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CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY

NEWARK BAY SITE: MAIN PARCEL AND PIER PARCEL

STATEN ISLAND, NY

New York City Long Range Sludge Management Plan GEIS III

Prepared for: New York City Department of Environmental Protection

Prepared by: Thomas R. Flagg

August 12, 1991

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CULTURAL RESOURCE EVALUATION

NEWARK BAY SITE: MAIN PARCEL AND PIER PARCEL

STATEN ISLAND, NY

New York City Long Range Sludge Management Plan
Thomas R. Flagg
August 12, 1991

This report assesses the cultural resources of a site in the northwest corner of Staten Island, NY. Field visits were made April 19, July 28, and August 4, 1991. During the second visit, the residents of 3599 Richmond Terrace were interviewed. This is the Nalwasky interview (see list of sources below).

DESCRIPTION OF SITE BOUNDARIES

The Newark Bay site is bounded by the pierhead line of the Kill van Kull to the north, the Mariner's Harbor marina to the east, Richmond Terrace to the south, and the Howland Hook Marine Terminal to the west (see Figure 3). It consists of two sections: the main parcel (Block 1301, Lot 1 and Block 1306, Lot 14) and the pier parcel (Block 1309, Lots 1, 2, and 10). In the early part of this century, the Milliken Brothers steel mill was located on the northeastern portion of the project site, and from ca. 1915 to the early 1920's, the Downey Shipyard occupied that location; this area of the project site is referred to below as the Milliken/Downey Shipyard site. The center part of the main parcel contains a small bay and wetlands; several abandoned vessels, described below, are located in this portion of the site.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The standing structures on land include two dwellings and several tanks plus pipelines and tracks on the Procter & Gamble property (on the pier parcel); and a number of concrete foundations on the Milliken/Downey Shipyard site (on the main parcel). Other resources on site include a Procter & Gamble pier (on the pier parcel), two segments of a dike, about 15 or 20 abandoned marine vessels, and some remains of wooden barges on the Milliken Shipyard site (all on the main parcel).

One dwelling, 3599 Richmond Terrace is probably at least 90 years old and is an essentially unaltered example of a vernacular worker's dwelling of its era, with associations with local industrial history. It may have some significance in this context. However, in itself, it is not greatly different from many other Staten Island dwellings, and is probably not of landmark significance.

The abandoned wooden marine vessels and some of the structural elements of wooden vessels located in the main parcel are of potential historic significance. These wooden vessels are an important part of the marine history of the New York area; some of the structural details visible on these vessels have never been adequately documented. Two of the hulks may have been sailing lighters or express lighters and are thus especially noteworthy. These vessels and some of the vessel remains on the Milliken/Downey Shipyard site should be

surveyed at a reconnaissance level if it appears that they may be impacted by the proposed project. Those vessels and elements found in the survey to be of special significance (and that could be adversely impacted by the proposed project) should be recorded to the standards of the Historic American Engineering Record prior to construction.

Other cultural resources on the site were not found to be of potential historic significance. A brief discussion of the resources on site follows.

I. MAIN PARCEL

MARINE CULTURAL RESOURCES: ABANDONED MARITIME VESSELS

Approximately 15 to 20 abandoned and derelict vessels are located off the shore line in various places around the site, mostly in the small bay between the Milliken/Downey Shipyard site and the Procter & Gamble piers, but about three are east of the shipyard site and one is north of it. These were viewed and photographed August 4, 1991, from a boat (see Figures 5-11; indexed on Map 3). Many of the hulks are variations of the typical harbor lighters and barges formerly used for lighterage in New York Harbor by railroads and others in New York Port. They are rectangular in plan, with sloping ends. All the hulks here are of wood construction throughout, except for one with a concrete deck and a concrete deckhouse. In most cases they retain evidences of their frames, and/or remnants of decks and deckhouses. None retain enough hull planking to prevent water flowing entirely through them. Any painted identifying marks have long since weathered away, making it difficult to deduce their former ownership.

At least two of the hulks are not square-ended barges, but rather have pointed or rounded ends; these may be older than the barges. Only their lower portions remain. The positions of two of them are shown on Map 4. The hulk northeast of the Milliken/Downey Shipyard site exhibits double hull planking and at one end features an interesting fabricated iron structural element, possibly a strengthening girder or rudder support (see Fig. 7, left end of hulk).

According to Payne and Baumgardt, 1986, pp. II-30-36 and p. III-6, these two hulks might be former sailing lighters, and thus much older than the other derelict vessels, and very significant. No on-site research was performed for the Payne and Baumgardt contract and no specific recommendations were made, although they quote a Norman Brouwer 1977 article in South St. Reporter calling for documentation of wooden harbor craft.

According to Mr. Nalwasky, one or more of the hulks was once a railroad express mail boat, and it is possible that he was referring to one or both of these vessels; their shape was similar to that of sailing lighters.

Mr. Nalwasky suggested that these hulks were brought here to be scrapped in relatively recent years (long after the shipyard was out of service). According to him, the boats brought here were torn apart and the wood was stacked on the Milliken site and burned, until the city stopped this practice in the late 1960's or the 1970's. Indeed, on the Milliken/Downey Shipyard site there are many timbers of a size suitable for barges, including wooden "knees", part

of the framework of old wooden hulls. Many of the timbers are charred. These can not be left over from the earlier shipyards on the site (see discussion below of the site's use for shipbuilding early in this century). If they were from that era (which ended in the early 1920's) they would not be in their present condition, but far more deteriorated, due to 70 years of exposure to weather. Also those shipyards specialized in steel construction, not wooden barges.

Because of the sensitivity to "submerged resources" that presently characterizes the National Park Service and other regulatory agencies, and because of role played at the Port of New York by wooden harbor vessels, these abandoned marine vessels must be considered potentially significant, both individually and as a grouping in place, with context information considered of importance as well. A more detailed survey, with each hulk individually inspected, is necessary to assess the significance of this resource. The timbers on land that are especially characteristic of wooden vessels, particularly the wooden knees, should also be surveyed. These hulks and components could provide data on methods of construction of wood barges, which were constructed until 1930, and occasionally thereafter. As Brouwer has noted (e.g. in Kardas & Larrabee, 1985, p. 49-50), there is no significant historic archive containing details of the construction of wooden barges, and they should not be allowed to disappear without leaving behind a record.

