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# SHOREHAVEN PROJECT

## PHASE 1A ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

CEQR 87-010X



**PHASE IA ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT REPORT**

**on the**

**SHOREHAVEN PROJECT, THE BRONX, NEW YORK**

**CEQR 87 - 010X**

**FOR: Soundview Associates**  
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Introduction .....	1
II.	Archaeological Research Design .....	3
III.	Environmental Setting .....	5
IV.	The Prehistoric Period .....	7
V.	The Historic Period .....	18
VI.	Recommendations .....	32
VII.	References .....	34
	Figures .....	39
	Photographs Taken in 1986 .....	93
	Appendix 1 N.Y. State Site File Reports .....	104
	Appendix 2 Excerpt from PANYC Newsletter .....	108

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1:	U.S.G.S. Map, Flushing Quadrangle Showing Project Area	Page 39
Figure 2:	Map Showing Shorehaven Site Area	Page 40
Figure 3:	Bedrock Map	Page 41
Figure 4:	Landfill Map of New York City	Page 42
Figure 5:	Sequence of Projectile Point Types in Connecticut	Page 43
Figure 6:	Sequence of Pottery Types in Connecticut	Page 44
Figure 7:	Chart Describing Prehistory of Connecticut's Native Americans	Page 45
Figure 8:	Historic Map of Clason Point Vicinity	Page 46
Figure 9:	Map Showing Indian Trails	Page 47
Figure 10:	Sequence of Indian Cultures of Coastal New York	Page 48
Figure 11:	1918 Photo of Sound View Ave. Site	Page 49
Figure 12:	1918 Photo of Artifacts from Clasons Point	Page 50
Figure 13:	1918 Photo of Artifact from Clasons Point	Page 51
Figure 14:	1918 Photo of Artifacts from Clasons Point	Page 52
Figure 15:	1918 Photo of Artifacts from Clasons Point	Page 53
Figure 16:	Drawing of Indian Site at Clasons Point	Page 54
Figure 17:	Map of Bronx Showing Native American Activity Areas	Page 55
Figure 18:	Bolton's Map of Sites	Page 56
Figure 19:	Map Showing Approximate Loci of Aboriginal Sites in Study Area	Page 57
Figure 20:	Shorehaven Project Area Map	Page 58
Figure 21:	Map of the Borough at the End of the Dutch Period	Page 59

Figure 22:	Map of Bronx Neck, Patent of 1676	Page 60
Figure 23:	View of "The Black Rock" on Cornell's Neck	Page 61
Figure 24:	Old View of the Mouth of Pugsley's Creek	Page 62
Figure 25:	1922 Aerial Photo of Clason Military Academy	Page 63
Figure 26:	Map of Clason's Point in 1838 from The Bronx Conveyance Records	Page 64
Figure 27:	Map of the Township of Westchester, 1867	Page 65
Figure 28:	Property Map 480 - Clason's Point in 1868	Page 66
Figure 29:	U.S.G.S. Map of Bay and Harbor of New York, 1874	Page 67
Figure 30:	U.S.G.S. Map of East River from Lawrence's Point to Throg's Neck, New York, 1888	Page 68
Figure 31:	Bronx Borough Topographic Bureau Map Showing Streets, Avenues, etc.	Page 69
Figure 32:	Portion of 1905 Bromley Showing Project Area	Page 70
Figure 33:	Illustrations from Comfort's HISTORY OF THE BRONX	Page 71
Figure 34:	Photo labeled by Bronx Hist. Soc. as "Probably from the Cornell Masion Now Site of Shorehaven Beach Club, Late 1890s"	Page 72
Figure 35:	Portion of 1900 Map of Bronx by Colton	Page 73
Figure 36:	Copy of Historic Plaque on Clason Point Inn	Page 74
Figure 37:	Old Photos of Higgs' Mansion	Page 75
Figure 38:	Old Photo-Ad for Higgs Camp Ground	Page 76
Figure 39:	Old Photo of Higgs Pavilion	Page 77
Figure 40:	Aerial Photo of Clason's Point	Page 78
Figure 41:	Old Photo of Historic Inn	Page 79
Figure 42:	Portion of 1913 Bromley ATLAS Showing Project Area	Page 80
Figure 43:	Portion of 1927 Bromley ATLAS Showing Project Area	Page 81

Figure 44:	Copy of Old Postcard Showing Clason Point Park	Page 82
Figure 45:	Letterhead from Clason Point Park Stationery	Page 83
Figure 46:	1911 Advertisement for Gilligan's Casino	Page 84
Figure 47:	1909 Postcards of Clason Point Park	Page 85
Figure 48:	Old Postcard Showing Entrance to Clason Point Park	Page 86
Figure 49:	Old Photo of Pool at Clason Point Park	Page 87
Figure 50:	Old Photo of Kane's Park	Page 88
Figure 51:	1910 Advertisement for Clason Point Park	Page 89
Figure 52:	Aerial Photo of Clason's Point c.1945	Page 90
Figure 53:	1931 Advertisement for Clason Point Park	Page 91

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. Project Description

Soundview Associates proposes to develop a large scale middle income housing complex on a roughly triangular-shaped property on Clason's Point in The Bronx. This proposal is referred to as the Shorehaven Project. This parcel is bounded on the southeast by the East River, on the west, in part, by Bolton Avenue, on the north, in part, by Sound View Avenue and Cornell Avenue, and on the east by Betts Street. (See Figures 1 and 2). This proposed development will include approximately 1,200 residential units (three- and four-story townhouse clusters), a neighborhood convenience center, a public waterfront walkway, a forty foot wide view corridor, eighteen acres of landscaped open space, and a community/day care center. Two small publicly owned parcels of undeveloped land, on the eastern and western edges of the project site, are to be improved by the developer as a part of the proposed action. Two new sewer easements and a storm sewer easement will be created for this development. A number of discretionary approvals are required by the City since this large scale development will necessitate various permits, a zoning change, and several mapping and de-mapping actions.

This report presents the results of a Phase IA archaeological assessment survey of both the project site and the secondary impact zone (study area) of the proposed Soundview Associates' Shorehaven Project development. The purpose of this survey, which was conducted by Historical Perspectives of Riverside, Connecticut, was to evaluate the archaeological sensitivity potential for the project site and the study area; that is, to locate or determine the possible existence of prehistoric or historic sites and cultural remains within the project and study areas that might be affected by the proposed construction of the residential complex, and to recommend appropriate measures with respect to such sites if they exist.

Archaeological remains are vital and irreplaceable resources for future research and for an objective approach to cultural interpretation of any community or region. Historical or prehistoric sites represent the tangible remains of past ways of life, the study of which can provide us with a better understanding of human culture in this area of The Bronx. This archaeological assessment is a contribution to such better understanding in its attempt to locate, record, and preserve the vestiges of our historic past.

## B. Study Area

The project site is situated on the East River in the southeastern section of The Bronx and roughly corresponds to that property known as to as the Shorehaven Beach Club. The Club facilities, which include both men's and women's changing rooms, an entrance arcade, swimming and wading pools, single-story locker sheds, picnic areas, a baseball field, and racquetball, handball, and tennis courts, are located on the largest parcel in the project area (Block Numbers: 3432, 3434, and portions of 3435 and 3436). The proposed development does not include the privately held home lots at the northern tip of Block 3432. The main club property, which is enclosed by a chain link fence and bounded by Sound View Avenue, White Plains Road, the East River, and the New York City Department of Parks property at the tip of Clason's Point, is not bisected by any public streets. The majority of the southern half of this parcel is used for passive recreation. (See Photographs 8 - 10, 12, and 14)

The remainder of the project area is comprised of parcels of cleared land that have been used in large part in recent years for vehicular parking for the Shorehaven Beach Club membership. The eastern section of Block 3430, which is bounded by Bronx River Avenue, White Plains Road, and the East River, is also presently the site of illegally dumped household trash and abandoned automobiles. Blocks 3443 and 3455 are slightly elevated, cleared parcels that have been used in the recent past as home lots, ball fields, and an air strip. The triangular parcel to the east of Sound View Avenue and south of Cornell Avenue (the southern part of Block 3436 and Block 3437) is covered with phragmite growth, maple trees, and what appears to be an accumulation of household and commercial debris. Very small portions of Blocks 3445 and 3446 - most of the vacant lots that front on Sound View Avenue - are to be incorporated into the proposed development. (See Photographs 2 and 7) In addition, a 3.6-acre parcel of undeveloped land owned by the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, to the north of Clason's Point Park and east of the project site and along Pugsley's Creek (Blocks 3438 and 3439), and a 0.5-acre parcel of undeveloped land owned by the New York City Department of Ports International Trade and Commerce, to the south of Bronx River Avenue and west of the project site and along a cove in the East River, would be developed with trails, landscaping, lawn areas, a ballfield and a play area with play equipment.

The surrounding neighborhood is mostly comprised of small, single-family homes with detached garages and a limited lawn area. Just north of the project site area, on White Plains Road, is a commercial strip of one- and two-story small businesses. On the south side of Gildersleeve Avenue, immediately east of the project site, is the local, volunteer Aviation Fire Station. Currently the City's Department of Parks and Recreation is re-landscaping the public park at the southern terminus of Sound View Avenue.

## II. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH DESIGN

This cultural resource survey was carried out in three basic steps. The standard methodology from which the following list was abstracted was written by Ed Lenik for Historical Perspectives' "Resource Recovery Project: Barretto Point Site," a 1986 Phase IA documentary study.

### A. Background Research

In an attempt to identify known or potential prehistoric and historic cultural resources, an intensive search of the literature was carried out at The Bronx County Historical Society, the New York Public Library, the Museum of the American Indian, and the Yale University Sterling Library. Site file searches were requested of the New York State Historic Preservation Office and the New York State Museum. Cartographic resources of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were studied in detail. From the outset, the accumulation of historical documentation of all types pertaining to the study area was considered to be of primary importance.

Several contacts were made with individuals knowledgeable in the history and prehistory of the area. Interviews were conducted with historians, professional archaeologists, The Bronx Borough engineering and sanitation personnel, and two long-time local residents to elicit information about the location and nature of prehistoric and historic sites, and to determine land use within the project study area.

### B. Field Survey

A walkover of the project site and a photographic survey of the project area was conducted in an attempt to locate and identify any existing cultural resources and to evaluate the archaeological potential of the area.

### C. Environmental Analysis

The prediction of prehistoric site locations involves the use of various kinds of information including environmental, archaeological, historic and ethnohistoric data. In making this determination, the following environmental factors were considered:

1. Topography: Variables within this category include landform and elevation.



- 4
2. Geology and Soils: The factors considered here are type and areal extent of bedrock formation and soils.
  3. Water: Under this category are variables concerning the nature and location of water supply. The proximity to a fresh water source would have been a primary determinant in site location for prehistoric peoples.
  4. Availability of Floral and Faunal Resources: The availability and utilization of the natural resources within the area would have been of crucial importance to prehistoric groups. Prehistoric peoples' search for subsistence resources was continual and they naturally chose those areas in which food resources appeared in greatest abundance.
  5. Historic and Current Land Use: As previously noted, known land alterations must be considered in order to assess the extent of potential disturbance to any cultural remains that may have been deposited over thousands of years by prehistoric peoples. Such environmental factors could equally affect the cultural deposits of the more recent historic populations as well.

### III. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The borough is considered a part of the New England Upland Physiographic Province, consisting primarily of granite and gneiss, of many dissimilar varieties, and of white crystalline limestone. The bedrock geology of the entire east Bronx is extremely complex and consists of an undifferentiated mixture of gneiss, schists, and amphibolites. (Schubert, 1968: p. 10; See Figure 3) The Bronx is noted for its north south running ridge-valley formation which, in part, dictated the cultural development of the interior of the borough. However, the Bronx coastal properties were not retarded by this formation and were exploited very early after European arrival. The rivers and streams of the borough, which were important factors in the settlement pattern of the region, drain to the south and southeast. The southeastern portion of the borough, the Clason's Point territory, is dominated by several bays and estuaries that extend far inland and divide the land into peninsulas and necks. (French, 1860: p. 706)

Most of the landscape in the study region was profoundly affected by Pleistocene glaciation as the massive ice sheets advanced and receded at least three times in the last million years. "The glacier was an effective agent of erosion, altering the landscape wherever it passed. Tons of soil and stone were carried forward, carving and planing the land surface. At the margins of the ice sheet massive accumulations of glacial debris were deposited, forming series of low hills or terminal moraines." (Eisenberg, 1978: p. 19) Approximately 18,000 years ago the last ice sheet reached its southern limit creating the Harbor Hill moraine that traverses the length of Long Island. "An early geological study of the Borough of the Bronx noted that, morainial heaps and alluvial coverings hide or bury the gneissic contours. These deposits were present throughout the area where rivers and streams carried debris from the receding glacier." (Lenik, 1986: pp. 7-8)

The topography of the Shorehaven Project site is generally low and flat, but the terrain does slope noticeably from the northwest section of the property toward the south and the east. The highest elevations (greater than 20 feet above mean sea level) occur at approximately the intersection of White Plains Road and Sound View Avenue and the lowest elevations (less than 10 feet above mean sea level) occur at the edge of the East River bulkhead and on the extreme eastern boundary of the project site at the confluence of Pugsley Creek and Westchester Creek. Approximately 700 feet west of the project site lies the Bronx River. Although not apparent on the modern landscape, historical evidence indicates that a post-pleistocene, fresh water pond did exist on the project site, at approximately the intersection of Sound View Avenue and the mid-block point between Newman and Stephens Avenues.

The terrestrial plant habitats of the Clason's Point region formerly consisted of salt marshes, fresh water marshes, swamps and floodplains, and uplands and flats. However these landforms and their associated vegetation no longer exist due to past agricultural practices, extensive land filling and development in historic times. The process of landfilling along the New York City shoreline began with the Dutch around 1654, and since that time the shoreline has been extended approximately 40,000 acres. Although the Clason's Point area has had its shoreline extended and the low areas along Pugsley Creek have been filled, the project area has not undergone the drastic filling that is evident in other parts of the City. (See Figure 4)

The vegetation presently found on the site is typical of disturbed or waste disposal places. In particular, the trees are rapidly growing species that are commonly found on waste sites and burned areas. Within the Shorehaven Beach Club fenced property is an elliptically shaped manicured lawn and flower garden that is to be retained for the housing complex. Also certain older "specimen trees" within the picnic area are to be preserved for the proposed complex. (See Photographs 13-14) These trees may be indicators of pre-twentieth century landscaping practices.

#### IV. THE PREHISTORIC PERIOD

##### Cultural Framework for Interpreting Clason's Point Prehistory

The term "prehistory" refers to the time span before the advent of written records. In coastal New York, it applies to the chronology and lifeways of the local American Indian cultural grounds, or Native Americans, prior to European settlement of the region, i.e., the Contact Period.

There is no published synthesis of the prehistory of Clason's Project. In fact, there is only one professional publication of an archaeological excavation in the area, written 67 years ago (Skinner 1919). Consequently, we must rely on cultural sequences formulated for adjacent regions (e.g., Smith 1950; Ritchie 1969; Snow 1980; Lavin 1984) to help us understand the culture history of the area.

In eastern North America, archaeologists divide prehistory into three main stages - Paleo Indian, Archaic, and Woodland. The Archaic and Woodland stages are further divided into temporally distinct cultural periods, based on changes in projectile point and pottery styles, and/or the addition of new artifacts or activities (See Figures 5,6,7). Stone spear and arrow tips are non-deteriorating cultural detritus and are used as a primary dating method for associated artifacts and sites in the Northeast. Twentieth century archaeologists have assigned specific names (e.g., Snook Kill, Neville, Rossville), that cross-cut modern political boundaries, to particular shapes and methods of manufacture (e.g., bifurcated base, fluted, narrow stem) of these projectile points. A brief explanation of these three steps follows.

Paleo Indian Stage (10,000-7,000 B.C.). The earliest settlers of North America and the ancestors of present-day Native Americans are called Paleo Indians. "Paleo" comes from the Greek word for "ancient" or "old". These people crossed the Bering Land Plain that connected Siberia to Alaska during one or more of the glacial maxima, when sea levels were at their lowest and the plain was exposed as dry land. Little is known about the Paleo Indians. It is believed that they were big-game hunters and gatherers whose economy and settlement patterns revolved around the migratory habits of such big-game as caribou, mammoth, mastodon, and bison, which inhabited the tundras and spruce woodlands of early post-glacial North America. The characteristic artifact of the Paleo Indian period is the fluted point. No fluted points have been reported from Clason's Point.

Archaic Stage (7,000-1,000 B.C.). Environmental changes during the Archaic stage brought about concurrent changes in Indian culture. With the warmer and drier climate, the tundra and spruce forests disappeared and deciduous woodlands gradually appeared. The Pleistocene big-game either became extinct like the mammoth and mastodon, or moved northward like the caribou and musk ox. The oak and hickory woodlands of coastal New York attracted mast forest foragers (e.g., the white-tailed deer and wild turkey). During this later post-glacial period, melting ice no longer poured large amounts of meltwater into local rivers and streams. The slower stream flow allowed the growth of marsh area and mud flats that encouraged the influx of migratory waterfowl and the growth of numerous edible plant species and shellfish. The subsistence and settlement systems of Archaic groups were based on a restricted wandering system which consisted of seasonal movements to and from base camps located near these resources. The group would move from one camp to another as each major resource became seasonally available.

Very little is known about the Early and Middle Archaic periods in coastal New York. Occupation sites are virtually unknown. One Early Archaic bifurcated base point and one Middle Archaic Neville point were recovered from Clason's Point, within the study area. Like coastal New York in general, Late Archaic points of the Narrow Point tradition are much more common within the study area. Terminal Archaic broad spear (such as Snook Kill) and Orient points have also been recovered from Clason's Point.

Woodland Stage (1,000 B.C. - European settlement and the Contact Period, ca. early 17th cc.). The Woodland stage is identified mainly by the production of clay pots. Other attributes are the advent of horticulture, large semi-permanent or permanent villages, pipe smoking, bow and arrow, and extensive trade networks. Early Woodland Rossville and Meadowood style points have been found at Clason's Point, Skinner (1919:XI,j) illustrates a possible Middle Woodland Jack's Reef corner-notched point from the Snakapins site (Sound View, Leland, and Lacombe Avenues), which also contained a number of Late Woodland triangular points and the remains of at least 55 Late Woodland pottery vessels. (Skinner, 1919:p.74)

The goals of the prehistoric portion of our study are (1) to identify the locations of known prehistoric sites and the location of areas with a high potential for prehistoric occupation (that is, areas whose physical attributes would have attracted aboriginal settlers and so signal the possible presence of as yet undetected prehistoric sites below ground),

and (2) to assess the impact of the Clason's Point project on these important and irreplaceable cultural resources.

We obtain the information necessary for this analysis in a number of ways. They include a search of the literature, interviews with local informants and amateur collectors, analysis of museum and private archaeological collections from the project area, physical environmental data, and field reconnaissance.

### Literature Search

Pertinent literature includes early ethnohistoric accounts by European traders and settlers, legal documents, site reports, museum and catalog files, and maps relating to the study area. Research was conducted at The Bronx County Historical Society, the President's Office in the Bronx Borough Hall, the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, the Map Room of the New York Public Library and the Sterling and Anthropology libraries at Yale University. Site file research requests were forwarded to both the New York State Historic Preservation Office and the New York State Museum. (See Appendix 1)

The earliest documented evidence for aboriginal habitation of the study area is the account of the 1614 trading voyage of Dutch explorer Adrian Block through Long Island Sound. Block reported a stockaded Indian village in the vicinity of what is now Castle Hill, near the intersection of Lacombe and Castle Hill Avenues. (Grumet, 1981:p.8) Castle Hill Park, at the point of Castle Hill peninsula, may be the locus where Block described meeting hostile Indians on his voyage up the East River. In a 1640 agreement with the Dutch government, the Siwanoy, an Indian group living along Long Island Sound in southern New York and southwestern Connecticut, claimed ownership of all lands along the East river as far west as Hell Gate. (Bolton, 1934: pp. 4-5) European records also report that the Weckquaesgeek Indians of Manhattan Island made annual visits to the Westchester area, of which the east Bronx was then a part. (Bolton, 1934:p. 128b) Dutch records note that Indian groups resided in the east Bronx at least as late as 1663. (ibid:pp. 4-5) Local folklore has it that the last Indians to leave their east Bronx homeland camped in the mid-1800s at the Twin Sisters Rocks, a bedrock outcrop located between Seward and Randall Avenues and White Plains Road and Olmstead Avenue. (See Figure 8; Arthur Seifert, personal communication, October 15, 1986)

According to seventeenth and eighteenth century sources two major Indian trails passed directly through the study area (Bolton 1920; 1922: pp. 115-116, Map VII, D; 1934: p. 14; McNamara 1984a: p. 14, 1984b: p. 232). One trail passed southward along what is now Castle Hill Avenue to Castle Hill



Park at the end of the peninsula. The other trail moved south along what is now Sound View Avenue (the old Clason's Point Road) to Clason's Point, directly through the project site. (See Figure 9)

According to local lore, Pugsley Creek, which originally flowed north of the Bruckner Expressway, was used by the Indians and there was a landing place along Compton Avenue in the study area. (Seifert, n.d.; See Figure 8) Several smaller waterways, which provided the Indians with food and fresh water, traversed Clason's Point. At least one was located into the primary project area - its mouth was located approximately near the west end of Taylor Avenue. Another small unnamed stream was located in the project site between the south ends of White Plains Road and Pugsley Avenue. (Bolton, 1920: n.p.) The areas on both sides of these creeks would have provided excellent camp sites for the Indians who exploited the shellfish beds along the Clason's Point coast. "Shell middens" or "shell heaps" are the material remains of an Indian camp where shellfish were collected and processed for consumption. These middens are clear indicators of past Indian activity.

Numerous archaeological sites are reported from the study area, supporting the ethnohistoric documentation. One of the most important is the large Indian village known as Snakapins or Clason's Point site, excavated by Alanson Skinner with a crew from the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, in 1918. (Skinner, 1918) Skinner called the site Snakapins because he thought it was the remains of the early historic Siwanoy village of that name; referred to in early Dutch documents. In his doctoral dissertation entitled The archaeology of Coastal New York, Carlyle Smith (1950) uses the site as the "type site"\* for his Clason's Point focus, his name for the late prehistoric to early historic (A.D. 1300-1650) Indian culture of the metropolitan New York/western Long Island region. (See Figure 10) His analysis does not refute Skinner's conclusions. Smith is, however, more conservative in his summation of the data. He

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\* A "type site" is one whose structure and contents epitomize the material culture of a specific socio-cultural group. In this case, Smith believes that the Indian remains at Snakapins, or the Clason's Point site as he refers to it, typified those of the late prehistoric to early historic Indian society in the metropolitan New York/western Long Island area, and so he named the culture "Clasons Point" after the site.

acknowledges that the site was probably used by the Siwanoy, but notes that there is no definitive evidence that it is Snakapins.

The Skinner excavations were on a knoll southwest of the intersection of Sound View and Leland Avenues. (See Figure 11) Sixty-six pits were uncovered, dug by the Indians for use as earth ovens, refuse pits, and burials. Six pits contained the human remains of 7 primary interments. One dog and one sturgeon burial were also discovered. Stone tools (See Figure 12) included projectile points for hunting, netsinkers for fishing, a celt or ungrooved axe for woodworking, a grooved clubhead, a limonite painstone used to produce pigment for paint, and hammerstones - general utility tools for pounding and processing stone, bone, and plant materials. Aboriginal pottery was recovered, including pipe fragments and the remains of at least 55 vessels (See Figures 13 and 14). Several European kaolin pipe fragments indicate that at least part of the site dates to the contact period. A unique feature of the site is its large quantity of bone, antler and turtle shell objects. Due to the acidic soils, they are usually absent or rare on Northeastern sites. The Snakapins assemblage includes 27 awls or punches (See Figure 15/c,e-l,n,o), one gorge - a kind of hook for fishing (See Figure 15/m), one fishhook (See Figure 15/d), four cut deer toe bones for use as jinglers or for the cup-and-pin game, one triangular bone arrow point (See Figure 15/b), one bone point or harpoon head, one bone dagger or batten for weaving, six cut bones of unknown function, six turtle shell cups or bowls, one antler point, one antler flaker fragment for stone tool making, and two partly worked antler tips. See Figure 16 for Skinner's site map.

The area directly north and east of the village in the secondary study area was used historically by the Siwanoy as a planting area (Grumet, 1981: p. 69). As noted above, at least one major Indian trail passed through the village. Beginning at the tip of the peninsula, at the intersection of Sound View and Bronx River Avenues, the trail snakes its way north to Sound View and then southwest to Bronx River Avenue, where it veers north to Snakapins (See Figure 17).

In addition to the village site, a series of shell middens have been reported (Bolton 1922, 1934; Parker 1922; See Figure 18). One was located at the tip of Clason's Point at the end of Sound View Avenue, at least partly within the project site. The area is now park and recreational space. A second shell midden was located in the southwest and southern portions of the peninsula, approximately south of Cornell Avenue, west of Bronx River Avenue and White Plains Road, within the study area and at the southwest edge of the project site (Bolton 1922, 1934).



