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LANDMARKS PRESERVATION
COMMISSION

34TH STREET REZONING PROJECT: POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SITE 1

CEQR No. 88-113M

PHASE 1A
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
ASSESSMENT
REPORT 1989

397

HISTORICAL
PERSPECTIVES INC.



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PHASE 1A ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT
FOR THE
34TH STREET REZONING PROJECT: POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SITE 1
MANHATTAN, NEW YORK
CEQR NO. 88 - 113 M

Prepared

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I. INTRODUCTION

A proposed rezoning action for a portion of Block 757, between West 33rd and West 34th Streets and Eighth and Ninth Avenues in Manhattan's middle West Side, requires certain building and zoning permits from the City of New York. Also, specific city review agency regulations must be met prior to obtaining a Certificate of Occupancy. The 34th Street Project CEQR Number is 88-13M. The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission is one of these review agencies and it requested that a Phase 1A Archaeological Assessment be conducted on the affected lots of Block 757 and a preliminary archaeological assessment be prepared for specific potential development sites in the immediate vicinity of the 34th Street Project Site. The Phase 1A study and preliminary reviews were completed by Historical Perspectives, Inc. in 1988. The preliminary review of Potential Development Site 1, located at the corner of Ninth Avenue and 34th Street, indicated a potential sensitivity for both pre-historic and historic resources. The Landmarks Commission accepted the review evaluation of Potential Development Site 1 and requested that "A formal archaeological documentary report must be produced. The research presented in this preliminary study should be included in the larger report" (Letter from Mark London, CEQR, to Andrew Rudko, AKRF, 9/14/89).

The following Phase 1A study on Potential Development Site 1 (Lots 1, 3 - 14 of Block 758), conducted by Historical Perspectives, Inc., addresses the particular concerns of the Landmarks Commission regarding the possibility of prehistoric sites and nineteenth century homelot features. The exhaustive lot by lot analysis has yielded sufficient data to satisfy the specific questions raised by the review agency. It is our conclusion that the potential for prehistoric resources is severely limited and that further consideration is not warranted. Only one nineteenth century homelot (Lot 11) is securely associated with one family over an extended period. Although municipal sewer and water utilities were available at the time of first house construction on Lot 11, we cannot document that the house water and waste lines were hooked into the city system. It is possible that cisterns and/or wells and/or privies were a feature of Lot 11's 18 feet by 25 feet rear lot during the second half of the nineteenth century. The potential for historic period resources is limited to Lot 11 and the possibility that the home was not hooked into the municipal system. The need for further archaeological consideration of Lot 11 is dependent upon the Landmarks Commission's research goals for the Borough of Manhattan's middle West Side during the second half of the nineteenth century.

II. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING AND CURRENT CONDITIONS

Although not readily apparent while walking the project site today, an inspection of the current USGS Central Park quadrangle reveals evidence of the original ridge topography on the site block. The urbanized 34th Street Rezoning Project Potential Development Site 1 is currently depicted on the eastside of a slight terrace. The terrace is registered at 40 feet above mean high water and represents a remnant of the earlier, larger terrace noted on early nineteenth century maps (Compare Figures 1, 3, and 4). The hillocks, fast-flowing streams, and marshly wetlands that dotted the island of Manhattan before human manipulation homogenized the terrain are not visible today. The scouring and pushing action of the glacial ice during the Pleistocene time period left its mark on the landscape as did the warming trend during the subsequent Holocene time period. The earliest maps clearly show the resulting rough and irregular terrain of the project area (See Figure 3). The surface of the island was originally broken by ridges of gneiss and hornblende slate. Exposed white limestone of coarse quality appeared at the surface just south of the project site between 29th and 31st Streets. (French 1860:418) "The s. part of the island was covered in drift and boulders, presenting conical hills, some of which were 80 ft. above the present grade of the streets" (French 1860:418).

The pre-urbanized 34th Street area is further defined by nineteenth century deed transactions, surveys, and newspaper accounts. As can be seen on Figure 5, Block 758 was on "rising ground, overlooking the Hudson River and the Jersey shore" (Wait, n.d.:3-4). The entire ridge, of "good soil for cultivation," stretched from 29th Street and Eighth Avenue to Eleventh Avenue and 39th Street. In 1836 the project area was described as having "a dry and gravelly soil." Prior to 1850 a large marsh, referred to as "Reed Valley," situated at approximately 42nd Street and 11th Avenue, was fed from the south, north, and southeast by a system of feeder streams that formed the Great Kill which flowed into a deep bay at the river. (Stokes 1921, Vol. IV:131) The southeastern stream apparently flowed immediately east of Eighth Avenue, at least 600 feet east of Potential Development Site 1. According to Randel's survey for the 1811 Commissioner's Map, the elevation of the Ninth Avenue and 34th Street intersection was 40 feet 8 inches above high water.

Further evidence of the early, natural ridge topography is the presence of the colonial roadbed that traversed Block 758. One of the first north-south roads on Manhattan, Fitzroy Road, took advantage of the well-drained ridge tops as it moved through what was to become the 34th Street neighborhood. The route of Fitzroy Road claimed the extreme eastern end of the block, east of the project site.

According to information gathered in c.1937 by the WPA and now available through the Subsurface Exploration Division of the NYC Department of General Services, the amount of landfill in the project area is minimal. At the corner of Ninth Avenue and 34th Street a soil boring revealed only five feet of "filled ground." This boring was taken at the street curb and so may be revealing a soil stratum disturbed by road construction and/or utility installation. Fill was not encountered and/or recorded approximately one-half block to the east and one-half block to the west of this intersection. The elevation readings taken at these boring locations further attest to the natural rise in the project area from the east to west.

Presently Lots 1, 5 and 6 host two and four-story commercial properties (e.g., a food store, karate studio, shoe store, palm reader), some of which are vacant. Each of these structures does have a full or partial below-street-grade level. The West Side Jewish Center at 347 West 34th Street is on Lot 14 and Edison parking lot with an entrance on West 34th Street covers Lots 3, 4, and 7-13 (See Photographs 1-6).

III. PREHISTORIC OVERVIEW

As late as 1819 the project area was an elevated part of the untamed drainage system flowing into the Reed Valley at present-day 40th Street and Tenth Avenue. Early and late nineteenth century and twentieth century maps all depict the project site at approximately 41 feet above mean high water with land to the east lower and land to the west higher in elevation. The gneiss and granite knoll supporting the site land was just one of many topographic features that are no longer a part of the Manhattan landscape. The confluence of three streams, one of which flowed in a northeasterly direction and was situated just northeast and downslope of the site, created the "marshy" Reed Valley as these waters traveled toward the Great Kill (Stokes 1926, Vol. VI:131). The Great Kill, flooded at high tide, was located at the present 42nd Street and Eleventh Avenue intersection and emptied into a deep bay in the Hudson River. I. N. P. Stokes has written that "The old Indian trail, later called Fitzroy Road, led to the wonderful fishing and hunting grounds at the Great Kill" (Stokes 1926, Vol. VI:131). Fitzroy Road evidently crossed the eastern portion of Block 758. As can be seen on the 1859 Viele Map of the City of New York (See Figure 3), another stream, south of the project site, flowed east to west from approximately 32nd Street to the River.

Prehistorically, subsistence and settlement patterns depended heavily upon environmental criteria and the Hudson River and its feeder streams would have provided a diverse array of resources attractive to Native Americans. The lacustrine, riverine and estuarine environments in close proximity, provide a wealth of floral and faunal resources including fish, birds, reptiles, mammals, and vegetation. In addition, there was at least one known fresh water spring in close proximity - on a farm west of Potential Development Site 1.

As the availability and desire to utilize resources varied through prehistory, it is necessary to understand trends and distinct cultural phases of Native Americans in the Northeast. PaleoIndians, the first known inhabitants of the Northeast, occupied the area between 10,000-12,000 years ago, relying heavily on big-game. Habitation sites have largely been located on upland bluffs or ridge tops, such as those along the Hudson (Eisenberg 1978:123). Since sea levels were much lower during this period, few sites have been recovered as many are likely under water (Saxon 1973:5). Although little is known of this period, the

presence of PaleoIndians in the Hudson Valley has been established.

Following this, the Archaic period, lasting from 9,000-3,000 years ago, is much better documented. The warming environment provided seasonally available resources which promoted a settlement pattern based on seasonal rounds. Archaic sites in the coastal and tidewater area of New York are often "represented by numerous, 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...along the lower Hudson" (Ritchie 1980:143). Sites along the Hudson indicate it was utilized for shellfish exploitation during the Archaic period (Snow 1980:182). Sites of the transition period between the Archaic and subsequent Woodland period tend to be located on high sandy river terraces.

The Woodland period is marked by the introduction of ceramics. By this time, sea levels and the environment were much as they are today. During this period there was a preference for sites to be located on knolls or terraces with well-drained soils adjacent to fresh water, such as short-term seasonal camps for the extraction of specific resources. Islands in the Northeast with strong northern winds, such as those coming down the Hudson, have often had sites of this period located on south facing slopes for protection (Little 1985:26). Also at this time there appears to be a trend toward semi-permanent occupations, and increased riverine aggregation for the exploitation of seasonal fish and bird migration (Snow 1980:265).

The project parcel is in a location that would have provided an abundance of resources throughout prehistory. A model developed by the Landmarks Preservation Commission to predict archaeological sensitivity in Manhattan has placed this parcel immediately west of a high sensitivity zone (See Figure 6). Early maps indicate that the shoreline of the Hudson was once much closer to the project site than it currently is. Topographically, the rise would have been attractive for habitation as there were numerous, diverse resources available nearby.

At the time of European arrival, northern Manhattan was occupied by a large number of Munsee Delaware-speaking Indians identified by the colonists as Wiechquesgeck (Grumet 1981:60). Historically, Fitzroy Road ran through Block 758. This road, a widened Indian trail, lead north to the Great Kill (Stokes 1921, Vol. IV:164). The trail

appeared to run along the rise although it may not have run directly through the site. A map of known Indian land use in Manhattan (See Figure 4) has no mention of Fitzroy Road or an Indian trail at this location (Grumet 1981). In fact the closest Native American land shown is a planting field called Sapokanikan, currently near Greenwich Village (Grumet 1981:44-45). According to the New York State Museum, State Education Department, there are no known sites within this parcel (personal communication, Philip Lord to Cece Kirkorian, July 26, 1988). He also stated that the probability of prehistoric remains is low unless original deposits remain, e.g., covered and protected by sidewalks, etc., or buried by fill from earlier construction.

It is very likely that prehistoric activities would have taken place on Potential Development Site 1. The surrounding environment and topography is particularly conducive for resource extraction and processing. The nearby streams and freshwater springs are crucial factors for settlement. There are no known prehistoric sites within the parcel, although there is the possibility that it was utilized prehistorically.

Prehistoric remains recovered in southern New York tend to occur in shallow deposits. However, as stated, asphalt, sidewalks, and other build-up can protect these resources. The potential to recover archaeological resources rests largely on the original topography and subsequent alterations to it. Since the urbanization in the mid 1800s, the original topography of knolls, valleys, streambeds and flooded meadows in the West 34th Street area has been greatly altered. Research on neighboring Block 757 revealed records of extensive mid-nineteenth century grading that reduced at least a part of the knoll supporting the project site (Kearns, Kirkorian, and Fox 1988:5-6).

Site-specific research, detailed in the following section, outlines the documented destructive forces that obliterated the possibility for in situ prehistoric resources on the majority of Potential Development Site 1.

IV. HISTORICAL PERIOD OVERVIEW

In the middle of the seventeenth century New York, then called New Amsterdam, was a small settlement huddled behind a palisaded wall along the present Wall Street. The study area lay approximately six-and-one-half miles north of the town, in a region of scattered farms, hills, meadows, creeks and marshes, quite unlike the man-made landscape which presently exists. When New Amsterdam was established c.1626 as the New World headquarters of the Dutch West India Company, Manhattan Island was reserved for the company's own use. Therefore, until the English conquest in 1664, the lands north of the town were occupied by farmers and householders by permission or lease (Kammen 1975:36). Potential Development Site 1 is on the farm leased by Hendrick Pietersen van Wesel sometime before 1639. The farmhouse was identified on the 1639 "Manatus Map" as farm number 15, incorrectly placed too far to the north (See Figure 8). In 1647, Governor Willem Kieft granted this farm to Adriaen Pietersen van Alckmaer, and after the death of his heirs c.1657, the farm reverted to the company, and was later amalgamated into the larger Weylandt Patent (Stokes 1926, Vol. VI:131).

With the English conquest, the confiscated company lands were deeded permanently to colonists. In 1668 the first English governor, Richard Nicolls, granted the land known as the Weylandt (Dutch = meadow) Patent, "ye said piece of Land lying very Convenient for Commonage for ye Cattle & Horses," to Cornelis van Ruyven, Allard Anthony and Paulus Leendertse van der Grift (See Figure 9). The patent extended from the shores of the Hudson to just west of Bloomingdale Road (present Broadway), north to Reed Valley and the Great Kill (40th to 42nd Streets), and south to 28th Street, encompassing nearly 300 acres. It included "Clapboard Valley," a small semi-circular meadow between 28th and 30th Streets, whose name probably indicates that it was fenced pastureland. The three recipients of the Weylandt Patent divided the area into six strips, which ran parallel from east to west, for the entire width of the grant. Lots 1 and 2, the most southerly (numbered by historian I.N.P. Stokes for convenience), went to Anthony, and the most northerly, Lots 5 and 6, went to Grift. By 1757, Grift's Lot 5 had been transferred to a Mathias Ernest, who in that year petitioned the Common Council for permission to build a dock at his river frontage as part of his plans to establish a "glass house" to manufacture glass bottles (Stokes 1926, Vol. VI:130-131, 153). A small wooden house was also erected to this end, but Ernest's

venture failed (See Figures 10 and 11). The entire neighborhood, including the project site, came to be known as the Glass House Farm through much of the nineteenth century (Anonymous 1913:138).