Conclusion: A survey and documentation were performed for a similar, though much more extensive, marine graveyard at the Shooter's Island site a short distance east of the Newark Bay site (Brouwer, 1983; Kardas and Larrabee, 1985). If there is to be any impact by the present project on the abandoned vessels at the Newark Bay site, reconnaissance survey should be performed here as well, with a Historic American Engineering Record Level Recording performed on any vessels found by the survey to merit it, using the Shooter's Island 1985 study as a prototype.

MILLIKEN/DOWNEY SHIPYARD SITE

This site is the largest land area of the main parcel, as shown on Maps 3 and 4.

On this site in 1902 Milliken Bros. (formerly located in Brooklyn) began conducting a business that included iron and steel fabricating and building contracting. Comparison of Maps 1 and 2 suggest that to do so they placed fill on what was previously a marshy area extending into Newark Bay. In fact they placed fill beyond the marsh into what was shown as open water on the Bien 1890 map, extending it as far as the U.S. Dike; this dike marked the beginning of the dredged area of the Arthur Kill channel, and was located approx. 1500' north of Richmond Terrace (B&O, 1912, p. 17; Bien 1890 map; USGS 1967 Quad; other maps listed below).

In 1905 Milliken expanded into steel manufacture by building five open hearth furnaces along with rolling mills, soaking pits, etc., but this business failed in 1907. The furnaces were entirely shut down then, but the fabricating plant remained in operation as of 1912. During this period iron and steel were brought in by rail, fabricated, and shipped by barge from the site. About 45,000 tons were fabricated annually in 1910 and in 1911 (B&O, 1912, p. 17).

This plant was shown on Sanborn, 1910, (Plates 114 and 115), with the notation that the steelmaking plant had shut down.

During World War I the fabricating plant was apparently converted to Downey Shipbuilding Yard and built a number of oceangoing cargo ships (Smith, 1919, p. 165).

By 1932 the site was labeled "vacant, former shipyard" (Corps of Engineers). No subsequent use of the site appears on later maps.

North of Richmond Terrace, on the Main Parcel site, there remain numerous concrete pedestals with protruding iron structural members, presumably cut off during scrapping operations. Some of these pedestals are quite massive. South of Richmond Terrace (not part of the project site) there are a variety of foundations, some of which may have potential historic significance, especially any remnants of furnace foundations, as remnants of what was probably the only modern, large-scale steelmaking plant ever built within New York City boundaries.

Conclusion: On the parcel itself, north of Richmond Terrace, the pedestals are unlikely to be of any historic significance. They are relatively common forms of foundation for many large shed-type industrial structures. The remains of wooden harbor vessels also located on this site are considered in the section above on Marine Cultural Resources, along with other remnants of abandoned vessels.

U.S. DIKE:

This is a marine structure located along some of the Pier & Bulkhead Line of the Newark Bay site. It extends easterly about 350 to 400 feet along this line from the western boundary of the Procter & Gamble pier area (the pier parcel) toward the north edge of the Milliken/Downey Shipyard site, roughly parallel to the shoreline. A similar structure extends west from the northwest tip of the Milliken/Downey Shipyard site about 80-100 feet. There is a gap of several hundred feet between the two structures; this gap forms the entrance to the small bay (containing many derelict marine vessels, as described above) west of the shipyard site (see Maps 2 and 3). The dike is covered at high tide, though even then some plant life is visible at the location of the dike, growing from it.

This structure was inspected by boat, and photographed, at low tide August 4, 1991 (Figs. 8 to 10; see Map 3 for location of photographs). The west portion of the dike is composed of two rows of piles, 10' between the rows, with piles about 2' apart within the rows, filled with stone (both cut and uncut). Some of the inner row of piles are connected with horizontal wooden strips on the side facing land. It is impossible to judge from the appearance of this dike whether or not it has been renewed or even entirely rebuilt since it was originally put in place.

The east portion of the dike has more varied pilings, parts of which are double rows. Other reports have suggested that this was a pier structure, and it is possible that a pier was built over (or replacing) a previously existing dike at this location. (As a pier it would have no integrity and no suggestion of an unusual structure.)

A structure with extent similar to that of the present dike is shown on some older maps, labeled "U.S. Dike" on the 1907 and 1917 Bromley Atlas maps. What is probably the same structure is also shown on the U.S. Geological Survey 15' "Staten Island" Quadrangle, edition of 1900, surveyed in either 1889 or 1897, and on the Bien map of 1890, based on the U.S. Coast and Geologic Surveys (see Map 1.) However on these older maps the dike is much more extensive: in 1890 the dike extended for a distance of about 2000 feet east from the point of land at the northwest tip of Staten Island known as Bowman's Point: on Map 1 (from Bien, 1890), note that this point is roughly 200-400 feet west of an imaginary line extending Western Avenue out to the channel. Since this stretch of dike (about 200-400 feet long) later contained the Port Ivory piers (as described below), it is clear that the then-existing dike had to be broken through to allow construction of those piers (presumably about 1905, when the plant was constructed).

Apparently the dike was also broken through for marine access to the small bay between the Procter & Gamble piers and the Milliken/Downey Shipyard site. According to Mr. Nalwasky (1991 interview) the dike was created (presumably by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) to prevent silting of the dredged ship channel connecting the Kill van Kull channel with the Arthur Kill channel. According to him the dike is still necessary: if it were not there, silting of the channel would be rapid due to stream flow and/or tidal currents that meet in this area. No other reasonable explanation for the building of this dike has been suggested by anyone.

Improvement of the channels around Staten Island by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers began in 1874, as industry (in particular the Singer Mfg. Co. plant) developed along the shores of Elizabethport (Kardas & Larrabee, 1980, p. 39). The original dike shown by Bien (1890) would, then, most likely have been constructed between 1874 and 1890.

Conclusion: Although a dike has been located on the present site for at least a century, there is no way to determine whether the structural elements of the dike now on the site are that old. Its present structure is not innovative or technically interesting. The dike is not known to be associated with any historical event. The U.S. Dike does not appear to be eligible for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places or for designation as a New York City Landmark.

