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STAGE 1A ARCHAEOLOGICAL/HISTORICAL
SENSITIVITY EVALUATION OF THE
NICHOLAS AVENUE AND RICHMOND TERRACE PROJECT
BOROUGH OF RICHMOND, NEW YORK

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ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

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LANDMARKS PRESERVATION
COMMISSION

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LIST OF PERSONNEL

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Paula Crowley	-	Word Processor Editor

Materials on file at Greenhouse Consultants, compiled for other projects conducted in the Borough of Richmond were used in preparing this report. Credit is extended to the documentary research completed by Linda Stone for previous projects.



INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to document the potential prehistoric and historic sensitivity of the proposed project area at Nicholas Avenue and Richmond Terrace in the Borough of Richmond, New York, through the review of existing archival, cartographic and published references. Recommendations will be made, based on the review, for 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for evaluating any identified resources within the parcel itself, this survey will include a synthesis of published and unpublished prehistoric and historic resources in the immediate area surrounding the project area.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 parcel is located in the northwestern portion of Staten Island, bounded on the east by Nicholas Avenue and on the north by Richmond Terrace. The western boundary is a line parallel to John Street, and the southern boundary follows the embankment of the Staten Island Rapid Transit tracks, now abandoned. The parcel forms a rough parallelogram. It includes Lots 40, 75, 101 and 105 on Block 1116. An outparcel exists in the northwest corner adjacent to the intersection of John Street and Richmond Terrace. See Figure 1 for the location of the project area.

The nearest New York City Landmark is the Stephen D. Barnes House at 2876 Richmond Terrace in the Mariners Harbor section of Staten Island. This building is approximately 0.6 miles west of the project area (New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission 1979:79). There are no New York City Landmarks within or adjacent to 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.



Figure 1 Location of the project area on the U.S.G.S. 7.5 minute series, Arthur Kill N.Y.-N.J., Elizabeth, N.J.-N.Y. quadrangles, 1966 and 1967, photorevised 1981.



GEOGRAPHY AND PHYSICAL SETTING

Geographically, Staten Island is part of New Jersey from which it is separated by the Kill Van Kull and Staten Island Sound (Skinner 1909:3).

The geomorphology of Staten Island consists of landforms and deposits of glacial origin. The sediments were deposited by the Wisconsin Ice Sheet 55,000 to 10,000 years ago and generally consist of ground moraine, terminal moraine and outwash sediments (Jacobsen 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 (Weingartner 1967:41). Local glacial deposits may be overlaid by fill as well as beach, marsh, dune, swamp, and estuarine deposits (Jacobsen 1980:5).

The Principal Investigator visited the project area during September 1999. A pedestrian survey was used to inspect the majority of the property. The land slopes gently from southwest to northeast. It is presently covered by grasses and a few shrubs. There are no standing structures. See Plates 1 and 2 for views of the project area.



PREHISTORIC SENSITIVITY

As part of the project evaluation process, this sensitivity study has surveyed published and unpublished sources 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, the Research Branch of the New York Public Library, and the New York State Historic Preservation Office. Most prehistoric archaeological work undertaken by both professional and avocation archaeologists has historically been concentrated in the southwestern portion of Staten Island (Baugher 1985, personal communication). Problems of inadequate archaeological survey coverage particularly evident in the interior of the island may also be present in this portion of northwestern Staten Island.

Table 1 presents the results of our search for prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the Nicholas Avenue and Richmond Terrace project area. Included in the table are ten sites located two miles or less from the project area. The locations of these sites are presented in Figure 2 with letter code identifiers which correspond to those in Table 1.

Of the ten known occurrences of prehistoric occupation within two miles of the project area, only one was recently excavated under controlled conditions. Eight represent sites located during the early years of this century by two professional archaeologists, and one represents the work of local avocational archaeologists.

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). Skinner originally reported six of these ten sites near the project area.

Arthur C. Parker, the former New York State Archaeologist, reported three sites. Parker also repeated information on four of Skinner's six sites. A comparison of Parker's map and text with Skinner's 1909 text shows that some of the locations of these sites may not be accurately recorded. Although there is certainly enough evidence to state that ten sites existed within our search area during the prehistoric period, the locations recorded in the files of the New York State Museum may not be entirely accurate. In case of conflicting information, we have assumed Skinner's descriptions to be more accurate.



The unnamed site designated A in Figure 2 and Table 1 is known only by Parker's notes filed in the New York State Museum. Parker mentions burials but provides no description of artifacts recovered or the date range of the site. No record of this site located approximately 0.5 miles southwest of the project area could be found at the *Staten Island Institute of Arts and Sciences*. This is the closest site to the Nicholas Avenue project area.

The second nearest known prehistoric site to the Nicholas Avenue project area is the Ascension Church site, designated B in Table 1 and Figure 2. This site was initially located and described by Alanson Skinner who characterized it as a village which had produced some burials prior to his investigations (Skinner 1909:5). Based on Skinner's description of the site as a village, as well as the finding of a fragment of aboriginal pottery, a date range including the Woodland period is suggested. The Ascension Church site is located approximately 0.8 miles east of the project area. Ascension Church itself was moved from this location in 1948 to the corner of Brookside and Kingsley Avenues.

Approximately 1.2 miles west of the Nicholas Avenue project area, Skinner reported finding in May 1902 a group of six shell pits from four to six feet in diameter and up to six feet deep, as well as some surface shell deposits less than 0.5 feet deep. These features have been designated as the Arlington Station site. They contained pottery and stone artifacts dating to the Woodland period (Skinner 1909:5-6). The Arlington Station site is designated C in Figure 2 and Table 1.

One site was noted by Skinner on his 1909 map, but it is not mentioned in his text or elsewhere. This is the Arlington Avenue site, which is located approximately 1.2 miles west of the project area. No data could be found regarding stratigraphy, date range or the integrity of this site (Skinner 1909:6, Figure 1). The Arlington Avenue site is designated D in Figure 2 and Table 1.

Two sites, designated E and J in Table 1 and Figure 2, exist between 1.4 and 1.8 miles east of the project area. One is called Upper or Pelton's Cove and the other merely Pelton's Cove. Both are described as villages with burials. The former is noted in a list of sites with collections housed at the Staten Island Institute of Arts and Science as including pottery, so a date range including the Woodland Period can be assigned. This site is noted by Parker as having been destroyed prior to 1922 (Parker 1922:676). The latter site is described only as a village with burials. It is possible that this site refers to the Upper or Pelton's Cove site with a slightly misplaced location, or that it represents another nearby village site. If the description of the latter site is accurate, it probably dates to the Woodland period.



