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Salwen

**Bert Salwen**

**1984      Archaeological Research Program: Scope of  
Work and Progress Report for the New York  
University Law School Library Extension  
Project, New York, New York**

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Bert Salwen

Sullivan Street, Manhattan

CEGA

SCOPE OF WORK

83-233M

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH PROGRAM:  
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL LIBRARY EXTENSION PROJECT,  
NEW YORK COUNTY, NEW YORK

1984

I. GENERAL DISCUSSION

New York University plans to construct an addition to its Law School Library which will involve excavation beneath the sidewalks and roadbed of Sullivan Street between Washington Square South and West Third Street in lower Manhattan (Figure 1.). Because of this area's relationship to the Greenwich Village Historic District, the University conducted preliminary researches designed to determine if important archaeological resources were likely to be affected by the project.

A historic background study (Harris and Pipes 1983) indicated that the area in question might possibly contain archaeological evidence of prehistoric Native American occupation, and was likely to contain important materials relating to the early 19th century expansion of New York City into its Greenwich Village "suburb." (This report is now undergoing minor revisions, as requested by New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission staff, but its basic findings have not been questioned.)

Based on the results of the documentary study, a series of test cores were taken from the project area. These did not yield any evidence of Native American occupation, but did confirm the presence of intact 19th century archaeological strata (Pickman and Rockman 1984).

The archaeological program described below is designed to further explore the 19th century strata and features in the Sullivan Street project area, to evaluate these resources in terms of their importance in providing information about changing patterns of urban life in 19th century New York, and to recover data and samples of material culture adequate to fully document the content and variability of these archaeological deposits.

A. Site Location and Boundaries: The area under discussion was



This map is reproduced from D. T. Valentine's Manual of the Corporation of the City of New York, 1886.

FIGURE 1.

part of Block No. 541 until Sullivan Street was extended north through the block from West Third Street to Washington Square South in 1903. The new street occupied the area previously occupied by Lots 15 and 16 (facing Washington Square South) and Lots 34 and 35 (facing West Third Street) (Perris 1854). The construction project area includes all of Lots 15, 16, 34, and 35, that part of Lot 17 not occupied by the Kervorkian Center Building, as well as Lot 33, to the east of Sullivan Street and north of West Third Street (see Pickman and Rockman 1984:Key Map).

However, based on both documentary research and analysis of the archaeologically supervised test boring program, we are confident that archaeological excavations should be limited to a somewhat smaller area, consisting of the courtyard or backyard areas in Lots 15, 16, 17, 33, and 34-- a total of approximately 5000 square feet (Pickman and Rockman 1984:4) (See Figure 2).

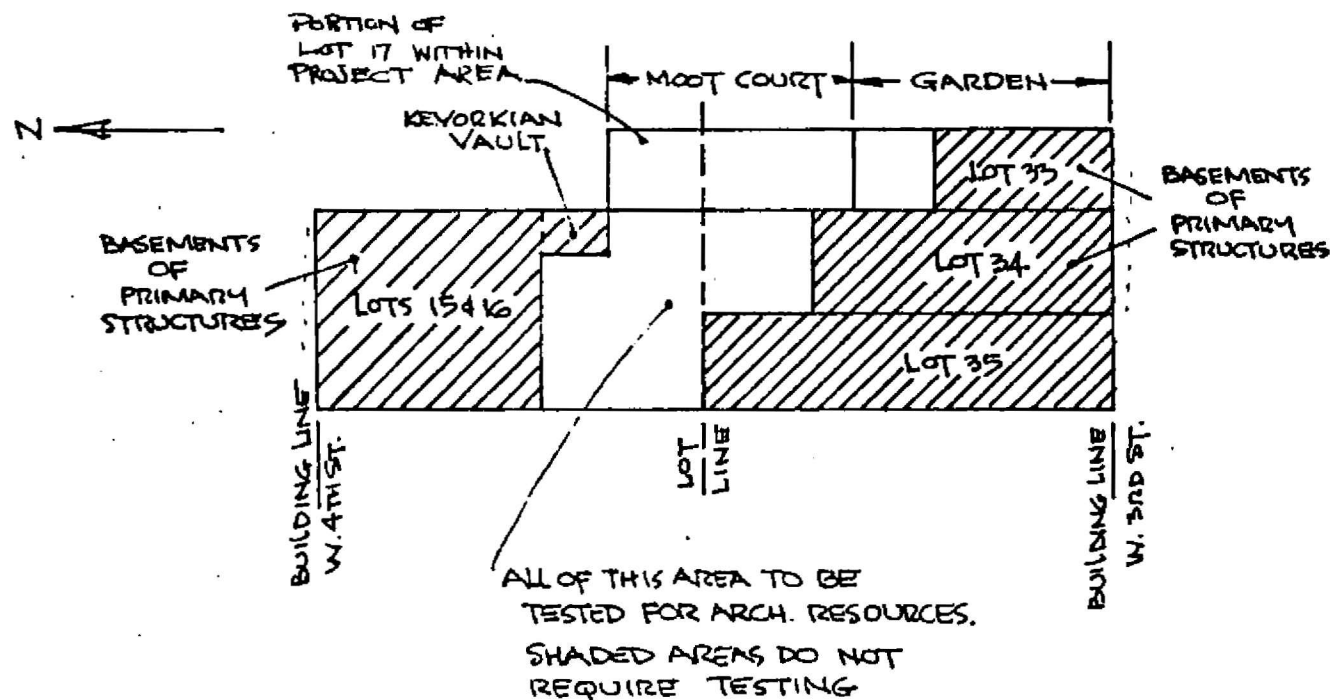
B. History/Stratigraphy: In order to understand events within the research area, it is necessary to briefly consider changes immediately to the north, in the area now known as Washington Square Park. In 1797, New York City determined to use this locality as its potter's field. This undertaking necessitated the filling of Minetta Stream, which flowed southwestward through the western part of the tract, only a block away from the Sullivan Street project area, and some "leveling" of terrain. Additional "leveling" occurred in 1825, when the potter's field metamorphosed into a fashionable parade ground and park (Stokes, referenced in Harris and Pipes 1983:3).

