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## 6-Archaeological Survey of the Allegan Apartment Project, Allegan, Michigan

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DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY  
WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

TECHNICAL REPORT NO. 6

1981

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE  
ALLEGAN APARTMENT PROJECT,  
ALLEGAN, MICHIGAN

ELIZABETH B. GARLAND  
CAVEN P. CLARK

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE ALLEGAN APARTMENT PROJECT,  
ALLEGAN, MICHIGAN

Principal Investigator: Elizabeth B. Garland, Ph.D.

Report Prepared and Submitted by  
Caven P. Clark and Elizabeth B. Garland

May 1981

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page No.</u>
1. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
2. PROJECT PERSONNEL . . . . .	1
3. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT AREA . . . . .	1
4. PREVIOUS RESEARCH IN THE PROJECT AREA . . . . .	2
5. SURVEY FIELD PROCEDURES . . . . .	2
6. LABORATORY PROCEDURES . . . . .	3
7. RESULTS OF THE SURVEY . . . . .	3
A. The Prehistoric Component . . . . .	3
B. The Historic Component . . . . .	7
8. RECOMMENDATIONS . . . . .	8
9. REFERENCES CITED . . . . .	11

LIST OF TABLE, FIGURE, AND MAPS

	<u>Page No.</u>
Table 1. Prehistoric Cultural Materials . . . . .	5
Figure 1. Lithic Tools from 20AE622 . . . . .	6
Map 1. Project Location - USGS Topographical Map . . . . .	9
Map 2. Project Grid . . . . .	10

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This project was carried out under terms of a contract between Western Michigan University and Gardner Management Company of Kalamazoo, Michigan, Mr. Jeff Gardner, President.

Mr. Gardner requested that this survey be done via a phone call to Elizabeth Garland in early May. He subsequently forwarded maps and provided information necessary for project planning and a budget was prepared. The contract was signed May 20, 1981.

## 2. PROJECT PERSONNEL

Principal Investigator: Elizabeth B. Garland, Ph.D.  
Field Director: Caven P. Clark, M.A. candidate  
Field Assistant: Deborah Rhead, M.A. candidate

We informed Mr. Gardner that high probability exists for a prehistoric site in the project area. The area to be surveyed is a 7 acre parcel with limited surface visibility, necessitating shovel probing. We carried out an intensive two-day survey with two people in the field (32 man-hours) on May 25 and 26, 1981.

## 3. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT AREA

The project area consists of a parcel ca. 600 feet by 540 feet (182.9 by 164.6 meters), situated between 600 feet and 1200 feet north of Hooker Road and from Eastern Avenue 540 feet to the west. The parcel is located in section 27 ( $N\frac{1}{2}$  of the  $SW\frac{1}{4}$  of the  $SW\frac{1}{4}$  of the  $SW\frac{1}{4}$  and the  $S\frac{1}{2}$  of the  $NW\frac{1}{4}$  of the  $SW\frac{1}{4}$  of the  $SW\frac{1}{4}$ ), T2N, R13W, Allegan County, Michigan. The topography is uniformly flat, although just to the west of the project area there is a steep drop (ca. 80 feet) to the bed of an unnamed stream which reaches its confluence with the Kalamazoo River one-fourth mile to the north. The elevation of the parcel is 680 feet.

The soil association is a fine sandy-loam. The parcel has formerly been under cultivation. At present, however, surface visibility is very limited. Current vegetation consists of large toothed aspen along the western margin, and elsewhere a diffuse combination of cherry, sassafras, box elder, apple, and pine, with a ground cover of grasses and brambles.

#### 4. PREVIOUS RESEARCH IN THE PROJECT AREA

In 1978 a survey was conducted in this portion of the Kalamazoo River Valley (Cremin and Marek 1978). The Allegan Apartments project falls inside transect A of this survey but was not one of the tracts actually examined. This survey was responsible for recording most of the sites in the vicinity of the project area of which there are eleven within a one-mile radius. Most consist of diffuse light lithic scatters; only one (20AE314) produced a temporally diagnostic "Cahokia-like" projectile point (Cremin and Marek 1978:40).

Other surveys (Garland and Kingsley 1979; Garland and Rhead 1980; Cremin 1980) and excavations (Rogers 1972; Kingsley and Garland 1980; Spero 1979; WMU field school at 20AE88, 1980; among others) provide a baseline for regional research of the late prehistoric period in this area. Several sites in this part of the Kalamazoo River drainage were used by Luedtke (1976) in a study of lithic raw material distributions during the Late Woodland period.