A number of shell middens were reported in the vicinity of the Snakapins site (Skinner 1919: p. 79). The survey map by Bolton (1919) locates them south and southwest of the village site, approximately between Patterson Avenue on the north, Sound View Avenue on the east, the Bronx River on the west, and a little south of O'Brien Avenue. Bolton (1922: p. 116) reports that the late Claude L. Turner collected "hundreds of discarded weapons, tools and fragments" from the surface of these middens. In fact, Bolton's survey (1919) indicates continuous shell middens existed all along the western and southern coasts of the Clason's Point peninsula, which includes parts of the study area and the project side (see below). This is corroborated by Skinner (1919: p. 79) and by local informants (see below). According to Skinner, the variety of point and pottery styles indicates that the shell heaps date from more than one cultural period. (ibid)

Skinner also reports that several skeletons were recovered during construction of the amusement park, once located in the project site area. (ibid)

The file catalog at the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, listed a shell heap located at the southern point of the Castle Hill peninsula, another site on "Castle Hill Neck," and a third locus at the foot of Castle Hill Avenue (see below for analysis of the collections).

### Informant Interviews

Local informants substantiate and expand upon the written information. According to both Mr. Arthur Seifert, member of the Bronx Historical Society and a resident of the area, and to Mr. John McNamara, a local historian, a BRONX PRESS REVIEW reporter, and a Bronx resident, collectors picked up arrowheads and other aboriginal tools on all of the beaches along the Clason's Point peninsula (personal communication, October 15, 1986). Mr. Seifert also noted that numerous arrowheads were found during house construction (c.1924) at 1815 LaCombe Avenue, at the intersection with Taylor Avenue and just slightly north-east of Skinner's excavations at Snakapins. (See Photograph 15). House construction (c.1924) at 217 Pugsley Avenue, in the eastern portion of the study area, uncovered six Indian skeletons. (See Photograph 16) Mr. Seifert also reported finding an "arrowhead factory site" in the wooded area bounded by Lacombe, Randall, Newman, and Seward Avenues. He graciously allowed the author to view his collection of artifacts from the site (see discussion below).

### Collections Analysis

Mr. Seifert's collection included a number of quartz, siltstone, and chert Lamoka style points, which date to the Late Archaic period of Indian culture in southern New York, ca. 3,000-2,000 B.C.; one quartzite Neville point, a Middle Archaic style that dates to about 6,000-5,000 B.C.; several broken biface fragments, one large chopping tool; one hematite paint-stone; one, possibly two, large anvil stones used to manufacture stone tools; and a number of stone flakes, by-products of the chipping process used to make points and other stone tools from beach cobbles and blocks. The artifacts seem to represent a small, temporary Archaic camp site where points were being produced from mainly local materials.\* (See Photographs 17-22)

The Bronx Museum of the Arts at 1040 Grand Concourse was contacted for information on collections from the study area. The author was informed that the museum had no information on Bronx prehistory.

The Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, was contacted and an appointment was made to view their collections from the study area, especially the Snakapins site. Unfortunately, the Snakapins collection could not be located. There were two accessions from Clason's Point, one collected by Skinner (#9/6098-6099) and the other collected by Bolton (#20/338-343).

The Skinner collection consisted of two artifacts, one chert "teardrop" shaped biface, and a fragment of a grooved axe. Neither of these specimens were described in the Snakapins report; and were apparently collected at another locale. Bolton's collection consists of five oyster shells, three scallop shells, three soft shell clam shells, one quahog shell fragment that appears cut or worked at one end, a limonite paint cup, a quartz lanceolate biface that is probably a preform for a point or knife, and a large (over four inches long) chert biface that resembles a very late Archaic Genesee point.

The Heye Foundation also contained three collections from the Castle Hill section, in the eastern part of the project study area. A small Terminal Archaic Snookkill style point

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\* This site is located on New York City Department of Parks property and was brought to the attention of the City by Diana Wall, representing the Professional Archaeologists of New York City. See Appendix 1.

(ca. 1750-1450 B.C.) was found at the foot of Castle Hill Avenue. Six artifacts were recovered from Castle Hill Neck: two late Archaic (ca. 3,000-2,000 B.C.) narrow pont preforms, one chert biface fragment, two chert flakes, and one sky blue glass bead (possibly an early 17th century trade bead).

The third collection was from a shell heap at the point of Castle Hill peninsula, excavated by Skinner. The site was apparently used for wampum\* manufacturing, as it contained about 100 whelk shells in various early stages of white bead manufacture, and about 30 one by one and one-half inch rectanguloid blanks of hard shell clam shell for purple bead manufacture. Other artifacts include a circular oyster shell pendant, two pottery sherds, four drills, 11 broken bifacial tool fragments, 10 point preforms and 26 points representing an Early Archaic bifurcated base style, Late Archaic Lamoka, Wading River, Bare Island/Poplar Island, and Normanskill Narrow Point types, Terminal Archaic Orient points (ca. 1,000-750 B.C.), and Early Woodland Rossville and Meadowood styles (ca. 1,000-100 B.C.).

#### Physical Environmental Data/Field Reconnaissance/Sensitivity

Prior to European settlement and urbanization, the Clason's Point region consisted of uplands, flats, floodplain, salt marshes, fresh water marshes, swamps, and a number of bays and coves protected by sand bars or spits. The large number of microenvironments, with their diverse plant and animal populations, would have made the area attractive to prehistoric Indian populations whose economy was based on exploitation of a large number of such resources. Indeed, the number of sites already known from the area substantiates the attraction (See Figure 19). Further, Smith's (1950) archaeological survey of the circum-Long Island Sound region indicates that Indian villages were located near bays and tidal streams such as were located in and near the project area. Our field reconnaissance of the project area indicated that some of these landforms have been altered or destroyed by historic methods of land use, especially building activities. Several waterways and marshes

\* "Wampum" were shell beads manufactured by coastal Indian groups. White beads were made from whelk shells, purple beads from the interior surface of the hard shell clam shell. Wampum was used as a medium of exchange by the Early European settlers, and was an important trade item in the fur trade. Many fine beaver pelts could be had for a belt of wampum.

have been partly or completely destroyed. Janowitz and Stehling (1984) report that large scale landfilling in the Bronx began in the 19th century and continues today. Much of the borough coastline has been changed by landfill operations. Remarkably, little of Clason's Point area seems to have been affected (See Figure 4 ). There are a number of undisturbed, vacant or park areas both along the coast and inland that are likely to yield or have yielded aboriginal remains. They include:

(1) Vacant lots Block #3455 and Block #3443, whose high elevation, nearness to known shell heaps located along the coast to the south and southwest, and location about a block southeast of the Snakapins site make this an area of high archaeological potential. Bolton's (1919) map of Snakapins shows Indian pit features extending to the southeastern edges of the excavation, suggesting that the site may have continued southward into the study area.

(2) Virtually all of the lots comprising the Shorehaven Beach Club and former Kane's Park (#3432, 3434, 3435, 3436, 3437, and a portion of #3430) share similar characteristics (a relatively undisturbed nature and a location next to former tidal streams, sheltered bays, and marshes) that make the immediate project area one of high archaeological potential. Their location near to (and possibly encompassing) known aboriginal shellfish processing stations and along the route of a major Indian trail, and the discovery of Indian burials within the immediate project area make them partially sensitive archaeologically. There is a strong probability that the reportedly extensive shell middens still exist under the project site, or that other hunting or food processing camps, from which the Indians exploited the rich marine and marsh environmental resources that once thrived there, are located under ground.

The project site's central location to Indian trail, shellfish beds, and burial grounds makes it a good candidate for an aboriginal village locus. Recent research in coastal New England (Juli and Lavin 1986) indicates that, for the Late Woodland period at least, large Indian villages were located inland within walking distance of the coastal shellfish collection stations, so that task groups from the residential unit could leave their "garbage" at the station and carry the precious foodstuff back to the village for consumption, keeping the living quarters free of garbage and the odor of decaying shells! If this pattern extends to coastal New York, the project site has high potential as a possible Late Woodland village location.

Archaeologically sensitive areas that are outside the project site but within the study area boundary (see Figure 20) and so may be affected by the project include:

(1) The tip of the Clason's Point peninsula (Block #3439; see Figure 2). Aboriginal shell middens were located here (see Figure 19). Significantly, aboriginal sites can be found on all of the peninsulas, or points, along the Bronx coastline (Bolton 1934; see Figure 18). This block, property of the New York City Department of Parks, has recently undergone landscaping and paving improvements. The proposed Shorehaven development will have no impact on Block #3439. A 3.6 acre plot of the undeveloped coastal land on the east shore of the Point (Block #3438, south of Cornell Avenue; see Figure 2), although outside the immediate, privately held project site, is slated for improvements. The Shorehaven developer plans to create a ballfield and a play lawn, including an enclosed play area with swings, platforms, and slides, on this publicly owned plot. These plans may impact archaeologically sensitive areas (see Appendix 1) if the fill overburden on this block is found to be less in depth than the depth of the proposed park improvements. An accurate assessment of this possible impact must await soil boring data from Block #3438. The Shorehaven Project development also calls for a new sewer line to be installed in this same area - following the route of Cornell Avenue from Sound View Avenue to Westchester Creek/Pugsley Creek. As proposed, this utility placement, although in a public street, will be in an area considered archaeologically sensitive and therefore should be field tested before subsurface activities begin.

(2) The vacant lots between Cornell and Gildersleeve Avenues, situated west of Bronx River Avenue and Block #3441 and on the Bronx River and also those shore areas south and west of Cornell Avenue and Bronx River Avenue where extensive shell middens were located and artifacts have been collected during recent times. It is known that filling of the area south and west of Cornell and Bronx River Avenues took place during Robert Moses' tenure as Parks' Commissioner and during the construction of a sewer line on White Plains Road. As part of the proposed project, a 0.5 acre parcel of land to the south of Bronx River Avenue and west of the project site, would be developed as parkland (see Figure 2). Although it is not part of the Shorehaven Project property, the development includes installation of a walking trail, lighting, and benches on this public plot. Recently collected soil boring data (see page 31) indicates that any potential resources in this small park area rest beneath an extensive layer of fill (approximately 30') and the proposed landscaping activities would not impact beneath this overburden.

There are other loci within the project study area that are considered potentially archaeologically sensitive but are not scheduled to be impacted by the Shorehaven project construction or associated utility upgrading. These include the New York City Parks' land that bounds the present and the original course of



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Pugsley Creeek and is located in or adjacent to a wetlands area that contains two known archaeological sites (see the discussion above; see Figure 19); and, the Castle Hill peninsula, including the elevated portion where Adrian Block encountered the fortified village, and the foot of Castle Hill Avenue and Castle Hill Park, where numerous Archaic Woodland artifacts were found, including the remains of extensive wampum manufacturing.

### Conclusions

The prehistoric archaeology of coastal New York is still in its frontier stage. Unlike other regions of North America, the cultural chronology (temporal sequences of cultures), lifeways, and even the cultural affiliations of the Indians who inhabited the area are poorly understood. The often cited synthesis of prehistoric archaeology in the region is Smith's (1950) doctoral dissertation The Archaeology of Coastal New York, which is over 25 years old and predates such presently standard techniques as radiocarbon dating, use wear analysis, regional point typology, geo-chemical analysis for source identification of stone materials used in tool making, and subsistence/settlement studies, to name a few. Although much of the work is still relevant, it could and should be refined and elaborated upon.

Why is there such an archaeological data lag? A major reason is urbanization and industrialization during the nineteenth century destroyed many of the major sites prior to archaeological interest in the area. Today there are relatively few open, undisturbed lots with a high archaeological potential in metropolitan New York from which the professional archaeologist might be able to gather fresh data about Indian life prior to European contact, and how it changed after contact. Clason's Point is such an area.

Our survey of the literature, physical environment, local informants, and archaeological collections all indicate a high density of aboriginal occupation for the study area from the Early Archaic through the early Contact period, a timespan of over 7,500 years. Further, most of the open park, recreational and vacant blocks in the project site appear not to have been disturbed by extensive landfilling and deep foundation building operations. The following Historic Era section discusses the extent of these post-1600 subsurface disturbances. The proposed development and construction within these blocks - especially the elevated areas, the blocks along the shoreline or along waterways, along the Indian trail, near marshland, near the point of the peninsula, or near where aboriginal remains were found - may impact previously unrecorded prehistoric cultural resources.

## V. CULTURAL BACKGROUND: THE HISTORIC PERIOD

The following historic development section details three aspects of the project area: (1) the sequence of events that have transpired there; (2) the historical import of these events; and, (3) the degree of known subsurface disturbance that might have altered the archaeological potential associated with these historic episodes.

### Historical Development

The earliest settlement on the east shore of The Bronx was established, with the consent of the Dutch, in 1642 on the long neck of land lying south of Eastchester Bay. This was a part of the coastal territory referred to by the Dutch as Vriedelandt, or "land of peace." (See Figure 21) The settlement of thirty-five families was led by John Throckmorton and this peninsula later came to be named for him - Throgg's Neck. "The colony was composed of Quakers and other malcontents from the New England colonies, who found the religious intolerance of these colonies unbearable, and so sought freedom among the Dutch." (Jenkins, 1918: p. 30) The colony thrived but within a few years an Indian raid massacred eighteen people and drove the survivors to the New Amsterdam fort for protection. The Indian title to this land was extinguished in 1643 by the Dutch. (French, 1860: p. 706)

"One of Throckmorton's companions at the Vriedelandt colony was Thomas Cornell, a native of Essex in England, who escaped at the time of the Indian massacre." (Jenkins, 1918: p. 31) According to the early reports of this Indian war "several persons belonging to the families of Mr. Throckmorton and Mr. Cornell" were killed. (Comfort, 1906: p. 9) Reports indicate that as early as 1643 Cornell may have occupied the Clason's Point neck of land - building a house and raising animals. Cornell's claim to this land was contested by the Indians who said he had not paid them for the land. (Jenkins, 1918: p. 402) When the attacks ceased Cornell returned to the east Bronx shoreline, definitely settling on the neck of land that we know as Clason's Point, having received a "patent," or "ground-brief," on July 26, 1646 from the Dutch Governor, Kieft. Cornell was granted

"the land lying between 'Brunk's Kill' and the creek, now called Pugsley's, which enters the mouth of Westchester Creek. The Indian name of the neck was Snakapins; but when Cornell settled on the land it took his name. He erected buildings and cultivated the land until again forced to vacate by Indian aggressions. After his two experiences, Cornell seems to have given up hope of establishing himself in New Netherland and returned to Portsmouth, Rhode Island, where he is recorded as being on a coroner's jury in 1653 and as a commissioner of the town in 1654." (Jenkins, 1918: p. 31; See Figure 22)

Randall Comfort's 1906 History of Bronx Borough states (p. 9) that it was not until 1665 that Thomas Cornell "was driven off the said land by the barbarous violence of the Indians." All historical accounts do agree, however, that upon Cornell's death his daughter, Sarah, who had married Thomas Willett, September 1, 1643, inherited the neck, and it remained with her descendants for over a century and a half. (Jenkins, 1918: p. 31)

On November 14, 1654 Thomas Pell purchased 9,160 acres from the Indian sachem Wampage.\* (Beyer Blinder Belle, 1985: p. 5) Pell's dubious title to the Clason's Point portion of this large land tract was not upheld in court when Sarah (Cornell Willett Bridges) challenged his claim, 1664. The land was once again confirmed by patent to the Cornell descendants - specifically to William Willett, a grandson - by Governor Robert Nicols in 1667. In this deed, the land is described as

"a certaine Parcell of Land, contained within a neck, commonly called and knowne by ye neame of Cornell's Neck, lying and being upon the Maine, toward the Sound or East River, being bounded to the West by a certain Rivolett which runs to the Black Rock and so into Bronckse Creeke or Kill. Then the Neck stretching itselife East South East into the Sound is bounded to the East with another Rivolett which divides it from the limits of West Chester and a line being run from the head of each Rivolett wherewith a narrow slip, the said Neck is joined to the Maine land, it closes up the Neck and makes the North bounds thereof." (Jenkins, 1918: p. 402)

Orienting the above description to the modern landscape is problematical and cannot be geographically specific. The "Rivolett which runs to the Black Rock," or, the western boundary, corresponds to what was called Barrett's Creek in the first part of the twentieth century. See Figure 8 for the location of this Creek. The "Black Rock" is a bluff of black gneiss at the southeastern part of the neck, see Figure 23 for a photograph of the Black Rock. The "Rivolett which divides it from the limits of West Chester" is currently called Pugsley Creek. (See Figure 24) The line joining the heads of the two creeks is a few yards south of the present Westchester Avenue, the road to the neck formerly passing between them on a narrow causeway. (ibid.; See Figure 22)

Subsequent ownership of the Cornell Neck property was as follows:

\* Wampage was the same Indian chief who had massacred the small settlement of Anne Hutchinson and her followers eleven years earlier.



"Thomas Willett of Flushing, son of Thomas Willett of New York City, in 1709 conveyed to his son, William Willett, 'all that certaine parcell of land, contained within a neck, commonly called and known by the name of Cornell's Neck, bounded on the west by a certain rivulet that runs to the black rock and so into Bronx River'." (Bolton, 1919: p. 78)

During the majority of the eighteenth century the Clason's Point land was part of the County of Westchester, which had been formed by the English in 1683. (Allee, et al, 1986: n.p.) The closest inland village to the peninsula was Westchester, now known as Westchester Square. As early as 1693, the English had established a market in the village and it was made a borough town in 1696. Under the Townships Act of 1788, a great deal of the eastern half of The Bronx was incorporated into the township of Westchester, including the project area. (Kearns and Kirkorian, 1986: n.p.)

One Bronx historian has written that during the Revolutionary War the old Cornell farmhouse, which stood on the extreme end of Clason's Point, was used as Lord Howe's Headquarters. Comfort relates (1906: p. 9) that the British commander made it his place of residence while his men were in the region.

The Willett's retained possession of the neck until 1793, when the west half of it was conveyed to Dominick Lynch. This division of the neck separates the project site from the development of Lynch's parcel - north and west of the Shorehave Project. Mr. Lynch built a large stone mansion on a high point of his land. He was a devout Catholic; and, "it is stated that the first services of the Church ever celebrated in Westchester County were held in this mansion." (Jenkins, 1918: p. 404) This northwest section of the neck was sold to the Ludlow family in c. 1830, it was transferred to the Schieffelins, and then came into the possession of the Christian Brothers of the Catholic faith. Eventually this property and the original Lynch mansion became part of the Clason's Point Military Academy, located until 1927 on Soundview Avenue at Beach and St. Lawrence Avenues. (ibid: p. 404; See Figure 25)

Also in approximately 1793, the eastern portion and southern tip of the neck (containing the project parcel) was sold to Issac Clason, hence the current name Clason's Point. (ibid.) Local histories and legends state that the original Cornell small stone house was adapted over the years by the Willetts and then Clason, eventually becoming the kitchen wing of the farmhouse. There are, of course, no building records or permits from this early period to verify this theory. The 1838 "Map of Clason's Point" (The Borough of The Bronx Property Map #672) divides the total 377.05 acres of this tract into 224.89 acres of upland, 123.43 acres of salt meadows, and 28.73 acres of sedge and mud flats. (See Figure 26) The map legend lists both a "mansion house lot" - Lot #3, 14.85 acres - and a "lane or opening by the Farm House

including cowyard and buildings" - Lot #7, 4.60 acres. Unfortunately, the portion of the map that contains Lot #7 has been torn off and it is impossible to determine definitively if the "Farm House" was indeed a separate structure from the mansion house and not simply a second reference to the same building. The preciseness of the legend and map indicates that most probably it was a secondary house but there is no way to determine if it or the mansion incorporated the original Cornell homestead.

"Clason resided on the project site for many years. His son, Augustus Washington Clason, lived nearby until 1855, when he sold his house and 15 acres of the Point to Joseph J. Husson." (Allee et al, 1986: n.p.) Husson, who acquired even more acreage at the Point, is remembered in Husson Avenue, a street in the study area. A study of subsequent lot divisions and The Borough of The Bronx Property Map #664 (1877) places the "Land of Joseph Husson," in part, on both the east and west side of the Clason's Point Road (Sound View Avenue) and, most probably, extending southerly to just south of what is now O'Brien Avenue - placing the Husson parcel(s) outside the project site. In the 1870s, Husson's neighboring landowners were John Beach, Wooster Beach, Caroline E. Cocks, and Maria A. Beach. In 1877 the property of Dr. W. Beach bordered the Bronx River from approximately Patterson Avenue northward and westward. By 1905 the western portion of the Husson property was owned by Alexander Howe and the eastern portion was being developed into small housing lots.

Pugsley Creek, the eastern boundary of the Clason's Point peninsula, received this name from the Pugsley family that used the creek as an access to the East River. (See Figure 27) Their sloop mooring called "Pugsley Dock" was at approximately the intersection of White Plains Road and Randall Avenue - an inland location lost on the modern landscape since the termination of Pugsley Creek at Lacombe Avenue in the 1940s. Earlier names for this waterway were Cromwell's Creek, Wilkins Creek, Barrett's Creek, Clason's Creek and West Creek. (McNamara, 1984: p. 204) The land on the east side of the Pugsley Creek head was used during the eighteenth century as a public sheep pasture, was eventually bought by the Wilkins family and became the site of the nineteenth-century Unionport development. (Jenkins, 1918: p. 406; French, 1860: p. 706) Gouverneur Morris Wilkins also owned and lived on the neck of land lying between Pugsley Creek and Westchester Creek. On the tip of what is now labeled Castle Hill Point stood, until at least the second decade of the twentieth century, the Reverend Issac Wilkins home built in 1765. (Jenkins, 1918: p. 407)

Like most of the eastern portion of The Bronx, the study area was slow to develop. Farms and estates with scattered village settlements existed along the shoreline, along the Hutchinson River and Westchester Creek, and along the present border with Westchester County, leaving the vast central part largely undeveloped. (Kearns and Kirkorian, 1986: n.p.) As can be seen from the earliest available maps (c.1700, 1838, 1867, 1868, 1874,

and 1888) Clason's Point remained a farmstead site through the third quarter of the nineteenth century, see Figures 21, 22, 26-30. As early as 1868 there appears to have been plans to develop the project site into a residential community. As can be seen on Property Map #480 (See Figure 28), the Cornell/Willett/Clason house, barn, outbuilding, dock, pond, and orchard existed on the landscape, as did the 49 1/2 feet wide road to the Point, but Bayside and Meadow Drive (30 feet wide) and the Locust Path (15 feet wide) were paper streets designed to gracefully circle and divide the eastern section of the neck. This c. 1868 proposal appears to encompass Blocks #3444, #3445, #3446, #3431, #3432, #3433, #3434, #3436, and probably #3437 of the project area. The extreme western, northwestern blocks of the Shorehaven Project were, at this time under the ownership of the Monnot family and not included in this design. Although there is no evidence to indicate that these roads were ever actualized, maps of 1903 and 1905 still include them as proposed roadways. (See Figures 31 and 32) The natural, pre-development, topography of the neck has been described by Jenkins:

"Near the mainland on each side of the neck are salt marshes dotted with rocky hummocks which rise from ten to twenty feet above the surrounding meadows.

The old road [to the southern tip of the Point] used to pass from one little hummock to another to the main part of the neck, which is nearly all less than twenty feet above water, though rising in two places to forty feet." (Jenkins, 1918: p. 403)

In 1895 a large number of towns and villages were annexed to the City of New York, including the project area. (Comfort, 1906: p. 103) Despite the encroaching growth of the City and the residential development of large tracts within The Bronx, up until the 1930s the Clason's Point area still hosted farms. As late as 1939 The WPA Guide to New York City (1939: p. 544) lists Clason's Point as an undeveloped residential district. However, the landscape was altered by the new city control. Just after 1900 the City of New York began to fill the salt meadows/mud flats/sedge fields with ashes and other rubbish collected by the Street Cleaning Department. (Jenkins, 1918: p. 403) Lloyd Ultan's The Beautiful Bronx describes the Point as a broad, flat, sandy peninsula that was not overly populated and the residents of the the two-family brick houses that lined the streets "shared the neighborhood with the farmers, most of whom were Italian. It was not uncommon to see cows grazing along Soundview Avenue near the point where Commonwealth Avenue crossed it." (1979: p. 14)

In c. 1898 12.37 acres of the Shorehaven Project site was purchased by Clinton Stephens as a summer home site for his family. (Seifert, 1973: n. p.) Stephens was an engineer whose contracts included the Erie Railroad and various aqueducts in New York State. (Allee et al, 1986: n.p.) He purchased the parcel that included the farmhouse and outbuildings and that roughly

corresponds to the current Blocks #3432, #3434, #3433, a portion of #3445 and of #3436. As can be seen by Figures 33 and 34, the original Cornell homestead that had been altered and adapted over the years was in a terrible state of repair. "When Mr. Clinton Stephens took possession, he found the place in ruins, and was tempted to pull them down completely; but the historic associations finally prevailed, and he incorporated the remains of the old buildings within the new, at considerable trouble and expense to himself." (Jenkins, 1918: p. 403) Intended as a summer retreat, Stephens

"wanted privacy for his family and himself at his summer place, but the fine sandy beach at the Point was too much of an attraction for the boys and people of the Bronx, who insisted on bathing there. A special officer, watchmen and the Police of Westchester could not keep them away, and it was one continual watchout.

