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Old set Ex Riffles

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF THE TERRACE AND
ROADWAY BEHIND THE EISENBURG HEREHUIS

Prepared for
Dept of Local Government, Housing and Works
Administration: House of Assembly

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1. INTRODUCTION

During the months of June and July of 1993, the Archaeology Contracts Office conducted an investigation of the Eisenburg herehuis and its immediate surrounds.¹ We were unable however to work at the rear of the house due to the fact that disturbance of the brick paved roadway at that stage was not desirable. Areas beyond the retaining wall adjacent to the roadway were not affected by the restoration process and thus did not form part of the investigation at that time either.

This situation has altered with plans for the restoration of the entire *werf* having become a reality. Part of this process will involve landscaping to more or less the historic levels and has necessitated that further archaeological work be undertaken to establish a number of facts. Given that there have been substantial alterations to the landscape around the *werf* in the past, it has become necessary to isolate the level of the old *werf*, to establish the positions of the buildings which were demolished during the 1960's and to assess to what extent foundations of the original historic buildings had been preserved.

The recent investigation of the *herehuis* raised the possibility that the original dwelling house may have been located to the rear of the current structure although the precise position was unclear. Lifting of the paving in the roadway as a prelude to the landscaping has made it possible to conduct test excavations in this area in an attempt to locate any traces of structural remains.

The current investigation is an extension of the original brief from the client.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

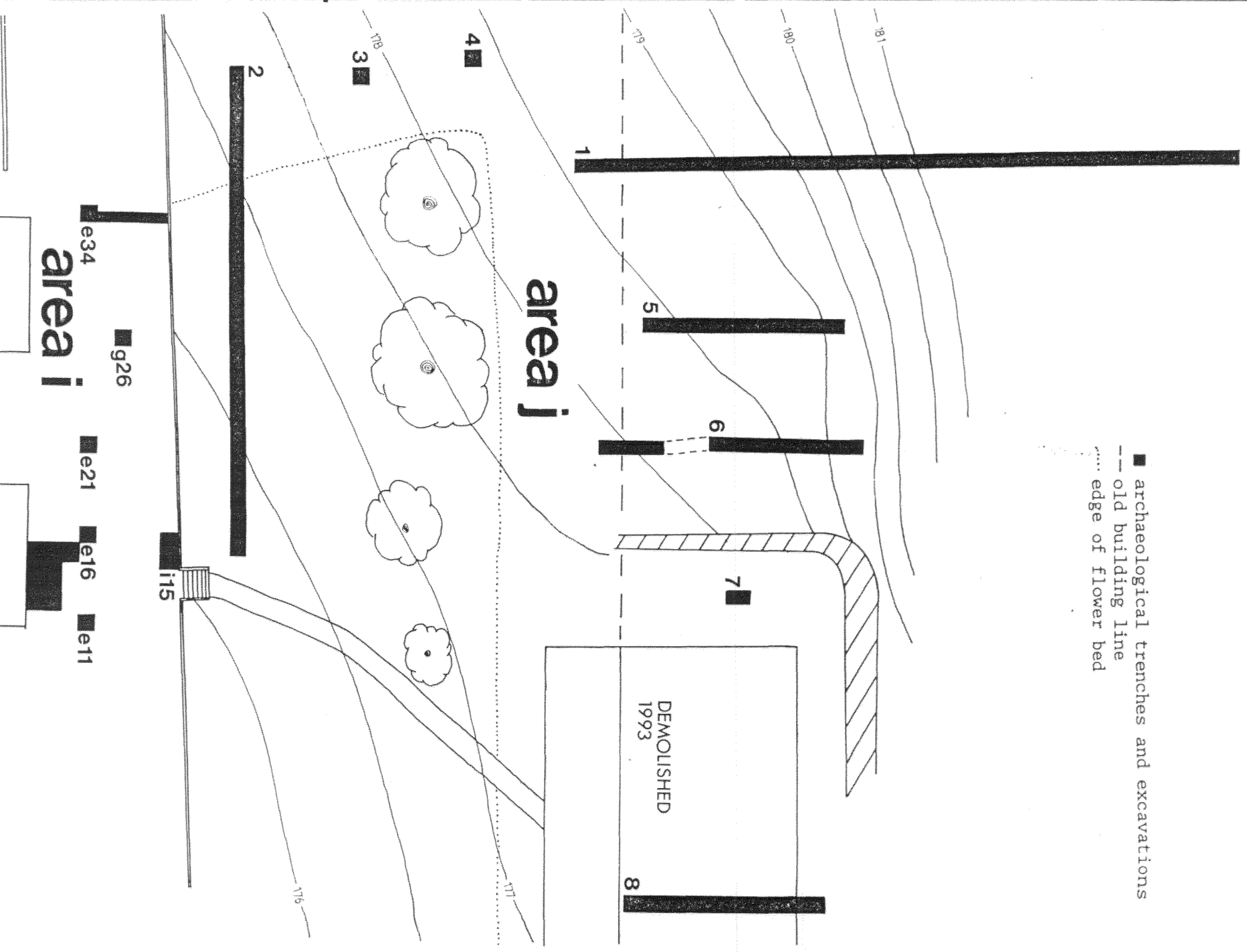
The latest investigation has focussed on two areas. Following the system of labelling decided on in the original investigation, the two areas in question here, namely, the roadway behind the house and the grassed area above the retaining wall, have been labelled areas I and J respectively. The locations of these areas are shown in Figure 2.1.

