

AN ARCHEOLOGICAL SENSITIVITY
STUDY OF FRANKLIN SQUARE

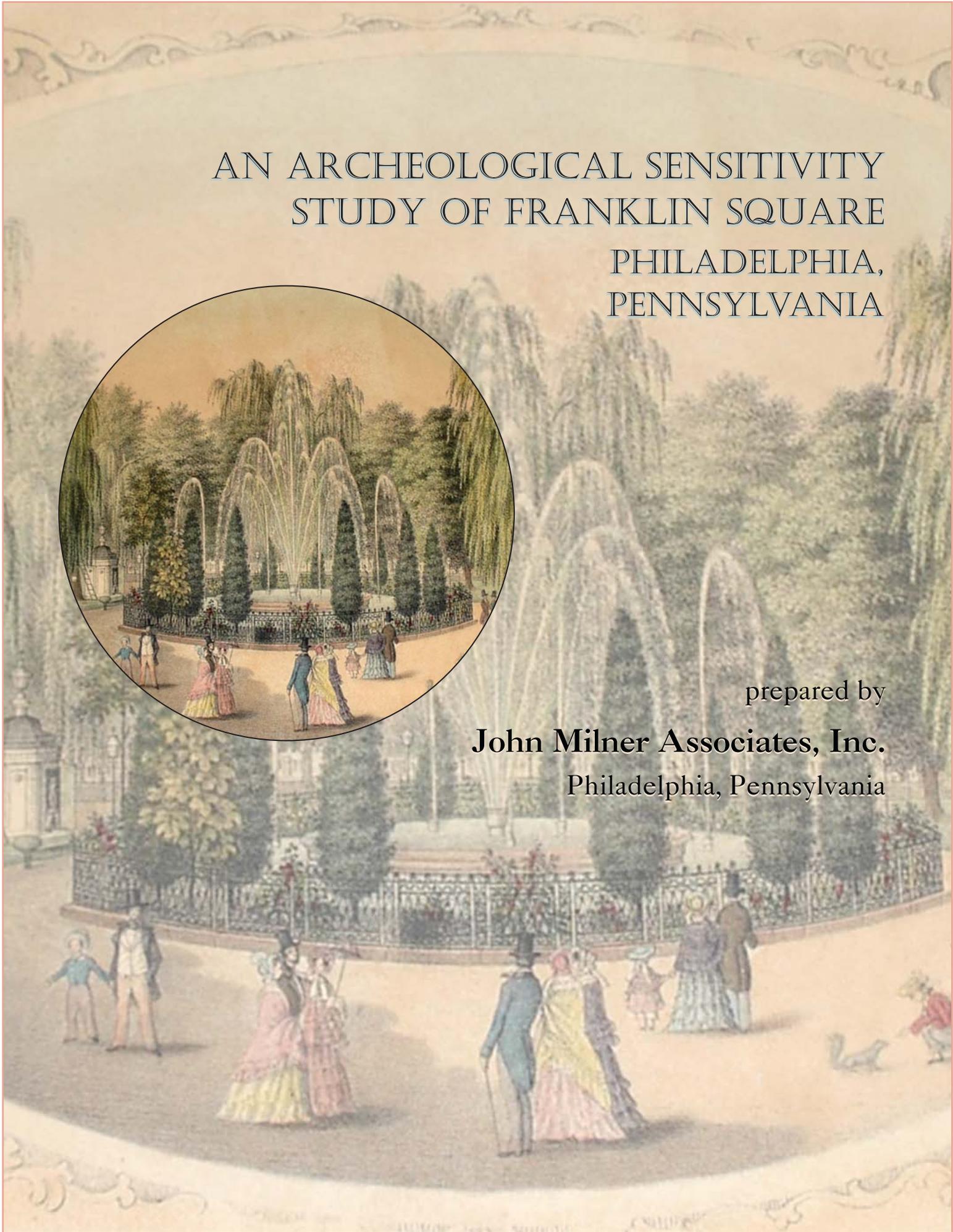
PHILADELPHIA,
PENNSYLVANIA



prepared by

John Milner Associates, Inc.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



**AN ARCHEOLOGICAL SENSITIVITY STUDY
OF FRANKLIN SQUARE
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA**

Prepared for

Once Upon a Nation
500 Arch Street
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ABSTRACT

John Milner Associates, Inc. (JMA) conducted a thorough review of historical documents and maps relating to the history of Franklin Square, one of the five squares in Thomas Holme's original plan for Philadelphia. Although it was originally designed to be public ground, the eastern half of Franklin Square was used by the Old First German Reformed Church as a cemetery between 1741 and 1836. When the land was returned to the city only a few, if any, graves were removed. Others, including those of several early ministers, most likely remain *in situ* on the square. According to documentary sources the headstones were laid down on top of the graves and covered with soil. A powder magazine was built in the northwest quadrant of the square in 1776 and used until 1790. A wall of the magazine was identified by archeologist Jeff Kenyon in 1975, but further excavation was not conducted.

Once the city made the square into a park in 1837, an elegant fountain was built in the middle and a pattern of curvilinear paths was designed. The fountain remains in altered form, but the pattern of paths was changed at the end of the nineteenth century to a more linear style, fragments of which remain today. The construction of the Benjamin Franklin Bridge in the 1920s and the high speed rail link and PATCO station in the 1930s transformed the square. Graves were reported disturbed during construction of the bridge as well as during the construction of various utility lines, and the subway tunnels most certainly disturbed many more. However, the northern half of the square has not been disturbed by any major construction projects.

JMA recommends that all ground disturbing activities on the square be monitored by an archeologist. Any deep holes for footings should be hand excavated and if graves are encountered an effort should be made to leave them *in situ*. It is recommended that representatives of the descendant church congregation be engaged to work closely with the archeologists to develop a protocol for the treatment of human remains revealed during construction. JMA also recommends archeological monitoring of the excavation of utility line trenches. If cultural resources, including but not limited to remnants of the powder magazine or associated structure, are revealed, further impacts should be avoided, but if that is not possible the resources should be further investigated and recorded before construction proceeds.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The purpose of this study is to assess the archeological potential of Franklin Square, one of the five original squares in Thomas Holme’s plan for Philadelphia. Originally known as Northeast Square, the block is bounded by Sixth Street on the east, Race Street on the south, Franklin Street (an extension of Seventh Street in this location) on the west, and Vine Street on the north. Figure 1 shows the square as it now appears in the modern grid of the city.

Since the construction of the Benjamin Franklin Bridge in the 1920s and a PATCO station and associated subway tunnels in the 1930s this portion of historic Philadelphia has not seen much productive public use except for a brief period during the 1970s when a rehabilitation project relating to the Bicentennial attempted to reintegrate the square into the city. Once Upon a Nation, however, has plans to transform Franklin Square into a public venue that will enable Philadelphia to connect with the city’s past and present. The goal of this project is to create a “fair,” a “not-to-be missed celebration of everything Philadelphia—both old and new—from amusements, parades, and performances to playgrounds, crafts, and gardens” (Applebaum 2004:19). The “fair,” now known as the ‘Once Upon A Nation’ project, will require a certain amount of construction and infrastructure which has the potential to impact archeological resources that may be present. The documentary study conducted by JMA was completed in advance of this site development to evaluate whether or not cultural resources are likely to be present in the square.

It was known at the onset of the study that the Old First Reformed Church had maintained a burial ground on the square between 1741 and 1836, and a particular effort was made to get as much information about the burial ground as possible. It was also known that a Revolutionary War period powder magazine was located on the square and that a foundation wall belonging to the magazine had been uncovered in the 1970s (Cotter, Roberts, and Parrington 1992:263-65, 320).

1.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT AREA

Franklin Square is presently surrounded on all four sides by heavy traffic flow. Its northern boundary is the embankment for the Vine Expressway which leads to Interstate 95. Traffic on the expressway and on I-95 is visible and audible from the square. Franklin Street, which bounds the square on the west, serves as a major approach to I-95 and traffic coming off the Benjamin Franklin Bridge to the east feeds directly onto Sixth Street, which bounds the square on the east. Race Street on the south is the major approach to the bridge. Crosswalks are few and far between, which makes getting across the bounding streets difficult. An informant reported that she used to bring her children to the playground on the square, but had to stop because there was no safe way to get across the streets.

The square itself includes few remnants of its former appearance. The walkways that are left are graveled, not paved, and the fountain in the middle is surrounded by a graveled walkway. There is a brick restroom structure on the southeast side of the fountain just off the walkway. A monument describing the Old First Reformed Church burial ground that once covered the eastern half of the square is located on the northeast side of the walkway surrounding the fountain. To the east of the fountain are a serpentine brick wall and a cement circular area surrounding a monument honoring park police, city police, and the fire department. That monument is virtually in line with the much bigger Ngouchi sculpture that is on the other side of Sixth Street, at the base

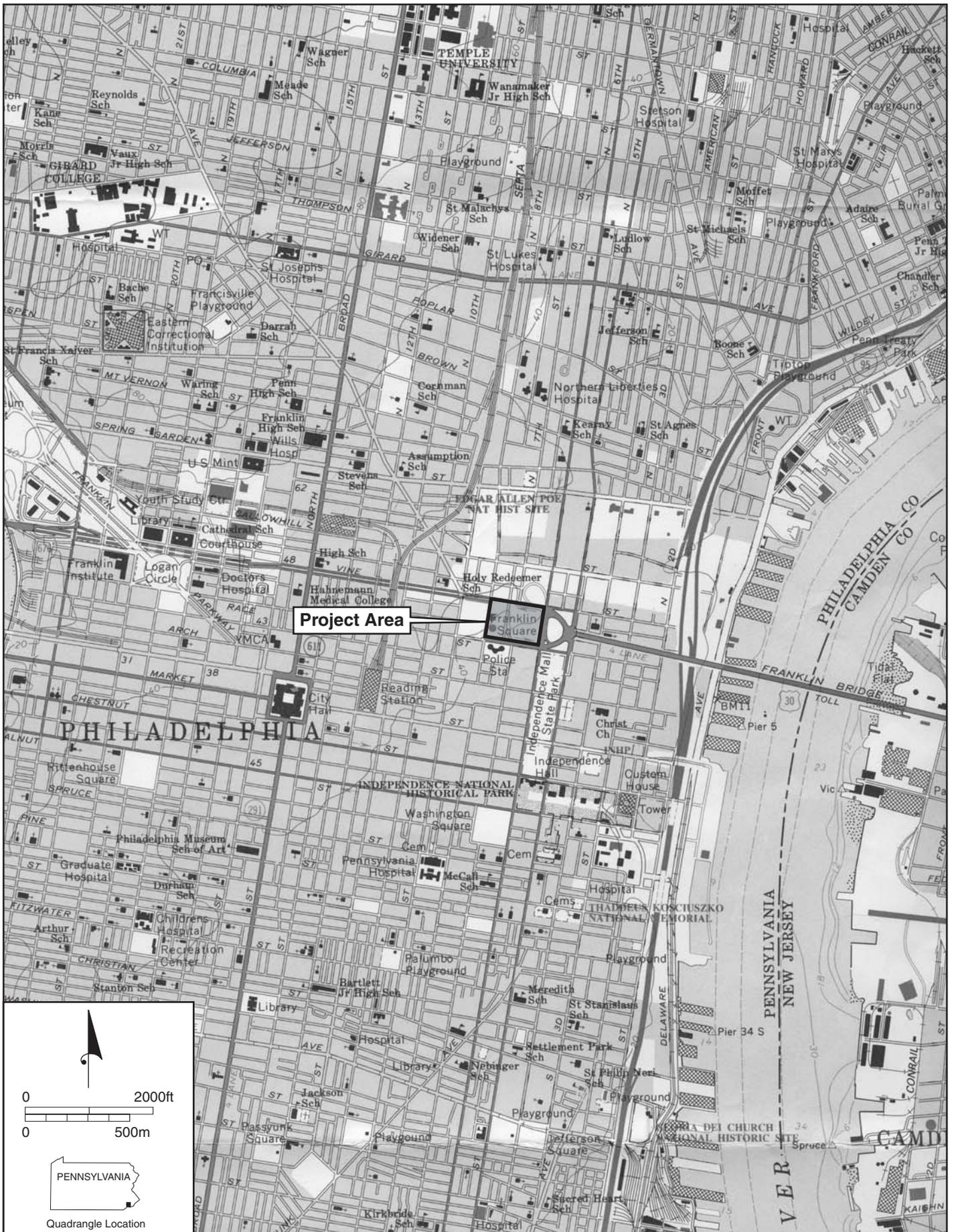


Figure 1. Detail of Philadelphia, PA.-N.J. 7.5-minute quadrangle (USGS 1967, photorevised 1985) showing location of Franklin Square.

of the Benjamin Franklin Bridge. There is a semi-paved seating area on the west side of the square and a small playground. Diagonal paths lead to the corner of Franklin and Race Streets, the corner of Sixth and Race Streets, and to the northeast and northwest corners of the square. The rest of the square is grass lawn interspersed with trees.

2.0 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

2.1 METHODS

The historical research for this report was conducted primarily at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania; the Free Library of Philadelphia; the Urban Archives at Temple University; the Print Collection, Library Company of Philadelphia; the Philadelphia Historical Commission; and the Philadelphia City Archives. The Historical Society of Pennsylvania is the custodian of the archival records of the [Old] First Reformed Church of Philadelphia. These records were examined for information concerning the church cemetery, as well as for the chronological history of Old First Reformed Church and Franklin Square, which is included here as Appendix A. The sequence of historic maps was assembled from holdings of the Free Library of Philadelphia. Much of the chronology and historical overview was assembled from newspaper clippings in the *Philadelphia Bulletin* collection at the Urban Archives. Several illustrations in this report are in the collection of the Library Company, while the Philadelphia Historical Commission files contained copies of several useful secondary source accounts of the square. Photographs from the Street Department and the Water Department in the City Archives provided visual documentation of some of the disturbances to the square.

