

STREET PLAN OF NEW AMSTERDAM AND COLONIAL NEW YORK.

Street Plan of New Amsterdam and Colonial New York, Manhattan.

Beaver Street (incorporating Bever Graft, Princed Street, and Sloat Lane, later Merchant Street) from Broadway to Pearl Street

Bridge Street (incorporating Brugh Straat, later Hull Street) from Whitehall Street to Broad Street

Broad Street (incorporating Heere Graft, also called Prince Graft) from Wall Street to Pearl Street

Broadway (incorporating Heere Straet, later Broad Way) from Wall Street to Stone Street

Exchange Place (incorporating Heer dwars straat and Tuyn Straet, later Church Street, then Flatten Barrack and Garden Street) from Broadway to Hanover Street

Hanover Square (incorporating the slip) from Stone Street to Pearl Street

Hanover Street (incorporating a portion of Sloat Lane) from Wall Street to Pearl Street

Marketfield Street (incorporating Marckvelt Steegh, later Petticoat Lane) from New Street to Broad Street

Mill Lane from South William Street to Stone Street

New Street from Wall Street to Marketfield Street

Pearl Street (incorporating The Strand, later Dock Street) from Whitehall Street to Wall Street

South William Street (incorporating Glaziers' Street, later Slyck Steegh, Muddy Lane, Mill Street Lane, and Mill Street) from Broad Street to William Street

Stone Street (incorporating Breurs Straet, later Straet van de Graft, Brouwer Street, Stony Street, and Duke Street) from Broadway to Broad Street and from the intersection of the relocated Coenties Alley to William Street

Wall Street (incorporating The Cingel) from Broadway to Pearl Street

Whitehall Street (incorporating Marckvelt, later The Whitehall) from Pearl Street to Stone Street

William Street (incorporating Burger's Path and Smit's Vly (Smith Street), later King Street) from Wall Street to Hanover Square

Landmark Site: Beaver Street -- the property bounded by the eastern curb line of Broadway, the southern curb line of Beaver Street, the western curb line of Pearl Street, and the northern curb line of Beaver Street;

Bridge Street -- the property bounded by the eastern curb line of Whitehall Street, the southern curb line of Bridge Street, the western curb line of Broad Street, and the northern curb line of Bridge Street;

Broad Street -- the property bounded by the southern curb line of Wall Street, the western curb line of Broad Street, the northern curb line of Pearl Street, and the eastern curb line of Broad Street;

Broadway -- the property bounded by a line extending westward from the northern curb line of Wall Street, the western, southern and western curb lines of Broadway, a line extending westward from the midpoint of the bed of Stone Street, and the eastern curb line of Broadway;

Exchange Place -- the property bounded by the eastern curb line of Broadway, the southern curb line of Exchange Place, the western curb line of Hanover Street, and the northern curb line of Exchange Place;

Hanover Square -- the property bounded by the northern curb line of Hanover Square, a line extending from the western curb line of Pearl Street to the northern curb line of Stone Street, the southern curb line of Hanover Square, and the eastern curb line of Pearl Street, and Tax Map Block 28, Lot 28;

Hanover Street -- the property bounded by the southern curb line of Wall Street, the western and southern curb lines of Hanover Street, the western curb line of Pearl Street, and the northern and eastern curb lines of Hanover Street;

Marketfield Street -- the property bounded by the western curb line of New Street, the southern curb line of Marketfield Street, the western curb line of Broad Street, and the northern curb line of Marketfield Street;

Mill Lane -- the property bounded by the southern curb line of South William Street, the western curb line of Mill Lane, the northern curb line of Stone Street, and the eastern curb line of Mill Lane;

New Street -- the property bounded by the southern curb line of Wall Street, the western curb line of New Street, the southern curb line of Marketfield Street, and the eastern curb line of New Street;

Pearl Street -- the property bounded by the eastern curb line of Whitehall Street, the southern and eastern curb lines of Pearl Street, the southern curb line of Wall Street, and the western and northern curb lines of Pearl Street;

South William Street -- the property bounded by the eastern curb line of Broad Street, the southern curb line of South William Street, the western curb line of William Street, and the northern curb line of South William Street;

Stone Street -- the property bounded by a line extending northward from the eastern curb line of Whitehall Street, the southern curb line of Stone Street;

the western curb line of Broad Street, and the northern curb line of Stone Street, and the property bounded by a line extending northward from the western edge of relocated Coenties Alley, the southern curb line of Stone Street, the southern curb line of William Street, and the northern curb line of Stone Street;

Wall Street -- the property bounded by the eastern curb line of Broadway, the southern curb line of Wall Street, the eastern curb line of Pearl Street, and the northern curb line of Wall Street;

Whitehall Street -- the property bounded by the southern curb line of Pearl Street, the western curb line of Whitehall Street, a line extending westward from the midpoint of the bed of Stone Street, and the eastern curb line of Whitehall Street;

William Street -- the property bounded by the southern curb line of Wall Street, the western and southern curb lines of William Street, a line extending from the northern curb line of Stone Street to the western curb line of Pearl Street, and the northern and eastern curb lines of William Street; Borough of Manhattan.

On February 10, 1981, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the Street Plan of New Amsterdam and Colonial New York and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 14). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Four witnesses spoke in favor of designation. There were no speakers in opposition to designation. Several letters have been received supporting this designation.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

The street plan of lower Manhattan, south of Wall Street, within the confines of the Dutch settlement of New Amsterdam, is a striking reminder of New York's colonial past and provides virtually the only above-ground physical evidence in Manhattan of the Dutch presence in New York during the 17th century.

"Manhattan" means "hilly island" in the Algonquin language spoken by the Indians who greeted the Dutch in the early 17th century. Evolving from Indian heritage, lower Manhattan became a governmental seat with the founding of Dutch "Nieuw Amsterdam" (1624-26) and, as New York, the English colonial capital after 1664. Now almost 360 years after the arrival of the first Dutch settlers, lower Manhattan continues to evoke its colonial past through the configuration of its streets.

Founding and Growth of New Amsterdam and New York

"This island is the key and principal stronghold of the country, and needs to be settled first," wrote Jonas Michaelius, Manhattan's first minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, in 1628.¹ Of course, the country had long been "settled" -- Indians have been in New York since 10,000 B.C. (and 14,000 American Indians still reside in the city today). By the time of Dutch settlement, however, the Indian population had plummeted tragically. For a century prior to the Dutch occupation, European explorers and fur traders had skirted the shores around New York City, accidentally introducing epidemics of European diseases such as smallpox and bubonic plague to which the Indians had no immunities. As a consequence, the Indian population had been reduced severely since 1524 when Giovanni da Verrazano, an Italian sailing under the French flag, saw the shorelines of New York City's Upper Bay and remarked that they were "very well peopled."²

From Henry Hudson's 1609 voyage until 1624, the Dutch had sailed the Hudson River and other waterways such as Long Island Sound, slowly establishing a fur trade with the many local Indian nations in the region. But the Dutch were not the only Europeans interested in the area; the French and the English also had their sights on the area's centerpiece, the Hudson River Valley. To meet this challenge and to establish their own claims, Dutch families in 1624 settled Nut (Governor's) Island under the sponsorship of the Dutch West India Company. This same year, some of these people may also have settled on lower Manhattan. The colony of New Netherland was underway, and the permanent white occupation of what became New York City began.

In 1626, Peter Minuit purchased the island of Manhattan from some local Algonquin Indians for European trade goods "the value of sixty guilders."³ Nieuw Amsterdam, as the new Dutch settlement was called, began to take shape under the guidance of Crijn Fredericksz who had been assigned the task of laying out the city by the Dutch West India Company in 1625 and began his work in 1626.

