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Archaeological Documentary Study of

Clove Road

Block 1309, Crown Heights, Borough of Brooklyn

prepared for

New York City Department of Transportation

Capital Project HWKP166

prepared by

Jean Howson

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The **RBA**
Group, Inc.

ENGINEERS • ARCHITECTS • PLANNERS

July 2002

**Archaeological Documentary Study of
CLOVE ROAD
Crown Heights, Borough of Brooklyn**

**In Connection with
Capital Project #HWKP166, Reconstruction of
Clove Road and Malbone Streets**

**Jean Howson
The RBA Group
July 2002**

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1. INTRODUCTION

This documentary study has been conducted for the New York City Department of Transportation in connection with Capital Project HWKP166, the reconstruction of Clove Road and Malbone Street in the Crown Heights section of the Borough of Brooklyn. The purpose as set forth in the scope of work is "to identify and assess the archaeological potential/sensitivity of the project area." The project area as defined in the scope includes only Clove Road, which extends from Montgomery Street on the north to Empire Boulevard on the south, crossing through Block 1309 in the Borough of Brooklyn (Figures 1.1 through 1.4).

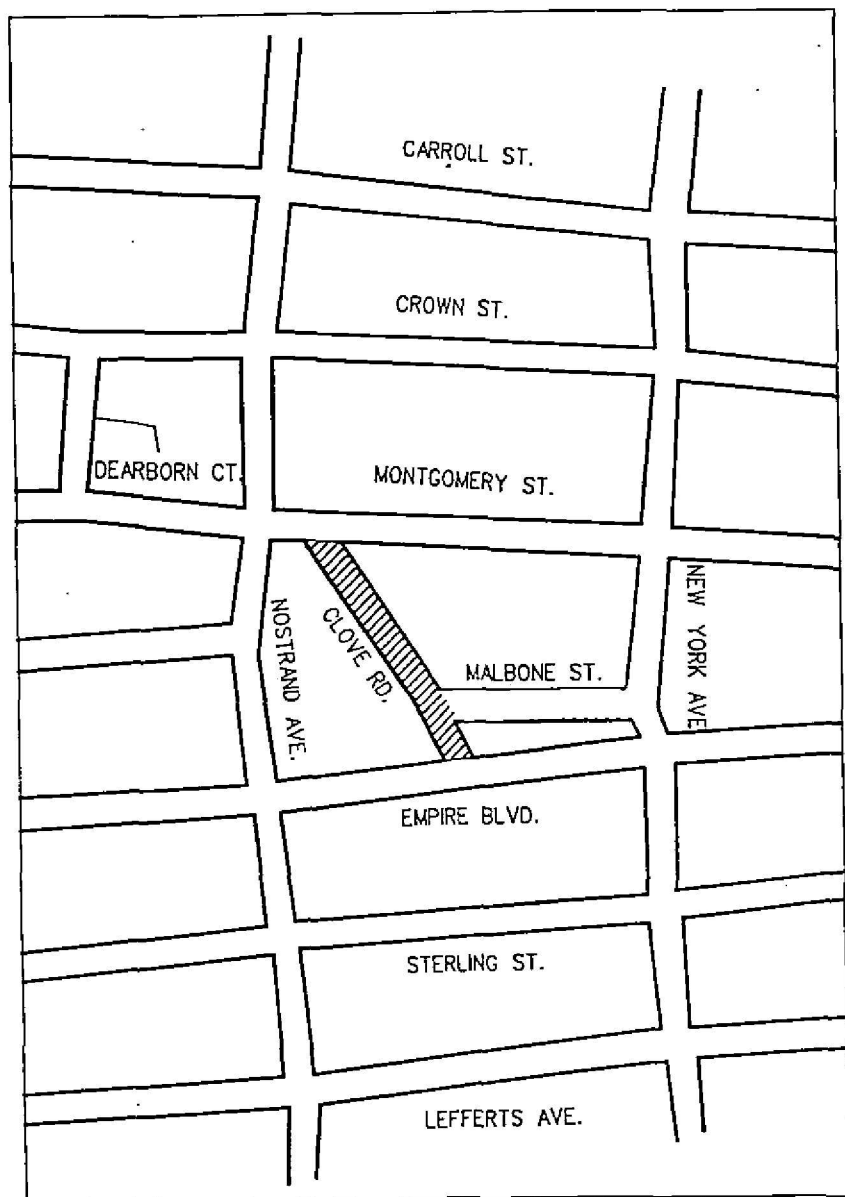
Community Board #9 in Brooklyn has worked to have Clove Road recognized as a historic site, and brought it to the attention of the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) in 2000 (see Appendix). Because the area may have seen Native American habitation and is associated with the Revolutionary War Battle of Long Island, the Department of Transportation has required this documentary study to determine whether archaeological resources may be present and potentially subject to disturbance from the proposed improvements.

Research was conducted at the following repositories (the Brooklyn Historical Society was closed at the time of this study):

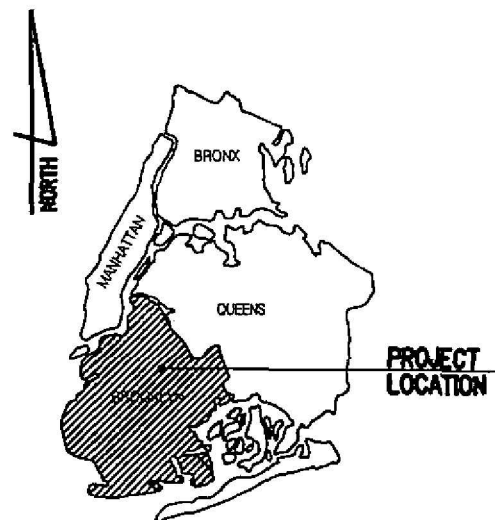
New York Public Library
New-York Historical Society
Brooklyn Borough President's Office, Topographic Bureau
King's County City Register's Office
New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

Brooklyn Revolutionary War historian Robert Furman provided guidance on the research and discussed the role of the Bedford Pass in the Battle of Brooklyn, and his assistance is gratefully acknowledged. Mr. Mike Cetera of Community Board #9 shared his research and information on the local area.

This study was conducted and the report authored by Jean Howson. Research and analysis of property records was assisted by Richard L. Porter. Adam Maskevich assisted with library research and graphics production.



▨ PROJECT LIMIT



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 37 UNION SQUARE WEST
 NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10008

Figure 1.1. Project locator map

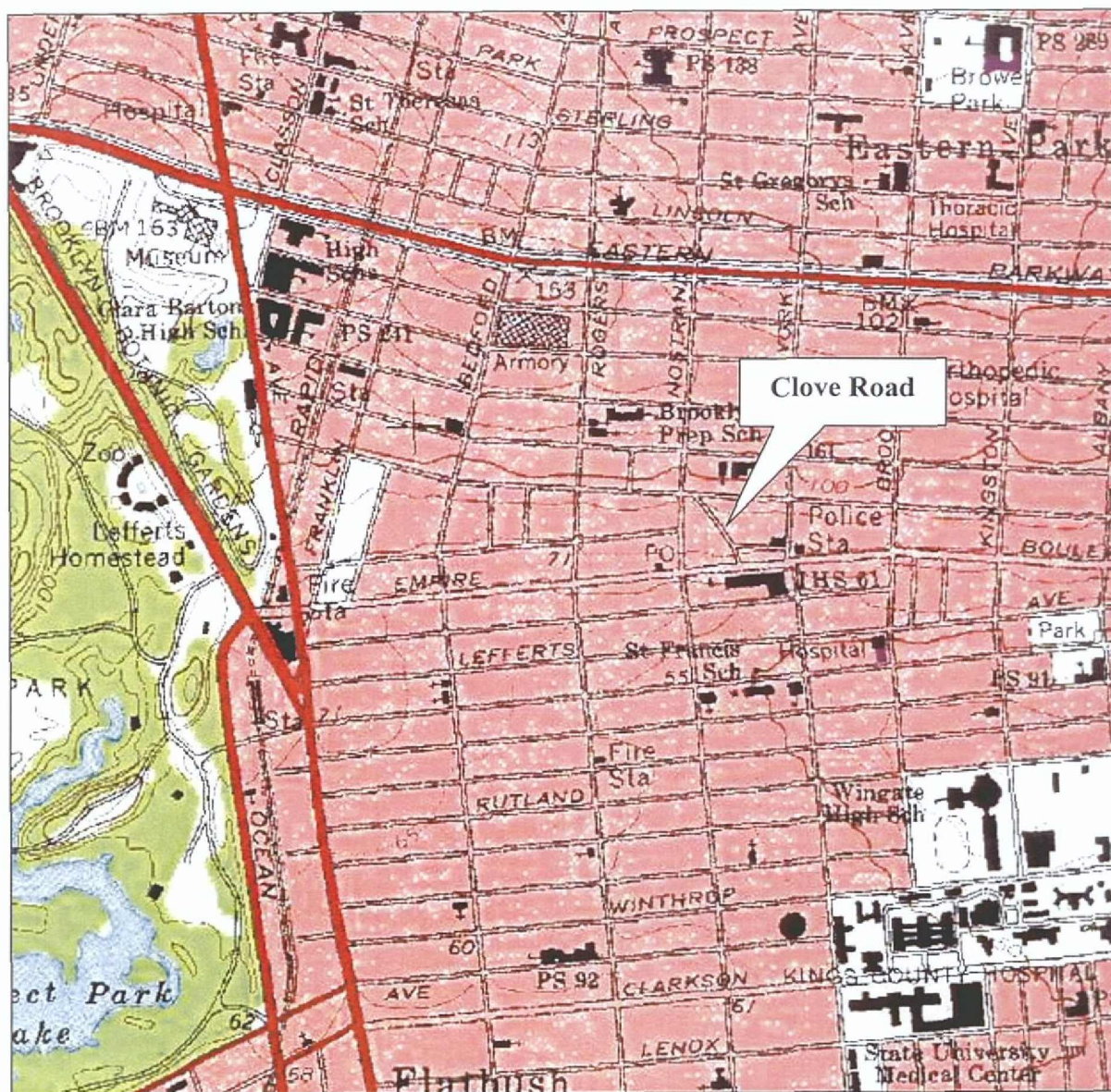


Figure 1.2. U.S.G.S. Brooklyn Quadrangle.

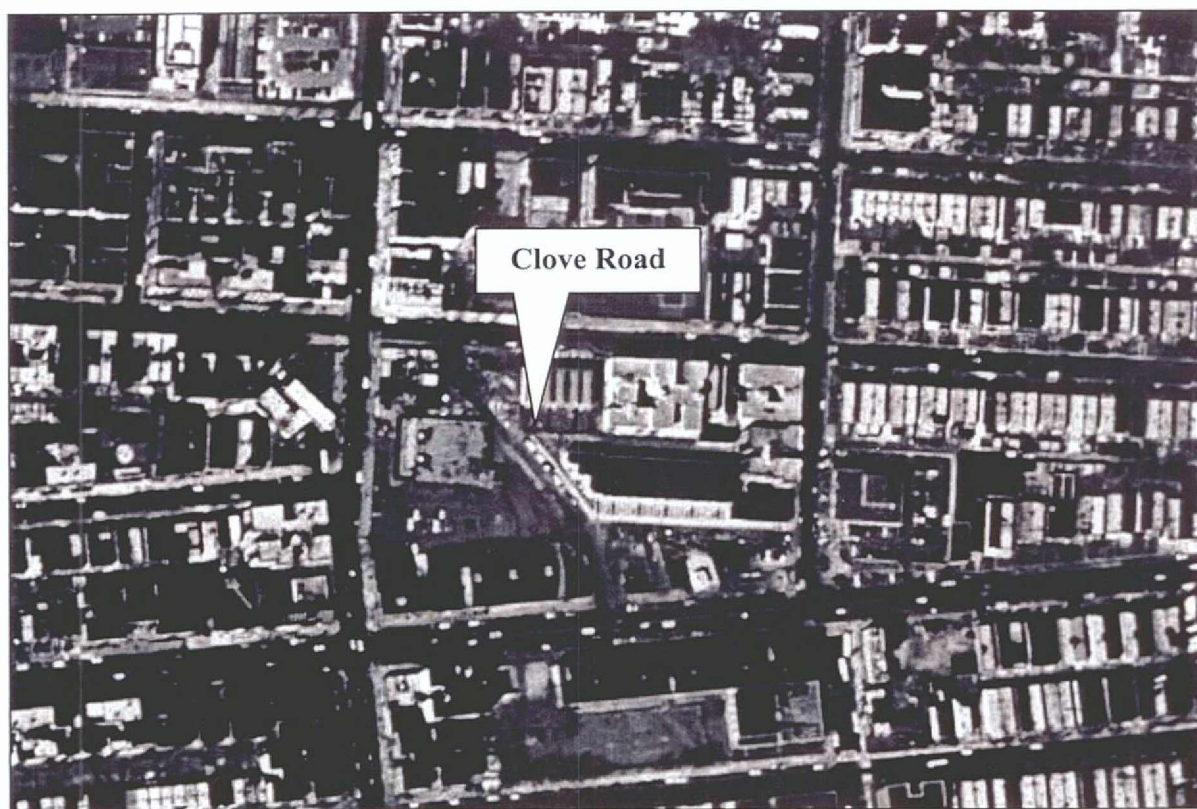


Figure 1.3. Aerial photograph showing Clove Road. 1994.
Source: <http://terraserver.homeadvisor.msn.com>

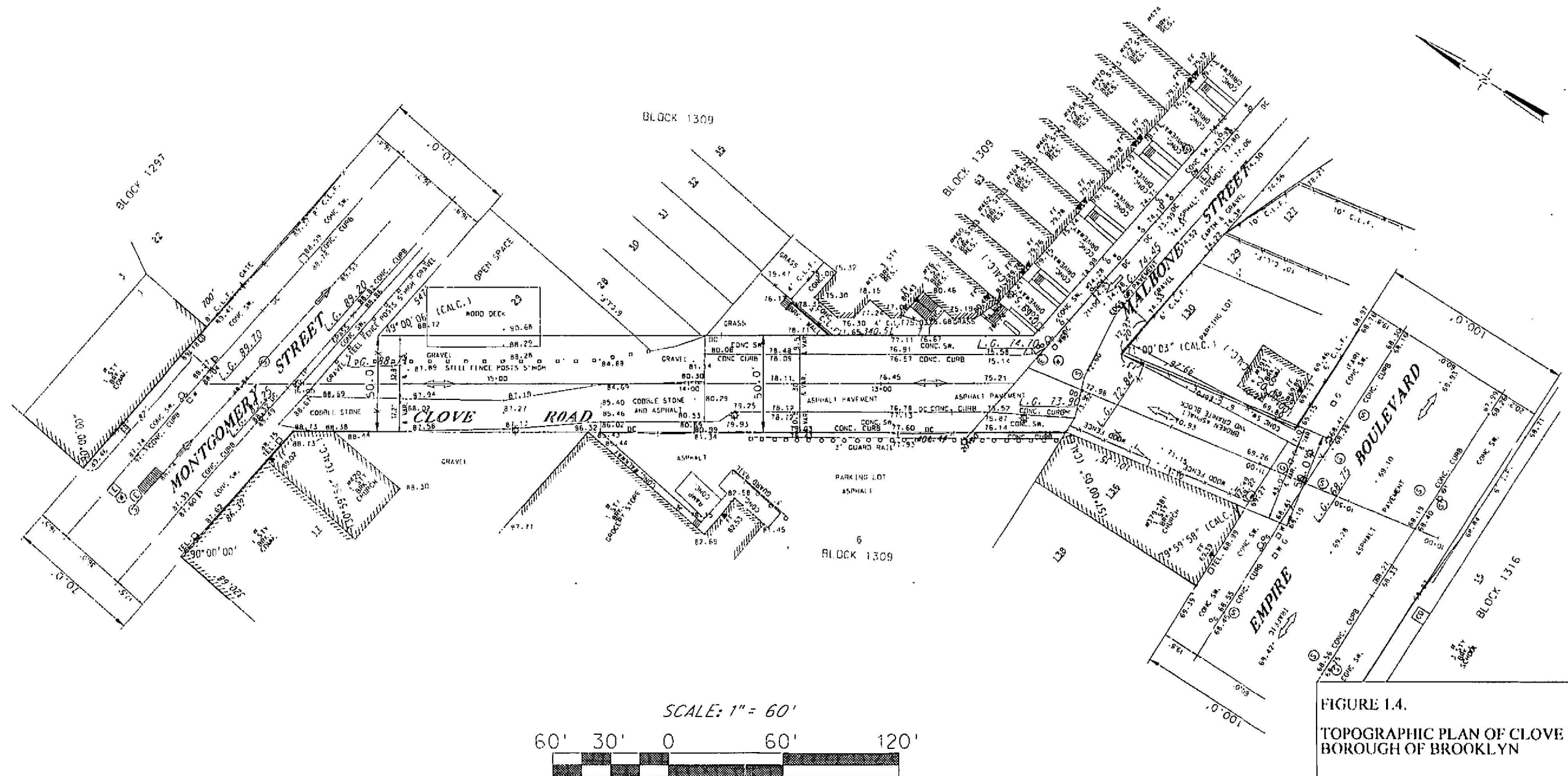


FIGURE 1.4.
TOPOGRAPHIC PLAN OF CLOVE ROAD,
BOROUGH OF BROOKLYN

CITY OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

2. SETTING

The project area is on western Long Island in a densely developed urban setting, the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn, New York (Figures 1.2 and 1.3). City blocks are formed by a grid of cross-streets and larger, north-south running avenues. The small remnant section of Clove Road is not aligned with the current street grid. Instead it cuts diagonally across Block 1309, which is otherwise almost fully developed with residential and commercial structures facing Montgomery Street, Empire Boulevard, Nostrand Avenue, New York Avenue, and Malbone Street.

