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## QUINDARO: KANSAS TERRITORIAL FREE-STATE PORT ON THE MISSOURI RIVER

Larry J. Schmits

*The Quindaro site is the location of the mid-nineteenth-century town site of Quindaro, the later post-Civil War African-American community of Happy Hollow and, during the late nineteenth century, Western University, the first black school in Kansas. Quindaro was established in 1857 and served briefly as a free-state port of entry into Kansas Territory. The depression of 1857-58, its poor location, its inability to finance a railroad, and internal dissension led to Quindaro's demise in the early 1860s. Late in the Civil War, African-American freedmen moved into the abandoned town site forming the African-American community of Happy Hollow. Freedmans University, founded in the 1860s by Eben Blachley, was acquired by the African Methodist Episcopal Church and was chartered as Western University in 1877. Fieldwork correlated the archaeological remains of the town site with the platted, nineteenth-century town-site lots and structures. Excavations focused on both commercial and residential lots. Other features that most likely were associated with the town site include building-stone quarries, lime kilns, roads, and bridge abutments. Local legend associates the Quindaro site with John Brown and the underground railroad, although historical research reveals little support for this interpretation. The Quindaro town site can best be viewed as a failed mid-nineteenth-century real estate development. The site is archaeologically significant primarily because of the association of an extensive archival record with the archaeological remains, which detail everyday life in a mid-nineteenth-century Kansas community. The site also has considerable significance to the local African-American community as a traditional cultural property.*

The biggest boom Kansas ever had in the city line, or perhaps ever will have, took place in 1857, continuing into 1858. To a half-dozen of the most prominent of these cities, I wish to invite your special attention: Quindaro, Delaware, Sumner, Doniphan, Palermo and Elwood.... Their "boom" continued for a year or two... today it would be difficult to determine even the sites upon which some of these cities were erected.

As there may be persons who have never heard of the cities about which I am speaking, and who do not know where they were located, and, as the enthusiastic exhumist of cities, after they have gotten through with Pompeii and Herculaneum and other cities of the Old World may want to

try their hands upon the lost cities of this continent, it might be well for me to state, that they were all situated on the Missouri River.

Address of Col. C. K. Holliday, founder of Topeka  
Kansas Quarter-Centennial  
Topeka, Kansas  
January 29, 1886

Quindaro was one of a number of Kansas territorial river ports established in the mid-1850s after the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which opened Kansas and Nebraska for settlement. The site (14WY314) is located on the bluffs of the Missouri River on the present-day northern edge of Kansas City, Kansas, just west of Interstate 635 (Figure 1). In addition to serving as a former Kansas territorial river port, the abandoned town site developed into the late Civil War African-American community of Happy Hollow and in the late nineteenth century became the location of Western University, the first black school in Kansas.

Browning-Ferris Industries (BFI) have proposed developing a 142-acre area of the site into a landfill. Consequently, archaeological investigations were conducted at the site from 1987-88. The archaeological program for the project was carried out under the directive of a special-use permit issued by the city of Kansas City, Kansas. The part of the site proposed for a landfill covers two abandoned tracts that are owned by the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the city of Kansas City but are leased to BFI. The site has received considerable media attention, particularly because of its alleged association with the Kansas Conflict and the underground railroad, and interested citizens, including many opponents of the landfill, petitioned the State of Kansas in 1989 to acquire the property as a state historic site. The Kansas State Historic Sites Board of Review recommended state acquisition of the site in 1988; however, legislation providing for funding failed to pass the Kansas legislature in 1989. Litigation regarding the fate of the site and proposed landfill has been ongoing since 1990.

The following report presents a brief overview of the site derived from the research conducted during the archaeological data-recovery program. This program, which includes both historical research and archaeological investigation, is only partially complete. While the field investigations have been nearly completed, analysis of the data generated was in its initial stages at the time the project was interrupted by the controversy over the landfill in 1988. The present report describes the historical development of the site and provides an overview of the 1987-88 field investigations. The concluding section evaluates the association of the site with the Kansas Conflict and the underground railroad.

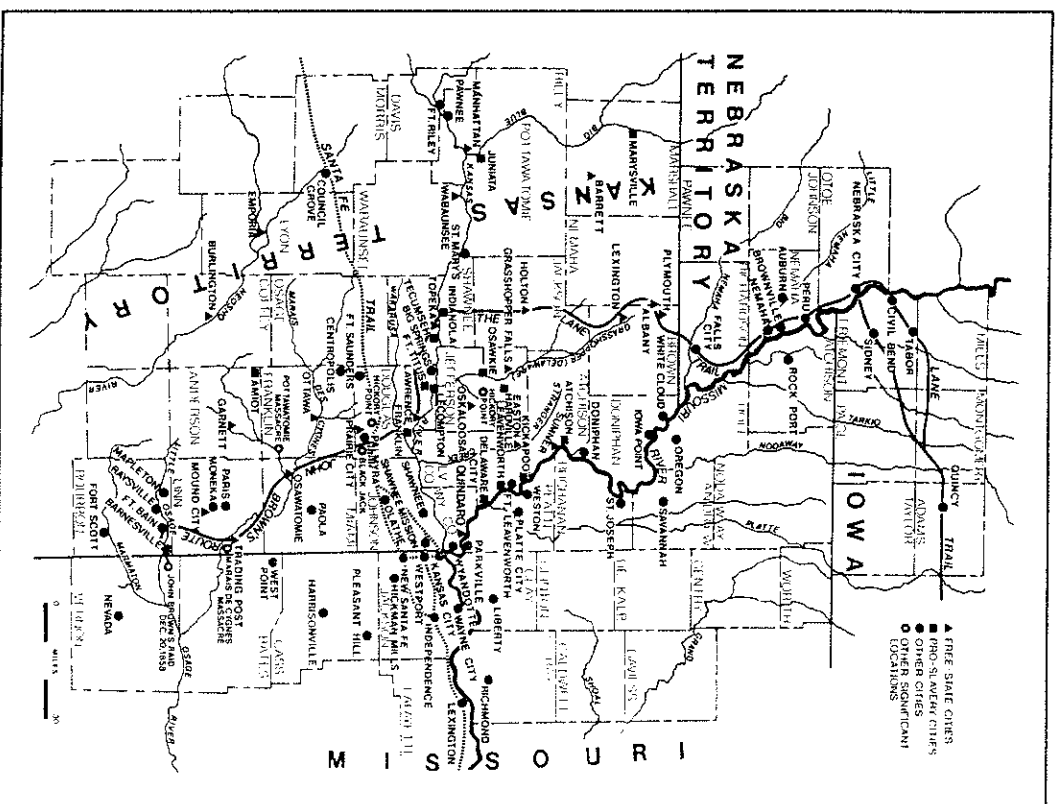


Figure 1. Location of Quindaro, other Kansas territorial towns, and significant places in the Kansas Conflict. The Lane Trail served as a free-state route of immigration into Kansas and later as the underground railroad for fugitive slaves.

## THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF QUINDARO

The development of the Quindaro town site occurred during the speculative boom in real estate following the opening of Kansas for settlement by the Kansas-Nebraska Act on May 30, 1854 (Gates 1954:5). This act provided for popular sovereignty over the issue of slavery as these territories were opened for settlement. Within the first two years, settlers moved into Kansas by way of the Missouri and Kansas rivers to as far west as Manhattan and Junction City (Malin 1984:224). Despite the fact that Kansas had opened for settlement, little land actually was available for preemption or purchase, since most land along the border in the eastern part of the state was held by Indians or claimed by Missourians. Because of the sectional controversy over slavery, settlement of Kansas was promoted by politicians and immigrant-aid companies from both the North and the South. The early established river ports—especially Leavenworth, Atchison, and Kickapoo City—were largely controlled by proslavery Missourians, although political sentiment in Doniphan and Iowa Point was more divided on the slavery issue (Fitzgerald 1986). The early free-state settlements established by northerners were located principally along the Kansas River valley. Charles Robinson and Charles Branscomb, who were sent by the New England Emigrant Aid Company to Kansas in 1855, established the free-state stronghold community of Lawrence on the bank of the Kansas River (Johnson 1954).

As the tensions in the Kansas Conflict heightened in late 1855, free-state speculators and land agents such as Robinson found themselves at a disadvantage because trade along the Missouri River, the main transportation artery into the new territory, was controlled by proslavery Missourians who attempted to prevent free-state settlers from entering the territory (Wilson 1975:58). The solution to flanking this proslavery blockade was the opening of the Lane Trail in early 1856 at the railroad terminus in Iowa City; the trail traversed west into Nebraska and then south to Topeka. In addition to serving as an immigrant trail, the Lane Trail also served as the principal route of arms into free-state communities and later as the route of the underground railroad for fugitive slaves (Connelley 1921; Noble 1977).

Robinson and other free-state leaders also believed that the control of river towns was required for the transportation and commercial development of the territory (Wilson 1975:58). The options available to free-state leaders included either the purchase of controlling interests in existing river port towns or the plating of new towns. In early January 1857 the New England Emigrant Aid Company authorized its general agent, Samuel Pomeroy, to attempt to acquire a controlling interest in the town of Wyandott (Hickman 1935; Johnson 1954). Failing this, the executive committee in March authorized him to establish a town on the Missouri River as nearly opposite St. Joseph as possible. Wyandott and a site adjacent to St. Joseph were the first choices because they were directly across the Missouri

River from the terminus of the two projected railroads across Missouri—the Hannibal to St. Joseph Railroad and the Pacific Railroad (from Jefferson City to Kansas City). While these plans were being considered, Pomeroy was approached by the proprietors of Atchison with an offer to sell a controlling interest in Atchison. It was Pomeroy's opinion that Atchison represented the best site, and the New England Emigrant Aid Company made its largest investment in Atchison in 1857, acquiring a controlling interest in the town. In early 1857 another free-state faction, headed by Jim Lane, bought heavily in Doniphan.

While these free-state groups were acquiring interests in Atchison and Doniphan plans were being made for the plating of two new free-state river towns, Sumner and Quindaro. The first, established in 1856, was Sumner, which was located just south of Atchison (Martin 1911-12). Major development, however, did not occur until 1857. The driving force behind the establishment of Sumner was a northeastern abolitionist, John N. Wheeler, who named the town after the brother of Massachusetts Senator Charles Sumner. By October 1856 Robinson had resigned his position with the New England Emigrant Aid Company, and in November 1856 he and S. N. Simpson approached Abeldard Guthrie with plans for the development of a second free-state port located between Wyandott and Leavenworth. Guthrie had married into the Wyandott tribe and owned land just south of the proposed town site. The site was selected and was named after his wife Quindaro, a Wyandott Indian.

The location of the proposed Quindaro town site was about five miles upstream from the confluence of the Kansas and Missouri rivers, or about three miles west of Wyandott City near the first meander cut along the Kansas side of the Missouri River and about two miles south of Parkville (Figure 2). George Park—who was the founder of Parkville and the editor of the Bentonic *Parkville Luminary* and who had previously assisted Robinson in preparation of a pamphlet for the New England Emigrant Aid Company (Johnson 1954:61)—also became an investor in the town site.

In 1856 Wyandotte County was still part of Leavenworth County. The extreme eastern part of the county between the Kansas and Missouri rivers had been purchased by the Wyandott tribe in 1844 (Figure 2). The Wyandott Purchase had been distributed to tribal members in the form of allotments, and title to these allotments could be acquired by purchase. At the time of the founding of Quindaro in early 1857, the principal existing cities in Leavenworth County consisted of Wyandott City and Leavenworth. Leavenworth County west of the Wyandott Purchase consisted of the Delaware reservation and the Delaware trust lands. Existing roads connected Leavenworth, Lawrence, and Wyandott. Ferries that crossed the Missouri River were located just below Weston at Rialto and at Parkville. Ferries also crossed the Kansas River at Wyandott City and at the southeast corner of the Delaware Reserve.

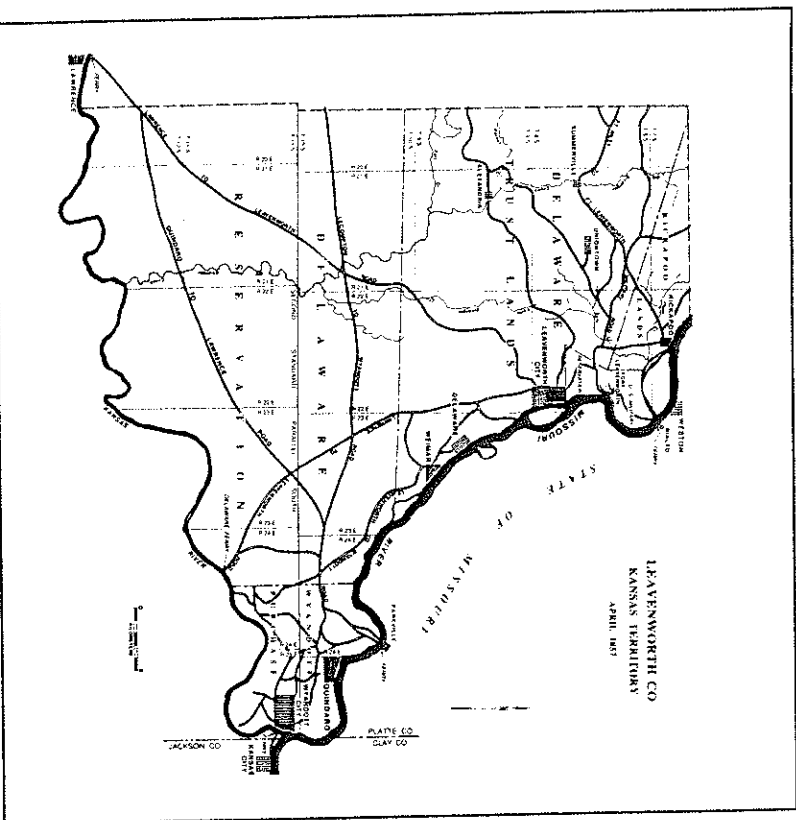


Figure 2. Map of Leavenworth County, April 1857 (after Quinn 1857).

Guthrie had been identified with the free-state movement; however, there were proslavery and antislavery factions in the Wyandott nation, and it was advantageous politically to include both factions in the town company. For this reason, Joel Walker, a Wyandott resident and proslavery member of the Wyandott tribe, was solicited to take an interest (Connelley 1899:114). That Walker, who died in 1857, was proslavery is indicated clearly by his August 26, 1860, probate record on file at the Wyandotte County Historical Society, which lists among his possessions two slaves named Minnie and Squire. Furthermore, Robinson and Walker were acquainted because Robinson previously had purchased Walker's Wyandott float for the development of Lawrence (Dary 1982).

The Quindaro town-site development was promoted principally by Charles Robinson who, on January 31, 1857, signed a two-year contract with Joseph Lyman, treasurer of the Boston Kansas Land Trust, to serve as land agent for the company (Lawrence Papers n.d.). He then traveled to Boston in early 1857 promoting Quindaro on behalf of the Boston Kansas Land Trust (Wilson 1975:61). The town was advertised extensively in the North and many New Englanders invested. Despite Robinson's former connections, and recent assertions to the contrary (e.g., Greenbaum 1982:10-12, Johnson 1954:85), the New England Emigrant Aid Company was not heavily involved in the Quindaro development. Correspondence from Robinson to Edward Everett Hale dated April 17, 1857, indicates a considerable disagreement between the Emigrant Aid Company and Robinson over his plans for the Quindaro development. In that correspondence Robinson states:

I offered the whole town to the secretary, one of the Directors and the Agents of the Aid Co. in the fall of 1856 but they declined it...it will take something besides the whiskey shops and proslavery influences of Wyandott, even with the agency of Mr. T. [Thayer] and the E. A. Co., to prevent the success of Quindaro. (New England Emigrant Aid Company Papers 1854-1909).

