

CITY OF BERKELEY  
Ordinance #4694 N.S.

# LANDMARK APPLICATION

## The Site and Remnants of the West Berkeley Native Shellmound (CA-Ala-307), Willow Grove Park and Lower Strawberry Creek

1. **Street Address:** Three blocks bounded by University Ave., Hearst Ave.,  
I-880 and 4th Street

County: Alameda

City: Berkeley

ZIP: 94710

2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:**

West side of 2nd St. between  
Hearst and University:

- 1. 620 Hearst Ave.      057-2105-00105
  - 2. 1916 2nd St.        057-2105-00203
  - 3. 1930 2nd St.        057-2105-00401
  - 4. 1920 2nd St.        057-2105-00503
- (entire block)

East side of 2nd St. between  
Hearst and University (Truitt & White):

- 5. 642 Hearst Ave.      057-2104-00203
  - 6. 3rd Street (strip of land along tracks)      057-2104-00300
- (entire block)

Spenger's Parking Lot:

- 7. 1900 4th St.        057-2101-00103
  - 8. 701 University Ave. 057-2101-00500
  - 9.        3rd St.        057-2101-00600
- (entire block)

10. **Northbound off-ramp I-880 (no parcel number)**

In addition, this application includes:  
the northbound offramp on the eastern side of the Freeway and  
2nd Street, 3rd Street, the railroad trackbed on 3rd Street and  
4th Street between University Avenue and Hearst Ave.

## Dimensions:

Parcels 1-4 (Block 2105) = 436 feet by 250 feet  
Parcels 5 and 6 (Block 2104) = 420 feet by 258 feet  
Parcels 7-9 (Block 2101) = 405 feet by 146 feet  
Each roadway named above is 60 feet wide

(See attached copies of Assessor's maps from City Finance Dept.)

Special Note about the Dimensions of the Shellmound itself:  
Archeologist Christopher Dore recently stated that he believes the mound's dimensions to be 250 meters or more east to west and 125 meters north to south based on the 1910 sketch map of N.C. Nelson (copy attached). Nelson himself wrote field notes indicating his belief that the mound could be 1,000 feet long or longer based on his own observations and accounts of local residents at the time.

## Cross Street: University Avenue

3. **Is property on any survey?** The Shellmound is an officially registered native shellmound on file with the State Office of Historic Preservation. Its number is CA-Ala-307. According to archeologist Colin Busby of Basin Research Assoc.,

"The site is not currently listed on any local, state or national registers. The data from the site and research interpretations indicate that it appears to be eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources under Criterion 4. In addition, local Native American groups consider archeological sites that have yielded human skeletal remains to be historic and culturally significant."

## State Inventory:

## National Register:

4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**

a. **Building(s):**      **Garden(s):**      **Other Feature(s):**

b. **Landscape or Open Space:**      **Natural:**       **Designed:**      **Other:**

c. **Historic Site:**       **d. District:**

e. **Other:** Designation would not include any above ground buildings, railroad tracks, ties, gravel, signal gates, barriers or structures.

Designation would include the site itself and all items found subsurface including artifacts from the earliest native habitation, such as but not limited to native tools, ornaments and human burials.

In addition, it would include any victorian era items, 20th century industrial era, including but not

limited to artifacts found from the Pioneer Starch & Grist Mill, West Berkeley's first smokestack factory, and the Monarch

(later Keystone) Oil Refinery (the largest refinery of its time east of the Rockies), both of which were located in blocks

currently used by Truitt & White Lumber Co. Designation would also include the Strawberry Creek creekbed, both the original course

and the current course (both having historical importance) and

any native or historic articles found beneath or around Spenger's parking lot (former Willow Grove Park).

5. **Historic Name:** West Berkeley Native Shellmound, Willow Grove Park and lower Strawberry Creek.

**Commonly Known Name:** For purposes of this designation, the site is referred to in abbreviated fashion as West Berkeley Shellmound.

6. **Dates of Construction:**

**Shellmound ca.3,700 B.C.-800 A.D. a. Factual:** yes

**Source of Information:** "Differences in Radiocarbon Age Between Shell and Charcoal from a Holocene Shellmound in Northern California" by B. Lynn Ingram, Dept. of Geography, U.C. Berkeley, CA, 1997.

**Date of Construction:**

**Willow Grove Park/Creekbed 1875 a. Factual:** yes

**Source of Information:** The Berkeley Advocate

7. **Builder:** The Shellmound had developed over a period of 4,500 years by the use of the earliest known native inhabitants. Willow Grove Park's builder was the Berkeley Land & Town Improvement Association.

**Architect:**

8. **Style:** The Shellmound at West Berkeley is believed to have been one of the first of its kind at the Bay's edge, built ca 3,700 B.C. Even the first pyramid was not built until 1,000 years later. While the pyramids were sacred monuments to powerful kings, the shellmounds were sacred burial sites for the average deceased mound-dweller. And while the pyramids were built of stones handplaced by thousands of workers over the course of a generation (30 years), the shellmounds were slowly constructed over thousands of years from daily debris and artifacts left by the tribelet communities that lived on the site. After 4,500 years of habitation, the Berkeley mound had only reached a height of about 20 feet. The importance of the shellmounds should not be underestimated. (They also contained ritual burials exhibiting a variety of deliberate, traditional positioning and use of burial goods.)

The question of "style" has also to do with their style of living which is covered in detail in the history portion which follows.

9. **Original Owner:** **Shellmound**-no known owner in 3,700 B.C., however this might have been part of the mound dwellers territory.

**Original Use:** Home

**Original Owner:** **Willow Grove Park/Creekbed**-This was originally part of the Shellmound until 800 A.D. Became a park in 1875.

**Original Use:** Native home of mound-dwellers; vacant between ca.800 and 1820 A.D.; 1820-1875 part of Peralta family's Rancho San Antonio; park between 1875 and 1881.

**Historical Note:**

(According to the 1890's Assessor's Block Books, parcels #1-4 were owned by the Niehaus Bros., proprietors of the West Berkeley Planing Mill, John Everding, proprietor of the Pioneer Starch Works, Wm.B.Heywood, owner of the Heywood & Jacobs Lumber Co., Sarah Walker and Jas.B. Henley. Parcel #5 (now Truitt & White) was owned by John Everding, Rosina Berger, Edw.O'Reiley, Sarah Davis Walker, McAvoy & Brannon, Mary Frederick, Eliz. Pavlicovich, Andrew McNamara, Mary Higgins and Horace H. Seaton. Parcel #7 & 8 (Spenger's Parking Lot) was owned by Timothy Page and Cath. Christ. Frank Spenger later purchased this property.)

**10. Present Owners:**

**Parcel #1:** 620 Hearst Ave., owner is The 620 Hearst Group

**Address:** 1 Montrose Rd., Berkeley, CA 94707

**Present Occupant:**

**Parcel #2-5:** E.side of 2nd & 642 Hearst, owner is DJJ&W Enterprises

**Address:** 54 York Dr., Piedmont, CA 94611

**Present Occupant:** Truitt & White Lumber Co.

**Parcel #6 and 9:** Owner is Union Pacific

**Address:** 1416 Dodge St., Omaha, Nebraska 68179

**Parcel #7 & 8:** Spenger's Parking Lot, owner is Frank Spenger Co.

**Address:** 1901 Fouth St., Berkeley, CA 94710

**Present Occupant:**

- 11. Present Use: Residential: single family: duplex: multiple:**  
**Commercial: x office: x store: x industrial: x hotel:**  
**Institutional: school: hospital: other:**

**Current Zoning:** Willow Grove Park (Spenger's Parking Lot) block C-W.

The 2 blocks to the west (Truitt & White) are zoned MU-LI.

**Adjacent Property Zoning:** Blocks on all 4 sides of Willow Grove Park are zoned C-W.

Blocks to the north and south of the other 2 Truitt & White blocks are zoned MU-LI.

**12. Present Condition of Property:**

**Shellmound:** Although the Shellmound has been leveled, many excavations on the sites of native mounds throughout the Bay Area have revealed subsurface, in situ mound (=midden) material.

This subsurface material needs further study to determine.

how deeply it extends. In Emeryville, the shellmound remnants

extend 8 feet deep. The archeologist currently working on that site, Sally

Morgan of URS Greiner Woodward Clyde, has found many artifacts and human burials there. Thus, any remaining midden material found at the Berkeley site may render valuable information about the earliest inhabitants. in close detail as a native monitor and In addition, Ohlone descendant Jakki Kehl has studied the native mounds has stated that there may still be cultural resources even in the disturbed middens which could be recovered. She points out that there is also the possibility of finding **undisturbed** mound material under buildings, railroad tracks, utility easements and roads. These may contain untold numbers of human burials and artifacts.

Much of the West Berkeley mound was removed in the period from 1853 to 1910 to be sold as garden fertilizer, chicken feed, material for grading for the many dirt roads of the day and surfacing for tennis courts. In the May 5, 1877 issue of the BERKELEY ADVOCATE, it says,

“The BLTIA are placing much of their Shell-Mound stock on the streets. This is an excellent deposit and after the rains it will become consolidated.”

And a week later,

“The BLTIA are about to erect a tank and windmill over their well, for the purpose of watering the streets of West Berkeley. As many of the roads have recently been made, the top-dressing needs water badly to solidify it.”

Four months later,

“This is the driest year since 1858.”

In 1950, UC Berkeley archeologists removed numerous artifacts and 95 human burials. Jakki Kehl suggests that now there is the opportunity for the City and developers to work with the native community to determine a way to return some of these materials, i.e. artifacts and human remains, to their rightful home.

### **Present Condition of Property:**

**Willow Grove Park/Lower Strawberry Creek:** The Park was replaced by several houses in the 1880's. Those houses were eventually moved to the northeast block of Cedar and 4th Street to allow the Spengers to build the parking lot. As sad as it was to see the park close, the paved lot which replaced it has served to protect any shellmound material that may lie under it. The Creek was placed in an underground culvert in the 1930's. Its current course probably differs from the original course to some degree. This is not insignificant. The location of the mound seems to be of growing

importance as the Fourth Street Phenomenon creates increasing financial pressure to develop such sites. It should be noted that the 1950 UC Berkeley study of the shellmound postulated that the mound was built on the north bank of Strawberry Creek where it meets the bayshore.

Since this application is for designation of a site and subsurface remnants rather than the buildings above, the site could be said to be in good condition. Only further study will reveal how badly disturbed the archeological material may be. But whether there is shellmound material or not, designation of the site would do more in the way of educating the community about its ancient past, native history and victorian times than any other place in Berkeley.

Exterior—	Excellent:	Good:	Fair:	Poor:
Interior—	Excellent:	Good:	Fair:	Poor:
Grounds—	Excellent:	Good:	Fair:	Poor:

### 13. Description:

To look at the site today (see contemporary snapshots that follow), surrounded by concrete, asphalt, cars, restaurants and clusters of men seeking employment, it is almost impossible to envision this portion of Berkeley in ancient times when the waters of the bay lapped up against sandy beaches and creeks meandered freely through marshy tidelands. The purpose of this proposed designation is to draw attention to Berkeley's earliest beginnings.

This section will describe the three components of this application:

#### 1.) Strawberry Creek:

According to the 1890's Assessor's maps, Strawberry Creek ran straight through the three blocks at a parallel distance of 100 feet north along University Avenue and emptied into the Bay. However, the 1899 USGS topographical map (and by implication the 1857 map of the Peralta Rancho) shows the creek crossing to the south of University Avenue at 3rd Street and exiting into the Bay just south of the Municipal Pier. This is corroborated by archeological mapping specialist Christopher Dore who has studied the historic maps, archeological descriptions and aerial photos of the area. Perhaps the creek was manipulated by culverts around the 1890's to change its course into the Bay. However, no record of this has yet been discovered.

After the Eastshore Highway was built in the 1930's, the creek's outflow became the spot where it is today: west of the freeway in a southerly direction out from University Avenue. This is evidenced in an aerial photo of the area (attached).

#### 2.) Shellmound:

The original course of Strawberry Creek is important to our discussion of the location of the West Berkeley Shellmound (CA-Ala-307). Scientists have contended

that the natives built the mound on the north bank of Strawberry Creek. The truth of this theory has yet to be found.

The first serious study of the mound came in 1904, long after it had been disturbed by such constructions as the Southern Pacific tracks (1877), the El Dorado Linseed Oil Works (1890's), the grading of University Avenue (1870), and a hotel and livery stable just to the south at 3rd and University Avenue.

Due to the significant age and historic value of the mound, any construction on the north or the south bank of the original creekbed should certainly be examined for midden material, especially since the current paving has been in place for so many years. Many artifacts and possible human remains may lie hidden underneath.

Fortunately, in 1910 a hand-sketched map was made by the archeologist N.C. Nelson of the mound (presently on file at UC's Hearst Museum). A composite of this 1910 Sketch Map superimposed over a 1980's aerial photo shows the large extent of this mound site. (Attached) The larger "site" is the midden as it extends out from the mound's core in the Truitt & White complex.

### **3. Willow Grove Park:**

The natural setting of this site included a thicket of California willow trees and Strawberry Creek running through. Natives chose this site to settle about 5,700 years ago, the presence of the trees, the creek and the Bay being paramount to their existence. As far as we know, when the Park opened many centuries later, it consisted of a bandstand pavilion and picnic area and existed as a park from 1875 to 1881.

Upon the original submission of this landmark application on 9/17/99, it was believed by the author that Willow Grove Park existed solely in the block known as Spenger's Parking Lot. However, upon examination of the 1878 Carnall & Eyre Map of Berkeley (copy attached), it appears that Willow Grove Park extended from 3rd to 5th Streets between University and Hearst Avenues encompassing both the parking lot block and the block to the east. Indeed it was the 1881 cutting through of 4th Street that spelled the demise of the Park later that year. This will be described in detail in the History section.

### **14. History:**

#### **The Age of the Native Shellmound**

A test of the latest high tech radiocarbon dating techniques was recently employed by UC Berkeley geologist B.Lynn Ingram on material excavated from the West Berkeley Shellmound. The idea was to test the technique, not particularly to study the West Berkeley Shellmound. However, the results of these studies were astounding. They showed the mound to be 2,000 years older than previously thought!

○ Ingram's 1997 report was entitled "Differences in Radiocarbon Age between Shell and Charcoal from a Holocene Shellmound in northern California." That Holocene (post Ice Age) Shellmound was the **West Berkeley Shellmound**.

Ingram dated material extracted from the mound at various layers including the very deepest layer. The oldest layer turned out to be possibly as old as 5,700 years! The youngest top layer was 1,200 years old. In other words the period of habitation was approximately 3,700 B.C. to 800 A.D.

To put this in perspective, landmarks commissioners, teachers, students, native descendants and the general public must make a great shift in their thinking about the history of the Bay Area. All too often this history is believed to have begun with the coming of Spanish explorers in 1769 or after the Gold Rush in 1849.

However, the history of the Bay Area begins with the natural history and geological changes following the Ice Age. The Ingram report goes into this in detail. Only a brief summary is provided here.

○ About 10,000 years ago, as the ice melted and the seas rose, ocean water poured into the basin which eventually became the San Francisco Bay. The speed with which the bay water rose slowed gradually over time and after 4,000 years, the presence of creeks and baywater were in sufficient balance to enable tidelands and marshes to develop and create an ecosystem conducive to human life.

Meanwhile, early humans were migrating into the Americas. For many years, scientists believed this migration to be by foot over the land bridge at the Bering Straits. However, recent finds of human remains 13,000 years old on Santa Rosa island off of Santa Barbara and further south at a seaside encampment in Chile and another, at a camp in Peru where shellfish had been part of the diet, challenge this notion. A recent science article in the Washington Post asks, what if they had boats? Some archeologists believe this could have been possible, further evidence of native ingenuity and ability to survive. This also coincides with early European reports that the natives were great boatmen.

○ So the earliest humans arrived in West Berkeley by land or by sea. Strawberry Creek supplied a source of fresh water and the bay and tidal marshes supplied an abundance of shellfish, fish, marine mammals and waterfowl. According to **BAYLANDS ECOSYSTEM HABITAT GOALS**, each day as the tide went out, almost 50,000 acres of tidal flats emerged along the margins of the bay's larger tidal channels. The survival of native people "depended upon a detailed understanding of the ecological structure and functions of the baylands." Strawberry Creek also cut through the land in a way that made the crested shoreline conducive to docking boats (as could be seen



5,700 years later after the Gold Rush brought a Danish ship captain who built the earliest known dock here.

Many Bay Area mounds were located at the mouths of freshwater creeks and streams adjacent to groves of California willow trees. The nearby Emeryville mound, at the foot of Temescal Creek, and the West Berkeley mound fit this model. In Berkeley, a willow thicket (called a "sausal" by the Spanish) adjacent to Strawberry Creek later became Willow Grove Park and is visible in an 1878 real estate map of Berkeley. Furthermore, local historian Sandra Sher states that the natives used wood from these willows for many things, including baskets, houses, tools and utensils.

Ingram's study went on to examine the history of El Nino weather patterns, precipitation levels and streamflow. Rate of growth of the shellmound seems to have correlated with extreme wet or dry periods that may have lasted for periods up to 200 years. She concludes that the growth of the mound slowed down and finally stopped during a long period of extremely dry weather called the "Medieval Warm Period." This suggests that the natives left due to intolerable weather conditions and the decrease in their freshwater food supply. Another theory suggests that a cultural change from shellfish gathering to the acorn economy may have contributed to the abandonment of the mound. Theories abound but in any case, the West Berkeley mound had no longer been occupied for many centuries when the first Spanish explorers passed through this area. Native families were certainly present in the greater Bay Area however, their use of the mounds was minimal if at all and the mounds ceased to increase in size.

### Life on the Mound (3,700 B.C.-800 A.D.)

How can we ever know what life was like on the mounds 57 centuries ago? The Berkeley site natives left no written history. There are only traces and clues which laid for centuries buried in the shellmound.

Nineteenth century newcomers from Europe made fast work scavenging these mounds for souvenirs and according to archeologist Colin Busby, much of the West Berkeley mound was sold off as fertilizer for gardens and hauled away to pave the early dirt roads since the crushed shell seemed to harden when it got wet. Little did the Europeans know or care that the mound was not a junk heap but a rare remnant of the extensive native era in this locale. Even to this day, native descendants value these mounds as sacred resting sites of their early ancestors.

By 1950, the top of the West Berkeley Shellmound had been severely altered. Originally, according to the Ingram report, "the top of the mound was estimated to be 1 to 1.5 meters above the high tide line in 1910 when first mapped by N.C. Nelson" and spread out in a wide ellipse along Strawberry Creek. It was the one of the largest mounds reported along the east bay shore. However, by 1950 the top had been flattened

to be used as a base for an industrial water tank.

After many surveys, scientists postulate that the natives actually lived on top of the mounds which served as a high dry area above the high tide line. Scientists believe that when these mound sites were first occupied, the level of the bay water was considerably lower than it is today, perhaps as much as 3 meters lower. The mound elevation gave the people a great vantage point from which they could spot other natives arriving or passing on land or by boat, the approach of wildlife and the approach of weather from the ocean. (Have you ever noticed that you can predict the day's weather in Berkeley by observing the conditions over Mt. Tamalpais?)

The native families lived in community groupings of 60 to 90 people in villages 3-5 miles apart (Milliken, 1995). They lived in houses composed of a wooden framework and overlaid with tules and branches gathered nearby. Evidence of these dwellings was found during the 1950 UC excavation.

The only indubitable structural remains, uncovered at a depth of 123 inches, consisted of a section of the floor of a large, presumably ceremonial, house... the exterior form of the structure could not be determined with any exactness but it seemed to be an oval, perhaps 40 feet long and 20-25 feet wide. No definite entranceway could be observed and there was no fireplace. An intrusive pit from a level two to three feet higher cut through one corner of the floor. Four inches below, the house floor, separated from it by a thin deposit of charcoal and calcined shell, lay another thinner clay band, perhaps remains of an earlier house."

The report goes on to describe the firepits found, concentrations of stone, often fire-stained, and the storage pit. Sandra Sher, author of two publications on the history of the Emeryville Shellmound, speculates that the natives moved their houses from time and probably re-built the houses yearly due to soggy thatch and insects.

Without a written language, information was orally handed down from generation to generation by. At the recent Shellmound Conference in July 1999, Ohlone descendant and archeologist Andrew Galvan told of the importance his family placed on listening to his grandmother's tales every Sunday night, how as a child he found it tedious, that she would tell of how the natives used to put red paint all over dead bodies when they buried them. Then, one day, his father brought him to a site where a native burial had been unearthed. Sure enough, there was the red paint. For the first time it clicked. These tales were true! What she was doing was not strictly for family entertainment but to convey information! His grandmother was keeping up this native tradition which spanned many thousands of years, hundreds of generations, and born out of the need to preserve knowledge based on native experience, native religion and mythology.

One can only get glimpses of native customs by reading the archeologists' reports on their findings in the field. The most useful such report is the 1975 summary of the 1950 excavation by UC Berkeley archeologists entitled "West Berkeley (CA-Ala-307): A Culturally Stratified Shellmound on the east shore of San Francisco Bay" by Wm. J. Wallace and Donald W. Lathrop. As stated above, two distinct cemeteries were identified containing possibly hundreds of burials. Neither could be explored. However, during the excavation, 95 skeletons were exhumed mostly in badly decayed and crumbly condition due to several factors.

"Many skeletons had been broken up as a result of lying in shallow graves and being subjected to pressure from human activity above, others had been disturbed by later aboriginal digging of graves or other pits. The cutting away of the east section of the mound close to a cemetery in order to make way for a railroad spur track exposed many skeletons to the forces of disintegration."

The native people were interred in shallow 2-1/2 to 3 foot deep hollows. They were placed in "loosely flexed positions with arms bent so that the hands lay near the face." However, the report states that they were oriented in diverse directions and in diverse positions. 43 of the 95 bodies exhumed had signs of powdered red ochre or hematite and 32 had "mortuary goods."

### Burial 32

The report lists details of each of the 95 burials but focuses on one male which it calls "Burial 32", a young male lying on his left side facing east with red ochre (covering most of the bones and the bases of 2 obsidian blades). He was buried with more objects than anyone else found: 2 large obsidian blades, 2 white chertlike blades, an antler wedge and a grooved net sinker. Perhaps he was an exceptional fisherman, hunter, boatman or warrior beloved by his family and community and perished from disease or injury. We need to move beyond his identification as "Burial 32" and think of him as a possible hero in the 4,500 year history of a civilization. For the charisma he possessed which caused him to be special so many hundreds of years ago, survives to bring some focus to him still and fires the imagination of those of us who would rather think of these as people, as family and tribal members, rather than as numbers on a chart. These people were not the list of 95 burials found in the report but a series of families that lived together atop the mound, 15 men, 17 women, 12 children and 51 babies. Infant mortality was high and life expectancy beyond infancy was only about 35 years. One woman was buried with her 13 year old son and another with her 7 year old child. One can only speculate what caused them to die. Perhaps with further advancements in science and the greater involvement of Ohlone descendants, a clearer story can be told about these people.

## Animal Burials

The 1975 report tells of an interesting find at the lower older depths of the mound of a half skeleton of a coyote. Why half? "The animal had been placed in a shallow depression and purposefully covered over. Its remains lay in anatomical articulation, suggesting that the coyote was buried after having been halved longitudinally. This may represent an interment of an animal, ceremonially raised and killed. Thirteen coyote burials, some with offerings, have been reported from Late and Middle horizon sites in the Valley." Another ceremonial burial reported was that of a California condor. "The bones of large carnivorous birds, eagles, hawks, and condors, have been unearthed elsewhere in California under conditions suggesting careful postmortem treatment...A fairly large number of condor bones were encountered at Emeryville...apparently representing a single individual. This may also have been an interment."

## Food

Despite its failure to tell a complete story, the 1975 report does give a clear picture of what the early mound dwellers ate. Shellmounds are composed primarily of shells and food debris left in the mounds.

The report describes the native fauna as "abundant and diversified. Of the more than 200 different species of mammals found in California, 75 lived in the bay region." These included deer and tule elk, grizzly bears, rabbits, squirrels, rats, mice, coyotes, bobcats, mountain lions, weasels, badgers, raccoons and skunks. In the bay could be found sea otters, seals, sea lions, dolphins and porpoises. Then there were lots of waterfowl and clams, oysters, mussels and many other kinds of shellfish and fish.

But by far the most constant and principal food source was shellfish, evidenced by the "enormous mass of molluscan valves" throughout the period of occupation. Mussels, oysters and later clams were easily found and consumed in addition to snails (periwinkles and others), red and black abalones, limpets, barnacles, crabs and land snails.

Fishing was another means of obtaining food as evidenced by the profusion of fish bones and net sinkers on the mound. During the entire 4,500 years, "shellmound people caught quantities of large fish in shallow offshore waters in nets weighted down with notched and grooved stones." Amongst the fish caught were thresher shark, leopard sharks, bat rays (but not in the winter), sturgeons, chinook salmon, coho salmon, jacksmelt, redbtail surfperch (especially during late winter), black perch and plainfin midshipman. Silver salmon and steelhead trout could have been caught out of the Bay or out of Strawberry Creek according to ichthyologist, W.I. Follett. He goes

on to describe the tule balsa watercraft of the West Berkeley people, a canoe of about 10 feet, 3 or 4 feet wide, made of rushes and dried grass of a long broad leaf, made up into rolls the length of the canoe, thickest in the middle, and regularly tapering to a point at each end where they were lashed securely. Although they appeared delicate, they were considered seaworthy by some scientists and nineteenth century natives were observed not to despair in the least at paddling across the choppy waters at the Golden Gate.

Although 360 stone sinkers were uncovered in 1950, most of them dated to the earlier centuries of the mound civilization. Possibly fishing methods changed at some point. At Emeryville, a much deeper mound, only 4 net sinkers had been found. By the time the Emeryville site was occupied, perhaps fishing methods for the region had changed. Nevertheless, abundant remains of sturgeons were found at Emeryville. Follett postulated that West Berkeley natives may have caught sturgeon and king salmon with drift gill nets. These nets are connected to poles which are raised up and together when fish swim into the net. Then the fish are beaten and removed and placed in the boat.

Follett quotes Frank Spenger Sr. about the abundance of salmon in the Bay as late as 1914. "We would catch 2 or 3 on the average, up to 25 to 30 pounds. On high water there would be 5 or 6 feet of water on the flats. We driftnetted them in fall and spring off Berkeley dock in 12 feet at high water, 1 to 1-1/2 miles out." His son, Paul Spenger, also corroborated this method of shoreline fishing in an oral history interview with Lesley Emmington and Stephanie Manning in June 1978. Little did the Spengers know that they were fishing in much the same manner of the natives several thousands of years before them.

Hunting was also practiced although not as much as fishing. The favorite hunted animal was deer. They were killed by hurling stone-tipped darts from a "throwing board". Birds, especially ducks and geese, were consumed in fair numbers and their remains found throughout the mound. They were especially hunted during winter months when there was an abundance of migratory waterfowl. 482 bird remains were found in the 1950 excavation. Of these 385 were ducks, geese and swans, 27 were cormorants, 42 were murrets, 9 were loons, 2 pelicans, 2 cranes, 2 gulls, 2 curlews, 1 barn owl, 2 great horned owls and 6 crows.

### Artifacts

During the 1950 excavation, 3,412 man-made objects were collected. These included prehistoric tools as well as broken china, bottles, glass, nails and other items from the "historic" period.

The top 1 to 2 feet of the mound was considerably disturbed and "represents

entirely a post-Indian accumulation; none appears to be 'contact materials' in the sense of having been obtained by the Indians from Europeans." Most of the items found below this represented the period of the ancient mound dwellers.