2.2 EARLY HISTORY OF THE SQUARE

In planning Philadelphia, William Penn was motivated in part by the London fire of 1666, where the intensity of development contributed to the severity of the conflagration. He conveyed instructions to his commissioner on October 10, 1681 that his city “may be a green country town which will never be burnt and always be wholesome” (Scharf and Westcott 1884:88). He commissioned his surveyor, Thomas Holme, to lay out the city in his North American colony. Franklin Square, originally Northeast Square, was planned as part of Holme’s 1682 plan of Philadelphia. This plan established a grid of streets for maneuverability broken by four public squares of eight acres each and a central square for civic buildings at the intersection of two major streets (Gallery 1994:11; Figure 2). The square, measuring 632 feet north to south and 543 feet east to west, contains seven acres and three roods, a measure equal to one-quarter acre (Jackson 1932:693).

Although designated as a public square in the earliest city plan, Northeast Square was slow to develop, due in part to its marshy land. Its earliest use was as an open common for pasturage and as a site of horse and cattle markets (Fairmount Park Commission 200_ [sic]). Available evidence indicates that the square remained undeveloped ground for many years after it was first laid out (Scharf and Westcott 1884:1846).

Minutes of the Common Council dated April 21, 1721 document a lease of the square to Ralph Assheton for 21 years at a rate of 40 shillings per annum. Assheton, an attorney and member of the Provincial Council, may have used the square for grazing livestock. In the lease that commenced March 25, 1724, he was required to buy fencing boards and to fence the square with good rails and cedar posts (Scharf and Westcott 1884:1846).

By the early 1740s, the First Reformed Church (also known as the First German Reformed Church) had begun construction of a church nearby at Sassafras (present Race) Street and Fourth Street. Because of the density of development in the area, the congregation lacked room for an adjacent cemetery. The nearest sizeable tract of open land was Northeast Square. Two church

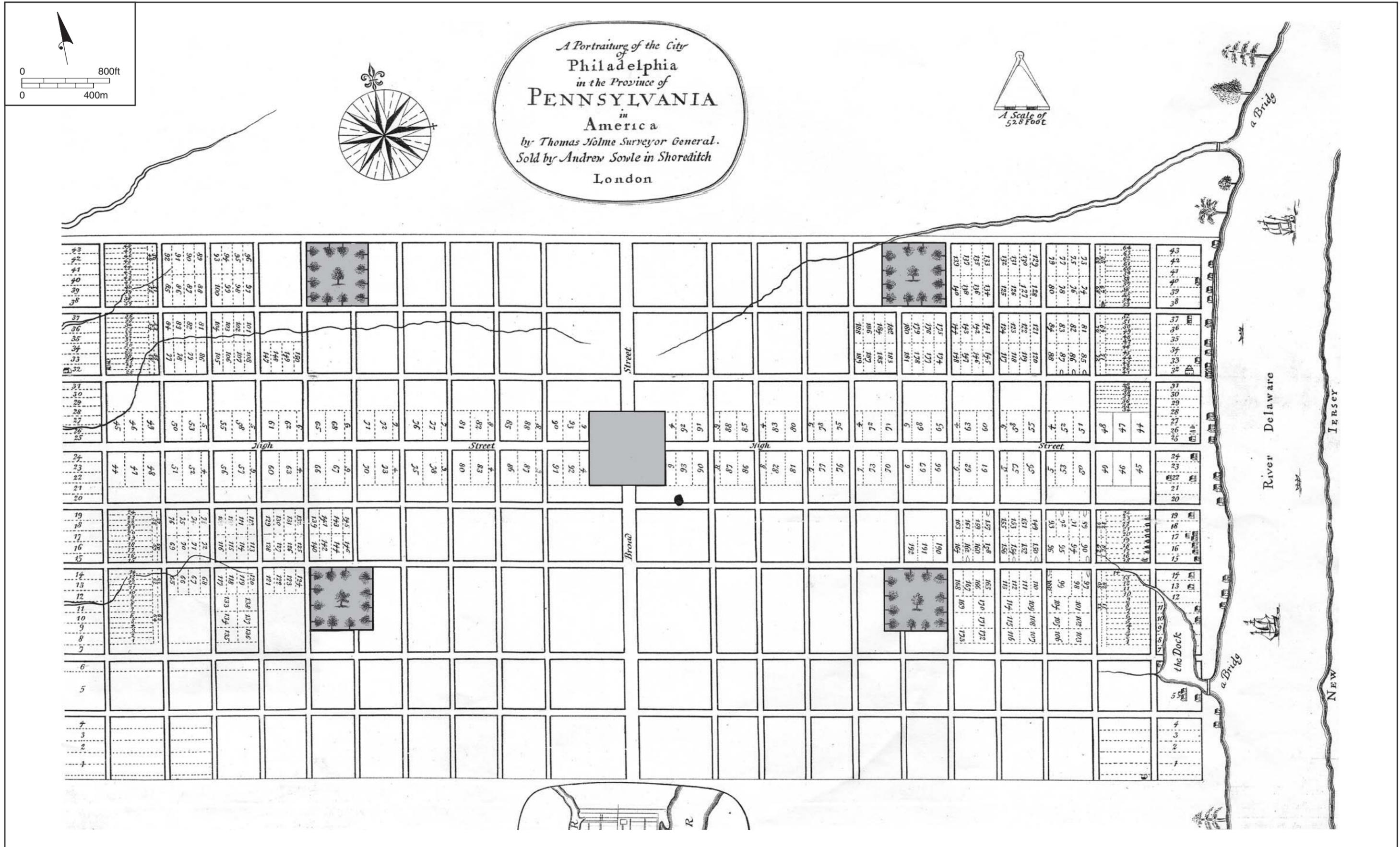


Figure 2. A Portraiture of the City of Philadelphia in the Province of Pennsylvania in America (Holme 1683) showing locations of the five public squares.

officials, Pastor John Phillip Boehm [also spelled Bohme] and Elder Jacob Siegel [also spelled Seigle] approached William Penn's son Thomas to inquire about leasing a portion of the Northeast Public Square for use by the church as a cemetery. This lease was granted by Penn on June 18, 1741 (Anonymous 1927).

2.3 THE CEMETERY

The original plat of the cemetery is depicted in a document in the records of the Old First Reformed Church of Philadelphia (Figure 3). This plat shows a rectangular lot whose north end adjoined Vine Street. The lot was 150 feet wide. Its northeast corner was 100 feet west of the intersection of Sixth and Vine Streets, while its northwest corner was 146 feet east of the intersection of Franklin and Vine Streets. The original cemetery lot measured 306 feet from north to south. During the nearly century long use of the square by the church, the cemetery's boundaries were enlarged several times.

In an undated, unsourced article entitled, "Earlier Utilities of Franklin Square" included in the clippings collection at the Urban Archives, the eighteenth-century extent of the burial ground is described as:

...being along the line of Vine street at about an equal distance from Sixth Street and the western boundary of the plot, and extending southward about one-half square toward Race Street (Anonymous n.d.)

Harbaugh's *Life of Schlatter*, written in the mid-nineteenth century, described the layout of the cemetery:

Directly east of the sparkling jets of the fountain, a few feet from the edge of the circular gravel walk, under the green sod, lie the Revs. Steiner and Winkhaus, and Dr. Weyberg and Hendel, the aged. Directly north of this spot, about midway between it and Vine st., lies Rev. Michael Schlatter; around these leaders of the Lord's host, far and near—a silent congregation now!—sleep thousands of those to whom they once ministered the holy ordinances of the church, and the precious instructions and consolations of the Gospel (Jones 1962; Schneider 2002:36).

The aforementioned Dr. Gaspar Weyberg served as a chaplain in the Continental Army and was briefly imprisoned for preaching to Hessian soldiers and advocating independence. His successor, the Rev. John Herman Winkhaus, died during the yellow fever epidemic in 1793, while his successor, William Hendel, the aged, died in the epidemic of 1798 (Jones 1962). Michael Schlatter (1716-1790), a Swiss-German minister, became the pastor of the combined German Reformed congregations of Germantown and Philadelphia in 1747 and served in that position until 1755. At the beginning of the Revolution he served as a chaplain in the Royal Army. His sympathies soon changed, and he was briefly imprisoned by the English during the war (Virtuology 2000).

An undated document in the records of the Old First Reformed Church of Philadelphia in the collection of the Historical Society of Philadelphia indicates that the Wardens of the City of Philadelphia proposed that the Congregation "should at least be indulged" with a grant of one acre and nineteen perches "beginning at the southern bounds of their present burial ground and extending thence to Sassafras Street" (Figure 4). This land, to be used as a burial ground and for

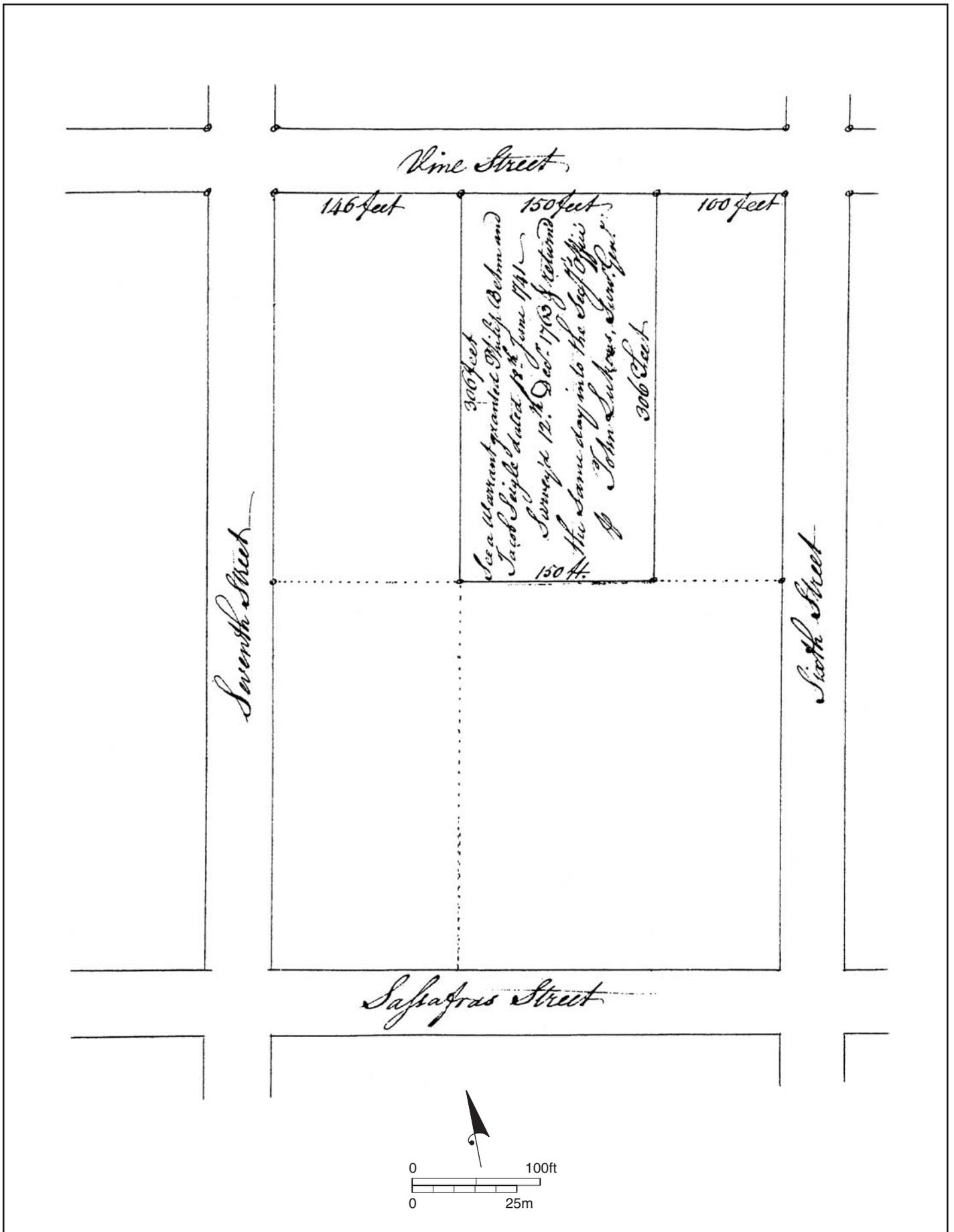


Figure 3. Plat of original portion of the church cemetery. From records of the Old First Reformed Church of Philadelphia. Record Group 3010. Box 17, Folder 1. Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

