

THE LONG ISLAND HISTORICAL JOURNAL



In Queens There Is Room For All

Fall 1998

Volume 11 • Number 1



"Starting from fish-shape Paumanok where I was born..."

Walt Whitman

Fall 1998

Volume 11 • Number 1

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Secondary school essay contest winners.

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Hofstra University will hold a conference in March 1999 commemorating the centennial of Nassau County. Papers dealing with the history of the county are welcome. For a copy of the call for papers, contact the Long Island Studies Institute, Hofstra University - West Campus, 619 Fulton Avenue, Hempstead, N.Y. 11549, (516) 463-6411; or the Hofstra Cultural Center, (516) 463-5669.

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We welcome comments, proposals for articles or reviews, or offers to help in whatever phase of our work you select.

EDITORIAL COMMENT

Nineteen-ninety-eight is a major anniversary year in the history of Long Island. Our Spring issue featured the centennial of the Spanish-American War, in which Montauk served both as port of embarkation and hospital camp for returning GI's, including members of Teddy Roosevelt's legendary Rough Riders. Our current issue marks the hundredth year of Long Island's partition, caused by the merging of Brooklyn and Queens with the other units of Greater New York. One year later, the three eastern towns of Queens, excluded from the merger, created a county of their own. Thus, the geographic entity known as Long Island split into separate political parts, one now within New York City and the other the autonomous counties of Nassau and Suffolk. Jeffrey A. Kroessler addresses the impact on Queens of the forming of Greater New York, while Donald E. Simon interprets the slender margin by which the voters of Brooklyn approved the consolidation.

In Spring 1999 we will cover Nassau's origin and the controversy over the role of county government preceding adoption of the Nassau County Charter of 1936. In addition, we will publish a Brooklyn scholar's lament for the merger that she claims lulled her borough into unfair subordination to the big city across the Gowanus.

The current issue also offers Elizabeth Shepherd's prodigiously researched account of large-scale, nineteenth-century agriculture, as typified by Deepwells, the now-publicly owned farm in Smithtown once operated by Joel Smith; an analysis of a scandalous colonial ministry written by Robert E Cray Jr., an exceptionally well-informed historian of seventeenth-century religious life on Long Island; and Paul Goldberger's description of the steeple of the Old Whaler's Church, and Sag Harbor's hopes to rebuild this architectural gem that stood from 1844 until it was blown away in the hurricane of 1938.

We are especially indebted to Natalie A. Naylor (the director of Hofstra University's Long Island Studies Institute), assisted by Victoria R. Aspinwall, for a meticulous index of articles in the *LIHJ* and other L. I. publications for the five-year-period, 1993-1998 (for Prof. Naylor's previous 1988-1993 index, see *LIHJ* 6 [Fall 1993]: 106-20). Three prize-winning articles by high-school students and an unusually strong assortment of reviews round out the first issue of our eleventh year, together with several absorbing letters to the editor.

With this issue we enter our second decade of publication. Thanks to those of you who subscribed from the git-go, and welcome to all who found us along the way. If you want to stimulate the study of Long Island as America, please encourage someone you know to subscribe to this scholarly, reader-supported, semiannual survey of the history of Paumanok.

THE GREATER CITY AND QUEENS COUNTY

By Jeffrey A. Kroessler

Historically, the great cities of the United States have ensured their economic and social vitality by annexing adjacent territories. In 1874, New York City took the first step in this direction, continuing its northward growth by annexing the portion of southern Westchester lying west of the Bronx River. The urban grid was almost immediately superimposed on the landscape, and the construction of tenements quickly followed the extension of the city's elevated lines across the Harlem River. Many citizens reasonably expected that New York would continue its march into Westchester to annex the city of Yonkers and the rural towns of Pelham and Eastchester. But the city fixed its gaze on the harbor, not the mainland. The historian David C. Hammack argues that commercial interests were the primary agents behind consolidation, and suggests that "many of the merchants and bankers believed that if a single municipal government could gain control over New York harbor and all the surrounding territory, it could promote the unified, comprehensive development of shipping, railroads, and related facilities in such a way as to aid both merchants and property owners."¹

The area envisioned for the greater metropolis encompassed southern Westchester, Richmond, Brooklyn and Kings County (not identical until 1896), and as much of Queens and the town of Hempstead to ensure the city's possession of Jamaica Bay and Little Neck Bay. Those boundaries were necessary if the city were to maintain control over future as well as existing harbor development.²

Just as important as the port was the acquisition of territory for New York's growing population. Several immigrant wards already had the highest population density in the world—in 1890, Manhattan's Tenth Ward on the Lower East Side held 522 persons per acre, 290,000 packed in a square mile. Those repugnant conditions concerned reformers on both sides of the East River. Edward A. Bradford, a member of the Consolidation League of Brooklyn, reminded his peers that no matter where they lived, they were hardly immune from the evils of Manhattan's slums:

Let none imagine himself so rich, careless, or secure that none of these things can touch him. He may withhold charity, but he cannot dodge taxes swelled by crime and pauperism. And though he may establish himself in the costliest residence in the city, the sewer beneath his cellar and the breeze above his attic are freighted with germs from the tenements threatening alike his parlor and his nursery. The labor maxim "the injury of one is the concern of all" is a thousand-fold true of this blot upon New York City.

The answer, according to Bradford, lay in annexation. The population and townships of Long Island, he argued, "are New York's in fact, and may be so in name, if the voters so decide. Across the East River lie idle acres lacking only men and houses to create values and taxable resources now scarcely dreamed of. This is Long Island's dowry in the union which shall produce Great York. New York can only reject the proposal at the cost of sinking to a second rate city." The question of whether New York, since 1810 the country's largest city, would maintain its position was not idle conjecture, for as New York's growth rate was slowing, Chicago's was rapidly expanding. In the decade between 1880 and 1890, New York grew at a rate of only 25 percent, and Brooklyn 42 percent. Chicago's growth rate, however, was an explosive 118 percent, and showed no signs of slowing down.³

Completion of the Brooklyn Bridge in 1883 had linked the nation's first and third cities, and political union seemed only a matter of time. In July 1886, the *Long Island City Star* reported on the proposed unification of New York and its suburbs, including Brooklyn, Long Island City, and Yonkers, into one grand city under the name "Manhattan":

The scheme would give a metropolis which for extent of territory, variety of advantage and population, would rival and soon outstrip any of the great cities of the world. Annexation would bring many great and lasting benefits to property and business interests and much and incalculable good could not but result from the strong and far-reaching governmental regulations that would be brought about. A great city like New York cannot afford to have a number of petty and corrupt municipal corporations in its immediate suburbs and which are constantly in conflict with its police and sanitary regulations. The first step was taken in the opening of the Brooklyn Bridge. The next which will lead on to the final one of unification will be the building of the bridge across the East River at Blackwell's Island [now Roosevelt Island].⁴

Many loyal Brooklynites also faced the traumatic prospect of the end of independence, but New Yorkers expressed little sympathy for Brooklyn's fate. The *New York Post* stated:

New York must retain its supremacy as the leading city of the New World, and it can only do this by enlarging its limits. It has for years been building up Brooklyn and other adjacent territory with the overflow of its population, and the time will come when it will claim all this for its own. A great and important part of it, that which has gone into New Jersey, it cannot reclaim; but Brooklyn and Long Island, Richmond and part of Westchester Counties are within its reach, and must sooner or later yield to the inevitable and come into its fold.

The editor went on to describe the impact of new transportation links between

Manhattan and Long Island:

It will not be many years before not one but many bridges over and tunnels under the East River will make Brooklyn and New York practically one city, and make the whole of Long Island almost as much a suburb of New York as Brooklyn now is. Brooklyn may as well resign herself to the loss of her identity, for the fates are against her preserving it. Her citizens ought to console themselves with the reflection that whatever greatness she possesses to-day is due to the fact of her nearness to New York, and that, after all consolidation will not be without compensation, for when the two cities are one, Brooklyn can no longer be spoken of as merely the sleeping room for New York.⁵

The contest over consolidation focused on Kings County. Practicing its own brand of urban imperialism, Brooklyn annexed Williamsburgh and Bushwick in 1854, reached through southern Queens to the Suffolk line for water, and acquired parkland in Jamaica (Forest Park). By 1896, Brooklyn had annexed the towns of Flatbush, Gravesend, New Utrecht, Flatlands, and New Lots, making the city limits coterminous with Kings County, home to a population rapidly approaching one million. In truth, New York had always been the primary city, and Brooklyn never seriously threatened Manhattan's economic, political, or social power, for while Manhattan had the entire continent at its back, Brooklyn could legitimately claim only Long Island for its hinterland. If there were any doubt of New York's primacy, one needed only to look at its historic boundary, defined in the 1686 Dongan Charter as the low-water mark on the Brooklyn side of the East River. This meant that ferry companies paid New York for their franchise rights, and not a penny went into Brooklyn's coffers, even though her citizens paid the vast majority of the fares.⁶

As shown in table 1, the population of Queens in 1890 was a relatively small 131,227, almost two-thirds of which lived in Long Island City and the western towns.

Accordingly, Queens played a much smaller role in the drama than did Kings. As Joseph Witzel, owner of one of the most popular hotels in College Point, put it, the people of Queens "would have very little say for or against the matter." From the start, the *Long Island City Star* was solidly behind the plan, in large part because politics and government in Long Island City were shamelessly corrupt. In December 1886, the editor stated that,

We are rejoiced to see that the project to raise one grand city has again been revived by the New York Aldermen appointing a committee to confer with the officials of the other municipalities interested and report. We hope all the parties interested in this movement may be able to decide upon some

Table 1
Population Growth in Queens, 1850-1892.

| | <u>1850</u> | <u>1855</u> | <u>1860</u> | <u>1865</u> |
|---------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Western | 16,831 (46%) | 18,296 (39%) | 30,429 (53%) | 31,481 (54%) |
| Eastern | 20,002 | 27,970 | 26,962 | 26,516 |
| | <u>1875</u> | <u>1880</u> | <u>1890</u> | <u>1892</u> |
| Western | 48,531 (59%) | 52,927 (59%) | 85,467 (65%) | 95,014 (67%) |
| Eastern | 33,490 | 37,147 | 45,760 | 47,184 |

Sources: *Census of the State of New York, 1865, and 1875; Flushing Journal, 26 March 1892.*

basis whereby the project may assume a definite shape and hasten the day when [they] will be incorporated into one grand corporation known as "Manhatta" or "Manhattan." We are not sticklers for any particular title; even plain New York will be agreeable to us.⁷

In 1888, the Chamber of Commerce of the State of New York initiated an earnest campaign for consolidation, with the implicit approval of New York City's reform mayor, Abram S. Hewitt, who, in his annual message of January 1888, spoke of his city's "imperial destiny." The next year, Andrew Haswell Green, former commissioner of Central Park and long-time advocate of consolidation, traveled to Albany but failed to convince the legislature at least to study the proposal. The *Star* once again loudly supported the bill, recognizing that consolidation meant that Long Island City would reap the "blessings" of expensive urban improvements. Like a child on Santa's knee, the paper cried:

Come, gentlemen, hurry forward the "Greater New York." Long Island City is anxious to be taken in. We want the Blackwell Island [Queensboro] bridge, a tunnel, some broad and handsomely paved streets and above all, a doubling and trebling up of the values of our factory and business sites and our magnificently situated building lands. The "greater city" will bring all these blessings and many more, and we are hankering after them. How soon? What's the prospect?

One year later, Green's efforts bore fruit when, in 1890, the legislature established the Greater New York Commission. Governor David B. Hill appointed five of the six men Green suggested, guaranteeing that the pro-consolidation coalition of business and political interests would not be disappointed by the findings.⁸

The *Flushing Journal* praised Green's commission and generally supported annexation, if only because it seemed inevitable:

If New York cannot conveniently extend towards and into Westchester county, her overflowing population must find an outlet somewhere, and with the advantages which Long Island is offering the expansion must

necessarily be this way...any scheme which benefits Long Island, or any territory adjacent to New York, must benefit that city, for the time is not distant, in our judgment, when all territory indicated will become part and parcel of the greater New York which the Legislative Commission appointed last week is to investigate and report upon well-located property near to New York must improve rapidly in value.

The paper wished the commission "godspeed in their task. The scheme is a gigantic one, but it is one that should be carried out if possible. It certainly will be, sooner or later. It is one of those things that must come, and the sooner the better." The *Long Island City Star* also supported the governor's action:

the formal inquiry will acquaint the public with the difficulties and embarrassments which the present division of authority occasions in the community gathered about the port of New York. It will broaden their view of the future of the great commercial capital and give them lessons in sound and effective municipal government"⁹

The legislature called for a nonbinding referendum on consolidation, to appear on the ballot in November 1894 in the area encompassed by the proposed metropolis. Before the election, the Commission of Municipal Consolidation issued a statement regarding the meaning of the vote:

Your vote is only a simple expression of opinion. Actual consolidation does not come until the Legislature acts. Electors will please observe that this vote amounts to nothing more than a simple expression of opinion on the general subject of consolidation. It is merely the gathering of sentiment of the electors of each municipality advisory as to the future proceedings. If every ballot in a city or town were cast in favor of consolidation there would be no finality about it; no consolidation would result until further action by the Legislature.¹⁰

Long Island City, Jamaica, Newtown, and the small portion of Hempstead (the Rockaway Peninsula) included in the referendum voted in favor; only in Flushing did consolidation fail to win a majority. In all, more than 60 percent of the electors in Queens voted yes, with the greatest number of votes coming from Long Island City. As expected, the vote in Kings County was extremely close, a difference of only 277 votes out of almost 130,000 cast, as shown in table 2.

Overall, better than 57 percent of the voters approved of consolidation, enough for the pro-annexation forces to press forward. By February 1896, the Greater New York Bill was wending its way through the state legislature; attempts to omit Flushing, Jamaica, and Hempstead were turned back, despite an intensive lobbying campaign by anti-consolidationists there. The Flushing Village Association sent a delegation to Albany to testify against the bill, and seven hundred citizens of Flushing and Jamaica signed a memorial sent to the governor

Table 2
A. Results of Consolidation Vote, 1894

| <u>County</u> | <u>For</u> | <u>Against</u> |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| New York | 96,938 (62%) | 59,959 |
| Kings | 64,744 (50.1%) | 64,467 |
| Queens | 7,712 (65%) | 4,741 |
| Richmond | 5,531 (79%) | 1,505 |
| Westchester* | 1,255 (56%) | 1,034 |

*Includes towns of Westchester, Eastchester, and Pelham

B. Results of Consolidation

| <u>Town</u> | <u>For</u> | <u>Against</u> |
|------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Long Island City | 3,529 (82%) | 792 |
| Newtown | 1,267 (57%) | 946 |
| Flushing | 1,144 (45%) | 1,407 |
| Jamaica | 1,381 (52%) | 1,263 |
| Hempstead (part) | 478 (54%) | 412 |
| Total | 7,599 (61%) | 4,820 |

Sources: *Brooklyn Daily Eagle Almanac*, 1899, 135; *Long Island Democrat*, 13 Nov. 1894. (The figures differ because of discrepancies in the election returns reported.)

and the legislature protesting annexation, but their efforts could not stop, or even modify, the legislation. After passing both houses, the bill was sent to the three mayors. Mayor William L. Strong of New York and Mayor Frederick W. Wurster of Brooklyn vetoed it, but Long Island City's Mayor Patrick J. Gleason sent it back with his wholehearted approval. The legislature repassed the bill over the vetoes, and Governor Levi P. Morton signed the measure on 11 May 1896.¹¹

In the end, Tammany Hall came out against the bill. Conversely, the GOP saw in consolidation the possibility that it could wrest control of the city from Tammany. By the end of 1895, Boss Thomas C. Platt was solidly behind the measure. In 1894, the Republican ticket carried the area that would become Greater New York, and some members of the party believed "that consolidation would actually help rather than hurt the party that accomplished it." It was Platt's control of the Republican Party that finally pushed the Greater New York Bill through Albany.¹²

When the bill first passed in March, the *Flushing Journal* lamented:

Of course the name Flushing will have to be dropped. Shall we have to call it "New York, E. D." (eastern district) and will our post office be "Station X" or some other lowdown letter of the alphabet? Then, too, what will become of the proud and cherished distinction of belonging to the First

Families of Flushing when it shall be known a Flushing no more?

The *Newtown Register*, which had opposed consolidation in the 1894 referendum, was now resigned to the inevitable: "We can only hope that in the framing of the charter for the new city, and in other preparatory measures and arrangements, wise and patriotic counsels will prevail. If they do not, Newtown at least will have nothing to boast of in losing its time-honored identity."¹³

On 2 May 1897, Governor Frank S. Black signed Chapter 378 of the Laws of 1897: "An act to unite into one municipality under the corporate name of the City of New York, the various communities lying in and about New York Harbor, including the City and County of New York, the City of Brooklyn and the County of Kings, the County of Richmond, and part of the County of Queens and to provide for the government thereof."¹⁴ The law took effect on 1 January 1898.

The fate of Queens County was one of the thornier issues unresolved by the new charter, for, unlike New York, Kings, and Richmond, the boundaries of borough and county were not identical. The birth of Greater New York left the towns of Hempstead, North Hempstead, and Oyster Bay in the peculiar position of being part of a county that was half in and half out of the new metropolis. Overwhelmingly rural, and dotted with small suburban villages along railroad lines, the eastern towns had never been included in discussions about the greater city's boundaries. For more than fifty years, however, Long Islanders had considered the formation of a new county, or even statehood. As the Greater New York charter worked its way through the legislature, State Senator Theodore Koehler, of Long Island City, introduced a measure to divide the county, with the annexed portion added to New York County as were the Westchester towns of Pelham, Eastchester, and Westchester soon after the 1894 referendum. Koehler's bill went nowhere, however.¹⁵

Queens had never been much more than a geographic expression, the townships joined in a loosely structured, and thoroughly ineffective, county government; the board of supervisors did not even have a permanent home, but met at taverns across the county. In contrast to Kings, which fell under the domination of Brooklyn, there was no city in Queens until 1870, when Long Island City received its charter. Each town had its own village center, but none of them emerged as the dominant social, political, and economic heart of the county. As late as 1892, in fact, Newtown was taking only the first steps toward incorporation as a village.¹⁶ Jamaica prospered as the LIRR's main transfer station, but the village never captured the county courthouse, the symbol of political power. Hempstead was the most populous town, but as it was almost entirely rural it could not compete with the gravitational pull of the dynamic economies of New York and Brooklyn. Citizens of the eastern towns soon recognized that their suburban and agricultural interests were not in harmony with the industrial economy and rough and tumble politics of Long Island City.

As the population in each section grew at a different rate, so, too, was there a marked difference in the relative wealth of the eastern and western towns. The area that became Nassau County contained only about 20 percent of the assessed

valuation of Queens in 1897; by contrast, Long Island City, with its growing industrial base, had more than half the total. The towns of Newtown, Flushing, and Jamaica accounted for the remainder. In the year after consolidation, the valuations in the eastern towns actually decreased, no doubt cheering the inhabitants and bolstering their belief that taxes from the rural districts had been siphoned off to finance improvements in urban and suburban sections.¹⁷

Just as the wealth was concentrated in the annexed section, so was the county's indebtedness. Out of a total debt of more than \$10 million, the eastern towns accounted for only \$642,500, or about 6 percent of the total, excluding their share of the county bonds and school bonds. The grossly mismanaged and blatantly corrupt administrations of Long Island City incurred the bulk of the debt, almost 35 percent of the total. Not all of that figure could be charged to corruption, however, for this was also the most rapidly urbanizing part of the county, and the city had to let contracts for water and sewer mains, schools, and street paving. The incorporated villages of Queens also accounted for a sizable proportion of the debt in 1897 (about 27 percent), and the reason was plain. According to the new charter, Greater New York would assume "the valid debts, obligations and liabilities of the municipal and public corporations including the counties, towns, incorporated villages and school districts." Secure in the knowledge that they would not be held accountable for repaying the debts, the several municipalities borrowed funds for all manner of public improvements; by November 1897, the county Board of Supervisors had issued \$375,000 in 4 percent bonds for county roads. The residents of Rockaway Beach, a square-mile section between Arverne and Rockaway Park, incorporated as a village on 1 July 1897, even though the area would become part of Greater New York within a few months. Almost immediately, the new municipality issued \$57,000 in bonds (10 percent of the assessed valuation), "to secure all the improvements they can before the city government takes away the local power and authority." The *Newtown Register* commented that the towns and villages were profiting by consolidation:

Jamaica surpasses all her neighbors in this respect and throughout the town wherever one goes are found gangs of men building macadam roads, laying sewers or making other improvements. Newtown and Flushing have also indulged in the same line of business and all seem determined to get as many local improvements as possible before going into the Greater New York. Controller Fitch of New York City has been very observant of the actions of the citizens of Queens County who are soon to be his fellow citizens of new York. He remarked that he did not blame the Queens County people in the least; that they are only doing what he would urge them to do if he lived among them; that they would not be likely to secure these improvements for many years if they did not secure them now.¹⁸

The luxury of unrestrained borrowing, of course, was denied to the towns excluded from the greater city.

New York's annexation of western Queens reopened the question of forming a new county on the island. Issues of taxation, public works, local politics, and

county government promised to grow in complexity and confusion if Queens County remained divided. Although the new charter authorized Greater New York to acquire "all of the public buildings, institutions, public parks, water-works and property of every character and description," the court house and other public buildings in Queens located within the new city limits were specifically exempted. In practice, this meant that the eastern residents would be financing local government without receiving the improvements bestowed on the annexed districts. The citizens of the eastern towns also recognized a crucial difference between the brand of politics practiced in the cities and, from their perspective, the more virtuous politics of Long Island, a distinction based on more than party affiliation. After the Tammany victory in 1895 returned the "old ring" to power, the *Queens County Review*, a weekly published in Freeport, asked, "Is the sense of morality so dead in New York that its citizens prefer corruption to business principles?" The unwelcome prospect of the Tammany machine, combined with fears that the growing urban population would dominate county politics, prompted citizens of Hempstead, North Hempstead, and Oyster Bay to organize a drive for secession. As noted in an editorial in the *Queens County Review*, "The people do not relish the idea of having to support two separate governments with all the confusion and clashing of authority that would thus arise. From past experience it certainly seems advisable to reduce, not enlarge the number of conflicting governments in Queens County."¹⁹

Differences between the agricultural hinterland and the commercial cities had always been an issue. In the 1830s and 1840s, a group of Kings and Queens men, many of them prominent in the Island's social and political life and members of the oldest families, held "statehood conventions" at taverns in Brooklyn, Jamaica, Hempstead, and Islip. According to Daniel M. Tredwell, one of the most literate and informative diarists of nineteenth-century Long Island, the group, after many hours of discussions and the "immolation of hecatombs of squab did solemnly vote and declare Long Island to be a free and independent state, and in the same spirit" elected Alden Spooner "Governor." Spooner was a member of the Queens County Bar, publisher of the *Brooklyn Star*, and a founding member of the Long Island Historical Society. The high point of this sincere if light-hearted campaign for statehood came at the grand national dinner and jubilee honoring president-elect William Henry Harrison, at Niblo's Garden in Manhattan in early 1841:

on the day and hour Governor Spooner at the head of his delegation formed in line at the entrance to the Garden to demand admission. The Massachusetts delegates headed by Governor Winthrop was just in advance and as they entered and were announced the throng inside burst into cheers. As they passed in Governor Spooner advanced with his delegation behind him. They gravely marched up to the usher, who by the way was a Louisiana man. Governor Spooner solemnly handed out the credentials and whispered, "Delegates from the State of Long Island." Forgetting all his history and geography amid the confusion inside in consequence of the entrance of the Massachusetts delegation, the usher roared out, "Delegates from the

State of Long Island please enter." They did enter and took seats amid thunders of applause, which broke out again and again as the ludicrous facts dawned on the convention. Spooner had the honor of replying to the toast "The Brand New State of Long Island" which he did in a manner said to have been the most consummate and finished piece of oratory of his life.²⁰

Behind the high-spirited fun and Spooner's "unprecedented nervy humor" lay the hard realization that the Island would never receive its due from the great state of New York, or escape Manhattan's lengthening shadow. Tredwell wrote that "Governor" Spooner "was one of the many old time Long Islanders who never became reconciled to the rude and uncourtly treatment of the proposition to enroll Long Island on the galaxy of Union Statehood." Generously fueled by tavern spirits, the conventions were a tacit recognition of the folly of their quest.²¹

Although statehood remained an unrealistic proposition, the idea of dividing Queens periodically surfaced. According to Nassau County Historian Edward Smits, one reason was the emerging Republican majority in the eastern towns. As in other parts of the North, the party was organized in Queens in opposition to the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854. The Republicans carried Hempstead and North Hempstead in 1860, although the county as a whole, as well as New York and Brooklyn, went Democratic. The 1860 census revealed that for the first time the population of the three western towns surpassed that of eastern Queens, a development which presaged a shift in the locus of political power.²²

In 1869, the growing rivalry burst open over the question of building a new county court house. At a meeting of the six county supervisors held on 10 July 1869, at the inn belonging to John A. Searing in Mineola, Edward A. Lawrence of Flushing introduced a resolution that the county build a new court house and jail:

The Court House of this County is wholly unfit, from its location and construction, for the transaction of the business of the Courts of the County—there being no accommodations for those who are compelled to be in attendance at such Courts as Judges, Jurors, Witnesses, Counsel or Officers. And the County Jail is unfit in every particular for the purposes for which it was designed; and especially so from the miserable and disgraceful cells assigned to those unfortunates who are committed to the Jail—the apartments being over-crowded, badly constructed, illy ventilated, and poorly heated—from the necessity of the case, whites being confined with blacks, and girls, young men and boys indiscriminately incarcerated with old criminals and hardened offenders. The fact that the cells are unfit for the safe detention of criminals has been demonstrated by the frequent escapes during the past few years.²³

The existing structure in North Hempstead, a cramped, wood-frame structure dating from the eighteenth century, was certainly inadequate, but the six supervisors could not agree on a location for a new one. After the western towns

succeeded in getting a bill passed in Albany authorizing a new courthouse, the eastern towns began to lobby for the division of the county. In February 1869, a Queens assemblyman, James B. Pearsall, introduced legislation to form a new county out of the three eastern towns and the western Suffolk towns of Huntington, Smithtown, and Islip, but this measure received little support and soon died. The triumph of the western towns came two years later when the county supervisors, all of them Democrats, voted to locate the new court house at Hunter's Point, the heart of Long Island City. The deciding argument was that the LIRR terminus was nearby, making the site equally accessible from all parts of the county. The same advantage would have been gained by selecting Jamaica, the railroad's main transfer point, or even rebuilding in North Hempstead, but the question of accessibility made compromise possible. The new court house, a magnificent stone and brick edifice topped by a gleaming copper roof, was dedicated on 28 March 1877. It was a fitting monument to an emerging urban center, and quite a change from its predecessor.²⁴

In 1876, while the new Queens County court house was under construction, Townsend D. Cock, of Oyster Bay, introduced a bill in the assembly to erect a new county from the towns of Oyster Bay, Hempstead, North Hempstead, and the Suffolk towns of Huntington and Babylon (formed from the southern part of Huntington in 1872). The first name proposed for the new county was "Ocean," but the bill was amended and the name changed to "Nassau." The hearing held in Albany before the Assembly Committee on Civil Divisions brought out voices on both sides of the question. As expected, the only support came from representatives of the towns that would form the new county; opposition arose both from Jamaica and eastern Suffolk. After its second reading in March 1876, the bill died; Assemblyman Elbert Floyd-Jones reintroduced the measure the following year, but this too failed, by a vote of forty-two to fifty-six.²⁵

However, the idea had gained influential supporters. William Cullen Bryant, a resident of North Hempstead, wrote, "The people in Roslyn and its neighborhood are strongly in favor of the project—I, for my part, am one of the numerous class who are in favor of the new county." The *Flushing Journal*, on the other hand, opposed the proposal. In an editorial on "The Division of the County" the paper suggested that Hempstead would soon gobble up North Hempstead and Oyster Bay. "What of the remainder?" the editor asked. Long Island City might "walk over the bridge and become part of Brooklyn," and Jamaica would "speedily absorb innocent and defenseless Flushing, and then Jamaica would represent in reality what it has long represented figuratively—the whole of Queens County." The *Journal* concluded, "We cannot consent to let our wayward sisters go." For the next two decades, as resentment of Long Island City and the western towns festered in the rural townships, the question of a new county received little public attention.²⁶

As soon as the smoke had cleared from the fireworks set off to celebrate the birth of Greater New York, the citizens of the three eastern towns renewed their campaign. On 22 January 1898, they held a public meeting at Allen's Hotel in Mineola "to consider the most expedient actions to take to escape the dangers by

which that portion of Queens County outside of the Greater New York limits is threatened by the operation of the new charter." P. Halsted Scudder outlined five options for the assembled citizens. The first, annexation to New York, was "not to be thought of or discussed for a moment," and the second, annexation to Suffolk, was "a method repugnant to our sense of individuality and to all traditions of our people." Scudder then rejected the annexation of Queens to Kings as impractical and presenting too many financial, statutory, and constitutional barriers. The fourth option, erection of a new county to embrace the eastern towns of Queens and the western towns of Suffolk, could be considered only if the population of Suffolk gave its unanimous consent. Finally he presented the fifth and final possibility, which was, "to those who have most carefully studied the situation in all its phases, the best, the wisest and surest way out of our difficulties—The erection of a new county out of that portion of the County of Queens which lies without the Borough of Queens." The assembled Long Islanders resolved "that it is the sense of this meeting that the Towns of Hempstead, North Hempstead, and Oyster Bay withdraw from the County of Queens and that a new county to include said towns be formed." The excited gathering also voted that each of the towns would contribute \$250 toward the expenses of drafting and preparing the bills "necessary to carry into effect the desire of the people to have a county free from any entangling alliances with the Great City of New York."²⁷

The citizens selected a seven-member committee to draft the legislation and select a name for the new county: P. Halsted Scudder, at-large; Lott Van de Water and William G. Miller, of Hempstead; Dr. James H. Bogart and William Lewis, of North Hempstead; and from Oyster Bay, James H. Ludlam and General James B. Pearsall. Names suggested for the new county were Matinecock, after the area's dominant Indian tribe; Norfolk, a complimentary if geographically inaccurate nod to Suffolk; Bryant, in honor of the writer and poet who made his home in Roslyn; and Nassau, an "appropriate choice as Long Island had been named Nassau Island by an act of the colonial Assembly on April 10, 1693." When the committee met on 5 February at Pettit's Hotel in Jamaica, they adopted the name Nassau and presented a draft bill to Assemblyman George Wallace.²⁸

The issue moved forward with remarkable speed. On 17 February, Wallace introduced the Nassau bill, and on 25 March it passed the assembly with three votes to spare, despite vigorous opposition from Assemblyman Cyrus B. Gale, of Jamaica; the bill received unanimous approval in the senate. Governor Black signed the measure on 27 April, and on 1 January 1899, exactly a year after the formation of Greater New York split Queens County in two, Nassau County was born.²⁹

Consolidation quickened the pace of investment and construction in Queens Borough. With completion of the long-planned Blackwell's Island Bridge and extension of the city's rapid transit lines, Queens urbanized at a faster rate than any other county in the nation. The act formalized the passage of western Queens from a rural county to an urban borough, while laying the foundation of Nassau's suburban destiny.

NOTES

1. For a history of annexation, see Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1985), chap. 8; David C. Hammack, *Power and Society: Greater New York at the Turn of the Century* (New York: Russell Sage, 1982), 185.
2. Jeffrey A. Kroessler, "Jamaica Bay: the Greatest Port That Never Was," *Seaport* 28 (Fall 1994): 22-27; "The City Built on Water," *ibid.* 33 (Summer 1998): 6-12.
3. Jacob A. Riis, *How the Other Half Lives* (1890; reprint, New York: Dover, 1971), 6; Edward A. Bradford, "'Great York': an Inquiry into the Relation of Rapid Transit and Consolidation to Past and Present Poverty, Disease, Crime, and Mortality and Their Remedy" (Brooklyn: Consolidation League of Brooklyn, 24 Sept. 1894), 7-8, 11-12.
4. *Long Island City Star*, 9 July 1886; Hammack dates the agitation for Greater New York from 1888.
5. Reprinted, *Flushing Journal*, 18 Apr. 1891.
6. Argument of Edward C. Graves, of Brooklyn, before the Consolidation Inquiry Commission, 2 Apr. 1891; Addenda, 18 January 1892; Henry Isham Hazelton, *The Boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens, Counties of Nassau and Suffolk, Long Island, New York, 1609-1924* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing, 1925) 3:1534.
7. *Flushing Journal*, 19 Mar. 1892; *Long Island City Star*, 10 Dec. 1886.
8. *Long Island City Star*, 5 Apr. 1889; Hammack, 187-95.
9. *Long Island City Star*, 8 May 1890; *Flushing Journal*, 17 May and 7 June 1890.
10. *Brooklyn Daily Eagle Almanac*, 1899, 135; *Flushing Journal*, 4 Mar. 1893; Hammack, 204.
11. Henry D. Waller, *History of the Town of Flushing, Long Island, New York* (Flushing: J. H. Ridenour, 1899), 220-24; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle Almanac*, 1899, 135; *Newtown Register*, 27 Feb., 5 March, 12, 26, and 30 April, 23 and 14 May 1896.
12. Hammack, 214-23; Richard L. McCormick, *From Realignment to Reform: Political Change in New York State, 1893-1910* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1981), 90-94.
13. Reprinted, *Newtown Register*, 26 Mar. 1896; no extant copies of *Flushing Journal* for years after 1893; *Newtown Register*, 14 May 1896.
14. *Brooklyn Daily Eagle Almanac*, 1899, 135.
15. *Newtown Register*, 4 Feb. 1897.
16. *Flushing Journal*, 30 Jan. 1892; *Queens County Review*, 31 Jan. and 16 Dec. 1898.
17. *Greater New York Charter, Laws of 1897*, chap. 378, chap. 1, section 8 (the charter is chap. 378, *Laws of New York*, section cited is chap. 1, section 8); *Long Island Democrat*, 7 Dec. 1897; *Flushing Journal*, 13 Nov. 1897; *Queens County Review*, 7 May 1897, 23 Sept.

1898; Alfred H. Bellot, *History of the Rockaways, from the Year 1685 to 1917* (Far Rockaway: Bellot's Histories, 1917), 106; Paul E. Kerson, "Union of Queens with New York City: What Was Gained and What Was Lost," ms., Queens Borough Public Library, 1988.

18. *Newtown Register*, 15 July 1897.

19. *Queens County Review*, 8 Nov. 1895.

20. *Ibid.*, 1 Jan. 1897.

21. Daniel M. Tredwell, *Reminiscences of Men and Things on Long Island* (Brooklyn: Charles Andrew Ditmas Publisher, 1912) Part 1, 2; *ibid.*, Part 2 (1917), 324ff.

22. *Census of the State of New York, 1865* (Albany, 1867), xxxi.

