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Documentary Study

Block 2140, Lot 19, known as 3450 Victory Boulevard

Staten Island, New York

CEQR #90-033



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KEY PERSPECTIVES

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INTRODUCTION

This study is designed to fulfill the requirement of a Stage IA documentary survey for Block 2140, lot 19, Staten Island, New York, as required by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission under CEQR (CEQR #90-033R). This lot was flagged for study because it was viewed as being a potential source of significant remains dating to the prehistoric period of Amerind occupation, specifically because of the project area's proximity to previously identified prehistoric sites. In addition, the NYCLPC noted that a house was on the site by 1874, according to the Beers Atlas of that year, prior to the bringing of piped water to that area of Staten Island. Thus, the site was deemed to have possible historic potential as well.

The proposed site is located at the wider, eastern part of the triangle formed by Signs Road, Victory Boulevard, and Sparks Place, on Staten Island, known by the address 3540 Victory Boulevard (Figs. 1 and 2). Today the lot contains a single house with out-buildings; the property is planned to contain a small shopping mall with attendant parking lot (Fig. 3).

This study consists of an examination, through maps and texts, of the history of Block 2140, lot 19, and its natural topography. In addition, the building history of the site has been researched and the site visited and examined in its present condition. The information is analyzed to determine if a Stage IB archaeological survey should or should not be required, and an appropriate recommendation is made. A Stage IB archaeological survey will be required if, on the basis of the Stage IA documentary research, the site is determined to have the possibility of yielding significant archaeological materials.

The research for this study was conducted at the Map Room and Local History Collection of Central Research Branch of The New York Public Library, the New York county and regional histories and atlases collection in the Mid-Manhattan Library, the Archives of the State Island Institute of Arts and Sciences, the Topographic Bureau, Staten Island Borough Hall, Avery and Butler Libraries, Columbia University, the New York Municipal Library, the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, and the authors' private libraries.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site was visited at mid-day on June 3, 1990.

Britton's 1882 geological map of Staten Island (Britton 1882: = Bayles 1887:9) indicates that the site lies just along the border of a band of Triassic sandstone on the east and a trap rock formation to the west, at the northern edge of the marine alluvium associated with Fresh Kills (Fig 4). Modern development has entirely obscured the underlying geological structure in the immediate vicinity of the site.

Block 2140 consists of a triangular wedge with its long side or hypotenuse formed by Spark Place and its two shorter sides formed by Victory Boulevard and Signs Road. Victory Boulevard and Signs Road are active, paved streets; Spark Place, which borders the site along the south and which follows the line of the earlier route of Signs Road, is now closed off with barriers at the east and west ends of the block. The street was in the past paved with asphalt. The paving remains, but it is in a badly deteriorated state (Fig. 5a)

Signs Road, which forms the shortest side of the triangle, slopes gently down from its junction with Victory Boulevard towards Spark Place. An embankment, which is supported by bushes and deciduous trees, begins at the level of Victory Boulevard and rises to a height of approximately four feet at the junction of Signs and Spark (Fig. 5b). Otherwise the block appears generally level. Whether this embankment reflects a fill episode to level lot 19 or the downcutting during construction of the new Signs Road is difficult to distinguish visually and cores are not available for the site.

The western half of the block, lot 1, not the focus of this study, is currently undeveloped and covered with deciduous trees, bushes and weeds. This lot was walked to observe general topography and soil conditions, since the proposed development site is covered with a masking lawn. The ground surface, where exposed, consists of dark brown humus which overlies a red, clayey subsoil. There are no signs of ash or burning in the exposed areas of ground surface. The ground in the western half of the block is level except along the border of Victory Boulevard, which is marked by an approximately two foot high ridge. It seems reasonable to suppose that this ridge was created during construction or leveling operations along the boulevard. There are three small clearings along Spark Place, each approximately 30 feet square, from which the topsoil has been removed, possibly for the purpose of using the area for dumping. Some modern rubbish litters the ground surface in these areas (e.g. automobile tires, [beer] bottle glass) and, in addition, two of the clearings contained a few fragments of 19th

to early twentieth century white ware as well as a few pieces of oyster and clam shell.

The proposed development is limited to the eastern half of the block, lot 19. The proposed development zone is today occupied by an aluminum-sided, wood-frame, two-story, L-shaped house (Fig. 6a). The form of the house is compatible with a construction date in the nineteenth or early twentieth century. The house is designated as 3450 Victory Boulevard.

Today the house fronts on Victory Boulevard, from which the driveway enters the property (Fig. 6b). However, doors and porches face both onto Victory Boulevard and onto Spark Place and the house is sited parallel to Spark Place. The original front of the house, based on the siting, was Spark Place, even though, in the nineteenth century, it was customary for a house to front on the major road, which would have been the turnpike.¹ Two outbuildings, a two-car garage and a smaller shed, are positioned to the west of the house, along the western edge of the proposed development site. The portion of the house that faces Signs Road contains no doors, a situation that reflects the fact that the current path of Signs Road is relatively modern and would have post-dated the construction of the building. The lot containing the house is otherwise covered with lawns and parking areas, and as noted above it is bordered with bushes and deciduous trees.

¹ Shirley Zavín, New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, personal communication.

PREHISTORY

Prehistoric occupation in the northeast, including the New York City area, has been divided into the following periods: Paleo-Indian, 10,500 - 8000 B.C., Archaic, 8000 - 1300 B.C., Transitional, 1300 - 1000 B.C., and Woodland, 1000 B.C. - historic occupation. The Archaic and Woodland periods have been subdivided into Early, Middle, and Late phases as follows: Early Archaic, 8000 - 6000 B.C., Middle Archaic, 6000 - 4000 B.C., Late Archaic, 4000 - 1300 B.C., Early Woodland, 1000 - 300 B.C., Middle Woodland, 300 B.C. - A.D. 1000, Late Woodland, A.D. 1000 - European contact. Each of these periods is characterized by particular settlement types.

Paleo-Indian sites are often along areas of low, swampy ground or on very high, protected areas (Ritchie 1980:7). Within New York City, Paleo-Indian remains have been excavated at the Port Mobile site on Staten Island, and worked stone implements of Paleo-Indian type have been found at additional locations within that borough (Ritchie 1980:xviiif. and map, 4f.).

In predicting the location of Paleo-Indian sites, it must be remembered that the topography of Staten Island and its surrounding region have changed considerably since the beginning of the Neothermal period. The discovery of the remains of land-based megafauna such as mammoth and mastodon on the Atlantic Ocean floor along the Continental Shelf opposite the New York - New Jersey sea coast (Chesler 1982:20) serves as a reminder that the geography of the New York area has been altered considerably since antiquity. Considering the general scarcity of Paleo-Indian remains within New York City, the probability of such remains being present on the site is extremely low.

The Early Archaic was characterized by small hunting camps. According to the Landmarks Commission's study for a city-wide archaeological predictive model, such sites do not have great archaeological visibility, nor are they likely to be associated with particular land forms (Baugher et al. 1982:10). Finds from other portions of the U.S. Northeast indicate that during the Middle Archaic there was a large increase of population. As yet, there is little evidence of this time period in the New York City region and thus it is especially important to watch for remains from this era. Discoveries of Middle Archaic components are necessary in order to define occurrence-characteristics and increase the accuracy of future predictions of site occurrence.

For the Late Archaic, sites are most likely to be found in littoral areas (Baugher et al. 1982:10-11; Ritchie 1980:143). Littoral areas and the zones along major inland water ways such as the Hudson are also known to have been settled during Transitional times. As yet, there is not a large enough body of information to

accurately predict Transitional site occurrence within New York City in anything except the most general terms.²

In the Woodland period, many different kinds of settlements existed. Permanent and semi-permanent settlements, villages, as well as seasonal campsites and food gathering/processing stations, are characteristic. Agriculture was practiced, although this development may date only to the end of the Late Woodland period, following the first contact with Europeans (Ceci 1982:2-36). Shellfish collecting sites at tidal inlets are particularly well represented in this period, although this may simply be a reflection of the fact that the tidal zones were less likely to have been disturbed by subsequent city development than were inland areas.

In the mid-17th century, high hills near streams, rivers and agricultural fields, and fishing places were favored by the native Americans for settlement. During this period, which is marked by the initial phases of European contact and Dutch settlement, Staten Island was occupied by Lenape or Delawarean populations.