II. PIER PARCEL

HOUSES

There are two houses remaining on the site, the "Richmond Terrace Coffee Shop" (3612 Richmond Terrace) and 3599 Richmond Terrace (called the "White House" by Payne and Baumgardt). It is not known when these houses were constructed, but according to a previous report on the site (Payne & Baumgardt, 1986, p. II-23), there were houses on this site from as early as 1845 and possibly even earlier, though not necessarily these particular residences. (The source of this claim is not discernible in that report.) The Richmond Terrace Coffee Shop is a two-and one half-story brick building that has been heavily altered. Originally constructed as a residence, a storefront has been inserted on the ground floor and metal siding applied. It does not appear to date from 1845, and is of no known architectural or historical significance.

During the July 28 field visit, inspection of 3599 Richmond Terrace showed it be a dwelling in a plain vernacular style, consistent with a construction date of about the turn of the century (see Figure 11). It is sheathed with clapboard, and has two stories plus attic and basement, with fieldstone foundations below ground, brick foundations above ground, and bluestone sills on the basement windows. The interior has its original arrangement and much original woodwork. The house is in good condition.

According to the owners, Mr. and Mrs. Nalwasky, the house was built about 1900 by a worker at the Singer Manufacturing Co., which was across the bay in Elizabethport, New Jersey. He presumably used the nearby Howland Hook/Elizabethport ferry. The second owner was Mr. Nalwasky's father, a carpenter; Mr. Nalwasky was an ironworker. The latter worked in a local shipyard, Brewer Dry Dock. Francis, Mr. Nalwasky's wife, formerly worked at the nearby Procter & Gamble plant. Thus this house has many ties with the local history of the area.

Conclusion: 3599 Richmond Terrace is probably at least 90 years old and is an essentially unaltered example of a vernacular worker's dwelling of its era, with associations with local industrial history and may have some significance in this context. However, in itself, it is not greatly different from many other Staten Island dwellings, and is probably not of landmark significance.

The Richmond Terrace Coffee Shop is of no particular historic or architectural significance.

PROCTER & GAMBLE PIERS AND OTHER STRUCTURES

The Procter & Gamble Co. used the pier parcel site for the receipt and storage of fuel oil and raw materials for their soapmaking operation. Piers and a railroad car transfer bridge were built here during the original construction of soapmaking facilities on their property south of the parcel. Comparison of the Bien 1890 map (Map 1) and recent maps (such as the 1967 USGS Elizabeth Quad., Map 2) show that in order to construct their facility, Procter & Gamble had to break through the U.S. Dike that already existed in this area. They placed fill out to a distance of 1200-1300 feet north of Richmond Terrace, along and east of the west edge of their north-south property line (which roughly corresponds to the line of Western Avenue extended north). They then constructed their piers from the end of the fill out to or a little beyond the former location of the U.S. Dike. The area west of this fill was apparently used as a lagoon for dumping waste liquids, according to company photographs and maps (see maps listed here, and June 1991 report on the Procter & Gamble site prepared as part of the GEIS (III) for New York City's Long Range Sludge Management Plan).

The transfer bridge allowed the company to receive freight cars from any railroad at the Port, rather than just from the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, whose tracks reached the plant from the south (B&O, 1912; Corps of Engineers, 1953). The transfer bridge went out of service in the 1950's and was removed about 1960 and sold to Bush Terminal as a replacement (Costello, 1975). The piers was evidently reworked and rebuilt at various times through the years (deduced from inspection and from maps). By the 1980's only one pier remained; it contains pipelines for fuel oil and liquid chemicals, as well as a pair of railroad tracks, each on a different level. The track arrangement is unusual,

and its purpose not known by present plant personnel, but otherwise the pier is a common timber pile-and-cap type and is not significant. There are no remains of the former transfer bridge visible (see Fig. 12). Piles and bulkheads in poor condition from earlier piers are visible to east and west of the last remaining intact pier.

The two large tanks on this parcel (shown on Map 2 as black dots) are large fuel oil storage tanks surrounded by spill containment dikes; they are of modern design and construction and are not significant. The same judgment applies to the pipelines and the tracks on the site, both of which are connect the pier to the rest of the plant south of Richmond Terrace.

On the upland just south of the pier, numerous tanks of various types are stored. Tom Bovitz, plant manager of Procter & Gamble, stated that these tanks were no longer needed in soapmaking operations.

Conclusion: The pier parcel does not contain any structures of potential historical and/or architectural significance.

MAPS

Bien, Julius, and Vermeule, C.C., Atlas of the Metropolitan District, engraved in 1890, based on U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey. Published by Julius Bien and Co. at New York, 1891

U.S. Geological Survey, Staten Island 15' quadrangle, ed. of 1900, surveyed 1888-89 and 1897

Bromley Atlas, Richmond County, 1907 and 1917

Sanborn Insurance Atlas of Richmond, NYC, Richmond Supplement of 1910 (Plates 114 and 115)

U.S. Geological Survey, Elizabeth 7.5' quadrangle, 1953; 1967; 1981.

SOURCES

Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Co., Operating Dept., 1912: Report on the Baltimore and New York Railway Co. and the Staten Island Rapid Transit Railway Co., Arthur Kill to Clifton & South Beach. Issued by the Office of Third Vice-President, Baltimore, Md., April 25th, 1912, p. 17.

Bovitz, Tom, 1991: Interview during 4-19-91 field visit to Procter & Gamble site

Brouwer, Norman: Survey of Cultural Resources in the Form of Derelict Ships and Barges: Area II (Completion) of Shooters Island, New Jersey, New York Harbor Collection and Removal of Drift Project." Feb. 1983.

Corps of Engineers, U.S. Army: Port Series, editions in 1932, 1942, 1953, 1965

Costello, 1975: interview with Tom Costello, former marine dispatcher of Bush Terminal (tape and transcript in possession of T. Flagg)

Flagg, Thomas: "Cultural Resource Evaluation, Procter & Gamble Site," prepared for the New York City Department of Environmental Protection, as part of New York City's Long Range Sludge Management Plan, Generic Environmental Impact Statement III, June 1991.

Kardas, S. and Larrabee, E.: "Cultural Resource Reconnaissance: New York Harbor Collection and Removal of Drift area of Elizabeth, Union County, N.J. and Channel Dredging, Elizabethport and North and South of Shooters Island Reaches," report submitted 18 April 1980.

