

845

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name ZION PILGRIM METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH SITE

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 303 BAXTERTOWN ROAD

city or town FISHKILL

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

vicinity

state NEW YORK code NY county DUTCHESS code 027 zip code 12524

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide X local

Rick A. Pappant DBHPO 8/10/14
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

X entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register

 determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

 other (explain): _____

Alyssa Oberlander 10/8/14
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

for

ZION PILGRIM METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH SITE

DUTCHESS COUNTY, NEW YORK

Name of Property

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
 (Check as many boxes as apply.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

Category of Property
 (Check only one box.)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
 (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	0	buildings
1	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
 (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION: church

Current Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT

7. Description

Architectural Classification
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

N/A

Materials
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: STONE

walls: N/A

roof: N/A

other: BRICK

ZION PILGRIM METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH SITE

DUTCHESS COUNTY, NEW YORK

Name of Property

County and State

Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

The Zion Pilgrim Methodist Episcopal Church Site is a small-scale archaeological site located in the Baxtertown area of the Town of Fishkill, Dutchess County, New York. The site occupies a position on what is now a residential property, 303 Baxtertown Road, which is located on the south side of Baxtertown Road (County Route 34), which connects Jackson Street to the east with New York Route 9D to the west. Jackson Street extends in a northwesterly direction from County Route 52, or what is otherwise Main Street in the Village of Fishkill, before it branches into Baxtertown Road and Osborne Hill Road, the latter extending northward before eventually meeting U.S. Route 9. The nominated site, which in essence occupies a portion of what is now the front lawn of a modern house, is located northwest of Dolfinger Lane and south of a prominent curve in Baxtertown Road where the latter turns sharply to the west, the road's intersection with Stonykill Road being a short distance beyond this curve. The property on which the site is situated is located within a relatively dense concentration of residential properties in the area that was, in the nineteenth century, defined as the hamlet of Baxtertown. The majority of these houses appear to be of recent date, although a few would seem to be of potential nineteenth century age, based on their overall form. The larger setting, beyond the rear of the houses which are aligned on both the east and west sides of Baxtertown Road in this vicinity, is characterized by moderately hilly terrain, dense woods and swampland. The nominated site is presently defined as that area which was the subject of a December 2013 archaeological investigation, measuring roughly 60' by 40'. It was here that the ca. 1848 Zion Pilgrim Methodist Episcopal Church was located. This building was at one time the central religious and social institution of Baxtertown, a small African-American hamlet located on the periphery of the more densely settled Village of Fishkill. The church fell into dereliction following its abandonment and collapsed ca. 1940. The principal focus of the archaeological investigation was to definitively establish the subsurface presence of the church's foundation and other evidence of its position there, in order to justify the inclusion of the site on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

Narrative Description

The Zion Pilgrim Methodist Episcopal Church Site is accessed from Baxtertown Road and is located on the northwest side of the driveway that provides access to 303 Baxtertown Road, the house with which the nominated site is presently associated, i.e. the corresponding legal tax parcel. The location of the former Zion Pilgrim Methodist Episcopal Church is discernible as a distinctive mound immediately adjacent to both the driveway and Baxtertown Road, and was previously identified on a 1997 engineering map generated in association with a subdivision project. The church collapsed ca. 1940, its roof having failed under the weight of snow. Its location and a general description of its physical characteristics were offered in 1987 by long-time Baxtertown resident Frank Dolfinger, who recalled the building from his youth. "It was a big church—all wood with big plain glass windows and a double door in the front. One could walk off the front porch onto the road."¹

The December 2013 archaeological investigation, overseen by Hartgen Archaeological Associates and the basis for this NRHP nomination, established a grid over the presumed location of the church foundation and the adjacent knoll that extends to the south and immediate west. This area measured approximately 60' by 40' and was characterized, physically, by a grass-covered lawn interspersed with mature deciduous trees, among them a number of large locusts. Eleven of the 15 test pits that were initially laid out were excavated, in addition to three additional judgmental tests that were subsequently added to the grid. The tests were arranged in three principal transects aligned in a roughly north to south direction. The stratigraphy of each of the individual test units were recorded in terms of depth, soil description, and artifact content, and plotted on a project map with the assistance of GIS technology. The investigation

¹ Frank Dolfinger to Lorraine M. Roberts, Dutchess County Historical Society, August 1987.

ZION PILGRIM METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH SITE

Name of Property

DUTCHESS COUNTY, NEW YORK

County and State

work confirmed the location of the church, as previously understood, and uncovered physical features associated with it, including brick, nails, hardware, window glass, and lime-based plaster debris. Additionally, a large amount of domestic material, in the form of table wares, bottle glass, gaming pieces and personal items was also recovered from the various test locations.

Among the outstanding issues which will require additional on-site investigation and analysis to properly address is anecdotal information that suggests the area behind the church, to the south of the identified foundation, contained a number of burials, these no longer being evident. Frank Dolfinger, in a 1987 interview, offered the following: "There used to be three graves at the back of the church with markers noting where the 'Bates' were buried." No evidence of these burials was encountered—their location, if they exist, has yet to be pin-pointed— and it is well established that the church also maintained a cemetery on Osborn Hill Road, the earliest graves in which date to the 1830s; however, if these grave shafts exist, they could potentially be located and their position established using ground penetrating radar technology.

ZION PILGRIM METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH SITE

DUTCHESS COUNTY, NEW YORK

Name of Property

County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHAEOLOGY: historic/non-aboriginal

ETHNIC HERITAGE: Black

Period of Significance

ca. 1848- ca. 1940

Significant Dates

ca. 1848

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

AFRICAN-AMERICAN

Architect/Builder

N/A

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance, ca. 1848- ca. 1940, corresponds with the physical presence of the Zion Pilgrim Methodist Episcopal Church at this location.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

ZION PILGRIM METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH SITE

Name of Property

DUTCHESS COUNTY, NEW YORK

County and State

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

The Zion Pilgrim Methodist Episcopal Church Site is an archaeologically significant historic resource in the Baxtertown area of the Town of Fishkill, Dutchess County, New York. This church, erected ca. 1848, served as the central religious and social institution for residents of the Baxtertown hamlet during the second half of the nineteenth century and in the first decades of the twentieth century, prior to falling into disuse and eventually collapsing ca. 1940. Baxtertown has long been recognized by historians as an early rural African-American community in the Hudson Valley and one which appears to share important associations with the history of the Underground Railroad in New York State. The importance of this archaeological site and the value of the recent excavations undertaken there, in the context of Baxtertown's history, is considerable and bolstered by present-day conditions; the historic hamlet depicted on nineteenth-century maps has been transformed, in recent times, by development and the alteration if not complete loss of the hamlet's earlier building stock. As such, the material culture of the Baxtertown hamlet and its early residents has been largely lost to history, making the archaeological information retrieved from the church site all the more critical in creating an accurate historic profile of the church and the small African-American community it served. Information specific to the church building was encountered, in the form of construction and finish materials and hardware, and the location of the church site confirmed; additionally, a wealth of other artifacts, many of which speak to domestic functions, offer information pertaining to the social, cultural, economic and religious life of the Baxtertown community. The site is being nominated in association with Criterion D, in the area of archaeology and at the local significance level, for the value of the information thus recovered and for potential future investigations which may yield more information on the hamlet of Baxtertown and the former Zion Pilgrim Methodist Episcopal Church. This information is invaluable in developing a more detailed and in-depth understanding of the historic Baxtertown community.

Narrative Statement of Significance

Historical Context

Baxtertown is located on the northern periphery of the Village of Fishkill, which was, along with Fishkill Landing and Matteawan, one of the principal settled areas in southwestern Dutchess County at the dawn of the nineteenth century. Fishkill Landing and Matteawan were later subsumed within the boundaries of what would be incorporated, in 1913, as the City of Beacon, named for the signal fires on the nearby hills which warned of the movements of British troops during the American Revolution. Growth in the region was first sustained by Hudson River-related enterprises, among them the river freight business and commercial fishing, while early industrial enterprises capitalized on water power harnessed from Fishkill Creek, where mills had been established in the first half of the eighteenth century. The Hudson River Railroad arrived in the region in 1851; in the 1860s, the Dutchess & Columbia Railroad Company established a line from the Hudson River line northeastward through Dutchess County, including a station in Fishkill.

Fishkill Village, located approximately five miles east of the hamlets of Fishkill Landing and Matteawan, or what would become modern-day Beacon, developed near the intersection of two major overland transportation routes, the north-south route of the Kings Highway, or Post Road, which linked New York City with Albany, and a second overland route that linked the east shore of the Hudson River with areas of southern New England to the east. The geographic importance of this location was affirmed during the Revolution, at which time a substantial quartermaster-commissary facility, known today as the Fishkill Supply Depot, was established. This facility, along with the fortifications at West Point, proved vital to the American defense of the Hudson River against English military ambitions. The Provincial Convention of the State of New York convened for periods of 1776 and 1777 at Fishkill, prior to relocating to Kingston, as did other committees charged with dispensing state business. The first 1,000 copies of the New York State

ZION PILGRIM METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH SITE

DUTCHESS COUNTY, NEW YORK

Name of Property

County and State

Constitution were turned out on Samuel Loudon's press at Fishkill in 1777. During the conflict a number of Fishkill buildings, among them the Episcopal and Dutch Reformed churches, were commandeered, temporarily, for military purposes by the Continental army. Trinity Episcopal Church served as a hospital for soldiers recovering from smallpox while the Dutch Reformed Church was employed as a military prison. A map of the Post Road, as drawn by Christopher Colles in 1789, indicated the future village as composed of the Episcopal and Reformed churches, three taverns, a blacksmith's shop, and numerous dwellings. By the early 1870s the village, by that time serviced directly by the railroad, had over 730 residents and was home to three churches, a union school, two banks, and a printing office.

Less certain, in terms of its early history and development, is the nearby hamlet of Baxtertown, which developed but a few miles north of Fishkill Village. It has nevertheless long been recognized as an early black community in the Hudson Valley and Dutchess County. References to it as a distinctive and distinguishable community date as far back as the second half of the nineteenth century, when it was described variously as "a small settlement of colored people" and "a settlement of some dozen families, mostly negroes, with a church..."² The following account was drawn from Henry McCracken's 1958 work *Blithe Dutchess*:

At two places in the county, Lithgow and Baxtertown, Negro communities sprang up. The latter neighborhood joins Fishkill, and represents a certain latitude allowed the earlier Negroes in their intercourse with Indians. According to tradition some Wappinger Indians dwelt here and were joined by free Negroes. A vigorous church life rose among them, with grove meetings, fish fries, and picnics, and plenty of work. Baxtertown was a station on the underground railway, probably working with Quaker groups.³

Slightly earlier, and dating to 1937, is an account which was offered in the *American Guide Series*, a program of the Federal Writers Project which offered self-guided driving tour itineraries:

Left on this road is BAXTERTOWN, 2 m., a settlement of whites and negroes, now dwindled to a thin sprinkling of humble dwellings and the ruins of the M.E. Zion Church, the roof of which has caved in from the weight of snow... As white settlers took possession of the best land, the Indians were relegated to the poorer acres. Negroes, originally slaves intermarried with them, and the two races merged. Some of the first negro settlers were slaves in Fishkill families; others had bought their freedom of hard come north on the underground railroad. The land on which they settled is rocky or marshy, unfavorable to agriculture. Today 4 negro and 10 white families remain...⁴

Most accounts of Baxtertown's history suggest it was a somewhat insular community established by African-Americans and Wappinger Indians, existing on the periphery of Fishkill Village. It was, by all indications, a place largely populated by a marginalized segment of society. The land around it was described as swampy and rock-strewn, and "the locality an uninviting one... At an earlier day it was a prolific guarantee of fever and ague."⁵ By some accounts the hamlet was earlier known as Pottertown, derived from the family of that name which resided there in the nineteenth century, and only later came to be known as Baxtertown.⁶ That later name was chosen, it appears, for Bartholomew Baxter, who is

² *Historical Sketch and Directory of the Town of Fishkill* (Fishkill Landing: Dean & Spaight, 1866), 147; James H. Smith, *History of Dutchess County* (Syracuse: D. Mason, 1882), 534.