2.1 Area I (*roadway behind Herehuis*)

As a result of the initial investigation, this area had assumed importance for several reasons. Firstly, the fact that the back wall of the kitchen cut through a dump suggested that it (the dump) continued behind the house. Secondly, we had established that the dump lay in a depression, over which the eastern part of the house, particularly the kitchen, had been built. The chance existed that if the depression was more substantial behind the house then significant additional dump deposits would be found. Thirdly, and perhaps most important, is the fact that the slope of depositional units in the dump suggested that discard had taken place from the northern rather than the eastern or western part of the site prior to the construction of the Melck house and implied that the original dwelling, (as the artefactual contents of the dump are from a relatively affluent domestic situation), had existed in this area. The fact that the original dwelling was built at a time before the *werf* had assumed its current configuration, it is not impossible to imagine that the position may have differed from the later building line.

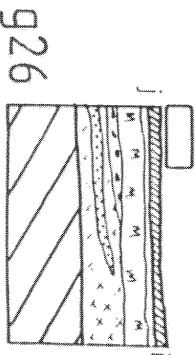
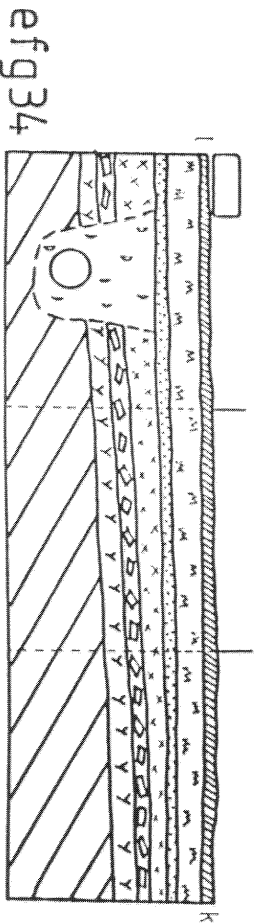
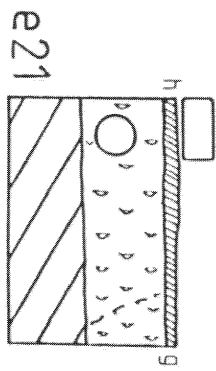
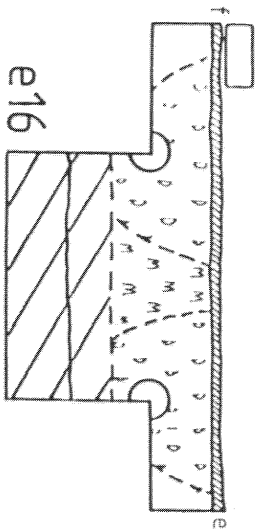
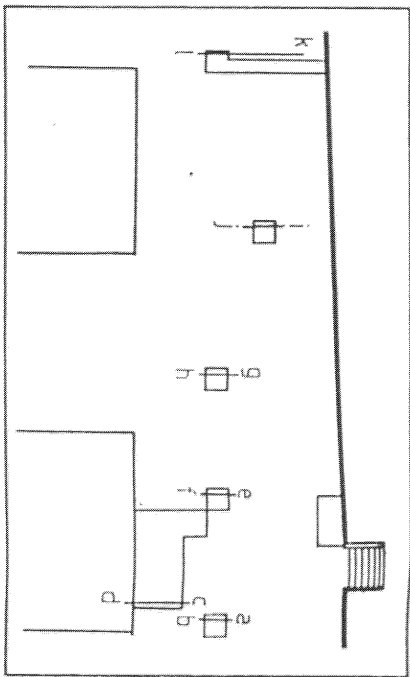
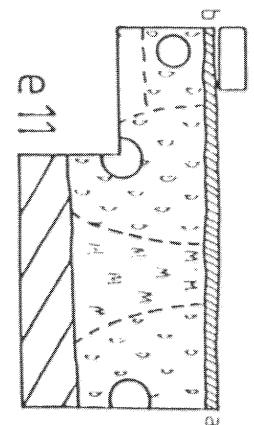
1. Archaeological investigation of the Eisenburg *Herehuis*. Report prepared for the Dept of Local Government, Housing and Works: Administration - House of Assembly, November 1993. UCT: Archaeology Contracts Office.











