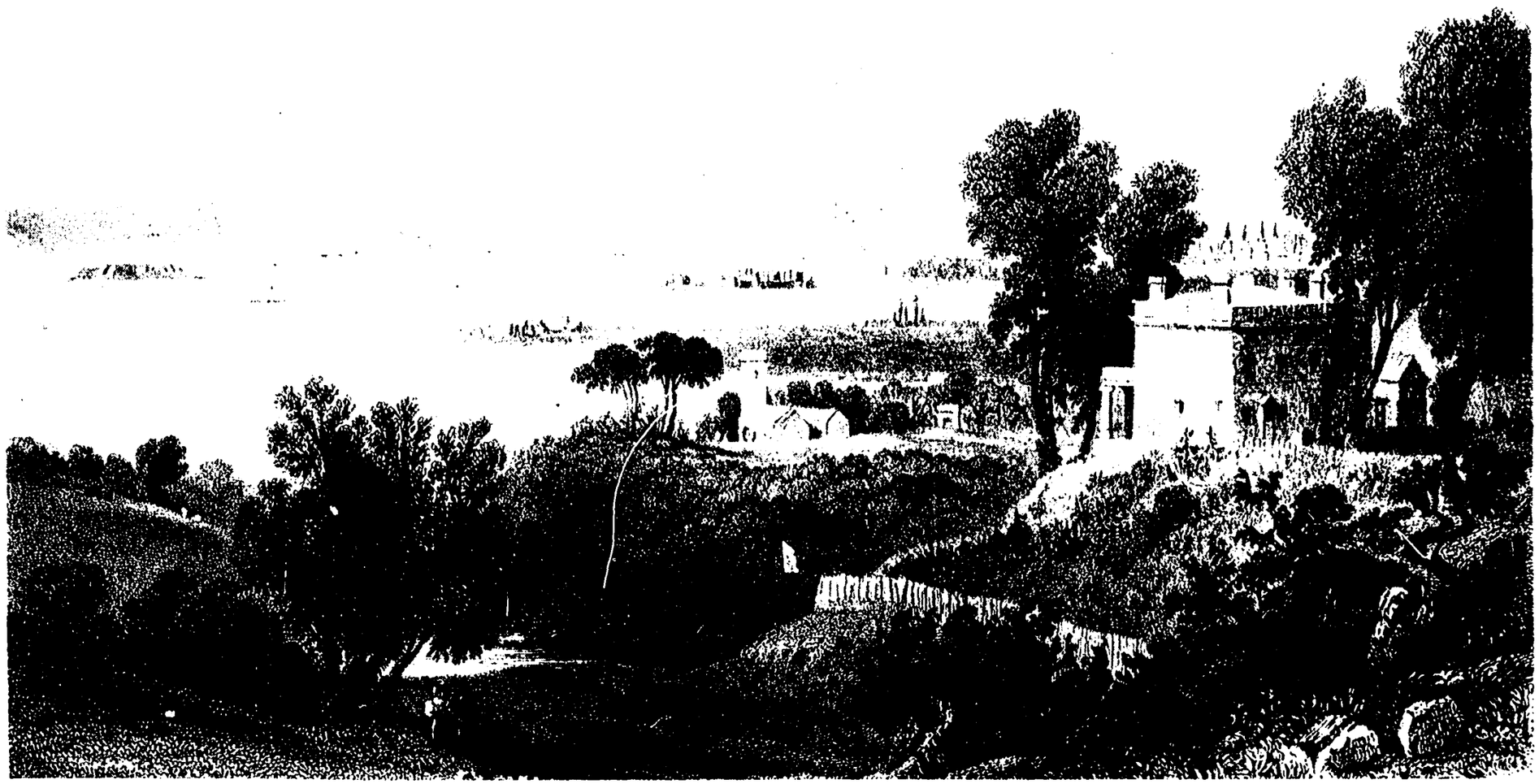


AN EARLY VIEW OF THE SHORES OF BROOKLYN

From a print in the collection of the New York Public Library.

HISTORIC

A Collection *of the*
Facts, Legends, Traditions *and*
Reminiscences *that Time has gathered*
about the Historic Homesteads *and*
Landmarks *of* Brooklyn

ISSUED IN COMMEMORATION OF THE

Seventy-fifth Anniversary

OF THE

Brooklyn, N.Y.

1941

The ornament
on the cover is drawn
from a picture of the old church
at New Utrecht. The headband is
from a plan of the city of New York as
surveyed in 1766 showing on the right
the shores of Brooklyn. The
tailpiece shows the first
church in Brooklyn

COMPILED, WRITTEN AND PRINTED
BY DIRECTION OF THE
WALTON ADVERTISING & PRINTING COMPANY
BOSTON, MASS.

A History of the Brooklyn Trust Company

THIS edition of Historic Brooklyn is presented in commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the chartering of the Brooklyn Trust Company. Inasmuch as this institution has so long been identified with the growth and development of Brooklyn, we deemed it not inappropriate to publish a revised edition of a historic book on Brooklyn which we originally issued twenty-five years ago. We believe the book will be found worthy of a place in your library. A concise account of the growth and development of the Brooklyn Trust Company, we feel, may not be out of place here.

The Brooklyn Trust Company came into existence in a time of great economic disturbance. The Civil War had left the United States in a critical condition both politically and financially.

On April 14, 1866, exactly one year after the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, the New York State Legislature passed a special act incorporating the Brooklyn Trust Company in response to an urgent demand in Brooklyn for a banking institution which could act as executor or trustee (a novelty in those days), and the corporate existence of the Company began. Business actually commenced in June, 1868, in offices located at the corner of Court and Joralemon Streets. The Company moved to its present location at 177 Montague Street in 1873.

The original incorporators were J. Carson Brevoort, Daniel Chauncey, Dr. Henry J. Cullen, Daniel F. Fernald, Jasper W. Gilbert, William M. Harris, William B. Lewis, Alexander McCue, Henry E. Pierrepont, John H. Prentice, John T. Runcie, Cornelius J. Sprague, William Wall, James Weaver, and Alfred M. Wood. Directors who joined the Board in 1868 just before business was started, taking the places of some of the original incorporators, were Ethelbert S. Mills, Martin Kalbfleisch, Edward Harvey, Josiah O. Low, Henry Sanger, William S. Tisdale, John Halsey, John P. Rolfe, Alexander M. White and James D. Fish. The descendants of some of the original incorporators and others who joined the Board of Trustees during the first few years are still active in the management of the Company.

Ethelbert S. Mills was the first president, serving from 1868 to 1873; other presidents who have served the Company were: Ripley Ropes, 1873–1890; Christian S. Christensen, 1890–1900; Theodore S. Miller, 1900–1913; Edwin P. Maynard, 1913–1927, and George V. McLaughlin, 1927 to the present time.

Under such adverse economic conditions as existed at the time, its early growth was slow. By the end of the first decade, however, de-

posits amounted to $1,625,594. Original capital of $150,000 had been increased to $400,000 by 1881, when, at the age of 15 years, the institution was well "on its feet." This is borne out by the fact that dividends on its capital stock have been paid each year from 1879 to the present time.

Growth of the Brooklyn Trust Company in the years which followed is illustrated by the various capital increases shown in the table below:

Year	*Capital Increase*
1883	$ 400,000 to $ 600,000
1888	600,000 to 1,000,000
1913	1,000,000 to 1,500,000
1926	1,500,000 to 2,000,000
1928	2,000,000 to 2,080,000
1929	2,080,000 to 8,000,000
1930	8,000,000 to 8,200,000

Branch development, which has played an important part in the Company's growth, began in March, 1903, when an office was opened at Fulton Street and Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn, for the convenience of residents of the Bedford district. In May, 1907, the Company opened a Manhattan Office at the corner of Wall Street and Broadway. In January, 1913, the Long Island Loan and Trust Company was absorbed in a merger, and in July of the same year Edwin P. Maynard was elected President of the Company.

Meanwhile deposits had been mounting, and on April 1, 1916, reached the total of $37,272,209. In 1921 a branch was opened at Fifth Avenue and Seventy-Fifth Street, in the Bay Ridge section of Brooklyn, and in 1926 the Flatbush Office, at Church and Ocean Avenues, was opened.

On December 1, 1927, Mr. Maynard became Chairman of the Board of Trustees and George V. McLaughlin, former New York State Superintendent of Banks and subsequently Police Commissioner of New York City, was elected President. The succeeding three years marked the greatest growth in the Company's history. In January, 1928, the Bank of Coney Island was absorbed in merger, while in February, 1929, the Mechanics Bank, one of the largest and oldest commercial banking institutions in Brooklyn, was consolidated with the Brooklyn Trust Company. In January, 1930, the Guardian National Bank of Brooklyn and the State Bank of Richmond County, Port Richmond, Staten Island, were merged.

These mergers added 16 branch offices to the Company's system. Independently of the new offices acquired in mergers, the Company established ten additional branches in various growing sections of Brooklyn and Queens during 1929 and 1930, bringing the total number of offices operated to 31 at the end of the latter year. Of these new branches, four have since been merged with other neighboring offices of the Company, and one has been sold to another banking institution, the total at present (1941) being 26.

FOREWORD

The growth and progress of the Company is perhaps best shown by the rise in its deposits over the past 65 years. The totals were as follows:

Date	*Deposits*
June 30, 1875	$ 1,469,446
June 30, 1885	6,206,002
June 30, 1895	10,028,845
June 7, 1905	17,897,896
June 30, 1915	33,030,189
June 30, 1925	49,955,759
June 30, 1935	105,400,631
Dec. 31, 1940	129,856,384

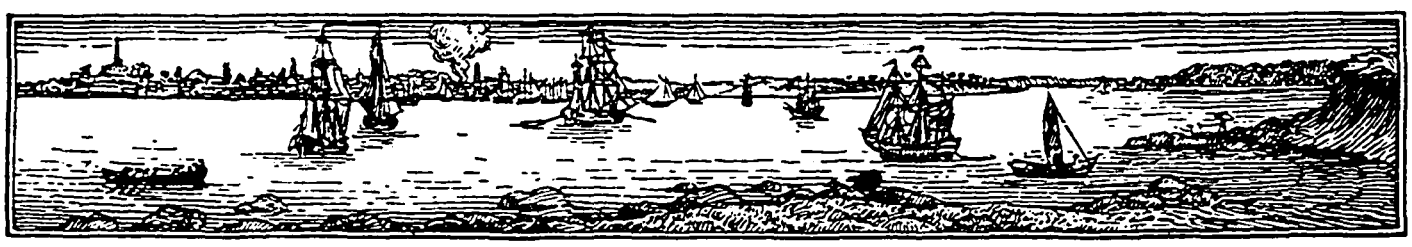
The trust business of the Company has also grown steadily, and while figures are not published, it is understood that the value of assets held in various fiduciary capacities by the Company is larger than its banking resources.

In presenting "Historic Brooklyn," no attempt has been made by the Brooklyn Trust Company to give a complete list of places of historic interest, but rather to glean here and there stories of interesting landmarks, both past and present. The Rambler wandered via trolley and motor and on foot from one point to another, guided by his own will and the lure of century-old traditions and localities. His data have been made as nearly historically correct as the reminiscences of residents, the legends and traditions that come down from generation to generation, and the various histories of Brooklyn, New York, and Long Island, allow. The book is designed not only for the residents of the Borough of Brooklyn, but also for strangers who may come here, interested in the many historic points of which we may justly boast. For Brooklyn has contributed to the history of the United States her share of tradition and romance, of thrilling incident and battle-scene; and from the lore of sage and poet, of historian and scholar, of student and antiquary, these rambles have been reinforced, with the intent to present this city in the light of a modern Mecca for those interested in historic landmarks and valued associations.

The editor desires to acknowledge the assistance in the preparation of this book of: Miss Frances B. Cropsey; Miss Edna Huntington of the Long Island Historical Society; Miss Maud Voris; Mr. Alexander J. Wall of the New York Historical Society; the Brooklyn Public Library; the New York Public Library; the New York Historical Society; the New England Genealogical Society, and the Massachusetts Historical Society.

NEW YORK FROM BROOKLYN HEIGHTS 1834

From an old print in the New York Public Library.



WHEN BREUCKELEN WAS YOUNG

THE Rambler from the majestic height of Brooklyn Bridge peered through its network of steel, north, east, south, and west. New York lay behind him; the East River, on either side; beneath surged the river traffic; over the bridge were trolleys; and above two airplanes were dashing across the sky toward Manhattan. Of all these things he was conscious, but longest he turned toward Brooklyn; and, pressing back with one flash of the imagination every busy thoroughfare, every towering roof, every vestige of nineteenth-century progress, he thought of Brooklyn as she was in the middle of the seventeenth century, rich in maize-fields, sleepy as an aborigine, the turbulent tide of the East River unharnessed, its treacherous currents unspanned.

The first step in the settlement of Brooklyn was made in the year 1636, when William Adriaense Bennet and Jaques Bentyn bought from the Indians 930 acres of land at "Gowanus." About a year later George Jansen de Rapelje bought a piece of land lying near the Wallabout Bay. De Rapelje was a farmer. He tilled his land, and occupied a house on it until about 1654. Tradition says his daughter Sarah was the first white child born on Long Island, and that she was held in great esteem both by the Dutch and the Indians. This assertion has been modified by later historians, who say that Sarah de Rapelje was the first female white child born in the New Netherlands colony.

Cabins were built on the Long Island shore, and eventually communication was established with Manhattan by one Cornelis Dircksen, who, having the advantage of holding land on both sides of the river, conducted a ferry between the two places. He was summoned by means of a horn that hung on a convenient tree, ready for the traveller to blow when he wished to cross. "The Ferry" on the Long Island shore later became the popular resort for the settlers. A road led from it to the Heights where the village of Breuckelen was thriving, which was supposed to have received its name from the Dutch, and means "broken land." It clustered close about the site of the present

Borough Hall, and followed the course of Fulton Street, which no doubt was originally an Indian trail. The first school stood about where Abraham and Straus store now is, only a few blocks from the Borough Hall and the First Church and graveyard behind City Hall.

Breuckelen passed through Indian troubles and through the tyranny of the régime of Director-General William Kieft, then into the administration of Peter Stuyvesant, who arrived in 1647, conspicuous for having one leg, the other having been lost in the wars and replaced with a wooden one, ostensibly laced with silver bands. He probably made an impression when he arrived, and the opinions formed of him were not exactly in his favor; for somebody, in watching the excited, soldierly old fellow, remarked that his stride was "like a peacock's, with great pomp and state," and complained that he kept the burghers bareheaded for several hours, though his own head was covered, "as if he were the Czar of Muscovy."

Breuckelen passed through various vicissitudes of tax laws, political upheavals, church establishments, and growth as a town, and at about the time of the Revolution she came to be known first as Brookland and then as Brooklyn. She was fired by the Patriots' cause in 1775. Her sons, grasping musket and bayonet, rushed to defend the colonies. Nor were these Patriots disheartened when the time came, at the close of the Revolutionary War, to gather up the threads of industry tangled by the British during their occupancy. Putting her shoulder firmly to the wheel, Brooklyn rallied her forces and industries along every line, and in half a century, in 1830, became a city.

Later came foreshadowings of the Civil War, made impressive by the prophetic words of Henry Ward Beecher. From forum and pulpit Beecher told of things as they were and as they would be. Slaves were sold in Plymouth Church, and the chains that bound them were held up by the great abolitionist on his pulpit platform to fire the hearts of his audience with hatred of the accursed institution.

More than three-quarters of a century ago the Civil War was fought. To-day Brooklyn reflects the changes brought to her by the twentieth century. Still sheltered by her are quaint Dutch manors of the early settlers, still may be seen Revolutionary landmarks, still there are reminders of the Civil War. She is the Borough of Brooklyn, with more than two and one-half million inhabitants, known to the world as "the City of Churches," called by her own people "the City of Homes."

THE BATTLE AT THE OLD STONE HOUSE AT GOWANUS

"We shall have with you in a few days four thousand men, which is all that we can arm and equip, and the people of New York, for whom we have great affection, can have no more than our all." — *Maryland Council of Safety to the New York delegates in Congress, August 16, 1776, concerning the American troops that fought at the Stone House of Gowanus.*

Maryland soldiers under Lord Stirling fought and died around the Stone House at Gowanus on the day when the first real battle of the

OLD STONE HOUSE AT GOWANUS

From a photograph by John L. Pierrepont in the collection of the Long Island Historical Society.

Revolution occurred, August 27, 1776. On the preceding day General Washington had viewed the works of defence nearest the British lines. It is altogether possible that he came to the Old Stone House, and that he surveyed the slopes of Gowanus, anxiously scanning them, seriously considering the situation. It is reported that he was "very anxious" on the night preceding the battle of Long Island, that a premonition came to him of an attack both by land and by sea, and that after much restless tossing he finally affirmed that "the same Providence that rules to-day will rule to-morrow," and fell asleep.

Of the morrow many tales are told, — tales of the battle of Brooklyn and of this old house that felt the shock of cannon and saw brave men die.

The Stone House at Gowanus no longer stands. The foundation and some of the stones of this house were unearthed and a new house built as nearly like the original as possible. It was opened to the public in 1933, and is in a park called the James J. Byrne Memorial Park, 3rd to 4th Street, between 4th and 5th Avenue. The park is a large playground for children and the house is in the center. On the second floor the park department has a kindergarten. Buildings have been built over the lands that formerly spread around the old house; on the

1 Augustus Graham
2 Joshua Sands
3 Mrs Harmer & daughter
4 Mrs Guy.
5 Jacob Patchen
6 Benj Meeker.
7 John Garrison
8 Thos W Birdsall
9 Jacob Hicks
10 Abial Titus.

VIEW OF FRONT St BROOKLYN, L.I. 1820.

From a Painting by Francis Guy.

VIEW OF FRONT STREET, BROOKLYN, L.I., 1820, SHOWING THE INTERSECTION WITH FULTON STREET

Augustus Graham and Joshua Sands are at the extreme left. The women in front are Mrs. Harmer and daughter, and Mrs. Francis Guy. In the centre of the road is Jacob Patchen, King of Butchers, carrying a quarter of mutton. Benjamin Meeker with square and measuring pole is talking to Judge John Garrison. Thomas W. Birdsall to the right of the judge is talking to Jacob Hicks. From a painting by Francis Guy in the New York Public Library.

reconstructed "Stone House" is a bronze tablet, depicting the scene of that eventful battle, when scores of Maryland's sons fell. "The site," one reads beneath the battle-scene, "of the Old Cortelyou House on the Battlefield of Long Island. Here on the 27th of August, 1776, two hundred and fifty out of four hundred brave Maryland soldiers under the command of Lord Stirling were killed in combat with the British under Lord Cornwallis."

This Old Stone House, which years after its erection came to play such a prominent part in the history of Long Island, was erected by Nicholas Vechte in 1699, and historians say it was the only stone house in Gowanus at the time he built it. Well built, with walls several feet thick, it withstood this terrific siege in the War of the Revolution, and, when finally destroyed several years ago, Gatling guns were necessary to force apart the stones of the structure. At the time Nicholas Vechte built it, momentous events were coming to pass; and the very year of its erection the notorious Captain Kidd sailed to Easthampton, Long Island, and buried treasure there.