³ Henry Noble MacCracken, *Blithe Dutchess: The Flowering of an American County from 1812* (Hastings House, 1958), 105.

⁴ *American Guide Series: Dutchess County* (Philadelphia: William Penn Association, 1937), 127-28.

⁵ Smith, *Dutchess County*, 534.

⁶ Information compiled by the Fishkill historian Willa Skinner and later disseminated in the *Southern Dutchess News* under the title "Wandering."

ZION PILGRIM METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH SITE

DUTCHESS COUNTY, NEW YORK

Name of Property

County and State

credited with building the first house in that locality, in 1818. A 1900 account claimed that an old Wappinger Indian village existed in the Baxtertown vicinity and that descendants of the tribe lived among the hamlet's early residents in the nineteenth century. The most celebrated of these was Harry or Henry Catskill, who was recorded as a resident of Baxtertown in the 1870 and 1880 Federal censuses; there his race was noted as black, perhaps confirming that he was of both Native American and African-American ancestry.⁷ In the 1880 census Catskill, then 62, was noted as a day laborer; his wife, Sarah, 54, was a "washerwoman," while their son, Jacob, 28, noted his profession as "dog trainer."

Historic mapping from 1858, 1867 and 1876 provides some general information relative to the hamlet during that period of the nineteenth century.⁸ In 1858 the hamlet was depicted as comprising some half dozen dwellings, not identified by name and located on the west side of the road, just south of the bend, and bordered on the north by the farm of J.D. Verplanck. The 1867 map ascribes names to the cluster of buildings on the west side of Baxtertown hamlet, among them "J. Anderson," "Potter," the church, and "R. Gould." Also indicated are "I.A. Adkins" and, near the intersection of Stonykill Road, the house of Henry Catskill, along with those of "C.H. Smith" and "S.A. Prualing." The Adkins, or Atkins family, was black, as were the Potters, as noted in the 1870 Federal census. A total of nine black households were noted in Baxtertown at that date, interspersed with a few white families. Among the black households, and by all indications the most prosperous of them, was that of Nicholas Potter, 45, a New York State native whose occupation was noted as coachman and who claimed \$2,000 in real estate and \$100 in personal property. This was one of six black Baxtertown households to claim real estate holdings but the only one which claimed personal property assets. More typical, in terms of occupation, were the heads of some of the other African-American households, among them Charles Bowman, 67, Charles Potter, 49, and Samuel Atkins, 58, who were noted in the census as farm laborers by occupation. All members of the black households claimed birth in New York State. Two dwellings were shown to be unoccupied at this date, as no information relative to the households was taken, though dwelling numbers were noted.

The household of David Potter and his wife in 1870 included one other individual, Floyd Mills, whose occupation was noted as "preacher." It is presumed that Mills, 36, was serving the Baxtertown church at this date. A decade later he was noted in the Federal census as a minister residing in Suffolk County, New York, although at that time he was noted as being black, and not white, as he had been on the previous Federal census.

As for potential connections between Baxtertown and the Underground Railroad, and the possibility that the hamlet served as a station on this clandestine freedom network, both documentary evidence and anecdotal information suggest that such an association existed, and that some of Baxtertown's pre-Civil War residents were, in fact, one-time fugitive slaves. One such tradition maintains that an escaped Southern slave, Joseph Thomas, or "Joe Tom," resided for a time in the Baxtertown hamlet, perhaps the place he chose to initially conceal himself in his first days as a wanted fugitive. By one account Thomas worked as a peddler of fish and vegetables and served as an agent on the Underground Railroad and assisted with the safe movements of fugitive slaves.⁹ A Joseph Thomas, 56, appears in the 1860 Federal census as a resident of Matteawan, in the Town of Fishkill. Given that Thomas's birthplace was listed as Virginia, and that he was noted as being black and further noted as being unable to read or write, it seems likely that this is the same "Joe Tom" referenced in traditional accounts.

⁷ "A Reminder of Long Ago," *Hudson Evening Post*, 1900.

⁸ 1858 Gillette Dutchess County wall map, 1867 Beers Atlas map, 1876 Gray Atlas map.

⁹ Skinner, "Wandering."

ZION PILGRIM METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH SITE

Name of Property

DUTCHESS COUNTY, NEW YORK

County and State

It bears noting that in an earlier census, Joseph Thomas identified his birthplace as New York, and not Virginia, suggesting he consciously intended to conceal his true identity from those who might attempt to deprive him of his freedom. This seems all the more likely given another Baxtertownt individual, Benjamin Caldwell (b. 1824) appears to have done the same. In 1860, on the eve of the Civil War, Caldwell noted his birthplace in the census as New York. Some two decades later, in the 1880 Federal census, Caldwell indicated his birthplace, and that of both of his parents, as Delaware, a border state where slavery was legal. This evidence suggests both Thomas and Caldwell were at one time fugitives that found safe haven in the Fishkill area of Dutchess County, where they settled permanently, and fits a pattern identified previously by Underground Railroad historians and researchers in New York.¹⁰

Many historians and documentary sources have referenced Baxtertownt's connection with Underground Railroad activities, the earliest of which date to the 1920s and 1930s. Herman Dean, onetime editor of the *Fishkill Weekly Times*, wrote about Baxtertownt being a station on the Underground Railroad and presented the story of "Joe Tom" to local readers in the 1920s, while the 1937 overview of Baxtertownt included in the *American Guide Series* for Dutchess County noted that some of the hamlet's early residents had escaped slavery and made their way northward as fugitives.¹¹ Henry Noble MacCracken, historian and president emeritus of Vassar College, was also among those who reinforced the Underground Railroad connection in his work of the late 1950s. There is additionally a reference to Baxtertownt as a "station" in James W. Hood's 1895 *One Hundred Years of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church*.¹² However, it is not presently known whether this relates to Underground Railroad activities in the hamlet or instead refers to a place of assignment for the church's minister, given the use of the terms "stations" and "charges" in that latter context.

The evidence, while in some instances anecdotal, nevertheless suggests a tangible connection between Baxtertownt and the Underground Railroad. The cases of Thomas and Caldwell, both of whom appear to have consciously concealed their true identities at one time, seem particularly compelling. While further research and documentation is required to substantiate some of these accounts, they nevertheless indicate the existence of early traditional accounts which were rooted in information and sources which may no longer be available to historians.

A few fleeting glimpses into contemporary Baxtertownt life are found in period newspapers. One such account, from 1890, the lead-in to which was "Do you know where Baxtertownt is?," featured the complaints of a "pleasure driver" who indicated the presence of a rogue bull in Baxtertownt which had terrorized more than one driver who sought to traverse the hamlet. While this would seem to suggest Baxtertownt was a place perhaps best avoided by non-residents, another story offers a much different and flattering image of its denizens. In 1877 W.J. Conklin, a doctor, was traveling through Baxtertownt when he was thrown awkwardly out of and partially trapped within the moving gig. "Fortunately, while he was in this perilous condition, the horse stopped, and Harry Catskill and another colored man came to his aid and released him."¹³

In 1896 one of New York State's oldest citizens, and one with long-time Baxtertownt connections, Maria Jefferson, died. Jefferson was purported to be 106 years old. The widow of York Jefferson, she was

¹⁰Personal communication with Paul Stewart, Underground Railroad History Project, and Ron Greene, 14 July 2014.

¹¹Ibid; *American Guide Series*, 127-28.

¹²J.W. Hood, *One Hundred Years of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church* (New York: A.M.E. Zion Book Concern, 1895).

¹³*Poughkeepsie Daily Eagle*, 25 July 1890; *Poughkeepsie Daily Eagle*, 1877.

ZION PILGRIM METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH SITE

Name of Property

DUTCHESS COUNTY, NEW YORK

County and State

known as "Old Maria" by Baxtertownt residents, who recalled that she "appeared as aged as when they were children as she did during the last year." She died at the residence of her sons in Baxtertownt.¹⁴

The Zion Pilgrim Methodist Episcopal Church

Baxtertownt's Zion Pilgrim Methodist Church was erected in 1848, the date given in numerous early sources. No information relative to the construction of the building, nor any images depicting its appearance at any juncture of its history, has yet been identified. Sporadic references are found in the historical record, typically in the form of brief newspaper accounts, but these offer little in the way of concrete information on the building and its appearance. Some residents who recalled the church prior to its ca. 1940 collapse, among them Frank Dolfinger (1899-1992), have since passed on, thereby diminishing the likelihood of capturing first-hand oral accounts from local residents.

Historical references to the building are few but do include an 1879 account which indicated "The trustees of the A.M.E. Zion church of Baxtertownt expect soon to commence the repair of their church." Whether the church had been damaged in some manner or was otherwise being renovated is not known. In 1906 repairs were again undertaken; "Rev. Cruise has made extensive renovations to the church at Baxtertownt; the church is progressing nicely."¹⁵ That account further noted a number of recent baptisms and an upcoming "harvest home and concert." It is likely that the original ca. 1848 church conformed to contemporary models for modestly scaled and funded Protestant religious buildings, being a self contained, gable-roofed building which was entered, as described by Dolfinger, via doors from the elevation fronting on Baxtertownt Road. While it is not known whether their efforts succeeded, a ca. 1885 account in the *The Recorder* of Cold Spring indicated that Baxtertownt residents were engaged at that time in raising funds with the desire to purchase a parsonage.

Some of the pastors who served the Baxtertownt church are known; it appears the congregation didn't always have a settled minister, and in those times relied on the services of an itinerant preacher. Frank Dolfinger, when interviewed in the late 1980s, recalled that preachers were sometimes sent northward from New York City to serve the group. "[The minister] used to take a train to Beacon, then a trolley to Fishkill, then one of the black residents of Baxtertownt Road would pick him up in a horse and buggy and ride him out to the A.M.E.," Dolfinger recalled.¹⁶ Floyd Mills, who resided in one of the Potter households in 1860 and was noted as a minister, is presumed to be among the early preachers active at the Baxtertownt church. Also known to have served the ministry there was Simeon Dickinson, known variously as Dixson or Dickson, and Abraham J. Tolbert, or Talbot variously, in addition to Reverend Cruise, who was referenced as the pastor in the decade of the 1900s but of whom nothing is yet known. Dickinson's charge was not without controversy, as he became embroiled in a romantic scandal in the mid-1870s that was widely publicized, including in the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*.¹⁷ While these articles offered largely sensationalized accounts of the scandal and relied in no uncertain terms on prevailing stereotypes, they nevertheless offered some valuable information relative to Dickinson, who had apparently only come to the ministry recently and who prior to taking the Baxtertownt charge had been residing in Williamsburgh, Brooklyn. Another minister appears to have been Charles H. Waters, who, in 1887, was appointed by the annual conference of the New York African Methodist Episcopal Zion Conference to serve the black

¹⁴*New York Herald*, 29 March 1896.