Fairly gentle topographic relief characterizes the vicinity of the project site, though Clove Road slopes from an elevation of approximately 88 feet above sea level on the north end to 69 feet above sea level on the south end at Empire Boulevard. Urban development has resulted in the smoothing out of steeper inclines. It is possible to obtain a better idea of the original terrain of the area in nearby Prospect Park, where the hilly landforms typical of the area prior to development are preserved. The project site lies along what was originally the southern base of a glacial moraine that stretched in an east-west line across western Long Island. Prior to development this series of hills was densely wooded and overlooked a broad wooded plain that sloped gently to the bay, with extensive bordering meadowlands. The project site is at the former southern entrance of a pass through the hills. Although a watercourse is not depicted on early maps in the immediate vicinity, a pond was once located some 1500 feet to the west of the project area, indicating a fresh water source (see Section 4 below for the full series of historic maps).

3. PREHISTORIC OCCUPATION

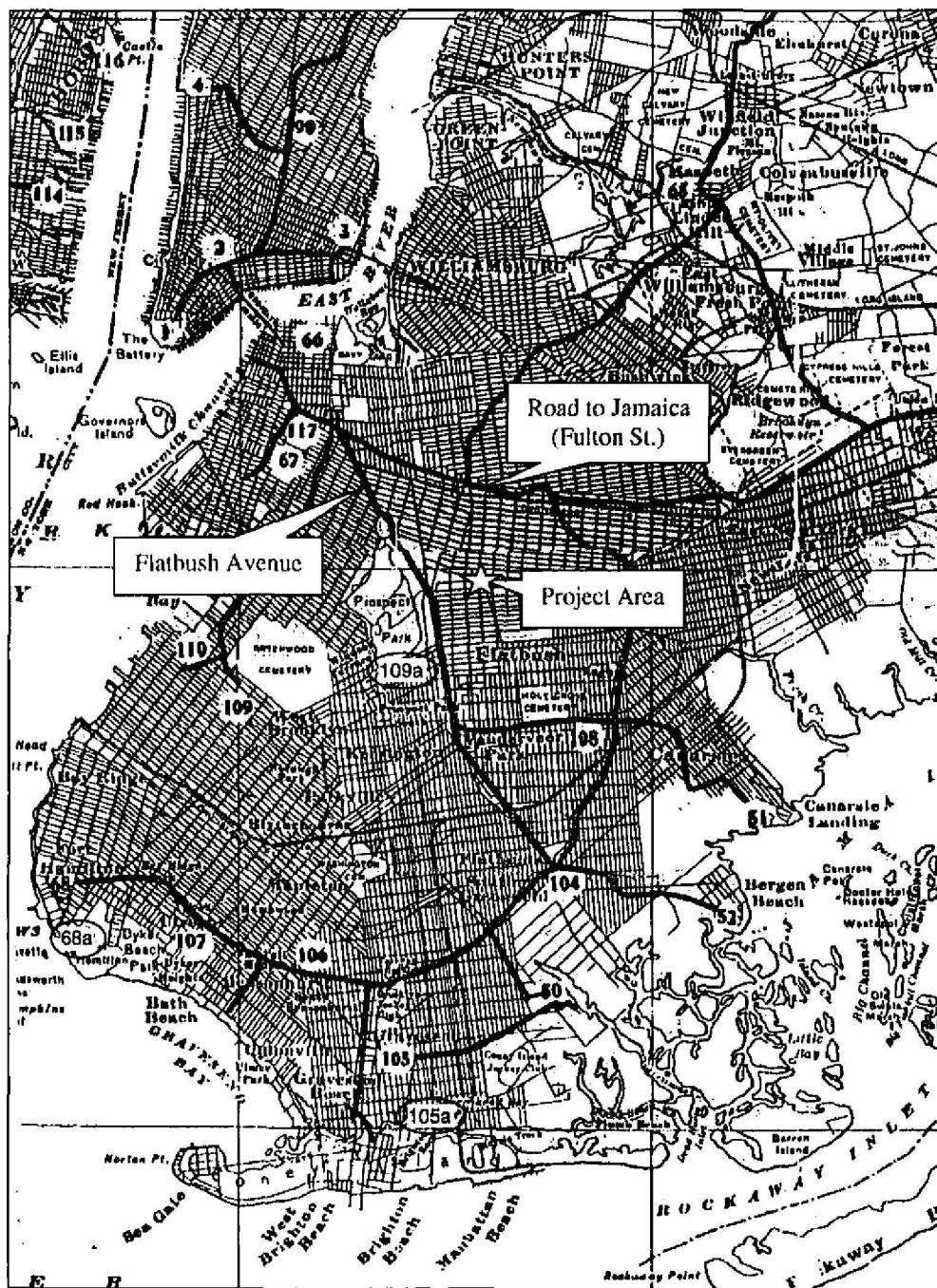
Because of its location on well-drained uplands at a natural pass through the hills, it is possible that the project area was used in prehistoric times. It may be on or adjacent to a prehistoric path, and the proximity of a habitation site cannot be ruled out. Previous research (both historical and archaeological) on Native American pathways and occupation sites has identified neither in the project area, however, and the potential for archaeological resources associated with prehistoric use has been compromised by historic-period development. A brief overview, based largely on Ritchie (1980), of the prehistoric occupation of western Long Island is provided below (see the following sources: Skinner 1909; Bolton 1920, 1922, 1934; Smith 1950; Ritchie 1965, 1980; Grumet 1981; Ceci 1990; Strong 1997).

The earliest human occupation on Long Island was during the Paleo-Indian Period, approximately 10,000 years B.P. Fluted projectile points diagnostic of this period have been recovered as surface finds at several locations on the island, and from nearby Staten Island. Nomadic game hunters and gatherers, the Paleo-Indians utilized small camps on a temporary basis, and their population density was very low. The record of this period is sparse, due to the nature of occupation, the inundation of sites (sea levels rose through

approximately 3000 years ago), and the intensity of subsequent development. During the ensuing Archaic period (circa 9000 to 3300 years ago), the region was characterized by greater variety in flora and fauna and it is thought that there was a shift in the subsistence strategy of inhabitants to exploit these resources, including an increased reliance on shellfish and on smaller game species. Ritchie (1980:142) postulates that the Archaic cultures of coastal New York were derived from inland cultures to the north, west and south that adapted to the marine littoral environment. Sparse archaeological evidence exists from the early part of the Archaic on Long Island, but later Archaic sites are better known. The period generally is represented by "small, nearly always multi-component sites, variously situated on tidal inlets, coves and bays, particularly at the heads of the latter, and on fresh-water ponds" (Ritchie 1965:143). The final centuries of the Archaic (circa 3300 to 3000 years ago, sometimes referred to as the Transitional stage) are defined on Long Island by the Orient culture, with its distinctive mortuary complex and artifacts.

The Woodland period saw the introduction of ceramics and, with the Late Woodland beginning about 1000 years ago, the advent of horticulture in some areas. The extraordinary natural abundance of food and other resources in coastal New York probably led to increasing sedentism and population density, with a village-based settlement pattern predominating even before the introduction of crop cultivation. Material culture of the Woodland period included houses of saplings and bark, pottery in a sequence of styles, basketry, shell beads, ceramic smoking pipes, and various chipped, rough, and polished stone implements. Preferred habitation sites were on knolls or well-drained terraces near water resources. Woodland "cultures" or "phases" are defined on the basis of ceramic and lithic styles, with the "East River Tradition" as the overarching classification for the project region (see Smith 1950 for the sequence in coastal New York). By the Late Woodland, circa 900 years ago, the Bowmans Brook suite of characteristics was predominant in the project region, apparently having entered western Long Island from New Jersey via Staten Island. Sites were situated on tidal streams or coves, shellfish were intensively utilized, and villages were semi-permanent. The Bowmans Brook phase appears to represent Algonkian people possibly related ethnically to the Delaware of New Jersey. The final prehistoric "culture" defined for the project region is the Clasons Point phase, which developed from Bowmans Brook. Shellfish continued to be the focus of exploitation, with sites on tidal coves and streams, and maize was probably cultivated. Ethnohistorical and archaeological evidence indicate continuity between the Clasons Point sites and historic Native American habitation of what is now Brooklyn (Ritchie 1965:271).

Native American sites in Brooklyn are poorly documented. Figure 3.1 shows the sites and pathways that were identified by Bolton in the early 20th century (Bolton 1922, 1934). All of the sites are located closer to the shorelines and/or the aboriginal meadowlands than the current project site, with the exception of one site mentioned by Furman in *Antiquities of Long Island* (1875), labeled 109a on the Bolton map (see Figure 3.1). Roads thought to follow prehistoric paths (Bolton 1922), such as Flatbush Avenue or the road to Jamaica (Fulton Street) do not traverse the project area, but, as noted above, it is possible that the Clove Road did in fact follow a less important prehistoric path through the hills. Recent archaeological research has not identified additional prehistoric sites in the inland parts of Kings County.



Numbered Sites
(with sources as given by Bolton [1934]):

- 66 Rinnegokinck (Furman, Antiquities of Long Island)
- 67 Werpos
- 117 Marechawik (Col. Docs. Of NY Vol. XIV)
- 110 Gowanus Bay
- 109 Sunset Park
- 109A (Furman, Antiquities of Long Island)
- 108 Musyttehool
- 51 Canarsie
- 52 Winnipague/Bergen Beach
- 104 Keskaechqueren (aka Amersfoort, aka Flatlands)
- 50 Shanscomacocke/Cerritsen Basin/Ryders Point
- 105 Massaharkem (aka Gravesend; Munsell History of Kings County)
- 105A Narriock/Sheepshead Bay
- 106 The Indian Pond/Marlboro
- 107 New Utrecht
- 68 Nayack/The Narrows
- 68A Fort Hamilton

Figure 3.1.
Map of Native American sites and paths in New York on the modern street grid. Dark lines are principal paths, numbered circles are sites. Source: Bolton 1922, with additions from Bolton 1934.

Scale: 1 inch = 1.75 miles (approx.)

4. HISTORIC OCCUPATION

The following narrative, based on primary and secondary documentary sources, focuses on the project area (Clove Road within Block 1309), and provides only limited additional information about the history of this part of Brooklyn. Maps showing the project area are included at the end of the section (Figures 4.1 through 4.24).

Colonial Period

Native American groups inhabiting the southwestern part of Long Island at the time of European settlement were sub-groups within what was taken to be the Canarsie "tribe." Several villages were occupied (see Figure 3.1 for those identified in Bolton's research) with inland fields planted in corn. The Dutch West India Company began to acquire large tracts in 1636, and most lands at the western end of Long Island were in Dutch hands by 1640; by then, the aboriginal population had been severely compromised by disease and warfare. The Dutch territory in what became Kings County was divided into the towns of Bushwick, Brooklyn, Flatbush, New Utrecht, Gravesend and Flatlands in the 17th century. As the towns were established, lots and farmlands were divided among the original freeholders, and meadow lots were soon added to each holding. Villages, such as New Amersfort (Flatlands), Bedford and Brooklyn (both in Brooklyn), and Midwout (Flatbush), grew up at crossroads in the second half of the 17th century (Stiles 1867-69, 1884; Strong 1842; Ostrander 1894; Hazelton 1925; Bolton 1922; see also Historical Perspectives 1985).

The project area itself was in woodlands during the 17th century, probably covered with hickory and white and black oak forest (Strong 1842). Like most of the large tracts of woodlands associated with the colonial towns it was originally left as commons. By the end of the century use of the woodlands was increasing, and the towns decided to divide them into lots and allocate them among the freeholders, in proportion to the sizes of their farms. Land records indicate that the common lands, including those within present-day Block 1309, were divided and sub-divided among the freeholders of Brooklyn and Flatbush beginning in the 1690s (Kings County Deeds 2:133, 191, 191a; 209a, 225, 226; 5:96).

The project area was along the boundary between Brooklyn and Flatbush. Early land transactions (conveyances to the Dutch from the Indians that were later confirmed by the English Governors) simply indicated that the hills were the northern boundary of Flatbush and the "foot" of the hills the southern boundary of Brooklyn. By the 1670s, differences arose as to the exact boundary line, since there was no clear location for the foot of the hills. The matter was referred to the Court of Sessions in 1678 and Captains Jaques Cortelyou and Richard Stillwell were ordered to establish the correct boundary

line. They submitted a report to the court in 1683 stating that the line had been run out and marked on trees (Kings County Deeds 1:51; Furman 1824:46-48; Strong 1842:3). In the following year, surveyor Philip Wells was employed by the two towns to re-check and confirm the line (Kings County Deeds 1:51a). According to Strong (1842:3), subsequent differences were settled as follows:

... the summit of the hills or the first perceptible southerly declivity of any hill, should be deemed and taken as the fixed and determined line, and wherever the hills are cut off or interrupted by an intervening valley or hollow, the boundary line should extend in the shortest possible direction, from the summit of one hill to that of the opposite one.

The original Clove Road, reportedly dating to 1662 (Willensky and White 1988; <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~blkyn/Streets> [no source is given for this date]), ran southward from the "Bedford Four Corners" (the crossroads at the village of Bedford), passed through the hills, then turned westward to run along the base of the hills, then veered southward, joining the Flatbush Road (see the Taylor and Skinner map of 1781, Figures 4.1 and 4.2, the Stiles and Johnston maps depicting 1776, Figures 4.6 and 4.7, and the Hassler map of 1845, Figure 4.9 for the best depictions). It was also called the Bedford-Flatbush Road, and at the time of the Revolution would be known simply as Bedford Pass. The current project site is adjacent to the point where the road turned westward on the south side of the pass through the hills, but the street bed currently under investigation is not part of the original Clove Road (see 19th-century history below). Based on Strong's description of the procedure for establishing the town boundaries (quoted above), the alignment of present-day Clove Road within Block 1309, along which the Brooklyn-Flatbush boundary line ran until the towns were consolidated at the end of the 19th century, may mark the "shortest possible direction" spanning the Bedford Pass.

It is not known whether any development occurred in the 18th century along the Bedford-Flatbush road near the current study area. Once the common lands had been allocated, it was possible for the freeholders to put up structures on their parcels. The land surrounding the present-day Clove Road on the west and south was held by Peter Lefferts in 1767 (Kings County Deeds 6:337), and it is possible the Lefferts family had owned it since the 1690s when the woodlands were divided. The Peter Lefferts dwelling mentioned in the deed of 1767 was probably one located along the Bedford-Flatbush Road well to the west-southwest of the project area. The fact that no farmhouses are mentioned at the Bedford Pass in accounts of the Battle of Brooklyn (see the following section) suggests that the location remained undeveloped. The east (Brooklyn) side of the current project area was still a wood lot in 1817 (Kings County Deeds 41:17).

The Revolutionary War – Battle of Brooklyn, August 27, 1776

Accounts of the Battle of Brooklyn, or, as it is often known, the Battle of Long Island, used for this study are contained in Johnston's study of the campaign around New York (1878), Stiles' massive history of Brooklyn (1867-69, 1884), Stevenson and Wilson's bicentennial commemorative pamphlet (1975), and John Gallagher's recent monograph (1995). The following is a sketch of the main events with special attention to the role of the Bedford Pass; reference should be made to the above cited sources for details of the American and British preparations, the order of battle on each side, and the engagement itself. Maps are at the rear of this report section. Figures 4.1 through 4.5 are contemporary maps of the area of the battle (two finished maps and one sketch), Figures 4.6 and 4.7 are by 19th-century historians (Johnston's is the most meticulously researched and rendered), and Figure 4.8 is a recent newspaper graphic that clearly indicates the main actions and locations in a schematic format.

