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PHASE IA HISTORICAL/ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
SENSITIVITY EVALUATION OF THE  
ALICE AUSTEN PLACE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT  
STATEN ISLAND, NEW YORK

CEQR #87-051R

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ALICE AUSTEN PLACE  
STATEN ISLAND, NEW YORK

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Phase I Sensitivity Study is to document the potential prehistoric and historic sensitivity of the proposed Alice Austen Place Development Project through the review of existing archival, cartographic and published references and then to make recommendations regarding possible further testing. In order to provide a context for evaluating any identified resources within the parcel itself, this survey will include a synthesis of published and unpublished prehistoric and historic resources in the immediate area surrounding the project area.

The project area is located in eastern Staten Island, New York just northwest of the Verrazano Narrows Bridge. It consists of two large irregularly shaped parcels on either side of Edgewater Street. The western parcel runs from Clifton Street on the south, to a point 75 feet south of Sylvaton Terrace on the north. The eastern parcel is roughly triangular in shape running from a point about 50 feet north of Clifton Street to a point about 100 feet south of Sylvaton Terrace. See Figure 1 for the location of the project area.

This study is organized in the following manner: first, a section describes the geography and physical setting of the project area, second, a section follows on the prehistoric sensitivity of the area; third, a review of the historic sensitivity of the area; and fourth, the conclusions and recommendations.

GEOGRAPHY AND PHYSICAL SETTING

The project area is located in the Atlantic Coastal Lowland Physiographic Province of New York State. There is only one other location in the state (Long Island) where this province occurs (Van Diver 1985:34). Geographically, Staten Island is part of New Jersey from which it is separated by the Kill Van Kull and the Staten Island Sound (Skinner 1909).

The surficial geology of Staten Island consists of landforms and deposits of glacial origin. The sediments were deposited by the Wisconsin Ice Sheet 55,000-10,000 years ago and generally consist of ground moraine, terminal moraine and outwash sediments (Jacobson 1980:5). The shoreline area in this portion of Staten Island is comprised of sandy embankments of beach sand adjacent to and at times overlying the area's geologically earlier glacial deposits of Cretaceous formations of sand and clay (Wein-

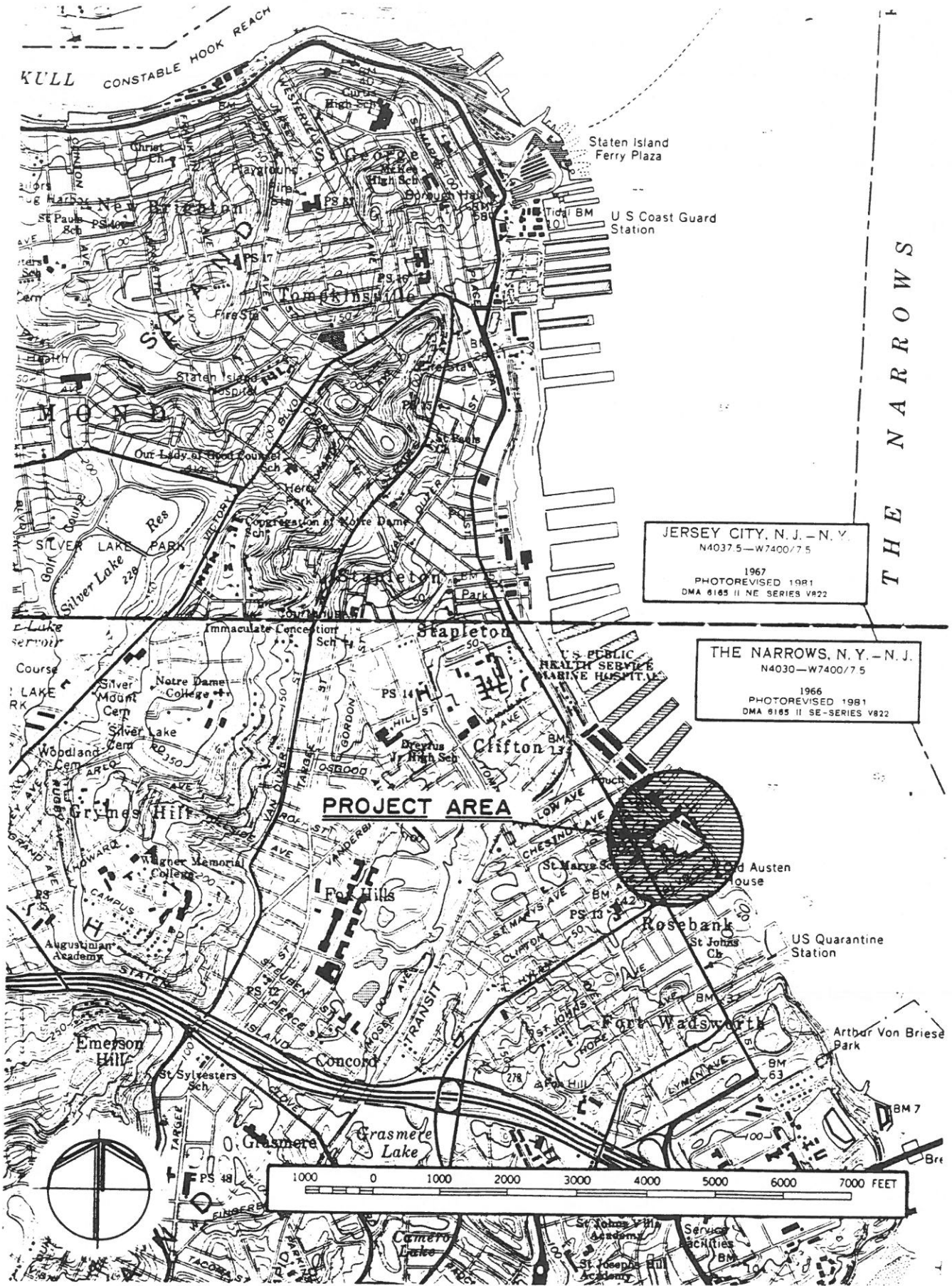


Figure 1: Location of the project area on USGS 7.5 minute series, The Narrows, N.Y.- N.J., Jersey City, N.J.- N.Y. Quadrangles.



gartner 1967:41). Local glacial deposits may be overlaid by fill as well as beach, marsh, dune, swamp, and estuarine deposits (Jacobson 1980:5).

During February 1988, the principal investigator visited the Alice Austen Place Development in Staten Island. During this visit, a combination of visual and pedestrian surveys was utilized to inspect the project area. The majority of the parcel east of Edgewater Street is covered with industrial structures formerly used by the Reynolds Shipyard with some open areas on the piers to the east. The western parcel is largely open with some trees and undergrowth apparent. There are three industrial structures along Edgewater Street north of Sylva Lane, and two residential structures on the south side of Sylva Lane. See Plates 1 - 4 for views of the project area.

### PREHISTORIC SENSITIVITY

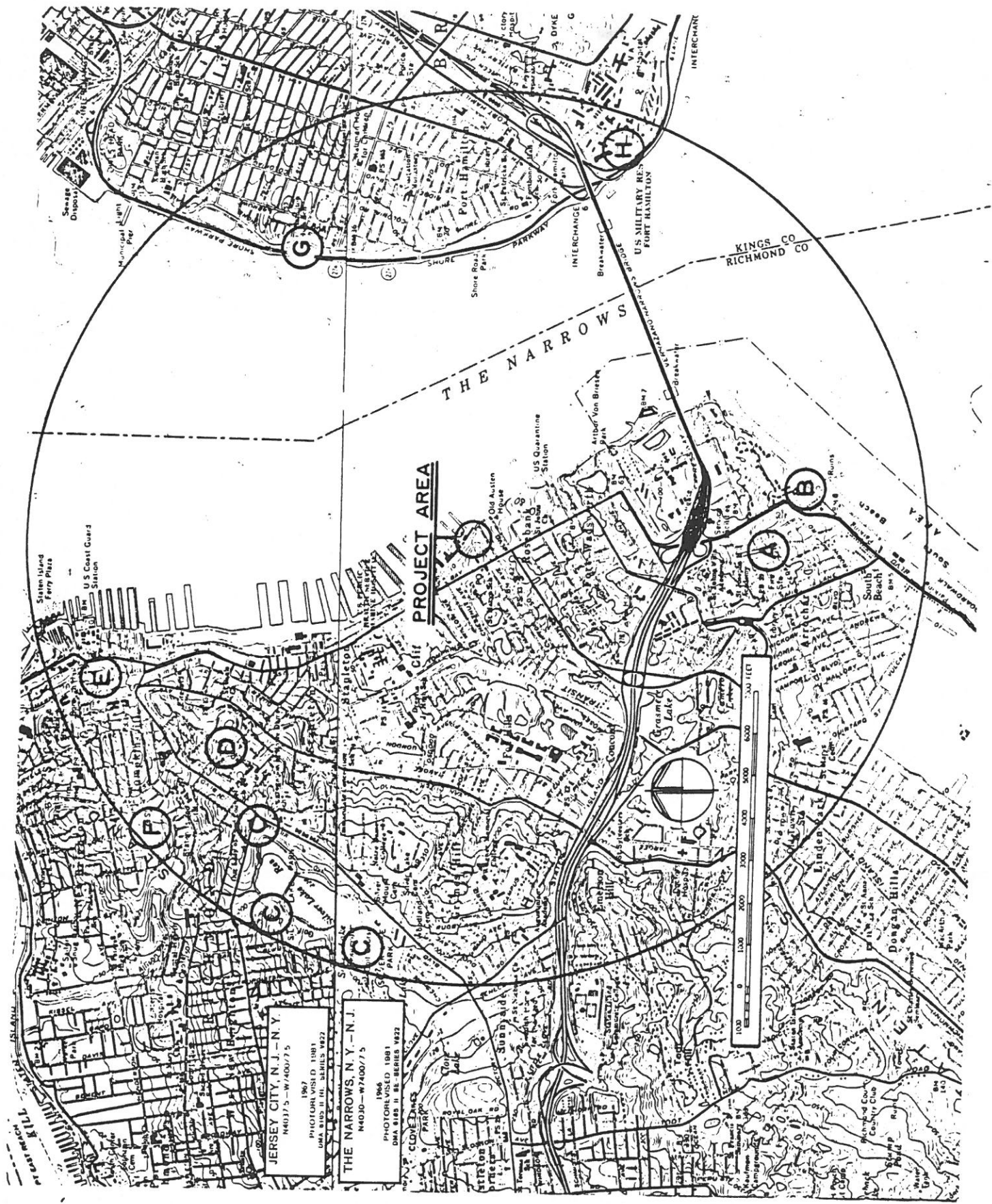
As part of the project evaluation process, this sensitivity study has surveyed published and unpublished resources in the Archives and Library of the Staten Island Institute of Arts and Sciences (hereinafter S.I.I.A.S.), the library of the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, the files of the New York State Museum Division of Historical and Anthropological Services, the Research Branch of the New York Public Library, and the New York State Historic Preservation Office (N.Y.S.H.P.O.). Most prehistoric archaeological work undertaken by both professional and avocational archaeologists has historically concentrated on the southwestern portion of Staten Island (Baugher 1985 pers. comm.). The problems of inadequate archaeological survey coverage particularly evident in the interior of the island may also be found in this portion of eastern Staten Island.

