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14 November 2005

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Attention: Dr A. Jerardino

ARCHAEOLOGICAL PERMIT: SUBMISSION OF REPORT LA GRATITUDE

Please find included the report on investigations conducted by myself in Stellenbosch La gratitude, Stellenbosch. Archaeological excavations on site of an earlier outbuilding. October 2004.

The development has come to a standstil since October 2004. Consequently no further excavations of any kind has been undertaken.

Would you please ensure that it is accessioned into your library at HWC.

With kind regards

Yours faithfully

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LA GRATITUDE, STELLENBOSCH

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS ON SITE OF AN EARLIER OUTBUILDING

OCTOBER 2004

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1. INTRODUCTION

In 2004 the property of La Gratitude Holdings gained new shareholders, who earmarked the old homestead as an upmarket restaurant. Additional modern kitchen space is required in order not to compromise the eastern wing of the old homestead (**FIG.1**).

The **purpose** of this investigation is to:

1. Locate the foundations of the Outbuilding (OB) as a footprint for the new construction.
2. Locate possible earlier features like floors, paving or rubbish deposits.
3. Make recommendations towards reconstruction.

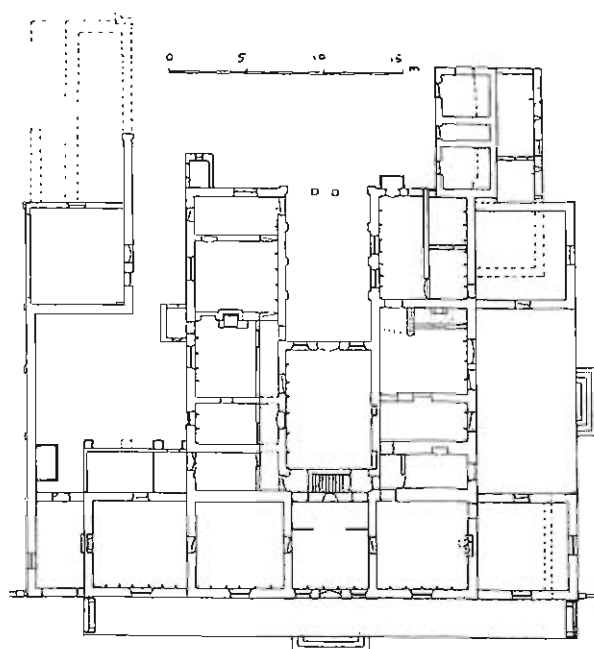


FIG.1 Site plan of the La Gratitude homestead and position of the OB (Vos 2004).