The American army prepared its New York defenses on western Long Island beginning in the winter of 1776. The interior line of defense in Brooklyn included a series of redoubts, palisades and entrenchments stretching from the Wallabout southwesterly to the Gowanus. In addition, outer defenses were established at crucial passes leading northward through the range of hills that stretched west to east across the central part of Brooklyn. Johnston (1878:142-3) described the lay of the land:

The ridge varied in height from one hundred to one hundred and fifty feet above the sea... Its entire surface was covered with a dense growth of woods and thickets, and to an enemy advancing from below it presented a continuous barrier, a huge natural abattis, impassable to artillery, wherewith proportionate numbers a successful defence could be sustained.

The roads across the ridge passed through its natural depressions, of which there were four within a distance of six miles from the harbor. The main highway, or Jamaica Road – that which led up [eastward] from Brooklyn Ferry—after passing through Bedford, kept on still north of the hills, and crossed them at the “Jamaica Pass,” about four miles from the fortified line. From this branched three roads leading to the villages in the plain. The most direct was that to Flatbush [known as Valley Grove road], which cut through the ridge a mile and a half from the [inner defensive] works [this was the Flatbush Pass, later known as Battle Pass]. Three quarters of a mile to the left [east], towards the Jamaica Pass, a road from Bedford led also to Flatbush [this was the original Clove Road]; and near the coast ran the Gowanus Road to the Narrows.

The “Bedford Pass” specifically designated the segment of the original Clove Road that ran northward through the gap in the hills. The northward turn in the old road was immediately adjacent to the current project area. Stiles (1867-69:261) describes the Bedford Pass as “at the intersection of the old “Clove Road” with the Flatbush and Brooklyn boundary-line, half a mile south of the hamlet of Bedford,” placing it at the

north end of present-day Clove Road. Gallagher's (1995:97) placement of the Bedford Pass at the current intersection of Bedford and Rodgers Avenues, well to the north of the hills in the old village of Bedford, is certainly inaccurate.

The British and Hessian troops under General Howe landed at Long Island on the 22 of August, 1776, well informed of Washington's position and troop strength. Howe's intention was to defeat the Brooklyn defenses and then take New York. In the next days, his troops occupied the coast and the broad plain, comprising the towns of New Utrecht, Gravesend, Flatlands, and Flatbush, that lay between the coast and the line of hills that formed the American outer defense.

On the eve of the British offensive, the three eastern passes through the hills were guarded with 800 troops each:

At the important Flatbush Pass, supporting the two or three gun battery there...were posted Hitchcock's and Little's Continental regiments, and Johnston's New Jersey battalion...To this point, also, Knowlton and his rangers appear to have been sent. At the coast road...the guards consisted of Hand's riflemen, half of Atlee's musketry, detachments of New York troops, and part of Lutz's Pennsylvanians under Major Burd. At the Bedford Pass...were stationed Colonel Samuel Wyllys's Connecticut Continentals, and Colonel Chester's regiment from the same State, under Lieutenant-Colonel Solomon Wills... (Johnston 1878:155-6; see Figure 4.7).

On August 26th Colonel Miles was stationed either at Bedford Pass or on the wooded hills to the east of the pass, with an additional 500 troops; in any case he was ordered to patrol the hills to the east of the Bedford Pass (toward the Jamaica Pass) on the eve of the battle (ibid.; see also Stiles 1867-69:262-3 and Gallagher 1995:100, 114). The Jamaica Pass itself, being two miles east of the Bedford Pass through the woods and four miles from the American lines via the Jamaica Road, was not guarded by battalions like the other passes, and was only lightly patrolled. This was the weakness in the outer defenses that General Howe targeted. On the night of August 26th, the British marched eastward and north to the Jamaica Road. Meanwhile, British Major General Grant attacked at the coast road in the early morning hours, and Lord Stirling led American forces in response, ultimately covering the retreat of most of his force northward across the swamp and Gowanus Creek to the American lines.

At about 8:00 am on August 26th, Miles (stationed furthest east on the hills) spotted the British column, but it was too late (he attacked the rear baggage guard, but he and his men were ultimately captured). By 9:00 am the British had reached the village of Bedford, behind the troops still guarding the Bedford Pass. At about the same time, Hessian troops under General De Heister advanced from the south toward the Flatbush and Bedford Passes. The troops at the Bedford Pass, with British advancing from both north and south, retreated toward the Flatbush Pass, and both American contingents

ultimately withdrew to Brooklyn Heights. There is no record of a skirmish at the Bedford Pass itself. Stiles (1867-69:273-4) describes the scene in dramatic terms:

...Col. Miles' panic-stricken troops were flying for their lives [presumably westward]. Parties of Americans, also, retreating from the onset of the Hessians towards the Bedford road, found themselves face to face with the dense columns of British troops, and turning back in dismay, became mingled hopelessly with the troops from the extreme left of Sullivan's line, who were hurrying forward to escape by the same road. The confused strife—for a battle it was not—which ensued is too terrible for the imagination to dwell upon...

The "strife" he describes, however, was centered at the Battle Pass rather than the Bedford Pass. Gallagher (1995:137), in assessing casualties, concludes that "Wylly's command at Bedford Pass, some 800 strong, disintegrated in the melee, some gaining safety, some not."

Heavy rains over the next two days brought the battle to a virtual halt. On the night of August 29th, General Washington evacuated his army of 10,000 men to Manhattan. The Battle of Brooklyn was the first major battle of the war, and a decisive victory for the British. The American army, however, was able to retreat relatively intact. Estimates of casualties in the engagement vary widely (see discussions in Johnston [1878] and Gallagher [1995:135-144]). It is an open question as to how many of those who had been guarding the Bedford Pass were killed.

19th Century Development

In 1830 the Superintendents of the Poor for Kings County determined that County institutions for the housing of the poor, insane, and criminal were needed. Land was purchased for the new institutions in the following years, and the buildings were gradually erected (Stiles [1884:464ff] recounts the recorded activities of the institutions in detail). Clove Road as it is known today is actually the northernmost segment of a road that was laid out in 1830 to connect the grounds of the new County Penitentiary on the Bedford-Flatbush Road (the original Clove Road) with the new Poor House and County Farm established in Flatbush. The County Hospital and farm are shown to the south of the project area and to the east of the new road on the Hassler map of 1845 (Figure 4.9). The Sidney map of 1849 and Coriner map of 1852 (Figure 4.10 and 4.11) show the Asylum and Poor House where the new road meets Clarkson Avenue in Flatbush. The Penitentiary and its grounds, immediately northwest of the project area, are shown on the 1852 map and subsequent maps (see the 1890 Robinson map, Figure 4.17).

The Superintendents (Samuel Smith, David Johnson, and Michael Schoonmaker) purchased the land for the road from three property owners:

Whereas the said Superintendents of the Poor have made an arrangement to open a Road of three rods wide from the Clove Road in the town of Brooklyn...over the lands of Jeremiah Vanderbilt the heirs of John Lefferts deceased and Isaac Cortelyou to the Northerly line of the County Farm in the town of Flatbush...and in order to carry their intentions into effect have agreed to purchase the land required for the said Road (Kings County Deeds 29:235B, 237, 239).

The road was surveyed by Jeremiah Lott on August 20 of 1830, but though intended to be filed with the County Clerk, the map has not been located in that office and is not listed in the Surveyors Index at the County Register's Office. Jeremiah and Ann Vanderbilt owned the land at the north end of the new road, in the town of Brooklyn. The piece purchased from them (for \$24.75) was described as follows (Kings County Deeds 29:235B):

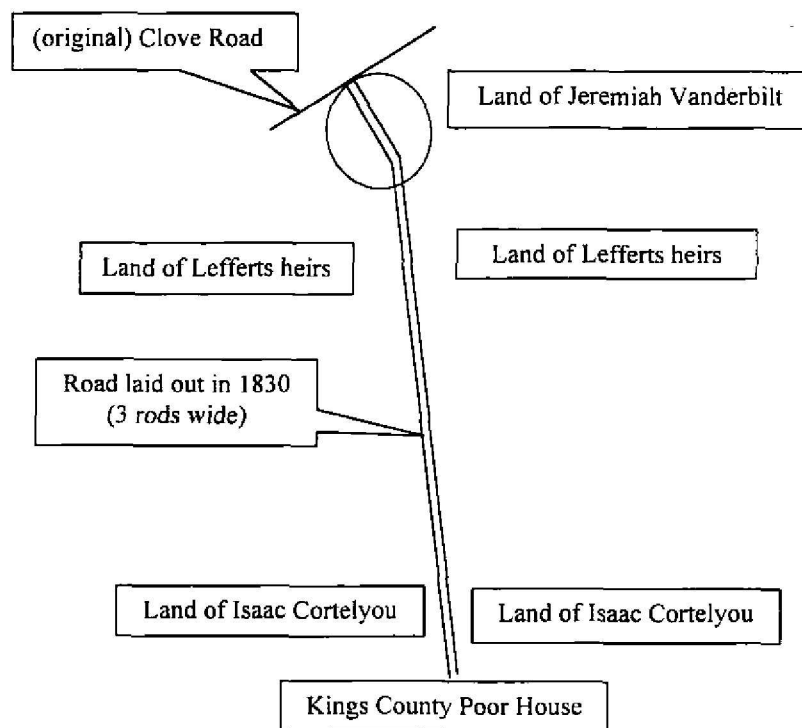
...bounded as follows (to wit) Northeasterly by a line running from a certain marked Hickory Tree (standing in the woodland of the heirs of the late John Lefferts deceased near the patent line between the towns of Flatbush and Brooklyn) to the Clove road so called leading from Flatbush to Bedford which said line bears North thirty one degrees west and is intended for the easterly or Northeasterly side of the aforesaid Road intended to be opened... Northwestery by the said Clove Road and Southwesterly by a certain recorded Road leading along the aforesaid patent line...

This piece corresponds to the northern section (oriented southeast-northwest) of the present-day Clove Road within Block 1309. The reference to the recorded road leading along the patent line is unclear. To the south of the Vanderbilt parcel, the road was carved from the Lefferts estate in Flatbush for the sum of \$303.00 (Kings County Deeds 29:239). Its bounds were given as follows:

Beginning at a point on the northerly line of the Farm of Isaac Cortelyou...and running thence on the easterly line of the [new] road north eleven degrees and fifteen minutes west twelve chains and eight links... thence North ten degrees west twenty one chains and fifty seven links on the said easterly line... to a certain marked Hickory Tree Standing near the patent line... thence northwesterly to the said patent line... to the Clove Road so called leading from Flatbush to Bedford thence Southwesterly along the said Clove Road [the width of the new road] thence south thirty one degrees East... to a certain point opposite to the aforesaid marked Hickory Tree and three rods distant therefrom at right angles thence south ten degrees east [along the west side of the new road] thence south eleven degrees and fifteen minutes East... to the land of the aforesaid Isaac Cortelyou.

This parcel includes the southern section of the present day Clove Road within Block 1309, with a more north-south orientation. Finally, the southernmost section of the new

road, adjoining the land of the County Farm, was purchased from Isaac Cortelyou for the sum of \$65.00 (Kings County Deeds 29:237). A schematic diagram of the road purchase is shown below, with the current project area circled (scale is 1:1000 feet).



The new road was unnamed and was variously referred to as the "Road to the County Farm," "Poor House Road," or "Road leading to the Poor House in Flatbush" in other land documents and maps (see e.g. Kings County Deeds 142:411 and Filed Map # 796, Vol. 28:23). By 1855, it was labeled on the Perris map (Figure 4.12) as "Canarsie Ave." and in 1860 the Higginson map of Flatbush (Figure 4.13) labeled it for the first time as "Clove Road."

It appears from the 1830 deeds that the location of the intersection of the new road and the old Clove Road (Bedford-Flatbush Road) was undeveloped at that time. The Hassler and Sidney maps (Figures 4.9 and 4.10) depict development in the vicinity by the 1840s, however. A row of structures is shown on the north side of the Bedford-Flatbush Road immediately to the west of the project site and one structure is shown on the northeast side of the intersection. The latter was labeled "French's Tavern" on the 1849 Sidney map. A Thomas French is listed in directories from 1848/49 through 1860 as a grocer or hotel/tavern keeper at Clove Road in Bedford, with locations given variously as "Malbone's vale," "n. New Lots rd.," "Malbonville," "n. Nostrand av.," "n. Carrol," "n. President," and "n. Montgomery" (Hearne 1848/49 through 1853/54; Smith 1854/55 through 1856/57; Lain 1859, 1860). While it is possible this structure was within Block 1309, it is more likely it was located slightly to the north. It is not known when the structures depicted in the 1840s were built, but it seems likely they followed upon the opening of the County institutions and the new road. Strong (1842:3) noted that the

Lefferts Farm included two brick kilns, but these were apparently located away from the project area (one had given its name to the "Stone Bakery Pond" located to the west, shown of Figures 4.6, 4.7, 4.9, 4.10, and 4.11).

The Vanderbilts sold the tract on the Brooklyn side of the Poor House Road to Ralph Malbone in 1843 (Kings County Deeds 115:219; Figures 4.12 and 4.15 show the Malbone land). Malbone was sued in 1846 and the tract was picked up by William Van Cott in Chancery proceedings (Kings County Deeds 142:411). In 1859, Elias E. Aaron purchased the property in a Sheriff's sale (Kings County Deeds 775:75), and in 1867 he had it surveyed into lots (Figure 4.14). Malbone and Montgomery Streets had been laid out by 1852 (Figure 4.11). Development of the lots was slow, but had begun by 1888, when two dwellings stood on the east side of present-day Clove Road (Figure 4.16).

The Lefferts farm in Flatbush was also sold off and surveyed into lots over the second half of the 19th century, but the Flatbush side of the Poor House Road (present-day Clove Road) in Block 1309 remained undeveloped through the 1890s (Figures 4.17 and 4.18). The street grids of Brooklyn and Flatbush met at the patent line, and the changing street layout and skewed angles shown on the late 19th-century maps reflect the joining of the two grids. Paper streets, planned to cross Block 1309 north to south, were never opened. The road to the County Farm was labeled as either "Canarsie Avenue" or "Clove Road," continuing to run southeastward at an angle to the grid. The original Clove Road, now usually labeled as either "(Clove)" or "Old Bedford Road," was straightened and subsumed within the grid.

20th Century Development

Figures 4.19 through 4.24 depict the 20th-century development of Block 1309. Many of the surveyed lots on the west side of Clove Road were consolidated into larger parcels and developed for commercial use. The east side of the block was always more residential. Sometime between 1912 and 1932, two residences were built at the northern end of Clove Road, with garages sited within the roadway itself (Figure 4.21). These garages, concrete block single-story structures, remained in the roadway through at least 1972 (Figures 4.22 and 4.33). Clearly the road had fallen into disuse, even though the city officially opened it and established legal grades in 1926/27/30 (Kings County Filed Map #s 2028, 5341 [neither map located]; Brooklyn Borough President's Office, Topographic Bureau). The houses and garages at the northeast end of Clove Road had been demolished by 1982.

Water lines were laid in present-day Empire Boulevard and Nostrand Avenue by 1904 (Figure 4.20). By 1932, water lines were depicted in Montgomery Street, and sometime between 1932 and 1972 they also had been laid in Malbone Street and in Clove Road from Malbone Street south. The northern segment of Clove Road did not receive water lines, since all of the structures on the block could tap the lines in surrounding streets.