Kardas, S., and Larrabee, E., with Norman Brouwer: "Historic American Building Survey/Historic American Engineering Record Level Recordation at The Ships Graveyards at Shooter's Island, Staten Island, Richmond County, New York, and Bayonne-Elizabeth, Hudson and Union Counties, New Jersey. Performed by Historic Sites Research, Princeton, New Jersey; October 1985.

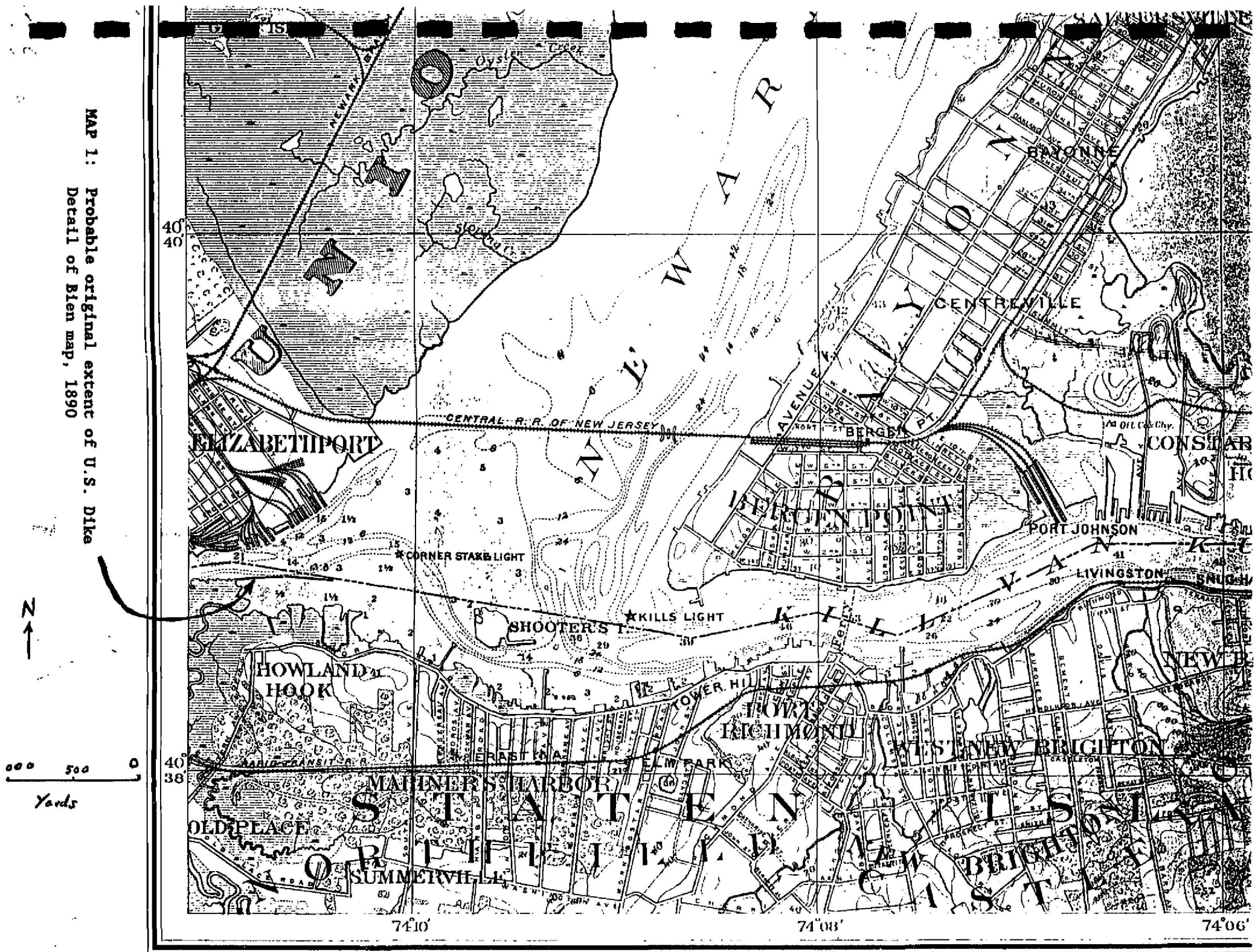
Nalwasky, William and Francis, interview: During the 28 July, 1991, field visit, a local couple, Mr. William Nalwasky and Mrs. Francis Nalwasky, were inter-

viewed. Mr. Nalwasky is now retired, but once worked in shipyards in the area; he has lived at 3599 Richmond Terrace all his life.