23. *Queens County Board of Supervisors Minutes*, 1869 (Glen Cove: E. M. Lincoln, 1870), 4-5.

24. Edward J. Smits, "The Creation of Nassau County," *LIHJ* 1 (Spring 1989):.171-73 (for the proposal to create Peconic County from the five eastern towns of Suffolk, see *LIHJ* 9 [Spring 1997] 140-67); in 1891, Bloodgood H. Cutter, the Long Island farmer-poet, bought the old courthouse and had one wing moved to his estate in Little Neck, where it became his "Poet's Hall." Cutter wished to preserve the place where he had once heard the famed abolitionist, Wendell Phillips, speak (Charles J. McDermott, "Mark Twain's L. I. Poet 'Lariat [sic]," *Long Island Forum* 21 (December 1958):229, 231-32. See Vincent F. Seyfried, *300 Years of Long Island City* (the author, 1984) 111; Smits, 173-74.

25. *Long Island Democrat*, 22 May 1877; "Early Bill for Nassau," *Long Island Sunday Press*, 11 Nov. 1937; Paul Bailey, "The Birth of Nassau County," in Paul Bailey, ed., *Long Island: A History of Two Great Counties, Nassau and Suffolk* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing, 1949) 2: 215.

26. *New York Times*, 16 Mar. 1877

27. *Flushing Journal*, 16 Jan. 1875.

28. *Queens County Review*, 28 Jan. and 11 Feb. 1898; Smits, 177-78; Bailey 2: 216-17.

29. *State of New York, Chapter 588, Laws of 1898; Queens County Review*, 15 Apr. 1898.

BY A MARGIN OF 277 VOTES: THE CONSOLIDATION OF BROOKLYN AND NEW YORK

By Donald E. Simon

Brooklyn. Shakespeare asked what is in a name. Brooklynites have been debating the essence of what it means to be a Brooklynite for a century and one-half. While Brooklynites ponder their image, the world wonders and marvels at the stereotyped characters that appear in books, plays, and films, with not only unique pronunciations but ferocious local pride.

What is beyond question is that something distinct has occurred in the southwestern portion of Long Island—the area occupied by Brooklyn. The proof is the countless number of immigrant groups who have populated the region, have fallen under its spell, and have themselves become fierce loyalists.¹

A clue to the origin of what became “the Brooklyn psyche” was the constant, and fruitless, effort to attain equality with its larger and more well known neighbor—New York, located across the East River. Unlike New York, which was recognized as a world-class city even in the Revolutionary era,² Brooklyn, by contrast, was always growing in the shadow of New York.

Brooklyn was but one of six towns within the political boundary of Kings County. In the early part of the nineteenth century, the urbanized part of Brooklyn occupied only the region around the ferry, the highly desirable Heights (where the most lavish homes were built), and the blocks extending to the locale of today’s Borough Hall. The majority of Kings County was agricultural. Much of it remained that way until it was overtaken by suburban development at the end of the century. The six towns, Brooklyn, Flatbush, Flatlands, Gravesend, New Utrecht, and Bushwick, provided local government under the auspices of Kings County, but there was no provision for dealing with the rapid economic, population, and geographic growth that occurred in Brooklyn beginning in the second decade of the century.

Local leaders recognized the need for a structure of government suitable for the needs of the rapidly growing community. Accordingly, in 1816 Brooklyn was incorporated a village. This was the first of many political steps that took place between 1816 and 1896, providing for centralized control over the community as it grew to encompass all of Kings County. Yet, the form of government only recently authorized soon proved unable to deal with essential affairs of the area.³ The village form of government was too restricted in its powers to be able to meet the needs of the rapidly changing district. During the nineteenth century, it was commonplace for communities to incorporate adjacent areas as population growth blurred the boundary between one and the other. This was an important phenomenon which enabled growing cities to have political and planning control

over the entire territory they affected. It was these unified political entities that provided the framework for the realization of major public works and social programs that took place in response to changing times.

In the early 1800s, although evidence of growing urbanization was to be found in the mile-square area focused on the ferry, Brooklyn town was still primarily a farming community. In 1810, Brooklyn town had but 4,402 residents. A decade later, mostly as a result of the economic prosperity that came with the War of 1812 and the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825, the town contained 7,175 people, 5,210 of whom resided in Brooklyn village. Clearly, the majority of inhabitants lived within the boundaries of the village, while the remainder of the town was sparsely populated. This trend continued, so that in 1825 the town population was 10,791 while the village had 8,900 inhabitants. A decade later, the same areas contained 24,310 and 18,977 people, respectively. From these statistics it is easy to see that Brooklyn was an emerging urban community, and that the majority of people living within the boundaries of the town were actually residing within the boundaries of the village.⁴

Many of those who established residence in Brooklyn did so because of its proximity to the most intensely developed districts of New York. They commuted by ferry from their homes in Brooklyn to their places of business in Manhattan. These early journeyers were part of a trend that in later years was to help shape Brooklyn's character.

To provide greater control over the affairs of the community, Brooklynites petitioned for and gained a city charter that took effect 1 January 1834.⁵ The city encompassed all of the town of Brooklyn. The newly incorporated city of Brooklyn soon undertook projects that boosted its pride, such as the creation of Green-Wood Cemetery (one of the first rural cemeteries in the United States), adoption of a city plan, establishment of its first public parks, building a glorious city hall, providing for gas lights, and regulating land use.

An emerging sense of frustration overtook Brooklyn just at the time it should have been basking in pride and a booster spirit. The difficulty that plagued Brooklyn from its inception in colonial days to the end of the nineteenth century was a provision in the Crown grant that defined New York's boundaries. The Dongan Charter of 1686 had given New York the right to regulate commerce on the East River to the high water mark on the far shore. This meant that the commercial wharves on the Brooklyn shore were rented from New York, and the larger city had control over the ferry routes. This provision of the charter became the basis of many years of sharp controversy.

Brooklyn's growth was always overshadowed by that of New York. Added to this was the right of the larger city to regulate Brooklyn's maritime commerce and all-important ferry routes, and it becomes apparent that Brooklynites, despite much to celebrate, always seemed to be doing things a little later and on a smaller scale than similar activities in New York. Examples of this phenomenon include: the Croton Water System, in 1844, versus the local well water system that remained in parts of Brooklyn into the mid-twentieth century; Central Park, with 840 acres, created in 1857, against Prospect Park, 526 acres, created in 1865; and New York's elevated railway system that took people from their homes to their

places of employment, compared to those in Brooklyn that took riders to either the ferry or, after 1883, to the New York end of the Brooklyn Bridge, from where commuters had to transfer to New York's "el" system to reach their destinations.

Throughout the 1840s and 1850s, Brooklyn continued to grow and prosper. By 1854 it had 145,000 residents, and was the seventh-largest city in the United States. As the line of development separating Brooklyn and the then-independent city of Williamsburgh became indistinguishable, the two cities (and the areas of the town of Bushwick not part of the city of Williamsburgh) merged, forming what was then the third-largest city in the United States with a population of 205,000.⁶

Following the Civil War, Brooklyn, with a population of 296,378 in 1865, embarked on a series of public works that set the pattern for growth and development long into the twentieth century. For example, parks, parkways (truly linear parks), and a nationally recognized system of public schools were all built in advance of the arrival of urban development. Of the five hundred miles of streets in Brooklyn in 1865, only half had anything built on them, providing a pleasant atmosphere that fostered and enhanced Brooklyn's role as New York's bedroom community. And, best of all in the minds of many residents, taxes were lower in Brooklyn than in New York. By 1880, the population soared to 566,663, and the bustling city already had a unique character that was widely characterized in the press. Of course, the opening of the Brooklyn Bridge, on 24 May 1883, made Brooklyn even more desirable as a residential community for New Yorkers. The bridge carried not only people but commerce. The two cities, bound by cables of steel, now were linked as they never had been before, their dual destinies tied together.⁷

In the decade from 1886 to 1896, Brooklyn annexed the four remaining independent towns in Kings County (Flatlands, Flatbush, Gravesend, and New Utrecht), so that as the new year of 1896 dawned, Brooklyn was coterminous with Kings County. But, while Brooklyn was growing by annexation, there was already a movement afoot to consolidate it with New York, forming one "Greater City" that would govern and regulate the affairs of the entire metropolitan region. There was ample reason to do so. By the turn of the twentieth century, the census counted 1,166,582 people living within the boundaries of Brooklyn. The city had reached metropolitan proportions independent of New York.⁸

Despite Brooklyn's growth and developing sophistication, its image continued to be one of a community populated by strange-speaking folk. This image originated partly as a result of Brooklynites, for nearly a century, proclaiming their city's character to be distinct from the nation's commercial and mercantile capital, with its congestion, crime, pestilence, and obvious domination by business interests. Brooklynites, especially those who earned their livelihood in New York, enjoyed contrasting the bustle of New York with the comparative calm of Brooklyn neighborhoods.

Brooklyn boosters spoke of how their home retained some of the Jeffersonian ideal of an agrarian-based community, largely exempt from corruption, pestilence, and crime. Indeed, Brooklyn's leaders did plan great open spaces, they did locate hospitals and asylums adjacent to parks, where, long before the germ theory of

disease had been developed, the beneficial influence of sunshine, fresh air, and pastoral influences on the sick was recognized, and they created a system of public schools, water works, and public amenities that were the envy of many other cities both in the United States and abroad. Brooklyn grew into a metropolis as the last vestiges of the American agrarian society were being dislodged from urban centers. Brooklyn retained some of the rural amenities long lost to development in New York. Thus, despite extensive suburban development in the post-Civil War period, Brooklyn continued to boast small-city qualities that clearly separated it from its cross-river rival. People who had grown to maturity in semi-rural circumstances in Brooklyn and the other Kings County towns longed for the preservation of those qualities of life they had come to favor.

It is ironic that the preface to *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, published in 1884, cites as a principal purpose of the book the recovery of the "old Mississippi days of steamboating glory and grandeur." Lewis Mumford, a perceptive analyst of urban development, noted that the modern city came about when "religion, trade, and politics went their separate ways," eliminating the total control over the city that had been the province of royalty.⁹ The commercial leadership of cities sought to preserve control over its communities, but could never attain the unity of purpose that had been common in earlier eras.

It might be stretching the simile to assert that Brooklyn represented the glorious, agrarian past, compared to a New York that was the essence of all that was right and wrong with the modern cities, built on manufacturing and finance. Such a conclusion was accepted by many citizens of Brooklyn, who lamented that the community of their youth—a village of under 2,500 people in 1800—had grown to nearly 600,000 by 1880 and to more than one million by 1898.

One such chronicler of change was Henry Cruse Murphy, a leading Brooklyn booster who recalled earlier and simpler times when every citizen could walk to a meadow or pond for recreation and relaxation. Surely, the changes he witnessed during his lifetime were as dramatic as those that a person born in 1900 would have seen in the twentieth century.¹⁰ Yet, the same Murphy who spoke sadly of the changes that growth had produced is credited with giving birth to an enterprise that was to have the most far-reaching implications for Brooklyn. It was in Murphy's library on 21 December 1866, that a group of Brooklynites decided to proceed with a plan for constructing a span across the East River—the Brooklyn Bridge.

Despite the metaphors cited by Brooklyn boosters, after the Civil War the two cities had more in common than in opposition. Sharing the best harbor in the Northeast, able to tap the riches of the mid-West through the Erie Canal, and focal point of a host of railway lines, New York was becoming the "seat of Empire" that George Washington had called it more than a century earlier. Not only was the value of goods moving through the region increasing annually, but manufacturing and service jobs were growing at an equal pace, making the two cities the logical destination for thousands of immigrants. All of this wealth gave New York preeminence in banking and finance. Indeed, so vital to the local economy were these enterprises that on the eve of the Civil War, New Yorkers supported Democratic candidates for national office for fear that secession would force

southern cotton interests to default on the loans they had taken from New York financiers. New York—and Brooklyn—were not only major cities individually and collectively, but the scope of their combined impact was national and even international.¹¹

The great city works accomplished in the last thirty-five years of the century, in both cities, required outstanding leadership. The growth and prosperity of New York and Brooklyn were considerably influenced by civic-minded visionaries in both communities.

In but one parallel, Andrew Haswell Green of New York and James Samuel Thomas Stranahan of Brooklyn followed similar paths to positions of civic prominence and power. Both were strong advocates of creating major public parks for their cities. Green became president of the board of commissioners responsible for the creation of Central Park, while Stranahan held the equivalent position on the board charged with building Prospect Park. Both men assumed major roles as directors of the New York Bridge Company, the firm that built the Brooklyn Bridge. Finally, in their later years, both recognized the importance of combining New York and Brooklyn into one political entity.

The parallels are not surprising if one views the business elite as boosters of their communities, who, above all else, wanted to create and maintain an environment that would attract business and riches. Green and Stranahan left legacies of a park, a bridge, and a united city. Other boosters were responsible for the creation of hospitals, museums, opera and symphonic orchestra companies, and many other civic-enriching endeavors. Instead of Green and Stranahan's being a unique collaboration, their similarity of purpose was an obvious outcome of a philosophy based on the belief that what is best for the city is also best for business.

Cities, some believed, could become moral, healthy, and prosperous if they were properly planned. For instance, Henry Whitney Bellows, of New York, pastor of the First Unitarian Church and head of the Civil War-era United States Sanitary Commission, argued that the religious values basic to rural America could continue to influence populations, provided the proper environment existed. The ideal city would be an urban-rural continuum, blending what tradition and morality deemed necessary for a proper style of life with what was clearly essential for growth, prosperity, and a rising standard of living. Those who chose to consider the issues realized they were not mutually exclusive. Indeed, the city could be a good place in which to live.¹²

The fundamental question that nineteenth century urban theorists pondered was how to ensure that the growing cities would be able to undertake the political and economic initiatives necessary to deal with their new populations, technological innovations, and physical requirements. More people brought new wealth. They also brought crowding and slums in areas that only recently had been desirable neighborhoods. Technological change literally transformed the faces of cities. Elevated railway lines blocked the sun from streets. Telegraph poles, with hundreds of wires attached to each, gave downtown streets the appearance of clutter and anarchy. Physical requirements included such projects as grading

streets, filling creeks and streams, and installing bulkheads along the shore. The shape and appearance of the urban landscape was being transformed almost overnight.

As cities grew, they approached and overran their political boundaries, leaving elected officials unable effectively to plan for the total community's needs. The response to this, in many cases, was a series of annexations of surrounding territories that brought under the aegis of the city all the area that was truly part of the urban fabric. The example of Brooklyn is typical. It grew from a small village located around the ferry in 1816 to a city encompassing all of Kings County by 1896. In eighty years, the city grew to contain all the lands within the county. Yet, the pace of urbanization was increasing. What was the next step to be taken?

In the minds of many business and civic leaders, the division of the metropolitan area into two separate and competing cities was an unnatural situation. Henry Cruse Murphy said that "the river which divides will soon cease to be a line of separation, and bestrode by the colossus of commerce, will prove a link that will bind them together."¹³ In an era of business consolidations and mergers that gave America many of its largest industrial and financial corporations, it seemed logical to carry the example from business to politics. The best approach, it seemed to many, was to move for the consolidation of New York and Brooklyn into a "Greater City" that would at once eliminate competition and, at the same time, eclipse any other metropolitan area for the title of the nation's greatest city.

Of course, the movement had its antecedents in the annexations that were so typical in cities across the nation. A major thrust forward came with the opening of the Brooklyn Bridge. The symbolic linking of the two communities was insignificant in comparison to the impact of the bridge on commerce and commuting. A letter to the *Brooklyn Eagle* observed that, "What the bridge has joined, let not the politicians keep asunder."¹⁴ Unlike the ferries, which were subject to problems caused by tides, weather, and the unpredictable New York City government, the bridge was available at all times under conditions that applied equally to all who used it. The bridge management encouraged greater use of the new facility in order to maximize its income. Quickly, what was first seen as something new and unique was utilized as part of the street system of the two cities. Indeed, one of the immediate results of the opening of the bridge was that it became congested, leading to plans for additional East River crossings. The construction of the Williamsburgh Bridge (1902) and the Manhattan Bridge (1909) were direct outgrowths of the monumental increase in commerce that flowed across the river, overburdening the earlier crossing.¹⁵

Back in New York, political maneuvering intent on forging a merger of Brooklyn and New York had been underway since the Civil War. Andrew H. Green, the ardent champion of consolidation, whose work gave the entire effort the appellation of "Green's Hobby," was finding support among the business leaders of both cities. It became widely recognized that Brooklyn—lacking a substantial industrial tax base—could never afford many of the public improvements needed to keep pace with its own growth. In New York there was a sense that, in Green's words, "public improvements... had to be undertaken by the entire

metropolitan district." New York's progress was hindered because so many facilities had to be provided to accommodate the large mass of commuters entering the central business areas, but a large number of these people lived in Brooklyn and thus were not supporting the improvements with their taxes.¹⁶

Despite Brooklyn's population being strongly divided on the issue, the Democratic Brooklyn political machine, dominated since 1873 by Hugh McLaughlin, was not only anti-consolidation but also able to counter efforts to pass legislation favoring the merger. Brooklyn's political boss did not want to see his power diluted as a result of consolidation. McLaughlin was fearful that the Brooklyn machine would be overwhelmed by New York's Tammany Hall, the seat of Democratic party politics in that city. Yet, with the advent of a reform movement in the early 1890s, the control of Brooklyn by the McLaughlin machine ended. Reformers such as Edward Morse Shepard, Seth Low, and the mercantile magnate, Abraham Abraham, effectively drew public support away from the entrenched political power structure. What was unforeseen was that with the loss of a powerful Brooklyn-based political machine, there was no longer a countervailing force that could stave off New York-based momentum for the consolidation effort.¹⁷

There was a parallel in New York. The same reform ethos as had been evident in Brooklyn resulted in the election William L. Strong as mayor. His administration is remembered for having been based on the so-called "good government ideals" advocated by reformers. He followed the model that Seth Low had used when he was mayor of Brooklyn in the early 1880s. Strong appointed forceful and visionary leaders to run municipal services. Theodore Roosevelt, selected as head of the Police Board, held commanders responsible for the actions of their subordinates. Colonel George Waring was placed in charge of the sanitation department, where he broke precedent by outfitting the workers in white uniforms and equally surprised most New Yorkers by establishing regular refuse collections that quickly cleaned the streets of the city.¹⁸

The influence of the Democratic powerhouses in both New York—the famous Tammany Hall—and the McLaughlin dynasty in Brooklyn, had been a countervailing influence against Albany-based Republicanism under the control of "Boss" Thomas Collier Platt. Platt favored consolidation in hopes of increasing Republican influence in the downstate area. Republican power in New York and Brooklyn was not inconsiderable, despite the predominance of the Democratic party in the two cities. It had been maintained by the appointment of commissions, created by the state legislature, which were given responsibility for such diverse public enterprises as parks, police, water supply, public works, and tenement house reform, to cite but a few. Thus, both downstate cities were faced with the unwelcome existence of Republican-dominated commissions empowered to undertake public works or control key public services. Worst of all, these commissions had the ability to assess the tax payers of each city for the services they provided.¹⁹

Thus, the temporary loss of power by the Democratic machines in New York and Brooklyn, which resulted from reform victories, gave Platt the vision of a

greatly enlarged city with an expanded tax base. Initially, many new commissions could be created, providing a much more influential presence for the Republicans in the downstate region. With the Democratic machines in disarray, Platt took the opportunity to put his plan into effect and threw his support behind consolidation.

Platt viewed consolidation as an opportunity to advance beyond the commissions and gain substantial influence in the new city's government—or, at least, to dilute the power of the Democratic forces. He allied his effort with the Protestant elite of Brooklyn, which was fearful of being overwhelmed by perceived evils emanating from Manhattan. There were strong voices in Brooklyn that wanted to preserve that city's "respectable Protestant values," as *Brooklyn Eagle* editor St. Clair McKelway termed it. McKelway joined with such nationally known Brooklyn clergymen as Richard Salter Storrs of the Church of the Pilgrims, Theodore L. Cuyler of the Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church, and Lyman Abbott of the Plymouth Church, each of whom was devoted to maintaining the lifestyle thought to be Brooklyn's fundamental strength. As Storrs noted, the Protestant ministry's devotion to preserving Brooklyn as "a fashionable place of residence for the sort of people we want," was unswerving. But this view was far from universally accepted. In opposition to the Protestant elite, strong forces supported the merger. These included merchants, bankers, and property owners, who viewed consolidation as an opportunity to develop Brooklyn in the image of New York's positive attributes.²⁰

Many reformers also wanted to preserve Brooklyn's independence, unwilling to give up autonomy. Shepard echoed the Protestant elite, observing that they wanted to preserve Brooklyn's institutions, its "special public conveniences, its own traditions, its own public life, its own local pride and enthusiasms." The assent of the reformers, with the support of many business leaders who were primarily concerned with eliminating corrupt local government, left the door open for the consolidation forces to make progress. Whereas measures that would lead to annexation had been blocked by the Brooklyn machine as late as 1888, by 1890 the momentum was unstoppable.²¹

On 8 May 1890, the state legislature approved a law authorizing creation of a commission "to inquire into the expediency of consolidating various municipalities in the State of New York occupying the several islands in the harbor of New York." The legislation appropriately designated Andrew Green as president of the commission, and James Stranahan as its vice president.²² Two years later, when the report of the commission was submitted to the legislature, the matter never got out of committee. One reason was that the proposal put forth made consolidation a *fait accompli*. Although some Brooklynites were becoming resigned to losing their independence, many issues, including taxation, remained major hurdles that impeded progress.

The consolidation forces felt that victory was within their reach. In the hope of quelling the voices of dissent on both sides of the East River, Green proposed to the leadership in Albany that arrangements be made for a nonbinding plebiscite. The proposal on which citizens would vote eliminated some of the basis for opposition in Brooklyn when it called for a uniform tax rate throughout the consolidated city.²³

The plebiscite took place on election day 1894 and carried by 44,188 votes. However, the margin of victory in Brooklyn was anything but overwhelming. Of 129,211 votes cast, 64,744 were in favor and 64,467 were opposed: Brooklynites voted for consolidation by a margin of 277 votes! In New York (which included what is now the borough of The Bronx), the tally was 96,938 in favor, 59,959 opposed, a margin of victory of 36,979 votes of the 156,897 recorded. An additional plurality of 6,932 votes in support of the measure came from residents of Staten Island, as well as from those parts of lower Westchester and western Queens counties that were to become part of the new city.²⁴ One year later, the area of Queens County not incorporated into the city of New York gained independent status as the newly created Nassau County, except for two villages in eastern Queens. The plebiscite was approved by all areas that were to be included within the consolidated city.²⁵

As noted, the consolidation force in Brooklyn, which was a combination of merchants, bankers, and real estate promoters, together with some civic reformers who saw realization of the goal as a “step toward reformed government,” was barely able to prevail. It had to counter the combination of Protestant leaders, who opposed the merger on social grounds, and voters in the poorest districts of the city where workingmen—traditional supporters of the Democratic party—followed the mandate of what was left of the McLaughlin machine, and voted against consolidation.²⁶

In the lengthy battle over consolidation, both sides had been motivated by a myriad of issues ranging from politics and economics, through social orientation, to boosterism and plain selfishness. Their varying visions of the city of the future helped to shape people’s positions on the creation of Greater New York.²⁷

As David Hammack concluded:

As enacted in 1896 and 1897, Greater New York represented a compromise among the metropolitan region’s mercantile, banking, and real estate elites; the smaller-scale real estate developers in Brooklyn, Queens County, and Staten Island; the leaders of militant Protestantism in Brooklyn; the Manhattan civic reformers; the regular Republicans in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and upstate; and some... Democrats.

Hammack noted that consolidation was the result of two major efforts: “Andrew Green directed the first of these... in the interest of the mercantile elite. Thomas C. Platt managed the second... in the interest of the Republican Party.”²⁸

One of the forces impelling New Yorkers and Brooklynites to vote for consolidation was fear that New York City would be eclipsed by Chicago. The growth of the mid-West metropolis threatened to outpace that of New York. Brooklynites saw that the loss of the glory that came from being adjacent to the nation’s predominant city would be a blow to their city’s prestige as well, with resulting economic implications. Boosterism was still an important factor in the minds of turn-of-the-century urbanites.

Following the plebiscite, New York Governor Levi P. Morton appointed a

commission to draft a charter for the new city. With consolidation to take effect on 1 January 1898, the charter was submitted to the legislature on 19 February 1897, then sent to the mayors of New York and Brooklyn, and returned to Albany on 24 March with the signature of each chief magistrate affixed. Legislation approving a new charter and creating the consolidated city was signed into law on 4 May 1897. Thus, Brooklyn “had conceded that consolidation was ‘manifest destiny.’”²⁸ The spring, summer, and fall of 1897 were spent by Brooklynites counting the days until their city would become a part of the new Greater City.

On New Year’s Eve 1897, Brooklynites gathered at City Hall—soon to become Borough Hall—for one last celebration. In a speech to the assembled throng concerning the impending change in government, St. Clair McKelway said that it was not “farewell to Brooklyn, for borough it may be, Brooklyn it is... Brooklyn it remains, and Brooklynites we remain.” As hands of the clock atop City Hall ticked off the minutes to midnight, “a silence fell over the assemblage and lasted until the bell tolled the beginning of a new year and a new city.”²⁹ As the last stroke peeled, the American flag atop the building was lowered only to immediately reappear in the company of the flags of Brooklyn and New York—the two entities that had just become one.

As Harold Syrett has observed::

The city of Brooklyn no longer existed. A poor location, a crusading Green, and... all powerful [political forces] had destroyed its autonomy; but the passage of years was to demonstrate that Brooklyn’s peculiar provincialism, its strong local pride, and its pronounced individualism were inveterate.³⁰

The deed was done. The city of Brooklyn ceased to exist. Once more, Brooklynites went forward in the shadow of greater forces. Indeed, it was a fertile field for the development of a peculiar culture and civic psyche. The underdog image of Brooklyn continued into the twentieth century. The Dodgers were famous for failure and futility until the glorious years beginning around 1940, when they emerged as a powerhouse and captured their first world championship in 1955. But, that same year, the borough’s only independent newspaper, *The Brooklyn Eagle*, ceased publication. And only two years later, in an act some Brooklynites saw as only second to Brooklyn’s loss of civic independence in 1898, the beloved Dodgers played their last home game in Brooklyn and left for the virgin Major League field of Los Angeles for the 1958 season. The loss of the Dodgers to the west coast, along with the simultaneous migration of the New York Giants to San Francisco, was truly a continuation of the process of annexation and expansion. In this instance, the West Coast of the nation had been opened to major league sports.

But, as St. Clair McKelway said so eloquently on that bitter night of 31 December 1897, “Brooklyn it is, Brooklyn it remains, and Brooklynites we remain.” How right he was!

NOTES

1. See Ellen M. Snyder-Grenier, *Brooklyn! An Illustrated History* (Philadelphia: Temple Univ. Press, 1996), 5-7; Alan Tractenberg, *Brooklyn Bridge: Fact and Symbol* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1965), 10-11; and Donald E. Simon, "The Public Park Movement in Brooklyn, 1824-1873" (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1972), 11-13.
2. See Sidney I. Pomerantz, *New York: An American City, 1783-1803* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1938, 1965), especially the preface and author's foreword, 2d. ed.
3. Ralph Foster Weld (*Brooklyn Village, 1816-1834* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1938), 25.
4. Gabriel Furman, *Notes Geographical and Historical Relating to the Town of Brooklyn, in Kings County, on Long Island* (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Star Press, 1824), 87-92; Bureau of the Census, *Third Census*, Washington, D.C. and Bureau of the Census, *Fourth Census*, Washington, D.C.
5. Jacob Judd, "The History of Brooklyn, 1834-1855" (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1959), 33-36.
6. Harold Coffin Syrett, *The City of Brooklyn, 1865-1898* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1934), 13-14; Snyder-Grenier, 7..
7. See David McCullough, *The Great Bridge* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972), especially 111-13.
8. Syrett, 235; Snyder-Grenier, 10.
9. Tractenberg, 14; Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1964), 319; Lewis Mumford, *The City in History* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1961), 345.
10. McCullough, 113.
11. Donald E. Simon, "Brooklyn in the Election of 1860," *New-York Historical Society Quarterly* 51 (July 1967): 255; see also, Philip S. Foner, *Business and Slavery* (Chapel Hill, N.C.:Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1941), vii, 1, 7.
12. Simon, "Park Movement in Brooklyn," 65; Peter J. Schmidt, *Back to Nature, The Arcadian Myth in Urban America* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1969), 67.
13. Syrett, 246.
14. *Brooklyn Eagle*, 5 June 1884.
15. Kenneth T. Jackson, ed., *Encyclopedia of New York City* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1995), 1264, 722.
16. Syrett, 246, John Foord, *Life and Public Services of Andrew Haswell Green* (New York: Harper, 1913), 170-81.
17. Jack Gabel, "Brooklyn's Last Mayoralty Campaign: Edward Morse Shepard and the Irony

of Reform Politics," *Journal of Long Island History* 15 (Spring/Summer 1979): 23-24.

18. David M. Ellis, James, A. Frost, Harold C. Syrett, and Harry J. Carman (*A History of New York State* (Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell Univ. Press, 1967), 378-80.

19. Ellis et al., 379; for a centennial review of consolidation, see *New York Times*, 22 December 1997; for a provocative essay supporting the notion that Brooklyn would have emerged stronger and richer had it never succumbed to the forces of consolidation, see also John Tierney, "What if Brooklyn Hadn't Surrendered?" *New York Times Magazine*, 28 December 1997.

20. Susan E. Lyman, *The Story of New York: An Informal History of the City* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1964), 202-3; David C. Hammack, *Power and Society: Greater New York at the Turn of the Century* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1982), 211, 202.

21. As quoted in *New York Times*, 19 October 1895. *Laws of the State of New York for the Year 1890*, chapter 311.

23. *Laws of the State of New York for the Year 1894*, chapter 64.

24. Syrett, 252.

25. *Encyclopedia of New York City*, 278.

26. Hammack, 206-09.

27. Edward R. Ellis, *The Epic of New York City*, New York: Coward-McCann, 1967, 452, Hammack, 209, Roy Lubove, *The Progressive and the Slums, Tenement House Reform in New York City, 1890-1917*, Pittsburgh: Univ. of Pittsburgh Press, 1962, 244.

28. Hammack, 228-29.

29. Syrett, 271; *Brooklyn Eagle*, 26 March 1897; Snyder-Grenier, 80-81, Edward R. Ellis, 453.

30. *Brooklyn Eagle*, 2 January 1898; Syrett, 273.

DEEPWELLS: A NINETEENTH-CENTURY FARM FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY?

By Elizabeth Shepherd

About one hundred fifty years ago, Joel Louis Griffing Smith (1819-1876), a descendant of the town of Smithtown's patentee Richard Smythe, operated a farm of a sort familiar to everyone in his time, with fields, orchards, pastures, and woodlots around and beyond a frame farmhouse, barns, and outbuildings. Both the house and farm were unusually large, visible to all who passed by on North Country Road. Today, the Suffolk County Department of Parks and Historic Services maintains the house with its last thirteen acres of garden and field. The house, known as Deepwells, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and anchors the St. James Historic District. To its north stands the St. James General Store, to the south the house of Joel Smith's farm superintendent (recycled as the village hall for Head-of-the-Harbor). Within a short distance are the St. James Episcopal Church, the Timothy Smith house (ca. 1800), and numerous cottages and farmhouses that sprang up later with the coming of the railroad (the station for which was carefully renovated in 1997). What is missing—apart from the horse-and-buggy traffic—is the activity that linked these structures in Joel Smith's day: farming.

The county's Historic Services decided not to restore the farm in miniature, not to create a house museum furnished to a particular period, and not to recycle the property for some particular contemporary use, but to use the place for a range of special events and exhibits managed by the organization, Friends for Long Island's Heritage. Interpretive efforts are focused on 1910, when the then-owner, William Jay Gaynor (1848/9-1913), became mayor of New York City, and the house with its formal gardens became a summer city hall. Gaynor was responsible for the wells dug 125-feet deep that gave the place its name. An "outsider," he nevertheless was raised on a farm and kept his prize-winning pigs in modern quarters across North Country Road. His gardens, corn fields, pigsties, and barns have disappeared, along with Joel Smith's. Recalling the social if not the agricultural scene, an actress in the role of Mrs Gaynor serves summer teas to "John Barrymore" and "Fanny Brice" in a formal dining room created by a subsequent owner, a New York attorney Winthrop Taylor.¹

What if one room, say the farm office, were set up as it might have been in Joel Smith's time, before summer folk, before celebrities discovered St. James? Could such a room adequately speak of the period before Gaynor was born, when farming was the way of life? Joel Smith considered himself a "farmer," whereas his peer and fellow descendant of Richard Smythe William Blydenburgh, identified himself to a census taker simply as "gentleman." Joel was something

more than farmer or gentleman. He had inherited a portion of the patentee's land, six hundred acres at least, along Moriches and North Country roads, south to Middle Country Road, and he bought more, including (through foreclosure) the early-eighteenth-century homestead of Stephen Smith as well as the acres on which he built his big house. To restore Joel Smith's house to 1850, say, would be difficult because of changes subsequent owners have made, especially in the service wing. To restore the cropland and woodlots would be almost impossible, because the soil itself has been removed or buried under houses and roads and parking lots. Nothing but another glacier could recreate the fertile loam that once lay over the glacial deposits of sand and gravel.²

Even assuming one could remove the man-made accretions and recreate the natural soil, what would the farm itself have been like? A few farmers on the East End still work their historic family lands, but apart from the small Hallockville Farm in Riverhead and the restoration at Old Bethpage, no working nineteenth-century farm of any size remains on Long Island to serve as a guide. Except for brief demonstrations, such places do not use period farm implements. The Billings Farm in Woodstock, Vermont, one of the few nineteenth-century farm museums, has a small garden in which grow heirloom vegetables and herbs, and, as did Joel Smith's farm, produces the feed its livestock requires, although the work is done with modern machines.