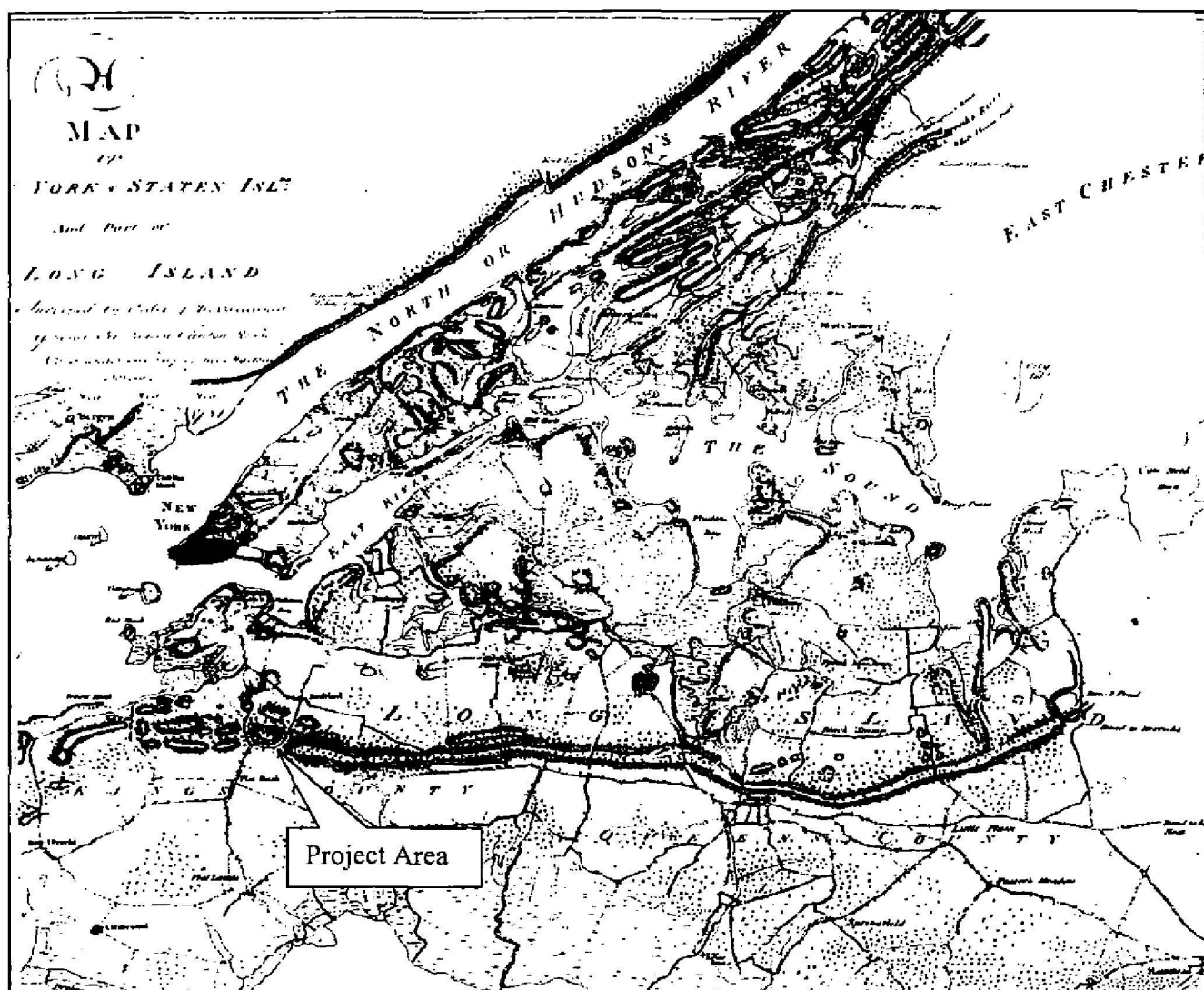


Figure 4.1. Taylor, George and Andrew Skinner. *A Map of New York & Staten Islds And Part of Long Island*. 1781.



Figure 4.2. Detail from the Taylor and Skinner map, 1781, showing the project area along the Clove Road at the south end of the Bedford Pass. The Flatbush or Battle Pass crosses the hills to the west of the Clove Road, in what is now Prospect Park.

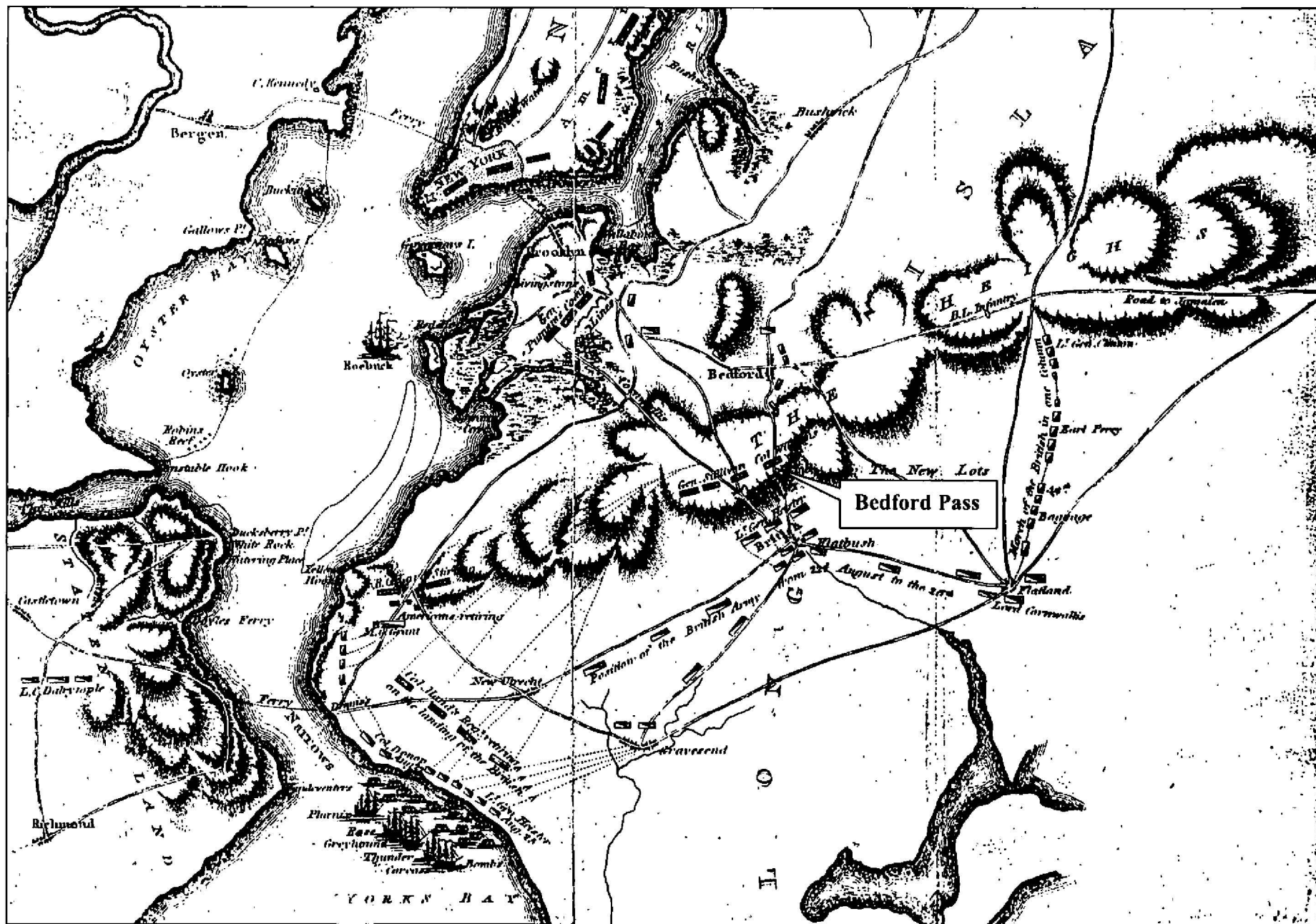


Figure 4.3. *A Plan of New York Island, Part of Long Island &c Showing the Position of the American & British Armies, before, at, and after the Engagement on the Heights, Aug. 27th, 1776.*

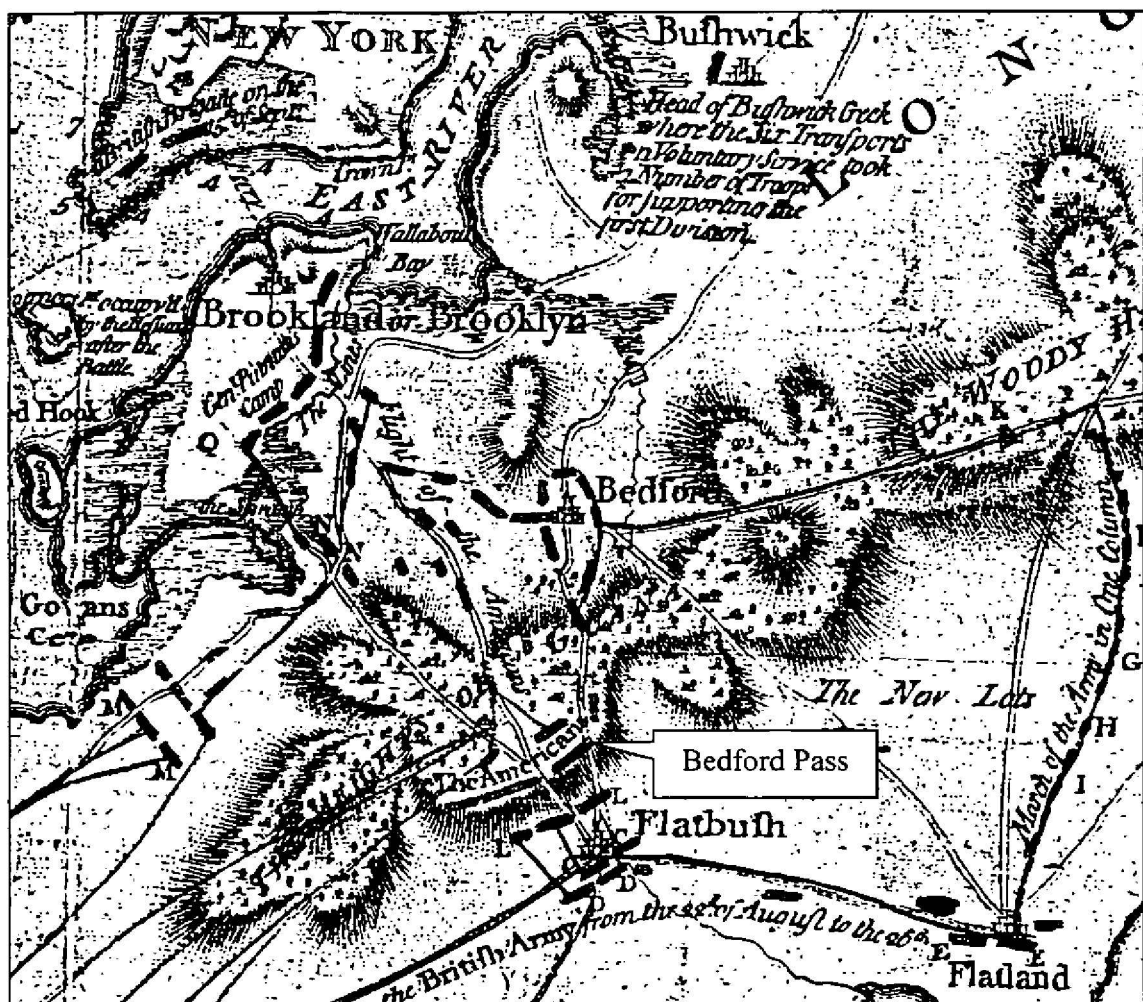


Figure 4.4. Faden, William. Detail from *A Plan of New York Island, with part of Long Island, Staten Island & East New Jersey*. 1776.

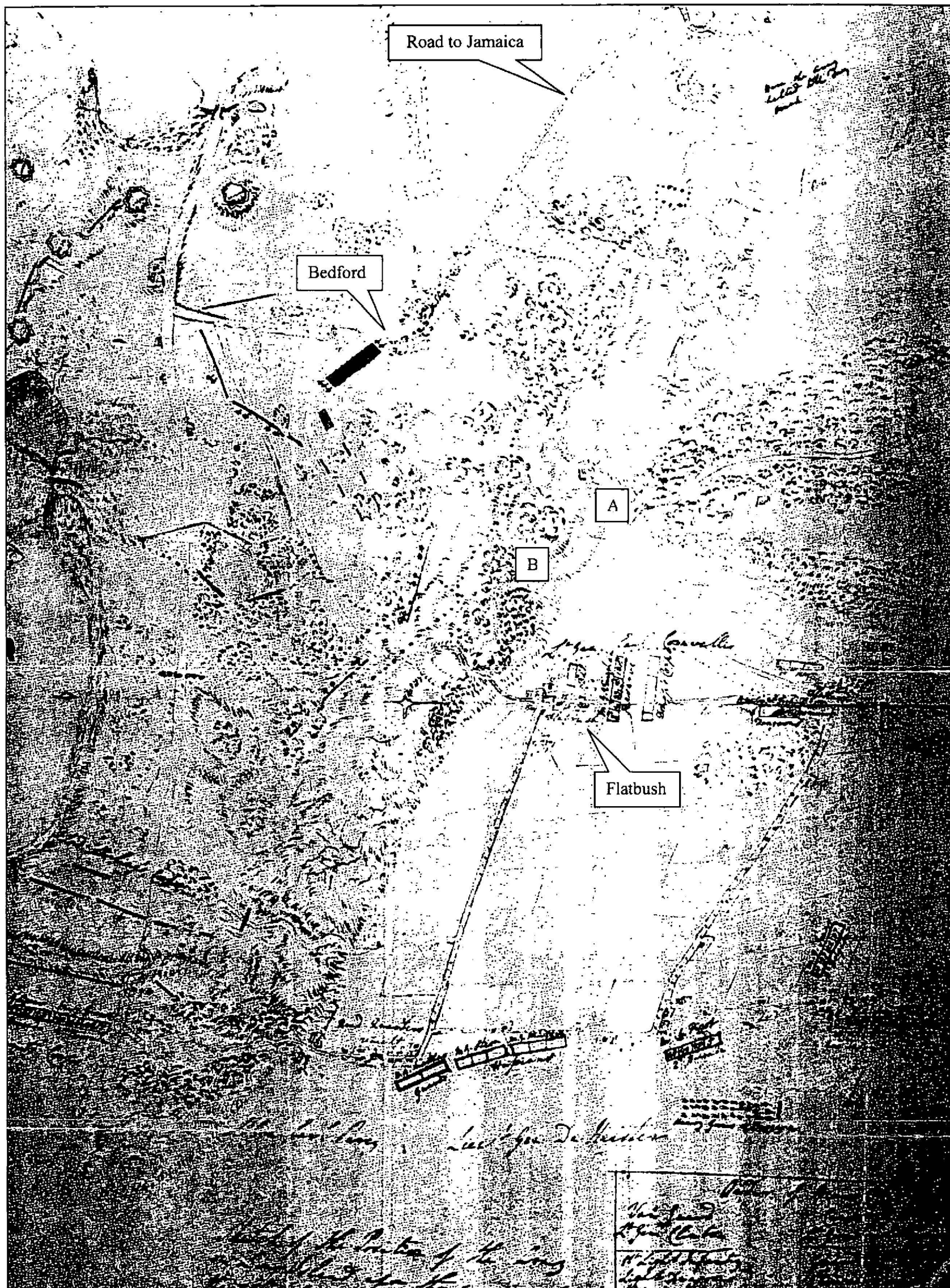


Figure 4.5. Rawdon, Francis. *Sketch of the Position of the Army on Long Island upon the morning of the 26th of August 1776; with the march on the ensuing night and the action of the 27th. 1776.* The letters A and B indicate possible locations of the Bedford Pass.

