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REPORT ON PHASE 1A
ARCHAEOLOGICAL DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH
IN ADVANCE OF THE RECONSTRUCTION OF
THE MARTINS FIELD PLAYGROUND
FLUSHING, QUEENS, NEW YORK

Contract No. Q017-196



Martins Field

Prepared for: New York City Department of Parks
and Recreation
Olmsted Center
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Flushing, New York 11368

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626

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This archaeological documentary study of the Martins Field Playground in Flushing, Queens, New York City has been conducted to comply with environmental review regulations. The report assesses the potential of the project area to contain archaeological resources from both the prehistoric and historic periods. The property has a relatively small chance of containing prehistoric archaeological resources. This would likely be evidence of temporary or intermittent usage. However no testing for prehistoric resources was recommended. The main reason is that the property was severely disturbed during the nineteenth century when it was used as a pauper's burial ground. This use as a burial ground is Martins Field's most significant potential archaeological resource. It is possible that the cemetery was the final resting place of 500 to over 1000 individuals beginning in 1840. However only four marked headstones remained in 1919 when the Queens Topographical Bureau mapped local cemeteries. Three of these were members of the Bunn family, who are of Native American ancestry. The 1919 survey identified the property as "Colored Cemetery". While in today's words this terminology means "African-American", at that time it also included "Native-Americans". However death records from the late nineteenth century did not distinguish between the two groups. Regardless, during the late nineteenth century only a small percentage of those individuals buried in what was then called Flushing Town Ground were white. While it was generally used as a cemetery for the poor, wealthier people were likely buried there during years of epidemics when relatives would not want to have contaminated family plots or churchyard burial grounds. Part of the park was purchased by the Town of Flushing for cemetery use in 1840. The property was augmented, possibly extending beyond the northern park boundary, in 1873. Martins Field became New York City property in 1898 at the time of consolidation. This is the time of the last known interments. The property was given to the Parks Department in 1914, however the construction of the playground did not take place until the 1930s. The park has since been further augmented with smaller parcels which may not have been used for burial purposes. No record was found of reinterments when the property was converted to a park, while eyewitness news accounts reported workers encountering bones during construction. Therefore a significant number of burials may still be present in previously undisturbed areas of the park, perhaps buried under shallow fill in parts of the project area. Therefore non-invasive testing for the presence or absence of remaining burials has been recommended.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary

List of Plates and Figures

INTRODUCTION	1
METHODOLOGY	3
PROJECT AREA TOPOGRAPHY	5
PREHISTORIC PERIOD	9
HISTORIC PERIOD	12
Seventeenth Century	12
Eighteenth Century	12
Nineteenth Century	13
Cemetery Information	15
Twentieth Century	16
Cemetery Data	21
Death Records	21
News Accounts	25
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	29
PLATES AND FIGURES	after 30
BIBLIOGRAPHY	31

TABLES

Table 1	Block 5443 Early 20th Century Ownership Information	20
Table 2	Former Names of the Martins Field Playground Project Area	22
Table 3	Race/Color of Deceased Listed in Appendix A	23
Table 4	Age Range of Deceased Listed in Appendix A	24

APPENDICES

Appendix A - Partial List of Burials at Flushing in Alphabetical Order by Last Name

LIST OF PLATES

- | | |
|---------|---|
| Plate 1 | Photograph of the handball court area in the northern portion of Martins Field, taken from the sidewalk facing southwest. |
| Plate 2 | Photograph of the handball court area in the northern portion of Martins Field, taken from the interior of the park facing northwest. |
| Plate 3 | Photograph of the central open field area of Martins Field, taken from the 164th Street entrance facing northeast. |
| Plate 4 | Photograph of the southern area of Martins Field, taken from the concrete walk facing north. |

LIST OF FIGURES

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| Figure 1 | Location of the Martins Field project area on a map of New York City. |
| Figure 2 | Location of the Martins Field project area on the U.S.G.S. maps of Flushing and Jamaica, N.Y.. |
| Figure 3 | Block and lot map showing the Martins Field project area. |
| Figure 4 | The 1986 Topographical Survey of Martins Field Playground. |
| Figure 5 | The 1934 Topographical Survey of Martins Field Playground showing modern park boundary. |
| Figure 6 | From the 1919 Topographic Final Maps of the Borough of Queens showing the modern park boundaries. |
| Figure 7 | The 1986 Topographical Survey of Martins Field Playground marked to show changes in elevation. |
| Figure 8 | Prehistoric sites in the vicinity of Martins Field Playground. |
| Figure 9 | From Walling's 1859 Topographical Map. |
| Figure 10 | From Dripps' 1872 Map of Kings County. |
| Figure 11 | New York City Department of Parks and Recreation Property Card Map of the Martins Field Playground. |
| Figure 12 | From Beers' 1873 Atlas of Long Island. |
| Figure 13 | From Sanborn's 1903 Insurance Maps. |
| Figure 14 | From Sanborn's 1903 Insurance Maps detail. |
| Figure 15 | From Sanborn's 1917 Insurance Maps detail. |
| Figure 16 | From Sanborn's 1934 Insurance Maps detail. |
| Figure 17 | From Sanborn's 1951 update Insurance Maps detail. |
| Figure 18 | Locations of past in-ground disturbances at Martins Field Playground. |
| Figure 19 | Location of headstones surveyed by the Queens Topographical Bureau in 1919... |

INTRODUCTION

The possibility of reconstructing Martins Field Playground has resulted in the commission of this archaeological documentary study by the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation. The project area lies within a residential area of Flushing, Queens; on 46th Avenue between 164th and 165th Streets. The general location of the project area within Queens is shown on Figure 1. The specific location is identified on the U.S.G.S. 7.5 minute series, sections of the Flushing and Jamaica, New York quadrangles (see Figure 2). Figure 3 is the block and lot map. The Martins Field Playground's current block is 5443 and lots are 1, 6, 10, 14, 43, and 49.

The New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) have requested this study to comply with environmental review regulations. Their request for proposal summarizes the need for the study:

The New York SHPO has identified the referenced site as having significance as an African American Burial site (circa 1850) with potential for recovery of human remains and burial goods. Based on documentation provided by the New York City Parks Department and members of the community, the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) concurs with this finding (New York City Parks Department 1996: 3).

This report will detail the project area conditions today, the topography (both historically and currently), and document what is known of the project area prehistory and history. It will synthesize the documentation and place it in context to provide an evaluation of the potential for the property to contain archaeological resources. Sections are included on methodology, project area topography, prehistory, historic period and conclusions and recommendations. The research was conducted and reported prepared for the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation by Linda Stone.

Some data has proven to be more elusive than one may have thought. The following individuals, listed in alphabetical order, have been helpful in trying to sort through some of the material; William Asadorian of the Long Island Division, Queens Borough Library; Cynthia Blakemore of the New York State Office of Park, Recreation and Historic Preservation; Kenneth Cobb of the Municipal Archives; James Driscoll of the Queens Historical Society; Jonathan Kuhn, historian for the New York City Parks Department; Marilyn McKenzie of the Bureau of Water Supply; Steve Rizick, Mapping Division of the New York City Parks Department; Vincent Seyfried, historian and author of histories of Queens; Bruno Seliste of the New York State Cemetery Board; and Ira Steinburg of Parklands, New York City Parks Department.

Additionally, the author would like to thank Michael J. Browne, Jr., Borough Supervisor, New York City Department of Parks and Recreation for his support and assistance with this undertaking.

Because of the interest and persist efforts of Mandingo Oceola Tshaka, a community activist from Bayside, this piece of property has attained a level of protection by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. Mr. Tshaka has been helpful to the author in sharing some of the data he has collected and the information he has come across during *his own research on the former cemetery now known as Martins Field Playground*. He was also instrumental in providing the author access to Mr. Ralph Bunn, chairman of the Native American Validation Alliance, Incorporated. In addition to running a corporation which conducts genealogical and cultural research for Native Americans, particularly of Long Island, Mr. Bunn is a direct descendant of one of the persons known to have been buried at the site (Pinto 1993).

METHODOLOGY

This Phase 1A archaeological documentary research report was prepared using cartographic, documentary, and archival sources. The research included a survey of standard repositories of information, including the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, the New York State Museum, the New York Public Library, the Municipal Archives, the Long Island Division of the Queens Borough Public Library, the Queens Borough President's Topographic Bureau, the Queens Building Department, the Queens Register of Deeds, the Queens Sewer Department, the NYC Bureau of Water Supply, and the Subsurface Exploration Bureau.

As part of the evaluation of prehistoric archaeological potential, three factors were considered. These are 1) project area topography, 2) proximity to fresh water, and 3) known archaeological sites in the vicinity of the project area. Identification of known prehistoric archaeological resources was done through review of standard resources and written requests to the New York State Museum and the Historic Preservation Division of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (NYSOPRHP).

Identification and evaluation of project area topography, soil conditions, and proximity to fresh water, current as well as historic, was made through analysis of historic and current maps, boring logs, and personal inspection. The project area was visited by the author on April 5, 1996 at which time photographs were taken. Cartographic and documentary sources were found at the New York Public Library, Long Island Division of the Queens Borough Public Library, and the Queens Borough President's Topographic Bureau. Boring data was provided by the DPR Mapping Section and the Subsurface Exploration Bureau of the NYC Department of General Services.

As part of the evaluation of historic archaeological potential, a variety of information sources were used to collect data on the history of the project area and to document previous site disturbances. Cartographic and documentary sources were located at the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, the New York Public Library, the Municipal Archives, the Long Island Division of the Queens Borough Public Library, the Queens Borough President's Topographic Bureau,

the Queens Building Department, the Queens Register of Deeds, the Queens Sewer Department, and the NYC Bureau of Water Supply. A limited amount of research was also conducted on cemeteries and burial practices in general. This report combines its presentation of site specific research with some general history and cemetery research in order to provide a context for evaluating archaeological potential of Martins Field Playground.

PROJECT AREA TOPOGRAPHY

The Martins Field Playground project area is located in the Flushing area of Queens, north of 46th Avenue between 164th and 165th Streets, across the street from Flushing Cemetery. It has a number of playground facilities, many of which are in a state of disrepair. The Parks Department conducted an inventory and analysis prior to planning the reconstruction of the Park. While the document is undated, it was most likely prepared in the early 1990s.

The present layout of the park is as it was after the 165th Street remapping of 1957, except that the entire playground is in poor physical condition, requiring complete reconstruction to meet present need. Only vestiges remain of the basketball, shuffleboard and horseshoe pitching courts. Many benches are non-existent or in poor condition. The handball courts need resurfacing. The ballfield area is weedy and of irregular grade. Fences are in poor condition. Storm damage of trees requires debris removal; extensive pruning is needed. The lighting system has not functioned since removal of the comfort station. Wading pool plumbing and grounds water system are obsolete. Storm drainage and water systems require replacement. Children's play area is deteriorated, requiring new pavement, water play, benches, play equipment and safety surfacing. Trees should be fertilized...All peripheral street sidewalks and curbs require new work, especially along 165th Street, to relate with street and park grades. (New York City Parks Department n.d.)

While some of the requirements may be different were the analysis conducted today, the conditions of the playground facilities remain relatively the same.

The property is at an elevation of about 39 feet in the southern end and rises to about 54 feet in the north. The topography and conditions of the facilities can be seen in the 1986 Topographic Survey (see Figure 4). The northern part of the playground is a concrete covered handball court area (see Plates 1 & 2). The central part of the playground is an open field area (see Plate 3). It contains remnants of a concrete shuffleboard court in the western area. The southern part of the playground is paved in asphalt (see Plate 4). It contains a large empty wading pool in the center of the area which is surrounded by such equipment as swings and see-saws.

On April 5, 1996, when the author visited the site, a small number of children were using the facilities. Plate 2 shows several children practicing their tennis. There were three teenaged boys with a dog in the field area playing with a frisbee. Two younger children were observed playing in the southern part of the park, using the swings and see-saws.

Topographic data was obtained from three sources; the 1909 mapping of the Borough of Queens (Borough of Queens Topographical Bureau 1919), the 1934 Topographic Survey of Martins Field Playground (NYC Parks Department 1934), and the 1986 Topographic Survey of Martins Field Playground (NYC Parks Department 1986). Copies of these surveys are attached as Figures 4 - 6. These three sources were compared with one another to determine if there has been any change in grade since 1909. Although no data was found to show the property elevations or grade during the period of time when Martins Field was used as a cemetery, one may speculate there had been few or no changes between 1898 and 1909. This conjecture may be valid since the eleven year time span saw little development in the area. Additionally, the 1986 survey, which was updated in 1989, should still be valid today since the Parks Department has not conducted improvements which would have resulted in grade changes since that time.

Contour lines on the 1909 survey were drawn every five feet. In 1934, they were drawn every two feet and in 1986, every foot. These differences in documentation expectedly result in a somewhat reduced level of comparison. However all surveys show elevation in relation to the Queens Highway Datum and are therefore directly comparable. All three Figures are scaled to eighty feet per inch to facilitate comparisons. Figures 5 and 6 have the current playground boundaries added.

Four contour lines cross the project area on the 1909 survey, ranging from 40 feet toward the center to 55 feet in the north. Elevation rose toward the north, as it continues to be depicted on the later surveys. When compared to the 1934 survey, the forty foot contour line of 1909 falls between the 42 and 44 foot contours. The forty-five foot contour line traverses the forty-six foot contour of the 1934 survey twice. The fifty and fifty-five foot contours show very little diversion between 1909 and 1934. The differences in location of contours on these two surveys indicates a change in grade of between two and four feet in the central portion of the project area between 1909 and 1934. However little or no difference is depicted in other portions of the project area.

The changes in grade between 1934 and 1986 are the most dramatic since Martins Field Playground was constructed between those dates, in 1935-36. However grade changes are generally under four feet. In planning the park, the Board of Estimate reviewed plans which involved grade "changes ranging from about 2 3/4 below to about 2 feet above the established street elevations" (Board of Estimate 1934). In the area of the wading pool which is paved in asphalt today, a slight amount of grading appears to have been done. In 1934, that area had elevations of between 38 and 42 feet with higher elevation toward the

northeast. The 1986 survey shows contour lines from 39 to 42 feet in a similar pattern. However, in the area of the wading pool, elevations are consistently in the forty foot range. Therefore some filling and some grading were done in that area.

It appears that filling and lowering of grade were also done in other parts of the project area between 1934 and 1986. The forty-two foot contour line of 1934 crosses from the forty-two to the forty-four foot lines of the 1986 survey, indicating up to a two foot change in grade. The same may be said for the forty-four contour line of 1934. A larger change in grade is observed along the forty-six foot contour line of 1934. This line traverses from forty-six feet to more than fifty-one feet on the 1986 survey, with the largest area of fill to the east of the current shuffleboard and horseshoe pitching courts locations. The same may be said for the area of the forty-eight foot contour on the 1934 survey, crossing from under forty-seven to over fifty-two feet on the 1986 survey. There was very little change in the area of the fifty foot contour line between 1934 and 1986 in the western part of the project area. However the eastern part of the project area has been filled up to four feet, which brings this narrative north to the current handball court area. In 1934, this area showed elevation contours of between fifty and fifty-six feet. In 1986, this entire area had been graded to about fifty-four feet, with fill added in the eastern part and soil removed from the western part and the entire area covered with concrete¹. Plates 1 and 2 show different views of this area today.