Assuming that a mid-nineteenth-century farm could be recreated for museum purposes, what sort of farm would be displayed? Joel Smith was not a typical Long Island farmer dependent on a single team of oxen, a metal-tipped wooden plow, and other tools the local blacksmith could forge. He could afford to buy the most modern equipment produced in the factories of New England and Pennsylvania—steel plows, horse-drawn mowers, threshers, and other such inventions. Sadly, not one of his farm implements survives, not a single picture. There is no way to establish with certainty his role in the farm economy. His might have been a gentleman's farm with all the latest improvements, or one that simply drifted along in the traditional way though its sheer size argues otherwise. There are photographs of Mayor Gaynor pitching in with the haying and other farm work, but none of Joel Smith. Winthrop Taylor sold milk locally from his dairy herd, his bull terrifying local youths who passed along the pasture fence. Joel likely kept pigs and milch cows, and probably, given his extensive acreage, raised cattle in the Richard Smythe tradition. The village historian, Barbara F. Van Liew, suggests that he derived much of his income from the sale of cordwood to city dwellers. However, there is no direct evidence, nothing a harried parks services director could take as a guide. Besides there is no way a woodlot could be managed on so few acres of land.³

As did those of many people who came to maturity in the decades preceding the Civil War, Joel's interests went beyond farming. He was a sort of agricultural entrepreneur. For starters, he owned the eighty-seven-ton sloop *Sylph* and a flat-bottomed scow, long overall but with narrow beam, carrying one or two masts. He had owned other ships, as well, which apparently were purchased or rented by the federal government to transport supplies to Union troops and lost during the Civil War. Though relatively small, such vessels would have allowed him to carry

cordwood (Long Island's principle cash crop, along with hay) and other products to markets of his own choosing on his own schedule. Later, when a local committee developed the financial arrangements to extend the North Shore Railroad through Smithtown, Joel, Samuel Carman, and another local man shared the contract for constructing the tracks between Smithtown and Port Jefferson. The line was to carry not only people, but also milk and other farm produce to the city. Joel had also invested in a farm and in a commercial fishing fleet in North Carolina and in the Samuel Carman shipyard on Stony Brook Harbor. He gave land for the Episcopal Church built in 1853, the church for which the hamlet of St. James was named. He was a warden and, according to church records, a "faithful" member of that church until his death.⁴

Like the gentleman Blydenburgh and so many others in Smithtown, Joel inherited not only Smith land but Smith genes, and, as so often, a double dose. His grandfather, Nathaniel Smith, was descended from the patentee's son, Adam Smith, as was his grandmother Renelche (Woodhull) Smith. After their own natural child died at nine months, they informally adopted the four-year-old son of Nathaniel's sister and Richard Smith, Joel's father. Three years later, they adopted the infant daughter of Renelche's sister, who had died shortly after the baby's birth (the baby's father also was a lineal descendant of the patentee). These children, Nathaniel Smith and Sarah Woodhull Floyd, married in 1808. In due course, they inherited Adam Smith's house known as Sherewog, the first house built (in 1684) at the southern end of Stony Brook Harbor (which their uncle-father had inherited from *his* father). They were to have seven children, though only Joel and two brothers, Nathaniel and Edmund Thomas, lived to adulthood. Their father died in 1826, bequeathing Sherewog to Nathaniel and dividing the rest of his substantial holdings evenly, so that each brother received one-third of

all my lands in Brookhaven, and also my grist mills and saw mills and stream and all that appertaineth thereto, in Stony Brook, and all my lands in Stony Brook neck [around Sherewog] and also all my lands at Rassapeage [around the Nissequogue Golf Club]. Also a certain tract of land lying southward of the mills about 70 [sic] acres. Also a tract called the Long Field, and all my meadow in Smithtown harbor and thatch beds or meadow ground.⁵

Joel, then away studying medicine, returned home to manage his share. Five years later, he married Anna Willis Lawrence (1825-1849), also a descendant of the patentee, and together they built Deepwells. The young couple took some care selecting the site. Rather than building on Joel's land, they purchased one of the fifty-acre "long" lots across from Ebenezer Smith's general store (now operated by the Friends for Long Island's Heritage). The site offered a commanding view across Joel's fields, orchards, and woodlots and, from the upstairs windows, of Stony Brook Harbor. Joel and Anna chose the Greek Revival style of the Mills Pond House (now home to the Smithtown Arts Council) as their model, and George Curtis as their builder (Curtis had built the Presbyterian Church in Smithtown and lived a few doors away from the store; his wife was a Smith). It is,

perhaps, worth noting that Joel's younger brother Edmund had married Amanda Mills, the daughter of William Wickham Mills, who had recently built the Mills Pond House. (For themselves, Edmund and his wife built a grand Italianate villa overlooking the Nissequogue River.) After his wife's untimely death soon after the completion of their house, Joel married her younger sister, Sarah Amelia, the following spring. She, too, died, leaving him to rattle about in the big house with his two small children, a daughter by Anna and a son by Sarah. Eventually, he sold that house and built a new one diagonally across North Country Road from the Mills Pond House. In 1860, Joel married a young widow, Helen (Oakley) Mills, by whom he had a second daughter, Helen.⁶

Joel Smith was elected town supervisor at the town meeting of April 1861, and remained so until 1869, when another large landowner and farmer (and a descendant of the patentee), Lyman Beecher Smith, assumed that office. Joel became town "auditer" in the year of his death. The minutes of regular town meetings during Joel's tenure as supervisor are remarkably scanty concerning the Civil War, with no more than a marginal note about what his cousin, Judge J. Lawrence Smith, writing his history of Smithtown, called "one of the most memorable events in this town:

The people were fully up to the mark of their patriotic duty in furnishing men and means for the war. They had from the beginning of the Rebellion furnished volunteers to the full extent of their ability, and when the call of the president for a draft was issued they were the first to act. They met spontaneously in mass meeting on a summer afternoon [July 4, 1862?] under the shade of this [black walnut] tree; voted a tax of \$8,000, to be used in procuring volunteers, appointed assessors and a collector, and issued a regular tax-list. The whole amount, with a very few exceptions, was voluntarily paid, and the quota of this town as promptly filled.⁷

The judge wrote nothing more of the Civil War's impact on Smithtown, though the town clerk kept complete records of enrollments from 15 April 1861 to 20 December 1865, and enrollment books listing Smithtown men eligible for military duty in 1862, 1864, and 1866. Of the 364 men between the ages of eighteen and forty-five in 1862, seventy seven were exempt because of their occupations, previous service, age levels, or physical disabilities ranging in severity from Joel Smith's "imperfect vision" to lameness, rheumatism, fractured bones that had not healed correctly, "weak lungs," and tuberculosis. If the "Complete Record" truly was complete, fewer than thirty men volunteered in the first rush of zeal to preserve the Union, enlisting in New York City or Brooklyn, with no dates recorded. After the bounty system went into effect, about seventy men volunteered in August and September 1862, the town paying from \$50 to \$110 to each as well as offering to provide for their families during the three-year enlistment period. To continue fulfilling these quotas without a draft, Joel Smith convened a series of special town meetings to raise money for these payments. On 30 August 1863, the supervisor and assessors were authorized to receive private contributions "for the promotion of enrollment" against future town funds. Six months later, by a

vote of 148 to 92, a resolution was passed to raise \$15,000 through property taxes in three annual installments, plus “any further sum necessary to procure the quota of this town.” Unfortunately, the minutes omit discussion of the appropriation or reasons for the sizeable dissenting vote (the usual \$1,200 to support the poor and \$100 to the commissioners of highways were authorized by the regular annual meeting in 1863). A committee, which included Joel and his brother Nathaniel, was empowered to fill the volunteer quota, paying a maximum of \$400 a man—more than double the average farm wage. By this time, bounties had risen to \$330, and on to \$500 and higher as the first three-year terms ran out. All told, about 180 Smithtown men volunteered, while seventeen men recruited substitutes (in 1864) with names like Balthus Zimmerman and Matthew Flanigan, reflecting German or Irish backgrounds. Recent immigrants, probably, and not local residents, they received a bounty of \$800 each, paid by the town and not by the individuals they replaced. The town paid at least \$36,040 in bounties, for 131 men, including the substitutes, and unrecorded sums to help families of volunteers—and their widows and orphans. Twelve men apparently died during the war, in combat, of wounds received on the battlefield, or of illnesses incurred in camp, prison, or the naval service.⁸

The town minutes suggest some difficulties in collecting the special taxes despite the general rise in farm income and in the price of farmland. The war surely had greater impact than that reflected by the record or Judge Smith’s history. For example, about half the enrollees were farmers or laborers upon whom the local economy—and certainly big landowners like Joel Smith and Lyman Beecher Smith—depended. Yet, in Joel’s years as supervisor, the age-old concern about non-residents’ taking fish from local waters received far more attention. This was a time when, because of shellfish dredging, notably on the South Shore, baymen were alarmed by the rapid depletion of stocks. In 1863, a committee was appointed to enforce the law prohibiting outsiders from harvesting oysters, clams, and scallops. In 1867, Joel as supervisor and Judge Smith, worked on legislation to set penalties that would prevent the catching of eels in eelpots, along with protection for oysters and clams. The following year, the scope of the bill was enlarged to protect all “white and other fish.” The work continued under the next supervisor, any progress going unreported. In 1869, Joel’s brother Nathaniel and two other men received permission to designate areas where local residents could seed oysters “for their individual benefit in the waters of Stony brook harbor.” All in all, Joel’s tenure as supervisor was remarked not so much for its policies regarding the volunteers, the poor, or the fisheries, but for the terrible fire, in 1862, which started on one of his fields and roared as far east as the headwaters of the Peconic River. After a special week-long circuit court trial, he was acquitted of charges of carelessness. However, stories of the victims and their losses filled the newspapers for weeks.⁹

As did Deepwells, Joel Smith’s new house overlooked his farm fields, cleared in the time-honored way by burning. What lay in those long vistas? As his grandson’s wife, Garetta Hagemeyer (Reboul) Lawson, was to write of her grandparents’ place, “I often... try to visualize the Island... as it must have been then... large wooden house, barns, and other out-buildings standing amidst the

orchards, fields and gardens that make up a farm." Joel's orchards, fields, and gardens were extensive enough to need a superintendent, to which both of his superintendents' houses stand witness: the one that became the village hall and the other, known as High Hedges, which was enlarged over the years and recently rebuilt after a disastrous fire. The superintendent managed day-to-day operations, supervising the laborers who tended the animals and worked the land. Judge Smith wrote in his history of Smithtown that the "principal farm crops" grown in the town were "wheat, rye, Indian corn, oats and potatoes." There were also fruits, vegetables, poultry, beef, and pork—and "a multitude of the other good things of this life." It would be hard for the parks services, with its straitened budget, to recreate the diverse bounty of that nineteenth-century farm on the nine acres across the lane from the house.¹⁰

A little is known of what Joel grew, thanks to Gideon Smith, a descendant of another branch of the patentee's family, who ran a general store near the harbor and maintained a ledger in which he kept an account of goods he sold, work he did, and amounts he was paid. He rented Joel an ox team (75¢ a day) on occasion for unspecified, undated tasks. He served him as a carpenter (for \$1.50 a day but less for work on a barn in 1850), a sawyer (for about \$1.00 a day), a shipwright (for \$1.75 a day), and a farm laborer, receiving 50¢ for half a day's "harvesting." He planted, hoed, and "gathered" corn (feed corn, not the sweet corn grown today), and also carted cornstalks. The stalks and husks were used as fresh fodder for cattle and pigs, the dried kernels were fed to poultry, as well. Corn was, Judge Smith reported, "the most profitable hoed crop; the average yield from 30 to 40 bushels to the acre."¹¹

There were fields of corn, then, beyond Joel's windows. The varied greens of wheat, rye, buckwheat, oats, barley, and other grasses colored other fields visible beyond different windows. Once the bread basket for New England and New York, Long Island's wheat yields had steadily declined, what with wheat rust, smut, and the ravages of the Hessian fly (*Mayetiola destructor*), thought to have arrived with imported horse fodder during the Revolution. Farmers did grow wheat as a cover crop, harvesting the grain mainly for home consumption. In the year following a corn crop, Judge Smith wrote,

the field is sowed with wheat and timothy grass seed [herdsglass]. The [red] clover, being more delicate, is put on in early spring. The wheat crop affords protection from the summer's sun, which otherwise would scorch and kill the tender grass plants. After the wheat crop the field affords hay and pasture four or five or more years, when it is again subjected to the same routine of agriculture.

To prevent weeds and brush from taking over in the meanwhile, a farmer needed to replot the field every year or so. By properly rotating his fields—as Joel with his vast acreage could easily do—he might cut two or more tons of hay per acre, each year. The hay "always returns the farmers remunerating prices," Judge Smith observed. After all, it provided the fuel for the city transportation system and became as much a staple cash crop as cordwood. While most farmers saved seed

to plant the next year, they could also buy it from nurseries or general stores. Gideon Smith sold corn, wheat, oat, and timothy seeds by the bushel to Joel, among others. If Joel bought other kinds of seeds from Gideon, he must have paid cash, for no record exists of such purchases. By about 1850, it was possible to buy seeds by mail from various Massachusetts firms, and later from the Shakers.¹²

Joel did buy other items from his neighbor that provide better clues to his farm. Once Gideon wrote on Joel's account, "1/2 beef of [sic] cow" with no price noted. Gideon served as the local butcher, with some barter arrangement perhaps involved. He built Joel a hog trough for 75¢, and regularly sold him salt for salt licks and to preserve meat and butter. The war created new reason to raise sheep because of the enormous demand for woolen cloth for soldiers' uniforms and blankets. More than six thousand pounds of wool were produced in the town in 1864, for example, but only twenty-nine sheep were slaughtered (with thirty-two killed by dogs). Again, there is no firm evidence that Joel kept such a herd. Slightly better evidence that he raised livestock lies in the record of the other food he grew. On a "List of seeds to be bought for sowing," Gideon included "one paper of Salsify \$00.4 [sic] Five OZ mangelwurzel 00.25 One OZ Kohl Robi 00.20." Of these items, mangel wurzel, in particular, was hardly a table crop. An oversized beet, it was fed to cows because it was believed to increase milk production. Turnips, kohlrabi, and rutabagas were sold for human consumption and also fed to sheep—but not to cows, on the assumption they turned cows' milk watery. Left to overwinter in a field, turnip greens provided forage for the sheep after grasses had gone by. Of course, any produce not fit for the table was fed to the livestock: carrots were given to cows and horses, as were potatoes and pumpkins, the latter being axed into manageable pieces. Fattened on roots and corn, cattle, hogs, sheep, and poultry were taken to market live, in the era before refrigeration. With his own ships moored in the harbor, Joel could move his livestock to market quickly for butchering in city slaughterhouses. Chickens and ducks, kept in cages outside butcher shops, were selected by city housewives for execution at home. Almost \$2,000-worth of eggs were sold in 1865, 1,600 gallons of milk, and some 110,283 pounds of butter.¹³

As the city's population increased, Long Island farmers could count on a reliable market for whatever they could grow. Orchards, in particular, had a conspicuous role in the developing cash economy. Pears from an acre of trees might fetch over \$9,000 in city markets. Bartletts sold for \$9 a barrel wholesale. A single Dutchess d'Angouleme pear brought \$1 retail. at a time when skilled laborers earned less than \$2 a day. Gideon's ledger shows that Joel maintained orchards—why else buy a bee hive, though Gideon did not note whether it was the new model with movable frames, or the traditional cone-shape kind. Like his contemporaries, however, Joel would have neither cultivated nor pruned his fruit trees unless to remove lower branches so that his livestock could not reach the fruit. Pears were, one agricultural historian notes, all the rage for gentleman farmers—a mania even—and, at that, Joel's pear orchards boasted but a fraction of the 420 varieties offered by the Prince Nursery in Flushing, the largest in the nation. Joel grew, "Bartlett, White Doyenne, Laurence, Seckel, Vicar of Winkfield, Beurre De Anjou, Beurre Du'l [illegible], Buffum, Onondaga, Golden

Beurre, Fondante de Automne, and Madeline." One of his neighbors planted nine additional varieties and three that duplicated Joel's, which Gideon listed by season: "Summer—Bartlett & Tyson, Madeline, Rostiezer. Autum—Beurre Bosc, Louisa Bonny of Jersey, Paradise D Automne, Grey Doyenne, White Doyenne, Seckel. Winter—Beurre D'Arenburg; Winter Nolis [?]"¹⁴

What if the nine or so acres remaining of Joel Smith's farmland were planted with some of these otherwise unobtainable pears? Pear cider, so hard to come by nowadays, might become a useful and unique product of an orchard "museum." Certainly, it was much relished in Joel Smith's day, though nowhere near as popular as apple cider. One relative of Gideon's purchased a quart nearly every day at five cents a quart. A person might drink two or more barrels a year (with thirty-one and a half gallons to a barrel). Thirty acres of apples could yield 4,800 barrels of cider. Although drops from any apple tree went into the press, Baldwins, Greenings, and Russets were thought to make the best-tasting cider, yet were far from the only varieties grown along the moraine. Gideon recorded "Summer apples—early Harvest, Sweet Bough, Autum Apples—Gravinstein, Fall Pippin; Winter Apples: Baldwin, Hubbardson Nonesuch, Northern Spy, Red Canada, Esopus Spitzenburgh, Wagener, Newtown Pippin, Rhodeisland Greening, Roxbury Russet, and Swaar." Long Island's orchards today offer no such range of flavors and textures and keeping qualities. A small Deepwells apple orchard could demonstrate the special attributes of the now-unfamiliar or less common varieties.¹⁵

While apples and pears were generally sold by the bushel, more perishable fruits such as peaches and plums were offered by the pound or the dozen. Unfortunately, although Gideon spent two and a half days in 1856 setting out peach trees for Joel, he kept no lists of their varieties. Most likely, Joel also grew blackberries and strawberries, which shipped well, along with gooseberries and currants. Local nurseries stocked them all. Gideon did name some varieties of strawberry, none of which is carried locally any more: "Sharptips, Cumberland Triumph; Charles Downing; Jersey Queen." Ebenezer Smith and later his son Everett often bought small fruits by the box to sell in their general store. Long before that (1847), strawberries sold in New York City for \$1 or \$2 a quart, and remained a leading Long Island crop until 1890. Joel bought twelve grape vines from Gideon at nineteen cents each, but the grapes, variety unspecified, were most probably for home consumption. However, since Simon Smith, "Black man," picked up one hundred rhubarb plants (for one cent apiece) in April 1844, charging them to Joel Smith's account, it is hard not to conclude that the rhubarb crop was destined for sale.¹⁶

Potatoes became the largest and most profitable market crop, but, increasingly, other vegetables were raised to meet city tastes. Asparagus in the spring and cauliflower in the fall were becoming standard "luxury" items for city tables, with a succession of fresh vegetables in between: sweet corn, celery, tomatoes, muskmelons, summer and winter squashes, parsnips, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, and pumpkins. To get the best price for an early crop, farmers sometimes started peas, beans, squashes, and melons early, under window glass to protect the

seedlings from spring frosts. A south-facing slope was preferred, with the seeds planted in sand spread over a bed of manure; the heat of its decomposition aided the germination and growth of the seedlings. Joel may have been able to grow hothouse crops as well, for by about 1830 hot-water heating was used in such greenhouses (and in a few houses). This stretched the season for lettuce, cucumbers, and tomatoes—and greatly augmented the farmer's income. With land to spare, Joel could experiment with new vegetables and new methods of growing them. Such efforts would ensure a greater range of crops, and free him somewhat from the vagaries of the weather.¹⁷

Neither large nor small farms irrigated crops. To improve moisture retention in the sandier soils and to lighten up the heavier clays, farmers often hacked out banks of marsh peat—as yet unaware of its importance in the estuarine ecology—and spread it onto a droughty field. A diversity of crops assured that at least some crops survived drought, not to mention depredation by pests. In Joel's lifetime, little was known about the life cycles of the most harmful insects. Caterpillars and beetles were picked off plants by hand. When that was not practical, a farmer might resort to such other measures as spreading bands of tar around fruit trees to keep off caterpillars. If that were ineffective, the tree would be shaken vigorously so that the insects would fall onto sheets laid out below. Diseased plants, even entire trees, might be removed. Later on, farmers tried a few poisons including sulphur and Paris green, a lethal mixture of copper and arsenic, the latter to control the Colorado potato beetle (*Leptinotarsa decelneata*) while cabbages were sprayed with arsenic. Such measures may have controlled insect pests, but their most lasting effect was on the skunks (*Mephitis mephitis*) that fed on the poisoned insects and are now very rare in Long Island.¹⁸

Pastures, meadows, cornfields, hay fields, orchards, vegetables, small fruits, woodlots—the mosaic of plantings shifted with each year and season. Even though no one knows exactly what Joel grew or how he managed his land, crops were routinely rotated—cultivated, harvested, and burned in their season. Land went from cornfield to pasture, from woodlot to vegetable garden, and from hay field to orchard, in a cycle shaped by soil, weather, and changes in the market. With his medical background, Joel would have wanted to manage the whole in the latest scientific manner. As the promise of cheap land in the Midwest lured farm laborers away from the Island, farmers like Joel had to increase the productivity of their land. This meant replenishing exhausted soils and improving horticultural methods. The New York State Board of Agriculture and the agricultural schools springing up around the country supplied endless reading matter. At the least, he would have subscribed to the *Cultivator*, which Gideon sold for a dollar an issue. William Prince's *Short Treatise of Horticulture* was one of the first books in the Smithtown Library, and still may be found in its Long Island History Room collection. Joel could readily visit the Prince Nursery, whose catalogues and planting manuals greatly influenced antebellum horticulture, as well as attend the yearly Suffolk County Fair, the first of which was held in nearby Commack in 1843. Judge Smith served as president of the Suffolk County Agricultural Society, and Joel's brother Nathaniel as its secretary. There were other state and local farmers' associations devoted to sharing the latest horticultural practices.

(Perhaps such a fair could be recreated on Joel Smith's last farm field, but one geared to home gardens and domestic animals). A contemporary farmer conveyed the flavor of such proceedings in Smith's time:

In...1835 Joshua Robinson... began to take Agricultural Papers... he was ahead of the rest of us he told us we needed to have our soil analized to know what it wanted to fertilize it and we should have our fertilizers analized and we must read and get all the information we can from others and then we must carry out the practical parts and keep a record of the results of all our fertilizers I believe every man should know his own business the farmer as well as the merchant or the mechanic to do this he must keep a book of record to show him through life. I have bought the different fertilizers I have watched the results" (original punctuation and spelling).¹⁹

Gideon Smith preserved almanac pages advocating just such record keeping. His small store handled a variety of commercially formulated manures, like those advertised by H. J. Baker & Bro (Est. 1850) in Richard M. Bayles's *Long Island Handbook*: "Our complete manures for every Farm Crop, furnish just the Plant Food each crop requires and in the correct proportions they are Cheaper than Stable Manures." Perhaps this formulation was some mix of dehydrated horse, cattle, and poultry manure with higher nitrogen content than straight horse or cow manure. From time to time, Gideon advanced the freight charges and the cost of carting such fertilizer to a neighboring farmer. However, "fertilizer" generally meant plain horse and cow manure, bone meal, and ashes, the wastes that New York City needed to dispose of. Horse manure, swept from city streets, had long been a staple export. Sloops that carried hay and cordwood to the city transported manure and ashes on the return trip—a city health problem transformed into farmers' resource. In addition, city slaughterhouses yielded a constant supply of bone, which, burned and pulverized, returned phosphorus to Long Island soils. Gideon charged his father \$2.25 for "bone manure" (1836), and \$0.75 for carting it from Stony Brook. He charged Joel Smith \$10.50 for the freight on 350 bushels of "ground bone." Judge Smith swore by ashes. "Leached ashes," he wrote, "where the pure article can be procured are considered highly valuable in laying down a field to grass [for hay]." The use of ashes was noted as early as 1825 by the *American Frugal Housewife*, which extolled two important by-products of laundry day: "both ashes [from the fire used to heat the water] and suds are good manure for bushes and young plants." The pot-ash, of course, supplied one of the essential plant nutrients, potassium.²⁰

Peruvian guano was also in demand, advertised at \$35 a ton. Gideon sold one neighbor 11½ pounds, charging him 2½¢ a pound. Another farmer, who discovered that ashes "did no good" and tried guano, observed the results for years and was "satisfied that it will pay for itself":

About the first using guano I don't remember the date I plowed a piece of land near the sound and sowed it with rye then sowed a small piece of

turnips and [spread?] on guano. I think about four hundred pounds per acre the turnips were good then I planted it with corn on the whole lot with a sprinkle of manure in the hill and where the turnips was the corn was twice as large then I sowed it with oats and the oats was so much larger that a man could walk through in a dark night and tell where the guano was put on the turnips (original punctuation and spelling).²¹

Despite the war, Smithtown farmers bought \$23,264 worth of fertilizer in 1864. Even farmers Judge Smith deemed most backward experimented with wastes found closer to hand. As early as 1795, Ezra L'Hommedieu reported to the Society for Promotion of Agriculture, Arts and Manufactures on results observed with fish manure:

By a late accidental experiment, it appears, that the product of grain from an acre will be in proportion to the quantity of the manure, and so far as to exceed any production we have heard of, in any part of the world.... Mr Downs, having four thousand fish called Mossbonkers, or Menhaden, strewed them about the first of June on 20 rods of ground, being a poor gravelly, dry soil, and which without manure would not pay for the tillage. These fish were ploughed under a shallow furrow; at the time of sowing, about the last of September the ground was plowed up again, and a little deeper; by harrowing, the putrified fish were well mixed with the earth and the ground sown with rye at the rate of one bushel to the acre. The ground being well covered in the fall, the rye was not injured in the winter; in the spring the growth was remarkably rapid and luxuriant till it was about nine inches high, when his neighbour's sheep broke into the inclosure and eat it all off close to the ground. The fence was mended and the rye grew again, and much thicker than before, till it got about six inches high, when the same sheep broke in again, and the second time eat it close to the ground. It was then supposed the crop would be lost, but it grew again with additional thickness and great rapidity; it all stood well, the ears were very long and full, and Mr Downs assured me he had 16 bushels of rye from this 20 rods of ground (original punctuation and spelling).

Menhaden (*Brevoortia tyrannus*) is a herring-like plankton-eater whose extreme oiliness and boniness make it unpalatable for human consumption. From late spring on, enormous schools once churned the near-shore waters silver as they tried to flee hungry bluefish and other predators. Starting about 1847, these "bunkers" were commercially processed for fish meal and oil. The smashed carapaces of horseshoe crabs provided a cheaper alternative, and, on a large acreage some distance from the house, the stench might be tolerable! Another alternative could be made, explained Judge Smith, by using "seaweed" as litter in the pens where animals were confined, and then spreading the used litter on a field. Presumably, he meant eelgrass, *Zostera marina*, or thatch, *Spartina alterniflora*, which traditionally had been used for animal bedding. Of course, such amendments improved the moisture retention of soils as well as their

fertility.²²

Fields were limed with plaster of Paris, gypsum, or pulverized shells. An off-season task for laborers on large farms was breaking up shells from Native American middens. One of Joel's cousins was known as "Shell Dick," because he sold off the shell middens on the family property at Rasapeage. The shells were also used to surface roads. "Ordinary traffic over them was all that packed the shells and broke them up—eventually," Mrs Lawson wrote, they "made a good hard road." Perhaps these sales account for shells appearing quite distant from the harbor, where no other traces of Native American settlement have been found.²³

Today, it is shopping centers, surrounded by acres of parking "fields," that offer visitors harvests of goods, albeit produced in distant places. Tourism, not agriculture, leads Long Island's economy. Should those shoppers and tourists seek a touch of history, there are some house museums, reconstructions like Old Bethpage Village, and parks on former estates, but there are few places where historical structures and their associated activities form part of the everyday landscape while connecting people to the accomplishments (and failures) of earlier generations. One such place is Deepwells and the last small Joel Smith field. His house in all its architectural splendor, lively with visitors, still stands on the site he chose. But the activities that once sustained a community are gone. To return land to earlier uses, cultivated with ox- or horse-powered tools, would require the systematic eradication of anachronistic plants and animals, the rediscovery of older breeds of cow and pig, of period vegetables and grasses. This would represent a rather ironic turning back the clock to a time when progressive farmers like Lyman Beecher Smith were energetically improving their stock, breeding new strains of sheep, cattle, and horses, and trying new varieties of fruits and vegetables. Besides, farms like Lyman Beecher's and Joel's were parts of a larger world. They depended on outside markets and even on manure beyond what their own stock produced, fertilizers from distant places, poisons no longer readily available, now-obsolete farm equipment, and the power of oxen and horses. Joel's last nine acres could hardly provide the basis of such a way of life.

Nevertheless, these acres could offer a tantalizing glimpse of nineteenth-century ways. Keeping livestock, even poultry, on county property presents obvious problems, but a pear orchard, an heirloom potato field, or a vegetable garden on four or five acres do not, just as they would not interfere with other special programs on the old farm field. In fact, such plantings could provide the basis for new events like spring plowing with oxen from Old Bethpage, or a harvest festival in the fall. School children could help harvest pears, turn the cider press, and sample the product. A Joel Smith Farm Museum could sell its produce in the General Store—certified organic. Like a farm office furnished with period seed catalogs, fertilizer samples, farming books, and pamphlets, a slice of farm life would add a theatrical element much like the teas with Mrs Gaynor—an element to enhance the experience of the nineteenth century offered to residents, tourists, and new generations of school children.²⁴

NOTES

1. Suffolk County Department of Parks and Historic Services (hereafter Historic Services), J. Lance Mallamo, "Action Plan for 'Deepwells,'" prepared for Suffolk County officials in 1987; author's conversations with Lance Mallamo and Richard Martin, Division of Cultural and Historic Services, Suffolk County Department of Parks and Historic Services, 1988 to present.

2 *1850 U.S. Census for Smithtown*; William S. Pelletreau, discussing the land "laid out to Edmund Smith, the grandson of the patentee," in *Records of the Town of Smithtown, Long Island, N.Y., with Other Ancient Documents of Historic Value* (Smithtown, 1898): 266, 265-72, 366-67; will of Nathaniel Smith, proved 1826, Suffolk County Surrogates Court (hereafter, Surrogates Court), Riverhead, *Liber E*, 191 and *Liber 38*, 374; for deeds between Joel and other Smiths, see *Liber 37*, 93, 372, and *Liber 50*, 73, 78, 86, 87, Office of Suffolk County Clerk, Riverhead; US Dept. of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service, in cooperation with Cornell Agricultural Experiment Station, *Soil Survey of Suffolk County* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975), *passim*.

3. Howard S. Russell, *A Long Deep Furrow*, abridged by Mark Lapping (Hanover, N.H.: Univ. Press of New England, 1976); Ulysses Prentice Hedrick, *A History of Horticulture in America to 1860* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1950) 220; see also chaps. 9 and 10, covering the North Atlantic States, 1800-1830, and 1830-1860; chapter 29, "Yankee Inventions," includes drawings of tools from nineteenth-century catalogs; Hedrick, *A History of Agriculture in the State of New York* (1933; reprint, New York: N.Y. State Historical Association and Hill & Wang, 1966); Percy Wells Bidwell and John I. Falconer, *History of Agriculture in the Northern United States, 1620-1860*. (Washington, D.C., 1925), 281 ff., also has relevant pictures of agricultural machinery, Barbara Ferris Van Liew to the author, 29 May 1998 and 19 Oct. 1997.

4. Gideon Smith, "General Farm Accounts Ledger, 1838-1868," in Edgar Law Land Collection, Museum of Early Trades and Crafts, Madison, NJ, n.p. (hereafter cited as Smith ledger); Charlotte Ganz, *Colonel Rockwell's Scrap-book* (Smithtown: Smithtown Historical Society, 1968), 167; Harry D. Sleight, *Town Records of the Town of Smithtown, Long Island, N.Y., 1837-1899* (Smithtown: Town of Smithtown, 1929) 2: 121, 123, 129; will of Joel L. G. Smith, Surrogates Court; St. James Episcopal Church records.

5 Will of Nathaniel Smith, Surrogates Court. He gave young Nathaniel's brother Woodhull the family grist mill, the mill dam, and various other structures, which Woodhull sold to another brother when he moved away. Nathaniel's heirs also inherited four slaves, to be freed when they "arrived at the age of thirty-one years" (Frederick K. Smith, *The Family of Richard Smith of Smithtown, Long Island* (Smithtown: Smithtown Historical Society, 1967), 192, 258-9, 154; F. K. Smith's spelling of the Native American place name Sherewog (49) is the simplest of many variants.

6. Mallamo, 7; F. K. Smith, 259-60, 196; Ganz, 167; Edmund's house was on the site of the house built by the patentee, both now gone (Ganz, 145); J. Chace Jr., *Map of Suffolk County, L.I., N.Y.* (Philadelphia: John Douglass, 1858) shows J. L. G. Smith's house opposite W. W. Mills, and W. M. Pullis as owner of Joel's original house (apparently, the sale to Pullis fell through, the house was purchased by Clinton H. Smith).

7. Sleight, 134, 103-15, 122; J. Lawrence Smith, "The Town of Smithtown," in *History of Suffolk County, N.Y.* (1882; reprint, Smithtown: Smithtown Historical Society, 1961), 28.

8. "Complete Record...relating to Officers, Soldiers and Seamen, composing the Quotas of

the Troops Furnished to the United States by the Town of Smithtown...from the 15th day of April, 1861 to December 20, 1865,"(Theodore Brush, clerk, in record book, office of Smithtown town clerk). Eighteen mariners and two teachers took advantage of the occupational exemption; a few men, like Joel's brother Edmund, apparently had been nine-month volunteers and chose not to reenlist; a few were almost forty-five and excused, as were some nineteen- and twenty-year old students. See also "Enrollment of Persons Liable to Military Duty, 1862 and 1864," B. B. Newton and Churchill G. Smith, enrolling officers, respectively, office of Smithtown town clerk; "Enrollment and Exemption Papers, 1862," Richard Handley Collection, Long Island History Room, Smithtown Library; Franklin B. Hough, *Census of the State of New York for 1865* (Albany: van Benthuyssen & Sons, 1867 (hereafter *Census*), 648-50, 734-45, 707.

9. Forty-five accepted \$50, while in the same period (Aug.-Sept. 1862) twenty-six received \$100 or \$110; by Mar. 1864, bounties had risen significantly, and twenty-seven received \$330, twelve \$500, and a later tally noted three paid \$600 and one \$750, amounts not shown in the record proper: J. L. Smith, 27.

10. Garetta Hagemeyer (Reboul) Lawson, unpublished letters to her son Joel and her grandchildren (ca. 1980), which I thank her son Christopher ("Jay") Lawson for sharing with me; J. L. Smith, 28.

11. Smith ledger; J. L. Smith, 28.

12. Russell, 212; Frank Turano, "History and the Long Island Environment to 1940," lecture, SUNY at Stony Brook, 3 April 1986; J. L. Smith, 28; 2,489 tons of hay were produced in Smithtown that year (*Census, Agricultural Statistics*, hereafter *Ag Stats*), 370-74); Smith ledger; Hedrick, 250-53, 204-7.

13. Smith ledger; *Census*; Billings Farm & Museum exhibit; Bidwell & Falconer, 77 ff; there were 1,081 head of cattle, 58 working oxen, and 547 milch cows in the town as well as 1715 swine, \$3,278 worth of poultry "owned," and another \$4,335 "sold" (*Census, Ag Stats* 375-77).

14. Russell, 273; Hedrick, 151; Smith ledger; Hedrick 235-37.

15. Hedrick, 152; Smith ledger; 8,038 apple "trees in fruit" grew in Smithtown yielding 12,792 bushels of apples and 404.75 barrels of cider (*Census, Ag Stats* 374).

16. Smith ledger; St. James General Store ledgers, Smithtown Historical Society, Smithtown; Hedrick, 240-41.

17. Hedrick, 223; Russell, 271; Turano, 10 Apr.

18. Russell, 173; Hedrick, 230-232; Turano, 3 Apr.

19. Hedrick 207-9; see also Russell, chap. 25, "The Eager Young;" Benjamin F. Thompson, *History of Long Island From its Discovery and Settlement to the Present Time*, 3 vols. (1849; reprint; Port Washington: Ira J. Friedman, 1962) 2: 24; James Y. Downs papers, Suffolk County Historical Society, Riverhead.