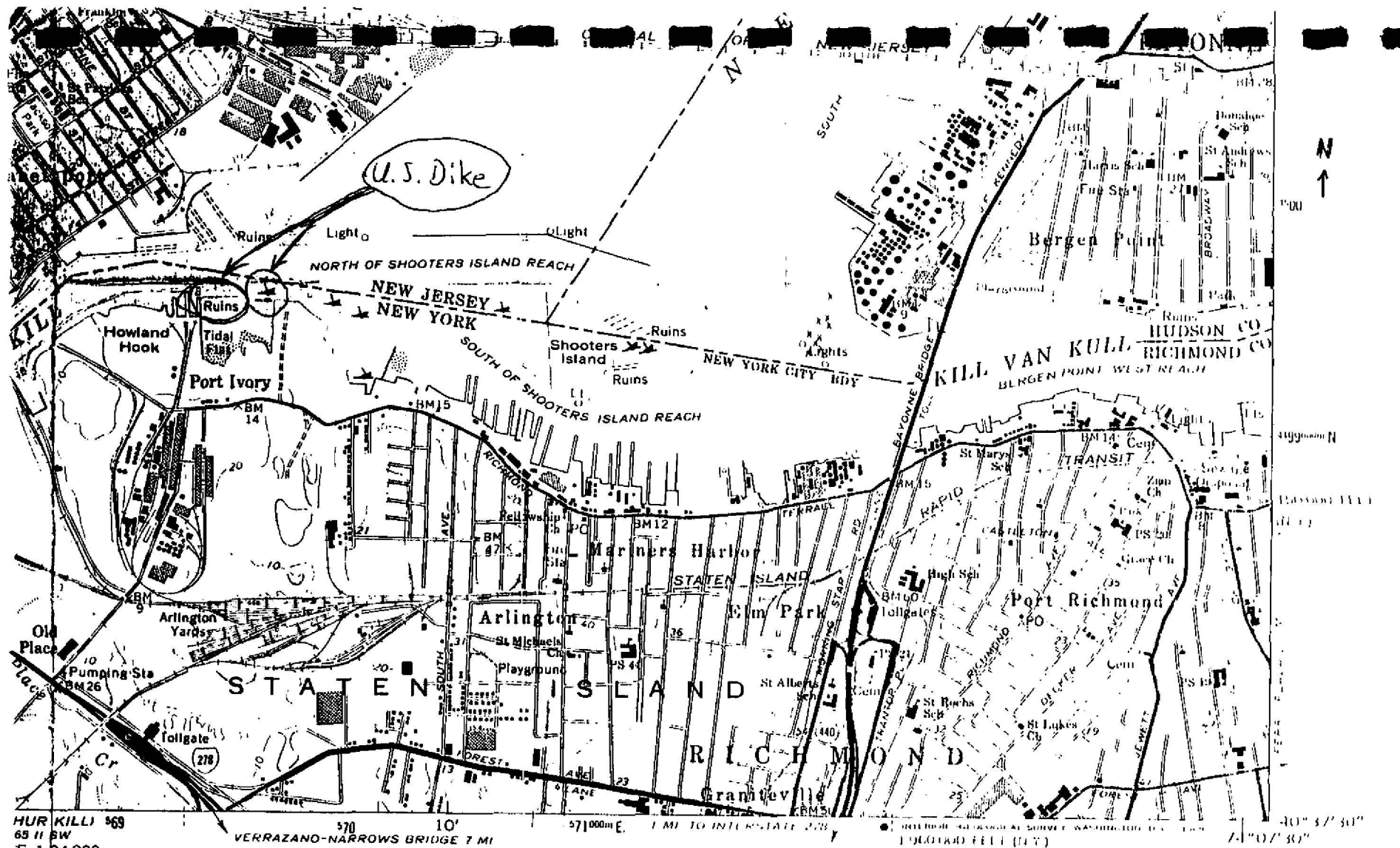
Payne, Ted M., and Baumgardt, Kenneth: "Howland Hook Marine Terminal Expansion Cultural Resources Reconnaissance," submitted by MAAR Associates, 1986. In library of U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Environmental Division.

Smith: Smith's Port of New York Annual for 1919

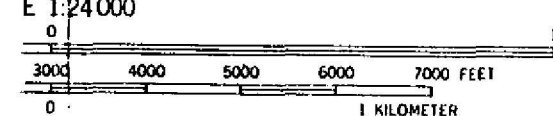
MAP 1: Probable original extent of U.S. Dike
Detail of Blen map, 1890



MAP 2: Present extent of U.S. Dike (mis-labeled "ruins")
Base Map: USGS 7.7' Elizabeth, NJ, Quadrangle



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VERRAZANO-NARROWS BRIDGE 7 MI



INTERVAL 10 FEET
MEAN SEA LEVEL
IN FEET—DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER
APPROXIMATE LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER
IS APPROXIMATELY 4.8 FEET



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

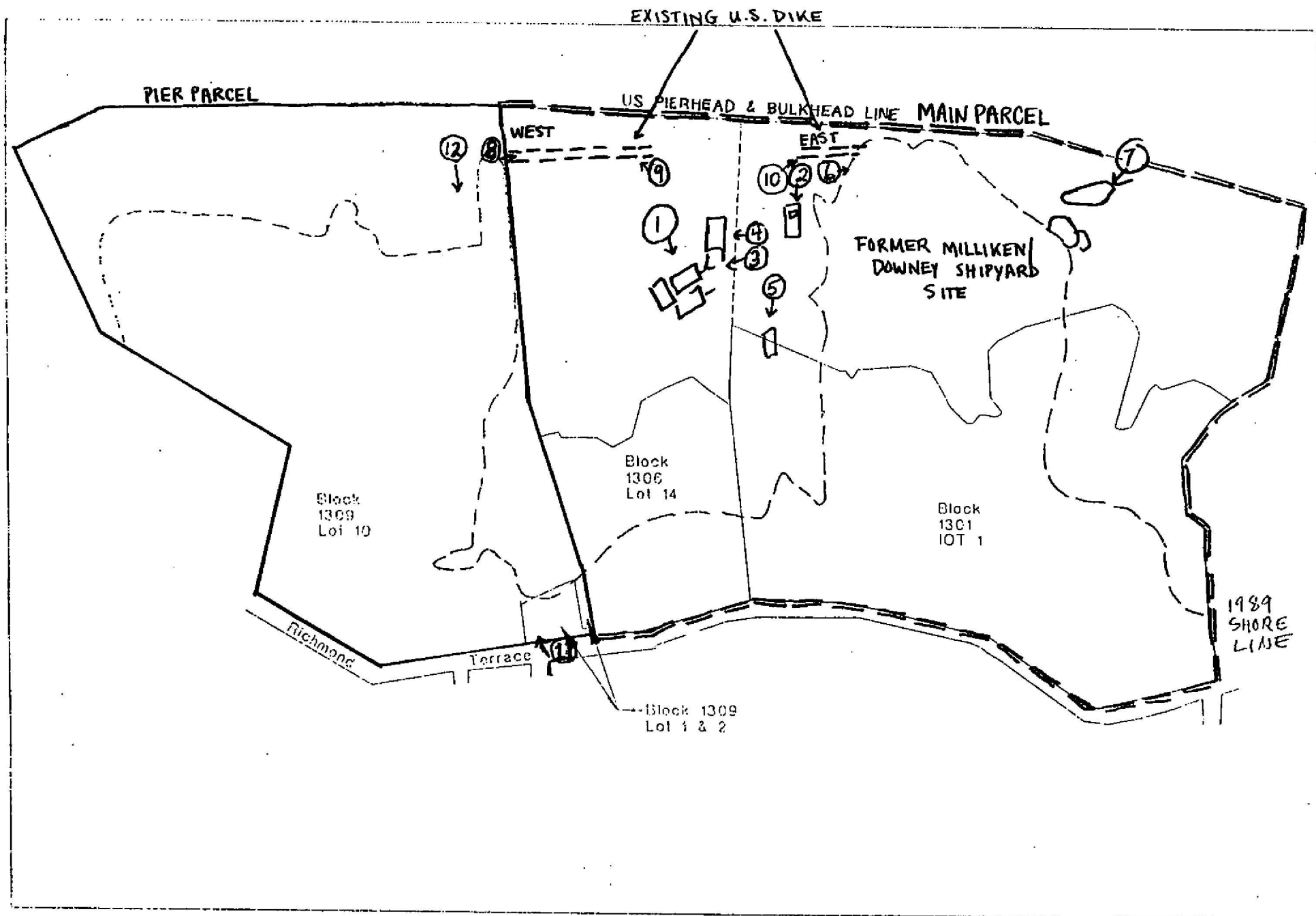
ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Heavy duty ——— Light duty ———
Medium duty - - - Unimproved dirt
Interstate Route — U.S. Route — State Route

