

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Yale Bowl

and or common

2. Location

street & number southwest of the intersection of Chapel Street and Yale— not for publication
Avenue

city, town New Haven — vicinity of

state Connecticut code county New Haven code

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Stadium

4. Owner of Property

(Football)

name Dr. A. Bartlett Giamatti

street & number President, Yale University

city, town New Haven — vicinity of state Connecticut 06520

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. New Haven Town Hall, Hall of Records

street & number 200 Orange Street

city, town New Haven state Connecticut

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Summary¹

Yale Bowl is a great oval structure of reinforced concrete constructed in 1914. It is 750' wide and 930' long at its extreme points. The playing field is 300' x 500' from face to face on the inner walls. The Bowl seats approximately 71,000 spectators.

Interior

Yale Bowl is positioned with its main axis facing northwest-southeast, so that the sun does not shine directly into the eyes of the players. Because of the manner of construction, which basically involved digging a large pit and mounding the excavated earth around it, the playing field is 27' below the outside grade, and the top row of seats 27' above.

Much of the mass of the structure is formed by the earth mound that was thrown up from the excavations. Atop the inner side of this embankment, reinforced concrete was applied to produce a continuous ring of seats set on the gentle slope surrounding the playing field. Thirty reinforced concrete tunnels cut through the great mound to provide access to the seats. The tunnel entrances are linked by very plain retaining walls.

The entrances to the tunnels are decorated by severe triangular pediments over arched entrances. Visible above them from the exterior is the outer edge of the great earthen embankment, which remains in an uncovered state, except for grass and small trees that have grown upon it.

The press stands on the southwest edge of the stadium, between Portals 14 and 17, remain relatively small and unobtrusive. They have been present since at least the 1920s.

The principal approach to the Bowl is by a northbound road from Derby Avenue, which intersects the southwest quadrant of the field at Gate C. Off Derby Avenue, the road passes through the Walter Camp Memorial Gateway, dedicated in 1928, which celebrates Yale's first coach, one of the most renowned figures in football history, and an individual so beloved that numerous colleges and universities, including Yale's traditional football foes, contributed to its construction. The Camp Gateway provides an impressive processional approach to the Bowl.

Footnote

¹The vital statistics of the stadium are taken from an information sheet on "Yale Bowl," supplied by the Yale Department of Athletics, Physical Education, and Recreation.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
prehistoric	archeology-prehistoric	community planning	landscape architecture	religion
1400-1499	archeology-historic	conservation	law	science
1500-1599	agriculture	economics	literature	sculpture
1600-1699	architecture	education	military	social
1700-1799	art	engineering	music	humanitarian
1800-1899	commerce	exploration settlement	philosophy	theater
X 1900-	communications	industry	politics government	transportation
		invention		X other (specify) Recreation

Specific dates 1914 **Builder Architect** Charles A. Ferry, Architect (College Football Stadium)
Sperry Engineering Co., Engineers

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Summary

The Yale Bowl, a widely admired and imitated work of sports architecture, is the second oldest active college stadium in the United States, and was the largest at the time of construction. It is significant on that account and for its associations with Yale's important role in the history of college football.

Yale's early influence in college football, through noted player-coach-official Walter Camp, extended to the shaping of the very rules of the game, and embraced the training of coaches who carried Camp's "System" to other universities and colleges, as well as the distinguished record amassed by the university's teams themselves.

Even beyond these highly significant events and influences, the history of the building of the Yale Bowl provides an insight into Yale's theory of sports as an activity vital to the development of whole individuals, a modern-day version of the Classical mens sana in corpore sano (healthy mind in a healthy body).

History

The discussions that preceded the erection of the Yale Bowl resulted in its building as a single-purpose facility.¹ This debate sheds light on Yale's philosophy of education and is similar to discussions that took place at other universities later on concerning the issues raised by the prominence of football at them.

In 1913, a Yale university committee was given a mandate to provide new and increased athletic facilities to guarantee that every student in the University would have ample opportunity for healthful exercise and recreation. The building of the Bowl, intended to replace the wooden stands on Yale Field (off Derby Avenue on the site of the present baseball field, across from the Bowl), was only one part of the overall plan. It was initially assumed that the Bowl would include facilities for several sports and not be limited to football alone, which would mean that it would stand idle about ten months of the year. When the committee announced that no other sports could be accommodated, furious debate ensued.

Advocates of track and field were especially insistent that a 220-yard straightaway be provided, and produced proposed design changes, including the cutting of tunnels. The issue was ultimately resolved by placing the track on the old Yale Field site and providing facilities for other sports at separate locations.