#### 5. SURVEY FIELD PROCEDURES

On May 25, 1981 a metric grid was laid out over the project area in order to plot the locations of cultural materials should they be present within the parcel. Shovel probes were excavated at 10 meter intervals over the western 60 meters of the parcel (Map 2). Linear transects at 10 meter intervals were placed over the remainder of the site, where considerable disturbance had been

noted. Additional probes were made in the vicinity of N80-W90 where prehistoric ceramics were discovered. Probes were dug through to subsoil, ca. 30 to 40 cm below surface. A plow zone 30 cm deep was observed throughout the shovel tested area. All of the 172 shovel probes were processed through a screen (1/8 inch mesh, N00-N180, W130-W160; 1/4 inch mesh, all others). Materials collected from the surface were piece-plotted, except in the disturbed localities of Streeter Avenue and a bank erosion immediately southwest of the project area.

## 6. LABORATORY PROCEDURES

All collected materials were washed and labelled with site and field lot number which identifies provenience. Prehistoric cultural materials, consisting of lithics and ceramics, were subjected to analysis consistent with that used elsewhere (Garland and Clark 1981) in order to assess their nature and significance. Deborah Rhead provided descriptions of the historic ceramics.

## 7. RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

### A. The Prehistoric Component

Both prehistoric and historic components were identified in the project area. It was not possible to delineate the dimensions of the prehistoric site beyond the limits of the parcel; except to note that in adjacent exposed areas to the southwest and the north, prehistoric cultural material was present. By the descriptive standards employed in the settlement pattern surveys conducted by Garland in the Lower Kalamazoo Valley (Garland and Kingsley 1979; Garland and Rhead 1980) this occupation would be considered as one of moderate density.

The horizontal locations of prehistoric material (Map 2) is derived from two sources: shovel test finds and surface finds. The distribution of surface finds is biased in favor of surface visibility and may not accurately reflect



the true nature of the prehistoric component. However, in two areas (N140-N170, W110-W140 and N60-N90, W80-W110) there is some apparent correlation between surface and shovel finds.

These finds typically consist of single flakes, fire-cracked rock, or small sherds, although some tests produced more than one artifact. The use of screens for processing shovel tests is considered essential for the recovery of these very small items which could easily be missed by simply trowelling through excavated backdirt.

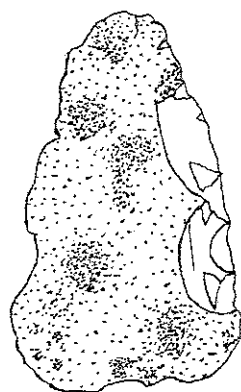
Cultural materials are primarily lithic debitage. This has been sorted into classes representing intervals of reduction processes (Table 1). Five lithic artifacts were recovered, none of them diagnostic. Figure 1 illustrates the five tools which include a decortication flake with bifacial flaking along one lateral edge (81-8), a biface fragment (81-22a), two unifaces (81-1, 81-22b), and a utilized flake (81-22c). The assemblage is far too small to make any meaningful statements about the lithic industry of the site. All stages of reduction are represented and chert types are restricted to material derived from glacial till sources which occur in close proximity to the site.

In addition to flaked stone items, a hammerstone and a possible mano fragment (FCR) were recovered. Fire-cracked rock was sparse throughout visible areas and recovered only twice during shovel probing.

Ten prehistoric sherds are indicative of a Late Woodland occupation of the site. No rim sherds were recovered but surface and paste characteristics are consistent with Allegan ware (Rogers 1972). Surface treatment is cord marked and smoothed-over cord marked. The temper is grit. Measurable thickness, on one sherd only, is 1.0 cm. All sherds were obtained from shovel probes in the vicinity of N80-W90.

