



## Cultural Resource Consultants

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### Memorandum

**To:** William Lee, Gowanus Environmental Remediation Trust #2

**From:** Michael Audin, RPA & Jonathan Bream, BA

**Date:** October 10, 2022

**RE:** Memo # 31 - Results of Cultural Resource Review  
Debris Staging at Clean Earth – Claremont  
RTA-1 Dredging, Level 2 Monitoring  
Gowanus Canal Remediation Project  
Brooklyn, Kings County, NY

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This memorandum presents the findings of Archaeology & Historic Resource Services, LLC's (AHRS) review of screened sediments at the Clean Earth Claremont Facility in Jersey City, New Jersey (Clean Earth) from Level 2 Monitoring. The screened sediments are from the RTA-1 dredging currently underway at the Gowanus Canal Superfund Site in Brooklyn, New York. The purpose of this memorandum is to present the results and recommendations for the items recovered from sediment screening at Clean Earth reviewed by an AHRS archaeologist on 10/07/2022. The attached Figure provided by the Trust indicates the approximate area that was dredged between 10/3/2022 and 10/6/2022.

### INTRODUCTION

Cashman Dredging and Marine Contracting Co. (Cashman) continues with the dredging of soft sediments from RTA-1 under the oversight of the EPA. The dredge material is being processed according to the Level 2 Archaeological Monitoring protocol outlined in the draft Cultural Resource Monitoring Plan (revised September 2020). This protocol calls for dredged soft sediments to be placed directly into scows, floated to Clean Earth, and screened over 4" bars on a vibrating platform. Items removed during the vibratory screening process are then sorted by the Clean Earth operator as per the Cultural Resource Monitoring Plan. Items of potential interest (possible artifacts or objects of local interests) are placed in a separate stockpile and photographed daily for AHRS archaeologists to review. These items are then placed in a holding area for AHRS to inspect weekly.

### RESULTS

AHRS archaeologist Jonathan Bream conducted a scheduled site visit on 10/07/2022 to review the recovered items in person with the assistance of a Clean Earth machine and operator to sort through stockpiled material. Photographs were taken of stockpiled material and retained items at Clean Earth.

The recovered material was spread by machine on a flat hard surface to allow for an archaeologist to clearly review it (Photograph 1). The reviewed material was comprised of mostly oily mud with debris comprised of tires, rocks, wood fragments, miscellaneous metal, and car parts (Photographs 2 and 3). One item of potential interest was observed (Photographs 4 and 5).



**Photograph 1** – View of debris pile to be reviewed, front view.





**Photograph 2** – Close up of the condition of the material to be reviewed, front view.



**Photograph 3** – View of car parts and log (not bulkhead related) front view.





**Photograph 4** – View of cast iron vice, before cleaning of mud.





**Photograph 5 – View of cast iron vice, after cleaning of mud.**

This object was removed from the debris pile and cleaned of the canal mud. Once cleaned, its construction and manner of operation became more visible. It appears to be a blacksmiths' leg vise. It clamps to a bench and the leg rests on the floor to absorb the force of hammer blows. These were used for holding objects while filing and light hammering of gun works and other small parts made by blacksmiths, gunsmiths and other tradesmen. It dates from the late 19<sup>th</sup>- or early 20<sup>th</sup>- century. (Photograph 6) (<https://maestronet.com/forum/index.php?/topic/340430-17th-or18-century-wrought-iron-vice/>)



**Photograph 6** – View of cast iron blacksmith's leg vise from maestronet.com website.  
(<https://maestronet.com/forum/index.php?/topic/340430-17th-or18-century-wrought-iron-vice/>)

