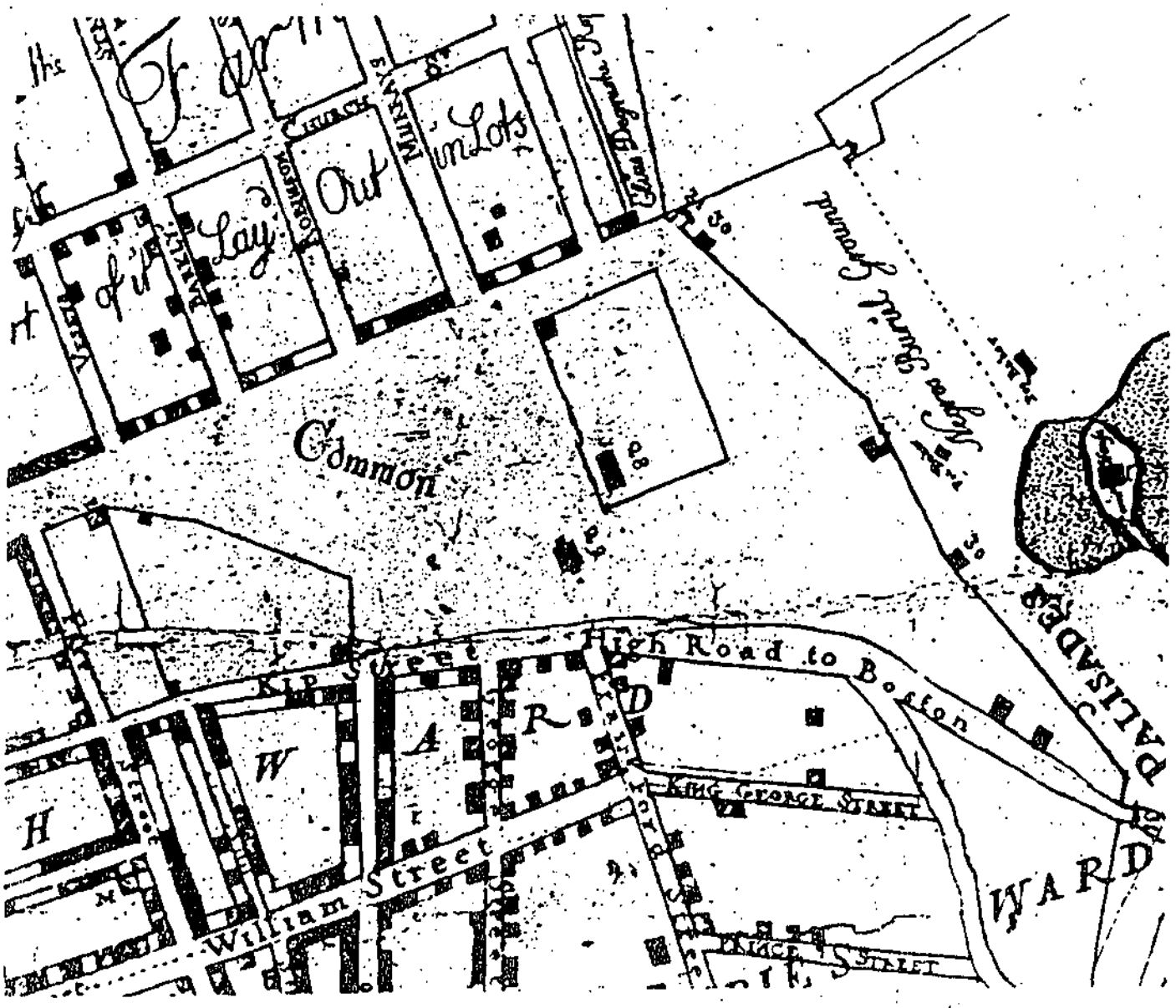
AFRICAN BURIAL GROUND
AND
THE COMMONS HISTORIC DISTRICT

DESIGNATION REPORT



NYC LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

FEBRUARY, 1993

AFRICAN BURIAL GROUND
AND
THE COMMONS HISTORIC DISTRICT

DESIGNATION REPORT

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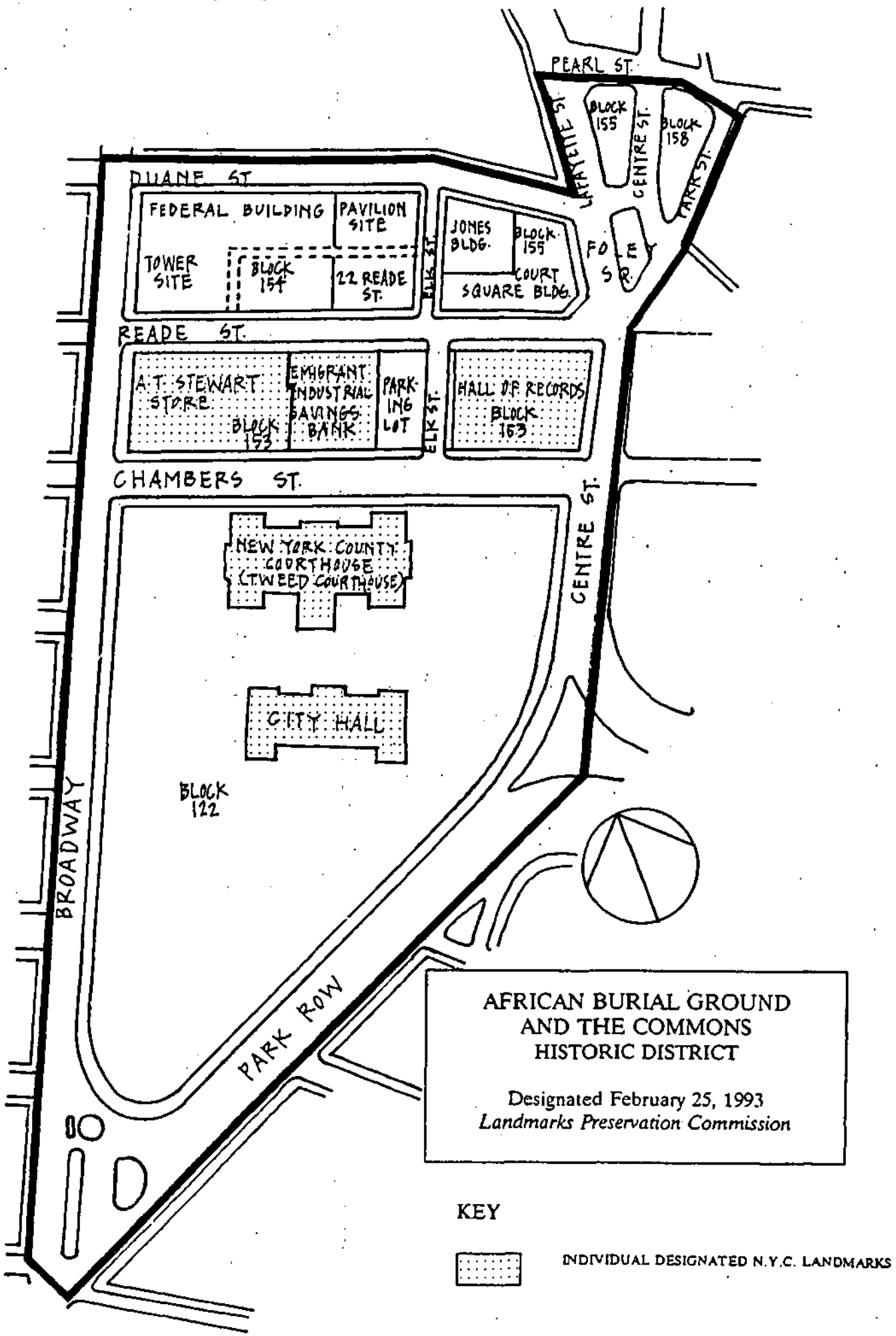
New York City
Landmarks Preservation Commission

February, 1993


PEARL ST.
LAFAYETTE ST.
BLOCK 155
CENTRE ST.
BLOCK 158
PARK ST.
DUANE ST.
FEDERAL BUILDING
PAVILION SITE
TOWER SITE
BLOCK 154
22 READE ST.
ELK ST.
JONES BLDG.
BLOCK 155
COURT SQUARE BLDG.
FOLEY SQ.
READE ST.
A.T. STEWART STORE
BLOCK 153
EMIGRANT INDUSTRIAL SAVINGS BANK
PARKING LOT
ELK ST.
HALL OF RECORDS
BLOCK 163
CHAMBERS ST.
CENTRE ST.
NEW YORK COUNTY COURTHOUSE (TWEED COURTHOUSE)
CITY HALL
BLOCK 122
BROADWAY
PARK ROW
AFRICAN BURIAL GROUND AND THE COMMONS HISTORIC DISTRICT
Designated February 25, 1993
Landmarks Preservation Commission
KEY
INDIVIDUAL DESIGNATED N.Y.C. LANDMARKS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Landmarks Preservation Commission wishes to thank Mayor David N. Dinkins for his special vision in calling for the designation of the African Burial Ground and the Commons Historic District and his support in seeing this designation to fruition.

Commissioner William E. Davis, Jr., has been a strong advocate of the Commission's work with the African Burial Ground. In addition, Senator David A. Paterson, through his Task Force on the African Burial Ground, was among the first to bring the burial ground to the attention of the public and the issue of its recognition, has encouraged community involvement, and continues to play a major role in the preservation of this significant site.

The Commission expresses its sincere appreciation to the members of the community who have been active supporters of the preservation of the African Burial Ground and this designation. Their insights and information have added to this report.

This designation would not have been possible without the work of Daniel Pagano, urban archaeologist on the staff of the Landmarks Preservation Commission, working under the supervision of Gina Santucci, Director of the Commission's Environmental Review Program, and Merin Elizabeth Urban, Executive Director, all of whom have been involved in issues pertaining to the planning, oversight, archaeological excavation, and preservation of the African Burial Ground portion of this historic district.

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AFRICAN BURIAL GROUND AND THE COMMONS HISTORIC DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

The African Burial Ground and the Commons Historic District consists of the property bounded by a line beginning at the intersection of the southern curbline of Ann Street and the eastern curbline of Park Row, extending northeasterly along the eastern curbline of Park Row, northerly across the Brooklyn Bridge approach, northerly along the eastern curbline of Centre Street, northeasterly along the eastern edge of Foley Square and the eastern curbline of Park Street, westerly across Park Street, westerly along the southern curbline of Pearl Street, westerly across Lafayette Street, southerly along the western curbline of Lafayette Street, westerly along the northern curbline of Duane Street, westerly across Broadway, southerly along the western curbline of Broadway to the northwest corner of the intersection of Broadway and Vesey Street, and easterly across Broadway, to the point of beginning, Manhattan.

TESTIMONY AT THE PUBLIC HEARING

On September 1, 1992, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the Negros Burying Ground and the Commons Historic District (Item No. 1). The item had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of the law. Fifty-three people offered testimony at the public hearing in favor of the proposed designation including Mayor David N. Dinkins; U.S. Congressman Charles Rangel; Manhattan Borough President Ruth Messinger; State Senator David A. Paterson; Assemblywoman Deborah Glick; Councilwoman Una Clarke; Councilman Wendell Foster; Councilwoman Kathryn Freed; Councilman Stanley Michels; representatives of U.S. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan; Congressman Ted Weiss; State Senator Manfred Ohrenstein; Manhattan Community Board 9. The representative of the only privately owned portion of the district supported designation as well as the State Commissioner of Parks, Orin Lehman. Many local groups including Landmarks Harlem, the Professional Archaeologists of New York City, the Municipal Art Society and the Landmarks Conservancy also testified in favor. The Commission also received many letters and petitions supporting this designation.

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AFRICAN BURIAL GROUND AND THE COMMONS HISTORIC DISTRICT

Introduction

The African Burial Ground and the Commons Historic District is a major portion of the New Amsterdam Commons as set off by the Dutch colonial government. The area has undergone intense public use since the mid-seventeenth century, resulting in the overlay of many significant historic improvements and resources -- both above ground and below -- all of which document the changing nature of this important area long devoted to communal, public, and civic purposes. The City Hall Park portion of the Commons, New York's approximation of a courthouse square or village green, survives as one of the city's earliest gathering places where the community assembled for both celebration and protest.

The northern portion of the Commons, southwest of the Collect Ponds, now the several blocks just north of City Hall Park, was used as the African Burial Ground during most of the eighteenth century and possibly as early as the seventeenth century. This was in the vicinity of where many free Africans had been granted farms during the seventeenth century. This separate burial ground reflects the establishment at an early date of the parallel society of Africans in New York City, one of the largest urban African populations in the American colonies during the eighteenth century, and physical evidence from the burial ground indicates that it was a focus of that community's identity for nearly one hundred years. The African Burial Ground, which was preserved under a deep layer of fill, is pending designation as a National Historic Landmark, and the archaeological excavation of a portion of the site has provided and will continue to provide rare, important, material evidence of eighteenth-century African life and culture in New York. This burial ground, which is one of the very few preserved eighteenth-century African burial grounds in the Americas, is historically significant in that it serves as a memorial to a people who came to America in bondage rather than by choice, and who lived, died, and were buried within a community which has been largely unacknowledged in historical studies of the colonial world.

By the mid-1660s, the portion of the Commons which is now City Hall Park was in use as a communal pasture, and such communal use of vacant, unpatented lands was confirmed by the Dongan Charter of 1686 and the Montgomerie Charter of 1730. Although the Commons was still generally regarded as a place for pasturage and various industrial activities, the area began to be used during the 1720s for such governmental activities as executions, near both Park Row and the Collect Ponds. One of the city's powder houses was erected in 1728 on the portion of the Commons between the Little Collect and Collect Ponds. The Commons was isolated enough from the rest of the city to be considered an appropriate location for the construction of an almshouse complex begun in 1735. Nevertheless, during the 1730s and 1740s, public gatherings were held on the Commons to celebrate holidays, including the Pinkster celebration of the African population, and other events. The military used the Commons as a parade grounds, as a defensive position in the 1740s -- constructing a palisade with blockhouses across what is now the northern end of City Hall Park and a powder magazine in the area -- and, during the mid- to late-eighteenth century, the site of several barracks. The Commons became more firmly established as the appropriate site for the location of welfare and punitive institutions at the northern edge of the city with the construction of the "New Gaol" in 1757-59 and the Bridewell for vagrants in 1775. Many burials associated with these institutions, as well as the almshouse and the barracks, also took place in the Commons. During the pre-Revolutionary period, the Commons became the locus for mass meetings and demonstrations in opposition to British policies. The contest for control of the Commons between the local populace and British soldiers and over the succession of Liberty Poles -- the monuments to freedom -- fostered civic identification with this most "public" of spaces.

Although a second almshouse was constructed in 1796-97, the Commons area began to be dramatically transformed at the end of the eighteenth century. The a portion of the "Calk Hook" farm and the Van Borsum patent, encompassing the African Burial Ground, were divided into lots for development (1785 and 1795), and the Common Council authorized the acquisition of a portion of the burial ground for the laying out of Chambers Street (1796). Around the same time, the Commons was transformed into the seat of local government with the construction of City Hall, begun in 1803, and the

landscaping of the Commons south of the building. This portion of the Commons came to be thought of as "The Park" and "City Hall Park" as the open area gradually acquired a more landscaped, park-like character, while the African Burial Ground to the north of City Hall Park was built over during the nineteenth century with commercial, public, industrial, and residential buildings. Around 1830 the buildings in the park became devoted entirely to governmental use, as the Second Almshouse became known as the "New City Hall" and housed government functions, and the "New Gaol" was remodeled to become the Hall of Records. During the mid-nineteenth century, a number of other buildings were erected to house governmental agencies, including the New York County (Tweed) Courthouse (1861-81) on the northern end of the park and the United States Post Office (1870-75, no longer standing) on the park's southern tip. The design for City Hall Park, adopted in 1870, remains in evidence in the northern portion today. Throughout the nineteenth century, City Hall Park continued to serve as the city's primary gathering place on occasions of joy or sorrow, prosperity or calamity, welcoming or separation, and, as it was described in 1855 by historian Henry B. Dawson, as the "resort of the people."

The symbolic importance of both City Hall and the setting -- considered by an early-twentieth-century observer as "one of the most spacious and delightful squares with which any City Hall in America was surrounded" -- was recognized during many attempts to erect new buildings for governmental purposes during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The construction of the Hall of Records (1899-1907) on the north side of Chambers Street brought government functions onto that portion of the Commons which is the site of the African Burial Ground. The small blocks south of Pearl Street, flanking Centre Street, the site of the eighteenth-century powder house, became part of Foley Square in 1926. In 1965, the city purchased many of the buildings, including the A.T. Stewart Store (the Sun Building) and the Emigrant Industrial Savings Bank, that are standing above the African Burial Ground, and these buildings and others in the historic district house municipal government agencies. The long history of public and civic uses -- reflected in the rediscovered African Burial Ground, which gives concrete evidence of the importance of Africans in colonial history, the many governmental buildings in the historic district, and City Hall Park, which still functions as an important gathering place of the city's population -- defines the historic district and reveals its role as the nucleus of New York City's public life.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE AFRICAN BURIAL GROUND AND THE COMMONS HISTORIC DISTRICT

THE COMMONS IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

The Colonial Commons

When New Amsterdam was settled in the 1620s, the whole of Manhattan Island was deemed to be the property of the Dutch West Indies Company, based both on the agreement of sale made between its native inhabitants and the company's agent Peter Minuit and the company's charter which granted it not just exclusive trading rights to the Dutch territories in North America, but also governmental powers and the right to dispose of land as it saw fit.[1] In order to encourage settlement, the company began making grants of house lots and farms, reserving certain property for itself, notably the fort at the tip of Manhattan Island (the site of the U.S. Custom House at Bowling Green) and a large farm extending from the Hudson River to Broadway between the present-day Fulton and Reade Streets. Following the model of agricultural villages in Holland, those lands which were not appropriated as house lots and farms were treated as communal lands available for use by all the inhabitants of the town as pasturage and as a source for such raw materials as wood, lime, clay, sods, and thatch.[2] During the first decades of settlement, animals were often allowed to range freely over the unappropriated pasture and woodlands of Manhattan.[3] Eventually the depredations caused to farmland by unfettered animals and the fear of Indian attacks on settlers in search of livestock led to the creation of a pound for stray animals and the development of communal pastures. By 1660, the townspeople of New Amsterdam employed a herdsman who sounded his horn daily to gather cattle for their trek up the vale at Maiden Lane to the wagon road which ran along the line of present-day Broadway, veering off to present-day Park Row, past the open pasture land known as the *Vlackte* (Flat), before looping around Catiemuts Hill to reach the Collect Pond (or Freshwater).

The triangular piece of pasture land was, as its Dutch name implied, a plateau covered by scrub and sod. (*fig. 1*). The plateau terminated just above present-day Chambers Street in a ravine leading east-northeast from Broadway toward the Collect, a deep, spring-fed pond formed by a geologic rift which cuts across Manhattan Island. Surrounding the Collect were several hills including Potbakers Hill, located between present-day Reade and Duane Streets west of Centre Street, and Catiemuts Hill (or Freshwater Hill, as it was sometimes known), at present-day Park Row and Duane Street. The Collect itself was comprised of two basins, the Little Collect, a shallow pond located near present-day Centre and Duane Streets, and a large pond extending over what are several present-day blocks between Lafayette, Baxter, Pearl, and White Streets, which were separated by a small "island" or spit of land. A stream originating

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[1]This section on the early development of New Amsterdam and the development of the colonial Commons is based on I.N. Phelps Stokes, *The Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498-1909*, 6 vols. (New York: Robert H. Dodd. 1915-28); John W. Reps, *The Making of Urban America: A History of City Planning in the United States* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), 147-154; Edward Hagaman Hall, "An Historical Sketch of City Hall Park," American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society, *Fifteenth Annual Report*, (1910):409-410; Murray Hoffman, *Treatise Upon the Estate and Rights of the Corporation of the City of New York as Proprietors*, 2 vols. (New York: Edmund Jones & Co., 1862), 1:126-132.

[2]Reps, p. 121, notes that pastures and woodlands were also treated as common land in New England seventeenth-century towns and Spanish colonial *pueblos*, suggesting that "the village-farm unit used in both English and Spanish settlements had its origin in European land tenure systems as they had evolved from feudalism."

[3]Stokes, 4 (1643, Nov.): 100, 4 (1656, May 1): 167; David T. Valentine "History of the Domestic Affairs of the Inhabitants of New York," *Manual of the Common Council* [hereafter Valentine's Manual], (New York:D.T. Valentine, 1858), 504-505. There are reports of cattle grazing on the banks of the Hudson near present-day Greenwich Village and of horses roaming the woodlands of northern Manhattan. In 1644, a communal pasture was established near the Great Bouwerie (later the Peter Stuyvesant farm) open to any cattle owner willing to help in building and maintaining a fence.

at the southeast corner of the large Collect Pond near Pearl and Centre Streets flowed eastward, draining into a swamp and then into the East River. At the northwest corner of the large pond, a second stream flowed northwestward until it reached the Hudson in the vicinity of present-day Canal Street. For almost two centuries it formed a natural barrier separating the town of New York from the surrounding countryside. Thus, when New Amsterdam was granted status as an independent municipality by the Dutch Government in 1653, the city limits were fixed at the Hudson (North) and East Rivers "as far as the Fresh Water."[4]

After New Amsterdam received municipal status, the land south of the Freshwater, between the highway (the wagon road described above) and the Dutch West Indies Company's farm, continued to serve as the city Commons. In 1658, Governor Peter Stuyvesant and the Council of the New Netherland conveyed the vacant and unpatented lands south of the city wall (Wall Street) to the Burgomasters of New Amsterdam. After the British conquest of New York in 1664, these rights were confirmed in the Dongan Charter of 1686 which extended the grant to include:

> all the waste, vacant, unpatented, and unappropriated land lying and being within the said city of New York, and on Manhattan's Island aforesaid, extending and reaching to the low water mark in, by, and through all parts of the said city.[5]

This grant was reaffirmed in the Montgomerie Charter of 1730. Thus not only the historic town commons of New Amsterdam, but also the unappropriated lands north of the town limits were vested in the municipal government as the Commons of New York.[6]

By the late seventeenth century the Commons had begun to serve a number of other purposes besides pasturage. During the brief period in 1673-74 when the Dutch retook New Amsterdam, it was employed as a parade ground for troops. The first structure known to have been built by European settlers on the Commons was a windmill, erected in 1663-64 by carpenters Jan de Wit and Denys Hartogvelt, who received a plot of land measuring 20 rods by 20 rods and materials from the Dutch West India Company in exchange for milling up to "25 skepels of grain" per week for the company (*fig. 2*).[7] Contemporary maps of New York suggest that the windmill was located just east of Broadway and somewhat to the south of present-day City Hall. One of only two mills serving the farmers of New York during the 1660s and 1670s,[8] the mill on the Commons played a vital role in the economic life of the colony, which

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[4]Quoted in Stokes, 1:39.

[5]Quoted in Hoffman, 1:121.

[6]Because all vacant and unpatented lands were vested in the New Amsterdam government, town records frequently refer to the Commons without distinguishing whether they mean the historic town commons of New Amsterdam or the undeveloped municipally-owned lands to the north of the city, thereby creating a certain amount of confusion for historians.

[7]For the first windmill on the Commons see Stokes, 1: 212, 225, 231, pls. 10A-a, 17, 19; 4 (1662, Nov. 2): 222, (1664, Jan. 22): 232, (1664, Apr. 4): 235, (1664, May 27): 236, (1672, July 1): 282, (1689): 348.

[8]The other mill was Pietersen's water mill on Water Street near James Slip, erected c. 1658. The two mills were already inadequate by 1672 when the bakers of the town complained of their inability to meet the needs of "ye Shipping outward bound & Like Occasions" and petitioned for the right to send their grain to Connecticut for milling.

depended on milled grain, both as a major source of food and as one of its chief exports.[9] The mill illustrates the "public" orientation of "private" enterprises sited within the Commons.

The Van Borsum Patent

In 1673, during the brief period when New Amsterdam returned to Dutch hands, Governor Colve granted the northern portion of the Commons, extending from present-day Chambers Street to Duane Street between Broadway and Centre Street, to Cornelius Van Borsum in recognition of the services rendered to New Amsterdam by his wife, Sara Roeloff, as an interpreter during the peace negotiations with the Esopus Indians. This patent was reaffirmed in 1696 by the English Governor, Benjamin Fletcher, who granted the property to Sara Roeloff's son, Lucas Kiersted, and sons-in-law, Johannes Kip and William Teller, the executors of her estate. Since Sara Roeloff had divided her estate equally among her eight children and Fletcher had vested the title in Kip, Kiersted, and Teller and "their Heirs and Assignes forever," a dispute soon arose as to whether the property had been granted to the three men solely for their own benefit or as executors on behalf of all the heirs of Sara Roeloff. For almost a hundred years the heirs continued to dispute this property. On several occasions the descendants of Johannes Kip and Lucas Kiersted asserted their claims before the Common Council of New York; however, the Council either deferred consideration on the matter or asserted the position that the property remained part of the common lands.[10] This latter position might have been based on the ancient privilege of the government to reclaim patented lands which had not been fenced or built upon within a certain number of years, or perhaps was taken under an act that annulled "certain extravagant grants of land made by Governor Fletcher." [11] In the popular mind, the Van Borsum patent remained a part of the Commons and was so used by the populace of New York, notably by the African community which established a burial ground on the patent lands (see below).(*fig. 3*).

THE COMMONS IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Commons was still generally regarded as a place for pasturage and various industrial activities. By the 1720s the area began to be used for such governmental activities as executions, near both Park Row and the Collect Ponds. One of the city's powder houses was erected in 1728 on the portion of the Commons between the Little Collect and Collect Ponds. The Commons was isolated enough from the rest of the city to be considered an appropriate location for the construction of an almshouse complex begun in 1735. Nevertheless, during the 1730s and 1740s, public gatherings were held on the Commons to celebrate holidays, including the Pinkster

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[9] Quoted in Stokes 4 (1705, July 15): 453. The mill was destroyed by lightning in 1689, but was replaced by a windmill erected between 1692 and 1695 by a baker, Jasper Nessepot (aka Nessepatt), who had leased the previous mill on the site for some years prior to its destruction. In addition to supplying flour for Nessepot's bakery, the new mill was also the chief source of grain for the garrison stationed at the fort at the Battery. This mill, which came to be known as the "Old Garrison Mill" or "Jasper's Mill," was demolished sometime between 1714 and 1723.

[10] A copy of the Van Borsum patent is in the Colve Papers, Colonial Mss. vol. 23, 433-20; see also the confirmation of title of 1696, in Liber Patents, 7:111-113, both in the New York State Archives, Albany, N.Y. Despite these documents, the government of New York City continued to dispute the Van Borsum heirs' claim to the property until the end of the eighteenth century, forcing two of the heirs to enter into an agreement in December 1760 to lease from the city the "three lots of ground contiguous and adjoining to the Negroes Burying place on part of which Lotts, their Father Built a Potting House, pot oven and sunk a well supposing at that said Time the said Lands were his property." New York City, *Minutes of the Common Council, 1675-1776* [*MCC, 1675-1776*] (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1905), 6: 238. Contention among the heirs about their respective shares in the Van Borsum estate may have prevented them from mounting a successful challenge to the City's claim to the property as common grounds. (See New York County, Office of the Register, Liber Deeds and Conveyances, Liber 245, p. 405; and Smith, *ex dem.* Teller, v. G. & P. Lorillard, 10 Johnson Reports 338 (Sup. Ct. N.Y., 1813).

[11] On the municipal government's attempts to have certain grants by Fletcher revoked see Hoffman, 1:121-126.

celebration of the African population, and other events. The military used the Commons as a parade grounds, as a defensive position in the 1740s -- constructing a palisade with blockhouses across what is now the northern end of City Hall Park and a powder magazine in the area -- and, during the mid- to late-eighteenth century, the site of several barracks. The Commons became more firmly established as the appropriate site for the location of welfare and punitive institutions at the northern edge of the city with the construction of the "New Gaol" in 1757-59 and the Bridewell for vagrants in 1775. Many burials associated with these institutions, as well as the almshouse and the barracks, also took place in the Commons. During the pre-Revolutionary period, the Commons became the locus for mass meetings and demonstrations in opposition to British policies. The contest for control of the Commons between the local populace and British soldiers and over the succession of Liberty Poles -- the monuments to freedom -- fostered civic identification with this most "public" of spaces. During the Revolutionary War, when New York City was under the control of the British, many American prisoners-of-war were incarcerated in the public buildings on the Commons. During the Federal period, a second almshouse was constructed (1796-97), a portion of the "Calk Hook" farm and the Van Borsum patent, encompassing the African Burial Ground, were divided into lots for development (1785 and 1795), and the Common Council authorized the acquisition of a portion of the burial ground for the laying out of Chambers Street (1796). It was during this period that the first attempts were made to convert the Commons to a public park, signaling the major transformation that was to take place in the nineteenth century.

Early Governmental Actions on the Commons[12]

During the first quarter of the eighteenth century, the Commons was still generally regarded as a place for pasturage and as a source of raw materials, though there seems to have been some effort made to control its use, especially in the southern portion. Beginning in 1700, laws were regularly passed forbidding the removal of sods or digging of holes on the Commons south of the Freshwater and in 1714 an edict specifically prohibited the burning of oyster shells or lime south of Jasper's Mill (the windmill on the Commons). The first governmental actions on the Commons were executions, beginning perhaps with the hanging and decapitation of Jacob Leisler and his son-in-law Jacob Milborne in 1691. Subsequent executions seem to have been moved to the Commons, away from the water side near the fort and the first City Hall where they had previously taken place. The twenty-one Africans that were executed as the result of a slave revolt in 1712 were probably hanged on the gallows on the Commons and interred in the African Burial Ground. Several times during the 1720s the Common Council authorized the construction of gallows on the Commons, which suggests that these were temporary structures that were put up and taken down as needed. A more permanent structure may have been in place by July 1728, when a sub-committee of the Common Council, empowered with finding a location for a municipal powder house, recommended a site "upon the common near the place where the Gallows now Stands." Eventually the Common Council fixed on another location for the magazine -- the "little Island in the fresh water," where a one-story building, 40 feet long and 20 feet broad, was constructed of stone and brick.(*fig. 4*).[13] Several factors seem to have influenced the City Council in selecting this site for the first permanent building to be erected under its jurisdiction on the Commons -- namely, that it was sufficiently remote to quiet fears of an explosion within the populated area of the city (the stated reason for relocating the powder magazine from its existing site at the fort), yet was convenient to the town and easily secured.

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[12]This section is based on David T. Valentine, "Park Row and Chatham Square," Valentine's Manual, 1866, 597; *MCC, 1675-1776*, 2:113, 3:57, 3:58; Stokes, 2:342, 351, 4 (1660, Jan. 15): 202, (1691, May 16): 368-369, (1714, Mar. 24): 480, (1725, Dec. 23): 504 (1726, Jan. 27,): 504, (1727, June 20): 506.

[13]*MCC, 1675-1776*, 3:442, 345. For the powder house see Stokes, 4 (1721, July 24): 495, (1728, July 6): 509, (1728, Nov. 21): 510, (1729, Jan. 10): 511, (1729, June 19): 512. Construction of the powder house was financed by the sale of a tract of Commons land in the vicinity of the Beekman Swamp to Jacobus Roosevelt. Stokes, 4 (1728, Sept. 5): 510.

