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Archaeology on the Campus: Archaeological Investigations of the Van Reyper-Bond House at Montclair State University Montclair, New Jersey

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In 2006, I accepted a position as a professor of anthropology at Montclair State University (MSU), located in Montclair, New Jersey (Figure 1). Upon beginning this new job and as the only archaeologist at the time in the anthropology department, I was asked by the chair of the search committee that hired me, Dr. Timothy Renner of the Classics Department, and the then-chair of anthropology, Dr. Rhoda Halperin, to take the lead on reviving a Center for Archaeological Studies. I took on this assignment with enthusiasm. With considerable moral and administrative support from Tim and Rhoda, over the course of the academic year we convinced people that needed convincing it was to everybody's interest that the revived Center should have its own home, not only in name but also as a physical space. We were given a house and the University graciously fitted the house to the needs of an active archaeology group. In the spirit of broadening the mission of our Center, I proposed a change of name to the Center for Heritage and Archaeological Studies. Tim and Rhoda also asked me to consider developing an archaeology field methods course. It is important to note here that many MSU students are first-in-the-family to attend college, and many of these students need to work while they are in school to afford tuition and expenses. Therefore, a field school located some distance away did not seem feasible. With these issues in mind, Tim and I conducted a pedestrian survey across the MSU campus looking into the potential for addressing the archaeology of some aspect of Montclair State University. MSU was founded in 1908 and we reasoned there might be some possibilities for historic or even prehistoric archaeology, assuming intact deposits.

Much of the seemingly undeveloped portions of campus did not look promising for intact archaeological deposits; most of the densely populated areas of north Jersey are characterized as made land in the soil surveys. However, in our reconnaissance we came across the Italianate Victorian mansion now called the Bond House (previously the Van Reyper House, after the builders, then the Van Reyper-Bond House), located at the southern edge of campus and surrounded by University parking lots (Figure 1). We determined that the house is located in its original setting and is listed in the State and National Registers of Historic Places. Over the years, the house was the center of considerable interest by local historians and community members. We decided that the Bond House property would make for a good first effort in developing a campus archaeology program at Montclair State University. Goals of the program were to provide an archaeology field class for interested students, build connections between aspects of heritage encompassed by the campus and the campus community, and forge relations with local community members, and, if possible, with descendants of the former occupants of the house.