Finally Mr. Stephens came to the conclusion that if they wanted to bath he would erect some bath houses and charge them for rooms. He erected ten that spring and they were full all of the time. The next year he went in the business in earnest, running stages from Westchester Avenue and creating quite a few more bath houses and from then to now the resort has grown every year until last year it had accommodations for 2,500 bathers, a large dance hall and casino and various other amusement attractions." (The Bronx Star, 1909: 2:2)

The result of Mr. Stephens "forced" entry into the bathing resort business was the establishment of the Clason Point Bathing Beach. The neighboring landowners to his new venture - and owners of Shorehaven Project blocks - were:

Tillinghast.....Block #3437, part of #3436

Leland &  
Thompkins.....Block #3445, #3443, part of #3430

Benedict .....part of Block #3445, #3446

Bradish Johnson...Block #3431, #3444, part of #3430.  
(WPA Conveyance Abstracts; See Figures 35)

Within a few short years some of these neighbors had also gone into the recreation business or, like Mr. Stephens, had begun to rent lots to amusement concessionaires. Mr. Stephens transformed the rambling wooden and stone Cornell/Willett/Clason farmstead into a public inn and restaurant, gaining commercial benefits by advertising the historic quality of the building. (See Figure 36) Stephens placed a commemorative plaque with a short legend of its history on the inn. Current Clason's Point residents recall the small, dark, stone room that was reputedly the original Cornell



kitchen and served as a bar for the inn. In 1907 Stephens signed a five year lease with Paul Piefke for the "Inn parcel." (Conveyance Records: L25, CP276-7) This transfer included the hotel with all fixtures and furniture except for the crockery and silverware. The parcel was described as being situated between Clason Point Road and the East River, bounded by the middle of the private roads at each side nearest to the Inn and by two private roads: 80 feet in rear of Inn and 200 feet in front of Inn. Piefke's lease also included privileges to the use of the new shed for horses and toilets situated east of the Inn, to the use of the dock in front of the Inn, and to pump water from the spring pond on the premises and from the well in front of the Inn. A 1918 description of the Inn includes a small stone outbuilding that "was formerly the smoke-house of the ancient farmstead." (Jenkins, 1918: p. 403)

Erich Marks' memories of the amusement complex as it was during the first five years of this century are a most interesting glimpse into the Point's past.

"It was a good 35 minute walk to the Point [from Westchester Avenue]. The road itself was an ordinary country road, wide enough for two wagons to pass, and dirt-surfaced. On each side was a ditch to receive the water which ran off when it rained. The road led through wooded country with no houses to be seen until one reached Clason Point Military Academy.

Almost at the southern end of the road where Gildersleeve Avenue now crosses, was a sharp bend to the left. There stood a wooden post supporting a sign reading 150 Street. About one block south of that was another post and sign which read 149 Street. I am sure the City did not put those signs up. They might have been put there by some farmer in the neighborhood, or by the Clason Point beach owners. [These numbered street assignments can be noted on early twentieth century atlases.]

At the Point there were four different amusement attractions. First was a carousel; then a set of swings, the ones that were shaped like a short canoe in which two people sat facing each other. On the beach, partly built over the water on piles, was the large dance pavillion. It had a dancefloor, a roof over it resting on pillars, and no walls.

East of the pavillion was the bathing beach, and that was what we were really interested in. There must have been a few hundred bathing booths where people could get undressed and put on their bathing suits. The beach itself was not very large, but next to it was a long narrow pier built out to the deeper water. At the end of the pier was a high tower.

I remember the long narrow wooden wagons that lumbered from the Point to Westchester Avenue. They were roofless and cushionless, and the nine or ten passengers sat on wooden benches on each side of the wagon. Who operated these wagons I do not know.... the fare was ten cents." (Marks, 1965: pp. 36-37)

Another early mode of transportation to the Point was by boat. Patrons of the resort could catch one of a line of small boats that sailed from East 134th Street to Clason's Point. The limited accessibility of the Point restrained its early commercial success. The 1908 announcement that a Union Railway Company double track trolley was to run on the new Clason Point Boulevard (Sound View Avenue) created tremendous real estate speculation in the project area. According to newspaper accounts of the time, the old inn was renovated at this time. Plans progressed quickly to install large-scale attractions. Fred Dolle leased ground to erect one of the largest carousels in the United States. Charles B. McKay quickly signed a contract to erect "The Waltzing Wheel." (The Bronx Star, May 1, 1909) According to a building permit (Block #3434/Plan #259), McKay's "revolving riding device" would be constructed on top of 20" x 20" x 40" concrete piers on a plot south of Bronx River Avenue and 300 feet east of White Plains Avenue.

After the opening of the trolley line from Westchester Avenue to the tip of the Point (June 1909) construction and expansion of the recreation complex completely dominated the peninsula. The Bronx Star (June 26, 1909) reported the formation of an organization aimed at increasing the popularity of the now accessible Point. The new organization was composed of people who held concessions at the Point and who were desirous of increasing their business quickly. Officers of this new association, who were either the owners or leasees of Clason Point property, were Joseph Cowan, Thomas E. Coffey, Frederick Dolle, William Berger, Phillip Wold, and James Frank.

Thomas H. Higgs obtained rights from the Leland and Tompkins' heirs to approximately 100 acres and the large house on the southwestern portion of the Point around 1898 and he had established a summer tent colony there by the turn of the century. Wooden platform tent sites were rented out to families who wanted to escape the heat of a city summer. Mr. Higgs' visitors tended to return year after year and a distinct community spirit evolved in this beach-side colony. The compound, known as the Higgs Beach Camping Grounds, revolved around the large, stone and stucco main house that faced the River, situated on a knoll just west of the project boundary at the intersection of Bolton Avenue and Cornell Avenue.\* (See Figure 37) William Higgs

\* Although local historian Arthur Seifert has referred to this house as a Willett family mansion, an 1868 map and notes on a 1927 map indicate that the mansion was the home of J. B. Monnot.

assumed the control of the family business in 1914 and the Higgs family continued to live in the mansion, sharing their telephone with the campers and using the camper's three communal privies for their own. Higgs provided cinder roadways for his campers, organized Labor Day parades, sponsored sporting clubs, and helped maintain the City's District 1 - Division 2 Life Saving Service station on the waterfront. (See Figures 38, 39)

Borough records indicate that Higgs in 1908 sub-leased to the Unionport Yacht Club a small portion of Block #3430 (150 feet west of White Plains Road and 50 feet south of Bronx River Avenue and 5 feet from the sea wall) for a locker house. The foundation construction was listed as large flat stones laid on top of the earth. This locker house and the life saving station might have been just within the Shorehaven Project boundaries but more than likely they were west of the project line. However, Mr. Higgs' "striker pole" which stood 35 feet above ground and 5 feet below ground, was erected within the project boundaries on Block #3443 (Plan #360). Mr. Higgs' daughter, Grace Higgs Reel, currently a resident of Pugsley Avenue, recalls that her father had intended to develop this particular block that falls within the Shorehaven Project area. These aborted plans may explain the 6 inch sewer line laid in Gildersleeve Avenue in 1912. (Grace Higgs Reel, personal communication, October 16, 1986)

Killian's Grove, a picnic and camping facility similar to but smaller than Higgs', was situated north of the Higgs' property on the shore of the Bronx River. During the housing shortage of World War I many owners (in the Higgs' Camping Grounds and Killian's Grove) converted their canvas tent homes into bungalows for year round living. Soon over 240 bungalows, situated on lots one-half the average city-lot size, dotted the area. In 1924 the Leland and Tompkins' heirs took back control of the property and it was redubbed Harding Park, after the then U. S. President. (Seifert, 1973: n.p.; Robbins, 1980: p. 13) The Higgs family moved from the mansion in November of 1923 and soon after that date it was demolished - making way for the laying of Cornell Street. (G. H. Reel, personal communication, October 16, 1986) It is possible to see the ghost print of this mansion on a 1945 aerial photograph. (See Figure 40)

Higgs' business activities were transferred to the lots east of Clinton Stephens' enterprise. Higgs Realty bought the Chicorelli farm (that included Blocks #3446 and #3447), divided the land into small home lots, installed a private 12 inch pipe sewer system, and built a string of bungalows on the southeastern end of Pugsley Avenue. A few of the Camping Grounds' winterized bungalows were moved by Higgs to the west side of Pugsley Avenue. (G. H. Reel, personal communication, October 16, 1986; Final Sewer Maps)

Clinton Stephen's amusement center business progressed rapidly and profitably. Between 1909 and 1935 the Clason Point Park expanded to offer an increasing variety of amenities to the

thousands of visitors. Part of this increased activity was due to the initiation of a ferry service, the Twin City Ferry, that traveled between Clason's Point and College Point in Queens. (Jenkins, 1918: p. 208) "According to a 1912 Billboard Magazine, the [Clason Point] park had outgrown its capacity of 60,000 people (arriving by trolley and 12,000 people (arriving by boat) and was to be enlarged and improved." (Allee et al, 1986: n.p.) On May 2, 1916 Sound View Avenue was officially opened. This modern, bituminous pavement roadway actually overlaid the original Clason's Point Road within the project area. (McNamara, 1984: p. 232) The Clason Point Inn remained the focal point of the Park. (See Figure 41) The Inn can be located on a 1905, 1913, and 1927 Atlas in the middle of the Bronx River Avenue paper street, straddling Blocks #3432 and #3434. Other features were a bathing beach, a two-story frame bath house, a one-story frame lunch room, open pavillions for picnic parties, and rides, including a roller coaster, ferris wheel, and circle swing. Also there was a rifle gallery and amusement booths, including a "Doll Base Ball Game." (Borough Block and Lot Folders: Plan #428-15, #1074, #478, #117; See Figures 32, 42-44) Borough Conveyance Records include a remarkable number of short term leases between Stephens and individual and corporate concessionaires. Gilligan's Palace Casino/Hotel and Dancing Pavillion were particularly favorite attractions at the Park. (See Figures 45-47)

The building permits available for the various (balloon) frame structures erected during this growth period specify pile and pier construction, in part due to the "marshy condition of the ground" and the expressed intent for temporary structures. The specified footings included Chestnut posts and concrete piers. In 1911 Stephens received a city permit to erect a grand ornamental entrance to the Park, see Figure 48, which was based on concrete footings. Major ground disturbances were, however, involved in the excavation and construction of a series of large-scale swimming pools that have existed on the Shorehaven Project property since before 1909. The barbell-shaped swimming/reflecting pool shown on a 1909 postcard was replaced, c. 1912, with a large saltwater pool that was filled with water filtered directly from the River. Nicknamed the "inkwell" because of the water's dark color, it was claimed that this "million gallon pool" was the largest in America. (See Figures 47, 49; Seifert, 1986: n.p.; Ultan, 1979: p. 150) Additional ground disturbances resulting from the Clason Point Park development were for cesspool and sewer line placement. In 1912, on Block #3433 at the intersection of [paper streets] Pugsley Avenue and Bronx River Avenue, Stephens' construction of a bath house necessitated the placement of a 6 inch sewer line, a connection with an existing cess pool, and the construction of a new concrete (8'x16'x8') cesspool, equipped with a centrifical pump. This one particular record is just an indicator of what was, undoubtedly, numerous such placements.

Kane's Park was another amusement center on Clason's Point that was within the Shorehaven Project property. Situated on



Blocks #3436 and #3437 and in operation by 1906, the two-story hotel, bar, and amusement center was owned by Patrick Kane. (See Figures 50-51) "The large facility, which was said to accommodate up to 10,000 customers, featured dining, dancing, and was a popular spot for special parties and receptions." (Allee et al, 1986: n.p.) Erich Marks memories from a 1906 visit to the Point include impressions of Kane's Park:

"On the other side of the road was Kane's picnic park and casino where many Bronx singing societies, gymnastic societies, bowling clubs and social clubs held clambakes, picnics, and all sorts of games and outings." (Marks, 1965: p. 36)

The Kane's frame building was erected on a deep foundation of fieldstone, which was visible for some years after the building burned in the early 1940s. (Wuttge, 1966: pp. 26-28; See Figure 52) Local residents recall that when the Holy Cross church was just forming the church meetings were held in the Kane's Park basement and that the wet conditions of this basement required boots and the use of wooden crates on the floor for a dry surface.

Newspaper articles and editorials of the second decade of this century reveal that not all the Point patrons were sedate couples and quiet families. In 1913 a special police patrol was assigned to the Point to halt the disruptions created by a "gang of toughs known as the Bergens." The Bergens had been visiting the Point on Sundays, wrecking booths and terrorizing anyone who opposed them. (Seifert, 1973: n.p.) A Bronx Home News editorial in 1920 called for a crusade against the loose morals of the Point patrons:

"Another practice widely condemned is that of dancing while in bathing suits. This form of amusement came into vogue with the popular dancing craze which swept the country a few years ago.

Unfortunately the Bronx beaches are not under the strict surveillance in force at Coney Island, Rockaway and Rye Beach. Policewomen patrol these beaches and arrest those who do not conduct themselves properly. The girls in scanty bathing suits are given a severe rebuke and forced to don their clothes.

Perhaps there is no greater danger to the morals of the young girl than that hidden by the seeming hospitality of the seductive bungalows." (Bronx Home News, 1920: 5:1)

During the 1920s and early 1930s the Clason Point community remained basically rural and the amusement Park continued its business. (See Figure 36) In 1923 the Aviation Volunteer Fire Department was formed, named in honor of the "Patterson Air

Strip" that reportedly existed, in part, on Blocks #3454 and #3455. (Seifert, personal communication, October 16, 1986; The New Yorker, 1975: pp. 27-28) In 1931 the Park's advertisements continued to tout the historic inn ("most ancient in the City") and the Palace Casino ("largest dancing pavillion in city"). Newly added features included a gasoline station and a concrete promenade from the entrance to a 1,000 foot pier. (See Figure 53) This promenade is apparent in a 1945 aerial photograph, see Figure 40. It was during this same time period that the city increased its public sewer service to the project area - a 30 foot wide sewer easement, roughly corresponding to the de-mapped Bronx River Avenue, bisects the southern blocks of the Shorehaven Beach facility (Plan #11493) and another easement with a regulator chamber/interceptor service extends the full length of White Plains Road in the project area. Certain lines of the early, private sewers are still in use. (Sewer Department Final Maps) Although not dated to this same time period, the Borough's Topographic Bureau plans detail the municipal water pipe service in the project area. These include:

- 4 inch WP - intersection of Cornell Ave./White Plains Rd.
- 8 " WP - on White Plains Rd. at Bronx River Ave.
- 12 " WP - on Bronx River Ave. at White Plains Rd.
- 8 " WP - intersection of Pugsley Ave./Soundview Ave.
- 6 " WP - on Betts south of Bronx River Ave.

The decline of the amusement Park began after World War I. Prohibition and competition from the Starlight Park at West Farms were major factors in the failing business that could not then survive the effects of the Depression. The Clason's Point Amusement Park was closed in 1935. Local residents remember playing as children in the overgrown fields of the Park, peering into the remaining houses and the historic inn, and scrounging for scrap metal and mementoes along the abandoned midway. (Seifert, 1973: n.p.; See Figure 40)

The ferry service that operated from the terminus of the trolley line at the tip of Clason's Point became obsolete after the completion of the Whitestone Bridge (1939). The ferry slips were removed and the adjoining Kaiser's restaurant and boathouse were vacated. (Marks, 1965: p. 37; Seifert, personal communication, October 16, 1986; See Figure 54) By the mid-1940s a boatyard/marina was operating from the waterfront parcels, Blocks #3435 and possibly the southern portion of #3436. (See Figure 52)

"Sometime in 1947 Mr. Mal Deitch and Dr. Joseph Goodstein took notice of the old site, the overgrown fields and few remaining houses made a sad picture. With a group of investors they purchased the land with intentions to build modern housing. A grander plan developed and a Beach Club with pools and sporting facilities was built to cater to the needs of the working business people of the Bronx." (Seifert, 1973: n.p.) The creation of the Shorehaven Beach Club obliterated most of the remnants of the Clason Point Park. The 1949 demolition of the historic inn

created quite a stir in the community. A New York Post Homes News article, entitled "Urge Restoration of Historic House," reported that "Clason Point residents today called for halt in demolition of a house erected in 1643 by Thomas Cornell and a band of settlers. The high towered mansion, overlooking the East River, was at one time known as 'Gilligan's Clason Point Inn.'" (March 23, 1949: 2)

The Shorehaven Beach facility, eventually serving approximately 10,000 dues paying members, still dominates the Clason Point landscape. Open in the summer months from Memorial Day to Labor Day, the facilities, which were expanded in various construction episodes, include tennis, racquetball and handball courts, two large in-ground swimming pools, a band shell for evening entertainment, and the eating areas include a cafeteria, a candy store, and a snack bar. There are also two substantial buildings in addition to the one-story entrance arcade on Soundview Avenue at Newman Avenue: one, visible from Soundview Avenue, is the men's lockers and changing rooms and the other, a two-story red brick structure that backs up to White Plains Road, is the women's lockers and changing rooms and the administrative office of the club. (Allee, et al, 1986:n.p.; See Photographs) It is in the area south and east of the wading pool where there is a cluster of one-story, slab-foundation frame shed-lockers that the historic inn was most probably located. Neighborhood informants feel that a few of the larger trees that lie between the shed-lockers and the band shell are survivors of the tree-lined midway that was a part of the Amusement Park and adjoined the historic inn lot.

The Clason's Point peninsula slowly changed from a rural community to a neighborhood of two-family homes and large apartment complexes. The blocks immediately adjacent to the Shorehaven Project property were developed in the 1940s and the area still hosts these low-rise, low-density structures. "In 1954, Sound View Houses, a publicly aided housing project with 1,260 apartment units, was completed to the north of Lacombe Avenue in the secondary study area. During the 1960s, the secondary study area was rapidly developed with several other large public housing projects." (Allee, et al, 1986: n.p.) These complexes include: the James Monroe Houses, Jamie Towers, Leland House, Carol Gardens, and the Bruckner House.

The marsh and mud flat filling that was begun by the city early in the century continued, changing the topography of the neck. The shoreline was not greatly expanded but the low-lying marsh areas were stabilized. Residents of Pugsley Avenue recall the mid-1930s City Sanitation Department land filling of "natural areas" on the west side of the Point. Originally a swampy tract, Sound View Park, which adjoins the study area to the west, was acquired by New York City in 1937 and subsequently filled in. New York City Parks Commissioner Robert Moses initiated a plan soon after 1945 to raze the "Soundview slums" that occupied Harding

Park. His condemnation efforts were thwarted but he was successful in dumping truckloads of rockfill off the western shore of the Clason's Point. Moses' rock and debris seawall permanently altered a portion of the Bronx River shoreline. Recent on-site soil borings, conducted by Olko Engineering of Manhattan, indicate that "very heavy fill" overburden is as much as 30' 6" deep in the most southwestern portion of the project site (Boring #34), revealing the degree of introduced overburden in the White Plains Road vicinity. (Steve Olko, Olko Engineering, personal communication, 6/30/87)

### Conclusions

The Shorehaven Project area served as one of the very earliest rural settlement centers of southern New York under Dutch control. For over 225 years the Clason's Point peninsula was a working farm with the original homestead intact on what is now the Shorehaven Project site. The neck's late nineteenth century development as an amusement park preserved the seventeenth century farm house and a number of its outbuildings. Most probably, a substantial sample of the "backyard" cultural deposits usually found at a private home of this time period was also preserved. The project site's historical archaeological potential rests on this preserved early home site. Although one Bronx historian has indicated that the project's historic home site was once the headquarters of General Howe and such a military/domestic site would be of immense value to archaeological research, the record does not seem to validate this claim and a field investigation on the basis of Revolutionary War significance alone would not be tenable.

Historical archaeology of individual home lots, or backyards, is often a standard procedure when that yard is associated with a significant historic episode and/or the archaeological resources of that time period have not been fully examined and/or it is an intact example of an important developmental stage in history. The cisterns, privies, and wells that were a ubiquitous part of home lots in New York City during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early to mid nineteenth centuries are invaluable time capsules for the anthropologist and historian. As a common practice, cisterns, privies, and wells - once their serviceability was exhausted - became repositories for the household trash, such as broken plates, wine bottles, and damaged tools. An analysis of this household detritus, in conjunction with a history of the household's ethnicity, occupation, socio-economic status, can reveal details on and insights into the everyday life of the city's past. Archaeological research into the refuse deposits of the Cornell/Willett/Clason home would greatly increase our understanding of the early farm homes of southern New York and our appreciation of the evolution from frontier home to a rural home site within an urban network.



The turn of the century amusement park related construction was, in the majority, confined to wooden and concrete footings that, although they entailed subsurface disturbances, were not as disruptive as deep foundation construction methods. To date, the records indicate that the only pre-1950 deep foundation construction within the project area was on Block #3436. Cesspools and a private drainage system were installed on the Shorehaven Project site and these necessitated subsurface disturbance. It is estimated that these below grade activities did not totally destroy the backyard deposits - privies, cisterns, wells - of the c. 1643 - 1900 Cornell/Willett/Clason home.

Twentieth century use of the Shorehaven Project site that encompasses the early homestead parcel involved the excavation for (at a minimum) three swimming pools and changing rooms and the grading for ball courts. However, the early home site, which roughly corresponds to the route of paper streets Bronx River Avenue, has not been greatly altered by the Beach Club's development and recreational activities.

A possible historical resource in the study area is the house site of the Higgs Mansion, now covered by Cornell Avenue. As stated on the preceding page, homelot archaeology of poorly documented growth periods in the evolution of a metropolis can reveal patterns of life and adjustment to this changing environment. The deposits associated with such an impressive and commanding home, situated outside the city but within the urban system, could reveal how a family of a specific socio-economic level interacted with the city's market economy. Currently, the legalities of landholdings within this Harding Park section of Clason's Point are still somewhat in question. Although not planned and apparently not necessary, if, in the future, the Shorehaven Project necessitates subsurface activities (e.g. water and sewer placements) on Cornell Avenue between Blocks #3443 and #3430 - immediately west of the project site - then an assessment of the particular life span and condition of the Higgs Mansion, not a complete Phase 1A study, may be necessary to determine the archaeological sensitivity of this house site.

## VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Clason's Point was occupied from Early Archaic to early historic times by Native Americans. The Shorehaven Project area could provide crucial information on prehistoric culture processes of cultural change, filling in the large gaps in the archaeological record for southern New York, and in the sometimes contradictory and biased accounts of the early historic European writers. There is documented evidence of Native American burials being recovered from Clason's Point. Native American interments have usually been recovered in clusters from sites that were repeatedly exploited over time. There is strong potential for locating Native American burials in the project site area. Professionally excavated burials can add greatly to our understanding of Native

American diet, health and population characteristics as well. It is known that the peninsula was farmed but federally funded studies have shown that farm plowing practices do not totally destroy aboriginal sites. (Talmadge, Val and Olga Chesler, 1977, "The Importance of Small, Surface and Disturbed Sites as a Source of Significant Archaeological Data," Cultural Resource Management Studies. Washington, D.C.: Interagency Archeological Services.)

It is essential that all localities on the project site not previously disturbed by swimming pool excavation, utility placement, and deep foundation building be tested by a professional archaeological survey team to determine the presence and extent of aboriginal activity. The methodology and extent of such fieldwork would of course be (1) determined by the degree of subsurface disturbance of the proposed housing units, slab and/or spread footing pile construction on the 1' to 10' of introduced fill, and the placement of new sewer lines (i.e., the storm sewer proposed for Block #3435); and (2) be submitted in writing and subject to approval by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (hereinafter referred to as NYCLPC).

As was discussed in the text and shown in Figure 19, the project study area, or secondary impact zone, also possesses a great degree of prehistoric potential. Certain sites of sensitivity will not be secondarily impacted due to the extensive and protective mantle of fill (i.e., the 0.5 acre parcel of public land west of project site). However, extensive subsurface activities that arise from this proposed development and that take place outside the project site boundaries but within the identified archaeologically sensitive parcel (see page 16), should involve consideration for archaeological potential (i.e., the utility placement on the eastern end of Cornell Ave.) The extent of the developer's impact on the secondary study area should be assessed in terms of site-specific archaeological concerns and be submitted for review and approval by the NYCLPC.

Portions of the c. 1650 Cornell/Willett/Clason farmhouse stood on Clason's Point, facing the East River, for 300 years. Situated on the proposed Shorehaven Project site, this early home existed during the Dutch control of the City and harbored some of The Bronx's first settlers. As a working farm, Clason's Point was typical of the eighteenth and nineteenth century rural activities that were concentrated north of the metropolitan center. It is very probable that household deposits from 225 years of this occupation have survived under the Shorehaven Beach Club picnic grounds. It is possible that a portion of the structure's foundation is still intact under ground. It is strongly recommended that fieldwork be conducted to locate and study the Cornell/Willett/Clason household deposits - cisterns, wells, privies; and, it is recommended that such fieldwork attempt to locate and study the structural remains of the early house and home-lot outbuildings. The fieldwork methodology should be designed by a SOPA certified archaeologists and is subject to review and approval by the NYCLPC.



