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University of Nevada, Reno

The Archaeology of a Pleasure Garden

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

BACHELOR OF ARTS IN ANTHROPOLOGY
AND THE HONORS PROGRAM

by

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May, 2013

**UNIVERSITY
OF NEVADA
RENO**

THE HONORS PROGRAM

We recommend that the thesis
prepared under our supervision by

DRURY MCPHERSON

entitled

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**BACHELOR OF ARTS IN ANTHROPOLOGY
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Abstract

The site occupation and potential use of the property known as Van Bokkelen's in nineteenth-century Virginia City, Nevada is analyzed from a historical and archaeological perspective with an emphasis on the archaeology of outdoor entertainment and drinking culture. The site went through several occupations, from Native Americans, Van Bokkelen, the Hildebrand Pleasure Garden, the St. Mary's Hospital run by the Daughters of Charity, the Storey County Hospital, a period of abandonment, and what is now St. Mary's Art Center. This project focuses on the Van Bokkelen, Hildebrand Pleasure Garden, and the Daughters of Charity occupations of the site ranging from the early 1870s to 1899. Synthesizing the historical record and the archaeological record, this thesis explores more specific potential uses of the site with artifact and feature descriptions, as well as an interpretation and analysis of the historical record.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the following people for their contributions to the success of this project: Dr. Sarah Cowie, who served as thesis adviser and director of the field school; Dr. Tamara Valentine, director of the University of Nevada, Reno Honors Program; Lisa Machado, project manager for the larger St. Mary's Hospital project; and Ron James, the Nevada State Historic Preservation Officer for support and funding of the St. Mary's project.

Historical research was conducted by UNR Special Collections Department staff, Arline Laferry (Historian/Docent) of the Nevada Historical Society, and UNR student Alexia Sober. Joe Curtis, owner of the Mark Twain Bookstore in Virginia City, provided some crucial historical photographic sources.

Thank you to Robert Leavitt for help in the Historical Archaeology lab with cataloguing, cleaning, classifying, and identifying artifacts and to lab volunteers Zebuel Stecker and Austin Offenbacher. Artifact identification and analysis was provided by Steven Holm, Geoffrey Smith (indigenous artifacts), Chris Morgan, and Bill Lockhart of the Bottle Research Group.

The field school was completed with the guidance of Dr. Sarah Cowie, Lisa Machado, Steven Holm, and Liz Bennett. Chris LeBlanc assisted with GIS map-making, preparation for the field school, and working at the field school. Field school students include Devin Blom, Jerri Ho, Katherine Kindorf, Dameon Meeks, Austin Offenbacher, Marcelle Powers, Samantha Redman, Alexia Sober, Zebuel Stecker, Cavan Van Geem, Heather Tiscareno, and myself.

Funding for research materials and printing costs was provided by the Honors Undergraduate Research Award (HURA).

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Chapter I. Introduction

The outdoor drinking establishments of the West have helped characterize the cultures that enjoyed them. From beer gardens to pleasure gardens, Virginia City's outdoor drinking culture had a significant presence in the mid- to late- nineteenth century. Beer gardens, which are outdoor drinking establishments that typically serve beer, other alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, and occasionally meals, were usually German-owned and operated. In her book *America Walks in to a Bar*, Christine Sismondo describes historical German-run beer gardens in the United States: "German beer gardens often welcomed entire families. They were well lit and relatively quiet and orderly, though the larger ones sometimes featured shooting galleries, live classical music, and bowling alleys" (128).

Pleasure gardens, which are similar to beer gardens in that they are outdoor community gathering spaces that also offer food and alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, also offered additional entertainment, from concerts to acrobatic shows, and from dancing to gambling (Wroth and Wroth 2).

Archaeological investigations of beer and pleasure gardens are very scarce. This lack of historical and archaeological research provides an excellent opportunity for my project, which explores the archaeology of a beer/pleasure garden from the nineteenth-century in Virginia City, Nevada, to lay a foundation for future research. The potential location of the beer/pleasure garden was the focus of a University of Nevada, Reno archaeological field school project in which I participated.

The excavation took place in the summer of 2012. Dr. Sarah Cowie, assistant

professor of Anthropology, led a group of 12 students in the archaeological field study of the site of St. Mary's Hospital in Virginia City, Nevada. The site, located east of town, has been through several different occupations since the beginning of the Comstock silver rush that began Virginia City in 1859. The field school project, which was mainly aimed to focus on the hospital portion of the site's history, involved research from the historical record as well as from the archaeological record.

The history of the site (also explored more in-depth in Chapter 3) dates to the 1860s, when General Jacob L. Van Bokkelen owned the six-acre property, which was also the site of his residence and gardens. Van Bokkelen's property was also thought to be a beer garden by some sources like The Roar and the Silence (James). In 1872, advertisements for Hildebrand's Pleasure Garden appeared in local newspapers, and by 1875, construction of the St. Mary's Hospital began. The hospital was run by the Daughters of Charity. In 1899, the hospital changed ownership and became the Storey County hospital, no longer run by the Daughters of Charity. Today, it is unclear who owns the property—both the county and a mining company claim to own the land (Sarah Cowie, personal communication to author). It is during the Daughters of Charity period that the main archaeological field school project aimed its focus. My portion of the project is on the potential beer/pleasure garden occupation of the site and will be described fully later.

Research goals for the bigger St. Mary's Hospital project include looking at the hospital as an institution. Most Virginia City archaeological excavations have focused on saloons, so this angle is new for archaeological study in the area. Also, not much is known about nineteenth century healthcare in the Western United States, so this site presents a great opportunity to explore the healthcare aspect. Other angles to analyze at

the hospital site are class, ethnicity, religion, and gender. Because men's activities in the "wild west" have been fairly well documented and interpreted many times through television shows in popular culture, the field school directed research toward a female-run institution to learn more about the female presence in Virginia City.

The project is multidisciplinary and cooperative in nature, requiring help from historians, students, faculty, volunteers, and outside archaeology firms. Before the field work began, ASM Affiliates, a local cultural resource management firm, conducted the ground penetrating radar (see Chapter 3) to determine the best places on the site to excavate; Masters student Lisa Machado and historians directed the preliminary historical research; students, faculty members, and volunteers helped with the excavating, lab work, and analysis as well as compiling artifact counts and redrawing field maps and profiles. My contributions include fieldwork, additional archival research specific to Van Bokkelen's occupation of the site, lab work cataloguing artifacts potentially associated with the beer/pleasure garden, and analysis of related data.

The focus of my project is the Van Bokkelen and Hildebrand Pleasure Garden phase of the site's history. The Hildebrand occupation of the site will be discussed at length in chapters three, four, and five. Initially, I wanted to analyze the artifacts and features as a "type site," or use it as an example of a beer garden site from the mid- to late-nineteenth century excavation that could inform archaeological research elsewhere. Unfortunately, the site did not yield sufficient data for creating such a complete picture of a typical beer garden. However, my project has evolved into an exploration of the particular history of the gardens on the site in addition to the archaeological record. Before the project began, there were some misconceptions about the site's history that this project will help to clear

up (discussed in Chapter 4). My initial research questions included: What artifacts and features does a beer garden excavation produce? What types of food and beverages were offered and served? Does the archaeological record from the Van Bokkelen property stay consistent with previous Virginia City saloon excavations? These questions directed my initial research, but upon discovering historical sources that suggest the site may have been used for a different purpose, the project changed focus and redirected research toward the potential uses of the site and its different occupational phases.

Researchers in Virginia City have never explored the outdoor drinking culture of beer/pleasure gardens archaeologically. Despite Virginia City's numerous saloon excavations, none of them has involved an outdoor drinking establishment. Saloons, while serving alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages and offering meals, would show up differently archaeologically than would an outdoor drinking establishment in its structural forms, features, and possibly artifacts themselves. This project, combining the historical record with the archaeological record, describes and analyzes the artifacts, features and potential structures that one would find at an outdoor drinking establishment and compares that information with what was found archaeologically at the St. Mary's site. Then, broader conclusions are drawn that can be useful for future research and contextualizes the project in the greater body of archaeological excavations in the West.

My portion of the project is the first to be completed; there are several other components of the project that are still awaiting analysis, including faunal analysis of the animal bones collected during excavation, soil flotation analysis, and the larger St. Mary's Hospital excavation write-up. Though my project does not necessarily require the data and analysis of these components, it is hard to speculate what will be determined

from this new information.

This thesis is organized first with this introduction (Chapter 1), and then a literature review (Chapter 2) of the scholarly research of the American West and its archaeology. Chapter 3 discusses the methods used to conduct research for this project and provides a presentation of the results from the archives, field, and lab. Chapter 4 is the section for analysis of the features and artifacts, and the conclusion (Chapter 5) explores this project's greater relevance to the existing understandings of Virginia City, drinking cultures, and the American West.

Chapter II. Historical Archaeology of Drinking Culture in the American West

This chapter reviews the historical archaeology of the American West and its drinking culture associated with saloons and other drinking establishments, as well as the history of beer and pleasure gardens, focusing on previous archaeological excavations and studies.

Historical Archaeology of the American West

The historical archaeology of the American West has been a popular subject for countless books, journal articles, and documentaries. Given its unique mixing of Native American populations and non-native settlers with varying lifestyles and cultural backgrounds, the American West has a fascinating history and material culture to accompany it. From excavations of old mining towns like Bodie, California, to the closer-to-home excavations that took place in Virginia City, Nevada, there is no doubt that the archaeology of the West has contributed significantly to the understanding of life during the era of boomtowns, mining, and the entertainment/leisure activities associated with the time period.

The archaeology of the American West has led to some rather surprising finds: in Virginia City, for example, the oldest known Tabasco Pepper Sauce bottle was found at the Boston Saloon, implying a high level of global connections of the nineteenth century in the West. Ron James, in his book Virginia City: Secrets of a Western Past, describes the significance of such a find: “That the newly invented Tabasco Pepper Sauce made it to the recently created state of Nevada, 2,200 miles from [its point of origination] Avery Island, Louisiana, speaks both to the emerging enthusiasm for the product and to the fact

that the world was becoming a small place” (xx). Because of the addition of the transcontinental railroad in the 1860s, more products became available for people living in Western boomtowns. In addition to the Tabasco Pepper Sauce bottle, many other imported goods were found, including a large water filter from England used at Piper’s Old Corner Bar in Virginia City (Dixon 86).