Cornelis van Ruyven received Lots 3 and 4, the dividing line of which ran through the southern edge of the study area (Note Block 758 on Figure 9). Ruyven sold both his lots in 1674. Lot 3, containing the southernmost section of the study parcel, passed through a series of Dutch owners until it was purchased by Wessel Pietersen van Orden between 1721 and 1724. He also purchased parts of Lots 1 and 4, east of Fitzroy Road, a former Indian trail which ran north to south just west of Eighth Avenue. The Orden family farm house must predate the 1811 city plan, since they do not align to the grid (See Figure 9). Later the Isaac Moses farm was divided into lots, on the death of his wife and heir, Reyne in 1829. The 1836 map of the project area shows only trees on the properties, but faint dotted lines seem to indicate lot boundaries. The next available map, from 1851, reveals the burgeoning urbanization of the surrounding neighborhood, as well as the establishment of piano and cotton factories and the New York Institution for the Blind all within a one block radius (See Figure 12). The conversion from farming to residential land had taken some two hundred years. In comparison, the industrial onslaught came almost overnight. Cornelius Vanderbilt's Hudson River Railroad tracks were laid in 1847, and the station at 30th Street and Eleventh Avenue was opened in 1851. The opening of the railroad led to the building of freight yards and repair shops on two blocks between 30th and 32nd Streets and Tenth and Eleventh Avenues. The so-called 30th Street yard actually included all properties between Eleventh and Twelfth Avenues from 30th to 37th Streets, as well as the blocks between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues from 30th to 32nd Streets (Parsons et al. 1980:II.B-2). In addition, the Eighth Avenue Railroad began operations between 51st and Chambers Streets in 1852. The railroads attracted other industry, as lumberyards, brickyards, lime kilns, stables, warehouses and distilleries moved into the area, "crowding malodorous slaughterhouses in the upper 30's." Flimsy tenement buildings were constructed to house the cheap labor attracted by the factories, and the transformation of the neighborhood was almost complete (WPA 1982:146-147).

Seemingly at odds with the industrial development of the neighborhood was the establishment of the New York Institution for the Blind on the block directly south of

the project area in 1833*. Incorporated in 1831 and located downtown, first at Canal then at Mercer Street, the institution arranged to rent, for a nominal fee, the property on 34th Street owned by James Boorman. In a series of real estate transactions Boorman, later the Commissioner of Emigration, had pieced together sections of the old Moses farm (French 1860:433; Stokes 1924, Vol. V:1803). The Blind Institute had solicited donations from Boorman, and he responded by offering to lease them, for nine years, 32 lots with their buildings, provided they were used by the Institute (Wait n.d.:5). A description of this charitable contribution gives us a good idea of how the project area appeared in the 1820s:

MUNIFICENT GIFT. - James Boorman, Esq., of this city, has presented to the New York Institution for the Blind, a ten years lease of the buildings and ground formerly called Abington Place, a short distance beyond the paved part of the city, and between the 8th and 9th Avenues. The main building on the premises is a large substantial two story house, 100 by 54 feet, situated on a rising ground overlooking the Hudson River. There are also two stone kitchens apart from the main building, and a well of good water near the house. The ground is now in good order, under cultivation as a garden, and contains a little over two acres. The situation is stated to be one of the pleasantest on Manhattan Island, in the immediate vicinity of the city, and offers fine air, good soil for cultivation, a shady grove and flower garden, with wide and level paths. The house is very large, two stories high, with a spacious attic, abundantly large enough for a workshop and place for exercise in bad weather, while the distance from City Hall is only about three miles (Wait n.d.:4).

The property called Abington Place is most likely the buildings of the Moses estate which included a substantial residence, as can be seen on 1815 and 1836 maps. By 1859

Although the New York Institute for the Blind site is outside of the present project area bounds, the extensive documentation available for the Institution provides many insights into the history of Potential Development Site 1.

the Institute was on firmer financial footing, receiving half its budget from the state and the rest from charitable contributions. Pupils were accepted from the ages of eight to 25, and were instructed in "all branches of English Education together with vocal and instrumental music," lasting for five years, and sometimes seven. Children whose parents could not afford to pay for their expenses (\$130 per year) were admitted on the condition that they "furnish a certificate from the overseer of the poor in the town where the applicant resides, stating the fact of permanent blindness, good moral character and the inability of their parents or guardians to support them in the Institution" (Phelps 1859:26). The Institute was able to purchase its property in 1837, and in 1842 leased the rest of the block (eastern section) from James Boorman, later purchasing this land from him as well (1847) (Wait n.d.:12,27). The facilities were expanded c.1840, when the original building was demolished and a new massive, turreted Gothic revival building was erected facing Ninth Avenue (See Figure 13). This new headquarters building remained in use until 1924. In the 1850s the Institute attempted to help the adult blind as well, erecting a three-story brick 'Manufacturing Department' on the Eighth Avenue side of their plot (See Figure 12). They attempted to train adults in various handicrafts such as basketry and mattress-making, paying the workers by the piece and financing the program from the sale of the products. Unfortunately, the venture was unsuccessful and proved to be a financial drain on the Institute itself, which it alleviated by selling off some of its eastern lots (Kearns, Kirkorian, and Fox 1988:9-12; Phelps 1859:26).

While the New York Institute for the Blind was working for the advancement of the sightless, the surrounding neighborhood continued to decline. During the 1860s and 1870s more business relocated there, especially north and west of the project area. Gas houses, swill-milk cow stables, glue manufactories, freight yards, stockyards, and new slaughterhouses took advantage of the supply of cheap labor and the inexpensive swampy land around 42nd Street, which the Great Kill had once drained into the Hudson. There are some indications that the project area was spared some of this early activity, perhaps due to the presence of a stable institution like the Blind Institute across the street. The chief indicator of this is the presence of the 34th Street Reformed Dutch Church on the project block, near the corner of 34th Street and Eighth Avenue. The "large and fashionable congregation" had erected a large Gothic Revival church of brick with a yellow stone front,

double towers and "a very sweet-toned organ" in 1860 (King 1893:340). Why the congregation left the downtown area in order to move into a slum or soon-to-be slum, next to a piano factory with a coal yard on the Ninth Avenue lots of the study area, is a mystery (See Figure 14).

Whatever had been left of Ninth Avenue's charm was destroyed with the completion of the Ninth Avenue El in 1871. The El was the first rapid transit system in the city, and was extended further north in 1876. Blocking out light on Ninth Avenue like a shroud, it depressed property values, providing more real estate for the tenement builders. Since an abortive reform movement in 1864, little had been done to alleviate the living conditions of the predominantly Irish (since the 1840s) "Hell's Kitchen." Hell's Kitchen, an area extending from between Ninth and Twelfth Avenues on 30th Street and Eighth and Ninth Avenues at 41st Street, got its name from the "Hell's Kitchen Gang" who were headquartered in a dive on the East Side, and specialized in raids on the Hudson River (later New York Central) Railroad yard on 30th Street. Organized in 1868 by Dutch Heinrichs, they were involved in extortion, breaking and entering, "professional mayhem," and highway robbery. After merging with the West Tenth Avenue Gang, they stopped and robbed the Hudson River Railroad express train, and terrorized the area for decades. They were succeeded by the "Gophers," who had their home in saloons like "Battle Row" on 39th Street between Ninth and Tenth Avenues. The Gophers were led by "Mallet" Murphy, who used to bash complaining bar patrons over the head with a wooden mallet, and others with colorful names like "Happy Jack" Mulraney, "Goo Goo" Knox, "Stumpy" Malarkey, and "One Lung" Curran. With the smaller affiliates, the gang numbered almost 500 men. In the early twentieth century, Hell's Kitchen was considered "one of the most dangerous areas on the American continent," lying alongside the "Tenderloin," the then theater/red light district (between Fifth and Seventh Avenues, 24th to 42nd Streets). Known as "the modern Gomorrah," more than half of all buildings were reputed to "cater to vice" as late as 1885. (WPA 1982: 145-147, 155-156).

The organized gangs "ruled" Hell's Kitchen until 1910, when the New York Central (formerly Hudson River) Railroad organized a special strong arm police force (WPA 1982:156), and the city police from the 37th Street (between Ninth and Tenth Avenue) Station began the practice of patrolling the "hot sections of the Hell's Kitchen streets" in "pairs of

four" with (well-worn) hickory nightsticks tucked up their sleeves (Herries 1954:3).

What should have had a more profound effect on the character of the study area neighborhood was the construction of Pennsylvania Station, which was completed in 1910. The Pennsylvania Railroad had always been stymied by the width and depth of the Hudson River, which prevented them from linking Manhattan with the rest of the continent. While their competition, the New York Central Railroad, had the advantage of a direct connection with points east, west and north via their tracks through northern Manhattan to Albany, Pennsylvania Railroad passengers were forced to take a ferry from the company's terminal in Jersey City to reach Manhattan. The problem and great expense of building a bridge twice the span of the Brooklyn Bridge (1883), which was still a recent engineering marvel, was solved by the construction of a tunnel (completed 1908), which remained below ground as far as the new station, between Seventh and Eighth Avenues from 31st to 33rd Streets, a block from the study area. The monumental Roman Doric station, designed by the firm of McKim, Mead and White, was described by the New York Times on opening day, November 27, 1910, as "the largest and handsomest in the world" (Diehl 1985:40-48, 108).

Interestingly enough, Penn Station was perhaps more significant to the neighborhood for what it removed, rather than what it attracted. The tunnel construction from the Hudson River to Seventh Avenue was done by excavation, destroying a two-block-wide swathe of tenements, shops, factories, and a church (St. Michael's Roman Catholic Church, which at the expense of the railroad was dismantled like Abu Simbel, and reassembled on 34th Street between Ninth and Tenth, where it stands today - See Photograph 7) to the river. While the station itself covered eight acres, an additional 20 acres were taken up by the approaches to the Hudson. In 1913, the McKim, Mead and White firm was again hired, this time by the Federal government to build the General Post Office facing Penn Station across Eighth Avenue, about a block south of the project site. Since the Pennsylvania Railroad carried 40 percent of all mail originating in New York City, this handsome Roman Corinthian building contained an elaborate conveyor system which moved mail between it and the station without using trucks. It is probably due to the reputation of the neighborhood that the presence of Penn Station, an incredible palace during the most glamorous period of train travel, could move speculators to buy land no further west

than Eighth Avenue (Diehl 1985:72, 114). What new development there was clustered itself at the eastern end of the study block. For example, the Manhattan Opera House, built in 1906, was only 13 lots east of the study area, and adjacent to the Reformed Dutch Church building. This large auditorium, because it preceded the big movie houses like Radio City, was used to exhibit Warner Brothers and Bell Laboratories new sound films in 1926. It still stands, the traditional place for union contract debate and votes (Willensky and White 1988:210).

There was little improvement in the slums of Hell's Kitchen by the 1930s. The great sooty cloud that hung over the area at the turn of the century could not have been improved by the additional smoke-belching trains which Penn Station began receiving in 1910. Aside from their electrification in 1928, as well as the trains of the Ninth Avenue El, the quality of life there had hardly improved (Diehl 1985:71, 126). In 1939 the area was described as a residential belt containing "row after row of three-, four- and five-story grimy brick tenement houses [which] proclaim one of the New York's worst slum areas." The city health district which contains what was officially the Middle West Side, had the highest mortality rate in the city (WPA 1982: 145). At best it was a "colorful" existence growing up on the "Old Westside," as Bill Herries described in his short book about his childhood experiences. Born in 1896 at 36th Street between Ninth and Tenth, his family moved in 1900 to 41st Street and Ninth Avenue, where they inhabited three small rooms on the top floor of a four-story cold water flat. Rent was nine dollars a month, and the toilet was in the backyard. For amusement they would visit the "nickelodians," the "dilapidated 8th Avenue moving picture houses," where the ushers would walk the aisles spraying perfume disinfectant from a bottle. Other diversions were watching the "Three Card Monies" working their con on the gullable, viewing the work of the bag snatchers, pickpockets, and the police chasing them both, having blockfights and attending boxing matches. Pool halls were notorious for being the headquarters of peddlars in opium, heroin and morphine. After 1910 a large number of Greek immigrants moved into the area, where six to eight were crowded into three small rooms (Herries 1954:1-9).

The industry that was attracted to the project area vicinity was fleeing even worse conditions. The transportation links provided by Penn Station, the later building of Lincoln Tunnel (1937 - approaches lie one half block west of the study area) and cheap buildings attracted

the garment and fur industries from their cramped quarters on the Lower East Side. By the 1920s they had established themselves on the West Side, the garment district workshops traditionally located from 34th to 42nd Streets from Broadway to Eighth or Ninth Avenues, while the Fur District lies to the south from 27th to 34th Streets, hence cheek by jowl with Hell's Kitchen (Yeadon 1979:88-93). The Garment District brought new hotels to the Penn Station area, namely the New Yorker Hotel (1930), at the eastern end of the project block, facing Penn Station (on the side of the Reformed Dutch Church). Now a facility of the Unification Church, this Art Deco building, was a popular economy-priced hotel with 2,500 rooms and underground passageways linking it to the train station (WPA 1982:210; Willensky and White 1988:210).

Since the 1940s many of the area's tenements have been removed to construct office and workshop space for the garment and other related industries. Lots were consolidated so that denser use could be made of the now more valuable land. Most of the project area block is taken up by five large buildings, surrounded by warehouses, garages, and parking lots, such as the one in the study area. The building of the new Penn Station and Madison Square Garden Complex (1968 on the site of the old station), seems to affect the study area insofar as the parking areas are used by Garden patrons.

V. POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SITE 1

BLOCK 758

This parcel is on the northeast corner of 34th Street and 9th Avenue (See Figure 2). An 1844 topographic map indicates there was no development on the project site by that time (See Figure 5). By 1849 sewer lines were being laid along Ninth Avenue (Wait, n.d.:29), and by 1852 sewer lines were available on 34th Street. An 1866 report on the sanitary conditions for the vicinity states that out of 417 tenements in the district, 105 were not hooked into the public sewer system at this time (Council of the Citizens Association 1866:257-261). Laws existed regulating when privies should be cleaned, however these were often violated. Privies were to be emptied as soon as they were full, but this was often ignored and they were left in horrible states. The overall condition of this district was considered poor, with the nicer buildings located to the east of Eighth Avenue.