The Almshouse[14]

The city's population almost doubled from 3,900 in 1690 to 7,248 in 1723. During the second quarter of the eighteenth century New York began to experience problems with poverty and vagrancy. Outbreaks of smallpox, yellow fever, and measles strained the resources of civic and religious organizations that previously had been able to address the needs of the city's small number of helpless, infirm, and impoverished widows and orphans. Taxes for poor relief mounted, and faced with an incipient tax revolt, the Common Council voted in 1734 to end subsidies to individuals living within the community and to build an almshouse on the Commons which would be, in part, an institution for housing the "incompetent" and infirm and in part a work house. Orphaned youths would be instructed in marketable skills, and adult "incorrigibles" ("disorderly persons, parents of bastard children, beggars, servants running away or otherwise misbehaving themselves, trespassers, rogues, and vagabonds") would be taught "industry."[15] The building's location at the northern edge of the city, on the flat portion of the Commons, made it possible to further isolate the diseased poor from the general population. The institutionalized poor also were more easily subject to control.

Constructed in 1735-36, on the site where the present City Hall stands, the almshouse was a eighty-six-foot-wide, two-and-one-half story, brick building with a hipped roof.[16] (*fig. 4*). It contained separate living and working quarters for the inmates, as well as living quarters for the superintendent, general storage facilities, an infirmary, and a room in the basement for incarcerating the unruly. The building was surrounded by a vegetable garden and there were separate kitchen and stable buildings, erected in 1736. By 1739, the numbers of the infirm had grown so great that "an additional building" was constructed for "Such unhappy Poor as are or shall be Visited with any Malignant or Obnoxious disease."[17] The almshouse itself was enlarged in 1746 and a fenced burial ground was created to the east of the building in 1757,[18] the earliest known burial ground on the portion of the Commons south of the African Burial Ground. Other outbuildings were constructed in 1769 and 1789.

Changing Perceptions of the Commons

By 1730, John Harris, a former builder and alderman, had acquired the windmill property and built a one-and-one-half story house at southeast corner of the lot, just north of present-day Murray Street, which is shown on a number of eighteenth-century maps as surrounded by a fenced orchard (*figs. 1,3,4 and Ratzen Plan detail*). In the 1760s the city acquired 11/12th's interest in the lot from the heirs.[19]

While the Commons' distance from the town center may have recommended it to municipal officials as a site for the powder house and the almshouse, the Commons began to be used as a place for public gatherings in the 1730s and early 1740s. In 1732 the Commons became the site for municipal bonfires

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[14]The following history of the Almshouse is based on Steven J. Ross, "Objects of Charity: Poor Relief, Poverty, and the Rise of the Almshouse in Early Eighteenth-Century New York City," pp. 138-172, and Robert E. Cray, Jr., "Poverty and Poor Relief: New York City and Its Rural Environs, 1700-1790," pp. 173-201, in *Authority and Resistance in Early New York*, William Pencak and Conrad Edick Wright, eds. (New York: The New-York Historical Society, 1988).

[15]*MCC, 1675-1776*, 4:307-11.

[16]This section on the almshouse buildings is drawn from Ross; Cray; and Sherene Baugher and Robert W. Venables, "The History of the Almshouse," in New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, "The Archaeological Investigation of the City Hall Park Site, Manhattan" (New York: City of New York, 1990), 73-96.

[17]*MCC, 1675-1776*, 4:459.

[18]*MCC 1675-1776*, 6:85.

[19]For the Harris house and lot see *MCC, 1675-1776*, 4:483, 7:311, 364, 437; Stokes, 4 (1770 Jan. 19): 804, (1770, Feb. 3): 805-806.

held in celebration of such events as the King's Birthday, Guy Fawkes Day, the visit of a foreign dignitary, or a military victory.[20] From the mid-eighteenth century through the antebellum period, the "Pinkster" Day celebrations of the African population were held on the Commons. For this holiday that lasted from three days to a week, thousands of Africans from as far as forty miles away gathered on the "Pinkster Fields" on the Commons.[21] As set in 1757 in James Fenimore Cooper's novel *Satanstoe* (1845), Africans at the celebration were "beating banjos, singing African songs, drinking, and worst of all, laughing in a way that seemed to set their very hearts rattling within their ribs," while observed by the white population.[22] Pinkster Day was Christian Pentecost or Whitsuntide, commemorating the receiving of the Holy Spirit by Jesus's disciples; it in turn was derived from Shavuot, the Jewish festival which celebrates the receiving of the commandments by Moses and early summer harvest. The Pinkster celebration in New York, Albany, Philadelphia, and other Middle Atlantic colonies and states was distinctly African in practice, however, and appears to have been a means of transferring and interpreting African heritage to American-born blacks.

Physically, the Commons area became less remote from downtown through the creation (c.1735-41) of a short cut between present-day Park Row and the Bowery that eliminated the loop in the road around Catiemuts Hill.[23] (Compare *figs. 3 and 5*). The hill itself was lowered and cut through to link Queen Street (Pearl Street) with the new section of Park Row, creating a fast route between the eastern waterfront of the city, the Freshwater, and the Bowery, which was by that time established as the Highway to Boston. In 1733 Anthony Rutgers was granted a seventy-acre tract, known as the "Calk Hook Farm," to the northeast of the Trinity Church farm that included the Collect Pond. A portion of this land was eventually used as part of the African Burial Ground. The patent was granted with the understanding that within a year he would drain the swamp between the Collect and the East River. Rutgers asserted that he had the right to drain the Collect as well and did so for about ten months until public outcry regarding the loss of the Collect's waters forced him to stop. Nevertheless, Rutgers and his heirs continued to drain the farmlands and meadows around the Collect, gradually reducing the size of the pond and causing the Little Collect to dry up by the end of the century.

The Commons and the Panic of 1741[24]

In the spring of 1741, a series of events became linked in the minds of the white inhabitants of New York as evidence of an impending uprising by the colony's blacks, the majority of whom were enslaved. These events included a burglary, thought to be by two blacks who sold their goods to a white innkeeper; a fire at the fort that destroyed the governor's house and provincial secretary's office, which was at first attributed to a careless workman but later was blamed on a disgruntled slave who had been beaten when he tried to gain access to the governor's house to visit his wife, one of the governor's slaves; and several other fires, at first thought to be accidental, but later interpreted as suspicious. Frightened that there was a conspiracy to burn the town down, the panicked white inhabitants began searching the possessions of the African population and questioning "suspicious" slaves, using such methods as torture, the promise

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[20]For municipal bonfires on the Commons see *MCC, 1675-1776*, 4: 163, 5:421.

[21]This discussion of Pinkster is taken from Herbert G. Gutman, *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom, 1750-1925* (New York: Random House, 1976), pp. 333-334, and Sterling Stucky, "The Skies of Consciousness: African Dance at Pinkster in New York, 1750-1840," typescript (1992) provided to the LPC.

[22]Quoted in Gutman, p. 334. Stuckey notes Cooper's description of the involvement of the non-African population in the role of spectators.

[23]For the changes to this area during the 1730s and early 1740s see Stokes, 1:257-259.

[24]For the Panic of 1741 see Thomas J. Davis, *A Rumor of Revolt: "The Great Negro Plot" in Colonial New York* (New York: Free Press, 1985); idem, "These Enemies of Their Own Household: A Note on the Troublesome Slave Population in Eighteenth-Century New York City," *Journal of the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society*, 1984, pp. 133-147; Stokes 4 (1741, Feb. 28) to (1741, Sept 4.): 565-570.

of pardon for those who implicated others, and large cash rewards. Over 200 blacks were arrested, of whom seventeen were hanged and thirteen were burned at the stake. Also executed were the innkeeper, his wife and servant, and a white schoolmaster, John Ury, who was suspected of being a Catholic priest and was accused of conspiring with others to instigate a black rebellion. Accounts of the period indicate that the executions took place at two places on the Commons, near the powder house on the island between the Collect ponds where slaves were hanged, and in the valley between Catiemuts Hill and Potbakers Hill (near the rear of the present Federal Court House building) where slaves were burned at the stake. Burials of those executed probably took place either at the execution sites or in the African Burial Ground (see below). These execution sites have special meaning for their association with a horrific moment in New York's history.

The Palisades and Related Structures[25]

During this period, New York had an almost constant fear of war and invasion. The so-called War of Jenkin's Ear between Spain and England over their competing commercial interests had begun in 1739 and was fought almost entirely in the West Indies, but Governor Oglethorpe of Georgia had warned of a possible invasion from Florida. Since it was feared that the Spaniards might attempt to raise a slave rebellion, Spanish-speaking blacks and Catholics fell under special suspicion during the Panic months. Late in 1741, the War of Jenkin's Ear expanded into the War of Austrian Succession, pitting the English against the French as well as the Spanish. There was no fighting on the North American continent until 1745, but the colonial government began to take defensive measures much earlier by strengthening the fort. In July 1745, work began on palisades which extended in a zigzag pattern from Cherry Street and James Slip on the East River to present-day Chambers Street on the Hudson. Constructed of cedar logs, about fourteen feet long and nine or ten inches in diameter, the Palisades were set in a three foot deep trench. Immediately outside the palisades wall were a series of blockhouses, each about thirty feet square and ten feet high. Two blockhouses would have been located within the boundaries of this historic district, one at Chambers Street just east of Broadway, and another at Centre Street between Chambers and Reade Streets. Gates were placed at the main north-south streets, including Broadway at Chambers Street and Park Row just north of Pearl Street (the latter is outside the boundaries of the historic district).

The construction of the Palisades restricted the portion of the Commons that could be used as the African Burial Ground (see *fig. 5*). The Collect Pond, and the Powder House and gallows on the island in the Collect were also separated from the rest of the city. Of immediate concern was the possibility that the municipal gunpowder supply might be subject to enemy attack; therefore, in October 1746, the Common Council decided to build a small watch house on the island for the purpose of guarding the powder house until another magazine could be built within the walls. In March 1747, it was announced that the new magazine would be constructed on the portion of the Commons in the hollow near the almshouse. The gallows remained near the old powder house on the Collect Pond until 1756 when it was moved to the foot of Catiemuts Hill where the "Negroes were Burnt."[26]

In the early 1750s the British became embroiled in a new conflict with the French and their Indian allies for control of the upper Ohio valley.[27] Following the loss of Oswego in 1756 to the French, 1000 English troops were sent to New York City for winter quarters. The barracks in the fort proved to be inadequate for the growing number of troops stationed in the town; under orders from the Earl of Loudon, commander-in-chief of the armed forces in America, soldiers were billeted in the homes of the inhabitants. The free quartering of soldiers was found to be "too unequal as well as too heavy a burthen

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[25]The following section is based on Stokes, 1: 196, 270-271, 275, 295-296; 4 (1736, June 17): 548, (1738, Aug. 15): 558, (1741, June 13): 568, (1741, June 14): 570, (1741, June 15): 570, (1741, Sept. 30): 571, (1745 July 6): 590-591, (1746, Oct. 29): 600, (1747, Mar. 20): 602.

[26]*MCC, 1675-1776*, 6:51.

[27]For New York's involvement in the French and Indian Wars see Stokes 1:199; 4 (1756, Apr. 14): 680, (1756, Dec. 1): 685, (1757, Oct. 19): 694, (1757, Oct. 31): 694, (1757, Dec. 24): 695.

for the Inhabitants to bear," so the following October 1757, when it became clear that the British forces would again be descending on New York, the Common Council authorized the construction of new barracks for 800 men. Work began on October 31 and was completed by November 29, when a load of firewood was delivered to the troops. Built near present-day Chambers Street, this one-and-one-half-story building measured 21 feet x 420 feet (*fig. 4*). A legislative act stipulated that the city was to retain title to the soil on which barracks were built, since they had been built "for the relief of the Inhabitants ... from Billeting of Soldiers in time of War," and might at other times be rented out by Common Council.[28]

The "New Gaol"[29]

A provincial lottery was renewed in 1753 to raise funds, and in 1756 the Common Council applied for the right to use a portion of the proceeds to erect a "pest house" (hospital) and "proper and convenient Gaols on Some Grounds to the Southward of Fresh Water."[30] Built between 1757 and 1759 the "New Gaol" was located to the east of the almshouse near present-day Park Row. Constructed of brick with a stone basement and stone trim, this three-and-one-half-story building measured about 60 feet x 75 feet and had a hipped roof pierced by dormers and crowned by a cupola. The need for a new jail was great -- the war was accompanied by an increase in crime and the municipal government had found itself housing many French prisoners-of-war. In July 1759 the Common Council ordered the sheriff to remove his prisoners from City Hall on Wall Street to the new building as soon as possible. Following the close of the war, the symbolic transfer of municipal disciplinary power to the Commons was completed with the erection of the whipping post, stocks, cage, and pillory (previously at City Hall) in the "New Gaol" yard. In 1767, an attempt was made to separate vagrants and other miscreants from the "worthy poor" at the almshouse by setting aside two rooms in the Gaol as a Bridewell (house of correction for vagrants). It continued to serve that purpose as well as functioning as the city jail until a separate Bridewell building was constructed in 1775.

The Commons in the Years Leading to Revolution

The war with France ended in 1764, but the war itself had been the source of much discord between the American colonists and Britain.[31] To pay for the maintenance of a standing army along the western frontier, the British government rigidly enforced the Navigation Act, which favored British shipping at the expense of American merchants. Parliament enacted the Stamp Act, which imposed a duty on all legal documents executed within the colonies. The colonists argued that since the colonies were not represented in Parliament the tax was illegal.

In New York, the Commons became a rallying place for opponents of the new British policies.[32] In 1764, a group of demonstrators seized a British press gang's boat and carried it to the Commons where it was burned. After November 1, 1765, the day the Stamp Act took effect, there were frequent, sometimes nightly, mass meetings and demonstrations, the latter usually involving the burning or hanging in effigy of persons connected with the new law. In May 1766, when it was learned that a new government under William Pitt had repealed the act, the usual celebration of the king's birthday on the

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[28]*Colonial Laws of New York* quoted in Stokes, 4 (1757, Dec. 24): 695.

[29]On the New Gaol see Stokes 4 (1756, Oct. 19): 684, (1756, Dec. 1): 686, (1757, Mar. 1): 689, (1764, Feb. 10): 740, (1764, Aug. 27): 743, (1767, Oct. 14): 778.

[30]Quoted in Stokes, 4 (1756, Oct. 19): 684.

[31]This section on the political conditions leading up to the Revolution is based on Stokes, 1:301-310.

[32]For the demonstrations on the Commons see David T. Valentine, "History of Broadway," Valentine's Manual, 1865, pp. 556-560; Henry B. Dawson, "The Park and its Vicinity," Valentine's Manual, 1855, pp. 433-471; Stokes, 4 (1766, May 21): 765, (1766, Aug. 11), 768, (1766, Aug 13-16): 768-769; (1766, Sept 23): 769; Paul A. Gilje "Republican Rioting," in *Authority and Resistance*, pp. 202-225.

Commons was combined with rejoicing at the news. The repeal of the Stamp Act was also marked by the erection of a pine staff (probably an old ship mast) carrying a large placard inscribed "George III. Pitt & Liberty," which came to be known as the Liberty Pole.

Two regiments of British soldiers, transferred to New York City in the summer of 1766, were stationed in the barracks on the Commons which they also used as a parade ground. The soldiers immediately came into conflict with the American opponents of British policies. The Americans, known as the Sons of Liberty, held daily drills on the Commons. On August 10, a group of soldiers cut down the Liberty Pole on the Commons. Two days later the Sons of Liberty erected a new pole, and on August 13 there was a confrontation between a group of artillerymen on parade in the Common and a mob of New Yorkers who pushed through the line, "saying that the Ground [the Commons] was theirs."[33] For four years, this contest continued, with the Americans erecting ever more substantial poles and the British soldiers eventually finding a way to dismantle them. After the fourth pole was destroyed in January 1770, the Sons of Liberty wrote to the Common Council, requesting leave to erect a fifth pole on the Commons so that "a monument of freedom" would appear in "the most publick place."[34] When the Council declined, Isaac Sears, one of the leaders of the Sons of Liberty, secured the one-twelfth share in the Harris house and lot that had not yet been acquired by the Common Council, as a site for the new pole, which was about forty-six feet high and topped by a mast twenty-two feet in height surmounted by a gilt vane with the word Liberty. This pole remained standing until the British captured New York in 1776. (see *fig. 4*).

In the 1760s a number of other changes occurred on the Commons and in the vicinity. The palisades were taken down. In 1760 the Common Council voted to extend Broadway from Ann Street to Reade Street, and Trinity Church had the portion of the farm it owned south of Reade Street mapped into streets and lots.[35] In 1761, the streets between Fulton and Reade Streets, west of Broadway, were ceded to the city. St. Paul's Chapel was constructed in 1764-66 to serve the population that was expected to move to the new neighborhood. South of the present-day Duane Street, three houses were erected along Broadway by members of the Van Vleck family, descendants of Sara Roeloff;[36] the Ratzen map (*fig. 6*) seems to indicate that the houses were separated by a fence from the African Burial Ground, which still remained in active use. On the African Burial Ground portion of the Commons, in the area around the present-day Chambers and Reade Streets, between Elk and Centre Streets, potteries, such as the Crolius and Remmey works, were leasing ground from the Common Council.[37] The John Harris house was acquired by the Common Council in 1768-69 and came to be used for government purposes.[38]

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[33]*Montressor's Journal*, quoted in Stokes, 4(1766, Aug. 13): 768.

[34]*MCC, 1675-1776*, 7: 203-204; see also Stokes, 4 (1770, Jan. 30): 804-805, (1770, Feb. 3): 805, (1770, Feb. 6): 805-806.

[35]For the changes in this area see Stokes 4 (1760, May 12): 712, (1760, Sept. 18): 720.

[36]Smith, *ex. dem.* Teller v. Burtis & Woodward, 9 Johnson Reports 182 (N.Y. Sup. Ct., 1812), p. 175.

[37]In February 1796, John Crolius complained to the Common Council that Van Borsum heirs were trying to encroach on his lease from the city. See New York City, *Minutes of the Common Council, 1784-1831*, [hereafter, *MCC, 1784-1831*] (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1917), 2:218, 220-221.

[38]The du Simitiere cartoon depicting the Liberty Pole in 1770 shows that the former Harris House was occupied by a soldier. It is not clear whether the building was being used as a barracks or as a watch house, though it should be noted that the Sons of Liberty are known to have set a "strong watch at an adjacent house" to guard the fourth Liberty Pole. (See Stokes 3: 864-865.) For other proposed governmental uses of the Harris house see *MCC, 1675-1776*, 7:311, 364, 437.

The Bridewell[39]

Although two rooms had been set aside in the New Gaol as a Bridewell, by 1774 New Yorkers had begun to feel the need for "a proper commodious building" for the "correction" of "the great number of vagabonds daily sculking about this city."[40] The Common Council awarded the commission in March 1775 to Theophilus Hardenbrook, a builder-architect who also designed alterations for the Battery and fort. Construction began soon after and seems to have been largely completed by April 1776. The building was constructed of gray stone with wood trim and had a E-shaped plan. Its Georgian design featured a three-story pedimented central block flanked by two-story wings which terminated in pedimented corner pavilions.(*fig. 7*).

The Commons During the Revolutionary War[41]

In April 1775, when news of the battles at Lexington and Concord reached New York, the radical members of the Sons of Liberty seized control of City Hall on Wall Street and the powder magazine on the Collect Pond. The British garrison was evacuated in June. The rebel army began building batteries and barricades as a defense against further British military activity. During this period in 1775-76 when the newly-formed Continental Army held New York, the Commons was also in constant use as a military parade ground and a place of assembly. There, on July 9, 1776, the Declaration of Independence was read to the Continental troops with George Washington in attendance.

In September 1776, the Continental Army sustained major losses to the British on Long Island and was forced to withdraw from New York, leaving the British in possession of the city until the end of the war. New York City became the headquarters for the British Army in America. Before the war a second barracks building, measuring 20 feet by 200 feet, had already been erected on the Commons just south of the first building; the two barracks buildings were separated by an alley known as Barrack Street,[42] and the first barracks became known as the Upper Barracks. In order to accommodate the growing number of troops, the British built two more barracks on the west side of the Commons opposite Murray and Warren Streets. (*figs. 8, 9*).

During the Revolution thousands of American prisoners-of-war were incarcerated in New York. Many of the public buildings in the city were employed for this purpose, including the Bridewell and the New Gaol on the Commons. The latter building housed officers, including Ethan Allan, who had been taken prisoner near Montreal. According to many accounts, the treatment of prisoners was exceptionally harsh. They received only starvation rations, were kept in unheated quarters, and were so crowded that epidemics of "prison fever" were widespread. (A number of prisoners were convinced that they were being given poison powders by the British.) Deaths were frequent and at least one eyewitness records visiting "ye Burying Ground & see[ing] four of ye Prisoners Buryed in one Grave."[43] William Cunningham, the notorious provost marshal for the British prisons in New York, made a confession just before his death in 1791 in which he admitted starving "more than 2,000 prisoners ... by stopping their rations, which I sold."[44] He further added:

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[39]On the Bridewell see William J. Davis, "The Old Bridewell," Valentine's Manual, 1855, pp. 486-492; Stokes, 4 (1767, Nov. 9):778, (1774, Feb. 7): 845, (1774, Nov. 15): 869, (1775, Mar. 17): 878, (1775, Mar. 27): 879.

[40]*New York Mercury*, Feb. 7, 1774, quoted in Stokes, 4: 845.

[41]This section on the Commons during the Revolution is based on Stokes, 1:318-334; Hall, pp. 414-420; Dawson, pp. 471-475.

[42]For the barracks on the Commons see Stokes, 4: (1770, Feb. 6): 805, (1771, Oct. 28): 823, (1776, May 24): 929, 5 (1779) 1080.

[43]Jabez Fitch, *The Diary of Jabez Fitch*, quoted in Stokes, 5:1038.

[44]William Cunningham, *Genius of Liberty*, quoted in Stokes, 5:1016.

> There were also 275 American prisoners and obnoxious persons executed, out of which number there were only about one dozen public executions, which chiefly consisted of British and Hessian deserters. . . . for private execution . . . the unfortunate prisoners were conducted, gagged, just behind the Upper Barracks, and hung (sic) without ceremony, and there buried.[45]

It is not known whether these burials took place on the area of the Commons now included in City Hall Park or in the African Burial Ground, though it should be noted that the British Headquarters Map (*fig. 9*) shows a burial ground immediately north of the Upper Barracks. It is likely that the map-maker meant to indicate that the southern area of the African Burial Ground was being used for the interment of prisoners of war and possibly soldiers during the British occupation of the city.[46] These included Africans since Africans fought on both sides of the revolutionary conflict. The promise of freedom was offered to runaway slaves as enticement to fight on the loyalist side at the outset of the war; the Revolutionary army did not actively solicit their participation until 1781.[47]

The Federal Period

The British evacuated New York in late November 1783. The municipal government made repairs in April 1784 to several public buildings including the Bridewell and New Gaol. Rooms in the barracks, which were in "ruinous" condition, were leased to poor families in exchange for a minimal rent and the promise that they would make repairs.[48] In September 1784 the residents of Park Row, near Tryon Row, requested that the gallows which "lately" had been been erected on the Commons be moved from Park Row to the area of the Commons between the New Gaol and almshouse. The new gallows was designed "in the Chinese taste" by John McComb, Sr., city-surveyor and father of the architect of the present City Hall.[49]

In September 1785 a new burial ground for the Bridewell and almshouse was created on vacant ground behind the Barracks.[50] In 1787, the barracks were renovated and converted for use as a hospital by the almshouse. New stables and storage buildings were constructed at the rear of the almshouse and a vegetable garden was established behind the Bridewell.[51]

By the 1790s, however, it was apparent that many of the buildings on the Commons had become obsolete. Concerns about the presence of gunpowder in a residential neighborhood led to the closing of the powder house in 1785 and its subsequent demolition in 1789. After the hospital in the barracks was closed, the buildings were razed in 1790. By 1794, the Common Council had become convinced that the almshouse building was too small to accommodate the growing numbers of poor and in too ruinous a condition to justify repair. Permission was sought from the state assembly to run a lottery to pay for

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[45]Ibid.

[46]See Stokes, 3:927.

[47]See Mary Beth Norton, "The Fate of Some Black Loyalists of the American Revolution," *Journal of Negro History* (1966): 402-426; Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: Duke University Press, 1961).

[48]On the barracks see Stokes, 5 (1787, Feb 9):1215.

[49]*Life, Journals and Corresp. of Rev. Manassch Cutler, LL.D.*, quoted in Stokes, 5 (1787, July 27): 1219.

[50]A committee empowered with finding a more suitable burial place recommended in November 1785 that two burial vaults be built at the rear of the almshouse garden, but it is unlikely that they were constructed since there are no records of payments for such work in the Common Council Minutes. For the second burial ground and burial vault associated with the almshouse see *MCC 1784-1831*, 1: 151, 158, 185; Stokes, 5 (1785, Nov. 14): 1206.

[51]See *MCC 1784-1831*, 1:214, 494; for information about the Commons during 1785 and 1790.

a new building. The lottery, held in April 1796, was won by Robert Derry, a free black. In May 1796 the Common Council authorized the construction of a new almshouse to the north of the existing building (approximately on the site of the New York County (Tweed) Courthouse).[52] Constructed between 1796 and 1797, this large three-and-one-half-story brick building with a raised basement and U-shaped plan was designed in the Federal style with columned entrance porches. (*fig. 10*). Its modern conveniences included Peale's Improved Fireplaces and a connection to the new sewer system in Chambers Street. The old almshouse was demolished in April 1797.[53]

That same year the western half of the Bridewell was appropriated by the state for use as a prison while the state's permanent building was under construction in Greenwich Village. When the new state prison was completed in 1799, the criminals imprisoned in the New Gaol were transferred to the Bridewell, which became the new city jail. The New Gaol building then became a debtors' prison, known as the Debtors' Gaol.

At the close of the century two other buildings were added to the Commons. In the summer of 1798, when there was the prospect of war with France, the Common Council granted a piece of land on the Commons between the New Gaol and Tryon Row to New York State for the construction of an arsenal to contain artillery and small weapons. A year later, a building was constructed in the Second Almshouse yard to house two fire engines imported from Hamburg, Germany.

It was during this period that the first attempts were made to convert the Commons to a public park. One newspaper called attention to the Commons as "a public nuisance, from which the inhabitants are infested during the summer season, with continual clouds of stinking dust" and suggested that "this place laid out with judgment and taste, would be a blessing to the inhabitants of New York, and an ornament to the City."[54] In June 1785 the Commons was enclosed with a fence. Between 1792 and 1794 the Common Council undertook a much more extensive project that included planting trees, enclosing the Commons with an ornamental picket fence, and putting down paths.[55](*fig. 11*)

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[52]Construction of the Second Almshouse made it necessary to find a new location for the burial ground that served the almshouse and the Bridewell; in 1794, soon after plans for the new building were announced, it was decided to move the burial ground from the Commons to a triangular piece of ground at the junction of the Post and Bloomingdale Roads [Fourth Avenue and Broadway]. This site is now included in Madison Square.

[53]*MCC, 1784-1831*, 2:389, 391.

[54]*New York Packet*, Aug. 15, 1785, quoted in Stokes, 5 (1785, Aug. 15): 1203.

[55]By 1796 it is indicative of how much the conception of the Commons had changed, for when a broken gate allowed "cows and other creatures" onto the grounds where they damaged the lawn and trees, a keeper was hired to protect the "park." *MCC 1784-1831* 2:220, 232.

THE AFRICAN BURIAL GROUND IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Throughout much of the eighteenth century, and maybe earlier, New York's free and enslaved Africans buried their dead in a portion of the Commons which is now north of City Hall Park. The African Burial Ground is located on the blocks bounded by Duane Street on the north, Chambers Street on the south, Centre Street and Lafayette Street on the east, and Broadway on the west. Archaeological excavations have been conducted on a portion of the site, in advance of a major federal construction project. These excavations revealed the presence of the burial ground under much of the site, due to deep levels of fill which have protected the original ground surface and an intact stratum of burials. The burial ground was used intensively, however, resulting in superimposed burials and, in some cases, disturbances of earlier graves by later interments. The approximately 400 burials fully excavated by archaeologists are expected to yield considerable information about African life in New York City during the eighteenth century. Additionally, the site has come to have indisputable significance as an historic site of national significance.

Presence and Role of Africans in Colonial New York

The Dutch introduced African slavery in New Amsterdam in 1626, two years after the settlement began. In that early corporate slavery system, male slaves worked as farm hands, stevedores, and builders of residences and public structures. An important aspect of slavery under Dutch rule for Africans was the possibility of obtaining half- or wholly-free status. Slaves who acquired free status received grants of land which were in the area from the Collect Pond northward to present-day 34th Street and Seventh Avenue. There are no known records indicating where Africans were buried in New Amsterdam, and it is possible that the African Burial Ground was used during the Dutch period.

In 1664 the colony of New Netherland was taken over by the British, and New Amsterdam became New York City. During the eighteenth century, New York was one of four important Northern shipping points in the Atlantic trading system, along with Philadelphia, Boston, and Newport. New York had a much larger African population than either Philadelphia or Boston, and a slightly higher population proportionally than Newport. In 1703, there were approximately 700 Africans in New York, or 14.4 percent of the population. The numbers grew to 2,444 by 1746, representing 20.9 percent of the population, and peaked at 3,137 by 1771, though by then Africans were again only 14.3 percent of all New York residents.[56]. It should be noted that prior to 1756, all Africans, enslaved or free, were counted simply as "negroes" or "blacks" in the New York censuses. Most Africans lived in the small area of the city proper, at the southernmost tip of Manhattan, and this concentration increased as the century progressed and African ownership of farmlands to the north of the city constricted due to confiscation and sales.[57] Enslaved Africans were owned by people in all walks of life, including artisans, merchants, clergy, mariners, and gentlemen.[58] As labor was scarce throughout the colony and free immigrants preferred to earn their livings by farming, New York merchants depended on slave labor to operate the port and supplement the pool of skilled craftsmen in such trades as ship carpentry and

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[56]This data on population is taken from Evarts B. Greene and Virginia D. Harrington, *American Population Before the Federal Census of 1790* (1932, rpt. Gloucester, Mass., 1966), pp. 94-104; and Thomas J. Davis, "Slavery in Colonial New York," (Ph. D. diss., Columbia University, 1974), p. 2.

[57]Thomas J. Davis "New York's Long Black Line: A Note on the Growing Slave Population," *Afro-Americans in New York Life and History*, 2 (1978):47; idem, "These Enemies of Their own Household: A Note On the Troublesome Slave Population in Eighteenth-Century New York City," *Journal of the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society*, 1984, p. 134.