The greatest number of a single item was 1,547 olivella shell beads. Other items included:

- 413 abalone shell beads
- 360 net-sinkers
- 98 bone awls
- 48 bone flakers
- 60 split mammal bone tools
- 11 mammal rib tools
- 136 flake scrapers
- 52 antler wedges
- 35 antler flakers
- 56 stone projectile points
- 58 core scrapers
- 46 charmstones
- 78 mortars
- 69 pestles
- 52 hammerstones
- 46 slingstones
- 36 abalone shell pendants
- Many other items too numerous to list

All the projectile points found were below the 6 foot level. The report states that the "West Berkeley points are not duplicated in nearby shellmounds. The only examples analogous to the large-stemmed variety are two obsidian points from the deeper portion of Ellis Landing." Obsidian was the most frequently used material at West Berkeley. Eighteen knife blades were uncovered from various layers throughout the mound. The report goes on to analyze every item brought up. It states that, "stone objects for personal adornment were uncommon at West Berkeley." Animal bones were split or fashioned into working tool items. Three bowls found were hollowed from whale vertebrae supporting scientist Josh Collins' theory that whale carcasses washed up on shore from time to time. However, these are the only bowl specimens reported from Central California. Also found were whistles made out of bird bones.

Nothing went to waste in this culture. 21 animal teeth were found which must have served as pendants or beads. From 2 graves at the north end of the mound came 20 coyote teeth, 18 in one grave and 2 in the other. Such beads made from teeth are not common in Central California sites.

On the subject of shells, the report states:

At West Berkeley shell was used almost exclusively for the making of beads and pendants. Only 3 kinds, Red Abalone, Black Abalone, and Olive were regularly utilized. The making of shell ornaments does not seem to have taken place at the site for the refuse failed to yield discarded waste fragments, incomplete articles, or pieces broken during manufacture. Drills suitable for piercing shells were lacking. Thus, it can be concluded that finished products were brought in from elsewhere. Either the West Berkeley people journeyed to the seacoast to gather shells and there made ornaments from them, or more likely, they procured the finished products in trade from shore-dwelling populations.

It goes on to say:

As a group, the West Berkeley shell pendants are distinct from those recovered at other shellmounds on the shores of San Francisco Bay, but several forms are very similar or identical to those from lower Sacramento Valley early horizon cemeteries. The most frequent Early pendant, as at West Berkeley, is circular with two central perforations. No such quantity and variety of shell ornament was present at West Berkeley as in the delta region. The relative scarcity of shellwork is also characteristic of other Bay mounds. Evidently, the Bay area people failed to develop a distinctive art in shell. The suggestion that this reflects their economic status may be correct. The bayshore dwellers probably did not have desirable trade items to exchange with the coast tribes for shell articles. Apparently the inland peoples did.

## Conclusion

The ancient native families came to settle along the shoreline at the mouth of Strawberry Creek with nothing but their tribal communities and their ancestral knowledge of how to survive in the natural Bay area wilderness. The area was ripe for human habitation with an abundance of wildlife, vegetation and clear water.

The natives lived here for thousands of years, hundreds of generations. Their location on the shellmound depended on the general weather patterns in hundred year spans. By the time the last of them left, the area had been dry for many, possibly hundreds of years - the "medieval warm period."

We can only speculate about what happened to them. All we know is that they unwittingly left a little trail of clues in the shellmound, a trail that leads to the astonishing fact of a civilization that managed without all the contrivances of modern life. Maybe there is something we can learn from those families that will help us live in peace with the unspeakable beauty of this area. May we be worthy of this knowledge and the presence of their unfailing spirit.

LATER HISTORY AND WILLOW GROVE PARK



## Later History and Willow Grove Park

For the purposes of this document, native and rancho history will not be discussed in detail beyond the abandonment of the shellmound ca.800 A.D. The nine hundred years which followed are still a questionmark in Berkeley's history. Undoubtedly native groups continued to live in the east bay or at least passed through it from time to time. Perhaps these people visited the old shellmounds which circled the Bay on special occasions, for feasts or to look out to the ocean. No one knows.

18th/19th Century mission life was most difficult for the native people. Many natives became Christians and many forced into hard labor. This whole period is covered in fine detail by anthropologist Randall Milliken in his scholarly 1995 work entitled *A TIME OF LITTLE CHOICE: The Disintegration of Tribal Culture in the San Francisco Bay Area 1769-1810*.

Milliken includes 24 translated manuscripts written by members of the Spanish army and church officials. From these we learn of one Sergeant Luis Peralta assigned in 1798 to go to Mission San Jose to investigate rumors of a planned native rebellion. The book includes the 1804 questioning of suspected native rebels and their testimony in their defense. It also gives the very moving testimony of runaway natives upon return to Mission San Francisco in 1797, their various reasons for attempting escape including the deaths by disease of loved ones, repeated beatings, forced labor despite injuries, disputes with other workers, hunger. The author identifies each person, both their christian and native names, their tribe and any details known about the individual. Disease was rampant at the missions and many died of infectious diseases, especially syphilis. Despite these miserable conditions, many natives came to consider mission life preferable to what Milliken describes as "changes in their tribal lands, disease, depopulation and the accompanying collapse of intergroup alliances..."

By 1810, the last of the East Bay native grouping known as the Huchiun had moved to the missions in San Francisco and San Jose. By this time, almost every native living in Berkeley was gone.

Between 1820 and 1853, the area was taken over by the Peralta family rancho, a large grant of land which was made to the Peralta's in 1820 by the King of Spain. The rancho thrived until the Gold Rush and the influx of anglo immigrants. The first Peralta house in Berkeley was Jose Domingo Peralta's adobe house, built in 1840 along upper Codornices Creek near Hopkins Street. However, this report will not cover this period except to say that the Peralta family eventually was forced to sell off most of the rancho to cover the legal costs of defense of its holdings in land disputes.

In 1853 a sea captain fresh from gold digging at Dutch Flat, Captain James Jacobs, established his dock at the Berkeley shoreline just west and north of the ancient

native shellmound. Jacobs, born James Jacobson in 1825 in Denmark and raised in Massachusetts, bought his first sloop at age 26. According to George Pettitt in BERKELEY, THE TOWN AND GOWN OF IT, he started a freighting business on San Francisco Bay. Two years later, in 1853 at age 28 he arrived in West Berkeley. When he arrived, the view that he saw included all the natural features in their raw state, the Golden Gate, Alcatraz Island, Mt. Tamalpais, Angel Island, Tiburon, Brooks Island, Albany Hill, the many creeks, Grizzly Peak, perhaps a vague glimpse of Coyote Hills in the distance, the Bay and **425 native shellmounds** spread out every few miles at the shoreline, long abandoned, wherever creeks or streams poured into the Bay.

Capt. Jacobs' choice of the West Berkeley Mound area and Strawberry Creek as an anchorage probably came to him as a mariner as it did to the early natives, something about the way in which the creek naturally coincided with the bay water to create an ideal docking place with viewing access to all parts of the region. Just to the south lie the bustling town of Oakland and across the Bay, San Francisco.

Jacobs' business was maritime freight. His business was hauling building materials back and forth across the Bay. Every now and then passengers got a ride with him but primarily he carried cargo. And in 1855, John Everding, a German immigrant, purchased 18 acres (Thompson & West Atlas of Alameda Co., 1878) and opened the Pioneer Starch and Grist Mill (2nd and Hearst) just to the north of the shellmound. Jacobs' shipping included supplies for this operation. The little settlement village of Ocean View was forming around this shoreline habitation and at San Pablo Avenue.

According to historian J.N. Bowman in his 1952 article entitled, "The Birthdays of Urban Communities," Ocean View was "an urban community of rural character." By 1857 it had "a name, a grocery, hotel, saloon, school, Sunday school, church services, and some 25 settlers resident within a relatively small area." Mail was left at the hotel/store for the neighbors and horse races were held on San Pablo Road from present Dwight Way to Delaware Street. On Friday afternoons, parents gathered at the Ocean View School to hear their students recite selected pieces. The community became "a cohesive group of independent individuals or families." Most of these families were European-Americans, however three families came from Chile - the Unda's, the Sisterna's and the Ysunza's.

Delaware Street connected Jacobs Landing and Bowen's Inn on San Pablo. Delaware Street ran east/west along the crest between Strawberry Creek and Virginia (or Schoolhouse) Creek before there were any bridges across the creeks. During the 1860's, Jacobs' partnership with Zimri Brewer Heywood enabled them to enlarge their freight shipping business in West Berkeley and their holdings became known as the Heywood & Jacobs 10-Acre Tract. One big job that Jacobs later recalled was hauling bricks from his wharf to the site

of the new Deaf and Dumb Asylum under construction. While he was in the eastern part of town, he might have purchased a bushel of strawberries from the large Kelsey Orchard. According to the ALAMEDA COUNTY HERALD of June 6, 1860, the Kelsey Brothers grew award winning strawberries. Ten acres were devoted to growing the delicious strawberries.

### Naming of Strawberry Creek

Ocean View's flatlands were divided into sizeable farming plots owned by large Irish families, including those of James McGee, Michael Curtis, William Mulholland and William Teague. Wm. Teague alone left 11 children and 11 grandchildren when he died in 1891. According to Teague descendants and Teague's own diary, Strawberry Creek was originally referred to as "Teague Creek." However, the BERKELEY ADVOCATE on Jan. 27, 1883 claims that the creek was originally called "Big Gulch" and "it was but a few years before the incorporation of the town that the creek acquired its present pleasant name."

These large families that helped increase the population of this little settlement community.

In July of 1866, Frederick Law Olmsted submitted his plan for the new site for the university in Berkeley. He proposed a ferry and an avenue from the ferry to the campus. But his plan was more fully explored a few years later.

### Berkeley's First Master Plan

In 1870, a letter to Ezekial Brown, Esq. from the well known writer, cartoonist, government agent, late U.S. Minister to China and Oakland resident, J. Ross Browne, was published entitled, "Town Site of Lower Berkeley and the Value of Property and Growth of Population In and Around Oakland."

Apparently a consortium of investors had hired J. Ross Browne to investigate lower Berkeley, and assess its prospects as an area to invest in. The letter reads as perhaps Berkeley's first "master plan," offering a glowing and enthusiastic recommendation for the place and touting it as **the** place to invest in, sure to increase in value as it had for the prior ten years.

Browne repeatedly points to the beauty of the area as a "natural advantage for suburban residences, and the establishment of institutions for educational purposes." His flowery description goes on to say:

"Broad and stately avenues diverge from the (U.C.) grounds, opening up charming vistas over an area of nearly 100 miles of beautifully-diversified

country. Chief among these is University Avenue, 100 feet wide, stretching in a straight line down to the water-front, and passing directly through the proposed town site of Lower Berkeley."

He compares the climate to that of Italy and Greece and quotes Frederick Law Olmsted on the mildness of the weather. "The climate of Berkeley is distinguished for a peculiar serenity, cheerfulness and healthfulness."

Browne predicts:

"Lower down, towards San Pablo Avenue, as the distance from the University increases, and access from San Francisco becomes more convenient, a class of professional and business men in easy circumstances but having occasion to cross the bay daily, will purchase homesteads, where they can enjoy ample grounds and fresh air, combined with the attractions of scenery and society."

He goes on to describe the waterfront as "a gradual slope to the bay-front, terminating in an abrupt embankment facing the beach." He doesn't mention the ancient shellmound. According to Browne, this 647 acres has soil which is "a rich black loam" able to produce all manner of fruits and vegetables, olives, figs and walnuts. Its view is comparable to that of Rio de Janeiro.

He suggests that investors offer the following:

"cheap houses...access to San Francisco, for persons of moderate means. A town judiciously laid out on this tract, with a wharf and ferry, would be nearer to San Francisco than any other point at all suitable or attainable for such a purpose. This would be the home of industrious business men of limited means, mechanics, artisans and the clerks and other employe's of mercantile class."

Browne goes on to compare the Berkeley ferry with Oakland's and finds it far more desirable.

### Proposal for a Park in the Willow Grove

In addition, he predicts Lower Berkeley to be a place of recreation for San Franciscans.

"A willow grove adjacent to the landing affords an admirable site for a German garden; and there are many choice situations for hotels and boarding houses. In short, nature seems to have specially adapted this locality to the purpose designated in your proposed enterprise."

Browne predicts that a company "obtaining absolute control of this property by purchase, would be able, within 12 or 18 months, to dispose of it at an advance of 50

per cent upon cost; and I venture to say the value would be doubled in 2 years."

He later predicts that Oakland and Lower Berkeley will eventually merge. Attached to his letter were numerous reports from the State government and articles from the local papers praising the new site of the University and predicting nothing but success for the up and coming town of Berkeley and for the young State of California.

Browne was not the only one to speak highly of West Berkeley's future. According to Louis L. Stein, William B. Ralston had the "Ralston Idea" which put forth the theory that workingmen should live where they worked. This idea suggested that the investors not only build shops and factories but homes for the workers as well.

Meanwhile, road conditions were deteriorating. The OAKLAND HOME JOURNAL AND ALAMEDA COUNTY ADVERTISER (November and December, 1873 issues) complained that San Pablo Avenue was in terrible condition. "By driving on the Shattuck road Ocean View can be reached." (It also criticizes the new university for even coming to Berkeley without any housing available for students and faculty and for draining water out of Strawberry Creek.)

Henry Durant, president of UC, realized that if he wanted to attract students to his grand university, he would have to have a town nearby. This was possibly as a result of the Olmsted report and the letter on Lower Berkeley from J. Ross Browne. In 1874 Durant formed a land company with the businessmen of West Berkeley which they called the **Berkeley Land and Town Improvement Association (BLTIA)**. He also organized an effort to incorporate the eastern and western portions of town, but, at the time, incorporation failed to win support due to opposition by the farmers.

### The BLTIA and Burgeoning West Berkeley

The BLTIA followed Browne's instructions carefully. They started a ferry service nearby Jacobs Landing to the southwest of the Shellmound at the foot of the new University Avenue. The ferry opened to great fanfare in May 1875 with an excursion trip by the steamer Clinton. Mr. Hiram T. Graves was president of the ferry company and the wharf extended out 1300 feet enabling wagons to drive on and off the boats. Four trips would be made a day, 40 minutes each at a price of \$2.24 a month. A horsecar route was instituted that ran from the ferry wharf up University to 6th Street to Addison and all about town to the Claremont area.

The BLTIA helped to clean up the area around the willow grove and the creek that ran by the shellmound. **They created Willow Grove Park in 1875.** Perhaps they were luring people away from the huge Standard Soap Works factory adjacent to the ferry slip. The whole idea was to bring potential investor/homebuyers from across the Bay to West Berkeley to enjoy the great recreational opportunities available here.

Under the management of Mr. H. Ayres and later Fitch & Cox (BERKELEY ADVOCATE of May 12, 1877), the Park was run as a "picnic retreat." A bandstand pavilion was built and musical performances took place there.

With the aim of selling lots and encouraging the building of houses and shops, the company bought up all the land in West Berkeley and divided it into the blocks and lots mentioned in the Browne letter. In 1877 the main line of the Central Pacific was laid along 3rd Street (across some part of the West Berkeley Shellmound and further south lopping off the easternmost section of the Emeryville Shellmound). As if to lead by example, John Everding built a "seaside residence." "...A fine piece of land is enclosed, which in his hands, will not be unproductive," predicted the BERKELEY ADVOCATE of July 7, 1877. What they did not mention was that Everding lived adjacent to (perhaps on top of) part of the ancient native shellmound.

West Berkeley lots being sold were cheap and sold very well. Houses were built along with churches, meetings halls, schools and stores. The prominent Fredericks Hotel and saloon was located at the southeast corner of University and Third Street. The Brennan Brothers also built their livery stable adjacent to the hotel and "a bachelor's hall, where horse-flesh and porterhouse will be discussed." The OAKLAND TRANSCRIPT of 1876 also lists 5 boarding houses, 3 groceries and over 12 saloons. Heywood & Co. extended their wharf 150 feet "to gain more accommodations" which caused the ADVOCATE to exclaim that "this is a pretty sure indication that building is on the increase in Berkeley." And a bulkhead was put in to protect Heywood's land from encroachment by the bay.

The BLTIA continued to make improvements in West Berkeley. The January 18 ADVOCATE reports that the sewers put down in the summer are "doing a good service leading off the overflow to the beach." It also says, "The storm has raged furiously in town. Many fences have been blown down and some of the large willows in Willow Grove Park have been uprooted. At the waterfront the sea rushed up to beyond Second Street." At high tide, the wharf might have succumbed. Ferry runs were delayed at Oakland.

Offices for city departments were located in West Berkeley especially along University Avenue between 4th and 6th Streets. A fire house was located on 5th Street between University and Hearst. Streets were laid out and graded and bridges built on certain streets to cross the creeks. By 1878, the population was sufficient to warrant incorporation of the east and west sections of Berkeley.

### The Close of Willow Grove Park

But unfortunately many of these improvements were not long lasting. The ferry closed down only a few years after it began. By 1881 the need for a sewer system was

becoming apparent and an ordinance was passed making it a misdemeanor to turn drainage or waste water into public streets or on private lands where it might become stagnant or dangerous to one's health.

In February 1881, the Berkeley Daily Advocate ran a little item that said that Willow Grove Park was "one of the finest grounds this side of the Bay notwithstanding the opening of 4th Street. The proprietor intends to fix up the grounds in fine style for the pleasure parties. The square formed by opening of the street will be kept intact for the present, and trees and shubbery planted and walks laid out. J.W. Hink considers the opening of the street a high-handed proceeding and intends to prosecute the town for damages..." A later item on March 5, 1881 says, "We shall have no Willow Grove Park in Berkeley this summer...The Willow Grove Park was about the only attraction for visitors to West Berkeley from the metropolis and its closing will divert the loose change of excursionists in another direction..." Hence the **closing of Willow Grove Park.**

In 1890, the block on which the park had stood was subdivided into lots and sold off by the heirs of the last owner, Alexander Campbell Sr. A Mr. John Higgins bought several lots and built 5 houses. A store was built at the southeast corner of the park just south of Strawberry Creek. But the park was never revived. The large pavilion at the Hearst Avenue side was sold to A.C.Dietz for an oil refinery. This succeeded for a short time but according to the June 12, 1886 ADVOCATE, for two years little has been done." The property was sold to the O'Neill family for a glass works.

### Industrial Growth and Its Impact on the Natural and Cultural Resources

Gradually over time, the area began to suffer from the lack of city zoning. Factories were built next to houses in bizarre mixes. Directly across University Avenue from the old Willow Grove Park was the Golden West Hotel. And just to the southwest was the big soap factory with its huge smokestack. To the west across the tracks on 2nd Street was the Pioneer Grist Mill and the O'Neill Glass Works, both with tall smokestacks. Houses were being built everywhere with saloons and shops adjacent. When the tall saloon on 6th Street was closed, it served as a kindergarten. And the Casabonne family lived behind their saloon at 6th and Delaware. The noise of steam engines mingled with the smell of fish frying on the Spenger griddle. The Bolsted children thought nothing of walking over the wooden bridges, past the huge soap, glass and starch factories, past train whistles, past 5 or 6 saloons, past the town jail and Sistrina Hall up to the 7th Street School. They might have stopped to scramble down the creekbank to quickly search for tadpoles or lingered on the digger mound to look for skulls or shell pendants. They might have waved to Mr. Spenger hauling in his boat from the early morning catch or heard the loud machinery at the planing mill grinding away at virgin redwood timber. But this was life in all its rich victorian complexity.

Shellmound preservation was not high in the minds of the people. In the 1890's, the mound served as foundation to the new factories of the Monarch Oil Refinery and El Dorado Linseed Oil Co. Monarch Oil must have had one of the first oil refineries in the country in service of the newly invented automobile. Later in 1911, according to Antony Kirk, when it expanded, it became one of the largest oil refineries west of the Rockies. The early owners had no idea of the size that oil refineries would one day assume. Monarch Oil was later bought by Keystone Oil and eventually became King Keystone and then part of Richfield Oil Co. It was passed on to several owners and some of its buildings were demolished. Now in its place is the Truitt and White Lumber Co., the popular neighborhood lumber company with a huge business and many clients.

(But just imagine two oil companies adjacent to the shoreline and Strawberry Creek sitting on top of the Shellmound and its 5700 year history.)

Industrial growth continued and surged after the 1906 earthquake. By 1927 Berkeley had 299 factories which employed 4,953 people and produced over \$59,000,000 in products. Many of the largest factories were located in West Berkeley. (Chamber of Commerce, 1929)

### Creeks, Bridges and Sewers

In Dec. 1894 the City dug a trench for a sewer on 6th Street between University Avenue and Strawberry Creek in response to a negative editorial in a November issue of the BERKELEY ADVOCATE entitled "Improvements Needed."

The people of West Berkeley are beginning to think they are not receiving sufficient attention at the hands of the Board of Trustees. They complain that the eastern end of the town is being rapidly improved while this end is allowed to worry along as best it can. Complaints are being made about the conditions of the bridges, more especially in regard to the Sixth street bridge, which is in very bad condition for vehicular traffic, and the unsanitary condition of the creek which runs beneath.

With regard to the bridges there is not one of them which is really in safe condition. In almost every case there is danger for the stranger on dark nights, either riding or walking, of going into the creek, and the town would then, in all probability, be compelled to pay a nice little bill for damages. Perhaps more than it would cost to repair the bridges...

Again, for some time the inhabitants on and around Fifth and Sixth streets have been complaining, and we understand to Health Officer Rowell, in regard to the various closets and drainages which have no outlet to any sewers. The odor that arises from some of these places is unbearable, and no doubt very injurious to the health. A number of places allow the drainage to run into cess pools and in some instances merely on the surface where it is



absorbed into the earth and possibly finding its way into the wells. The need of a sewer on 5th street is keenly felt, and there is scarcely need for argument in favor of this much needed improvement. The residents do not wish to be behind their neighbors. They do not relish the idea of the contents of cess pools soaking into their wells. A sewer should be put in and every drainage and closet connected with it.

### Prohibition in Berkeley

In 1909 the city of Berkeley became a dry city, that is to say, no alcoholic beverages could be sold here. This came as quite a shock to West Berkeley whose reputation for saloons came with the 1873 banning of liquor within two miles of the UC campus. You could only get a drink west of San Pablo Avenue. Consequently 28 saloons were said to be located here and two large breweries on San Pablo Avenue. However, a funny note appeared in the May 15, 1890 ADVOCATE, revealing that you really could get liquor closer to campus at speakeasies where you would ask for cold tea(whiskey) or sea foam (beer). One such place was opposite City Hall where you would ask for hard cider (whiskey) or goats milk (beer). A dry town? But, according to Frances Starn, Centennial Exhibit Coordinator, in 1909 liquor was banned city-wide and not legalized until 1939. Most of the saloons were closed up and the use of these buildings changed. Some became housing, others became grocery stores, others were demolished.

### The Changing Face of West Berkeley

In 1923 Berkeley became a "modern" city by adopting a city manager form of government and adopting the new concept of zoning which restricts residential uses to residential areas and factories to manufacturing areas. This represented a huge change for West Berkeley which was used to having all uses everywhere. The area west of 4th Street was zoned for factories, and the area between 4th and 6th Streets was to be light industrial. However, houses were located throughout these zones.

It wasn't until the 1930's that Frank Spenger decided to convert his fishing business into a restaurant business and opened Spenger's Fish Grotto on Fourth Street and challenged the anti-liquor laws.

At this time West Berkeley saw many changes with the destruction of its natural shoreline, the undergrounding of its creeks, the creation of Aquatic Park and the construction of the University Avenue overpass directly next to Strawberry Creek and the Shellmound. In addition, the Eastshore Highway was constructed establishing an auto connection with the new Bay Bridge and ensuring the demise of the ferry system. "Clean landfill" (garbage) was dumped into the tidelands and fashioned to form a "yacht harbor". A very tall water tower and machinery were installed at the shellmound by El Dorado Linseed Oil Co. (The tower is visible in several of the

attached photos.)

### Early Excavations

The earliest excavations of the West Berkeley mound were the scavengings of early West Berkeleyans. In 1877 the ADVOCATE reported that a large stone mortar, 3 feet in diameter, was just excavated at the West Berkeley Shellmound. Boyd, the expressman, brought it up to the University. In the March 23, 1878 ADVOCATE, it says, "Bristol St. (Hearst) between 2nd and 3rd is in very dangerous condition, caused by injudicious shellmound digging. Mr. Heywood has fenced in the dangerous part, leaving the part intended for side-walk purposes open to travel."

Later in 1903, it was reported that "Capt. Chittendon and his young friends will level the Indian mound on the bayfront of Berkeley next Saturday. Students of High School over 15 may attend."

The West Berkeley Shellmound was one of the first bay mounds to be studied by archeologists. In 1902, E.L. Furlong and John C. Merriam excavated and removed 265 artifacts. In 1904, Joseph Peterson worked at the northeast corner of the site. These early pioneer archeologists built up a body of data without interpretation. There never really had been a comprehensive and planned study of the Bay's shellmounds. This was perhaps because of historic racism. Scientists had a common notion of natives as sub-humans and greatly undersold the value of their place in history. Some archeologists wrote about them as "rude savages."

Archeologists were uncertain how old the mound really was and there was a minimal effort to investigate the site.

From September to December 1907, archeologist N.C. Nelson studied and numbered the 425 Bay area shellmounds. The Berkeley mound became #307. (He also noted native camps on the campus of UC Berkeley.) He discussed the erosion of many of the mounds by wave action and further destruction by local farmers. He stated that his count of 425 mounds may be too low and that not all existing mound deposits may have been accounted for.

Nelson described the mounds as having "a slightly bluish tinge, imparted by mussel shells, which distinguishes these places often at a considerable distance." Often the mounds were located near buckeye trees, or in our case, by willow trees.

Nelson stated:

"Certain definite physical conditions, such as the presence of fresh water,

timber, shelter from the wind, and easy access to the open seashore, appear to have controlled the location of most of the camps... Fresh water was probably one of the first essentials."

"Nearly all the mounds lie within 50 feet of the Bay waters... at least 10 extend below sea level about Berkeley and Richmond."

He went on to say that although the mounds "are made up of comparatively loose material, they do not appear to weather appreciably...the majority of the larger accumulations lie precisely in the places since found suitable for habitation by the modern invaders (1909), and therefore have to give way to the requirements of civilization."

Nelson's description of the mound-dwellers culture stated that they used fire from the start "used prepared vegetable foods," hunted and fished with seines (nets). He presumed they ate about 50 mussels each per day and lived in groups of about 100. They used body paint and buried their dead. He doubted that the earliest mound-dwellers made clothing out of skins or knew of basketry believing these skills were developed later in younger levels of the mound along with the making of pipes and decorative objects. He admitted to difficulty interpreting the poor accumulation of data recorded by 1909.

In his study of the West Berkeley Shellmound, Nelson made notes about the size and location of the mound from his own observations and from accounts of local residents. These notes indicate that Nelson understood the original shellmound could have been as long as 1,000 feet.

In 1924 the huge Emeryville Shellmound brought archeologists to the East Bay and some attention was paid to the West Berkeley Mound at that time. The field of archeology was growing in general and it was at this time that UC expanded its department.

In 1948, archeologist Richard K. Beardsley developed a theory disputing the belief that no significant cultural changes occurred during the long period of habitation of the Bay area shellmounds. Based on studies of the Bay mounds versus those found in the Sacramento Valley, he concludes that the Early Horizon period could be characterized as peacefully egalitarian with activities centered on hunting and gathering. During the Middle Horizon period there is evidence of warfare and changes in food preparation and gathering and burial techniques. During the Late Horizon period, the bow and small pointed arrow are found and "traits regarded as fundamental to the ethnographic Indian tribes of California are added..."

Following World War II, industrial buildings were growing up all around the old shellmound in West Berkeley with the growth of smokestack industry. In 1946 an

excavation was done next to the old Everding mill (see photo). And in 1950, the owner of the land along 2nd and Hearst, Mrs. Lincoln Maclise, and A.E. Troiel of Troiel Companies, Inc., gave permission for the UC archeologists to come and excavate the site prior to building another structure. About 14,000 cubic feet of the mound were examined and the entire work was recorded in detail.