In 1797, the project area, which, like Washington Square Park, had been part of the Elbert Herring farm, was sold to John Ireland (Harris and Pipes 1983:5). At that time the ground surface was evidently located considerably below its present position. Test borings indicate a dark silty soil stratum marking a surface that sloped generally from northeast to southwest--more steeply in the northern part of the block-- at depths varying from approximately seven to 17 feet below the present elevation of the Sullivan Street roadbed (Pickman and Rockman 1984:50).

In 1826, the block was divided into building lots, and,



**FIGURE 2.** Plan view of Sullivan Street Construction Area, showing portion of project area which requires archaeological testing.



NOT TO SCALE

during the late 1820s and early 1830s, residential structures were erected on Lots 15, 16, 33, and 34 (Harris and Pipes 1983:6). (Lot 35 was never built upon.) The fronts of these buildings abutted the building lines on either Washington Square South or West Third Street. Each property had a backyard or courtyard at its rear.

The test cores suggest that the surface levels of each of these courtyards or backyards rose two or three times in the years between construction and their demolition at the turn of the 20th century (Pickman and Rockman 1984:58). The stratigraphic columns through the courtyard deposits reveal these "surface" strata, separated by thicker strata of relatively sterile fill. It is expected that the "surface" strata, and any features associated with them, will provide important information about changing patterns of domestic life in one of New York's first suburbs in the years between 1826 and 1903.

We do not believe that the courtyard or backyard fill strata, the contents of the cellar holes of the demolished buildings, or the bedding fill which was deposited over the entire area during construction of the 1903 Sullivan Street extension are likely to yield significant archaeological information (Pickman and Rockman 1984:4).

No major underground utility lines cross the project area. The small gas, electric, and telephone conduits that are present in the area are located within three feet of the present surface and should not disturb the strata chosen for further investigation (Pickman and Rockman 1984:11; Dr. Joseph Schober, personal communication).

### C. Research Goals:

1. Native American Culture. During the initial stages of documentary research for this project it appeared that features of the site's locale might have made it attractive for Native American occupation. However, no documentary evidence--either archaeological or ethnohistorical-- of such occupation has been discovered (Harris and Pipes 1983:4), and the sections of the core columns from strata that might have been expected to contain artifactual evidence of prehistoric or contact period occupation

have not yielded such specimens. We do not propose to make further efforts to discover Native American materials in the project area.

2. Euroamerican Culture. As indicated above, the Sullivan Street courtyard surfaces and associated features (cisterns, privies, refuse pits, etc.) are expected to yield assemblages of domestic debris which should be assignable to specific periods within the temporal span beginning in 1826 and ending in 1903.

If this expectation is fulfilled, these materials will provide data for studying a number of questions that are already receiving serious attention from urban historians and anthropologists. Two topics, both relating to the development of the modern class system, are particularly relevant.

a.) Separation of home and work place: A major reorganization of both production and domestic life took place in New York in the years between 1790 and 1840. During this period, the earlier productive unit, consisting of the artisan (or merchant), his family, journeymen, and apprentices, all living and working in the same establishment, was replaced by the single-purpose workplace, on the one hand, balanced against the employer's home and the worker's rooming house or tenement, on the other.

Excavations in lower Manhattan, particularly those at the Telco Block, 175 Water Street, and in the Wall Street vicinity, have already provided material evidence concerning life just before this shift (e.g. Rockman 1984). The material remains from the Sullivan Street block, particularly those associated with the earlier levels at the two houses facing Washington Square (Lots 15 and 16), should provide important data about merchant and/or master artisan families after the spatial move was completed.

Historian Bayard Still states, regarding the Washington Square locality:

"Viewing the neighborhood as it was when it was assessed in 1838 and again in 1854, the most striking feature is that the owners or renters, if male and not retired, had their places of business further downtown and were obliged to commute to work" (Still 1982:5).