The Arlington Place site was excavated during the mid-1960s by Donald Sainz. He reported finding Woodland period artifacts in the disturbed topsoil, much of which had already been removed. Approximately one foot below the topsoil was an occupation zone from 0.5 feet to 0.7 feet thick, which yielded over fifty projectile points dating from the Late Archaic through the Woodland periods. Sainz reported that this site was entirely destroyed by July 1966 (Sainz 1966; Ritchie 1980:147-148). The Arlington Place site is located 1.4 miles west of the project area, and is designated F in Figure 2 and Table 1.

Skinner included the site of Gertie's Knoll on his 1909 map, but made no reference to it in his text. An archaeological site survey form for Gertie's Knoll states that by November 1973, virtually the entire knoll had been destroyed by bulldozers and that only scattered surface finds remained. These artifacts included pottery, bone and shell. Based on the presence of pottery, this site is associated with the Woodland period. Virtually no possibility exists that any finds remaining from this site could be *in situ*. The Gertie's Knoll site was located 1.5 mile west of the project area, and is designated G on Figure 2 and Table 1.

The Goodrich site is located approximately 1.6 miles southwest of the Nicholas Avenue project area. This site was initially located by several avocational archaeologists during the mid-1960s. Professional archaeologists tested the site during 1969 and found eighteen projectile points, but no ceramic remains (Ottesen and Williams 1969:2-5, ms.). Five more professional excavations were carried out from 1969 through 1980 which confirmed that this site dated to the Late Archaic period, based on the diagnostic bifaces found and the conspicuous lack of ceramic remains. The finds were primarily from the third orange sand stratum which extended from seven inches below the surface down to the water table (Ottesen and Williams 1969:2-5, ms.; Eisenberg 1981:19-20, Figure 1). The Goodrich site is designated H in Figure 2 and on Table 1.

The largest of the ten sites was the Bowman's Brook site. This site was discovered during construction work on the former Milliken Brothers' iron foundry in March 1903 by Alanson Skinner. Skinner worked on this site *intermittently* until 1918. The reported location of this site is 1.6 miles west of the project area on a strip of land between 8 to 24 feet above Richmond's high water table as of 1911. At least 35 features, predominantly pits and burials, were excavated. These were largely within four feet of the surface although a few were noted as extending to a maximum depth of six feet below the surface. The majority of the recovered artifacts date to the Woodland Period (Skinner 1909:6-8; 1925:70-81). Additional work was performed at this site by Donald Sainz and Albert Anderson prior to 1964, in a partially disturbed area formerly covered by a foundation of one of the foundry buildings. Five



occupational horizons were identified by their artifact assemblage and relative depth, although only one could be differentiated by soil color and texture changes. These horizons were not superimposed, hence the validity of any sequence derived from this data is open to question. A number of projectile points dating to the Late Archaic were found. Virtually this entire area was extensively leveled by bulldozers during the early 1960s, eliminating any possibility of any features or artifacts surviving *in situ* (Ritchie 1980:146-48). The Bowman's Brook site is designated I in Figure 2 and Table 1.

There may be another site within two miles of the Nicholas Avenue project area. Research at the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission indicates that a site known as Castleton Avenue and Palmer Avenue was registered with the Staten Island Institute of Arts and Sciences as STD-CP. The files regarding this site are now missing. Maps show three possible locations for this site ranging from 0.8 to 1.5 miles east of the project area (Boesch 1994:120). Due to the lack of a clear location and any other data regarding the Castleton and Palmer Avenues site, it is not included in Table 1 or Figure 2.

In terms of 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 ten sites within a two mile radius of the Nicholas Avenue 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. Fresh water from an unnamed creek would have been available south and east of the project area itself, and the marshes adjacent to this creek would have attracted potential game. Marine resources would have been available from the Kill van Kull just to the north.



However, extensive grading of most of the project area combined with nineteenth and twentieth century use of the northern ungraded portion makes it unlikely that prehistoric remains could survive undisturbed in this location.

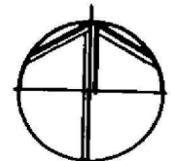
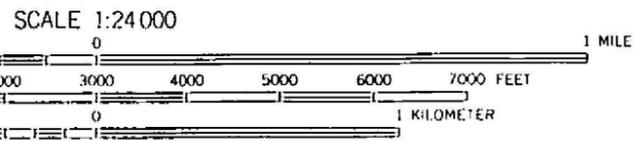
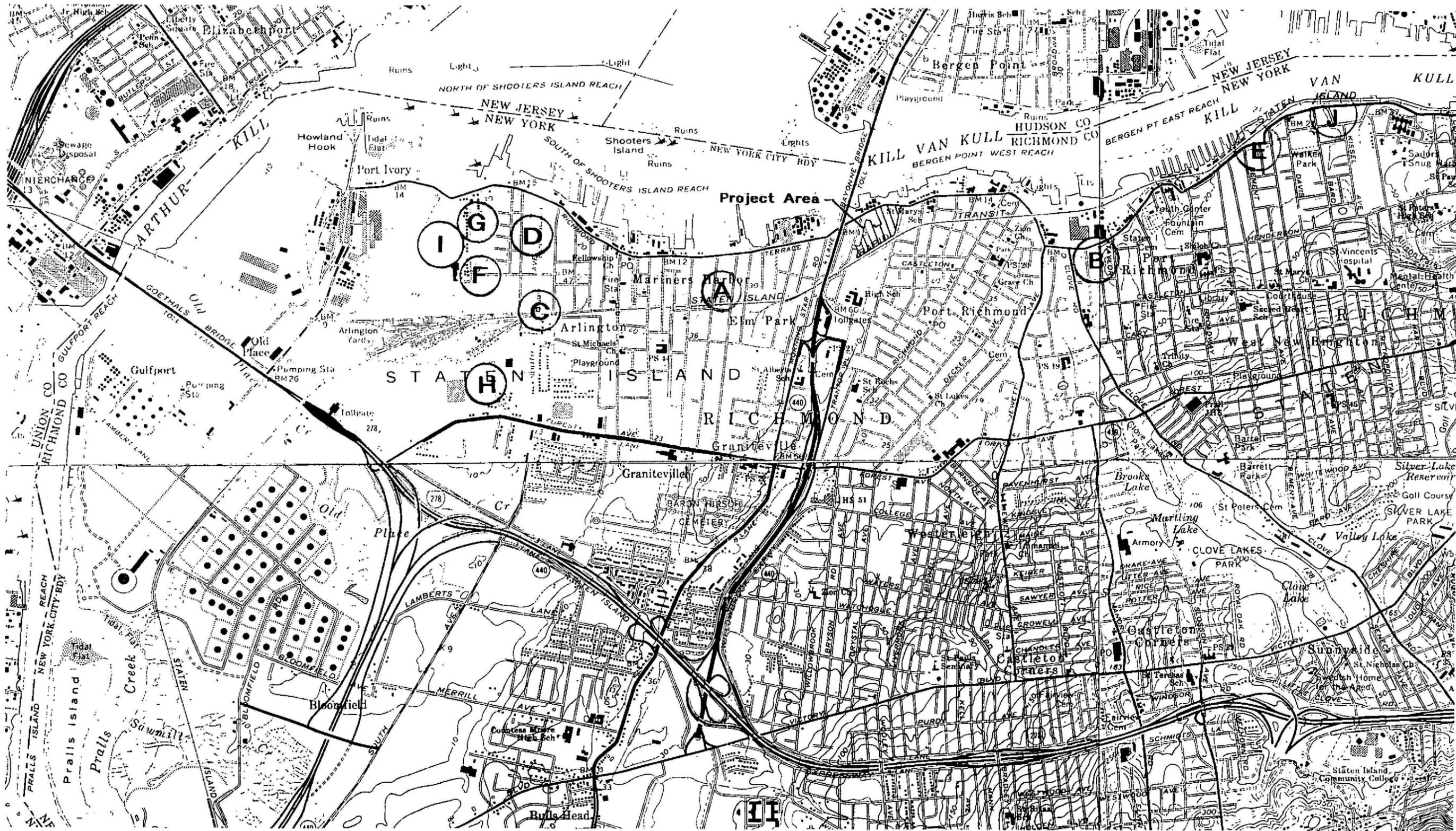


