

Learning Places Fall 2017

# Library / Archive REPORT

## Hidden Gem In New York City



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### INTRODUCTION

New York City Public Library in Bryant Park, has an impressive surrounding area. The surrounding area of the NYPL, is impressive because of the features that are around it and one of the main features is Bryant Park which is right behind the library. The park goes through different changes throughout the seasons which is very inviting. The back of the library which is seen from the park looks massive and very breathtaking with big windows and overall look. The front entrance to the library feels as if you are walking into the past of New York City and the main floor when you enter the library has massive staircases and high ceiling. The NYPL seems similar to Grand Central Station with similar features that both have. The library makes you like you're about to find a hidden gem of New York City or the world.

# SITE OBSERVATIONS



(Taken by me)



(photo taken by <http://phoebesphoto.tumblr.com/>)

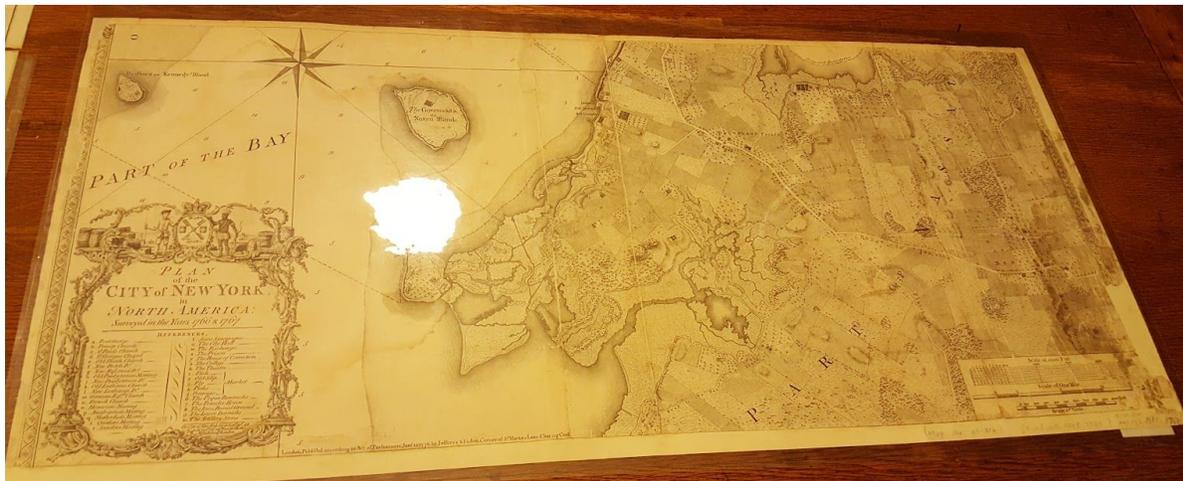


- What is the Genius Loci, or spirit, of this place?
  - Bryant Park which is behind the New York Public Library, also known as, Stephen A. Schwarzman Building, is the Genius Loci or spirit of the place. The reason Bryant Park is the central place of the library because the park is always under going changes throughout the different seasons which attracts many people to the park. Once you arrive at the park you would see the beautiful massive public library and it seems as if the location as a whole is attracting you in and bringing different types of people from all over to visit, get together, or hang out. Bryant Park pulls people into the park and when you're in the park, you would want to explore what the park has to offer which includes the library. You would see the back of the massive library which gives an elegant touch to the park and the surrounding area.
  
- What kind of archive or library is this? What kinds of materials / sources does this place collect?
  - The New York Public Library located in Bryant Park has different collections that are collected by the library which are maps, books, old cds, and much more. The library also has old things from New York City which gives the library a museum kind of feel when you're walking around. Stephen A. Schwarzman Building is known to be one of the busiest libraries because of all the materials they have, how many different collections, and all their different resources. They have materials in all different types of topics such as religion, psychology, history, travel, philosophy, and many more. They also have many of the collections in different languages. The map room in the library is pretty impressive and has many types of maps from different years and as well as different areas from around the world.
  
