



# Historical Research Report

26 April 2003



Photos © William Saslow, 2002



# Discovering our History

## Objectives:

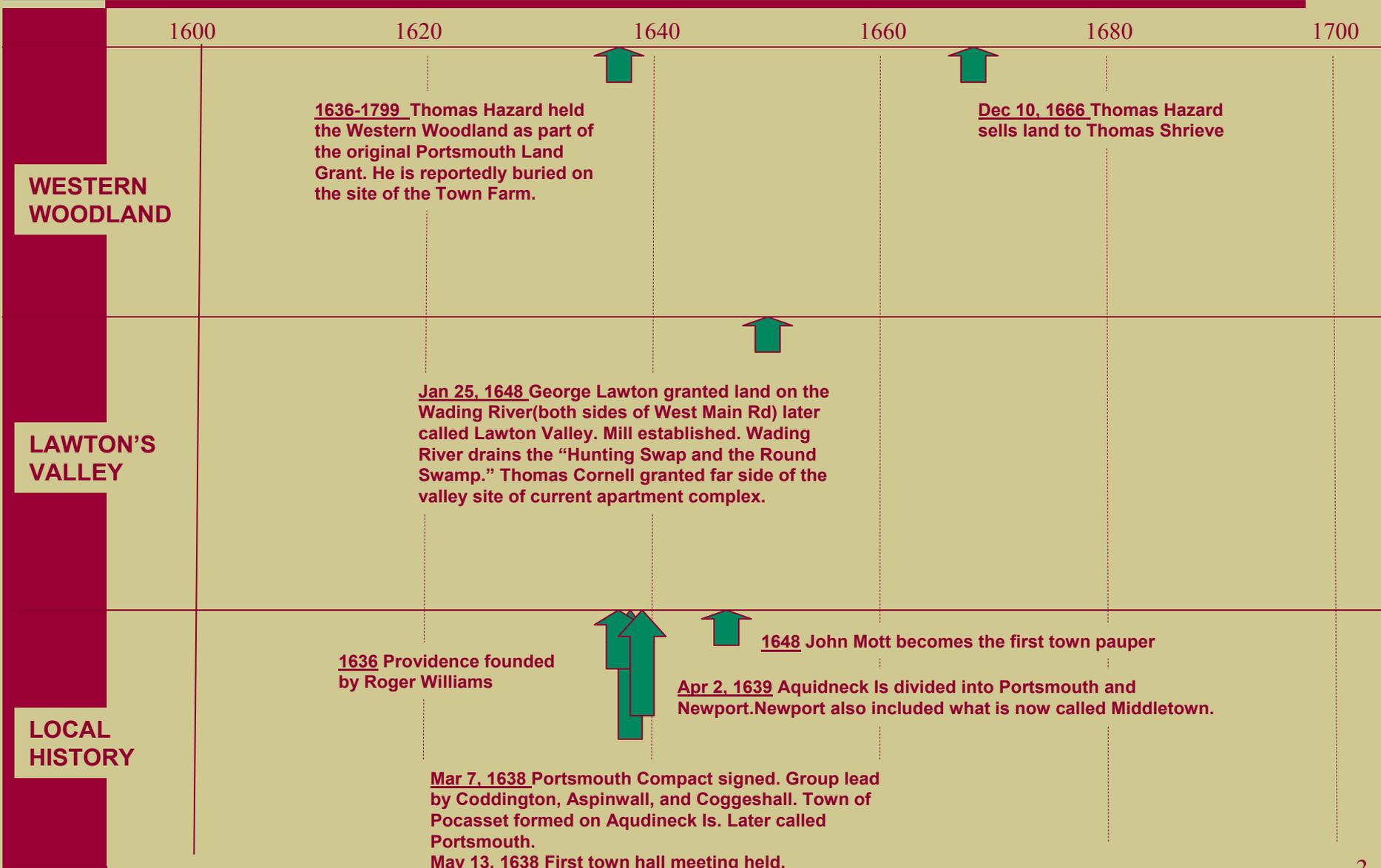
- Research historic use of the land comprising our campus,
- Share educational interpretation with our fellow employees and the community,
- Protect historic features for future generations.

## Discussion:

- Site Timeline,
- Original Land Grant Map,
- Turn of the Century Postcards,
- Portsmouth Asylum Project.