Table 1 presents the results of our search for prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the Alice Austen Place project area. Included in the table are eight sites located two miles or less from the project area. The locations of these sites are presented on Figure 2 with letter code identifiers which correspond to those in Table 1.

Of the eight known occurrences of prehistoric occupation within two miles of the project area, none were excavated recently under controlled conditions. These data represent either surface finds, less well documented excavated finds by local amateur archaeologists, or the work of professional archaeologists early in this century.

Alanson Skinner, one of the first professional archaeologists to work extensively on Staten Island, characterized the locations chosen by prehistoric populations on the island as follows: "Throughout Staten Island, with very few exceptions, aboriginal sites are confined entirely to the sandy spots" (Skinner 1912:90).





1967  
 PHOTONUM USED: 1581  
 DATA SOURCE: 2515 2522  
 NAD175-W7400/75  
 JERSEY CITY, N.J.-N.Y.

1966  
 PHOTONUM USED: 1081  
 DATA SOURCE: 2515 2522  
 NAD175-W7400/75  
 THE NARROWS, N.Y.-N.J.

Figure 2: Prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the project area.

TABLE 1: Prehistoric Sites in the Vicinity of the Alice Austen Place Project

Site Name	SITAS #	Parker #	Skinner #	NYSM #	Reference	Periods	Description
A Atrochar		ACP-RICH-21	17	4611	Parker 1922:684; Skinner 1909:16	Woodland	Camp site.
B Walton-Stillwell	STD-13-4			750			Refuse Pit near Historic House.
C Silver Lake (3 loci)	STD-SL	ACP-RICH-23	19	4613	Parker 1922:684 Skinner 1909:16	Woodland	Camp sites, one with pottery.
D		ACP-RICH-28		4618	Parker 1922	Woodland	Trace of Occup., many triangular points.
E Stuyvesant Place	STD-ST	ACP-RICH		4629			Camp site with traces of occup.
F Harbor Hill		ACP-RICH-24	20	4614	Skinner 1909:16		Camp site.
G		ACP-KINGS-1		3605	Parker 1922:582		Cache of Lithic Blades.
H		ACP-KINGS		3611	Parker 1922:Plate 179		Shell Middens.



The nearest prehistoric site to the Alice Austen Place project area, designated "A" in Table 1 and on Figure 2, is the Arrochar site, reported by the former New York State Archaeologist Arthur C. Parker. This site, described only as a camp site, is located approximately 1.3 miles south of the project area. Artifacts recovered included pottery, so a date during the Woodland period is suggested.

The second nearest prehistoric site to the Alice Austen Place project area is designated "B" in Table 1 and on Figure 2. This site is known as the Walton-Stillwell Site and is primarily known as an historic house. Files at the New York State Museum indicate that a prehistoric component consisting of a refuse pit was also present. No artifacts are described, so no date range can be suggested. The Walton-Stillwell site is located approximately 1.5 miles south-southeast of the project area.

The Silver Lake site, designated "C" in Table 1 and on Figure 2 is located approximately 1.7 to 1.9 miles northwest of the project area. Skinner and Parker describe recovering pottery from one of these areas. This indicates a date range in the Woodland period, although other periods may also be represented here.

An unnamed, Woodland period site (designated "D" in Table 1 and on Figure 2), exists approximately 1.6 miles northwest of the project area. This site is described by Parker as traces of occupation with many triangular projectile points, which indicates a date range in the Woodland period.

The fifth nearest Staten Island prehistoric site to the Alice Austen Place project area, designated "E" in Table 1 and on Figure 2, is the Stuyvesant Place site also reported by Parker. This site, described only as a campsite with traces of occupation, is located approximately 1.8 miles north of the project area.

The sixth nearest prehistoric site to the project area, designated "F" in Table 1 and on Figure 2, is the Harbor Hill site, located approximately 1.9 miles to the northwest. This site is described only as a campsite, and no period of occupation is suggested by the early twentieth century archaeologist, Alanson Skinner.

Both the seventh and eighth sites discovered in our search are in Brooklyn along the shore of the Narrows. Both were reported by Parker who offers no detailed descriptions of artifacts recovered and no estimates of date range. The first of these is designated "G" in Table 1 and Figure 2. It is described as a cache of stone and flint blocks equivalent to a wagonload, and is located approximately 1.6 miles northeast of the project area. The other site is designated "H" in Table 1 and Figure 2. It is described as a shell midden located about 2.0 miles southeast of the project area.



In terms of potential prehistoric sensitivity, the project impact area was evaluated from two points of view:

- 1) the proximity of known prehistoric sites in or near the project area; and
- 2) the presence of fresh water drainage courses in general, and particularly the identification of river or stream confluence situations where two or more drainages come together, providing access to both water and food supplies of both systems.

This survey has documented the recorded or published location of no less than eight sites within a two mile radius of the Alice Austen Place project area. Although sites have been identified in the general region of the proposed project impact area, none are known to exist within the project area itself. No evidence, positive or negative, based on previous survey work is available. It would be inappropriate, however, to characterize this region as without prehistoric sensitivity. The Blood Atlas of 1845 shows a stream near the intersection of New York Avenue and Wood Road (later St. Mary's Avenue) about 300 feet west of the project area, and a map of old place names in Staten Island indicates that a stream formerly existed about 1300 feet south of the project area, which could have provided sources of fresh water. Abundant marine resources would have been readily available from the Narrows. This information combined with the knowledge of at least five prehistoric sites near the shoreline within two miles of the project area (see Sites A, B, E, G, and H above) indicate that this parcel may potentially preserve prehistoric archaeological evidence.

#### HISTORIC SENSITIVITY

##### The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries

Staten Island was called Eghqaous, Motanucke, Monockong, or Aquehonga by the bands of Unami Delaware who inhabited the territory. The island was purchased from the Indians by the Dutch Director General in 1626. By 1630, a patent of the Island was granted to Michael Pauw. Two years later, the Directors in Holland ordered Cornelius Melyn to establish a colony. In turn, Melyn conveyed his right to title to land on Staten Island to the Dutch West Indies Company, which, in turn, granted land to "several French Waldenses and to a greater number of Huguenots" (Pickman 1978).

In 1664, Nieuw Amsterdam was ceded to the English. The final purchase of Staten Island from its aboriginal inhabitants was accomplished by the English Governor Francis Lovelace on April 13, 1670. By this time, how-



ever, there were a number of Dutch, French and English settlers on the Island who had obtained first Dutch and then English permission to settle. No surveys had been made, however, "and the boundaries of their lands, as well as their title to them, were quite indefinite" (Leng and Davis 1930:741). Governor Lovelace ordered land surveys to be undertaken and this task was completed under Governor Andros by 1677 (see Figure 3).

Root's 1902 Map of Colonial Grants on Staten Island places the project area within lands granted to Andrew Norwood (Figure 3). Norwood, a surveyor, had extensive land grants amounting to 547 acres on the east shore, dated 1672, 1676 and 1677 (Leng and Davis 1930 II:933).

When Richmond County was established by the English in 1683, 200 families were living there. In 1688, the settlements comprising Richmond County were divided into four towns. The project area became part of Southfield.

Late eighteenth century cartographic sources show that several farmsteads lined the island's eastern shore by the onset of the Revolutionary War (see McMillen's Map of Staten Island During the Revolution, 1775-1783 \$1933†; Plan (No. 31) du Anglo-Hessois dans Staten Island 1780-1783). Unfortunately, due to a certain degree of inaccuracy inherent in these early maps, it is not possible to ascertain the project area's exact location on them. The Alice Austen Place project area appears to be located in the vicinity of two structures shown on the Plan (No. 31) du Anglo-Hessois and McMillen's 1933 Map of Staten Island During the Revolution, 1775-1783, which are designated "Capt. Ward" and "Cook."

McMillen's 1933 Map notes the locations of Cole's Ferry to the project area's north (present day Stapleton) and the Narrows Ferry to its south (near Clifton). Cole's ferry is "often mentioned in the accounts of the Revolution" (Morris 1898 I:392). It later became known as Van Duzer's ferry and was in operation from before 1788 to 1817 (ibid.). The "Narrows Ferry" is marked on Faden's 1776 map, and was then apparently owned by Frederick Simonson (op. cit.:393).

The Plan (No. 31). du Camp Anglo-Hessois dans Staten Island and McMillen's 1933 Map of Staten Island During the Revolutionary War depict a large fort, just south of the abovementioned Narrows ferry landing. McMillen notes a fort at this location, with "five Bastions made of earth containing 500 men" (McMillen 1933). There is, however, no evidence of Revolutionary War activities within or in closer proximity to the project area. The abovementioned Revolutionary War Fort is shown on maps dating to the 1840s and 1850s, where it is designated Fort Tompkins and located near to a second military structure: Fort Richmond (or Wadsworth) (see Butler 1853; Leng and Davis' 1896 Map of Staten Island with Ye Olde Names & Nicknames; Figure 4).

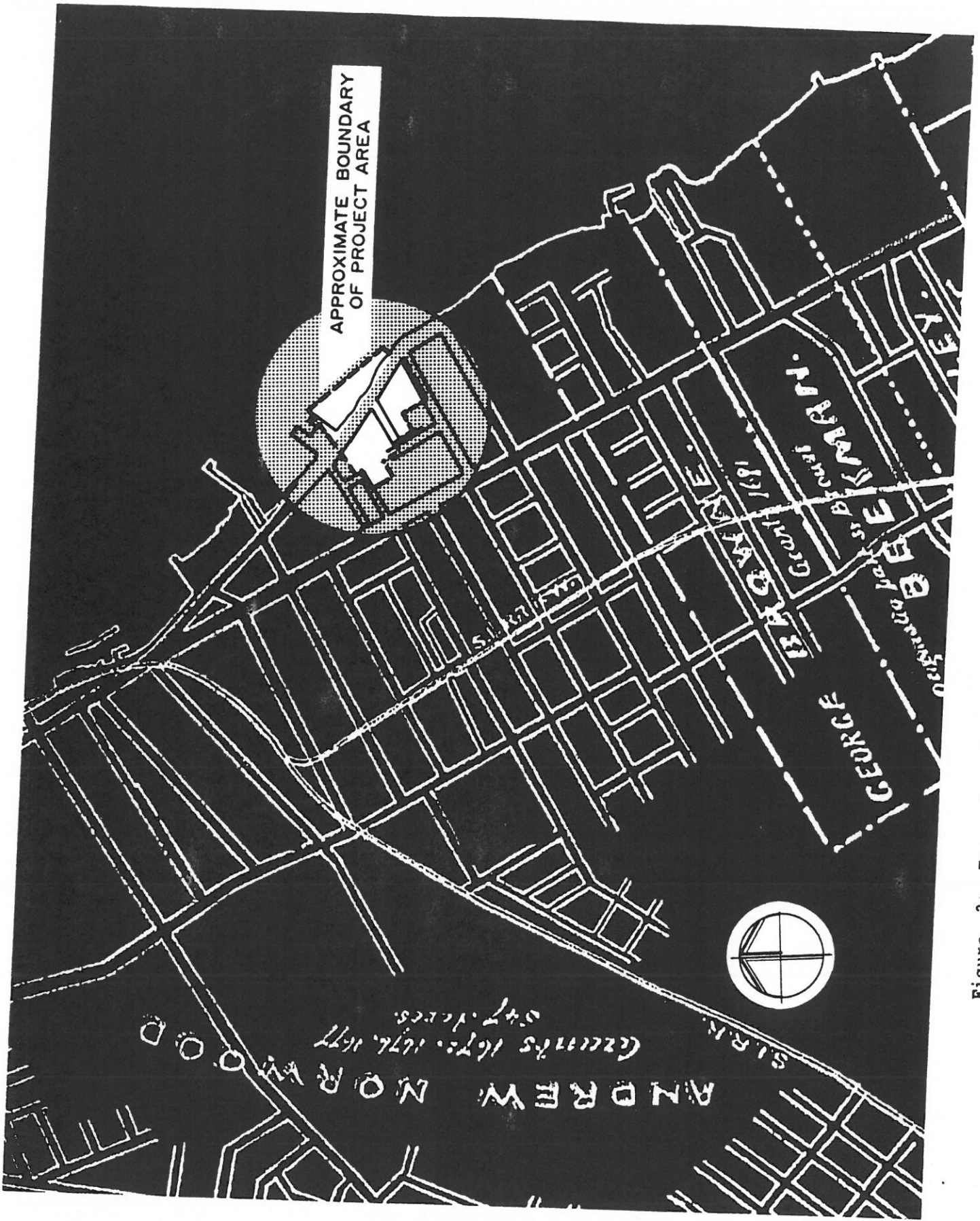


Figure 3: From Georgis Root 1902 Map of Staten Island, showing Colonial Land Grants.