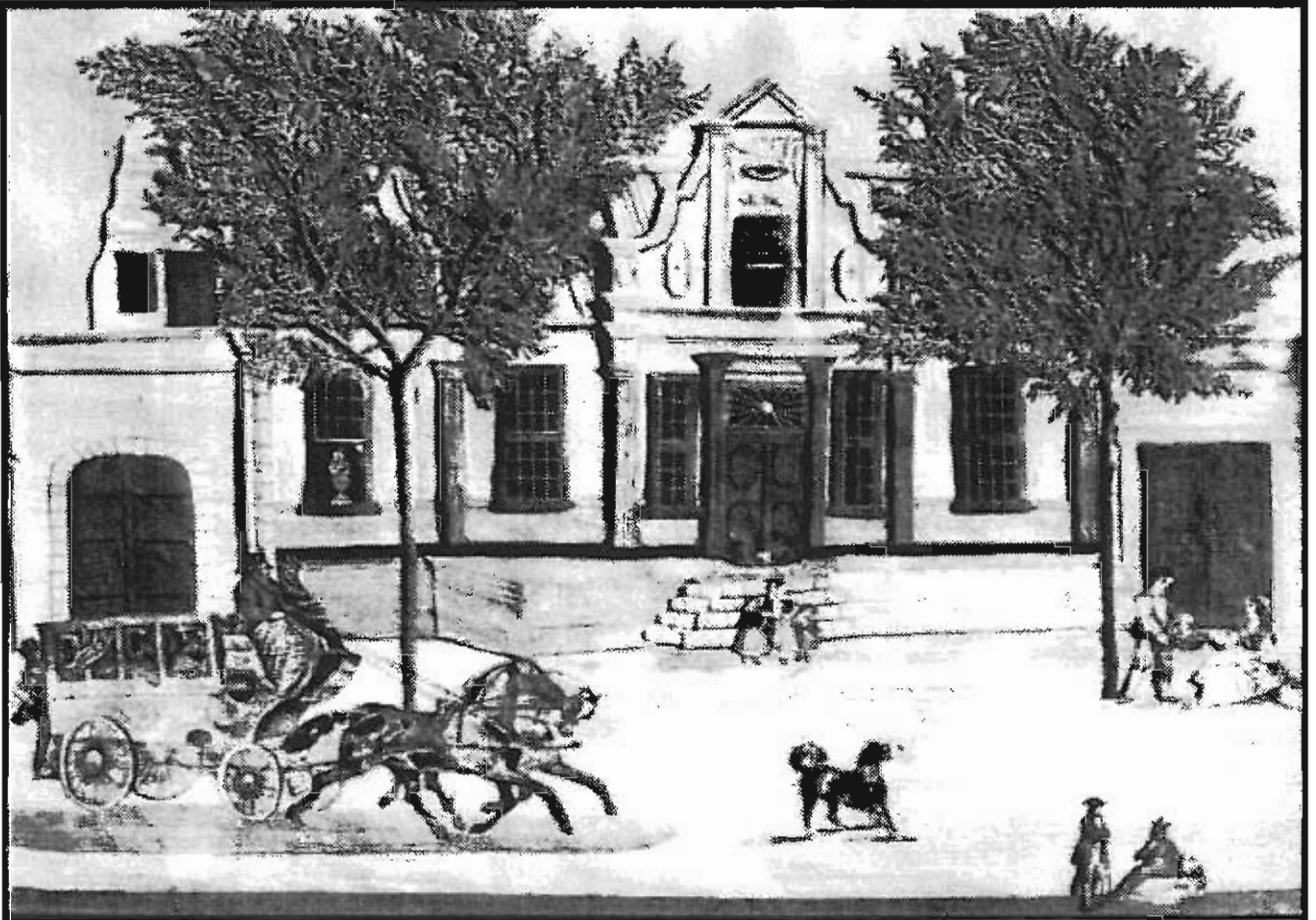


FIG.2 Façade of the c.1825 homestead, a collage by Petronella Camijn. It clarifies certain details previously speculated about, e.g. the length of the stoep, the front double doors with two panels each, fanlight and the two different coach-houses (Odendaal 2004).

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

By c.1825 the homestead had gained much of its present façade (**FIG.2**) and layout, being built originally as a U-shaped, status homestead with ornate gables. A Hire-House of this time (Vos 2001:76) stood between the La Gratitude homestead and House Lucy (Dorp Street 99), with two large outbuildings and some smaller rooms. The only evidence for their existence that could be traced was a municipal drainage plan of c.1926 (Ibid.:77) (**FIG.3**). The OB appears as a narrow building with two smaller rectangular rooms at its back. The thickness of walls are merely symbolic and not to scale.

Another 1926 drainage plan of La Gratitude showed this OB to be rather large and wide (**FIG.4**) (Vos 2001:153). Structural investigations already confirmed that the “modern” garage (>1950) reutilised portions of this old OB. Its final extent had to be established.