¹⁵*Poughkeepsie Daily Eagle*, 1879; *The New York Age*, 11 October 1906.

¹⁶Dolfinger as quoted in "Baxtertownt Road settlers paved way for local blacks," *Poughkeepsie Journal*, 12 February 1989.

¹⁷"A Reverend Deceiver," "Lucky Dog" and "The Reverend Simeon and his Mary Jane," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, December 3, 14 and 16, 1877.

ZION PILGRIM METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH SITE

DUTCHESS COUNTY, NEW YORK

Name of Property

County and State

churches at Fishkill Landing and Baxtertownt.¹⁸ In 1893 C.H. Randall was appointed to serve the Baxtertownt church.¹⁹

The relationship between the minister and the Baxtertownt community was not always harmonious, as evidenced by the claim brought against the church by A.J. Tolbert, who had served there previously and who in 1893 was assigned to the church in Haverstraw, Rockland County:

Rev. A.J. Tolbert, late pastor of the colored people's church at Baxtertownt, is about to sue the church for back salary, and has employed Mr. H.H. Hustis as his attorney in the case. Mr. Tolbert claims the church owes him \$90, and brings suit for that amount. The church people don't deny that they owe Mr. Tolbert some back salary, but question his right to bring in a bill for the full \$90, as they claim he did not preach the full time to earn that amount of money, and would pay if they had the money; but the dominie wants his salary and is waiting in the town for it.²⁰

It appears that the fortunes of the church rapidly declined during the first quarter of the twentieth century; according to Frank Dolfinger, the church membership slowly fell away until only one family of congregants, the Atkins, were left. After that point it was abandoned before eventually collapsing, ca. 1940.

The Case for Archaeological Significance

The recent archaeological work conducted at the nominated site yielded a significant body of interpretable data that is critical to forming a better understanding of Baxtertownt church and the historic community it served, which has since largely fallen away. It offers the first glimpse into the material culture of this church and community. The following overview was provided by archaeologist Matthew Kirk of Hartgen Archaeological Associates, who organized and oversaw the work:

...The archacological excavations were remarkably successful. A significant assemblage of late 18th, early 19th, and middle to late 19th century material was recovered, especially in the area immediately surrounding the church foundation. The location of the foundation was also confirmed and, although limited in scope, the excavation revealed that the northern and western portions of the church foundation appear to be mostly intact. In addition, the structure appears to have had a partial cellar hole (perhaps for food storage or coal storage for the internal coal stove). The excavations suggest the site is still largely intact and has the potential to answer new research questions...²¹

While a complete inventory of the collection has yet to be completed, a partial field catalog was generated and it offers an overview of the material recovered and a general sense of the dates of the material. A majority of the artifacts were recovered in the immediate vicinity of the church foundation and included both architectural debris and a large quantity of domestic material. The former included hand-wrought, machine cut and wire nails, the former suggesting the possibility that another building at one time occupied the site or that earlier material was reused at the time the building was erected. Given the construction date of 1848, cut nails would be expected, and as such the wire nails presumably relate to subsequent upgrades or repairs. Also recovered was red slate, possibly roofing material, in addition to hardware, window glass, and both whole and broken hand-moulded brick.²² Some of the material excavated appeared

¹⁸"Appointing Methodist Ministers," *New York Herald-Tribune*, 18 May 1887.

¹⁹"Appointments of Colored Ministers," *New York Herald-Tribune*, 23 May 1893.

²⁰"A Pastor Sueing for His Salary," *Peekskill Highland Democrat*, 6 August 1892.

²¹Matthew Kirk, Hartgen Archaeological Associates, to Ron Greene, 19 February 2014; this letter prefaced an overview of the December 2013 archaeological survey, referred to hereafter as the "Hartgen Letter Report."

²²Hartgen Letter Report.

ZION PILGRIM METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH SITE

Name of Property

DUTCHESS COUNTY, NEW YORK

County and State

to represent objects contained within the church, among them a picture frame holder and a tin escutcheon plate; however, no evidence of liturgical or sacred objects was identified.²³

A surprising amount of domestic material was also recovered, including table wares, bottle glass, gaming pieces, personal items, and food remains in the form of both animal bones and shell. The table wares represented a fairly broad chronological range and included several fragments of lead-glazed redware dating to the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century, in addition to creamware likely of early nineteenth century age. Other materials included a flat-iron, buttons, an early sheet-copper safety pin and a copper thimble, a clay gaming piece, and several pipe bowls and stems.²⁴

The December 2013 preliminary excavation work engendered a series of important research questions which the site can provide data sets for, not only for the church and community, but also for the broad study of black rural communities in New York State in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Noted below are new research questions which the site might ultimately provide information on:

- Was the site previously occupied by a house?
- What does the archaeological assemblage evince about the activities of the congregation while at the church?
- What other evidence of the church's superstructure can be found, and what does this say about the construction and maintenance of the church over time?
- What can be learned about the appearance of the church from the archaeology, in order to contextualize it in the larger body of A.M.E. church architecture?
- Are there other areas of archaeological interest on the property, such as the area where a surface scatter of material was previously encountered?
- What does the material culture of the church imply about group identity in the nineteenth century? How did this identity evolve over time?
- Does the early ceramic assemblage represent a tradition of "antique" table wares?
- What vessel forms are represented within the assemblage, besides the tea cups, tea pots, and tureen?
- What might these forms suggest about the activities that occurred at the church?
- Is there evidence of sacred or liturgical artifacts or were they removed from the structure prior to its collapse? And what might this suggest about the dissolution of the church community at the beginning of the twentieth century?

Conclusion

While the December 2013 archaeological investigation was limited in scope it was nevertheless successful in yielding a surprisingly diverse and interesting artifact assemblage. Additionally, it confirmed that the church foundation appears largely intact and that later, more modern construction activities largely avoided the site. The archaeology performed to date suggests the site possesses additional research potential that

²³Ibid

²⁴Ibid

ZION PILGRIM METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH SITE

Name of Property

DUTCHESS COUNTY, NEW YORK

County and State

can help to answer important historical questions about the church and the community it served for portions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These data sets are not likely to be found in publically available documents or records; therefore, the archaeological work at the Zion Pilgrim Methodist Episcopal Church Site is a significant potential source of new information.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

N/A

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

BOOKS & PUBLISHED SOURCES

American Guide Series: Dutchess County. Philadelphia: William Penn Association, 1937.

Historical Sketch and Directory of the Town of Fishkill. Fishkill Landing: Dean & Spaight, 1866.

MacCracken, Henry Noble. *Blithe Dutchess: The Flowering of an American County from 1812*. Hastings House, 1958.

Smith, James H. *History of Dutchess County*. Syracuse: D. Mason, 1882.

CORRESPONDENCE

Frank Dolfinger to Lorraine M. Roberts, Dutchess County Historical Society, August 1987.

Matthew Kirk, Hargten Archaeological Associates, to Ron Greene, 19 February 2014; this letter prefaced an overview of the December 2013 archaeological survey.

NEWSPAPERS

Brooklyn Daily Eagle

Hudson Evening Post

New York Herald

New York Herald-Tribune

Peekskill Highland Democrat

Poughkeepsie Daily Eagle

Poughkeepsie Journal

Southern Dutchess News

ZION PILGRIM METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH SITE

DUTCHESS COUNTY, NEW YORK

Name of Property

County and State

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .09 acres

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18</u>	<u>589649</u>	<u>4600062</u>	3	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary for this NRHP nomination is shown on the three enclosed maps, all of which are entitled "Zion Pilgrim Methodist Episcopal Church Site, Fishkill, Dutchess Co., NY." The boundary is depicted at a scale of 1:24,000, 1:12,000, and 1:1,000.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary, measuring 60' by 40' and rectangular in form, has been drawn to correspond with that established during the archaeological investigations undertaken under the guidance of Hartgen Archaeological Associates in December 2013.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title William E. Krattinger

organization NYS Division for Historic Preservation date August 2014

street & number PO Box 189 telephone (518) 237-8643 ext. 3265

city or town Waterford state NY zip code 12180

e-mail William.Krattinger@parks.ny.gov

ZION PILGRIM METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH SITE

DUTCHESS COUNTY, NEW YORK

Name of Property

County and State

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Photographs, TIFF format, by William E. Krattinger, December 2013. Original files maintained at NYS DHP, Waterford, NY.

0001 View of site, looking to south east, depicting archaeological work of December 2013

0002 View of site, looking to south east, showing shovel test pit work, December 2013

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Ronald G. Greene

street & number 303 Baxtertown Road telephone _____

city or town Fishkill state NY zip code 12524

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

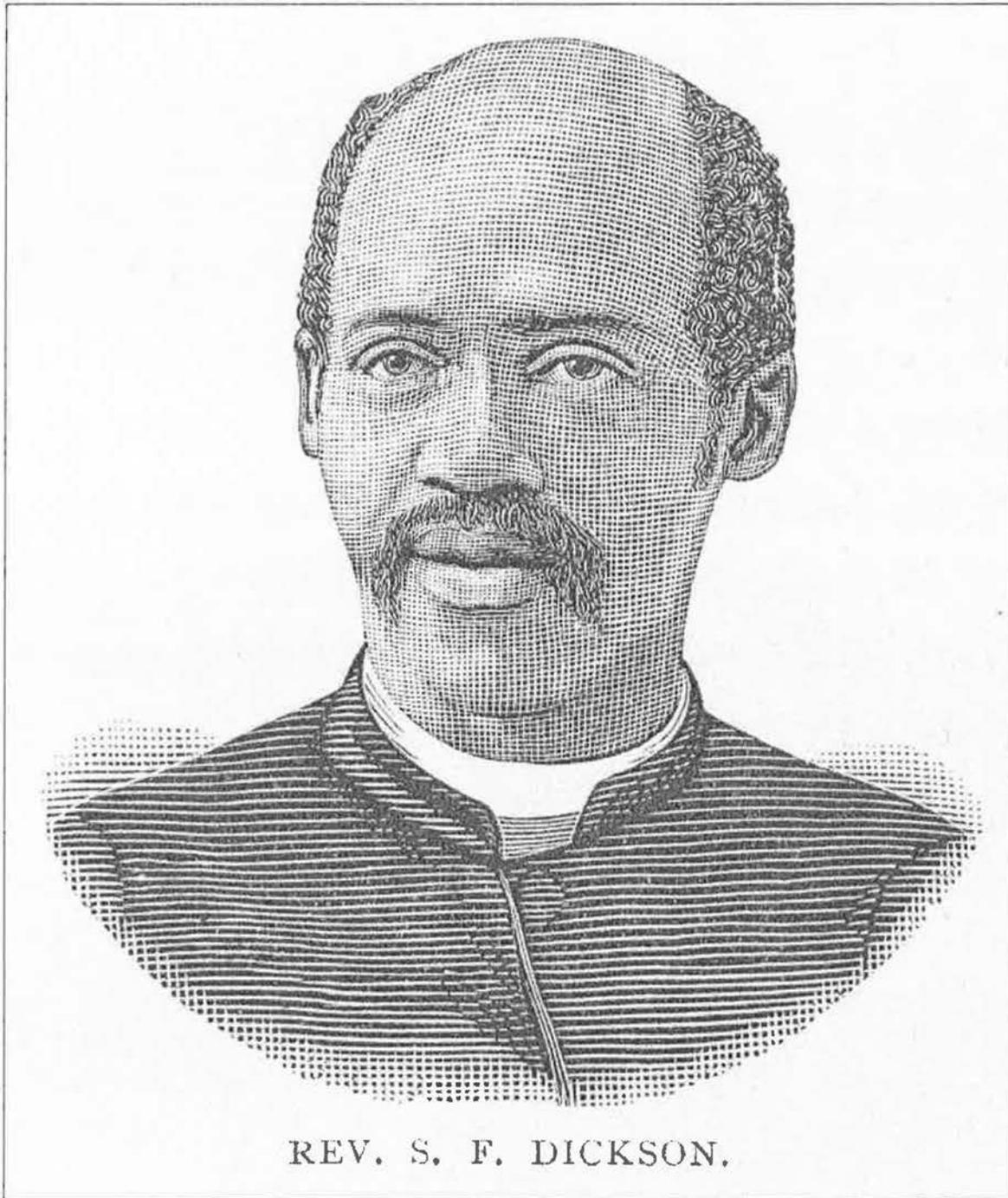
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

ZION PILGRIM METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH SITE

DUTCHESS COUNTY, NEW YORK

Name of Property

County and State



Reverend Simeon F. Dickinson, sometime minister of the A.M.E. church at Baxtertown.