Stirling set out from the Stone House at three o'clock on the morning of the 27th to face the British. He advanced along Fifth Avenue, past Greenwood (Lookout) Hill, to meet the enemy, who had several days before landed at Gravesend and Fort Hamilton. The British in the mean time were directing their lines against the Stone House. The detachments met in the early morning near the border of Greenwood Woods. Washington and the people of Brooklyn had been aroused by the rattle of musketry. General Washington was in his saddle at dawn, hastening toward the Brooklyn lines, where he beheld the slaughter of Lord Stirling's men, fighting against Cornwallis. At that moment there was being fought what John Fiske calls the first real battle of the Revolution, beginning with an engagement between Grant and Stirling at Greenwood and concluding with that between Cornwallis and Stirling at the Old Stone House of Gowanus.

Hour after hour the storm of fire from the cannon, muskets, and rifles continued between Grant and Stirling. The patriot general held his own until word reached him that Sullivan had fallen and been made a prisoner by the Hessians, while the British army was advancing on his rear. The Old Stone House was occupied by Cornwallis and his troops. Taking a chance in a thousand of saving himself and his men, Stirling directed his forces toward routing the British general. Time and again the brave Americans stormed the house; and, though guns had been placed both within the house and without, with each charge the enemy fell back. Victory seemed inevitable for Stirling, but just at the turn in his favor Cornwallis received reinforcements. Stirling knew that escape was impossible, for every way had been closed. Signalling for six companies of a Maryland regiment of riflemen to join him, he once more turned on the British, and with his men faced the rain of English bullets until two hundred and fifty-six of the Marylanders were dead. Then Lord Stirling

NEW YORK BAY FROM BROOKLYN HEIGHTS

From a painting by Miss M. L. Sneden in the collection of the Long Island Historical Society.

blindly fled across the hills, where, refusing to surrender to a British general, he sought out in Prospect Woods the Hessian general, De Heister, and was sent a prisoner to the British flagship *Eagle,* with other prisoners of war.

Darkness fell on the ill-fated August 27. Rain and fog set in; and General Washington, fearing that the British fleet would sail up the East River and cut off his forces on Long Island, resolved on a retreat. Only the sound of the sentinel's footfall broke the stillness of the night. At the foot of what is now Fulton Street, preparations were being made for embarking. Suddenly the hush of midnight was broken by the boom of a solitary cannon.

"We are lost," said an aide to Washington.

They tell a story of Mrs. John Rapelje, whose husband was a notorious Royalist. From the gathering of boats on the shore and the unusual movements of the American troops, Mrs. Rapelje surmised that they meant flight; and, summoning a negro slave, she sent him to inform Lord Howe of these facts. A Hessian sentinel stopped the slave, and, unable to understand his language, the sentinel detained him as a spy until morning, when only the empty entrenchments of the patriots remained to tell of their escape.

Four years later Nicholas Vechte moved from his substantial stone house, having sold the Gowanus estate to Jaques Cortelyou, by whose name the house has very frequently been called.

MELROSE ABBEY

A ROMANCE OF MELROSE ABBEY

Time has swept away the broad lawns and drooping trees that once made the famous Melrose Abbey picturesque. It even in later years moved the Abbey itself from the lovely lane that led up to it; for, when the late Dr. Homer L. Bartlett purchased the property, he removed the house which stood on Flatbush Avenue opposite the junction of Franklin Avenue, from the east side of the lane to a spot east of Bedford Avenue, where it remained until its destruction several years ago.

In the days of the Revolution this old colonial place, built many years before, was the home of Colonel William Axtell, a Tory, who purchased it from Mr. Lane, an Englishman; and it was called far and near Melrose Hall, famous for its broad lawns and flower-beds, its wide halls, gilded drawing-rooms, and elaborate parties. For Lane himself, who about 1749 had built this house, so different from the usual Dutch style of architecture, had led a merry life at the Hall; and Colonel Axtell, who purchased the property on Lane's death, was no mean host.

Proud old Colonel Axtell was of ancient lineage, a descendant of that Colonel Daniel Axtell who had been in Cromwell's army, and who, scorning the benefits of the "general pardons and obligations" set forth later by the Parliament, was beheaded by the order of Charles II. Years after this proud old Colonel William Axtell's property had been confiscated, and after Bateman Lloyd, an American army officer, had lived there, Anna Cora Mowatt, a well-known actress and novelist, spent five years on the estate, which in her autobiography she recalls very pleasantly and names Melrose Abbey. It is,

however, around Colonel William Axtell that the most stirring scenes of the old Hall gather, — scenes recalled by the grim days of the Revolution; for the smoke of war-clouds hung heavy over Melrose Hall, and the din of battle surged without and within its borders and involved the fate of a young girl, Eliza Shipton, niece of Colonel Axtell's wife.

Days followed when the avenue of white pines resounded with the tread of British soldiers; for Colonel Axtell not only welcomed them to Long Island, but he threw open the doors of his home, that the Tory leaders might enter. Axtell himself was a member of the King's Council, and for his adherence to the British cause was made a colonel in Sir William Howe's army. If time could have made a dictagraph of the hours, it would have recorded late revels, alluring music, dancing feet, tales of pro-British plots, and the clank of chains binding the Patriot prisoners concealed in the dungeons of Melrose Hall.

Years later only brave travellers frequented the old Flatbush road after nightfall; and many tales were told of cries heard in the Hall, and of a white-faced young girl who flitted from room to room and peered from the upper windows down the avenue of pines, sobbing with the pines and restlessly pacing through the night. Years after all these things the bones of a woman were found in the dungeon in the cellar where so many brave Patriots, brought to the merciless Axtell, had died. She may have been the white-faced girl who, travellers say, watched during the night, and cried out in her loneliness from the upper rooms.

Early in the war, when the subtle Axtell was entertaining the British within his house, there were many gay functions at the Hall, — brilliant balls, brilliant suppers, — such gayety as modest Flatbush had never known. And into these scenes of music and romance walked young Aquila Giles, who met and loved Eliza Shipton, niece of the mistress of the Hall. Affairs went smoothly for a time, and under the white pines walked in serene happiness the lovers, the broad lawns and misty fountains making their way pleasant as they strolled. What might have happened had Aquila Giles kept from Colonel Axtell his regard for the lovely girl and his sympathy for the Patriot cause cannot be surmised. He declared both. The sumptuous gatherings at Melrose Hall went on, but without Aquila Giles; for in wrath the stern old adherent of the king had forbidden him to enter its doors again.

A party of British officers were being entertained by Colonel Axtell a few days previous to the battle of Brooklyn, and from the Heights an American gunner threw a shell into the house, causing damage. After the battle of Long Island until the close of the war Flatbush was in the hands of the British, who, invariably insolent, were a veritable thorn to the people of the town. It was Captain William Marrener, an American, who among others was paroled in Flatbush, and who after his release resolved to be avenged for the treatment given by the enemy. In a whale-boat, with a picked crew,

ERASMUS HALL IN 1826

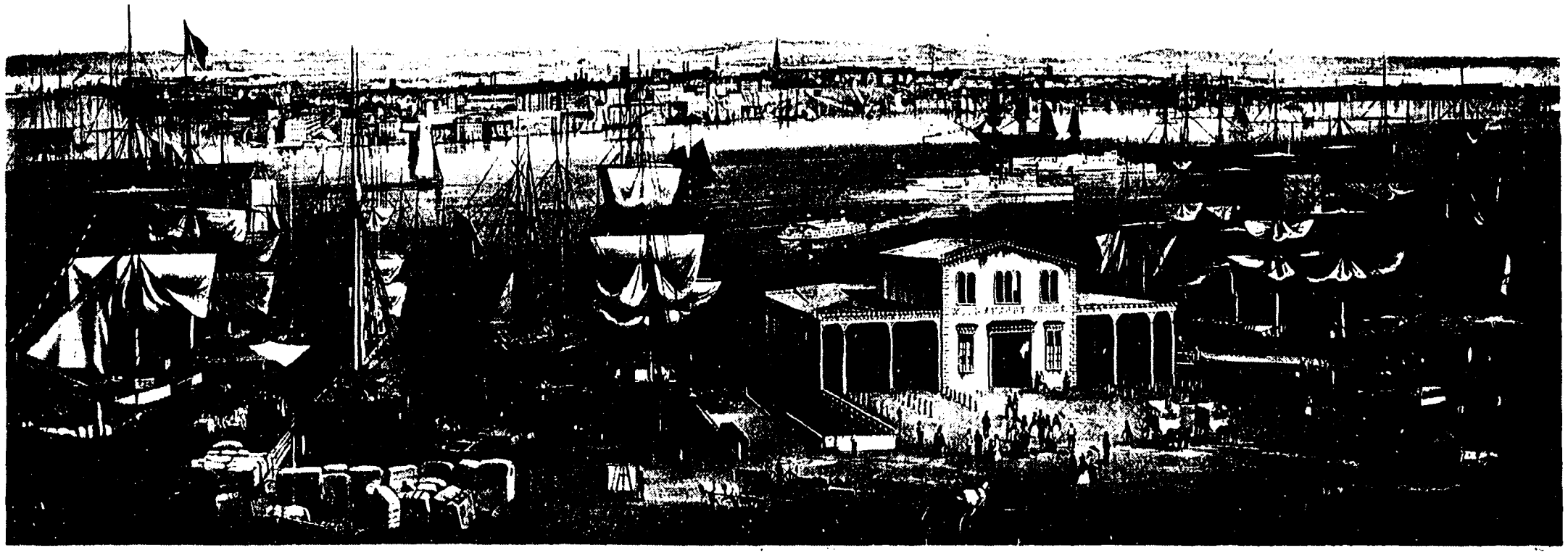
From a photograph made by Allen B. Doggett from the original painting.

he sailed by night into Gravesend Bay from Jersey, and thence led his men to Flatbush, where, having made four parties, four houses of the town were assailed, among them Colonel Axtell's. The doors of Melrose Hall were battered down, but the colonel was not there, having previously gone to New York. It is said by an authority that the capture would have been difficult, for the old Hall had many a secret stairway, closet, and vault, which none knew better than the man who planned them "for the glory of God and the king."

Aquila Giles, who had joined the American army and risen to the rank of colonel, returned to Flatbush at the end of the war, to make Eliza Shipton his wife. Melrose Hall was confiscated by the government, and advertised to be sold by public auction. It was purchased on October 21, 1784, by Colonel Aquila Giles, who led his bride over the threshold from which he had been turned away, into the Hall where she when a girl, his betrothed, waited for him during the weary days of the war.

ERASMUS HALL, AN EARLY SEAT OF LEARNING

Behind the Erasmus Hall High School its old parent Erasmus Hall still stands on Flatbush Avenue, Brooklyn. Its condition is fairly good, but at present it is not used for classes. It stands in the center of the school grounds surrounded by modern buildings. Many years ago, Dr. John H. Livingston came to Flatbush, and aided by influential men of the town, agitated for better education. Dr. Livingston hoped that this school might form the nucleus for a theo-



BROOKLYN, L. I.

As seen from Trinity Church in 1853. Painted by J. W. Hill. Published by Smith Bros. From the collection of Robert Fridenberg.

logical school that he wished to establish. He came to Flatbush during the summer of 1786, and his students of theology came with him. Senator John Vanderbilt became interested in Dr. Livingston's suggestion to have a school in the town other than the village school in the heart of Flatbush, and together they set to work to obtain the support of other influential men. They finally won to the cause Jacob Lefferts, Joris Martense, Peter Lefferts, Johannes E. Lott, William B. Gifford, Peter Cornell, Matthew Clarkson, Aquila Giles, Garret Martense, Cornelius Vanderveer, and Justice John Vanderbilt.

A subscription paper was started, and it was not long before a spot was chosen for the new school in the center of the village on Main Road (now Flatbush Avenue) near the place where the village schoolhouse stood.

The year 1787 was a busy one for the Flatbush men. Logs were hauled from neighboring farms for the new school, and men from far and near helped in the building. They named it Erasmus Hall, for Desiderius Erasmus, the Dutch scholar who during Henry VIII's time brought the "New Learning" to England.

The governor of the State, members of the Assembly, and many residents of Flatbush attended the first public exhibition held at Erasmus Hall, on September 27, 1787. Previously application had been made to the Regents of the University of the State of New York for a charter, which, subsequently granted, placed Erasmus Hall first on the list of secondary schools to receive such a charter.

About this time the directors turned to Dr. Livingston for guidance, and in addition to his duties as pastor in New York City he accepted the principalship of the new academy — without salary. The year following its erection the trustees announced that, "as this institution was designed to be a superior common school, the Board resolved that no scholar be admitted into the Hall but such as have begun to read and write." The fee was fixed at a half guinea, and the tuition fee for instruction in English was placed at £3 10*s*. For instruction in other departments the fee was one guinea, and the tuition fee six pounds.

The trustees from the first were anxious that the scholars at Erasmus Hall should have a well-equipped library, and the year following its opening (1788) each language pupil was assessed one dollar, to go toward buying books. It appears that some of the parents of the pupils objected to this scheme, so this plan of getting a library was abandoned. The trustees next turned to the regents for an equipment, and in this their pleas were successful; for a record of May 2, 1791, shows that 115 books had been given, also one thermometer, one barometer, one small magnet, an electrical apparatus, a theodolite and chair, Hadley's quadrant, a small telescope, two prisms, and a case of drawing instruments. The head teacher, John Todd, was appointed to care for the books, among which were "Paradise Lost," Goldsmith's "Roman History" and his "Animated Nature," Johnson's Dictionary, and the *Rambler* and *Spectator*.

From far and near pupils came to the new school. Some of them even came from other States, and the records show that there were a good number of boarding pupils, and that the number increased to such an extent that the rooms at the school were filled, and some of the students sought board among the neighboring farms. It was fortunate that the residents of Flatbush — all of them well-to-do — were kindly disposed toward the new-comers, for they opened their homes to them. Twenty pounds a year was the cost of board, room, and washing. There is hardly a question that these youths of early Erasmus Hall did play their pranks, though nothing worse than stealing apples is on record against them. Mr. J. Baxter, of Flatlands, has an interesting note in his diary of October 13, 1792, to this effect: "Went to the meeting to the church about the Academy boys, who had played the d—l."

Erasmus Hall in 1896 was transferred to the city of Brooklyn, and in 1905 the new Erasmus Hall High School was begun. The first principal was Dr. Walter Balfour Gunnison. The principal now (1941) is Dr. John F. McNeill. The parent building stands close behind its progeny on Flatbush Avenue, as though shielded from the too curious gaze of the public; and, if an old building can think, it probably wonders concerning the changes that have come about in Flatbush.

The Reformed Church of Flatbush, used as a hospital for the wounded soldiers during the Revolution, for years was closely associated with Erasmus Hall. Its steeple bell gave the first warning of the coming of the British to the town. The bell which hangs now in the steeple of the Dutch Church in Flatbush was not installed until after the Revolution. It was given by John Vanderbilt and on its way to America was interned in Halifax during the war. This church building was built in 1796 and the bell hung there. It is rung by hand for the church services, but a hammer strikes it to sound the hour of the day as told by the clock in the belfry. It has tolled at the passing of every President from Washington to the present time.

THE LEFFERTS HOUSE AND TALES OF STEINBOKKERY POND

"There's Senator Lefferts across the street in his homespun suit that made the statesmen at Albany jealous when he was there. His wife spun every thread of it." — *John Baxter's Diary, 1790.*

The old Lefferts house has been occupied by eight generations of Lefferts. It stood at 563 Flatbush Avenue, but was acquired by the Park Department in 1918 and now stands in Prospect Park on the Flatbush Avenue side. The original house was burned during the Revolution, but was rebuilt after the same design. At present it is owned by the Park Department, but "The Fort Green Chapter," Daughters of the American Revolution, maintains a museum in it. On

LEFFERTS HOMESTEAD

At 563 Flatbush Avenue, Flatbush, Brooklyn. Built before 1776, burned during Revolution and rebuilt.

certain days it is open to the public, and some of the patriotic meetings are held there. On the landing of the British at Bath in August of 1776, when the American riflemen, toward evening, saw the enemy approaching, they set fire to stacks of grain in Flatbush and also burned this house. Its foundations were saved, and in a short time was reared the dwelling that now occupies the site. The land on which it stands was granted to Lefferts Pietersen Van Hagewout, who came to this country in 1660 and settled in Flatbush. He received a deed in parchment a year later, signed by Peter Stuyvesant.

The Lefferts family has been a prominent one and closely associated with the growth of Flatbush. John Lefferts, a grandson of the original settler, was judge of the Court of Sessions and Common Pleas, and was a county judge for a number of years. He was a town clerk of Flatbush and delegate to the Provincial Congress. His son Peter was a State senator and a judge of the Court of Sessions and Common Pleas, one of the first trustees of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church in Flatbush, and a large contributor toward the erection of Erasmus Hall, to which he subscribed sixty pounds and of which he was one of the trustees. He was a prominent Patriot.

An interesting tradition concerning property of a later member of the family, Mr. John Lefferts, is told by Mr. Daniel M. Treadwell. This property was Steinbokkery Pond, once near Bedford Avenue, which covered a surface area of about two acres and was owned by Mr. John Lefferts in 1860. About this pond the Indians wove tales; and the Algonquins, of whom the Flatbush Canarsies were a sub-tribe, believed that springs, brooks, and ponds were gifts of the Great Spirit,

ZABRISKIE HOMESTEAD IN 1839

From "Historical Sketch of the Zabriskie Homestead," by Dr. P. L. Schenck.

hence sacred. Probably many of these tales were heard by the whites, and Steinbokkery Pond came in for its share of superstition. One Joris Van Nyse asserted that the Steinbokkery was a breeding-place for sea-serpents and ghosts, and he further declared that one night, when he was returning home from Ben Nelson's in Flatbush, on Clove Road, near the bridge, he saw four or five great serpents come out of the pond, their heads blazing flame, and that they followed the creek toward the ocean.

Mr. John Lefferts said that in the fall of the year he had seen phosphorescent lights rising from the swamp and marshes about the pond, but, like many of his neighbors, he was not disturbed by the phenomenon. The country folk were the ones who saw visions and wove tales of a supernatural nature about old Steinbokkery, interpreting what they saw as forerunners of some great calamity. The Indians in their turn believed that the pond was the home of fire dragons, and that these monsters flew from one pond to another.

"One of the most charming men I ever saw," continues Mr. Treadwell, "was Mr. John Lefferts. He was a factor in all of the affairs of Flatbush for half a century. He was 6 ft. 4 in. tall and proportionately powerful, and was as kind and gentle as a child, — but no trifling. At one time a donkey domesticated in his family for the pleasure of his children refused to go into an adjoining pasture. No persuasion could induce him to move an inch. Mr. Lefferts wasted no time in expostulating with the reluctant beast, but seized him by the tail and nape of the neck and threw him bodily into the adjoining field."

This homestead has been the inspiration from which has sprung the plans of a number of summer cottages. In fact, some of the most attractive modern suburban homes are adaptations of these old Dutch homesteads. Not a few of the "Queen Cottages" are almost pure Dutch. Could we trace back the history of the architect's plan we would find its beginnings in an old Dutch home.

THE ZABRISKIE HOMESTEAD AND ABIGAIL LEFFERTS' LOVE STORY

Bateman Lloyd wooed lovely Abigail Lefferts almost under the very eyes of her father, Jacob Lefferts, at whose house on the corner of the cross-roads he was billeted for meals when a prisoner in Flatbush. The young officer, only nineteen years old when the war began, advanced from the rank of lieutenant to that of captain in the American army, and remained in the town a prisoner from February 27, 1776, until April 1, 1781. Though probably lodged for the greater part of the time as prisoner in the county jail, he was given the freedom of certain parts of the town; and it is not strange that during his solitary walks he met Miss Abigail, whose beauty had attracted him at her father's house. To be sure, Mr. Lefferts was a Tory, and there may have loomed before the lovers the monstrous prejudices they would have to overcome.