The fur trade with the Indians, especially in beaver pelts, was the mainstay of New Amsterdam's economy. By 1643, however, the Dutch wanted to expand their beaver pelt trade with the Iroquois who lived west of what is now Albany -- at that time the Dutch settlement of Fort Orange (Nassau) and Beverwyck. The Dutch also coveted the agricultural potential of the Algonquin Indian lands of the lower and mid-Hudson Valley. Conveniently for the Dutch, the Iroquois they wished to become more attached to were the mortal enemies of the Algonquins whose lands the Dutch wanted. Without provocation, the Dutch in 1643 massacred dozens of innocent Algonquin families in a surprise attack, and this atrocity launched a series of wars which drained the economy of the colony. The wars ended in 1664, the same year the English sailed into New York harbor and accepted New Netherland's surrender from Governor Peter Stuyvesant, who had been unable to persuade his countrymen to resist because they believed they had already spent enough money on the Indian wars.

The English have actually invaded New York City four times: 1664, 1674, 1691, and 1776. In 1664, they captured the city and colony from the Dutch, renaming New Amsterdam as New York. But the English lost the city when the Dutch recaptured it in 1673. In 1674, after treaty negotiations ended the "Anglo-Dutch War," the English peacefully reentered the city. But in 1689, a German resident of New York City, Jacob Leisler, led a local rebellion which succeeded in ousting the resident English officials in favor of Leisler and his followers. Such a brazen act was not undertaken in isolation, however. News of a revolution in England (the "Glorious Revolution" of 1688) had inspired both Boston and New York City to rebel. It would not be the last time these two cities were hotbeds of revolution, but this time English authority was successfully reimposed. Although English rule was reintroduced peacefully in Boston, a small English army was required to defeat Leisler in 1691. Leisler and his lieutenant were hanged. The fourth and final English invasion came during the American Revolution. This revolution had been preceded by a decade of violent demonstrations in New York City against British economic policy. In 1776, to crush the rebelling thirteen colonies, the British struck at the colony's geographic center -- New York. In a series of battles, the British successfully drove General George Washington and his Patriot army from the city. The British occupied the city continuously from September 1776 until November 1783, when -- under terms of the Treaty of Paris -- George Washington peacefully reentered the city he had lost seven years before. At Fraunces Tavern on Pearl Street at the southeast corner of Broad, on December 4, 1783, Washington bid farewell to his officers. The colonial period had ended. After 1783, New York City transformed itself from an important imperial outpost to the economic center of a new nation and eventually a new world economic structure.

Throughout all these dramatic events, the city's population grew as follows:⁴

DUTCH ERA

ENGLISH ERA

1624-1626: a few dozen

1629: 300

1639: 400

1643: 500

1655: 1,170

1664: 2,240

1664: 2,240

1698: 4,937

1731: 8,622

1750: 13,300

1770: 21,000

1775: 22,000

(In the first United States census of 1790, New York City had 33,131 people.)

The total population figures, however, do not hint at the remarkable character of Dutch New Amsterdam and English New York. The people of New Amsterdam slowly evolved into a diverse lot comparable only to colonial Newport, Rhode Island -- the other magnet in colonial North America for ethnic and religious diversity.

In 1643, eighteen languages were spoken in New Amsterdam, including Algonquin and Iroquoian -- two major Indian languages each of which includes various dialects. Among this diverse population was one Polish Lutheran (male), and Irish Catholic (male), and one Portuguese Catholic (female). The first blacks had been brought to New Amsterdam in the 1620s. Throughout the colonial period (1624-1783), between 7% and 20% of the population was black, both slave and free. The first Jews -- 23 men, women and children -- arrived in 1654, refugees from Bahia, Brazil.

The overall ethnic composition of New Amsterdam and the entire colony when it capitulated to the English in 1664 reveals a most significant fact: most colonists in New Netherland were not Dutch. To survive and expand their colony, Dutch officials needed to attract non-Dutch settlers and thus when the English captured the colony in 1664 the composition of New Netherland was:⁵

1664 Ethnic composition of the entire colony of New Netherland

Dutch	40%	Black	7%
German	19%	Flemish and Walloon	5%
English*	15%	French	5%
Scandinavian	7%	Jewish and other	2%

*Especially on eastern Long Island

Despite an expanding and increasingly diverse population and increasing pressures on the city's physical structure, the essential context of lower Manhattan as laid out by the Dutch continued to survive and accommodate itself to the needs of the city's residents.

The Street Plan of Lower Manhattan

In 1626, Crijn Fredericksz arrived in lower Manhattan to plan New Amsterdam according to the instructions he had been given in 1625 by the Dutch West India Company. Fredericksz's instructions from Holland called for a five-bastioned fort with the city's streets running along the walls. Local geography and the need for defense dictated a four-bastioned fort, on the site of the present-day U.S. Custom House, with streets extending from the fort that followed natural contours. The local Indian's Wickquasgeck Trail became Broadway, and -- as in Amsterdam and throughout Holland -- some streets needed bridges to cross a natural inlet the Dutch remade into a canal (filled-in and now Broad Street).

New Amsterdam's burgomasters attempted to regulate the town's growth, using defense against Indians and/or Englishmen as a major argument for keeping the city's buildings close together. Throughout the early years of the settlement, burgomasters ordered and supervised the planning, opening, closing, grading, and widening of the city's thoroughfares and alleys.

Captain Frederick de Koningh was authorized to make a survey of New Amsterdam on November 10, 1655; this was approved on February 25, 1656. A major survey was undertaken by Jacques Cortelyou and completed by December 5, 1656. That and subsequent surveys by Cortelyou culminated in a wonderfully-detailed plan of the existing city in 1660. The original did not survive, but a copy, redrawn by an unknown draftsman, has survived and is known as the Castello Plan. Along with a list of people and houses drawn up in 1660 by Nicasius de Sille (and perhaps meant to supplement the plan), the Castello Plan is the earliest surviving, reliable, and detailed guide to a reconstruction of New Amsterdam's street pattern as it was just prior to the English conquest of 1664.⁶ The following streets shown in the Castello Plan still survive today in roughly their 1660 configuration: Beaver Street, Bridge Street, Broad Street, Broadway, Exchange Place, Marketfield Street, Mill Lane, Pearl Street, South William Street, Stone Street, Wall Street, and William Street. Whitehall Street also existed although in a somewhat different configuration.

After the English took over in 1664, another survey was made which is shown in the Nicolls Map of c. 1668. The streets are virtually identical to those in the Castello Plan. New Street was added to the street system in 1679. Hanover Square, portions of Beaver Street, and Hanover Street, east of Beaver Street, were in existence by 1730. The last extensions to these two streets as well as to Exchange Place were made in the 1830s.

Colonial city plans abound in the 18th century. Most useful are the William Bradford Map depicting New York in 1730, drafted by James Lyne and issued in 1731; the 1765-1766 Montresor Plan; and the Bernard Ratzer plans of 1766-1767. The Bradford Map illustrates the English city's growth since 1664 as defined by the Montgomerie Charter of 1730s which set out the boundaries of the city's wards and added, to the northeast, a new ward: Montgomerie's Ward. The Montresor and Ratzer Plans show the city at its colonial economic height in the decade preceding the American Revolution. The clearest and most accurate modern rendering of colonial New York City was redrawn by contemporary cartographers to represent the city in 1770. It was published, with detailed explanations, by the Newberry Library and Princeton University Press in 1976 as the Atlas of Early American History.

Maps of other North American colonial cities in addition to New York were also carefully redrawn for the Newberry-Princeton Atlas of Early American History (1976). Based on the latest research and techniques, these plans illustrate a comparison of colonial New York's street plan toward the end of the colonial period with Quebec, Newport, Boston, Philadelphia, Williamsburg, Charleston, New Haven, Savannah, Detroit, Baltimore, New Orleans, Mobile, St. Augustine, and Santa Fe. All these maps indicate how these cities had evolved. New York City, founded in 1624-1626, is similar only to Boston, founded later in 1630.