[58]Vivienne Kruger, "Born to Run: the Slave Family in Early New York, 1626 to 1827," (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1985), p. 93.

printing. Slaves also were employed in heavy transport, construction work, and domestic labor, as well as in farming and milling.[59]

In addition to enslaved Africans, there were numerous free Africans in New York, some of whom were descendants of people who had been freed by the Dutch West India Company during its tenure of New Amsterdam. Many privileges and rights, such as legal marriage and land ownership, accorded to enslaved and free Africans under the Dutch were rescinded within forty years of the imposition of British rule. New York's African slaves became subject to a highly restrictive legal system, one which was put in place to secure England's valuable colonial possessions in the Western Hemisphere and which resulted in severe physical and social coercion of non-whites. Between April 7 and 21, 1712, a group of New York City slaves had revolted, burning houses, killing nine whites, and wounding about fifteen others. Twenty-one Africans were executed and may have been interred in the African Burial Ground. Despite such strictures, enslaved Africans, along with the established and growing population of free Africans, seized all available social and economic opportunities to build a distinct community. In an urban setting the lives of slaves and free Africans, and their interactions with European and Native American populations, were often quite different from their contemporaries on plantations. This was certainly the case in New York where urban life during the eighteenth century was characterized by a remarkable mix of peoples, and was much more diverse than in other American cities. Divisions based on "race" and national origin were overlaid by constant close contact. It has been suggested that New York's unique diversity and high level of ethnic factionalism resulted in particularly harsh social conditions for Africans, as competing Europeans closed ranks against them.[60]

A Separate Burial Ground

The African Burial Ground is a tangible reminder of African life in colonial times. The location of the burial ground itself was symbolically and socially significant in the life of early New York. Forbidden to inter their dead in most church graveyards, and probably wishing to attain a degree of privacy and autonomy in their funerary practices, New York's Africans appropriated a parcel of the Commons outside the town, in a "remote" place. Thus today this site symbolizes both the oppression under which enslaved peoples lived in America, and their ability to persist in honoring their African heritage while forging a new culture. It is also significant that many of those buried at the site probably helped materially in the building of the city which throughout the eighteenth century refused to formally acknowledge their final resting place.

For enslaved people in the colony of New York, funerals offered a chance to express cultural identity in an unsupervised context. Even though laws prohibited night funerals and gatherings of large numbers of Africans,[61] the evidence from the burial ground indicates that it continued as a focus of community identity for nearly a hundred years. City Clerk David Valentine, writing in the 1860s, provided the following account:

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[59]See Thelma W. Foote, "Black Life in Colonial Manhattan, 1644-1783," (Ph.D. diss., American Studies Department, Harvard University, 1991), cited in Howard University and John Milner Associates, Inc., "Research Design for Archeological, Historical, and Bioanthropological Investigations of the African Burial Ground and Five Points Area, New York," prepared for Edwards and Kelcey Engineers, Inc. and the General Services Administration, Region 2, 1992, p. 12; Elizabeth Blackmar, *Manhattan for Rent, 1785-1850* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), p. 20; Edgar McManus, *A History of Negro Slavery in New York* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1970), pp. 114-133; Samuel McKee, *Labor in Colonial New York* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1935), pp. 64-70, 114.

[60]Winthrop D. Jordan, *White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550-1812* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968), pp. 119-120; Thomas J. Davis, "These Enemies," pp. 133-47. See also Foote, 1991, cited in Howard University and John Milner Associates, Inc., "Research Design," p. 12.

[61]*MCC, 1675-1776*, 3:30, 296; 4:86, 88.

> Beyond the Commons lay what in the earliest settlement of the town had been appropriated as a burial place for negroes, slaves and free. It was a desolate, unappropriated spot, descending with a gentle declivity towards a ravine which led to the Kalkhook pond. The negroes in this city were, both in the Dutch and English colonial times, a proscribed and detested race, having nothing in common with the whites. Many of them were native Africans, imported hither in slave ships, and retaining their native superstitions and burial customs, among which was that of burying by night, with various mummeries and outcries....So little seems to have been thought of the race that not even a dedication of their burial-place was made by the church authorities, or any others who might reasonably be supposed to have an interest in such a matter. The lands were unappropriated, and though within convenient distance from the city, the locality was unattractive and desolate, so that by permission the slave population were allowed to inter their dead there.[62]

Though Valentine may have been speculating on many points, he evokes the image of a place where cultural distinctiveness was acknowledged, as well as the social conditions which led to the burial ground's existence.

Physical History of the African Burial Ground

The area of the African Burial Ground was known and used as part of New York's "common" land until the late eighteenth century, despite its having been granted to Sara Roeloff's husband Cornelius Van Borsum in 1673 and Anthony Rutgers for his "Calk Hook Farm" in 1733 (see above).[63] The Van Borsum patent comprised approximately 6.6 English acres at the northern limits of the colonial town, extending eastward from the line of Broadway. Its exact boundaries were the subject of legal dispute in the eighteenth century, and the eastern boundary is difficult to reconstruct.[64] It is clear, however, that the patent covered most of the area within the historic district including and north of present-day Chambers Street.

Reconstruction of the historical topography is important in understanding the physical and social context of the burial ground. According to the Viele map of 1859 (*fig. 12*), the ground sloped down to the Collect Pond north of present-day Chambers Street and east of Broadway. The drop-off has been confirmed through study of geologic test borings conducted in the area, which also provide information on the elevations of the original surface. Both the borings and the archaeological excavations at the burial ground site establish that the ravine was quite deep, at least twenty-five feet below present grade at its bottom. Africans thus appropriated a burial place then remote from the colonial town by virtue of its location in a low-lying area between hills, as well as its actual distance.

It is not known precisely when the African community began using the area for burying its dead. David Valentine, writing about the burial ground in the 1860s (see above), assumed its origin was during the Dutch colonial period, but offered no supporting evidence for this assumption. The suggestion of an origin for the burial ground in the Dutch period is supported circumstantially, however, by the ground's location near the farms granted to Africans by the Dutch West India Company.[65] The earliest document

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[62]Valentine, "History of Broadway," p. 567.

[63]For a short history of this site see Stokes, 4 (1696, April 10): 394; 6: 123.

[64]In 1784 the heirs to the Van Borsum patent retained Evart Bancker, Jr. to survey the patent lands. He recorded preparing a plan of the Van Borsum property, the Common grounds, and the adjoining lands of George Janeway showing how these properties "interfered with each other." Bancker Survey Books, vol. 1, item 309, Manuscripts Collection, New-York Historical Society. See also Hoffman, 2: 205-207. The Rutgers land was surveyed prior to its sale for development in 1787. Liber Deeds and Conveyances, Liber 46, p. 139.

[65]On the Africans' farms, see Stokes, 6:123-24.

mentioning the burial ground is from 1712/13. Military chaplain John Sharpe wrote that "Negros" were being buried in the Commons by "those of their country."[66] Sharpe gives no indication of the exact location of the ground which Africans were using, but a clue is provided by a 1722 law prohibiting night funerals of slaves south of the Collect Pond.[67] By 1732 a piece of ground north of the built-up town and just south of the Collect Pond had become well enough known as the "Negro Burying Place" to be labeled as such on a map of the city. It is likely the area indicated on this map is the same part of the Commons to which Sharpe referred in March 1712/13.

The burial ground is clearly labeled on the 1755 Maerschalck Plan of New York. (*fig. 5*). Here it is shown north of the palisade, thus just outside the town. According to this map, the "Negros Burial Ground" extended east from Broadway to the Little Collect. The northern boundary of the Burial Ground is shown as a line running northeastward from Broadway. This line corresponds to the northern boundary of the Van Borsum patent. The heirs to the patent were attempting to assert their claim to the land in the mid-eighteenth century, and this boundary line may have been laid out with a fence at that time.[68] In 1753 the heirs requested that the Common Council exchange their interest in the "Negroe burying place" for other city lands.[69]

No city maps surveyed after 1755 explicitly label the burial ground. It is clearly labeled, however, on a series of surveys related to the division of the farm patents in the area in the 1780s and 1790s. Abutting the Van Borsum land to the north was the "Calk Hook" Farm owned by the Barclay/Rutgers family. In 1785 a survey was made for the purpose of dividing this property into blocks and lots for sale and subsequent development.[70] The survey map indicates that the Barclay/Rutgers land was bounded on the south by the "Negros Burial Ground."[71] (*fig. 13A*). The Van Borsum patent itself was divided into lots for sale in 1795.[72] Construction of houses on the lots began almost immediately after each survey was completed. In the same year that the Van Borsum tract was subdivided, the Common Council financially assisted in the purchase of land on Chrystie Street for a new African cemetery.[73] In 1796, the Common Council arranged to acquire a part of the "Negros Burial Ground" for laying out Chambers Street east of Broadway.[74] A small portion of the Van Borsum patent also extended onto the northwest corner of present-day City Hall Park. (*fig. 13B*). This property had been leased by the Van Borsum heirs to tenants who had erected buildings on the Commons. When the heirs tried to repossess the lots in order to convey them to the City, the tenants demanded compensation for their improvements. It was not until

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[66]John Sharpe, "Proposals for Erecting a School, Library and Chapel at New York," (1712-13), *New-York Historical Society Collections*, 13 (1880):355.

[67]*MCC, 1675-1776*, 3:296.

[68]Smith, *ex dem.* Teller, v. G. & P. Lorillard, 355.

[69]*MCC, 1675-1776*, 5:416. The request was not granted at that time.

[70]Liber Deeds and Conveyances, Liber 46, p. 139.

[71]Archaeological excavations on the burial ground site in 1991-92 revealed that a portion of the "Calk Hook" Farm also was used for burials (see below).

[72]Liber Deeds and Conveyances, Liber 195, pp. 405-420 and Map File 76J and Evart Bancker, Jr., Partition Map of the Van Borsum Patent, 1795, Box 1, Folder 44, of the "Bancker Plans," in the Manuscripts Collections of the New York Public Library. Records do not indicate when burials ceased at the site.

[73]*MCC, 1784-1831*, 2:137.

[74]*MCC, 1784-1831*, 2:250-53.

1800 that the heirs were able to release all the ground south of Chambers Street, in exchange for which the Council granted the Van Borsum heirs city lots further to the east.[75]

The earliest development of Blocks 153, 154, and 155 subsequent to their division into lots probably involved construction at original grade. By the time larger brick buildings with single or double basements were constructed in the 1820s, the entire vicinity had been leveled through grading and filling. References to the leveling of Broadway just north of the burial ground indicate it was graded some four to fifteen feet.[76] As shown on the Viele map, the burial ground ravine cut across Broadway near Chambers Street. It is possible some filling occurred when Chambers Street was laid out in 1796. Just north of Reade Street, archaeological excavations revealed that sixteen to twenty-five feet of fill covered and protected the burials. These excavations also revealed information about burials customs of the Africans in New York: the dead were buried in wooden coffins, laid supine with arms folded over the pelvic area or placed at the sides, and oriented on an east-west axis with the head to the west. The bodies were wrapped in shrouds fastened with brass straight pins. Items of personal adornment were also found with the remains. (See Archaeological Resources in the African Burial Ground below for more detailed information.)

Potteries were located in the immediate vicinity of the burial ground in the eighteenth century, one just north of the site to the west of Broadway, and others to the southeast, where "Pot Baker's" or "Potter's Hill" is depicted on historic maps. (*figs. 5, 11, 13A*). The important early Crolius pottery may have overlapped with a portion of the burial ground during the eighteenth century. At one time it appears to have stood east of present-day Elk Street within the bounds of the burial ground as presently understood. Several brief references to the Van Borsum land (in deeds and in Common Council minutes) indicate the presence within its boundaries of a pottery or potteries.[77]

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY: TRANSFORMATION

The Commons Becomes City Hall Park and the Seat of Government

The construction of the new City Hall in the Commons relocated the seat of municipal government to what long had been the site of communal, public, and municipal functions. Throughout much of the nineteenth century, however, many of the older buildings remained in the park, and continued to house a variety of municipal functions. The Park, as the area was often referred to during the nineteenth century, became gradually more formal in appearance, and decisions concerning the location of new buildings were more carefully considered. The role of the park as the setting for the seat of government of New York City was firmly established during that period, and City Hall Park today retains much of its late nineteenth-century character due primarily to the interest around the turn of the century in preserving City Hall and City Hall Park.

The Development of the Seat of Government[78]

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[75] *MCC, 1784-1831*, 2: 548-549, 615, 626.

[76] *MCC, 1784-1831*, 2:359-361; Peter Gassner, "Recollections of an Old Citizen," Valentine's Manual, 1859, p. 588.

[77] Liber Deeds and Conveyances, Liber 97, p. 158; Liber 75, p. 118; Liber 75, p. 125; *MCC, 1675-1776*, 5:416, 6:227, 6:238; *MCC, 1784-1831*, 2:218, 2:220-21. See also Arthur W. Clement, *Our Pioneer Potteries* (New York: printed privately, 1947), pp. 8-9, 21-24; John E. Stillwell "Crolius Ware and its Makers" *New-York Historical Society Quarterly Bulletin* 10 (1926):52-66; William Ketchum, Jr., *Early Potters and Potteries of New York State* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1970), pp. 23, 25-26, 28; Jane Van Vleck, *Ancestry and Descendants of Tielman Van Vleeck of Niew Amsterdam* (New York: printed privately, 1955), pp. 109-110.

[78] This section is based on Edward Hagaman Hall, "An Historical Sketch of City Hall Park," American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society, *Fifteenth Annual Report*, (1910):385-424; Stokes; Hunter Research, Inc., (continued...)

The first City Hall or *Stadt Huys* stood at No. 73 Pearl Street. The second stood on the site of the U.S. Custom House, later Sub-Treasury (Federal Hall) at Wall and Nassau Streets. In 1800 a new City Hall building that could accommodate the demands of a growing American metropolis was proposed, and a competition was held in 1802. City Hall (1803-11, Joseph-François Mangin and John McComb, Jr., a designated New York City Landmark)[79] was built in the Commons -- which had just recently been fenced and improved enough in appearance to be considered "The Park" -- where several other municipal institutions were located. This relocation of the seat of the city government northward was brought about by the "spatial and social reordering" of lower Manhattan during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and the relocation of the geographic center northward beyond the confines of the colonial port.[80] Beginning around 1790, the blocks facing the park, and Broadway and Chambers Street (west of Broadway), in particular, had become a fashionable residential neighborhood and the area around the former Commons was evolving as the entertainment center of the city.

In 1804 Joseph F. Mangin, one of the designers of City Hall who also worked in the city as a surveyor, recorded the proposed landscaping for the area of the park, south of City Hall, which was laid out with a series of walkways, three of which radiated from a point south of a plaza in front of City Hall. (*fig. 14*). The plaza was connected to Broadway and Chatham Street with a walkway, and a walk was established that linked Park Place and Beekman Street (close to the location of the Mail Street which was established later). By 1807 the area in front of the new City Hall had been planted with several varieties of trees. John McComb, Jr., the other architect of City Hall, designed a decorative iron fence and an entrance with marble piers which had been installed at the southern end of the park by 1821 (the gateway was removed in 1847 when the southern tip of the park was given a more rounded form). More trees were added to the park and rose bushes were planted around that time.[81] (*fig. 15*).

Several buildings were constructed on the northern portion of the park during the early nineteenth century, and older structures were used for a variety of functions. A small school building associated with the Second Almshouse stood in the northwest corner of the park around 1805. This structure, used only briefly as a school, housed several municipal offices before being torn down. In 1806, the Almshouse Commissioners erected a small building to house a soup kitchen "near the east entrance to the park."[82] Directories describe the location of the soup kitchen through 1835 as the Alms House yard, Tryon Row, or Cross Street near Tryon Row.[83] The City Dispensary, New York's first dispensary, was

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[78](...continued)
"Historical and Archaeological Assessment of the Former New York County Courthouse (The Tweed Courthouse), Borough of Manhattan, City of New York." Report prepared by Hunter Research, Inc. for Mesick Cohen Waite, Architects and the Department of General Services, City of New York, 1990; New York City, *MCC, 1784-1831* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1917); Joy Kestenbaum, "City Hall Park," report prepared for Walmsley & Company, Inc., 1984; and Walmsley & Company, Inc., *City Hall Park -- Planning for the Future of an Historic Landscape* (City of New York, Parks & Recreation, 1985).

[79]LPC, *City Hall Designation Report* (New York, 1966) and *City Hall Interior Designation Report* (New York, 1976).

[80]Blackmar, pp. 93-94.

[81]These improvements are noted in Hall, 407-408.

[82]James Hardie, *The Description of the City of New York* (New York: Samuel Marks, 1827), p. 263.

[83]A small structure is shown at this location on Daniel Ewen, "Plan of City Hall Park" (1820) and A.T. Goodrich, *A Map of the City of New York* (1827). (*fig. 16*). The building also is shown, however, on the "Plan of the Corporation Ground from the Park to Chamber Street," drawn by Joseph F. Mangin in 1804 (*fig. 14*), indicating that it pre-dated the soup kitchen (the building that appears on these maps has been shown on Figure 19 in this report). Hall seems to have assumed that the soup kitchen, dispensary (see below), and a hook and ladder company
(continued...)

also located in the park for a number of years. Originally located at Beekman and Nassau Streets, the Dispensary was relocated temporarily to the Board of Health at the northwest corner of the park from 1810 through 1818.[84] It was then moved into a small building "formerly occupied by the Health Office," "in the rear of City Hall, fronting on Tryon Row."[85] City directories list the dispensary at Cross Street near or in the rear of City Hall, or "in Park near Chatham" from 1819 through 1828. Although the descriptions of the locations of the Dispensary and the Soup House are similar, they are not identical in any listing, and original sources do not indicate that the two shared the same quarters. In 1829, the dispensary was again moved, to a location further north on White Street. Dispensaries treated minor ailments and filled prescriptions for outpatients, and were a distinctive part of New York's nineteenth-century health care system.[86]

The Second Almshouse, on the south side of Chambers Street, no longer used for its original purpose after the new facility at Bellevue was completed in 1812, was left standing. It became known as the New York Institution and offered space to several groups, including the New-York Historical Society, the Academy of Arts, the Lyceum of Natural History, and the Deaf and Dumb Institute, among several other institutions. (*fig. 10*). The shift in use of the northern end of the park continued with the construction of the Rotunda on the south side of Chambers Street in 1817-18; built as an an art exhibition gallery by John Vanderlyn on a lot leased for nine years from the Common Council,[87] the building also provided office space for cultural institutions. In 1808, the State Arsenal building on the east side of the Park, at the corner of Tryon Row and Chatham Street, became the home of Free School No. 2, an institution operated by the Free School Society to educate the children who resided in the almshouse.[88]

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[83](...continued)
all shared the same premises, and located the building at the corner of Chambers and Centre Streets, where it was superseded by a new firehouse built in 1852. Sources consulted for this report suggest that separate buildings housed the soup house and dispensary, and that they were located slightly to the southwest of the later firehouse. The list of fire companies in George W. Sheldon, *The Story of the Volunteer Fire Department*, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1882), pp. 353 and 357 notes that Engine Company No. 25 and Hose Company No. 1 were located at Tryon Row during the early 1830s, and it seems possible that the soup kitchen and the fire companies shared a building on the west side of Tryon Row during the early 1830s or that the firehouses used the dispensary building vacated in 1829. The firehouses replaced in 1851 were located on the site of the city courthouse (see below).

[84]The Board of Health building may have been an older structure, possibly a house that was taken over by the city. From the Ratzen Map depicting the city in 1766-67 it appears that there were also three frame buildings in the northwest corner of what is now City Hall Park, two of which were enclosed by a fence and a third facing Broadway that extended beyond the fence. A watercolor by the Baroness Hyde de Neuville depicting the Bridewell and City Hall in 1808 from Chambers Street shows a number of frame buildings on the northern end of the Park including a one-story building labeled office of the Board of Health facing Chambers Street and a two-and-one-half-story building with casement windows and a spring-eaved roof (built before 1725) which correspond to the buildings depicted on the Ratzen Map.

[85]Hardie, *Description of the City of New York*, p. 287; *MCC, 1784-1831*, 6: 318, 326.

[86]New York's dispensary system grew into a major component of the city's medical establishment and health-care delivery system. See the excellent discussion by Charles E. Rosenberg, "Social Class and Medical Care in Nineteenth Century America: The Rise and Fall of the Dispensary." *Journal of History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 29 (1974): 32-54.

[87]*MCC, 1784-1831*, 9: 79.

[88]"Historical and Archaeological Assessment of the Former New York County Courthouse (The Tweed Courthouse)" notes many of these uses of buildings on the northern portion of the Park. For a more complete list of occupants and a view of the New York Institution, see Valentine, "History of Broadway," pp. 563-564. The New York Free School No. 2, 1808, is pictured in Valentine, "Park Row and Chatham Street," p. 604.

The installation of the city's first official clock in the cupola of City Hall in 1830 heralded the changes that occurred in the park during the following decade. The size of the park was reduced when Centre Street was extended south of Pearl Street in 1835 and cut off the northeastern corner; around that time the State Arsenal building was demolished. During the 1830s, areas of lawn, set off by iron chains supported by wood posts, were added to the park and the plaza and walk in front of City Hall were paved with flagstones. The Croton Water Works fountain, which celebrated the completion of the Croton Aqueduct water system in 1842, was sited prominently in the southern end of the park. During this period the uses of many buildings in the park changed. The occupants of the New York Institution (former Second Almshouse) were evicted in 1830, and the building was renovated for use as municipal offices and court rooms. The building was then often referred to as the New City Hall. The Old Gaol to the east of City Hall, remodeled in 1830-31 with the addition of Grecian porticos and steps on the north and south facades, became the Hall of Records. (The building, which stood on Centre Street, was torn down in 1903 to allow for the construction of subway entrances.) The Rotunda was used as a post office from 1835 to 1845 and was then remodeled for city offices and housed the Croton aqueduct board and other municipal agencies. The old Bridewell was used as a Debtors' Jail from around 1830 until shortly before it was demolished in 1838.[89]

During the 1850s, as the city expanded rapidly, yet more municipal office space was needed and City Hall Park was considered the appropriate site for additional buildings. In 1851-52, a small brownstone building was erected immediately to the west of the Rotunda to house municipal courts and offices (the courthouse building stood until 1928). Since the courthouse was built on the site of buildings that housed three fire companies, construction began in 1851 on a three-story firehouse at the Chambers Street and Centre Street corner of the park.[90] Several plans were put forward for a "New City Hall," as the project which was to become the New York County (or Tweed) Courthouse was first called. As with several later civic building projects, the decision of where to build was determined by legislation. In 1858 the New York City Board of Supervisors passed an act authorizing the appointment of Commissioners to direct the erection of a building in the park, in the rear of City Hall on the site of the former Second Almshouse, which had been destroyed by fire in 1854. Further state legislation in 1861 confirmed the location in City Hall Park and construction soon began on the New York County Courthouse (1861-81, John Kellum and Leopold Eidlitz, a designated New York City Landmark). By the 1860s, landscaping had been extended to the northern portion of the Park. The site of the Bridewell had become a plot of grass, and paths radiated diagonally from the northern entrance of City Hall. The plaza and walk in front of City Hall had been straightened and widened in 1851 and a statue of George Washington (no longer in the park) had been erected near the plaza, opposite City Hall, in 1857.[91]

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[89]These changes are noted in "Historical and Archaeological Assessment of the Former New York County Courthouse (The Tweed Courthouse)," and Valentine, "History of Broadway," pp. 563-564.

[90]Board of Aldermen *Proceedings* 41 (1851): 519; 42 (1851): 674. By around 1800 fire equipment was located in City Hall Park, and in 1813 several companies were located in the Bridewell. By 1842, Engine Company No. 22, Hose Company No. 28, and Hook and Ladder Company No. 1 were located in the buildings that were demolished in 1851. Hall notes the existence of another firehouse, a temporary one built in 1859 to the south of the fire house at the corner of the park, in "An Historical Sketch of City Hall Park." See his "A Landmark Map of City Hall Park," pp. 422-423. This building appears to have remained standing through at least 1870, since it appears on the Map of the Business Portion of New York City, J.F. Lloyd, 1867 (see Stokes, 6: 481) and the "Plan of Improvements of City Hall Park," 1870-71, both of which are reproduced in Kestenbaum.

[91]See "Historical and Archaeological Assessment of the Former New York County Courthouse (The Tweed Courthouse)," p. 2-5, Kestenbaum, and LPC, *Tweed Courthouse Designation Report* and *Tweed Courthouse Interior Designation Report*, reports prepared by Anthony W. Robins (New York, 1984).

During the Civil War, there were a number of temporary buildings erected on City Hall Park, including large barracks buildings, a building in which enlistment clerks worked, and recruiting tents.[92]

In 1866 the City sold the lower end of City Hall Park to the Federal government for the construction of a post office and courthouse; the conveyance was made with the condition that at any such time that the site was no longer used for a post office and courthouse, it would revert to the ownership of the City.[93] Mail Street was created in 1870 to provide access to the northern side of the United States Post Office (1870-75, A.B. Mullett), which stood until 1938-39.

The newly created Board of Park Commissioners addressed the conditions of City Hall Park in 1870, and a plan for the redesign of City Hall Park was provided by M.A. Kellogg, the Chief Engineer, and Ignaz A. Pilat, the Chief Landscape Gardener of the Parks Department. (*fig. 17*). The plan called for the demolition of the Rotunda and new landscaping. The park was regraded, repaved, replanted, and provided with new fixtures and furnishings. For the area between City Hall and the Post Office, the plan featured an elaborate granite fountain designed by Jacob Wrey Mould, then architect-in-chief for the Department of Public Parks, and two smaller fountains in the northern portion of the park. (The Mould fountain, removed to Crotona Park, the Bronx, in 1920, was replaced with the Crane fountain with the statue, *Civic Virtue* (Frederick MacMonnies), which was in turn removed in 1941 to the Queens Borough Hall).

With the completion of the Brooklyn Bridge in 1883 and the development of the subway system (opened in 1903), the area around City Hall became a transportation hub. Thousands of New Yorkers passed daily through City Hall Park to use the trolley and elevated train lines that crossed the Brooklyn Bridge; the park was connected with the bridge terminal by a footbridge above Park Row. When the IRT subway line, constructed from 1899 to 1902 under Lafayette Street in the area of the district, was first planned, the southern end of the line was at City Hall with a station located under City Hall Park. Although the extension of the line to Brooklyn slightly changed plans for the station which express trains by-passed, the loop design for the station was retained. (The below-grade City Hall Station, a designated New York City Interior Landmark, has not been used since 1945.)[94] The heavy commuter traffic of the Brooklyn Bridge/City Hall area demanded the expansion and remodeling of the Manhattan approach to the Brooklyn Bridge to better accommodate trolley and elevated train traffic. The plan put forward around the turn of the century called for the demolition of the Staats-Zeitung Building east of Park Row and north of the bridge approach. When the proposed construction of the Nassau-Centre Street IRT line linking Manhattan with Brooklyn and Queens was approved in 1907, the plans were altered and an additional subway station was constructed northeast of City Hall Park. An enclosed pedestrian bridge over Park Row connecting City Hall with the bridge terminal was built and stood until around 1940. The BMT Broadway Local line, with a station at City Hall, was built on the west side of City Hall Park during the early 1910s.

Throughout the nineteenth century, City Hall Park continued to serve as the city's primary gathering place where the community assembled for both celebration and protest. On July 5, 1827, the New York State emancipation celebration parade began at City Hall with a salute to the mayor.[95] The park was the site of meetings concerning public defense during the War of 1812; during the Civil War, in addition

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[92]See Stokes, 4: (1861, May 1), 1897 and (1865, Jan. 7), 1915 and the *Board of Aldermen Proceedings*, 93 (Jan.-Mar., 1864): 84-87.

[93]In 1857 the Common Council had negotiated with Federal authorities to cede the land at the southern end of the park -- or a portion of the upper part of the park fronting Chambers Street -- as a site for a new post office, but no decision was made at that time.

[94]LPC, *IRT Subway System Underground Interior Designation Report*, report prepared by Marjorie Pearson (New York, 1979).

[95]Stuckey, "Skies of Consciousness," note 64.

to public meetings, the park was used as the site for recruiting, enlistment, transient barracks, and a hospital. The park continued to be the scene of protest and was a gathering spot during the Flour Riot of 1837 and again during the Draft Riots of 1863.[96] The sentiments of the city's residents were expressed when City Hall was draped in mourning to receive Lincoln's and Grant's funeral corteges. City Hall Park has also been the scene of civic celebrations, such as the opening of the Croton Water system, and the inauguration of the IRT. In 1855, the historian Henry B. Dawson described City Hall Park as the city's "cradle of liberty":

> It must not be forgotten, that the Park is still the refuge of the people. . . . Here they have met La Fayette and other friends of freedom and their country, making the welkin ring with their joyous shouts; and here they have mingled their tears over the memory of Jackson, Clay, and other departed worthies. On all occasions whether of joy or sorrow, of prosperity or calamity, of welcome or of separation, the Park is now as it ever has been the resort of the people.[97]

The Preservation of City Hall Park

An important aspect of City Hall Park was the evolution of the perception in the late nineteenth century that it was an historic site that should be preserved.[98] The symbolic importance of both City Hall and the surrounding park as "one of the most spacious and delightful squares with which any City Hall in America was surrounded"[99] was recognized during the many attempts to enlarge the seat of government during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Beginning in the 1880s, the appropriate location for an additional municipal building was a controversial topic, and such extreme solutions were offered as flanking City Hall with seven-story end pavilions, suggested in 1888, and the destruction of City Hall, advocated by Mayor Hugh J. Grant in 1891. Numerous acts were passed by the state legislature, authorizing construction of a new building within or outside of the park. In 1893, during a period when construction in the park was in favor, the legislature even authorized the removal of buildings in the park, including the old Hall of Records (demolished in 1903), the fire engine house (removed in 1906), and the City Courthouse (not demolished until 1928).

In 1897 the Legislature authorized construction of a new Hall of Records in the neighborhood of the County Court House, but not in City Hall Park. This Hall of Records (now Surrogate's Court; 1899-1907, John R. Thomas and Horgan & Slattery, a designated New York City Landmark), located across Chambers Street from the northeast corner of City Hall Park, expanded governmental functions north of the park, onto the site of the African Burial Ground. City Hall Park, as it became the seat of government for the consolidated New York in 1898, had a significant identity as one of the City's most valued meeting places and historic monuments.

A Mixed-use Area Develops North of City Hall Park

Although generally perceived as part of the Commons, the African Burial Ground was located on land that was part of the Van Borsum patent, granted in 1673, and the Rutgers patent, granted in 1733. After being surveyed, partly as the result of various legal claims, it was able to be sold off for development as private property beginning in the late eighteenth century (see above). The African Burial

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[96]J.T. Headley, *The Great Riots of New York City, 1712-1873* (New York: E.B. Treat, 1873), pp. 102-103.

[97]Dawson, p. 481, also is quoted in "An Historical Sketch of City Hall Park," p. 424.

[98]See Robert A.M. Stern, Gregory Gilmartin and John Massengale, *New York 1900, Metropolitan Architecture and Urbanism 1890-1915* (New York: Rizzoli, 1983), pp. 61-69 and "New York City Civic Center. The Defense of City Hall Park," American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society, *Seventeenth Annual Report*, (1912):103-112 for reviews of the development and preservation of the civic center.

[99]Quoted in *New York 1900*, p. 63. Herbert Croly alleged that the city had degraded the square he so praised in "New York as the American Metropolis," *Architectural Record* 13 (1903): 198.

