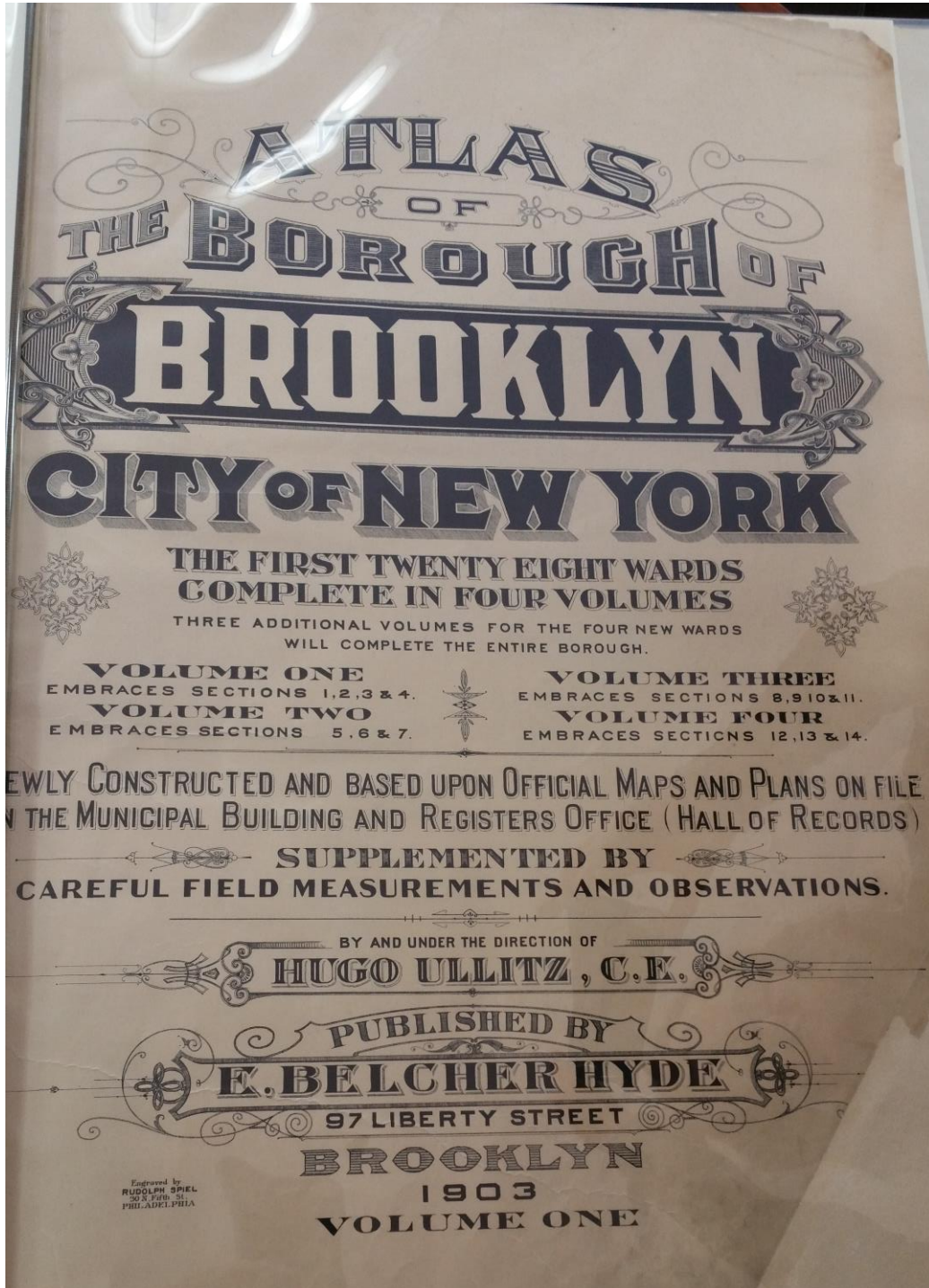


Learning Places Fall 2015

SITE REPORT

Brooklyn Public Library



Ben Sternhell

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INTRODUCTION

We visited the main branch of the Brooklyn Public Library at Grand Army Plaza on Monday October 26 as part of our research project on the Farragut Houses. We had already been to the main branch of the New York Public Library, the Stephen A. Schwarzman Building, to look at maps of the area around the projects—DUMBO, downtown Brooklyn, Vinegar Hill—and see how the layout had changed over the years. The Brooklyn Public Library had additional maps, including transit maps, which were really useful for my particular research on transportation. Even more exciting, the Brooklyn library had folders of news clippings about transportation. These were exactly what I needed for my research. I even found a map showing the old elevated lines, the main form of transportation to the area before the subway was constructed.