Clearly, both the street patterns of New York City and Boston evolved around and were determined by their natural environment much more than they were dependent upon or followed preconceived and rigidly-imposed patterns or grids. The economic purpose of the town reinforced this organic growth. The original concept of settlement in 1624 was defense. The fur trading post established on Nut (Governor's) Island in 1624 was a good defensive position but inadequate to daily life. If in 1624 some of the Dutch settlers on Nut Island did move to the southern tip of Manhattan as some historians believe, it was indeed a random move -- organic. In 1626, when settlement on lower Manhattan began in earnest, defense was still the priority. In the instructions given to Crijn Fredericksz in 1625, the town was to be laid out as an ordered appendage to the fort, not the other way around. While the plan had to be adapted to geography, a new grid pattern was not imposed. The town instead developed around some existing focal points: the existing Algonquin Indian paths of Broadway and Battery Place (Beaver Path); the inlet at Broad; and the more favorable mooring and docking opportunities on the East River rather than the Hudson. The random settlement patterns beyond the town evident in the 1639 Maratus Map were rolled back by the Dutch war with the Indians in 1643 when the Indians counterattacked furiously. New Amsterdam, already "organic" in design, had to absorb refugees and subsequent waves of settlers determined to live within the protection of the town -- an impulse made policy by the Dutch West India Company which insisted that defense necessitated close settlement. Since the organic pattern was already in place, future settlement adjusted to its organic nature.

Much of the town's organic growth is due to its function, primarily the fur trade. By 1700, agricultural products from farmers upriver were also vitally important, and they intensified the trading nature of the town. While the town required residences for the managers of this trade (merchants) and space for the temporary storage of goods prior to shipment to Europe, the town's most extensive innovation and planning went into its dock areas. Thus the streets were secondary to the waterside just as they were secondary to defense. New Amsterdam is perhaps best described as a fort at the west end for defense and East River docks for trade on the east end, with the town sandwiched in between.

An organic growth was also, initially at least, the most practical and economic. The natural terrain did not have to be leveled, the inlet (Broad) was adapted to a canal, and people could settle faster. There was nothing in medieval tradition that insisted on a grid: property lines were often irregular and determined by the environment (a grid is most useful when property is going to be frequently exchanged or sold, as well as being orderly in appearance). The natural terrain of New Amsterdam was primarily changed where it economically mattered the most: the waterside, where landfill kept commerce close to the established economic base of the town.

New Amsterdam did not need large spaces for manufacturing because the intent of the community was to sell European manufactured goods to the Indians and then, later, to the white farmers upriver. Even when factories became economically feasible after the English conquest in 1664, manufacturing except for local consumption (breweries, for example) were forbidden by law (the Navigation Acts 1650-1774). Thus Dutch New Amsterdam and English New York were commercial centers which like many medieval European towns grew up around their function and focus: trade.

The focal point that characterizes so many European towns is not part of New Amsterdam, and it illustrates how a town can develop by what it is not. New Amsterdam had no religious focus, no cathedral to mark a culturally and religiously significant part of the Dutch settlers' myth, simply because there was no European religious significance to Manhattan; no saint had been martyred here, no Crusader's vow had been pledged. Religious observances were important, but they did not dictate town planning. The first church in 1633 gave way to a more important church, St. Nicholas, in 1642, built, significantly, within the walls of the fort. It was no myth in the colonial period that when people gathered together for worship they were vulnerable to a single attack, and thus it was deemed wise to erect the church in the fort. This lack of religious focus actually increased in degree with the increasingly diverse religious backgrounds of subsequent settlers. Because New Amsterdam and New York had no religious significance and no myth, its fabric was easier for its inhabitants to destroy to make way for its primary functions: trade and defense.

The organic evolution of the street patterns of New York and subsequently of Boston are not just unique in comparison with other colonial cities established by European powers. New York City and Boston are unique in North American urban geography because they are different from the only known comparable American Indian city: 13th-century Cahokia, Illinois. Cahokia at its peak had a population of at least 30,000, surpassing New York City's 1775 population of 22,000. Cahokia, a center of one of many Indian cultures which have been broadly labeled "Mound Builders," was established on a formal pattern dictated more by human measurement and geometric grid than New Amsterdam was more than four centuries later. In the Southwest, both before and after white contact, Indian town plans demonstrated a more tightly dictated and imposed town plan than either New York City or Boston. However, the populations of these Southwestern towns were closer to 17th-century New York and Boston populations than to 18th-century totals, and thus a comparison is not as valid as with Cahokia.

The Streets

Beaver Street extends from Broadway to Pearl Street. It was in existence by 1658 and probably by 1639; the present name dates from before 1693. The present street incorporates three colonial streets: 1) Beaver Graft, also Beaver Gracht, (by 1658), later Beaver Street (before 1693), between Broadway and Broad Street; a branch of the inlet, later a canal extending off Broad, ran west along Beaver until 1684; 2) Princen Straet, also Prince Straet (by 1660), Princes Street (by 1695), Princess Street (by 1711), and Carmer Street (by 1767), between Broad and William; 3) Sloat Lane, also Sloote Lane, and the Sloat (by 1730), later Merchant Street, east of William Street. The last extension of the street to Pearl Street was made in 1837. The name Beaver recalls the animal that contributed to the city's fur trade, the major source of the colony's early wealth.

Bridge Street extends from Whitehall Street to Broad Street. It was in existence by 1658; the present name dates from before 1693. The present street incorporates one colonial street: Brugh Straat, also Bruch Straet (by 1658), Bridge Street (before 1693), later called Hull Street (by 1695) and Wynkoop Street (by 1767). Bridge Street marks the location of one of the three bridges built by the Dutch settlers to cross the canal at Broad Street.

Broad Street extends from Wall Street to Pearl Street. It was in existence as a street by 1664; the present name dates from 1692. The present street incorporates one colonial street: Heere Graft, also Heere Gracht, also Prince Graft (by 1645), later Broad Street (1692). Broad Street was usually wide for a colonial street, the result of its origin as an inlet which ran from the East River up to Tuyn (Exchange). The Dutch enlarged the inlet into a canal and extended streets on both sides by 1664. The canal was filled and the street which resulted was paved in 1676.

Broadway extends from Wall Street to Stone Street. It was in existence prior to 1600; the present name dates from c. 1668. The present street incorporates one colonial street: Heere Straet, also Heerewegh (by 1649), later Broad Way (c. 1668). Broadway was originally an Indian thoroughfare called Wickquasgeck (Wick-kwas-geck), meaning "birch-bark country." The route of this thoroughfare led through the Bronx and Westchester to the north of present-day Albany. It is the oldest thoroughfare in New York City and one of the oldest in North America.

Exchange Place extends from Broadway to Hanover Street. It was in existence by 1657; the present name dates from 1827. The present street incorporates two colonial streets: 1) Heere dwars straat (1657), also Flatten Barrack, between Broadway and Broad Street; 2) Tuyn Straet (by 1658), also Church Street (1695), and Garden Street (1797), between Broad and William Streets. The last extension of the street to Hanover Street was made in 1836. The street was named Exchange Place in 1827 after the construction of the Merchants Exchange Building at Wall and William in 1825-27. This building was the predecessor of the Citibank building, a designated New York City landmark, at 55 Wall Street.

Hanover Square is located at the intersection of Stone and Pearl Streets. It was in existence by 1730, and the present name dates from its creation. It has also been known as the slip, on the site by 1695, reflecting its original location on the Manhattan shoreline. The name Hanover is taken from the House of Hanover, the German royal family who ruled England beginning with George I in 1714.

Hanover Street extends from Wall Street to Pearl Street. It was in existence by 1730; the present name dates from 1830. The present street incorporates one colonial street: the portion of Sloat Lane, also Sloot Lane and the Sloat, between Beaver and Pearl Streets. The street was extended from Beaver to Wall in 1830.

Marketfield Street extends from New Street to Broad Street. It was in existence by c. 1626; the present name dates from 1677. The present street incorporates one colonial street: Marckvelt Steegje, or Marckvelt Steegh (by 1658), later Petticoate Lane (by 1695). Marketfield originally extended to Broadway; the portion between Broadway and New Street was closed in 1880 to accommodate the construction of the Produce Exchange. Marketfield designates the location of the first Dutch livestock market in New Amsterdam. - During the English period the street was known as "Petticoate Lane," for it was here that, at the western end of the street near

the fort which guarded the harbor, New York City's prostitutes gathered.

