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Pickman

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STAGE II ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY
BLOCK 7527, LOTS 17, 19, 21, 23, AND 25
STATEN ISLAND, NEW YORK

BY
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Submitted To
The City of New York
Department of General Services
Division of Real Property

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
I. Introduction	1
A. Existing Disturbance	1
B. Procedures	2
II. Results of Sub-surface Testing	2
III. Conclusions and Recommendations	3
Reference Cited	3
Figure 1 - Location of Project	4
Figure 2 - Site Map Showing Shovel Test Locations	5
Figure 3 - Photograph - East-West Cleared Strip	6
Figure 4 - Photograph - Vicinity of Shovel Test 2	7
Figure 5 - Photograph - North-South Cleared Strip	7
Appendix A - Shovel Test Stratigraphy and Artifact Inventory	8

I. INTRODUCTION

The City of New York is planning to construct a municipal animal shelter in the southwestern portion of Staten Island. The project will be located on Block 7527, Lots 17, 19, 21, 23 and 25 in the portion of Staten Island known as Kreisherville or Charleston. The property is situated on the south side of Veterans Road West, beginning some 268 feet east of Arthur Kill Road and extending eastward for 200 feet. It extends approximately 87.5 - 89 feet south of Veterans Road West (see Figures 1 and 2). An archaeological survey of the property is required to meet the requirements of the New York City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) process.

In June, 1988 a report was submitted to the New York City Department of General Services, Division of Real Property, presenting the results of a documentary study and evaluation of the archaeological potential of the property (Pickman 1988). This report concluded that the property has a low potential for containing possibly significant historic period archaeological resources and a moderate potential for containing prehistoric campsites. The report recommended that limited sub-surface testing be undertaken to determine whether or not prehistoric archaeological remains are present on the property. This report presents the results of the sub-surface testing.

A. Existing Disturbance

The results of a pedestrian reconnaissance, included in the documentary study, indicated that of the approximately 17700 square feet within the project area, some 7000 square feet had been disturbed to an extent which would preclude the presence of intact archaeological deposits. Measurements taken during the present survey indicate that the extent of the disturbed area is approximately 6000 square feet, somewhat less than previously estimated. The disturbed area includes lot 17 and the western portion of lot 19 (corresponding to the area marked "earth and grass" on Figure 2), and approximately 500 square feet in the southeastern portion of lot 25. An additional 1300 square feet in the southern portion of lot 25 is not readily accessible for manual testing due to the presence of a large mound of debris. The previous report noted that manual testing in most of the remainder of the project area would be difficult due to the presence of dense stands of briar. The report concluded that 3-5 manually dug shovel tests, sufficient to meet survey objectives, could be placed within a relatively small clearing in the south-central portion of the area covered with briar.

B. Procedures

Sub-surface testing was conducted on April 12, 1989. A total of four shovel tests were placed within the project area. Testing was facilitated by the fact that bramble had been cleared from a

portion of the area since the submission of the documentary report. Examination of the area indicated that the clearing had occurred incident to the taking of soil borings on the property. A truck-mounted boring rig had apparently been driven onto the property, clearing a 15-20 foot wide swath extending in an east-west direction beginning approximately 45 feet south of Veterans Road West (Figure 3). Observation indicated that while the presence of the boring rig had cleared the vegetation, it had not caused sub-surface disturbance in most of the area. Two tests were placed in this cleared area. The other two tests were placed in the original open clearing noted in the previous report (Figure 4). Access to this area was facilitated by another swath extending north-south which was apparently cleared by the boring rig (Figure 5).

Each shovel test was excavated until culturally sterile sub-soil was encountered. Soil removed from the excavation was placed in a 1/4 inch mesh screen. Because of the high clay content some of the soil could not be readily passed through the screen. In such cases, the clayey lumps of soil were carefully separated using a trowel and examined for the presence of artifacts.

All artifacts recovered were placed in bags numbered according to provenience and returned to the laboratory. The artifacts were cleaned, identified, and tabulated. The stratigraphy encountered in each test and the artifacts recovered are shown in Appendix A. The location of each test is shown on Figure 2.