There is some precedent for doing what has come to be called 'campus archaeology.' The Archaeological Research Lab at Santa Clara University in California has been doing campus archaeology since the 1970s (Skowronek and Hylkema 2010). The University even has a fulltime campus archaeologist on its paid staff. Michigan State University in East Lansing maintains an active Campus Archaeology Program under the direction of Lynne Goldstein that has been addressing the pre-colonial, colonial, and more-recent land-use history of the University property (Lewis 2010). Skowronek and Lewis's (2010) edited volume, "Beneath the Ivory Tower: The Archaeology of Academia," features a number of case studies from across the United States where
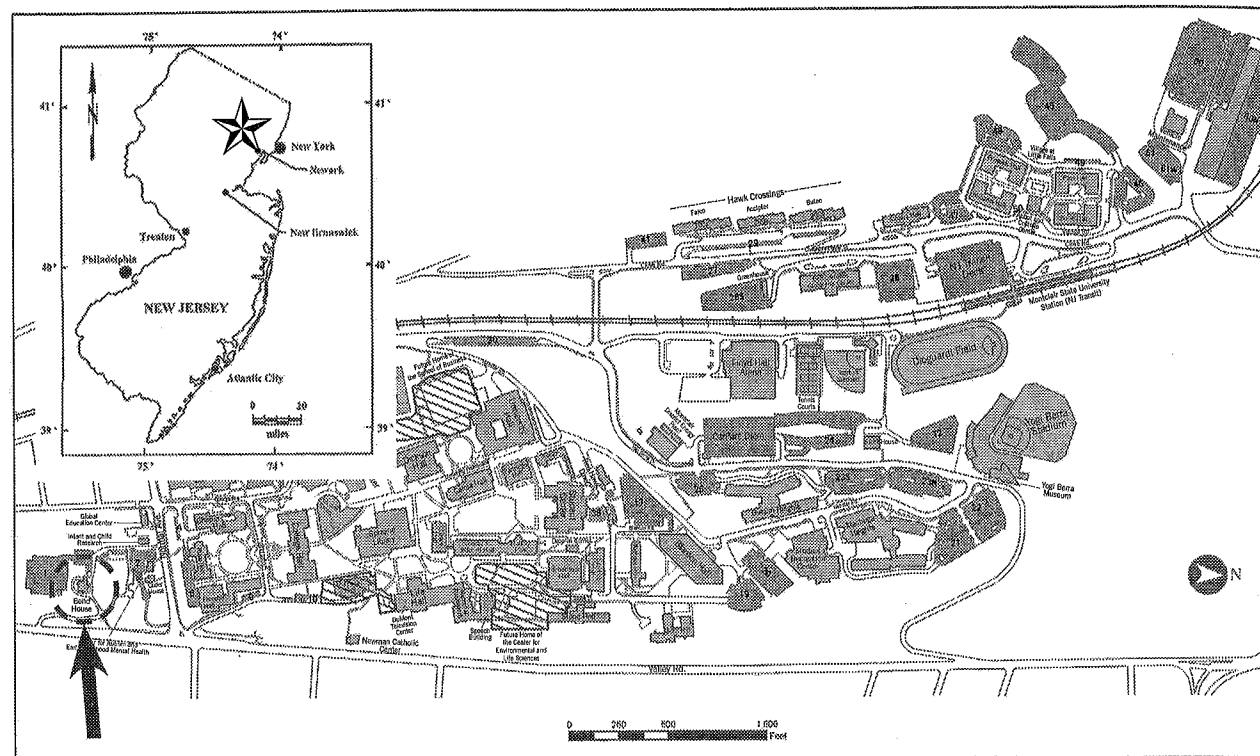
Figure 1. Upper: Location of Montclair State University (starred); Lower: Map of Montclair State University Showing the Location of the Van Reyper-Bond House.
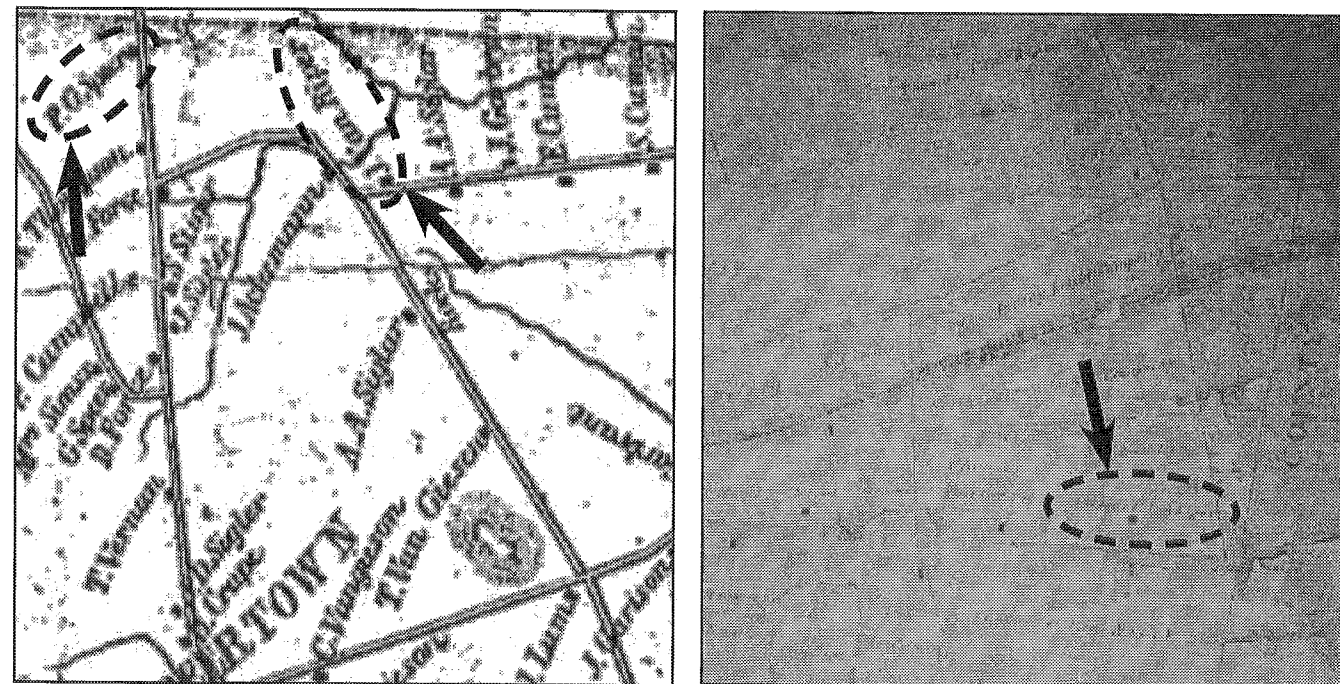

Figure 2. Left: Detail of the 1850 Essex County Map, Showing the Locations of the P. G. Spier and J. Van Riper Households; Right: Detail of the 1878 Hurlbut Map, Showing the Location of Thomas Van Reyper's House.

archaeologists link the heritage of the campus to their current academic and local communities. As Lou Anna K. Simon (2010:xv), President of Michigan State University, remarked in her foreword to the book, "The archaeological dig combined the social and hard sciences; engaged students, faculty, staff, and the community; brought history to life; and formed a connection between the present and past ... The remains helped to form associations with the past and created a sense of heritage in the modern campus and community."

Our goals at Montclair State University were similar to the sentiment expressed by President Simon, albeit at a considerably reduced level of ambition compared to Michigan State. For two summers, I taught the archaeology field methods class on the Bond House property. Since the property is listed in the State and National Registers and is owned by a state institution, I submitted a proposal and research design to the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office to conduct the investigation. The proposal was approved. As in any archaeological project, back-

ground research was a fundamental component. At the beginning of each summer, the class received orientations at the New Jersey State Historic Preservation Office, State Museum, State Library, and State Archives. In addition to conducting research in the state agencies, deeds and census records were researched at the Essex County Hall of Records, Montclair Historical Society, and Montclair Public Library. Most of the class was devoted to fieldwork, followed by lab work. Class met Monday through Friday, eight hours per day for four weeks from mid-May to mid-June for two summers.