Mill Lane extends from South William Street to Stone Street. It was in existence by 1657; the present name dates from after 1664. The present street incorporates one colonial street: Mill Lane (after 1664). Prior to 1664 no name was given to the street. Mill Lane ran from a mill built in 1628 to grind bark used by tanners.

New Street extends from Wall Street to Marketfield Street. It was in existence by 1679, and the present name dates from then. The present street incorporates one colonial street: New Street which ran between Wall and Beaver. The section between Beaver and Marketfield was added in 1880 when a section of Marketfield was closed. New Street was the first street added by the British to the Dutch street plan after the conquest of New Amsterdam.

Pearl Street extends from Whitehall Street to Wall Street. It was in existence by 1639; the present name dates from 1794. The present street incorporates two colonial streets: 1) Paerle Straet (1660), also Waal (The Strand) (1659), between Whitehall and Broad; a portion of this section was also called Watter Side (1683); 2) Dock or Great Dock Street (1687), between Whitehall and Wall Street. Pearl Street formed the original shoreline of the East River; this location is reflected in such names as the Strand and Dock Street. Pearl Street refers to the oysters which were found in abundance in the waters of the East River. Pearl Street also refers to a major image held by Spanish, English, French, and Dutch colonists throughout eastern North America: that the pearls which they thought could be found abundantly in American waters could make one's fortune instantly.⁷

South William Street extends from Broad Street to William Street. It was in existence by 1657; the present name dates from 1838. The present street incorporates one colonial street: Glaziers' Street (1657), also Slyck Steegh (1660), later Muddy Lane (1677), Mill Street (1687), and Jews' Alley (1754), between Broad and Mill Lane. It was extended in 1836 from Mill Lane to William. South William Street extends south of William Street. Its earlier names reflect its condition, a muddy lane, and its location as the site of glazier Evert Duyckinck's dwelling, a succession of mills, and a Jewish synagogue.

Stone Street extends from Broadway to Broad Street and from the intersection of the relocated Coenties Alley to William Street. It was in existence by 1653; the present name dates from before 1797. The present street incorporates two colonial streets: 1) Breurs Straet (1653), also Straet van de Graft (1655), and Brouwer Straet (1658), later Stony Street (1695), between Whitehall and Broad; 2) Hoogh Straet (1662), also High Street (1677), later Duke Street (by 1730), between Broad and Manover Square (William Street). The southern portion of Stone Street between Broad and William was closed and demapped by action of the Board of Estimate in 1980. This portion of Stone Street was incorporated into a consolidated zoning lot where the building at 85 Broad Street now stands. The path of Stone Street is indicated by special paving in the lobby of the new building. Coenties Alley, which ran between Stone and Pearl and had been established by 1653, was demapped and relocated northward at the same time. Stone Street, the first paved street in New York, was surfaced with cobblestones at the request of its inhabitants in 1655.

Wall Street extends from Broadway to Pearl Street. It was in existence by 1653; the present name dates from 1685. The present street incorporates one colonial street: The Cingle (before 1657), which the British renamed Wall Street (1685).

The Dutch had built a wall at this location, perhaps as early as 1639, but more likely in 1653, to defend the city against attacks from the north whether by the Indians or the English. In 1655 several citizens were fined for collecting illegal firewood; they had cut down part of the stockade at Wall Street.

Whitehall Street extends from Pearl Street to Stone Street. It was in existence by c.1626; the present name dates from the 1680s. The present street incorporates one colonial street: Marckvelt (by 1658), later Whitehall (1680s). Whitehall was adjacent to the fort. The configuration of the present-day street dates from 1790 when Government House (replaced by the U.S. Custom House) was constructed on the site of the fort. The English heritage of colonial New York is especially obvious in the name of the street. The English colonial governor from 1683 to 1688, Thomas Dongan, constructed a mansion adjacent to the street which he named Whitehall after the London palace occupied by English kings from Henry VIII through William III.

William Street extends from Wall Street to Hanover Square. It was in existence by 1636; the present name dates from 1794. The present street incorporates two colonial streets: 1) Smit's Vly (1636), also Sweet Straet (1660), later Smith Street (1677), between Wall and Stone; 2) Burger's Path (by 1644) between Stone and Pearl (Hanover Square). William Street was named for Willem Beeckman, a Dutch immigrant who arrived in New Amsterdam in 1647. He later served nine terms as mayor. The original William Street extended north of Wall Street, and the name was given to Smith Street, the extension of William Street south of Wall, in 1794.

Examination of 17th-century plans from the 1660 Castello Plan to the 1695 Miller Plan and the multitude of 18th-century plans reveal only modest changes in the 18th century from the early Dutch development despite the increasing pressures on the city's physical structure. While some streets were added within the confines of the Dutch settlement, the more common method of expansion was through landfill, a technique which has continued to this day. Comparison of present-day maps with earlier plans show that this essential street pattern remains despite the disappearance of all colonial structures. (The heavily reconstructed Fraunces Tavern was built in 1701 on the south side of Pearl Street on some of the city's first landfill.) Recent archaeological excavations at the site of 71 Pearl Street and at Stone Street, in conjunction with the construction of the new building at 85 Broad Street, have shown how closely later builders adhered to the line of the original streets although many changes have been made in grade, composition, and paving.

Today the street plan of New Amsterdam and colonial New York within the confines of the original Dutch settlement is the last visible, physically obvious remnant of a major colonial city. Even their very names evoke the city's early physical character. Only by walking along the streets of lower Manhattan can the full measure of this colonial capital be appreciated. This picturesque street plan with its narrow curving roadways has accommodated change and growth for almost 360 years, and with conscious realization of what it represents can continue to do so.

The intent of this designation is to regulate the configuration and presence of these streets, rather than to deal with matters of materials, paving, and grading.

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FOOTNOTES

1. I.N. Phelps Stokes, The Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498-1909 (New York: Robert H. Dodd, 1928), vol 6, p. 67-b.
2. Quoted in Robert W. Venables, "The Indians' Revolutionary War in the Hudson Valley, 1775-1785," in Laurence M. Hauptman and Jack Campisi, eds. Neighbors and Intruders: An Ethnographic Exploration of the Indians of Hudson's River (Ottawa: National Museum of Man, 1978), p. 226.
3. Reginald Pelham Bolton, Indian Life of Long Ago in the City of New York, 2nd ed. (New York: Crown Publishers, Harmony Books, 1972), p. 128a. There is no mention of beads and trinkets which are simply myth created by later white generations.
4. Joyce Diane Goodfried, "Too Great A Mixture Of Nations: The Development of New York City Society in the Seventeenth Century" (University of California at Los Angeles, Ph.D. dissertation, 1975), pp. 12, 29, and 137; New-York Historical Society and Amsterdam Historical Museum, The Birth of New York: Nieuw Amsterdam, 1624-1664 (Amsterdam: The Municipal Archives and the Amsterdam Historical Museum, 1982), pp. 13 and 21; and Lester J. Cappon, Barbara Bartz Petchenik, and John Hamilton Long, eds., Atlas of Early American History: The Revolutionary Era (Princeton, New Jersey: The Newberry Library, The Institute of Early American History and Culture, and Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 97.
5. New-York Historical Society and Amsterdam Historic Museum, Birth of New York, p. 6.

Beaver Street (incorporating Bever Graft, Princes Street, and Sloat Lane, later Merchant Street) from Broadway to Pearl Street.

Bridge Street (incorporating Brugh Straet, later Hull Street) from Whitehall Street to Broad Street.

Broad Street (incorporating Heere Graft, also called Prince Graft) from Wall Street to Pearl Street.

Broadway (incorporating Heere Straet, later Broad Way) from Wall Street to Stone Street.

Exchange Place (incorporating Heer dwars straat and Tuyn Straet, later Church Street, then Flatten Barrack and Garden Street) from Broadway to Hanover Street.

Hanover Square (incorporating the slip) from Stone Street to Pearl Street.

Hanover Street (incorporating a portion of Sloat Lane) from Wall Street to Pearl Street.