II. RESULTS OF SUB-SURFACE TESTING

Similar stratigraphy was encountered in each of the four shovel tests excavated for this project. The topmost two and one half to five inches consisted of roots, leaves and humus. In tests one and three a thin gray/black silty layer was noted beneath the humus. In the other two tests this layer was not observed, although there was some staining of the underlying stratum by the humic material. The underlying stratum, 12.5 to 14.5 inches in thickness, consisted of tan/brown clayey silt with some orange or red mottling noted, depending on the color of the underlying subsoil. This stratum yielded a low density of historic period material, mostly coal and cinder, with a few sherds of whiteware and glass. No prehistoric period artifacts were recovered. This stratum may have been deposited during a previous episode of grading of the area. If so, the previous surface was stripped off before or during the grading since the subsoil directly underlay this stratum. It is also possible that this stratum represents a plow zone although the appearance of the soil makes this a less likely explanation. The subsoil, an orange or reddish mixture of silt and clay, was encountered at depths of 15-24 inches below the surface. The water table was encountered at 15.5 to 26 inches.

In the previously submitted documentary survey, it was noted that at some locations in Staten Island a layer of yellow/orange sand

is present beneath the topsoil and that artifact-bearing layers have been encountered in this sand at several prehistoric sites. The test results indicate that this yellow/orange sand stratum is not present in the project area.

III. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Sub-surface testing conducted in the project area yielded no indications of prehistoric activity and no possibly significant historic period archaeological remains were encountered. No further archaeological investigations are recommended.

REFERENCE CITED

Pickman, Arnold

1988 Evaluation of Archaeological Potential, Block 7527, Lots 17, 19, 21, 23 and 25, Staten Island, New York. Report submitted to the City of New York, Department of General Services, Division of Real Property. ✓