How the love affair would have progressed, had it not been for an uncle of Abigail's who had no Tory scruples, cannot be surmised. It is safe to assume that the youthful prisoner broke his parole, and that the most of his courtship was done at the home of the young woman's uncle, Mr. Jacobus Vandeventer. She left home one afternoon ostensibly to call on her relative. A clergyman happened there at the same time, also Mr. Bateman Lloyd. The following morning Mr. Vandeventer appeared at the home of Mr. Jacob Lefferts, on the corner of what is now Flatbush and Church Avenues, then known as the cross-roads.

"Is Abby at your house?" asked Mr. Lefferts.

"Yes, and her husband also," was the unexpected response. "Now, now, now," he may have continued, on seeing wrath flame up in the good Tory's face, "better allow them to go in peace."

The family was soon reconciled, the young couple given a paternal blessing, and Mr. Jacob Lefferts and his son-in-law became friends for life.

Mr. Lefferts' house was sacked and robbed by Hessians during the Revolutionary War. Word had come to him that the redcoats were not far distant. The family were about to eat dinner, and, leaving their meal untouched, they took only time enough to drop the family silver down the well. The house was one of the first seized by the enemy when the troops entered the town. The Lefferts family went to stay with friends at Jamaica; and later, on returning to Flatbush, they found their house and furniture in a state of con-

VAN PELT MANOR

fusion and wreck. Realizing they were at the mercy of a merciless enemy, they took the oath of allegiance to King George.

This old house has come down in history as the Zabriskie homestead, named for the well-known family who, however, do not own the estate at the present time. The early history of the house is not known. Tradition says it was older than the old Stryker house that stood opposite, constructed about 1696. Changes were made in the homestead when Jacob Lefferts bought it, and he largely rebuilt it. A Dr. Newbury may have been the first owner, prior to the occupancy of Jacob Lefferts, who in his turn in 1802 conveyed the estate to his son-in-law, Bateman Lloyd. Under the Zabriskie ownership the estate was broken up, and residences erected for members of the family.

A famous linden-tree stood by the side of the house, and beneath it, during Revolutionary times, Major David Lenox, when urged by his brothers to abandon the Patriot cause and swear allegiance to King George, firmly refused. "I will never do it," he asserted, with tears in his eyes. The tree fell in the summer of 1876, and the homestead was demolished in 1877. None of the family own the property now.

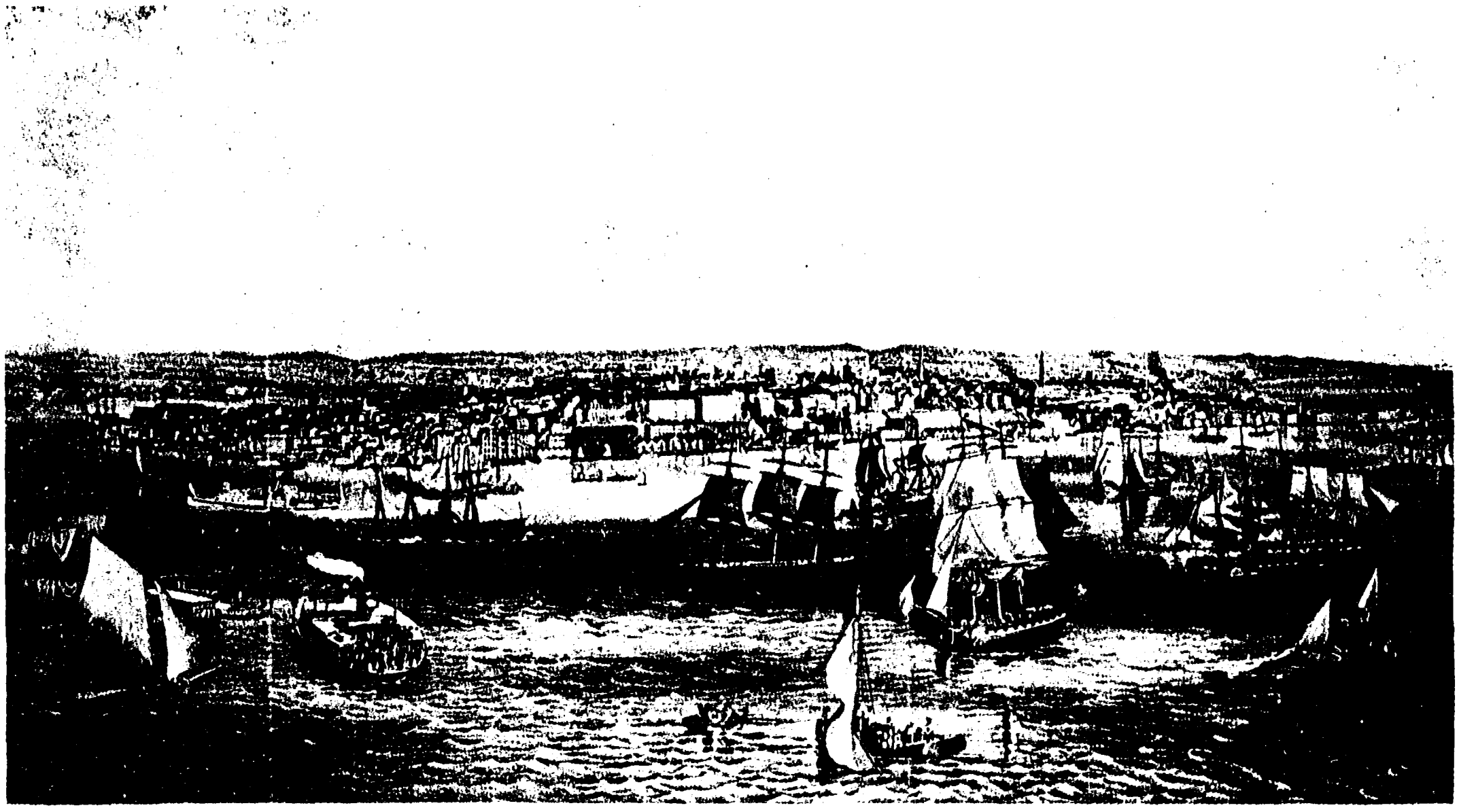
THE VAN PELT MANOR HOUSE

The Van Pelt Manor House stood in Van Pelt Manor from 1664 to 1924, when it was sold to the Park Department. Until then it was owned by the Van Pelt family. It is not used at present, but is in fairly good condition. So prominent has this family been in the town that the name of Van Pelt Manor has for many years been given to this part of Brooklyn. Mrs. Townsend Cortelyou Van Pelt, now

MILESTONE AT VAN PELT MANOR

dead, who lived at the Manor House, was a direct descendant of Sarah de Rapelje, the first female white child born in New Netherlands. Near her home in the yard of the Reformed Dutch Church, on the green in front of which the townspeople assembled, and cannons were fired, and patriotic demonstrations were made, is the New Utrecht Liberty Pole, topped by an ancient eagle and weather vane spelling "Liberty." It is the original eagle and vane which topped the first pole. The eagle is made of wood and measures five feet from wing to wing. Wind and weather have weakened it considerably, and it has been strengthened by iron bands on the wings and an iron bill and legs. Nobody knows where the eagle came from or who made it. The present pole is the fifth one to be erected on the same spot. A pole has always stood here and it is said to be the only spot in the country that can boast that at no time has the pole been allowed to disappear. Though many a locality has started a movement for a similar liberty pole, this one in New Utrecht is said to be the only one of its kind in the country and year after year it has served as a constant reminder of the Revolution. A flag flies every day. There are four tablets on the pole. The tablets read as follows:

"*Plate One.* New Utrecht—Liberty Pole. This Liberty Pole marks the spot over which the American Flag first waved in the town of New Utrecht. The original Pole was erected by our forefathers on the evacuation of the British, November, 1783, amid the firing of cannon and demonstrations of joy. A Second Pole was erected on the same site in 1834. A Third Pole was erected May, 1867. 'The Star Spangled Banner. O Long may it wave, O'er the land of the



BROOKLYN. N.Y. 1854.

Drawn by B. F. Smith, Jr., and published by H. Fern & Co., 218 Fulton Street, N.Y. From the collection of Percy R. Pyne, 2d.

free, and the home of the brave.' This Pole was reconditioned in November, 1892. Committee. T. C. Van Pelt. J. Lott Nostrand.

"*Plate Two.* This Pole was reset, May, 1899, by the descendants of those by whom it was originally erected. The occasion was appropriately observed by a popular demonstration and unfurling of a new flag. Committee T. C. Van Pelt. J. Lott Nostrand.

"*Plate Three.* Fourth Liberty Pole. Erected September 10th, 1910. Presented by Townsend C. Van Pelt and his wife Maria E. Van Pelt to the New Utrecht Liberty Pole Association. Incorporated 1908.

"*Plate Four.* Fourth Liberty Pole, destroyed by lightning July 14 — 1936. Replaced by Fifth Liberty Pole — Erected October 1936."

The old Dutch Reformed Church was used during the War of the Revolution by the British as a hospital and a riding-school.

The Manor House stood on what was King's Highway, which led from New York to the South and no longer exists. An old milestone, relic of George II's time, stands in a little park purchased by the city in 1917. It is in the same spot it always has been and is the only milestone in Kings County dating from before the Revolution. Along the old King's Highway passed the travel of the day between Long Island and Philadelphia. Washington rode over the old highway in 1790, and was greeted in New Utrecht by the village people. There was great excitement when word came that the general was shortly to arrive. From the little school-house near Van Pelt Manor the school-children were hustled home for fresh linen and face-washings and hair-combings; and they were as quickly marched back, dressed in new clothes and company manners, for the great George Washington would pass their way. At last, after many anxious scannings of the road, they saw him riding toward the little school-house, and the children lined up and waited until he approached. Little Peter Van Pelt was on the end of the line, and he was the last boy to whom George Washington spoke; and to little Peter he looked very tall, as he came near to him and laid his hand on Peter's head.

"Be a good boy, my son," said Washington, "and you will be a good man."

Little Peter Van Pelt probably remembered this admonition, but how far it shaped his life's course is not known. He did grow up to be a good and a great man, entering the ministry and achieving fame throughout the country. When Washington died, Peter Van Pelt delivered a sermon wherein he extolled the great general and President; and this sermon was printed in something like a twelve-page leaflet. Only a short time ago a single copy of this discourse was sold for five hundred dollars.

The Van Pelts were staunch to the American cause during the days of the Revolution, and Rem Van Pelt and his brother Aert were arrested on suspicion by the British authorities and placed in jail. With them also were a Colonel Rutgert Van Brunt, of Gravesend, and his brother Adrian. Colonel Van Brunt bribed his jailer, and the four men succeeded in getting a midnight interview, during which they planned to

BENSONHURST

From a photograph owned by Mrs. John F. Berry.

tell the same story. When examined, they were found not guilty, and were freed. As a matter of fact, they did know of plans under way to trick the British, and to this day is pointed out the window in the Van Pelt Manor House at which the American captain knocked that night when he told Rem Van Pelt's father of his hopes for success in the work against the enemy.

There was a sun-dial on the green in front of the Van Pelt Manor House, and a white fence shielded the garden from the whirl of the twentieth century. There are storied blue tiles about a fireplace. They say that even in Holland there are no older tiles than these.

BENSONHURST AND WASHINGTON; CLAY'S APPLEJACK

An old millstone, worn smooth by time, long lay in front of the hospitable door of Bensonhurst. Years ago this stone was brought from Holland, and, after passing decades in faithful service, was finally preserved as a unique threshold for the ancient house that was famous for the welcome given its guests. Bensonhurst stood near Gravesend Bay, between what is now Benson Avenue and Bay 24th Street. Near the homestead the British landed in Revolutionary times, and far and wide spread themselves over the town, regarding personal property as lightly as they might a wisp of hay driven by the wind across their march. The millstone and house are now no more.

Nicholas Cowenhoven built the house more than a hundred years

ago. His grand-daughter Maria married Egbert Benson, and since that time until within a few years, from generation to generation, the Bensons lived and kept the latch-string out in their house by the sea. The family became prominent in affairs of State, which they served with honor. Fighting Anthony Benson gave his life for his country in the Revolutionary War, during which he was taken prisoner, and confined in the old prison-ship *Jersey*, where he died from starvation and disease and was buried in Wallabout Bay.

Bensonhurst opened her doors to many a distinguished guest. General Washington was a frequent visitor there; and Mrs. Margaret Benson Berry, daughter of the late George Benson, had rare old plates that were used when the first President of the United States dined in her old home. Washington was fond of leisurely partaking of his excellent meal, of praising it, and afterward he found pleasure in walking arm in arm with his host down to the beach where the shad for which New Utrecht was then famous were caught. He probably lingered there to see this and that fisherman draw out his shad. This home must have been a quiet retreat for the great man, though before and after a visit there he was accustomed to meet the groups that gathered to see and speak with him.

Henry Clay liked Bensonhurst, and the elder Benson was a firm friend and admirer of his. There is a tradition that they enjoyed many a pipe and bottle of applejack together, and Mrs. Berry, now dead, once had a bottle of the very applejack that came from Clay's plantation in the South. This was evidently a bottle that Clay and the elder Benson overlooked, or else it may have been sent by the latter after one of his visits to the homestead.

At Bensonhurst Martha Lamb wrote much of her History of New York, gaining inspiration in the quiet of the old homestead and historical facts from the old families of the vicinity by whom she was received.

"Welkom," was the quaint motto that hung in the hall at Bensonhurst. The homestead itself was some years ago sold and the house was taken down.

ABOUT A LOST SUNBONNET AND HOW MISTRESS VAN BRUNT CONQUERED THE BRITISH IN THE VAN BRUNT HOMESTEAD

Within gunshot of this old house was fought the battle of Long Island. Within a good stone's throw of it 15,000 British soldiers and 40 pieces of cannon were landed on August 22, 1776. Almost past its very doors surged the stream of red-coated soldiers on their way to quell the rebellious colonists. The first Van Brunt of New Utrecht came from the New Netherlands in the seventeenth century. He was a well-known citizen of the town, which he served in various ways; and he was one of the hosts when Attorney-General Nicasius De Sille visited the village early in the year of 1660, and

VAN BRUNT HOUSE

this first Van Brunt with his neighbors assisted in giving their distinguished guest a good dinner and entertainment.

This Van Brunt house was built nearly two centuries and a half ago. Now demolished, it stood at 1752 84th Street, New Utrecht, in very different surroundings from the emerald green of the meadows that bounded it in the early days; for a city has crept up to its quaint old door, to its trees and shrubbery and rose-bushes.

One Mistress Van Brunt, whose husband joined the Patriots in Revolutionary days, gathered together her slaves and her children when she heard that the British were landing in New Utrecht. She was a resourceful woman and quick to act; and, as her slaves crowded about her, she bade one of them harness a horse. Into the cart she hustled her servants and her children; and without stopping to look after her hens or her cows or other live-stock, or even to lock up her house, she bade the driver whip up the horse, and away the Van Brunt family sped toward New Lotts. They were driving at a smart trot over the King's Highway, not yet out of sight of home, and not so far away but that they could see the redcoats emerging in line up the road, when one little Van Brunt girl lost her sunbonnet. She set up a terrible ado about it, and was far more concerned about its loss than she was about the lengthening line of redcoats that were marching close behind the steed that was drawing her to New Lotts. In the midst of the

confusion the slave stopped the horse, rescued the sunbonnet, and, concealed in its depths, the little Van Brunt girl snugly retreated. In the mean time the British were swarming over New Utrecht.

No sooner had Mistress Van Brunt arrived in New Lotts than she regretted her hasty retreat, and it was not long before she made up her mind to go home. She arrived with slaves and children. Soldiers were everywhere, and there were an unusual number of them in the Van Brunt house. It fairly bristled with crimson uniforms.

"What are you doing here?" she demanded of one of them as she walked into her kitchen.

"We live here," explained an officer. "This is our house."

"Indeed it is not," snapped Mistress Van Brunt. "This is my house, and I have brought my family home. If you must have part of it, you must, but you'll have to make room for my family and for me."

So she moved in, and the soldiers allotted her a portion of the house; and from all reports, after a formal understanding, they dwelt together under the same roof in peace and harmony, as the poets say.

"Where are my cows?" demanded the lady, pursuing the formal understanding to the letter.

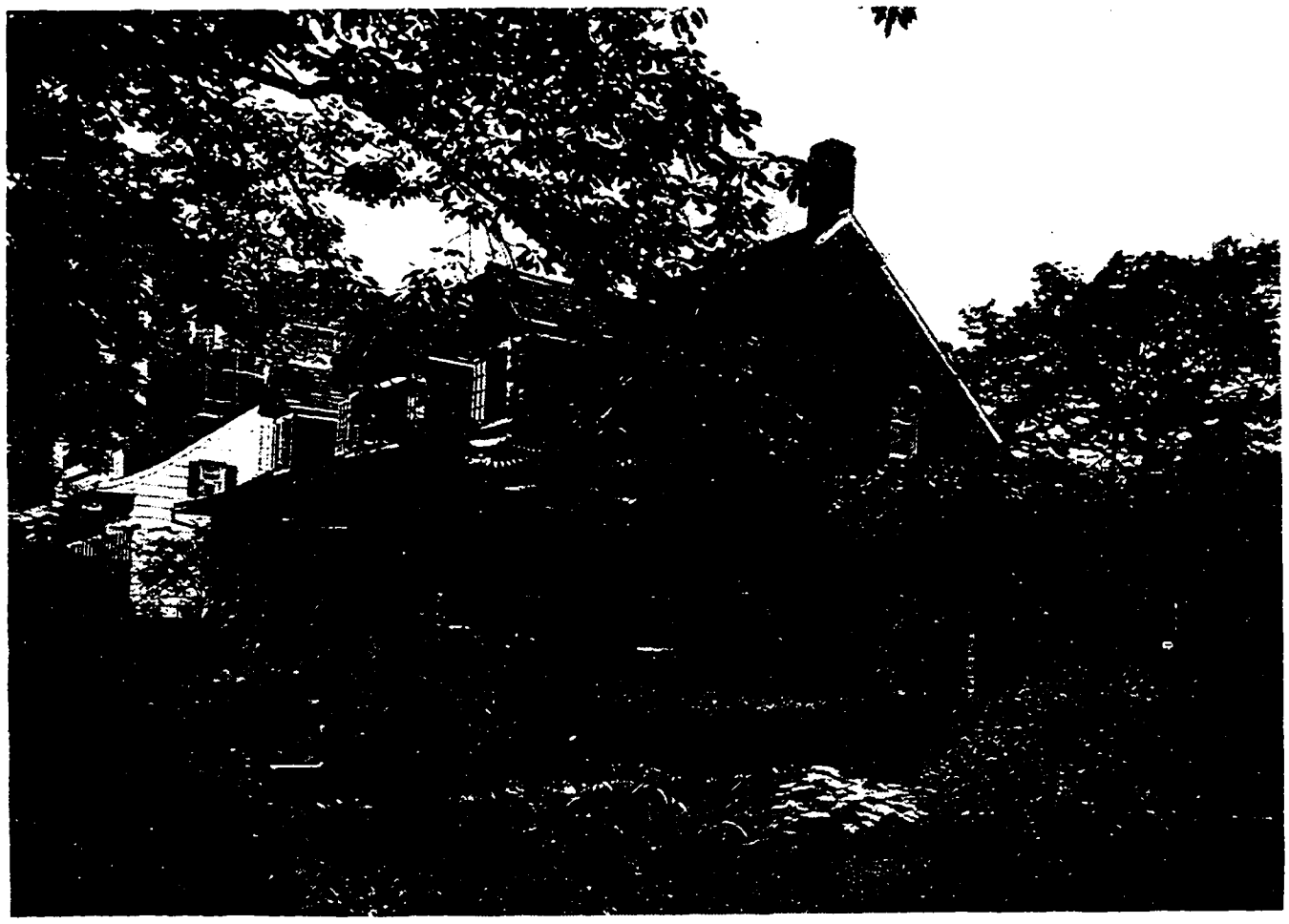
"Your cows, madam? You have no cows," returned the officer. "They are our cows, and they have been turned into a common pasture."