Marketfield Street (incorporating Marckvelt Steegh, later Petticoat Lane) from New Street to Broad Street.

Mill Lane from South William Street to Stone Street.

New Street from Wall Street to Marketfield Street.

Pearl Street (incorporating The Strand, later Dock Street) from Whitehall Street to Wall Street.

South William Street (incorporating Glaziers' Street, later Slyck Steegh, Muddy Lane, Mill Street Lane, and Mill Street) from Broad Street to William Street.

Stone Street (incorporating Breurs Straet, later Straet van de Graft, Brouwer Straet, Stony Street, and Duke Street) from Broadway to Broad Street and from the intersection of the relocated Coenties Alley to William Street.

Wall Street (incorporating The Cingel) from Broadway to Pearl Street.

Whitehall Street (incorporating Marckvelt, later The Whitehall) from Pearl Street to Stone Street.

William Street (incorporating Burger's Path and Smit's Vly (Smith Street), later King Street) from Wall Street to Hanover Square.

Landmark Site: Beaver Street -- the property bounded by the eastern curb line of Broadway, the southern curb line of Beaver Street, the western curb line of Pearl Street, and the northern curb line of Beaver Street;

Bridge Street -- the property bounded by the eastern curb line of Whitehall Street, the southern curb line of Bridge Street, the western curb line of Broad Street, and the northern curb line of Bridge Street;

Broad Street -- the property bounded by the southern curb line of Wall Street, the western curb line of Broad Street, the northern curb line of Pearl Street, and the eastern curb line of Broad Street;

Broadway -- the property bounded by a line extending westward from the northern curb line of Wall Street, the western, southern and western curb lines of Broadway, a line extending westward from the midpoint of the bed of Stone Street, and the eastern curb line of Broadway;

Exchange Place -- the property bounded by the eastern curb line of Broadway, the southern curb line of Exchange Place, the western curb line of Hanover Street, and the northern curb line of Exchange Place;

Hanover Square -- the property bounded by the northern curb line of Hanover Square, a line extending from the western curb line of Pearl Street to the northern curb line of Stone Street, the southern curb line of Hanover Square, and the eastern curb line of Pearl Street, and Tax Map Block 28, Lot 28;

Hanover Street -- the property bounded by the southern curb line of Wall Street, the western and southern curb lines of Hanover Street, the western curb line of Pearl Street, and the northern and eastern curb lines of Hanover Street;

Marketfield Street -- the property bounded by the western curb line of New Street, the southern curb line of Marketfield Street, the western curb line of Broad Street, and the northern curb line of Marketfield Street;

Mill Lane -- the property bounded by the southern curb line of South William Street, the western curb line of Mill Lane, the northern curb line of Stone Street, and the eastern curb line of Mill Lane;

New Street -- the property bounded by the southern curb line of Wall Street, the western curb line of New Street, the southern curb line of Marketfield Street, and the eastern curb line of New Street;

Pearl Street -- the property bounded by the eastern curb line of Whitehall Street, the southern and eastern curb lines of Pearl Street, the southern curb line of Wall Street, and the western and northern curb lines of Pearl Street;

South William Street -- the property bounded by the eastern curb line of Broad Street, the southern curb line of South William Street, the western curb line of William Street, and the northern curb line of South William Street;

Stone Street -- the property bounded by a line extending northward from the eastern curb line of Whitehall Street, the southern curb line of Stone Street, the western curb line of Broad Street, and the northern curb line of Stone Street, and the property bounded by a line extending northward from the western edge of relocated Counties Alley, the southern curb line of Stone Street, the southern curb line of William Street, and the northern curb line of Stone Street;

Wall Street -- the property bounded by the eastern curb line of Broadway, the southern curb line of Wall Street, the eastern curb line of Pearl Street, and the northern curb line of Wall Street;

Whitehall Street -- the property bounded by the southern curb line of Pearl Street, the western curb line of Whitehall Street, a line extending westward from the midpoint of the bed of Stone Street, and the eastern curb line of Whitehall Street;

William Street -- the property bounded by the southern curb line of Wall Street, the western and southern curb lines of William Street, a line extending from the northern curb line of Stone Street to the western curb line of Pearl Street, and the northern and eastern curb lines of William Street; Borough of Manhattan.