Other ways the West saw a mixing of cultures was through immigration; European, African, Asian, and South American immigrants came to the West in search of mineral riches and a better life. Virginia City became a popular spot for people to settle. Additionally, Native American and Mexican populations already living in Virginia City played an important role in the culture of the boomtown: by 1870 most Mexicans in Virginia City were laborers or miners, and most of the Mexican women were prostitutes (James 156). James also describes the relationship between settlers and the Native American population as being tolerant, versus the common idea that indigenous ethnicities were marginalized in the American West:

The American Indians won a great amount of sympathy from the European majority. Although nineteenth-century rhetoric included a nationwide antagonism toward American Indians, local circumstance lacked any long history of warfare with them, and so it was easy for Euro-Americans to understand the original inhabitants of the area as unfortunate victims of change they had not wanted. (156)

From this description, it is clear that Virginia City’s culture and acceptance of diversity was unique in the West, making it a point of interest for archaeologists.

Historical archaeological excavations of other areas in the West have produced

similar results, demonstrating the wide variety of lifestyles, cultures, and technological advances as seen in Virginia City. For example, Donald Hardesty's book Mining Archaeology in the American West focuses on the technological and industrial advancements of the West. Through descriptions of mining technology, equipment, and settlement areas in places like California, Arizona, Alaska and Nevada, Hardesty's image of the American West is one that relies heavily on the archaeological record, historical documents, and oral histories.

Other topics of focus on the subject of historical archaeology in the American West include explorations of the Donner Party (Hardesty and Brodhead 1997), Pony Express stations (Hardesty 1979), and mining settlement camps (Hardesty and Hattori 1982). These studies among others have helped develop historical archaeology of the American West into what it is today; through the diverse subject matters, these studies have set precedence for methods of historical and archaeological data collection and analysis. The topics chosen by Hardesty and others are unique to the West and have provided a more realistic understanding of life in the "wild west."

Drinking Culture in the American West

The West is a fascinating subject due to its technological, social, political, and economic complexity. Like many regions across the United States, leisure activities were involved in the complex nature of life in the West; with all of the seriousness of life working in mining, construction, and related support services, residents also loved what little free time they had. A hallmark of Western American industrial communities was the development of local drinking cultures at saloons, pubs, taverns, and outdoor drinking

establishments like beer and pleasure gardens. Among the choices for settlers on the Comstock were hard liquor, wine, and beer (James, *Roar and the Silence* 186). Pubs and saloons were not just places to go and have a drink; they provided a setting for social interactions in the community. “The bachelor men in the mining camps, far from home and family, sought out the saloon for its camaraderie, information about lucrative strikes, and news from the rest of the world” (Spude 90). A good number of saloons also functioned as casinos and brothels. Archaeologically, studies in brothels look at alcohol, the sex industry, and gender. In the archaeology of gender, females are often the focus. Archaeology of brothels in the American West analyzes the artifacts and aims to shed light on day-to-day life of workers and patrons in the brothel environment. “For archaeologists, the principal difference between the saloons and brothels was not so much behind the swinging doors but, rather, who selected the material culture” (Spude 91). For archaeologists, artifacts are not just old objects buried in the ground—they are remnants of a real past, intimately connected to history and the people who interacted with these objects on a daily basis.

Ethnicity is another subject that archaeologists research through the historical and archaeological record. The late-nineteenth century saw an increase in German immigrants, with more than five million German immigrants coming to North America (Bade 348). Ethnicity and drinking culture has been a popular topic of study for many archaeologists and historians. For example, German cultures were known to be involved in an integral part of the West’s drinking culture: the brewing of beer. Hannaford and Taylor describe the brewing culture in the West during the mid-nineteenth century: “By 1873, an all-time high of 4,131 commercial beer breweries existed in the United States,

and every town of any consequence had its own brewery and its own beer” (Hannaford and Taylor 117). This influx of German beer-brewing activity is also true of Storey County, which houses Virginia City and its twenty six brewers, “all but four were German or of German ancestry” (James 159). In this same vein, Hannaford and Taylor explain why there was such a brewing industry boom in the mid-nineteenth century in the West:

During the latter half of the nineteenth century, the nation experienced tremendous demographic growth resulting in an increased westward expansion. Streams of immigrants from Europe became an integral part of this expansion, and many were skilled brewers. The magic combination of ingredients for a successful brewery normally included a good water source, plenty of ice for the production of lager beer, a sizeable German population, and a large population for distribution. (117)

Gender, ethnicity, and drinking culture in Virginia City are themes explored in Kelly Dixon’s 2006 book entitled Boomtown Saloons. In the book, the excavations of four prominent Virginia City saloons from the mid to late nineteenth century are the focus of a comparative analysis. Dixon’s focus on the material culture from Virginia City saloons and focus on ethnicity allows for an excellent basis for comparison for my project. Additionally, Dixon’s analysis of artifacts to determine possible menu items and the socioeconomic status of the clientele represented by each drinking establishment helps with the analysis of the artifacts found at my project’s site.

The excavations of the Boston Saloon, Piper’s Old Corner Bar, Hibernia Brewery, and O’Brien and Costello’s Saloon and Shooting Gallery yielded tens of thousands of

artifacts, and each establishment demonstrated its own individual client bases, menu items, diverting activities, and uniqueness of décor. For example, ethnicity was reflected not only in the immigrant-ownership of the saloons, but also in the general atmosphere and menu items catering to the tastes of their respective home countries. Using Dixon's work as a guide for common artifact finds in Virginia City drinking establishments gives context to the artifacts found at the Van Bokkelen site.

The artifact collections from these saloon excavations demonstrate that a wide variety of food and drink items available to their patrons. For example, at Piper's Old Corner Bar, a water filter from England (mentioned previously) provided clean drinking water (Dixon 86), and the Boston Saloon offered beverages with medicinal qualities, like Essence of Jamaica Ginger and Italian bitters (Dixon 81). Common to all four saloons were dark green glass bottles, glass fragments, and stoneware bottles (Dixon 75).

Similar to my project's site, faunal remains (animal bones) with butchering/cut marks were found at all four of the drinking establishments featured in Dixon's analysis. Faunal remains with cut or butchering marks found at the saloons indicate which cuts of meat were offered at each establishment. Depending on the taphonomy of the bones and also the techniques used to butcher them, archaeologists can determine the animal the bone came from and also the cut of meat. The archaeological record suggests that lamb, beef, and pork were common items available at Virginia City saloons (Dixon 89). Faunal remains from the Boston Saloon suggest that lamb was the predominant meat served; Hibernia and Piper's Old Corner Bar offered more beef cuts; O'Brien and Costello's offered equal amounts of beef and lamb (Dixon 88).

The quality of meat available at each establishment was also analyzed from the

four saloons. In the case of beef and lamb, the Boston Saloon's offerings of quality cuts of meat were unparalleled, with nearly 65% of the butchered cow and lamb bones being high quality cuts (Dixon 91). The saloon exhibiting the lowest quality cow and lamb meat selection was Hibernia, whose menu items "were cheaper and of lower quality than the fare at the three other drinking houses" (Dixon 92).

"Colorless glass tumblers with faceted bases and glass beer mugs were among the materials shared by all of the saloons, whatever their position on the socioeconomic scale of drinking houses, suggesting that such wares were likely standard saloon equipment" (Dixon 100). Other common artifacts found were green glass wine, champagne, and ale bottles (Dixon 100).

Dixon's analysis of the archaeological record shows that the information can lead to greater understandings of leisure-time life in a western boomtown. For example,

By combining historical information about the location and ownership of the four saloons, we could conclude that it is likely that the glasses from which saloon patrons drank reflected the status of each drinking place, with the nicer stemware at places like the Boston Saloon and Piper's Old Corner Bar illustrating the higher status and refined atmospheres at those establishments. (Dixon 101)

Ceramic artifacts found at the four saloons provide information about what the different establishments may have been serving with respect to food. Also, the frequency of ceramic artifacts found gives clues to the emphasis the saloon owners placed on food menu items. For example, the largest collections of ceramic dining pieces were found at the Boston Saloon, "which implies that it emphasized meal service to a greater extent than the other drinking places did; this may further explain the evidence that high-quality

meat was served there” (Dixon 104).

The Boston Saloon excavation yielded undecorated white earthenware ceramic sherds that were once plates. From the maker’s mark on the bottom of the artifacts, it was clear that some of the plates came from several different manufacturers in Staffordshire, England (Dixon 105). While the Boston Saloon excavation yielded a relatively large collection of ceramic artifacts, the Hibernia Brewery’s collection included only around ten ceramic sherds, possibly representing plates and platters. Though there were approximately ten ceramic sherds found, this information is useful in analyzing the site; Hibernia’s relatively low quantities of serving ware and faunal remains indicate that the Hibernia placed less emphasis on food service than did the other saloons (Dixon 108-109).

Artifacts tell a story that the historical record does not describe. Without the excavations of these drinking establishments, the interpretations of saloons the Virginia City and the greater American West would rely only on historical documents and oral histories, which often highlight the extreme qualities of a place—the danger, the decadence, the rough-and-tumble nature of the West. Archaeology helps show what day-to-day life may actually have been like.

Kelly Dixon’s research, while not specifically focusing on outdoor drinking establishments, provides a unique look at four different drinking venues that were operational in Virginia City around the mid-nineteenth century; it is therefore invaluable to this project for comparative purposes. Dixon provides a wealth of relevant comparative information with which to analyze the artifacts found at the Van Bokkelen site.

Faunal analysis for my project is currently being conducted by Anthropology

student Alexia Sober as another facet of the larger St. Mary's Hospital project. This information will assist in the interpretation of the faunal remains and may help lead to similar conclusions about menu items and/or indications of socioeconomic status of the patrons at the possible beer/pleasure garden. Additionally, Dixon's descriptions of artifacts common to all four saloons may indicate the kinds of artifacts one would expect to find at my project site, which also features a drinking establishment component.

Historic Pleasure Gardens

“Pleasure garden” is a catch-all term for recreational garden areas intended to offer a diverting environment for visitors. While some pleasure gardens offer simply walkways and pleasing vegetation, others offer more variety, ranging from food and drink, music performances, games, dances, sports fields, and more.

