

A Phase I Literature Review of the James A. Garfield house and
property, Hiram, Portage County, Ohio.

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Abstract

Hiram College, with the collaboration of the University of Akron, Department of Anthropology and Stewards of Historical Preservation, proposed a geophysical survey of the recently acquired Garfield Home and property. The goal of the survey is to identify associated outbuildings with the Garfield Home, which is currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The project area includes the entire residential property, and extends into the lot immediately north of the property. The total area to be surveyed is roughly 400 square meters. A fluxgate gradiometer and an electrical resistivity meter will be used to identify subsurface architectural and archaeological materials. The equipment will be provided by the University of Akron, Department of Anthropology and Classical Studies.

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Introduction

The Garfield property is located in the uplands of the Silver Creek watershed (Figure 1). The property is a residential lot within the village of Hiram, Ohio. The property was recently acquired by Hiram College; the goal of future research is to identify potential contributing elements of the property to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Currently, the Garfield home at Hiram is listed on the NRHP (Johannesen 1975a).

The project area includes the back lot of the Garfield property, or roughly 400 square meters. The project area is bound to the south by the Garfield-Robbins-Zimmerman home. The western and northern boundaries of the project area are bound by the parcel property lines. The eastern boundary of the project area are the garage and drive-way leading to Hinsdale Street.

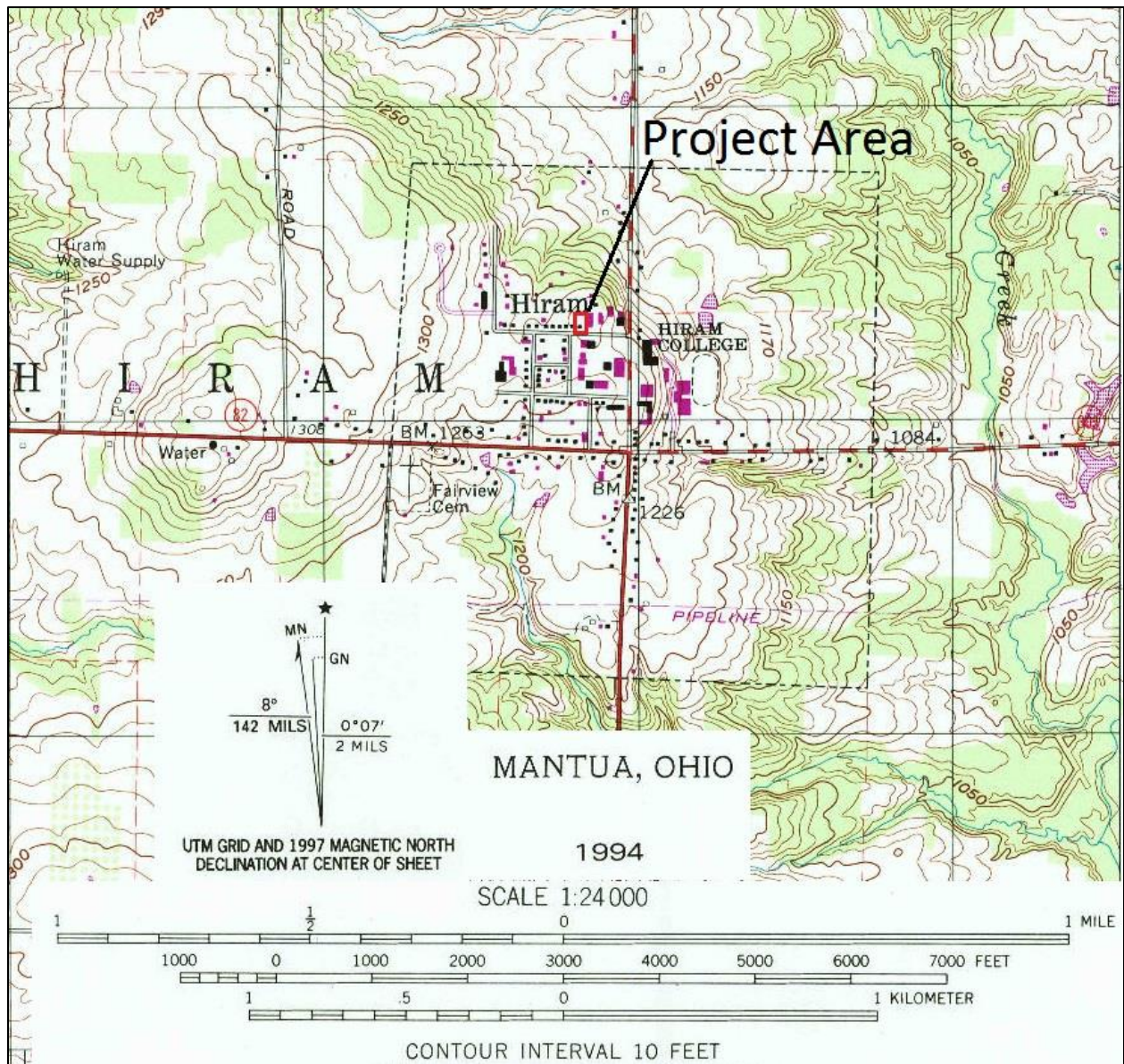


Figure 1: Project Area on the 1994 USGS 7.5' Mantua quadrangle.