According to Thomas Bender:

"The development of residential neighborhoods around the Square was the first instance in the city of the modern pattern of life that separates work and residence. It was in the region of Washington Square that an exclusively residential housing market for middle- and upper-class commuters was created. This event marks not only a new spatial order in the city, but a new social order as well" (Bender 1982:32).

b.) Class and ethnic differences during the 19th century: While the well-to-do continued to occupy the residences on the north side of Washington Square throughout the 19th century, during the second half of the century many of the pre-Civil War dwellings on the south side of the Square were turned into inexpensive rooming houses, "populated by young writers" (Baker 1982:72). At the same time, and particularly from the 1880s on, the streets immediately to the south became the home of a new Italian immigrant population.

The archaeological materials from the upper courtyard levels in Lots 15 and 16 may reflect the life styles of the new rooming house occupants. Those associated with the buildings facing West Third Street (Lots 34 and 35) should provide data about immigrant life. This last category of information is particularly important, because it is so poorly represented in the documentary sources.

## II. RESEARCH PROGRAM

A. Documentary Research: The documentary research already completed has demonstrated the archaeological importance of the project area, and has provided guidance for the test boring program and for the framing of general research questions. However, additional information is needed to guide the field excavation program and to aid in the interpretation of excavated materials. To the extent possible, the actual dates of construction and modification of each building, data about their successive owners and/or tenants, and information about the availability of public water supply, sewers, and garbage collection should be obtained.

This research is now under way, and should be close to completion when field work begins.



B. Field Investigations: The initial strategy for the fieldwork segment of the research program was to combine the extended testing and mitigation phases (that is, combine identification, delineation, evaluation, and data recovery). This approach, which is patterned after traditional scholarly archaeological research design, phases the fieldwork based upon an information feedback system so as to efficiently and effectively retrieve the greatest amount of pertinent cultural and historical information with the least expenditure of time and energy. It was believed this approach was both appropriate and feasible for the following reasons:

- New York University has agreed from the very outset to support a full, professionally adequate, data recovery program because it recognizes the historic value and significance of the landmark historic district. Thus, in this case, NYU is fully supportive of a field program that most efficiently maximizes pertinent data recovery within the project area.
- In order to answer pertinent anthropological and social historical questions about the project area and immediate environs, rather than simply describe the chronology, land use patterns, and broad culture history of the project area, the fieldwork strategy is designed to permit careful comparison of the sequence of occupation layers. Thus, each of the series of 19th century ground surfaces will be exposed and an appropriate sampling strategy for each occupation level will be used to test it. Because this approach necessitates complete exposure of each 19th century ground surface, it is not feasible (not safe at the depths expected) to pedestal each feature to await a subsequent mitigation phase.

Because we are working in a spatially confined area, quantified comparison of each occupation level, by taking an average 7.5% sample (5% to 10% for the entire depth of the project area) of the 5000 square foot surface of each level is best achieved by total exposure of each successive 19th century level. Because we are working within a relatively limited historical time span, with a tightly coupled sequence of occupations, full exposure of each ground surface should yield data useful in explaining the various cultural (including social, environmental, political, economic) processes at work in this 19th century suburban area. Certainly, a more fine-grained analysis will be possible than if simple test "cores" or sondages were taken the full depth of the project area. These data will be especially useful in the future if they are compared with the 19th century archaeological assemblages from other portions of New York City. Each such effort takes us somewhat beyond the "thick description" of past historical events and closer to an understanding or explanation of the historical processes functioning during the 19th century in the Sullivan Street project area.

However, we have been informed that combination of extended testing and mitigation is not permissible under the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission Guidelines for Archaeology (see Attachment I). As a consequence, in consultation with the Landmarks Preservation Commission archaeologist, it has been agreed that if we must proceed with mitigation during testing (as we expect we will), and if we submit a written status report on work completed and a mitigation plan prior to completion of testing, the Commission will give it an expedited review (for professional adequacy of the data recovery plan). Once we have an approved mitigation plan, even prior to completion of testing, we may proceed with both phases of the work. It seems that the ultimate goals of scientifically valid and economically prudent retrieval of maximum information from the project area, in a timely manner so as not to hinder construction of the library extension, are shared by New York University and the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission.

1. Archaeological guidelines.

a.) Each successively deeper 19th century ground surface will be exposed, using a combination of power machinery and hand tools.

b.) Artifactural and ecofactual samples will be recovered from each ground surface stratum, sufficient to fully document both cultural content and variability of distribution. The exact sizes and locations of sampling cuts will be determined by the nature and content of each surface stratum (5%-10% of total surface area).

c.) All features, cisterns, privies, trash pits, etc., associated with each surface will be recorded and completely excavated (100%). (This will be subject to an approved mitigation plan, if necessary).

d.) The thicker fill zones between ground surfaces are not expected to yield significant materials, but these zones could not be completely characterized during initial testing. Therefore, as each fill zone is exposed, bucket-sized bulk samples will be retrieved and screened. The number and locations of samples will depend upon the character of each fill zone.

e.) Plans and profiles will be drawn for all test cuts and features. Photographs will be taken of test cuts and features and will be used to record the general stratigraphic character of the fill zones between ground surfaces.