ELIZABETH, N. J. — N. Y.
N4037.5 W7407.5 7.5

1967

AMS 6165 II BW 31 001 1 000

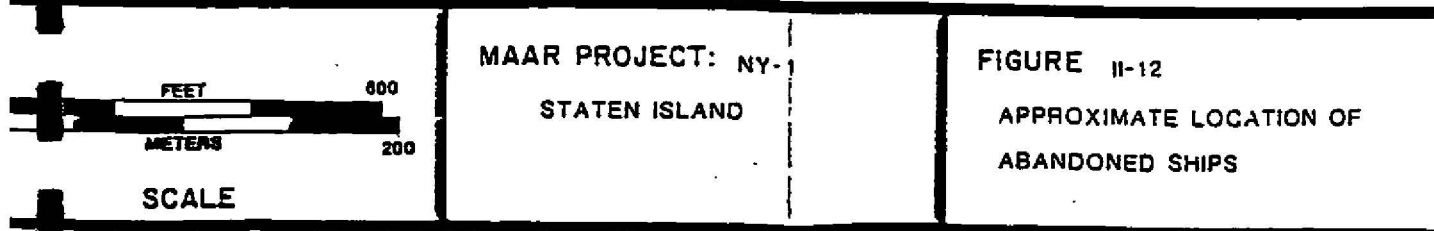
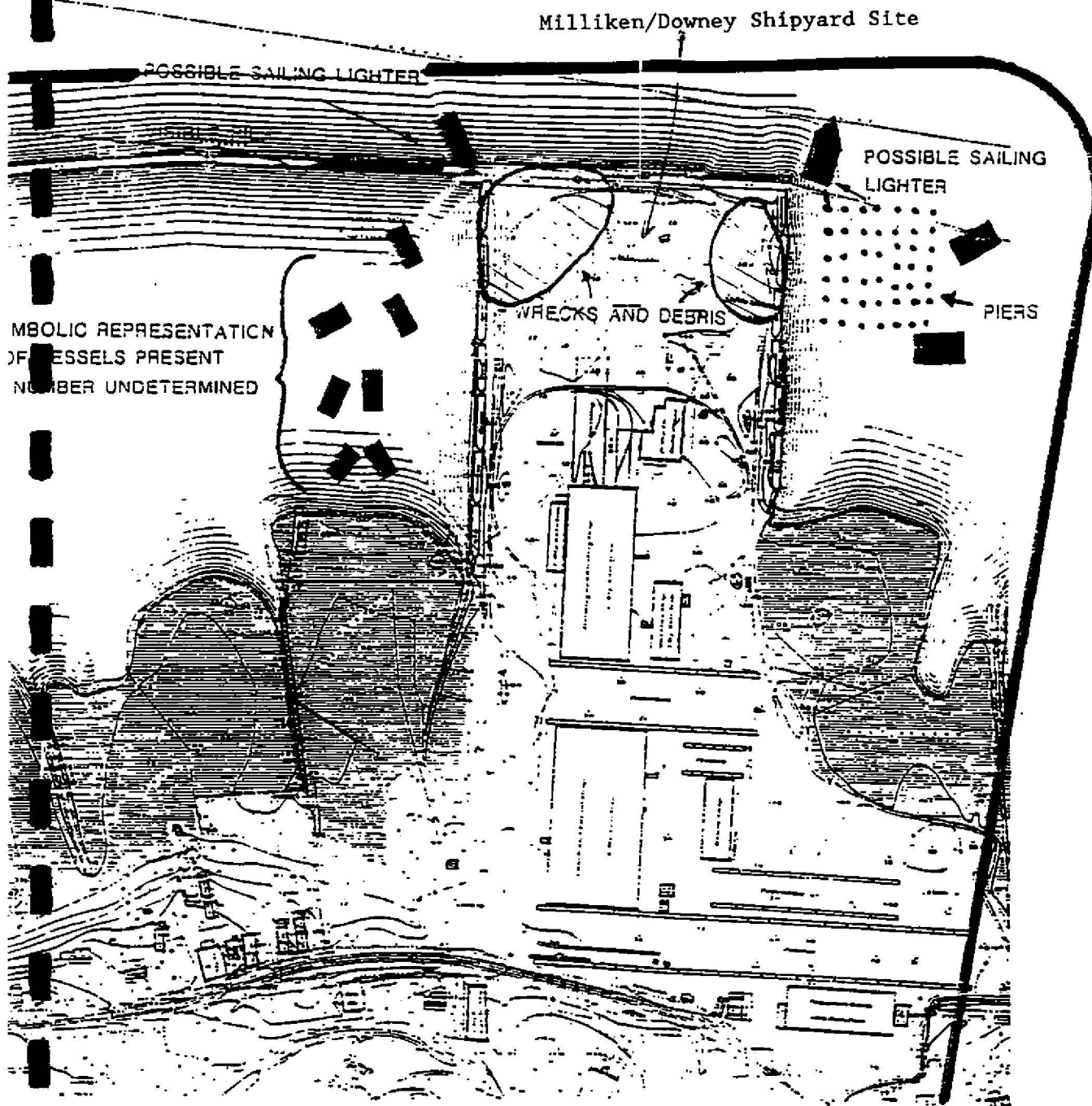
MAP 3: Key to Photographs and Location of U.S. Dike as seen on field inspection (8/4/91).



BLOCK & LOT DIAGRAM FOR STATEN ISLAND SITE 6, NEWARK BAY

0 200 400 FT.

