

Location of the William Hampton Smith House and Fort Clatsop

William Hampton Smith and his wife Ada built a house in 1872 near the location of the original Fort Clatsop. The house was built adjacent to a half buried rotten log which the Smith's claimed, or rather thought, was a remnant of the original Fort Clatsop. This log was positioned in a East/West direction. They "respect(ed) that log as a memento of the old Fort Clatsop. And so they didn't take it up. They built along side of it" (Harlan Smith 1957). The sketch map provided by Harlan Smith in 1957 shows the location of the log to be under an addition to the house. The map shows the log lying just north of the center portion of the house (under their kitchen). Two additions were added to the house, one in 1872 and the other in 1875. One of these additions was built on top of the old log thought to be a portion of the original Fort Clatsop.

The Smith's mined clay from the area starting in 1877 or 1888. Later William Smith and James Steel, a Portland banker, formed the Portland Pottery Company, based in Portland. Clay mined in the Fort Clatsop area was loaded on barges at the Canoe Landing area to be taken to the pottery company in Portland. Bricks were made on site and marketed in Astoria. The Smith's lived in the house for eight years before moving to Portland in 1880. After the Smith family moved out, Joseph and Louisa Stevenson moved in. The Stevenson's had a land claim just up the Lewis and Clark River. There is a little discrepancy here since Stevenson supposedly rented the house starting sometime between 1876 and 1879, however the Smith's lived there until 1880. The Stevenson's were living there by July 19, 1882 when surveyors were in the area. They moved to Portland sometime between 1882 and 1889.

By 1890 the Smith house was unoccupied. In 1905 the house burned down.

A geodetic survey and section line surveys were first established in this area in 1856 by General Land Office Surveyors Joseph and John Trutch. They placed a post marking the location of the 1/4 Corner between Section 35 and 36 (a 1/4 Corner in a survey marker designating the half way point between Section Corners which are 1 mile apart). When placing a survey marker it is customary to survey several other nearby objects, "witnesses", in order to help find the point later.

The next surveyor in the area was County Surveyor Gelo F. Parker. On July 19, 1882 he refound the old post marking the 1/4 Corner. They established two new witnesses, an 18" Spruce and the southeast corner of the Smith house ("Stevenson House"), which had been built since the last survey. The 18" Spruce was blazed and a "1/4 S" was inscribed on the blaze.

The next survey party to reestablish the 1/4 Corner was again Parker on November 6, 1905. The original stake marking the

1/4 Corner was gone. "The Stevenson house had burned down this year". There is no indication that the 18" Spruce was relocated. It is unclear what they utilized to reestablish the 1/4 Corner, but apparently they utilized incorrect references, since they were approximately 67 feet off of the proper 1856 location. This mistake was not uncovered until 1993. Subsequent surveys and 1/4 Corner reestablishments were based upon the marker improperly placed by Parker.

The 1/4 Corner posts long gone, in May 1993 County Surveyors lead by Robert Hovden reestablished the 1/4 Corner and placed a brass cap set in concrete. The error of 1905 was discovered when the survey did not figure properly and with the finding of the 1882 18" Spruce witness. The removal of the decaying outer portion of a 30" rotting stump clearly showed the "1/4 S" mark. New witnesses established by Hovden included the east and south corners of the fort replica. As a side benefit, they surveyed an old exposed brick near the start of the Canoe Landing Trail.

On May 18, 1994 David Ek performed a compass and tape survey from the south corner of the fort replica to the coordinates of the southeast corner of the Smith house (as surveyed by the 1882 survey). A small wooded stake was placed in this spot. Utilizing photographs and a floor plan sketch by Harlan Smith, William and Ada's son, the rough outline of the house was superimposed over the present landscape. The old Smith house location is directly on top of the start of the Canoe Landing Trail, adjacent to the two large red alder trees on the edge of the grassy demonstration area (not the rifle demonstration area). The position of the exposed brick surveyed in 1993 is nearby. This places the location of the old log, claimed by the Smiths to be a part of the original Fort Clatsop, underneath the present Canoe Landing Trail approximately 65 feet from the main gate to the fort replica. Besides the exposed brick shown on the 1993 surveyor's map, there are other exposed stones or bricks lying basically within the "gutter" of the existing Canoe Landing Trail. The row of stones appears to be a footing or a foundation.

During the 1957 interview, Harlan Smith believed the Smith house was in the same spot as the fort replica, when in fact they are approximately 65 feet apart. This error could be either faulty recollection or the fact that the 1/4 Corner monument was off by approximately 70 to 80 feet from 1905 to 1993.

Enclosed are a few sketches to better illustrate the position of these structures. Map number one through three show the existing conditions with different proposals as to the original location of the Smith's house. The outline of the Smith's house is based upon the sketches provided by Harlan Smith. Utilizing the sketches and the descriptions, I based my maps on a twelve by twelve foot parlor.

Map number one has the southeast corner of the Smith house at the location identified by the surveyors. The orientation of the house is due north-south-east-west, as shown on the Harlan Smith sketches. The log claimed to be a portion of the original Fort Clatsop then would lie entirely under the existing trail. The row of stones adjacent to the trail is not oriented in any logical manner to be considered a part of the house, although they are under the old Parlor.