## 2. Conduct of field operation.

a.) General provisions: For purpose of this discussion, it is necessary to define an "archaeologically sensitive zone" within the larger construction zone. This area is shown unshaded in Figure 2. It includes the back walls of the primary structures in Lots 15, 16, 33, and 34 and the courtyard areas behind them, including the area now covered by the moot court building.

In order to expedite the proper removal of archaeological strata and features within this "archaeologically sensitive zone," the operator(s) of mechanical equipment used in the aid of archaeological excavation should be under the direct supervision of the archaeological field supervisor, who will choose methods and sequences of operation.

While the archaeological team is working within the "sensitive zone," construction or demolition work may proceed in the non-sensitive area, shown shaded in Figure 2. However, care must be taken to protect the "sensitive zone" from inadvertant damage.

When the general excavation operation involves work within the "sensitive zone," this work must be conducted in a manner which will guarantee protection of archaeological resources until they are completely recorded and removed-- or until the archaeological field supervisor indicates that they may be demolished.

It is expected that the archaeological program and the general excavation operation can be scheduled so as to minimize delay to either segment of the project. If, however, it is found necessary to suspend archaeological activities in order to conduct general construction work, it may become necessary to provide additional time for completion of the archaeological program.

b.) Sequence of operations: Prior to the beginning of actual archaeological field work, the moot court building will be demolished, and its basement filled with rubble. Following this operation, the roadbed, sidewalks, and bedding layers will be mechanically removed from below the present elevation of Sullivan Street. Three feet will also be removed from the rear portion of the "garden" in Lot 33. (An archaeologist should be present during this operation to watch for unexpected archaeological features which may require sepcial attention, and consequent rescheduling of the excavation operation.) The entire area will then be scraped mechanically at the 3-foot depth.

The archaeological team will need approximately 1 day to examine this exposed surface. If archaeological features are encountered, additional time will be needed in specific locations (and possibly develop a mitigation plan). Such features are most likely to be located in Lot 15.

Within the "sensitive zone," mechanical equipment operated under the supervision of the archaeological field supervisor will remove fill to the depths of the uppermost of the earlier ground surfaces identified through examination of the test cores. These appear to occur at different depths in different parts of the area, but are usually located between 5 and 7 feet below the present roadbed surface. See Table 1.

As each of these surfaces is exposed, archaeologists will excavate sufficient cultural material to provide valid cultural samples where warranted, and excavated any features (such as cisterns, privies, trash pits) discovered on each surface.

After archaeological work is completed on each surface, mechanical equipment will excavate down to the next lower ground surface(s). See Table 1. The archaeological team will continue to work as described above.

When the level of the basement floor of the moot court building is reached, this floor will be removed in a manner designed to do minimal damage to any sub-floor archaeological resources. The sub-floor area will then be scraped mechanically, and archaeologists will examine the area for possible truncated features originating in the 5-foot-deep ground surface. Work will then continue as described above.

Because the level of effort required to complete the work described above is dependent upon the nature and quantity of significant archaeological materials encountered, it is not possible to provide a specific time schedule for its completion. It is anticipated that not more than six weeks will be required-- beginning at the time that the upper three feet of roadbed, sidewalks, and fill have been removed-- with field crews varying in size from 4 workers at the earliest stage to about 16 during the more intensive phase of the project (see Table 2). Thus, after the roadbed and sidewalks and fill have been removed, if there are no construction delays, not more than six weeks should be required in the field.



TABLE 1. Estimated depths of earlier ground (living) surfaces, based on interpretation of test cores (Pickman and Rockman 1984)

Lot 15:	1.	Possible features directly under present road bed.		
	2.	Earlier surface ca. 7/9½ ft. below present surface.		
Lot 16:	1.	Earlier surface ca. 5 ft.	"	"
	2.	" " " 9 ft.	"	"
Lot 33:	1.	Earlier surface ca. 7 ft.	"	"
	2.	" " " 10 ft.	"	"
Lot 34:	1.	Earlier surface ca. 5 ft.	"	"
	2.	" " " 11 ft.	"	"
	3.	" " " 13 ft.	"	"
Moot Court: Early features may appear directly under basement floor (ca. 6 feet below present surface).				
	2.	Earlier surface ca. 9-11 ft. below present surface		
	3.	" " " 13 ft.	"	"

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C. Field Laboratory: A field laboratory will be established in a building on West Third Street, two doors from the site, which will also contain the archaeological field office and equipment storage areas. The laboratory will be equipped with adequate washing facilities, work benches, lights, and storage shelving. This laboratory will be in operation during the entire field session, permitting rapid feedback of information to guide specific field decisions, and will continue to operate until all specimens are processed. It is expected that this goal will be accomplished in 14 weeks or less, employing a full-time lab director and a staff ranging in size from 2 to 5 people (see Table 2).

