

# THE LONG ISLAND HISTORICAL JOURNAL



Long Island Rail Road Train Arrives in Patchogue, N.Y. c. 1910.

Fall 2004/Spring 2005  
Volume 17, Nos. 1-2



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

*Walt Whitman*



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**THE LONG ISLAND  
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The Editor, LIHJ  
Department of History  
Stony Brook University  
Stony Brook, New York 11794-4348  
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KENDALL A. BIRR (1924-2004)  
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## CONTRIBUTORS

**Dr. Charles F. Howlett** is Assistant Professor in the Graduate Education Department at Molloy College. He retired as social studies coordinator after twenty-seven years of service at Amityville Memorial High School. He is the author of numerous books and articles in the field of American History.

**Stacey Horstmann Gatti** is an Assistant Professor of History at Long Island University

**Natalie A. Naylor** taught Long Island and American social history at Hofstra University and was director of its Long Island Studies Institute from its founding until she retired in 2000. She has been editor of the *Nassau County Historical Society Journal* since 1996.

**Louisa Thomas Hargrave** is currently the Director of Stony Brook University's Center for Wine. Ms. Hargrave is also a Suffolk County appointee to the Long Island Regional Planning Board.

**Sean Kass** graduated from Yale University in 2004. He is currently a paralegal at the law firm of Boies, Schiller & Flexner LLP and will attend Harvard Law School beginning this fall.

**Philip C. Weigand** was Professor in the Anthropology Department at Stony Brook University from 1975 to 1988, and chair of the department from 1977 to 1987. He is currently a Research Professor at the Colegio de Michoacan, a research and graduate institution in Mexico.

**Ruth Shackelford** is an Assistant Professor of History at Long Island University in Brooklyn.

**Justin Kastner** is an Assistant Professor in Food Safety and Security at Kansas State University

**Douglas Powell** serves as scientific director of the Food Safety Network, a Canada-based research center providing international research, policy evaluation and public information on issues related to food safety, animal and plant health, and agricultural security.

**Jason Ackleson** is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Government at New Mexico State University and Associate Director of the University Honors College.

**Terry Crowley** is Professor of History and Chair of the Department of History at the University of Guelph in Ontario, Canada.

**Karen Huff** is a Professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Business, University of Guelph.

**Lee E. Koppelman** is a Leading Professor of Political Science at Stony Brook University. He is also the Executive Director of the Center for Regional Policy Studies at Stony Brook

**Seth Forman** is Research Associate Professor at Stony Brook University's Center for Regional Policy Studies and the editor of the *Long Island Historical Journal*.

**T.A. Milford** is Assistant Professor of History at St. John's University.

**Walter Greenspan** is a specialist in local geography and government and a former resident of Jericho, Long Island.

**John A. Strong** is Professor emeritus at the Southampton campus of Long Island University. His most recent publication is *The Montaukett Indians of Eastern Long Island*, Syracuse University Press, 2001.

**Faren R. Siminoff** is an Assistant Professor of History at Nassau County Community College. She is the author of *Crossing the Sound: The Rise of Atlantic American Communities in Seventeenth Century Long Island*.

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At the time of submission:

**Alyssa Jakim** was a sophomore at Paul D. Schreiber High School in Port Washington.

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**Brian Tashman** was a sophomore at Paul D. Schreiber High School in Port Washington.

*Supervising Teacher: Mr. David O'Connor*

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For information, contact either of our two co-presidents:

Natalie A. Naylor  
496 Clarendon Road  
Uniondale, New York 11553  
(516) 538-7679  
email: [Natalie.Naylor@Hofstra.edu](mailto:Natalie.Naylor@Hofstra.edu)

Or

Richard Stewart  
16 Barteau Avenue  
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email: [cookiehs16@verizon.net](mailto:cookiehs16@verizon.net)

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# LONG ISLAND'S 106<sup>TH</sup> RESCUE WING: AMERICA'S OLDEST AIR NATIONAL GUARD UNIT

*Charles F. Howlett*

*The story of the nation's oldest Air National Guard Unit reflects Long Island's central role in the history of air flight and the development of military technology. Charles Howlett provides a comprehensive account of this unit's history.*

In the fall of 2003 members of an elite Air National Guard search-and-rescue unit based on the eastern end of Long Island conducted a dramatic mission in Iraq. A CH-47 Chinook helicopter had been shot down killing sixteen soldiers. Outside the city of Fallujah, two American soldiers remained trapped in the burning wreckage when rescuers from the 106<sup>th</sup> swooped in aboard their own HH-60G "Pave Hawks" (helicopters) and used the "jaws of life" to pry open the destroyed chopper and pull out the injured soldiers. A dangerous hot zone, the pararescuer jumpers (PJs) carried out their mission successfully. In the words of the unit's commander, Colonel Mike Canders, "that's what we train for. That's what we do."<sup>1</sup>

The 106<sup>th</sup> Rescue Group, along with its 102<sup>nd</sup> Rescue Squadron, is the oldest flying unit in the Air National Guard. It is part of the 106<sup>th</sup> Rescue Wing (RQW) currently located at Frances S. Gabreski Airport in Westhampton Beach Long Island. Throughout its long and distinguished history, the group has played a pivotal role in serving the state and nation.<sup>2</sup>

## **Early History**

It was during World War One, prior to American military intervention in Europe, that the Dick Acts of 1903 and 1908 – which established an effective National Guard – and the Army reorganization of 1916 cemented the relationship between the Guard and the U.S. Army.<sup>3</sup> From that point on, the Guard would play an increasingly important role in defending the nation while continuing to fulfill its traditional role of responding to natural disasters, emergency relief and homeland defense within the separate states. During the Great War, moreover, the initial use of air reconnaissance as a military intelligence factor aside from aerial bombing, played an important role in combat operations. Pilots from the New York National Guard performed their part in serving the nation overseas. Thus, it was in New York State that the first Air National Guard unit in U.S. history was created.<sup>4</sup>



According to military records, “when the U.S. Army’s 1<sup>st</sup> Provisional Aero Squadron was formed in 1913, Company A Signal Corps, New York National Guard had been in the air for five years.”<sup>5</sup> The actual airborne unit, the 102<sup>nd</sup>, dates back to an “aeronautical corps” interested in learning ballooning from the Park Avenue Armory in New York City in April 1908. Company A began flying on May 1, 1908. The pilots were from New York’s 71<sup>st</sup> regiment. Two years later, the Company “had funded its own \$500 home built copy of a Farman aircraft.”<sup>6</sup> Now flying “heavier-than-air craft,” the plane, along with its pilot, Private (later Major) Philip W. Wilcox, traveled to Pine Camp (now Fort Drum) for what was then referred to as the Field Instruction Period.<sup>7</sup> The beginnings of a modern military air force, though far from actual combat deployment, had begun with Wilcox’s training in upstate New York.

The first official pilot of the Air National Guard, however, was not Wilcox, but Private Beckwith Havens. In 1911, when the Curtiss Airplane Company worked jointly with the New York State Militia it had a “sizable ‘stable of exhibition pilots and planes which barnstormed the Country.’” Havens, holder of Flight Certificate 127, participated in the first aerial observations that were coordinated with ground maneuvers. It was August 1912, and it constituted the first war game using airplanes in American history.

According to a published report in the *New York Times*, some 20,000 soldiers participated. During one maneuver, Havens, flying a Curtiss biplane, “dived toward the ground and struck a Burgess-Wright biplane while landing at the far end of a meadow.” No injuries were reported and the game continued, along with the use of airplanes. The success of the aerial reconnaissance missions, as well as the combined large scale aerial-land maneuver, resulted in the creation of the 1<sup>st</sup> Company Signal Corps, New York Guard.<sup>8</sup>

On November 1, 1915, when the 1<sup>st</sup> Aero Company, Signal Corps, New York National Guard was established, the unit officially became an Aviation Detachment.<sup>9</sup> The company was composed of four officers and forty men. It had five “airplanes costing [a total of] \$29,500 furnished by the National Aeroplane Fund.” Flight training was conducted at the Mineola Aviation Field, later re-designated as Mitchel Field in honor of the former New York City mayor, John Purroy Mitchel (killed in a flight training accident in Louisiana in the summer of 1918). When the United States entered World War I Mitchel Field became a major storage facility for the distribution of war materials until the Armistice was signed on November 11, 1918. The 1<sup>st</sup> Aero Company’s attachment to Mitchel Field represents the earliest recorded documentation of the unit’s long history with Long Island.<sup>10</sup>

Prior to American military involvement in World War I, the 1<sup>st</sup> Aero Company became the first National Guard aviation unit activated for federal service on July 13, 1916. The unit was activated during the campaign against Pancho Villa in northern Mexico. The company was mustered into federal service at Mineola and trained under the command of Lieutenant (later Colonel) Raynal C. Bolling. Most importantly, on November 18, 1916, aviators of the 1<sup>st</sup> Aero Company conducted the first National Guard cross country formation flight from Mineola, New York to Princeton, New Jersey. Seven Curtiss JN<sup>4</sup>s, under the command of recently promoted Captain Ray Bolling, successfully carried out the mission.<sup>11</sup>

Although the War Department ordered that there would be no National Guard air units during the Great War, nearly all the members of the 1<sup>st</sup> Aero Company were commissioned in the Air Services. The 1<sup>st</sup> Aero Squadron was the first to report for flying duty in the American Expeditionary Force. Members of the squadron served with distinction on every front in France from Chateau Thierry to the Argonne.

Two highly decorated members of that unit, Colonel Bolling and Major James E. Miller were killed in action. Bolling, a Connecticut native and member of the Harvard class of 1900 and Harvard Law 1902, was named General Solicitor of U.S. Steel in 1913. In 1917 he was appointed Assistant Chief of the Air Service and headed the Bolling Mission to Europe. On March 26, 1918 Bolling was the first high-ranking U.S. officer to be killed in action. He was ambushed by German troops near the front lines on the Amiens-Saint-Quentin road during the Somme offensive. He was posthumously awarded the Cross of the Legion of Honor and the Distinguished Service Medal.

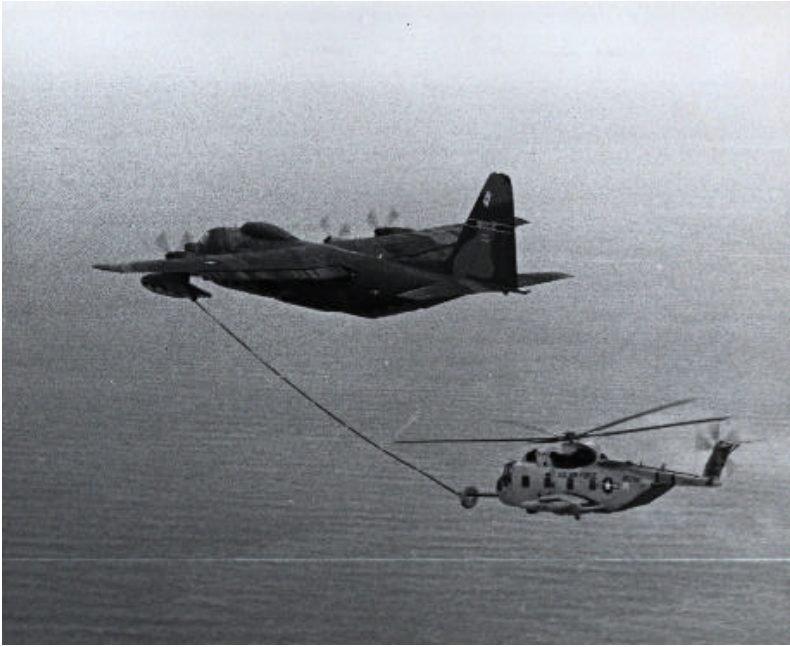
Miller was the Commander of the 95<sup>th</sup> Squadron and was "shot down by German fighters on March 10, 1918 over German territory in the Rheims sector." At the end of the war the unit was demobilized at Garden City on May 1, 1919.<sup>12</sup>

### **The Interwar Years**

In the aftermath of World War I, twenty former flyers worked with the Adjutant General of the New York National Guard. Their purpose was to organize their own observation squadron. After the Great War, despite the War Department's long predisposition favoring ground forces, Guard aviation was placed on a permanent basis.

The army organized twenty-nine Guard observation squadrons composed of some 4,800 experienced personnel during the interwar period. Thus, when the War Department approved the establishment of an Observation Squadron for each National Guard Division, the 102<sup>nd</sup> Squadron, 27<sup>th</sup> Division Air Service, New York National Guard, was

granted Federal recognition on August 8, 1921. It began with the assignment of three officers and all the enlisted men of Company M, 14<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry (a unit that dated from 1848).<sup>13</sup>



C-130 Refueling a Rescue Helicopter. Courtesy of Public Affairs Office, 106th RQW, New York Air National Guard.

The newly federalized squadron began its flying missions from Mitchel Field where pilots were trained in aerial observation; enlisted troops trained in nearby Hempstead. The pilots' duties included flying aircraft, filling out flight logs, studying every aspect of the plane's mechanical structure and engine performance, troubleshooting scenarios in case of malfunction while in the air, and tending to other administrative details. Enlisted personnel were trained "in the assembling, maintenance and repair of airplanes and motors, radio telegraphy, aerial photographic development, machine gun maintenance and repair. . . in addition to the regular drill of all National Guard soldiers."<sup>14</sup>

On January 23, 1923 the unit was re-designated as the 102<sup>nd</sup> Observation Squadron and began conducting its training at Miller Field in New Dorp, Staten Island. The 102<sup>nd</sup> became part of the 27<sup>th</sup> Aviation Division. The new air base was named after its fallen comrade. In the fall of 1922, the squadron flew six JN4H aircraft to the Hartford Aviation

Meet in Connecticut. The event earmarked the aviation skills of the unit's pilots. The squadron took home six silver cups. An account written by Captain Curtiss Wheeler, New York National Guard Operations Officer, noted the following: "Air service meets and flying races were held throughout the eastern seaboard. In the fall of that year six ships flew up to the Hartford Aviation Meet and in competition with regular Army and civilian flyers, won six silver cups.<sup>15</sup> The squadron also held its first Air Circus in 1924. Over 41,300 people came to the event at Miller Field. A year later, the 102<sup>nd</sup> took first place in the National Guard Aerial Machine Tournament.

The first commanders of the 102<sup>nd</sup> Aero Squadron were Major George A. Vaughn and Major Kenneth P. Lettauer of the old Lafayette Flying Corps – the French force that included American pilots during the early stages of American military intervention in World War I. Both pilots fought in every front in France.<sup>16</sup> The roster of pilots in the 102<sup>nd</sup> also included several World War I aces who accounted for over fifty-five enemy planes shot down.

In the 1920s and 1930s, the 102<sup>nd</sup> flew various strategic observation missions for New York's 27<sup>th</sup> Division.<sup>17</sup> Many of these missions involved mapping of the geographic terrain and coastal defense facilities. Training in the areas of aerial bombing, reporting/spotting for artillery fire, protecting troop movements, and aerial maneuvers avoiding anti-aircraft fire was also part of the daily regimen. During the years 1925 to 1931, for example, the squadron trained at various locations: at Pine Camp practicing artillery spotting; at Camp Smith (Peekskill, New York) supporting infantry maneuvers; at Fishers Island supporting the Coastal Artillery; and at Oswego Lake, practicing with an Anti-Aircraft Battalion. The squadron also supported the regular army at Fort Dix and at Lake Ontario. In addition, throughout the entire 1930s, the squadron "took over 70,000 photographs for the mosaic mapping of the St. Lawrence River waterway."

### **Word War II and the Start of the Cold War**

During World War II, the 102<sup>nd</sup> Observation Squadron was activated for Federal Service. Members of the unit, along with its component aircraft of one AT6 (an advance trainer that was single wing), two 047s, six 046s, and three 049s, commenced one year of intensive training.<sup>18</sup> The unit remained under federal jurisdiction for the duration of the war. Initially, the unit was sent to Fort McClellan, Alabama, for a course in infantry training as well as flight training. In 1941, the squadron participated in basic maneuvers, and on December 22 was transferred to Morrow Field, San Bernardino, California.<sup>19</sup> At Morrow Field, and later at Ontario Observation Aerodrome, Ontario, California, the 102<sup>nd</sup> flew

numerous shore patrols and photographic missions as defense measures. As military technological development grew and expanded so, too, did the nature and mission of the 102<sup>nd</sup>. On April 15, 1943 the unit became the 102<sup>nd</sup> Reconnaissance Squadron (Bombardment) and four months later, August 21<sup>st</sup>, was designated as the 102<sup>nd</sup> Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron. At this point in the war, the squadron participated primarily in maneuvers in the Gulf of Mexico, providing reconnaissance along the Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas coastlines. On April 15, 1944 all squadron personnel were reassigned to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Commando Group. Although the unit remained stateside during the conflict, many of its more experienced members were rotated to other Army Air Corps squadrons and served with valor in the European and Pacific theaters. Among those pilots were Francis Gabreski and Lewis A. Curtis, later Brigadier General and Commander of the New York Air National Guard in the 1950s.<sup>20</sup>



106<sup>th</sup> Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Group, Westhampton Beach, N.Y. August 23, 1981. Courtesy of PAO, 106th RQW, NYA.

On May 24, 1946 the 102<sup>nd</sup> returned to state control and was reassigned to the New York National Guard as the 102<sup>nd</sup> Bombardment Squadron (Light), Floyd Bennett Air Field, Brooklyn. The field had been extremely active during the war. It had grown from 387 acres to 1,288 acres. The 106<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group was the direct descendent of the 394<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group which had served with distinction during the D-Day Invasion and later at the Battle of the Bulge.<sup>21</sup>

After the war the creation of the Department of the Air Force led to the reconstitution of air units into wings, groups, and squadrons. The policymakers creating the Air Force as a separate military branch envisioned a separate service “capable of winning wars independently by

destroying the enemy's war making capability." This has remained the primary focus of the air force, a branch characterized by "a concentration on the development and employment of new technology to a higher degree than any of the other services."<sup>22</sup>

During the early years of the Cold War, the 102<sup>nd</sup>, now part of the 106<sup>th</sup>, operated out of Floyd Bennett Field. Federal recognition was bestowed on the bombardment unit on March 21, 1947. Increasingly, the role of air power as a critical element in U.S. military doctrine and strategy expanded. As the technology grew so did the types of aircraft being built. In the late 1940s, the unit was equipped with B-26 Avengers (bomber aircraft).

After the Korean War broke out the 106<sup>th</sup> was once again called into active service. The unit was re-designated the 106<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Wing and equipped with B-29 Super fortresses (the largest bomber aircraft in the Air Force). The 106<sup>th</sup> was then assigned to March Air Force Base, California, until June 16, 1952, when it was deactivated. During the conversion process, the aircrews of the unit won distinction by completing accelerated B-29 training in less than three weeks. On December 1, 1952 the 106<sup>th</sup> returned to New York where it was re-designated as the 106<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group and reconverted to flying B-26s.<sup>23</sup>

After Korea the Air National Guard became a "mixed force of fighters, air lifters, tankers, and support units."<sup>24</sup> The resulting inclusion of the Air Guard as part of the larger Air Force mission witnessed a number of changes for the 106<sup>th</sup>. The 106<sup>th</sup> and 102<sup>nd</sup> continued flying their B-26's until February 1957. Annual Field Training, apart from one weekend a month at the home unit, was conducted at Hancock Field in upstate New York. There, for two weeks each year, gunnery and rocketry practice was held at the Grenier Range. Low level bombing practice was also conducted on Gardiner's Island, just off the eastern tip of Long Island. In February 1957, as the American military fully entered the jet age, the unit began flying the Lockheed T-33A "Shooting Star," and the F-94B "Starfire" (for defense). In 1957, the 102<sup>nd</sup> Squadron was re-designated a Fighter Interceptor Squadron, while the 106<sup>th</sup> was re-equipped with the F-86 "Sabrejet." It was also awarded the Governor's Air Trophy as the top-flying unit in New York. Moreover, in September 1958 the unit's mission was changed to Aeromedical Transport and the fighter jets gave way to the C-119 transports (large planes capable of carrying medical supplies, personnel, and equipment). The unit also boasted as one of its pilots, Lt. Colonel Norma Parsons Erb. Erb, a registered nurse, was the first female in the history of the Air National Guard. During the next four years, when the unit flew the C-119s, the

102<sup>nd</sup> was the annual recipient of the Certificate of “Notorious Achievement for Flying Safety.”<sup>25</sup>

In the early sixties the mission changed once more. On January 1, 1963 the unit received the first of nine C-97 Stratocrusiers. These heavy-duty transports would remain with the unit for close to seven years. The acquisition of these heavy aircraft signified that the unit’s mission was now Air Transport (Heavy) with responsibility for cargo and personnel; medical evacuation became secondary. The unit crews frequently flew to military installations in the Pacific, the Caribbean, South and Central America, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia. The 106<sup>th</sup> and 102<sup>nd</sup> were averaging six missions per month.

### **Vietnam and After**

As events in Vietnam captured the daily headlines in newspapers across the country, the 106<sup>th</sup> and 102<sup>nd</sup> went about their business in support of the conflict. In 1966, Lt. Colonel John B. Conley (later Major General and Commander of the New York Air National Guard) assumed command of the 102<sup>nd</sup> and its new designation as a Military Air Lift Squadron. Over the next eighteenth months, the squadron compiled an outstanding safety record while carrying out priority flights to Southeast Asia.<sup>26</sup> The flight logs recorded for that period note the following: fifty-seven missions to Southeast Asia (SEA), each a ten day round trip, other flights to Europe, Africa, Australia, 1,430,000 nautical airlift miles flown while airlifting 1,200 tons of cargo and 3,230 passengers.<sup>27</sup>

By the end of the decade the unit underwent another change in mission. On September 17, 1969 the new mission was that of Air-to-Air refueling. The C-97s were replaced with the KC-97s (tankers). Following a brief mobilization of the entire 106<sup>th</sup> wing in order to move the mail stalled by the postal workers strike of March 1970, the full unit was moved from Floyd Bennett Field to Suffolk County in Westhampton Beach in June of 1970. Its relocation marked a strategic change in the Air Force’s doctrine of global readiness and aerospace preparedness. More importantly, the relocation would also pave the way for the 106<sup>th</sup>’s major contribution in the area of search and rescue missions. This is where the 106<sup>th</sup> would achieve its present-day notoriety.

The former Suffolk County Air Force Base was selected to serve “as a natural aircraft carrier for the new unit mission of Aerospace Defense.”<sup>28</sup> During World War II a plan had been suggested making the Westhampton Beach air base the Northeast’s first line of defense against possible attacks by Nazi war planes. A 1940 plan entitled, “Engineering Brief for the Construction of a Major Military Airplane Base on Eastern Long Island, New York,” was discovered recently at the base. It advocated constructing underground bunkers housing 1,000 fighter planes

that could be quickly dispersed to pursue Nazi bombers and fighter planes. In 1960, the base was leased by the U.S. Air Force for an Air Defense Command Base, deactivated in 1969, then released back to Suffolk. In 1991, the airport was renamed in honor of Colonel Francis S. Gabreski, a former base commander.<sup>29</sup>

A primary reason for relocating the 106<sup>th</sup> was the extensive runway at Westhampton Beach. The runway was capable of handling large transports required for takeoffs and landings. The runway is also currently used to accommodate an emergency space shuttle landing. As the mission changed so, too, did the physical features of the base.

When it was an active Air Force base in the fifties and sixties, numerous barracks and housing for officers and enlisted personnel were situated on the west side of County Road 31 (Old Riverhead Road). Today, those buildings no longer exist. All facilities, including hangars, supply buildings, base headquarters, dining, fire equipment, air operations, etc., are presently located on the east side of County Road 31. The base currently occupies eighty-eight acres, with thirty-four buildings, thirty-two industries and two services encompassing 311,000 square feet. There are 250 day-to-day personnel. During a weekend drill approximately 800 Air National Guard personnel report to the base in order to perform their duties.

On June 6, 1972 the 106<sup>th</sup> was assigned officially to the Aerospace Defense Command. In December of that year, the formal conversion started with F102s, fighter jets, replacing the KC-97s. However, another change was in the wind for the unit. On June 14, 1975 the 106<sup>th</sup> was re-designated as an Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Group. This was marked by the arrival of the first of the HC130 Hercules that were specifically designed for aerospace and recovery missions. In fact, one month after its re-designation, the unit was put on standing alert in support of the Apollo-Soyuz Mission.<sup>30</sup>

With its new mission designation the 106<sup>th</sup> also began carrying out civilian search and rescue missions. The first actual airborne rescue mission took place on February 7, 1976. However, the first two unit saves were not until January 15, 1977 when two children trapped in an icebound boat off the coast of Southampton were rescued. The number of successful rescues grew each year. In 1977, eleven lives were saved; in 1978, twenty-one lives were saved, and it was only up from there.<sup>31</sup>





F-86 Saberjet. Courtesy of PAO, 106th RQW, NYANG.

Throughout the 1980s the unit's saves ranged from injured sailors, seamen and fishermen from various countries to local medivac operations. The most notable rescue during the early years of the unit's search and rescue operations involved the crew of the *John F. Leavett*. The *Leavett* was the first modern sail powered cargo vessel built in the United States in forty-four years. According to the mission log, on December 27, 1979 the *Leavett* was 290 miles offshore and sinking in the North Atlantic Ocean. The unit, once notified, immediately sent a C130 and HH3 (helicopters) support. Despite fierce winds and frigid waters, two PJs went into the water and saved the crew. One of the PJs, TSGT (Technical Sergeant) Jay Davis, was named the Air Force's 1980 Outstanding Pararescueman of the year for his efforts on the *Leavett* rescue. In November, 1980, the 102<sup>nd</sup> Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron was awarded the New York Air National Guard Commanders Trophy as the top unit in the state air guard. On August 23, 1981 moreover, the 106<sup>th</sup> Aerospace and Recovery Group (now wing) was awarded the United States Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for its search and rescue activities from 1 September 1978 to 31 May 1980.<sup>32</sup>

Along with its remarkable efforts in search and rescue missions, the 106<sup>th</sup> began the 1980s by participating for the second time in the space program in support of the Columbia Space Shuttle. This was followed up with another mission in November of 1981. On August 27, 1981 a new milestone was achieved when the unit registered its 106<sup>th</sup> save. The rescue was appropriately referred to as the first "Rotor Baby." An acutely

ill baby was evacuated by helicopter to a Long Island hospital that was designated for pediatric intensive care.<sup>33</sup>



B-26. Courtesy of PAO, 106th RQW, NYANG.

As volunteer servants of their country and state, the men and women of the 106<sup>th</sup> continued their impressive record of saving lives in the 1980s. The unit has flown every mission in the Air Force inventory. As the unit's impressive record of saving lives using HC130s and now HH60s continued, it also received its current designation just prior to the 1990s. On October 1, 1989 the 106<sup>th</sup>, with all its component squadrons, was formally given status as an Air Rescue Wing. It became one of only three rescue wings in the entire Air National Guard. Its mission was now clearly defined as one of land and sea recovery. The current mission of the 106<sup>th</sup> is twofold: (1) conduct Search and Rescue (SAR) and Medivac Operations from the Northeast United States, south to the Bahaman Islands, and east to the Azores. Its air refueling capabilities allow for long range rescue missions; (2) provide the Airborne Mission Commander (AIRBOSS) for every shuttle launch, as well as PJ men on board the HC-130(Hercules) for deployment in the event of a launch accident.<sup>34</sup>

As an Air Rescue Wing, the 106<sup>th</sup> quickly achieved greater stature and publicity at the beginning of the new decade. Unfortunately, it did not get off to a good start. The 1991 attempted rescue of crew members of the *Andrea Gale* on Halloween night, depicted in the book and movie, "The Perfect Storm," cost the life of TSGT (Technical Sergeant) Rick Smith, a valued PJ in the 106<sup>th</sup>. The mission logbooks depict a harrowing

experience, marked by bravery and courage. Every effort was made to save the lives of the Massachusetts fishermen. What is not detailed in the movie is how unit members, flight crews and PJs, planned the mission while fully aware of the risks.<sup>35</sup>

In 1994, the 106<sup>th</sup> conducted the longest over-water helicopter rescue in U.S. history when it saved the lives of one crew member in the frigid waters in the North Atlantic after their container ship, the *Salvador Allende*, broke apart. The round-trip mission took fifteen hours.<sup>36</sup>

Iraq has led to further examples of exemplary military service. On September 29, 2003 “A U.S. Army quick reaction force” was attacked near a prison in Baghdad. An Army Humvee rolled into an irrigation canal, tossing its occupants into the muddy ditch. The 106th PJs sprung into action. The PJs “began their search underwater in the filthy irrigation ditch where visibility was less than a foot. They felt their way blindly in dark and dangerous waters where live munitions had fallen only moments before.” They worked through the night “until the next day finally resulted in the recovery of two missing soldiers who did not survive their violent water entry.” Though the soldiers were not found alive, recovering their bodies for their families led PJ Chief Master Sergeant Tim Malloy to state: “It was my proudest day as a PJ.” As noted earlier, moreover, the unit’s heroism was demonstrated during the rescue of the two soldiers in a downed helicopter.<sup>37</sup>

America’s oldest Air National Guard Unit, which began as an observation squadron and is now an elite pararescue organization, continues to serve the nation and the state of New York. The men and women of this unit adhere to the motto that “Readiness Strengthens Liberty.” As a valued part of our military and an important organization on Long Island, the 106<sup>th</sup>’s humanitarian mission testifies to its resolve not only to preserve and protect America, but also to save lives.<sup>38</sup>

## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> “Long Island Unit Rescues 2 in Iraq,” *Newsday*, November 6, 2003; see also, *Newsday*, November 30, 2003; *Newsday*, December 28, 2003: G10-11.

<sup>2</sup> Historical Records, Public Affairs Office, New York Air National Guard, 106<sup>th</sup> RQW, Westhampton Beach, New York.

<sup>3</sup> Bruce Jacobs, USA (Ret.), “The National Guard, Yesterday, today, tomorrow,” *American Legion Magazine* 157 (October 2004): 10-14.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 13-14.

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<sup>5</sup> Historical Records, Public Affairs Office, 106<sup>th</sup> RQW; see also, unpublished paper compiled by Public Affairs Office (PAO) entitled “102 Air Rescue and Recovery Squadron, 106 Air Rescue and Recovery Group.”

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*; Quoted in Major William J. O’Dwyer, “The First Flying Squadron of 1912: War Games That Changed History,” *Gabreski Gazette* 259 (September 1998): 1, 910; *Gabreski Gazette* 260 (October 1998): 9; “Our heritage: Beckwith Havens, First Pilot,” *Gabreski Gazette* 259 (September 1998): 16.

<sup>9</sup> Lt. Colonel George H. Wrenn, “History of the 102<sup>nd</sup> Observation Squadron,” pamphlet prepared by the New York Air National Guard, 1956.

<sup>10</sup> Historical Records, Public Affairs Office, 106<sup>th</sup> RQW; Wrenn, “History of the 102<sup>nd</sup> Observation Squadron,” 1956; Reggie Shore, “Mitchel Field and the History of Aviation on Long Island,” *Long Island Historical Journal* 12 (Spring 2000): 216-220;  
[www.hempsteadplains.com](http://www.hempsteadplains.com)

<sup>11</sup> Historical Records, Public Affairs Office, 106<sup>th</sup> RQW; Wrenn, “History of the 102<sup>nd</sup> Observation Squadron,” 1956.

<sup>12</sup> Wrenn; Reference and Research Section, Air Historical Office, October 1, 1947 copy located at Public Affairs Office, 106<sup>th</sup> RQW;  
[www.encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com](http://www.encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com);  
[www.geocities.com/miller\\_field.com](http://www.geocities.com/miller_field.com)

<sup>13</sup> Historical Records, Public Affairs Office, 196<sup>th</sup> RQW; Charles J. Gross, *Militiamen, Volunteer, and Professional; The Air National Guard and the American Military Tradition* (Washington, D.C.: National Guard Bureau, 1956); *Air National Guard* (Washington, D.C.: Air Force History & Museums, 1964), passim.

<sup>14</sup> Margery Cohen-Willard and Charles F. Howlett, “Military Training at Camp Upton During the Great War: The Diary of Oscar I. Ostrow,” *Long Island Historical Journal* 16 (Fall 2003/Spring 2004): 55-103; “When

doughboys Camped in Garden City, *Newsday* November 9, 2004, B2-B5; Report prepared by Captain Curtiss Wheeler, June 1924, New York National Guard Air Corp, 27<sup>th</sup> Division, Division of Historical Records, Archives of Air Historical Office, Washington, D.C.

<sup>15</sup> Historical Records, Public Affairs Office, 106<sup>th</sup> RQW; Curtiss Wheeler Report, June 28, 1924; [www.gees.com/miller\\_field.com](http://www.gees.com/miller_field.com)

<sup>16</sup> Recorded Records of 1<sup>st</sup> Pursuit Group History, August and September 1918, [www.acepilots.com](http://www.acepilots.com).

<sup>17</sup> Press Release, Public Affairs Office, 106<sup>th</sup> RQW.

<sup>18</sup> Historical Records, Public Affairs Office, 106<sup>th</sup> RQW; Wrenn, "History of the 102<sup>nd</sup> Observation Squadron," 1956.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> Wrenn; George DeWan, "The Wings of War," in *Long Island Our Story* (Melville, N.Y.: Newsday Publishers, 1998): 304-311.

<sup>21</sup> Historical Records, Public Affairs Office, 106<sup>th</sup> RQW; Richard G. Davis, *Carl Spaatz and the Air War in Europe* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1993); John W. Chambers II, ed., *The Oxford Companion to American Military History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999): 18-24; [www.aero-web.org/history/fbennett/cgasb.com](http://www.aero-web.org/history/fbennett/cgasb.com)

<sup>22</sup> Chambers, 21-22; Herman S. Wolk, *Planning and Organizing the Postwar Air Force, 1943-1947* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1984); Walter J. Boyne, *Beyond the Wild Blue: A History of the United States Air Force, 1947-1997* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997).

<sup>23</sup> Historical Records, Public Affairs Office, 106<sup>th</sup> RQW.

<sup>24</sup> Chambers, 26; Gross.

<sup>25</sup> Historical Records, Public Affairs Office, 106<sup>th</sup> RQW; Wrenn.

<sup>26</sup> Historical Records, Public Affairs Office, 106<sup>th</sup> RQW.

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<sup>27</sup> Flight Log and Mission Logs, Historical Records, Public Affairs Office, 106<sup>th</sup> RQW.

<sup>28</sup> Historical Records/Unit Logs for 1972, Public Affairs Office, 106<sup>th</sup> RQW.

<sup>29</sup> Michael Dorman, "A Wing and a Plan," *Long Island, Our Story* , 308; DeWan, 304; "Francis S. Gabreski, WWII Air Ace, Dies at 83," *New York Times* (February 2, 2002).

<sup>30</sup> Historical Records, Public Affairs Office, 106<sup>th</sup> RQW.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*; Rescues 277 and 278, for instance, are recorded in *Team Rescue Today* , Special Issue (December 1999): 28-29; Tom Kaminski, "ANG Oldest Unit," <https://www.nysuff.ang.af.mil>.

<sup>32</sup> Mission Log, December 27, 1979, Historical Records, Public Affairs Office, 106<sup>th</sup> RQW.

<sup>33</sup> Historical Records, Public Affairs Office, 106<sup>th</sup> RQW.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> Mike Candors, "The Perfect Storm, So that others may live," [www.usna.com/News.Pubs](http://www.usna.com/News.Pubs).

<sup>36</sup> Michael Hirsh, *Pararescue* (New York: Avon Books, 2001): 236; Historical Records, Public Affairs Office, 106<sup>th</sup> RQW.

<sup>37</sup> *Team Rescue Today* 321 (February 2004): 3, 9.

<sup>38</sup> Recently, local, state, and federal officials have been lobbying to keep the 106<sup>th</sup> at Gabreski, fearing it could be the target of a federal BRAC (Base Reduction and Closing) Commission report. Consult the following articles: "Supporters Rally for National Guard Unit," *New York Times*, December 5, 2004, LI Section, 3; "Civic leaders, Politicians fight to save base," *Newsday*, December 1, 2004, 17; "Life-Saving unit at risk," *Newsday* (December 14, 2004), 16-17; "Pataki vows to fight attempts to close base," *Newsday*, January 31, 2005, 14. As this issue goes to print in May, 2005 the U.S. military has indicated that the 106<sup>th</sup> was not slated to close. See "Nice Saves," *Newsday*, May 16, 2005.

**THINKING GLOBALLY, ACTING LOCALLY:  
THE WOMEN OF THE SETAUKET LIBRARY CLUB,  
1896-1924**

*Stacey Horstmann Gatti*

*The Setauket Library Club embodied many of the ideals of the Reform era, but not its progressive politics. Stacey Horstmann Gatti tells the story of this spirited but austere group of women.*

In 1892 eighteen year-old Elizabeth Strong of Setauket, Long Island composed a fictitious letter to a friend describing her life after boarding school. Setting her sights on the weeks immediately following commencement she prophesized a life filled with continued learning. Her letter to “Lucy” explains, “All during the journey, I kept thinking, ‘Well, so my school days are over forever,’ How strange it seems! Not that I ever expect to give up learning. I hope to be able to do that all my life long.” Young Elizabeth recognized that she did not wish to pursue her intellectual interests alone, and she imagined herself bringing a literary club to her rural Long Island town. Continuing the story, Strong wrote:

I thought it would be nice to get up a literary society of just a few girls of my acquaintance here. So we formed a club called “The Half Hour Society.” We are able to read half an hour every day some book, by a famous author, and then we meet at each other’s houses once a week and compare notes on what we have read since the last meeting. There are just six of us; four friends, my oldest sister, and myself . . . We have had only two meetings so far, I do hope it will be a success, and that we shall derive much pleasure as well as profit from it.<sup>1</sup>

Elizabeth’s hopes were not fulfilled immediately. But fewer than five years later she would help organize a literary club that in essential respects carried out its work as she had predicted. In 1896 she, along with members of her family and women from her circle of friends, established a literary society that would serve as a vehicle for their continuing education. They did not meet in each other’s homes, but instead gathered in the newly constructed Emma S. Clark Library, and named their organization “The Setauket Library Club” (SLC).

Neither Elizabeth’s aspirations or the actual club were unique. By the 1890s women throughout the country were gathering in private homes, in churches, community centers, and libraries to read and discuss ideas. As a

prominent Suffolk county family of wealthy farmers, lawyers, and politicians, the Strongs were able to provide Elizabeth with an elite education and regular travel. Her years at boarding schools during the late 1880s and early 1890s in Connecticut and Maryland, along with the social milieu of her upper class east coast family put her in contact with the burgeoning number of women's literary societies that were emerging in the urban areas of the United States. Her correspondence reveals that even at a young age she had already shared ideas about religion, politics, and the ordinary tasks that occupied women's lives with her peers as well as her elders.<sup>2</sup>

While not creating a new concept, Elizabeth Strong's vision represents taking what was already a common institution for women in cities and applying that model to a rural Long Island community. Her subsequent efforts as a leading member of the SLC would help usher in the progressive era worldview of the "new woman" to small town Long Island. However, this story of Setauket women reveals that small town women did not follow an identical path to the one described by historians of urban women's clubs and the national organizations those clubs created. Rather, small town women's clubs reacted to their own individual and community needs, ultimately embracing those issues closer to their immediate concerns.

The basic story told by early historians of women's clubs posits that as the nation accelerated its path to industrialization women of the leisure classes turned their energies toward church work and study clubs. Those initial forays into organized activity expanded to include greater civic and reform work, particularly among women living in urban areas where the problems of the industrial age were most acute. Eventually many of these women recognized the need to become more involved in politics in order to affect positive changes in their own neighborhoods, leading them to endorse woman suffrage. Women who initially formed study clubs for continuing education, self-improvement and companionship soon embraced progressive causes such as improvements in public health, education, sanitation, child labor laws, working conditions for women, temperance, and woman suffrage. Some scholars, notably Theodora Penny Martin and Anne Ruggles Gere, have recently challenged this view and have demonstrated that it was not uncommon for women's study clubs to continue their literary and cultural pursuits for the primary purpose of self-improvement through continuing education rather than reform. Gere suggests that many clubs may have exaggerated their service work so as not to raise the ire of critics who condemned clubs aimed at mere self-improvement as self-indulgent forays pulling women away from their domestic responsibilities.<sup>3</sup>



The history of the SLC, however, suggests that women living in a small town that was itself experiencing the ripple effects of the demographic and economic changes brought about by the industrial age do not necessarily fit neatly into either model. The story of Setauket's women begins in familiar fashion. After the Civil War the women of Setauket engaged in public work, including charitable endeavors through their churches, and supported the educational institutions of the community. In 1896 they established a woman's study club, the SLC, and gathered once each week between the months of October and April from 1896 through 1917, when they temporarily disbanded in order to devote their time to Red Cross work. The club's minutes reveal that the SLC began as a community of rural women seeking knowledge for the sheer love of learning, as Elizabeth Strong had predicted.

The next phase of this history, however, did not develop in the predictable progressive pattern. During the 1900s and 1910s the national progressive movement, especially national and urban women's groups, intensified their reform efforts. National women's organizations even stepped, albeit tentatively, into the ranks of woman suffragists. The members of the SLC, however, did not follow that path. Participation in the SLC did not lead its members into progressive reform movements during this period, did not lead them into organized suffrage activity, and did not compel them to embrace feminist perspectives.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, even though the members of the SLC read progressive publications and, at least initially, showed a keen interest in the world beyond the boundaries of their small town, they did not become leaders based on an urban model of progressive activism. Instead, through their studies the women of the SLC kept abreast of all of those developments from a distance.

When the club regrouped in 1920 its members entered a new phase of blending study with community activism, drawing closer to the model embraced by their urban counterparts who had been transforming study clubs into civic activity for decades. The members of the SLC joined and occasionally led community organizations, and through these efforts began taking official positions on the political, social, and cultural issues of their times. Their activities during this decade, however, did not translate into an unequivocally progressive pattern. By the time these women had turned their thoughts into deeds the high tide of the progressive national impulse had faded. Some Setauket women put their education to use in progressive causes, but others reflected the national trend toward local boosterism, echoing Warren Harding's proclamation of a national "return to normalcy." This story of Long Island women thus suggests that the impact of the progressive era on middle and upper class women varied even more widely than historians have described thus far.<sup>5</sup>

**Setauket: A Community in Transition**

By the 1890s the women of Setauket were ready to join the women's club movement. This decade marked not only a transitional period in the lives of Elizabeth Strong and the other young women who joined her endeavor, but their rural village was itself in the midst of its own transformation. The community's economic base and demographic composition were changing from its agricultural and seafaring roots to a mixed economy. At the same time Setauket was experiencing an influx of new ethnic groups, which brought closer economic and social ties to nearby urban centers.

Setauket traces its roots to the seventeenth century and to this day boasts of its storied place in the history of the American Revolution. The early Puritan community was first colonized by migrants from other English settlements in 1655 who displaced the local Indians to settle near an attractive harbor and on farmland previously cleared by its first inhabitants. The village of farmers, shipbuilders, and traders grew steadily during the colonial period. Setauket continued to attract the attention of other British colonists, including the Strong family, who first arrived in Setauket at the onset of the eighteenth century. The community sealed its claim to historical fame during the American Revolution, when it served as home to a group of underground Patriot spies, including Ann Smith Strong, great, great, grandmother to Elizabeth Strong. After the Revolution, the community continued to expand, experiencing a slight diversification of its economy with the addition of the R. Nunns Clark and Company piano factory during the early nineteenth-century, but primarily remaining close to its farming roots and watching as its shipbuilding interests grew.<sup>6</sup>

The industrial age of the late nineteenth century came to Setauket during Elizabeth Strong's girlhood, and the transformation in Setauket and the nation underlay her own quest to find her place in this society. Thanks to the easy access of the harbor through which manufacturers could import raw materials and export the finished products, Setauket experienced some industrial growth. The piano factory faltered and closed during the Civil War, but soon gave way to the Long Island Rubber Factory, which was established in 1876, and soon employed two hundred workers. The rubber factory stimulated the local economy enough to warrant the establishment of the Bank of Setauket, but frequently spewed noxious fumes into the air, especially during one of the factory's occasional fires. The rising demand for industrial materials elsewhere also stimulated the formation of extraction industries, such as gravel, which was shipped to New York for glass and sandpaper manufacturing.<sup>7</sup>

During these early years of industrialization in Setauket, the sea served as the primary means of transportation for goods and essential communication, but by the end of the eighteenth century shipping would be replaced by the railroad. The Port Jefferson line of the Long Island Rail Road, completed in 1873, included a freight stop in Setauket and four years later expanded to include a passenger station as well, connecting this community directly to Brooklyn. The introduction of the railroad brought new summer residents from New York City, broadening Setauket residents' contacts with the outside world, and dramatically eased the burdens of travel by its own residents. With railroad expansion, shipping by water and the need for the small ships constructed by Setauket shipbuilders quickly declined. The character of agricultural production also changed abruptly from diversified farms to single crop farming and Setauket, along with the rest of eastern Long Island, witnessed the rise of potato farming.<sup>8</sup>

Setauket remained a rural area according the U.S. Census Bureau definitions, but it grew in population and diversity at the end of the nineteenth century. The United States Census Bureau recorded fewer than five hundred residents in Setauket in 1880, but by 1896 the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* described Setauket as "A Polyglot Village" with approximately two thousand residents. With the expansion of the rubber factory, the immigrant population of the community rose, and by the end of the nineteenth century included approximately six to seven hundred Jewish, two hundred Irish, and over one hundred Polish and Lithuanian residents. Religious institutions emerged to support these new Jewish and Catholic communities, including the North Shore Jewish Center, established in 1890, and the St. James Catholic mission, which began in 1887. Thus the descendants of the Puritans witnessed a marked lessening of their own numerical dominance in the community.<sup>9</sup>

### **The Women of the Setauket Library Club**

As their community went through this period of adjustment, the lives of women and their understanding of their roles in the community also were transformed. The women who joined the SLC between 1896 and 1917 represented the community's elite and middle class families, and in this respect mirrored the national trends for women's clubs. Of the fifty-six women who participated in the SLC during this period, thirty-three of them can be clearly identified in the manuscript records of the United States Census. Several members worked outside of the home, but none of the members worked in industrial or domestic service occupations. Of the eighteen married women from this group only one lists an occupation of her own, working in the store her family owned. Four of the fifteen single women declared middle class occupations, including a teacher, a grocery

store owner and manager, the local postmistress, and a farmer on property her family owned. The husbands of six of the eighteen married women worked in merchant and professional middle class positions: two clergymen, a grocer, a hotelkeeper, two postmasters and an engineer. The remaining husbands worked in skilled trades (including five carpenters), or as land-owning farmers. The fathers of the single women engaged in similar occupations, providing financial support for their daughters so that they did not need to seek employment to support themselves. Again, none report jobs in unskilled occupations.<sup>10</sup>

As in other communities throughout the country during the nineteenth century, the women of Setauket had already gained organizational experience by participating in women's church groups. Setauket's Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Methodist churches provided a solid institutional structure for the community, and by the end of the nineteenth century each church boasted an active women's group. During the late 1880s and early 1890s, while Elizabeth Strong was away at boarding school, her mother frequently wrote to her about the work she and other women in the community engaged in through the Presbyterian church, including joining the women's missionary society, teaching Sunday School, and attending meetings of the charitable group known as the King's Daughters. When she returned to Setauket, Elizabeth joined the Setauket women in their charitable, fundraising and educational work.<sup>11</sup>

Other members of the SLC shared Elizabeth Strong's religious faith and experience with church work. The wives of the Presbyterian and Episcopalian ministers, Julia Littell and Louise Marvin, respectively, led women's church organizations and were founding members of the SLC, demonstrating a strong link between women's religious organizations and the later formation of study clubs. Throughout the early history of the SLC the membership drew from the leading Protestant churches, with the majority of members listed in either the marriage or cemetery records of the three local Protestant churches.<sup>12</sup>

The public work of Setauket's women was not limited to church activity; they also focused on improving the educational facilities of the village. In 1879 the women of Setauket took the initiative to establish a community reading room. They gathered together and decided on a set of rules and regulations, and then turned to the leading men of the community to help them establish a governing association. Even though women started the endeavor, the development of the reading room was a joint effort of men and women, and the reading room association that was established to run the institution was comprised of both sexes, including at least one future member of the SLC. The reading room itself proved

short lived but did reveal the beginnings of the community's interest in library building.<sup>13</sup>

Twelve years later, Thomas Hodgkins, a Setauket resident who had become a millionaire as a confection tycoon in New York City, helped form the Emma S. Clark Memorial Library Association for the purpose of creating a community library in memory of his niece. In 1892 the library opened its doors and issued its first library card to Elizabeth Strong, who paid ten cents for the privilege. With the backing of a wealthy benefactor and a library board comprised of the leading men of the village, the work the women had started in 1879 was on firm ground. There is no evidence that the women resented the takeover, but in 1896 they sought to carve out a place of their own in this new institution. In October of that year a dozen women presented a petition to the Board of Trustees of the Library requesting permission to use the reading room one afternoon or evening each week for the purpose of forming "a Literary and Reading Circle." Family connections assured the acceptance of their appeal. Elizabeth Strong's uncle, Thomas, was a member of the library board, and the minister of the Episcopal Church, whose wife and daughter were among the petitioners, drafted the petition itself. Immediately after the board meeting broke up the trustees sent Thomas Strong to meet with his niece and the other ladies to give them permission to use the library for an hour and a half each Monday.<sup>14</sup>

Thus far the story of the women of Setauket closely resembles the stories told from the perspective of urban women's clubs throughout the nation. As their small town grew, women's roles changed and the women themselves responded by expanding their charitable and fundraising activities with particular focus on building educational institutions. As these institutions grew, men took over their administration, and the women moved on to the next task. It seemed that Setauket's leading women were primed to join the legions of progressive women reformers.