As noted above, the Alice Austen Place project area was originally part of the town of Southfield. However, literary and cartographic sources show that during the late eighteenth century, and throughout the nineteenth century, the project area's general locality changed appellation several times. During the late eighteenth century and up until the 1830s, this area was simply called the "Narrows." This general term embraced "all the shore between Van Duzer's and the Forts . . . Stapleton had not been born nor Clifton dreamed of . . ." (Richmond County Gazette, March 7, 1860 in Davis 1896:88). The project area's locality had also been known as Wood Road, and later, in 1865, became part of "a village called 'Edgewater'" (Davis 1930:91). Edgewater comprised part of Tompkinsville and all of Stapleton and Clifton. This last designation was shortlived, and the project area became part of the locality of Rosebank.

The Nineteenth Century

The U.S. Coast Survey Charter of New York Harbor, 1836-1839 (published 1845) shows several farmsteads along the shore between Stapleton and Clifton (see Figure 4). Three of these structures are shown in the project area's vicinity. It is possible that one or two of these may actually lie within the project area, and that one of these may represent the structure noted above on late eighteenth century maps, designated Cook (Plan (No. 31) du Anglo-Hessois).

C.H. Blood's Map of New Brighton, Tompkinsville, Stapleton, and Clifton provides further information regarding structures and lot configuration within the Alice Austen Place project area (see Figure 5). The portion of the project area that is located west of Edgewater Street is shown, on the 1845 map, to consist of five entire lots and portions of two others. The northernmost parcel, a rectangular, undesignated lot extending between Church Lane and Edgewater Street, is shown to contain a structure (Figure 5). Following south, a large lot is shown extending from New York Avenue (present day Bay Street) to present day Edgewater Street and designated D. Low (Figure 5). A small, possibly farm related structure is shown within Low's lot, at its northeast corner. However, as this structure does not appear on later cartographic sources examined, it is possible that this mark is merely the result of the 1845 map's inherent inaccuracies, perhaps coupled with the relatively poor legibility of the available copy.

The 1845 map depicts three lots within the project area's central portion (west of Edgewater Street) which appear to be designated Silva (see Figure 5). Two of these are shown as vacant parcels. The third and largest parcel, bounded by Edgewater Street, is shown to contain four structures, of which two are presumably dwellings (Figure 6). The two remaining lots within the project area's southern portion are designated L. Lyman and Mirandoli. The former is shown to contain a structure, while the latter appears vacant on Blood's 1845 map (see Figure 5).



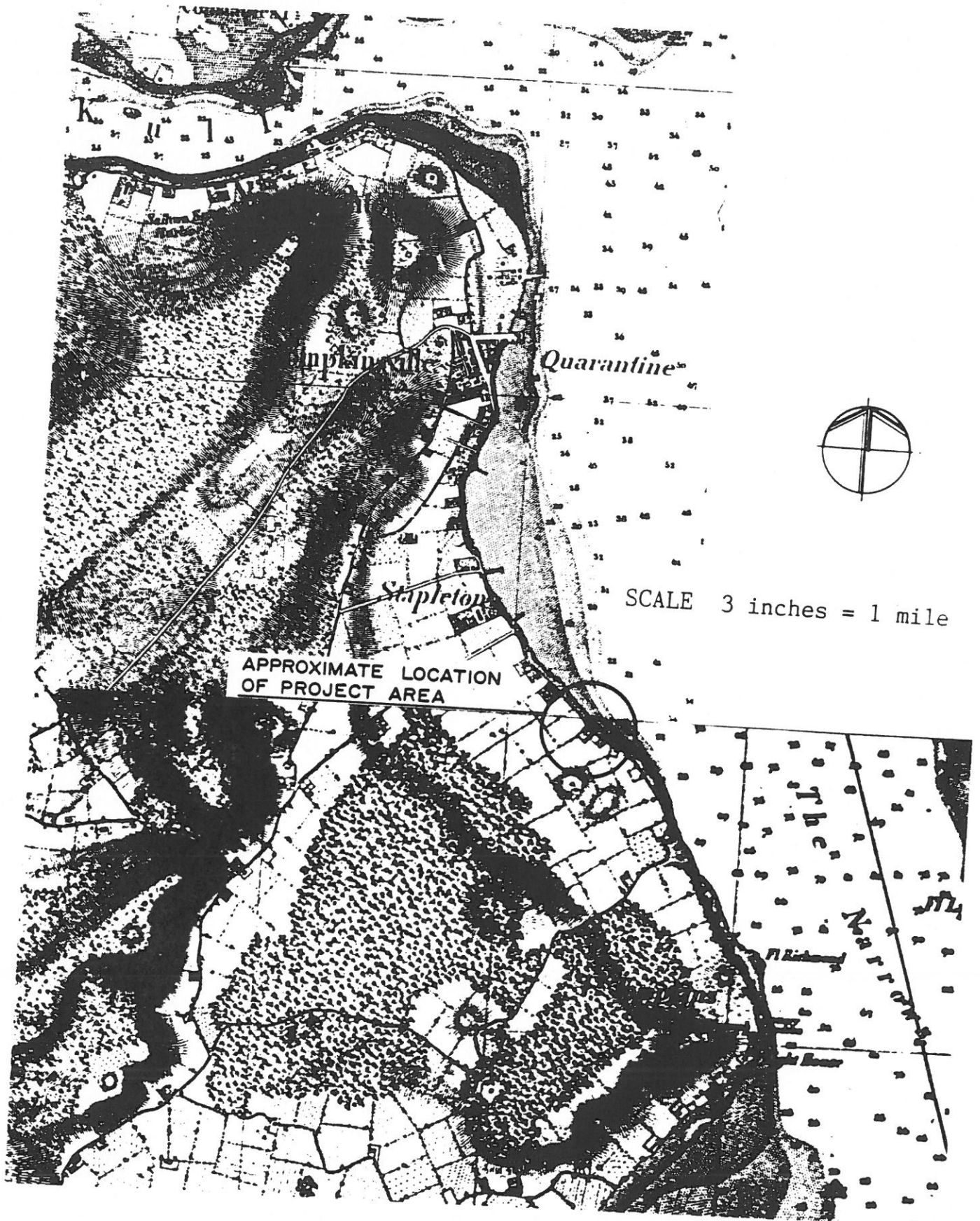


Figure 4: From U.S. Coast Survey Charter of New York Harbor, 1836-1839.

The portion of the Alice Austen Place project area that lies east of Edgewater Street consists, for the most part, of landfill built up between 1917 and 1937 (Sanborn insurance maps). The part of this area that is fast land is depicted on the 1845 map and shown to contain two structures (Figure 5). These two structures also appear on later cartographic sources dating between 1853 (Butler) and 1887 (Beers). These later maps indicate that only one of these structures was actually located within the project area (Figures 6 and 7).

As noted above, the largest of the lots delineated on Blood's 1845 map is that owned by D. Low (Figure 5). Daniel Low came to Staten Island in 1835. He was born in 1792 near Salem, Massachusetts, and "he resided for several years in Paris as a merchant and there he became well acquainted with Lafayette" (Leng and Davis 1930 II:992). Low lived on Staten Island for about twenty years "near Fort Wadsworth, moving to New Brighton, where Daniel Low Terrace recalls his memory, about 1857" (ibid.). Daniel Low's second home, built about 1840, is shown on Blood's 1845 map, adjoining the site of Fort Tompkins (Wadsworth). The lot owned by Daniel Low, of which a part was mentioned above as located within the project area's western parcel, is one of the many properties once owned by Mr. Low on Staten Island: "his interests on Staten Island were numerous and large, so extensive that the name Lowville was applied to a portion of the north shore, near Elm Park" (ibid.). In fact, two other lots, just north of the project area are also shown as the property of D. Low on the 1845 map (Figure 5).

Another property owner shown within the project area's western portion on Blood's 1845 map who left his mark on Staten Island's nineteenth century history is Silva. Richard Silva "was a farmer, fisherman, and inn-keeper, residing in the old town of Southfield" (op. cit. IV:473). This family was apparently of Spanish or Portuguese origin, and the records of St. Andrew's indicate Joseph Silva, who married Elizabeth Kingston in 1766, as the first of the family on Staten Island (op. cit. II:952). Richard Silva, presumably the Silva referred to on the 1845 map, "operated the Cliff House at Silvaton (so-called in his will), near Fort Wadsworth" (op. cit. IV:473). As the Blood 1845 map does not show any properties designated Silva closer to Fort Wadsworth than that within the project area, and as Sylva Lane and Sylvaton Terrace are undoubtedly named after the Silva family and lie within and very near the project area, it is very likely that the "Cliff House at Silvaton" referred to above was actually located within the project area.