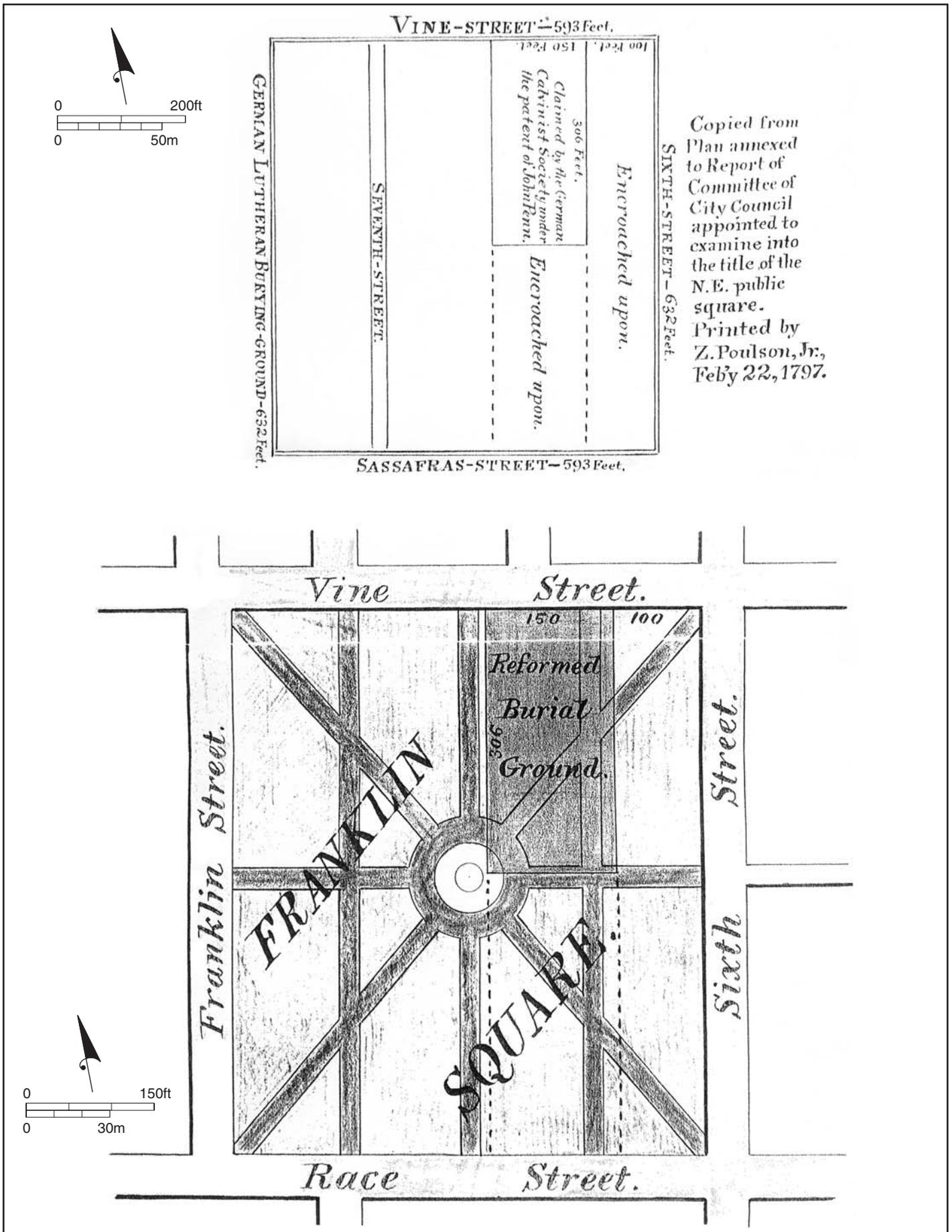


Figure 4. Map showing ultimate extent of the cemetery in Franklin Square (Spiese 1903).

no other use whatever, was bounded on the north by the grounds of the church and extended three hundred and twenty feet southerly to Sassafras Street (Lloyd n.d.).

Several period newspaper accounts also document the cemetery. A 1915 *Philadelphia-Bulletin* article defined the cemetery boundary based on information contained in church records at the time:

The burying ground, extending 306 feet southward, as time passed was extended eastward to 6th st. and southward to Sassafras (now Race) st., so that in 1797 the whole enclosure extended 632 feet north and south by 250 feet east and west bounded on the north by Vine st., on the east by 6th st., on the south by Sassafras st., and on the west by the remaining part of what was then known as the Northeast Public Square (Anonymous 1915; Spiese 1903; Figure 4).

In addition, according to the same article and another newspaper article 12 years later (Anonymous 1927), yellow fever victims were buried in a potter's field in the Square. This plot extended from Vine to Race streets and extended west one hundred feet from the 6th Street border of the square. The church cemetery and the potter's field were apparently intermingled for the first 100 feet west of Sixth Street, while the church cemetery continued west for an additional 150 feet.

Because the assertion that victims of the 1793-1794 yellow fever epidemic were buried in Franklin Square is found in two retrospective twentieth-century newspaper articles, it is not certain that any victims of the epidemic were actually interred in the square. The main place of interment for victims of the epidemic was Southeast Square (present Washington Square). The same two twentieth-century articles (Anonymous 1915, 1927) also indicate that Franklin Square was the place of interment for some who died in military hospitals in Philadelphia during the Revolutionary War. Again, because of the retrospective nature of this documentation, its accuracy cannot be evaluated. The main place of interment for Revolutionary War hospital dead was also Southeast (Washington) Square.

A 1934 newspaper article (Anonymous 1934) described the burial ground as located at the northwest corner near Franklin (the portion of Seventh Street that flanks the square on the west) and Vine Streets. However, this statement is not supported by documentary evidence. Historic maps depict the western portion of the square as being used for other activities and other sources describe the area as low and swampy. A raised footway extended from Race Street to the graveyard (Anonymous 1915).

According to a manuscript history of the graveyard in the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania collections:

Very few if any of the bodies were removed. The gravestones were laid flat upon the graves and the whole covered with earth to the depth of several feet, as the ground was then considerably below the regulated grade of Vine Street (Spiese 1903).

As discussed below, this treatment has been confirmed on several occasions during subsequent work on the square.

2.4 OTHER EARLY LAND USE OF THE SQUARE

As previously noted, in its earliest years the square was either vacant land or was fenced for the grazing of livestock. The central and eastern portions of the square evolved as the location of the cemetery of the First Reformed Church of Philadelphia.

In about 1776, a brick powder magazine was constructed in the northwest portion of the square. This magazine, rebuilt several times, was used for powder storage until 1790. Viewed as a safety hazard due to the development of the surrounding area, the magazine was relocated to the vicinity of present 22nd and Walnut Streets (Corr 1975b). The magazine in Franklin Square was subsequently used to store oil for street lamps in the square and in the surrounding neighborhood (Starobin 1968).

In the period of increased military tensions and war during the 1810s, the portion of the square not used as a cemetery was used for military exercises, and a small wooden structure was erected to store oil for street lamps (Anonymous 1921). In addition, during the early portion of the nineteenth century, that portion of the square south of the powder magazine site was used as a horse and cattle auction site by John M. Irwin, auctioneer. He carried on a similar business at Southeast [Washington] Square, generally holding a weekly sale at each location (Scharf and Westcott 1884:1847).

The city had long coveted the square for use as parkland, a use that would require the closure of the church cemetery. Though this closure did not occur until the 1830s, planning of the layout of the square began in the 1820s as evidenced by an 1824 watercolor by William Rush in the collection of the Library Company of Philadelphia (Figure 5).

With the closure of the cemetery and the removal or toppling of the grave markers, as described above, in 1837, conversion of the square to a recreational area began in earnest. The central fountain, still located in the square, was erected, paths were laid out, trees were planted, and a perimeter fence was constructed.

2.5 THE EVOLUTION OF THE SQUARE

During the mid-nineteenth century, the square was in the heart of one of Philadelphia's exclusive residential neighborhoods. The park was the province of the elite of the city. Ladies with parasols would stroll the paths and would be joined on the weekends by their husbands and children (Starobin 1968; Figure 6). One retrospective newspaper article described the square and its vicinity in the late nineteenth century as "surrounded by rows of prim looking dwellings which furnished abodes for some of the solid and substantial business men of that section" (Anonymous 1931, Figure 7).

The character of the surrounding area changed in the early twentieth century as the wealthy moved west to areas such as Rittenhouse Square and northwest to suburbs such as Chestnut Hill (Sama 1973). At this time, the surrounding area became an entertainment district featuring taverns, hotels, and bordellos (Sama 1973) locally known as the "tenderloin:"

Though mainly of a cheap and squalid sort, it gave an ephemeral local fame to places of popular resort as Jermon's frolicsome and frisky Lyceum, Jerrt Donoghue's well known thirst emporium and Applegate's notorious carousel and dance hall, over which moralists long waxed eloquent (Anonymous 1921).

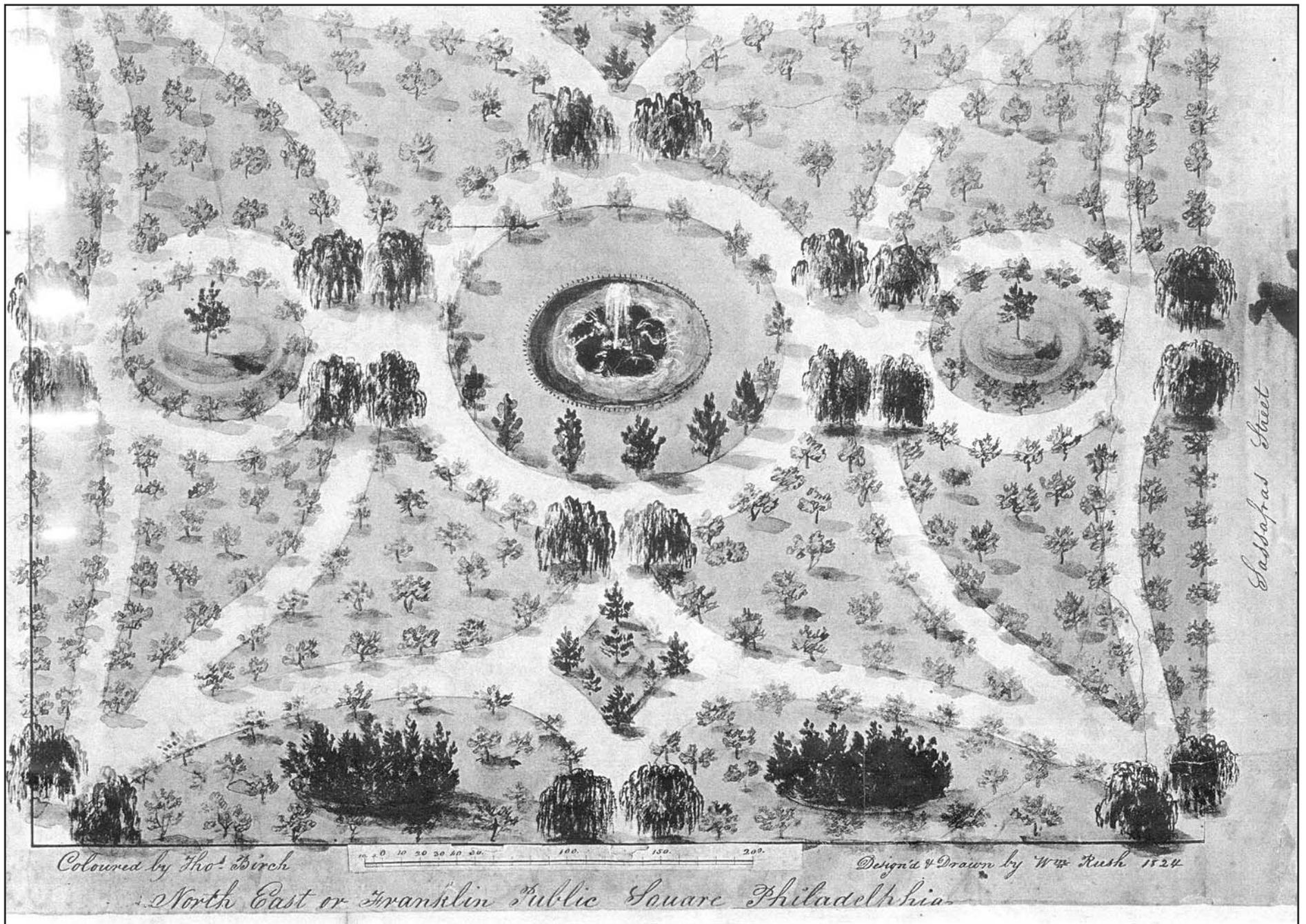


Figure 5. Watercolor rendering of plan of Franklin Square (Rush 1824). From the Print Collection, Library Company of Philadelphia.



Figure 6. Fountain in Franklin Square, Philadelphia. J. Childs & Company 1851.



Figure 7. Franklin Square, c. 1915. Philadelphia City Archives photo collection. Folder 638.

The appearance of the square was described in a 1919 *Philadelphia Inquirer* article:

The Square is of generous proportions, and it contains some noble trees. The large fountain in the center with its surrounding border of flowers, varying according to the season of the year, is the sole attempt at distinctive decoration. To say that is no disparagement; nothing is more restful than trees and grass, and the comparatively few cross-walks give unusual expanses of greensward (Anonymous 1919).

Philadelphia Bulletin columnist James Smart argued in a 1961 commentary that the square began to change for the worst when plans developed for the Delaware River bridge in the 1920s. He described the “quiet, predominantly German neighborhood” in the days after the end of World War I:

...Franklin Square on a warm spring day was full of playing children and mothers sunning themselves on benches....Red and pink geraniums grew near the pool in the middle. City workman cut the grass with whirring hand lawnmowers. The flag ruffled from a tall pole. Baby carriages were parked on the red brick walks (Smart 1961).

An anonymous *Bulletin* writer described the square a few years later as shabby and somewhat neglected, habited by “idlers and ne’er-do-wells” (Anonymous 1921). Another article written about the same time characterized the square as follows:

The prevailing note is supplied by the “bums” and loafers who practically monopolize all the benches there are, circled about the fountain. Morning, noon and night one finds them. They no doubt would take up permanent quarters there but for the watchful Park Guard, who rouses them from their frequent sleep and now and then makes them “move on”—whither heavens knows (Anonymous 1919).

Descriptions of Franklin Square as the domicile of homeless and unemployed men were a staple of Philadelphia newspapers through much of the twentieth century. In the spring of 1934, an anonymous *Bulletin* reporter wrote of the Franklin Square “Club,” described as “one of the largest fraternities in Philadelphia, a fraternity of ‘retired’ or ‘resting’ gentlemen. Representative park denizens, given nicknames such as “Celery Joe,” “Shad Tom,” and “Nettie the Match Girl,” were described and quoted (Anonymous 1934).

During the Depression, the square became a retreat for the unemployed, derelicts, and hoboes. In the late 1940s and early 1950s, regular raids took place in an attempt to clear vagrants from the square. After one such raid, a park police detective was quoted as saying that the raids would “continue without letup until the undesirables are cleared out” (Anonymous 1954b).

By the late 1950s, Philadelphia newspapers were urging a massive slum clearance in the area adjacent to the “wine-soaked” square (Anonymous 1958). Writing about a spring day in 1960, *Bulletin* reporter Joseph F. Lowry noted that by noon, more than 200 men were basking in the park, most of them derelicts from the surrounding neighborhood (Lowry 1960). In the 1970s, the square was described as the “promenade for the city’s Skid Row,” with a non-functional fountain, an unguarded brick guardhouse, closed public restrooms, shattered lamp posts, and strolling middle-aged prostitutes (Sama 1973).