It is important to note that Maclise and Troiel gave permission of their own volition. They did not have to be forced to it by environmental studies. They could see the intrinsic value in allowing the archeologists to study the mound. We are lucky to this day for the insight and generosity of these West Berkeley entrepreneurs.

All visible parts of the West Berkeley Shellmound are gone. All that remains is the oldest deepest part yet to be explored. Perhaps in the next few years with the construction planned for the Spenger's Parking Lot, we will once again have an opportunity to invite the native community and the archeologists to consider what is left of this ancient civilization before the next wave of construction at the site.

#### **15. Significance:**

The significance of Willow Grove Park/Lower Strawberry Creek is its place in the history of West Berkeley, the natural history of Berkeley, the native "pre-contact" period of history, the undergrounding of the creeks and the entrepreneurial history of Berkeley as explained above. In Sally B. Woodbridge's Survey of the West Berkeley Redevelopment area, both the site of the old Willow Grove Park and the grocery store/home of Johann Spenger are identified as significant to the history of Ocean View: "These buildings and sites date from about 1854 to the turn of the century, the period in which West Berkeley contributed most significantly to the development of the town of Berkeley."

The West Berkeley Shellmound is most highly significant to native descendants as a sacred native burial ground. Native descendents and the native community should be consulted at all stages of planning for this site, especially with the presence of human remains, whether in disturbed or at mound material.

Further significance of the Shellmound as a cultural resource lies in its age, the fact that it is the oldest and one of the largest mounds established around the Bay, that it represents an ancient culture, that it was built by the earliest humans in the area. Scientists at the July 25 Shellmound Conference seemed to agree on its archeological value. UC Professor Kent Lightfoot commented on the rapid advancement in excavation techniques and how critical it is to preserve mound remnants for future study with new hi-tech non-invasive methods currently being developed. Josh Collins of the San Francisco Estuary Institute suggests the possibility of several smaller mounds surrounding the identified mound as is the case with the Emeryville Shellmound.

Recognizing that a historical resource

According to archeologist Colin Busby, (see page 2, item #3 of this application), the site is eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources under Criterion 4 which states that a historical resource may be listed if it "has yielded or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history."

Furthermore, the Shellmound plays an important role in the history of the changing shoreline and the change in attitude toward the use of natural resources. The book BAYLANDS ECOSYSTEM HABITAT GOALS, published in 1999 by the U.S.EPA, claims that "the history of science and management of the baylands begins with the native peoples that lived near the baylands...the emerging picture of native land management may provide some guidance for managing the baylands in the future." The book goes on to cite a startling statistic: in 1800, there were 6,266 acres of grasslands, vernal pools, riparian forests and willow groves surrounding the Bay. Now there are 88 acres.

Native history itself has often been underplayed in the history education of our children, especially ancient native history. Every Berkeleyan should come to know of the city's very earliest beginnings in antiquity. This is a great opportunity to bring this information to public attention and to educate our children about this ancient culture, its roots in natural history, its connection with later native history and its connection to all of Berkeley's people.

Historic Value— National: State: x County: x City: x  
Neighborhood: x

Architectural Value— National: State: County: City:  
Neighborhood:

16. Is the property endangered? Yes Explain: Development plans are in the works for construction of a mall and possible 400 car parking garage on Spenger's parking lot atop possible remnants of the West Berkeley Shellmound, its site and that of Willow Grove Park and Lower Strawberry Creek.

17. Photograph(s) or copies of photographs and their Depository:

The following attached photos can be found in the Louis Stein Collection at the Berkeley Historical Society:

Heywood & Jacobs Lumber Wharf, 1867, view from end of wharf looking east toward hills.

Municipal Ferry Wharf and Heywood & Jacobs Lumber Wharf, undated,

view looking from shoreline west.

Southern Pacific Train Station at Delaware & 3rd looking west.

Aerial view of flatlands and original shoreline, ca. 1930.

West Berkeley Shellmound after 1946 excavation at Everding Starch Mill.

**From the Curtis Manning Collection:**

Aerial view of West Berkeley, ca.1950.—

**The following photos can be seen in THE WAY WE LIVED by Malcolm Margolin:**

Luiseno sweat-house

Native clothing and headpiece

Sample of native dwelling

Drawing of Ohlone Village from THE OHLONE WAY by Malcolm Margolin

**The following composite is from the collection of Archeological Mapping Specialists ([www.archymap.com](http://www.archymap.com)) and was produced by Christopher Dore:**

1910 Sketch map of the West Berkeley Shellmound (CA-Ala-307)  
from sketch in the Nelson report over 1980's aerial photo.

**The following contemporary photos are from the Stephanie Manning Collection:**

Shellmound Tour at Coyote Hills Regional Park in June 1999 and  
snapshots of the West Berkeley Mound site taken in October 1999.

**Maps**

Alameda Co. Assessor's Map 57, blocks 2101, 2104, 2105 at City of Berkeley Finance  
Dept. public records.

U.S. Geological Survey Topographic Map of Berkeley (section), 1899, repository: UC  
Berkeley Library Map Room.

"Map of The Ranchos of Vincente (sic) & Domingo Peralta," (section) filed Jan.21,  
1857. Alameda Co. Records, Book 17, page 12.

"Fig.2 Location of West Berkeley shellmound..." from "Differences in Radiocarbon

Age between Shell & Charcoal from a Holocene Shellmound in Northern California," by B. Lynn Ingram, Dept. of Geography, UC Berkeley, 1997.

Map of Berkeley Published by Carnall & Eyre, 1878, repository: UC Berkeley Library Map Room.

"Map of the San Francisco Bay Area, Past & Present" from "Baylands Ecosystem Habitat Goals," U.S.EPA, 1999. Currently available upon request

### 18. Bibliography:

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BAYLANDS ECOSYSTEM HABITAT GOALS: A Report of Habitat Recommendations," by the San Francisco Bay Area Westlands Ecosystem Goals Project, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, San Francisco/San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board, Oakland, 1999.

THE BERKELEY ADVOCATE, 1877-1896 issues including Supplements, Bancroft Library.

Berkeley City Directories, 1878-1899, Oakland History Room of the Oakland Public Library.

BERKELEY DAILY HERALD, July 26 and August 29, 1894 issues.

BERKELEY GAZETTE, July 3, Nov. 9, 1903 issues.

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Booth, Wm., "Bones Indicate Early Migrants Also Came by Sea", Washington Post, 9/15/99.

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Butler & Bowman, "Boundaries of Townships & School Districts," Steam Book & Job Printers, Oakland, 1878.

- DAILY EVENING ARGUS, March 6 & 8, 1876 issues.
- Ferrier, William Warren, BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA: The Story of The Evolution of a Hamlet into a City of Culture & Commerce, 1933.
- Ingram, B. Lynn, "Differences in Radiocarbon Age between Shell and Charcoal from a Holocene Shellmound in Northern California", UC Berkeley Dept. of Geology, 1/19/97.
- "Letter from the Hon. J. Ross Browne in Relation to the Proposed Town Site of Lowell Berkeley and the Value of Property and Growth of Population In and Around Oakland," Excelsior Press, San Francisco, 1870.
- "List of Manufacturing Establishments in Berkeley," compiled by the Berkeley Chamber of Commerce, Sept. 1929.
- Nelson, N.C., "Shellmounds of the San Francisco Bay Region," in UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PUBLICATIONS IN AMERICAN ARCHEOLOGY AND ETHNOLOGY, University of California at Berkeley, Vol.7, no.4, Dec. 1909.
- OAKLAND HOME JOURNAL & ALAMEDA COUNTY ADVERTISER, Sept. 20 & 27, Nov. 1 & 15, Dec. 20, 1873 issues.
- Pettitt, George A., BERKELEY: The Town & Gown of It, Howell North Books, 1973.
- Sanborn Insurance Maps, 1911 updated to 1929, Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association.
- Sher, Sandra, "The Native Legacy of Emeryville", Parts I & II, JOURNAL OF THE EMERYVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY, vol.V, no. 2 & 3, 1994.
- Spenger, Paul, an oral interview with Lesley Emmington and Stephanie Manning, BAHA, 6/78.
- Thompson & West, HISTORICAL ATLAS OF ALAMEDA COUNTY, 1878.
- Wallace, Wm.J. and Lathrap, Donald W., "West Berkeley (CA-Ala-307): A Culturally Stratified Shellmound on the East Shore of San Francisco Bay", UC Berkeley, Archaeological Research Facility, 1975.
- "West Berkeley Industrial Park BRA Project: Cultural Resources Survey Report submitted to the City of Berkeley Redevelopment Agency", 8/31/78.



WEST BERKELEY NEWS, 1894 issues, UC Bancroft Library.

**Special Consultations**

**During 6/99-10/99 with:**

- Sandra Sher, history writer and researcher, on shellmounds, editing
- Christopher Dore, archeologist, on location and dimensions of mound
- Richard Schwartz, history writer, on native/anglo first contact
- Josh Collins, Robin Grossinger and Elise Brewster, San Francisco Estuary Inst., mudflat, tidelands, original shoreline, EcoAtlas, native life
- Colin Busby, Allen Pastern, Andrew Galvan and Kent Lightfoot, archeologists on West Berkeley Shellmound
- Antony Kirk, historian, on Monarch/King-Keystone Oil Co.
- Curt Manning, photographer and co-founder of Berkeley Historical Society, original shoreline, course of creek, Willow Grove Park, etc.
- Jakki Kehl, Ohlone descendant, importance of mounds as burial grounds

**In 1978-80:**

- Louis L. Stein, leading Berkeley historian and photo collector, on West Berkeley history
- Gregory Glosser, who first told me about the mound while he was a graduate student at UCB Archeology Dept.

19. **Recorder:** Stephanie Manning, 2107 Fifth Street, Berkeley, CA 94710

**Special thanks is given to Sandra Sher and Christopher Dore for their tireless help with the technical work and to Barbara Gates for her undying encouragement and enthusiasm.**



Map of Tract B of the Berkeley Land and Town Improvement Association (B.L.T.I., Pg. 24) Scale: 1"=40'

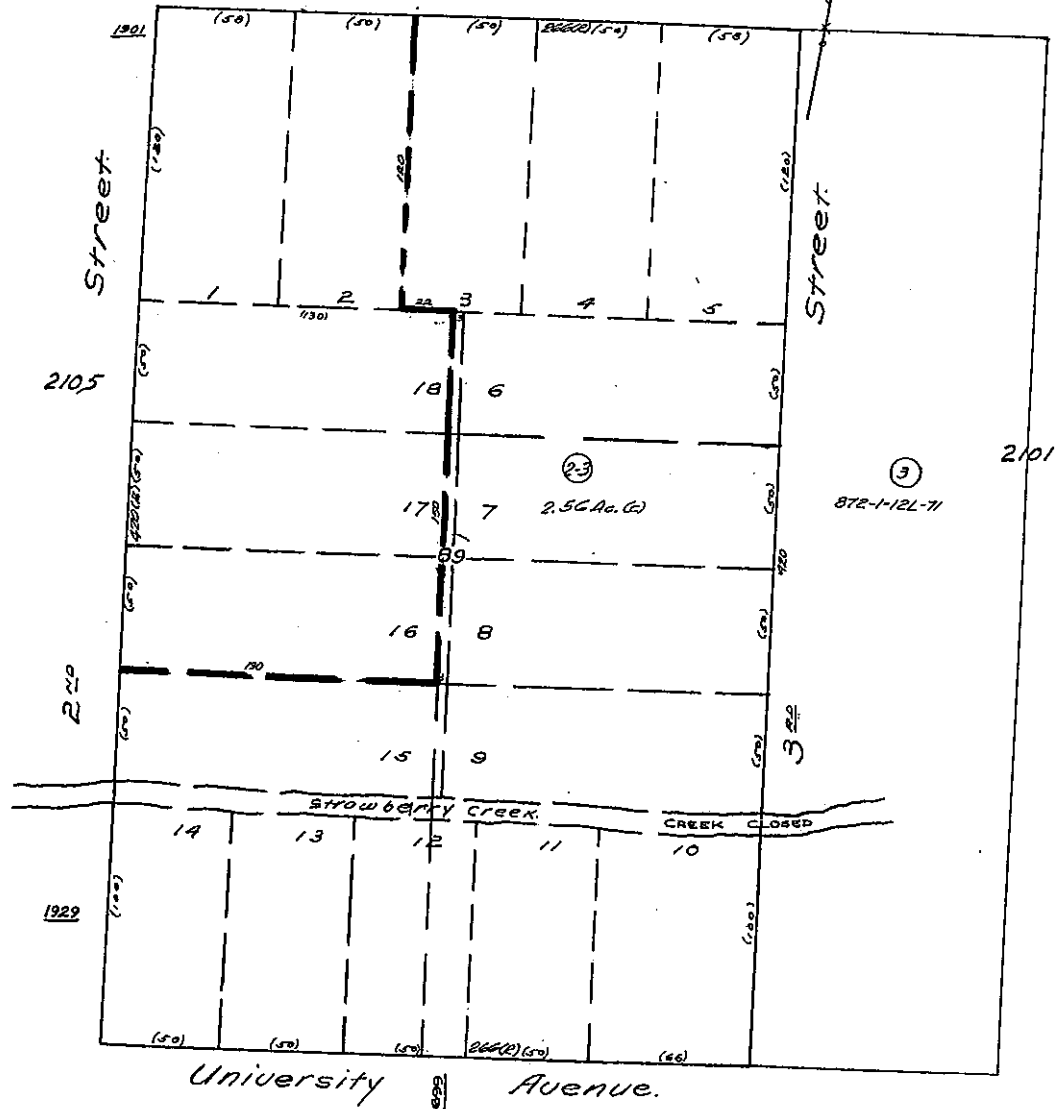
REV. 8-24-52 BY T.M.

2104

2103

Hearst

Avenue



University Avenue.

Booth 55  
1954

Ind. 3

ASSESSOR'S MAP 57

Code Area No. 13-004

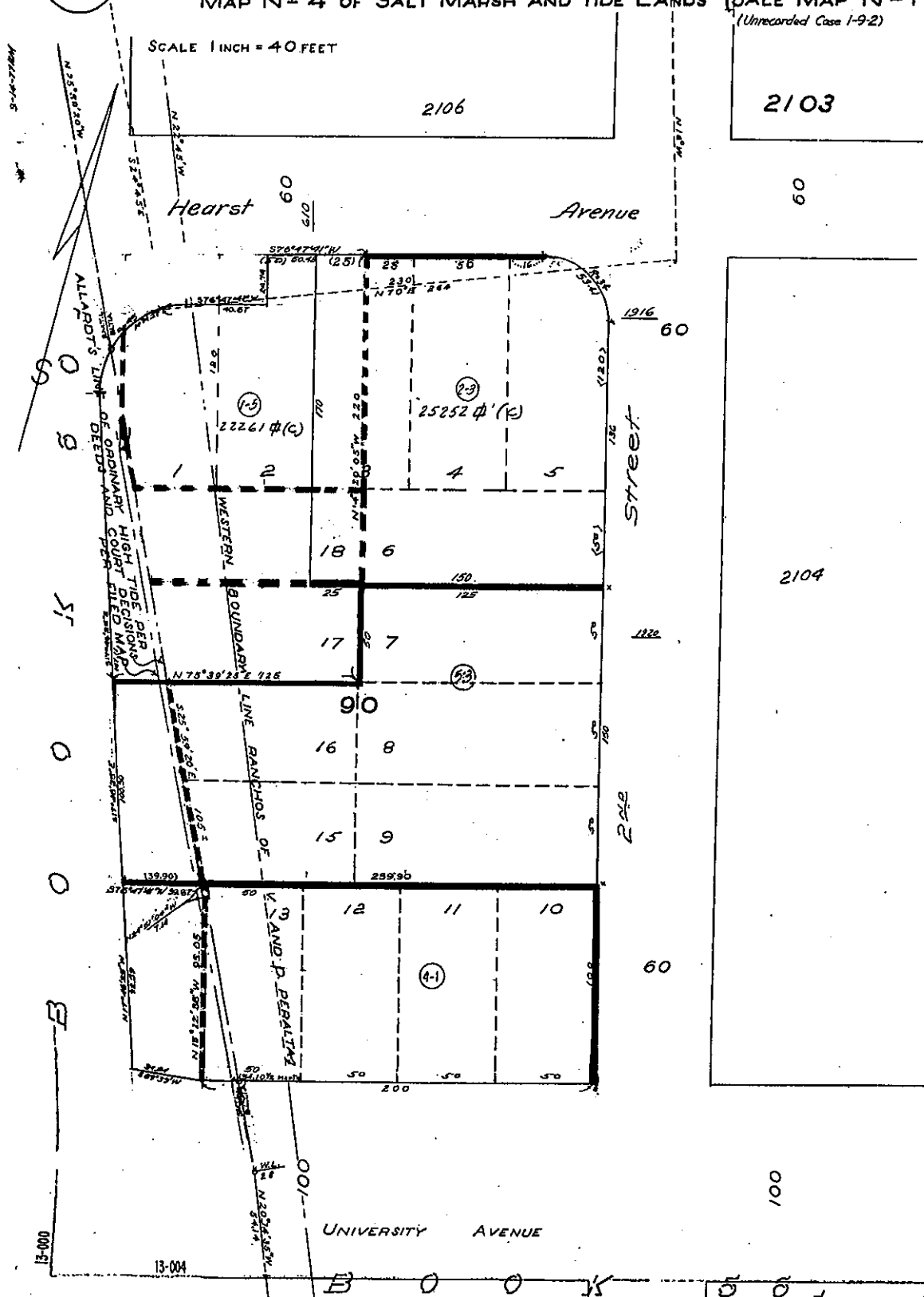
MAP OF TRACT B OF THE BERKELEY L.T.I. ASSOCIATION (Bk. 7, Pg. 24)

MAP N<sup>o</sup> 4 OF SALT MARSH AND TIDE LANDS (SALE MAP N<sup>o</sup> 11)

(Unrecorded Case 1-9-2)

2105

SCALE 1 INCH = 40 FEET



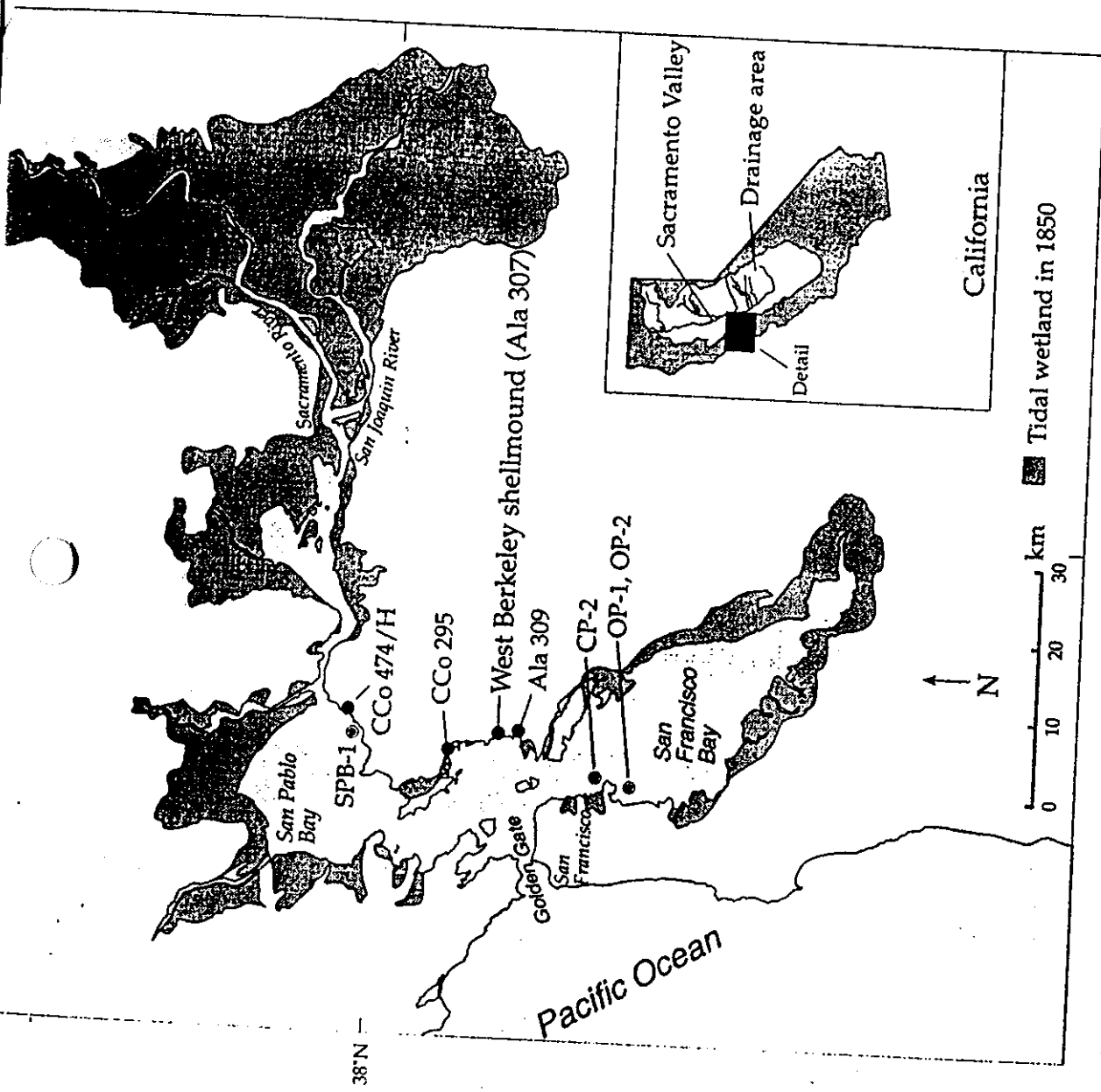


FIG. 2. Location of West Berkeley shellmound and three other shellmounds along the eastern shore of San Francisco Bay. Also shown are the location of three sediment cores taken from north and south San Francisco Bay (SPB-1, OP-1, OP-2, and CP-2).

Map from the 1997 B.Lynn Ingram report on the age of the mound. Note the West Berkeley Shellmound indicated in about the middle of the map.



City Planning Department  
Current Planning Division  
Landmarks Preservation Commission

## NOTICE OF DECISION

FOR MEETING OF: February 7, 2000

PROPERTY ADDRESS: Three blocks bounded by University Avenue, Hearst Avenue, I-880 and 4<sup>th</sup> Street, including: 620 Hearst Ave, 1916 2<sup>nd</sup> St, 1930 2<sup>nd</sup> St, 1920 2<sup>nd</sup> St, 642 Hearst St, 701 University Ave, 1900 4<sup>TH</sup> St and the northbound off-ramp (eastern side) of I-880, the public right-of-ways of 2<sup>nd</sup> St, 3<sup>rd</sup> St and 4<sup>th</sup> Street between Hearst and University Ave, the railroad track bed on 3<sup>rd</sup> St between Hearst Street and University Ave and the strip of land along 3<sup>rd</sup> Street tracks identified as parcel 057-2104-00300 (this is not public right-of-way and has no street address).

DESIGNATION NOTES: It is important to note that the designation does not include any current above ground buildings, railroad tracks, ties gravel, signal gates, barriers or structures. Designation does include the site itself and all items found subsurface including artifacts from the earliest native habitation, such as but not limited to native tools, ornaments, and human burials. In addition, it would include any Victorian era items, 20<sup>th</sup> century industrial era, including but not limited to artifacts found from the Pioneer Starch & Grist Mill, West Berkeley's first smokestack factory, and the Monarch (later Keystone) Oil Refinery (the Largest refinery of its time east of the Rockies) both of which were located in blocks currently used by Truitt & White Lumber Co. Designation would also include the Strawberry Creek creek bed, both the original course and the current course (both having historical importance ) and native or historic articles found beneath or around Spenger's parking lot (former Willow Grove Park).

ALSO KNOWN AS: The West Berkeley Shellmound

OWNERS OF PROPERTY: Frank Spenger, Timothy Hassler, White West Properties, Richard and Charlene DeVecchi, D.J.J.&W. Enterprises(Truitt & White), City of Berkeley, Cal-Trans, Union Pacific Railroad.

ACTION: Approval of Landmark designation

APPLICANT: Stephanie Manning

WHEREAS, the significance of Willow Grove Park/ Lower Strawberry Creek play in the history of West Berkeley the natural history of Berkeley, and the native "pre-contact" period of history and

WHEREAS, the West Berkeley Shellmound is most highly significant to native descendants as a sacred burial ground and,

WHEREAS, the Shellmound's cultural resource lies in its age, the fact that it is the oldest and one of the largest mounds established around the bay, that it represents ancient culture, that it was built by the earliest humans in the area and,

WHEREAS, it is recognized that this historical resource has yielded and is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history and,

WHEREAS, the Shellmound plays an important role in the history of the changing shoreline and the change in attitude towards the use of natural resources and,

WHEREAS, on December 6, 1999 a public hearing was opened, duly held and continued to January 3, 2000 and continued again to February 7, 2000 regarding the above property and the Landmarks Preservation Commission, being fully advised, voted to APPROVE the designation of the West Berkeley Shellmound as a City of Berkeley Landmark.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Landmarks Preservation Commission of the City of Berkeley that the decision is deemed final unless it is reversed, upon appeal, by the City Council of the City of Berkeley.

VOTE: 7-0-1

Aye: Edwards, Emmington, Kehlmann, Morse, Olson, O'Malley, Eichenfield


Nay:

Abstain: Dishnica

**DATE NOTICE MAILED: March 10, 2000. THE APPEAL PERIOD EXPIRES (15 DAYS) AT 5 PM: March 27, 2000. As the appeal expires on a Saturday, the deadline is extended to the next business day.**

**Appeal must be filed with City Clerk By This Date.**

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Margaret Kavanaugh-Lynch**  
Secretary, Landmarks Preservation Commission

cc: City Clerk  
Property Owners  
Redevelopment Agency

**LEGAL LIMITATIONS:**

If you object to this project or any city action or procedure relating to this project application, any lawsuit which you may later file may be limited to those issues raised by you or someone else in the Public Hearing on this project or in written communications presented at or prior to the Public Hearing. The time limit within which to commence any lawsuit or legal challenge related to this (these) application(s) is governed by Section 1094.6 of the Code of civil

Procedure, unless a shorter limitations period is specified by any other provision. Under Section 1094.6, any lawsuit or legal challenge to any quasi-administrative decision made by the City must be filed no later than the 90th day following the date on which such decision becomes final. Any lawsuit or legal challenge which is not filed within that 90-day period will be barred.

**COMMUNICATION ACCESS:**

To request a meeting agenda in large print, Braille, or on audio cassette, or to request a sign language interpreter for the meeting, call (510) 644-6480 (voice) or 644-6915 (TDD); at least FIVE working days notices will ensure availability.