20. Smith ledger; J. L. Smith, 28; *The American Frugal Housewife Dedicated to Those Who Are not Ashamed of Economy*, 7th ed., enlarged and corrected by the author, whose name is not given (Boston: Carter, Hender, 1835), 13.

21. Daniel Y. Williamson ledger, Carriage Museum, Museums at Stony Brook; Smith ledger;

Downs papers.

22. *Census*, 377; Nathaniel S. Prime, *A History of Long Island, from Its First Settlement by Europeans, to the Year 1845*, 2 parts (New York: Carter, 1845)1:75-77; J. L. Smith, 28.

23. Pelletreau, 437; F. K. Smith, 193; Lawson letters; "The immense shell banks which heretofore existed on the sites of ancient Indian villages have in many instances been removed, and their contents applied for fertilizing the soil" (Thompson 1:13).

24. J. L. Smith, 38.

STATE OF THE ISLAND

Our State of the Island department provides a forum for analysis of problems confronting Long Island. This issue presents a speech by a noted architectural historian, given this past April at the First Presbyterian Church of Sag Harbor, concerning the campaign to restore the church's magnificent spire that stood for ninety-four years before its destruction by the hurricane of 1938.

SIXTY YEARS AFTER THE HURRICANE: THE CASE FOR REPLACING THE STEEPLE OF SAG HARBOR'S OLD WHALER'S CHURCH

By Paul Goldberger

It is a great privilege to be in this church, which is one of the truly great buildings not only of Sag Harbor, but of this region: a triumphant building, with a miraculous combination of delicacy and strength that, just in and of itself, represents the very best of the nineteenth century. I have been asked to say a few words about the architectural climate of the midnineteenth century, to set the tone, so to speak, for the building—to say something about the environment in which its architect, Minard Lafever, worked, and about the architectural environment that surrounded and defined the culture of Sag Harbor in the 1840s, and which made this building possible.

It was a time when the world was opening up, literally as well as figuratively—when connections of all sorts were being established between places, connections that had never existed before. Sag Harbor itself demonstrated this in the basis of its economy, with great whaling ships leaving to go halfway across the world, not to return for years. But everywhere, there was a sense that isolation was breaking down, that greater ties were being established, that information as well as goods were flowing back and forth.

In such a climate, it is natural that Egypt would hold a certain allure. There was a brief flurry of what we today would probably call Egyptian chic in architecture around the time of this church. Perhaps the greatest piece of Egyptian Revival architecture in the United States, the triumphant gates of the Grove Street Cemetery in New Haven, designed by Henry Austin, were started in 1845 and completed in 1848. The first archeological discoveries in Egypt surely fueled this interest, and it seemed particularly appropriate for a cemetery. Over the gates in New Haven are inscribed the words, "The Dead Shall Be Raised." Egypt symbolized exotic, foreign culture; it also symbolized power and riches, and, perhaps most of all, it symbolized time—time going back further than so much of the European culture from which most Sag Harborites had come.

Nothing, however, could be more wrong than to think that the Egyptian

influences in this church—and it is important to remember that they are influences, not literal replications, since you can go up and down the Nile for a lifetime and never see a building that looks like this one—in any case, the Egyptian influence here is a sudden incursion of other architectural cultures into what, heretofore, had been a purely American way of making buildings.

The truth is, American architecture has never been pure. It has always assimilated influences, primarily from Europe but to a certain extent from elsewhere, and, while it has adjusted and changed things to suit American circumstances—most often, at least early on, in the direction of making things simpler and more practical—it has invented relatively little from whole cloth. There is no pure American architecture—certainly in the midnineteenth century there was not. Even the magnificent white New England meeting houses and exquisite white clapboard and shuttered houses and churches had their roots in English architecture, primarily Georgian; we can see buildings like this all over Sag Harbor, since the roots of Eastern Long Island are primarily in New England, not New York. The houses you see around Sag Harbor are American adaptations to American circumstances, but their architectural beginnings are nonetheless European.

And many of our greatest buildings of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries—the White House, the Capitol, Jefferson's University of Virginia, Thomas U. Walter's Girard College in Philadelphia—owe deep debt to European precedent, either Georgian or classical. Jefferson interpreted his precedents brilliantly, with an inventiveness that marked his work, particularly the university, as being as creative as anything American architecture has ever made—but his starting point, once again, was tile architecture he had seen in Europe, or in books. And so, too, with the architects who made the buildings of the Federal style, very much an American interpretation, lighter and more delicate than much classicism, but based on European precedent, nonetheless. And I have not even mentioned the Gothic Revival and the Greek Revival, two more or less containable, definable movements that had a profound effect on American architecture's tendency to look back, even as it was interpreting and changing to fit the new needs and circumstances of American cities and villages.

George Hersey, the architectural historian, once commented on this whole tendency in American architecture in an essay that had a wonderful title, a title that in itself says it all: "Replication Replicated: Notes on American Bastardy." American architecture, Hersey pointed out, relied heavily on what had come before, and yet it *was* original in the creative and often brilliant way in which architects combined elements from other times and other cultures. Sometimes they were even copying the copiers—since much of European architecture was based on earlier models, too—but they did it in a uniquely American way. Vincent Scully has often pointed out that American buildings from the nineteenth and early twentieth century are often more picturesque, more freewheeling, than their European models. The Europeans tend to be more theoretical, to think more about ideas; the Americans think more about appearances, about what it looks like—even, we might say, about how it feels.

Let me say something about the whole idea of style, since this is what really

sets the context for this church, and it raises some issues that remain important, even controversial, in American architecture right to this day. The question is simple: what does style mean? The answer is not so simple. In fact, architects and critics and historians still fight about it. The nineteenth century was divided—as is the twentieth century—between those architects who tend to believe that style contains profound, deep meanings, what we might even call moral associations between the building and its purpose, and those architects who believe it is more a matter of appearances—what feels good, what looks good, what strikes your fancy.

Now, I am oversimplifying with this distinction, I admit, but it is still a valid one, and it remains an issue today. When the Gothic Revival in England was at its height, it was believed, by architects such as, say, A. W. N. Pugin, to have a moral connection—this was the God-given right way to build, because the Gothic style connected to God, it was how the great cathedrals were made, and it was honest and true and, if you will, it was what God wanted. Or so the most ardent of Gothic Revivalists thought. “The Gothic Revival owes its rare force to the way in which it reduced all architectural matters to a religious or a moral issue,” wrote Kenneth Clark. Indeed, Pugin did not like even to refer to Gothic as a “style.” To him, that implied that there were other styles, and, as Clark said, “an architect who could adopt any style to suit his client was as unworthy of admiration as a priest who could adopt any creed,” or so Pugin and the Gothic Revivalists believed.

But, of course, many architects and many clients did want to adopt just any style; that was the very point. The ideological revivalism of the Gothic Revival was shared by some proponents of other styles, especially classicists who believed that it would be possible to evoke the nobility of the Greek and Roman periods through imitating their architecture—but, in general, American architects were more concerned with appearances, with what looked and felt good: the associations with the historical origins of a particular style were loose, at best. Thus, many American architects moved easily from style to style, designing one kind of building one day and another the next. That was particularly true in the twentieth century, when eclectic architects like Cass Gilbert, James Gamble Rogers, John Russell Pope, McKim Mead & White, and others filled the landscape with Georgian, Tudor, Classical, and Spanish Revival buildings, sometimes literally designing them at the same time. Architecture became more about mood, about feeling, and, to use a term James Gamble Rogers once used, about “effect.” Indeed, Rogers once wrote, with reference to his great Gothic Harkness Quadrangle at Yale, that we must keep the effects paramount, not the traditions, since the traditions didn’t matter—it was all a stage set, in other words.

Is there anything evil about this? There was to Pugin, and there was, many years later, to the earliest of the Modernist architects, to whom this approach represented the violation of a moral purpose to architectural style. Minard Lafever, however, was not such a moralist; although he never went so far as James Gamble Rogers, who once designed a building at Yale with a Gothic front and a Georgian Colonial back, he worked in a number of styles. Lafever is best considered as a part of the movement of the broadening of American culture in the mid-nineteenth century, as industrialism and trading created greater wealth, and

the desire for access to a certain kind of culture was increasing among an ever-larger middle class. Art and architecture suddenly seemed within the reach of all, not just the province of an elite. There was a great cultural change going on, and Lafever was part of it.

So, Lafever's greatest contribution to the American culture, in a sense, was his role not only as an architect, but as a kind of propagandist, creating early pattern books that brought real architecture to a broader public. *The Modern Builder's Guide*, published in 1833, which went through five editions and was in print until 1855, was a kind of system intended to make it both possible and practical to build a Greek Revival house on a small budget without a professional architect. It is important to remember, as we look at the Old Whaler's Church, that its architect was largely self-trained as a designer-builder; he designed intuitively, and his mission, as he saw it, was to make great architectural style accessible to a broader public.

I want to say a word about the Old Whaler's Church's importance as a landmark. It should be self-evident, but it still is not to everyone, and, not that many years ago, was not evident to enough Americans at all—the notion that great buildings are a part of our cultural legacy that we have as much responsibility to preserve as we would a great painting, or a great natural feature. The Grand Canyon is part of our patrimony as Americans; so is a painting by Frederick Church, and so is our great architecture. We inherited it, and we are obligated to take care of it for future generations. That should be the end of the matter, but, of course, it is not. There are still plenty of questions raised.

First is the question of change and growth. A community that changes not at all will die; a community that changes too much, or too fast, will live, but will live an existence empty of meaning. A civilized village or town has anchors in the past, has a sense of time resonating on the streets, and that gives a kind of security that the only new cannot provide. It is comforting to know that a place has roots that began before us and will extend past us. The great landmarks, of which the Old Whaler's Church is one, provide the beginnings of those roots in time; streets and an overall sense of place are just as important, which is why Main Street and so many of Sag Harbor's blocks mean as much as individual landmarks. Tear this church down and the village would have a hole in its heart; leave the church and tear down a dozen ordinary houses nearby, and the village would have no heart at all.

But of course, when one looks at a building like this one, there is also the question of private vs. public property. Buildings like this church are private property in the technical sense, but they belong to each of us in the other sense I have been talking about, they are part of our heritage. They occupy a crucial position in the cityscape, or the townscape, defining space and making time visible, giving the town the sense of depth, of resonance over time, that is so essential to making a place civilized and giving it meaning. In that sense the church belongs to us all, in that it affects all of us; it defines the nature of the Sag Harbor that we all experience, as much as the Long Wharf or Main Street or the park.

If so, then—if the church belongs to us all—how come we do not pay for it?

That is a long story, but suffice it to say that we do not, in this country, pay the freight for a lot of our historic preservation. Only a handful of great monuments, those built by and for the government and certain historic houses, are usually paid for as public properties, in a sense the equivalent of national parks. And, in truth, the independence of this church is essential: it has been able to remain a vibrant and vital religious and community center on its own.

But it does bear an extraordinary weight—the responsibility of caring for, and restoring, the great building that is its own heritage, and its contribution to the public life of Sag Harbor. I believe that the congregation's ongoing maintenance and restoration of this building constitute as important a contribution to Sag Harbor as anything that the church does—that through keeping this building and taking care of it, the church provides a kind of uplift and enrichment to the life of the whole community that is in every way similar to the other things the church does as part of its program. Keeping this building in good condition, and restoring it as a centerpiece of Sag Harbor, in other words, helps the soul, just as the other activities of the church try to do.

A final question involves the last part of the master plan, to restore the spire. It is a wild and daring scheme, and I want to go on record as being all for it. Lafever's original spire, which lasted from 1844 to 1938—nearly a century—was the tallest thing on Eastern Long Island, and one of the most beautiful. It had a quality to it one can only call aesthetically daring—huge, a bit bombastic, startling, brazen—and, I suspect, very beautiful. I think all the same adjectives can be applied to the decision to build it again. Re-creation of lost monuments is often a dicey thing, and risks being tacky or sentimental, or cloyingly cute. Somehow, this one strikes me as none of those things, but as spectacular, and capable of giving this building once again the power and the glory that it was intended by Lafever and the newly rich of Sag Harbor to have in the mid-nineteenth century, and which it fully deserves to have again.

We have been given this building, and it is a gift. We have been given it somewhat broken, and it is our responsibility, I think, to fix it. That need not mean erasing the presence of time, and making the building so spiffy and clean that someone would think it was 1844 all over again. It is essential that time remain visible as this building is once again restored and completed. But fix it is what we have to do—for as much as the ocean beaches, the cleanliness of the bays and harbors, the lighthouse and the windmills, the Old Whaler's Church is a vital piece of the legacy of this part of the world.

CONGREGATIONAL AUTONOMY AND PRESBYTERIAN DISCIPLINE: THE IMMORAL MINISTRY OF LUTHER GLEASON IN EARLY REPUBLIC NEW YORK, 1789-1808

By Robert E. Cray Jr.

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Born in Connecticut in 1760, Luther Gleason was a rough-hewed country parson ordained in 1789 by the Strict Congregationalists, a staunch Calvinist sect. He acquired little formal education—no college degree distinguished his entry into holy order, unlike many Presbyterian and Congregational ministers of the early republic. Instead, Gleason harnessed his preaching skills, however plain, to deliver sermons across the northeast. After a brief stint in Stillwater, New York, Gleason moved to Smithtown, Long Island, installed in the town church by the Presbytery of Long Island on 28 September 1797. His flock embraced him warmly, for the young man proved a “ready, and in some respects, a popular preacher.” The church appeared well shepherded, serviced by an energetic pastor pleasing both to congregation and presbytery.¹

Appearances deceived, however. By 1804, Gleason’s drinking and “lightness of deportment” garnered notoriety and eroded his ministerial standing, requiring a public apology from him to undo the damage. Several churchmembers thought the minister’s apology insincere, and they considered Gleason’s domestic life, especially his attentions to the family’s hired girl, Hannah Denton, highly irregular, if not blatantly scandalous. Rumors circulated that Gleason preferred Denton to his wife. The ensuing investigation, started by discontented parishioners, soon involved the presbytery: damning testimony from the Stillwater congregation led Gleason’s colleagues to first suspend and then depose him for lying and moral irregularities in 1807. Even so, the disgraced Gleason retained his pulpit, licensed by the Long Island Convention of the Strict Congregationalists. The presbytery fumed over the convention’s embrace of Gleason. As one presbytery cleric remarked, the Gleason affair threatened “not only to sweep away all communion between the two denominations, but to perpetuate bitter animosities in each.” His prophecy proved accurate. The two Calvinist denominations prohibited their members from sharing or exchanging pulpits in 1808.²

This ecclesiastical rift, based on contrasting notions of ministerial behavior and propriety, poisoned ecumenical relations on eastern Long Island. The presbytery had handled delinquent ministers before, but such admittedly rare

occurrences were in-house affairs without interdenominational repercussions. According to Lyman Beecher, East Hampton Presbyterian minister and soon-to-be famous evangelical, Gleason had cost him and his associates “much time and trouble.” The convention rejected presbytery appeals against Gleason, and the Smithtown church breathed defiance by supporting their pastor. An irate Beecher declared that if Gleason “had broken the seventh commandment at noonday in the public square, they / his parishioners / would not have given up.”³

The question of Luther Gleason’s character illuminates the clashing borders of denominational authority and congregational autonomy in the early republic. If, on the surface, the debacle appears more lurid than substantive—what is one more miscreant minister, after all?—the underlying text of the episode was rather more profound. To date, historians have acknowledged the democratization of American Protestantism, that is, the means by which ordinary persons chose and fashioned religious beliefs, empowered by the republican ideology of the American Revolution. The early republic witnessed a plethora of religious sects and movements, some of which blossomed into full-fledged denominations. People dissatisfied by mainstream Christianity charted different courses, explored new faiths, and embraced distinctive sects. Yet the early republic also witnessed the growth of denominational structures compounded by the rise of clerical professionalism. Even democratic sects often had a firm authoritarian base, headed by watchful ministers mindful of their office. These two trends, although parallel, sometimes intersected violently with surprising force over issues of ministerial morality. Who sat in judgment of a minister’s character, the individual congregation or the denomination, the laity or the clergy, emerged as contentious topics. As an ordained Strict Congregationalist licensed by the Presbyterians, Gleason temporarily straddled the ecclesiastical chasm; as an accused miscreant, he tested the boundaries of faith between these two Calvinist faiths. The fracas over Luther Gleason helps clarify the means of ecclesiastical judgment, and it underscores the dynamic of lay autonomy and denominational authority in the early republic.⁴

Luther Gleason has left few traces of his early life. The son of Ephraim Gleason had a modest education, perhaps no more than a common school background. He did hold patriotic ideals, enlisting alongside his father in the Revolutionary cause in 1776, yet we know little about Gleason’s army career, except that he suffered from a bout of “camp distemper.” Toward war’s end he married Mary Knapp, of Danbury, and the couple had their first child, Mary, in 1780.⁵ Gleason also immersed himself in the religious currents that eddied after the Great Awakening. Described as a “brother of the Canaan Church,” a Strict Congregationalist meeting, Gleason eventually moved to the Oblong, a tract of territory in western Connecticut adjacent to Salisbury, where he became a preacher in the Strict Congregationalist fold. Unlike standing order Congregationalists, who typically held college degrees, the Strict Congregationalists downplayed the importance of formal learning, more concerned with a person’s spiritual relationship to God. A conversion experience and a sense of experiential religion distinguished their faith. Consequently, Gleason’s limited education posed no hurdles to them, and he was ordained in Middletown in September

1789.⁶

The Strict Congregationalists had arisen from the ecclesiastical debris of the Great Awakening. This series of emotional religious revivals had rent denominational unity in Connecticut during the 1740s. The treks of George Whitefield, Gilbert Tennent, and James Davenport, combined with the work of local ministers and laypersons, had shaken the Calvinist establishment. Extreme New Light supporters of the revival opted to leave town churches and form their own Separate meetings. Separates believed in a heartfelt, experimental religion, criticizing the formalistic notions of the standing order Calvinists as dry and legalistic. As such, they denounced the Half-Way Covenant, favored fiery preaching, and stressed a return to undiluted Calvinism. At their peak, scattered across New England and eastern Long Island, they numbered roughly one hundred congregations.⁷ Yet the movement soon paid a price for its success. Many Separatists returned to restructured town churches that had abandoned the Half-Way Covenant; others chose to enlist in the Baptist fold. A smaller nucleus of the faithful, who now called themselves Strict Congregationalists, organized in 1781 and retained elements of Separatist teachings. Less radical in tone, the Strict Congregationalists remained committed to the belief “that every brother in the church has the right to preach, pray, and exhort publicly.” Lay preaching had been a hallmark of the Great Awakening. A half-dozen or so churches thus preserved this religious memory of the faith, content to remain apart from the Calvinist mainstream.⁸

Gleason left Connecticut sometime in the early 1790s for Stillwater, New York. Located north of Albany in Saratoga County, the town had been described by Timothy Dwight, Yale College president and Calvinist divine, as a “small, pleasant village,” with “many proofs of comforts and thrift in both farms and homes.” The Northern Associated Presbytery had licensed Gleason to preach in the church in the 1790s. Although a Strict Congregationalist, Gleason passed muster among Presbyterians in frontier New York—both denominations shared some theological similarities, after all, and their common Calvinist roots were sufficient for an exchange of pulpits. Indeed, the town had a flexible religious character for Congregationalists and Presbyterians found it “very easy to work together,” and Baptists and Congregationalists attended religious councils jointly. Gleason had an added attraction to townfolk. Since the town had largely been settled in the 1760s by migrants from Canaan, Connecticut, Gleason’s former residence, he was welcomed as a native son, a reminder of their New England roots. The dismantling and reconstruction of the Canaan meetinghouse in Stillwater by the town founders hints further at the strength of this regional devotion. Both church and parson seemed aptly suited.⁹

A promising start in the new community did not last long. Despite converting several individuals, Gleason soon attracted unwelcome attention because of his chaotic domestic life. The Gleason family evidenced signs of marital tension—relations between him and wife Mary deteriorated, almost to the point of separation. Neighbors heard a steady barrage of complaints from Mary Gleason about her husband. Once an outraged Mary Gleason packed her clothes and

stormed from the house before being persuaded to return. Other times parishioners found themselves wondering about their minister's actions and statements. Gleason never offered a convincing defense. Neighbors and parishioners increasingly blamed Parson Gleason for the domestic disruptions, and the besieged minister left Stillwater in 1796.¹⁰

What explains this domestic turbulence? Despite a large and growing family—it would eventually include twelve children—Gleason's marriage had clearly fallen apart. The bonds of love that tied husband and wife together were foundering upon the shoals of domestic discord. Harsh criticism by Luther of Mary's domestic skills supplies one example of this: it was intolerable, he told a Long Island woman some years later, that his wife "had not washed a washing these ten years," a time period that extended back to his Stillwater ministry. After all, he required a "clean handkerchief and shirt" to preach. Yet household skills, although offering a target for complaint, barely hinted at the true source of contention, the arrival of a house-girl, Hannah Denton, to work in the Gleason home. This was what had set the household astir. The new servant monopolized Luther Gleason's attentions and affection, prompting Mary to complain publicly about leaving her husband. Mary did not require a house girl—the Gleason's eldest daughter, also named Mary, could assist in the chores—and, besides, there were only two spinning wheels in the house, hardly necessitating a hired girl's presence. No matter, such objections failed to impress Luther, and he continued his attentions to Hannah. In fact, when not conversing with her employer, Hannah used the wheels to produce clothes for herself, depriving the minister's daughters of badly needed shawls and short gowns. One daughter had to work outside the household to supplement her meager wardrobe. When Mary complained, her husband reprimanded her, too smitten by his youthful houseservant to listen.¹¹

Gleason could hardly escape notice. Like many communities, Stillwater defined itself by the social web of visiting and gossip that distinguished small town existence in the early republic. Women participated fully in these social rituals, exchanged news, offered opinions, and discussed events. As a minister, Gleason obviously commanded attention; as a man with a troubled marriage, Gleason's insults to his wife could not fail to arouse critical comment from neighborhood women. For example, Gleason told a neighbor, Mary Chapman, that if his wife died tomorrow, "he would not go over his door sill to look for another but would marry Hannah Denton as soon as it would be decent." Such remarks were bound to circulate. Equally disturbing, men and women both could notice how Hannah Denton constantly accompanied Luther Gleason on visits to parishioners, as Mary Gleason conspicuously stayed home. Troubled church members met among themselves and sent Joel Ketcham, the local deacon, to reproach Parson Gleason. The meeting only inflamed the already tense relationship between pastor and flock. When informed by Ketcham of the church's disapproval, an angry Gleason banged his fist upon his knee and declared: "if Hannah Denton would ride with him, he would carry her every day in the week, if it was only to spite the church!" Ketcham advised Gleason to return Denton to her parents.¹²

Angry outbursts at parishioners would undermine a minister's standing.

Gleason's emotional need for Hannah Denton, so apparent in his statements, blinded him to the possible professional consequences. Time and again, he positioned himself by Hannah, nudging and holding her close. One neighbor, Esther Wilson, swore that she had seen Gleason and Denton "sundry times" at her house, "on bed together, in a merry way, with one of his legs across hers." If greatly fatigued or plagued by headaches, Gleason would recline, joined by Hannah "not far from him." Amos Wilson, Esther's husband, noticed similar behavior on at least one occasion. Another female servant in the Gleason household reported additional curious behavior: sleeping near Denton, she observed Parson Gleason enter the room, kiss Hannah, and silently leave. All these episodes furnished grist for Stillwater gossip mills. There was, to be sure, no evidence of outright fornication—even Esther Wilson recounted no "further indecent behavior" beyond what she had described—but the social repercussions were very real to perplexed and indignant worshippers. Gleason's overly affectionate displays, combined with his chilly marital relations, troubled parishioners and raised a host of questions about their minister's moral character.¹³

How did Hannah Denton respond to the attention? Witnesses' accounts suggest Denton tolerated the advances. When asked by a fellow servant why she allowed the minister to kiss her in bed, Denton replied "she did not wish it, but he would do so." Servant girls were easy prey for exploitation, sexual or otherwise, but some domestics could and did resist. Denton could have returned to her parents, or she could have publicly exposed Gleason. She chose neither course. Service in the Gleason household brought too many benefits for Hannah: her wardrobe increased at the expense of the Gleason daughters; and she avoided her aged parents, especially her blind mother, whose condition required substantial care. Such considerations may have prompted Denton to stay with Luther Gleason.¹⁴

The state of affairs could not last indefinitely. Church members had already revealed their concerns to Gleason; if forced, they could dismiss him from the pulpit. Whatever Gleason's state of mind—he later claimed to have been almost insane "from a pain in the head"—the minister saw the opposition against him and decided to leave. During a conversation with Deacon Ketcham, Gleason blamed jealousy and "difficulties in his family" as necessitating his departure. Ketcham replied: "I would not have lifted a finger to get you to Stillwater, had I known of these difficulties in your family, for I think you have no right in the vineyard, and I advise you not to preach till these matters are settled."¹⁵

Yet Ketcham did not prevent Gleason from obtaining a letter of recommendation from the congregation. Although troubled, Ketcham had conferred with an "influential churchmember," who contended it would be difficult to prove "absolute criminality" against Gleason, hence they should supply the necessary papers. Since Hannah Denton had recently returned home, and since Gleason had disavowed any intention of wrongdoing, a majority of the congregation attested to Gleason's ministerial fitness.¹⁶

Gleason's troubled marriage, and his confused state of mind, offer partial explanations for the sequence of events. An unloving husband, angered by his

wife, might seek affection elsewhere; indeed, he claimed that his chronic headaches necessitated Denton's attendance. His wife was not under consideration for such a role apparently. Another possibility presents itself also. As a Strict Congregationalist, Gleason embraced an experiential faith based upon one of the more radical Great Awakening sects. Separates forged in the fires of the revival defied normal codes of religious etiquette: some espoused spiritual perfection, convinced they were incapable of wrong; others believed in physical immortality; and a few practiced spiritual marriages—liaisons with non-spouses—that prompted them to abandon their lawfully wedded husbands and wives. The last of these vexed Separate and Separate Baptists in New England during the 1740s and 1750s. Nor were traditional standing order Congregationalists immune, for the wife of the Reverend Solomon Prentice of Grafton, Massachusetts, lodged with a man she termed her spiritual husband in 1752. Isaac Backus, the noted Baptist leader, claimed that the Congregational minister of Braintree, Massachusetts, took up with a neighbor's wife in similar circumstances. Backus believed that spiritual factors induced otherwise respectable ministers to become involved in adulterous behavior. As Backus wrote: "I think this is Plainly one of the Signs of Christ's Coming when iniquity abounds and ye love of many waxes cold."¹⁷

Direct connection between Gleason and extreme Separatists remains unprovable. A generation or more separated Stillwater's pastor from the practitioners of spiritual marriages. Yet Gleason did acknowledge the workings of spiritual Providence, which perhaps links him indirectly to the marital radicals of yore, and provides a hint of things to come when the Prophet Matthias and Joseph Smith, two later religious radicals, redefined matrimonial standards among their followers in the 1830s and 1840s. In Stillwater, while once complaining about his family, Gleason suddenly brightened and remarked: "Providence smiles upon me; there is a reformation in my family." What was the means of this transformation? Gleason had decided to kiss "every woman that comes to my house." Liberal displays of affection to all females, while far less than a spiritual marriage, does suggest a similar emotional and religious trajectory to those earlier, radical Separates.¹⁸

Removal to Smithtown temporarily revitalized Gleason's ministerial career. Nevertheless, the minister's past exploits in Stillwater, deeply etched in the collective memory of residents, would eventually shadow him to Long Island. The fact that Hannah Denton accompanied Gleason to Long Island virtually guaranteed that the past would repeat itself.

Smithtown was a quiet Long Island farming community located in Suffolk County. From the founding of their community in the mid-seventeenth century, the townspeople extolled the virtues of Puritanism, fortified by their New England origins. Even so, regular preaching remained scarce; ministers sometimes left after brief sojourns. The town meetinghouse, according to one account, had "wind whistling through the crevices in winter," while the "twittering of the swallow in the roof in summer enliven the labors of the clergymen."¹⁹ After the Revolutionary War, the church steadily decline, deprived of steady preaching, ambivalent about Presbyterian affiliation, and beset by internal friction. Prior to Gleason's arrival, his predecessor, the Reverend Hartt, had launched a suit against a church elder in

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the early 1790s, requiring mediation by the presbytery. It was an unhappy church that Gleason took over.²⁰

Gleason revitalized the troubled church. Arriving in 1796, he quickly won admirers in Smithtown and grateful worshippers in neighboring Islip and Brookhaven. All three communities petitioned the presbytery to recruit Gleason. After receiving testimonials of character, the presbytery accepted Gleason's explanation that financial expediency, a glaring lie, had forced his departure from Stillwater, and they duly installed him in 1797. Whatever his flaws Gleason did resolve long-standing church disputes between Congregational and Presbyterian factions. The presbytery had advised them to renew their covenant and effect an "ecumenical reconciliation." As a Strict Congregationalist adopted by the presbytery, Gleason straddled the ecclesiastical divide in Smithtown, acceptable to both church factions. Thus, in December 1797, eighteen persons reaffirmed their faith, with Pastor Gleason heading the list and Hannah Denton at the bottom.²¹

This ecclesiastical rapprochement promised a new era. Troublesome church disputes disappeared under Gleason's pastorate; even his wife, Mary, acknowledged the covenant by 1798. An examination of the session records shows no more than ordinary concerns, ranging from the admission of new members to the confessions of errant members—the kind of tasks any rural church would experience. Should singing in the church be encouraged? The session thought so and agreed that Gleason should address the congregation on the issue. The session also noted, approvingly no doubt, that Parson Gleason had "broke bread and wine for David Smith...on his deathbed in 1802." Among his colleagues, Gleason was a faithful associate who attended presbytery meetings and worked as a supply minister. Even the Gleason household functioned smoothly. Three children, two girls and a boy, enlarged the Gleason clan between 1797 and 1801, while Hannah Denton stayed in the background. Although Stillwater churchmembers threatened in 1800 to rescind Gleason's recommendation if Hannah Denton did not return home promptly, the Smithtown pastor kept her in service without complications. Smithtown church members showed their approval by providing Gleason with a parsonage lot.²²

An 1803 sermon by Gleason, delivered before the Smithtown school on 23 December, provides a glimpse into the minister's conception of family life. Like many sermons, it stressed the sanctity and obligations of family members to one another. Children and parents, according to Gleason, both had responsibilities: the former should obey the latter cheerfully, lest the rod be applied to enforce compliance; and parents had to "maintain an uniform sobriety and remember that what they do or say before their children is like sowing weed, which will spring up and bring forth answerable fruit in them." Family worship was critical. Pious parents could expect children to follow their example, but sinful parents would be "surrounded with their miserable offspring in hell, disposed to charge their damnation to their neglect of parental duty." Strong language and vivid imagery were staples of sermonistic prose. The sermon's author, however, would soon run afoul of his very advice, exposed and condemned for inappropriate domestic and

ministerial behavior.²³

By January 1804, the Smithtown session had noted “considerable conversation about difficulties in the church.” Despite his recent sermon, perhaps designed to repel contrary images, Gleason came under censure from leading laypersons. The Smithtown parson appeared too frivolous and too lacking in solemnity, according to some congregants, to qualify as a worthy cleric. Worse yet, Gleason drank spirits, hoisting glasses and mugs on public occasions, and he “frequented loose company.” Respectable community members demanded an apology from him. Gleason promptly refused.²⁴ Two prominent church figures, Deacon Thomas Blydenburgh and Jonas Mills, Esq., called upon the presbytery in March to hear the charges. Mills had left nothing to chance. He presented witnesses to verify such charges as the use of “spirituous liquors” by the minister; light and airy deportment inconsistent with his office; and insufficient efforts by Gleason to “heal the differences between him and his Church and congregation.” After two days of testimony and deliberation, the presbytery judged Gleason guilty of the first and third charges, and they recommended that he confess his fault publicly before his colleagues and the church. Gleason accepted the verdict, announced his fault, and settled the charges to the presbytery’s satisfaction.²⁵

Within Smithtown, ripples from the affair set the congregation on edge. Although relations between flock and pastor at first improved, distinguished by Gleason’s “more grave and exemplary” demeanor, undercurrents of tension rose to the surface nonetheless. Churchmembers started feuding openly. Jonas Mills deliberately withheld himself from church. In addition, the session asked the presbytery in October 1805, to excommunicate people guilty of the “sin of intemperate drinking.” Christian fellowship was tested further when Daniel Brown, a churchmember, accused Gleason of bringing Hannah Denton to them without the approval of the Stillwater church. The session, controlled by Gleason loyalists, considered the charges trivial, prompting Brown to settle with the parson. Jonah Mills was less fortunate—the session targeted him as the ringleader in the affair, and the members demanded that he apologize to Gleason. The session censure Mills in 1806 when he refused their request. In retaliation, Mills approached the presbytery to proffered new complaints against Gleason. Having recruited Thomas Blydenburgh to procure evidence and affidavits from Stillwater, Mills charged Gleason with making light of his previous apology in 1804, keeping Denton in his family and occasioning “unfavorable suspicion,” lacking a regard for truth, and presenting another minister, a Mr. Beebe, an immoral individual, as a worthy, morally upright cleric. Other town residents seconded Mills’s actions against Gleason. The presbytery met in June 1806, to hear the charges.²⁶

The actual origins of this contention, buried beneath charges and allegations, reveals a deeply divided church. Worth noting is how some of the criticism against Gleason targeted his overall demeanor and tone. Was he suitable to be a village parson? This question underscored emerging issues of taste and refinement. As a Strict Congregationalist, Gleason had imbibed a heady, unrefined experiential faith, which grated upon more educated Presbyterians. This was part and parcel of the cultural chasm that had originally divided Great Awakening Old Lights and New Lights. Some prominent Smithtown residents, such as Blydenburgh and

Mills, evidently preferred a polished parson, with polite conversation, proper dress, tasteful habits, and social graces.²⁷ Gleason failed to meet some of these standards: true, he appreciated clean shirts, but his drinking and conversation, perhaps even more so his sermons and modest education, reflected a rustic persona. Many ordinary villagers by contrast identified with Gleason, uneasy with emerging social codes of etiquette and affluent material displays. The story is told, for example, that when Lyman Beecher first arrived in East Hampton, Long Island, the same decade as Gleason, he astonished his parishioners by placing a decorative carpet in his home. Such stylish pretensions were unknown to them. If some Presbyterians embraced new styles and devotions, Strict Congregationalists espoused sentiments rooted in tradition. Gleason was caught between these two codes, a man of two identities, whose Strict Congregationalists' sensibilities, combined with his evident domestic troubles, raised serious doubts about his suitability in some quarters.²⁸

