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Backyard Archaeology: A Snapshot of Life on the Home Front in the Hamline Neighborhood

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Backyard Archaeology:
A Snapshot of Life on the Home Front in the Hamline Neighborhood

Yvonne M. Thorpe

An Honors Thesis
Submitted for partial fulfillment of the requirements
for graduation with honors in Anthropology
from Hamline University

07 April 2015

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge a number of people who have provided invaluable knowledge, advice, and support.

To the 2009 Excavating Hamline History class and the students who first excavated, cleaned and cataloged the collection, thank you for uncovering the materials that allowed for this story to be told.

Anne Levin not only provided her backyard for the 2009 Excavating Hamline History class but also a wealth of information about the history of her home. Without her personal research this project would be incomplete.

David Mather was an important consultant and kindly contributed his time and expertise to discuss the faunal remains of the Levin Site.

Dr. Brian Hoffman, as my advisor, guided, encouraged, and challenged me to progress throughout this project and my time at Hamline. He has allowed me countless opportunities, both in the field and in the classroom, to gain the skills I will need after graduation.

I would also like to express my thanks to the other members of my defense committee, Deanna O'Donnell and David Davies. Collaborations among professors and across fields are what I view as one of the advantages of a liberal arts education.

And finally, to the Hamline-Midway community, thank you for shaping this history-rich neighborhood into a thriving area to live and learn.

"Tread reverently upon this ground,' Ireland advised in 1890. 'It is the Midway, the very heart of the coming great city. Look at it! Admire it! Has not providence been generous to it. It is the precious gift by which St. Paul will woo and win fair Minneapolis.'"

-- John Ireland and the American Catholic Church by Marvin Richard O'Connell, 1988
("Hamline Midway History Corps")

ABSTRACT

The Levin site is a backyard household archaeology deposit dated to the 1940s. This site is a distinctive example of the emerging branch of both backyard archaeology and twentieth century archaeology. This backyard site is an essential piece in reconstructing the history of the Hamline-Midway neighborhood. The Levin site also provides unique insights into changing consumption patterns, the roles of class and gender, and the evolution of the American identity. The Levin collection utilizes archaeological and historical methods to answer a number of questions. What can the everyday life of a family in the Hamline-Midway neighborhood say about national changes that were undergoing in the 1940s? What were the local effects of these changes? How did this particular family live during this pivotal time in history? In order to interpret this site, analysis of historical maps, documents, and archaeological evidence gathered during the 2009 Excavating Hamline History course is used to piece together a snapshot of the lives of the people who occupied this site. The remains of the household burn deposit found in the backyard contains a diverse collection of diagnostic items, from faunal remains to glass shampoo bottles and metal lipstick containers. The effects of advertising, government regulation, and other social forces that directed the consumer choices of the family that lived at the Levin site can today be found in our own bathroom cabinets, backpacks, and garbage cans. This research has the potential to guide future Hamline excavations that seek to connect and balance the local histories of an area to national and global changes in customs of living and learning.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Levin Site

The archaeological site that this report discusses is located in the backyard of the home of the Levin Family at 1473 Van Buren Avenue. The Levin Site is a mid-twentieth century backyard garbage deposit. The questions this research explored are: What can the everyday life of a family in the Hamline-Midway neighborhood say about national changes that were undergoing in the 1940s? What were the local effects of these changes? How did this particular family live during this pivotal time in history? What do their consumer choices say about them and how they adapted to life on the home-front? It is hoped that this contribution to the Hamline Village History Project continues the projects ability to build a connection between Hamline students, faculty, and the residents of the Hamline-Midway neighborhood. This research also seeks to bring to light the ability of twentieth century archaeological sites to contribute to the interpretation of the past. As a branch of anthropology, archaeology and its methods do not need to be exclusive to research on the distant or “prehistoric” past. This report details the context of the excavation of the site and the analysis of the Levin collection. After being unburied, cleaned, and cataloged, this analysis hopes to breathe life back into the collection by piecing together the story of the people who once lived at 1473 Van Buren. The historical context of the site plays an important role in the interpretation of the Levin collection. The time during and after the Second World War was a momentous point in the consumer history of the United States. Not only will this report discuss the lives of the previous residents of the Levin Site, but it will attempt to place their lives into the context of the development of the Hamline-Midway neighborhood and the far-reaching changes during this time in history, the results of which can be seen in our daily lives today.

Excavating Hamline History

The Levin Site was excavated in 2009 during Dr. Brian Hoffman's Excavating Hamline History course at Hamline University. The excavation was part of a larger collaborative community research project that began in 2004. The multidisciplinary course is offered every two years to allow a variety of students to excavate Hamline's history on campus and in the surrounding neighborhood. The most recent excavations were done in 2013 in the Blue Garden-the previous location of the Hall of Science and at 830 Simpson Avenue (aka "The White House"). The Simpson Avenue artifacts were dated to the nineteenth and twentieth century. The analysis of the Simpson Avenue collection was framed "simultaneously as an analysis of the archaeological excavations, and as a stepping-stone to save the history still preserved on campus" (Elm 2014: 4). The White House was demolished in the summer of 2014 and other homes in the neighborhood are intended to be demolished in the future. Many of the people who live in the neighborhood and share it with the university have expressed serious concerns about the demolitions of homes that have been here for decades. The project invites neighbors and community members to participate in the excavations on "open dig" weekends. The goals of the Hamline Village History Project are summarized on Dr. Hoffman's archaeology blog, Old Dirt, New Thoughts to "develop our neighborhood identity through a better understanding of local history and providing educational opportunities for students and interested members of our community through direct participation in excavations and other research" (Hoffman 2009). This overarching goal is an integral part of the interpretation of the Levin Site. The interpretation of this site is intended to be accessible to the Hamline-Midway community, which includes the university and the neighborhood residents. It is hoped that this project fosters a connection to the neighborhood community

surrounding the university so that students and residents may collaborate in building a sense of place in this section of the Twin Cities, *midway* between St. Paul and Minneapolis.

The Hamline-Midway Neighborhood by the 1940s

Hamline University was established in Red Wing, where it existed from 1854 to 1869. It then moved to St. Paul and began its first term on September 22, 1880 (Johnson 1994: 21). The area was primarily prairie but its proximity to the railroad held promise for its expansion.

“Neighborhood development initially centered around the university, expanding outward with the streetcar system into the 1950s” (“Hamline Midway”). This boom in development happened in the first few decades of the twentieth century. “Limited development of houses occurred in the 1940s through 1950s on available open lots and a few open blocks in the neighborhood's perimeter” (“Hamline Midway”). By the 1950s, the area had made its transformation from prairie to a neighborhood community with a variety of home styles. This means that a large majority of the homes in the neighborhood have been here for more than 75 years. The neighborhood identity is undoubtedly tied to this long history and its co-development with a place of higher learning.

With the majority of the growth of homes in the Hamline-Midway having occurred mostly in the 1910s to 1930s, the neighborhood was well established by the mid-twentieth century. Coming out of the Depression and into World War II and Recovery era, there was a continued momentum for change. As with World War I, industry goals shifted and rationing of certain goods was mandated by the government. “The war years’ high employment was followed by the longest sustained period of peacetime prosperity in history” (Derks 1994: 282). These changes undoubtedly shaped the relationship people had with their goods and the consumer choices they made at the time and for decades later. The Levin Site allows a glimpse of how a family who lived in the neighborhood at the time made their own adjustments to these changes.

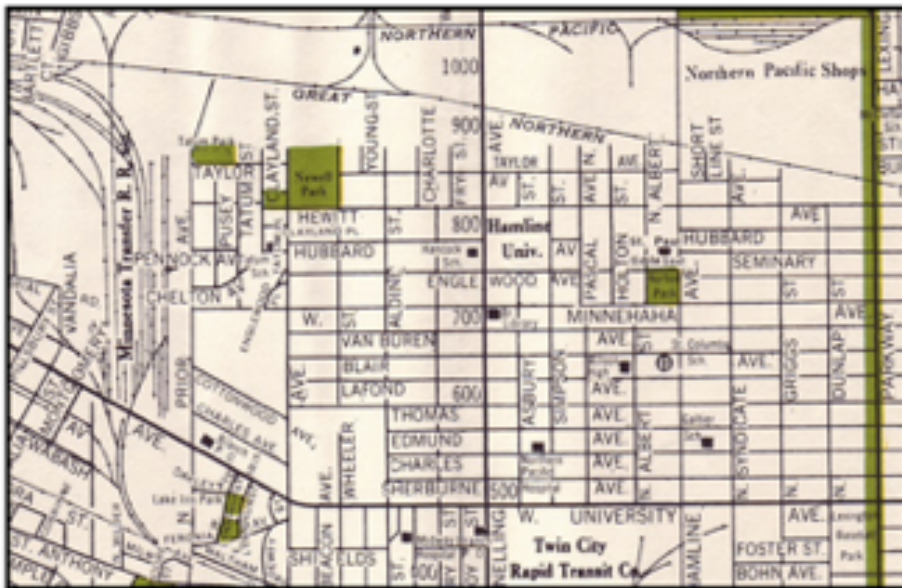


Figure 1. 1923 Map of the Great Midway
 Figure 2. 1956 Detail of the Hamline Midway
 (Hamline Midway History Corps)

Theoretical Perspectives in Twentieth Century Archaeology

The Levin Site falls under multiple categories within archaeological research. It is considered backyard archaeology, twentieth century archaeology, and its analysis places it into the archaeology of consumption. The relevance, importance, and urgency of twentieth century archaeology can be difficult to justify in light of a curation crisis in the United States (Childs and Corcoran 2000). What questions can archaeology answer about the twentieth century that other historical sources do not already? I argue that archaeology of both the distant and recent past offer a different perspective on history. It can redefine and highlight integral aspects of our lives that are frequently overlooked or falsely represented in other historical sources. Knowledge acquired through archaeological research can impact the future by reshaping our image of the past. Christopher Matthews, in his research on evidence of American capitalism in the archaeological record, argues “only archaeology can look at the unrecorded, everyday effects of capitalism on a site by site basis as well as relate capitalism to a long-term material and social change” (1965: 25). In the case of the Levin Site, by incorporating a theme of community, utilizing a consumption framework, and combining multidisciplinary methods this collection offers a unique context to explore the lives of the past residents of 1473 Van Buren. The Levin Site is foremost analyzed through an anthropological approach, a combination of both science and storytelling.