Beers' 1874 Atlas of Staten Island depicts the portion of the parcel west of Edgewater Street as consisting of ten lots. To facilitate the description of these lots on the 1874 atlas, as well as changes affecting them as shown on later maps and atlases, these will be numbered 1 through 10 for the purposes of this study as shown on the following schematic

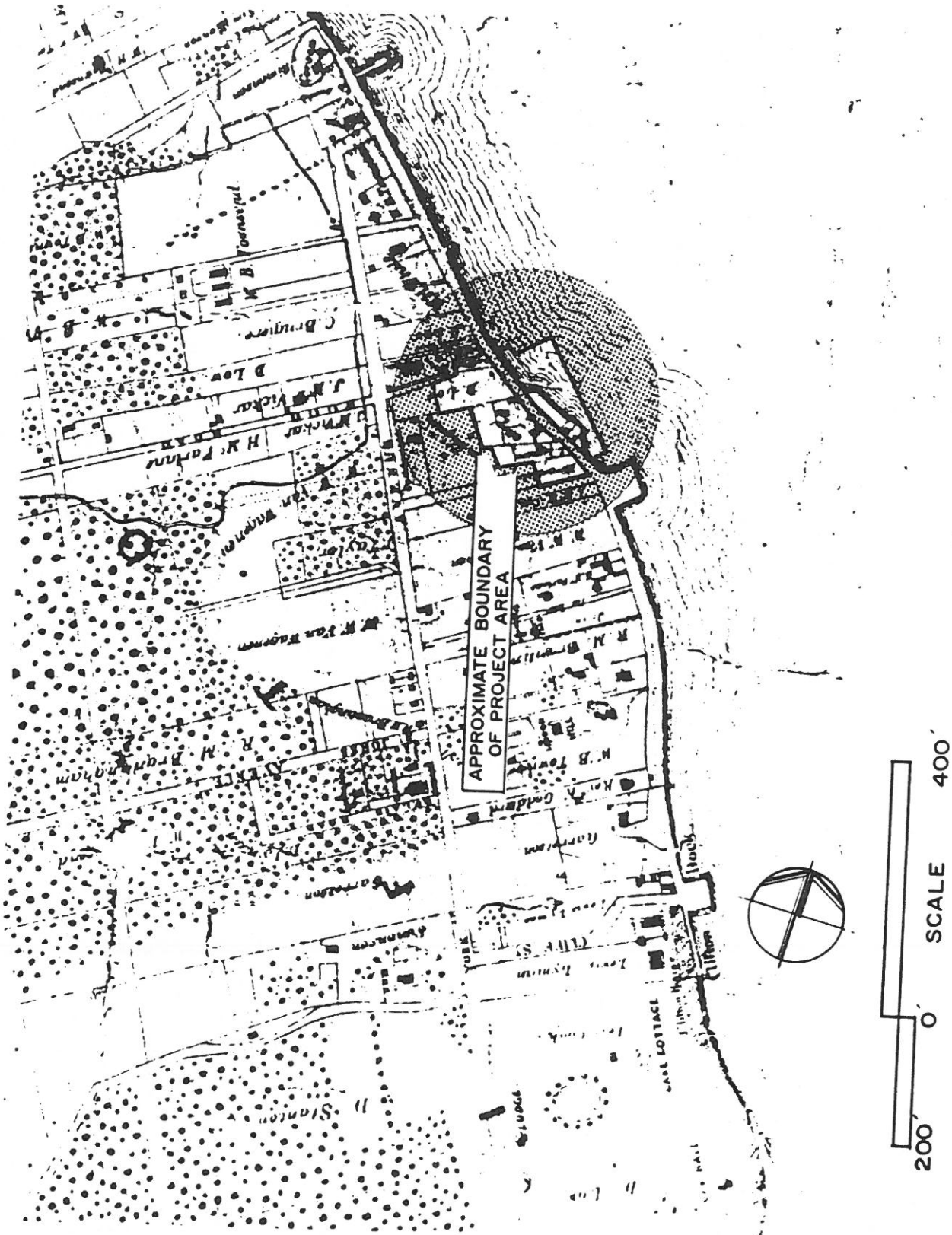
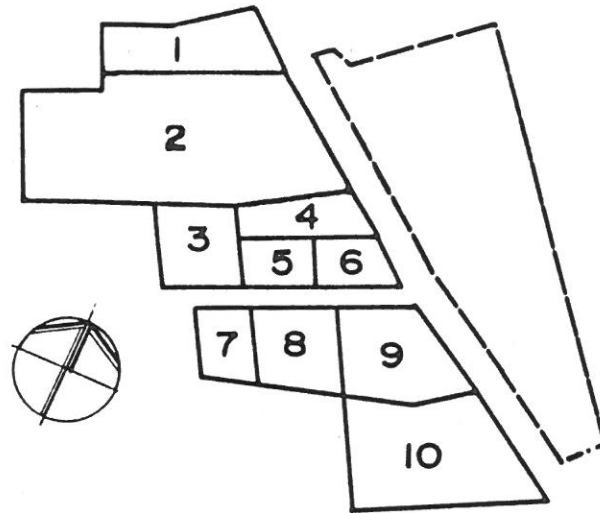


Figure 5: From Blood's 1845 Map of New Brighton, Tompkinsville and Clifton, Staten Island.

plan. The following diagram shows the ten lots within the western parcel with their numerical designations.



On the 1874 Beers atlas, Lot 1 is designated Mrs. Bell and contains one structure, noted also on the Blood 1845 map (see Figures 5 and 6). Following south, Lot 2, formerly owned by D. Low (Blood 1845) is shown as the property of C. O'Connor (Figures 5 and 6). The O'Connor house is located centrally within the lot on Beers' 1874 atlas, with pathways leading from it to both Bay (now Edgewater) Street and present day Church Lane (see Figure 6). Butler's 1853 Map of Staten Island depicts this structure within Lot 2 which was at that date still owned by Daniel Low. This house is also shown on later nineteenth century maps and atlases (Figures 7, 8, and 9). On Beers' 1887 atlas it is shown as the property of Wilson Adams, and on Robinson's 1898 atlas as that of Edward M. Muller (Figures 7 and 9). On both atlases, Lots 1 and 2 are shown as part of one, subdivided property.

Lot 3, designated Silva on the 1874 atlas, is shown vacant (Figure 6). Other cartographic sources examined indicate that this lot was never developed during the nineteenth century (Figures 5 - 10). The adjacent lots (4 and 5), each containing a structure, are undesignated on the 1874 atlas but were most probably then owned by Silva, as was also indicated on the 1845 map (see Figures 5 and 6). Lot 6 is designated J. Stilwell and is portrayed as a vacant lot on the 1874 atlas (Figure 6). This lot





would appear to have remained vacant throughout the nineteenth century (Figures 5 - 10).

The Stilwell family, of English origin, settled on Staten Island at an early date. The earliest mention of the name, with reference to the island is in Albany records "where a piece of woodland on the south side of Fresh Kill is mentioned as belonging to Daniel Stilwell in 1680" (Bayles 1887:580). By the close of the seventeenth century there were apparently at least four families of the name on Staten Island (ibid.). The J. Stilwell shown as one of the property owners within the project area on the Beers 1874 atlas, however, most probably refers to James Stilwell, who came to Staten Island during the early nineteenth century. Captain James Stilwell was born in Long Island in 1804 (Leng and Davis 1930 IV:473). He later resided on Staten Island where he became a ferryboat captain and "commanded a boat plying between Staten Island and Manhattan" (ibid.).

In 1824 James Stilwell married Hester Silva, daughter of the abovementioned inn keeper, Richard Silva (ibid.). This marriage explains why Lot 6, previously designated Silva (Blood 1845) is designated Stilwell on the 1874 atlas (Figures 5 and 6). Beers' 1887 atlas shows Lots 3 and 4 to then be the property of Captain Hannum, while it designates Lots 5 and 6 J. Stilwell (see Figures 6 and 7). Both Beers atlases (1874 and 1887) depict a structure in both Lots 4 and 5; structures at these approximate locations also appear on Blood's 1845 map (Figures 5, 6 and 7). These two structures are shown on Vermeule and Bien's 1890 Topographical Map and on Robinson's 1898 atlas (see Figures 8 and 9). The 1898 atlas shows that the dimensions of Lot 4 had been altered some time between 1887 and 1898, as approximately half of the area previously encompassed by Lot 6 is shown as part of Lot 4 (Figures 7 and 9). Robinson's atlas (1898) also notes the addition of a small structure within Lot 5 (Figure 9).

The Beers 1874 atlas depicts two new structures within the western parcel's southern portion, south of Sylva Lane (Figure 6). One of these is located within Lot 7. A structure is shown at this location on all the later nineteenth century maps examined (Figures 7-10). The area covered by the project area's southern portion (Lots 7-10) would appear to have been owned by Howden in 1874 and by Wiman in 1887 (Beers 1874 and 1887; Figures 6 and 7).

The 1874 atlas depicts a structure within Lot 9 which appears to correspond in location to that noted above on Blood's 1845 map as within Lyman's lot (Figures 5 and 6). This structure is also depicted on Beers' 1887 atlas and on Vermeule and Bien's 1890 map, but would appear to have been demolished some time between 1890 and 1898 as it does not appear on Robinson's 1898 atlas (Figures 7, 8 and 9). By 1887 a second structure had been built within Lot 9, as illustrated by the Beers atlas of that year (see Figure 7). Both Beers' atlases (1874 and 1887) show a struc-





ture within Lot 10 (Figures 6 and 7). The earliest cartographic source upon which this structure is depicted dates to 1859 (Walling). This structure is also shown on later nineteenth century maps and atlases (Vermeule and Bien 1890 and Robinson 1898; Figures 8 and 9).

Robinson's 1898 atlas notes several changes within the western parcel's southern portion regarding lot configuration as well as structural additions (Figure 10). Some time between 1890 and 1898, Lots 8, 9 and 10 were subdivided into smaller parcels or properties (Figure 9). On the 1898 atlas Lot 8 is shown as comprising four narrow lots; Lot 9 is divided into four lots and Lot 10 into two (Figure 9). These lot subdivisions, however, are not shown on Sanborn's 1898 insurance map of Staten Island, suggesting that Robinson's 1898 lot divisions were at that date merely proposed or, in any event, forming part of properties still delineated by boundaries shown on earlier maps. The only lot subdivision shown on both 1898 sources (Robinson and Sanborn) is that within Lot 9's northeast portion, represented by two small lots which each contain a structure fronting on Edgewater Street. These structures, described as 2 1/2 story frame dwellings on Sanborn's 1898 map, were built some time between 1890 and 1898 (Figures 8 and 9). Sanborn's 1898 map also shows the addition of two small, probable shed structures within the southern portion of the project area's western parcel: one within the southwest corner of Lot 9; the other along the northern boundary of Lot 10 (Figure 10).

As mentioned above, the portion of the Alice Austen Place project area that is located east of Edgewater Street consists for the most part of landfill built up during the twentieth century. Nineteenth century cartographic sources dating between 1845 and 1887 show two structures within the project area's eastern parcel, one located across from the foot of Sylva Lane, the other near the project area's southeastern boundary (Figures 5-7). The Beers' 1874 and 1887 atlases depict a dock or platform across from Sylva Lane (Figures 6 and 7). Between 1887 and 1898 a pier was constructed just north of the abovementioned dock. The pier is depicted on Robinson 1898 atlas as well as on Sanborn's map of that year, and is described on the latter as 300 feet long (see Figures 9 and 10). Most of the area covered by the project area's eastern parcel appears to be included within water grants to Edward M. Muller on the 1898 atlas (Figure 9). Sanborn's 1898 map shows that a larger, longer dock had been built between 1887 and 1898 which extended from the northern side of the pre-existing dock noted on earlier maps and atlases. This is designated the "Clifton Boat Club." Sanborn's 1898 map describes the club house as a 2 story frame structure, with a floating platform ("Float") extension (Figure 10). This 1898 map also shows one of the two structures noted above on maps dating as early as 1845 as located within the project area's eastern parcel. Shown just southwest of the boat club, this structure is described as a combined 1 and 1 1/2 story frame dwelling. The second structure, shown on maps and atlases dating between 1845 and