Figure 7 is a marked up version of the 1986 survey showing areas with changes in elevation of two feet or greater. The central and eastern parts of the project area have been most affected with increases in elevation or filling. The only area substantially affected by removal of soil is in the western part of the current handball court.

Only one boring has been recorded for the project area by the Parks Department. It was located within the wading pool, 18 feet north of center and 10 feet east of center. Two foot soil samples were taken at five foot intervals. The soil data shows fill in the top four feet. The fill was underlain with five feet of fine silty sand. That was underlain with sixteen feet of fine, slightly gravelly sand and then by seven feet of fine silty sand before water was encountered at twenty-five feet below ground (Walsh 1989).

¹ It should be noted the fifty-three foot contour in the handball court area is a typographical error. It should read fifty-four feet, based on the point elevations.

The Subsurface Exploration Bureau had no data from the immediate vicinity of Martins Field. The closest borings on file with their agency were for P.S. 107, located on the northern side of 45th Avenue between 168th and 169th Streets. These borings showed similar stratigraphy to the project area boring sample. The one difference is that the top lens was generally a combination of loam, clay and sand rather than fill. The P.S. 107 borings were also around 25 feet deep, however no record was made to say whether or not they hit water at that depth (DGS 1937). The closest source of fresh water during the historic period would have been Dennett's Mill Pond (now called Kissena Lake) located about one-third mile to the southwest of Martins Field Playground (see Figure 10).

PREHISTORIC PERIOD

As presented in the methodology section of this report, three factors were considered in the evaluation of prehistoric archaeological potential; 1) project area topography, 2) proximity to fresh water, and 3) known archaeological sites in the vicinity of the project area. The reasons these indicators are useful in predicting locations of unknown sites has to do with their relationship to subsistence and settlement patterns during prehistory. Ecological factors such as distance to fresh water, elevation, slope, and soils are generally used as predictors of past animal habitats. If it can be demonstrated that past environmental conditions were conducive to exploitation by game animals, birds and fish, then it can be inferred that the human population may have in turn exploited these resources in those same areas. Furthermore, if evidence of prehistoric human activity can be found near the project area, this assertion can be strengthened. However, recent research has shown that prehistoric populations may have intentionally removed themselves from prime micro-habitats in some cases, perhaps in order to lull prey into a false sense of security or merely when a more suitable site was only a short distance away (Boesch 1996, Stewart 1996).

Prehistoric hunter-gatherers first arrived in the New York region from the west toward the end of the last ice age, over 12,000 years ago, marking the beginning of the Paleo-Indian cultural period. The ice sheet was rapidly melting and the environment was changing. Food resources were not yet stabilized to seasonal cycles and resource predictability and density were both low. About 10,000 years ago the Paleo-Indian period came to an end. The advent of the Archaic Period was marked by a change in foraging strategy, precipitated by the warming climate. The economic strategy of the Archaic period was becoming more diffuse as more varieties of flora and fauna were becoming established in the warming climate of the northeast. There is a belief that the Early Archaic people were beginning to establish territories and a "restricted wandering" foraging behavior (Snow 1980:171). The transition from the Early Archaic to the Middle Archaic is not as sharp. Dincauze and Mulholland (1977) believe:

The Middle Archaic subsistence and settlement patterns appear to represent the expansion and increase of a successful resident population. Sites proliferate along obvious communication routes and in the richest habitats; territorial ranges are established, and the resource base is broadened. (Dincauze and Mulholland 1977:454)

Very little archaeological data exists for the earliest prehistoric cultural periods in the New York City area, the Paleo-Indian through Middle Archaic periods, prior to about 5,000 years ago. Possible explanations are that these early sites were buried under water as the sea level rose and/or the smaller

population occupied a fewer number of locations and inadequate survey has not identified many of them (Funk 1991:57).

The amount of data on the prehistoric population of the Late Archaic increases dramatically. This large increase in archaeological evidence is what separates the Late Archaic from the previous periods. It also indicates that adaptations must have been such as to allow for the increase in the number of recorded sites. The environment had essentially stabilized during the Late Archaic, with conditions much the same as today's. The prehistoric cultural periods defined after the Archaic are generally marked by the introduction of innovations in pottery and vessel type and changes in artifact assemblages, rather than by changes in the environment.

The Transitional Phase, 1500 - 1000 B.C., is marked by the introduction of steatite vessels into the artifact assemblage as well as the prevalent use of certain projectile point types. The Woodland Period of prehistory, 1000 B.C. to about A.D. 1600, like the Archaic, is divided into early, middle and late sequences. These Woodland Period divisions are defined based on changes in the style and type of pottery and projectile points found at archaeological sites. With the use of pottery for cooking and storing food resources, the people of the Woodland Period were able to become increasingly sedentary, relying less on seasonal movement to exploit available resources. Ultimately, this led to the development of cultigens during the Late Woodland period, about A.D. 1000.

The Late Woodland period ended at the time of European contact, in the early seventeenth century. From that time through the early to mid-eighteenth century is identified as the Contact period. Native American archaeological sites have been identified as contemporaneous with European sites. The influence of European contact can be seen in the artifact assemblages from the Native American sites of this time.

There are no well known documented prehistoric archaeological sites in Queens. Most of these site types are located toward the eastern end of Long Island (Ritchie and Funk 1973:4). However work in recent years by avocational archaeologists in Queens has reportedly turned up diagnostic materials dating from the Paleo-Indian through Mid-Woodland periods. A fluted point was found at an unspecified location in Bayside (Platt 1995:1). Stratified deposits dating from the Early Archaic period were found at an unspecified location near Little Neck Bay. It is "the only presently known Early Archaic Stage site with

occupation features, on all of Long Island, New York" (Platt 1994:4). That area also produced "extensive" archaeological material dating from the Late Archaic through Middle Woodland periods (Platt 1994:7).

A number of prehistoric Native American sites were identified prior to research on and acceptance of the current cultural and temporal sequences. In 1874, Gabriel Furman reported on an 1841 finding of human skeletons while excavating for a road through the Linnaean Gardens, about two miles from the project area. "They were in a circle of thirty feet, their heads all lay to the east, and some nails and musket-balls were found with them" (Furman 1874:97-98). In 1900, William Beauchamp reported the previously identified skeletons found at the Linnaean Garden in Flushing, as well as another cemetery site found in 1880 on Thomas P. Duryea's farm. He said "The Matinecocks had large settlements at Flushing, Glen Cove and Cow Harbor (Beauchamp 1900:137). In 1922, Arthur C. Parker mapped a number of previously identified sites, including the Linnaean Garden Burials, the burials on Duryea's farm, and the Matinecock village. He also showed a small camp site near the mouth of Flushing Bay (Parker 1922:672). This is the same area that was called a probable oyster station by Bolton who also located the two burial sites. He further identified the Duryea farm location as East Flushing (Bolton 1934:149-150). The New York State Museum has mapped Parker's data on the Duryea farm burial site within one half mile from the project area and the village site at about three-quarters of a mile away, but they provide no additional information. The NYSOPRHP identified no archaeological sites within the vicinity of the project area. Those previously identified sites located in the vicinity of the project area are mapped on Figure 8.

During the Contact Period, Bolton reports the Matinecock with a large village at what is now the mouth of Flushing Bay (Bolton 1920:89). Grumet reports several habitation sites in that vicinity, over two miles from the project area. However by 1676, disputes with and harassment by the English caused the Matinecock to sell their land on the north shore and move "south to join the Massapequa" (Grumet 1981:33).

HISTORIC PERIOD

Seventeenth Century

The Flushing Bay area was first settled by europeans in 1643 in the vicinity of the "Matinecoc" settlements (Furman 1874:32, Munsell 1882:75). For the tri-centennial of Flushing, Stuart writes "Matinecoc Indians inhabited the terrain now occupied by Flushing Cemetery...Relics of their inhabitation are continually excavated in the grounds of the cemetery" (Stuart 1945:6).

The Dutch West India Company received a land grant in 1639 for part of Queens bounded by Flushing Creek on the west. However they did not establish a settlement there at that time. The area was first settled by planters who were dutch englishmen; english who had "resided for a time in Holland". The name of the place was then called "Vlissing or Vlissingen" (Thompson 1962:v.3:5-6). Governor Keift issued Flushing its charter in 1645 (Hazelton 1925:v.2:941).

In a relatively short period of time the Director General issued a patent to a group of sixteen men. However disputes with the Native Americans over land arose since the Dutch did not require "indian deeds". The matter was eventually settled when the area was under English rule in 1684 and 1685 when the sachem of "Massapeage" executed a conveyance and the English Governor Dongan issued a "confirmatory patent" (Thompson 1962:v.3:26-28). The first houses were erected in the area of Bowne Avenue (Hazelton 1925:v.2:985). The Bowne House on Bowne Street is the oldest standing structure in Queens, originally built in 1661 by John Bowne with later additions (Dolkart 1992:191). The Bowne family was prominent in early Flushing history and descendants of John Bowne owned the project area property in the nineteenth century.

Queens County was organized in 1683, as "one of the twelve original counties of the Province of New York" (Hazelton 1925:v.2:939). It was subdivided into six municipalities, including Flushing. By the close of the century, Queen had a population of about 3563, including 197 "negroes" (Thompson 1962:v.2:30,54).

Eighteenth Century

Flushing was not an easy place to get to by land early on. There were no direct roads to the city. The most convenient way to travel was by ferry boat. In 1704, a commission was appointed to lay out the

roadways. The first road in Queens was "from Brooklyn to Easthampton, through the center of the island" (Hazelton 1925:v.2:942).

William Prince established the nursery business in Flushing, opening his Linnaean Botanic Garden and Nursery in 1737. It was located on Northern Boulevard, between Main Street and the Creek (Seyfried 1982:157, Stuart 1945:4). Prince's gardens were originally five acres but expanded to eight acres by 1793 and, at their peak, in the mid-nineteenth century they occupied forty acres. General Howe was so impressed with the gardens, he "stationed a guard there to prevent any damage" during the Revolutionary War (Valles 1938:51). After the war, George Washington visited Flushing as a guest of William Prince (Mandeville 1860:64).

During the Revolutionary War period, the Quaker Meeting House of Flushing was "taken possession of by the British... and used as a hospital and storehouse during the war" (Thompson 1962:v.3:36). "Loyalists from the mainland flocked here in considerable numbers as refugees" (Munsell 1882:82).

The reason little information on early Flushing exists is due to a fire. The town records were kept at the home of John Vanderbilt, the town clerk, when it was consumed by fire in 1789 (Munsell 1882:75). The fire was attributed to "two slaves, Sarah and Nelly. The culprits were hanged in 1790, Aaron Burr being the prosecuting attorney" (Comstock 1915:46).

By the close of the century, the Queens County population had swollen to 16,980, an increase of almost five fold over the previous hundred years. (Thompson 1962:v.2:54). However there had been little development in the immediate vicinity of the project area.

Nineteenth Century

The vicinity of the project area was so undeveloped during the early and mid-nineteenth century, it is rarely depicted on detailed maps. Dripps' 1852 map shows the project area within a much larger area of farmland. Farms were usually under one-hundred acres, "being generally protected by a stone wall and highly cultivated" (Thompson 1962:v.3:43).

The Flushing Bridge and Road Company was incorporated in 1802 for the purpose of improving the road to Brooklyn (Comstock 1915:35). Steamboat service from Flushing to New York was established by

1820 (Gabriel 1921:129). Plank roads were laid by 1847. However, the Flushing area was still considered an "out of town resort", particularly in the summer months (Hazelton 1925:v.2:942,989, Valles 1938:68).

The Brooklyn and Jamaica Railroad was incorporated in 1832 and completed the tracks through the center of Long Island for traffic four years later when it was leased to the Long Island Railroad. The early service was to Hicksville, with service available for passengers to Greenport by 1845 (Hazelton 1925:v.2:942, Thompson 1962:v.1:457, Valles 1938:76). However these lines were not in the immediate vicinity of the project area. The Flushing Gas Company began providing service in 1856. The village began supplying water in 1872. Street lamps were electrified in 1896 (Valles 1938:71-74). The first "circular newspaper" of Flushing, the Flushing Journal, was published in 1841, but did not circulate weekly until 1882 (Thompson 1962:v.3:43, Valles 1938:66). Other newspapers followed soon thereafter (ibid. 66-67).

Conditions in the vicinity of the project area at mid-century are depicted on Walling's 1859 topographical map (See Figure 9). The project area, across Queens Avenue (now 46th Avenue) from Flushing Cemetery, contains no buildings and was depicted next to Ramsey's property. A stream is seen to the south of Flushing Cemetery and a small pond (now called Kissena Lake) is to the southwest. Very little change is seen in the area between 1859 and 1872 (see Figure 10). The major difference is the depiction of North Shore Railroad to the north of the project area which began service in the 1860s (Seyfried 1961). Dripps' 1872 map shows the early property boundaries. It depicts most of the project area as having been part of the land of John H. and Hannah N. Bowne. The later acquired Lots 1, 6, 10, and 14 were within Ramsey's property. However no buildings are depicted in the vicinity of what is now Martins Field (see Figure 9).

The village of Flushing was incorporated in 1837 and its charter amended in 1883 to increase the land area. However, the project area lies outside the former boundary divisions (Thompson 1962:v.3:42-43, Valles 1938:71, Waller 1899:207). The 1845 census data shows Flushing with 3918 men and women, 600 "colored persons" and 12 paupers. Twenty-six deaths were reported in the previous year (Thompson 1962:v.3:57). The town of Flushing became incorporated in the City of New York on January 1, 1898. By the close of the century the population of Queens had risen by more than five times to 152,999 (Thompson 1962:v.2:54).

Cemetery Information

In nineteenth century Queens, "All the families of any prominence whatsoever had their own private burying ground" (Valles 1938:62). "Churchyard burials were outlawed" in New York in 1822 due to perceived deteriorating sanitary conditions after outbreaks of cholera and yellow fever. Concern in Albany led to the 1847 Rural Cemeteries Act which allowed private companies to get into the cemetery business (Culbertson & Randall 1987:xv, Seyfried 1982:116). In 1853, Flushing Cemetery was among the first cemeteries to be organized under this law. When the site was selected, it "was farm and virgin forest land" (Stuart 1945:8-9).