The categories of archaeology that the Levin Site falls under comes with a history of research. There has been an evolving discussion on the role of twentieth century archaeology, often underlined by a discussion of consumption and consumerism (Crook 2000, 2011, Deetz 1996, Douglas and Isherwood 1982, Herva and Nurmi 2009, Hicks and Beaudry 2006, Majewski and Schiffer 2009, Martin 1993, Mullins 2011, Orser 2004, South 1976, Spector 1993, Sweitz 2012). The end of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century are known to have

been a time of rapid change and transition in invention, production, and consumption. This change has resulted in an increased scholarly interest in what the products people produce and purchase can say about their values and behavior. An important branch of consumption studies is directed at advertising, how effective are advertisements and branding and how consumers perceive them. “For a number of scholars, advertising is the preeminent medium for conveying the lessons of consumer culture” (Pendergast 1998:5). In his summary of scholarship on consumerism in America, Tom Pendergast states that until relatively recently, scholars placed “production at the center of their conceptions of American culture and American economic development” (1998:1). He argues there has been a shift in studies of past cultures that focuses on consumption because “this culture of consumption embraces all aspects of human activity, from the way people construct their identity to the way they work” (1998:5). Pendergast outlines three characteristics of consumption scholarship: its transition from a focus on production, scholarly attention centers on the twentieth century, and advertising is a commonly studied medium of consumerism. These three conditions are present in the analysis of the Levin Site. The analysis of the artifacts addresses some aspects of production (the origin and production date) but primarily focuses on the consumption and disposal of the products. The time period the site has been dated to is within the time period that has been given the most attention by consumption scholars. And a number of artifacts from the Levin Site can be directly linked to advertisements from the 1940s. The methods, techniques, and questions of archaeology work well with a consumption framework, especially in historical archaeology, due to its emphasis on material culture.

One major question that consumption scholarship seeks to address, particularly in reference to advertising, is: what do the things people buy say about them, how they see themselves and how they wish to be perceived by others? “The perceived importance of consumption hinges

on the idea that consumer choices and possessions express, reproduce, and manipulate social relations and identities” (Herva and Nurmi 2009: 158). Attempting to interpret the meaning behind objects can be an obstacle course of false assumptions. It is a long journey for a glob of clay to evolve from ceramic container to broken pot to ceramic sherd artifact. This journey is referred to as an artifact biography. An artifact biography is crafted by interpreting the context of where the artifact came from, what it was found with, its condition, and any marks or characteristics that can provide information about who made or used it. Consumption attempts to connect a behavior to this artifact biography. It goes beyond the question of what were they doing with this object to what were they saying with this object (Herva and Nurmi 2009). Herva and Nurmi argue that, “artifacts need to be understood as processes rather than bounded physical objects” (2009: 179). Their research in Tornio, Finland found evidence of a mixture of human-artifact interactions. Some artifacts suggested through evidence of wear, recycling, and reuse that people do have a connection with things but that this is not the case for all artifacts. Branding and advertising in twentieth century archaeological collections complicate these distinctions because it is possible that objects that would otherwise have just “done” something are now “saying” something. The company that makes the liquor, shampoo, bleach, lipstick, ketchup , etc., is now associated with the item and the brand’s values and reputation are part of the consumer choice.

Twentieth century archaeology has to consider the many factors that affect consumer choices. James Deetz acknowledges the argument that historical archaeology is an expensive way to learn what we already know but states, “The phenomenon of cultural change is far more complex and imponderable than we might suspect were we to rely only on prehistory” (1996: 34). There are a much more diverse set of factors that need to be considered in historical archaeology. Prehistoric archaeology tends to view culture as an adaptive device; historic archaeology

invites us to more intimately factor in the “whimsy” and seemingly irrational (Deetz 1996). In “Shopping and Historical Archaeology: Exploring the Contexts of Urban Consumption,” Penny Crook reminds us that the relationship between material culture and socio-economic status has been found to be inconsistent (2000). She cites Ann Smart Martin’s speculations that, “the apparent interest in matching wares by more affluent consumers was simply an effect of buying in bulk, rather than an example of taste of preference for matching sets” (2008:18). This inconsistency between material culture and socio-economic status proves that there are many more factors involved in consumer choice. Interpreting historical archaeological collections demands an approach that combines scientific methods with storytelling so that it might factor in the “whimsy” while still providing definitive answers.

Archaeological evidence often challenges and contradicts expectations and assumptions. Twentieth century collections can address some of the complexities of consumer strategies by taking into consideration the social, historical, and geographical context of a site. Contradicting expectations and determining broad behavioral patterns are some of the main outcomes of the Garbage Project at the University of Arizona, detailed in William Rathje and Cullen Murphy’s (1993) book *Rubbish! The Archaeology of Garbage*. Rathje has been a pioneer in the subject of archaeology of the present. The project has overturned countless assumptions and brought to light behaviors and tendencies of everyday life that were previously unrecognized. An important point made in *Rubbish!* is that, “Most ordinary household waste is generated at every transformative stage. That waste never shows up in the data on household waste because it gets dealt with somewhere else— at the factory, say, or at the slaughterhouse, or on the farm” (1993: 39). What is found in a backyard garbage deposit is only a fraction of the waste that the household is technically responsible for creating. Distinctions between production and disposal sites are easily

recognized in prehistoric archaeology. There seems to be a disconnect between these stages in an artifacts life history in historic archaeology. Consumption needs to be redefined to more consciously include the production and disposal of artifacts to better understand its subjects.

There are a lesser amount of published sources on backyard archaeological sites from the mid-twentieth century and certainly none from the Hamline-Midway neighborhood. The most similar excavation done in the Twin Cities is The Elliot Park Neighborhood Archaeology Project in Minneapolis which was “both a research project and a community event” (Bakken 2007:1). The Hamline Village History Project has a similar format. Some of the artifacts found at the Elliot Park site were, like the Levin site, found in trash pits in the backyards. Due to these similarities in both the data set and project goals, the report on the Elliot Park site was an important initial framework for the Levin Site interpretation. The Elliot Park project recognized that the materials from the site, despite being from the twentieth century, had “the potential to tell us many kinds of things about these homesteads and the people who lived there, ranging from consumer habits to diet and health care, evolution of the homes through time in response to family needs or changing technology, patterns of land use, and even the changing character of the neighborhood over the last 150 years” (Bakken 2007: 2). The Levin Site has a similar ability to provide a snapshot of what life was like in the Hamline-Midway neighborhood and to prompt discussion about changing consumption patterns during the mid-twentieth century.

An advocate for the urgency of twentieth-century backyard research is Steve Brown. He argues in “Toward an archaeology of the twentieth-century suburban backyard” that the very themes this type of archaeology addresses-rapid change, expansion, development-are the reasons why backyard archaeology cannot be saved for later (Brown 2012). The dilemma with this type of research is that the themes of development, change, and expansion are also the reason why the

size of these collections would be difficult to fund the cost of processing, analyzing, and storing them. However, studying the present or not-so-distant past through archaeology should not be entirely ruled out. One scholar that is reimagining how to go about this, is Alfredo Gonzalez-Ruibal. In "The Past is Tomorrow: Towards an Archaeology of the Vanishing Present," he points to the issue that anthropologists have been delegated to study people and ideas and archaeologists study things-in themselves, a "division of labour of the social sciences" (2006: 115). This has the effect of fracturing the big picture anthropological research seeks to gain. In its quest for detail, anthropology risks narrowing its scope and misses the complexities the total image can reveal.

The Levin Site attempts to avoid some of the common errors in historical archaeology through its community collaboration and historical sources. A traditional archaeological analysis is integrated with historical advertisements and records that prompt big picture discussions about changing disposal patterns, roles of women, and the adaptations made by a community to a World War. The proximity of historical archaeology's subjects to the present is an advantage for it to be able to examine and potentially fix current issues. The urgency of twentieth century archaeology might not yet be a particularly drastic situation but research such as, the Garbage Project have proven its worth in affecting positive change in the present. Archaeology employs the ordinary, everyday artifacts of our lives to piece by piece construct a new image of the past. Twentieth century archaeology can reaffirm what we already know but also has the ability to correct misconceptions of the past before they become ingrained in our society as truth and create misinformed policies. This is without a doubt one of the most important contributions of this type of research and perhaps is the adaption archaeology needs to be relevant and compatible with the future.

CHAPTER II: METHODS AND FIELD DATA

Field Methods

The excavation of the Levin Site is a product of Dr. Brian Hoffman's 2009 Excavating Hamline History course. The course is intended for students of all majors. This is intended to create a multidisciplinary class and encourage students to present Hamline's History from a variety of perspectives. The Levin Site was excavated at the same time as the Hamline Methodist Church on Englewood Avenue, about one block away. The Levin Site encompasses the entire backyard of 1473 Van Buren Avenue. The excavation consisted of a single one by one meter unit.