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Figure 1

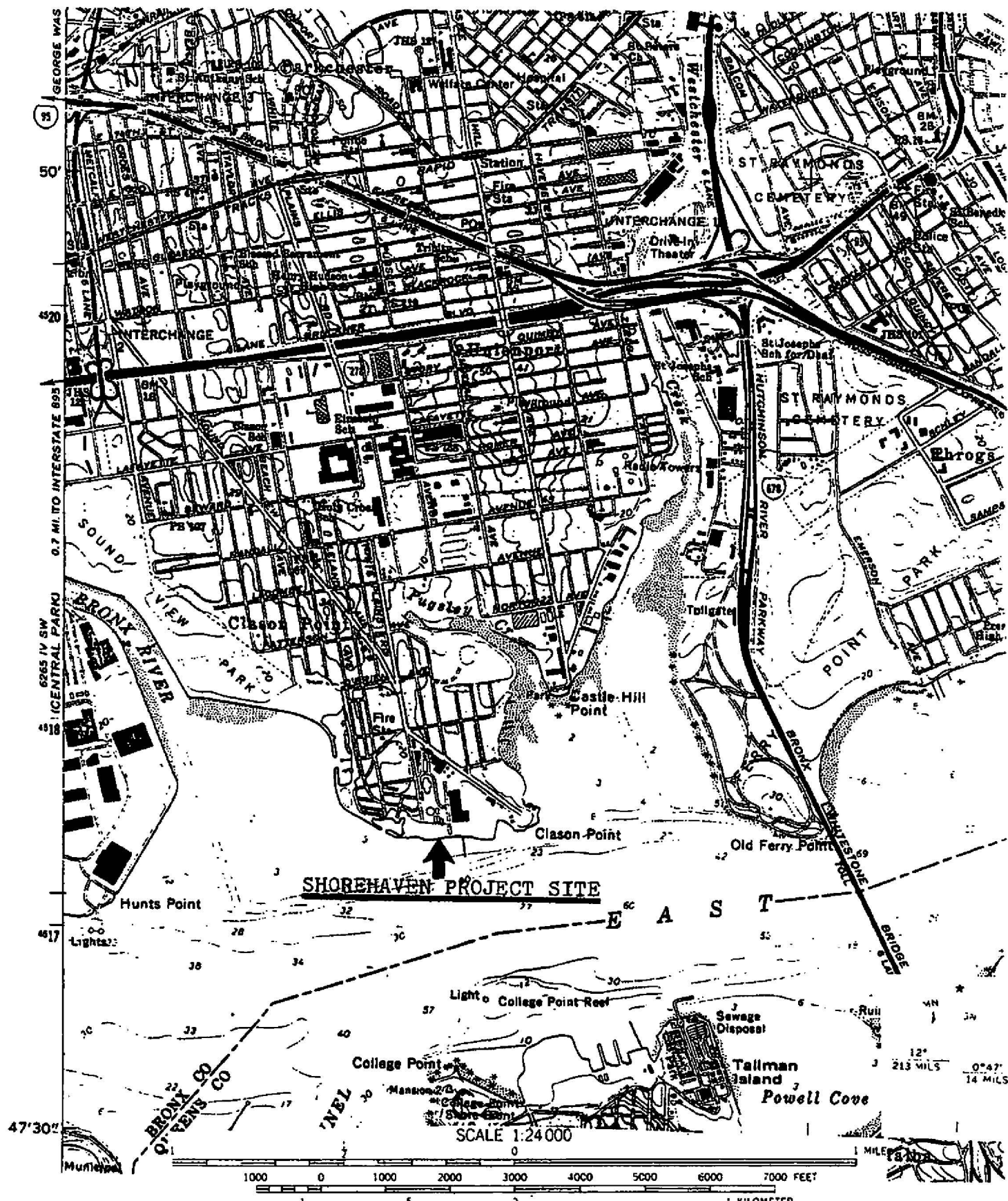




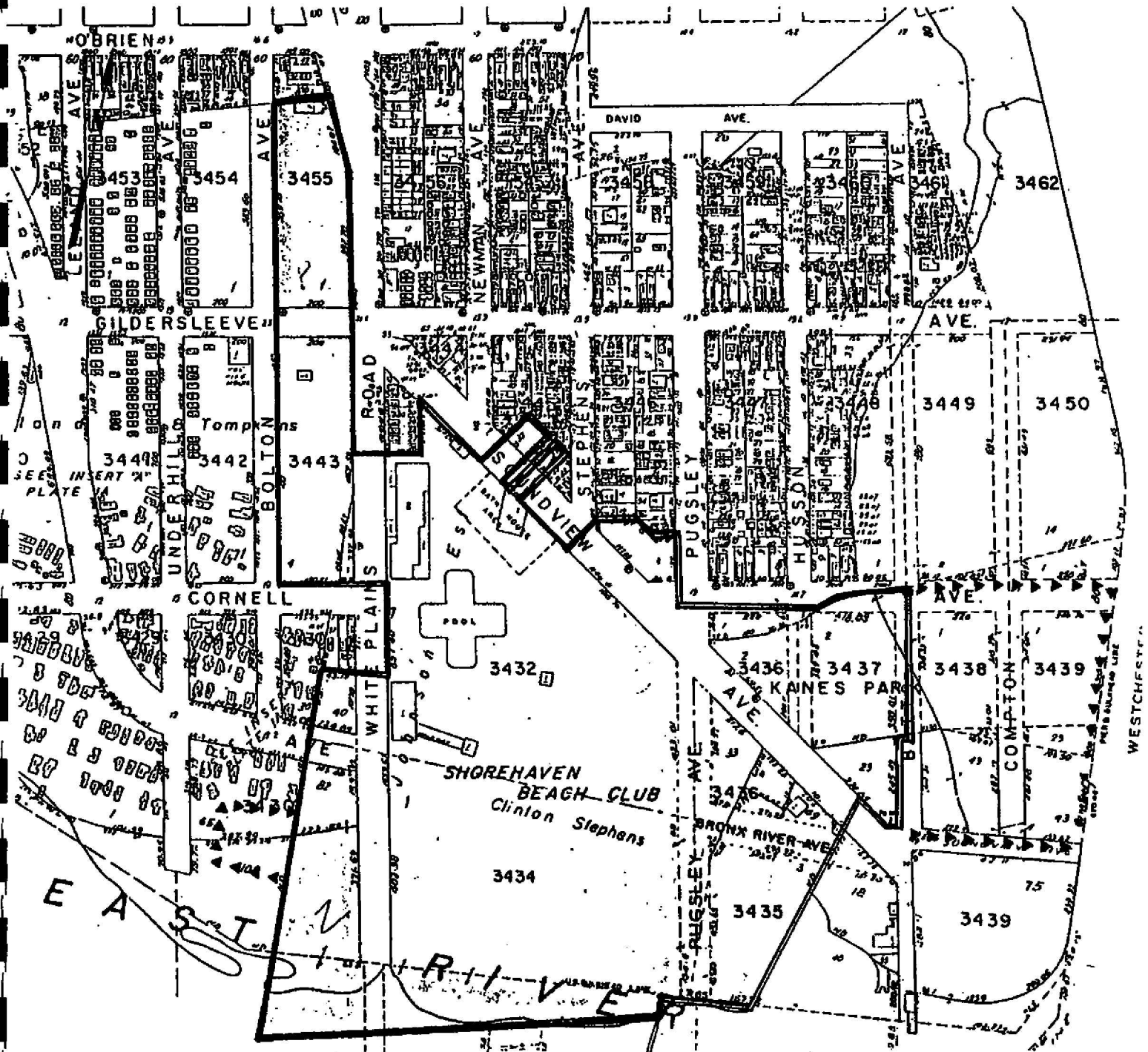
Figure 2

Map provided by Soundview Associates,  
Company.

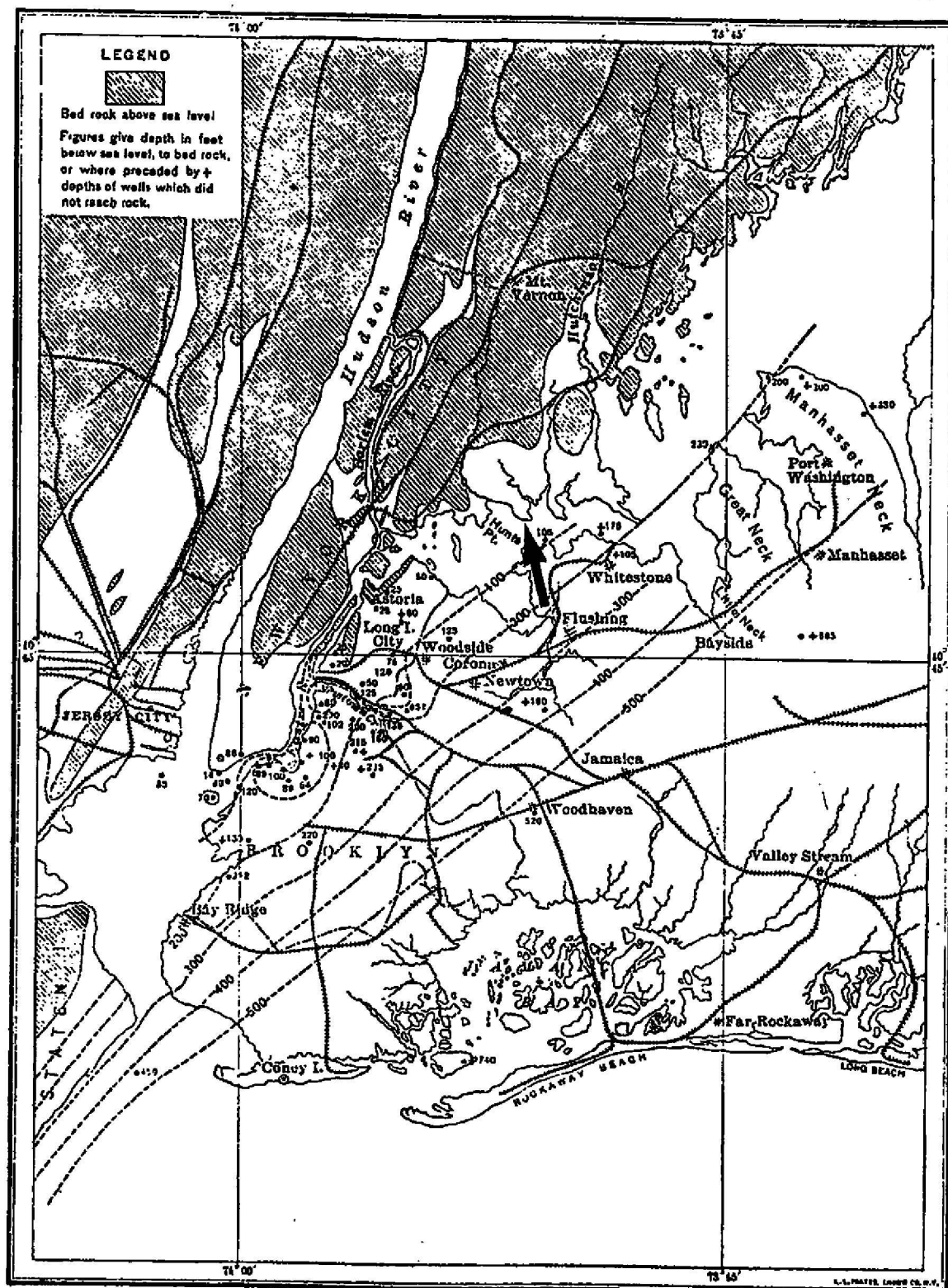
### Shorehaven Project Site Area

◀ ◀ approximate location of publicly owned land to  
be improved by developer

### SITE PLAN



## MAP II



MAP SHOWING DATA BEARING ON THE POSITION OF BED ROCK  
IN WESTERN LONG ISLAND, NEW YORK, AND VICINITY.

**By A. C. Veatch.**

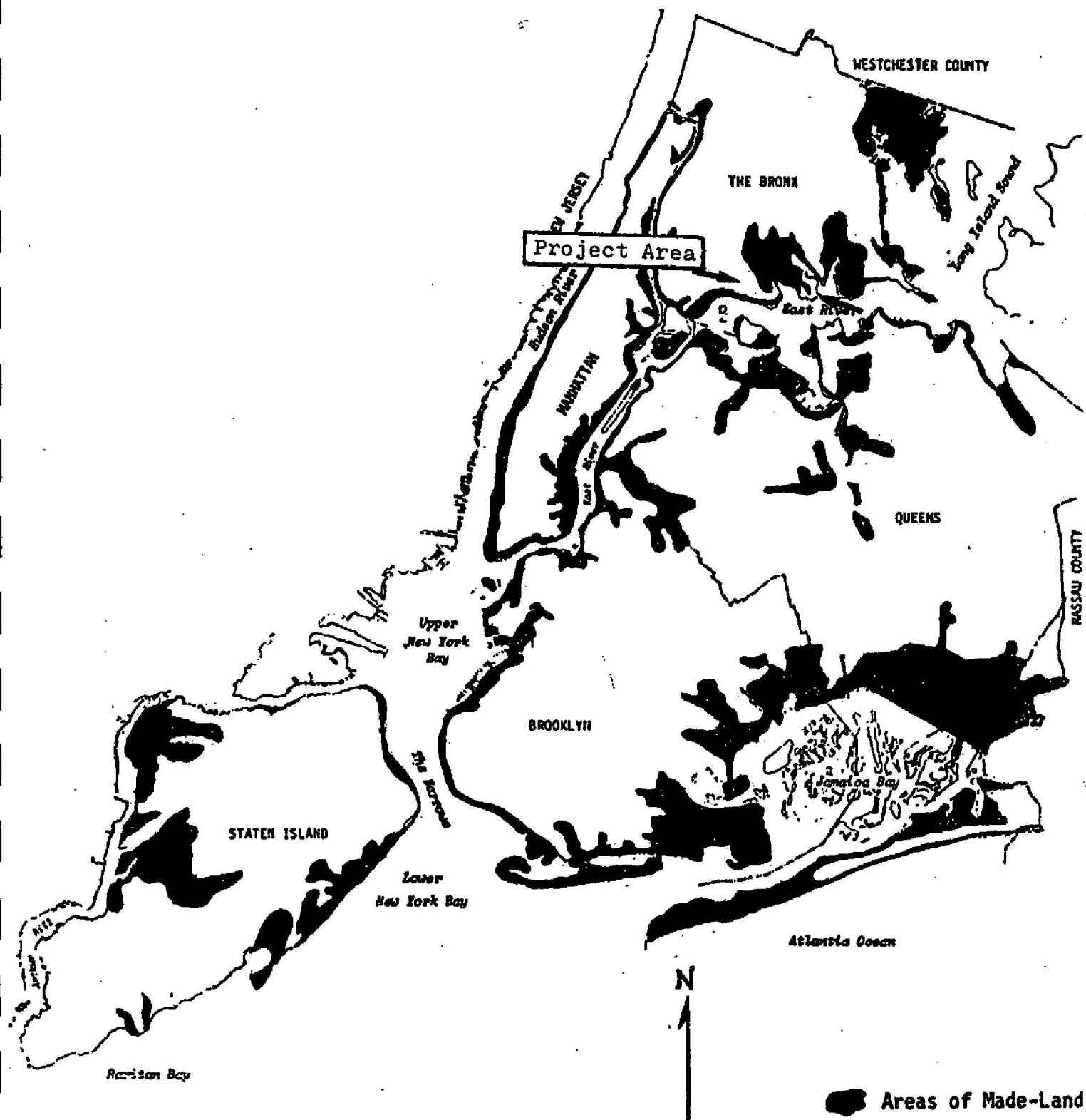
1004.

### Scale

**10 miles**

Figure 4

Photocopied from Lenik, 1986:p. 10  
(Horenstein, 1980:p. 9)



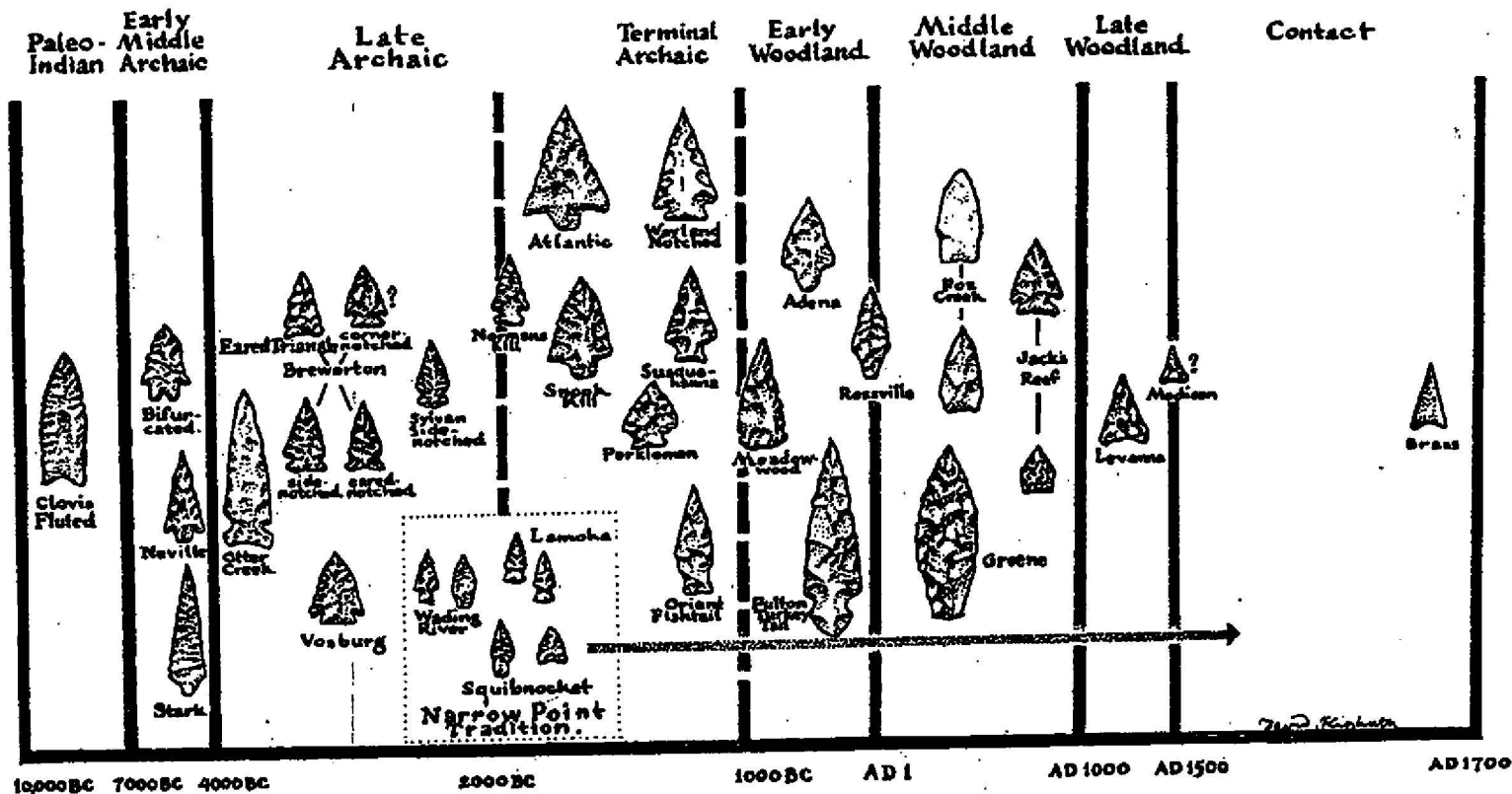


Figure 2. Sequence of projectile point types in Connecticut

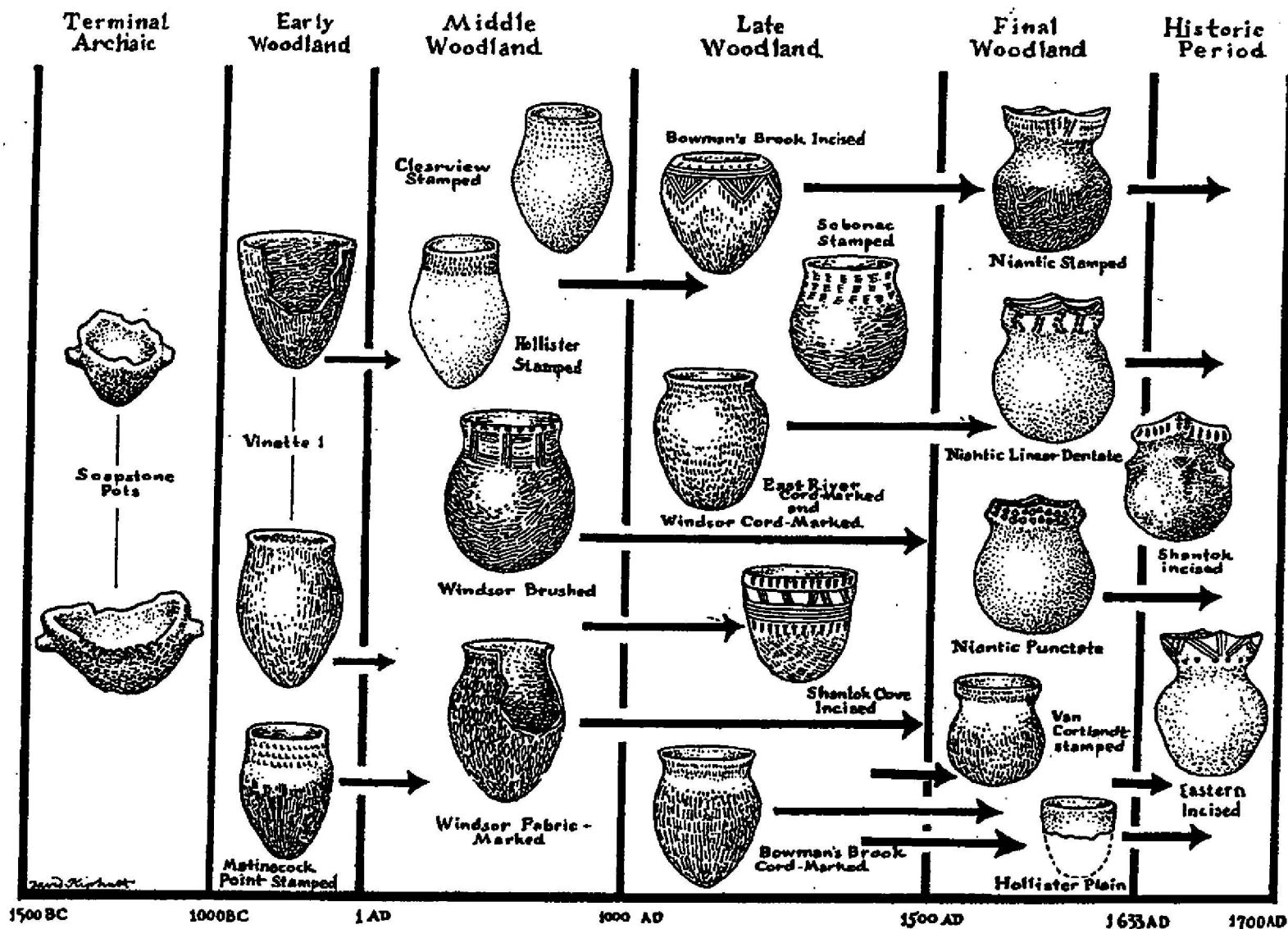
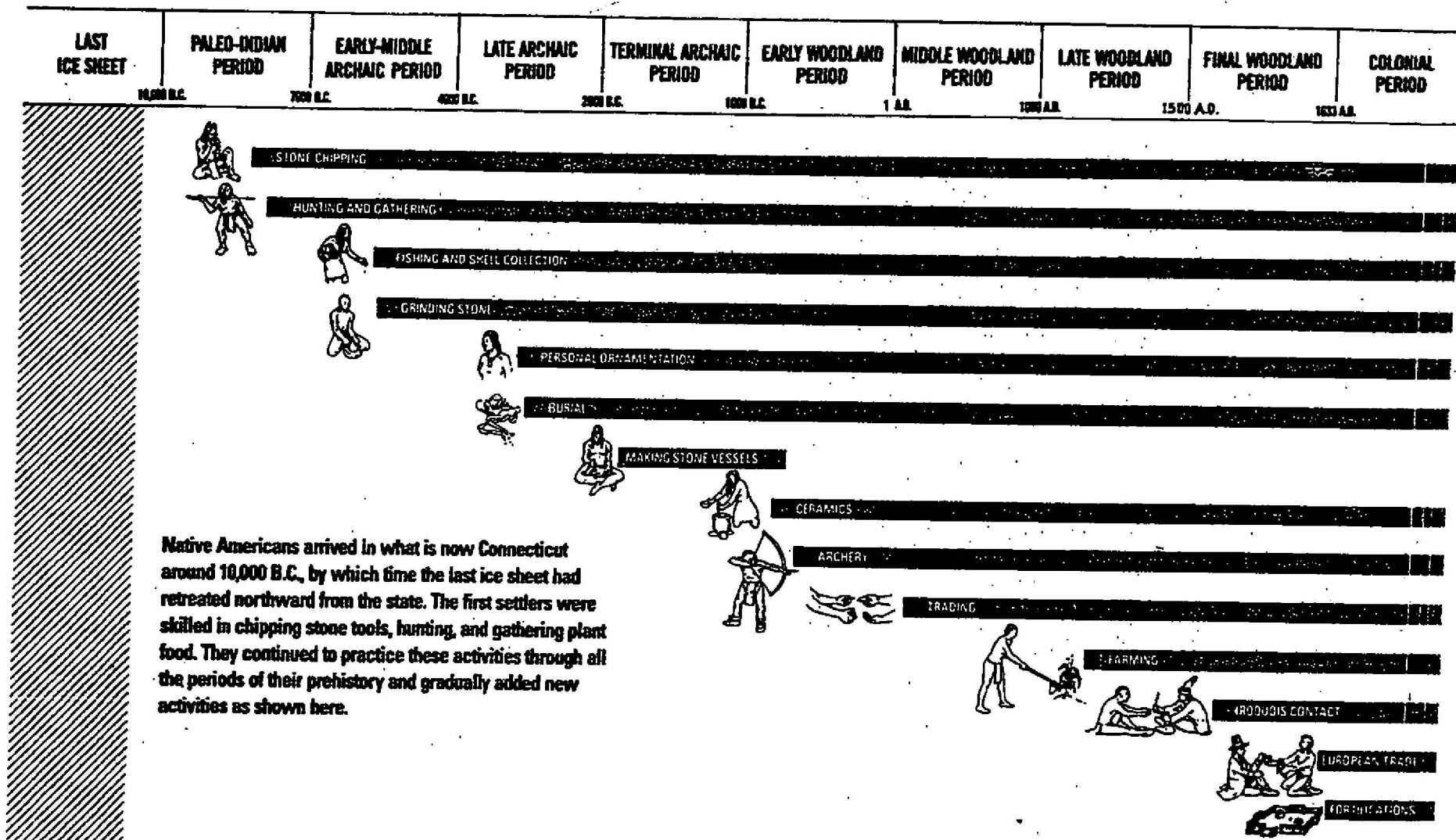


Figure 3. Sequence of pottery types in Connecticut

# PREHISTORY OF CONNECTICUT'S NATIVE AMERICANS



Photocopied from Rouse, 1984

Figure 7

Figure 1. Chronological chart at the entrance to the present Connecticut exhibit.