Map number two also has the southeast corner of the Smith's house in the same location, but the house is rotated to be in line with the existing row of stones (foundation?). The row of stones would then be located along the front edge of Smith's old fireplace within the Parlor.

Map number three has the outline of the Smith's house moved so the outside wall is in line with the existing row of stones. This places the southeast corner of the house in a different location than what the surveyor's indicated, which is not likely. The crude surveying instruments that I utilized could possibly have resulted in this much of an error, but then again, not likely. This map was shown to indicate some of the possibilities that could exist.

The positioning identified on map number two was superimposed over the map of the archeological trenches constructed by Schumacher from 1956 to 1961. A portion of trench number nine goes through the edge of the kitchen and through the center of the wood shed. The existing row of rocks (foundation?) and the proposed location of the old log is not within a trenched area. The entire house lies within the area identified by Schumacher as being an area of "concentration of mid and late 19th century artifacts". This rectangular area is identified on the map by lines of Xs (e.g. "XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX"). This information is compatible with my proposal.

The positioning identified on map number two was also superimposed over the geophysical report produced by James Bell in 1990. In his report, Bell identified eight possible subsurface features. Two of these eight features are below the proposed Smith house location. Although the positioning of these potential subsurface features is compatible with my proposal, the alignment of the two features does not match the alignment in any of the three positions identified on maps one through three. The existing foundation (?) and the log location was not within the scanned portion of this geophysical survey.

Included after map number three are the following maps:

- 1) A portion of the survey notes from the different surveys in this area.

- 2) A sketch made by Harlan Smith of the floor plan for the Smith's house.
- 3) The southern section of Schumacher's archeological trench map showing the relationship to the proposed location of the Smith's house.
- 4) The map from James Bell's geophysical report showing the areas scanned in relation to the proposed location of the Smith's house.

David A. Ek
May 19, 1994

References

Suggested Historical Area Report Fort Clatsop Site, Oregon by John A. Hussey

a transcribed interview of Harlan Smith conducted by Hussey and Schumacher on July 6, 1957