Table 1. Prehistoric Cultural Materials

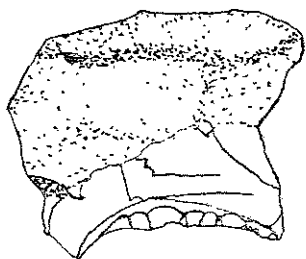
	<u>N</u>	<u>Wt. (grams)</u>	
Debitage (chert)			
Decortication	3	18.8	(1 uniface) #81-1
Block	3	13.9	
Flat			
Primary	5	20.3	
Secondary	7	11.7	(1 utilized) #81-22c
Tertiary	8	4.0	
Bifacial RT	2	0.4	
Fragments	<u>6</u>	<u>5.2</u>	(1 uniface) #81-22b
Totals	34	74.3	
Debitage (quartzite)			
Decortication	1	10.5	
Flat	<u>1</u>	<u>4.9</u>	
Totals	2	15.4	
Bifaces			
Knife	1	14.2	(#81-8)
Fragment	1	1.4	(#81-22a)
Miscellaneous Lithics			
Mano fragment	1	46.0	
Hammerstone	1	643.2	
Ceramics (body sherds)	10	10.0	



81-8



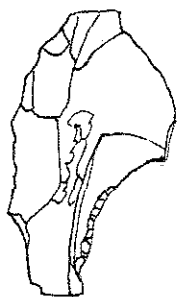
81-22a



81-1



81-22b



81-22c

Figure 1. Lithic Tools from 20AE622

Bifaces: 81-8, 81-22a

Unifaces: 81-1, 81-22b, 81-22c

Prehistoric material obtained on this project is consistent in both type and density with other nearby sites recorded on survey (Cremin and Marek 1978). This indicates a long-term, relatively non-intensive aboriginal use of this area, punctuated at intervals by larger, more intensively occupied sites along the main channel of the Kalamazoo River. In the project area, at least one episode of occupation during the Late Woodland period is documented by the presence of ceramics. The lithic assemblage, while not diagnostic, is tentatively presumed to be contemporaneous with the ceramics, although a multicomponent situation is by no means precluded. Michigan site number 20AE622 has been assigned.

Archaeological excavation in this region has tended to focus on the more intensively occupied Woodland sites which produce valuable but limited data with respect to overall patterns of subsistence and settlement. A contribution to our present knowledge would include an assessment of Woodland sites like 20AE622 located away from the Kalamazoo River along tributary streams. Data obtained from such presumably limited activity sites can be articulated with larger, more complex sites in order to better understand the settlement system. In addition, the observation of apparently exclusive use of locally derived lithic raw materials can be juxtaposed with the hypotheses contained in Luedtke's dissertation (1976).

#### B. The Historic Component

The evidence for historic land use in the project area includes agricultural activities in the form of uniform plowing to a depth of 30 cm below surface. A former fence line was observed near the bluff along the west side of the project area. An orchard was present on the eastern portion of the parcel as evidenced by short rows of stumps and a few viable apple trees.