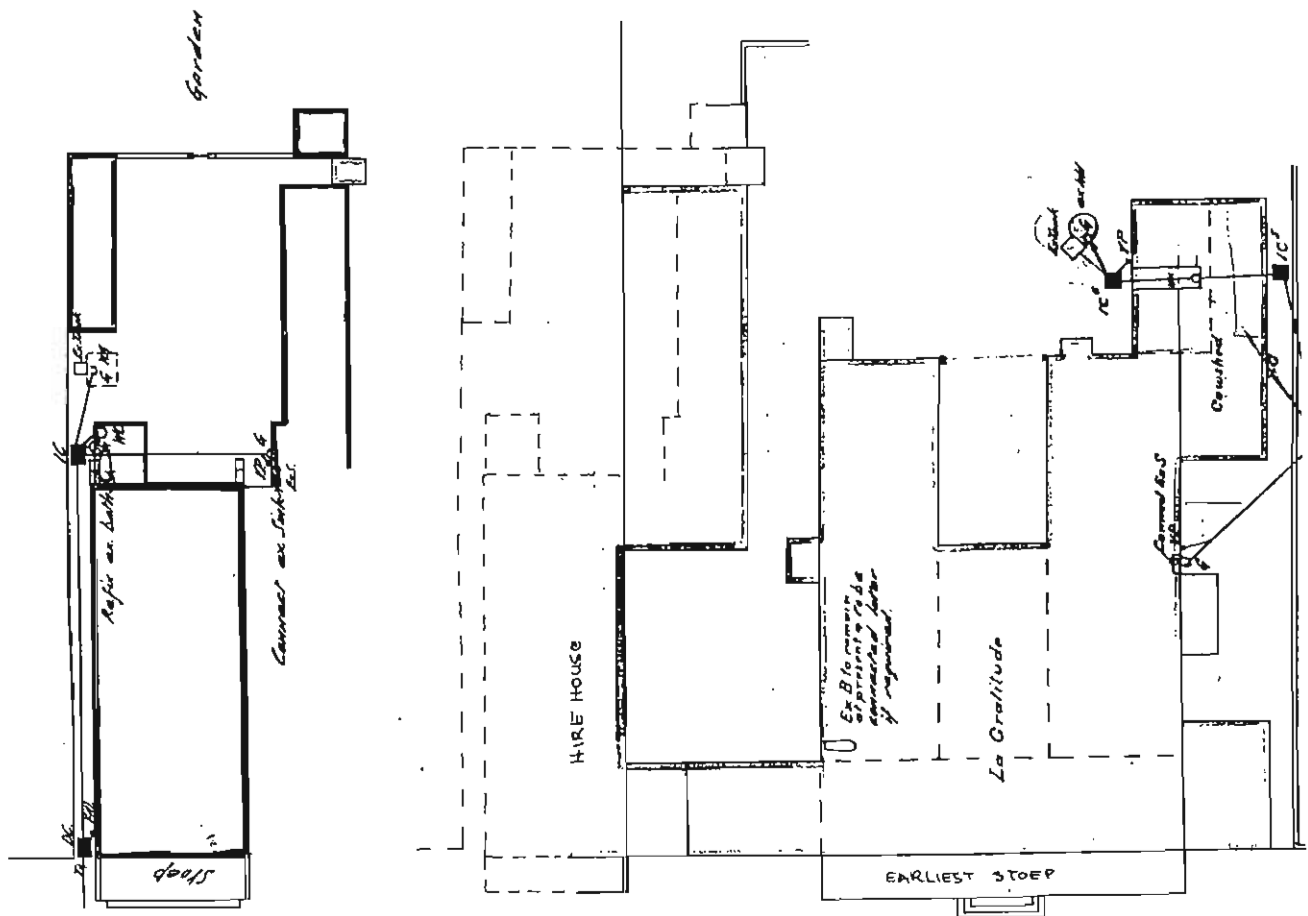


FIG.3 In this 1926 drainage plan of the Hire House plot (Dorp St. 97), the OB is depicted as a narrow structure, which is correct according to the room C excavations. Note the similar width of the vaulted extension of the western wing of the homestead. Were the OB also vaulted and used as a wine store? (Vos 2001:77).

FIG.4 Another 1926 drainage plan shows the OB as a wide structure, which is again confirmed by the room B excavations (Vos 2001:153).