D. Analysis and Preparation of Report: Artifactual analysis will begin towards the end of the field program, and is expected to be completed 8 weeks after the end of field work. In this phase of the program, expert consultants will be employed on a part-time basis to aid in the identification and interpretation of materials in various specimen classes. The exact apportionment of time among consultants will, of course, depend upon the

TABLE 2.

	Director	Field Supervisor	Field Crew Members	Lab Director	Lab Crew Members	Stratig. Analysts	Artifact Specialists	Historian	Writer/Editor	Typist	Draftsman/Artist	Photographer
Week 1	2	5	20	5	10			5	0.5			1
Week 2	1	5	40	5	10			5	0.5			
Week 3	1	5	60	5	15			1	0.5			
Week 4	1	5	60	5	15			1	0.5			
Week 5	1	5	80	5	25		5	1	1		1	1
Week 6	1	5	80	5	25		5	1	1		1	1
Week 7	2	5		5	25	3	5		2		5	
Week 8	1	1		5	15	3	5		2		1	
Week 9	1			5	15	3	10		2		1	
Week 10	1			5	10	3	10		5	2	1	
Week 11	1			5	10		10		1		1	
Week 12	1			5	10		10	1	1		1	1
Week 13	1	1		5	10		10	1	1		1	1
Week 14	2	1		5	10		10	1	1		1	1
Week 15	2	1						5	5	2		
Week 16	3								5	5		
Week 17	5								5	5		
Week 18												

NOTE: Figures in boxes above are estimated work days per week.  
Letters in left hand column refer to stages in archaeological program, as follows:

- A. Testing: Removal of upper strata by machine.
- B. Intensive Data Recovery: Machine-aided archaeological excavations.
- C. Analysis: Lab processing of specimens and field data.
- D. Preparation of Report.

nature of the materials recovered (see Table 2).

Preparation of the report will begin early in the field session and will continue for approximately three weeks beyond the end of the laboratory phase of the work. The writer/editor will work in close collaboration with the project director, the field supervisor, the historian, and the artifact specialists.

### III. SCHEDULING AND PERSONNEL

Table 2 provides a summary of projected personnel requirements, organized over the estimated 17-week duration of the archaeological program. At this time, based on NYU's construction schedule, Week 1 will occur on or about June 18, 1984. If there are not too many unexpected delays, the draft report should be completed before the end of October 1984.

Key personnel will be as follows:

Project Director (Co-principal Investigator): Professor Bert Salwen, of the NYU Department of Anthropology, will have overall responsibility for all phases of the project, including preparation of the final report. He will share day-to-day supervisory tasks with the Field Supervisor and the Writer/Editor.

Field Supervisor (Co-principal Investigator): Arnold Pickman, who has directed many field projects in the New York Metropolitan Area, will be responsible for the early phases of the field program. If, as appears likely at this time, he finds it necessary to discontinue full-time field supervision after July 10, this role will be assumed by the Project Director.

Writer/Editor (Co-principal Investigator): Sarah Bridges, who is on leave from her position as Chief Archeologist of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and who has directed many New York State archaeological projects while employed by the N.Y. State Office of Parks and Recreation, will be primarily occupied in preparing the project report. However, she will be available for supervision of other aspects of the project, as necessary.

All three of these individuals have the training and experience necessary for directing a project such as this one, and one or

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more of them will be responsible for its conduct at all times.  
(See attached C.V.s.)

Laboratory Director: Deborah Creighton, a graduate student in the Anthropology and Museum Studies programs at NYU will be the Laboratory Director for this project. Ms. Creighton worked for years as full-time archaeologist for the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Her experience includes work at Drayton Hall, S.C., Clivedon, Penna., and Tarrytown, N.Y. In each case her work involved the processing of all excavated specimens. She is familiar with the range of 19th century artifactual materials, and will basic conservation techniques.

Historian: Barbara Balliet, a doctoral candidate in the NYU Department of History, is the project Historian. Ms. Balliet has done research on 19th century history in the Washington Square vicinity, and, hence, is already familiar with the documentary sources for the project area.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH PROGRAM, NEW YORK UNIVERSITY LAW LIBRARY  
EXPANSION PROJECT, PROGRESS REPORT FOR JULY 31, 1984

On Thursday, June 28, 1984, fieldwork began for the archaeological research program of the New York University Law School Expansion Project located on Sullivan Street, between Washington Square South and West Third Streets. The project area is located within the Greenwich Village Historic District. The field program commenced with the field director and two assistants monitoring the mechanical removal of the Moot Court Building debris and the overburden in Lots 33 and 17. The mixed materials overlying these lots were removed with a single backhoe under the direction of the Tishman Construction Company. If archaeological materials or potentially sensitive areas were encountered, the field director was to take-over direction of the backhoe operation.