The London Pleasure Gardens of the Eighteenth Century provides exemplary information regarding historic pleasure gardens. The book describes activities that could be performed in different pleasure gardens, the types of food and drink offered, and some potential structures that could be associated with the pleasure gardens in eighteenth-century London.

In some places, a Long (or Great) Room was at an early period built for the dancing that generally took place in the morning or afternoon; and booths and raffling-shops were set up for the benefit of card-players and gamblers. The quiet charm of the garden was, moreover, sometimes rudely broken by the incursion of [people notoriously rowdy in the town]. (Wroth and Wroth²)

Pleasure gardens also served different purposes. Some pleasure gardens were run

as businesses, drawing in locals to a garden area with different attractions. As a business, it was prudent and profitable for pleasure garden managers to charge admission.

At last, about 1730-40, the managers of the principal public gardens found it desirable to make a regular charge for admission: they requested gentlemen ‘not to smoak [sic] on the walks,’ sternly prohibited the entrance of servants in the livery, and, generally, did their best to exclude improper characters. (Wroth and Wroth 2)

Others were opened for the well-being of workers in an industrial environment. Beginning in the 1880s, “a new type of designed green space appeared in the industrial landscapes of Britain and the USA – the factory pleasure garden and recreation park” (Chance 1602). Additionally, pleasure gardens attracted arts and culture. Some music composers even created music specifically for pleasure gardens as well as for theaters and concert series (Mace 170).

Features of historic pleasure gardens often included paths, walls, fences, seating areas, pavilions, and any other outdoor meeting-related structures. John Pendlebury, author of an article addressing historic parks and gardens, notes “the enclosing wall and the paths form the major structure, as do the spaces left—the arrangement of [flower and other vegetation] beds” (253). The layout of the pleasure garden had much to do with the activities offered. Gardens usually included walkways, but with pleasure gardens that offered more activities, greater open space was a requirement. The landscape also played in to the layout of pleasure gardens. “Though there [were] landscape elements [that] usually [formed] part of the major structure, a particular landscape element might act as major structure, minor structure or decoration in different circumstances” (Pendlebury

255). The pleasure garden environment would have been just as the name suggests—pleasing. With trees, shrubs, flowers, and other vegetation, this setting would have been a pleasant location to spend a few hours or even a day. Some pleasure gardens offered food and drinks as well, adding to the list of attractions available at these outdoor meeting and recreational centers.

History and Archaeology of Beer Gardens

The existing literature for beer garden excavations is scarce, particularly when narrowing down the site's date to the mid-nineteenth century and the geographical boundaries to the western United States. Although Virginia City has been host to dozens of archaeological excavations, none has focused on the city's outdoor drinking culture. This is also the case with other western and midwestern mining towns—while there have been countless archaeological studies in these areas, none seems to hone in on a beer garden or other outdoor drinking establishment specifically. An excavation and historical analysis of brewery sites in Santa Fe, New Mexico yielded some information about on-site beer gardens associated with large breweries in the mid- to late-nineteenth century. The references to the beer gardens come from *Finding Elysium: When Territorial Santa Fe Brewed Its Own Beer* by Charles Hannaford and Michael Taylor.

As with the case of Virginia City, “by the 1860s Santa Fe had a large, influential German population, and all of the proprietors of these breweries were of German ancestry” (Hannaford and Taylor 117). The breweries that opened in Santa Fe were large operations, often containing multiple structures for consuming and brewing beer (Hannaford and Taylor 119). From the archaeological side of the study, ten glass

concentrations were explored, which were identified as representing “discrete dumping episodes” (Hannaford and Taylor 129). Archaeologists found glass fragments and selected for analysis only those with maker’s marks, bottle bases, and occasionally necks and finishes (Hannaford and Taylor 129). Their artifact count for bottle bases alone reached approximately a thousand (Hannaford and Taylor 129). “The ten localities represent specialized dumps composed almost exclusively of pre-1903 style quart-sized export beer bottles and only a minority of other bottle types such as wine and mineral water” (Hannaford and Taylor 132). Though the glass dumps yielded little specific information about which bottles were associated with which brewery, the bottle bases with makers’ marks show that a vast majority of the bottles contained beer (with brown and green glass) and that the bottles came from places like Pittsburgh, Milwaukee, New York, Kentucky, Germany, and Czechoslovakia, just to name a few places (Hannaford and Taylor 130).

The beer gardens associated with a couple of the breweries are described through historical documentation, not necessarily through the archaeological record.

A June 26, 1877 advertisement in the *New Mexican* stated that a beer garden had opened on the grounds of the City Brewery with much imbibing of lager and riding on the automatic horses and buggies which whirl around at lightning speed. The garden was to be kept open every evening except Sunday...” (Hannaford and Taylor 118)

In a description of the structures associated with the Fischer Brewing Company, there is mention of a beer garden and also of a cellar, possibly used to store ice for lager beer:

The front porch which spanned the width of the building (in front of the east/west

oriented saloon) had a shingle roof. A platform for the beer-garden was in front of the porch with steps leading up to the platform. According to the map, a cellar was located approximately 40 ft (12 m) from the northeast corner of the main structure. In a separate building but only about 10 ft (3 m) from the machinery room was the bottling house. (Hannaford and Taylor 122)

With this description, the beer garden seems to be raised on a platform, which probably would have had seating for patrons. The cellar, which would have involved an underground component, was necessary for storing ice and beer and for maintaining a cooler environment than the above-surface structures.

The early producers needed to “lager” or store the beer in a cool, undisturbed place for several months after the brewing. The usual solution was to use underground caves or cellars. The underground temperature of these subterranean chambers was not always cold enough so many times ice had to be added. Ice was not only needed for the actual brewing process. Without ice the brewers wouldn’t be able to produce throughout the year, since the heat of the summer months would have prohibited production in many parts of the country.”

(Hannaford and Taylor 122)

Given the Hannaford and Taylor source’s information on a drinking establishment’s archaeology and structure, there is now a point of reference for investigating the potential for Van Bokkelen’s beer garden in Virginia City.

Additionally, Christine Sismondo, through her research on historical beer gardens of America, determined that typical Germans in the nineteenth century:

...Generally stuck to lager, a lighter, bottom-fermenting beer that they began

brewing in America as soon as they arrived. Lager, incidentally, would soon take off in nineteenth-century America. As soon as regular ice deliveries and refrigeration made cold lager readily available, it began replacing the traditional darker and heavier beers. (128)

This information provides insight into the types of bottles that might be associated with beer/pleasure garden sites. Though there is only a small amount of information, similarities between the sites and potential artifacts shed light on information in Chapters 3 and 4 of this thesis. Additionally, the information from the historical archaeology of the American West and its drinking culture helps for a comparative analysis for the project. The previous work of historical archaeologists certainly helps with the sometimes ambiguous nature of archaeological analysis. Referencing other sites with similar artifacts and analyses helps with providing new insight to the archaeological record of a related site. Placing my project's site in the greater context of the drinking culture and history of the American West helps provide more information about its greater significance and allows for a comparative analysis.

Chapter III. Methods and Results

This historical archaeological project has required several methods for data research, collection, and analysis. The archival research for the project involved scouring historical databases, researching library archives, and consulting historical societies to gather photos, maps, and written documents containing information about Van Bokkelen, the potential beer garden, Hildebrand's Pleasure Garden, the hospital, and any information that might help orient the site in a historical context. The field component of the project, the collection of archaeological data, was the field school in which I and 11 other UNR students participated. Then, the archaeological materials and associated excavation records were processed in the historical archaeology lab at UNR. This chapter will describe the methods for archival research, methods for field research and data collection, and lab methods, and then present the results.

Archival Methods

Documentation for Van Bokkelen's use of the site is scarce. Ronald James, former State Historic Preservation Officer for the State of Nevada is a leading authority on Virginia City's colorful past, and in his books on the topic, he suggests that Van Bokkelen used the site as a beer garden. Additional information comes from newspaper articles from the 1860s-70s and historical photographs that help locate Van Bokkelen's property in the bigger context of the city. Newspapers like *The Territorial Enterprise* and the *Virginia Evening Chronicle* were excellent sources for advertisements and news stories, which describe the special events that occurred at the beer garden. Many of the original newspaper articles are available in UNR's library on microfilm. Census records

from 1870 have helped determine the location of Van Bokkelen's possible house and his occupations. Other documents consulted for this project include Sanborn fire insurance maps, a plat map from the Bureau of Land Management, the 1871-72 Storey County Directory, photos from Special Collections at the UNR library and the Nevada Historical Society, and more recent publications pertaining to the historical archaeology of the American West and more specifically, Virginia City.

Dr. Sarah Cowie, Lisa Machado, historian Arline Laferry of the Nevada Historical Society, and I conducted archival research. The workload was shared among us in this collaborative project.

Field Methods

In the summer of 2012, Dr. Sarah Cowie organized and supervised the excavation of the St. Mary's Hospital site located on the east side of Virginia City, Nevada. This site is also the location of the gardens that are the subject of my thesis. Before the excavation began, a crew dug shovel test pits of varying depths (until the digging yielded no more artifacts) around the property. If a shovel test pit contained particularly interesting artifacts, it was noted and then used to determine locations to use ground-penetrating radar (GPR), a procedure similar to an X-ray that finds anomalies (e.g., buried pits and foundations) below the surface of the ground. An archaeology company, ASM Affiliates, performed the ground penetrating radar over five separate areas of the grounds of the hospital: two in the front lot of the building, one area where the hospital's outbuildings were thought to be, and two other areas behind the hospital.

The data collected from the ground-penetrating radar were used to create a map of

the grids, highlighting areas of interest below the surface of the ground. The locations of test units for the excavation were determined based on these anomalies.

The 1x1 meter test units (TU) were each assigned to two UNR undergraduate students, with graduate students supervising each grid. Test unit size was determined before the excavation began, and remained consistent at 1x1m throughout the duration of the excavation. Also, before the dig began, it was decided that because the stratigraphic profiles of the shovel test pits did not provide clear or predictable stratigraphic information (i.e., layers of earth that may date to distinct time periods), the test units would be excavated in arbitrary levels of 10cm. Students excavated the test units with shovels, picks, and trowels, and used buckets to collect any removed dirt. The dirt was then sifted through 1/8" screens, which separated the artifacts from the excess dirt, gravel, and rocks. Artifacts collected from the levels were bagged together and documented with level excavation forms. The bagging method grouped artifacts together by feature, test unit, level, and zone. Zones are different soil types found within the test unit that could represent discrete cultural episodes. Other data collected from the test unit excavations included photographs of each level, soil samples and soil descriptions using the Munsell classification system, plan- and profile-view maps, and additional contextual information for the artifacts or the excavation unit in general.