Figure 2 Prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the project area.



Table 1
Prehistoric Sites in the Vicinity of the Nicholas Avenue Project Area

Site Name	#	Reference	Periods	Description
A.	ACP-RICH NYSM: 4594	Parker 1922:Pl. 211		Burials
B. Ascension Church	SIAS: STD-WNB ACP-RICH-2 NYSM: 4592	Parker 1922:676 Skinner 1909:5	Woodland	Village w/burials
C. Arlington Station	SIAS: STD 7-1 ACP-RICH-3 NYSM: 730	Skinner 1909:5-6 Parker 1922:677	Woodland	Shell pits & middens
D. Arlington Avenue	SIAS: STD 5-1 NYSM: 728	Skinner 1909:6, Fig. 1		
E. Pelton's Cove	NYSM: 734			Village w/burials
F. Arlington Place	SIAS: STD 6-1 NYSM: 729	Sainz 1966:ms. Ritchie 1980:146-48	Late Archaic to Woodland	
G. Gertie's Knoll	SIAS: STD 10-1 NSYM: 731	Skinner 1909:6, Fig. 1	Woodland	Pottery, shell & bone
H. Goodrich	SIAS: STD 11-1 NYSM: 732	Ottesen & Williams 1969:2-5 Eisenberg 1981:19- 20, 30, Fig. 1	Late Archaic	
I. Bowman's Brook	SIAS: STD-BPt ACP-RICH-4 NYSM: 4630	Skinner 1909:6-8 Parker 1922:677-80 Ritchie 1980:146-48	Late Archaic to Woodland	Village; pottery, lithics, bone, antler, clay pipes
J. Upper or Pelton's Cove	SIAS: STD-WNB ACP-RICH-1 NYSM: 4591	Parker 1922:676 Skinner 1909:4	Woodland	Village w/burials, now destroyed. Pottery reported by SIAS



HISTORIC SENSITIVITY

Historical Background

The history of Staten Island begins in 1609 when Henry Hudson anchored at Sandy Hook in the Narrows and took two Staten Island Indians on his trip up the Hudson River (Bayles 1887:44-45). The native Staten Islanders were members of the Delaware nation. They called the island, Eghquaons, Monocknong, or Aquehonga Manacknong, meaning high sandy banks or dark bad wood (Clute 1877:8; Federal Writers' Project 1939:598; Grumet 1981:2; Kolff 1926:1; Leng and Delavan 1924:1). Hudson named it "Staaten Eylandt" after the States General of Holland. He claimed the entire area between the Delaware and Connecticut Rivers where fur was plentiful, and called it New Netherlands (Kolff 1926:16).

A lack of control over the fur trade in New Netherlands resulted in the charter of Dutch West India Company in 1621. This company then came into power over all matters related to the New Netherlands (Clute 1877:12-13; Leng and Delavan 1924:2). The Dutch West India Company had among its responsibilities on Staten Island, issuing land grants. The grants stipulated the simultaneous purchase of the land from the Indians.

The first grant of land on Staten Island was in 1630 to Michael Pauw. However, no settlement was established at that time (Bayles 1887:63). A 1636 land grant to David Pietersen de Vries did result in a settlement at what is now Tompkinsville. However, this settlement was abandoned after a war with the Indians in 1642 (Kolff 1926:17-18). A large grant was issued to Cornelius Melyn in 1641. This settlement also encountered problems with the Indians and it was virtually destroyed. Additionally Melyn was at odds with the Governor over Indian issues (Bayles 1887:66-69). He eventually sold his interests in Staten Island back to the Dutch West India Company in 1659 which, in turn, granted land to French Waldenses and Huguenots (ibid.:70-71).

In 1664 New Netherlands was surrendered by the Dutch to the English. New Amsterdam became New York. The English Governor, Francis Lovelace, made the final purchase of Staten Island from the Indians in 1670. The native Staten Islanders signed this final deed in order to bind it (Kolff 1926:22). Since the transition to English governance allowed many of the same freedoms the Dutch conferred, many of the Dutch and French settlers chose to remain on Staten Island (Bayles 1887:75). However, no property surveys had been conducted "and the boundaries of their lands, as well as their title to them, were quite indefinite" (Leng and Davis 1930:741). Governor Lovelace began conducting land surveys in 1675, the year Staten Island



became an independent judicial district. This task was completed in 1677 by his successor, Governor Andros (Clute 1877:56; Leng and Delavan 1924:6).

In 1683 the first assembly of the colony of New York adopted a bill of rights. This included the establishment of counties. About 200 families were residing in Richmond County (Staten Island) at that time. Five years later Richmond County was divided into four towns (Bayles 1887:90). The Nicholas Avenue project area became part of the town of Northfield. The Port Richmond section of Northfield was then called Burial Place because it had one of the first graveyards on Staten Island (Leng and Davis 1930:348, 978; Steinmeyer 1950:114).

From the time of the establishment of Richmond County in 1683, "there are very few events to record ... until the Revolution, except the increasing conveniences" (Leng and Delavan 1924:10).