LA GRATITUDE : OUTBUILDING EXCAVATIONS 2004

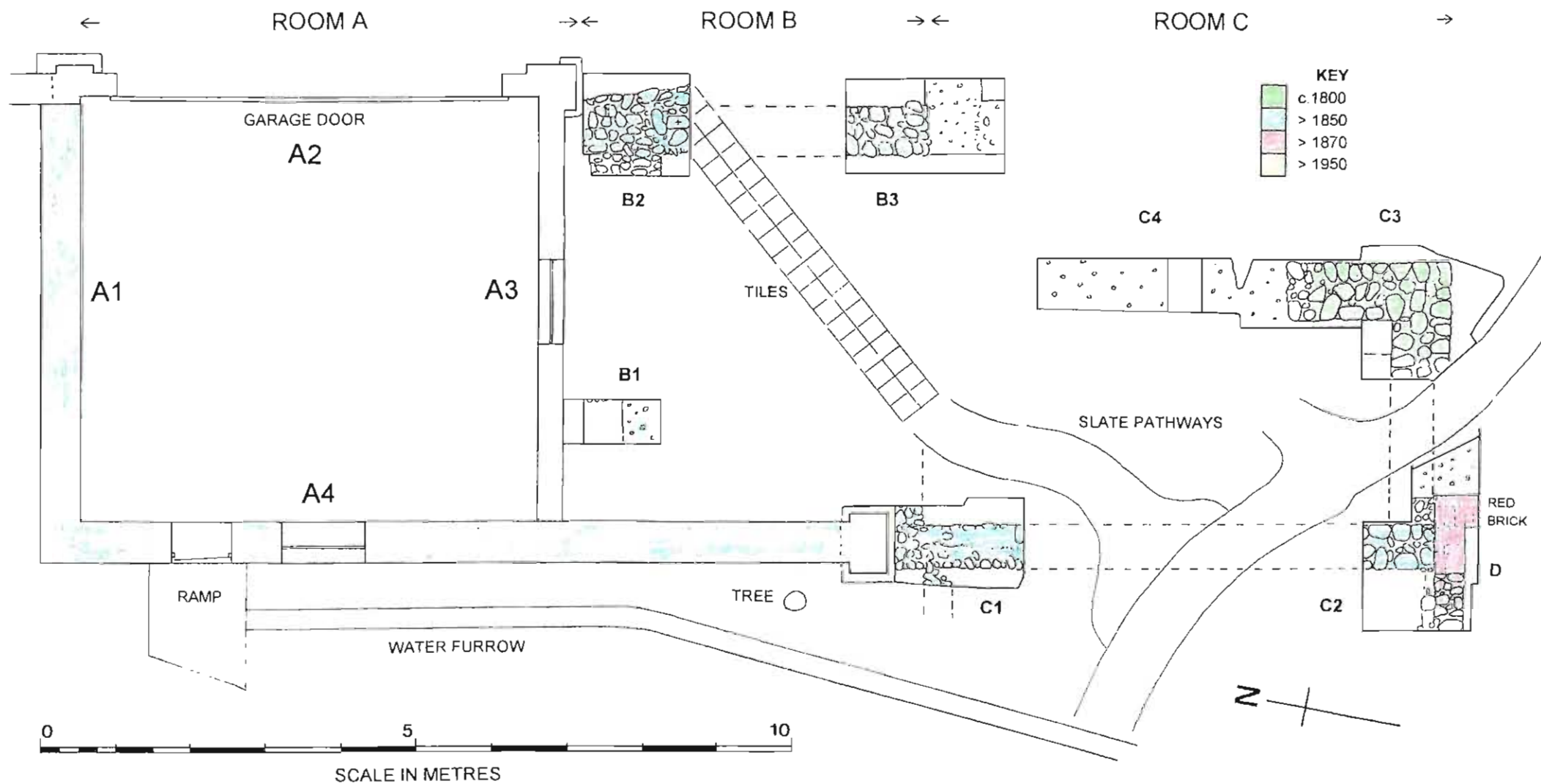


FIG.5 Site plan of the OB and the archaeological excavations. A preliminary chronology is provided (Vos 2004).

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS

3.1 METHODOLOGY

There were limitations to the excavations, viz. vegetation, slate and tiled pathways, and recently established lawns. The bushes and flowers were removed to provide unimpeded excavations. As little as possible was disturbed as not to unduly destroy the present garden layout.

It was decided to use test sections and trial trenches to find the foundations and to interpolate the missing structures.

The garage is designated as Room A, the southern portions as Room B and Room C, with the small roomlet D at the extremity (**FIG.5**).

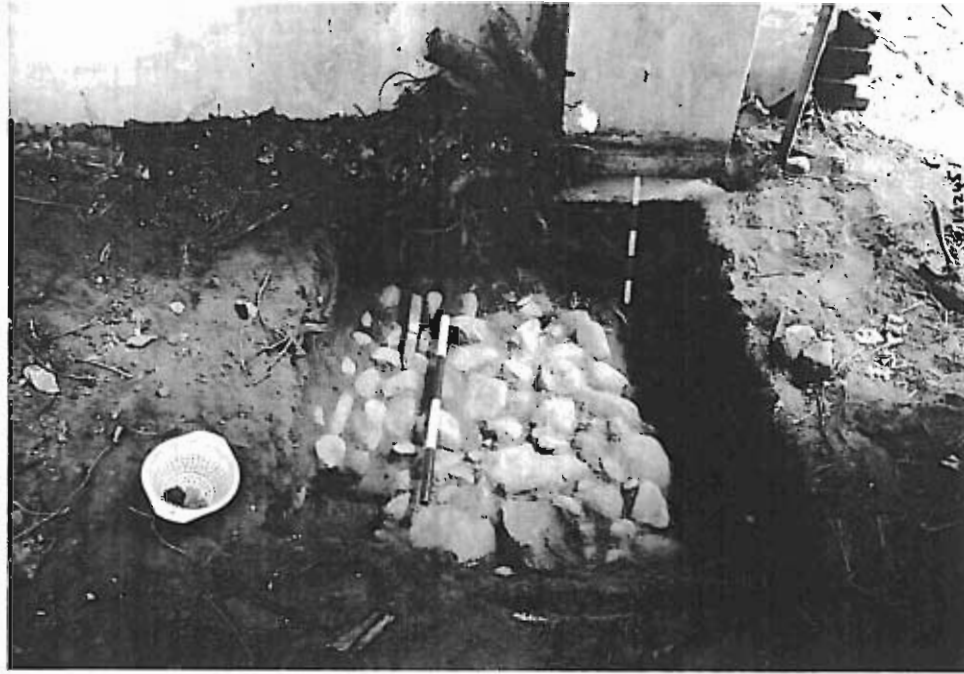
3.2 ROOM A (GARAGE)