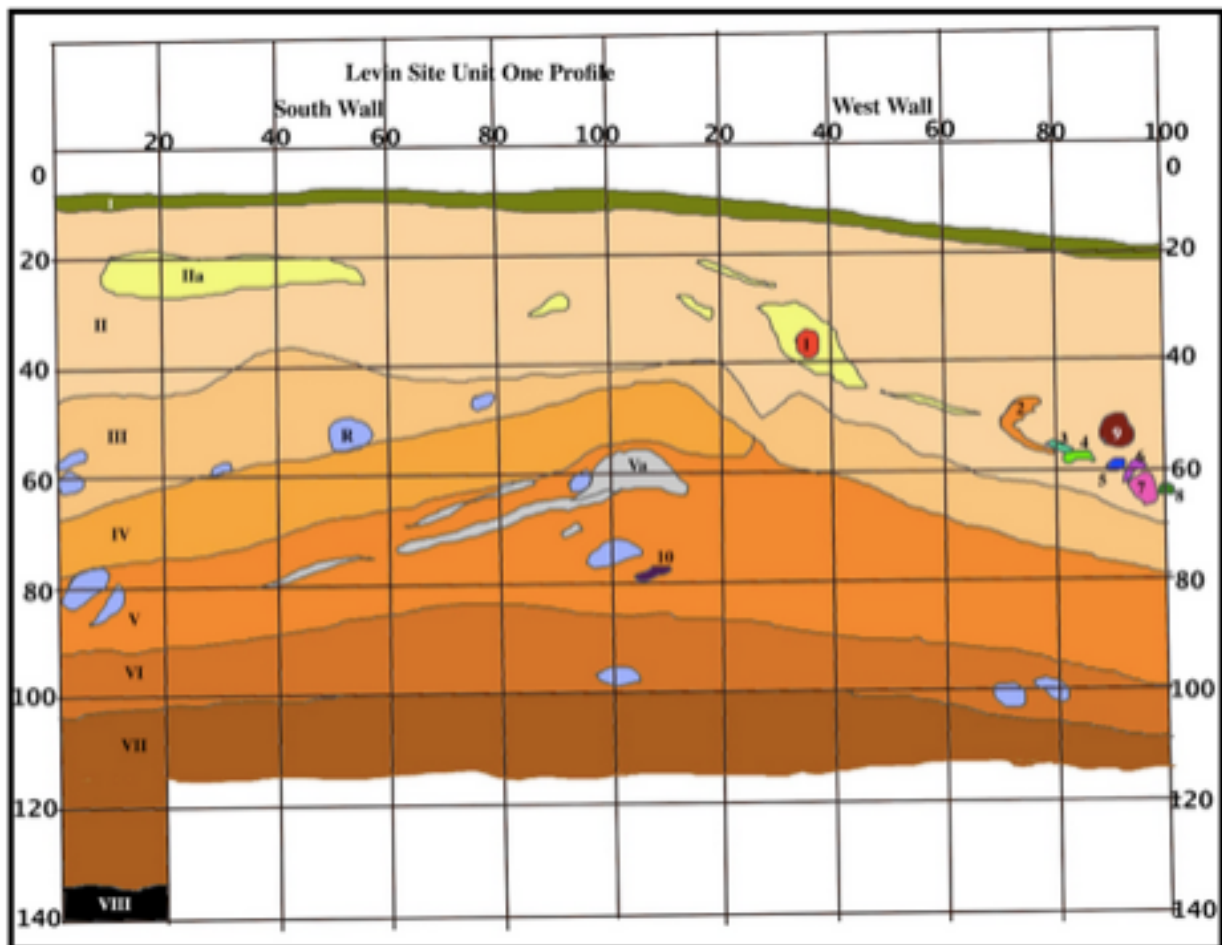


Figure 3. Soil Profile of South and West Wall

The unit was excavated in ten centimeter levels and reached a final depth of 110 centimeters. There are a total of eleven levels. Included in the collection are artifacts found by the Levin Family in the area of their backyard adjacent to the excavation unit. The profile of the excavation unit shows eight noticeable layers. The top layer was the sod layer. The second is a thick layer of topsoil with a band of burned gritty conglomerate where artifacts were found in the wall. Below it is a layer of sand and gravel with a number of cobbles. The fourth layer composed of brown clay soil does not extend far into the West wall. The fifth layer is a major cultural level with a lot of ash and mottling. At about ninety centimeters below datum, the soil is mostly sterile as the bottom two layers are loamy natural soils. The soil profile is consistent with the artifact distribution of the excavated materials. There is a high density of artifacts in levels three, four, and nine (20-40cm, 80-90cm) which correlates with the soil profile layers II and V.

Some clues about the soil formation were offered in a discussion with the landowner at the site. The floor of the dining room on the first level of the home has wear that indicates that there was possibly a door that went out to the backyard. The bottom level bathroom is now where that door potentially existed previously. During a bathroom renovation, there was some structural evidence that this was a definite possibility. This is significant because that door would have been closer to the garbage deposit than the current door that leads to the backyard that is in the kitchen. The path they took to their burn pile could have affected the location choice of the burn deposit and the type of refuse that was present. Some contributing factors that likely shifted the soils since the artifacts' deposition include the addition of the back deck and the removal of multiple trees along the fence line.

Anne Levin also mentioned that the front porch was probably previously an open porch with pillars. They also found an assortment of scrap underneath the front porch including: old

blinds, molding pieces, an old bike, wood, and a wagon. A crawl space under the bathroom addition also had stored wood scraps and other materials. A number of bottles and other artifacts

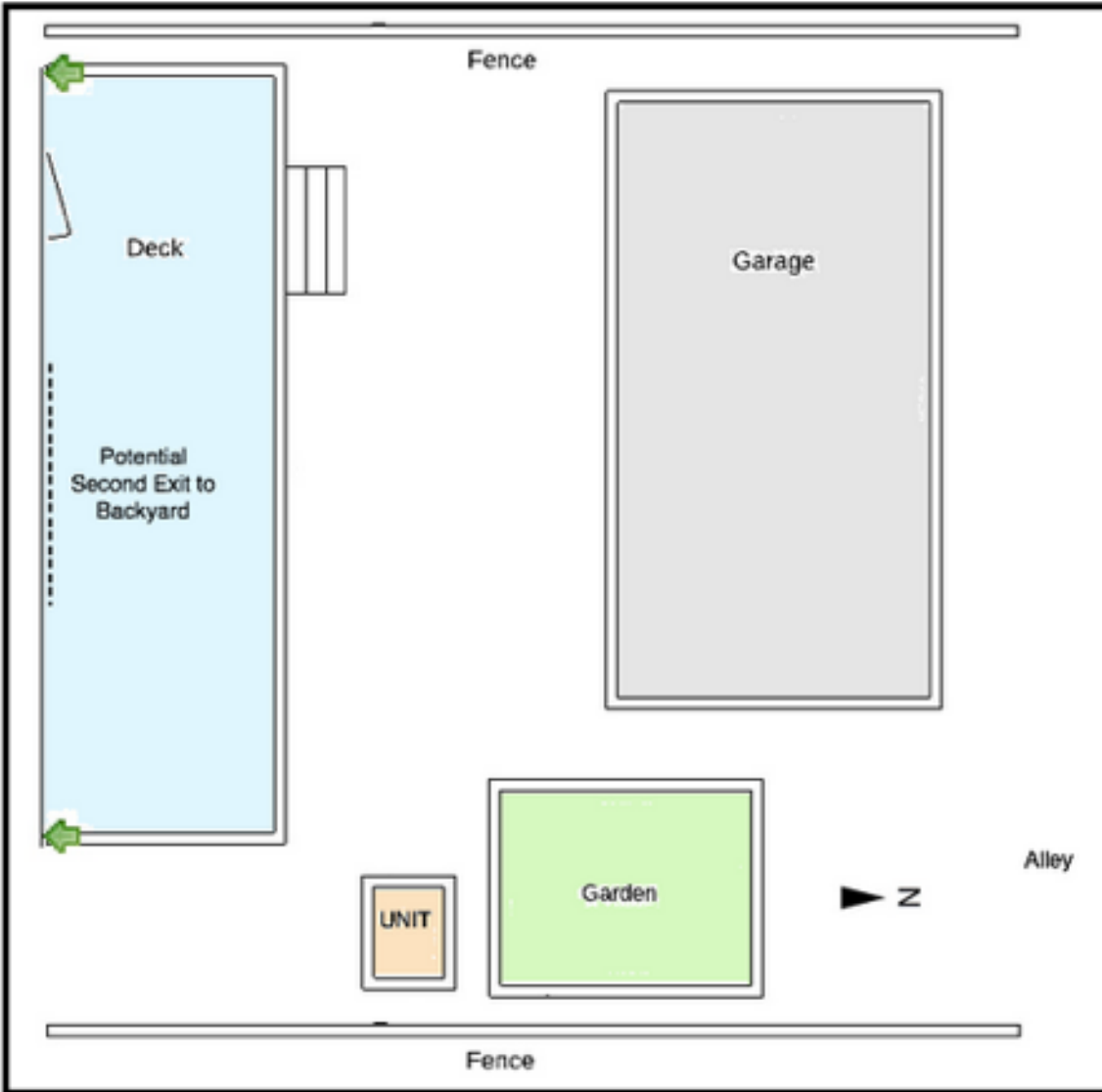


Figure 4. Plan of Backyard (not to scale)

were initially found while gardening in the backyard, not far from the surface. It is safe to say that the past residents of 1473 Van Buren utilized storage throughout both their front and back yard.

Another aspect of the backyard is its history of food-producing plants. Anne Levin stated that there was an apple tree just south of the excavation unit until about 2005/2006. She also said

there were raspberries north of the unit, between the alley and the garden which is where she found many of the complete bottles in the collection. During the Second World War, the government promoted the idea of “victory gardens” for citizens to supplement their rations. Citizens who had victory gardens canned their goods to preserve them, but canning required sugar. “Women who canned could receive additional sugar, but they had to complete a special application” (“World War II on the Home Front: Rationing”). It's likely the family that lived at 1473 Van Buren had a garden in the past to supplement their rations with home-canned goods.

In the field, the preliminary assessment of the site was that it was a 1940s garbage deposit. The analysis in the lab has since proven this assessment to be true. The evidence of outdoor storage and gardening are further evidence of how the previous residents utilized their space. The distribution of artifacts in the excavation unit layers and throughout the yard provide context about the circumstances under which the artifacts were deposited.

Lab Methods

The Levin Collection was partially cataloged in 2009 by members of the Excavating Hamline History course and the Hamline Archaeology Research Group. The protocol used in 2009 was modified by the author in 2013 during a Summer Collaborative Research Project to finish cataloging the collection. The artifact categories that became the focus of analysis are glass, ceramic, faunal remains, and a variety of artifacts described as “personal objects”. Personal objects are artifacts designated as having higher research potential due to distinctive characteristics or representation within the collection (i.e., brand labeling, unique to the collection). The artifacts are quantified by weight and item count. The total weights have proven to be the most effective in comparative analysis. One complication that has arisen in analysis is that some arti-

facts were counted as individual items and others were counted as lots. Artifacts were given a lot count if it was not efficient to count each item individually or they could not be given a single catalog number. For example, this was especially used for large quantities of burn residue (i.e., clinker, coal, ash). This is one reason why the weight is the most consistent measurement in this analysis. Another complication is that there is a division among the artifacts between items that came from individual levels (1 through 11) and artifacts that were collected during other steps of the excavation with less specific provenience. The latter includes artifacts collected during the West wall profile, items previously collected by the Levin's, and others found "under the garden." Artifacts in these categories are within the site boundaries and can be dated to the same time period. They are treated separately only when describing artifact distribution by level. More detailed information on how each artifact category was analyzed will be discussed in the results.