### **The First Year**

The club organized quickly and during that first year strongly resembled young Elizabeth's dream of a community of young women who met to read history and literature and to discuss current events for the sheer joy of learning. During that initial year the membership was comprised principally of young, single women and a few of their mothers, all of who represented leading families of the community. Fifteen of the twenty-one members were unmarried, ranging in age from sixteen, the minimum age required for membership, to sixty-four with an average age of thirty-three. The few women over the age of forty joined the group with their daughters.<sup>15</sup>

The initial organizational structure blended club functions with schoolroom lines of authority. They elected a President, a Vice President, and a Secretary at the re-organizational meeting each fall, a common procedure in women's clubs throughout the country, but they also gave the President a role that resembled that of a schoolteacher. The original by-laws granted the President the authority to call upon individual members to speak, specified that each member must address her remarks to the President, and instructed each member to wait for her turn to speak. In selecting as their first President Louise Marvin, the fifty-one year old wife of the town's Episcopal minister, the SLC acknowledged the community's preexisting lines of authority. As one of the few members over the age of forty and one of two minister's wives, she served as an easily identifiable leader who the younger women would feel comfortable following.<sup>16</sup>

The agenda they established during their first year set the stage for the rest of first decade. They began a study of French history by reading a condensed version of the recently released *Growth of the French Nation* by George Burton Adams, the prominent Yale historian of medieval Europe and future President of the American Historical Association. The recording secretary, Helen Ridgeway, did not provide an explanation for their choice of French history that year, but nearly fifty years later she wrote, "France we studied first, and learned to love her, as we understood her better."<sup>17</sup> The SLC also read plays by William Shakespeare, the newly published travel accounts of Woman's Christian Temperance Union world missionary Jessie Ackerman, entitled *The World Through a Woman's Eye*, and weekly selections from the progressive journal *The Review of Reviews*. These particular choices reveal the women's desire to engage in an ambitious and cohesive course of study that engaged them in traditional academic subjects and touched upon popular issues of the day. By selecting the work of an academic historian and reading classical literature, the members of the SLC demonstrated that they sought to engage in a continuation of a formal education process.<sup>18</sup>

During that first year they also experimented with different study techniques, suggesting an interest in learning rather than a mere desire to follow a fashionable trend. After a few weeks of reading from Adams' book, they expanded the focus of their study of history. Deciding that reading a general history written by a single author was too narrow, they resolved to supplement their study with other sources on related topics. They also enhanced their own pedagogical approach, beginning by simply reading aloud and progressing to a group discussion of the material. Furthermore, on at least one occasion when a particularly complex topic arose, the President acted as surrogate teacher by stopping to provide some background or review material from the previous week

before proceeding. For example, in January 1897 the young members of the SLC became overwhelmed by the chronology of the Carolingian dynasty, so Mrs. Marvin created a chart to clarify the timeline. Such techniques demonstrate that during that first year they approached their study of history and literature as a continuation of a classroom education.<sup>19</sup>

The SLC's decision to subscribe to and to discuss articles from *Review of Reviews* reveals a self-conscious desire to learn more about contemporary world issues. At the first meeting of the club they voted to subscribe to the magazine "that the club might be conversant with the topics of the time." They reinforced that decision a month later by passing a motion "that in order to keep in touch with the topics of the time, articles should be chosen from *Review of Reviews*, bearing on politics, social life, foreign affairs, and reviews of important books of the month, and should be read at each successive meeting." In selecting that particular magazine they put their faith in a popular progressive publication that provided both short news items summarizing notable events throughout the world and longer articles analyzing local, national, and international concerns. *Review of Reviews*, edited by Albert Shaw, a municipal reformer and supporter of Theodore Roosevelt, began as an American version of a British publication run by the respected journalist William Stead and maintained an international perspective. The focus on international affairs held great appeal for the young women of SLC whose families (and sometimes themselves) traveled abroad and suggests that the women recognized the United States' increasing involvement in world affairs. As the political leaders of the nation devoted increasing attention to the rest of the world during the 1890s, vastly expanding the Navy and keeping careful watch on their Latin American neighbors, especially Cuba, the women of this small town similarly adjusted their focus.<sup>20</sup>

During this first year the women of the SLC read articles on a wide array of subjects including international events and progressive reform. They discussed articles ranging from human-interest topics, such as the "high standards of Princeton University" and a parade held to commemorate Ulysses S. Grant's birthday, to municipal reform and international events. The women of the SLC embraced the international perspectives presented in the *Review of Reviews*, with exactly half of the thirty articles they cited that year concerned with international affairs.

While they took a thoughtful view of international politics, the women of the SLC virtually ignored articles seemingly directed at women. Of the remaining fifteen articles they read and discussed that year, five addressed issues of progressive reform, four examined literature or the arts, three focused on travel and exploration, and the final

three articles focused on domestic politics or social customs, but during that first year none of the articles they read directly addressed the role of women in society or other issues commonly addressed by women's reform and civic groups at that time. Among the articles from the *Review of Books* that they decided not to discuss were: "The 'New Woman's' Educational Duties," "The Social Mission of the Public School," "A Diatribe Against American Women," "Child Study in the Training of Teachers," "The Sunday Schools: Their Shortcomings and their Great Opportunity," "A Study of American Liquor Laws," "The Public Library Movement," "The Future of Marriage," "The Position of Women in France," and "The Emancipation of Women in Spain."<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, they did not display much passion for the significant domestic electoral conflicts of their times. The *Review of Reviews* included dozens of articles on the Presidential election of 1896, including discussions of the debates over monetary policy and other proposed reforms, but the women of the SLC discussed none of these articles. They examined the contents of one article about President William McKinley's new cabinet, but their discussions of this article did not address the fundamental political issues.<sup>22</sup> Their choices suggest that the women of the SLC were interested initially in learning about a distant past, foreign affairs, and the actors on the domestic political stage, but were not compelled to discuss practical applications for such knowledge. Their local circumstances had not yet propelled them into civic activism, and as un-enfranchised citizens they might be interested in the knowing the names of government officials, but they did not yet feel compelled to study the most immediate domestic policy issues.

The choice of Jessie Ackerman's, *The World Through A Woman's Eye* seemingly challenges that conclusion, because it suggests an interest in the largest American women's reform organization of the era, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). Ackerman's book could indeed have served as a primer for turning knowledge into service, but a careful analysis of the reaction of the SLC to this book demonstrates that they remained more interested in seeking knowledge of exotic people and places than in forming an activist application for that knowledge. Ackerman worked to promote women's rights throughout these countries while also learning to appreciate the cultures themselves, and her readers seemed to recognize this fine line. Secretary Helen Ridgeway introduced the book into the SLC's minutes with words that suggest an interest in Ackerman's early feminist message. Ridgeway expressed concern with men's ill treatment of women, writing "[Ackerman] speaks of the praises lavished upon women by the poets as the most perfect of God's creatures, but remarks the sad fact, that in her many years of travel, and experience, she has yet to find one thoroughly contented with her lot in life." She



continued with the apparent promise of women's progress, explaining, "The advance of the sex is also referred to, and the old boys are warned of the necessity to make rapid strides to keep step with the new girl." Later summaries covered the travels of Jessie Ackerman throughout the world, including Alaska, the Hawaiian Islands, New Zealand, Japan, China, Siam, Singapore, India, Australia, and South Africa, frequently focusing on the lives of women in those countries, and the women of the SLC worked to understand why women of other cultures behaved as they did. Ridgeway repeated Ackerman's discussion of the "awful degradation of [Alaskan native] women," the secretary observed, "the sad fact that wherever the white man has been, there [woman's] misery is accentuated."<sup>23</sup>

Reading Miss Ackerman's book during that first year of the club's existence suggested that the women of the SLC could have become inspired by her example and embraced political and social feminist reforms. Some women did, indeed, view her as a role model and admired the work of the WCTU. As the SLC began its second year of study in October 1897 Corinne Tyler read an article from the *Review of Reviews* on the WCTU. The secretary reported the article "[showed] what a vast amount of good this organization has accomplished in the comparatively few years since it has been started. It was interesting to some of the members to be reminded that Miss Ackerman . . . is an active member of the Society and that the facts for this book were gathered while traveling in its interests."<sup>24</sup> Later that study year, another member read a short obituary of Frances Willard, the President of the WCTU, who the recording secretary described as, "a woman of whom America may be proud. Of most brilliant intellectual gifts she devoted her life to benefit her fellow beings."<sup>25</sup>

Despite that initial engagement in a dialogue about women's reform efforts, they backed away from that course of study and did not follow up on a study of reform or other feminist concerns. Between 1897 and 1917 the club members would discuss women's issues, famous women in history, and notable female characters in literature, but they never again made the study of contemporary women's issues a central component of their agenda.

### **The Continuing Work of the Setauket Library Club: 1897-1917**

Throughout the twenty years prior to America's engagement in World War I, the members of the SLC continued to engage in a focused course of study that reveals that its members were eager to continue their previous education, learning more about the world beyond the bounds of their small village. They read scholastic historical studies, studied literary classics, drew on mainstream progressive publications in their study of

current events, and occasionally added an additional special topic after being inspired by a particular article. The group started off their work by combining some elements of the curriculum of a classical education with a practical approach to getting to know the world around them; consequently, at the height of the progressive era they fell in line with the approach of other women's study clubs of the progressive era who resisted the pressure of the urban clubs and the national organization to move from study to activism.<sup>26</sup>

A small core of women remained in the SLC throughout this entire period, but they did not restrict the organization to the company of its founding members, but rather opened up their doors to other women of the community. Between 1897 and 1917 fifty-six women belonged to the SLC, the vast majority of whom spent five or fewer years in the club with only four women participating in the group for more than fifteen years and only one woman belonging to the group for all twenty-one years. During the first decade membership remained consistent, ranging from ten to twenty-two members each year, with an average of fourteen members, and the majority of those members remained unmarried women under the age of thirty-five. During the second decade, membership fell off slightly to an average of nine members each year, and the average age of the members increased steadily from thirty-seven in the 1906-1907 study year to forty-three in the 1916-1917 year. The majority of the women in this latter period were married. Appropriately, over time the character of the SLC also transformed from the schoolroom model to a more traditional women's study club.

### **Current Events**

The women of the SLC discussed current events every year, but branched out beyond the *Review of Reviews* after their first year. At their re-organization meeting in October 1897 they decided not to renew the subscription to that magazine, but rather agreed that at each meeting one member would be "appointed by the President [to] select something which was of special interest to herself." Some women continued to read from the *Review of Reviews*, but they also branched out and discussed articles from a wide array of magazines, with a particular emphasis on the progressive publications of the era, and they continued to read articles on a far ranging number of topics from the mundane to the monumental. In essence they maintained the same generalist approach in their study of current events as they did in their study of history and literature, continuing in their aim to remain broadly well-read women rather than specialists or activists.<sup>27</sup>

Between 1896 and 1917 the women of the SLC reported on nearly 300 separate articles, and identified over half of them with a specific

publication. The 166 articles with identifiable sources were read from twenty-one weekly or monthly magazines and two daily newspapers. The SLC maintained the general approach they established during their first year, though, of reading mainstream, essentially progressive publications, rather than reading the popular women's magazines of that era. During that entire twenty-one year period, they reported reading only one article each from *Ladies' Home Journal* and *Woman's Companion*, but frequently cited articles from general news magazines, such as *Universe* and *Great Round World*, as well as from progressive periodicals, including *Century*, *McClure's*, *Munsey's*, *Harpers* and *Outlook*.<sup>28</sup>

Their selection of topics continued to fit into the same pattern they had established during their first year, ranging from international concerns and conflicts to more lighthearted fare, but only suggesting a slight interest in domestic politics or reform movements. Especially during the first five years, as the nation became embroiled in international conflicts, the club placed a heavy emphasis on international news, discussing events leading up to the Spanish-American War, the continuing tensions in the Philippines, the Boer war, the Dreyfus affair, and China. Recognizing the impact of scientific developments on their lives, the SLC incorporated articles on science and technology. As the group evolved, they devoted even less attention to articles on progressive reform or women's rights, articles that were readily available in the publications they read, than they did during their early years. Such choices suggest that these women believed that an understanding of world events and developments in science and technology would be essential to help them make sense of the world around them, but that they were not actively looking for role models among contemporary, prominent women's or progressive reform movements.

### **History and Literature**

The SLC maintained its continuing education approach to history and literature by choosing selections that reflected the contemporary canon of the early twentieth century. In both history and literature, the members focused on a study of western civilization, often using popular history texts and widely recognized literary classics. In history, they initially used texts that were written specifically for a school aged audience, but as the average age of the SLC's members advanced, they moved from school textbooks to general studies written for an adult general audience.

The SLC drew all of their topics for the literature portion of their meetings from classics of western civilization, with special emphasis on British literature. William Shakespeare remained their most faithful companion, as the women read at least one of his plays, including the historical plays as well as comedies and tragedies, in each of nine

separate years. Alfred Tennyson also received significant attention. They rounded out their course of study with the works of other British poets, including Robert Browning, Robert Burns, John Milton, Samuel Johnson, Lord Byron, Thomas Addision, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and Benjamin Disraeli. The SLC devoted less time to American authors, but did briefly study the works of poets James Lowell and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow in each of two years. The young women of the SLC on occasion took advantage of this literary half hour to indulge their creative side by acting out the plays they read. Despite these lighthearted moments, the reading selections reflected the desire of the women of the SLC to embrace the literary canon as established at that time, and their particular affinity for the works of William Shakespeare dovetailed nicely with their interests in history.<sup>29</sup>

European history, particularly the national histories of France and England, dominated the history portion of the SLC's agenda with American history, including both the United States and Mexico, rounding out the remaining course of study. During the first twenty-one years, 1896-1917, they devoted twelve years to the study of European history and five years to topics in United States history. France received their full attention during four years and represented a piece of the agenda for two additional years. They spent the history portion of three years of meetings studying English history and frequently grappled with English history through their reading of Shakespeare's historical dramas.

From 1900 through 1902 the SLC examined American history, engaging first in a sweeping survey of the history from the settlement of European colonies through the Mexican war. From that general introduction, they were inspired to examine the biographies of leading men of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-centuries. Thereafter, they devoted three years to Long Island history, spending one of those years narrowly focusing on Setauket during the American Revolution. During the other three years they examined Mexican history for two years and initiated a general study of South America during their last year of meetings prior to their hiatus in 1917. Neither Africa nor Asia entered into their historical inquiries, a choice that was possibly a reflection of the limited materials that would have been available to them, as they did express interest in developing nations, especially China, in their study of current events.<sup>30</sup>

Their book selections suggest their desire to keep up with scholastic trends. After reading a work of French history written by prominent Yale historian, George Burton Adams during their first year, they followed up with Charles Dickens' *A Child's History of English History*, Edward Eggleston's American history texts, and the locally esteemed Martha Flint's *Early Long Island*. These particular books were appropriate for

young women approaching their club as an extension of their formal education. By the 1910s, as the average age of their membership increased, they turned their attention to travel writer John Stoddard's popular lecture series, which provided an impressionistic approach to the study of history, geography, and cultural artifacts of different nations. By selecting this course of study, the women of the SLC demonstrated their continued interest in learning stories about the rest of the world, especially the Western world.<sup>31</sup>

### **Women in History and Literature**

Even though the SLC engaged in a rather traditional history and literature curriculum, the commentary recorded in the club's minutes reveals some interest in the role and place of women in both literature and history. Despite their initial foray into women's writing during their first year when they read Ackerman's *A World Through a Woman's Eye*, they did not continue to seek out women authors or books that provided feminist social commentary. Between 1897 and 1917 they studied the work of only one other woman, Marguerite de Navarre's *The Heptameron*. In their current events section they reported on articles written about nineteenth century women authors such as Louisa May Alcott and Harriet Beecher Stowe, but they never read their work or any works of fiction written by American women authors.<sup>32</sup>

Most of their access to women's issues came through the words of men. During two years they studied women either in the history or in the literature segments of their meetings, reading the "Great Women" volume of John Lord's *Beacon Lights of History* series, specifically focusing on stories and commentaries of Cleopatra, Marie Antoinette, Queen Elizabeth, Hannah Moore, and other famous women.<sup>33</sup> Unfortunately, the recording secretaries kept only cursory minutes during these years, and they did not reveal the thoughts or reflections of the SLC members on the subject matter. Despite their focus on works written by and about men, they did occasionally seek out commentary about women, especially commenting on what they perceived to be the ill treatment of women at the hands of men. While reading Shakespeare's "The Merchant of Venice" in 1897, for example, the secretary commented on "the scene in which Portia discovers the merit (or rather lack of merit) of her several suitors, much in the same fashion of a girl of today." Despite their fondness for Shakespeare, however, they were also critical of his most notorious rendering of a turbulent marital relationship. When reporting on their reading of "The Taming of the Shrew" in 1897, the secretary wrote, "If one end indeed justifies the means, then perhaps Petruccio may be pardoned for his methods of breaking his wife's spirit, but to the nineteenth century mind it appears to be a trifle harsh." Their interest in

fictional depictions of actual women was also aroused in 1903 when their study of King Henry VIII led them to read Tennyson's "Queen Mary," but they did not record their thoughts or feelings on Queen Mary or Tennyson's rendering of her in their minutes.<sup>34</sup>

The SLC's historical studies generally focused on wars and leading men, but occasionally included notable women of the ruling class. They discussed royal women, including Marguerite de Navarre, Catherine de Medici, both of Napoleon's wives, the wives of King Henry VIII, Queen Mary, Queen Elizabeth, and Queen Victoria, as well as women who rose to fame through war and revolution, including Joan of Arc, Madame de Stael, Charlotte Corday, and Madame Roland. In their commentary on women's lives, they praised their strength and condemned the men who treated them poorly. They lauded Catherine de Medici for "[taking] a prominent part in government and [endeavoring] to strengthen her power by balancing the Catholics and Protestants against one another"; credited King Louis XIV's mistress, Madame de Montespan, with influencing his reforms; explained that Madame de Stael "saved many of her friends from the guillotine" and possessed "the intellect of a man"; judged that Madame Roland "bore her sentence [of death by guillotine] nobly"; acknowledged Josephine's influence over Napoleon's career; and expressed admiration for Marguerite de Navarre's work with the poor.<sup>35</sup>

The SLC also acknowledged the influence women exerted over creative men, praising the women who supported and condemning the women who hurt the men in their lives. They lauded Edith Fricker, the wife of author Robert Southey, for "taming his recklessness somewhat" and Benjamin Disraeli's wife for her "fine mind and influence," which "worked very much to his advantage." On the other hand, they mourned John Milton's "two unfortunate marriages" to women "intellectually very much his inferiors."<sup>36</sup>

After their first year the women of the SLC did not examine early feminist or progressive critiques of women's role in modern society, but the selection of topics by or about women and subsequent commentary on them reveals an interest in fitting women into the traditional historical and literary canon and a readiness to critique past injustices done to and committed by women, especially with respect to women's traditional relationships of mothers, wives, and helpmates to men. While people living in cities at this time described the sudden appearance of the independent "New Woman," in rural locations like Setauket women did not seek sweeping reform or independence. Even in a club that included some women who worked outside the home and a few women who would never marry, its members continued to recognize that women's lives would remain connected to the rest of their families and communities, including its men, and while they did not propose political reforms during

the progressive era, they were not afraid of praising women's strength and challenging injustice against women when they saw it.

### **Coming of Age: Civic Activities of the 1920s**

As patriotism swept the nation in 1917, the women of the SLC put aside their reading, instead committing their time and energy to their country and such volunteer activities as the Red Cross. They did not reconvene the SLC until January 1920, and when they did so the nature of the organization had changed. As newly enfranchised citizens in a world shaken by the upheavals of World War I and the Russian Revolution, the women of Setauket narrowed the scope of their studies, but expanded their discussions of political issues and their official work with other clubs.

When the SLC members resumed their studies their agenda clearly reflected the national mood to reject internationalism in favor of local concerns. The SLC began their study of history by rereading Martha Flint's *Early Long Island*, and they chose the American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow as their literary topic for the season. The next few years did not bring any significant increase in their global perspective. They continued to read Flint's history of Long Island during the next year and returned to an old literary standby, Tennyson. In 1922 they set aside their study of literature to fill scrapbooks with clippings on and memorabilia of such American heroes as George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. Even though they reintroduced some European history into their repertoire, starting with the study of England in 1922 and of Holland in 1923, the general focus indicated a return to more local concerns, and less interest in global affairs.<sup>37</sup>

Their study of current events, which had continued a strong international perspective throughout the first twenty-one years of the club's history, became increasingly less substantive than it had been prior to the war. The practice of assigning a single member to carefully select and report on a single article was replaced in 1920 with a procedure of incorporating current events into the roll call. This new format required that each member read a short news item as part of her response in roll call, and consequently the need for a longer discussion of current events was deemed no longer necessary. This change in practice resulted in women listing random comments rather than probing one or two significant world events for thirty minutes. The following topics represent the entire current events discussion for the meeting on March 22, 1920: a quaint marriage custom in Sumatra, the remodeling of Mark Twain's home, hedgehog quills used as needles for phonographs, making paper from cotton stalks, ancient and modern dolls, the history of glove-making, and kitchen gods of Japan. Later that year the current events

segment of the meetings reached its nadir when one unidentified member of the club presented an article that the secretary recorded simply as “a piece of thread.”<sup>38</sup> In 1922 the era of focused study of world events gave way to community work as the women of the SLC expanded their activities into their own and other Long Island communities, and began to adopt official positions on political, social, and cultural issues.

After operating in isolation for over two decades, the newly reformed SLC finally joined forces with other Long Island women’s groups. Some of these organizations embraced a progressive agenda aimed at solving community problems, including the Red Cross, the Setauket Welfare Association, the Setauket Neighborhood Association, and the Three Village Garden Club. But other organizations maintained the style of restrictive clubs, especially patriotic organizations for women, such as the Daughters of the Revolution and the Daughters of the War of 1812. Through their participation in these organizations the women of the SLC expanded their quest to help their community make sense of the changes ushered in during the past few decades both through political and social activism and by creating a sense of community identity and pride.<sup>39</sup>

During the early 1920s the SLC established cordial working relationships with women’s clubs in other Suffolk County communities, notably Patchogue’s women’s club, Sorosis, with whom they exchanged visits in 1922 and 1924 for purposes of shared study. In 1924, the SLC opened their doors to representatives from other clubs, including the Riverhead Women’s Club, the Bay Shore Literary Club, the Shakespeare Club of Greenport, the Patchogue Study Club, and various chapters of the Daughters of the Revolution and other women’s patriotic societies. These visits continued throughout the decade, giving women’s groups the opportunity to entertain each other by sharing stories of their recent studies and activities.

This expanding geographic notion of community encouraged the SLC to reach out to other leaders in the women’s club movement, including, most notably, future first lady Eleanor Roosevelt, who delivered a public address in Setauket in 1925 at the request of the SLC and guest clubs from Patchogue and Bay Shore on the subject of “Woman’s Responsibility as a Citizen.” The newspaper account simply describes her talk as “intensely interesting” without any indication of significant debate or follow up, but their choice of a prominent member of New York City’s women’s clubs and the Democratic Party, who was also the wife of the Democratic Party’s vice presidential candidate in 1924, suggests that the women of the SLC understood the implications of their recent enfranchisement. Through these visits, Setauket’s women also expanded their definition of community by entering into an active fellowship with other Long Island women, and through these meetings



also contemplated their role in public life far more than they had during the Progressive Era.<sup>40</sup>

As an organization the SLC participated in this expansion of their community of women by joining the Long Island Federation of Women's Clubs (LIFWC), an organization that had existed since 1895, although primarily consisting of women's clubs in Brooklyn and Queens rather than in Nassau and Suffolk counties. By participating in this group the women of Setauket became more engaged in the political and cultural issues of the era. In 1921 the members of the SLC discussed joining the LIFWC and after sending representatives to an information luncheon in Riverhead in 1922 voted to become an official affiliate of that larger organization. The women of the SLC immediately demonstrated that they planned to take this obligation seriously. Rather than rubber-stamping the resolutions passed on to them by the LIFWC, the SLC discussed and approved only some of them. Following the 1923 convention in Brooklyn, the SLC's delegates presented brief summaries of the convention proceedings and of the addresses delivered by Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick and Channing Pollock. Fosdick and Pollock discussed concerns and proposed solutions to national problems of law and order, including the rise of lynching throughout the nation, violations of the Eighteenth Amendment, and concerns about obscene material in films and theater. After these summaries, the delegates then presented the SLC with a set of resolutions, which were unanimously passed at the LIFWC convention, and asked the members of the SLC to act on them. The SLC unanimously carried the resolution in support of a child labor law, and for the first time instructed their secretary to write to members of the United States Senate. They did not support either of the other two LIFWC resolutions, however. They rejected a resolution calling for stricter enforcement of the Eighteenth Amendment and abstained on a resolution condemning Arbuckle Films.

Later that same year the SLC again turned down a LIFWC request for support, refusing to support a pledge "to promote conservation of natural resources," explaining simply, "Subject laid aside as it did not meet the requirements we had wished for." The following year the LIFWC raised an issue that the SLC enthusiastically supported, approving state legislation to ban the use of "wayside signs" on country roads, which they believed marred the beauty of the landscape. The club not only endorsed a resolution in support of this legislation but also sent letters to legislators and contributed money to the national organization, the General Federation of Women's Clubs, to help promote this issue. The SLC had not previously put itself on record concerning political and social issues, but when the members finally decided to take an official stand on political and cultural issues, they did not shy away from their

responsibility to consider the issues carefully and to endorse only those measures that suited their interests.<sup>41</sup>

In supporting stricter child labor laws and restrictions of roadside advertising, the members of the SLC promoted some, but not all, of the remnants of the progressive impulse that lingered in the nation during the early 1920s, and by taking a political stand on these issues, the women of Setauket demonstrated an interest in and a willingness to use their newly won political power. Some of their members also supported these goals through other local organizations. Combining those efforts with a more parochial course of study and their members' participation in patriotic societies, however, reveals interests that also supported the locally oriented booster elements of the 1920s. Thus, as the members of the SLC moved into their period of maturity, they struggled to use their organization to balance the global perspective they had gained through their years of study and their newfound role as fully enfranchised citizens with the responsibility of representing the best interests of their families and their communities.

The official minute books for the years following 1924 are not available, but the organization remained active for at least two more decades. The SLC's first recording secretary, Helen Ridgeway, wrote a short history of the club in 1944 and reported that the SLC had become so popular in the community that they were forced to limit their membership to forty women. The club continued their booster spirit by sponsoring a student essay contest on American history "to make good Americans, by making the children have an intelligent interest and pride in their own country." The SLC also remained active in the LIFWC, and, presumably, continued to negotiate between the political demands of that organization and their local interests.<sup>42</sup>

## **Conclusion**

The women of one of the oldest communities in Suffolk County interpreted the women's club movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in a unique way. The story of the SLC from 1896 through 1924 reveals that the club prepared women for citizenship but did not follow the exact model of urban women's clubs or their national organizations in embracing political reform during the progressive era. Rather, Elizabeth Strong, who remained an active member of the SLC throughout this period, fulfilled her youthful goal of a life of continued learning. Strong, along with the fifty-five other women who participated in the group during the years between 1896 and 1920, shaped an education of their own that prepared them for their roles as voters and small town community leaders in a modern world. They took those next steps, however, not during the height of the Progressive Era, but during

the period of boosterism of the 1920s. This mix of the progressive impulse with the booster spirit - reflected in the concern of SLC women with environmental protection, patriotism, and physical safety - seems to closely mirror the concerns of contemporary suburban women who share some but not all of the concerns of national feminist organizations.<sup>43</sup> The continuity of outlook of these earlier female community activists with their contemporary counterparts on Long Island seems a rich field for future study.

## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Letters of Elizabeth Davenport Strong, Strong Family Papers, Three Village Historical Society Archives, Emma Clark Library, Setauket, New York.

<sup>2</sup> Letters of Elizabeth D. Strong, Strong Family Papers, Three Village Historical Society Archives. For more information on the Strong family see *History of Suffolk County, New York, with Illustrations, Portraits & Sketches of Prominent Families and Individuals* (New York: W.W. Munsell & Co., 1882), 75-81.

<sup>3</sup> Mary I. Wood, *The History of the Federation of Women's Clubs, For the First Twenty-Two Years of Its Organization* (New York, 1912); Eleanor Flexner, *Century of Struggle: The Women's Rights Movement in the United States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959); Karen Blair, *The Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1980); Robyn Muncy, *Creating a Female Dominion in American Reform* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Anne Scott, *Natural Allies: Women's Associations in American History* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1992); Jean V. Matthews, *The Rise of the New Woman: The Women's Movement, 1875-1930* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2003); Theodora Penny Martin, *The Sound of Our Own Voices: Women's Study Clubs, 1860-1910* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1987); Anne Ruggles Gere, *Intimate Practices: Literacy and Cultural Work in U.S. Women's Clubs, 1880-1920* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997); Natalie A. Naylor and Maureen O. Murphy, eds., *Long Island Women: Activists and Innovators* (Interlaken, NY: Empire State Books, 1998).

<sup>4</sup> Nancy Cott, *The Grounding of Modern Feminism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).

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<sup>5</sup> Flexner; William O'Neill, *Everyone Was Brave: The Rise and Fall of Feminism in America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, Belknap Press, 1969); Muncy; Scott.

<sup>6</sup> Edwin P. Adkins, *Setauket: The First Three Hundred Years*, (Setauket, New York: Three Village Historical Society, 1980), 1-28, 33-54, 68-69; *History of Suffolk County, New York, with Illustrations, Portraits & Sketches of Prominent Families and Individuals* (New York: W.W. Munsell & Co., 1882), 39-43, 75-76, 81.

<sup>7</sup> Adkins, 68-70, 76; *History of Suffolk County*, 40.

<sup>8</sup> Adkins, 80-90; *History of Suffolk County*, 39-40, 84-86; Beverly C. Tyler, "The Risks of Sea Travel from an Earlier Era," *Three Village Herald*, October 12, 1983; Bev Tyler, "Three Village Shipbuilders," *Three Village Herald*, October 28, 1981.

<sup>9</sup> The combined population of Setauket and East Setauket for 1880 was 492, according to Barbara Shupe, Janet Steins and Jyoti Pandit, *New York State Population, 1790-1980*, (New York: Neal Schuman Pubs, Inc., 1987), 271. This source provides no data for the years between 1890 and 1940. Neighboring Stony Brook, another community in the Three Village area, had similar population numbers, with a population of 549 in 1880. *Ibid.* "The 1896 data was reported in the following article, "A Polyglot Village," *Brooklyn Eagle*, 22 December 1896, 9. Edwin Atkins connects the rise in the immigrant population and the establishment of the Catholic and Jewish religious institutions to the expansion of rubber factory, but indicates that that population left the area soon after a fire destroyed the factory shortly before the turn of the century. See Atkins, *Setauket*, 22-23, 69-70.

<sup>10</sup> Manuscript census records for Setauket and East Setauket for the 1880, 1900, 1910 or 1920 reports of the United States Census. Photocopies of manuscript census records and church marriage and cemetery records for the Caroline (Episcopal) Church and the Methodist Church of Setauket are located in the Three Village Historical Society Archives, Emma Clark Library, Setauket, New York. Cemetery records for the Presbyterian Church are included in Belle Barstow, *Setauket's Religious Beginnings – with Epitaphs for the Presbyterian Churchyard* (Smithtown, NY: Rost Associates, Inc., 1984).

<sup>11</sup> Adkins, 16-22, 94; Barstow. Elizabeth's mother discussed missionary and ladies' aid society work in letters dated: June 7, 1890, January 30, 1891, May 21, 1891, May 28, 1891, May 26, 1896. The Elizabeth Strong files also include letters from other relatives discussing their church work. Elizabeth Strong Letters, Strong Family Collection, Three Village Historical Society Archives.

<sup>12</sup> The church affiliation of thirty of the fifty-six women who were members of the SLC between 1896 and 1917 has been established through church cemetery and marriage records, and out of these thirty women, thirteen were Episcopalians, another thirteen were Presbyterians, and four were Methodists. For a discussion of nineteenth century women's church work see Scott, *Natural Allies*, Anne M. Boylan, *Sunday School: The Formation of an American Institution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988) and Lori D. Ginzberg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence: Morality, Politics, and Class in the Nineteenth Century United States* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990).

<sup>13</sup> "John B. Mount Tells of Setauket's First Library," October 1927, clipping in Emily Smith Scrapbook, Three Village Historical Society Archives, Emma S. Clark Library, Setauket, New York, 93.

<sup>14</sup> Adkins, 93; "Library History," Emma S. Clark Memorial world wide website [www.emmaclark.org/library.cfm](http://www.emmaclark.org/library.cfm), accessed August 22, 2003; "Petition," dated 1896, File of loose papers and ephemera, and "Setauket Library Club Minute Book, 1896-1900," Setauket Library Club Collection, Three Village Historical Society Archives, Emma S. Clark Library.

<sup>15</sup> Manuscript census or church cemetery records provide dates of birth for fourteen of the original twenty-one members. Marital status of all twenty-one women is indicated through their identification in the SLC records as Miss or Mrs., and manuscript census and church marriage records determined family relations. Photocopied manuscript census records for Setauket and East Setauket for the 1880, 1900, 1910 or 1920 reports of the United States Census, Three Village Historical Society Archives.

<sup>16</sup> "SLC Minute Book, 1896-1900," 1-13.

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<sup>17</sup> Helen Ridgeway, untitled history of the Setauket Library Club, 1944, Three Village Historical Society Archives, Emma S. Clark Memorial Library, Setauket, New York.

<sup>18</sup> "SLC Minute Book, 1896-1900," 14-15, 25.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 23, 27, 30.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 15 and 25; Lloyd J. Graybar, *Albert Shaw of the Review of Reviews, An Intellectual Biography* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1974)

<sup>21</sup> The SLC cited articles from the following issues of *Review of Reviews*: October, November, and December 1896 and January, February, March, April, and May 1897. The article titles are listed on the contents page from those issues. "SLC Minute Book, 1896-1900," 15-52.

<sup>22</sup> Albert Shaw, "The New Administration at Washington," *The Review of Reviews*, April 1897, 411-434; "SLC Minute Book, 1896-1900," 46-47.

<sup>23</sup> "SLC Minute Book, 1896-1900," 14-39. For additional information on Jessie Ackerman see Jenny Rushing, "Jessie Ackerman, "'The Original World Citizen': Temperance Leader, Suffrage Pioneer, Feminist, Humanitarian," (M.A. thesis, East Tennessee State University, 2003).

<sup>24</sup> "SLC Minute Book, 1896-1900," 53.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 76-77.

<sup>26</sup> Martin.

<sup>27</sup> "SLC Minute Book, 1896-1900," 52; Stacey Horstmann Gatti, "Preparing for World Citizenship: The Role of Popular Magazines in Small Town Women's Study Clubs, 1896-1917," Annual Meeting of the Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association, New Orleans, April 2003.

<sup>28</sup> The minutes between the years 1896 and 1917 mention 286 articles either by topic, author, or magazine. Of those, 166 articles connect the topic to a specific magazine.

<sup>29</sup> “SLC Minute Book, 1901-1924”; “SLC Minute Book, 1896-1900,” 146.

<sup>30</sup> “SLC Minute Book, 1896-1900,” “SLC Minute Book, 1901-1924.”

<sup>31</sup> “SLC Minute Book, 1896-1900,” 9-10, 77-84; “SLC Minute Book, 1901-1924,” 61-86, 181-192.

<sup>32</sup> “SLC Minute Book, 1896-1900,” 58, 61.

<sup>33</sup> “SLC Minute Book, 1901-1924,” 184-191.

<sup>34</sup> “SLC Minute Book, 1901-1924,” 58, 56, 184, 49.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 48, 57, 63-64, 72-73.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 127, 132, 119, 126, 124.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 201-333.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 226, 253.

<sup>39</sup> The activities of these organizations were chronicled in newspaper clippings in the Emily Smith Scrapbook, Three Village Historical Society Archives.

<sup>40</sup> “SLC Minute Book, 1901-1924,” 284-287, 316-319; “Emily Smith Scrapbook”; “Patchogue Sorosis Club Entertains Council Women’s Clubs,” 1922, 7; “Mrs. R.A. Porter Escapes Death,” April 30, 1923, 7; “Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt Speaks at Setauket,” 4 May 1925, in Emily Smith Scrapbook, 12.

<sup>41</sup> Long Island Federation of Women’s Clubs, “The Centennial of the Long Island Federation of Women’s Clubs: Our History,” 1997, pamphlet in possession of author, 4-11; “SLC Minute Book, 1901-1924,” 265, 284, 290, 292-293, 303, 322, 324, 327, 328.

<sup>42</sup> Ridgeway.

<sup>43</sup> Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, “*Feminism is Not the Story of My Life: How the Elite Women’s Movement Has Lost Touch With Women’s Real Concerns* (New York: Nan. A. Talese, 1995).

## THE LEGACY OF NEW DEAL ART ON LONG ISLAND

*Natalie A. Naylor*

*The federal government's New Deal of the 1930s reached deep into almost every corner of American life. Along with Social Security, Federal Deposit Insurance, and the Tennessee Valley Authority, works of art sponsored by New Deal programs remain one of the era's legacies. Natalie Naylor deciphers the "alphabet soup" of New Deal art programs and offers a comprehensive guide to New Deal art executed and exhibited on Long Island.*

Visitors to art museums on Long Island and New York City enjoy the opportunity to see changing and permanent exhibitions. But many people get their first introduction to paintings and sculptures by professional artists at their local school or post office. Many of these murals depict events in local history, so they are also visible reminders of our history and heritage.<sup>1</sup>

The legacy of New Deal art programs in the 1930s includes twenty-one murals in nine post offices on Long Island (Freeport, Garden City, Hempstead, Long Beach, Oyster Bay, Port Washington, Rockville Centre, Westhampton Beach, and the building which formerly housed the Huntington post office). Sixteen murals are in Long Island schools and colleges (Hicksville Middle School, Roslyn schools, Sewanhaka High School in Floral Park, and Farmingdale State University). Four murals are in the Theodore Roosevelt Executive and Legislative Building (the old Nassau County Court House), two murals are in a Suffolk County building in Yaphank, and seven murals are in a Hempstead fire department. In addition, sculptures are in three post offices (Bay Shore, Great Neck, and Oyster Bay). Seventeen artists created this body of work (three had one or several assistants). A number of the artists were or became quite well known nationally; others had local or regional reputations. A few of the murals have been lost over the years or are now in quite poor condition and in jeopardy. Some have been restored and are in excellent condition. After a brief overview of New Deal art and culture programs, this article focuses on the legacy of New Deal public art and the artists who created these murals and sculptures in Nassau and Suffolk counties. The Appendix provides additional information on the murals and sculptures (arranged by community), and indicates where illustrations of the art have been reproduced.

The federal Works Progress (later Projects) Administration (WPA) is often best remembered today for the buildings constructed under its funding in the 1930s. Many post offices and other government buildings,



including the new Nassau County courthouse complex and the Suffolk County Home in Yaphank, were financed by federal funds under the WPA and other New Deal programs.

The New Deal had a number of programs that involved art and culture. The music and theater programs of the WPA are perhaps the least remembered today because they focused on performances, which are by nature ephemeral. The Federal Writers' Project produced state and city guidebooks, collected slave narratives, and pioneered oral history in collecting "living lore." The New York State guidebook includes several tours of Long Island, which have brief descriptive and historical information on various sites and communities. The Writers' Project also prepared brief histories of a few Long Island communities, including Baldwin, Roosevelt, and the Five Towns. The Historical Records Survey compiled and published inventories of public records.<sup>2</sup>

Artists were employed in a number of different New Deal programs, and though murals are the most visible legacy and permanent contributions, they were not the only products of the art programs. The WPA also employed artists to paint easel art. In the national program, more than 108,000 easel paintings were created and allocated to government buildings. Unfortunately, relatively few of these easel paintings have survived. In comparison, 2,566 murals were created nationwide under the WPA, with an additional 1,116 murals in federal buildings, including post offices, under Treasury Department art programs. More than 18,000 sculptures were created and thousands of prints made from more than 11,000 designs.<sup>3</sup> WPA artists conducted art classes and the WPA organized art exhibitions held in department stores and other locations throughout the country, enhancing art appreciation. Another WPA program was the Index of American Design, which employed commercial artists. Its artists created 22,000 watercolor plates of decorative and applied arts. It was not until a decade later that some of these were published under private auspices in two large volumes, thanks to the work of Clarence Hornung of West Hempstead.<sup>4</sup>

Thomas Hart Benton was the leading American muralist of the day, but most artists of the time engaged in easel art and had little experience painting murals. It was the work of Diego Rivera and other muralists in Mexico that was an inspiration for the mural programs. George Biddle suggested mural art to President Franklin D. Roosevelt in May 1933. The first federal program for artists, Public Works of Art Project (PWAP), began in December 1933. None of the murals and sculptures on Long Island were created under the PWAP, which operated for only six months. Nationwide, the PWAP funded artists who created more than 700 murals and thousands of prints and easel art. This first venture showed the feasibility of federal government art programs.

Although murals and other art produced under government auspices in the 1930s are often classified under the rubric “WPA,” there were actually several different programs. Ten of the murals and two sculptures in Long Island post offices were created under the auspices of the Treasury Section of Painting and Sculpture, which began in 1934. (The U.S. Postal Service operated as a function of the federal Treasury Department.) The Treasury’s art program continued with minor name changes until 1943, and is known as the “Section.” The Treasury Department held competitions for its murals and sculptures and contracted with selected artists to pay a set amount for a work, remitting a percentage of the total at specified stages in the process. Payments for murals were usually calculated on the basis of square footage and that depended also on the size and design of the post office. (The Appendix includes figures for the Section commissions.) The Department also had a Treasury Relief Art Project (TRAP, 1935-1939), under which six frescoes, five murals, and four sculptures were created and placed in the Freeport, Hempstead Oyster Bay, and Port Washington post offices. Thirty murals in Long Island schools and other public buildings were painted under the auspices of the WPA’s Federal Art Project (WPA/FAP, or simply WPA, 1935-1942). Most of the artists working in the WPA and TRAP programs were on relief and received weekly salaries for their work, with local sponsors paying the cost of their supplies, including paints and canvas. Nearly all of the murals were painted in oil on canvas in a studio and later affixed to the walls of the building.<sup>5</sup>

Since the post office (Section) artwork was competitive, many of its artists tended to be better known and produced better quality work. However, some of the artists painting murals for the WPA created more interesting art. Most painters of the 1930s “had little mural experience” and, as Karal Ann Marling observes, “were content for the most part, to paint enlarged easel pictures.”<sup>6</sup> Long Island benefited from the concentration of artists in New York City and the metropolitan area. The American Scene, past and present, was a recommended subject matter for murals. Communication, broadly defined, was a favored theme in post offices. Most of the artists working in Treasury Department programs produced generic murals for Long Island post offices which are only loosely associated with the location. The WPA artists produced more murals portraying Long Island history, reflecting the desires of the local sponsors.

Robert Gaston Herbert (1873-1954) created the largest number of New Deal murals on Long Island, painting twelve murals under the auspices of the WPA. Four are in the old Nassau County Court House in Mineola, six were originally in the Roslyn High School, and two are in an auditorium in a Suffolk County building in Yaphank.

Herbert was born in Ohio and studied art at the Cincinnati Art School and Art Students League in New York City. He worked in the art department of the American Lithograph Company for a decade before opening his own art studio at 333 Fourth Avenue in 1906, which he maintained for some twenty years. He engaged in commercial and fine art, producing illustrations for books and magazines and other commissions. Herbert and his wife moved to Long Island in 1908, residing initially in Freeport, but settling in Sea Cliff where they lived for nearly forty years. Although he worked primarily in oil, he used many media including watercolor and charcoal; he also made pottery, woodcarvings, and pewter objects.<sup>7</sup>

Herbert painted six murals for the auditorium of the Roslyn High School in 1937, after researching local history in order to choose significant events to portray. His subjects included: an Indian family and village; Scottish soldiers encamped in Hempstead Harbor (now Roslyn) during the Revolutionary War; President George Washington visiting Hendrick Onderdonk and his paper mill in 1790; William Cullen Bryant and his country home, Cedarmere; and two contemporary (1930s) scenes, Hempstead Harbor and Roslyn village.

Indians are a theme in a number of the local murals. Herbert's mural accurately includes a domed wigwam in its depiction of Long Island's Algonquians rather than a tepee, which appears in some of the other local murals. Long Island was occupied by British and Hessian troops throughout most of the Revolutionary War, and it was a time of hardship, not triumph. So perhaps it is understandable that Herbert was the only artist to include this period in a mural. He depicted tartan-clad Scottish soldiers in Roslyn, alluding to the departure of soldiers from Hempstead playing a Scottish tune, "Roslyn Castle." According to local tradition, this was the origin of the community's name, although this is not historically accurate.

President George Washington's 1790 tour of Long Island was the subject of three New Deal murals, two by Herbert. His Roslyn mural of this event depicts Washington's stop at Hendrick Onderdonk's home for breakfast and prominently features Onderdonk's paper mill. This was one of the first paper mills in the country and is mentioned by Washington in his diary. Onderdonk's house survives on Old Northern Boulevard in Roslyn, now much enlarged as the George Washington Manor Restaurant.

William Cullen Bryant, a poet and *New York Evening Post* editor, was Roslyn's most famous resident. Herbert's mural has a bust of Bryant in the foreground and Cedarmere, his country home, in the distance. Cedarmere is now owned by Nassau County and is open weekends seasonally with period rooms and permanent exhibitions on Bryant.

Herbert's Hempstead Harbor mural includes a large ship's wheel and anchor in the foreground and sailboats in the harbor. Unfortunately, Herbert's mural of Roslyn village was damaged when it was removed. It has not survived nor has any image of it been located.

When the Roslyn High School was expanded in 1969, the auditorium where Herbert's murals hung was slated for demolition. Edward Glannon, an art teacher at the school, pleaded with the Roslyn Board of Education for permission to remove the murals, but the Board turned him down on grounds that they were federal property. Finally, the night before the auditorium was to be razed, the principal told Glannon he could take them down. Glannon worked all night with students to remove the murals from the wall, photographed them, and then the murals were put in storage. Glannon sent photographs of the murals to the Smithsonian, explaining what he had done and requesting that the murals remain in Roslyn. The Smithsonian responded, "these are a portrait of one American village, Roslyn, and we feel that they should stay there." They made Roslyn High School a branch of the Smithsonian to cover the legal issue of federal government ownership.<sup>8</sup>

In 1978, Herbert's Indian and Bryant murals were in a Hofstra University exhibition, *Art for the People—New Deal Murals on Long Island*. In 1991, Glannon restored four of the murals, refinishing and framing them so they could be rehung. (The two contemporary scenes had more damage and were not restored at that time.) The district hung one of the murals in each of their schools.<sup>9</sup> One additional mural was later restored and placed in another of the district schools. The Appendix indicates the locations of the five Roslyn murals that can be seen today.

In 1937-1938, Robert Gaston Herbert painted four murals for the Nassau County Courthouse in Mineola, consulting with county historian Jesse Merritt in choosing the subjects. The large murals in the upper foyer of the rotunda include descriptive labels as part of the painting, so viewers can more easily understand the scenes depicted. One of the murals is of the locally famous Duke's Laws Convention. In 1664, Peter Stuyvesant surrendered the Dutch colony of New Netherland to Colonel Richard Nicolls, who represented the Duke of York (later King James II). Six months later, Nicolls, now governor, convened a meeting in Hempstead of elected representatives from the towns of Long Island and Westchester to issue a code of laws. Herbert's caption states: "The Duke's Laws promulgated March 1st 1665 in Hempstead village. Matthias Nicolls, resident of Plandome and later speaker of the Colonial Assembly presided." Matthias Nicolls is the central figure in the upper right of the mural, reading the document that would govern Long Island. He was then secretary to Governor Richard Nicolls (no relation) who is seated under the British flag.

Herbert's second mural in the courthouse portrays a less familiar colonial event held in New York City. His description on the mural states: "New York's counties were created in 1683 by Gov. Thomas Dongan, later Earl of Limerick." Governor Dongan is standing in front of a large "Map of Yorkshire on Long Island," which prominently features Queens and Suffolk counties. Above the map in script are references to the "Prospect" of the North, East, and West "Ridings," which were administrative divisions of Yorkshire. The mural is a reminder that Nassau County was once part of Queens County and, before 1683, of the North Riding of Yorkshire. The East Riding became Suffolk County; the North Riding included the towns of Jamaica, Flushing, Hempstead (including present-day North Hempstead), Oyster Bay, and Westchester; and the West Riding was composed of Staten Island, New Town, and the six towns of what later became Kings County.

President Washington's 1790 tour of Long Island is celebrated in Long Island history, and historical markers were erected in the 1930s at the locations where he stopped. One of the houses where he stayed is the subject of Herbert's third mural in the courthouse. Herbert's caption describes his mural: "The Youngs Mansion Oyster Bay, built by Thomas Youngs in 1652. George Washington honored the house with an overnight visit in 1790." Washington and his party are shown in the foreground, looking at the home in the distance. The Youngs house survives in private ownership at the junction of Cove and Cove Neck Roads; a state historic marker on the corner commemorates the event Herbert depicts.<sup>10</sup>

Herbert's fourth courthouse mural shows "Gov. Theodore Roosevelt laying the corner-stone of the Nassau Co. Courthouse, July 13th, 1900." Nassau County was formed in 1899 after the three western towns of Queens County became part of New York City in 1898. The courthouse was the first building the new county erected, and they invited their most famous citizen to dedicate it. Roosevelt had achieved fame in the Spanish-American War in 1898 and within a few months was elected governor of New York. Roosevelt was nominated for vice president of the United States three weeks before the event Herbert depicted and would become president after William McKinley's assassination in 1901. The mural shows Roosevelt speaking to a crowd from an elevated platform festooned with flags and bunting. Appropriately, in 2002 the courthouse Roosevelt dedicated in 1900 was officially renamed the Theodore Roosevelt Executive and Legislative Building.<sup>11</sup>

The last two murals Herbert painted for the WPA are located in a Suffolk County building in Yaphank, which has housed different facilities over the years. When it was built with WPA funds in 1937, the building was Suffolk County's old age home; by the 1970s, it was the county

infirmary or hospital. More recently it housed offices for the purchasing department. Fortunately, these large murals have been well preserved in the elegant auditorium of the building, which was recently renovated and restored by the county. In these murals, Herbert includes at the bottom very lengthy descriptions of the scenes he depicts. One of the murals is "Bull" Smith's legendary ride to establish the boundaries of Smithtown in 1665: "'Bull' Smith's Ride—about 1665. Richard Smith, in contract with Lion Gardiner and Sundance, exchanged his farm for all the land he could circle in one day—riding a bull! The ride established the original boundaries of Smithtown." Smith on a bull dominates the foreground of the center of the mural, with some Indians and Englishmen in the woods watching. Herbert's second mural in Yaphank is of Paul Cuffee (1757-1812), a Shinnecock minister, preaching to the Indians in a clearing. Herbert's description on the Cuffee mural is taken verbatim from the gravestone erected for Cuffee by the New York Missionary Society: "Paul Cuffee — Indian preacher of the Shinnecock tribe, humble, pious and indefatigable, testifying the Gospel of God. Died March 17th. Age 55 yrs."<sup>12</sup>

In addition to the murals he did under the auspices of the WPA, Herbert painted an historical mural for the Hempstead Village Hall in 1947: "First Real-Estate Transaction in Hempstead," depicting the November 1643 purchase from the Indians. Herbert also produced murals for many banks on Long Island and New York City. Unfortunately, the murals he painted in the Rockville Centre High School (now the Middle School) were painted over many years ago.<sup>13</sup>

Frederick Marshall is another artist who painted murals at more than one site on Long Island under the auspices of the WPA. Marshall lived in Woodbridge, New Jersey and was a member of the National Society of Mural Painters and the Architectural League of New York. In 1936, he painted four large murals in two buildings at the State Institute of Applied Agriculture (now Farmingdale State University of New York). The murals are on the walls of the staircase and wrap around the corner and windows in each building. In what was originally the Agronomy Building (now Cutler Hall), Marshall painted a redwood forest and rice harvesting in China. In the Horticulture Building (now Hicks Hall), he depicted wheat thrashing and cotton picking. At a later date fire doors were constructed at the top of the stairwell, which cut through the murals. These murals are in very poor condition today. Some of the canvas is peeling off the wall and the redwood mural has had water damage. Moreover, students defaced parts of two of the murals with graffiti. The two buildings that house the murals have been closed for a number of years, but may be renovated in the near future. It would be desirable that,

as part of the renovation, the murals be preserved and restored rather than removed or painted over.