Despite the conflict with Robinson, the New England Emigrant Aid Company did acquire ten shares in Quindaro in exchange for a saw mill. This, however, appears to have been a simple business transaction to dispose of a mill that was accumulating storage fees in Kansas City rather than an attempt to acquire controlling interest in Quindaro.

The 1856 O. A. Bassett plat of the Quindaro town site (Figure 3) probably was used as an advertising brochure for the sale of lots and is typical of many of the town plats of the period. These plats often illustrate an exaggerated town-site development and basically were just paper plats with a network of graded streets. A park is shown, and a network of proposed railroads is shown in the lower map connecting Quindaro with cities in the east. Connections with the proposed Hannibal to St. Joseph Railroad, which would have linked Quindaro with the northeast seaports through the Great Lakes, are shown by the proposed Parkville and Grand River Railroad. Connection of Quindaro with the Pacific Railroad, which would link Quindaro with St. Louis and Cincinnati, is shown by a line extending from Jefferson City westward through Kansas City and Wyandott. In the upper part of the plat is a map of the Kansas River valley showing the proposed Central Pacific Railroad connecting Quindaro with Lawrence and Manhattan. Obviously, anticipated railroad connections were uppermost in the minds of the Quindaro promoters.

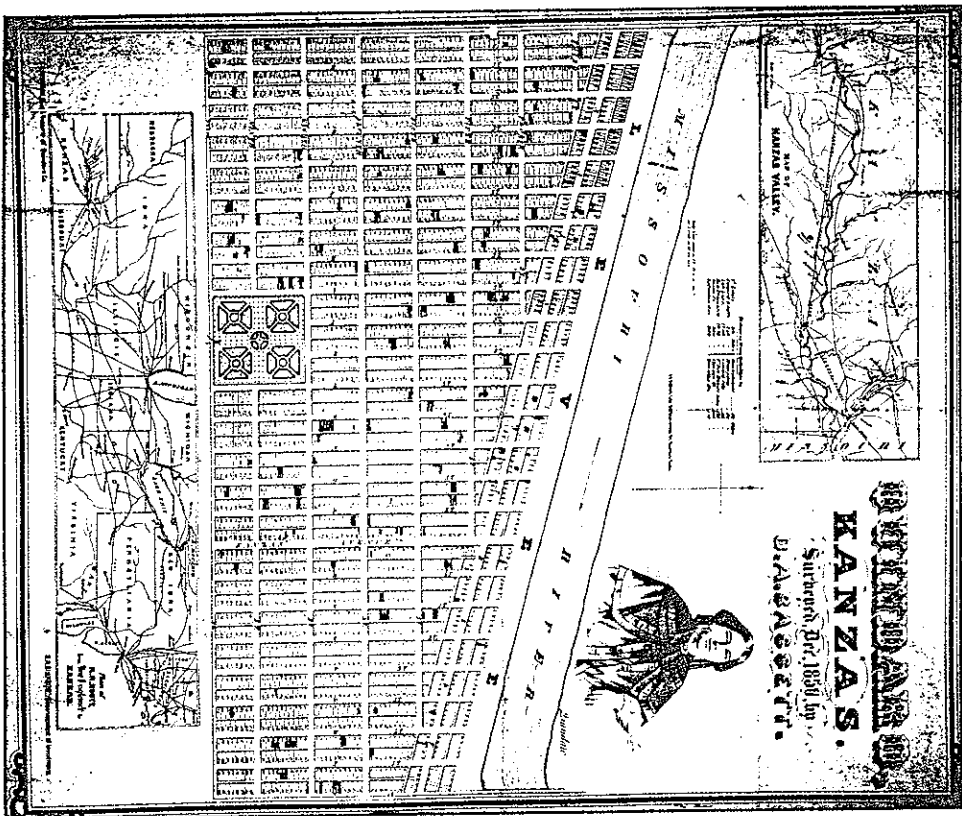


Figure 3. The December 1856 O. A. Bassett plat of Quindaro. This plat most likely was used as an advertising brochure to promote the sale of town-site lots. Courtesy of the Kansas State Historical Society.

The Quindaro Town Company officers were Joel Walker, president; Abelard Guthrie, vice president; Charles Robinson, treasurer; and S. N. Simpson, secretary (Figure 4). The town site was surveyed and ground was broken on January 1, 1857. The first building erected was a small structure that was used as a temporary town company office. The first store was opened in March, and the Quindaro House Hotel and the sawmill were opened by April 1. In May, a considerable work force was put to work grading the wharf and Kansas Avenue, the main street extending south from the river. A large ferry boat was put into operation by the summer.

The newspaper, the *Quindaro Chinidawm*, made its first appearance in May 1957, the editor was J. M. Walden, and it was published until June 1858. The first issue of the newspaper indicated that trees had been removed from several acres, that grading of the hill to the wharf had progressed, and that 30–40 homes had been built. The *Chinidawm* (May 23, 1857) reported 36 steamboat landings in one week. A road (see Figure 2) was built across the Delaware reservation to Lawrence, and a line of stages operated by Alfred Robinson left Quindaro each morning on a six-hour trip to Lawrence. Many residents were reported buying stock, equal to their investments in Quindaro, in the Parkville to Grand River Railroad. In June 1857 a committee studying the question of town organization deemed that the existing Vigilance Committee was sufficient protection and that city government was not needed. The committee did advise that a registrar of deeds and wharfinger be elected soon.

In the middle of August 1857 the *Chinidawm* (August 15, 1857) reported that the town had a population of 600 people living in more than 100 buildings, 20 of which were built of stone. In September, George Park, who was traveling across the country promoting the Parkville to Grand River Railroad, was so encouraged by the prospects that he sent word to add another story to the warehouse he was constructing on Levee Street. In a review of the year's progress, the *Chinidawm* (January 23, 1858) reported that over one hundred thousand dollars had been expended in building and that about one hundred homes had been erected. The population was reported to be 800, composed almost entirely of businessmen and their families. The trade from one hardware store, three dry-goods-and-grocery stores, four grocery stores, one clothing store, two drug stores, two meat stores, two blacksmith shops, one wagon shop, six boot-and-shoe shops, one livery stable, four doctors, three lawyers, two surveyors, and several carpenters was reported to total \$125,000. Many of these had been in operation less than a year. A free school had been open for six months, a literary society had been formed, and a literary association organized. Two churches had been erected, one being a Congregational church and the other a Methodist Episcopal church.

On January 23, 1858, the *Chinidawm* reported that a charter had been sent to the legislature, and the following week a list of nominations for city

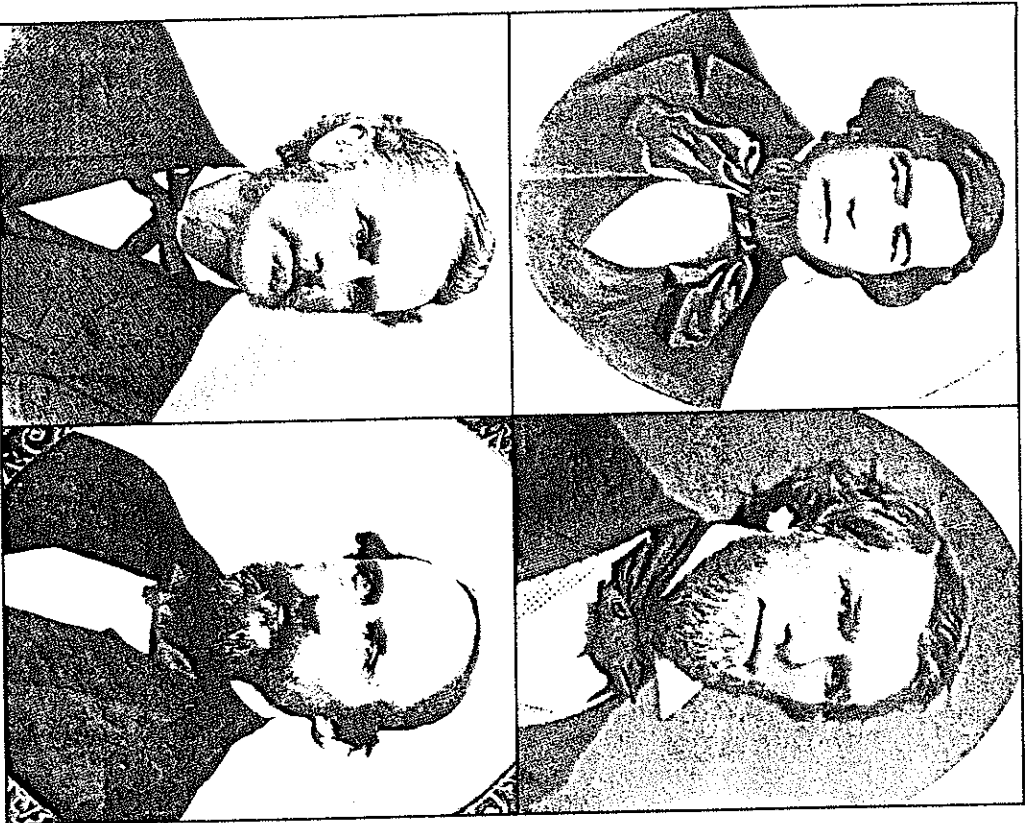


Figure 4. Quindaro Town Company founders: Joel Walker (upper left), the prosavery town company president, lived in Wyandott and died in 1859; Abeldar Guthrie (upper right), vice president, married into the Wyandott Tribe and was financially ruined by the Quindaro venture; Charles Robinson (lower left), treasurer, was a Lawrence resident, an agent for the Boston Kansas Land Trust, and a leader of the free-state movement; S. N. Simpson (lower right), town company secretary and director of public works, was also a Lawrence president and an ardent free-state supporter. Photograph of Robinson courtesy of the Kansas State Historical Society; photograph of Guthrie and Walker from Connelly (1899), and photograph of Simpson from G. Lewis and Company (1879).

offices was published. The *Chindowan* (February 6, 1858) reported that Alfred Gray had been elected mayor. Aldermen elected included W. J. McCown, G. W. Veale, F. Klaus, J. S. McCorkle, E. O. Zane, E. B. Magoon, Wm. Lansing, Geo. Bodenbun, and C. Parker. P. T. Colby was elected city recorder; Rollin M. Richmond, city clerk; Albert S. Corey, comptroller; Wm. Shepherd, treasurer; Geo. E. Budington, superintendent of schools; Charles Wingard, attorney; Julius Fisk, city marshal; Cyrus Gorton, surveyor; J. B. Welborn, coroner; R. M. Ainsworth, A. C. Morton, and Jacob Zinter, assessors; Peleg Caswell, street commissioner; Frank M. Edmunds, John Vanzandt, and F. Durfee, constables; and T. P. O'Mera, F. Cook, and C. H. Chapin, inspectors of elections. When the city council met in April, the results of the March elections officially were confirmed. The *Chindowan* (May 8, 1858) reported that wholesale liquor licenses were granted to Geo. Bodenbun & Co. and Fisk & Richmond. Retail sales licenses were granted to Charles Morasch, Henry Steiner, J. A. Bartles, and John Muhlebach.

If the population figures cited by the *Chindowan* for August 1857 and January 1858 are accurate, the population of Quindaro had declined by 1860. The 1860 U.S. census listed only 588 people in Quindaro Township, this included 432 Euroamericans, 28 Native Americans and 29 African-Americans. Quindaro Township included the two easternmost townships (T10S R24E and T10S R25E) north of the Second Standard Parallel, a unit considerably larger than the town site. The age distribution of this population included 291 minors, 109 persons aged 21–29 years, 93 aged 30–40 years, 60 aged 40–49 years, and 30 over 50 years of age. The occupations listed by the census included 44 farmers, 31 laborers, 10 carpenters, nine merchants, three printers, two lawyers, two physicians, two engineers, three clergymen, two hotel keepers, and one each of the following: soap-and-candle maker, teamster, tinsmith, musician, lumberman, contractor, trader, painter, grocer, postmaster, miller, millwright, mason, shoemaker, bricklayer, blacksmith, and wagon maker. Many of the farmers most likely lived outside of the city. Places of nativity listed by the census indicate that 125 of the Euroamericans were from northeastern states, primarily New York, Pennsylvania, and various New England states; 159 were from states comprising the Old Northwest Territories, primarily Ohio and Indiana; 32 were from Missouri; 89 were born in Kansas; and 99 were foreign immigrants, including 42 from Ireland and 33 from German states.

The prospects of the Quindaro town site, which had grown rapidly in 1857 and early 1858, began to fade by mid-1858. This was due to a combination of factors, one of which was the financial panic of 1857 that had moved into the west by 1858 (Malin 1950:184–90). However, in the spring and summer of 1858 several new buildings were being constructed, including the Jacob Henry Building, the most expensive structure erected in the town. Gradually, though, the effects of the depression, which affected the flow of investment into western development, began to be felt. Money



began to disappear and credit became harder to obtain. Initially, the depression was viewed as temporary, and the feeling prevailed that in the long run the town would succeed. The 1858 immigration season was poor compared to the previous year, and many merchants and residents signed notes to satisfy debts. As the economy failed to improve they were unable to make payments. Notes were traded between residents as a means of satisfying personal and commercial debts and were used almost as a legal tender. In late 1858 and early 1859 both the town-site company and Guthrie, acting individually, offered free lots to parties pledging to develop industries within the town (Guthrie 1858-63). Even these attempts to stimulate business were ineffective.

Wyandotte County court records indicate that as the notes and other debts entered into in 1858 became overdue, lawsuits were filed for collection. In March 1859, the first of a series of lawsuits was filed against the town-site company. Within the next two years a total of 31 civil cases involving the town-site company or its various partners were filed in Wyandotte County District Court, the majority being filed between February and September 1860. Guthrie was a defendant in 25 cases, Robinson was a defendant in 12 cases, and Samuel Simpson was a defendant in 13 cases. Guthrie appears to have been held responsible for more than his share of the liabilities incurred by the town-site company and eventually lost most of his property in judgments against him.

As litigation between the town-site partners proceeded the town struggled for success. Guthrie's diary (1858-63) indicates that during 1858 and 1859 businesses in Quindaro began to close and move away. Residents seem to have held onto the hope of a railroad connection that would have provided the needed economic boost to save the town. The *Kansas Tribune* was established by Vincent Lane in Quindaro in 1860 but moved to Olathe later that year. The only issue that has survived, dated September 20, 1860, contains numerous references to the need for a railroad and suggests that the citizens of the Kansas Valley work together to acquire government support for a rail line. The businesses that advertised in the *Kansas Tribune* were reduced to three attorneys, one real estate agent, one collector, one grocer, one dry goods store, one doctor, and the flour mill.