- Who might use this collection and for what purpose?
  - The collection that the NYPL has to offer is used by different type of people. Some of the people who might use the collections that are offered by the library are students, researchers, tourist, teachers, and many more. The library offers different collections for all the different types of researches that could be done. One collection that is on the main floor on the right side of the library is the map room. Within the map room you would find many maps from all over and within different years. So a person who would be doing research or just trying to get some facts for an article could go to the map room and look around for whatever map they need and get different information that would help them. Some older maps might only be handled by a librarian, so requesting some material like that would be best before visiting.

- Are there any special rules for using or accessing material?
- There's a few rules on using some of the materials that the library has to offer. One of the rules that is applied when looking at archival items that might be dated back in the 1800s and 1700s, or are in bad condition, it's best if the librarian be the only one who touches the material or moves, especially if the source is one of kind of only a few exist. Another thing in order to access certain materials is to make an appointment with the collection or resources that is being looked for, so that the library could look for the material before your arrive and also the librarian would even explain what the material is and the meaning of the collection.

## SOURCE ANALYSIS:

### CITATION for ARCHIVAL SOURCE #1:

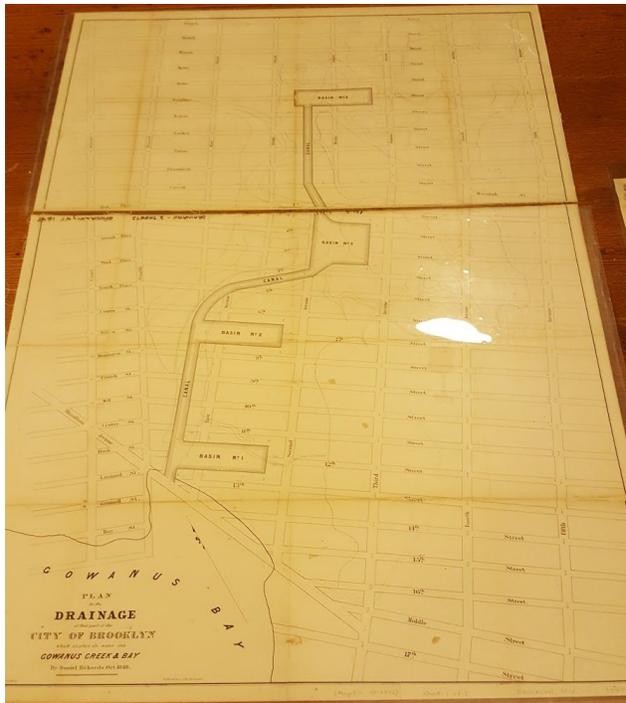


Lionel Pincus and Princess Firyal Map Division, The New York Public Library. (1776). *Plan of the city of New York in North America : surveyed in the years 1766 & 1767* Retrieved from <http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47df-f437-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>; (Map Div. 01-314)

1. What is this source and what is its purpose?
  - This source is a map of the Gowanus area in Brooklyn that was created back in 1766 and 1767 and it shows that is now known as the Gowanus Canal in its natural form before it became a canal and what was in the surrounding area. The map shows what was in the area and who lived in the area and where things were located. The purpose for this map was to understand what was in the area and the different types of people who were there and as well businesses. Also, the map shows references of the things that were located in the Gowanus area and the reference was written in alphabetical order from lower case a-z and then continue on with numbers 1-10. This map could be helpful in analysing what was located in the Gowanus areas before the Gowanus became a canal.
  
2. Who created it and who was it created for?
  - The person who created the map is Faden, William and this may have been created in order to know what is in the area and all things that make up the area as whole. Also, it could have been created in order to understand what kind of farms and businesses were in the area.
  