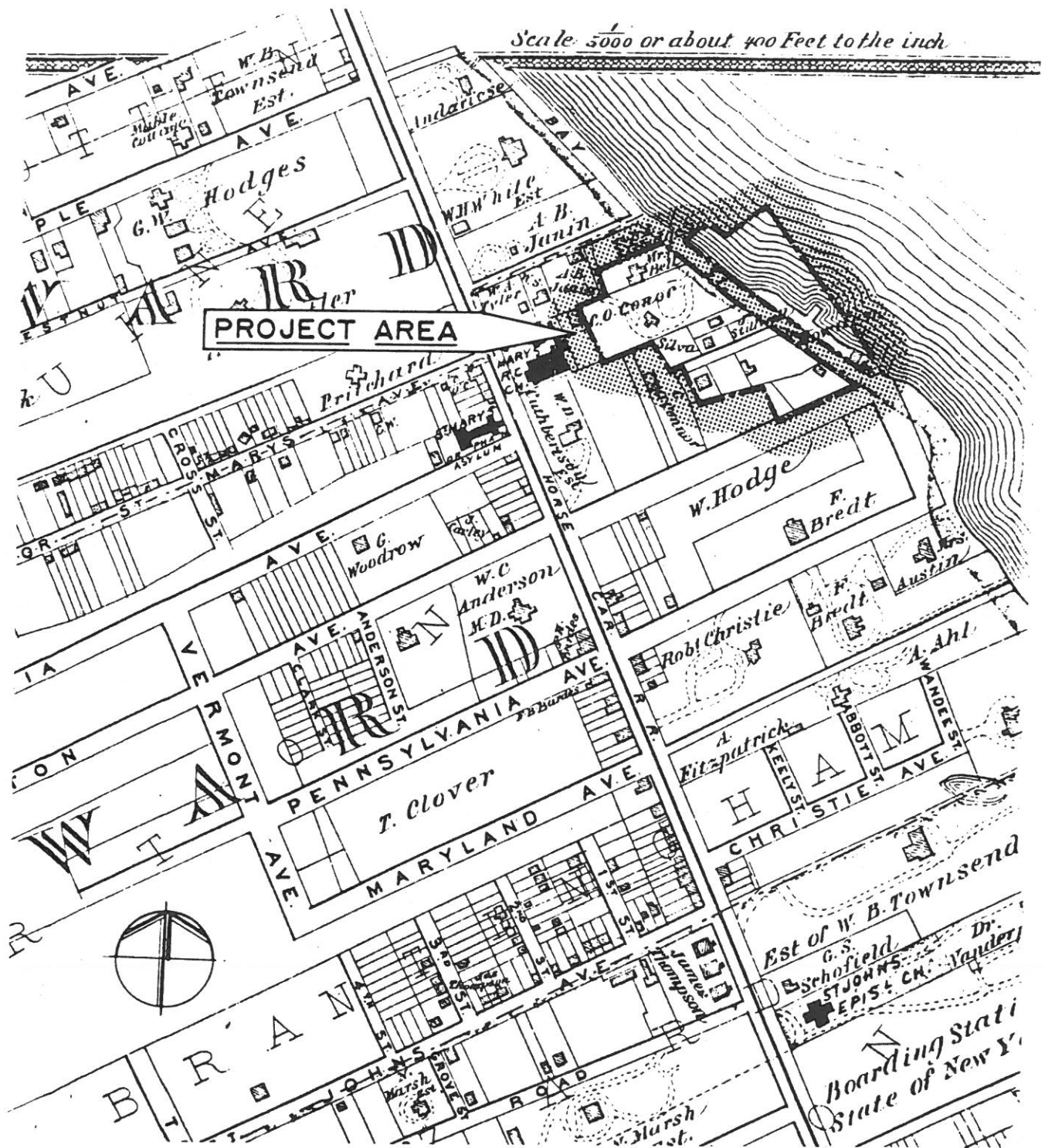


Figure 6: From Beers' 1874 Atlas of Staten Island, Richmond County, N.Y.

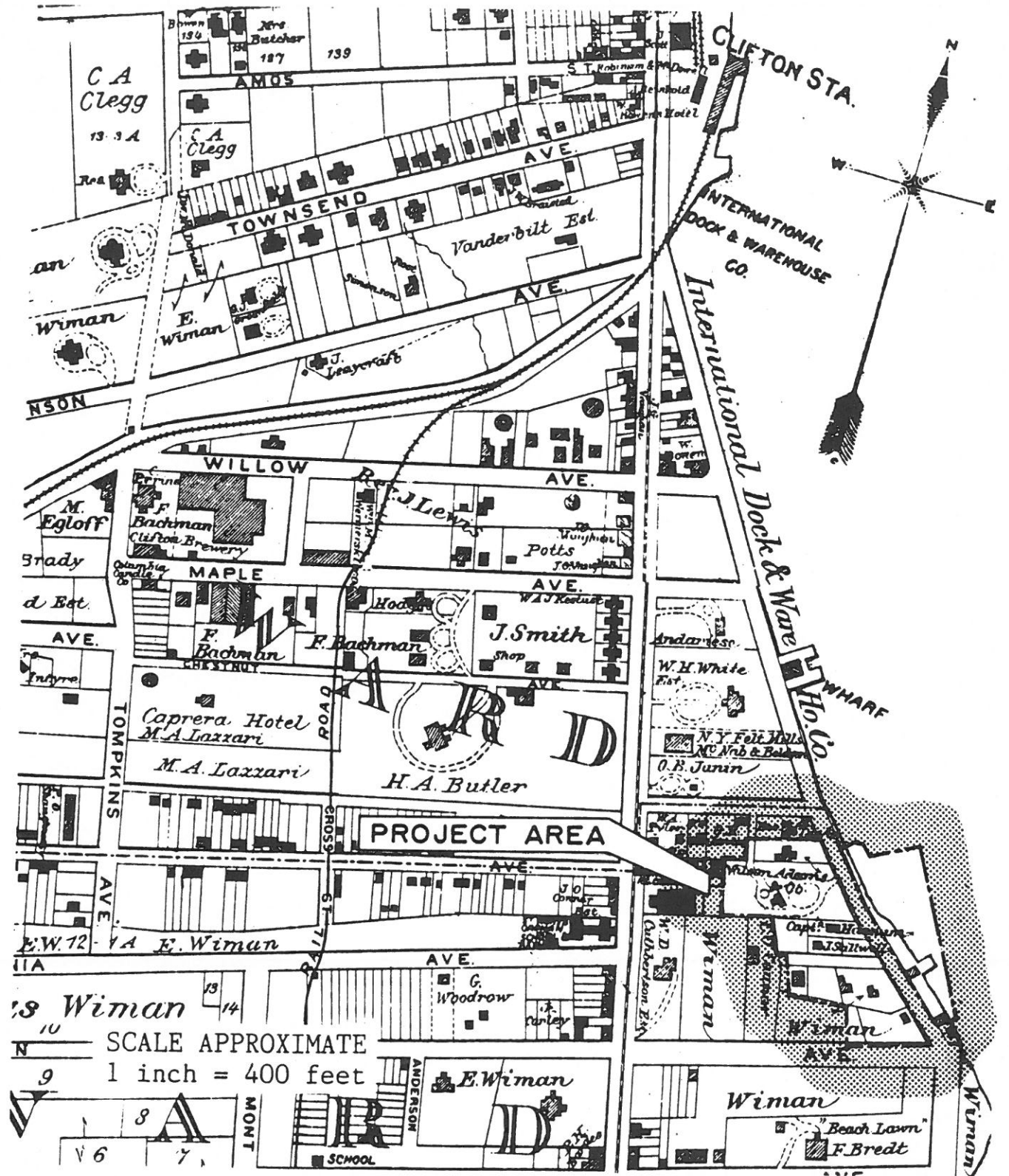


Figure 7: From Beers' 1887 Atlas of Staten Island, Richmond County, N.Y.