The information gathered on the installation dates of sewer and water lines in the project area is contradictory, which may in part explain the sanitary conditions described above. The 34th and Ninth Avenue mid-century installation dates, obtained from the Sewer Department maps, agree with other sources. However, the Sewer Department maps list a 1907 installation date for 33rd Street and a 1929 date for Eighth Avenue which seem to be very late and perhaps inaccurate. Water lines were laid along 34th Street between Eighth and Ninth Avenues by 1849. However, it is possible that the lines on 34th Street may have been solely available to the New York Institute for the Blind directly to the south of Potential Development Site 1, as the Institute petitioned for their installation. The Water Department's official records indicate the earliest date for availability is 1903 on 34th Street, and 1908 on Ninth Avenue, far too late to be the initial installation. The Water Supply Bureau keeps a file card for each building which lists dates of specific hook-ups. However, when a line is replaced, the old file card is thrown out. The oldest tapping date noted for this area was 1925.

LOT ANALYSIS

The following history of development on Potential Development Site 1 is presented chronologically for each lot, in numerical sequence. The lot numbers referenced are

those designated in the 1913 Bromley Atlas corrected to 1920 (See Figure 14).

LOT 1

The first development took place on Lot 1 between 1852 and 1868 when a coal yard and several wooden structures were located on the lot (See Figure 15) through the turn of the century (See Figures 16 and 17). It is likely that the wooden buildings associated with the coal yard were temporary in nature and did not possess cellars. The depth of foundations and impact can not be verified. By 1920 a one and two-story brick building was on the lot directly at the corner of 34th Street and Ninth Avenue, that is on the southern portion of the lot (See Figure 14). Also at this time, Lot 1 had a one-story wooden structure bordering Ninth Avenue, on its western side. According to city atlases, by 1950 the wooden structure was removed, and the entire lot was covered by a two-story brick building, which is still standing (Photograph 1) (Hyde 1906 corrected to 1950). Permits issued in 1922 were for the removal of a two-story building, and the construction of a new two-story brick building, measuring to 58 feet 6 inches by 49 feet 4 inches with a partial cellar of unknown depth (NB78, CO5606). The 1922 building construction specifications for the cellar were altered due to "rock." The following statement from the 1922 Certificate of Occupancy (#5606) documents this change:

In the process of excavation we found that the assumed kind of earth, as specific as hard pan, was incorrect. Earth is of solid rock and hard clay. North wall, as indicated in red ink on foundation plan, will be constructed of rubble stone with concrete footings as shown. On account of the solid rock, remove location of small cellar to new location farther west. Floors of office and ceiling will be constructed as formally specified. Also there will be no occupants.

LOTS 3 and 4

No buildings were present on Lots 3 and 4 in 1868 (See Figure 15). By 1879, the coal yard originally confined to Lot 1, was extended north to encompass Lots 3 and 4 (See Figure 16). By 1883, wooden buildings in association with the coal yard were built across all of Lot 4 fronting Ninth

Avenue, and on the east and west ends of Lot 3 (See Figure 17). There is nothing to indicate that either of these structures possessed basements, and the impact of the coal yard activities was probably minimal. By 1920 both lots possessed five story brick tenements, each being 100 feet by 24 feet 8 inches, fronting Ninth Avenue. According to census data, these buildings were erected by 1890. These were both removed in 1955 (DM424, DM342) and became parking lots. The 1906 Hyde atlas corrected to 1950 depicts these as six-story brick buildings, which suggest they originally had basements now functioning as living spaces. There is no additional data available to confirm this. Currently the lots are both used for parking (Photograph 5).

LOT 5

Lot 5 was first developed between 1852 and 1868, when a building appeared on the north half of the lot, set back from 34th Street (See Figures 15 and 16). The 1883 atlas depicts this as a brick two-story building, still set back from 34th Street (See Figure 18). In 1926 an extension on the existing two-story building was added on the south side, to bring the front up to 34th Street. The addition had a 4 feet 8 inches deep foundation (ALT151). A 1946 permit indicates this was a four-story building with a cellar (ALT36045), while the 1906 Hyde atlas corrected to 1950 shows a two-story brick building occupying the entire lot. It is likely that the top two stories were removed between 1946 and 1950. Currently a two-story brick building is covering all of this lot (Photograph 2).

LOT 6

The first construction on Lot 6 occurred between 1852 and 1868, when a building was situated on the southern portion of the lot, fronting 34th Street (See Figure 15). An 1879 atlas depicts the lot as vacant (See Figure 16). Contradicting this development date is an 1883 atlas showing a brick building occupying the majority of the lot (See Figure 17). In 1920 a three-story brick building with a basement is located on the southern three quarters of the lot, and it appears as a four-story brick building in 1950. An alteration permit dating to 1875 indicates that it is a four-story brick building with a 10 feet deep foundation, measuring to 22 feet by 50 feet (ALT499). Later permits support the presence of a cellar (ALT2280-26, CO12451-27). The building currently standing is a brick four-story structure, and is probably the original (Photographs 2 and 3).

LOTS 7-14

By 1868 Lots 7 through 14 each contained a building on the southern portions, fronting 34th Street (See Figure 15). This row of brick buildings is shown on an 1883 atlas (See Figure 18), and permits support that they were tenements. By 1920, Lots 7 and 13 each had a brick extension on the rear of the buildings at the north end of the lot (See Figure 14). The 1902 extension on Lot 13 was an operating room being added to the Metropolitan Throat Hospital which was housed there. The foundation of the extension measured 8 feet 6 inches deep (ALT622). In 1924 a four-story brick tenement was demolished on Lot 14 and was then replaced by a three-story Synagogue with a cellar. The foundation of this was built on hard rock (DM89, NB373). The row of buildings was still standing in 1950, but by 1967, Lots 7 through 11 were vacant (Hyde 1906 Atlas corrected to 1950; Bromley 1955 Atlas corrected to 1967). Demolition permits support that most of these buildings were removed in the 1950s (DM343-56, 368-56, 72-52). Lots 12 and 13 are currently vacant as well (ALT799-70). The only existing building is the Synagogue on Lot 14 (See Photographs 4 and 6). The only foundation depth or size mentioned of all existing buildings is that of the hospital on Lot 13 measuring to 18 feet 7 inches by 64 feet with an 8 feet 6 inches deep foundation. All of the tenements probably possessed full cellars. Unfortunately no data were available to verify this conclusion.

VI. ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

A. Subsurface Disturbance Record

Documented historic era subsurface disturbance included construction of below grade cellars and basements. The majority of the block appears to have experienced subsurface disturbance. However, the review of the cartographic data and information acquired in the Building Department Block and Lot files suggests that there may be existing undisturbed areas.

Lots 3, 4, and 6 each appear to have a narrow portion of undeveloped land behind the previous structures, on the eastern ends of the lots (Hyde 1906 corrected to 1950). These appear to be alleys rather than rear yards, as they are less than ten feet wide. It is likely that these have been disturbed as a builders trench would have been associated with the construction of the adjacent foundation. Such a trench would have disturbed the majority of this narrow alley.

Lot 7 has a small, possibly undisturbed, rear yard on the north end of the lot. The undisturbed area borders Lots 3 and 4 to the west, and Lot 8 to the east. In addition, Lots 8 through 12 had rear yards on the north end of each lot that had not been developed. These northern parcels appear to have remained undisturbed, operating as back yards for the tenement buildings on the south side of the lots. The atlases and block and lot records support that these rear yards have not experienced substantial development.

B. Prehistoric Potential

Potential Development Site 1 lies in a sensitive area for prehistoric cultural remains. The land would have been ideal for prehistoric occupation, as it would have afforded ample opportunities for resource procurement. It is likely that some form of prehistoric utilization did take place on this parcel. Extended habitation is doubtful as the strong northerly winds coming down the Hudson would have discouraged this. Short-term habitation sites are most apt to be represented in such an area.

What is the likelihood that such resources from possible short-term habitation exploitation would have survived the destructive forces of urbanization? As detailed in the above lot by lot analysis, the documented

construction of cellars on Block 758 has undoubtedly destroyed the integrity of prehistoric resources on the majority of the site (i.e., Lots 1, 5-14). Although the Block and Lot records do not contain specifications for cellars on Lots 3 and 4 it is most likely that they too hosted cellars during the early part of this century and they were simply unrecorded in the construction permit applications. The discrepancy between the 1920 atlas notation of five-story tenements on Lots 3 and 4 and the 1950 atlas notation of six-story tenements is most probably due to the transition from a service-oriented cellar to a residency-oriented cellar. According to the atlas review and our document search, all the other tenements in the immediate neighborhood did possess cellars. Lot 1, immediately south of Lots 3 and 4, has only a partial cellar that was oriented on the western side of the lot to avoid "rock." It is our consensus that Lots 3 and 4 did experience cellar construction and such excavation and construction would have obliterated any possible prehistoric presence. If cellars were never built on these two lots, it was most probably due to rock outcroppings that prohibited reasonable excavation. Such a rock outcropping would also argue against the sustained accumulation and preservation of prehistoric resources.

C. Historical Era Potential

Potential historical archaeological resources are limited to mid to late nineteenth century remains. The lack of occupation prior to this period suggests that there is no potential to recover earlier remains. According to communications from the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (NYCLPC) to the Department of City Planning, NYCLPC is interested in the potential existence of archaeological resources associated with the nineteenth century homes on the project site - specifically as contained in wells and cisterns on the various homelots. NYCLPC asked that the 1A Archaeological Assessment address these topics: 1) ascertain residents of the houses and their period of residency; 2) determine whether or not there exists a potential for significant archaeological resources on the homelots; and 3) identify any subsurface disturbances which may have altered or destroyed resources. On other projects, NYCLPC's concern about homelot resources requires that certain conditions be met before potential can be assumed. That is, research must identify one decade of continuous occupancy by a special affinity group about whom data is scarce, such as a black family. Residency by a single family for at least twenty years is another

criterion for further investigation. These periods of occupancy must occur prior to the availability of municipal sewer and/or water supplies, which, of course, obviate the need for backyard privies, wells, and cisterns (Kearns, Kirkorian and Fox 1988:25).

Sewers appear to have been available in the neighboring blocks at the time of earliest residential construction, with water lines generally available as well. However, it is known that utility installation in specific house lots often lagged behind availability. Therefore, we cannot predict the possible presence of nineteenth century backyard features, commonly investigated by archaeologists (e.g., cisterns, privies, and wells), with any certainty for project area lots.

It may be considered that the information to be gained from these types of cultural resources is potentially significant enough to warrant testing to ascertain their presence or absence. The criteria for selecting loci to be tested would be 1) those areas which may be relatively undisturbed based on the limited data available, and 2) those rear lot areas associated with buildings known to have a long-term residence pattern. The following paragraphs are a residence history of the project area, based on census data (1870, 1880, 1890 Police census, 1900 and 1910). The lot numbers and street addresses referenced are those designated in the 1913 Bromley Atlas corrected to 1920 (See Figure 14).

LOT 1

371 West 34th Street or 432 Ninth Avenue. No census material was available for either of these addresses. 369 West 34th Street, since it follows in the sequence (adjacent lot to east is 367), was also checked without success.

LOTS 3 and 4

Located at 436 and 438 Ninth Avenue, these two lots contained tenements, and do not appear on the census rolls until 1890. They were both clearly used as boarding houses, each containing from 50 to 60 people from 1890 to 1900. The list of names changes with each census.

LOT 5

367 West 34th Street. This lot was occupied by a building between 1852 and 1868 (both Dripps), shown to be a two-story brick building in 1883 (Robinson). However, it was not mentioned in the 1880 census, and two different families lived there in 1900 (Dunn?-2) and 1910 (Paguli?-2).

LOT 6

This building, 365 West 34th Street, still stands. The building erected here by 1883 (see building history) was obviously standing by 1880 when William Salmon and his wife and their servant lived there. William Salmon is listed as a builder of Irish extraction. The wife, Elizabeth appears in the 1900 census as a widow, living with her two spinster sisters, a servant and a lodger. This lot shows at least 20 years residence, however only the wife is present during the entire period.

A row of four-story brick tenements was built on Lots 7-14 by 1868. These buildings were still standing in 1920. Since the census material only covers the period from 1870 to 1910, they refer to the tenement buildings, and earlier and later building records need not be consulted in their interpretation. Maps referred to are the 1852 and 1868 Dripps, 1913 corrected to 1920 Bromley, and the 1883 Robinson (which has some numbering errors).

LOT 7

363 West 34th Street. The most westerly of the row of four-story tenements on this block. From 1870 to 1880 this structure was the residence of the Benedick family (6) with two servants in 1870 and one in 1880. By 1890 the Benedicks had left and the Butlers (2) had moved in with one unrelated person, possibly a servant. Although the Butlers are still present in 1900 and 1910, the building is clearly a rooming house, with three other families (total of 12 people) in 1900, and four other different families (more than 15 people) in 1910, and only one Butler present then. Although the Butler family maintains a presence from 1890 to 1910, any attempt to relate privy or other remains to the family would not be feasible because of the number of other residents using the same facilities.

LOT 8

361 West 34th Street. Another four-story brick tenement from the row. The 1870 residents are the family of Dr. Suzar (? hard to read) and their servants. Two families are there in 1880, the Waleses and the Browns, in 1890 the Fish family and two lodgers, in 1900 the Buchanans and a lodger, and in 1910 the Hogan family with ten lodgers and one servant. No continuity is represented from census to census.

LOT 9

359 West 34th Street. Another of the row of four-story brick tenements, completed before 1868, and still present in 1920, this lot shows at least ten years of residential continuity, with the Frear family living there for the 1870 and 1880 census. Three Frears were present in 1870, with two domestics, while in 1880 there were only two with two servants, and a boarder (probably using the living space of the missing Frear). In 1890 a different family living there with three unrelated people, probably lodgers, and in 1900 two other families resided at that address, with two lodgers and a boarder.

LOT 10

357 West 34th Street. This tenement, also part of the row which was built on Lots 7-14, was present by 1868, and still standing in 1920. In 1870 the Ensine family of two with two boarders and two domestics lived there. The Gleadhill's (6) shared the building with the Maher family (2) and one servant in 1890. Both families were still present in 1900, except the number of Gleadhills had dropped to five, and the Mahers had increased to five and are listed as lodgers. There were also two servants. By 1910 neither family is present, and there are eight lodgers residing in the building.