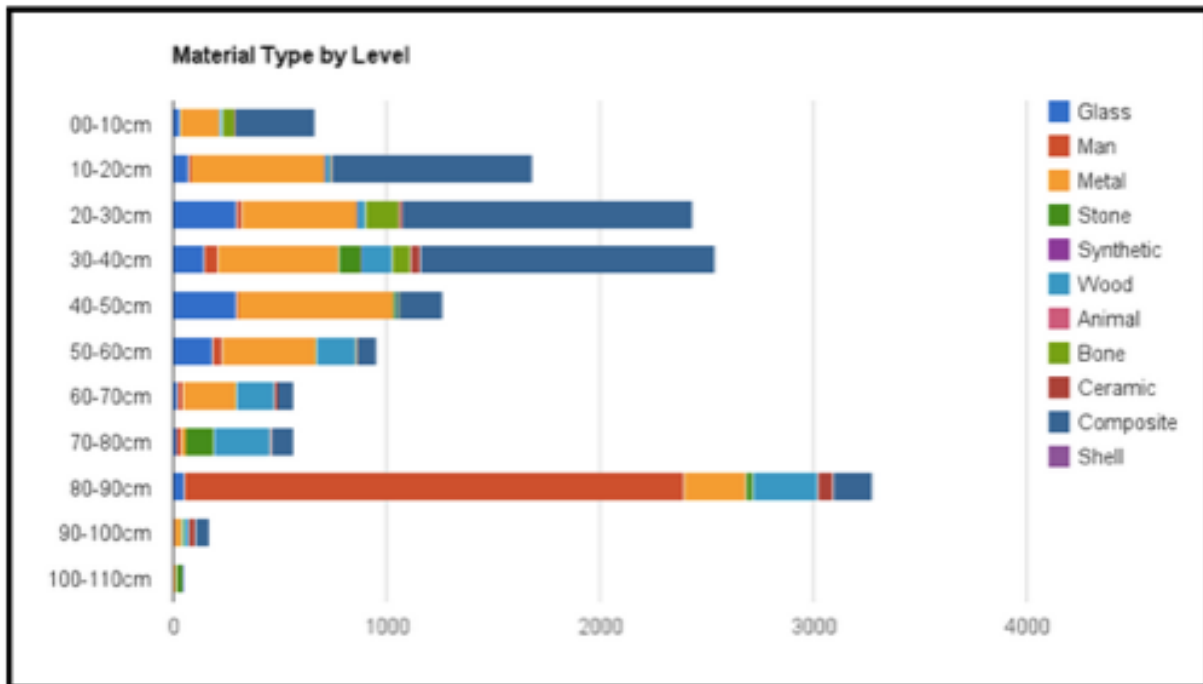


Table 1. Material Type amount (g) by 10 cm level

Archival Research Methods

The majority of archival research was done by the current homeowner Anne Levin. She utilized online resources, local historical society archives (Ramsey County and Minnesota Historical Societies) and the Hamline Bush Library and Hamline Branch Library archives to learn more about her home. Anne Levin's archival research was a major contribution to this research and had an impact on the direction of the archaeological analysis. The content she found is the record of what was occurring locally in the first half of the twentieth century. Advertisements for the neighborhood butchers, updates on the building of the library, achievements of local children are all included in the various newspapers. She also found records of additions to her home and census data through Ancestry.com on a family that lived there in the first half of the twentieth century. Discussing the site with Anne Levin was an important part of the process of understanding and connecting to the history of the Hamline-Midway neighborhood. If there were to be future work on this site or in the neighborhood, incorporating more oral history would be highly beneficial to the project.

CHAPTER III: RESULTS

Results of Archival Research

Anne Levin reports that the previous owners, as they were signing the house ownership documents, stated a former owner worked in an auto shop on University Ave and when a previous owner moved in "the attic had old auto/Chevrolet magazines" (Levin personal communication 2015). She included a picture of a Minnesota license plate that appears to be from 1928. She requested a copy of the original building permit and a copy of the index card for her residence 1473 Van Buren from the Ramsey County Historical Society. According to the RCHS the index card does not show the original first permit. The original building permit was issued February 3,

1910-permit number 53956. The permit is missing from the St. Paul Building/House Permit Collection because “most of the permits granted during the year 1910 were destroyed by water damage while in the care of city hall/courthouse and could not be saved” (Levin personal communication 2015). The index card that Anne Levin was able to acquire from the RCHS, has a record of sub-permits. Two of the permits were for “bld.” and “build” in 1928 and 1916, both for H. Emerson. The 1916 addition was for the garage and was estimated to cost \$150 and the 1928 addition was a renovation estimated to cost \$100. In November of 1936 the home owned by H. Emerson, was issued a permit to install warm air. The estimated cost was \$198.

From research done at the Minnesota Historical Society Library, she was also able to learn from the Dual City Blue Book that Mr. and Mrs. A.E. Pfinner lived at 1473 Van Buren from 1911 to 1912. Mr and Mrs. F.W. Burtis were listed as residents from 1913 to 1914. The next record of residence in the home is from a registration card dated June 5, 1917, detailing Harry William Emerson, age 30, as living at 1473 Van Buren St Saint Paul, MN. He was a “natural born citizen,” born May 13, 1887, in Superior, Wisconsin. His occupation is listed as machinist and foreman at the University Garage in Saint Paul. He claims to have a wife and child solely dependent on him for support and states his exemption from draft as “dependent family.” The card describes him as slightly bald with brown hair and eyes and is medium height and slender with no lost limbs.

The 1920 census states that Emerson lived in 1473 Van Buren and was married to Charlotte Emerson with their two oldest children Doris and Donna being age 5 and 1 (11/12 months). The house was mortgaged at the time and his occupation was machinist. According to the 1930 Census, the Emerson family still lived at 1473 Van Buren. It lists Harry Emerson’s parents as

having been born in Norway. At the time he is listed as being the proprietor of a repair garage and having been married by age 25.

The 1940 US Federal Census states Harry Emerson, 52, born about 1888 in Wisconsin owned 1473 Van Buren Saint Paul, MN. The value of the home was \$3000. He was married to Charlotte Emerson, 55. Also listed now are Doris Emerson (25), Donna Emerson (22), Eunice Emerson (14), and Harriet Emerson (13). Harry Emerson worked at a garage at 185 W. University Ave.

The records vary somewhat particularly about the birth year and ages of the residents. By 1940, the Emerson's had lived in the home for at least twenty years, raising four daughters and maintaining a job at a garage on University. It is no surprise, given the time, that the majority of the information is about Harry Emerson. The archaeological evidence however fills in some gaps about Charlotte and her daughters. Learning the names of the people who lived at the Levin Site brought about mixed feelings. It was exciting to learn the composition of the family, the father's occupation and origin. At the same time, the mystery of who lived there was solved. When presenting some of the preliminary results on the Levin Site, I had discussed with people who the woman could be who once owned the Pond's lipstick tubes found in the deposit. While the historical records may have solved the mystery of their identities, it only brought up even more lines of inquiry. Why did Harry from Superior, Wisconsin of Norwegian descent and his wife Charlotte move to the Hamline-Midway? Did his job at the University Garage provide the money to pay for all of the items that were found in the excavation and the renovations and additions to the house? Did Charlotte have a victory garden? Did they have a dog or a cat? Did they ever go to the Hamline Library, the church, or the State Fair Ground? The analysis of the collection addresses some of these questions sparked by the historical research provided by Anne Levin.

Summary of the Collection Contents

The Levin Collection includes the artifacts found in the one by one meter excavation unit (110 cm depth), as well as artifacts found in the backyard north of the unit by the Levin's. There are more than one thousand artifacts weighing a combined total of 28,419.57 g. The material types discussed in this analysis are glass, ceramics, faunal remains, and artifacts singled out as "personal objects." The glass bottles in this collection are utilized both for their ability to date the site and detail specific products the residents bought. The ceramics at the site supplement the glass bottle dating and are also indicators of consumer choice influenced by personal taste, value, and accessibility. The faunal remains link to a potentially four-legged family member and incite questions about how they adapted to the war. Artifacts singled out as "personal objects" have a particular ability to highlight both life on the home-front and individual consumer choice.

The majority of the collection is composed of glass. The next most common category of artifacts have a lower research potential and are primarily composed of burn residue and building material. This category of "other" includes large amounts of clinker, coke, ash, coal, charcoal, limestone, brick, concrete. One category that is significantly underrepresented are synthetics. In a modern day garbage sample, paper and plastics would have much more of a presence. There is a significant amount of metal in the collection. However, much of the metal is not easily identifiable due to deterioration in the moisture-rich soil. The metal from the Levin Site is one area that I would recommend if there were to be future research done on the site, especially if there were perhaps items related to the occupation of Harry Emerson.