Research Design

For the purposes of this report, cultural resources have been divided into *prehistoric* and *historic* resources. *Prehistoric* is defined here as cultural resources created or used prior to written accounts, while *historic* is defined as cultural resources create or used after written accounts. The historic period begins circa 1650 with the first accounts of southern Lake Erie in *The Jesuit Relations* (Brose 1984; Bush and Callender 1984; Wheeler-Voeglin and Tanner 1974).

Prehistoric Environment

Portage County bedrock consists of Denovian, Mississippian, and Pennsylvanian age rock (Bownocker 1981; Ohio Division of Geological Survey 2006). The Denovian formations consist of Olentangy and Ohio Shales, which bisect Portage County near the center and through the north of the county in thin sections paralleling the West Branch of the Mahoning River and Parts of Eagle Creek. The Mississippian formation, composed of limestone, sandstones, and Waverly and Maxville shales, lies beneath the small sections of the Denovian formations that bisect the county. The dominant deposit in Portage County are Pennsylvanian age shales, sandstones, Allegheny coal and other similar aged rock. Well over 75% of Portage County is composed of Pennsylvanian bedrock. Pennsylvanian limestones contain the only flint or chert strata in the county. Within the Pennsylvanian limestone is the Upper Mercer formation, located in the southern part of the county (Stout and Schoenlaub 1945) along streams eroding out as small nodules.

The project area lies within part of the Glaciated Allegheny Plateau, on a Wisconsin Age Ground Moraine (Brockman 1998; White 1982). The soils in the project area consist of Rittman silt loam, part of the Wadsworth Rittman soil association (Ritchie et al. 1978:92); Rittman silt loams are nearly level to sloping, are moderately well drained with medium runoff. Wadsworth Rittman soils formed in moderately fine textured glacial till and have a fragipan (Ritchie et al. 1978:3).

The vegetation of the region is dominated by beech-maple forests (Gordon 1966; Forsyth 1970); beech-maple forests could provide numerous different resources for prehistoric populations such as bark for canoes and habitation structures, sap for food, and wood for fire fuel. The prehistoric ecology of the project area must be inferred from sites excavated in the area around the property. The Krill Cave site (33 SU 18) preserved prehistoric ecological resources that can be partially reconstructed here. Fauna identified at the Krill Cave site include 35 types of mollusks, 10 types of birds, 3 types of reptiles, 3 types of fish, and 2 types of amphibians (Prufer et al. 1989). This area of Summit County also suited woodland wildlife such as deer, raccoon, squirrel, chipmunk, wolf, bear, bobcat, woodchuck, vole, woodrat, bat, hawk, owl, turkey, passenger pigeon, ruffed grouse, and woodcock. The project areas ecological conditions were likely similar to the area around Krill Cave (33 SU 18). Other sites in the area, including the Mystery Cave site (33 SU 488), have recovered bear, deer, wolf, and fox remains.

The project area is 387 m above sea level (USGS 1994) in the upland headwaters of the Mahoning River watershed. Silver Creek, a permanent stream tributary of Eagle Creek, is roughly 1.25 km east of the project area. The Cuyahoga River is roughly 2.75 km west of the project area. The project area is near the drainage divide of the Lake Erie and Ohio River watersheds to the west.

Prehistoric Cultural Resources

The prehistoric period spans over 10,000 years of human activity in the Cuyahoga River Valley (Table 1); the time periods are divided into broad cultural time periods listed below (Lepper 2005). The dates listed below are sometimes subdivided further, such as the various Whittlesey phases of the Late Prehistoric (see Brose et al. 1981). American Indians have been using the natural resources of the Cuyahoga Valley in response to social, economic, and climatic changes throughout the prehistoric period

(Winstel 2000). Along the Cuyahoga River valley there are hundreds of prehistoric sites including camps, small habitations, hamlets, villages, cemeteries, burial mounds, earthworks, storage caches, and plenty of artifacts dropped in transit from one camp to the next.