LOT 11

Formerly 355 West 34th Street, the tenement building erected here by 1868 was demolished in the 1950s. The brick building was inhabited by the Henry Goff family by 1870, and the family was still present in 1900. Henry Goff was a "broker" of Irish birth, and lived with his wife, four sons (3 working as clerks) and one daughter. From 1870 to 1900 there were always two servants and sometimes one boarder. By 1900 the sons had moved out, and Goff's

mother and a second daughter were living with them. This lot is sensitive, exhibiting at least 30 years of continuous residence by one family.

LOT 12

353 West 34th Street. This lot was the site of a tenement building by 1868 still standing in 1920. In 1870 two families and seven lodgers lived there, for a total of 17 people. Only single families are present in 1880 (with two servants), 1890 and 1900 (with one servant). Each year a different family is reported.

LOT 13

351 West 34th Street. 351 had become the Metropolitan Throat Hospital before 1902 (Alt#622), apparently in the four-story tenement that stood on the lot by 1868 (Dripps 1868). The earliest census record, 1880, reports three different families occupying the building, along with 14 boarders and five servants, for a total of 29 people, none of whom appear in census lists for that address again. 1890, 1900 and 1910 each show a single family, but no proof that any of the three inhabited the structure for longer than ten years. It is curious that the 1910 data overlap the presence of the Throat Hospital. It is possible that the single families were those of full-time building superintendents, which would explain the transition from flats to single family occupancy.

LOT 14

349 West 34th Street. The four-story tenement building that appears on the 1920 Bromley map, was present in 1868 (Dripps 1868). While in the 1870 and 1880 censuses single families occupied the building, the 1890 records report two couples, five unrelated people, and from seven to twenty others, depending upon the interpretation of the hard-to-read handwriting. In 1900 there are 14 lodgers, and in 1910 there are 11, but the "lodgers" exhibit no continuity with those of the 1900 census.

In summary, of the two lots (6 and 11) which have the potential to yield information which might be securely associated with one family of long-term residency, only Lot 11 contains a relatively undisturbed area according to available documentary records.

VII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Potential Development Site 1 may very well have been exploited during prehistoric times. The site would have provided a wealth of resources attractive for Native American utilization. It is likely that the site was occupied at some time prehistorically for the extraction of resources. Potential remains would likely represent short term habitations for this purpose. The potential to recover these remains exists where back yards, or undisturbed plots, were located historically, or beneath the sites of existing or previous standing structures without cellars. However, we feel that this potential is extremely limited. The limitation is due in part to the massive earth moving undertaken in the nineteenth century. Clement Clark Moore, a nearby nineteenth century landowner, described the changes brought about by the 1811 Commissioners Survey: "The great principle which governs these plans is, to reduce the surface of the earth as nearly as possible to a dead level. The natural inequities of the ground are destroyed..." (Cohen 1988:2511). However, the present day elevations roughly correspond to those taken by the street surveyors prior to leveling. The three borings we were able to locate through the Department of General Services noted the same relative topography recorded prior to the massive street regulations after 1811. At the corner of 34th Street and Ninth Avenue a boring in the street near the curb recorded five feet of fill. This fill may very well be from utility installation along the curb or disturbances due to the construction of the Ninth Avenue El. These borings do not assist us in determining the amount of "missing" pre-1811 A horizon or B horizon soil. Therefore, the question of the depth of intact soil stratigraphy on Potential Development Site 1 remains unanswered.

The tenement lots (Lots 7 through 12) each had rear yards of approximately 18 feet by 25 feet that apparently never hosted substantial structures. According to a c.1927 photograph from the New York Public Library Photograph Collection the buildings on this 34th Street frontage were substantial, raised-stoop, masonry structures. For more than a century the rear lot spaces have been subject to multiple human activities which almost surely would have destroyed or hopelessly mixed shallow-lying prehistoric deposits. As stated in the results of a site file search by the New York State Museum, Division of Research and Collections, the "Probability of prehistoric remains is low unless original deposit remains e.g. covered and protected by sidewalks etc. or buried by fill from earlier construc-

tion" (personal communication from B.W. to Cece Kirkorian, 7/26/88, See Appendix A). On Block 758 we estimate that the pre-1811 topography has been graded rather than preserved by an overmantle of fill.

There is documentation for cellars under at least a part of each structure on all the lots except for Lots 3 and 4. Although there is no written record of cellar construction on these lots, we strongly feel that such cellars existed or did not exist due to underlying rock outcroppings. Under either circumstances there is no potential for recovering prehistoric cultural remains.

The very narrow strips of land abutting the rear lot lines of Lots 3, 4, and 6 that have been seemingly vacant through the historic era were impacted by documented foundation excavations on Lots 3, 4, 6, and 7. The approximately ten foot wide strips would, at the most, afford a possibly undisturbed strip of less than six feet. This small, restricted area would only provide a very limited window on the possible prehistoric use of the area.

We do not feel that the potential for in situ prehistoric archaeological resources at Potential Development Site 1 is strong enough to warrant further consideration.

Remnants of historic lifestyles are limited, as there was nothing constructed on the site prior to the middle of the nineteenth century. Lot 11 is the only parcel on the project site that could produce historical period cultural resources which might be securely associated with one family of long-term residency. The Goff family apparently occupied the building for the last thirty years of the nineteenth century.

Although questionable, there is the possibility that privies, cisterns, and wells were once located in the back yards of some of the project site's lots including Lot 11. As detailed in the preceding discussion, municipal sewer service was available from the onset of construction on the site. However, based on nineteenth century sanitation reports and health violation records from neighboring blocks there is no reason to believe that each tenement was connected to this available sewer. If privies were in rear yards of certain of these tenements - including the one on Lot 11 - they were regularly emptied according to late nineteenth century health code regulations. Periodic

cleanings may have destroyed any archaeologically significant deposits.

It has been impossible to ascertain the exact nature of an individual tenement's earliest water supply despite extensive investigation. Although there was municipal water in the immediate area at the time of first construction, there may be a capped cistern in the backyard space in Lot 11. The backyard area in Lot 11 is approximately 25 by 18 feet (See Figure 14) and the documents we were able to locate do not record any structures occupying the space subsequent to the Goffs' departure in 1900. However, the building was not demolished until at least 1950, so a half century of use must have had an impact on the space. It is not possible for documentary research to afford definitive assurance that significant potential resources do, in fact, exist.

In the event that the Landmarks Preservation Commission should decide that the backyard area in Lot 11 should be investigated for cultural resources, we recommend the following procedure. Mechanical equipment should remove the parking lot surface from the sensitive area measuring approximately 25 by 18 feet. Then a small backhoe or a blade-fitted bulldozer, under the direction of a professional archaeologist, could carefully remove extraneous material to a depth sufficient to determine whether or not archaeological features exist. Features such as privies and cisterns are usually readily detectable because of their distinctive shape. If features are encountered, they, or portions thereof, would be hand excavated according to accepted archaeological procedures.

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HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

July 8, 1988


Phil Lord
Room CEC 3118
New York State Museum
Empire State Plaza
Albany, NY 12230

Dear Phil,

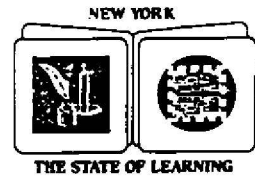
We are conducting a Phase 1A archaeological assessment on a tract of land in Manhattan. I have enclosed a topo quad with the blocks in question noted.

Could your office conduct a site file search for information/sites pertinent to this particular section of the city. We appreciate your cooperation.

Again, thank you,


Cece Kirkorian

encl.
cc: Fullem



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY NY 12230

NEW YORK STATE MUSEUM
DIVISION OF RESEARCH AND COLLECTIONS

Search Results:

NEW YORK STATE MUSEUM
Prehistoric Site File

Date: July 26, 1988

To: Cece Kirkorian
Historical Perspectives
P.O. Box 331
Riverside, Connecticut 06878

Area Searched: Manhattan, New York, (see attached map).

In response to your request our staff has conducted a search of our data files* for locations and descriptions of prehistoric archaeological sites within the area indicated above.

The results of the search are given below. Please refer to the NYSM site identification numbers when requesting additional information.

If specific information requested has not been provided by this letter, it is likely that we are not able to provide it at this time, either because of staff limitations or policy regarding disclosure of archaeological site data.

Any questions regarding this reply can be directed to Philip Lord, Jr., at (518) 473-1503 or the above address, mark as Atten: Site File.

*[NOTE: Our files normally do not contain historic period sites or architectural properties. Contact: The Survey Registration & Planning Unit, Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation, Agency Building #1, Empire State Plaza, Albany NY, at (518) 474-0479 to begin the process of collecting data on these types of sites.]

RESULTS OF THE FILE SEARCH:

The following sites are located in or adjacent to the project area:

See attached list.

Code "ACP" = sites reported by Arthur C. Parker in The Archeology Of New York, 1922, as transcribed from his unpublished maps.

SEARCH CONDUCTED BY: B.W. (initials)
Staff, Office of the State Archaeologist

EVALUATION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SENSITIVITY FOR PREHISTORIC (INDIAN) SITES
Examination of the data suggests that the location indicated has the following sensitivity rating:

- [] HIGHER THAN AVERAGE PROBABILITY OF PRODUCING PREHISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATA.
- [] AVERAGE PROBABILITY OF PRODUCING PREHISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATA.
- [] LOWER THAN AVERAGE PROBABILITY OF PRODUCING PREHISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATA.
- [] MIXED PROBABILITY OF PRODUCING PREHISTORIC ARCHEOLOGICAL DATA.

The reasons for this finding are given below:

- [] A RECORDED SITE IS INDICATED IN OR IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT TO THE LOCATION AND WE HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE IT COULD BE IMPACTED BY CONSTRUCTION.
- [] A RECORDED SITE IS INDICATED SOME DISTANCE AWAY BUT DUE TO THE MARGIN OF ERROR IN THE LOCATION DATA IT IS POSSIBLE THE SITE ACTUALLY EXISTS IN OR IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT TO THE LOCATION.
- [] THE TERRAIN IN THE LOCATION IS SIMILAR TO TERRAIN IN THE GENERAL VICINITY WHERE RECORDED ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES ARE INDICATED.
- [] THE PHYSIOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LOCATION SUGGEST A HIGH PROBABILITY OF PREHISTORIC OCCUPATION OR USE.
- [] THE PHYSIOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LOCATION SUGGEST A MEDIUM PROBABILITY OF PREHISTORIC OCCUPATION OR USE.
- [] THE PHYSIOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LOCATION ARE SUCH AS SUGGEST A LOW PROBABILITY OF PREHISTORIC OCCUPATION OR USE.
- [] EVIDENCE OF PRIOR DESTRUCTIVE IMPACTS FROM CULTURAL OR NATURAL SOURCES SUGGESTS A LOSS OF ORIGINAL CULTURAL DEPOSITS IN THIS LOCATION.
- [] THE PHYSIOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LOCATION ARE MIXED, A HIGHER THAN AVERAGE PROBABILITY OF PREHISTORIC OCCUPATION OR USE IS SUGGESTED FOR AREAS IN THE VICINITY OF STREAMS OR SWAMPS. LOW PROBABILITY IS SUGGESTED FOR AREAS OF EROSIONAL STEEP SLOPE. OTHER AREAS WITHIN THE PROJECT SUGGEST AVERAGE PROBABILITY OF USE.

COMMENTS:

Probability of prehistoric remains is low unless original deposits remains e.g. covered and protected by sidewalks etc. or buried by fill from earlier construction.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE FILE SEARCH
NEW YORK STATE MUSEUM
CULTURAL EDUCATION CENTER
ALBANY, NEW YORK

ASM SITE #	OTHER SITE #'S	SITE NAME	TIME PERIOD	SITE TYPE	SOURCE OF DATA	15' QUAD NAME	7.5' QUAD NAME	REPORTER NAME	PROJECT NAME OR #
4059	ACP NYRK-9	NO INFO	NO INFO	VILL AGE		STATON ISLAND QUAD	JERSEY CITY QUAD	PARKER	NO INFO
4061	ACP NYRK-(UN NUMBERED)	NO INFO	NO INFO	TRAC ES OF OCCU PATI ON		HARLEM QUAD	CENTRAL PARK QUAD	PARKER	NO INFO



Mapped, edited and published by the Geological Survey
 Revised in cooperation with New York
 Department of Transportation

Control by USGS, USC&GS, and New Jersey Geodetic Survey

Planimetry by photogrammetric methods and from USC&GS Charts T-4567
 T-5089, T-5264, T-5278, T-5448, T-5449, T-5451, T-5452, T-5453, T-5458,
 and T-5778. Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
 taken 1954 and planimetric surveys 1956

Revised from aerial photographs taken 1966. Field checked 1966

Selected hydrographic data compiled from USC&GS Charts 226, 274, 745,
 746, and 747 (1966). This information is not intended for navigational purposes

Polycyclic projection. 1927 North American datum
 10,000 foot grids based on New York coordinate system. Long Island zone,
 and New Jersey coordinate system
 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 18, shown in blue

UTM GRID AND 1979 MAGNETIC NORTH
 DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

NEW JERSEY CITY
 DISTRICT

12
 213 VTC 1 0°42'
 12 MILES

8263 IV SW
(CENTRAL PARK)

74°00'



42'30"

NOVEL DIGITALIZATION OF THE



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

- | | | | |
|------------------|-------|-----------------|-------|
| Heavy-duty | ————— | Light-duty | ————— |
| Medium-duty | ————— | Unimproved dirt | ===== |
| Interstate Route | ⬢ | U. S. Route | ◯ |
| | | State Route | ◯ |

QUADRANGLE LOCATION

WEEHAWKEN, N. J.-N. Y.
N4045—W7400/7.5

Revisions shown in circles compiled from aerial photos

This is a detailed black and white map of Midtown Manhattan, New York City. The map shows the grid of streets from 42nd Street to 110th Street and from the Hudson River to the East River. Key landmarks and locations labeled include:

- Central Park** and **The Lake** in the center.
- Lincoln Center** and **Fordham University** on the west side.
- United Nations Secretariat Building** and **United Nations Headquarters** on the east side.
- Rockefeller Center** and **Carnegie Hall** in the lower left.
- Metropolitan Museum of Art** and **American Museum of Natural History** at the top.
- New York City Subway** lines and stations, including 42nd St, 57th St, 69th St, 77th St, 86th St, 96th St, and 110th St.
- Waterways** such as the Hudson River, Harlem River, and East River.
- Islands** like Welfare Island and Long Island.