The appearance of Franklin Square in 1981 was described in the National Register nomination for the four public squares of Philadelphia:

At present, Franklin...Square is the least attractive of Philadelphia's Squares owing to its location, flanked by highways. Nevertheless, it retains its character as an open green space with trees, walkways, benches, and a circular water pool in the center. It also has jungle gyms for children, a small brick utility building toward the east side, and a subway stop at the southwest corner (Vaux 1980).

In a recent brochure concerning Philadelphia's squares, the Fairmount Park Commission described the present character of the square:

With the building of the Benjamin Franklin Bridge and the Vine Street Expressway, it has become increasingly isolated, despite its proximity to Independence Mall. Although it currently has playground equipment, a small baseball diamond, a fenced central pool, colonial-style lamps, and a large collection of benches among the trees, Franklin Square goes relatively unnoticed by passersby (Fairmount Park Commission 200-).

2.6 PHYSICAL DISTURBANCES TO THE SQUARE

Due to the growth and development of the surrounding portions of the city, utility construction became necessary within the borders of the square. The earliest identified utility line through a portion of the park was a culvert laid in 1819. Its exact diagonal route is not known (Scharf and Westcott 1884:1847).

In 1915, excavations took place for the installation of a new sewer line. In the course of this excavation, several graves were disturbed (Figure 8). During the excavations for the Benjamin Franklin Bridge Plaza in the early 1920s, additional human remains were discovered. These remains were reburied in Laurel Hill Cemetery (Gibbons 1976). In 1925, a water main was constructed through the square. In the course of this excavation, three human skulls were uncovered in the western part of the square (Anonymous 1925). This is the only reference to human remains being found in the western portion of the square and is somewhat suspect since virtually all other documentary sources describe both the Old First Reformed Church burial ground and the potter's field as located within the eastern half of the square.

After the Delaware River (present Benjamin Franklin) Bridge was completed in 1926, Franklin Square was viewed as an impediment to efficient traffic flow to and from the bridge. One proposal was to redesign the square as a grand traffic circle, similar to the redesign of the original Northwest (Logan) Square (Anonymous 1930). Instead, Race and Vine Streets were widened, with the extra right-of-way taken from the north and south sides of Franklin Square (Anonymous 1931).

In 1933, a diagonal extension of Seventh Street was cut through the southwest corner of the square to provide more space for traffic approaching the Benjamin Franklin Bridge (Anonymous 1933). Twenty years later, more of the square was sacrificed to improve traffic flow to the bridge. In 1954, 21 feet was shaved off the north and south sides of Franklin Square, permitting two additional traffic lanes on Race and Vine Streets (Anonymous 1954a).

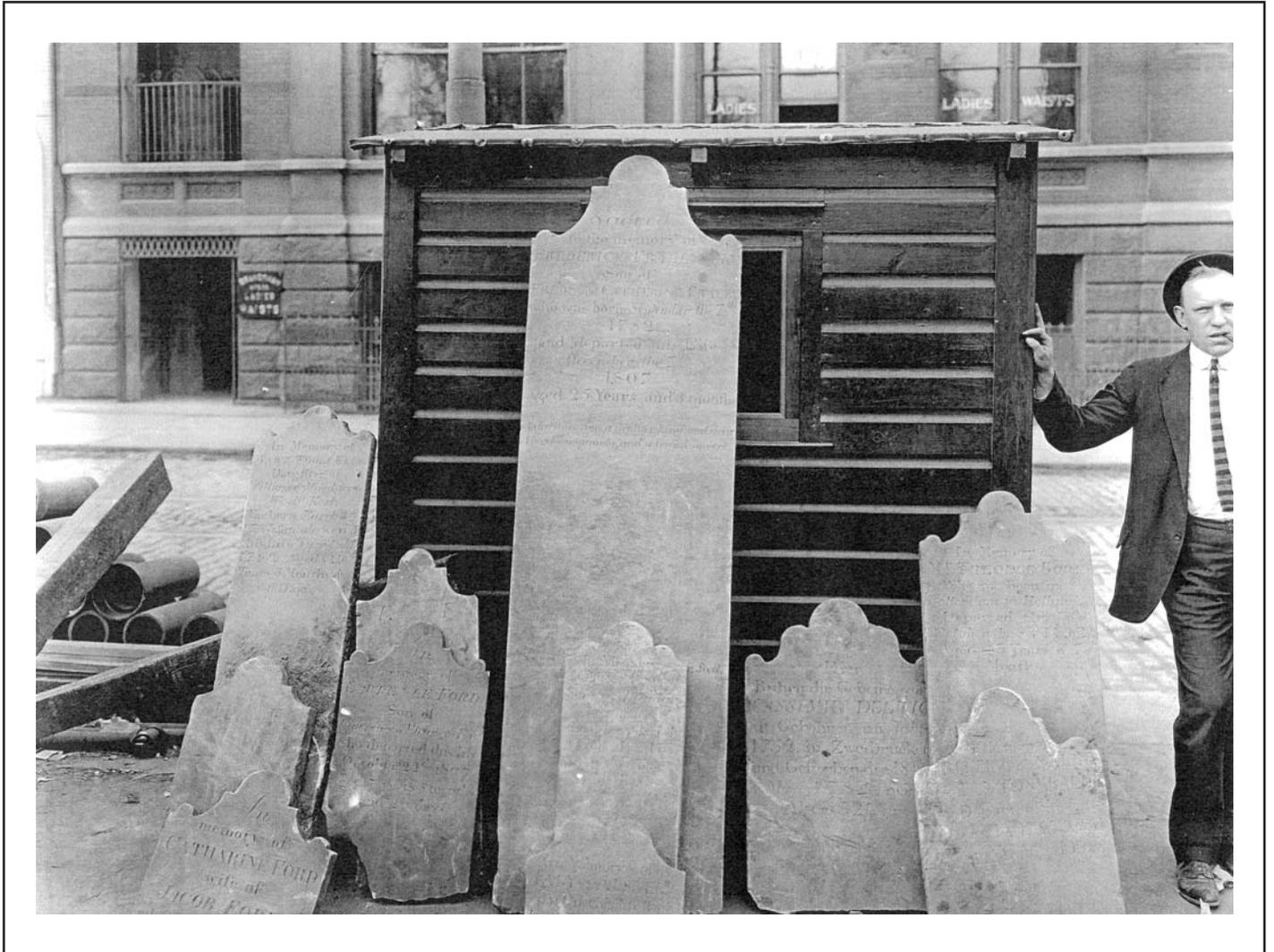


Figure 8. Gravestones uncovered during 1915 sewer excavation in Franklin Square. Philadelphia City Archives photo collection. Folder 638.

When the Delaware River Bridge was first planned, a high-speed rail link was envisioned between Philadelphia and Camden. Construction of the underground portion of the link took place in the 1930s with excavation for the Franklin Square Station. The station opened with the rest of the Bridge Line on June 7, 1936. The station remained open for only three years and was briefly reopened in 1952 as a transfer point for passengers on the Philadelphia to Camden ferry service. Reopened again for the Bicentennial, it closed again in 1979 (NRHS 2002).

In 1968, the historic character of the square was compromised with the removal of its last flagstone walk along Sixth Street (McAdam 1968). In 1975, a memorial to police and firemen was constructed in the east portion of the Square (Anonymous 1975a). During a sewer excavation in the square in 1976, two skulls and other bones were uncovered, as well as two gravestones (Gibbons 1976).

3.0 POTENTIAL ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

3.1 METHODS

A series of historic maps was examined with the purpose of tracing the changes in land use within the square that might have left an archeological signature. Because it was known that two potentially important resources, an eighteenth-nineteenth century cemetery and an eighteenth-century powder magazine, were present in the square at the outset of the study, special attention was given to better defining their locations. The maps were also used to trace changes in the treatment of the landscape once it became a public park. The one report (Kenyon 1975) relating to previous archeological excavation on the square was evaluated. JMA also studied a map, supplied by Urban Engineers, showing the subway tunnels and other utility lines that have impacted the square.

3.2 HISTORIC MAPS

The following historic maps were examined (listed in chronological order):

Thomas Holme, *A Portraiture of the City of Philadelphia in the Province of Pennsylvania in America*. London, 1683.

Effegy Company, *Philadelphia in 1702*. Site of Philadelphia when in possession of the Swedes before the landing of Penn.

Clarkson, Matthew and Mary Biddle, 1762. *A Map of Philadelphia*. Published November 1, 1762. Republished November 1858 by Joseph H. Bonsall and Samuel L. Smedley.

Colonial Trust Company, 1776. *Philadelphia: Plan of the City and the Environs*. The Colonial Trust Company, Philadelphia.

Easburn, Benjamin, 1776. *A plan of the City of Philadelphia, the Capital of Pennsylvania*. Andrew Dury, London.

Faden, William, 1779. *A Plan of the City and Environs of Philadelphia with the Works and Encampments of his Majesty's Forces*. Engraved and published by William Faden, January 1, 1779, London. Reproduced in 1965 by Historic Urban Plans, Ithaca, New York.

Philadelphia c. 1790. *Broad Street to the Delaware and Vine Street to South Street*. Parchment original transferred to City Archives.

Anonymous, c. 1794. *Plan of the City and Suburbs of Philadelphia*. "Davies Map," reproduced by Historic Urban Plans in 1973.

Hills, John, 1797. *Philadelphia*. John Cooke, Engraver. Republished in 1881. S. Smedley, Philadelphia. Photolithography by Thomas Hunter.

Paxton, J.A., 1811. *Philadelphia*.

Graff, Frederick, 1814. *Map of Water Pipe Lines Now Supplied from Fair Mount Water Works*.

Paxton, J.A., c. 1817. *Philadelphia: Firemen's Map*.

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The three earliest maps do not show any specific features on the square, which on the 1762 Clarkson and Biddle map is labeled "North East Publick Square According to Holme's Plan." The 1776 Easburn *Plan of the City of Philadelphia* shows an area extending along the east side of the square (the western edge of Sixth Street) that was probably meant to represent the burial ground and a symbol for the powder magazine in the northwestern portion of the square, but neither is labeled. The first clear representation of the burial ground appears on the 1790 parchment map (Figure 9) where it abuts Vine Street on the north and extends halfway to Sassafras (Race) Street. It is clearly labeled "Calvinist Burial Ground" (an alternate name for the First Reformed Church burial ground). Curiously, a map dating just four years later (Figure 10) shows the burial ground abutting Sassafras Street on the south and extending northward about two-thirds the distance (c. 400 feet) to Vine Street. In this map, a key (56) corresponds to the label "German Calvinist Grave Yard" (yet another alternate name for the burial ground). A second feature shown on this map (No. 57) corresponds to the label, "Old Powder Magazine." The 1797 Hills map (Figure 11) shows the burial ground (N. 48, Burying Grounds) extending all the way from Vine to Sassafras Streets. The powder magazine is apparently in the same location and a second (unlabeled) structure is shown to the southwest of the magazine.

By 1828 the square is shown with an elaborate curvilinear design of pathways. Figure 12, Allen and Tanner's 1830 map, shows the curvilinear design and its relationship to the German

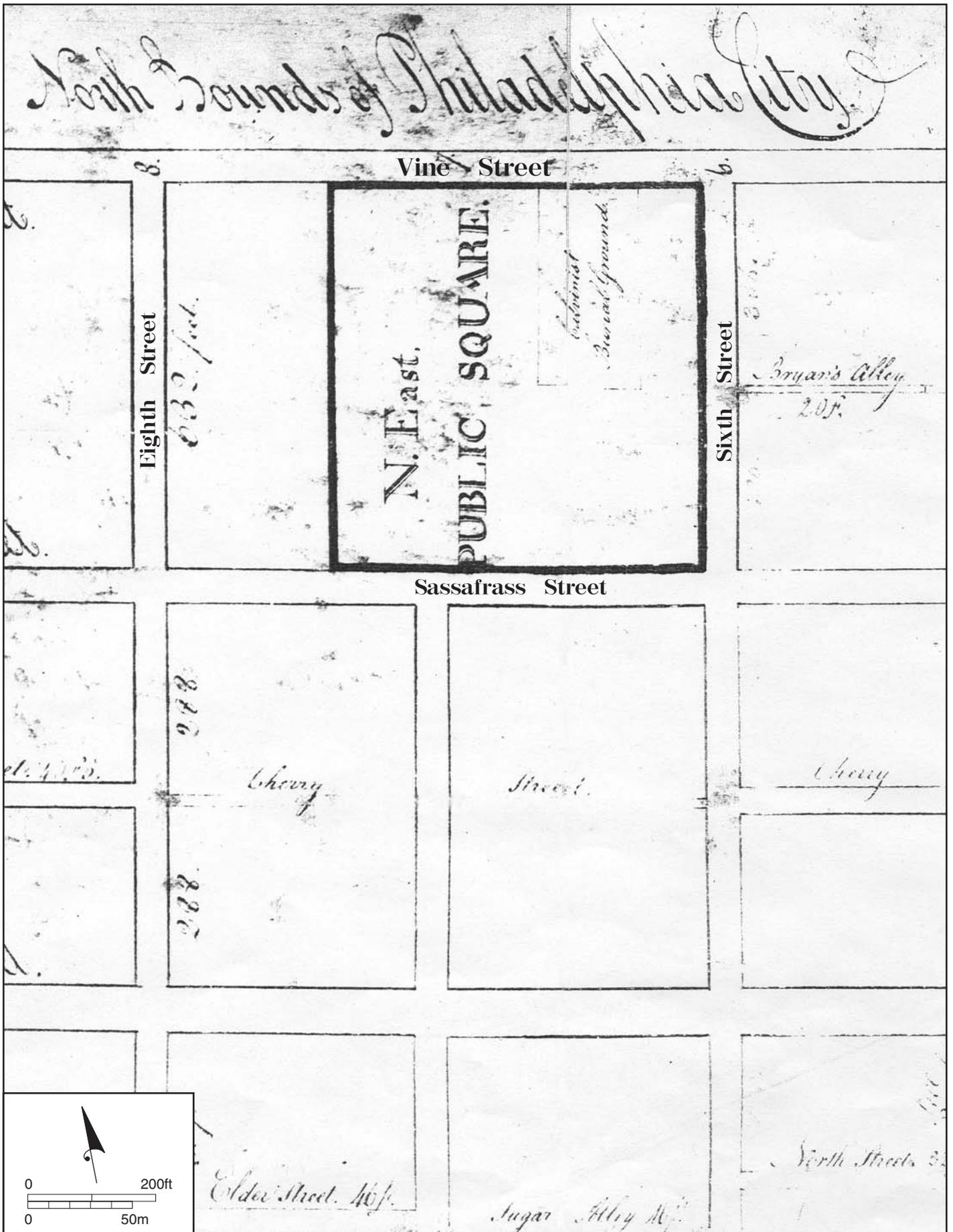


Figure 9. Detail, Philadelphia c. 1790. From Broad Street to the Delaware and Vine Street to South Street. Parchment original, transferred to City Archives.