1. Street Address: Three blocks bounded by University Ave., Hearst Ave.,  
I-880 and 4th Street  
County: Alameda City: Berkeley ZIP: 94710

2. Assessor's Parcel Number:

West side of 2nd St. between  
Hearst and University:

- 1. 620 Hearst Ave. 057-2105-00105
- 2. 1916 2nd St. 057-2105-00203
- 3. 1930 2nd St. 057-2105-00401
- 4. 1920 2nd St. 057-2105-00503  
(entire block)

East side of 2nd St. between  
Hearst and University (Truitt & White):

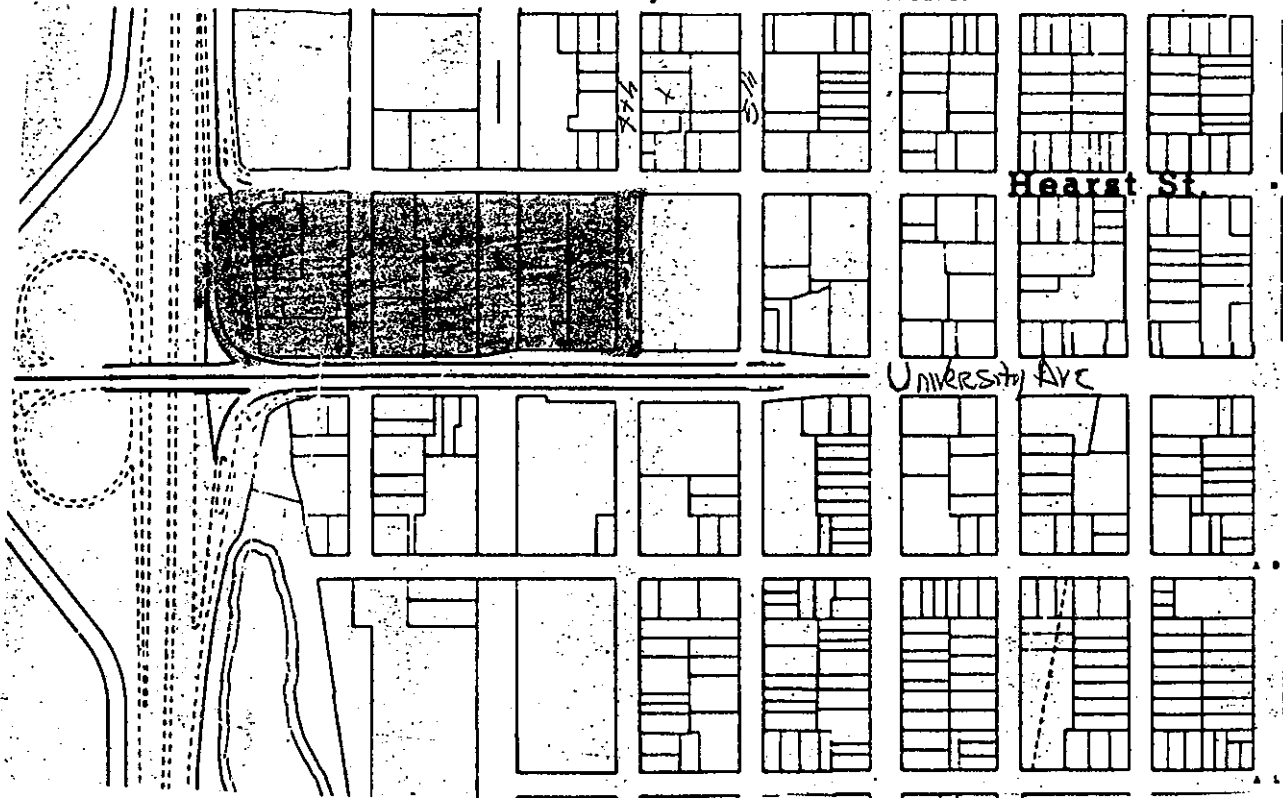
- 5. 642 Hearst Ave. 057-2104-00203
- 6. 3rd Street (strip of land along tracks) 057-2104-00300  
(entire block)

Spenger's Parking Lot:

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- 9. 3rd St. 057-2101-00600  
(entire block)

10. Northbound off-ramp I-880 (no parcel number)

In addition, this application includes:  
the northbound offramp on the eastern side of the Freeway and  
2nd Street, 3rd Street, the railroad trackbed on 3rd Street and  
4th Street between University Avenue and Hearst Ave.



RESOLUTION NO. 60,806-N.S.

DESIGNATING THE BERKELEY SHELLMOUND AS A CITY OF BERKELEY  
LANDMARK BY OPERATION OF LAW; AND DISMISSING THE APPEALS

WHEREAS, on December 6, 1999 the Landmarks Preservation Commission initiated the Berkeley Shellmound, being all lands, public and private, bounded by the southern edge of the Hearst Avenue right-of-way from the western edge of the east Frontage Road to the eastern edge of the Fourth Street right-of-way, south to the northern edge of the University Avenue right-of-way, west to the eastern edge of the northbound off-ramp from Interstate 80, and then north along the western edge of the east Frontage Road to the starting point, as a City of Berkeley Landmark; and

WHEREAS, on February 7, 2000, after conducting a public hearing, the Landmarks Preservation Commission, in light of all the evidence presented, designated the Berkeley Shellmound as a City of Berkeley Landmark based on the findings stated in the attached Notice of Decision; and

WHEREAS, the owners of the parcels at 620 Hearst Avenue and 1920 Second Street and the Berkeley City Manager filed appeals of the decision of the Landmarks Preservation Commission; and

WHEREAS, on July 18, 2000 the City Council opened a public hearing and, after hearing testimony from more than thirty speakers, voted to continue the hearing to September 19 to allow Staff to draft regulations that would protect the Shellmound while addressing concerns about process and criteria; and

WHEREAS, on September 19, 2000, the City Council, at Staff's recommendation, continued the public hearing to the meeting of October 17, 2000 to allow additional time for Staff to develop a regulatory approach and meet with the affected parties in an effort to resolve issues raised in the appeals; and

WHEREAS, Section 3.24.300C of the Berkeley Municipal Code (Landmarks Preservation Ordinance) requires the Council to act on an appeal of a Landmarks Preservation Commission decision within thirty days of the date the hearing is opened, which would have required Council action at the meeting of September 26, 2000.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the Berkeley Shellmound is designated as a City of Berkeley Landmark by operation of law and the appeals are dismissed; and that the attached Notice of Decision, Landmarks Preservation Commission, March 10, 2000 is incorporated by reference.

BE IT FURTHERED RESOLVED, that the City Clerk is hereby directed to notify the appellants and other parties to the appeal of this action and to advise them of their legal rights pursuant to the Code of Civil Procedure Section 1094.6 (b).

\*\*\*\*\*


The foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Berkeley City Council on October 17, 2000 by the following vote:

Ayes: Councilmembers Armstrong, Breland, Maio, Olds, Shirek, Spring, Worthington and Mayor Dean

Noes: None

Absent: Councilmember Woolley

Attest:   
Sherry M. Kelly, City Clerk

  
Shirley Dean, Mayor



City Planning Department  
Current Planning Division  
Landmarks Preservation Commission

## NOTICE OF DECISION

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Margaret Kavanaugh-Lynch  
Secretary, Landmarks Preservation Commission

cc: City Clerk  
Property Owners  
Redevelopment Agency

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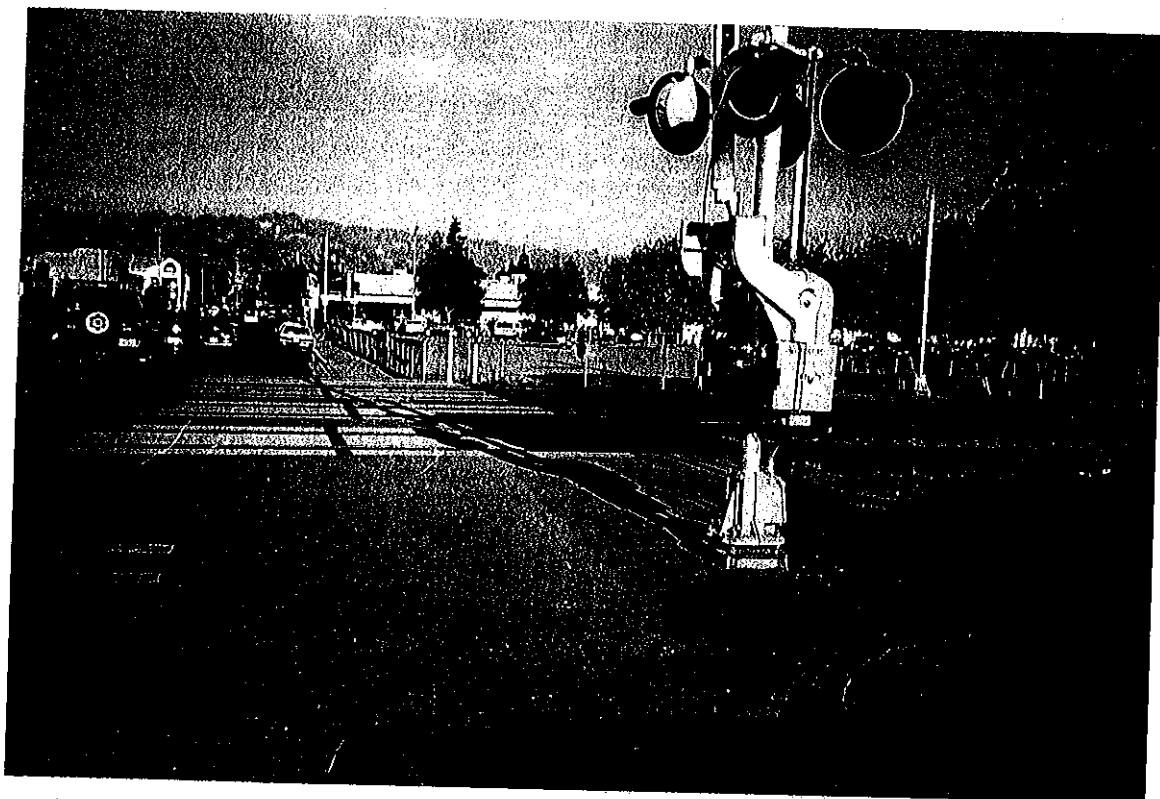


## Contemporary Views of the Site

### Cautionary Note:

It is almost impossible to envision the original shoreline, Strawberry Creek, the Ancient Native Shellmound and Willow Grove Park when viewing these contemporary photos. These photos are a startling reminder of how far we have drifted from Nature's earliest intentions for the area. They make the telling of the history and the designation of the site that much more important.

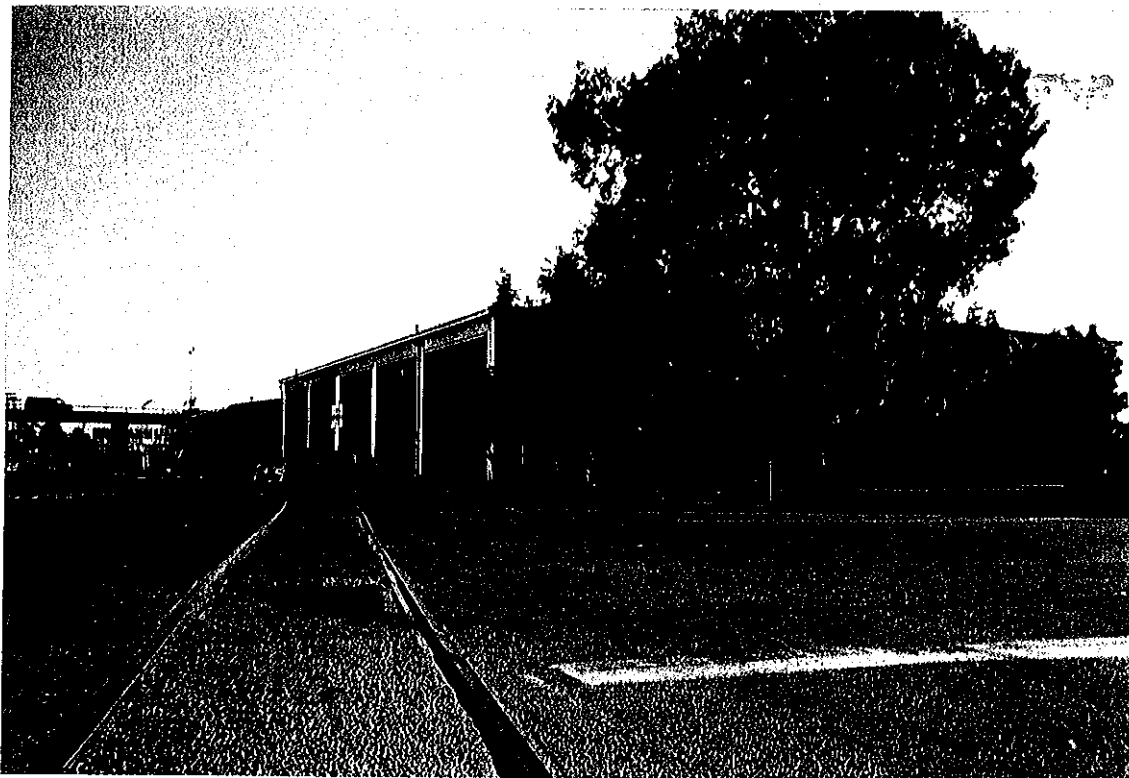




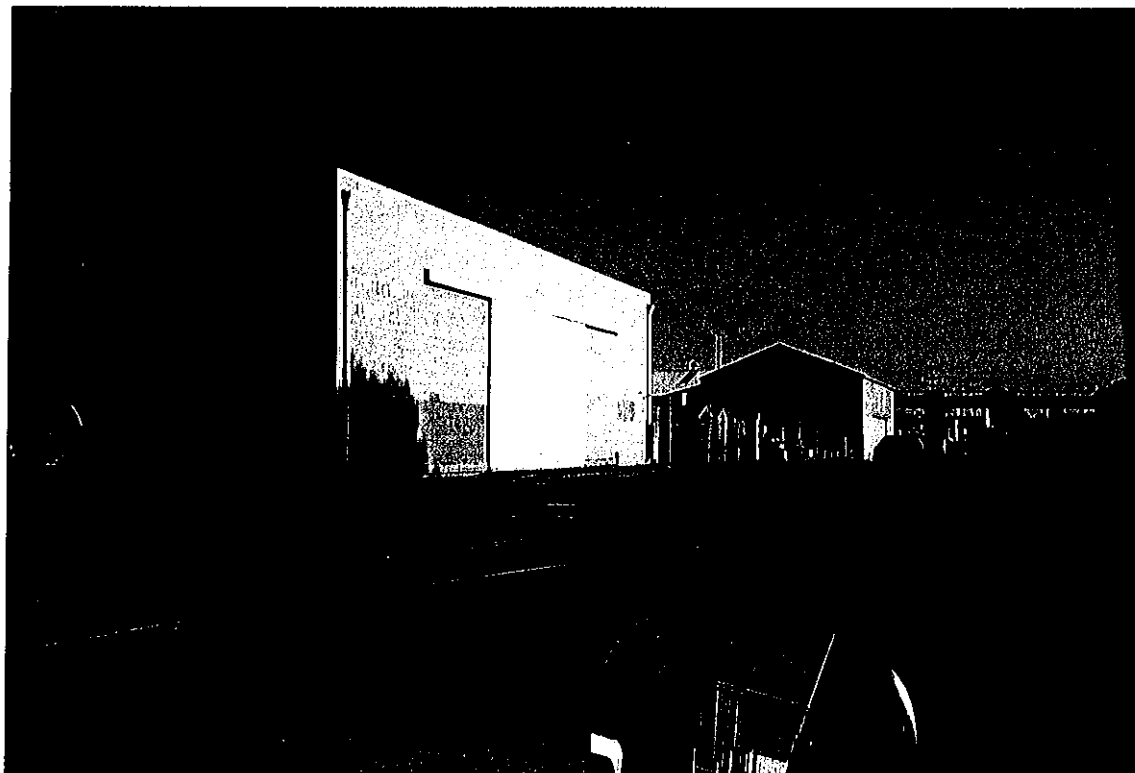
Looking East on Hearst Avenue at S.P. Tracks  
(Spenger's Parking Lot is on the right)



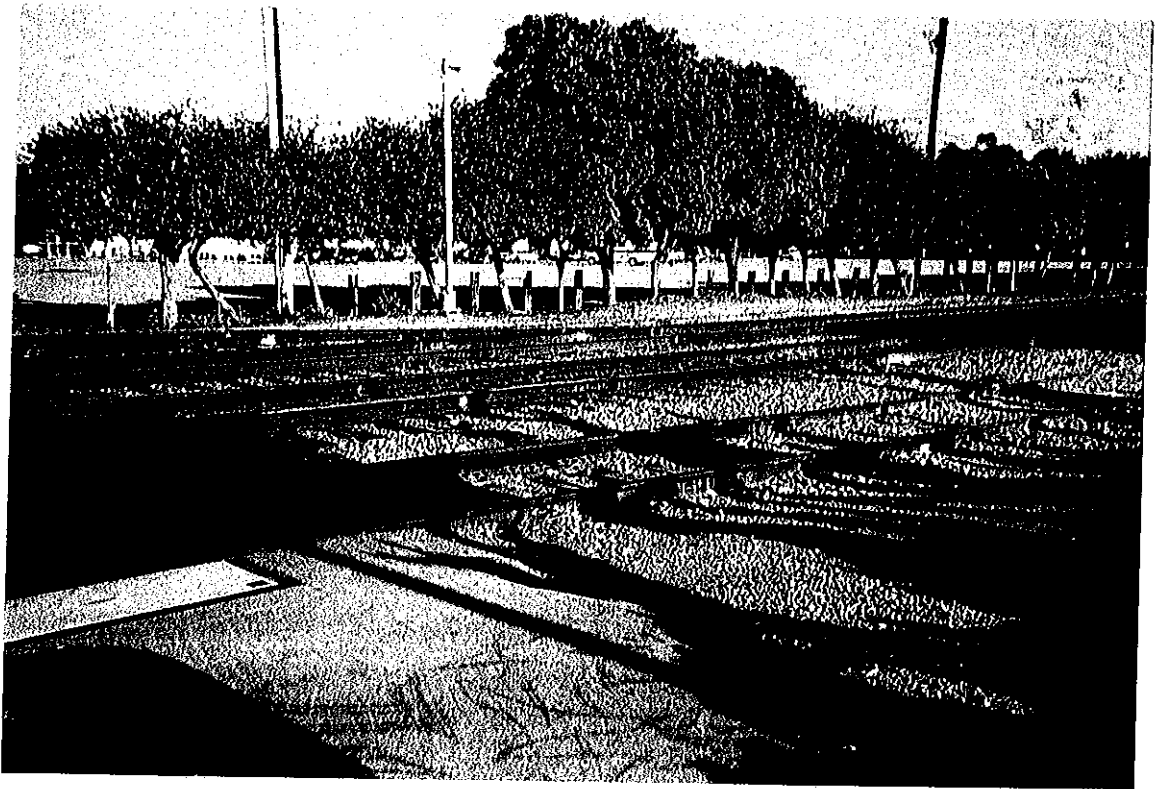
Looking West on Hearst Avenue at 2nd Street  
(spur track in foreground)



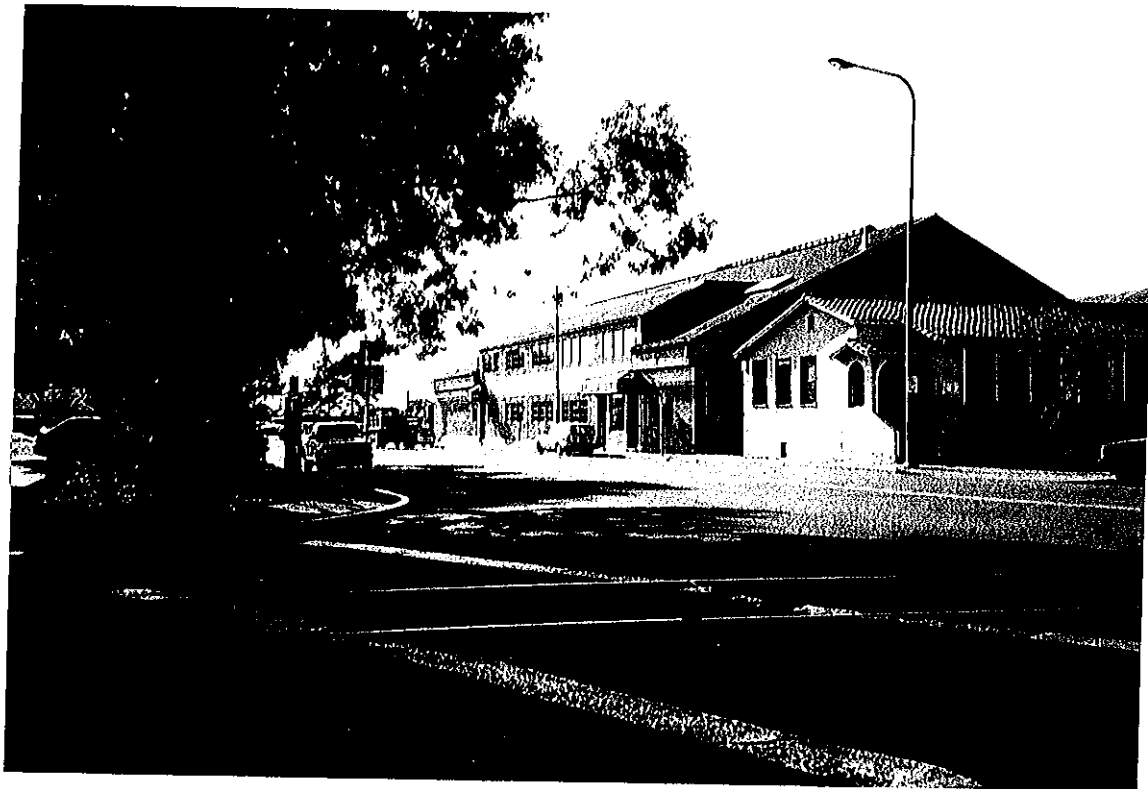
View of 620 Hearst from 2nd & Hearst looking to the southwest



View of Truitt & White from 2nd & Hearst looking to the ~~north~~ east  
south



View of Willow Grove Park site from west side of tracks

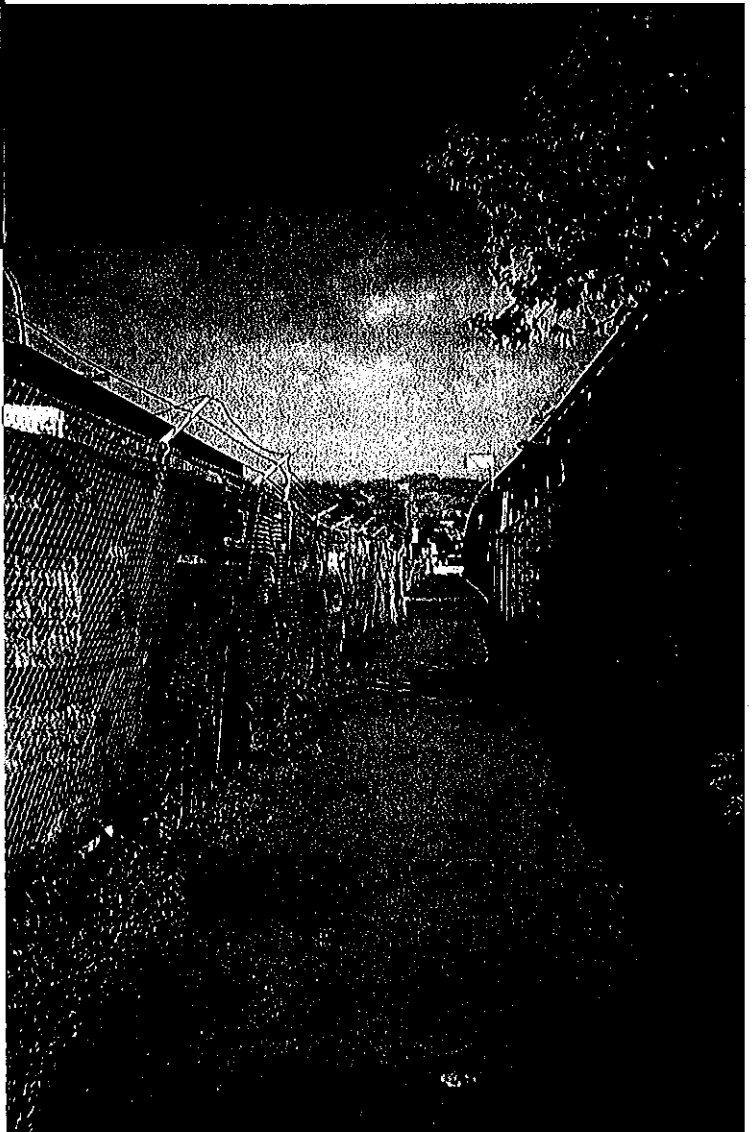


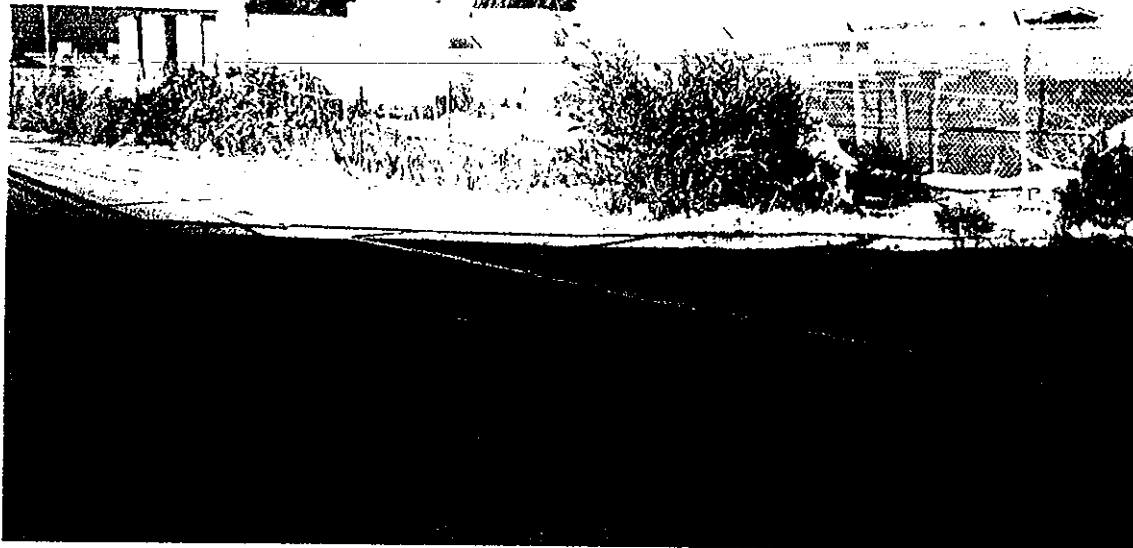
View of Import Tile Co. at 2nd & Hearst

Left-Looking east from 2nd and  
University towards Truitt & White

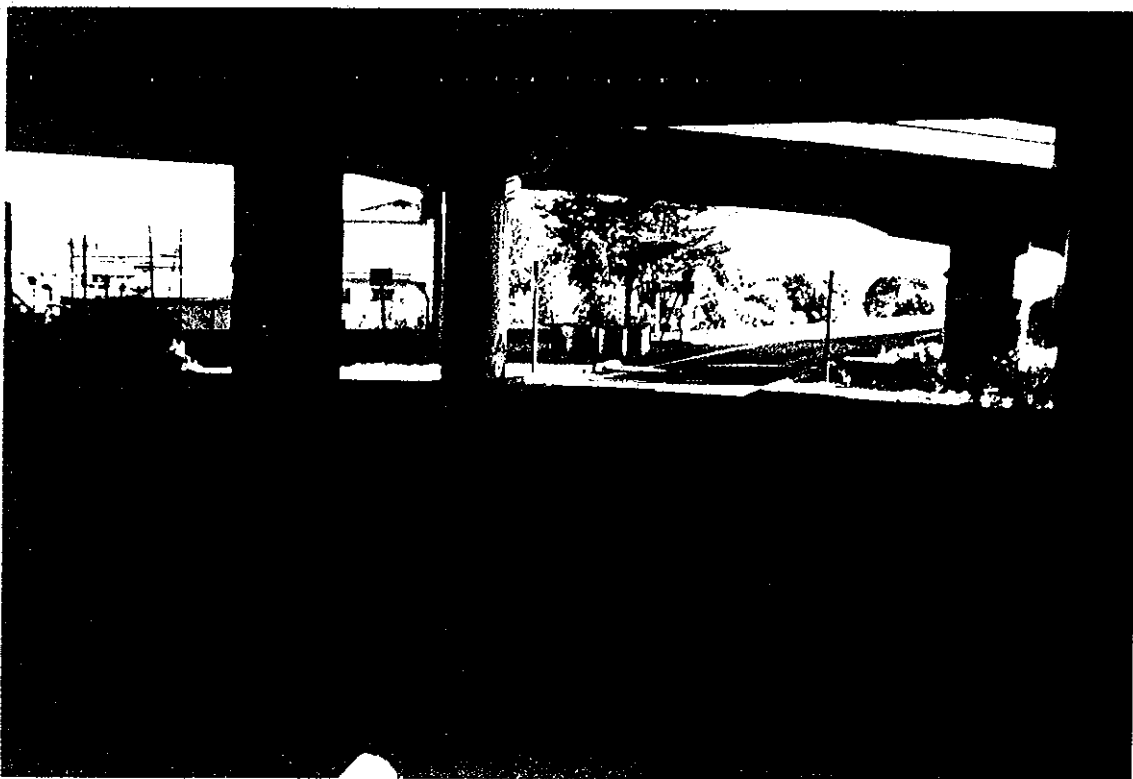


Right-view from University foot/bike path at  
original shoreline looking east





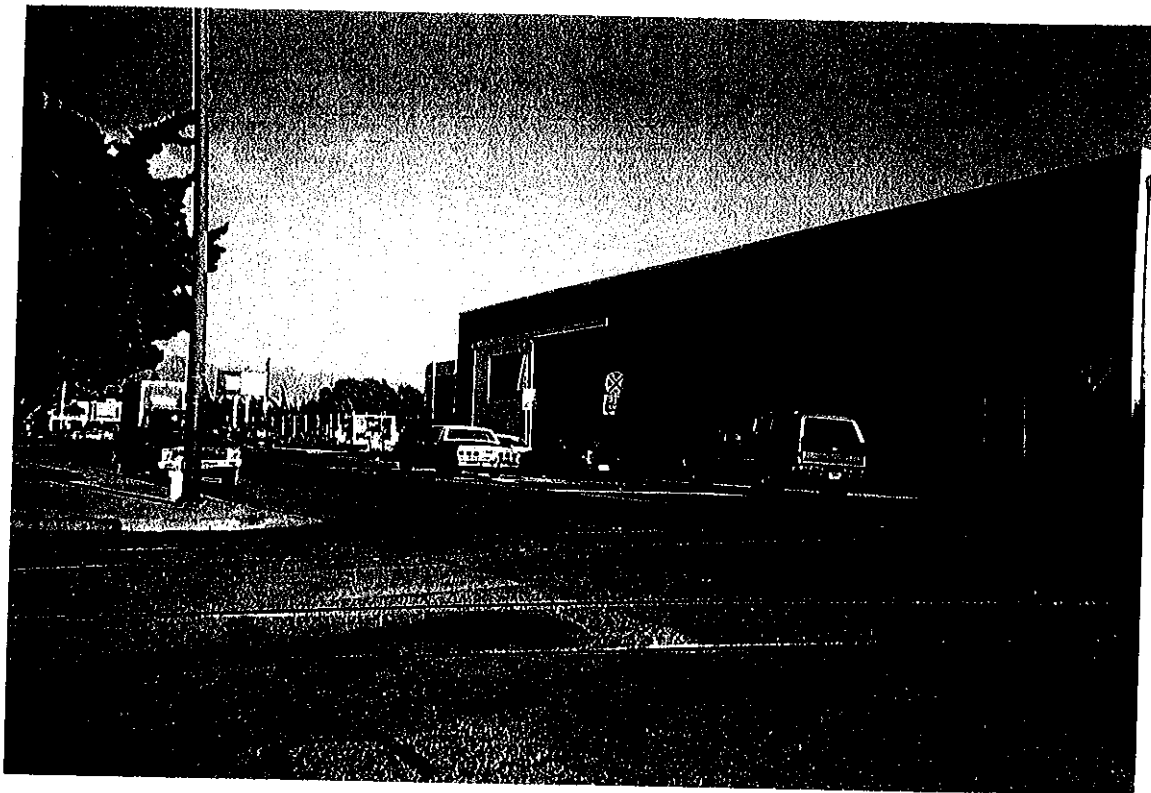
View of the original shoreline as it looks today (University Avenue and I-880 Offramp)