Photocopied from  
Bolton, 1922: Map VII, D

Figure 9

— project site, approximate boundaries



Photocopied from Smith, 1950: p. 107

Figure 10

1950

SMITH: THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF COASTAL NEW YORK

107

TABLE 1

SEQUENCE OF CULTURES IN THE COASTAL AREA

		CENTRAL NEW YORK	SOUTHEASTERN NEW YORK	CONNECTICUT AND EASTERN LONG ISLAND	
HIS- TORIC	1700	IROQUOIS ASPECT	Massapeag focus	Atlantic focus	SHANTOK ASPECT
	1600				
	1400				
	1100				
LATE PREHISTORIC PERIOD		OWASCO ASPECT	EAST RIVER ASPECT	WINDSOR ASPECT (continued)	
		Castle Creek focus	Clasons Point focus	Sebonac focus	
		Canan- dalgua focus	Bowmans Brook focus		
INTERMEDIATE PERIOD		VINE VALLEY ASPECT	WINDSOR ASPECT	Clearview focus	
	700			Clearview focus	Clearview focus
ARCHAIC PERIOD		LAURENTIAN ASPECT		North Beach focus	
		Lamoka focus		Orient focus and North-Beach-like focus	
PRECERAMIC HORIZON					

"Sound View and Leland Avenue site,  
from Sound View Avenue.

Clasons Point  
Bronx  
New York

Photo by Edward F. Coffin, 1918"

Plate VIII  
Skinner, 1919

Photograph Courtesy of Museum of the American  
Indian, Heye Foundation



Figure 12

"Arrow points, celt, and pipe fragments.

Cat. #s: 8/6861, 8/6968, 8/4465

Clasons Point  
Bronx  
New York

Photo by Alanson B. Skinner, 1918"

Photograph courtesy of Museum of the  
American Indian, Heye Foundation

Plate XI from Skinner, 1919



Figure 13

"Pottery Jar.

Sub-Iroquois  
Clasons Point  
Bronx  
New York

Photo by Alanson B. Skinner, 1918"

Photograph courtesy of Museum of the American  
Indian, Heye Foundation

From Skinner, 1919





Figure 14

Photocopied from Skinner, 1919: Plate XIII

CONTR. MUS. AMER. INDIAN, HEYER FOUND'N

VOL. V, NO. 4, PL. XIII



SHERDS OF SUB-IROQUOIS VESSELS FROM CLASONS POINT

Figure 15

"Bone awls, bead, and fish hook.

Cat. #s: 8/4460, 8/4987, 8/6977, 8/4458,  
8/7204, 8/6840.

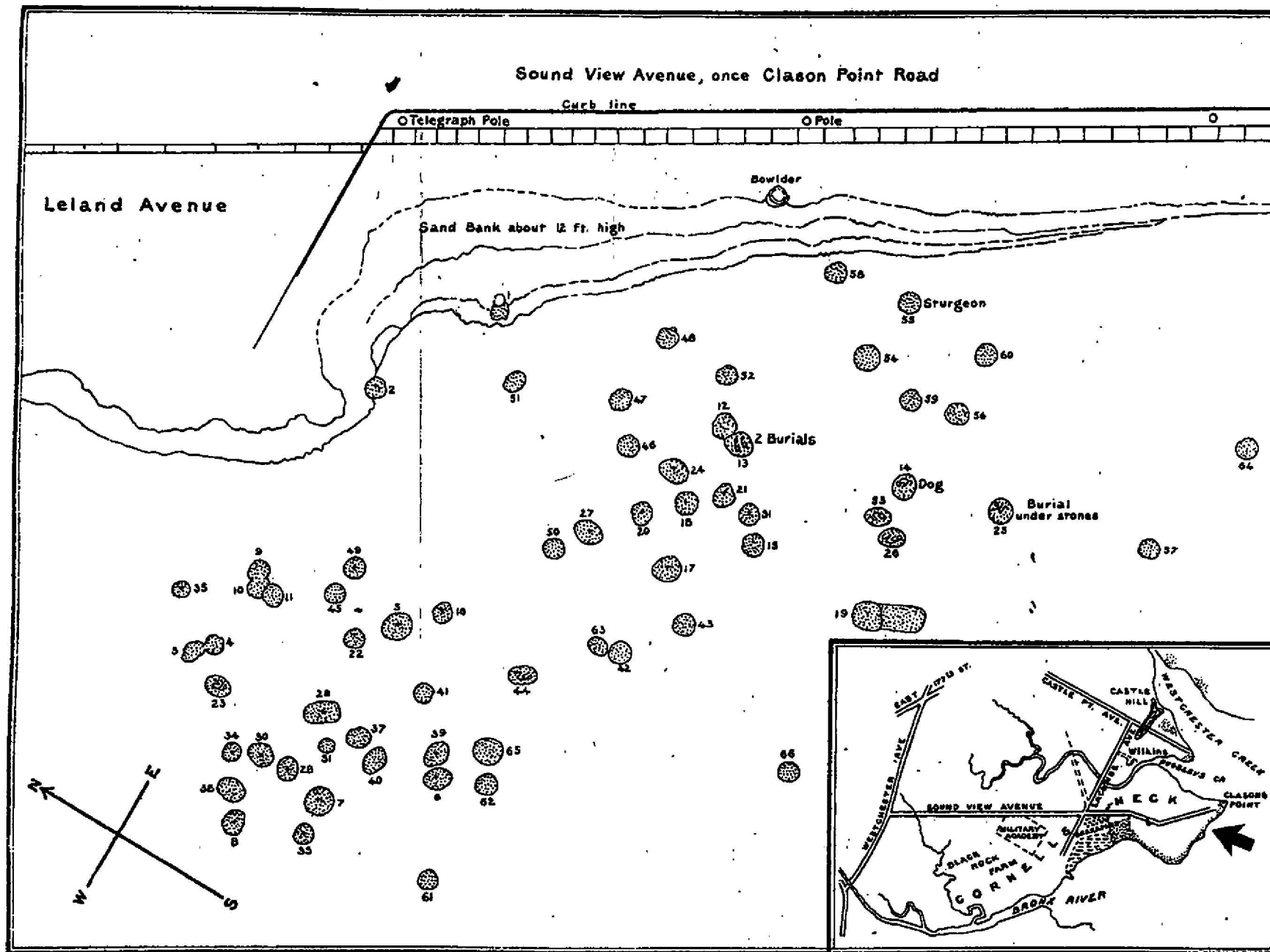
Clasons Point  
Bronx  
New York

Photo by Alanson B. Skinner, 1918"

Photograph courtesy of the Museum of the  
American Indian, Heye Foundation

Plate X, Skinner, 1919





SITE OF THE SIWANUY INDIAN VILLAGE OF SNAKAPINS AT CLASON'S POINT, FROM THE SURVEY BY REGINALD PELHAM BOLTON  
 SCALE, ABOUT 33 FEET TO THE INCH

Photocopied from Skinner, 1919: Plate IX

Figure 16

Photocopied from Grumet, 1981: p. 69

Figure 17

—Trail

/// Planting Areas and Old Fields

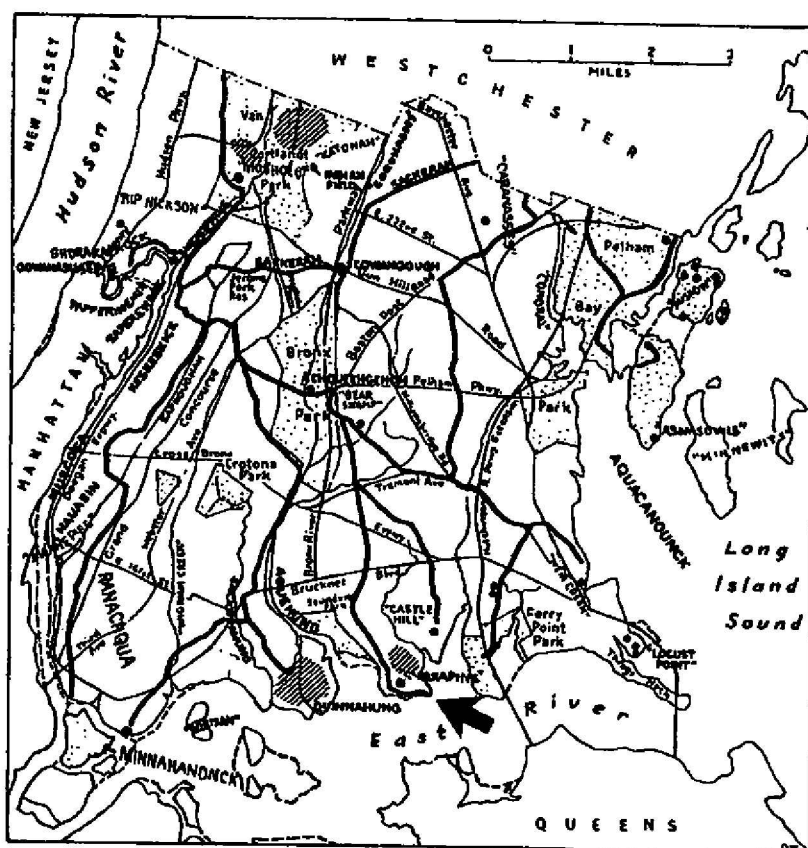
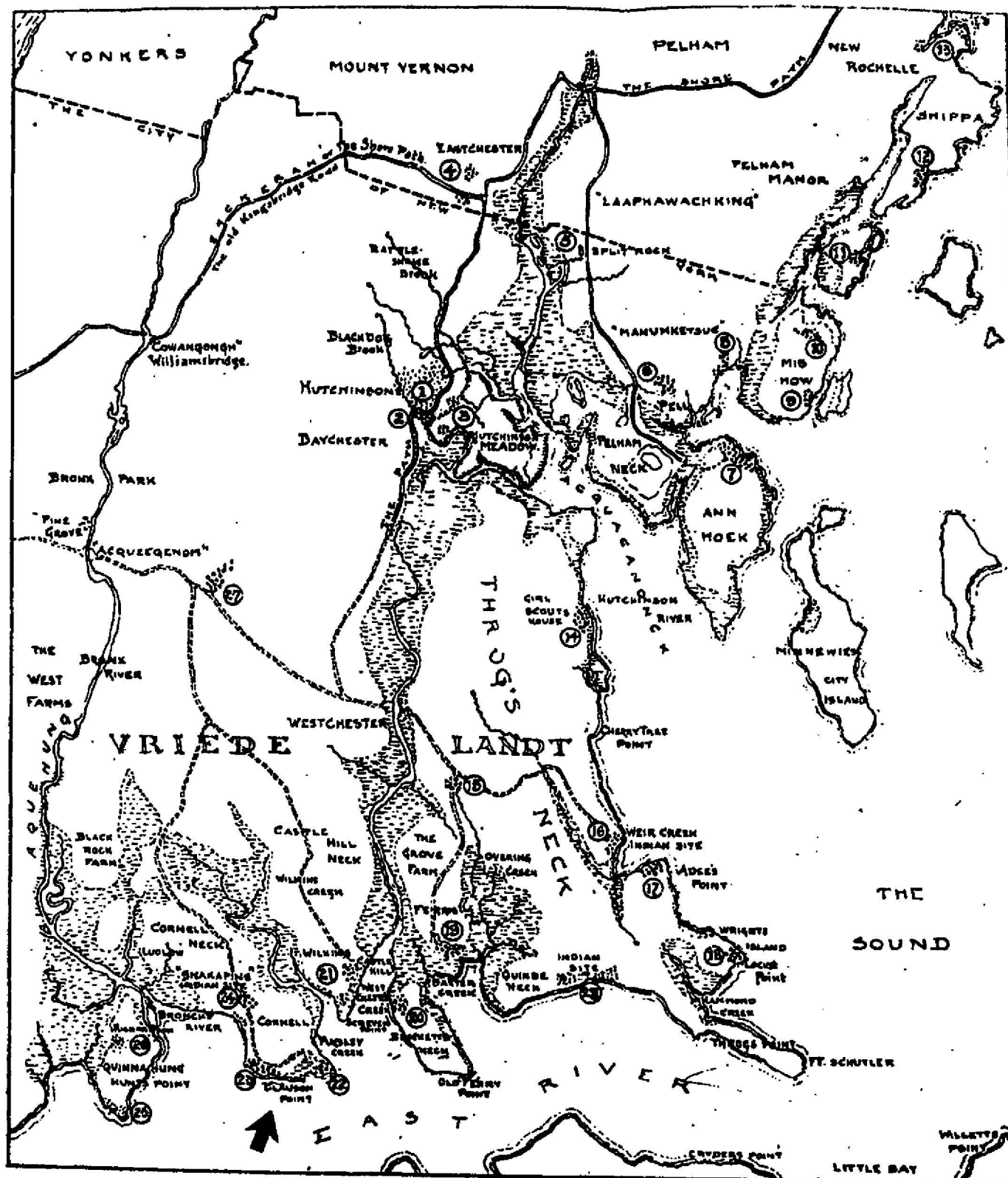


Figure 18

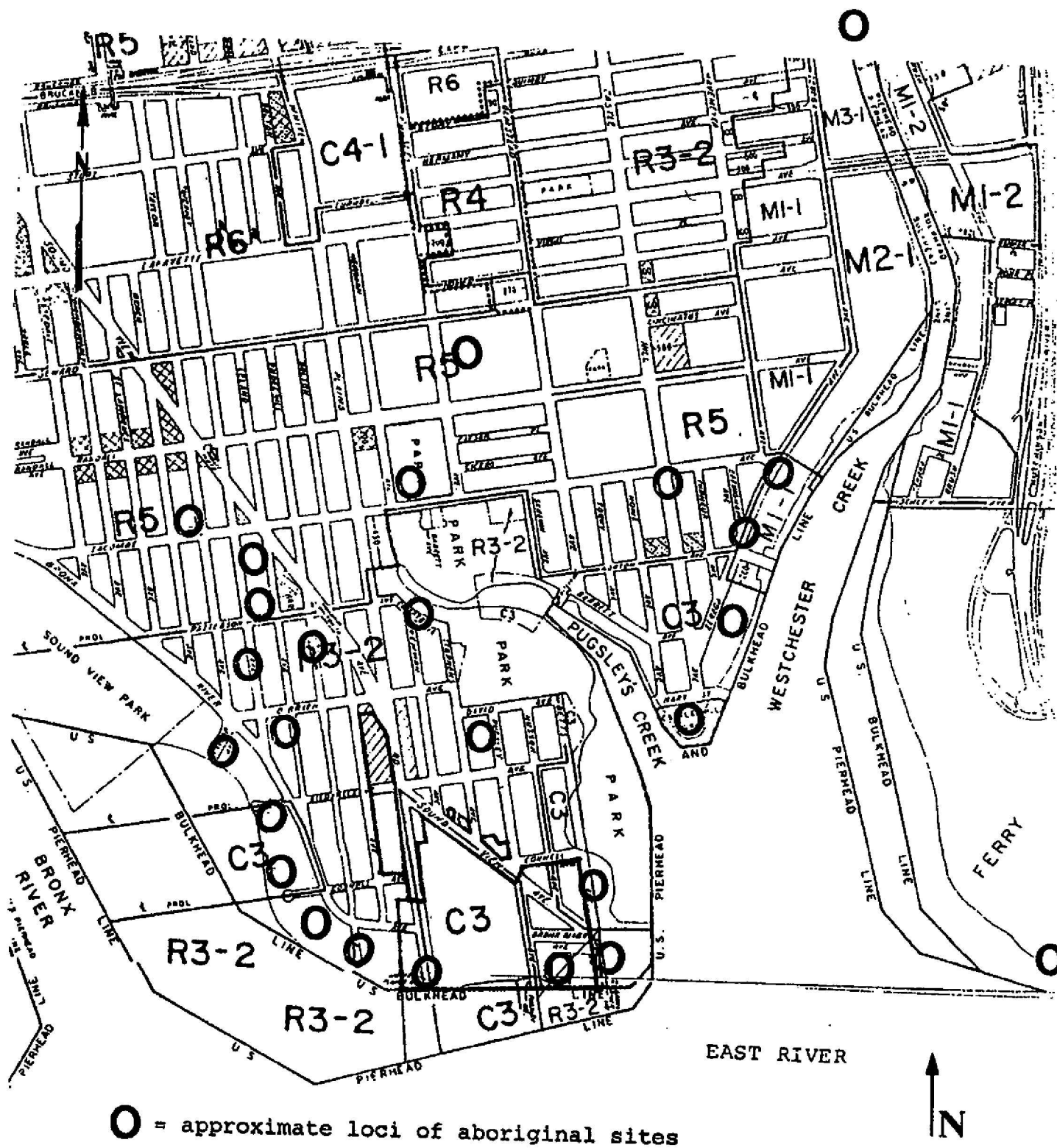
Photocopied from Bolton, 1934: n.p.



Base Map provided by Soundview Associates,  
Company.

Figure 19

ZONING MAP



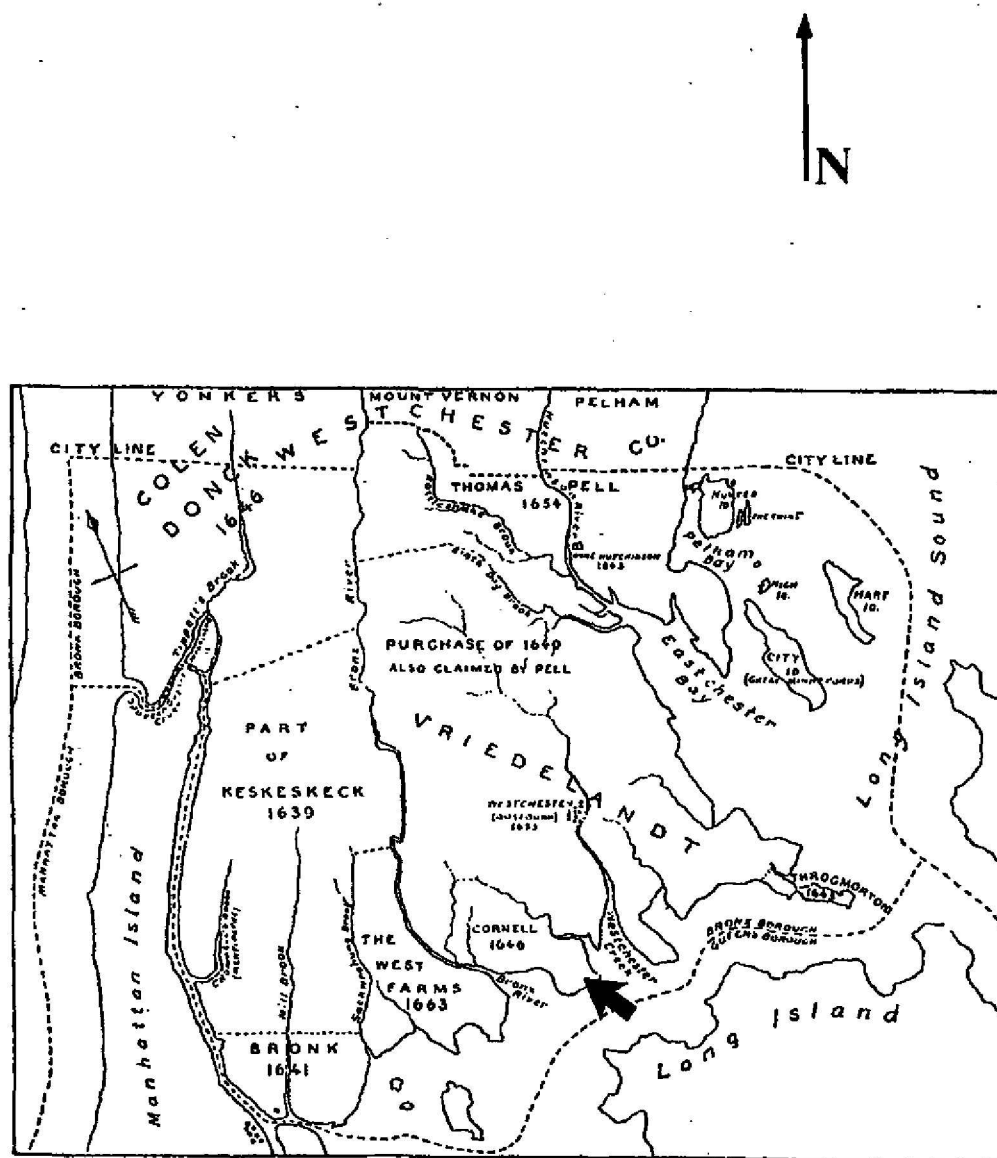


## Figure 2



Figure 21

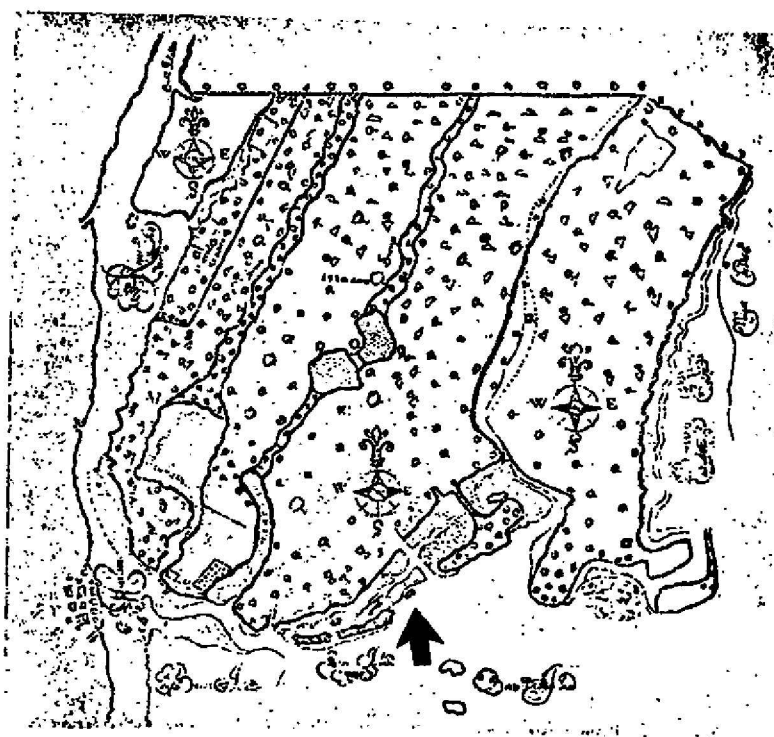
Photocopied from Jenkins, 1918: n.p.



The Borough at the End of the Dutch Period.

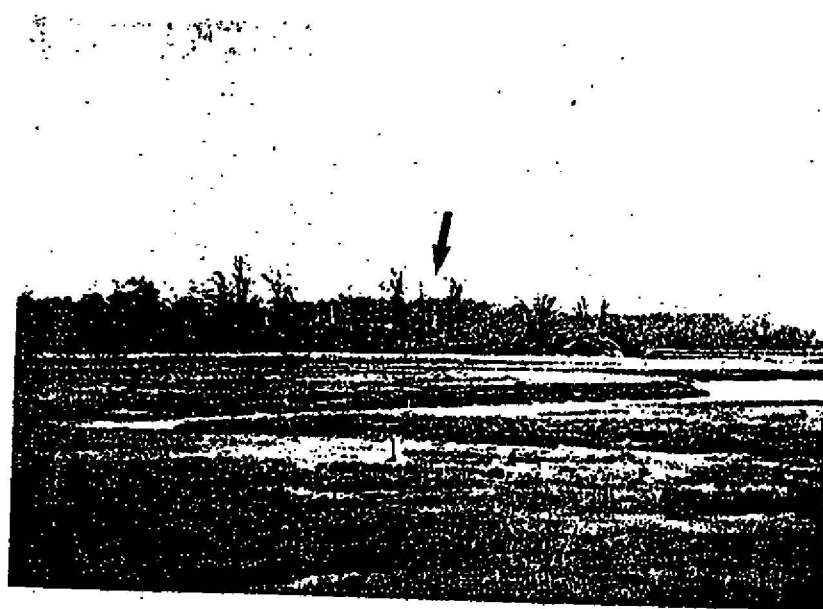
Figure 22

Photocopied from Jenkins, 1918: n.p.



Map of Bronx Neck. Patent of 1676.

Photocopied from Jenkins, 1918: n.p.



"The Black Rock" on Cornell's Neck.

Figure 24

Photocopied from Jenkins, 1918: n.p.



Near the Mouth of Pugsley's Creek.

\* Air photo of 1922 indicates Sound View Ave. in right foreground. Bottom center the wagons of cartman Velente are excavating the foundations for Holy Cross Church. A few newly built houses are seen on Beach and St Lawrence Aves. Randall Ave on the left is just a dirt pathway. On the top center are the main buildings of the Academy. Beyond them the fields of the Orsini and Decorla farms. Sheep can be seen grazing on the extreme right on pastures of the Schmidt farm.