The walls of this building are about 52 – 55cm thick (walls A1, A4), but the modern (>1950) walls of the garage are about 30 cm thick (walls A2, A3).

According to the brick and clay mortar of the old walls, the building could date from the mid 19th century.



1. View of the site prior to the removal of most of the vegetation. Garage (Room A) is in the middle with the central window (looking N).



2. Section B2 against the eastern end of the garage. Note the flat laid stones on the left (scales 1m, 50cm)(looking N).



3. Section B3 where the foundation stones are clearly defined. In the foreground there is a shallow depression, the fill 2.1 having been excavated (scales 2m, 1m).

3.3 ROOM B

Here three test sections (B1, B2 & B3) were dug.

Section B2 revealed a wide, uneven cobbled foundation that splayed towards the southeast. All stones are river cobbles of quartzite and range in size from about 5 cm to 35 cm in diameter. It appears that the western cobbling of this foundation is laid flat and I interpret it as a portion of possible paving. This particular section was overgrown with thick roots of poison ivy, which made excavation difficult.

In order to establish whether the "paving" continued westwards, **section B1** was dug. No cobbling was found, except a filled-in layer of small pebbles, brown soil mixed with some plaster, a Cape tile fragment (26mm) and a bottle neck and top. The latter was dated to about 1795 – 1800.

Section B3 showed a more standardized, defined foundation, which ended rather abruptly, as if meant to be. South of it, fill consisting of pebbles, a variety of plasters and reddish brick in soil, was again encountered in a shallow depression. It appears to be specific fill (layer 2.1) (see elevation drawing **FIG.6**).



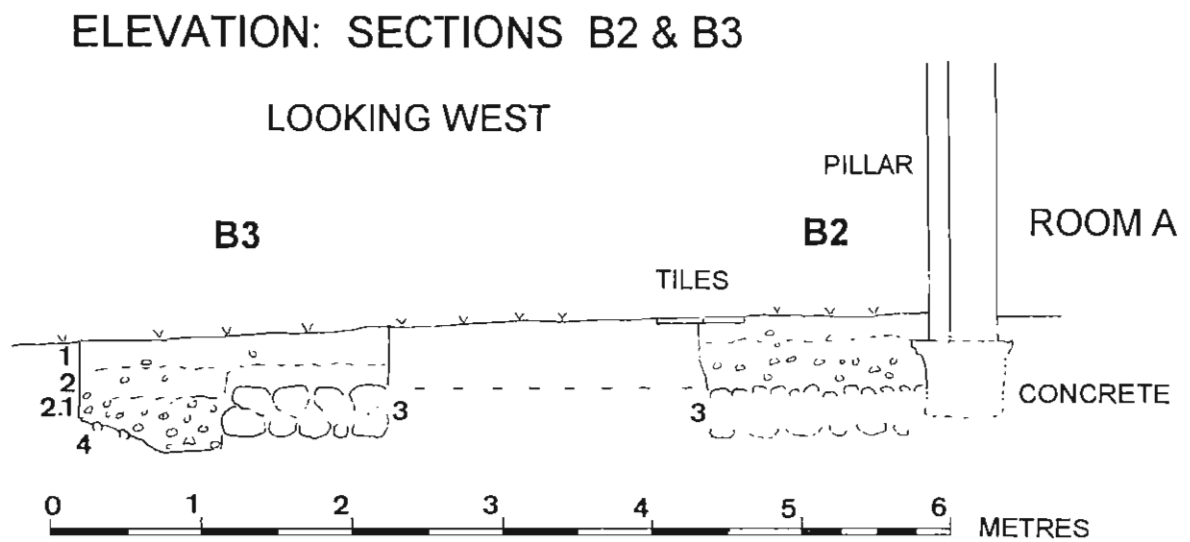
4. Artefacts from sections B2 and B3 (scale 10cm).