The map includes a scale bar at the bottom indicating 3.5 miles and 201000 feet. The map is oriented with North at the top and includes a coordinate grid with latitude and longitude markings.

34th Street Rezoning Project: Potential Development Site 1



[illegible]

Map No. 68

George Rapelye

GLASS HOUSE FARM

Isaac Moses M.D. Jr. 41

Samuel Adams

AVE.

W. 37TH

W. 3.6 TH

W. 35TH

W. 34TH

-W. 33RD



Figure 3

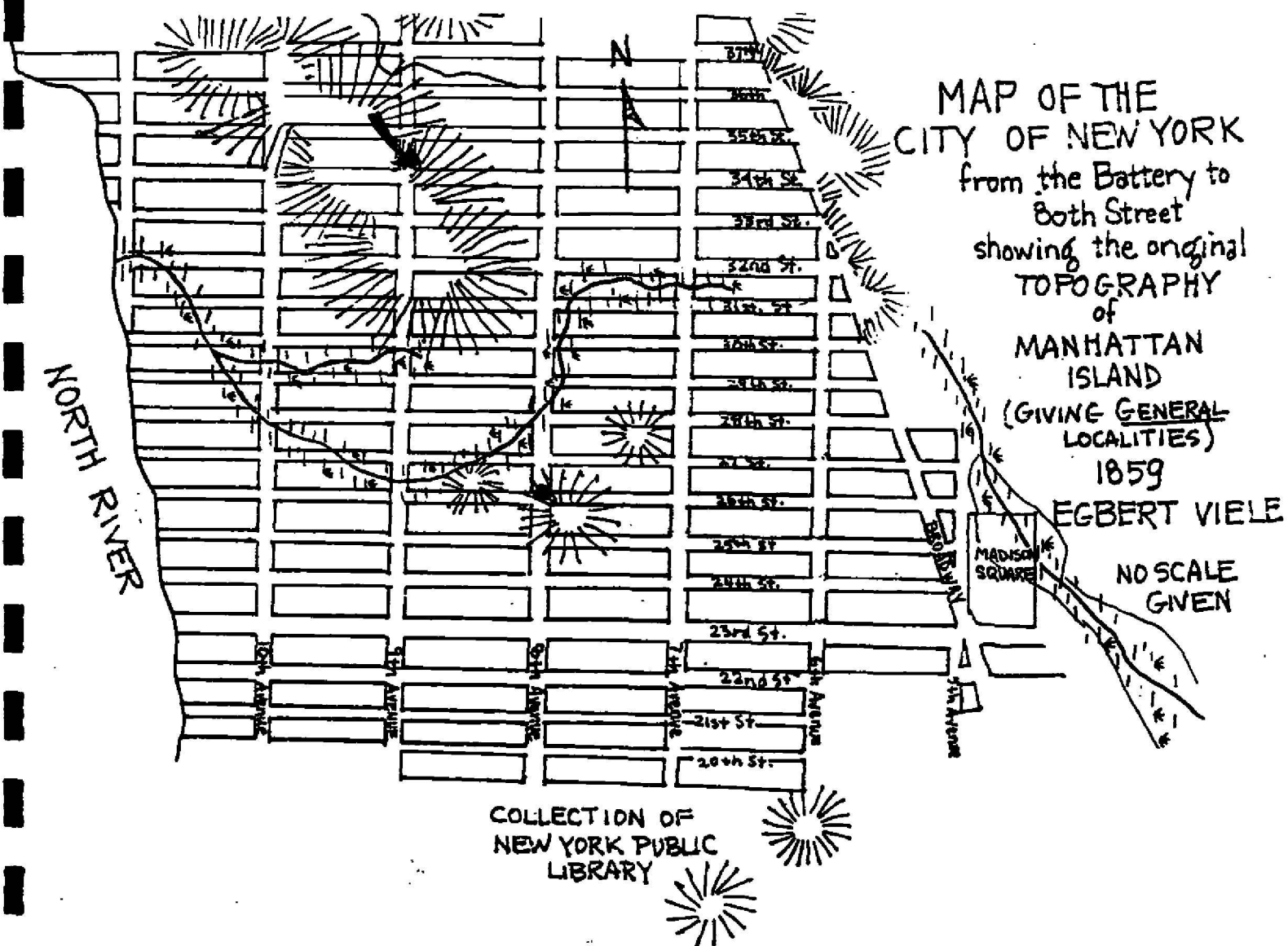
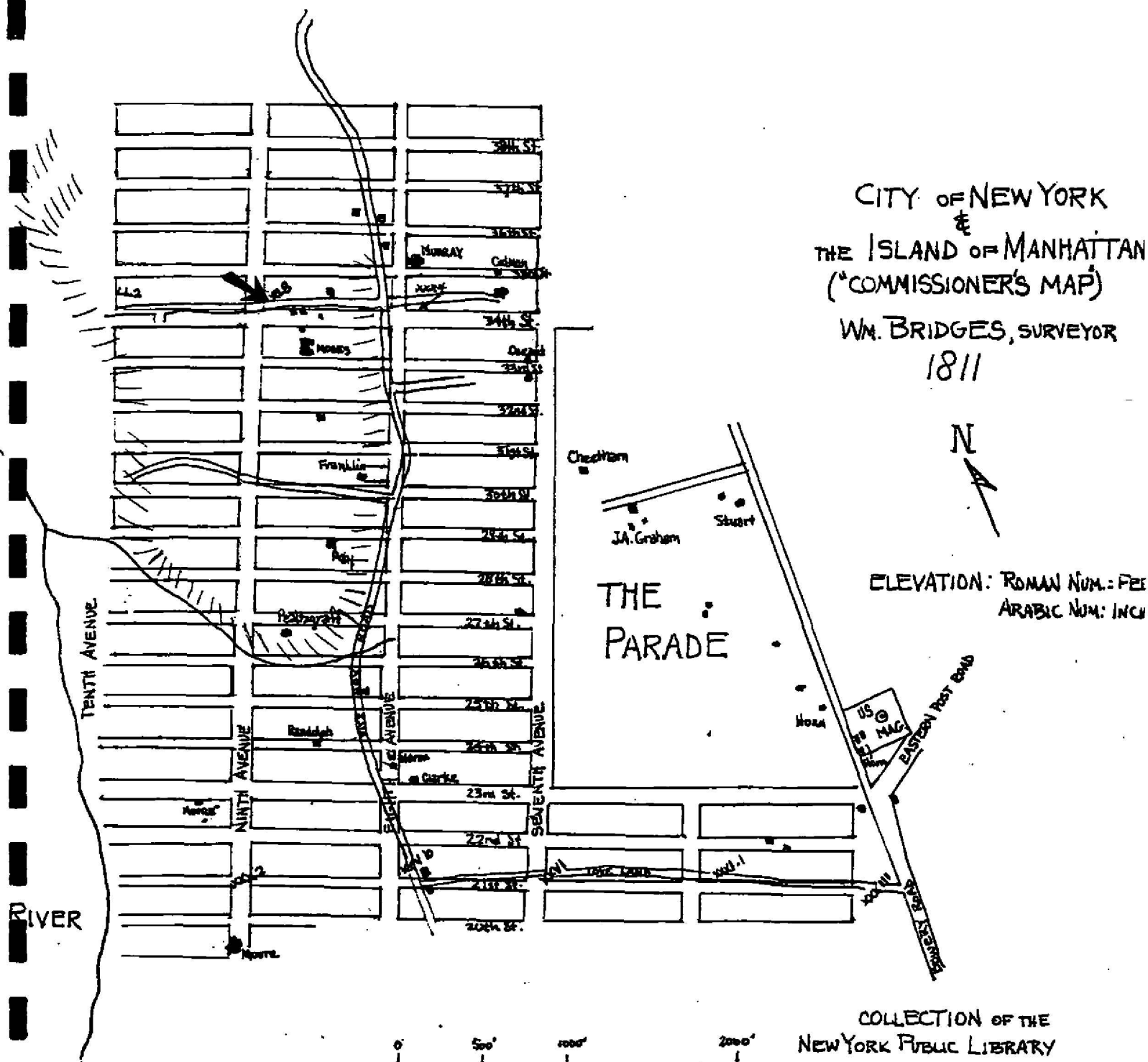


Figure 4



Photocopied from Wait, n.d.:2.



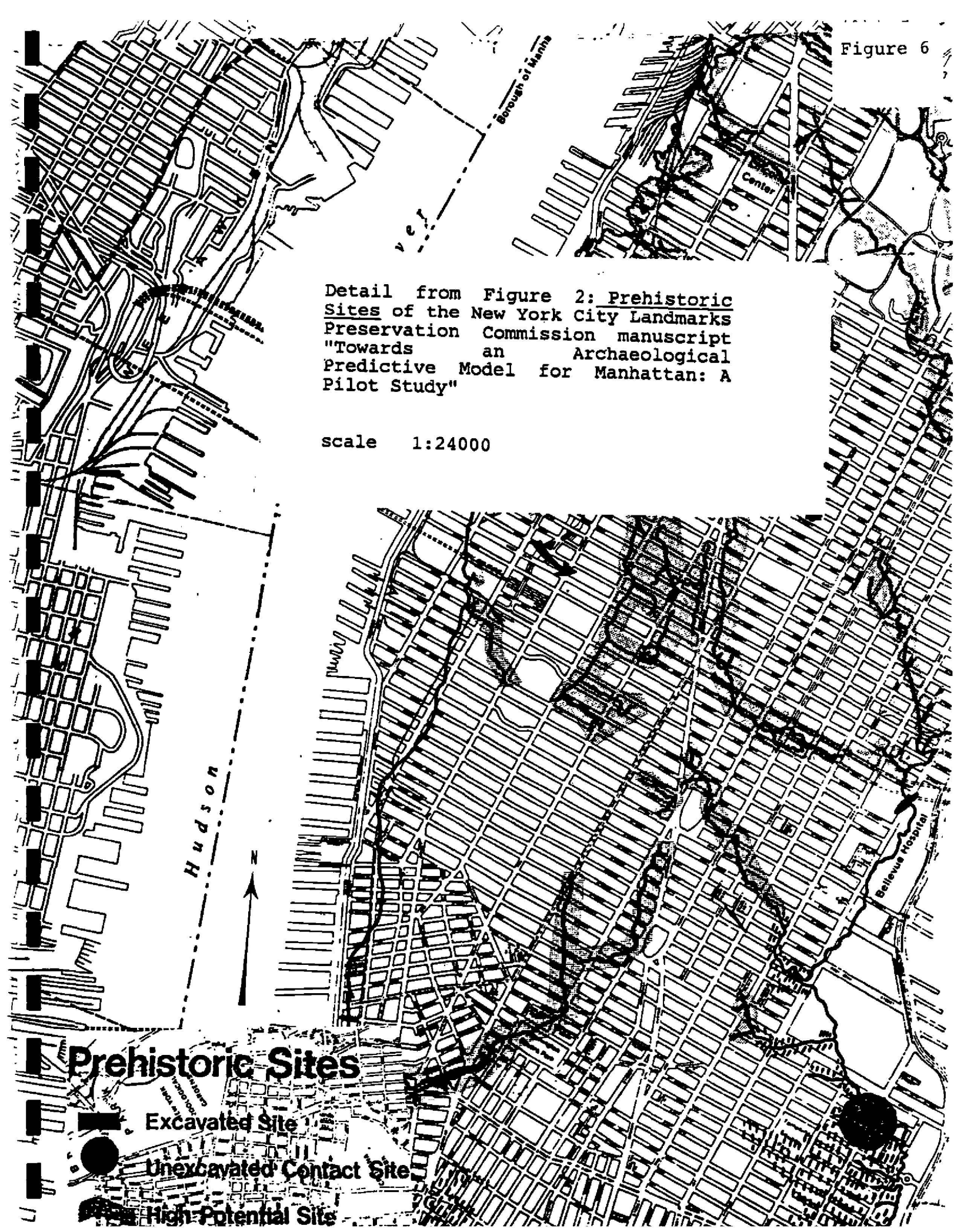
FIGURE 1.

Detail of topographical map of New York City by Sherman and Smith, 1844.
Courtesy of New York Historical Society, New York City.

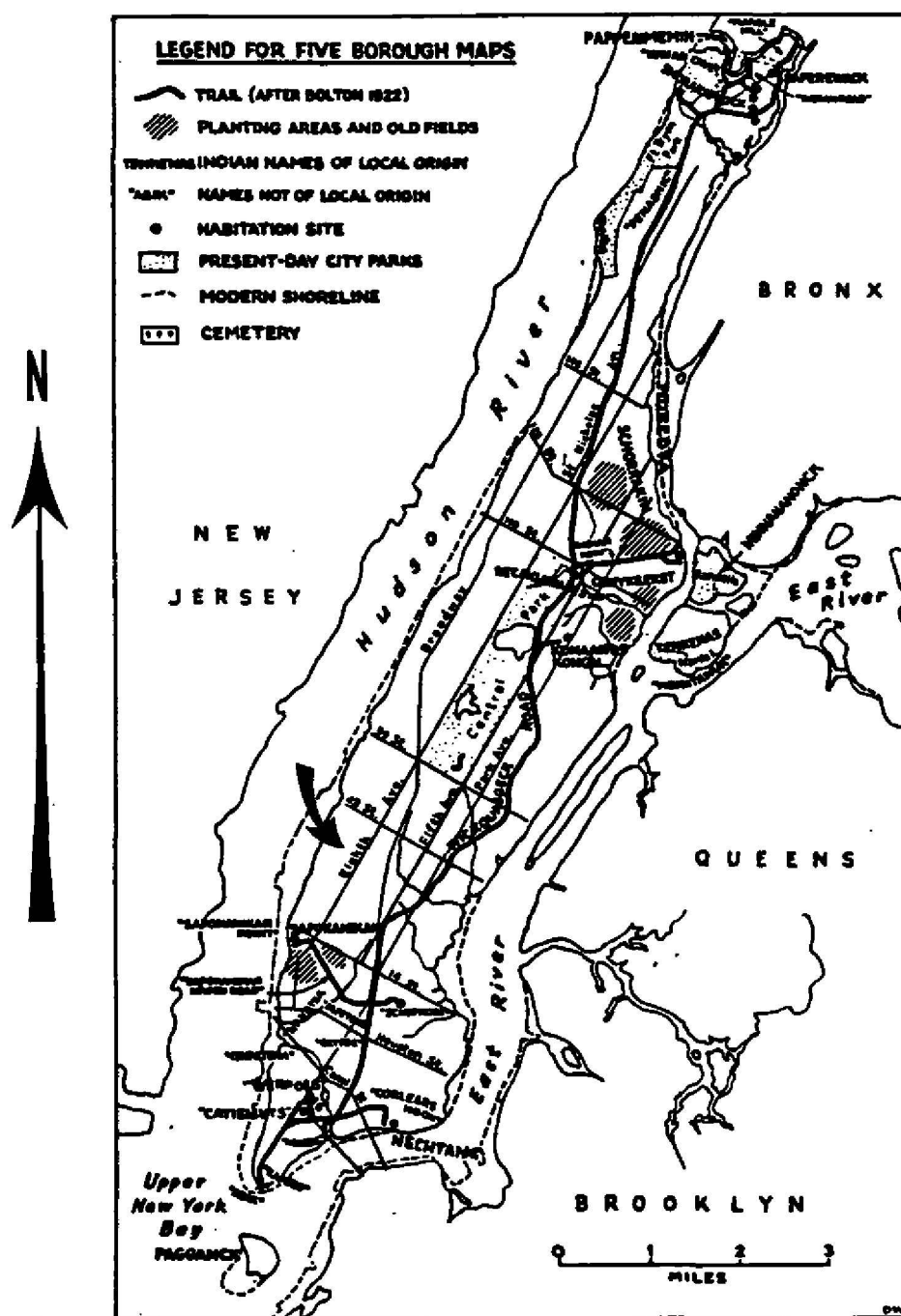


Detail from Figure 2: Prehistoric Sites of the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission manuscript "Towards an Archaeological Predictive Model for Manhattan: A Pilot Study"