The front Gravel Grid (located in the parking lot), which is likely the grounds of the beer and pleasure garden according to the historical record (see Figure 3.1 on the following page), showed an anomaly in the shape of a ring, which was later explored with a 3x1m excavation block encompassing test units 7, 8, and 13. Test units 9 and 12, placed next to each other forming a 2x1m area, explored feature 5, and test unit 14

explored features 6 and 7. The results of these excavations are detailed in the next section, Chapter 4.

Other field methods included recording points for reference for map-making with a total station. The total station is a survey instrument that uses a central point called the “datum” to collect data points for areas of interest, recording points relative to the central “datum” point. The data can be turned in to a map accurate to a fraction of a meter. The grids, test units, structures, and other geographical points of interest were located and are depicted in a map of the St. Mary’s property, shown below (Figure 3.1).



Figure 3.1. Map of the entire St. Mary’s Hospital Excavation, including all grids and test units. (Satellite imagery courtesy of Bing Maps, map courtesy of Lisa Machado)

The field school finished after five weeks. A total of 14 test units were opened on

the five grids, along with an off-grid surface collection of the trash-dump area of the southeast corner of the property. The artifacts and soil samples, still in their bags organized by level, test unit, and feature, along with related field forms and other data were taken to the UNR Historical Archaeology lab for cleaning, cataloguing, packaging, and analysis. Documents recording this data are currently housed in the UNR Historical Archaeology lab and will become a permanent part of the archived materials from this excavation in the UNR Anthropology museum.

Lab Methods

The historical archaeology lab received artifacts, soil samples, and associated paperwork and other data collected in the field shortly after the completion of the field school in August 2012. During the Fall 2012 semester, volunteers and I worked to clean and catalogue all the artifacts from the excavation. Much like the organization for bagging artifacts in the field, the artifacts were separated by provenience (i.e., grid, feature, test unit, level, and zone) in the lab. Cleaning involved several techniques: for glass fragments and ceramics covered in dust and dirt, toothbrushes were used to remove the excess dirt, or the artifacts were dipped in water to remove the dirt. After cleaning, the artifacts were separated into like categories; for example, all glass fragments of a certain color and from the same provenience received the same catalogue number. The artifacts were then counted, weighed, and bagged together with contextual information for later analysis. For artifacts that may have carried dating information or more specific information like a maker's mark (a mark on the item that provides information about the company that produced it), the artifacts were given their own special catalogue number to

be analyzed separately. These artifacts are called diagnostics because they can indicate the time period of manufacture, as well as information about the manufacturer and the artifacts' original geographical location. Sources used to determine diagnostic information for the artifact analysis include Gibson's Ceramic Makers Marks (2011), Logan's Cartridges (1959), Toulouse's Bottle Makers and their Marks (1971), Kovel's New Dictionary of Marks: Pottery and Porcelain, 1850 to the Present (1986), Fike's The Bottle Book (2006), and the Intermountain Antiquities Computer System (IMACS) artifact guide (1992).

All information collected from diagnostic and non-diagnostic artifacts was documented and then added to a searchable Access database for further analysis. Using the database not only makes organization easier, but with its sorting feature, the database also helps determine trends (like the frequency or infrequency of a certain artifact type) in the archaeological finds from the excavation.

Archival Results

Archival research has led to some interesting and yet sometimes contradictory information. The historical record for Virginia City is extensive, yet there are still some gaps that make research challenging. Secondary sources, in addition to primary sources, were an important component of the site research. Former State Historic Preservation Officer Ronald James' book The Roar and the Silence gives an overview of General Jacob Van Bokkelen and his gardens.

Van Bokkelen, who was "born in New York of Dutch ancestry, came to represent the Germanic contribution for the rest of the [Virginia City] community to see" (James

159). According to James, not only did Van Bokkelen own his own property with a beer garden, but he also was a significant importer of dynamite to be used in Virginia City's booming mining industry (James 130), the commander of the National Guard of Virginia City (James 73), provost marshal who had established order after the assassination of Lincoln (James 130), and a popular member of Comstock society (James 159). He was said to be kind to immigrants, with his beer garden "[attracting] a wide variety of people who wished to enjoy the best of what diversity had to offer" (James, 159). The beer garden itself was a "social, family-style drinking venue" which helped secure Van Bokkelen as a prominent member of Virginia City's German immigrant population (James 159).

The first mention of the Van Bokkelen residence is in an historical newspaper, the *Sacramento Daily Union*, on January 18, 1867 ("The Election of Nye—Salutes Fired"). The article describes a meeting that took place to celebrate the election of J.W. Nye to the Senate. There was a 32-gun salute, with each gun representing the 32 votes Nye received. In the article, the place of the meeting was at "the residence of J. L. Van Bokkelen, at the Old Provost Marshal headquarters" ("The Election of Nye—Salutes Fired"). The article does say where in Virginia City the event took place.

Three years later, in the 1870 Census, Van Bokkelen was 46 years old and was living with an 18-year old Chinese cook (likely a servant) from Hong Kong (Nevada State Census 1870). The 1871-72 Storey County Directory lists Van Bokkelen as living at Piety Hill (Storey, Ormsby, Washoe and Lyon Counties Directory 1871-72). Piety Hill on historic maps is the same location of St. Mary's Hospital and the archaeological site. General Jacob Van Bokkelen's occupation is listed as "miner," which is consistent with

the Piety Hill Lode plat map, which documents the location of a mine (Survey No. 119 Plat of the Andrews Co.'s Claim on the Piety Hill Lode) (Figure 3.2). From this map, it is clear that the property was used as a mine for a time, and it was well known that Van Bokkelen was an entrepreneur, often taking on multiple professions at a time.

In the April 21, 1871 newspaper the *Territorial Enterprise* reports that Van Bokkelen filed for bankruptcy ("Bankrupt Notice"). It is unclear why he needed to declare bankruptcy, or if they ownership of the property at Piety Hill was at all affected.

In the 1871-72 Storey County directory, Van Bokkelen's residence is listed at Piety Hill (Storey, Ormsby, Washoe and Lyon Counties Directory 1871-72), which is also consistent with a plat map of the site from April 1875 of the Piety Hill Lode (see Figure 3.2) (Survey No. 119 Plat of the Andrews Co.'s Claim on the Piety Hill Lode). This map, which was drawn after Van Bokkelen died, shows three buildings associated with the property, as well as fence lines, a tunnel, and a laundry building to the south of the property.

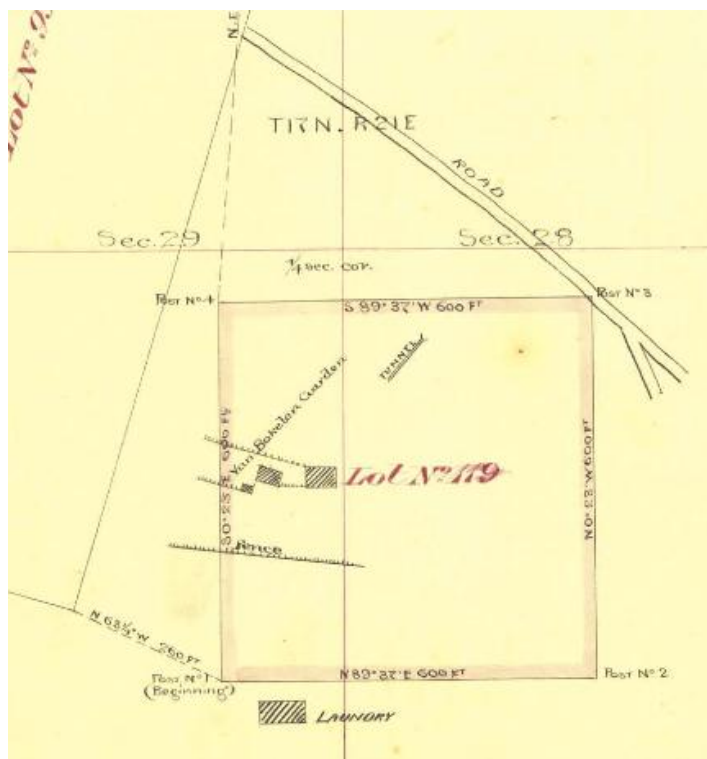


Figure 3.2. 1875 Plat map of the Van Bokkelen property. (Survey No. 119 Plat of the Andrews Co.'s Claim on the Piety Hill Lode) (Map courtesy of the Bureau of Land Management)

It is unclear if and when Van Bokkelen's gardens ceased operation, but in the *Territorial Enterprise* on April 25, 1872, an advertisement appeared for Hildebrand's Pleasure Garden, which was located on the former grounds of Van Bokkelen's residence at Piety Hill and boasted an 80x60-ft dance hall with a 1,250-person capacity, meals, cigars, and liquors ("Hildebrand's Pleasure Garden!"). The advertisement does not make it clear whether the large dance hall had already been constructed or if the structure was only planned for construction. The May 7, 1872 *Territorial Enterprise* advertises a festival at the pleasure gardens with music, a dance hall with a grand ball, transportation to and from the two-day festival, and an entrance fee of one dollar, with ladies'

admittance being free (“Grand May Festival”). A review of the event appeared in the *Territorial Enterprise* on May 21, 1872 and was said to be “a grand success;” the dance hall was filled to capacity and there were all kinds of games for the children, including a game involving a greased pole the children climbed up using sandpaper to grip the slippery pole (“Turn Verein Festival”). The reviewer notes the lack of leaves on the trees due to the season, and recalls the colored lamps hung in bushes after dark (“Turn Verein Festival”). Another advertisement for Hildebrands’ Pleasure Garden appearing in the May 21, 1872 *Territorial Enterprise* describes a “first-class saloon and restaurant” and is owned by the Hildebrand Brothers (“A Splendid Summer Resort”).