An act of the New York State law enabled Flushing to raise the funds needed to purchase "a suitable piece of land for a public burial ground" in 1839 (NYS 1839: 178). The Town of Flushing was allowed to tax its citizens to collect five-hundred dollars for the land purchase. The deed, entered on June 15, 1840, refers to this act in describing the roughly triangular piece of land purchased by the Supervisor of the Town of Flushing from Charles, Samuel and John W. Bowne (Queens Register L52:320). The actual purchase price was \$400. Additionally, this deed contained a caveat that "forever no building to be erected thereon". This land is what is referred to as Parcel "A" on the Parks Department Property Card (see Figure 11).

In 1851, the Town of Flushing was authorized to raise money to buy a "farm to support the poor... This farm was operated under a contract system, and sold in 1897" (Valles 1938:69). The farm was located in Fresh Meadows. In 1860, it averaged 24 "inmates" (Mandeville 1860:89). The Town Hall was built in the early 1860s. It would be rented out to various groups. The extra money thus generated "was to go for the support of the poor-farm" (Valles 1938:69). Mandeville listed the burial options for Flushing residents in 1860 as private graveyards, church graveyards, Flushing Cemetery, and the Town Poor House (p.87). Presumably, he meant the Town Poor House burial ground, which is now within Martins Field. Records of the Overseer of the Poor from 1827-1847 were scanned to determine if there was more precise information on the burial ground. No details on the locations of burials were found. However the Ledger showed payments for such things as coffins, grave clothes, keeping corpses, digging graves, and "ground to bury pauper". The Flushing Board of Health was concerned about the spread of small pox in the 1850s. The records of their meetings indicate a small pox hospital was established at the "Town Farm" in 1858 (Minutes 6/8/1858).

Beers' 1873 Atlas depicts part of the project area marked as "Poor House Burying Ground" (see Figure 12). It appears to encroach upon the property of Jacob Ramsey to the west, although the dimensions of the map seem a bit skewed. The year 1873 was also the year during which the cemetery appears to have been augmented by the town's purchase of the adjoining land. Isaac Bloodgood along with his wife and five other couples sold the Town of Flushing an adjacent piece of property for \$1989 as described in the deed recorded on March 11, 1873 (Queens Register L402:320). However the deed does not specify cemetery usage nor contain any building restrictions such as the 1840 deed does. The 1873 deed describes the property as running along Ramsey's land for three hundred eighty-six and one-half feet, but does not include any of Ramsey's land. It provides measurements of the dimensions of the parcel without specific directional information or a map for a total of about 1.95 acres. In trying to reconstruct the shape of the property, it appears that it may have extended north of the current property boundary and cross what is now 45th Avenue, and include the land mapped as Parcels B, C and D on Figure 11. This land made up the southwest corner of the former 153 acre Samuel Bowne estate as mapped in 1870. Nineteenth century deeds show a court dispute between members of the Bowne family resulted in the sale of this land at public auction in 1871 (Queens Register L354:91). The land had been in the Bowne family since 1831 when it was purchased from Anthony Franklin by Charles, Samuel and John Bowne (Queens Register LBB:378). Prior to that the land was owned by Samuel Van Wyck (Queens Register LN:226). These early deeds indicate a "dwelling house" was part of the property. However it was located north of the project area (Shipman 1870).

The Proceedings of the Sinking Fund, during their transfer of the property to the New York City Park Department, reported the last interments in the cemetery were done in 1898. These were bones found during the grading of Rocky Hill Road, now 46th Avenue (City of New York 1914).

Twentieth Century

Improvements within Flushing continued into the twentieth century. By 1914 the subway was authorized to create a route to Flushing. Ground was broken in 1923 and service began in 1928 (Valles 1938:85). The vicinity of the project area was being subdivided into lots and streets laid out. However much of the area was still open space in 1903 (see Figures 13 and 14). The project area was on the outskirts of the development. What is now the western part of the project area is depicted as the Lots 1, 6, 10, and 14 on Block 154, none of which contained buildings. The eastern part of the project area was not depicted (see Figure 14). The Hyde Atlas of 1904 provides a bit more detail, showing the eastern part

of the project area as "City of New York".

Martins Field became the jurisdiction of the Parks Department on December 2, 1914. The property transfer was resolved by the Commissioners of the Sinking Fund. Their proceedings noted that the transfer of the roughly three acre parcel was done at the request of the Flushing Association, who "stated that for some years the plot had been entirely neglected, and is now a veritable jungle and a nuisance but could be converted into a small park or playground" (City of New York 1914). The Parks Department provided a summary site history.

Title was vested in the Town of Flushing in 1840 and 1873, and then vested in the City of New York upon consolidation on January 1, 1898. Jurisdiction as a Park is dated December 2, 1914. Portions were added in 1914, 1946, 1947 and 1983. Formerly Paupers Burial Ground, the name was changed to Martin's Field on May 5, 1931.

The playground was originally designed by the Department of Parks in 1935 and constructed in 1936. Early in the 1940's a comfort station and sand pit were added; they were demolished and removed in the Fall of 1985. A portion of the playground was removed after 165th Street was remapped in 1957. (New York City Parks Department n.d.).

The 1914 property boundaries are depicted as Parcels A, B, C, and D on Figure 11. They are described as Block 5443 Lot 49 and Block 5444 Lot 1. The Annual Report of the Department of Parks for 1914 listed "Pauper Burial Ground" of Flushing at 3.57 acres as one of seventeen small parks (p.299). No other annual reports were found for the significant years of the construction of the park facilities or acquisition of additional lots. The 1919 DPR survey of Paupers Burial Ground maps the property at "3.2 ± Acres". Its boundaries match the fence line of the 1934 survey (see Figure 5).

By 1917, several dwellings had been erected to the northwest of the project area, north of lot 14 (see Figure 15). A shed to the rear of a store encroached on the project area property. Street names were also in the process of changing and while 165th Street is shown dividing the project area in two, it was not an open road at that time. This situation is depicted with more clarity on the 1934 Sanborn Map (see Figure 16). By 1934, the shed which was encroaching on the project area had been removed. A notation of the change in block number is also depicted. The 1951 update shows the same conditions within the project area, however substantial residential development is shown to the east (see Figure 17).

During this time there was no construction within the Martins Field Playground lots. The Buildings Department has four records under the Martins Field lots. However these all appear to be inaccurately

located. Buildings data for Block 5443, Lot 1 included a 1906 application for the erection of a building. However the provided plans located the lot as number 16, not number 1. Similarly, Buildings Department data filed under Block 5443, Lot 6 was a 1917 application to add gas piping to an existing house. The house location was 116 24th Street, (now 164th Street) which would be Lot 21, not Lot 6. The other two building applications were filed as Block 5443, Lot 49. A 1926 permit was issued Albert Carroll to build a frame house on his property where he was currently residing. Since deed records did not show Carroll as a property owner of any of the Martins Field Playground lots in 1926, one may assume this application was also filed incorrectly. The final application in the Buildings Department files was for the erection of a sign in 1929 on a building located at Queens Avenue (now 46th Avenue) east of 164th Street owned by Roland Lievendag. Like the other application, this owner was not listed on any of the Martins Field Playground lots, leading to the dismissal of this application for incorrect filing.

The only known building to ever have existed within the Martins Field Playground project area was the park comfort station whose demolished remains are shown on the 1986 survey (see Figure 4). The only atlas mapping a building is the 1941 update of the E. Belcher Hyde Atlas of the Borough of Queens which shows a one story brick building in that spot. Parks department records show construction of this type of building could have created an in-ground disturbance of between 4 to 7 feet below grade. However generic plans were used and the as-built data does not exist (NYC Park Department 1941).

The straight path of 165th Street through the Martins Field Playground prior to sewer installation and pavement of the road was the subject of internal Parks Department correspondence for several years until the matter was resolved in 1957. Resolution involved ceding part of the park, including Block 5444, Lot 1, and turning 165th Street toward the southeast to become the newly remapped road (Queens Topographical Bureau 1956).

A permit for water service was issued to the Parks Department in 1936 which allowed installation of a 3" water pipe to the center of the park from a point on 164th Street at a depth of four feet (Bureau of Water Supply 1936). However no inspection was recorded. Sewer service was made available in the project area neighborhood beginning in 1917 on 46th Avenue. In 1920, service to 164th Street was completed. A private combined sewer was placed in 165th Street in 1957 at the time of the remapping of the road. Utility locations, as they go through the park, are mapped on Figure 18. This figure depicts locations of previous known and current in-ground disturbances mapped by the DPR, with the addition

of electrical lines mapped as existing in 1986 (DPR 1986). It also includes the locations of the four mapped headstones (see Figure 19) and park appurtenances.

Parks Department records show considerations were given to augmenting Martins Field by a number of blocks in 1934 and 1935 (Spargo 1935). However financial concerns regarding acquisition of private property prompted the Acting Chief Engineer to recommend deferment on the decision of expanding what was then an existing park called Queens Avenue Park (Board of Estimate 1934). It seems clear that by this time the property was being used recreationally. However a file memorandum dated July 21, 1934 discussed the fact the property was formerly a cemetery and refers to the 1919 Topographic Map of the "Colored Cemetery" (Borough of Queens 1932) (see Figure 19). This map shows the remains of a stone wall which was the boundary between Parcels A and B. It is not known if this was a farm boundary or created between 1840 and 1873 as a cemetery boundary.

The early deeds show the western lots of the project area, Lots 6, 10 and 14, were subdivided by William Ziegler in 1890. Lot 1 was likely also included, although the deed could not be identified. Prior to remapping of 165th Street in 1957, Block 5444, Lot 1 was also part of Martins Field Playground. This lot was used as part of the street when its course was changed. Table 1 provides some of the ownership information based on deed research and Parklands' records.

Real estate valuation records for the years 1910-1961 were examined, using five year intervals. The largest lot of the Martins Field project area was shown as a "Potters Field" through the year 1945. However it was also shown as a park beginning in 1938 with the wading pool installed by 1937, indicating the valuation records were not kept up to date. Lot 14 is listed under Charlotte Maddock's ownership from 1910 through 1920. Lots 1 and 6 were owned by Julia L. Roeve or Rowe for that time period. Presumably, this is the same person shown on the Lot 10 deed as Julia D. Rowe. Lot 6 was owned by William Ziegler in 1910 and by the Ziegler estate in 1914. By 1920 Lot 6 was listed with unknown ownership. Lot 43 was not listed in these records. The smaller lots showed unknown ownership from 1927 through the end of the period. Only lots 10 and 14 showed known ownership for some of those years. Lot 10 was attributed to P. Guilfoyle beginning in 1940/41 and his ownership continued throughout the period. Lot 14 had unknown ownership listed throughout the dates evaluated up until 1960/61 when ownership was attributed to the City of New York.

Assignment of the smaller lots to Martins Field Playground in 1946 and 1947 seems pretty straight forward for Lots 1, 6 and 10, as seen in Table 1. However there appears to have been some confusion regarding assignment of Lots 14 and 43. These lots were calendared by the City Planning Commission in 1963 to consider assigning them to the Parks Department. However, in 1983 the Parks Department was still seeking resolution. They were informed Lot 14 was approved on February 14, 1957, when it was mapped with the park, as was Lot 43 (Sturman 1983). Apparently assignment procedures changed between 1963 and 1983 and Board of Estimate assignment was no longer necessary to incorporate Lots 14 and 43 into Martins Field Playground.

Cemetery Data

In the 1930s, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) conducted a number of interviews with local prominent citizens for the purposes of recording their histories. George W. Pople was one such person. He was a former town supervisor who at the age of about 80 recounted information on a variety of subjects, including the Potters Field.

It so happened that Flushing suffered from an epidemic of Cholera in 1838-40, and an epidemic of smallpox in 1844. A prejudice existed against the use of Church burying grounds for such corpses as resulted from these diseases, and so it came to pass, as a result of the first epidemic, at least 25 interments of Flushing citizens in Potters Field were made. As a result of the second epidemic, more than 25 burials took place in this cemetery, so that some of Flushing's prominent citizens found their final resting place in Potters Field. There were possibly 500 interments in this parcel, many of which were colored people (Queens Topographical Bureau 1938).

Death Records

The cemetery or burial place which is now Martins Field Playground has been referred to by a number of names in the historic documentation. Table 2 is a sample of some of those appellations.

In a 1919 survey, the Queens Topographical Bureau identified the project area as "Colored_Cemetery". They mapped four marble headstones in good condition (see Figure 19). The headstones marked the graves of:

- 1) Willie, son of Alfred & Fannie Curry; aged 4; 1874.
- 2) Geo. H. Bunn; died Jan 13, 1887; aged 17 years.
- 3) Alfred E. Bunn; died April 7, 1876; aged 3 years & 17 days.
- 4) James Bunn; died Aug 3, 1890; aged 53 years. (Borough of Queens 1932: 46-47).

Table 2 Former Names of the Martins Field Playground Project Area

NAME	DATE	REFERENCE
Public Burial Ground	1840	Deed Liber 52 Page 320
Town Poor House Burial Place	1860	Rev. G. Henry Mandeville
Flushing Town Cemetery	1873	Deed Liber 402 Page 320
Poor House Burying Ground	1873	Beers' Atlas of Long Island
Town Ground	1881 - 1898	Flushing Register of Deaths
Pauper's Burial Ground	July 1919	Department of Parks Map Q-RW-17-2
Colored Cemetery	October 1919	Queens Topographical Bureau, 1932
Potters Field	1910 - 1945	Annual Record of Assessed Valuation of Real Estate

The Town of Flushing began keeping records of deaths in 1881 and continued to do so until it became part of New York City in 1898 (Kenneth Cobb, Municipal Archives: personal communication). Therefore a search of the death records was made for George and James Bunn, who died during that period. Only the record for James Bunn was found. Deaths were recorded at the place of death. Therefore it is possible that George Bunn died elsewhere, although he was buried in Flushing. James Bunn died on August 3, 1890 of consumption. He was married and had worked as a farmer. He was born in Stony Brook, Long Island, but resided in Blackstump (now in the area of Fresh Meadows) at the time of his death. His race or color was not specified in the death record. Mr. Bunn's burial place was listed as "Town Ground".

The Flushing death records were logged in a hand-written book(s), with a one line entry for each individual who is recorded dying in Flushing. This made it relatively simple to scan some of the microfilmed pages for place of burial as Town Ground. The search began with 1890, the year of Mr. Bunn's death. The first listing of a person buried at Town Ground that year was Julia Hicks. Coincidentally, she was the 32 year old daughter of a James and Marie Bunn. Ms. Hicks died at Fresh Meadow of pneumonia with lymphoid fever.

A total of 3,084 death records are available for the Town of Flushing between 1881 and 1898. Of these records, the author viewed 837 of them (27%), as time allowed. For the same period, there are 1,587 ✓

records available for the Village of Flushing. Four-hundred-sixty-four of these were viewed (29%). Appendix A provides the names and some of the other information found in these records for individuals listed with a burial place of Town Ground, Town Cemetery, Potters Field, or Public Ground. There were 97 such individuals. There were also a number of individuals with no place of burial listed. Those individuals were not counted among those who could have been buried in the property now known as Martins Field. However, it is possible some or all of them actually were.