The presbytery pondered Gleason's behavior. On the one hand, a sizable group of people had protested Gleason's behavior; on the other, many worshippers approved of him. At one point during the proceedings Gleason requested a dismissal. His supporters petitioned the presbytery to retain him. After a day of fasting and prayer, the presbytery agreed that Gleason had made "too light of his confession;" his association with Hannah Denton, while impossible to prove "criminal intercourse" under law, merited an ecclesiastical reprimand due to many "instances of impudent and censurable conduct." His language, the presbytery believed, had also been "calculated to deceive." Only the allegation linking him with Beebe was rejected. A motion to suspend Gleason failed to win a majority. Nevertheless, if Gleason wanted to regain his standing he needed to apologize and remove Hannah Denton from his household. Failure to comply would result in a dismissal. As for the difficulties between Jonas Mills and the church, the presbytery left that to the church session to resolve.²⁹

After several months resistance, Gleason dismissed Hannah Denton and duly apologized for his transgression. By October 1806, the presbytery declared him in compliance. It proved short-lived. Information from Thiriza Denton, Hannah's sister in law, had reached the presbytery; she was prepared to recite under oath additional damning testimony against Gleason. People in Smithtown now heard an array of rumors about their minister—more damaging than before—that required the presbytery's intervention. The presbytery advised Gleason to go to Stillwater, accompanied by Lyman Beecher, to confront his accusers.³⁰

Gleason's past was fully exposed in Stillwater. Lyman Beecher quickly learned about the parishioners' discontent with Gleason, his aberrant behavior, harsh treatment of his wife, and close association with Hannah Denton. Equally damning, Gleason's explanation for leaving Stillwater, namely, that monetary reasons had required his departure, was proven false. At the Denton household, Thiriza declined, when pressed by Beecher, to swear under oath what she had previously narrated—the basis of the allegations against Gleason in Long Island. Nevertheless, she affirmed that her refusal "was not because what she had said was not true, but that her husband was opposed to her saying any thing on the

subject; that Hannah had now come home and was one of the family, and that since she had come home, they were more satisfied." Gleason never spoke during the interview. Neighbors were more forthcoming and supplied Beecher with tales of Gleason's misdeeds and strange behavior. Thoroughly alarmed, Beecher barricaded his door at night against his traveling companion, fearful that Gleason might murder him.³¹

On 18 February 1807, the presbytery assembled to hear the charges. Called into a "committee of the whole" the following day, the gathered ministers, including Gleason, heard accounts confirming the Smithtown minister's duplicitous nature. The rumors were proven true. No formal action was taken, for the presbytery decided to "leave the whole to the overreaching providence of God." Even so, they did not have long to wait: by April, the Reverend Nathaniel Reeve formally charged Gleason with immoral behavior. A trial was set for Southampton in June.³²

Gleason ignored the summons. Cited to appear four times by his colleagues, Gleason rejected presbytery authority and remained in Smithtown. Few of his erstwhile colleagues seemed surprised. By August, the presbytery suspended Gleason from all ministerial duties; by October, they deposed him, the harshest penalty under church law. Gleason no longer had any identity within the church. Moreover, the presbytery warned all churches where Gleason preached "to abstain from that wicked man, lest should they continue to countenance him, they should harden him in his crime, assist him still more deeply and extensively to wound the cause of the Redeemer, and become themselves partakers in his sin, and partakers also in the awful judgments which his sins may provide."³³

Neither Gleason nor his congregation bothered to listen. The Smithtown church had rallied around their pastor, excluding Thomas Blydenburgh from fellowship in early 1807, and they accepted affiliation with the Long Island Convention of Strict Congregationalists. Despite Lyman Beecher's warnings to the convention that a "soul destroying controversy" would ensue, the Strict Congregationalists licensed Gleason and believed him to be a "persecuted, innocent man."³⁴ Such events illustrate the fluid borders of Christianity in the early republic. Religion offered individuals a plethora of choices, and furnished preachers with a variety of pulpits. Thus, both laypersons and clerics could, if necessary, redefine their religious loyalties in another church. In Smithtown, as we have seen, the warnings of the presbytery had limited affect. When the presbytery announced to the Smithtown church that it ran a "fearful risk of being found fighting against God," defiant churchmembers expressed satisfaction with Gleason and retorting with Scriptural verses to approve their actions.³⁵

Church loyalty to Gleason went beyond mere personality. Although convinced of their pastor's innocence, many worshippers preferred a congregational polity to a centralized Presbyterian oversight. Individuals wished to control their meetinghouse, hire their own minister, and set their own religious standards without interference from any presbytery. The Strict Congregationalists promised such an arrangement. Since the Smithtown church had been divided between Congregational and Presbyterian stalwarts, the fracas over Gleason allowed the former to dominate the meeting. Many Suffolk churches, originally Congrega-

tional, had reluctantly accepted Presbyterian governance because of the divisiveness of the Great Awakening. By the 1780s some wished to sever the link to a larger polity. The Smithtown church reflected these larger religious divisions. If Gleason switched religious loyalties, his purged congregation, rid of Blydenburgh and Mills, the minister's chief foes, would heartily endorse him.³⁶

An outraged presbytery reproached the Long Island Convention, determined to assert its responsibility over Gleason. In response, the convention called a special meeting in Old Man's [Mount Sinai], a small village, in April 1808, to hear the presbytery's charges. The rift between the visiting Presbyterian delegation and the Strict Congregationalists immediately widened: convention ministers and laypersons announced they would serve as judges, something Presbyterian representatives thought absurd; having already condemned Gleason, presbytery members believed that only their own synod, not the convention, could decide the issue. A compromise permitted the Reverend Aaron Woolworth, Southampton Presbyterian, to act as prosecutor and submit written documents against Gleason. The college educated Woolworth, despite concerns about the "impropriety" of the arrangement, had a reputation for "great intellectual activity and untiring industry."³⁷

When Woolworth presented the charges the next day, he relied upon written testimony from presbytery clergymen and laypersons to dramatize Gleason's web of deceit. Such evidence should have been telling. Yet obstacles appeared based on whether Gleason had consciously lied about his motives for leaving Stillwater. Moses Comb, a Strict Congregationalist, wondered aloud if Gleason might have forgotten the reasons. Perhaps Gleason did not truly lie if his memory had failed him. Anyway, if Gleason had indeed misled the presbytery, said Comb, "it was their duty immediately to have dealt with him privately, upon the subject." Because the presbytery failed in this responsibility, any testimony against Gleason, announced Comb, "ought to be set aside." Woolworth objected to this line of reasoning. Sworn testimony against Gleason could not be invalidated for so flimsy a reason; moreover, Woolworth castigated Combs for acting as both judge and advocate, preventing a fair, impartial hearing.³⁸

Woolworth won the point but other objections slowed the proceedings. On the second day Parson Noah Hallock, a Strict Congregationalist, expressed embarrassment about the trial, convinced the convention had erred in judging Gleason. Hallock read a part of the convention's constitution, along with a Gospel verse from Matthew, chapter 18, to emphasize that private steps should have first been employed. Hallock added that "impressions" received the night before, which he believed came from God, obliged him to proceed no further; indeed, if the convention did continue, Hallock threatened to withdraw. After a lengthy deliberation the convention decided to resume. Woolworth seethed internally and wondered if Hallock had intentionally created these objections as a kind of "subterfuge" to derail the proceedings.³⁹

The evidence against Gleason painted a dark portrait of the Smithtown minister. Again and again, Woolworth presented unflattering accounts about Gleason's troubled character, disregard of marriage vows, deceitful language, and

overall misdemeanors. Not only had Gleason failed to check his behavior in Smithtown, but he had Hannah Denton accompanied him away from Smithtown. A Connecticut tavernkeeper and his wife swore that Gleason and Denton both rented a room from them overnight in 1804. Gleason contested the depositions and loudly proclaimed his innocence. He attacked the Stillwater accounts as improper because they stated "things against him of so old a standing." Next, Gleason produced a certificate of good character signed by six Stillwater residents, who considered him "a well wisher to the cause of religion." He also presented a call from the First Congregational Church of Stillwater, which included forty-eight signatures, some of whom had been his former charges. The underlying thrust was clear--why would people in Stillwater desire Gleason unless they thought his character spotless?⁴⁰

With a similar flourish, Gleason produced witnesses to challenge the assertions about his conduct toward Hannah Denton. Deacon Wheeler of Smithtown testified that he had heard favorable reports about his pastor during a recent visit to Stillwater with Gleason, with many "willing to have him for their minister." A conversation with Hannah Denton's brother reconfirmed the impression--Jesse Denton stated "he was ashamed that there was so much noise about reports from here to Long Island. He had nothing against Mr. Gleason's moral character, should be glad to have him for his preacher." Gleason also interrogated Smithtown churchmembers at the hearings." Question--was Hannah Denton a member of the church? Ans.--yes. Question--Do you know anything against Hannah Denton? Ans.--Nothing. Question--Did she receive a recommendation? Ans.--Yes; from every member present and unanimous except Messrs. Blydenburgh, Brown, and Mills." Although Woolworth believed these unidentified churchmembers had most likely forgotten Gleason's earlier public confession regarding Denton, their testimony spurred confusion about the truth of the affair.⁴¹

The convention withdrew to consider the evidence. Woolworth, however, wanted to explain the "force" of the testimony, much as any prosecutor in a civil case would do. Convention members objected. Woolworth told them "he was sure they did not understand the testimony," unless they permitted him to explain its significance. After discussion, and some arguing between Woolworth and the moderator, the convention denied the request. Gleason's colleagues would decide without benefit of summation; in fact, few of them had written notes, according to Woolworth, reliant upon their memory of oral testimony. After eight hours of deliberation, long into the evening hours, a divided and weary convention declared Gleason "in a measure guilty," but not to the degree portrayed. A confession of flaws would enable him to receive a certificate of good standing from them. Gleason delivered the confession, acknowledging wrongdoing over Hannah Denton, light deportment, and a disregard of family prayer. Woolworth was stunned at the presbytery's defeat.⁴²

Gleason finished his ministry in Smithtown, before residing briefly in Stillwater. Afterward, we lose track of him, until he reappeared with his wife in Columbus, New York, located in Chenango County, where he died in 1820. No further controversy engulfed him. Long Islanders did not forget him, however. Relations between the presbytery and the convention, torn by the trial, deterio-

rated further when Aaron Woolworth authored a pamphlet of the proceedings in 1808 that castigated the Strict Congregationalists as “false prophets.” It would be several years before harmony was restored. Within Smithtown, church divisions led to a factionalized meeting deprived of regular preaching. Although the Presbyterians eventually shepherded the church, Congregationalist-minded members won the right to hear their own ministers. It was an ecclesiastical split-decision. Full ecclesiastical rapprochement did not occur until 1813.⁴³

A larger dynamic is evident here. Gleason may well have been an ecclesiastical rogue, disloyal to his wife, disdainful of etiquette, and deceitful toward his flock, yet his convention colleagues defended and retained him. Even written evidence of Gleason’s crimes did not persuade them to reject him. Why? As heirs to the Separates, the Strict Congregationalists upheld an experiential faith wherein unusual behavior might signify spiritual workings and evidence of divine Providence. At least one convention member cited impressions from God as a rationale to halt the trial; others might have felt the same. The written word emphasized by Woolworth and other Presbyterians mattered less to Strict Congregationalists than oral impressions and spoken feelings. Smithtown parishioners had orally exonerated Gleason, and despite occasional reliance on written documents, Gleason also preferred an oral defense against the charges. In addition, Strict Congregationalists’ dislike of Presbyterian formalism, rooted in the aftermath of the Great Awakening, remained a powerful memory to them. The Gleason affair reopened these ecclesiastical wounds. Much as Jonathan Barber, James Davenport, and other Great Awakening New Lights had relied on impulses and impressions to challenge standing order preachers in Eastern Long Island, the Long Island Convention employed similar tactics against Gleason’s Presbyterian opponents. They were, to be sure, conscious of Gleason’s flaws—he did have to apologize for his transgressions—but they refused to allow Presbyterians to dictate policy and standards to them. The divisions separating Calvinists in the Great Awakening had been resurrected. Only this time ministerial decorum and ecclesiastical procedures sparked the conflict.⁴⁴

Who sat in judgment over Luther Gleason? He clearly had many judges, parishioners and colleagues, Presbyterians and Strict Congregationalist, engaged in a battle over forms and standards. It was also a conflict between two Calvinist groups separated by religious emphasis and polity considerations. Additional issues of taste and refinement—how exactly should a minister behave, what separated a rustic country parson from individuals with more refined demeanor—supplied a cultural sub-text that upped the ecclesiastical stakes. Could the ill-educated Gleason find a niche in the community? Many Smithtown residents believed so. Well-to-do opponents of Gleason disagreed. Equally important was whether a denomination or an individual church should decide these issues. Smithtown Presbyterians divided, and some embraced the Strict Congregationalist fold. Ultimately, local congregational concerns triumphed over denominational objections; autonomous-minded Smithtown layfolk rebuffed the presbytery, retained Gleason, and affiliated with the Long Island Convention. What Nathan Hatch has referred to as the “Democratization of American

Christianity," the ability of laypersons to chart their own religious course, was very much in evidence. Over time the Smithtown church returned to the Presbyterian fold. Yet Smithtown churchmembers, not the presbytery, had agreed to reaffiliate with the denomination, illustrating once more how local concerns governed actions. The Presbytery of Long Island could never take the membership for granted. Indeed, even a miscreant minister such as Luther Gleason might find a home in a local church.

NOTES

1. Nathaniel Prime, *History of Long Island from Its First Settlement by Europeans to the Year 1845* (New York, 1845), 242-43; Benjamin F. Thompson, *History of Long Island*, 3 vols. (1918; reprint, Port Washington, 1962) 2:382. There is some confusion as to the date of Gleason's ordination. I have relied on 1789, rather than the more commonly cited 1788, on the basis of information provided by Martha Smart, reference assistant, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Connecticut, from the "Separate Church Papers, 1733-1815," located in the society.
2. *An Impartial Narrative of the Trial of Mr. Luther Gleason* (Sag Harbor, 1808), iii, of which Aaron Woolworth is thought to be the author; Prime, 242-43.
3. Barbara M. Cross, ed., *Autobiography of Lyman Beecher*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA, 1961) 1:110; see also J. Richard Mehalick, *Church and Community, 1675-1975: The Story of the First Presbyterian Church, Smithtown, Long Island* (Hicksville, 1976), 48-50.
4. For two different interpretations of Christianity, in particular, the conflict between lay autonomy and denominational structures, see Jon Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith: Christianizing the American People* (Cambridge, MA, 1990), 257-88, and Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven, CT, 1989). The literature on miscreant ministers is remarkably scant, however. The best work on an errant minister during the first half of the nineteenth century is David Richard Kasserian, *Fall River Outrage: Life, Murder, and Justice in Early Industrial New England* (Philadelphia, 1986).
5. Lillina May Wilson, ed., *Genealogy of the Descendants of Thomas Gleason of Watertown, Massachusetts, 1607-1909* (Haverhill, MA, 1909), 134, 233; Thompson 2:382.
6. See C. C. Goen, *Revivalism and Separatism in New England, 1740-1800: Strict Congregationalists and Separate Baptists in the Great Awakening* (New Haven, 1962). On revivalism in Connecticut, see Mary Hewitt Mitchell, *The Great Awakening and Other Revivals in the Religious Life of Connecticut* (New Haven, 1934); Richard L. Bushman, *From Puritan to Yankee: Character and the Social Order in Connecticut, 1690-1765* (Cambridge, MA, 1967). Information on Gleason's whereabouts was kindly supplied by Martha H. Smart, 30 August 1993, drawn from the Separate Church Papers, Vol. 3.
7. Jon Butler, "Enthusiasm Described and Decried: The Great Awakening as an Interpretive Fiction," *Journal of American History* 69 (September 1982): 305-25; Goen, 36-42, 145-158; S. Leroy Blake, *The Separates or Strict Congregationalists in New England*, foreword by Williston Walker (Boston, 1902).
8. Stephen A. Marini, *Radical Sects of Revolutionary New England* (Cambridge, MA, 1982), 4, 19-21; Goen, 156-58; William G. McLoughlin, *New England Dissent: The Baptists and the Separation of Church and State*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA, 1971), 1: 437-38; *Historical*

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Narrative and Declaration... Course and Rise of the Strict Congregationalists Churches in the State of Connecticut (Providence, RI, 1781), 17-19. For a look at a Strict Congregationalists parish see Stephen Foster, "A Connecticut Separate Church: Strict Congregationalism in Cornwall, 1780-1809," *New England Quarterly* 39 (September 1966): 309-37.

9. Nathaniel Bartlett Sylvester, *History of Saratoga County, New York* (1878; reprint, Interlaken, NY, 1979), 297-99, 301; Timothy Dwight, *Travels in New England and New York*, ed., Barbara M. Schoman, 4 vols., (1822; reprint, Cambridge, MA, 1962) 4: 150-55. Information on the removal of the church from Canaan, Connecticut, to Stillwater was supplied by Karen Campola, Deputy Historian, Saratoga County, Ballston Spa, NY, 10 Aug. 1993. On religious union and revivalism among Protestants in New York during the 1790s, see Richard W. Pointer, *Protestant Pluralism and the New York Experience: A Study of Eighteenth-Century Religious Diversity* (Bloomington, 1988), 125-40.

10. *An Impartial Narrative*, 42, 45-46.

11. Deposition of Mary Ketcham, 45-46, 47-48, is in *Impartial Narrative*; unless otherwise stated, all depositions cited come from this source.

12. Depositions of Joel Ketcham, 27-28, Mary Chapman, 50, Phebe Denton, 53. See also *Impartial Narrative*, 41-42. On the social webwork of gossip and visiting in small rural towns I have relied upon Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard, Based on Her Diary, 1785-1812* (New York, 1990).

13. Depositions of Esther Wilson, 51-52, Tabathy Tuttle, 52, Amos Wilson, 52-53. *Impartial Narrative*, 39. Deacon Kethcam later told Lyman Beecher, during a visit to Stillwater in 1806, that Gleason was "impudent," although admitting "on the whole, it was not his opinion that anything actually criminal had taken place between them" (*Impartial Narrative*, 43).

14. Deposition of Tabathy Tuttle, 52; *Impartial Narrative*, 49, 54.

15. Deposition of Joel Ketcham, 47; *Impartial Narrative*, 40.

16. Deposition of Samuel Denton, 53; *Impartial Narrative*, 44, 49.

17. William G. McLoughlin, *Soul Liberty: The Baptists' Struggle in New England, 1630-1833* (Hanover, NH, 1991), 100-123 passim, especially 110-12.

18. Deposition of Joel Ketcham, 47. On the radical marital beliefs of future religious figures, see Paul E. Johnson and Sean Wilentz, *The Kingdom of Matthias: A Story of Sex and Salvation in 19th-Century America* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1994); Richard L. Bushman, *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism* (Urbana, IL, 1984).

19. J. Lawrence Smith, "Smithtown," in W. W. Munsell, ed., *History of Suffolk County* (New York, 1882), 21-22; Prime, 241-42; Thompson 2:380-81. Timothy Dwight described it as a small hamlet of a dozen houses near the church (Dwight 3: 200).

20. Presbytery of Long Island Minutes, vol 2: 1790-1811, typescript copy, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, PA, 24; Mehalick, 45-46. Other Suffolk towns besides Smithtown preferred a Congregational to a Presbyterian polity; in fact, the Presbytery of Suffolk considered severing its association with the Synod of Philadelphia. See Leonard J. Trinterud, *The Formation of an American Tradition: A Re-examination of Colonial Presbyterianism* (Philadelphia, 1949), 289, 294. In 1790 the Presbytery of Long Island issued a circular letter decrying the declension of religion, which it blamed on unorganized, unaffiliated churches, see "Circular Letter Addressed by the Presbytery of Long Island to the Several Churches under Their Care," 1790, Presbyterian Historical Society.

21. Mehalick, 46-47; Presbytery of Long Island Minutes, 45, 47-48, 54-55, 57.
22. Smithtown Church Session Minutes, Book 1, Xerox copy, 1800-1807, entries for 10 Aug. 1798 to 2 Nov. 1802 passim (I am grateful to J. Richard Mehalick for mailing this information). William S. Pelletreau, *Records of the Town of Smithtown* (Smithtown, 1898), 216, 225, 435; Wilson, ed., 233; *Impartial Narrative*, 54-55.
23. Luther Gleason, *A Sermon Addressed to the School in Smithtown, December 26, 1803* (Sag Harbor, 1805).
24. Smithtown Church Session Minutes, 5 May 1804; *Impartial Narrative*, 5-6.
25. Minutes of the Presbytery of Long Island, 90-93; *Impartial Narrative*, 6-7.
26. Smithtown Church Session Minutes, 30 August 1804, 20 Apr., 15 June, 16 July, 21 Sept., 3 Oct. 1805, 29 Jan., 13 Feb., 24 Mar. 1806; Minutes of the Presbytery of Long Island, 93, 111-13, 118; *Impartial Narrative*, 7-8.
27. On gentility and refinement in the early republic, see Richard Bushman, *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities* (New York, 1992). Since the Great Awakening, New Lights had often been castigated as rustic bumpkins and uncultured preachers. Joseph Bellamy claimed a substantial minority of New York City Presbyterians rejected him as pastor because he was "not polite enough for them" (quoted in David W. Kling, *A Field of Divine Wonders: The New Divinity and Village Revivals in Northwestern Connecticut, 1792-1827* [University Park, PA, 1993], 27).
28. Cross, *Autobiography of Lyman Beecher*, 86-87. Subtle divisions of style can be seen between Presbyterians and Strict Congregationalists in Nathaniel Prime's 1845 history of Long Island. A Presbyterian clergyman, Prime habitually referred to Strict Congregationalists as ungrammatical in their sermons, if sincere in their beliefs. This represents additional evidence of the cultural divide that plagued people such as Gleason.
29. Minutes of the Presbytery of Long Island, 115-19; *Impartial Narrative*, 9-10.
30. *Impartial Narrative*, 10-11; Minutes of the Presbytery of Long Island, 122. For Lyman Beecher's early East Hampton career, consult Stuart C. Henry, *Unvanquished Puritan: A Portrait of Lyman Beecher* (Grand Rapids, MI, 1973), 45-66.
31. *Impartial Narrative*, 38-39, 42-43, 45-46. Cross 1:110.
32. *Impartial Narrative*, 11-12; Minutes of the Presbytery of Long Island, 126-27, 131.
33. *Impartial Narrative*, 12, 14-15; Minutes of the Presbytery of Long Island, 135-40. On ecclesiastical proceedings among Presbyterians see Charles Hodges, *Constitutional History of the Presbyterian Church* (Philadelphia, 1839). On the presbytery's role as the "locus of ecclesial authority," see Randal Balmer and John R. Fitzmier, *The Presbyterians* (Westport, CT, 1993), 38-39.
34. Smithtown Church Session Minutes, 27 January 1807; Minutes of the Presbytery of Long Island, 161; *Impartial Narrative*, 12-14.
35. Minutes of the Presbytery of Long Island, 155, 161-62; see Hatch for religious fluidity in the early republic.
36. The formation of the Suffolk Presbytery 8 April 1747, resulting from Great Awakening divisions, prompted Congregational clerics to adopt a more centralized polity. The disorders, these clerics believed, resulted "to the want of some stated rules of ecclesiastical government," see "Records of the Suffolk Presbytery, 1747-1789," typewritten copy, Presbyterian

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Historical Society, 6-7. See also Moses Scudder, *Records of the First Church of Huntington, Long Island, 1723-1779*, (Huntington, 1899), 120, for an example of one church's voting to join the Presbytery. The history of the Strict Congregationalists on Long Island can be found among the following: Reverend Christopher Youngs, "The Long Island Convention, 1791-1840," Chalmers Collections, ms., Suffolk County Historical Society, Riverhead; William Chalmers, "Associated Congregationalism in Suffolk County, New York, 1791-1891," ms., Suffolk County Historical Society; Blake, 138-39.

37. *Impartial Narrative*, 16-21; Prime, 243. For Woolworth, see Franklin Bowditch Dexter, *Biographical Sketches of the Graduates of Yale*, 6 vols. (New York, 1885-1912) 4: 372-73; Prime, 201-2, 204-5. Woolworth led his church from the Congregational fold into the Presbytery in 1794, according to Dexter, a fact which could hardly have pleased Long Island Convention members.

38. *Impartial Narrative*, 23-24.

39. *Ibid.*, 25-26. Woolworth was probably unaware that Noah Hallock had been ordained alongside Gleason in 1788 or 1789, according to different accounts (see Youngs, "Long Island Convention," unpaginated ms. Friendship for Gleason may have been a factor in Hallock's criticism.

40. See deposition of Nathan Cornwell and Sarah Cornwell, Danbury, 56-57, for accounts of Gleason sleeping in the same room with Hannah Denton. Deposition of Hezekiah Jennings, New York City, alleged that Gleason prohibited family prayer, 57-58. See *Impartial Narrative*, 63-72, for Gleason's defense.

41. *Impartial Narrative*, 69-71.

42. *Ibid.*, 73-77.

43. Thompson 2:382; Youngs, 62-63; Minutes of the Presbytery of Long Island, 163, 207-9, 217-19; Mehalick, 49-51, Smithtown Church Session Minutes, Book 2, 60-61.

44. On the particular tone and character of Strict Congregationalists preachers on Long Island, see Robert E. Cray Jr., "More Light on a New Light: James Davenport's Religious Legacy, Eastern Long Island, 1740-1840" *New York History* 73 (January 1992): 21-26. Strict Congregationalists inhabited a traditional world of oral communications, unrehearsed sermons, and unrefined gestures characteristic of New Light evangelicals, see Donald Weber, *Rhetoric and History in Revolutionary New England*, (New York, 1988), 21-22. See also Harry S. Stout, *The New England Soul: Preaching and Religious Culture in Colonial New England* (New York, 1986), for changing sermonic style during the colonial period.

RECENT ARTICLES on LONG ISLAND HISTORY

By Natalie A. Naylor with the assistance of Victoria R. Aspinwall
With editor's additions of books in the introduction.

The *Long Island Historical Journal (LIHJ)* has published two issues a year for more than a decade. Five years ago, I compiled "Recent Articles on Long Island History," published in the Fall 1993 issue (*LIHJ* 6: 106-20), which included the first five years of articles in the *LIHJ*, articles from other journals, and chapters from edited Long Island Studies Institute conference volumes. This new and more comprehensive continuation of that initial listing includes all articles since the 1993 compilation in the *LIHJ*, the *Long Island Forum*, and the *Nassau County Historical Society Journal*.

The semiannual (fall/spring) *LIHJ*, edited since its inception in 1988 by Roger Wunderlich, is published by the Department of History of the State University at Stony Brook. The quarterly *Long Island Forum*, published by Friends for Long Island's Heritage, has been edited since 1992 by Richard F. Welch, who succeeded Carl A. Starace, the editor from 1964 until 1991. The *Nassau County Historical Society Journal*, now published annually, was edited by Myron H. Luke for forty-five years (1950-1995), and has been edited by Natalie A. Naylor since 1996.

Selected articles dealing with Long Island history from other publications are also included. The *Freeholder*, published by the Oyster Bay Historical Society (OBHS) since 1996, and edited by Thomas A. Keuhhas, is town-wide in scope. The *Register*, published quarterly by the Suffolk County Historical Society, and the *New York Genealogical and Biographical Record* each focuses on genealogy, but selected articles of interest to historians are included here.

Other journals (such as *de Halve Maen*, focusing on America's Dutch colonial period and published by the Holland Society) occasionally have articles pertaining to Long Island history, and a few are in this listing. Some historical organizations have publications with articles pertaining to a specific community or area, such as the Cow Neck Peninsula (Manhasset Neck) Historical Society *Journal*: the society's recently published book, *A Hidden History: Slavery, Abolition, and the Underground Railroad in Cow Neck and on Long Island* by Mary Feeney Vahey, will be reviewed in the Spring 1999 *LIHJ*. The Three Village Historical Society (Stony Brook, the Setaukets, Old Field, and Poquott) now sometimes publishes its journal, the *Historian*, also in book form: vol. 35 is *The Sailing Circle: 19th Century Seafaring Women from New York* by Joan Druett and Mary Anne Wallace, copublished with the Cold Spring Harbor Whaling Museum, 1995), and vol. 38 is *Sands of Time: A History of the Sand and Gravel Operations in Port Jefferson and Nearby Harbors* by Frederick W. Bone, edited by Mildred Michos,

1998, and reviewed by Henry Bokuniewicz in this issue of *LIHJ*.

Newsletters published by historical organizations may have useful information. For example, those concerned with historic preservation will find much of interest in *Preservation Notes*, published by the Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities (SPLIA), P.O. Box 148, Cold Spring Harbor, NY 11724. SPLIA also publishes books, including Robert B. MacKay, Anthony Baker, and Carol A. Traynor, eds. *Long Island Country Houses and Their Architects, 1860-1940* (New York: Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities in association with W. W. Norton, 1997). The *Newsletter* of the Suffolk County Archaeological Association (SCAA, P.O. Drawer 1542, Stony Brook, NY 11790) has information on Native American and historic archaeology on Long Island; the association's most recent book is Gaynell Stone, ed., *Readings in Long Island Archaeology & Ethnohistory*, vol. 3, 2d ed., *The History and Archaeology of the Montauk* (Stony Brook: Suffolk County Archaeological Association, 1993). For a list of Long Island historical organizations, see Joann P. Krieg and Natalie A. Naylor, eds., *To Know the Place: Exploring Long Island History*, 2d ed. (Interlaken, N.Y.: Heart of the Lakes Publishing, 1995), 139-43.

The Frank Melville Jr. Memorial Library of the State University at Stony Brook, the Long Island Studies Institute, and other major collections have the no-longer-issued *Long Island Courant (1965-1967)*, published by SPLIA, and the *Journal of Long Island History (1961-1982)* published by the Long Island Historical Society, now the Brooklyn Historical Society (the Long Island Studies Institute also has the *Long Island Historical Society Quarterly [1939-1942]*, and a list of articles in all three of these journals).

An impressive number of individuals have made significant contributions to Long Island history in recent years. The titles below are evidence of the flourishing state of Long Island history. A brief subject listing by author's last name is at the end. We trust this compilation will be useful to all who are interested in researching Long Island history.

ARTICLES IN JOURNALS AND EDITED BOOKS

Abbreviations and Dates:

LIHJ - *Long Island Historical Journal*, Fall 1993-Spring 1998

LIF - *Long Island Forum*, Spring 1993-Spring 1998

NCHSJ - *Nassau County Historical Society Journal*, 1993-1998

N.Y.G&B - *New York Genealogical & Biographical Record*, selected articles, 1993-1998

OBHS - Oyster Bay Historical Society, *Freeholder*, selected articles, 1996-1998

SCHS - Suffolk County Historical Society *Register*, selected articles, 1993-1997

LISI - Long Island Studies Institute conference volumes, 1994-1998

Books

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Joann P. Krieg and Natalie A. Naylor, eds. *To Know the Place: Exploring Long Island History* 2d ed. Interlaken: Heart of the Lakes Publishing, 1995, hereafter cited as *To Know the Place*, LISI.

Natalie A. Naylor and Maureen O. Murphy, eds. *Long Island Women: Activists and Innovators*. Interlaken, N.Y.: Empire State Books, 1998, hereafter cited as *Long Island Women*, LISI; reviewed by Elizabeth Ewen in this issue of *LIHJ*.

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Agriculture: Chorzempa, Imperato (2), Lindemann, Reichman (2), Shephard,

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Architecture: Fasanella, Hibbard, R. MacKay

Art and Artist: Berkow, Colbert, H. Harrison, Moffatt, Oldenbusch, Salem, J. Spinzia

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Brooklyn: Charles/Roff, Dorinson, Manton, Sterngass (2)

Business/Commerce/Industry: F. Allen, Finckenor (2), Johnston, Kassner, Kleinegger, Koppelman/Kamer (2), Romaine, van Wie

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Community: Boulton, Gibbs, Howlett, Johnston, Kassner, Kelly, Krieg, Linehan/Brice, Matarrese (2), Meeker, Morris, Rushmore, White, G. Williams

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Environmental: Fasanella, Harmond, L. E. Koppelman, Romaine

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Government and Politics: Baldwin, Cimonetti, E. Gordon, J. Gordon, M. Harrison, Herbsman, Howlett (4), Jacobs, L. E. Koppelman (3), Lis, Metzger, Moffatt, Myers, Naylor, Osborn, Rightmire, Scarrow, Smits, Soifer, Solomons, Thiele, Wiese, Wunderlich

Health and Medicine: Kaslow-Capik

Legal and Constitutional: Bernius, Horoski, Mockler, Solomons, Strong, Thompson

Maps: D. Allen

Maritime/Naval: Dunbaugh, Hammond, Havemeyer, Joyce, A. MacKay, Magnani, Mulvihill (3), Reynolds, Robinson, Shepherd, Stevens/Moeller, Van Hoff, Welch

Military: Alpenstein, Goodenough, Gaines; see also Revolutionary, Civil, and Spanish American Wars

- Native American:** Grumet, Guillaume, Lindemann, Strong (4), Witek
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- Revolutionary War:** Buck, Cartelli, Hayes, Herbsman, Magnani, Manton, McNamara, Moeller, Mulvihill, Stevens/Moeller, Vincitorio
- Science and Technology:** Crease (4), Currie, Howell, Koch
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- Women:** Berkow, Bogard, Burghardt, Cash, Cohen, Curran, DeRiggi, Goldstein, Gordon, Guillaume, Harvey, Kleinegger, Keeler, L. L. Koppelman, Kreisel, Krieg, Lane-Weber, Mayo, Meeker, Morantz-Sanchez, Naylor (4), Ross, Ruetters, Rutherford, Shapiro, Singer, Soifer, Solomon, R. Spinzia, C. Starace, Welch.

SECONDARY SCHOOL ESSAY CONTEST

We are pleased to publish the following three winning essays in the annual "Long Island as America" contest we sponsor in conjunction with the SUNY at Stony Brook Center for Excellence and Innovation in Education, Dr. Eli Seifman, director.

THE 1939 WORLD'S FAIR: YESTERDAY'S WORLD OF TOMORROW

*By Adrienne McIlvaine
Amityville Memorial High School
Faculty advisor, Charles F. Howlett*

The Lagoon of Nations... Democracy... The Futurama... Trylon and Perisphere. These now unfamiliar words trigger memories of one of the greatest fairs ever held in the United States—the New York World's Fair of 1939, in Flushing Meadows, Queens. With the mammoth exposition titled "World of Tomorrow," the groundbreaking fair presented a future "shaped and perfected by science and social progress." The world presented was not what it would be, but what it could and should be according to the public consciousness of 1939. The country, just coming out of the Great Depression, badly needed an event with which to say good-bye to the 1930s and welcome the 1940s. An imaginative vision was needed, an event that projected a hopeful outlook for the future while reminding the nation of all the good that had come to it in the past. One writer described the fair as, "A huge party...the serious, hopeful view of a new American century was wrapped up in a carnival-like atmosphere, like some weird collaboration between Buckminster Fuller and P. T. Barnum."¹

The bold graphics and visionary architecture, of which the Trylon and Perisphere were the most striking, came to symbolize purity, functionality, and mechanization, the scientific essence of the future the fair tried so hard to predict. The projected society was a utopia, in which advanced transportation, consumerism, and technology ruled the day. The fair's prospectus proclaimed that, "Mere mechanical progress is no longer an adequate or practical theme for a World's Fair... We must demonstrate that supercivilization is based on the swift work of machines, not on the arduous toil of men." This future was presented most

dramatically by General Motors's Futurama, designed

to demonstrate in dramatic fashion that the world, far from being finished, is hardly begun; that the job of building the future is one which will demand our best energies, our most fruitful imagination; and that with it will come greater opportunities for all.