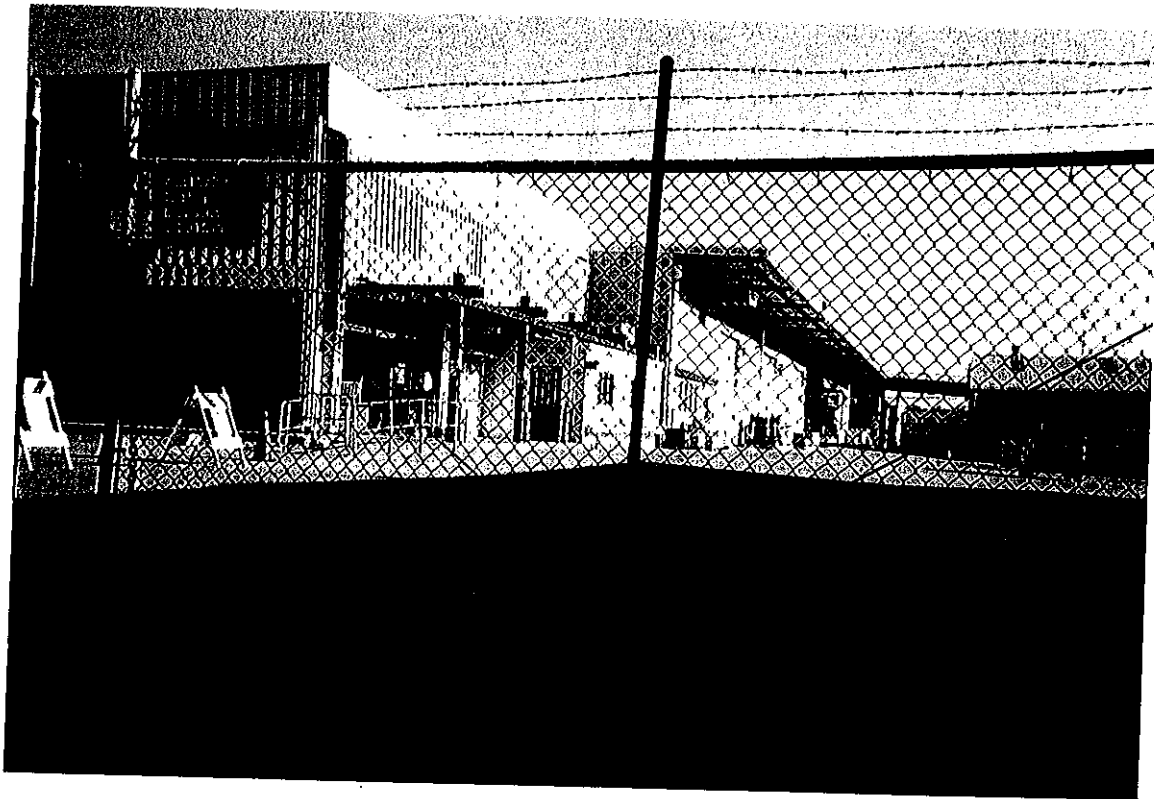
Northbound offramp as it crosses Strawberry Creek (underground) and comes down off of the highway onto the site of Berkeley's original shoreline



View looking north on 2nd Street from near University Avenue



View of 620 Hearst from 2nd & Hearst looking to the southwest



View of Truitt & White from 2nd & Hearst looking to the northeast

# NATIVE SHELLMOUNDS OF BERKELEY AND EMERYVILLE

*A conference on the archaeology, recent history,  
and future of the East Bay's oldest cultural resource—  
the Native Californian shellmounds.*



Courtesy of L. Jones collection

**DATE:**

Sunday, July 25, 1999

**PLACE:**

Galen Rowell's Mountain Light  
Photography Studio  
1466 66th Street, Emeryville

**TIME:**

10 am to 5 pm

**OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

Suggested donation: \$5  
*(No one turned away)*

**SPONSORED BY:**

Berkeley Architectural  
Heritage Association  
News for Native California  
University of California,  
Berkeley Archaeological Facility

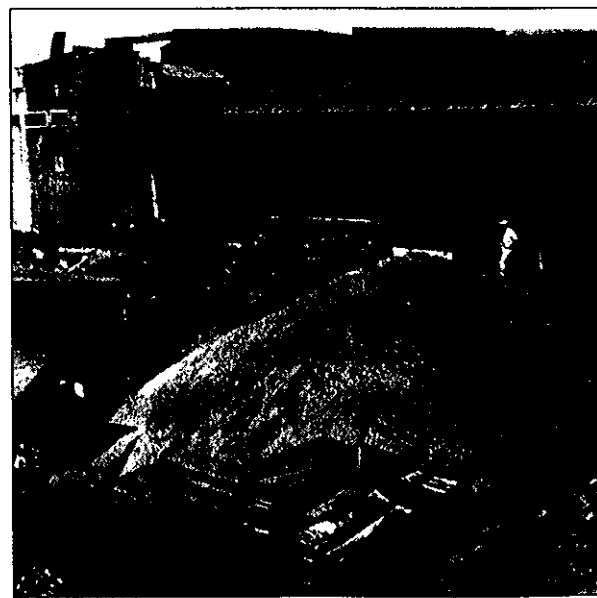
**MODERATOR:**

Malcolm Margolin,  
Publisher of Heyday Books and  
author of *The Ohlone Way*

**FOR MORE INFO, CALL:**

Stephanie Manning,  
Event Coordinator at  
(510) 841-8562 or 841-2242

Our community is home to two historically significant shellmound sites: the **Emeryville Mound** at the foot of Powell Street and the **West Berkeley Mound** at the foot of University Avenue. These mounds, although now greatly damaged, were once of immense size—nearly 30 feet deep and over 600 feet long. Built up from ashes, shells, animal bones, artifacts, and human remains, they remind us that the East Bay has been home to people for thousands of years. This conference, open to the general public, will explore their archaeological, scientific, historic, cultural, and spiritual values from a number of perspectives; a forum will follow on how these sites might be managed in the future.



West Berkeley Shellmound, 1925



## Panelists' biographies

**Malcolm Margolin** (Master of Ceremonies), Publisher of Heyday Books and author of *The Ohlone Way*, *The Way We Lived*, and *Native Ways: California Indian Stories and Memories*.

**Kent Lightfoot**, Professor of Anthropology at U.C. Berkeley.

**Ed Luby**, Associate Archaeologist at the Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum of Anthropology.

**John Holson**, Archaeologist and principal investigator of Pacific Legacy.

**Peter Schweikhardt**, Doctoral candidate in Geography at U.C. Berkeley.

**Josh Collins**, Landscape Ecologist, San Francisco Estuary Institute.

**Randy Milliken**, Archaeologist and Anthropologist with Far Western Anthropological Research Group, and author of *Time of Little Choice: The Disintegration of Tribal Culture in the San Francisco Bay Area*.

**Charles Wollenberg**, Professor of History at Vista College.

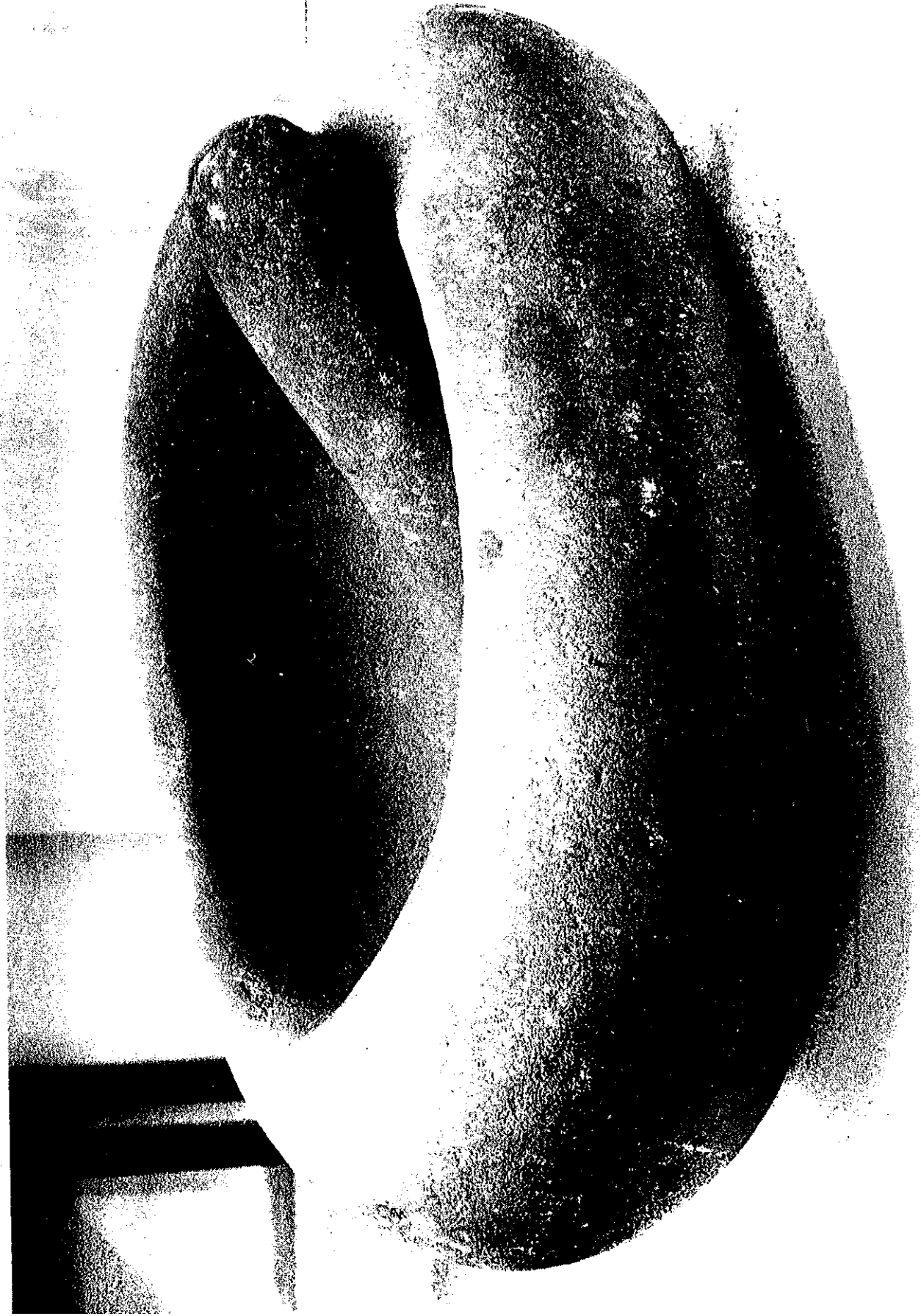
**Sandra Sher**, Emeryville Historical Society and author of *Native Legacy of Emeryville*.

**Larry Myers**, Native American Heritage Commission.





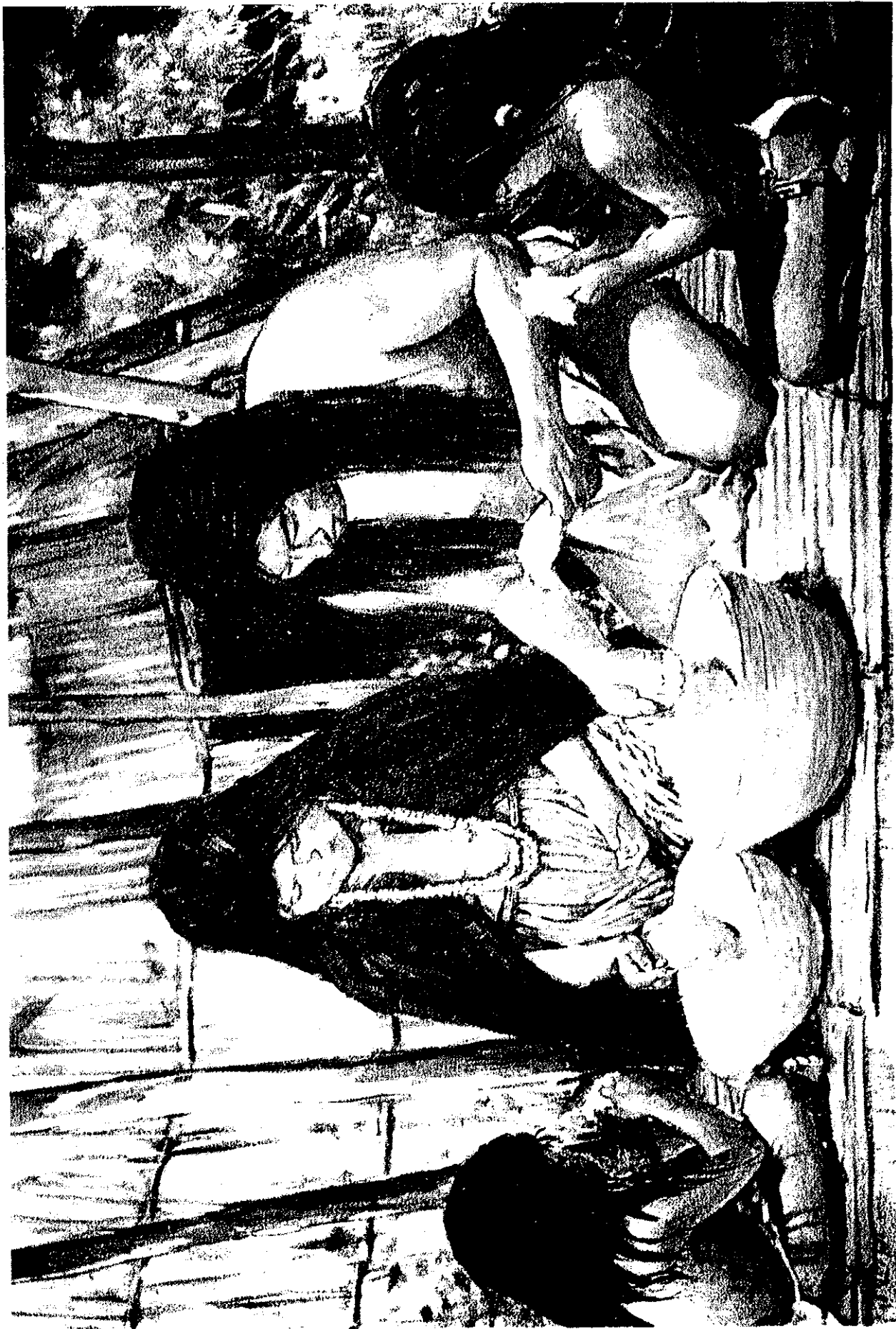
sample of a native dwelling from THE WAY WE LIVED  
by M.Margolin



Mortar and pestle from an Alameda mound, 21 inches outside diameter. Emeryville shellmound mortars tended to be 20 inches or smaller, and more straight-edged. Nonetheless, mortar shown here similar to one recovered by Max Uhle, at Emeryville mound, 1902. (Photo by S. Sher, with permission, at Alameda Historical Society Museum)

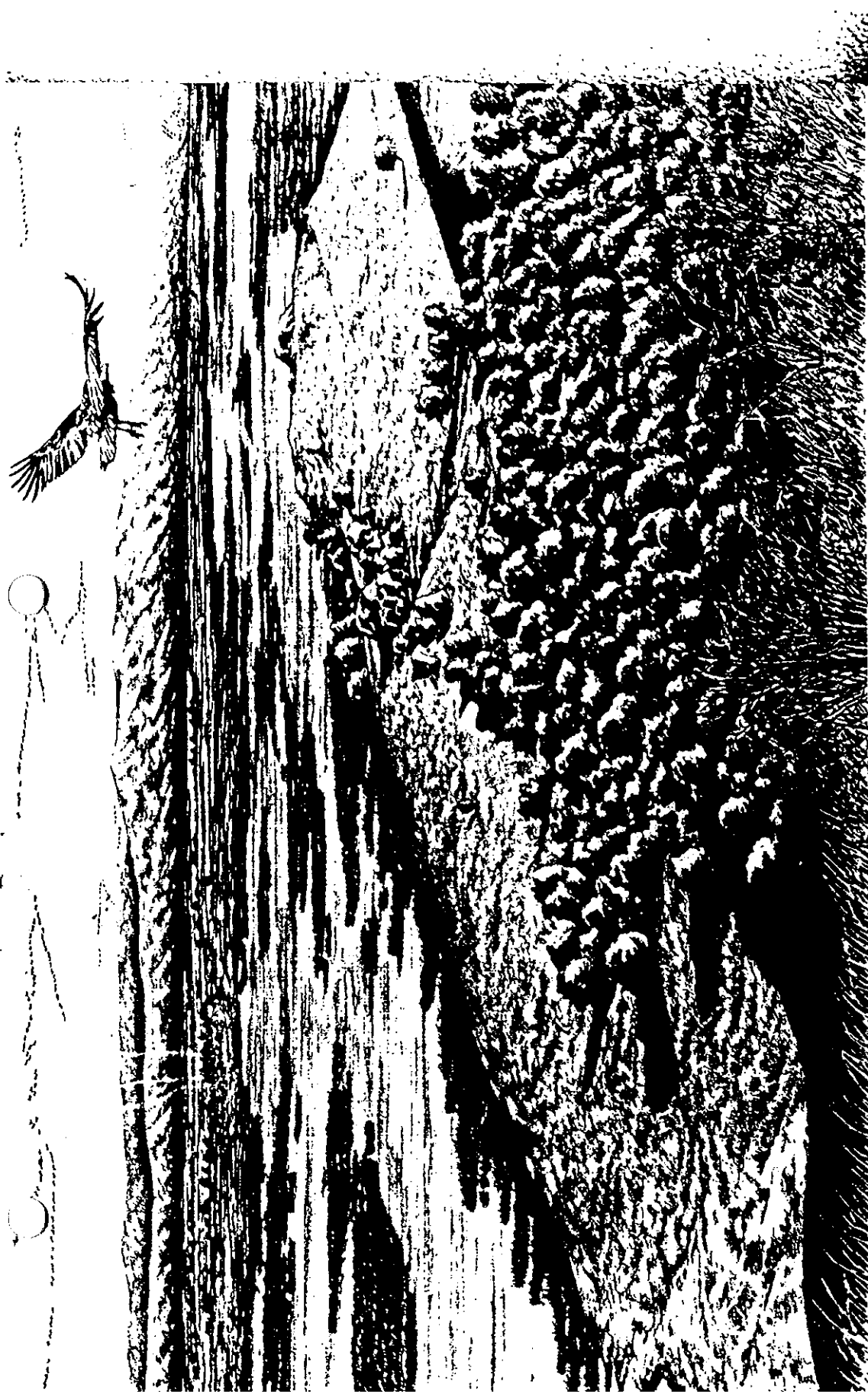


Two abalone pendants, similar to certain specimens found in Emeryville Shellmound, recovered from an Alameda shellmound. Notched pendant approx. 2-1/2 inches in diameter. (Photo by S.Sher, with permission at Alameda Historical Society Museum.)





Portion of mural showing deer and native man, with deer antler headpiece, hunting. (Mural by John Xu, Coyote Hills Regional Park Visitor Center)



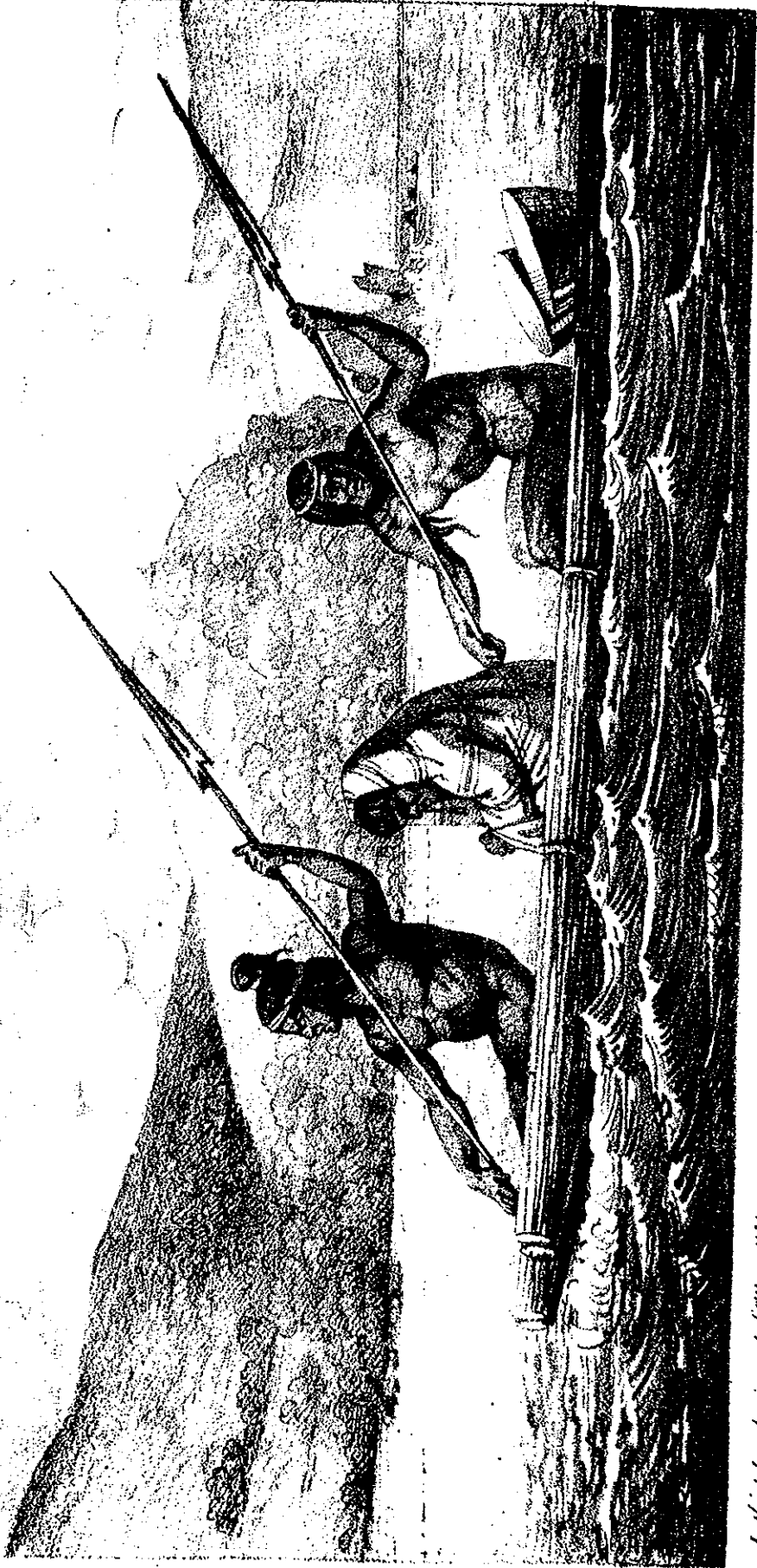
## IV.