Ground was incorporated into the expanded city, as were many graveyards in lower Manhattan during the early nineteenth century.[100] In many of these cases, bodies were moved to other locations, but in others, such care was not taken; certainly in locations other than the African Burial Ground interments were left in place as development proceeded on the sites of graveyards. At the end of the eighteenth century, two other sites became available for burials of Africans. In 1773, a plot was set aside by Trinity Church at the corner of Church and Reade Streets as a "Burial Ground for the Negroes belonging to the Church." In 1795, in response to a petition from the leaders of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the Common Council financially assisted in the purchase of four lots at 195-197 Chrystie Street, a site that was to be used as a burying ground for Africans.[101]

The streets in the area east of Broadway were laid out as extensions of thoroughfares established by the Trinity Church Corporation on its land west of Broadway, and the City gained title through property transactions during the 1780s and 1790s. Reed (Reade) and Ann (Elm) Streets appear on the survey map that initially divided the Barclay/Rutgers ("Calk Hook" Farm) tract into lots in 1785. (*fig. 13A*). These two streets, as well as Chambers Street, appear on the 1795 survey map dividing the Van Borsum patent. In 1796 the Common Council adopted a plan to extend Chambers Street east of Broadway and arranged to acquire a part of the "Negros Burial Ground" for that purpose.[102] The pattern of streets at the eastern end of the district has been changed several times. A north-south street, "Potter's Hill," had been cut through near the northeastern corner of the Commons by the 1790s.[103] That street was incorporated into Cross Street which angled to the northeast, parallel to Chatham Street; Cross Street, which became Park Street, cut off the southeast corner of the small block on the north side of Reade Street (Block 155). (see *fig. 16*). Centre Street was extended south of Pearl Street in 1835; south of Duane Street, the new street superseded Cross Street, which had been a short distance west of the new stretch of Centre Street. Elm Street was extended and widened during the 1890s and was subsequently renamed Lafayette Street. The final change in the street pattern was the extension of Elm Street from Reade Street to Chambers Street, west of the Hall of Records, in 1901.

The burial ground was located on two parcels of land which, by the end of the eighteenth century, were recognized as being in private ownership. The northwestern portion of Block 154 was part of the Barclay/Rutgers family's "Calk Hook" Farm. It was divided into lots in 1785, and at that time an alley, which came to be known as Republican Alley, was laid out, although its position later was shifted slightly. Within a few years all of the lots were sold and built upon. After the Van Borsum patent was

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[100]Stokes, 5 (1833): 1717, notes that by 1833 several graveyards had been abandoned. Stokes' list includes the cemetery of the French Episcopal Church on Pine Street and the Presbyterian burial ground on Nassau Street, between John Street and Maiden Lane (later sold to the Baptists) where the dead had been removed. The burying-ground of the Lutherans at the corner of Broadway and Rector Street, was cleared in 1805 and 1806 as "bones in open box carts [were carted off] promiscuously, and fragments of bones and coffins were dumped into the North River" so that Grace Church could be built on the site. When the Quaker or Friends' burying ground was dug up, bones and rubbish were carried off in carts. The Jewish burial ground on Oliver Street also was dug up. Much earlier, in 1677, the old Dutch grave yard on lower Broadway was sold off as lots for development. See "The Old Grave-Yard of New Amsterdam," Valentine's Manual, 1856, pp. 444-447, and Stokes, 4 (1677, Feb 28): 312. See also Blanche Linden-Ward, *Silent City on a Hill: Landscapes of Memory and Boston's Mount Auburn Cemetery* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1989), pp. 154-155, for information on the movement to close urban cemeteries in New York City in response to the yellow fever epidemic of 1822.

[101]For the Trinity cemetery see Stokes, 4 (1773, Sept. 15): 840; 5 (1788, May 1): 1227; Bancker Plans, Manuscripts and Archives Section, New York Public Library, box 3, folder 81; and New York County, Office of the Register, Liber Deeds and Conveyances, Liber 71, p. 355. See *MCC 1784-1831*, 2:137, 161, for the Chrystie Street site.

[102]*MCC, 1784-1831*, 2:137.

[103]See "A New and Accurate Plan of the City of New York in the State of New York in North America (The Taylor-Roberts Plan)," 1796. Stokes, 1: plate 64.

surveyed and divided for sale in 1795, almost immediately small residences were built in the area, before fill was brought in to even out the topography.

By 1802 modest residences had been built on most of the lots. The earliest residents of the area -- tenants rather than property owners -- included cartmen, carpenters, coopers, masons, upholsterers, other craftsmen, and laborers. In some areas of the burial ground site, most notably on Broadway and Chambers Street, larger, more grand, residences were built. Throughout the first decades of the nineteenth century, the housing in the area varied from large residences like that of Clarkson Crolius at the corner of Cross and Reade Streets, to more modest three-and-one-half story brick houses and small two-and-one-half story wood dwellings.[104]

The area of the African Burial Ground shared a development history more closely related to the Broadway corridor and area to the west than to much of the Sixth Ward, of which it formed the southwest corner. The character of the Sixth Ward, was dominated throughout much of the nineteenth century by the notorious slum surrounding the "Five Points" intersection of Worth, Baxter and Park Streets.[105] The working class neighborhood that developed on the blocks between present-day Broadway and Centre Street at the very end of the eighteenth century was gradually replaced by commercial and industrial development during the 1840s and 1850s, and the area became a part of the dry goods district located to the west and north. However, there was a disparate character in the area of the district, ranging from the fashionable commercial precinct along Broadway, to the working class neighborhood and industrial area near Centre Street. Several industries, including iron foundries and shoe and clothing factories, were located in the southern portion of the Sixth Ward.

One of the major developments in this area of the city, significant both for its architectural and commercial importance, was the construction of the A.T. Stewart Department Store in 1845-46. When Alexander Turney Stewart opened a new store on the east side of Broadway between Chambers and Reade Streets, it was the first structure in the area to be built specifically for the sale of dry goods and was, in effect, the first American department store, given its unprecedented scale of commerce. The store, designed by Joseph Trench and John B. Snook, also was different from other mercantile buildings previously constructed in the city in its size and in its use of elegant, expensive materials. A great success, it set the trend for future commercial architecture and attracted other similar businesses to the area. Following the completion of the Stewart Store, the section of Broadway between City Hall Park and Madison Square became the major commercial artery of the metropolis. Beginning in the 1850s, the dry goods merchants relocated to the area north and west of the A.T. Stewart Store, transforming the residential area to a new commercial district. As the area began to change, the first stories of residences were altered and stories were added, as those buildings were converted for commercial use.

These general development trends affected the blocks encompassing the African Burial Ground. The Stewart Store, on the western edge of the Burial Ground site, was expanded in 1850 along the entire Broadway frontage of the block, and later additions were made to the east. Beginning around 1852, commercial buildings were built on most of the lots on Chambers Street, replacing the old dwellings that previously had been used as offices by lawyers and agents. The 1850s saw the virtual transformation of

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[104]Testimony in a lawsuit involving the Van Borsum heirs in 1812 described the recent changes in the area: "The lots adjoining, and including the premises, and including the African burying ground, for many years since the American war, were regarded as uninviting suburbs. The streets have since been widened, the face of the ground wholly changed, and it is now covered with a flourishing population, and elegant improvements." Smith, *ex. dem.* Teller, v. Burtis & Woodward, 9 Johnson Reports 182 (N.Y. Sup. Ct., 1812).

[105]See Carol Groneman Pernicone, "'The Bloody Ould Sixth': A Social Analysis of a New York City Working-Class Community in the Mid-nineteenth Century" (Ph.D. diss., University of Rochester, 1973) for a description of the Sixth Ward. See Margaret M.M. Pickart, "Historical Development of the Tribeca East Historic District," in LPC, *Tribeca East Historic District Designation Report* (New York City, 1992), for a review of the development of the dry goods district.

this portion of the historic district with the construction of store and loft buildings of around five stories in height, and the accompanying commercial and industrial activity.

The area north of Reade Street and just to the west of Centre Street developed with industry. As early as 1818, Worrell & Company had established an iron furnace on the north side of Duane Street (just outside the boundaries of the historic district) and soon several of the larger iron foundries in the city were located nearby, including two of the more important architectural cast-iron foundries. The Badger Iron Works moved from its location on the south side of Duane Street, west of Centre Street, to a larger works uptown, but retained an office at 42 Duane Street. The Architectural Iron Works of James Bogardus was on Duane Street, just east of Centre Street (not within the historic district). At mid-century, there were a number of other manufacturing and industrial operations in the area, including those producing silverware and pianos, and printing houses. Many of the neighborhood residents who lived in old dwellings used as tenements and boarding houses were iron founders, moulders, mechanics, silversmiths, and printers.[106]

The development of larger commercial buildings that occurred on Broadway south of Canal Street late in the nineteenth century is also evident in the area of the historic district. New buildings were erected on Chambers Street, including the American News Company building in 1876, and a larger building for the Emigrant Industrial Savings Bank in the late 1880s. The extension and widening of Elm Street, subsequently renamed Lafayette Street, during the 1890s, reconfigured the eastern portion of the burial ground site and prompted redevelopment in that area, including the construction of the Jones Building (1897-99). Several commercial buildings of more than ten stories were built along Broadway, between Reade and Duane Streets, during the 1890s.

At the close of the nineteenth century, the site of the African Burial Ground remained a commercial area although federal courts had occupied the Burton Theatre on Chambers Street during the 1860s and 1870s. The selection of the eastern end of the block north of Chambers Street as the site of the new Hall of Records in 1899 was a significant event in re-establishing the municipal use of the African Burial Ground portion of the Commons.

The Twentieth Century: Preservation and Progress

The construction of the Hall of Records on the north side of Chambers Street reflected a general consensus that the preferred location for additional government buildings was the area adjacent to City Hall Park, not the park itself. The 1904 *Report of the New York City Improvement Commission* gave strong support for the grouping of additional government buildings around City Hall Park, and called for the preservation of City Hall as "one of the few good monuments possessed by the City."[107] From that time on City Hall generally was considered a cherished relic of the past.

Mayor George B. McClellan, who had appointed the New York City Improvement Commission, apparently agreed with this approach. In 1907, legislation[108] authorized the construction of a municipal building at the Manhattan terminus of the Brooklyn Bridge. The City had acquired land east of Centre Street, just north of the bridge, for the construction of an expanded Brooklyn Bridge terminal in Manhattan, but the proposed construction of the the Nassau-Centre Street IRT subway line had altered plans for the terminal and made the site available for another use. McClellan was able to move forward with the Municipal Building (1907-14, McKim, Mead & White, a designated New York City Landmark) project without the intense public debate that had accompanied previous proposals. (This site is outside the historic district.)

When plans were under consideration for a replacement for the New York County (Tweed) Courthouse, the issue of building in City Hall Park again arose. After the public outcry against plans for a large new court building on the south side of Chambers Street, the legislation that authorized the

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[106]See Pernicone, pp. 43 and 99 for more information on the industry in Sixth Ward, as well as the area residents who worked in them.

[107]*Report of the New York City Improvement Commission to the Honorable Geo. B. McClellen, Mayor of the City of New York, and to the Honorable Board of Aldermen of the City of New York.* (New York, 1904), p. 15.

[108]Chapter 670 of the *Laws of New York State* (1907).

construction of the new building was amended in 1911 to prohibit its location in City Hall Park and the city was required to find an appropriate site elsewhere. The New York County Courthouse (1913-27, Guy Lowell, a designated New York City Landmark) was built north of the Municipal Building fronting on a small open area, named Foley Square in 1926, that became the setting for further expansion of the government center, primarily courts, during the twentieth century. (The courthouse is outside the historic district.)

Notwithstanding the several proposals for government buildings to be located north of City Hall Park, private commercial development continued in the area. At the close of first decade of the twentieth century, the Emigrant Industrial Savings Bank, designed by Raymond F. Almirall (1908-12, a designated New York City Landmark), was built on Chambers Street, replacing the Emigrant Industrial Savings Bank built in 1885-87. The Court Square Building at 2 Lafayette Street, designed by Buchman & Kahn, was begun in 1925 as the New York County Court House neared completion on Foley Square.

In 1938-39, the United States Post Office at the south end of City Hall Park was demolished, and this part of the park was re-landscaped. Additional landscape changes were made to this portion of the park in the late 1970s with the installation of the Delacorte Fountain.

During the 1960s, a plan for an enlarged Civic Center identified the northern part of City Hall Park and the blocks to the north -- the African Burial Ground portion of the Commons -- as the site for expansion. Several buildings on the blocks between Chambers Street and Reade Street were purchased in 1965, and soon the A.T. Stewart Store (Sun Building) and the Emigrant Industrial Savings Bank were used by various municipal agencies. During the late 1960s, 2 Lafayette Street was leased by the City for use by governmental agencies. These buildings, as well as 22 Reade Street, have continued to house municipal agencies. The City's plans to erect new government buildings on the site of the African Burial Ground portion of the Commons were not realized. In the late 1980s, the Federal Government made arrangements with the City to acquire most of Block 154 as the site for one of its Foley Square Project buildings. The planning and site preparation for this building provided the opportunity to rediscover the African Burial Ground and excavate a portion of this historic site. Today most of the land and improvements within the boundaries of the historic Commons are once again in governmental ownership and use.

DESCRIPTION OF SITES WITHIN THE HISTORIC DISTRICT

CITY HALL PARK

Block 122

The appearance of City Hall Park today reflects various periods of its development. Several key elements, however, have remained constant since the early nineteenth century: the plaza area in front of City Hall, the view corridors centered on the front of City Hall along three pedestrian paths to the south, fountains in the park, fencing, large areas of lawn, and the presence of large trees. City Hall was designated a New York City Landmark in 1965, and City Hall Park was designated as its Landmark Site. City Hall station was designated a New York City Interior Landmark in 1979 as part of the IRT Subway System Underground Interior Landmark. The New York County (Tweed) Courthouse was designated a New York City Landmark in 1984.

The northern portion of the park retains the configuration of the 1870 plan, with the addition of subway entrances at the northeast corner.[109] The area immediately south of City Hall also retains some remnants of the 1870 plan. Additions to the northern portion of the park include several small-scale elements. The John Quincy Adams Ward statue of Horace Greeley (1890) was moved in 1916 to the park from a sidewalk niche in the Tribune Building, which stood across Park Row from City Hall Park. The statue of Nathan Hale (Frederick MacMonnies, 1890), presented to the City in 1893 by the Sons of the Revolution of the State of New York, has stood in various locations in the park. The flagpole erected near Broadway in 1921 by the New-York Historical Society and the Sons of the American Revolution commemorates the early liberty poles that were erected in the park.[110]

The design of the southern end of the park is the only portion of the plan for City Hall Park proposed by Robert Moses and adopted in 1935 that was implemented: the broad mall angling from the southern tip of the park to the central entrance of City Hall. The mall was constructed south of Mail Street on the site of the Post Office, which was demolished in 1938-39. The addition of the Delacorte Fountain (M. Paul Friedberg and Partners) to the southern end of the park during the late 1970s, established a new focal point, while recalling the Croton Aqueduct Fountain.

Archaeological resources in City Hall Park

The potential for preservation of significant archaeological remains beneath City Hall Park is very high. Building foundations and deposits containing eighteenth- and nineteenth-century artifacts have probably survived beneath the present surface in those areas not destroyed by later construction. Such archaeological resources are particularly significant because they represent the development of public institutions in the colonial city and the new nation, but more importantly, they are associated with groups considered marginal in New York society, for whom few first-hand documents survive. Debtors, criminals, vagrants, the poor, and the sick resided in the institutions located on the Commons. Remains associated with their daily lives in these places can provide important information on how such groups were treated and their responses to institutionalization.

The following is a chronological review of the various structures in the Commons, most of which are no longer extant but may have left traces beneath the surface of City Hall Park. (See the Historical Development section of this report for more detailed information on these structures.) *Figures 18* and *19* indicate the locations of some of these structures.

The **windmills** which stood on the Commons, built 1663-64 and c. 1692-95, were post mills. Foundations, post-molds, and post-holes may be extant beneath the present surface.

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[109]See *City Hall Park -- Planning for the Future of an Historic Landscape* for a more detailed description of the current appearance of City Hall Park.

[110]See Stokes, 4 (1770, Feb. 6): 806.

Remains associated with the **John Harris house** (c. 1720-30) may have survived and be intact near Broadway, though substantial disturbance beneath the Broadway streetbed for subway construction may have destroyed all or part of the house foundation. The Harris house was probably demolished when the Bridewell was built in 1775-76 (see below).

The **first Almshouse** on the Commons, built 1735-36 and enlarged in 1746, stood on the present site of City Hall (see *fig. 5 and 6*).[111] Although the footprint of the almshouse proper may have been obliterated by the construction of City Hall (1803-11), remains of numerous associated structures may survive nearby. Buildings associated with the almshouse included a kitchen, oven, wash house, and stable (1736), hospital (1739), shed for the washhouse (1769), and stable and storehouse (1789). It is difficult to locate these structures precisely, as they were not always labeled or even shown on historic maps. Remains of what is believed to be the Almshouse kitchen were excavated archaeologically in 1989.[112] The structure was located between the Tweed Courthouse and City Hall, its brownstone foundation walls buried three feet beneath the present surface. A layer of debris, including bricks, plaster, nails and other building material from the destruction of the building was also excavated, and domestic artifacts from the eighteenth century, including pottery, glass, tobacco pipes, buttons, and food bone were recovered, which provided new information about almshouse life.

In addition to outbuildings, the Almshouse had two wooden cisterns (dug in 1749), a separate washhouse cistern (1769), a new well in the yard (1790), and probably privies as well, though these are not documented. The almshouse had an associated fenced burial ground dating from 1757, located to the east. Even though deep fill has not protected subsurface remains as much as to the north in the African Burial Ground, in the absence of evidence for deep grading in the park, it is considered likely that some burials from the eighteenth century may remain intact.

In the northwest corner of City Hall Park, evidence of the 1745 **palisade** may remain below grade (see *fig. 5*). Remains of the gate at Broadway were probably destroyed by subway construction, but evidence of the foundation or footings of the the **block house** just east of Broadway, as well as post-holes from the palisade wall, may survive. The 1747 **powder magazine**, located southeast of the first Almshouse, would have had a foundation of brick or stone, and remains of this structure may survive near Park Row.

The **New Gaol**, built 1757-59, stood to the east and slightly north of the Almshouse (see *fig. 6*). construction of IRT subway entrances and platforms, and the tracks beneath Park Row, would have disturbed a portion of the structure's foundation. The south end of the foundation may survive. A stone cistern was located at the front (south end) of the building, where the least subsequent disturbance has taken place. The location of the associated stable is uncertain, but may have been to the rear just northwest of the New Gaol. The New Gaol building, later used as the Hall of Records, was demolished in 1903 when the subway station was constructed.

Four **barracks** are known to have stood in the northern part of the Commons in the eighteenth century. The footprint of the "Upper Barracks" built in 1757 lies beneath the Second Almshouse (see below), the New York County (Tweed) Courthouse, and other nineteenth-century structures to the

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[111]For a discussion of the history, architecture, and archaeology of the Almshouse, see Baugher, et al., "The Archaeological Investigation of the City Hall Park Site, Manhattan."

[112]Joel W. Grossman, "The Buried History of City Hall Park: The Initial Archaeological Identification, Definition and Documentation of Well-Preserved 18th. Century Deposits and the Possible Structural Remains of N.Y.C.'s First Almshouse," prepared by Grossman and Associates, Inc. for the New York City Department of General Services, 1991; Baugher et al., "The Archaeological Investigation of the City Hall Park Site..."

east.[113] The second barracks, which appear on a 1774 map, were located just to the south and east of the first, across what was once "Barracks Street" (*see fig. 8*). The western end of the building is beneath the Tweed Courthouse and the eastern end is beneath the nineteenth-century City Court and Rotunda buildings. Both the Upper and Second Barracks were demolished in the 1790s, when a new Almshouse was planned for the site (see below).

The two "British Barracks" buildings are shown on the 1782 British Headquarters Map (*fig. 9*). They were located to the southwest of the earlier barracks, extending eastward from Broadway.

Human remains were found in two recent utility excavations in the immediate vicinity of the Upper Barracks. The first of these excavations, in 1987, was located at the northeast corner of City Hall Park, where remains of at least eight individuals were recovered.[114] In 1993, remains were unearthed during installation of electrical vaults beneath the southern sidewalk of Chambers Street, just north of the Tweed Courthouse. It is not possible to determine whether the remains recovered during these incidents were from intact burials. Historical evidence that burials took place "behind the barracks" (which would have meant to the north of the building at that time) points to one explanation for the presence of human remains in the area. Since the exact extent of the African Burial Ground is not known, it is also very possible that these remains are from the southern part of that graveyard. Regardless of whether the deposits were previously disturbed or contained intact graves, these remains are certainly from eighteenth-century burials in the Commons.

The locations of the first four "Liberty Poles" (1766-67) erected in the Commons are difficult to determine precisely. The fifth and last **Liberty Pole** (1770) was sited within the Harris lot (see *figs. 4 and 8*), and its location is marked today with a flagpole and commemorative plaque. A twelve-foot hole was dug for the fifth Liberty Pole, and evidence of the pole's exact location probably remains below the present surface in the form of a very large post hole and/or post mold.

The city **Bridewell** stood between Broadway and the Almshouse on the southern part of the old Harris lot from 1775 to 1838. An 1808 view of "The Bridewell and Charity School opposite Chambers Street" (*fig. 7*) depicts numerous frame buildings to the north of the Bridewell, probably housing related functions in the institutional complex. Building footprints and associated deposits may survive below the present surface in some cases.

In 1784, the city moved its **gallows** to the Commons, between the Almshouse and the New Gaol, and enclosed the gallows in a building. Foundations or post-holes may survive.

The city's **Second Almshouse**, built 1796-97, was on Chambers Street at the site of the New York County (Tweed) Courthouse until it was destroyed by fire in 1854. The building's foundation was probably destroyed when the Tweed Courthouse basement was dug. A sewer was commissioned in 1797 to carry off waste from the building, down Chambers Street to the Hudson.[115]

City Hall was built on the site of the old Almshouse from 1803 to 1812, and it is likely that its construction destroyed the foundations of the earlier structure. Water used during the construction of City Hall was provided by the Manhattan Company, whose reservoir and wells were located immediately north of Chambers Street.[116] The same company may have supplied water to the finished building in its early

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[113]See discussion in "Historical and Archaeological Assessment of the Former New York County Courthouse (The Tweed Courthouse)," prepared by Hunter Research, Inc., for Mesick Cohen Waite Architects and City of New York Department of General Services, 1990.

[114]Leslie Eisenberg, "Final Case Report, M87-2891, Archaeology/Scene Search Forensic Recovery Information" (on file at the New York City Office of the City Medical Examiner).

[115]*MCC, 1784-1831*, 2:373

[116]*MCC, 1784-1831*, 3:272.

days, but water supply seems to have been a problem by the 1820s, when the Common Council resolved to sink an iron tube "in the rear of the City Hall for the purpose of obtaining good Water for the use of the said Hall".[117] This well may survive in the area between City Hall and the Courthouse. City Hall may not have been hooked up to a sewer until the mid-nineteenth century. Common Council minutes from the early nineteenth century document problems with the "nuisance" caused by inadequate privies outside the building.[118] In 1814, complaints were heard about citizens "making water" against the building walls, and a shed was ordered to be built on the east side of City Hall "similar to that on the West side." Both the east and west sinks (privies) were deemed "intolerable nuisances" by 1823, due to heavy use day and night by park traffic. "Indeed," wrote the city inspector, "it seems hard that in the neighbourhood of the Hall where Jurors Witnesses Watchmen &c are constantly found that no facilities so necessary Should be convenient and it therefore appears that the only corrective at present is to have all the daily and nightly nuisances removed and the places well Swept before Nine Oclock Every morning...."[119] The archaeological excavations conducted in 1989 behind City Hall provided information about the building's former rear stoop and entrance.

A soup house was built near the northeast corner of the park in 1806, and the **New York City Dispensary** was housed with the Board of Health at the northwest corner of the park from 1810 to 1818, then moved to a building near the northeast corner, where it remained until 1829. A 1991 excavation for public toilets near the sites of the soup kitchen and dispensary was inspected by archaeologists, and the artifacts found in the backfill were analyzed.[120] Artifacts found in the soil matrix included ceramics, glass, and bone dating from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Because this was not a stratigraphically-controlled archaeological excavation, it is especially difficult to assign a historical context reliably to this material. Some of it may be associated with the barracks or the nearby Almshouse, or may be redeposited fill from the basement excavations for the courthouse or City Hall. A small section of foundation was exposed at a depth of approximately 18 inches below the present surface, possibly from one of the early nineteenth-century structures or from the firehouse built at this location in 1852 (which may have destroyed evidence of earlier structures).

The **Rotunda** was built in 1818 and demolished in 1870.

Construction of the **New York County (Tweed) Courthouse** in 1861, would have destroyed earlier remains over its entire footprint but it is not known how far trenching extended beyond the perimeter of its foundation.

Subsurface disturbances in City Hall Park include building construction which often has obliterated earlier deposits, subway tunnels, platforms and stations, and excavations for numerous utility lines.[121] (see *fig. 20*). The latter would have destroyed or substantially disturbed deposits along their corridors, but even though utilities traverse the park, especially near buildings, and also lie beneath Chambers Street, their trenches are usually narrow and only as deep as necessary to lay the lines or pipes.

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[117] *MCC, 1784-1831*, 16:531.

[118] See *MCC, 1784-1831*, 8:33,44; 9:274; 13:364; 19:125.

[119] *MCC, 1784-1831*, 13:379.

[120] See draft report in LPC files.

[121] See Hunter report, and maps available at the Parks Department and the Department of General Services.

AFRICAN BURIAL GROUND

Block 153

A.T. Stewart Store, 280 Broadway, 53-63 Chambers Street, and 31-39 Reade Street

The site of the A.T. Stewart Store was the location of an important institution, Washington Hall, and several residences during the early nineteenth century. Washington Hall, a meeting place of the Federalist Party, was constructed between 1809 and 1812 at the southeast corner of Broadway and Reade Street to the designs of John McComb, Jr. The Hall, an important gathering place, hosted a variety of social functions, lectures, and political events. The building became the Washington House, a first class hotel, around 1828. In 1831-32 Aaron Burr lived a few doors to the east of the hotel at 31 Reade Street.[122] A.T. Stewart built the first portion of his store on the site of the hotel which had been destroyed by fire. The A.T. Stewart Store (1845-46, Joseph Trench & Co., additions by Trench & Snook and others, a designated New York City Landmark) was expanded along the entire Broadway frontage of the block in 1850-51. The structure was expanded to the east along Chambers and Reade Streets in several phases, replacing early dwellings, with the last addition completed in 1884. The building served as Stewart's retail store until 1862, when it became a warehouse for the Stewart wholesale business. The *New York Sun* newspaper occupied the building from 1919 to 1952. The Stewart Store was acquired by the City of New York in 1965 and now houses municipal agencies.[123]

Emigrant Industrial Savings Bank, 43-51 Chambers Street and 21-29 Reade Street

The site of the Emigrant Industrial Savings Bank incorporates the sites of an early-nineteenth century church and bank buildings that preceded the present one. In 1801, a frame church building at 47 Chambers Street was erected by the Presbyterian Church. In 1818 that structure was replaced by one of brick; a rectory was built behind the church on Reade Street. In 1835 the church building was acquired by the Roman Catholic Church of the Transfiguration which remained at that site until around 1853, when it moved to Mott Street.

One of the new businesses to become established on Chambers Street during the early 1850s was the Emigrant Industrial Savings Bank which opened offices at 51 Chambers Street in 1850; the bank erected new quarters on that site in 1858. The bank acquired the lot adjacent to its existing building in 1882 and erected a larger, eight-story fireproof bank and office building between 1885 and 1887. The existing Emigrant Industrial Savings Bank (a designated New York City Landmark), designed by Raymond F. Almirall, was built from 1908 to 1912. The building was acquired in 1965 by the City of New York and since that time has housed municipal offices.[124]

The Site of the American News Company Building, 37-41 Chambers Street, 13-19 Reade Street

This portion of Chambers Street, west of the Manhattan Company's reservoir, was associated with the entertainment industry during the early nineteenth century. In 1827 Stoppani's Arcade Baths was erected at 39-41 Chambers Street on a lot where a bath house had been located since 1802. The National Academy of Design briefly occupied the upper part of the Baths. In 1844 Palmo's Opera House -- a three-story theater -- was built on the site of the Arcade Baths. From 1848 to 1856 the building was Burton's Chambers Street Theatre where farces, burlettas, and light comedies were presented. After

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[122]See Valentine, "A History of Broadway," p. 571, for a view of Washington House in 1828. Burr's address was found in the Trow's City Directories of the period.

[123]LPC, *Sun Building Designation Report*, report prepared by James Dillon (New York, 1986).

[124]LPC, *Former Emigrant Industrial Savings Bank Building Designation Report* and *Former Emigrant Industrial Savings Bank Interior Designation Report*, reports prepared by Virginia Kurshan (New York, 1985).

Burton moved to a new theater farther uptown, the building was used briefly for minstrels.[125] In 1851 the Plain Water Saloon and a hotel shared the theater building. The former Burton's theater, which had been used from around 1860 by the federal government as the U.S. Court Building, was demolished in 1876. On that site the American News Company built an imposing seventy-five-foot-wide five-story building that extended through the block, designed by the prominent architect, Griffith Thomas.[126]

The American News Company building was acquired was acquired by the City of New York in 1965, was demolished in 1971, and since that time the site has been used as a parking lot.

Hall of Records, 23-37 Chambers Street and 1-11 Reade Street

The configuration of the eastern end of this block was changed when Centre Street was extended south of Pearl Street in 1835; south of Duane Street, the new street replaced Cross Street (later known as Park Street). (See *fig. 15*). The closed portion of Cross Street through Block 153 was sold by the Corporation in 1838.

Early maps depict the location of a hill, known as "Pot Baker's" and "Potter's Hill," in various locations (see *fig. 13A*); however, the hill was located near the eastern end of this block. The area near the hill was associated with pottery making as early as the 1730s when this industry, was located at the northern edge of the urban area. The large residence of the Crolius family, of which several generations worked as potters, was located at the corner of Cross and Reade Streets, just west of present-day Centre Street, until around 1844.[127] (See Block 155, South Half Entry).

The Manhattan Company, chartered in 1799, established its water supply operation on the north side of Chambers Street, west of Cross Street, and built a reservoir at 31-33 Chambers Street.[128] The stone reservoir, with a frontage of approximately fifty feet on Chambers Street, had battered walls and a central architectural motif consisting of Doric columns supporting an entablature on which a figure of Oceanus reclined. The company owned several lots on which some small dwellings were built, including the company's office at 7 Reade Street, and may have had a well on this property in addition to its wells on the north side of Reade Street. The Manhattan Company's reservoir and tank served the over forty miles of wooden water mains which supplied a portion of the city south of Chambers Street with water. "Manhattan Wells" became a place name for the property owned by the company, and was used in the Clarkson Crolius pottery marks of the period.[129] The Manhattan Company's system provided water for lower Manhattan until the Croton Aqueduct system became operational in 1842.

During the 1850s the site of the Manhattan Water Works was developed with store and loft buildings, including the structure at 37 Chambers Street (1857-58), designed by John B. Snook for the Estate of Gabriel Furman.[130]

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[125]For a description and view of the theater, see Mary C. Henderson, *The City and the Theatre* (Clifton, N.J.: James T. White & Co., 1973), p. 83; see also Stokes, 3:982.

[126]See Deborah Ann Claiborne, "The Commercial Architecture of Griffith Thomas in New York." (M.A. thesis, Pennsylvania State University, 1972), pp. 84-86.

[127]See note 77 for sources on early potteries in New York City.

[128]Edward Hagaman Hall reviews the history of the Manhattan Company's water works and includes a view of the reservoir in "The Croton Aqueduct," American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society, *Twenty-third Annual Report*, (1918):717-19 and Plate 8.

[129]Ketchum, p. 29.

[130]Mary Ann Clegg Smith, "The Commercial Architecture of John Butler Snook." (PhD. diss., Pennsylvania State University, 1974), p. 206.