Photocopied from Seifert, 1973: n.p.

Figure 25



Figure 26

1838. "Map of Clason's Point" has been reduced by 10 per cent.

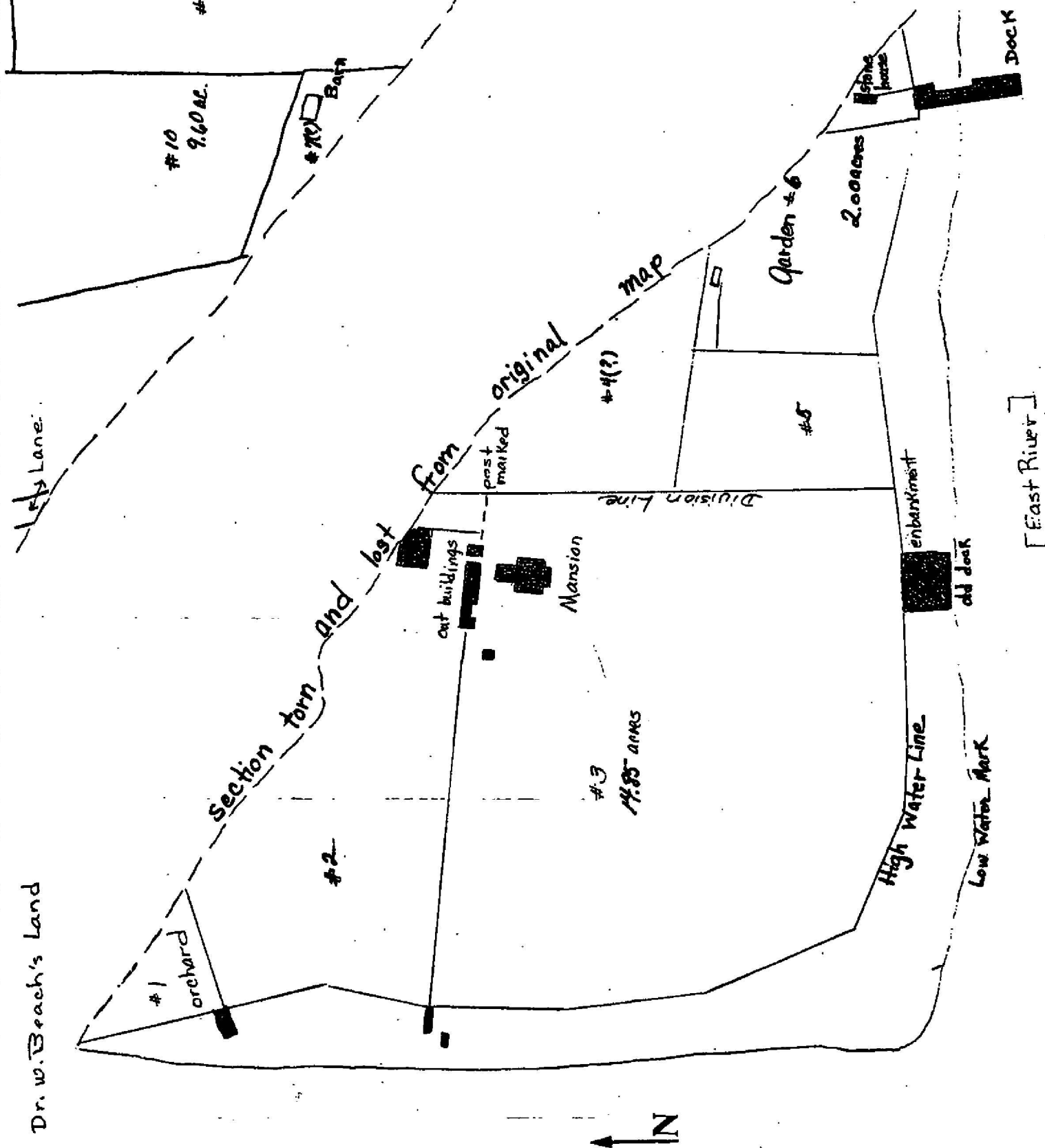
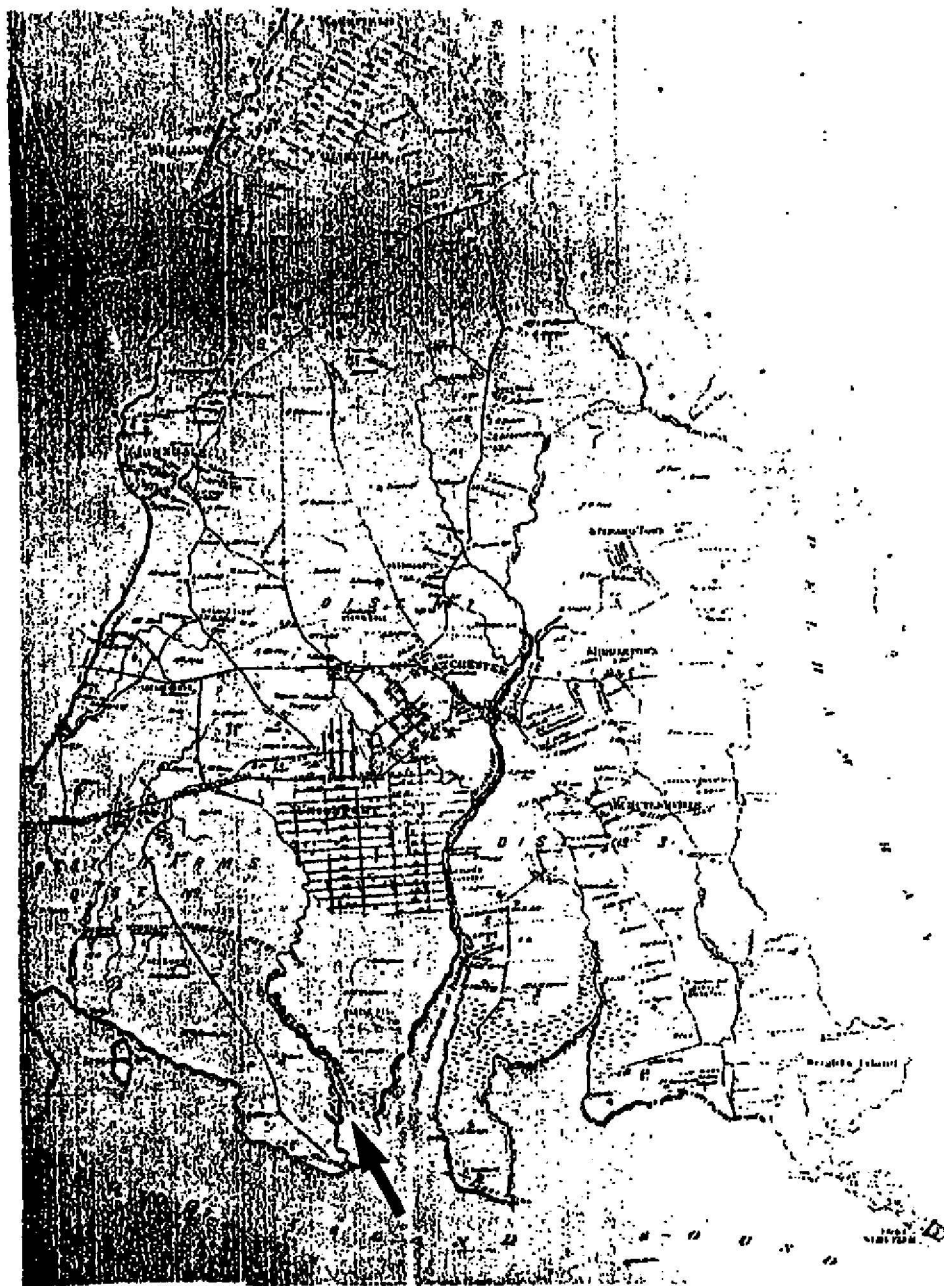


Figure 27

Photocopied from Jenkins, 1918: n.p.



Map of the Township of Westchester, 1867.

Conveyance Records,  
Bronx Borough

Figure 28

"Map of Clasons Point"  
June 30, 1868 (recopied 1904, #480)  
surveyor: I. Pilat scale: 200' = 1"  
(reduced 16 per cent)

Public Road - 49½' wide; Bayside and  
Meadow Drive - designed for 30' wide  
public way; The paths laid out upon  
the Map are designed for 15' wide  
private ways

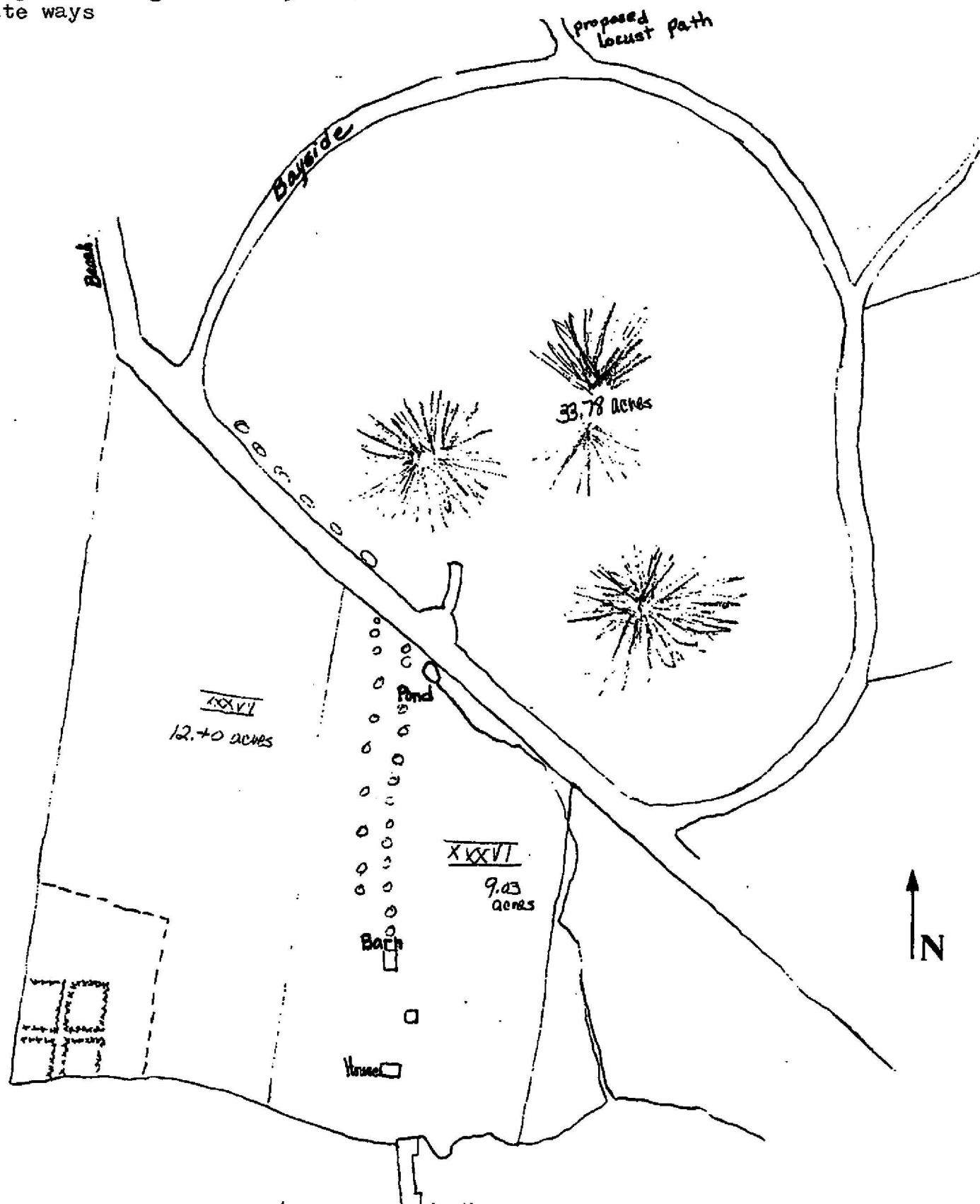


Figure 29

Tracing of "Bay and Harbor of New York"  
1874

U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey

repository: New York Public Library  
Map Room

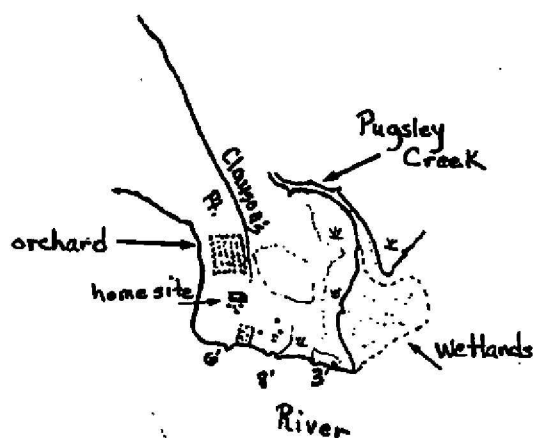


Figure 30

Tracing of "East River from Lawrence's Point  
to Throg's Neck, New York"

1888

United States Coast and Geodetic Survey

scale: 1:10,000

sft - soft

m - mud

AAA - rock

Note the early route of farm lane that  
is now Sound View Avenue and, in part,  
forms the Shorehaven Project boundary.

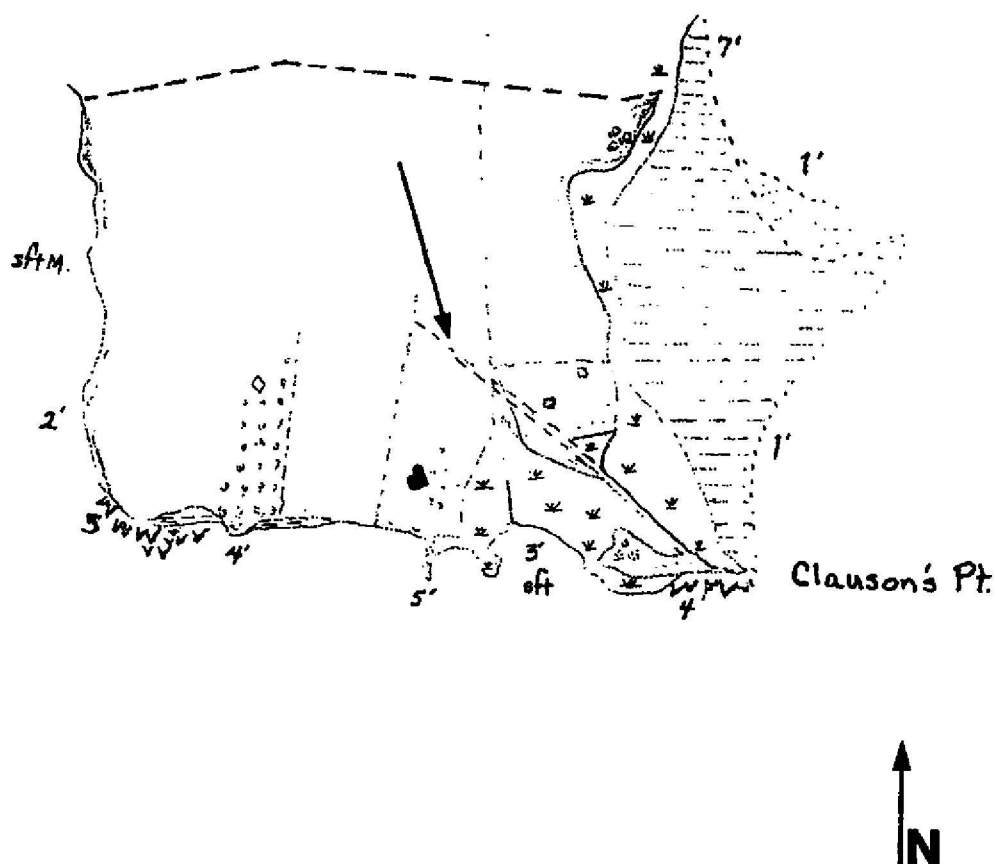


Figure 31

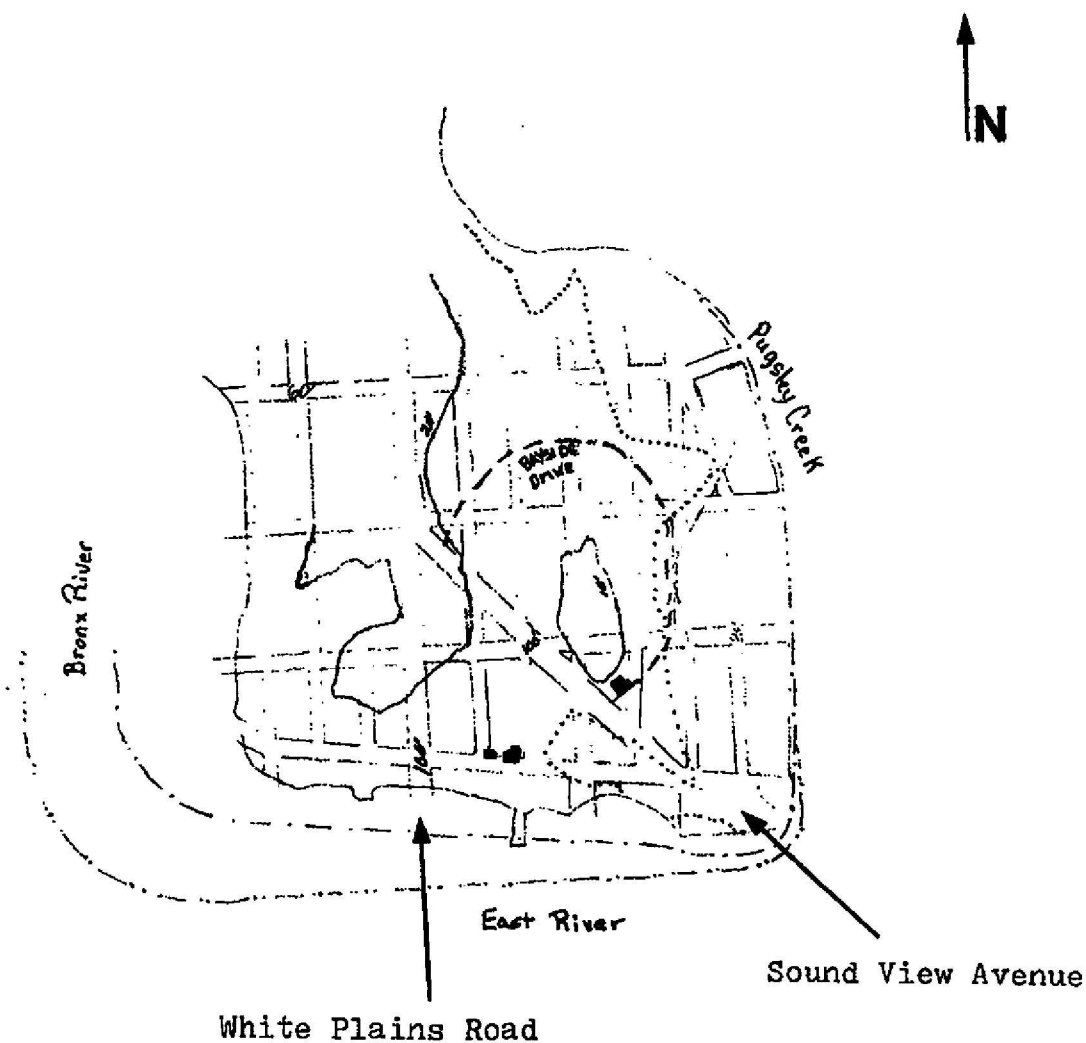
Tracing of "Map of Plan Showing the System of Streets,  
Avenues, Public Squares and Places, Parks,  
Bridges, Etc. in that Part of the Bronx"

1903

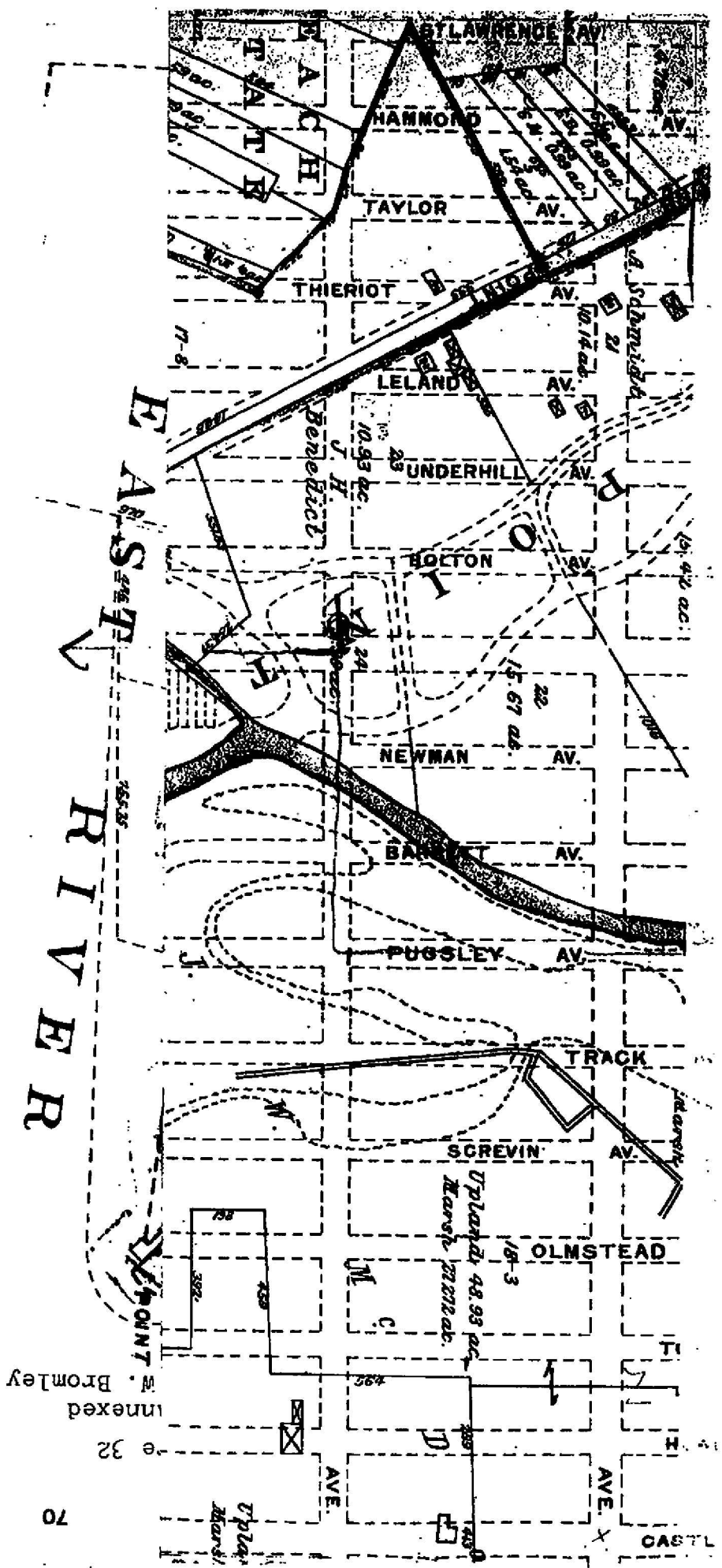
Borough President's Office, Topographic Bureau  
(repository: New York Public Library, Map Room)

scale: 1000' 0' 1000'

- ..... - wetland
- - structure
- - - - - U. S. Bulkhead Line
- - - - - U. S. Pier Line
- - - - - old street which exist or is laid out
- — — — street adopted by Board, 1903







Photocopied from Comfort, 1906: p. 9.

Figure 33



Ruins of Lord Howe's Headquarters, Clason's Point



Ruined Chimney in Lord Howe's Headquarters, Clason's Point

Figure 34

Photocopy of "probably from the Cornell Mansion  
now site of Shorehaven Beach Club, late 1890s"  
photograph: The Bronx County Historical Society  
Neg. #B-7.3, File #B-7.3 2

Copy courtesy of The Bronx County Historical Society.



Figure 35

Tracing of "New Map of the Borough of The Bronx"  
1900  
Colton, Ohman and Co., New York  
(repository: New York Public Library)

scale in feet: 0 1000 2000 3000

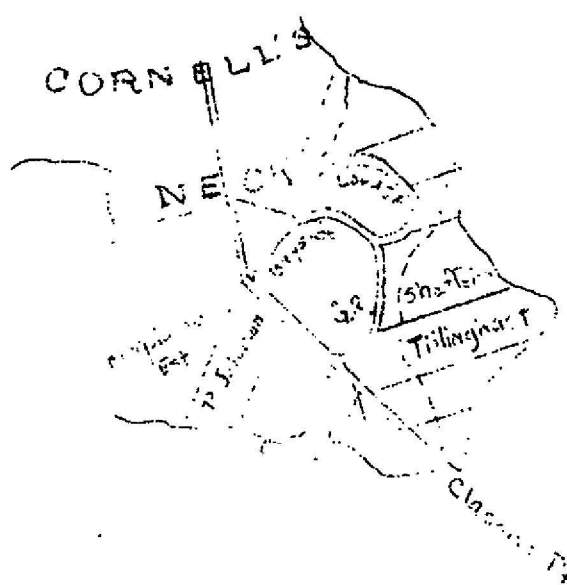


Figure 36

Photocopy from  
 BRONX HOME NEWS, May 28, 1922: 24:3  
 (repository: The Bronx County Historical Society)

**CLASON POINT PARK**  
 On Beautiful Long Island  
 Sound Bronx Shore  
**Park and Bath Now Open**

Ample grounds, extensive water front, commodious docks, ferries,  
 sandy beach (free to children), fishing, motor boats, row boats, swim-  
 ming station, concrete promenade from entrance to 1,000-foot pier.