Taxes assessed in 1860 by Wyandotte County remained unpaid on a majority of the properties in Quindaro. A delinquent tax lists published in the *Wyandotte Commercial Gazette* (July 2, 1864) indicate that the owners of a large number of the undeveloped lots were unknown. Outside speculators apparently had abandoned their nearly worthless property in Quindaro rather than pay the taxes due. The Ninth Kansas Volunteer Infantry was quartered in the deserted commercial buildings during the Civil War, and the troops reportedly tore up the town for firewood (Andreas 1883). C. M. Chase (1863-73) described the town as follows:

We visited the city in 1863 and found but one solitary family there. A poor man and a crazy wife had strayed into the hall of the hotel, and there occupied a bunch of rags. One store with granite front and iron posts stood as good as new, and various other buildings were in good preservation, but empty. Governor Robinson Avenue was graded back into the bluff 75 rods, where it stopped leaving a perpendicular embankment 20 feet high. Small cottonwoods had sprung up in the street, and the owls were making selections of choice localities for places of abode.

Chase visited the town again in 1873 and noted that the buildings had tumbled down, the solitary family had abandoned the place, and Kansas Avenue was covered with a fine growth of cottonwood. Wyandotte County Registrar of Deeds records indicate that during the mid-1860s the town lots were sold by county tax sales in small tracts along the west, south, and east parts of the original town site. Freedmans University purchased approximately 160 acres of the town site, including the landfill-project area, as development began in surrounding areas.

Because of its free-state political sentiment Quindaro had a free black population in the late 1850s. According to the 1855 Kansas territorial census, the portion of the sixteenth territorial voting district excluding the Delaware reserve, which is the modern equivalent of eastern Wyandotte and Leavenworth counties, had a total population of 1132, including 25 black slaves and 11 free blacks. Seven free blacks and 14 slaves were from Missouri. As noted earlier, the 1860 U.S. census records list 29 free African-Americans living in the Quindaro Township. These included the Joseph Taylor, Jackson Harris, Gilbert Drake, and Edward Mason families, and Henry Walker. None of the free blacks in Quindaro Township in 1860 were listed in the 1855 territorial census. The free black community in Quindaro in 1860 appears to have represented recent immigrants from various states rather than fugitive or manumitted slaves from Missouri, since two people were born in Virginia, three in Kansas, two in Tennessee, one in Indian territory, four in Arkansas, two in Texas, eight in Mississippi, two in Alabama, and only five in Missouri. At least three black families owned real estate, with lots clustered on K Street on the uplands to the west of the commercial district.

Late in the Civil War, African-American slaves from Missouri moved to Kansas and settled at Quindaro, as well as at Leavenworth, Atchison, and Wyandott. Nelson's (1934) study of Missouri slavery from 1861 to 1865 indicates that by 1863 slaves in Missouri were deserting their owners in droves. He estimates that as many as 10,000 had moved to Kansas by 1865, an estimate that is confirmed by the 1865 Kansas census, which listed a total of 12,577 African-Americans in Kansas (including 1504 in Wyandotte, 3374

in Leavenworth, 613 in Atchison, 2078 in Douglas, 787 in Doniphan, and 808 in Bourbon counties). The 1864 Missouri census indicated that there were not more than 22,000 slaves and not more than 60,000 blacks in the state. There previously had been about 112,000 slaves in the state in 1860. Articles in Kansas City papers describe these refugees moving through the streets of Kansas City in groups of 5-100, including some in wagons, presumably on their way to Kansas (*Kansas City Journal of Commerce*, April 9, 1863).

The 1865 Kansas census indicated there were 429 African-Americans living in Quindaro Township. The birthplace of their children suggests that most had come to Kansas after 1863, since over 70% of the children born in Kansas were under the age of two years. Of this total, 248 listed their birthplace as Missouri; an additional 78 listed Kentucky, a state from which many Missouri slave owners had come, as their place of birth. This confirms that the overwhelming majority of the black newcomers to Quindaro were from Missouri. The 1865 census indicated that the Joseph Taylor, Jackson Harris, and W. Pope families were living in Quindaro, thus indicating a continuity in the Quindaro black community from 1860 to 1865.

The addition to the existing community of the black refugees late in the Civil War and the freedmen after the war resulted in the development of an African-American community named Happy Hollow (McKay and Schmitz 1986). This community primarily consisted of residential occupations located to the west of the landfill project, adjacent to the then-existing black community. This occupation apparently was located along Big Eddy Creek in the western portion of Section 30 above Nearnans Landing and later, in the 1870s, spread east into town-site residences that were still owned by Euroamericans and were located along Quindaro Creek. Photographs indicate that the commercial district and the area of the town site east of Kansas Avenue were deserted by the mid-1880s (Figure 5). Figure 5 shows that all of the frame buildings had been torn down and only the ruins of the masonry buildings still were standing. The area of the town site east of Kansas Avenue and south of Main Street was a cultivated field. A late-nineteenth-century farm house is standing near the intersection of Sixth and R streets.

The Reverend Eben Blachley founded a school for blacks on the town site. The exact date of the founding of the school is uncertain, but the school, according to Smith (1966), was in operation as early as 1865. This school served as the basis for the founding of Freedmans University. The *Laurelworth Daily Conservative* (February 18, 1867) reported that George Veale, a former Quindaro merchant, had donated a stone building and that Charles Robinson had given his remaining interest in the town site to Freedmans University. The institution was described as owning 700 acres of

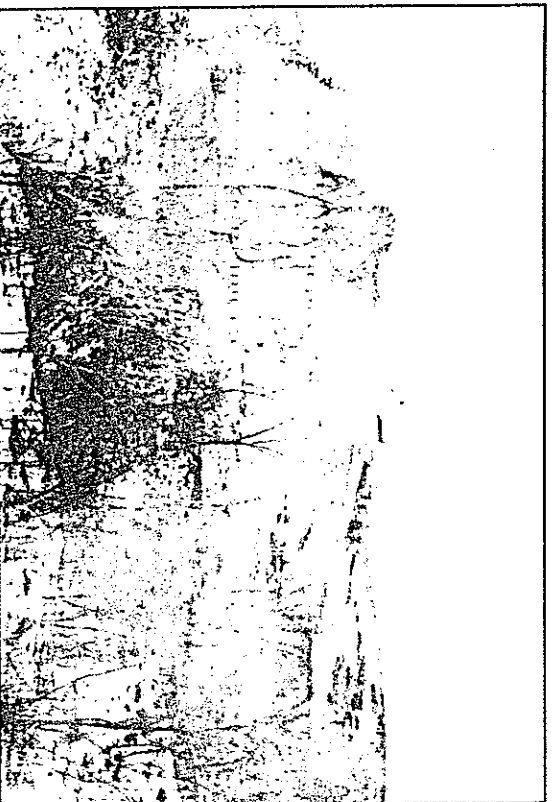


Figure 5. General view (to the south-southeast) of the abandoned town site in the 1880s. At the time, the area of the site east of Kansas Avenue, which consisted of a cultivated field and frame buildings, had been removed and only the ruins of masonry structures were standing. Kansas Avenue extended up the bluff to the right of the building ruins. Courtesy of the Kansas City, Missouri, Public Library.

land, including several residences and a great many lots. This news report, however, is not quite accurate since deed transfers indicate that in 1868 Freedmans University acquired approximately 160 acres of the abandoned town site, which consisted of the area from L Street east to Y Street and from north of Eighth Street to the river. This area, approximately one-fourth of the original town site, was acquired for a total of \$2579.75 in tax sales. Plat maps dating to the 1870s and 80s (Heisler and McGee 1870; Hopkins 1887) indicate that the remainder of the town site consisted of small, privately owned tracts. The location of Blachley's school is uncertain, but it was most likely located in Fielding Johnson's house at 83-85 R Street. George Veale, Fielding Johnson's son-in-law, quitclaimed this property to Freedmans University in 1868 for \$1200 (Wyandotte County Registrar of Deeds Book K-279). The 1879 Heisler and McGee plat map of Wyandotte County shows Blachley at this location in 1870.

In 1877 Blachley died and the university passed into the hands of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, who chartered it under the name of



Western University. In 1899 the state appropriated funds to establish an industrial department, and Stanley Hall was erected in 1901 (Smith 1966). Western University buildings (Figure 6) were located on the bluff overlooking the ruins of the original town-site's commercial district, on the north-west corner of the present-day intersections of 27th and Sewell streets in Kansas City, Kansas. In 1911 a statue of John Brown was placed in front of Ward Hall. Buildings associated with this institution have all been destroyed in recent years.

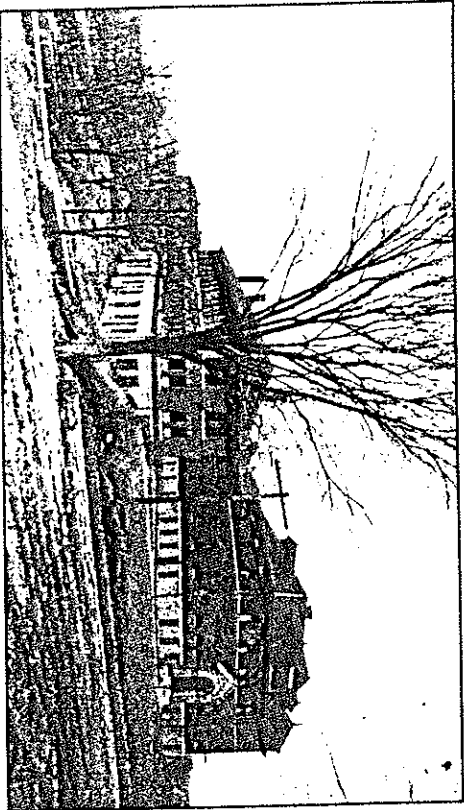


Figure 6. General view of one of the Western University buildings in the 1920s. Courtesy of the Kansas State Historical Society.

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

The commercial district of the Quindaro town site was located along Kansas Avenue, the principal north-south street extending south from the wharf up the bluff slope (Figure 7). Since 1857 the river has shifted slowly to the north; it originally flowed against the bluff and exposed a rock bench that was located immediately north of the present railroad grade. The depth of the water adjacent to the bench formed a favorable landing for steamboats. Two principal commercial streets, Levee and Main, bisected Kansas Avenue along a west-northwesterly to east-southeasterly axis. Streets numbered Third-Eighth extended east-west, perpendicular to Kansas Avenue and south of Main on the original plat. Lettered north-south streets (A-Y) extended from Eighth Street north to Main.

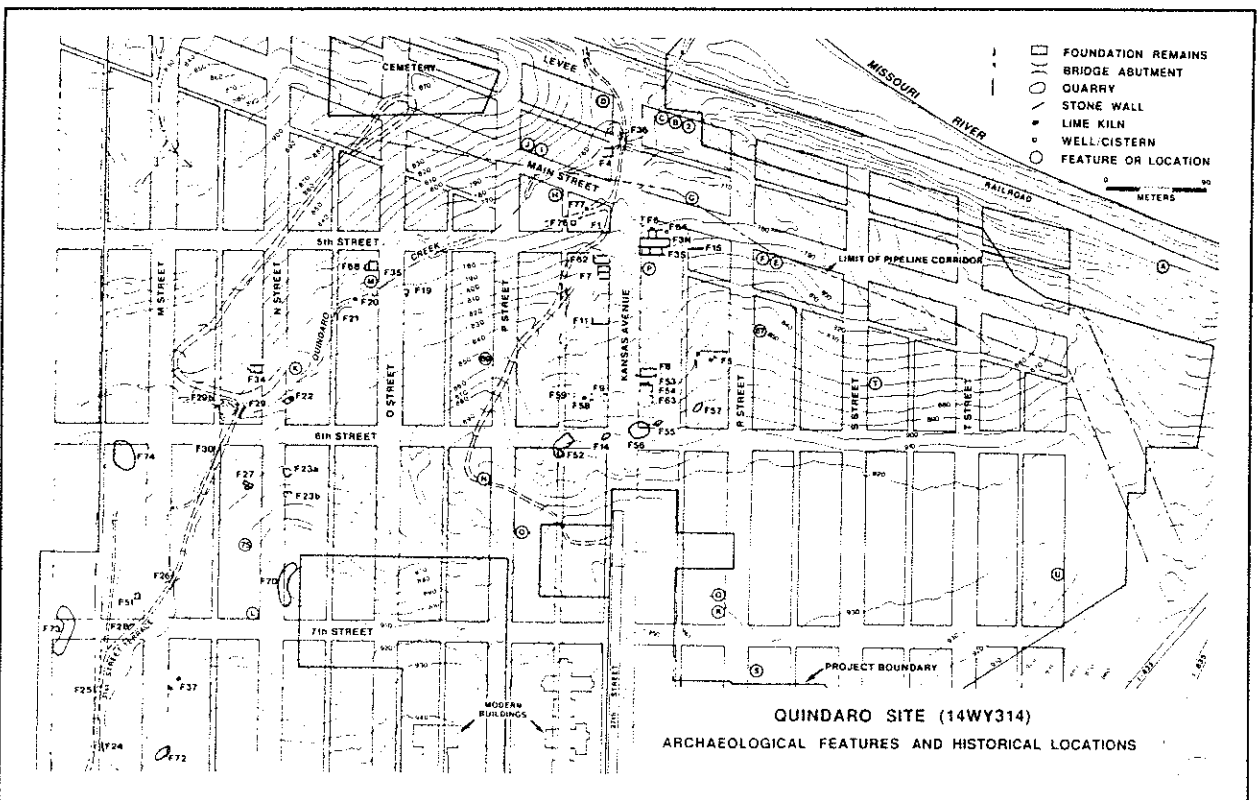


Figure 7. Location of archaeological features and historical locations within the project area.

Only a few of the platted town-site streets were actually graded, and none appear to have been paved. Kansas Avenue was graded south from the wharf and up the bluff as far as Sixth Street. Excavation never was completed through the top of the bluff. The indentation immediately south of the intersection of Sixth Street and Kansas Avenue on the 900 ft contour interval is the termination of the grading (Figure 7). The wharf along the Missouri River was graded. Levee Street was graded near its intersection with Kansas Avenue and most likely along the bluff as far east as the sawmill (Location A). Main Street was graded near its intersection with Kansas Avenue. Streets N, O, and P most likely were graded from Eighth Street as far north as Fifth Street. R Street, located east of Kansas Avenue, provided access to the river in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and most likely was graded from the bluff as far north as Main or Levee streets. Fifth Street probably was graded from N or O streets east to Kansas Avenue, and Sixth Street was graded most likely from Kansas Avenue east to R Street.

The archaeological excavations at the Quindaro site have been limited to the proposed BFI project area, and within that area the investigations were restricted further to the area south of the pipeline corridor, the intended use area of the proposed landfill. This area (Figure 7) includes the part of the town site from L Street east to U Street and from Main Street south to Eighth Street, and principally consists of the southern part of the main commercial district (along Kansas Avenue between Levee and Fifth streets), a smaller cluster of commercial buildings located to the south on the bluff slope, and several residences located to the west along a small northeasterly flowing tributary creek that bisects the project area. The majority of the original town-site residences, as well as the school and churches, were located on the uplands to the south and west, outside the BFI project area. While the majority of these remains have been destroyed by modern development, archaeological remains, as well as a number of standing structures associated with the original town site of Quindaro, are most likely present in the surrounding community adjacent to the project area. The eastern part of the town site (east of R Street) was heavily damaged by Interstate 635 construction, and the northern part of the project area, which includes most of Main Street and Levee Street, had been damaged earlier by pipeline construction.

The archaeological investigations within the BFI project area located a total of 26 features—including the foundation remains of 20 main buildings, two outbuildings, three wells, and one cistern—associated with the Quindaro town site (Figure 7). Many of the additional 11 stone quarries, four bridge abutments, four retaining walls, and two lime kilns shown in Figure 7 probably are associated with the original town site but could be later developments. In addition to those structures located archaeologically, historical research indicates the presence of an additional 17 town-site

structures located in the project area. These structures are referred to as Historical Locations A-U (Figure 7) and principally are located in the pipeline corridor and the areas disturbed by Interstate 635 construction. Access roads through the project area and rechannelization of Quindaro Creek also destroyed several of these structures.

