

## Excavations of the Frame Building

Archaeologists are continuing excavations of the frame building located to the west of the duplex remains discussed in earlier posts. This building is located behind the more substantial buildings that fronted Compromise and Newman Streets, suggesting it is one of the various outbuildings documented in archival records as being present on the larger property by the early to mid-nineteenth century.

But how can we tell what we're excavating was constructed using wood and not brick? Materials such as brick and mortar usually survive within the archaeological record, while organic materials, such as wood, tend to degrade over time. Typically, if there is an absence of brick or similar materials, archaeologists can infer the structure was likely made of wood even if the

wood is no longer present. Luckily, some of the original wooden beams survived and since brick fragments are mostly absent within the vicinity of this building, archaeologists were able to determine the type of construction.

While the archaeologists do not yet know the function of this building, the upper strata contained a variety of late nineteenth to early twentieth century domestic artifacts. Included within the assemblage are clusters of slate pencils, glass bottles, ceramic sherds, and keys. Glass bottles from this period provide wonderful insight into consumer habits because they were typically embossed with either the name of the product or the company who produced it. Not only does this tell us what the residents were purchasing, it can also tell us where they shopped. Examples of some of the bottles found within the frame structure are shown to the left.



Archaeologist excavating the frame building.



### Bottles from Left to Right

1. Beer bottle from Monumental Brewing Co. in Baltimore, MD (1900-1920)
2. Medicine bottle from R.R. Smith Pharmacy at 110 Main St. Annapolis, MD (1905-1954)
3. Soda/seltzer bottle from Annapolis, MD
4. Milk bottle from J.W. Gregg Dairy 612 to 618 O St. NW from Washington, D.C. (1875-1920s)