"Your cows, indeed!" asserted the lady. "How do you think the baby is to be fed? Tell me that! I need a cow, and I need it right away."

The officer may have shrugged his shoulders, but he eventually led the way to the cow pasture; and Mistress Van Brunt surveyed the herd, and carefully selected an excellent one of the number, which she drove home — and kept.

For a long time Mistress Van Brunt and her family and the British soldiers dwelt in their various portions of the homestead. After the war one of the Van Brunt girls married a British soldier, and with him went to live in Maryland. When the war-clouds had long passed, Mr. Van Brunt while visiting his daughter died and was buried in Maryland. Mistress Van Brunt was one day brushing her husband's coat which her daughter had sent back to her, when there fell from the pockets several nuts, which she planted in the grounds near her house. These nuts grew into trees, and the last of their number was standing until recently.

Mrs. Barbara Dawson lived there until a few years ago, and took great pride in the old kitchen with its quaint fireplace, in the low-ceilinged rooms, in the rose garden and the picturesque shrubbery that surrounded it and in the vines that clambered to the very eaves. "This house is very old," said Mrs. Dawson, "and they say General Washington once stayed here."



LADY DEBORAH MOODY HOUSE (HICKS–PLATT HOUSE)

YE BOWERIE OF LADY MOODY, A SCENE OF EARLY DISSENSIONS AND INDIAN TROUBLES

This quaint old house stands, on Neck Road in Gravesend, midway between Gravesend Avenue and Van Sicklen Street. The plot on which the house stands was originally owned by Lady Deborah Moody. It was sold by her son, Sir Henry Moody, to Jan Jansen Verryn. From Verryn it passed to Ralph Cardell, who prior to 1689 willed it to his wife, Elizabeth. She later married a man named Baylis, and her third husband was Isaac Haselberry. Haselberry sold the land in 1701 to Nicholas Stillwell, who sold it in 1702 to Ferdinand Van Siclen. Van Siclen is supposed to have built the house; some say he used the foundation of one which Lady Moody had built on the same spot, but no one can prove it. From the Van Siclens it went in 1841 by marriage to Thomas Hicks. A Mr. Platt purchased it about 1906. It has been known for many years as the Hicks-Platt House, but it is really a Van Siclen House. Opposite in the old graveyard, it is said, Lady Moody is buried, but the identity of the nameless stone supposed to mark her grave has never been proved, any more than has the fact that the beautiful old house was ever occupied by the grand dame herself of the English colony. Lady Deborah Moody was several times an exile. Her troubles seem to have begun in England at the time of her husband's death, in 1632, when his independent widow did a number of things that did not become a woman of her

times. She went to London, and evidently became interested in religious matters; for she overstayed the time that a non-resident should remain. She was ordered to return to her own home, and her case was taken up by the Star Chamber, which kept the search-light of the law on the Lady Deborah until, seeking for civil and religious liberty, she decided to emigrate with her son, Sir Henry Moody, the second. They came to America. Probably this country loomed before them as a land of promise, where, if a woman had opinions of her own, they were hers for the thinking. In Lynn, Massachusetts, in 1640 Lady Deborah Moody united with the church. She appears to have been respected by the community, and shortly after her arrival a grant of land amounting to about four hundred acres was given her by the General Court, and the following year she paid £1,100 for the farm.

Roger Williams appeared in the colony, and, whether from his teachings or from the reasonings of her own fertile brain, the Lady Deborah's religious views took a sudden turn from her neighbors' trend of belief. And it was not long before she was excommunicated from the church because she was convinced that the baptism of infants was not of divine ordinance.

With a party of English colonists the Lady Deborah came to New Amsterdam in 1643, and settled in Gravesend. The house was probably built in that year. The grant to her and her associates from Governor Kieft comprised Coney Island and all of Gravesend and Sheepshead Bay.

There is a question on the part of authorities as to whether the old house on the Neck Road was really owned and occupied by this woman of royal lineage. Some authorities claim that the house which she built and in which she lived was a mile farther up Neck Road. Still, as time passed, this beautiful cottage came to be known as "Ye Bowerie of Lady Moody," and it is true that it stands on land formerly granted to this distinguished Englishwoman and her followers. Contention also has arisen as to how the town got its name. Some say that Governor Kieft named it *S'Gravensande,* after a sea town on the river Maas, and that the name means Count's Beach, *graven* signifying count, and *sande* a sandy beach. Still others say that the town was named for Gravesend in England. Lady Moody was influential in the colony which she strove to establish, and her bravery when the Indian troubles arose is recorded. She was influential in government affairs with both Kieft and Peter Stuyvesant. The latter with his wife was entertained at the home of Lady Moody, and Mrs. Stuyvesant was agreeably impressed by the charming Englishwoman. When Governor Stuyvesant was troubled by affairs of state, he went to Lady Moody for advice, and matters were helped by the lady herself nominating a magistrate for Gravesend.

The internal troubles in the little colony presided over by Lady Deborah Moody were mostly caused by the Indians, who were particularly troublesome from the very first. Her house was the chosen

point of the savages for attack. Every precaution was taken for defence, and every man went to his work armed, and every person in the colony turned his hand to the building of a palisade for protection. The fiercest attack occurred in 1655, when the sturdy settlers held out against the enemy until help was sent from New Amsterdam. Records show that the English settlers tried to deal honestly with the redskins, and even after Kieft's second patent they purchased the lands of Gravesend for "one blanket, one gun, one kettle."

The nameless headstone in the old town churchyard across from the "bowerie" of Lady Moody may or may not mark her resting-place. Traditions say that she was driven from her colony by the Indian ravages, and they say also that her handful of followers married into the Dutch families and that the identity of the English colony was lost. The son, Sir Henry, drifted to Virginia.

THE VOORHEES HOMESTEAD IN THE CELLAR OF WHICH, TRADITION SAYS, A HESSIAN SOLDIER WAS BURIED

"8¾ miles to Brockland Ferry," said the old milestone which long stood at Neck Road and Ryder Lane, Gravesend. The old stone was placed there under the English provincial government, and about it hangs a romance. One hot day in midsummer a young British officer rode out to Gravesend to place the mile-post. He asked for a drink of water at the near-by farm-house, and a lovely girl gracefully served him. Love at first sight is an old story, with new charms revealed at each repetition; and in the case of the young officer and the winsome maiden it resulted in marriage and a journey to far-away England, where, they say, in a noble house hangs a picture of the milestone in front of the homestead from which the English nobleman brought his beautiful bride.

The Voorhees house, now gone, which stood on Neck Road, near Ocean Avenue, is said to have been built more than two centuries ago by one John Coerte Voorhees, son of the first Voorhees who came to Gravesend. Though little is known of the early history of the homestead, it came into local prominence at the time of the Revolutionary War, when Stephen J. Voorhees joined the American army. On learning that the British were coming, General Washington ordered all supplies to be destroyed, all grain burned in the fields, and the cattle killed. For many years after the enemy swept through that part of Gravesend, back on a lonely road of the town were great piles of the bones of cattle bleaching in the sun, and the townsmen as they passed the white heaps gazed silently on the remnants of their stock, and wondered when the weary days would pass that had brought an enemy to destroy their crops and their live-stock.

The Patriot officers, when they warned the people to kill their cattle, allowed Mrs. Voorhees to keep one cow, that her baby might have milk; and for safety's sake the lady concealed it in her house. Not long afterward a Hessian came prowling about for beef; and,

VOORHEES HOUSE

discovering the cow that the thrifty Mrs. Voorhees had concealed, he started to drive it off, when Mr. Voorhees, who had been separated from his regiment in the battle of Brooklyn and had hastened home, interfered. Words led to blows, and the Hessian was killed. Fearing lest the other members of the army would discover the loss of their companion and search for him, the Voorheeses, the tradition runs, buried the dead man in their cellar. Mr. Voorhees hastened by night to join again the American army.

CORTELYOU MANOR HOUSE FROM WHICH A WOMAN SIGNALLED WITH A RED PETTICOAT FOR THE BRITISH TO LAND

Jacques Cortelyou was the founder of New Utrecht; and his stone house so graphically described in a "Journal of a Voyage to New York in 1679–80," by Jasper Dankers and Peter Sluyter, stood in what was then known as Nyack and is now Fort Hamilton. Jacques Cortelyou came to this country from Utrecht in 1652. Seven years before his arrival the West India Company gave the Indians six coats, six kettles, six axes, six chisels, six small looking-glasses, twelve knives, and twelve combs for all the land from Gowanus to Coney Island, including what is now New Utrecht. Cornelis Van Werckhoven, for whose children Jacques was tutor, received from the West India Company the first patent of Fort Hamilton. After attempting to plant a settlement there, he returned to the old country, leaving as agent Cortelyou, who in 1657 received permission to lay out the town

SIMON CORTELYOU HOUSE

From a photograph owned by Mrs. Townsend C. Van Pelt.

of New Utrecht, named in honor of the birthplace of Cornelis Van Werckhoven.

Dankers and Sluyter in their Journal speak of Cortelyou in commendable terms. They say: "Jacques is a man advanced in years. He was born in Utrecht, but of French parents, as you could readily discover from his actions, looks and language. He had studied philosophy in his youth, and spoke Latin and good French. He was a mathematician and sworn land-surveyor. He had also formerly learned several sciences, and had some knowledge of medicine. . . . We went looking around the country and toward evening came to the village of New Utrecht, so named by him. This village was burned down some time ago, with everything about it, including the house of this man, which was almost an half an hour distant from it. . . . It was now almost rebuilt, and many good stone houses were erected, of which Jacques's was one, where we returned by another road to spend the night. After supper, we went to sleep in the barn, upon some straw spread with sheep-skins, in the midst of the continual grunting of hogs, squealing of pigs, bleating and coughing of sheep, barking of dogs, crowing of cocks, cackling of hens, and, especially, a goodly quantity of fleas and vermin, . . . and all this with an open barn door, through which a fresh northwest wind was blowing. Though we could not sleep, we could not complain, inasmuch as we had the same quarters and kind of bed that their son usually had, who had now on our arrival crept in the straw behind us."

When the British landed on Long Island, three houses stood where Fort Hamilton now stands, the Cortelyou house, which was on the south side of the reservation, the Bennet house, and the stone house of Denyse Denyse. Tradition says that, when the British ships-of-war were riding in the bay, a Cortelyou woman, Tory in sympathy, carefully

watching her opportunity, signalled with a red petticoat to the British the best time for them to land. The soldiers, more than fifteen thousand strong, swarmed the Bath shore August 22, 1776, on land owned by Captain Adrian Van Brunt and Isaac Cortelyou, the latter a direct descendant of Jacques of Nyack (Fort Hamilton) fame. They say that American officers took possession of the house before the enemy came, and that, as fast as Lord Howe's men marched across the beach, the Patriots picked them off. Hessians, however, soon gained the field, and Lord Howe and his staff made the Cortelyou house their headquarters for about a month.

Catherine, the daughter of Simon, then owner of the estate, loved a young British officer, who in a straightforward way asked the father's permission to marry her. The wrath of Simon Cortelyou blazed high, and the officer was told to vacate the premises, while Catherine was shut away from all communication with the outside world. The lovers waited, and on a clear moonlight night a horseman appeared beneath the window of the imprisoned girl. Low whispers followed, and Catherine, hastily throwing a scarf over her head, carefully crept from her window. Softly the elopers ran to the bay, where a boat was waiting. Behind them rushed frantic members of the family, who had been awakened. Gun-barrels gleamed in the night. When the pursuers reached the shore, only the soft plash of oars told them that Catherine was out of reach. The report of a gun awoke echoes in the glorious night, followed by a woman's cry — and silence. They say that on the morrow a tiny slipper was found embedded in the sands on the shore. Catherine Cortelyou and her husband returned later to the old home to beg forgiveness, only to be greeted by bitter, angry words. On the very beach over which the night before he had carried his slender betrothed in their flight, the young officer shot himself and Catherine Cortelyou became mad.

Throughout the War of the Revolution the Cortelyou house was the target for both British and Patriots. It is related that men sent by Lord Stirling, the American officer, captured at New Utrecht Simon and Jacques Cortelyou, "two famous Tories in the enemies' lines, and specie and other property to the amount of $5,000." "The prisoners," continues Onderdonk, "are on parole at Brunswick, and are to be exchanged for two citizens of Jersey, in captivity with the enemy." Captain Marrener, a patriot officer, took Simon Cortelyou of New Utrecht to New Brunswick as a return for his uncivil conduct to the American prisoners and kept Cortelyou's silver tankard and several other articles. The Cortelyou house was burned about 1905.

DE SILLE HOUSE

From a painting in the collection of the Long Island Historical Society.

NICASIUS DE SILLE HOUSE WHERE THE PATRIOT GENERAL WOODHULL DIED OF WOUNDS

General Nathaniel Woodhull, for nearly a year president of the Provincial Congress of New York, gave his life to the Patriots' cause in the battle of Brooklyn. He was captured on the 28th of August, 1776, by a party of Tories commanded by Captain De Lancey, after which he was brutally treated and given the innumerable sabre thrusts that caused his death. Mortally wounded, he was taken and lodged with other prisoners for the night in the Presbyterian church at Jamaica, near which he was captured. The following morning he was carried to a hay-boat which went down Jamaica Bay to New York Bay, and, in a dying condition, was taken on shore at New Utrecht, and laid in the church, which stood near where the burying-ground now is at 16th Avenue and 84th Street. Shortly before the arrival of his wife, he was removed to the stone house near by built by Nicasius De Sille, where he died, swearing his love for his country.

This famous old stone house, with its roof of red tiles imported from Holland, torn down by Baret Wyckoff, its last occupant, in 1850, stood east of the church on what is now 84th Street and 18th Avenue, New Utrecht. It was one of the first houses erected in the town. On

May 20, 1916, The General Nathaniel Woodhull Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, dedicated a tablet in the graveyard, marking as nearly as possible the site of the De Sille House.

Nicasius De Sille came to the town shortly after the patent of land in New Utrecht had been granted early in 1657 and laid out into twenty lots of fifty acres each by Jacques Cortelyou, surveyor. He was an important person, having been appointed fiscal or attorney-general by Petrus Stuyvesant; and his zeal for the well-being of the town of his adoption and the burdens of his official position brought incessant woes on his illustrious head. Nineteen other individuals, whom the records show as having unmistakably Dutch names, occupied the lots laid out for them. Fiscal De Sille built in the town the first house covered with red tiles. He erected a palisade about his house and trim garden. Wonderingly the neighbors whispered that the fiscal feared attacks from the Indians. As a matter of fact, the good Nicasius was protecting his domain against the depredations of droves of swine that evinced an unyielding propensity to eat up his garden. Shortly after this precautionary palisade was erected, Surveyor Cortelyou complained about the pigs of Anthony Jansen Sale, a Moor and a rover, who respected neither Dutch tradition nor Dutch cleanliness, and who had spent several years — contrary to the law — in dickering with the Indians, from whom he purchased land, which the redmen readily parted with for a rusty knife or a looking-glass. From them this Moorish gentleman obtained a salt meadow, where he proceeded to keep snugly his hogs.

Among the nineteen proprietors in New Utrecht dissensions arose, and they disputed constantly concerning land, houses, plantations, and rights. In the midst of the troubles, Nicasius De Sille faithfully kept the first town records of New Utrecht, and interspersed them with poems of his own. His later years as fiscal brought him woes innumerable, for his neighbors fought, their swine were destroyed, fences were broken, and thieves were abroad by day and by night. Added to all these things, John Schott, accompanied by a hundred Puritan guerillas, rode into New Utrecht with an immense brandishing of knives and blare of trumpets. They terrified the inhabitants and tormented the peace-loving fiscal in an unknown tongue, which they reinforced with threatening gestures and flashes of steel. De Sille had hard work to get rid of Schott and his horde. Not least of his troubles in office was the charge made against him by the States-General, asserting that he forbade the soldiers in the fort of Amsterdam to fire on the English troops into whose hands the colony fell.

DE HART OR BERGEN HOUSE FORMERLY THE CENTRE OF A HUNTER'S PARADISE

The relic of a frontier trading-post stood for years on the shore of Gowanus Cove, west of Third Avenue, near 27th and 28th Streets, known as the Simon Bergen or De Hart house. The land on which

the De Hart house stood was a portion of the 930-acre tract of land bought by William Adriaense Bennet and Jaques Bentyn in 1636, extending from about 27th Street to the New Utrecht line at Bay Ridge. The days of its most romantic history were when Simon Aerson De Hart owned, occupied, and dispensed his munificent hospitality to travellers, fur-traders, missionaries, and Indians. It apparently mattered little to mine host who his guests were, so long as they enjoyed the bounty of his table and tasted the excellent deer meat and wild turkey which he served. Not a great deal would be known of his history, had not Jasper Dankers and Peter Sluyter, agents for the Labadist Society in Holland, visited De Hart and his family when they came on a voyage to this country in 1678. They describe him as a magnificent host, who with his wife was glad to see them. "We found a good fire," they say, in speaking of the house, "half-way up the chimney, of clear oak and hickory, of which they made not the least scruple in burning profusely. We let it penetrate us thoroughly. There had already been thrown upon it, to be roasted, a pail-ful of *Gouanes* oysters, which are the best in the country. . . . They are large and full, some of them not less than a foot long, and they grow sometimes ten, twelve and sixteen together and are then like a piece of rock. . . . In consequence of the great quantities of them, everybody keeps the shells for the purpose of burning them into lime. They pickle the oysters in small casks and send them to Barbadoes and other islands."

The travellers were treated also at the De Hart house to roasted venison, which had been purchased from the Indians for "three guilders and a half of *seewant,* that is fifteen stuivers of Dutch money (fifteen cents), and which weighed thirty pounds." They remark also concerning the spicy flavor of the venison and its tenderness. They had, besides, wild turkey and wild goose, and a sight of Simon's watermelons, — all in one meal. "It was very late at night," they add, "when we went to rest in a Kermis bed, as it is called, in the corner of the hearth, alongside of a good fire." They arose early in the morning and saw Simon and his wife depart for the city with their articles for marketing.

Several Indian huts were built near the house of Simon De Hart, and these dusky neighbors proved themselves troublesome and at times not a little embarrassing. In the midst of one of their wild riotings, Dankers and Sluyter fortunately appeared to record the circumstances. They say that, when they arrived at *"Gouanes,"* they heard a great noise, shouting and singing, fighting, brawling, and raging like wild beasts in the huts of the Indians, who had drunk too freely of fire-water. Finally, with a series of wild yells, infuriated men pursued their squaws, who fled to De Hart's house for protection. The door was closed after those who sought safety had been admitted, and the carousers were left outside to yell or return to their huts, as they pleased.

In the early part of the nineteenth century Simon Bergen, then the

SCHENCK HOUSE AT MILL ISLAND

owner, proposed to tear the old house down, but he was prevailed on to rescue it from decay, which he did by adding a new roof and other repairs, and for a number of years it remained, until crowded out by modern dwellings.