Block 2140 is located less than 300 feet west of the northernmost extent of the Main Creek tributary of the Fresh Kills. While this proximity to fresh water may be viewed as giving the site an increased probability for prehistoric settlement, the natural surface of the site, as revealed on the unoccupied western half of the block, is damp and semi-marshy. As such, and noting the preference of local prehistoric populations for elevated sites or for well-drained, sandy soils for settlement and burial sites (Ritchie 1969:146-148; Jacobson 1980:1; Kardas and Larrabee 1982:32; Lenik 1983:62; Eisenberg 1982:44, 548; Rubinson 1988:7) it would seem that Block 2140 would not be a particularly likely place for native settlement.

Grumet indicates that Victory Boulevard follows the line of a native Amerind pathway or trail, but the existence of that kind of transit route need not be taken as a guarantor of settlement (Grumet 1981:72) (Fig. 7). Additionally, roadways on early historic maps do not pass by the site, so it is possible that this particular part of Victory Boulevard was not part of that early Indian path.

However, Skinner, in his list of prehistoric sites on Staten Island notes one at New Springville, Corson's Brook (Skinner 1909:10) (Fig. 8). He says of the site as follows:

A site is said to be located at New Springville on Corson's brook. Shells and graves are reported; also an iron arrow-head. The writer has not been successful in

² Ritchie 1980:150-178 for general characteristics and distribution of Transitional remains.

personally locating this site, up to date. The locality differs from almost all the other on the Island, in that the soil is not sandy, and we have seen no indications of aboriginal occupation of any kind. Many people have said that they found Indian implements there, however, and at one time a skull, said to be Indian, was found in the bed of Corson's brook after a freshet had eaten away the banks.

Bolton, in 1920,³ noted a number of sites as present in northwestern Staten Island, but all of these lie to the west of the proposed development site, close to the shore of the Arthur Kill and to the west of the trap rock formation that runs in a north-south band immediately to the proposed development site's west.⁴ Then, in 1934, Bolton published a revised listing of native Amerind sites in which he included the New Springfield site listed by Skinner (Bolton 1934/1972:152, 155), but no other prehistoric sites in the project area vicinity.

Since Bolton wrote, other prehistoric sites have been found on Staten Island, but none near the project site.⁵

³ Bolton 1920/1975:92, sites #73 through 77 [Bowmans Brook, Mariners Harbor, Tunissens Neck, Watchogue and Linoleumville].

⁴ Compare Britton's geological map (Bayles 1887, p. 9) (here Fig. 4) and Bolton 1920/1975, Pl. 1, or Skinner 1909 (here Fig. 8).

⁵ See, inter alia, Robinson 1988:20, fig. 9; Geismar 1986:16, fig. 7; Rutsch and Hartman 1982:9ff.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Staten Island was first permanently settled in 1661 by the Dutch. It became Richmond County in 1664, with the capture of New Amsterdam by the British. Rural until the recent past, the principal occupations on Staten Island were for almost two hundred years farming and sea-related occupations such as oyster fishing and boat building.

Although connected to both New York and New Jersey by ferry systems at least as early as the Revolution, the Island was thinly settled. In 1813, the entire population of Staten Island was 5347. Northfield, the district in which the development site lies, contained 1595 people, 3 churches and three ferries (Leng and Davis II:645). It was not until the 1830's that the forces of urban development were apparent on Staten Island. At that time, it became a favorite summer resort for the wealthy and construction of grand homes and resorts commenced, particularly in shore areas easily reached from New York City and Brooklyn (Smith 1970:101-102).

The Civil War was a turning point for the economy of Staten Island. During the war itself, the area was a refuge for the families of wealthy southerners and a stronghold of Successionist sentiments. After the war, industrialization of Staten Island began in earnest, resulting in a greater density of population for the island as a whole. However, the area around the development site remained quite rural until recent years, for a description of the area in 1939 reads "The western section, save for the neighborhoods of Mariners Harbor and Travis, is largely a stretch of meadowland, dotted with a few truck farms" (WPA 1939/1982:617).

SITE HISTORY

The history of the development site itself, described primarily from maps and atlases, reflects the general development of Staten Island just outlined.

According to the Skene map of Land Grants and Patents, the site was part of the 253 acres of land granted to John Crushron in 1686 (Fig. 9). Whether this is the same John Crocheron (sic), a planter who dies in 1696, cited by Morris as the founder of the Crocheron family on Staten Island, is not clear from the available evidence (Morris 1898/1900:II,71).^{*}

^{*} Reed 1962:20 identifies Crushron as Crocheron.

On the map McMillen compiled of Staten Island During the Revolution, 1775-1783, based in part on the Hessian Map of 1777, which shows the same features in the development area, there are no buildings on the development site and only widely scattered houses in the area (Fig. 10). A preacher visiting the area in 1748 had noted that the area was remote and covered with woods (Rutsch and Hartman 1982:21). This had not changed during the years of the revolution. The houses nearest the development site belonged to W. Creshown and H. Creshown, presumably an alternative spelling of the Crushron of the Skene map and ancestors of the Crocheron family (McMillen 1944:20). The Morning Star Ferry Road, which becomes Richmond Road, is in place, as is a stretch of road which eventually becomes part both of Signs Road, and of the Richmond Turnpike (Victory Boulevard) (McMillen 1946:16; Reed 1961:17-18). This road passes on the southern side of the development area.

After the Revolution, probably around 1800, a grist mill was built not far from the development site on a brook which fed into Neck Creek, to provide for the farmers in this area. Sometime after the grist mill was built, a sawmill was also constructed on the site. The mills operated until the 1880's, in the last years owned by Freeman Winant. The mill pond, known as Crocheron's Mill Pond or Bullshead Pond, existed until about 1900. It was reported to be the source of illness in the area until it was drained (McMillen 1949b:27-28; McMillen 1949a:3).

The next major development in the area of the site was the creation of the Richmond Turnpike, also called the Philadelphia Turnpike and the Governor's Road, now Victory Boulevard, in 1816/-17. The road was developed under the auspices of Governor Daniel D. Tompkins, who guided the incorporation of the turnpike company in 1815 (Leng and Davis 1930:I,222; Smith 1970:100).⁷ The turnpike, originally a 66-foot-wide dirt road, partly followed previously existing roads and partly ran over newly acquired land, including that just to the east of the junction of what is now Spark Place and Victory Boulevard (Reed 1966:6; Morris:I,396-7), that is, the part of Victory Boulevard bounding the development site. At the time of the creation of the Turnpike, Signs Road received its name from a three-way sign placed at the intersection of Signs Road and Richmond Avenue (Reed 1964:25-26). That old portion of Signs Road is what is now called Spark Place, bounding the development site on the south.

The new turnpike joined with a new steamboat run to Philadelphia, but was never a successful venture (Reed 1966:8) and it apparently brought no economic prosperity to the region near to the development site (Reed 1962:18). Based on written evidence, Reed says that the road itself was apparently not paved in the area

⁷ The date is apparently misprinted in Leng and Davis, cf. Reed 1962.

of the site until 1915/16 (Reed 1966:9), but the cartographic evidence indicates the Turnpike was paved by 1898, as Morris also noted (Morris 1898:II,455).

The sparsely settled lands which the turnpike passed in the area of the development site can be seen on the next available map of the area, the U.S Coast Survey of 1836-39, published in 1845 (Fig. 11). Although there are houses along both Signs Road and the Turnpike, none of them are on the development site. What is apparent from the Survey is that there is much swamp and woods in the area, as well as fields cleared for agriculture. The Turnpike is shown proceeding from approximately the western edge of the development site towards the southwest on a slightly raised ridge. Reed implies this is a natural rise (the "Long Neck") (Reed 1966:6). Such a ridge is not apparent on the development site today nor on the 1911/12 Topographic Survey.

On the 1850 Dripps Map, there appears to be an unlabeled structure on the development site, approximately at the eastern edge of the lot along the Turnpike.* However, that is not likely to be accurate, since it does not appear on the Butler Map of 1853 or any subsequent maps. The Dripps Map does document a member of the Decker family in the area, one "S. Decker" on the south side of Signs Road (Spark Place), approximately across the street from the development block. A "G. White" had a house on the lot to the east of lot 19. Both of these names occur on the Butler 1853 map as well. The locations of these structures on the 1850 and 1853 maps are slightly different from that presented in the Coast Survey, although the number of structures in the area is almost the same, demonstrating that there was little change in the character or population of the area from 1836/39 through 1853.

The Butler 1853 map identifies several members of the Decker family in the general site area (Fig. 12). It is also the first map that identifies a mill not far to the east of the development site, the name of which is obscured. It is the location of the mill noted on later maps associated with Winant, as discussed by McMillen (1949b). However, McMillen suggests the construction of the mill around 1800, which is not reflected in the examined cartographic record.

The next map available which shows the site area, the 1867 U.S. Coast Survey, shows more land cleared for farming in the area of the development site. There are apparently no structures on the development site; however, the scale of the map is quite small.