Religious congregations of French, Dutch and English denominations continued and grew on Staten Island under British rule during the eighteenth century. "There are traces of a church on the North Side, about 1680, in which the services were in the Dutch language, the Hollanders having settled in considerable numbers along the Kills" (Clute 1877:255). This congregation, originally organized in the 1660s, was granted land in 1714 for the construction of an edifice at what is now Port Richmond (Hine and Davis 1925:104). The Dutch Reformed Church was erected in 1716 and became the center of the village. It was located near the intersection of what is now Richmond Terrace and Richmond Avenue (Federal Writers Project 1939:621; Leng and Davis 1930:146). Figure 4 depicts this church in relation to the project area. The original edifice of the Dutch Reformed Church was destroyed during the Revolutionary War.

With the impending Revolutionary War, Staten Island was valued for its location from a military point of view. The Staten Islanders of that time were generally in favor of reconciling with the British (Leng and Delavan 1924:16). These feelings were made known by five island representatives at the First Provincial Congress. Among these representatives was Richard Lawrence, a shipyard owner, of Port Richmond. He resided east of the Nicholas Avenue project area as shown on Figure 4 and on the 1780 plan of English and Hessian camps (Leng and Davis 1930:919). The Continental Congress was not pleased by the attitude of the Staten Islanders and wanted to send a colonel from New Jersey to protect the Island from British possession. Lawrence and the other Island representatives protested these actions and agreed to form militias for the 'association.' This is confirmed by a report from Lawrence in April 1776 on the progress of these military companies (Smith 1970:57-58).



Although actions were taken by the rebels, Staten Island became a British military stronghold. By 1776 there were over 30,000 troops camped on Staten Island under the direction of General Howe. Many of the rebels fled for their safety to New Jersey (Clute 1877:85-86). Richard Lawrence remained and was appointed master carpenter by General Howe. Lawrence was arrested after the war because of these, and earlier actions (Leng and Davis 1930:919). There were two Revolutionary War incidents in the Port Richmond area. The first was a small battle over a British guard boat which drifted from Decker's Ferry toward New Jersey in 1779. The boat was saved. The second incident involved American troops under General Stirling crossing over the iced kills in the harsh winter of 1779-1780 and landing near Port Richmond. There was a skirmish and the Americans were driven back (Bayles 1887:205-207; Clute 1877:97). However, there is no evidence that either of these incidents involved the Nicholas Avenue project area.

The early nineteenth century was a time of increased development on Staten Island and in the Port Richmond area. The reliance on farming gave way to the beginning of other industries. However, Port Richmond continued to rely on the waters for its economy during the early part of the century. The oyster trade expanded and in 1838 the Staten Island Whaling Company was established at Decker's Ferry north of the Shore Road (now Richmond Terrace) near Maple Avenue (Kolff 1945:79; Leng and Davis 1930:226). Steam driven ferries began replacing the earlier service between Port Richmond and Bergen Point around 1839 (Leng and Delavan 1924:24).

Other commercial developments came to Port Richmond in the 1840s, in the form of quarrying and white lead manufacturing. Staten Island had three trap rock quarries during the mid-nineteenth century. The Port Richmond quarry was one of the most active. Rock from this location was used as far away as South Carolina (Morris 1898 (II):473). John Street was built to connect the quarry to a dock. The quarry continued operating until 1896 (Leng and Davis 1930:18, 623). In 1842 the Jewett White Lead Works was established at the site of the old Staten Island Whaling Company factory (Leng and Delavan 1924:24). By the end of the century this factory was producing over three thousand tons of white lead annually (Blanchard 1893:81).

The appellation, Port Richmond, first appeared in a local newspaper in 1838, however, the use of this name did not catch on until the village became incorporated (Leng and Davis 1930:348). The New York State Legislature passed a charter for the incorporation of the Village of Port Richmond in 1866. Unfortunately no local government began at that time because the charter document proved to be unconstitutional. The following session of the legislature amended the charter and Port Richmond was incorporated on April 25, 1867 (Morris 1898:446). The election of



village trustees was held two weeks later (Leng and Davis 1930:271). The Nicholas Avenue project area is located west of the village of Port Richmond.

Cartographic Evidence

The first indication of historic land use for the project area is on Frederick Skene's map (1907) illustrating colonial land patents on Staten Island. The project area is within the patent of William Arrowsmith, dated December 15, 1680. See Figure 3.

Loring McMillen's 1933 Map of Staten Island during the Revolution (1775-1783) shows the Morningstar Ferry Road (now Morningstar Road) which is slightly west of the project area. The map shows several structures along the south side of Shore Road (now Richmond Terrace), including the Dutch Reformed Church at Decker's Ferry (Richmond Terrace and Port Richmond Avenue. The project area was included in the land belonging to Bastian (Sebastian) Ellis and a structure is indicated near Shore Road. See Figure 4. Richmond Terrace was laid out during 1704 and Morningstar Road in 1730 (McMillen 1946a:8; 1946b:15).

Figure 5 is taken from the 1845 U.S. Coast Survey of New York Harbor, surveyed during 1836 through 1839. This map shows the project area as part of two or three farms lying south of Richmond Terrace. The farmhouses are shown facing the road. Morningstar Road is shown west of the project area. John Street and Nicholas Avenue do not yet exist.

By 1853 (Butler) the area had become more populated. John Street, which is immediately to the west of the project area, is shown on this map with a number of structures along its length. See Figure 6. On this map we see several members of the Houseman family living in the area. At the time the family is centered in the town of Graniteville to the southwest. This family was a prominent one on the North Shore. They were sea captains, oystermen, merchants and financiers.

In 1874 the Beers Atlas shows several homes along the south side of Shore Road. The home and land of Captain Bush are probably under Nicholas Avenue. G. W. Houseman, who in 1853 lived in Graniteville, now owns property which includes part of the project area. The home of Houseman is not included in the project property. The bulk of the project area is shown belonging to I.D. Johnson. See Figure 7.