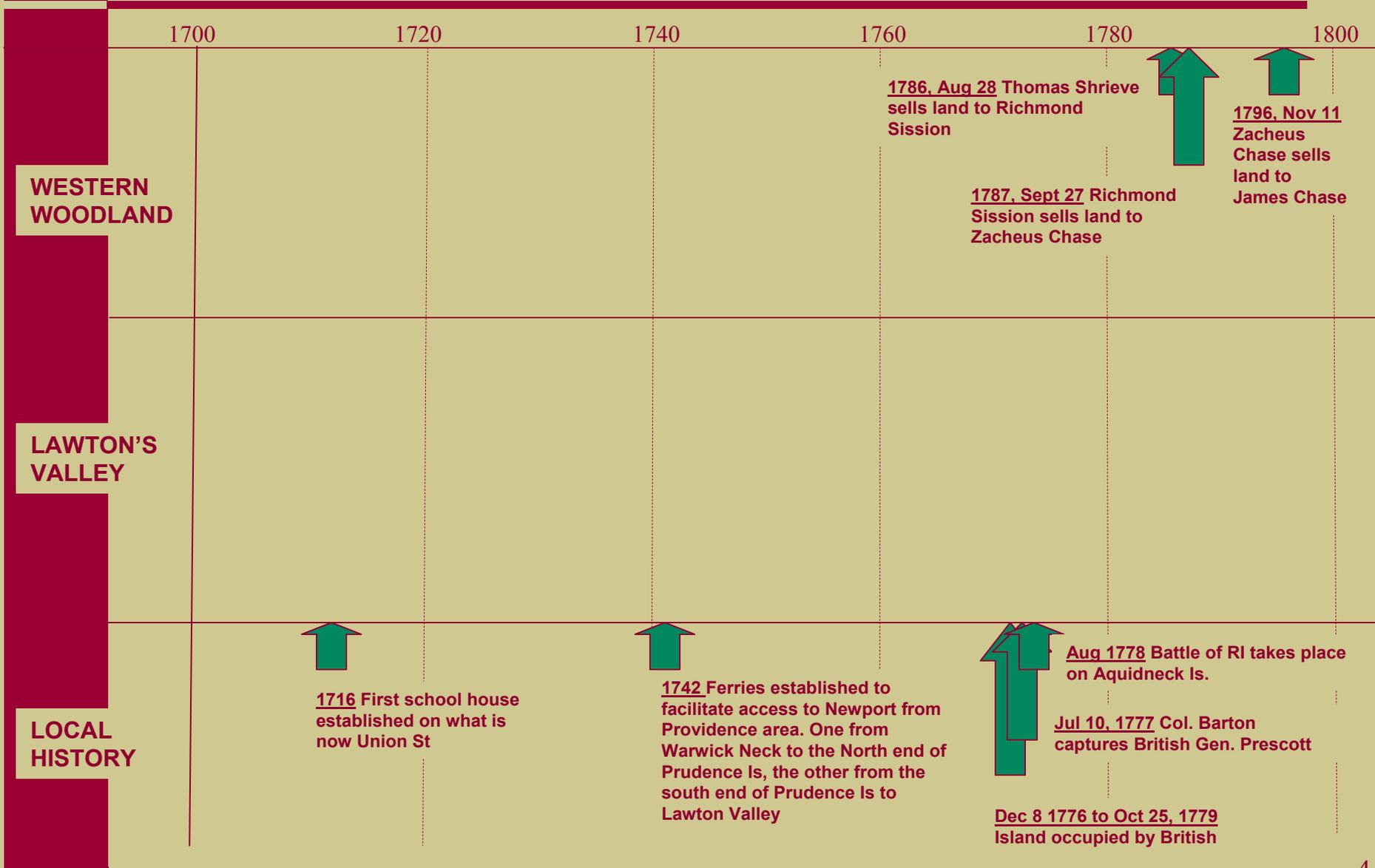


# Site History Timeline



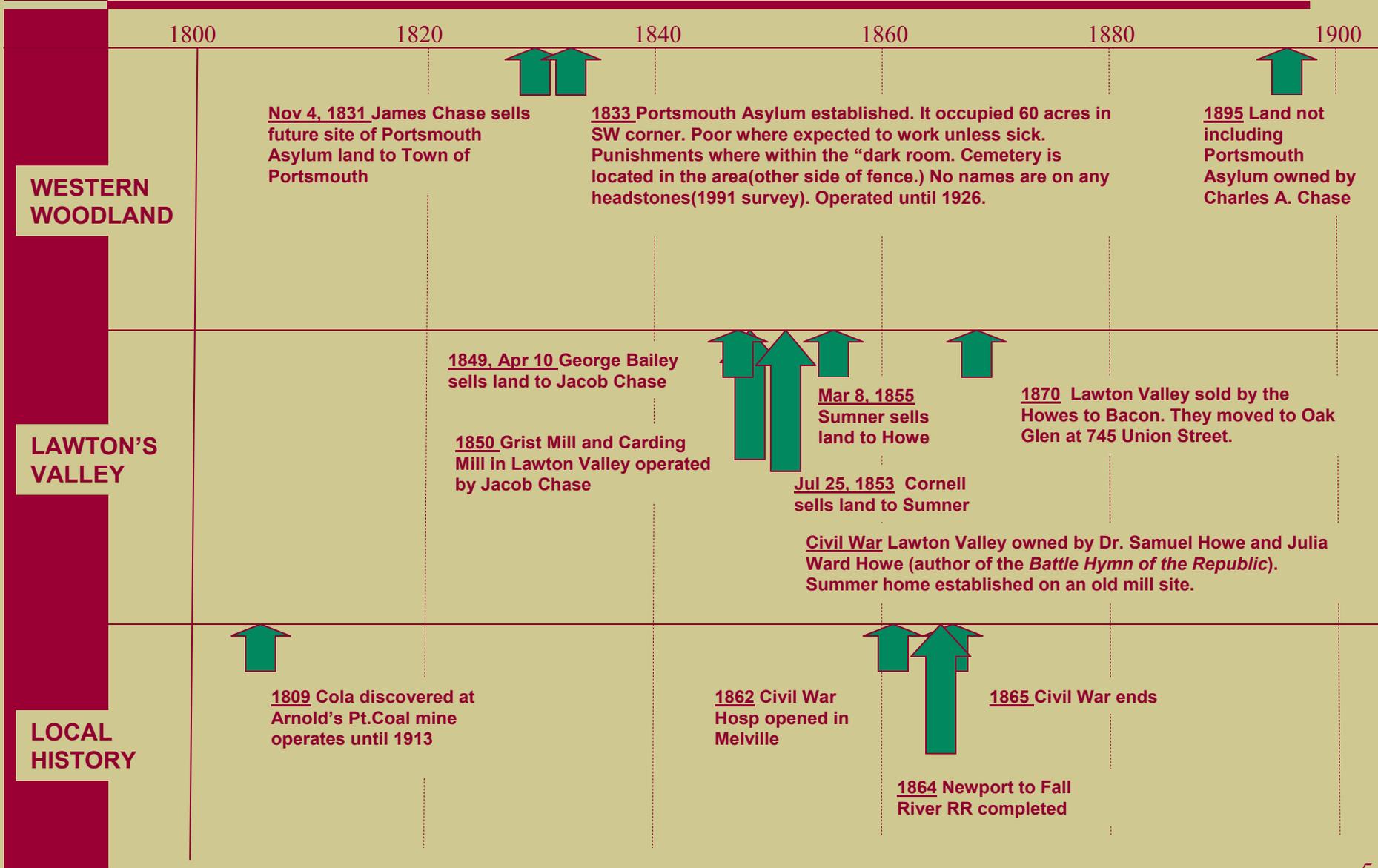


# Site History Timeline



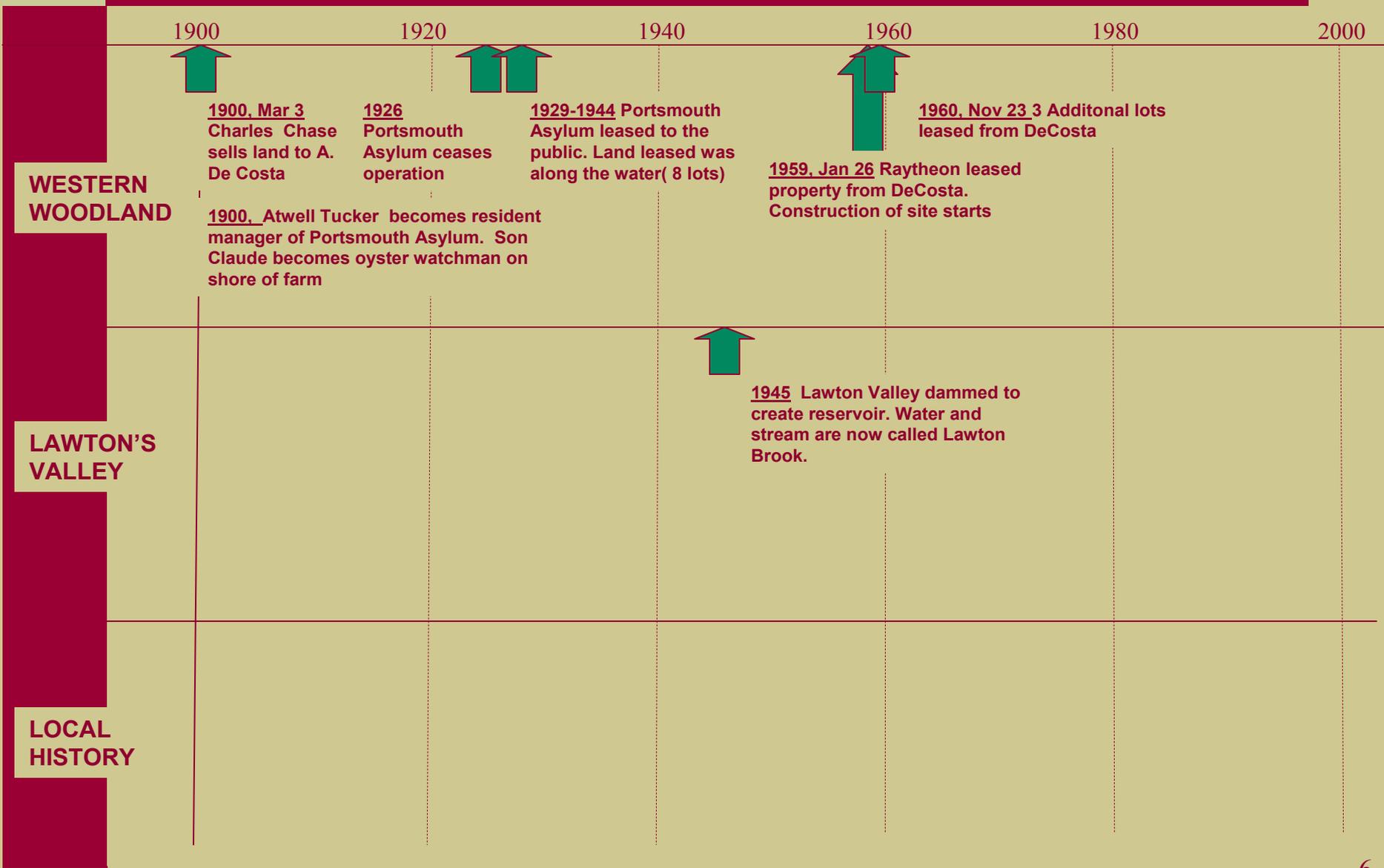


# Site History Timeline





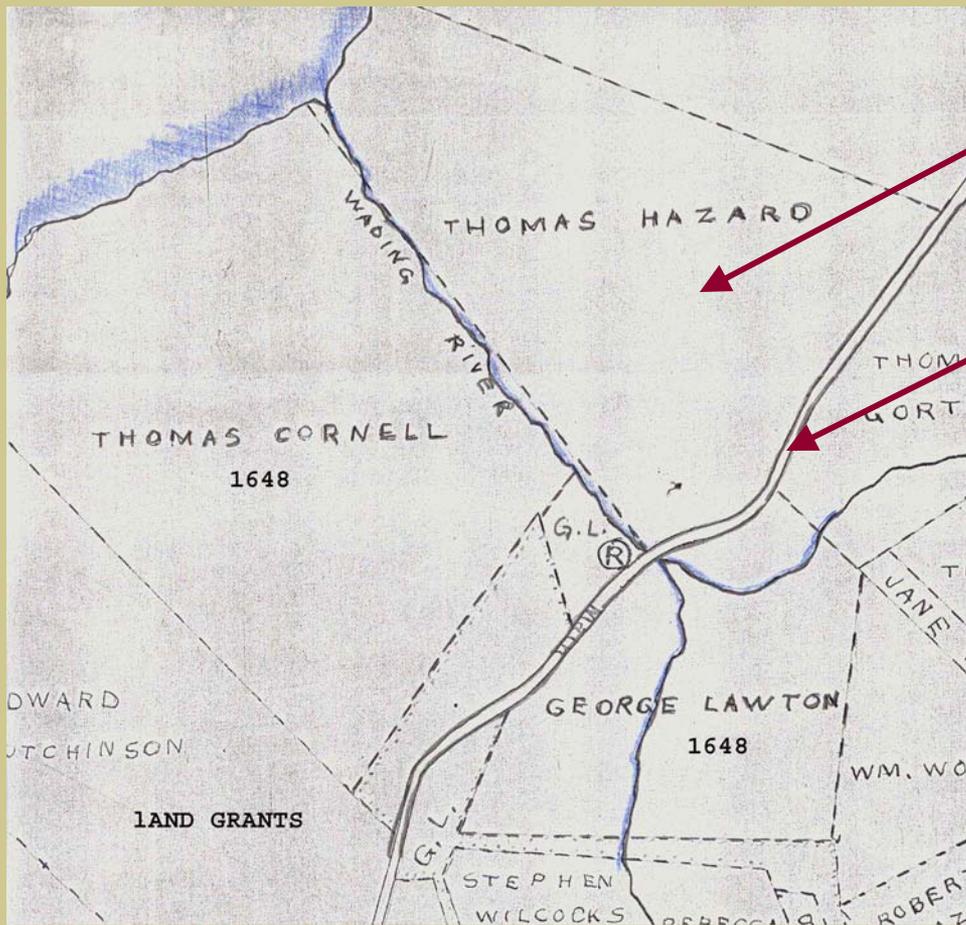
# Site History Timeline





# From the 1648 Land Grants

## Thomas Hazard, Original