* The Dripps map examined is housed in the Archives of the Staten Island Institute of Arts and Sciences. The map is in fragments and badly deteriorated, so it could be neither traced nor xeroxed and the contrast was such that it could not successfully be photographed.

But the industrialization which followed the end of the Civil War eventually had its effect in the development area. Not far to the west of the development site is the village of Travis, which was re-named Linoleumville in 1873, at the time of construction of a facility of the American Linoleum Company (WPA 1939:622). Although the area was still primarily farmland, new roads were laid out and new houses built. The region of the development site has a name of its own, Chelsea H[e]ights. Two of those houses were built on Block 2140 between 1853 and 1874, that of Mrs. E.C. Worth on what is today lot 1 and that of A.B. Decker on the development site, today's lot 16. In the Beers Atlas of 1874, the Decker house is visible, placed in the southern third of the one-acre lot (Fig. 13). At the time the map was drawn, A.B. Decker was apparently deceased, since the farmland on the northern side of Richmond Turnpike was allocated to A.B. Decker H[ei]rs, and A.B. Decker Est[ate]."

It is possible that A.B. Decker is the Abraham B. Decker who was a son of John M. Decker (Leng and Davis 1930:IV, 355). The Deckers, of whom there were many on Staten Island, first apparently had grants on Staten Island under the Dutch (Leng and Davis 1930:II, 886; V,200). Although it is possible that Johannes de Decker, who came from Holland to New Amsterdam in 1650 and had a grant on Staten Island, was the progenitor of all of the Deckers on Staten Island (Leng and Davis 1930:IV, 354; Clute 1877:369), the first clear record of a Decker on Staten Island was the noting of the cattlemark of one Matthew (Mattheus) (de) Decker in 1704 (Leng and Davis 1930:II, 886; IV, 354). They were considered "one of the oldest families" on Staten Island (Clute 1877:369). By the time Leng and Davis compiled their history, they said about the Decker family (1930: II, 886):

In the two centuries that have elapsed since these Deckers [Matthew's children] were born on Staten Island, the family has become, in Clute's words, "by far the most numerous on the Island." Decker's Ferry, an old name for Port Richmond, Deckertown, a nickname for Travisville, are among the many reminiscences of their prominence.

* The T. Roosevelt property south of Signs Road and the development site had been the country seat of the family of President Theodore Roosevelt, although by this time the property was being rented out and was soon to be sold.* It had been abandoned as a country seat about 1859, due to the malaria which was caught by visitors to the house, the result presumably of the mill pond across the road (Reed 1962:19). It is interesting to note that according to the documentary record, the land had belonged to the Rosevelts since April 30, 1785 (Reed 1962:19), yet the name does not appear on examined cartographic sources until this time.

Many of the Deckers in the New Springville and Bull's Head area were farmers and oystermen, common occupations on Staten Island (Smith 1970:103). One Decker, John A. 2nd, was a truck farmer ("market gardener") apparently by the 1860's, while others in the area were still working traditional farms (Leng and Davis 1930:IV, 355; IV, 354ff.; II, 886f).

J.W. Decker assumed the properties of A.B. Decker and appears as the owner of record in the Beers 1887 Atlas (Fig. 14). By that time the Crystal Water Works had bought the mill property (McMillen 1949b:28), indicated in the Beers Atlas. One pump house of the water works is on the lot directly to the east of the development site, and we assume that the house had piped water at that time and possibly sewer service as well. Piped water had come to Staten Island beginning August 15, 1881 and the Crystal Water Works begun in 1883 (Leng and Davis 1930:I, 311). According to Leng and Davis, a "flush tank system of sewers was first specified in the Crystal Water Company's contract dated May 4, 1886" (1930:I, 311).

The Beers 1894 Atlas shows some changes in title and greater density in the villages surrounding the development site, but the house and fields indicated as belonging to J.W. Decker in the 1887 Atlas continue to do so (Fig. 15). This atlas shows not only the house with T-shaped footprint, located in the southern third of the lot, but also three outbuildings, one along Richmond Turnpike towards the eastern part of the lot, a second on the eastern lot line directly east of the house, and a third between the house and second outbuilding, but somewhat north.

The same three outbuildings and form of the house are illustrated in the Robinson 1898 Atlas. The house is described as frame and the outbuildings identified as sheds. J.W. Decker is owner of the house and the same acreage as in 1887 and 1894. Richmond Turnpike, with a city water pipe running underneath, is paved. Signs Road (Spark Place) is open, but not paved.

By 1907, when the development area is illustrated in the Robinson Atlas of that date, both Richmond Turnpike and Signs Road (Spark Place) are shown as paved, although the 1911 survey still indicates Signs as a dirt road. The city water pipes under the Turnpike are again indicated. J.W. Decker still lives in his house on lot 19, then designated 3A, and the same acreage as earlier. In this atlas, the house is, as earlier, shown as T-shaped. The three outbuilding associated with the house are all shown at or quite close to the eastern property line, slightly modified from the earlier positions. Whether this reflects an actual change in outbuildings or a map-makers modification cannot be determined.

Three outbuildings, identified as 2-story frame barns, are shown along the eastern property line in the 1911 survey of Staten

Island¹⁰ (Fig. 16). Whether they are the same three structures which are shown in the 1898 atlas, or just those illustrated in the 1907 one, cannot be determined. On the 50-foot-to-an-inch survey plan two other outbuildings, called sheds, are shown directly west of the house, one near the house and the other towards the property line. It is unlikely that either of the sheds shown is a privy, since these were identified as such by the surveyors.¹¹ There is no indication in the elevations of the rise shown on the 1845 Coast Survey.

By 1917, in the Bromley Atlas, only the outbuilding closest to Richmond Turnpike is still shown with the 2 1/2-story wood house on the lot owned by J.W. Decker, designated 3A. One of the two outlying parcels of J.W. Decker's former land is now owned by Eliz. C. Worth, although he still retains the 6.5 acres of lot 45. New roads have been mapped in the area, although the change in Signs Road is still far in the future.

That change in the roadways, making Spark Place out of the diagonal leg of Signs Road and creating a right-angle intersection of Signs Road and Victory Boulevard was first entered into the official records on June 12, 1958. When the road was actually put through was not determined, although it may not have been until the later 1960's, for the same changes, with slight modifications, were entered into the records again, with cross-checked measurements, on January 12, 1965. Around that time, Victory Boulevard (The Richmond Turnpike) was widened to 100 feet from the initial 66 feet, a new Signs Road was laid to the east of the development site, and the former Signs Road, now Spark Place, was widened as well. Some of the modifications of the development property noted on the site visit probably were made at that time.

¹⁰ Recorded in Field Book #263:62-63. Survey date is 5-23-11. The field book is filed in the Richmond Borough Engineers' Office.

¹¹ Personal communication from Carl Hempel of the Richmond Borough Engineers' Office.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The above research indicates that it is not likely that prehistoric Amerindian remains are preserved on Block 2140, Lot 19.

The alleged New Springfield site is the only indication of native settlement in the immediate vicinity of the proposed development site. As described in the literature, it shares a similar location to the proposed development site, just beyond the swampy area near a small stream which feeds into Fresh Kills.

However, in the opinion of the authors, the probability of the project site encompassing prehistoric remains of significance is very low, because of the clayey soil and poor drainage found on the site. In fact, as noted on page 6 above, Skinner himself expressed doubt about the New Springfield site, because of the lack of sandy soil. He also noted that he could not locate the site which had been reported.

Many sites have been tested for prehistoric remains on Staten Island in recent years and virtually no remains have been excavated in areas without sandy soil. In fact, 625 shovel tests at the Staten Island Industrial Park Site, just to the west of the project site, yielded only "meager finds." (Lenik 1983:60-62). 252 shovel tests within a four-block area with clayey damp soil near Burial Ridge also yielded "minimal traces of prehistoric activity" (Winter 1985:6). In contrast, recent excavations at the Goodrich Site, an area with sandy soils, yielded substantial prehistoric materials (Eisenberg 1982).

There is, however, a possibility of intact historic remains on the site. The cartographic evidence showed that a farmhouse was constructed on Block 2140, lot 19, sometime between the years of 1853 and 1874, before piped water was brought to this part of Staten Island. The house standing today appears from the cartographic evidence to be the house built in the third quarter of the nineteenth century, although it has undergone modifications of the footprint, especially on the northern side, as can be seen in comparing Fig. 16, the 1911 survey and the 1990 survey in Fig. 17.