Marshall also painted two large murals for the cafeteria of the Sewanhaka Central High School in Floral Park. He decided to interpret the word "Sewanhaka," one of the Algonquian names for Long Island, by showing "Indian activities at sunrise and sunset." A newspaper account of the proposed project indicates that a different artist had planned to depict "activities in state parks such as horseback riding," and views of "trails and picnic grounds."<sup>14</sup> Both murals in the high school, however, are by Marshall of Indian scenes, which is certainly an appropriate subject for a school bearing an Indian name. The mural includes tepees and Indians with the full-feathered headdress of Plains Indians, whose clothing and way of life were probably more familiar to the artist than were those of the Long Island Algonquians. The Indian word "sewanhaka" has been translated as "island of shells" or "sewan" (wampum) country.<sup>15</sup> Each of the murals shows only a single strand of wampum, which were beads made from shells and used in ceremonies and as currency.

Jon Corbino (1905-1964) was one of the better-known artists whose New Deal work is on Long Island. His mural, *The Pleasures of the Bathing Beach*, is in the Long Beach Post Office. Born in Sicily, Corbino came to New York City when he was eight years old. He studied at the Art Student League and was exhibiting his paintings at museums and galleries when he was in his early twenties; his first solo exhibition was at Oberlin College in 1928. Corbino received a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1936 and was featured in a *Life* magazine article in 1938.

Corbino received a commission in 1938 from the Treasury Section of Painting and Sculpture for the Long Beach mural, with the suggestion from Edward Rowan in Washington that the subject matter be appropriate "to the particular locale of Long Beach." This was a general policy for post office murals. Corbino probably never visited Long Beach. He painted the mural in his summer studio in Rockport, Massachusetts and described it as "a generalized scene that is typical of many seashore places along the East coast."<sup>16</sup> The mural shows people on a boardwalk and on the sand, beach umbrellas and rowboats, sailboats on the horizon, and a number of people standing prominently in the right foreground.

Artists were required to submit preliminary pencil and later color sketches of their murals for approval. Corbino's original sketches included a prominent nude figure of a woman, shown from the back. The federal government had already coped with the issue of nudity in a proposal for the post office in the District of Columbia. It held that such figures were inappropriate in public buildings. In fact, Rowan had stated in 1936, "I personally feel that any person who paints a nude for the Public Works of Art Project should have his head examined." Rowan

insisted on more clothing on this and other figures in correspondence with Corbino. Corbino wanted to withdraw from the project, but eventually did make the changes the government required.<sup>17</sup>

William Gropper was a Long Island muralist who became a well-known artist. Gropper (1897-1977) was born and grew up on the Lower East Side in New York City, the son of poor Jewish immigrants. He studied with Robert Henri (of the Ashcan School) and George Bellows. Gropper became known as a political cartoonist and supported labor unions and various social issues and left-wing causes. Gropper was also a fine-art painter and had his first solo exhibition in 1936, the same year he painted the murals for the Freeport Post Office. He later created two other murals under auspices of the Treasury Section: "Construction of the Dam" in the Department of the Interior building in Washington, D.C. (1939) and "Automobile Industry" in a Detroit post office (1941). Gropper produced sculptures, prints, and ceramics, as well as illustrations, drawings, and lithographs. In later years his work became more abstract.<sup>18</sup>

Gropper's two murals in the Freeport Post Office (on which he was assisted by Morris Pass) are among the most charming of the local murals. His "Winter Scene" has several people in the foreground, including a postman with a mail pouch on his back walking in the snow on a windy day in front of what appears to be a church. Telephone poles, cars, a train, and an airplane in the sky clearly convey the post office's "communication" theme. Gropper's second mural has four men loading mail into the front cargo bay of a 1930s airplane. The colors in these murals are again vibrant, thanks to their restoration in 1986 by the Postal Service's Fine Arts Conservation Program. Three circular relief sculptures on the interior north wall in the Freeport Post Office further highlight transportation. One features a steam railroad engine, another a paddle wheel steamboat, and the third an airplane. No information is available on their sculptor or designer, nor are they listed as Treasury sculptures.

At least two artists who later became quite well known were selected to do murals for Long Island post offices, but had their work rejected. Paul Cadmus (1904-1999) had aroused controversy with his 1934 picture *The Fleet's In*, which Navy officials insisted be withdrawn from an exhibition at the Corcoran Gallery in Washington, D.C. because they were embarrassed by what they deemed a "disgraceful, sordid, disreputable, drunken brawl." Two years later, Cadmus submitted for his Port Washington post office commission three color sketches depicting *Aspects of Suburban Life: Public Dock, Golf, and Polo*. The satiric caricatures in Cadmus's portrayal of suburbanites were viewed as insulting rather than amusing, and local residents rejected his designs.<sup>19</sup>



As a result, the Port Washington post office has three bland murals by Harry S. Lane (1891-1951): *Lighthouse*, *Sailing*, and *Landscape*. These are unusual because they are framed paintings rather than being affixed directly on the wall. Lane was apparently a quite undistinguished artist; virtually no biographical information on him could be located, except that he lived in Elmhurst, Queens. His painting is generic rather than site specific, though Port Washington does have an active harbor with many sailboats and a lighthouse off the peninsula in Sands Point. His *Landscape* painting depicts a horse farm and cliffs, another generic scene.

The federal government allocated \$4,200 for murals at the Hempstead Post Office and artists competed for the commission. The *Hempstead Sentinel* reported that the Art Director at Cooper Union in New York City chaired the open competition. He came to Hempstead to confer on the subject matter with a local committee. An artist's design usually had to be approved by the local postmaster and a citizens committee, as well as by the program officials in Washington. In this case, the Hempstead committee included the Hempstead Postmaster, the wife of a local Supreme Court Justice, and the president of the Hempstead Parent Teacher Association. The Hempstead committee wanted the history of Hempstead depicted in the murals. Their suggestions included: "local post office service; the coming of the first settlers in 1643, the stockade . . . the meeting of the new inhabitants with the Indians and the signing of the agreements; the Hempstead Plains and its camps in the various war periods; the progress of the village; and a pictorial representation of . . . Hempstead under three flags, Dutch, English, and American."<sup>20</sup>

James Brooks (1906-1992) won the competition for the Hempstead Post Office, a result of being removed from the original post office building, but his design was not accepted. Brooks later recalled: "They felt a little bereft about [it] because they had expected this important commission would be won by a name artist that they could be sure of a product from, and I had never had any experience in murals, and the sketches were small. They asked me to do a larger one so that they could tell more about it, which I did. They probably didn't like it so much . . . they called it off." Brooks felt it "was pretty nasty in a way" inasmuch as it would have been "a good-sized job—five big panels."<sup>21</sup>

Not all post offices held competitions. The government often selected artists who were runners-up in a competition to do a mural at another site. After Brooks' design was rejected, the government turned to Peppino Mangravite (1896-1978) who was a runner-up in the competition for the Hempstead Post Office. Mangravite received a commission to paint two murals in the Hempstead Post Office. At that time, he was better known than Brooks. Mangravite had emigrated from Italy in 1923

and lived in Rye in Westchester County, across Long Island Sound. Mangravite, who taught art at Sarah Lawrence College and later at Columbia University, had won two Guggenheim Fellowships; he was also a draftsman and lithographer. Mangravite painted several other murals for the Treasury Department: two in the Atlantic City, New Jersey Post Office (1939); one in the Jackson Heights Post Office in Queens (1940); and one in the Governor's Mansion in the U.S. Virgin Islands (1942).

Mangravite reported that he spent seven months in historical research before painting his murals in the Hempstead Post Office in 1937. His large mural of the early settlement depicts three episodes that he described as: the English landing at Roslyn and driving their cattle south to Hempstead; the purchase from the Indians; and the stockade in Hempstead. This mural includes all the various aspects the committee had suggested for a "settlement mural." Mangravite clothed the Indian women in classical garb; by doing so he avoided any possible problem with nudity. His second mural depicts the "arrival of the British Dirigible R-34 with the first airmail in 1919." The R-34 was a 641-foot rigid airship that flew from Scotland to Roosevelt Field in four and one-half days. It was the first successful round trip transatlantic flight and the first to fly from east to west. The large airship dominates the mural, but the artist also included in the upper right background a period biplane in the air, tents, and Mitchel Field airplane hangars.<sup>22</sup>

Mangravite planned three additional murals embodying a transportation theme, which the Treasury Department promoted for its murals in post offices. The completed settlement mural showed travel by foot, and the R-34 mural depicted air travel. One of the other murals Mangravite proposed for the Hempstead Post Office was to be of the Revolutionary period (topic unspecified, but featuring travel by horseback). The two others were to be of the Hempstead stage receiving mail from the Brooklyn ferry and the Hempstead railroad station in 1890. However, the government planned only two murals for the Hempstead Post Office. Mangravite hoped an additional \$6,000 could be raised locally for the other three, but they never came to fruition. The \$4,425 allocated for the two large Hempstead murals was the largest amount for post office murals on Long Island.<sup>23</sup>

The Oyster Bay Post Office has the most extensive New Deal art of any Long Island post office, perhaps because the community was the hometown of President Theodore Roosevelt (TR), who was related to both President Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) and First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt. TR was Eleanor's uncle, while TR and FDR were fifth cousins.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, TR's widow, Edith Kermit Roosevelt, still lived at Sagamore Hill, which was served by the Oyster Bay Post Office. This

post office has five fresco murals, a large ceiling fresco, and four sculptures. These are the only frescoes on Long Island, with the paint applied on the wet plaster. (Most of the other murals are oil paintings on canvas that subsequently were affixed to the wall.)

Ernest Peixotto (1869-1940), who with the assistance of Arthur Sturges painted the five fresco murals in the Oyster Bay Post Office, was another artist with a national reputation. Born in San Francisco, he studied at the San Francisco School of Design and at the Atelier Julien in Paris for seven years. He painted murals, portraits, and landscapes and illustrated articles and books for Scribner's and Harper's, including fifty illustrations for Theodore Roosevelt's *The Strenuous Life: Oliver Cromwell*, published in 1900. Peixotto was president of the Mural Painters Society in the 1930s, one of six painters on the jury for a competition for federal buildings in Washington, D.C., and he chaired the New York City Municipal Art Committee. William L. Bottomley, architect of the post office, recommended that Peixotto create the post office panels.<sup>25</sup>

Peixotto effectively depicted various aspects of Oyster Bay history over time. The lunette frescoes are relatively small (2 x 6 feet), but have brief titles at the bottom as part of the mural. One of them, *William Leverich Discusses the Treaty with the Indians, 1653*, commemorates the purchase of Oyster Bay. Leverich was one of three Englishmen to sign the treaty. As a result of his missionary efforts, he was probably the one most able to communicate with the Indians. *George Washington at the Youngs' House, Oyster Bay, April 1790* is an interior view of Washington and the Youngs in front of a fireplace during the president's famous tour of Long Island. The Treasury Section liked to have murals depicting postal history and Peixotto obliged in his third mural, *James Caldwell, First Postmaster and First Post Office, Oyster Bay, Established about 1800*. Another mural features *Theodore Roosevelt with his Children, Sagamore Hill, 1900*. (Peixotto may have met TR in 1900 when he was illustrating his *Cromwell* book.) Four of TR's children are shown: Ted, Kermit, Ethel, and Archie; the eldest, sixteen-year old Alice and the youngest, three-year old Quentin are not in the mural. The final mural is a contemporary scene, *A Spring Afternoon at Piping Rock, 1936*. Many well-to-do residents of the area were members of the Piping Rock Club in nearby Locust Valley. The mural shows two men and a woman on the lawn, a tennis racket and bag of golf clubs nearby, and the clubhouse in the distance. Thus it alludes to some popular leisure-time activities of North Shore estate owners of the day.

Leo Lentelli (1879-1962) created four sculptures for the Oyster Bay post office. Lentelli was born in Bologna, Italy and came to the United States in 1903. He had studied art in Bologna and Rome, although one

account says he was “mainly a self-taught artist.” He was an Academician of the National Academy of Design and taught at the Art Students League and Cooper Union in New York City and at the San Francisco Institute of Art. His sculptural decorations are in Rockefeller Center and the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York, and among his other important works are an equestrian statue in Charlottesville, Virginia and the Cardinal Gibbons Monument in Washington, D.C.<sup>26</sup>

Lentelli’s unsigned life-size bust of Theodore Roosevelt in terracotta on a pedestal inside the post office commemorates Oyster Bay’s most famous resident. With the aid of six assistants (Frank Aro, Lawrence Cupani, Dominick La Salle, Frank A. Machera, Gaetano Venezia, and Eduardo Villafrato), Lentelli also sculpted two terracotta relief panels: *Asia America*, with the dates 1858 and 1919 in the top corners, and *Africa Oceania*, with the dates 1904 and 1936. In front of rays of the sun, facing animals symbolize the continents. The subject of these panels apparently was selected because of Theodore Roosevelt’s African safari and Brazilian expeditions. The larger animals in the panels are a lion and rhinoceros on the east wall and an elephant and buffalo (bison) on the west wall. The 1858-1919 dates on the Asia America panel are Roosevelt’s birth and death dates. On the Africa Oceania panel, 1904 was when Roosevelt was elected president, and 1936 is the year the post office was built. These reliefs have some flaking and would benefit from restoration. Lentelli also decorated the base of the flagpole outside the post office. Four sea horses are the dominant motif, accompanied by decorative seashells and gargoyle-like fish. Over his own name (followed by SC, for sculptor), the artist inscribed the stone “Treasury Department Art Project”; the year 1937 is in roman numerals on the back.

Some of the WPA artists did not become well known and information about them is more limited. This is particularly true of the young artists who assisted the “master artist.” Arthur Sturges assisted Peixotto with the lunette murals, while Abell Sturges signed the large fresco on the ceiling vault of the Oyster Bay Post Office, although Peixotto may have designed it. No information could be located about either Arthur or Abell Sturges. The ceiling is an unusual shape: “an elongated octagon adjusted to a bell shape.”<sup>27</sup> The mural is an allegory of North America receiving mail from the world. Women representing different countries (including Cuba, Holland, Hawaii, and China) send mail on trains, ships, and planes. Mercury, the winged messenger, is at the top of the dome to receive the mail.

Gaetano Cecere (1894-1985), on the other hand, was a fairly well known sculptor. Born in New York City, he studied at the National Academy of Design, Beaux-Art Institute of Design in New York City, and the American Academy in Rome. He was an Academician of the

National Academy of Design, a Fellow of the American Academy in Rome, and a member of the National Sculpture Society. Cecere won a number of prizes in the 1920s and 1930s for his plaques and reliefs. In 1938, Cecere created an eagle for the post office and court house in South Norwalk, Connecticut. Two years later, he sculpted a six-foot square sunken relief sculpture of an American eagle with stars on the façade of the Great Neck Post Office.

An eagle with stars was a popular patriotic motif in sculptures, and is incorporated in Wheeler Williams's 1936 sculpture inside the Bay Shore Post Office. Williams (1897-1972), was born in Chicago, graduated from Yale University, and received his Master's in Architecture from Harvard University. He studied at the Art Institute of Chicago and the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. Wheeler won awards for his work in Rome and Paris and was president of the Fine Arts Federation of New York, the National Sculpture Society, and the American Artist Professional League. He had sculpted *Indian Bowman* (1938) for the Canal Street Post Office in New York City. His other sculptures include *Tablets to Pioneers* on the Michigan Avenue Bridge in Chicago and *Settlers of the Seaboard* in Fairmount Park, Philadelphia. Williams entitled his Bay Shore sculpture *Speed*. Communication was one of the recommended themes and Williams expresses the speed of mail in an image of Mercury in his winged hat. In Roman mythology, Mercury was the messenger and god of commerce and travel, a "flying man" (the Greeks called him Hermes). The sculpture also has a large eagle in the back and stars on bottom.

Sol Wilson (1896-1974), who painted the mural in the Westhampton Beach Post Office, was born in Vilna, then part of Russia but now in Poland. Wilson came to America as a young child and grew up in New York City. He studied at Cooper Union, the National Academy of Design, and Beaux Arts School in Paris. Wilson taught at the American Artist School and the Art Students League. Best known for his maritime paintings, he lived in New York City and summered on Cape Cod, where he had a studio in Provincetown. His art is in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Brooklyn Museum, and the Corcoran Gallery. He painted a mural entitled *Indian Ladder* (1940) in the Delmar Post Office in upstate New York.<sup>28</sup> His Westhampton Beach mural *Outdoor Sports*, depicts tennis, golfing, wild duck hunting, swimming, and boating activities in a seaside landscape in almost in a folk art style.

Joseph Allen Physioc (1865-1951) painted five murals in the Hicksville High School (now the Middle School). He was best known as a scenic artist or stage designer for theater productions in New York City, most notably (when he was only twenty-seven), Richard Mansfield's production of Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man*. Physioc, who lived in Bayville for many years, also created easel paintings and had a one-man

exhibition of his art in Sea Cliff in 1949, which included paintings and models of stage settings.<sup>29</sup>



Victor White's 1939 mural in the Rockville Centre Post Office of eighteenth century bayman sorting fish and clams.

Physioc's murals depict different aspects of local history over the years. A mural of Cantiague rock and trees portrays the purchase of Oyster Bay from the Indians at an important boundary point. The scene outside a colonial tavern on another mural probably depicts Quakers at Jericho. The man beating gold illustrates an important small-scale industry in Hicksville from the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth century. Gold was reduced to tissue-thin sheets, which were used to decorate a variety of items, such as leather book bindings. Physioc's fourth mural of a potato field depicts an important agricultural activity on Long Island. His final mural is of the Long Island Aviation Country Club established in Hicksville in 1928. In addition to tennis courts, swimming pool, and a clubhouse, the Club had a landing field and hangars for private planes. The mural shows planes in the air and on the ground, luxury automobiles, and the edge of the clubhouse.<sup>30</sup>

J. Theodore Johnson (1902-1963) who painted the large mural in the Garden City Post Office in 1937 was a painter, sculptor, and teacher. From 1938 to 1945, he taught at the Minneapolis School of Art and later

at San Jose State College. Under the auspices of the Treasury Section program, Johnson painted a mural *Father Marquette—1674* in the Morgan Park Branch Post Office in Chicago (1937) and four panels on the history of Chicago in the suburban Oak Park (Illinois) Post Office in 1939.

Johnson's *Huckleberry Frolic* mural has a basket of blueberries in the foreground and shows two men carrying a large basket and two women apparently preparing for a picnic on the grass. Three horses and a dog are on the left and a farmer and several sheep on the right. This mural has been described as "a Diego Rivera-esque scene of harvesters cheerfully laboring." The *Huckleberry Frolic* on the Hempstead Plains was a popular annual event in the nineteenth century, but was a very different type of activity from that shown in the mural. The fact that Johnson proposed an alternate sketch of "Cranberry Frolic" is probably further evidence that the scene was intended to be a generic rather than a site-specific one.<sup>31</sup>

The Rockville Centre Post Office has four murals painted by Victor White (1891-1954), who was born in Dublin, Ireland and came to the United States when he was 17. He studied at the Art Student League with George Bellows, Robert Henri, and William Merritt Chase, and was known for his portraits, marine scenes, and decorative murals. After serving in World War I, White lived first in Woodmere and later in Cedarhurst. A member of the National Society of Mural Painters, White painted murals at the Belincourt museum in France, for the Grumman Corporation in Bethpage, and in a number of commercial buildings in New York City. In the Starlight room of the Waldorf Astoria hotel, he painted murals on glass and created mosaic designs.<sup>32</sup>

White's murals in Rockville Centre are most distinctive because of their irregular shapes. White depicts a number of typical Long Island activities over time: a colonial settler with his animals (hogs and cattle); maritime (a fisherman and woman sorting the catch); agriculture (a man and woman harvesting wheat), and construction of homes (two men framing a house, with completed suburban homes in background). These murals were restored in 1977 and are in excellent condition.<sup>33</sup>

Carl E. Noble (died 1972) painted murals on the history of local fire fighting in Hempstead. He was an illustrator, cartoonist, and painter who lived in Great Neck. Noble had studied with Norman Rockwell and John Singer Sargent and at the Boston Museum Fine Arts School.

The Hempstead Volunteer Fire Department is among the oldest in the state, organized in 1832. One of Hempstead's youngest fire companies, the Southside Hose Company No. 2 (organized in 1929), houses the WPA murals. The members of the company spent a year preparing the walls of their second floor meeting room for them. Noble's

murals extend from about four feet off the floor to the ceiling and cover all the walls above the paneled dado, including spaces above the door, windows, and archway. His first panel, *Pioneer Fire Fighting*, features a man at a water pump and two children with buckets, with a 1790s gooseneck engine in the background. A barn is on fire in the next panel. Hempstead acquired their Engine No. 1 from a Brooklyn fire company in 1832 and used it for more than three decades. In the twentieth century, it was proudly drawn in parades and exhibited in a New York City museum. Another mural, *Old Time Fire Gong*, has a man hitting the round metal gong with a hammer to summon others to a fire and, on the side, a sign post pointing to nearby communities. The *First Hempstead Hose Cart* mural depicts four men pulling an elegant vehicle still owned by the department. On the left side of the door, a mural shows the Front Street fire which destroyed five stores in the business district in 1915. A red Ford Chemical automobile is featured, which is another vehicle still owned by the department and used in parades. The speed with which motorized engines from Freeport and Mineola arrived to assist in fighting this fire convinced the village to secure modern equipment. On the other side of the door is the *Hempstead Riding Academy Fire* mural. It portrays a c. 1920 fire in the horse stables with the department's floodlight truck illuminating the scene. All the horses died in the fire and the artist depicts them ascending into heaven. The two largest murals, *Modern Fire Fighting*, feature men fighting a fire and several fire engines from the 1930s. The artist used men from the Southside company as models, and the company proudly displays a nozzle and lantern which appear in the mural.<sup>34</sup>

No biographical information is available for Paul Chapman, a painter from New York City. He painted a mural for the Nutley, New Jersey Post Office entitled *The Return of Annie Oakley* (1941- Oakley was a native of Nutley). Chapman's *Huntington Harbor* mural was painted for the Huntington Post Office in 1939. After the new post office was constructed in 1966, the Town of Huntington used the building for a number of years. It was thought that there may have been one or two additional murals in the building, but when Gundermann and Gundermann Insurance bought the building in 1978, there was only one mural. The fee Chapman received (\$1,200), would be consistent with one rather than two or three murals.<sup>35</sup> *Huntington Harbor* is a generic contemporary maritime scene, featuring two men at the shoreline preparing to put their boats in the water, with sailboats in the water in the distance.

The WPA approved two mural designs for Long Island locations that are not extant and may never have been executed. The WPA approved a mural design by Edward Ward in 1936 for the West Bathhouse at Jones



Beach. No trace of it has been seen for many years. The WPA for the Manhasset High School approved John Doremus's mural entitled "Map of Long Island," in 1938, but no evidence of it has been located.<sup>36</sup>

Most of the easel art created on Long Island has not survived. A rare example of a WPA poster created for a Long Island community that did survive is one promoting the village of Sea Cliff as a travel destination for visitors to the World's Fair.<sup>37</sup>

Funding for the federal art programs declined in the late 1930s; the WPA ended in 1942 and the Treasury Section ended in 1943. On Long Island, the peak year in terms of the number of murals completed was 1937. Sol Wilson's mural in the Westhampton Beach Post Office was the last one to be completed (1942).

What can now be said about this legacy of New Deal murals and sculptures and the artists who created them? Most of the murals and all of the sculptures created on Long Island survive. The murals in the Freeport and Rockville Centre post offices and in Suffolk County's Yaphank building are in the best condition today. Many of the others would benefit from conservation and restoration so future generations can continue to enjoy and benefit from them. As in the rest of the nation, most of the Long Island murals are in the style of Social Realism or Regionalism. Long Island does not have any examples of more abstract murals, which are a minority nationwide, though there were some in New York City buildings. Nine of the ten Long Island post offices that have murals or sculptures are on the National Register of Historic Places for their architectural significance.<sup>38</sup>

Most of the artists who created this work resided in New York City or the metropolitan area—not surprising, since New York City was a mecca for artists. Moreover, the Treasury Section held regional competitions for post office commissions and gave preference to local artists in the region. Several of the artists lived on Long Island: Robert Gaston Herbert in Sea Cliff; Carl Noble in Great Neck; Joseph Allen Physic in Bayville; and Victor White in Cedarhurst. Of the eleven artists whose birthplace could be identified, five were immigrants, three coming from Italy (Corbino, Lentelli, and Mangravite). Only two were born in New York City (Cecere and Gropper) A few of the artists who painted the murals and sculptures on Long Island were in their sixties when they did so (Herbert, Peixotto, and Physioc), but most were younger men in their thirties. Women created none of the local murals or sculptures, though nationally women constituted nearly 18 percent of the artists in the Treasury Section art programs.<sup>39</sup>



Detail of 1939 mural in Suffolk County building in Yaphank by Robert Gaston Herbert of Shinnecock minister, Rev. Paul Cuffee, preaching to Long Island Indians, c. 1800.



Victor White's 1939 mural in the Rockville Centre Post Office of harvesting wheat in the nineteenth century.

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The New Deal art programs enabled these and many other artists to continue to paint or sculpt during the Great Depression and thus survive while working as artists. All of these artists were proud of the work they created and included their murals in the biographical information they provided for professional directories such as *Who's Who in American Art*. Long Island has fifty murals and six sculptures today from the New Deal. New Deal art continues to remind and instruct us about our history and region, from colonial settlements to contemporary scenes in the 1930s.

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### NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Natalie A. Naylor, "Local History in Long Island's New Deal Murals," *Nassau County Historical Society Journal* 59 (2004): 1-18; *Art for the People—New Deal Murals on Long Island*, ed. David Shapiro (Hempstead: Emily Lowe Gallery, Hofstra University, 1978). Extant New Deal murals in Brooklyn and Queens are listed on 51-56.

<sup>2</sup> Milton Meltzer, *Violins and Shovels: The WPA Arts Projects* (New York: Delacorte Press, 1970); *New York, A Guide to the Empire State*, 1940, ed. Bertrand M. Wainger (Reprint; New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), 690-717; *The Story of the Five Towns* (Rockville Centre: Nassau Daily Review, 1941); *Check List of the Imprints of Sag Harbor*,

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*L.I., 1791-1820*, 1939 (Reprint; New York: Kraus Reprint, 1964); *Hick's Neck: The Story of Baldwin, Long Island* (Baldwin: Baldwin National Bank and Trust Company, 1939); "The Story of Roosevelt, Nassau County, Long Island," typescript (copy in the Nassau County Museum Collection, Long Island Studies Institute at Hofstra University). New York's Historic Documents Inventory (HDI) undertook a program in the 1980s inspired by the Historical Records Survey, and surveyed manuscript materials in libraries, historical societies, and other repositories. The HDI is now available on line through the New York State Library [www.nysl.nysed.gov](http://www.nysl.nysed.gov).

<sup>3</sup> Francis V. O'Connor, *Federal Support for the Visual Arts: The New Deal and Now* (New York: New York Graphic Society, 1969), 28-29, 54; Richard D. McKinzie, *The New Deal for Artists* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 66. See also Karal Ann Marling, *Wall-to-Wall America: A Cultural History of Post-Office Murals in the Great Depression* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982); Marlene Park and Gerald E. Markowitz, *Democratic Vistas: Post Offices and Public Art in the New Deal* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984), 201-35; Belisario R. Contreras, *Tradition and Innovation in New Deal Art* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1983); Francis V. O'Connor, ed. *Art for the Millions: Essays from the 1930s by Artists and Administrators of the WPA Federal Art Project* (Boston: New York Graphic Art Society, 1973); David Shapiro, *New Deal for Art* (Hamilton, NY: Gallery Association of New York, 1977).

<sup>4</sup> Clarence Hornung, *Treasury of American Design* 2 vols. (New York: H. N. Abrams [1972]; reprinted in one volume, 1976); "Tracing America By Design," *Newsday*, November 27, 1972, part 2:4-5.

<sup>5</sup> *Federal Support for the Visual Arts*, 16-30; Shapiro, *New Deal for Art*, 16, 18.

<sup>6</sup> Marlene Park, "City and Country in the 1930s: A Study of New Deal Murals in New York," *Art Journal* 39 (Fall 1979): 38; Marling, 220.

<sup>7</sup> Exhibition checklist, "Robert Gaston Herbert, 1873-1954," Stenson Memorial Library, Sea Cliff, June 27-July 17, 1976. Biographical information on artists not explicitly cited in the notes is from [www.Askart.com](http://www.Askart.com); Peter H. Falk, ed. *Who Was Who in American Art*, 2nd ed., 3 vols. (Madison, CT: Sound View Press, 1999); *Biographical*

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*Encyclopedia of American Painters, Sculptors and Engravers of the United States*, 2 vols. (Dealer's Choice Books, 2002).

<sup>8</sup> Jo M. Wagner, "Portrait of One American Village: Roslyn Artist Restores Depression-Era Murals," 7-page typescript (press release, Roslyn School District), March 21, 1991 (copy in the author's possession); Anthony Miller, "Murals, Once in High School, To Be Rehung," *Roslyn News*, March 28, 1991 (copy in Bryant Library Local History Collection); Barbara Delatiner, "W.P.A. Murals Get a New Deal," *New York Times*, October 23, 1977, LI sec., 1, 10; and Park and Markowitz, *New Deal for Art*, 107.

<sup>9</sup> *Art for the People*; Delatiner, "W.P.A. Murals Get a New Deal," 1, 10.

<sup>10</sup> Town of Oyster Bay Historian John E. Hammond has indicated that the Youngs house was probably not built until 1665 (letter to author, January 25, 2005).

<sup>11</sup> Roosevelt's "Speech at the Laying of the Courthouse Cornerstone" is reprinted in *Nassau County: From Rural Hinterland to Suburban Metropolis*, ed. Joann P. Krieg and Natalie A. Naylor (Interlaken, NY: Empire State Books, 2000), 76-77.

<sup>12</sup> Cuffee's gravestone survives west of the Shinnecock Canal, north of Montauk Highway (Route 27A), and south of the LIRR tracks at Canoe Place in Hampton Bays. The grave site is pictured in John A. Strong, "*We Are Still Here!*": *The Algonquian Peoples of Long Island Today*, 2nd ed. (Interlaken, NY: Empire State Books, 1998), 31; the gravestone in *Newsday*, *Long Island: Our Story* (Melville: *Newsday*, 1998), 30. On Cuffee, see Ernest Edward Eels, "Indian Missions on Long Island," 1939, reprinted in *The History and Archaeology of the Montauk* [Indians], ed. Gaynell Stone, 2nd ed. (Stony Brook: Suffolk County Archaeological Association, 1983), 184-86.

<sup>13</sup> An illustration of Herbert's Hempstead mural is in *Roots and Heritage of Hempstead Town*, ed. Natalie A. Naylor (Interlaken, NY: Heart of the Lakes Publishing, 1994), 83.

<sup>14</sup> "Artists Ready for WPA Murals," *Nassau Daily Review*, February 6, 1936.

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<sup>15</sup> William Wallace Tooker, *The Indian Place-Names of Long Island*, 1911 (Reprint; Port Washington: Ira J. Friedman, 1962), 232-33.

<sup>16</sup> "Postoffice Gets Mural Of Eastern Beach Scene," *Long Beach Life*, November 3, 1939.

<sup>17</sup> Marling, 264-65 (includes early version of Corbino's mural); Shapiro, "Introduction: New Deal Murals and the Tradition," in *Art for the People*, 3; Marcia Corbino, "Jon Corbino and *The Pleasures of the Bathing Beach: A Slice of Life in America, 1939*," *Nassau County Historical Society Journal* 59 (2004): 19-30.

<sup>18</sup> John L. Hess, "William Gropper, Artist, 79, Dies; Well-Known Left-Wing Cartoonist," *New York Times*, January 8, 1977, 22; Helen A. Harrison, "Show of Gropper Art Starts Tomorrow [at Adelphi University], and His Widow Reminisces," *New York Times*, January 21, 1979, 61; www.Askart.com; and Park and Markowitz, *Democratic Vistas*, 53-55, 162, 265-66, 214, 234.

<sup>19</sup> Shapiro, *Art for the People*, 41; *Newsday*, *Long Island Magazine*, December 17, 1978, 30-31.

<sup>20</sup> "Plan Historical Murals On Walls Of Federal Building," *Hempstead Sentinel*, February 28, 1935.

<sup>21</sup> "Interview: James Brooks Talks with Dorothy Seckler," *Archives of American Art Journal* 16 (1976): 13.

<sup>22</sup> "Spent Seven Months Time in Historical Research Before Painting Murals Artist Says," *Hempstead Sentinel*, March 4, 1937, 1.

<sup>23</sup> *Hempstead Sentinel*, March 4, 1937.

<sup>24</sup> The relationships between the Roosevelts are shown in genealogical charts on the front endpaper of *Theodore Roosevelt: Many-Sided American*, ed. Natalie A. Naylor, Douglas Brinkley, and John Allen Gable (Interlaken, NY: Heart of the Lakes Publishing, 1992).

<sup>25</sup> John E. Hammond, *Oyster Bay Remembered* (Huntington: Maple Hill Press, 2002), 131; letter William Lawrence Bottomley to Olin Dows (Superintendent, Department of Painting and Sculpture, Treasury Department), February 28, 1936 (photocopy in John Hammond's files).

<sup>26</sup> "Leo Lentelli Dies; Sculptor, was 82," *New York Times*, January 2, 1962; www.AskArt; Nick LaBella, "The Man in the Shed," Oyster Bay Historical Society's *Freeholder* 1 (Spring 1967): 7.

<sup>27</sup> Sources are conflicting on Sturges. Shapiro includes the names of both Arthur and Abell Sturges, Arthur as an assistant to Peixotto on the lunette murals and Abell Sturges as the ceiling muralist (*Art for the People*, 58), as do Park and Markowitz (*Democratic Vistas*, 221), but O'Connor (drawing on TRAP records) lists only Arthur Sturges as an assistant to Peixotto (*Federal Support for the Visual Arts*, 39). The fresco itself has the signature of "Abell Sturges." Quotation re ceiling is from an undated typescript by the post office in the Oyster Bay Library vertical files.

<sup>28</sup> "Sol Wilson Dead; Expressionist, 81," *New York Times*, November 25, 1974; www.Askart.com; and Park and Markowitz, *Democratic Vistas*, 219.

<sup>29</sup> "Physioc, at 83, Holds 'Last' Art Exhibition," *New York Times*, August 27, 1949; and "J. A. Physioc Dead; Stage Designer, 86," *New York Times*, August 5, 1951.

<sup>30</sup> Carolyn Kelly, "A Brief History of Aviation in Hicksville," *Nassau County Historical Society Journal* 51 (1996): 30-32.

<sup>31</sup> Quotation from Ariella Budick, "Art of a Critical Era Seen Throughout NYC and LI," *Newsday*, 13 August 2004, B3. Johnson's other murals are listed in Park and Markowitz, *Democratic Vistas*, 207 and 208. The reference to "Cranberry Frolic" sketch is in "New York State: Long Island," a 3page typescript by Marlene Park and Gerald Markowitz, dated July 1976, in author's possession.

<sup>32</sup> "Financial Difficulties Never Discourage the True Genius, Says Woodmere Artist," *Nassau Daily Star*, May 6, 1933; "New Postoffice Murals Depict Rockville History," November 7, 1939 (unidentified clipping in the Nassau County Museum vertical files at the Long Island Studies Institute, Hofstra University).

<sup>33</sup> Delatiner, "W.P.A. Murals Get a New Deal," *New York Times*, October 23, 1977, LI sec., 1, 10.

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<sup>34</sup> Oscar G. Darlington, *A History of the Hempstead Volunteer Fire Department* (Hempstead: Hempstead Fire Department, 1953), 10, 27, 53-55, 131.

<sup>35</sup> Park and Markowitz, *Democratic Vistas*, 218.

<sup>36</sup> Park and Markowitz, "New York State: Long Island" (typescript).

<sup>37</sup> Christopher DeNoon, *Posters of the WPA* (Los Angeles: Wheatley Press, 1987), 81.

<sup>38</sup> Only the Port Washington Post Office, which was built later, was not included in the 141 "United States Post Offices in New York State, 1858-1943, Thematic Resources" on the National Register. The Glen Cove, Mineola, Northport, Patchogue, and Riverhead post offices are on the National Register, but do not have any murals or sculptures. See Peter D. Shaver, *The National Register of Historic Places in New York State* (New York: Rizzoli, 1993), 196; and the National Park Service web site ([www.cr.nps.gov/nr/](http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/)).

<sup>39</sup> Park and Markowitz, *Democratic Vistas*, 8.



**Appendix:****New Deal Murals and Sculpture in Nassau and Suffolk Counties**

“Section” refers to the Treasury Section of Painting and Sculpture (1934-1938), the Treasury Section of Fine Arts (1938-1939), and the Section of Fine Arts of the Public Buildings Administration of the Federal Works Agency (1939-1943). TRAP is the Treasury Relief Art Project (1935-1939). WPA/FAP is the Work’s Progress (later Projects) Administration’s Federal Art Project (1935-1942; name changed in 1939). The dollar figures are the amount of Section commissions; comparable figures are not available for WPA and TRAP projects where the artists were paid weekly salaries. The listing indicates whether a work has been reproduced in a publication; usually these are black and white photographs of the completed works, but as noted, a few are the artist’s preliminary sketches or a study, and some have been reproduced in color. Fuller descriptions of the works are found in the text of the article.

This list is based on David Shapiro, *Art for the People—New Deal Murals on Long Island*, exhibition catalog (Hempstead, N.Y.: Emily Lowe Gallery, Hofstra University, 1978); and the author’s own research, supplemented by Francis V. O’Connor, *Federal Support for the Visual Arts: The New Deal and Now* (New York: New York Graphic Society, 1969), 35-37 (primarily for the cost of Treasury Section projects);

**Bay Shore.** Post Office, 10 Bay Shore Avenue. Wheeler Williams, plaster relief sculpture, *Speed*. Approximately 3 x 6 feet; 1936, Treasury Section, \$625. Reproduced in Shapiro, *Art for the People*, 57.

**Farmingdale.** New York State Institute of Applied Agriculture at Farmingdale; now Farmingdale State University of New York, 2350 Broadhollow Road. Four oil on canvas murals by Frederick Marshall on walls of staircases, 1936, WPA/FAP. The two in Hicks Hall are wheat threshing and cotton picking, each 6 x 15 feet; the two in Cutler Hall are a redwood forest and rice harvesting, 6 x 19 feet.

**Floral Park.** Sewanhaka Central High School, 500 Tulip Ave., in cafeteria on the third floor. Two oil on canvas murals by Frederick Marshall of Indian scenes, each 8 x 12 feet; 1937, WPA/FAP.

**Freeport.** Post Office, 132 W. Merrick Road. Two arched oil on canvas murals by William Gropper, assisted by Morris Pass: winter scene and loading mail onto airplane, 15 feet 2 inches x 6 feet 10 inches (winter scene), and 9 feet 9 inches x 6 feet 10 inches; 1938, TRAP. Reproduced in Shapiro, *Art for the People*, 44 (from color sketch of *Suburban Post in Winter*); and loading mail, 57; loading mail (in color) in Newsday, *Long Island: Our Story* (Melville: Newsday, 1998), 254 and in www.lihistory.com, Newsday’s web site.

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Garden City. Post Office, 600 Franklin Avenue. Oil on canvas mural by J. Theodore Johnson, *Huckleberry Frolic*, 10-1/2 x 18 feet; 1937, Treasury Section, \$840. Reproduced in Shapiro, *Art for the People*, 57; and (in color) in Newsday, *Long Island: Our Story*, 254, and web site ([www.lihistory.com](http://www.lihistory.com)).

Great Neck. Post Office, 1 Welwyn Road at intersection with Shorewood Road. Sunken relief on façade by Gaetano Cecere: American Eagle and 13 stars, 6 x 6 feet; 1940, Treasury Section, \$550.

Hempstead. Fire House, Southside Hose Company No. 2, Bernhard St. and Long Beach Road. Six oil on canvas murals above dado around walls of the second floor meeting room, by Carl Noble: *Pioneer Fire Fighting*; *Old Time Fire Gong*; *First Hempstead Hose Cart*; *Front Street Fire*; *Hempstead Riding Academy Fire*; and *Modern Fire Fighting* (two murals); each approximately 4 feet high, varying widths; 1938, WPA/FAP.

Hempstead. Post Office, 200 Fulton Avenue. Two oil on canvas murals by Peppino Mangravite: settlement of Hempstead (Indians and English), 1644; and arrival of British dirigible, R-34 in 1919; each 12 x 18-1/2 feet; 1937, Treasury Section, \$4,425. (Francis O'Connor in *Federal Support for the Visual Arts* includes this in his list of TRAP murals.) Reproduced in Shapiro, *Art for the People*, 15 and 58; and *Nassau County Historical Society Journal* 59 (2004): 3, 10; a study for the dirigible mural is in Karal Ann Marling, *Wall-to-Wall America*, 143.

Hicksville. Former Hicksville High School and Junior High School, now Middle School, Jerusalem Avenue, auditorium. Five oil on canvas murals by Joseph Allen Physioc: treaty at Cantiague Rock; Friends (Quakers) in Jericho; man beating gold; potato field; and Long Island Aviation Country Club. Three approximately 8 x 7 feet and two arched (gold beater and farm field), approximately 11 x 7 feet, 1936, WPA/FAP.

The man beating gold, potato farm field, and Aviation Country Club murals are reproduced in Gayle Turim, "New Deal Murals," *Distinction*, October 2001, 107. A detail from the airfield mural is in the *Nassau County Historical Society Journal* 51 (1996): 30; the goldbeater is reproduced in *Nassau County Historical Society Journal* 59 (2004): 8.

Huntington. Former Post Office, 175 W. Carver Street; now a commercial building occupied by Gundermann and Gundermann Insurance. Oil on canvas mural by Paul Chapman: *Huntington Harbor*, 7 ft. 11 in. x 14 ft. 8 in., 1939, Treasury Section, \$1,200.

Long Beach. Post Office, 99 E. Park Avenue. Oil on canvas mural by Jon Corbino: *The Pleasures of the Bathing Beach*. Approximately 6 ft. x 14 ft. 8 in., 1939, Treasury Section, \$1,520. Reproduced in Shapiro, *Art*

for the People, 13 and 58; and *Nassau County Historical Society Journal* 59 (2004): 20, 24, 26; see also note no. 17 above.

Mineola. Nassau County [Old] Courthouse, now the Theodore Roosevelt Executive and Legislative Building, 1550 Franklin Avenue, upper foyer. Four oil on canvas murals by Robert Gaston Herbert: Duke's Laws, 1665, Creation of Counties, 1683; Washington at the Youngs Mansion, 1790; and Gov. Theodore Roosevelt laying the cornerstone of the courthouse, 1900. Each approximately 6 ft. 6 in. x 10 ft. 6 in.; first two in 1937, last two in 1938, WPA/FAP. (Herbert's descriptions are abbreviated here; his full descriptions are in the text of the article.)

The Duke's Laws and Counties murals are reproduced in *A History of the Town of Hempstead, 325th Anniversary, 1644-1969* (Hempstead: Town of Hempstead, 1969), 18 and 25; and *Roots and Heritage of Hempstead Town*, ed. Natalie A. Naylor (Interlaken, NY: Heart of the Lakes Publishing, 1994), 54 and 67. The Duke's Laws mural is also reproduced in Shapiro, *Art for the People*, 58; and in color in Newsday, *Long Island: Our Story*, 82 (and [www.lihistory.com](http://www.lihistory.com)). Washington at Youngs house is reproduced in the *Nassau County Historical Society Journal* 59 (2004): 6. The Roosevelt mural is on the cover of the *Long Island Forum* 62 (Fall 1999); in *Nassau County Historical Society Journal* 53 (1998): 13; and in *Nassau County: From Rural Hinterland to Suburban Metropolis*, ed. Joann P. Krieg and Natalie A. Naylor (Interlaken: Empire State Books, 2000), 253, cf. photograph of event, 77.

Oyster Bay. Post Office, 1 Shore Avenue. Five fresco murals over doors by Ernest Peixotto and Arthur Sturges (assistant): *Treaty with the Indians, 1653*; *Washington at Youngs' House, 1790*; *First Postmaster and First Post Office, 1800*; *Theodore Roosevelt with his Children, 1900*; and *Spring Afternoon at Piping Rock, 1936*. Each 2 x 6 feet, 1937, TRAP. (The titles are abbreviated here; the full titles are in the text of the article.)

On ceiling, irregularly shaped vault: fresco by Abell Sturges, allegory of North America receiving mail from the world, 1937, TRAP.

Above interior archways, two reliefs by Leo Lentelli and six assistants: *Asia America*, with dates, 1858 and 1919; and *Africa Oceania*, 1904 and 1936; the continents are symbolized by facing animals. Each terracotta, 2 x 10 feet, 1937, TRAP.

Interior: Bust of Theodore Roosevelt, by Leo Lentelli. Terracotta, life size, 1937, TRAP.

Exterior: Decoration of flagpole base, by Leo Lentelli. Limestone, 1937, TRAP.

A photograph of the mural of Roosevelt and his children is in Shapiro, *Art for the People*, 58; and in *Distinction*, October 2001, 110, which also reproduces the ceiling fresco (104). An illustration of the

flagpole sculpture is in the Oyster Bay Historical Society's *Freeholder 1* (Spring 1997): 7.

Port Washington. Post Office, 1051 Port Washington Boulevard. Three oil murals on canvas, by Harry S. Lane: *Lighthouse*, *Sailing*, and *Landscape*. Each 5 x 7 feet, framed separately on a different section of the wall, 1937, TRAP.

Rockville Centre. Post Office, 250 Merrick Road. Four oil on canvas murals with cut-out shapes, by Victor White: farmer with livestock; fisherman and wife; harvesting wheat; and carpenters framing a house. Irregularly shaped, approximately 9 ft. x 7 ft. 10 in., 1939, Treasury Section, \$1,250. The mural of carpenters is reproduced in *Nassau County Historical Society Journal* 59 (2004): 12; fisherman is in *Newsday, Long Island: Our Story*, 254 (and [www.lihistory.com](http://www.lihistory.com)).

Roslyn Heights. Originally in Roslyn High School auditorium. Six oil on canvas murals, by Robert Gaston Herbert, scenes of local history: Indian family and village; Scottish soldiers during the Revolution; Washington visiting Onderdonk; William Cullen Bryant and Cedarmere; Hempstead Harbor; and a landscape of Roslyn village. Four approximately 6 ft. 6 in. x 10 ft. 5 in.; two approximately 13 ft. 4 in. x 6 ft. 6 in., 1937, WPA/FAP.

Five of these murals are now in various Roslyn schools: Indians in the Middle School on Locust Lane; Scottish soldiers in East Hills School, Locust Lane; Washington's visit in the library of the High School, Round Hill Road; Hempstead Harbor in the Heights School on Willow Street; and the Bryant/Cedarmere mural in the Harbor Hill School on Glen Cove Road in Greenvale. The Roslyn village mural was damaged when it was removed from the auditorium wall in 1969 and was not restored; no image of it has been located.

The Indian settlement mural is reproduced in Shapiro, *Art for the People*, 46. A detail from Washington's visit to Onderdonk is in Naylor, *Roots and Heritage of Hempstead Town*, 120; and in color in *Newsday, Long Island: Our Story*, 158 (and [www.lihistory.com](http://www.lihistory.com)). The Cedarmere mural was reproduced in *Newsday, Long Island* magazine, December 17, 1978, 31.

Westhampton Beach. Post Office, 170 Main Street. Oil mural on canvas by Sol Wilson: *Outdoor Sports*. 4 ft. 7-1/2 in. x 13 ft. 3 in., 1942, Treasury Section, \$700.

Yaphank. Originally in Suffolk Home, later the Infirmary, now a county office building, 300 Yaphank Avenue, auditorium. Two oil on canvas murals by Robert Gaston Herbert: "*Bull*" *Smith's Ride*, 1665; and *Paul Cuffee*, Shinnecock Preacher. Each 9 ft. 2 in. x 9 ft. 5 in., 1939, WPA/FAP. Color sketches, tempera on board, reproduced in Shapiro, *Art*

*for the People*, 45; color illustration of the finished Bull Smith ride mural in *Newsday*, *Long Island: Our Story*, 61 (and [www.lihistory.com](http://www.lihistory.com)); color photographs of both murals were in Peter Goodman, "Preserving History: Fresh Space for '30s Murals," *Newsday*, April 27, 2003.

## **EXERPT FROM THE VINEYARD: THE PLEASURES AND PERILS OF CREATING AN AMERICAN FAMILY WINERY**

*Louisa Thomas Hargrave*

*In keeping with the Long Island Historical Journal's effort to include at least one primary source document in every issue, the following is an excerpt from the recently published memoir of Louisa Thomas Hargrave. Former co-owner and operator of Long Island's first vineyard, Ms. Hargrave's memoir was published by Viking Press in 2003 (Pp. 254). This chapter recounts Louisa and Alex Hargraves' struggle to plant viniferous grapes on Long Island's North Fork in the face of resistance from viticulture experts and governmental regulators.*

In every pioneer story, there are challenges from nature. The snows, the gales, the parched earth, and the wild animals – it wouldn't be a pioneer story without them. In my case, even as a modern day pioneer, these were the kinds of obstacles I expected. Obviously, my life in a vineyard in Cutchogue was not even close in terms of mortal danger to Laura Ingalls Wilder's life on the prairie in the 1870s. Nevertheless, the natural challenges were still there. When I pruned in the snow or picked in the rain, I was cold and uncomfortable, but welcomed the feeling that I belonged out there, as much as the birds and the snakes. The same way that Laura Ingalls Wilder would tear off her bonnet so that she could feel the wind in her hair, I exposed my arms to the sun in a most unladylike way.

As we settled into life in the vineyard, our determination and enthusiasm carried us forward. With my husband, children, pets, grapevines, wine, employees, and visitors to attend to, I didn't have time to reflect on John Wickham's warning that pioneers get arrows in their backs. Where were the Indians? I didn't see them. But they were there.

It came as a shock to me to learn that Dr. Nelson Shaulis, the Cornell professor who had conducted an experiment in our vineyard from 1974 to 1979, had wanted our efforts to fail. In 1997 we got a letter from John Tomkins, the Cornell professor who had first told Alex about the North Fork as a place to grow vinifera grapes, that explained what had happened with Shaulis. Tomkins was the man who had brought vinifera table grapes to John Wickham's farm a few years before we saw them on our first trip to the North Fork in 1972. In his letter, he wrote, "I wish to comment about something which might affect the entire grape survival on Long Island."