scale 1:24000



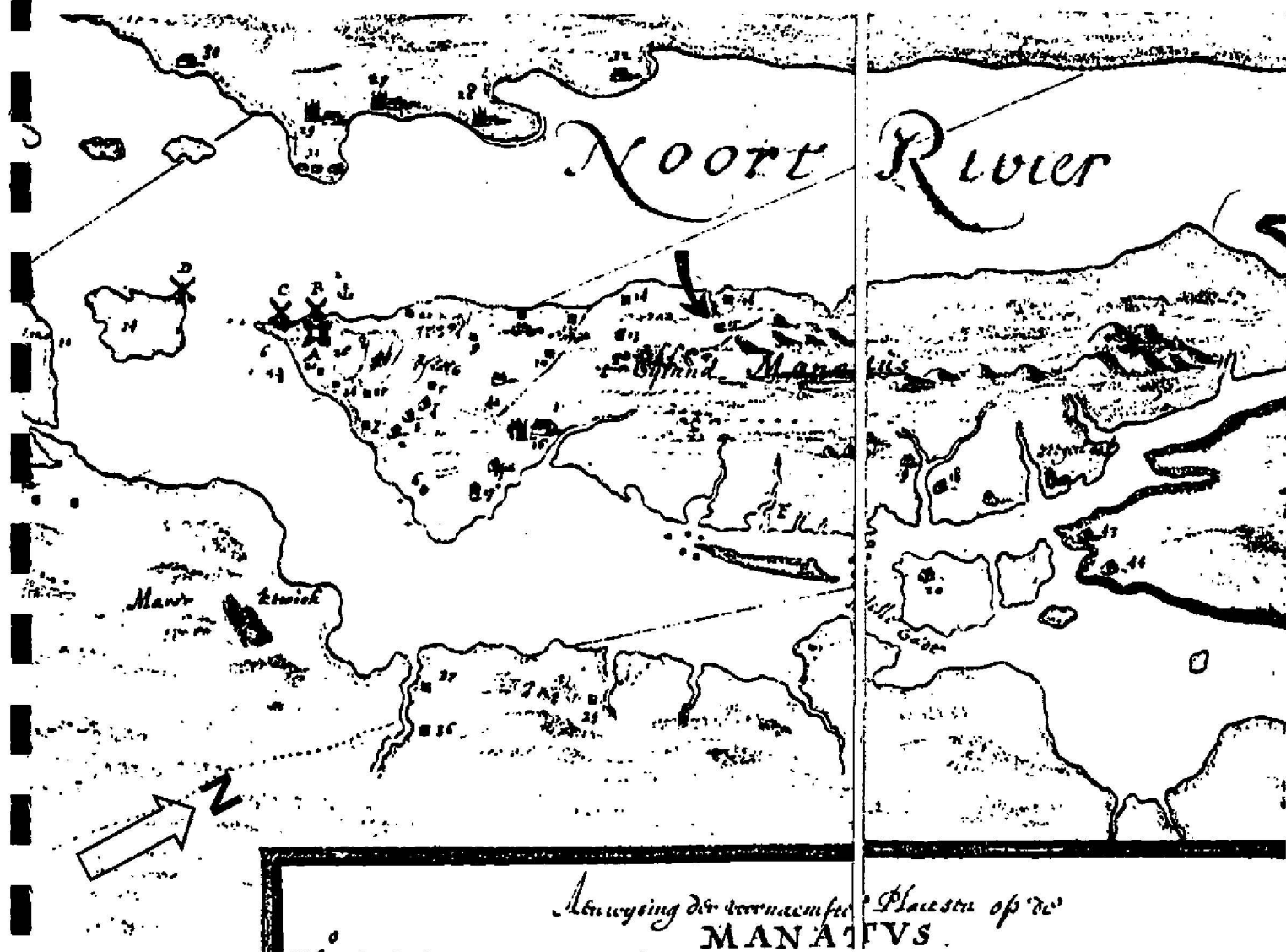
68 / MANHATTAN



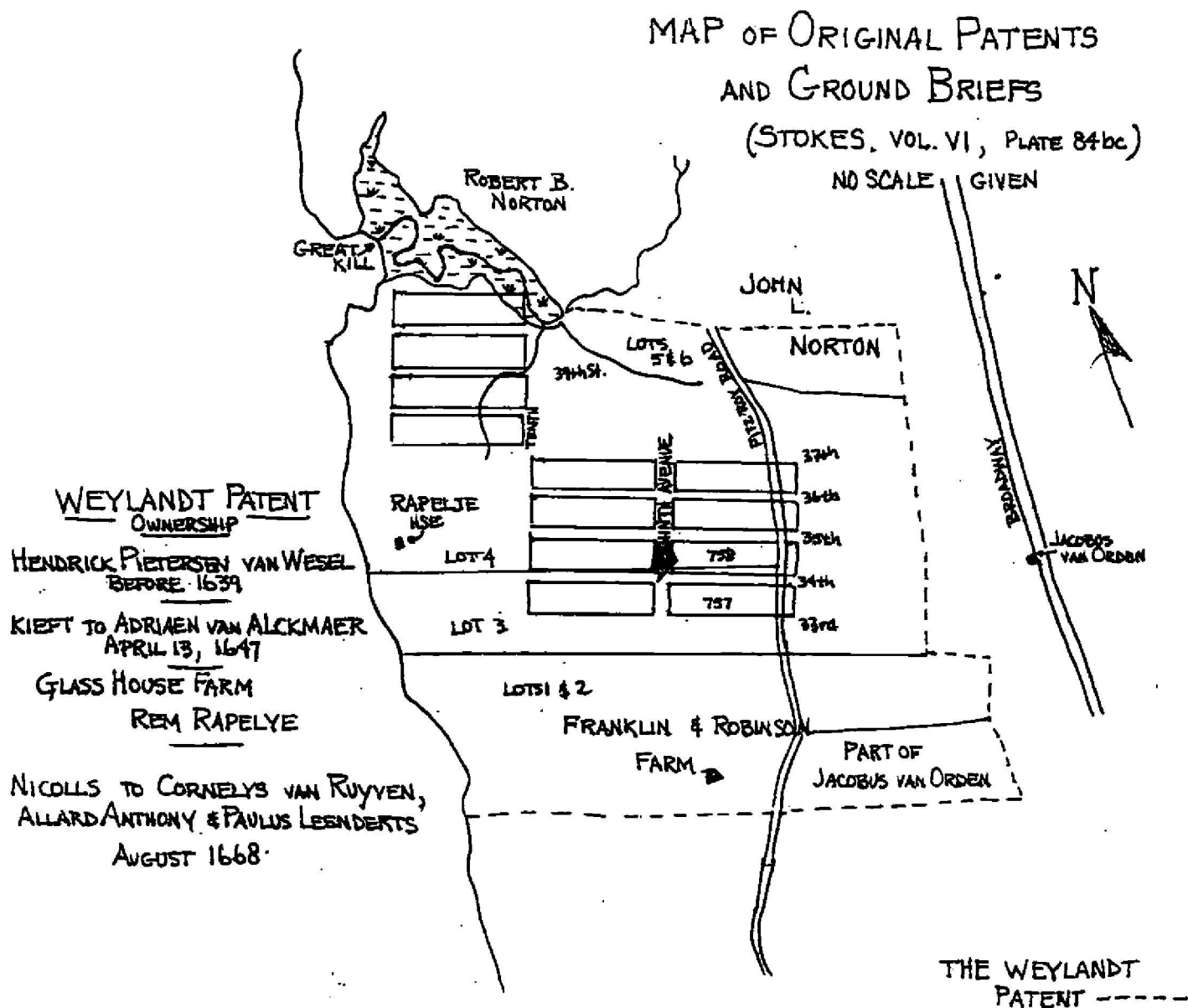
Robert Grumet, 1981

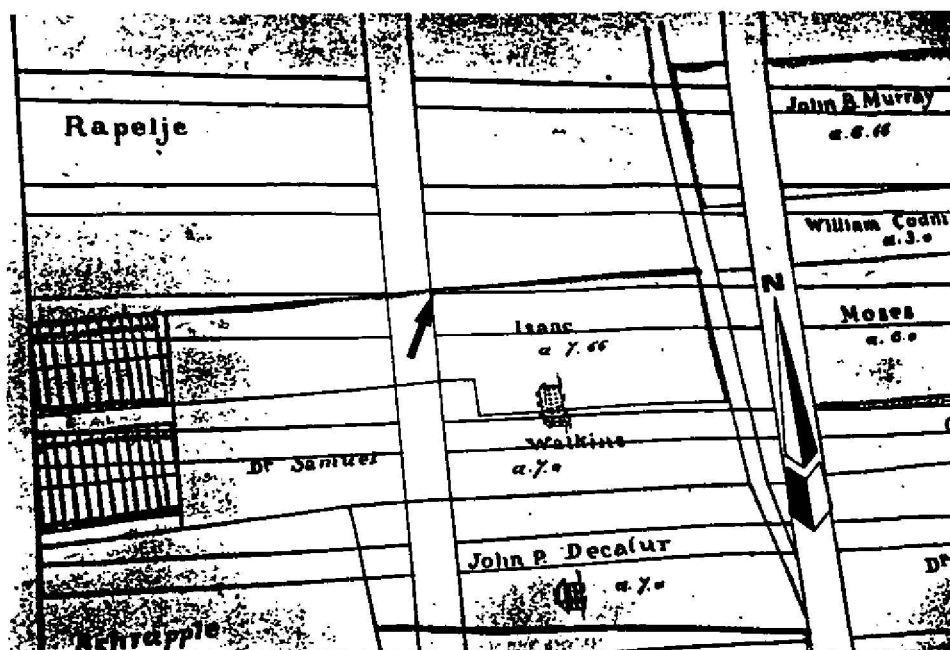
Manatus Map, 1639

Arrow indicates approximate location of project area.



Reproduced from John A. Kouwenhoven's COLUMBIA HISTORICAL
PORTRAIT OF NEW YORK, 1953





1815 (1868) Otto Sackersdorff Map of
Farms, also known as the Blue Book

NYPL Map Room



FARM HOUSE OF RAPELJE PROPERTY, AFTERWARD FACTORY
OF CHEMICAL MFG. CO.