It is therefore possible that the remains of a privy or a well might be found on the grounds of the site. It should be noted, however, that the occupants of the farmhouse might not have used a privy, but rather a "pan outhouse", an ephemeral structure with a pan that lay on the ground and slide out to be emptied, which would not likely leave an archaeological trace. Such structures

were used in rural areas including upstate New York (e.g., the Fort Drum Project), in Southeastern states, and also rural New Jersey.¹² A cistern is not likely, because the high water table and flowing fresh water in the area would have made a well or other source of fresh water more efficient than a cistern.

As we saw from the cartographic evidence, the house was owned by the same family at least from 1874 through 1917. This family, the Deckers, was among the founding families on Staten Island. Therefore, any intact deposits could be associated with a single family, one which is important in the history of Staten Island.

Based on these observations, it is recommended that field testing, be carried out on Block 2140, lot 19.

If a privy or a well was built on the site in the third quarter of the nineteenth century, it would likely have been within ten to twenty feet of the house, either on the sides or in the back, not far from the house. This supposition is based on the results of the excavation of the Van Deventer-Fountain House (1786-1901), also on Staten Island. In that excavation, two cisterns were found, one on each side of the house, approximately 10 feet from the house. A small outbuilding and a brick shaft of unknown function were found about 20 feet from the house, the outbuilding opposite a back corner and the shaft to the west of the house (Lockwood, Kessler and Bartlett, Inc and the Cultural Resource Group, Louis Berger and Associates 1990:fig. 5.2).

Therefore, we recommend that the area to be tested to see if any of these historic features exist. The areas to be tested should extend along the Victory Boulevard side of the house from the narrow part of the long side of the porch to the western corner, around the corner along the western side of the house to the Spark Place corner of the one-story part of the house. The second area to test extends along the eastern (modern Signs Road) side of the house from the Spark Place corner to the steps, that is, up to the location of the post-1911 addition (Fig. 17).

If intact remains of the historic period are identified in the field testing, then as part of the report, we recommend more detailed historical research be carried out, including census records, deeds and other primary site-specific materials.

If, during testing, sandy soils are found below the topsoil, then testing for prehistoric remains should be carried out.

¹² The information about Fort Drum and the Southeastern states is a personal communication from Alain C. Outlaw, Louis Berger and Associates. The information about New Jersey is a personal communication from Terry Klein, formerly Louis Berger and Associates.

ZONING MAP

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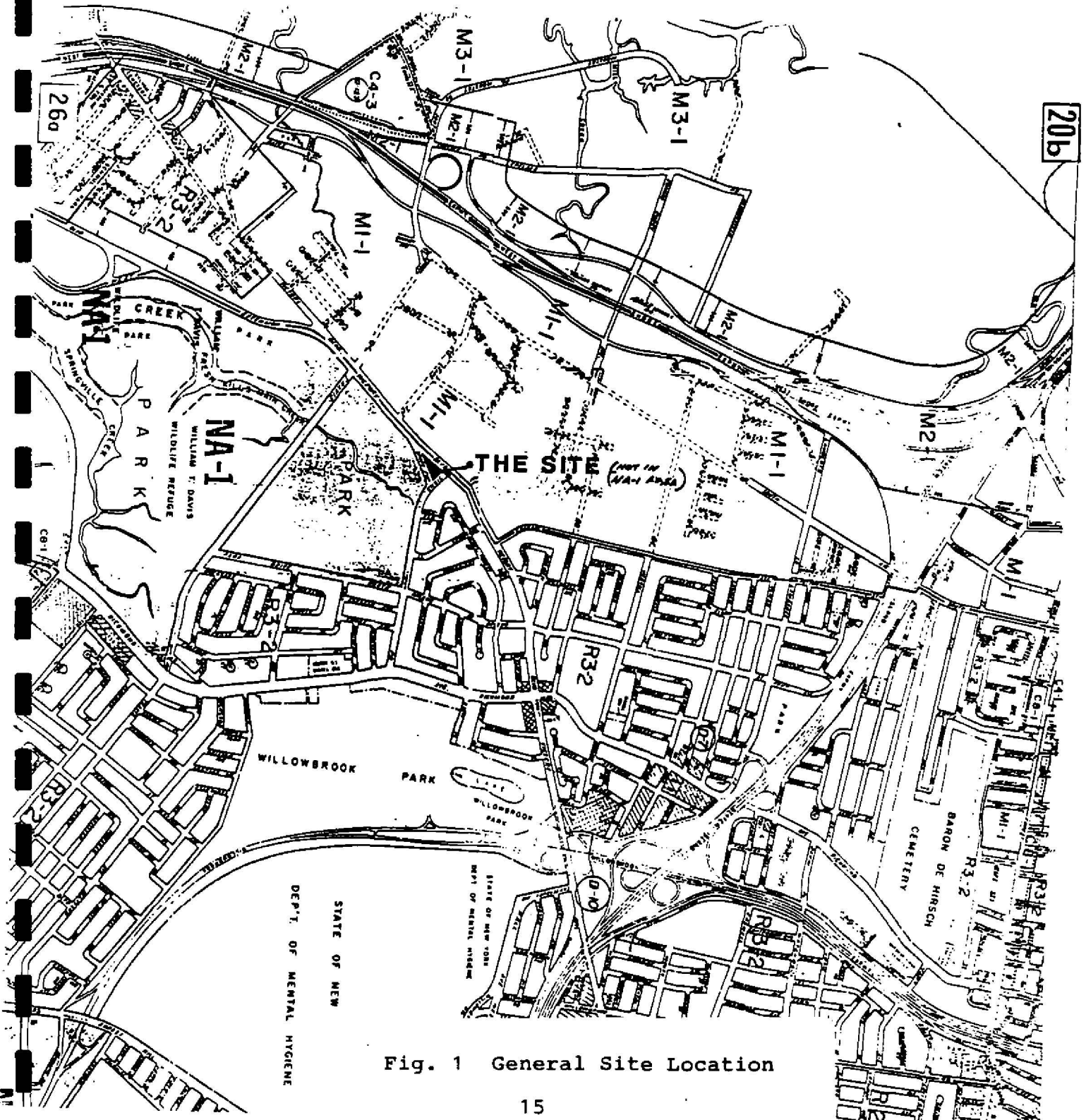
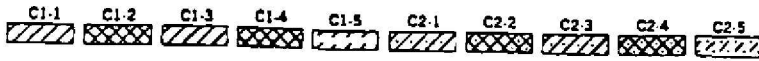
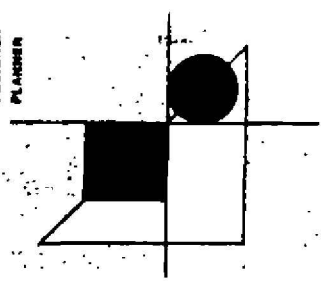