- archaeological trenches and excavations
- old building line
- edge of flower bed

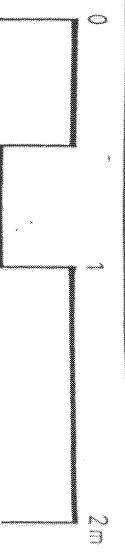


2.1

175



-  brick paving (removed)
-  loose dusty grey
-  disturbed material (trench fill)
-  mixed material
-  ferruginous gravel
-  light brown gritty soil
-  crushed brick layer
-  yellow gritty soil
-  pipes asstd.
-  hard yellow gritty clay (substrate)



2.2

AL (1)



Plate 1

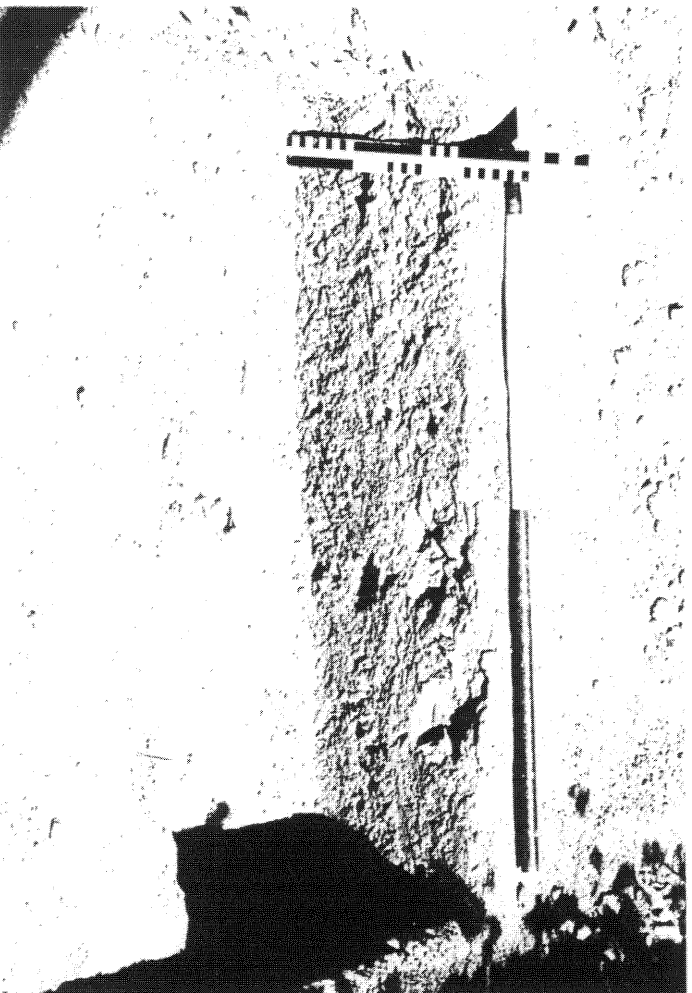


Plate 2

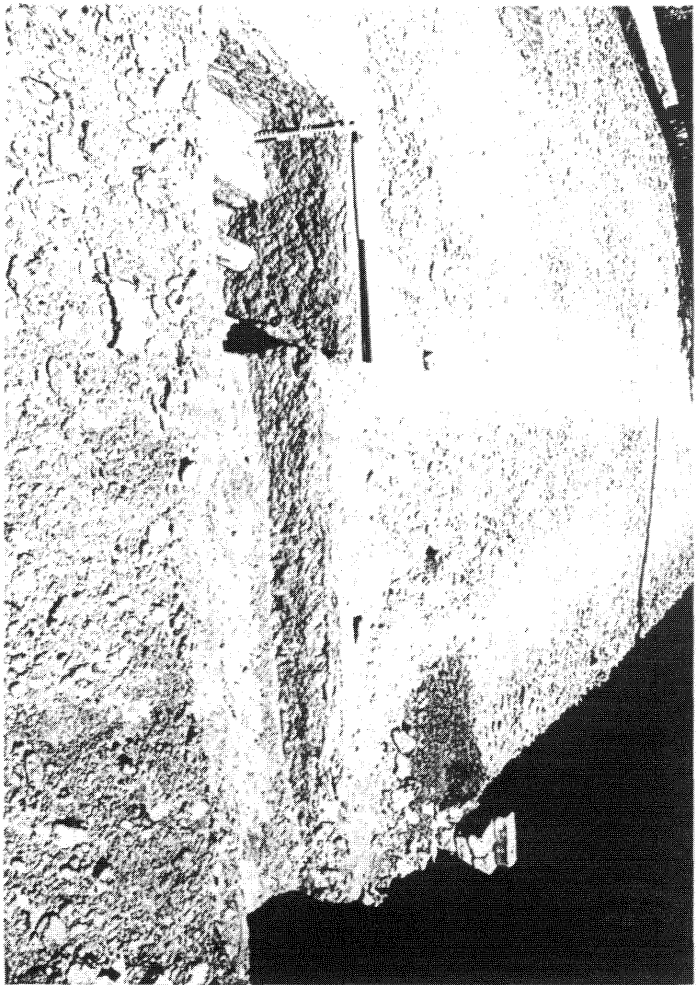


Plate 3

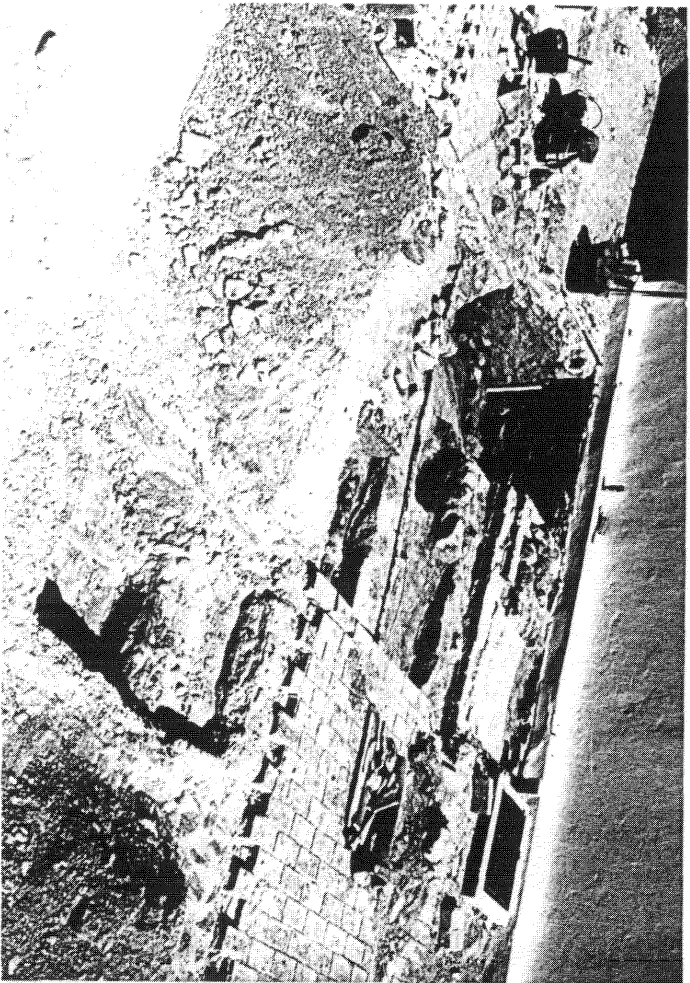
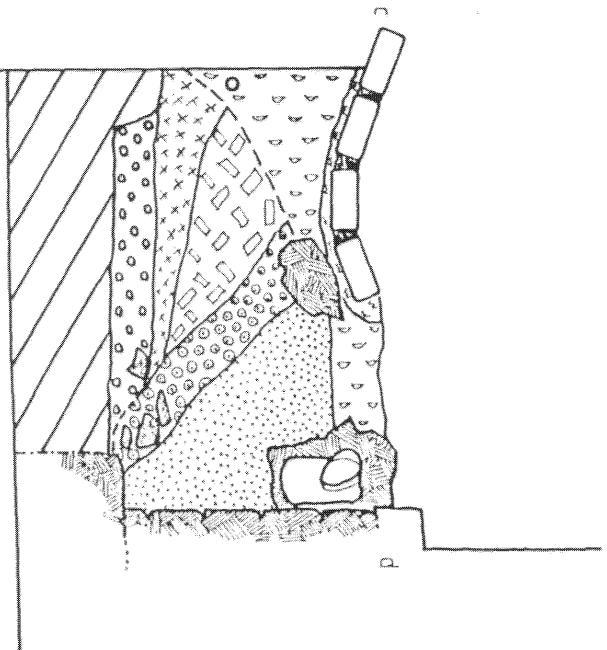












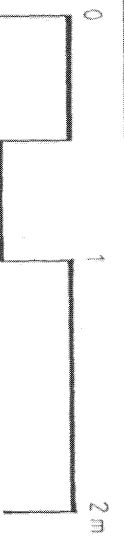
Plate 4



Plate 5



- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
|  | white soil below brick |
|  | disturbed |
|  | stone or cement |
|  | vertical dump |
|  | trench fill |
|  | rubble wedge in dump |
|  | orange yellow clay |
|  | DBYC |
|  | electric cable |
|  | hard yellow gritty clay |



2.3

The presence of what appear to be the remains of steps in AB14/15 seems to strengthen this assumption. The lowest "step" is at the same level as the hard yellow gritty surface. The reason that we cannot be absolutely sure that these are steps is twofold. Firstly, pieces of brick greater than half size have been used instead of wholes. Figure 2.4 shows a photograph (plate 6) and a sketch interpreting the feature. The bricks are of the type ascribed to Martin Melck. While these have obviously been laid, the way it has been done suggests a very casual approach. Some lime mortar is present but forms an edge along the lowest of the steps rather than being used for cement between the bricks themselves. The second reason for circumspection is that it is only in the area of the 1915 *solder* steps that these have been preserved. Since other areas have not been protected