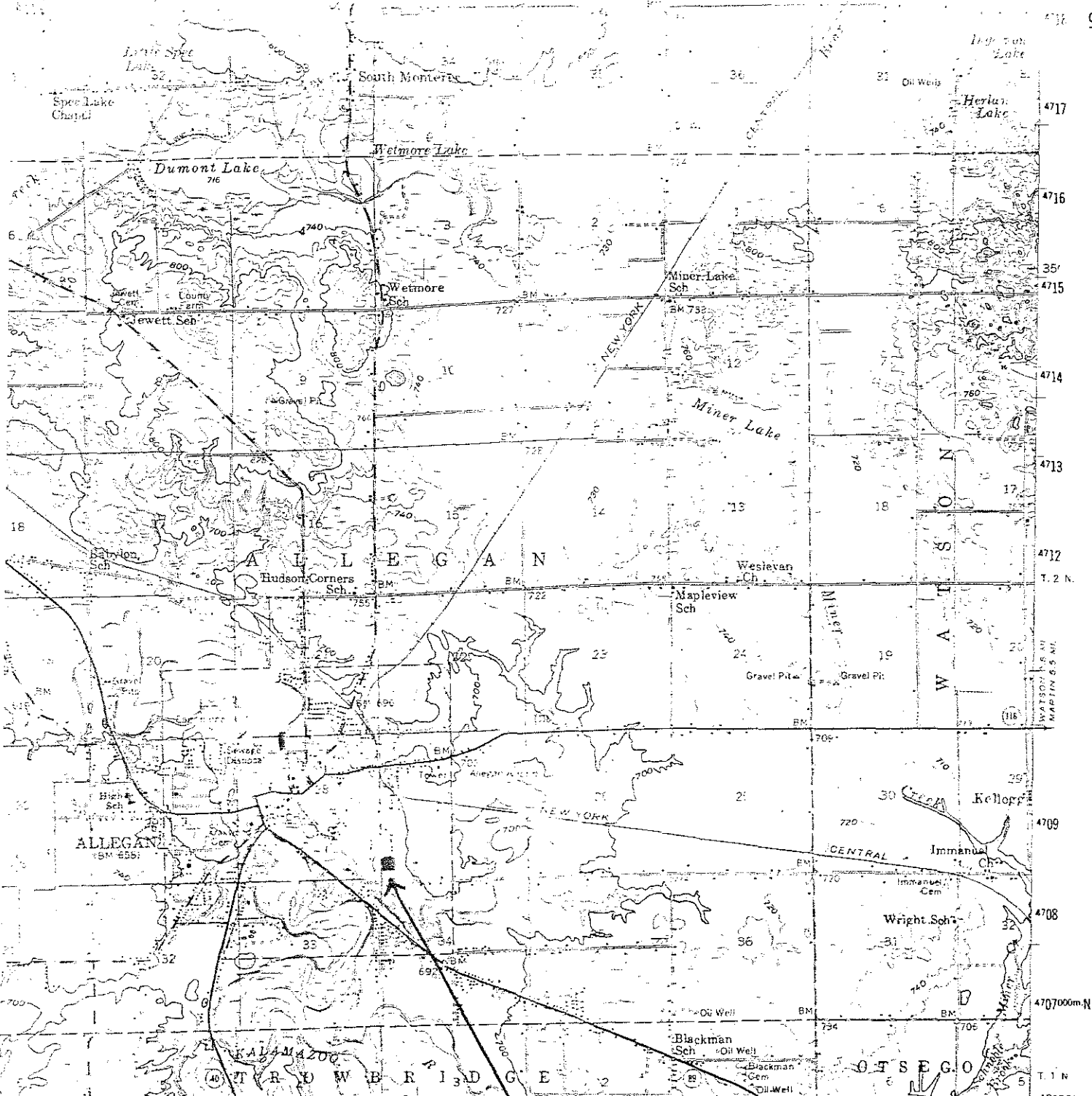
According to a nearby landowner, a structure dating ca. 1840 was located near the concrete well housing (N100, W30), but was moved in 1969 to another location. No in situ evidence for a structure in the form of foundations, wall, or cellar depressions were observed on the site. Asbestos and glass fragments are scattered throughout the area east of the W50 line. The area east of the W50 line appears to have undergone considerable disturbance through the moving of the structure and subsequent dumping and ditching along Eastern Avenue. West of the W50 line the site has been randomly borrowed from; shallow (8-10 cm) gouges are present throughout the area but are not extensive and do not constitute a major destructive element to the prehistoric component.

No historic material, other than occasional coal and very recent litter, was obtained through shovel testing. One ceramic and one glass item were collected just southwest of the project area near the bluff line. The ceramic piece is a blue-on-white sponge decorated basal sherd without bottom marks, probably dating to the late nineteenth century. The glass is an opaque light green moulded panelled basal sherd without bottom marks.

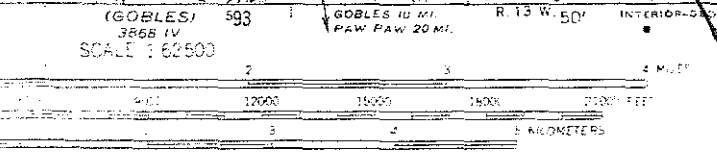
The well housing is 2 meters square and is accompanied by a small 1 meter by  $\frac{1}{2}$  meter trough-like concrete basin at its north corner. The well's pipe and cap appear to be fairly recent and intact.

## 8. RECOMMENDATIONS

The historic component within the project area is not considered to be of significance. We do however recommend that further testing of the prehistoric component be conducted, utilizing a sampling strategy designed to recover cultural materials in quantities sufficient for meaningful analysis and to locate features if these be present. Random sampling within blocks which produced the greatest density of material in the Phase 1 survey is one such strategy which might be employed.