Fig. 1 General Site Location

Michael A. Biagioli
 ARCHITECT
 DESIGNER
 PLANNER

MICHAEL A. BIAGIOLI R.A.
 ARCHITECT
 DESIGNER
 PLANNER



710 - 870 - 0175
 PROJECT
 VICTORY
 BOLLARD
 COMMERCIAL
 OVERLAY

Drawing Status
 ILLUSTRATIVE SITE
 PLAN FOR CDD
 REVIEW ONLY

07.23.99 11:20
 HD

CECH
 SITE PLAN

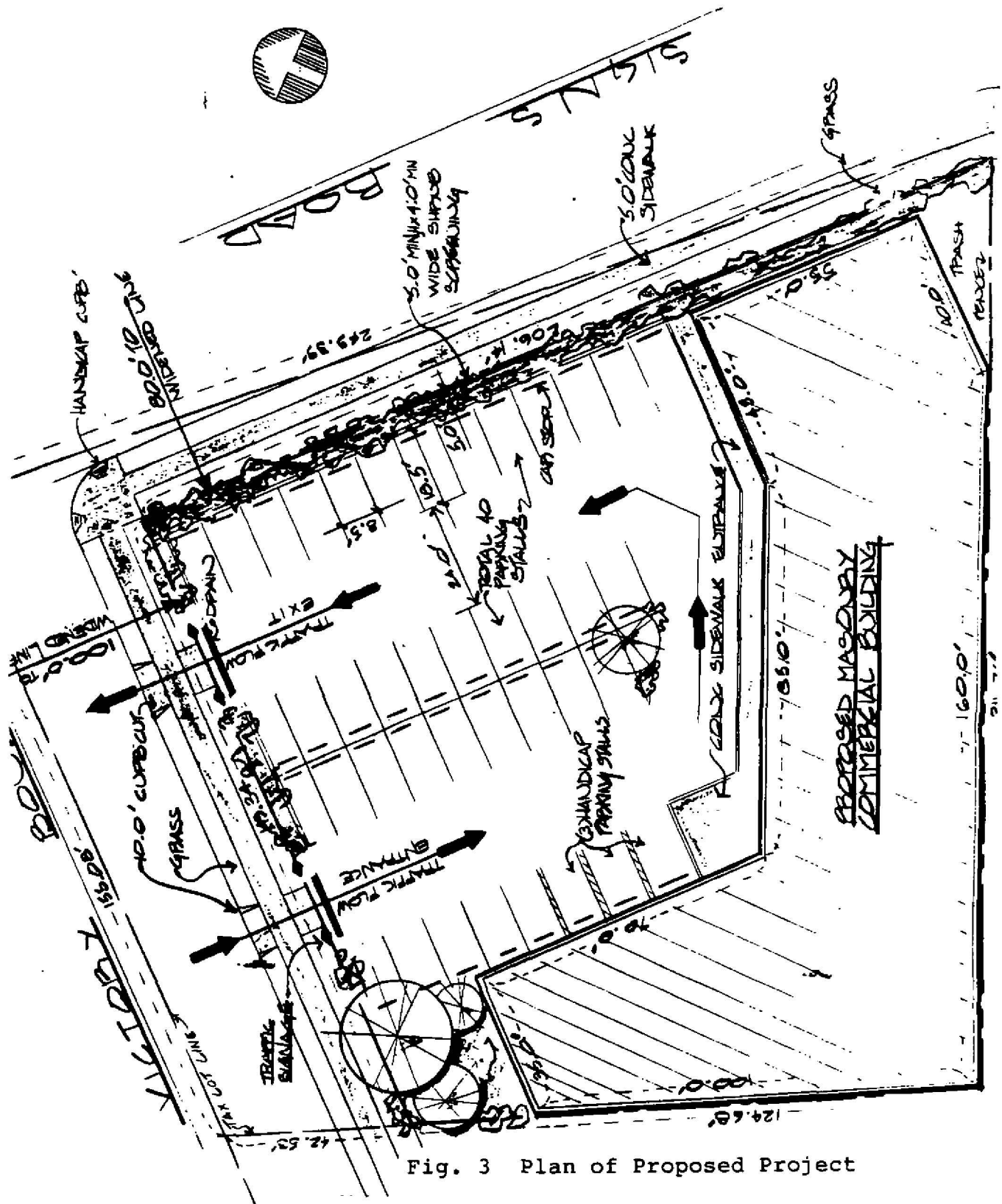
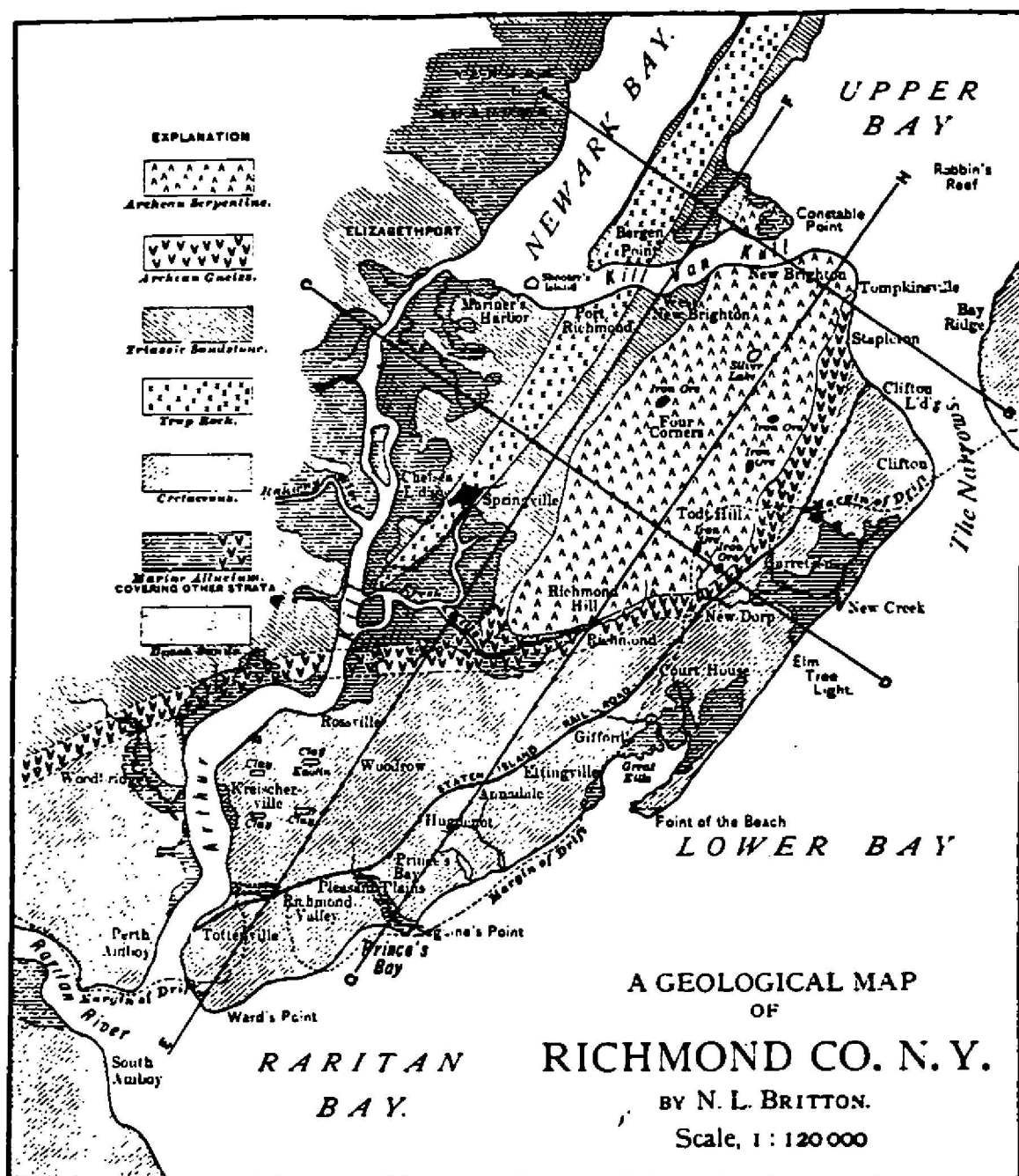


Fig. 3 Plan of Proposed Project



FROM ANNALS NEW YORK ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, 1932

◆ site

Fig. 4 Geology of Staten Island
Bayles 1887:9



Fig. 5a Intersection of Spark Place (at left) and Signs Rd.
From North. Note Deteriorated Condition of Spark.
(all photographs by F. Winter)



Fig. 5b Corner Signs Road (at left) and Victory Blvd.

Fig. 5 Site Photographs



Fig. 6a 3450 Victory Boulevard from Victory Boulevard



Fig. 6b 3450 Victory Boulevard from Victory Boulevard
Intersection with Signs Road at left