The eastern end of Block 153 was purchased by the City around 1898 as the site for the new Hall of Records (1899-1907, John R. Thomas and Horgan & Slattery, a designated New York City Landmark).[131] Elm Street was extended from Reade Street to Chambers Street in 1901. It was renamed Elk Street in 1939.

Block 154.

Block 154 was bisected by Manhattan Alley, which was laid out in the original survey of the Rutgers property on the northern portion of the block. Several of the blocks in the area were divided by such alleys, including Catherine Lane between Anthony and Leonard Streets, a few blocks to the north. The alley is shown as "Manhattan Place" in an 1853 atlas[132] and by the late nineteenth century, the east-west portion of the alley was known as Republican Alley, although the north-south portion remained Manhattan Alley.

Federal Building: Tower Site, 290-304 Broadway, 28-40 Reade, and 72-86 Duane Street

The site for the tower portion of the Foley Square federal building encompasses nearly the western two-thirds of the block. After the location of Manhattan Alley was adjusted in the early nineteenth century to provide access to the lots on the south side of Duane Street, small wood and brick buildings were constructed on the alley ends of many of the lots, joining dwellings that had been built on Duane and Reade Streets at the very end of the eighteenth century. During the 1820s and 1830s, tenements and commercial operations occupied the small buildings. The Rutgers Medical College occupied two lots at what would later be 80 Duane Street from 1827 through the late 1830s.[133] By the early 1850s, a number of larger commercial buildings had been built on this portion of the block, but wood buildings remained at the corner of Broadway and Duane and on some of the lots fronting on Republican Alley. Of the several brick dwellings built in this area during the Federal era, the one at 80 Duane stood until 1920.

Among the store and loft buildings built on the block at mid-century, were the ones erected at 72, 74, and 76 Duane Street which stood until 1991. Similar buildings stood on the Reade Street portion of this site, which were demolished around 1970.

In the mid-1860s, three-story Federal-era dwellings converted for commercial use as well as larger store and loft buildings erected to house the dry-goods trade in the area stood on the Broadway end of the block.[134] The last buildings to built on the Broadway lots, prior to the current Federal building project were: the fifteen-story R.G. Dun Building at 290-294 Broadway (1897), the ten-story building at 296 Broadway (1898), a building designed by McKim, Mead and White at 298 Broadway, which was later joined with 300 Broadway and raised to ten stories, and the sixteen-story building erected as The Vincent and later known as the Fordham Building at 302-304 Broadway. These buildings were demolished in late 1960s and late 1970s.

Federal Building: Pavilion Site, 60-70 Duane Street

The site for what is known as the Pavilion portion of the Foley Square Federal building project is at the northeast corner of the block. Small frame and brick buildings were built on both the Duane Street and Republican Alley ends of the lots in the late eighteenth century. The redevelopment of the block at mid-century included brick buildings at 60 and 62 Duane Street which were used for manufacturing

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[131] LPC, *Surrogate's Court (Hall of Records) Designation Report* (NYC, 1966) and *Surrogate's Court (Hall of Records) Interior Designation Report* (NYC, 1976).

[132] William Perris, *Map of the City of New York* (New York: William Perris, 1853).

[133] Stokes, 3:941.

[134] See Valentine, "History of Broadway," plate opposite p. 564.

purposes and the store and loft building with a cast-iron facade at 66-68 Duane Street, designed in 1860 by the prominent architect, John B. Snook, for Thomas Palmer.[135] The small, commercial building at 60 Duane, at the corner of Elm (Elk) Street, built around 1867, remained standing until 1991. The small, five-story building erected at the corner of Republican Alley and Elm (Elk) Street in 1899 and the other buildings on the Pavilion site were demolished for the construction of the projected Federal building.

Construction on the Pavilion portion of the Federal building ceased in August 1992, and a Federal Advisory Committee was formed at that time, charged with advising the General Services Administration (the Federal agency responsible for the project) on all matters concerning the future treatment of the Pavilion site. This Committee includes representatives from local and national preservation agencies and museums, local political and community leaders, and other concerned citizens. Interim stabilization measures which have been adopted include the installation of suporting braces across the site and placement of a layer of clean sand fill over the area in order to preserve remaining burials.

22 Reade Street Buildings

The building known as 22 Reade Street incorporates three structures, two of which were designed by the promiment architect, John B. Snook. Adolph Pfender commissioned Snook to design 16-20 Reade, a five-story building with a stone facade edged with quoins, in 1859.[136] Nos. 22-26 Reade Street was designed by Snook for the East River Savings Institute in 1860. One of Snook's *palazzo* designs, it features composite "Stewart" cast-iron capitals at the ground story.[137] The third portion of the building, at the corner of Reade and Elm (Elk) Streets, was erected in 1886 by liquor merchant Richard W. Block to house his business; the building, designed by Frederick Jenth, received an additional two stories, designed by George F. Pelham, in 1895. The buildings were acquired by the City of New York in 1965, combined into one structure, and renovated, beginning in the late 1970s. The combined structure is occupied by the New York City Planning Commission and the Department of City Planning.

Block 155, South Half.

The eastern portion of the historic district appears to have been the site of both potteries and the African Burial Ground during the eighteenth century. It developed as an industrial area during the second quarter of the nineteenth century. What is now Block 155 was just north of Pot Baker's Hill and as early as the 1730s was the site of pottery making, a nuisance industry, located at the northern edge of the urban area. The Plan of the City of New York of c.1730[138] depicts a pottery southwest of the Little Collect Pond, near the present-day Block 155. The pottery of Abraham van Vleck, one of Sara Roeloff's descendants, was mentioned in a legal document of 1837. It is thought that van Vleck's pottery was located on the north side of Reade Street on Block 155 and was the site used later by the Crolius family of potters.[139] The William Crolius pottery is shown on the Grim Map of 1813 (depicting the area in 1742) on what appears now to be Block 155. The well-known and best-documented potteries of the Crolius family were a significant component of the pottery industry which played an important role in the local economy of colonial New York.

On the north side of Reade Street, the Manhattan Water Company built a forty-one-foot diameter water tank -- an iron tank supported on a masonry foundation -- which apparently supplemented the

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[135]Smith, 208 and figures 25 and 34. She notes that the facade was almost identical to Plate XIX in Daniel D. Badger's Architecural Iron Works Catalog of 1865.

[136]Smith, pp. 98, 208 and figures 32 and 33.

[137]Smith, p. 100 and figures 35 and 36.. She notes that the capitals are similar to the "Stewart" capital illustrated in Daniel D. Badger's Architectural Iron Works Catalog of 1865.

[138]Stokes, Plate 27A.

[139]See note 77 for sources on the early potteries in the area.

company's reservoir south of Reade Street.[140] The tank was above one of the company's wells. "Manhattan Wells" became a place name for the property owned by the company, and was used in the Clarkson Crolius pottery marks of the period. Around 1850, the Beebe Iron Works operated an iron foundry on the site of the Manhattan Water works on the north side of Reade Street. The firm of Morris & Cummings established an iron foundry and millstone supply firm on Duane Street in the early 1840s and soon had premises on both sides of the street between Centre and Elm Streets. During the 1850s, the D.D. Badger Iron Works and the Turner and Lane glass cutting operation occupied adjacent premises at 42-46 Duane Street. The Connor type-foundry occupied much of the block at the end of the nineteenth century.[141]

The extension and widening of Elm Street, subsequently renamed Lafayette Street, during the 1890s cut off the eastern edge of the southern half of Block 155 and prompted redevelopment near the new commercial thoroughfare.

The Jones Building, 5-13 Elk Street and 52-58 Duane Street

The ten-story Jones Building, designed by architect Albert Wagner, was built in 1897-99. The site of the Jones Building included a portion of the iron works on the block and several small structures near the corner of Elm (Elk) Street and Duane Street. The building, privately owned, remains in commercial use.

Court Square Building, 2 Lafayette Street, 4-12 Reade Street, and 42-50 Duane Street

In 1925, around the time the new New York County Court House was nearing completion, construction began on the twenty-one-story Court Square Building, designed by Buchman & Kahn. The building was named after the open area west of the Court House, which was named Foley Square in 1926. The building, which has housed municipal offices since the 1960s, was acquired by the City of New York in 1981.

Archaeological Resources in the African Burial Ground

The extent of the resource

In some areas of the African Burial Ground the intensive nineteenth and twentieth-century development that took place did not obliterate the strata of burials. Preserved burials are believed to exist under the basements of many of the buildings on the north side of Reade Street, and under the buildings standing on the south side of Reade Street between Elk Street and Broadway (see *fig. 21*). Burials may also exist under the streetbeds of Chambers Street, Reade Street, a portion of Duane Street, and Elk Street -- all of which were within the historic expanse of the burial ground -- within the historic district. It can be assumed that the original ground surface, into which grave shafts were dug, sloped northward from the flat area of the Commons (now City Hall Park) below Chambers Street down to the depth of approximately twenty feet below present grade in the archaeological excavation of the Pavilion site. The deep foundations of the Emigrant Industrial Savings Bank and the Hall of Records are believed to extend deeper than the original ground surface, and therefore the construction of those buildings would have destroyed most remnants of the burial ground there. The subway lines beneath Centre Street and Lafayette Street have probably destroyed any remains to the east of the lot lines of Blocks 153 and 155. A similar condition occurs along Broadway, where there is also a subway tunnel.

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[140]This tank, the date of construction of which remains undetermined, was enclosed in a three-story building and stood until 1914 when that building was demolished. See Edward Hagaman Hall, "Manhattan Company Reservoir Demolished," American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society, *Twentieth Annual Report*, (1915): 203-210, plates 5 and 6.

[141]These companies are documented in the tax assessment records, city directories, and nineteenth-century city atlases.

A portion of the archaeological site on Block 154 (the Pavilion site) was only partially excavated and is known still to contain burials. In the northeasternmost portion of that site, nineteenth-century buildings had relatively shallow basements which may have cut only into fill. Here, the original ground surface may still be preserved, and grave markers may be *in situ*, as was the case in the western end of Republican Alley. An estimated 200 to 300 burials are thought to be preserved below the graded surface.

Description of excavated remains[142]

Demolition debris from recent structures covered much of the area excavated by archaeologists within Block 154. In some places, nineteenth-century deposits were encountered, notably beneath Republican Alley and beneath buildings with shallow basements. Once these layers were removed, roughly rectangular soil stains representing grave pits were sometimes clearly visible. In the area where the early ground surface was preserved, several graves were marked. In two or possibly three cases, headstones remained *in situ*, and several graves were outlined in cobbles and fieldstones.

The excavations in Block 154 uncovered preserved burials beneath Republican Alley, which had remained relatively undisturbed since 1795 when it was laid out. The bottoms of grave shafts beneath the alley were at depths of from 6.53 feet above sea level at the west end to -.23 feet below sea level at the eastern end. Burials were also found extending north of the alley beneath the basements of some Duane Street lots. Bottoms of grave shafts were at a maximum elevation of 7.13 feet above sea level beneath the westernmost excavated lot and as deep as -1.52 feet below sea level further east. The area covered by burials spread slightly north of the boundary of the Van Borsum patent. It is likely this boundary was not clearly marked throughout much of the African Burial Ground's history, and there is no reason to suppose that those who used the ground always knew its exact location. However, a series of post-holes was discovered running from west to east in a line roughly corresponding to the old patent boundary. This may be the remains of a fence which marked the northern extent of the Van Borsum property (or the southern boundary of the "Calk Hook" Farm). This indicates that even though burials extend at least thirty to thirty-five feet further north, at one time the burial ground may have been contained south of the fenced line, within the patent boundary. In the westernmost lot that was excavated, archaeologists also exposed a ditch to the north of the presumed fence line. The ditch also runs in a line parallel to the old patent boundary, and may have been another marker of the property line and of the burial ground's northern limit. This evidence suggests that the northern boundary definition varied slightly in the eighteenth century.

The soil which filled each grave shaft contained material that had either been placed in the grave or had lain in or on the surrounding soil at the time of interment. This material, which included fragments of brick, nails, glass, ceramics, animal bone, shell, seeds, and tobacco pipes, was recovered for further analysis. In the central and eastern portions of the archaeological site, the grave shaft fill contained significant amounts of pottery wasters, kiln furniture, and sherds of locally-produced stoneware.

Only a few of the grave shafts contained human remains that had been placed directly in the ground. In the vast majority, remains of wooden coffins were found. These remains consisted of decayed wood stains in the soil and occasional small wood fragments. Coffins were of three types: hexagonal (the majority), rectangular, and four-sided tapering. Iron coffin nails were recovered, but little additional coffin hardware was found. In a few cases, metal handles or decorative cover plates were found on the coffins. Tacks spelling out the initials "H. W." and a date of 1758 or 1738 decorated one coffin lid.

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[142]Howard University and John Milner Associates, Inc., "Draft Research Design," and Edward S. Rutsch and staff, "A Draft Research Design for the Broadway Block, Including an In-progress Fieldwork Summary Report," prepared by Historic Conservation and Interpretation, Inc. for Edwards & Kelcey Engineers, Inc. and the General Services Administration, Region 2, 1992. Information about the African Burial Ground site has been provided by the staffs of John Milner and Associates, Inc. and the General Services Administration; the staff of the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission has conducted many site visits.

Over 400 burials were fully excavated by professional archaeologists. In all but a few cases, the deceased had been laid supine with arms folded over the pelvic area or placed at the sides, and oriented on an east-west axis with the head to the west. Burial artifacts were scarce, mainly consisting of items of personal adornment when identifiable. Approximately 140 glass beads, 130 buttons made of pewter, copper alloy, bone, and shell, nine coins, four rings, four shells, and one fragment of coral were recovered from the coffins. One man's remains were found with five buttons, two of which matched and were gilt-decorated with an anchor design. Perhaps the most spectacular interment was of a woman who was buried wearing a belt or girdle of over one hundred glass trade beads and cowrie shells. In three cases, coins had been placed over the deceased's eyes. One of these pairs of coins were King George II pennies, minted in the 1730s. The other coins await conservation and identification. The most frequent items found in the coffins were brass straight pins, often near the head and upper torso, indicating that many of the dead were at least partially wrapped in shrouds. Infants and very young children appear to have been completely shrouded. In many cases small fragments of hair, and in a few cases small fragments of fabric, were recovered.

Preliminary forensic assessments were conducted in the field but the firm assignment of gender and age to individuals awaits further study. Ninety-three percent of the individuals whose graves have been excavated are thought to be of African origin or descent. Evidence of pathologies such as arthritis was noted in some individuals. An ossified pelvic tumor indicates one individual who suffered from tapeworm; such a discovery is extremely rare. A ball of lead shot was found in one woman's rib-cage, and steel shot was found with another individual. In most cases, based on observations made prior to the exhumation of burials, there is little evidence of traumatic injury or death.

Anomalous burials included several graves containing coffins but no human remains. One burial held the remains of an individual of European origin who had undergone an autopsy. These burials point to the possibility that the burial ground was occasionally robbed for cadavers and perhaps used for disposal of remains by physicians or students from the nearby New York Hospital.[143] In addition, three burials were oriented north-south rather than east-west, and one individual was buried head-to-east instead of west.

FOLEY SQUARE

Block 155, North Half, and Block 158, West Portion

The northern portion of Block 155, between Duane and Pearl Streets, included at its northeast corner the powder house (powder magazine) site. In the early 1830s the city subdivided the powder house site into lots for sale, and some of the site became Centre Street (just south of Pearl Street). (See *fig. 15* for the pre-1835 configuration of the area.) In 1835 Centre Street was extended south of Pearl Street and became the eastern boundary of the block. Small dwellings built along Pearl Street during the 1830s were replaced later with store and loft buildings of around five stories.

The firm of Morris & Cummings established an iron foundry and millstone supply firm on Duane Street in the early 1840s and soon had premises on both sides of the street between Centre and Elm Streets (both halves of Blocks 155). Later, the Columbia Iron Foundry occupied the Morris & Cummings site on the north side of Duane Street. The extension and widening of Elm Street, subsequently renamed Lafayette Street, during the 1890s cut through the foundry site and created the small, triangular eastern portion of Block 155. The mid-nineteenth-century building at the corner of Lafayette and Pearl Streets received a new Lafayette Street facade after the acquisition of land for the construction of the street had reduced the size of the lot on which it stood. During the early twentieth century, a narrow, five-story building stood on the northeast corner of the site, and a three-story building extended through the block from Centre Street to Lafayette Street. When the subways were constructed under Lafayette and Centre

[143]See Claude Heaton, "Body Snatching in New York City," *New York State Journal of Medicine* 43 (1943): 1861-1865 and Jules Calvin Ladenheim, "'The Doctors' Mob' of 1788," *Journal of the History of Medicine* 5 (1950):23-43 for more on this subject.

Streets during the first decades of the twentieth century, subway stairs were built at the southern ends of both small triangles.

When a site was purchased for the New York County Court House in 1912, it included the two small triangles south of Pearl Street (Blocks 155, north half, and 158, west portion), as well as the larger block north of Pearl Street which is now known as Thomas Paine Park (not within the district boundaries). The Court House site was planned to create a "new City Square" with a "noble approach from the south and open space to the west."[144] The Block 158 triangle was already owned by the City; the one west of Centre Street was acquired at that time. A slight modification of the Court House site left the small blocks unchanged except for a slight shifting of Pearl Street to the south between Lafayette Street and Park Street. The open space in front of the New York County Court House, named Foley Square in 1926, became the focus of a new governmental center developed during the early twentieth century.

Archaeological resources in Foley Square

Subway lines run beneath Centre and Lafayette Streets, converging in the southern part of Foley Square at the connected Brooklyn Bridge (IRT) and Chambers Street (BMT) stations. Archaeological resources may survive in a small area, which is shown on *fig. 22*, a portion of Block 155 triangle.

This area is the southern portion of three lots which comprise part of the site of the eighteenth-century **powder house**. The northern halves of the lots lie beneath the sidewalk and the present alignment of Pearl Street, and were completely disturbed by the construction of a power substation in 1988.

The powder magazine was located on a small island or spit of land between the Collect and Little Collect ponds. The entire area was low-lying, and substantial filling is believed to have taken place, which would have protected deposits below. Nineteenth-century buildings on the powder house lots probably had only single basements which were dug mainly into fill. Historical evidence indicates that executions sometimes took place at the powder house, and it is especially significant that those convicted in the 1741 slave "conspiracy" were apparently executed here. Since the bodies of executed persons sometimes were buried near or at the foot of the gallows, burials may be found in the small area identified. Moreover, since it is located very near the known area of the African Burial Ground, the island in the pond may actually have been part of the land used by New York's African community to bury their dead prior to the construction of the powder house.

[144]New York City, Board of Estimate and Apportionment *Minutes* (January 11, 1912): 225.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture, and other features of this area, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the African Burial Ground and the Commons Historic District contains buildings and other improvements which have a special character and special historical and aesthetic interest and value and which represent one or more eras in the history of New York City and which cause this area, by reason of these factors, to constitute a distinct section of the city.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the African Burial Ground and the Commons Historic District, which is a major portion of the New Amsterdam Commons as set off by the Dutch colonial government, has undergone intense public use since the mid-seventeenth century, resulting in the overlay of many significant historic improvements and resources -- both above ground and below -- all of which document the changing nature of this important area long devoted to communal, public, and civic purposes; that the City Hall Park portion of the Commons -- New York's approximation of a courthouse square or village green -- survives as one of the city's earliest gathering places where the community assembled for both celebration and protest; that the northern portion of the Commons, southwest of the Collect Ponds and in the vicinity of where many Africans had been granted farms during the seventeenth century (now the several blocks just north of City Hall Park), was used as the African Burial Ground during most of the eighteenth century and possibly as early as the seventeenth century; that this separate burial ground reflects the establishment at an early date of the parallel society of Africans in New York City, one of the largest urban African populations in the American colonies during the eighteenth century, and physical evidence from the burial ground indicates that it was a focus of the community's identity for nearly one hundred years; that the African Burial Ground, which was preserved under a deep layer of fill, is pending designation as a National Historic Landmark, and that the archaeological excavation of a portion of the site has provided and will continue to provide rare, important, material evidence of eighteenth-century African life and culture in New York; that the African Burial Ground, which is one of the very few preserved eighteenth-century African burial grounds in the Americas, is historically significant since it serves as a memorial to a people who came to America in bondage rather than by choice, and who lived, died, and were buried within a community which has been largely unacknowledged in historical studies of the colonial world; that by the mid-1660s, the portion of the Commons which is now City Hall Park was in use as a communal pasture, and such communal use of vacant, unpatented lands was confirmed by the Dongan Charter of 1686 and the Montgomerie Charter of 1730; that although the Commons was still generally regarded as a place for pasturage and various industrial activities, the area began to be used during the 1720s for such governmental activities as executions (near both Park Row and the Collect Ponds) and the storage of the community's powder in a powder magazine located between the Collect Ponds; that the Commons was isolated enough from the rest of the city to be considered an appropriate location for the construction of an almshouse complex, begun in 1735; that, nevertheless, during the 1730s and 1740s, public gatherings were held on the Commons to celebrate holidays, including the Pinkster celebration of the African population, and other events; that the military used the Commons as a parade grounds, as a defensive position in the 1740s (constructing a palisade with blockhouses across what is now Chambers Street and the northern end of City Hall Park and a powder magazine in the area), and, during the mid- to late-eighteenth century, as the site of several barracks; that the Commons became more firmly established as the appropriate site for the location of welfare and punitive institutions at the northern edge of the city with the construction of the "New Gaol" in 1757-59 and the Bridewell for vagrants in 1775, and and that many burials associated with these institutions, as well as the almshouse and the barracks, took place in the Commons; that during the pre-Revolutionary period the Commons became the locus for mass meetings and demonstrations in opposition to British policies, and the contest for control of the Commons between the local populace and British soldiers and over the succession of Liberty Poles erected as monuments to freedom fostered civic identification with that most "public" of places; that at the end of the eighteenth century, a portion of the "Calk Hook" farm and the Van Borsum patent, encompassing the African Burial Ground, were divided

into lots for development (1785 and 1795), the Common Council authorized the acquisition of a portion of the burial ground for the laying out of Chambers Street (1796), and a second almshouse was constructed (1796-97); that the Commons was transformed into the seat of local government with the construction of City Hall, begun in 1803, and with the landscaping of the Commons south of the building; that this portion of the Commons came to be thought of as "The Park" and "City Hall Park" as the open area gradually acquired a more landscaped, park-like character, while during the nineteeth century, the African Burial Ground portion of the Commons to the north of City Hall Park was built over with commercial, public, industrial, and residential buildings; that around 1830 the buildings in the park became devoted entirely to governmental use, and during the mid-nineteenth century, a number of other buildings were erected to house governmental agencies, including the New York County (Tweed) Courthouse; that the design for City Hall Park, adopted in 1870, remains in evidence in the northern portion today; that throughout the nineteenth century, City Hall Park continued to serve as the city's primary gathering place on occasions of joy or sorrow, prosperity or calamity, welcoming or separation, and, as it was described in 1855 by historian Henry B. Dawson, the "resort of the people;" that the symbolic importance of both City Hall and the setting -- considered by an early-twentieth-century observer as "one of the most spacious and delightful squares with which any City Hall in America was surrounded" -- was recognized during many attempts to erect new buildings for governmental purposes in the park during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; that the portion of the Commons which is the site of the African Burial Ground began to be reincorporated into the municipal government center with the construction of the Hall of Records (1899-1907) on the north side of Chambers Street; that portions of what had been the Commons are included in the small blocks south of Pearl Street (flanking Centre Street), the site of the eighteenth-century powder house, which became part of Foley Square in 1926; that in 1965 the city purchased many of the buildings, including the A.T. Stewart Store (the Sun Building) and the Emigrant Industrial Savings Bank, that are standing above the African Burial Ground and now house municipal government agencies; that the long history of public and civic uses -- reflected in the rediscovered African Burial Ground, which gives concrete evidence of the importance of Africans in colonial history, the many governmental buildings in the historic district, and City Hall Park, which still functions as an important gathering place of the city's population -- defines the historic district and reveals its role as the nucleus of New York City's public life.

Accordingly, pursuant to Chapter 74, Section 3020 (formerly Chapter 21, Section 534) of the Charter of the city of New York and Chapter 3 of Title 25 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Historic District the African Burial Ground and the Commons Historic District containing the property bounded by a line beginning at a line beginning at the intersection of the southern curbline of Ann Street and the eastern curbline of Park Row, extending northeasterly along the eastern curbline of Park Row, northerly across the Brooklyn Bridge approach, northerly along the eastern curbline of Centre Street, northeasterly along the eastern edge of Foley Square and the eastern curbline of Park Street, westerly across Park Street, westerly along the southern curbline of Pearl Street, westerly across Lafayette Street, southerly along the western curbline of Lafayette Street, westerly along the northern curbline of Duane Street, westerly across Broadway, southerly along the western curbline of Broadway to the northwest corner of the intersection of Broadway and Vesey Street, and easterly across Broadway, to the point of beginning, Manhattan.

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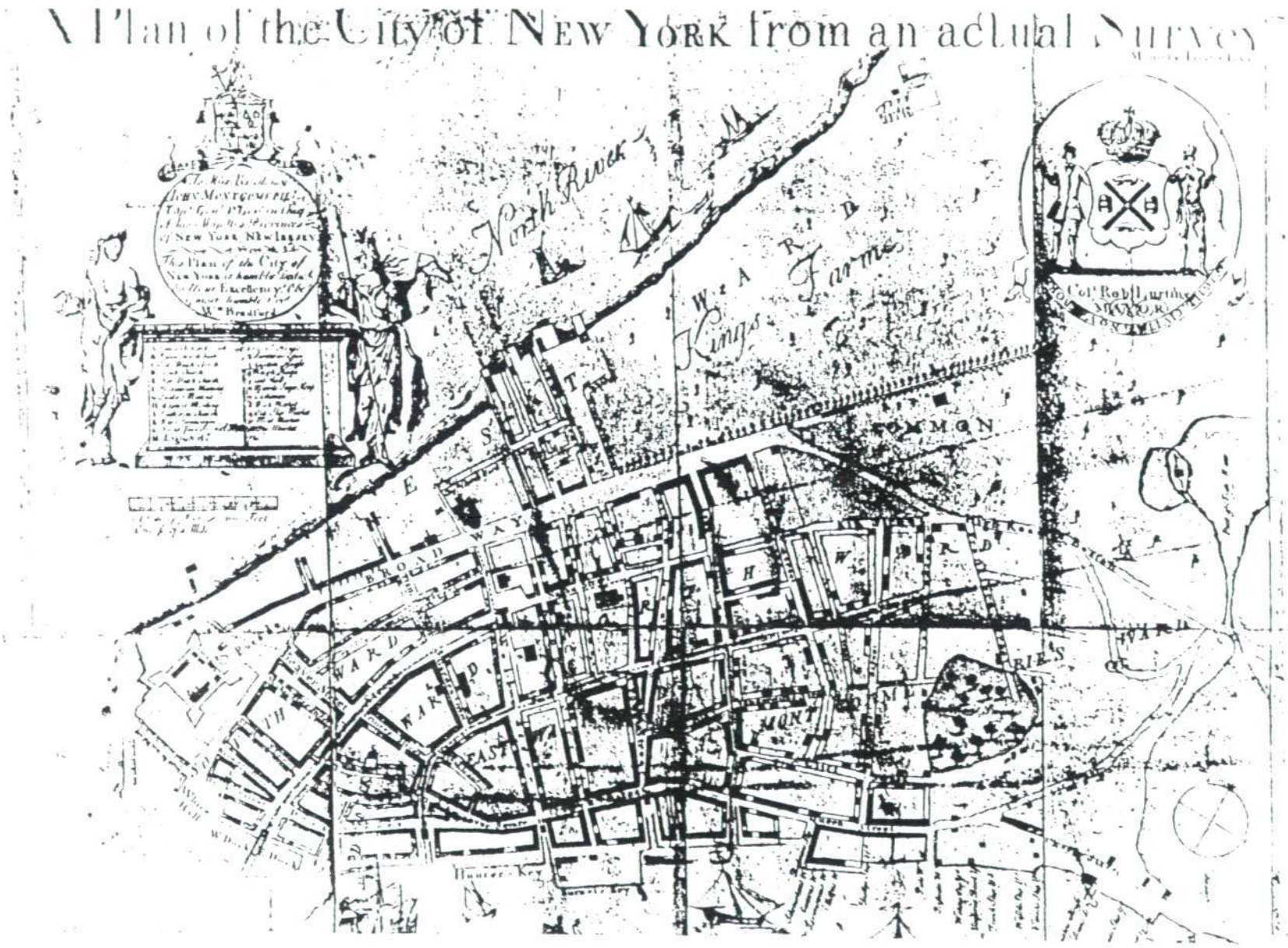


Figure 1 *A Plan of the City of New York from an Actual Survey Made by James Lyne* (The Bradford Map or the Lyne Survey). Cartographer unknown, 1731, depicting 1730 (Stokes, vol. 1, pl. 27).