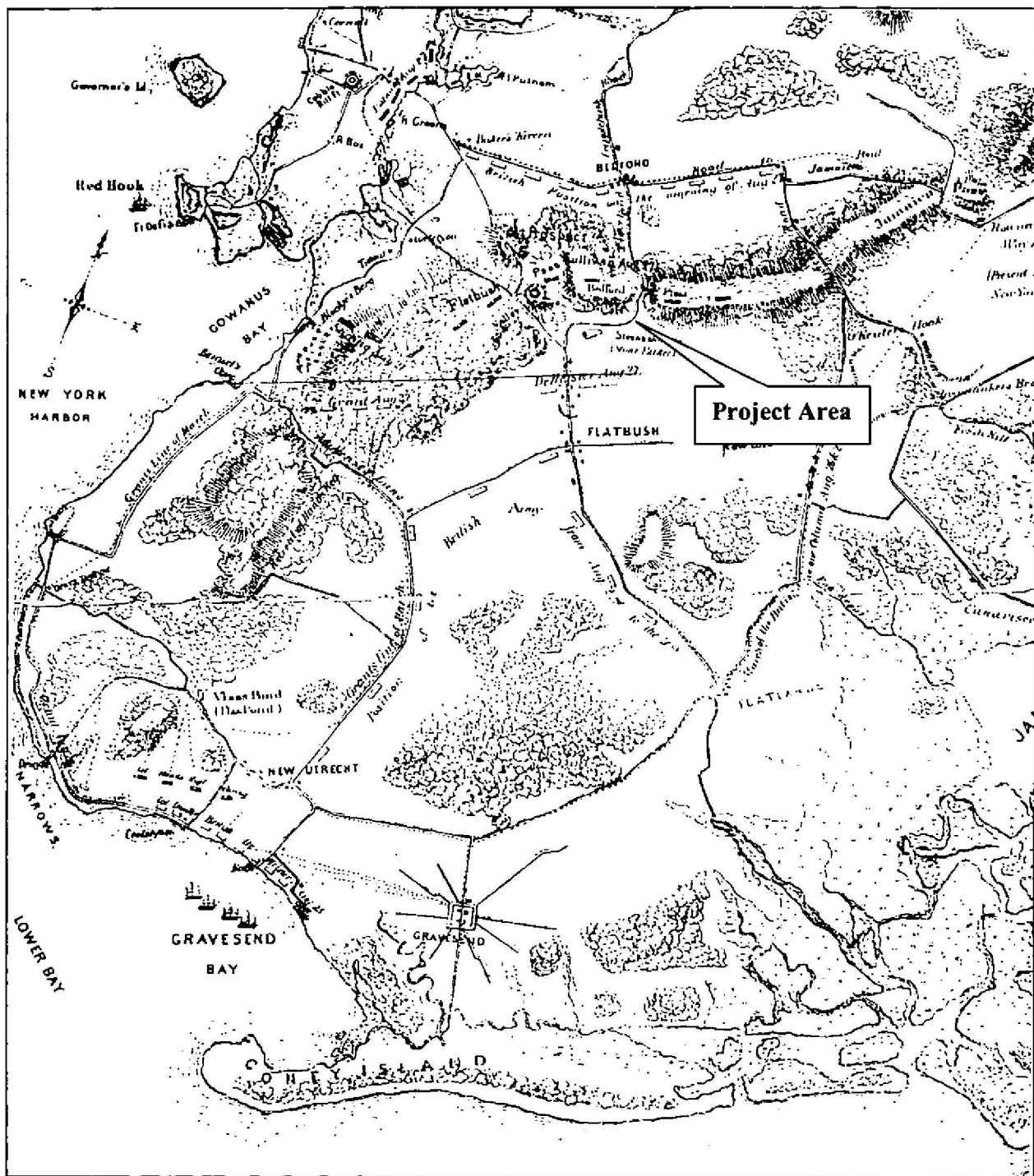
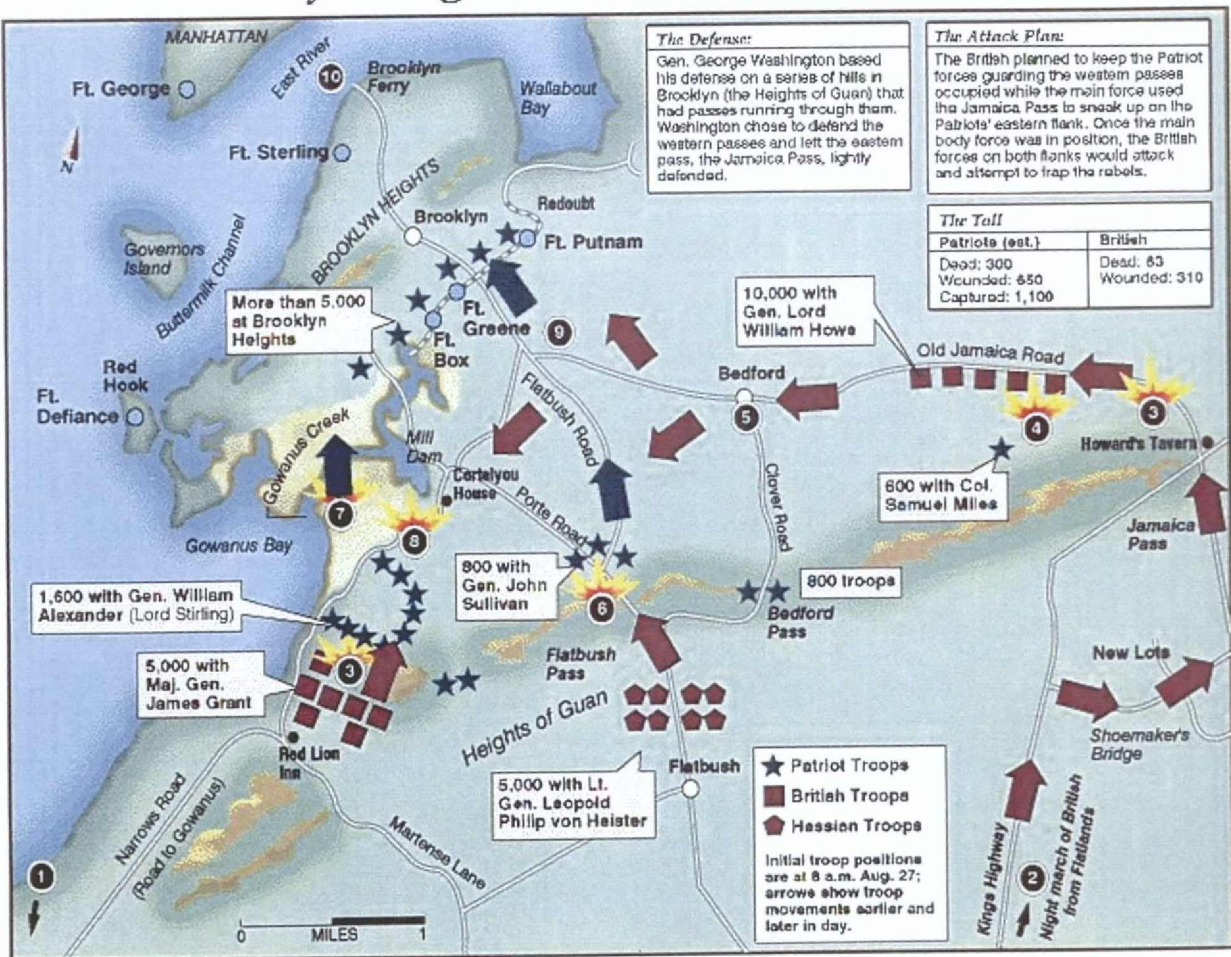


Figure 4.6. Stiles, Henry. "Plan of the Battle of Brooklyn." In *History of Kings County*, 1867.



Figure 4.7. Johnston, Henry P. *Plan of the Battle of Long Island and of the Brooklyn Defences August 27th, 1776.* 1878.

The Battle of Long Island



SOURCE: "The Battle of Brooklyn 1776," First Division Museum at Cantigny; Cowie's History Group; "The British Army in America 1775-1783," "George Washington's Army," Long Island Historical Society; "Early American Wars and Military Institutions," "Rebels and Redcoats," "Encyclopedia of American History," Williamsburg Savings Bank, World Book Encyclopedia; "The Battle of Long Island"

Figure 4.8. Account of the Battle of Long Island from *Newsday*. Source: www.lihistory.com/4/gbatt281.htm (Copyright Newsday, Inc.)

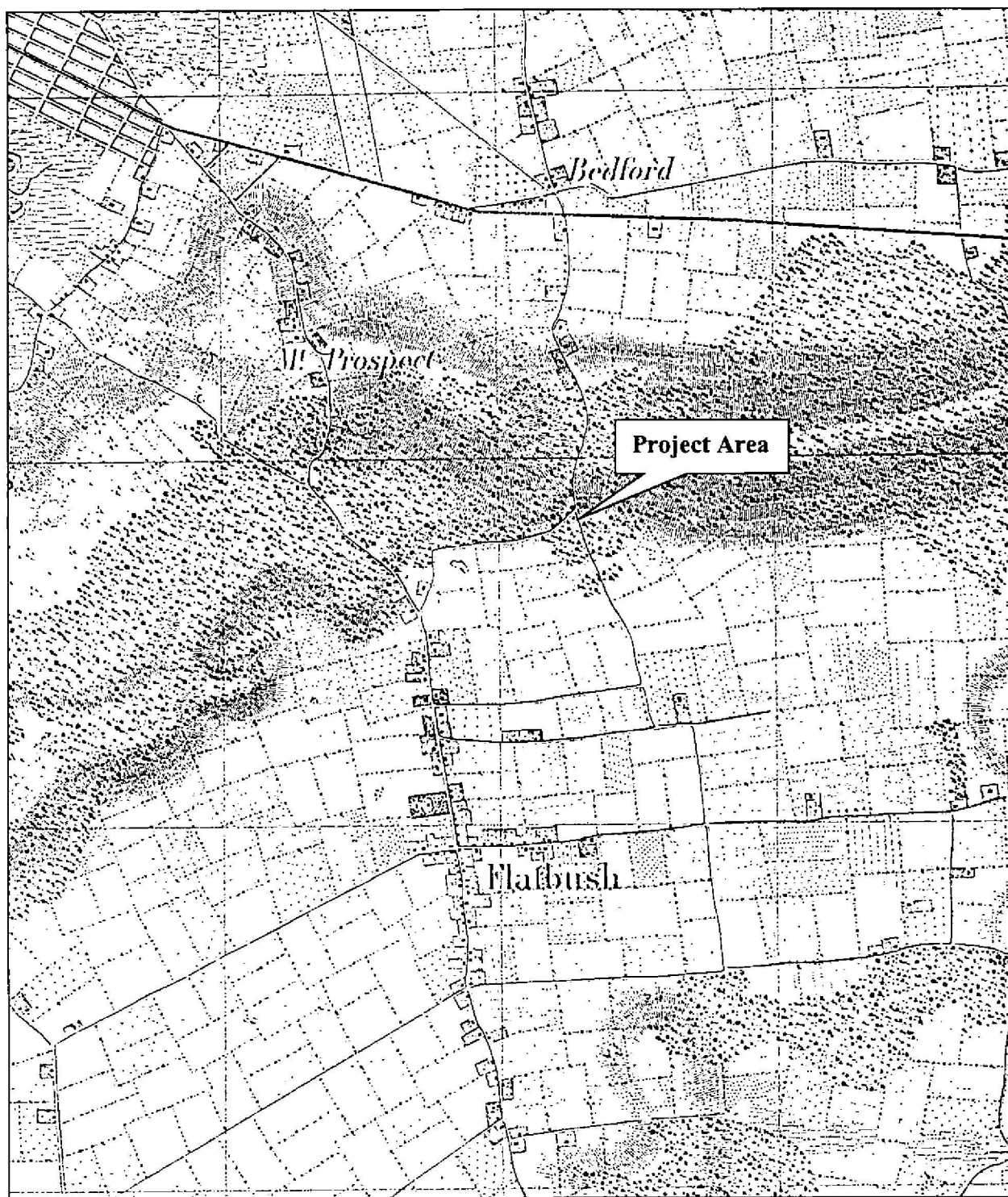


Figure 4.9. Hassler, F.R. *Map of New York Bay and Harbor and Environs*. 1845.



Figure 4.10. Sidney, J.C. *Sidney's Map of Twelve Miles Around New York*. 1849. The project area is on the road connecting the Asylum, Poor House, and County Hospital (shown to the south in Flatbush) with the old Clove Road. "French's Tavern" is shown on the east side of the intersection.

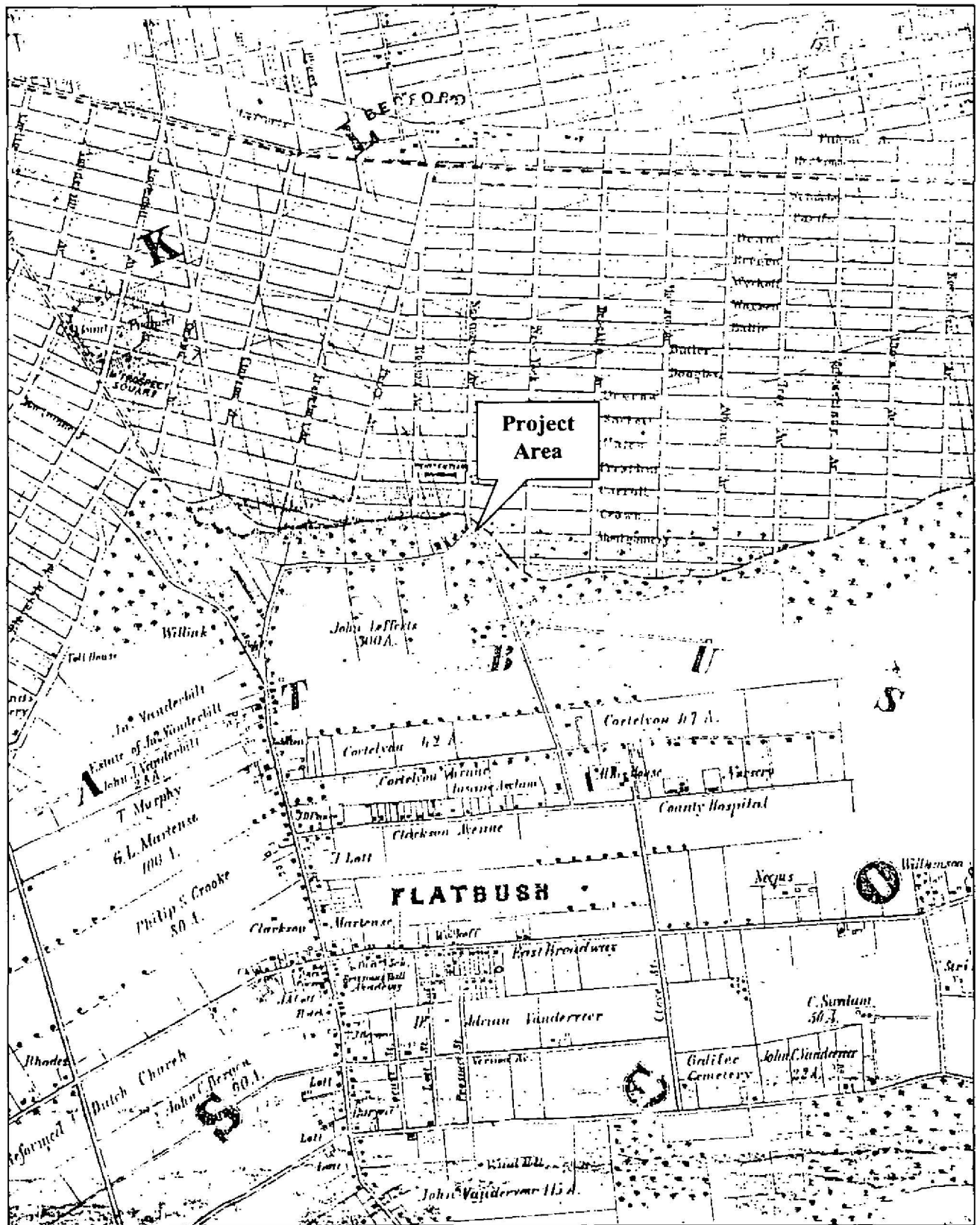


Figure 4.11. Conner, R.F.O. *Map of Kings and part of Queens Counties. 1852.*

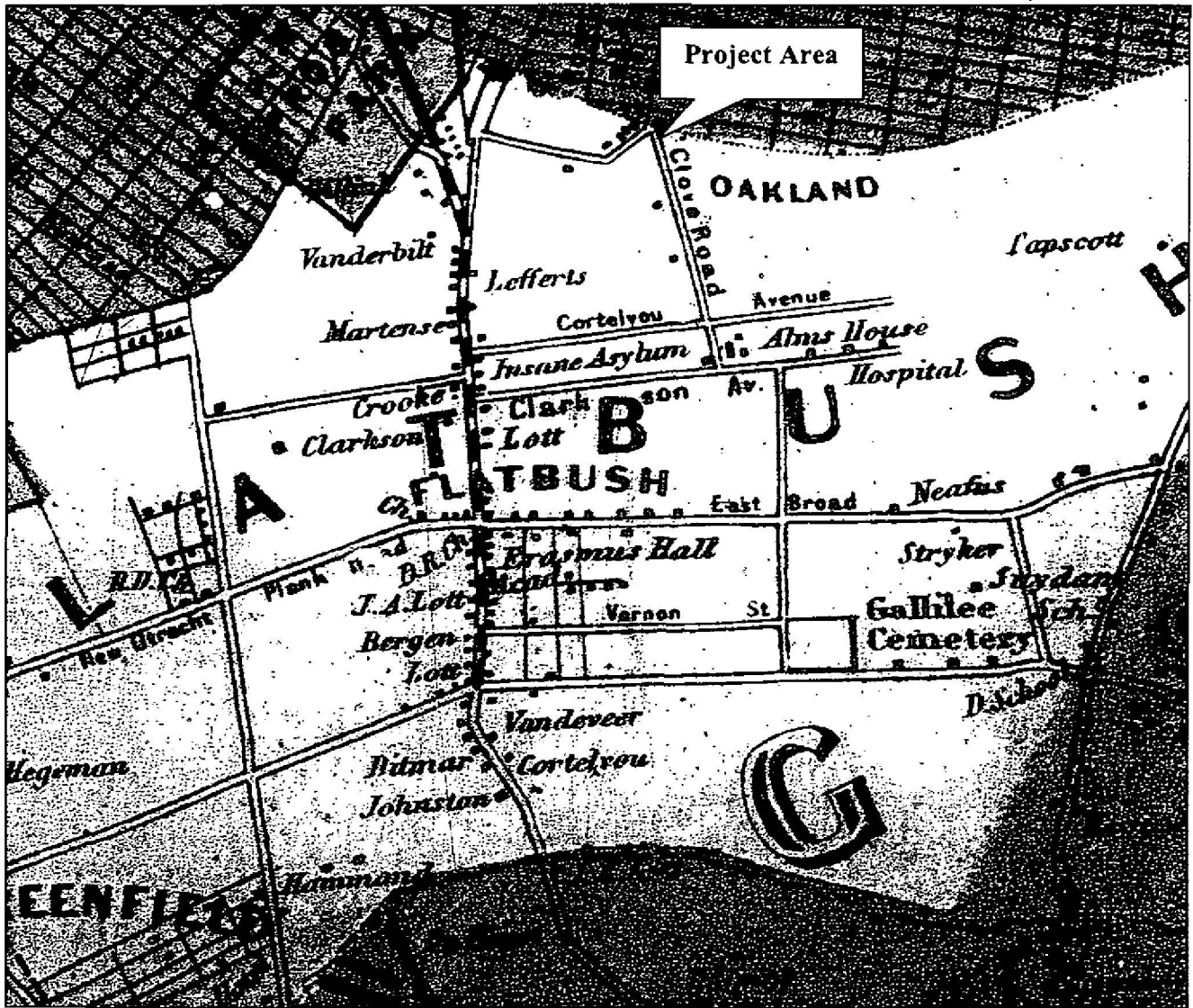


Figure 4.13. Higginson, J.H. *Higginson's Map of Kings and a Large Part of Queens Counties. 1860.*