Fig. 6 Site Photographs

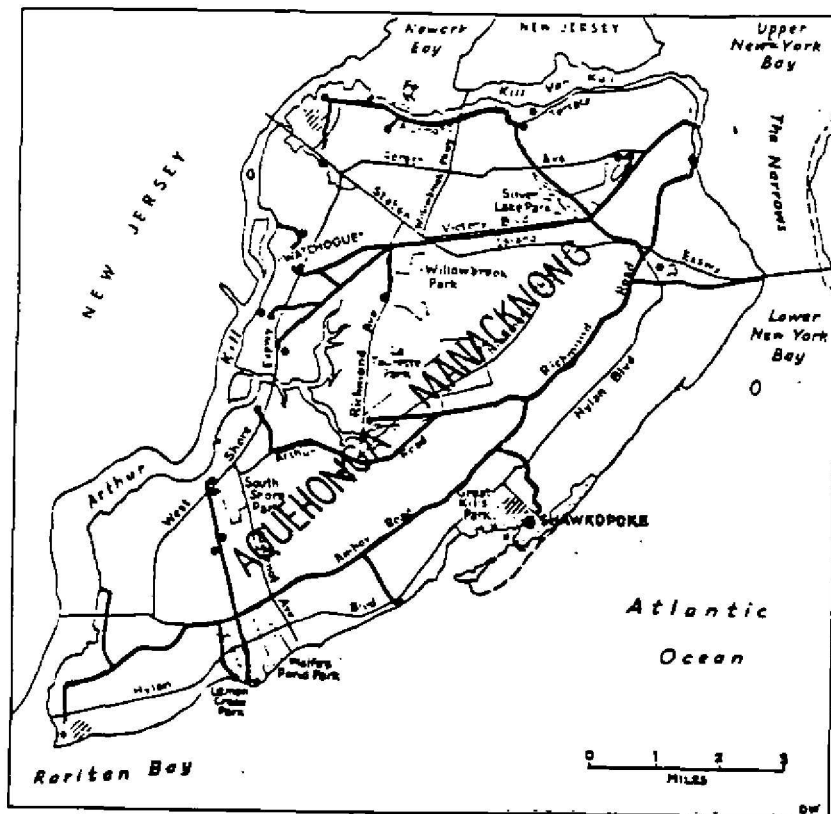


Fig. 7 Indian Pathways on Staten Island
Grumet 1981

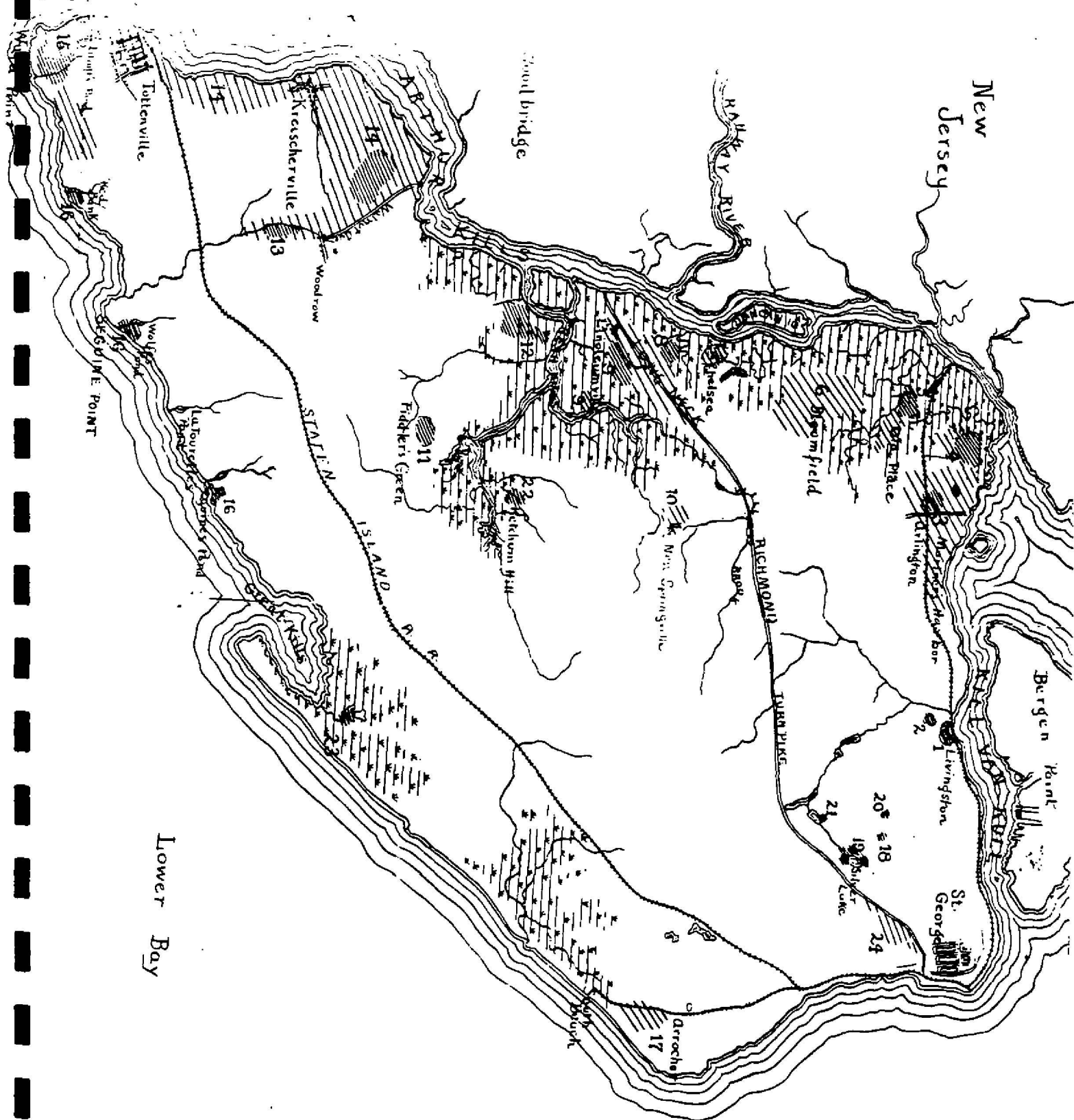


Fig. 8 Indian Sites on Staten Island
Skinner 1909

Newark Bay

Bergen Point

KILL

THE DECHERS FERRY

NORTHFIELD

N M O

STEELE

Perry

Kingsda Neck

Dongan's Is.

Swamp

Creek

Fresh Kills

Cannon's Pt.

Lony Arch

New Blazing Star Ferry

Fig.10 Staten Island 1775-1783
from McMillen 1933

site

Enlarged

No Scale



Fig. 11 US Coast Survey 1836-9
Published 1845

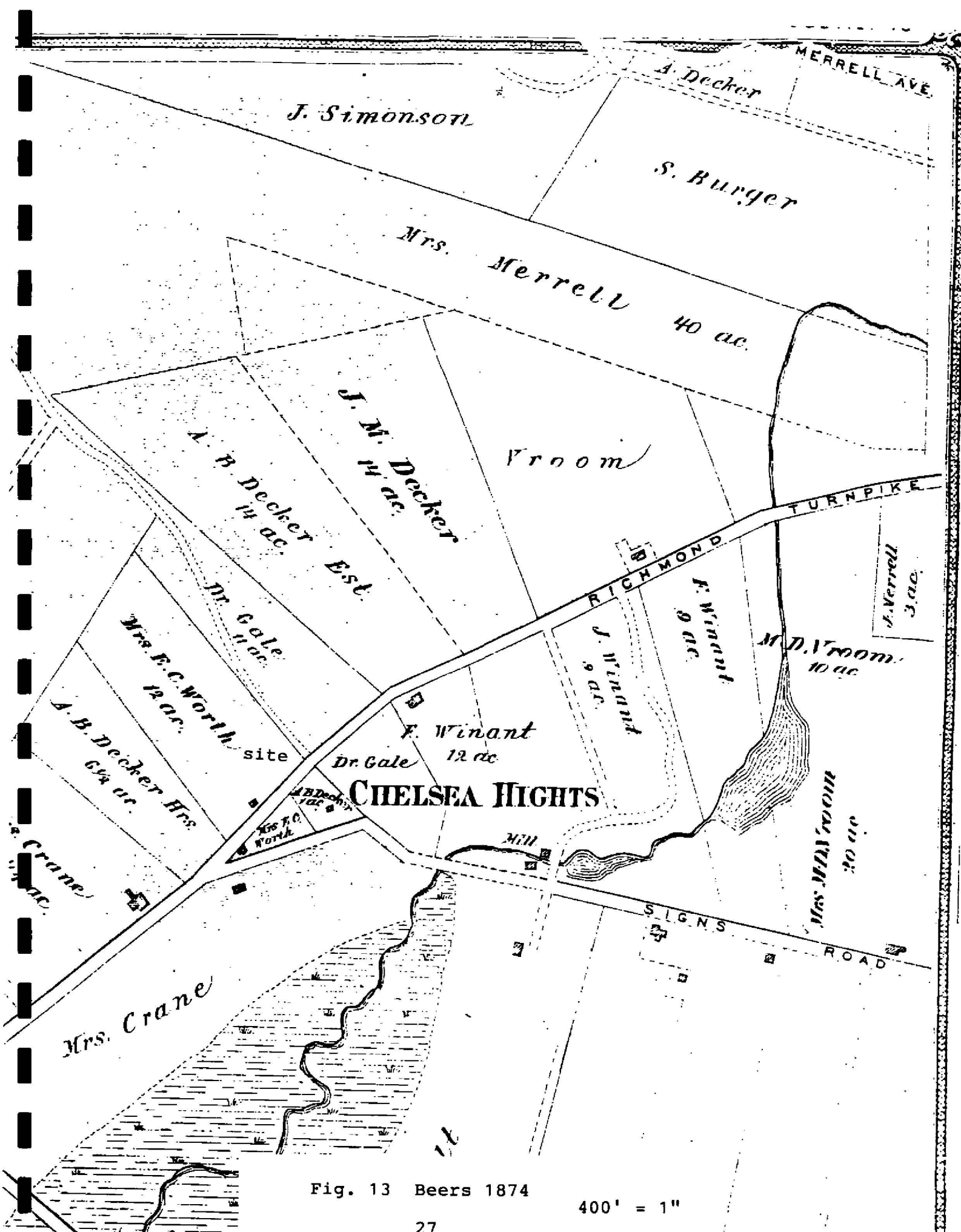


Fig. 13 Beers 1874

400' = 1"