Before the coming of the Indian population anywhere in the coastal area between Point Belvedere and Point San Pedro belonged to about forty different chiefdoms. Each language had an average size of a group (or *tribelet*, a

That so many independent languages could be packed into the European mind. The Spanish people of the coast. This was settlers who mispronounced: In this way the Indians of the amalgamated into a single Costanoan. But the name was of whom had a name for his Bay Area Indians dislike the be called *Ohlonas*, even though have been the name of a perhaps it was a Miwok with Ohlone has a pleasing sound consequently that is the name

But like Costanoan, Ohlone or Ohlone tribe in the sense of small Bay Area tribelet would by bonds of trade and marriage larger tribal organization, or tribelet who lived near present they were in any way allied Oakland—and indeed the two





*Lith. de l'anglais par de l'Albany N.Y.*

*Bateau du port de S.<sup>n</sup> Francisco.*

*del. par. V. Allen d'après Corris.*

"Boat of the Port of San Francisco," lithography by Louis (Ludovik) Choriz, from his painting, 1816. (San Francisco Mission visit)



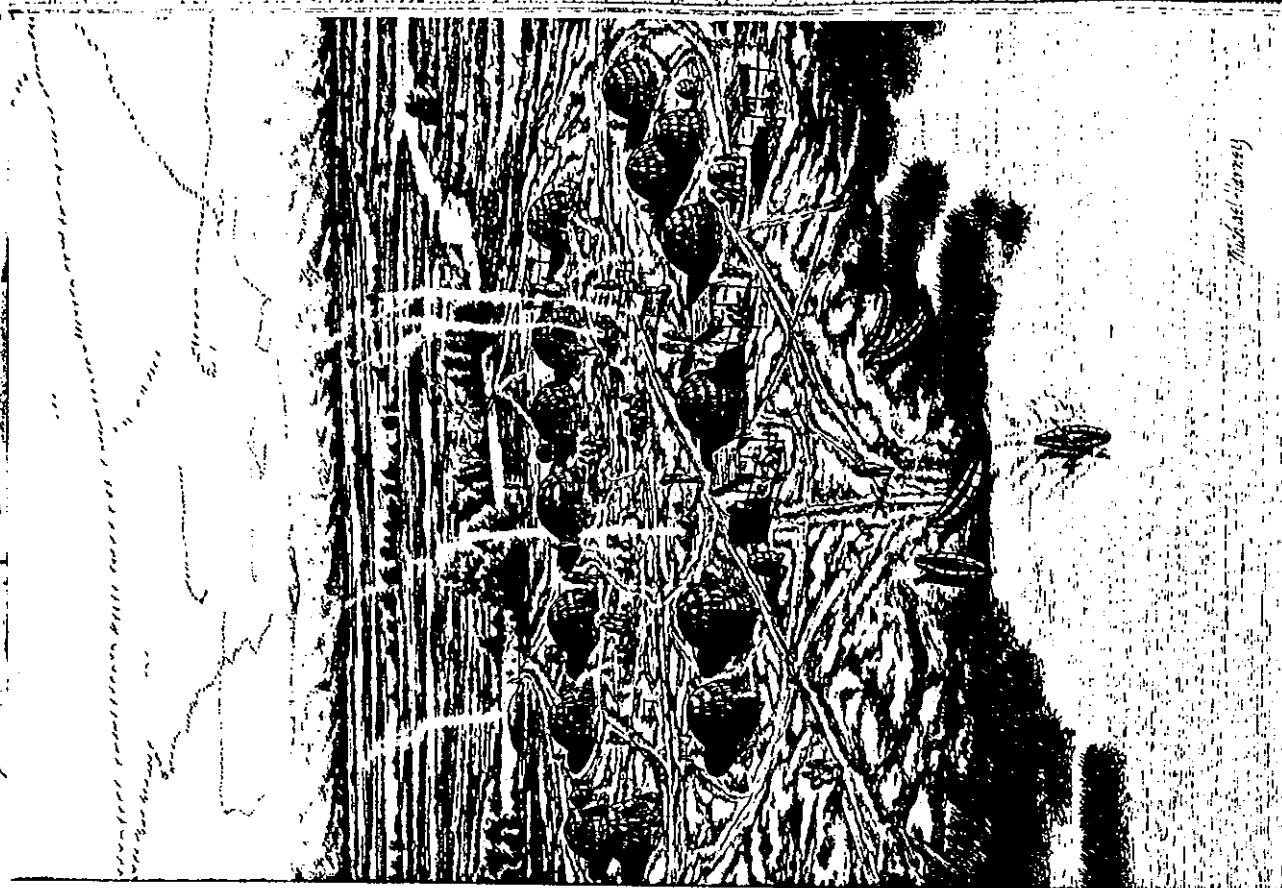
sample of a sweat-house

from THE WAY WE LIVED by M.Margolin

ABOVE: Luiseno sweat-house. *Courtesy of  
the Calif. Historical Society.*

from THE OHLONE WAY by Malcolm Margolin

5/4/74



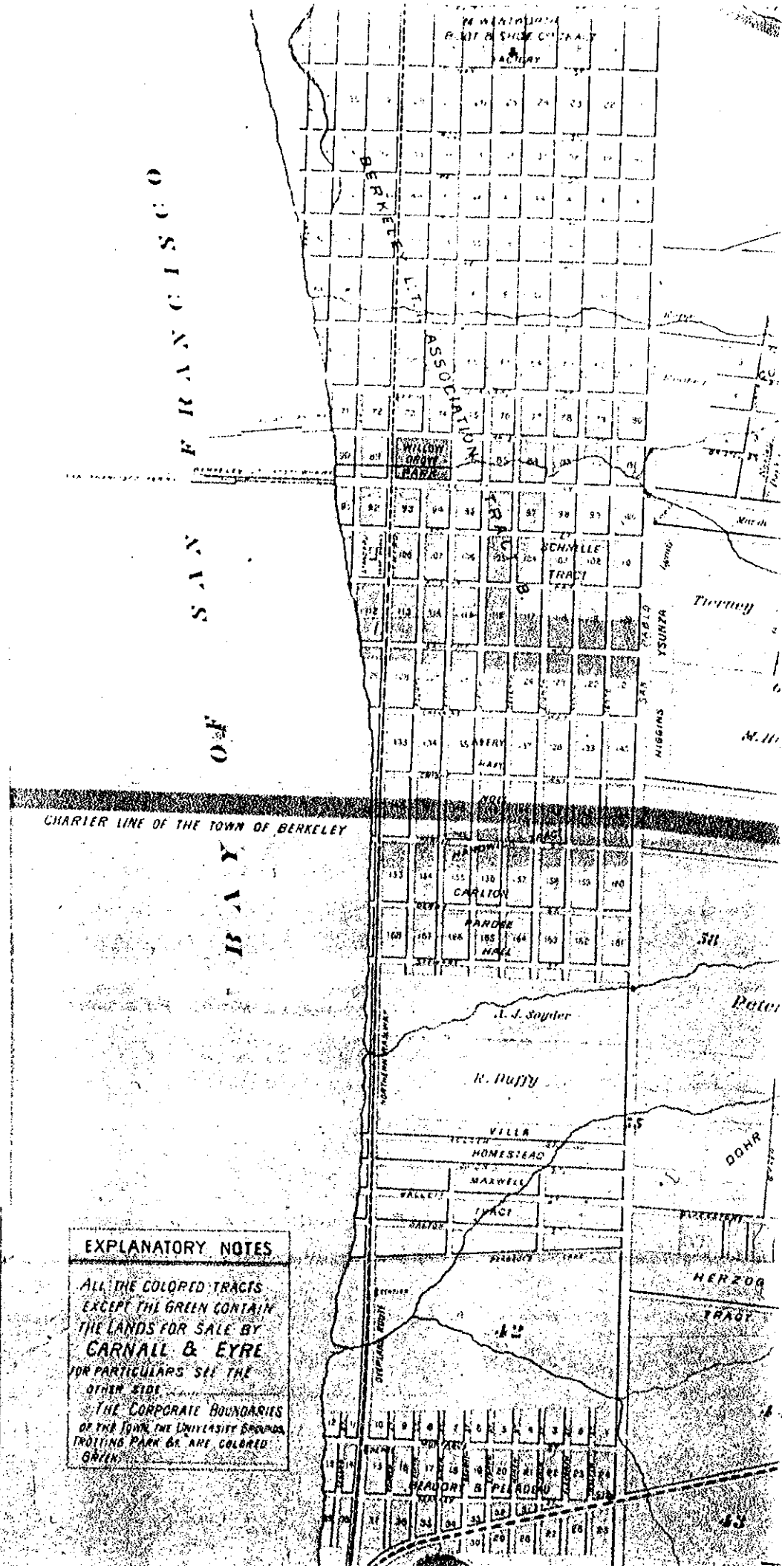
Michael Harnsey

from THE WAY WE LIVED by Malcolm Margolin





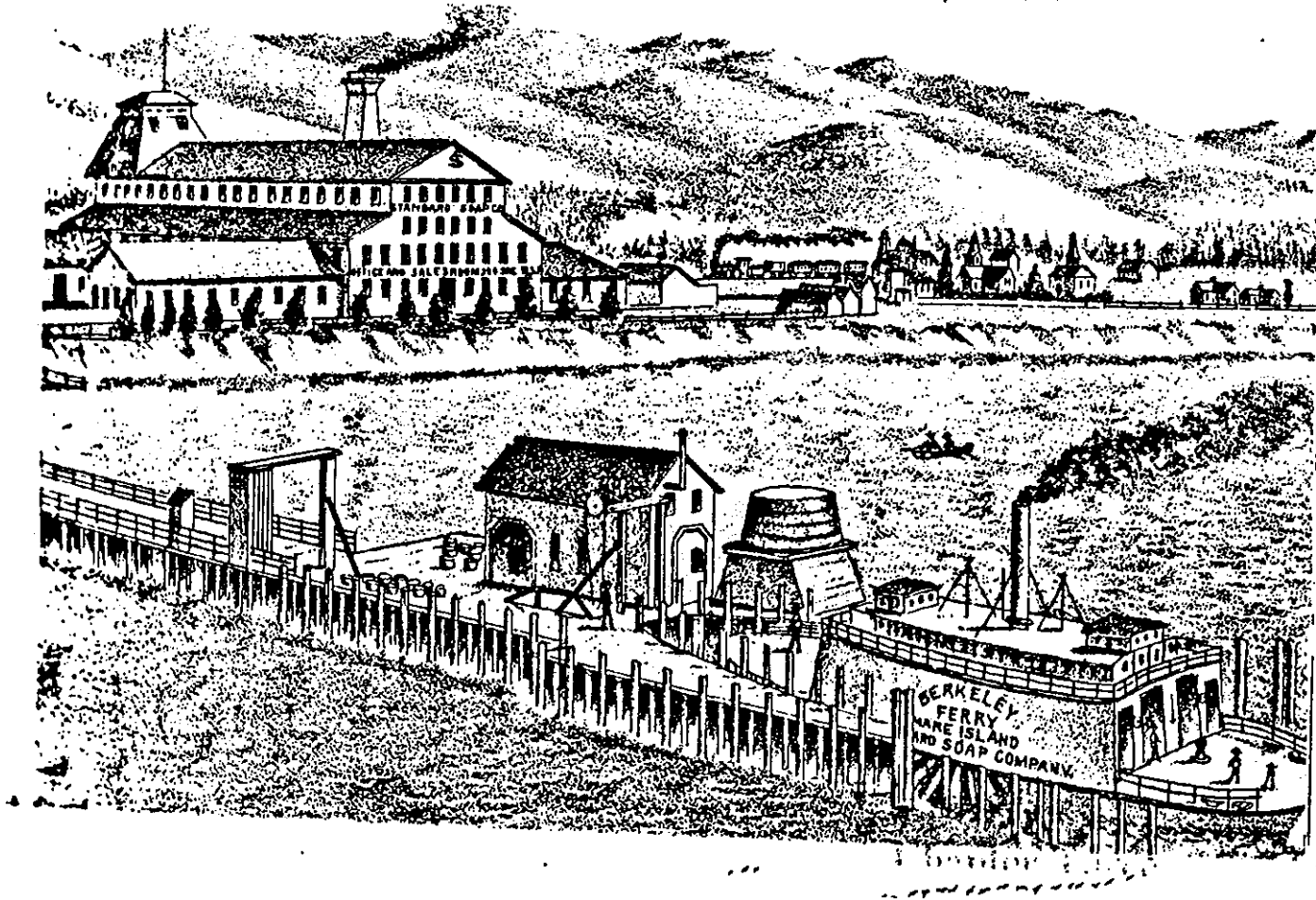
1878 Map of Berkeley published by Carnall & Eyre, dealers in Berkeley Real Estate. Notice Willow Grove Park along tracks and pier.



**EXPLANATORY NOTES**

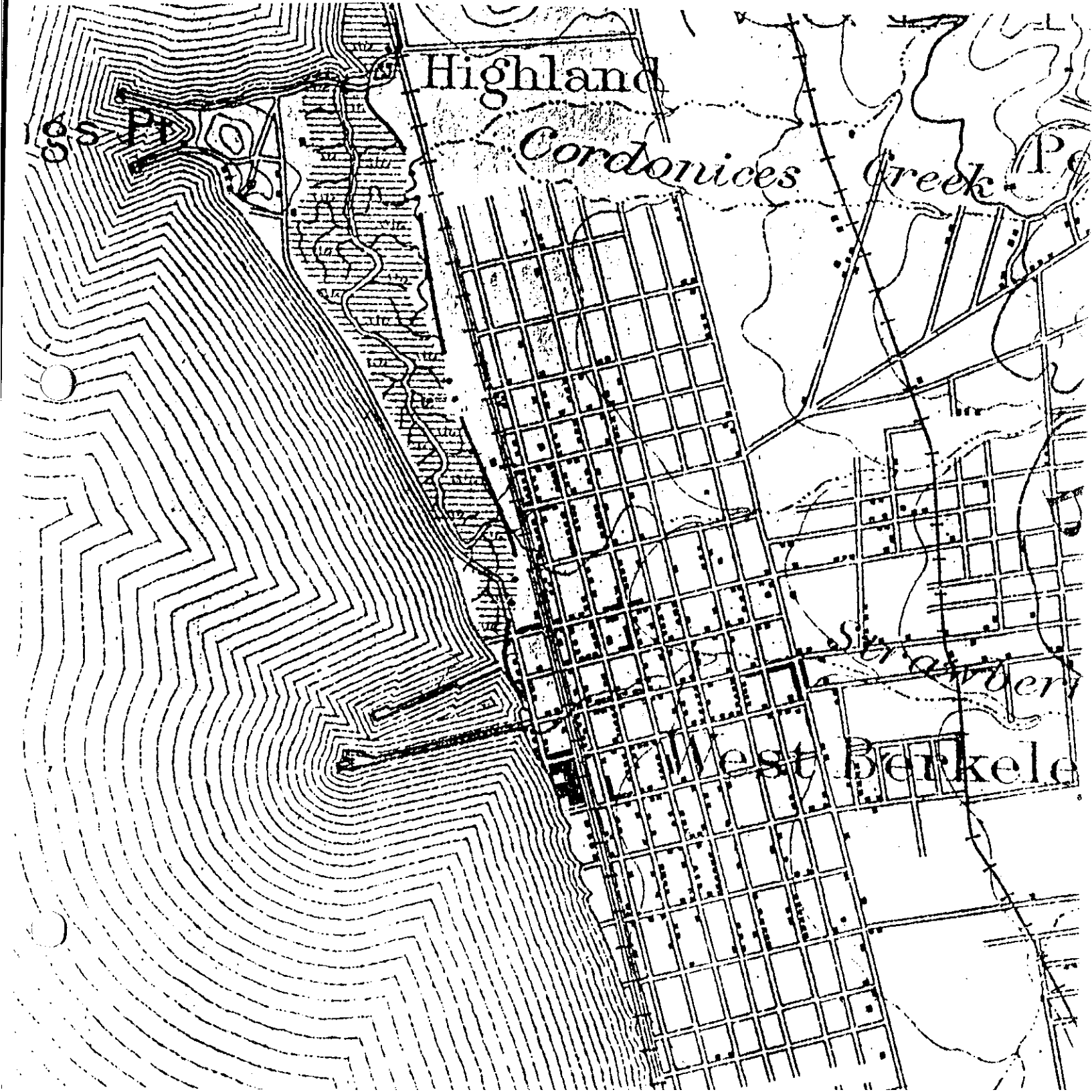
ALL THE COLORED TRACTS EXCEPT THE GREEN CONTAIN THE LANDS FOR SALE BY CARNALL & EYRE FOR PARTICULARS SEE THE OTHER SIDE.  
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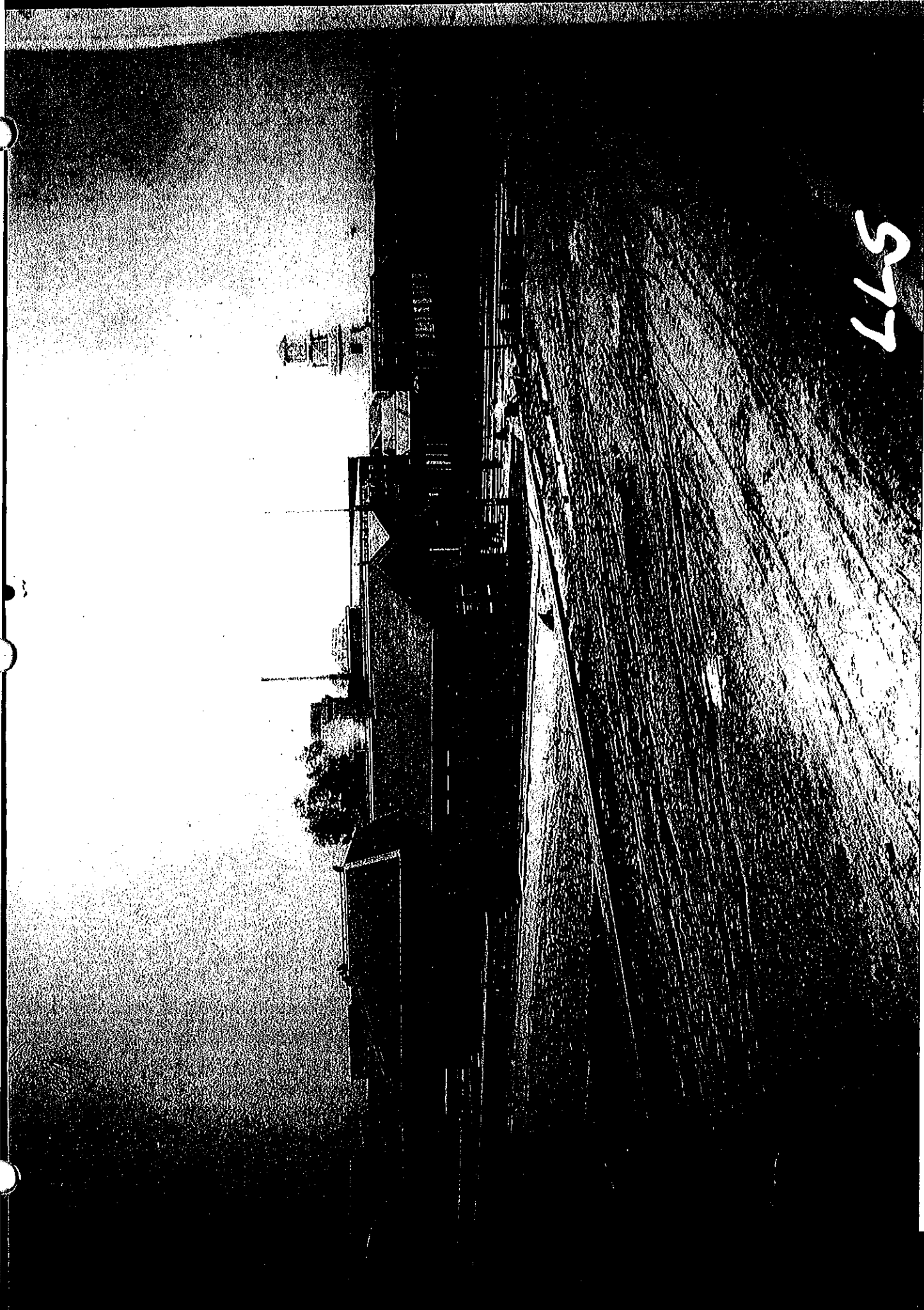
*The Standard Soap Company, Ocean View's second major industry, which arrived in 1874, helped to start the first Berkeley ferry, and had its name on the side paddle box.*



1899 U.S.G.S. Topographical Map. The little dots are buildings, however not all buildings present are represented due to lack of space. Note the two piers. The northern pier is the Heywood and Jacobs Lumber Wharf, originally built by Capt. Jacobs in 1853. The southern pier is the Ferry Wharf built in 1875 by land developers. The dark block along the bayshore is the huge Standard Soap Works built in 1875. It changed hands over the years and eventually became Colgate Polmalive Peet and burned to the ground.

Note the course of Strawberry Creek. It crosses Spenger's parking lot, formerly Willow Grove Park, north of University. At the 3rd Street tracks, it crosses to the south of University Avenue and exits into the Bay just south of the Ferry Pier. Our true first settlers made their home encampment presumably on the north bank of Strawberry Creek ca. 3,700 B.C.

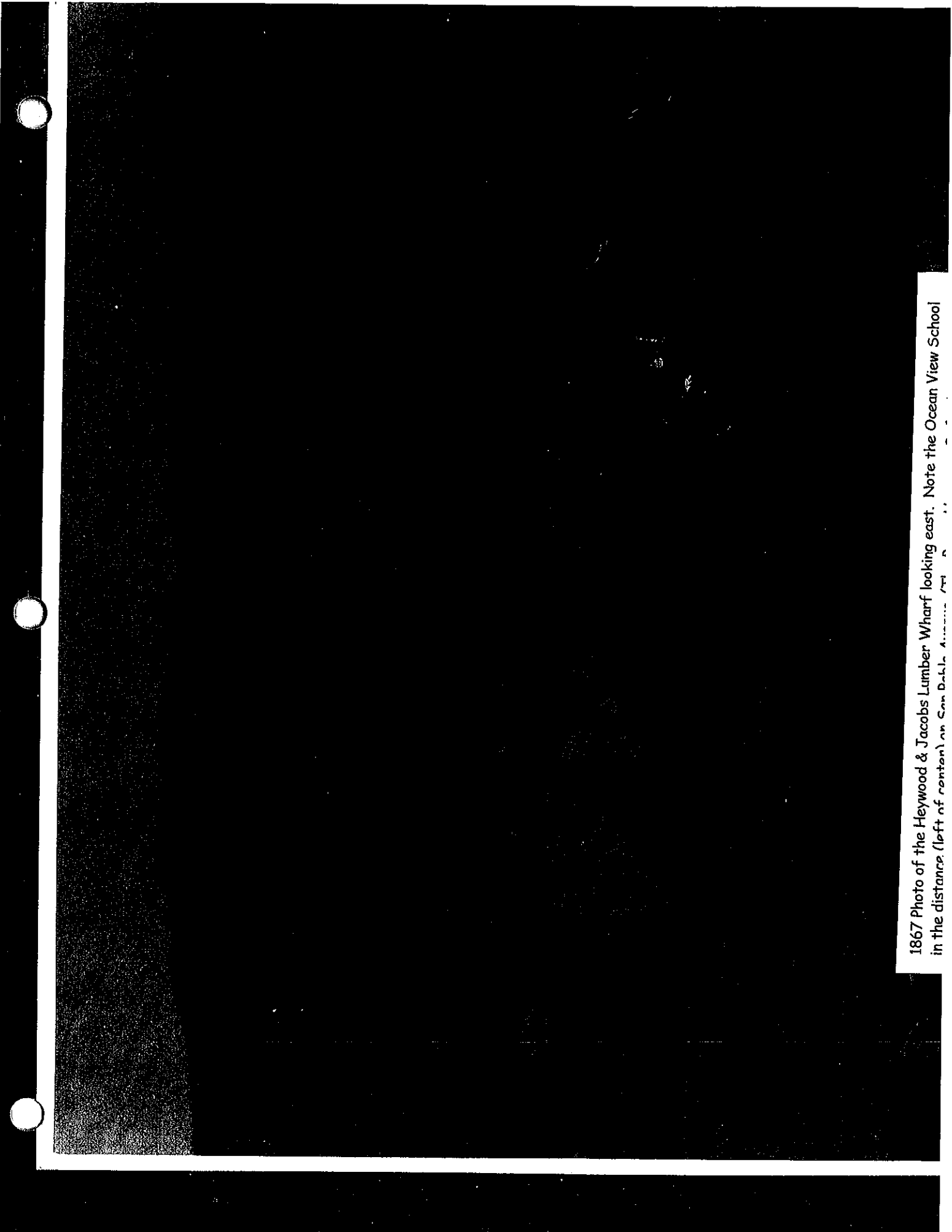




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The S.P. Station at the foot of Delaware Street in West Berkeley, undated, likely 1890's. Note the West Berkeley Planning Mill west of the tracks. (Louis

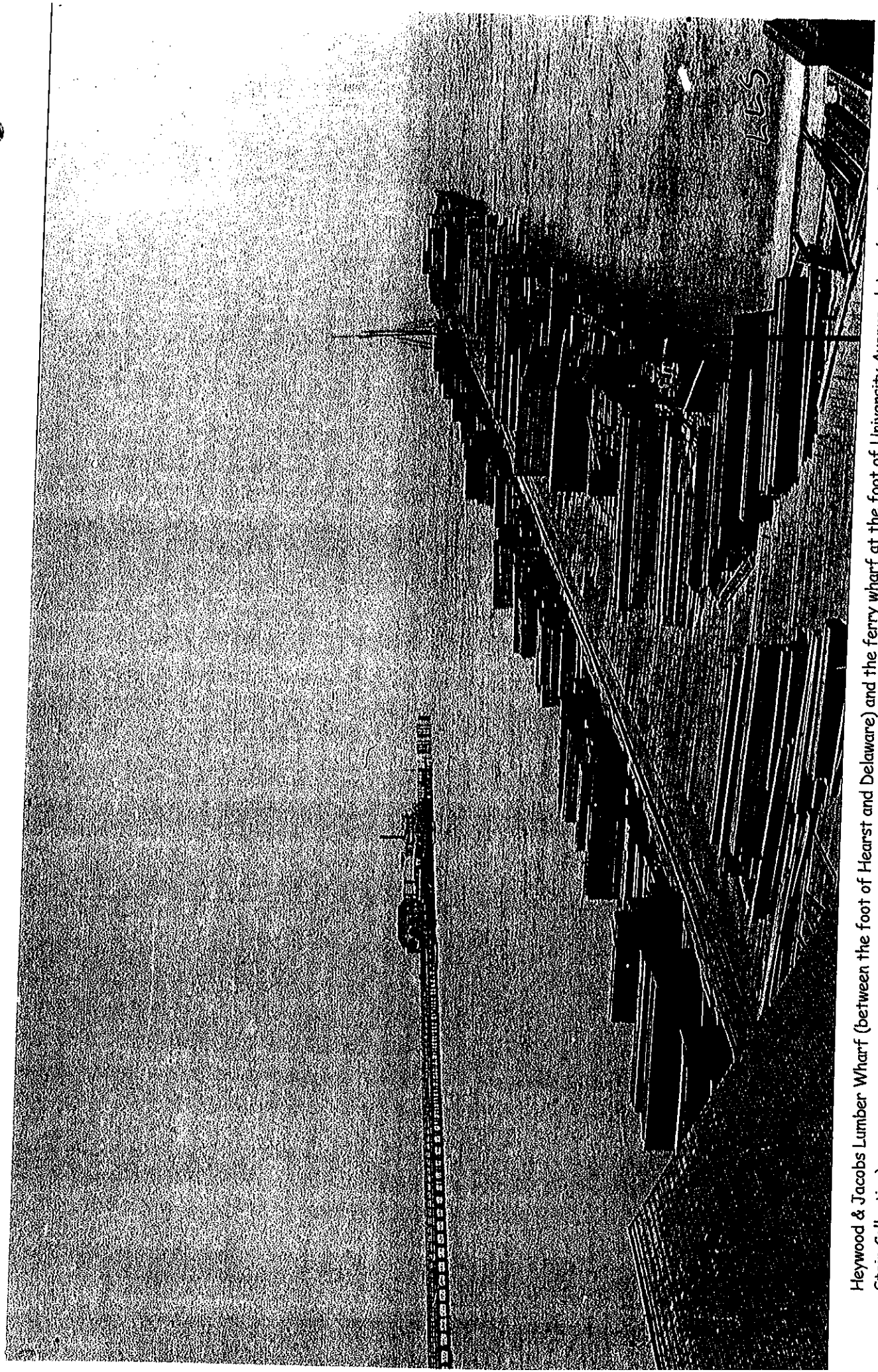


A dark, grainy historical photograph showing a wharf and distant buildings. The image is mostly black with some faint, indistinct shapes that could be structures or ships. The overall quality is poor, typical of an old, underexposed photograph.