According to the original scope-of-work presented to the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission by the New York University Office of Planning and Construction, fieldwork was to begin with archaeological monitoring of the removal of the Sullivan Street pavement and up to three feet of underlying deposit from the project area within Lots 15, 16, and 34. This field strategy was to be employed in order to maximize feedback on the nature and extent of each 19th century ground surface. These data could then be used to facilitate design of the most efficient field strategy for Lots 17 and 33. This was considered desirable because preliminary core samples could only be completed in the southern portion of Lot 33 while the Moot Court Building was still standing and obscured access to the remainder of the

eastern third of the project area. However, because electrical and telephone service had not been turned-off within the street area of Lots 15, 16, and 34, the pavement could not be removed. Thus, the field director agreed to commence archaeological work in Lots 17 and 34 in order to accommodate the construction schedule, even though these areas had had no preliminary testing and prior to observing and assessing the deposits in the adjacent western two-thirds of the project area.

The mechanical removal of all the overburden and debris from Lots 17 and 33 was completed on July 6 and manual testing (rather than backhoe scraping, as specified in the scope-of-work) commenced, immediately. The clearing of the pavement and removal of approximately two feet of underlying deposit from the archaeologically sensitive areas of Lots 15, 16, and 34 was completed on July 13. Archaeological scraping with mechanical assistance began immediately but, in order to try to keep to the completion schedule in Lots 17 and 33, testing and excavation efforts continued to focus on the eastern third of the project area.

To date, ten stone-lined features, associated living floors, two undocumented architectural features, and three additional activity areas have been encountered in the field. Simultaneously, archival research, specific to the project area, has been on-going. A summary of this documentary research is appended.

Approximately two weeks after the field work commenced, the field laboratory started work and, as storage and processing equipment became available, the lab director was able to hire sufficient <sup>staff</sup> to keep-up with the washing of the artifactual specimens coming in from the field. There is about a one-to-two week

lag in sorting the specimens, and cataloging and tabulating the specimens began the week of July 28.

A lot-by-lot summary description of the features encountered thus far follows.

Lot 33. Fieldwork within this lot has exposed, at approximately five feet below street grade, the back wall and extension of a residential structure and demonstrated that there were two distinct building phases in this area that faced on what is now West Third Street. A cistern was uncovered at the same depth and has been excavated; it contained late 19th century and early 20th century artifacts. The builder's pit under the cistern is now being sampled, as is the matrix in which this feature was found. North of the cistern and below the Moot Court floor, redeposited refuse from the mid-to-late 19th century occupation of the structure (possible trash pits) have been exposed within the same occupation level; these activity areas are being sampled.

Near the northern boundary of Lot 33, approximately seven feet below street grade and under the former Moot Court area, a truncated (by construction of the Moot Court Building) privy, approximately five feet in diameter was uncovered. This feature is being excavated.

Lot 17. At the south end of this lot, and at the same level as the privy in Lot 33 (about seven feet below street grade), another stone-lined privy, approximately seven feet in diameter, was encountered. This feature is being excavated.

Lot 34. Fieldwork exposed a hard-packed ground surface at approximately five feet below street grade; the



artifactual assemblage from this surface, recovered in a test sample, dated from the 19th century. Also exposed was an extension to the late 19th century structure on this lot (facing what is now West Third Street). No other features were found in this lot.

Lot 16. At approximately four feet below grade, clearing exposed the small extension at the rear of the residential building on this lot. Immediately to the south of this building a cistern was encountered; this stone-lined feature has been cross-sectioned and half of its contents have been excavated. It appears to contain demolition debris and has a very low artifactual density. Because of the nature of the contents, we don't plan to excavate more of the cistern. Immediately to the south of the cistern, what appears to be a stone-lined privy was exposed at the same level. This feature has not yet been excavated.

Lot 15. In this lot, a similar extension of a 19th century residential building was exposed. Immediately to the south, at approximately the same depth as the extension floor, the foundation of a small outbuilding, probably associated with the main structure, was uncovered. South of the outbuilding, a brick cistern, approximately six feet in diameter, was encountered. Adjacent to this brick feature, a dry-laid stone-lined feature, possibly a drainage sump for the cistern, was found approximately one foot lower than the cistern. South of the cistern and probable sump, two more dry-laid sandstone features (four and six feet in diameter) were found; these appear

to be privies. None of the Lot 15 features have been excavated.

Lot 35. Based upon the evidence from the preliminary test borings, it was suggested that no significant archaeological finds would be encountered in this lot. While clearing this area for the construction company, the backhoe operator uncovered a circular stone feature, approximately five feet in diameter, and approximately three and one half feet below street grade. When first exposed to view, the feature was empty to a depth of approximately three feet and material below this point appeared to be loosely packed. The deposits within this feature were partially excavated in cross-section to a depth of ten feet. The artifactual assemblage from these deposits suggest a late 19th or early 20th century date of construction for the feature. The upper courses of stone appear to have a fine sand mortar. Based upon the nature of the fill, the depth and manner of construction, we believe this feature functioned as a dry well, possibly dating from the time that Sullivan Street was first cut through this block (1903); however, further study is necessary to determine the actual function and mode and date of construction. Because of serious safety problems and because of the consistent nature of the artifactual assemblage from the top to the bottom of the feature (the only variation being decreasing density of artifacts from top to bottom), excavation was suspended.