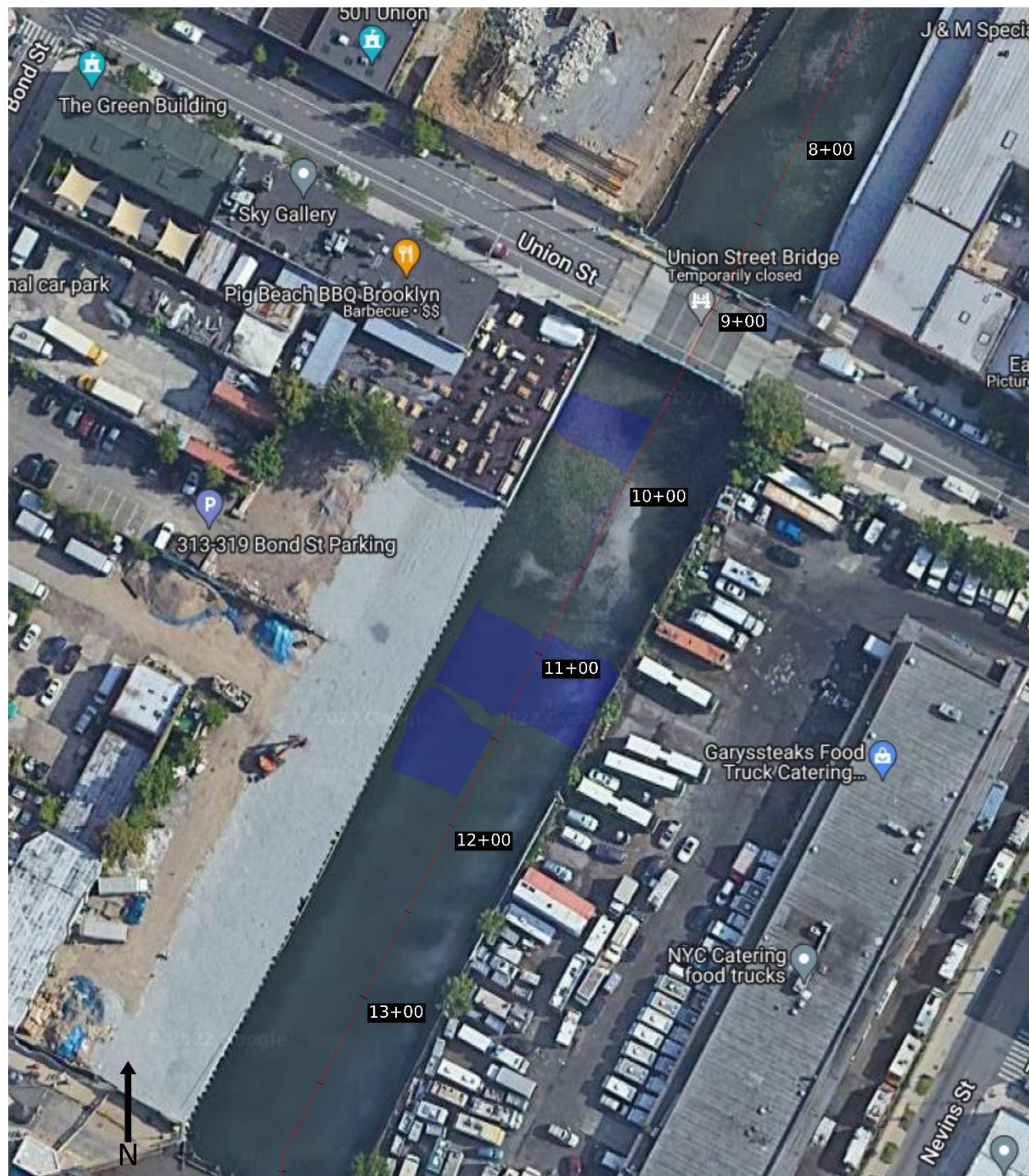
#### Items Segregated for Further Review

AHRS archaeologist retained one item, cast iron blacksmith's leg vise, which is most likely an artifact from the same or one of the other black smith shops identified for the metal ladle identified in Memo 20. The item is fragile since being cleaned and exposed to the air. AHRS recommends a curator to review the item as how best to store it.

#### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

AHRS concludes that a single item, a cast iron blacksmith's leg vise, recovered during the sediment screening at Clean Earth meets the criteria of an artifact. Per the draft Cultural Resource Monitoring Plan, all the non-historically/archaeologically significant debris at Clean Earth has been reviewed by the AHRS archaeologist as of 10/07/2022 and AHRS recommends that it be disposed of.





**Figure 1** – Approximate areas of Phase III material dredged north of Carroll Street Bridge between October 3 and October 6, 2022.