Table 1: Timeline of Prehistory in Northeast Ohio

Period Name	Years (BC and AD)	Overarching trends
Proto-historic	AD 1500—1650	European trade goods, Iroquois Wars
Late Prehistoric	AD 1000—1500	Fortified villages, Maize Agriculture
Late Woodland	AD 400—1000	Hopewellian collapse, nucleation, maize introduction, bow and arrow
Middle Woodland	AD 1—400	Hopewell culture, trade networks, earthwork construction, ceremonialism
Early Woodland	1000 BC—AD 1	Adena culture, Ceremonialism, mound construction, plant domestication, trade
Late Archaic	3500—1000 BC	Plant domestication, tool diversification
Middle Archaic	6500—3500 BC	Deciduous forest resource exploitation, climate change
Early Archaic	8000—6500 BC	Big game hunting/climate change
Paleoindian	12000—8000 BC	Big game hunting

The first people to migrate into the Lake Erie watershed are known as the Paleoindians (Lepper 2005). Most of the Paleoindian in Ohio is represented by a small handful of excavated sites, with the majority of sites discovered as isolated projectile point finds (Brose et al. 1981:108). Paleoindian that have been professionally excavated include Nobles Pond in Stark County, Paleo-crossing in Medina County, and Sheridan Cave in Wyandot County (Lepper 2005).

The Archaic Period encompasses the largest time period Ohio prehistory (Purtill 2009). Throughout the Archaic, the climate was changing. The water levels of Lake Erie were fluctuating (Holcombe et al. 2003; Szabo et al. 2011), and new floral and faunal resources, such as deciduous forests and deer and elk, were establishing populations in Northeast Ohio (Brose et al. 1981:106-108; Purtill 2009).

The Woodland Period is one of the best represented time periods in public interpretation and education. The “Adena” and “Hopewell” cultures flourished during the Early and Middle Woodland Periods (Lepper 2005; Finney 2002:24). The Woodland Period is usually synonymous with the term “moundbuilders,” as this period marked a rapid increase in ceremonial mound and earthwork construction (Lepper 2005). Most Woodland mounds and earthworks have been reported since the earliest White Settlers arrive in the Lake Erie watershed, and are well represented in Mills’ (1914) Archaeological Atlas of Ohio.

During the Late Prehistoric and Proto-historic Periods, populations shifted towards settled village life, intensive maize agriculture, and nucleated families (Brose 2000; Finney 2002:28-32; Lepper 2005; Redmond 2000; Winstel 2000:6). American Indians continued building earthen embankments, historically called “hilltop forts,” (Murphy 1968); however, these hilltop forts were not functionally forts. Some “forts” served as habitation locations (Redmond 2000, 2008), and others as sacred spaces (Belovich and Brose 1992). The most well-known prehistoric sites are the large, multi-family villages scattered throughout the Cuyahoga River Valley.

There are no previously recorded sites within the project area; however, there are two prehistoric sites within one mile of the project area (Figure 2), the Collier Site (33 PO 53) and the Knippenberg Site (33 PO 138). The Collier site (33 PO 53) is a small lithic scatter consisting of one point, three flakes, and a scraper. The site was previously investigated by S. N. Luther of Garrettsville, OH and reported in the annual report of the Smithsonian (Luther 1881). Luther’s investigation revealed an annual pile of sandstone, 10 feet in diameter and 3 feet tall, filled with ash and charcoal but no other artifacts reported. The other site, the Knippenberg site (33 PO 138) is a more substantial and diverse site that includes an adze, celt, part of a Hopewellian platform pipe, and numerous projectile points from the Early Archaic to the Late Woodland period. Most of the prehistoric sites in the Upper Cuyahoga watershed consist of small lithic scatters of a few flakes, a few projectile points, and perhaps a scraper (see 33 PO 23, 33 PO 43 through 33 PO 58, 33 PO 114-115). Most of these sites are located within the Cuyahoga River Valley on remnant terraces. Another large and diverse site 3.5 km north of the project area is the Allyn Site (33 PO 137). The Allyn site contains drills, celts, adzes, and a large variety of projectile points and knives.

According to Mills (1914), there is a mound reported approximately 700 meters northeast of the project area. No OAI currently exists for this reported mound, and there is no previous investigation on file at the Ohio Historic Preservation Office. William C. Mills would occasionally rely on the letters of collectors to plot sites on the atlas (Dancey 1984); however, as Dancey notes, this does not mean the Mills Atlas should be abandoned. Warner, Beers, and Co. (1885:221) describe a possible mound “north of Hiram centre” but report that no excavation had been conducted on the mound to confirm its cultural affiliation.

In the northern portion of Portage County, there is an astonishing lack of sites with sub-surface features. Within Cuyahoga Valley National Park, prehistoric sub-surface features have been found within meters of historic homesteads (Wanyerka 2014), so there is a possibility that prehistoric features are intact on the Garfield property.