**AMONG OTHER ATTRACTIONS, HISTORIC INN**  
 Most ancient in the city, erected in days of the Indians, and still  
 progressing, dining room seating 1,000 persons, specialty sea foods,  
 shore dinners and clam bakes, also a la carte.

**THE PALACE CASINO**  
 Under the management of Manny Hart and Harry Fink, the two  
 most popular dancing masters in the Bronx, Manny is there with  
 the salve, he can laugh and show his gold tooth on all occasions.  
 Walk, please, dancing afternoon and evenings.

ROLLER COASTER, CIRCLE SWING, FERRIS WHEEL,  
 PENNY ARCADE, THE WHIP, MERRY GO ROUND, OLD MILL,  
 WATER RIDE, SHOOT THE SHOOT, SNAPPER, EVERY MAN  
 HIS SEA SIDE ATTRACTION.

Take Third Avenue "L" or Bronx Subway to 148th St. Willis Ave.  
 cars from 125th St. All Bronx trolley cars transfer to Clason Point.

Figure 37

Photocopied from Seifert, 1973: n.p.

Higgs' Mansion, demolished in 1924.



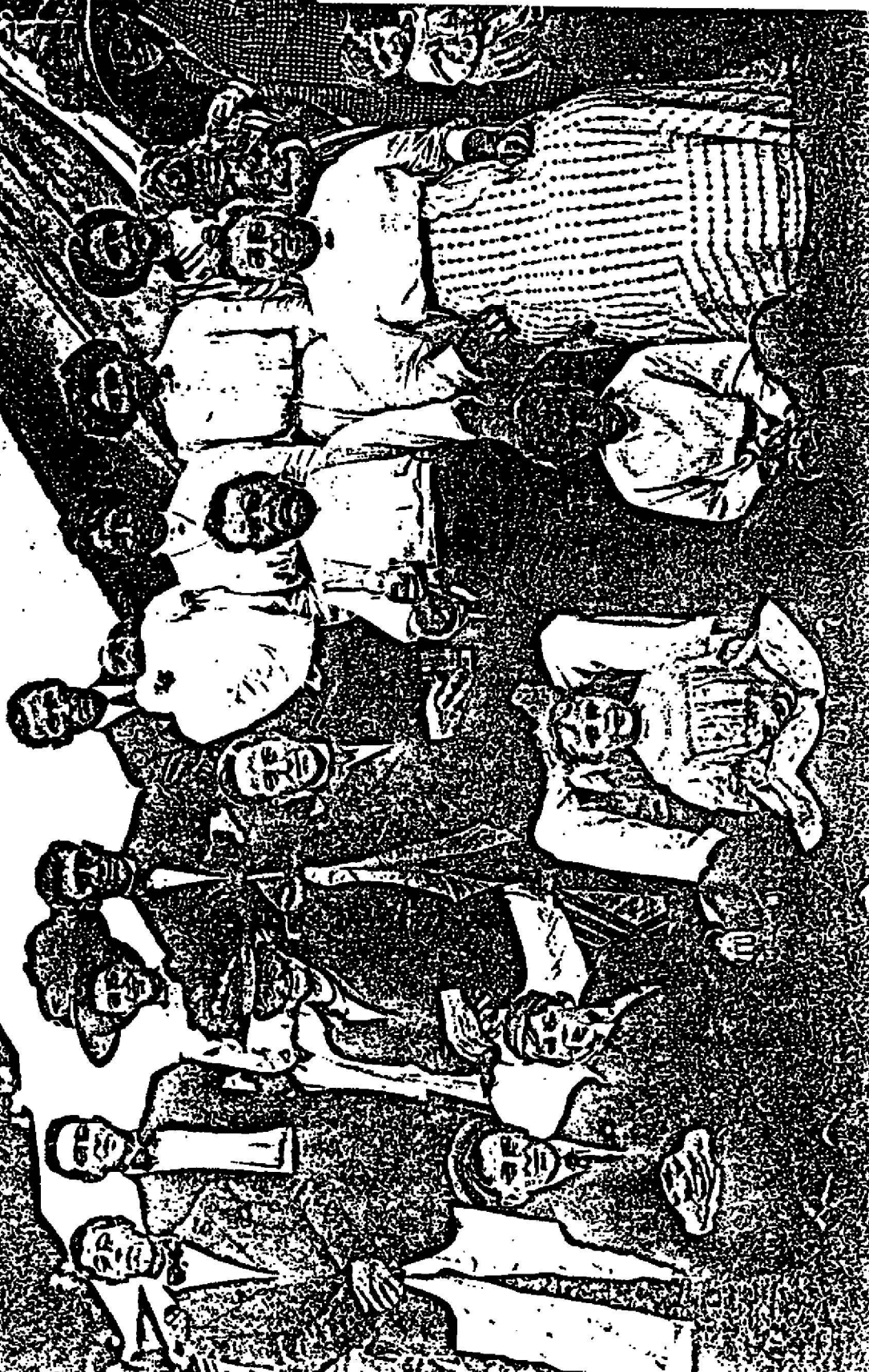
Higgs' Mansion, front view.  
Grace Higgs Reel on extreme left.



Photocopy from  
Seifert, 1973: n.p.

Figure 36

The FACES of Old Clason Point:  
You are invited to visit here with the McCulloughs! at their Tent  
on the Old Higgs Camp Ground during a family gathering in 1909...



Photocopied from Seifert, 1973: n.p.  
c. 1900

Figure 39



Figure 40

Aerial Photograph of Clason's Point, c. 1945

Photograph supplied by Arthur Seifert.



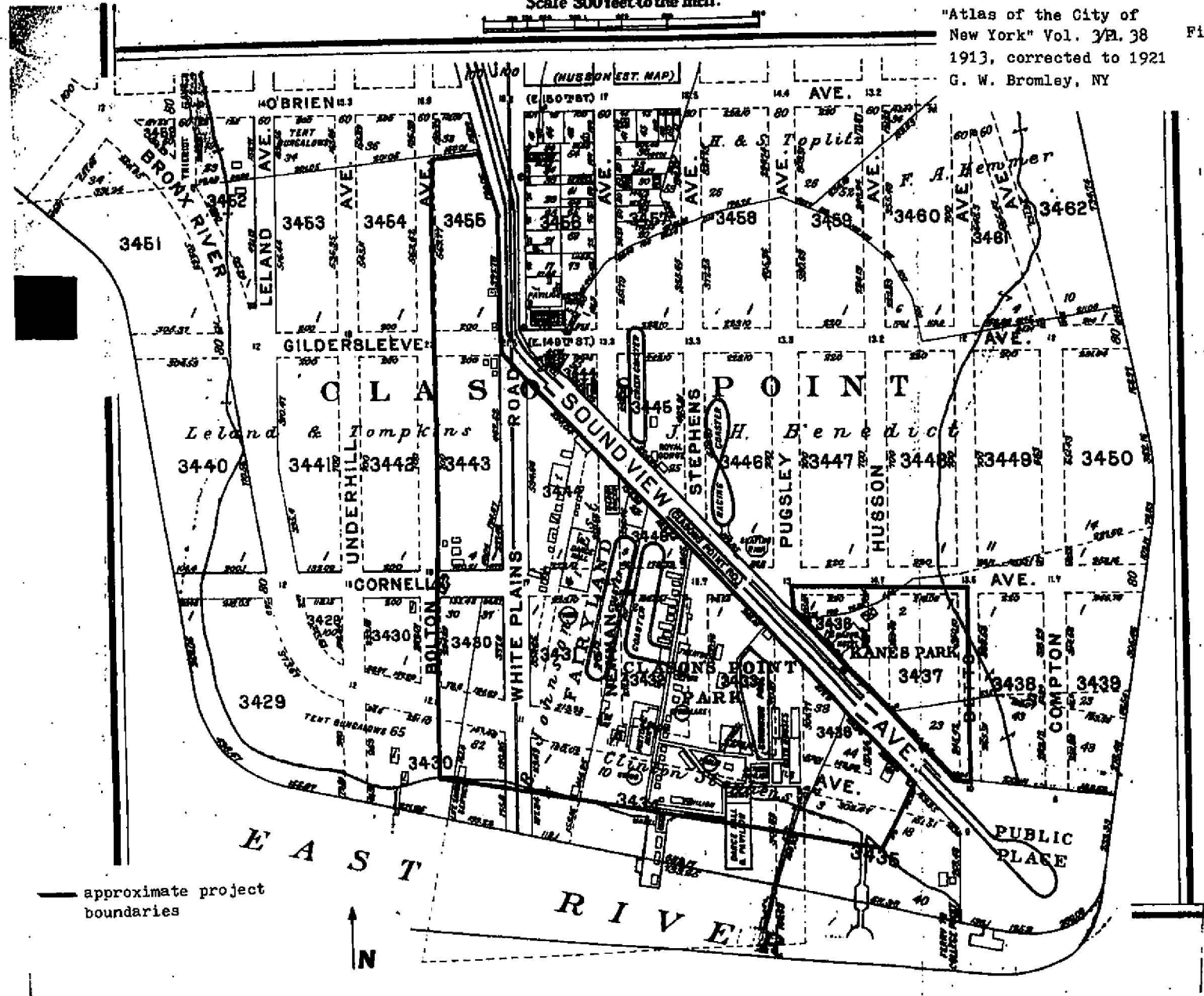
Figure 41

Historic Inn on left.  
Photograph courtesy of Arthur Seifert.  
c. 1910



"Atlas of the City of  
New York" Vol. 3/A. 38 Figure 42  
1913, corrected to 1921  
G. W. Bromley, NY

Scale 300 feet to the Inch.





G. W. Bromley; NY

approximate project boundaries

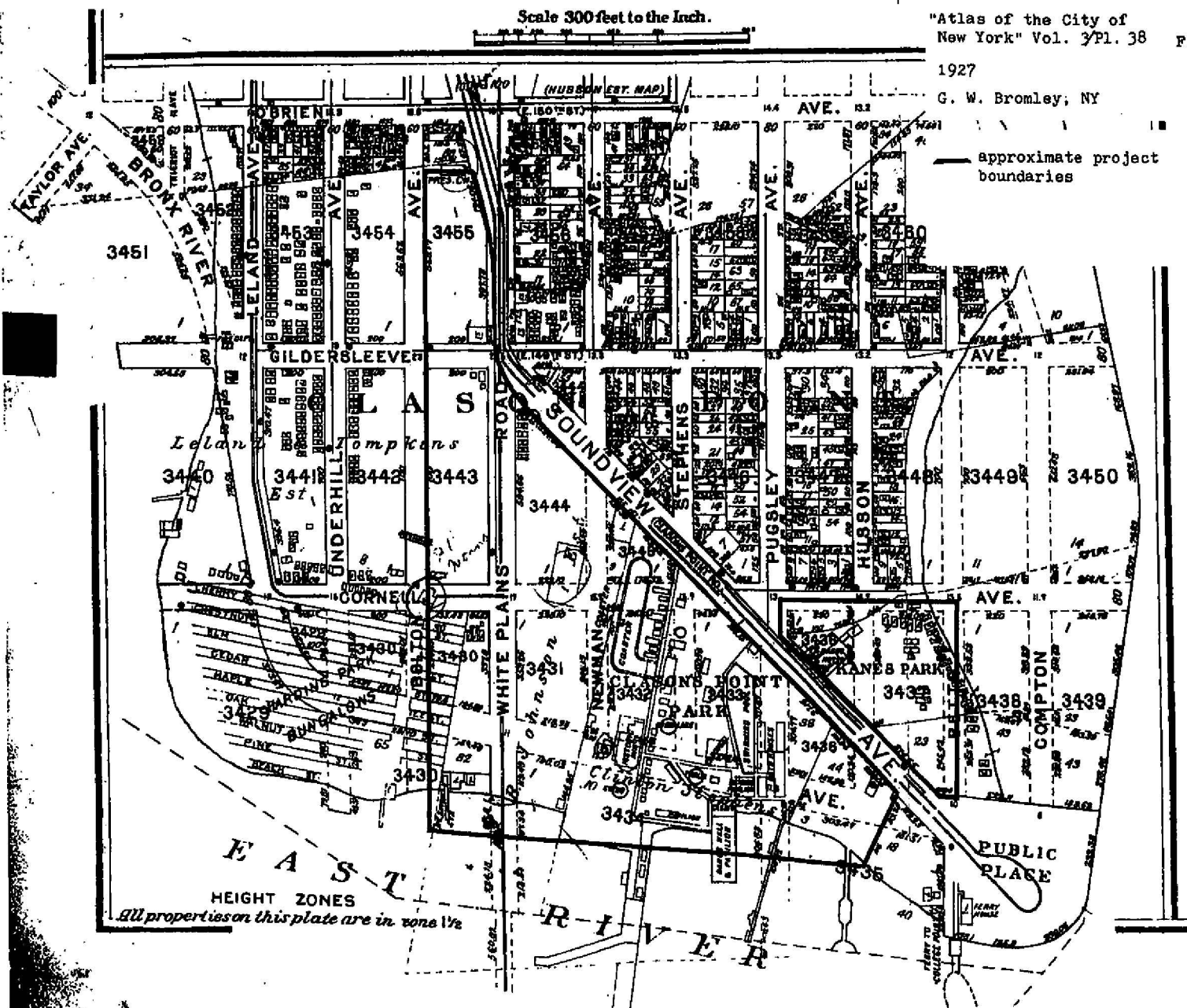




Figure 44

Copy of a postcard:

"Scene in Clason Point Park, Bronx, New York"  
from Seifert, 1973: n.p.

"Pictured above . . . The famous Aeroplane ride and  
Ferris Wheel. Tragedy struck here in 1924, a  
freak wind squall developed in minutes blowing  
over the Wheel loaded with it's passengers.  
23 were killed, many injured. For years thereafter  
local events were referred to as having happened  
'before or after' the Ferris Wheel." (Seifert,  
1973: n.p.)

Scene in Clason Point Park, Bronx, New York.

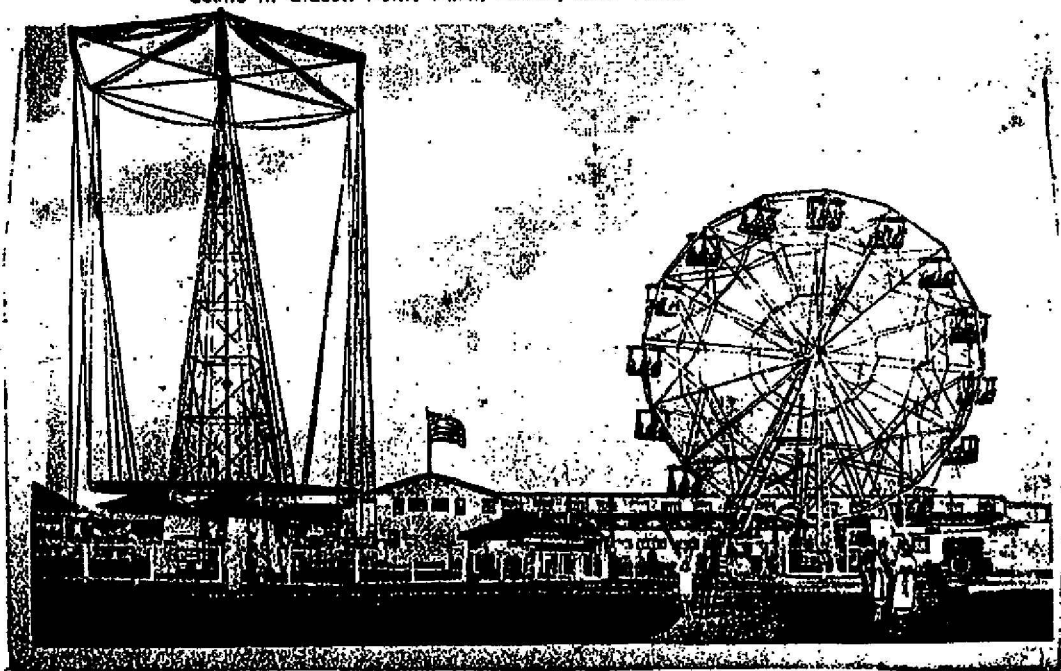
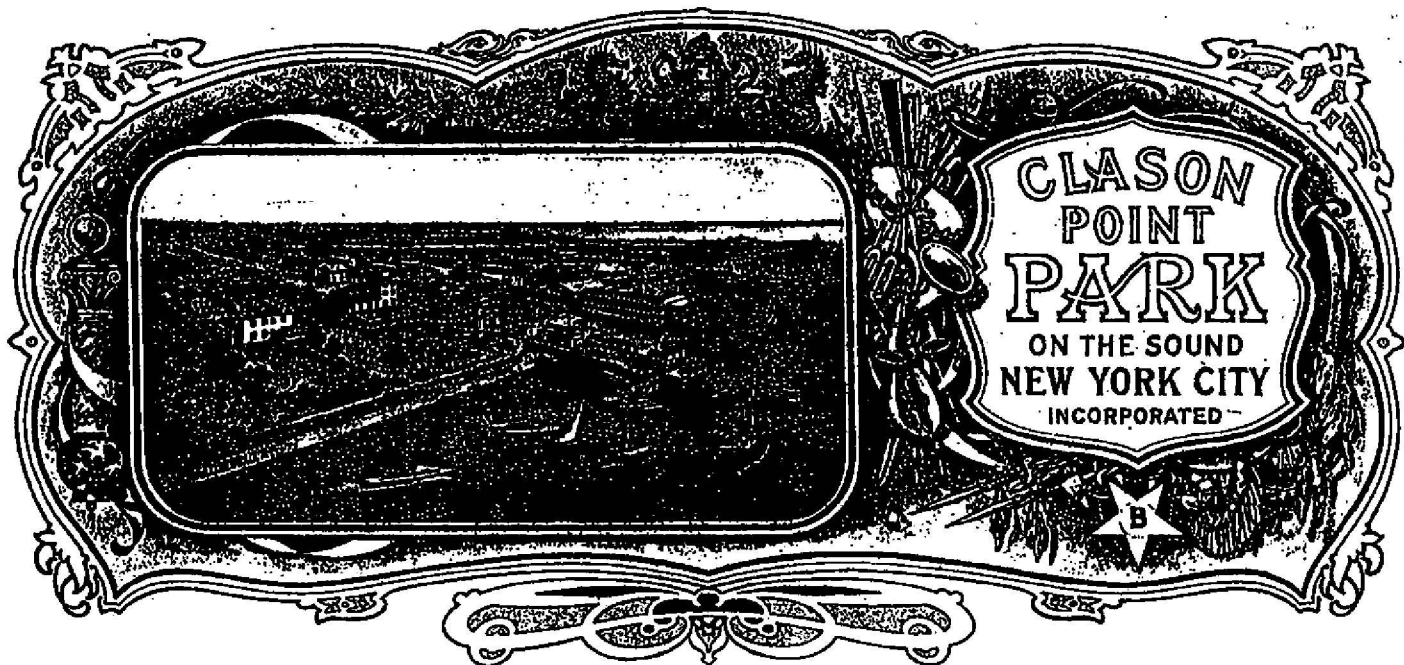


Figure 45

Photocopy of Clinton Stehpens' letterhead stationery (1911)  
that illustrates the Park.

Obtained from Bronx Borough Block and Lot Folders files.

TELEPHONE, 446 WESTCHESTER



Advertisement from the BRONX HOME NEWS,  
August 3, 1911: 10.

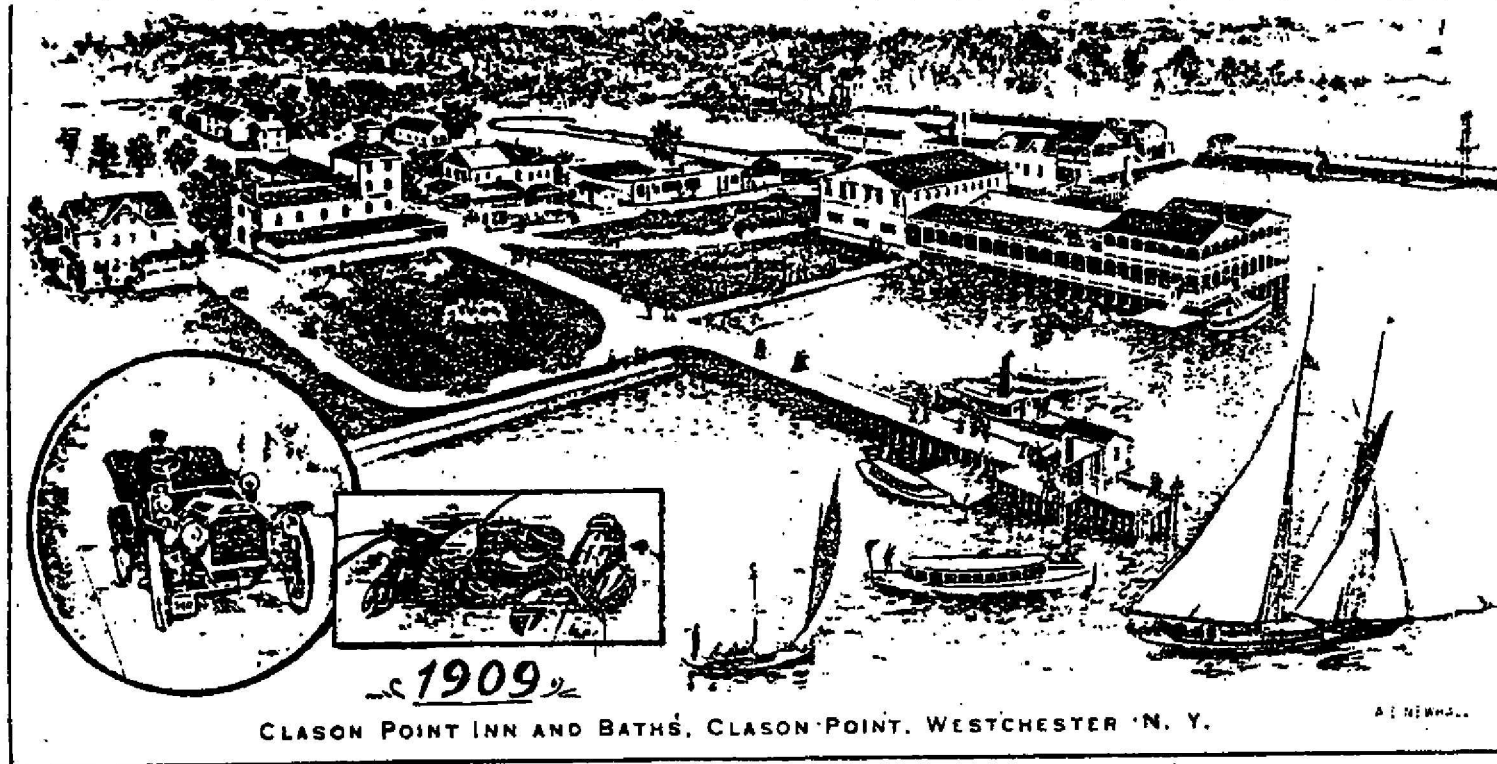
Figure 46

Obtained from The Bronx County Historical Society

Go to  
**Gilligan's Palace Casino**  
In Clason Point Park  
Especially for the Enjoyment of  
:- Women and Children :-

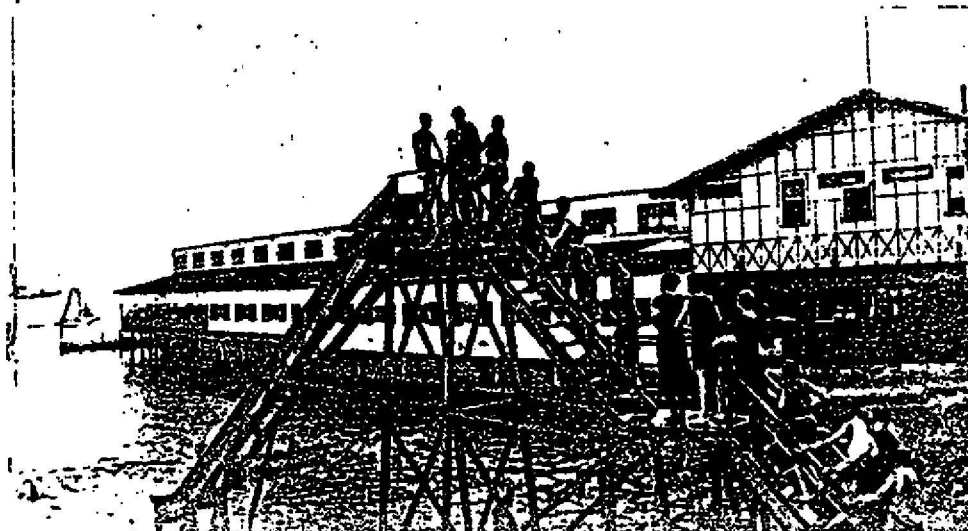
*A Dancing Palace Conducted on the Most  
Approved Lines and Endorsed by the Best  
Citizens of the City. This Includes "The  
Clergy," Judges and Business Men. . . . .*

For Clean and Wholesome  
:- Enjoyment Go to :-  
**Clason Point Park**



Postcard of 1908 reproduced above indicates the attractions offered at that time. Steam and motor launch service brought most of the visitors from East 138 st. to the Point. Bathing was a featured attraction, Dining at Gilligan's Hotel and Historic Inn (left center), and dancing and Dining at Gilligan's Pavilion (the large structure on pilings over water) pleased the patrons.