9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property approximately 30 acres

Quadrangle name New Haven

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	8	6	7	0	8	2	0	4	5	7	5	4	8	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

1	8	6	7	0	9	0	0	4	5	7	5	0	5	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

1	8	6	7	0	6	0	0	4	5	7	4	9	7	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

D

1	8	6	7	0	4	5	0	4	5	7	5	5	8	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

E

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H

Zone			Easting				Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title James H. Charleton, Historian

organization History Division, National Park Service date December 1985

street & number 1100 L Street, NW telephone (202) 343-8165

city or town Washington state DC 20013-7127

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title date

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Despite the debate at Yale before construction, the Bowl proved an instant success and was quickly emulated. The stadium's dish-like shape suggested the name "bowl," and was especially admired because it provided fine views for the spectators from almost any seat. The Rose Bowl (1922) and the University of Michigan Stadium (1927) are but two of the major facilities that owe basic elements of their design and construction pattern to the Yale Bowl.

Yale did not build what was then the largest "stadium" in America to capture a place in the college football world. Yale was, in fact, the pacesetter in the game's early decades.² Her teams had a well-established record that went back to the earliest days of the "American" game, when its rules, even as to the numbers of players on the respective sides, were not settled. Primitive versions of football played by Yale students created such a stir that students were banned from playing intramural games on the town green in 1858.

Yale first competed in intercollegiate football in 1872, 3 years after the first intercollegiate game between Princeton and Rutgers. The following year, Yale began playing with 11 on the team, thereafter becoming the great advocate of the number that eventually became standard in the game.

Walter Camp (Yale, 1880), as Yale's advisory coach (1882-1910), full coach (1888-92), and representative on intercollegiate rules bodies, was a preeminent voice in the evolution of the game, as well as a masterful coach for the Yale team, amassing a 67-2 record in the 1888-92 period. Camp's role was so fundamental that he has been termed the "Architect" and the "Father" of American intercollegiate football.³

Camp served on or advised every national rules committee from the time he was a student-player in 1878 until his death in 1925. He devised or successfully promoted the scrimmage line, the 11-man team, signal calling, the quarterback position, the fourth-down rule, tackling below the waist, marking of the playing field as a "gridiron," and the numerical scoring system. He collaborated in the selection of the first All-Americans (1889) and was the chief arbiter in their selection until he died.

Camp's accomplishments, of course, and those of the distinguished players on his Yale teams, preceded the erection of Yale Bowl. But their successors have gained additional laurels within its precincts, and alumni of Yale have been coaches of exceptional rank at other colleges and universities. Yale's coaches of distinction since Camp have included Howard H. Jones (1913) and his brother Thomas A.D. ("Tad") Jones (1916, 1920-27), who, with Camp, are in the select fraternity of those elected to the National College Football Hall of Fame.

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Howard H. Jones went on from an invincible team at Yale in 1909 to equally great success as the coach of Iowa (1916-23) and the University of Southern California (1925-40). Along with Jones, Yale alumni such as Amos Alonzo Stagg, the long-time coach at the University of Chicago (1892-1932); and Harry Williams, at the University of Minnesota, the originator of the "Minnesota shift," illustrate Yale's importance as a training ground for coaches.

In intercollegiate competition, Yale has, as her roots would suggest, been a major force, except in the 1930s and early 1940s. Yale's strength was especially evident in the early days of the sport, when the Eastern teams were the leaders as well as the originators of the game, and since the mid-1950s. In the Eastern Intercollegiate, or "Ivy League," Yale has captured the conference championship 19 times (1900, 1902, 1905(shared), 1909(shared), 1923(shared), 1927, 1946(shared), 1954(shared), 1956, 1960, 1967, 1968 (shared), 1969(shared), 1974(shared), 1976(shared), 1977, 1979, 1980, and 1981 (shared)).⁴

Even in the dismal days of Yale football in the 1930s, however, Clinton "Clint" Frank, twice an All-American halfback, performed "dramatic deeds" that "made him the idol of young fans throughout the nation." With Frank and end Larry Kelley (1934-36), who was brilliant in pass catching, the team was in contention in 1935-37, though it did not capture the conference championship.⁵

Frank and Kelley were figures of such eminence that they have been elected to the College Football Hall of Fame, along with 12 other Yale teammates, more than any other university. No history of early football could be written without them. They include (with years of play):

Francis ("Albie") Booth (1929-31)
William Corbin (1886-88)
W.W. ("Pudge") Heffelfinger (1888-91)
James J. Hogan (1902-04)
John Reed Kilpatrick (1908-10)
Thomas L. Shevlin (1903-05)