Israel D. Johnson's home was along the Shore Road and he owned a ship chandlery across the street (Hine and Davis 1925:113). The property, which has a stream running through it, was willed to Israel Johnson by his father John Johnson, a well-

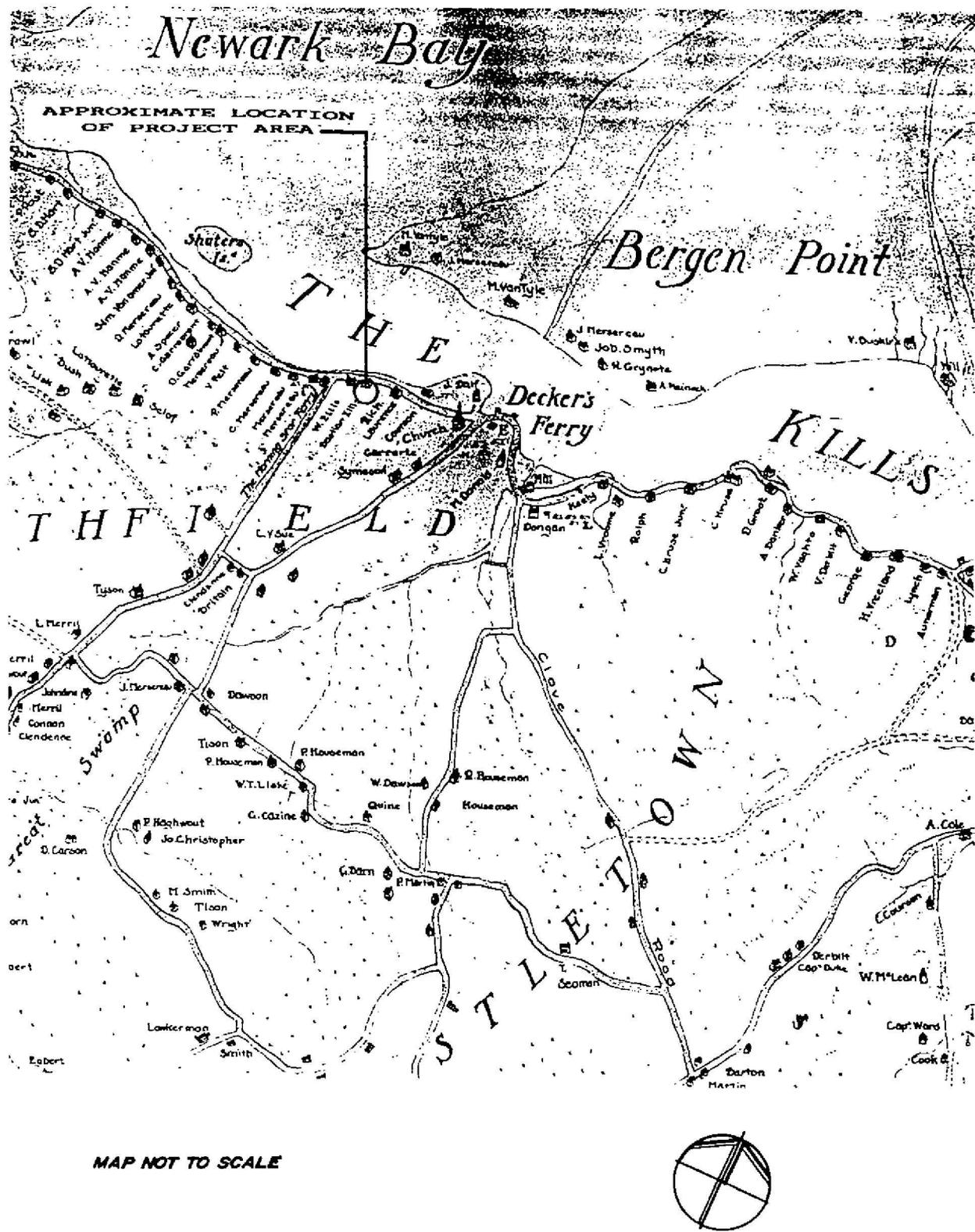
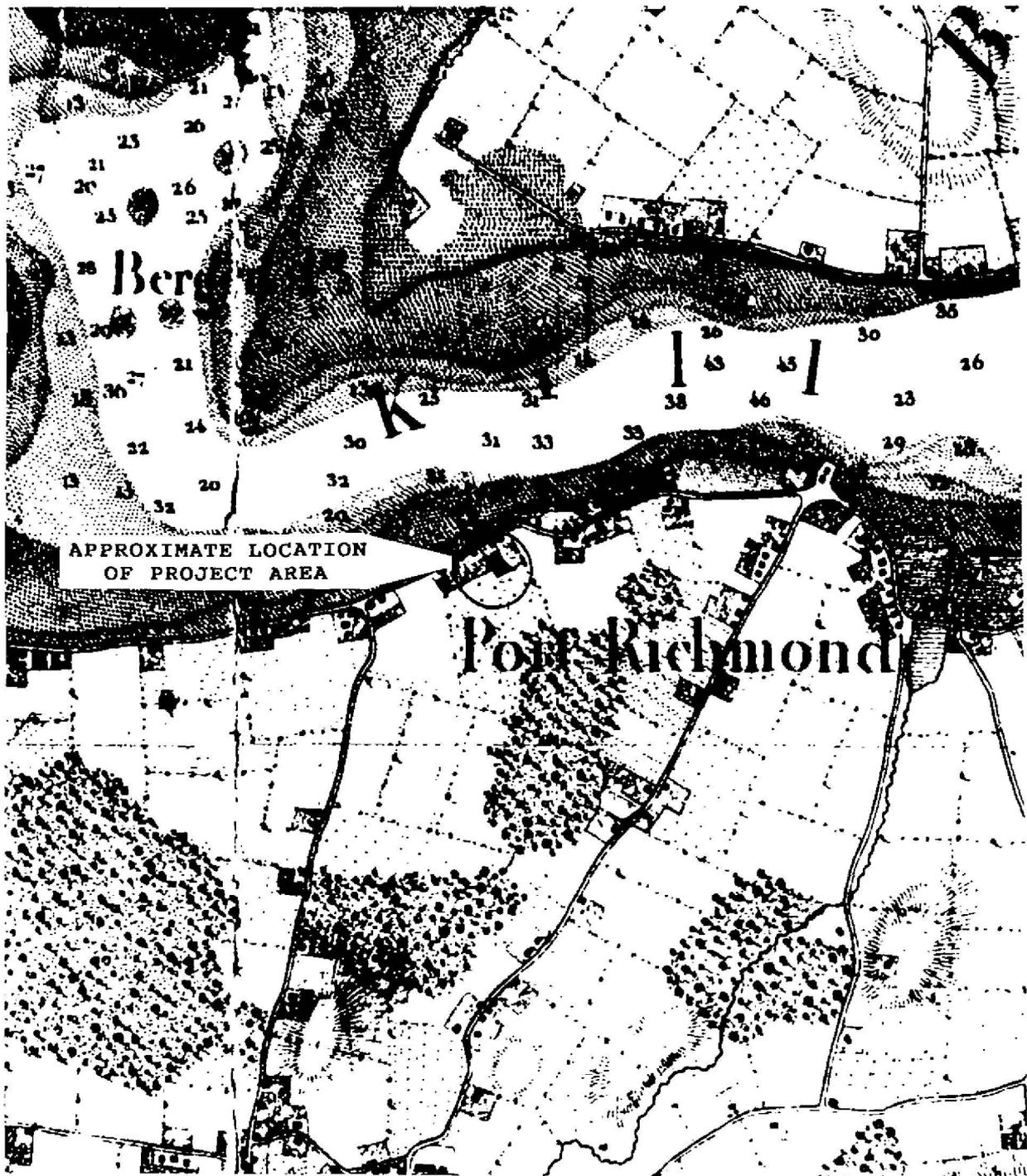


Figure 4 From McMillen's 1933 Map of Staten Island During the Revolution (1776-1783).