ZION PILGRIM METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH SITE

DUTCHESS COUNTY, NEW YORK

Name of Property

County and State



1876 map showing the location of the church and Baxtertown

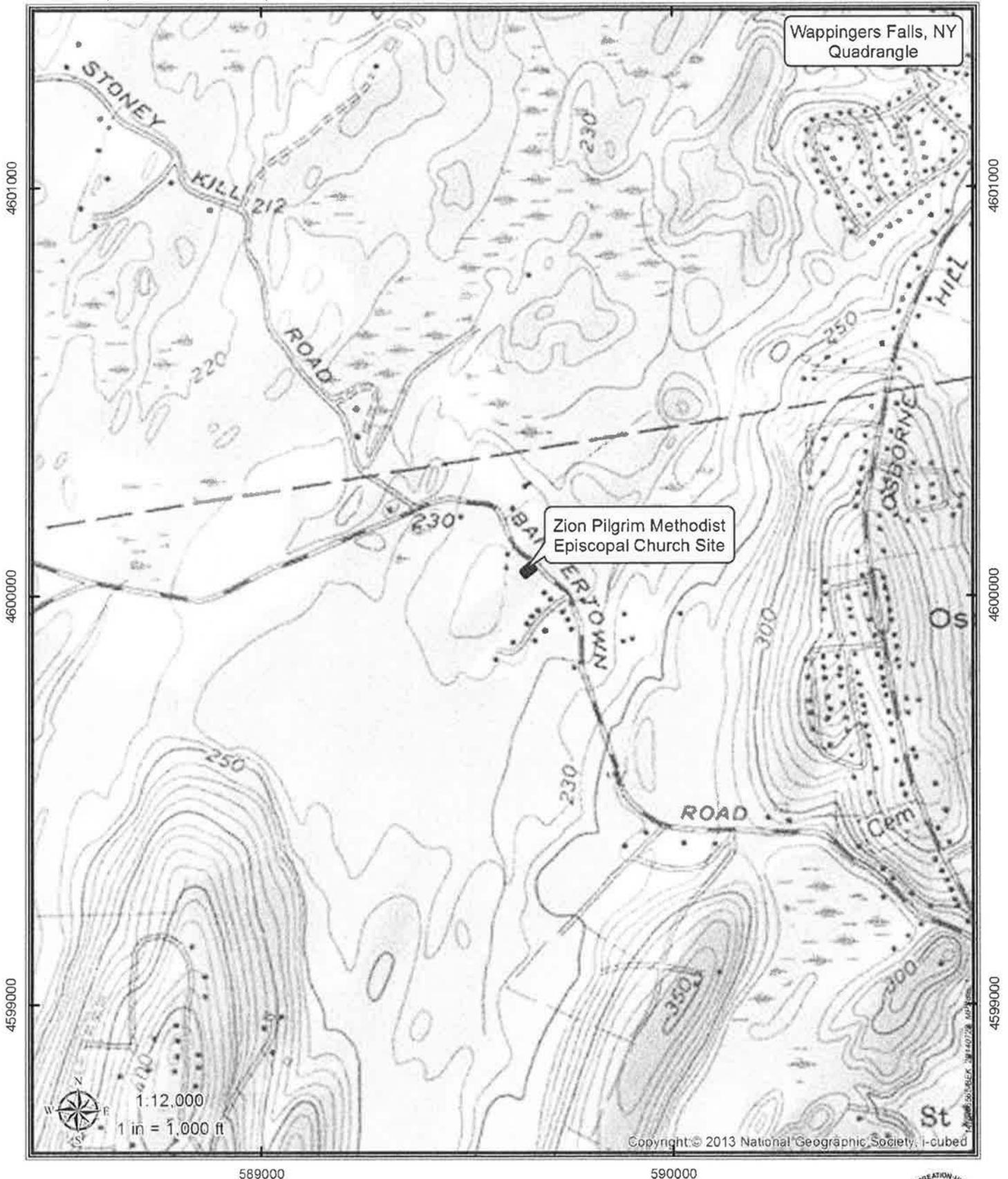
ZION PILGRIM METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH SITE

DUTCHESS COUNTY, NEW YORK

Name of Property

County and State





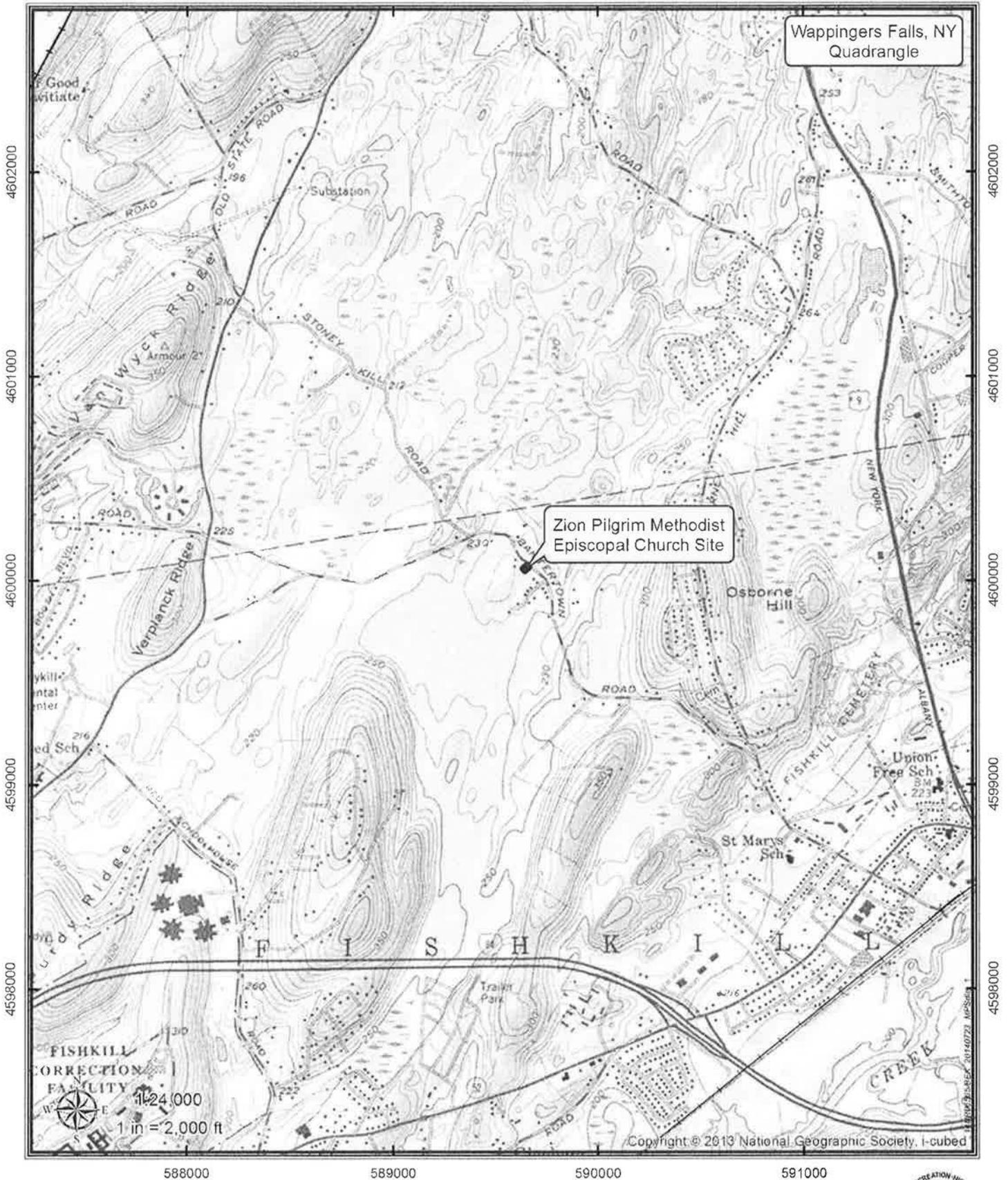
Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter

0 305 610 1,220 Feet

 Church Site  Railroad

Tax Parcel Data:
Dutchess Co. RPS
www.co.dutchess.ny.us





Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter

0 600 1,200 2,400 Feet

 Church Site  Railroad

Tax Parcel Data:
Dutchess Co. RPS
www.co.dutchess.ny.us





Σ = .09 Acres

589649E 4600062N

1:1,000
1 in = 83 ft

Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, Swisstopo, and the GIS User Community

Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter

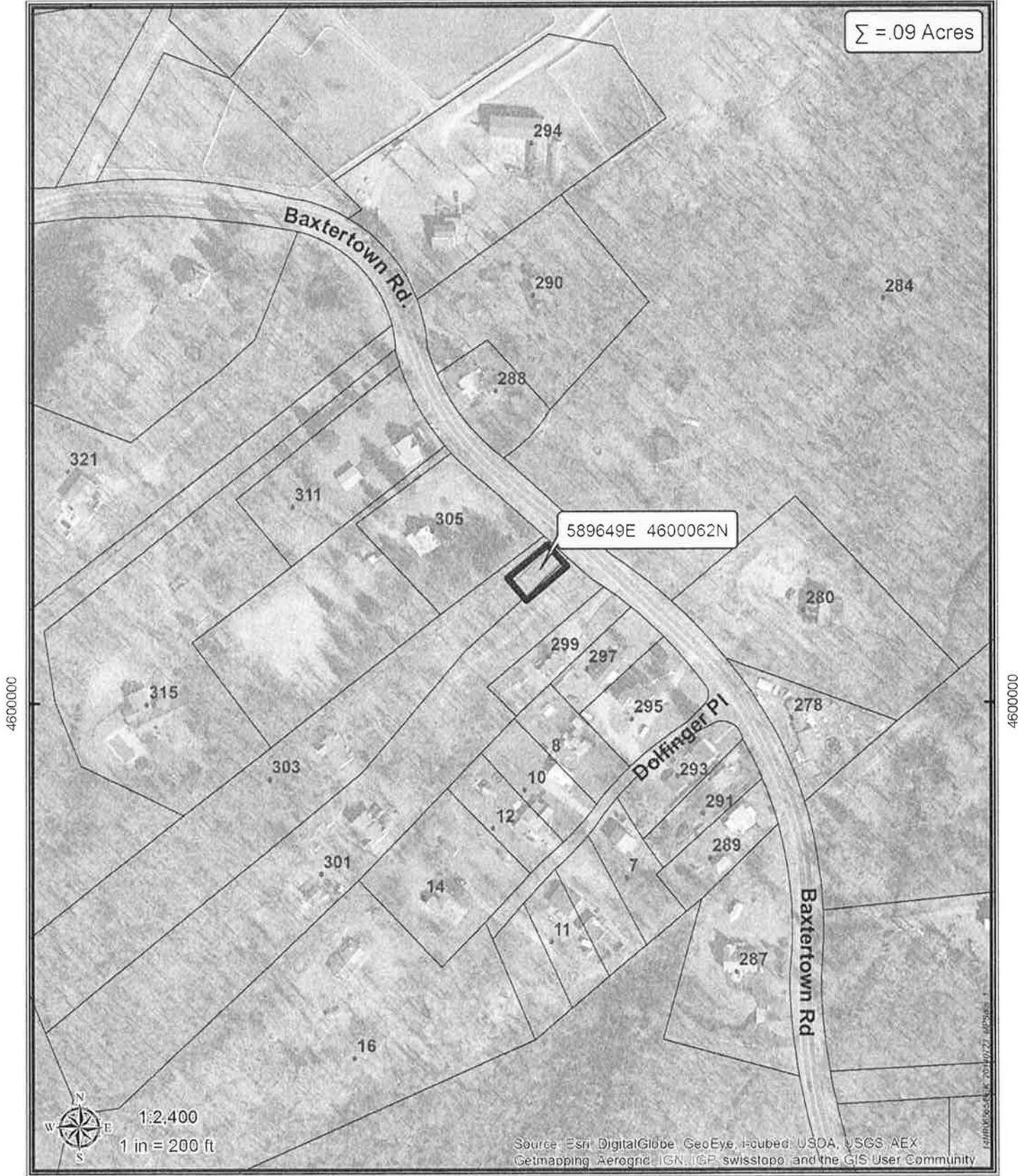


 Church Site

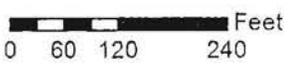
Tax Parcel Data:
Dutchess Co. RPS
www.co.dutchess.ny.us



$\Sigma = .09$ Acres



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter



 Church Site

Tax Parcel Data:
Dutchess Co. RPS
www.co.dutchess.ny.us







National Register of Historic Places
Memo to File

Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.

Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Zion Pilgrim Methodist Episcopal Church Site

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, Dutchess

DATE RECEIVED: 08/22/14 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 09/23/14
DATE OF 16th DAY: 10/08/14 DATE OF 45th DAY: 10/08/14

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14000845

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: Y NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 10/8/14 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

a significant local example of an African American religious site in New York State

RECOM./CRITEREA a+d

REVIEWER Abernathy DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attsched comments Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

**THE ARCHEOLOGY OF 290 BROADWAY
VOLUME IV
CONSERVATION OF MATERIALS FROM THE
AFRICAN BURIAL GROUND AND THE
NON-MORTUARY CONTEXTS**

Prepared for

Jacobs Edwards and Kelcey
(formerly Edwards and Kelcey Engineers, Inc.)
299 Madison Avenue
Morristown, New Jersey 07962

and

U.S. General Services Administration
Public Buildings Service
Northeast and Caribbean Region
26 Federal Plaza
New York, New York 10278

Authored by
Cheryl J. LaRoche

Edited by
Charles D. Cheek
and
Daniel G. Roberts

John Milner Associates, Inc.
535 North Church Street
West Chester, Pennsylvania 19380

2009



	List of Figures	
	List of Tables	
	Acknowledgments	
1.0	Introduction	
1.1	Project Background	1
1.2	Goals and Objectives of Conservation	5
1.3	Report Organization	8
2.0	Field Conditions	
2.1	Burial Environment at the 290 Broadway Block	9
2.1.1	<i>Historical and Natural Factors Contributing to the Archeological Environment</i>	9
2.1.2	<i>Soil Compression and Fill</i>	12
2.2	Field Triage Conservation	12
2.3	Site Stabilization	14
3.0	Post-Field Conditions	
3.1	Maintenance of Skeletal Remains	17
3.2	Packing and Shipping Protocol for Transportation of Skeletal Remains to Howard University	20
3.2.1	<i>Survey of Collection Prior to Transportation</i>	20
3.2.2	<i>Transportation Procedures</i>	20
3.2.3	<i>Results</i>	21
4.0	Conservation Procedures: Methods	
4.1	Safety Standards	23
4.2	Collection Survey	23
4.3	Artifact Stabilization and Environmental Controls	24
4.4	Documentation	24
4.4.1	<i>Database System</i>	24
4.4.2	<i>Photodocumentation and Digital Imaging</i>	25
4.5	Instrumentation	25
4.5.1	<i>Optical Microscopy</i>	26
4.5.2	<i>X-radiography</i>	26
4.5.3	<i>Scanning Electron Microscopy/Energy Dispersive X-ray Spectrometry</i>	26
4.5.4	<i>X-ray Fluorescence Spectroscopy (XRF) and Emission Spectrography</i>	27
5.0	Conservation Procedures: African Burial Ground Materials	
5.1	Inorganic Materials and Artifacts	29
5.1.1	<i>Copper</i>	29
5.1.1.1	<i>Coins</i>	29
5.1.1.2	<i>Buttons</i>	30
5.1.1.3	<i>Shroud Pins</i>	33

	5.1.1.4	Finger Rings	33
	5.1.1.5	Circular Copper Ring Fragments	36
	5.1.1.6	Sleeve Links.....	36
5.1.2		Iron	40
	5.1.2.1	Coffin Furniture and Tacks.....	40
	5.1.2.2	Nails and Screws	43
	5.1.2.3	Animal Shoe	43
5.1.3		Lead and Its Alloys	45
5.1.4		Silver and Its Alloys.....	45
	5.1.4.1	Methods.....	47
	5.1.4.2	Results	47
5.1.5		Glass Beads	47
	5.1.5.1	General Condition.....	50
	5.1.5.2	General Treatment	50
	5.1.5.3	Analytical Methods	50
	5.1.5.4	Results	51
	5.1.5.5	Discussion	53
	5.1.5.6	Conclusion	55
5.1.6		Composite Materials and Artifacts	56
	5.1.6.1	Enameled Copper Alloy.....	56
	5.1.6.2	Fired-Clay and Copper-Alloy Band.....	56
5.1.7		Calcite Crystal Cluster	59
5.2		Organic Materials and Artifacts.....	59
5.2.1		Wood	59
	5.2.1.1	Wood Identification.....	59
	5.2.1.2	X-ray Fluorescence.....	62
	5.2.1.3	Coffin Lid.....	65
5.2.2		Other Organic Matter	67
	5.2.2.1	Bone Buttons.....	67
	5.2.2.2	Textile Fragments	67
	5.2.2.3	Pseudomorphs	71
	5.2.2.4	Coral and Shell	75
	5.2.2.5	Amber	78

6.0 Conservation Procedures: 290 Broadway Block Artifacts and Materials

6.1		Metal Artifacts.....	81
	6.1.1	Gold Alloy.....	81
	6.1.2	Copper Alloy	85
	6.1.2.1	Coins.....	85
	6.1.2.2	Sleeve Links.....	85
6.1.3		Pewter	85

6.2	Organic Artifacts and Materials	88
6.2.1	<i>Coral</i>	88
6.2.2	<i>Crinoid Stem Fragment</i>	88
7.0	Recommendations	91
8.0	Concluding Summary	93
9.0	References Cited	95
<hr/>		
Appendix A: Conservation Inventory		
<hr/>		
Appendix B: Spectrographs of X-ray Fluorescence Results		
<hr/>		
Appendix C: Wood Identification by Burial		
<hr/>		

LIST OF FIGURES

- Figure 1.** Project area location. The 290 Broadway Block contains the African Burial Ground and the Courthouse Block contains the Five Points site (U.S. Geological Service 1981).
- Figure 2.** *African Burial Ground and the Commons Historic District* showing the location of the archeological investigations (from Landmarks Preservation Commission 1993).
- Figure 3.** Condition of iron coffin handle, Burial 90, cat. no. 833: a) mass of iron corrosion; b) X-radiograph of corrosion mass revealing a portion of a coffin handle. Notice chevrons in center pointing left and right (see Figure 18b also). Photo by Cheryl LaRoche.
- Figure 4.** Tracing of a portion of the *Plan of the City of New York* showing the relationship of the African Burial Ground Site to the marshes and water of the Collect (Goerck 1803, after Ingle et al. 1989).
- Figure 5.** Cross-section of Feature 111/120, a naturally filled depression, showing alluvial clays underlain by Cretaceous sands. View to northeast.
- Figure 6.** Cowrie shells (Burial 340, cat. no. 1651) with soil adhering to the surface after a PVA adhesive was used in the field to consolidate the remains. Photo by Cheryl LaRoche.
- Figure 7.** Chain-link fence surrounding the undeveloped area of the African Burial Ground where an estimated 200 burials remain. Photo by Cheryl LaRoche.
- Figure 8.** Art-Sorb® packages with specifications indicating a dry relative humidity (RH). The warped condition of the packaging is due to the hydration process of conditioning the Art-Sorb® to a 50 percent RH. Photo by Cheryl LaRoche.
- Figure 9.** The shrine to commemorate the ancestors at Lehman Laboratory: a) overall view; b) detail of the animal bone and other organic items. Conservators were concerned that pests and other contaminants might be attracted to the organic matter, particularly the wooden sculptures, which were removed. Photo by Cheryl LaRoche.
- Figure 10.** Preparing fragile skeletal remains for packing and shipping: a) compartmentalized box with adjustable dividers to accommodate the various sizes of the wrapped remains; b) example of fragile skull; c) packing methodology for fractured, crumbling skeletal specimens in preparation for transportation from Lehman College to Howard University. Acid-free tissue bolsters support fractured and fragmented areas. Photos by Cheryl LaRoche.
- Figure 11.** George II coin, Burial 135, cat. no. 880, X-radiograph. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.
- Figure 12.** Gilt button with anchor-and-rope motif, Burial 6, cat. no. 219. Photo by Doville Nelson.
- Figure 13.** Tinned wrapped-head pins: a) from various burial contexts; b) pin showing wrapped head, Burial 405, cat. no. 2071. Photos by Josh Nefsky.
- Figure 14.** Reconstructed finger rings with glass insets: Burial 310, cat. no. 1486 (top) and Burial 242, cat. no. 1229 (bottom). Photo by Cheryl LaRoche.
- Figure 15.** Octagonal sleeve link, Burial 238, cat. no. 1224: a) obverse at mid-treatment; b) reverse at mid-treatment; c) sleeve link with corrosion products removed. Photos by Josh Nefsky and Cheryl LaRoche.
- Figure 16.** Octagonal sleeve link, Burial 341, cat. no. 1652.