Pictured below is a view of the Swim Slide, East Pier and Gilligan's Pavilion. Try to imagine, a cool summer night at the Pavilion, the full moon reflecting off the Sound and brightly lit Excursion Steamers passing by. The music from the Steamers mingled with that of Jazz Band playing at the Pavilion, Good food & Beer, in company with sweetheart or friends couldn't be beat.



Photocopied from Seifert,  
1973: n.p.

Figure 47

Figure 48

Copy of postcard:

"Entrance to Clason Point Park, New York"

from Seifert, 1973: n.p.

This entrance, erected c. 1911, was on Sound View Avenue, opposite Stephens Avenue. The "tower" of the Inn can be seen through the gate opening.

Entrance to Clason Point Park, Bronx, New York.





Figure 49

Photocopy from Ultan, 1979: p. 150



THE POOL AT THE CLASON POINT AMUSEMENT PARK at the foot of Soundview Avenue in the early 1920s had water so dark it was called "the Inkwell." Behind the fence can be seen the Ferris wheel.



Figure 50

Photocopy from Ultan and Hermalyn, 1964: p. 69.  
c. 1910



Figure 51

Photocopy from the BRONX HOME NEWS,  
September 1, 1910: 5:5

Obtained from The Bronx County Historical Society.

**Grand Carnival**  
**CLASON POINT PARK**  
**Sept. 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th**

**Tuesday: Doll Day**  
Handsome Prizes given to the prettiest, homeliest, biggest, smallest, and best dressed dolls.

**Wednesday: Baby Day**  
Valuable Prizes given to the biggest, fattest, prettiest, and smallest babies. Special prize for healthiest twins.

**Thursday: Children's Day**  
Free Tickets to all attractions to Children under 12 years will be found on another page of this paper. Don't forget to cut them out.

**BALLOON ASCENSIONS**  
Afternoon and Evening

**Friday: Fraternal Societies**

**Saturday: Carnival of Sports**  
5-mile A. A. U. Road Race, Swimming Races, Lacrosse Game at Kane's Field.  
Band Concerts Every Afternoon and Evening

**CONFETTI**  
**A Fast, Furious, Feast of Fun and Frolic**  
**PRIZES NOW ON EXHIBITION**  
In the windows of LYONS & CHABOT, 14th Street and Third Avenue

Figure 52

Aerial Photograph of Clason's Point, c. 1945.

Photograph supplied by Arthur Seifert.

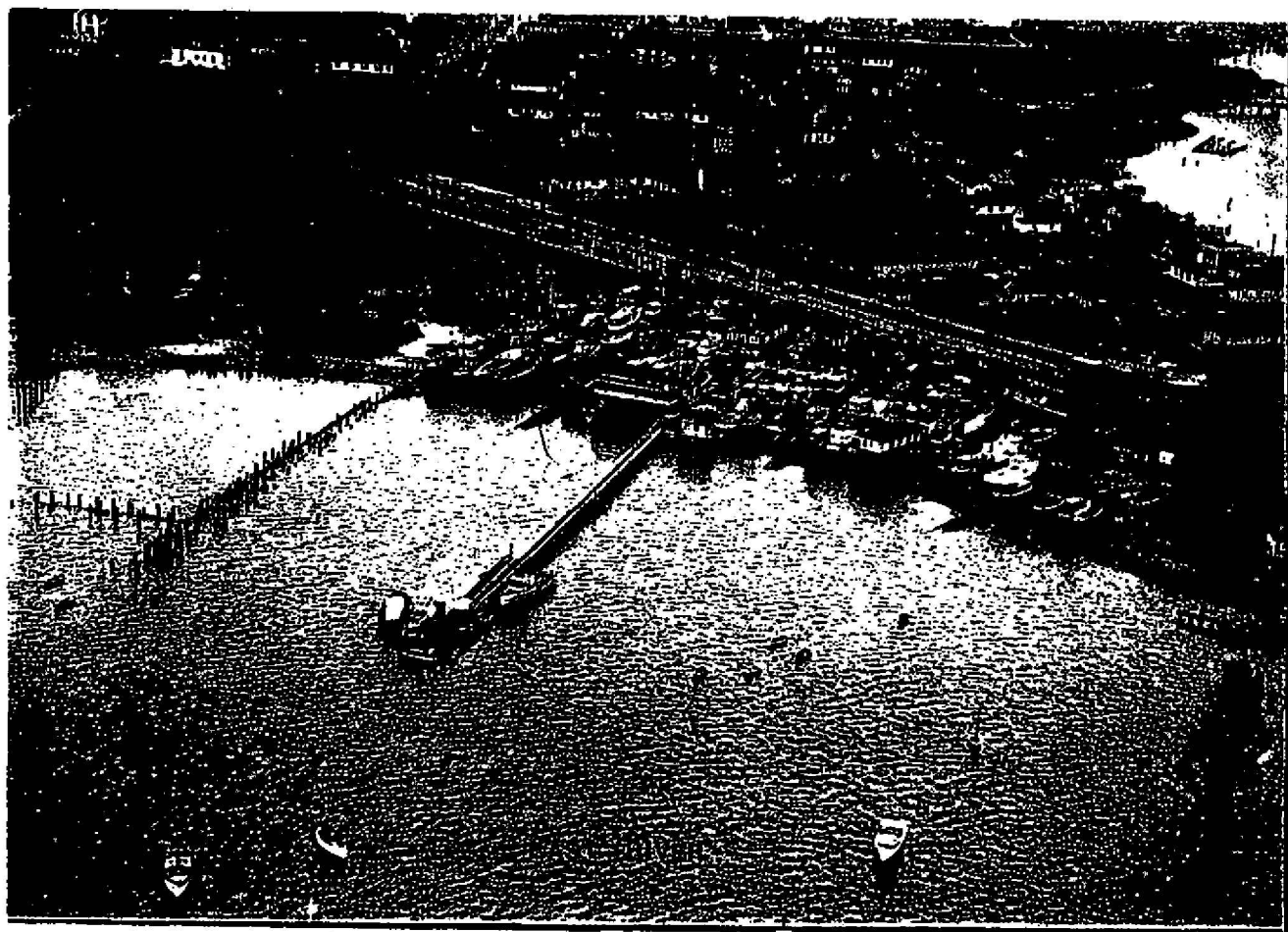


Figure 53

Photocopied from THE BRONX MAGAZINE,  
April 1931: p. 8

Obtained from The Bronx County Historical Society.

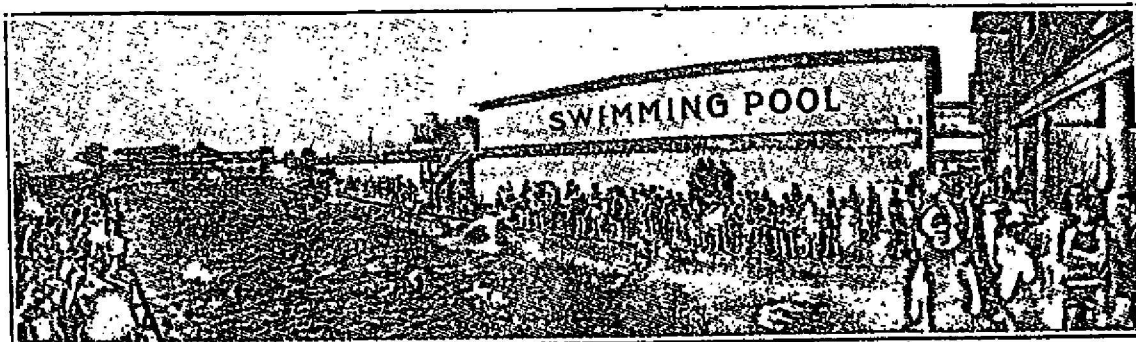
Members of the Bronx Chamber of Commerce

# Clason Point Park Opens

## SWIMMING POOL

### On the Sound

## May 15



ON BEAUTIFUL LONG ISLAND SOUND, BRONX SHORES

## UP-TO-DATE PLEASURE PARK

Ample grounds, extensive water front, commodious docks, ferries, sandy beach (free to children), fishing, motor boats, row boats, gasoline station, concrete promenade from entrance to 1,000-foot pier.

### AMONG OTHER ATTRACTIONS HISTORIC INN

Most ancient in the City, erected in days of Indians, and still progressing: dining room, seating 1,000 persons; specialty sea foods, shore dinners and clam bakes; also à la carte.

### CLASON POINT PARK PALACE CASINO

Largest dancing pavilion in city, extending 400 feet over Long Island Sound; cool, refreshing sea breezes. Dancing afternoons and evenings.

Roller Conster, Circle Swing, Penny Arcade, The Whip, Merry-Go-Round, Old Mill Water Ride, Shoot the Shoots, Skooter, Every Manner Sea Side Attractions  
Take Third Avenue "L" or Bronx Subway to 149th St., Willis Avenue Cars from 125th Street.  
All Bronx Trolley Cars transfer to Clason Point. Clason Point Ferry to Park

Figure 54

Photograph of vacant Kaiser's boathouse and restaurant, c. 1950s, at the tip of Clason's Point adjoining the abandoned ferry slips.

Photograph provided by Arthur Seifert.



## Photographs 1 and 2

Northeastern exterior wall of the Shorehaven Beach Club,  
Stephens and Soundview Avenue intersection: Block #3445.  
view: east to west.



Shorehaven Project site: southern portion of Block #3446,  
intersection of Cornell and Pugsley Avenues.  
view: east to west.





## Photographs 3 and 4

Shorehaven Project site: White Plains Road at the East River sea wall, Beach facility to the right.  
view: south to north



Northwest tip of Block #3444, not in the Shorehaven Project site  
view: northeast to southwest





## Photographs 5 and 6

Shorehaven Project site: Block #3443, Block #3444 and the brick,  
two-story ladies' changing room - which is to be retained -  
in the rear of photo  
view: west to east



Shorehaven Project site: Block #3455  
view: west to east



## Photographs 7 and 8

Shorehaven Project site: Block #3436, site of Kane's Amusement  
Park  
view: north to south



Shorehaven Project site: Block # 3435  
view: east to west



## Photographs 9 and 10

Shorehaven Project site: Block #3443, Beach Club ball field and ball courts visible through the security fencing  
view: east to west



Shorehaven Project site: Block #3436, southern portion of Beach Club facility and approximate location of (paper street) Bronx River Avenue  
view: east to west

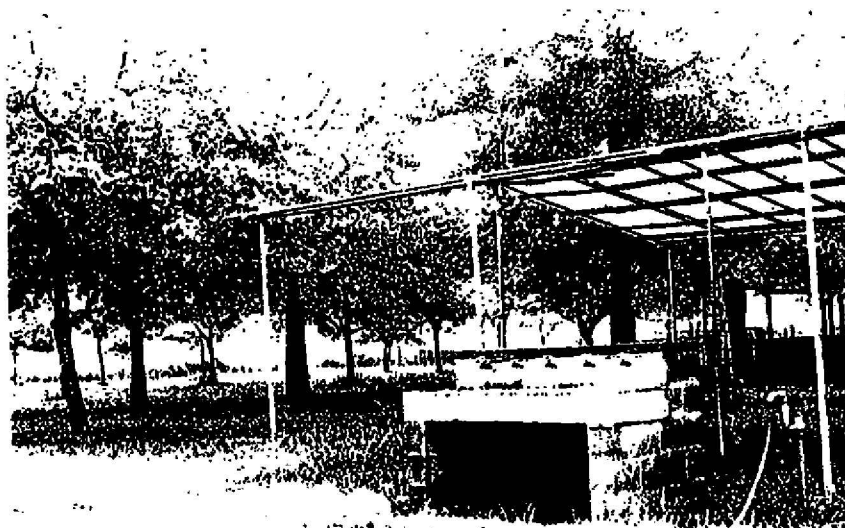


## Photographs 11 and 12

Shorehaven Project site: Block #3431, swimming pool  
view: north to south



Shorehaven Project site: Block #3422, southern section of Beach  
Club facilities, picnic area  
view: northeast to southwest



## Photographs 13 and 14

Shorehaven Project site: shed lockers on southern portion of Beach Club facility - approximate site location of "historic inn"

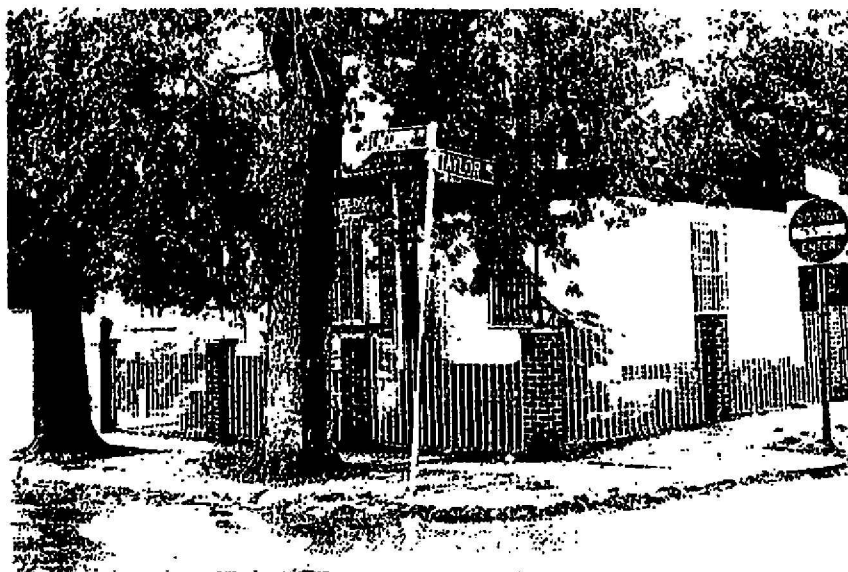


Shorehaven Project site: stand of trees in the middle section of the Beach Club facility - local residents believe that the older, "specimen trees" are remnants of the Midway landscaping and/or the tree border for the homestead lane which followed the same path



## Photographs 15 and 16

Northwest corner of the intersection of Lacombe and Taylor  
Avenues - identified by Arthur Seifert as a prehistoric site  
uncovered during construction, c. 1925  
view: southeast to northwest



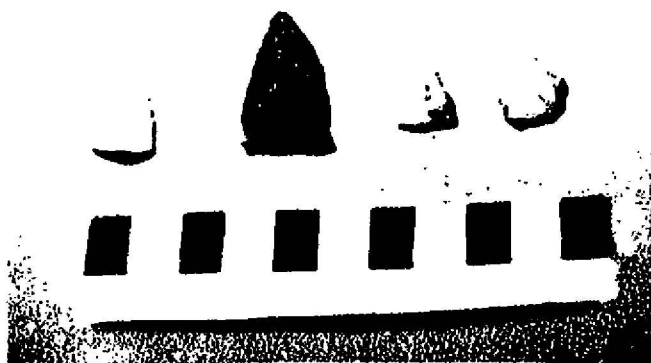
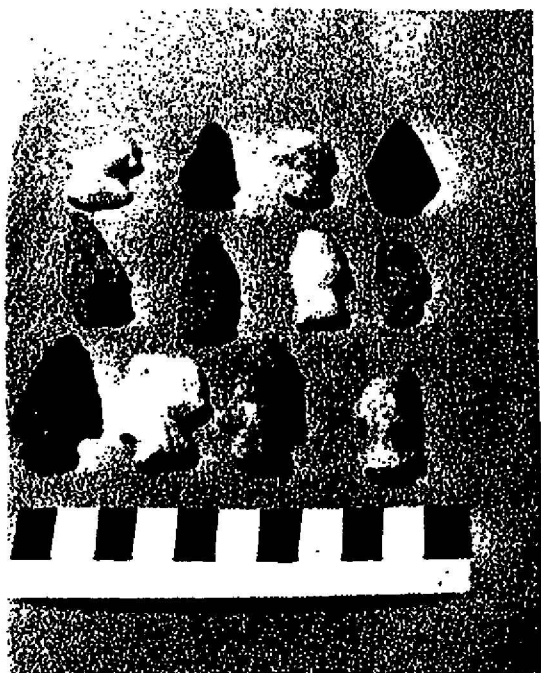
217 Pugsley Avenue - identified by Arthur Seifert as a prehistoric  
burial site uncovered during construction,  
c. 1925  
view: south to north



## Photographs 17 and 18

Specimens from Arthur Seifert's artifact collection, City Park  
Property at Lacombe, Barrett and Pugsley Avenues.  
scale in centimeters

10/15/86





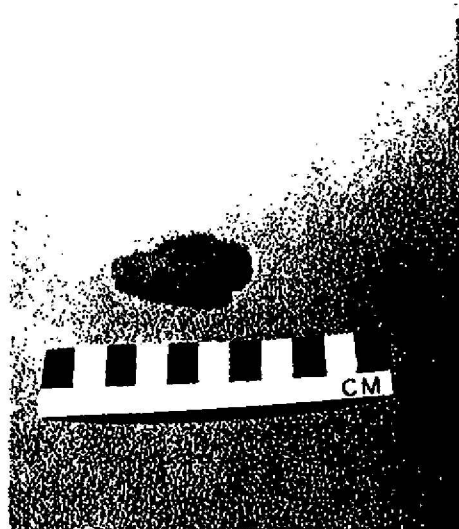
## Photographs 19 and 20

Specimens from Arthur Seifert's artifact collection, site on City Park Property at Lacombe, Barrett and Pugsley Avenues.

note: the white kaolin pipe fragment is reportedly trash from a twentieth century amusement booth at the Clason Point Park

scale in centimeters

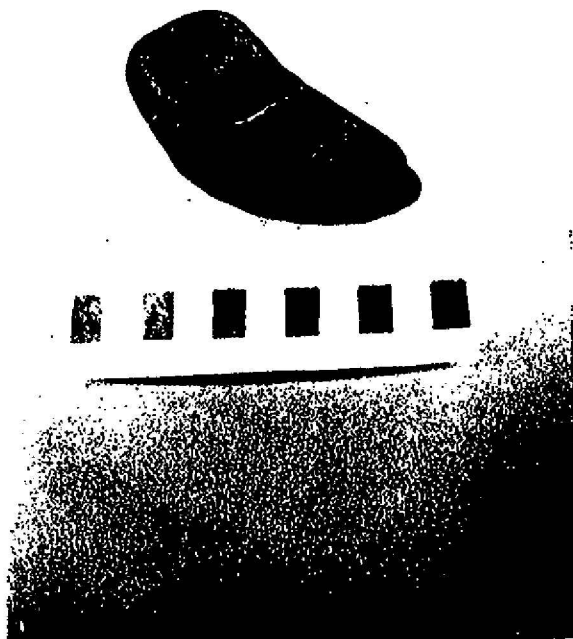
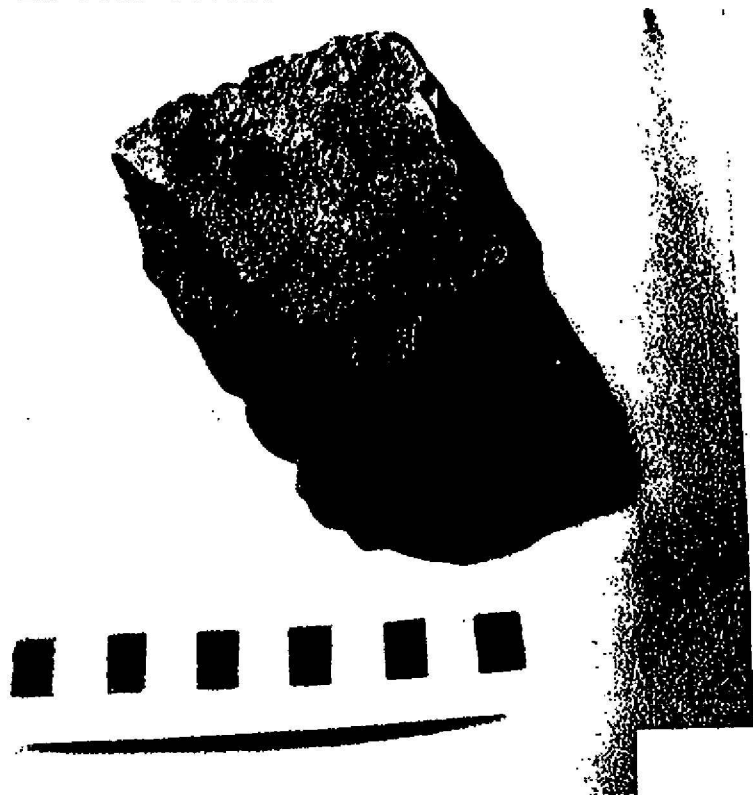
10/15/86

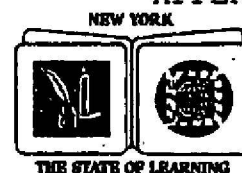


## Photographs 21 and 22

Specimens (chopping tool and hematite paintstone) from Arthur Seifert's artifact collection, site on City Park Property at Lacombe, Barrett and Pugsley Avenues.  
scale in centimeters

10/15/186





THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, N.Y. 12234

Search Results:

NEW YORK STATE MUSEUM  
Prehistoric Site File

Date: 8 October 1986

To: Cace Kirkorian  
Historical Perspectives  
P.O. Box 331  
Riverside, CT 06878

Area Searched: Approximate 1.5 mile circle of project area as indicated in your letter of Oct. 6th

Our staff has conducted a search of our data files for locations and descriptions of prehistoric archeological sites in New York State which are within the area indicated above, as requested.

The results of the search are given below. Please refer to the NYSM site identification numbers when requesting additional information.

If specific information requested has not been provided by this letter, it is likely that we are not able to provide it at this time, either because of staff limitations or policy regarding disclosure of archeological site data.

Any questions regarding this reply can be directed to Philip Lord, Jr., at (518) 473-1503 or the above address.

RESULTS OF THE FILE SEARCH:

713	Clasons Point (Har 5-4)	
714	Weir Creek (Har 6-4)	(Skinner 1919)
715	Schurz site (Har 7-4)	extensive shoreline midden, multi-component
716	Old Ferry Point (Har 8-4)	
2825	ACP BRNX-3*	shell heaps
2840	ACP BRNX-18*	shell heaps
5325	ACP BRNX*	traces of occupation
5326	ACP BRNX*	traces of occupation
5327	ACP BRNX*	traces of occupation

\*This notation refers to Arthur C. Parker's Archeology of New York State (1922).

SEARCH CONDUCTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_ (initials)  
Staff, Office of the State Archeologist



Light: College Point Dam



New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation  
The Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller Empire State Plaza  
Agency Building 1, Albany, New York 12238

518-474-0456

November 3, 1986

Cece Kirkorian  
Historical Perspectives  
P.O. Box 331  
Riverside, Connecticut 06878

Dear Ms. Kirkorian:

Re: Information Request  
Clason Point EIS Preparation, Unionport, Bronx County

The Field Services Bureau of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) has received your request for information on properties or sites which are included in or may be eligible for inclusion in the National and State Registers of Historic Places.

Based upon the information which you provided and a file search conducted by our staff, we have been able to determine that:

☐ The Project area contains no known districts, sites, buildings, structures or objects in or eligible for inclusion in the National or State Registers of Historic Places.

☒ The following resources are located in or in the vicinity of the project area which you identified:

☐ I. National/State Register of Historic Places listed or eligible properties:

☐ II. Properties included in Statewide Inventory:

☒ III. Archaeology

☒ 1. With regard to archeology, it is the opinion of this office that your project lies in an area that is archaeologically sensitive. This determination is based upon OPRHP's archaeological sensitivity model. Archaeologically sensitive areas are determined by proximity to known archaeological sites, as well as the area's likelihood of producing other archaeological materials. Based upon the use of the model, it is OPRHP's opinion that unless substantial ground disturbance can be documented, an archaeological survey should be undertaken to determine the nature and extent of archaeological resources in your project area. If you wish to submit evidence regarding ground disturbance, it should include statements concerning the nature and date of the disturbances as well as a map indicating the locations and

Page 2

depths of such activities. Photographs of recent construction activities keyed to a map are very useful in this regard. Once we have had an opportunity to review the additional information provided as the evidence regarding prior disturbance or as a result of the archaeological survey, we will be able to complete our review of this project and issue our final comments.


- ☒ 2. OPRNP notes that at the present time there are no previously reported archaeological resources in your project area or immediately adjacent to it. This finding is based upon the OPRNP's archaeological sensitivity model. Archaeologically sensitive areas are determined by proximity to known archaeological sites, as well as the area's likelihood of producing other archaeological materials.

☒ Regarding your request for site file information, the following archaeological resources are located within or proximal to the project area: Sensitivity is triggered by information held at the NYS Museum. Suggest contacting NYSM if additional information is needed.

☐ Additional Comments:

Should you have any further questions, please contact our Project Review staff at (518) 474-3176.

Sincerely,

  
David S. Gillespie  
Director  
Field Services Bureau

JSS/RLE/vr

#2(3/86)

## APPENDIX 2

## APPENDIX

The September 1986, Number 30, PANYC Newsletter (Professional Archaeologists of New York City) includes a letter by Diana Wall (June 23, 1986), president of PANYC and an archaeologist at New York University, concerning a recently discovered site within the primary study area. The site is located on Park's property in Block #3529, adjacent to the old course of Pugsley Creek between Lacombe, Newman, Pugsley, and Randall Avenues, and appears to be the one reported to us by Arthur Seifert (see text). According to Wall, Valerie DeCarlo of Wave Hill alerted her to the fact that over 100 artifacts had been removed by area residents. Wall, as a representative of PANYC, urged Park's to take steps to protect the site from further destruction.