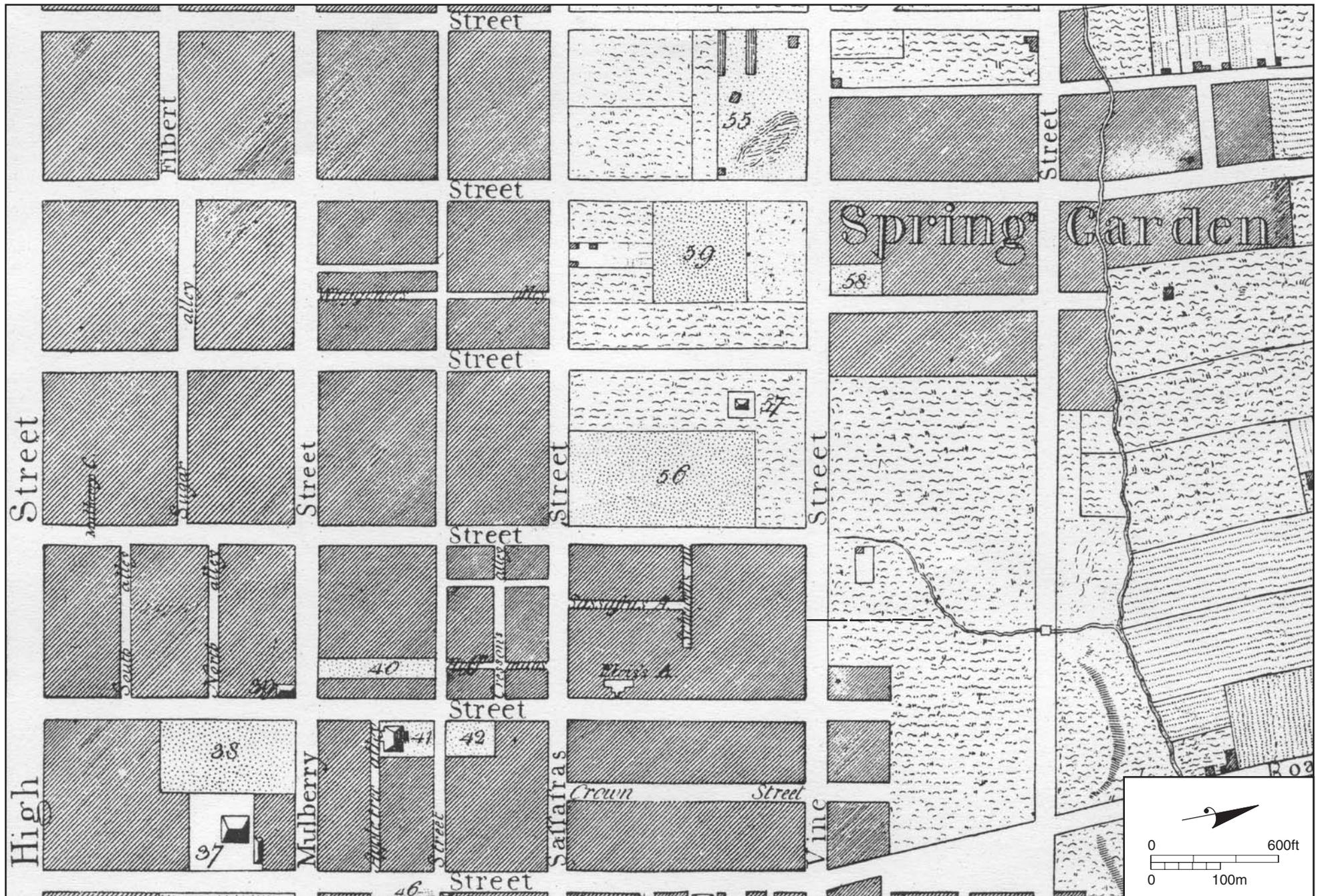


Figure 10. Detail, Plan of the City and Suburbs of Philadelphia, R. Scot and S. Allardice Sculpit, 1794. "Davies Map" reproduction. Historic Urban Plans, Ithaca, New York, reproduced 1973.

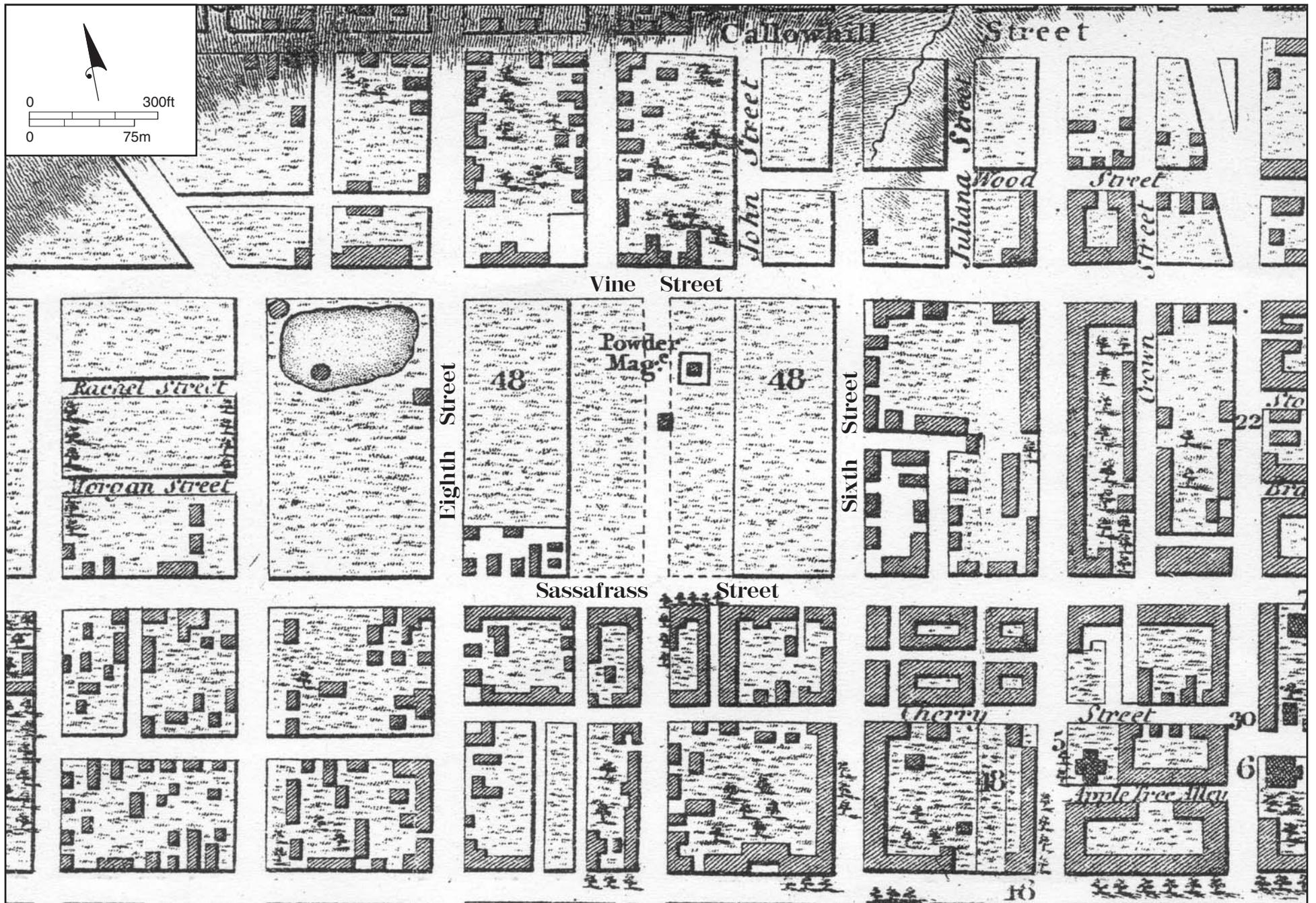


Figure 11. Detail, Philadelphia 1797 by John Hills. Photo-lithograph, 1881. Thomas Hunter, Philadelphia.

Reformed or Calvinist Church Burial Ground (No. 126), which on this map conform to their 1790 (Figure 9) boundaries. The 1843 Tanner and Roberts map is the earliest map examined that specifically shows a fountain in the middle of the square. The burial ground, powder magazine, and structure bordering Seventh Street have disappeared by that time and are not shown on any subsequent maps. The Jones 1875 map (Figure 13) shows the water lines that fed the fountain and a diagonal line cutting across the southeast corner of the square appears to be a pipe that connected to water pipes in the street. This map is the last map to show the curvilinear design, which appears to have been replaced by 1877. The Bromley and Bromley 1901 map (Figure 14) shows the new design. This design has more or less lasted to the present although a variety of features including the Franklin Square Station, Philadelphia-Camden Hi-Speed line, a guard house, and a restroom facility had been added by 1939 (Figure 15).

3.3 PRIOR ARCHEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS

Jeff Kenyon conducted a resistivity study and test excavation in the mapped location of the powder magazine in the northwest quadrant of Franklin Square in 1975. The work was done in anticipation of refurbishment activities planned for the square in preparation for the Bicentennial in 1976. The results of Kenyon's research included a description of the building as it appeared in 1779, twelve years after its construction:

The magazine is in length nearly north and south thirty-five feet and in breadth sixteen feet, measur'd on the inside; the height of the wall seven feet & eight inches. Under the floor the whole length of the building, and I judge about a foot above the ground, there appears a wall on which the sleepers rest, crossways of the building, those sleepers are many of them decayed by which means the floor is much settled yet it is in no ways damp.

Captain Joseph Stiles 1788
(quoted in Kenyon 1975:4)

Stiles, who was in charge of the magazine, apparently argued that the powder magazine was no longer adequate and a new one was needed. In its heyday, according to Stiles, the Franklin Square magazine held 400 casks of gunpowder and could hold 400 casks more (Kenyon 1975:4), but in 1788 Stiles was using a nearby frame house to store excess gunpowder. By 1791 a powder magazine for the city had been built elsewhere and the old one was used to store oil for the city's street lamps (Kenyon 1975:5).

Kenyon conducted a soil resistivity survey in the general area where the magazine appeared on historic maps to determine his test locations. He exposed a hefty portion of a stone wall, which he interpreted as "the foundation base for one of the main walls of the magazine" (Kenyon 1975:7), at a depth of 1.3 feet below the surface (Figure 16). The wall was located approximately 100 feet east of Franklin Street and 100 feet south of Vine Street. Of his ten test trenches only one other revealed a feature that appeared to relate to the former structure, and that was only a robbed out wall. By Kenyon's (1975:7) own estimation, his work was very preliminary and any "formal conclusions would have to await more extensive excavations." No further excavations were done.

Although no other formal archeological excavations have been conducted on the square, numerous construction projects have encountered burials (see Section 2.5 above). It would appear, in fact, that every construction project on the square during the twentieth century uncovered human remains.

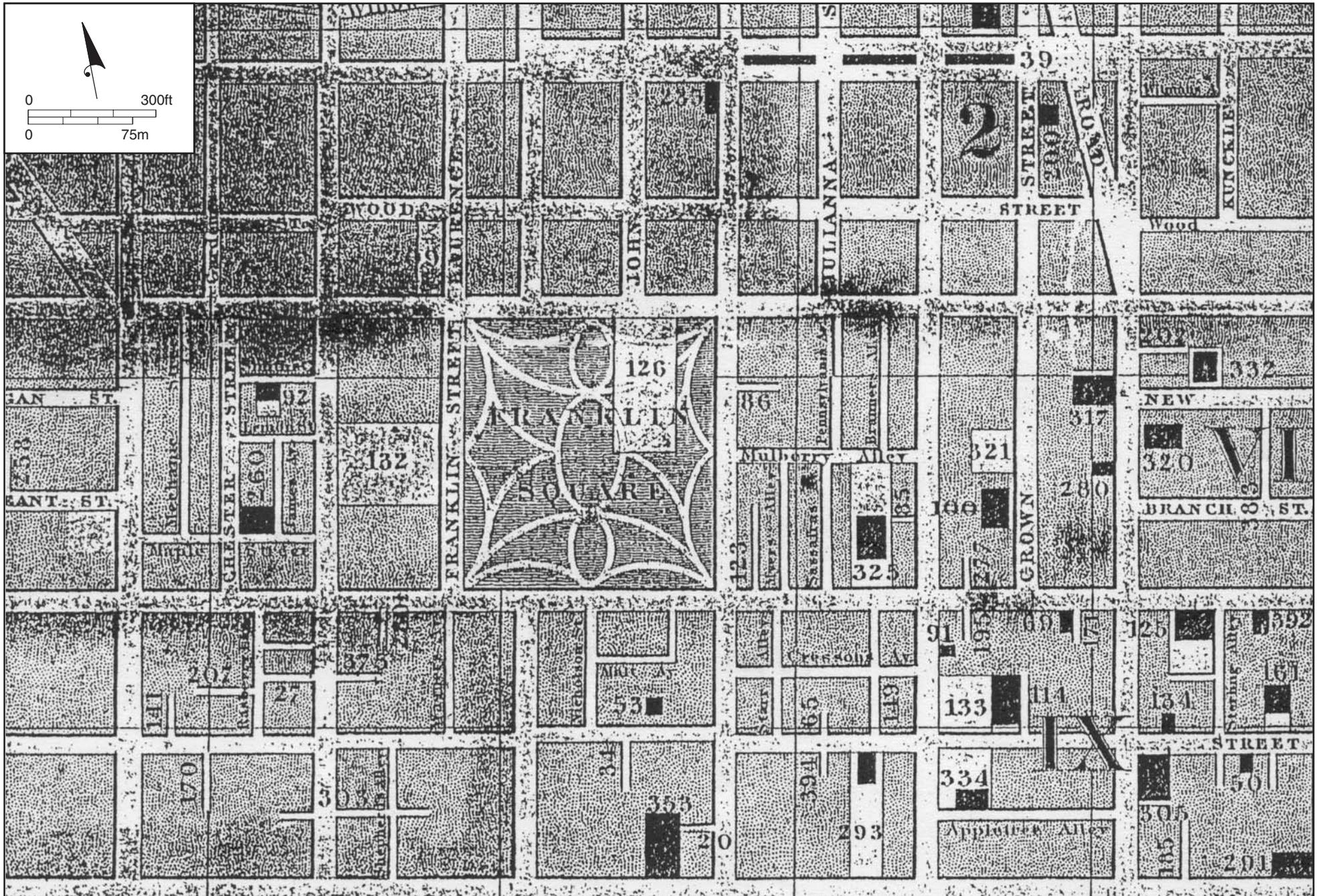


Figure 12. Philadelphia 1830. William Allen and H.S. Tanner, Philadelphia.