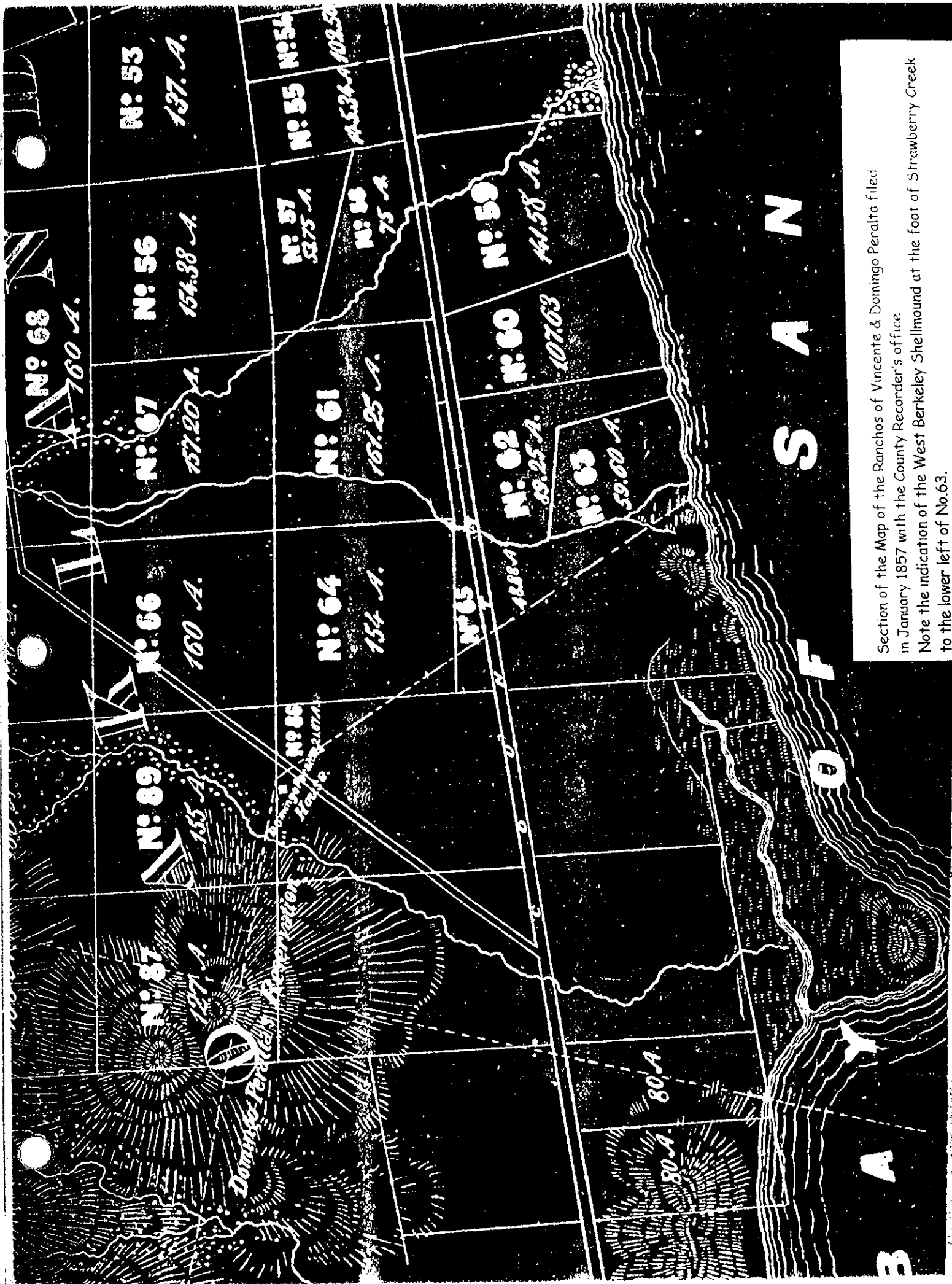
1867 Photo of the Heywood & Jacobs Lumber Wharf looking east. Note the Ocean View School in the distance (left of center) on San Diego Avenue.



The original Berkeley shoreline circa 1890 viewed from the foot of Hearst Avenue. This photo was probably taken from up on the watertower structure at the Heywood & Jacobs Lumber Wharf just to the north. Visible here are the Municipal Pier and what appears to be the Strawberry Creek outwash just below the pier. Also visible are the roof of the Soap Works, the fat chimney of the glass factory, the house of John Everding and several unidentified pioneer

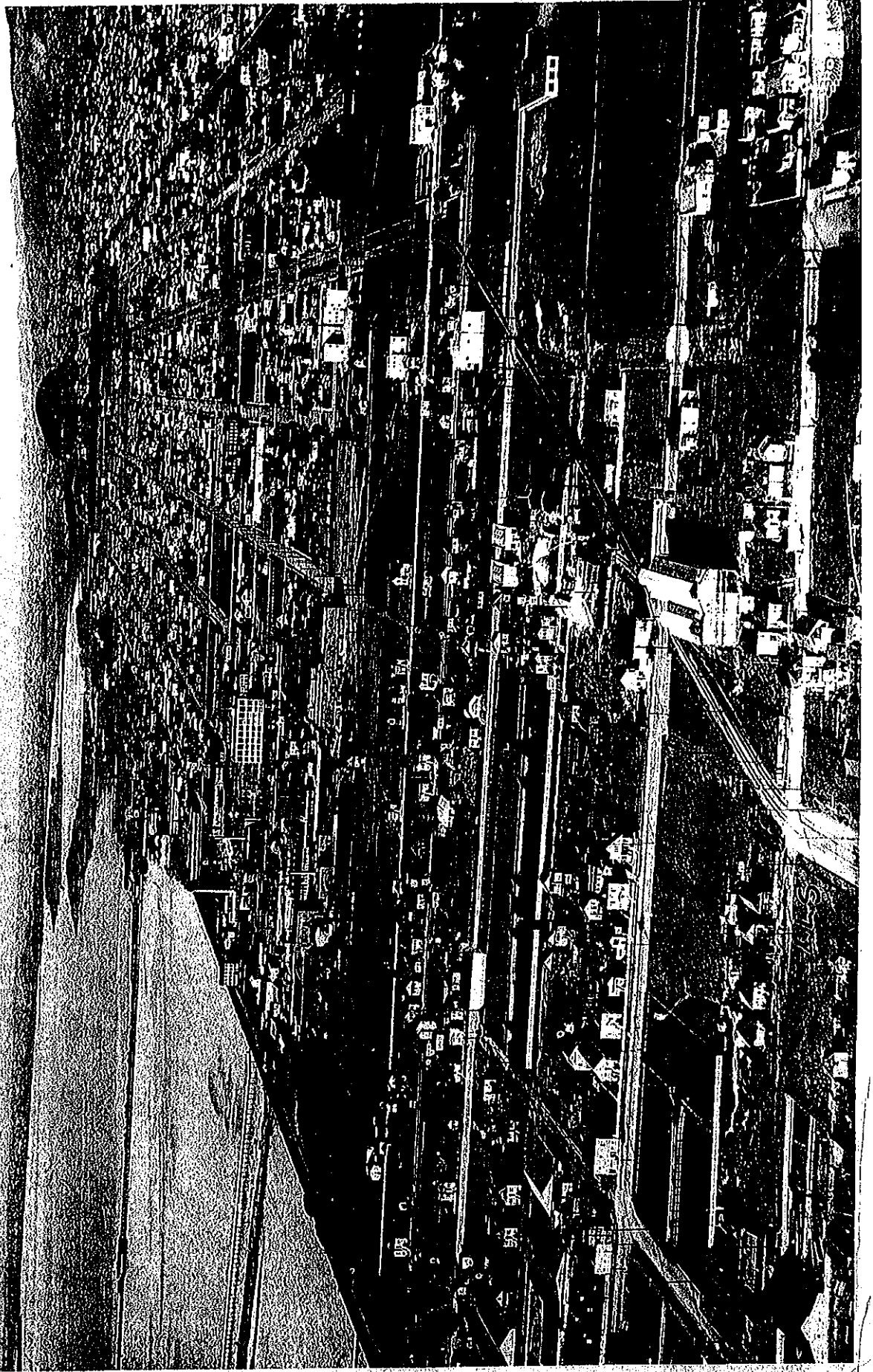


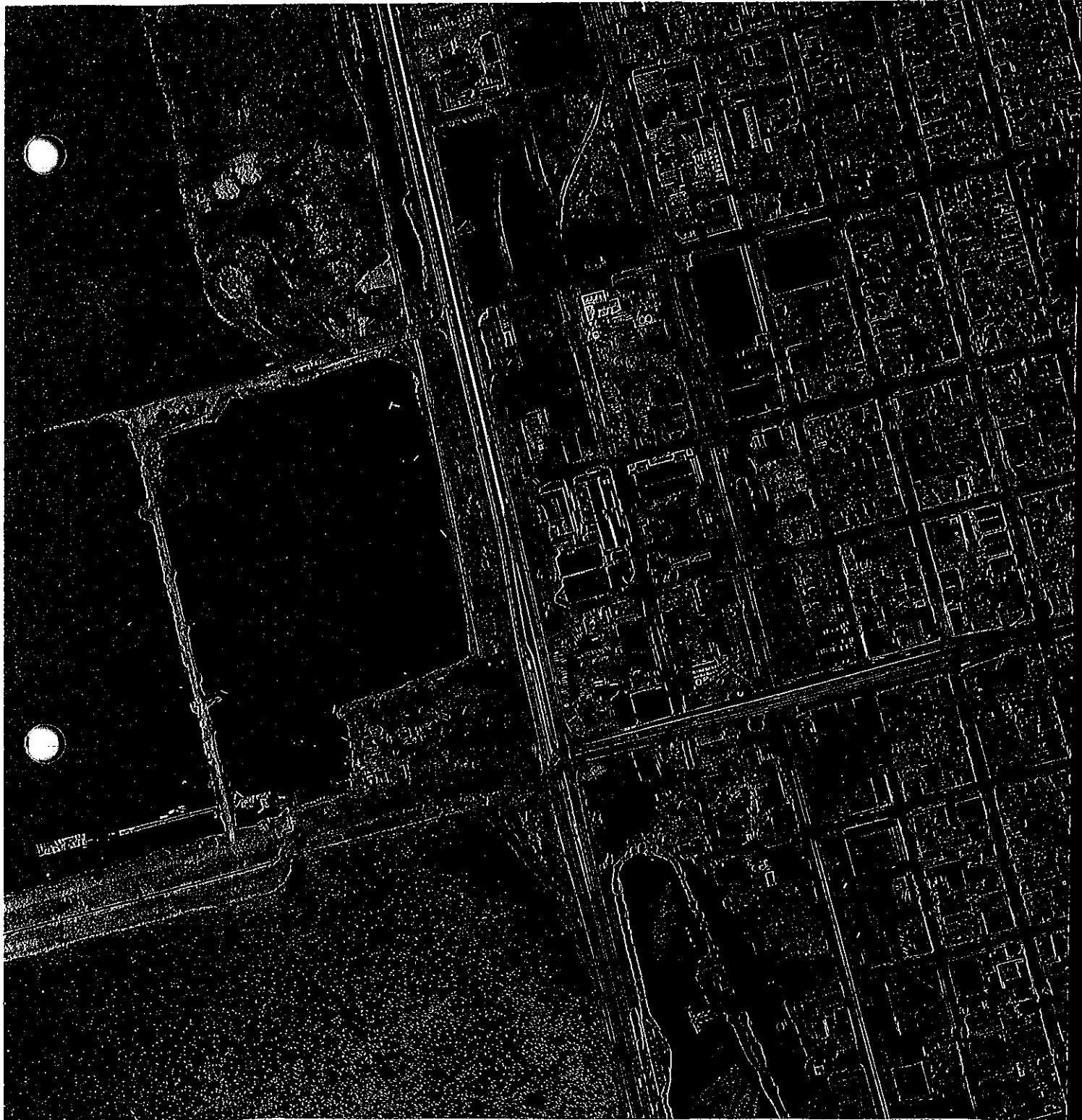
Heywood & Jacobs Lumber Wharf (between the foot of Hearst and Delaware) and the ferry wharf at the foot of University Avenue. (Louis Stein Collection)



Section of the Map of the Ranchos of Vincente & Domingo Peralta filed in January 1857 with the County Recorder's office. Note the indication of the West Berkeley Shellmound at the foot of Strawberry Creek to the lower left of No.63.

Aerial photo of the original shoreline taken circa 1930. Note the tracks are right at water's edge. The lower piers are at Ashby Ave. or further south. The upper pier is Berkeley's municipal pier. Also visible is the very tall water tower of the El Dorado Linseed Oil Works. The broad road starting about the middle of the bottom of the photo is the Ninth Street tracks which ran from upper Solano Avenue down to Ninth Street in West Berkeley and over to the ferry in Oakland. (Louis Stein Collection)

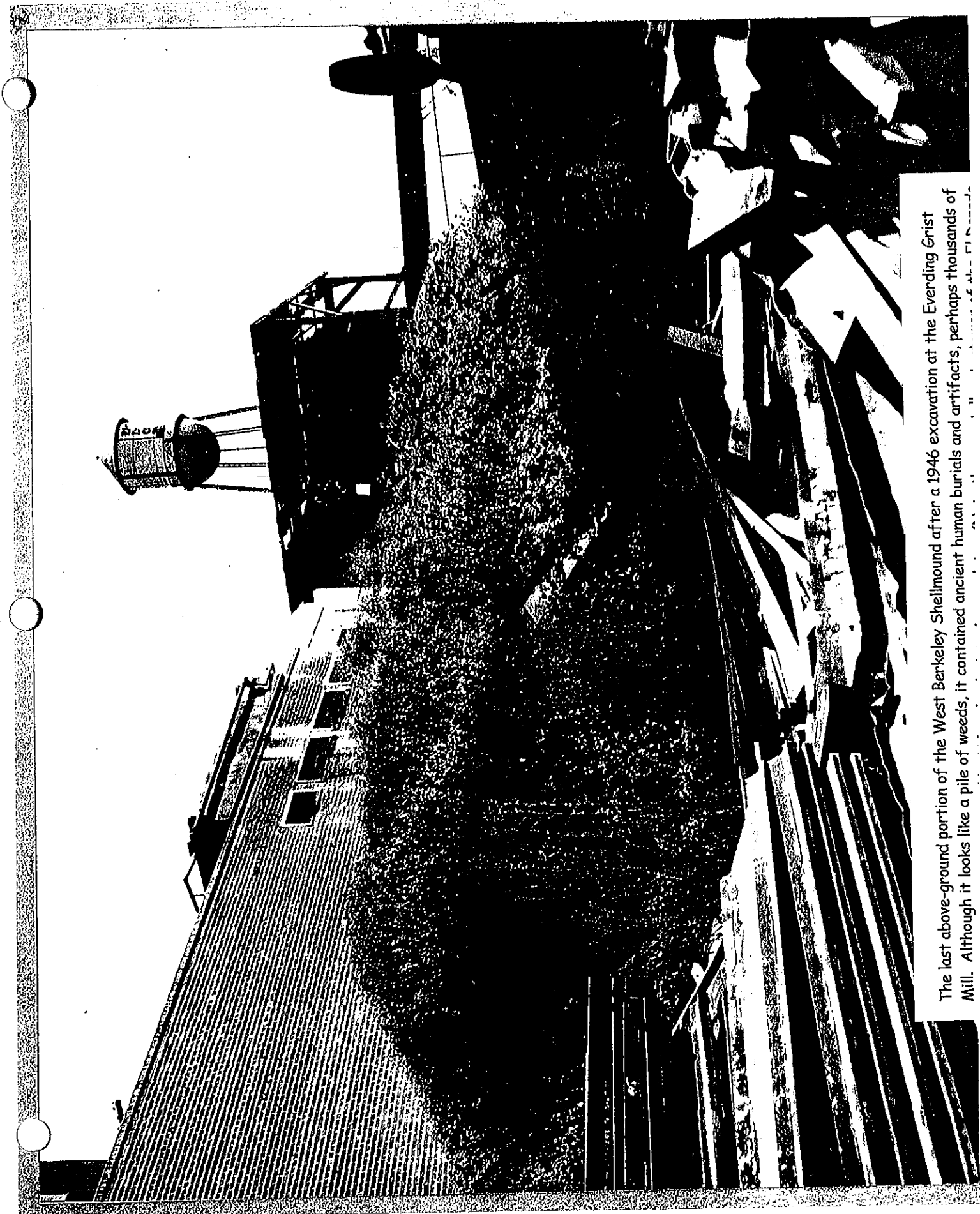




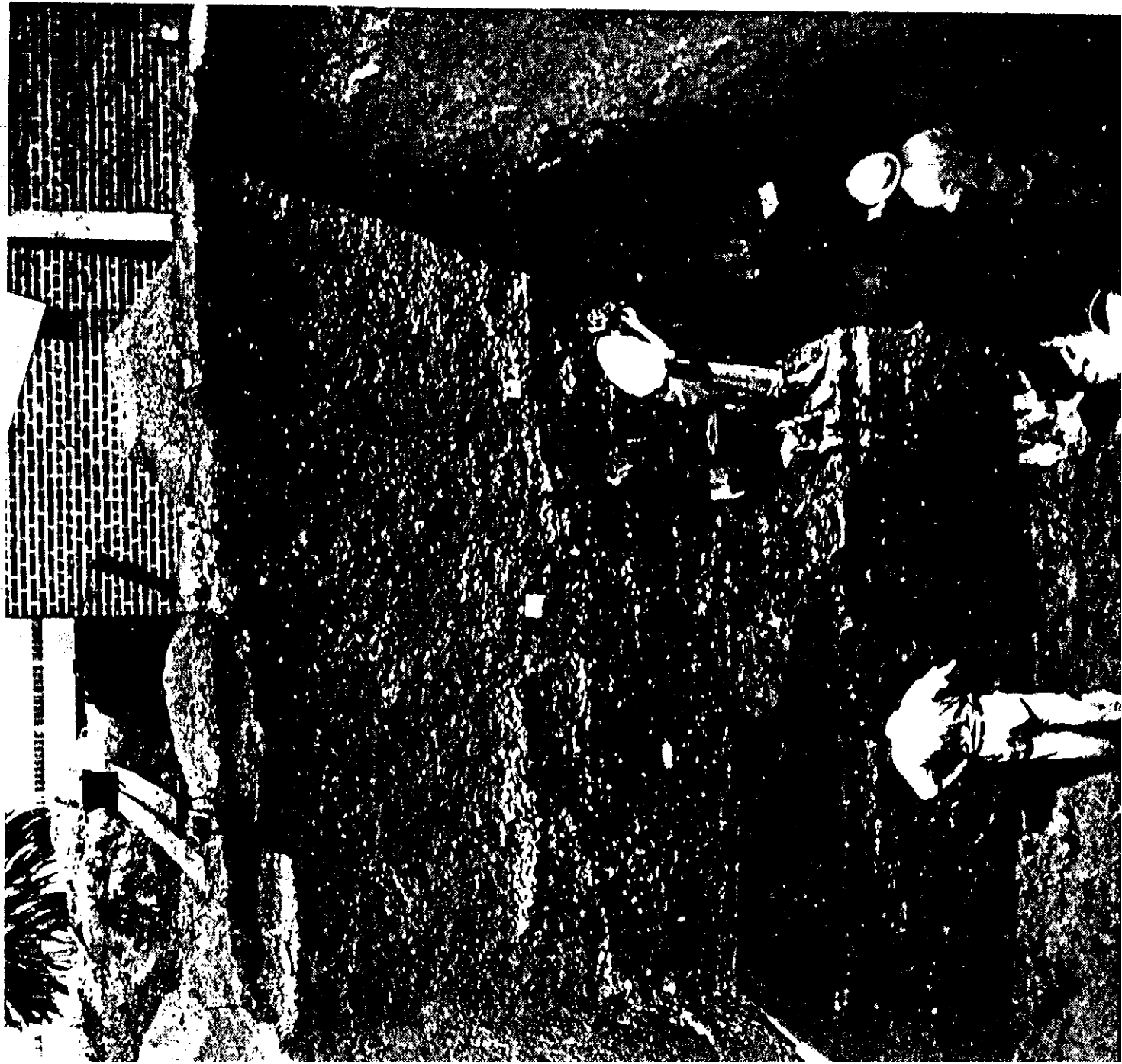
This 1950 aerial view of West Berkeley shows many houses which are no longer there. Many boat hulls can be seen in what is now Spenger's parking lot.

Note that the North Sailing Basin is merely a section of the Bay outlined by extensions of University Avenue on the south and Virginia Street on the north. Look closely to see the outflows of both Virginia (Schoolhouse) Creek and Strawberry Creek into the Bay. These are still the same locations of their outflows however much has been filled in around them.

The site of the last remaining visible portion of the West Berkeley Shellmound can be seen. Look in the block bounded by 2nd Street, Hearst Avenue, the 3rd Street Tracks and University Avenue for a dark trapezoidal shape. This was the site of the 1950 UC archeological dig.

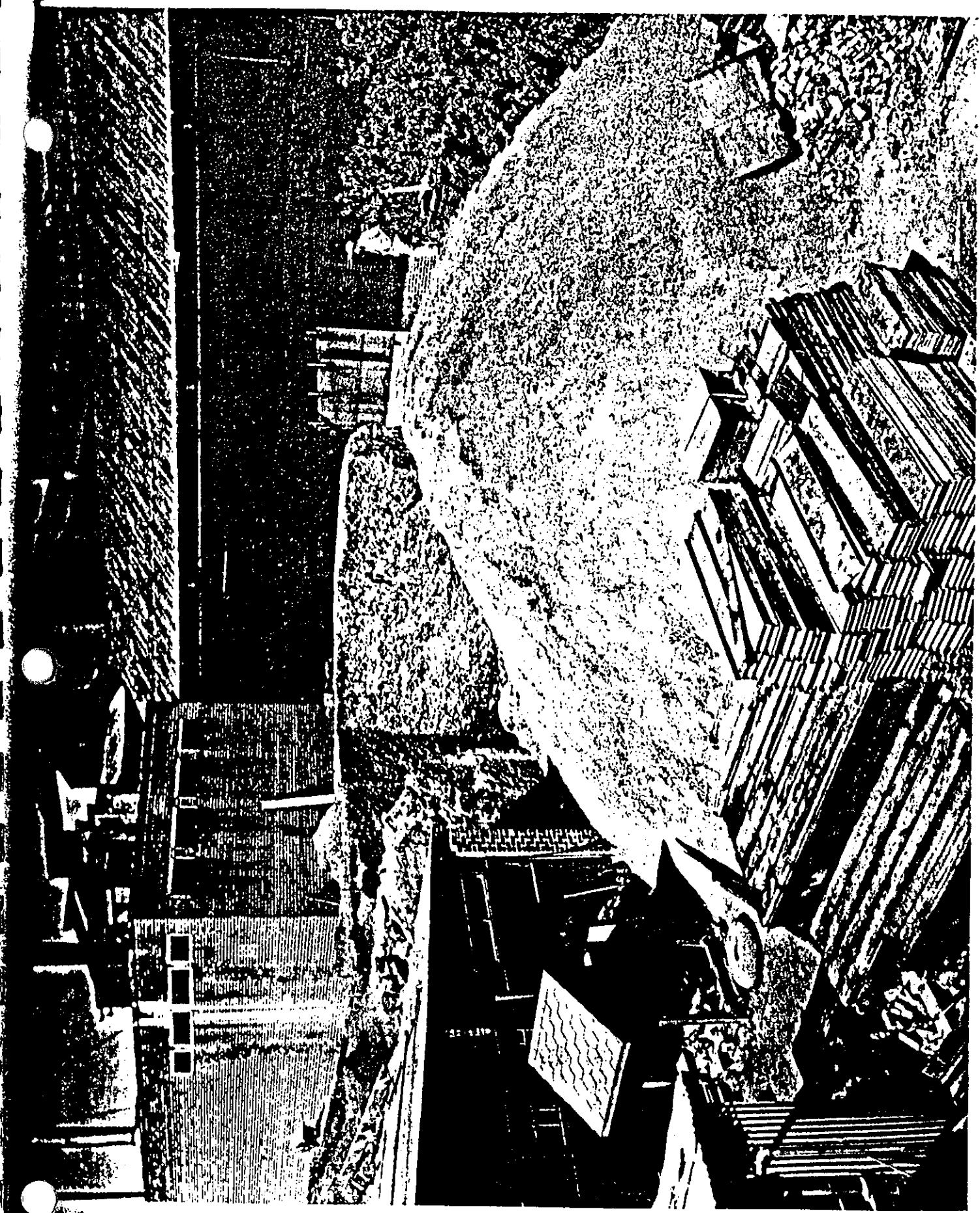


The last above-ground portion of the West Berkeley Shellmound after a 1946 excavation at the Everding Grist Mill. Although it looks like a pile of weeds, it contained ancient human burials and artifacts, perhaps thousands of



The depth of the mounds of shells and bones left by prehistoric Indians along the Berkeley-Emeryville shoreline gives a rough indication of the many millennia of seasonal occupation that must have passed before the first Caucasians arrived. The Uhle excavations of 1902 found mounds of shells more than 20 feet deep covering acres of ground area. One of the best preserved of these large mounds was protected for years by the fact that Emeryville built a trotting park in the area and put the band pavilion on the highest crest. The one shown here was in Berkeley. (*—Robert M. Lowie Museum of Anthropology*)





The 1950 Dig at Truitt & White  
PLATE 1

from 1997 Report by B.Lynn Ingram

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Carp they plastered themselves with mud. For  
fishing and transportation they made a kind of  
canoe out of tules, and propelled it with double  
bladed paddles. They also might use tules to  
cover the rough huts in which they slept and the  
sweathouses in which they took their sauna  
baths. When the Spanish arrived they found one  
of these sweathouses, and not knowing the local  
Indian name for it they applied a name used by  
the Aztec Indians of Mexico. That is how the  
name Temescal came to be used for a district  
and a creek in North Oakland.

White men, particularly gold seekers who  
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The only good photograph of an original Inhabitant of Berkeley territory is this one of a Costanoan Indian dug out of a shellmound near the foot of University Avenue. The subject is obviously shy about having his picture taken by a University of California archeologist.

Burial 50 was a woman found at 144-inch depth, lying on her right side facing east, no red ocher, buried with rectangular olivella beads, an awl fragment and polished bone object.



Burial 76 was a man found at the 162 inch depth level, lying on his left side facing north, red ocher present, large mortar over his pelvis.