If one is to assume a constant percentage of deaths recorded in the Town and Village of Flushing were buried at the cemetery now known as Martins Field, it is possible that 354 individuals were buried there from 1881 to 1898. Should one carry that same logic and data back in time it is possible that 1160 individuals were buried within the project area from 1840, when the property was purchased for burial use, through 1898 when the last interments took place. However this type of reasoning may not be appropriate since varying numbers of deaths occurred in different years. Epidemic years would most likely have disproportionately larger numbers of deaths and during 1895 only two deaths were listed. Below is a summary of some of the data found in Appendix A.

Table 3 Race/Color of Deceased Listed in Appendix A

RACE/COLOR	NUMBER	PERCENT
Black	43	44
Colored	17	18
White	4	4
not listed	33	34
TOTAL	97	100

One may speculate the race/color categories used in the death records could include other races which are defined differently today, such as Native American or Asian, and perhaps others. Nevertheless, more than sixty percent of the deaths listed in the appendices are non-white. Only four percent are listed as white. While race or color were not listed for one-third of the individuals.

A descendant of James Bunn, his great-grandson Ralph Bunn, currently lives in Suffolk County. He is a "Native American Indian" and the chairman of the Native American Validation Alliance, Inc., a genealogical and cultural organization. He was contacted during the course of research and was interested

to know that a number of deaths had been identified. He was asked, based on his knowledge of Native American genealogy, if he could determine likely ancestry based on surname of individuals listed in Appendix A. Including Bunn, he identified 27 common Native American surnames on Long Island among those listed in the appendix; Butler, Corse, Gains, Garner, Hamilton, Helms, Hewlett, Hicks, Hinckman, Hincksman, Jackson, Jarvis, Johnson, Mitchell, Potter, Rapelya, Sands, Seaman, Skank, Smith, Taylor, Townsend, Treadwell, Valentine, Williams, and Wood. Individuals with these surnames make up 41 of the 97 individuals listed (42%).

Table 4 Age Range of Deceased Listed in Appendix A

AGE	NUMBER	PERCENT
Less than 5 years	54	56
5 - 30 years	13	13
Older than 30 years	23	24
not listed	7	7
TOTAL	97	100

Infant mortality was obviously high among the buried population during the period of 1881 - 1898, with more than half of the recorded deaths of individuals under the age of five. About one-quarter of the individuals listed in the appendices survived to live beyond the age of 30. A search for the wills of all individuals who were in the older than thirty years category was conducted (Wilson 1937). Not surprisingly, wills were not filled for any of these people, presumably because of their modest financial means.

No records of disinterments of graves were found. Bruno Seliste of the New York State Division of Cemeteries is familiar with the fact that many city parks have been built on top of former cemeteries. He said it was common practice for the Parks Department to place advertisements alerting the public to cemetery conversion plans and allow relatives the opportunity to reinter loved-ones elsewhere. However no such advertisements were found for the project area. Even if these ads were placed, it seems unlikely that many descendants of "paupers" had the financial means to reinter ancestors. Additionally, the cemetery was converted to a park during the depression years when money was tight for most people.

Mr. Seliste also said the method of converting a cemetery to a park generally involved laying the headstones flat and then covering the area with fill.

News Accounts

Quite a bit of secondary/tertiary source data is available on the former cemetery in the form of newspaper articles. These articles can be grouped into five time frames; 1) the cemetery period, 2) 1910, when a controversy arose about the use of the property, 3) the 1930s, around the time the project area became Martins Field, 4) 1947, when the playground was augmented, and 5) the early 1990s, when a local citizen, Mr. Mandingo Tshaka, successfully spearheaded efforts to have the site protected.

Only one news account was found from the earlier time period when Martins Field was a cemetery. Although newspaper articles, particularly those published long ago, are not the most accurate source for certain types of data, they can provide valuable accounts. A report in the Long Island Democrat in 1896 describes the conditions at the cemetery while maintenance was taking place. A member of the crew was charged with trimming the grass "when suddenly the ground gave way". He fell through into a burial and then another below it. The report goes on to say: "Bodies are indiscriminately buried only 6 to 12 inches below the ground just as in previous years". Although the article does not describe the base of the depth of burials, one can be certain from the account that the burials in the former cemetery were stacked at least two deep and the upper burials were made in shallow graves.

In the spring of 1910, the City of New York apparently considered resuming the use of the pauper's burying ground. They had the over four acre property "cleared off" in preparation. However cemetery use never recommenced, probably because of community concerns regarding potential depression of real estate values (Brooklyn Eagle 1910; Flushing Evening Journal 1910a, 1910b). One account describes "the land has been practically abandoned and it has become covered with underbrush and scrub oaks. The few graves on the plot are in no way recognizable" (Flushing Evening Journal 1910a). In describing the earlier interments, another account says "the village trustees ordered a local undertaker to bury in the cemetery those who died unidentified or who had no means with which to pay for regular burial, but such cases were few, and there are not more than a dozen bodies buried there now altogether" (Brooklyn Eagle 1910). This article is accompanied by two photographs of the property. One is of a single headstone with a "sunken grave". While it is difficult to interpret the microfilmed pictures, it seems that the other one shows four headstones in the foreground and a stone wall in the rear. However, these are not the

same four headstones mapped nine years later by the Topographic Bureau because of their orientation to the stone wall. At most, two of the headstones photographed are the same as those mapped in 1919 (see Figure 19). It is more likely these newspaper accounts have underestimated the number of burials at the site in order to further their own objectives, or those of informants who would have been opposed to continued use as a cemetery. The earlier news article, as well as later accounts and the documentary record, indicate a larger number of burials.

It is also possible the 1910 controversy surrounding use of the property led to the decision to convert it to a playground. At a civic conference in the Queens Borough President's Office, one "Mrs. Wilfred Law, of the Good Citizenship League of Flushing" introduced a number of her organization's concerns. Among other items, she voiced her opposition to the resumption of burials at the pauper's cemetery as well as her view that Flushing needed more playgrounds for its children (Flushing Evening Journal 1910b). Although no report of the decision-making involved in conversion of the cemetery to a playground was found, this account is the first one found where both uses were discussed simultaneously.

A group of news accounts from the 1930s discuss the conversion of the property to park use and the change of its name to Martin Field, in honor of the local tree conservationist Everett P. Martin. One news item from 1931 describes the writer's experience upon visiting the site: "Walking through the thick brush of the place today one stumbles over rotting name boards which marked the graves" (North Shore Daily Journal ? 1931). This is the only account found which describes grave markers made of wood. It leads one to wonder why these were not surveyed along with the marble headstones by the Queens Topographical Bureau in 1919. Another article written in 1931 said burials were placed "usually without any headstones or even markers". It then refers, as many of the other articles also do, to the cemetery as the final resting place for many who died in the 1857 cholera epidemic and the 1867 small pox epidemic (North Shore Daily 1931). Yet another 1931 article discusses a proposal to "improve and extend the park" (Star 1931).

A news account from 1936 celebrates the opening of the Martin Field playground and the change of its name from "Paupers' Burial Ground" (North Shore Journal 1936). A 1936 Long Island Press article is entitled "Coins From Dead Men's Eyes Are Sold by WPA Workers". The article recounts the excavations for the wading pool. Works Progress Administration (WPA) workers found coins in the eyes of burials. Without reverence for the dead, the workers reportedly sold these coins for profit. The

newspaper article also describes "bones galore" excavated from "what appeared to be an old vacant lot". It describes records showing the abandonment of the cemetery "more than 50 years ago", that being prior to 1886. The article also states, "In its day, it was the only public cemetery in Flushing".

The practice of placing coins in the eyes of the dead was recently observed in some of the burials excavated from the African Burial Ground in Manhattan from 1991 - 1992. The fact the property was described as a vacant lot is probably accurate, given what is known of the property history. However the date of disuse of the cemetery is inaccurately reported as prior to 1886. The Topographic survey recorded headstones of two individuals who died later than that (Queens Topographical Bureau 1932:47). Additionally, there is a record of its use as a cemetery until some time in 1898 (Proceedings of the Sinking Fund 1914). It is not known through primary source data whether or not Martins Field was the only public cemetery in Flushing at that time. However it was the first. Additionally, Vincent Seyfried, noted historian of Queens, confirms this was the only pauper's cemetery in Flushing during the time period, although he has no specific reference (personal communication).

In 1947 the Long Island Daily reported on the recent acquisition of lots adjacent to the playground along 164th Street; lots 1, 6, and 10. It discusses the acquisition making possible the enlargement of a baseball field. The article also refers to the former potters field and paupers burial ground (Loring 1947).

Several more recent newspaper articles recount the efforts of Mandingo Tshaka to gain recognition for the forgotten cemetery. Mr. Tshaka is a community activist who became interested in the Martins Field site around seven years ago. The newspaper articles on the subject discuss how Mr. Tshaka had lobbied politicians to "restore the cemetery", designate it a historic landmark, "halt further reconstruction", reinter the remains, and "installation of a memorial". The politicians and officials of the day whom he contacted include State Senator Frank Padavan, City Council Member Julia Harrison, Assembly Speaker Saul Weprin, and Borough President Claire Shulman, as well as the New York State Historic Preservation Office (NYSOPRHP) and the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (Bazzi 1993; Gattuso 1992; Hosey 1993; Pinto 1993; Queens Courier 1992; Stone 1992). Assemblyman Weprin sent a letter on Mr. Tshaka's behalf to Julia Stokes, Deputy Commissioner for Historic Preservation and the NYSOPRHP, which solicited her agency to protect the site. Ms. Stokes responded by supporting "any effort to safeguard and properly memorialize" the property (Stokes 1992).

The author spoke with Mr. Tshaka, who traces his family tree to the Bunn family, regarding his research and desires for the future of the site. As for the future of the site, Mr. Tshaka would like to see the removal of playground facilities and the installation of a memorial in the portion of the park which is known to have been a cemetery. Furthermore, he would like to see a replica made of the marble headstones recorded in 1919 for the site. Mr. Bunn was also asked what he would like to see happen to the project area. He also wants the playground removed and would like to see recognition of the Native Americans buried there. He explained his culture has an insult involving "dancing and playing" on the graves of the ancestors. However, the insult is just words, at Martins Field he finds it an offensive reality.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report has reviewed data relating to the potential for the Martins Field Playground project area to contain prehistoric and historic archaeological resources. There is a low to moderate chance of encountering prehistoric archaeological resources. The area topography and soils may have been conducive to prehistoric use, however it was a considerable distance from fresh water and therefore may have been utilized on a short term or intermittent basis. The nearest reports of known prehistoric use come from the Flushing Cemetery across the street, however these reports come from the cemetery itself, rather than standard archaeological sources and are not specific as to the type of prehistoric archaeological material encountered. Additionally, the use of the property as a cemetery in the nineteenth century would have obliterated prehistoric archaeological deposits in these areas.

The data presented demonstrates the likelihood of encountering intact and partially intact burials within sections of the Martins Field Playground. Furthermore, of the four individuals who were certainly buried within this former cemetery, three of them are definitively of Native American ancestry, members of the Bunn family. However the bodies of these individuals would have been removed at the time the wading pool was excavated in the 1930s (see Figure 18). Regardless, should burials remain within the property, there is likely a substantial percentage of Native Americans buried there, as well as those of African descent, at least those individuals buried after 1881 and perhaps earlier. While the cemetery which is now Martins Field was used as a burial place for the poor, it is possible wealthier individuals were buried there during the epidemics of 1838-40, 1844, 1857 and 1867, their relatives not wanting to contaminate family plots or churchyards. After 1873, when the cemetery land was augmented, there is a possibility burials were made to the north of the Martins Field Playground, since it seems land was purchased there at that time. However, this was not explored because that property is located outside of the project area.

No data on reinterment of individuals formerly buried within the project area has been found. However several news accounts from the 1950's indicate reinterments from another Queens cemetery were made at Flushing Cemetery. This led to speculation the same may have been done prior to or during construction of Martins Field Playground, particularly since Flushing Cemetery is located directly across the street. A call was placed to see if any of the three members of the Bunn Family whose headstones were recorded in 1919 were now buried at Flushing Cemetery. They were not. The likelihood that individuals with wooden grave markers, or no grave markers at all, would be reinterred at Flushing

Cemetery seemed more remote. However, all names were not checked.

The names of all of the individuals buried within this cemetery may never be known, nor will specific locations of each individual's burial place. However, it may be possible to identify locations of burials remaining within Martins Field Playground today by use of non-invasive testing methods such as ground penetrating radar (GPR). Methods such as GPR, particularly when accompanied by other methods of geophysical testing, have had success in identifying burial locations at other sites. Such a study should be undertaken at Martins Field Playground as the next step in the archaeological evaluation of the property to determine if intact or partially intact graves still exist and to determine to what extent throughout the playground. Historic grade alterations were not substantial enough to have destroyed burials or to have deeply buried, and thus protected, them. In-ground disturbances have been from park facility construction, mainly the wading pool, comfort station and sand pit, as well as utility lines. Specific documentation on depth of disturbance below current grade is not available. All of these disturbances would have been localized and not affected all, or a large percentage, of the former cemetery. Therefore the entire playground is recommended for testing.

Should testing prove intact graves still exist within the park, evaluation of site significance could be made. The National Park Service provides guidance in evaluating cemeteries and burial places for the National Register of Historic Places. "Cemeteries and burial places traditionally have been regarded as sacred and inviolate, especially by those whose ancestors are buried there." In cases of Native American burial places they refer to the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (NAGPRA). "The Act encourages the avoidance of archaeological sites that contain burials and also makes Federal agencies responsible for consulting Indian Tribes or Native Hawaiian groups when they encounter such sites" (NPS 1992:2). Proof of consultation is also required (NAGPRA 25USC3002 Sec.3.c.). These are also the guidelines applied by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission. Furthermore LPC suggests the Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Traditional Cultural Properties may be appropriate in the case of Martins Field Playground. "The way to determine what constitutes a reasonable effort to identify traditional cultural properties is to consult those who may ascribe cultural significance to locations within the study area. The need for community participation in planning identification, as in other forms of preservation planning, cannot be over-emphasized" (NPS 1994:6). Certainly Mr. Tshaka and Mr. Bunn should be among those consulted.