BACKGROUND HISTORY OF THE VAN REYPER-BOND HOUSE

Dutch colonial-era immigrant families from New Amsterdam began occupying portions of northern New Jersey around 1650. As early as the 1720s, members of the Spier (later "Speer") family had settled the east slope of First Watchung Moun-

tain, part of the first mountain range west of New York City. Their homestead became the epicenter of "Speertown" – later Montclair Heights, part of Upper Montclair. In 1815, Sarah Speer married her fourth cousin Peter Speer of nearby Acquackanonk (now Clifton) and by 1831 they had settled on the portion of the Spier Homestead that became the Van Reyper-Bond property (Figure 2). In 1855, their daughter Caroline married Thomas C. Van Reyper of Acquackanonk and they lived in Peter and Sarah's house. Ironically, while Speertown was known as the Dutch part of town, neither the Speers nor the Van Reypers were of Dutch heritage. Their immigrant ancestors were German and Danish, respectively.

When Peter Speer died in 1866, Caroline inherited his estate and by 1872 Thomas and a crew of workers built the Italianate Victorian mansion we see today, in a prominent setting to gaze over the landscape. The view shed from the house included

the evolving New York City skyline and the property eventually became known as "Look-Out Hill" (Figure 3).

In discussing the built environment generally and structures specifically it is worth considering Henry Glassie's (2000:19) observations: "Buildings, like poems and rituals, realize culture." He went on to say that "architecture works in space as history works in time. History interrupts time's ceaseless flow, segmenting and reordering it on behalf of the human need for meaning. Architecture intrudes in the limitless expanse of space, dividing it into useful, comprehensible pieces. Converting space into places through disruption, architecture brings meaning to the spatial dimension" (Glassie 2000:21). It is precisely this notion of imbuing meaning in the spatial dimensions of buildings and communities that we may consider the social and political context of Speertown.
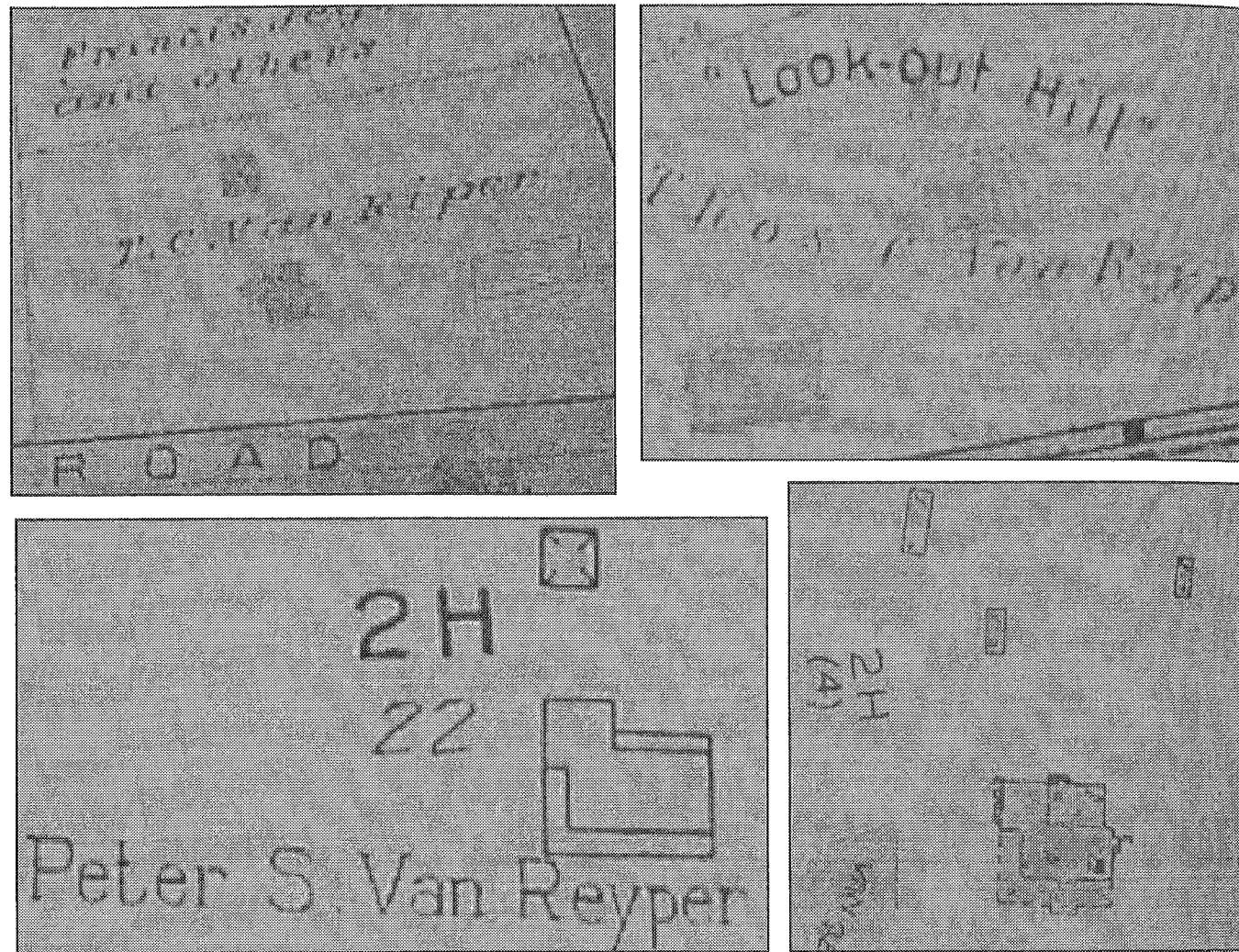
Figure 3. Details of the 1890 (Upper Left), 1906 (Upper Right), 1933 (Lower Left), and 1934 (Lower Right) Maps, Showing Differences in Mapping of the Van Reyper Property. Not to scale.