Clatsop County survey records, Clatsop County Public Works Department

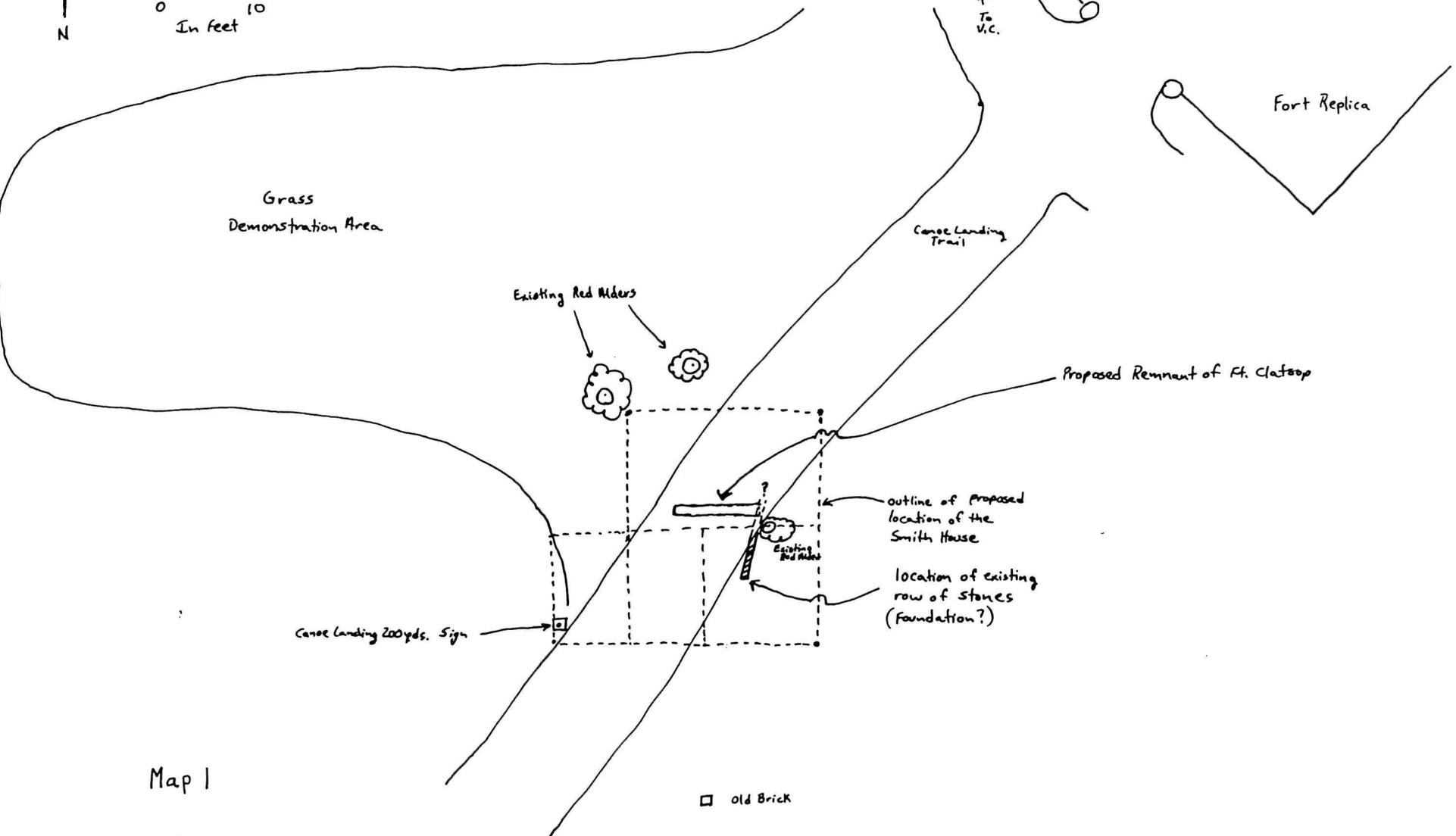
Fort Clatsop, Oregon by Alan H. Patera

the Archeological Base Map produced by the National Park Service in March 1962 depicting archeologist P.F.J. Schumacher's excavated trenches constructed between 1956 and 1961.

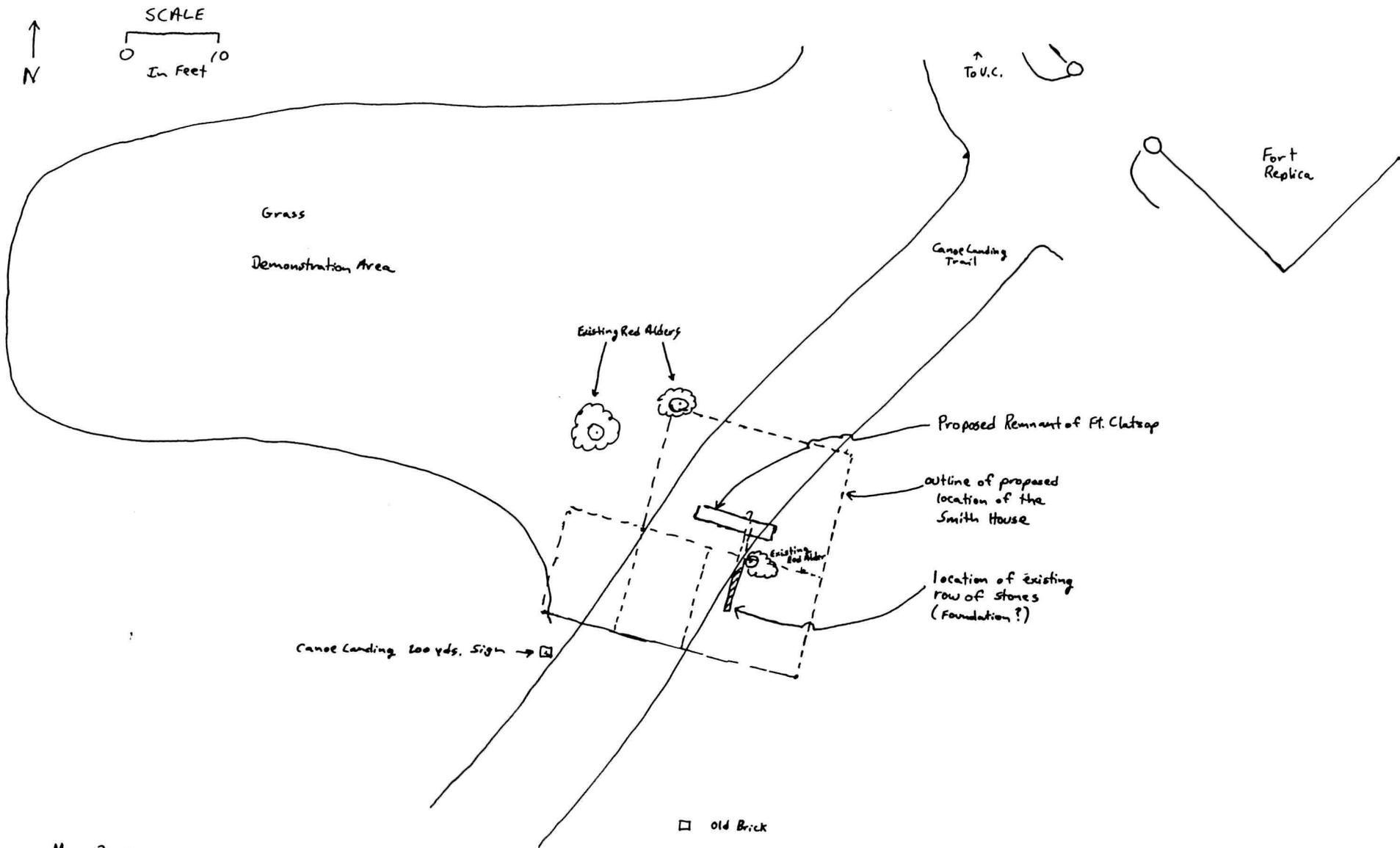
Report of the Geophysical Survey of Fort Clatsop National Monument (sic) 1990 by James Walter Bell.