- Figure 17.** Composite drawing of coffin hardware based on X-rays of pieces from Burials 90 and 176. There are slight dissimilarities between the hand-wrought handles, particularly in the placement of the central pierced-chevron motif and the bale attachment. The lack of uniformity or identical placement is consistent with hand-crafting of the materials. Drawing by Cheryl LaRoche and Robert Schultz.
- Figure 18.** Coffin handle, Burial 176, cat. no. 942: a) corrosion in the shape of the ear of the coffin hardware, on the left. Photo by Cheryl LaRoche; b) X-ray of coffin handles shows the ear of a coffin handle; screw holes are clearly visible. Compare to Figure 3, which shows chevron central motif with score marks; forged outer edges and bales are visible on the right. Slight differences between the pieces from Burials 90 and 176 are evident.
- Figure 19.** Ox- or horseshoe, Burial 15, cat. no. 286: a) metal mass obscured by corrosion; b) X-ray of corrosion reveals an animal shoe; c) drawing of ox- or horseshoe. Photo by Cheryl LaRoche. Drawing by Cheryl LaRoche and Robert Schultz.
- Figure 20.** Silver ornament, Burial 254, Cat 1243: a) drawing of reconstructed item; b) photograph of reconstructed item; c) spectrograph showing high silver content. Photo by Cheryl LaRoche. Drawing by Cheryl LaRoche and Robert Schultz.
- Figure 21.** Photomicrograph detail of central ball portion of silver ornament showing corrosion pattern associated with silver, Burial 254, cat. no. 1243.
- Figure 22.** Bead assemblage from the African Burial Ground. Photo by Doville Nelson. Key: R=row; #=position in the row; tsp.=transparent; op.=opaque; †additional bead recovered during processing of skeletal remains at Howard University; ††not shown; ?manufacturing technique uncertain.
- R1 (top): Burial 340, cat. no. 1651: #1–2, IIa* (tsp. light gold), 16[†] specimens; #3–4, IIa* (tsp. blue green/turquoise), 26[†] specimens; #5–6, WIb6 (tsp. light gold), 6 specimens; #7, IIa55 (tsp. cobalt blue), 59 specimens; #8, WIIC? pentagonal (indeterminate color), 3 specimens.
- R2: Burial 340, cat. no. 1651: #1, WIIB* (op. blue with 2 gold gilt wavy lines), 1 specimen; #2, amber, 1 specimen; #3, IIj2 (op. black with 3 white wavy lines), 1 specimen.
- R3: Burial 434, cat. no. 2124: #1, bone, 1 specimen; Burial 226, cat. no. 1212: #2, WIb? (possibly tsp. yellow), 8 specimens; Burial 187, cat. no. 988: #3–4 IIa6, 22 specimens; Burial 428, cat. no. 2115: #5–6 WIIC2 (tsp. light gray), 2 specimens; Burial 250, cat. no. 1239: #7, WIb* (op. black), 1 specimen. ††Burial 107, cat. no. 850: Ia1 tubular (op. redwood cased in clear glass), 1 specimen (not in photo).
- Figure 23.** Decorated beads, Burial 340, cat. no. 1651: black bead with wave pattern, left; blue bead with gold gilt in wave pattern, right. Photo by Doville Nelson.
- Figure 24.** Sleeve link with motif associated with the Masons, Burial 371, cat. no. 1875. Photo by Doville Nelson.
- Figure 25.** Clay ball with encircling band, Burial 375, cat. no. 1886: a) band *in situ* with acid-free tissue mends; b) field drawing; c) copper-alloy band at mid-treatment; d) photomicrograph of copper-alloy band repair, mid-treatment; e) front view of treated artifact; f) top view of treated artifact. Drawing by Margo Schur. Photos by Cheryl LaRoche.
- Figure 26.** Photomicrograph of larch sample, Burial 101, cat. no. 843.
- Figure 27.** Lid from a child's coffin, Burial 100, cat. no. 842: a) before treatment; b) at mid-treatment. Photos by Cheryl LaRoche.
- Figure 28.** Photomicrograph of partially mineralized linen and wool textile fragment, plain weave, Burial 135, cat. no. 880.

- Figure 29.** Photomicrograph of woolen textile fragment, Burial 371, cat. no. 1875.
- Figure 30.** Photomicrograph of fibers: a) cotton fiber, Burial 169, cat. no. 926. Rodent hairs with ladder medulla structure: b) Burial 34, cat. no. 427; c) Burial 419, cat. no. 2104.
- Figure 31.** Photomicrograph of fiber, possibly sisal, Burial 419, cat. no. 2104.
- Figure 32.** Photomicrograph of a possible shroud pseudomorph from cranium of an infant, Burial 121, cat. no. 866: a) entire sample; b) detail.
- Figure 33.** Scanning electron micrographs (a, b, c) of pseudomorph of unidentified fibrous material, Burial 186, cat. no. 987.
- Figure 34.** Coral specimens, Burial 376, cat. no. 1895: a) *Siderastrea siderea*; b) detail of *S. siderea*.
- Figure 35.** Amber bead, Burial 340, cat. no. 1651.
- Figure 36.** Bone and antler utensil handles, left to right: bone, Feature 77, cat. no. 1027; bone, Feature 77, cat. no. 1104; bone, Feature 104, cat. no. 1276; antler, Feature 77, cat. no. 1020. Photo by Heather Griggs.
- Figure 37.** Thimbles, left to right: cat. no. 444, NE, Lot 20.5, Unit 4; cat. no. 517, Lot 12, Unit 10; cat. no. 569, Lot 12, Unit 16. Photo by Heather Griggs.
- Figure 38.** St. Christopher medal with corrosion products removed, cat. no. 703, Lot 12, Unit 19, AU 27, Phase 4. Photo by Cheryl LaRoche.
- Figure 39.** Fugio cent, cat. no. 464, Lot 12, Unit 11: a) obverse; b) reverse. The black pattern is indicative of the anaerobic conditions that allow sulfate-reducing bacteria to thrive. Photos by Josh Nefsky.
- Figure 40.** Fragments of octagonal sleeve links, cat. no. 580, NE, Lot 20.5, Unit 4. Photo by Cheryl LaRoche.
- Figure 41.** Toy cannon, cat. no. 664, Lot 12, Unit 12. Photo by Doville Nelson.
- Figure 42.** Unidentified coral, cat. no. 272, Lot 12, Unit 11. Photo by Josh Nefsky.



LIST OF TABLES

- Table 1.** SEM/EDS compositional surface analysis of glass beads from Burial 340.
- Table 2.** Summary of wood identification, African Burial Ground.
- Table 3.** X-ray fluorescence results of test for pigments on coffins.
- Table 4.** Artifacts associated with cloth or clothing.
- Table 5.** Coral identification from mortuary contexts.
- Table 6.** Coral identification from non-mortuary contexts.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to thank and acknowledge the many specialists required for the successful completion of a project with the scope and magnitude of New York City's African Burial Ground and, in particular, the project's scientific director, Dr. Michael L. Blakey. For the greater portion of the project, Gary S. McGowan, principal conservator, supervised the conservation team of Cheryl J. LaRoche, conservator, and conservation technicians Elizabeth Vogel, Janet Hawkins, and Norine Carroll.

The extremely degraded condition of certain artifacts necessitated that identification be undertaken by specialists. Glass expert Robert F. Brill, research scientist, the Corning Museum of Glass, graciously took the time to examine selected glass beads and made the initial identification of the amber bead in the collection. Analytical chemists John Boyd and Yves Midy at the U.S. Customs Laboratory, New York City, provided X-ray fluorescence analysis for selected artifacts, and Roland Harris identified degraded wood samples. Margaret Walsh, textile specialist, also with the U.S. Customs Laboratory in New York, assisted in the identification of fibers. Analytical chemist Peter Brown at the U.S. Customs Laboratory in Savannah provided scanning electron microscopy analysis for selected samples. Mary Wypyski, conservation scientist, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, provided scanning electron-microscopy analysis for selected beads. Steven D. Cairns, curator of stony corals, Department of Invertebrate Zoology, Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, generously took the time to meet with Ms. LaRoche to discuss the corals recovered from the site. Upon his recommendation, selected coral samples were sent to Ann Budd, fossil coral taxonomist, Department of Geology, Iowa State University, for further identification. Cynthia Hughes, the Textile Museum, Washington, D.C., generously provided comparative fiber samples and the use of the conservation laboratory. Dennis Seckler, Doville Nelson, Josh Nefsky, and Cheryl LaRoche were responsible for photodocumentation. Gary McGowan and Cheryl LaRoche were responsible for X-ray analysis and photomicroscopy.

In addition to these specialists, staff members also assisted in the conservation effort as needed. Stephen Brighton, Michael Bonasera, Claudia Milne, Christopher Campbell, Doville Nelson, Paul Reckner, Tamara Kelly, and Paula Saunders lent their support. We thank Dr. Sherrill D. Wilson and the staff at the Office of Public Education and Interpretation of the African Burial Ground for keeping the public informed and educated about conservation by facilitating tours of the archeological laboratory.

And finally, Charles D. Cheek and Daniel G. Roberts contributed their editorial skills to the manuscript, together with the assistance of Donna J. Seifert, Kathryn L. Bowers, and Margaret Schoettle.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This conservation report presents the methods and results of conservation strategies applied to materials from the 290 Broadway Block (Block 154) portion of the various projects associated with development of Foley Square, Lower Manhattan. These projects were comprised of two locations: Blocks 160-161, the Courthouse Block; and Block 154, the 290 Broadway Block in Lower Manhattan, New York City. A federal courthouse was erected on Block 160-161 and a federal office building located at 290 Broadway was erected on Block 154 (Figure 1). Plans for the construction of a pavilion (Figure 2) at the 290 Broadway building were eliminated due to the discovery of the African Burial Ground. The 290 Broadway Block portion of the project included two archeological components, the African Burial Ground and the non-mortuary-related archeological contexts. This report covers conservation aspects of both the mortuary (African Burial Ground) and the non-mortuary components of the 290 Broadway Block; the conservation of the courthouse material can be found in Volume V of the Foley Square report entitled *Tales of Five Points: Working-Class Life in Nineteenth-Century New York* (McGowan and LaRoche 2000).

1.1 Project Background

An overview of the complex contractual and administrative history of the various Foley Square projects is necessary for comprehension of the role of conservation on the project, and is presented here to clarify subsequent discussions or decisions pertaining to scheduling, shipment of skeletal materials, or treatment.

In May of 1989, a contract to conduct data recovery investigations at Foley Square, which consisted of both the Courthouse Block (Five Points site) and the 290 Broadway Block (African Burial Ground), was awarded by the General Services Administration (GSA) to Historic Conservation and Interpretation, Inc. (HCI), a cultural-resources management firm based in Newton, New Jersey (Ingle et al. 1989). With time, the Courthouse Block was separated from the 290 Broadway Block, and the non-mortuary component of the 290 Broadway Block was eventually separated from the African Burial Ground. However, conservation strategies were developed for the project as a whole. Gary McGowan, now with Cultural Preservation and Restoration, Inc., was hired in 1989 as a subconsultant to provide conservation services to HCI and continued to provide conservation services beginning in 1992 as a subconsultant and eventually an employee of John Milner Associates, Inc. (JMA).

HCI conducted preliminary historical research for both sites and completed excavation of the Courthouse Block. During the last three months of the Courthouse Block excavation, HCI crew members worked concurrently on the Courthouse Block and the 290 Broadway Block. By September 1991, the excavation of the Courthouse Block was completed and the excavation effort shifted to the 290 Broadway Block.