Gordon F. Brown (1897-1900)
Edward H. ("Ted") Coy (1907-09)
Frank A. Hinkey (1891-94)
Henry Ketcham (1911-13)
William Mallory (1921-23)
Amos Alonzo Stagg (1885-89)⁶

Yale alumni also have reason to glory in the way their team has fared in the most venerable of intercollegiate rivalries, "The Game," that with Harvard, which began in 1875. As of the start of the 102th game in the series, in 1985, Yale had defeated Harvard 55 times, while Harvard had bested Yale only 38 times, and 8 games had ended in ties. Yale had shut out Harvard 28 times, while Harvard had performed the same feat on Yale only 18 times. Perhaps the most treasured memory to the "Elis" is the 1957 game, Yale 54, Harvard 0.⁷

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Yale's football history might be terminated here, without noting the role it has played in shaping the careers and lives of many alumni, unknown to the Hall of Fame, who have won distinction in other fields. One example may serve to illustrate the point, which is fundamental to the Yale philosophy of sport. Archibald MacLeish, in a 1969 address to the National Football Hall of Fame, "Poetry -- and Football," credited his football play at Yale with smoothing the way to his appointment as Assistant Secretary of State, for it made clear to doubting Senators that he was a well-rounded individual, an athlete as well as a poet. He went on rhetorically:

What is there about the game of football--about the mere fact of having played the game of football--which permitted that Senate Committee on Foreign Relations to adjourn in peace? What guarantee does football offer that a man who has played the game whatever else he may do or be, will at least act as though he were human?...

Why are we haunted by the smell of torn earth and winter grass and the taste of time?

I think I know and I think you know too. There are some things in life which have a poignance which does not belong so much to them as to the human circumstances which surround them -- to the fact that they are common human experiences -- experiences in common.⁸

Footnotes

¹This account of the debate over the design and uses of the Bowl follows that by George D. Vaill, "This was almost Yale Arena, and the event you're watching a crew race." (Reprint furnished by Yale University Department of Athletics, Physical Education, and Recreation.)

²The account of Yale football that follows consolidates and summarizes material that appears in John Allen Krout, "Annals of American Sport," The Pageant of America (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1929), pp. 238-248; John D. McCallum and Charles H. Pearson, College Football U.S.A., 1869-1973 (New York: Hall of Fame Publishing Company, Inc., 1973), pp. 86-99, 195-199; The College Game (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1974), pp. 22, 24, 50, 52; and Hubert M. Sedgwick, "25 Years of Football in Yale Bowl," New Haven Register, Sunday, November 19, 1939.

³Camp's career is sketched in McCallum and Pearson, op. cit., pp. 88-92; and Krout, op. cit., pp. 238-248.

⁴Keith W. Jennison, ed. "Football," The Concise Encyclopedia of Sports (New York: Franklin Watts, Inc., 1970), p. 450; and World Almanac, 1985, p. 829.

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⁵Herbert Kamm, The Junior Illustrated Encyclopedia of Sports (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1970), pp. 272-273.

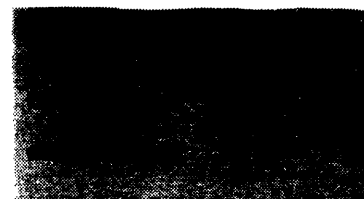
⁶Ibid., pp. 301-309.

⁷Yale University Department of Athletics, Physical Education, and Recreation, Down The Field, 1985 Yale Football (New Haven, 1985); and Yale University Sports Information Office, The GAME, Football Program, November 19, 1983 (New Haven, 1983), passim, especially pp. 8-9, and the article by Thomas G. Bergin, "Long Live The Game," at pp. 57-61.

⁸MacLeish's speech is reprinted in full in McCallum and Pearson, op. cit., pp. 284-287. The cited portion is at p. 286.