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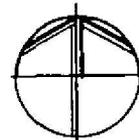


Figure 5 From U.S. Coast Survey Charter of New York Harbor, 1836-1839 (published 1845).



known local potter (Safford 1938:11). However, no evidence of the use of this large property was found.

The next important development affecting the project area was in 1880 when Erastus Wiman began constructing the Rapid Transit Railroad along the north shore of Staten Island (Kolff 1926:29). The Rapid Transit Steam Railroad opened in 1886 (Reed 1953:3). Beers 1887 atlas and all subsequent maps show the tracks going through the property of I.D. Johnson's estate. A subdivision plan of the I.D. Johnson estate was surveyed in 1891 and filed with the Borough of Richmond Topographical Bureau in 1898, the year New York City was formed from the five boroughs. Richmond County became the Borough of Richmond at this time.

The 1887 Beers Atlas shows the Housman property in the hands of J.I. Housman. According to Leng and Davis (1930) J.I. (Capt. Jake) Housman was a prosperous oyster fisherman along the Mariners Harbor Port Richmond coastline, who later became active in finance and real estate. He became a director of several banks, and his real estate holdings would encompass property in many areas of the Island. A small triangular lot in the northwest corner of the Johnson property now has the name J. C. Lynch attached to it. See Figure 8.

Between 1887 and 1898, the area was subdivided and streets are shown on the 1898 Robinson Atlas. These streets are not shown on the 1909 topographic map, although they continue to be shown on tax maps for several decades. It may be that they were not actual streets, but merely existed on paper. Sewer and water lines existed in the area by 1898. Figure 9 presents part of the 1898 Robinson Atlas. The structures to the east of the Housman home are now part of the Dean Linseed Oil Company, which was located on the north side of Richmond Terrace. The J.A. Dean & Company Linseed Oil Mill and Wharf is shown on the 1887 Beers map, and the two structures on the south side may have been part of the company property at that time. The home of J. C. Lynch is still shown as is the Johnson home. One other structure is shown within the project area, set back from Richmond Terrace. It lies within the Johnson Estate.

The 1909 Borough of Richmond Topographical Survey is presented in part as Figure 10. Five structures are shown within the project area. Two are the Johnson and Lynch houses shown on the 1887 Beers Atlas. A barn is shown southwest of the Johnson house, and a concrete pad to its southeast. The Dean Linseed Oil Company has removed the three structures shown on their property during 1898 and replaced them with a group of oil storage tanks. Elevation of the project area ranges from 28 feet in the southwestern corner to six feet near Richmond Terrace. The railroad

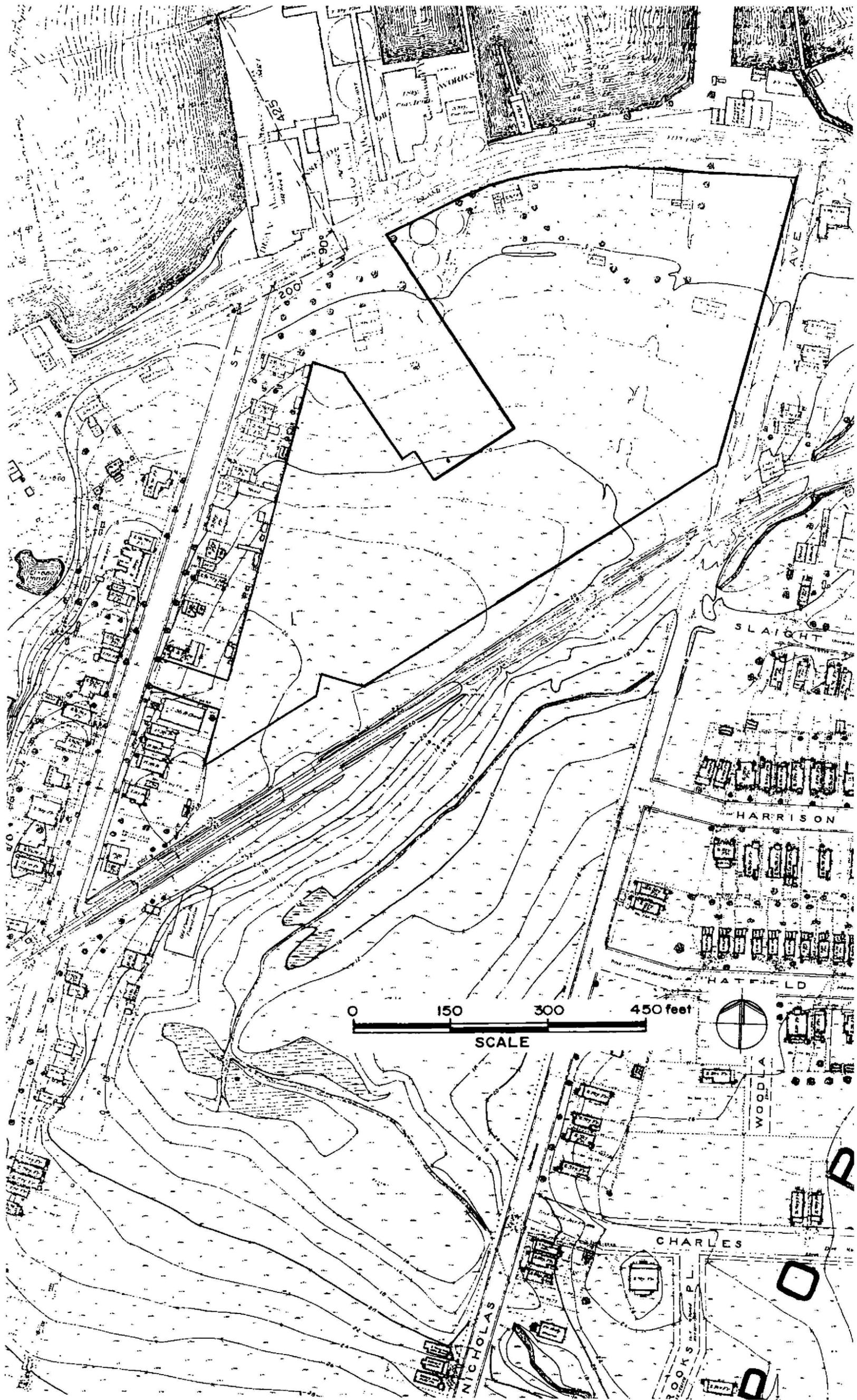


Figure 10 From the Borough of Richmond's 1909 Topographical Survey.