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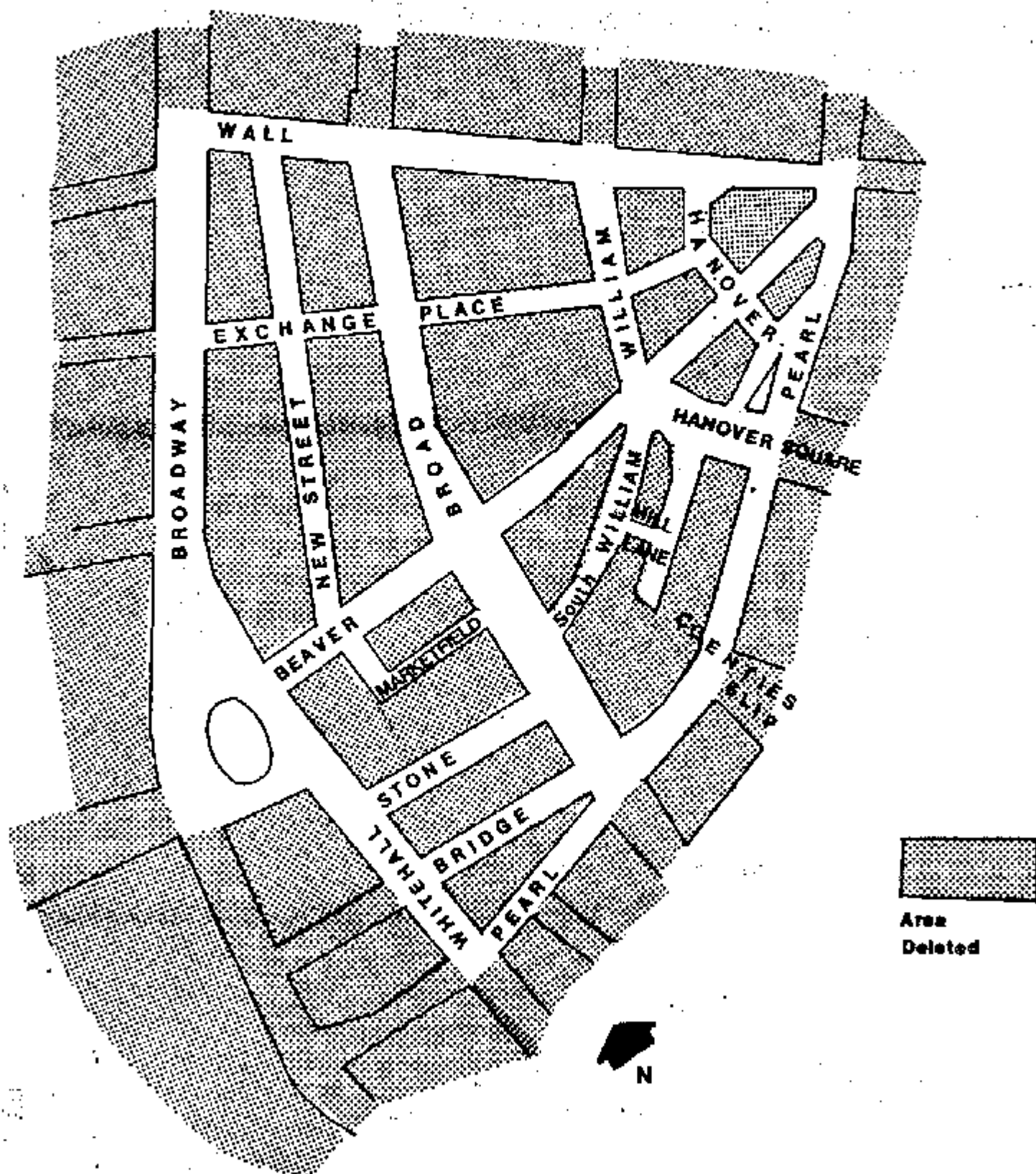
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