by similar structures we cannot say whether these are simply not present because they have been removed or whether they were actually only present in this one spot. In short, we don't know whether this steplike construction was found along the entire rear of the house or if it was only present at only this one area.

2.2 Area J (*Grassed area behind retaining wall*)

This area is very much an extension of the roadway although it may not appear to be so from the prevailing topography. It must be remembered that the present situation bears little resemblance to the historic landscape. The brickwork in the lower part of the retaining wall suggests that this was erected at the turn of the century. The extra courses bringing the wall up to its present height were added sometime in the 1960's after which a considerable amount of imported loamy soil was introduced to produce a gently sloping terrace. Prior to this, a line of buildings parallel to the retaining wall was demolished. These buildings though modernised for use by the agricultural college, probably retained their historic cores and most likely had stone foundations.

The purpose of excavating on the terraced area was twofold. Firstly, our brief required us to isolate the historic surface/s as a guide to the landscaping specialists whose task it will eventually be to restore to as close to the original levels as possible, and at the same time look for indications that other buildings may have been located between the demolished line and the present *Herehuis*. Secondly, tests would establish whether the positions of the demolished buildings could be ascertained by identifying traces of foundations. These tests would also show if any associated archaeological deposits had been preserved. The positions of the exploratory trenches are marked in Figure 2.1.