One odd thing about the fair was that, though it idealized technology, nary a computer was to be found. The closest product resembling one was International Business Machines's "radio-typewriter," a kind of telex.²

The architecture and art that graced the 1,216-acre site helped mightily to advance the ideals that the fair presented. Murals by Salvador Dali, William de Kooning, and other leading artists were to be a "reflection of our own day in [their] complete lack of period style as it has prevailed in other ages." Critics praised the works of such innovators as Raymond Loewy, Norman Bel Geddes, and many others, marveling at their sleek designs and unusual shapes. Many artists, like Loewy and Geddes, along with Henry Dreyfuss and the industrial designer Walter Dorwin Teague, achieved some of the finest work of their careers. "They conjured up an optimistic preview of a future America where the advances of science, the capability of technology, and the wisdom of good design would shape an orderly, healthy and content society," observed one commentator, Donald J. Bush. Some designers did not follow the guidelines set to ensure a degree of uniformity throughout the buildings; some followed the idea that a building's form should suggest its function, or even that a building should mainly serve as an advertisement. Ergo, the Marine Transportation building sported twin "ocean liner prows," and National Cash Register's bright red, forty-foot-high register rang up the day's attendance.³

However, the 1939 World's Fair will always be remembered for the Trylon and Perisphere, its theme center and focal points, the triumphant designs of Wallace K. Harrison and Andre Fouilhoux. The two-hundred-foot-in-diameter Perisphere, the largest globe of its time, symbolized the world, while its partner, the Trylon, a slender, triangular obelisk that soared seven hundred feet into the air, symbolized hope for the future. The famed essayist, E. B. White, who at first was skeptical of the fair, soon praised the awesome spectacle:

Suddenly you see the first intimation of the future, of man's dreams—the white ball and spire—and the ramp and the banners flying from the pavilions and the brave hope of a glimpsed destination.

More than sixty works of sculpture were commissioned for the occasion, including James Earle Fraser's statue of George Washington that stood fifty-feet tall, and Leo Lentelli's "Golden Sprays," depicting a pair of female athletes.⁴

Created by the budding architect, Norman Bel Geddes, one of the most popular exhibitions, the Futurama, carried 552 passengers on a moving trip through time and space to oversee the world's largest animated model, a miniature landscape

covering 35,738 square feet. Millions of trees, half a million buildings, and orderly rows of homes and highways presented themselves to incredulous passengers unaware that the world of the Futurama would be eerily close to post-World-War-II suburban Long Island.

After the disastrous 1930s, Americans were ready to look to the future, which, unbeknownst to them, would witness the further rise of Nazi Germany and the carnage of World War II. This short-lived optimism, evident throughout the fair, was clearly seen in the names of such exhibits as the Hall of Color, the Court of Communications, and the Bridge of Tomorrow.

A Theme Committee for the World's Fair was set up, under the direction of the architect Robert Kohn, who specialized in "bigness." He, along with Lewis Mumford and several others, was cofounder of the Regional Planning Association of America, and had served as director of housing for the PWA during President Franklin D. Roosevelt's first term. His committee produced documents which inspired the Fair Corporation's exhibits, like Democracy and six others focused on Transport, Production and Distribution, Food, Communications, Medicine, Science, and Community Interests. The fair's designers could not divide it into such categories as science, art, agriculture, manufactures—the classic divisions of fairs for centuries.⁵

To understand the fair's importance, one must look at the two people who made it a reality, turning three and a-half miles of ash dumps into the most talked-about American event for two years. One was Grover A. Whalen, who is credited with planting the ambitious seeds of the fair as early as 1935, when the World's Fair Corporation was incorporated, with him as its president. The other was Robert Moses, who in 1939 already was renowned for his astonishing works in parkways, public housing, bridges, tunnels, and, of course, Jones Beach. Though they never worked directly together, each had a major impact on what Whalen fondly called "the miracle in the marsh."⁶

Whalen was "a showman every bit the equal of New York's flamboyant mayor, Fiorello La Guardia...the epitome of 1930s chic." Inspired by the success of Chicago's 1933 Century of Progress, Whalen began planning for the World's Fair in 1935, the lowest point of the Great Depression. He aggressively recruited some 120 prominent businessmen to back a world's fair in New York, and financed the fair with debentures that totaled \$28 million. Whalen detailed the financial structure in the guidebook for the fair:

The entire project involves the expenditure of between \$150 million and \$160 million...of this, the federal government contributed \$3 million...The World's Fair Corporation spent \$42 million, and foreign governments \$30 million on their own exhibits.

The federal government contributed very little money, because Whalen insisted that the fair should be privately financed. Unlike many European fairs, which traditionally were publicly funded. He succeeded in signing up thirteen-hundred commercial firms, thirty-three states and territories, and sixty foreign governments

and international organizations. Foreign exhibits were set up in an area called the Court of Peace, an optimistic designation soon shattered by World War II. Practically every major industrial nation was represented, with the exception of Germany. Especially breathtaking was the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics' pavilion, dominated by a 190-foot Karelian marble pillar topped by a seventy-nine foot stainless steel figure of a Soviet worker holding a lighted red star above his head. Other popular foreign sites included the Italian pavilion, which had a waterfall and rooftop statue of the goddess Roma, and the British pavilion, where replicas of the crown jewels and Magna Carta were displayed.⁷

As befitting an exposition with so many participants, the finished site included more than three hundred structures, including one hundred major exhibition buildings, eighty restaurants, and some seventy amusement concessions. Pretty impressive, considering the labor problems which hampered construction, coupled with the threat of a strike days before the opening on 30 April 1939. The fair had a first-day crowd of 198,791, with President Roosevelt dedicating the site with the first-ever televised speech. Soon the world was enthralled by the fair, with dramatic stories unfolding almost daily. The *New York Times* even carried a daily gossip column, "Fair of the Future." As one spectator put it, "The fair was so uniquely earnest, it could only have happened just at that moment, in that narrow, narrow gap between the depression and the catastrophic war which utterly rewrote the world."⁸

By the time the idea of a New York World's Fair was even a glimmer in Whalen's eye, Robert Moses was a renowned master-builder with millions of dollars of tunnels, highways, parks and bridges to his name. Jones Beach, completed in June 1929, was his chef-d'oeuvre: one visiting Englishman praised the man-made beach by saying, "This is the finest seashore playground ever given the public anywhere in the world." Legendary for his ruthlessness, Moses was in awe of Baron Georges-Eugene Haussman, the creator of modern Paris, whose dictatorial temperament was not unlike his own. Moses made his own "dictatorial" inclinations perfectly clear in his own writings:

We must employ ingenious means and a good deal of determination to do what needs to be done. When there is any sign of weakness—the minute a politician says we can't move a highway over a bit or curve it around a group of apartments—that is when the trouble starts.

Moses reshaped the face of New York City and Long Island, as David Gelernter stated:

In a city in which there had been only 119 playgrounds, he built 225 new ones. In a city in which not a mile of new arterial highway had been built in fifteen years, he built fifty miles of arterial highway. In a city in which a new bridge had not been built in a quarter of a century, he built not only the three new big bridges—Triborough, Henry Hudson and Marine Parkway—but 110 smaller ones.⁹

As the city's parks commissioner in 1939, Moses was placed in charge of the huge project of converting the Corona Dumps (described vividly as "the valley of ashes" in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*) into a fair site and future park. Thirty thousand workers created two lakes in the 1,216.5-acre site, using eight hundred thousand cubic yards of topsoil, and transplanting ten thousand trees. When the fair closed and the structures were torn down except for the Tyllon and Perisphere and the massive New York State Building, the grounds were converted to public use as Flushing Meadows Park.¹⁰

Displays of new-fangled technology caught the public's fancy, exemplifying the wizardry of Yankee ingenuity. For example, the Westinghouse Corporation presented "The Battle of the Centuries," an inventive exhibit pitting "Mrs. Modern," who used new appliances such as a dishwasher, against "Mrs. Drudge," who still scrubbed by hand. Another popular exhibition was Elektro the Moto-Man. Weighing 260 pounds, this seven-foot-tall robot filled with gears, cells, motors, and enough wire to circle the earth at the equator, performed twenty-six functions, including walking, talking, singing, smelling, and counting with his fingers. The list of questions that people could ask Elektro, was "When will we run out of oil?" Answer? "1955."¹¹

Among the many ingenious displays was the sight of cows being milked on a rotating Walter-Gordon platform, in the all-electric "Dry World of Tomorrow." Even more amazing was the RCA pavilion, which housed the first public viewing of television, then nothing more than black and white flickers on a nine-inch screen. In contrast to the fair's serious aspects was its extensive attention to fun. One section (a whopping 280 acres, larger than the entire site of many another fair) was known as the Amusement Zone, with carnival rides, arcades, and an animal freak show. The fair also featured such crowd-pleasing entertainment as George Jessel's Old New York, a re-creation of Gay Nineties Gotham, and Billy Rose's Aquacade, where the former Olympic champions Eleanor Holm and Johnny "Aquadonis" Weismuller performed as members of a swimming extravaganza that numbered some five hundred swimmers in its cast.¹²

The first season ended in October 1939. When the fair reopened the following May, it was not to the great acclaim that had marked the first day, on which Albert Einstein threw a switch to collect "cosmic rays" and dazzled the grounds with the fair's spectacular florescent lighting that never ceased to amaze the crowds. Many problems contributed to declining attendance and imminent financial loss. War had broken out in Europe, causing Whalen to scramble to keep involved countries from backing out of the 1940 season. Despite his best efforts, many nations did pull out of the Court of Peace, a name which now seemed to mock the fair. The Soviet Union withdrew and bulldozed its elaborate \$4-million pavilion. Many people blamed the drop in attendance on the high cost of a ticket, a then-expensive seventy-five cents. Whalen predicted a total attendance of sixty million but had to settle for forty-five, which was still an impressive draw. One person, objecting to the prices of tickets and refreshments, grumbled: "The fair doesn't know a nickel anymore. Everything costs a dime, even the hot dogs."¹³

Despite all the things that may have been wrong with it, such as the

controversy over the lack of churches in the "World of Tomorrow," or the argument that it was nothing more than one big advertisement and promotion of commercialism, the fair was a huge success. People loved the fair, with its assessment of the nation's progress over the last century and a half, and its optimistic, sometimes reverent look at the times that lay before them. When they walked through the gates, people felt that nothing could stop them and their country from becoming everything they set out to be, and that the future would be kind and gentle. In some respects, they were right, both technologically and socially. Unfortunately, you cannot buy a brand new car for \$200, as one exhibit promised, but you can flip on the television, surf the 'Net on your computer, and drive on miles and miles of highway. People attending the 1939 World's Fair were convinced they had "seen the future." Well, we can go them one better. We can proudly say, "We live in that future, and, though it may not be exactly as you predicted, it's amazing nonetheless."

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FOUR DRAMATIC EVENTS THAT AFFECTED LONG ISLAND

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The history of Long Island extends from the earliest times to the present, reflecting as well as contributing to every major aspect of national life. That is the essential meaning of “Long Island as America,” the concept on which the *Long Island Historical Journal* is based. In addition to its significant political, economic, ethnic, and social history, Long Island has been the scene of, or closely connected with, widely publicized kidnappings, alleged supernatural happenings, murders, and aerial disasters. This article examines four significant such events, each of which has led to major changes in the nation.

The Trial of the Century

Charles Augustus Lindbergh Jr., the hero of the 1920s, stands as the symbol of an adventurous, risk-taking era. Lindbergh earned his enduring fame by doing what many had tried but failed. He set out to complete the first non-stop solo flight across the Atlantic, between New York and Paris. In his small, single-engine plane, *The Spirit of St. Louis*, Lindbergh took off from Roosevelt Field, Garden City, at 7:52 A.M. on 20 May 1927. Thirty-three hours, thirty-two minutes later, he landed at Le Bourget Airport near Paris. By accomplishing this extraordinary task, Lindbergh instantly became a national and worldwide idol, a hero to millions.¹

Lindbergh’s triumph was all too soon followed by his tragic involvement in what became known as the “trial of the century.” Early in 1932, the Lindberghs—Charles, his pregnant wife Anne Morrow Lindbergh, and their twenty-months-old son, Charles Jr.—were living in a rented house in Hopewell, New Jersey, while waiting for their nearby estate to be built. Also living in the house were the baby’s nurse, Betty Gow, and a housekeeper couple. Sometime between eight and ten o’clock on the night of 1 March, the child was taken from his second-floor nursery by a kidnapper, who left no fingerprints but a note demanding \$50,000 ransom, an exorbitant amount in the time of the Great Depression:

Dear Sir! [read the note]

Have 50,000\$ [*sic*] ready 25,000\$ in 20\$ bills 15,000\$ in 10\$ bills and 10,000\$ in 5\$ bills. After 2-4 days we will inform you where to deliver the money. We will warn you for making anything public or for the police, the

child is in gut [*sic*] care. Indication for all letters are signature and three holds.²

After finding that the baby was gone, the Lindberghs examined the grounds, and called the state police—the township of East Amwell, where the Lindbergh house was located, had no police, then or now. Police and press rushed to the scene, looking for whatever was left of the kidnapper's footprints in the mud and a light fall of snow. In addition to the ransom note, investigators found an abandoned homemade ladder and a chisel, near the house.³

In the days that followed, the frantic Lindberghs sought help from numerous negotiators claiming to be go-betweens for the kidnapper. Thousands of letters poured in, some expressing sympathy, some with ransom demands or death threats, and many with psychic predictions. Banner headlines announced, "Lindbergh Baby Kidnapped from Home of Parents; Taken from His Crib; Wide Search On."⁴

It took more than two years of following the trail of those ransom bills that were passed to track down the man accused of the murder, a German-born Bronx carpenter, Bruno Richard Hauptmann. Colonel H. Norman Schwarzkopf, of the New Jersey State Police, working assiduously with the New York State Police, was the official most responsible for tracking Hauptmann down. At the time of his arrest, Hauptmann had more than \$14,000 of marked ransom bills concealed in his garage. Later, it was discovered that a board cut from his attic floor was used in making the ladder. Within hours, press, police, and prosecutors clamored for the death penalty.⁵

Hauptmann contended that the money was left by Isidor Fisch, a fur dealer he knew, who had fled to Germany and died there—an unconfirmable story, as was Hauptmann's wife Anna's claim that on the night of the kidnapping she and Hauptmann had been at home in the Bronx. After Hauptmann's extradition to New Jersey, the spotlight fell on the century-old Hunterdon County courthouse in the little borough of Flemington. Beginning 2 January 1935, the thirty-two day trial of Bruno Richard Hauptmann for kidnapping and killing the twenty-month-old first-born son of Long Island and the world's idol, Charles A. Lindbergh, was an event that H. L. Mencken called "The greatest story since the Resurrection." Police estimated that sixteen thousand cars came to Flemington during the first weekend.⁶

Two and a half years of frustrating investigations and rumors passed before the first real clues led to the arrest of Hauptmann, who had no regular job but appeared to be living better than most folks did in the depths of the Depression. In September 1934, some of the ransom bills began showing up. One had been used to buy gasoline at a service station whose owner wrote the car's license number on the bill. It was Hauptmann's. Police reported finding a stockpile of Lindbergh ransom money in Hauptmann's garage.⁷

On the witness stand, Hauptmann denied any involvement in the kidnapping. He insisted he made money by playing the stock market, and said a fur dealer, Isidor Fisch, had left the bills at his house.

Q. On the night of March 1, 1932, did you enter the nursery of Charles Lindbergh?

A. I did not.

Q. ... and take from that nursery Charles Lindbergh Jr.?

A. I did not.

Q. On the night of March 1, 1932, did you leave on the window seat of Colonel Lindbergh's nursery a note?

A. Well, I wasn't there at all.

Q. You never saw Baby Lindbergh in your life, did you?

A. Never saw it.⁸

The jury found the Lindbergh money to be one of the most convincing pieces of evidence introduced by prosecutor David Wilentz. It also believed seven handwriting experts who said the kidnap notes matched Hauptmann's handwriting. Woodwork and forestry experts said North Carolina pine from a lumberyard near Hauptmann's home, and a board cut from his floor, were used in the crudely built kidnapping ladder. Hauptmann said no "real carpenter" could produce such rough work.⁹

In his five-hour summation, Wilentz urged the jury not to bring an indecisive recommendation of mercy. Their choice, he said, was to acquit "this animal, this Public Enemy Number One of the World," or find him guilty of murder in the first degree:

And I am going to say this in closing: Remember, we are not required to have a picture of this man coming down the ladder with the Lindbergh baby. But we have shown you conclusively, overwhelmingly, beyond a reasonable doubt, that Bruno Richard Hauptmann is guilty of the murder of Charles A. Lindbergh, Jr."¹⁰

Thomas Trenchard, the presiding justice, dismissed the jurors for the night. Next morning, 13 February 1935, he reviewed the evidence and instructed the jurors on their duties. Observers had determined that the Lindbergh child died when accidentally dropped from the ladder, but the jury was told that even an accidental death, during commission of a burglary, was a "felony murder" subject to the death penalty. The jury of eight men and four women took eleven hours to reach a unanimous verdict of guilty. Despite appeals, despite stays of execution by a new governor, Harold Hoffman, and despite doubts by some as to his guilt, Bruno Richard Hauptmann, refusing to confess, went to the electric chair at Trenton State Prison on 2 April 1936.¹¹

A direct result of this case was the enactment of the Lindbergh Act, making kidnapping a federal crime. Although the tragedy of his baby's death had no relationship to it, Long Island forever will be associated with the hero who took off from its grounds for one of history's most remarkable flights.

The Amityville Hoax

The story of one of the most elaborate hoaxes of all time began at three in the morning of 13 November 1974, in a house in the village of Amityville, when Ronald DeFeo used a high-powered rifle to murder his mother, father, two brothers, and two sisters. DeFeo was convicted and sentenced to six consecutive terms of twenty-five years-to-life, and the house was put up for sale. The Edith Evans agency listed it as an "Exclusive Amityville Area: 6-bedroom Dutch Colonial, spacious living room, formal dining room, enclosed porch, 3-1/2 baths, finished basement, 2-car garage, heated swimming pool and large boathouse. Asking \$80,000."¹²

The price was low for a house that spacious, but few were inclined to bid on a place linked to cold-blooded murder. In November 1975, almost one year after the killings, George and Kathy Lutz bought the house. Their desire to own it was so strong that in spite of many horror stories they paid the full asking price. The couple and their three children moved in a month later but soon absconded, leaving their belongings behind them.¹³

In February 1976, the Lutzes went public, alleging that ghosts had driven them from the house after only ten days of occupancy. At first, their allegations resembled the standard ghost or supernatural yarn, but, in the months that followed, their stories magnified, informing the public of even more bizarre phenomena, and changing the number of days they lived in the house from ten to twenty-eight. The story, flashed across the United States and around the world, was generally accepted: why otherwise would the Lutzes abandon such an attractive home?¹⁴

The haunting stories included a diabolical flying pig, phosphorescent red eyes that stared at them through the window, a hole in the basement leading to hell, slime and blood from the walls, urges to repeat the murders that had happened in the house, swarms of flies, and waking every night at the same time the murders took place. In 1977, a book by Jay Anson that captivated both the media and the public became an instant best seller. A movie, *The Amityville Horror*, released in 1979, was also an immediate hit. The Amityville Horror story by now was known all over the country, but inconsistencies began to show up. As the Lutzes kept changing their story, it became more complex, with expanded numbers of horrors. At first it was overlooked that, at the peak of the story's popularity, professional investigators could find nothing unusual or significant about the house. Now one such expert, Dr. Stephen Kaplan, became first to contend that the story was a hoax. Once other investigators learned that the Lutzes had contracts for book and movies, they all became suspicious. When another family moved into the house, its members experienced nothing out of the ordinary, and found it difficult to believe what the tumult was all about: crowds of curious tourists vexed than far more than any ghost or demon. After filing a lawsuit against the Lutzes and the publishers, they settled out of court.¹⁵

An attorney, William Weber (who was Ronald DeFeo's defense lawyer sued the Lutzes for stealing his ideas, and, one night after too many drinks with Weber, the Lutzes admitted concocting the story. This case also was settled out of court,

with the judge stating that the any discrepancies and embroiderings rendered the book preposterous. The truth finally came out. The Lutzes, distressed about living in a house where so many murders had been committed, decided to abandon it and live with a relative while thinking over their situation. The relative suggested that they exaggerate what had happened and turn it into a lurid ghost story. The Lutzes proceeded accordingly, and met with Weber to seek more information about the murders and what had gone on in the "horror house." Weber, who planned writing a book which would include the Lutzes's stories and feelings, discussed his project with them, showed them pictures, and gave them all they needed to know about the crime scene. Shortly after this meeting, the Lutzes went public. At first, Weber went along with them, but when their story started expanding he withdrew from the entire process. He still wanted to write his book on the murders, but the Lutzes beat him to it with theirs.¹⁶

The Amityville house still stands, and a family still lives there with no poltergeists or ghosts to complain of. The street number (112 Ocean Avenue) was changed, the house repainted, and the top windows, that used to glow red, replaced with differently shaded ones. Since the total repudiation of the rumors spread by the Lutzes, the people of Long Island and the rest of the nation are inclined to be far more skeptical of supernatural horror stories.¹⁷

The Nightmare Murder Journey on the LIRR

A few years ago, Carolyn McCarthy, of Mineola, characterized herself as a wife, mother, and registered nurse, unfamiliar with the world of politics. She never imagined that one day she would stand in her front yard announcing her candidacy for Congress. Her journey to the House of Representatives began with a sundering personal tragedy.

On 7 December 1993, Colin Ferguson, a forty-five-year-old man from Brooklyn, boarded a crowded Long Island Railroad commuter train en route to Mineola with a malevolent ambition. He was armed with a Ruger 9-mm. semi-automatic pistol, and more than two dozen rounds of lethal Black Talon bullets, whose sharp steel claws spread open on impact. He took a seat in the back of the third car and waited for the train to cross into the largely white sanctuary of Nassau County.¹⁸

At 6:10 P.M., as the train pulled into the Merillon Avenue station, one stop from Mineola, Ferguson rose and at point-blank range shot Dennis McCarthy, a fifty-two-years-old business executive, in the back of the skull. Ferguson quickly fired a second round, perilously wounding McCarthy's twenty-six-years-old son, Kevin, seated next to his father, then walked up the aisle while firing indiscriminately. When he reached the vestibule a quarter of the way down the car, he calmly pulled a fifteen-round clip from his waistband and reloaded. He ended up killing six people and wounding nineteen before he was stopped. A daring commuter, using his briefcase as a shield, jumped from behind a seat and knocked Ferguson to the ground. Two other passengers wrestled him into a seat and unarmed him. "Oh, my God, what have I done?" said Ferguson, according to one

of the passengers.¹⁹

Even by the ghastly standards of mass murder, this crime was particularly atrocious. Twenty-five of the thirty rounds fired found their mark. "He created the Devil's paradise for those three minutes," a passenger said,

It was hell without the fire. I never saw the gunman. Never even looked up. When I heard the shots I instantly hit the floor, curled up tightly, and tried to wedge myself under the seat. From this position I could only see feet flying as passengers tried to get to the next car. It's amazing that anything goes through your mind at such a terrifying moment, but I remember thinking, a gun holds six bullets. I'll count six shots and that will be the end of it. Well, I counted to six but the gunfire didn't stop. I remember saying to myself, I'm 31 years old, about to be married to the most wonderful man, and I'm going to die on the Long Island Railroad.²⁰

Prosecutors called the shootings a crime of prejudice. According to notes found in Ferguson's pockets, and documents in his apartment, it was hatred of white people in general and, in particular, the staffs of Governor Mario M. Cuomo and Adelphi University, along with "the sloppy running of the #2 [New York City subway] train" that provoked the "moon-faced, six-foot-tall," Jamaica-born Ferguson to become a real-life terminator. His attorneys, Ronald L. Kuby and the late William Kunstler, contended that Ferguson went on his rampage because of "black rage," which they defined as a psychological state provoked by living in a predominantly white, racist society. Their theory was not tested in court, because, although many observers considered Ferguson mentally unbalanced, he was allowed to act as his own lawyer.²¹

The rage of victims given a chance to speak at the trial was expressed by one of the survivors, Robert Giugliano, who had been shot in the chest:

I know I have an impossible request, your honor. But given five minutes alone with Colin Ferguson, this coward would know the meaning of suffering...[To Ferguson]: Look at these eyes. You can't look at 'em, right? You can't. You remember these eyes. You're nothing but a piece of garbage. You're a [expletive] animal. Five minutes. That's all I need with you. Five minutes.²²

Influenced by this unprovoked massacre, forty states have adopted a "victims' bill of rights," giving crime victims or their relatives the right to speak during the sentencing phase of trials. As recently as fifteen years ago, only three states had such laws. The 1994 federal crime bill contains a similar allocation provision for people who have suffered violent crimes. When Ferguson received six life terms, the survivors embraced in a moment that seemed to close a dreadful chapter of their lives. "I was able to put to rest what has been going on in my mind," said Kevin McCarthy, one of forty-three prosecution witnesses, "just being able to stand up against him."²³

Carolyn McCarthy (D-Mineola) promised herself not to let the tragedy ruin her

life. She became a crusader for gun control, speaking to Rotary clubs, PTAs, and school children, reiterating the message that firearms do not belong on the streets. As a result of her passion and eloquence, this newcomer to politics was elected to Congress in 1996, and is currently a candidate to succeed herself. As the catalyst for victims' rights and more stringent gun control, the catastrophic shootout on the main line of the LIRR produced positive results for the nation as a whole.²⁴

Terror on Flight 800

On 17 July 1996, about 8:45 P.M., TWA Flight 800, N93119, a Boeing 747-100, crashed into the Atlantic, off the South Shore of Long Island, shortly after taking off from Kennedy International Airport. The plane, a regularly scheduled flight to Paris, France, with 212 passengers and eighteen crewmembers on board, was destroyed with no survivors. While the nation continues to mourn the 230 victims, it searches for the cause and prevention of future aerial disasters²⁵

On the morning after the explosion, amongst the overwhelming malodor of inflamed jet fuel and the plane's incinerated remains, hundreds of letters floated on the ocean. A postcard of the Statue of Liberty became a disconnected souvenir; the image of the monument born in France never made its way home. Somewhere, lost in the waters, a diamond ring accompanies a proposal of marriage to a lover who now must long for the rest of her life. The effluvia off the beaches of Long Island mixed the memory and hopes of the dead with the horror and sadness of the living. "My mother, I came to see if my mother was on the plane," a young man said, grabbing a companion's hand at JFK Airport. Police brought him across the street, where he was shown a piece of paper held by an official. The official nodded yes, creating yet another mourner. The origin of the disaster became the focus of prolonged inquiry. A technical malfunction had once sent another robust Boeing 747 crashing into a Japanese mountain, killing more than five hundred people. But this 747 burst into flames 13,700 feet in the air. What mishap caused such complete and relentless devastation? Mechanical failure, accidental friendly fire, or terrorist attack? Experts explored the possibility that a bomb may have found its way onto the plane, or that a missile may have been fired from an unknown launching point. Investigators sifted the debris for clues, reassembled the plane, and gathered the families of the victims in hopes of solacing their grief.²⁶

For the two years following the wreck, with mounting evidence telling them mainly what it was not, investigators have studied the many possible reasons why a 747, after an uneventful takeoff on a clear summer night, would crash so frightfully. The theory of a static spark, generated from a fuel leak in the center tank, now receives the most acceptance: Laboratory tests will show whether electrostatics could have engendered the blast. Another possibility is an accidental crossing of high with low voltage fuel tank wires, along with faulty wiring in the fuel pumps. Each new theory causes more concern with the general safety of the immensely successful and popular 747. Few can imagine what kind of event could

annihilate Flight 800 so suddenly, or why highly trained investigators, using the most sophisticated techniques, can work for more than two years without conclusively finding the cause.²⁷

The crash of Flight 800 led to a plethora of new safety measures and rules. The National Transportation Safety Board issued imperative recommendations that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) take instant steps to diminish the risk of fuel tank explosions by urging airlines to make design and operational changes. In response, the FAA called on airlines to reinspect the wiring on fuel pumps before every take-off.²⁸

Long Island is notable for the myriad of events that have made it more than an "ordinary" place to live on or visit. This article summarizes four tragic and very dramatic events that took place on or are linked by association with the Island. Each affected the nation: the Lindbergh case by the passage of a law making kidnapping a federal crime; the Amityville Horror hoax by encouraging increased skepticism for "supernatural" happenings; the massacre on the LIRR by augmenting acceptance of gun control legislation as well as political activism by previously uninvolved citizens; and the TWA Flight 800 disaster by the adoption of new aviation safety measures. Much as we regret their happening, we also can acknowledge the reforms that stemmed from these horrendous events, all of which are connected with the history of Long Island.

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THE AERONAUTICAL HERITAGE OF PORT WASHINGTON

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A sign overlooking Manhasset Bay, on the North Hempstead town dock on lower Main Street, Port Washington, reads "Port Washington, Historic Waterfront Community, Settled 1644." This article explores an aspect of this village's history for which there are few if any markers—the little-known but crucial role it played in the growth of aeronautics. Residents contributed mightily to the advance of flying, beginning as far back as 1910: from 1929 through 1956, aviation was the heart and soul of Port Washington. Hangars on the adjacent Manhasset Isle were the sites of groundbreaking accomplishments. Here airplanes were manufactured, and Pan American World Airways and Air France launched commercial flights to Bermuda and Europe. The buzz of "flying boats" overhead and the hum of tools manufacturing aircraft parts became intertwined with the culture of Port Washington. Aviation brought fame, recognition, and prosperity, forever altering the development of the community.

The Beginnings of Aviation in Port Washington

Port Washington was an ideal location for aeronautical experiments. Only fifteen air miles from Manhattan, it was set on the calm, sheltered waters of Manhasset Bay, a standard surface for taking off and landing before the advent of paved runways. Beginning in 1910, the building of estates overlooking Manhasset Bay by prominent financial and industrial magnates stirred the economy of a village formerly dependent on agriculture and maritime activities. Many owners of Gold Coast mansions, among them Whitneys, Vanderbilts, Guggenheims, Belmonts, Astors, and Morgans, took up flying as a hobby and were eager to be associated with its continuing development. Village residents adept at repairing fishing boats quickly adapted their skills to maintaining airplanes. Local aviators attained speed and altitude records and performed death-defying stunts that awed Port Washingtonians accustomed to the relatively harmless vocation of sailing.¹

In 1916, before the United States entered World War I, the Navy recognized the military potential of the airplane and began training young men to fly seaplanes in Port Washington. This band of courageous recruits, led by F. Trubee Davison, consisted of undergraduates from Yale University. When Rodman Wanamaker, a prominent retailer who operated a flying school in the village, offered the group the use of a Curtiss flying boat, the era of military aviation and aerial combat was well on its way. After the war, the same affluent Port

Washington residents who partially funded the First Yale Unit continued to fly as an avocation when flying became an integral part of the opulent Sand Point life style. The drone of seaplanes became as common as the sounds of crickets chirping. Some of these wealthy pioneers of flying helped to make the emerging technology available to the public, thus stimulating the benefits and practicality of air travel; for example, the Sands Point estate owners, Daniel and Harry Guggenheim, launched the Guggenheim Fund for the Promotion of Aeronautics in 1926. By this time, aviation had become an inseparable part of the community, but the most exciting era in Port Washington's aeronautical history was yet to come.²

The American Aeronautical Corporation

By the second half of the 1920s, the early perception of aviation as an exciting spectator sport, marked by the thrills of daring stunts, came to an end. The profitability and practicality of the airplane were realized. Early design flaws were corrected, and the airplane now was seen as a machine, with tremendous economic and commercial potential. With its sheltered waters and proximity to New York City, Port Washington was an excellent site for commercial aviation. The first company to establish a presence was the American Aeronautical Corporation, organized in October 1928. On 1 January 1929, the firm contracted with an Italian airplane manufacturer, Societa Idrovolanti Alta Italia, for exclusive rights to manufacture and sell Savoia-Marchetti seaplanes in the Americas. American Aeronautical received the right to manufacture the Societa's world-renowned S-55, S-62, and S-56 model "flying boats."³

American Aeronautical's primary task was to translate the drawings and dimensions of the three amphibian seaplanes from metric to American standards, and set up a site for manufacturing. Temporary headquarters were set up in Whitestone, Queens, until an ideal location was found on Manhasset Isle, Port Washington. The sixteen-acre site was chosen for its level, sandy soil, favorable water conditions, and accessibility to New York City, an established center of international commerce. The beach was free of rocks and stones, and it was rare to find better conditions for seaplane manufacture and operation.⁴

The facility, including hangars and a repair base, flight school, passenger terminal, and factory, was designed by Lockwood Greene Engineers, and built by Commonwealth Industries. The *Port Washington News*, upon learning of the project, proudly proclaimed in a headline: "Local Airport Will Be Largest in the World." It reported that construction would cost \$1.5 million, and deemed the site "a great over-water flying center...an international Port of Call." Although construction of the site in Port Washington and American Aeronautical's contract resulted from the Italian aviation industry's plan to enter the American market, and despite Savoia-Marchetti's operation of American Aeronautical as a division, the entire undertaking was financed with American capital. This arrangement, as well as construction of the Port Washington facility, reportedly received final approval from the Italian dictator-premier, Benito Mussolini.⁵

Meantime, American Aeronautical began accepting orders for seaplanes built in Port Washington. Three sample ships were imported from Italy for demonstration at the site, now known as the "New York Seaplane Airport." By May 1929, orders for Savoia-Marchetti airplanes exceeded \$400,000, and the American Aeronautical Corporation expected deliveries to customers as early as August.