MAP 4: Approximate Location of Abandoned Ships
(From Payne & Baumbardt, 1986)



NOTE: Circles Indicate Approximate Locations of Remains of Vessels on the Milliken/Downey Shipyard Site



Figure 1: Remains of covered lighter in small bay. View to south. Side walls are gone from both deckhouse and hull.

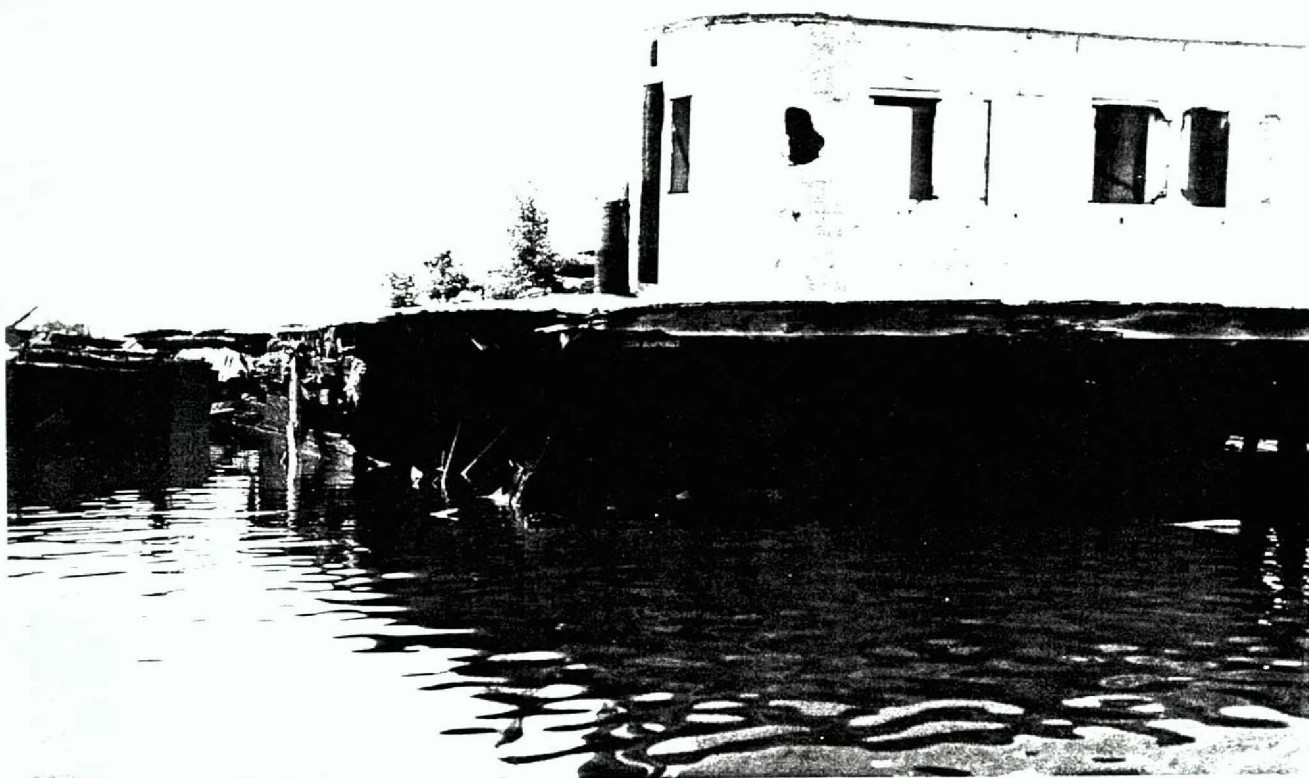


Figure 2: Hulk of open deck lighter, with concrete barge captain's house and concrete deck. View to south.



Figure 3: Collection of hulks in small bay, both covered and open lighters.
View to southwest.

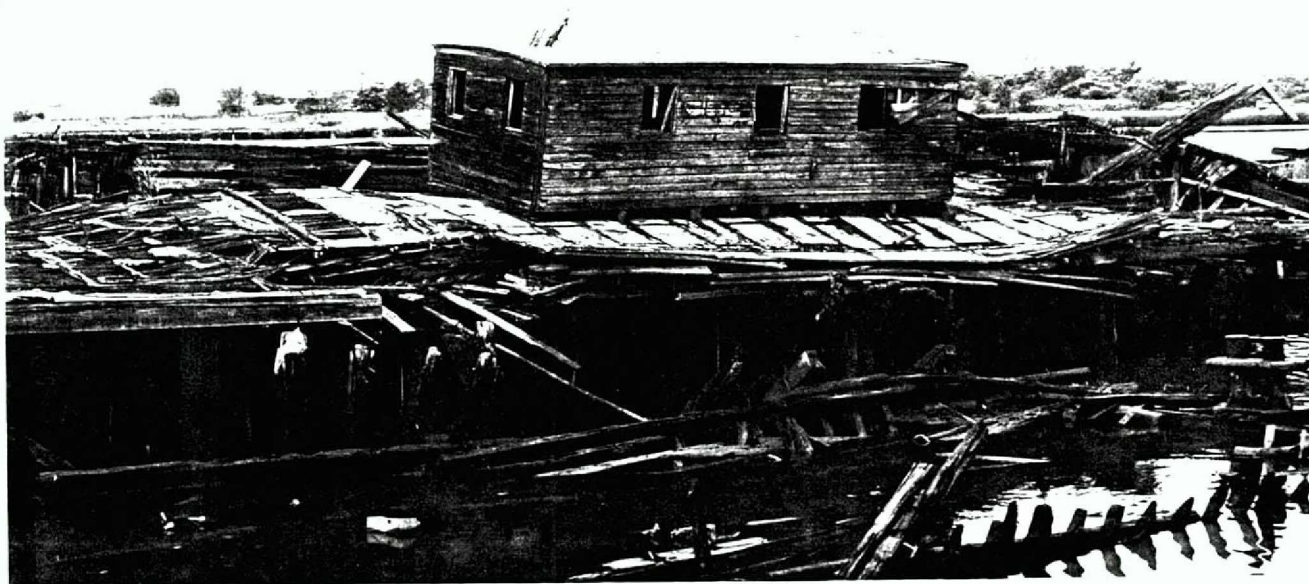


Figure 4: Covered lighter with barge captain's house on roof, but with roof collapsed onto deck. Hull sides missing, hull framing clearly visible. View to west, just to right of Figure 3.