To our surprise, the trenches revealed no trace of any buildings. In fact no trace of either foundations or indeed any building rubble is evident. The conclusion that one must draw from this is that the demolition was extremely thorough and that foundations were completely removed. The stratigraphic sequence seems to confirm the fact that the area has been vigorously cleared in that no naturally weathered surface is detected. The sequence consists of a light grey unit of imported soil resting immediately above clays resulting from decomposition of local bedrock. The interface between soil and clays (clays vary from yellow to red/grey) is clearly marked with no protracted gradation from one to the other occurring. Plate 7 shows a view of trench 1 in which the proximity of the yellow clay to the surface can clearly be seen. Plate 8 shows the level patch where the old buildings would have stood with test trenches transecting it.

Trenches were also dug on the terrace between the retaining wall and the remaining oak trees. It is clear from the sections that a greater volume of fill was added at this point (substrate is found at approximately 2 meters below the present surface) than higher up suggesting that originally there was a gentle increase in slope behind the

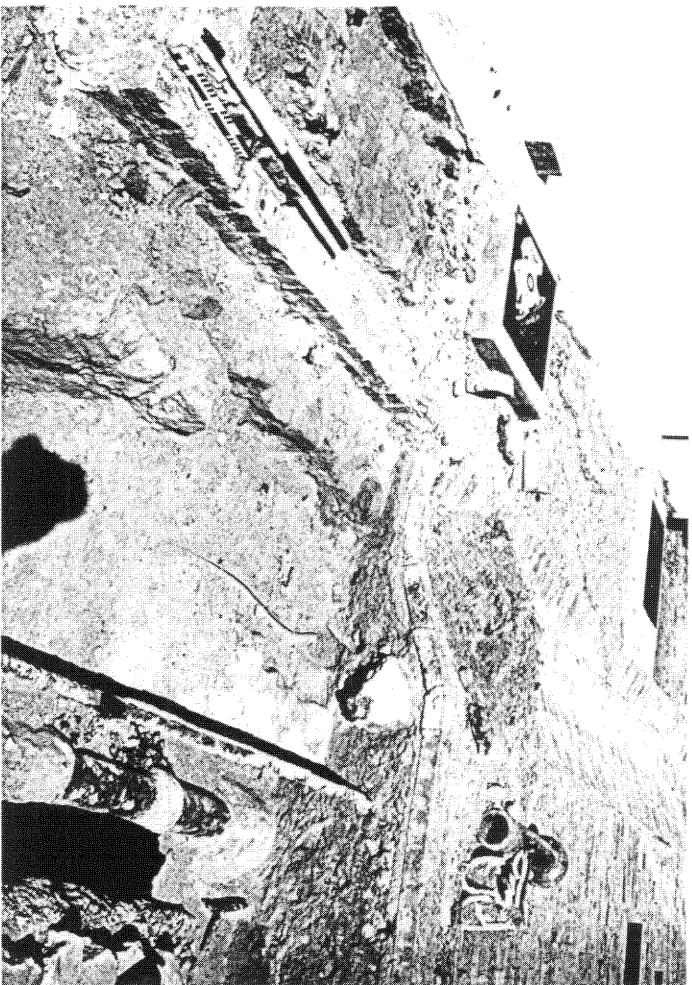
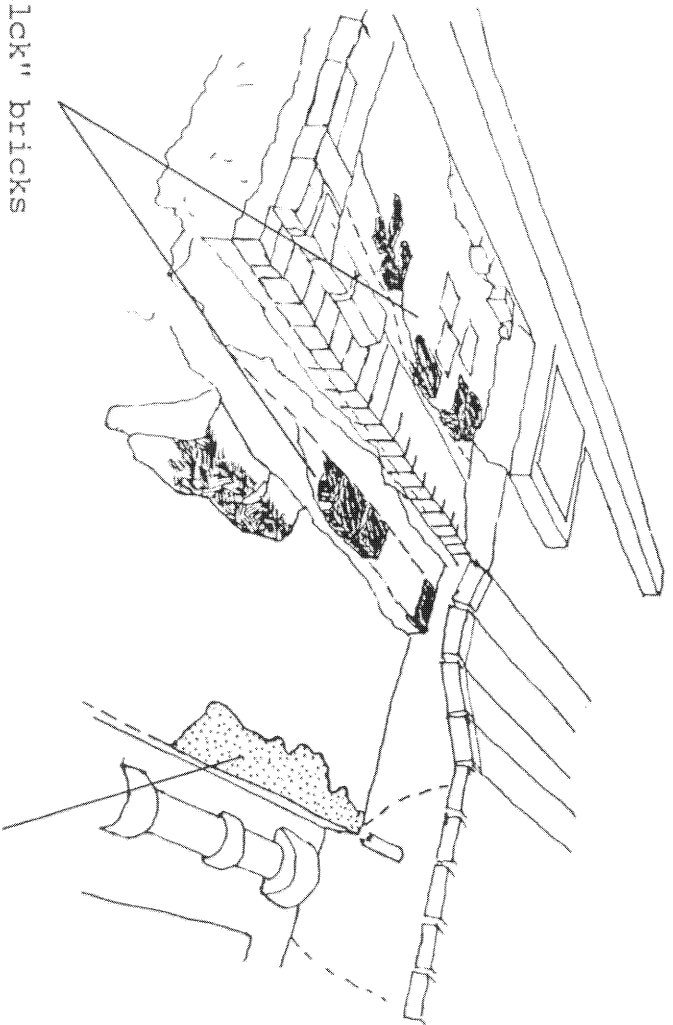