Tomkins went on to describe how he had been Nelson Shaulis's first graduate student. Dr. Shaulis had gotten Tomkins a job doing grape

research with him after World War II. "I thought Nelson was my friend," Tomkins wrote. He then described how Dr. Konstantin Frank, the vintner who had dared to plant vinifera vines in the Finger Lakes, had invited Cornell administrators to visit his vineyard. Dr. Shaulis had been telling everyone at Cornell that Dr. Frank's operation was "a disaster," but the dean of the School of Agriculture was impressed by it. Dr. Frank thought that some of his vinifera grapes would grow well on Long Island, and the dean agreed to fund an experiment there on Wickham's farm. Tomkins was the only Cornell pomologist who already traveled regularly to Long Island, so he was assigned to manage the study. "Trouble soon hit the fan," Tomkins wrote to us, "as Dr. Shaulis objected to my working with grapes there. He even threatened to resign. He applied for a job at Davis (California) but was turned down not because he was not qualified but because he had a speech impediment and might have problems speaking to growers."

Dr. Shaulis stayed at Cornell, and the Long Island experiment at Wickham's continued. Dr. Frank and Dr. Shaulis both went to visit it with Tomkins, but, as Tomkins put it, "never in the same time in the same car." At one point, Tomkins commented to Shaulis that he wished Dr. Frank had used more than one kind of rootstock on the vines he sent to Long Island. He was afraid that "if his vines died the dean might wonder what happened." In Tomkins words, "Nelson replied—you are upset because you think the vines might die. He WENT ON TO SAY THAT HE WAS TERRIFIED THAT THE VINES MIGHT LIVE AND THRIVE THERE (Tomkins' emphasis)."

Because of this comment, Tomkins was now worried that Dr. Shaulis, whose job it was to advise New York grape growers of all viticultural problems, might not have sent (and in fact did not send) us his report warning of some serious rootstock problems in California. He wrote us, "I might sound rather bitter but did Nelson use his copy to alert the Vinifera growers in NY what was happening or did he use my report to him as toilet paper which he flushed down the drain?"

Tomkins tried to understand what would motivate his old friend Nelson Shaulis to want to subvert an industry. Was it jealousy, or Shaulis' own sense of impotence after a lifetime of hard work? Tomkins told us that Shaulis had worked on a book about wine grapes in New York for forty years. When he sent it to a publisher, it was returned to him, rejected. Tomkins speculated, "Perhaps the planting of Vinifera varieties was the death of his book. I strongly feel that he wanted a very cold winter to arrive and knock out the Vinifera grapes in the northeast."

Luckily for us, the cold winter that Nelson Shaulis wished for never came. We did have to deal with the legacy of his attitude, however, even after he retired. The results of the five year Cornell study that was done

in our vineyard were never published. Other Cornell agents who had worked with Shaulis whenever he came to Long Island continued to look for signs of problems in our vines – mites, funguses, crown gall, viruses, drought injury, and anything else. They would bring people by to observe whatever problems they found and alert the media about them, too. We had to deal with a steady stream of eager beaver reporters who wanted to see the tomato galls that spotted a few leaves near the woods or Japanese beetles – none of them truly threatening – for themselves. When Dr. Shaulis' replacement upstate brought down a variety of experimental hybrids to be planted at the Cornell research farm on Long Island instead of vinifera – the only type of grape that made any sense to grow here – we got fed up and asked that they all stay out of our vineyard. We had had enough of their kind of help. (In recent years, however, Cornell Cooperative Extension has hired some very good extension agents who are trained in viticulture and are most helpful to Long Island's growers.)

The hybrid-vinifera grape wars continued without us. That masked bandit of the Finger Lakes, Walter Taylor, who had gotten his fans to publicly ink his name off hundreds of bottles of his wine, came down to Long Island to stir up more hoopla in his mask and cowboy hat. Back upstate, when he was cited for contempt of court for continuing to play games with the Taylor name, he obliged the court order to turn over all his offending literature to the Taylor Wine Company by bringing it in a manure spreader.

Meanwhile, the curmudgeonly Dr. Frank had persuaded Walter Taylor's winemaker, Hermann Wiemer, to plant some vinifera grapes. Walter didn't want vinifera planted in his own vineyard at Bully Hill; he was dedicated to hybrid grapes, and didn't like Dr. Frank any more than Dr. Shaulis did. Because of that, while he was still working for Walter, Hermann started his own vineyard on Seneca Lake, a warmer part of the Finger Lakes than the Bully Hill site. On Christmas Eve, while Hermann was visiting his family in Germany, he received a cable from Walter. Thinking it was a nice Christmas greeting, Hermann eagerly opened it only to learn that he had been summarily dismissed from Walter's employment.

We had bought our first vines from Hermann, so when we got wind of this, we invited him down to Long Island to trade ideas about growing vinifera. To welcome Hermann, Alex made a big sign that he put on our tractor shed at the end of the driveway, poking fun at Walter Taylor's motto, "Wine without water." Our sign read WINE WITHOUT WALTER.

While we weren't getting any help from Cornell, we certainly weren't getting any from the State Liquor Authority, either. The SLA



maintained an elaborate system of keeping tabs on wine producers by requiring us to file twenty-five copies of a list of everything we had for sale every month, along with prices and quantities of wine per package. There were two versions of this, and they had to be printed on different colored paper – yellow and salmon. Every month, Alex would religiously fill out the forms, take them to a printer to be copied on the right color paper, and send them off to the SLA. One day he received a notice in the mail that our winery license had been revoked for forty-five days. But what had we done wrong? He called the SLA and was transferred from one official to the next until finally he got someone who knew something. “You violated the filing regulations,” the man told him. “How did I do that” asked Alex. “I filled them out the same way I always do.”

“You failed to specify the quantity of wine in each container,” he was told.

It was true. Alex had put “12 bottles per case” at the top of the list of columns, and below that, he had used ditto marks because all of our wines were sold in twelve-bottle cases.

“Ditto marks are illegal,” the official said. “That’s why we are revoking your license until the next filing period.”

In the end, Alex was able to negotiate a deal in which he wrote the SLA a mea culpa apologizing for the use of dittos. We got our license back and never used another ditto.

Our own intense enthusiasm served to shield us from the barbs of those who we could see were simply jealous of our success. From the very beginning, we took our dedication to making our farming venture work into the rest of the farming community. In the late seventies, after Alex stopped riding the tractor, I would often come in from the field to find him on the phone with members of the Farm Bureau who were trying to stop the construction of three nuclear power plants about six miles from our farm. The success of that effort led to his leadership in organizing an agricultural district so that farmers who committed themselves to a minimum of eight years of farming could get a tax abatement. He hit it off with Albin Pietrewicz (known as Al Patrick), a neighboring potato farmer with a round, red face and a quick laugh who teamed up with Alex. They paid calls on all the local farmers and persuaded many of them to preserve their farms.

All of Alex’s organizing activities caught the eye of Governor Hugh Carey, who chose him to be an “honorable commissioner” on his Temporary Commission for Real Property Tax. To do this unpaid but distinguished job, Alex flew to Albany and other parts of the state for meetings and public hearings on new rules for real property tax. There was a move afoot to set a higher tax on farmer whose land was planted in

more valuable crops. Again, we were pitted against the upstate grape industry, because our vinifera fruit was worth more per ton than upstate native or hybrid grapes. Alex was able to argue that there were too many factors involved besides price – yield, labor cost, land cost, higher risk – to make taxation based on crop valuation a valid concept. Again, his logic and rhetorical skills prevailed.

The commission took a great deal of Alex's time, but it did have two benefits. When Alex went to the State Liquor Authority office in the city to renew our winery license, he found himself seated at a desk across from a stone faced official who pretended that he couldn't find our records. The man said, "Let me go see if I can find them elsewhere." He stood up, pulled out an empty desk drawer, and left the room. Alex realized that the empty drawer was a big hint for him to leave some kind of contribution to the official. Thinking fast, he put his Commissioner of Real Property Tax card in the drawer and closed it. When the man came back empty handed and looked in the drawer, he immediately snapped to attention. "I think I can find your papers now, sir," he said, closing the drawer.

The second benefit of Alex's involvement in the commission came when his father, also named Alex Hargrave, an attorney who had been involved in politics upstate for years, called with a tale. "My secretary rang me to say that the governor was on the line for me," Alex's father said. "I picked up the phone and greeted the governor. There was a long pause, and then the governor said, 'Oops – I got the wrong Alex Hargrave!'"

During the eighties, Alex's role as the treasurer of the Hampton Day School embroiled us in more controversy. He and the rest of the board of directors agreed that problems with the school's current director were insoluble, and they acted to replace her. After half a year of intense meetings the search committee that Alex was part of hired a new director. This woman came with her own problems. By the time she was seen sunbathing in the nude in front of the school, Alex had removed himself from the board. It was too frustrating to work as hard and care as intensely as he did, and to see the effort go for naught. We didn't need to go looking for crises. Our lives in Cutchogue were about to be changed by something no pioneer on the prairie had to deal with – a modern regulatory agency.

I should have known that just when everything felt right, it was time for something to go wrong. On a chilly day in the late 1980s, an enforcer for the [New York State] Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) stood in our doorway in a leather jacket, clenching the muscles in his jaw. The expression on his face reminded me of a schoolmate of Zander's who liked to pull the legs off frogs just for fun.

The official was there to inspect our pesticide storage shed and check our pesticide application records. Alex held our pesticide applicator's license, so he showed him that the records were all in order, complete with labels and dates of application. The official took notes and went away. A few days later Alex got a call from someone at Long Island's DEC office. He announced that we were in violation of pesticide use regulations and that we owed a fine of six thousand dollars. If we signed a consent order, the fine would be reduced to three thousand dollars.

As with the purported violation of the law on ditto marks, we could not imagine what law we could possibly have violated. Alex knew the regulations and was scrupulously careful to follow them. It turned out that the DEC had traced some Ferbam, a common fungicide that we had bought, and found that its registration had lapsed at the time we bought it. The way we purchased pesticides was to call the salesman at the local farm supply company and ask for delivery of whatever we needed. The company brought it to us. Every pesticide was individually registered on a periodic basis by its manufacturer. In the case of this Ferbam, some employee of the manufacturer had let the registration lapse that period. It was just a matter of having neglected to pay a small fee to the DEC; the substance wasn't illegal. It was approved by the Environmental Protection Agency. Other brands of the same product that were identical had maintained their registration through this time. We never saw the package before it was delivered to us, and even if we had, there was no way of knowing whether its registration had lapsed or not.

When Alex went down to the DEC offices to speak with the officials directly, they threatened to publicize our misuse of pesticides and ruin us. Incredulous, Alex turned on his heels and walked out, saying, "Let the party begin." How could he sign a consent order that was an admission of wrongdoing, when he hadn't done anything wrong that he could possibly have known about? Once a consent order has been signed, the next violation the DEC comes up with may be a criminal offense.

We learned very quickly that the DEC is funded by collecting fines from alleged violators. The jobs of the staff at the DEC depend on their pursuing violators – and who could object to that? It appeared though that there were some big violators who were politically untouchable, so that left the easy targets, like dumb farmers, for the DEC to go after.

The DEC enforcer had also checked the dates when we had sprayed the fungicides. Every year, we were issued recommendations for pesticide use that Cornell University had been charged by government agencies to write. All the farmers used these guidelines for spraying, and our spray dates coincided with these recommendations. The enforcer was a real sleuth, however; he figured out that the Cornell recommendations did not coincide with those on the pesticide label. So there was another

claimed violation. Every day we failed to sign the consent order, the ticker ran until the DEC asserted that we owed in excess of ninety thousand dollars.

Because we were not at fault, we decided not to sign the consent order under any circumstances. Alex called Cornell University to get some support from them, since it was the university's recommendations that were getting us into trouble, but they would not take Alex's call.

The next day, Alex and I were working in the wine cellar when we got a message from one of our employees who was at our retail outlet on the highway. "There was a man here from the DEC," she said. "He wants to find you, but I said you were out. He wanted me to give you some papers, but I said I didn't know when I'd see you."

It was sheer luck that one of us hadn't been there when the DEC official came. He was trying to serve us a summons. The DEC has its own regulatory quasi court, and we weren't optimistic about the outcome if our case was heard there. After a powwow with our lawyer that went into the night, we decided that we could not allow the DEC to serve us that summons. The agency had thirty days to serve us before we could take the case to the regular courts and get relief, and two-thirds of that time had passed before we decided to hide out.

Now I knew what it felt like to be a fugitive. Billy the Kid didn't have anything on us. The DEC people couldn't trespass onto our farm, but they could sit at the end of our road and wait for us to come out. If the DEC made good on its promise to tell the press that we were outlaws, it would ruin us. No one would care about the facts; they would just believe that our wines were tainted with illegal pesticides. I imagined a reporter calling and asking, "Tell me, exactly how did you put poison in your wines?"

Alex and I decided that we had to get our children out of there. We arranged for them to stay with their teacher in Montauk until the end of the service period. We told them not to call us, fearing that the call would be traced; in fact, we took no calls at all during that time.

We were able to keep working in the winery, which was adjacent to our house, but we had to rely on one of our employees to bring us messages and supplies. Repeatedly, the DEC tried to serve the summons. At night we kept the lights out. If we passed a window, we crept under it so as not to be seen. It was hard to eat, hard to sleep, harder still to believe that we were hiding from the law because some secretary forgot to mail fifty dollars to the DEC.

When the time for service elapsed, we went to the state supreme court to get an order to stop the DEC from proceeding. There, the judge looked at the DEC's procedural irregularities as well as the substance of the claims against us. Finding both irregularities and lack of substance,

he appeared to be incredulous that the case had gone so far as to land before him, and he ruled in our favor. The DEC did not pursue the matter against us.

Just because we won the shootout didn't mean we felt victorious. What was the meaning of all our labors if a bunch of petty bureaucrats could threaten to ruin us? Was it for this that we had risked everything and put our hearts on the line, hoping to build a life for our children and ourselves? Where did our love of nature and our desire for an honest day's work fit into this equation? We decided to quit.

We had a meeting planned with our partner, Bill Chapin, who still owned almost half of our corporation. Bill had been an ideal partner – interested but undemanding. He had called the meeting to discuss another investment he wanted to make in Florida with Jack Gross, a man who was also his attorney. The meeting was in Rochester, Alex and Bill's home town. On the long drive up there Alex and I talked about how we would present the idea of quitting to Bill. It was a pretty straightforward matter of putting the vineyard on the market, but his aunt still owned one of our buildings, and there were details that would have to be worked out concerning equity because Alex and I had not taken regular salaries since the vineyard started.

As I recall, we met in a private room at the country club. Alex and I were surprised that Mr. Gross (whom we had not previously met) was there with Bill, but the meeting began well enough. We all shook hands, settled into chintz-covered chairs, and said friendly things to one another. Having lulled us into submission, Mr. Gross proceeded to unroll plans for an elaborate Florida condo that Bill had designed. We politely admired the architectural details and ambitious expanse of the development, until Mr. Gross abruptly changed the topic of conversation. He glowered at us and said, "You know, your vineyard has been a terrible investment for Bill. Nothing in your business plan has come true. The million dollars that Bill inherited is all gone, and it's your fault."

Mr. Gross might as well have punched us in the face. We knew that Bill had lost money, but it was because he had pledged his stocks to the bank and gotten stung when his stocks lost value and the bank called the loan. It was true that we hadn't been able to pay him – or ourselves – what we had projected back in 1973, but we had built a valuable asset with a strong reputation, which protected his investment more than the stock market had.

Bill sat there while Mr. Gross rubbed it in some more. Mr. Gross didn't even know us, and here he was assassinating our character, telling us that we had to buy out our partner so that he could build a bunch of condos! I felt like a kid whose best friend had just sold out to the school

bully. Both Alex and I were speechless. We were so close to tears that we just said, “We’ll get back to you,” and left the room.

We couldn’t sell the vineyard. Not now. Didn’t all our awards and accolades count for something? What about the life we had made for ourselves with our children. No! We would not be insulted! If Bill had come to us alone and said, “Gee, guys, this vineyard thing just isn’t working; can we figure out a way to exit gracefully?” we would have agreed with him. But Mr. Gross had no right to insult us the way we had.

We went back to the bank, refinanced everything we had, and worked out a deal with Bill that bought out his interest in the vineyard. After the real estate closing, instead of going home, Alex and I drove to the sound and sat together on the rocky shore. We watched the gulls bickering over a piece of dead fish. The tide was coming in, and the small waves made a soft rushing sound as they pushed against the shore. Holding hands, we gulped in the fresh sea air. I thought of sampling wine with the *chantepleure*. Should we sing or should we cry? I wondered. The vineyard was now all ours. And so, we sang.

## THE LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD AND IT'S PROMOTION OF LONG ISLAND, 1900-1930

*Sean Kass*

*Standard histories of Long Island describe the region's suburbanization as a post-World War II phenomena, ignoring significant suburbanization that took place before that era. Sean Kass explores the growth of Long Island as a tourist destination, an agricultural haven and, finally, a residential enclave in the years 1900-1930. Mr. Kass finds that urban development patterns are not only influenced by available modes of transportation, but often by the aggressive marketing of new transportation technologies as well.*

Nineteenth century Long Island was predominantly rural. Agriculture and maritime activities, the two main areas of employment, sustained Long Island's small towns and villages. With the exception of a significant sand mining industry and a number of large hotels along the shores, there was little development to speak of. Yet, by the latter part of the twentieth century, Long Island was home to a population of 6.8 million and the nation's busiest commuter railroad. Furthermore, it acquired a reputation as the quintessential American suburb.

While the process of suburbanization is often thought to have been a post-World War II phenomenon, a first wave of suburbanization occurred on Long Island during the first three decades of the twentieth century. From 1900 to 1930, the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) promoted the transformation of Long Island from a rural expanse to an area of elite leisure. In pursuit of riders, the railroad marketed Long Island as both a recreational paradise for sojourners and a year-round haven for the growing numbers of potential commuters.<sup>1</sup>

### **The Early History of the Long Island Rail Road**

Yale historian Ralph Henry Gabriel observed in 1921 that railroad service "did not come to Long Island primarily for the sake of the Island itself." Rather, the LIRR was founded in 1834 for the purpose of carrying urban residents from New York City to Boston (and vice versa). The plan was to connect passengers traveling from New York with Connecticut via the train to Greenport, Long Island. There they would board a ferry to Stonington, Connecticut, where they would board another train that would take them the rest of the way to Boston. To achieve this the New York State Legislature chartered the Long Island Rail Road in 1834. The Long Island through-route, completed in 1844, cut five hours off the fastest all-land route to Boston. From 1844 to 1848, the Long

Island through-route was the principal passenger and mail route between New York and Boston.<sup>2</sup>

Profits from the Boston through-route did not peter out or gradually decline - they stopped dead. With the establishment of a railroad through Southern Connecticut in 1848 it was cheaper and faster to travel from New York to Boston solely by rail. The role of the LIRR as part of the route to Boston was defunct, and the railroad was forced to reformulate itself as a local railroad. Over the next thirty years, the LIRR expanded rapidly in an effort to serve more Long Island communities.<sup>3</sup>

In 1863, the Long Island Rail Road was taken over by two prominent New York City politicians: Oliver Charlick and former New York City mayor William Havemeyer. During the tenure of President Charlick (1863-1875), the railroad lost money for twelve consecutive years. Conrad Poppenhusen eventually succeeded Charlick.<sup>4</sup> Poppenhusen was the owner of the Island's two other major railroads: the South Side Railroad and the Flushing, North Shore, and Central Railroad. When he became President of the LIRR, Poppenhusen consolidated his railroad empire into the LIRR system. This event marked the end of decades of fierce competition and rate wars between Long Island's rival railroads. Nevertheless, the financial difficulties of maintaining an enormous infrastructure with low ridership forced the LIRR into receivership in 1877.<sup>5</sup>

### **The Resort Industry on Long Island**

Nothing about Long Island's development was spontaneous. It was a premeditated transformation orchestrated by a number of individuals and groups with land or business interests on the Island. Indeed, the story of Long Island suburbanization in the early twentieth century is largely one of successful promotion. Beginning in the late nineteenth century, the builders and owners of Long Island shorefront real estate began to promote the Island as a vacation destination. A series of massive hotels were constructed along Long Island's shores. In order to cultivate an infant tourist industry, those invested in Long Island promoted the area as a recreational paradise. These seaside resorts attracted thousands of weekend visitors from New York City. This resort phenomenon persisted into the early twentieth century. The development of hotels, businesses, and small towns formed a vital first step in Long Island's suburbanization as tourist destinations soon became seasonal resort villages and later year-round suburban neighborhoods.<sup>6</sup>

The idea of a resort industry had originally evolved under Colonel Thomas R. Sharp, the Long Island railroad's receiver and president from October 1877 to December 1880. Forced to deal with the financial problems bequeathed by the Charlick and Poppenhusen administrations,

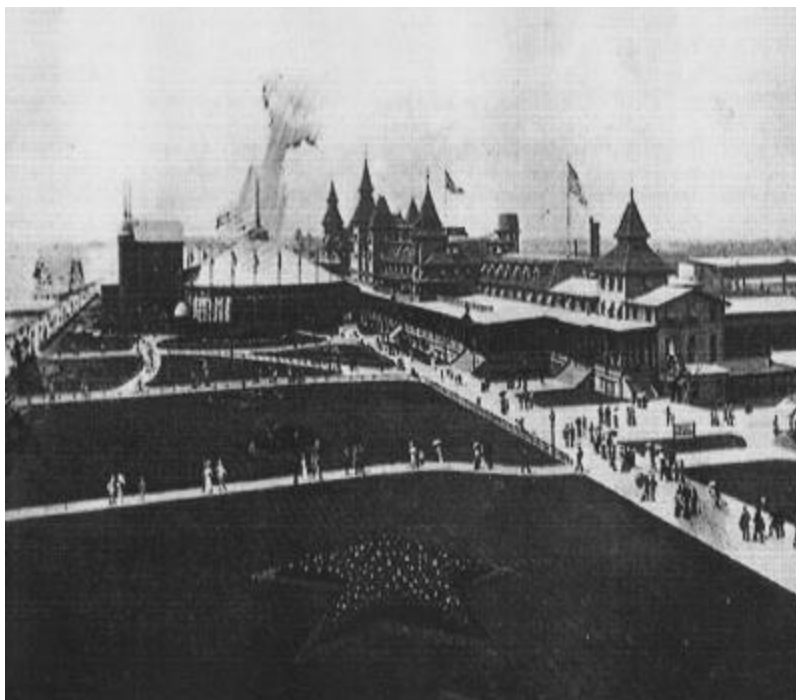


Colonel Sharp attempted to increase both freight and passenger revenue. At the time, the railroad owed a total of \$14,190,000 in debt and loans. On the freight side, Sharp offered discounted rates and special trains to Long Island farmers and fishermen. These special freight trains would stop on request between stations in order to load produce. In addition, the return transport of produce containers was free.

With respect to passenger service, Sharp hoped to raise revenue by promoting tourism. He instituted excursion trains to Fire Island, Babylon, Patchogue, and the Rockaways. Excursion trains offered daily round trips to these burgeoning resort locales. In addition to the excursion trains, the Evening Bathing Train ran from Jamaica Station to Rockaway Beach during the summer nights of 1878 and 1879. Colonel Sharp purchased state of the art Pullman cars for Rockaway Beach and insisted that they be drawn by the newest locomotives, which were faster and less smoky. Finally, Sharp provided extra service during popular vacation weekends.

While Sharp attempted to cultivate the nascent tourist industry, the resort era on Long Island became a reality at the hands of Austin Corbin, LIRR President from 1881 to 1896. During the 1870s, Corbin personally built and operated several of the largest and most luxurious of the seaside resorts: the Manhattan Beach Hotel, the Oriental Hotel, and the Argyle Hotel. In 1885, he added the Long Beach Hotel to his real estate empire by buying out Colonel Sharp and his associates. By that time, Corbin owned four major hotels on Long Island's seashore - each of which could accommodate several hundred guests, and had invested in several others. He used the LIRR to secure his investment in the budding Long Island tourist industry. In 1888, advancing tidewaters had washed up to the foundations of the Brighton Beach Hotel, another one of the resorts in which Austin Corbin had a personal financial stake. He arranged for the railroad to rescue the endangered landmark hotel. Under his instructions, the entire hotel was placed on flatcars and moved 200 yards inland.<sup>7</sup>

Under President Corbin, the railroad actively promoted the hotels on Long Island. Corbin hoped these efforts would simultaneously promote his properties and save the troubled railroad he had taken over. With his guidance, the LIRR became "the principal publicist of the area's resort potential." The railroad began producing a series of promotional publications, including annual visitor's guides. Above all, these guides almost always included an extensive list of the boarding houses and hotels in each area. They extolled Long Island as the ideal spot for a summer getaway. The seaside hotels provided countless havens "to which the tired dweller of the city may betake himself for rest, recreation, and recuperation."<sup>8</sup>



The Manhattan Beach Hotel, 1902. Courtesy of the Queens Borough Public Library, Long Island Division, Rugen Collection.

Besides being the builder and promoter of the resort boom of the late nineteenth century, the LIRR was also the primary means of transportation. As one of the annual visitor's guides claimed, "every important place on Long Island is reached quickly and comfortably" via the Long Island Rail Road. This too was Corbin's work. As noted earlier, Corbin had begun constructing hotels several years before becoming president of the LIRR. It was during these years that he realized that efficient rail transportation could open up new areas of Long Island for the summer resort business while rescuing the railroad from its financial straits. While President, Corbin secured adequate rail service for all of Long Island's major resorts. As Robert B. MacKay has noted, "many of the large resorts had their own railroad depots since convenient transportation links were . . . the key to success." In an age before the motor vehicle was widely available for either public or private transportation, the railroad provided the most efficient means of travel to and from Long Island's resort hotels. The LIRR gave Long Island a privileged position as the summer bathing area for the man of affairs (and

his family) who wished to relax without losing contact with developments in the city and at the office.<sup>9</sup>

The success of Corbin's efforts was evident in the sheer scale of the resort industry during his term as president (1880-1896). By 1895, the railroad's total number of riders (13,768,163) was more than four times that of 1877 (3,063,041). Largely thanks to Corbin, Long Island had become the home of some of the largest hotels in the world. The railroad visitor's guides reported that Long Island had accommodations for over 24,000 vacationers. In the span of twenty years, Corbin and the Long Island Rail Road had built, promoted, and provided transportation to a substantial resort industry on Long Island. The recreational iconography established by the emergence of the resort industry in the late nineteenth century provided much of the impetus for families to move to Long Island in the early decades of the twentieth century.<sup>10</sup>

### **Recreation and Promotion**

Publicizing these recreational possibilities was the job of the LIRR's Passenger Department. Its steady stream of promotional publications reached thousands of homes, clubs, and businesses. The department's broad objective was to cultivate "increased enthusiasm and love for Long Island." From 1895 to 1930, the Traffic and Passenger Department of the LIRR issued an average of over two publications each year. These publications were predominantly pamphlets that ranged from seventeen to over two hundred pages and almost always included a large number of photographs. These were generally distributed free of charge upon application by mail or at one of the LIRR's New York City terminals.<sup>11</sup>

The railroad's publications served two aims. First, they were intended to advertise Long Island's potential as a resort. In the 1903 edition of *Long Island Illustrated*, for example, a substantial majority of the photographs are of hotels and inns at various locations on Long Island. In addition to the more than twenty-five photographs of hotels, the pamphlet contains "a list of boarding houses and hotels in each locality" and the recreational opportunities they offered. Second, the railroad publications tried to attract permanent residents to Long Island. *Suburban Long Island*, "*The Sunrise Homeland*" (1921), for example, was published "to promote the advantages of Long Island for suburban living."<sup>12</sup>

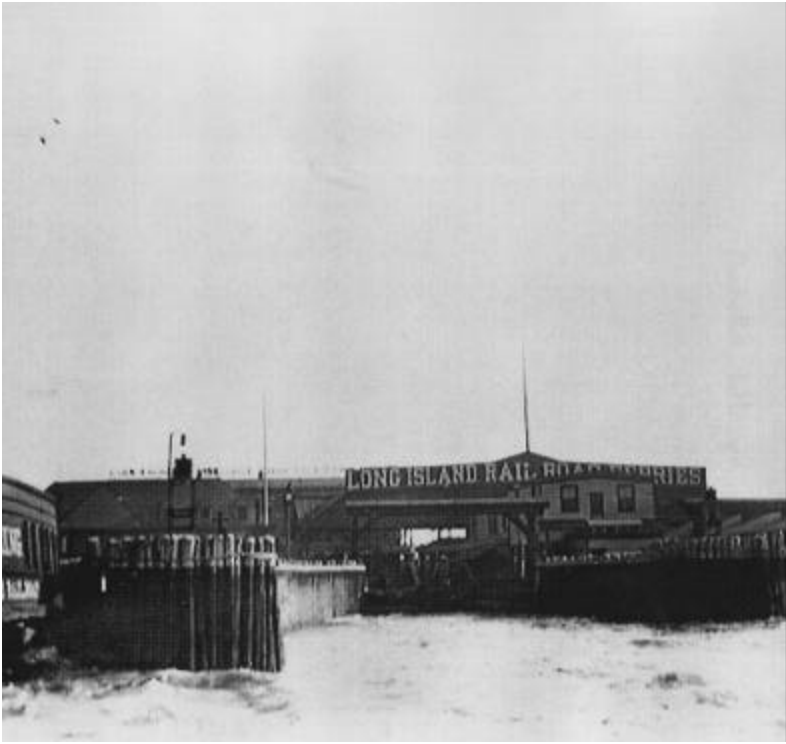
The following table presents a partial list of the publications issued by the railroad between 1895 and 1930:<sup>13</sup>

**Table 1**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <i>Beauties of Long Island</i>                     | 1895  |
| <i>Long Island Summer Resorts</i>                  | 1895-1900, 1902-1904                        |
| <i>Cyclists' Paradise</i>                          | 1897, 1898                                  |
| <i>Long Island Illustrated</i>                     | 1897, 1898, 1900, 1901, 1903,<br>1905, 1908 |
| <i>Unique Long Island</i>                          | 1898-1904 (issued annually)                 |
| <i>Summer Resorts on Long Island</i>               | 1898, 1908                                  |
| <i>Summer Homes</i>                                | 1901  |
| <i>Long Island Resorts</i>                         | 1909, 1912                                  |
| Diamond Jubilee of Long Island<br>Railroad Company | 1910  |
| <i>Long Island: Where Cooling Breezes<br/>Blow</i> | 1913  |
| <i>Long Island Agronomist</i>                      | 1914  |
| <i>Long Island and Real Life</i>                   | 1915, 1916                                  |
| <i>A Statement of Facts</i>                        | 1920  |
| <i>LIRR Information Bulletin</i>                   | 1920-1931 (issued annually)                 |
| <i>Long Island, America's Sunrise Land</i>         | 1921-1932                                   |
| <i>What Poets Say About Long Island</i>            | 1923  |
| <i>Campaign of Education and Good Will</i>         | 1928  |

Even this large number of publications does not encompass the extent of the railroad's promotional efforts. The railroad spent considerable sums of money advertising in area newspapers and periodicals. Some of the promotional publications, including *Campaign of Education and Good Will* listed in the table above, were actually compilations of advertisements that had been published elsewhere. In addition, the railroad organized and hosted promotional events. LIRR Special Agent Hal B. Fullerton, the single most important figure in the railroad's massive promotional campaign, spent thirty years in the railroad's Passenger Department "promoting and advertising events, activities, or plans that would bring public attention to the Island's potential for sport, recreation, business and residential development for both the middle classes and the urban elite." These events included lectures delivered by Fullerton (1897-1929), the Vanderbilt Cup automobile races (1904-1910), the Mile-A-Minute Murphy Challenge (1899), and experimental farms at Wading River (1905-1910) and Medford (1910-1927).<sup>14</sup>

The LIRR advertised many recreational opportunities on Long Island, but the sea was always chief among them. It was the beach that had precipitated the resort boom, and it dominated all promotional efforts. During the summer months, visitors thronged to Long Island's beaches and bathing pavilions. Summer bathing was "a great magnet."



The LIRR Ferry Terminal at Long Island City. Photo by Hal Fullerton. Courtesy of the of the Queens Borough Public Library, Long Island Division, Hal B. Fullerton Collection.

Boating was an attraction for many. Popular yacht clubs emerged at various locations along Long Island's shores. Even on dry land, Long Islanders could enjoy "Cool Breezes from off the Sea!" The LIRR's promotional pamphlets almost always had an illustration of the sea on the cover. The 1921 issue of *Long Island*, "*The Sunrise Homeland*," for example, had a picture of two young girls holding hands on the beach. In like manner, the cover of the 1928 issue showed three young women sailing a yacht. When people thought about the Sunrise Homeland for a vacation or a home, it was clear that "in no particular is there greater attraction than its seashore."<sup>15</sup>

Long Island was not only surrounded by usable waters; much of it was also flat. That geographic feature provided the perfect terrain for an increasingly popular activity – cycling. By the late nineteenth century, Long Island had become a fashionable gathering point for cyclists. A number of advances in cycling technology, including inflatable tires and

the rear-wheel-driven bicycle, resulted in a national surge in cycling, and Long Island was a center of the new craze. The Island was ideal for bicyclists because it offered pleasant roads through wooded areas as well as seashore trails. Bicycle clubs were formed “in practically every village on the Island.” In 1896, there were forty-seven cycling associations in Brooklyn alone.

Major cycling organizations such as the League of American Wheelman (LAW) and the Good Roads Association were also active on the Island. Hal Fullerton was active in both organizations. He served as Second Vice President of the Good Roads Association’s Brooklyn chapter and was elected to both the state board and the national assembly of LAW as a delegate from the second district of New York (Long Island). In fact, his involvement in these organizations and his reputation as a proponent of cyclists’ interests was one of the main reasons he was recruited by LIRR President William Baldwin. After being hired by the railroad in 1897, Fullerton immediately set about the promotion of Long Island as a prime area for cyclists. He equipped LIRR passenger cars with LAW-approved bicycle racks. He later improved these combined passenger and bicycle cars (and obtained a patent for his design). In 1897, Special Agent Fullerton published *Cyclists’ Paradise* from the railroad publication office. The booklet detailed a number of recommended bicycling routes on Long Island. The original 10,000 copies were quickly exhausted, and the pamphlet went through at least two additional editions. In the summer of 1898 alone, the LIRR transported 150,000 bicyclists to points on Long Island.<sup>16</sup>

By far the most imaginative of the LIRR’s efforts to promote bicycling on Long Island was the Mile-a-Minute Murphy Challenge. During the summer of 1899, Charles M. Murphy, a champion amateur cycle racer from Brooklyn, thought that in the absence of wind resistance he could he ride a mile in one minute or less. Together, he and Fullerton designed a wood-planked raceway that would run between the railroad tracks of the LIRR’s central line near Farmingdale. They attached a wind-protective hood to the rear of a railroad car: this car would serve as Murphy’s pace car, clearing the air in front so that he could ride unencumbered by air resistance. Murphy’s Challenge was highly publicized by the Passenger Department. They documented his training regiment and invited every possible media outlet to the event. Although none of his test runs had been successful, Murphy did ride one mile in 57.8 seconds during the actual challenge run. “Mile-a-Minute” became an international celebrity, and Long Island gained valuable publicity as a prime location for cycling.<sup>17</sup>

While cyclists rode by, New York City’s wealthiest citizens built massive country estates along the North Shore. As Eugene Armbruster

noted in 1914, “many men of great means have acquired large tracts on Long Island for their country homes.” Between 1900 and 1918, 325 mansions (houses of twenty-five rooms or more) were constructed on Long Island. By 1930 there were more than 900 mansions on Long Island. The wealthiest American families - the Morgans, Goulds, Chryslers, Fords, Pratts, Vanderbilts, and Guggenheims - and many of the most famous individuals - Conde Nast, Ralph Pulitzer, William Randolph Hearst, Nelson Doubleday, Sinclair Lewis, Thomas Edison, Payne Whitney, Theodore Roosevelt, and Louis Comfort Tiffany - owned large homes on Long Island. Together their estates formed Long Island’s “Gold Coast” and provided the setting for F. Scott Fitzgerald’s novel *The Great Gatsby* (1925). Much as Fitzgerald had described them, the Gold Coast mansions formed a pleasure land “in which millionaires and celebrities . . . danced the night away.”<sup>18</sup>

While the Gold Coast parties were an attraction, Long Island appealed to New York City millionaires for the same reason it had appealed to summer vacationers and to the new middle class residents: outdoor recreation. Long Island was seen as “one of the most ideal summer breathing places on the American continent.” For the upper classes, the Long Island recreational experience was centered on the country club. The country club offered opportunities for such popular activities as golf, tennis, polo, yachting, and fox hunting. The club became “the focus of suburban social life” and induced many of New York’s elite to build estate homes on Long Island. For example, in the thirty-five years following the construction of the Seawanhaka Corinthian Yacht Club’s waterfront facility at Oyster Bay, the club’s members built over forty mansions in the area.<sup>19</sup>

Other popular activities included golf, tennis, and polo. In 1900, *Long Island Illustrated* advertised that forty golf courses were located on Long Island. By 1930, there were an additional forty-eight golf courses built on Long Island. Long Island was also home to the country’s largest tennis club at Forest Hills. The West Side Tennis club relocated to Forrest Hills in 1912. Its new facility included the world’s largest tennis stadium, which served as the site of the U.S. Open from 1923-1978.<sup>20</sup>

Polo fields could be found at many of Long Island’s country clubs, including Piping Rock, Montauk Beach, Meadowbrook, Rockaway Hunt, and others. The sport gained such popularity on Long Island that a 40,000-seat stadium was built exclusively for polo. Every American to play in international competition against Britain between 1886 and 1939 hailed from Long Island. Based on these factors, the LIRR marketed Long Island as “the American Home of polo.” Nearly all of the great country estates erected in the area of Old Westbury and North Hills were built so that aspiring polo players would have adequate living quarters

while they honed their craft on the polo grounds of the nearby Meadowbrook Club. Hence, by the year 1900 “sporting interests determined the building sites of mansions.”<sup>21</sup>



The Brighton Beach Hotel, 1917. Courtesy of the Queens Borough Public Library, Long Island Division, Postcard Collection.

Finally, the railroad promoted the agricultural opportunities on Long Island. These efforts focused on Suffolk County and were intended to increase the railroad’s freight business. In 1903, the railroad reported that Long Island was “admirably adapted to flower, vegetable, and fruit culture and thousands of its broad acres are being scientifically and intelligently tilled.” Similarly, an article that appeared in the *South Side Messenger* in 1911 juxtaposed a report on the thousands of acres being successfully farmed with the claim that Suffolk County could still provide small rooms and country houses for an additional 200,000 people. Nevertheless, LIRR President Ralph Peters believed there was a difference between word and action. He thought that if the railroad really expected people to move to Long Island in order to farm, he would have to demonstrate that it could be done. To this end, he created an Agricultural Department of the railroad, headed by Special Agent Fullerton. He instructed Fullerton and his wife, Edith, to find ten of the worst acres in Suffolk County and proceed to farm them. The results would then be published in area newspapers and promotional publications for the sake of demonstrating “that others may do likewise, or even exceed the results in the same brief space of time.” It was hoped that this campaign would bring farmers to Suffolk Country and freight revenues to the Long Island Rail Road.<sup>22</sup>



Thus, Long Island had become the “cradle of many of America’s nascent recreational pursuits.” As such, it could attract both summer and permanent residents from among the middle and upper classes. Vacationers began to put down roots and build summer homes. This was especially true along the South shore, which saw the greatest amount of real estate activity. Even Suffolk County, Long Island’s easternmost county, saw modest increases in population as farmers embraced the example set by the railroad’s experimental farms.<sup>23</sup>

### **Pennsylvania Station and the East River Tunnels**

The railroad’s infrastructure was equally as important as its promotional efforts to the development of Long Island during this period. Most significant was the construction of Pennsylvania Station and the East River Tunnels. Prior to the opening of the tunnels in 1910, Manhattan-bound passengers had to take a ferry across the East River or endure multiple train transfers. The tunnels provided a long awaited direct rail route that was faster and more convenient than either of the previous alternatives. Easier and more efficient transportation options greatly increased the number of commuters who chose to make Long Island their home. By bringing New York City and Long Island closer together, the direct rail route sired a population and home building boom on Long Island.<sup>24</sup>

As the LIRR system’s shape matured in the late nineteenth century, the railroad could no longer count on expansion to increase ridership. To increase traffic, the LIRR began a new promotional campaign: commutation. It published “booklets setting forth the advantages of every little town.” The railroad recognized that commutation had enormous revenue potential. If it could convince a critical mass of people to become suburban commuters, the LIRR would see a sizeable increase in the number of daily riders. Thus, beginning in the 1870s, the LIRR Passenger Department tried to convince potential Long Island homeowners that daily commutation to New York City was manageable.

The earliest commuters to Manhattan were Brooklyn residents who took ferries across the East River. The LIRR sought to make commutation an attractive possibility for residents further east. As with nearly all of the LIRR’s promotional activities during this period, Special Agent Fullerton was intimately involved. In an 1898 promotional pamphlet called *Unique Long Island*, Fullerton enumerated that the homes of Long Island were within quick-and-easy reach of the city. He also discussed the new railroad improvements and in particular the express trains, which brought “every section of the Island within easy reach of Greater New York.” These comments were echoed almost

verbatim in the 1900 edition of *Long Island Illustrated*. In both cases, they were targeted at the prospective commuter.<sup>25</sup>

The railroad's effort to promote commutation met with moderate success between 1880 and 1910. During the 1880s, the LIRR ran fifteen trains daily along the main line and twelve along the South Shore Division - and a few commuter towns were emerging along the railroad routes. During the 1890s, the number of Long Island commuters increased substantially: the Main Line, South Shore Division, and Oyster Bay Branch of the LIRR all saw 50 percent increases in the number of daily commuter trains.<sup>26</sup>



Cyclists on Long Island, 1897. Photo by Hal Fullerton. Courtesy of the Queens Borough Public Library, Long Island Division, Hal B. Fullerton Collection.

Despite this growth, the number of commuters was limited by one glaring inconvenience: the railroad did not actually run all the way to Manhattan. The islands of Manhattan and Long Island were separated by the East River, and until 1899, no tracks ran across the East River. Prior to 1899, all passengers heading to New York City had to take the LIRR to a terminal at Long Island City. From there, they would board ferries that would carry them across the East River to terminals at 34<sup>th</sup> Street, East 7<sup>th</sup> Street, and James Slip (the intersection of Front Street and South Street). According to railroad historian Ron Ziel, the railroad maintained a large fleet of ferries, tugboats, and steamboats to transport passengers and

freight across the river. For passengers, the transfer at Long Island City was time consuming and unpleasant. Furthermore, all passengers heading to New York City had to disembark and board ferries at a single terminal. The result was a serious bottleneck, which delayed passengers waiting to board ferries.<sup>27</sup>

The establishment of the first all rail route to Manhattan in 1899 did little to improve matters. The El Connection, as it was called, was flawed in several respects. First, it only served a limited number of customers: the entrance to the El structure was at Flatbush Avenue in Brooklyn, and thus not conveniently accessible to most LIRR trains. Consequently, the majority of Manhattan-bound passengers continued to traverse the East River by ferry and the El Connection did not significantly ameliorate the bottleneck that occurred each day at the Long Island City ferry terminal. Second, the El Connection had a bottleneck problem of its own at the Sands Street station. In addition to the growing number of Long Island commuters, many Brooklyn residents began riding these trains across the river to work each day, causing further overcrowding and delays.<sup>28</sup>

The third major flaw with the El Connection was that it involved a large number of transfers. Transfers inevitably take time and inconvenience passengers. Passengers rode select LIRR trains into the El structure entrance near the Flatbush Avenue terminal. The original train continued along the El structure until Myrtle Avenue. There passengers had to disembark and board a second train. This second train took them to Sands Street in Brooklyn, at which point they had to board a third train. The third train was operated by the New York and Brooklyn Bridge Railroad, which would take them over the Brooklyn Bridge and into Manhattan. For these reasons, the first all-rail route from Long Island to Manhattan did not relieve the inconveniences associated with commutation via the LIRR.<sup>29</sup>

The system of transport to Manhattan, be it by ferry or the El Connection, was clearly inadequate. Austin Corbin foresaw this problem before his death in 1896 and offered several proposals for improvement, including a Corbin Bridge across the East River from the LIRR's Long Island City terminal. In 1895, he even went so far as to promise that "the Long Island Railroad with its bridge over the East River will be at the service of any steamship company which wishes to save time." The Corbin Bridge was never built, but William Baldwin, Corbin's successor, took it upon himself to remedy the problems associated with the LIRR's passenger service to Manhattan. When Baldwin's experiment with the El Connection proved insufficient, he resolved to construct a direct rail route to Manhattan. Although Corbin had obtained the necessary government permits, the project could not proceed without massive capital.<sup>30</sup>

While the LIRR ferried passengers across the East River to Manhattan, the Pennsylvania Railroad ferried passengers from the West across the Hudson River to Manhattan. For reasons analogous to those recognized by Baldwin, the Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR) was making plans to build an all rail route to reach Manhattan from the West. Unlike the LIRR, the PRR was one of the nation's largest railroad syndicates and consequently had the financial resources to launch such a large undertaking. However, permission to build rail lines and a terminal in the borough of Manhattan had been granted to the LIRR, not the PRR. In 1900, Baldwin and the PRR finalized an agreement by which the Pennsylvania Railroad would purchase the LIRR for \$6 million provided that it would build a terminal in Manhattan and railroad tunnels under the East River. Under this arrangement, both railroads (which remained operationally distinct until 1928) would be able to operate direct rail service to Manhattan.

Pennsylvania Station and the East River tunnel project would take ten years to complete at a cost of \$125 million. Although some individuals and op-ed writers lamented that "the Long Island Railroad has been unique in that it has been exclusively a local road . . . now all this is to be changed," their lament did not override the need for adequate service to Manhattan. LIRR service was vastly improved; the number of commuters soared after the station and tunnels opened in September 1910.<sup>31</sup>

### **Population, Commutation, and the Sunrise Homeland**

The construction of Pennsylvania Station and the East River tunnels eliminated the major inconveniences that had plagued the LIRR's service to Manhattan and made commutation possible on a wide scale. Prior to the completion of the tunnels, the number of people willing to undertake the daily journey to Manhattan was limited by both the railroad's capacity and passenger inconvenience. The new infrastructure gave the LIRR the capacity to transport hundreds of thousands of people to and from New York City each day. With an efficient direct line to Pennsylvania Station, the LIRR delivered thousands of passengers per hour into the very heart of New York City. The ambitious new LIRR president, Ralph Peters, proposed plans for enlarging the capacity of the stretch of tracking that led into the tunnels. He and the other railroad officers anticipated a "monumental exodus from the city," resulting in a massive rise in passengers and passenger revenue. They estimated that both would increase as much as 200 percent in the years following the project's completion.<sup>32</sup>

The expectations of Pennsylvania Station's planners were met and exceeded in the two decades after its opening in 1910. Nassau County's

population was 83,930 in 1910, 116,825 in 1915, 126,120 in 1920, 207,640 in 1925, and 303,053 in 1930. Its population increased more than twofold between 1920 and 1930, making it the fastest growing county in the United States. Suffolk County's population was 96,138 in 1910, 104,342 in 1915, 110,246 in 1920, 143,208 in 1925, and 161,055 in 1930. Though less spectacular than the growth of Nassau County, this still represents a significant population increase of 67.5 percent over twenty years. In 1927, the Chairman of the Suburban Transit Engineering Board (a subsidiary of the Port of New York Authority) announced that, since 1900, Long Island had grown more rapidly than any other area in the New York metropolitan region.<sup>33</sup>

The new residents were commuters. In nearly every Long Island community the number of commuters increased markedly. Great Neck, for example, was home to 132 commuters in 1911. By 1923, that number had risen to 626. Over the same period, the number of commuters in Freeport increased from 475 to 2,211 and the number in Rockville Centre increased from 589 to 1,751. In 1911, the first full year that the East River tunnels were in operation, 30 percent of all LIRR passengers were commuters. By 1928, 61.7 percent of all LIRR riders were commuters. During that time span, ridership had risen from 33,000,000 passengers per year to over 118,000,000 passengers per year. In 1928, no other similarly sized area in the world was serviced by as many daily trains as Long Island. The new commuters were generally not long time Long Islanders who were now taking jobs in New York City. They were salaried white-collar city men "whose dream," according to one observer in 1914, "is to own a home in a healthy neighborhood."<sup>34</sup>

To accommodate the rapidly rising population of new commuters, construction companies built homes at an unprecedented pace. Home construction reached a fever pitch as contractors rushed to build "suburban homes for all business men who wish them." In Malverne for example, the Amsterdam Development and Sales Company began constructing homes in 1912. By 1920, over 100 homes had been built on land that had been used for agriculture just ten years earlier. Elsewhere on Long Island, real estate companies such as the Hewlett Land Improvement Company, the Freeport Land Company, Garden City Development Company, and the Bellmore Land Improvement Company developed residential communities aimed at the average middle-class family. In yet another illustration of the railroad's importance to the suburbanization of Long Island, these companies chartered trains to transport potential buyers to home sites under construction. As Edward Smits, author of *Nassau, Suburbia, U.S.A.*, writes:

A definite change in Nassau's population was evident. Stimulated by railroad promotion of the area as both a resort and a year-round home, its growth was increasingly steady. Along both shores attractive communities were developing for middle-class businessmen from the city, where their families could live in a healthy semi-rural environment.

At its height in the 1920s, the demand for new housing employed over 200 companies and 16,000 construction workers. What had once been rural country was physically transformed as "vacant land disappeared until the only distinction between community boundaries became a street, a stream, or a lake."<sup>35</sup>

The new residents had come in search of the "Sunrise Homeland," the catch phrase used most frequently to conjure up the hybrid image of recreation and permanent residence promoted by the railroad. The first half of the phrase (Sunrise) alluded to Long Island's recreational capacities. The second part of the phrase (homeland) clearly speaks to the residential aspect that the railroad wished to promote. The word "Sunrise" was borrowed from the Sunrise Trail, an already popular phrase used to describe the journey to Long Island's vacation spots. As Paula Brown wrote in the railroad's 1923 pamphlet *What Poets Say About Long Island, The Land of the Sunrise Trails*, "For balmy air, sports/ And beautiful homes/ Take the Sunrise Trail."<sup>36</sup>

Theodore Roosevelt, Long Island's most celebrated citizen during this era, embodied the "Sunrise Homeland" lifestyle. At his Oyster Bay home, Sagamore Hill, Roosevelt and his family spent a great deal of time engaged in their popularized "strenuous life" of outdoor pursuits - including swimming, tennis, and boating. They provided a vivid advertisement of Long Island's recreational opportunities. Roosevelt was a close friend of Special Agent Fullerton and was consequently willing to cooperate with railroad management in whatever means they thought beneficial. It is, unsurprisingly, from Teddy Roosevelt that we find the most explicit endorsement for Long Island as the "Sunrise Homeland." He described the character of his home on Long Island as "a great many things - birds and trees and books, and all things beautiful, and horses and rifles and children and hard work and the joy of life." This same sentiment was summarized by the railroad's promotional material, which proclaimed, "Long Island is the ideal - yes, that is the word - home-ground and playground." The notion of the Sunrise Homeland as a place where one's family could live in a recreational wonderland combined the railroad's most potent promotional concepts into a single ideal.<sup>37</sup>

It would be easy to characterize the LIRR's promotional efforts as a progression from resort promotion to residential promotion. However, a

linear construction of the LIRR's promotional themes from 1880 to 1930 would be inaccurate. The LIRR continued to promote the area's merits as a vacation site well into the 1930s. More precisely, the promotional materials of this period reveal a struggling railroad seeking to entice people to come to Long Island in any way possible. The railroad's promotional team, led by Special Agent Fullerton, launched several different visions of Long Island that it hoped would appeal to middle and upper-class New Yorkers. From 1900-1930, Long Island was simultaneously promoted as an ideal vacation destination, a recreational paradise, an ideal home for commuters, and a fertile land for agricultural pursuits. The Passenger Department saw these vastly different images as not only compatible but mutually reinforcing.