According to Ron James, one year later, in 1873, the residence of Van Bokkelen is listed as the Root building on B Street (James, *Roar and the Silence* 130), where it was rumored he stored an overflow of imported dynamite. On June 29, 1873, a little more than a year after Hildebrand’s Pleasure Garden opened, Van Bokkelen died in the explosion in the Root building where he lived. Van Bokkelen, a man often taking on multiple jobs at a time, was involved with importing dynamite for the mining industry, and perhaps it is no surprise that Van Bokkelen’s death was caused by a massive explosion, resulting in at least ten casualties (James 130). Ron James describes the event:

[Van Bokkelen] imported nitroglycerine for the mines and, convinced of its harmlessness, often stored his inventory in his bedroom in a B Street lodging house. He became so confident of the substance that he frequently slept on the boxes that crowded his room when he was over-stocked. Near midnight on June 30, 1873, Van Bokkelen’s inventory exploded. Later estimates placed the amount of explosives at 100 pounds of dynamite and 200 pounds of black

powder. Many believed his pet monkey may have jostled some of the dynamite, causing the disaster. The explosion and subsequent fire destroyed several buildings and killed at least ten people, including Van Bokkelen, a merchant, a mining superintendent, a lawyer, a clerk, a housewife, and her eight-year-old daughter. One man died while working across the street at a stable, killed by the hail of bricks and steel doors that flew away from the detonation. There may have been other victims lost in the explosion and fire, and there were many wounded. Rescue workers found no trace of the monkey. (130)

Two months after Van Bokkelen's death, on August 9, 1873, another advertisement appeared in the *Territorial Enterprise* for the pleasure garden. This advertisement, for "a grand entertainment" on August 10, describes a pantomime troupe and a man named Professor Delay walking a 600-ft long tightrope from the Nevada Laundry building to the garden pavilion "one hundred feet above the earth" ("A Grand Entertainment at Hildebrand's Gardens"). The advertisement also describes gymnastics performances, and a pantomime of the Barber of Seville, with the event concluding with "a grand social dance" ("A Grand Entertainment at Hildebrand's Gardens").

The next time the property was mentioned was one year later in the *Territorial Enterprise* on August 18, 1874, when the property at Piety Hill was posted for sale. In the article, the property included "the house known as Van Bokkelen's" and is again listed as being six acres, bounded on the west and north by Latrobe Tunnel and "Mining Company's ground." To the west, the advertisement describes the property as also being bound on the west by "Henry Shipton's garden" ("Administrator's Sale of Real Estate").

Mary Louise Mackay, wife of John Mackay, purchased the property in August 1874 and presented the property to the Daughters of Charity for use as a hospital (St. Mary Louise Hospital). A subsequent ad in the *Virginia Evening Chronicle* on May 25, 1875 was run for the Turn-Verein's fourth annual picnic at the "Virginia Pleasure Grounds," the location mentioned in the advertisement as formerly Van Bokkelen's (*Virginia Evening Chronicle*). This German gymnastics event would take place June 6-7, 1875, which was after the date of sale of the land to the Mackays. It is unclear who the Turn-Verein-ers were, whether they were renting the land from the Daughters of Charity, or if they had permission to use the land for the event free of charge. This is the last mention of any pleasure garden-related activities taking place on the property of Van Bokkelen.

An article appeared in the August 17, 1875 *Virginia Evening Chronicle* describing an event on August 16, 1875 (a few months after the last event of the Turn Verein), when the cornerstone for the hospital was laid ("The New Hospital"). "The land [was] donated by Mrs. John W. (Mary Louise) Mackay, wife of one of the four Bonanza Kings" and opened by the [Daughters] of Charity and Father Patrick Manogue (St. Mary's Art and Retreat Center). A historic photo of the building taken shortly after the hospital's construction shows the hospital, its relative location to the city, and a fuzzy area in front of the building that could be steps or possibly something else (to be discussed in Chapter 4) (Figure 3.3).



Figure 3.3. Historic photo of St. Mary's Hospital. This early photo of the hospital shows something in front of the building. (Photo courtesy of Joe Curtis)

The Daughters of Charity ran the hospital until 1897, when the population of Virginia City declined due to unsuccessful mining claims. The hospital was then taken over by Storey County and became the county hospital. Today, the St. Mary's Hospital building serves as an art center (St. Mary's Art and Retreat Center). Further research on this topic will be conducted by Lisa Machado and Dr. Sarah Cowie.

Field and Laboratory Results

The field and lab results of the project will be described here. The results have been integrated and will describe the results of fieldwork and simultaneously refer to artifacts as they were identified during lab work.

During the field school, a total of 14 test units (TU) were opened on a total of five

grids, and seven features were found. The grid I focused on for my project was the Gravel Grid. A total of five features were found in six test units in Gravel Grid in the front of the hospital. Test units and features were numbered in the order in which they were opened, which resulted in the mixed-numbered test unit numbers associated with features. Test Units 7, 8, and 13 made Feature 4, Test Units 9 and 12 made Features 3 and 5, and Test Unit 14 uncovered two features with Features 6 and 7. A map of the Gravel Grid with the individual test units is shown below (Figure 3.4):

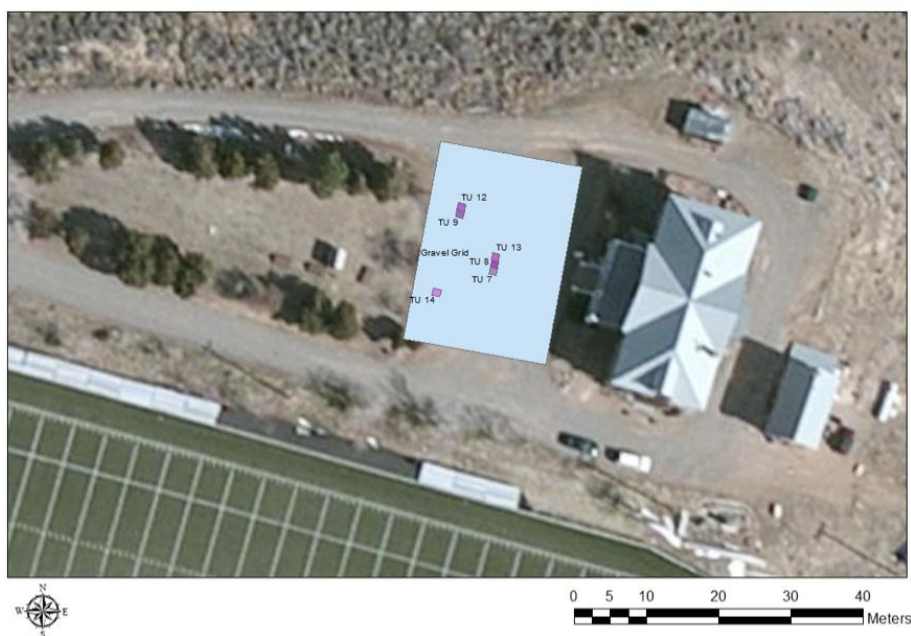


Figure 3.4. St. Mary's Hospital Site Map, Gravel Grid. Shown: TU 7-9, 12-14. (Satellite imagery courtesy of Bing Maps, map courtesy of Lisa Machado)

Test Units (TU) 7, 8 and 13: Feature 4

Test units 7, 8, and 13 were 1x1m units opened next to each other in the Gravel Grid directly in front of the hospital steps to form a 3x1m trench. Because the Gravel Grid is used as a driveway for the St. Mary's Art Center, the soil was compacted and required the use of picks for excavation. TU 7, the southernmost of the 3x1 trench, was

located at coordinates N11-12, E10-11 of the Gravel Grid; TU 8 was in the unit north of TU 7 at N12-13, E10-11; TU 13 was the northernmost test unit at N13-14, E10-11. The map on the previous page (Figure 3.4) shows a visual of the 3x1 trench's relative location to the hospital. TU 7 was located on top of a rock ring (which was designated Feature 4), and TU 8 and 13 were opened within the circular, ring-like feature to investigate its possible contents.

The circular rock feature, Feature 4, was found to be a pit feature with two concentric circular pits within it. The inner circle, which was deeper than the outer ring, was bordered by the rock ring and formed a pit with two levels. TU 8 and TU 13 contained the base of the pit feature. Excavation of the pit continued until the bottom of the pit feature was reached and all of the dirt fill was removed and screened.

The soil composition of Feature 4 was divided into eight strata, or distinct layers in the profile of the wall of the trench. The top layer, also the surface of the driveway for the Art Center, which was 2-8cm thick, was comprised of gravel and a pale brown silty loam. The second stratum, which was a dark yellowish brown sandy loam with small pebble inclusions and was 6-24cm thick, appeared to have been a builder's trench to lay down an iron pipe found in TU 13. The third stratum, which was a light yellowish brown sandy loam with fine to medium inclusions, demonstrates a different fill episode from that of stratum two. The fourth layer, which was disturbed tuff (or volcanic cement-like soil), was approximately 15 cm thick and consisted of very pale brown silty clay loam. The fifth layer was 2-12cm thick and was a dark grayish brown silty loam with small pebble inclusions. The sixth layer was 2-8 cm thick and consisted of light yellowish brown volcanic tuff. The seventh layer, which was 12cm thick yellow sandy loam, was a

circular soil inclusion in the fifth and sixth strata. The eighth and final layer was a 2cm thick yellow silt.

Final depths of the test units were as follows: TU 7, 20cm below datum; TU 8, 34cm below datum; TU 13, 39cm below datum.

Test Unit 7

Test Unit 7, the test unit placed on top of the circular rock feature, yielded many different types of artifacts. Firstly, the circular rock feature appeared to be mortared or cemented in place. Level 1 (0-10cm below datum) yielded celadon (a Chinese ceramic), some construction brick, wood fragments, glass fragments, mortar, and metal fragments. Level 1 also produced one artifact that could be associated with a Native American occupation of the site: a brown cryptocrystalline silicate (CCS) tertiary flake. The flake likely came from the production of Native American lithic stone tools. Level 2 of the unit was excavated only in the area of the unit that included the interior of the rock ring (the northern section) and was excavated to 10-20cm below the datum. The artifacts excavated from this level include glass fragments, paper, wood fragments, and one terra cotta vessel rim. Initially, the whole area of the test unit was excavated, but at the discovery of three square wooden post holes south of the rock ring, excavation of that area was terminated, and only the area which included the interior of the rock ring was excavated. The wood postholes were probably used in constructing the circular rock feature.