SCALE
0 10
In feet



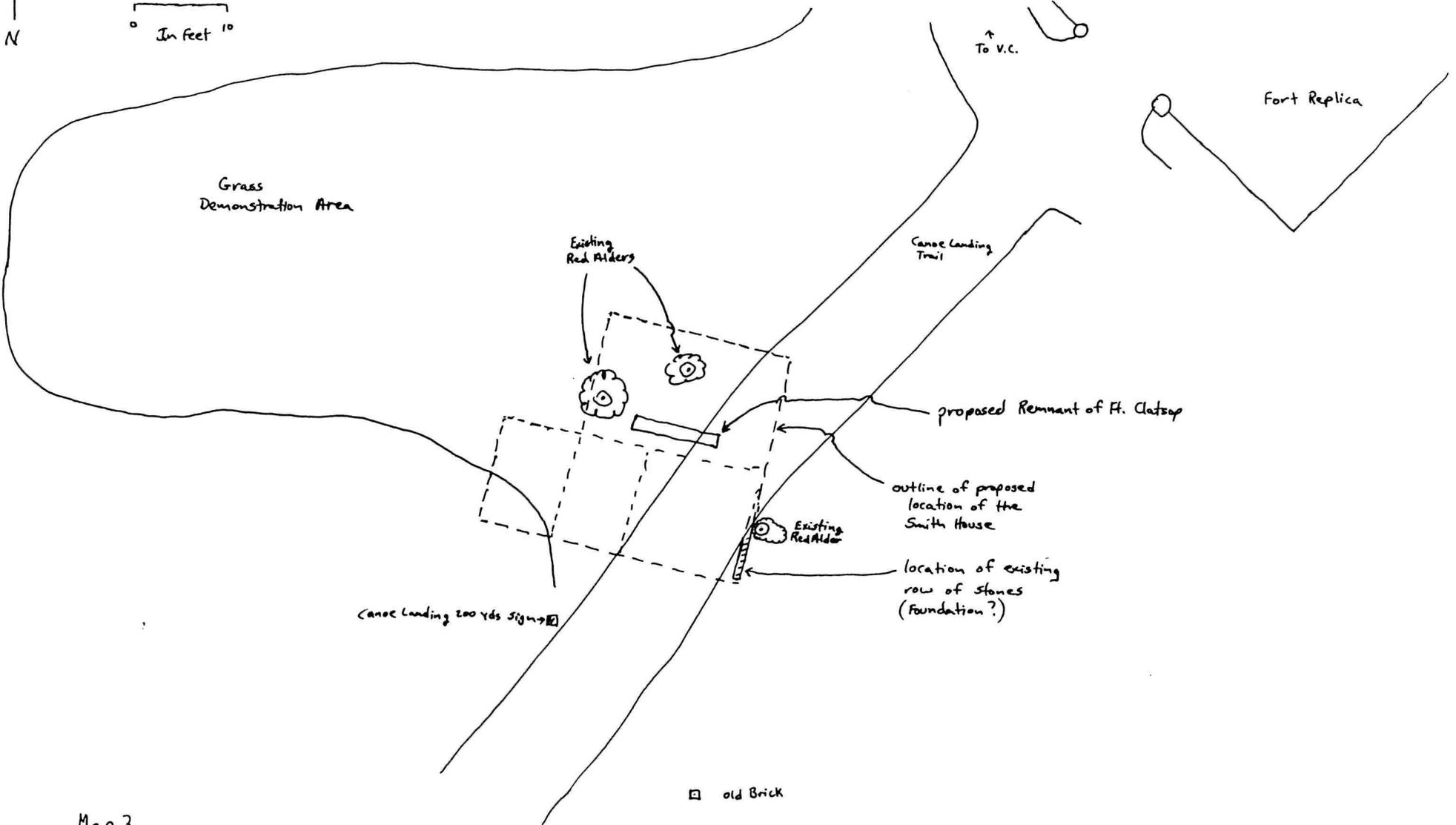
Map 1



Map 2



SCALE
In feet 10'



Map 3

CS# BT-1356

QUARTER SECTION CORNER COMMON TO SECTIONS 35 AND 36, TOWNSHIP 8
NORTH, RANGE 10 WEST, WILLAMETTE MERIDIAN.

HISTORY:

- Record No. 1 1856 - Joseph and John Trutch, GLO Deputy Surveyors;
Established, set a post for corner from which:
A 36" Fir bears N31°E, 335 lks. (221.10');
A 40" Spruce bears N73°30'W, 472 lks. (311.52')
- Record No. 2 July 19, 1882 - Gelo F. Parker, County Surveyor;
"Find remains in ground of old stake, I set new ...
Find remains of old witnesses, I set new
A Spruce 18 ins. S85°30'E 2.65 ch.=174.9 ft.
SE Cor. Smiths House S88°11'W 2.16 ch=142.56 ft."
(Gelo F. Parker U.S. Notes Book 10, page 16, Clatsop
County Survey Records.)
- Record No. 3 November 6, 1905 - Gelo F. Parker, County Surveyor;
"I go to spruce limb 1/4 Sec cor betw Secs 35 and 36
set by me in July 1882 [From which:]
A Spruce 8 in dia is 5 ft E & 2 ft S. of stake,
measurements to center of tree.
The Stevenson house which I used as a witness at
that time has been burned down this year." (4)
(Gelo F. Parker Field Book T, page 127, Clatsop
County Survey Records.)
- Record No. 4 December 14, 1923 - Arthur F. Danielson, County
Roadmaster, Field notes of County Road No. 201; "to
station 74+94.0, which is an old 2 in iron pipe, the
recognized 1/4 section corner between sections 35 &
36 T8N R10W. W.M. and the ending point of this survey
and from which a
30" spruce scribed "R" bears N2°20'E-79.8 ft ...
12" spruce scribed "R" bears N57°00'W 12.7 ft."
(Road Plat Book 3, page 293, Clatsop County Road
Records.)
- Record No. 5 June 22, 1934 - Vince Hagerup, G. Salvon and L.
Johnson, County Road Dept. Survey Crew; "1/4S Found
2" pipe BT's OK." (Field Book 191, page 40, Clatsop
County Road Records.)
- Record No. 6 Circa 1949 - County Road Dept. Survey Crew; "1/4 Sec
Cor [From Which:]
N70°45'W 75.28' Tack in Root 24" Spruce
S58°56'W 98.5 Iron Bolt."
(Field Book 222, page 51, Clatsop County Road
Records.)
- Record No. 7 January 10, 1952 - Arne Jarvi, Oregon Land Surveyor
No. 244; "2-1/2" dia pipe - set by county orig. B.T's
gone. No B.T's This cor will be destroyed when they
re-line the county Road. - Can be re-set from the
transit line. ... Re-set 1/4 Cor. bet. 35-36 T8NR10W
New B.T.s
35" dia. Alder N36°W 72
H. stump 16" S18°E 23.5
Cor. falls on E shoulder of road drove 3/4" bolt
flush with road." (Crown Zellerbach Field Book
FB-103, page 4, Clatsop County Survey Records.)
- Record No. 8 August 24, 1954 - Arthur F. Danielson, County
Surveyor; "I reset the 1/4 cor. bet. Secs. 35&36 on
the East edge of the Ft. Clatsop oiled pavement I set
a round head sq. boat spike from which
An 8" Alder bears N64°15'E - 40.4 ft a copper tack
set in an ⊙ scribed.
A 36" spruce bears S70°W 72.5 ft scribed BT-1/4
An Abandoned cedar telephone 6" X 8" X 14' bears
S46°30'E - 50.0 + ft."
(Bearing Tree Book page 192, Clatsop County Survey
Records.)