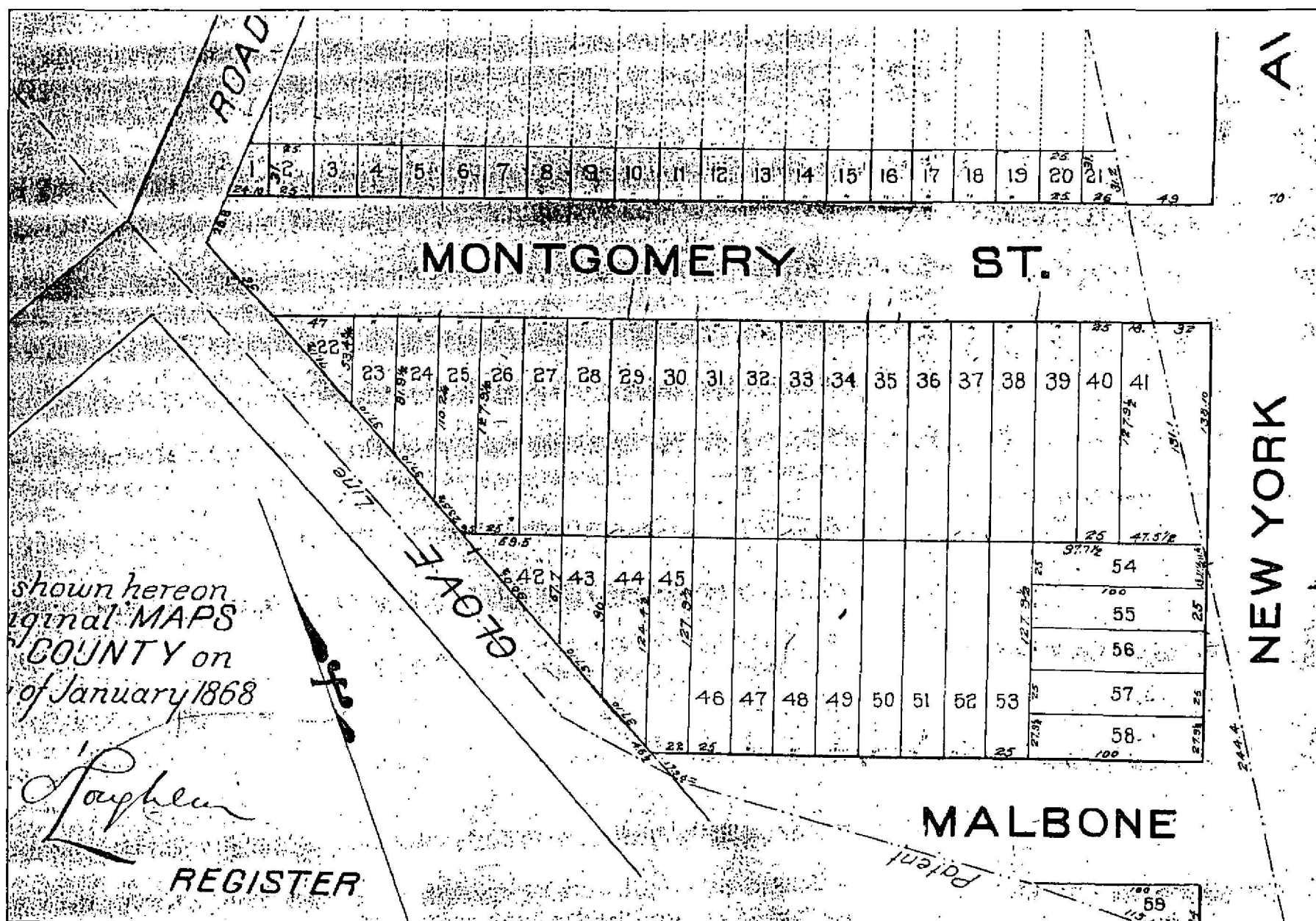


Figure 4.14. Butt, Richard, City Surveyor. Map of land of Elias E. Aaron. 1868 (Filed Map No. 760).

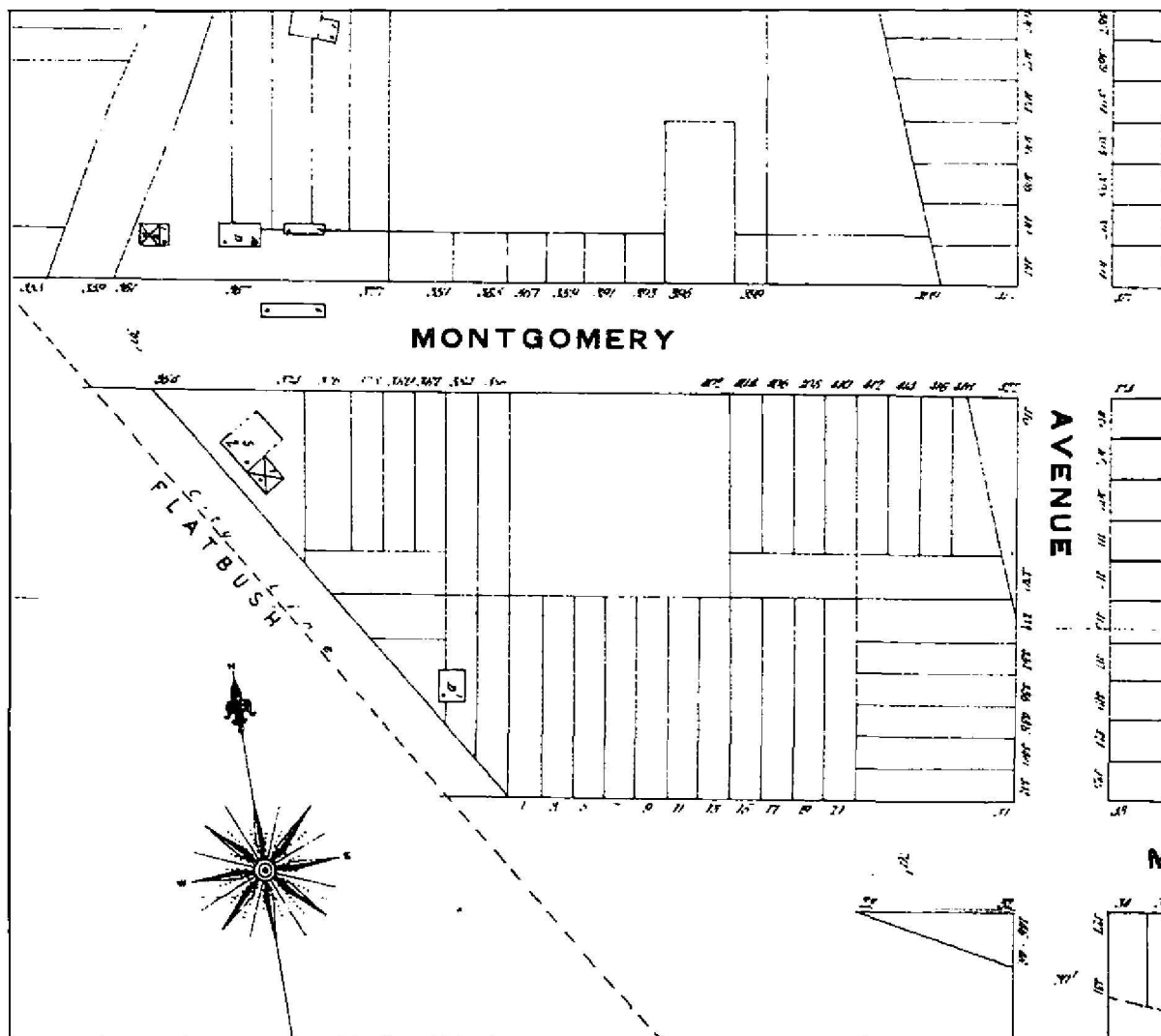


Figure 4.16. Sanborn Map Company. *Insurance Maps of Brooklyn, NY*, Vol. 7. 1888. Present-day Clove Road is the diagonal street at lower left, its center line the boundary between Flatbush and Brooklyn.

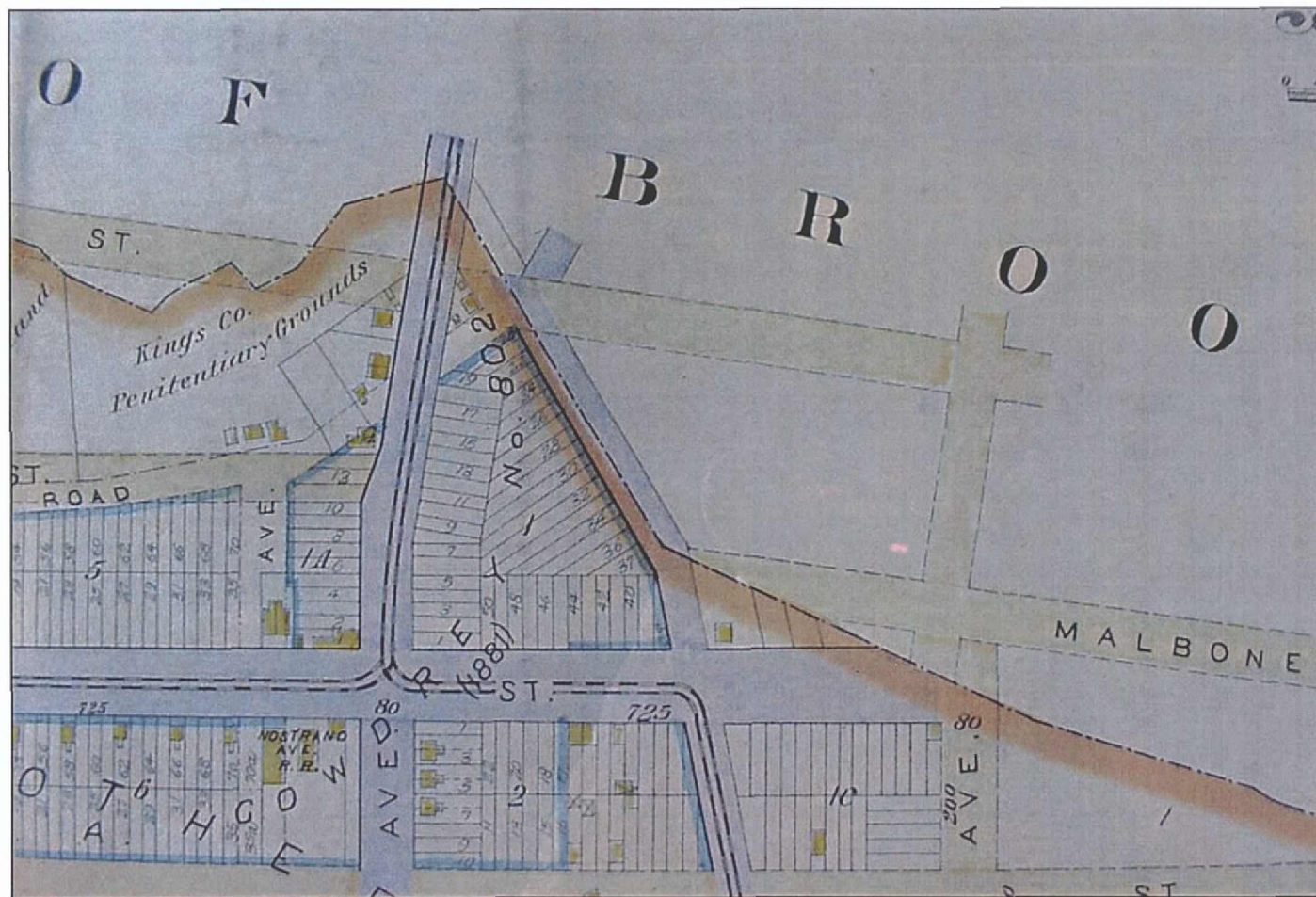


Figure 4.17. Robinson, E. *Part of the Town of Flatbush, Kings Co., New York*. 1890. Present-day Clove Road is the diagonal street at center. Lots had been laid out on the Flatbush side of the road. The alignment of the old Clove Road (Bedford-Flatbush Road) is clearly shown at upper left.

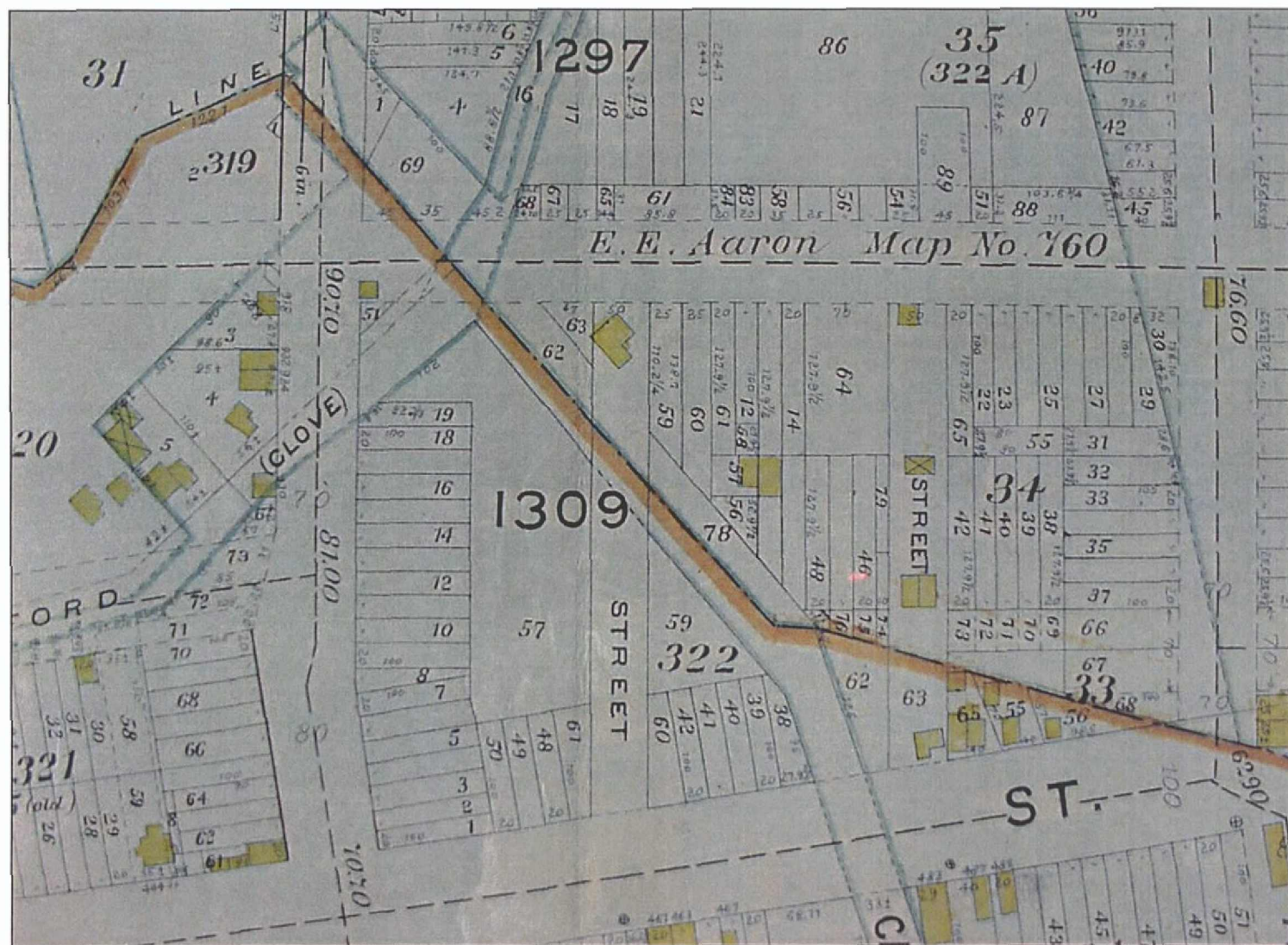


Figure 4.18. Hyde, E. Belcher. *Atlas of the Borough of Brooklyn of the City of New York*. Vol. 1, Plate 16. 1898. The present-day Clove Road, called Canarsie Avenue, runs southeast to northwest through Block 1309, meeting the original Bedford (Clove) Road, shown running southwest to northeast. Two north-south unnamed paper streets through the block were never opened.