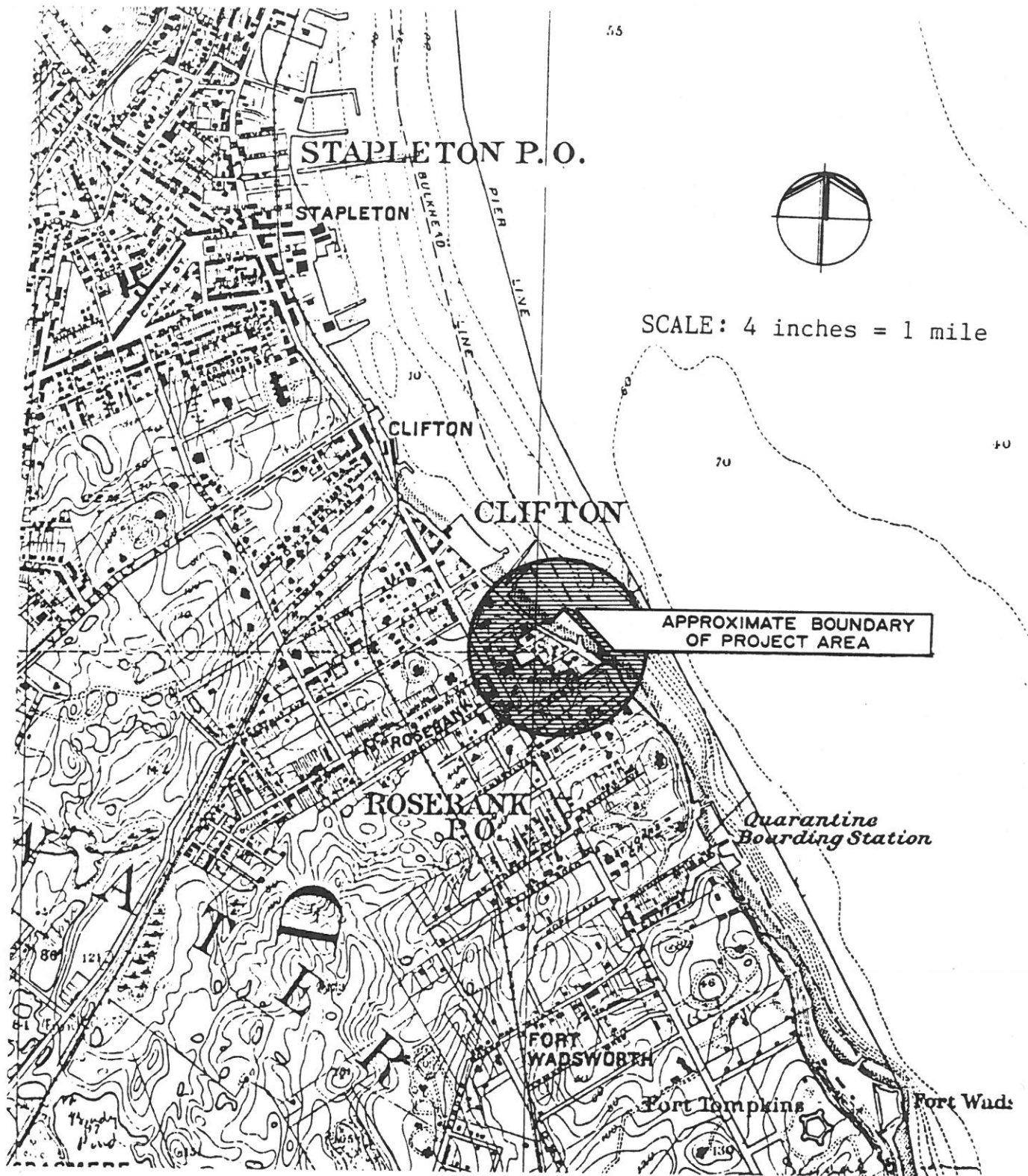


Figure 8: From Vermeule & Bien's 1890 Topographical Map of Staten Island



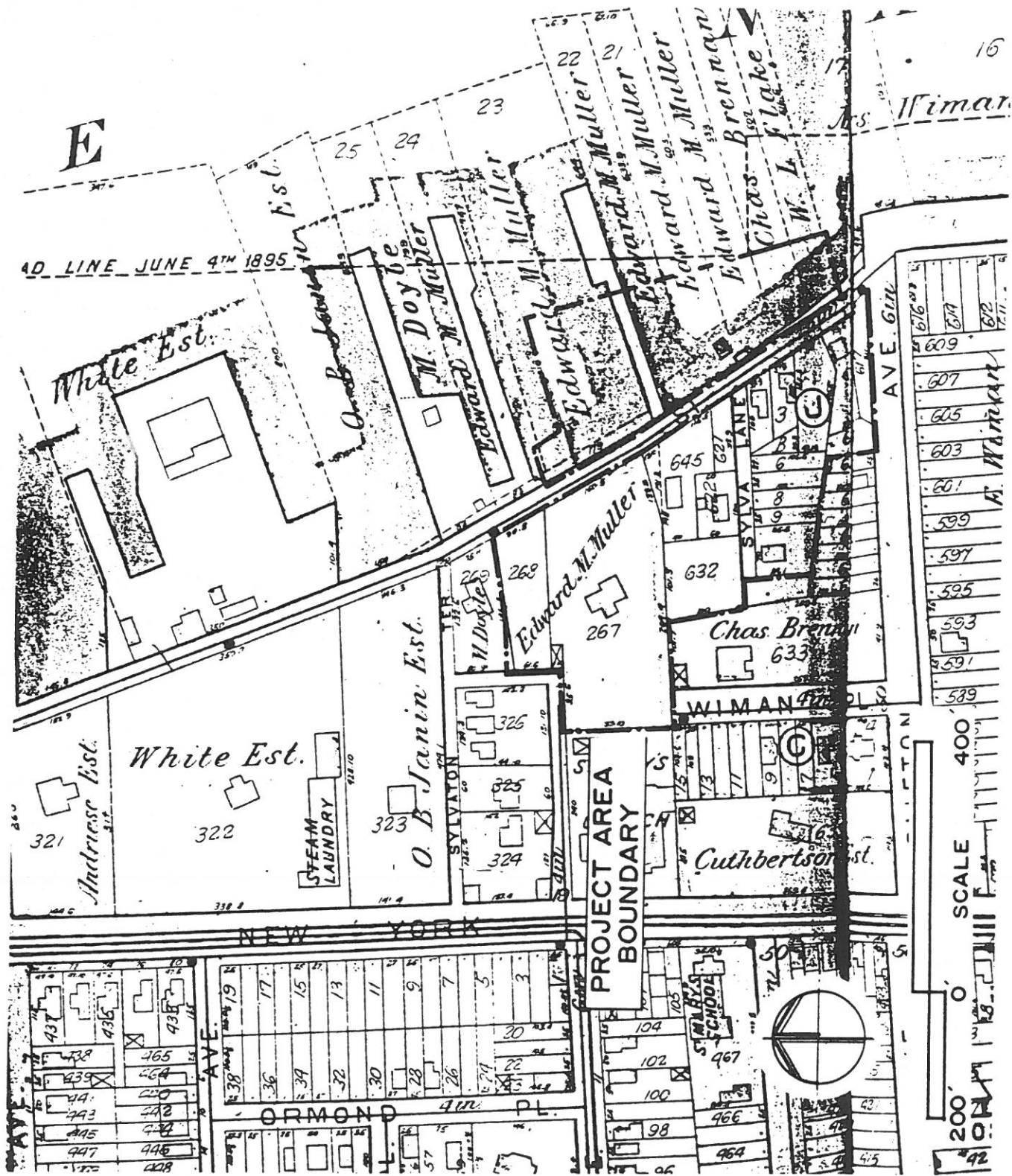


Figure 9: From Robinson's 1898 Atlas of the Borough of Richmond, N.Y.

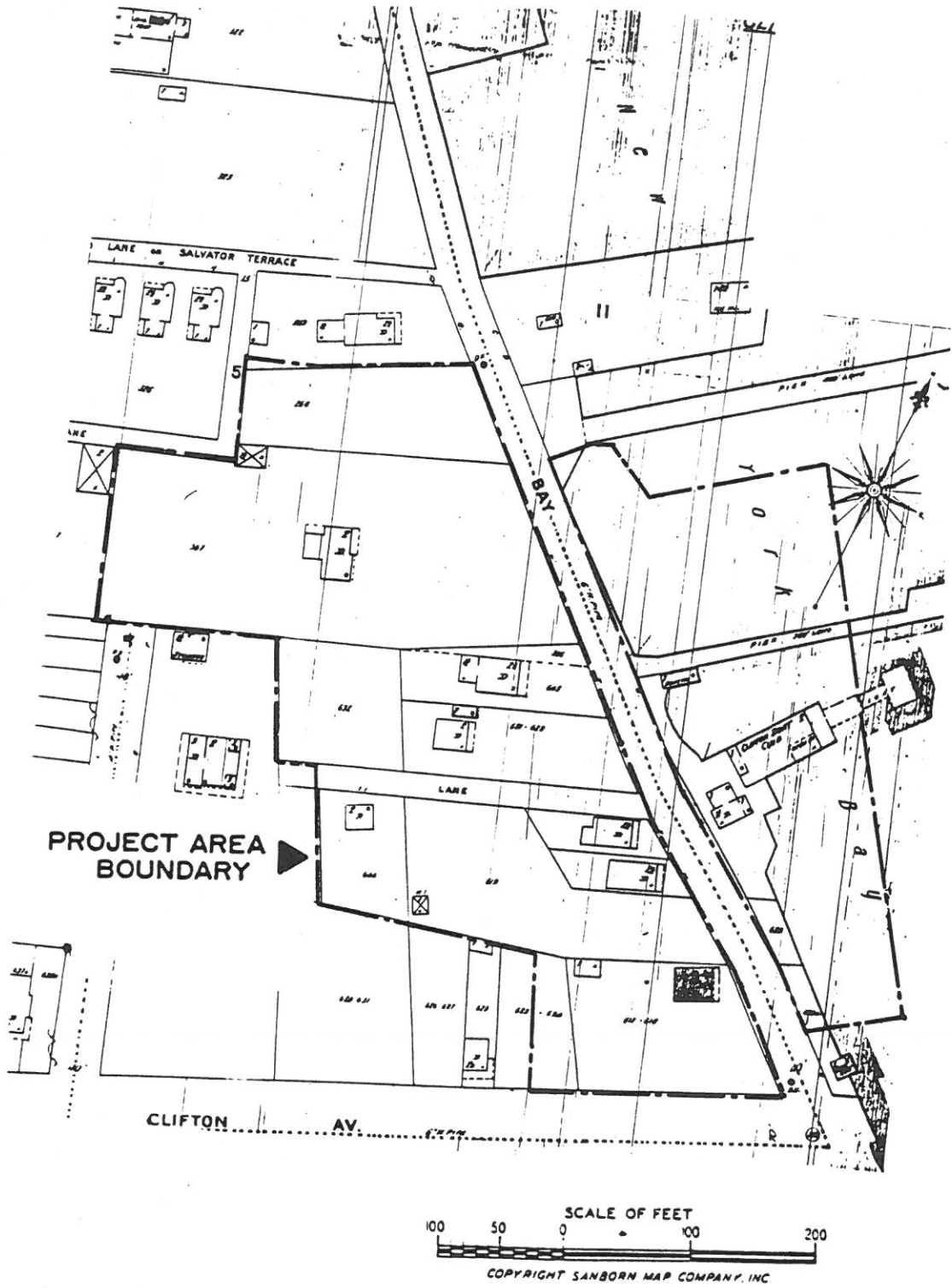


Figure 10: From Sanborn's 1898 Insurance Maps of Staten Island.



1887 as located within the eastern parcel's southwest corner, was apparently demolished by 1898 (Figures 5-10). This structure had most probably functioned as a boat house. Another 1 story frame boat house is shown located along the pier's southern edge built, as was the pier, between 1890 and 1898 (Figures 8-10).

The "Clifton Boat Club" was organized in 1881 and, according to one late nineteenth century historian, its club house was "charmingly situated at Clifton . . . a delightful place to visit during the boating season" (Bayles 1887:667). The club began as a social organization, and began to compete in rowing regattas only in 1886 (ibid.). The source cited above provides the following description of the Clifton Boat Clubhouse: "The house is sixty-six feet deep by thirty-five feet wide, with a piazza twelve feet wide on two sides, facing the Narrows" (ibid.).

#### Property Ownership and Occupation During the Nineteenth Century

Sources for the following segment of this report include deeds obtained at Staten Island Borough Hall, and Trow's Directory (1898) consulted at the Local History Division of the New York Public Library. The atlases used are Beers' (1874 and 1887), Blood's (1845), and Robinson's (1898). In addition to the atlases, the Map of Property Purchased by the Staten Island Association filed in the Richmond County Clerk's Office (14 March 1839) was also consulted. Each lot is summarized in this report according to the information contained in the above sources.

Lot #1: According to the Staten Island Association Map this property was owned by Seguire in 1839. This lot is shown on Blood's 1845 map, but the name of the owner cannot be deciphered. This lot contained a structure in 1874 (Beers 1874), but other sources do not give any information regarding the owner, Mrs. Bell. There is nothing in the deeds on this individual. Beers (1887) indicates a structure on the property and a small arrow showing that it belonged to a certain Wilson Adams, but the deeds offer no information on him. Robinson (1898) shows Edward Muller as owner of the lot.

Lot #2: According to both the Staten Island Association (1839) and Blood (1845) Daniel Low owned Lot #2. The deeds indicate that Low sold property to different families in the 1840s through 1870s, including the O'Connor family "west of Bay Street" close to St. Mary's during July 1870 (Liber 103:309-310). Low died in 1877 (Liber 118:557-561). The chain of ownership, according to the data, is Low (Blood 1845) to O'Connor (Beers 1874). The name C. O'Connor appears on Lot #2 in 1874 (Beers 1874). The 1874 atlas shows a structure on the O'Connor property. Wilson Adams appears on Beers' 1887 atlas with a structure indicated. Edward Muller is shown on the lot in 1898 with a structure on Robinson's 1898 Atlas.

Lot #3: Lot #3 was purchased in 1832 by Richard Silva of Southfield, Staten Island from Joseph Silva of Brooklyn (Liber U:11). In 1857 James



Stilwell sold to Joseph Silva one lot on the "easterly side of Shore Road" (Liber 41:337). Beers (1874) indicates Silva occupying Lot #3. The maps do not show any structures on this lot.

Lot #4: In 1832 Richard Silva and his wife purchased Lot #4 from James Stilwell (Liber V:92). The deed mentions Stilwell's land as bounding on Silva's (Liber U:12). According to the deed, Richard Silva's property was "bounded southerly by the land of Richard Silva, Sr., and easterly by the Bay" (ibid.). Richard Silva died at an early age and his father inherited the property. Lot 4 was owned by Silva in both 1839 and 1845 (Staten Island Association 1839, Blood 1845). Lot #4 contained one structure (Beers 1874). According to the deeds, Elizabeth and Josiah Hannum bought land from Frederick and Anna Van Dyke of New York City in 1877 (Liber 118:192). It was located "one hundred (100) feet to the southerly line of land of late Daniel Low", and it was bounded by Bay Street (ibid.). Beers' Atlas (1887) shows Hannum on Lot #4 and a structure is included. The name, Hannum does not appear on Robinson's Atlas (1898), but it is listed under "Boats To Let" on Bay Street in Trow's Directory (1898) (Trow 1898 I:6).