All phases of the archaeological operations are being fully recorded. The field director is maintaining a daily diary on the

activities, provenience records are being kept for all tests and excavations, and all lots, features, archaeological activity areas, test excavations are being mapped and photographed. All areas that are excavated are being recorded with profile drawings, plan views, and sketches, as appropriate, and all are being recorded in photographs that are suitable for publication. An overall site plan is being maintained with elevations recorded, relative to a permanent datum, using standard surveying methods.

Preliminary test borings suggested that some intact surfaces and features would be found during the archaeological field operations. However, we are pleased to report that the fieldwork thus far has encountered far more undisturbed features than ever anticipated. As a consequence, we even more firmly believe that when the documentary and archaeological data from these areas are fully analyzed, the results will constitute a rich contribution to the historical record of New York City as well as a meaningful addition to the on-going historical and archaeological conservation efforts of the University community and the wider Washington Square and Greenwich Village communities.

PRELIMINARY DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH-- BLOCK 541, LOTS 15, 16, 17, 33, 34, 35. Prepared by Barbara Balliet, New York University, Department of History.

Block 541 was originally part of Wouter Van Twiller's one hundred acre bouwery. Van Twiller's bouwery contained two tracts of land divided by the Minetta Water and connected by a stretch known as "the old Negroes" causeway." The causeway crossed West Third Street, the southern border of the project area, just west of MacDougal Street. In the mid-seventeenth century, Van Twiller's bouwery was granted in small farm lots to Blacks manumitted by the Dutch West India Company. The parcel, including Block 541, was given by Willem Kieft, Director of the Dutch West India Company, to Anthony Portuguese, on September 5, 1645. The land was described as:

A piece of land lying at the west side of Manuel Trumpetter on a Cripplebush (swamp) at the end of the foresaid Trumpetter's land. S, E by S the land of Great (Big) Manuell 60 rods. At the end of aforesaid's land at the W by N 15 rods. And further W by S W 17 rods; back to the Cripplebush N W 67 rods. Along the Cripplebush 65 rods amounting together 6 morgens 425 rods. (Stokes, Iconography, vol. 6, p. 104-105).

Sometime before 1680, the farm passed into the Herring family. Jan Pietersen Haring's name was applied to the farm from the 1680s and he resided in New York as early as 1662. Elbert Herring inherited all the farm south of the Minetta Water. He was the youngest son of Pieter (Jansen) Haering and Grietje Bogert, and was baptized in 1706. He died in 1773. His will, dated June 17, 1772, devised his entire estate to his widow, Elizabeth, and after her death to his ten children. The house shown on the Ratzer Map was probably the old homestead. It stood nearly one hundred feet back from the road, in the block

between Bond and Great Jones Street. In May, 1784, Abraham Herring, to whom the portion of the farm including Block 541 devised, agreed to run a lane between his farm and the Bayard farm. This was Amity Lane (later called West Third Street).

In 1784, William Ward Burrowes appears as the owner of record of the parcel including Block 541. By 1797, the block had passed to John Ireland, merchant. Ireland and his wife Judith were considerable landholders. They owned lots in the West Village, Chelsea, and Warren County in upstate New York. Ireland resided at 61 Amity Street near Laurens Street in the early nineteenth century when the block was being developed, ~~lotted~~ <sup>plotted</sup>, and sold.

Ireland was powerful enough within the city to block the development of Amity Street through his grounds from 1808 until 1822. The street forms the southern border of the project area. It was not opened until after 1822 and was not paved from Broadway to Sixth Avenue until 1826. Ireland was also influential in petitioning the Common Council to transform Washington Square from a potter's field to a parade ground (1826) and, later, a Park (1827). His name appears on petitions to the Council for fencing and planting trees in the newly designated park from 1825-1827. In this same time period, Block 541 was lotted and sold by Ireland to merchants, lawyers, artisans, and brokers.

Yellow fever epidemics in 1819, 1822, and 1823 affected the timing and pace of development in the Village. The West Village boomed during these years as city residents and businesses fled the plague-stricken lower city. "On lots but lately overgrown

with woods are now erected stores occupied by the principal merchants of the City... many of them put up in 24 hours" (Riley, Some Reminiscences, Vol. 1, p. 217, quoted in Ware, Greenwich Village, p. 9). An editorial in the Commercial Advertiser in 1825 predicted that "in three years' time, at the rate buildings have been everywhere erected during the last season, Greenwich will be known only as a part of the city and the suburbs will be beyond it." John Ireland evidently agreed. Between 1825 and 1826, he lotted and sold Block 541. The block, especially the lots facing the park, was an especially desirable residential address for artisans and merchants seeking to move away from noise and dirt of the crowded, commercial lower city. Many of the first residents of the block had already made one move away from their offices on Front, South, and Wall Streets. Their move into the Washington Square area constituted another step up and away from their workplaces. In June, 1827, an ad in the New York Gazette described the houses facing the Park:

Three story dwellings in Fourth Street between Thompson and MacDougal Street for sale. The front and rear of the whole range is to be finished in the same style as the Bouwery theatre and each is to have a grass plot in front with iron railings.