The 1987-88 archaeological excavations were concentrated in two primary areas—the southern part of the main commercial district along Kansas Avenue between Main and Fifth streets (Figure 8) and a residential area near the intersection of Fifth and O streets (Figure 9). Preliminary work also was completed at the second cluster of commercial structures located on the bluff slope just north of Sixth Street and Kansas Avenue and at a number of the residential structures located between Fifth and Seventh along N and O streets.

The northern portion of the town's commercial district was located along Levee and on Main Street adjacent to Kansas Avenue (Figure 8). Both of these streets have been bisected by the petroleum pipeline corridor. Archaeological and historical research indicate that four warehouses were located on Levee. Feature 2 is the limestone foundation of the O. H. Macauley warehouse that was located at 76 Levee. A number of businesses operated at this structure, including Simpson and Macauley Forwarding Agents (who advertised in the *Clinidown* from May to October 1857), Alfred Tuttle's Groceries and Provisions (who advertised from November 1857 to May 1858), R. P. Gray & Company real estate and land agency (who advertised from June to September 1857), and Corey and Yarnell auctioneers and real estate agents (who advertised in June 1858).

A second warehouse immediately west of Feature 2 at 77 Levee (Location B) was under construction by Frederick Klaus in the spring of 1858. The *Clinidown* (April 13, 1858) indicates that the second story of this stone building with a brick-and-tin front was completed by April 3, 1858; however, deed transfers indicate Klaus mortgaged the warehouse in May of 1858 (Wyandotte County Registrar of Deeds Book D:193). He failed to pay off the mortgage and the property was foreclosed on in December 1859. It is uncertain whether construction was ever completed.

Directly to the west of Klaus's warehouse at 78 Levee was George Parks's warehouse. Abelard Guthrie's diary (1858-63) states that a hard rain on August 26, 1858, undermined the foundation, thereby fracturing the wall. This structure is almost certainly the four-story, limestone-masonry building, whose photographed remains often have been misidentified as the Quindaro House ruins, in the foreground of Figure 5. The rear of this building was adjacent to the creek, requiring the construction of a storm drain along the rear of the structure. The three warehouses at 76, 77, and 78 Levee were damaged badly by the pipeline construction that went through the middle of the three structures. However, remnants of the foundation footings and the base of the front walls along Levee still may be present.

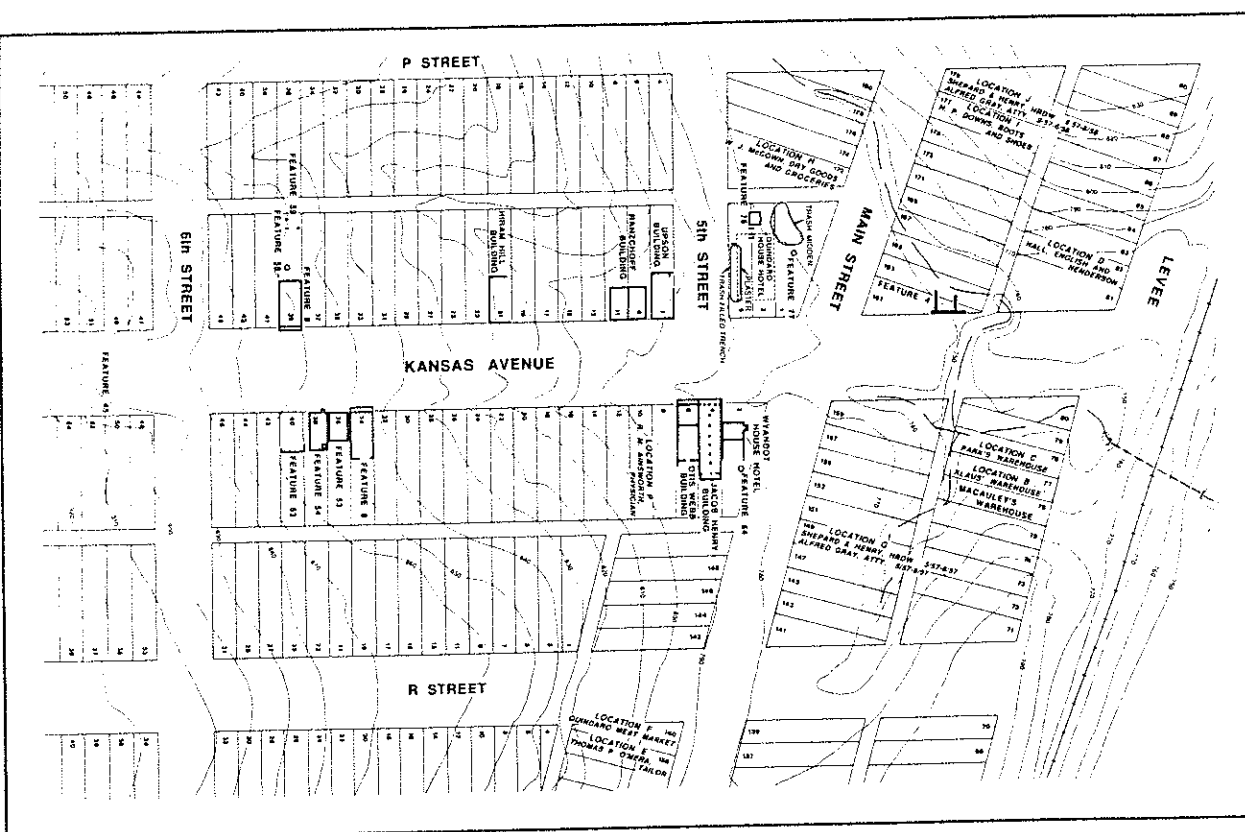


Figure 8. Location of archaeological features and historical locations along Kansas Avenue.

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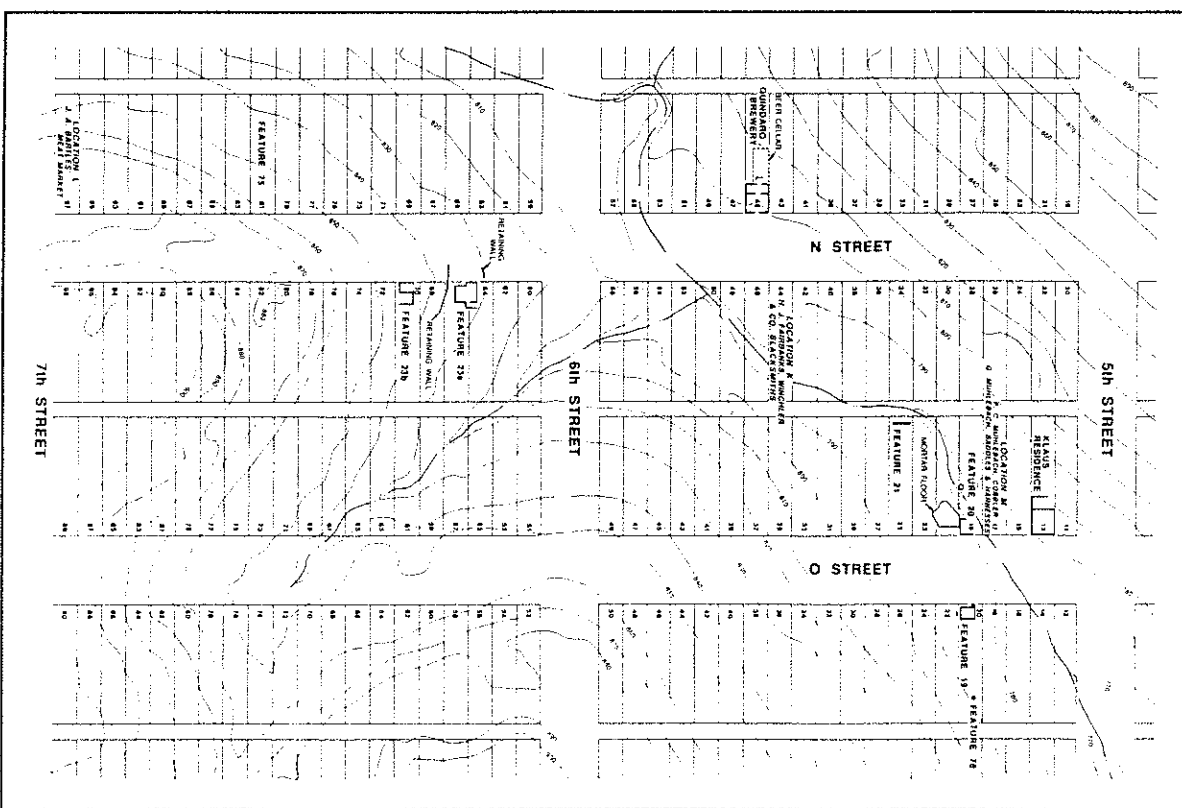


Figure 9. Location of archaeological features and historical locations along Quindaro Creek.

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The fourth warehouse was located across Kansas Avenue at 82 Levee and was operated by Hall, English, and Henderson. Advertisements in the *Chindowan* from May to November 1857 indicate this firm was a forwarding and commission agent that also sold groceries.

The Quindaro Steam Sawmill Company (Location A) was located on the bluffs, a considerable distance east of the wharf at 33 Levee. It was operated by A. J. Rowell and Otis Webb from April to June 1857, at which time the partnership was dissolved and the business was carried on by Rowell. In early June 1857 the sawmill was enclosed by a heavy frame building and four additional saws and a lathe were added (*Chindowan*, June 6, 1857). Julius Fisk acquired the sawmill sometime prior to 1860. The *Wyandotte Commercial Gazette* (December 8, 1860) indicates that the sawmill burned on December 3, 1860, and several thousand feet of lumber, along with the tools and machinery, were destroyed. There was no insurance, and it is unlikely that the mill was rebuilt.

Four structures were located on Main, including the Gorton Building at 161-65 Main Street. Hartford Fire Insurance Company (n.d.) records indicate that this was a two-story frame building with a store on the first floor and offices on the second floor. The W. H. McCown Company advertised in the *Chindowan* from this address from April to June 1858. These lots may have been subdivided, and an additional structure may have been erected on the rear of these lots fronting on Kansas Avenue because the *Chindowan* (April 24, 1858) indicates that the Johnson & Yeale Dry Goods and Groceries Store was erecting a three-story stone structure with a brick-and-iron front on the corner of Kansas Avenue and Main Street. Whether this structure was ever completed is unknown. Archaeological remains on these lots include massive limestone foundation footings (Feature 4) eroding out of the bank of Quindaro Creek toward the rear of the lot (Figure 8). Whether Feature 4 consists of the footings of the Gorton Building, the Johnson and Yeale store, or the western edge of a bridge abutment for Kansas Avenue is uncertain.

Five additional historical structures were located on Main Street (Figure 8). The Quindaro Meat Market (Location E), which was operated by Peleg Caswell and Lewis from October 1857 to June 1858, was located at 140 Main Street. Thomas P. O'Mera advertised a tailor shop (Location F) at 138 Main Street in the *Chindowan* from May to June 1858. The Shepard & Henry Hardware Store advertised in the *Chindowan* from May to September 1857 from 149 Main Street (Location E) and from 179 Main Street (Location J) from September 1857 to June 1858. Alfred Gray, an attorney, advertised from 149 Main from May to September 1857 and from 179 Main from September 1857 to June 1858. H. P. Downs Boots and Shoe Store advertised from 177 Main from September 1857 to June 1858. The W. J. McCown Dry Goods and Grocery Store (Location I) advertised from 172 Main Street from October to December 1857.

## Description of the 1987 Excavations

The 1987 excavations focused on the commercial district at Fifth Street and Kansas Avenue (Figure 8). Kansas Avenue was bulldozed in the 1960s during the construction of a powerline that extended up the bluff (Figure 10). Fortunately, construction down the center of the street avoided many of the building remains. The building foundations on the lower left of Figure 10 are on the southeast corner of the intersection of Main Street and Kansas Avenue and include the Wyandot House Hotel (lower), the Jacob Henry commercial building (middle), and the Otis Webb commercial building (upper). The excavations in the lower right of Figure 10 are at the Quindaro House Hotel, which is located on the west side of Kansas Avenue between Main and Fifth streets. To the south, across the modern access road, the Upson and Ranzchoff commercial buildings are located on the southwest corner of Fifth Street and Kansas Avenue.

The Wyandot House Hotel, located at 2 Kansas Avenue was owned and operated by E. O. Zane from May through December 1857, at which time operations were taken over by John Stewart (*Chindowan*, December 19, 1857). A jeweler, Z. Hughes, also advertised from this address in the *Chindowan* from January to June 1858. The building consisted of a 25-by-40-

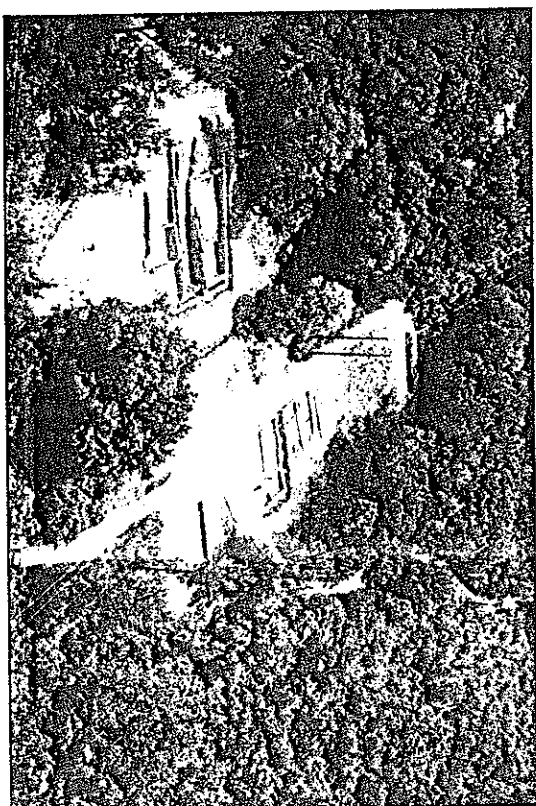
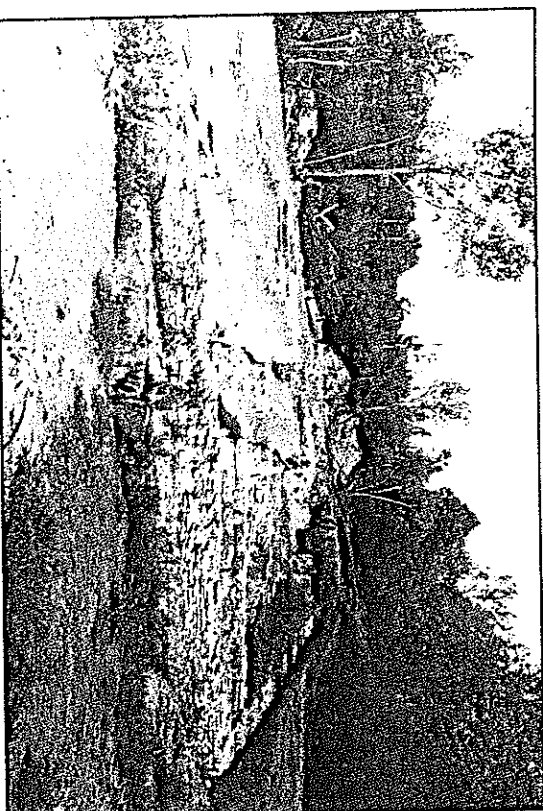


Figure 10. Aerial view (to the south-southwest) of the 1987 excavations between Main and 5th streets along Kansas Avenue. The powerline corridor corresponds to Kansas Avenue.