Occupant of our Site



Future Site of Raytheon

West Main Road



# Turn of the Century Picture Postcards

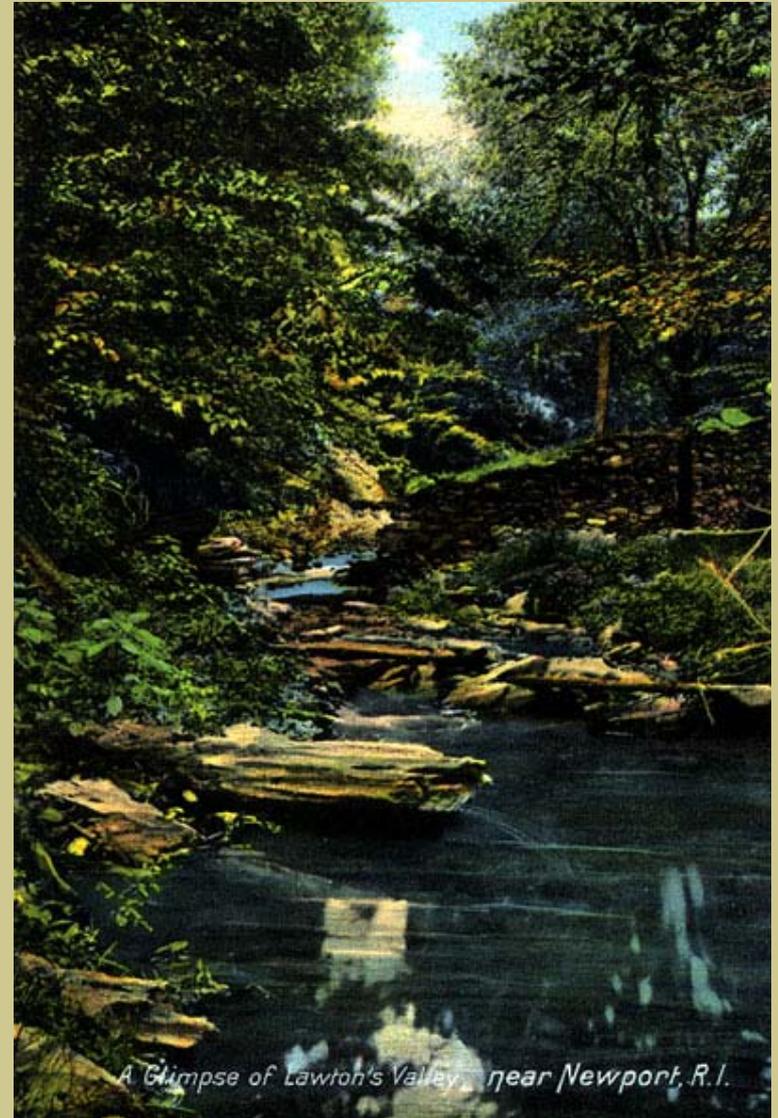
## “Lawton Valley Falls”





# Turn of the Century Picture Postcards

**“A Glimpse of  
Lawton’s Valley,  
near Newport R.I.”**



*A Glimpse of Lawton's Valley, near Newport, R.I.*