Figure 4. Van Reyper House. Left: 2013; Right: Cicra 1920 Showing Thomas Van Reyper, Grandson of Thomas C. Van Reyper.

Figure 5. Excavation Grid of the Van Reyper-Bond Property.

At the time of the 1870 federal census, Thomas was 38 and his wife Caroline was 33. Their son Peter was 13 and daughter Margaret was 10. The household also included a cousin, Margaret Paulson age 49 and an African-American couple: Susan Day aged 53 and Gilbert Day aged 46. According to the 1870 census, all were born in New Jersey and none of them were deaf, dumb, blind, insane, or idiotic. Their listed occupations were Thomas "farmer," Caroline "keeping house," children Peter and Margaret "at school," cousin Margaret "no occupation," Susan Day "servant," and Gilbert Day "laborer." This was two years before Thomas completed the mansion. The 1875 census lists the same household members, minus the Days. The 1900 census lists the

same household members minus Caroline who died in 1899. In addition to spouses of Thomas's kids and their children, the household now had three servants: Mary Kane, 33 white from Ireland, Charles Houseman, 30 white from New Jersey, and Edward Donnel, 24 black from Virginia. Thomas died in 1909 at the age of 76.

As shown in the historic maps, the Mount Hebron cemetery was increasingly carved out of a portion of Thomas Van Reyper's property across Valley Road from his house. The cemetery was incorporated in 1863 and in the minutes of the February 28, 1863 meeting of the founding members "we learn that the founders agreed to 'form an association for the
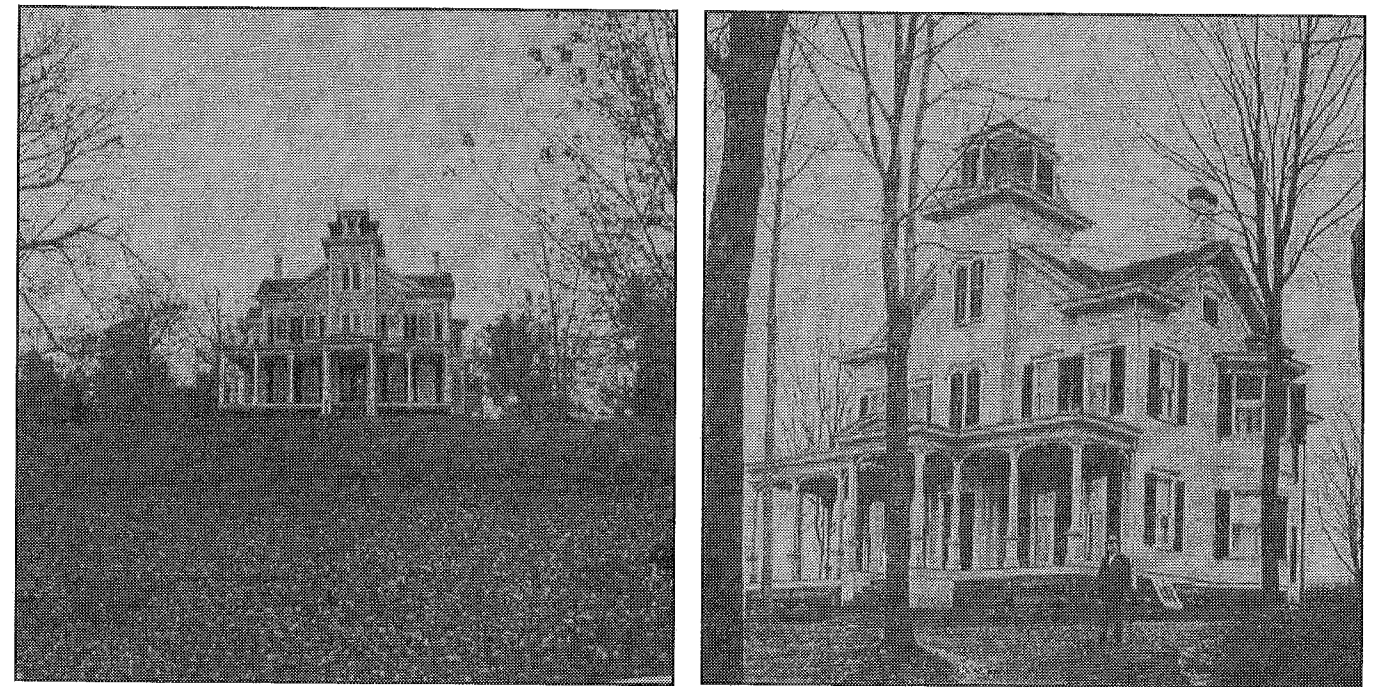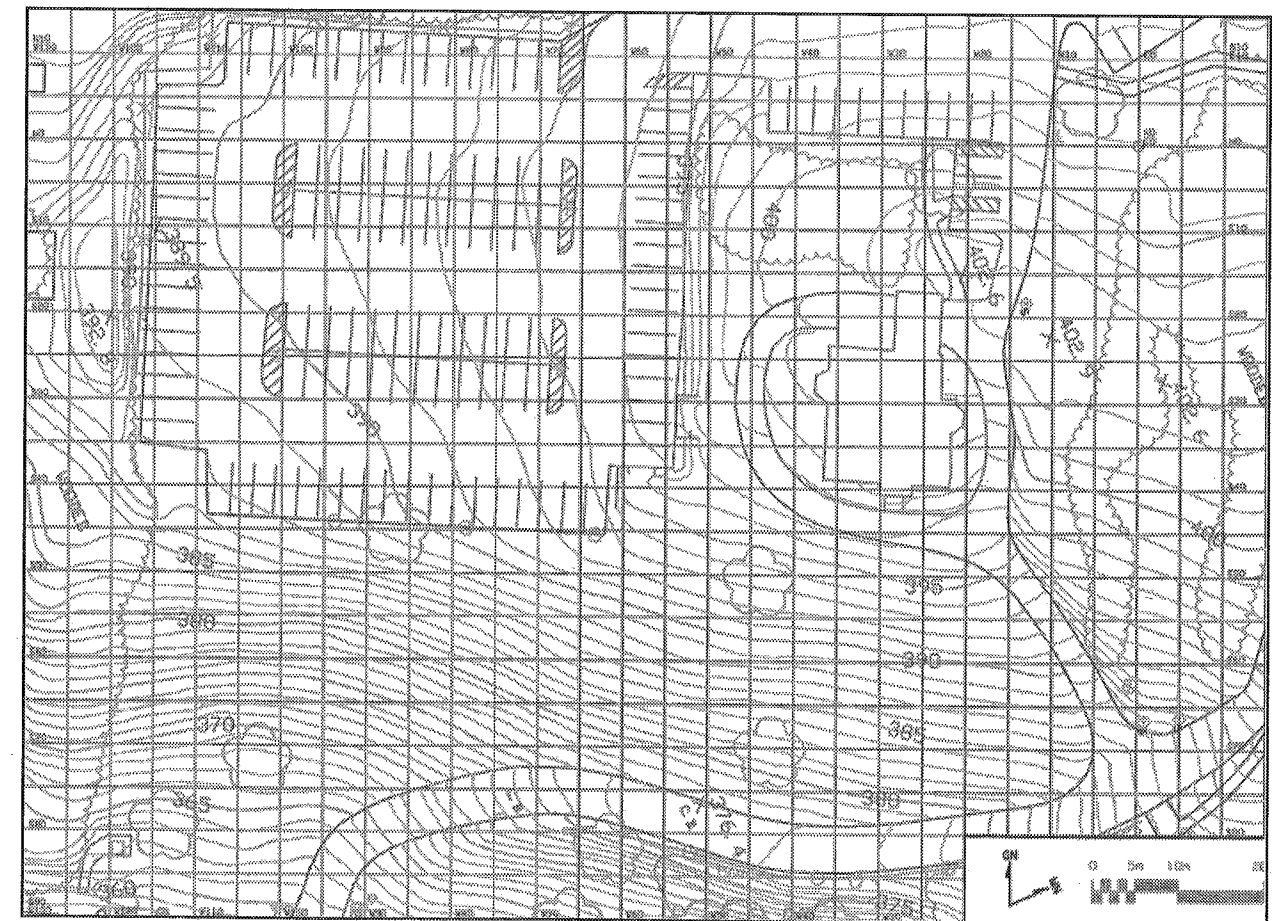