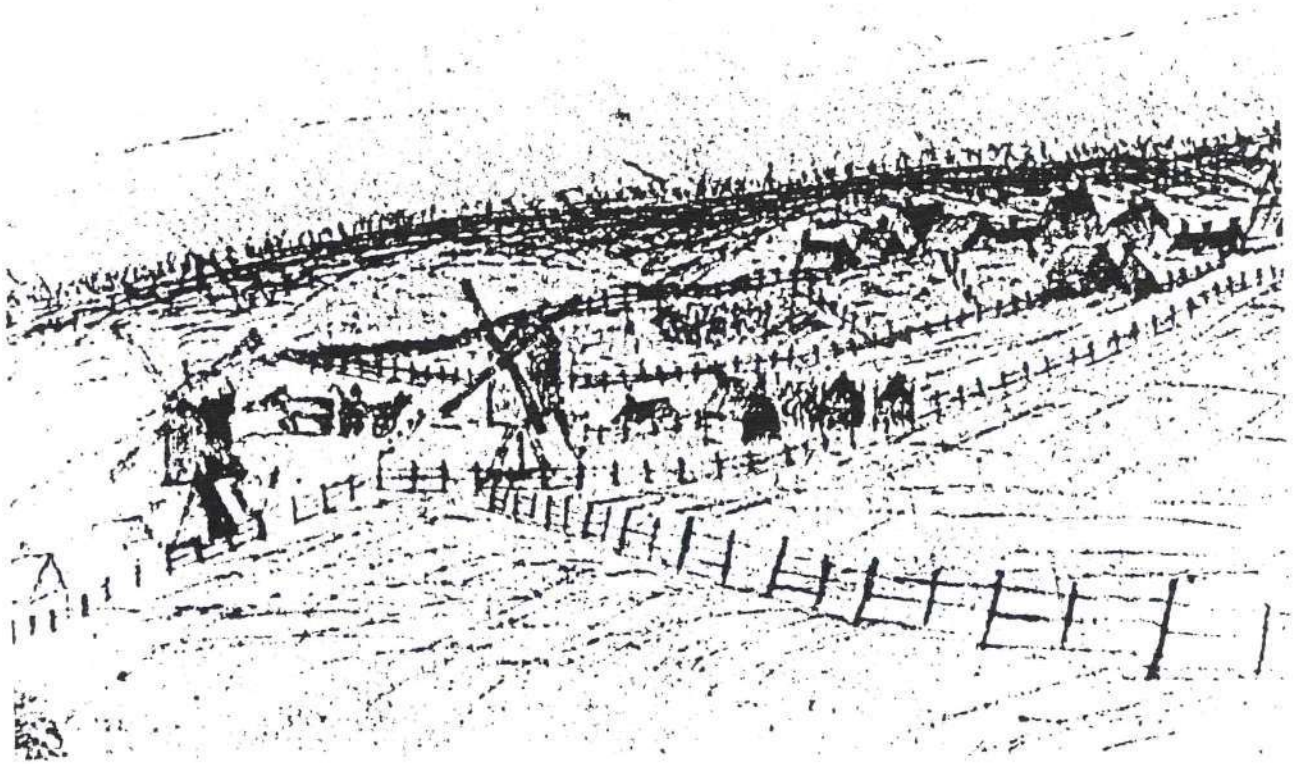
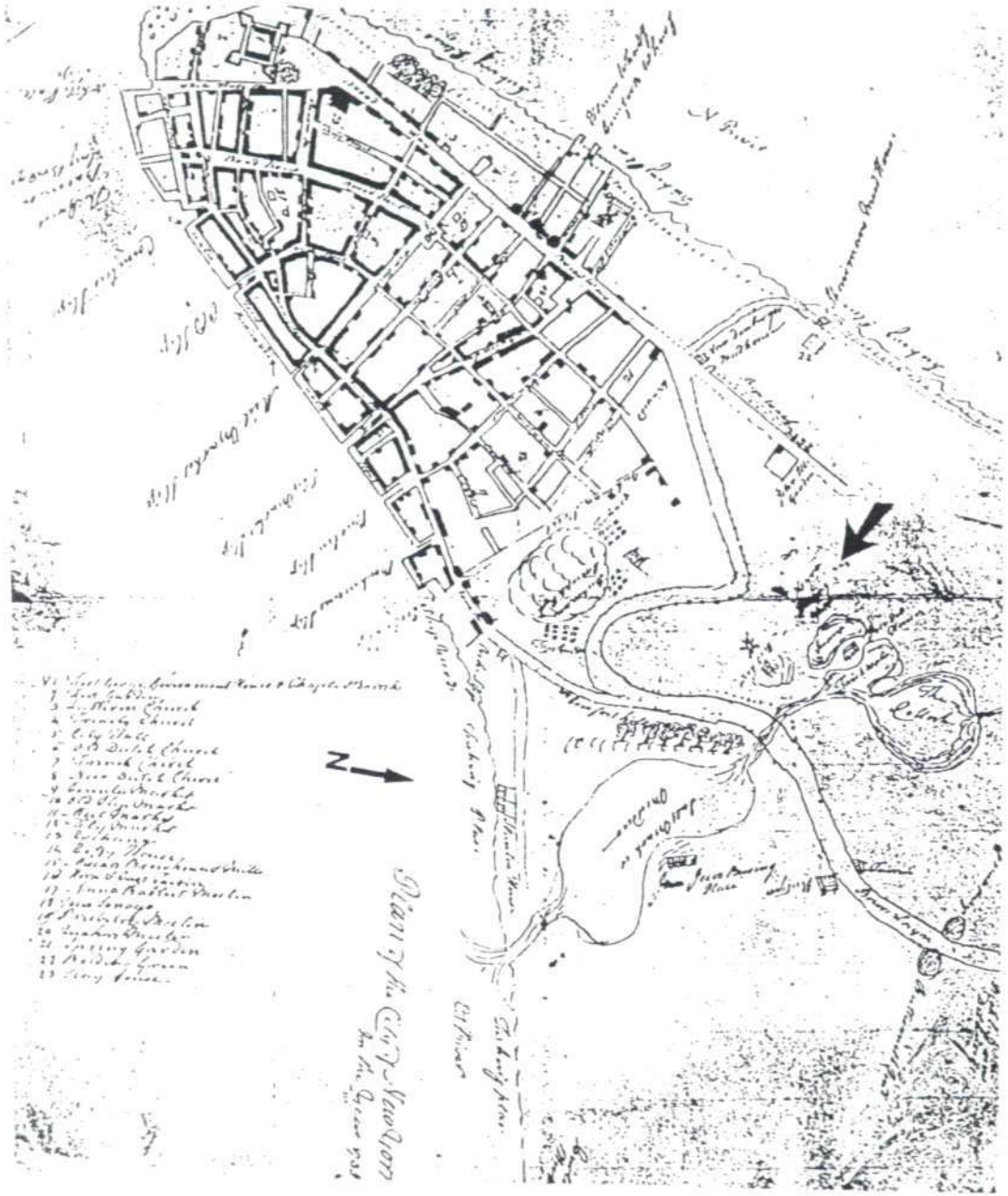


Figure 2 Detail showing the windmill on the Commons of 1663-64 (center) and the De Meyer windmill of 1677 (left) from *N York Van Acteren of Van De Noort Kant* (View of New York from the North Side). Drawing by Jasper Danckaerts, accompanying the Labadist *Journal*, 1679-80 (Stokes, vol. 1, pl. 19).



Detail

Figure 3 "Plan of the City of New York in the Year 1735." Cartographer unknown, 1735, depicting 1732-35 (Stokes, vol. 1, pl. 30). Arrow points to "Negro Burying Place."

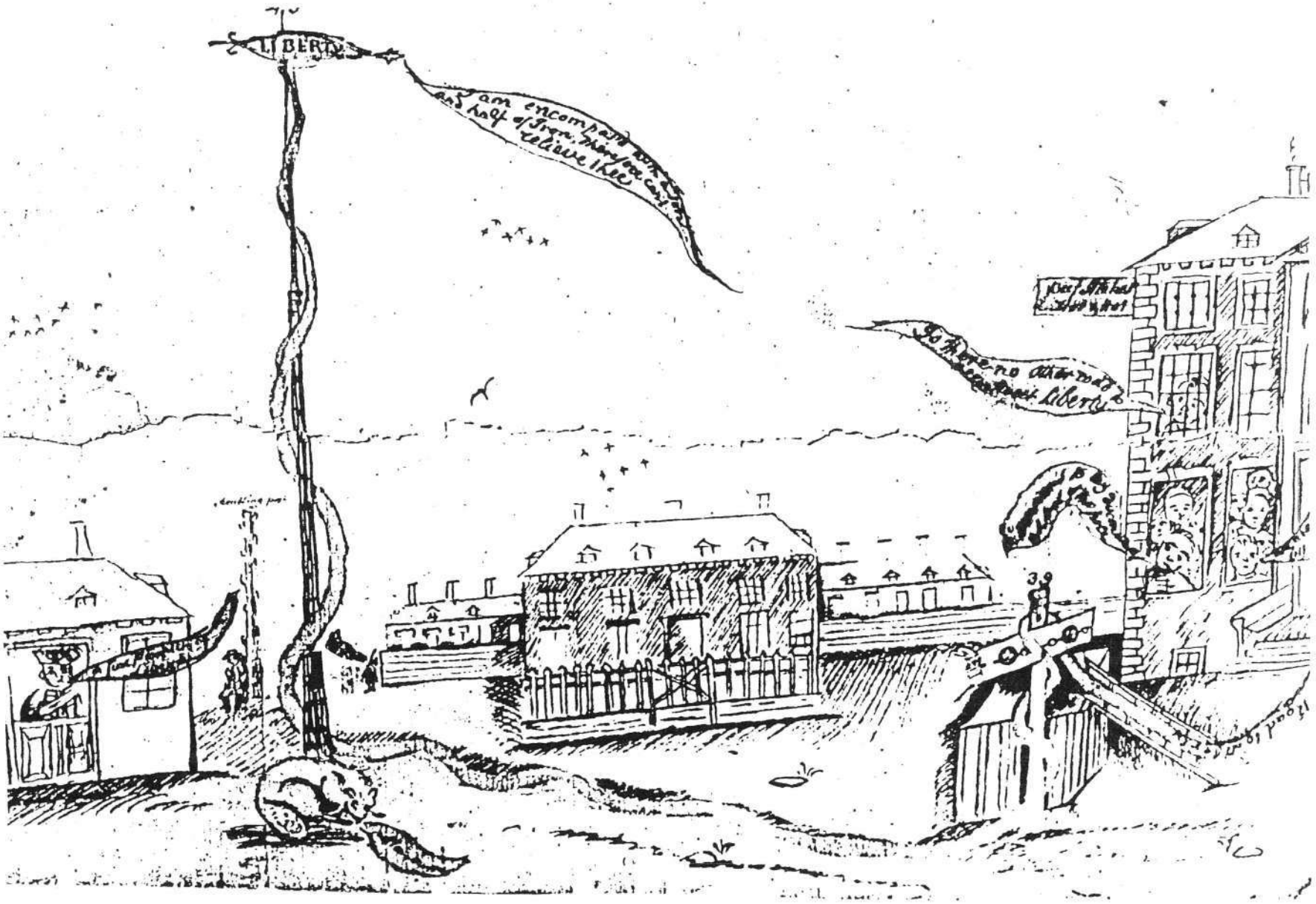


Figure 4 Caricature of the Commons showing the Almshouse (center), Upper Barracks (behind), New Gaol (right), Liberty Pole and John Harris House (left). Political cartoon by Pierre Eugene du Simitiere, 1770 (Stokes, vol. 3, pl. 4b)

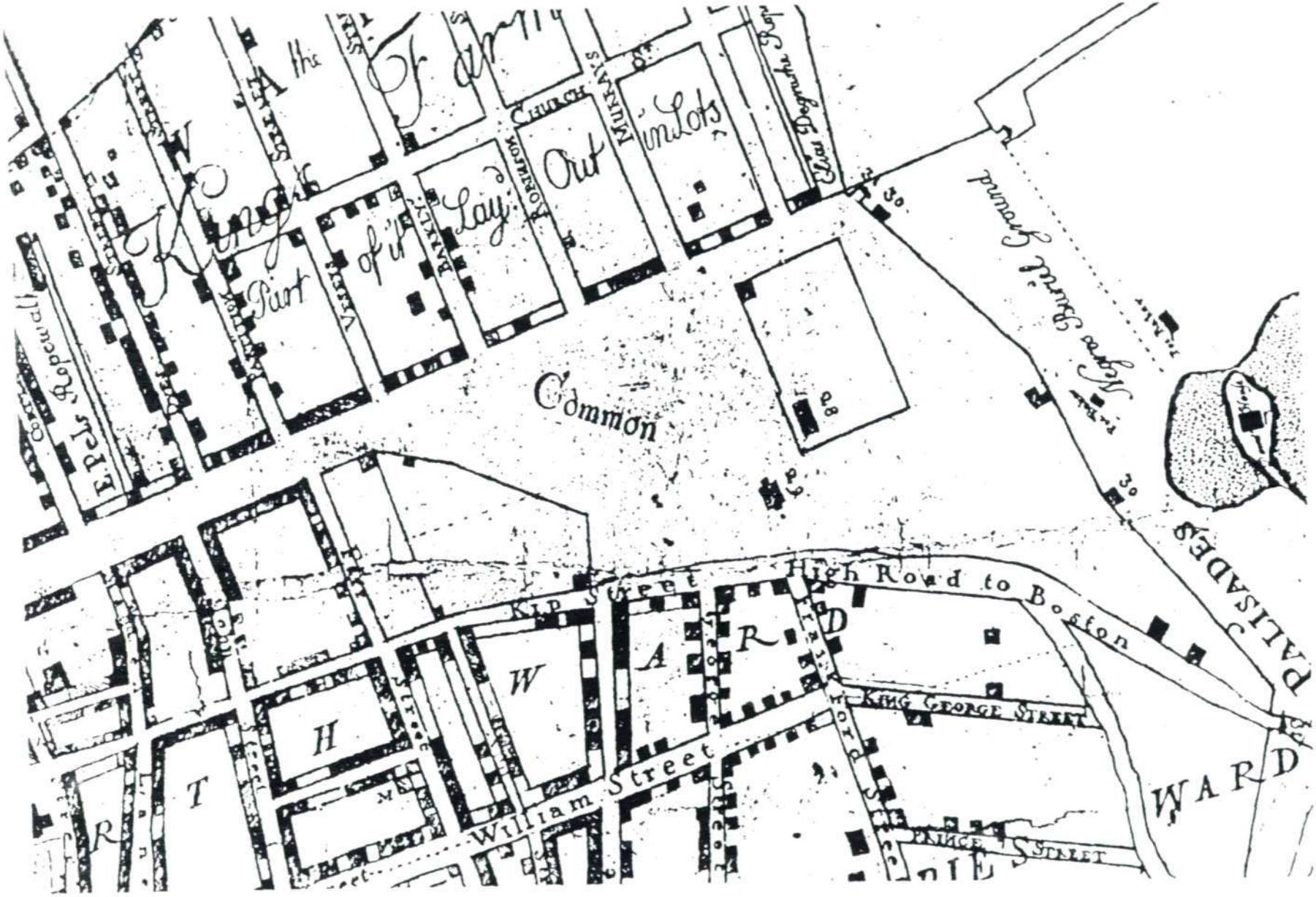


Figure 5 Detail showing the first Almshouse (no. 28), Powder Magazine on the Commons (no. 29), Palisade and Blockhouses (no. 30), from *A Plan of the City of New York from an Actual Survey Anno Domini M,DDC,LV* (The Maerschalck or Duyckinck Plan). F. Maerschalck, 1755, depicting 1754 (Stokes, vol. 1, pl. 34).

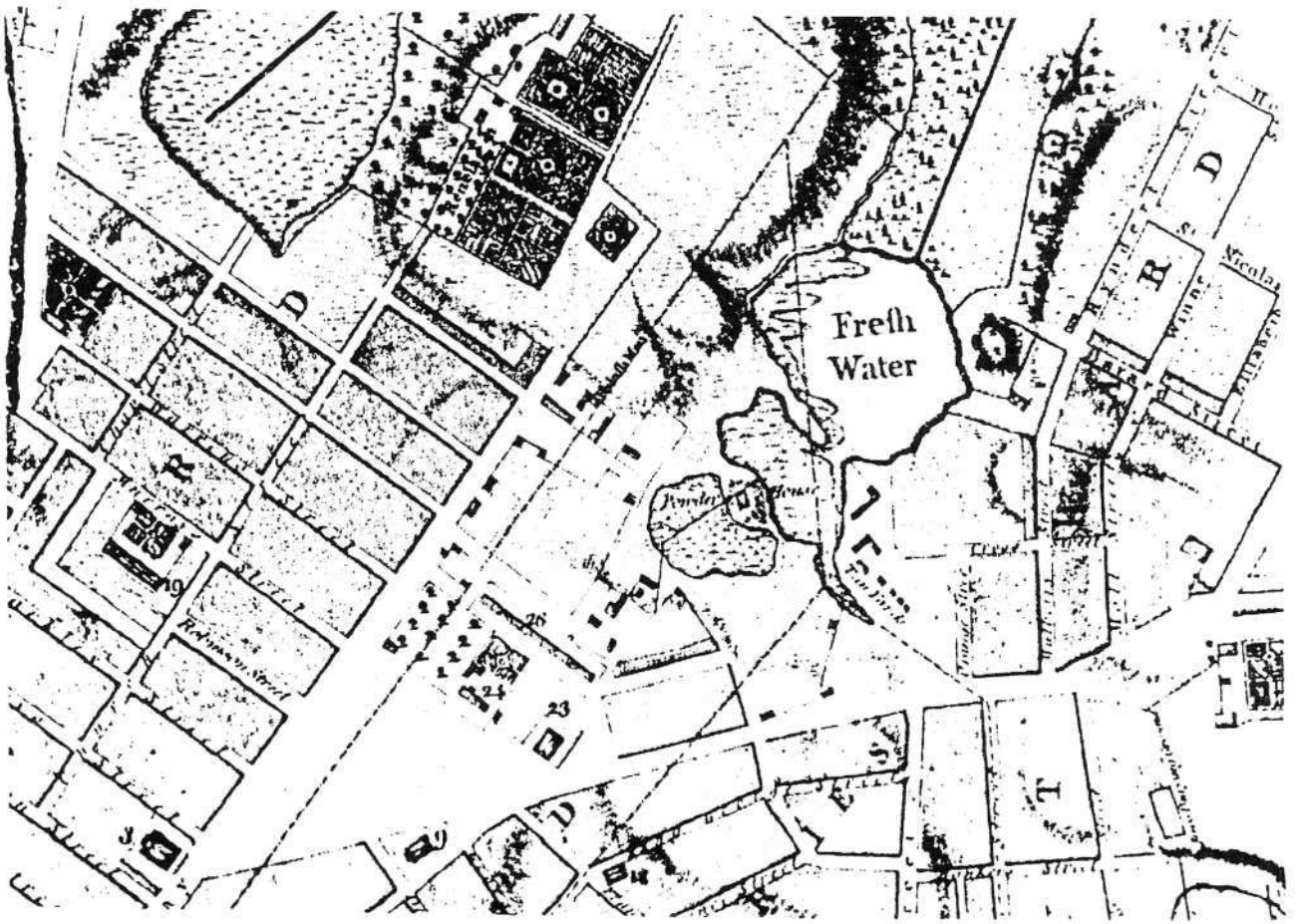


Figure 6 Detail showing the first Almshouse (no. 24), New Gaol (no. 23), and Barracks (no. 26) from *Plan of the City of New York* (The Ratzen Plan). Bernard Ratzen (Ratzer), 1776, depicting 1766-67 (Stokes, vol. 1, pl. 42).

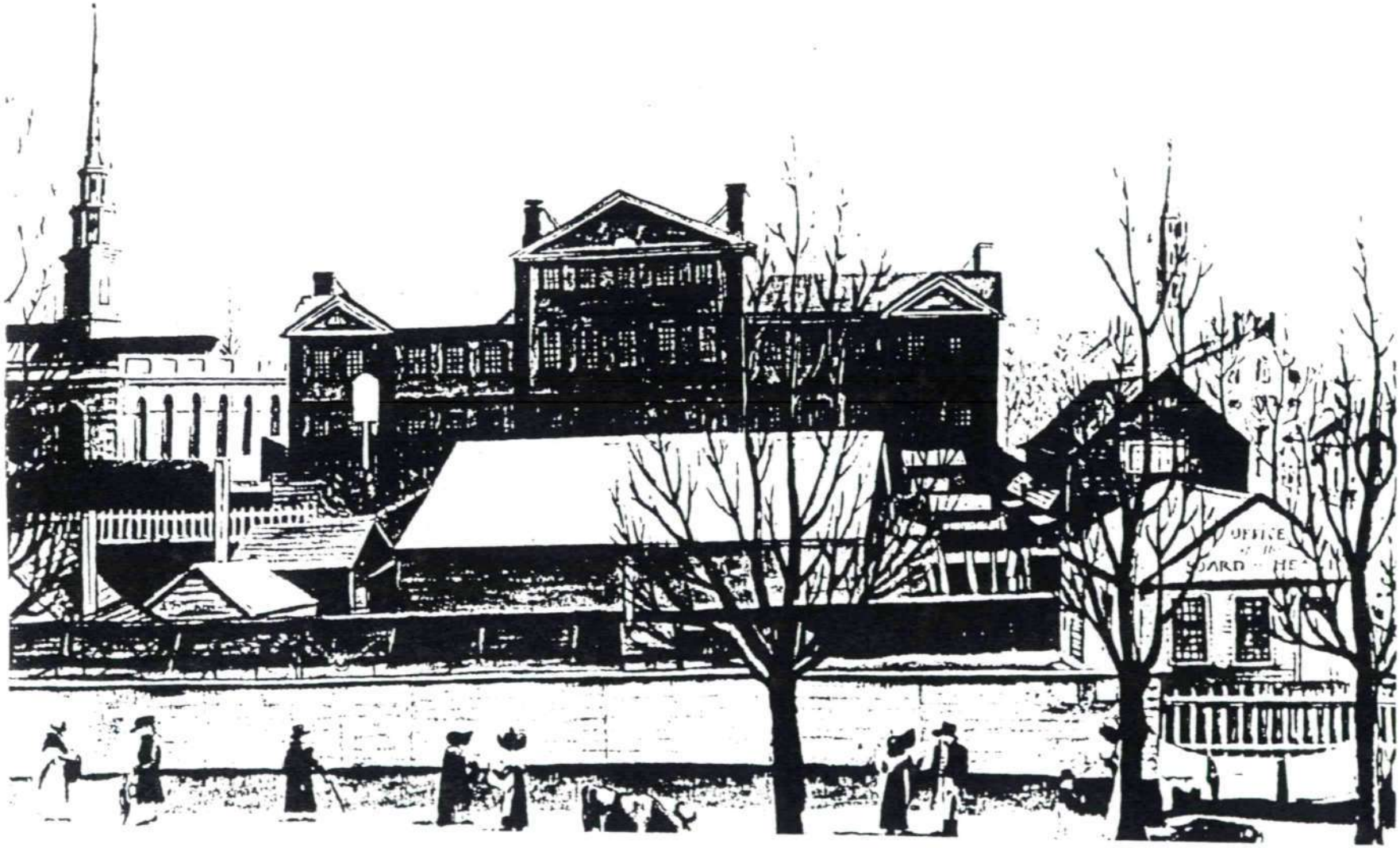


Figure 7 "The Bridewell and Charity School opposite Chambers Street." Watercolor by Baroness Hyde de Neuville, 1808 (*On Being Homeless*, p. 117).

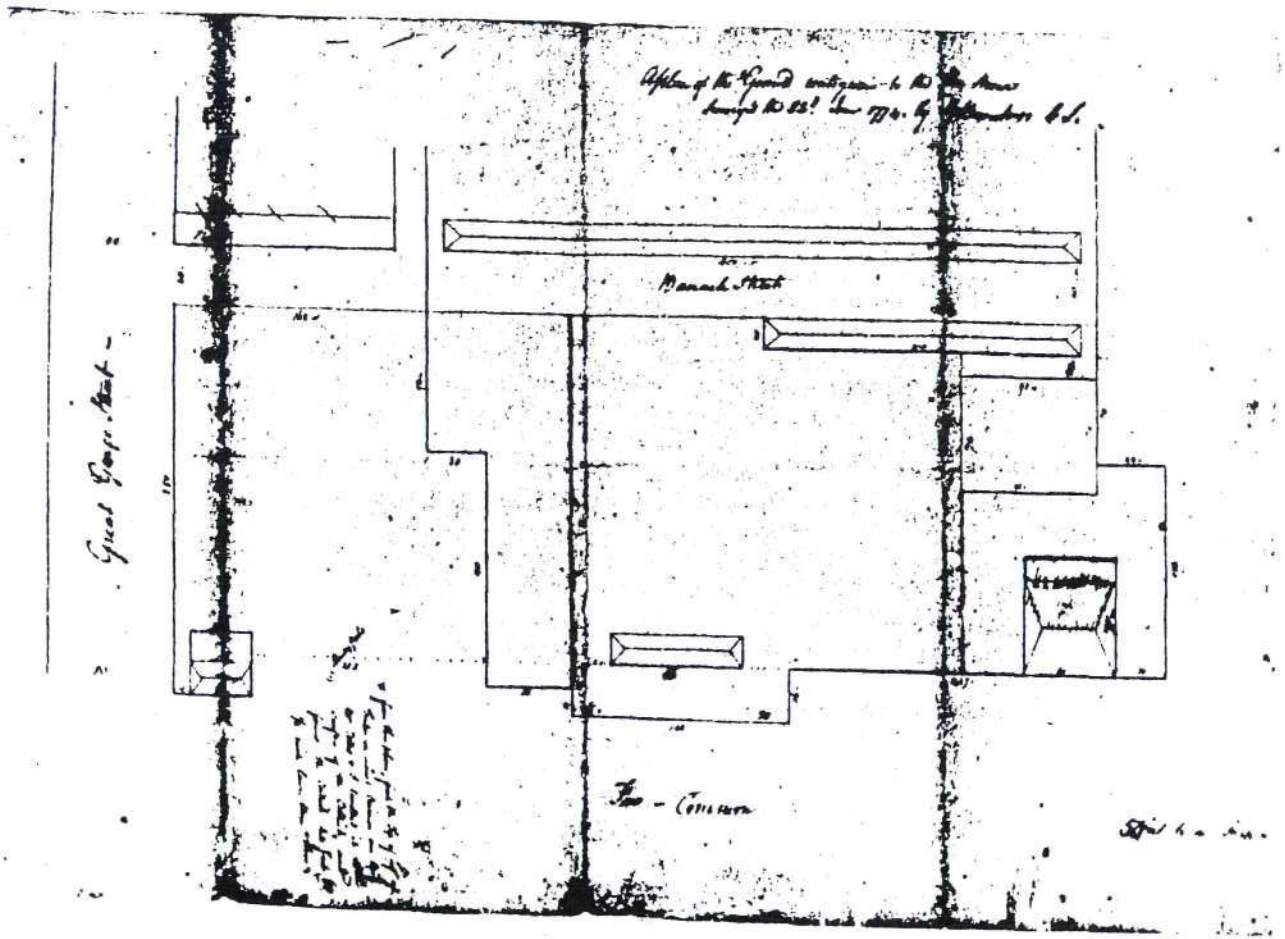


Figure 8 "A Plan of the ground contiguous to the Poor House. Surveyed the 22d June 1774." By Gerard Bancker (Stokes, vol. 4, pl. 40b)

Figure 9 Detail from the "British Headquarters Manuscript Map of New York and Environs." Cartographer unknown, depicting c.1782 (Stokes, vol 1, pl. 50).

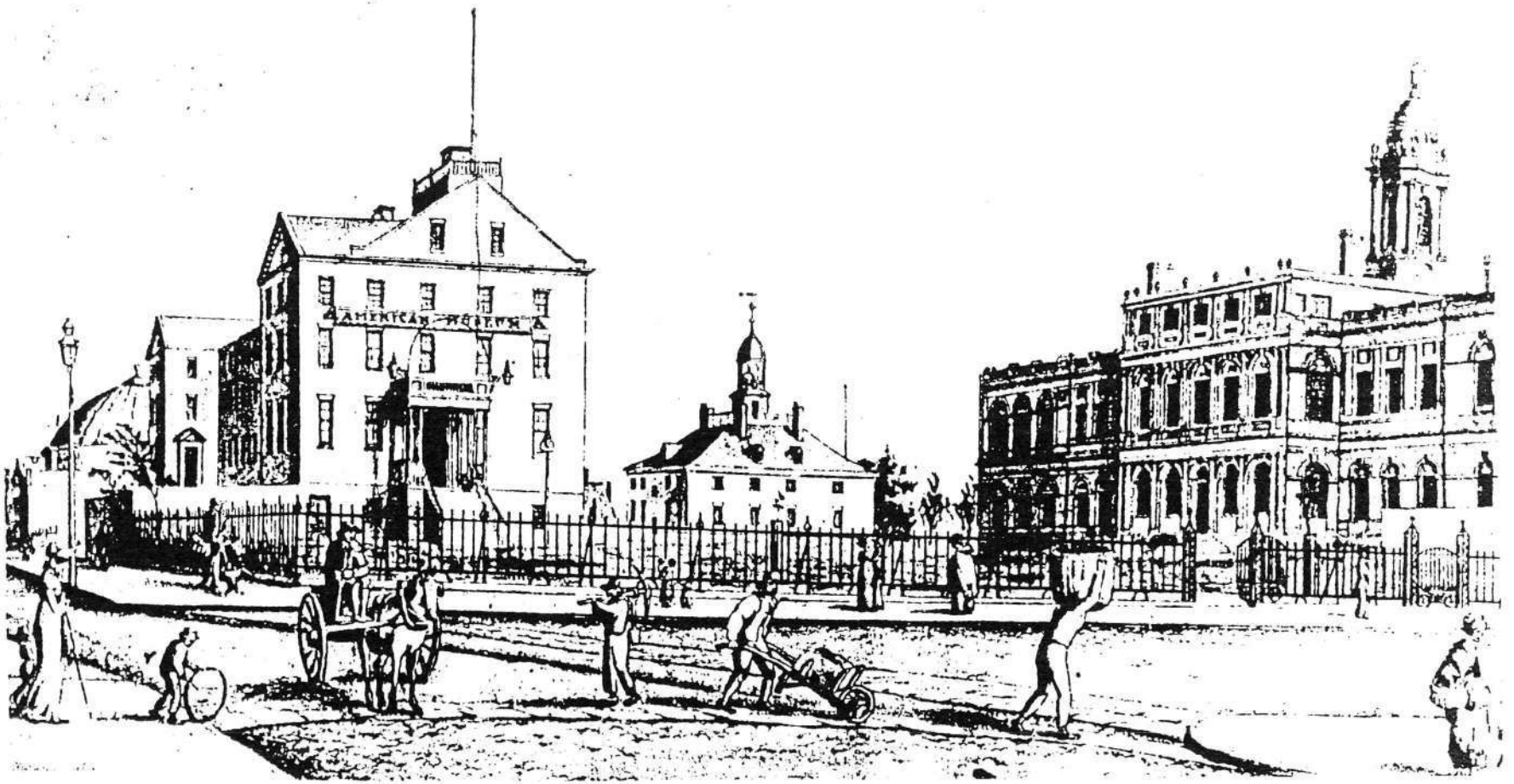


Figure 10 *The Second Almshouse*. Watercolor by Arthur J. Stansbury, c. 1825, depicting City Hall (right), the "New Gaol" (center), the Second Almshouse [The American M

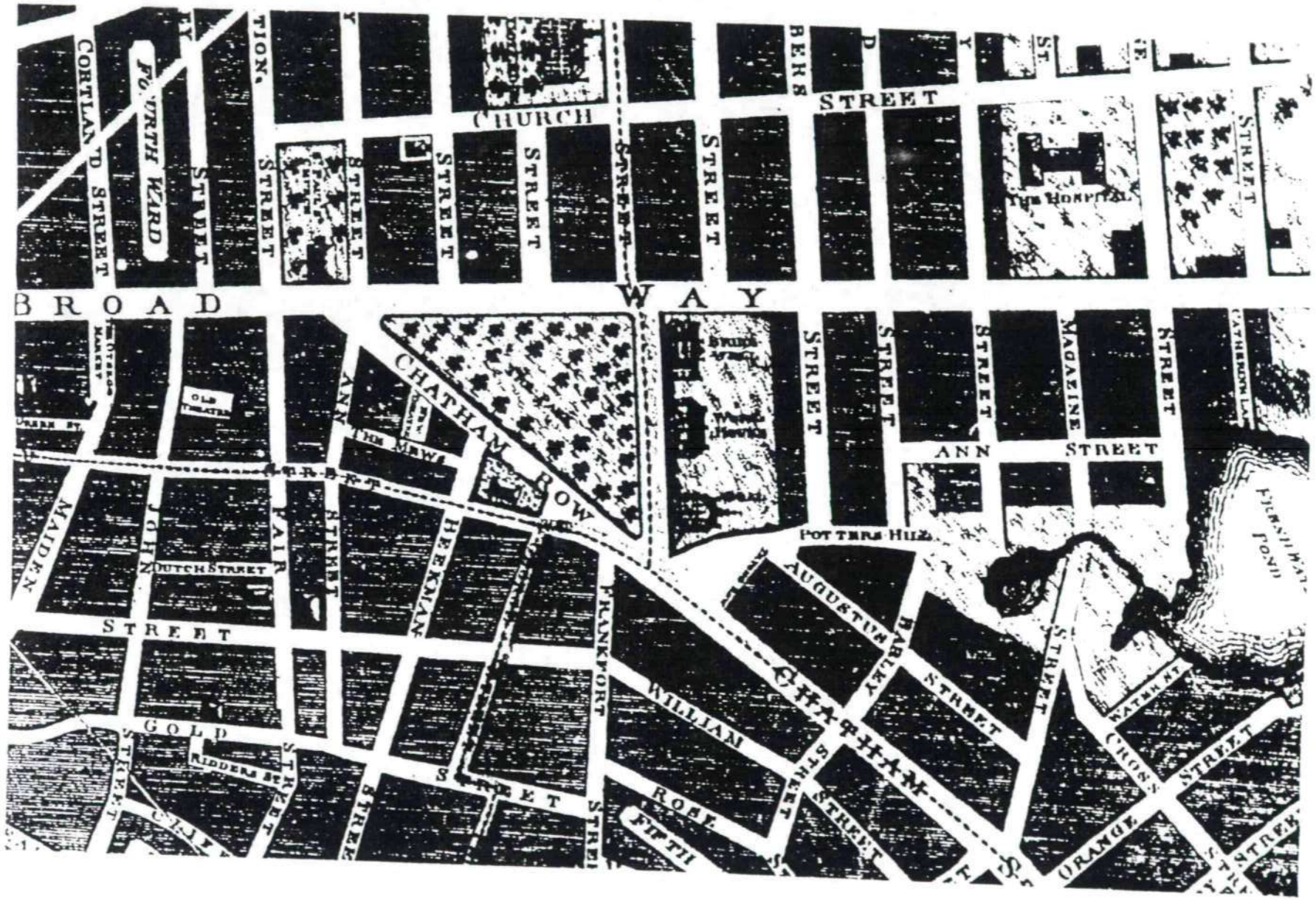


Figure 11 *A New and Accurate Plan of the City of New York in the State of New York in North America*. B. Taylor, 1797, depicting 1796 (Stokes, vol. 1, pl. 64).