CS# BT-1356

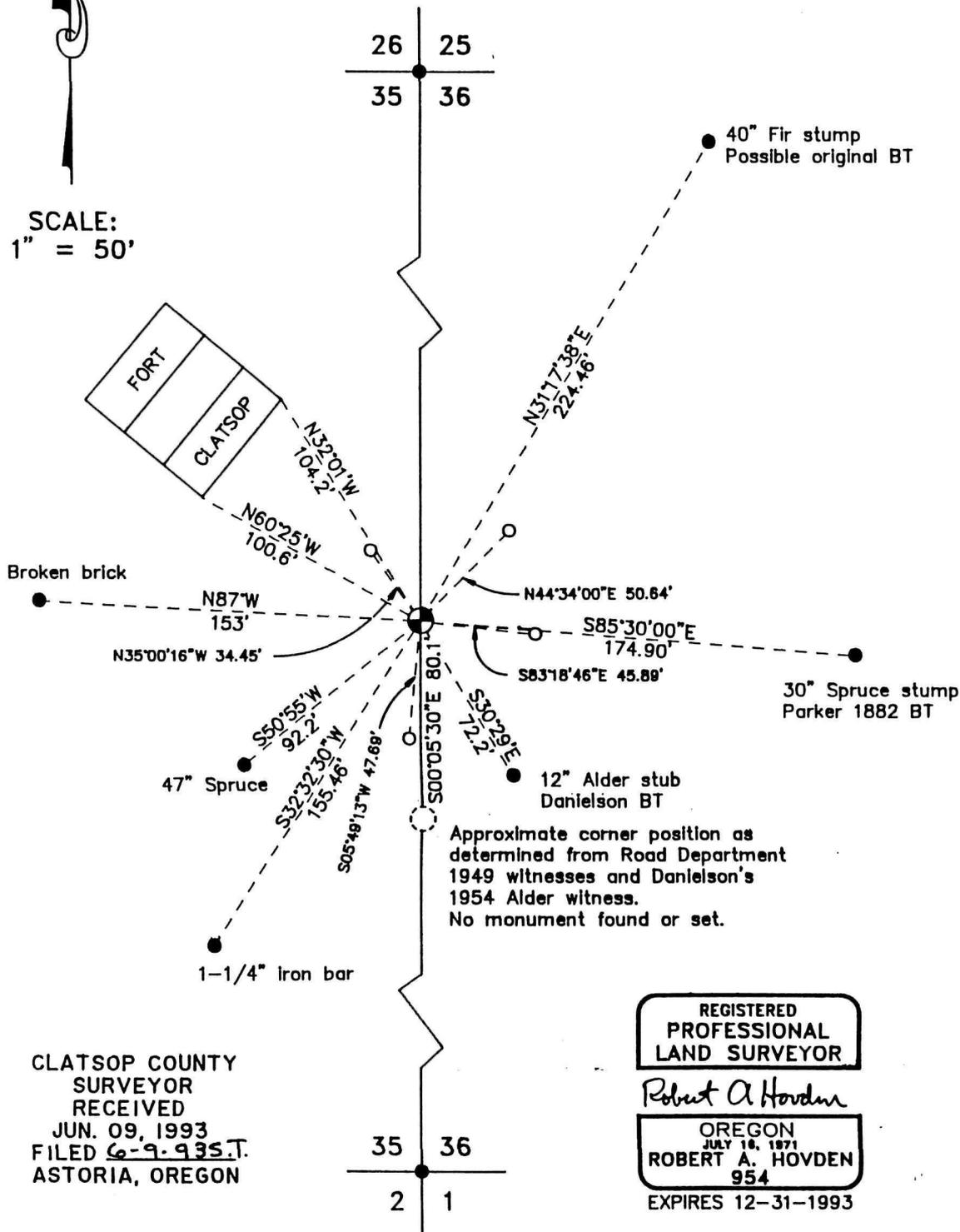
DETAIL MAP

LEGEND:

- Reference Monument. Set 1-1/2" X 30" galvanized iron pipe with 2" brass cap stamped as shown on sheets 3 and 4.
- ⊕ Corner restored this survey.