purpose of procuring and holding lands to be used exclusively for a cemetery or place for the burial of the dead ... and that the name of association shall be The Mount Hebron Cemetery Association'" (Mount Hebron Cemetary Association n.d.). Two of the 14 charter members of the association included Peter G. Speer and his son-in-law Thomas C. Van Reyper. Many of the earliest graves in the cemetery include Speer and Van Reyper family members.

The property remained in the possession of the Van Reyper family until 1952, when it was purchased by George and Bertha Bond. George was active in the Montclair State College community and he bequeathed the house and property to the College upon his death in 1966.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELDWORK

Upon completion of background research, the class conducted fieldwork. Research was modeled after a combined assessment survey and data-recovery investigation in a cultural resources setting (Figure 5). To evaluate the integrity, density, and distribution of archaeological deposits, students laid out a five-meter interval shovel-test grid across the prop-erty. Based on total artifacts and individual artifact classes, the greatest density of cultural material is located in the backyard, which is consistent with expectations for archaeological deposits generally associated with historic-period house lots. Some of the historic maps available for the property do show outbuildings in the backyard (Figure 3). Based on shovel-test artifact distributions we then selected a handful of locations for more-controlled one-meter square unit excavations. In doing so, we narrowed down areas for larger block excavations in the form of contiguous one-meter square units. We identified the foundations and associated deposits of an out-building, which I believe corresponds to one of the outbuildings plotted on an insurance map and can be seen in a number of photographs taken by Bond family members (Figure 6).