With its vast publication efforts, the LIRR had been the central author of a new vision of Long Island – a winning combination of the recreational and the residential – the Sunrise Homeland. It would undoubtedly be influenced and modified later on, but the basic structure had been laid out. The Sunrise Homeland signified a home of leisure that was solid, close to New York City, conducive to family life, and fun. Long Island in 1930 was already a well-known suburb of a great metropolis. Later waves of migration eastward would merely confirm that identity.

## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Geoffrey L. Rossano, "Broader Networks of Modernization," in *Between Ocean and Empire: An Illustrated History of Long Island*, ed. Robert B. Mackay, Geoffrey L. Rossano, and Carol A. Traynor, (Northridge, CA: Windsor Publications, 1985), 160; Natalie A. Naylor, "Population Statistics" in *The Roots and Heritage of Hempstead Town*, ed. Natalie Naylor, (Interlaken, NY: Heart of the Lakes Publishing, 1994), 226.

<sup>2</sup> Ralph Henry Gabriel, *The Evolution of Long Island: A Story of Land and Sea* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1921), 132; E.B. Hinsdale, *History of the Long Island Railroad Company, 1834-1898* (New York: The Evening Post Job Printing House, 1898), 4; The official name of the railroad is the Long Island Rail Road. However, when referred to as a corporate entity, it is the Long Island Railroad Company; Jacqueline Overton, *Long Island's Story* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday Doran & Company, 1929), 230; Gabriel, 133; Hinsdale, 5. See also Mildred H. Smith, *Early History of the Long Island Railroad, 1834-1900* (Uniondale: Salisbury Printers, 1958).

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<sup>3</sup> Ron Ziel and George H. Foster, *Steel Rails to the Sunrise* (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1965), 11; Hinsdale, 5.

<sup>4</sup> For more on Poppenhusen see James E. Haas, "Conrad Poppenhusen: A Biographical Sketch of the 'Benefactor of College Point' Emphasizing the Civil War Years," *Long Island Historical Journal* 16 (Fall 2003/Spring 2004): 135-144.

<sup>5</sup> Ziel and Foster, 13; Gabriel, 142.

<sup>6</sup> Edward J. Smits, *Nassau Suburbia, U.S.A.: 1899 to 1974* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company Inc., 1974), 118.

<sup>7</sup> Robert B. MacKay, "Of Grand Hotels, Great Estates, Polo, and Princes" in *Between Ocean and Empire*, 112-131, 112; Ziel and Foster, 38-39. The Manhattan Beach Hotel and the Oriental Hotel were in Coney Island. The Argyle Hotel was in Babylon. The second edition of the book in which Robert MacKay's article appeared was entitled: *Long Island: An Illustrated History*, ed. Robert B. MacKay and Richard F. Welch (Sun Valley, CA: American Historical Press, 2000).

<sup>8</sup> MacKay, 114; Howard M. Smith, *Long Island Illustrated* (New York: The Long Island Rail Road Company, 1903), 5.

<sup>9</sup> Smith, *Long Island Illustrated*, 106; MacKay 112.

<sup>10</sup> Annual Report of the Long Island Rail Road Company for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1895 (Long Island City, NY: Long Island Railroad Company, 1895), 18; (This pamphlet and many of the other sources cited in this article can be found in the Nassau County Museum Collection of the Long Island Studies Institute, Hofstra University); Vincent F. Seyfried, *The Long Island Rail Road: A Comprehensive History: The Age of Expansion* 3 (Garden City, NY: self-published, 1961-1984), 159; MacKay, 114.

<sup>11</sup> Smits, 4; *A Campaign of Education and Good Will Conducted by the Long Island Railroad During 1927-1928* (Long Island City, NY: Harry R. Gelwicks Co. Inc, 1928), 1.

<sup>12</sup> Smith, *Long Island Illustrated*, 5; Suburban Long Island, "The Sunrise Homeland" (New York: Long Island Railroad Company and the Long Island Real Estate Board, 1921), cover page.



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<sup>13</sup> Natalie A. Naylor, Professor Emeritus of History, Hofstra University, interview by author, March 26, 2004, Hempstead, NY. 10,000 copies of *Cyclists' Paradise* were printed for its first issue in 1897 and it went through two additional issues. In addition, *The Agronomist* had 16,000 subscribers.

<sup>14</sup> Charles L. Sachs, *The Blessed Isle: Hal B. Fullerton and His Image of Long Island 1897-1927* (Interlaken, NY: Heart of the Lakes Publishing, 1991), 36.

<sup>15</sup> Smits, 161; Campaign of Education, 4; Long Island, America's Sunrise Land (New York: Long Island Railroad Company, 1926), cover page; Campaign of Education, 4; *Long Island, America's Sunrise Land* (New York: Long Island Railroad, 1930), 7.

<sup>16</sup> Sachs, 24, 29, 32 and 36; Gabriel, 181; Gabriel, 181.

<sup>17</sup> Sachs, 37 and 38.

<sup>18</sup> Smits, 12; Eugene L. Armbruster, *Long Island, Its Early Days and Development* (New York: The Brooklyn Daily Eagle, 1914), 43; MacKay, 119, 127; Ketcham, 36.

<sup>19</sup> *Long Island Illustrated*, (New York: Long Island Railroad Company, 1900), 7. This pamphlet from 1900 will be cited as *Long Island Illustrated* while Howard Smith's 1903 pamphlet of the same title will continue to be cited as Smith, *Long Island Illustrated*, followed by the appropriate page number; Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 98; MacKay, 121.

<sup>20</sup> *Long Island Illustrated*, 6; Long Island, America's Sunrise Land (1930), 15; MacKay, 119; Forest Hills hosted the U.S. Men's Championship, later known as the U.S. Open, from 1923-1978. It hosted the U.S. Women's Championship from 1935-1978.

<sup>21</sup> MacKay, 119; Long Island, America's Sunrise Land (1930), 15; MacKay, 120, 121.

<sup>22</sup> Smith, *Long Island Illustrated*, 7; "Development of LI," *South Side Messenger*, February 23, 1911; Edith Loring Fullerton, *The Lure of the Land, A Call to Long Island: The Story of the Work of the Long Island*

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*Railroad Company at Experimental Station Number One* (New York: The Long Island Railroad Company, 1906), 8.

<sup>23</sup> MacKay, 119; Smits, 12.

<sup>24</sup> Smits, 143.

<sup>25</sup> Ketcham, 36; Sachs, 35; *Long Island Illustrated*, 5.

<sup>26</sup> *Long Island Illustrated*, 4; Smits, 4.

<sup>27</sup> "LIRR Celebrates 150 Years of Service to Long Island," *Along the Tracks*, 9 (New York: Long Island Rail Road, 1984); Ron Ziel, LIRR historian and co-author of *Steel Rails to the Sunrise*, interview by author, December 4, 2003, Southampton, NY.

<sup>28</sup> "EI" is short for elevated, because the tracks were raised above street level.

<sup>29</sup> Ziel and Foster, 41.

<sup>30</sup> Austin Corbin, *Quick Transit Between New York and London* (New York: self-published, 1895), 31.

<sup>31</sup> *A Brief History of the Long Island Rail Road*, 69; Ziel and Foster, 75, 184; "Long Island Rail Road's Checkered Career," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, June 8, 1901.

<sup>32</sup> Correspondence Between the President and General Manager of the Long Island Rail Road and the Board of Estimate and Apportionment of the City of New York in Relation to Grade Crossing Matters and Improvements in Queens Borough (New York: The Long Island Railroad Company, n.d.), 17; Ziel and Foster, 190.

<sup>33</sup> Naylor, 226; Henry J. Lee, ed, *The Long Island Almanac and Year Book 1930: A Book of Information Respecting Nassau and Suffolk Counties* (New York City: Eagle Library Publications, 1930), 241; Jackson, 176; Rossano, 178; Lee, *Almanac and Year Book 1930*, 241; Long Island Regional Planning Board, *Historical Population of Long Island Communities 1790-1980: Decennial Census Data* (Hauppauge, NY: Long Island Regional Planning Board, 1982), 16; Daniel L. Turner, *Suburban Transit Relief for the Long Island Sector of the Metropolitan*

District: An Address Delivered at the Second Annual Meeting, Long Island Chamber of Commerce (New York: Long Island Chamber of Commerce, 1928), 3.

<sup>34</sup> Smits, 155-156; Ziel and Foster, 121; *A Campaign of Education and Good Will Conducted by the Long Island Railroad During 1927-1928* (Long Island City, NY: Harry R. Gelwicks Co. Inc., 1928), 1; *Statistical Railroad Summary, 1923-1929* (New York: Committee on Public Relations of the Eastern Railroads, 1929); Sachs, 66; Armbruster, 43. There were not many motor vehicles on Long Island prior to World War I. In 1915, there were only 8,766 automobiles in Nassau County for a population of 116,825 – hardly a common possession. During the 1920s, car ownership became fairly common among Long Island families.

<sup>35</sup> “Development of LI,” *South Side Messenger*, February 24, 1911; Rossano, 176; “LIRR Celebrates 150 Years of Service to Long Island,” 13.

<sup>36</sup> The phrase may have also been an allusion to the all night parties of the Jay Gatsby-type millionaires who made their homes on Long Island; *What Poets Say About Long Island, The Land of the Sunrise Trails* (New York: The Long Island Railroad Company, 1923), 18.

<sup>37</sup> Ziel and Foster, 49; Smits, 10; *Long Island and Real Life* (New York: The Long Island Railroad Company, 1916), 7.

## HOW ADVANCED WERE LONG ISLAND'S NATIVE AMERICANS? A CHALLENGE TO THE TRADITIONAL VIEW

*Philip C. Weigand*

*Philip Weigand suggests that Long Island's Native American population may have been larger, more complex, and more sedentary prior to European settlement than previously believed. An examination of the admittedly sparse record of the explorer Giovanni Verrazzano's early contact with Narragansett Indians suggests the potential for long range trade, hierarchy, and social organization. Weigand also believes that this contact may have initiated the disease transfer and subsequent pandemics that spelled the fate of these Native American tribes.*

*The Long Island Historical Journal thanks Gaynell Stone for permission to publish this article, which appeared in a slightly expanded form, under the title of "The Great Frontier on Long Island, New York: Verrazzano and Early Epidemic Diseases," in the Suffolk County Archeological Association Newsletter 29 (Spring 2003) and 30 (Winter & Spring 2004).*

When the first Homo sapiens entered the New World 20,000 to 12,000 years ago, they traveled in small numbers across the Bering Strait through Arctic and sub-Arctic landscapes. This environment probably sanitized them of most of the diseases they were carrying. Generally, human diseases depend upon three factors to reside successfully within their hosts: Temperate and/or tropical climatic regimes; groups biologically large enough to sustain the diseases; and close association with the appropriate animals which were co-infected with many of the diseases, and served therefore as their reservoirs.<sup>1</sup>

While there is uncertainty concerning the dates and even the origins of the first migrants, those controversies do not affect the aforementioned three points: the New World migrants formed largely disease free human communities, at least when compared with their temperate and tropical brethren after the experiments with animal domestication began in the early and middle Holocene period (10,000 – 3,500 BC). This is not to say that the New World was a disease free paradise, for it most certainly was not. It is to say only that the diseases, which ultimately ravaged the New World, were not present, and their absence can be explained by a lack of a shared disease community with domesticated animals.<sup>2</sup>

Native Americans thus grew and prospered in an isolated disease environment. However, when the inevitable renewed migrations from the Old World occurred, these earlier populations were naturally at high risk. The mortality that occurred upon the Euro-African contact with Native

Americans varied from region to region, but some areas suffered ninety percent death rates, especially in the tropical and subtropical zones. As much as the technological disparity between the first Europeans and the Native Americans, the former's epidemiological adaptation was vastly superior in the New/Old World encounter. In the long run, it was this adaptation that was definitive and decisive. The inexperienced Native American populations, previously unexposed to Old World diseases, "proved vulnerable to wholesale destruction on first encountering these infections."<sup>3</sup>

Aside from depopulation in the New World, other consequences are common for what ethnographers call "virgin soil" epidemics:

1. The restructuring of social groups as composite societies;
2. Demoralization and receptiveness to new ideologies;
3. Interruption of traditional seasonal cycles with ensuing malnutrition; and,
4. A cycle of increased disease susceptibility which result from the first three points.

Interplay between biological and cultural factors thus transpired and the feedback between the two processes made, the situation all the more critical.

In New World Studies, an ethnographic base line is usually defined as the ethnography of a sociocultural group or area during their last moments of existence prior to contact by Europeans. Most New World populations existed within systematic networks of demographic, social and cultural contacts with their neighbors, and hence few if any were pristine in this sense. But contact with Euro-African populations, beginning in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, was of a completely different nature. Disease spread so fast after contact that any investigation that wishes to establish the character of Native American society prior to Euro-African contact in a particular locality must first establish whether or not the area was affected by a "disease frontier" before actual contact. It must also contextualize the changed socioeconomic situation of such an environment whether or not the disease frontier was a variable.<sup>4</sup>

### **Verrazzano's Possible Impact on Native Americans on Long Island**

Upon European contact, areas in the eastern United States which once had high populations and large ceremonial and residential centers surrounded by large areas of cleared farm lands, reverted to grassy woodlands and small prairies with scattered inhabitants within a few generations. Throughout the eastern United States, Europeans arriving later commonly mistook this devolution in the environment as representing the "natural" situation --- few Native Americans, lots of deer and trees, i.e. an empty quarter to model to their own pattern. But the true

ethnographic base line - how Indians organized their societies before contact with Europeans - and what role a previously established "disease frontier" may have played in the unraveling of that base line, has never been postulated for Long Island.<sup>5</sup>

Given these facts there are several questions requiring further investigation involving what existed prior to first contact:

1. Was the Native American population on Long Island considerably denser than the earliest Colonial documents reflect?
2. Did Native Americans on Long Island exploit most of the varied ecological zone with a growing level of intensity and sophistication, including sedentary life styles based on horticulture, agriculture, intensified shell fishing, fishing, gathering, and hunting in various configurations?
3. Can the apparent (and growing) disagreement between the archaeological data and the ethnohistorical analysis of the early Colonial period be explained?
4. Is it possible that during the one hundred year period between the first contact with Europeans and actual European settlement Old World epidemic diseases were successfully introduced?
5. Was the introduction of those diseases, and hence possibly the first phase of the pandemic in the northeastern United States, including New England, inadvertently accomplished by the men of the Verrazano expedition to the northern shore of Long Island Sound in 1524? And is it possible that the well-documented 1617-19 epidemic throughout New England was not the first.<sup>6</sup>

The situation requires the recognition of a post contact but pre-colonial time period of over one hundred years (1524-1640), and thus a reconsideration of the ethnographic base line for the area.<sup>7</sup>

The ethnohistorical and ethnographic base line for describing the Native Americans on Long Island traditionally has been that of the earliest European settlers. By 1640, religious dissension was evident within the Puritan colonies of New England, including Connecticut, and in that year a colony at Southold, Long Island, was established.<sup>8</sup> Long Island's northern shore had been reconnoitered for years prior to the establishment of this colony, but the contacts with the Island's Native Americans had been few and erratic and few records resulted. What documentation exists from this period is largely geographical, and even much of that is of very poor quality. Thus, a century had transpired between the Verrazano expedition and the ethnographic base line, perceived to be 1640, for Long Island.

That perceived base line, by definition, ignores or completely underplays the possibility of more complex demographic and sociocultural configurations prior to that date. Aside from a lack of recognition of the post-contact pre-colonial period of over a century, there is a logical incongruity implicit in the adoption of the mid-seventeenth-century base line: if things were not complex when the Europeans first established their permanent presence, then they never could have been before.<sup>9</sup>

Lynn Ceci's exceptionally well-researched and stimulating dissertation, published in 1990, is the best example of the aforementioned approach for Long Island. The situation documented by mid-seventeenth-century colonists was chosen as the ethnographic base line to develop a descriptive model of Native American demography and settlement for pre-European times. Ceci's model makes no allowance for a post-contact/pre-colonial period, and, hence, gives little minimal treatment of the archaeological arguments for denser populations and more sociocultural complexity. Ceci argues that sedentary lifestyles among the Native Americans were late and resulted from the stimulus of European trade and the development of large manufactories for wampum (shell beads used as a special purpose currency through the entire Northeast area). She maintains that soils were too poor for systematic agriculture, and what little that existed was unimportant. Therefore, native life was largely based on seasonal gathering and this was reflected in the tiny demographic profile that the settlers encountered.<sup>10</sup>

Ceci made her case with some passion, especially after her work received a strong critique by Annette Silver.<sup>11</sup> The major points of Ceci's argument are as follows:

1. Native Americans were very few in number on Long Island (between 3,000-6,000 for the entire Island).
2. They were living in a highly dispersed, seasonal and simple settlement system.
3. Their settlements showed no signs of intensification nor hierarchy, such as specialized structures.
4. Their social system showed no signs of intensification nor hierarchy.
5. Agriculture played an extremely limited role, if any at all, within the economic structure, and what little did exist should best be described as horticulture.
6. The early colonial documents give adequate though sparse evidence for the demographic context of the sociocultural systems that they report.

The point here is not that Ceci is incorrect in her description of the mid-seventeenth century situation. Projecting these points uncritically

into the pre-contact period, however, is another matter. For that period, we have two lines of evidence: the Verrazzano narrative and the archaeological database. Both lines of evidence strongly suggest that Ceci's projections need to be dramatically and substantially modified.

First, a contextualization of Long Island's pre-European archaeology is helpful. The standard brief summaries of Long Island's Native American communities and their regional relationships during the archaeological pre-colonial and early historical periods in the context of southern New England and Long Island Sound remain those published in the Smithsonian's *Handbook of North American Indians*.<sup>12</sup> Those archaeological descriptions are now quite dated and require that these interpretations be reexamined. Research emphasizing the southern New England literal (of the States of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut), including the offshore islands (Martha's Vineyard, Block Island, Nantucket Island, and the Elizabeth Islands), is most conclusive: for those regions sedentary lifestyles began as long ago as 1,000 B.C., if not before. As Mark Tveskov notes: "the coast was occupied by relatively large groups--throughout the year, often without the benefit of maize horticulture."<sup>13</sup>

The variation in settlement density for a marine environment (as examined in detail by many researchers) is not so much the presence of agriculture but rather the expected presence of patterns for systematic exploitation of maritime resources, such as shellfish, fish, and seaweeds. Augmented with agriculture, even in slight amounts, these patterns offer a productive profile, which led to even denser populations. Thus it was not so much agriculture *per se* but maritime resources that established the first opportunity for population and sociocultural intensification, a point completely missed by Ceci in her analysis. Some of the shell mounds reported in the historic literature for the area were truly massive. Andrew Christenson describes one of the largest at Damariscotta, and calculates that it had, before its destruction, about 1.27 million cubic meters of shell debris, though it was clearly deposited over a long period of time.<sup>14</sup> Historic lime production has reduced most of the region's shell mounds to just shadows of their former sizes considerably damaging their potential for archaeological research. However, even small quantities of maize (and other cultigens) within this context offered even more potential for intensification.

While maize cultivation was a relatively late arrival in the general New England zone, and although it did not have the same impact everywhere, it did affect the social organization of the entire region. As Chris Benison noted for southern New England in general, a "gradually increasing commitment to economic to economic systems which included maize and other seed bearing plants led to increased levels of complexity



in labor organization and land use practices.”<sup>15</sup> This observation should be extended to Long Island. The first and greatest changes, even with a small commitment to agriculture, are reflected in competition for suitable lands for cultivation both within a social group and between them. The trend toward social ranking and/or incipient stratification thus received a major stimulus. These changes are clearly seen in the archaeological record at late Woodland period (300- 1000 A.D.) sites such as those along the lower Connecticut River valley, as well as within other areas. In addition, the Indian Neck Ossuary reflects the increased level of complexity in burial ceremonialism seen in the area. Maize, bean, and squash cultivation did not replace earlier systematized seed utilization (chenopodium, hickory nuts, hazel nuts, sumac, and acorns), but rather added to these already productive nutritional profiles. There is also evidence of widespread forest clearing after 1,000 A.D., which probably reflects the clearing of land for agricultural purposes.<sup>16</sup>

The result of the combination of maritime, forest, and riverine resources with those derived from cultivation (occurring in the years after 1,000 A.D.) was a dramatic increase in the level of sociocultural complexity, leading some researchers to speak of “semi-stratified societies.”<sup>17</sup> Clearly, the regional level of political organization implied by the term *sachem* is attributable to this combined and complex subsistence strategy. It is clearly not the result of European contact, and the growth of the wampum manufactories. A map of the small Nausett Harbor drawn by Champlain in 1605 represents an approximation of the type of community seen in the general area, even after initial European contact.

On Long Island, Ceci's characterization of the absence of agriculture and the unproductive nature of soils has not gone without critical commentary. Silver has offered abundant evidence that the soils available for agriculture are not as reduced as Ceci maintains, pointing out the large areas of fertile soils all over the Island, especially those classified as Haven Loams (between 36 and 47 percent of the Island's surface). Silver ends her critical review of Ceci with this statement: "I suggest that the solution of the question about the prehistoric practice of agriculture in Coastal New York [Long Island] does not lie in the study of [the early colonial] documentary evidence.”<sup>18</sup>

Ceci's response to Silver's critique is largely a polemic one. Instead of a comprehensive examination of the new data clearly available to her she has simply restated her prior positions. Her last presentations have become even more extreme in terms of her comments on demography and the reliability of the archaeology record, calling those works examples of regional pride instead of scientific research. In her 1982 publication she even revised further downward the previous demographic

estimate from 6,000 (first suggested by Mooney 1928) to 3,000 for the entire Island. Ceci has never systematically examined the crucial variable for sedentary lifestyle of marine and estuary resources for Long Island; she relies solely upon the relationship between demographic scale and agriculture. Thus she has placed the full weight of her interpretations on her perception of the apparent absence of agriculture and a mistakenly conceived ethnographic base line.<sup>19</sup>

Ceci dismisses the archival evidence cited by Gordon Day concerning the extensive areas cleared of their forest cover in the zone as being out of date, though she can offer no reason or current research to substantiate this claim. Silver argued strongly against Ceci's dismissal of the direct evidence for maize cultivation (pollen and carbonized cobs) on Long Island, and in southern New England in general. Certainly, subsequent excavations and pollen studies have strongly supported Silver's perspective. The direct evidence for maize cultivation during the late Woodland period (A.D. 400 – 900) throughout the area is undeniable.<sup>20</sup>

On Long Island the best evidence in recent survey and excavation comes from Mt. Sinai Inlet on the North Shore, which empties into Long Island Sound. This new research allows us to see that certain types of ecological zones could, and very likely did, support year round settlement based upon intensified estuary exploitation.<sup>21</sup> Other sites, such as the Englebright and Tiger Lily sites, show similar manifestations.<sup>22</sup> At Mt. Sinai in particular, Gretchen Gwynne was able to show that a large percentage of the estuary's shoreline was covered with archaeological material, though the shell midden components had been very badly damaged by quarrying for lime during historic periods. The settlement at Mt. Sinai was very long lived, intensive, and extensive, beginning in the Archaic (8,000 to 1,000 B.C.) and lasting till the late Woodland period (a span of approximately 4,000 years or more).

Detailed analysis of the shell materials shows that all four seasons were represented in the harvesting of this resource. This constitutes very strong evidence for the year round occupation of the estuary. The faunal evidence, which show monthly growth markers, strongly supports this conclusion, as well. Kent Lightfoot has examined the theme of shell midden diversity within southern New England, and regards the Mt. Sinai and Cape Cod cases as the best examples of year round sedentary settlements.<sup>23</sup> While William Ritchie's examination of the neighboring Wading River Inlet and the Stony Brook sites was more cursory, that material is very similar to Mt. Sinai. At the time of his research, Ritchie characterized that site as a nomadic encampment, though reexamination of the faunal and shell materials suggests otherwise.<sup>24</sup> Lightfoot, in his reexamination of the older archaeological record, has suggested that

nearby Muskeeta Cove shows a very long history of habitation which changed from periodic occupation during the early and middle Woodland phases, to a permanent residential site by the late Woodland period, the approximate time that maize cultivation was introduced into the area. Specifically for Long Island, Lightfoot is careful to point out that the evidence he summarizes supports the argument for year around settlements, as well as a moderate degree of demographic density, whether or not maize agriculture is considered.<sup>25</sup>

A more recent survey and very limited excavation in the Shoreham and Wading River Inlets (along the shore of Long Island Sound due east of Mt. Sinai) supports the conclusions reached at the Mt. Sinai estuary.<sup>26</sup> The extensive profiles left by the excavations for the abandoned Shoreham nuclear plant showed a lengthy habitation history. While the shell and bone materials have yet to be analyzed from the perspective of seasonality, the artifacts are virtually identical with those described by Gywnne, Gramly, and Wisniewski. This type of settling in around estuary, marine and riverine resources has been documented for a wide range of areas, representing vastly differing settings, throughout North America.<sup>27</sup> It should come as no surprise that it existed on Long Island in particular, and in southern New England in general. The combined archaeological evidence from Long Island strongly suggests that a high degree of estuary oriented sedentariness, with the demographic corollary that this implies, was accomplished whether or not one considers the variable of maize cultivation.

Although no area on Long Island is really too far removed from either the Atlantic Ocean or Long Island Sound, examination of inland areas on Long Island has proved far more problematic. Inland water resources are frequent and year-round. A large number of small lakes, marshes, and ponds exist in these zones, especially in the area between the two glacial moraines that cross the island on an east-west axis. The water table is so high in the Peconic River valley and along the southern shore, that drainage is frequently the major problem. Silver has shown that profiles are actually best along the higher fringes of these moraine areas. It was within this zone that the early settlers encountered areas that they considered to be meadows, but which much more likely were the remnants of Native American fields.

In a detailed description of the difficulties of surveying within areas with dense forest and/or underbrush covers (a situation which describes much of Long Island), Kent Lightfoot relates the unbalanced view that archaeologists have of the inland settlement system: eighty percent of the Island's sites so far located are coastal. This is due completely to the differential visibility of the two zone's sites, rather than an actual distribution of settlements. In addition, ninety percent of the inland sites

are encountered by earth moving equipment in the process of land leveling, highway construction, or excavations for house foundations, sewers, water lines, etc. This indicates that the inland sites are buried, and hence not easily located by surface survey.

Sites from all over Suffolk County suggest highly specialized use: quarrying on Shelter Island, hunting stations along the ridges of the inland zones, and so on, indicating that, through time, a high degree of resource symbiosis between different sub-regions on the Island existed, with some indications for a settlement hierarchy. Certain inland sites, especially those near permanent lakes and ponds, such as Sunken Meadow and sections of the former R.C.A. property in Rocky Point, were true villages of some size.<sup>28</sup> The R.C.A. property offered one of the most favorable areas to examine an inland site, due to the nature of its recent utilization. It had many areas that were heavily altered by surface earth removal equipment, building staging areas for the great radio antennas and access roads. This activity often exposed rather than destroyed the archaeological deposits, leaving the deposits in these eroding surfaces quite visible and intelligible. While the sites thus exposed are largely composed of lithic scatters, they nonetheless are extensive, closely spaced, and numerous. Beyond intensified gathering for acorns and hunting for deer, these settlements could have been agricultural components for permanent estuary settlements, such as Mt. Sinai. There is little to suggest that they were permanently occupied, a conclusion also reached for the more extensive work done at Shelter Island.

Early settlers identified these inland regions as open spaces and plains, though the remaining Native Americans on Long Island claimed that they were defunct agricultural fields. In general, the former R.C.A. property, the Middle Island and Nissequogue River valley surveys, and archeological excavations also offer revisions for the manner in which we had traditionally understood the inland economies and sociocultural organization of pre-contact Long Island. The research accomplished on Shelter Island (located within the Peconic Bay, between the two forks of the eastern most sector of the Island) is the most extensive for an inland settlement component yet accomplished.<sup>29</sup> A large expanse of the Mashomack Nature Preserve was sampled by the subsurface survey technique called shovel testing. While this technique has been criticized, it is nonetheless the first combined survey excavation of its sort for Long Island.<sup>30</sup> As such, and despite the critique, it represents at least a partial view of an inland site or site system. Although no area of Shelter Island is really too far removed from the Peconic Bay, this project encountered a basic inland adaptation based on periodic occupation of the sites, obviously oriented toward hunting and gathering. This pattern is well enough documented by this research to imply that these sites were most

probably stations within a larger settlement system, part of which, along the actual shores or sub-inlets of Shelter Island, might have been more permanent, resembling Mt. Sinai. These sectors of Shelter Island, however, were not investigated as thoroughly as the inland zones, so the question of symbiosis remains unanswered to date. The research was able to confirm a long history of periodic habitation, which included the late Woodland period. In addition, there was considerable density of occupation during any one particular time period, arguing strongly for resource abundance. While the occupation thus appears to be largely oriented toward the coast, it also shows regularized and systematic use of inland resources in the context of hunting and gathering.

In summary, many of the above cited projects have documented relatively well-developed settlement densities, especially for the later phases commonly subsumed under the Late Woodland designation, though some cultural complexity is also evident earlier. This settlement density, especially for the estuary areas, is beginning to appear as the rule rather than the exception, though clearly political centralization and stratified societies never evolved. Whatever the specifics concerning settlement patterns and demography turn out to be for Long Island, it is clear that the model developed by Ceci, dependent upon the mid-seventeenth century sources, is no longer adequate for the study of this region's pre-contact situation.

What, then, explains the apparent disjuncture between the early historical references about the character of Native American settlement on Long Island, well summarized in Ceci's dissertation, and the archaeological evidence cited above? The discrepancy appears to be related to the scarcity of data from the post-contact but pre-settlement period. Specifically, the Verrazzano report represents the true ethnographic base line for the general area, though it is frustratingly brief.<sup>31</sup> This voyage began in 1523 and was recorded in 1524 in Dieppe. There is universal agreement that Verrazzano reached the shores of New York and southern New England, made a brief landfall and established contact with Native Americans in the Narrows of the former. Verrazzano also spent a fifteen-day landfall somewhere in the Narragansett Bay (probably Aquidneck Island, Rhode Island). Morrison has the most convincing reconstruction of Verrazzano's route and landfalls for this area. It is important to remember that the opening of the Narragansett Bay is only twenty-five miles over water from the eastern tip of Long Island.<sup>32</sup> The closest point on the shore of New England is but eleven miles from Long Island. At no point along Long Island Sound is either the southern shore of New England or the northern shore of Long Island out of sight. Far from being a barrier, Long Island Sound was the focal point for heavy traffic, with communication across the Sound constant.

During his fifteen-day visit in the Narragansett Bay, Verrazzano describes what he and his men encountered. The eight points summarized below, quotations from Richard Hakluyt's sixteenth-century English, represent those observations that may reflect social complexity, details of land utilization, and the settlement systems:

1. Possible emblems of office or status markers: "About his necke he had a large chaine, garnished with diuers stones of sundrie colours."<sup>33</sup>
2. Use of copper, and hence long distance trade "Among whom wee sawe many plates of wrought coper."<sup>34</sup>
3. Concentrations of people: "They came in great companies of their small boates."<sup>35</sup>
4. Probable extended family/lineage households: "The father and the whole familie dwell together in one house in great number: in or 30 persons."<sup>36</sup>
5. Some seasonality of settlement geared to resources: "They mooue the foresaide houses from one place to commoditie of the place an season."<sup>37</sup>
6. Broad clearings and the placement of agricultural fields: "wee were oftentimes within the lande 5 or 6 leagues, which wee found as pleasant as is possible to declare, very apt for any kind of husbandry, of corne, wine, and oyle: for that there are plaines of 25 or 30 leagues broad, open and without any impediment of trees [.] of such fruitfulness, that any seede being sowne therein, will bring forth most excellent fruite."<sup>38</sup>
7. Direct mention of agriculture per se: "They feede as the other doe aforesaide, of pulse, whiche doe growe in that countrey with better order of husbandry then in the others."<sup>39</sup>
8. Agriculture geared to a lunar and stellar calendar: "They obserue in their sowing the course of the Moone, and the rising of certaine starres,"<sup>40</sup>

It is not possible to quantify from Verrazzano's descriptions, nor to postulate many specifics about demography, social organization, or the settlement system. But we can cautiously generalize about several points of social relevance on the nature of Native American economies and the social order: Verrazzano encountered agriculturally advanced villages which were probably organized as extended lineages, led by males (the sachem of later documents) -- marked with emblems. The villages were not isolated or completely independent one from another, but were organized into systems of seasonal activities that, aside from agriculture, involved hunting, gathering, and fishing.

Common languages certainly aided communications over a wide area within the region. Eastern Long Island and southern New England native

peoples were all Algonquian speakers at the time of the European expeditions and colonization. Later sources mentioned the extent of the Narragasset's political and economic influence within the region.<sup>41</sup> As the English and Dutch became more interested in questions of regularized trade, colonization, and territory, their observations became much more acute. As a result, we know that the Narragasset sachem, with its allied and junior groups, held dominion over a fairly wide area which included all of the Rhode Island Inlet, parts of Connecticut, southern Massachusetts, Nantucket Island, Block Island and parts of Long Island extending as far south and east as Montauk. This is not a small area, though most of it is open water. However, the open water was no barrier to either trade or social control. The Narragasset sachem was therefore focused on Long Island Sound, and included parts of Long Island at its peak. One reason for the Narragasset ascendancy, aside from the wealth of estuary resources and fine agricultural land, may have been their control over the area's only argillite (slate rock) outcrops. While this green-gray argillite was not of the best quality, it was valuable enough to be traded over a very large region, including Long Island. In addition, the Narragasset may have been the middlemen for the Long Island Sound based trade of raw copper, and, most probably, the copper artifacts made from the Canadian sources at Cot d'Or.

During the early colonial period warfare between Native American polities continued, with the Europeans often aiding first one side and then the other. As late as 1643, in the general context of the ongoing and ever accelerating social and cultural collapse, the Narragasset were still expanding, eliminating first the Pequot and then the Mohegan in western Connecticut. Their polity collapsed in the aftermath of King Philip's War. This war was the last expression of Native American independence in the overall region, and had touches of a revitalization movement, as well. The execution by the colonists of their last sachem, Canonchet, in 1676 marked the definitive end.

How much of the Narragasset expansion is due to the disruption that initial European contact introduced, beginning with Verrazzano, and how much is a continuation of the political and economic dynamics already underway before the first contact are questions still debated by archaeologists and historians. Whatever the outcome, we can note several important facts:

1. Long Island Sound never represented a geological barrier for contacts between Long Island and New England, and, indeed, the Sound facilitated contacts over a fairly large region.
2. Political and economic systems in the general area were village based.
3. Political control was exercised through the institution

represented by the sachem, who in later times held their offices through inheritance, and who held territorial sway over other less important sachem.

4. Agricultural villages were numerous and fairly large, integrated into symbiotic relationships with one another which focused upon the exchange of local goods which included and apparently emphasized foodstuffs.
5. Long distance exchange relationships were important for basic resources, such as argillite, as well as status markers, and covered much of the northeastern United States and parts of Canada as far away as the Cot d'Or.
6. Long Island was an integrated part of the southern New England sociocultural system and cannot be viewed as isolated or sufficiently different from general contacts that were frequent, systematized, intensive, and important in social and cultural terms throughout the entire region.
7. The balance of power between many of the sachem in southern New England was upset by the general presence of Europeans in the area, especially reflected in the late (post-contact) Narragansett expansion to the west (the elimination of the Pequot and Mohegan in Connecticut). This western expansion marks the disintegration of the original, wider native system, and the beginning of a response polity operating progressively more and more within the incipient European colonial realm.
8. Narragansett influence and expansion to the east (i.e. Block Island, Nantucket Island, southern most Massachusetts, the Buzzards Bay area, and parts of eastern Long Island including Montauk), most probably reflects a pre-contact arrangement.
9. It appears to have been no accident that Verrazzano targeted the Narragansett for his fifteen-day visit, as they would have been the most notable of all the regional sachem at that time.
10. What is described in many of the preceding points is the social residue post-dating the Verrazzano contact, and it remains a strong possibility that the pre-contact sociocultural situation may have been more complex, especially on Long Island.

## **Conclusions**

Clearly, the societies around Long Island Sound were not truly stratified or even close to being organized as early states. In the parlance of the evolutionary literature, they appear to have been early ranked chiefdoms. An event, like the contact with Verrazzano, would have affected them all, regardless of what side of Long Island Sound they lived upon. The intense, face-to-face fifteen-day visitation by Verrazzano



among the Narragasset was sufficient to have introduced the European diseases. The pre-contact populations of southern New England and Long Island were certainly high enough and in sufficient concentrations, whether completely sedentary or not, to have supplied the critical mass for epidemics, as even the 1617-19 colonial situation shows.

Whether or not this hypothesis about a post-contact/pre-colonial Long Island epidemic is correct, the growing discrepancy between the emerging archaeological picture and the descriptions of the early and mid-seventeenth-century must be explained. The most logical explanation is an epidemic. One century transpired from the Verrazzano contact before the first documents with any ethnohistorical content were written. Hence, for Long Island, the mid-seventeenth-century cannot represent an accurate ethnographic base line. Therefore, that base line must be reconsidered in light of the intervening period.

#### **Author's Note:**

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#### **NOTES**

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<sup>1</sup> William H. McNeil, *Plagues and People* (New York:Anchor Books, 1998).

<sup>2</sup> Philip Weigand, "La Antigua Ecumene Mesoamericana: un Ejemplo de Sobre-Especializacion?," *RealQiones* 21, no. 82: 39-58.

<sup>3</sup> Sherburne F. Cook and Woodrow Borah, *Essays in Population History: Mexico and the Caribbean*, 2 vols. (Berkeley: University of California, 1973); Jacques M. May, ed. *Studies in Disease Ecology* (New York: 1961); William H. McNeil, *The Great Frontier: Freedom and Hierarchy in Modern Times* (Princeton: University Press, 1982).

<sup>4</sup> Phil C. Weigand, *Evolucion de una Civilizaci6n Prehispanica: Arqueologia de Jalisco, Nayarit, y Zacatecas, El* (Colegio de Michoacan, Zamora, 1993).

<sup>5</sup> William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the*

*Ecology of New England* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983).

<sup>6</sup> The spelling of Verrazzano offered by Hakluyt (1582) is the one that will be followed in this text, as it appears in literally all of the secondary sources. Giovanni da Verazzani was his full and correct name.

<sup>7</sup> The data of the Verrazzano expedition to New England is 1524. The date of Long Island's first European colony is 1640.

<sup>8</sup> Ruth Higgins, *Expansion in New York: With Special Reference to the Eighteenth Century*, (New York: Porcupine Press, 1976); Lynn Ceci, *The Effects of European Contact and Trade on the Settlement Pattern Of Indian in Coastal New York: 1524-1665*, PhD dissertation, (Department of Anthropology, City University of New York, 1977); Lynn Ceci, *The Effect of European Contact and Trade on the Settlement Pattern of the Indians in Coastal New York: 1524-1665* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1990).

<sup>9</sup> Steadman Upham, "Smallpox and Climate in the American Southwest", *American Anthropologist*, 88 (1986): 115-128.

<sup>10</sup> Ceci, *The Effects of European Contact*.

<sup>11</sup> Annette Silver, "Comment on Maize Cultivation in Coastal New York," *North American Archaeologist* 2, no. 2: 117-130.

<sup>12</sup> Laura Conkey, Ethel Boissevain, and Ives Goddard," Indians of Southern New England and Long Island: Late Period", *Handbook of North American Indians* 15 (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institute, 1978): 177-189; William S. Simmons, "Narragansett", *Handbook of North American Indians* 15 (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institute, 1978): 190-197.

<sup>13</sup> Mark Tveskov, "Maritime Settlement and Subsistence along the Southern New England Coast: Evidence from Block Island, Rhode Island", *North American Archaeologist* 18, no. 4 (1997): 343-361; David J. Bernstein, *Prehistoric Subsistence on the Southern New England Coast: The Record from Narragansett Bay* (San Diego: Academic Press, 1993); Chris Benison, "Horticulture and the Maintenance of Social Complexity in Late Woodland Southeastern New England" *North*

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<sup>14</sup> Andrew L. Christenson, "The Identification and Study of Indian Shell Middens in Eastern North America: 1643-1861" *North American Archaeologist* 6(1985): 227-243.

<sup>15</sup> Benison, 217.

<sup>16</sup> McManamon, et. al.; Gordon M. Day, "The Indian as an Ecological Factor," *Ecology* 32(1953): 329-436.

<sup>17</sup> Benison, 14.

<sup>18</sup> Silver, 126.

<sup>19</sup> Lynn Ceci, "Method and Theory in Coastal New York Archaeology: Paradigms of Settlement Pattern", *North American Archaeologist* 3(1982): 5-36.

<sup>20</sup> Benison.

<sup>21</sup> Gretchen Gwynne, *The Late Archaic Archaeology of Mount Sinai Harbor* (New York, PhD dissertation, Department of Anthropology, State University of New York, 1982).

<sup>22</sup> Michael Gramly and Gretchen Gwynne, "Two Late Woodland Sites on Long Island Sound," *Bulletin of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society*, 40(1979): 5-19.

<sup>23</sup> Kent Lightfoot, Robert Kalin, and James Moore, "Interior Resources Exploitation: A Woodland Settlement Model for Long Island, New York," *Anthropology* 8(1985): 15-40.

<sup>24</sup> William A. Ritchie, "The Stony Brook Site and its Relation to Archaic and Transitional Cultures on Long Island", *New York State Museum and Science Services Bulletin*, no. 372 (1959).

<sup>25</sup> Burt Salwen, "Muskeeta Cove 2: A Stratified Woodland Site on Long Island" *American Antiquity* 33(1968): 322-340.

<sup>26</sup> Philip Weigand, *Survey in the Wading River and Shoreham Inlets*, Suffolk County, New York, unpublished manuscript; Edward Johannemann and Laurie Schroeder, *Survey and Tests within the Wading River Inlet*, Suffolk County, New York, unpublished manuscript.

<sup>27</sup> Stuart Scott, "Core versus Marginal Mesoamerica: A Coastal West Mexican Perspective", in M. Foster and P.C. Weigand, eds., *The Archaeology of West and Northwest Mesoamerica* (New York: Westview 1985); Barbara Stark, "Prehistoric Ecology at Patarata 52, Veracruz, Mexico: Adaptation to the Mangrove Swamp," *Publications in Anthropology No. 18*, (Vanderbilt University, 1977).

<sup>28</sup> Weigand, *Survey in the R.C.A. Property and the Sunken Meadow Area*.

<sup>29</sup> Lightfoot, Kalin, and Moore; Edward Johannemann, *A Cultural Resource Inventory at Nissaquogue, Proposal to the Town of Smithtown*, unpublished manuscript (1982).

<sup>30</sup> Michael J. Shott, "Shovel-Test Sampling in Archaeological Survey: Comments on Nance and Ball, and Lightfoot," *American Antiquity* 54 (1989): 396-404.

<sup>31</sup> Richard Hakluyt, *Divers Voyages Touching the Discovery of America*, edited by John Winter Jones, Hakluyt Society, and First Series No. VII, (New York: Burt Franklin Publisher, n.d., originally published 1582), 55-71.

<sup>32</sup> Samuel E. Morrison, *The European Discovery of America: The Northern Voyages A.D. 500-1600* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971).

<sup>33</sup> Hakluyt, 11.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.* 65.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.* 68.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.* 66.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* 67.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.* 66.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> William S. Simmons, "Narragansett" in *Handbook of North American Indians* 15 (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institute, 1978), 190-197; Daniel Gookin, *Historical Collections of the Indians in New England [1792]*, Jeffery Fiske, ed., (Towtaid, 1972).

## EARLY CHILD WELFARE IN NASSAU COUNTY

*Ruth Shackelford*

*The story of child welfare in America before the advent of large scale state involvement is seldom told. Once the domain of voluntary private, charitable, and religious groups, this model of social welfare was in some ways quite effective. Ruth Shackelford explains how child social welfare evolved from private charity to state provision in the early part of the last century in Nassau County, and suggests the old system may hold lessons for improving the modern child welfare delivery system.*

Public/private partnerships have been a feature of American life since the earliest days of colonial settlement. One of the first examples of this partnership is Harvard College. A private institution founded only sixteen years after the arrival of the Pilgrims in Plymouth, Massachusetts, Harvard received much of its funding in its early years from periodic public appropriations. Public/private partnerships have been even more common in the care of dependent populations. In the colonial era it was common everywhere, including in the rural communities of Long Island, for needy citizens who could not be supported in their own homes to be supported by public funds in the homes of private citizens. The first private charitable institution for women and children in New York, the Ladies Society for the Relief of Poor Widows with Small Children, founded in 1797, received regular appropriations from the New York state legislature as well as from the city of New York. Privately operated orphanages, the first one established in New York in 1806, also were aided financially by grants from state or local treasuries, even orphanages that were openly affiliated with religious groups. When the New York State constitution was amended in 1874 to prohibit the granting of financial aid by the state to any private institution or agency (except those aiding the blind, the deaf, and juvenile delinquents), counties and towns took over the funding of many of these orphanages. On Long Island, as in many rural communities where the population of dependent children was too small to support the establishment of an orphanage, children were boarded in private homes at public expense.<sup>1</sup>

Beginning in the last quarter of the nineteenth-century, the communities comprising the portion of Queens that would in 1899 become Nassau County became involved in a series of public/private partnerships that began with the State Charities Aid Association, a private organization that coordinated visits to public institutions, and expanded in 1913 to include the Nassau County Association, another private organization whose goals included monitoring and improving the

county's poor relief and child welfare programs. The two organizations often clashed with each other and with public officials, but their members never questioned their right as citizens to investigate, report on, and attempt to change various aspects of Nassau County's public welfare system.