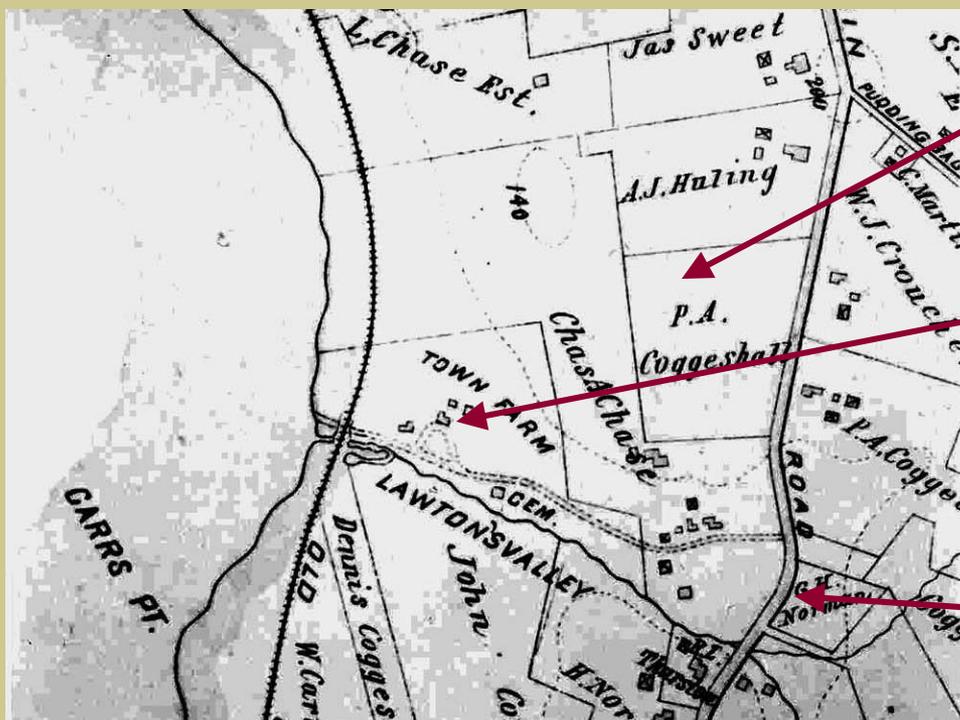
# Portsmouth Asylum Project

- Establishing the Location:
  - Where is it?
- Researching the Operation:
  - What existing documentation is available?
- Uncovering the Past:
  - What can the site tell us?
- Sharing our Heritage:
  - How can we share our newfound knowledge with others?