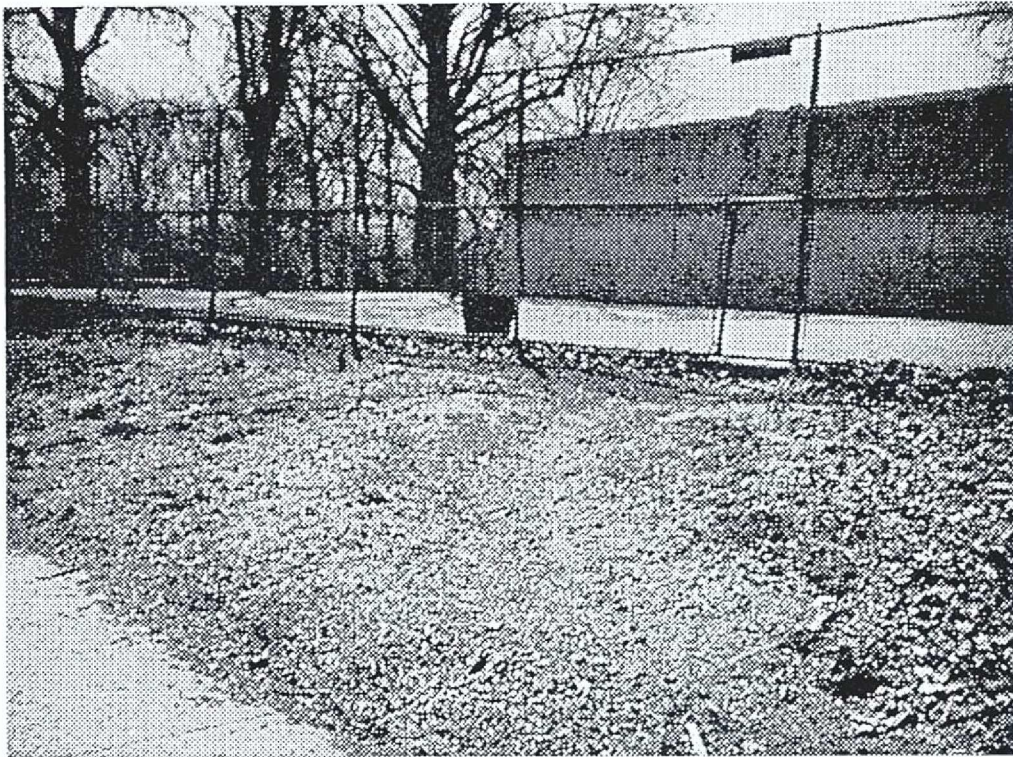


Plate 1 Photograph of the handball court area in the northern portion of Martins Field, taken from the sidewalk facing southwest.

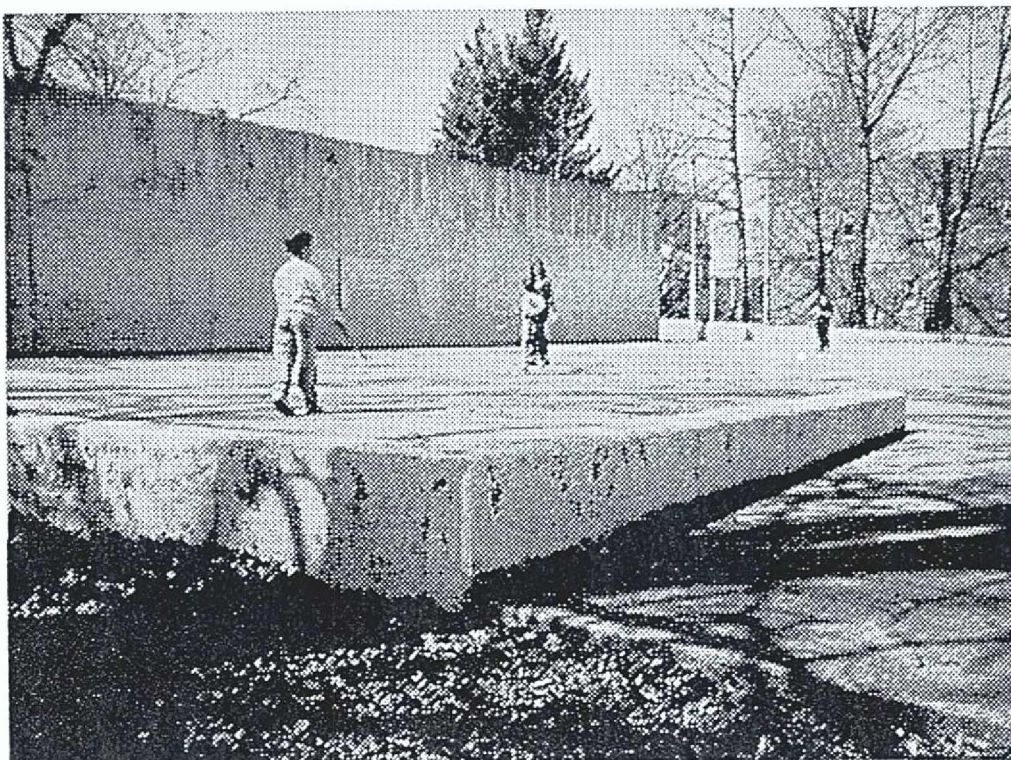


Plate 2 Photograph of the handball court area in the northern portion of Martins Field, taken from the interior of the park facing northwest.

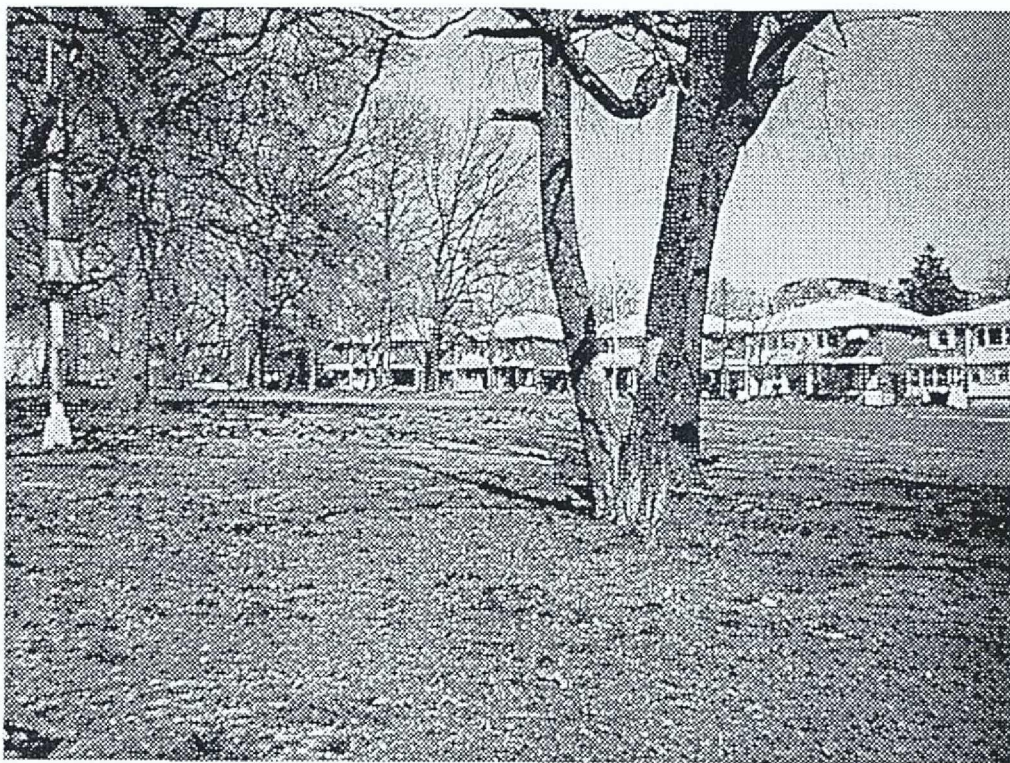
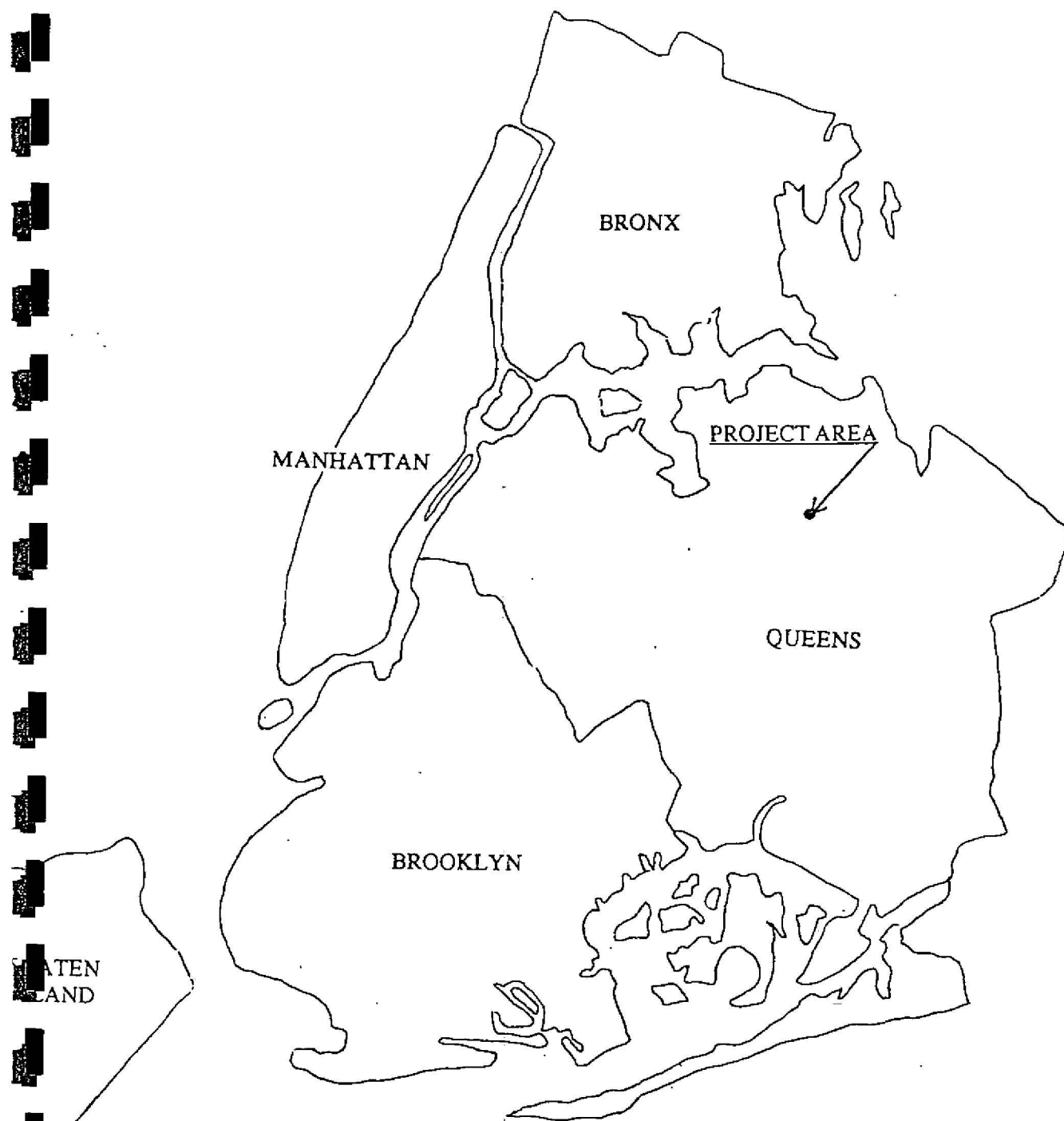


Plate 3 Photograph of the central open field area of Martins Field, taken from the 164th Street entrance facing northeast.



Plate 4 Photograph of the southern area of Martins Field, taken from the concrete walk facing north.



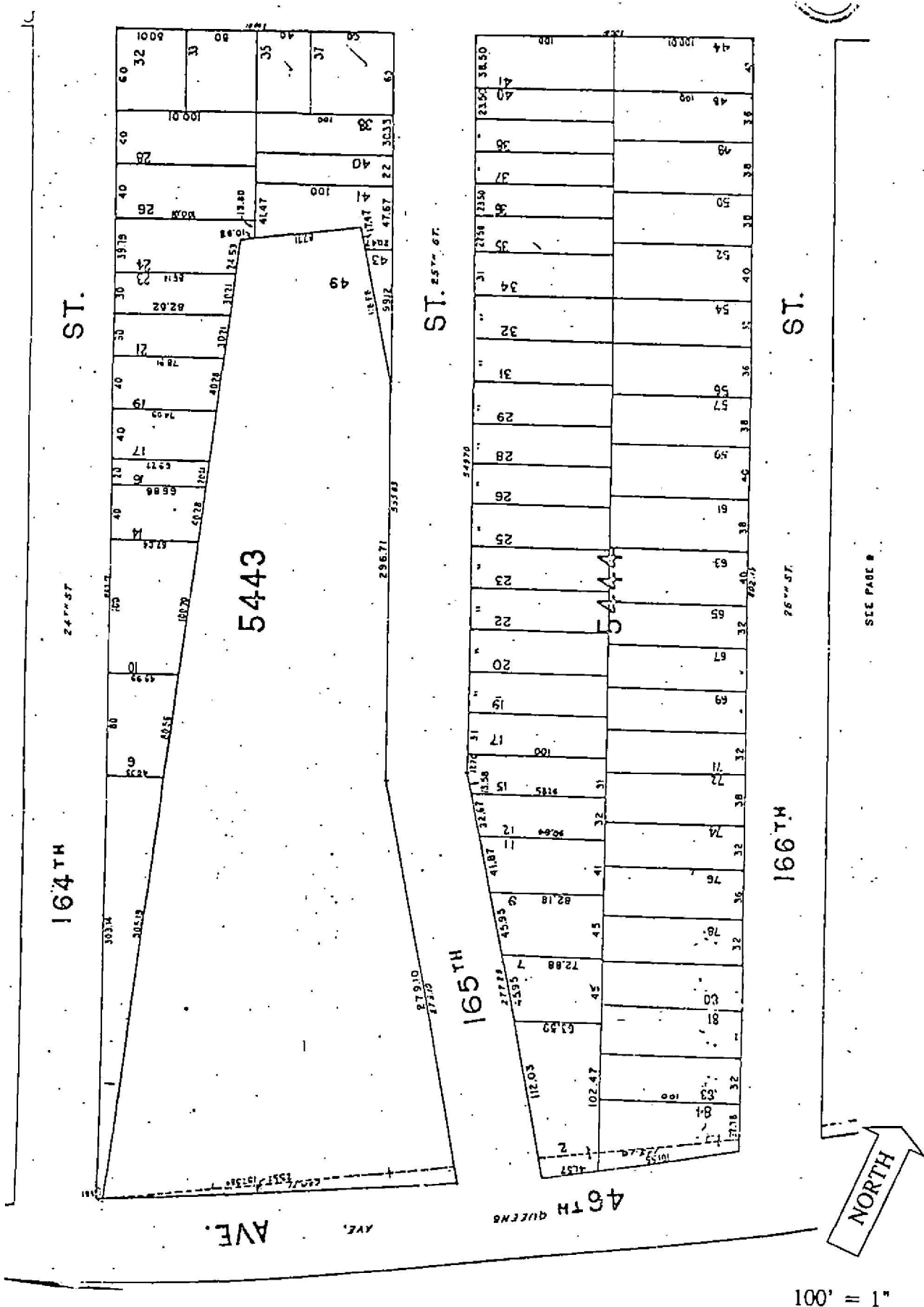
NOT TO SCALE

Figure 1 Location of the Martins Field project area on a map of New York City.



