

Learning Places Spring 2016

LIBRARY REPORT

Brooklyn Public Library



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Introduction

The archives at the Brooklyn Public Library are a fantastic way for us as professors and students to capture the history of our focus on Vinegar Hill, Brooklyn. The archives are the spot where we scoop up the rare documents, maps, letters, and old books from late

18th century to early 20th century, in strong hopes of expanding our knowledge of our area.

Pre-Visit Reflection

I have never been to the Brooklyn Public Library before but I had heard very good things about it, from the unique architecture and exterior of the building to its endless informative resources. My only concern was getting there on time with the public transportation, since I usually have to take a bus to the college and then find whatever subway brings me to the library.

The Visit

I really enjoyed what the Brooklyn Public Library had to offer. The old maps of Vinegar Hill that were so vintage and delicate that they were covered in plastic protectors to prevent damages were fascinating. At this point in time, I am still unsure of what exactly I would like my main focal point of my Vinegar Hill project to be, but the Brooklyn Public Library taught me new strategies of how to dig into ideas and eventually I will find what I am looking for.

We learned in class that archives are NOT libraries, and I can understand the difference now, even though it is all under the same roof. Archives exist to preserve important historical information and make it accessible.

Sources:

1. Brooklyn Daily Eagle
2. "Brooklyn By Name" - Leonard Benardo & Jennifer Weiss

Discoveries

1. Neighborhood History
 - a. Industrial area
 - b. Growing residential community.

2. Key Events / Historical Dates

- a. Brooklyn and Manhattan Bridges
- b. Whiskey Wars
- c. St. Anne's Church

Names to Know:

- a. Joshua Sands
- b. John Jackson
- c. Charles Bulfinch and John McComb

Who were they?

- a. John Jackson's property had access to the waterfront and he took this opportunity to bring his shipbuilding company to Vinegar Hill.
- b. Joshua Sands helped develop the waterfront, manufactured rigging for his merchant vessels.
- c. Constructed the Commandant's House, located at the southeast corner of Evans and Little Streets, in 1806.

TOPICS & KEYWORDS

Henry Stiles, Joshua Sands, Comfort Sands, John Jackson, Front Street, Water Street, Plymouth Street, Hudson Street, Jackson Street, Gold Street, Navy Yard

QUESTIONS:

1. Who was the person/people who first created these maps?
2. Why did the Daily Eagle stop their business?

3. How many of these street names still exist?

RESEARCH METHODS:

1. Question 1

- a. Lookup reasons why maps were thought up
- b. Check the maps to see if they are valuable
- c. Lookup the names on the maps

2. Question 2

- a. Find most recent Daily Eagle article from mid-century and see if there was any explanation

3. Question 3

- a. Compare maps of same area over different years
- b. Find out any name changes based on the year given

Post Visit Reflection

I really enjoyed this day at the Brooklyn Public Library, I felt it was more informative than I had expected. The archive was quiet and away from the rest of the library. Our guide was very helpful, she showed us the different sources to use and how to use them.

The location of the Brooklyn Public Library was beautiful too, right by Grand Army Plaza, surrounded by beautiful sculptures and architecture.