Test Unit 8

Test Unit 8, which had a closing depth of 34cm, was excavated until the bottom of the pit feature bottomed out and all of the fill from the pit had been removed. Level 1

yielded a tobacco pipe fragment, glass fragments of various colors, numerous flat metal fragments, faunal remains, wood fragments, a small amount of brick, some charcoal, and a fragment of cranberry glass that appears to be from a faceted tumbler. Level 2 (10-20cm) was divided into two zones; Zone I yielded minimal historical artifacts and was comprised mainly of volcanic tuff. Zone II of Level 2 included the pit fill from the feature and produced charcoal, non-aluminum foil, glass fragments with numerous flat colorless fragments, metal fragments, and wood fragments. Four additional cranberry glass fragments were excavated from this zone, and are likely from the same vessel as the glass fragment found in Level 1. The excavation of Level 3 (20-30cm) and Level 4 (30-34cm) consisted only of the pit fill dirt. Level 3 yielded faunal remains, numerous flat glass fragments, many metal fragments, unmilled wood, and more cranberry glass fragments possibly associated with the other cranberry glass fragments found in the previous levels of the unit. Level 4 produced numerous glass fragments, primarily flat colorless glass, and metal fragments. Trace amounts of coal, white improved earthenware (WIE), and plaster were also found in this level. This test unit also yielded seven lithic flakes that may be associated with the Native American occupation of the site.

During the excavation of TU 8, a lead pipe was found protruding from the east wall of Level 3. It was unclear whether this pipe was placed intentionally, or if it was part of the pit fill.

Test Unit 13

Test Unit 13, which had a closing depth of 39cm, terminated at the bottom of the pit feature at the volcanic tuff. Level 1 (0-10cm) produced numerous pieces of aqua and colorless flat glass, glass fragments of various colors, and minimal amounts of oyster

shell and charcoal. Another artifact included in this level at 4cm below datum was a ferrous branch pipe coming off the main pipeline lower in the level. The soil around the pipe was different than the surrounding soil in the level, and corresponded to the soil type from the backfill of when the pipe was laid. The soil not immediately around the pipe to the north appeared to be similar to disturbed volcanic tuff. The area to the south of the pipe represented a different fill episode than the surrounding soils. Because of these different soil types, the level was excavated in zones. Zone I, which represented the fill episode prior to the presence of the pipeline, produced small amounts of flat glass, charcoal, bone, as well as metal fragments. Zone II, representing the backfill from the pipeline's addition, yielded small amounts of bone, brick, chalk, shell, wood fragments, one bead and flat aqua and flat colorless glass. Another zone, a transitional zone between Zone II and the disturbed volcanic tuff to the north of it, yielded a few artifacts, including small amounts of metal fragments, wood, and flat aqua glass. The artifacts from zones I and II of Level 3 (30-30cm below datum) were collected together in the field and included many metal fragments, flat glass fragments, small glass fragments, and trace amounts of charcoal, wood, clinkers/slag, and more fragments of the cranberry glass found in TU 8. The backfill from the pipeline yielded one more cranberry glass fragment, nails, metal fragments, glass, and a glass thermometer fragment that provides dating information to the site, discussed in Chapter 4.

The pipe was found at 23-27cm below datum in Level 3 and was left in situ (in its original place in the unit). The backfill associated with the pipe bottomed out at 30-31cm. Level 4's excavation consisted only of the feature fill and went down to 39cm below datum. Below the pipe at 37-38cm was a decomposing plank of wood oriented

east-west and appeared to be intentionally placed on the floor of the pit feature. Artifacts collected from this area included pieces of a plaster cast, faunal remains, metal fragments, a seedpod, and various glass fragments including numerous pieces of flat glass.

Test Units 9 and 12: Features 3 and 5

Test Unit 9 and 12, located in the Gravel Grid at N18-19, E4-5 and N19-20, E4-5 respectively, formed a 2x1m unit selected for its circular subsurface anomaly found with the ground penetrating radar. This circular anomaly was designated Feature 5, with TU 9 located within the feature and TU 12 aimed to investigate the edge of the circular feature. The edge of the feature, which was an undisturbed natural soil, was left in situ. There were a total of seven layers in the profile wall of varying colors and textures, which indicate different fill episodes and soil types. In the course of excavation, a shallow pocket of clay was located and designated as Feature 3.

Test Unit 9

Test Unit 9, excavated to a depth of 50cm, and contained Feature 3 near the surface, which was a circular clay pocket 16cm in diameter discovered in Level 1. The clay pocket, which went 15cm below datum and was composed of very pale brown soil with rocks, was first bisected (excavated in half to reveal its shape in profile), yielded no artifacts, and then the second half was removed with the same results. The feature could be a small posthole, although it is not definitely so. The rest of Level 1 (excluding Feature 3) was fill for a large pit feature, Feature 5. It produced small amounts of ceramics, water- or sand-worn glass, and cut nail fragments. The second level went from 10-17cm below datum and was terminated when a soil change occurred. In Level 2, faunal remains, an aqua bottle fragment, a cartridge case, small glass fragments, leather

fragments, nails, wood, and numerous metal fragments were found. Levels 1 and 2 are likely fill from the leveling of the driveway. Level 3 was mostly pit fill and contained trace amounts of faunal remains, white improved earthenware, charcoal, and wood. Subsequent levels revealed more about what the large pit feature may have been used for, which will be discussed in the next section of this report. For example, in the profile on Level 4, the fourth identifiable layer contained a heavy presence of charcoal as well as one olive green bottle base (see Chapter 4), a German stoneware mineral water jug fragment (see Chapter 4), cut nails, metal fragments, and a tack. Level 5 (40-49cm below datum) contained more faunal remains than previous levels, and also yielded chalk, charcoal, cut nail fragments, and plaster or mortar. Charcoal was found throughout the entire unit, with a heavier concentration near the southwest corner of the unit. Fire-affected artifacts were also found, including some unidentifiable artifacts, one of which had molten glass attached. Level 6 (49-60cm below datum) did not yield many artifacts—it just produced one clinker or slag.

Test Unit 12

Test Unit 12, excavated to 51cm below datum, was excavated for the purpose of investigating the edge of Feature 5. Essentially, TU 9 excavated one-quarter of the feature, and TU 12 explored the adjacent quarter; the two units together roughly bisected the feature. Level 1 (0-10cm) did not produce many artifacts, but some found include small amounts of white improved earthenware (WIE), glass, melted glass, modern plastic, silicone sealant, and metal fragments. The difference between the soil associated with the edge of the feature and the fill of the feature was apparent in this level. Level 2 (10-39cm) revealed the edge of the pit feature, which was sloped and on the north wall;

this edge was not excavated because it was comprised of undisturbed tuff. This level produced more artifacts than the previous level, with faunal remains, a prescription bottle finish with cork stopper, charcoal and coal/clinkers, metal fragments, cut nails, plaster, oyster shell, a cartridge case, and milled and unmilled wood. Pockets of ash or perhaps decomposing bedrock were also discovered in this level in the southern area of the unit (soil samples are awaiting analysis). Level 3 (39-48 cm below datum) produced more faunal remains than the previous level, as well as charcoal, water- or sand-worn glass, and metal fragments. Level 4 (48-51cm below datum) produced charcoal, which probably fell out of the sidewall. Upon completion of the excavation of this unit, there were a total of six strata on the profile.

Test Unit 14: Features 6 and 7

Test Unit 14, located at N6-7, E2.5-3.5 also in the Gravel Grid, was opened near the edge of the driveway to investigate anomalies revealed by the ground penetrating radar. The anomalies appeared to be a series of postholes in a line, one of which was contained within TU 14, as well as an amorphous disturbance, also located in the test unit. The closing depth of TU 14 was 49cm below datum and terminated when the feature bottomed out and was fully excavated. The excavation uncovered a total of six strata in the profile and two features: Features 6 and 7, both of which were found in Level 1. The surface profile layer, Stratum I, contained the gravel from the driveway and was approximately 2-6cm thick. Strata II-V are associated with Feature 7, which was another pit feature on the northeast section of the unit. Feature 7 had a thick border of darker soil during excavation, and appeared to be fill. Excavation of this feature continued until artifacts had stopped being discovered and the pit bottomed out. Feature 6 appeared as a

posthole profiled in one wall of the unit and contained a darker soil than the surrounding material. Level 1 (0-10cm below datum) of the test unit itself produced numerous pieces of construction brick, white improved earthenware, glass fragments, metal fragments, plaster, tape, and a shotshell husk. The excavation of Level 2 (10-20cm below datum) yielded artifacts only from that portion of the unit including Feature 7. For this reason, Levels 3-5 were excavated only within Feature 7. Artifacts produced from Feature 7 include numerous large oyster shells and fragments, glass fragments, some cut nails, white improved earthenware (WIE), and one lithic flake.

Chapter IV. Analysis

This chapter, comprised of historical and artifact analyses, integrates the results of the historical, archival, and field discoveries to provide information about the context of the site and diagnostic artifacts, potentially raises more questions. This study has led to some ambiguous finds, and while extensive research has been conducted by a team of undergraduate students, graduate students, historical experts, and faculty members, the project still leaves much to be answered. The large project is still in progress, with soil and faunal analyses still being conducted. My project is the first to be completed, so the analysis presented in this section is preliminary.

The focus of this project is to look at the possible occupations of the St. Mary's Hospital site and the potential site uses that make up its history. There are several possibilities for site occupation and use in this section.

In this analysis section, ambiguities will be presented and explored, beginning with a greater contextual discussion of the site, its features, and its artifacts. Then there will be a discussion of specific features and diagnostic artifacts from features, which have been determined to be late nineteenth-century artifacts.