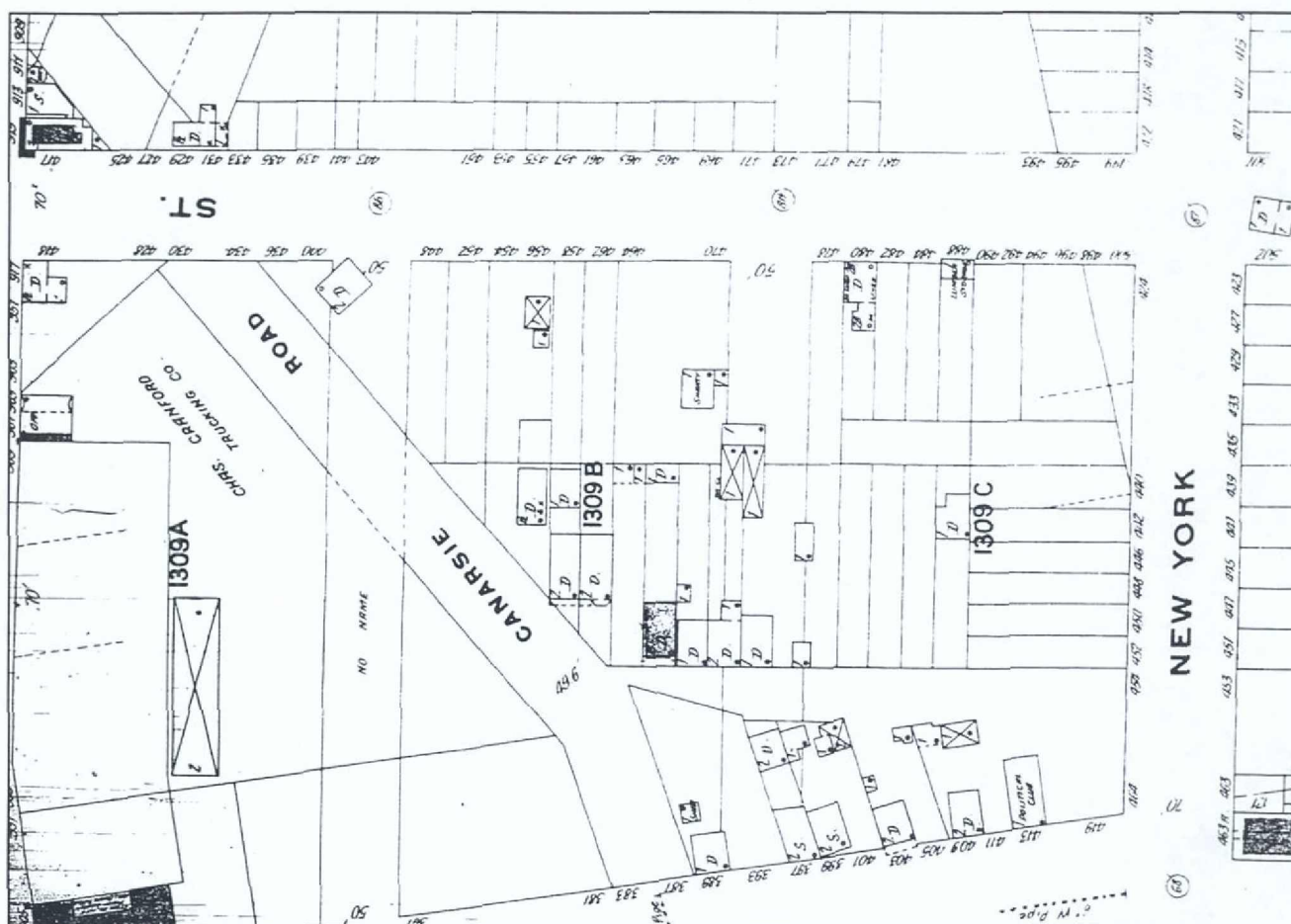


Figure 4.19. Sanborn Map Co. *Insurance Maps of Brooklyn, NY*. Vol. 7. 1908.

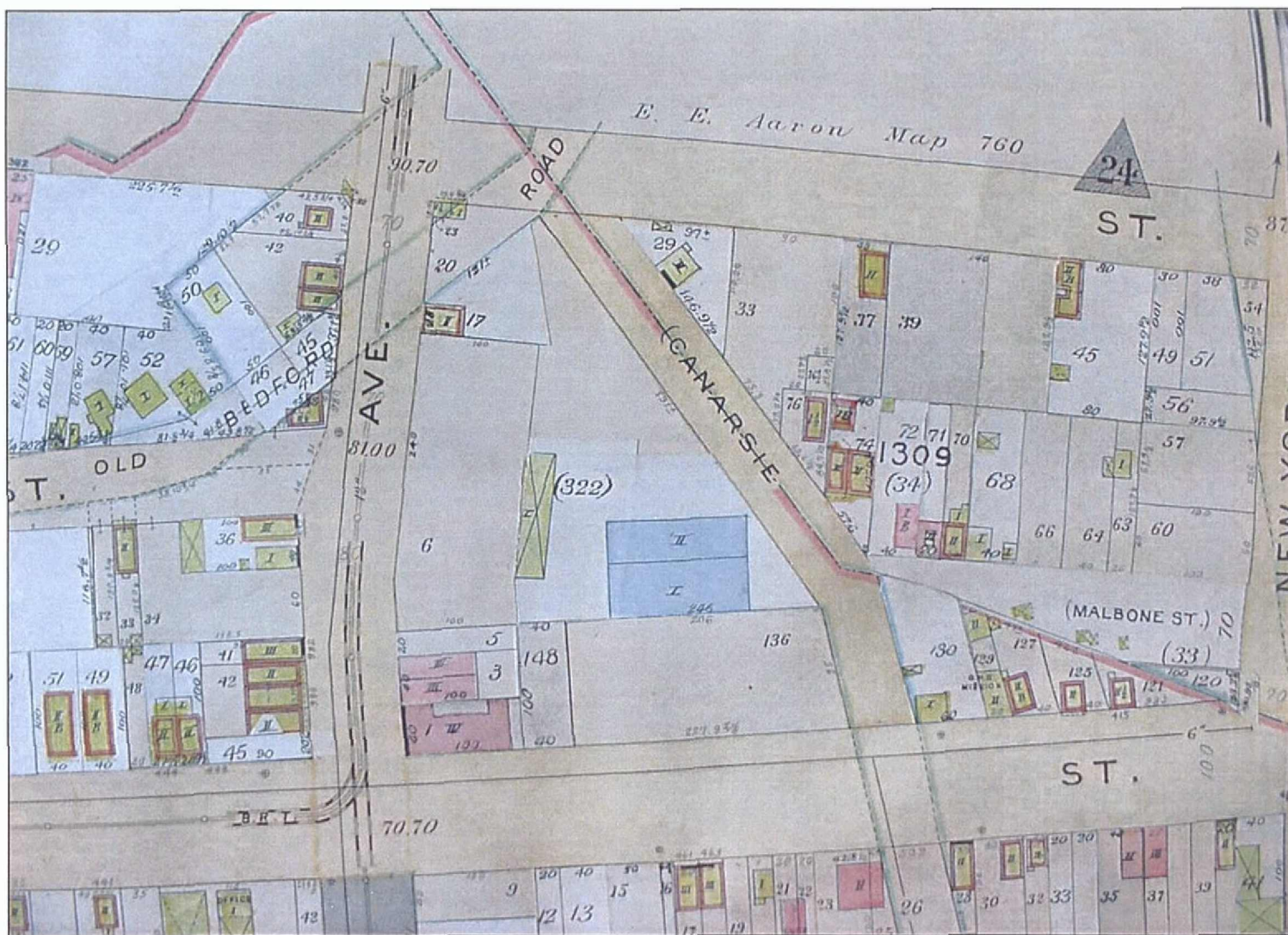


Figure 4.20. Hyde, E. Belcher. *Atlas of the Borough of Brooklyn of the City of New York*. Plate 26. 1904 updated to 1912. The Brooklyn-Flatbush boundary is still shown (center line of Canarsie Avenue, now Clove Road), and the alignment of the "Old Bedford Road" is still mapped.

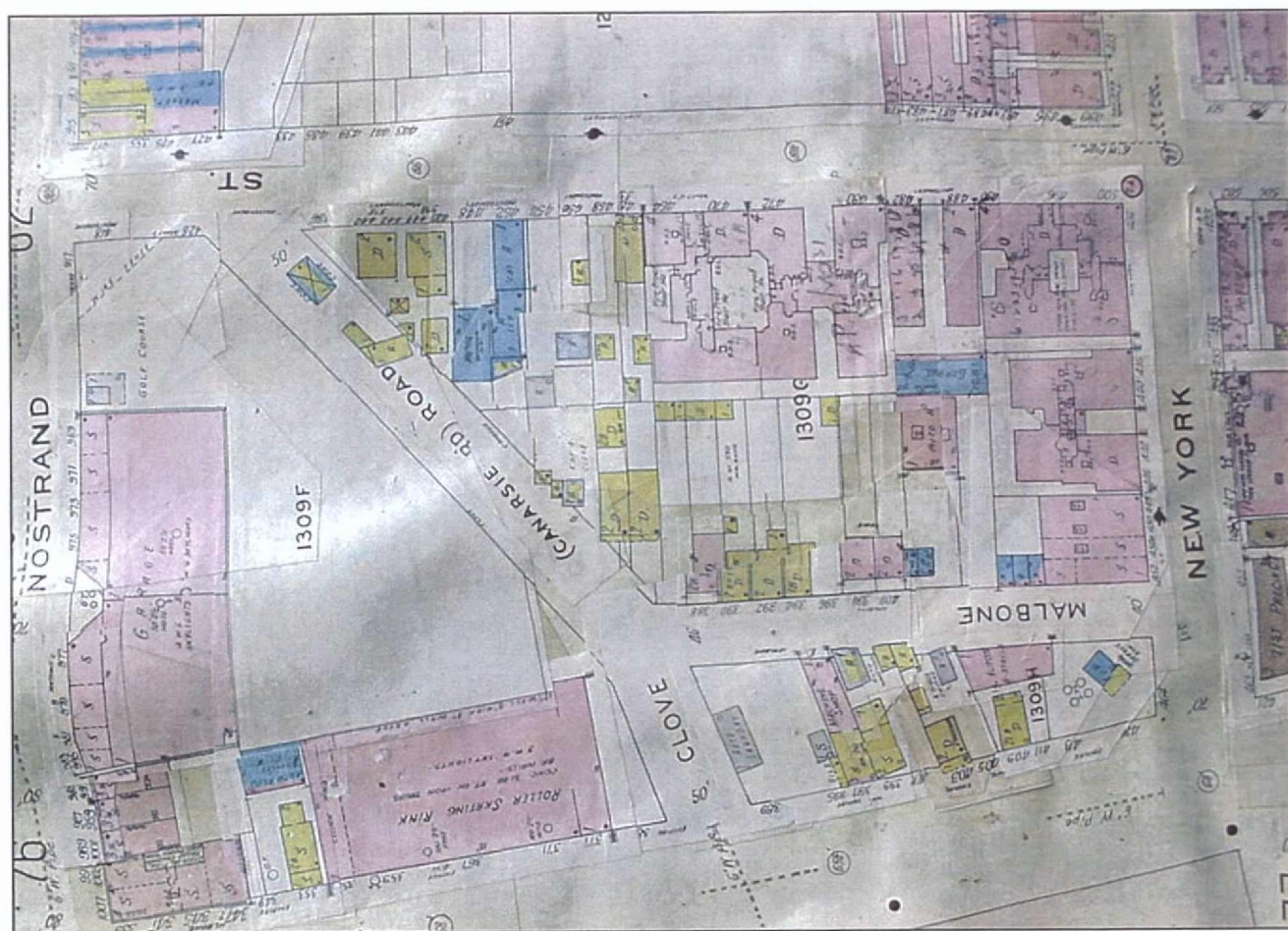


Figure 4.21. Sanborn Map Co. *Insurance Maps of Brooklyn, NY*. Vol. 7, Plate 68. 1932.



Figure 4.22. Sanborn Map Co., *Insurance Maps of Brooklyn, NY*. Vol. 7, Plate 68. 1972.

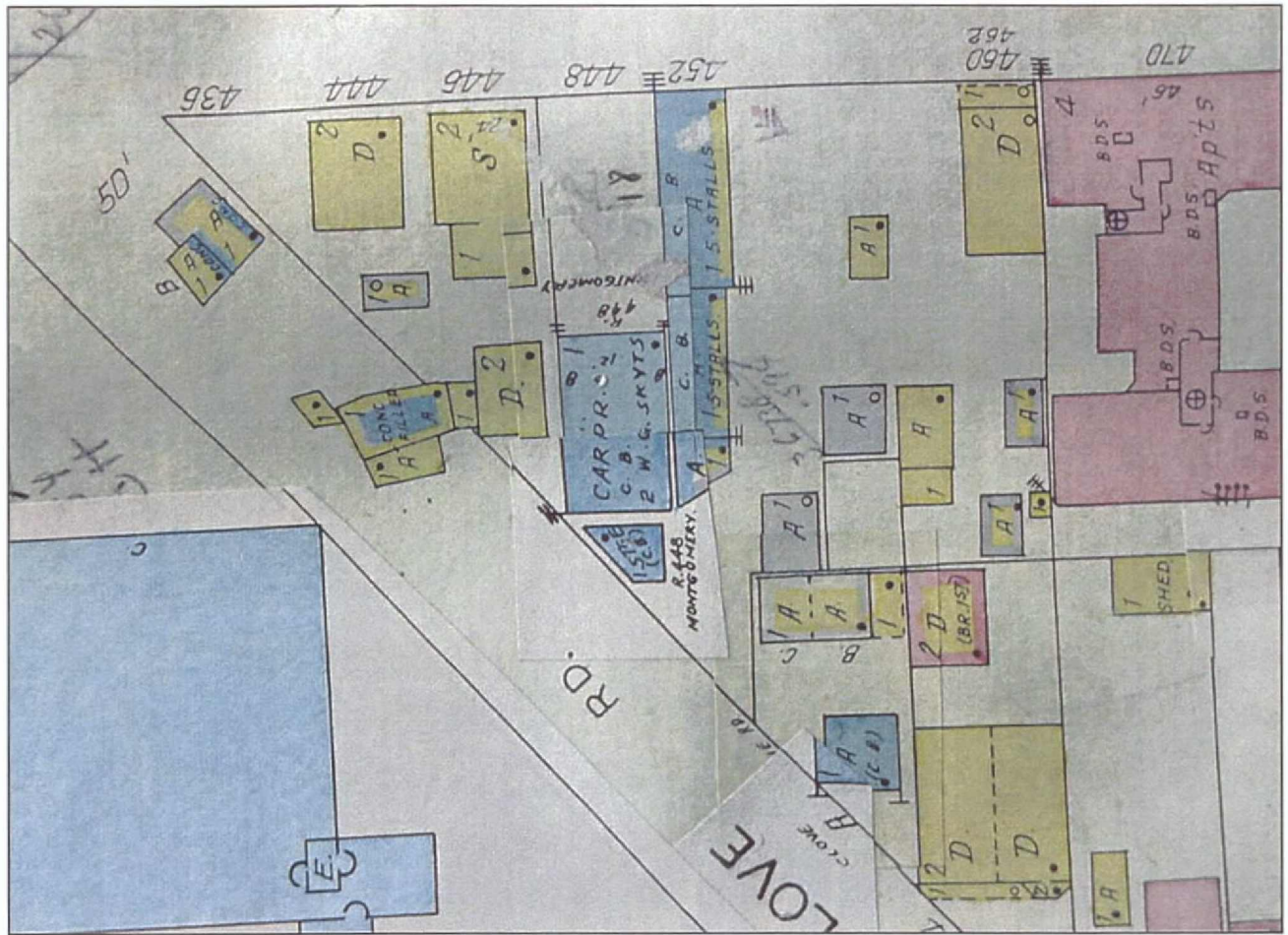


Figure 4.23. Detail of 1972 Sanborn map showing the north end of Clove Road.