Figure 5: Another derelict vessel in small bay. View to south.



Figure 6: Hulk with bottom only remaining. Note pattern of bolts used to hold diagonal wood truss members of hull framing, illustrating some of the information to be gained from these resources. View to northeast.



Figure 7: Submerged hulk east of Milliken shipyard site. Payne & Baumgardt (1986) suggested this was a possible sailing lighter; Nalwasky suggested it was an express lighter of "mail boat" of a railroad. Hull planking is double. The near (stern) end contains cast iron shapes that may be unusual in a vessel. View to southwest.



Figure 8: West portion of U.S. Dike, at low tide, view to east from near its western end. Distance across dike (left to right) approximately ten feet (10').

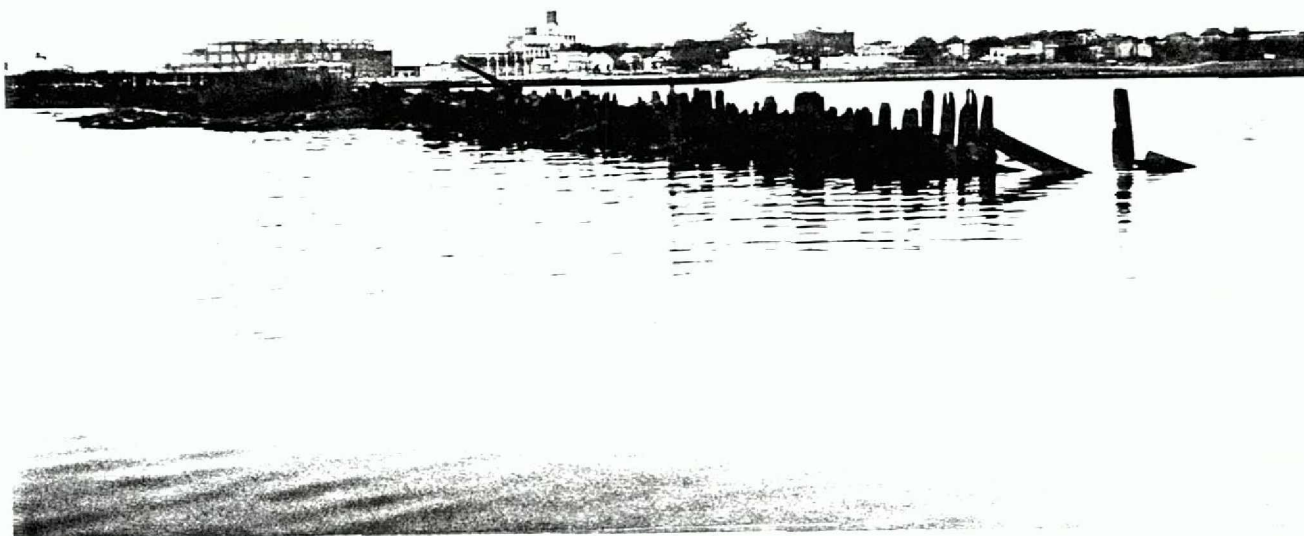


Figure 9: Eastern end of west portion of U.S. Dike, at low tide. View to northwest from small bay; Newark Bay beyond dike.

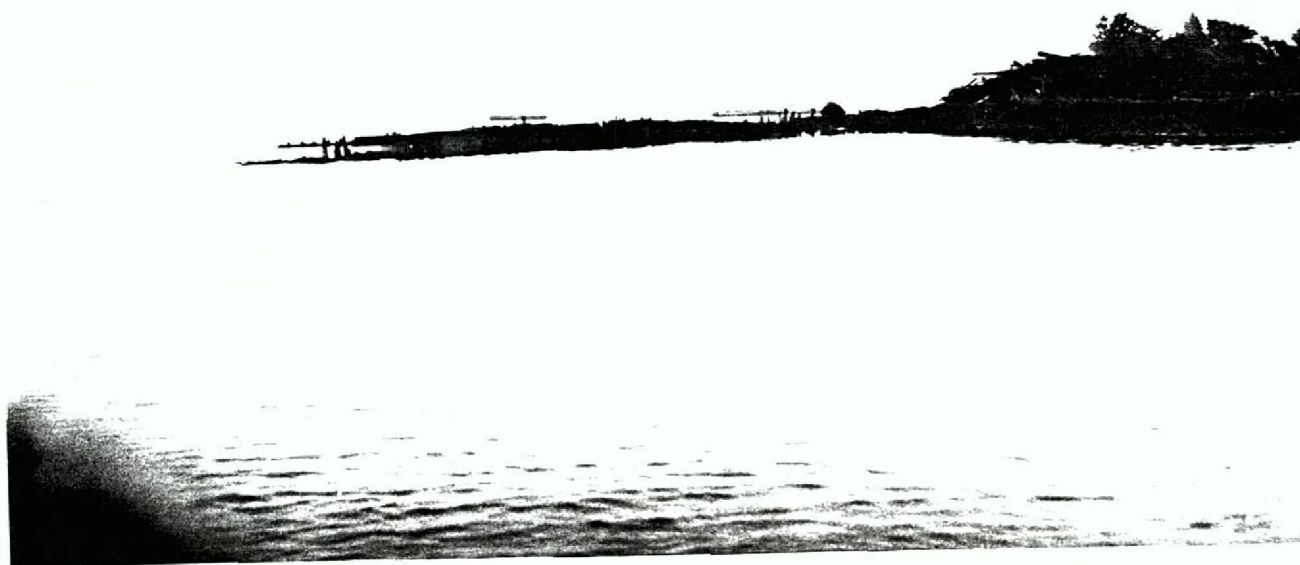


Figure 10: East portion of U.S. Dike, at low tide. View to northeast, from inside small bay. Visible beyond dike are remains of possible sailing lighter.



Figure 11: The Nalwasky house, 3599 Richmond Terrace. Seen from Richmond Terrace. View to northwest.



Figure 12: Procter & Gamble fuel oil pier to left; site of former
Procter & Gamble transfer bridge straight ahead. View to south.