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ft, two-story frame structure set back from Kansas Avenue (Figure 8). The foundation remains (Feature 6) indicate the Wyandot House had a partial basement located beneath the front of the structure and footings that extended to the east and supported the rear of the structure (Figure 11). Archaeological remains present in addition to the basement walls and foundation footings include a mortar-lined cistern (Feature 64), located outside the northeast corner of the structure, and a basement entryway on the north. Intact mid-nineteenth-century artifact deposits, primarily domestic and architectural debris, were located in the cistern.



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Figure 11. Location of commercial buildings on the southeast corner of Main Street and Kansas Avenue: Wyandot House Hotel (left), Jacob Henry Building (center), and Otis Webb Building (right).

Hartford Fire Insurance Company (n.d.) records indicate that the Jacob Henry Building at 4 Kansas Avenue was a three-story building that was completed in 1858 and consisted of a basement, a store on the first floor, offices on the second floor, and a public hall on the third. The building had a brick-and-iron front and a tin roof. The first floor was occupied by the Fisk and Richmond Mercantile Store in 1860 (*Kansas Tribune*, September 20, 1860). The archaeological remains of the building (Feature 3 North) consisted of a 25-by-86-ft, limestone-masonry foundation with attached areaways at both the front and the rear of the structure (Figure 11). A set of piers

bisecting the front and the long axis of the building provided internal structural support. The building also contained the base of two brick chimneys near the rear and a long subbasement brick floor drain that was capped with flagstone and extended from the rear of the building to the front areaway. The internal fill of the Jacob Henry Building consisted of a zone of brown silt which thickened toward the rear of the building and contained a series of cultural zones, with mid-nineteenth-century artifacts, above the basement floor. The lowermost zone contained architectural debris that is most likely associated with the initial construction. Military artifacts along with other debris, presumably associated with the Union troop occupation, were located in the middle zones. Higher frequencies of domestic and architectural debris were recovered from the upper zones, suggesting a possible later residential occupation. The mid-nineteenth-century cultural zones were overlain by a thick zone of wall debris covered by an organically rich zone containing modern trash.

The Otis Webb Building (Feature 3 South), located at 6 Kansas Avenue, was a 25-by-66-ft building with an attached front areaway. This structure shares a common wall with the Jacob Henry Building. An interior wall separated a front basement room from a rear room with a walk-in entryway. No concentrated artifact deposits were located. Little historical documentation is associated with this building other than evidence confirming that it was of masonry fabric, that it was used at least once as a meeting hall, and that Charles Robinson owned a part interest in the structure. Two grocers who advertised their business in the *Chindowan*—W. Lansing (November 1857–April 1858) and Rollin Richmond (March–June 1858)—at Fifth Street and Kansas Avenue could have been located in the building.

The Quindaro House Hotel was located between Main and Fifth streets at 1–5 Kansas Avenue. A number of sources including Harrington (1935) and Greenbaum (1982) have attributed a late-nineteenth-century photograph of a large masonry building to be the ruins of the Quindaro House. This is an error, and in reality, the structure shown in the photograph is Park's warehouse at 78 Levee Street. No evidence of masonry foundations associated with the hotel were located by the archaeological excavations. Contemporary news in the *Chindowan* indicate that the Quindaro House Hotel was a 40-by-70-ft, five-story frame structure that could accommodate 250 persons. The hotel was one of the first structures completed by April 1857. Philip Colby and Charles S. Parker were proprietors of the Quindaro House from April 1857 to June 1858. Johnson and Veale advertised a dry-goods-and-grocery store in the basement of the Quindaro House in the *Chindowan* from May 1857 to June 1858. Other businesses that advertised in the *Chindowan* as being operated out of the hotel include R. C. Anderson's Quindaro House Leasing Agency and Kansas Claim Agency (from August 1857 to March 1858) and O. A. Bassett Surveyor (from November 1857 to March 1858). Bassett also advertised as Bassett and Brackett Land Agents

(from November 1857 to March 1858) and as Blood, Bassett, and Brackett Real Estate, Surveyors, Engineers (from May to November 1857).

The archaeological remains of the hotel consist of plaster wall debris associated with the south wall and several shallow limestone piers associated with the southwest corner of the structure. Two trash dumps, an outbuilding, and a well also were located on the lot. Two rows of stepped limestone, located along an east-west axis, almost certainly consist of shallow stair footings that extended from the rear of the structure to the outbuildings. The easternmost set of piers is 25.6 m (83.9 ft) from the front of the lot. The first trash dump was located in a trench 3.0 m wide that extended along the southern boundary of Lot 5 on Kansas Avenue. This trench may have been a diversion ditch to channel water around the hotel. Artifacts recovered from the trench consisted mainly of architectural debris; most items were window glass. A long zone of plaster debris 50 cm wide extended along a trench 3.0 m (9.9 ft) from the front of the lot, 18.9 m (62 ft) to the rear. The zone of plaster is 12.1 m (39.6 ft) west of the boundary between lots 1 and 3 and almost certainly delineates the interior wall of the structure.

The second trash dump was located to the rear of the northwest corner of the hotel and consisted of a 14.3-by-6.7-m (47-by-22-ft) concentrated cultural zone located on the original 1857 surface. The majority of the artifacts from this deposit consist of domestic refuse, mainly faunal remains. The Feature 76 outbuilding, located to the rear of the hotel, consists of the masonry footings of a small structure that is 3.9-by-4.49 m (12.8-by-14.4 ft). The interior fill contained two artifact zones above and below a zone of wall debris. This structure is most likely the remains of an 8-by-10-ft building that is referenced in the *Chindowan* as having been the first building erected on the site early in 1857 and temporarily used as an office by the town company (Figure 12). Ice was advertised in the *Chindowan* as being available from Hodges at the rear of the Quindaro House from July to August 1857, and this temporary structure could have been used secondarily as an ice house. A well (Feature 77) was located along the north side of the hotel and extended to a depth of 7.0 m (23 ft) (Figure 13). The lower 4.0 m (13 ft) contained a concentration of timbers, probably derived from the demolition of the Quindaro House. The base of the well wall was set into the north-sloping bedrock face; the north part of the base contained a zone of lime paste underlain by hawthorn branches that were weighted down by several rocks that covered a row of charred logs. This basal feature of the well clearly was prepared intentionally rather than being accumulated fill.

The two commercial buildings on the southwest corner of Fifth Street and Kansas Avenue (features 7 and 62) include the J. B. Upson Building at 7 Kansas Avenue and the Ranzhoff Building at 9-11 Kansas Avenue (Figure 14). Both buildings probably were two-story, frame structures that rested on



Figure 12. View to the southeast of the outbuilding and the probable town company office located in the rear of the Quindaro House Hotel.

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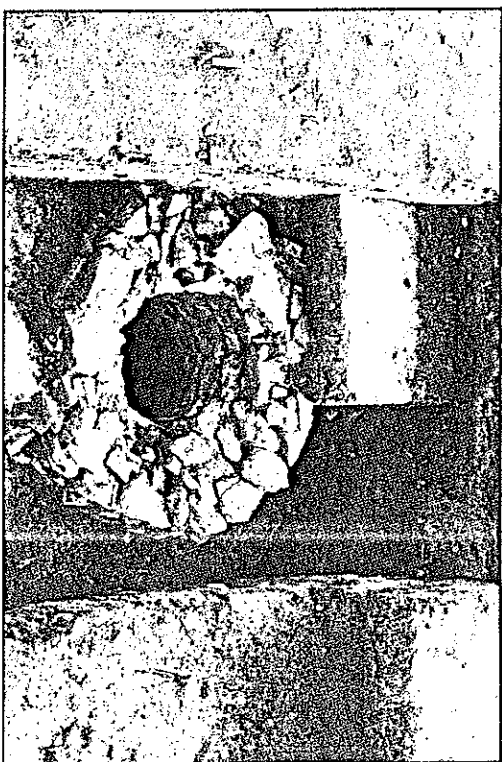


Figure 13. General view of the well located north of Quindaro House Hotel.

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masonry footings set into the colluvial side slope. Excavations located a concentrated artifact zone near the base of the limestone-masonry footings in both buildings. Based on the amount of charcoal and melted glass present, both buildings appear to have burned. The Upson Building was a 25-by-50-ft structure that housed a number of businesses, including the McCown Merchantile (which advertised in the *Chindowan* from November 1857 to June 1858) and the R. P. Gray & Co. Real Estate Office (which advertised in the *Chindowan* from October 1857 to June 1858). The *Chindowan* newspaper office was located in the building from September 1857 to June 1858, and the Quindaro Town Company offices also were located in this building. Printers' type, printing press parts, and battery parts, presumably associated with the town telegraph, were found in Feature 62. The Ranzchoff Building at 9-11 Kansas Avenue was a 40-by-35-ft, two-room structure, from which the Ranzchoff Clothing and Shoe Store advertised (*Chindowan*, October 1857-June 1858).

The Hiram Hill Building (Feature 11) was located upslope from the Ranzchoff clothing store at 21 Kansas Avenue. This building apparently was a frame structure built in April 1857. The archaeological remains include the limestone-masonry footings for the east, south, and north walls of a 25-by-50-ft structure. Franklin E. Byrd mortgaged 10 beds and 36 chairs from



Figure 14. View to the northwest of the Upson and Ranzchoff buildings at 7 and 9-11 Kansas Avenue, respectively.

the Hiram Hill Building for \$72 on October 31, 1857 (Wyandotte County Registrar of Deeds Book D:99), suggesting that it initially may have served as a boarding house. Dr. R. C. Anderson also advertised his medical office in the *Chindowan* at this location from November 1857 until April 1858.

A second smaller cluster of commercial structures was located on the bluff slope between Fifth and Sixth streets on Kansas Avenue. The 1987 test excavations located the remains of four structures (features 8, 53, 54, and 63) on the east side of Kansas Avenue and the remains of a structure and an associated well and outbuilding on the west side of Kansas Avenue (features 9, 58, and 59). The four features on the east side of Kansas Avenue are located adjacent to each other on a relatively level bench just east of Feature 9. Feature 8, located at 34 Kansas Avenue, consisted of a 25-by-52-ft, limestone-masonry basement foundation with an attached areaway along the front. No historical information has been located concerning the structure at 34 Kansas Avenue. The ruins of this structure were still standing in the 1880s photograph and indicate that it was a three-story, limestone-masonry structure (Figure 5).

Feature 53 is a smaller 18-by-22-ft, limestone-masonry foundation located at 36 Kansas Avenue. An advertisement in the *Chindowan* indicates that a storehouse was located on Lot 36 Kansas Avenue from September to November 1857. Feature 54, located at 38 Kansas Avenue, was a 20-by-41-ft, limestone basement foundation with a front stairway leading to a basement. An interior well was located to the rear of the structure. The Peoples Variety Store was operated by A. C. Strock, who advertised the store in the *Chindowan* from May 1857 to June 1858. Dr. J. B. Welbone also advertised his medical office at this address during the same interval. Feature 63 consists of the limestone-masonry rear footings of a structure located at 40 Kansas Avenue. Assuming that this structure fronted on Kansas Avenue, it would have been a 20-by-40-ft structure. A delinquent tax list published in the *Wyandotte Commercial Gazette* (July 2, 1864) indicates that H. G. Otis was the owner of this lot prior to 1860. More extensive excavations were conducted in 1988 at features 9, 58, and 59, which are located at 39 Kansas Avenue. Feature 9 consists of the masonry remains of a 25-by-45-ft, commercial structure with an attached areaway on the front of the structure. A well (Feature 58) also was encountered directly behind this structure, and the remains of three piers associated with an outbuilding (Feature 59) were uncovered at the rear of the lot. No historical records have been located concerning the identity of the features on this lot. The excavations recovered minimal artifacts, and it is likely that the structure was never completed.

### Description of the 1988 Excavations

The major focus of the 1988 work was the excavations of three residential structures located just south of Fifth and O streets. Feature 68 is the remains

of the Frederick Klaus residence, which was erected in May 1857 at 13 O Street. Klaus operated stone quarries and was one of the primary builders at Quindaro. Advertisements in the *Chindawan* billed his residence as a limestone-masonry structure that was an example of his handiwork and the quality of stone from his quarries. The archaeological remains indicate that it was a 25-by-38-ft, rectangular structure with an attached rear kitchen set into the colluvial hillside (Figure 15). The southern portion of the attached rear kitchen is approximately 1.2 m (4.0 ft) higher than the floor of the main structure and contains the base of a brick cooking feature with an associated pit immediately behind the rear wall of the front room. A gap in the wall provided access from the kitchen to the front anteroom. The brick feature most likely is the base of a bake oven, and the pit probably is an ash chamber.

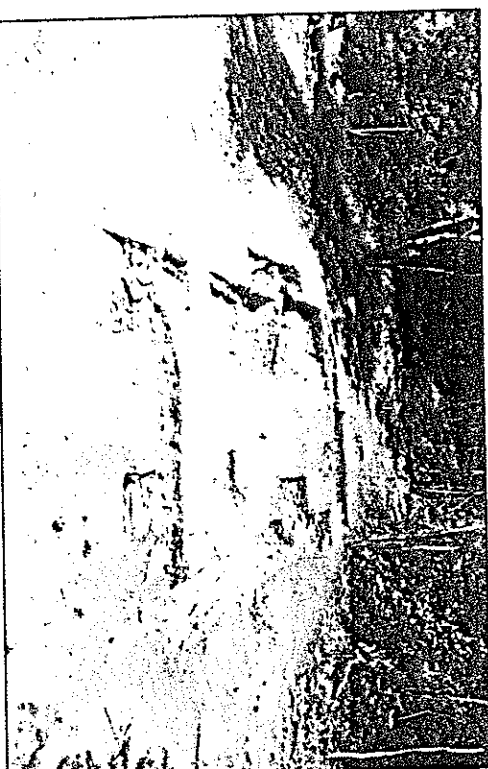


Figure 15. General view (to the west) of the Frederick Klaus residence at 13 O Street.

This rear kitchen of Feature 68 probably represents a mid-nineteenth-century variation of a German *Schwarze Küche* or black kitchen. This type of structure survived in Germany until the mid-nineteenth century, and examples have been recognized in Wisconsin and South Dakota and probably exist in Missouri. Similar types of Dutch baking ovens are common in Pennsylvania and basically consist of a square, attached masonry structure with a tapered chimney. While they are most often

detached, they also can be attached to the rear of residences (Noble 1984). The German black kitchens were derived from *Pomerania* and originally contained openings for loading a stove from the adjacent anteroom, a feature similar to that found in the Klaus home.