Much of the deposit within the outbuilding consists of primary refuse characterized by complete to near-complete glass bottles and fairly large fragments of ceramic dishes (Figure 7). Most of this deposit was sealed in a context well below the floor of the structure seen in photographs from the mid-twentieth century (Figure 6). The foundations of the outbuilding are substantial and would have been unnecessary for the shed shown in the mid-twentieth century photos. I believe we have documented a change
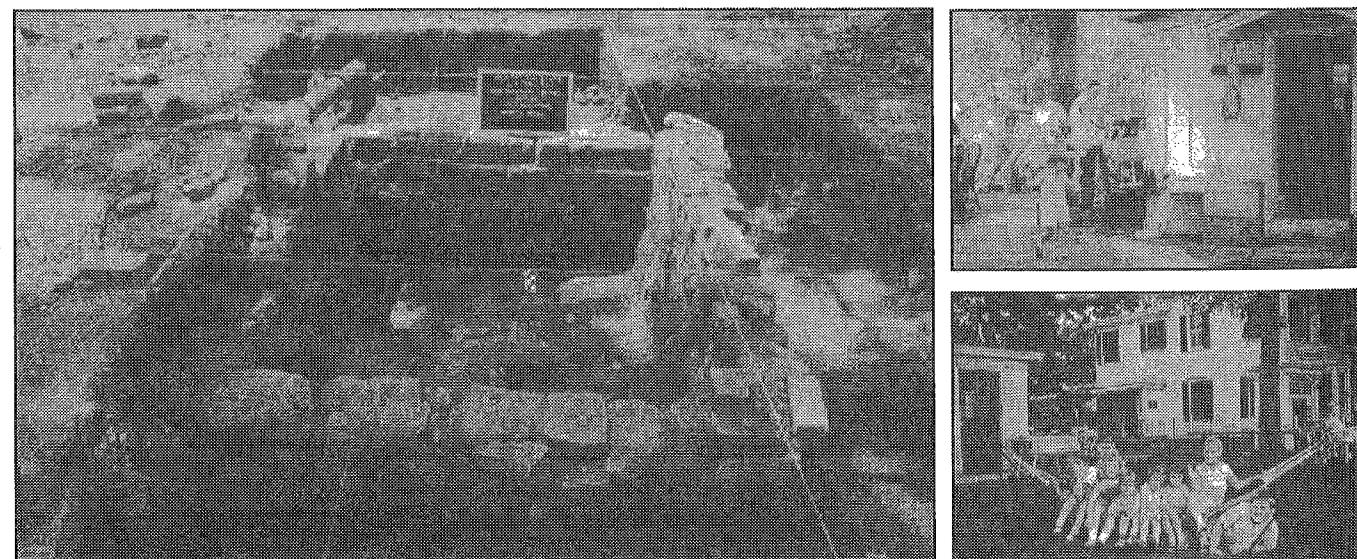

Figure 6. Outbuilding Behind the Van Reyper-Bond House. Left: Identified Archaeologically; Right: Circa Mid-1950s (Bond family).
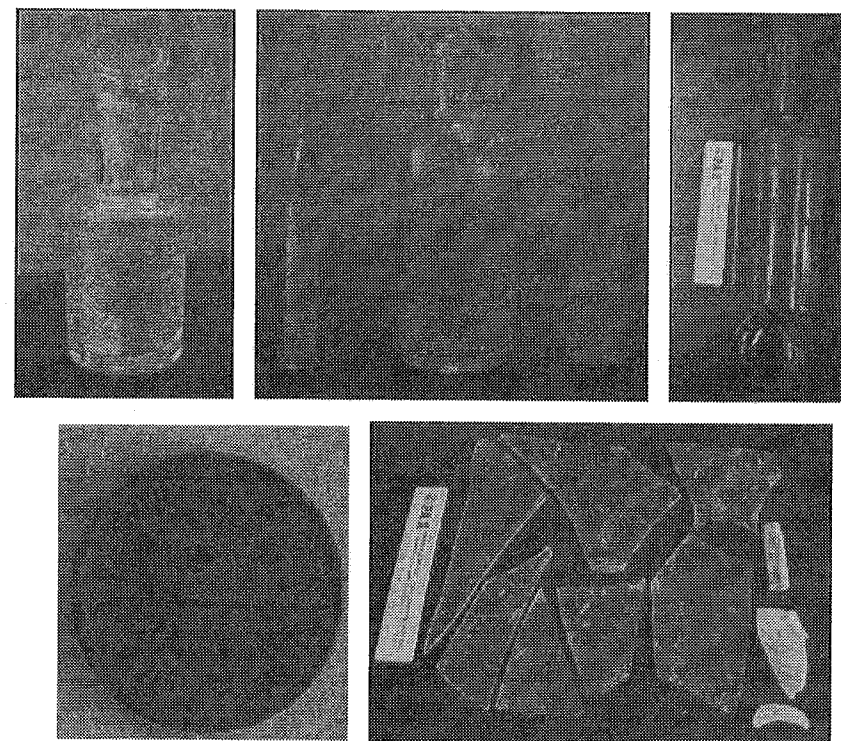

Figure 7. Sample of Artifacts Collected from the Lower Depths of the Outbuilding Fill Deposit.

in use of a structure through time. Like other categories of artifacts, buildings have life histories, a phenomenon I have documented in pre-Columbian archaeology in the Caribbean and ethnographically in Amerindian villages in Amazonia (Siegel 1990, 1992). The original use of the small but substantially constructed outbuilding may have been for cold storage, like a root cellar or an ice house. As that function became obsolete the below-ground foundation was filled to grade and the shed was used to store miscellaneous household and yard items and appeared to become a focal point for backyard activities.