- Found monument as described hereon.



SCALE:
1" = 50'



CLATSOP COUNTY
SURVEYOR
RECEIVED
JUN. 09, 1993
FILED 6-9-93 S.T.
ASTORIA, OREGON

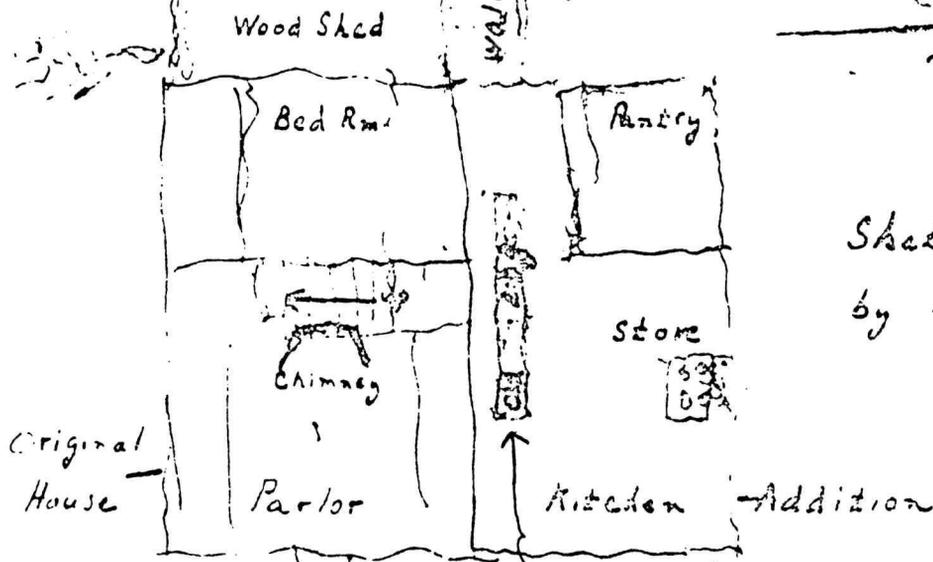
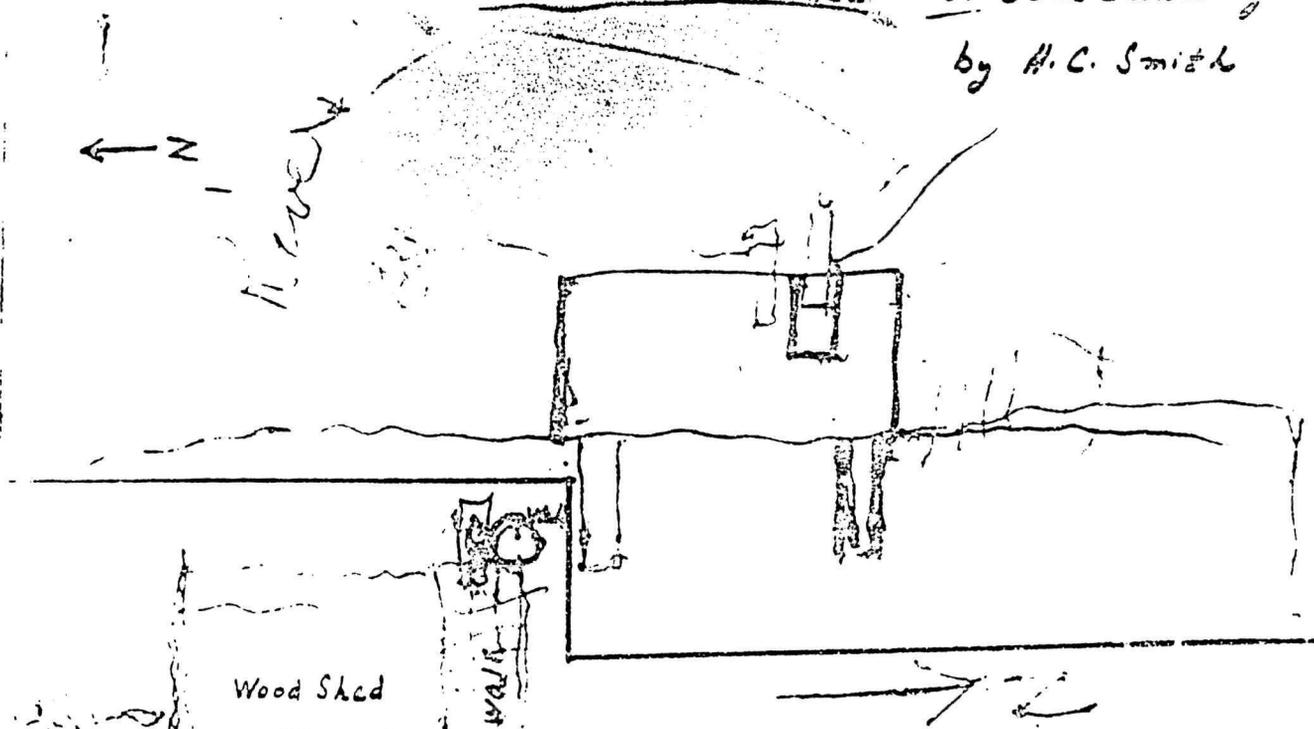
REGISTERED
PROFESSIONAL
LAND SURVEYOR