The tables below detail the amounts (in grams) of the material types by level. The largest concentration of artifacts in the excavation unit were between twenty and forty centimeters and

	Glass	Man	Metal	Stone	Synthetic	Wood	Animal	Bone	Ceramic	Composite	Shell	TOTAL
00-10cm	34.5	0	185.07	0	0.76	7.07	0	60.92	1.32	377.2	0	666.84
10-20cm	72.3	14.4	621.7	0	0.5	26.6	0	2.1	3.8	940.5	0	1681.9
20-30cm	293.7	26.2	541.8	0	1	41.9	0	153	14.8	1363.9	0	2436.3
30-40cm	145.7	64.8	565.8	104.1	1.6	141.5	0	86.6	44.8	1385.7	0	2540.6
40-50cm	297.7	7.5	726.3	12.1	0.5	10.8	2.4	4.7	0.3	202.2	0	1264.5
50-60cm	183.8	45.6	440.9	0	0	186.5	0	1.2	3.1	93.2	0	954.3
60-70cm	17.4	28.4	247	0	0	180.6	0	0	16.5	75.7	0	565.6
70-80cm	14.9	22.2	25.1	130.4	0	261.8	0	0	4.9	106.8	0	566.1
80-90cm	55.3	2337.2	289.6	34.7	0	300.9	0	0	72.2	187.5	0	3277.4
90-100cm	4	38.8	35.6	10.7	0	18.4	0	0	35.03	63.7	0	206.23
100-110cm	0.9	1.7	12.2	32	0.1	0.8	0	0	0	0	0	47.7
PPO	477.45	0	286.6	0	0	0	0	0	789.31	0	0	1553.36
Levin Collected	5362.8	0	472.3	0	12.4	77.7	0	10	536.3	49.5	0	6521
Profile	88.4	0	377.4	0	0	0	0	0	16	0	0	481.8
Under Garden	4571.9	0	87.68	0	4.08	0	0	0	992.28	0	0	5655.94
TOTAL	11620.75	2586.8	4915.05	324	20.94	1254.57	2.4	318.52	2530.64	4845.9	0	

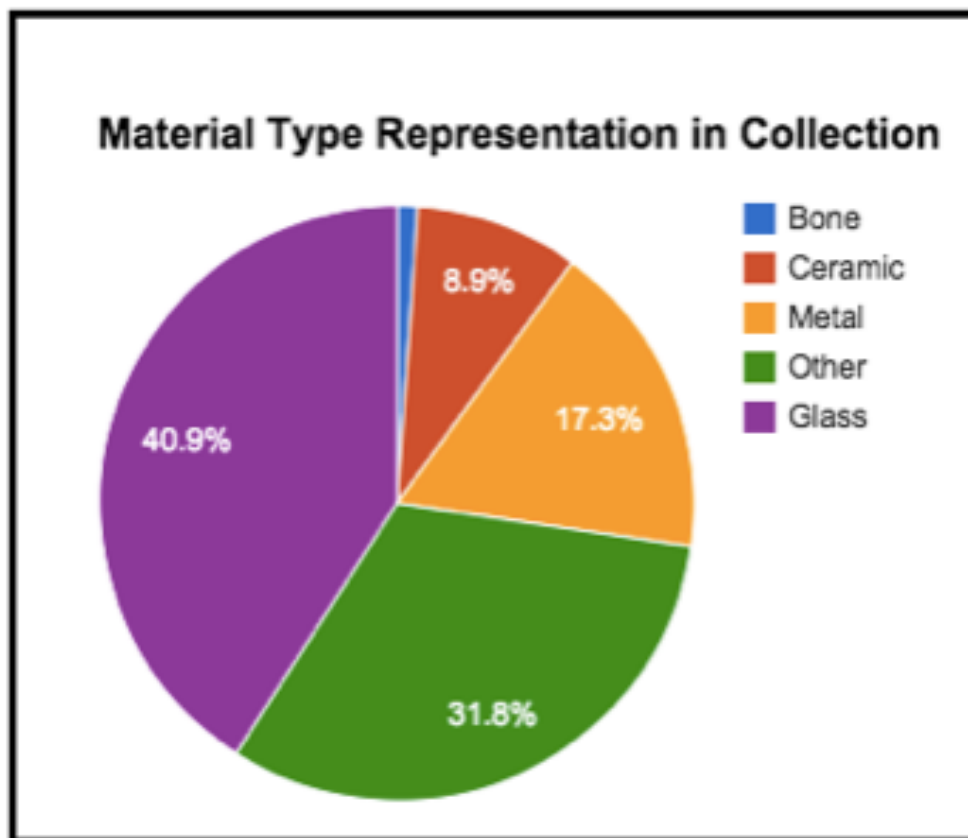


Table 2. Artifact Distribution by Material Type and Level in Weight (g)
Table 3. Grouped Material Type Representation in Collection

also peaked at eighty to ninety centimeters. A significant amount of the artifacts were found by the Levin family and under the garden. These two locations overlap because some of the items collected by the Levins were found under the garden. The vast majority of these items were the complete glass bottles in the collection. Their discovery is what sparked the interest in excavating in the yard. The variety of artifacts offers a relatively rich image of what products the previous residents purchased, consumed and eventually disposed.

Results of Artifact Analysis: Glass

The glass bottles in the Levin Collection are in many ways the foundation of the assemblage. There are six different discernible maker’s marks on the thirty-two complete bottles in the assemblage. A portion of the complete bottles are very small, all weighing less than 105 grams. The smaller bottles represent all of the six main bottle-making companies as well as, drene, an olive oil brand, and a brand that utilizes a cursive letter as their mark. The bottles were useful in dating the site and in determining the contents of their garbage deposit. While the analysis focuses primarily on the complete glass bottles, there is also a significant amount of broken glass sherds.

There are six eight-paneled bottles that appear to be catsup bottles. One of the six was made by the Hazel-Atlas Glass Company (“H over an A”) while the rest were produced by the Owens-Illinois Glass Company. The Hazel-Atlas bottle is slightly taller

Owens-Illinois (Duraglas)	6
Owens-Illinois	4
Hazel-Atlas	5
Pyrex	4
Ball	2
Knox Glass Company	2
Armstrong Cork Company	1
Drene	1
Olive Oil Patent	1
Cursive G/R/L	1
Other	5

Table 4. Companies Represented

than the Owens-Illinois catsup bottles. “The ‘H over a smaller A’ is probably the second most- commonly seen manufacturer’s mark on glass containers found in typical bottle dumps / trash deposits of the c.

1920-1960 period, behind the ubiquitous Owens-Illinois mark” (Whitten). The Heinz Co. is known to have used

Owens-Illinois glass for their ketchup.

The Owens-Illinois Glass Company

maker’s mark has a useful key to deter-

mining its production year and location. Tak-

en from Bill Lockhart’s article “The Dating

Game,” the table details the plant location key

for Owens-Illinois glass. The five Owens-Illi-

nois catsup bottles were made in Gas City,

Indiana. The “Duraglas” script indicates that

they were made after 1940. The number ‘2’

on the right of the Diamond I-O symbol indi-

cates that they were made most likely in

1942. Seven of the Owen’s Illinois bottles

were made in 1942. Most of the Owens-Illi-

nois bottles were produced in Gas City, Indi-

ana but there are also bottles from Fairmont,

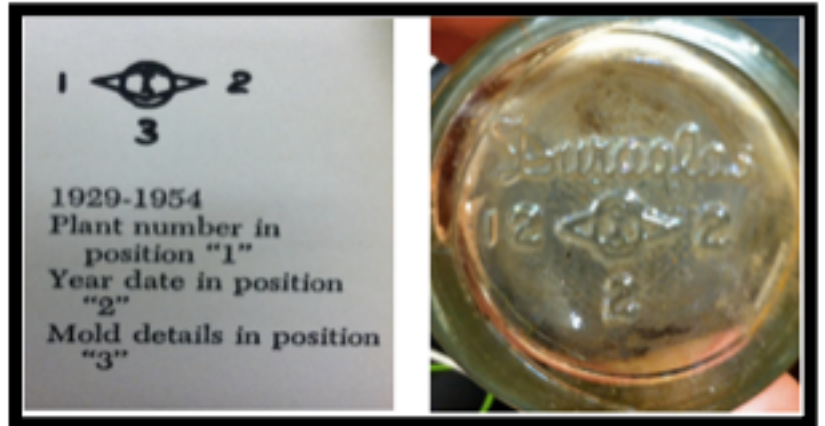


Figure 5. Dating Code and Levin Collection bottle

Plant Number	Plant Location	Dates of Operation
1	Toledo, Ohio	1930-1937
2	Fairmont, West Virginia	1930-present †
3	Huntington, West Virginia	1930-present †
4	Clarksburg, West Virginia	1930-1944
6	Charleston, West Virginia	1930-1963
7	Alton, Illinois	1930-present †
8	Glassboro, New Jersey	1930-1939
9	Streator, Illinois	1930-present †
10	Newark, Ohio	1930-1939
11	Evansville, Indiana	1930-1940
12	Gas City, Indiana	1930-present †
13	Chicago Heights, Illinois	1930-1940
14	Brigeton, New Jersey	1930-present †
15	Okmulgee, Oklahoma	1930-1940
16	Cincinnati, Ohio	1930-1932
17	Clarion, Pennsylvania	1932-present †
18	Columbus, Ohio	1932-1948
20	Backinridge, Pennsylvania	1932-1940
25	Terre Haute, Indiana	1934-1950
26	Muncie, Indiana	1936-1949

Table 5. Plant Number and Location (Lockhart)

West Virginia and Alton, Illinois.

There is one complete Hi-lex bleach bottle in the collection that was also made by the Owens-Illinois Glass Company. The bottle was made in 1941. The date code has a '1' with a period after it. "In the early 1940s, realizing that single digit date codes were repeating (e.g., "0" could be 1930 or 1940), caused the company to add a period after the single digit on some bottle types — primarily soda bottles (not beer bottles) — from about that time to the mid-1940s" (Whitten). Adding a period to the date code was used somewhat inconsistently so it is not an entirely reliable tool for dating.

The Armstrong Cork Company marked its glass with an A in a circle. Armstrong did not have a glass division until June of 1938 (Lockhart et al.). They are listed as having made in 1939, "prescriptions, patent, proprietary, vials, toilets, packers and preservers, beverages, liquors, specialties" (Lockhart et al.). Ball and the Knox Glass Company are also represented in the collection. Among the incomplete glass sherds there is at least one more Hi-Lex bleach bottle and Pyrex glass pan. There are also four 20 g Pyrex bottles of unknown use. Pyrex made heat resistant laboratory glass, given the small size the Pyrex bottles might have held medicines.

Stippling, a bumpy surface on the bottom of bottles, "Likely first appeared in 1940 on bottles produced by the Owens-Illinois Glass Company when they began using their proprietary 'Duraglas' bottle making process (Toulouse 1971)" (Whitten). The paneled catsup bottles in the collection made by the Owens-Illinois glass company have this stippling on the bottom. Other Owens-Illinois bottles also have stippling on the bottom, some of which could have held alcohol or sauces. The stippling adds extra grip to the bottom of bottles. After prohibition, from 1935 to the mid-1960s's machine-made liquor bottles were required to be embossed with a label that said, "Federal law forbids sale or reuse of this bottle" (Whitten). The Levin Collection does not

have any bottles with this label but that does not mean that there are not alcohol bottles in the assemblage. One unique bottle has embossed grapes on it and is marked by Midwest Wine. The Wisconsin Historical Society has an archive of taxation on alcoholic beverage companies. It details the Midwest Wine Co. Inc. as having existed from 1938 to 1940 (University of Wisconsin Digital Archives). Whether it existed before or after those years is unknown. It is difficult to verify if the bottle in the collection is this same company but it seems likely given the dates. It is interesting that the only positively identified alcohol bottle is a local wine. It is possible that the war time regulations, lack of imports, and post-Prohibition state of American vineyards caused them to have a more limited wine selection.