3. What does this source tell us about the place we are studying? What themes or subtopics does it relate to?
  - What the source is telling us about the place we are studying is that it did not look or consist of the things that it has now back in 1766 and 1767. The map shows how the Gowanus Canal looked in its natural form and how the land around looked at as well. Gowanus Canal in the map shows how it was formed and how it formed within the area we know now as Brooklyn, the canal was more of a creek which was called a saltmarsh. The different types of subtopics that this map relates to is history architecture, topography, and many more. The way it relates to history is that the map is rich in history because it was created in 1766 and it shows what was in the area at the time. This map also relates to topography because topography has to do with detailed description on maps of the natural features that make up the area. Therefore, this map could be used in different subjects and can relate to different themes.
  
4. How might it be integrated into a research project? What question could it be used to help answer?
  - This map of the Gowanus area could be integrated into a research project because the map shows

what the Gowanus creek use to look like, it shows it's natural form. This could help in different research project that deal with the history of a place and as well as the different eco-system a place has had over the years. The map could be helpful as well in answering questions that on how the Gowanus Canal use to look like and what was it's natural form. The map is proof that the Gowanus Canal wasn't always a canal and the surrounding area has changed as well. This would also help answer questions on how might the Gowanus creek in 1766 and 1767 was being used by the surrounding area.

## CITATION for ARCHIVAL SOURCE #2



Lionel Pincus and Princess Firyal Map Division, The New York Public Library. (1776). *Plan of the city of New York in North America : surveyed in the years 1766 & 1767* Retrieved from <http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47df-f437-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>; (Div 01-1886)

1. What is this source and what is its purpose?
  - The main purpose of this source was the plan of turning the Gowanus Creek into a useful canal that fit with the grid mapping of the new layout for Brooklyn. This map was created in order to show a plan and the way it was laid out was that the Gowanus Creek was drawn in thin lines and the Gowanus Canal was drawn in thick, bold lines above the existing creek. The map shows a plan on how the canal would be more useful to the new developing area around it. This source must of been used to help developed the Gowanus Canal in order to do trades in the area more easily.

2. Who created it and who was it created for?
  - The creator of the map is Daniel Richards, and this map was created on October 1848. This was a map that was created for the city of Brooklyn. The map might have been created to layout a functional plan of how the Gowanus Creek could be turned into a Canal and change to surrounding area as well.
  
3. What does this source tell us about the place we are studying? What themes or subtopics does it relate to?
  - This source tells us and shows us how the plan for the Gowanus Creek to be turned into a canal. The source shows us how the area would be formed into a grid kind of area as well at the Gowanus Creek being molded into the grid layout. It also shows how the area would undergo a lot of different changes and have something different develop in the area. The themes or subtopics that this map relates to is similar to the first source because they both relate to history and topography most. The way this map relates to history is because it shows how the past area use to look in thin lines like the Gowanus Creek and then in thick, bold lines it shows how the area is going to be changed. It also shows very detailed changes to the Gowanus Creek.
  
4. How might it be integrated into a research project? What question could it be used to help answer?
  - The way that this map might be integrated into a research project is that if you are studying on the different development that has been made throughout history in a certain area. This map shows how plans were made back in the day on how to change the area from what was there before. It also helps in understanding how the area changes and what was added on and as well what was removed from the area in the past. The map would be helpful in answering a question that deals with on how the Gowanus canal became a canal or if that was it's natural form. Another question this map could answer is how did the eco-system around the Gowanus Creek change. Lastly, it could also answer question how the Gowanus area wa developed through the years.

## GENERAL NOTES:

- The Gowanus Canal was a creek in 1766 and 1767 and then there was plan to change it in 1848.

- There was maps in the room that show when zoning was created and how that map was drawn out.
- The map of the Gowanus area has changed from 1766-2017
- The atlas that were shown to the class were actually part of the fire insurance.
- There was a rediscovery map, it shows gentrification of Brooklyn.

## QUESTIONS for Further RESEARCH

1. Why was the Gowanus Creek changed into a canal?
2. Was there any kind of green infrastructures added to the plan when changes the Gowanus Creek into a canal?
3. How drastic is the change in the eco-system of the Gowanus canal area changed through time?