Both residents and merchants enthusiastically anticipated that their new neighbor would bring growth and prosperity to Port Washington. The arrival of the corporation catalyzed the village's transformation from a quiet suburban retreat to a bustling manufacturing community. Hundreds of jobs were offered to engineers, test pilots, machinists, and mechanics. A significant percentage of these jobs was held by residents, and, by fall 1929, all seemed to be going well at American Aeronautical, as well as in the community. Traffic increased, new jobs were created, and merchants prospered. This all changed, however, on 29 October 1929, with the beginning of the Great Depression. The American Aeronautical Corporation survived for a while, but hard times ultimately destroyed it and the company went out of business. For several years, it appeared that Port Washington's role as an international port of call had ended.⁶

Pan American World Airways in Port Washington

Through the late 1920s, and in spite of the Great Depression during the early 1930s, an entrepreneur, Juan Trippe, established Pan American World Airways, the first American commercial air carrier. Pan Am had established many short routes from its hub in Miami to destinations in the Caribbean and South America, but Trippe's major goal was to fly passengers across the ocean and profit from it. To do so, he had to establish hubs in the Northeast to serve as passenger terminals and repair bases. A potential New York area site was Manhasset Isle, the former base of the now defunct American Aeronautical Corporation. In December 1933, Trippe purchased the site from American Aeronautical through a dummy organization known as the Marine Airport Corporation. At the same time, Charles A. Lindbergh, renowned for his solo flight across the Atlantic in 1927, was flying survey routes across the Atlantic for Pan Am. The site on Manhasset Isle, though never fully completed by American Aeronautical, was the largest privately owned hangar in the country, and ideal for Pan Am's aspirations. Pan Am was able to purchase the site for a fraction of the original price, since the former American Aeronautical Corporation was eager to liquidate it to meet liens and tax charges.⁷

The news of Pan Am's acquisition of the Manhasset Isle hangars and seaplane base placed the community in a state of euphoria. As reported in local newspapers, the vast majority of residents welcomed Pan Am, which they believed would resurrect the community from the blight imposed by the Great Depression. The *Port Washington News* proclaimed that, "An industrial plant in that section can do the residential sections of the community no great harm," and would stir the local economy. It was hoped that new jobs would be created, many unemployed local mechanics would find work, traffic would increase, local merchants would prosper, and property values would rebound. The presence of a large corporation

would undoubtedly stimulate prosperity.⁸

Trippe spent several years obtaining the necessary permits from the authorities overseas, allowing Pan American World Airways to fly to, from, and through the United Kingdom, Newfoundland, Bermuda, Canada, Ireland, and Portugal. He allowed British Imperial Airways to utilize Pan Am bases in order to obtain these permits, which were granted by the secretary of commerce on 20 April 1937. Trippe now had to establish several bases along the eastern seaboard from which to commence flights. Negotiations had resulted in bases being built in Baltimore, Charleston, and New York, none of which would be ready for some time. New York City had allocated \$8 million to build a flying boat airport, as well as a standard runway at North Beach, now known as La Guardia Airport. In the meantime, Trippe ordered the improvement of the company's Port Washington property purchased several years earlier. The site had one completed hangar, steelwork laid for another, and several smaller buildings that could function as terminals, handling areas, and boiler rooms. Bases for Pan Am flying boats were built on the other side of the Atlantic, as well. By May 1937, survey flights to Bermuda and Europe were set to commence.⁹

Before Pan Am commenced passenger service, Trippe wanted to be sure that the trip was feasible with the company's Sikorsky *S-42 Flying Boat*. The first formal survey flight, 25 May 1937, was conducted jointly by Pan Am and Imperial Airways. The Pan Am *Bermuda Clipper* departed from the Port Washington base that morning for Bermuda, while Imperial Airways's *Cavalier* simultaneously departed for Port Washington from Hamilton Harbor, Bermuda. The flight was successful, and all was set to start passenger service between Bermuda and Port Washington. As *The New York Times* reported, "Bermuda was brought within five and one-half hours' traveling distance of the New York Metropolitan area today with the successful completion of survey flights in both directions by Pan Am and Imperial Airways."¹⁰

Several weeks after the survey flight, Pan Am began regular service to Bermuda out of Port Washington. On 18 June 1937, the *Bermuda Clipper* departed from Manhasset Bay for the first time with passengers. One round-trip flight per week was scheduled for both Pan Am and Imperial Airways. Pan Am provided maintenance service at Port Washington, while Imperial provided it in Bermuda. Though the Port Washington terminal offered few amenities, William Masland, a *Clipper* navigator, recalled its organization and cleanliness at the time the flights to Bermuda began:

The Port Washington base took on a smartness, a spit and polish that even the peacetime navy would have envied. The hangar floors were spotless. The docks glistened in fresh white paint, with a proper signal mast standing at the head, yard slung at the doubling, national colors flying from the gaff.

For the first time in aviation history, an airline operated on a specified schedule. As one resident put it, Port Washington was placed "on the timetable of the world." Pan Am, however, was now more than ever determined to expand service

and fly passengers from Port Washington to Europe.¹¹

In July 1937, Pan Am and Imperial Airways prepared joint survey flights across the North Atlantic, to test the feasibility of Atlantic passenger service. Pan Am's *Clipper III* was set to take off from Port Washington at seven a.m. on 3 July, with Imperial's *Caledonia* to leave at the same time from Shannon Airport, in Foynes, Ireland. In addition, the German carrier Lufthansa and the French carrier Air France also sought to conduct survey flights across the North Atlantic to Port Washington. All four airlines, though they would compete once permanent routes were established, agreed to share technical data to assist in future flights. The *Clipper's* historic departure from Port Washington attracted a media frenzy, covered by major newspapers throughout the United States, as it marked the beginning of a new era in global transportation. Once survey flights were completed and permanent routes established, Europe would be only several hours from New York City.¹²

The Pan Am flight to Foynes was unique in many ways. The first airline weather map of the North Atlantic was utilized, and the first sighting of an iceberg by a commercial aircraft was reported by the *Clipper III*. The crew was warmly and graciously welcomed at each stop, finally landing at Foynes on 9 July, while the *Caledonia* landed in Port Washington that same afternoon—the flights were scheduled for simultaneous arrivals. The *Caledonia* landed flawlessly on Manhasset Bay, preceded by an encirclement of New York City's skyscrapers. With approximately three hundred residents on hand at the airport on Manhasset Isle, Trippe warmly welcomed the crew. However, the many stops on the way to Europe required by the *Clipper III*, and the *Caledonia's* thirst for fuel, made both of them impractical and unprofitable for passenger traffic. The flights proved that crossing the Atlantic by a commercial aircraft was possible, but not until Boeing delivered the more economical *B-314* could Pan Am formally schedule transatlantic flights from Port Washington.¹³

Later that summer, Deutsche Lufthansa conducted Atlantic survey flights. Lufthansa's sixteen-ton airliner, the *Nordmeer*, was unique in that, in order to take off, it had to be catapulted from a mother ship, the *Schwabenland*. The *Nordmeer* departed from Luebeck, Germany, made one refueling stop at Horta in the Azores, and landed in Port Washington on 10 August, the first German craft to arrive in America since the tragic crash of the airship *Hindenburg*. The arrival of the *Nordmeer*, clearly emblazoned with Nazi swastikas, startled Port Washington's residents; German planes continued flying into the village through the summer of 1938.¹⁴

Pan Am moved operations to Bermuda during winter 1937, and returned to Port Washington the following spring, flying three weekly round trips to Bermuda. On 6 April 1938, the line inaugurated scheduled transatlantic airmail service from Port Washington, to the plaudits of the residents and the local press. The Port Washington Chamber of Commerce printed three thousand commemorative envelopes to be postmarked in Bermuda, to which the village postmaster, Thomas E. Roeber, flew on the *Bermuda Clipper*, compliments of Pan American, to ensure the plan was carried out enthusiastically. The inauguration of airmail service

between Port Washington and Bermuda marked the beginning of a new era in communication, as mail could now be transported internationally within a matter of hours.¹⁵

Pan Am continued to fly to Bermuda from Port Washington throughout spring and summer 1937. Operations were moved to Baltimore during the winter. The company was eager to commence transatlantic routes to Europe, but now had to wait for Boeing to deliver its *B-314 Flying Boat*. These planes, several of which were ordered, were supposed to be delivered beginning December 1937, but did not arrive until late spring 1939. Pan Am's *B-314 Dixie Clipper* was due to depart from Port Washington on 28 June 1939, and the preceding weeks were marked by excitement in the village. The chamber of commerce declared a gala holiday for the *Clipper's* departure for Marseilles, France. Festivities were planned throughout the village, with merchants asked to close their stores to celebrate the occasion. Local officials prepared messages to the mayors of Marseilles, Lisbon, and Horta, the *Clipper's* destinations. The festivities on 28 June were nothing short of extravagant. The community was decorated with flags and bunting throughout the week, bustling with anticipation of the historic event. The Port Washington High School Band played as the world's first transatlantic passengers boarded the *Dixie Clipper*, and four Manhasset Bay yacht clubs fired memorial salutes as the plane left the water, an event witnessed by more than five thousand spectators. Not since the opening of the Port Washington Railroad Station nearly half a century earlier had the community witnessed such a gala celebration.¹⁶

During the course of the next several years, the rumbling of the giant *B-314's* engines taking off became customary sounds in Port Washington. The lavishly commodious interior of the *B-314* rivaled that of the best hotels in the world. Food was catered by the Lord Baltimore Hotel, in Maryland. Hollywood and Broadway stars, political leaders, and other prominent personalities flew the *Clippers* out of Port Washington.¹⁷

Later in summer 1939, aviation history was yet again made in Port Washington, when Air France conducted the first non-stop commercial transatlantic flight from Port Washington to Biscarosse, France. On 14 July, Bastille Day, the hydroplane *Lieutenant-de-Vaiseau-Paris* departed from Manhasset Bay, piloted by Henri Guillaumet, and arrived in France twenty-eight hours later. Among the passengers was Antoine de Saint-Exupery, a famous French author and aviator. Though this flight did not receive the gala send-off received by the *Dixie Clipper* some three weeks earlier, it was nevertheless historic.¹⁸

Port Washington became the center of international air transportation for the New York metropolitan area. For two dollars, Pan Am passengers were able to take a fifty-five-minute taxi ride into New York City from Manhasset Isle. Traffic to the village increased, and local businesses prospered. The *Clippers'* flying to Europe brought recognition and prosperity on a scale never previously known. In the ten-year period since the arrival of American Aeronautical, Port Washington had undergone a complete transformation. All roads were now paved, and the economy had become reliant on industrial production. With both its agricultural past and the Great Depression all but forgotten, Port Washington now was linked

to the entire world. Residents were proud of their community, confident of a bright future.¹⁹

However, the air route between Port Washington and Europe proved ephemeral. As the number of flights increased, the Port Washington Airport could not keep pace with the number of aircraft attempting to use it. In addition, there was growing demand for a location more accessible to New York City. For several years, Mayor Fiorello H. La Guardia had promised to build an airport at North Beach, overlooking Flushing Bay. On 28 March 1940, less than one year after the inauguration of transatlantic passenger service, the final three Pan Am *Clippers* landed, the *Dixie Clipper* that morning, her two sister ships, the *Yankee* and the *American Clipper*, that afternoon. The new facilities at North Beach opened days after the last *Clipper* flights from Port Washington. After that, the airport on Manhasset Isle was used only for emergency landings. Port Washington lost its place on the "timetable of the world." The glorious days of watching the graceful *Clippers* lift off from Manhasset Bay were over. The only thing that remained were the fond memories of the residents.²⁰

Dorothy Grant Ford, editor of the *Port Washington Reporter*, recalled Pan Am's final trips to Port Washington. As war engulfed Europe, American businessmen, ambassadors, diplomats, and citizens scrambled for space aboard the *Clippers*, and told harrowing stories of escape upon arriving in Port Washington. She remembered when, in the early days of German aggression, a *Clipper*, fueled and set to take off from Manhasset Bay, had to wait for the federal government's permission to depart. A glorious and prosperous era in Port Washington history ended abruptly with the permanent departure of Pan Am *Clippers*, an era whose glory has never been reproduced.²¹

Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corporation in Port Washington

Fortunately, the disappearance of Pan Am did not end the local connection to aviation. The hangars on Manhasset Isle were taken over by the Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corporation, headquartered in Bethpage. Grumman's Plant #15 opened in 1943, at the peak of American involvement in World War II. The plant operated twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, manufacturing wing panels, cowlings, and turrets for *Avenger* bombers and *Hellcat* fighter planes, two of the most important aircraft contributing to victory. Patriotism rose to an all-time high in Port Washington, whose residents were proud to be associated with the war effort. A sizeable number of Plant 15's more than four thousand employees lived in the village. Many of these workers were women—of "Rosie the Riveter" fame—engaged in assembling and testing parts. However, although aviation remained strong, Port Washington lost its significance and status as an aircraft manufacturing center. The Grumman factory in Port Washington was only one small outpost among the myriad of defense plants in the United States. Nevertheless, Plant 15 bolstered Port Washington's economy throughout the war years, and kept the community's morale high during very difficult times. Residents were

proud that their work was a major contribution to victory both in Europe and Japan, and that women were given the chance to be part of aviation history. After Grumman vacated the plant in 1945, it remained idle for several years until American involvement in Korea prompted the arrival of the Republic Aviation Corporation.²²

Republic Aviation Corporation and the End of Aviation in Port Washington

Republic took over the hangars on Manhasset Isle in 1951. In January 1952, the plant began active operation, employing approximately ninety people. It expanded rapidly, and, by 1953, employed 2,655 persons, 10 percent of whom were local residents employed both on the assembly line and executive staff. Most of the work involved the manufacture of wings for Republic's *F84F Thunderstreak* fighter bombers, the most modern fighter in the Air Force's arsenal, with a substantial amount of subcontracting for larger firms, such as Boeing.²³

Republic Aviation Corporation proved a valuable asset to the community. The company trained Port Washington High School students for future careers in aviation, paying them as they learned valuable skills. A training school was opened in Manorhaven to instruct applicants for jobs. In addition, Republic sponsored community events and sponsored a Little League baseball team. The company arranged with merchants to provide discounts to its employees, which stimulated business in the community.²⁴

Republic made every attempt to be a "good neighbor" to those residing near the factory, regulating the increase of traffic to minimize inconvenience to residents, and maintaining the plant's appearance. During the postwar period, however, as Port Washington became increasingly suburban, the residents began losing interest in heavy industry in the village. The prevailing attitude appeared to be that, much as manufacturing had helped Port Washington, it now was time for it to move elsewhere. Republic remained until 1958; when it finally closed its doors, Port Washington's last ties to aviation were permanently severed.²⁵

Conclusion

Commercial aviation in Port Washington during the 1930s changed the way the world worked and traveled. The presence of Grumman and Republic was significant, but Pan American Airways brought the most pride and fame to Port Washington. For more than half a century, Pan Am planes, emblazoned with the famous global logo, crossed the Atlantic and maintained the tradition that started in Port Washington.

Today, hardly anything remains from the aeronautical past. The Manhasset Isle hangars were torn down in 1994 to make way for new housing. The last vestige is Sintsink Drive, a twelve-inch-thick, reinforced concrete road built by Grumman

to deliver aircraft parts, even after an enemy attack. All that serves to remind residents and visitors of the village's glorious epoch is the plaque, installed in 1969 by the Port Washington Wings Club, on the southwest corner of the North Hempstead town dock, commemorating the joint 1937 survey flight of the North Atlantic by Pan Am and Imperial Airways. After briefly describing the flight, the plaque proudly proclaims: "Thus was pioneered the beginning of a new era in communications between the peoples of the world."

NOTES

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REVIEWS

Natalie A. Naylor and Maureen O. Murphy, eds. *Long Island Women: Activists and Innovators*. Interlaken N. Y.: Empire State Books, under the auspices of the Long Island Studies Institute, Hofstra University, 1998. Illustrations, bibliography, notes, index. Pp. 368. \$38 (cloth), \$20 (paper).

Long Island history has been written mainly as a chronicle of great men responding to historical forces and giving shape to new ways of life, from Lion Gardiner in the colonial era, to Revolutionary War heroes like Nathaniel Woodhull and William Floyd, to Elias Hicks, the Quaker antislavery leader, to Walt Whitman and William Cullen Bryant, to President Theodore Roosevelt, to Robert Moses, the "Colossus of Roads," to William Levitt, inventor of the mass-market, post-World-War-II suburb: the list goes on and on. The promises and problems of popular fiction concerning Long Island, from F. Scott Fitzgerald to Nelson De Mille, have also been defined by the attitudes of men.

The *Long Island Historical Journal* tries to blunt this male-oriented bias with articles showing that the concept of "Long Island as America" involves the contributions of multiple sources, including Native Americans, African Americans, women, immigrants, working people, men and women from all walks of life. Yet, even the *LIHJ* reflects the tension between an analysis focused on prominent men and a more inclusive interpretation.

Now there is a book that places women in the forefront of Long Island's historical development. *Long Island Women: Activists and Innovators*, edited by Natalie A. Naylor and Maureen O. Murphy, is a compendium of thirty-two papers delivered at the Hofstra University conference of the same name in March 1996. Organized chronologically, this collection of essays presents a compelling account of the historical impact of well-known and unsung heroines, past and present.

In "The Role of Algonquian Women in Land Transactions on Eastern Long Island, 1639-1859," a study of the antebellum period, John A. Strong points out that Indian women held pivotal positions in their communities, and were the negotiators with English settlers over land sales and whaling rights. This paper stands in strong contrast with what Bernice Forrest Guilliame, in "Women's Lives at the William Floyd Estate and Poosepatuck Indian Reservation, 1800-Present," reveals about the ways in which Anglo-American women viewed Indian women during the same period. Here we get a suggestive sense of the dialectical interaction between the racially biased assumptions of white estate owners, and how Indian women, using their own traditions, created strategies to protect their interests and preserve their culture.

One of the most important ideas in the field of women's history is that women, although conventionally seen by male culture as home-bound and passive, were, in fact, deeply involved in community life and the creators of organizations that contributed to its enhancement. Eunice Jucket's Meeker's paper, "The Ladies Village Improvement Society: A Century of Force in East Hampton," shows how

this tradition evolved from 1895 to the present. Long before the East End became the “Hamptons,” the Ladies Village Improvement Society (LVIS) worked hard to get the roads paved and lit, trees planted, bicycle paths built, and village greens maintained. This model organization has been the inspiration for many others of its kind.

The settlement house movement, more concerned with human needs than with the environment, was a related but equally important aspect of this tradition. Because the settlement house is associated with cities, the reader will be surprised by Floris Barnett Cash’s exciting essay, “Gender and Race Consciousness: Verina Morton-Jones Inspires a Settlement House in Suburbia.” Cash explores the long, distinguished career of a public-spirited African American physician, who served in urban organizations like the N.A.A.C.P., founded the Brooklyn Equal Suffrage League and the Lincoln Settlement House in Brooklyn, and, in her seventieth year, moved to Hempstead in the 1920s. Large numbers of southern African Americans were migrating North at this time, mainly to urban centers but some to Long Island communities such as Hempstead and Freeport, with most of the employed women working as domestics. In response to discrimination in employment and housing, Morton-Jones and others organized the Harriet Tubman Settlement House, in Hempstead, which helped find jobs and lodging for women, some of whom, at times, were forced to sleep in the streets. The settlement house, which publicized the subpar conditions of black women domestics, became an important institution in Nassau County.

Cynthia J. Bogard updates this tradition to the contemporary period. “Homeless in Huntington: Struggling Mothers and Their Care Givers” examines the ways that family homelessness has been almost prevented in this town, largely because of the work of a coalition of local women. Focused on the needs of homeless children, this coalition has secured a wide array of services to house, feed, and provide other needs of poor families. .

Another function of this collection is to bring to public attention women who were innovators, path-breakers, and barrier jumpers. In “First Women in Aviation,” Joanne Lynn Harvey details the little-known lives of early women aviators during the first three decades of the twentieth century. Flying against extreme odds, in a world where the media and other influential institutions maintained that it was both socially inappropriate and physically impossible for women to fly, such women as Bessica Faith Raiche, Harriet Quimby, Portia Willis, and Laura Bromwell took to the air over Long Island, with Willis the first to use aviation to further the cause of suffrage. In 1913, she decorated her airship with banners and sprinkled the countryside with “Vote for Women” leaflets.

In “Alicia Patterson and the Shape of Long Island,” Robert F. Keeler shows how the founder of *Newsday*, in 1941 (using her husband Harry Guggenheim’s money and help), had to take on the Republican Party and its organ, the *Nassau Daily Review-Star*, to establish her new paper as an independent voice. In doing so, she championed the new master-builder—William Levitt, who wanted to build houses without basements, an idea considered not only bizarre but illegal under the building code. The Republicans opposed this plan, concerned that the World War II veterans who flocked to Levittown might vote Democratic, but *Newsday*

went against the machine, creating many new readers in the process.

The book contains many other illuminating articles by Helen A. Harrison, Alice Ross, Sister Edna McKeever, and many others. One of the editors, Natalie A. Naylor, the director of Hofstra's Long Island Studies Institute, presents a list of "Long Island's Nationally Notable Women" as well as a comprehensive bibliography. Because space is short, I have highlighted certain aspects to demonstrate the collection's breadth. Some problems remain. The book overemphasizes biographies, many of which, rather than shed light on Long Island history, seem more accidental, an issue of location rather than import. Janice Williams Rutherford's "Christine Frederick: Barometer of Conflict" is a case in point. While her essay provides insight, she oddly neglects to mention that, in the 1920s, Frederick, a major proponent of scientific housekeeping, strongly criticized suburbia and the conformity she saw as its essential nature. The collection barely refers to the suburban experience; not one essay looks at the impact on women's lives of postwar suburban Long Island. Because of this omission, essays written on the women's liberation movement of the 1970s lack analytical focus, and are more anecdotal than informative. Marilyn Goldstein's "Reflections on Long Island Women" reads more like a lively speech than a historical argument about why there was such a strong movement on Long Island at that time. This is, perhaps, a phenomenon common to books that are collections of conference papers.

Despite these problems, this book makes an important contribution to women's history and the variety of roles that women have played in the Island's long and complicated history. By shedding light both on individuals and on organizations created by women, *Long Island Women: Activists and Innovators* brings a neglected subject from the backwater on to the center stage.

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David Yehling Allen, *Long Island Maps and Their Makers: Five Centuries of Cartographic History*. Mattituck: Amereon House, 1998. Illustrations, bibliography, notes, index. Pp. xix, 153, \$23.95 plus 3.95 for shipping and handling for the first copy; \$1.10 for each additional copy, from Amereon House, P.O. Box 1200, Mattituck, N.Y. 11952-9500

Not long ago in these pages I had the pleasure of reviewing a superlative exhibition of Long Island maps jointly sponsored by the Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities and the State University at Stony Brook. David Y. Allen, the guest curator, has now published *Long Island Maps and Their Makers*—a fine book, indeed, though it suffers somewhat from annoying lapses by the publisher and/or printer. Many of the fifty-four plates are murky, washed out, or just too small to convey the richness and fascination of the originals; several, including a couple of mysterious portraits, appear to have lost their captions in the course of production. In my copy, moreover, the last page of the preface is printed

twice and misnumbered. Budgets are tight, and everybody makes mistakes, but in this instance it is a special pity that greater care was not taken to manufacture a book worthy of its contents.

For *Long Island Maps and Their Makers* is an original and engrossing work that testifies to Allen's encyclopedic knowledge of cartography, local geography, and history. Chapter 1, "Early Colonial Maps," details the progress of Island mapping from the sixteenth through the mid-eighteenth centuries—although "progress," as Allen makes clear, is not the best word for a story marked at every turn by political calculation, prejudice, venality, and plain ignorance. Historians and cartophiles will especially appreciate his shrewd remarks on the maps prepared by John Scott and Robert Ryder not long after the English Conquest. Chapter 2, "The Cartography of Conquest," describes the sharp increase in the quality and quantity of Long Island maps that accompanied the Anglo-French and Anglo-American conflicts in the latter half of the eighteenth century. That military necessity was the driving force behind this change is borne out by Allen's lucid comments on the maps drawn by Thomas Jefferys, John Montrésor, and others. Chapter 3, "The Age of Simeon De Witt," is a measured tribute to the surveyor general of New York who, in 1802, produced the first really detailed and accurate map of the entire state, including Long Island, and to the coastal surveys prepared by Edmund Marsh Blunt and sons. Building on the story of the Blunts, chapter 4, "Long Island Triangulated," describes the pioneering work of Ferdinand Rudolph Hassler and the U.S. Coast Survey, which published finely detailed surveys of the Island in the 1830s and 1840s. In chapter 5, "The Cartography of Commerce," Allen connects the economic and social transformations that swept the Island in the middle decades of the nineteenth century to another upsurge of map making, perhaps the high point of which was the *Atlas of Long Island* (1873) by F. W. Beers. Allen's last and least successful chapter, "Long Island Digitized," reviews a number of twentieth-century topics, among them the work of the U.S. Geological Survey, the rise and fall of road maps, satellite imagery, and the trend toward computerized cartography.

Perhaps because he tries to cover so much ground here, or tries to cover it too quickly, Allen never finds a secure thematic handle on this material, and does not establish the strong connections between map making and social context that inform his previous chapters. On balance, however, that is a very modest defect in a book that is otherwise so intelligent and informative.

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Clarence Taylor, *Knocking at Our Own Door: Milton A. Galamison and the Struggle for School Integration in New York City*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1997. Notes, index. Pp. 261. \$29.50,

Knocking at Our Own Door: Milton A. Galamison and the Struggle to Integrate New York City Schools examines the contentious political fight led by the

iconoclastic African American Presbyterian minister and social activist, Milton A. Galamison (1923-1988), to desegregate New York City's public schools during the 1960s. One of few African American pastors to achieve distinction within the Presbyterian Church, Galamison emphasized the Christian obligation to fight all forms of inequality, and encouraged his parishioners to ally with secular groups to achieve equality in American society during the turbulent Cold War era. As a controversial but enigmatic figure in the northern civil rights movement, Galamison believed that integration offered the best opportunity for African American and Latino socioeconomic mobility, as well as harmonious race relations for the nation. As a strong supporter of grassroots mass action, he worked closely with such groups as the Parents' Workshop for Equality in New York City Schools and the People's Board of Education to demand immediate rectification of the pedagogical, social, and material inequities endured by many African American and Puerto Rican children.

Galamison's mobilization of local groups, progressive educators, and both regional and national civil rights leaders culminated in the participation of half a million African American and Puerto Rican students in the first city-wide boycott of the New York public schools, in 1964. However, the triumph of this mass action was short-lived, as political conflict, internal dissension, and legal battles prevented implementation of Galamison's idea of a truly integrated school system. Nevertheless, his community-based protest against segregation influenced the process of decentralizing the public school system, and inspired local parent groups to control the educational future of their children.

The experienced historian, Clarence Taylor, skillfully incorporates interviews with the late Milton Galamison, his wife, and his associates, along with archival research, into a perceptive analysis of the tumultuous events that propelled this nonconformist clergyman to challenge bigotry, ineptitude, and economic disparity within New York's public school system.

Taylor traces Galamison's radicalism to his impoverished youth in Philadelphia and collegiate experiences at Saint Augustine College in Raleigh, North Carolina, Lincoln University, and Princeton Theological Seminary. Raised primarily by his maternal grandmother, Nellie Woods, after his father abandoned the family, Galamison survived the grim hardship of the depression by developing a keen sense of social justice, intolerance of racism, and willingness to challenge authority. His experience at conventional Saint Augustine intensified his opposition to conservative rigidity. Taylor stresses his contact with African students at Lincoln University, enhancing his comprehension of economic underdevelopment. Galamison matured intellectually as he became acquainted with the works of Karl Marx, Bertrand Russell, Martin Luther, and Frederick Douglass during his years at Lincoln and Princeton. Moreover, his childhood encounters with racism in the Philadelphia public schools, and then as a student at Princeton, underscored his conviction that segregation and racial inequality must be eradicated through the progressive model of integration.

Galamison's commitment to activism grew slowly, beginning in 1947 with his sermons at his first ministerial post as pastor of Princeton's genteel Witherspoon Presbyterian Church. Taylor notes that Galamison, an admirer of the liberal views

of former vice president and 1948 presidential candidate Henry A. Wallace, espoused a socialist critique of American society, one that avoided connection with Communist parties or trade unionism. Even so, the conservative publication *Counterattack* labeled him a communist sympathizer in 1953, a charge he vehemently denied.

Galamison's transfer from Witherspoon's small, middle-class congregation to Brooklyn's large and prestigious Siloam Presbyterian Church, in 1948, signaled a crucial period in his life. His defense of liberal organizations such as SANE (the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy) sometimes alienated moderate members, but Taylor points out that Galamison commanded the respect of his parishioners for his antidiscrimination stance. For example, he refused to pay a tithe earmarked for constructing a new Presbyterian Church at Levittown on Long Island because the housing development there refused to admit blacks. "While driving to Wisconsin in 1957, en route to addressing Presbyterian curb conferences about his trip to Cameroon, Galamison's resistance to racism stiffened when he and his family were denied motel accommodations in Indiana, Ohio, and Illinois. "I ... decided that if I had to bum this stinking, bigoted country to the ground, my son and his family would never have to suffer the indignities heaped on the Black people of my generation," he declared (45)

His commitment to ending segregation crystallized during his tenure as head of the Brooklyn NAACP. Galamison's leadership transformed the organization from a lethargic association to one of the most active civil rights groups in New York City. With the invaluable assistance of other social activists like Anne Stein and Winston Craig, Galamison and the Brooklyn NAACP issued reports such as "Progress of the Integration Program," in 1959, that documented the increase of de facto segregation caused by zoning and school construction programs. However, conflict and financial difficulties within the Brooklyn NAACP compelled Galamison not to seek reelection in 1959. According to Taylor, Galamison's acrimonious experience with the Brooklyn NAACP reinforced his apprehension of hierarchical institutions.

Taylor emphasizes Galamison's lack of political ties and patronage as a major factor that separated him from the majority of African American Protestant ministers, who avoided organizations that alienated their political benefactors. His support for grassroots mobilization was often at odds with the conservatism shared by a good many NAACP board members. Though Galamison's political skills and contacts matured during his association with the NAACP Schools Workshop, his Christian radicalism and advocacy of mass action clashed with the ideological roots of such prominent African American leaders as NAACP chairman Roy Wilkins and Whitney Young, the executive director of the Urban League. Both these men accused him of being a "lone gun" who jeopardized the organization's relatively benign relationships with New York City government. As Taylor emphasizes, Galamison's eagerness to act without consultation remained a weakness that contributed to his political demise as a social activist after 1968.

After his voluntary resignation from the Brooklyn NAACP, Galamison continued his commitment to social justice and campaign to integrate New York's

public schools by participating in the campaigns of the Parents' Workshop and the People's Board of Education. He understood that the educational inequality between affluent white and underprivileged African American and Latino students emanated from policies of the board of education. His leadership resulted in community-organized demonstrations, boycotts, and sit-ins to compel the bureaucracy to desegregate. Taylor underscores Galamison's dedication to school integration as a major factor in the gradual integration of African Americans and Latinos, who made up a large proportion of students, into the administrative and teaching staffs of the city's public schools.

While the influence of the city-wide school integration movement waned by 1966, African American and Latino activists in Brooklyn continued their struggle to wrest fiscal, pedagogical, and administrative control of their schools from the board of education and the United Federation of Teachers (UFT). In 1965, black and Puerto Rican students from Brownsville encountered insensitivity, and, at times, violence, when transferring to schools in predominately Italian American Bay Ridge. This appalling situation convinced many African American and Latino parents in Ocean Hill/Brownsville that community control of their schools remained the only viable solution for assuring quality education to their children. Inspired by the Black Power movement, these parents created the Ad Hoc People's Board of Education (AHPB), in 1966, as an alternative to the board of education, and elected Milton Galamison as its president. Taylor notes that the AHPB hoped that Galamison's stature as a civil rights leader would lend credence to their cause, while Galamison used the organization to criticize his old adversary, the board of education.

Although Galamison lacked a strong commitment to black nationalism, he believed firmly in community activism, particularly during the 1967-1968 crisis, when the issues of community control and due process for teachers underscored dramatic confrontations between the Ocean Hill/Brownsville governing board and the UFT and board of education. Despite his endorsement of community control, Galamison tried to negotiate a compromise among the UFT and its president, Albert Shanker, the board of education, and the Ocean Hill/Brownsville governing board. However, Galamison's role as mediator faded, as Shanker and Rhody McCoy, the unit administrator of the Ocean Hill/Brownsville board, remained critical of his plan. Despite his brief tenure as vice president of the board of education in 1968, Galamison's inability to resolve the Ocean Hill/Brownsville conflict signaled his retreat from public affairs. Taylor stresses that Galamison's autocratic style and willingness to negotiate unilateral concessions led to his departure from the broad coalitions that fought for school integration and community control.

Taylor utilizes an impressive array of primary and secondary sources to analyze the political, social, and cultural milieu that propelled Galamison into the struggle for radical educational reform. His use of interviews, private papers, and memorandums from community groups and public officials present an insider's view of the internal conflicts that plagued these grassroots groups' ability to challenge an unresponsive city bureaucracy. However, while the book chronicles this African American movement, it does not pay similar attention to Puerto

Ricans. Taylor emphasizes Galamison's support for educational change for Latino students, but offers no comprehensive discussion of how Galamison dealt with bilingualism, or the ethnic antagonism between Puerto Rican and African Americans, in his coalition-building strategies. This would have been useful, given the new scholarship on bilingual education and Latino educational achievement in the Northeast, as well as the lack of support by puertoriqueno parents for Operation Shutdown, his 1965 student boycott.

Following his 1968 withdrawal from educational struggles, Galamison faded into obscurity as he encountered financial and administrative problems, combined with declining membership, in the Siloam Presbyterian Church. Despite the defeat of progressive, broadly-based, educational coalitions in the 1970s and 1980s by neoconservative groups and politicians, Taylor highlights the current need for renewal of Galamison's vision of an equalitarian and integrated school system for the New York public schools. *Knocking at Our Own Door* expands present scholarship on grassroots political organizing, exemplified in such works as John Dittmer, *Local People* (Urbana, IL: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1994), and Charles Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle* (Berkeley, CA: Univ. of California Press, 1995), which explain the importance of community activity in the civil rights movement. Clarence Taylor has resurrected a little-known figure from the Sixties as an important participant in modern American social history.

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John A. Strong, *"We Are Still Here!" The Algonquian Peoples of Long Island Today*, 2d ed. Interlaken, N.Y. Empire Books (prepared under the auspices of Hofstra University), 1998. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Pp. 140. \$14.00 (paper).

The first edition of John A. Strong's *"We Are Still Here!" The Algonquian Peoples of Long Island Today* was released only in late 1996. Thus, it is telling that the revised and enlarged second edition, part of the excellent series on the cultural history of Long Island published under the auspices of the Long Island Studies Institute of Hofstra University, has been issued so quickly. Strong's book is the best single source of information regarding the lives of the Algonquian peoples of Long Island in the twentieth century.

Along with its companion volume, *The Algonquian Peoples of Long Island From Earliest Times to 1700*, the first edition of *"We Are Still Here!"* was reviewed in *LIIJ* 9 (Spring 1997): 252-54. The new version provides an update on some of the challenges currently faced by the Algonquians of Long Island, including defense of the boundaries of the Shinnecock Reservation, protection of the tax-exempt status of Indian nations, the Montaukett's ongoing struggle for federal recognition, extending the advances made by Algonquian women, and the concern shared among all Native Americans to counter negative stereotypes and

focus on the preservation of their cultural heritage.