# Establishing The Location

- 1895 Map Shows Portsmouth Asylum (Town Farm) Established in Southwest Corner of Raytheon Property.



Future Site of Raytheon

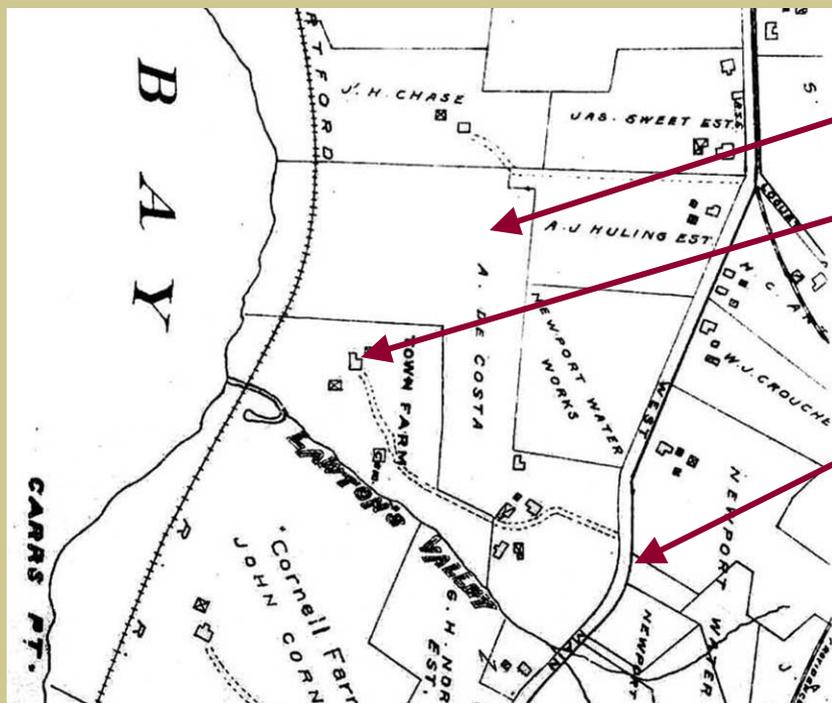
Portsmouth Asylum

West Main Road



# Establishing The Location

- 1907 Map Shows Portsmouth Asylum (Town Farm) Still in Operation



Future Site of Raytheon

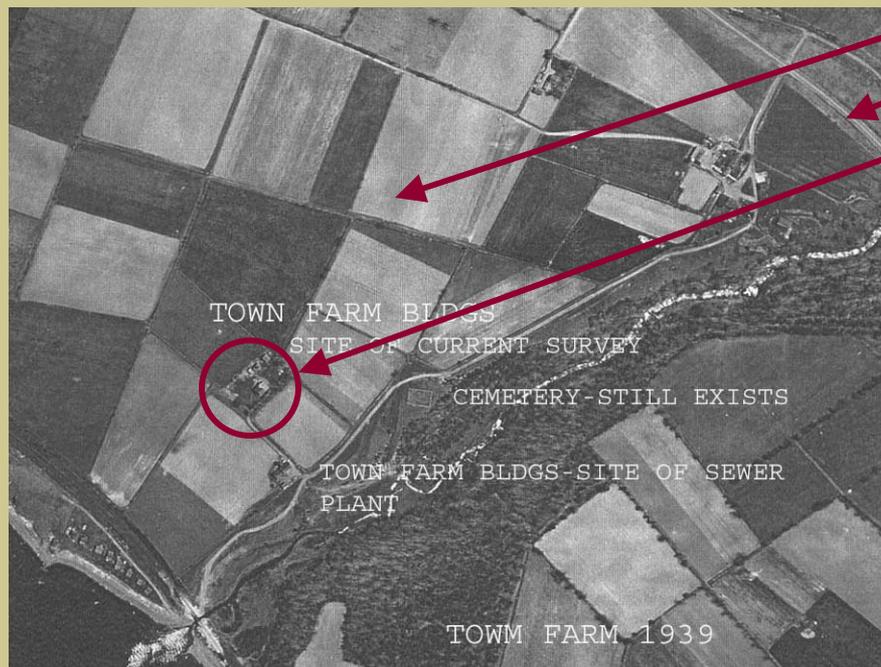
Portsmouth Asylum

West Main Road



# Establishing The Location

- Jim Garman, a Local Archaeology Professor, Finds the Town Farm in a 1939 Aerial Photo,
- Fields Yield Clues To Stone Walls Locating The Farm.