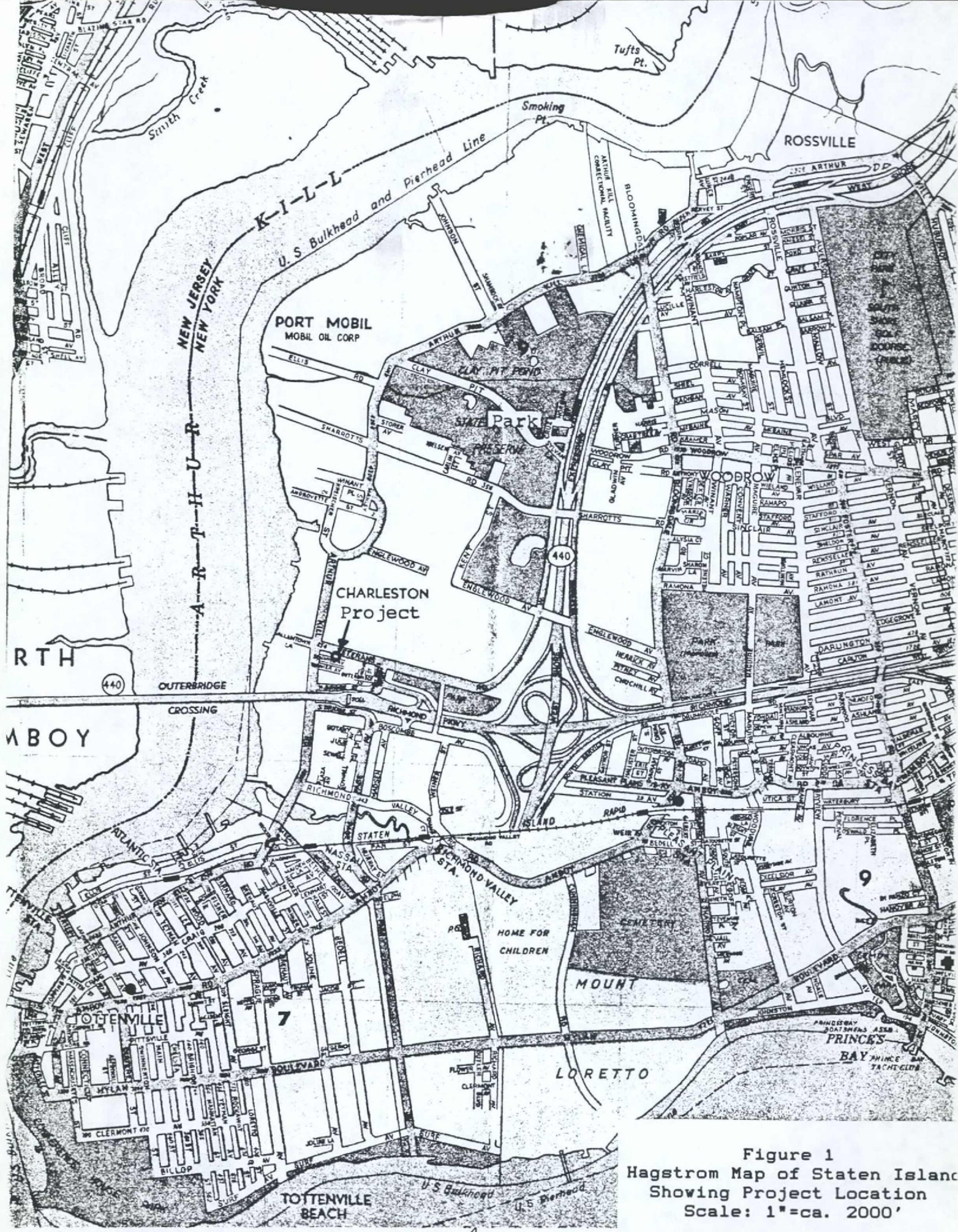
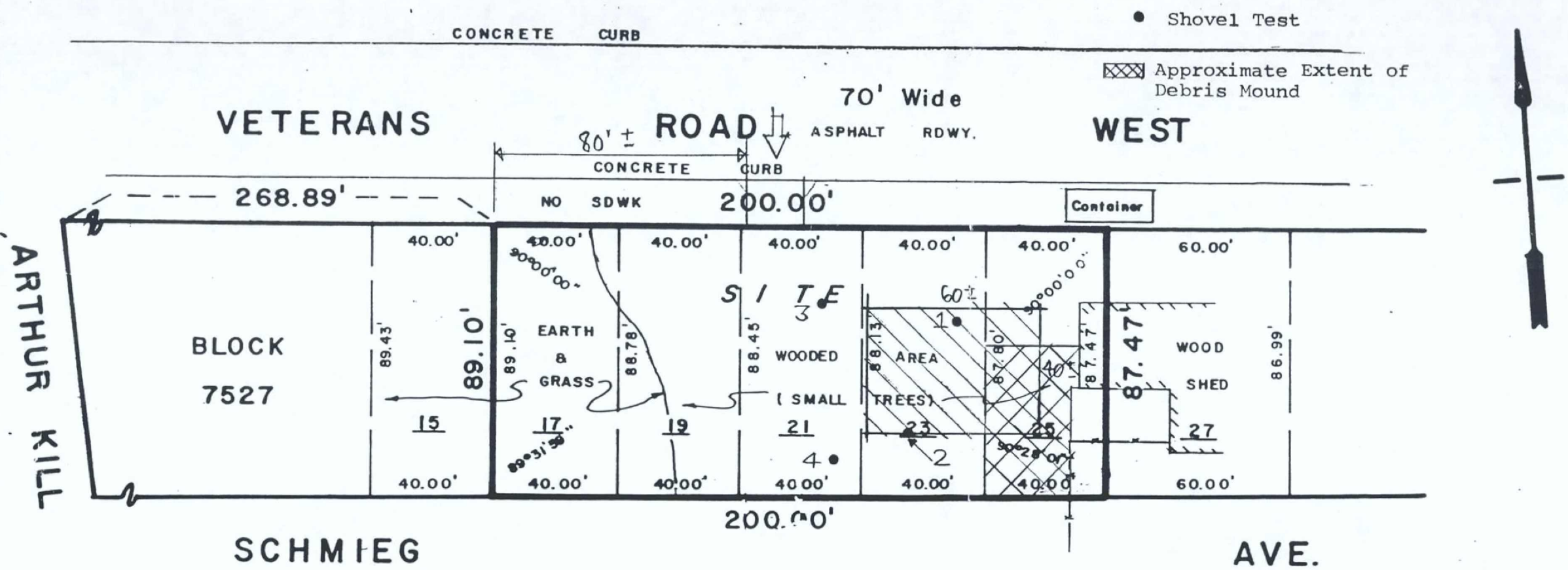