Besides coverage of recent events, the new edition of *"We Are Still Here!"* (one-third larger than the original publication) contains more genealogical data and photographs. Following publication of the first edition, John A. Strong, professor of history at Southampton College of Long Island University, received numerous phone calls and letters from people who traced their ancestry to the Native Americans of Long Island. Strong has incorporated their voices into the new edition, filling gaps in the narrative. The new information concerning non-reservation Algonquian families is especially important, as these groups are not so visible to the public eye as are the inhabitants of the Shinnecock and Unkechaug (Poospatuck) reservations. The text of *"We Are Still Here!"* is beautifully enriched with over seventy archival and contemporary photographs, and with several illustrations by the talented Shinnecock artist, David Bunn Martine.

In both *The Algonquian Peoples of Long Island From Earliest Times to 1700* and *"We Are Still Here!"*, Strong weaves threads gleaned from archaeology, cultural anthropology, historic documents, and oral history into a seamless reconstruction of the past, augmented with a description of the present. Myths and biases are dispelled along the way, including the myth of the extinction of Native Americans on Long Island following the arrival of Dutch and English colonists in the seventeenth century. The precipitous decline of Native American populations because of disease, warfare, and the "sale" of their land is well-documented. However, despite monuments to "the last of the Matinecock" and "the last of the Rockaway" (129), the Indians of Long Island survived, as demonstrated by the proud affirmation *"We Are Still Here!"*

The descendants of the seventeenth-century Algonquian survivors have faced their own battles, particularly on the fronts of land ownership and cultural identity. As Strong remarks, the misleading perception that there is a direct relationship between skin color and culture has worked to the detriment of Long Island's Algonquian people, some of whom have intermarried with African Americans and whites. Strong explains how modern groups that apply for federal recognition as Indian tribes must fulfill specific criteria (which do not include "racial purity"), including a documented genealogy which pre-dates European contact, evidence of internal political organization, and demonstration of the continuance of community rituals or ceremonies. The Shinnecock and Unkechaug have satisfied these stringent requirements, while the Montaukett have proceeded with their petition to the United States Branch of Acknowledgment and Research (BAR) for federal recognition. Completion of the petition is a long and arduous process, one that has caused some internal tensions among the Montaukett. A sympathetic Strong describes the Montaukett cause, but notes that it could be another two years before a decision is made by the BAR. Perhaps the outcome will be documented in a future edition of *"We Are Still Here!"*

In the meantime, Strong's book does much to document the cultural continuity maintained by Native American groups on Long Island. While the annual Powwow held at the Shinnecock Reservation may be the most conspicuous

affirmation of the Native American presence on Long Island, other traditional gatherings are also important. One such ceremony is the June Meeting, held every year as far back as Shinnecock and Unkechaug elders can remember. According to Strong, the June Meeting tradition "appears to be related to the concept of death and rebirth common to spring celebrations in many cultures" (29). It is a time to honor the dead, and to feast with family members. Using documentary and oral history, Strong traces the origin of June Meeting to before the mid-eighteenth century, when it was known as *Wi-kan-da-min-na-bo*. Interestingly, it was the incorporation of Christian themes into *Wi-kan-da-min-na-bo* ceremonies that led to the acceptance of Christianity among the Shinnecock. Today's June Meeting continues to be an important social and religious event.

In addition to traditional gatherings, the Algonquians of Long Island maintain their cultural identity through the struggle to protect or reclaim communal ownership of land. Other political skirmishes (such as defending the tax-exempt status of Native Americans) serve as unifying forces. "*We Are Still Here!*" also includes a chapter regarding community associations and services active on the Shinnecock Reservation, such as the Shinnecock Native American Cultural Coalition, the Shinnecock Senior Citizens' Nutrition Program, the Shinnecock Indian Health Service, and the Shinnecock Nation Cultural Center. The board of directors and staff of the Cultural Center are working to complete a museum on Montauk Highway, in Southampton. Much as does Strong's book, this museum will provide visitors with a fuller understanding and appreciation of Native American history and culture. The Montauketts also have a community support group, the Friends of the Pharaoh Museum, working to expand the Pharaoh Museum on the ground of Montauk County Park.

The first edition of "*We Are Still Here!*" was conceived as the final chapters of what, instead, became *The Algonquian Peoples of Long Island From Earliest Times to 1700*. Now that another thirty-two pages have been added for the second edition, "*We Are Still Here!*" stands by itself as a noteworthy volume.

In summary, Strong presents a clearly written, engrossing account of the modern lives—marked by struggles and triumphs—of the Native American peoples of Long Island. "*We Are Still Here!*", an important contribution to the literature of the Island's Algonquian peoples, is highly recommended for readers of all ages.

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Gardner of Eden: The Wit and Wisdom of Hal B. Fullerton. Compiled and edited by Anne Nauman. Las Vegas, Nevada: Scrub Oak Press, 1998. Illustrations. Pp. 208 \$24 (paper). Available at Suffolk County Historical Society, 300 West Main Street, Riverhead, N.Y. 11901, or Scrub Oak Press, P.O. Box 34691, Las Vegas, NV 89133 (add \$2.50 S/H).

Hal B. Fullerton, a man of many talents, became a driving force in showcasing the

beauty and productivity of what he called the "Blessed Isle." After his formative years in Ohio and elsewhere, as a student of many subjects at a host of educational institutions, he explored a variety of employment opportunities. His constant travel in search of a position that held his interest and brought out his talents led him to Long Island in 1897, where he was appointed a "special agent" for the Long Island Railroad (LIRR), assigned to publicize the Island to the people of New York City and elsewhere.

Combining photographic skill with a ready "wit and wisdom," he ably promoted Long Island as the ideal vacation setting, free from the city's congestion and a tranquil holiday getaway from the mundane chores of the workplace. One could spend a carefree day or enjoy a full week of peace and solitude. Those reluctant to drive their cars could embark on their peaceful interlude on board the LIRR. Ms campaigns attracted a wide range of visitors, from bicycle clubs to birdwatchers to romantic couples walking those magnificent beaches, to many others. *Gardener of Eden*, capably compiled and edited by Anne Nauman, is an entertaining collection of Fullerton's anecdotes, the latest in a series of recent works concerning Hal and his "50-50 partner" and wife, Edith.*

In 1905, LIRR President Ralph Peters appointed Fullerton to head the company's newly created agricultural department. Keenly aware of the nearly quarter-million acres of idle land in the pine barrens and scrub oak waste areas, Peters believed these could be converted to productive farmland, which would draw immigrant farmers from New York City and, in turn, dramatically increase the railroad's freight traffic. With this as its purpose, Fullerton's new department established experimental farms to dispel the disparaging myths long attached to the pine barrens and scrub oak wastelands. Experimental Stations 1, at Wading River in the scrub oak area, and 2, at Medford in the center of the pine barrens, were cleared and planted with nearly a thousand varieties of crops, flowers, and fruit trees. (A planned Station 3, on the sandy outwash plain of the South Shore, never materialized.)

When the huge success of the farms created wide-spread interest as well as demand for information, Peters authorized publication of the *Long Island Agronomist*. In *Gardener of Eden*, Nauman highlights articles from the *Agronomist*, in connection with her account of Hal and Edith Fullerton, the "senior and junior partners," who not only proved the agricultural value of their farms but shared their knowledge with the public. Nauman commemorates Hal's efforts in the fields of Wading River and Medford, and also the products of his pen as he shared information, offered advice, and attacked exploiters of the hard-working farmers of Long Island. His articles in the *Agronomist* could be fiery, but some of his "wit and wisdom" found their way into every issue. His earthy humor (pardon the pun, writing style (and personal appearance) that Nauman compares with Mark Twain's, and striking photographs shed new light on 'The Blessed Isle, he richly deserves the inspired title, "Gardener of Eden" (with Edith's equal help, of course).

The book includes selections from the *Agronomist* on the Island's abundance of water for irrigation, the success of corn, potatoes, tobacco, cotton, and other

crops, many introduced on the Long Island farms—"like many other things, you never know what you can do until you try" (41); secrets of marketing success, and how proper packaging, advertising, and presentation led to increased sales—"a good showing, makes a ready sale" (30); Long Island's good, bad, and, at times, confusing weather, the success of dairy cows on the Island; proven facing techniques of the experimental farms, such as use of wood ashes, manure, simple hard work, and common sense—no need for "chemical cocktails of fertilizer" (24), and plant enemies that plagued production, from insects to fungus, rusts, and blights. Hal's association with the Suffolk County Boy Scouts perhaps prompted his constant exhortation to "be prepared," work hard, offer no excuses, and, when nature dealt a serious blow, work harder! There are recollections of prizes and awards at the Suffolk and Nassau County fairs, as well as at fairs and expositions from Madison Square Garden to the cities of Syracuse, Chicago, and Milan, Italy.

Hal and Edith Fullerton's efforts to educate led to their cry for more agricultural schools and the implementation of courses assisting the farmer. Their suggestions bore fruit when the Extension Department of the New York State College of Agriculture at Cornell organized the Long Island School of Agriculture, at Riverhead, a three-week series of classes for local farmers (127). New York State then developed other agricultural colleges, such as the Long Island Agricultural University at Farmingdale (131), at which the Fullertons' daughter Hope and grandson William C. Ferguson were students, and their son-in-law Donald V. Ferguson served on the faculty (133).

The Agronomist highlighted contributions from the rising number of immigrants, who, according to Hal, provided plenty of labor, knowledge, and new farmers of every conceivable nationality. The Fullertons were quick to praise the immigrant laborers, those who cleared the land at both experimental farms and prepared them for cultivation, and those who remained and looked after the farms' daily workings. The foremen of both farms were immigrants, prompting Hal to remark that, "foreign-born were put in charge and made good" (147).

As noted in Nauman's preface, Fullerton used the *Agronomist* as a "bully pulpit" from which to attack speculators who drove up land prices; unscrupulous salesmen who sold dead or unhealthy seed that often failed to germinate; and food speculators, who used "cold storage as a comparatively new method of playing the old shell game" (83) to manipulate prices in a falsified supply and demand scenario. "Producers had no commercial instincts or training and were *not* organized" (84), making hard-working farmers easy victims of the middlemen who robbed producers and inflicted consumers with constant price increases they blamed on "freight rates," in an ironic attack on the LIRR. Fullerton could not justify "futures trading," which he condemned as "weird gentlemen's agreements" to replace what only "Providence and Nature knew what the season would bring forth," and were "almost as honorable as loaded dice or stacked cards" (89).

The Fullertons championed public markets with honest prices and profits and assured freshness for the consumer. They called for cooperative associations which united growers and earned them a fair share of the consumer dollar. The LIRR could provide speedy service to the markets of New York City and its millions of hungry citizens yearning for fresh produce: the "Farm to Family Fresh"

method was advocated by the Fullertons and the LIRR (97).

This work highlights the humor of Hal Fullerton, with many examples and anecdotes, "Agriculture is frequently said to be an inexact science, but so are medicine, astronomy, electricity, chemistry, etc." (151), and "we are tickled to death because we are alive, and have as our portion a place in that inexact science, agriculture, which combines each and every one of the rest of the world's inexact sciences, including plumbing and legislation" (152). The Fullertons devoted their collective energies to the "most important, most interesting and most intricate profession-agriculture" (142).

The *Agronomist*, published from 1907 to 1914, brought agricultural facts and much-needed humor to the Island's hardpressed farmers. Hal's witty and often comical portrayal of the simple life on Long Island brought answers to such age-old fiddles as is it a yam or a sweet potato? His satire quieted skeptics of the success of Long Island's agricultural production (to this day, Suffolk is the state's first-ranked county in agricultural revenue). His wit and wisdom spurred farmers to produce late fall and winter crops, generating added income and "discouraging winter laze or the desire to hibernate at the post office and general store" (37).

Throughout *Gardener of Eden*, Nauman mixes Hal's humor and Edith's positive influence to highlight the success of the LIRR's Agricultural Department, its directors, and the organ of the Experimental Stations, the *Agronomist*. As the Fullertons shared their knowledge with all who would listen, Anne Nauman shares the Fullertons with her readers: "The latch string is always out at both experimental stations. Visitors are very welcome at any time" (2).

*See Charles L. Sachs, *The Blessed Isle: Hal B. Fullerton and His Image of Long Island, 1897-1927* (Interlaken, N.Y.: Heart of the Lakes Publishing, under the auspices of the Long Wand Studies Institute, Hofstra University, 1991); Eleanor F. Ferguson, *Long Island—Growing up on Hal B. Fullerton's Blessed Isle, 1902-1942*, edited by Anne Nauman, (Las Vegas, NV: Scrub Oak Press, 1993); Anne Nauman, *The Junior Partner: Edith Loring Fullerton, a Long Island Pioneer* (Las Vegas, NV: Scrub Oak Press, 1997, and Chet Chorzcempa, "The Fullertons and the Experimental Farms of the Long Island Railroad," *L.I.H.J.* 6 (Spring 1994):245-53.

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Jeffrey A. Kroessler, *Lighting the Way: The Centennial History of the Queens Borough Public Library, 1896-1996*. Virginia Beach, Va.: Donning Company, 1996. Illustrations, bibliography, index. 8½" x 11½" hardback. Pp. ix, 138. \$29.95, plus \$4.95 shipping and handling, from Queens Library Foundation, 89-11 Merrick Blvd., Jamaica, N.Y. 11432.

In 1996 the Queens Borough Public Library celebrated its centennial. To commemorate the occasion the Queens Library Foundation published a photo-

graphic record of the library's first hundred years. The book is really two entities: the first half is an illustrated account of the library's development, written by the Queens historian Jeffrey A. Kroessler; the second half is a photographic chronology. As the book magnificently demonstrates, the library has much to celebrate. The library system, "with a Central Library and sixty-two branches, and holdings of over nine million books, periodical, videos and recordings, has the highest circulation of any library system in the nation-and perhaps the world" (1).

The growth of the library has mirrored the development of Queens itself. For a hundred years the library has responded to the changing needs of its increasingly diverse community. Of course, its history has not always been a smooth one. Although independently governed, it has always depended on financial support from the city. In times of fiscal crisis, such as the 1970s, it was an easy target for cuts in the name of fiscal responsibility.

The library had a curious origin in Long Island City, where, in 1895, a "Long Island City resident, William Nelson, acquired the holdings of three circulating subscription libraries as payment for debts, and ... offered the books to any parties who would open a free public library" (11). In 1896, a couple of citizens took up the challenge and the Long Island City Public Library was founded, renamed the Queens Borough Library in December 1899 soon after creation of Greater New York. Within a few years, seven private libraries had merged with the new public library to form a system.

In 1901, Andrew Carnegie gave the city of New York \$5.2 million for the construction of library branches throughout the five boroughs. As Queens had the lowest population, it received the smallest share of Carnegie's philanthropy, only \$240,000. According to Kroessler, "The original plan was to erect three grand edifices; the Library decided instead to build eight smaller branches"(17) to that more communities in this sprawling borough could be served.

The development of the library was closely tied to the rapid changes in the surrounding community: it "would be hard-pressed to serve a population increasing at a phenomenal rate" (19). The pace of construction quickened with the opening of the Queensboro Bridge in 1909, the completion of Penn Station in 1910, bringing the Long Island Rail Road into Manhattan, and the erection of elevated transit lines. To meet increasing demands for service and outreach, the library "embraced imaginative and innovative methods" (21): deposit collections were set up in such places as factories, schools, stores, and the men's and women's jails.

The library always was responsive to the community around it, on one occasion negatively. After the United States entered World War I in April 1917, comments Kroessler, "patriotic hysteria ... resulted in the only overt act of censorship in the Library's history. All German-language books were withdrawn from circulation" (23).

Story hours were scheduled in every branch, with children welcomed into the libraries, rather than tolerated. Schools were sent lists of books appropriate for each grade. Slides advertising branch services were sent to local movie houses for projection before shows. A typical slide might read, "The Public Library is the working man's college" (23). In 1930, during the depression, the library

purchased the first book bus, *Pioneer*; which carried two thousand volumes to the borough's outlying neighborhoods. The bus was even equipped with a radio on which to hear the stories for children broadcast by the city-owned station WNYC. After *Pioneer* was retired in 1938 because of its "dilapidated condition," it was replaced by *Progress*, christened by Mayor Fiorello H. La Guardia, "who used the occasion to obtain a library card, listing his occupation as 'civic worker... (29).

The Queens Library celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 1946, with a gala dinner for five hundred guests at \$5 a person. By this time it had grown to forty-four branches and a large Renaissance Revival Central Library, opened on Parsons Boulevard in 1928. In 1965, Congress passed the Library Services and Construction Act, as well as the Immigration Act which abolished national quotas, as parts of President Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society agenda. The library continued to respond innovatively to challenge, establishing its own "Operation Headstart" six months before the federal programs inception. In 1969, it opened the Langston Hughes Community Library and Cultural Center, in Corona, Three years later a spacious new Central Library, opened on Merrick Boulevard, became "the first major urban library in the nation with all public services on one floor" (41).

"The Library emerged like a phoenix from the [1970s] fiscal crisis" (47) By its ninetieth anniversary in 1986, it was the most heavily used library system in the nation. By 1996, circulation topped fifteen million items and eight million people used its services. No resident of Queens, except at the tip of the Rockaway Peninsula, lives more than a mile from a branch. The library has kept up with pervasive technological changes. Five years ago it installed a computerized catalog, InfoLinQ—Information On-Line at Queens Library. On its hundredth birthday, 19 March 1996, the library entered cyberspace, unveiling its Internet homepage and offering access to the World Wide Web. As Jeffrey Kroessler concludes, "At its heart, however, the mission of the Queens Library will remain the same well into the 21st century... providing reading materials and information for the borough's increasingly diverse population" (50).

Except for a few contributed by businesses, most of the photographs that intersperse the text and compose the second half of the book are from the voluminous collections of the library's Long Island Division. They illustrate not only the development of the library and its services, but also the history and vibrancy of the borough, *Lighting the Way.- The Centennial History of the Queens Borough Public Library, 1896-1996* is not only a fascinating chronicle of a magnificent library system, but also a tribute to the community it serves.

CHRISTINE KING
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Frederick W. Bone. *Sands of Time: A History of the Sand and Gravel Operations in Port Jefferson and Nearby Harbors*, Edited by Mildred Michos. Setauket: Three Village Historical Society, 1998. Illustrations, glossary, bibliography, index. Pp. 157. \$13 (paper), add \$2.50 S/H, from Three Village Historical Society, P. O. Box 76, East Setauket, N.Y. 11733.

I once was told that somewhere in the Columbia University School of Engineering is a vial labeled "Cement Sand, Port Jefferson, NY." Engineers trained there in the first half of this century associated Port Jefferson with an indispensable source of raw material—the type of sand and gravel needed to make concrete. *Sands of Time* tells the story of that industry of another age, which changed the community and the landscape until eradicated by environmental awareness and village ordinance.

Today, mining sand from the sea floor is associated with the artificial rebuilding of beaches. Sand has other uses, which, if not more productive, are certainly more permanent. Sand fills our societal demand for concrete, mortar, roadbeds, and many other needs. Around Long Island there are unimaginably vast quantities of sand offshore. This resource has been both used and abused from time to time in our history. In the early days of Long Island, sand was exported, partially in exchange for other building material. Around the Three Village area, one can find old walls of red rock-sandstone that came from the Connecticut Valley when waterborne transport was the most efficient way to move bulky items. Robert Moses dug up submerged sands for coastal construction projects like the Ocean Parkway. Some deep holes are found in the bays along the parkway's length, where sand was dredged to feed the new public works (offshore sand mining is called dredging, because dredges are used to remove the sand from the sea floor).

New York still needs six to eight million cubic yards of sand per year for the expansion and maintenance of highways, bridges, and urban infrastructures. One company mines offshore sand for these uses, in an arrangement under which they dredge the main shipping channel into New York Harbor at no public cost, pay a royalty (to New Jersey) for this sand, and supply it to construction companies. This is the only offshore mining company for sand and gravel on the East Coast, although it is a common practice in Europe, Japan, Hong Kong, and many other places. It is likely that the careful use of these offshore reserves of raw material is greatly preferable to creating open pit mines on land.

Dredging for sand and gravel was an important industry in Port Jefferson and vicinity for decades, starting on Crane Neck Beach before 1874: "Large quantities of gravel are taken from the beach at Crane Neck and shipped to New York and other cities where it is used in furnaces for smelting iron, in laying gravel roofs and in the manufacture of sandpaper and glass" (3). But *Sands of Time*, "in large part, is the story of the industry's heyday between the World Wars, told by a man with personal connections to this bit of our history. His father entered Port Jefferson on a dredge in 1923, and Fred Bone began to work in a sand and gravel operation in 1938. His intimacy with the subject gives authority to his account,

and a certain comfort in the telling.

Another treatment of the topic by Jeffrey Kassner, "The Mining of Port Jefferson Harbor for Sand and Gravel, 1910-1948," *LIIJ* 8 (Spring 1996): 213-24, may be more scholarly than Bone's somewhat uneven ramble through its history. However, the technical details of the industry are enlivened by Bone's stories, like that of finding the anchors from a dredging operation off Flax Pond Inlet (26), the impact of the 1938 hurricane (135), or a worker being blown, uninjured, through a twenty-inch dredging pipe (132). He also makes connections with topics farther afield. The Sand Fleas' Baseball Team, Prohibition and rum-running, catching eels, and other peripheral topics set the dredgers into the life and times of the community.

The industry cannot be separated from the residential development of the community. Special ties existed between Belle Terre and sand mining. For Belle Terre to incorporate, the Seaboard Sand and Gravel Company had to bring some of its land into the incorporation to meet the assessed evaluation, and, in 1938, the first mayor of Belle Terre commuted to New York City on a seaplane moored at the company's sand and gravel dock (141). Of course, there were scandals and lawsuits and exposes, as well as the changing times that led to the demise of sand mining in Port Jefferson.

I have to admit, however, that I most enjoy the book's photographs. The text is almost an extended caption setting off more than one hundred photos from the era. They show us how this industry and the dredgers fit into the local scenery. Among the collection are photographs of people engaged in the business, equipment of the industry and era, as well as both familiar and unfamiliar facilities and sites. Bone reveals where to look for remnants still to be found (and perhaps wondered at) of this *element of* Port Jefferson's past.

Fred Bone died three weeks after completing the manuscript for *Sands of Time*. We are fortunate that he told this story, and grateful to Mildred Michos for skillfully editing it for us.

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Vincent R. Seyfried. *A Long Island Academy: The Flushing Institute, 1845-1901*. Garden City: the author, 1997. Illustrations. Pp. 168. \$25. (Available from the author, 163 Pine Street, Garden City, N.Y. 11530; plus \$1.74 for postage.)

In "Who Has Done More? Vincent Seyfried and the Discovery of Queens History," Jeffrey A. Kroessler analyzed Seyfried's prodigious contributions to Queens history (*LIIJ* 9 [Fall 1997]: 79-85). *Flushing Institute* is the most recent in his Queens Community Series.

The founder of the Flushing Institute was Ezra Fairchild, a teacher who had conducted private schools in several New Jersey communities before relocating to Long Island in 1845. Ezra was only forty-six years of age, but soon was incapacitated by a stroke, and his twenty-seven year-old son, Elias A. Fairchild,

became principal in 1852. Allen Northrop became an instructor in mathematics and science in 1851, married Elias's sister, and, within a few years, became his partner.

The longevity of the Flushing Institute is doubtless the result of the successful half-century careers of Elias Fairchild and Allen Northrop. The school also had four teachers whose careers each exceeded forty years, though, Seyfried notes, three of them taught subjects for which students were charged extra (modern languages, music, and drawing), and they probably were not employed full-time at the Institute. This continuity of teachers and principal provided much greater stability than most academies enjoyed, and was particularly important to the Flushing Institute, an entrepreneurial institution which did not have an external board of trustees.

Some records of the Institute have survived, including a complete roster of students. (Although the location of the materials, including glass plate photographs, is not indicated, they are in the author's private collection.) The range of ages of the students from five to sixteen or seventeen was fairly typical for academies. Many attended for only a year or two. Seyfried lists names, date of entrance, community, and sponsor for each of the students, which constitutes nearly two-thirds of his book's pages. The enrollment was eighty when the school opened, peaked at 175 in 1865, and was in "rapid decline" in the years after 1881. Seyfried analyzes student enrollments during three periods: 1845-1860; 1861-1880, the "Golden Age"; and 1881-1901, the "Declining Years." Initially, Manhattan accounted for the largest group of students, followed closely by Flushing. The third-largest group was from New Jersey (some students followed Fairchild's relocation of his school to Long Island). Interestingly, in the years before the Civil War, the Institute drew 9 percent of its students from the southern states, and 8 percent from abroad, the majority from Cuba and Mexico.

The number and percentage of students from Flushing, Queens County, and other areas of Long Island increased in the two decades after 1861, but declined from Manhattan, other parts of New York State, and other states (particularly from the South). Seyfried notes an increasing number of German and Irish names, reflecting the economic mobility of more recent immigrant families. In the Institute's last decades, total enrollments declined drastically (beginning by 1874), and it drew most of its students from a narrower radius. Forty percent were from the village of Flushing, almost 20 percent from other parts of present-day Queens, and 15 percent from elsewhere on Long Island and Manhattan, but only 7 percent from upstate or out-of-state. Surprisingly, the foreign contingent accounted for 19 percent of the students in this final period, with the largest numbers from Cuba, Venezuela, and Puerto Rico.

The Flushing Institute enrolled only boys, and all the teachers were men. Apparently the records and Seyfried are silent on who provided meals for the students, but there is a clue in his statement that, "Emily Fairchild Northrop, wife of Allen, inherited the Institute and ran it as an kind of informal boarding house till her death" (88). Mrs. Northrop probably also had been responsible for providing room and board for Institute students, an essential but unacknowledged part of the enterprise.

Institutions that fail to survive, however important they may have been in their own time, far too often disappear from the written histories. Fortunately, Seyfried has provided extensive information on the Flushing Institute, including its students and teachers, utilizing newspaper accounts and surviving records. His book is lavishly illustrated with more than forty well-reproduced photographs, many of which are nearly full page (in the book's 8-1/2" x 11" format). Quotations from the Institute's catalogs provide good descriptions of the building, calendar, and curriculum. An article from the 1857 school newspaper gives a student's account of the Institute's daily schedule.

Unfortunately, Seyfried errs in some of his statements about the general situation of education, including in his opening paragraph. Public elementary (common) schools were available from the mid-1810s, though most were not free until the late 1860s. Academics, female seminaries, institutes, and other private and entrepreneurial educational institutions competed for students with both common schools and colleges in the nineteenth century. In 1850, there were only two or three public high schools in upstate New York cities and none on Long Island. After an 1853 state law permitted union free school districts to establish academic departments (i.e. high school grades) and allowed academics to unite with public schools, the number of public high schools increased. In the late 1870s, enrollments in high schools surpassed those in academics. The private academics then competed not only with each other for students, but also with public high schools.

Flushing High School opened in 1872, and Queens had several other high schools by the 1890s. When the Flushing Institute closed its doors in 1901, enrollment was down to twenty students; Fairchild and Northrop were in their seventies and in failing health. The students' admiration for the principal was demonstrated in the formation of an alumni association, which raised money for a monument for Fairchild's grave and continued to hold annual dinners in New York City until 1953.

Although Seyfried exaggerates in claiming that the Flushing Institute was "the most noted prep school in America" (9), for several decades it was a very successful institution with more than a local reputation. Seyfried achieves his goal of providing the "fullest possible account" of the Flushing Institute. It was indeed, "an academic institution of which Long Island can well be proud" (1).

NATALIE A. NAYLOR
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Booknotes

Here are capsule reviews of two new reprints of historical classics by the distinguished Long Island publisher, Dover Publications.

Jacob A. Riis. *The Battle with the Slum*, with photographs by the author. 1902; reprint, Mineola: Dover Publications, 1998. Illustrations, index. Pp. xiv, 465. \$14.95 (paper).

An impressive reprint of the sequel to *How the Other Half Lives* (1890),

concerning the somewhat improved status of New York City's tenement houses after his earlier work called attention to their squalor. This compelling study will interest those concerned with the city's history and the plight of the urban poor at the turn of the century.

Admiral David D. Porter. *The Naval History of the Civil War*. 1886; reprint, Mineola: Dover Publications, 1998. Illustrations, index. Pp. xvi, 843. \$37.95 (8½" x 11¼, paper).

This expert account offers Civil War buffs, naval historians, and general readers fascinating views of an often-overlooked facet of a defining chapter in American history. More than two hundred illustrations of battle scenes, individuals, and maps enhance the authoritative text.

To be reviewed in our Spring 1999 issue:

Newsday. *Long Island: Our Story—The Celebrated Series*. Illustrations, index. Pp. 428. \$49.95. Melville: Newsday, 1988. The collected articles from the 1997-1998 series.

Mary Feeney Vahey, *A Hidden History: Slavery, Abolition, and the Underground Railroad in Cow Neck and on Long Island* (Port Washington: Cow Neck Peninsula Historical Society, 1998). Illustrations, bibliography. Pp. 49. \$10 (paper) At the Dolphin Bookshop, Port Washington; Port Washington Public Library; Old Bethpage Village gift shop; or from Cow Neck Historical Society, 338 Port Washington Blvd., Port Washington, N. Y. 11050 (add \$3.50 s/h). By perusing historical archives, family records, and local lore, the author has put together an interesting picture, revealing some little-known details of slavery and abolition on Long Island.

COMMUNICATIONS

Dear Editor,

I read with great enthusiasm the article about Lion Gardiner and Gardiner's Island (Roger Wunderlich, "Lion Gardiner, Long Island's Founding Father," *LIIJ* 10 [Spring 1998], 172-85). However, I object to crediting Gardiner with being the first English-speaking person to settle in what became New York State, and have found records concerning what apparently is an old controversy.

First, I would like to introduce what I learned from Regents of the University documents and other sources pertaining to New York's colonial borders, which included parts of Maine, the Pemaquid colony, Elizabeth Islands, Martha's Vineyard, and Nantucket until ceded to the Massachusetts colony in 1686 and 1692. Having been exposed only to New York history, not to that of the above colonies, a bias toward the facts may result. For example, is Luce Landing, in the northeastern section of the town of Riverhead, named after the original surveyor of Martha's Vineyard, which may, indeed, represent part of a "lost" record in Long Island history?

While researching Dutch and English records, I came upon the *Calendar of Historic Manuscripts* (E. B. O'Callaghan, ed. [Albany, 1865]), which contains a property transfer dated 15 November 1638. This document records a patent to George Holmes and Thomas Hall for land at Deutel ("Turtle") Bay on Manhattan Island, granted about one year earlier than the 1639 patent to Lion Gardiner for Gardiners Island (which he called the Isle of Wight and the Native Americans called Manchonake, meaning a place where many had died). There is another patent to Thomas Hall, dated 15 May 1647, for a Manhattan lot stretching from 47th to 52d streets, and, roughly, from the East River to Second Avenue.

To paraphrase the record, in about 1635, a party from Virginia, led by George Holmes, took possession of the abandoned Fort Nassau on the Delaware River. Thomas Hall, an indentured servant of Holmes's, escaped, found his way to Fort Amsterdam, and conveyed the news of this encroachment to the Dutch governor Wouter Van Twiller, who sent an armed boat, captured all without resistance, and brought them to New Amsterdam. All were returned to Virginia except Holmes and Hall, who were, "perhaps with Augustine Heerman, the first to introduce there the cultivation of tobacco" (183). According to English manuscripts, Holmes's introduction of this cultivation so far atoned for his encroachment that he and his runaway servant, Thomas Hall, were given grants of land on Manhattan. Both men became reputable freeholders, occupying prominent places in colonial history (190-1).

Augustine Heerman, who settled on Maryland's Eastern Shore on the Bohemia River, in present-day Cecil County, had a warehouse in New Amsterdam inside the wall, the site of which was excavated fifteen years ago. Heerman is considered one of Maryland's "most important pioneers, a man from the province of Bohemia in what is now Czechoslovakia" (Richard Pratt, "The Eastern Shore, Maryland," in *Regional Houses* [from a series in the *Ladies Home Journal* (Philadelphia: Curtis Publishing, 1946-1947), 58]. Bohemia, the house on the Bohemia River,

was built of brick, all header-bond, in 1745, and noted for its use of molded plaster.

The historian John H. Innes observed that Thomas Hall resided on the former farm, brewery, orchard, and buildings of Philip du Tricux from August 1654 until his death in 1669 (Innes, *New Amsterdam and Its People: Studies, Social and Topographical of the Town under Dutch and Early English Rule* [1902; reprint, Port Washington: Ira J. Friedman, 1969], 326). Hall was a prominent citizen of New Amsterdam for thirty-five years, which would place him in the colony of New Netherland as early as 1634, five years before Gardiner landed on the Isle of Wight, although the reported encroachment was ca. 1635. It is recorded that Thomas Hall, originally from Gloucestershire, later married Anna Mitford, from Bristol, a “distressed [she had been married to William Quick, who died quite poor] English widow” in New Amsterdam. If so, Anna Mitford is a candidate for the title of “earliest English settler in New York State,” perhaps predating both Thomas Hall and Lion Gardiner!

In 1648, Hall was one of the five first fire wardens commissioned to inspect houses in the city for dangerous conditions, with consequent fines used to purchase fire-fighting equipment. In 1650, he was one of the delegates on behalf of the people in their application for a city government for New Amsterdam, and, in 1668, one of the commissioners appointed to lay out and determine the most convenient wagon-road to Harlem (Innes, 328). According to Innes:

This man, who was for nearly thirty-five years a prominent character at New Amsterdam, possesses a peculiar interest to us as having been with his partner, George Holmes, beyond any reasonable doubt the first English settlers in the present State of New York; that honor has been claimed for Lion Gardiner, who acquired Gardiner's Island at the eastern end of Long Island, in 1639; but in 1638 Thomas Hall with Holmes was in occupation of ex-Director Van Twiller's tobacco plantation at Sapokanican near the later Greenwich village, and in all probability they had been there for at least a year or two before that date (Innes, 326-27).

George J. Myers Jr.

Dear Editor,

(This response to a query to the author about his article in the current issue refers to the denominational identity of the East End's early churches.)

...The first churches were independent-Congregationalist in essence, until a presbytery of sorts appeared around 1716, of which no real records exist. I think they had three or so town churches in the group. The Presbytery of Suffolk, formed around 1747/1748, came about because of the divisions of the Great Awakening. The ministers wanted to police irregularities and license proper candidates. However, by the early 1780s, the presbytery was almost defunct and seldom met, perhaps a reflection of the independent historic character of the churches. Meanwhile, several villages in certain communities like Southold and Bridgehampton had created Separate churches as a result of the Awakening, heirs

to a more experiential faith and the half-way covenant. These became Strict Congregationalists by 1781; by the 1790s, there were several flourishing Strict Congregationalists meetings in and around Riverhead and some smaller villages. If anyone should be interested, I did a study of this entitled, "More Light on a New Light: James Davenport's Religious Legacy, Eastern Long Island, 1740-1840," that appeared in the January 1992 issue of *New York History*...

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