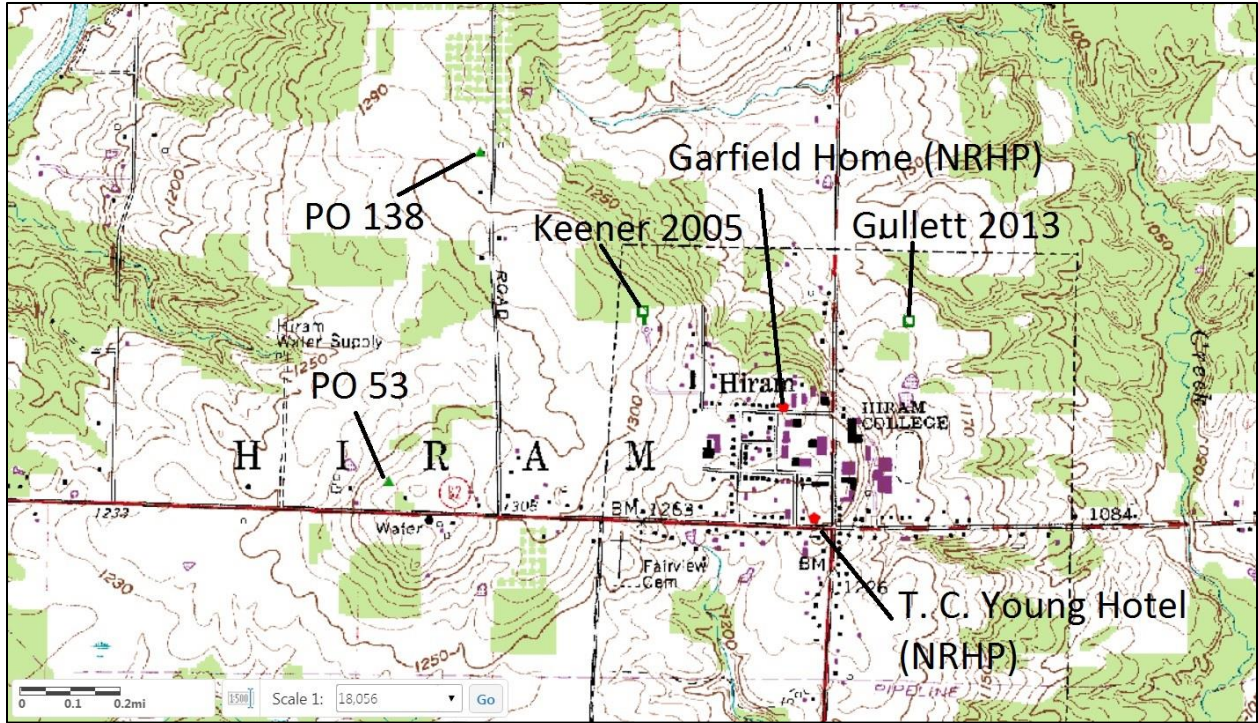


Figure 2: Location of other historic properties and surveys (USGS 7.5' Mantua quad 1994; Ohio Historic Preservation Office).

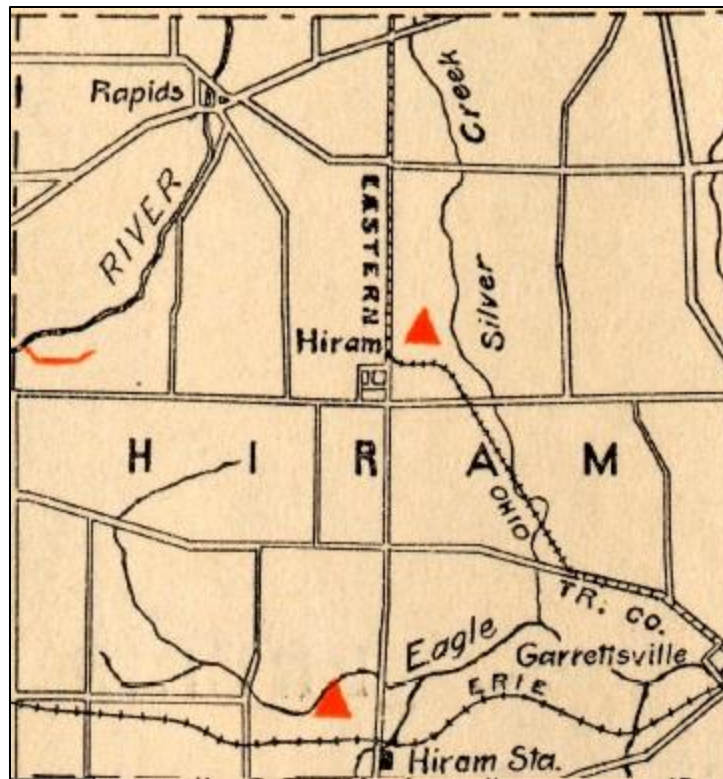


Figure 3: Two mounds and a burial plotted in Hiram Township (Mills 1914).