COLLABORATING WITH THE DESCENDANTS

In addition to archival research and archaeological fieldwork, we made efforts to identify and contact living descendants of the Van Reyper-Bond house occupants. George and Bertha Bond had three sons: George, Jr., William, and Robert. They eventually went their own ways, George Jr. to Pasadena, California; Robert to Fort Worth, Texas; and William to Williston, Vermont. We were able to track down Jude Bond, daughter of William. Jude and her husband live in Burlington, VT and they came to Montclair during our first season of fieldwork (Figure 8). Jude was happy to share her memories of visiting the Bond House when her grandparents were living there. In addition, she contacted her cousin, Susan Bond Butsch, daughter of Robert, who had moved to Fort Worth. Susan lives in Duncanville, TX, and she maintains albums of family photos. She kindly sent me a number of photos of house and property dating from the mid-20th century.

Recently, Nancy Terhune, a great, great granddaughter of Thomas C. Van Reyper, heard about some of the work that Chris Matthews and his students were doing in Montclair and she contacted him about the Van Reyper-Bond house excavations. We met with her and learned that she has a wealth of information about the Van Reyper and Speer families and she shared with us a number of photographs of her ancestors. One of her relatives has a collection of
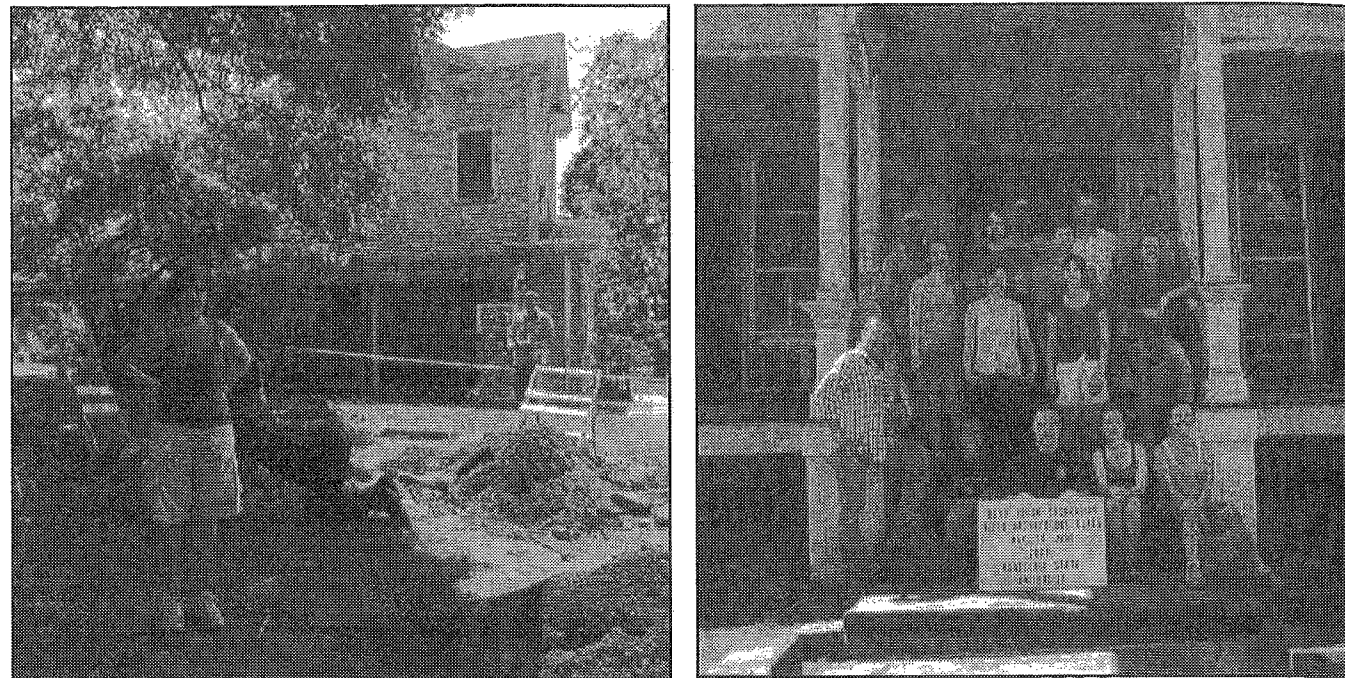
Figure 8. Left: Jude Bond, Granddaughter of George and Bertha Bond; Right: Field School Participants from the First Season of Work.

Table 1. Heritage Resource Management within a University Environment (from Skowronek and Lewis 2010:Appendix).