The second residence excavated in 1988 (Feature 20) was at 19 O Street and was owned by Charles Morasch from April 1857 to October 1858 and by Philip Heschel from October 1858 until January 1859, at which time the title was transferred back to Sarah Morasch. Chester Hubbard purchased the property in 1863 and sold it to Henry Brown in 1867. Martha Tillman purchased the property in May 1879 (Wyandotte County Registrar of Deeds Book A:3, Book D:336, 393; Book F:324; Book L:354; Book N:341). The archaeological remains include the limestone-masonry footings of a small frame structure (Figure 16). A twentieth-century rechannelization of the creek bisected the structure; however, the south wall and parts of the east and west walls were preserved, indicating a length of 17 ft and a width in excess of 13.8 ft. A lime-mortar platform was connected to the southwest corner of the structure and extended to the rear of Lot 21 on O Street. This rear structure is either a patio or the foundation for an attached outbuilding. Both the structures are located on the flood plain of Quindaro Creek. The rear platform was buried soon after occupation by alluviation sealing in an intact artifact deposit above the floor.

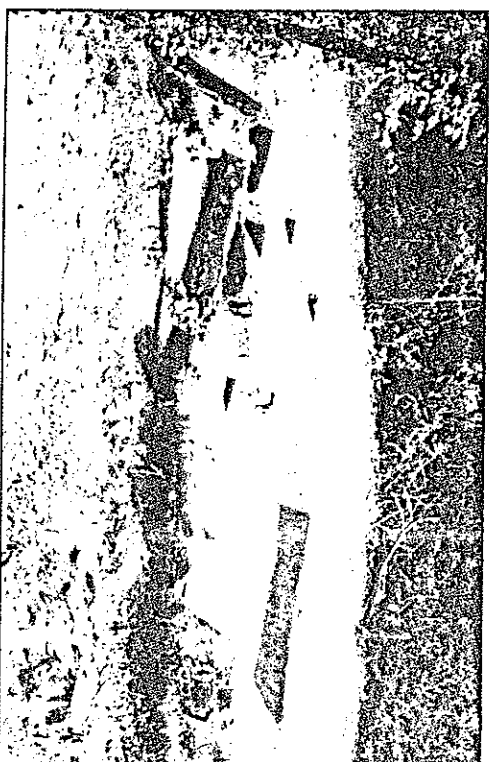


Figure 16. General view (to the southeast) of the residence at 19-21 O Street. The house foundation was bisected by creek rechannelization; a mortar platform was located to the rear of the southwest corner of the structure.

While Morasch, a grocer who had immigrated from Indiana, was the original owner, it is doubtful that he resided on the property. P. C. Muhlebach Boot and Shoe Manufacturer advertised at this location in the *Chindawon* from August to September 1857. P. C. Muhlebach Cobbler also advertised his address as 17 O Street from October 1857 to June 1858, as did George Muhlebach Saddles and Harness for the period May-June 1858. However, the rechannelization of Quindaro Creek has destroyed any archaeological remains at 17 O Street. The 1865 Kansas state census indicates that Chester Hubbard was a 36-year-old literate white male from Ohio. No occupation is listed for him; however, the *Wyandotte Commercial Gazette* (February 20, 1864) notes that Hubbard's steam shop was manufacturing broom handles at this time. The attached masonry platform may have been the foundation or floor for a shop attached to the dwelling and may have been used as the shoe factory and later as the broom-handle factory. Martha Tillman was not listed in the 1870 census.

The third residence excavated in 1988 (Feature 19) was located at 20 O Street and was owned by Robert Kelly, an Irish immigrant laborer prior to 1860. The archaeological remains include the limestone-masonry walls of a 5.24-by-4.11-m (17.2-by-13.5-ft) basement foundation with an entryway at the front of the lot (Figure 17). The steps of the basement entryway were still visible in the profile. The detached footings to the south likely supported an attached room which may have been a porch or kitchen. A privy also was located at the rear of this lot.



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Figure 17. General view (to the southeast) of the Feature 19 cellar foundation, the probable Robert Kelly residence. The stairway to the cellar was located along the northwest corner of the structure.

This structure was situated on a low terrace, and, since it was safe from flooding, it was occupied until the early twentieth century. While the structural remains date to the late 1850s, the archaeological remains primarily date to the late nineteenth century. Deed transfers indicate that Mary Thompson of Wyandott had acquired the property after 1860 and then sold the structure to William Meyer in 1872 (Wyandotte County Registrar of Deeds Book 42:610). The 1875 Kansas census indicates that William Meyer was a 50-year-old illiterate black laborer from Missouri with a wife and two children. An informant also recalls a Meyer family living in a two-story structure prior to 1918 (McKay and Schmits 1986). The archaeological assemblage recovered almost certainly dates to the Meyer occupation.

Limited work also was conducted at the Quindaro Brewery (Feature 34) at 41-47 N Street in 1988. This structure, built in 1857 by Jacob Zehntner and Henry Steiner, was standing well into the twentieth century when it was used as a residence (Figure 18). The Zehntner-Steiner partnership was dissolved in 1858, and the property was transferred to George Bodenburg in March 1859 (Wyandotte County Registrar of Deeds Book A.2, 310; Book 1:12). The deed transfers clearly indicate that the structure was not the brewery but a combined residence and bar room. Detached structures on the property include a stable, a small dwelling house, and the actual brewery. Shortly after acquisition, Bodenburg made improvements that included constructing a beer cellar in the rear, remodeling the bar room, and adding to the brewery. Bodenburg's business evidently failed since he

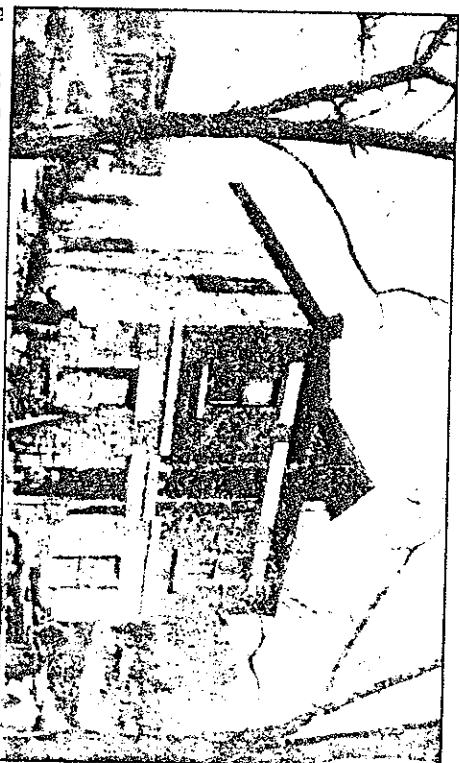


Figure 18. Early twentieth-century view of the Quindaro Brewery at 41-47 N Street. This structure was actually a combined bar room-residence. The actual brewery was an outbuilding located to the rear. Courtesy of the Kansas State Historical Society.

was unable to pay for these improvements and the property was sold for back taxes in 1862 (Wyandotte County Registrar of Deeds Book 4:35).

The remains of the front of the 25-by-30-ft. bar room-residence structure are still standing, as is the beer cellar in the rear (Figure 19). The lower front facade consisted of coursed ashlar limestone with the upper facade being brick; cut sills and corner gowns were used. The side- and rear-wall facades were roughly coursed rubble walls. Excavations revealed an interior rear wall to a small basement that may have been the original beer cellar. A doorway provided entry through this wall into the 17-by-35-ft. beer-cellar addition that was constructed of coursed rubble walls with an arched ceiling.

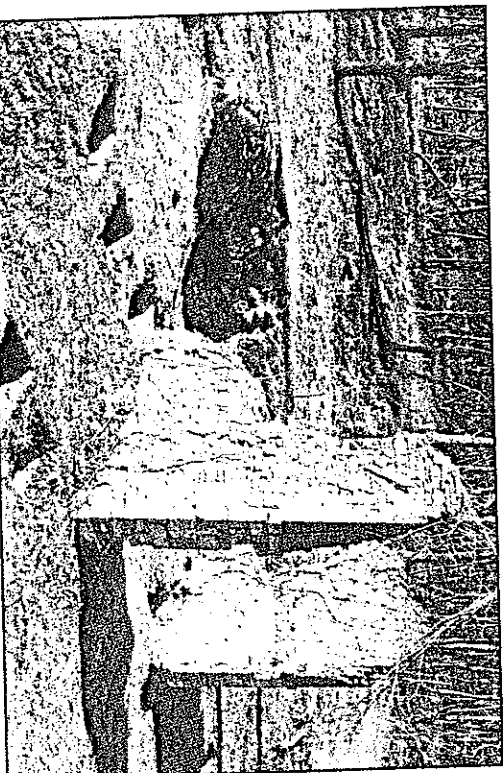


Figure 19. Present-day view (to the northwest) of the Zehntner-Stecher bar room-residence and the attached rear beer cellar.

Albert D. Richardson, a resident of Sumner and author of *Beyond the Mississippi* (1867), visited Quindaro in 1857 and reported the following episode from the Quindaro brewery.

Quindaro was distinctively a temperance town. Lots had been deeded with the express stipulation that they should not be occupied by liquor sellers. Still several low grogeries, fountains of bad habits and worse whisky had arisen to fright the isle from its

propriety. All the leading women joined in a petition to the men 'to take speedy and efficient measures for casting out the vile demon.' The meeting accordingly selected three of its members to appoint a vigilance committee of twenty, to cast out the vile demon. It was organized forthwith, and sallied out at daylight the next morning. The first saloon was kept by a herculean German who, refusing to give up his keys, retreated behind his bar, pointing two enormous self-cocking six-shooters at the invaders, and swore he would blow out the brains of the first man molesting him or his whiskey. Several of the visitors also drew revolvers, but the German's eye was wicked, and they hesitated. Their leader, a lithe, young man, armed only with a whale bone cane, had served in Lane's army and smelt gun powder. Turning to his companions said quietly: 'Kill him, boys, if he shoots me.' Then he sprang over the bar and wrestled both revolvers from the plucky but overpowered feuton. But suddenly the German's wife, awakened by the noise, rushed from her bedroom to the scene of conflict, dragging a clothes-line which had caught her foot, and which was about the only thing in the line of clothes adorning her person. She flung hard words, broken English, and all other loose articles she could lay hands upon, at her unceremonious callers, but they unlocked a closet, rolled out and emptied two casks of whisky, and one of brandy... Two other saloons were similarly visited and purged. Neither ale nor beer was destroyed, and just after sunrise the committee separated for breakfast.

Two additional residential structures (features 23a and 23b) were located south of Sixth and O streets, and one structure (feature 51) was located just north of Seventh and M streets (Figure 9). Little historical documentation is available regarding these structures, and their association with the Quindaro town site is based principally on their position on town-site lots. Further work, however, could indicate that they were constructed after the demise of the town since the Quindaro plat was not vacated until 1872. Testing indicates that the archaeological remains of all three consist of limestone-masonry cellars or combinations of cellars and footings. Artifacts recovered indicate later nineteenth-century occupations. Feature 23a, located at 66-68 N Street, is a 13-by-11.5-ft cellar foundation with an entryway along the north. A wall extending east from the cellar suggests the presence of a two-room, 13-by-23-ft structure resembling a hall-and-parlor house.

The 1886 Edwards plat map indicates J. Williams was living at this location. Feature 23b, located at 70 N Street, is a two-room cellar foundation with an entryway on the east; the floor plan suggests a half-and-parlor house with an attached room, perhaps a kitchen, on the south. Tax records indicate that Thomas Kane owned Lot 70 on N Street prior to 1860. The 1886 Edwards plat map indicates S. Seals was living at this location, while the 1875 census lists a Susan Seals, a 23-year-old illiterate. The heirs of S. Seals sold the structures referred to as features 23a and 23b to S. C. Hogg in 1923. Feature 51, located at 99 M Street, also is a small, rectangular, 11.3-by-12.5-ft, limestone-masonry cellar foundation. This structure was standing until the 1960s.

The position of a number of additional commercial structures and residences within the BFI project area have been established through historical research, although their archaeological remains apparently have been destroyed by modern development. Commercial structures include the H. J. Fairbanks, Winchler and Company Blacksmith Shop at 46 N Street (Location K) and the J. A. Bartles Meat Market at the corner of Seventh and N streets (Location L). Residences include S. N. Marchant at 65 R Street (Location Q), John S. McCorkle at 69 R Street (Location R), George Yeale at 78-80 R Street (Location S), C. H. Carpenter at 16 S Street (Location T), and Thomas B. Saddlington at 35-39 V Street (Location U).

### QUINDARO AND THE KANSAS CONFLICT

A number of controversial claims have been made regarding the Quindaro town site. Two of the more important of these claims are the association of the site with the Kansas Conflict and with the underground railroad. The interpretation of the development of the town as a result of the altruistic motives of northern abolitionists engaged in the struggle to make Kansas a free state is perhaps best espoused by Smith (1966) and Greenbaum (1982). Greenbaum (1982:10-12) states:

The town of Quindaro was founded by a coalition of Wyandotts and the Emigrant Aid Co.... Quindaro was at one and the same time a boom town on the western frontier and a paramilitary outpost in the abolitionist crusade to eliminate slavery.

Smith (1966:11) even attributes the demise of the town site to the end of the conflict over slavery in Kansas.

Quindaro's initial purpose and role during this period had been absorbed by other towns along the Missouri River and in the Kansas border. In effect, Quindaro found it necessary to die when all the other river towns adopted its faith in the rights of men.

While these views are colorful, they have little to do with historical facts. The association of the development of the town with the New England Emigrant Aid Company rests largely on Charles Robinson's past association with that organization prior to the founding of Quindaro. This view ignores the fact that he had officially severed his ties to the Emigrant Aid Company prior to the founding of Quindaro and that by early 1857 the Emigrant Aid Company, by investing in Atchison, was competing with Robinson and his associates in establishing free-state control of a port along the Missouri River. The Quindaro Town Company was promoted principally by Robinson through the Boston Kansas Land Trust, a real estate trust headed by Joseph Lyman and largely consisting of northeastern investors desiring to profit from investments in Kansas lands. The hostility toward northern immigrants by proslavery communities such as Leavenworth and Atchison at the height of the Kansas Conflict in 1856 actually gave Kansas land agents, such as Robinson, the opportunity to promote new town-site development as safe ports of entry for northern immigrants. Few of the northern investors lived in Quindaro or ever visited it. Most of the residents were businessmen interested in capitalizing on the anticipated immigrant trade, or were builders and laborers associated with the early phases of construction.

The suggestion that Quindaro was established for altruistic motives to combat the spread of slavery fails to take into account that the overriding issues in Kansas by early 1857 were real estate speculation and the acquisition of Indian lands, rather than the issue of slavery (Gates 1954). The Kansas Conflict which had erupted in civil war in the summer of 1856 was largely resolved by the end of the year, and proslavery and free-state interests were collaborating in business ventures designed to promote railroad connection to their town-site developments. The association of Samuel Pomeroy with proslavery Benjamin Stringfellow in Atchison is but one example, and the association of the free-state leader Charles Robinson with proslavery Joel Walker in the Quindaro venture is not unusual when viewed in this context. The prevailing attitude in 1857 is best expressed by Pomeroy in a letter to Amos Lawrence dated December 19, 1856. He stated that the future of Kansas never looked so bright, everybody's attention was turned to getting rich, real estate was rising rapidly, railroads and Indian lands were all the rage, and "we don't think or care now whether the laws are 'bogus' or not" (Lawrence n.d.).