### **The State Charities Aid Association**

Born in New York City in 1837 to a wealthy and socially prominent family, Louisa Lee Schuyler inherited her family's strong sense of civic duty and service to the poor, and her family influenced her early charitable efforts. She began her charity work as a sewing teacher for the New York Children's Aid Society, one of the many charities supported by her family. When the Civil War began, Schuyler joined the main office of the Woman's Central Association of Relief located in New York City, which her mother had helped form. Affiliated with the United States Sanitary Commission, the Woman's Central supervised branch offices throughout the region that collected donations of food and clothing, which were packaged and sent to hospitals and Sanitary Commission agents at the front. Schuyler was the "undisputed leader" of the Woman's Central and worked long days and weeks supervising the regional managers, writing letters, and preparing reports and publications.<sup>2</sup>

Following the end of the war, Schuyler spent several years recovering from exhaustion in Europe before returning to New York in 1871. After reading the reports of the New York Board of State Commissioners of Public Charities on conditions in the state's almshouses, Schuyler made a series of visits to the Westchester County almshouse, which was located in the vicinity of her family's country estate at Dobbs Ferry. The deplorable conditions she saw there spurred her to action. First, she made personal appeals to local officials to institute changes, but when her efforts were rebuffed she determined to utilize the experience and contacts she had gained while working at the Woman's Central to develop a more effective program. In 1872, Schuyler joined with a number of the well-connected, influential volunteers she had worked with in the Woman's Central to form the State Charities Aid Association. With a structure similar to that of the Woman's Central, the Aid Association was to function as a central clearing agency, supervising a county based network of Local Visiting Committees charged with making regular visits to public charitable institutions.<sup>3</sup>

In the course of their visits, the State Charities Aid Association's volunteer visitors also were expected to take on the responsibilities of what was called "friendly visiting." First developed by the New York

Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor in 1843, friendly visiting was based on the belief that the United States was a land of opportunity that offered a job and at least modest success for all who were willing to exert themselves. Therefore, poverty had to be caused by personal character flaws such as improvidence, indolence, immorality, and intemperance. Given this assumption, providing financial relief exacerbated the problem by removing the incentive to work. The only sure way to reduce or eliminate poverty was by reforming individual character. Friendly visiting promised to effect this character reform through a system of regular visits between poor families and their “economic and social betters,” who would “inspire” the poor with “self reliance and self-respect,” and teach them “habits of economy, industry and temperance.” Based on the concept that it was “not only the right, but the civic duty” of the upper classes to intervene in the lives of the poor, the system of friendly visiting established by the New York Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor became the standard for charitable organizations that aimed to “uplift” the poor by improving their character. Firmly committed to this goal, the constitution of the Aid Association specified as its first object the “physical, mental and moral improvement” of the “pauper inmates” of the state’s charitable institutions.<sup>4</sup>

The State Charities Aid Association typified the relationship between private, volunteer organizations and public bodies that was common at that time. The Aid Association saw itself as a watchdog organization of “independent citizens” who had the right (and duty) to inspect public institutions supported by their taxes. From the beginning, the Aid Association expected to work closely with the Board of State Commissioners of Public Charities, an official state body formed in 1867 that was charged with oversight of all state supported charitable institutions (except prisons) but that lacked the funds to underwrite the regular inspections it was required by law to make. Without any official affiliation, an understanding was reached between the two organizations whereby the Aid Association’s volunteers would make systematic visits to state institutions, reporting their findings to the Aid Association’s central office in New York City. From these reports, the central office would prepare an annual report to the State Board with recommendations for action. Access to the State Board was ensured by enlisting officers of the State Board to serve as officers of the Aid Association.<sup>5</sup>

### **The Early Years: The Queens County Local Visiting Committee**

The Queens County Local Visiting Committee was one of the first such committees organized by the State Charities Aid Association. When this committee was formed in 1873, Queens County was a 396 square



mile area made up of the towns of Newtown, Flushing, Jamaica, Hempstead, North Hempstead, and Oyster Bay, and the incorporated city of Long Island City. While the Local Visiting Committee was made up of members from all of these localities, its management and visiting committees consisted almost exclusively of people from the three eastern most towns of Hempstead, North Hempstead and Oyster Bay. For this reason, the work of the Queens County Local Visiting Committee focused primarily on these three eastern towns, which in 1899 would become Nassau County following the incorporation of the three western Queens towns into New York City.<sup>6</sup>

The work of the Queens County Local Visiting Committee was based on the principles of friendly visiting. At its first meeting in June 1873, the Local Visiting Committee stated its aim was “to secure a regular visitation of the public charitable, voluntary and penal institutions . . . with a view to the mental, moral, and physical improvement of the inmates, and to extend Christian sympathy and aid to the victims of misfortune, circumstance and crime.” Specific committees were formed for specific types of institutions, such as a Jail Committee and a Hospital Committee, and for specific populations, such as an Adult Able-bodied Pauper Committee and a Committee on Children.<sup>7</sup>

Five representatives of the State Charities Aid Association attended the initial meeting of the Queens County Local Visiting Committee. For the next twenty-five years, however, the Association would maintain only minimal contact with its Committee. Annual reports were submitted by the Committee to the Association, and the Association kept its county committees apprised of new laws and procedures and gave advice when it was solicited. But representatives of the Association made no further attempts to attend meetings of the Committee until 1898, when the Association began to take a more active interest in the committee.<sup>8</sup>

Even without guidance from its parent organization, the Local Visiting Committee was extraordinarily energetic in its early years. Before any of the members of the Committee had officially been appointed as “visitors” by the State Board of Charities (it would take about a year to get the first appointment), they were already visiting almshouses in Freeport, Hempstead, Oyster Bay, Long Island City, Flushing, Jamaica, and Newtown. As a result of the deplorable conditions they found at some of the almshouses, they immediately focused their attentions on establishing a county almshouse. Members of a special committee located a suitable piece of property on what was then called Hog Island in the town of Hempstead (the property is now Island Park, Harbor Isle and Barnum Isle) and persistently lobbied the county Board of Supervisors to purchase it. As a direct result of the Committee’s work, a new county almshouse was opened on Barnum Island in May

1874, less than a year after the Committee's formation.<sup>9</sup> A few years later, the Committee would score another success when they persuaded the county to establish a Lunatic Asylum at Mineola in the town of Hempstead, so that the county's insane could be moved out of almshouses and into an institution designed specifically for their care. Gradually the Flushing, Newtown, Jamaica and Long Island City almshouses transferred their populations to the new county almshouse and insane asylum, so that by 1887 the only institution the Local Visiting Committee visited outside of what would become Nassau County two years later was the county jail at Long Island City.<sup>10</sup>

The poor relief system in place at this time in the towns of Hempstead, North Hempstead and Oyster Bay had changed little since colonial times. Each town had two elected Overseers of the Poor, who decided when, how much, and which type of aid would be granted to people who had lived in the town for at least a year. There was also an elected county Superintendent of the Poor who was responsible only for needy persons who had not been resident in a town for a year. Each poor relief official operated independently, making daily decisions affecting the lives of children whose parents could not support them. Some families were provided with "outdoor relief," which allowed them to remain in their own homes; other families were sent to one of the two local almshouses along with their children, while children without parents were boarded in private homes or sent to institutions in other counties, since there were no orphanages or other institutions specifically for children in Queens County at this time.<sup>11</sup>

The Local Visiting Committee's Committee on Children first focused on the children living in almshouses, trying to ensure that they were being properly educated. In 1875, the State Charities Aid Association, working with the State Board of Charities, succeeded in getting a state law passed that required the removal of children from almshouses.<sup>12</sup> The Committee on Children then began working with local poor relief officials to remove children from the county almshouse on Barnum Island, the town Almshouse in Hempstead, and the almshouse that served North Hempstead and Oyster Bay (called the Jones Institute). As the county still lacked a local institution for children, the almshouse children were disposed of in the same way as parentless children: some were boarded with local families, while others were sent to children's institutions in New York and Brooklyn.<sup>13</sup>

Once placed these children tended not to move for years. Public officials paid little attention to them other than to write out occasional checks for their support.<sup>14</sup> The Local Visiting Committee's Committee on Children was determined to make up for this lack of official oversight. However, since the Local Visiting Committee was authorized to visit

only publicly supported institutions, once children were removed from almshouses the Committee's attempts to supervise them were based on nothing more than good will.<sup>15</sup> The Visiting Committee asked for the names and locations of children receiving town or county aid and assigned members of the Committee on Children to visit them. Committee members then began what they would later call their "most important work," making regular visits to the children, distributing gifts and clothing, and monitoring their care.

When children were found to be in undesirable homes, the Visiting Committee had no authority to act independently, but had to rely on the town or county poor relief official to act on the Committee's recommendations. The Committee's attempts to locate free foster homes for children also depended on the voluntary cooperation by officials. When officials were reluctant to cooperate, the Visiting Committee could do little but exert moral pressure and practice patience. A situation that occurred in 1880 is illustrative. The Visiting Committee had discovered three children being boarded at public expense in a home where they were being "taught nothing by wickedness" and were being "treated cruelly." Repeated requests were made to the Overseers of the Poor in Hempstead, who had placed the children in the home, to place them elsewhere. After months of being assured that the children would be removed "as soon as practicable" and "as soon as possible," the Overseers finally took action. By that time, the Committee reported that one of the boys was "in a condition too bad for description, his person lacerated by the bites of huge vermin."<sup>16</sup>

While the Committee on Children was quite active in visiting children placed in boarding homes in the three towns, the time and expense involved in visiting children placed in institutions outside the county must have been prohibitive, because there are no indications that any such visits took place. Instead, in 1877 the Local Visiting Committee proposed that a local institution for dependent children be established so that members could provide proper oversight over these children. A special committee was formed and a few tentative inquiries were made of citizens who were in a position to donate a building and land, but the committee "received no encouragement of assistance from that quarter." When Louisa Lee Schuyler, the founder of the State Charities Aid Association, read the Visiting Committee's reports describing their fruitless efforts, she wrote to the Committee suggesting that they turn their attention from an institution providing long term care to a temporary home for children that would move children as quickly as possible into foster homes. The special committee met with Schuyler at the Association's headquarters in New York City to discuss the matter in more detail. Schuyler made it clear that she believed "these homes

should be the plainest farm houses, with land attached, [and] that the children should be taught domestic & farm service.” The committee began making inquiries about establishing such a home, but again “met with so much discouragement” that the members gave up the effort.<sup>17</sup>

In 1882 the Local Visiting Committee once again constituted a special committee to look into “the establishment of a Home for destitute children in this county,” and the committee once again met with State Charities Aid Association representatives at the New York City headquarters, where the “subject was fully discussed and much interest manifested,” and the committee received “much valuable information” from the treasurer of a temporary home that had been established in Westchester County. This time, rather than seek a sponsor to donate property, the new committee organized a series of charity fairs that raised sufficient funds to establish and maintain a small home in Hempstead.<sup>18</sup>

The Temporary Home for Children of Queens County, which opened on June 10, 1884, was intended, as its name implied, to be “a temporary home for the poor, dependent children of the county, where they might be trained for usefulness and self-support.” The home expected to receive most of its children from the county Superintendent of the Poor and the town Overseers of the Poor, although they also accepted children from “relatives and friends,” charging \$1.50 a week for their care. The home got off to a slow start. On October 1, they still had no children, but by the following October they were caring for thirteen children, of whom twelve had been committed by the Overseers of the Poor. By 1886, the number of children being cared for had grown to twenty-eight, too many for the small home to accommodate. In 1888 five acres were purchased in Mineola and a new, larger home was constructed that eventually would include a separate school building and a children’s hospital on the grounds.<sup>19</sup>

The Local Visiting Committee was closely involved with the Temporary Home. Many members of the home’s Board of Managers were also members of the Visiting Committee, and members of the Visiting Committee’s Committee on Children regularly visited the home and delivered reports to nearly every Visiting Committee meeting.<sup>20</sup> The placement work the Committee had been performing for children being boarded in private homes was now extended to the children in the Temporary Home, although with disappointing results: in the first four years of the home’s founding, only one permanent home was found. More effectively, the Temporary Home aided the Committee’s work with boarded children. Now, when children were found to be living in unacceptable boarding homes, they could be removed immediately and placed in the Temporary Home, rather than having to remain in an unsatisfactory home until another boarding home could be secured.<sup>21</sup>

**Child Welfare in Nassau County**

As the nineteenth-century came to a close, public relief was becoming more professionalized, more organized, and more systemized. In New York and most of America's other major cities, charity organization societies had replaced haphazard relief programs with centralized application and processing bureaus that reduced duplication of effort. As charity work gradually evolved into social work, workers trained in investigation, diagnosis, preparation of case records, and treatment were required. Some organizations, including the State Charities Aid Association, provided this training for their workers; others sent their workers to specialized schools that provided lectures, visits to public and private agencies and institutions, and training in field work. The first of these was established in New York in 1898 as the Summer School of Philanthropy. Volunteer visitors, such as the men and women in the Local Visiting Committee, began to seem "old fashioned" compared to "modern" social workers.<sup>22</sup>

As part of this modernization movement, the State Charities Aid Association established an Agency for Placing-out and Supervision of Children in Families in 1898 to investigate prospective foster homes, match children available for foster home placement (then called "placing out") with appropriate homes, and monitor the children after placement. Previously the volunteers of the Association's county committees had done this work. Now "carefully selected and trained agents" who would use "carefully ascertained and carefully recorded" information about the children, their birth families, and their foster families to facilitate placements would handle it. Volunteers were to be limited to making local visits and inspections that could not be done by agents based in New York City, while all decision making powers were shifted to the "Home Office."<sup>23</sup>

The new Agency began its work with a comprehensive visitation of all of the children being boarded by the towns and by the county. The Association found eight children being boarded in families by the county, twenty-four by the town of Hempstead, and twelve by the town of Oyster Bay. Most of the homes were acceptable. When they were not, the Agency worked with the county Superintendent of the Poor and the town Overseers of the Poor to improve them or to move children to more acceptable homes. On October 25, 1898, M. V. Clark of the State Charities Aid Association appeared at a meeting of the Local Visiting Committee to explain the work of the new Agency, to report on the progress of its investigation in the county, and to inform them of their next project: facilitating foster home placements for the children in the Temporary Home. The trained agents did their job well, placing twenty-

three children from the Temporary Home in “very satisfactory” foster homes in only three months, compared to thirty-five children reported placed by the volunteer Committee on Children over a ten year period.<sup>24</sup>

When Nassau County was formed out of the three eastern towns of Queens County (Hempstead, North Hempstead, and Oyster Bay) on January 1, 1899, the twenty-seven members of the Queens County Local Visiting Committee who resided in the new county were reorganized into the Nassau County Local Visiting Committee, which now would be responsible for visiting only those institutions located in Nassau County. The new Local Visiting Committee echoed the previous committee’s commitment to the principles of friendly visiting. Its new constitution made the Committee’s central object the visitation of all public institutions in the county, “with a view to the mental, moral and physical improvement of their inmates, and to bring about such reform as may be practicable.” Ending a long period of neglect, the Aid Association now took an active interest in the affairs of the Visiting Committee, sending representatives to at least one of their meetings each year.<sup>25</sup>

As the State Charities Aid Association became more acquainted with Nassau County, it became increasingly convinced that the county’s child welfare programs needed the attention of a full time professional. The Local Visiting Committee was devoting substantial time and energy to supervising the county’s dependent children, but there were problems. Despite the existence of the new Temporary Home, some children remained in institutions outside the county where visits by volunteers were impractical. Moreover, the voluntary nature of the Local Visiting Committee allowed public poor relief officials to ignore their requests and recommendations at will. In 1902, it took members of the committee more than a year to get information on dependent children from the Oyster Bay Overseer of the Poor.<sup>26</sup>

By 1909, the State Charities Aid Association had a new solution to Nassau County’s child welfare problem: County Agencies for Dependent Children. This line of work had been inaugurated by the state Association in 1894, when authorities in the city of Newburgh proposed to enlarge their overcrowded Children’s Home. As a less expensive alternative, the State Charities Aid Association, through its Local Visiting Committee in Newburgh, proposed that the city hire a trained agent under the Committee’s supervision to investigate whether the children living in the Children’s Home could be returned to their families or placed for adoption in other families. Within two years the number of children living in the home had been reduced by more than half, not only saving citizens the costs of enlarging the institution, but also supporting the twenty-four children who had been removed from the institution.<sup>27</sup>

The success of the Newburgh Agency for Dependent Children

encouraged the State Charities Aid Association to establish similar agencies throughout the state. Progress was slow at first, and only two additional agencies were established during the next ten years. Then, in 1907, the Association received a grant from the Russell Sage Foundation to employ an agent at its headquarters in New York City to “assist the county committees of the State Charities Aid Association in establishing agencies [for dependent children] within their respective counties and to act as superintendent of such agencies.” The Association formed a new County Agencies Department on December 1, 1907, and five more agencies were established by February 1909.<sup>28</sup>

The State Charities Aid Association now turned its attention to establishing an Agent for Dependent Children in Nassau County. The Association would have preferred to have one agent to oversee all of the county’s dependent children, but knowing that each of the three towns jealously guarded their “home rule” advantages, the Association focused instead on establishing a town agency whose authority might later be extended to cover the entire county if the Agency could prove its effectiveness. After a determined campaign by H. Ida Curry, the head of the Association’s County Agencies Department, Oyster Bay agreed to hire an agent for dependent children for a six-month trial period beginning July 1, 1909. Mrs. Benjamin Hicks, a member of the Local Visiting Committee’s executive committee as well as of its committee on children, agreed to cover all other costs associated with the agency. This cost sharing arrangement was typical for the Association’s agents for dependent children.<sup>29</sup>

The duties of Oyster Bay’s agent for dependent children, as specified in the usual contract between the Local Visiting Committee (representing the State Charities Aid Association) and the local officials (in this case the town Board), was “to investigate the circumstances attending the numerous children now maintained by the town at the several institutions for the care of indigent children” with an aim to reducing the number of these children, thus releasing them “from a condition of pauperism,” while simultaneously releasing taxpayers from the burden of their support. The idea was to save the town more money than it was costing them to support the Agent, thus ensuring a renewal of the contract and the extension of the Agent’s work to other towns and eventually the county.<sup>30</sup>

At the beginning of the six-month period, July 1, 1909, there were fifty-six children being supported in institutions at the expense of the town of Oyster Bay; at the end of the period, December 31, 1909, there were forty-seven children in institutions. While thirteen children had been returned to relatives and two had been placed in “free family homes,” an additional six children had been accepted for public support, reducing the net decrease in the relief rolls to nine children, and the Agent

was directly responsible for only six of these. While the Agent's work probably did save the town some money, the results were far from spectacular. In addition, by continuing the State Charities Aid Association's earlier focus on removing children from the Temporary Home for Children in Mineola, the Agent had managed to antagonize the home's matron. By this point in time, the home was having financial difficulties because the town Overseers of the Poor could not justify paying the higher boarding fees charged by the home, and therefore preferred to board needy children in private homes that accepted lower fees.<sup>31</sup>

Under the circumstances, the matron of the home, Mrs. Hunting, could hardly be expected to appreciate the efforts of the Agent to remove children that she had worked so hard to place in the home. When the Agent's contract was presented to the town Board for renewal, representatives of the home reported that "in several instances" children who had been removed by the Agent from institutions and placed in private families "were not receiving the care and education that the Homes offered." Based on this testimony, and possibly also on the limited nature of the Agent's achievements, the town Board decided not to renew the Agent's contract.<sup>32</sup>

In spite of this setback, the State Charities Aid Association remained as committed as ever to establishing an agency to supervise all of Nassau County's dependent children. In March 1911, an unusually large contingent from the Association (five representatives) attended a special meeting of the Local Visiting Committee to impress upon them the importance of this matter. Bailey B. Burritt, the assistant director of the Association, tried to stir the Committee's members to action by pointing out that "Nassau is much behind the times in the manner of caring for the dependent poor, being the only county in the state to retain the town system."<sup>33</sup> As it turned out, however, it would not be the Local Visiting Committee that would take up the Association's mission but a new voluntary organization.

### **Struggle for Control**

The Nassau County Association was formed in January 1913. A part of the wave of municipal reform that was sweeping the country in the beginning of the twentieth-century, the Nassau County Association was a volunteer organization of "progressive" citizens that aimed to work, as stated in its official motto, "For the Promotion of the Welfare of the Citizens and Residents of Nassau County and the Improvement of Social and Political Conditions." Like other municipal reform organizations, the Association aimed to eliminate corruption and inefficiency and to institute honest and efficient government in Nassau County.<sup>34</sup>



Shortly after the Nassau County Association was formed, four of its founding members, Mrs. Frank L. Crocker, Mrs. J. Sargeant Cram, Mrs. Charles Carey Rumsey and Mrs. Willard D. Straight, met with Homer Folks, the executive director of the State Charities Aid Association, to discuss the possibility of establishing an agency for dependent children in Nassau County. Both Mrs. Rumsey, the President of the Association, and Mrs. Straight were members of the State Charities Aid Association's Board of Managers, and Mrs. Rumsey also was a member of its subcommittee on county and town Agencies for Dependent Children. Their work for the Aid Association had convinced them of the necessity for such an agency in Nassau County, and so they had joined with Mrs. Cram and Mrs. Crocker, who were interested in the county's outdoor relief programs, and with Mrs. Crocker's husband and others who were interested in matters such as civic reform, to form the Nassau County Association. Mrs. Straight was particularly anxious to establish an agency for dependent children, and offered to pay an agent's salary if one were hired "right away."<sup>35</sup>

This generous offer posed a problem for Folks. The standard arrangement was to have the county agent's salary and expenses paid partly by the local board of supervisors and partly by contributions solicited by the State Charities Aid Association's local committee (in this case the Local Visiting Committee) with supervision provided by the Association's County Agencies Department. The arrangement proposed by the Nassau County Association was problematic as it provided no direct line of communication among the Visiting Committee, the Association, and the agent. Folks' solution was to recommend that the women simply fold their organization into the Visiting Committee. This would solve Folks' problem by putting the State Charities Aid Association back in direct control of the Agency, but it completely ignored the possibility that these women might not want to dissolve an association they had only just established. Mrs. Crocker would later say that she had acquired a dislike for Folks at this meeting because of his apparent desire "to be the 'big it' of everything."<sup>36</sup>

In spite of their reservations, the women agreed to meet with the Visiting Committee to discuss a possible union. The meeting apparently did not go well, as it left the Nassau County Association members even more strongly opposed to any plan that meant the extinction of their Association. The State Charities Aid Association, still anxious to maintain control over the new agent, now suggested that the two organizations remain distinct but work together in the areas of outdoor relief and child welfare. The Nassau County Association again reluctantly agreed to pursue the idea.<sup>37</sup>

A committee made up of members of the Nassau County Association

and of the Local Visiting Committee was formed on February 13 to consider an alliance between the two organizations. The result was that each organization accepted into its membership those members of the other organization's committees on children and outdoor relief, thus creating joint committees with identical members, and three members of the Local Visiting Committee were appointed to the Association's Board of Managers. In this way a firm link was established between the two groups that left them distinctly separate. The new arrangement did not, however, eliminate conflict between the two groups.<sup>38</sup>

Mrs. Crocker was especially vocal in her opposition to the Local Visiting Committee. She told Ruth Taylor, the State Charities Aid Association's Assistant Superintendent of County Agencies, that the Committee "had never done anything and had amounted to nothing," and that it was "a great mistake" for the Nassau County Association to join with it, even in the limited areas of child welfare and outdoor relief. She was pleased that the meeting had ended with no formal union between the two organizations, and, in spite of being one of the Nassau County Association members who had been accepted for membership in the Local Visiting Committee, she flatly refused "to attend another one of those ridiculous meetings."<sup>39</sup>

The relationship between the Nassau County Association and the Local Visiting Committee finally having been settled, the Agency for Dependent Children now began to come to life. The agent, Mary Malcolm, who had been hired shortly after the original meeting with Folks in January, was now authorized to get an office and to begin her work. Mrs. Straight and Mrs. Cram volunteered to furnish the office, Mrs. Straight agreed to provide Malcolm with five dollars a week to use for an emergency fund, and a schedule was drawn up giving Malcolm access to various members' automobiles on stated dates and times. More contributions from the Nassau County Association came when Mrs. John T. Pratt offered to pay the rent for the Agent's office, to provide a typewriter and filing cases, and to pay the salary of a stenographer to assist the agent.<sup>40</sup>

Although officially the duties of the new agent were to "investigate the circumstances of all children publicly supported, or for whom public care is asked," the clear intent of the agents' work was to reduce local public expenditures on child welfare by moving as many dependent children as possible into less expensive living situations. The early reports of the Agent for Dependent Children highlighted cases of "children being returned to care of parents or relatives and of families that would be dependent upon the public charities being helped in such ways as to be able to help themselves." Mentally or physically handicapped children were moved into state supported institutions, children in costly

private orphanages were moved into less expensive private boarding homes, and children in boarding homes were moved into “free” homes—homes where the children were cared for without charge by parents, relatives, or families providing an adoptive home. The basic concept behind the work of the County Agencies for Dependent Children was spelled out by the State Charities Aid Association: “It is particularly important that while paying for the support of all children actually in need of public care, the County shall pay for support only so long as may be absolutely necessary and that it shall in no instance support children for whom other suitable care can be found.”<sup>41</sup>

On February 21, 1913, Mrs. Rumsey and Mrs. Straight of the Nassau County Association met with H. Ida Curry, the head of the State Charities Aid Association’s County Agencies Department, and her assistant, Ruth Taylor, to clarify the relationship between their two organizations and the Nassau County Agent for Dependent Children. Much to Curry and Taylor’s relief, Rumsey and Straight clearly stated that the Aid Association’s County Agencies Department “was to have such supervision of the Nassau County Agency as it had of all its other agencies. The Nassau County Agency, in short, was to be the S.C.A.A. Agency.” To further solidify the relationship, the Nassau County Association arranged to have the Agent’s salary and expenses paid by the State Charities Aid Association out of funds provided to it by the Nassau County Association, and agreed that the Nassau County Association’s name would not appear anywhere on the Agent’s stationery. A “case committee” consisting of sixteen women was put together to meet every two weeks to go over the cases handled by the Agent and to decide what action was to be taken.<sup>42</sup>

A few months later the Nassau County Association launched a new field of work when a Miss Orr was hired to do eugenics work. Like the Agent for Dependent Children’s work, the Association’s eugenics work was intended to reduce public expenditures by reducing the number of children being supported at public expense. Under the supervision of the Association’s Committee on Eugenics, the new agent was “to locate the families of the county that are producing grossly defective and wayward offspring” and to turn their names over to the Committee, which would then “take such steps as may seem wise and feasible to prevent them from continuing to produce children for the state and county to take care of.” These steps included involuntary sterilization, but since a 1912 New York state law that authorized sterilization of “feeble-minded criminals and other defectives” was being legally challenged, the Committee on Eugenics focused instead on having these “feeble-minded” persons committed to institutions.<sup>43</sup>

In June 1913 the Nassau County Association extended Orr’s

responsibilities as Eugenics Worker to take over some of the duties of the Agent for Dependent Children. Orr was now to “take up the first investigation of the cases of children now in institutions at the expense of Nassau County or the towns thereof.”<sup>44</sup> Unfortunately, the new distribution of duties did not work. Malcolm, the Agent for Dependent Children, spent most of her time investigating families referred to her by the local poor relief officials, and Orr, the Eugenics Worker, had little time to devote to the investigation of children. When she resigned six months later, all Orr had managed to do was to make an initial visit to children who had been committed to institutions. Her replacement, Leora G. Field, also spent little time on children’s matters. When the Aid Association’s representative tried to get Malcolm to make monthly reports on her progress with children, Malcolm replied that “since she had begun the outdoor relief work she could not drop it, and that it was perfectly impossible for her to do children’s work too.” After a review of Malcolm’s work, the Aid Association was forced to agree that she had “done virtually nothing on any children’s cases except those that have grown out of new cases that have come to her attention.” The Nassau County Association, however, was satisfied that Malcolm was meeting the demands of both jobs since “the work she was doing with families was preventing the commitment of children.” Statistics for 1914 seemed to support this contention. Over a six-month period extending from March 1 to September 30 Malcolm investigated more than eighty families that had applied for assistance but not one child was recommended for commitment as a public charge. The Aid Association was concerned that there was still no Agent working on moving the county’s dependent children out of costly institutions into less expensive boarding homes, into free adoptive homes, or back under the care of parents or relatives, but as long as the Nassau County Association was paying for the Agent and was satisfied there was little the Aid Association could do.<sup>45</sup>

The solution to the Aid Association’s problem arrived in November 1913 when Mrs. Frank L. Crocker of the Nassau County Association decided to provide one year of funding for another agent for dependent children in memory of her daughter Faith, who had died a few weeks earlier. Unfortunately for the State Charities Aid Association, Mrs. Crocker apparently still resented the efforts of Homer Folks and the Aid Association to take over the Nassau County Association earlier that year. Both Mrs. Crocker and her husband had decided that they wanted this agent to work solely for the Nassau County Association and to be “entirely independent of the S.C.A.A.” Ruth Taylor, the Assistant Superintendent of the State Charities Aid Association’s County Agencies Department, tried a number of different tactics to change Mrs. Crocker’s mind. One was for the Aid Association to present its own candidate for

the position, Florence Van Vranken, who was working as an Agent for Dependent Children in Newburgh, but who wanted to secure a position where she could live at home with her mother in Brooklyn. Apparently, someone – possibly Taylor, or more likely Mrs. Crocker’s cousin, who lived in Newburgh and knew Van Vranken personally – had managed to change Mrs. Crocker’s mind as she not only agreed to interview Van Vranken, but she also agreed to hire her as an official State Charities Aid Association Agent for Dependent Children.<sup>46</sup>

By the end of January 1914, the Nassau County Association was employing three agents supervising various aspects of Nassau County’s poor relief: Van Vranken, the new Agent for Dependent Children, was to “confine her attentions to the investigation of the circumstances of children now in institutions and boarding homes.” Malcolm would retain her title of Agent for Dependent Children but was to work for the Association’s Family Welfare Department in “the investigation of outdoor relief cases and of families needing rehabilitation in the county.” Field, the eugenics worker, would continue her eugenics work and also aid the Agent for Dependent Children by investigating “the cases of all children reported for placing in free homes so that their eugenics history may be filed with the child’s history.” The State Charities Aid Association was to supervise the two Agents for Dependent Children but not the Eugenics Worker, who was to remain under the supervision of the Nassau County Association.<sup>47</sup>

The Agents for Dependent Children settled into their work, investigating cases referred to them by the town and county poor relief officials. Van Vranken took over the work of the Local Visiting Committee’s Committee on Children, monitoring children in boarding homes, visiting them, ensuring they were being properly cared for, and moving them to new homes when they were not. New children approved for public support were placed in boarding homes or in the free homes Van Vranken solicited with advertisements about “homeless children” who were “alone in the world either orphaned or having only such relatives as are unfit or unable to care for them.” She investigated the circumstances of children placed in institutions and moved as many as possible into other situations that did not require county or town support. Some were placed in free homes, some were returned to parents who were financially able to support them, and those who qualified were sent to state institutions for “defective” children. In spite of Van Vranken’s efforts, town and county poor relief officials continued to commit children to institutions; as a result, the number of children being maintained in institutions at public expense remained fairly constant over the period January 1914 to October 1916. However, she was effective in increasing the percentage of dependent children being maintained in

boarding homes over the same period from fifteen percent to thirty-five percent.<sup>48</sup>

In 1915 the scope of Van Vranken's work was extended when she volunteered to act as probation officer for the justices of the peace in the town of Hempstead. Although Van Vranken received no salary for her work, she was to investigate homes, interview children, make recommendations as to the disposition of the children, receive weekly reports from children on probation, and periodically report back to the justices. By diligent casework with the child and his or her parents, the Agent hoped to circumvent placement in an institution that entailed public expense and keep the child at home. By April 1915 she had been assigned six children on probation, "only one of whom has failed and has been sent away."<sup>49</sup>

Malcolm's work with families also was intended to reduce public expenditures for relief by working with families to determine long-term solutions to their problems. A man who had been blinded in an on-the-job accident was taught to make rugs and baskets to support his family; an alcoholic was "given the cure" and was transformed into "an entirely different man" who was able to support his family. Like Van Vranken, Malcolm made use of the newspapers, soliciting orders for items that could be produced by "deserted widows as well as the wives of men who are out of employment through no fault of their own." The idea was to avoid giving direct relief in the form of money, fuel, clothing, or food, and instead to help the families to become self-supporting. Single mothers were another group that had to be supported at public expense when their families rejected them. To address the problem, Malcolm oversaw the establishment of the Nassau Cottage in 1915 to train these young women so that they could support themselves and their children by doing housework for "carefully chosen" families.<sup>50</sup>

The State Charities Aid Association was much more involved with its Agents for Dependent Children than it was with the Local Visiting Committee, which continued to visit the local almshouses, county jails, and hospitals. Representatives of the Aid Association met frequently with the Agents, either at the Association's headquarters or at the Agents' offices in Mineola, giving advice and providing guidance. All seemed to be going well when, in 1915, a new public relief program appeared on the scene that would once again leave the Aid Association without an Agent devoted to working with dependent children.<sup>51</sup>

### **Public/Private Cooperation: Mothers' Pensions**

On July 1, 1915, New York State inaugurated a new public relief program: the granting of widows' pensions. The first laws establishing widows' pensions were passed in 1911, and within ten years all but ten

states had enacted similar laws. These pensions reflected a growing consensus among child welfare experts that it was in the public's best interest to provide financial aid to mothers whose husbands had died and left the family without adequate means of support. Prior to the adoption of this new policy, mothers who had lost their husbands often were forced to give up their children for placement in homes or institutions at public expense so that, freed of her child caring responsibilities, the mother could pursue self-supporting work. Within a few years widows' pensions became mothers' pensions as the law was amended to extend aid to mothers whose husbands were in a state hospital or prison, who were permanently incapacitated, or who had deserted their families for at least five years. Eventually pensions were allowed to be paid to close relatives when both parents had died or when the father was absent and the mother was incapacitated.<sup>52</sup>

Nassau County was one of the first in the state to organize a Board of Child Welfare to administer the pensions. As provided in the new law, County Judge James Neimann appointed six Board members in August 1915. Since at least three of these appointees were members of the Nassau County Association, the Association was able to control this new form of public welfare. The chairman of the Board was John A. Albertson, and Mrs. Crocker, who had hired Van Vranken, was also on the Board. Not surprisingly, the Nassau County Association's Agent for Dependent Children, Florence Van Vranken, was hired to work part time as the Board's agent and investigator, with the understanding that she also was to remain in her position as Agent for Dependent Children. A stenographer, Alma Lyman, was hired to assist her. Half of the total salaries was to be paid by the Nassau County Association, with the other half to be covered by the county Board of Supervisors, who also paid the new agent's expenses.<sup>53</sup>

The pace of work at the Nassau County Board of Child Welfare was hectic. At the end of its first six months, fifty-five applications had been received, and each had to be investigated and a report prepared for presentation to the Board, who then decided on the specific awards. The first allowance was granted on November 20, 1915, and by June 30, 1916, thirty-eight families with 142 children were being supported by widows' pensions at an average rate of \$5.35 per week.<sup>54</sup>

The pace may have been too hectic for Van Vranken, since by July 1916 her stenographer, Lyman, had replaced her. Lyman stayed for two years before she left to get married and was replaced by Ella Howard Macauley in June 1918. In these first few years, the work of administering mothers' pensions consumed most of the agents' time. Although all three agents continually promised the State Charities Aid Association that they would "in a short time" be able to reduce the

mothers' pension work to part-time status and to turn the remainder of their time to their work as Agents for Dependent Children, it never happened. Finally, in January 1919, the Nassau County Association stopped paying for work that was not being performed, and the mothers' pension agent became a full time public employee.<sup>55</sup>

### **The End of the Nassau County Association**

In 1920 the Nassau County Association became involved in a scandal that permanently damaged its reputation. Its executive director, John N. Fleischer, had provided testimony that led to three prominent Nassau County men being charged with conspiracy to protect gambling. In the course of the trial, evidence was presented that Fleischer, a former lawyer, had been disbarred in Boston for misappropriation of his clients' funds. Thoroughly discredited and publicly humiliated, Fleischer resigned from his position at the Nassau County Association and was replaced by Frederick W. Olmsted, who promised that the Association would once again "do efficient work along its many lines of interest" as soon as he had succeeded on putting it back "on a fundamentally sound business basis." It was a tough job, for he would have to show that the Association's "efficient work" was still valid in spite of the shortcomings of its previous executive director.<sup>56</sup>

Fleischer had spearheaded the formation of the Welfare Federation of Nassau County in 1920 "for closer cooperation in work of the welfare of Nassau County, the removal of duplication of effort, the prevention of waste, and the most economical manner possible of administering the various activities." Early in 1921, Olmsted took over leadership of the Welfare Federation with a more limited goal: establishing a "community chest" for purposes of fund raising. Although the Welfare Federation's initial membership was limited to the local chapters of the American Red Cross, the Girl and Boy Scouts, and the New York League of Girls' Clubs, along with the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (which had at least four members of the Nassau County Association among its directors), the Wayside Home for Girls, a home for young women who had gone astray, and two Association committees, the Family Welfare Committee and the Poliomyelitis Committee, Olmsted went ahead with a planned fund drive in June 1922. The results were disappointing; only \$38,000 of the projected \$80,000 goal was raised. Nassau County apparently was not yet ready for a "community chest," at least not one led by the Nassau County Association.<sup>57</sup>

When the Association first announced the consolidated fund drive in June 1921, a lengthy article appeared in the *Daily Review of Nassau County* quoting extensively from a circular letter sent out by Olmsted and claiming that the Association was seeking "to perpetuate itself" by raising



funds using “the powerful names of those organizations with which it seeks to ally itself” and then diverting the money to its own use. Reminding its readers of the “recent debacle” involving Fleischer and the gambling trials, the newspaper charged that the Association’s real intent was “to reach out for more power and for absorbing gradually all other welfare agencies.” The Association took out an advertisement in the *Hempstead Sentinel* under the title “Not Seeking to Dominate County Welfare Work,” denying the charges and saying the only matter discussed so far “was whether or not a united request for finances was desirable.” In subsequent publicity the Association tried to make it clear that the Welfare Federation’s funds would be kept separate from the Association’s funds, saying “Not one dollar shall be spent directly or indirectly upon any form of civic work whatever,” and “no portions of the funds solicited will apply to the continuance of the civic investigations of the Nassau County Association.” Olmsted’s efforts were in vain; although he promised another fund drive, it never materialized.<sup>58</sup>

Olmsted now tried to repair the Association’s damaged reputation by focusing on county health matters. The Nassau County Association had been closely involved with the Nassau County Tuberculosis Hospital located in Plainview since it was established in 1920; it paid an agent to do tuberculosis field work, and it funded the Hospital’s Occupational Therapy Department. Now, in July 1922, the Association stepped up its contributions. It funded a “preventorium treatment” at a summer camp on the Hospital’s grounds. It was in the process of employing another agent “to devote her time to publicity and education” and was working to get a trained nutritionist to work in the schools. It established a Nassau Health Clinic at its headquarters to provide free chest examinations. This kind of volunteer work could hardly be criticized, but in 1923 another political altercation led to more negative publicity.<sup>59</sup>

This debacle involved the county’s new Engineering Department. Prior to 1921, the county had paid for engineering services on an as-needed fee basis. The Nassau County Association had complained that this inflated costs and had requested that the county establish an Engineering Department with a full time staff of engineers. The Association’s recommendation was adopted in 1922, but when engineering costs almost doubled the press blamed the Association for having “foisted on the county an engineering department that is so expensive that it should be abandoned.”<sup>60</sup>

As it turned out, the engineering department survived the fracas but the Nassau County Association did not. By 1923 the Association was forced to accept that it had become an outcast in Nassau County reform work. It spun off what it considered its two most valuable branches of work on the assumption that they “would receive wider community

support” if their work was divorced from the Association. The Family Welfare Department became the Family Welfare Association of Nassau County in March, and the Association’s Committee on Tuberculosis and Public Health was turned over to the State Charities Aid Association in October, along with \$3,700 from the Nassau County Association’s tuberculosis fund, several automobiles, and clinic and office equipment. Although the State Charities Aid Association announced, in an article acknowledging the donation, that the Nassau County Association took this action because it was “vigorously” involved in “a program of civic reform and county governmental reorganization,” in fact this would be its last official act. By the end of the year, without any fanfare or public pronouncement, it had ceased to exist.<sup>61</sup>

### **The End of the Nassau County Local Visiting Committee**

By the 1920s the Local Visiting Committee also was in a state of decline. Membership was dwindling, and those members who did actively contribute had lost much of their enthusiasm for the work. While members had given up visiting children in boarding homes when the second Agent for Dependent Children was hired, they continued their usual rounds of visitations to the Temporary Home for Children, the county jail, and the local almshouses (now referred to as “Homes for the Aged and Infirm”), but without direction from the State Charities Aid Association. In September 1921, the Chair of the Visiting Committee’s Executive Committee, Ellwood V. Titus, had to make four visits to the Association’s headquarters before he was finally able to locate someone who was willing to talk with him. To make matters worse, in 1925 the Children’s Home closed, ending what had been a significant part of the Committee’s work.<sup>62</sup>

Meanwhile, the State Charities Aid Association resumed its campaign to establish a county Agency for Dependent Children. The last Agent had ceased working in 1919, when the Nassau County Association had decided to stop funding the position. When a representative of the Aid Association, Ruby B. Carlton, began canvassing social reformers in Nassau County in 1926, the Association’s attitude toward the Local Visiting Committee was made clear. Carlton interviewed the Overseers of the Poor of Oyster Bay, North Hempstead, and Hempstead, the Assistant to the Overseers of the Poor in Hempstead, the county Superintendent of the Poor, and the Commissioner of Charities of the city of Long Beach. She also interviewed the county probation officer and his assistant, the Board of Child Welfare agent, the agent for the Family Welfare Association of Lawrence, Cedarhurst and Inwood, and board members of several of the child welfare organizations in the county. Finally, she interviewed Phoebe Willis of the Local Visiting Committee.

Willis had been a member of the Visiting Committee since 1874 and had held a number of high-ranking positions in the organization; she was at this time the Committee's secretary and treasurer. Carlton found Willis "a woman of the old school" who "had little understanding of the possibilities of social work among children" and concluded that Willis would be of little help convincing officials of the need for a trained social worker to work with the county's dependent children. To add insult to injury, she apparently already had decided this before the meeting, as she noted, "Visiting Mrs. Willis was more a matter of courtesy."<sup>63</sup>

The State Charities Aid Association's inquiries, however, went nowhere; meanwhile, since 1919 no one had been supervising the children who had been placed in institutions and boarding homes by the poor relief officials. Nowhere nearer to getting a trained social worker to do the work, the Association gave the Visiting Committee another chance. In response to a letter from the Committee asking how they might help with child welfare matters, H. Ida Curry, now Superintendent of County Children's Agencies for the State Charities Aid Association, appeared at the Visiting Committee's meeting in April 1927 to discuss the lack of centralized oversight of the county's various relief programs, especially with respect to the children who were being supported in institutions or boarding homes at the expense of the county or towns. This was evidently the kind of encouragement the Visiting Committee was looking for, as the Committee on Children once again began an active program of visiting children boarded in private homes at public expense.<sup>64</sup>

The Local Visiting Committee's work with children continued until a new State Public Welfare Law came into effect on 1 January 1930. As far as overall public relief was concerned, the new law changed little but names. The two town almshouses were now to be called "town homes," the Town Overseers of the Poor were renamed Town Welfare Officers, and the County Superintendent of the Poor was now the County Commissioner of Public Welfare, in charge of the new County Department of Public Welfare. While the new Town Welfare Officers remained responsible for supervising the two town homes and for granting relief to adults, all responsibility for the towns' and county's dependent children was transferred to a new Division of Child Care within the county's Department of Public Welfare. Although the new law did not establish a countywide system for all public welfare programs, the Division of Child Care at last achieved what the State Charities Aid Association had been pursuing since 1909 in Nassau County: centralized control of child welfare matters.<sup>65</sup>

The Visiting Committee was surprised to discover that they had no legal right to visit children in boarding homes as they had been doing this

since at least 1879, and they were not particularly interested in visiting the town homes. Disappointed, they sent a letter to the State Charities Aid Association asking them to send a representative to their next meeting to “suggest any activities that might make our continuance worthwhile.” Ida Curry again made an appearance, only to find that a mere sixteen members had bothered to show up for this crucial meeting. It was obvious that the organization had lost its momentum and focus. Fourteen of the sixteen members voted to disband the Local Visiting Committee on November 29, 1932, ending a long career of volunteer service on behalf of the county’s needy children.<sup>66</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Volunteer citizen organizations contributed greatly to Nassau County’s child welfare programs in the late nineteenth and early twentieth-centuries. Organizations like the State Charities Aid Association, the Local Visiting Committee, and the Nassau County Association insisted on the right of citizens to have a say in how public monies were expended, especially in child welfare programs. Today, the issue of “client confidentiality” often hinders similar oversight. Private groups that established active roles in public welfare programs in the past can perhaps provide us with positive models for ways to increase public accountability of child welfare programs and agencies in the future.

While both the Local Visiting Committee and the Nassau County Association ceased to exist in Nassau County, their experiences do provide some insights into how a future system of citizen oversight over child welfare programs might be instituted. First, the ultimate failure of both the Visiting Committee and the Nassau County Association points to the importance of strong leadership. In both groups, when the leadership lost its vision of what it was doing and why, volunteers and employees lost interest and the organization itself eventually drifted away. Second, we can learn from the State Charities Aid Association the importance of enlisting high profile, influential people to work for the cause, people who are not easily brushed aside or put off, and who can use their contacts to open doors that otherwise would be slammed shut. Finally, the concept of friendly visiting might be revisited. Denuded of its social control/class superiority aspects, friendly visiting could contribute to improving child welfare services.

metropolis. Later waves of migration eastward would merely confirm that identity.

## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Peter Dobkin Hall, "A Historical Overview of the Private Nonprofit Sector," in *The Nonprofit Sector*, ed. Walter W. Powell (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 4; Robert E. Cray, Jr., *Paupers and Poor Relief in New York City and its Rural Environs, 1700-1830* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988), 56-57; David M. Schneider, *The History of Public Welfare in New York State 1609-1866* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1938), 63, 187-191; David M. Schneider and Albert Deutsch, *The History of Public Welfare in New York State, 1867-1940* (Montclair, NJ: Patterson Smith, 1969), 20, 64-65.

<sup>2</sup> Lori D. Ginzberg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence: Morality, Politics, and Class in the Nineteenth-Century United States* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 108, 134, 142, 150-51, 159, 164; Judith Ann Giesberg, *Civil War Sisterhood: The U.S. Sanitary Commission and Women's Politics in Transition* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2000).

<sup>3</sup> Ginzberg, 190-93; Walter I. Trattner, "Louisa Lee Schuyler and the Founding of the State Charities Aid Association," *New York Historical Society Quarterly* 51 (July 1967): 233-48; Robert D. Cross, "The Philanthropic Contribution of Louisa Lee Schuyler," *Social Service Review* 35 (September 1961): 290-301.

<sup>4</sup> David M. Schneider, *The History of Public Welfare in New York State 1609-1866* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1938), 266; Roy Lubove, *The Professional Altruist: The Emergence of Social Work as a Career, 1880-1930* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1965; reprint, New York: Atheneum, 1973), 14; David M. Schneider and Albert Deutsch, *The History of Public Welfare in New York State, 1867-1940* (Montclair, NJ: Patterson Smith, 1969), 20-21

<sup>5</sup> Ginzberg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence*, 194-96; Schneider and Deutsch, *History of Public Welfare*, 21-22.

<sup>6</sup> Vincent F. Seyfried, *Queens, A Pictorial History* (Norfolk, VA: The Donning Company/Publishers, 1982), 15, 39; Gary McLendon, "100 Years of New York City," world wide web at

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[www.queenstribune.com/archives/featurearchive/feature98/02/index.htm](http://www.queenstribune.com/archives/featurearchive/feature98/02/index.htm); *Local Visiting Committee for the Public Institutions of Charities and for Correction in Queens County, State of New York: Address with Constitution and By-laws* (Jamaica, NY: Charles Welling, 1873), 2-3, in Box 2, Folder H, LVC Collection.

<sup>7</sup> Minute Book, vol. 1, meetings of June 21 1873 and July 31, 1873, Local Visiting Committee Records, Nassau County Museum Collection (L55.20), Long Island Studies Institute, Hofstra University, Hempstead, New York (hereafter cited as LVC Collection); *Laws of the State of New York Passed at the Ninety-Sixth Session of the Legislature* (Albany: Banks and Brothers, 1873), Chapter 571.

<sup>8</sup> Meeting of September 24, 1874, Minute Book, vol. 1; meeting of April 30, 1878, Minute Book, vol. 2; meeting of May 31, 1881, Minute Book, vol. 3; meeting of October 25, 1898, Minute Book, vol. 8; all in LVC Collection.

<sup>9</sup> Meetings of October 30, 1873, November 25, 1873, December 23, 1873, February 26, 1874, March 26, 1874, and July 30, 1874, Minute Book, vol. 1, LVC Collection; Clinton E. Metz, "Sarah Ann Baldwin Barnum," *Long Island Forum* (September 1984): 168-172.

<sup>10</sup> Meeting of March 25, 1878, Minute Book, vol. 2; "Annual Report of the Queens County Local Visiting Committee" in Minute Book, vol. 3, with meeting of January 27, 1880; "Annual Report of the Local Visiting Committee" in Minute Book, vol. 3, with meeting of January 25, 1881; "Ninth Annual Report of the Local Visiting Committee of Queens County," in Minute Book, vol. 3, with meeting of January 31, 1882; "Annual Report for 1887" in Minute Book, vol. 5; all in LVC Collection; *Proceedings of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Queens, For the Year 1874* (Jamaica, NY: Charles Welling, 1875) 24; *Proceedings of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Queens, For the Year 1876* (n.d., n.p.), 81.

<sup>11</sup> New York Bureau of Municipal Research, *Government of Nassau County, N.Y., Description of Organization and Functions* (Albany: J.B. Lyon Company, 1915), 20-21, 61-62, 72, 82.

<sup>12</sup> "Extracts from the Minutes of the Local Visiting Committee of Queens and Later Nassau County, 1873-1932," Box 2, Folder A, LVC Collection; Homer Folks, *Fifty Years—Their Real Meaning* (State Charities Aid Association, n.d., n.p.), 9; Meeting of September 24, 1874, Minute Book,

vol. 1, LVC Collection; *Laws of the State of New York Passed at the Ninety-Eighth Session of the Legislature* (Albany, NY: Hugh J. Hastings, 1875), Chapter 173, 150; *Laws of the State of New York Passed at the One Hundred and First Session of the Legislature* (Albany, NY: A. Bleecker Banks, 1878), Chapter 404, 483.

<sup>13</sup> Meetings of December 30, 1879, February 24, 1880, and October 26, 1880, Minute Book, vol. 3, LVC Collection; *Proceedings of the Board of Supervisors, of the County of Queens, For the Year 1879* (Jamaica, NY: Charles Welling, 1880), 188-189.

<sup>14</sup> Letter from Benjamin D. Hicks dated "8<sup>th</sup> Mo. 29<sup>th</sup>, 1901," in Box 1, Folder A, LVC Collection.

<sup>15</sup> Chapter 546, Laws of 1896. SCAA, *Thirty-second Annual Report of the State Charities Aid Association* (NY: n.d.) 130; Meeting of 28 July 1902, Minute Book, 8:22, LVC Collection.

<sup>16</sup> Meetings from November 28, 1876 to July 29, 1884 documented in Minute Book, vols. 2, 3 and 4, LVC Collection, discuss the presence and removal of children in various almshouses; Meetings of December 30, 1879, January 27, 1880, February 24, 1880, March 30, 1880, April 27, 1880, May 25, 1880, June 27, 1880, July 27, 1880, September 28, 1880, and October 25, 1881, Minute Book, vol. 3, LVC Collection; June 16, 1908, Minute Book, 8:83, LVC Collection; February 24, 1880 to July 27, 1880, Minute Book, vol. 3, LVC Collection.

<sup>17</sup> Meetings of May 29, June 26, and August 28, 1877, and April 30, and July 30, 1878, Minute Book, vol. 2, LVC Collection; Louisa Lee Schuyler to "My dear Miss Willetts," March 12, 1878, Box 1, Folder C, LVC Collection.

<sup>18</sup> "Temporary Home for Children," *Hempstead Inquirer*, May 8, 1885; Minute Book, 4:14, 25, LVC Collection; unsigned report dated October 1, 1892, Box 1, Folder C, LVC Collection.

<sup>19</sup> Unsigned report dated October 1, 1892, Box 1, Folder C, LVC Collection; *Annual Report of the State Board of Charities for the Year 1885*, in *Documents of the Senate of the State of New York, One Hundred and Ninth Session, 1886* (Albany: Weed Parsons and Company, 1886), 110-111; Annual Report for 1895, Minute Book, vol. 7, LVC Collection.

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<sup>20</sup> “Extracts from the Minutes of the Local Visiting Committee of Queens and Later Nassau County, 1873-1932,” Box 2, Folder A, LVC Collection; “A Home for the Orphans,” *Hempstead Inquirer*, August 8, 1884; “Temporary Home for Children,” *Hempstead Inquirer*, May 8, 1885. Visits by the Committee on Children to the Temporary Home from 1885 to 1924 can be found in Minute Books, vols. 5-10, LVC Collection.

<sup>21</sup> “Extracts from the Minutes;” Jean Spellman, “The Local Visiting Committee of Nassau County,” *The Nassau County Historical Journal* (Summer 1945): 25; Annual Report for 1895 and quarterly meeting of January 31, 1899, Minute Book, vol. 7, LVC Collection; report dated October 1, 1892, Box 1, Folder C, LVC Collection.

<sup>22</sup> Trattner, 91-103 and 233-52.

<sup>23</sup> Folks, 11; SCAA, *Twenty-Sixth Annual Report of the State Charities Aid Association* (New York, n.d.), 19-20; SCAA, “Thirty-sixth Annual Report of the State Charities Aid Association” in *Documents of the Senate of the State of New York, One Hundred and Thirty-Second Session, 1909* (Albany: J. B. Lyon Company, 1909), 27.

<sup>24</sup> SCAA, *Twenty-sixth Annual Report*, 20; meeting of January 29, 1895, Minute Book, vol. 6, and meetings of October 25, 1898 and January 31, 1899, Minute Book, vol. 7, LVC Collection.