In sum, the bottles in the Levin Collection can be dated to the late 1930s to early 1940s. Exact dates exist for Owens-Illinois bottles dated to 1941 and 1942. The Armstrong Cork Co. and Midwest Wine Co. bottles would not have been produced before 1938. The latest date produced from the glass data is 1942. It is not possible to determine the exact contents of all of the complete bottles with absolute certainty. Unsurprisingly, the contents of the bottles in the collection are an assortment of items you might find in the side door of a refrigerator or a bathroom cabinet. There are for certain at least six catsup (sauce), one shampoo, one olive oil, one medicine (tall cylindrical bottle), and one alcohol bottle in the collection. An expanded estimate would be that about two-thirds of the bottles would have been found in the kitchen and the other one-third could be found in a medicine or bathroom cabinet. Overall, the glass bottles from the Levin Site show a variety of activities in a 1940s home. The sizes and often ornate shapes reveal a notable contrast to the plastic bottles found in our cabinets and refrigerators today.

Results of Artifact Analysis: Ceramic



Figure 6. Five Diamond Vase Mark on Levin sherds (left), Example ship mark from 1930s (center), Partial ship mark on Levin sherd (right) ("A Basic Guide to Dating Edwin M. Knowles China")

There are ninety ceramic artifacts in the Levin Collection. A little more than half of them were found in the excavation unit and the rest were found by the Levins or under the garden. Their distribution in the excavation unit is consistent with the overall collection, peaking at levels four and nine. Dating the ceramics was accomplished primarily by utilizing the maker's marks and secondarily by the ceramic type. The analysis of the ceramics artifacts was intended to complement the glass analysis. The ceramic data is consistent with the glass bottle dating analysis. Ceramics are generally expected to have earlier dates than glass in historic assemblages because they tend to be used for a longer amount of time before being disposed.

The most definitive dates were found on the ceramics produced by the Edwin M. Knowles China Co. The Edwin M. Knowles maker's mark include an image of either a ship or a vase. The ship image maker's mark was used only in the 1930s. "Made in USA" labeling was added after the 1930s ("A Basic Guide to Dating Edwin M. Knowles China"). However, the most reliable mark are the numbers below the symbol that indicate the year and month of production. Of the three Edwin M. Knowles China Co. marks one is of the ship used in the 1930s and ap-

pears to include the “MADE IN USA” text. The other two have the mark used in the 1940s of a vase with five central diamonds at the bottom crosshatching (earlier versions had six diamonds) and the “Made in USA” label. The most useful aspect of the two vase marks are the year and month marks. One mark says, “39-1” and the other “39-8,” indicating they were made in January and August of 1939. The image on the outside surface of the Edwin M. Knowles sherds is of a man in a sombrero looking out into the desert from his kitchen doorway. The sherds with this image vary from cups to bowls to plates. “The greater the diversity of function of matching sets found in archaeological contexts (e.g. tea wares and table-serving vessels), the more likely it is that the consumers owned or used a substantial portion of a crockery set” (Crook 2000: 23). Given the diversity of pieces, the past residents likely owned most if not all of this set.

Unfortunately, the only maker’s marks in the collection are the three Edwin M. Knowles marks. The most common sherd material by weight were terracotta flower pot sherds. Terracotta is a common material for flower pots due to its earthy-feel and porosity.



Figure 7. Levin Collection Edwin M. Knowles Cup

However, terracotta is prone to breakage in cold winters which is perhaps why it was found in such large amounts in the backyard. The most common in individual quantity were whiteware sherds which also produced the most variety. The most distinctive whiteware sherds had a glossy orange band on the rim with three sherds

having a floral image between the band of orange. There were thirteen sherds with this pattern. Another common sherd had a scaly/crackled body which was in generally poor condition with more spalling than other sherd types. The Edwin M. Knowles, orange rimmed, and crackled body sherd patterns were the three most common sherd pattern types. Other than these types other patterns were represented by only a single or few sherds. Edwin M. Knowles and terracotta sherds were found both in the unit and under the garden or collected by the Levin's. The appearance of the same sherd types in both the unit and the garden suggest that it is plausible to treat the entire backyard as a single site. The ceramic sherds date the site to after 1939 which is consistent with the glass bottle mark data.

The Levin Collection ceramics represent a variety of wares with at least two "sets" of tableware present. The range of quality of the ceramics also varies. There appears to be a positive correlation between "lower quality" ceramics and higher representation in the assemblage. This could mean that the previous residents likely had at few "everyday" tableware sets. Their more frequent use would have led to a higher frequency of breakage.

Results of Artifact Analysis: Faunal Analysis

The faunal remains at the Levin Site comprise only one percent by weight of the Levin Collection. Despite their limited representation, they inspired some intriguing questions about life at 1473 Van Buren. The data used to interpret the faunal remains included their taxonomy, element, and modifications. The majority of identifiable bone represented was mammal. The larger representatives were identifiable as bovid (cow). There is also an avian long bone within the size range of a chicken. This analysis will primarily discuss the larger samples that have distinctive modifications as a result of human and animal activity.

One key feature on the larger remains were the saw/cut marks. One hypothesis that was proposed was that the cuts were a result of amateur butchery practices. Meat rationing was in



Figure 8. Ads for canned (1940) and packaged (1949) dog food (Reminisce)

place during the Second World War. It was hypothesized that perhaps they were getting their meat from a black market butcher who offered less common or scrap cuts of meat to supplement the meat rations. The lack of chicken bones is not uncommon for the time period since chicken

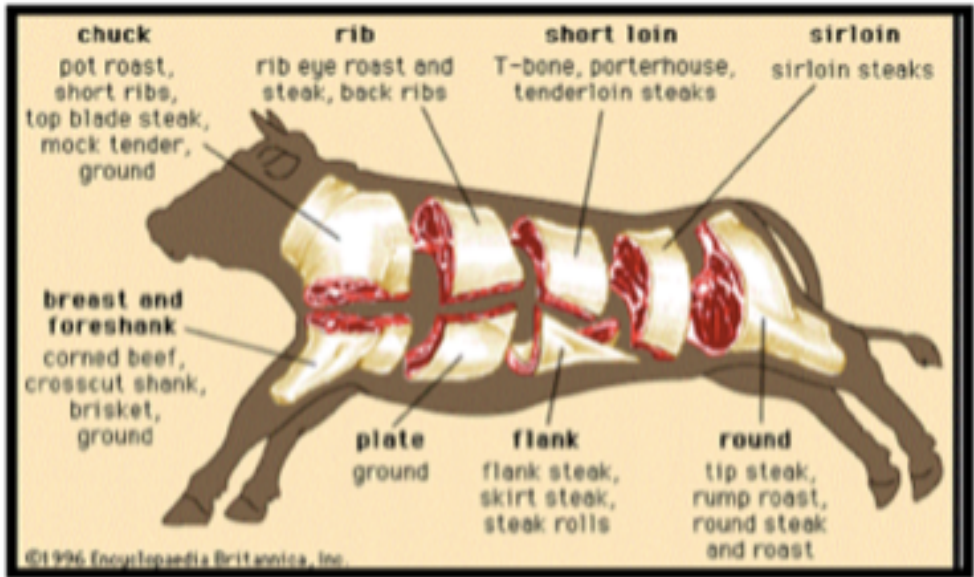
was more expensive in the 1940s than it is today. Another possibility was considered after looking closer at the gnawing/chewing on the bones. After discussing with Brian Hoffman and David Mather, it was suggested that these bones were purposed for animal or pet consumption. The puncturing on the bones are more consistent with a carnivorous animal, as opposed to the types of marks left by a rodent. Similar, if not the exact, cut of bone can be found in major pet stores today. It was not until after the 1930s when pet food became its own product and the family dog no longer shared in the family groceries (Reminisce 2015). Dogs and even more so, pigs were used to eat the “wet” garbage that was thrown out onto the street before landfills became popular in the United States (Kelly 1973). Canned dog food was one of the first incarnations of food made specifically for the family pet. Pet food, in pellet form, was a result of the increased use of factory assembly lines. Dogs have a long history of cohabitation with humans. It is a convincing possibility that the people that lived at the Levin Site spent some of their income on a four-legged family member.

The pet hypothesis is relevant to the consumption framework for a multitude of reasons. The family pet is not just another uncovered resident of 1473 Van Buren, it is another step in the consumption of the items bought and brought into their home. Maybe they were buying odd cuts from the butcher for themselves and then giving the animal the scraps. They could have been buying large cuts of meat and then cutting it themselves at home. Odd cuts of meet might have been preferred over canned or pellet dog food during the war due to cost or availability. The story of this animal, whether it was a family pet or a stray, is just one example of the storytelling that archaeology is able to access through scientific methods.

The burning on the faunal remains provide some information about how the garbage was disposed. The faunal artifacts that exhibit signs of burning are primarily found between levels three and four (20-40cm), with the only other instances being found in level six (50-60cm) and one partially burned faunal bone in level two (10-20cm). There were no faunal remains found below sixty centimeters and a significant majority were found between twenty and forty centimeters. The faunal remains were divided into three analysis categories (A, B, C) based on their size and research potential. All categories were capable of showing evidence of burning. The faunal remains in category A were bones that could be identified by taxonomy and element. Category B was highly fragmented but were large enough to identify evidence of modification (chewing/gnawing and cutting). Category C faunal remains were extremely fragmented and were only useful in identifying signs of burning. Though it should be noted that I value the research potential of highly fragmented bone to reveal signs of food processing, it was outside of the scope of this project. Further research could be done to look for digestive marks or soup processing.

Of the thirteen bones in Analysis B, six were burned, two were cut, and two had evidence of carnivore gnawing/chewing. Of the forty-five fragments of bone in category C, only six had evidence of burning. The burned remains in B were in levels two, four, and six. In category C, the burned remains were found in levels three and four. The only bone with evidence of burning from category A, came from level four. Burning was found in all levels that faunal remains were found except for level one (0-10cm). This seems to indicate that the faunal remains were not completely burned and were located more on the surface of the garbage deposit. This could mean that the chewing/gnawing happened either after the garbage was disposed or after it was burned for the first time. It would also be interesting to learn more about how grease or residual meat on

bones affects how they are burned. The Levin faunal remains that survived burning are mostly only partially burned. It is possible there was more bone but that it was burned away.