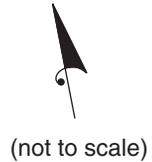
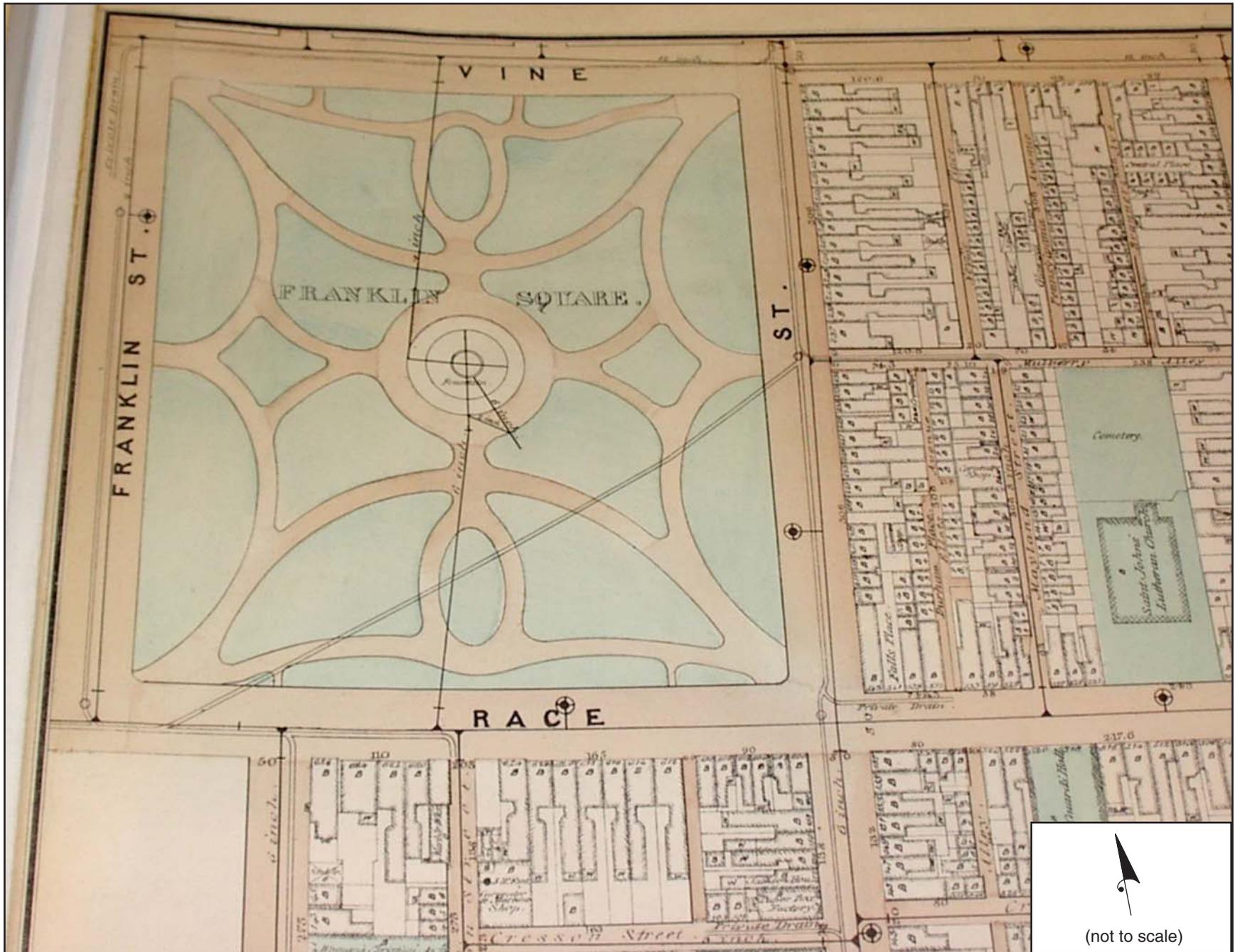


Figure 13. Franklin Square 1875. G.H. Jones and Company.

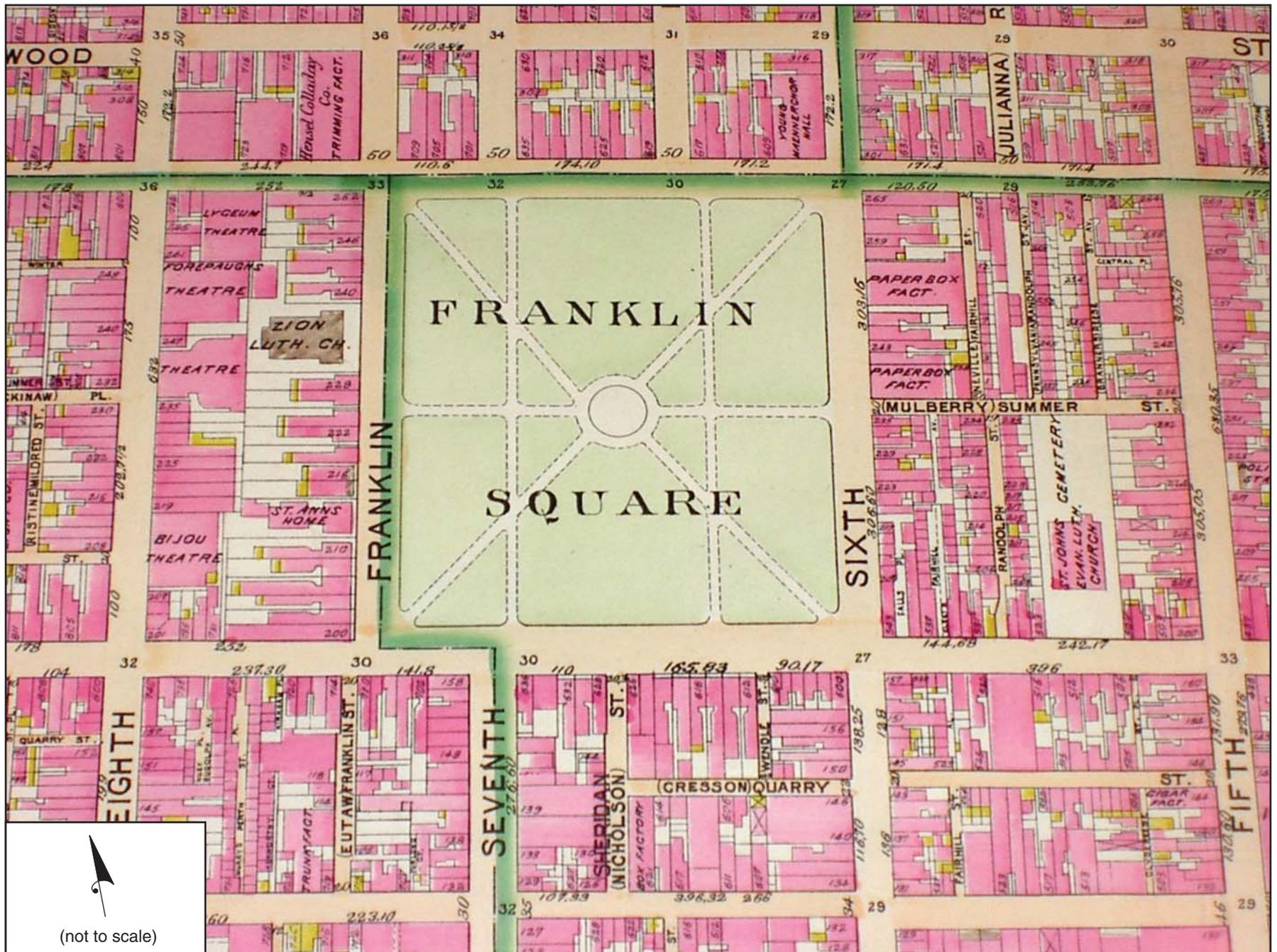


Figure 14. Franklin Square 1901. Bromley and Bromley.

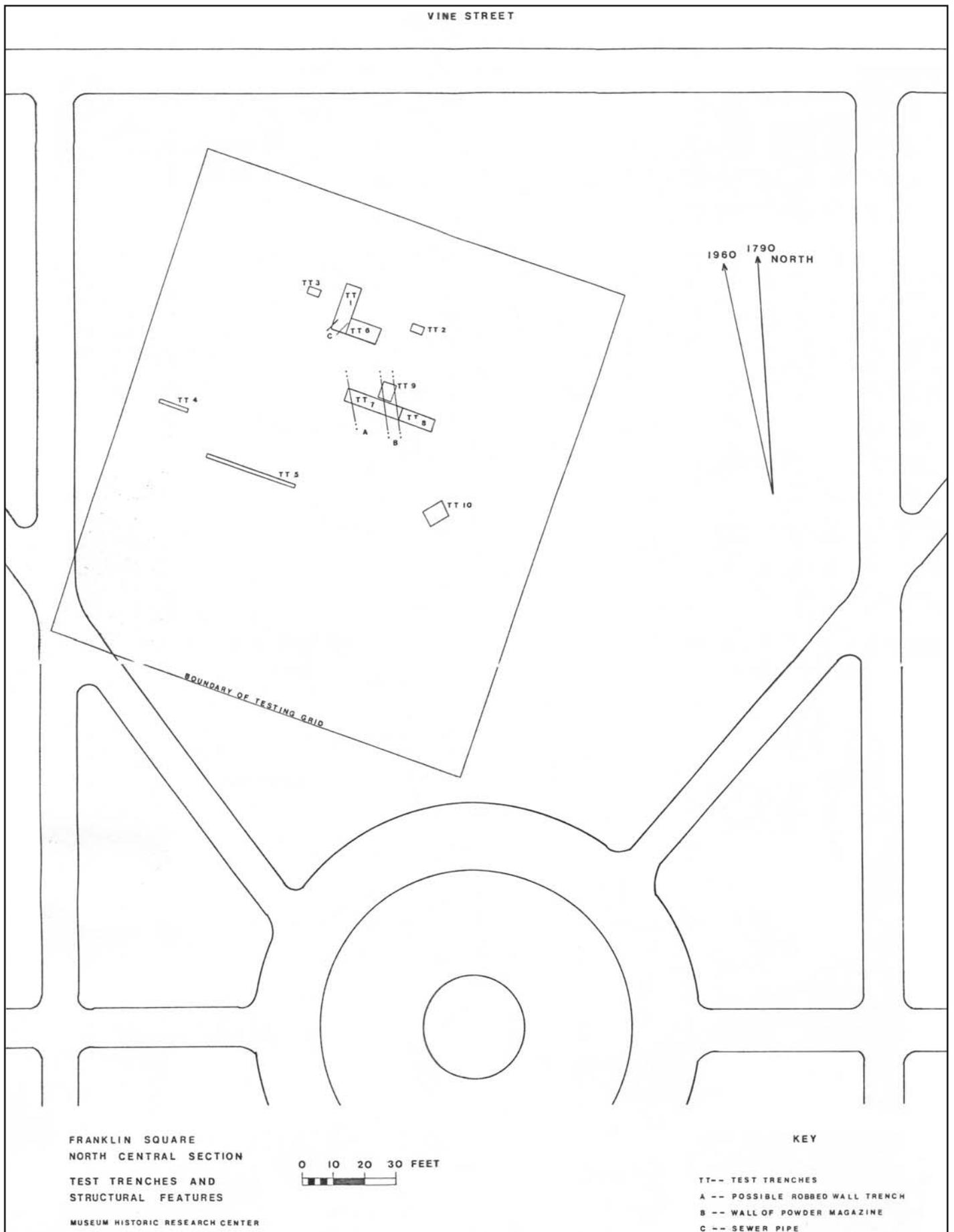


Figure 16. Powder magazine excavation (Kenyon 1975).

3.4 MODERN DISTURBANCES

The most significant modern disturbance to the square was the construction of two subway tunnels and a station in the 1930s. The tunnels and station are shown on the management plan prepared by Synterra, Ltd. for 'Once Upon a Nation,' included here as Figure 17. The tunnels were apparently built using cut-and-cover techniques, although it is difficult to know how they managed to go directly beneath the fountain.