The initial excavation of the African Burial Ground focused on Republican Alley and Manhattan Alley, where burials were thought to be preserved, and on Lots 12 and 20-21, where later historic resources were predicted. The original studies concluded that there was a very low probability of the presence of burials in other parts of the project area (Ingle et al. 1989:127-129; Condell and Rutsch 1991, as cited in Rutsch et al. 1992:3-5).

When it became apparent that a larger-than-anticipated portion of the African Burial Ground was undisturbed and that the number of skeletons, therefore, exceeded predicted levels, the Metropolitan Forensic Anthropology Team (MFAT), affiliated with Lehman College, Bronx, New York, was given responsibility for the skeletal analysis. Michael Parrington of Helen Schenck Associates, a subconsultant to HCI, was hired as the principal investigator and provided oversight of the field excavations of skeletal and cultural materials for the African Burial Ground. Philip Perrazio supervised excavation of the non-mortuary contexts.



Figure 1. Project area location. The 290 Broadway Block contains the African Burial Ground and the Courthouse Block contains the Five Points site (U.S. Geological Service 1981).

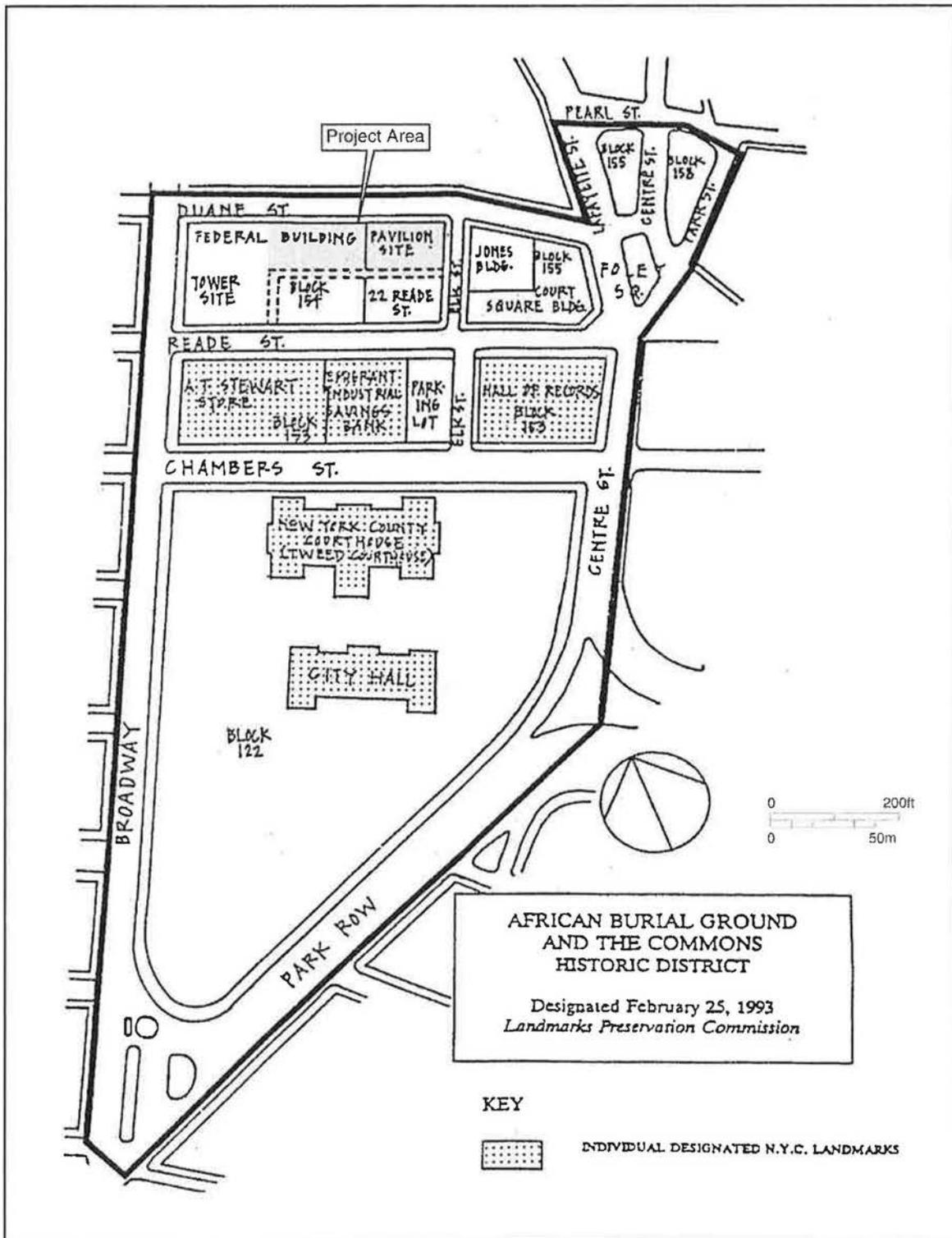


Figure 2. African Burial Ground and the Commons Historic District showing the location of the archeological investigations (from Landmarks Preservation Commission 1993).

Artifact and cultural materials assessed in the field by Parrington and his staff as requiring conservation were sent to an interim laboratory, which was provided as a professional courtesy by the South Street Seaport Museum's conservation laboratory, 17 State Street, New York City. This facility provided a stable environment for the mortuary artifacts and enabled compliance with local concerns that excavated materials remain in New York City. A small portion of the non-mortuary artifacts excavated from the 290 Broadway Block was initially sent to HCI in Newton, New Jersey.

The decision to use the local laboratory at the South Street Seaport Museum was based on the quality of the conservation laboratory and its proximity to the excavation site. The initial conservation effort was directed toward assessing the physical and chemical stability of the artifacts by beginning holistic interim stabilization on the excavated mortuary artifacts.

During the time when the African Burial Ground artifacts were at the South Street Seaport Museum's conservation laboratory, they became a vehicle for fulfilling the laboratory's mission to engage the public about archeology and conservation. The conservators were frequently involved in outreach to the community at large to explain the conservation work. The intense public interest in the African Burial Ground component of the Foley Square project meant that many people visited the conservation laboratory.

The conservation laboratory was equipped with a video system that allowed the public to observe the conservators at work at the microscope and provided a means of educating large groups about the intricacies of conservation. In addition to viewing conservation techniques, an interactive exhibit entitled "New York Unearthed" presented information on archeology for those specifically interested in the African Burial Ground.

Although all inorganic artifacts were treated at the conservation laboratory of the South Street Seaport Museum, the skeletal remains were initially housed in a trailer at the 290 Broadway Block, and the other organic materials, including all wood samples, were initially stored in freezers at HCI in Newton, New Jersey. With the introduction of MFAT as project physical anthropologists, the skeletal materials were sent to Lehman College, Bronx, New York. The hair and tissue samples from the graves were stored in a refrigerator at MFAT's laboratory adjacent to where the skeletal materials were stored.

HCI's contract was terminated by the GSA, and John Milner Associates, Inc. (JMA), of West Chester, Pennsylvania, was awarded a contract for the completion of the excavation of the site. From July of 1992 through October of 1992, Gary McGowan was retained by JMA as a subconsultant to provide conservation services. The GSA and JMA equipped a conservation and archeological laboratory at 6 World Trade Center, New York City. In November of 1992, McGowan became an employee of JMA and principal conservator for the project and Cheryl LaRoche became project conservator. Michael Parrington continued as principal investigator, working as a subconsultant to JMA. In July of 1992, Howard University was awarded a contract for the bioanthropological investigation and interpretation and Dr. Michael Blakey of the Cobb Bioanthropology Laboratory, Howard University, was named scientific director.

The 6 World Trade Center laboratory housed the artifacts excavated from all components of the Foley Square archeology, including the Courthouse Block (Five Points), the 290 Broadway Block, and the African Burial Ground. Although JMA and Howard University assumed responsibility for the project in July 1992, the skeletal remains continued to be housed at Lehman College under the control of MFAT from July of 1992 to April 20, 1993. From April to November of 1993, the skeletal remains at Lehman were monitored by JMA's project conservators. In November of 1993, the skeletal remains were transferred to the Cobb Bioanthropology Laboratory at Howard University.

At the time when the conservation and archeological laboratories were established, the Liaison Office was created, also at 6 World Trade Center, to foster public awareness. In compliance with the public interpretation and education mandate of Section 106, the Liaison Office officially became the Office of Public Education and Interpretation of the African Burial Ground (OPEI). The OPEI was fully funded by the GSA, who contracted with JMA to manage and operate the office with Dr. Sherrill D. Wilson as its

director. In addition to its quarterly newsletter, the OPEI conducted archeological tours that discussed recovered and conserved artifacts and offered films and lectures in fulfillment of the OPEI's educational mandate.

When JMA began work on the 290 Broadway Block in 1992, conservation and archeological processing was focused on the African Burial Ground collection. The schedule of treatment and work on the artifacts from the African Burial Ground was postponed, however, due to contractual considerations. The conservators then shifted to the conservation of artifacts from the Courthouse Block. Laboratory work on the Courthouse Block's Five Points project ended in the summer of 1997.

During the intervening years, while treating cultural material from the Courthouse Block, the conservators packed the African Burial Ground artifacts for shipment to Howard University for analysis, in accordance with *The Protocol for the Disposition of 290 Broadway Block Artifacts and Data, Lower Manhattan, New York* (Yamin et al. 1995a:1). It was later decided that these artifacts would remain in the Foley Square Laboratory in New York City. Dr. Warren R. Perry and his staff assumed responsibility for the artifacts and their analysis in 1996 under the direction of Dr. Michael Blakey of Howard University. In November of 1996, Dr. Charles Cheek of JMA assumed responsibility for the non-mortuary contexts of the 290 Broadway Block and served as a liaison between Howard University and JMA. Conservation and analytical testing of the artifacts associated with the two sites were resumed at this time.

It should be noted that the World Trade Center was bombed on February 25, 1993. The epicenter of the explosion was in the basement of Building No. 1 which is adjacent to Building No. 6, which housed the Foley Square Laboratory. There was minor damage to the laboratory walls, but no physical injury to the staff and no damage to the artifacts. The effects of the dense particulate matter, smoke, and soot which resulted from the bomb were minimal. The cultural material was stored in bags and boxes, which shielded the collection from contamination. During the week immediately following the bombing, the laboratory was closed and no heat was provided to the facility. This fluctuation in temperature, however, appeared to have no adverse effect on the artifacts.

1.2 Goals and Objectives of Conservation

This document, part of a multi-volume report prepared by JMA on the archeological investigations of the 290 Broadway Block, is intended for use by archeologists as well as conservators. The role of the conservator is to act as a steward for collections and artifacts that require conservation. The conservation objectives for the 290 Broadway Block are consistent with the objectives of the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (AIC 1994) and the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 79—Curation of Federally Owned and Administered Archeological Collections (36 CFR Part 79:8). The work was further guided by an amended memorandum of agreement (GSA 1991), which calls for reburial of the mortuary-related artifacts along with reburial of the skeletal remains. The African Burial Ground was designated a New York Historic Landmark in February of 1993 (Landmarks Preservation Commission 1993).