Location of  
20AE622



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty	Light-duty
Medium-duty	Unimproved dirt
○ State Route	

CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET  
 TEN LINES REPRESENT 10-FOOT CONTOURS  
 ELEVATION IS MEAN SEA LEVEL



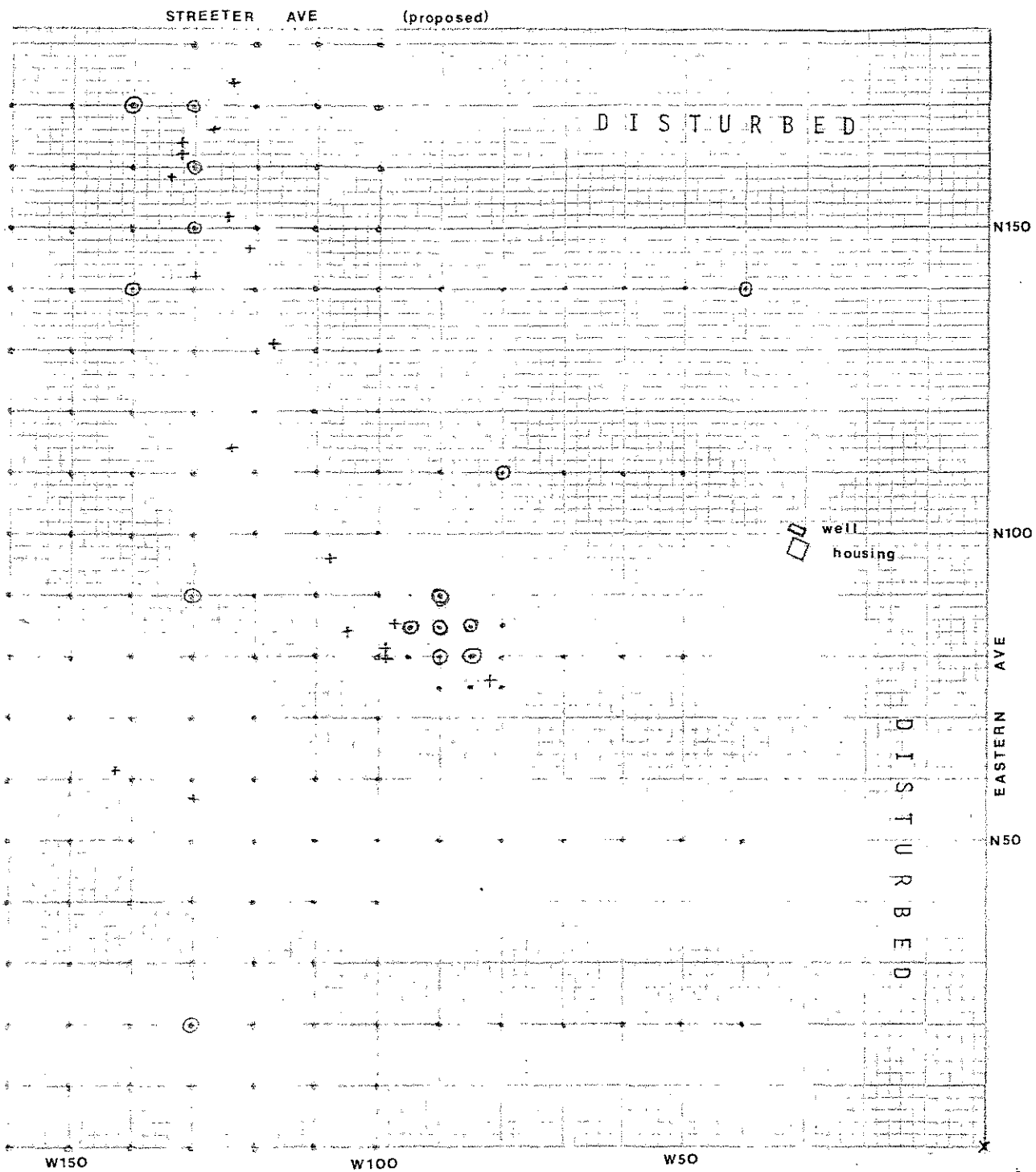
ALLEGAN, MICH.  
 N4230-W8545/15

APPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
 S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242  
 TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

Map 1

1958

AMS 3869 III--SERIES V762



- Shovel Tests
- ⊕ Shovel Test Finds
- + Surface Finds

10 m



ALLEGAN APARTMENTS PROJECT GRID. (160x180 meters) ca. 7 acres

Map 2

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