SCALE 1:2400

Figure 2 Location of the Martins Field project area on the U.S.G.S. maps of Flushing and Jamaica, N.Y..



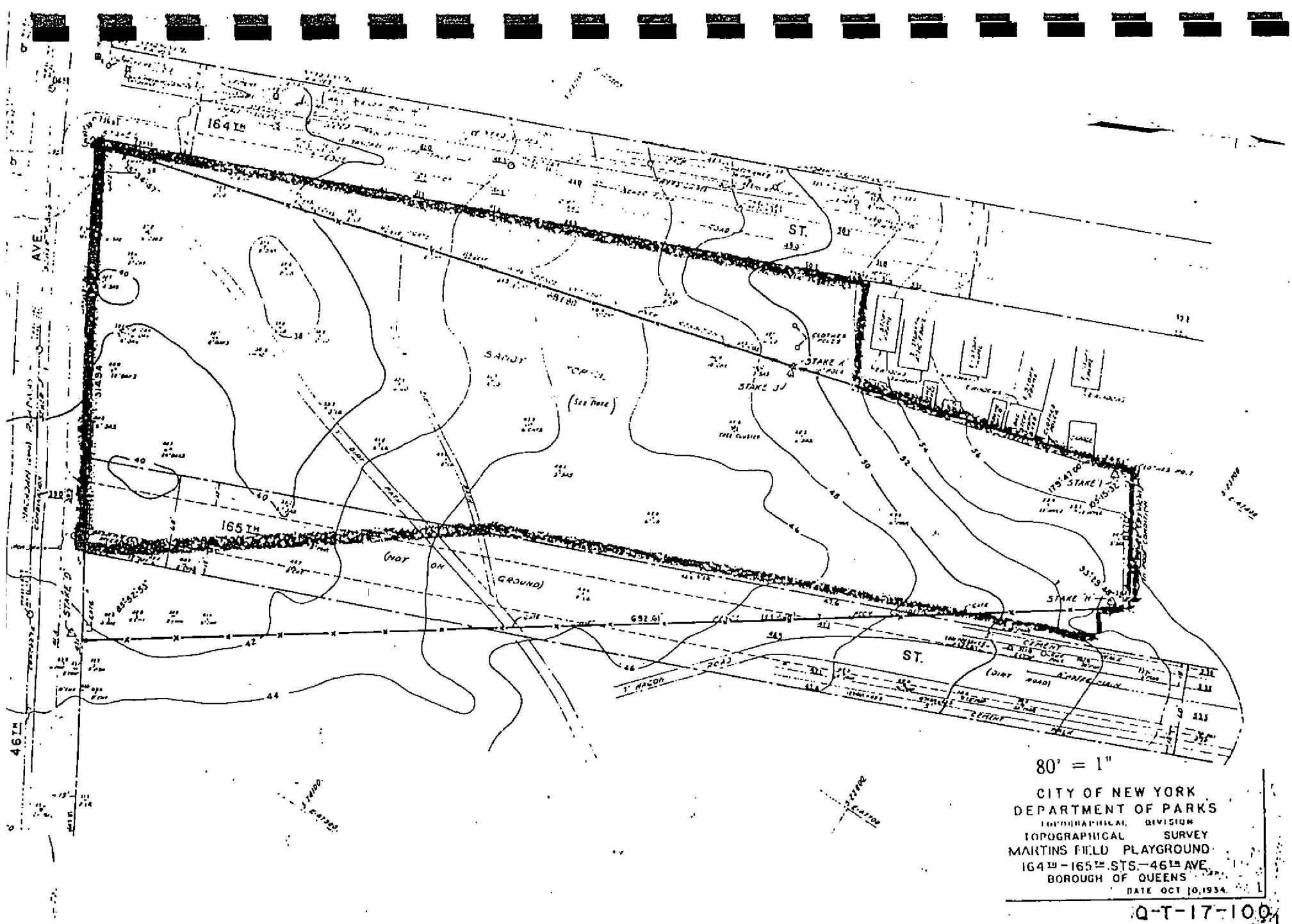
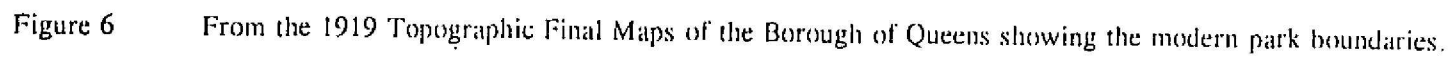


Figure 5 The 1934 Topographical Survey of Martins Field Playground showing modern park boundary.



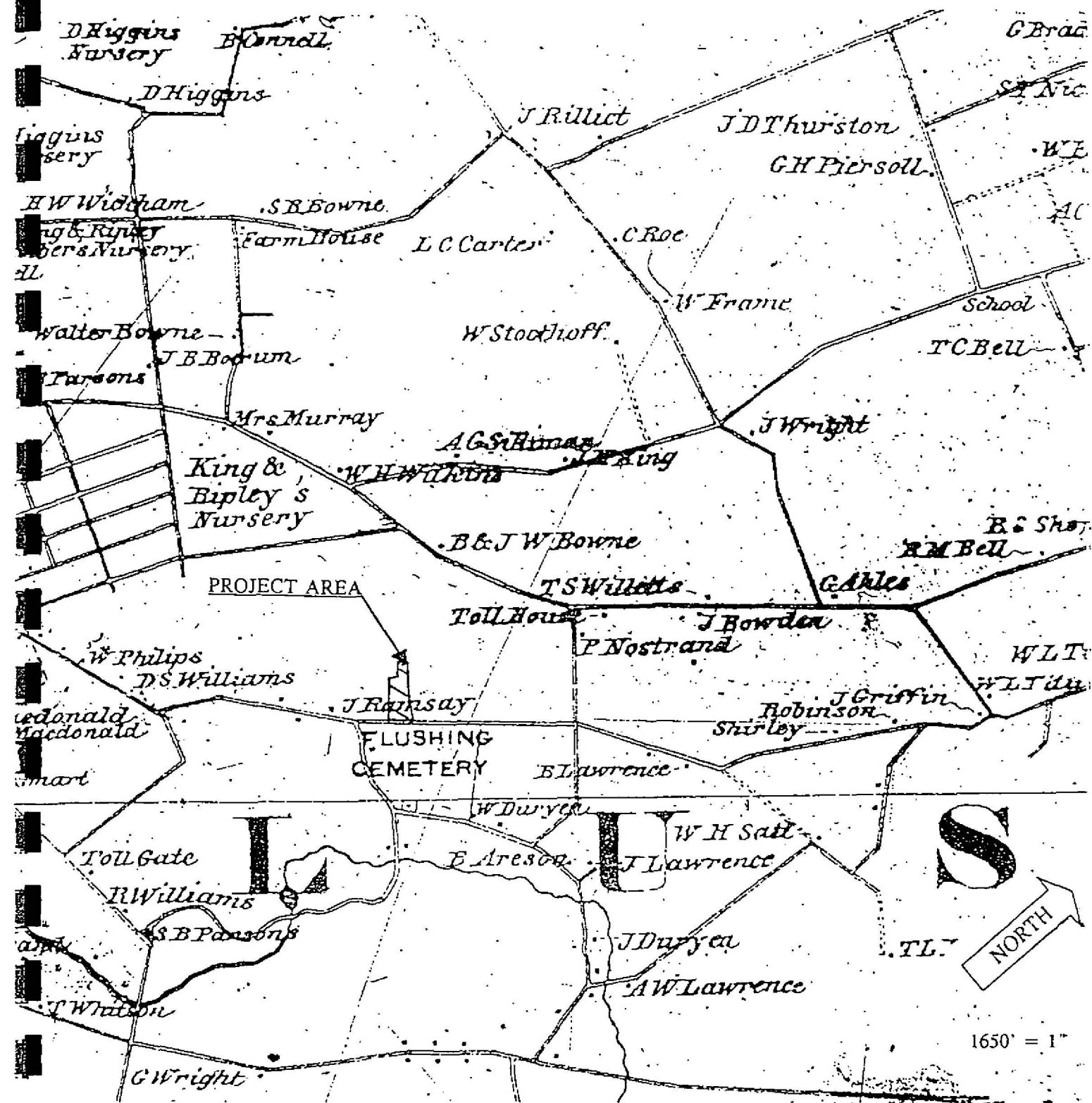


Figure 9 From Walling's 1859 Topographical Map.

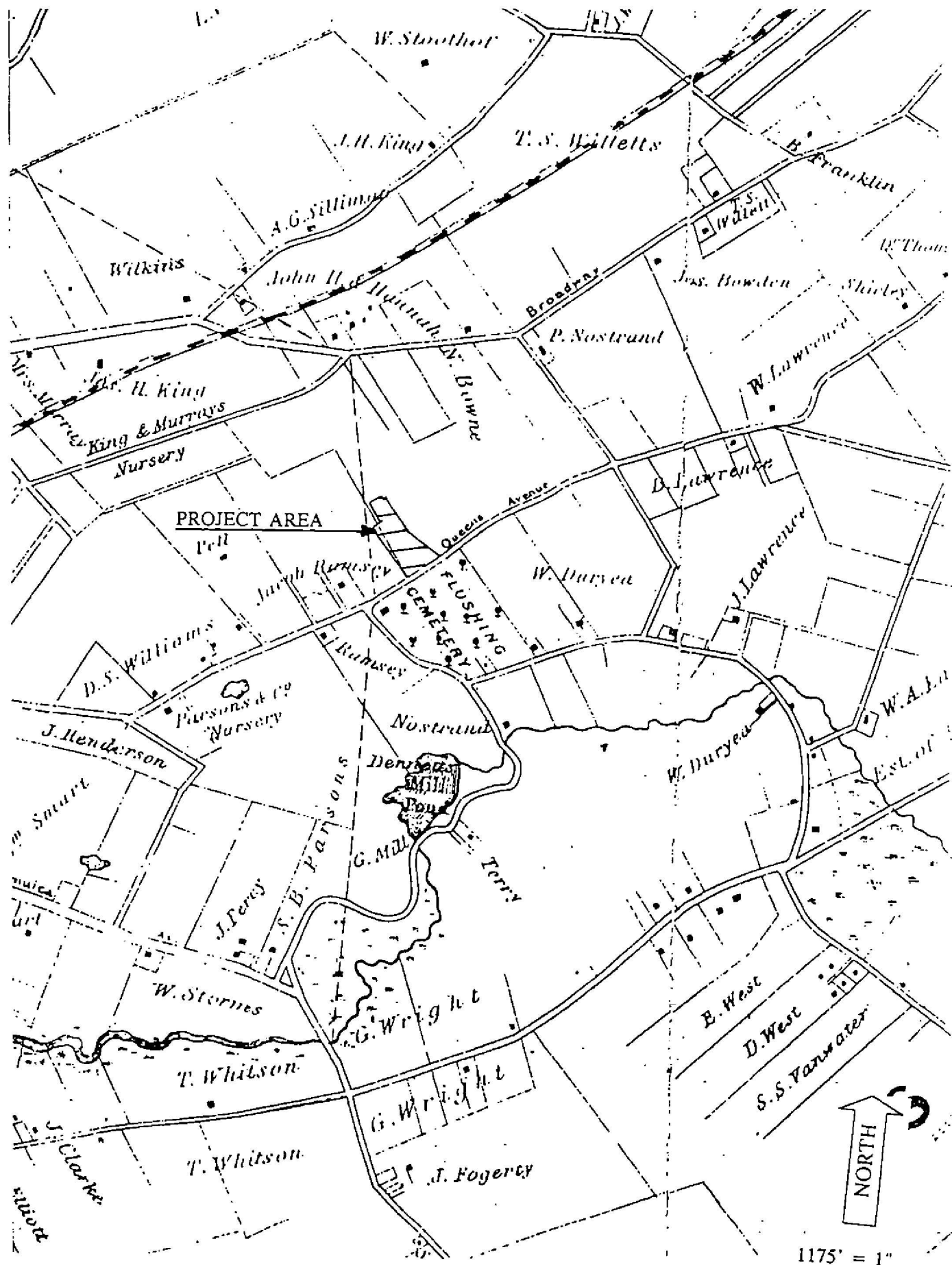


Figure 10 From Dripps' 1872 Map of Kings County.

Part of
FLUSHING

TOWN OF FLUSHING QUEENS CO. LI.

Scale 600 feet to the inch

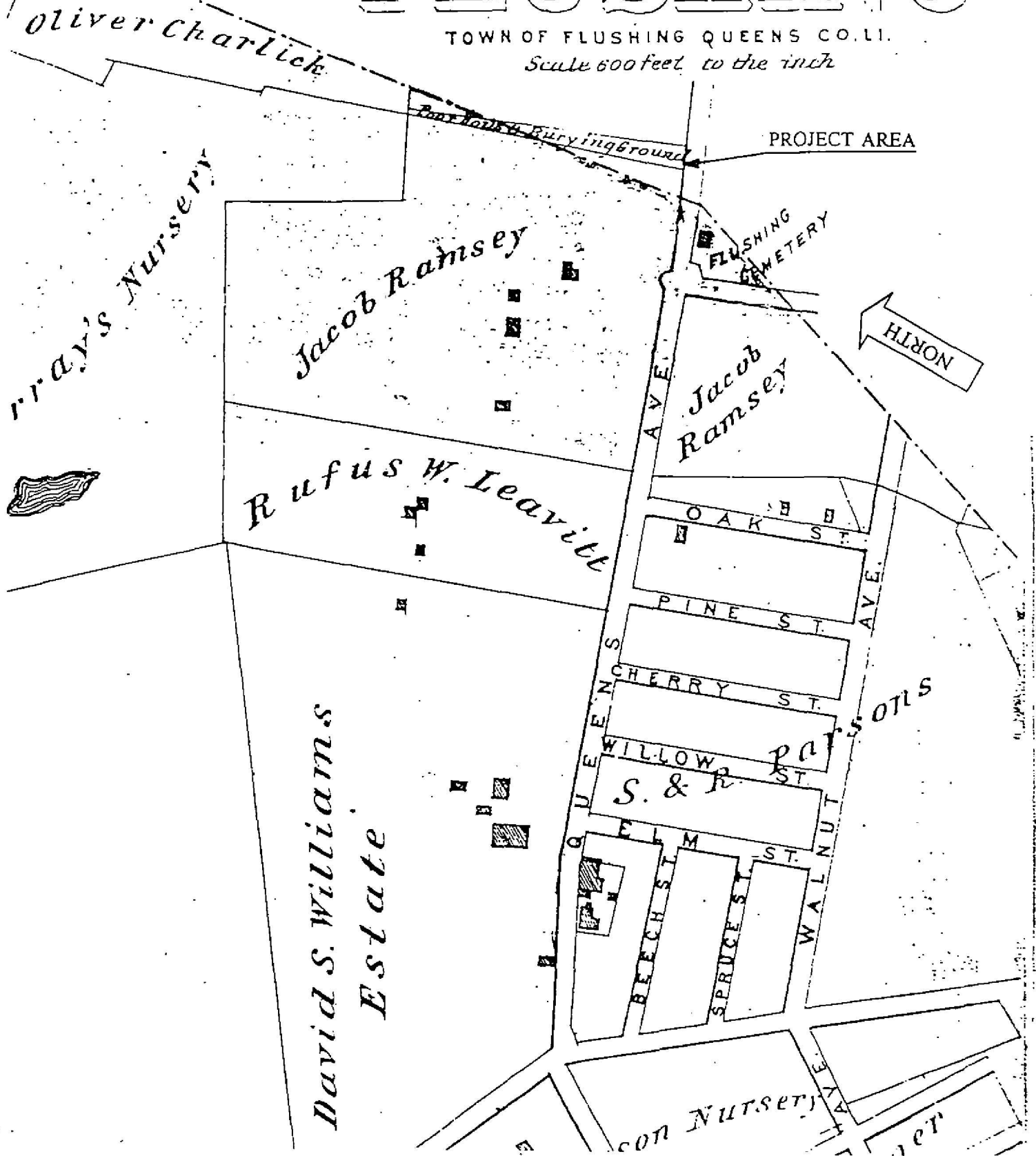


Figure 12 From Beers' 1873 Atlas of Long Island.