Future Site of Raytheon

West Main Road

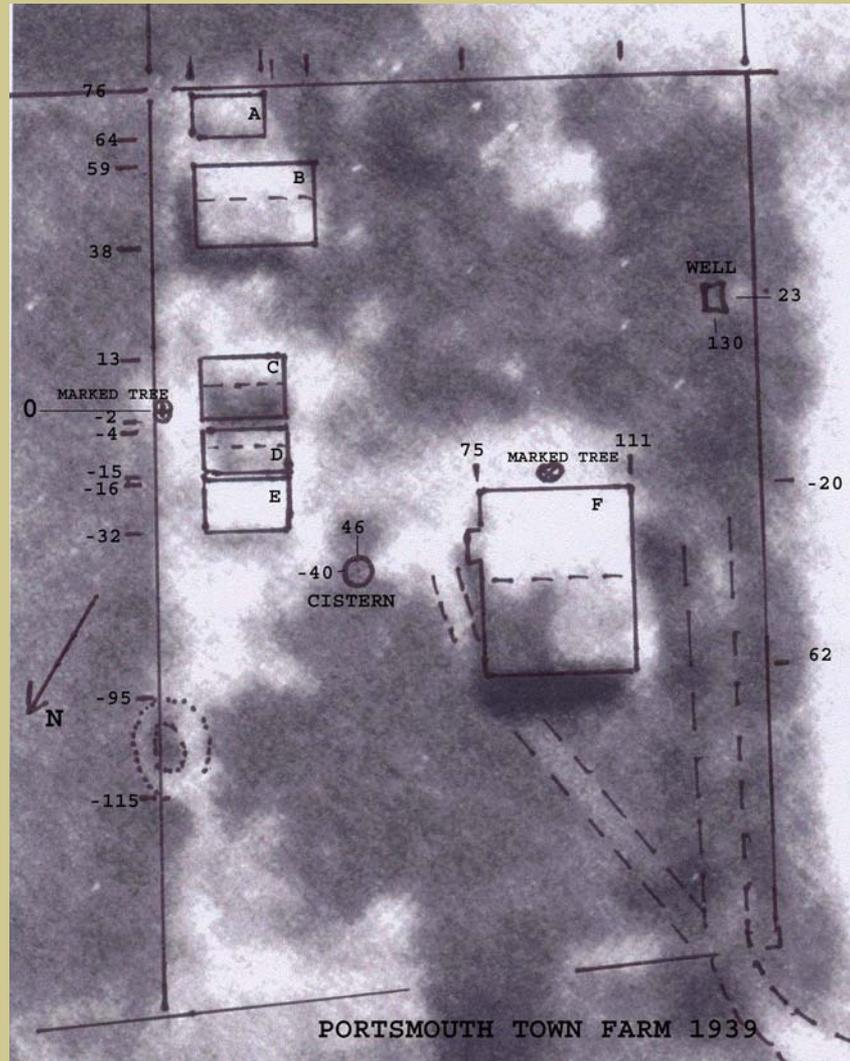
Portsmouth Asylum Site



Jim Garman



# Establishing The Location

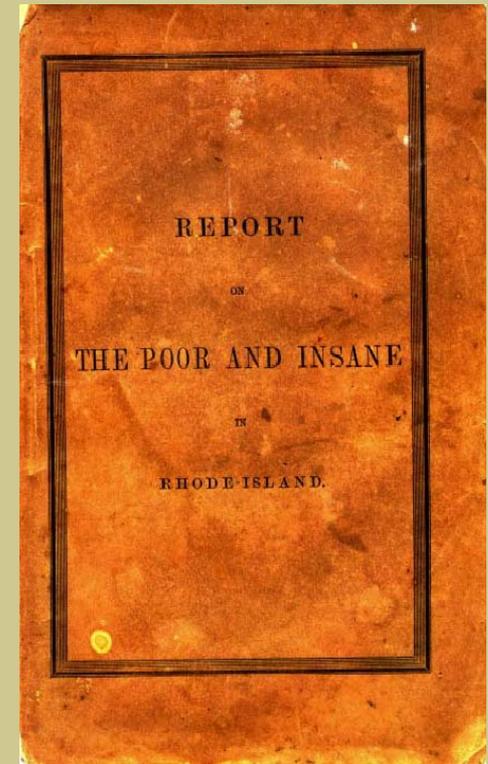


- Walk-Through Reveals Surface Artifacts:
  - Cistern,
  - Well,
  - Indentations.
- Further Examination of Indentations Yield Buried Foundations,
- Preliminary Mapping Performed.



# Researching the Operation

- Acquiring “Report on the Poor and Insane in Rhode Island”:
  - 1850
  - Portsmouth Asylum Prominently Mentioned
- Looking for Portsmouth Asylum in Published Memoirs
  - “A Coastal Schooner Life on Southern New England Waters”