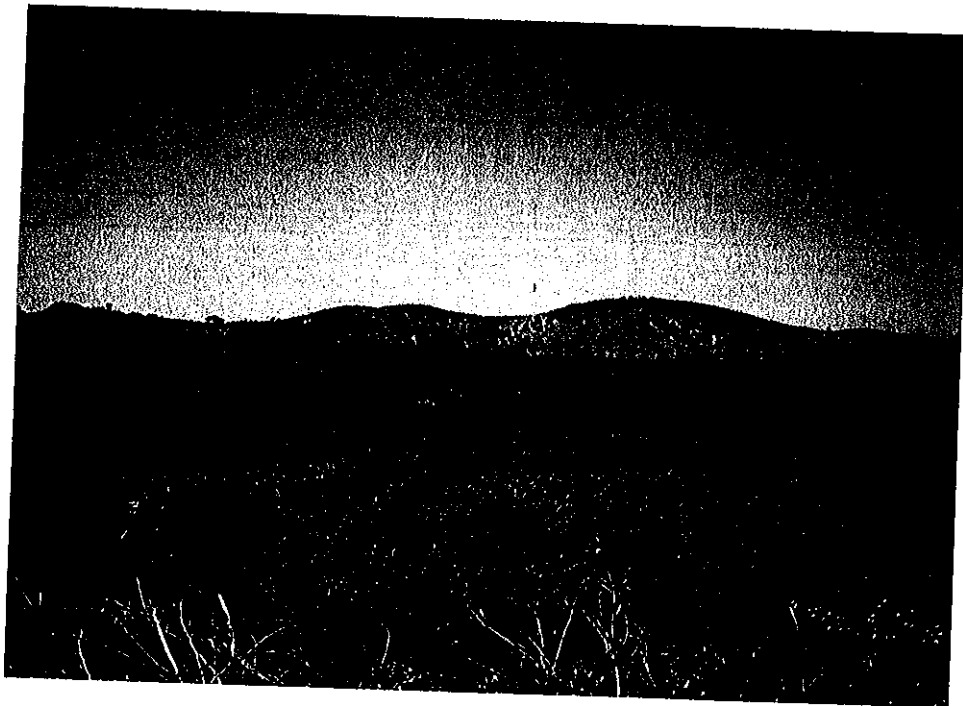
PLATE 7

from 1974 UC Report on West Berkeley Shellmound

○ Coyote Hills Regional Park - Shellmound Tour in  
June 1999



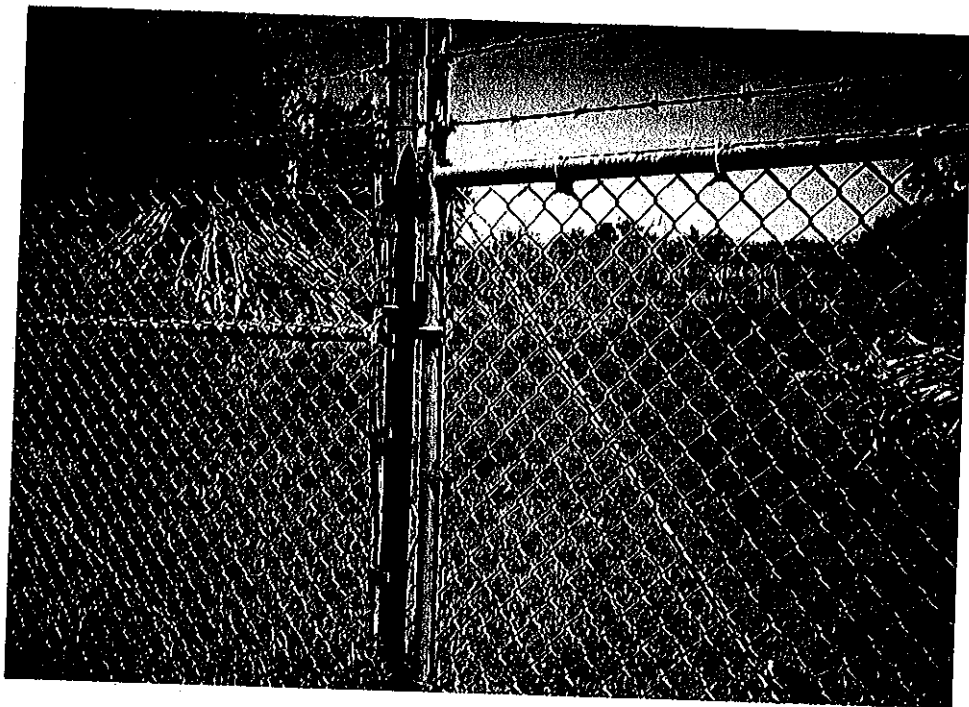
○ Naturalist leads tour along boardwalk through marsh towards shellmound



○ View of Coyote Hills from out in the marsh



Naturalist unlocking gate at the native Shellmound



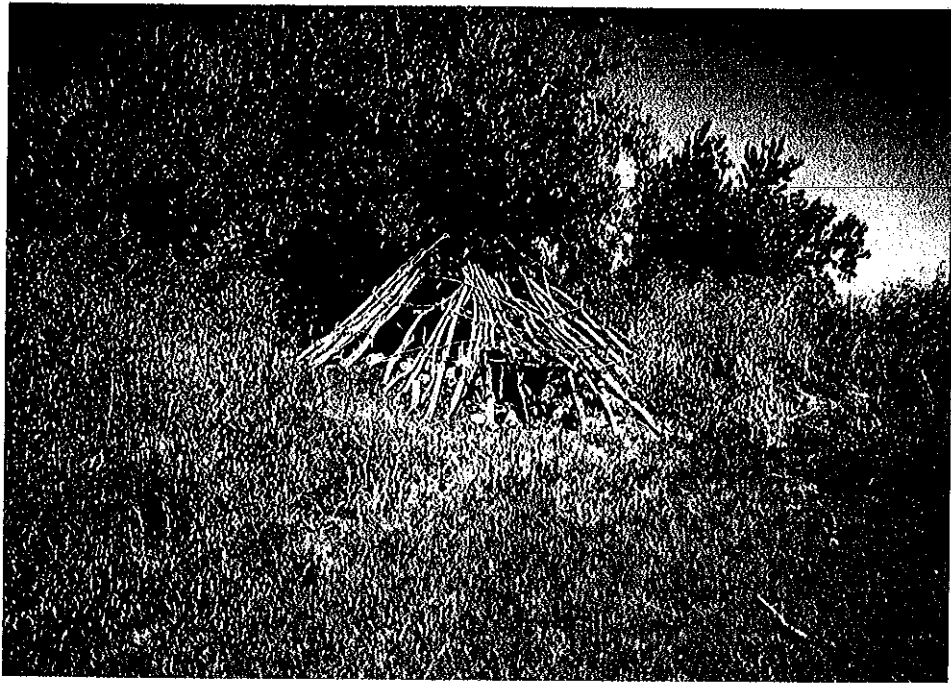
View through the fence at Shellmound and re-created native shelters



Re-creation of ancient native house



Close-up of native house



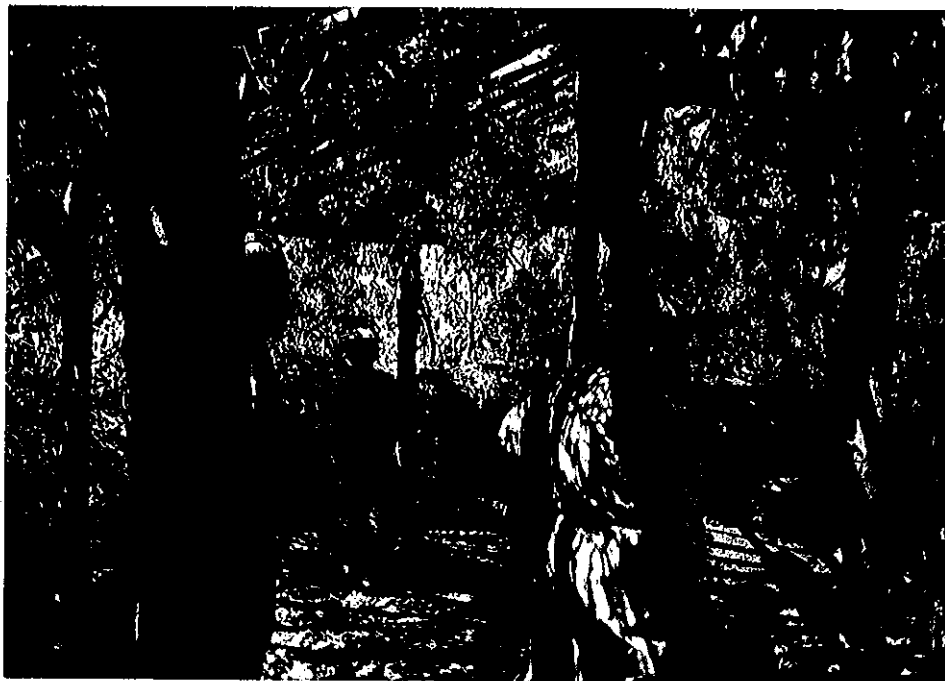
Re-creation of native sweathouse on Shellmound



Re-creation of native shade covering

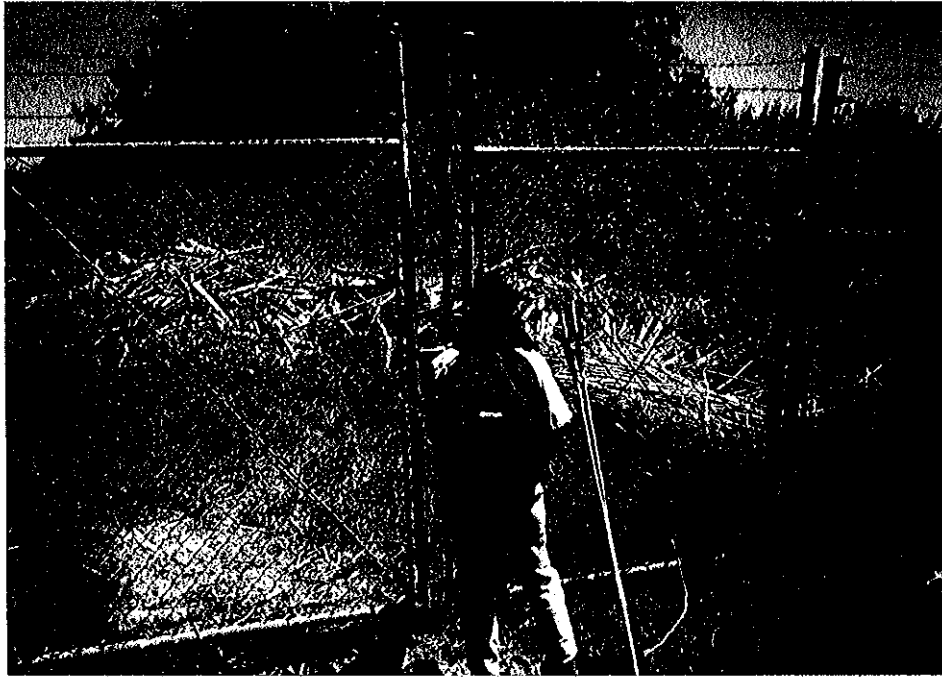


Native house on Shellmound  
(note construction from materials immediately available)



Tour participants get a chance to enter  
another native shade shelter

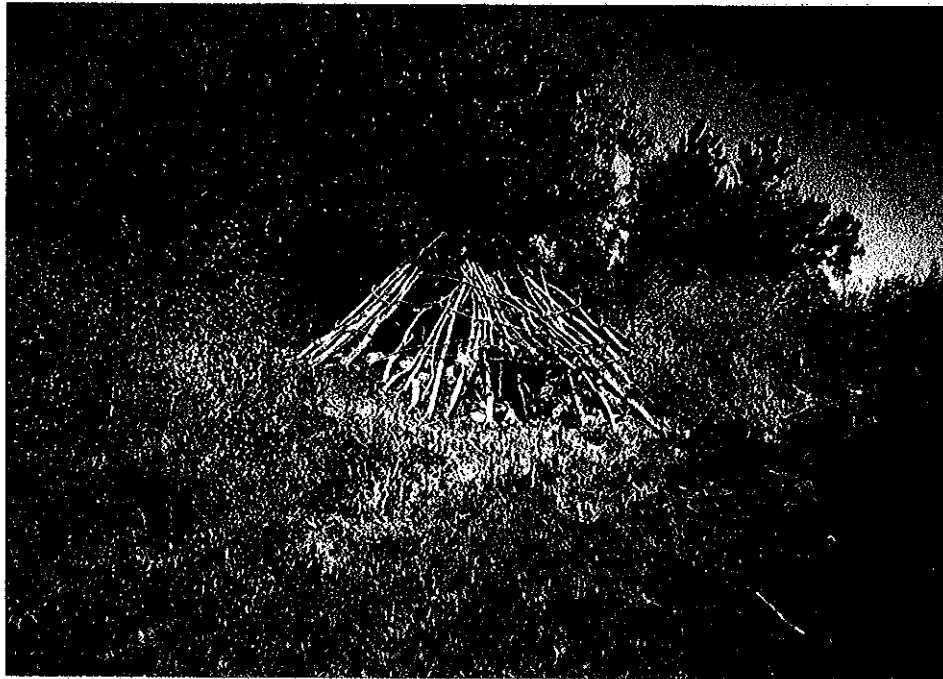




Naturalist unlocking gate at the native Shellmound



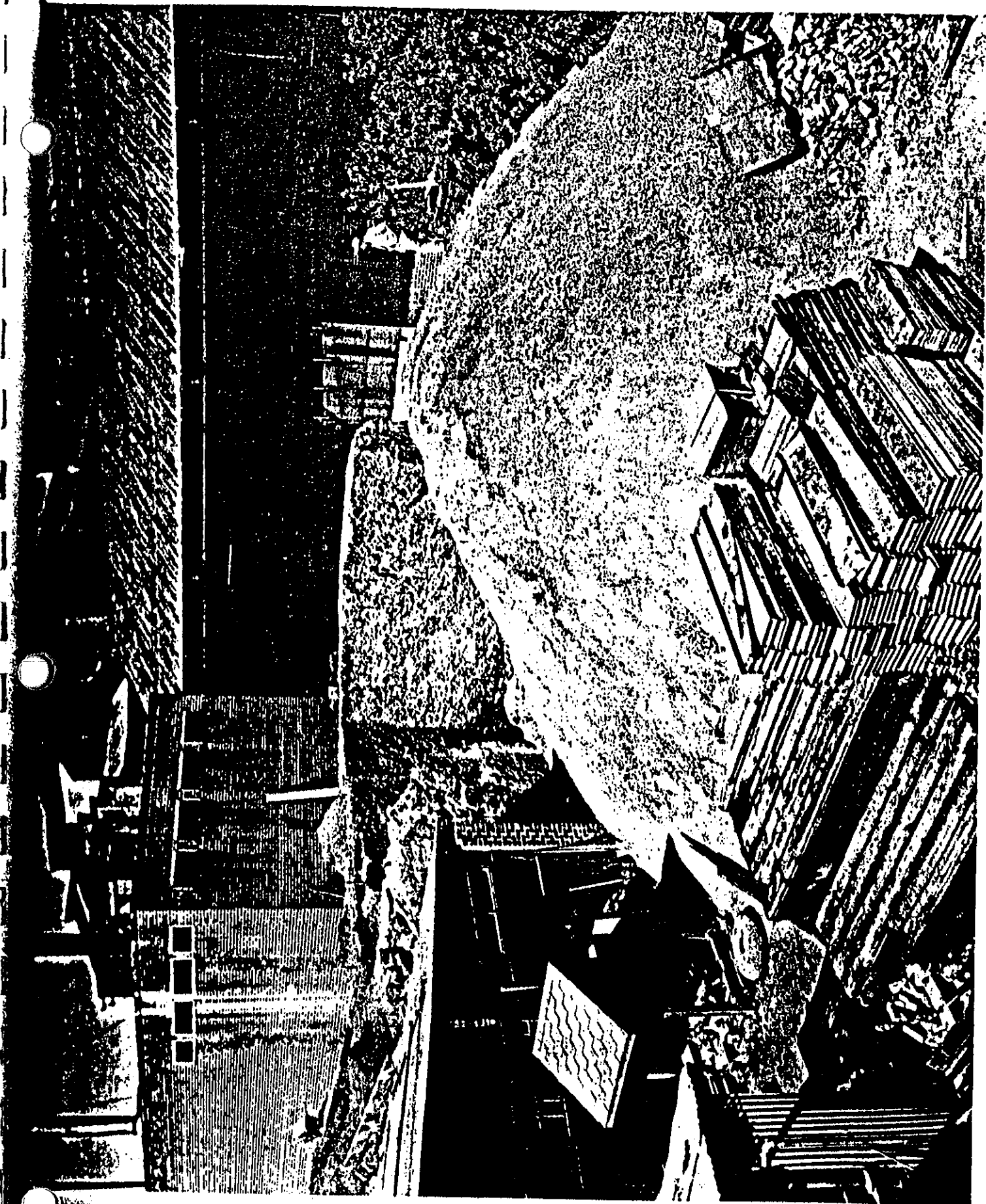
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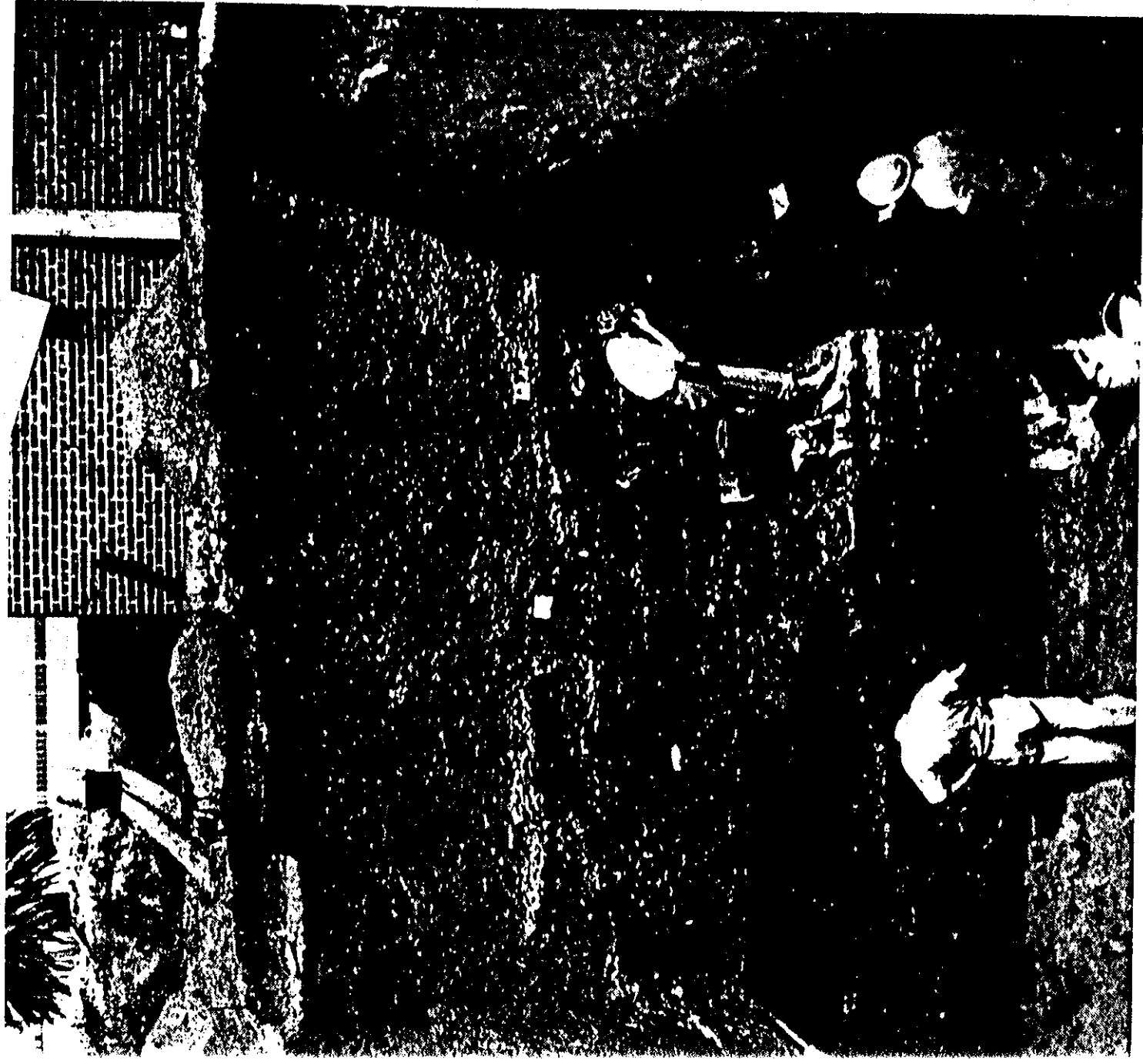


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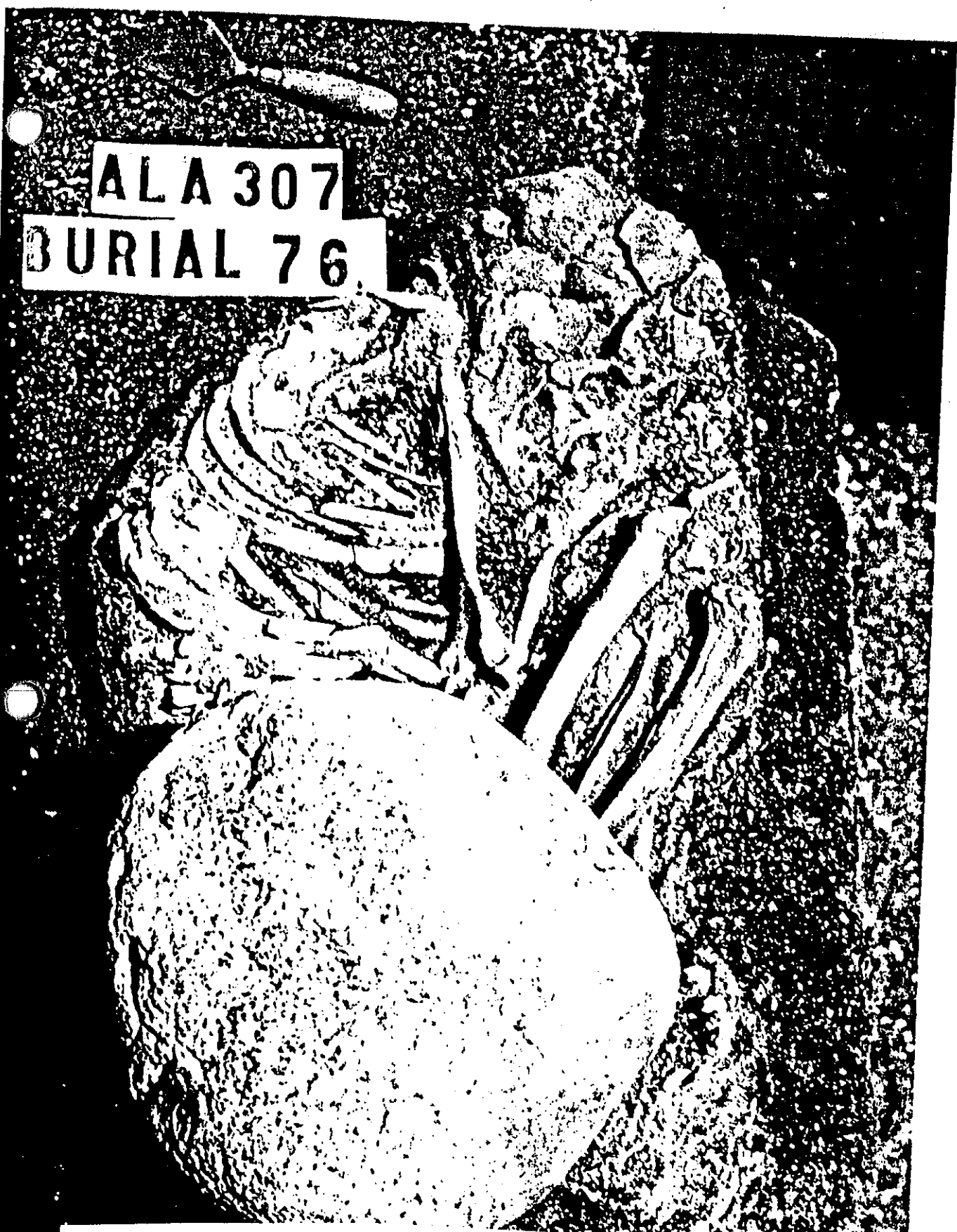
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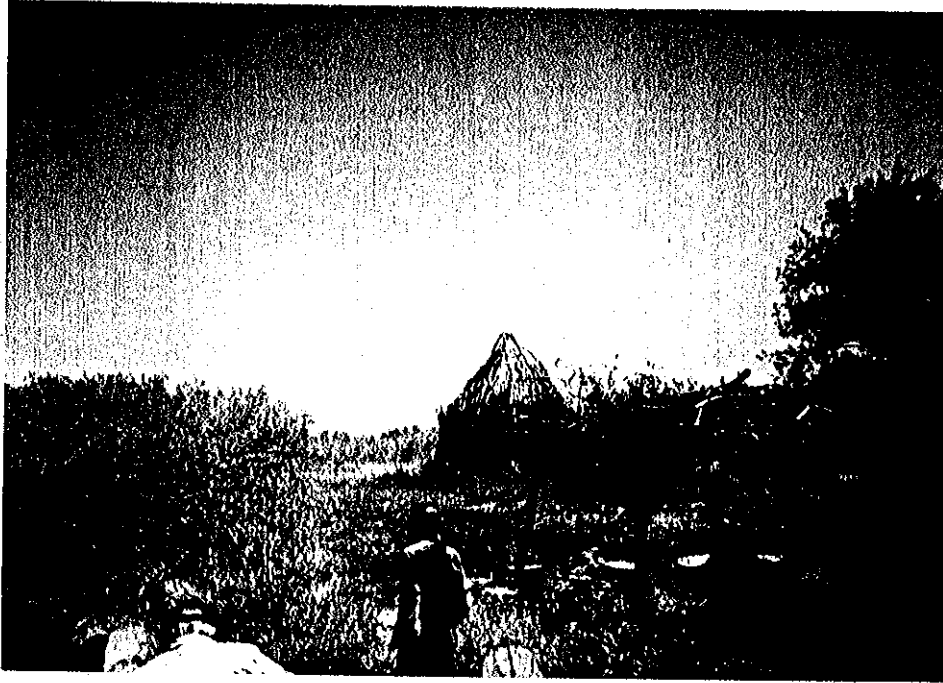
Coyote Hills Regional Park - Shellmound Tour in  
June 1999



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View of Coyote Hills from out in the marsh

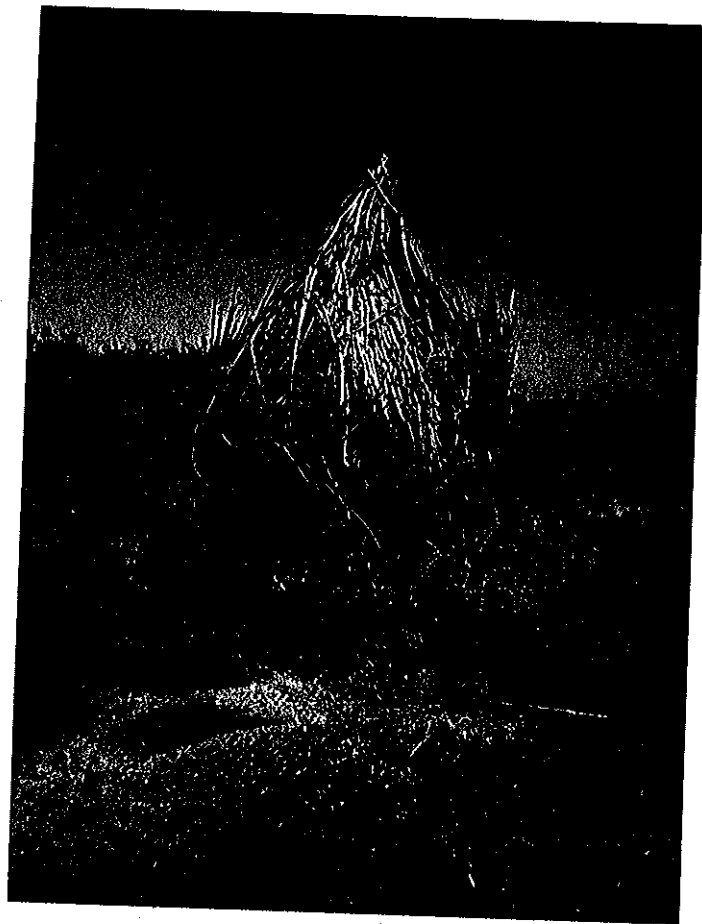


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