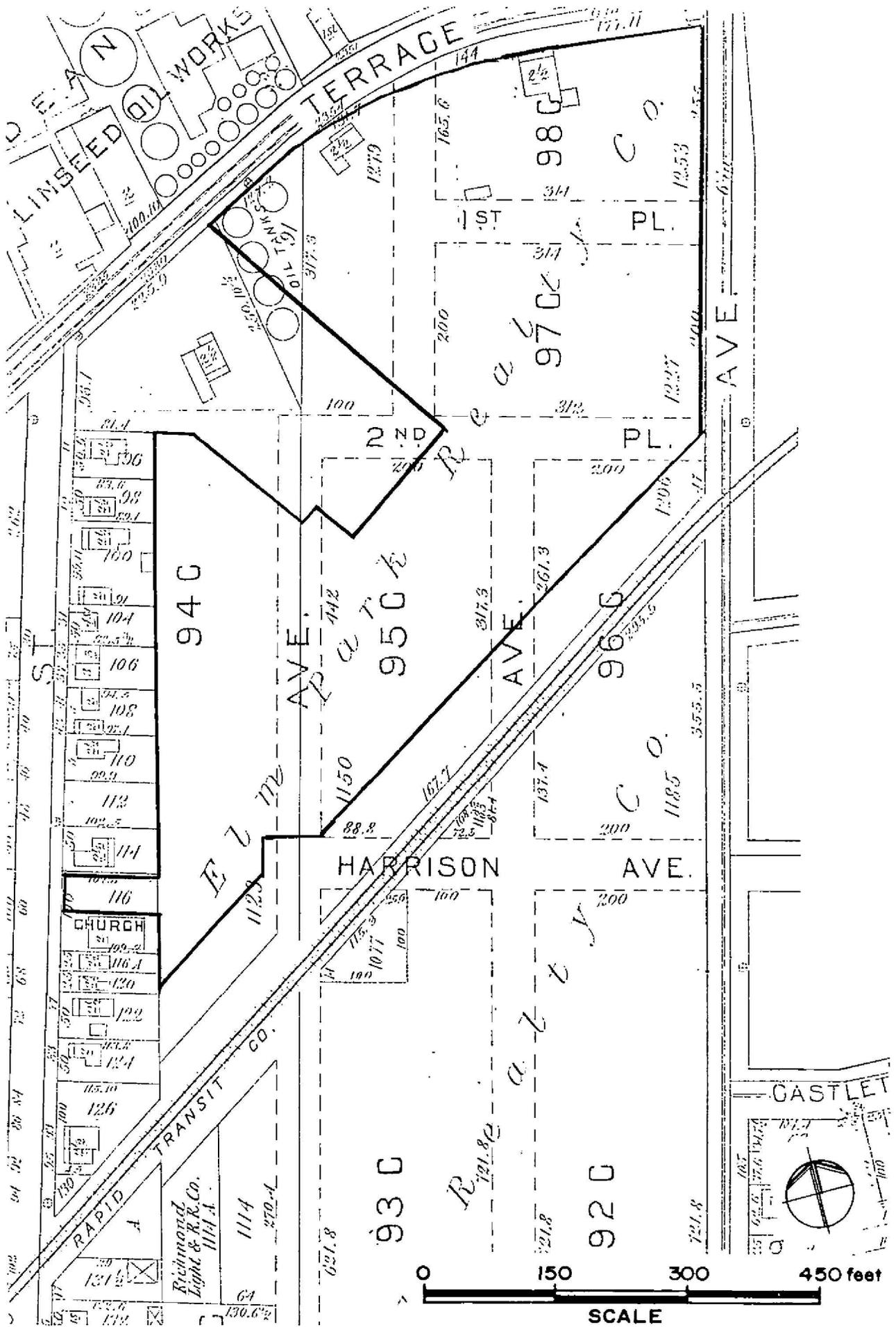


Figure 11 From Bromley's 1917 Atlas of the City of New York, Borough of Richmond, Staten Island.



crosses Nicholas Avenue at grade. A stream is shown to the south and east of the project area.

The elevations shown on the 1909 map were compared to the 1998 survey of the project area by Wohl and O'Mara. The railroad is raised above grade and an overpass is shown over Nicholas Avenue. Elevations have been reduced over nearly all of the project area excepting the northeastern corner within 200 feet of Richmond Terrace. Reductions in grade range from approximately two feet to fourteen feet. No structures exist within the project area. The changes in grade of the railway occurred during 1936 (McMillen 1952:4).

The 1917 Bromley Atlas shows that the subdivision of the Johnson estate did not result in the sale of individual lots. All of the former Johnson and Lynch property is now owned by the Elm Park Realty Company. The Dean Linseed Oil Works tanks still exist in 1917. The former Johnson and Lynch houses are shown as is the former Johnson barn. The remainder of the project area is vacant. The streets shown on the 1898 Robinson Atlas are shown with dashed lines indicating that they were not yet constructed. See Figure 11 for the 1917 Bromley Atlas.

The 1931 Tax Records show most of the project area in the hands of J. I. Houseman. One lot, Block 1116, Lot 42, is owned by Archer Daniels Midland. By 1963, the Sanborn Atlas shows no structures within the project boundaries. The linseed oil tanks and all other structures have been removed. This indicates that the grading of the project area probably dates to between 1931 and 1963.



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RESULTS

The section on prehistoric sensitivity has documented that the Nicholas Avenue project area was probably used during prehistory. It is within two miles of at least ten known sites, and fresh water would have been available to the south and east. It is unlikely that any prehistoric remains could survive undisturbed in this location due to extensive grading that took place during the twentieth century. The only portion of the project area not graded is the location of a series of structures during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries which likely disturbed any remains.

The section on historic sensitivity shows that the project area includes the locations of two houses that formerly faced Richmond Terrace. These structures were certainly present by 1874 and may predate 1839. During the late nineteenth century they were occupied by the Johnson and Lynch families. Water lines and possibly sewers existed by 1898. Both houses likely had cisterns to supply water as well as privies. These features could have been filled in during the 1890s. The locations of the two houses have not been reduced in grade since 1909. The Jewetts Linseed Oil Works, later the Dean Linseed Oil Company, had at least one structure within the project area by 1874. This structure was probably destroyed by the foundations of a group of oil tanks in the same location by 1909.



CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The above text documents that remains of the former Johnson and Lynch family houses may exist within the northeastern portion of the Nicholas Avenue project area. Cisterns and privies filled during the end of the nineteenth century could exist in both properties as could refuse pits. The Johnsons were potters at one time. Both families were probably middle or artisan class since they had businesses or owned their own homes and property along Richmond Terrace.

We recommend that a series of backhoe trenches be excavated prior to any construction activities here to search for potential remains. Trenches should be located adjacent to the rear walls of both houses, as well as further behind the house locations.



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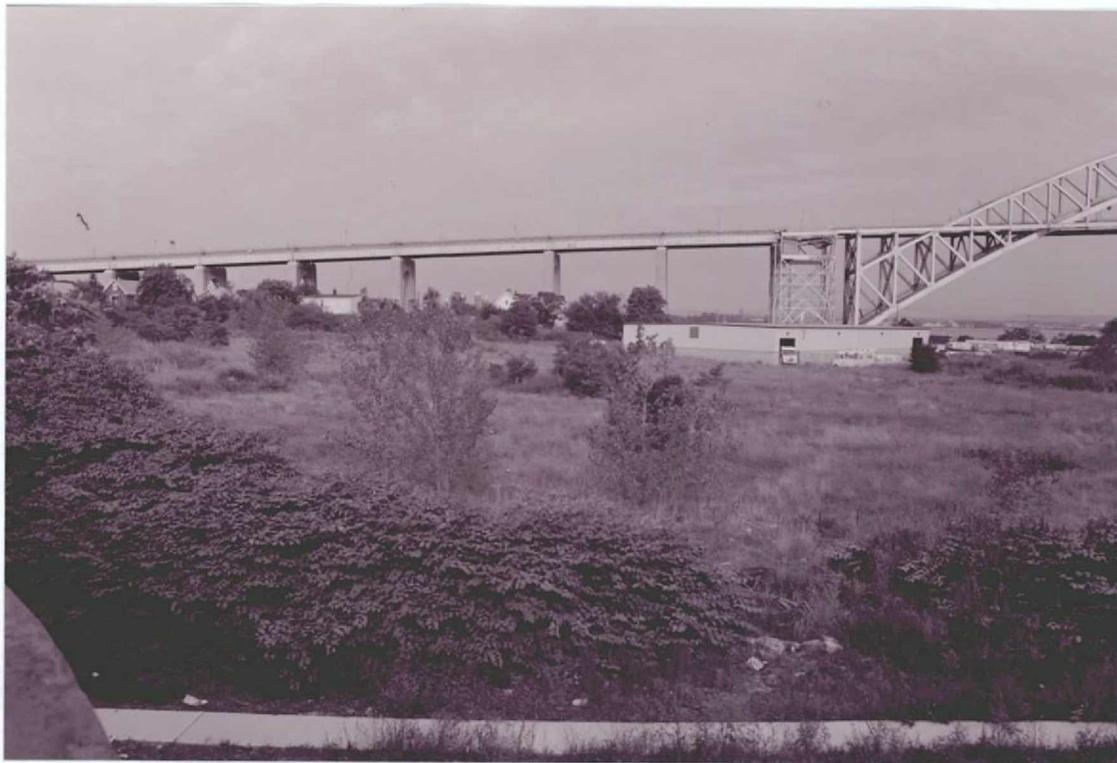


Plate 1 View of the southern and western portions of the project area looking west from the railroad overpass over Nicholas Avenue.

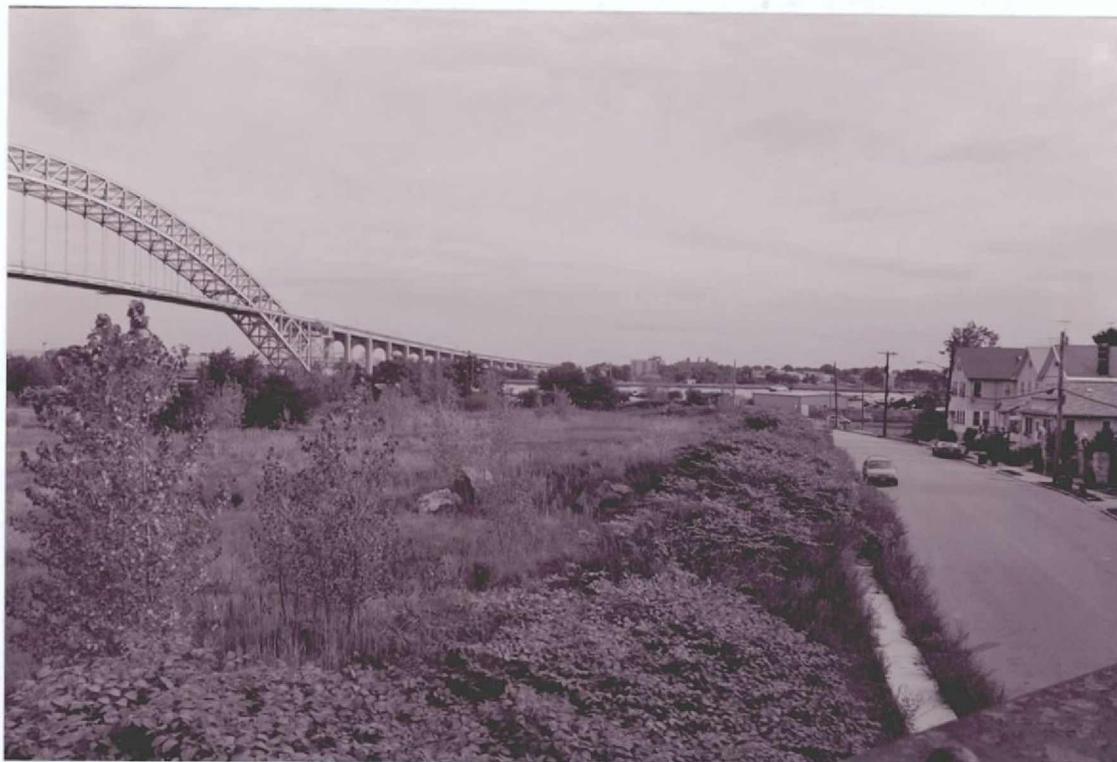


Plate 2 View of the eastern portion of the project area looking north along Nicholas Avenue from the railroad overpass.



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