

Learning Places Spring 2016

# LIBRARY / ARCHIVE REPORT

## New York Public Library



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### INTRODUCTION

Today's objective is to have a sit down with one of New York Public Library's Librarians. This meeting will be taken place in a conference style room which is off limits to the general public; unless otherwise directed. At this meeting we will have the opportunity to observe the maps of Vinegar Hill tracing back to the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## PRE-VISIT REFLECTION

When I think of Midtown the first thing that comes to my mind are extremely tall Skyscrapers. I never actually consider anything else such as the library. I've visited the city a plethora of times but never have I visited The New York Public Library. I was familiar with the location however, the library in my opinion more resembled a post office instead. I thought it looked so much like a post-office: that I near walked right past it. I thought it resemble a post-office I once visited off of Madison Avenue within walking distant of Madison Square Garden. I must say that I'm quite excited about exploring a place that's not necessarily new, but new to me. I am interested in viewing maps which I can possibly use to help me with my project.

## DOCUMENTATION of site & resources (maps/archival documents/photos)



Above is a photo taken from the second floor of The New York Public Library. I snapped this photo just

before heading to the Archieve because I personally thought that it was absolutely beautiful. This is a picture of a bronze lion mask drinking fountain which obviously is no longer in use. Although it is nor longer in use its still has its history. This was just one of many pics that I thought was interesting.

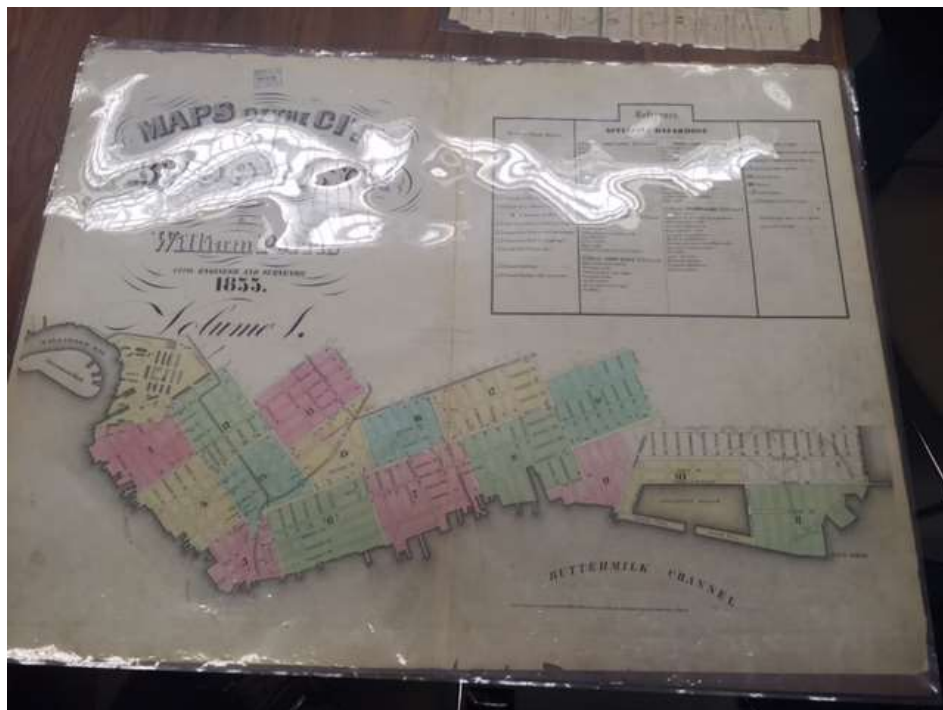
The pictures above are the interior of the NYPL both taken from the top of the staircase.



The photos above show the interior of the Archives' room at the NYPL. I thought that these two photos could show the similarities as well as the differences between this library and the Brooklyn Central Library that we visited prior. The similarities I noticed was that they both had books along the walls and they both had windows, however at this location there is also a mezzanine level of books as well. The differences would be that at Brooklyn Central Public Library there was an accessible computer where you could easily search information from the library database and about 4-5 tables for you to relax and do your research. Whereas at the New York Public Library there were no computers and just one long conference table with two tables off to the side (as shown up above).