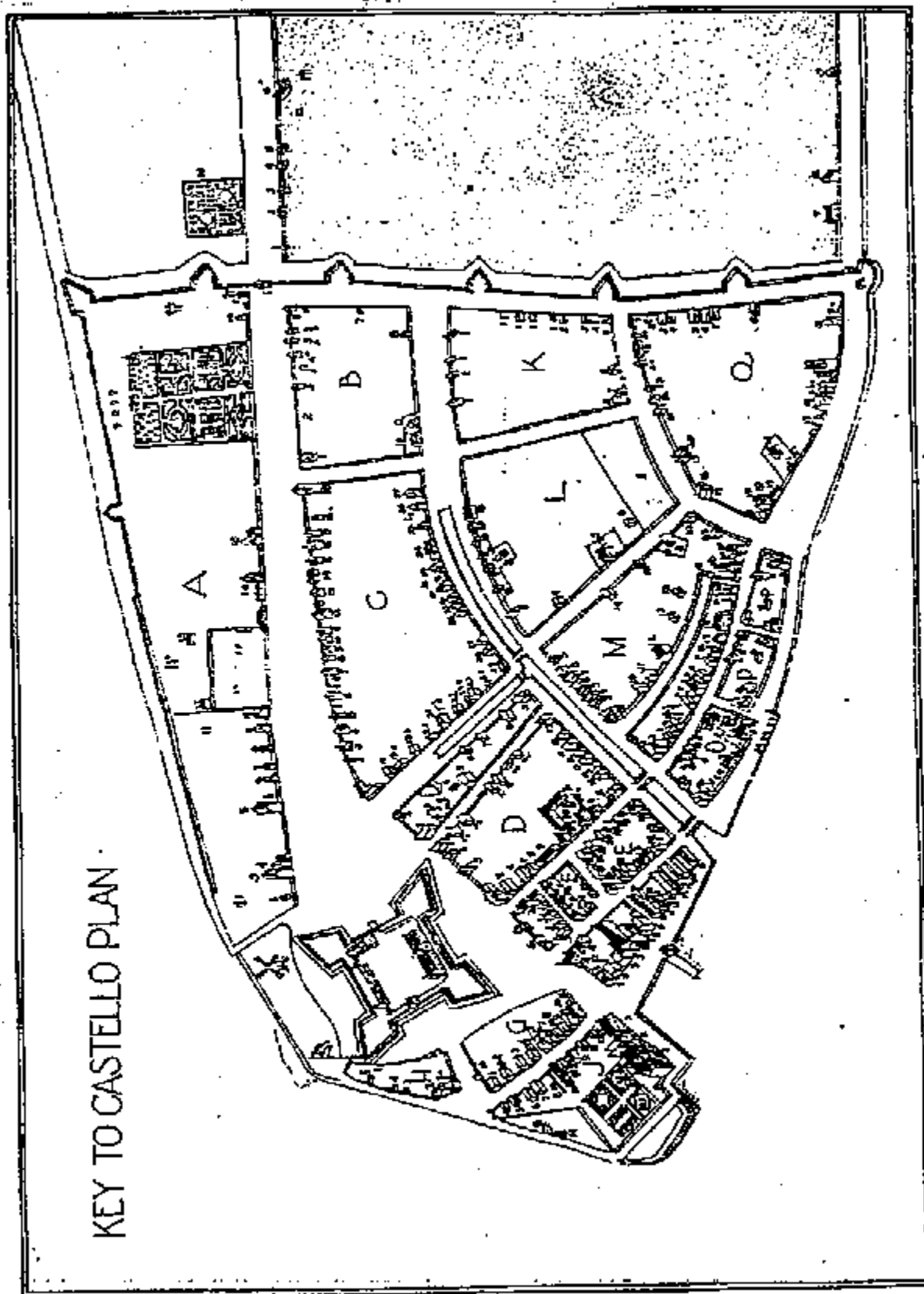
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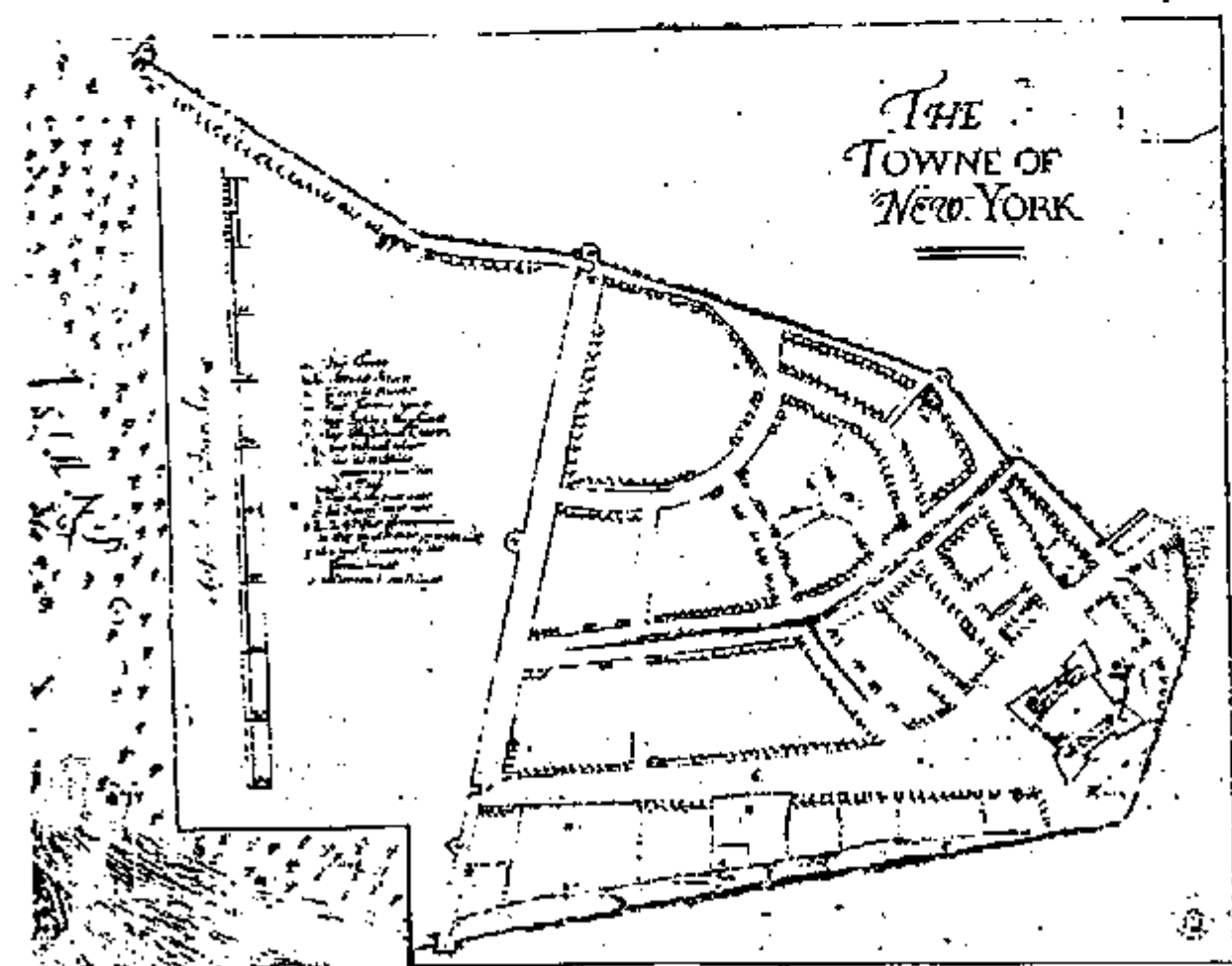
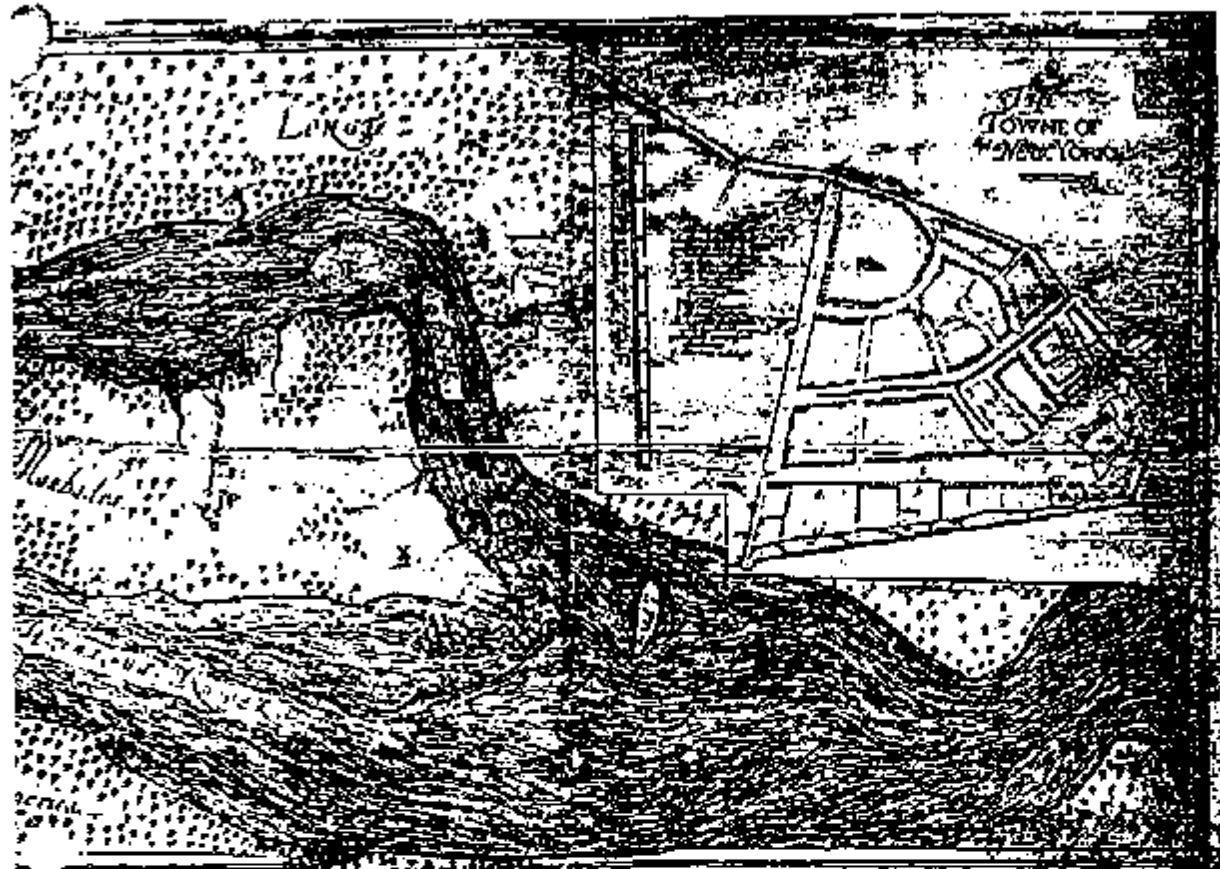