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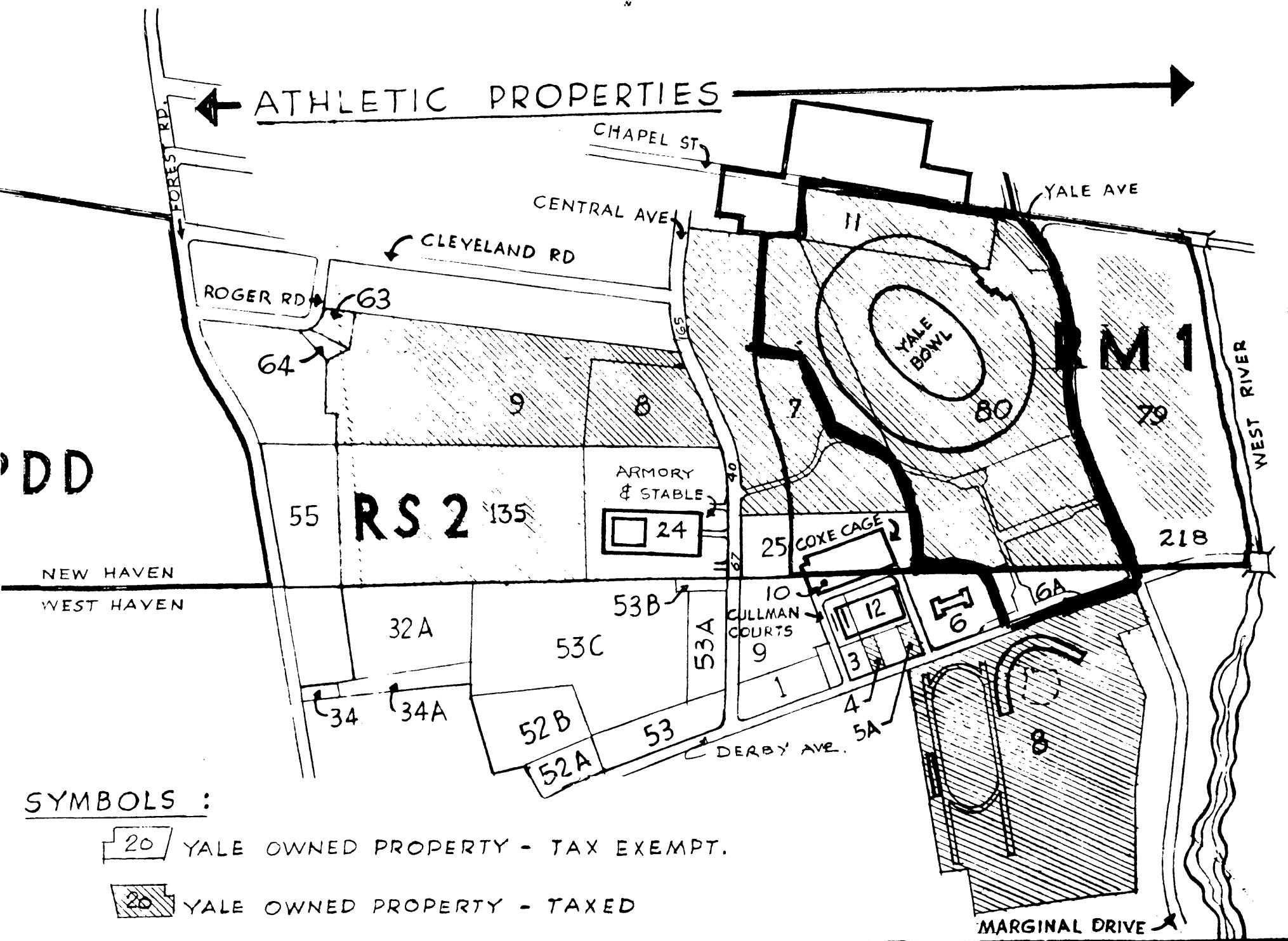
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Verbal Boundary