h B

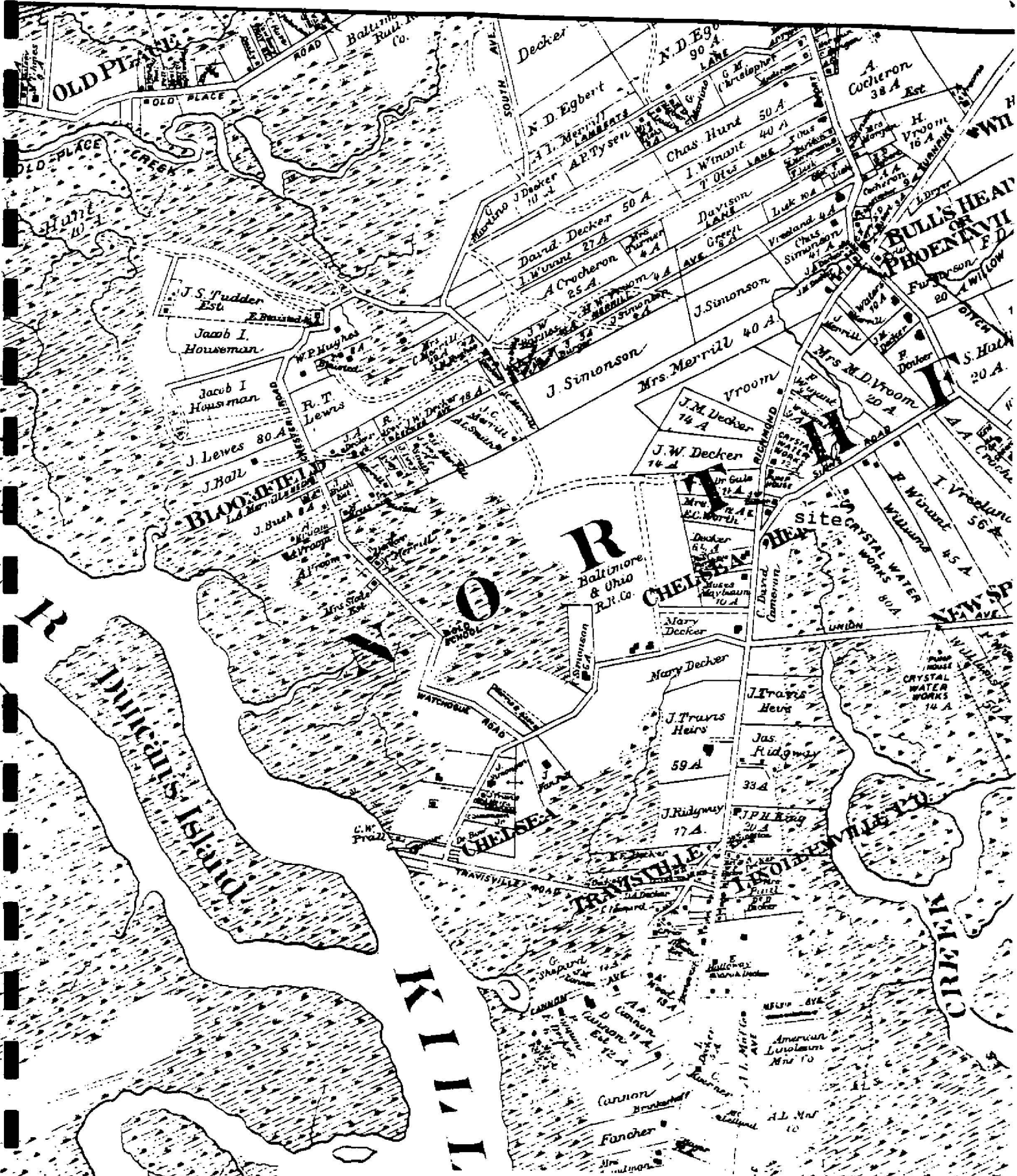


Fig. 14 Beers 1887

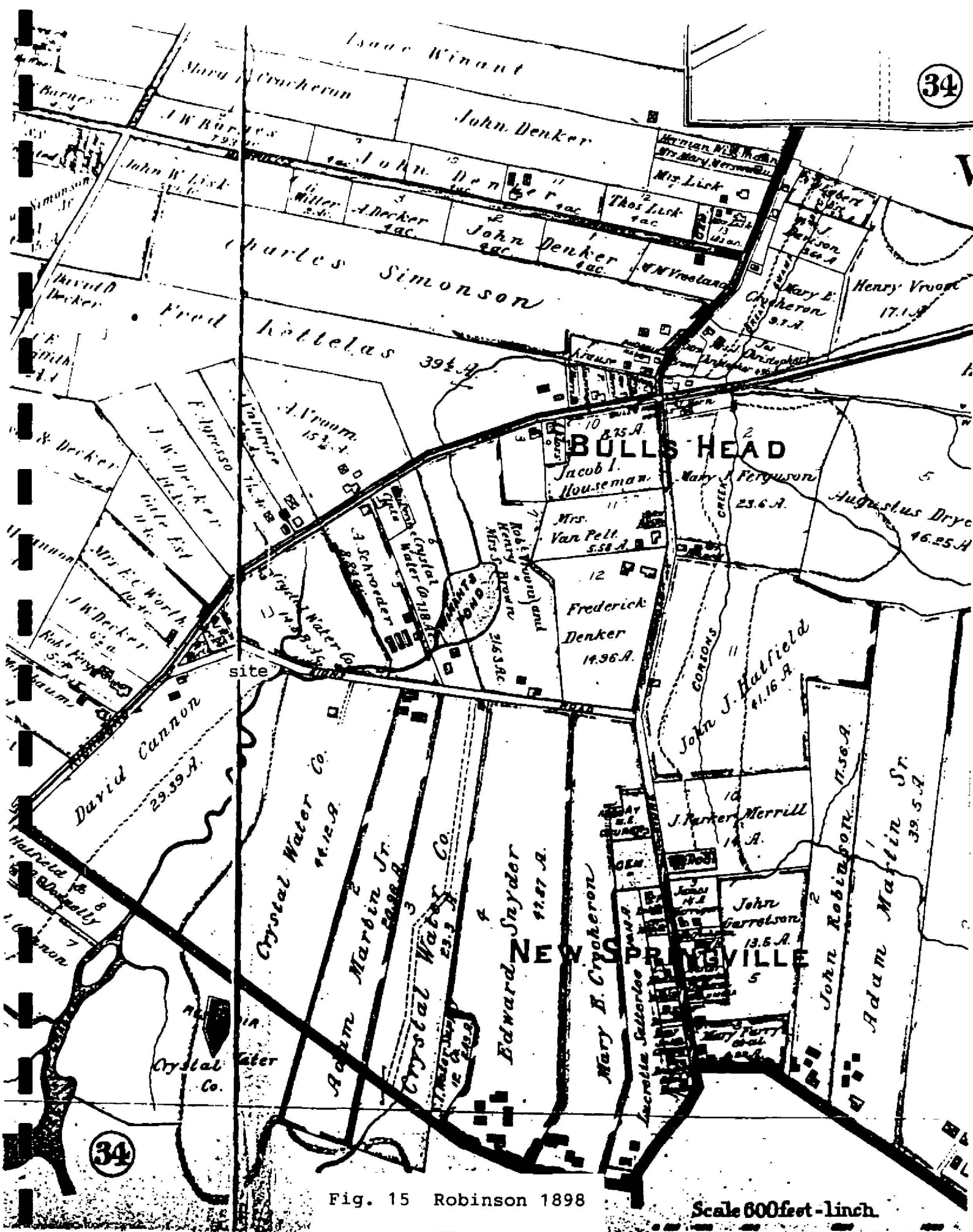


Fig. 15 Robinson 1898

Scale 600 feet - inch.