<sup>25</sup> Meetings of January 31, and October 31, 1899 and July 31, 1900, Minute Book, vol. 7; Annual Report for 1887 in meeting of October 25, 1887, Minute Book, vol. 5; Annual Report for 1899 in meeting of October 31, 1899 and Annual Report for 1900 in meeting of 30 October 1900, Minute Book, vol. 7; all in LVC Collection. The Nassau County Local Visiting Committee Constitution can be found in Box 2, Folder A of the LVC Collection; Ruth Shackelford, “Institutional Poor Relief in Nassau County, 1899-1999” in *Nassau County: From Rural Hinterland to Suburban Metropolis*, ed. Joann P. Krieg and Natalie A. Naylor, (Interlaken, NY: Empire State Books, 2000), 79-80.

<sup>26</sup> Meeting of October 27, 1885; Meetings of April 28, and October 28, 1903. Minute Book, vols. 5 and 8, LVC Collection; Minutes of January 28, 1902 and January 27, 1903, Minute Book, vol. 8.

<sup>27</sup> State Charities Aid Association (hereafter abbreviated as SCAA), *Fortieth Annual Report to the State Board of Charities and Twentieth*



*Annual Report to the State Hospital Commission November 1, 1912* (Albany: The Brandow Printing Company, n.d.), 84.

<sup>28</sup> SCAA, *Thirty-Sixth Annual Report* (Albany: Brandow Printing Company, n.d.) 32; SCAA, *Fortieth Annual Report*, 84-85.

<sup>29</sup> SCAA, *Thirty-sixth Annual Report*, xx; SCAA, *Fortieth Annual Report*, 85; "Local Visiting Committee Annual Report 1908-1909," *Oyster Bay Guardian*, 19 November 1909. On the importance of "home rule," see Nassau County Village Officials Association, *1925-1943: Eighteen Years of Progress* (NY: Bruce Ellis Associates, n.d.), 16. Guide to the H. Ida Curry Collection, 1927-1965, Fray Angélico Chávez History Library, Santa Fe, New Mexico, "Biographical Note," world wide web [http://elibrary.unm.edu/oanm/NmSm/nmsm1%23ac284/nmsm1%23ac284\\_m1.html](http://elibrary.unm.edu/oanm/NmSm/nmsm1%23ac284/nmsm1%23ac284_m1.html).

<sup>30</sup> "Town Board Meeting," *Oyster Bay Guardian*, July 16, 1909; "Local Visiting Committee Annual Report 1908-1909," *Oyster Bay Guardian*, November 19, 1909; Minute Book, vol. 8:83-84, LVC Collection; Minute Book, vol. 8:102-103, 106-107, and 109, LVC Collection; "Minutes of the Town Board, Volume 5, April 17, 1909 to April 29, 1912," 107, Office of the Town Clerk, Town of Oyster Bay.

<sup>31</sup> "Minutes of the Town Board, Volume 5, April 17, 1909 to April 29, 1912," 106-8, Office of the Town Clerk, Town of Oyster Bay; meeting of 30 October 1894, Minute Book, vol. 6, LVC Collection; "Local Visiting Committee Annual Report, 1902," and "Local Visiting Committee Annual Report (1905)," Minute Book, 8:11, 48.

<sup>32</sup> "Minutes of the Town Board, Volume 5, April 17, 1909 to April 29, 1912," 109, Office of the Town Clerk, Town of Oyster Bay; State Communities Aid Association Archives, Box 12, County Public Welfare Committees, "Nassau County," 5, 27, New York State Library, Manuscripts and Special Collections (hereafter cited as SCAA, "Nassau County").

<sup>33</sup> Minute Book, 8:128, LVC Collection; *S.C.A.A. News* (February-March 1913), 2.

<sup>34</sup> Nassau County Association, *First Annual Report January 1914* (n.d., n.p.), 9; Edward J. Smits, *Nassau: Suburbia, U.S.A. The First Seventy-five Years of Nassau County, New York 1899 to 1974* (Friends of the Nassau County Museum, Garden City, NY: 1974), 65-67; John Whiteclay

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Chambers II, *The Tyranny of Change: America in the Progressive Era, 1900-1917* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2000).

<sup>35</sup> SCAA, "Nassau County," 1; "Nassau County Association," *S.C.A.A. News*, April 1913, 6; "Abstract of the Thirty-eighth Annual Report to the State Board of Charities of the State Charities Aid Association November 1, 1910," in *Documents of the Senate of the State of New York One Hundred and Thirty-fourth Session, 1911* (Albany, NY: J.B. Lyon Company, 1911) Vol. 19, No. 41, Part I, 685-686; "Local Visiting Committee 1913 Annual Report," Box 2, Folder H, LVC Collection.

<sup>36</sup> SCAA, "Nassau County," 29.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-2.

<sup>38</sup> SCAA, "Nassau County," 2, 7-8; Nassau County Association, *First Annual Report January 1914* (n.d., n.p.), 8; meeting of February 15, 1913, Minute Book, Vol. 9, LVC Collection.

<sup>39</sup> SCAA, "Nassau County," 4, 9

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 9-10.

<sup>41</sup> SCAA, *Forty-second Annual Report to the State Board of Charities and Twenty-Second Annual Report to the State Hospital Commission November 1, 1914* (Albany: Brandow Printing Company, n.d.), 60; meeting of January 27, 1914, Minute Book, vol. 9, LVC Collection; F. Van Vranken, "Report to Local Visiting Committee" and "Report Given at Meeting of Local Visiting Committee April 27th, 1915," Box 2, Folder B, LVC Collection; "County Agency for Dependent Children is War-Time Need of Every County," *S.C.A.A. News* 5:12 (Sept. 1917): 6.

<sup>42</sup> SCAA, "Nassau County," 10-11, 23-24.

<sup>43</sup> Nassau County Association, *First Annual Report January 1914* (n.d., n.p.), 17-18; *S.C.A.A. News*, May 1918, 8; SCAA, "Nassau County," 11, 13, 16.

<sup>44</sup> SCAA, "Nassau County," 16.

<sup>45</sup> SCAA, *Forty-second Annual Report to the State Board of Charities and Twenty-Second Annual Report to the State Hospital Commission November 1, 1914* (Albany: Brandow Printing Company, n.d.), 68-69; SCAA, "Nassau County," 16, 19, 23, 28.

- <sup>46</sup> SCAA, *Forty-second Annual Report*, 62; SCAA, "Nassau County," 28-31.
- <sup>47</sup> *S.C.A.A. News*, October 1914, 7; SCAA, "Nassau County," 31-32.
- <sup>48</sup> "Homeless Children," *Hempstead Sentinel*, October 8, and October 15, 1914; meetings of January 27, 1914, July 28, 1914, January 26, 1915, and October 31, 1916, Minute Book, vol. 9, LVC Collection; reports of Van Vranken to the Local Visiting Committee from October 1914 to October 1915 and undated report entitled "Current Events Connected With the Work for Dependent Children" in Box 2, Folder B, LVC Collection.
- <sup>49</sup> "Report Given at Meeting of Local Visiting Committee April 27<sup>th</sup>, 1915," Box 2, Folder B, LVC Collection; New York Bureau of Municipal Research, *Government*, 54.
- <sup>50</sup> "Aid Unemployed in Nassau Co.," *Hempstead Sentinel*, December 24, 1914; Shackelford, 87; "Accomplishing Good Work at Nassau Cottage Association," *Hempstead Sentinel*, February 22, 1917; Mary Malcolm "To the Members of the Local Visiting Committee," January 24, 1916, in Box 1, Folder A, LVC Collection; "Nassau Cottage Ass'n Decides to Dissolve," *Hempstead Sentinel*, October 24, 1918.
- <sup>51</sup> SCAA, "Nassau County," 32-37. On the activities of the Local Visiting Committee, see the minutes of July 27, 1915, October 26, 1915, and January 25, 1916, Minute Book, vol. 9, LVC Collection.
- <sup>52</sup> Grace Abbott, *The Child and the State*, 2 vols. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1938), 2:229, 262; *Fifty-first Annual Report of the State Board of Charities For the Year 1917* (n.d., n.p.), 107.
- <sup>53</sup> "Widow's Allowances," *Hempstead Sentinel*, August 5, 1915, p. 1; "Child Welfare Committee," *Hempstead Sentinel*, November 11, 1915, p. 1; *Laws of the State of New York Passed at the One Hundred and Thirty-eighth Session of the Legislature* (Albany: J.B. Lyon Company, 1915), Chapter 228, 690-94; *Proceedings of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Nassau for the Fiscal Year 1915* (Great Neck, NY: Record Print, n.d.), 1,106 and 1,493.
- <sup>54</sup> Report of County Agent dated 22 January 1916, Box 2, Folder B, LVC Collection; "Welfare Has Been Operating Six Months," *Hempstead Sentinel*, 5 May 1916; "Work of Child Welfare Board for First Year," *Hempstead Sentinel*, 5 October 1916.

<sup>55</sup> SCAA, "Nassau County," 37, 3, 44-46; "Report - Local Visiting Committee S.C.A.A. October 27, 1916," Box 2, Folder C, LVC Collection; *Proceedings of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Nassau for the Fiscal Year 1931* (Rockville Center, NY: Nassau Daily Review Print, n.d.), 23.

<sup>56</sup> SCAA, "Nassau County," 52.

<sup>57</sup> "Welfare Drive Begins June 10," *Hempstead Sentinel*, May 25, 1922; "Welfare Drive Starts Saturday," *Hempstead Sentinel*, June 8, 1922, 1; "To Renew Welfare Drive Next Fall," *Hempstead Sentinel*, August 10, 1922, 1; "Will Renew Welfare Drive in Early Fall," *Hempstead Sentinel*, August, 17 1922, 4; "One Drive for Welfare Funds," *Hempstead Sentinel*, September 14, 1922, 1; "A Great Step Forward in the County of Nassau," *Hempstead Sentinel*, November 28, 1922; SCAA, "Nassau County," 52.

<sup>58</sup> "Would Unite Welfare Bodies, Nassau Association in the Lead," *The Daily Review of Nassau County*, June 11, 1921; "Not Seeking to Dominate County Welfare Work," *Hempstead Sentinel*, June 16, 1921; "Welfare Drive Begins June 10," *Hempstead Sentinel*, May 25, 1922; "To Renew Welfare Drive Next Fall," *Hempstead Sentinel*, August 10, 1922.

<sup>59</sup> *Proceedings of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Nassau for the fiscal year 1919* (n.p.: Observer-Post Print, n.d.), 490; *Proceedings of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Nassau for the fiscal year 1922* (Glen Cove, NY: City Record Print, n.d.), 963; State Board of Charities, *Fifty-third Annual Report of the State Board of Charities For the Year 1919* (Albany, NY: J.B. Lyon Company, 1920), 195.

<sup>60</sup> "Has Reform Cost County Over \$40,000?" *Daily Review of Nassau County*, November 13, 1923; "County Engineering Department Not to be Abolished," *Daily Review*, November 28, 1923.

<sup>61</sup> "New Family Welfare Ass'n and Its Work," *Daily Review*, March 7, 1924; "County Committees Strengthen Local Organization," *S.C.A.A. News*, October 1923, 23; SCAA, "Nassau County," 58; The Nassau County Association was listed in the June 1, 1923 telephone directory but not in the 31 May 1924 directory. *Telephone Directory, Nassau County, L.I., June 1, 1923*; *Telephone Directory, Nassau County, L.I., May 31, 1924* (copies available in the Long Island Studies Institute, Hofstra University).

<sup>62</sup> “Annual Report for 1917,” Minute Book, vol. 9, LVC Collection; Minute Book, 10:43-160, LVC Collection; SCAA, “Nassau County,” 52. On dwindling membership, see Minute Book, 10:49, LVC Collection. The fate of the Children’s Home is discussed in the meeting of 25 April 1916, Minute Book, vol. 9 and in vol. 10:24, 59, 130, 140, LVC Collection; Florence Van Vranken to Anna Cornwall, 27 April 1916, Box 1, Folder C, LVC Collection.

<sup>63</sup> SCAA, “Nassau County,” 60-75; “Members of the Local Visiting Committee,” “1921 Committees of the Nassau County Local Visiting Committee,” and “Committees of the Nassau County Local Visiting Committee 1923,” in Box 2, Folder H, LVC Collection; H. Ida Curry to Miss P.P. Willis, February 19, 1929, Box 1, Folder A, LVC Collection.

<sup>64</sup> H. Ida Curry to Miss P. P. Willis, November 4, 1926, Box 2, Folder B, LVC Collection; Minute Book, vol. 10:163, LVC Collection; October 1927 and continued until the Visiting Committee disbanded in 1932 (Minute Book, vol. 10).

<sup>65</sup> *Laws of the State of New York Passed at the One Hundred and Fifty-second Session of the Legislature*, Chapter 565, 1149-93; Minute book, 10:194-95, LVC Collection; Josef J. Hayes, *The Department of Public Welfare of Nassau County, New York During the Years 1938-1958, A History* (n.p., n.d.), 7, 32; “Goldsmith Named as Town Welfare Office by Board,” *Hempstead Sentinel*, December 5, 1929; Hayes, 21-25.

<sup>66</sup> Minute Book, 10:232, 236, 241-244, LVC Collection; “Nassau County,” 83-84; Meeting of October 28, 1879, Minute Book, vol. 3, LVC Collection.

## **LESSONS FROM LONG ISLAND: PUBLIC HEALTH SCIENCE AND AGRICULTURAL TRADE**

*Justin Kastner, Douglas Powell, Jason Ackelson,  
Terry Crowley, and Karen Huff*

*This article unveils Long Island's place in the historical relationship between the United States and Canada in the area of public health science and agricultural trade. In the nineteenth century transatlantic world, British leaders viewed North America as a source of affordable food, including livestock imported and slaughtered for meat within Britain. However, during the winter of 1878-1879 the cattle disease pleuro-pneumonia threatened this burgeoning trade.*

### **The Transatlantic Livestock Trade**

On March 14, 1878, representatives of Great Britain's port city of Liverpool paid visit to the Duke of Richmond, Lord President of the Privy Council. The party, including Liverpool's mayor, sought to persuade Richmond on a number of points regarding legislation then under consideration in the British Parliament. After reminding Richmond of the importance to Liverpool of the live cattle trade, the mayor argued that existing trade regulations were sufficient to guard against animal disease, that the majority of Liverpool's imports were disease free by virtue of being from North America, that proposals for the immediate slaughter of all imported cattle were unnecessarily rigid, and that the Privy Council should continue to enjoy flexibility in deciding from which countries live cattle could be freely imported.<sup>1</sup>

At issue was a Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill, which proposed a fundamental shift in British agricultural trade policy. Previously, the unhindered importation of livestock had been the norm at British ports, and import restrictions were applied only to livestock from specifically "scheduled" countries. Scheduled countries were those where particular animal diseases were known to be endemic or where outbreaks had recently occurred. Livestock from scheduled countries had to be slaughtered at the port of entry immediately (by rule, within ten days). Among the livestock ailments the discovery of which might compel the Privy Council to "schedule" a country was a lung disease in cattle: pleuro-pneumonia. Pleuro-pneumonia boasted a high mortality rate and had posed a menacing threat to dairymen and livestock owners ever since its importation into Britain in 1840. Along with foot and mouth disease and other scourges, pleuro-pneumonia had plagued British livestock during the 1860s and 1870s. Because animals from scheduled countries were slaughtered upon importation and sold as meat at the port, and

because most continental European countries were in fact scheduled during the 1870s, the lucrative business of importing European “store cattle” for inland fattening and slaughter was declining. The 1878 Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill proposed to accelerate this trend by making immediate slaughter a general rule rather than an exception.<sup>2</sup>

The contemplated legislation carried important implications for North American exporters of livestock. As of March 1878, both the U.S. and Canada had avoided scheduled status, and transatlantic commerce in North American “store cattle” had expanded as the British government scheduled continental European countries. Just a few months earlier, Britain had looked to North American live cattle supplies after suspending imports from eastern Europe because of an 1877 pleuro-pneumonia outbreak. In late 1877, a London based agent for Canada's Department of Agriculture could report that it was “hardly possible to exaggerate the growing importance of the trade in cattle and meat imported from Canada.”<sup>3</sup> By 1878, and even as the Liverpool delegation paid visit to Richmond, U.S. cattle imports, too, were on the rise. Those involved in the transatlantic livestock trade worried that the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill would require the immediate slaughter of U.S. and Canadian cattle. Such a policy, they understood, would bring an end to the lucrative store-cattle trade. Immediate slaughter, they also feared, would compromise sale prices, particularly in overstocked markets. Appealing to prevailing economic interests, North American exporters and British salesmen argued that any restrictions on live importation would also reduce Britain's supply of meat and raise food prices. This argument resonated in Britain, where economic leaders were convinced that importing food from the U.S. and Canada was an essential plank in Britain's larger commitment to free trade. Generally loyal to free trade principles, Britain was increasingly dependent upon American agriculture and the transatlantic livestock and meat trade. This economic dependence rendered controversial the question of subjecting American and Canadian livestock imports to the immediate slaughter provision associated with the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill.<sup>4</sup>

Amidst such controversy, Richmond referred questions about North American store cattle to a Select Committee in Parliament. During the next several months, public debate ensued. Richmond, a staunch advocate for the agricultural interest in Great Britain, stressed the importance of the immediate slaughter restriction, if not for North American cattle, then certainly for European. Britain's Central Chamber of Agriculture agreed, lest “an attempt be made to impose a stringent sanitary regime upon the husbandry of the country without the indispensable safeguard at the ports.”<sup>5</sup> Indeed, the fact that British livestock farmers were still the major providers of Britain's meat was a

compelling reason for strict import rules. However, reports of the slaughter of infected animals from abroad had become routine and seemed to affirm the existing policy whereby the Privy Council used discretion in scheduling countries. One writer to *The Times* noted that there were only five unscheduled countries, and that their animals were still subject to inspection before admission inland. The writer argued that regulatory discretion by the Privy Council was “acting like a most efficient sieve” and that “the protection against foreign disease so passionately insisted upon does already exist.”<sup>6</sup> *The Economist* contended that the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill did little to control domestic sources of disease and feared discrimination against North American cattle supplies, upon which Britain was increasingly dependent.<sup>7</sup>

After making amendments, Parliament adopted the Bill, which came into force on October 1, 1878. The Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act 1878 made restricted entry into Britain the rule, thereby reversing the previous policy of free importation being the norm. However, free importation was provided for certain countries under conditions subject to Privy Council review. Immediately, U.S. diplomats were told that the importation of American livestock into Britain could continue without immediate slaughter, but only if diseases were not detected among them and only if a government health certificate accompanied shipments. Meanwhile, scientists, diplomats, and newspaper correspondents speculated if U.S. animals would continue to be exempted from compulsory slaughter.<sup>8</sup> There were doubts, and these doubts were about to be confirmed on Long Island.

### **Pleuro-pneumonia on Long Island?**

George Fleming, a veterinarian who frequently took it upon himself to write on behalf of the British veterinary profession, had already argued the case against the free importation of live U.S. animals:

contagious pleuro-pneumonia has for years been known to linger [in the U.S.], and the recent development of the new trade has given it an extension, which it had not before, and will soon render it a widely prevalent scourge to that country. There is, therefore, no reason whatever why the [United] States should not be treated as a scheduled country.<sup>9</sup>

Fleming's warnings echoed those of James Law, a veterinary professor at New York's Cornell University who had previously taught in Britain. In a report noticed by both the American and British



governments, Law explained that pleuro-pneumonia existed along the eastern seaboard: in eastern New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. The U.S. government, Law argued, was “asleep over a smouldering volcano” and needed regulations to suppress the insidious disease.<sup>10</sup> In his report, Law referred to an 1871 study by his former colleague John Gamgee who, among other things, had traced the epidemiological history of pleuro-pneumonia in the U.S. Gamgee had discovered that while the western states had avoided the scourge, several eastern states were home to pleuro-pneumonia. More troubling than Fleming's, Law's, and Gamgee's reports were recent episodes of disease; in the summer and autumn of 1878, there were supposedly outbreaks of pleuro-pneumonia in the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia, New Jersey, and New York.<sup>11</sup>

Long Island in particular received unwanted attention. Positioned on the eastern seaboard, Long Island was a likely geographical portal through which animal diseases might enter the U.S. Moreover, the city of Brooklyn was replete with the disease, attracting filth typical of the Gilded Age in America - precisely the kind of urban environment likely to cultivate pleuro-pneumonic cattle. Ever since 1793, when the U.S. Congress relaxed tariffs on imports of breeding stock, the introduction of diseases from Europe into America had been a problem. Interestingly, if not ironically, pleuro-pneumonia appears to have taken root on Long Island in 1843. From 1843 onwards, pleuro-pneumonia most likely was endemic in certain Brooklyn locales, repeatedly threatening herds on Long Island. In a March 1878 message to agricultural leaders, Professor Law rejoiced that pleuro-pneumonia had not spread westward from endemic pockets such as Long Island; but he warned against complacency.<sup>12</sup>

### **A Canadian Veterinarian's Exposé**

During the early winter of 1878-1879, shipments of American and Canadian livestock continued to arrive into British ports in good condition, but the specter of immediate slaughter still loomed as reports of pleuro-pneumonia on Long Island and elsewhere persisted. On January 1, 1879, Richmond, still Lord President of the Privy Council, and Professor George Brown, head of the Privy Council Veterinary Department, intensified enforcement of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act. Two weeks later, Brown received word, from the Privy Council inspector for Liverpool, that a Canadian cow showing signs of pleuro-pneumonia had been slaughtered upon importation. The inspector excised a diseased portion of a lung in the slaughtered animal and forwarded it to Professor Brown in London. The sample signaled

pleuro-pneumonia, but Brown wanted a second opinion. Aware that Canada would vehemently contest the diagnosis, Brown circulated the lung sample among at least seven other veterinarians, all of who concurred that it was in fact pleuro-pneumonia. Later, Brown learned that the Canadian animal, while originally shipped from Quebec, was part of a cargo from the U.S. Coupled with the recent reports of pleuro-pneumonia in America, the revelation served to absolve Canada - and legitimize growing suspicions of American cattle shipments. In view of the United States' crumbling animal disease reputation, veterinarians urged the U.S. Commissioner of Agriculture, William G. Le Duc, to persuade Congress to pass legislation for the purchase and slaughter of animals infected with or exposed to pleuro-pneumonia.<sup>13</sup>

About that same time, Commissioner Le Duc was interviewed by Duncan McEachran, a Canadian veterinary professor on a "confidential mission" to investigate pleuro-pneumonia along the U.S. eastern seaboard.<sup>14</sup> McEachran, founder of the Montreal Veterinary College, was one of Canada's pioneers in both veterinary education and regulation. After their meeting, McEachran persuaded one of Le Duc's veterinary colleagues, Professor J.W. Gadsden of Philadelphia, to accompany him to Long Island. On January 24<sup>th</sup>, McEachran and Gadsden covertly entered a dairy near Brooklyn, where they uncovered several cases of pleuro-pneumonia. A January 1879 letter from Professor Gadsden to a British official tells the interesting episode:

134, North 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Philadelphia, 28 January 1879.  
Knowing you wish all the information respecting contagious diseases of cattle, I send you a report of my examination of some with Professor Dr. McEachran, the Veterinary Inspector of Canada, who was sent by his Government to investigate it, and report at once . . . I started with him on the 24<sup>th</sup> to New York to find out the truth of the report that a contagious disease [pleuro-pneumonia] was prevalent on Long Island. We found very many cases of contagious pleuro-pneumonia in a large byre, or cow house, containing about 800 cows (all in a filthy condition), at Williamsburg, near Brooklyn. This large cow house adjoins the distillery of Gaff, Flieschman & Co., where they were fed on hot swill and hay, to force the milk. This place is a regular pest house for the disease . . . It is quite impossible for me to inform you how many of these 800 cows have the disease at the present time, but I should

think from what I saw that several hundred have it now, and it is only a question of time for all the others to take it. The men would not allow us to examine many of them in one part; we found very few healthy cows there. We made a post-mortem examination of the lungs of one of the cows that had this disease in the last stage, which leaves no doubt of its character, as well as the pathological anatomy of this malady was present (one lung was very heavy and quite solid). Just before the cows die, they are killed and sent into New York market as good beef (at night).

From inquiry made by us from cattle men and veterinary surgeons in Brooklyn, we have no doubt that this disease is prevalent in many parts of Long Island, as these diseased cows from Williamsburg are often sent away alive to other parts of the island.<sup>15</sup>

Upon being discovered by personnel at the Long Island dairy, McEachran supposedly “narrowly escaped personal violence.”<sup>16</sup> McEachran’s clandestine investigation, now uncovered, had aroused the fury of dairymen. More importantly, however, it aroused the activism of U.S. public health scientists.<sup>17</sup>

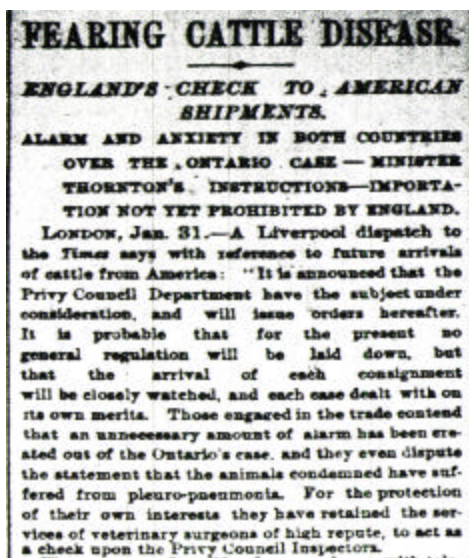
Dr. Gadsden, who had accompanied McEachran to Long Island, immediately joined the chorus of veterinarians urging Commissioner Le Duc to adopt new animal disease regulations. On January 29, 1879, he wrote to Le Duc:

This disease is very prevalent within a few miles of Brooklyn, and has been for some time. Cannot you, sir, try and stamp it out? I am afraid if it spread from there the English Government will not receive any cattle from our ports, as they have a law ready to put into force as soon as they are satisfied this or any contagious disease exists in cattle.<sup>18</sup>

Two days later, Le Duc secured an opportunity, before the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, to beg for regulatory help. Unfortunately, it was already too late. Earlier in January, the steamship Ontario, loaded with 265 cattle, had left Portland, Maine. The shipment was comprised of mostly American but also Canadian cattle. On Sunday, January 26, the Ontario arrived at Liverpool. Approximately

199 cattle landed at the port, though two were dead. The Privy Council inspector examined the lungs of one of the dead carcasses and detected pleuro-pneumonia. Portions of the diseased lungs were sent to the Privy Council Veterinary Department in London, where the diagnosis was confirmed. Soon after, inspectors noticed that a considerable number of the cattle had respiratory inflammations as a result of exposure to cold, and pleuro-pneumonia was observed in the lungs of twelve animals.<sup>19</sup>

The discovery of pleuro-pneumonia among the Ontario shipment had immediate implications. On Thursday, January 30, the British Foreign Secretary, Lord Salisbury, announced that, on account of detecting pleuro-pneumonia among the Ontario cargo, the British government was reconsidering its exemption of U.S. cattle from immediate slaughter.<sup>20</sup> On Saturday, February 1, Richmond received British agricultural representatives urging the immediate slaughter of American cattle,<sup>21</sup> and page five of *The New York Times* carried the following headline:



"Fearing Cattle Disease," *The New York Times*, February 1, 1879, 5.

The diagnosis of pleuro-pneumonia in the Ontario shipment accelerated the unraveling of America's animal disease reputation. Continued exemption of U.S. cattle would require especially compelling arguments; U.S. exporters and diplomats tried a few, with

New York shipping mogul Timothy Eastman leading the charge. Eastman conceded that pleuro-pneumonia existed in certain locales along the American east coast and Canada, but he doubted the diagnosis of pleuro-pneumonia on the Ontario shipment a contention that would be repeated again and again. Eastman argued that pleuro-pneumonia was entirely confined to eastern dairies - such as the one discovered by McEachran on Long Island - and did not threaten export cattle, which were always sourced from the western states. Eastman presented this argument to E.M. Archibald, the British Consul General in New York City. Archibald then investigated whether disease free export cattle might be exposed to pleuro-pneumonia at eastern ports just prior to shipment.<sup>22</sup>

After reviewing Professor McEachran's report citing pleuro-pneumonia in a dairy on the outskirts of Brooklyn, Archibald told Lord Salisbury that cattle from this dairy were frequently sent to other parts of Long Island. Therefore, Archibald argued, there was indeed the "possibility of contagion affecting western cattle shipped from this port."<sup>23</sup> Statements by Dr. A. Liautard, Dean of the American Veterinary College in New York and editor of the recently launched *American Veterinary Review*, corroborated Archibald's concerns. Liautard wrote to Commissioner Le Duc, lamenting the absence of veterinary inspectors on Long Island to prevent the spread of pleuro-pneumonia to export cattle. On February 4, Commissioner Le Duc conceded that as long as places like Long Island were infected, the U.S. was in a poor negotiating position when it came to the transatlantic trade dispute over pleuro-pneumonia. In late February 1879, the British Privy Council formally scheduled the U.S., and the key requirement of immediate slaughter came into force. Canadian authorities, acting to protect their country's piece of the transatlantic store cattle trade, immediately prohibited imports of U.S. cattle.<sup>24</sup>

## **Epilogue**

The investigation that occurred on Long Island in January 1879 was in many ways a microcosm of the broader U.S.-Canadian bilateral relationship. McEachran's exposé is but one episode in a longer series of similar U.S.-Canadian conflicts: throughout their shared history, Canadian and American officials have been quick to identify security concerns in each other's countries. When Professor McEachran brought attention to the animal disease problems in the dairy on Long Island, he not only was provoking dairy farmers but also contributing to an historical pattern of U.S.-Canadian relations. Indeed, cross border accusations about health and security have been long standing items on the North American agenda. Consider, for example, the following two

accusatory quotes, the first by another Canadian veterinarian during the nineteenth century squabble over pleuro-pneumonia, the second by an American politician a year before the recent terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001:

Along our southern frontier lies an infected country. True, the [U.S.] West as yet claims exemption [from the cattle disease at issue, pleuro-pneumonia], but this fact has not been established by proper veterinary inspection.<sup>25</sup>

The December arrest of Ahmed Ressam as he attempted to enter the U.S. from Canada with hundreds of pounds of sophisticated bomb-making materials was a loud wake-up call.<sup>26</sup>

Despite such finger pointing the U.S. and Canada have persisted as each other's most important trading partner, and the transnational movement of people and goods has continued relatively unabated. This movement is not new. In agriculture, convenient cross border trading of livestock, goods, and technology has been a key feature of U.S.-Canadian commerce, both before and since Canadian Confederation. Thus, during the trade dispute over pleuro-pneumonia, this important historical reality emerged: despite the ire of the U.S. being aroused by McEachran's disease exposé on Long Island, and despite Canada initially curtailing livestock imports from the U.S., North American trade and cooperation would eventually improve.<sup>27</sup>

Britain never yielded in its immediate slaughter requirement for American cattle. For the remainder of the nineteenth century, the U.S. challenged Britain's immediate-slaughter policy. More significant, however, was progress made in America to control pleuro-pneumonia. The U.S. government wisely accepted a reality: as long as the disease existed anywhere in the U.S., even if confined to certain eastern dairies, American cattle would continue to be slaughtered upon importation at British ports of entry. This recognition, along with a growing appreciation of the risks posed by pleuro-pneumonia, prompted regulatory action in America. Improved disease control legislation, federal appropriations for the purchase and destruction of diseased animals, and state cooperation fostered the eradication of pleuro-pneumonia in America by 1892.<sup>28</sup>

Immediately after Britain scheduled the U.S., Canada had prohibited imports of American cattle to protect its interests in the transatlantic livestock trade. This policy, however, came to cause problems for both

American and Canadian interests. The prohibition discouraged cattle trafficking through Detroit, Port Huron, and Buffalo, and practically suspended the shipment of cattle, on the Grand Trunk Railway, from Port Huron to the Atlantic coast for export to Britain. By March 1880, U.S. and Canadian officials were brainstorming solutions. Seeking to resume its role as an entrepôt for U.S. livestock and yet still retain its disease-free status, Canada began to discuss with Britain a concession whereby American cattle would be permitted transport through Canada from one American port (e.g., Detroit) to another (e.g., Buffalo). As it turned out, U.S.-Canadian trade policy further coalesced, as Canada found itself in a pleuro-pneumonia situation identical to the U.S.; in the autumn of 1892 a herd of Canadian store cattle was landed at Dundee, Scotland, and an animal in the lot was diagnosed with pleuro-pneumonia. Britain swiftly declared that Canadian cattle must join American cattle and be subject to immediate slaughter.<sup>29</sup>

After instituting sophisticated animal disease controls, Canada and the U.S. together lobbied until the end of the century for removal of Great Britain's immediate slaughter provision. For both the U.S. and Canada, resolution of the transatlantic livestock trade dispute would be delayed until the arrival of new technological and economic realities. Courtesy of improving refrigeration capabilities on steamers, transatlantic shipping of fresh beef would eventually provide an alternative to live-cattle transatlantic enterprises. The dispute was finally "resolved" when, after 1900, increasing demand for beef in North America made the British market less critical for North American traders. By 1914, the transatlantic cattle and meat had practically waned into extinction, carrying the dispute with it.<sup>30</sup>

Today, the powerful economic forces of free trade, underpinned by globalization and the North American Free Trade Agreement, push for an ever more open U.S.-Canadian border. At the same time, and not unlike the situation in the late nineteenth century, security concerns about animal disease and food safety, among other issues, have prompted caution. This caution, in turn, has spawned pressure from some quarters for more restrictive border security initiatives, particularly in terms of anti-terrorism and biosecurity measures. This situation has resulted in a somewhat intractable trade/security tension: how can the vital cross border flow of goods, people, and animals - many of which depend on a speedy crossing of the frontier - be maintained under a tighter border control regime? More than 100 million people cross the U.S.-Canadian frontier each year. Canada is the number one trading partner of the U.S., accounting for \$441.5 billion worth of trade in 2003. Renewed devotion to economic security and the safety of citizens, meanwhile, has spawned

increased attention to not only terrorism but also endemic risks facing agricultural and food resources.<sup>31</sup>



Duncan McNab McEachran, Canadian veterinary professor who investigated pleuro-pneumonia in a Brooklyn dairy in 1879. Photo courtesy of the Kansas State University College of Veterinary Medicine Library, c. 1930.

Salient among these risks is that of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), or mad cow disease. Since its discovery in Canada in May 2003, and in the U.S. in December 2003, BSE has frustrated U.S.-Canadian agricultural trade relations. As U.S. and



Canadian public health and trade officials grapple with the BSE issue, they would be well served to be mindful of the lessons of history: that disease - and security related issues need not spell doom for agricultural trade and cooperation within North America.<sup>32</sup>

Today, visitors to Long Island can contemplate the region's ties to the livestock industry generally and the nineteenth century trade dispute in particular. At Theodore Roosevelt County Park, formerly Montauk County Park, cattle raising continues, and on nearby Plum Island contagious animal diseases such as pleuro-pneumonia continue to receive scrutiny.<sup>33</sup>

## NOTES

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<sup>2</sup> Richard Perren, *The Meat Trade in Britain 1840-1914*, ed. F.M.L. Thompson, *Studies in Economic History* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1978), 109-11; S.A. Hall, "The Stimulus for the Statutory Control of Animal Diseases in Great Britain in the Nineteenth Century," *Veterinary History* 6 (1976): 3-12; Ken McCarron, *Meat at Woodside: The Birkenhead Livestock Trade 1878-1981* (Birkenhead: Merseyside Port Folios and the National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, 1991), 19; Duckham and Brown, 262; J.R. Fisher, "The Economic Effects of Cattle Disease in Britain and Its Containment, 1850-1900," *Agricultural History* 54 (1980): 278-294.

<sup>3</sup> Fred J. Dore, "Report of the London Agent, England," in *Report of the Minister of Agriculture for the Dominion of Canada for the Calendar Year 1876* (Ottawa: Department of Agriculture, 1877), 128.

<sup>4</sup> Margaret Derry, *Ontario's Cattle Kingdom: Purebred Breeders and Their World, 1870-1920* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 60-61; 2nd Session 46th Congress, "House Ex. Doc. 53: Pleuro-

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<sup>5</sup> John Algernon Clarke, "Letter to the Editor of 29 June," *The Times*, July 1, 1878, 11.

<sup>6</sup> C.B., "Letter to the Editor of 29 June," *The Times*, July 1, 1878, 11.

<sup>7</sup> "The Importation of Foreign Cattle"; Duckham and Brown, 274; J.K. Fowler, "Letter to the Editor Regarding the Cattle Diseases Bill," *The Times*, June 27, 1878, 8; George Fleming, "Letter to the Editor of 27 June," *The Times*, July 1, 1878, 11; C. Gocher, "Letter to the Editor," *The Times*, July 1, 1878, 11; "Daily Post Clipping of May 17th," in *Cattle Trade Accommodation (General) Worked-up Papers, Volume 1* (Liverpool: Mersey Docks and Harbour Board & Merseyside Maritime Museum Archives, 1878); J.H.D., "Texas Live Stock: An Englishman's Opinion of Its Value for Exportation," *The New York Times*, August 14, 1878, 3; "The Cattle Diseases Bill," *The Times*, June 26, 1878, 11; Sanders, 130; Perren, 118-23; "Cattle Disease," *The Times*, April 10, 1878, 11; "The Cattle Disease Bill," *The Economist*, June 29, 1878, 764; "Our Foreign Food Supplies," *The Economist*, July 20, 1878, 854.

<sup>8</sup> Duckham and Brown, 274; *The Times*, December 7, 1878, 9; Perren, 113; Fred Wilbur Powell, *The Bureau of Animal Industry: Its History, Activities and Organization*, ed. Institute for Government Research, *Service Monographs of the United States Government* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1927), 5, "Diplomatic Correspondence Paper No. 219: Mr. Seward to Sir Edward Thornton, October 25, 1878," *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States* (1878), 356-57.

<sup>9</sup> Fleming, 11.

<sup>10</sup> British House of Commons, "Correspondence Connected with the Detection of Pleuro-Pneumonia among Cattle Landed in Great Britain from the United States of America," *Sessional Papers* LVIII (1878-1879): 349-64.

<sup>11</sup> Iain Pattison, *The British Veterinary Profession, 1791-1948* (London: J.A. Allen, 1984), 73, 121; 2nd Session 45th Congress, "Senate Ex. Doc.

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<sup>12</sup> "Report Of The Sanitary Committee On The Principal Causes of the Excessive Mortality in Brooklyn, Presented Jan. 8, 1874," *Report of the Broad Health of the City of Brooklyn, May 1873-January, 1875* (New York, 1876), 39-46, in James E. Bunce and Richard P. Harmond, *Long Island as America: A Documentary History to 1896, Empire State Historical Publications Series* (Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press Corp., 1977), 146-47; Powell, 1-2; Alexandra Cella, "An Overview of Plum Island: History, Research and Effects on Long Island," *Long Island Historical Journal* 16(2004): 176-81; Law, 14, 55-67.

<sup>13</sup> "American Cattle Trade," *The Times*, December 4, 1878, 9 "Cattle from Canada," *The Times*, November 21, 1878, 10; Extract from 1879 Annual Report of the Veterinary Department of the Privy Council Office of Great Britain in 3rd Session 46th Congress, "Senate Ex. Doc. 5: Documents...Relative to Contagious Diseases of Cattle," *U.S. Serial Set 1* (1880): 5, 17, 20; "The Foreign Animals Order," *The Times*, December 7, 1878, 11; letter of January 16, 1879, from Professor F.S. Billings to U.S. Agriculture Commissioner William G. Le Duc, cited in 3rd Session 45th Congress, "Senate Misc. Doc. 71: Information On...Pleuro-Pneumonia among Cattle," *U.S. Serial Set 1* (1879): 3-4.

<sup>14</sup> "The British consul at Philadelphia referred to McEachran's investigation as a "confidential mission." British House of Commons, 351.

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<sup>15</sup> Rendition of letter from Gadsden to George Crump, British consul at Philadelphia, 352.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 351.

<sup>17</sup> F. Eugene Gattinger, *A Century of Challenge: A History of the Ontario Veterinary College* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962), 3, 25-27; C.A.V. Barker and T.A. Crowley, *One Voice: A History of the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association* (Ottawa: Canadian Veterinary Medical Association, 1989), 5-6; Law, 67; 3rd Session 45th Congress, "Senate Misc. Doc. 71," 4.

<sup>18</sup> Gadsden to Le Duc, in Gattinger, 4.

<sup>19</sup> "Fearing Cattle Disease," *The New York Times*, February 1, 1879, 5; 3rd Session 46th Congress, "Senate Ex. Doc. 5," 18, 23-25; British House of Commons, 350, 53; 3rd Session 45th Congress, "Senate Misc. Doc. 71," 4-5; 2nd Session 46th Congress, "House Ex. Doc. 53," 3-4; "Docks & Quays Agenda: Letter from Messrs Flinn Main & Montgomery of January 29th," in *Cattle Trade Accommodation (General) Worked-up Papers, Volume 1* (Liverpool: Mersey Docks and Harbour Board & Merseyside Maritime Museum Archives, 1879).

<sup>20</sup> British House of Commons, 349-50.

<sup>21</sup> "Fearing the Cattle Disease," *The New York Times*, February 4, 1879, 5.

<sup>22</sup> British House of Commons, 353; "Fearing Cattle Disease," 5. For the remainder of the century, British, Canadian, and American veterinarians would endlessly debate the accuracy of the pleuro-pneumonia diagnoses. For a multimedia presentation of the diagnosis-dispute drama, see the online video by Christian Battista, Susie Kastner, and Justin Kastner, "Professor Williams and the Transatlantic Trade Dispute over Pleuro-Pneumonia" (September 2002), <http://fss.k-state.edu/research/multimedia/Williams.ram>.

<sup>23</sup> British House of Commons, 355-59.

<sup>24</sup> Gattinger, 27, 30; Commissioner Le Duc to J.B. Sherman, Superintendent of the Union Stock Yards, Chicago, quoted in "England's Unfounded Fright," *The New York Times*, February 5, 1879, 2; 3rd Session 45th Congress, "Senate Misc. Doc. 71," 5-6, 9; 3rd Session 46th

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<sup>25</sup> J.T. Duncan, Ontario Veterinary College faculty member, in an essay for the 1879 Ontario Provincial Exhibition, in J.T. Duncan, *Contagious Diseases of Cattle: Prize Essay* (Ottawa: MacLean, Roger, & Co, 1880), 1.

<sup>26</sup> U.S. Congressman Lamar Smith, in January 2000 following the foiling of a terrorist plot involving Ahmed Ressam, who entered the U.S. via Canada, in Terry Frieden, *Panel Considers Terrorist Threat on U.S.-Canada Border* (CNN, January 27, 2000 [cited 2 September 2004]); [www.cnn.com/2000/US/01/27/us.canada.border/](http://www.cnn.com/2000/US/01/27/us.canada.border/).

<sup>27</sup> Gregory P. Marchildon, "Canadian-American Agricultural Trade Relations: A Brief History," *American Review of Canadian Studies* 28(1998).

<sup>28</sup> Powell, 12.

<sup>29</sup> *1879 Report of the Minister of Agriculture*, ¶ 2nd Session 46th Congress, "House Ex. Doc. 53," 10-11; "Diplomatic Correspondence Paper No. 336: Mr. Evarts to Sir Edward Thornton, March 25, 1880," *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States* (1880), 511; "Diplomatic Correspondence Paper No. 338: Sir Edward Thornton to Mr. Evarts, April 17, 1880," *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States* (1880), 511-12; *The Times*, November 1, 1892, 9-10; "Importation of Canadian Cattle," *The Times*, November 5, 1892, 9, 11.

<sup>30</sup> Perren, 157. For more on the Canadian perspective, see Max Foran, "The Politics of Animal Health: The British Embargo on Canadian Cattle, 1892-1932," *Prairie Forum* 23(1998).

<sup>31</sup> Increasingly, in the U.S. food security is seen as an aspect of counter-terrorism policy. U.S. Department of Homeland Security, *Fact Sheet: Strengthening the Security of Our Nation's Food Supply*, <http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/display?content=3802>; Canadian Embassy, *United States-Canada: The World's Largest Trading Relationship* (April 30, 2004), <http://www.canadianembassy.org/trade/wltr-en.asp>.

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<sup>32</sup> As of the writing of this article, U.S. and Canadian heads of state are meeting to discuss, among other issues, the U.S. BSE-related ban on Canadian live cattle. “Bush Dismisses Strains in Canada Visit: Trade, Foreign Policy Issues on the Agenda,” Dec 1, 2004, [www.cnn.com/2004/WORLD/americas/11/30/bush.canada/index.html](http://www.cnn.com/2004/WORLD/americas/11/30/bush.canada/index.html).

<sup>33</sup> “Theodore Roosevelt County Park,” <http://www.montauklife.com/history/moses1.html>.

## ***Observations***

### **THE STATE OF LONG ISLAND?**

*By Lee E. Koppelman and Seth Forman*

*Secessionist movements in local government have been around a long time. Typically motivated by some perceived injustice inflicted on a locale by a larger jurisdiction, few such movements have seen success in recent years. But Long Island is not a typical disgruntled American community. It is America's largest suburb located inside of a state whose legislature was called the nation's most "dysfunctional" by scholars at New York University Law School's Brennan Center for Justice in 2004.<sup>1</sup> While other New York State regions sometimes seek independent municipal status (e.g. Staten Island, Suffolk's East End) Lee Koppelman and Seth Forman make the case that secession for a region of Long Island's size and significance may mean nothing less than statehood.*

The establishment of states is as old a practice as the nation itself. Thirteen original British colonies agreed to limit their independent sovereignty to form the United States of America. Over the following two centuries new states were added to the Union. Some were created by secession from existing states; e.g., Vermont from New York and West Virginia from Virginia. A majority of new states resulted from the division of Territories - Louisiana Purchase lands or the Northwest Territories, or purchase without subdivision, in the case of Alaska; and some by conquest - Texas and California.

Thus, the discussion of adding a fifty-first state - the State of Long Island - is in keeping with a time-honored tradition. Puerto Rico was the most recent candidate for statehood. Some activists have also suggested the conversion of the District of Columbia into either the 51<sup>st</sup> or 52<sup>nd</sup> state (depending on what actions would be taken on behalf of Puerto Rico). For a variety of reasons Puerto Ricans voted against statehood. Some were motivated by a desire for independence from the United States. The majority saw fiscal advantages in maintaining the status quo.

For years the business leaders of Long Island have whimsically played with the idea of statehood. After all, Long Island is part of the Empire State and shares a common history that precedes the founding of the nation, the Constitution, and the creation of thirty-seven other states since 1776.

Secession should never be taken lightly. But, Puerto Rico or D.C. a state before Long Island? Preposterous! If Long Island shouldn't be a state, why should they? And why are the gadflies the only ones who

would seriously consider it? After all, there would be no City of New York as we know it if a Victorian gadfly by the name of Lasswell Green didn't have the vision to see a Greater New York, and suggest that in place of five separate counties – each with limited potential – a metropolis be forged that would become preeminent among the cities of the world.

A more current gadfly who tried to promote statehood for Long Island was a Nassau County resident, Dr. Sterling, who used to be one of the few private citizens who ever attended the Nassau County hearings where department heads had to justify their proposed budget increases before the County Executive's budget committee.

The good doctor would demand that steps be taken to secede from the State and thereby generate a more favorable tax climate for Long Island. His mantra would be received by public employees with snickers or expressed annoyance, a powerful lobby for state largesse they had become. Besides, in the view of many, the Island had more pressing problems than chasing after the chimera of statehood: problems of affordable housing for senior citizens, moderate income workers, and the poor; transportation improvements; open space acquisitions; the provision of recreation opportunities; and the need for sound economic development. In short, the need to apply solutions for the problems and impacts created by the phenomenal growth of the previous three decades. Why squander the precious resource of time on what might be considered a frivolous exercise?

And yet, perhaps this is an idea whose time has come. After all, every public issue and need is either directly or indirectly tied to governmental form, hierarchy and structure. Perhaps there would be great benefits to statehood for the people of Long Island, such as more streamlined and direct government for the citizens at less cost. Certainly the efforts to enhance Long Island's identity would receive a national boost if it were the next star added to Old Glory. The anguished cries that this creature of the State of New York is too often treated as misbegotten would be summarily ended for all time. No more shortchanging from Albany! At the very least, Long Islanders may have a greater sense of this splendid isle by taking stock at this time.

Secession from New York State is not a new idea. On April 13, 1919, *The World Magazine*, in an article entitled "The Proposed New State of Liberty," cited a proposal advanced in the New York State Legislature. The plan called for the five boroughs (counties) of the City of New York, and the eight downstate counties of Westchester, Rockland, Putnam, Orange, Ulster, Sullivan, Nassau, and Suffolk to constitute the State of Liberty (See Maps 1 and 2). At that time this grouping of counties, with New York City as the core, would have had more



population and more wealth than any other state in the nation. The combined downstate population was approximately 6,474,000 - 62.3 percent of the population of New York State, and six percent of the nation's population. Nassau and Suffolk counties' population was only 236,366 at that time. (By 2003 the population of Long Island had grown to 2,807,500).

Several factors provided impetus for this early separation movement. One issue was the upstate vs. downstate set of conflicts – both partisan and economic. Aside from upstate Erie County, there was a conviction that the northern counties did not understand or support the needs of urban communities – the classic rural-urban conflict. Yet the major portion of tax support for the entire state was derived from the downstate counties.

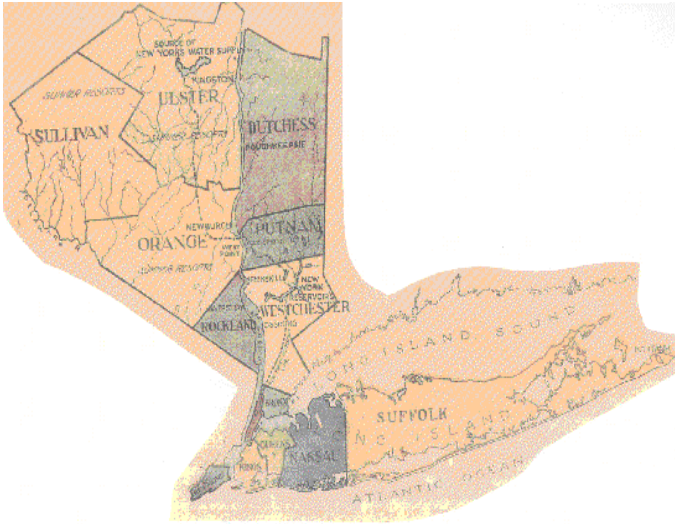
The *World* article made the point that by whatever criteria a state is to be measured, the proposed State of Liberty could be justified. From the remotest township in Suffolk, at the far eastern end of Long Island, to the northern boundary of Ulster, is more than two hundred miles. But every county in the proposed state, save Sullivan, may be reached by water routes as well as by rail. The inter-county commercial relations were by that time firmly established. New York City was roughly equidistant from the Long Island section and the Hudson section.

Just about everything that is necessary to a State's welfare may be found in the proposed new unit – commerce, agriculture, horticulture, lumbering, fisheries and shipping. New York Bay, the Kill van Kull, the East River, Long Island Sound, the ocean and the Hudson, with abundant harbors and docks, gave to the proposed State of Liberty a commercial advantage not enjoyed by any other State in the Union.