Lvl	Cat. #	Weight	Taxon	Element	Region	Side	Part	Cut of Meat
1	354	59.6	Bovid	Femur	Hindlimb	R	Distal End	Foreshank
3	234	10.4	Bovid	Rib	Axial	X	Proximal Shaft	Rib
3	357	10.7	Bovid	Innominate	Hindlimb	X	Pubis Fragment	Rump
4	359	58.8	Bovid	Innominate	Hindlimb	X	ischium Fragment	Rump
3	264	133.4	Bovid	Innominate	Hindlimb	L	Acetabulum +Ischial & Pubis Frag.	Rump

Figure 9. Meat Cuts by Location ("Meat Processing")
Table 6. Group A Levin Faunal Remains Data

Personal Objects

There are a few artifacts in the Levin Collection that are connected directly to advertisements and local histories from the '40s. They are the objects that stand out in the collection as having "said something" about their owners.

To admit some bias, I find the lipstick tubes to be the most intriguing artifacts in the Levin Collection. They interacted the most intimately with their owner[s]. They represent a distinct personal choice and a direct link to advertisements of the time. Before learning the identities of the residents, they were the evidence that at least one woman lived at 1473 Van Buren. And after learning their names, the quantity of lipstick brings up new questions about how they lived and what they did in the neighborhood. Did all of the women that lived there use lipstick or was it only Charlotte Emerson? When did Doris, Donna, Eunice, or Harriet begin to purchase this distinctly feminine artifact? There are three lipstick tubes in the Levin Collection



Figure 10. Levin Collection lipstick (right), Post-1941 Pond's "Beau Bait" advertisement (left) ("Beauty Bait During Wartime")

(Levin 104, 188, and 199). Of the three, one has "Pond's Lips" written on the case. Pond's launched their Lips lipstick in 1940 ("Pond's Extract Company").

Besides the lipstick, there are two examples of milk glass hand cream bottles. One is quite melted but another is complete with a visible screw top. There are no indications of a brand. Since there are few resources for mid twentieth century artifacts, one of the best resources are antique collectors. The bottle in the Levin Collection most closely resembles a Barrington's hand cream container. If it is indeed hand cream, it brings up the question of how and who in the



Figure 11. Barrington's Hand Cream jar sold online (left), Levin Collection milk-glass jar (right)

Emerson family used it. Did Charlotte use it after working in a “victory garden” or handling the bleach used to do laundry? Did Harry use it after working at the garage?

Another artifact that stands out are the Hi-lex bleach bottles. Hi-lex was founded in Minnesota by Asa Eldredge, a medic in World War I. He was looking for a way to sterilize bandages.¹ In 1939, the company owners “had 10+/- gnomes constructed of chicken wire frames and were covered with paper mache to look like drops of bleach” (“Troop 13 History”). They appeared for the first time in the 1940 Winter Carnival Parade. Boy Scout Troop 13 now owns

¹ This information was found in a quote on a blog (“The Bleat”) and is repeated in other sources without reference to an original source



Figure 12. MN Boy Scout Troop 13 Hi-Lex Gnomes ("Troop 13 History")

the gnomes after the Hi-Lex company was sold to a new owner. Other bleach companies were around at the time but the Emerson's obviously bought a local product.

Also in the collection is a pink Depression glass goblet. Depression glass was relatively cheaply made and sometimes "given away at carnivals or fairs" (Whitten). Today, Depression glass is highly collectible. Since there is only one representative of this type of glass it causes me to wonder if one of the Emerson's won the sherbet cup at the State Fair considering their close proximity to the grounds.

The bottles in the collection are each individual mysteries in themselves. However, the *drene* shampoo bottle provides some particular insights about how people lived then compared to now. The *drene* shampoo bottle is about the same size as a modern hotel shampoo bottle. The 1937 advertisement for Drene states "Only half a tablespoonful for a perfect shampoo" and encourages consumers to "Buy the large size. It costs less per shampoo." Half a tablespoon is .25 fluid ounces. In a 50 milliliter bottle (about modern hotel shampoo size), using half a tablespoon



Figure 13. 1937 Drene Shampoo Ad (Lenssen)

each time, it would take about six to seven washes to finish the bottle. This would certainly be a sufficient supply for someone who washed their hair less frequently. It seems plausible that they would not have wanted to wash their hair as often because it likely took much longer to dry their hair without the powerful hair dryers of today. And I can personally attest to the discomfort of wet hair during a Minnesota winter. Even if they washed their hair once a week, the *drene* shampoo bottle would have supplied one person for more than a month (if they followed the advertiser's suggestion).

CHAPTER IV: DISCUSSION

Garbage, Gardens, and Girls

From the way food was packaged to reinventions of everyday items to be disposable (pens, cups, razors, etc.), the 1940s to 1960s brought about monumental changes that had a direct effect on the quantity of garbage, its subsequent disposal methods and government regulations. The way(s) that garbage was disposed at the Levin site can provide insights about the relationship people had with the items they bought and the remnants of their use. The residents at the Levin site could have used a variety of methods of disposal. The options they chose concerning where they placed their garbage and how they reduced its volume are a reflection of their con-

sumption patterns. Consumption is not simply the production, purchasing and use of products. It is the responsibility of the consumer to dispose of the products they purchase. Therefore, consumption encompasses the entire life history of an object, including its disposal and decomposition.

During the time when the artifacts in the Levin collection were deposited, there was an intersection of methods by which people were disposing of their garbage. Regional trends in garbage disposal narrow down the range of options to be considered for how the Levin occupants likely took out their trash. A local or neighborhood dump became a common solution to garbage disposal in the early 1900s. In the United States, landfilling became the primary disposal method of municipal solid waste by the 1950s (Lerner 2008). It was Benjamin Franklin who “established the first systematic garbage pickup service for Philadelphia” (Kelly 1973: 23). Big cities had more urgent reasons (rodents and odor) to implement such services than suburban and rural areas. Another form of disposal at the time was burning, incinerators were introduced to the United States by 1885 (Kelly 1973). Hauling away garbage to landfills and incinerating it were the cities solutions to an exploding garbage problem. Burning garbage in the yard was a way to reduce it. Even in urban areas, laws prohibiting households from burning garbage were not enacted in Minnesota until the 1980s (MN Pollution Control Agency). And archaeological evidence of artifacts from the Elliot Park project in Minneapolis suggested that, “The practice of burying trash continued after it was prohibited by city codes” (Bakken 2007: 5). This array of options (burning, burying, hauling, and landfilling) are all considered in determining what the past inhabitants of the Levin Site did with the remnants of the products they consumed.

The archaeological evidence at the Levin Site strongly suggests that burning their garbage was part of their disposal practices. The evidence for this collection as having come

from a burn deposit can be seen in the artifact collection and the distribution of burn residue in the unit. The concentration of artifacts at the excavation unit suggests that the previous owners possibly burned their garbage in a container. The most compelling evidence for the use of a burn barrel is the large quantity of burn residue. One-fifth of the entire collection consists of artifacts in the material types “composite” and “wood” (charcoal, coal, coke, ash, clinker, conglomerates), artifact categories that are frequently present as a result of burning. The total depth of the one meter by one meter excavation unit at the Levin Site was 110 centimeters. The highest concentration of artifacts that are considered burn residue (charcoal, coal, coke, ash, clinker) are found between 70 and 90 centimeters. This is consistent with a hypothesis that the burning was done in a barrel, as most of the burn residue would be at the bottom of the barrel. Any artifacts below this level could be explained as having been previously below the bottom of the barrel or more likely, shifted there after the barrel deteriorated.

Anne Levin, the present resident of 1473 Van Buren, stated that they have consistently found subsurface garbage throughout their backyard. The widespread presence of garbage throughout the yard could have resulted as a combination of debris from the burning (dispersed by the wind or animals) and the practice of burying garbage. Part of the collection is a significant quantity of whole bottles that the Levin’s previously collected outside of the excavation unit area north of the unit along the fence line. The completeness of the bottles could be because burying was, at least at one point in time, part of their disposal process. It seems likely, given the amount of artifacts, that burning and burying was not their only method of disposal. The production dates of the glass bottles hint that the artifacts were deposited over a relatively short period of time.

The methods of disposal are an important insight into the consumption of the family that occupied 1473 Van Buren in the mid-twentieth century. The increase in disposable items and the

availability of a larger range and quantity of products had a direct effect on how they chose to dispose of their garbage. It seems the Levin site captures a point of transition. The complexity of artifacts throughout the site and the presence of a burn barrel suggest a time when there was an increasing amount of waste and a demand for new ideas about what to do with all of it. The generation of Hamline-Midway residents that the Levin site represents had to reevaluate their relationship with their garbage. The decisions they made then directed our present day disposal methods that continue to evolve in tandem with our consumption patterns.

The Garbage Project at the University of Arizona is the premiere example of garbage archaeology. The project concerns itself with garbage on a large scale to be able to discern broader patterns of behavior. Their research began with garbage in Tucson neighborhoods and then expanded to landfills. William Rathje and Cullen Murphy's book *Rubbish! The Archaeology of Garbage*, begins by detailing the process of excavating at the Fresh Kills landfill in Staten Island, New York. Research in landfills though was a later development of the Garbage Project, the foundation of the project was comparing fresh garbage that could be linked to specific neighborhoods to census data. This work highlighted a disparity in how people reported what they bought and what they actually purchased and used (1993). The Levin Site addresses this question on a much smaller scale.

The disposal methods at the Levin Site should encourage us to think about our own relationship with our garbage. Our garbage is tucked away under our kitchen sinks and then brought out to the edge of our homes to be taken away to a location we probably have never visited ourselves. We barely interact with it and we likely never see its full contents. Does having our trash (and recycling) hauled away from our homes increase the amount of products we consume? Would having to burn and bury our garbage in our yards make us more likely to buy less or reuse

more? If so, would companies be forced to rethink how they package their products? What would be the environmental repercussions of reinstating the practice of burning garbage? How much time or effort are we willing to put into separating our recycling or compost? Would people be less interested in living in densely populated areas if their neighbors were burning their trash? How would it be different for people that live in apartments? Another aspect of our garbage that we rarely consider is that we are responsible for more than just what we throw away. “Most ordinary household waste consists of material that has somehow been processed, and waste is generated at every transformative stage” (Rathje and Murphy 1993: 39). That waste is absorbed by the communities and countries that host the farms and factories that fuel our consumption. These are all questions and factors that should be considered as we continue to trend towards finding global sustainable solutions for our environment.