Lot #5: Lot 5 was owned by Silva in 1839 and 1845 (Staten Island Association 1839; Blood 1845). Beers (1874) atlas shows a structure on Lot #5, but it is unclear whether the lot belonged to Silva or to Stilwell. Beers (1887) atlas, however, makes it clear that it was Stilwell's. The Stilwell family, closely associated with the project area since the early 1830s, probably owned Lot #5 since that time.

Lot #6: Lot #6 was owned by Silva in 1839 and 1845 (Staten Island Association 1839; Blood 1845) and James Stilwell from 1874 through 1887 (Beers 1874; Beers 1887). Robinson (1898), however, does not show any name connected with this lot. The maps show no structures on it.

Lot #7: Lot 7 was owned by L. Lyman in 1845 (Blood). Lewis Lyman was secretary of the Staten Island Association in 1839. In March of that year this property was owned by the Silva family (Staten Island Association Map). Beers (1874) shows a structure on Lot #7, but no name. Beers (1887) and Robinson (1898) offer the same information.

Lot #8: Lot 8 was owned by Silva in 1839 and Lyman in 1845 (Staten Island Association 1839, Blood 1845). The atlases indicate neither structures nor names regarding Lot #8. Therefore no names were available to trace in the deeds or directories for the period 1874-1893.

Lot #9: Lot 9 was owned by Silva in 1839 and Lyman in 1845 (Staten Island Association 1839, Blood 1845). Beers (1874) shows a structure on Lot #9. According to Beers (1887) there were two structures on the lot and the owner was Wiman. Robinson (1898) indicates two structures but no name. The deed notes E. Wiman who had property at Clifton and made a sale to





Th. J. Glover in 1888 (Liber 180:556). E. Wiman also conveyed property to John Silva in 1891 (Liber 213:99). Wiman was residing at Castleton and Silva was living at Clifton Avenue, Southfield (ibid.). Eleanor and Erastus Wiman also granted some property to Ann Wiman in 1902 (Liber 289:251).

Lot #10: Lot 10 is shown as the property of Hazzard in 1839 (Staten Island Association 1839). Beers (1874) shows a structure on Lot #10, but no name is indicated. The Wiman name appears on Beers (1887) in addition to the structure. Robinson (1898) continues to show the structure, but the name is not included. Beers (1887) and Robinson (1898) indicate that the Wiman family owned a lot of property outside of the project area, but within the general vicinity of Clifton. They seem to have been very active in the buying and selling of land during the 1880s and 1890s.

In conclusion some of the families have been in the locality for two or more generations. Some of them owned and sold much property. The Silva family was in the area for a long time and influenced the local toponymy. Local street names, such as Sylvaton Terrace and Sylva Lane (Robinson 1898), are indicative of the Silva family's long association with the area. The Silva and Stilwell families are linked by marriage. As noted above in the text on the nineteenth century, James Stilwell married Hester Silva in 1824. Lots 3, 5, and 6, are consistently referenced to either Silva or Stilwell (where names are supplied) from 1839 through 1887. Daniel Low is first seen as a major property owner in this area in 1839. He can be documented as owning Lot 2 from 1845 through 1870. Although the ownership of Lots 2, 3, 5 and 6 can be linked to either the Low or Silva/Stilwell families for 25 years or longer during the nineteenth century, the issue of whether these families occupied these lots during the century is much more difficult to resolve. Daniel Low is described as being from Clifton in a deed of 1845 (Liber 13, p.148). In another deed from 1873 Low was evidently living in Castleton, Staten Island (Liber 103, p.309), so it is possible that he occupied Lot 2 from 1845 through 1870. Unfortunately, no evidence was found to confirm this. This Silva/Stilwell family definitely owned Lots 3, 5 and 6 from 1839 until at least 1874 for Lot 3 and 1887 for Lots 5 and 6. The maps and atlases show no structures in Lots 3 and 6 during the nineteenth century, so Lot 5 is the only location that they could have both owned and occupied. A John Silva is mentioned in a deed of 1891 as living on Clifton Avenue (Liber 213, p.99). Clifton Avenue forms part of the southern boundary of the project area but does not bound Lot 5. It is possible that Lot 5 was occupied by Silva or Stilwell, but no firm evidence exists to prove this. The fact that Lot 5 lies on Sylva Lane suggests that they did live there. The locality was basically a residential community in which property was bought, sold, and occupied. The residents may be generally described as middle class property owners.



### The Twentieth Century

The 1907 Borough of Richmond Topographical Survey depicts the "Clifton Boat House" with its floating platform, as well as the pier and other structures noted above on late nineteenth century cartographic sources as located within the project area's eastern parcel (Figures 7-11). The 1907 Survey also provides information regarding original water grants along this section of Staten Island's shoreline. Many of the persons to whom these water properties were granted and the dates given correspond to the property information provided by nineteenth century maps and atlases relevant to the Alice Austen Place project area's western parcel noted above (Figure 11). The project area's eastern parcel extends over portions of water properties that had been granted to Daniel Low (December 11, 1861), Elizabeth A. Hannum (October 7, 1886), Hester Stilwell (July 9, 1886), Esther J. Howden (November 29, 1886), Timothy Brennan (December 7, 1854) and Edward M. Muller (December 7, 1901) (see Figure 11).

Sanborn's 1917 insurance map depicts a few changes within the project area's eastern portion. These include two structural extensions of the Clifton Boat Clubhouse, represented by one story additions to the original structure's northeast and southeast. Some time between 1907 and 1917, the clubhouse's "float" was substituted by a fixed pier and a ramp built to its southeast (see Figure 11 and Sanborn 1917). The two structures noted above on Sanborn's 1898 map and earlier maps are also shown on Sanborn's 1917 map as well as another boathouse along the earlier pier's northwest side, just north of the Clifton Boat Clubhouse (see Figures 5-11; Sanborn 1917).

Some time between 1917 and 1937 the piers and structures built within the project area's eastern parcel during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were demolished. By 1937, this portion of the Alice Austen Place project area had, for the most part, taken on its present day aspect, illustrated on Sanborn insurance maps dating from 1937 to the present (see Figure 12). Aside from that portion of fast land depicted on nineteenth century cartographic sources and noted above, the area covered by the project area's eastern parcel consists of land fill built up between 1917 and 1937. The structures within this area are shown fronting Edgewater Street on Sanborn maps (1937-1972) and are described as machine and tool shops, offices and storage houses (Figure 12). The dry dock and two wood piers on wood piles (Nos. 24 and 25), shown extending out from the project area's eastern parcel on Figure 12 were also constructed between 1917 and 1937 (Sanborn 1917 and 1937).

Twentieth century Sanborn insurance maps show the project area's eastern parcel to be the property of "O'Brien Bro.'s Shipyard Corp'n" by 1937. This corporation (100 employees) is included in a list of the principal manufacturing enterprises on Staten Island as given in the 1928 official publication of the Chamber of Commerce (Leng and Davis 1930 II:639).





Some time after 1951 this area became the property of Reynold's Shipyard Corporation (see Sanborn corrected 1937-51 and Figure 12). Except for one structure at the eastern parcel's northwest corner, and possibly two or three sheds, all the buildings shown within the project area east of Edgewater Street on Sanborn maps dating between 1937 and 1972 are still standing today. See Plate 1 for a view of two of these structures.

The portion of the western parcel of the Alice Austen Place project area that lies north of Sylva Lane is shown to contain five structures on the 1907 survey (Figure 11). These structures were also noted above on Robinson's 1898 atlas (Figure 9). The 1907 survey depicts a 2 story stone structure and a frame shed within what was previously referred to as Lot 2 (Figure 11). Nineteenth century cartographic evidence, discussed above, has indicated that this house was built by 1853 and may date to the late 1840s (Figures 5-11). The structure and shed are also shown on Sanborn's 1917 map where the area covered by Lot 2 is designated Charles Rosenberg and William and Charles Horrmann. William and Charles Horrmann were the sons of William Horrmann and part owners of the Rubsam and Horrmann Brewing Company, one of the largest breweries in New York (Leng and Davis 1930 IV:161). In 1917, with the passing of the Eighteenth Amendment, the brewery was converted "for the manufacture of artificial ice and cereal beverages" (ibid.).

The other three structures shown within this portion of the project area's western parcel on the 1907 survey are located in lots referred to above as 4 and 5 (see Figure 11). A 2 story frame structure is shown within Lot 4 and, a smaller 2 story frame structure and probable shed are shown within Lot 5 (Figure 11). These two dwellings are noted above on the Robinson 1898 atlas and are depicted on all the cartographic sources examined dating between 1845 and 1917 (Figures 5-11; Sanborn 1917). They were apparently demolished some time between 1917 and 1937, as they do not appear on Sanborn's 1937 map (see Sanborn 1937). By 1937, the entire area north of Sylva Lane that is covered by the project area's western parcel had become the property of "O'Brien Brothers Shipyard Corporation, Marine Repairing" (Sanborn 1937). The stone structure within Lot 2, noted above as possibly dating to the late 1840s, is still shown on the 1937 map, but was demolished some time between 1937 and 1951 as Sanborn maps corrected between those years do not depict it (Sanborn 1937-1951).

Sanborn's 1937 map shows five new structures with the portion of the western parcel that lies north of Sylva Lane, built some time between 1917 and 1937 (Sanborn 1937). Two of these, described as garages, are located within the western portion of what has been referred to as Lot 2. The southernmost of these garages does not appear on the Sanborn maps corrected 1931-51; the second, within Lot 2's northwest corner, was demolished some time between 1951 and 1972, as it is not shown on Sanborn maps corrected 1963-72. The three other new structures within this portion of the project area noted above on the 1937 Sanborn maps are located





along or near to Edgewater Street and are presently standing (see Figure 12). These are described on Sanborn maps as a "paints" shop, a "miscellaneous storage" building and a "tank storage" building (Figure 12). Some time between 1951 and the 1960's this area became the property of "Reynolds Shipyard Corporation, Marine Repairing" (see Figure 12). See Plate 2 for a view of the "Paints Shop".

The 1907 survey shows six structures within the portion of the western parcel that lies south of Sylva Lane (Figure 11). One of these is located within Lot 7 and is described as a 2 story frame dwelling on the 1907 survey. This structure was built some time between 1853 (Butler) and 1874 (Beers) (See Figures 6-11). A second house was built within this lot between 1917 and 1937, adjacent and just east of the earlier structure. These two houses and a smaller, third structure used as a garage, also built between 1917 and 1937, are still standing today within what has been referred to here as Lot 7 (see Sanborn maps 1917-1972; Figure 12).

The 1907 survey shows two structures just south of Sylva Lane, near its junction with Edgewater Street (Lot 9) (see Figure 11). These are both described as 2 story frame dwellings (Figure 11). As noted above, these houses were built some time between 1890 and 1898 (Figures 8-11). Sanborn insurance maps dating between 1917 and 1951 indicate that the more southerly of the two structures was demolished by 1937 and that the other, along Sylva Lane, was demolished some time between 1937 and 1951.