SCHENCK HOMESTEAD BUILT IN 1656 AND REPUTED TO BE THE OLDEST HOUSE IN NEW YORK STATE

Captain John Schenck, years before Jamaica Bay was even thought of as a terminal for ocean liners, built Schenck Wharf on the end of Mill Island, and personally carried on the larger part of the shipping between the New and the Old Netherlands. The oldest people of Flatlands and Bergen Beach have told many a tale concerning this same Captain Schenck, and added that he was at one time a lieutenant of Captain Kidd. Somebody once called the house itself "the pirate house." How it got this name or why is not known, as no member of the Schenck family appears to have followed this calling, and no tales of Captain Kidd and his many and varied treasures seem to be connected with the place. It is a great wonder, however, owing to the convenience of its location, that the notorious Kidd never visited it.

For more than two centuries and a half this picturesque little house has stood on what was formerly Mill Island and is now Bergen Beach. Jan Martense Schenck Van Nydeck, of noble lineage, born in Amers-

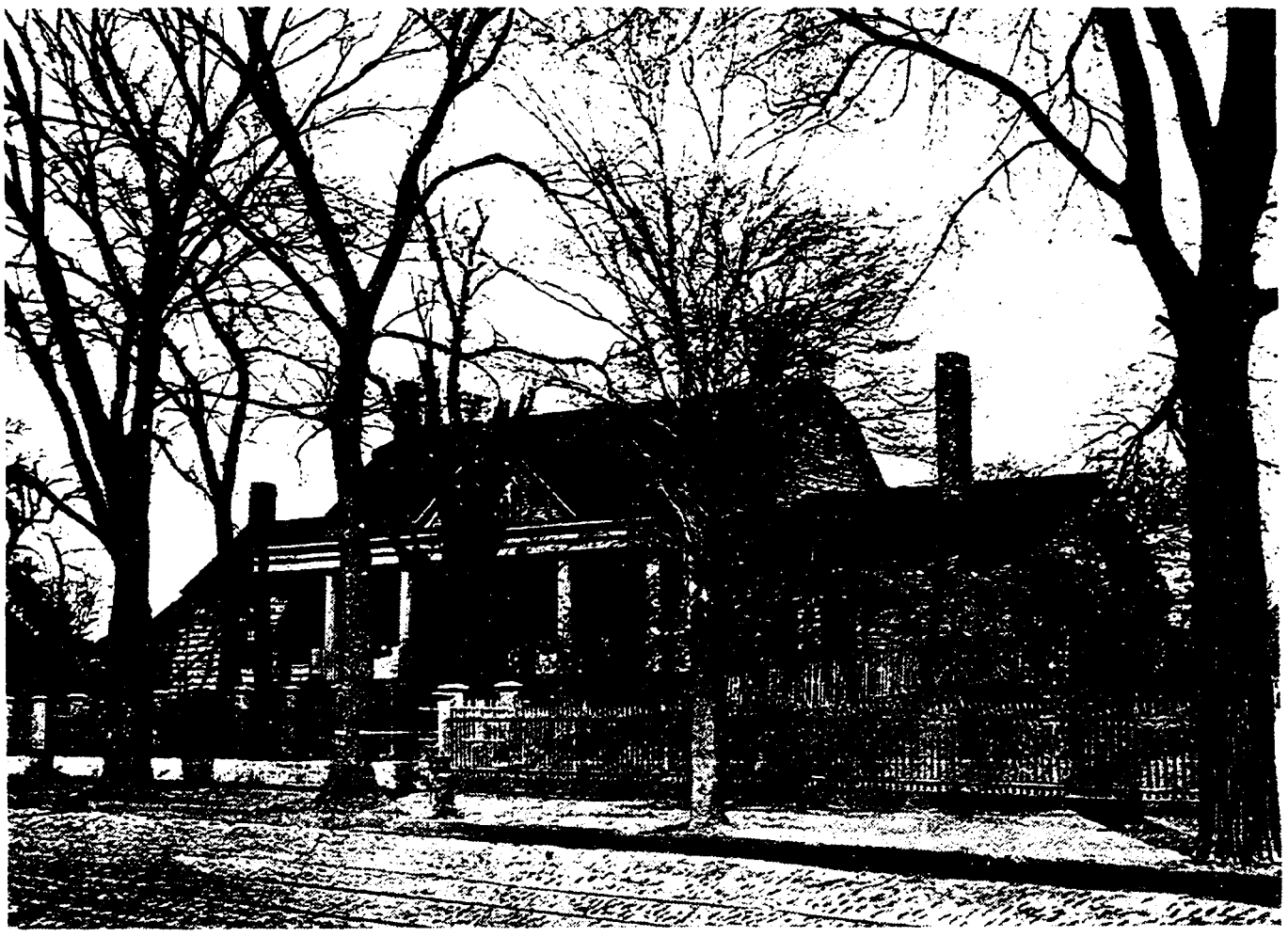
foort, Holland, emigrated to America and built this house in 1656. After the property came into the possession of a descendant, Captain John Schenck, it consisted of about seventy-five acres of woodland, upland, and salt marsh. Those who inherited the estate from Captain John Schenck sold it to Joris Martense, of Flatbush, for £2,500. The new owner, while apparently not swerving from his allegiance to the king, during the War of the Revolution gave generously toward the Patriot cause, — in all, about $5,500. In this house Captain William Marrener (when he made his famous midnight expedition through Flatbush) captured Major Moncrief of the British army.

From the Martense family the property passed into the hands of General Philip S. Crooke, and was finally bought and is still standing, being now owned by Cornell University.

It has changed little during the nearly three hundred years of its life. The massive fireplace still stands in the living-room, and the old beams, taken from the hull of a ship wrecked years ago in a great storm on the shore, are in a state of fine preservation. The creek that formerly separated the house from the mainland was filled in long ago. Ivy clambers over the walls of the homestead, and trees shade its low porch. From this porch there might have been seen, until its destruction a few years ago, a queer little mill, called Gerritson's Mill, which stood for two centuries on the edge of Strome Kil, or Gerritson's Creek, or the Mill Pond, as it has been called. They say that, when the redcoats were hastening on their way over Long Island, the thrifty Dutch Patriots sold them flour at the mill for a dollar a pound.

THE BERGEN HOUSE WHERE THE GHOST OF LORD HOWE IS SAID TO ROAM ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF LONG ISLAND

This old Bergen house, located once at 33d Street and Third Avenue, south of the King's Highway, stood directly in the British line of battle here in Brooklyn. Michael Hansen Van Bergen received the original grant of land, confirmed by the Dutch, from the Indians about the year 1660. The most interesting history of the old homestead was during the seven years prior to the evacuation of New York by the British, when it was occupied by British officers as their headquarters. It is said that in one of the quaint upper chambers General Burgoyne wrote his comedy, "The Battle of Brooklyn," afterward performed at the King's Head Tavern, on what is now Fulton Street, Brooklyn. And it is further asserted that sharp on the stroke of midnight each year, on the anniversary of the battle of Long Island, booted feet were heard pacing the floor of an upper chamber, and a great clanking of steel was heard as the stately tread of spurred feet descended the winding stairs. The ghostly visitor, supposed to be Lord Howe, paused in the lower hall, long enough possibly to adjust his cloak or his sword, and then, regardless of the storm that might be raging without or the soft moonlight that sifted through the locust-



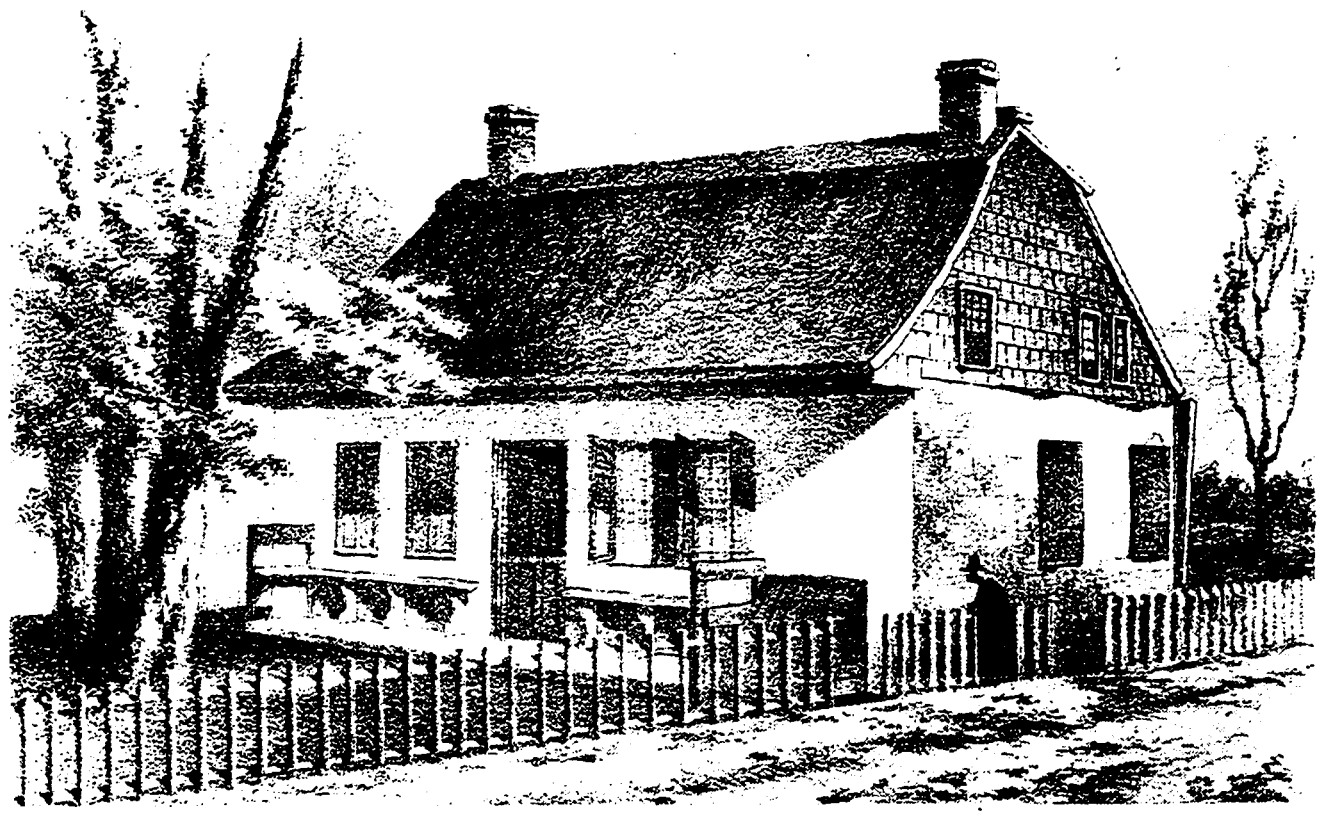
BERGEN HOUSE

trees, he passed out of the old door, to again revisit the scenes of the battle of Long Island.

Romance did not pass the old homestead by, but paused longest, it may be, in the shadow of the locust-trees that shaded it and in the arbors that sheltered the old garden. A Bergen girl fell in love with a British officer, and fearing the wrath of the stern old squire, her father, who was a high magistrate of the village, she left her home, and with her husband sought Nova Scotia, where land was granted them by the King of England.

The women of the house of Bergen were famous for their beauty, and the men were noted for their hardihood and courage in war. Forth from their home the Bergen boys stealthily went one dark night, and, rowing a waiting boat toward a British war-ship anchored far from land, they surprised the sleeping crew, and made the Hessian officers prisoners, triumphantly carrying them to the headquarters of the Patriot army in Jersey.

The early surroundings of the old Bergen homestead must have been picturesque before the forests were cut or the bay filled in, or there was any road save an Indian trail upon which to travel through the country. Gone now is each near-by landmark, and every vestige of the life of the early days; and nothing but pictures and memories of this old Bergen homestead remain.



SUYDAM HOUSE

From a print in "Historic and Antiquarian Scenes in Brooklyn and Vicinity," by T. W. Field.

THE SUYDAM HOUSE OCCUPIED BY HESSIANS DURING THE REVOLUTION

Hessians took possession of the Hendrick Suydam house in the Bushwick section of Brooklyn during the Revolutionary War. They were not welcome to Hendrick's snug homestead on Bushwick Lane, but, good Whig that he was, he had his choice of being relegated to a dirty prison or swearing allegiance to the Tory cause. So he chose the latter. His house was as trim and tidy and clean as the average Dutch house of the day. It had been built about 1700 by Leffert Lefferts, some say. Other authorities claim that a man by the name of Van Nuyse may have owned the land and built the house.

Like a horde of wild Vandals, the hired soldiers of the king descended on Mistress Suydam's snug home, spreading about them more dirt than the Dutch had ever been buried in, and gaining, by reputation, the name of the "Dirty Blues." These Hessians were prodigious thieves; though, when once assured that they would remain unmolested by the Patriots, they were kinder than the British, and more likely to give the Americans a square deal.

A door-post in the Suydam house was hacked by the sabre of the captain of the regiment, one Colonel Rahl, who with twenty-one men and a cook took up quarters there during the absence of Hendrick Suydam. Mrs. Suydam was obliged to vacate a part of her house, and establish herself and her children, as best she could, in a room across the hall. For three months she lived there, until her Dutch soul became desperate, so unclean were her tenants, and she left her

REMSEN HOUSE

house. Returning later, she found it in a deplorable condition, — her furniture broken, the house sacked, and all of the bedding stolen.

Before the destruction of the house, many years ago, there were many evidences of the hard usage it had received, though, so far as the walls were concerned, it might easily have weathered another century or two. Staples in the ceilings of the rooms on the first floor were once used by the soldiers to hang their sabres on. Bullet-holes were found in the casements of the windows set in their tiny sashes. The sabre-marks on the lintels of the front door were never removed, being kept there, no doubt, by the sturdy Dutch as a reminder of the many indignities they received during the days when Hessians roved through their streets and robbed their fields, flocks, and larders. The first story of the house was built of stones gathered from the neighboring fields, and the walls were unusually thick and exceptionally well built. The site of the old house is occupied by the Second German Baptist Church, on the corner of Evergreen Avenue and Woodbine Street, which acquired the property in 1907.

THE REMSEN PLACE AND JANNETTE DE RAPELJE'S TRIP IN A TUB

The Remsen house stood on the corner of Remsen Place and Church Avenue and was built long before the War of the Revolution. It is believed by members of the family that some Remsen lived in it from the days of the first Dutch Governor until it was torn down.

The first member of this distinguished family was Rem Van Der Beck, a blacksmith in early Brooklyn, who married Jannette De Rapelje, about whom the Canarsie Indian legend has come down, telling how, when Jannette was a little girl, a squaw bundled her into a tub and rowed her all the way from Gowanus Island to Long Island, that the Indians might see what a little white girl looked like.

Brooklyn's history is closely associated with this family, which, though never seeking office, always served the community in one way or another. One Jacob Remsen was the bell-ringer of the town when the first bell was purchased for £49 4*s*., and people were deploring the wasteful extravagance of it and of a fire-engine that some progressive men of affairs had bought. More than twenty-six acres of land south of Brooklyn Ferry, as Fulton Ferry was then known, came into the possession of the Remsen family on June 19, 1753, and cost them the then snug sum of £1,060. About ten years later they sold this land, and Henry and Peter Remsen purchased all of the present business section of the city. Their holdings have been recorded as extending south to Red Hook Point and north to what is now Livingston Street.

The progenitor of the Remsen family, Rem Jansen Van Der Beck, died in 1681, leaving his wife Jannette and fifteen children, all of whom have been recorded as married and attending his funeral. He was esteemed as a citizen and a magistrate.

HENDRICK I. LOTT HOMESTEAD AND CAPTAIN LOTT OF THE KINGS COUNTY MILITIA

From the heart of Brooklyn one may reach in thirty minutes Flatlands, where still remains the Dutch manor at 1940 East 36th Street, surrounded by small houses and apartments. Small wonder is it that the renowned Talleyrand, when he came here, begged rides of Flatlands farmers, all the while praising their fertile fields and suggesting new vegetables adapted to the soil. Talleyrand may have seen the quaint Lott homestead, which, combining the old and the new, is one of the most interesting places thereabouts — at one time a show place in this part of the country, and called the finest house in Kings County.

The Hendrick I. Lott homestead was probably built about 1800. Johannes Lott, a descendant of the first Lott that came to America, bought the land in 1719 from Coert Voorhees, and there was a time when most of the land in this section was owned by either the Lotts or the Wyckoffs. Johannes Lott, who lived on the farm and eventually became one of the largest land-owners in Flatlands, was something of a farmer and something of a soldier. He served as captain of the Kings County militia, and fought well in the French and Indian War. His three sons received each a farm after his death, and one of them was the Hendrick I. Lott who built this homestead, moving the dining-room of the old house and its kitchen up to the new. The old part is probably more than two hundred years old.

Flatlands has been the subject of many a story. Its church chronicles are interesting, and its civil records full of varied incidents,

LOTT HOMESTEAD

while its legends are fascinating. If the traveller has once heard these things, he cannot fail to recall some of them as he wanders in the vicinity of the Lott homestead, viewing it from this point and that. He will remember the renowned Adrian Van Sinderen, who presided over the Flatlands church, now more than two and a half centuries old, and the Dutch sermons for American liberty that Van Sinderen preached to British soldiers. Every Sunday he prayed that success might come to Washington, and the British officers, not knowing what the pious Van Sinderen said, joined heartily in the service.

A tale is told of the days when the council of the town met in a store that once stood on King's Highway and Flatbush Avenue, and of the old court being held in the cellar, to the consternation of the dignitary, who protested against presiding over a court held among the pots and kettles. There also was the heated contest in which it was disputed whether the owner or the town should have a strip of land called "Ruffle-bar." A man by the name of Eliot and another named Bergen were appointed to watch the polls when the matter came to a vote. Bergen was for and Eliot against the town. Things might have gone well enough, had not Mr. Bergen yielded to his unvarying propensity for a mid-day nap, whereupon the shrewd Eliot, as the story goes, chewed up and swallowed a quarter of a hundred ballots, and carried the polls against the town.

Frequently during the early Dutch days this part of Brooklyn was a scene of stirring times, for neighbor wrangled with neighbor and magistrates had much to do; but now the city here has been quiet for centuries; and one of the fairest of its present residences is the Hendrick I. Lott homestead, still peaceful and charming as it was in the early part of the past century.

CAPTAIN CORNELIUS VANDERVEER HOUSE

THE HOMESTEAD OF CAPTAIN CORNELIUS VANDERVEER WHO CAME NEAR BEING HANGED BY THE REDCOATS

Captain Cornelius Vanderveer and the burghers of Flatbush fought the British two days before the battle of Long Island, and were repulsed at an old lane where fortifications had been thrown up. Fortunately, this good Patriot had taken the precaution of sending his family over to Jersey. After the end of the skirmish with the British, attended by a slave, he returned to his home only to find it in the hands of the enemy, and later, still clad in his uniform, he ran into a Hessian sentinel. Preparations were made to hang him, and a rope was placed about his neck, when Captain Miller, a British officer whom he had met before the war, interfered. Captain Vanderveer was taken before Lord Cornwallis, who ordered him sent to New Utrecht. In a trial before Captain Cuyler, one of Lord Howe's aides, he was asked —

"Will you take a 'protection' and go back to your farm in Flatbush?"

"If you don't ask me to fight against my country," answered Captain Vanderveer. "I will never do that."

"That need not worry you," responded the British officer. "We have fighting men enough without you. You may go to the rebels or to the devil, for all I care."