Plate 6



"melick" bricks

lime plaster surface on substrate

2.4

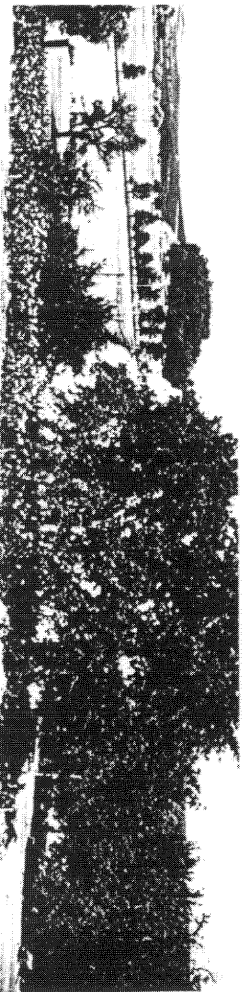


Plate 7

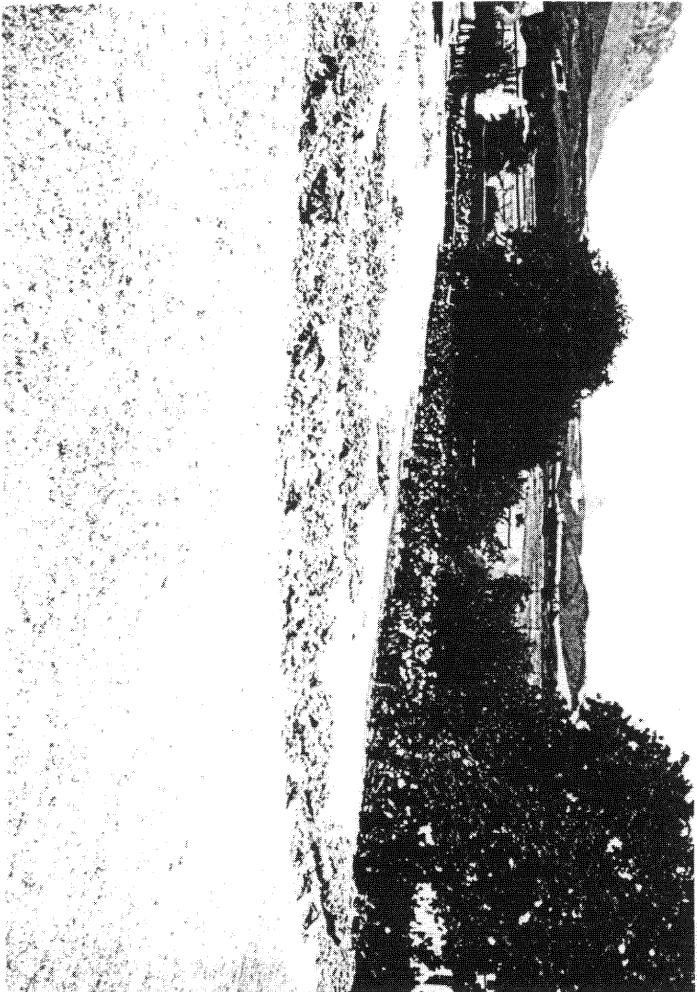


Plate 8

herehuis with a more steep incline occurring at the point where the old buildings stood (substrate found at approximately 150 centimeters below present surface). This would mean that the level area behind the *herehuis* would have originally been much larger. The depth of the substrate at various points in the test holes below the prevailing surface is presented in Figure 2.5.

Small amounts of refined earthenware and building rubble are found towards the lower part of the section in trench B. It cannot be said with certainty that this material comes from the demolished buildings. The fact that the fill has been imported means that artefactual material could come from elsewhere.

3. ARTEFACTUAL MATERIAL

Artefactual material has been found in most of the roadway test holes and in some of the test trenches in area J. Apart from the excavations immediately adjacent to the kitchen however, material is often in secondary context. This is evident by the mixing of porcelain and refined earthenware of different periods for example.

As with the previous investigation around the house, a clear distinction can be made between the deposits of the dump and those from elsewhere. Quite clearly, the dump deposits are *in situ* and predate the building of the present *Herehuis*. The absence of any refined earthenwares of english origin suggests that no mixing has occurred. Care was taken to isolate deposits that had been disturbed by trenching and so avoiding potential contamination.

The volume of artefactual material is low. Even the dump deposits produced relatively small amounts. In the case of the dump this can be explained by the fact that the substrate has angled up at this point providing much less of an area to be filled and consequently containing less material. A more detailed hole-by-hole inventory of artefactual material is presented in Appendix 1.