The western parcel's southern portion, referred to above as Lot 10, is shown on the 1907 survey to contain a 3 story brick building fronting Edgewater Street, and a 2 story frame stable and 1 story frame shed to the main building's rear (west) (Figure 11). A structure is shown at this approximate location on maps and atlases dating between 1874 and 1937. The 3 story building was presumably demolished some time between 1937 and 1951 as it does not appear on Sanborn maps corrected during that time period (see Figure 12). See Plate 3 for a view of the portion of the project area south of Sylva Lane and west of Edgewater Street.

Of the structures presently standing in the Alice Austen Place project area's western parcel, illustrated on Figure 12, only one appears to have been built prior to 1937. This structure, discussed above, is located in the area circumscribed by Lot 7 and was apparently constructed some time between 1853 and 1874 (Figures 5-12; Butler 1853). See Plate 4 for a view of this structure. The earliest structures built within the Alice Austen Place project area, constructed in the 1840s or earlier were all located within the western parcel, and are discussed above. By 1951 all the structures built prior to 1859 (Walling) had been demolished.

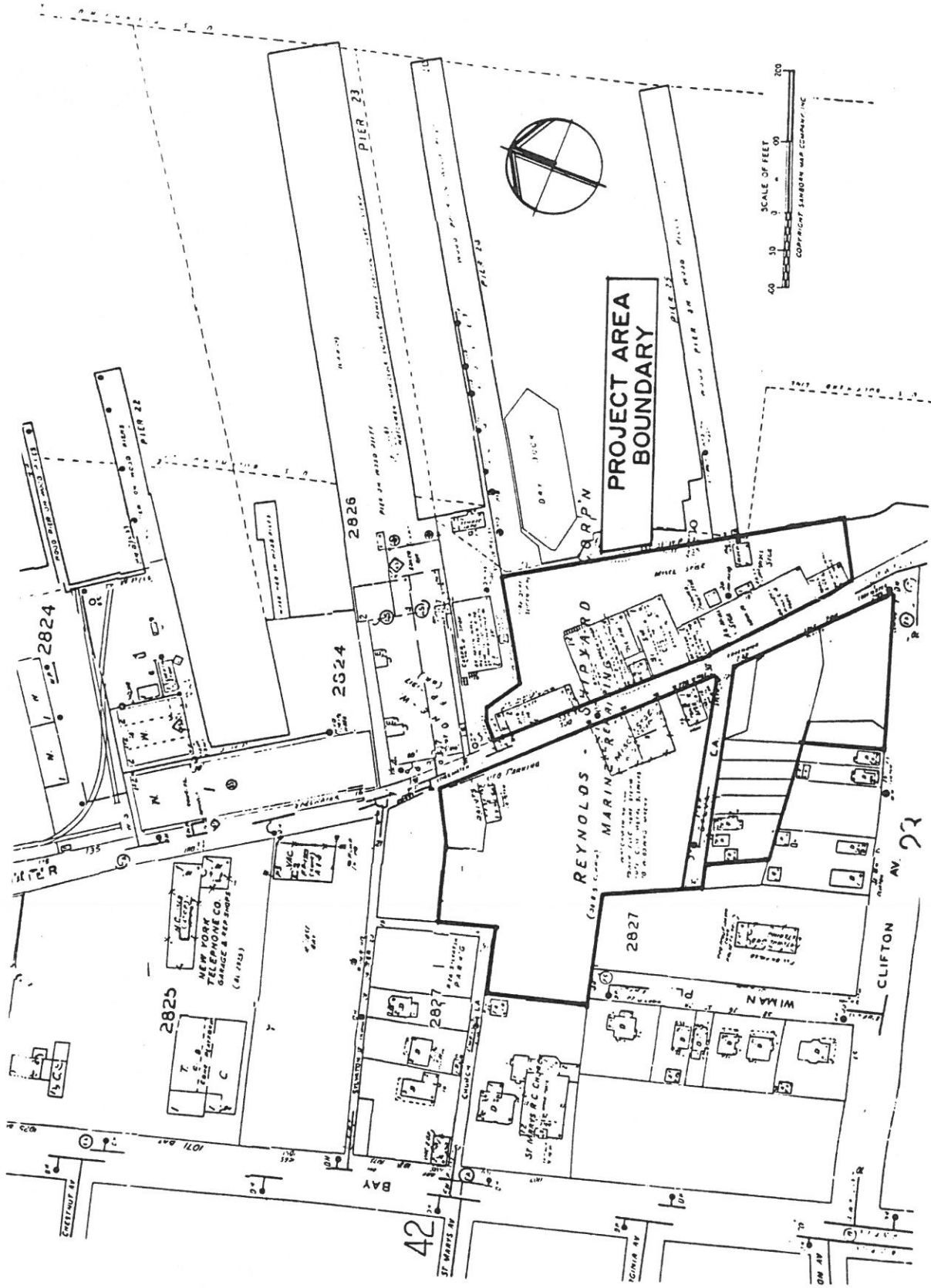


Figure 12: From Sanborn's 1987 Insurance Maps of Staten Island.



## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The above text has documented that the majority of the western of the two parcels of the Alice Austen Place Development project area may potentially preserve archaeological evidence from the prehistoric period. Eight prehistoric sites are known to exist within two miles of the project area. Abundant marine resources in New York Bay, the presence of well drained elevated land near the shore and the presence of fresh water near the intersection of St. Mary's and New York Avenues 300 feet to the west of the project area all indicate that this location had the potential to support a fishing camp.

It is our conclusion that over ninety percent of the eastern parcel consists of landfill deposited during the period of 1917 to 1937. The standing structures were constructed during the early twentieth century and served as shops for the O'Brien Brothers Shipyard and subsequently the Reynold's Shipyard. The ten percent of this parcel that represents either fast land or nineteenth century fill is now nearly entirely under the present shop buildings which may well be supported on pilings. If this is so, then there is very little possibility that any early historic or prehistoric remains could survive in this location.

The western portion of the project area is entirely fast land. Several lots within this portion are relatively undisturbed and may preserve evidence of prehistoric archaeological resources. These lots are discussed below utilizing the same numerical referencing system described in the section above on the nineteenth century history of the project area. Lots 1 and 9 both contained structures as of 1845 which were probably residences. These were demolished between 1890 and 1898. Lots 4 and 5 contained two structures each in 1845, probably residences with associated barns. All four were demolished between 1917 and 1937. Lots 7 and 10 both had structures on them in 1859, again probably residences. The house on Lot 7 still stands while that on Lot 10 was demolished between 1937 and 1951. No evidence of other structures exists prior to the 1874 Beers' Atlas. Although our study of the history of the project area indicated that several lots were owned by one family for 25 years or longer during the nineteenth century, it could not be proven that the same families also occupied the lots at those times. Although various remains may well survive below the surface from this period, they cannot be linked beyond doubt to particular families or ethnic groups. Lot 3 as well as considerable portions of Lots 2 and 10 were evidently always open ground, as were smaller pieces of Lots 1, 7, 8 and 9. These locations provide the best chance for preserving evidence of prehistoric resources. It is our opinion that a Phase IB archaeological survey would serve to determine the presence or absence of any prehistoric remains on all of Lot 3; the western half of Lots 1 and 2; the southern half of Lots 7 and 8; and the western two-thirds of Lot 10. See Figure 13 for an illustration locating these portions of the project area.

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It is suggested that this search for potential cultural resources take the form of shovel tests excavated at least to the surface of the subsoil. We suggest that the equivalent of a 100 foot grid pattern covering the portions of the western parcel described above would be an appropriate level of effort for this presence or absence testing.



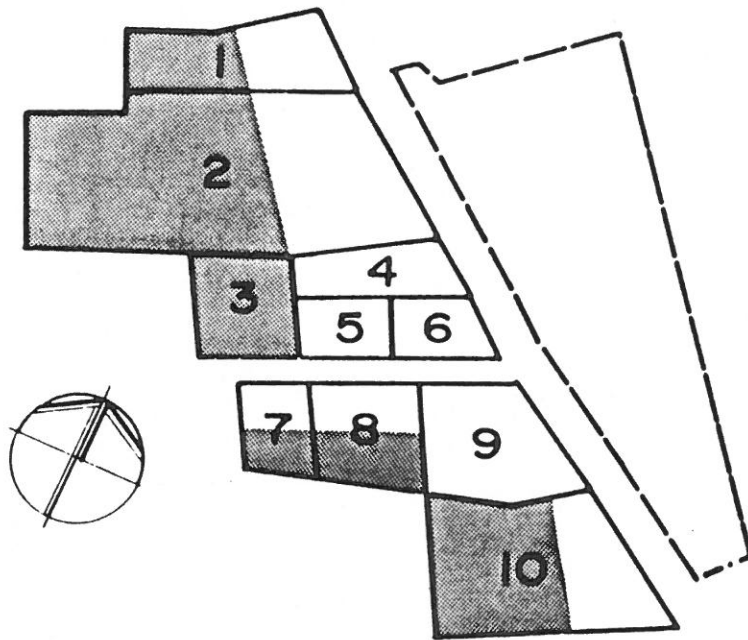


Figure 13: Portions of the project area with potential for preserving prehistoric archaeological evidence, denoted by shading.



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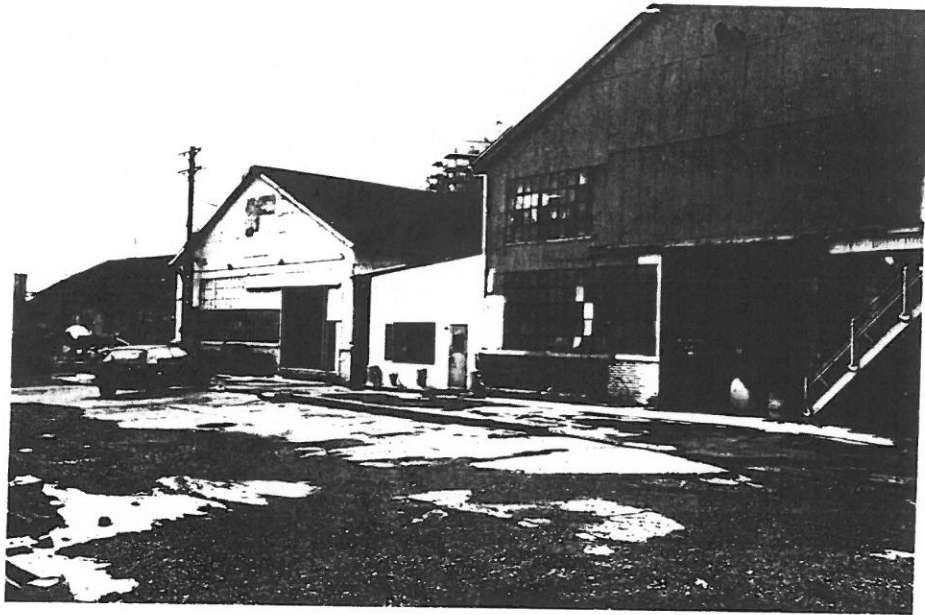


Plate 1 : View of standing structures associated with Reynolds Shipyard east of Edgewater Street looking west.



Plate 2 : View of former paint shop structure west of Edgewater Street looking northwest.





Plate 3 : View of southern portion of project area west of Edgewater Street looking southeast.



Plate 4 : View of standing structures on south side of Sylva Lane looking southwest.