SCALE 500 FEET TO AN INCH.

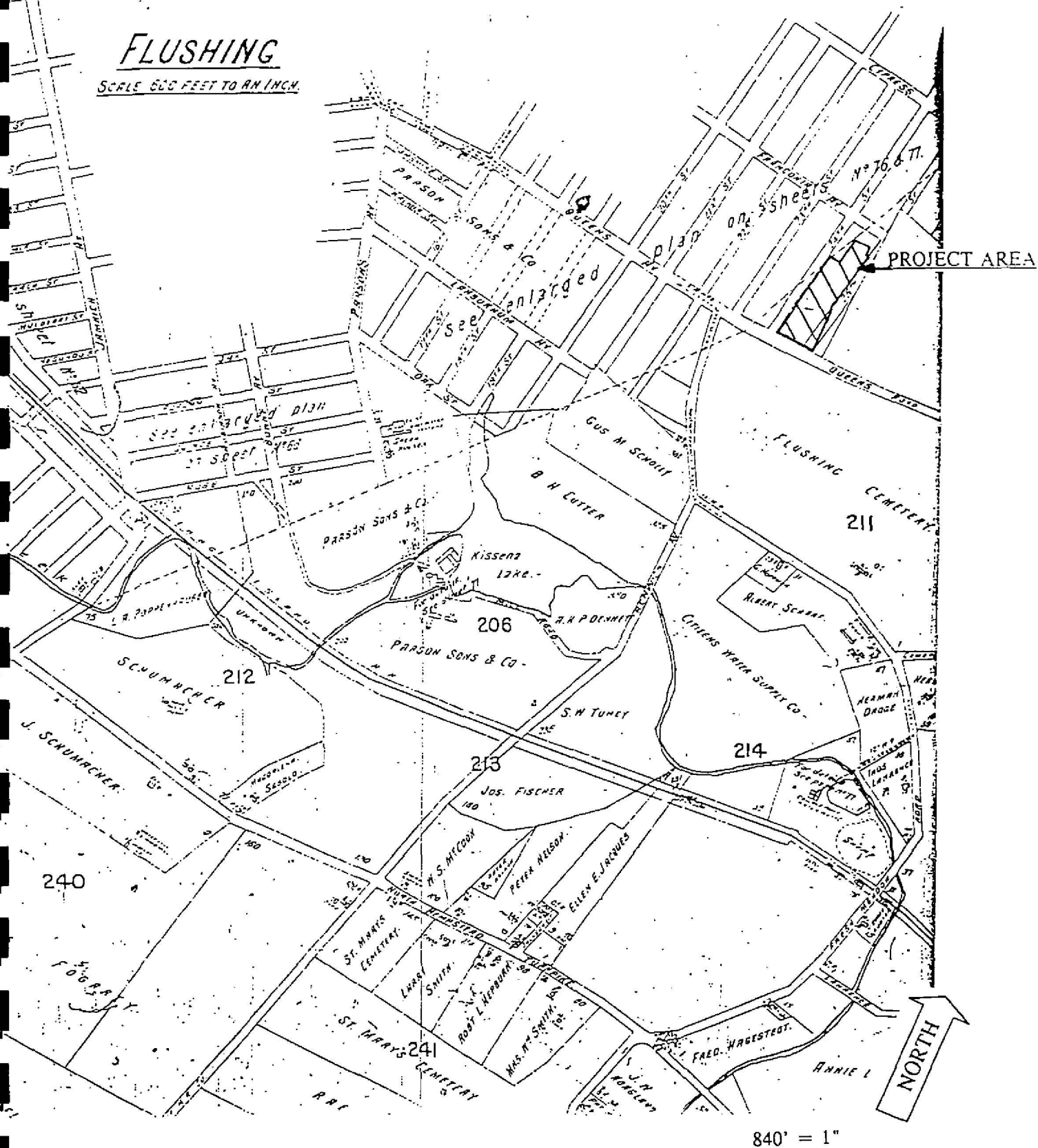


Figure 13 From Sanborn's 1903 Insurance Maps.

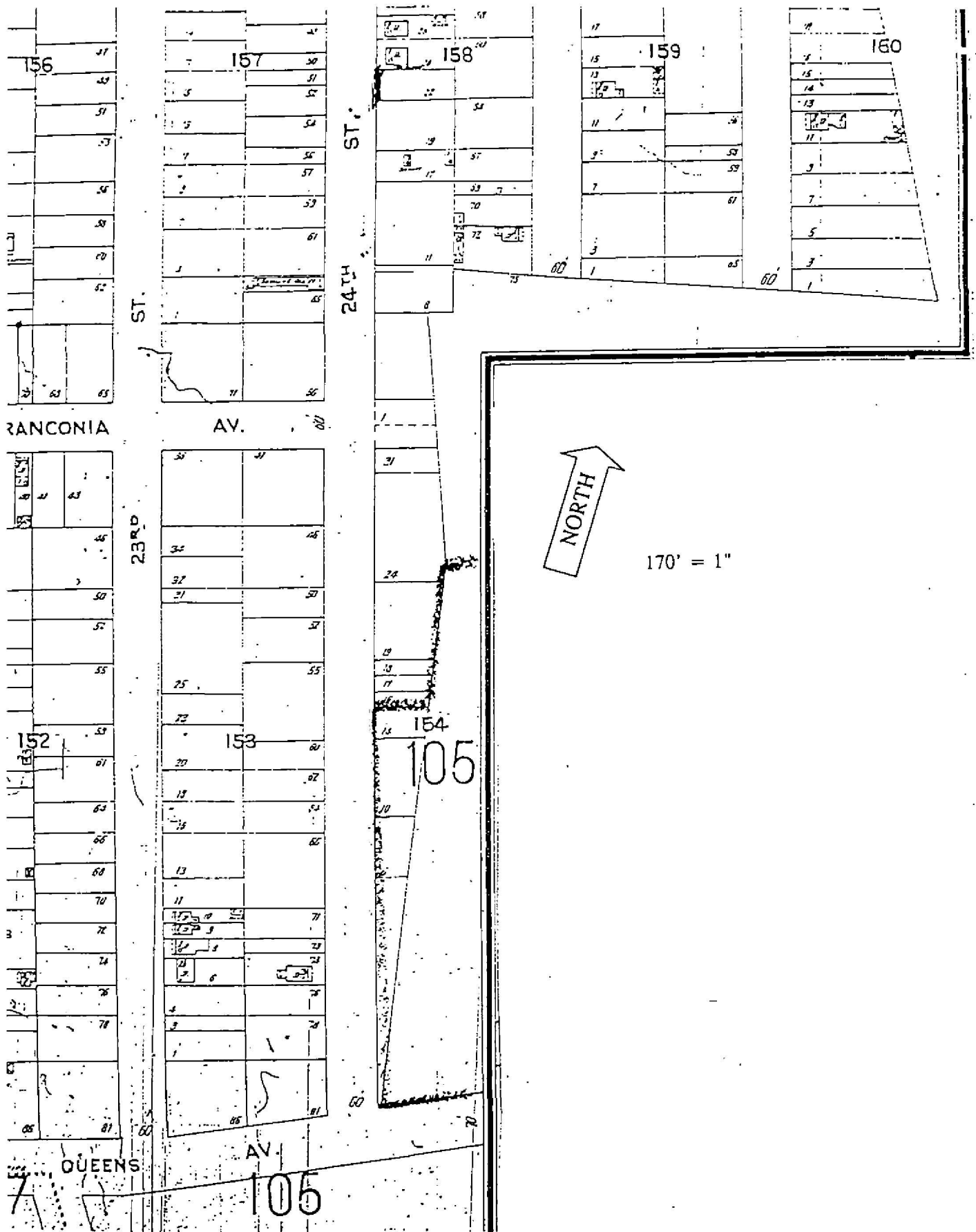
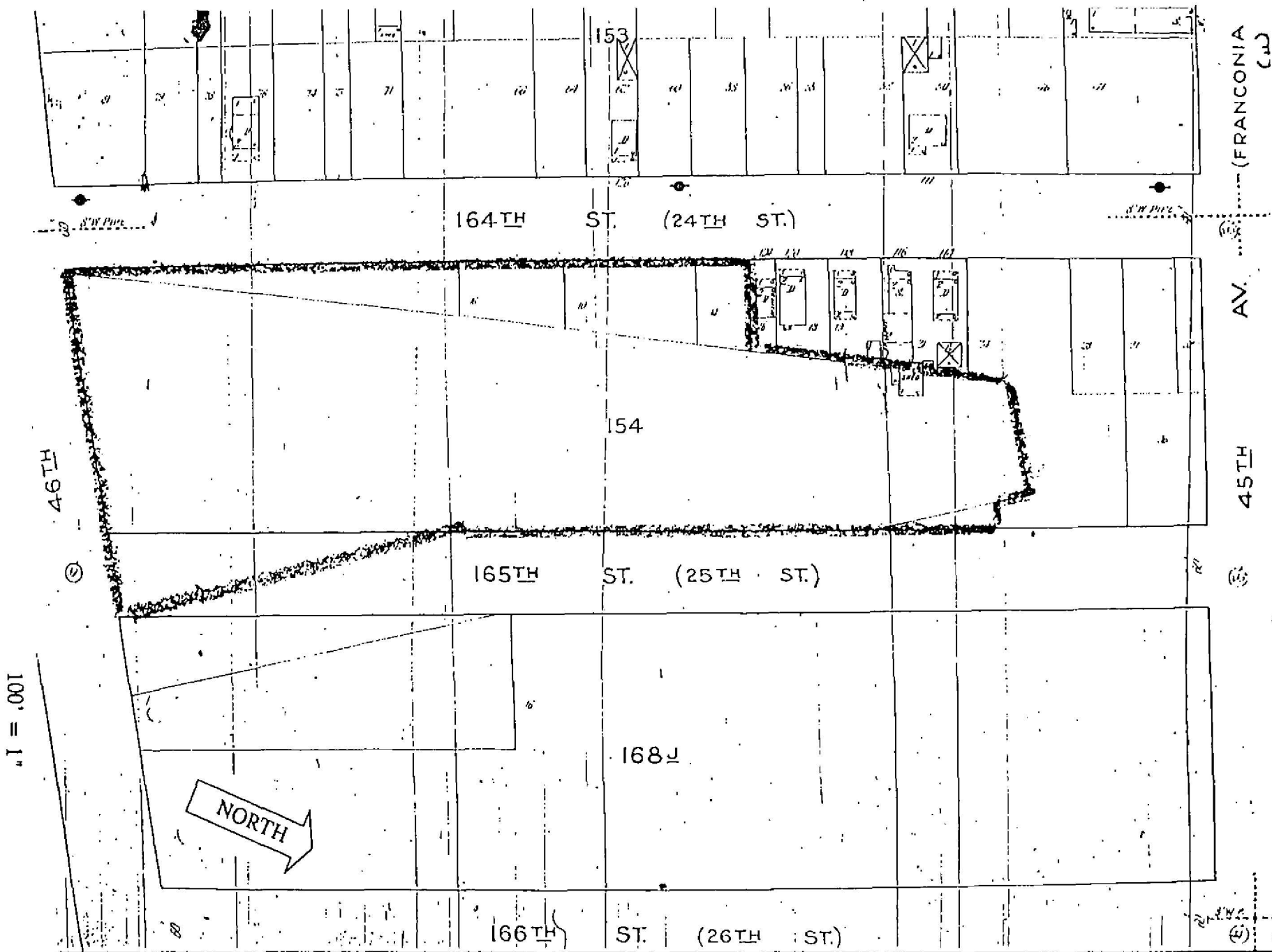


Figure 14

From Sanborn's 1903 Insurance Maps detail.

Figure 15 From Sanborn's 1917 Insurance Maps detail.