The ad suggests that on lots within the project area handsome Greek revival style buildings, similar to those on the north side of the Square, had been constructed before 1830. Lots 15, 16, and 17, fronting on the Square, were part of twelve lots sold by John Ireland in 1825 to Alfred S. Pell. Pell mortgaged the property and began selling the lots individually. Buyers in the 1820s and 1830s included lawyers and brokers.

Between 1825 and 1835, the population of the Village and the Washington Square region doubled. (Ware, p. 9-10). In



addition to the affluent professionals and merchants who moved onto the Square, parts of Block 541 were acquired by bakers, printers, and engravers. Lot 33, within the project area, was bought by two engravers and printers and housed a third engraver.

Block 541 fell within the 9th Ward of the City during the early part of the 19th century. This ward was known throughout the 19th century as the American Ward, a name which reflected its middle class and native born residential character. Its crooked streets, small lots (most 25 feet on the street) and small frame and brick buildings limited the development of tenements in the area. The Washington Square area remained the most desirable residential quarter in the city until the 1840s when the development of Union Square began to move fashionable New York uptown. By the mid-1830s, the Sullivan Street area south of the Square was described as housing many families of color. By 1865, the ward on the southern border of the Village contained nearly one quarter of the Black population of the city. In the 1880s, Lot 33 housed 15 mulatto families. Amity Street had, by the 1870s, acquired a reputation as a disreputable neighborhood. The block between Thompson and MacDougal contained numerous brothels. Lot 34 held a stable in the 1870s and 1880s.

Although the north side of the Square maintained its reputation as a fine residential area, the southern side of the Square had declined by the 1880s. Of the three houses in Block 541 on the Square, only Lot 15 was owner-occupied and still employed servants. Next door, Lot 16 had become a boarding house full of Irish and German workmen and actors and theatrical agents. In the 1890s, the blocks south of the square were

rebuilt with 6 and 7 story tenements as Northern Italian immigrants crowded into the Village from the Lower East Side. By 1910, one half of the inhabitants of the southern section of the ward were Italian born and over 80 percent were of foreign birth (Ware, p. 13). By the 1890s, German and Italian names had replaced English names on the deeds for Block 541. And, in one of the stately town houses on the Square, a Home for Fallen and Friendless Girls was established in the 1880s. The transformation of the block was complete.

### Research Questions

The preliminary documentary research suggests Block 541 was part of the residential expansion of the city. As home and workplace were separated, professionals, merchants, and artisans sought residential housing at some distance from their workplaces. Greenwich Village, an early suburb, was one of the first areas to be developed as a wholly residential district. The pattern on Block 541 seems to be one of speculative investment, first by John Ireland, the large land owner in the area, then by several smaller investors. Most of the investors or members of their families lived either on the block itself or nearby. They developed an area, not merely a block or a couple of lots, and were residents themselves. More research needs to be done on the occupants of the houses on the block and the class background of the owners. Of particular interest are the presence of Black families, including several interracial marriages, and the brothels on West Third Street by the 1870s. This may help explain the decline of the south side of the Square. The Park may have operated as a

barrier allowing the north side and lower Fifth Avenue to retain its exclusive residential character as the south side slid into rooming houses and Bohemia. Certainly, by 1912, the numbers of writers (including Floyd Dell and John Reed) living on the south side of the Square and describing its shabby gentility suggests that after the turn of the century the neighborhood on the south side began to "revive" as middle class Bohemians and settlement workers moved in with the prostitutes and respectable poor. How did these transitions occur? Were most of the lots on Block 541 bought as investments after the 1830s? Did the fluctuation in land values influence the class character of the block?

Another area to be explored is the relationship between the city and private speculators. The pattern of early development of the block suggests that, unlike the lower city, the Common Council was not as willing or able to provide services which would enhance the value of property in the project area. Although a well and pump were installed in Sullivan Street near Amity by 1828 (presumably immediately south of the project area since Sullivan Street did not exist north of Amity until 1903) "by reason of the great increase of buildings in that vicinity," running water was probably not available in individual houses until after the completion of the Croton Aqueduct in the mid-1840s. Gas also was not available until mid-century. The development of the Village seems to have proceeded in a less systematic mode with fewer city resources to aid private development. This may also help to explain why the southern

side of the Square declined. Its owners may have had fewer resources to fight-off a lower class invasion.

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