Photocopied from HISTORY OF THE CHEMICAL BANK, p. 138

Photocopied from Wait, n.d.:14

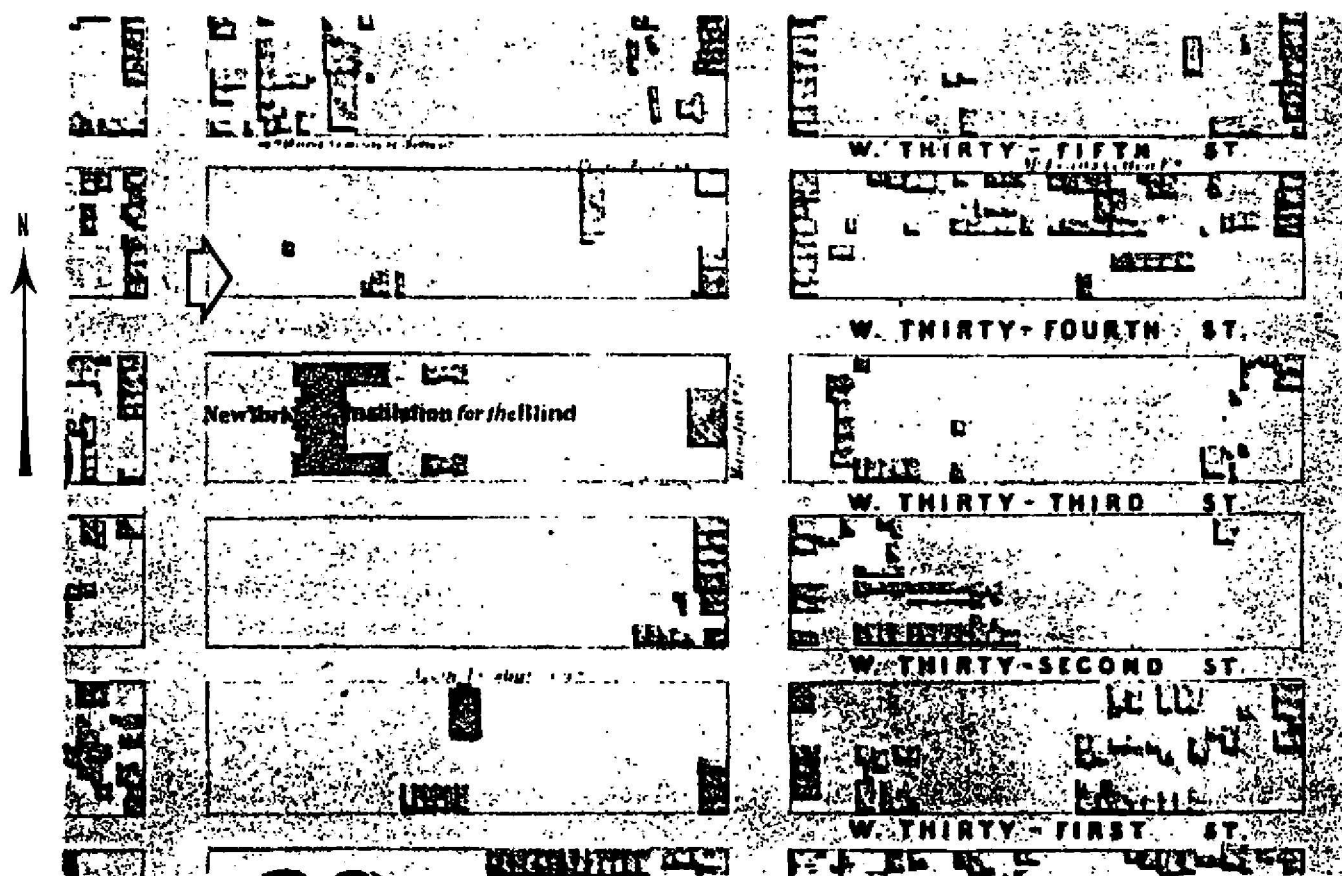
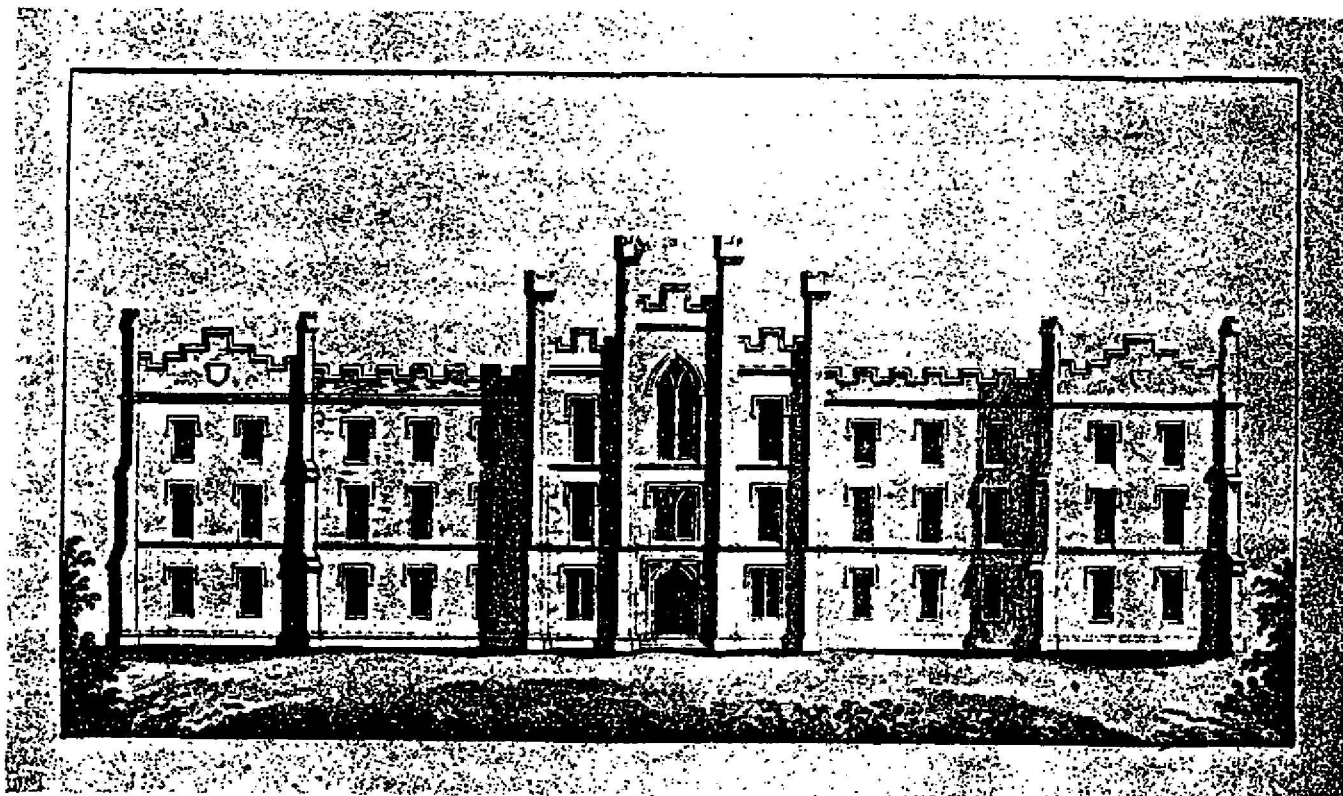


FIGURE 5.

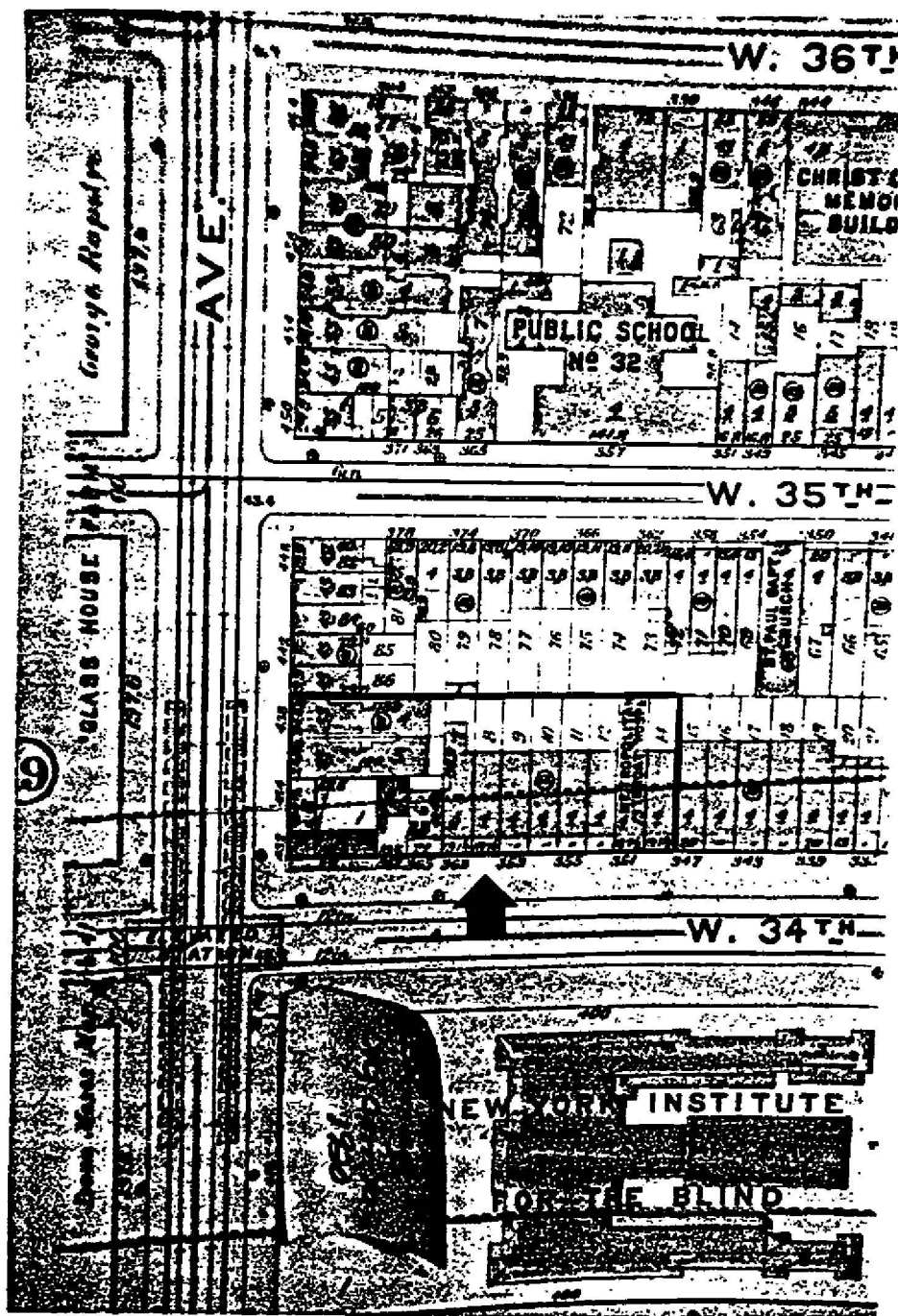
Detail from the M. Dripps Map of New York City, south of 50th Street, 1851.
Courtesy of the New York Historical Society, New York City.

Photocopied from Wait, n.d.:frontispiece

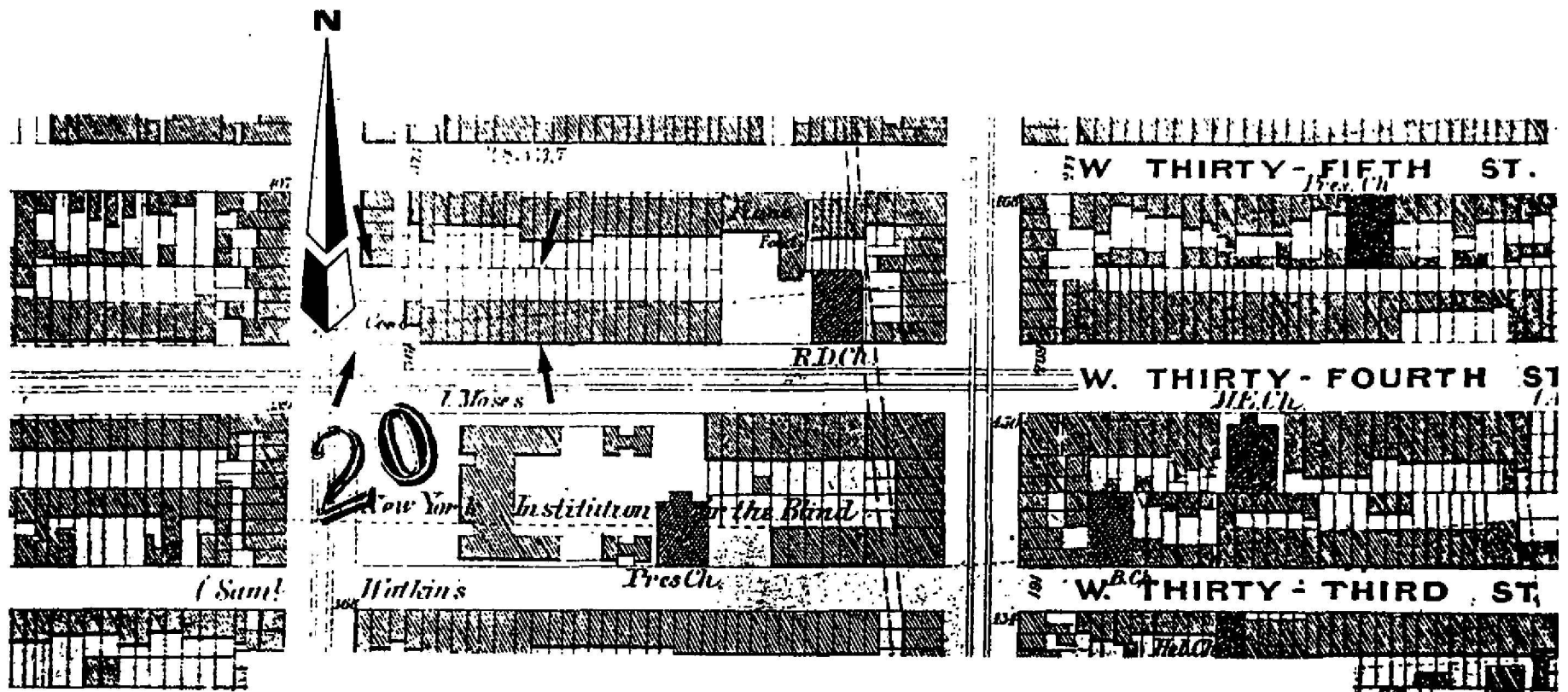


FRONTISPIECE

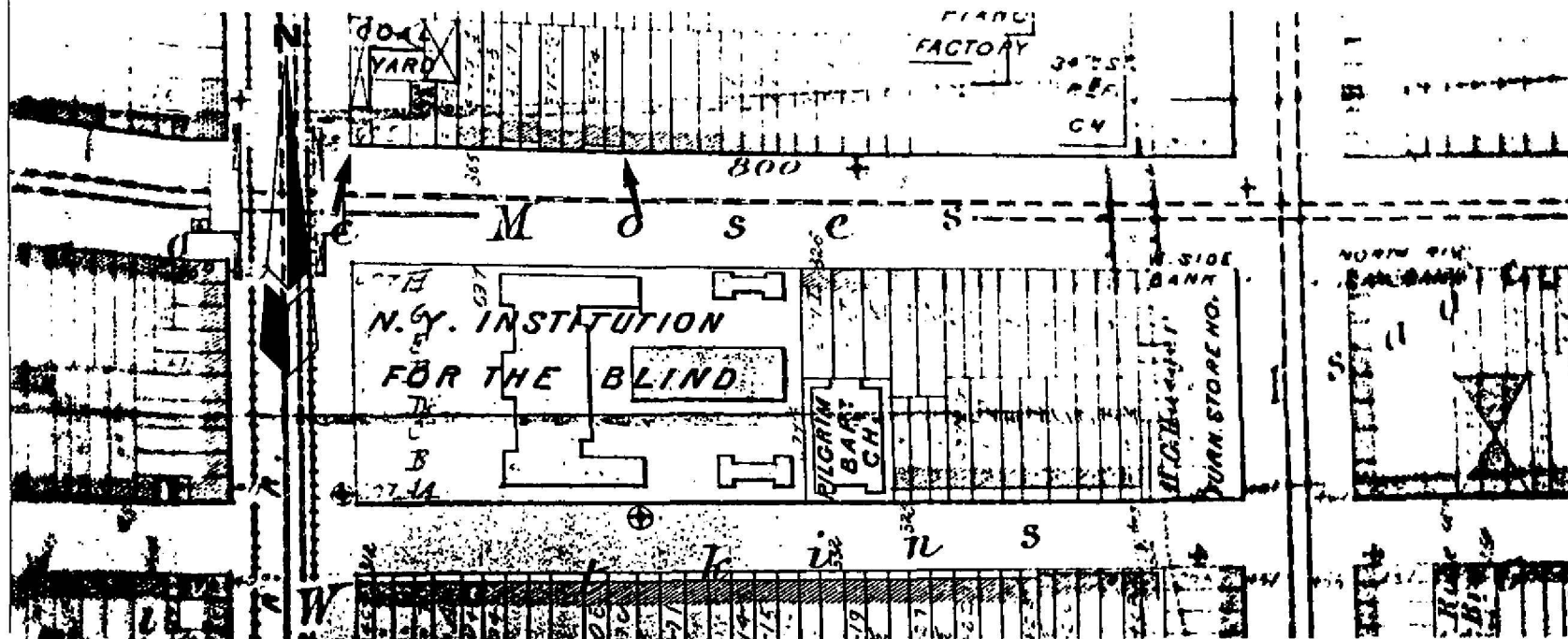
First known picture of the New York Institution for the Blind,
from the Report for 1837.