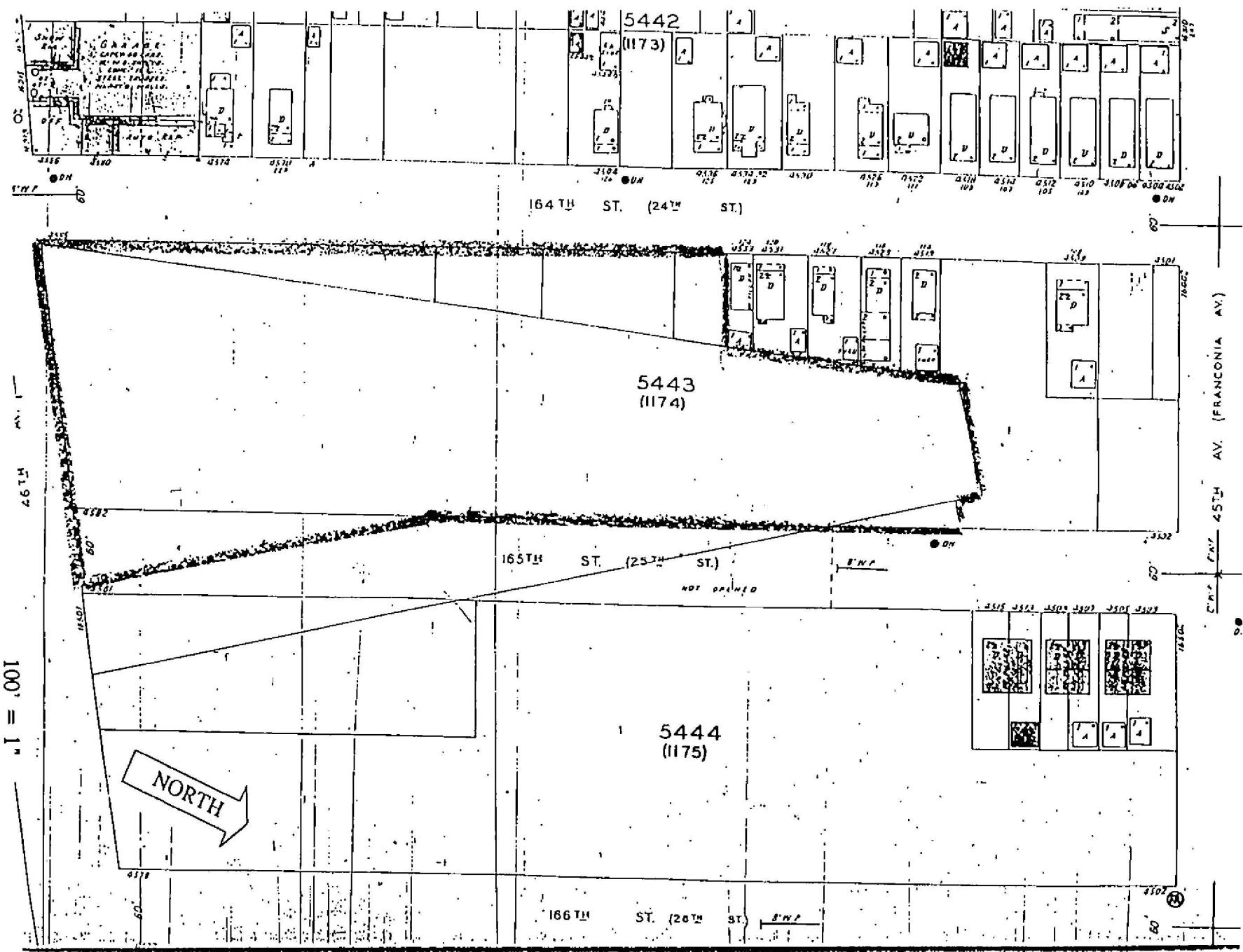


Figure 16 From Sanborn's 1934 Insurance Maps detail.

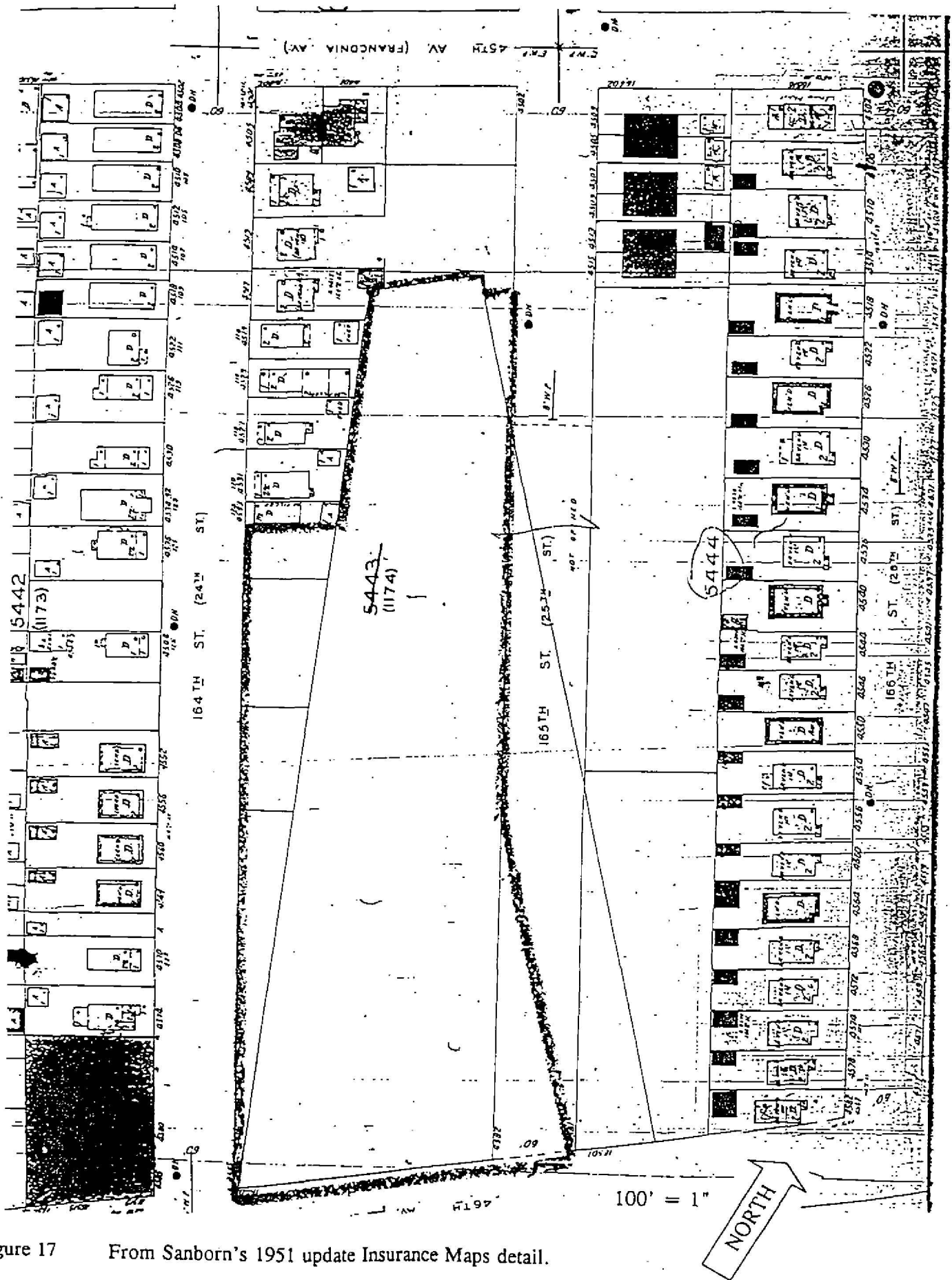


Figure 17 From Sanborn's 1951 update Insurance Maps detail.

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Appendix A

Partial List of Burials at Flushing in Alphabetical Order by Last Name

PARTIAL LIST OF BURIALS AT FLUSHING IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER BY LAST NAME

NAME	RACE/ COLOR	DATE OF DEATH	AGE AT DEATH	DEATH RECORDED AT	BURIAL PLACE
Aldridge, Sarah R.	Black	Jul 3, 1882	47	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Ames, George	Colored	June 19, 1893	68	Town of Flushing	Town Cemetery
Ampy, James	Black	Aug 2, 1882	10 months	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Andrews, infant		Jun 4, 1897	1 day	Village of Flushing	Town Ground
Beddeau, William E.	Colored	Jan 10, 1897	15	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Bediau, Margaret Ann	Black	Jul 7, 1881	7 days	Town of Flushing	Public Ground
Beveridge (?), Anne		Jul 28, 1882	80	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Briggs, Peter		Nov 18, 1881	50	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Bunn, James		Aug 9, 1890	54	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Butler, Jesse	Black	Jul 17, 1890	4 months	Village of Flushing	Town Ground
Chambers, Thomas	Black	May 15, 1882	46	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Cornell, James	Colored	Nov 21, 1896	57	Village of Flushing	Town Ground
Cornell, James H.		Mar 4, 1890	28	Village of Flushing	Town Ground
Corse, Sarah Anne	Black	Jan 22, 1882	6 days	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Cougdown, Flora	Black	May 2, 1881	1	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Day, Benjamin Jr.	Colored	Mar 24, 1897	14 days	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Evaitz (?), Richard		Sep 20, 1893	55	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Forrester, Alfred M.	Black	Dec 24, 1881	5	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Forrester, John R.	Black	Dec 19, 1881	1	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Forrester, Mary L.	Black	Dec 11, 1881	4	Town of Flushing	Town Ground

PARTIAL LIST OF BURIALS AT FLUSHING IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER BY LAST NAME

NAME	RACE/ COLOR	DATE OF DEATH	AGE AT DEATH	DEATH RECORDED AT	BURIAL PLACE
Jenkins, infant daughter of Thomas & Roseanna		Aug 14, 1890	8 months	Town of Flushing	Town Cemetery
Jenkins, John		Mar 26, 1894		Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Jenkins, Mary L.	Colored(?)	Sep 24, 1890	1	Town of Flushing	Town Cemetery
Johnson, David	Colored	Sep 9, 1896	6 months	Village of Flushing	Town Cemetery
Johnson, Emma	Black	Mar 7, 1881	12	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Johnson, Lulu Arene	Black	Oct 11, 1882	9 days	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Jonston, infant	Black	Nov 9, 1881	1/2 day	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Kelly, (?)		Nov 3, 1890		Village of Flushing	Town Ground
Metzger, Mary	White	Mar 25, 1882	9	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Mitchell, infant	Colored	Oct 26, 1897	1 day	Village of Flushing	Town Ground
Murelam, Arnold		Mar 19, 1890	3 months	Village of Flushing	Town Ground
Murelam, Walter		Mar 26, 1890	3 months	Village of Flushing	Town Ground
Nelson, Fred		Oct 26, 1896	33	Village of Flushing	Town Cemetery
Nettling, William		Nov 31, 1897		Village of Flushing	Town Ground
Potter, Israel	Black	Feb 5, 1882	80	Town of Flushing	Town Ground Cemetery
Rapelya, Margaretta		Jan 10, 1896	1	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Reilly, Hugh		Aug 21, 1897	1 month	Village of Flushing	Town Cemetery
Sands, David		Feb 24, 1890	69	Village of Flushing	Town Ground
Saunton, William	Black	Sep 18, 1881	2 days	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Scheonfeld, Henry	White	Dec 27, 1882	4 days	Town of Flushing	Town Ground

PARTIAL LIST OF BURIALS AT FLUSHING IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER BY LAST NAME

NAME	RACE/ COLOR	DATE OF DEATH	AGE AT DEATH	DEATH RECORDED AT	BURIAL PLACE
Schrum, Valentine		Mar 25, 1897	54	Village of Flushing	Town Ground
Schumaker, George		Apr 19, 1897	21	Village of Flushing	Town Ground
Seabury, Josephine		May 10, 1890	70	Town of Flushing	Town Cemetery
Seaman, Hezekiah	Black	Aug 26, 1881	30	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Seymore, Nancy (?) Jane	Black	July 14, 1881	8 months	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Sherman, Josephine Wilson	Black	Dec 2, 1882	20	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Shuges (?), Sophia		Oct, 14, 1897	4 months	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Simpson, Walter S.		Aug 2, 1882	6	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Skank, Caroline	Black	Jul 16, 1882	2	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Smith, Charles		Apr 16, 1896	40	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Smith, Dasie	White	Feb 2, 1882	1	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Smith, John J.	Black	Oct 11, 1890	30	Village of Flushing	Town Cemetery
Smith, Ruth Ellen	Black	Sep 8, 1881	11 months	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Stanford, Lulu Adelaide		Jan 19, 1881	5 months	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Taylor, Sarah	Black	Nov 14, 1882	22 months	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Townsend, Anton		Sep 26, 1894	9 days	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Townsend, Caroline	Black	Jan 9, 1883	112	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Townsend, Elizabeth		Sep 10, 1893	1	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Treadwell, Charlotte	Black	Apr 10, 1882	2	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Treadwell, Kenneth	Black	Apr 14, 1882	1	Town of Flushing	Town Ground

PARTIAL LIST OF BURIALS AT FLUSHING IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER BY LAST NAME

NAME	RACE/ COLOR	DATE OF DEATH	AGE AT DEATH	DEATH RECORDED AT	BURIAL PLACE
Treadwell, Mary		July 17, 1881	3	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Tripp, Robert A.	Black	Oct 8, 1881	69	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
unknown		Sep 23, 1896		Village of Flushing	Town Cemetery
unknown		Dec 1, 1895		Town of Flushing	Town Ground
unknown female		Aug 10, 1882	45	Town of Flushing	Town Cemetery
unknown infant		May 27, 1890	10 days	Village of Flushing	Town Ground
unknown man	White	Sep 25, 1882	45	Town of Flushing	Town Cemetery
Valentine, George H.	Colored	Oct 12, 1897	2	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Virmer, August		Jul 27, 1897	63	Village of Flushing	Town Ground
Willetts, Henry	Colored	Jun 14, 1893	75	Town of Flushing	Potters Field
Williams, Andrew	Black	Aug 18, 1882	3 days	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Wilson, Fannie	Black	Mar 26, 1882	1	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Wilson, Samuel	Colored	June 22, 1893	18	Town of Flushing	Town Cemetery
Wofleth, Gerard		Jul 17, 1896	1 month	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Wood, Sarah	Black	Mar 31, 1882	1	Town of Flushing	Town Ground
Wright, Josephine	Colored	Nov 1, 1896	4 months	Village of Flushing	Town Ground
Wynn, Bertha	Colored	Aug 21, 1895	1	Town of Flushing	Town Ground

(?) signifies interpretation of illegible handwriting

Table 1 Block 5443 Early 20th Century Ownership Information

LOT	DATE	GRANTOR	GRANTEE	LIBER/PAGE	COMMENT
1	6/30/1916	City of New York	Logan Mortgage Co.	3380/464	assignment
	3/22/1928	Logan Mortgage Co.	Clarence J. Smith	3380/464	assignment
	2/28/1930	Richardson	Clarence J. Smith	3380/464	tax lien foreclosure
	4/27/1941	William Murphy	City of New York	4834/127	tax lien foreclosure
	4/27/1944		City of New York		tax lien foreclosure
	6/27/1946	City of New York	Parks		assignment
6	11/26/1923	Mary Mallon	Thomas Allen	2571/120	
	8/27/1946	Elizabeth Allen	City of New York	5268/333	tax lien foreclosure
	4/24/1947	City of New York	Parks	3511/250	assignment
10	9/3/1931	Julia D. Rowe	James J. Bishop	3963/23616	tax lien foreclosure
	7/1/1938	James J. Bishop	Patrick Guilfoyle		
	4/27/1944		City of New York		tax lien foreclosure
	6/27/1946	City of New York	Parks		assignment
14	10/8/1907	Charlotte Maddock	Sara Cohen	1537/113	
	5/23/1956	City of New York	City of New York	6882/106	tax lien foreclosure
	2/14/1957	City of New York	Parks		assignment
43	7/1/1917	Rickert Finlay Realty	Broadway Flushing Development	2139/429	
	9/29/1926	Rickert-Browne	Alabama Educational Foundation	2980/300	
	9/19/1940	Alabama Educational Foundation	Standard Tile		
	9/24/1940	Standard Tile	Rhodes Realities	4273/572	
	7/17/1942	Rhodes Realities	Delia DeMarco	4594/490	mortgage foreclosure
	6/25/1962	City of New York	City of New York	7432	tax lien foreclosure