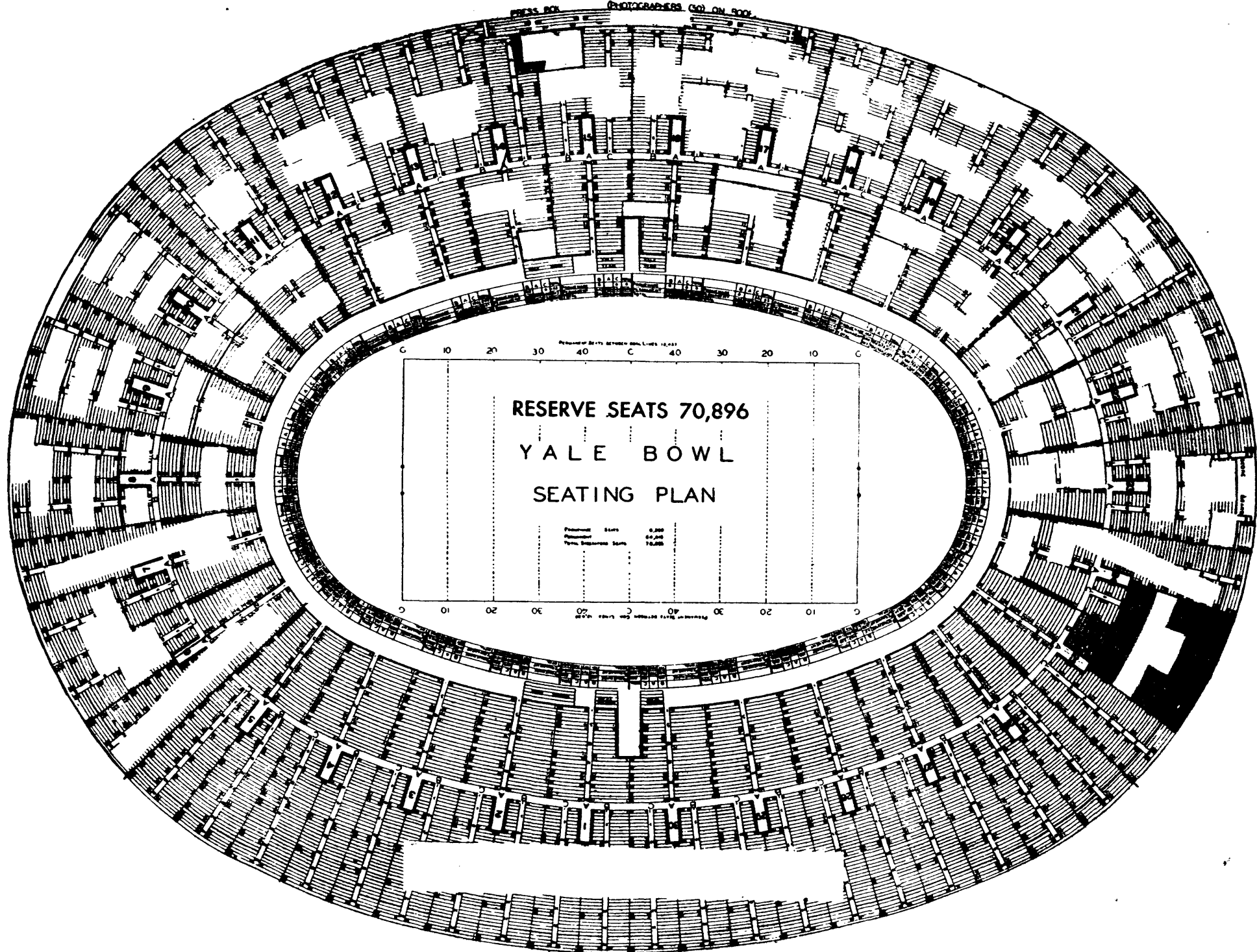
Lots 6A, 11, and 80, as indicated on attached university planning map, using city tax map as a base, including a tract bounded by Chapel Street on the north, Yale Avenue on the east, Derby Avenue on the south, and the irregular lot lines tracing generally northwest to Chapel Street ending with the west lot line of Lot 11 at Chapel Street, i.e., the point of beginning. This tract includes the Bowl, its south parking lots, and the Camp Memorial Gateway. It does not include other athletic facilities on the block, which are on other lots.

ATHLETIC PROPERTIES

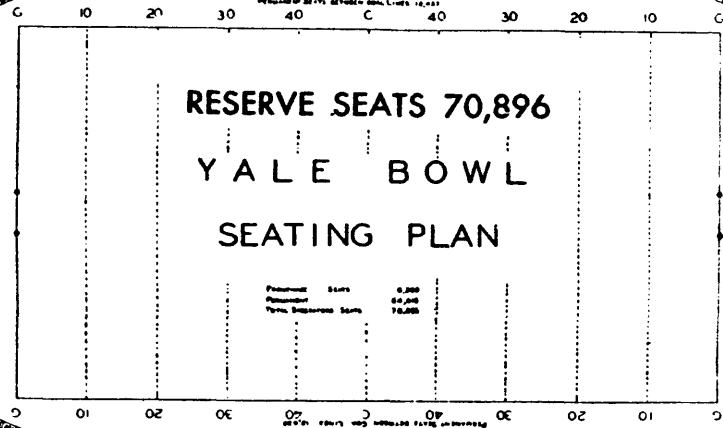


SYMBOLS :

-  YALE OWNED PROPERTY - TAX EXEMPT.
-  YALE OWNED PROPERTY - TAXED



PERIOD OF SEATS BETWEEN ROW LINES 10, 20, 30, 40



RESERVE SEATS 70,896
YALE BOWL
SEATING PLAN

Permanent Seats 8,200
Temporary Seats 62,696
Total Seating Capacity 70,896