There has also been other construction on the square, including a brick one-story restroom facility to the southeast of the fountain (Figure 17) and innumerable utility trenches. Also significant is the extension of Seventh Street which cut off the southwest corner of the square. However, for an urban space of this size modern disturbance is minimal. No buildings with deep basements have ever stood on the square and no documents suggest that the ground was ever modified (bulldozed) in a major way, although some grading evidently took place when the First Reformed Church burial ground was closed.

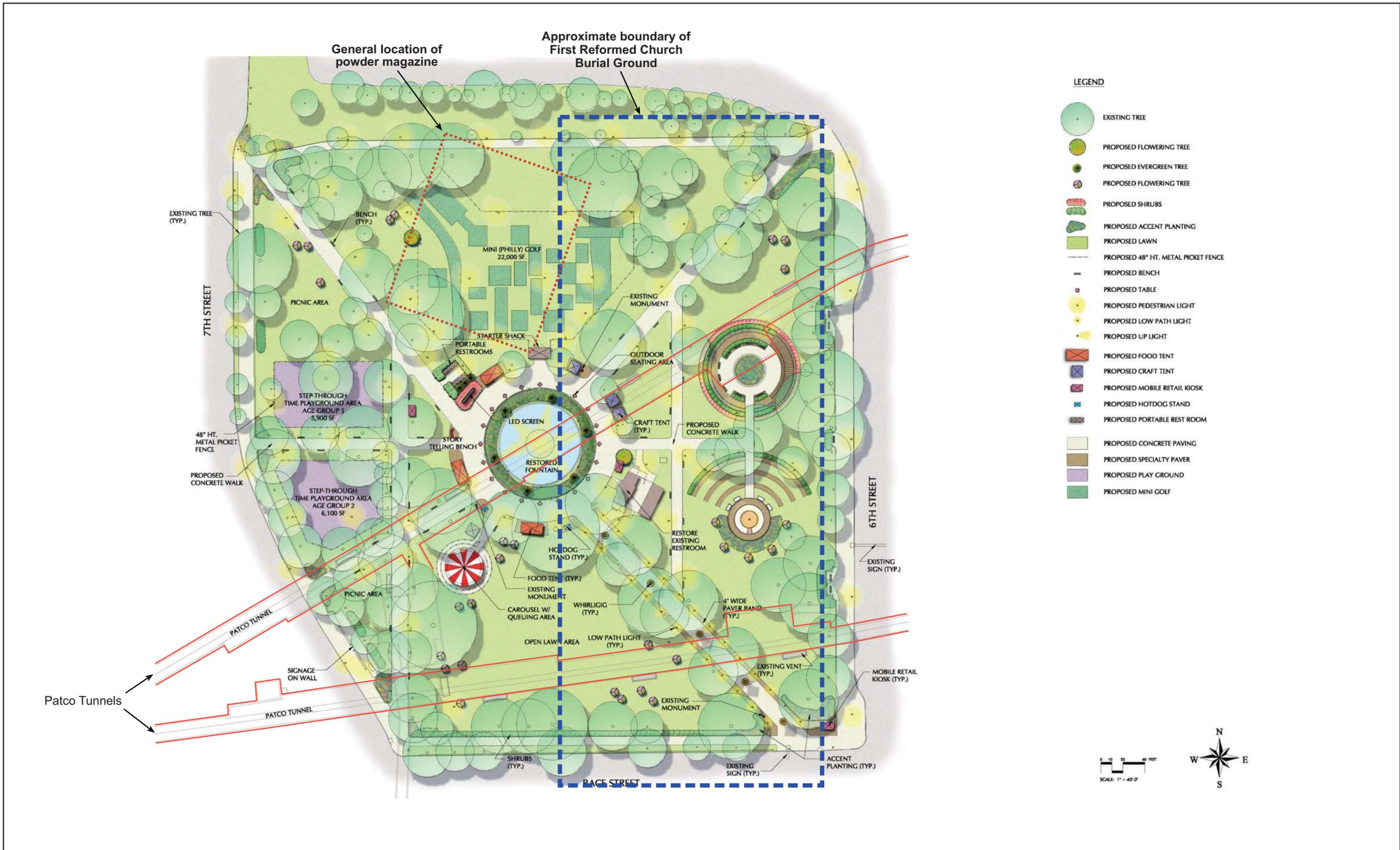


Figure 17. Archeological Sensitivity Plan. Management Plan showing the boundaries of the First Reformed Church Burial Ground and the general location of the powder magazine (1776).

4.0 CONCLUDING SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 SUMMARY OF HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Franklin Square was one of the five squares in Thomas Holme's original design for William Penn's "green country town," but it was not actually developed as a public square until the middle of the nineteenth century. In the early decades of the eighteenth century the land was rented, probably for grazing, and beginning in 1741 a large part of the eastern half of the square was used as a burial ground by the Old First Reformed Church. The church bought the land from William Penn's son in 1763, but was required to sell it back to the city in 1819. Although the land was officially designated Franklin Square in 1825 and a plan was put forth for a central fountain and geometrical walks, the church continued to bury their dead in the cemetery until 1836. During the Revolutionary War a powder magazine was built in the northwestern quadrant of the square. By 1788 the magazine was deemed too small and a nearby house, also located in the western part of the square, was being used for the overflow storage of munitions. After 1791 the city's powder magazine was located elsewhere and the old magazine was eventually used to store fuel for the gas lamps on the square and surrounding area. It is possible that Continental soldiers were buried in the vicinity of the magazine and it also possible that the area was used to bury victims of the yellow fever epidemic of 1793. In 1837 the central fountain was finally built and the square was laid out in an ornate curvilinear pattern which was not replaced until 1883. The geometric plan and fence installed at that time remain today, although a number of features, including a PATCO station, restrooms, and a police monument, have since been built on the square.

4.2 POTENTIAL ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

4.2.1 THE BURIAL GROUND

Although a number of burials were disturbed by construction projects in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, there is no reason to believe that most of the burials are not still in place within the portion of the First Reformed Church burial ground that has not been disturbed by the two subway tunnels that run diagonally from southwest to northeast across the southern half of the square and the widening of Vine and Race Streets on the north and south respectively. When use of the burial ground was discontinued the stones were laid flat on top of the burials and the ground was graded above them. The oldest part of the burial ground, which abutted Vine Street, was located 100 feet west of Sixth Street and extended 150 feet to the west and 306 feet to the south. It was eventually extended all the way to Race Street on the south and it may also have extended eastward to Sixth Street on the east. According to the archivist for the descendant congregation of the Old First Reformed Church, the graves of Caspar Weyberg, chaplain to the Continental Army, and the Reverend Michael Schlatter, the founder of the German Reformed denomination in this country, remain *in situ* and at least one document (*Harbaugh's Life of Schlatter*) claims that the remains of the reverends Steiner, Winkhaus and Hendel are also interred within the bounds of the earliest part of the burial ground.

4.2.2 THE POWDER MAGAZINE AND ASSOCIATED SMALL STRUCTURE

A resistivity survey and preliminary archeological testing conducted in 1975 in the northwestern portion of the square revealed a substantial stone wall believed to belong to a Revolutionary War-era powder magazine. The wall was found 1.3 feet below the surface. A trench possibly representing another robbed out wall of the magazine was also found, but an additional eight test

trenches did not reveal any structural remains. There is a contemporary description of the magazine that describes its dimensions as 35 feet north-south and 16 feet east-west.

4.2.3 THE MID-NINETEENTH-CENTURY LANDSCAPE DESIGN

The landscape design for the park, which was apparently developed in the 1820s but probably not constructed until the fountain was built in 1837, appears to represent a transitional style. Designed by William Rush, the geometric quality of the landscape is similar to the formal Renaissance inspired style fashionable in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, but the prevalence of curved lines suggests the naturalistic style that was to become popular in the middle of the nineteenth century. Rush, who was best known as a sculptor, also designed Rittenhouse Square.

4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Cemeteries represent sacred spaces, and the human remains buried in them are not specimens to be treated in a cavalier fashion, but ancestors of people living today. As such, human remains imbue powerful, symbolic meaning to living descendants that must assume primacy when contemplating their disturbance or removal. Accordingly, JMA recommends that every precaution be taken to ensure that human remains likely still buried in the Old First Reformed Church Burial Ground on Franklin Square are treated with dignity and respect. This recommendation, of course, refers to the removal or disturbance of any burials as a result of proposed construction, but it also refers to planned activities on the surface above the burials that will not necessarily disturb any graves. An essential first step is to engage the descendant congregation (The United Church of Christ, 151 North Fourth Street) to be sure that they are aware of what is planned, that they are informed of the project schedule, are kept abreast of its progress, and most importantly, are enfranchised in the decision-making process as the project moves forward. It is recommended that a protocol for the treatment of human remains (if encountered during construction) be developed with representatives of the church before construction begins. Such issues as excavation techniques, appropriate storage materials, analytical methods, reporting, and reburial should be specifically defined in the protocol.

Because the project (as described at a meeting on January 28, 2005 at the offices of Urban Engineers) does not appear to require deep disturbances over large areas within the likely footprint of the cemetery (Figure 17), it will probably not be necessary for the protocol to include provision for the proactive search for grave outlines and/or human remains. The need for such an approach, however, should be subject to the wishes of the current church congregation. In the absence of conducting remote sensing survey (such as ground-penetrating radar) and/or proactive excavation to “ground truth” the map-documented area of the cemetery, the precise boundaries of the cemetery will not be known. However, such knowledge will probably not be necessary unless substantial, deep ground disturbance becomes necessary or unless the church congregation wishes to benefit from such knowledge.

The excavation of holes for footings and trees, and the excavation of trenches for utility lines, however, will have the potential for disturbing human remains. Subject to concurrence by the church congregation, JMA recommends that all such holes for footings and plantings, as well as utility trenches, be excavated by hand with an archeologist present in order to impact burials as little as possible. If human remains are exposed, it may not be necessary to remove them. Seventeen intact burials were partially exposed during utility trenching associated with the rehabilitation of Washington Square (Roberts and Benedict (2000). They were left *in situ*, recorded, and covered up again. If it becomes necessary to remove human remains from Franklin

Square, the detailed protocol noted above should be implemented. At a minimum, and again subject to church approval, such a protocol should allow for the careful and dignified removal of remains by an archeological team, basic identification of sex, age, and gross pathologies by a qualified physical anthropologist, and the return of the remains to the church for suitable reburial.

The foundation wall belonging to the Revolutionary War period powder magazine was exposed at a relatively shallow depth (1.3 feet below grade) and any ground disturbing activities within the general area of the magazine (Figure 17) should also be monitored by an archeologist. Like any human remains that may be present on the square, proactive analytical excavation does not appear to be necessary since no major ground disturbing activities are planned for the area. If wall segments belonging to the magazine or associated small house are encountered in tree holes or utility trenches, it is recommended that they be left in place and recorded.

It is not clear whether the curvilinear landscape plan developed in the 1820s was ever installed, although it appears on many maps. JMA recommends conducting further research to document more about the designer and determine whether it was actually built. If it indeed was built, any portions exposed during construction should be recorded by an archeologist. Accordingly, all ground disturbing activities in the vicinity of the walkways, as shown overlain on the Management Plan for Franklin Square (Figure18), should be monitored by an archeologist.

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APPENDIX A:

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF OLD
FIRST REFORMED CHURCH AND
FRANKLIN SQUARE

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF OLD FIRST GERMAN REFORMED CHURCH AND FRANKLIN SQUARE

1682. Northeast (Franklin) Square laid out as one of five public squares in Thomas Holme's plan of the City of Philadelphia. These squares were described as follows: "In the center of the city is a square of ten acres. There are also in each quarter of the city a square of eight acres, to be for the like uses as the Moorfields in London." The Moorfields had been reserved in 1638 for "common and public uses" (Anonymous 1927).
- 1721 Square leased for 21 years to Ralph Assheton, a Philadelphia attorney and a provincial councilor of Pennsylvania, at the rate of 40 shillings per annum, beginning March 26, 1724 with the understanding that it be fenced with "good rails and cedar posts" (Anonymous 1927).
- 1727 September 21. The Rev. George Michael Weiss and 400 members of the German Reformed Church arrived in Philadelphia from the Palatinate region of western Germany. They settled in a neighborhood east of Broad Street and north of Market Street (Lyons 2001).
- 1727 First Reformed Church established and originally met in a small, wood-framed house (Smart 1968) of a member located on Arch Street. They shared this house of worship with the city's Lutheran congregation (Lyons 2001).
- 1741 Congregation purchased a lot at the southeast corner of Fourth and Sassafras (now Race) streets as the site of their church (Lyons 2001).
- 1741 18 June. Thomas Penn, son of William, issued a warrant to Benjamin Eastburn, the surveyor general, stating that Philip Bohme [a.k.a. Pastor John Phillip Boehm] and [Elder] Jacob Siegel had requested use of land in Northeast Square and agreed to pay 50 pounds sterling and a yearly quitrent of five shillings. Bohme and Siegel represented the German Reformed Church (Anonymous 1927). The land, located in the north portion of the square, measured 150 feet east and west and 306 feet north and south (Jackson 1932:693).
- 1742 14 December. Date of first gravestone in the cemetery [Elizabeth Messenger] according to a secondary source. This information was given in testimony by Alexander McCarahan, a witness in the case of Commonwealth v. Alburger (1835) (Spiese 1903).
- 1745 Receiver General paid thirteen pounds sterling, four years' interest and four years' quitrent, for the portion of the square which was then in the congregation's possession (Anonymous 1927).
- 1747 First church, a hexagonal building, was completed to house the German Reformed congregation (Lyons 2001).
- 1748 11 January. Date of first recorded burial in the Northeast Square: Catherina Barbara, the 9 year old daughter of Peter Frees (Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania).