The order stating that Captain Vanderveer was under Lord Cornwallis's protection was written, and directions were given that he be left undisturbed.

THE JOHN DITMARS HOMESTEAD

The Vanderveer homestead, standing, until late in 1911, on Flatbush Avenue between Clarendon Road and Avenue D, dated back to 1747, and possibly farther. Many aids were given there to the American cause. The women of the Vanderveer household made the suit of clothes which Captain Lyman wore when he got beyond the British lines and joined the American army, and Captain Vanderveer himself loaned Governor Clinton money, that New York might be enabled to carry on the war. In this house also was made the flag which was raised on the liberty pole in Flatbush when the British left Long Island.

THE DITMARS HOUSE AND ITS STORY

At the outbreak of the War of the Revolution, General Washington ordered the farmers in Kings and Queens Counties to stack their grain in the fields and burn it, provided the enemy came and the burning could be accomplished without endangering the buildings near by. Not long afterward the redcoats landed on Long Island, and hither and thither the Patriot farmers ran, dropping their silver into wells, concealing their valuables, driving off their live-stock, and last, but not least, burning their fodder and grain. Johannes Ditmars, fairly well off in this world's goods for the time in which he lived, young, patriotic, obeyed the commands given by General Washington. He had, however, a guardian who was a Loyalist, and refused to burn his grain. The enemy were not far away, and American soldiers ordered that the barn of the guardian of Ditmars be burned,

whereupon young Ditmars rushed into the building, extinguished the fire, and, mounting a convenient pile of hay, cried to the Americans, "If you burn this barn, you burn me!"

They marched away in solemn file, leaving young Johannes Ditmars master of the situation, so intent on his service to his neighbor and guardian that probably little thought was given to the flaming stacks of grain in his own fields.

Still another tradition, equally interesting, concerns an attack made by the British on the old Ditmars house by night. They came for gold that they had heard was concealed in bags in a cupboard in the house. Two slaves heard the commotion downstairs, where young Ditmars and his mother had been seized and smothered beneath a feather bed, while now and again the soldiers endeavored to force one of them to unlock the closet where the treasure was supposed to be concealed. When Ditmars refused to do this, the invaders, seizing their weapons, hacked the closet time and again. Their blows brought downstairs the two slaves, who, armed with various antiquated weapons, soon ousted the British.

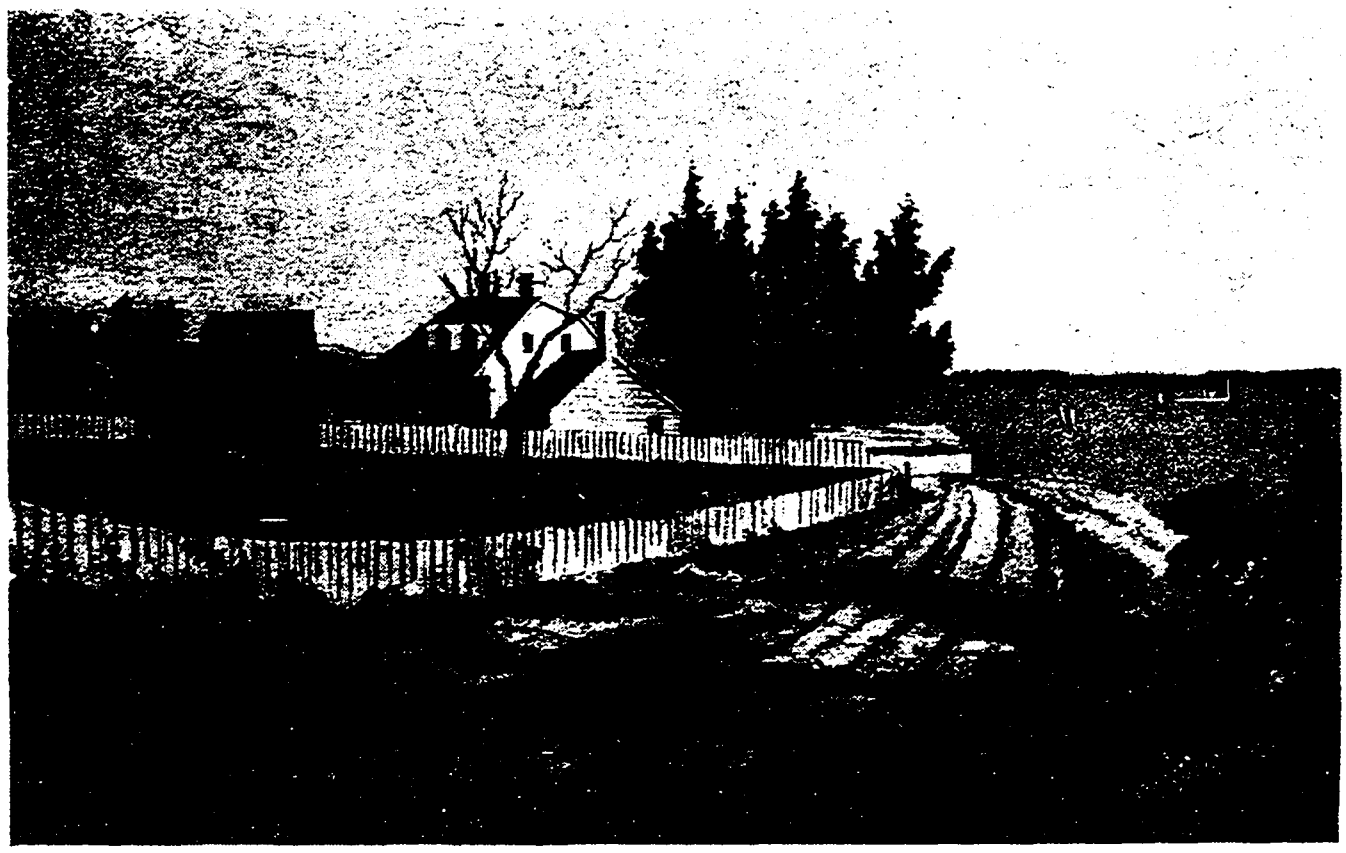
The following notice of the event afterward appeared:—

"20 pounds Reward. — Last night, Nov. 5, about 8 o'clock, 4 men, with weapons, forced into the house of Johannes Ditmars, Flatlands, and beat him and his mother in a cruel manner. . . . Three of them went off, and the fourth was put in Flatbush Jail, but escaped the same night wounded in the head, and said his name was Jos. Mosier."

The Ditmars house has been torn down.

DENYSE'S FERRY THE SCENE OF THE FIRST RESISTANCE TO BRITISH ARMS IN THE MIDDLE STATES

A stirring scene was enacted at Denyse's Ferry on the 22d of August, 1776, when a fleet of British vessels arranged themselves a half-mile distant from the Long Island shore. Across on Staten Island thousands of Hessians marched to the water's edge to embark, and twice as many British soldiers followed them. A signal gun roared out, and simultaneously hundreds of oars tossed up the water, and the great vessels prepared to come closer to the shore. Ships' boats advanced, spitting flame into every thicket and toward every point where Patriots might be concealed. At Denyse's Ferry, which is now Fort Hamilton, there were three houses — the dwelling of Denyse Denyse, that of Bennet, and the house of Simon Cortelyou, violent Loyalist. A ball fired from one of the British ships passed through Bennet's kitchen; another tore away part of a fence in front of the house of Denyse Denyse; but the house of Simon Cortelyou, where a woman is supposed to have waved a red petticoat as a signal for the British to land, remained unscathed. Up on the bluff near the landing at Denyse's Ferry a tiny battery spit at the boats of the advancing horde. Soon the shore was dense with the landing troops, and Long Island paralyzed, knowing not where to turn. The country people dwelling on the plain bordering Gravesend Bay had the choice



DENYSE'S FERRY

From a print in "Historic and Antiquarian Scenes in Brooklyn and Vicinity," by T. W. Field.

of placing themselves under the protection of unwelcome invaders or of abandoning their farms. Most of the neighborhood in the vicinity of Denyse's Ferry were Loyalists, who hailed the coming of the troops as their natural protectors. The British came 15,000 strong, bringing fear to the inhabitants and spreading their forces like a pestilence over Long Island. "Thus," it is recorded, "commenced the first resistance to British arms in the Middle States, on the spot where Fort Hamilton now stands."

Robert E. Lee, when he was stationed at Fort Hamilton, was a vestryman at old St. John's Church, and "Stonewall" Jackson was baptized in this church. It is said he was a rigid keeper of the Sabbath, never travelling on that day nor attending to any details of business. He attended church morning and evening, and taught in the Sabbath school.

BOUGHTON HOUSE FROM THE WINDOWS OF WHICH COULD BE SEEN THE PRISON-SHIPS RIDING IN WALLABOUT BAY

Near the Navy Yard on Cumberland Street still standing, in bad condition, is this old house. Probably Samuel Boughton, once its owner and from whom the house has taken its name, knew much more of its history than is known today, or he may have been too much engrossed in tilling the land that adjoined it, and in raising fruit and vegetables on an extensive scale, to play the antiquary. Mr. Boughton occupied the place after the Revolution, but the extent of his stay is

BATTLE PASS, BROOKLYN, L.I. 1766

From a lithograph made from McCloskey's Manual for 1867. In the collection of the New York Public Library.

BATTLE PASS, VALLEY GROVE, BROOKLYN, L.I. 1866

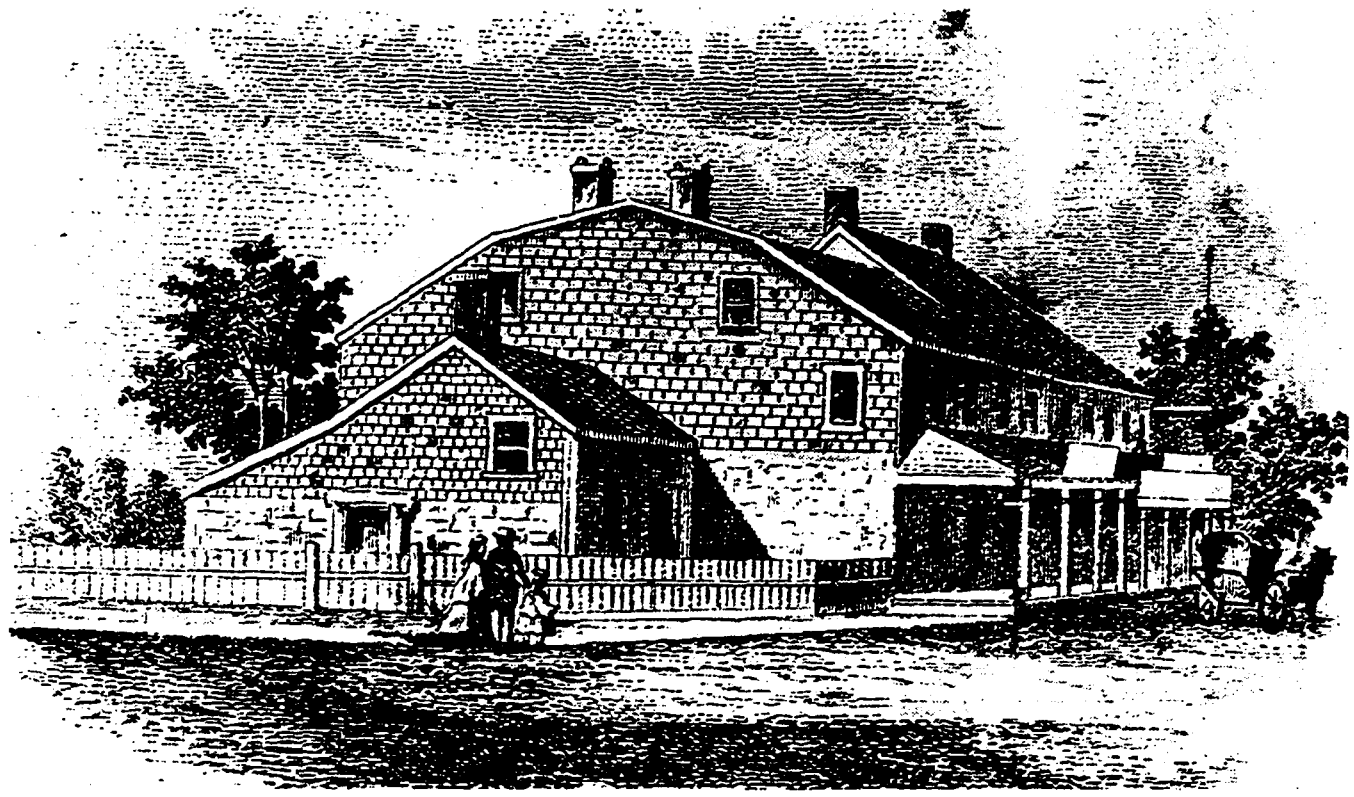
From a lithograph made from McCloskey's Manual for 1867. In the collection of the New York Public Library.

BOUGHTON HOUSE

not generally known. After his death, in 1860, the estate passed through various hands.

Today the Boughton house is surrounded by tenements, and the best view obtainable of it is from the back windows of some of the houses on Carlton Avenue. Survey it on an idle day from a convenient point, and imagine how its weather-beaten walls, windows, and doors looked when Washington rode up to it. Fancy him, as they tell, passing long nights there, planning details for the American army. This old house was a convenient stopping-place and practical headquarters for the American commanders before the battle of Long Island, as it lay in a direct line with the chain of fortifications and entrenchments that had been thrown up by the Continental troops from the Wallabout to the head of Gowanus Creek.

Some years ago, in making repairs, workmen found an old shingle with the inscription, "Erected 1727." There is a tradition that the British troops also occupied the Boughton house during their reign in Brooklyn, and that the prison-ships riding in Wallabout Bay could be plainly seen from the windows. Of all of the prison-ships the old *Jersey*, which had as many as 1,000 men at once, was the worst. At the close of the war her prisoners were released. Worms demolished her old hulk, and she finally sank. No one has ever been able to say how many men were tossed from their loathsome prisons into the waters of the Wallabout, though some one has said that more than 11,000 died on the *Jersey* alone.



HOWARD'S HALF-WAY HOUSE, EAST NEW YORK

From an engraving in "A History of the City of Brooklyn," by Henry R. Stiles.

Old residents call attention to the fact that at the rear of this house, the centre at the time of the Revolution of so much activity, a large slate powder-mill was operated for the use of the Continental troops; and they say further that, before the British troops came to live in the house, it was used as a storage place for the plunder of Continental freebooters.

The old mansion is deserted now; and tales of fortifications and entrenchments, of commanding officers and General Washington himself, are buried in the dim past, so much so that the fancy of the history lover is hardly kindled by the dilapidated structure.

HOWARD'S TAVERN AND GENERAL HOWE

William Howard (to General Howe): "We belong to the other side, general, and can't serve you against our duty."

General Howe: "You have no alternative. If you refuse, I shall have you shot through the head."

A guard burst open the door of the bar-room in William Howard's Tavern at two o'clock on the morning of the 26th of August, 1776. The early guests were Sir William Howe, Lord Percy, Marquis Cornwallis, and Sir Henry Clinton. Sixteen thousand British soldiers, who had lain for several days at Flatbush, were halted in front of the tavern, waiting to be led over the Rockaway Path, in order that they might outflank the Americans who, the enemy thought, were hidden along the Jamaica road.

General Howe had selected William Howard, tavern-keeper, as his guide. The conversation, later recorded by Major William Howard, the son, follows. He was then a little fellow, and a soldier had

awakened him. Going into the bar-room, he saw his father standing in one corner, hemmed in by soldiers with their muskets and bayonets fixed. General Howe wore a camlet cloak over his uniform. At the bar he called for a glass of liquor.

"I must have some of you show me over the Rockaway Path around the Pass," he said.

"We belong to the other side, general, and can't serve you against our duty," quietly responded William Howard.

"That is all right. Stick to your country or stick to your principles, but, Howard, you are my prisoner, and must guide my men over the hill."

"But"—

"You have no alternative," silenced the general. "If you refuse, I shall have you shot through the head."

William Howard, accompanied by his son, set out in the early morning across the hills. They and their house were placed under a strong guard. Orders were given that none escape. Every house in the neighborhood was similarly protected.

Through the wooded hills, father and son led the British army, and at the end of the march, on reaching a turn in the Jamaica road, "my father and myself," continues the narrator, "were released and sent back to the tavern, which we found surrounded by the guard."

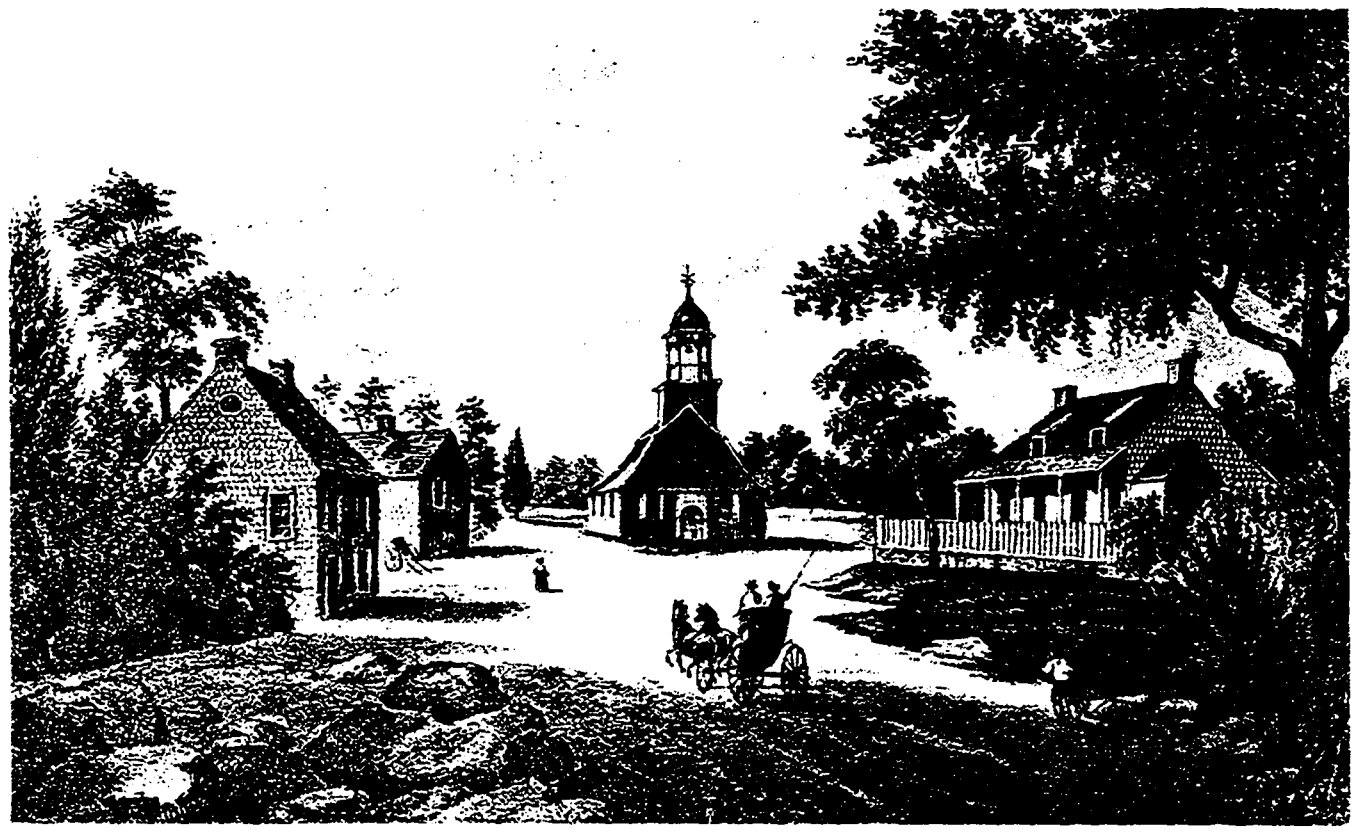
Howard's Tavern, known by many as the Half-way House and the Rising Sun Tavern, formerly stood at the junction of the Jamaica and Bedford turnpikes. It was sold in 1867, and today on the site are car barns and shops.