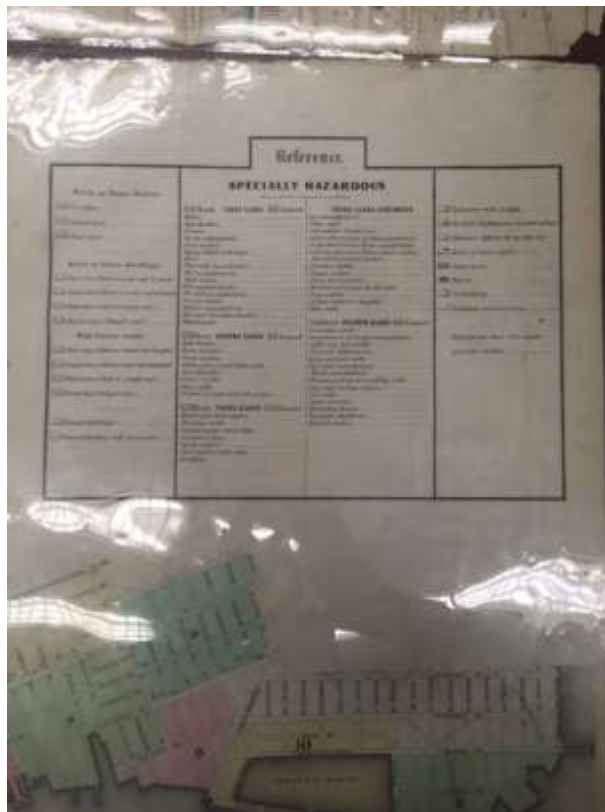


Ward Lines (Green), Stitched Lines (Steam Railroads), Pink Color (Brick or Stone Buildings), Yellow Color (Frame Buildings), X's (Stables or Sheds), Circle w/ + (Fire Hydrants), Straight Lines (Street Railways) etc. I think these photos are important because it helps us to better differentiate what we are observing.



The map above is an 1855 Map of The City of Brooklyn. This map is an overview of Vinegar hill and some in its entirety. This map consists of a total of

18 plates. I am most interested in plates 17 and some of plate 18 which covers both Harrison Alley and pretty much all the other alleys throughout Vinegar Hill.



The picture above can also be found on the 1855 Map of The City of Brooklyn. I however was unable to above the light which was shining on the map so I took this photo in two parts. This photo is of great significance in order for one the understand exactly what they are looking at when viewing the map in question. In this map each plate has a color code which I think is extremely helpful.

## DISCOVERIES

- a. Neighborhood History
  - a. Railways
  - b. Old Farm Lines
  - c. Industrial Companies
- b. Key Events / Historical Dates
  - a. Early 17<sup>th</sup> Century
  - b. Mid-18<sup>th</sup> Century (1855)
  - c. Early 19<sup>th</sup> Century (1908-1929)
  - d. 20<sup>th</sup> Century
- c. Key Players
  - a. Hyde
  - b. Bromely
  - c. Perris
- d. Relationship Key Players
  - a. Maps
  - b. Explanatory Index
- e. Important Changes to Neighborhood
  - a. Brooklyn Bridge
  - b. Manhattan Bridge
- f. Other Observations
  - a. The variety of maps
  - b. The condition of the maps

#### Public Perception of Key

- a. Increased Population
- b. More Alleys than I thought

## TOPICS & KEYWORDS

Archives' Database, Wikipedia, Archival Architecture, 18 Plates from the 1855 The City of Brooklyn Map.

## QUANTITATIVE DATA for Area of Study

Subject	Data
Land Ownership	City Owned founded 1895.
Number of Blocks	An endless amount.
# of Buildings on a Typical Block	Every city block.
Materials	51 Million.
# of Stories of Buildings	2 Stories
Residential Bldgs	Of Course, its 5 <sup>th</sup> Avenue. There are lots of them.
Empty Lots	None.
Commercial Uses	Everywhere.
Industrial Uses	None.

## QUESTIONS to Research Further

### QUESTIONS:

1. What is the width of the library?

2. How long did it take to build?
3. What was it before it before it was a library?

RESEARCH METHOD/ ADDITIONAL SOURCES NEEDED TO ANSWER EACH QUESTION ABOVE:

1. Question 1
  - a. Library archives
  - b. NYPL.org (maybe)
  - c. Historical Archives
2. Question 2
  - a. Architectural Archives
  - b. NYPL.org
  - c. Historical Archives
3. Question 3
  - a. Library Archives
  - b. NYPL.org
  - c. Historical Archives

## SUMMARY / POST VISIT REFLECTION

It was a pleasure visiting the New York Public Library because at this visit we were given really great information about Vinegar, through maps. I thought the librarian was extremely helpful and very knowledgeable about all the information that was provided to us. The Archive room was nice and spacious and it had windows which allowed the sun to shine through. I was a bit surprised that it didn't have a computer in the room which we could use; but overall it was okay. I thought the art on both the interior and exterior of the building were visually breath taking; I think it's a wonderful place for anyone getting married to take wedding photo, but only if they are allowed of course. Last but not least I visited the book shop before as well as after the meeting, I thought it was extremely inviting and had a lot of really great things.