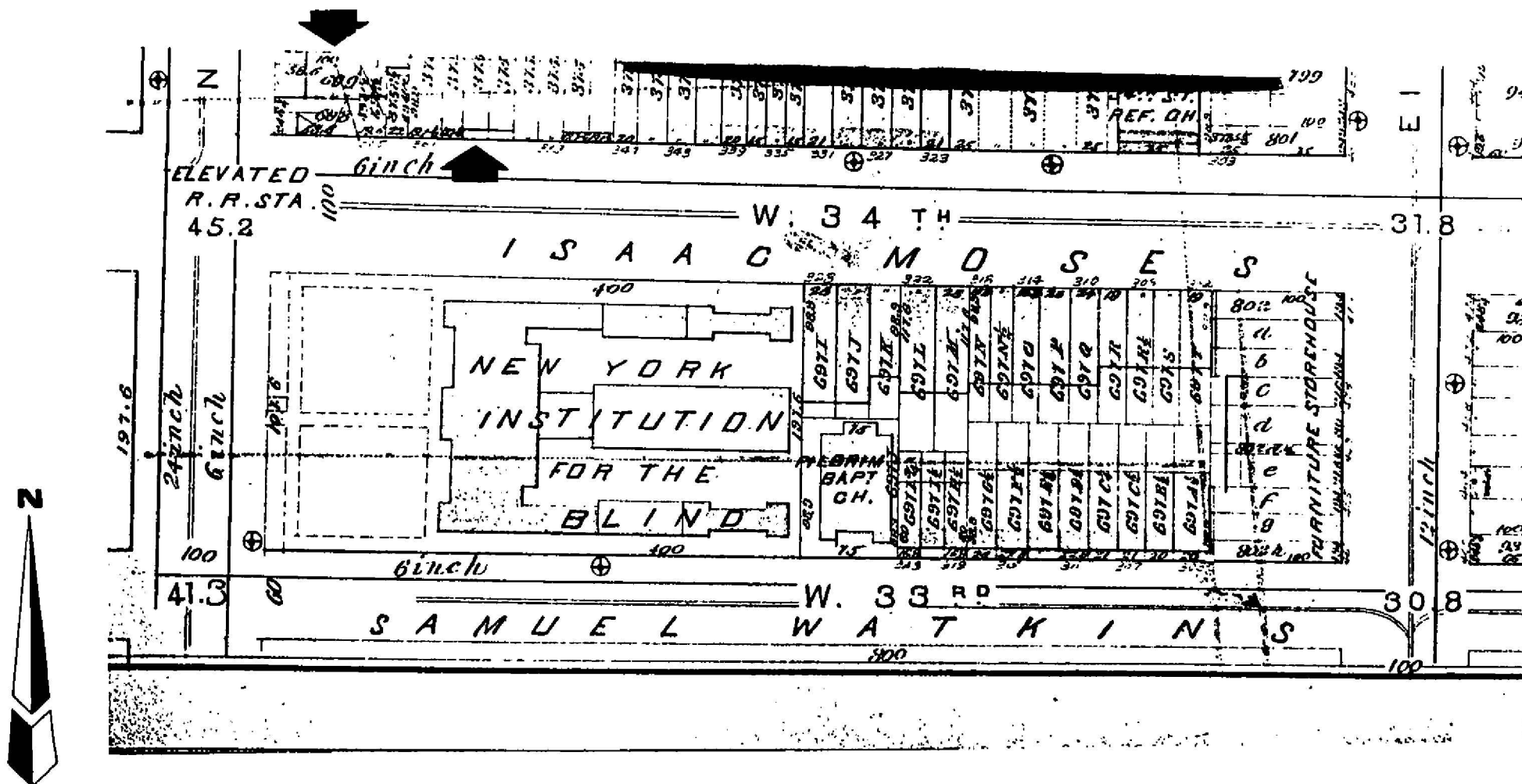
Bromley: Atlas of the City of
New York 1913 corr.
to 1920



Dripps Plan of New York City, 1868. NYPL Map Room

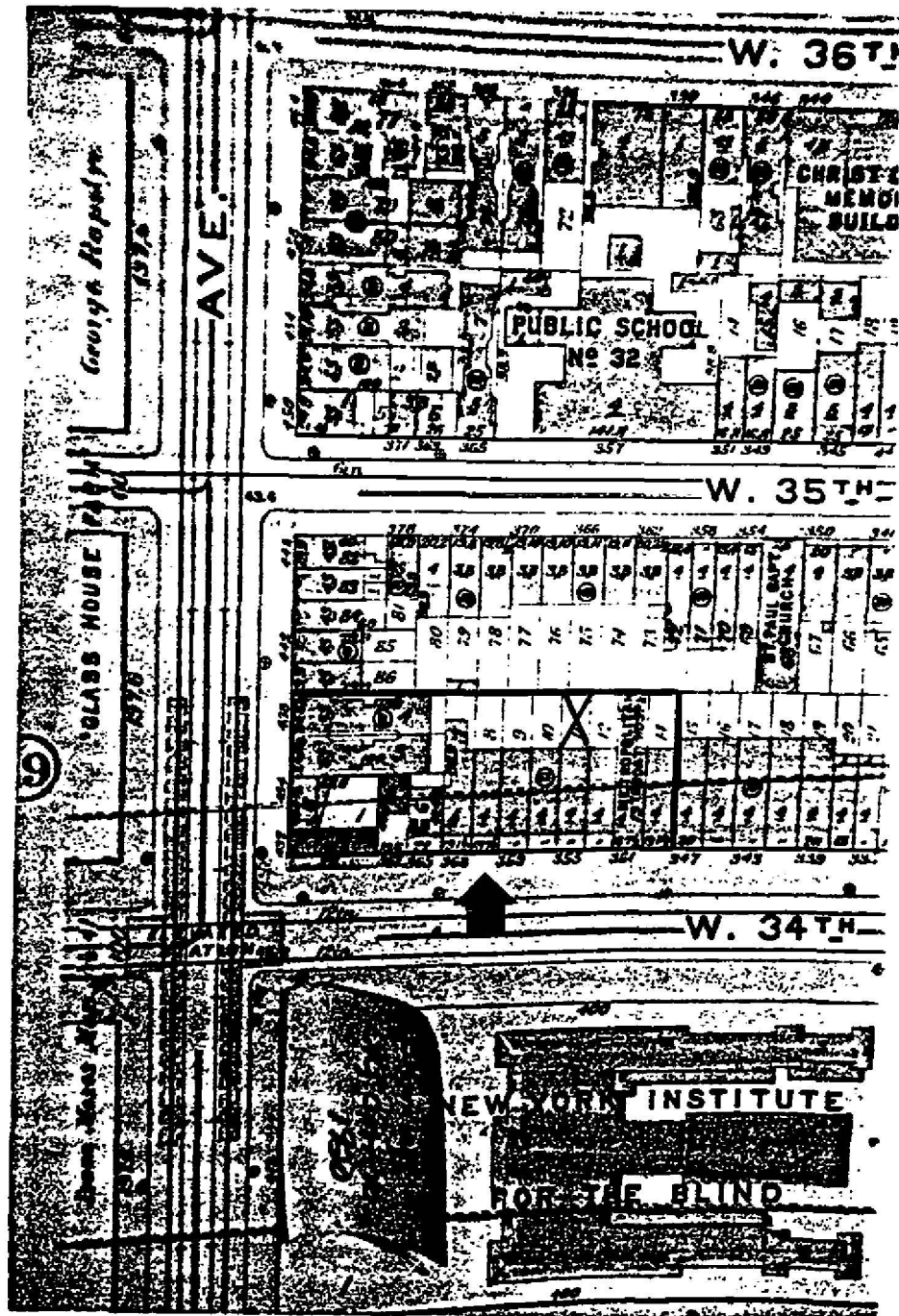


G. W. Bromley Atlas of the City of New York, 1879 (NYPL Map Room)



E. Robinson Atlas of the City of New York, Vol 3, 1883

NYPL Map Room



Bromley: Atlas of the City of
New York 1913 corr.
to 1920

X = Area of potential historical era archaeological
sensitivity on Lot 11

Photo 1: Project site - looking northeast from the southwest corner of West 34th Street and Ninth Avenue

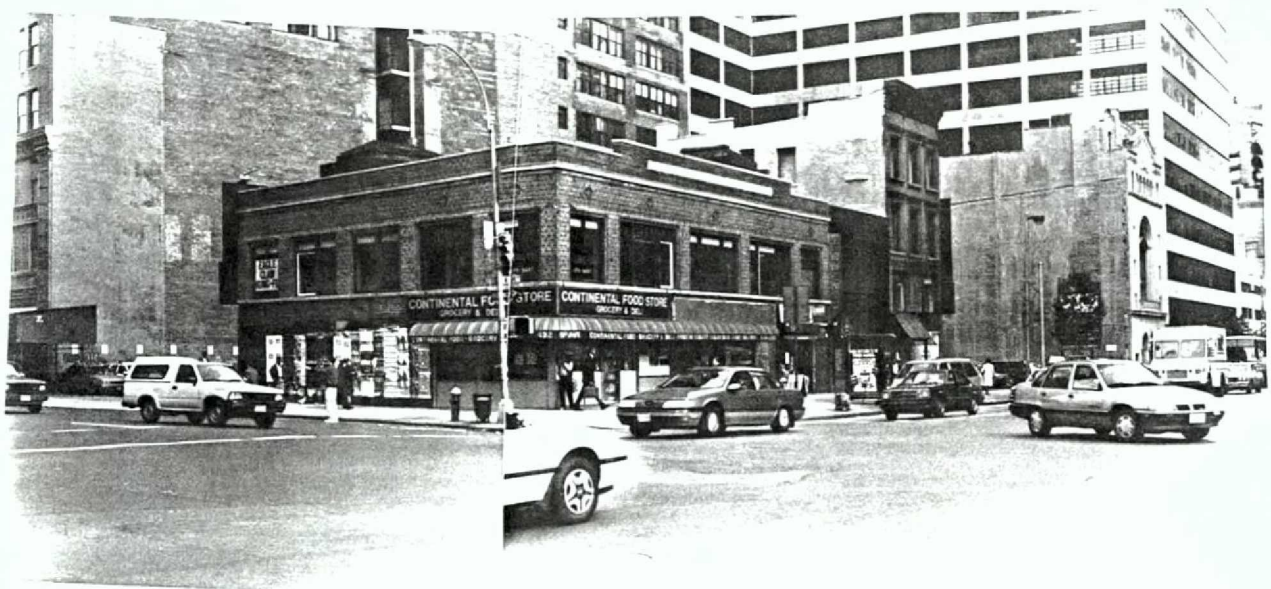


Photo 2: Looking northeast
from the south side of West
34th Street toward 367 and
365 West 34th Street. (right)



Photo 3: 365 West 34th
Street and parking lot.
Looking northwest. (left)



Photo 4: Looking northeast from the south side of West 34th Street toward the parking lot that would be 363-351 West 34th Street. (above)

Photo 5: Looking east from the west side of Ninth Avenue toward the parking lot that would be 436-438 Ninth Avenue. (above)

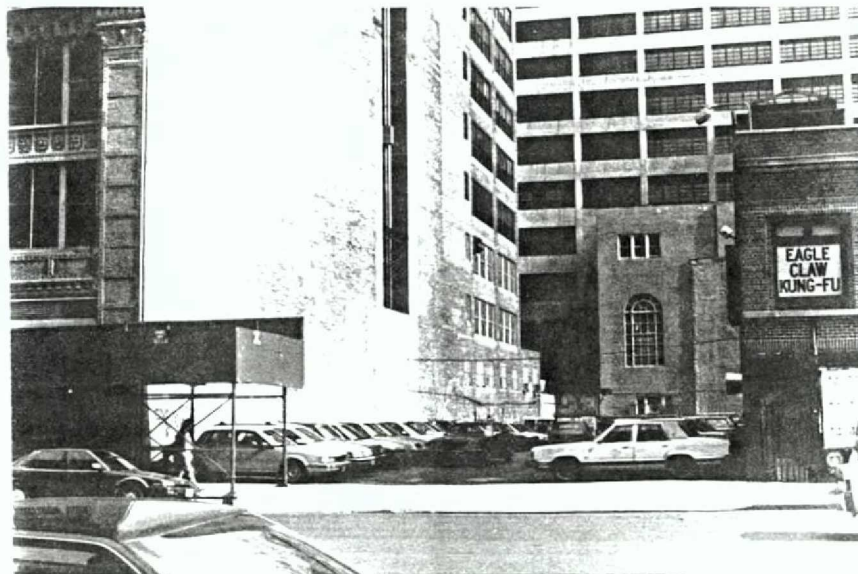




Photo 6: Looking northeast from the south side of West 34th Street toward the West Side Jewish Center at 347 West 34th Street. (left)

Photo 7: Looking southeast from the north side of West 34th Street toward St. Michael's Church west of Ninth Avenue on West 34th Street. (right)