PRE-VISIT REFLECTION

I'm looking forward to our visit to the Brooklyn Public Library, partly because I've never been there, and also because the visit to the main branch of the New York Public Library was so interesting and useful. Although I'd been to the main branch of the NYPL—the one with the lions—many times, and to at least five of its branches (Epiphany, Jefferson Market, Mid-Manhattan, Ottendorfer, and Tompkins Square), as a Manhattan resident, I had never even thought about libraries in Brooklyn. I'm eager to see the main branch of the Brooklyn Public Library at Grand Army Plaza, and I'm hoping that I'll be able to find transit maps there, as there were very few transit maps made available at the NYPL.

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SITE DOCUMENTATION



THE 3RD TRACK What "SUBWAYS FOR BROOKLYN" Really Means

OUTRAGE

RUIN For Hundreds
LOSS For Thousands

Business Men Driven Out
Property Sacrificed
Foreclosure Sales and
Widespread Disaster

9 FT. GIRDERS
TO CARRY
FREIGHT TRAINS
Barely Room
For Trolley Car

PLEASE COME IN AND SIGN PETITION

To STOP "L" Construction on Fulton Street and Jamaica Avenue
To LAY OUT 4-Track Subway To Jamaica, and BUILD as far as possible NOW

To Save Brooklyn's Old Residence Section and the Jamaica Avenue Territory
and not Allow History to Repeat in 1905, through Jamaica Ave. Plot to built eventually either by way of
Fulton St. or EASTERN PARKWAY, WHICH?

FULTON STREET SUBWAY LEAGUE
714 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

Public Opinion Controls

SITE OBSERVATIONS

1. The main branch of the Brooklyn Public Library is known as the Central Library.
2. The architecture is very impressive, as if the library were going to fly away. According to the BPL website, the building was designed to resemble an open book, “with the spine on Grand Army Plaza and the two wings opening like pages onto Eastern Parkway and Flatbush Avenue.”
3. The gate at the entrance is decorated with many bronze sculptures depicting figures from American literature.
4. The plaza outside the library is large and includes benches, café tables, fountains, and plants.
5. We particularly looked at items from the Brooklyn Collection.
6. The collection included many atlases, including ones with old transit maps.
7. We also looked at folders of old newspaper clippings (the “morgue”), particularly from *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*. I was able to find very valuable information about transportation.

QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESIS

QUESTIONS:

1. When did the Brooklyn Collection first become available to the public?
2. How many items are in the Brooklyn Collection?
3. Why does the collection include the full archive of *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*?
4. What other newspapers are available?
5. Is there a complete collection of transit maps?

HYPOTHESIS:

1. The Brooklyn Collection probably includes a complete collection of transit maps.
2. The Brooklyn Collection probably includes other transportation-related memorabilia.

QUANTITATIVE DATA

Subject	Data
When Central Library of BPL opened	February 1, 1941
When Flatbush Avenue wing completed	1973
Address of Central Library	Grand Army Plaza, intersection of Flatbush Avenue and Eastern Parkway
Number of BPL branches	60
Number of items in Central collection	More than 1 million books, magazines, and multimedia materials
Architectural style of building	Beaux-Arts
Size of Central Library Plaza	6,000 square feet
Types of items in Brooklyn Collection	Books, maps, photos, newspaper clippings, postcards, playbills, city directories, phone books, trading cards, sheet music, children's books—much of it available in digital form.
Publication dates of <i>The Brooklyn Daily Eagle</i>	1841–1955

SUMMARY / POST VISIT REFLECTION

I really enjoyed our visit to the Brooklyn Public Library. The Brooklyn Collection was awesome, particularly the clippings from *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*. I was able to find a transit map showing the old elevated lines—the main public transportation before the underground subway was constructed—and also many newspaper articles about transportation and transportation history. This material will be extremely useful for my research project.

Because I want to demonstrate the importance of transportation in urban development, I was really happy to discover the Brooklyn Collection. I plan to do more research in the BPL's digital archives about everything Brooklyn-related, particularly their newspaper collection, available on their special website *Brooklyn Newsstand*.

I'm really glad we were introduced to the Brooklyn Public Library, because even though I love libraries and was well-acquainted with the NYPL system, I don't think I would ever have discovered the Brooklyn Collection on my own.

REFERENCES TO EXPLORE HYPOTHESIS

1. Brooklyn Collection, *Bklyn Public Library*;
<http://www.bklynlibrary.org/brooklyncollection>.
2. Brooklyn Public Library main website, *Bklyn Public Library*;
<http://www.bklynlibrary.org/>.
3. *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle 1841-1955*, Brooklyn Newsstand, *Bklyn Public Library*;
http://bklyn.newspapers.com/title_1890/the_brooklyn_daily_eagle/.
4. *Brooklyn Life 1890–1924*, Brooklyn Newsstand, *Bklyn Public Library*;
http://bklyn.newspapers.com/title_3477/brooklyn_life/.
5. Historical Maps, *nycsubway.org*; http://www.nycsubway.org/wiki/Historical_Maps.
6. “History of Public Transportation in New York City,” New York Transit Museum;
<http://www.transitmuseumeducation.org/trc/background>.