5. CURRENT CONDITIONS

The existing conditions on Clove Road are shown in Figure 1.4 and Plates 5.1 through 5.6. The total length of Clove Road from Empire Boulevard to Montgomery Street is approximately 500 feet. The street currently has a 50-foot right-of-way width, and the roadway width varies from approximately 17 feet near Montgomery Street to 40 feet near Empire Boulevard. No new right-of-way is expected to be acquired for the proposed improvements. The southern section of the street (from Empire to 150 feet north of the Malbone Street intersection) is asphalt paved. The northern section is paved partly with asphalt and partly with cobblestones. The latter cover the western half of the roadway from Montgomery southward for 100 feet. South of that point asphalt is mixed with cobblestone paving on the west half of the street. The east half of the street in the northern section is currently covered with gravel and dirt. The only sidewalks along Clove Road extend northward from the Malbone Street intersection northward for 140 feet, on both sides of the street. The roadway and the sidewalk on the west side of the street are in poor condition, while the sidewalk on the east side of the street is in good condition.

Water and sewer lines are present beneath the southern segment of Clove Road only (from the intersection with Malbone Street to Empire Boulevard; see Figures 1.4, 4.22, and 4.24). Gas lines extend beneath the northern segment.

A comparison of current elevations with legal grades recorded in 1930 (Brooklyn Borough President's Office, Topographic Bureau) indicates that the street level has not changed substantially in the past 70 years (Figure 1.4). Soil borings indicate that at least several feet of "fill" underlie the street (Soil Mechanics Drilling Corp. 2000). Five-foot deep borings were done at either end of the street, and a 30-foot deep boring was placed halfway between Montgomery Street and the intersection with Malbone Street. The northern boring indicated "sand, silt, gravel and cinder" to a depth of five feet (the extent of the test), and the southern boring indicated the same fill to four feet. The deeper boring produced fill containing "sand, silt, gravel, wood, brick" to a depth of eight feet, followed by brown silty sand with a trace of gravel to thirteen feet.



Plate 5.1. View down Clove Road from Montgomery Street.

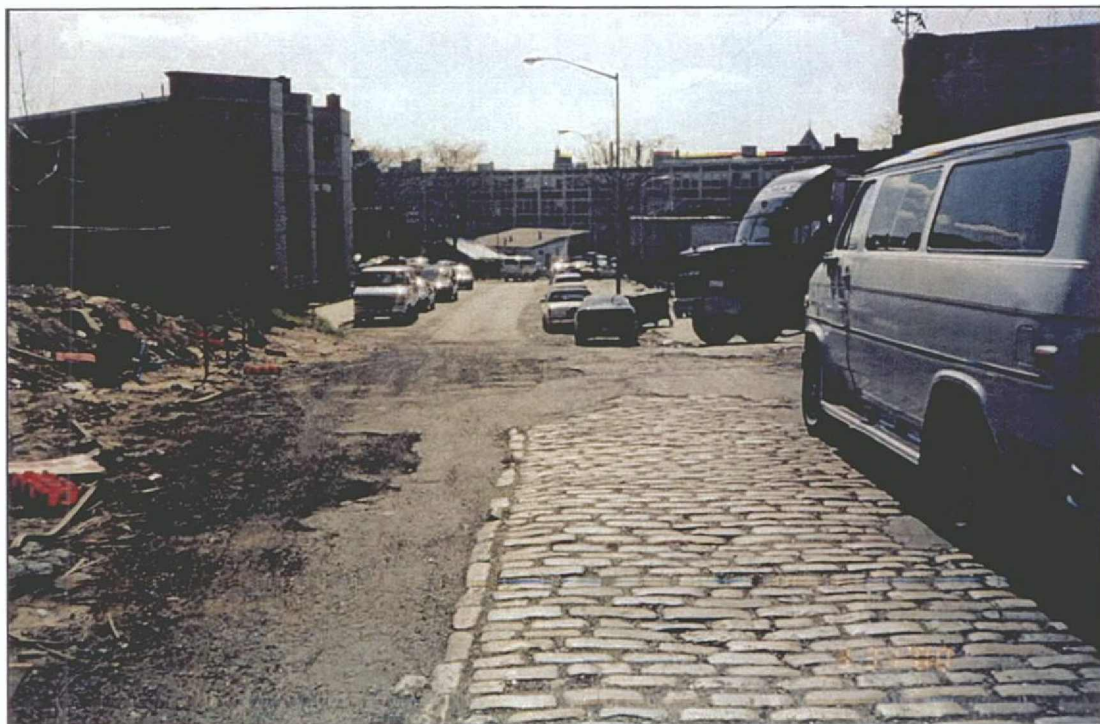


Plate 5.2. View to south along Clove Road.



Plate 5.3. View of east side of Clove Road from near the north end of the street.



Plate 5.4 View south from Malbone St. toward Empire Blvd. Manhole at left.



Plate 5.5 Door is at the northeast corner of brick church. View is to west opposite Malbone Street.



Plate 5.6. Truck is emerging from the supermarket, west side of Clove Road.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The project area, consisting of the right-of-way of Clove Road between Empire Boulevard on the south and Montgomery Street on the north, is of historic significance on two accounts:

- 1) Its northern terminus intersects the alignment of the original Clove Road at the Bedford Pass, an important locale during the Revolutionary War Battle of Brooklyn.
- 2) It is the only surviving remnant of the road laid out in 1830 as a connector between two nodes of a new, County-wide system of public welfare institutions, having the Alms House/ Hospital/Asylum complex at the south end and the Penitentiary at the north end.

The proposed improvements project will have subsurface effects only within the road right-of-way itself, not within the flanking properties or related properties that are further removed. Therefore, only the potential for deposits at or beneath the road surface is considered. Since 1830, when it was first laid out, the northern section of the road has never been subjected to invasive disturbances for utility installation, large building foundations, or basements. Even the garages that stood within the roadway in the 20th century were constructed at grade and may have had little impact greater than a foot or two deep. The road itself, then, may have served to protect deposits from earlier periods. As discussed in Section 5 above, soil boring data indicate that five to eight feet of "fill," (strata bearing cultural material, including wood and brick fragments) underlie the northern segment of the roadbed. This "fill" may represent archaeological deposits. Overall archaeological potential is viewed as moderate, a function of the small site area and the type of site that might reasonably be expected in this location.

The possibility for prehistoric deposits cannot be ruled out, though no evidence of habitation in the vicinity has come to light. The limited project area and the lack of known sites in the vicinity or natural features seen as favorable for prehistoric Native American habitation (especially water resources) diminish the archaeological potential of the project area.

There is some potential for historic-period deposits that might yield information important to Revolutionary War research. Evidence, however ephemeral, of an encampment at this location would enhance our understanding of the American defenses at Brooklyn and provide a glimpse of the material aspect of camp life in the earliest months of the war. It would also serve to better pinpoint the defensive position at the pass, and, if there were evidence of fighting at this location, our understanding of the details of the battle's progress would be enhanced. As noted above (Section 4), the precise fate of the troops that guarded the Bedford Pass is not known. Because of intense

urban development and alterations in topography, within the current landscape the "Bedford Pass" does not possess sufficient integrity to meet National Register eligibility under Criterion A (association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history). If, however, archaeological deposits attributable to the encampment or battle are present, both Criteria A (association with significant events) and D (the potential to yield information important in history) should be considered applicable.

Clove Road itself appears to be eligible for the National Register under Criterion A based on its association with the establishment of Kings County's 19th-century public institutions, the Alms House, Hospital, Asylum, and Penitentiary, an event that significantly contributed to the broad pattern of New York's urban history. It is the only surviving remnant of a road that pre-dated the urban grid, representing this part of Brooklyn in a time when it was still rural in character, far enough removed from the city to render it suitable for housing the sick, insane, and criminal. As the metropolis expanded into the surrounding sub-urban lands in the mid- to late-19th-century, the road became an anomaly, though it remained in use through the turn of the century. What remains of Clove Road, despite (or perhaps because of) the nature of surrounding development, is experienced as a very distinctive place within the modern city, though its genesis in the shifting of civic functions from town to county, and in the development of centralized institutions of social control in response to a rapidly growing population, is virtually unknown. The road possesses integrity of location, for it is unchanged from 1830 and remains to this day aligned toward the Kings County Hospital, and possibly integrity of material, which can be confirmed through archaeology.

Finally, with restoration and interpretive goals in mind, there is a good potential for archaeology to provide information on the original 1830s road, for instance the width and nature of surface treatment (the Belgian block may have been preceded by cobbles or cinder).

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

A limited program of archaeological testing is recommended in order to determine whether deposits are in fact present beneath the current surface. The recommended scope of work is as follows.

Test units should be excavated at the northern end of Clove Road, adjacent to the original Bedford-Flatbush Road (the Bedford Pass) and away from known disturbances that begin at the Malbone Street intersection. The garage footprints should be avoided to reduce the amount of demolition rubble expected in the upper layer of fill. A long trench should be considered, placed perpendicular to the road alignment so as to provide an adequate cross section and obtain information about the development of the road itself. In this case, the trench can be opened, recorded, and back filled within a single day to reduce disruption of the use of the street.

If the testing indicates that archaeological resources are extant within the right-of-way, the resources will need to be evaluated for significance and integrity. In this evaluation, the following should be considered (see Section 6 above): the potential of the site to yield information on Native American habitation and the Revolutionary War Battle of Brooklyn, and the integrity of the original road.

A determination should then be made as to whether planned improvements to the road and sidewalks will affect significant resources. A full report of findings and recommendations of the testing phase of work should be submitted to the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

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APPENDIX

Community Board No. 9 Correspondence

Howson, Jean

From: Pearl Miles [pearlmiles@mindspring.com]

Sent: Wednesday, June 12, 2002 2:48 PM

To: jhowson@rbagroup.com

Subject: Clove Road

Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, June 18th 2002, at 5:30 p.m., 890 Nostrand Avenue, Brooklyn, between President and Carroll Street. Please email with any questions or concerns.

Pearl Miles



ENGINEERS • ARCHITECTS • PLANNERS

Ms. Pearl R. Miles
District Manager
Community Board No. 9, Borough of Brooklyn
890 Nostrand Avenue
Brooklyn, New York 11225

Re: NYC DOT Capital Contract No. HWKP166, Reconstruction of Clove Road

Dear Ms. Miles:

I am writing regarding the Clove Road reconstruction project, for which The RBA Group, Inc., is performing the Preliminary Design Investigation. I'm sorry to have missed you when you returned my call, and will try again to reach you by phone.

I am conducting a documentary study to determine the archaeological potential of the project area. The study is limited in this phase to a review of maps and numerous kinds of documents and an examination of the site; recommendations for archaeological testing may result if the research indicates the possible presence of historically significant below-ground deposits.

Clove Road is a most interesting location, as you well know. I am looking forward to speaking with you about the research the Community Board has already compiled, and will gladly share with you my own findings and will provide a copy of my report to the Department of Transportation.

I can be reached at my office at 973-898-0300 or jhowson@rbagroup.com, or alternatively at 732-291-4106. Perhaps we can arrange a meeting (either in Brooklyn or at our Manhattan office in Union Square), for a day next week. Thank you for your continuing attention to this matter.

Very Truly Yours,

Jean Howson
Principal Archaeologist

Cc: Jamil Yousef, RBA



COMMUNITY BOARD No. 9

October 26, 2000

Howard Golden
Borough PresidentRabbi Jacob Goldstein
ChairmanPearl R. Miles
District ManagerKathie Keegan, P.E.
Borough Commissioner
Department of Transportation
44 Court Street
Brooklyn, NY 11201Re: Contract No. HWKP166 - Reconstruction
Of Clove Road and Malbone Street

Dear Commissioner Keegan:

As indicated to you in previous correspondence, Community Board #9 has discovered, through research of historic maps, books and documents, that Clove Road played a significant role in the American Revolution. As such, we are desirous of having the reconstruction of this roadway treated in a manner that will reflect its historic nature.

We are in discussion with the State of New York and our federal, state and city elected officials regarding the appropriation of funding to accomplish this task. In order to do so we need cost estimates for proposed amenities that the Board would like to see incorporated into the contract.

These amenities are as follows:

- An archeological dig to locate historic architectural artifacts dating back to Neolithic, pre-Colonial, Colonial, Revolutionary War, and 17th through 20th century periods.
- The existing cobblestones should be preserved for the installation of distinctive pavements in keeping with the historic nature of the roadway.
- Sidewalks should be widened and the roadway narrowed to deter vehicular traffic (the inclusion of traffic calming principles);
- Historic gas lighting, with the inclusion of moon lighting and other supplementary lighting to enhance the historic appearance of the area;

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May 22 '01 15:22 P.03

- Historic utility fixtures including fire hydrants and traffic signals;
- ✓ • Heritage trail markers;
- ✓ • The installation of historic bollards
- ✓ • The installation of benches;
- ✓ • The planting of trees and shrubs.
- ✓ • The addition of Percent for Art to commemorate this historic landmark quality site.

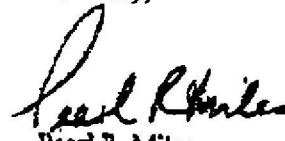
We are therefore requesting your agency's assistance with the provision of cost estimates for the incorporation of the above referenced amenities into the capital reconstruction project for Clove Road and Malbone Street - HWKP166

Thank you for your urgent attention to this matter.

Sincerely,


Rabbi Jacob Z. Goldstein
Chairman

Sincerely,


Pearl R. Miles
District Manager

Cc: Hon. Major Owens
Hon. Clarence Norman, Jr.
Hon. Howard Golden
Hon. Mary Pinkett



COMMUNITY BOARD No. 9

July 12, 2000

Howard Golden
Borough President

Rabbi Jacob Goldstein
Chairman

Pearl R. Miles
District Manager

Kathie Keegan, P.E.
Brooklyn Borough Commissioner
Department of Transportation
44 Court Street
Brooklyn, NY 11201

Re: Contract NO. HWKP166
Reconstruction of Malbone Street
And Clove Road in Brooklyn

THE RBA GROUP
RECEIVED

JUL 17 2000

FILE: _____
COPY TO: _____
ACTION: _____

Dear Commissioner Keegan:

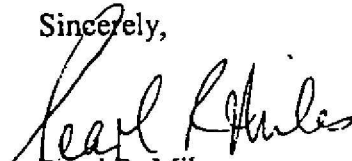
Please be advised that Community Board #9 has identified the site of the above referenced project - Clove Road - as one of great historic significance to Brooklyn and the country as a whole. Specifically, Clove Road is the "Bedford Pass" of the American Revolution, where 600 Pennsylvania troops were stationed to prevent the passage of the invading British Army.

We are currently in the process of requesting landmark status for this site - NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission, NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and eventually the National Register of Historic Places.

Community Board #9 is therefore requesting that adequate funding be provided for this project in order to restore this location in a manner that would reflect its importance as a Revolutionary War site.

We look forward to discussing this matter with you further.

Sincerely,


Pearl R. Miles
District Manager

Cc: Hon. Mary Pinkett
Mr. Kelvin Robinson - RBA Group