When JMA and Howard University were awarded contracts for various aspects of the Foley Square work, research designs were written and revised. Among other things, they delineated the conservation parameters of the project (Howard University and John Milner Associates [HU/JMA] 1992, 1993a, 1993b; John Milner Associates and Howard University [JMA/HU] 1993). The primary goal was stabilization and preventative conservation. As stated in the research design (HU/JMA 1993b:84), conservation measures were undertaken when conservation of an object was necessary to provide data related to the research questions or when an object was determined to be suitable for display purposes. With the exception of iron nails and the majority of the glass beads, mortuary and non-mortuary artifacts were treated at a level of stabilization that would allow retrieval of data through conservation or analytical means. Freezing of organic material is an example of an interim stabilization procedure. When treatment was not warranted or requested by team members, preventative conservation measures were undertaken.

Although the AIC provides definitions of conservation terminology, those who are not conservators may not recognize the terms used in this document. The conservation profession is devoted to the preservation of cultural materials. The archeological conservator must balance the preservation of evidence with the necessity of treatment to enhance the interpretive value of the artifact (Dollery and Henderson 1996).

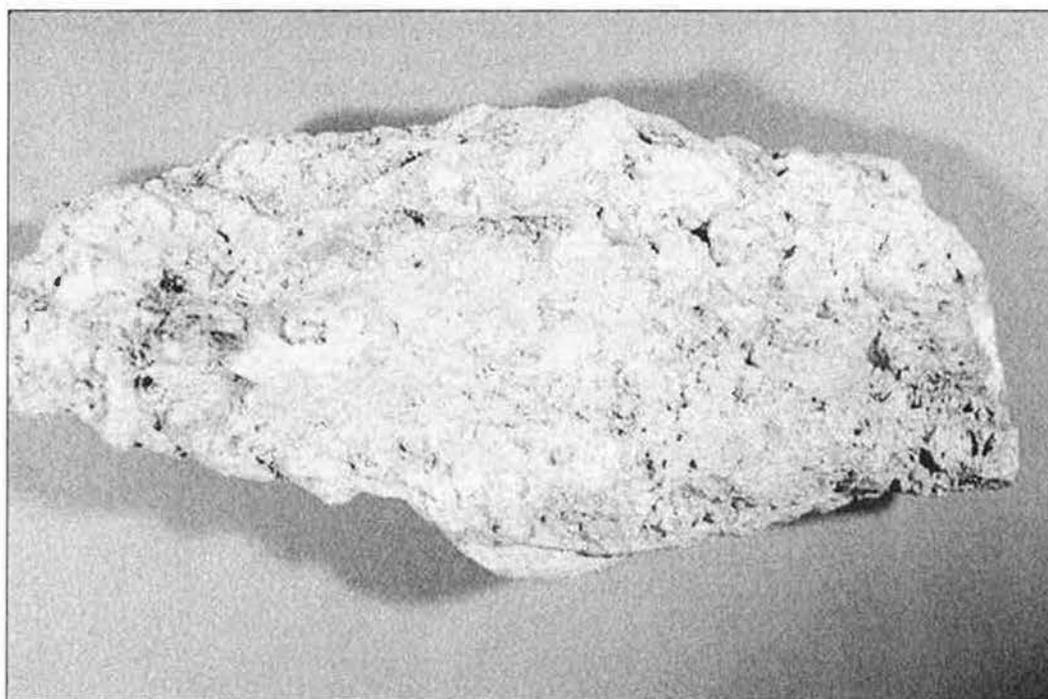
Conservation activities include examination, documentation, treatment, and preventative care, supported by research and education. Examination includes the investigation of the structure, materials, and condition of cultural property, including the identification of the extent and causes of deterioration and alteration. Documentation consists of recording in a permanent format information derived from conservation activities. For the Foley Square 290 Broadway Block, documentation consisted of photo-documentation, digital imaging, X-rays, drawings, and computerized conservation records.

While chemical and mechanical cleaning treatments are most closely associated with the conservation profession, the term treatment has a broader definition. Within the field of conservation, treatment is the deliberate alteration of the chemical and/or physical aspects of cultural materials, aimed primarily at prolonging its existence. Treatment may consist of stabilization or restoration or a combination of approaches. Stabilization includes treatment procedures intended to maintain the integrity of cultural materials and to minimize deterioration. Restoration includes treatment procedures intended to return cultural materials to a known or assumed state, often through the addition of non-original material. Preventative care, often referred to as preventative or passive conservation, is the mitigation of deterioration and damage to cultural materials. Preventative care procedures include appropriate environmental conditions; appropriate handling and maintenance procedures for storage, exhibition, packing, transport, and use; integrated pest management; emergency preparedness and response; and reformatting/duplication (AIC 1994:22). One primary preventative care procedure implemented for the 290 Broadway Block is the storage of fragile artifacts in transparent polyethylene boxes fitted with Ethafoam®, which allows viewing of the artifact without handling.

Aesthetic issues and criteria normally associated with evaluation for exhibition were not the primary considerations for display of cultural materials associated with the project. The criteria of suitability for display centered on educational and analytical values. Artifacts that were reconstructed or restored to enhance analytical potential were placed on view in the Foley Square Laboratory for both public and scholarly investigation. If degradation rendered an artifact difficult to “read” or understand but it contained educational value for archeology or conservation, the artifact was displayed along with teaching material.

For example, iron coffin handles from Burials 90 and 176 were completely obscured by corrosion overburden and would have been difficult to clean due to their fragile nature and lack of robust metal content. The handles were analyzed using X-radiography, eliminating the need for invasive conservation techniques (Figure 3). The handles were used to illustrate electrochemical activity inherent in wet archeological sites; the science and chemistry of corrosion formation and equilibrium; and how archeologists use style and decorative detail in dating artifacts. As part of a larger goal of exposing broader audiences to anthropology, archeology, and archeological conservation as professions, the OPEI and the laboratory staff displayed the artifacts and explained their information potential.

Although this report describes aspects of conservation as they relate to the mortuary and non-mortuary components of the 290 Broadway Block, it may also be used as a general reference guide for understanding treatment goals and objectives within archeological conservation. However, this document should not be considered a practicum for conservation treatments. The condition of an artifact depends on soil and deposition processes, which vary from site to site. Archeological conditions foster unique chemical and physical environments and reactions. Mishandling or damage may result if treatments are applied without a full understanding of the rationale behind treatment strategies and their effects on artifacts.



a.



b.

Figure 3. Condition of iron coffin handle, Burial 90, cat. no. 833: a) mass of iron corrosion; b) X-radiograph of corrosion mass revealing a portion of a coffin handle. Notice chevrons in center pointing left and right (see Figure 18b also). Photo by Cheryl LaRoche.

Conservation emphasis was placed on passive or preventative conservation, stabilization, and preservation of the inherent data and analytical potential of the artifacts to ensure artifact preservation while this collection is available for study and analysis. It should not be assumed, however, that conservation inevitably renders materials immune to the effects of agents of long-term deterioration. Conservation attempts to buffer materials against deteriorating agents, but sometimes this is impossible (Cronyn 1990:33). The durability and chemical stability inherent in materials such as metal or glass are often difficult to reconcile with the unstable, morphologically degraded artifact from the archeological environment.

Chemical treatments may mitigate the degrading effects of the archeological environment but may not impart structural stability. For example, artifacts were frequently vacuum-impregnated with an acrylic resin that acts as a consolidant and barrier coating. This did not, however, compensate for loss or voids in the object. Fissures, cracks, and breaks in artifacts were repaired, but reconstructed objects received no further physical or structural strengthening. Restoration, which does give strength to reconstructed artifacts, was not undertaken, with the exception of a few selected artifacts as noted. Therefore, many of the treated artifacts remain quite fragile and should not be handled for study, photodocumentation, or analysis without supervision of a conservator.

1.3 Report Organization

The remaining portion of this report is organized into several sections. In Section 2.0, field conditions and the mortuary environment are discussed. Section 3.0 reviews the post-field conditions for the mortuary remains and the monitoring and shipping of the skeletal remains. Conservation methods, including safety standards, documentation, instrumentation, and elemental analysis, are discussed in Section 4.0. The fifth and sixth sections deal with materials, summarizing treatment and analytical approaches by material type, from mortuary (Section 5.0) and non-mortuary (Section 6.0) contexts, with reference to examination, condition, and treatment of specific artifacts by provenience. The same conservation methods, materials, and procedures were applied to both the African Burial Ground collection and the non-mortuary collection. Specific artifacts reflect the mixed use of the African Burial Ground site, and the various artifacts treated, rather than conservation procedures *per se*, were selected to illustrate the application of conservation methods. Recommendations for curation and long-term storage are included in Section 7.0. The report's conclusions are presented in Section 8.0, and the references cited are in Section 9.0. Analytical results and conservation-treatment records are contained in the appendices.

2.0 FIELD CONDITIONS

Archeological site-formation processes at the 290 Broadway Block are discussed in another project document (Cheek 2004). Field conservation procedures are also discussed in detail in the research design (HU/JMA 1993a:85). This conservation report limits discussion to the conditions that contributed to the complex patterns of degradation associated with the skeletal and cultural remains from the site. According to Pollard and Heron (1996:345–346):

We know very little about the detailed effects of variations in burial conditions on a wide range of materials, such as bone, metalwork, etc. This requires a detailed knowledge of the deterioration mechanisms of the materials themselves, but also an ability to predict the changes arising from variations in soil conditions. This requires an understanding of the soil (strictly, burial medium)/groundwater/archaeological object interaction, which involves a very wide range of chemical and physical understanding.

2.1 Burial Environment at the 290 Broadway Block

Catalytic agents present in the burial environment always impact artifact preservation. For the African Burial Ground and the 290 Broadway Block excavation, the presence of moisture and acidic soils had adverse effects. The Collect Pond and the marshes that surrounded it were once among the most conspicuous topographical features of Lower Manhattan, located within a belt of low-lying wetlands. Historic maps depicting the Collect Pond, the Little Collect, and the surrounding marshes and swamps indicate the extent and proximity of the wetlands to the African Burial Ground and the 290 Broadway Block (Figure 4). The ponds were fed from underground aquifers, and this may account for the high water table associated with the burial ground excavation (Yamin et al. 1995b). The southern arm of the marshy area surrounding the pond extended to West Broadway and Barley Street and probably contributed to the wet environmental conditions found at the site (Neville 1994:14–15).

2.1.1 *Historical and Natural Factors Contributing to the Archeological Environment*

Throughout its history, the site was a multi-functional property. While it was in active use as a burial ground, it was also used for ceramic production and as a refuse site for the production debris. Land manipulation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, including landfill and drainage changes in the early nineteenth century, produced a myriad of effects on the artifacts. Several episodes of environmental changes culminated in contamination through the introduction of twentieth-century pollutants. In the twentieth century the site was in use as a parking lot and was frequently the dumping site for a variety of pollutants, such as petroleum distillates and cooking oils from neighborhood push carts (Rutsch 1989, personal communication).

The topography and complex soil conditions created a variety of archeological environments. The variety of environments affected the preservation of both artifacts and skeletal remains. For example, aqueous environments affect artifacts. Electrochemical reactions with water cause corrosion and damage (Crown



**New York State Office of Parks,
Creation and Historic Preservation**

Division for Historic Preservation
P.O. Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189
518-237-8643



Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor

Rose Harvey
Commissioner

25 July 2014

Alexis Abernathy
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye St. NW, 8th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005

Re: National Register Nomination

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

I am pleased to enclose the following National Register nomination, on disc, to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register:

Zion Pilgrim Methodist Episcopal Church Site, Dutchess County

Please feel free to call me at 518.237.8643 x 3261 if you have any questions.

Sincerely:

Kathleen LaFrank
National Register Coordinator
New York State Historic Preservation Office