Van Bokkelen's Beer Garden, Hildebrand's Pleasure Garden, and St. Mary's Hospital

While some historians like Ron James have often referred to Van Bokkelen's property at the St. Mary's hospital site as a beer garden, other historical research suggests a more complicated history. General Jacob L. Van Bokkelen's residence and gardens, from the 1871-72 Storey County directory (231) and the 1875 plat map shown in the

results section (Figure 3.2), refer to the residence of Van Bokkelen situated at Piety Hill near Latrobe Tunnel (Survey No. 119 Plat of the Andrews Co.'s Claim on the Piety Hill Lode). The plat map not only calls the property "Piety Hill", but it also names "Van Bokkelen's gardens" and shows the location of a tunnel close to the property (Survey No. 119 Plat of the Andrews Co.'s Claim on the Piety Hill Lode). With this directory and plat map information, it is clear that Van Bokkelen had a residence and garden located at the St. Mary's hospital site prior to the construction of the hospital. Standard survey terms also match, showing the property's location in Township 17N, Range 21E, Sections 28 and 29. (Survey No. 119 Plat of the Andrews Co.'s Claim on the Piety Hill Lode)

Though we know Van Bokkelen's residence and garden were located at the site, the idea that Van Bokkelen operated a beer garden on the site is questionable. In my research, the property was never referred to as a "beer garden" specifically, but rather simply as a "garden" (Figure 3.2) (Survey No. 119 Plat of the Andrews Co.'s Claim on the Piety Hill Lode). The "garden" is referred to in the plat map, and the absence of any census, directory, or newspaper ads or stories about "Van Bokkelen's Beer Garden" may suggest there was never an actual beer garden on the premises. This lack of evidence is not enough to rule out the possibility of the beer garden's existence, though; it is possible that additional historic sources will come to light to indicate the presence of a beer garden. However, it is also possible that the idea for the beer garden stemmed from the Hildebrand Pleasure Garden, which not only hosted acrobats, a pantomime troupe, tightrope walkers, grand balls, and activities for the whole family, but also served meals and beverages ("Hildebrand's Pleasure Garden!").

Hildebrand's Pleasure Garden, which opened in 1872, was also located on the

Van Bokkelen property. The location of the pleasure garden is known to be the former residence of Van Bokkelen from *Territorial Enterprise* articles (“Hildebrand’s Pleasure Garden!”) (“Grand May Festival”) (“A Splendid Summer Resort”). Though the location was described several times through multiple newspaper articles, much is not known about the pleasure garden. Certain aspects of the pleasure garden remain a mystery, for example the location of the 80x60 dance hall that was advertised in the April 25, 1872 *Territorial Enterprise* (“Hildebrand’s Pleasure Garden!”). Though the advertisements mention this dance hall structure in the original Hildebrand announcement on April 25, 1872, May 7, 1872, and again on May 21, 1872, there are no maps recording its location, and though some of the features we found may have been associated with this structure, there is not enough archaeological evidence to confirm its construction and location. It could be that the structure was indeed 80x60 and could hold a large number of people, or this information (or lack thereof) could mean that the dance hall, which boasted a capacity of 1,250 guests, was a temporary structure, or that it consisted of a dance floor with no significant structure. It could also be that dance hall is located in another part of the site, adjacent to these excavation areas, and it has yet to be uncovered.

Structures associated with the pleasure garden might have included a pavilion, which is mentioned in the advertisement for the festival held on August 10, 1873 (“A Grand Entertainment”). Other features might include the 80x60 dance hall, an area for activities and concerts, a bar or saloon, a restaurant/kitchen, and tables for where patrons ate and drank (“A Splendid Summer Resort”) (“Hildebrand’s Pleasure Garden!”). Additional structures associated with the pleasure garden included a building referred to as the “Nevada Laundry,” which, in the festival on August 10, 1873, was used as one of

the bases for a tightrope walker. The tightrope, which spanned an area 600-ft long and reached 100ft in the air, began at the pavilion at the pleasure garden and reached to the Nevada Laundry (“A Grand Entertainment”). The 1875 plat map, which shows the location of Van Bokkelen’s property, also shows to the south of the property a building labeled “laundry” (Figure 3.2) (Survey No. 119 Plat of the Andrews Co.’s Claim on the Piety Hill Lode). This building, which was located on a hill, may well have been the location of one of the points of the tightrope activity, though the structure is no longer standing today. The plat map was superimposed onto the current aerial map of the St. Mary’s Art Center site to show where the buildings, tunnel, fence lines, and laundry building would potentially be.



Figure 4.1. Plat map overlay of current satellite imagery of the St. Mary’s site (Image courtesy of Christopher LeBlanc).

The map shown above (Figure 4.1) shows the relative locations of the buildings

associated with Van Bokkelen's property to the current location of the hospital building and the front Gravel Grid that was excavated in front of the hospital. Though the excavated areas do not include the Van Bokkelen buildings, this map demonstrates the possibility of the advertised tightrope walker in the *Territorial Enterprise* on August 9, 1873 ("A Grand Entertainment"). Though it is not definitively true, my personal investigations of the site conclude that the laundry building in the plat map corresponds to a location that could have been 600ft away from the pleasure garden area and that would allow for 100ft clearance from the ground. This finding adds credence to the idea that the location of Van Bokkelen's, the Hildebrand Pleasure Garden, and the hospital is approximately the same.

Excavations in front of the hospital (the Gravel Grid)

The Gravel Grid, which is the location of the test units possibly associated with the Van Bokkelen/Hildebrand's Pleasure Garden period of the site, is used as a driveway for St. Mary's Art Center today. All of the features excavated had an uppermost, thick layer of gravel to peel back during excavation, which contained gravel, soil, and artifacts of varying materials and certainly different time periods. The artifacts coming out of Level 1 of any of the test units contained a mixture of modern materials like plastics, and older materials like mouth-blown glass. The use of this area as a driveway complicates analysis in that the materials from Level 1 especially are mixed and cannot be attributed to one specific time period. Artifacts discovered in lower levels are more likely to be from older periods of site usage.

In all of the features in the Gravel Grid, there were no wire nails found, only cut

nails. This nail assemblage is significant because of the date range associated with these two types of nail technologies. Wire nails first appeared in 1819, but became widespread in the 1880s, and cut nails, the older technology, were used more from 1815 until the 1880s (Adams 66). Because the cut nail period is earlier than the 1880s, this information can be significant for dating the artifacts found in the features. It is likely that the features were filled before the 1880s, which would make them more likely associated with the pleasure garden periods or perhaps with the earliest period of the hospital's history.

Features, Artifacts, and the Historical Record

Feature 4

Feature 4, located directly in front of the hospital's steps and that encompassed test units 7, 8, and 13, was a circular rock feature that had several discrete fill episodes and a lead pipe running east-west in the lower levels. This rock feature may have been associated with Van Bokkelen's occupation of the site, the Hildebrand's Pleasure Garden, or even the St. Mary's hospital phase of the site's occupation. In the historical photo of the hospital from around 1875 (Figure 3.3) there appears to be an object or structure in front of the hospital. The image quality is poor, so it is not immediately clear what the object is, but it could be the circular rock feature discovered during the excavation. If that is the case, the feature would have been associated with the nineteenth century hospital component.

The artifacts collected from Feature 4 do not provide any solid dating information beyond dating to the later nineteenth century or possibly the early twentieth century

timeframe, but some inferences can be made as far as the possible feature period association is concerned. Artifact finds from Feature 4 suggest that the circular rock feature's fill is associated with the hospital rather than the gardens or potentially both. For example, from a logical standpoint, the glass thermometer fragment and the plaster cast fragments found in the feature are more likely from a hospital occupation than a pleasure garden. While this idea cannot be confirmed or refuted, with the historical photographic and archaeological evidence, the circular rock feature (Feature 4) is more likely filled in during the hospital phase of the site occupation.

Diagnostic artifacts from Feature 4 include a small fragment of a clay tobacco pipe bowl found in Level 1, a ceramic sherd of white improved earthenware (WIE) with a decorative pattern from Level 1, a small amber-colored hexagonal glass bead in Level 2 (zone II), the thermometer fragment in Level 3 (zone II), a seed pod that still contained at least one seed from Level 3 (zone IV), and the cranberry glass fragments in all levels that are possibly from the same tumbler glass vessel (zone II). These diagnostic artifacts do not definitively point to one direction or another as far as determining the use of the feature. However, the consistency of the fill in this feature (with similar types of artifacts throughout), suggests that the feature was filled in all at once, rather than gradually over time. Additionally, research on the glass thermometer fragment from Feature 4 shows that the first practical medical thermometer appeared in American medicine in 1867 (Leung 548). This information suggests that the thermometer was deposited after 1867, and being that it is a thermometer and thus more likely related to the hospital, the find can be attributed to the Daughters of Charity occupation of the site or later.

The lead pipe found in the bottom of the feature suggests a number of potential

uses; it could be that the feature was used as a fountain, and the pipe was used to bring in water, or possibly that the pipe was placed in the ground after the fill episodes of the circular rock feature, hence the soil change around the pipe. The evidence is not conclusive as to what the pipe was used for, but its presence may indicate a use that required water or gas.

Feature 5

Feature 5, which was explored with test units 9 and 12, was another pit feature with different fill episodes. It showed a layer of charcoal towards the bottom of the unit and yielded fire-affected artifacts. Some diagnostic artifacts that came from Feature 5 included two ammunition cartridge cases, 22 caliber, from Level 2, a colorless glass bottle with the cork stopper still intact from Level 2, an olive green mouth-blown bottle base with a molded "Flying N" in the kick-up from Level 4, and a salt-glazed German stoneware mineral water jug from Level 4. This German stoneware jug fragment is the only artifact that can be definitively dated, with a year range before 1886 (Leavitt). The fact that this stoneware fragment comes from Level 4 helps to date other surrounding artifacts in the level, and is also a likely date because of the depth of the level, which is more likely to be associated with older time periods of the use of the site. The olive green mouth-blown bottle base with a molded "Flying N" in the kick-up can be dated between ca. 1870 to the early 1900s, and was likely a British "stout" bottle (Bill Lockhart, personal communication to Lisa Machado, via email). He also says "this 'N' may indicate Nuttall & Co., St. Helens, Lancashire, England (1872-1913). Both stout and bottles by Nuttall & Co. are fairly common in U.S. contexts" (Bill Lockhart, personal communication to Lisa Machado, via email). If the bottle is indeed from the late

nineteenth century to early twentieth century time period, this date range would include the beer/pleasure garden, the Daughters of Charity occupation of the site, and also some of the early county hospital time period. With the German stoneware jug fragment dating to before 1886, another interpretation of the date of the artifacts from the feature is that the diagnostic and non-diagnostic artifacts were more likely deposited during the beer/pleasure garden or Daughters of Charity hospital period. The hospital, which was built in 1875, fits within the date range, but given that the diagnostic artifacts were German and an alcoholic bottle suggest the feature was filled during the beer/pleasure garden phase.