Both Berwanger (1967) and Rawley (1969) also have documented that many free-state settlers in Kansas were against slavery because they were nonslaveholders and did not want blacks in Kansas. This seemingly paradoxical viewpoint has been discussed in some detail by Malin (1984) who attributes this cultural trait to the background of the majority of most settlers who were from the border states north of the Ohio River where "black laws" outlawing free blacks were in force. The antislavery attitude of



Kansas freestaters is perhaps best illustrated by the free-black exclusion clause passed by the Topeka Constitutional Convention in 1855. The Topeka Movement, which began as a protest against the fraudulent territorial elections of 1854 and 1855 and the policies of the proslavery *legis* legislature, ultimately resulted in the Topeka Constitutional Convention of 1855, which prohibited slavery but also provided for a referendum excluding free blacks from the state. Antislavery Kansans approved the constitution by a vote of 1731 to 46. Of the 1778 votes cast on the Negro exclusion, 1287 favored it and only 453 opposed it.

In 1860 Quindaro had one of the larger black populations in the state. As previously noted, the U.S. census lists a total of 30 for Quindaro Township. In comparison to other Kansas towns, the black population in Atchison was 29 and in Fort Scott was 19. However, by far the largest black population was in Leavenworth where it totaled 252.

The attitudes of the Quindaro townspeople toward blacks are expressed by news items in the *Chindowan*. In July 1857 the *Chindowan* reported that the Quindaro Literary Society discussed the issue of whether colored children should be allowed in the same day and Sunday schools as white children, but they came to no conclusion.

Alfred Gray, in his mayoral inaugural address (*Chindowan*, February 20, 1858), noted that the Quindaro town charter had provisions for establishing free schools for white children and "also a separate school for colored children." Gray further stated:

The provision, which thus keeps the two races from mingling together in our common schools, will meet the unqualified approbation of the Majority of this community, and, without doubt, the experience of a reasonable period of time, will convince all of the wisdom and expediency of this measure. But whilst the unfortunate class is denied the privileges incident to social equality, it would be manifestly unjust to deprive them of the advantages of an education. It would seem most humane and more consistent with sound policy, to take prompt measures to provide for an efficient school for them.

Gray's belief that separate schools for white and colored children would be supported by the people of Quindaro was born out by the results of an election held on May 18, 1858. The two questions listed on the ballot concerned Negro suffrage and the issue of separate schools. The response reported by the *Chindowan* (May 22, 1858) indicated that 30 people voted for Negro suffrage and 20 against. Forty-five voted for separate schools and eight against.

While the majority of the Quindaro residents were from states compris-

ing the Old Northwest Territory, they were certainly tolerant of blacks within their community. While a majority (60%) supported black suffrage, a large majority (85%) were for separate schools. Since Negro suffrage did not come to Kansas until passage of the Fifteenth Amendment, the Quindaro townspeople were certainly progressive and ahead of their time in regard to black voting rights.

### THE LEGEND OF THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

The interpretation that Quindaro served as a major point on the underground railroad is a commonly held belief in the current folklore of this area. The oral tradition associating the underground railroad with Quindaro has been included in a number of historical studies (Farley 1956; Greenbaum 1982; Reid 1969; Smith 1966), which have been the source of much of the recent controversy regarding the site. Farley's 1956 association of the site with the underground railroad is based principally on a letter to the *Wyandotte Gazette* (December 29, 1882) from Mrs. C. I. H. Nichols who, in a rather romantic recollection of her early days in Quindaro, recalled the escape of at least two slaves through the site in 1857-58.

Reid's (1969) principal sources are county histories by Morgan (1911) and Harrington (1935). Upon rechecking these sources, one finds that Harrington (1935:227) states that there were several stations on the branches of the underground railroad in eastern Kansas, the most notable being Pardee in Atchison County. Quindaro is not specifically mentioned by Harrington as a station, although officers of the system are said to have resided in both Quindaro and Wyandotte. According to Morgan (1911), slaves in western Missouri living north of the Missouri River generally escaped to Iowa, while those to the south of the Missouri escaped to points in Kansas. Quindaro, however, is not specifically mentioned.

The source for Smith's association of the site with the underground railroad is the oral tradition of the area. Greenbaum (1982) has based her interpretations largely on Smith's study and on informants such as Orin Murray's account of his grandfather escaping from Parkville to Quindaro in 1864. Orin Murray's grandfather, Philip Murray, did move to Quindaro Township as he is listed in the 1865 U.S. census; however, the 1864 date suggested by Mr. Murray is several years after cessation of underground railroad activities along the Kansas-Missouri border.

One of the most important documents on underground railroad activities in Kansas is a series of unpublished manuscripts that were written in the early 1870s by C. F. W. Leonhardt (n.d.a, n.d.b). Leonhardt visited Quindaro in February 1858 to deliver a lecture on the Kansas struggle (*Quindaro Chindowan*, February 6, 1858). Leonhardt, along with J. E. Stewart, conducted the last train on the underground railroad, which left Lawrence on June 13, 1860. Stewart was a resident of Douglas County and



was not the John Stewart who was proprietor of the Wyandott House at Quindaro. The manuscripts by Leonhardt make only brief mention of Quindaro and indicate his uncertainty of the involvement of this community in this matter. These manuscripts suggest that other Kansas towns such as Leavenworth, Wyandotte, Grasshopper Falls, Lawrence, and Topeka played a much more prominent role in the underground railroad than did Quindaro. While Leonhardt's document does not provide any detail about the underground railroad at Quindaro, he suggests that if anyone was familiar with the involvement of that city in the underground railroad, it would be John Morgan Walden.

As noted above, Walden was the editor of the *Chindowan*. He attended free-state conventions in Kansas and traveled widely, speaking in favor of the free-state cause. His papers on file at the University of Chicago discuss John Brown and the underground railroad (Walden n.d.). He states that he had never met John Brown at a free-state convention, but that in traveling to Mapleton to make an address, he was introduced to a Captain Morgan who was traveling toward the Missouri state line. Only later and after the meeting did he learn that Captain Morgan was in fact John Brown. Walden's discussion of Brown's involvement in the underground railroad does not mention the occurrence of underground railroad activities at Quindaro (Walden n.d.). Walden's writings indicate that one of the most important, widely traveled free-state leaders in Quindaro did not even recognize John Brown and had nothing to say about the involvement of Quindaro in the underground railroad, thereby questioning the extent of underground railroad activity at Quindaro.

Newspaper articles in the *Chindowan* also refute underground railroad activity at Quindaro. The first is a response to a story in the *Westport Star of Empire* that accuses the Quindaro residents of harboring escaped slaves (*Chindowan*, August 8, 1857). The *Chindowan* denies this charge and goes on to claim that the real issue behind this incendiary rhetoric is the economic competition for the overland trade between Quindaro and Westport. In a second article in the *Chindowan*, the paper notes that slave hunters had come to Quindaro looking for escaped slaves. Town officials escorted them around town and even visited black residences to convince them that there were no escaped slaves harbored there.

While Quindaro residents undoubtedly aided escaped slaves prior to the Civil War, as the recollection of Mrs. Nichols indicates, there is no evidence indicating that it was the locus of a major point, comparable to either Lawrence or Topeka, on the underground railroad. Most likely the association of Quindaro with the underground railroad developed as a result of the predominately free-state philosophy of the town, the rapid influx of black refugees into the area late in the Civil War, and the result of freedmen into the area immediately after the Civil War, as well as the result of the placement of the John Brown statue at Western University. Harrington

noted the legendary aspects of the association of Quindaro with the underground railroad when he stated that:

Old Quindaro is rich in tradition because it was the Free State gateway to Kansas and; naturally, marvelous stories would grow on the aid given to escaping slaves and its tunnels, dug to carry surplus water from the hills, would stretch in imagination, under the Missouri River and form an important link in the underground railway. It is not strange that the name of John Brown should be linked with traditional Quindaro though there is no evidence that he was ever in town or connected in any way with its development (Harrington 1935:289).

The development of the legend associating the Quindaro site with the underground railroad can be reconstructed by examining the newspaper account. By the end of the nineteenth century considerable public interest had developed in the ruins of the Quindaro town site. A number of photographs were taken and a fairly large number of newspaper articles regarding the town site appeared.

In 1898 an historical reminiscence of Quindaro appeared in the *Kansas City Journal* (August 14). The article contained considerable factual, historical information regarding the town site and noted that the ruins of two buildings were still present. The article included interviews with Mr. and Mrs. Elisha Sorter, identified as two early rural settlers who lived northwest of the town site. Mr. Sorter recalled the initial economic prosperity of the town site, while Mrs. Sorter recalled that she was afraid of the Indians and that her children were afraid of the Negroes in the area. No mention was made of the underground railroad or of escaping slaves through the site.

In 1899 an article in the *Kansas City Star* (July 16) contained a fairly detailed history of the Quindaro town site. No mention was made of the underground railroad, although it states that soon after the war Negroes from Missouri lived for a short time in the ruined and deserted buildings. The article had an illustration of the ruins of Park's warehouse. The slots in the walls for the second-story floor joists were identified as portholes for guns.

In 1905 the (July 2) *Kansas City Star* published a fairly detailed article, which contained illustrations of Jim Lane and John Brown, on the underground railroad in Kansas. A map accompanying the article lists Mound City, Lawrence, Topeka, Oskaloosa, and Holton as underground railroad stations. No mention, however, was made of Quindaro or any of its former residents. An illustration of the underground railroad in operation that accompanied the article shows several black refugees with a white driver and two white horsemen. Later that year the *Kansas City Star* also published

a fairly detailed, and for the most part historically accurate, account of the former Quindaro town site. No mention of the underground railroad was made other than a very brief statement that Abelard Guthrie ran an underground railroad there during the war.

In 1907 the *Kansas City Gazette* (March 25) had a news story entitled, "The tunnel explored," which detailed the account of A. L. Hovey, a law student who had explored a tunnel at what he termed "Fort Quindaro." Hovey described the tunnel as an oozy hole next to a wall through which he crept downward for about 80 feet until he came upon what he identified as a buried beach of the Missouri River where the passage widened out into branch chambers.

In 1911 a statue of John Brown was erected in front of Ward Hall at Western University. Accounts indicate that considerable publicity surrounded the unveiling and dedication of the statue.

In 1912 a *Kansas City Star* (May 26) reporter visited the Quindaro ruins and found an unidentified, white-headed old man with a cane who identified himself as one of the original settlers of Quindaro. The old man recounted in considerable detail the events and individuals associated with the town site, although some of his facts and names were clearly confused with the passage of time. The article had two accompanying illustrations, one showing Park's warehouse and the second the opening of the tunnel. The old man recounted the following information about Park's warehouse.

Down at the rear of that building you see what appears to be a neglected cave. Many a fanciful story has been written about that hole in the ground. They have called it a cave where the whites hid from the Indians. Then they have turned the story around and called it a cave where the Indians hid from the whites. If you look into it you will find a tunnel. It runs clear to the river and it was not a freight subway, as one eloquent writer described it. No, it was a plain, every day sewer, whereby Colonel Parks was able to dump the refuse from his warehouse and send it down to the Missouri River. Just a plain sewer.

In 1913 the *Kansas City Sun* (April 25) published a letter from a high school student addressed to S. N. Simpson, one of the founders and the superintendent of public works for the former Quindaro town site. The student indicated that he had visited the ruins where he was told that Quantrell had a fort, now represented by a pile of rocks, near which there is a small opening in the ground represented to visitors and school children as the mouth of a tunnel. Simpson replied:

Neither Quantrell[sic] nor any other person ever had a fort at Quindaro. The pile of rock was formed by a

stone building. The hole in the ground was formed by a trench, walled up on each side and covered over and used as a roadway to the bridge.

The initial newspaper interest on the Quindaro site from 1882 to 1913 mainly cited informants who had lived at the town site. For the most part these accounts are accurate. However, in 1915 a rather imaginative article appeared in the *Kansas City Star* (April 25). The article entitled, "A sleepy hollow in Kansas," contained the following.

Hidden away beneath a crumbling stone wall and a tangle of vines, on the site of Old Quindaro, is a cave, hoary tradition.

If the folklore of the oldest negro inhabitants of the district be worthy of belief, the big cavern in the hillside is the last remnant hereabouts of the famous "underground railway" system that sheltered thousands of northward fleeing slaves.

And, if there be truth in the tales handed down from father to son concerning those days of nearly a century ago, one of the half dozen ruined stone walls of the gloomy ravine supported the house occupied for some time by John Brown, champion of liberty.

By day, the cavern is stunned by the sturdiest negro of the colony. And by night, from the black depths of the haunted hole, myriads of misty shapes slip forth 'tis said—the disembodied spirits of blacks who died in its moldy depths while evading pursuit....

Just beneath one of the walls of the warehouse, peeps the entrance to the haunted cave.

Fifty yards farther up the gulch stands another vine-covered heap of stones, a lonely marker of the John Brown house. On all sides are dense thickets and little gullies that conjure up in the mind pictures of black forms slinking through the night from the water's edge to the safety of the endless cavern.

It is almost a haven, but not quite, for many a man, and woman, too, and child entered the black, mouth of the hole never to come forth, trapped like a rat by the close pursuers.

From the old John Brown house is seen the Missouri River slipping silently on its way. On the far side is the

state of Missouri, half free in those days, half slave—a sorry refuge for the fleeing negro. Here, in the tangle of undergrowth, is Kansas, all free and a haven for the black man who crossed the river in safety and reached the security of the cave....

There was a time, some years ago, when a venture-some spirit betook himself with a spade into the dark recesses and attempted to burrow through the debris to find the hidden mysteries beyond....

The effort to get through the mass of fallen rock was unsuccessful and the spirits of the gaunt black men and women hide in peace by day and slip through the chinks of the falling rocks by night to cross and recross the river that meant so much to them in their dreams of freedom.

The mysteries of the old cavern belong to the beautiful blossoming hill, to the river, and to the shades of John Brown and his associates.

In 1932 the *Kansas City Star* published captioned illustrations entitled, "The stroller visits Old Quindaro." The captions to the illustration identify one of the masonry structures as the hotel where Abraham Lincoln had stayed, and the mouth of the tunnel near the remains of a warehouse is identified as the old slave tunnel. A slave hideout was described as being present in the rear of a former residence which the caption states later became a brewery.

That same year, Western University (1932) published its historical statement in its biennial report containing much of the same information reported by the *Kansas City Star* stroller. The account (Western University 1932) states that the Massachusetts Aid Society founded the city of Quindaro in 1844, that they built a beautiful and elaborate stone hotel where the immortal Abraham Lincoln stayed for three days, and that John Brown established one of the principal stations on his underground railroad at Quindaro and that it included a stone-and-brick tunnel built through the hill so that boats bringing Negroes from Missouri might pass through. The account states that William Tecumseh Sherman, Horace Greeley, and Susan B. Anthony all received their inspiration there, and that, therefore, "the ground was both sacred and historical."

John Brown's whereabouts in Kansas have been documented by numerous biographies (e.g., Connelley 1900; Hinton 1894; Malin 1942; Oates 1984), and there is no evidence that he ever visited Quindaro. Lincoln did in fact spend seven days in Kansas in 1859 visiting Troy, Atchison, and Leavenworth (Bastler 1953). These visits are well documented, and there is

no evidence that he stayed in Quindaro. Sherman lived in Leavenworth from September 1857 until June 1859, when he went into law practice with his brother-in-law, Thomas E. Ewing, Jr. (Merrill 1971). Again, there is no evidence of his having established a law practice in Quindaro.