Robert A. Hovden

OREGON
JULY 16, 1871
ROBERT A. HOVDEN
954

EXPIRES 12-31-1993

Sketch of Boat Landing
by H. C. Smith

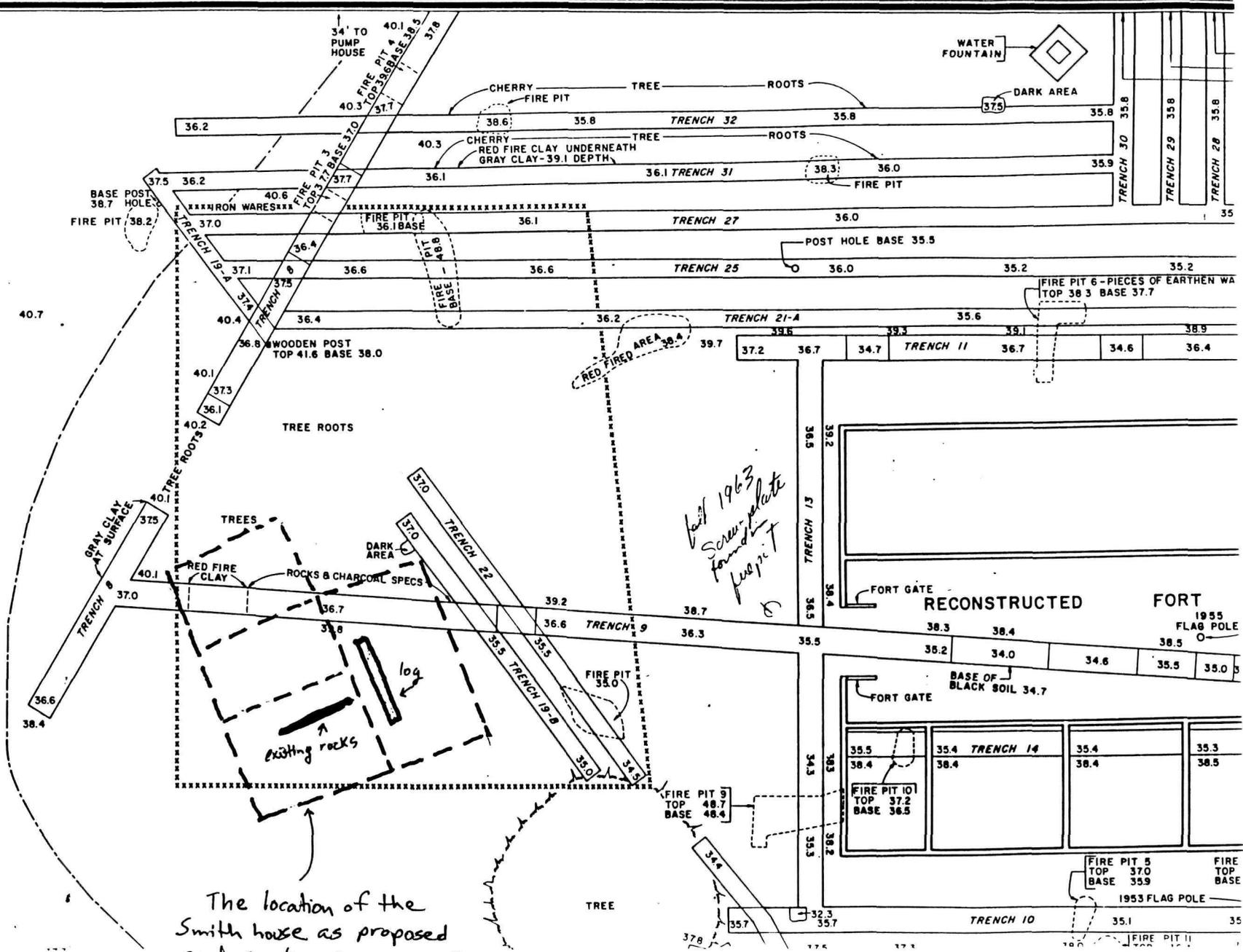


Sketch of Smith House
by H. C. Smith

Log thought to be a
portion of Ft. Clatsop

From July 6, 1957

Interview

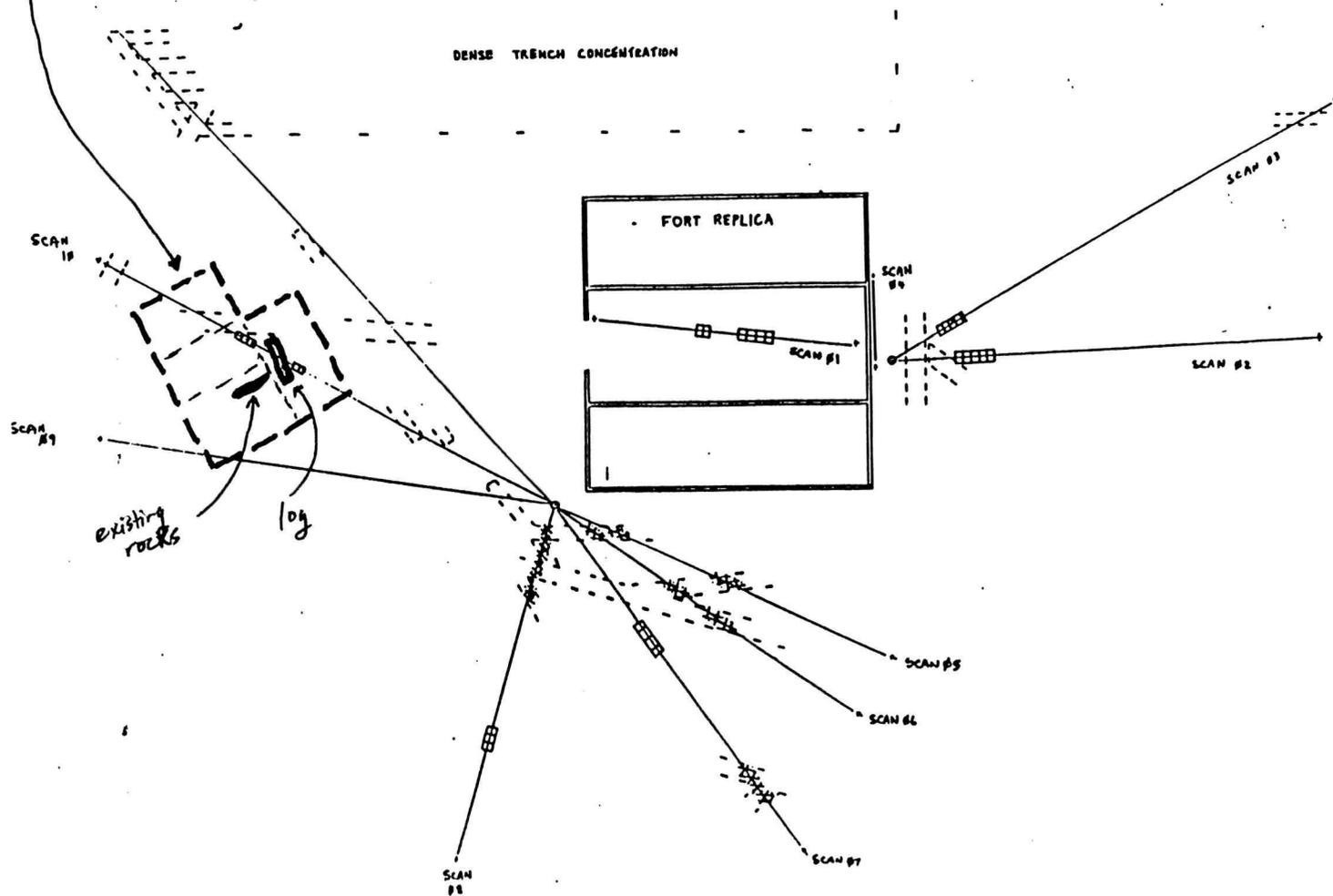


The location of the Smith house as proposed and positioned on map 2 in relation to the trenches constructed by Schumacher.

GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY MAP OF FORT CLATSOP

Combination
Map 1.1.3

The location of the Smith house
as proposed and positioned on map 2
in relation to the geophysical map
prepared by Bell in 1990.



LEGEND

-  POSSIBLE SUBSURFACE FEATURES
-  DETECTED TRENCH

SCALE IN FEET
0 5 10 20 40