Street Plan of New Amsterdam
and
Colonial New York

KEY TO CASTELLO PLAN

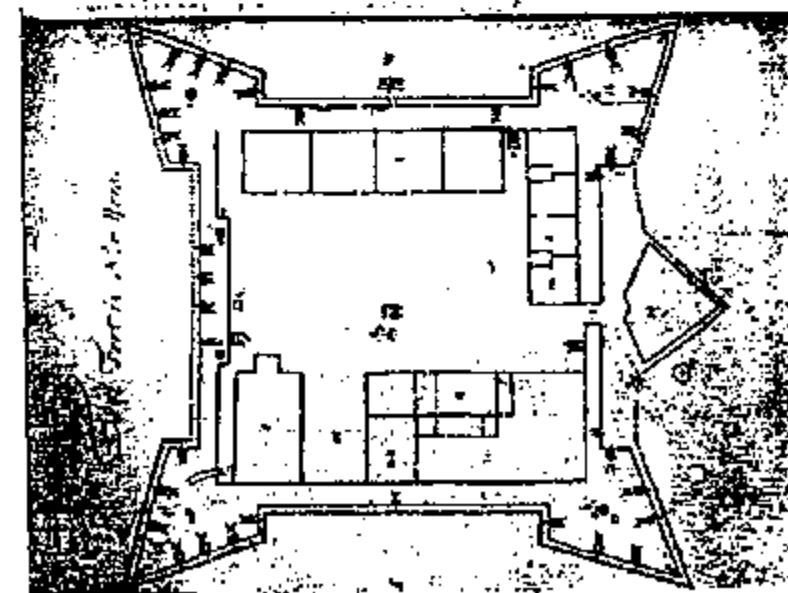


Castello Plan, 1660 (Redrawn) From: Stokes, Iconography of Manhattan Island, II

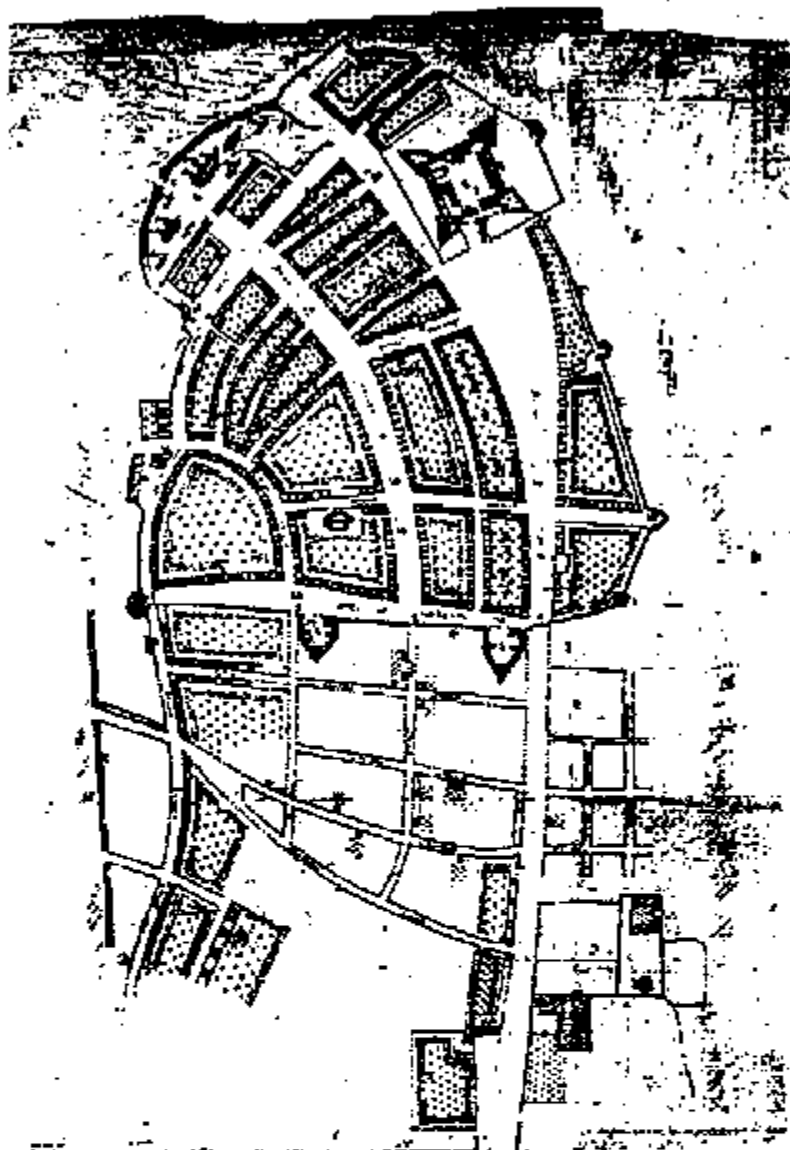


From Stokes, Iconography of Manhattan Island, I

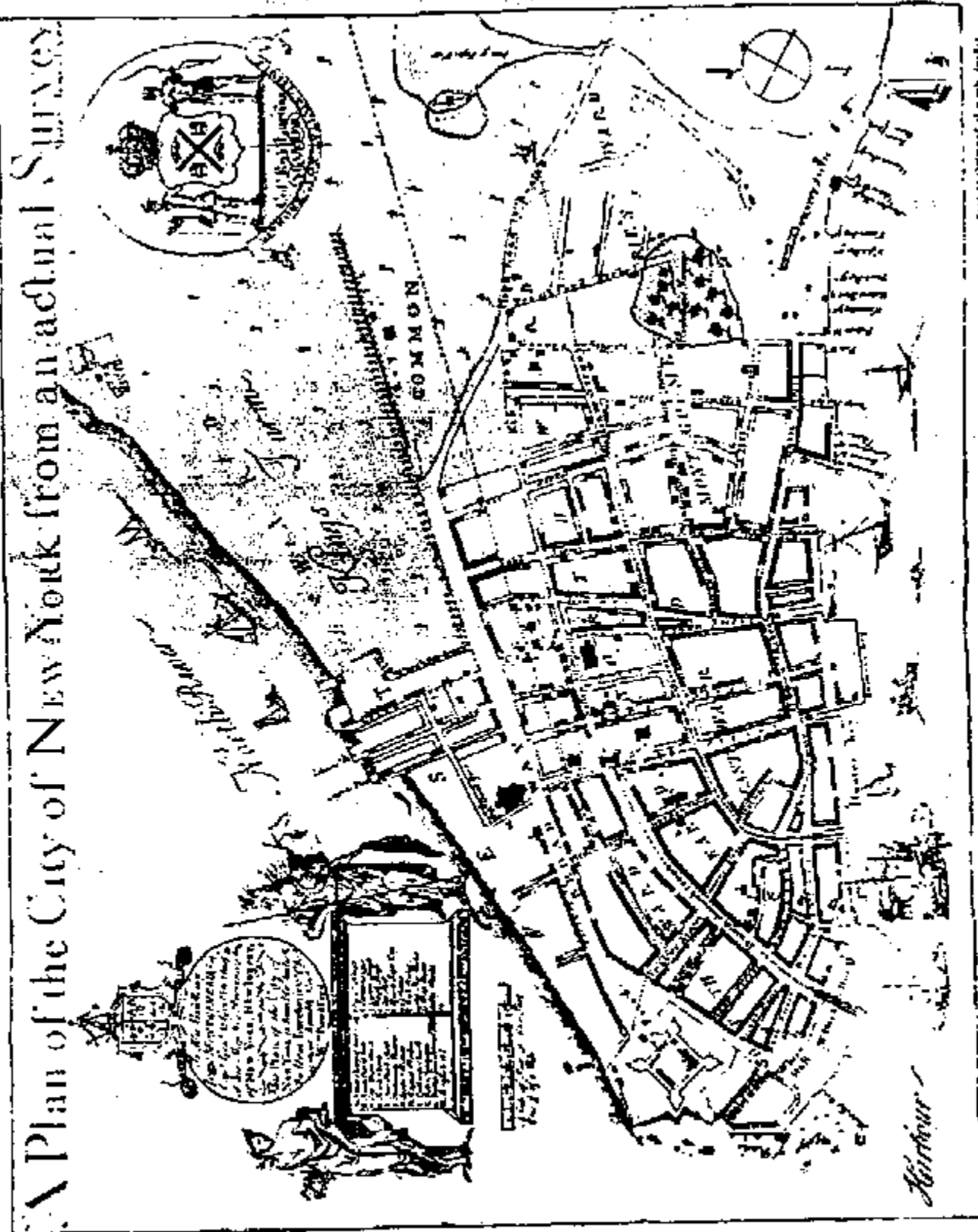
Nicholls Map, c. 1668



Miller Plan, 1695



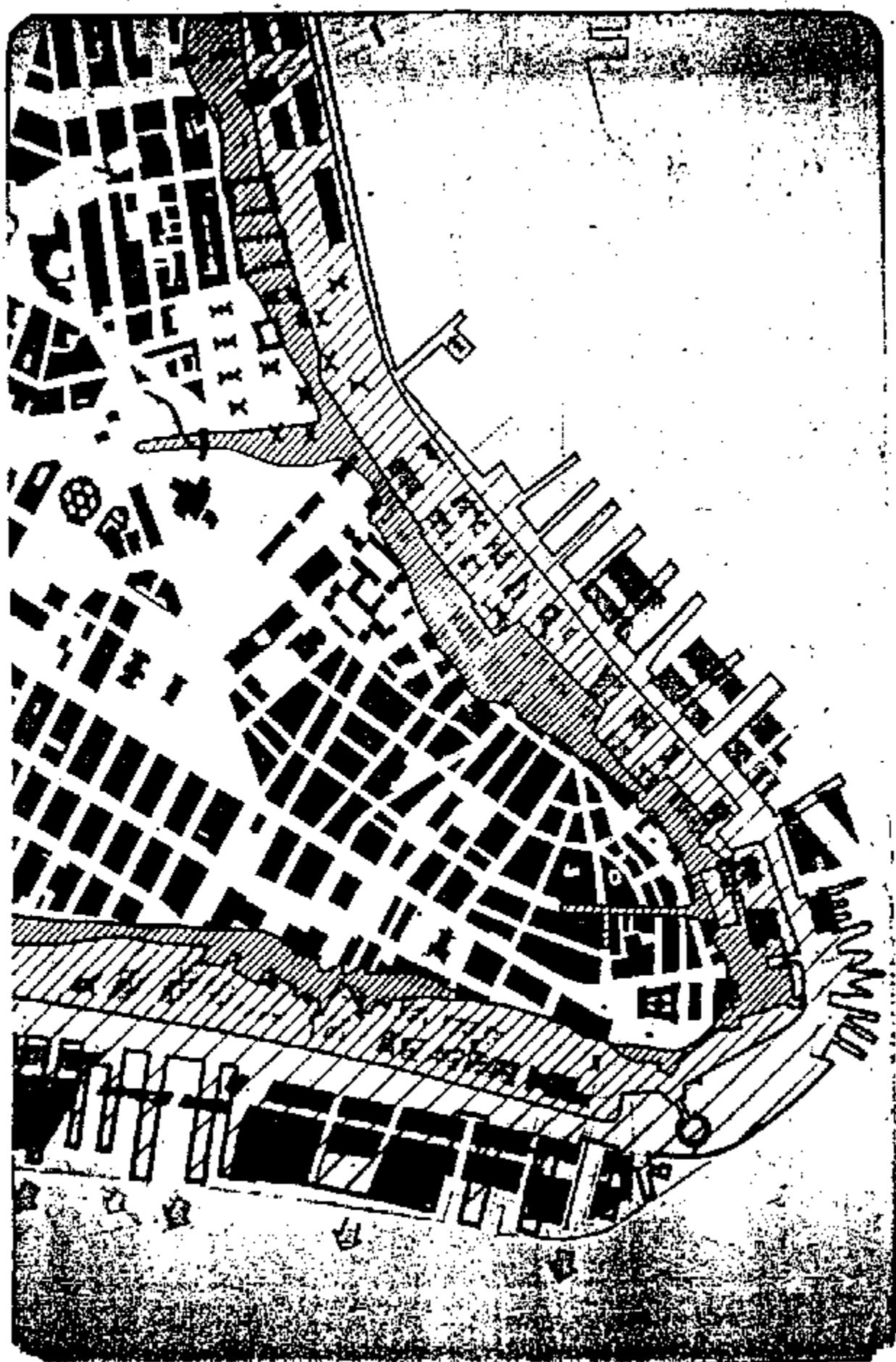
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Ratzer Plan, 1767

From Stokes, Iconography of Manhattan Island, I



Landfill Map of Lower Manhattan, c.1980