4. CONCLUSIONS

While no new and significant structural remains have been identified in the course of this investigation, the test holes have revealed something of the original topography of the *werf*. The lack of structural and other remains on the terrace is due to demolition which took place during the 1960's. Lack of remains in the roadway where we had previously speculated a building may once have existed seem to suggest that the structure may have been elsewhere. It seems unlikely that demolition of this structure would have been as thorough as in others although the possibility can never be completely dismissed.

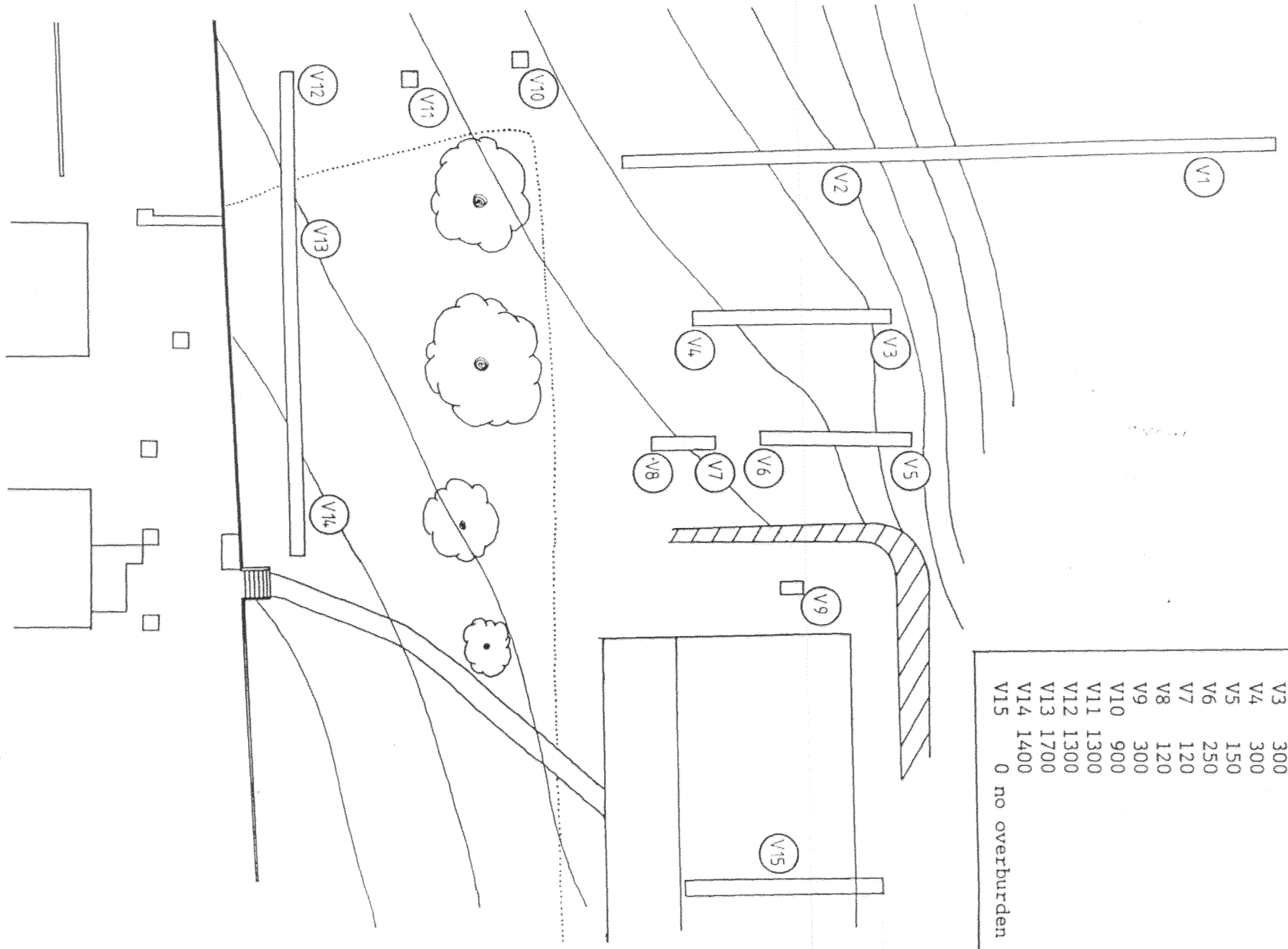
Excavations immediately behind the *herehuis* have permitted us to estimate the extent of the 18th century dump as well as add to the existing artefact assemblage.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

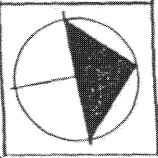
The area of the *werf* that has been tested in this latest investigation seems to be devoid of major archaeological remains. One area of interest remains around the kitchen where dump deposits still exist. We would recommend that:-

1. No further archaeological work should be conducted on the terrace tests have been conducted. If buildings are to be re-erected, design will have to be informed by photographic and other archival records showing location and dimensions.

V1	400	mm
V2	440	
V3	300	
V4	300	
V5	150	
V6	250	
V7	120	
V8	120	
V9	300	
V10	900	
V11	1300	
V12	1300	
V13	1700	
V14	1400	
V15	0	no overburden



2.5



2. Any lowering of the levels on the eastern corner of the kitchen should be preceded by excavations to remove remaining dump deposits. Structural remains also exist in this area as reported previously. Care should be taken not to disturb these if it can be helped.

