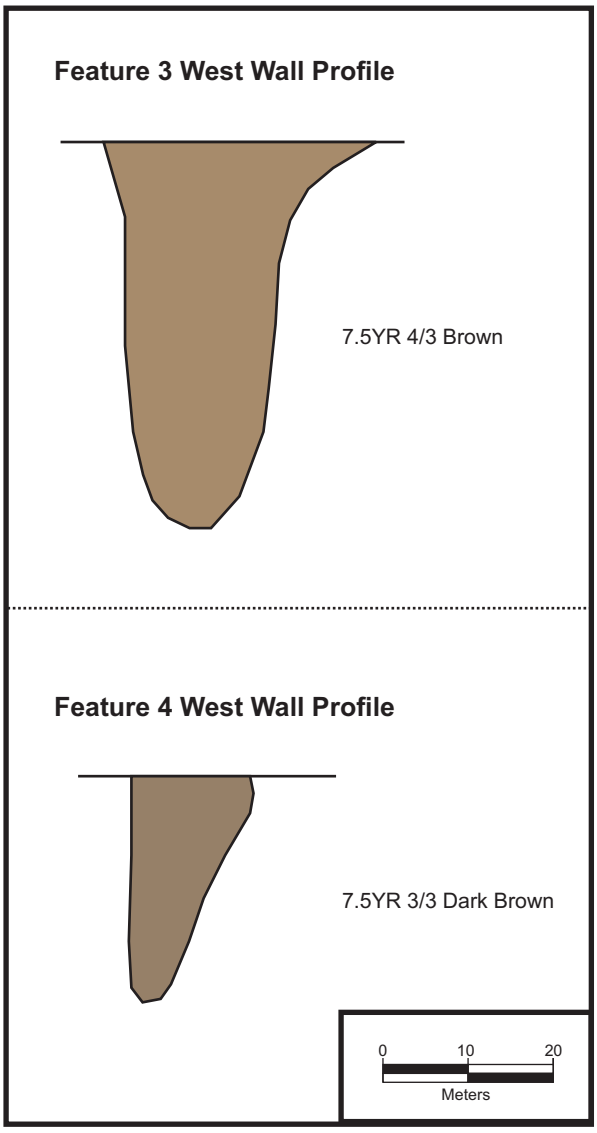


Plans and Profiles-EU 1 and Features 1 and 2

Rev. M. L. Latta House

Wake County, North Carolina

Plan photo of Features 3, 4, and 5 (EU 2).



Features 3 and 4 profile drawings.

EU 2 north wall profile.

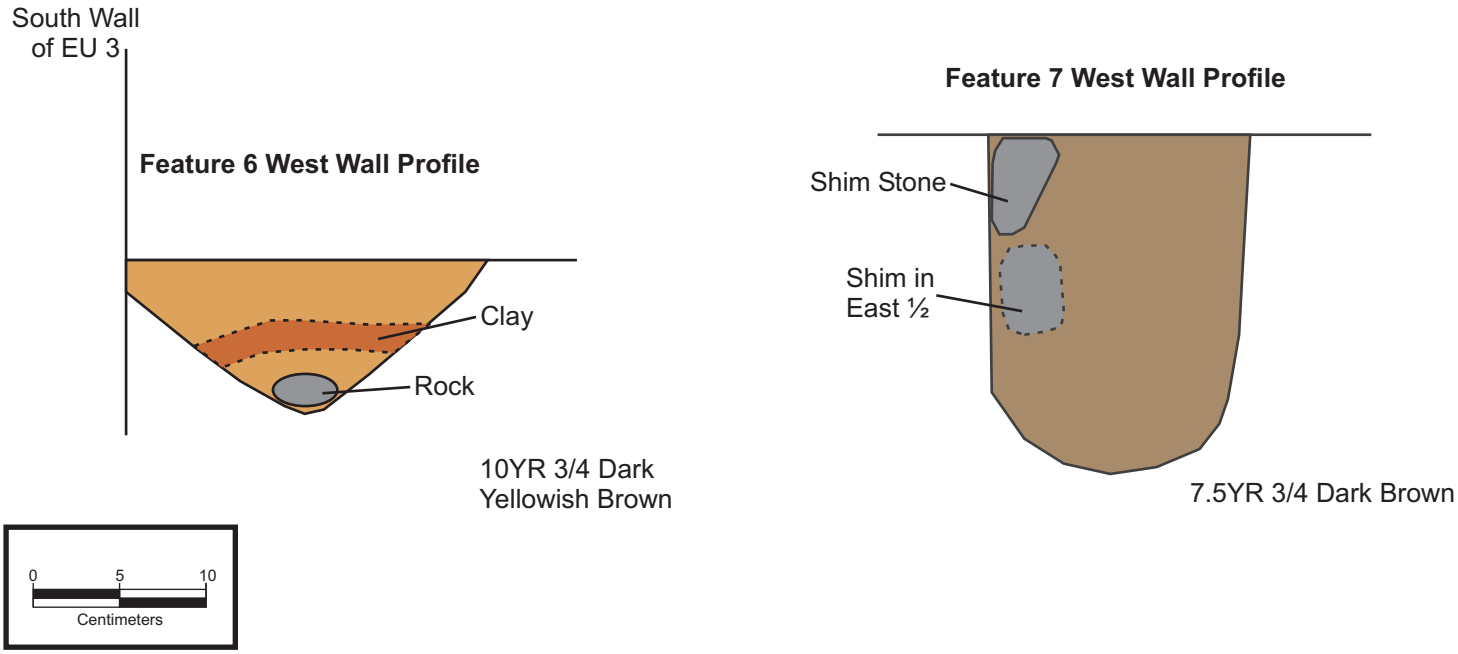
Plan and Profile-EU 2 and Features 3, 4, and 5