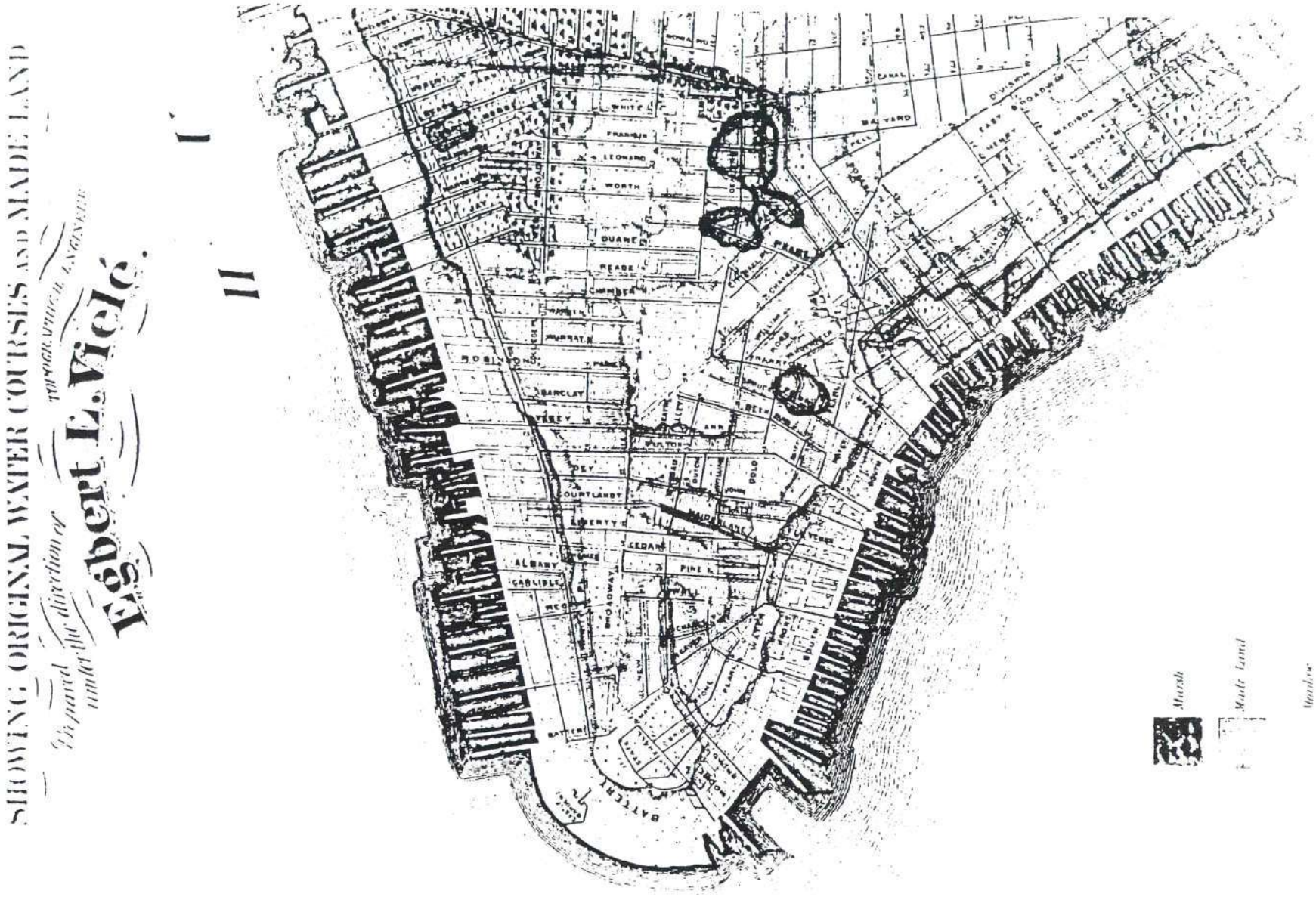


Figure 12 Sanitary and Topographical Map of the City and Island of New York (The Viele Map). Egbert L. Viele, 1865, depicting 1864 (Stokes,

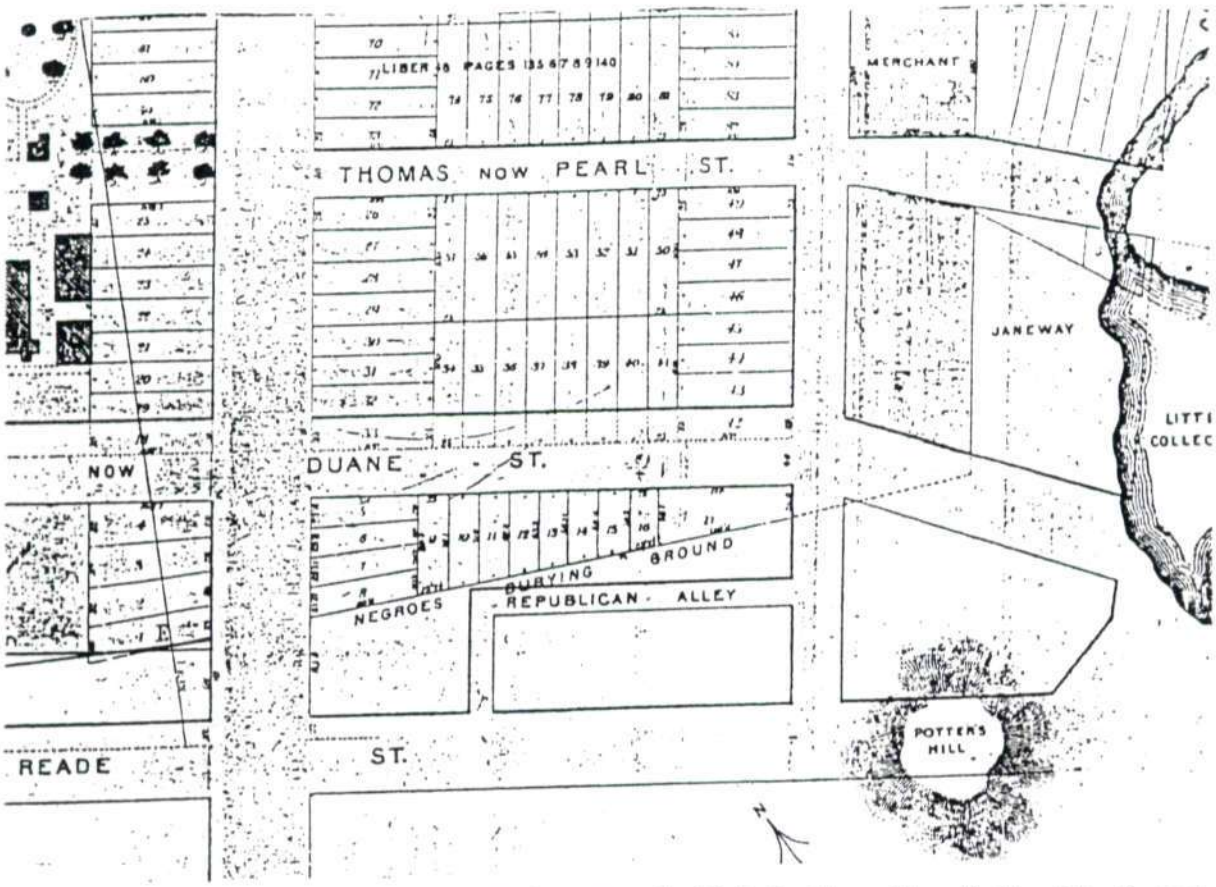


Figure 13A *Map of the property formerly known as the 'Calk Hook'. . .* Compiled by John B. Holmes, C.E. and City Surveyor. Municipal Archives, Farm Map Number 6. This map was based on the 1785 survey of the Calk Hook property, filed with the partition deed.

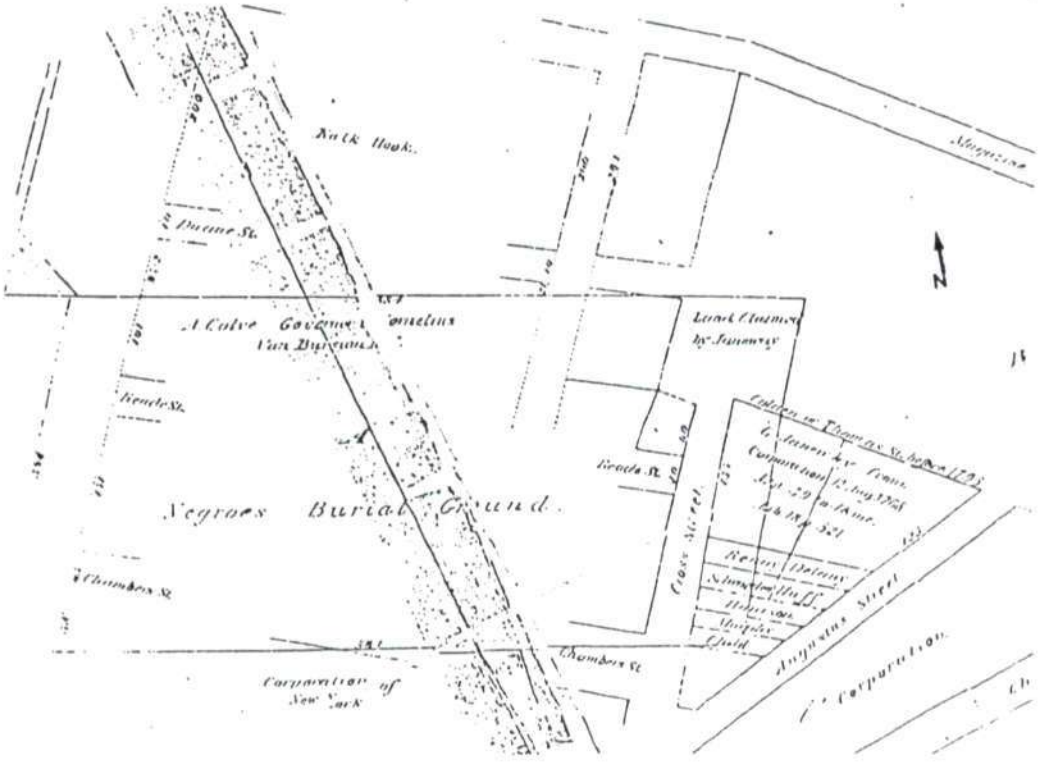


Figure 13B Survey map of the Van Borsum Patent/"Negroes Burial Ground" showing location in relation to Chambers, Reade, and Duane Streets. From Hoffman, Vol. 2, Diagram 8.

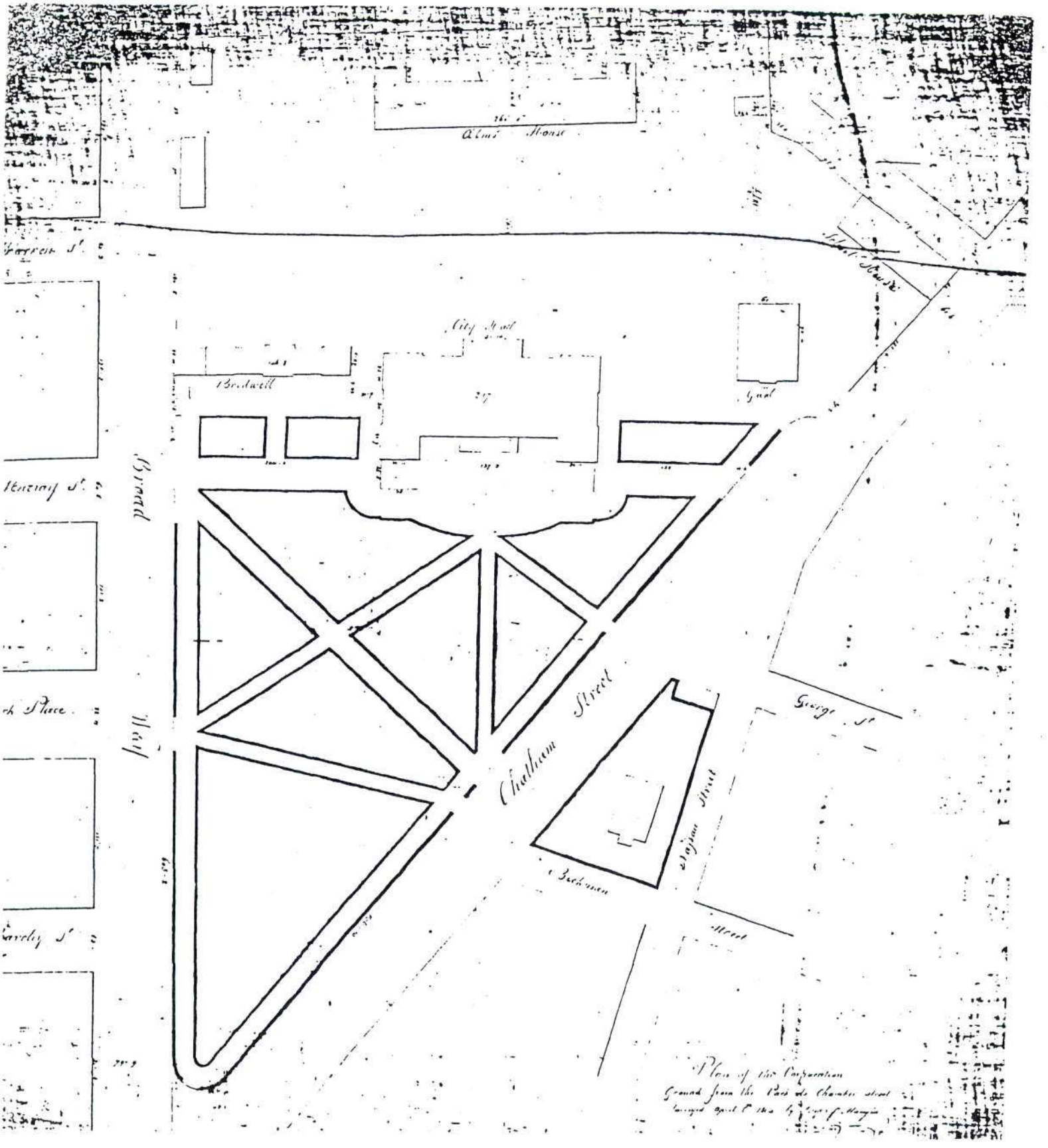


Figure 14 "Plan of the Corporation Ground from the Park to Chamber Street." Joseph F. Mangin, 1804. In the Office of the Bureau of Topography, Manhattan Borough President (Kestenbaum, fig. 3).

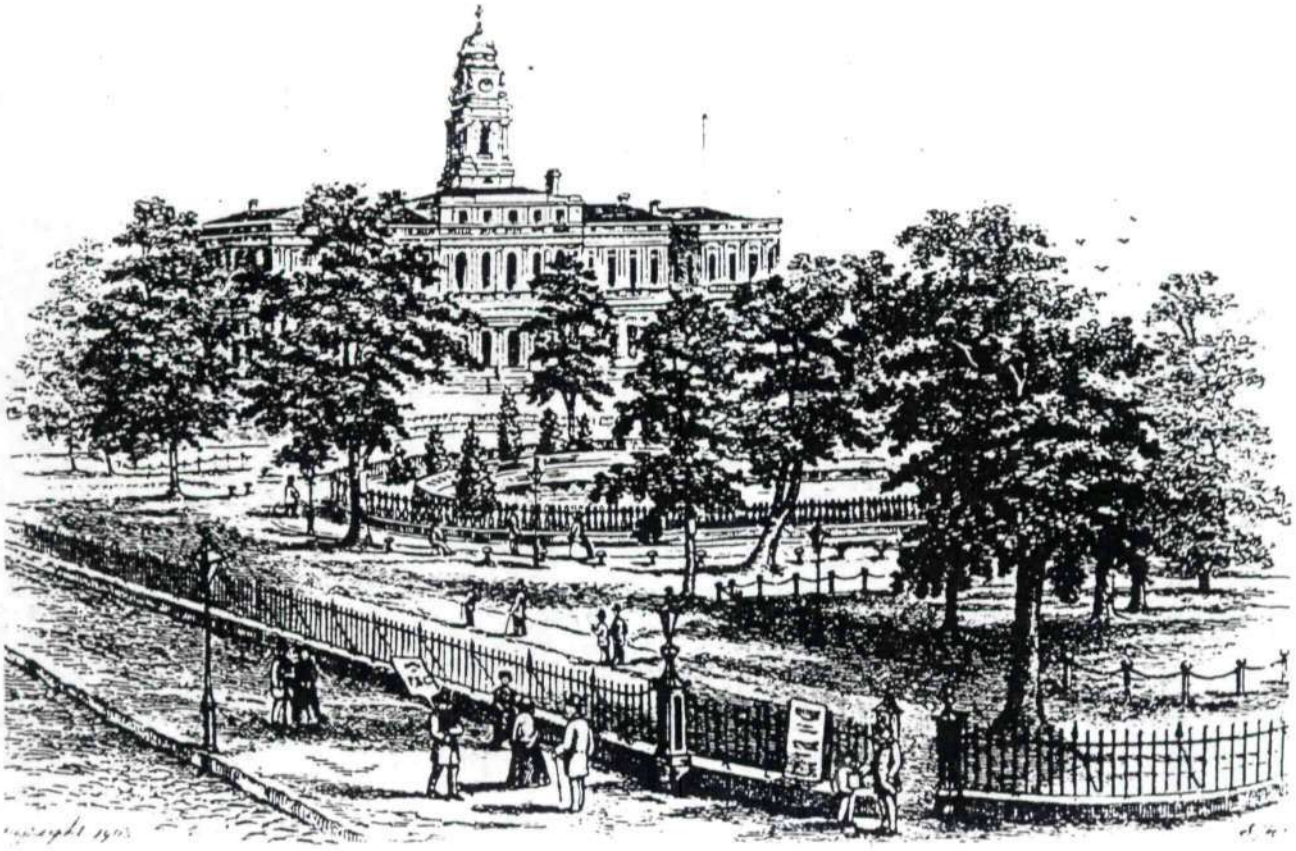


Figure 15 *City Hall and the Park, 1849.* Lithograph by S. Hollyer, 1903. (LPC Research Files).

Figure 16 *A Map of the City of New York* (The Goodrich Plan). Engraving by H. Anderson, published by A.T. Goodrich, 1827. In the Office of the Bureau of Topography, Manhattan Borough President (Photograph: Carl Foster).

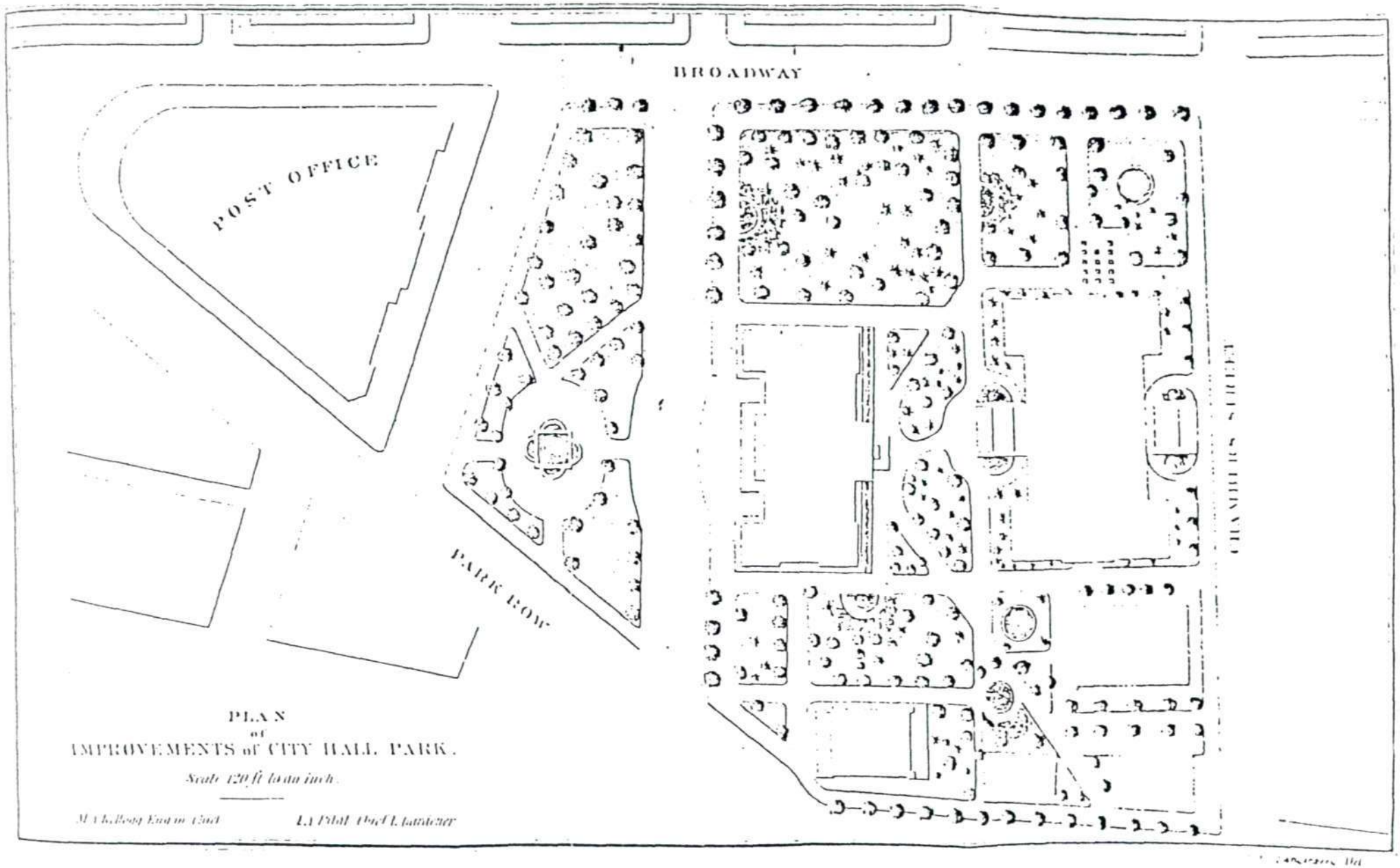


Figure 17 Plan of Improvements of City Hall Park. M.A. Kellogg and L.A Pilat, 1870-71 (Kestenbaum, fig. 9)

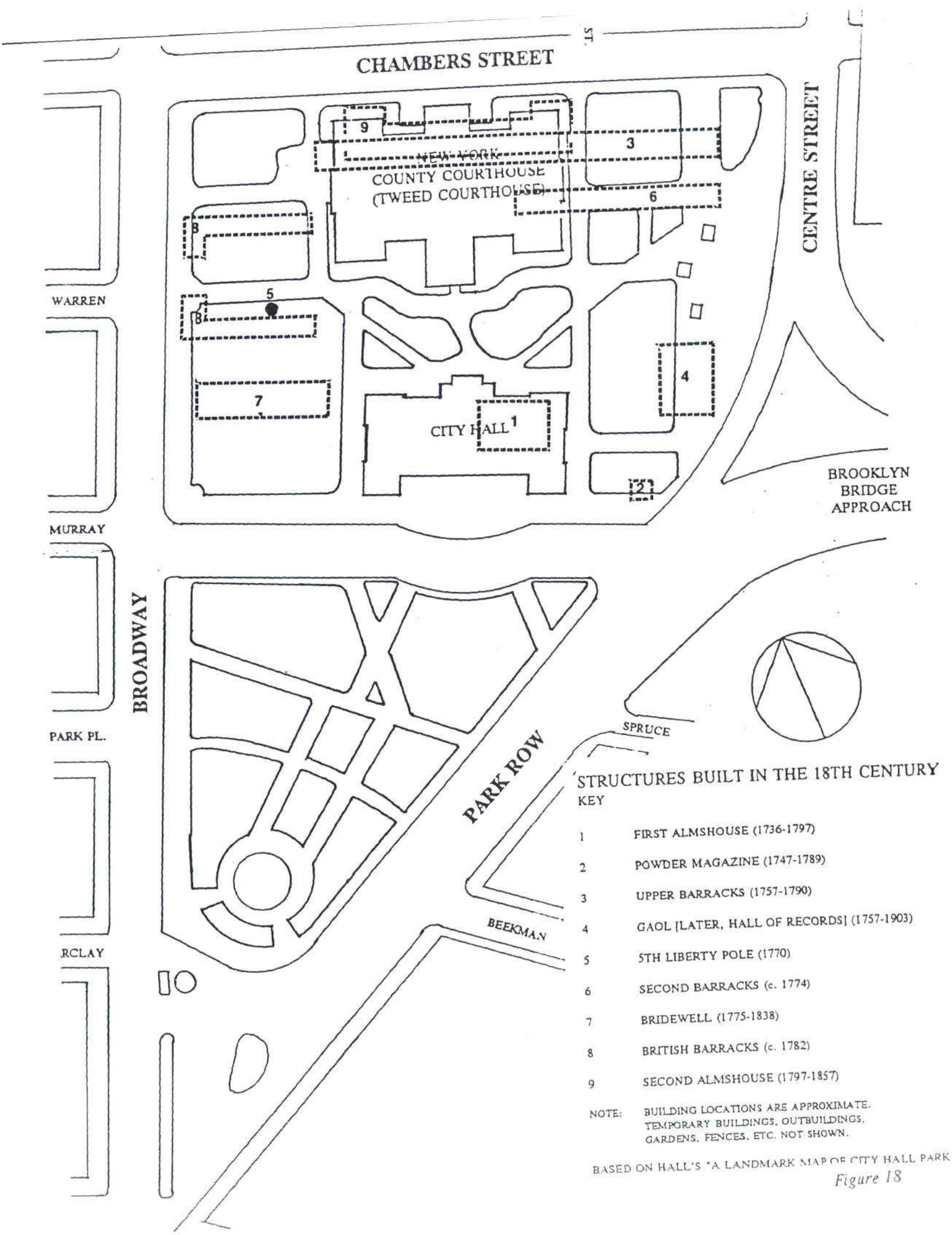

CHAMBERS STREET
CENTRE STREET
WARREN
MURRAY
PARK PL.
RCLAY
BROADWAY
PARK ROW
SPRUCE
BEEKMAN
NEW YORK
COUNTY COURTHOUSE
(TWEED COURTHOUSE)
CITY HALL
BROOKLYN
BRIDGE
APPROACH
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
STRUCTURES BUILT IN THE 18TH CENTURY
KEY
1 FIRST ALMSHOUSE (1736-1797)
2 POWDER MAGAZINE (1747-1789)
3 UPPER BARRACKS (1757-1790)
4 GAOL [LATER, HALL OF RECORDS] (1757-1903)
5 5TH LIBERTY POLE (1770)
6 SECOND BARRACKS (c. 1774)
7 BRIDEWELL (1775-1838)
8 BRITISH BARRACKS (c. 1782)
9 SECOND ALMSHOUSE (1797-1857)
NOTE: BUILDING LOCATIONS ARE APPROXIMATE. TEMPORARY BUILDINGS, OUTBUILDINGS, GARDENS, FENCES, ETC. NOT SHOWN.
BASED ON HALL'S "A LANDMARK MAP OF CITY HALL PARK"

Figure 18

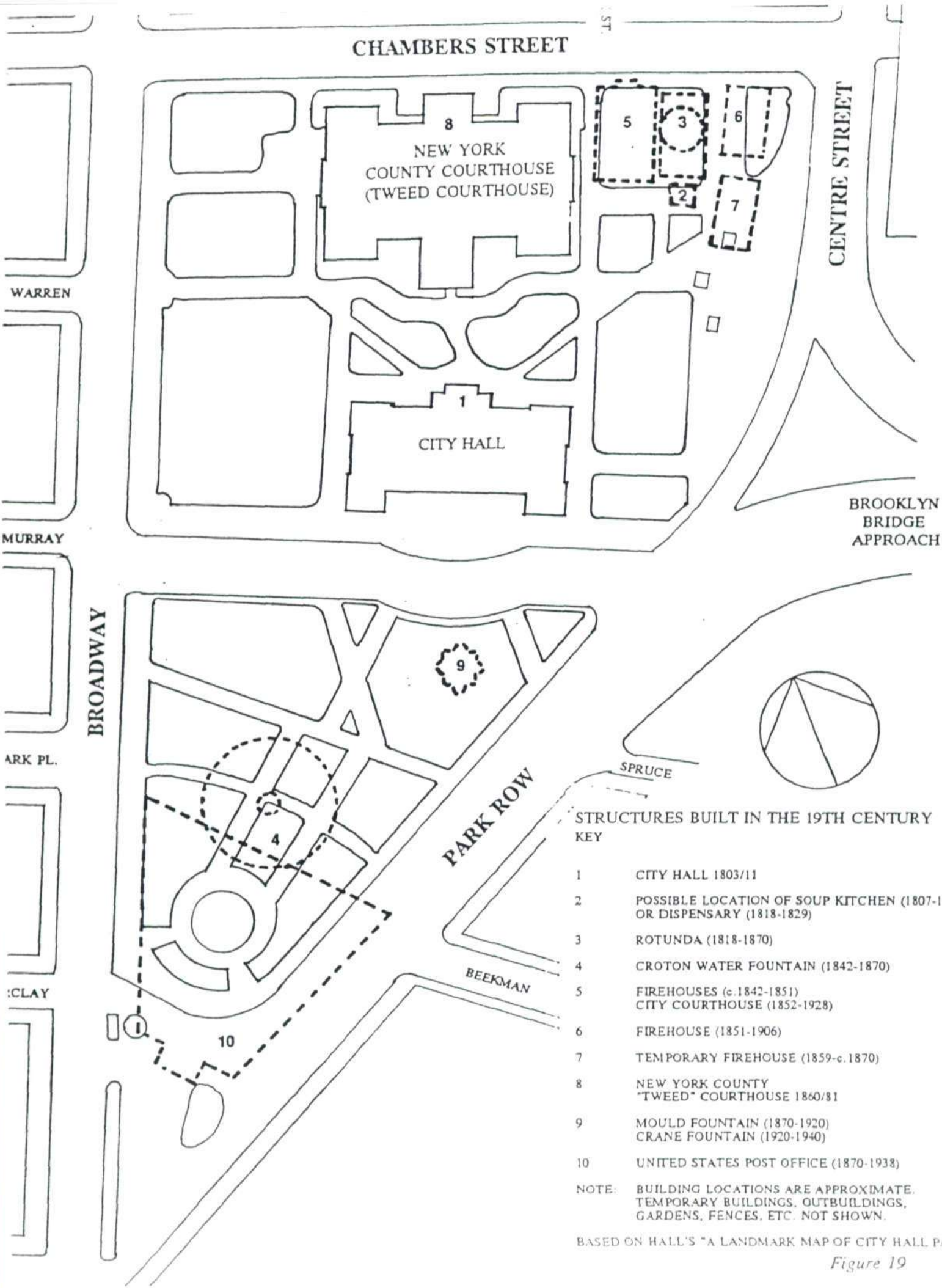

CHAMBERS STREET
CENTRE STREET
WARREN
MURRAY
BROADWAY
ARK PL.
CLAY
PARK ROW
SPRUCE
BEEKMAN
BROOKLYN BRIDGE APPROACH
NEW YORK COUNTY COURTHOUSE (TWEED COURTHOUSE)
CITY HALL
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
STRUCTURES BUILT IN THE 19TH CENTURY
KEY
1 CITY HALL 1803/11
2 POSSIBLE LOCATION OF SOUP KITCHEN (1807-1835 OR DISPENSARY (1818-1829)
3 ROTUNDA (1818-1870)
4 CROTON WATER FOUNTAIN (1842-1870)
5 FIREHOUSES (c.1842-1851) CITY COURTHOUSE (1852-1928)
6 FIREHOUSE (1851-1906)
7 TEMPORARY FIREHOUSE (1859-c.1870)
8 NEW YORK COUNTY "TWEED" COURTHOUSE 1860/81
9 MOULD FOUNTAIN (1870-1920) CRANE FOUNTAIN (1920-1940)
10 UNITED STATES POST OFFICE (1870-1938)
NOTE: BUILDING LOCATIONS ARE APPROXIMATE. TEMPORARY BUILDINGS, OUTBUILDINGS, GARDENS, FENCES, ETC. NOT SHOWN.
BASED ON HALL'S "A LANDMARK MAP OF CITY HALL PARK