THE FIRST CHURCH OF BROOKLYN

Jasper Dankers and Peter Sluyter, when they visited America late in the seventeenth century, speak of crossing the ferry from Manhattan to Long Island, and of going "up the hill, along open roads, and a little wood, through the first village Breuckelen, which had a small ugly church standing in the middle of the road." This was the first church of Brooklyn (as the village then existed), built in 1666, and located on what would be now Fulton Street, near Lawrence. The church society still exists as the Old First Reformed Church on Seventh Avenue.

In the neighboring villages of Midwout (later Flatbush) and Nieuw Amersfoort (later Flatlands), however, two Dutch Churches had been organized almost simultaneously in the year 1654. The question of which of these two churches — The Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of Flatbush, and The Flatlands Dutch Reformed Church — is the older, has been a matter of disagreement among Brooklyn historians for many years and has never been answered authentically.

There is a tradition that this first church was built on the walls of a crude stone fort, erected to protect the inhabitants from the attacks of the savages. The church began with a membership of 27, and they gave their dominie a salary of 300 guilders, payable in corn.

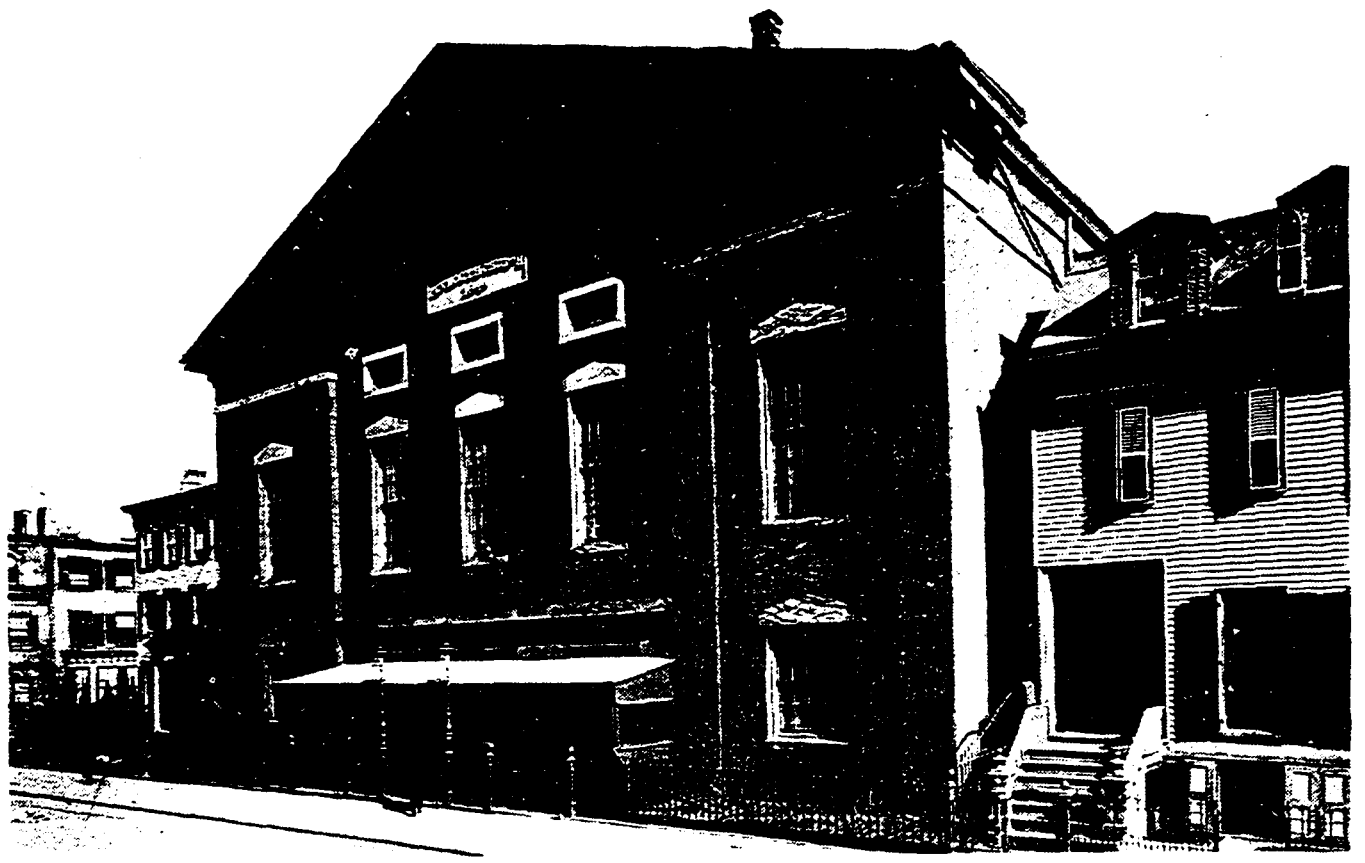


SECOND CHURCH EDIFICE

Built in 1766. Reproduction is from a drawing by Miss Elizabeth Sleight in 1808. From "History of the First Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of Breuckelen." Compiled by Henry Whittemore.

Dominie Polhemus preached his first sermon in Breuckelen on Sunday, April 6, 1656. He preached out-of-doors until invited to go into the house of Joris Dircksen. Breuckelen appears to have become dissatisfied with the dominie; for, when a bill of 150 guilders was presented to them, they refused to pay it. Their protests included a declaration that they had never called Polhemus, had never accepted him as a minister, that he had intruded himself on them against their will, and "voluntarily preached in the open streets, under the blue sky; when, to avoid offence, the house of Joris Dircksen was temporarily offered him here in Breuckelen." Governor Stuyvesant did not grant the plea made, and the town was told that it would be obliged to pay for the minister's services. The people were told they might pay in produce, — maize, peas, wheat, anything that they chose to present.

In the mean time the good Mr. Polhemus was in actual need, complaining that his family in Flatbush were suffering greatly, that their house was unfinished, that they were obliged to sleep on the cold floor, and that they had not sufficient clothing to wear. After much pleading with the governor and council, he was able to secure a part of his salary, three years due, and was finally succeeded in Breuckelen by a resident minister, Henricus Selyns, who was formally installed as the dominie of the First Reformed Protestant Church of Breuckelen. This first installation in the town was held September 7, 1660. Dominie Selyns said, "I found in Breuckelen one Elder, two deacons, twenty-four church-members, 31 householders, and 131 persons."



PLYMOUTH CHURCH

PLYMOUTH CHURCH WHERE HENRY WARD BEECHER SOLD SLAVES

Strangers in New York, a half-century ago, were given the following direction to reach Plymouth Church: "Cross Fulton Ferry and follow the crowd."

Henry Ward Beecher was then pastor; and, at the time when he began to prove himself the champion of the slave, throngs came to hear him preach, and standing room in the church was rarely available. When the question arose as to whether Kansas should be a free or a slave State, Mr. Beecher struck an initial blow by suggesting to his parishioners that a Sharpe rifle was as good a missionary to send as a Bible, and accordingly cases of rifles were bought by the church, boxed, and sent out. They came to be known as Beecher's Bibles. This action occurred at the time when John Brown came into national prominence.

Later, in addressing a large audience in Broadway Tabernacle, New York, during his address he lifted a chain that had once bound a slave, and, holding it high over his head, he dashed it to the floor, and, placing his foot upon it, said, "In this way we propose to deal with the slave power in the South." "Slavery is wrong; slavery shall not extend; slavery shall die," was Henry Ward Beecher's constant cry. This saying became a keynote of the abolitionist movement. Beecher flung open the door of Plymouth Church to the men who were fighting the slave traffic. Wendell Phillips was welcomed to Plymouth Church. No other place in New York was open to him.

A memorable slave auction occurred on Sunday, June 11, 1861. News of the event had been noised abroad, and the church and street outside were crowded. The service was begun by reading the story of the man cured of a withered hand: "'Is it lawful,'" read Henry Ward Beecher, "'to do good on the Sabbath day' or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" "About two weeks ago," he said, "I had a letter from Washington, informing me that a young woman had been sold by her own father to be sent South. She was bought by a Federal slave-dealer for $1,200, and he has offered to give you the opportunity of purchasing her freedom. She has given her word of honor to return to Richmond if the money be not raised, and, slave though she may be called, she is a woman who will keep her word. Now, Sarah, come up here, so that we can see you."

The girl came slowly up the pulpit stairs and stood by Mr. Beecher's side. The pastor of Plymouth Church at once took on the voice and action of a slave auctioneer. His dramatic impersonation has been reported thus:—

"Look at this remarkable commodity,—human flesh and blood like yourselves. You see the white blood of her father in her regular features and high, thoughtful brow. Who bids? You will have to pay extra for that white blood, because it is supposed to give intelligence. Stand up, Sarah! Now look at her trim figure and wavy hair! How much do you bid for them? She is sound in wind and limb, I'll warrant her! Who bids? Her feet and hands—hold them out, Sarah—are small and finely formed. What do you bid for her? She is a Christian woman,—I mean a praying nigger,—and that makes her more valuable, because it insures her docility and obedience to your wishes. 'Servants, obey your masters,' you know. Well, she believes that doctrine. How much for her? Will you allow this praying woman to be sent back to Richmond to meet the fate for which her father sold her? If not, who bids?"

His audience was breathless. Women sobbed.

"Come, now," continued Mr. Beecher, "we are selling this woman, you know, and a fine specimen she is, too. Look at her! See for yourselves! Don't you want her? Now, then, pass the baskets and let us see!"

Bank-notes were piled in those baskets, and jewels from women's hands. Those who were near the pulpit laid their gifts at Henry Ward Beecher's feet.

"There, Sarah, you are free," said Mr. Beecher.

More than a year before this event a young slave girl, valued by her master at $900, was sold in Plymouth Church. This occurred on Sunday in February, 1860. In the audience was a lady named Rose Terry, who put into the contribution-box one of her rings. Later the pastor placed this ring on the slave girl's finger, telling her it was her freedom ring, and that her name was Rose Ward, for the lady who gave the ring and himself. Rose Ward was later sent to Howard University by the Plymouth society.

THE CORNELL-PIERREPONT MANSION

From a print in "Pierrepont Genealogies from the Norman Time to 1913," by R. Burnham Moffat.

Nor were the slave days the only stirring times that Plymouth Church experienced; for leaders along various lines were welcomed there, and among them Louis Kossuth, once Governor of Hungary, who, engaged in a civil war with Germany, was beaten and driven into Turkey, where the sultan protected him. Kossuth went to England; and, after enjoying a cordial reception in London, he came to America in the winter of 1851. A bitterly cold night brought him to Brooklyn, where he was escorted through brilliantly lighted streets to Plymouth Church, draped in the flags of America and Hungary. "I present him," said Mr. Beecher, "not only as the champion of his own kind, but because he loves his kind everywhere."

Kossuth told them of Hungary's sufferings and of her condition. At the close of his address he was given a cannon-ball from the New Orleans battlefield and a casket of bullets from Bunker Hill.

Plymouth Church is on Orange Street. It remained practically the same as when Mr. Beecher preached, but the activities of the church have led to the construction of an addition known as the Arbuckle Memorial in honor of the giver, John Arbuckle. Its present pastor is the Reverend J. Stanley Durkee.

THE PIERREPONT MANSION ON THE HEIGHTS. WASHINGTON'S SIGNAL STATION DURING THE SIEGE OF BROOKLYN

The Pierrepont mansion, which has come down in history as "The Four Chimneys," stood on a line with the present Montague Street, when the Heights of Brooklyn had many green fields and open spaces. The little bridge which to-day spans Montague Street is where was once Mr. Pierrepont's cellar. It is said that during the siege of Brooklyn a signal was established upon the roof of "The Chimneys" in order to communicate with New York, and from it by means of a

tall liberty pole information concerning the movements of the troops there was sent to the headquarters in Brooklyn. Orders from Washington also were sent from the station on the roof.

General Lafayette, when he visited Brooklyn in August, 1824, was entertained by Hezekiah Pierrepont in his mansion on the Heights. Among the distinguished guests were Colonel Fish, father of Governor Hamilton Fish, and Judge Daggett, of New Haven, both of whom had known Washington well and had been associated with him as secretaries or aides during some part of the Revolutionary War. After the dinner given to Lafayette, the guests assembled on the piazza.

"By the by, General," said Colonel Fish, "are you aware that this house has a great historical interest? This is the room in which the council was held which decided upon the retreat from Long Island."

The panic into which the troops were thrown during the retreat was recalled, and Judge Daggett said that the confusion was frightful. In spite of the commands of the officers the soldiers crowded into the boats that were to carry them to Manhattan, until there was no possible way of moving them.

Washington, in the mean time, was keenly observing the situation, and his patience was rapidly ebbing. When a man leaped out from the throng, Washington seized a stone, which probably few men in the army could have lifted, and, raising it in his hands, shouted,—

"If every man in that boat doesn't instantly leave it, I'll sink it to ——!"

For an instant he towered there with the huge stone in his upraised hands. The boat was instantly cleared, and no act of insubordination is recorded during the rest of the retreat.

Mr. Pierrepont, master of "The Chimneys," was one of the most influential men of his time in Brooklyn. He was a merchant, traveller, and humanitarian, delighting in the progress of Brooklyn and taking great pride in the beauty of his surroundings. He was frequently abroad, and was in France at the time of the Revolution, witnessing there the bloodiest of the days, and was present when Robespierre was beheaded, July 28, 1794. So overcome was he by the sight of blood that he feared for his personal safety among the mob that revelled in those scenes.

Early in 1804 he purchased what was known as the Benson Farm on the Heights, where the Plaza now stands on Montague Street, commanding a fine view of the Hudson and East Rivers. Later he bought land adjoining this, and had in all about sixty acres, with a frontage of eight hundred feet on the East River, going back about half a mile to Love Lane on the north and Remsen Street on the south, as far as the old Jamaica road and Fulton Street, as it is now known. While in Europe, Mr. Pierrepont met Robert Fulton, and they formed a friendship that was lasting. Mr. Pierrepont aided the inventor in the establishment of Fulton Ferry, and was one of the directors until his death.

A series of stone steps, during the early days of his occupancy of

THE OLD TUNNEL OVER MONTAGUE STREET

From a photograph in the collection of the New York Public Library.

"The Chimneys," led down to the shore, where Mr. Pierrepont kept a small boat in which he was accustomed to row himself each day to New York. He was deeply interested in beautifying the Heights, and he cut up his land into streets, which he named for many of his neighbors.

Mr. Pierrepont once said that the people of Brooklyn and vicinity often dug for Captain Kidd's treasure, and that the hills were full of holes made by searchers. He added that such explorations had been made on his own estate and in other places on the Heights. On November 25, 1783, when the British troops formally evacuated New York, from the flagstaff of the Pierrepont mansion the American flag was unfurled.

THE OLD FORT UPON THE HEIGHTS AND LOVE LANE

Upon the Heights, where traffic and residences have long been, once stood the "most thoroughly constructed and complete fortifications" erected by the British on Long Island. According to Stiles, the old Fort occupied what is now the junction of Pierrepont and Henry Streets. The position was very commanding, and much time and labor were spent in completing the works. It was begun in May, 1780, and was not fully finished in July, 1781, when but eighteen cannons had been put in place. The site of the fort at the time of its erection was occupied by fine orchards which spread over the level top of eminence, and these orchards were cut down by the two or three thousand soldiers, and the additional farmers, laborers, and mechanics who were impressed to dig the trenches and form the bastions of the fort.

The fortifications were 450 feet square, and were surrounded by a ditch twenty feet deep, while the ramparts rose fifty feet above the level of the surface. On the bastions at each angle were afterward planted buttonwood trees, which grew to large size. Along the line of what is now Fulton Street between Pierrepont and Clark Streets, a row of small mud huts were erected by the British army sutlers.

Time has now effaced every vestige of this strong old redoubt, and apartments and residences, for which the Heights have long been famous, now cover the site of the fort and its vicinity.

Another interesting feature of which time has only a remnant, though romance long lingered about it, was that short, private little lane which led between the DeBevoise and Pierrepont estates on the Heights in the vicinity of Columbia Heights and Pierrepont Street. The fourteen acres from the East River to Fulton Street and from north of the present Pierrepont Street to Love Lane were owned by two bachelors, Robert and John DeBevoise, whose grandfather had bought them in 1734 from Joris Remsen. Robert was stout, strong, and broad-faced, and having through disease lost his nose was greatly feared by the village urchins, although his disposition was kind. Perhaps the twenty or thirty savage dogs that the brothers kept about their home gave Robert a bad name. John was quite a contrast to his brother, being thin and consumptive. They occupied a small, rather old and battered-looking home of Dutch architecture, and as housekeeper had a very beautiful girl, who bore their name and was treated as a daughter. This adopted child, Sarah DeBevoise, used the little lane between the DeBevoise and Pierrepont estates when promenading with her many admirers, and the numerous love lines with Miss DeBevoise's initials, which her admirers cut or scribbled upon the fence, gave the lane the name by which it was long known to residents of the Heights. Her first husband was a Samuel Van Buren and her second Edward McComber.

THE GREENLEAF FEMALE INSTITUTE, PACKER INSTITUTE, AND THE POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

Brooklyn, particularly the Heights, has long been a staunch supporter of private schools. Some of these schools rank among the best in the land. On the site where now stands the new building of the Brooklyn Trust Company stood the Greenleaf Female Institute, one of the most famous schools on the Heights. Miss Sarah Ball, who attended the school, says that when Dr. Alfred Greenleaf decided to build in 1844 the school where now stands the Brooklyn Trust Company, many of his friends told him the site was so far out of town that the school would be a failure.

Dr. Greenleaf, who was a graduate of Dartmouth, had previously taught a boys' school in Brooklyn, and while he was not a born disciplinarian, his wit, humor, and ardent love did more than discipline to keep his pupils in the narrow way of order. His readiness of wit was proverbial. For instance, when Miss England forgot her where-

GREENLEAF FEMALE INSTITUTE, BROOKLYN HEIGHTS

Which stood on the site of the present Brooklyn Trust Company. From a print in the possession of the Brooklyn Trust Company.

abouts and began talking, Dr. Greenleaf's long pointer would reach her way, and he would exclaim, "England, with all thy faults I love thee still," and she would subside. Many of his pupils shared his readiness of wit, and frequently they dropped into verse in recitation.

At noon in summer Andrews' Bakery on Clinton Street drew to its sweet delectables most of the maidens of the school, and Clinton Street was then indeed a flutter of muslins. A wedding at Trinity Church at high noon was something that always attracted a bevy of girls and never failed to more or less upset the school.

Dr. Greenleaf was surrounded by an excellent faculty, some well-known professors of New York often coming to Brooklyn to teach the girls natural sciences. Owing to ill health Dr. Greenleaf in 1870 sold the school out to Mr. Bradbury, who kept it for several years before it eventually passed into the hands of others. And when the old school building was torn down girls gathered from far and near to bid adieu to the place they had learned to love.