Figure 1
 Hagstrom Map of Staten Island
 Showing Project Location
 Scale: 1"=ca. 2000'

Figure 2



ALL DIMENSIONS SHOWN ARE IN THE STANDARD USED ON THE ADOPTED MAP OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK.

SURVEYED: 3-7-88

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ANIMAL SHELTER VETERANS ROAD WEST & ARTHUR KILL ROAD BOROUGH OF STATEN ISLAND	
PREPARED BY ENGINEERING SERVICES TOPOGRAPHICAL SECTION	
SITE MAP	
Dated: 3-9-88	Scale: 1" = 40'

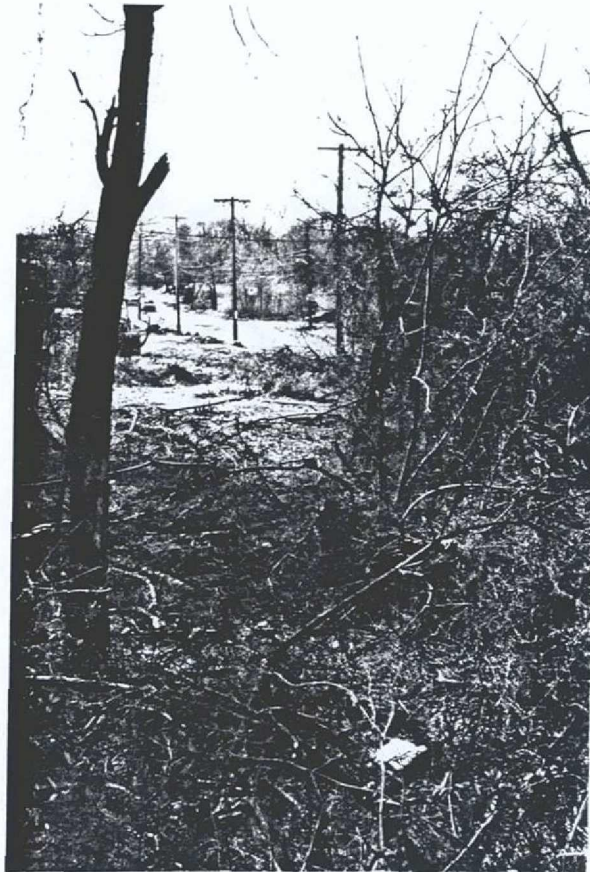


Figure 3
East-West Cleared Strip
View West from Debris Mound

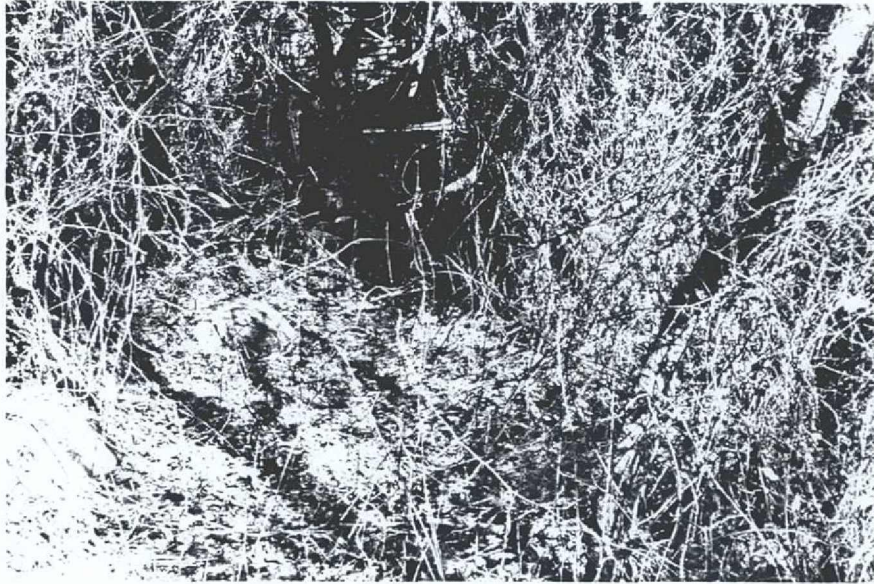


Figure 4
Clearing - Vicinity of Shovel Test 2
View East

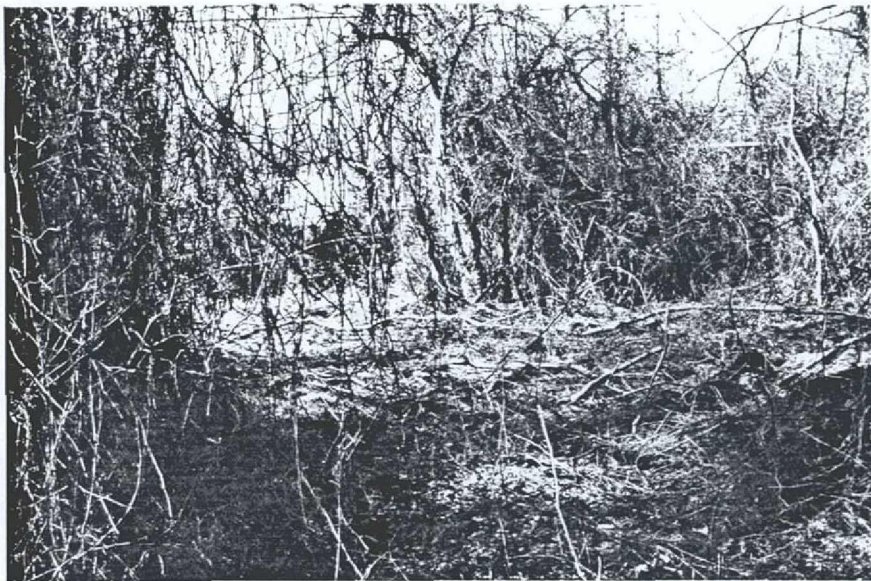


Figure 5
North-South Cleared Strip
View North Toward Location of Shovel Test 3
From Vicinity of Shovel Test 4

APPENDIX A
SHOVEL TEST STRATIGRAPHY AND ARTIFACT INVENTORY

<u>Test</u>	<u>Depth</u> (Inches)	<u>Description</u>	<u>Cultural Materials</u>
1	0-3.5	Humus and Root Mat and	1 wire nail, corroded 4 pcs. coal