Figure 19

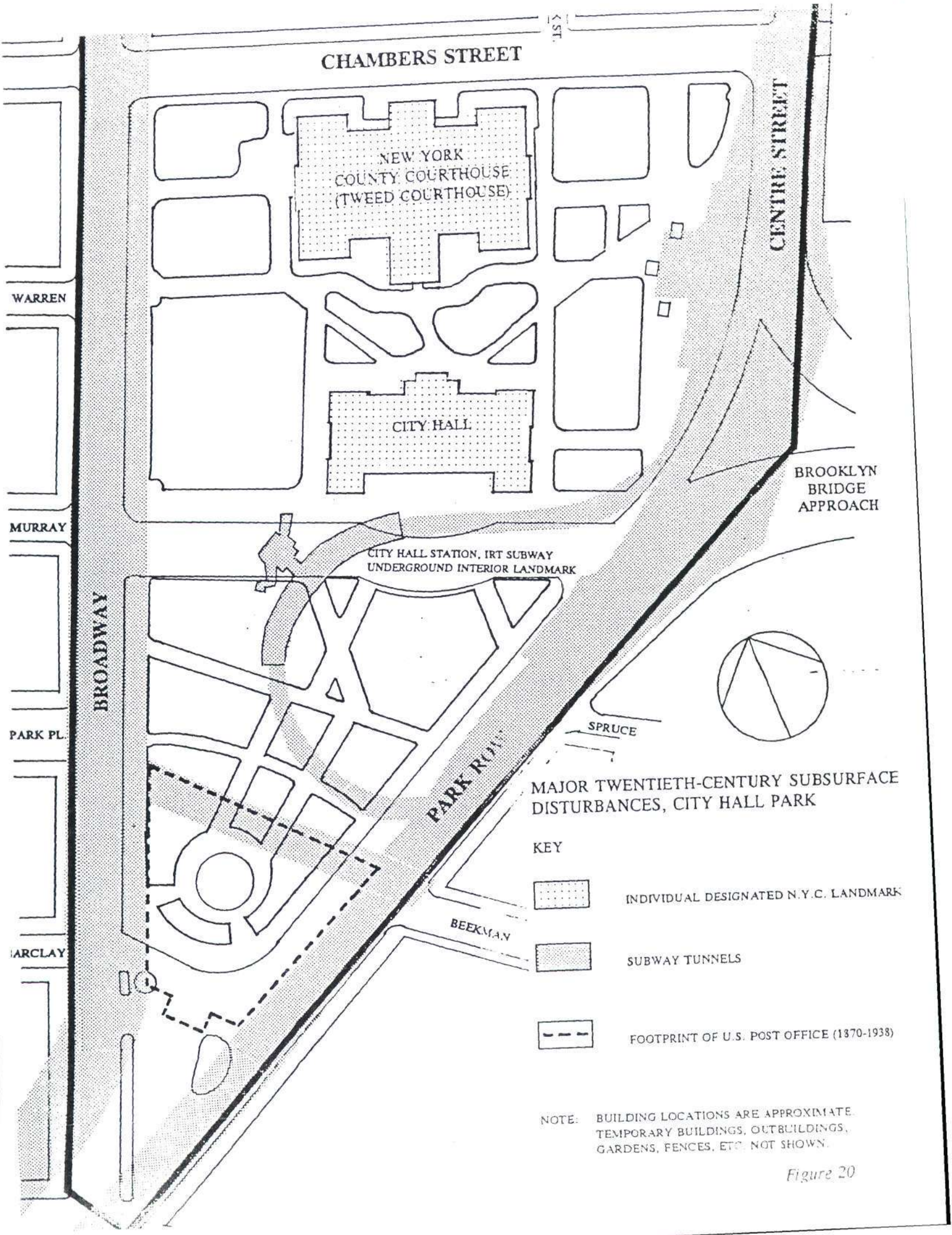
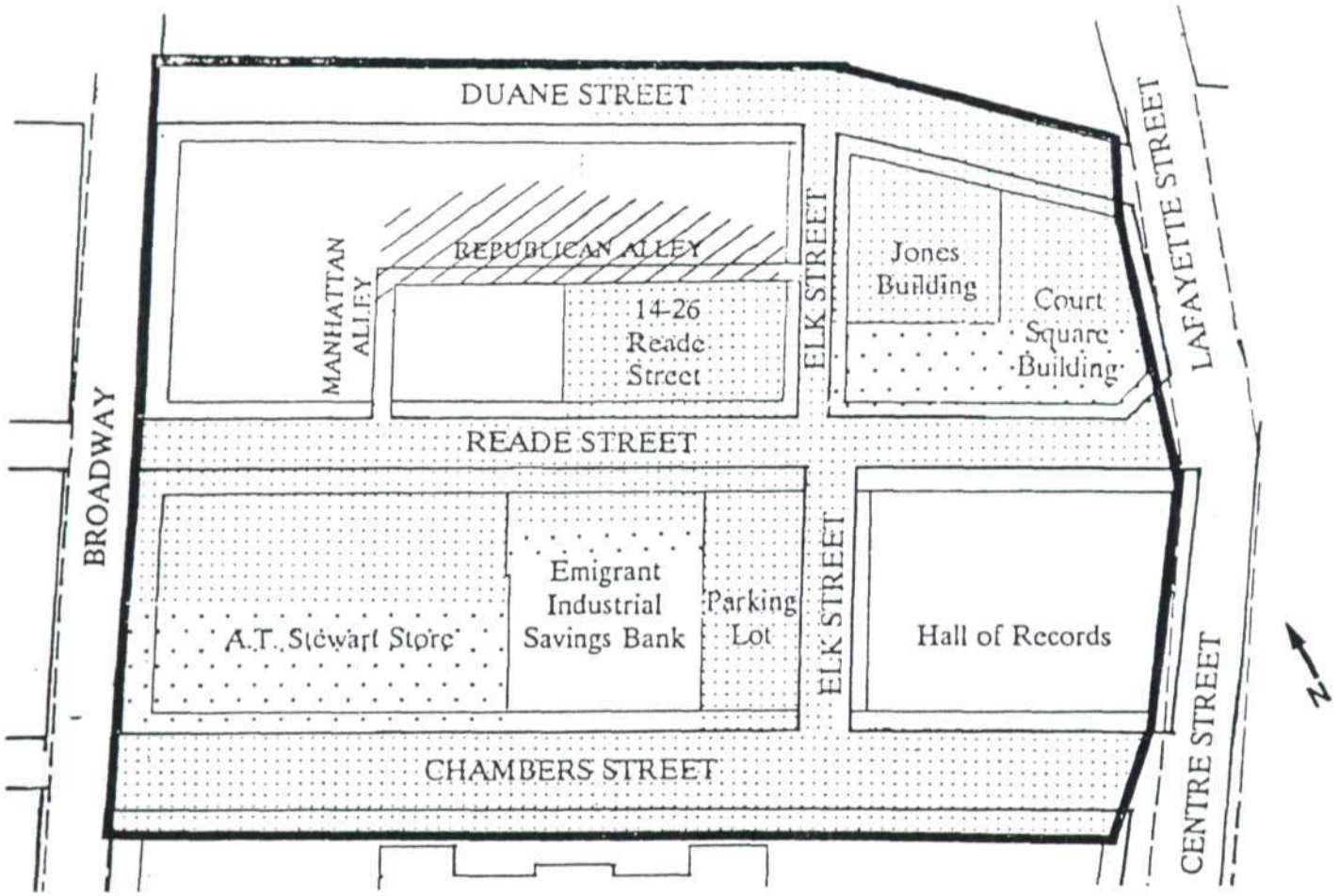

CHAMBERS STREET
CENTRE STREET
NEW YORK COUNTY COURTHOUSE (TWEED COURTHOUSE)
CITY HALL
WARREN
MURRAY
PARK PL.
ARCLAY
BROADWAY
BROOKLYN BRIDGE APPROACH
CITY HALL STATION, IRT SUBWAY UNDERGROUND INTERIOR LANDMARK
SPRUCE
PARK ROW
BEEKMAN
MAJOR TWENTIETH-CENTURY SUBSURFACE DISTURBANCES, CITY HALL PARK
KEY
INDIVIDUAL DESIGNATED N.Y.C. LANDMARK
SUBWAY TUNNELS
FOOTPRINT OF U.S. POST OFFICE (1870-1938)
NOTE: BUILDING LOCATIONS ARE APPROXIMATE. TEMPORARY BUILDINGS, OUTBUILDINGS, GARDENS, FENCES, ETC. NOT SHOWN.

Figure 20

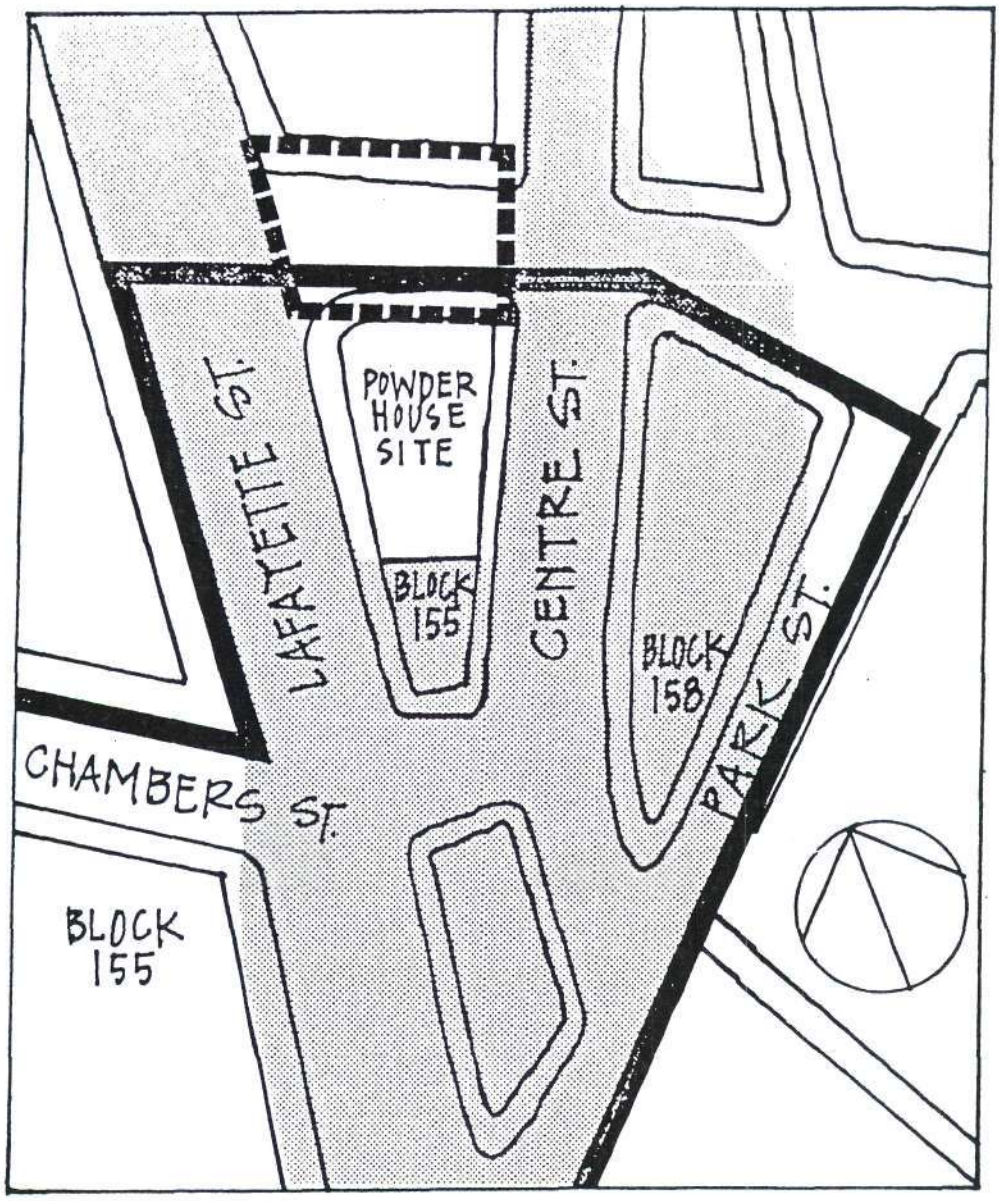


Plan showing archaeologically sensitive areas of the African Burial Ground National Historic Landmark Site.

- area known to contain intact burials (Pavilion site)
- areas most likely to contain intact burials
- areas unlikely to contain intact burials
- area excavated that has yielded information of major scientific importance
- unshaded areas have no potential for preservation of intact burials

Note: Bold line indicates boundary of the National Historic Landmark site. Dashed lines indicate subway tunnels.

Figure 21



MAJOR TWENTIETH-CENTURY SUBSURFACE DISTURBANCES, FOLEY SQUARE

KEY

POWER SUBSTATION (1988)

SUBWAY ENTRANCES, PLATFORMS, TUNNELS

AFRICAN BURIAL GROUND AND THE COMMONS HISTORIC DISTRICT BOUNDARY

NOTE: BUILDING LOCATIONS ARE APPROXIMATE. TEMPORARY BUILDINGS, OUTBUILDINGS, GARDENS, FENCES, ETC. NOT SHOWN.

Figure 22

Figure 23 View of City Hall Park from southwest. African Burial Ground and the Commons Historic District. (Photograph: Carl Forster, 1992)

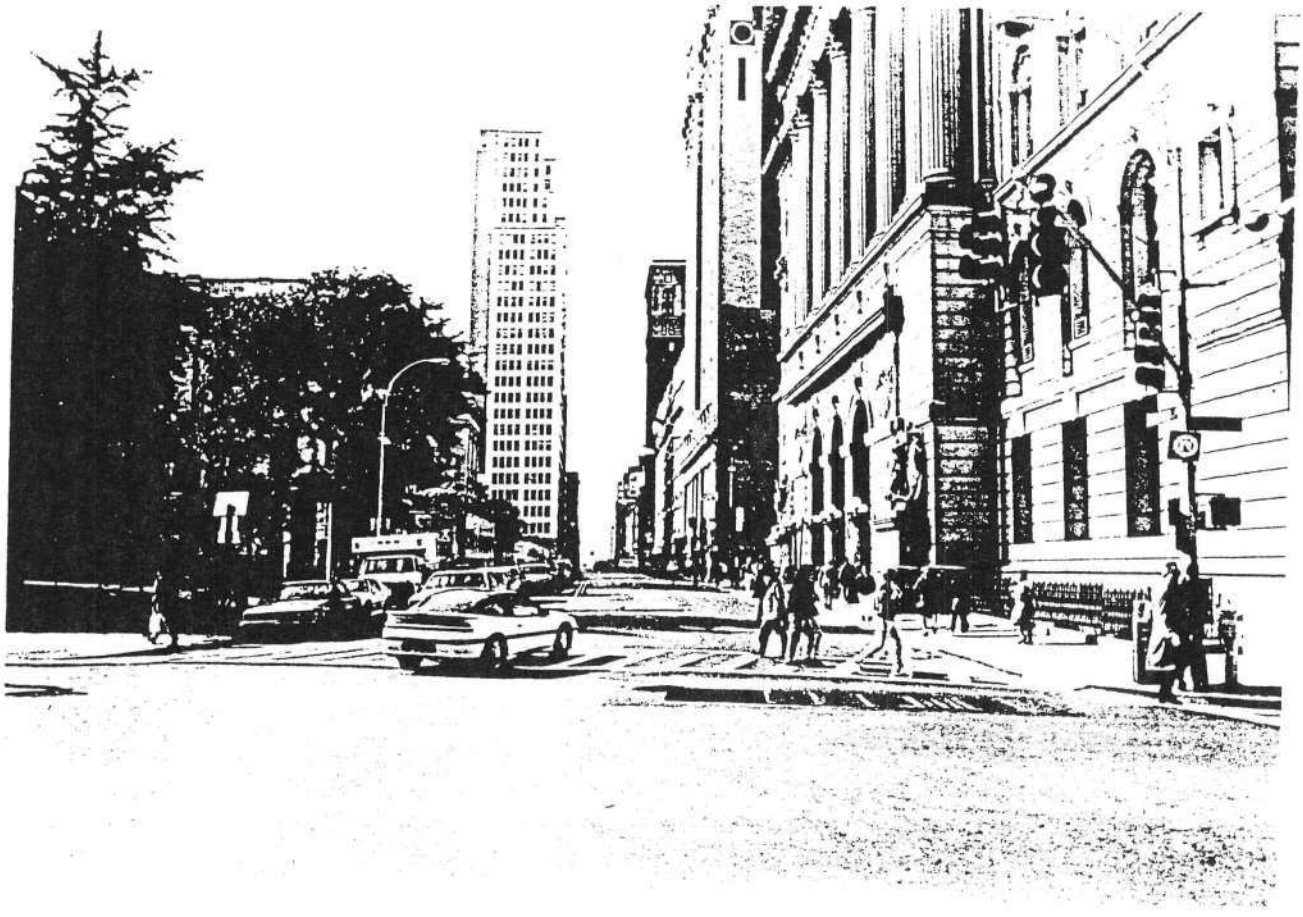


Figure 24 View of Chambers Street, African Burial Ground and the Commons Historic District. (Photograph: Carl Forster, 1992)

Figure 25 View of African Burial Ground and the Commons Historic District from corner of Broadway and Duane Streets. Federal Building excavation in foreground. (Photograph: Carl Forster, 1992)

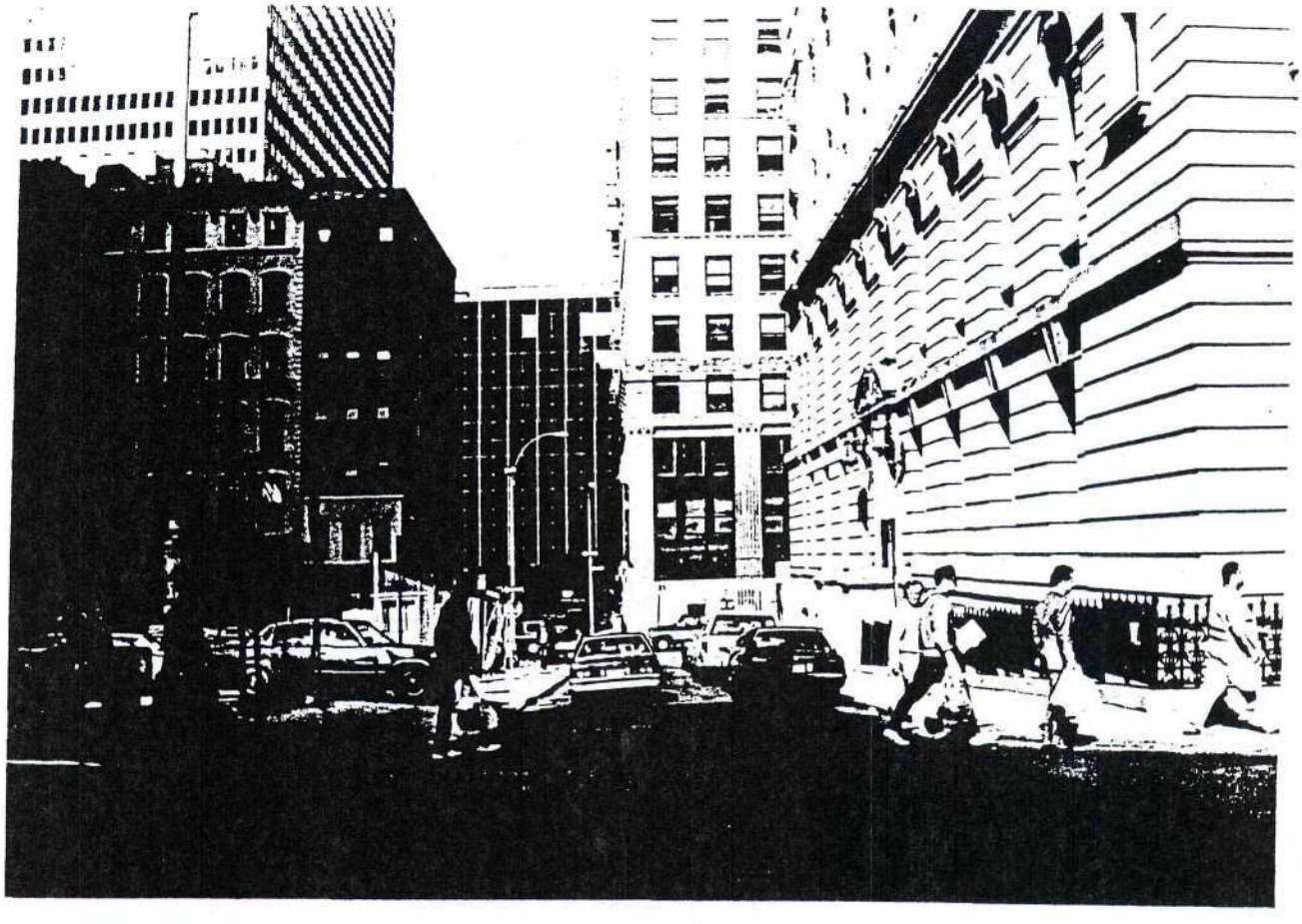


Figure 26 View of Elk Street, from Chambers Street, African Burial Ground and the Commons Historic District. (Photograph: Carl Forster, 1992)

Figure 27 View of northeast portion of the African Burial Ground. Pavilion site in foreground. African Burial Ground and the Commons Historic District. (Photograph: Carl Forster, 1992)

Figure 28 View of Foley Square from the northeast. African Burial Ground and the Commons Historic District. (Photograph: Carl Forster, 1992)

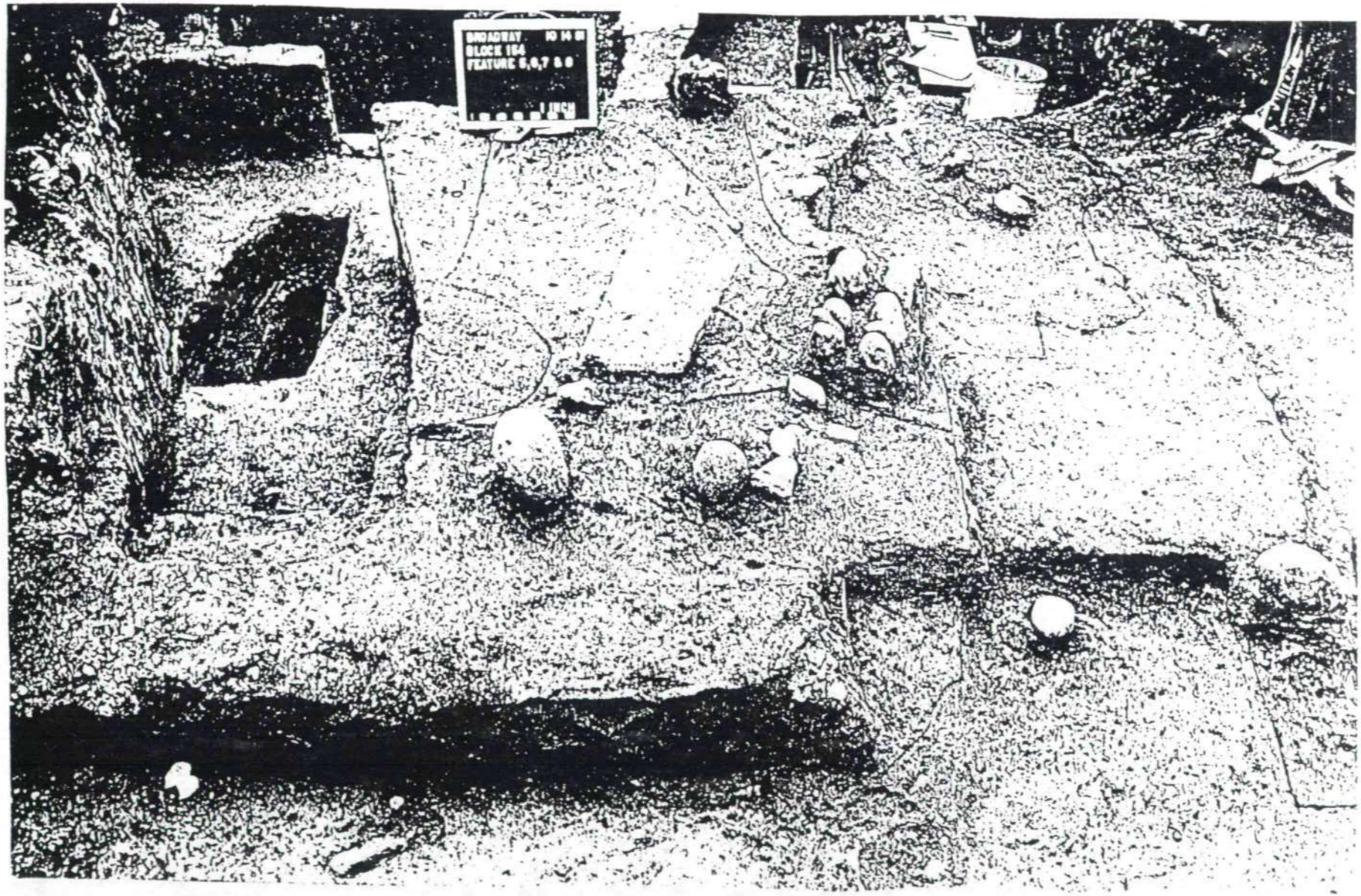


Figure 29 Headstone and cobbles marking

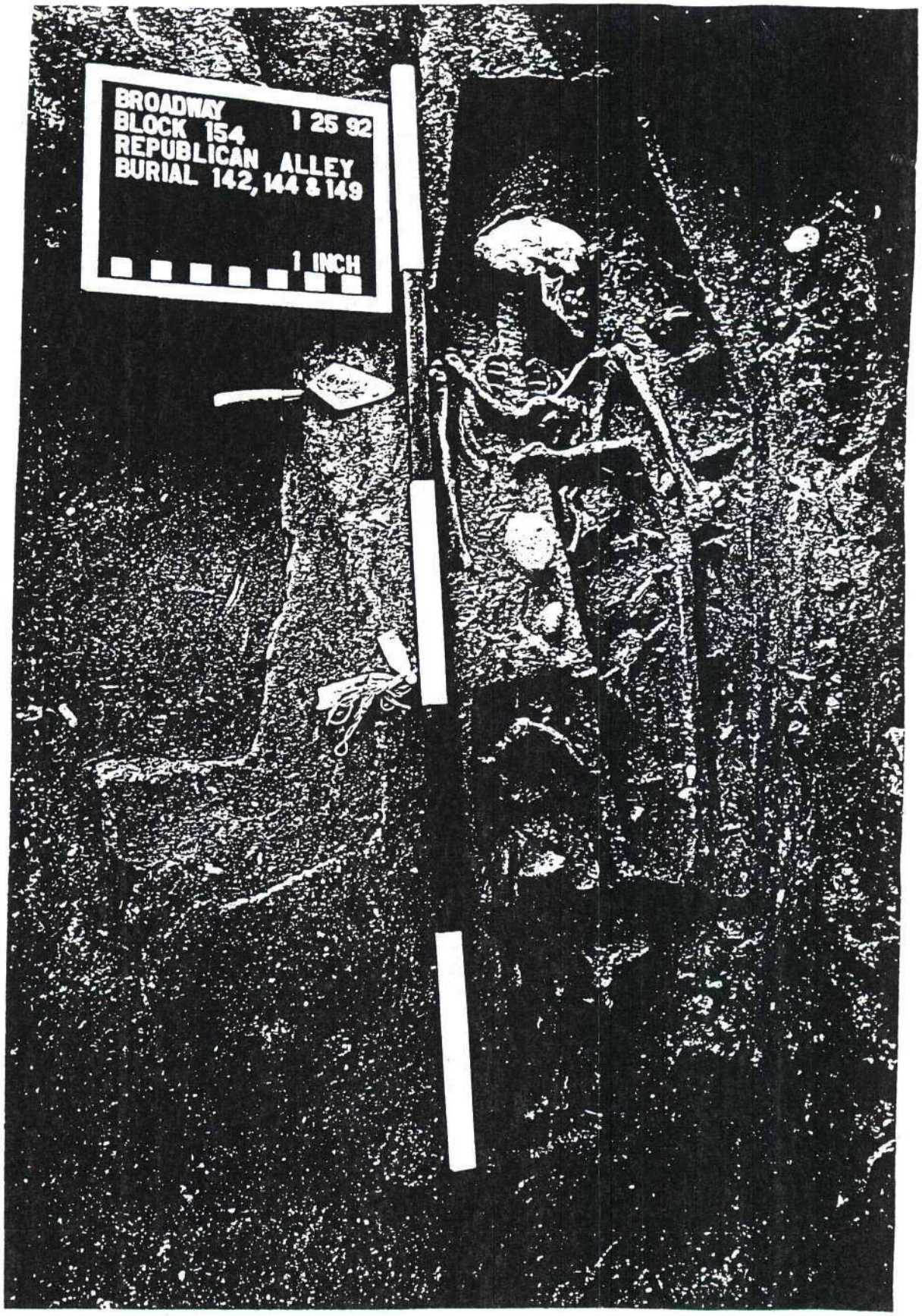


Figure 30 Grave with burial of a woman and two infants in separate coffins in the African Burial Ground. (Photograph: Dennis Seckler, 1992).