3. Apart from the area around the kitchen, the roadway behind the house will not require further archaeological work.

6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank Elsenburg staff who assisted with this investigation by removing bricks from the roadway and for the loan of the JCB and driver during trenching operations on the terrace.

7. INVESTIGATION TEAM

Principal investigators

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Tim Hart

Report preparation

Dave Halkett

Analysis:

Dutch smoking pipes
other artefacts

Otto Graf
Dave Halkett

Excavation

Dave Halkett
Tim Hart
Mzwondile Sasa
Mzunzima Mjikelezi

APPENDIX 1
INVENTORY OF ARTEFACTUAL MATERIAL

The following is a record of the artefactual material recovered from test holes in area I and from test trenches in area J. Apart from the material from the stratified dump units, no material could be found in an *in situ* situation. In these cases no stratigraphic distinction is made. No detailed bone or porcelain analysis has yet been undertaken. The smoking pipes from the dump units have been examined and the results are presented in Appendix 2.

AREA I

E11	(disturbed/mixed context)		
	bone		
	glass	frags	3
	iron	nails	5
	refined earthenware	frags	6
	porcelain	frags	3

D15	(disturbed/mixed context)		
	bone		
	glass	frags	3
	iron	padlock w brass attachments	1
	refined earthenware	frags	4
	porcelain	frags	8
	smoking pipes	stems	2
		partial bowl	1

E16	(disturbed/mixed context)		
	bone		
	glass	frags	2
	iron	nails	5
	refined earthenware	frag	1
	porcelain	frags	3

E34	(disturbed/mixed context)		
	bone		
	glass	frags	6
		bottle stopper	1
	iron	nails	2
	refined earthenware	frags	4
	porcelain	frag	1
	earthenware	frag	1
	smoking pipes	stem	1
		partial bowl	1

AB/CD 12			
DBYC			
bone	analysable, though fragmented.		107
porcelain	Jap/chin b/w polych frags		1
	Delft		11
earthenware	fragments		1
	red ware frag (t-pot)		6
stoneware	German		3
glass	onion bottle frags		32
	case bottle frags		87
	other green frags		7
	wine glass base frags		20
	engraved tumbler frags		12
	window pane frags		12
	other clear frags		34
iron	nails		1
	flat bar		1
	bolt		1
	hinge frag		1
	ring		1
copper	pins		23
	large tack		1
	ring		1
	scrap		1
	scrap		5
	stems		132
lead	bowl frags		48
smoking pipes	bowl w heel mark		3
	bowl w other marks		1
	frags		49
ostrich egg	C meridionalis (black mussel)		13
shell	D serra (white mussel)		20
stone flakes	silcrete		2
gunflint	chunk		1
A13			
DBYC			
bone	analysable, though fragmented.		45
porcelain	Jap/chin b/w polych frags		2
	Delft		5
earthenware	fragments		2
stoneware	German		9
glass	onion bottle frags		4
	wine glass base frags		2
	aqua frags		49
	stems		20
	bowl frags		1
smoking pipes	bowl w heel mark		

AB12/CD12
VERTICAL DUMP

bone	analysable, though fragmented.	18
porcelain	oriental b/w polych frags	
earthenware	fragments	3
stoneware	fragments	2
glass	aqua frags	2
	green frags	19
	wine glass base frags	17
	engraved tumbler frags	3
	window pane frags	3
	other clear frags	5
iron	nails	6
copper	nail	1
smoking pipes	stems	26
	bowl frags	8
stone	bowl w heel mark	1
	silcrete MBP	1

AB12/CD12
RUBBLE WEDGE IN DUMP
v small sample

AB12/CD12
TRENCH FILL
disturbed and not analysed.

AREA J

TRENCH 1
(disturbed/mixed context)
glass

refined earthenware	blue medicine bottle (whole)	1
porcelain	window glass	4
	frags	8*
	frag	3

* not included are numerous fragments of a refined earthenware water pitcher with blue and white decoration (english).

TRENCH 2
(disturbed/mixed context)
refined earthenware
porcelain
stoneware

	frags	2
	frag	2
	frag	1

APPENDIX 2 DUTCH SMOKING PIPES

This is a small sample of pipes fitting into a much larger sample that has previously been analysed from the kitchen dump found below the Eisenburg *berenhuis*. The analysis of this additional material has showed it to be in all ways consistent with previously analysed material. Only pipes from the layer DBYC have been examined and samples from squares AB12/CD12 and A13 combined. Pipe samples from most of the other test holes and trenches were too small for analysis.

Stem bore diameter:

1.96mm

n = 31

(Measurement made with calibrated bits)

Heel marks:

Duco mark		most likely date for discard*
82 (x1)	"landman/boer met spade"	1740-1795
705a (x2)	"82 gekroond"	1734-1739
97b (x1)	"Job op de mesthoop"	1715-1803
114 (x1)	"leeuw in de Hollandse tuin"	1740-1775

*since the dump was covered by the house in 1760 the discard period can be reduced in this case.

Makers names:

Only two names are discernible namely Barend van Berkel and K. Verby.

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