- 1751 Thomas Penn offered a portion of the square for the use of the Pennsylvania Hospital. The board of the hospital turned down the offer due not only to the unhealthiness and unsuitability of the site but also “as it is part of a square allotted...for public uses,...our fellow-citizens would tax us with injustice to them” (Anonymous 1927).
1763. 12 December. John Penn, grandson of William, sold the cemetery lot to the congregation for 189 pounds and seven pence. This transaction conveyed clear title to a tract, 150 feet wide in the center of the square, extending from Vine Street, 306 feet southward. This rectangular tract’s northeast corner was 100 feet west of Sixth Street, while its northwest corner was 146 feet east of Seventh Street (OFRC 1763; Anonymous 1927).
- 1774 Second church building erected at 4th and Race streets. This building, said to be the largest church in Philadelphia at the time, could seat 3,000 people (Lyons 2001).
- 1776- Square was site of a powder magazine. Some Continental soldiers who died in hospitals in and around the city were buried there (Anonymous 1927). This magazine was the first of a succession of structures located in the vicinity of the present ball field (Shusterman 1997:3).
- 1782 The congregation asked for additional space to expand their burial ground. The military protested this request (Anonymous 1927).
- 1783 12 February. Petition presented with six signatures protesting the use of the square as a burial ground, indicating that it should be reserved for public use (OFRC Box 17, Folder 1).
- 1793-1794 Yellow fever epidemic in Philadelphia. According to secondary sources (e.g. Anonymous 1927), victims were buried in paupers’ graves in the Northeast Square.
- 1797 The City Council ruled that church lease of land was illegal and resolved to enter suit for the recovery and possession of the ground. Church unwilling to relinquish its burial ground (Anonymous 1927).
- 1800 February 19. Grant of land made to the church from the Pennsylvania Assembly for a lot bounded on the south by Mulberry [Arch] Street, on the east by Schuylkill Sixth (Seventeenth) Street, on the north by Cherry Street, and on the west by Schuylkill Fifth (Eighteenth) Street. The burial ground was laid out on the eastern portion of the block, about 100 feet in width (Scharf and Westcott 1884:1847).
- 1800s-1810s John M. Irwin, auctioneer, was in possession of the western side of the square which he used for a horse and cattle market. He carried on a similar business at Southeast [Washington] Square, generally holding a weekly sale at each location (Scharf and Westcott 1884:1847).

- 1801 Reformed Church sought a lease of fifteen years. The city agreed to discontinue its suit against the church with the provisions that the city was to have possession of all the square where no interments had been made; that the congregation accept a lease from the city for those parts of the square on which interments had been made, but for which they held no patent; and that no buildings were to be erected on the portion reserved for a burial ground (Van Horne 1876:73; Anonymous 1927). Negotiations concluded on 20 September 1801 with agreement that the church would take down and remove the fence around the square, replacing it with a “handsome” fence enclosing only that portion of the square where burials were located. The church agreed to pay a yearly rent of five shillings during the term of the lease (OFRC Box 17, Folder 3).
- 1803 9 August. First recorded burial in new First Reformed Church of Philadelphia burial ground on Cherry Street: infant child of Heinrich Ludwig. Burials continued in Northeast Square (Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania).
- 1805 31 December. Bill submitted to church for one year’s rent of burial ground. Amount of bill: \$31 (OFRC Box 17, Folder 4).
- 1814 September. City Councils passed a resolution “that all the unenclosed part of Northeast Public Square, east of Seventh Street and south of the oilhouse, be cleared off as far as the same is not inclosed, and that the militia, or any company thereof, or any military association shall be permitted to drill on or parade on said open ground when cleared” (Scharf and Westcott 1884:1847).
- 1815 September. City Council passed a resolution that the Northeast Public Square should be enclosed. It was recommended shortly after that the high portion of the ground be plowed down, that earth be laid over the lower portions, that grass seed be sown, and the square be planted with forest trees, and that there be other improvements under the direction of the city commissioner (Scharf and Westcott 1884:1847).
- 1816 Church sought a longer lease. Councils indicated that only a two and one-half year lease would be granted and that would require the enclosure of the burial ground. Church refused and requested 99 year lease. Matter remained unsettled (Anonymous 1927).
- 1819 A culvert was ordered to be built to commence on Race Street about 65 feet west of Seventh Street and run diagonally across the square to Sixth Street. The exact location of this culvert is uncertain (Scharf and Westcott 1884:1847).
- 1819 14 January. Select and Common Councils of the City of Philadelphia resolved to institute proceedings to obtain possession of the entirety of Northeast Public Square (OFRC Box 17, Folder 4).
- 1819 Present Franklin Street, 50 feet wide, opened along west side of the square (Jackson 1932:697).
- 1821 12 April. Councils terminated all negotiations with the church and ordered the vacation of the grounds (Anonymous n.d.; OFRC Box 17, Folder 5).

- 1824 Plan developed for landscaping of Franklin Square including central fountain and geometrical walks (Rush 1824).
- 1825 Councils ordered the church to turn over entire square. The church agreed to vacate in exchange for \$50,000, a position opposed by the Councils. Litigation carried to Supreme Court of the Commonwealth (Anonymous 1927).
- 1825 City Councils officially designated the square, "Franklin Square" (Anonymous 1924b).
- 1833 19 November. W.M. Meredith was instructed by a resolution of the Councils to acquire possession of all that part of Franklin Square claimed by church (OFRC Box 17, Folder 6).
- 1836 In *Commonwealth v. Alburger*, Justice Sergeant noted that Franklin Square was one of two squares placed where Penn had located them. The Commonwealth Supreme Court concluded that the church congregation had no right to the land, that the 1741 grant from Governor Thomas Penn and the subsequent proceeding were illegal, the Penn family having no title to the land (Anonymous n.d.) In summarizing the proceedings, the Rev. David Van Horne wrote, "All this illustrates the truth of that saying that 'Corporations have no souls'" (Van Horne 1876:76).
- 1836 May 23. The Committee on Public Property ordered that the church remove the fence in the square and indicated, "the committee do not intend to disturb the remains of any of the bodies which have been interred in the Square, but if any of them are desired by their friends to be removed, every facility will be afforded for the purpose" (Price and Chandler 1836).
- 1837 Third (present) church building erected at 4th and Race streets. This building had the same dimensions as the second church but was rotated 180 degrees and set back farther from the street to attempt to reduce street noise (Lyons 2001).
- 1837 March 28. Letter from Committee of Councils on City Property to the church indicating that they "propose to have that part of Franklin Square recently occupied by the German Congregation as a burying ground, leveled and laid out in conformity with the rest of the Square." The letter indicated that many gravestones had been left standing and some of the vaults not attended to. The Committee gave the congregation until April 6 to remove the gravestones and indicated that "the grave stones which may be left on the ground...will be laid in their respective graves so far as it can be done" (Chandler 1837).
- 1837 November 2. Councils passed a resolution indicating now that "the trees had grown finely and there was a pleasant shade. To render it more attractive a large fountain was ordered to be constructed...of grand dimensions, having forty jets of water that fell into a marble basin which was guarded from intrusion by an iron railing round the top" (Jackson 1932:695; Shusterman 1997:3). The square was lighted with gas lamps (Starobin 1968).
- 1838 Philadelphia Councils remitted the court charges and granted \$5,000 to the congregation on the condition that the church relinquish all claim on the lot. The

- church agreed and used the proceeds to build vaults at the church (Van Horne 1876:75).
- 1882 Because of industrial development in vicinity of the church, it relocated to a new building at 10th and Wallace Streets (Lyons 2001).
- 1883 Electric lights replaced gas lamps in the square (Shusterman 1997:3). The iron railing (fence?) in the square was taken down, replaced with low stone coping, and the grounds were laid out in flagstone paving on the same plan as Washington Square (Jackson 1932:695; Scharf and Westcott 1884:1848).
- 1915 Old graves uncovered in excavation for a new sewer line. According to a newspaper article, graves uncovered included those of members of the church. The excavation extended through a portion of a potters' field for late eighteenth century yellow fever victims and the church graveyard (Anonymous 1915).
- 1916 Declining attendance and migration of congregants caused the church to relocate to 50th and Locust streets. The cornerstone of the church was laid in 1917, and the church was completed in 1925 (Lyons 2001).
- 1920s Bones found during construction of Benjamin Franklin Bridge plaza were reburied in Laurel Hill Cemetery (Gibbons 1976).
- 1924 T-Square Club organized a competition for a redesign of Franklin Square. The winning design, a Beaux-Arts plan featuring a semicircle of marble columns and a statue of Ben Franklin, was executed by Roy Larson (Anonymous 1924a). Larson later joined the office of Paul P. Cret and was subsequently a founder of the firm which became known as H2L2.
- 1925 Three human skulls found in the western part of Franklin Square during excavation for a new water main. The skulls were put in a box and reburied (Anonymous 1925).
- 1930 French landscape architect Jacques Greber proposed Franklin Square be converted to a circle to provide an entrance to the Ben Franklin Bridge (Anonymous 1930).
- 1931 In place of Greber's Beaux-Arts scheme, the City Council's Committee on Public Works proposed widening Race and Vine streets by taking 14 feet off the north and south sides of Franklin Square (Anonymous 1931). The widening of Vine Street took place later the same year (Jackson 1932:695).
- 1933 Diagonal extension of 7th Street planned to cut through southwest corner of Franklin Square to provide more space for traffic approaching the Ben Franklin Bridge (Anonymous 1933).
- 1934 Houses razed on the west side of Franklin Square to permit construction of the Delaware River Bridge high-speed line to New Jersey. Station planned for the middle of Franklin Square. With the excavation, about half of the trees in the square had to be removed. Joseph K. Costello, general manager of the Delaware

- River Bridge, promised the park would be restored to the “finest condition” with new walks, trees and grass (Anonymous 1934).
- 1936 June 7. The Bridge Line, operated by Philadelphia Rapid Transit, opened including Franklin Square stop (NRHS 2002).
- 1952 Mayor Clark proposed cutting 21 feet off the north and south sides of the Square to permit widening of Race and Vine streets from 50 to 71 feet (Anonymous 1952). This street widening occurred in 1954.
- 1967 Christmas tree placed in Franklin Square, paid for by a donation from the Shackamaxon Society (Smart 1967). Christmas trees were placed in the square at least through 1970 (Montgomery 1970).
- 1966-68 Restoration of third church building at 4th and Race streets. The building was later used as a paint factory. The first service was held in restored church in November 1968, and the church was officially rededicated the following year (Lyons 2001).
- 1968 Last flagstone walk in square removed. This walk extended along the Sixth Street side of square. The stones removed were slated to be used for repairs in Washington Square and at the Art Museum (McAdam 1968).
- 1969 Delaware River Port Authority officials announced that Franklin Square would be a station on the PATCO High Speed line. Originally built in 1934, it was closed for lack of patronage in 1939 and reopened briefly in 1952 (Lordon 1969). The station again closed several years after the Bicentennial and has not reopened.
- 1971 Fairmount Park Commission approved slicing off of a small portion of the northeast corner of the square for the extension of the Vine Street Expressway (Anonymous 1971).
- 1975 May. Memorial to police and firemen dedicated in Franklin Square. The fourteen foot high memorial, “A Place of Honor,” was designed by Reginald Beauchamp, assistant to the president of the *Bulletin*, and was assembled by Bulletin employees. Constructed of donated materials it has aluminum legs holding up an aluminum urn in which rests a Plexiglas “living flame” (Anonymous 1975a).
- 1975 Foundation and rubble from powder magazine found in excavation led by Jeff Kenyon, an archeologist with the University of Pennsylvania Museum. The foundation measured approximately 35 feet square. The magazine was excavated by the Museum as a Bicentennial project (Anonymous 1975b and c; Corr 1975a). According to an article, the existence of the magazine was documented by a 1796 map in the files of the Philadelphia Historical Commission (Corr 1975a). The magazine, which had a storage capacity of 800 casks of gunpowder, was in use until about 1790, when officials decided to move the powder away from the settled part of the city to present 22nd and Walnut streets (Corr 1975b). Later, the powder magazine was converted to a storehouse for oil for street lights (Sama 1973).

- 1976 Square refurbished for the Bicentennial. The fountain was reconditioned, new benches and trash receptacles were installed, and a small covered stage was erected. The old Franklin Square transit stop was reconditioned for PATCO's High Speed Line (Enoch 1976). This station closed again in 1979 (NRHS 2002).
- 1976 During a sewer excavation in March 1976, portions of two skulls and other bones were uncovered, as well as a tombstone bearing the inscription, "Anna Maria Paris and Peter B. Paris, 1756." Workers were excavating an eight foot deep, east-west trench across the square. The previous week, workers had found another tombstone with the inscription: "Here Lieth the Body of Philip Zeller, son of Philip and Margaret Zeller, Who Departed This Life, October 7, 1798, Aged 12 Years and 7 mos" (Gibbons 1976).
- 1978 September 24. Plaque placed in square to commemorate its role as a cemetery. The plaque reads:
- Historic Burial Grounds. Old First German Reformed Church; United Church of Christ founded 1727.
- In the easterly portion of Franklin Square between the years of 1741 and 1835, many faithful members and five beloved pastors of Old First Reformed Church, United Church of Christ were buried.
- While a number of graves were moved when the City of Philadelphia reclaimed the Park area for recreational purposes, many graves and their stone markers remain beneath these present grounds and walkways. This plaque is placed here that future generations might remember those here buried and honor these sacred grounds.
- Pastors buried in Franklin Square: Rev. John Conrad Steiner-1762; Dr. Gaspar Dietrich Weyburg-1790; Rev. Michael Schlatter-1790; Rev. John Herman Winkhaus-1793; Dr. William Hendel-1798.
- Among these leaders of the Lord's host far and near a silent congregation now sleep thousands of those to whom they once ministered the holy ordinances of the church and the precious instructions and consolations of the gospel.
- Presented by the Congregation of Old First Reformed Church, United Church of Christ. 4th and Race Streets, Philadelphia, PA on the 251st anniversary (as cited in ushistory.org 2005).
- 1982 Franklin Square listed in the National Register of Historic Places (ushistory.org 2005).
- 1984 *Bolt of Lightning...A Memorial to Benjamin Franklin*, a sculpture by Isamu Noguchi, was installed in Monument Plaza, base of Benjamin Franklin Bridge across Sixth Street from Franklin Square (FPAA 2004).