Rev. M. L. Latta House

Wake County, North Carolina

Plan of Features 6 and 7 (EU 3).

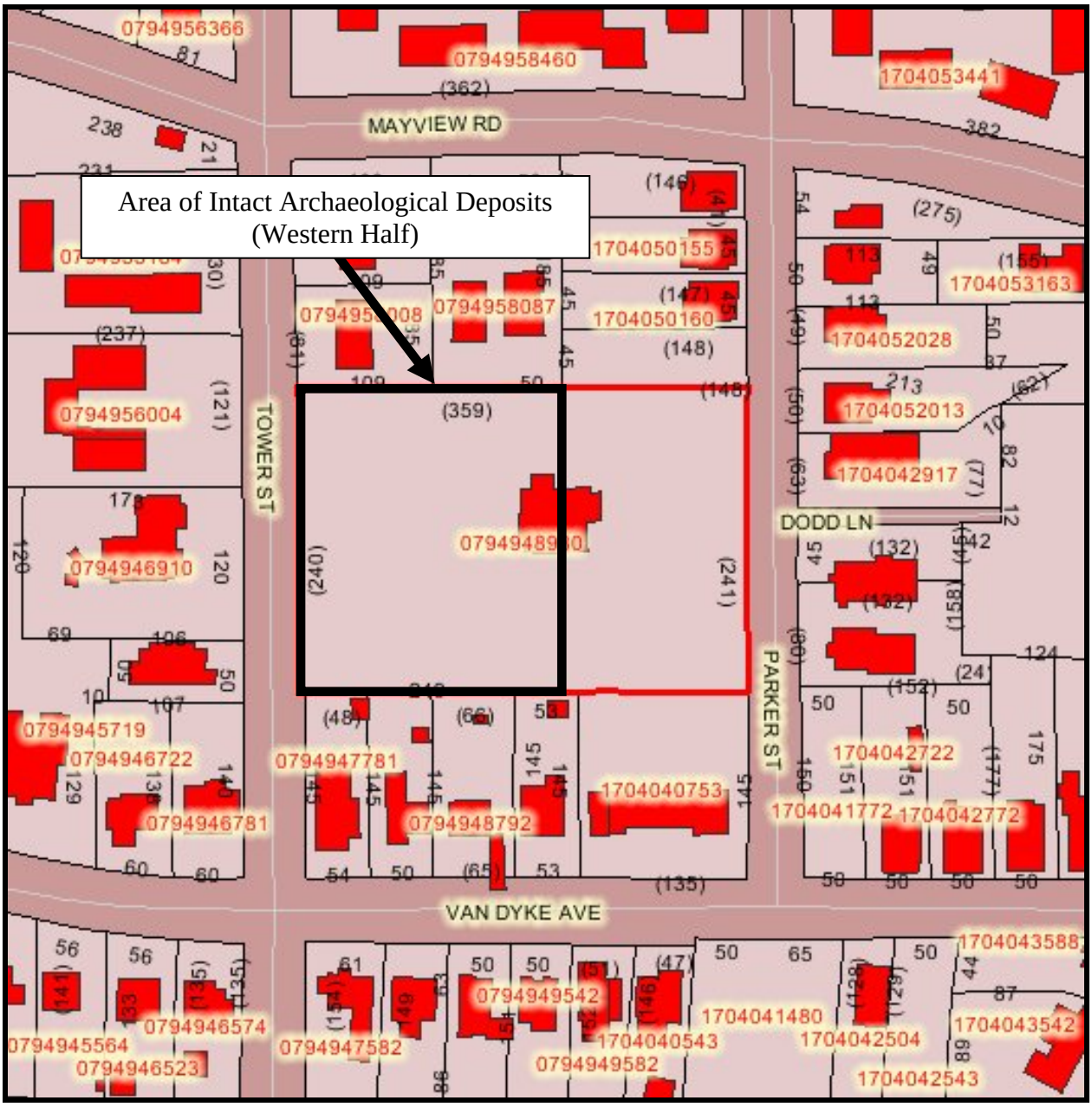
Profile of EU 3, south wall.



Plans and Profiles-EU 3 and Features 6 and 7

Rev. M. L. Latta House

Wake County, North Carolina



Area of Intact Archaeological Deposits at Reverend M.L. Latta House Site