Section B2

1. Floor tile piece
2. Do, very thick, broken
3. Bottle top 1790-1800

Section B3 (19th c)

1. English fine earthenware (B & W)
2. Do, annular bowl fr.
3. Glass fr.



KEY

1. GRASS & DARK SOIL
2. BROWN SOIL WITH SOME ARTEFACTS 19TH
- 2.1 FILL OF RED BRICK, PEBBLES & BROWN SOIL
3. FOUNDATIONS c.1850
4. STERILE YELLOW CLAYS & PEBBLES

FIG.6 Elevation drawing of sections B2 and B3 (looking W).



6. View of the same wall and and pilaster in cement, with section C1, which exhibits a narrow stone foundation (scales 2m, 1m, 50cm)(looking N).



5. View of the existing wall B4 with its orange brick and clay mortars (scale 2m)(looking W).



7. View of the corner section C2 with remnants of red brick walling representing a portion of roomlet D (scales 1m, 50cm)(looking N).

Note that at section C1 the cobbling indicates a wall that could have linked up with section B3. Surprisingly, at the western side of B3, there is no indication of foundation stones! Note that the existing, eastern wall is built of old brick and clay mortar (c.1850) but the end-pillar is built in modern masonry and cement on concrete foundations, similar to that of the garage (>1950).

3.4 ROOM C

Section C1 also produced a defined foundation of 58 – 60 cm wide, with a depth of 90 cm below the surface. It showed signs of being robbed of stone. Slate pathways barred the way, but at **section C2** the foundation ended, and turned *at a right angle* diagonally eastward. It abuts a thinner foundation, the smaller stones lay in an orangey clay, with a remnant section of thin brickwork on top. It is interpreted as a portion of the small **roomlet D**. Above the foundation stones most of the artefacts represent 19th century refuse and the odd Chinese porcelain piece or glass of the 18th century.