The number of news stories associated with the Quindaro ruins decreases in the 1930s and 40s, probably due to the destruction of the ruins by the construction of a gas pipeline through Levee Street in the late 1930s. However, beginning in the 1950s, a series of historical studies focusing on the former town site appeared, including Farley's "The annals of Quindaro," which was published in the *Kansas Historical Quarterly* in 1956. This was followed by Thaddeus Smith's Master's thesis on Western University (1966) and by a rather lengthy class paper by Sandra Reid of the University of Missouri (1969). In 1982 the city of Kansas City published Susan Greenbaum's study of the African-American community in Kansas City, Kansas, which included considerable information on Quindaro. The most recent historical studies accepted as historical fact much of the local tradition associating the site with the underground railroad, although both Smith and Greenbaum state that the local tradition is partly legend, especially the association of John Brown with the site. Nevertheless, they both exaggerate the association of Quindaro with altruistic motives of northern abolitionists engaged in the struggle to make Kansas a free state.

While much has been written about the underground railroad, more recent scholarly studies have emphasized the legendary aspects of the institution. They have noted that although the underground railroad was a reality, much of the material relating to it belongs to the realm of folklore rather than history (Gara 1961). The legend of the underground railroad had its origin in the antebellum period when an image of the mysterious institution, based in part on propaganda statements of abolitionists and their southern opponents, began to take shape. However, the great bulk of material on the subject appeared after the Civil War when elderly abolitionists told, in reminiscences and late-nineteenth-century histories, of their part in the institution. According to Gara (1961), these individuals enlarged the scope and exaggerated the importance of the underground railroad and thus contributed to what he refers to as one of America's best known but least-examined legends.

The western or Kansas-Nebraska underground railroad came into existence following the settlement of Kansas in the mid-1850s, and most accounts date its operation from about 1857 to 1861 (Leonhardt n.d.a, Noble 1977). The main stations on the route were the free-state towns of Lawrence and Topeka. The northward route generally followed the Lane Trail, which was opened by free-state settlers in 1856, and extended north from Topeka to Holton and then north to Nebraska City where it crossed the Missouri River into Iowa. The best known episode of the western underground railroad was the raid made by John Brown into Vernon County, Missouri, in

December 1858 (Figure 1). This raid liberated 13 slaves who were then escorted by Brown to Lawrence, Topeka, and then on the Lane Trail out of Kansas Territory (Merkle 1943; Noble 1977).

There are no good estimates as to the number of fugitives that traveled over the western underground railroad, but the number probably did not exceed several hundred. Missouri census data indicate that there were 90,000 slaves in Missouri in 1850 and 111,000 by 1860. The slave population was associated with the plantation economy, which emphasized hemp production, and was concentrated along the Missouri River valley from Jefferson City west to Kansas City and from Kansas City north to St. Joseph (Gerlach 1986). The 1860 Federal census records only 23 fugitive slaves—including eight from Platte County and one each from Clay and Jackson counties—for the preceding year along the Kansas-Missouri border. News items and reward notices in Kansas-Missouri border newspapers from 1848 to 1861 document at least 46 fugitive slaves in this area, again suggesting the presence in this area of a relatively small number of fugitive slaves prior to the Civil War (Schmitz and Verbrugge 1988).

Review of the available information concerning the underground railroad in Kansas and Missouri—including published books (Noble 1977; Siebert 1898), journal articles (Merkel 1943; Nelson 1934), individual narratives of escaped slaves (Still 1871; Rawick 1941), along with a study by the author of Missouri and Kansas border newspaper accounts from 1848 to 1865 and the considerable documentary data associated with the Quindaro site—reveals no evidence that a significant number of black fugitives escaped through Quindaro prior to the Civil War. As a matter of fact, the only account of a contemporary eyewitness detailing the escape of a slave through Quindaro prior to the Civil War is the account of Mrs. Nichols. The historical evidence does not suggest that Quindaro played any greater part in the underground railroad than many of the other territorial river towns along the Kansas-Missouri border and certainly less than many such as Topeka and Lawrence, where considerable underground railroad activity appears to have taken place.

It has been pointed out that since helping escaped slaves in the 1850s was a violation of the Fugitive Slave Law, the facts concerning their escapes would not be reported. While this is an important consideration, the extensive written documentation by individuals intimately associated with the Quindaro site (e.g., Guthrie 1858-63; Robinson 1892) and the writings of many of the Kansas abolitionists involved in the underground railroad fail to mention the presence of any type of abolitionist plan to route slaves through Quindaro.

By the mid-1860s, blacks entering Kansas were refugees from the war and the disintegrating institution of slavery, not fugitives being pursued by bloodhounds and slave catchers who were aided by the underground

railroad. The April 9, 1863, *Kansas City Journal of Commerce* tells of a procession passing through Kansas City of 85-90 former bondsmen that consisted of six wagons, one carriage, five horsemen, and ten footmen. Another note on April 25 states that a group passed through the city in a buggy on which was written in large letters, "IMMEDIATE EMANCIPATION with Transportation and without Compensation." The reference to emancipation without compensation referred to the current political debate in Missouri regarding the emancipation of slaves and various proposals to compensate their owners (Bellamy 1971). The recently published letter of Benjamin Franklin Mudge dated February 1862 detailed the assistance provided to eight contrabands (Mudge 1991). The slaves were moved to Leavenworth where a large contraband community was located. This letter indicates that attempts were made by slave owners as late as 1862 to secure the return of their slaves, although this was increasingly uncommon as the state emancipation movement grew in Missouri.

The contradiction between the historical record and the local tradition associating the Quindaro site with the underground railroad lies principally in the confusion of pre-Civil War fugitive slaves with Civil War black refugees or contrabands. The breakdown in the institution of slavery in Missouri in the mid-1860s, along with the freeing of slaves by Union armies, created an incredible refugee problem along the Kansas-Missouri border. Estimates suggest that as many as 10,000 former slaves had moved to Kansas by 1865. Newspaper information indicate that the exodus had started in 1861 and had gained considerable momentum in the spring of 1863. A number of these people settled in the vicinity of Quindaro. Census data shows that the black population of Quindaro Township grew from 29 in 1860 to 479 in 1865. Most of the new residents appear to have arrived after 1863.

## SUMMARY

The Quindaro site is an historic archaeological site that largely consists of the remains of the Quindaro town site, a predominantly Euroamerican Kansas territorial river port which was founded in 1857 and which was largely deserted by 1862. The site is also the location of a post-Civil War African-American community, often referred to as Happy Hollow, which grew into one of the major African-American communities of Kansas City, Kansas. Late in the nineteenth century the site became the location of Western University, the first black school in Kansas. Buildings associated with Western University were destroyed in the 1960s.

The Quindaro town site was one of a number of mid-nineteenth-century ports developed along the Kansas side of the Missouri River following the

passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, an action which opened Kansas for settlement in 1854. Prior to the advent of railroads, the principal route of entry for immigrants and freight into the new territory in the mid-1850s was by steamboat up the Missouri River. The town site was located on Wyandot allotments adjacent to the Missouri River, just above the confluence of the Kansas and Missouri rivers. This position, adjacent to the first cutbank of the Missouri River west of the Kansas-Missouri state line, was about two miles south of Parkville. The river flowing against the bedrock bluff at this point formed a natural landing. Access to the landing was provided by a small tributary stream leading to the uplands beyond. From this point overland transportation for freight and passengers could be arranged either by road or by smaller boats up the Kansas River to interior towns such as Lawrence. To a large extent, Quindaro could be considered a port for Lawrence. The *New York Tribune* on June 19, 1857, stated:

The new town of Quindaro, which was regarded as the port and harbor for Lawrence on the Missouri, though founded only some three or four months since, has a free school, a free-state newspaper, and connections with Lawrence by road, with good substantial bridges across all the streams.

The layout of Quindaro was typical of a river town with the street system designed to serve the riverfront and the levee. Wholesale and retail establishments occupied locations most convenient for unloading and distributing. The principal north-south street was Kansas Avenue, which extended from the wharf south up the bluff. The commercial district primarily consisted of a row of warehouses on Levee Street adjacent to the wharf and the retail and business establishments were located along Kansas Avenue and Main Street. The position of these establishments took advantage of the access to the landing provided by the small tributary stream. The warehouses were located on the slopes of this narrow valley while the businesses and retail establishments were located at the foot slope of the bluff and on the terraces of the creek. The warehouses most likely were used for storage; however, one contained several offices.

The principal retail business district was located along Main Street near its intersection with Kansas Avenue and south along Kansas Avenue; fourteen structures were located in this area. Six structures faced Main Street and housed a surveyor, two attorneys—who also dealt in real estate—a tailor, a meat market, a hardware store, a dry-goods-and-grocery store, and a boot-and-shoe store. Most of these structures, as well as the warehouses along Levee, were within the pipeline corridor and were damaged heavily by pipeline construction. The part of the business district extending along Kansas Avenue south to Fifth Street was better preserved and was the focus of the 1987-88 excavations. Structures located here

include two hotels, other commercial buildings housed two mercantiles, a real estate office, a newspaper office, and a clothing-and-shoe store. One of the largest structures, the Jacob Henry Building, housed offices on the second floor and a public hall on the third floor. Two physicians, who also dealt in real estate, were located at the southern edge of this north commercial district.

A second smaller group of commercial structures was located on the bluff slope near Kansas Avenue. This location would have held a commanding view of the river and wharf. Businesses located here included a variety of grocery-and-dry-goods store, a physician, and a druggist. Businesses also were located at several residences between Fifth and Sixth streets, along O and N streets to the west and adjacent to Quindaro Creek. These included a boot-and-shoe manufacturer, a saddle-and-harness shop, a brewery and bar, a wagon-and-blacksmith shop, and another meat market. While a few residences were scattered along the bluff on P and R streets east and west of Kansas Avenue, a number were located along the creek in the vicinity of Fifth and O and Sixth and N streets. Most, however, along with the school, two churches, and a grist mill, were to have been located on the bluffs to the south and west of the commercial district, outside of the proposed landfill project area.

Development at Quindaro began in January 1857. The plan, undoubtedly Robinson's design, was essentially the one developed by the New England Emigrant Aid Company and consisted of the construction of a hotel and a saw mill so that new arrivals would have a place to stay and could acquire lumber for building houses. The town grew rapidly in 1857, and major developments continued into early 1858. However, by late 1858 the boom began to falter, and by 1859-60 businesses were beginning to close. In 1862 the commercial district was deserted, and the Union calvary was quartered in the deserted buildings. These buildings were fairly intact in 1863, according to the account of C. M. Chase, but by the early 1870s had collapsed. While the commercial section of the town became deserted, occupation of the residential structures along Quindaro Creek and on the bluff overlooking the site continued.

The initial Quindaro community was predominately a Euroamerican community with several black families located along K Street on the western edge of the town site. This black community expanded rapidly in the later part of the Civil War due to the influx of black refugees or contrabands from Missouri. As this community grew, it expanded eastward, acquiring some of the residential structures along Quindaro Creek in the 1870s.

There are a number of reasons for the failure of the Quindaro town site. In 1858 the national depression began to take its toll on Quindaro, as well as on many other speculative developments in the Kansas Territory (Fitzgerald 1983; Gates 1954); other Kansas river ports that collapsed include Sumner,



Iowa Point, Delaware City, and Doniphan. According to one of the former residents, George Yeale (1910), the naming of Wyandott, which later became Kansas City, as the county seat in 1858 also hurt Quindaro's chances for survival. The town's misfortune suffered further when the free-state movement gained control of the Kansas legislature. The larger, more-established towns such as Leavenworth and Wyandott quickly became free-state towns, and Quindaro could no longer compete as a safe port of entry for northerners. However, perhaps the most important cause for the collapse of the town was its inability to secure a railroad, a failure that probably can be attributed to a conflict of interest on Robinson's part. Robinson was chief lobbyist for the Parkville Grand River Railroad but also had interests in the Leavenworth, Pawnee, and Western Railroad, which was headed by Thomas Ewing and was projected to connect Leavenworth and Lawrence (Gates 1954). Robinson's foremost interest was in Lawrence, and he changed his support to the LPW line.

As its capital was drained, the Quindaro Town Company was unable to meet expenses. Abelard Guthrie lost everything and was incensed over the town's failure. His diary (Guthrie 1858-63) contains numerous references to his increasing dissatisfaction with his business dealings with Robinson, especially Robinson's refusal to pay his debts, and in 1859 he filed a lawsuit against Robinson. The case was considered by three judges who decided in Robinson's favor (Wilson 1975:60). At the time, the three judges cited poor management on Guthrie's part; however, there was evidence of Robinson's refusal to pay his bills and the matter was never resolved fully. Robinson was elected the first state governor in December 1859 and from then on distanced himself further from the affairs of Quindaro.

### CONCLUSION

The Quindaro town site is best viewed as a mid-nineteenth-century real estate development that, for a number of reasons, failed within a short period of time. To a considerable extent, the significance of the site lies in its failure, in that it represents an archaeological time capsule representative of one of the many competing Kansas territorial settlements that grew up along the Missouri River. Some, like Atchison and Leavenworth, succeeded while others, like Quindaro, failed. The site was abandoned, and a considerable amount of damage from looting, the salvaging of building materials, and hillside erosion occurred in the late nineteenth century. It was damaged further in the twentieth century by railroad, pipeline, and powerline construction, which destroyed the original wharf and the northern end of the commercial district. Nevertheless, intact remains in the southern part of the commercial district along Kansas Avenue and residential structures along N and O streets have been preserved.

The architectural remains preserved are limited primarily to mortared-

limestone rubble footings and basement foundations. Superficially, these remains suggest a preference for the use of limestone as a building material. However, historical data indicate that most of the structures at the town site, including the hotel, were frame buildings. Many of the commercial, stone buildings had brick-and-iron front facades.

The emphasis on the use of limestone as a building material in Kansas territorial architecture has been attributed to the large number of German immigrants and the early settlers with a Pennsylvania Dutch background (Asbury 1956; Malin 1954). Both Frederick Klaus and at least one other bricklayer, B. H. Terreling, were German immigrants and, in general, there was a fairly large number of German immigrants in the community. The association of preserved limestone quarries, lime kilns, and structural remains is an important aspect of the site. Thus, while the above-grade superstructures of nearly all the buildings are gone, the site has provided considerable opportunity for the study of the construction sequence—from the initial quarrying of the building stone to the preparation of mortar to the construction of foundations and footings.

Intact mid-nineteenth-century artifact deposits were recovered from a number of the structures, including a varied assemblage from the trash deposits associated with the Quindaro House Hotel. The remains recovered include an extensive ceramic and faunal assemblages. Analysis of the faunal remains will provide considerable information on the diet of Quindaro residents. Few non-domestic historic ceramic assemblages have received detailed analysis, and the study of these remains will provide information on dining customs as well as mid-nineteenth-century trade-and-commerce patterns associated with the town site. The study of these remains will provide many details, which are unavailable from the historical record, about the town site and everyday life in a Kansas territorial community. The associated archaeological remains of several late-nineteenth-century African-American residents are also of considerable significance since few written records are associated with the early development of the black community in Quindaro.

The significance of the Quindaro town site principally lies in two areas. First, the site contains the archaeological remains of a Kansas territorial town site that dates to a relatively brief interval, 1857-62. This time capsule of archaeological data greatly supplements the information available from the historical records regarding the architecture, diet, and utilitarian objects associated with the town-site occupation. Archaeological data is enhanced considerably by the wealth of documentary data—personal papers, diaries, and legal documents—associated with the town-site occupants.

Second, the site has considerable significance as a traditional cultural property—it is presently considered to be holy and sacred by a segment of the local African-American community because of its perceived association with John Brown and the underground railroad. While this association is



largely folklore rather than historical fact, it would be extremely ethnocentric to discount the significance of this association.

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