The most notable difference between the archival research and artifact analysis is the lack of detail about the women of 1473 in the historical record and their overwhelming presence in the archaeological record. The role of consumer was in many ways a female occupation. Advertisements for products and by the government frequently featured women and often addressed women directly. Considering that the household was composed of five women (Doris, Donna, Eunice, Harriet, Charlotte) and one man (Harry), there is a noticeable female presence in the assemblage. Not only does this presence open up a discussion on gender in consumerism but it is also connected to the topics of race and class in consumer archaeology. “The construction of an emerging US mass identity (or an “imagined” identity) was channeled through a very narrow concept of femininity that emphasized class and race distinctions” (Sutton: 6). This identity, imagined or real, was directed by advertisements affect on consumer choices.

The female copywriters at the J. Walter Thompson advertising agency were one of the first women's editorial departments. Female copywriters in the beginning of the twentieth century defined "ideal beauty" through their work. It was a novel idea at the time to allow women into the advertising business because it was thought that women could answer the mystery of "what do women want?" and would be more effective at advertising to people of their own gender. The lipstick and white ceramic jar in the Levin collection stand out as distinctly feminine artifacts. The advertisements connected to these artifacts hint at the values of their consumers and possibly even more so, the values of the advertisers. Consumers that bought the products that advertised the chosen attributes that equate with beauty they literally "bought" into the values promoted in the ads. Advertising in the beginning of the twentieth century, and arguably still today, promoted an ideal consumer -- white and wealthy. "The Women's Editorial Department staff took Pond's from a 'utility and cost' market strategy to positioning facial cream as an intimate psychological need -- a product enhancing personal feminine beauty" (Sutton: 69). The problem with the female copywriters at the J. Walter Thompson advertising agency was that they did not represent all women, they represented wealthy white women in the work force.

"Mona Domosh shows that 'for much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, American foreign and economic policy was geared not toward the establishment of formal colonies, but toward the expansion of markets" (Sutton: 9). The archaeological record cannot determine the ethnicity of Charlotte Emerson but the historical record indicates Harry as having come from Norwegian immigrants. Were Charlotte and her daughters the ideal consumers of Pond's lipstick imagined by copywriters? While they were most likely white (though that is not for certain), it is more difficult to determine if they were wealthy. They appear to have been able to afford a home even through the Depression. The ceramics in the collection indicate that they did have matching

sets but also a variety of other patterns represented by only one or two samples. Maybe only the cheaply made ceramics were broken or thrown away. The variety could actually indicate wealth since they could “afford” to buy multiple different sets. The glass bottles reveal that they bought sauces, alcoholic beverages, medicine, and cosmetics. All of these items could be considered non-essentials. However, the size of the bottles is perplexing. Why would anyone buy such a small shampoo bottle in a house of six people? The advertisement for the shampoo promotes buying the large size for a better value. Did they choose to buy the smaller size more frequently rather than buy the larger size for a higher price but less often?

Another question that remains unanswered about Charlotte is whether or not she had an occupation since it is not listed in the historical record. “By 1950 25 percent of American wives worked outside the home; by 1960 the number had risen to 40 percent” (Derks 1994: 283). It seems somewhat unlikely given the location and time but perhaps she had a way of supplementing their income. Though, it might not have been necessary if Harry’s job produced enough in-



Figure 14. Posters to Support the War through Consumer Choices (“World War II on the Home Front: Rationing”)

come, he appears to have kept the same job for the duration of their time in the home. Charlotte's contribution to the financial state of the family might have been connected to budgeting and purchasing the products brought into their home. Donica Belisle in "Conservative Consumerism: Consumer Advocacy in *Woman's Century Magazine* During and After World War I" states studies demonstrated that, "between 1920 and 1960 women often organized around consumer issues" and "Canada's activist housewives sought to make high-quality consumer items accessible to cost-conscious women" (2014: 112). Unfortunately, again this often connected to the idea that, "lower class" and immigrant women were equated with being wasteful or ignorant of how to be a good consumer (2014). In this sentiment, it seems good citizenship was tied to being a good consumer.

Today, Americans do not feel such direct impacts on their domestic life from foreign wars. This might make life more comfortable but reduces our awareness of our presence abroad and the consequences of war are often not felt at home by citizens unconnected with the military. Supporting troops by purchasing and displaying a plastic bumper sticker is very different from supporting them by eating less meat. These choices are also linked with consumer choice and perceived identity. It also reveals how connected and responsible people feel towards their community. On the other hand, did average citizens really need to "do with less" to benefit the war effort? "With meat rationing in effect for civilians during World War II, the per capita consumption of meat in the Army and Navy was about two and a half times that of the average civilian. Russell Baker observed that World War II began a 'beef madness... when richly fatted beef was force fed into every putative American warrior' (Adams 1990: 55-56).

Women's contribution to war was connected to consumption. To demonstrate their support Canadian women "campaigns for military recruits, put together soldiers' care packages,

held fundraisers, publicized government messages, and mobilized women’s consumer responsibilities” (Belisle 2014: 117). After America entered the first world war, the Food Administration was created and Woodrow Wilson urged women to demonstrate their citizenship by planting and canning their own vegetables (Belisle 2014). Did the products the residents of 1473 Van Buren purchased -- Pond's lipstick, Hi-lex bleach, Midwest Wine -- fit them into this category of “ideal consumers”? It seems very possible. But were they good citizens that followed rationing regulations and purchased American-made products? Did the son of Norwegian immigrants achieve the “American dream” working at the garage on University, owning a home in the Midway, and providing for four daughters and his wife? Did Charlotte have a victory garden during the war? The history of food-producing plants in the Levin backyard hints at the potential for a “victory garden” during World War II. The hi-lex bleach bottles, U.S.A.-made ceramics, and local wine indicate that the previous residents might have preferred to buy local and American. On the other hand, they might not have had the option to buy as many imported goods during the Second World War. Given the contents of their garbage, it is easy to imagine the Emerson's as having been the ideal image of patriotic consumer practice. However, it is difficult to determine how much of their consumption was an active construction of identity and how much of it



Figure 15. World War II Poster for Meat Rationing (“World War II on the Home Front: Rationing”)

was due to other factors like accessibility/convenience, brand recognition, or affordability.

To provide a final snapshot of a potential evening of patriotic consumption at 1473 Van Buren: imagine Charlotte Emerson as having put on her red “Beau Bait” lipstick after washing her hair with half a tablespoonful of Drene shampoo. Then maybe while her hair was drying she picked some vegetables from her victory garden to add to a meal with a cut of meat she bought with rations from the neighborhood butcher. She might have placed the meal on the Edwin M. Knowles plates and grabbed a bottle (or six!— one for everyone) of catsup from the cupboard to put on the table. Once Harry was home from working at the garage on University Ave, all six of them might have sat down for dinner. At dinner, Harriet could have announced that she wasn’t feeling well and needed some medicine. So then, Donna, as the older sibling, would have gone upstairs and grabbed the near empty cylindrical medicine bottle for her younger sister. While she was up there she grabbed her own lipstick and put on some perfume because she was going to meet up with some friends at the Hamline library later. Meanwhile, Harry and Charlotte decided to pour a glass of Midwest Wine to have with their meal. Afterwards, as they were cleaning up, one of the dishes might have broken. Eunice or Doris would have swept up the broken pieces and taken the odd scraps of meat out to the backyard to the burn pit. And then, their family dog might have rummaged through the garbage to gnaw on the bones of that evening’s meal. Decades later, a group of Hamline University students would dig up these mundane items of their daily life.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

The Levin Collection has the potential to produce more information about the residents of 1473 Van Buren. The metal in the assemblage could reveal more about how they used the backyard and it would be interesting to see if Harry Emerson brought his work home with at all.

However, I think the Levin Collection would best serve as a comparison for future excavations. The 830 Simpson Avenue excavation produced artifacts from the late 18th and early nineteenth century. Comparing the Levin site and 830 Simpson Avenue with future backyard or campus excavations could result in a useful timeline of historic artifacts in the neighborhood. Incorporating more oral history into the project would also be highly beneficial in identifying artifacts, particularly artifacts that are only components or pieces of larger objects. There are many artifacts in the Levin assemblage and in other Excavating Hamline History excavations that are both aesthetically pleasing and tell unique stories about the local area. These objects could easily be used in a traveling or stationary exhibit on campus or in the neighborhood. This has been done before with the Hamline Methodist Church artifacts. Sharing the results of these excavations with the public is as important as inviting neighbors and students to the open dig weekends.

The Levin Collections place in the Excavating Hamline History Project could be used as a transitional site between the past and present. It represents a point in time that is often not viewed as archaeologically important and as a result has very little available reference material. What it can contribute besides being a contrast to other historical sites, is to be a contrast to present day garbage deposits. I believe placing the 1940s Levin materials side by side with twenty-first century garbage would bring to light how the changes that occurred in the mid-twentieth century affected the future. Often it seems, when ideas are recycled or reformed we use the past to give them legitimacy. Thinking that the way people did things in the past was best is often a false romanticization. However, learning from the garbage of the past and present could produce new ideas about how to reform packaging, disposal methods, or even the proportion of different types of food that we eat.

Besides making the collection materials more accessible to the public and available for comparison for future excavations, my hope for the Levin Site is that it has an impact on the sense of history and community in the Hamline-Midway neighborhood. Digging up your neighbors trash decades later might be an odd way to get to know them but I think it is an effective way of creating a sense of place. The snapshot of the lives of the Emerson family in the 1940s that the Levin Site provides connects them to this neighborhood. The path Harry took to work on University Ave, the conversations Charlotte might have had over the fence to her neighbors as she harvested her victory garden, the games their daughters played in the parks are not confined to a single home. Their memories are imprinted all over the neighborhood and intersect with the paths students, professors, and neighborhood residents walk today to class, to the park with their dog, or to the local coffee shop or restaurant. As more people choose to live in urban areas rather than rural, among all of the change and development it is important to keep in mind the history of not just the buildings but also the people that lived and learned there before us.

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