	3.5-5.5	Gray/Black Clayey Silt	3 pcs. wood charcoal (additional pcs. discarded in field)
	5.5-20	Tan/Brown Clayey Silt with some Orange Mottling	2 sherds whiteware, blue transfer printed 1 sherd whiteware, plain 1 pc. glass tableware, molded decoration 1 lg. fragment fire brick 1 pc. coal/cinder 9 pcs. wood charcoal
	20-30	Orange/Red Silty Clay (water at 26")	None

2	0-2.5	Humus and Leaf Mold	None
	2.5-15	Tan/Brown Clayey Silt with some Orange Mottling	1 pc. cinder
	15-23	Brown/Red Clayey Silt (water at 15.5")	None

3	0-2.5	Humus and Root Mat	None
	2.5-4.5	Gray/Black Sandy Silt	None
	4.5-16	Orange/Brown Clayey Silt and	1 pc. flat glass, clear 4 pcs. coal/cinder 8 pcs. natural mineral material with black (asphalt?) coating
	16-24	Brown/Orange Clayey Silt	
	16-31	Brown/Orange Clayey Silt (more orange and more pebbles than above) (water at 25")	None

4	0-5	Humus and Leaf Mat	None
	5-19	Light Brown Clayey Silt w. Red Mottling	1 sherd whiteware, plain
	19-28.5	Brown/Red Silty Clay (water at 26")	None