8. Artefacts from section C1 and C2 (scale 10cm).

Section C1

1. Stoneware jars
2. English fine earthenware
3. Glass fr.
4. Chinese porcelain 18th
5. Floor tile fr.
6. Bone (cow)

Section C2

1. English fine earthenware, jarlet
2. Do, variety
3. Stoneware
4. Plaster, white-washed



9. View of the excavations and the position of section C3/4.

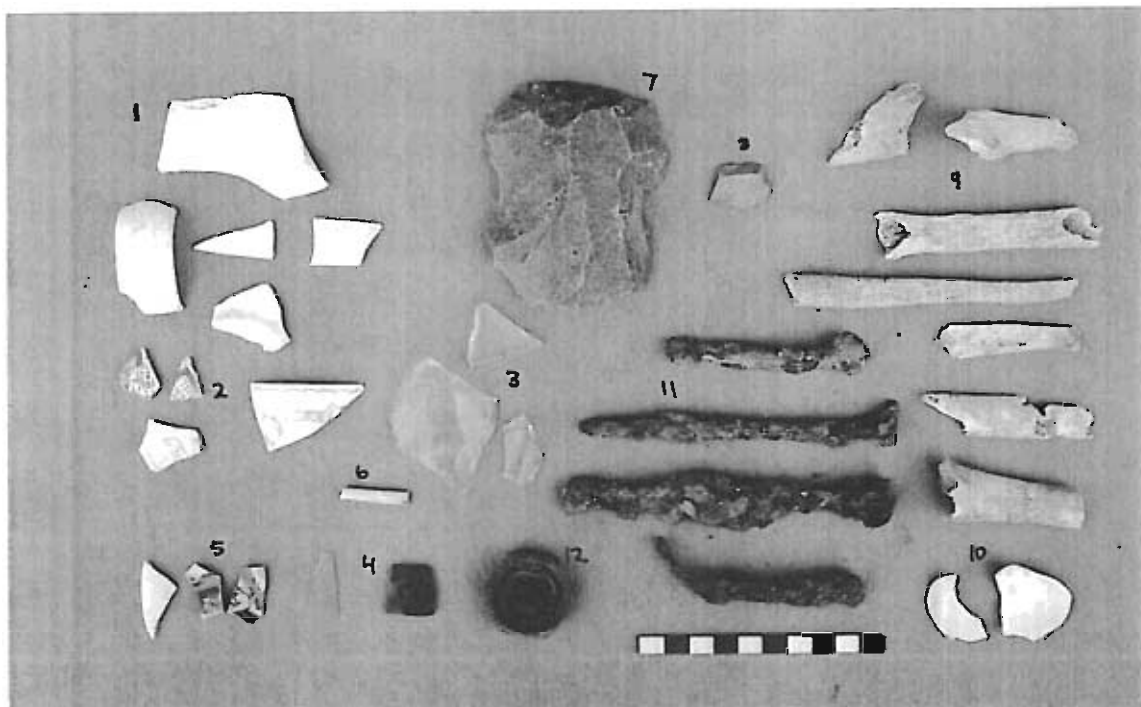


10. Close-up of section C3/4. Note the 80 cm width and the depth of 120 cm of the foundations (scales 2m, 1m, 50cm)(looking N).

Section C3 revealed a 75 – 80 cm wide foundation, but with large cobbles, laid and to a depth of 80 cm below the surface. From its building technique it appears to be different than the rest, probably a portion of an old structure or a high boundary wall. It is directly in line with the exterior gable of the homestead (see FIG.5) and may indicate an old 18th century boundary wall or one built by Borchers in 1800 (see also title page photo).

according to the 1929 plan (see FIG.3) it was incorporated into the OB, and was probably demolished after 1950. What is surprising, is that no portion of its northern section could be found in the trial **trench C4**. Only pebbles, plaster and reddish brick fill were encountered. The remnant foundations were certainly robbed for its stone.

On its eastern, southern side, there were again no signs of stonework. A section dug by workers on a previous occasion found nothing where one would expect the corner section. A long iron rod hammered into these positions also revealed no signs of stone.



11. Artefacts from section C3/4 (scale 10 cm).

(all 19th century except where stated)

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| 1. English fine ware, plain | 9. Bone fr., sheep |
| 2. Do, blue & white | 10. White mussel shell |
| 3. Glassware. | 11. Iron nails, rusted |
| 4. Glass fr 18 th c. | 12. Hexagonal brass screw top |
| 5. Chinese porcelain 18 th c. | |
| 6. Glazed pipestem | |
| 7. Acheulean stone tool (ESA, >100 000 y BP) | |
| 8. Silcrete micro flake (LSA, Holocene to recent) | |