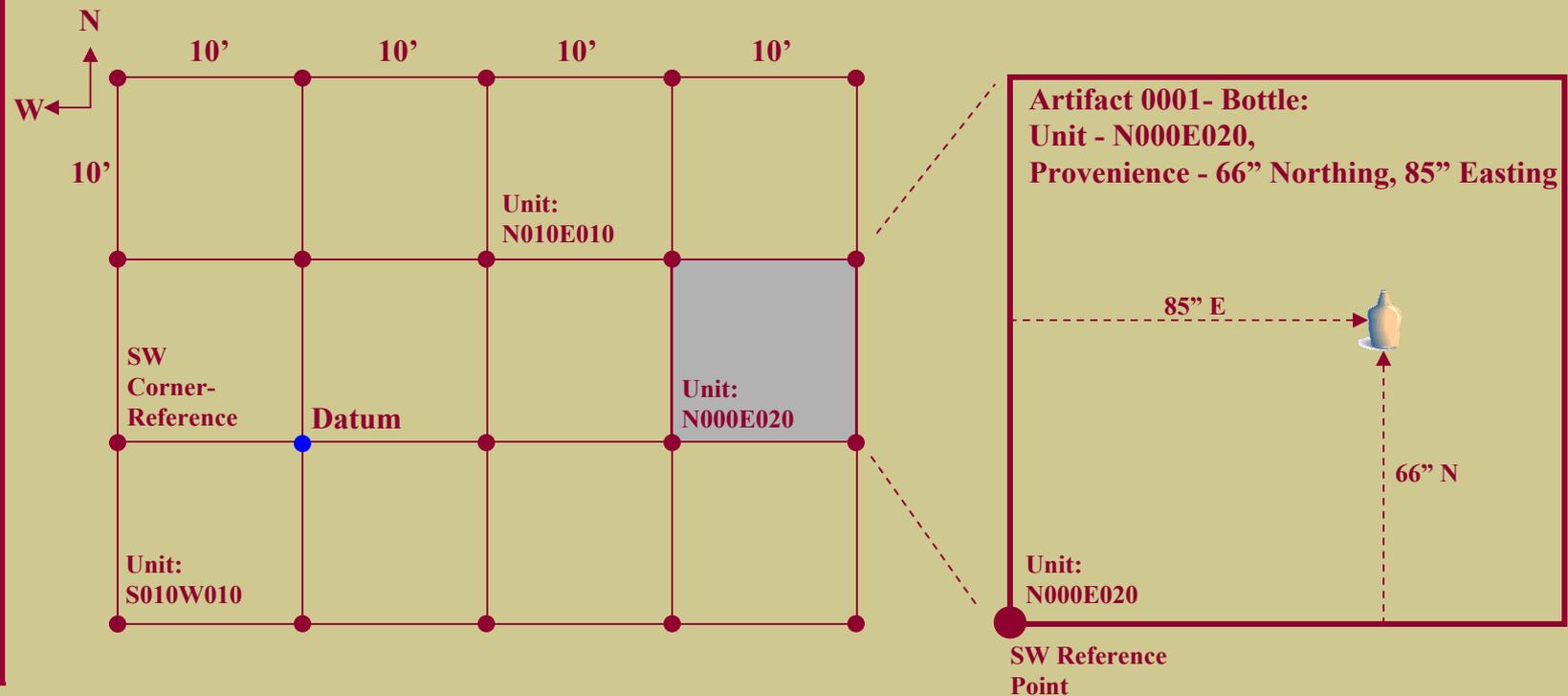
# Researching the Operation

- Examining Town Records at Portsmouth Town Hall,
- Examining Portsmouth Asylum Records at Rhode Island Historical Society,
- Scouring Microfiche of Newport Daily News and Newport Mercury,
- Interviewing Local Historians,
- Scouring Private Collections,
- Investigating Genealogical Web Message Boards.



# Uncovering The Past

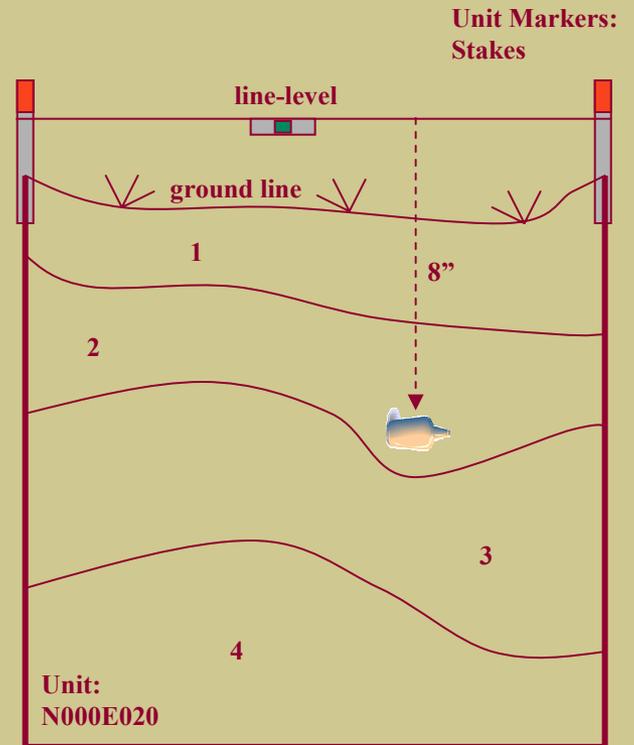
- Detailed Mapping, Selective Excavation and Artifact Curation
  - We Will Establish “Horizontal Control” by Laying out a Grid of 10’x10’ Square Units,
  - Artifacts Given ID Numbers and Located Within Unit





# Uncovering The Past

- Detailed Mapping, Selective Excavation and Artifact Curation
  - We Will Establish “Vertical Control” by Measuring the Depth of each Artifact or Feature
  - Strata Profiles Recorded Every 10”
  - Artifact Depth Recorded