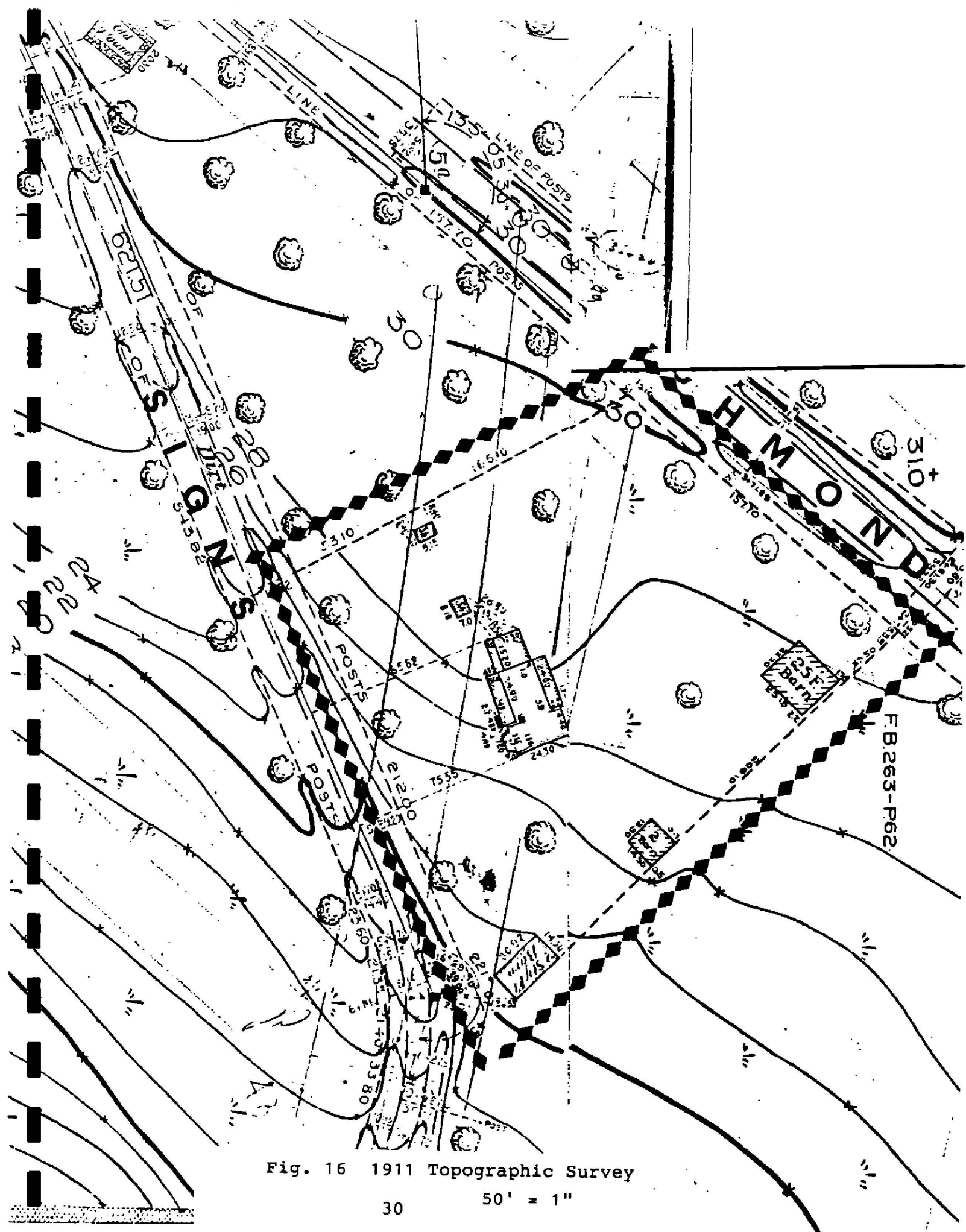
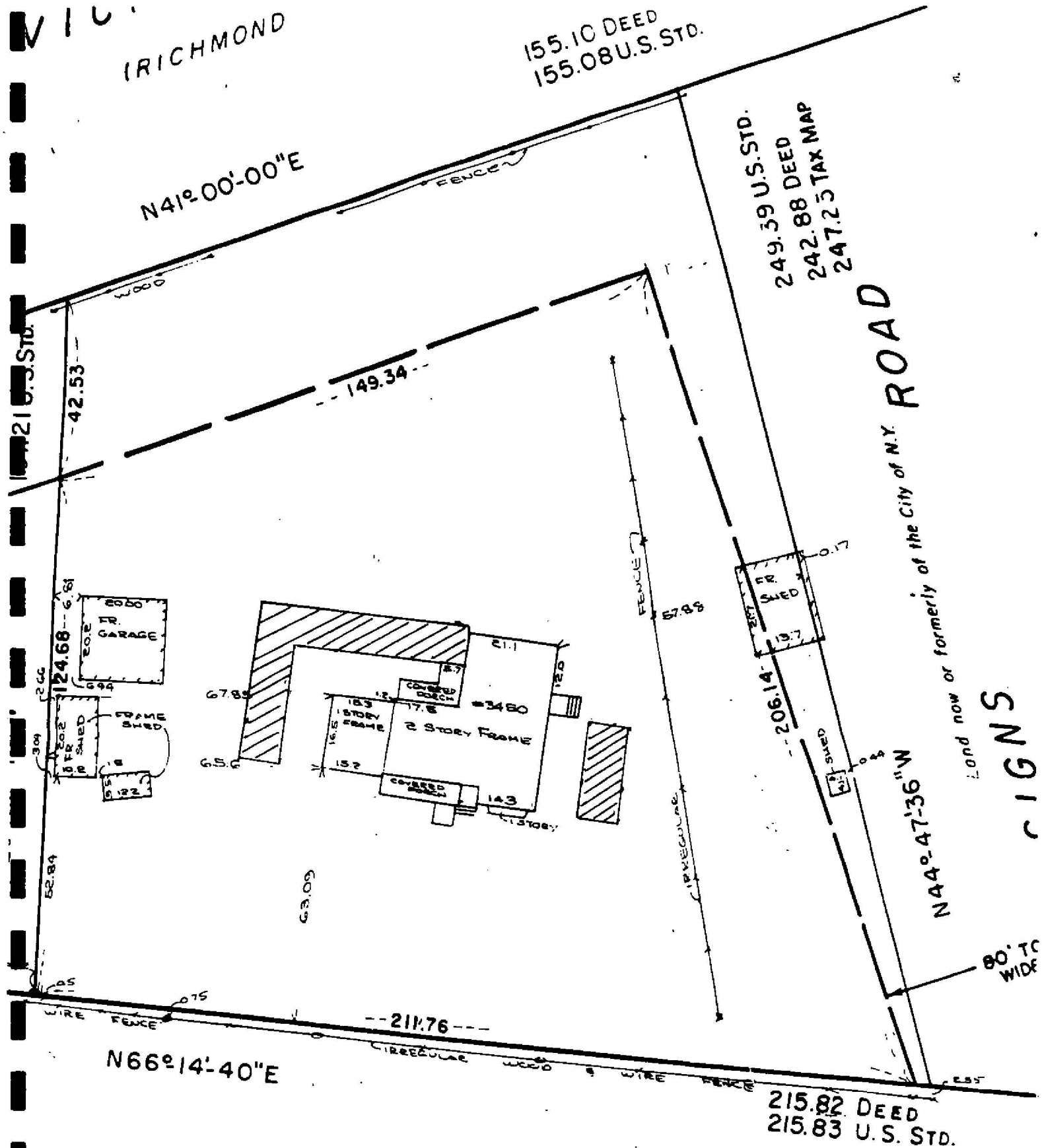


Fig. 16 1911 Topographic Survey



SPARK
PLACE

Fig. 17 Current Site Survey with Recommended Test Areas

Scale 30' = 1"
Test areas

MAPS AND ATLASES CONSULTED

1668-1712	Skene 1907, Map of Colonial Land Patents
1775-1783	McMillen, Map of S.I. during the Revolution
1781	Taylor and Skinner, Map of New York and SI
1783	Plan No. 31 du Camp Anglo-Hessois
1836-39	U.S. Coast Survey, published 1845
1850	Dripps, Map of Staten Island
1853	Butler, Map of Staten Island
1867	U.S. Coast Survey
ca. 1870	Morgen Co., Atlas of S. I. (site not included)
1874	J.B. Beers, Atlas of Richmond County
1874	C. L. Meyer, Atlas of S. I. (site not included)
1885	Sanborn, Richmond County (site not included)
1885-1891	Sanborn, Richmond County (site not included)
1887	J.B. Beers, Atlas of Richmond County
1894	J.B. Beers, Atlas of Richmond County
1896	Leng and Davis, Map of SI with Ye Olde Names
1898	E. Robinson, Atlas of the Borough of Richmond
1910	Sanborn, Richmond County (only roads in area)
1911	Field notebook, Topographic Survey, Richmond
1911/2	Topographic Survey, Borough of Richmond
1917-1923	Sanborn, Borough of Richmond (site not included)
1917-35	Sanborn, Borough of Richmond (only roads in area)
1917	G. W. Bromley, Atlas of the Borough of Richmond
1937	Sanborn, Borough of Richmond
1937-51	Sanborn, Borough of Richmond (only roads in area)
1958	Road survey, adopted June 12, 1958
1965	Road Survey, adopted January 12, 1965

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