The Garfield property was plotted by the Connecticut Land Company for land speculation in the early 1800s (Holm and Dudley 1957:372). According to Holm and Dudley (1957:376), Hiram center was located along the road from Warren to Cleveland, and established three inns very early to accommodate travelers between the two towns. Thomas Young, one of the first settlers of Hiram Center (Holm and Dudley 1957:374; Warner, Beers & Co. 1885:470), established a Hotel known as “Young’s exchange.” The Young house is the only other property listed on the National Register of Historic Places in Hiram (Johannesen 1975b). The Hiram Eclectic Institute was founded in 1850 (Holm and Dudley 1957:378; Warner, Beers, & CO. 1885:473), after which time Hiram Center saw rapid development. Most of the houses neighboring the Garfield property were constructed shortly after the opening of Hiram Eclectic Institute (see OHI’s for POR-117-3, POR-609-3, POR-611-3). The first owner of the house was Horace Brown (Johannesen 1975a). By 1863, James and Lucretia had purchased the property (Johannesen 1975a); after the Garfield’s, the property largely remained in the hands of the Robbins and the Zimmerman families to the present day.

Horace R. Brown, son of Daniel Brown, owned the property and constructed the extant house on the Garfield property circa 1852 (Johannesen 1975a). Horace Brown, son of one of the first White settlers of Freedom Township, was born in 1826 (Warner, Beers, & Co. 1885:454). Horace Brown, owner and builder of the original house in 1852, was listed as a farmer in Freedom Township, lot 60, a few miles southeast of Hiram in 1850 (U.S. Census 1850). By 1857 he was listed as the owner of the house two doors down from the Garfield home (Figure 4 and 5). By 1860, Horace was still listed in Hiram, but as a merchant (U.S. Census 1860). According to his U.S. draft registration record (Provost Marshal General’s Bureau 1863), Horace was a “trader,” in Hiram. Horace married Mary Ann Peck in 1842 (Summit County Court of Common Pleas 1842). Horace may have been related to Judge P. O. Brown who lived at the corner of the road (Mathews and Taintor 1857; Warner, Beers & Co. 1885). During this time, Hiram’s first principal, Amos Hayden (Warner, Beers, & Co. 1885:473) lived in the house immediately northeast (POR-609-3).

In 1863, Horace Brown sold the property to James A. Garfield (Portage County Records Office 1864). James and Lucretia Garfield owned the property until 1874 (Figure 6), when the property was sold to Burke Hinsdale, another Principal of Hiram College (Portage County Records Office 1874).

By 1879, the Ladies Hall (later renamed Bowler Hall), POR-628-3, was constructed next door (Figure 7) to the Garfield Property (Holm and Dudley 1957:378). Between 1952 (USDA 1952) and 1959 (USGS 1959) additional dormitories were constructed around Bowler Hall and Dodge Circuit was paved (Figure 8). Prior to these renovations, the area behind Bowler Hall had been renovated in the 1930s for the faculty housing (POR-630-3), the music department (POR-610-3), and the old Amos Hayden home (POR-609-3). The area around the Garfield property has clearly been heavily disturbed by these various historical construction episodes.

In 1883, Burke Hinsdale sold the property to Phebe B. Clapp (Portage County Records Office 1883). Phebe Clapp, born 1834, was the mother of Elizabeth A. Clapp and widowed by 1880 (U.S. Census 1880). Phebe B. Clapp was also James A. Garfield’s cousin (Cleveland Plain Dealer 2014). Phebe’s daughter, Elizabeth, married Frank Carle Robbins in 1886 (U.S. Census 1900). Phebe and Frank Robbins son, John Clapp Robbins, married Esther Turner Holland in 1918 (U.S. Census 1930). Esther H. Robbins gave the property to her daughter, Phebe R. Zimmerman (Cleveland Plain Dealer 2014) in 1952 (Portage County Records Office 1952). Phebe Zimmerman was the owner when the property was nominated to the National Register of Historic Places in 1975 (Johannesen 1975a). Shortly before Phebe Zimmerman passed away in 2014, Hiram College acquired the property (Bilizcky 2013).

Sanborn fire insurance maps for the Village of Hiram could not be located during a search of the Kent State University Map Library. Fire insurance maps were likely never produced for the Village of Hiram due to the village’s small population during the 19th and early 20th century.



Figure 4: Area of Interest on the 1857 Portage County Atlas (Matthews and Taintor 1857).