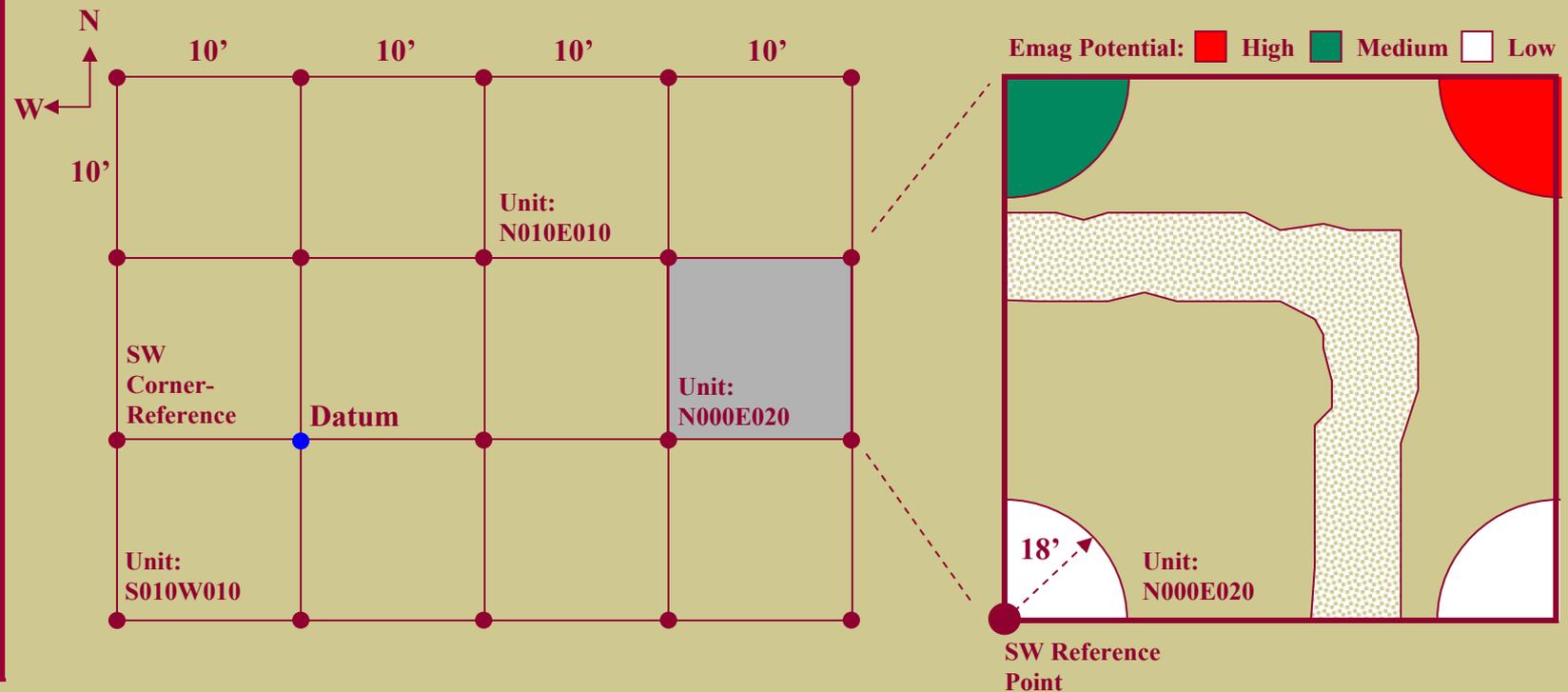


**Artifact 0001- Bottle:  
Unit - N000E020,  
Depth – 8”**



# Uncovering The Past

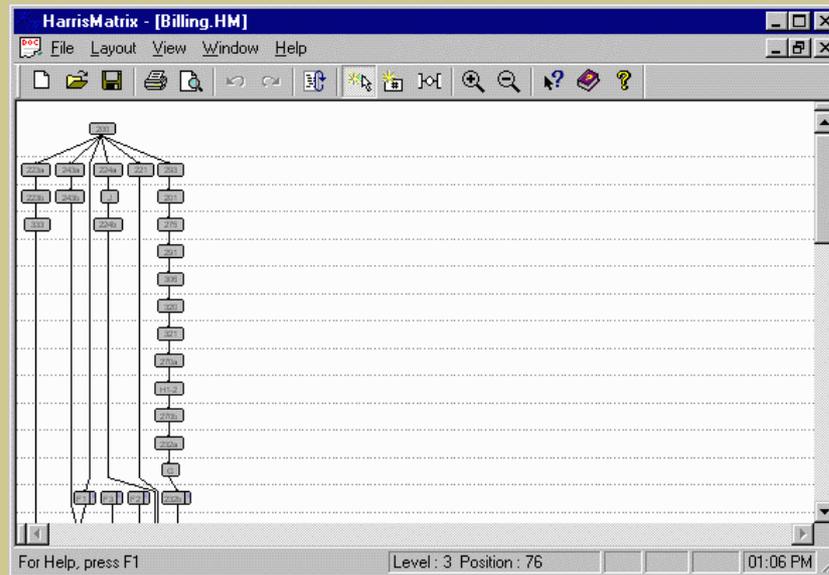
- We Will Identify High Potential Areas For Excavation
  - To Help us Determine Artifact Deposits, We will Perform an Electromagnetic Survey at Each Corner Reference
  - We Will Locate Foundation Wall Outlines Using Probes
  - We Will Correlate with Photographic Evidence





# Uncovering The Past

- We will Interpret Collected Artifacts to Determine How People Lived in the Portsmouth Asylum
  - We will use Stratigraphic Relationships to help Interpret Collected Artifacts:
    - Harris Matrix Format using ArchEd Tool. Relationships between artifacts in time: earlier, later, contemporary, and equal





# Sharing Our Heritage

- We Will Develop An Interpretive Trail
  - A Day at the Portsmouth Asylum
- We will Reach Out to The Genealogy Community

This is a wonderful project (a work-in-progress) which has been created by the employees of **Raytheon Company** in Portsmouth, RI. Their website coverage of the project is very responsive responsive to the planning, physical work on the location, and on-going historical research they are doing. For that reason, the website is constantly changing. Currently it includes: the 1832 Act -- Establishing the Asylum, the 1838 -- "Rules & Regulations", the 1851 Statewide Investigative Report (documenting abuses & making recommendations for needed laws), excerpts from Local Records (i.e. inventories, production reports, etc.) ... plus ...many tidbits of information which will make day-to-day life in the poorhouse seem real! >>>>>>>>

**Kudos to Corporate America ?**  
**You Bet ! 👍👍👍**

The "[Portsmouth Asylum](#)" 1833-1926

Don't miss ... [Picking Oakum!](#)

Review from: <http://www.poorhousestory.com/>



# Sharing Our Heritage

- We Will Develop Lesson Plans and Enablers for Local Educators
- We Will Lead Guided Walks for Employees and Community Groups Alike
- We Will Publish All of our Research On-Line:
  - Databases,
  - Photographs,
  - Reports,
  - Educational Enablers.





# Sharing Our Heritage

- Learned So Far:
  - Working farm producing eggs, butter, apples, onions, seaweed, wool, sheep, pork, beef, and oakum,
  - Several buildings hidden in woods off beaten path,
  - Rules and regulations suggesting treating poor as criminals,
  - Dungeon, a place of repression, singled out in Commissioner's Report,
  - Insane and elderly clash in common quarters,
  - Chaining and bailing to keep insane restrained,
  - About 35-40 paupers buried in cemetery,



# How You Can Help

## Join the REWHC Team!:

- Perform Research,
- Help Map the Site,
- Participate in Excavation and Interpretation.

**Visit the [rewhc.org](http://rewhc.org) website for further information or Contact Bill Saslow at x3461**