Recommendation	Description
1	Develop and implement an institutional heritage resource management plan.
2	Inventory the known heritage resources within the framework of a management plan.
3	Develop an institutional standard on how its heritage resources articulate with the criteria of the National Register of Historic Places.
4	Integrate students with the heritage resources management program.
5	Forge relations or programmatic agreements with appropriate outside partners.
6	Develop an institutional organizational structure to guide and sustain the heritage resource management program.
7	Identify a contact person who will interface between the heritage managers and relevant law-enforcement agencies.
8	Institutional support to sustain the heritage resource management program.
9	Cooperate with other academic institutions locally and regionally in promoting heritage resource management within the framework of higher education.

19th-century household items and tools that belonged to the family when they occupied the house. We are now in discussions with Montclair State University personnel to put together an exhibit on campus, integrating results of our archival research, archaeological investigations, oral histories, and the Van Reyper-Speer family heirlooms that are available. Ms.Terhune has agreed to co-curate this proposed exhibit. MSU Sprague library has an exhibit case in the main lobby that will be available for us to use for this purpose in October 2014.

HERITAGE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN THE COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY ENVIRONMENT

Skowronek and Lewis offer useful guidance in building and implementing a plan for sustainable heritage consideration on University campuses (Table 1). Institutional support, Number 8 on their list, is of crucial importance. The administrative hierarchy at the highest levels needs to be convinced that heritage management is a crucial component of the college infrastructure or else any plan that is created on paper is unlikely to be followed in practice, much like many of the elaborate heritage-protection plans I have seen in the Caribbean but rarely enforced by the very governments that created the plans (Siegel and Righter 2011; Siegel et al. 2013).

At Montclair State University we are at the stage of trying to generate interest in an informed sense of heritage and community centered on the cultural landscape of the campus (Figure 8). Aside from issues of managing tangible heritage resources, it makes no sense to limit our view to the strict legal boundaries of the campus periphery when assessing heritage implications. We may regard the campus and surrounding areas as a heritagescape, borrowing Arjun Appadurai's (1997) concept of "scape" and developed by Michael Di Giovine (2009) in his book on world heritage and tourism. At this point we still need to enlighten our administrative superiors, like the Vice President of University Facilities and the University Presidents that institutional and cultural memory materialized by heritage resources are in fact embedded in and reside on the landscape. If we do not take this seriously then the cultural memories of the ivory tower will become acts of fiction to be distributed in glossy handouts and magazines to prospective students and alumni.

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Once Upon a Time in a Nucleated Village: English Land Use and Town Planning in Seventeenth-Century East Jersey

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ABSTRACT

*Townscape studies and landscape archaeology
can supply significant information about broad
cultural development in towns, states, and re-
gions. The macroscopic view offered by examin-
ing communities provides a lens through which
cultural, religious, socio-political, and commer-
cial ideas are transferred between regions, modi-
fied by community members, and solidified in the
creation of cultural identities. Examination of
seventeenth-century English settlement patterns
and their underlying influences in Woodbridge
and Piscataway, Middlesex County, New Jersey
provides insight into the role township corpora-
tion freeholders played in cultural identity for-
mation in northeastern New Jersey. The town-
scape systems employed by these freeholders had
lasting impacts on regional cultural development
within the state.*

INTRODUCTION

During the seventeenth century, New Jersey was
colonized by the Dutch, Swedes, Finns and Eng-
lish. Each ethnic group arrived with their own ideas
about the forms a settlement should take, the ways
the spaces within it must function, and the multitude
of roles it should serve in fulfilling cultural, defen-

sive, economic, religious, and social expectations.
Even within groups great variation existed in the
style, form, and function exhibited by vernacular
townscapes for a variety of reasons. To explore this
concept, this article examines the cultural transfer
of vernacular townscape plans by New England im-
migrants to the Province of East New Jersey. This
examination focuses on mid-seventeenth-century
English settlement of two New Jersey towns: Pis-
cataway and Woodbridge Townships, in Middlesex
County (Figure 1). By examining townscapes as
designed and contrived artifacts on the landscape
(Yentsch 1996:xxvii), one gains insight into the
cultural transformation of space with dynamic,
multifaceted cultural meanings (Beranek 2012:78;
Thomas 2012:165-186) and the metamorphosis of
perceived wilderness into organized communities.
This transformation fulfilled aims toward wealth
and power accumulation, concepts of cultural and
religious identity, solidification of social and fam-
ily relations, and promoted gender ideals and mas-
culine responsibility. By carving the land into par-
cels with distinct, real and conceptual boundaries,
English settlers who emigrated from New England
physically imbedded their cultural identity on the
New Jersey landscape, which had a lasting impact
on the cultural development of the East Jersey Prov-
ince.

Through landscape archaeology and historical re-
search, this study examines the initial settlement of
Piscataway and Woodbridge between the late 1660s
and mid-1670s, with an emphasis on the latter town,
and presents the ways in which English settlers uti-
lized land to promote religious values and create a
cultural identity. Among its merits, landscape ar-
chaeology has been used to examine, discern, and
define the ways in which inhabitants transform
landscapes into places with deep cultural mean-
ing (Thomas 2012:182). Landscape archaeology
studies in New Jersey have enabled archaeologists
to explore the concept of "otherness" and the role
"others" played in the Northeast region's cultural
development. In this study, "others" consisted of
freeholders or town associates in restricted access
or insular East Jersey township corporations. These