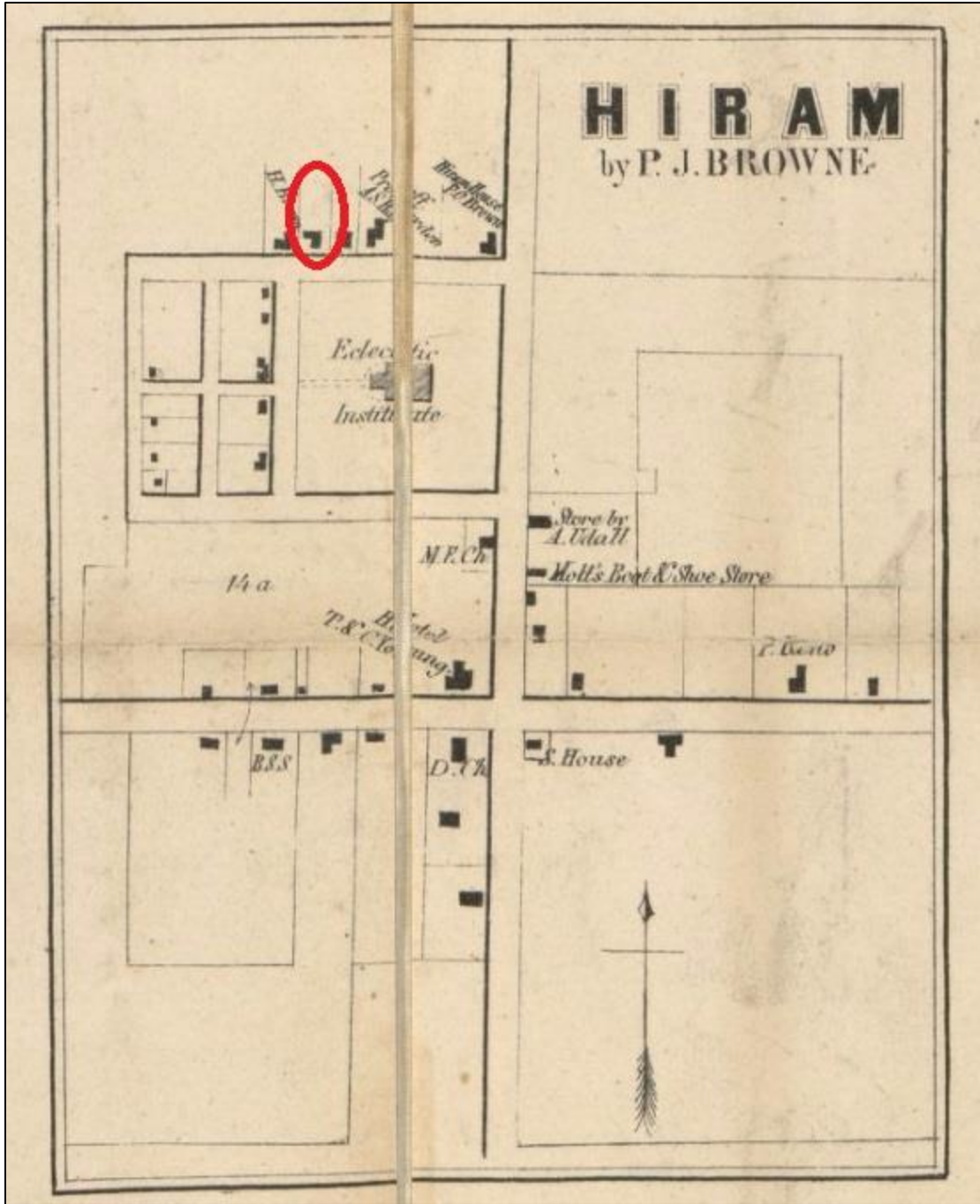


Figure 5: Project Area in closer detail on the 1857 Atlas (Matthews and Taintor 1857).