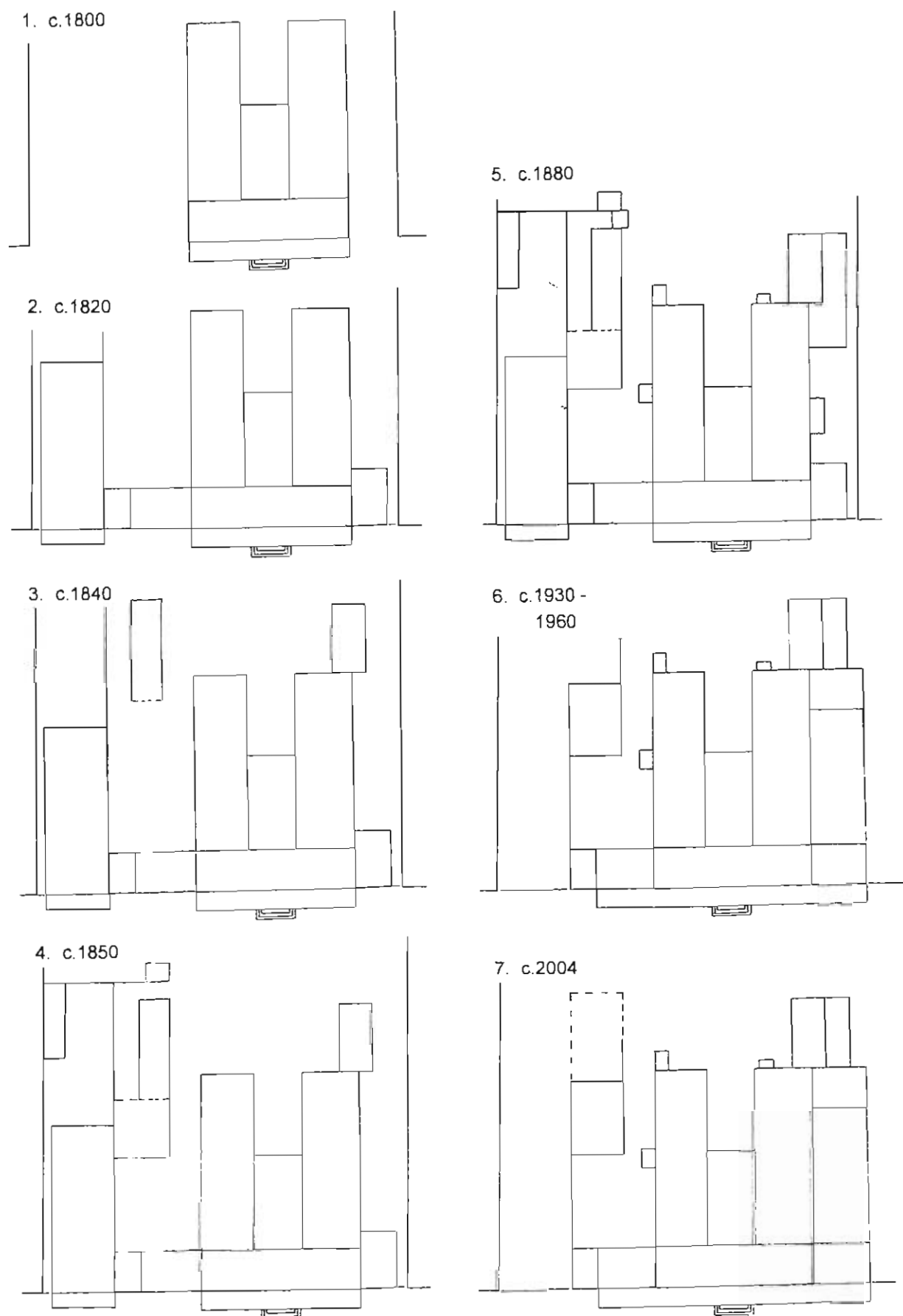


FIG.7 The 1926 La Gratitude drainage plan (inaccurate in its finer detail) was used as a basis for this preliminary draft of the possible development of the OB relative to the rest of the buildings. It covers the period from about 1800 to 1960 when numerous buildings, including the Hire House on the east and the long rectangular dwelling on the west side were demolished. The last example (7) is a possible scenario of reconstruction of the OB

4. CONCLUSION

It is apparent from the archaeological plan that the excavations provided some answers, but raised also some questions. The OB probably evolved in phases during the 19th century. Yet there are also indications of possibly an earlier construction, incorporated into the OB.

The unusually wide and deep foundation at section C3 could be the earliest (late 18th century ?) and was apparently incorporated in a later (early 19th century) foundation and structure with a 2.75 m interior width (see FIG.3), indicating a flat-roofed building. The sections B2 and B3 indicate a 19th c. structure, and it probably stopped at B3, with a "diagonal wall", of which no traces were found at B3. It may have been robbed for its stone. Signs of this wall are apparent at section C1 (see FIG.5). This represents the 5 m interior width of the OB as illustrated in FIG.4.

Cross
wall at
Right-
angle

Possible configurations of the development of the OB are considered in FIG.7.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Reconstruction of the OB is a viable option in the rehabilitation process of La Gratitude. The exact size of the OB has not been fully clarified. It could have been a building of two dimensions of respectively 5 and 3 metre interior widths, indicating at least two periods. This appears to be impractical for the requirements of the proposed kitchen. A full 5 metre interior width is probably a better option over the full length. The roof structure could be pitched or flat-roofed.
2. A pitched roof in thatch with a building with fenestration in early – mid 19th century style is an option. This would be more sympathetic with the c.1800 homestead. A modern building (flat or pitched) roof would have to be well-designed in order not to detract from the earlier homestead.
3. Interior features (walls, floors, ceilings) can all be modern as befits a modern kitchen.
4. Interior excavations of room A need to be monitored, as it ~~is~~ probably contains *in situ* floors, etc. These would be important to establish earlier functions of the building, as all other floor levels have been destroyed.
5. There are still a number of known features (not excavated) and potential archaeological features in the vicinity. All these features would require archaeological excavation or at least monitoring by an archaeologist. Minimum intervention in order to conserve them is advised.

6. REFERENCES

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