Another institute for the higher education of girls was housed in a substantial brick building on Joralemon Street, and was completed and dedicated in 1846. The association which owned it was known as the Brooklyn Female Academy, and the school was under the management of Alonzo Crittenden, who had left the Albany Female Academy to take charge of the new institute.

In 1853 no less than 600 pupils were attending the school. On the first day of that year fire swept it away, but not for an instant, however, was the school interrupted, for rooms were at once offered, and almost before the ruins had ceased smoking Mrs. Harriet L. Packer offered $65,000 for rebuilding it and $20,000 more if wanted, provided that it be made a girls' school exclusively. The Brooklyn Female Academy transferred its rights to this new school, and a new building was erected on the ground of the old and dedicated September 1, 1854. In honor of the donor it has been known for years as Packer

JOHN BENNETT HOUSE
95th Street and Shore Drive.

Institute. To it at one time or another nearly all the best-known families on the Heights have sent their children, and it has been enlarged again and again. So successful was the Packer Institute that it was not long before the members of its organization who had sons to educate founded a new institute for boys, which is now known as the Polytechnic Institute, founded in 1854.

Another celebrated educational institution for girls was the school conducted by Professor West — known as the "Brooklyn Heights Seminary," no longer in existence — and located in a handsome old house on Pierrepont Street, formerly the residence of Simeon B. Chittenden. It was started in 1851 by Professor Alonzo Gray, and in 1860 came under the management of Dr. E. C. West, who built it into one of the most successful schools in Brooklyn.

BENNETT HOUSE

(95th Street and Shore Drive)

Just before the Battle of Long Island on August 27, 1776, during the Revolution, the British ship *Asia* came into New York harbor and opened fire on the little battery at what is now Fort Hamilton. One of the cannon balls went through the roof of the Bennett house.

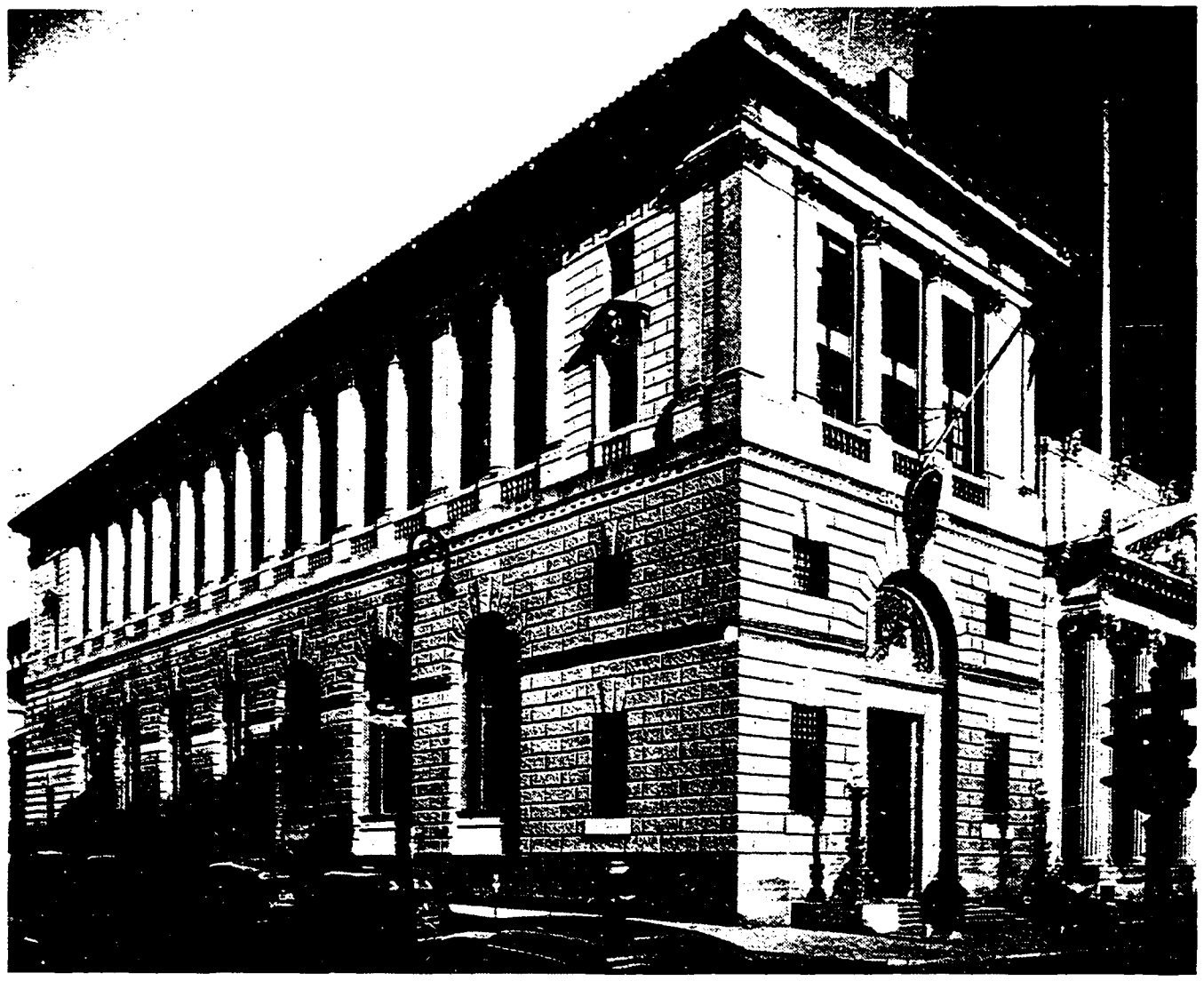
At the time, the house was occupied by John Bennett, who was the son of Wynant and Geertje Emmans Bennett. He had married in July, 1761, Willemtje Barkaloo, a young girl whose father lived at about 93rd Street and Shore Drive, and soon after the marriage built the Bennett House. It stood in a lovely, large yard until the Shore Road was widened into Shore Drive and all of the yard and some of the house were then taken. The last to own this house was Charles C. Bennett, who sold it about 1890.

At the close of the World War a barge loaded with ammunition was tied to the dock at Fort Hamilton. Some of the shells exploded and one went through the roof of the house. Today it is still occupied and in good condition.

The Brooklyn of Revolutionary War days was scarcely more than a village. In 1790, one year after the inauguration of George Washington, its population was only 4,495. But by 1866, when the Brooklyn Trust Company was chartered, its population had multiplied 80-fold, and Brooklyn had become a thriving city of 363,000 people.

The opening of the Brooklyn Bridge on May 24, 1883, was a real landmark in its history, providing its first land transportation connection to the great neighboring city of New York and foreshadowing its later absorption into the greater city. The next quarter-century saw the opening of the Williamsburgh Bridge, in 1904, Brooklyn's second vehicular artery to Manhattan, and the beginning of subway service under the East River on January 9, 1908. The following year, 1909, witnessed the opening of the Manhattan Bridge — Brooklyn's third.

Meanwhile Brooklyn spread to the southward and eastward, annexing numerous villages whose names are now but the designations of neighborhoods. Miles of streets, filled with the homes and shops of Brooklyn's thousands of new inhabitants, spread out where but a short time before only vacant land met the eye. But despite the tremendous influx of new population from all points of the compass and a certain exodus of former residents, Brooklyn yet retains a character and an individuality.

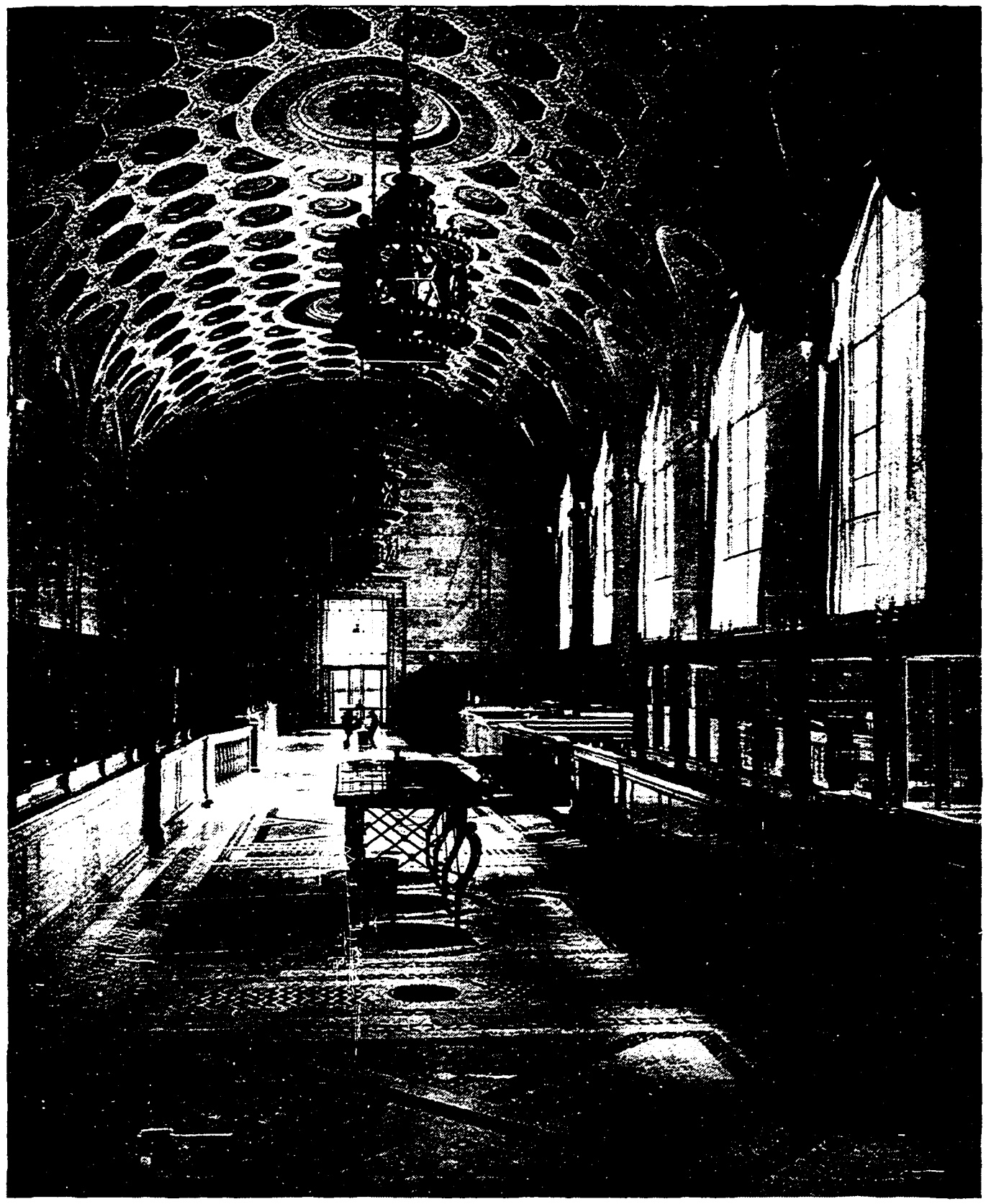


MAIN OFFICE OF BROOKLYN TRUST COMPANY
177 Montague Street.

CONTEMPORARY BROOKLYN

The contemporary Brooklyn of 1941, like most of the older American communities, presents a sharp contrast to its earlier self. With a population of 2,698,285, according to final figures of the 1940 Census, it is outranked only by the City of New York, of which it is a part, and the City of Chicago. It contains approximately 36 per cent of the total population of the City of New York, and 20 per cent of the population of New York State.

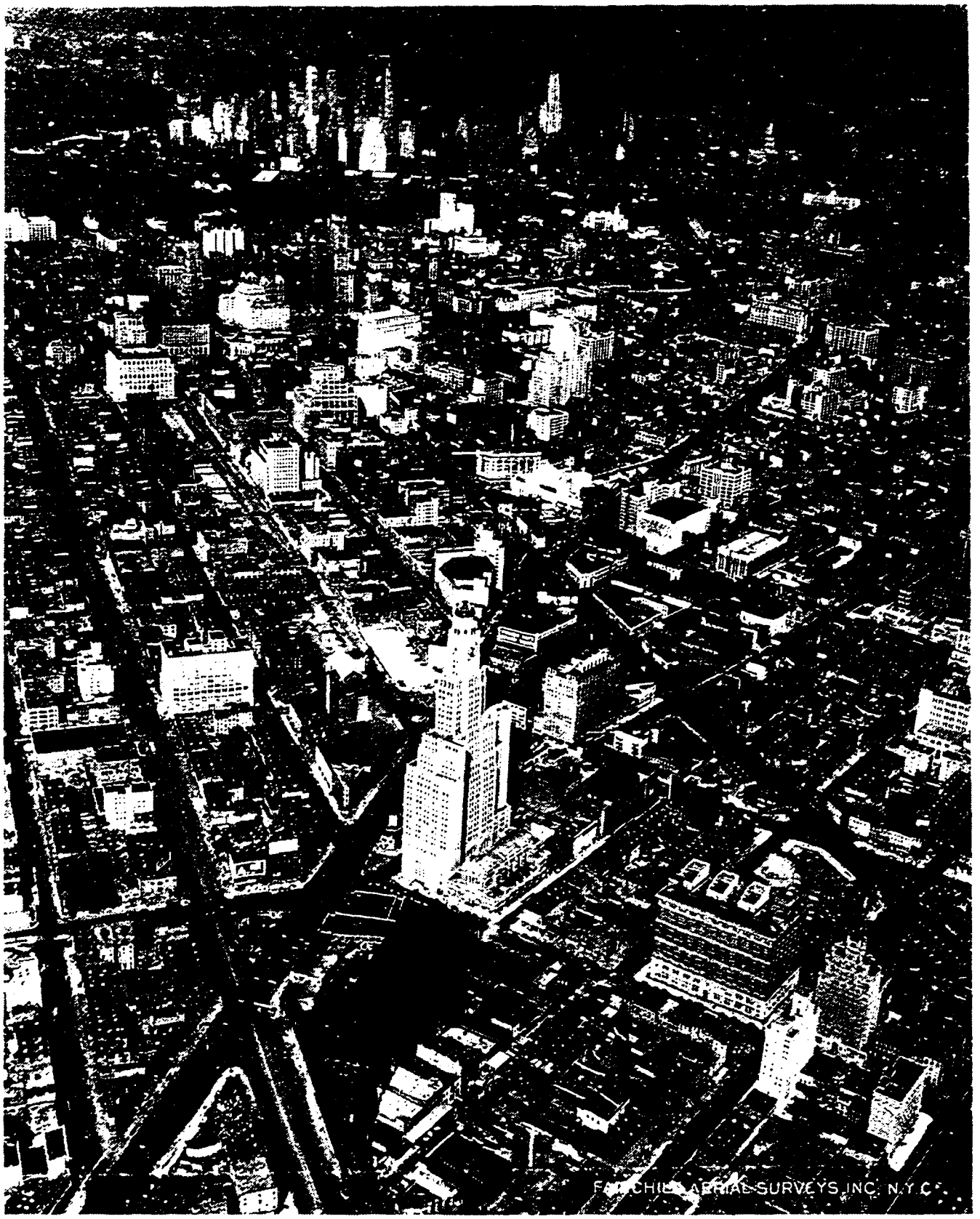
As a result of annexations of adjoining communities many years ago, its area now exceeds 74 square miles. Its people live in approximately 90,000 one-family houses, 92,000 two-family houses, and 67,000 apartment buildings. It is one of the major industrial communities of the United States, with 6,959 factories employing 163,279 workers in 1940. Its 38,000 retail stores sell merchandise having a total value of approximately $769,000,000 per annum, a total trade volume comparable to that of the City of Philadelphia. Its 21 mutual savings banks, as of December 31, 1940, held total deposits of $1,274,089,787, represented by 1,479,160 accounts — more than one account for every two of its inhabitants. Brooklyn's commercial banking requirements are served



INTERIOR OF MAIN OFFICE OF BROOKLYN TRUST COMPANY
177 Montague Street

by 98 banking offices, 23 of which are operated by Brooklyn Trust Company.

Cold statistics, however, fail to convey to the reader an adequate impression of Brooklyn as it exists today — seventy-five years after the chartering of Brooklyn Trust Company. It is therefore suggested that the accompanying photographs may provide the reader who has not visited Brooklyn with a clearer impression of the appearance of the community at the time of the publication of this book.



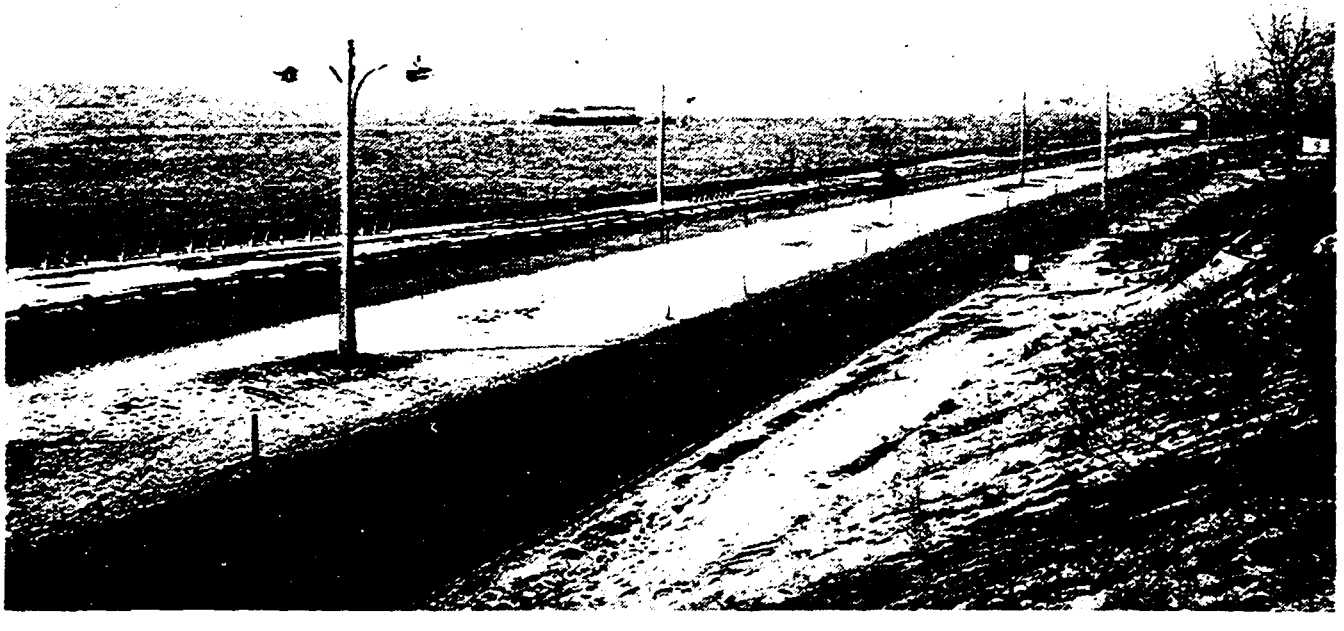
Courtesy of Fairchild Aerial Surveys Inc., New York City

AIRPLANE VIEW OF DOWNTOWN BROOKLYN

Looking westward toward the towers of lower Manhattan across the bay.

BROOKLYN'S BOROUGH HALL, SURROUNDED BY SKYSCRAPERS

NEW HOME OF THE APPELLATE DIVISION, SECOND JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT, OF THE SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK



A PORTION OF THE NEW FOUR-LANE "BELT" HIGHWAY
Along the shore line of New York Bay.