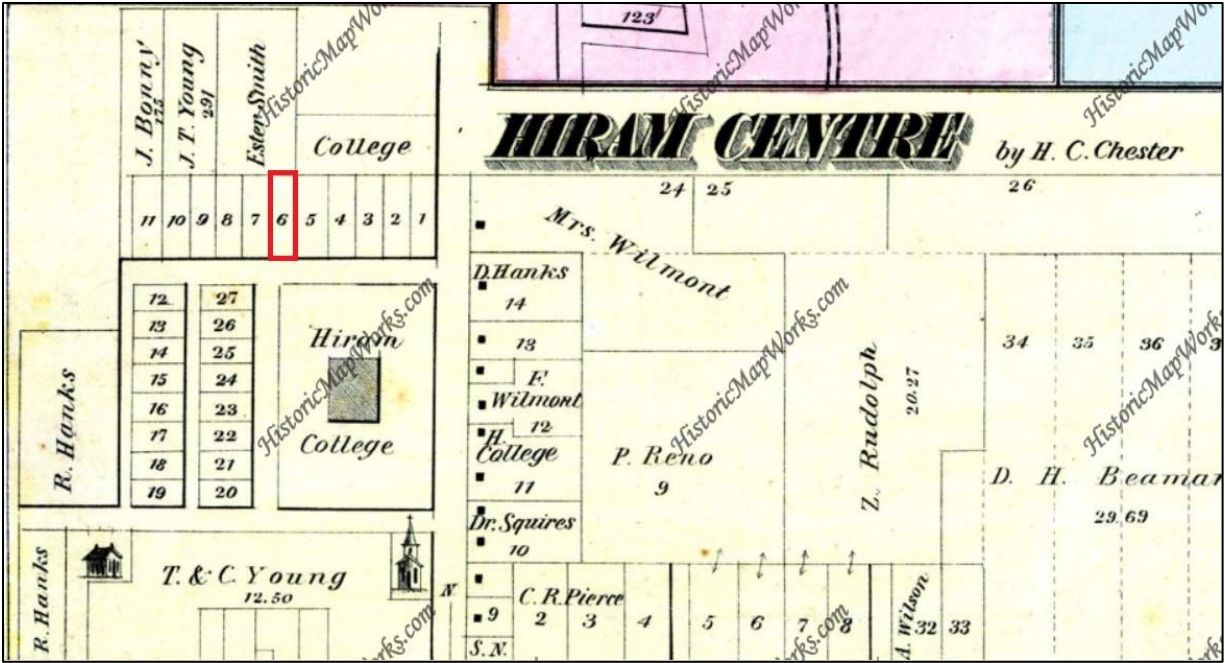


Figure 6: Location of Garfield property on 1874 atlas (L. H. Everts & Co. 1874).

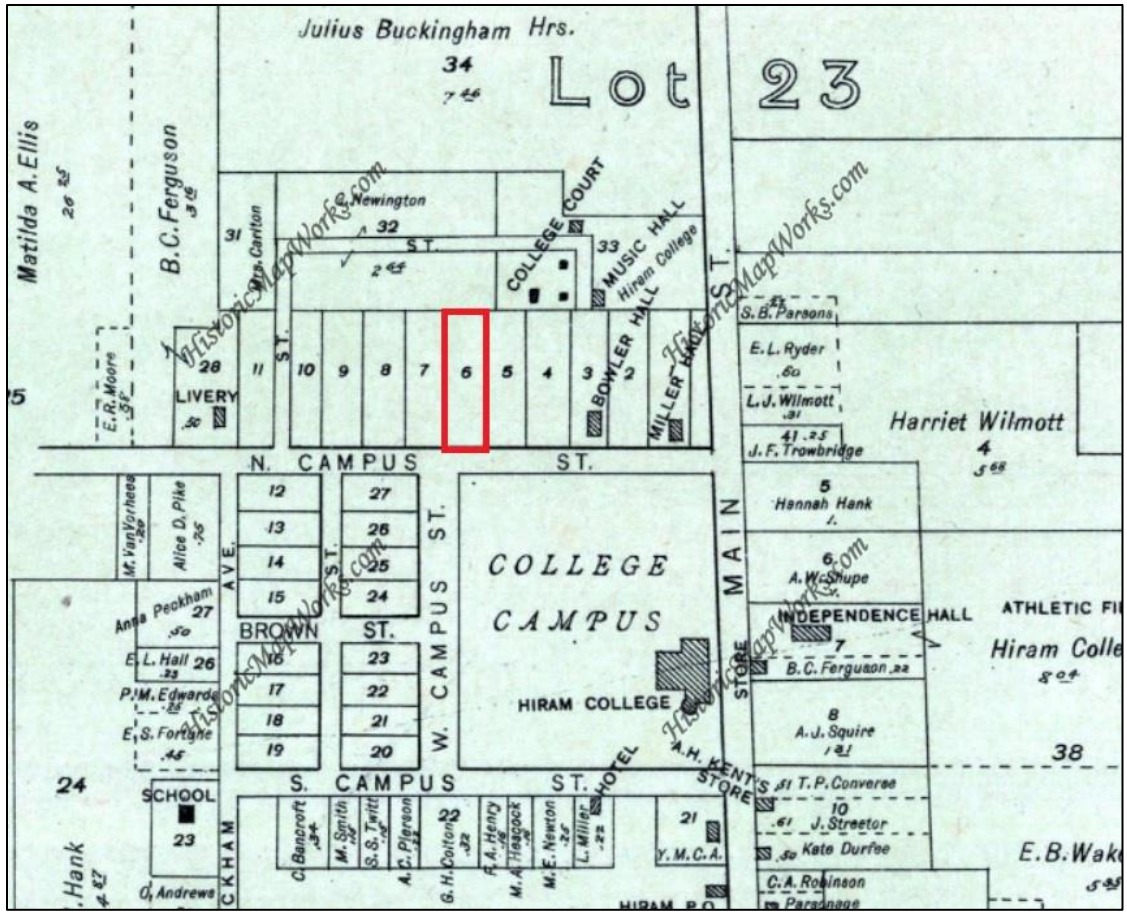


Figure 7: Location of Garfield Property on 1900 atlas (H. B. Stranahan & Co. 1900).