The charcoal towards the bottom on the feature suggests that this pit was at one point used for burning. Alternatively, the charcoal could have been dumped there as a secondary deposit, having been dumped from somewhere else at the site.

Feature 6

Feature 6, which appeared on the northwest corner of Test Unit 14 is a posthole. While no diagnostic artifacts came out of this posthole, the shape of the posthole was evident in the profile view of one unit wall. Based on the plat map, the location of the posthole seems to be consistent with one of the fence lines associated with Van Bokkelen's occupation of the site. Eight wood fragments were also found in this feature, which helps support the idea that this portion of the test unit was used as a posthole for a fence line. The fragments were too small to determine whether they were milled or unmilled, but the presence of wood fragments in a posthole supports the idea that this posthole represents remnants of a fence line.

Feature 7

Feature 7, also contained within Test Unit 14, was a pit feature that spanned the northeast corner of the unit. Artifacts recovered from this feature include large oyster shells (the largest pieces we excavated at the site), an entire brick, glass fragments, and cut nails. Because the excavated oyster fragments ranged from smaller fragments to almost complete oyster shells, it is a possibility that this feature was used as a trash pit. Perhaps it was dug for the purpose of disposing of refuse, or perhaps it was dug for some other purpose and filled in later with trash. The large oyster shell fragments suggest that these oysters were used for consumption and then thrown in the pit. There are no datable artifacts from this feature, though with the presence of the posthole (Feature 6) and the plat map, it may have been more likely associated with the beer/pleasure garden than the hospital. Logically pleasure garden patrons may have been more likely to consume oysters than hospital occupants.

Additional Observations

Little information was found to apply a date to the artifacts found in the features in the Gravel Grid. A different angle to look at these findings is to consider the absence of certain data. For a beer garden/pleasure garden site, in which one would anticipate finding an abundance of alcohol-related artifacts, the archaeological record in reality produced very few bottles and serving wares. This might support the idea that the excavations of the test units were not placed on top of structures or activity areas associated with the beer/pleasure garden. It could also be the case that looters have taken the more desirable and datable artifacts, or that the activities performed at this component of the site were not as drinking-related as once thought. The absence of drinking-related

artifacts at this site could also mean that the beer/pleasure garden did not have quite the presence that was originally thought. While it is known that the site housed Van Bokkelen's residence and garden (1870 Nevada State Census) (Survey No. 119 Plat of the Andrews Co.'s Claim on the Piety Hill Lode), and then later the Hildebrand Pleasure Garden, the gardens were still outdoors establishments, potentially limiting the timeframe for when they could be fully functioning community gathering grounds. Virginia City is subject to cold winters with snow, which would limit the months the business could run. Less activity would mean fewer remains to be found in the archaeological record.

Additionally, to compare the site's artifact assemblage to those of the saloon excavations from Dixon's Boomtown Saloons, there are some similarities between this excavation's results and the results from the Hibernia Brewery. Though there were few ceramic sherds found at the Hibernia Brewery, Dixon was able to determine that the drinking establishment likely did not place as great of an emphasis on serving food (Dixon 108-109). My project's excavation also did not yield many ceramic sherds, nor did it produce much glassware. Similar to Dixon's conclusions, the same idea may apply to my project's analysis; though historical advertisements describe a saloon and restaurant ("A Splendid Summer Resort"), there seems to be no overwhelming evidence from the excavation in the Gravel Grid to support the existence of those activity areas. Thus, a number of possible explanations might include: the saloon and restaurant were missed, the pleasure garden did not particularly emphasize the drinking/meal service, or that we did not reach the depth associated with the pleasure garden time period.

Another possibility to consider is that the "undisturbed" volcanic tuff that was uncovered while excavating was actually not undisturbed it is possible that the dirt we

thought was natural was actually hard-packed soil brought in from elsewhere and used to level and fill the driveway. When wet, the soil became muddy, and when it dried it became again like concrete; this suggests the possibility that this hard-packed soil may not have actually been as undisturbed as we thought. It could be that the artifacts associated with the garden period are still below this “undisturbed” volcanic tuff, waiting to be discovered yet. While this is a possibility, geoarchaeologist Christopher Morgan suggests this is unlikely (Personal communication with Sarah Cowie).

This idea, while helping to explain one of the possible reasons for the few drinking-related artifacts found, in a way contradicts the finding of Feature 6, a posthole that appears to fall in line with one of the fence lines mapped in the plat map. The posthole supports the accuracy of the plat map, but is not definitively associated with Van Bokkelen’s occupation of the site. It may be a coincidence that the posthole is roughly in the same place as the fence line in the plat map, but could also rule out the idea that the artifacts associated with the beer/pleasure garden still remain below the excavated soil.

In Summary

This analysis, while presenting different possibilities for the presence/absence of certain archaeological findings, is largely still inconclusive. The data available are not enough to determine very specific dates, only relative ones based on fill episodes; the contents of the fills are not particularly diagnostic. Also, the data does not point to one use of the features or another; the features contain a mixture of artifacts with different functions, which could mean the features were associated with either the beer/pleasure garden or the hospital or both if the features lay open for a long period of time.

Chapter V. Conclusion

Many people contributed to this project's success. The project's goals included research into the multiple occupations of the site, including a Native American occupation, an 1870s period when the site was used for a residence and one or more pleasure gardens, followed by a nineteenth century hospital period, a twentieth century hospital period, a period of abandonment, and an era since the 1960s when the site was converted in to an art center. Many of the tasks were shared among students, faculty, community historians, and volunteers. This cooperative effort is often the nature of multi-disciplinary archaeological projects. I was in charge of writing up the portion of the larger St. Mary's project potentially associated with Van Bokkelen's gardens and the front Gravel Grid. I helped with excavating, cataloguing and analyzing the artifacts from the Gravel Grid, as well as conducting related archival research and writing the beer/pleasure garden portion of the project.

My contribution to the greater St. Mary's focused on the archival records, features, and artifacts potentially associated with the front Gravel Grid. I attempted to discern whether we could definitively say from the data at hand, whether the features and artifacts resulted from either the beer/pleasure garden or the hospital occupations. However, the Gravel Grid, while yielding many possible interpretations, has still not produced enough diagnostic artifacts to make any definitive conclusions about the features' uses.

The initial working title of this thesis, "The Archaeology of Van Bokkelen's Beer Garden," while indicative of initial research goals set for the excavation of the site, does

not, upon completion of the research, reflect the findings of this study. The famous General Van Bokkelen, while he almost certainly owned and had a residence at the St. Mary's site, may not have operated a beer garden on his premises. The historical record, including maps, photographs, newspapers, and letters, does not mention specifically "Van Bokkelen's beer garden." It is hard to say where the misconception came from, but it could be that Van Bokkelen's use of the site was confused and overlapped with the Hildebrand Pleasure Garden, which was also a part of the site's history.

The main focus of the field school excavation was to uncover artifacts from the St. Mary's Hospital Daughters of Charity occupation of the site. The period spanned from 1875 when the hospital was constructed through the end of the Daughters of Charity's use of the hospital in 1899, when the hospital became the Storey County hospital. The beer garden aspect of the site was still an important component of our research. The ground penetrating radar detected the anomalies in the front Gravel Grid, which led us to investigate some potential beer garden features. Though it is likely that Feature 4 is a hospital-related feature, the other features from the Gravel Grid are potentially associated with non-hospital uses, whether from Van Bokkelen or the Hildebrands.

Future investigations could be conducted in the areas from the plat map where Van Bokkelen's buildings were placed. This area was not prioritized in the initial research design because hospital features were the main focus. Thus, in future research specifically on the gardens, it might be beneficial to target those areas where the structures stood. It looks as though the excavations were on the north edge of where the garden features might be found. Also, as mentioned in the analysis, the test units and

features in the Gravel Grid may have been filled in different episodes to level out the driveway area during the hospital's construction. If this idea is true, it is possible the artifacts associated with Van Bokkelen and the Hildebrand Pleasure Garden are still buried below what was thought initially to be "undisturbed" volcanic tuff. With the help of backhoe trenching and a geomorphologist, it could be determined if the soil below the features is truly undisturbed or if there are artifacts still buried below that layer. However, it is more likely that features could be found immediately to the south of the areas we excavated.

Additional fieldwork would help to explore some of the more ambiguous results this project yielded. Beginning student archaeologists spent five weeks in the field excavating and documenting the archaeological record. With more time dedicated to the project, it is likely that more definitive answers for various stages of site use could be found, especially given what we know now after searching through the historical record. The locations of structures associated with the beer/pleasure garden could be explored more fully.

In the greater scheme of historical archaeology, this project suggests how a beer or pleasure garden in the late nineteenth century might appear in the historical and archaeological record. Though excavations and historical studies of pleasure gardens have been conducted in the past, beer gardens have been missed as a subject for archaeological investigation. Though the beer garden's existence is still up for debate and cannot be completely ruled out, future researchers will be able to refer to this study as an example of what types of historical documents, artifacts, and features may have been associated with a mid- to late-nineteenth century pleasure garden site.

This project also contributes to a greater understanding of life in the American West and also its drinking and entertainment culture. While previous excavations in Virginia City have focused on saloons, this project adds a new dimension to the existing information available about daily life in a Comstock community. This establishment catered to many different people, offering activities for adults and children, and provided lavish entertainment to its patrons on certain nights. The pleasure garden would have been a unique place to enjoy a night off with family and friends on a spring or summer evening.

This project has also helped to disseminate information about historical archaeology and the history of the St. Mary's hospital site to the public. During excavation, students took turns giving guided tours to curious members of the public and also gave people a feeling a connection to the site's history. Others got involved with providing historical information, proving to be a valuable component of our background research. The excitement and interest from the public came as no surprise--Virginia City has always been an essential part of Nevada's history.

Without this project, the pleasure garden and its colorful history may not have been remembered, but it can now be added to the big picture of “the way it was” in Virginia City in the 1870s.

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