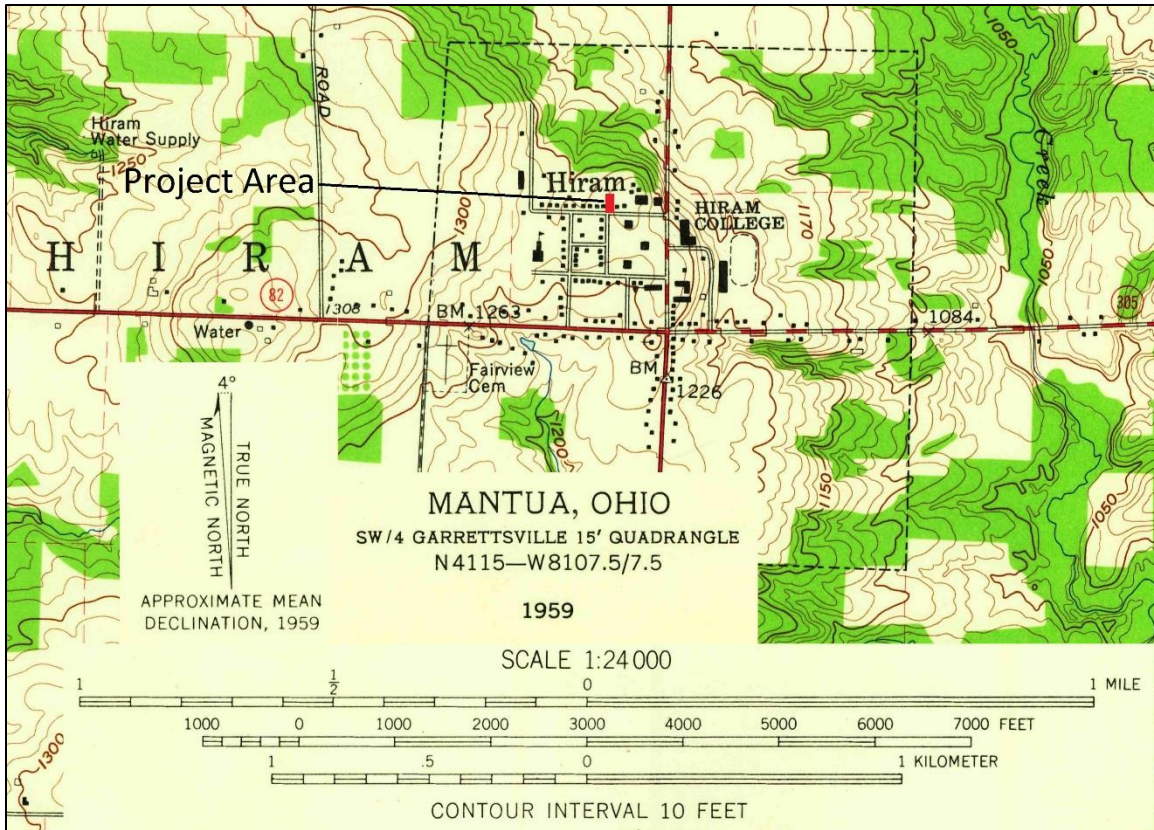


Figure 8: Project area on 1959 USGS 7.5' Mantua quadrangle.

Previous Investigations

There have only been two previous archaeological investigations conducted within one mile of the project area (Guttell 2013; Keener 2005); both investigations were conducted for proposed cell tower facilities to the northeast and northwest of the project area. Neither Keener (2005), nor Guttell (2013) located any cultural materials within their respective survey areas; however, both surveys involved a relatively small area of potential effect (less than 0.3 acres).

Conclusions

Based on the available historical resources and previous surveys, there is a small likelihood of historic out-buildings present within the project area. The historic out-buildings more than likely included a privy, or outhouse. The extant house is currently listed on the NRHP (Johannesen 1975a); the current project area is outside the NRHP boundaries. The potential to identify contributing elements to the current NRHP Garfield Home is low. There is an equal potential of finding prehistoric artifacts and sub-surface features, which would be a significant addition to the archaeological record in the northern part of Portage County.

The current historical record indicates the property has been residentially plotted and occupied since at least the mid-19th century. According to Ritchie et al (1978) the back lots of residential properties are the most likely to have the least soil disturbances.

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