### **Constitutional Requirements for the Admission of New States**

The Congress of the United States has the power to admit new states into the Union. There are only two limitations to this power. A new state cannot be created from within the jurisdiction of an existing state, nor can a new state be created by the combination of two or more existing states, unless the legislatures of the existing states grant their consent.<sup>7</sup> Other than this simple language there are no detailed standards or requirements. In the case of territories where only congressional action was required, the criteria applied was that the inhabitants of a proposed state are committed to the American form of government; have sufficient population and resources to support a state government; and must demonstrate by vote that a majority want statehood.

**Map 1**  
**Proposed State of Liberty - 1919**



**Map 2**  
**Proposed State of Liberty Counties in 2005**



The proposal for a State of Liberty never amounted to anything. But today Nassau and Suffolk Counties alone could abundantly meet the other criteria for congressional approval, if a favorable plebiscite were held. There exists ample population and resources to support a state government; and as citizens the commitment to American ideals is pro forma. The initial overriding consideration would be the support of the New York State Legislature to allow secession from the State.

### **Demographic Comparisons**

As of July 1, 2003, the population of Nassau and Suffolk Counties together (with a population of 2,798,235 persons) exceeds the population of nineteen states of the nation. These nineteen states – with populations as low as 501,242 – have a combined total population of 26,662,055, or only nine percent of the population of the United States. They nevertheless control thirty-eight percent of the seats in the United States Senate. If the State of Long Island were created, the small states would amount to ten percent of the nation's population, and control forty percent of the Senate. Table 1 lists the population by states in ascending order.

In fact, Long Island has more population than Alaska, Wyoming, Vermont, and North Dakota combined. Yet, they can boast of eight Senators. Long Island can boast of none.

In comparison with the cities of America, Long Island would rank as the fourth largest, exceeded only by New York, Chicago and Los Angeles. Long Island is more populous than Philadelphia and Dallas combined; or Houston and Dallas; or San Diego, Baltimore and San Antonio. Of course, this is merely to place our demographic importance in perspective. The last thing any true Long Islander would ever seek, of course, would be city status.

### **Organizational State Scenarios**

Currently Nassau and Suffolk Counties are part of a three tier governmental structure: state, county, and municipal. Many functions are overlapping. Police departments serving Long Island include state, county, and town. Parks and environmental control departments, courts, and highway departments exist at every level. Water supply functions exist at county (Suffolk County Water Authority), municipal and district levels. Each county has separate departments for every county function. Legislative bodies exist at all levels of government. In short, Long Island can be said to be over-governed. The creation of the State of Long Island is an opportunity to examine alternative models that may be more responsive, less duplicative, more efficient, and less costly.

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**Table 1**  
**Smallest U.S. States by Population in 2003**

| <b>Geographic Area</b> | <b>Population Estimate</b> |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Wyoming                | 501,242                    |
| Vermont                | 619,107                    |
| North Dakota           | 633,837                    |
| Alaska                 | 648,818                    |
| South Dakota           | 764,309                    |
| Delaware               | 817,491                    |
| Montana                | 917,621                    |
| Rhode Island           | 1,076,164                  |
| Hawaii                 | 1,257,608                  |
| New Hampshire          | 1,287,687                  |
| Maine                  | 1,305,728                  |
| <b>Nassau County</b>   | <b>1,339,463</b>           |
| Idaho                  | 1,366,332                  |
| <b>Suffolk County</b>  | <b>1,468,037</b>           |
| Nebraska               | 1,739,291                  |
| West Virginia          | 1,810,354                  |
| New Mexico             | 1,874,614                  |
| Nevada                 | 2,241,154                  |
| Utah                   | 2,351,467                  |
| Kansas                 | 2,723,507                  |
| Arkansas               | 2,725,714                  |
| <b>Nassau-Suffolk</b>  | <b>2,798,235</b>           |

Source: Long Island Regional Planning Board; U.S. Census Bureau

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### **A Two Tier Approach**

One model would consist of the State of Long Island and the municipal governments – thirteen towns, ninety-five villages, and two cities. The two counties would be abolished; in effect, becoming the state. This model is analogous to Connecticut, which abolished the counties in the 1960s. The municipal governments would be maintained in their current boundaries, governmental structure, and general powers with very limited changes in function. Thus, the creation of the State of Long Island would not disrupt the strong local home rule philosophy that typifies the three century history of local communities. In fact, there would be a strengthening of local government in that the municipalities would no longer be subject to both county and state domination.

The executive branch would have one governor in place of two county executives. Within the executive branch there would be one department of health, one police department, one park department, one

education department, one transportation department, one state university system, and so on. This simplification would be more cost effective administratively and fiscally. At the least, the seesaw competition between the unions in both counties would disappear. Administratively, each county now duplicates facilities and programs, like police academy training, which could be handled with one academy. Statehood could improve governmental efficiency.

The extent of functional consolidation, however, must meet political objectives. For example, Nassau County has a unified countywide police department. Suffolk's police department has a role limited to the western five towns. A state police department could be achieved by the combination of the two existing departments, with the local east end towns maintaining their police departments. The alternative would be the creation of one island-wide state police. Consideration could also be given to the abolishment of the Sheriff's office. In its place, a Long Island Department of Corrections could supplant the Sheriff's functions and include jail operations and probation. This move alone could eliminate the longstanding feud between New York State and Suffolk County over the best method of dealing with jail overcrowding.

In most cases, a State of Long Island would provide the majority of police services and programs that they now deliver; without duplication and without mandates imposed from above, absent of financial support to accompany the mandates. Primary, secondary, and higher education would also become stronger. The current competitions that local school districts suffer from in terms of state support would be eliminated. A single Attorney General's office would supplant the two County Attorney's Offices; and the two Treasurers and two Comptrollers could be consolidated under one State Comptroller.

Although there are few responsibilities that the counties do not now exercise, there would be some existing responsibilities that the new state would have to provide. The new Long Island State Education Department would have to create a State Licensing Board for such professions as architecture, engineering, medicine, dentistry, landscape architecture, and others. In addition, a Public Service Commission would be necessary.

The legislative branch could take several forms ranging from a single body to a bicameral one. If it were to be a single body, the composition could be made up of the existing Long Island delegation in Albany, including twenty-one Assembly and nine Senate members. An alternative would be the combination of the nineteen Nassau and eighteen Suffolk County Legislators into a thirty-seven member state legislature. A third scenario could be any combination of the existing state and county legislators. Obviously, the smaller the size of the legislative body, the lower the cost. A converse argument in favor of a larger body is that the

greater number of legislators would mean smaller election districts, which could provide better representation and the fostering of a larger pool of experienced public officials.

The existing thirty-seven members of the Nassau and Suffolk Legislatures could be abolished. If the judgment is to have a bicameral legislature, then the combined Assembly and Senate members could comprise the upper house; and the existing county legislative bodies could comprise the Assembly or lower house. The exact number of seats could be less than currently exist. There would also be a need for only one legislative budget review office to balance the Governor's budget office.

It is worth mentioning that the history of budget preparation and adoption in the two counties has generally been prompt in contrast with the experience of New York State over the decades. The conflicts between upstate and downstate over school aid amounts, transportation spending, state police coverage, and the specific battles between New York City and New York State (e.g. like the one involving the repeal of the commuter tax in 2000) would no longer affect the State of Long Island.

The judicial branch would require the least alterations. The existing structure of District, Supreme, Criminal Courts, Family, and Claims Courts could remain. An Appellate Court and Court of Appeals would have to be created. The presence of existing Federal Courts could be expanded as necessary for a totally independent Long Island District.

### **Fiscal Status and Considerations**

One of the unofficially stated criteria used by Congress to validate the creation of a new state is that states have the resources to support its existence. Fortunately, Nassau and Suffolk Counties are today, and have been for decades, two of the wealthiest counties in the United States in terms of median family and family disposable income. It should be noted that Nassau ranked sixth and Suffolk ranked twelfth out of more than 3,100 counties in the United States in terms of median household income (see Table 2). Furthermore, the gross county product is roughly \$120 billion (2003), and eighty-six percent of Suffolk's resident labor force is employed on Long Island (Nassau has sixty-seven percent employed on Long Island). When the equation includes the reverse commutation of workers mainly from New York City, it is evident that Long Island is a diverse, self-sustaining economic area. Long Island consistently posts unemployment rates lower than the nation as a whole, as well as New

**Table 2**  
**United States Counties Ranked by Median Household Income**  
**2003**

| <b>Rank</b> | <b>County</b>             | <b>Income (\$)</b> |
|-------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| 1           | Somerset County, NJ       | 89,289             |
| 2           | Howard County, MD         | 88,555             |
| 3           | Prince William County, VA | 82,926             |
| 4           | Morris County, NJ         | 82,025             |
| 5           | Fairfax County, VA        | 80,753             |
| <b>6</b>    | <b>Nassau County, NY</b>  | <b>80,647</b>      |
| 7           | Santa Clara County, CA    | 76,544             |
| 8           | Montgomery County, MD     | 76,439             |
| 9           | Rockland County, NY       | 72,276             |
| 10          | Collin County, TX         | 71,458             |
| 11          | McHenry County, IL        | 70,956             |
| <b>12</b>   | <b>Suffolk County, NY</b> | <b>70,281</b>      |
| 13          | Fairfield County, CT      | 70,083             |
| 14          | Fort Bend County, TX      | 69,848             |
| 15          | Contra Costa County, CA   | 69,835             |
| 16          | Lake County, IL           | 69,670             |
| 17          | San Mateo County, CA      | 69,219             |
| 18          | Ann Arundel County, MD    | 68,938             |
| 19          | Monmouth County, NJ       | 67,761             |
| 20          | Norfolk County, MA        | 67,689             |

Source: Long Island Regional Planning Board; U.S. Census Bureau

York City and New York State.<sup>3</sup> Perhaps an even more telling indicator is the net wealth that New York State and the federal government receives annually – as of the year 2000 – topping \$27 billion.<sup>4</sup>

As the following table indicates, tax revenue that New York State raises from Nassau and Suffolk Counties is greater than the amount the state spends on Long Island. In fact, Long Island currently pays roughly \$2.9 billion more in taxes to New York State than the state gives back in either aid or benefits annually, something which augur's well for the fiscal benefits of statehood for Long Island.

### **New York State Taxes Paid to State From Long Island**

Personal Income Tax liability in Table 3 is calculated using annual figures from the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance. The data used is from 2001 adjusted to 2004 using the New York Metropolitan Region consumer price index.<sup>5</sup>

The state receives four percent of gross retail sales in each county.

The numbers for the state share are based on 2004 estimates from the Suffolk County Treasurer John Cochrane and Nassau County Deputy Treasurer John Marcari.<sup>6</sup> Nassau and Suffolk counties also pay an additional .25 percent of gross retail sales to the Metropolitan Commuter Transportation District.

Revenue paid to the state for Net Motor Vehicle Fees (which include registration, drivers license, and other fees), Cigarette and Tobacco Taxes, Motor Fuel Tax, Alcoholic Beverage Control License Fees, and Alcoholic Beverage Taxes are allocated to Nassau and Suffolk counties in direct proportion to the percentage of the total state population these counties account for. For 2003 New York State total population was 19,190,115. Nassau's population for 2003 was 1,339,463, or 7 percent of state population. Suffolk County's population in 2003 was 1,468,037, or 7.7 percent of state population.<sup>7</sup>

The Mortgage Recording Tax is the total tax collected from the county minus the amount distributed to county treasurers. Revenue from Thoroughbred and Harness Racing is estimated from total state revenue from New York Betting in 2002. The category "New York Betting" includes fees, rents, and other items in addition to betting. Based on data from years 2000-2002 Nassau accounted for thirteen percent of total thoroughbred and harness racing in New York State, while Suffolk accounted for ten percent.<sup>8</sup>

Business taxes are based on the report *The Fiscal Imbalance Among New York State Regions* produced by the Center for Governmental Research of Rochester, New York.<sup>9</sup> This report estimated that the Nassau-Suffolk region paid roughly 26.1 percent of all business taxes levied by New York State between 1991 and 1996. Accordingly, the present analysis allocates the same proportion of business taxes to the Long Island region, 12.5 percent for Nassau County and 13.6 percent for Suffolk County. (This revenue analysis does not include state Auto Rental Tax, Hotel/Motel Tax, Beverage Container Tax, and Petroleum Business Taxes.)

### **New York State Spending on Long Island**

Direct Payments - Table 4 summarizes state funds that Long Island receives annually. State spending programs on Long Island include direct payments to local governments; Tuition Assistance Payments (TAP); several highway programs; lottery support for education; the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA); Medicaid; state pensions and several other spending categories. Revenue data used in this analysis reflect studies of the Center for Regional Policy Studies at Stony Brook



**Table 3**  
**New York State Taxes and Revenues Paid to State From Long Island**  
**And Balance of Payment Gap**  
**(Estimate for years spanning 2002-2004)**

| <u>Source</u>               | <u>Nassau (\$)</u>   | <u>Suffolk (\$)</u>  | <u>Total (\$)</u>    |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| PIT 2004 Estimate           | 2,589,618,329        | 1,913,796,197        | 4,503,414,526        |
| Sales Tax 2004 Estimate     | 884,705,882          | 944,941,176          | 1,829,647,059        |
| Metro. Comm. Trans.         |                      |                      |                      |
| Dist. 2004                  | 55,294,118           | 59,058,824           | 114,352,941          |
| Estate Tax 02-03            | 99,838,682           | 36,334,815           | 136,173,497          |
| Real Estate Transfer        |                      |                      |                      |
| 2002-2003                   | 43,081,900           | 55,841,019           | 98,922,919           |
| Net Motor Vehicle           |                      |                      |                      |
| Fees 02-03                  | 53,828,008           | 59,210,808           | 113,038,816          |
| Cigarette and Tobacco       |                      |                      |                      |
| Taxes 02-03                 | 75,531,005           | 83,084,105           | 158,615,110          |
| Motor Fuel Tax 02-03        | 38,064,654           | 41,871,119           | 79,935,772           |
| Mortgage Recording Tax      | 71,453,369           | 94,325,166           | 165,778,535          |
| Alcoholic Beverage Tax      |                      |                      |                      |
| 02-04                       | 12,582,850           | 13,841,135           | 26,423,985           |
| Alcoholic Beverage          |                      |                      |                      |
| Control License             |                      |                      |                      |
| Fees 02-03                  | 2,935,870            | 3,229,457            | 6,165,327            |
| Revenues From               |                      |                      |                      |
| Racing 02                   | 5,455,479            | 4,196,522            | 9,652,002            |
| Corporation Franchise       |                      |                      |                      |
| Tax 02-03                   | 175,906,375          | 191,386,136          | 367,292,511          |
| Corporations/Utilities      |                      |                      |                      |
| Taxes 02-03                 | 107,444,375          | 116,899,480          | 224,343,855          |
| Insurance Taxes 02-03       | 87,970,125           | 95,711,496           | 183,681,621          |
| Bank Taxes 02-03            | 51,129,500           | 55,628,896           | 106,758,396          |
| <b>Total Revenue to NYS</b> | <b>4,354,840,520</b> | <b>3,769,356,352</b> | <b>8,124,196,872</b> |
| <b>Total State Spending</b> |                      |                      |                      |
| <b>on LI (Table 4)</b>      | <b>2,243,673,552</b> | <b>2,948,967,148</b> | <b>5,192,640,700</b> |
| <b>Balance of Payment</b>   |                      |                      |                      |
| <b>Gap</b>                  | <b>2,111,166,968</b> | <b>820,389,204</b>   | <b>2,931,556,172</b> |

University, and the use of some data from the Center for Government Research of Rochester, New York.<sup>10</sup>

Direct Payments to Local Governments – The New York State Comptroller reports annually on all state aid received by counties, towns, cities, villages, and school districts throughout the state.<sup>11</sup>

TAP - Each year a share of “payments to localities” funds are distributed to communities without directly flowing through either a municipality or a school district. The Office of the New York State Comptroller reports this as “miscellaneous other payments,” which typically comes to around

fifteen percent of payments made directly to local governments. Because of the vast amount of different spending categories, most of this miscellaneous other payments category was unallocated. But Tuition Assistance Payments made to Long Island colleges was allocable from data supplied by the New York State Higher Education Services Corp.<sup>12</sup>

Special Revenue - The Office of the New York State Comptroller reports payments to localities from only the General Fund. The vast majority of spending from special revenue funds remains unallocated by region. But in several instances it was possible to determine monies Long Island receives from special revenue funds. These are the Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement program (CHIPS), the Suburban Highway Improvement Program (SHIPS), and the Marchiselli Highway program.

State Services - The most efficient way to calculate the amount the state spends on Long Island on state operations is to determine the amount the state spends on personal services and the amount it spends on things "other than personal service." Personal services amount to roughly seventy-three percent of all general fund state spending for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2004, according to the New York State Comptroller's annual report to the legislature on State funds.<sup>13</sup>

The New York State Labor Department calculates total wages and salaries in the year 2002 for state employees in the Long Island region to be \$1,029,987,886. There are several self-supporting funds in state operations, particularly at Stony Brook University Hospital in Suffolk County. The hospital is the recipient of much private sector, health insurance, Medicare, and Medicaid income, which goes to support many state employees. It is estimated that direct state support for Stony Brook University for 2002-2003 amounts to \$211,813,297 (\$159,374,900 for State Purposes and \$52,438,900 for Special Appropriations). This is approximately, eighteen percent of the entire \$1,173,681,647 2002-2003 University budget or, proportionally, approximately \$119,489,482 of the \$662,104,855 allocated for wages and salaries. Total Wages and salaries for state operations in Suffolk County as reported by the New York State Labor Department are thereby reduced by \$542,615,373 for self-supported operations at Stony Brook. Tuition revenue and other self-funding programs at state supported campuses and health related facilities throughout Long Island count for roughly forty percent of state spending. As this represents the bulk of state operations on Long Island, though not its entirety, this analysis assumes a thirty percent reduction in state salar-

**Table 4**  
**Summary of State Contribution to Long Island**  
**(Annual Estimate for Budgetary Years Spanning 2002-2004)**

| <b>Category of Spending</b> | <b>Nassau (\$)</b>   | <b>Suffolk (\$)</b>  | <b>Total (\$)</b>    |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Direct Payments to Locs     |                      |                      |                      |
| 2002                        | 933,711,000          | 1,604,074,000        | 2,537,785,000        |
| TAP 01-02                   |                      |                      | 190,036,437          |
| CHIPS                       | 11,988,936           | 13,897,544           | 25,886,480           |
| SHIPS                       | 2,238,647            | 506,967              | 2,745,614            |
| Marchiselli                 | 1,580,242            | 1,074,284            | 2,654,526            |
| Wages and Salaries          |                      |                      |                      |
| 2002                        | 151,625,006          | 189,535,753          | 341,160,759          |
| Fringe Benefits             | 15,162,501           | 18,953,575           | 34,116,076           |
| Other Than Personal         |                      |                      |                      |
| Services                    | 40,938,752           | 51,174,653           | 92,113,405           |
| Lottery Aid to              |                      |                      |                      |
| Education                   | 59,075,542           | 133,186,024          | 192,261,566          |
| State Pension               |                      |                      |                      |
| Payments                    | 381,404,276          | 501,115,953          | 882,520,229          |
| Medicaid Payments to        |                      |                      |                      |
| Long Island                 | 321,121,057          | 269,962,871          | 591,083,928          |
| State Subsidy to            |                      |                      |                      |
| LIRR                        | 282,166,020          | 118,110,660          | 400,276,680          |
| <b>Total State Spending</b> |                      |                      |                      |
| <b>on LI</b>                | <b>2,243,673,552</b> | <b>2,948,967,148</b> | <b>5,192,640,700</b> |

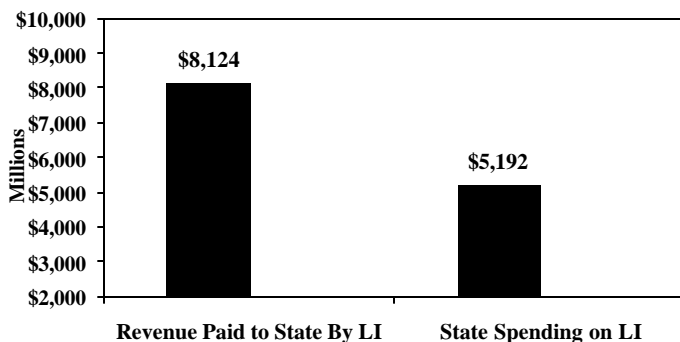
ies and wages reported by the New York State Department of Labor. Nassau County therefore receives approximately \$151,625,000 in state supported wages and salaries while Suffolk receives approximately \$189,535,753.<sup>14</sup>

Assuming a certain number of part-time employees on the state payroll, a conservative estimate for the cost to the state in fringe benefits would be an additional ten percent of total wages and salaries. The fringe benefit estimate comes to \$34,116,076. These numbers can then be apportioned by county relative to the number of state-supported employees in each county.

This analysis also assumes that state general fund operating expenditures for "other than personal services" is twenty-seven percent of all state general fund operating expenditures on Long Island (wages and salaries account for seventy-three percent), an additional \$92,113,405 that is spent on Long Island.

Lottery Aid - Revenue from the New York State Lottery, dedicated by statute to education, is deposited in a special revenue fund and distributed to local school districts by formula.<sup>15</sup>

**Figure 1**  
**Balance of Payments Deficit**  
**Long Island and New York State**  
**(Annual Estimate for Years 2002-2004)**  
**\$2.9 Billion Gap**



MTA - New York State provides subsidies for regional transportation authorities, including \$1,567,589,000 for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, the parent company of the Long Island Rail Road. This information is reported by the New York Comptroller's Office. Other subsidiaries of the MTA include: Metro-North Commuter Rail Road, Metropolitan Suburban Bus Authority, Staten Island Rapid Transit Operating System, Metropolitan Transportation Authority Card Company, and First Mutual Transportation Assurance Company. The Long Island Rail Road's portion of this subsidy is estimated to be roughly thirty percent: eighteen percent for Nassau County and twelve percent for Suffolk County.<sup>16</sup>

Medicaid - New York State provides roughly twenty-five percent of all Medicaid costs. The federal government provides fifty percent and the counties themselves provide twenty-five percent. Other major social service program expenditures are contained in the direct payments to localities figures.

State Pensions - the New York State Comptroller reports pension payments to New York State retirees on Long Island annually.<sup>17</sup>

**Conclusion**

This analysis of revenue transfers between New York State and Nassau and Suffolk Counties was deliberately kept as conservative as possible. The negative return from New York State clearly proves the fiscal viability of an independent state of Long Island. A closer examination of the origin of New York State revenue moves the argument even more favorably toward Long Island statehood. For example, with independence the entire sales tax generated on Long Island, if maintained at the current tax rate, would produce more than two billion dollars of additional revenue annually. Without any added efficiencies in service delivery, reduction in service output, or loss of federal revenues that pass through the State of New York, the State of Long Island could easily reduce and possibly eliminate the entire property tax.

A number of tax scenarios could be evaluated, such as retaining all existing taxes but at significantly reduced rates. Whatever path is ultimately chosen, the end result would be lower tax burdens for all Long Islanders – and with the advantages of no loss in the provision of important public services.

**NOTES**

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<sup>1</sup> Jeremy M. Creelan and Laura M. Moulton, *New York State Legislative Process: An Evaluation and Blueprint for Reform*, Brennan Center for Justice, New York University Law School, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Article IV, Section 3 of the Constitution of the United States. “New States may be admitted by the Congress into this Union; but no new state shall be formed or erected within the Jurisdiction of any other State; nor any State be formed by the Junction of two or more States; or parts of States, without the consent of the Legislature of the States concerned as well as of the Congress.”

<sup>3</sup> *The Long Island Regional Comprehensive Plan: Economic Segment: Long Island: The Economy (Draft)*, (Hauppauge: Long Island Regional Planning Board, 2002).

<sup>4</sup> Balance of Payments Analysis, Long Island Regional Planning Board, Hauppauge, New York, 2004; *The Fiscal Balance Among NYS Regions: NYS Fiscal Years Ended March 31, 1992-March 31, 1997* (Rochester: Center for Governmental Research, Inc., 1999); *2002 New York State Statistical Yearbook* (Nelson Rockefeller Institute of Government:

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Albany, N.Y.); *Consolidated Federal Funds Report* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Census Bureau, 2002).

<sup>5</sup> *New York Adjusted Gross Income Tax Liability: Analysis of 2001 State Income Tax Returns By Place of Residence*, (Albany: N.Y.S. Department of Taxation and Finance, 2004).

<sup>6</sup> State sales tax paid from Nassau and Suffolk Counties is estimated for 2004 by Suffolk County Treasurer John Cochoran and Nassau County Deputy Treasurer, John Marcari, *Newsday*, December 21, 2004.

<sup>7</sup> *2004 New York State Statistical Yearbook* (Albany: Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government, 2004)

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *The Fiscal Balance Among NYS Regions: NYS Fiscal Years Ended March 31, 1992-March 31, 1997.*

<sup>10</sup> Lee E. Koppelman, Arthur Kunz, Fred Rosenberg, and Seth Forman, *Financing Government on Long Island*, (Stony Brook, New York: Center for Regional Policy Studies, 1992); The model supplied by Center for Government Research, Inc., *The Fiscal Balance Among NYS Regions.*

<sup>11</sup> *Comptroller's Report on Local Government Finances for New York State: For Local Fiscal Years Ended 2002* (Albany: N.Y.S. Department of Audit and Control, 2004).

<sup>12</sup> New York State Higher Education Services Corp., PAIS Office, Research and Information Management, 2001-02 Student Aid File Layout.

<sup>13</sup> *Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for Fiscal Year Ended March 31, 2004*, (Albany: Office of the N.Y.S. Comptroller, 2004).

<sup>14</sup> Current Employment and Wages, New York State Department of Labor, Albany, New York; *The Economic Impact of Stony Brook*, Center for Regional Policy Studies, Stony Brook University, 2003.

<sup>15</sup> *2004 New York State Statistical Yearbook.*

<sup>16</sup> Office of the New York State Comptroller, Public Authorities, Long

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Island Rail Road, State Assistance File, world wide web  
<http://www.osc.state.ny.us/finance/pubauth/page315.htm>

<sup>17</sup> *New York State and Local Retirement System: Comprehensive Annual Report* (Albany: Office of the N.Y.S. Comptroller, 2004)

## **FEATURE: LONG ISLAND PLACE NAMES**

*This is the second installment of our series on Long Island place names. The series is designed to explore the origins and relevance of the names of Long Island's counties, towns, cities, villages and other places and landmarks of historical interest.*

### **THE COUNTIES: KINGS, QUEENS, SUFFOLK, AND NASSAU**

*T.A. Milford*

The creation of Kings, Queens and Suffolk counties was a welcome development for most of their residents. Too many arbitrary elements colored the original scheme by which James, Duke of York, and his seconds governed the province. The 1683 organization of the Duke's proprietary holdings into twelve shires, or counties, promised local governments that were more accountable to local people and, better yet, it provided for an Assembly – New York's first – in which the counties' representatives would meet and pass laws to safeguard the colony's welfare.<sup>1</sup>

The counties' names remind us that this reform was accomplished under the auspices of the ducal and royal Stuarts. Kings County was named to honor the Duke's brother, King Charles II of England and Scotland (1630-1685).<sup>2</sup> The predominantly Dutch farmers of Breuckelen and its neighboring villages would not have known quite what to do with this most cavalier of kings. The mistresses, the fawning and much-fawned-upon spaniels, the secret Catholicism: these were not the appointments of a New World man (though we should note here that it was a tolerant Roman Catholic governor, William Dongan, who oversaw the creation of New York's counties and the seating of its first legislature).<sup>3</sup>

Queens County was named for Charles's wife, Catherine of Braganza (1638-1705). This royal marriage, celebrated in 1662, was for England a considerable bounty. Catherine's brother, King Alfonso VI of Portugal, sent her north with a dowry of two million crusados, the equivalent then of one half million pounds, or, as one courtier put it, "almost double what any king had ever received in money by any marriage."<sup>4</sup> Louis XIV of France, who was anxious to see England's king wed to a Portuguese and not to a Habsburg infanta, further subsidized her endowment. To Charles's court, impoverished and so lately (1660) restored to power, the money was no mean incentive. And added to it were Tangier and Bombay and trading rights in the East Indies and Brazil. Moreover, an Anglo-Spanish union would have meant the



loss of Jamaica, one Cromwellian legacy that the Stuarts were anxious to keep. (It is fitting that another Jamaica was and is one of the county's most important towns, although it was named for a beaver pond in its midst – called 'Jemeco' by the Indians – and not for the pirate isle.)<sup>5</sup> All that said, we remember Queen Catherine less for what she brought to the marriage than for what she failed to put out: a royal heir. Her barrenness allowed the Duke of York and all his baggage to occupy the throne after Charles's death.

Charles's death was certainly a cause for rejoicing in Suffolk County. Suffolk was an outpost of Yankeedom and was for decades more tightly bound to Connecticut, whence many of its settlers came, than to New Netherland. The county's name rings true: we associate Puritanism with East Anglia, of which the English shire of Suffolk is a part. We know that Boston, once the most important Puritan settlement in North America, dominates Suffolk County, Massachusetts. Yet we cannot say that Suffolk of Long Island was named thus to acknowledge the Anglo-Puritan heritage of its inhabitants. That was not the Stuart way, and Stuart appointees were, as of 1683, still very much in charge of New York. Besides which, no one has established that the first Yankees to settle the Hamptons and the North Fork were grown from Suffolk (England) stock. Southold, the county's senior hamlet, was founded by families originally from Norfolk, Suffolk's East Anglican neighbor.<sup>6</sup>

Therefore the venerable John R. Brodhead's explanation remains the best: the easternmost county in New York was named for one of the easternmost counties in England. The simplicity of this idea is all the more compelling when we recall that, before 1683, the future Suffolk County was known as the East Riding of colonial Yorkshire. When an honorific imperative was lacking, the province's leaders were ever willing to paste England's geographical template onto New York's. East was east, and so too was Suffolk. If this straightforward answer does not appeal to the county's proud denizens, they can at least take comfort in the fact that Suffolk wasn't named for one of King Charles's many bastards. (See Richmond County, named for the Duke of Richmond and Lennox. He was just eleven in 1683, but Staten Island was, from that year to this, crossed by his bar sinister.)<sup>7</sup>

Nassau County is a creature of New York City's consolidation. It was Queens' village rump, the remnant undigested by the engorged metropolis. In 1898, its worthies adopted the name of Nassau, which had been Long Island's official designation since 1693. New York's governor in that year was Benjamin Fletcher, whose role it was to stamp the province with King William and Queen Mary's mark.<sup>8</sup> William III expelled his father-in-law, James, from England's throne during the Glorious Revolution (1688-89). The Dutch William's royal house – the

house of Orange-Nassau – would have shallow foundations in England (he and his queen’s failure to produce an heir elevated a final Stuart monarch, Mary’s sister Anne, whose own bad luck in motherhood made British kings of the German Georges of Hanover), but Nassau lives on in various American incarnations, among which Nassau County, New York is arguably the greatest.

All of the above demonstrates an obvious point: that naming practices are political. The late twentieth century saw our politics take a decidedly cultural turn, to the disadvantage of, among other things, Queen Catherine’s memory. In the 1990s, Portuguese and Portuguese-American boosters designed to have a statue of Catherine placed at Hunter’s Point, where she might enjoy a fine view of the Manhattan skyline and where others might have a good look at her, standing tall for her namesake borough. But for this barren, betrayed, and by all accounts rather modest princess there were further indignities in store. The cast of her statue was damaged. Historians and human rights campaigners complained that her family, the house of Braganza, persecuted Jews and promoted the slave trade. The monument was scrapped; some of its enemies suggested that a “museum of tolerance” take its place. Then, in 2002, Helen Marshall, the new Queens Borough president, ordered the removal from Borough Hall of a mural with Catherine’s image. Marshall wanted to efface what she described as a “dark past,” and so a *petit* revolution claimed its royal victim.<sup>9</sup> The Queen is dead (and glad of it, no doubt), but long live Queens and her sister counties on Long Island.

## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> At the top of any list of standard works on New York’s colonial past would be Patricia U. Bonomi’s *A Factious People: Politics and Society in Colonial New York* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971) and Michael Kammen’s *Colonial New York* (New York: Scribner, 1975).

<sup>2</sup> For place-name attributions, see *Counties USA: A Directory of United States Counties* (Detroit: Omnigraphics, 1997), 337-340 and the *Illustrated Dictionary of Place Names*, Kelsie B. Harder, ed. (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1976), 275, 370, 446, 458 and 529. And, on the general topic, see George R. Stewart’s *American Place-Names* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970) and his *Names on the Land* (Boston, 1958).

<sup>3</sup> Simon Schama’s popular *History of Britain* (New York: Hyperion, 2001), 212, 286-289; *Long Island: A History of Two Great Counties*, Paul Bailey, ed., 3 vols. (New York, 1949), I, 71-72.

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<sup>4</sup> Clyde L. Grose, "The Anglo-Portuguese Marriage of 1662," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 10 (August 1930), 317-319; Gerald L. Belcher, "Spain and the Anglo-Portuguese Alliance of 1661," *Journal of British Studies* 15 (Autumn 1975), 67-88.

<sup>5</sup> Victor Hugo Paltsits, *The Dongan Charter to Jamaica of 1686* (Jamaica, NY, 1940), 5-6; Grose, 325-327; Belcher, 73.

<sup>6</sup> Dixon Ryan Fox, *Yankees and Yorkers* (New York, 1940), 59-61; John Romeyn Brodhead, *History of the State of New York*, 2 vols. (New York, 1874), II, 56-57, 259, 298-300.

<sup>7</sup> Brodhead, 48, 385-386; Dorothy Horton McGee, "The Naming of Nassau County," in *Nassau County: From Rural Hinterland to Suburban Metropolis*, Joann P. Krieg and Natalie A. Naylor, eds. (Interlaken, NY: Empire State Books, 2000), 159; Richard Minta Dunn, "Howard, James, third earl of Suffolk (1619-1689)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, eds., 60 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), XXVIII, 385-386.

<sup>8</sup> *Long Island: A History*, II, 217; Martha Bockee Flint, *Early Long Island: A Colonial Study* (New York, 1896), 326; McGee, 158-165.

<sup>9</sup> Tina Kelley, "Following Up," *New York Times*, June 4, 2000, sect. 1, 39; E.E. Lippincott, "Neighborhood Report: Long Island City," *New York Times*, January 21, 2001, sect. 14, 9; Lippincott, "Neighborhood Report: Kew Gardens," *New York Times*, January 27, 2002, sect. 14,8.

## *LONG ISLAND PLACE NAMES (CONT'D)*

### **YOU'RE NOT WHERE YOU THINK YOU ARE**

*By Walter Greenspan*

The United States Postal Service (USPS) uses non-conforming postal zones – now referred to as ZIP Codes – which leads to severe geographic confusions about where a particular place may be located. A postal zone “City” and “Town” is an administrative district established by the USPS to deliver mail. Postal zone “City” and “Town” are not mandated to conform to municipal or community borders. Thus, postal zone location does not always determine city, village or hamlet location. In many areas of New York State, the problem of non-conforming postal zones leads to a situation where the majority of places have a different community name in their mailing address than the community where that place is actually located. This is often the case in the cities, villages and hamlets of Nassau and Suffolk counties. Of all 293 communities (two cities, ninety-five villages and 196 hamlets) located on Long Island, only the Village of Sea Cliff in the Town of Oyster Bay in Nassau County shares identical borders with its postal zone of the same name. All the other postal zones in either county have different boundaries than the community (city, village or hamlet) whose name the postal zone shares.

Table 1 is a preliminary and partial listing of famous Long Island places that are "Not Where You Think They Are."

#### **Why Long Island Can Not Be A Mailing Address**

In addition to the geographic confusion caused by non-conforming postal zones, here are also the less well-known but equally important problems caused by non-conforming postal districts/divisions (postal processing centers).

Nassau County is the only county in the United States that is divided into three postal processing divisions:

All “110” ZIP Code (most of western and north-mid-western Nassau County) mail is processed in and receives a Flushing, N.Y. or, in some cases, a Jamaica, N.Y. cancellation mark;

All “115” ZIP Code (central Nassau County) mail is processed in East Garden City and receives a Western Nassau cancellation mark; and,

All "117" and "118" ZIP Code (eastern Nassau County) mail is processed in Melville and receives a Long Island cancellation mark along with all Suffolk County ZIP code mail, except for Fishers Island in the Town of Southold that has a Connecticut mailing address. (Yes, Fishers Island in New York is "Fishers Island, CT" when addressing a letter.)

This three Postal division organization means that Nassau and Suffolk will not be able to obtain from the USPS a "Long Island" cancellation mark nor a "Long Island" mailing address for all outgoing Nassau and Suffolk County mail. Secondly, it means that intra-divisional mail will take an extra two or three days for double processing as it is shifted from one processing center to another before delivery.

When the USPS reports on the efficiency of "Long Island" mail delivery they are only measuring the on time performance for the "115" and higher ZIP Code groups. Thus, the USPS has the smallest definition of what constitutes "Long Island" and secondly, by not including the intra-divisional transfer of mail from Melville and/or East Garden City to Flushing and vice versa, the USPS overstates by a significant percentage their "on time" statistic.

This also means that any mailer - public or private - has to purchase three different mailing permits (one in any Postal Office in each of the three separate Divisions) in order for mail to be simultaneously received in all parts of Nassau and Suffolk County.

For example, mail sent from Hicksville, N.Y. 11803<sup>1</sup> to Manhasset, N.Y. 11030 must first go to Melville, then to Flushing and then to the address in the Manhasset postal zone. This double transfer of the mail from one division to another before its delivery adds a day or two versus inter-divisional mail.

Thus, the mailer in Hicksville would have to buy a permit good in the "110" area in addition to the permit for the "118" area and truck the "110" mail to any "110" postal zone, in order for all mail going to either ZIP Code group to arrive on the same day. Should the mailer in Hicksville also want to mail to the "115" group ZIP Codes, then a mailing permit in any of those postal zones must also be purchased.

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<sup>1</sup> Plainview is a branch of the Hicksville Post Office and thus while the post office allows people to use " Plainview, N.Y. 11803," it is really "Hicksville, N.Y. 11803".

**Table 1**  
**Community & Postal Zone Mismatches**

| <b>Place/Community</b>  | <b>Zip Code/Postal Zone</b> |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Brookhaven National Laboratory<br>Hamlet of Yaphank                     | (Upton, NY)                 |
| Cold Spring Harbor Fish Hatchery &<br>Aquarium Village of Laurel Hollow | (Cold Spring Harbor, NY)    |
| Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory<br>Village of Laurel Hollow               | (Cold Spring Harbor, NY)    |
| Christopher Morley Park<br>Village of North Hills                       | (Roslyn, NY)                |
| C.W. Post University<br>Village of Brookville                           | (Greenvale, NY)             |
| Fishers Island<br>Hamlet of Fishers Island                              | (Fishers Island, CT)        |
| Hofstra University Dorms<br>Hamlet of East Garden City                  | (Hempstead, NY)             |
| Jericho Cider Mill<br>Village of Muttontown                             | (Jericho, NY)               |
| Leonard's of Great Neck<br>Hamlet of University Gardens                 | (Great Neck, NY)            |
| Long Island Jewish Hospital<br>Village of Lake Success                  | (New Hyde Park, NY)         |
| Long Island Rail Road Station<br>Village of Great Neck Plaza            | (Great Neck, NY)            |
| Long Island Rail Road Station<br>Hamlet of East Northport               | (Northport, NY)             |

**Table 1 (cont'd)**  
**Postal Zone and Zip Code Mismatches**

|   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| Nassau Executive Building<br>Village of Garden City           | (Mineola, NY)     |
| Nassau County Community College<br>Hamlet of East Garden City | (Garden City, NY) |
| Nassau County Supreme Court<br>Village of Garden City         | (Mineola, NY)     |
| Planting Fields Arboretum<br>Village of Upper Brookville      | (Oyster Bay, NY)  |
| Republic Airport<br>Hamlet of East Farmingdale                | (Farmingdale, NY) |
| Roosevelt Field<br>Hamlet of East Garden City                 | (Westbury, NY)    |
| Sagamore Hill<br>Village of Cove Neck                         | (Oyster Bay, NY)  |
| St. Francis Hospital<br>Village of Flower Hill                | (Roslyn, NY)      |
| SUNY Farmingdale<br>Hamlet of East Farmingdale                | (Farmingdale, NY) |
| Suffolk Old County Seat<br>Hamlet of Riverside                | (Riverhead, NY)   |
| Sunrise Mall<br>Hamlet of East Massapequa                     | (Massapequa, NY)  |
| Tilles Center<br>Village of Brookville                        | (Greenvale, NY)   |
| Troop L, New York State Police<br>Hamlet of East Farmingdale  | (Farmingdale, NY) |

**Table 1 (cont'd)**  
**Postal Zone and Zip Code Mismatches**

|   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| Veteran's Memorial Coliseum<br>Hamlet of East Garden City | (Uniondale, NY)          |
| Walt Whitman House<br>Hamlet of West Hills                | (Huntington Station, NY) |
| Walt Whitman Mall<br>Hamlet of South Huntington           | (Huntington Station, NY) |
| North Fork Theatre at Westbury<br>Hamlet of Jericho       | (Westbury, NY)           |

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## **SECONDARY SCHOOL ESSAY CONTEST**

*We are pleased to present the following two winning essays in our Secondary School Essay Contest, an annual event co-sponsored by Stony Brook University's Center for Excellence and Innovation in Education, Dr. Eli Seifman, director emeritus. We encourage social studies teachers to submit papers by their students exploring any aspect of Long Island history.*

### **JACKSON POLLOCK IN EAST HAMPTON: SPLATTERING THE ART WORLD**

*Alyssa Jakim*

*Jackson Pollock's impact on the art world is equaled, in its own way, by his impact on the East End communities of Springs and East Hampton. Alyssa Jakim details Pollock's turbulent embrace of these venerable Long Island communities. The house in Springs that Pollock lived in with his wife Lee Krasner was deeded to the non-profit Stony Brook Foundation, affiliated with Stony Brook University, in May 1997.*

The East End of Long Island has long been a center for artists. Its beautiful landscape and seclusion provide a perfect niche for any bohemian. The style of art it has inspired has gone through quite a transformation, abstract art being a significant change in a place that was used to more representational forms. When Abstract Expressionist Jackson Pollock entered the art scene on the East End, he fundamentally changed the artistic community there as he himself changed as an artist. Springs, the conventional everyone-knows-everyone town where Pollock settled, was not particularly welcoming to artists. Pollock's Abstract Expressionism was also struggling to gain acceptance. Added to these difficulties was the national clash between Abstract Expressionists and the emerging Pop Artists. Pollock, however, retained a love of nature that anchored him to the East End, even while he brought to it these momentous disputes in artistic style.

Many people have been drawn to the East End for its great charm, beaches, and proximity to New York City. F. Scott Fitzgerald called this part of Long Island a "fresh, green breast of the new world."<sup>1</sup> The artistic popularity of the Hamptons got its major start in the 1870s and 80s. The village of East Hampton became especially prominent. Part of its popularity was that it was a remarkably pretty area, especially attractive to landscape painters. This is part of the reason Pollock would later be drawn there. At the end of the nineteenth century, it became a sketching

ground for many artists and institutions such as the Art Students League of New York City. The first studio residence was put up by the art loving Moran family in 1884. The Morans frequently brought with them artist guests who soon populated the colony, buying land and building studio cottages.

The village never had a formal institution of landscape painting, but there was one in Southampton. This was the Shinnecock Summer School of Art, founded in 1891 by William Merritt Chase. Chase was a well-known painter and a popular teacher, who gave lectures the public enjoyed. The school fostered many later famous artists such as Rockwell Kent, Joseph Stella, and Howard Chandler Christy. Even after the close of the school in 1902, Southampton remained an artists' retreat. Both South and East Hampton became a little bit of a tourist retreat as well.

The first few decades of the twentieth century brought a decline to the artist population on the East End. There was some activity from a group of five New York City writers who lived in East Hampton in the 1920s. However, when the stock market crashed and the Depression struck, the East End was hit hard, especially its tourism, fishing, and agriculture. Nevertheless, there were still a few wealthy people who could afford to summer in the Hamptons. One of these people was Mrs. Lorenzo P. Woodhouse, who funded and founded a center for the arts called Guild Hall.

When conflict and persecution arose in Europe, many intellectuals, artists, writers, and scientists escaped to New York City. This included a number of artists from the Surrealist movement. Not only did their arrival launch New York as an ideological center for the second half of the century, but it brought people back to the East End as well. It has been said that tourists used to come to East Hampton asking, "where are the Surrealists?" Some of the notables included painters Fernand Léger, Max Ernst, Marcel Duchamp, and Jean Hélion. Poets such as André Breton and John Hall Wheelock flocked there as well.

In 1945, Jackson Pollock moved to the East End. He lived in a different community, the Springs, a community next door to East Hampton which he would vitally change. The story of his life is a trouble filled one, perhaps mirroring the many conflicts that were seen in the art world at that time. Pollock did not talk of his family, so it was often assumed that he did not have one. This was not the case. His parents were Roy and Stella Pollock, and he was the youngest of four sons. He was born in Cody, Wyoming, but the family did not stay there, moving eight times in fourteen years. This was partially because Roy Pollock needed to find work and partially because Stella wanted her boys to be educated at good schools. Stella was a strong-minded woman who loved her sons. Marie Levitt Pollock, one of Stella's daughters-in-law, said "I never did

hear a word of criticism from Stella about any of her boys.’<sup>2</sup> Indeed, she gave her children a great deal of support, allowing their artistic natures to flourish. Roy Pollock was a no-nonsense man who showed signs of depression.

In his young adult life, Pollock took many trips to New York City. He took classes at the Art Students’ League, where he was introduced to Renaissance forms and lines. Pollock seemed to be struggling with these drawings, however. A friend of Pollock, Marwel Tolegian, said, “Pollock tried, but he just could not do realistic forms.”<sup>3</sup> It was in New York where Pollock’s drinking habit began. Pollock was famously shy, but not when he was drunk. When drunk he was violent, sometimes getting arrested for minor offenses. Pollock would continue drinking for the rest of his life, although he made some attempts to stop it in therapy.

Pollock was also a man very much influenced by people of strong personality, including his wife, Lee Krasner. Krasner was a woman without whom he would have been lost. She sometimes became his keeper, always wanting to know where he was. Lee put aside her own promising career as an artist in order to get Jackson through his.

In the summer of 1945 the two stayed with friends in East Hampton. Afterwards, Pollock insisted on buying a house there. They made their home on Fireplace Road in Springs. The property was five acres and had a barn, a few small outbuildings, and a beautiful view of the Accabonic Harbor. The house was a turn-of-the-century design with two floors and front and back porches. Pollock eventually turned the barn into a studio and painted on the floor instead of a canvas.

Pollock was drawn to the Springs because of the natural surroundings, which he reveled in, especially when the first spring arrived. Smith tells us that “Jackson hadn’t seen a true country spring for twenty years, not since the spring harvest in the yellow fields below Janesville. According to Krasner, this profoundly affected him. ‘He spent hours, sometimes whole days walking around the first spring we were there . . . . He was like a kid, exploring everything.’”<sup>4</sup> He explored the hills and valleys, observed the trees. He was also drawn to the sea; he often sat at the sea shore, just taking in the nature and watching the boats. This was a very happy year for Jackson.

Jackson’s paintings, though abstract, seemed to focus on the natural, and his titles reflected his interest in rhythm and movement both in creating a painting and in imitating nature’s rhythms. His 1946 paintings had the titles *Croaking Movement*, and *Shimmering Substance*, evoking a feeling of closeness to nature.<sup>5</sup> *Croaking Movement*, a title suggestive of frogs, seems to have incisions of white lines that inscribe swirls of primary yet natural looking colors (greens and browns are prominent as well). The white parts give off the feeling of a wood carving, almost as

though the canvas had been peeled back. *Shimmering Substance* looks similar. It has a yellow halo almost invisibly glimmering out from Jackson's free wheeling strips and circles of white, red, grey, green, and purple. The painting is punctuated by intensified dots of color. It once again sets up natural rhythms for the eye to follow, becoming almost mesmerizing yet remaining playful. In 1950, Jackson painted *Autumn Rhythm*, its title true to this theme, is restricted to a severely uncolored pallet of black, white and brown splotches. These appear to have been caught in motion. They give us a feel of jazz and life, even though they lack color.

Though the winters were almost unbearably cold, Lee Krasner commented that "there was this incredible white light and Jackson would indulge in the experience of light then because of the luminescence of the snow."<sup>6</sup> Times were often tough for Pollock, but the summer provided a sense of renewal for him. "Summer was increasingly a time to roam the countryside, see friends, and *paint* . . . no matter what crises threatened, no matter where Jackson was in his cycle of depression, the coming of summer never failed to boost his spirits."<sup>7</sup>

One of the tenets of Abstract Expressionist art is that it comes from the artist's feelings. An artist's environment would be something to affect his feelings and to seep into his psyche. Indeed many Abstract Expressionists, such as Willem de Kooning and Joan Mitchell, felt a strong connection to nature. Al Newbill wrote that "abstract painting put the painter into nature. He is no longer an isolated observing entity but is in nature and in the painting."<sup>8</sup> As Pollock scholar Francis V. O'Connor notes,

In the year immediately following Pollock's move to East Hampton in November 1945, he reacted very strongly to his new environment, and produced during 1946 two series of paintings which he called the *Accabonic Creek Series* after the body of water behind his house . . . and [the] *Sounds in the Grass Series* . . . if you contrast these open, highly colored, and directly painted works with the dark, brooding images of his 1945 city paintings, I think you will see the effect of the Long Island landscape on his work.<sup>9</sup>

It was on Long Island, after all, that his techniques developed and his famous drip painting started. In a drip painting Pollock would pour the paint directly from the can, sometimes using other tools, such as funnels and soda cans, in order to attain certain paint qualities.

The new style reflected his mental struggles. The Pollocks moved out to Springs in order to help with Jackson's moodiness and alcoholism, since he very much enjoyed working on the house and garden with various projects. About the country's effect on Pollock, Lee Krasner recalls,

I remember sitting with Jackson on our country porch—sitting there for hours, looking into the landscape, and always at dusk, when the woods ahead turned into strange, mystifying shapes. And we would walk in those woods, and he would stop to examine this or that stone, branch or leaf . . . his moodiness and depression would vanish, and he would be calm - and there would often be laughter.<sup>10</sup>

Though it is hard to come up with viable psychological motives for Pollock's having painted the shapes and colors he did, it can be said that his surroundings affected him, for the two are indelibly interconnected.

Pollock's climb to fame was an arduous one, full of disappointments. When Pollock first moved to Springs, in 1945, he became notorious and he sunk into a depression. The Pollocks were still extremely poor, even after Pollock began to receive recognition. They huddled over stoves in the winter. Julian Levi said "Even now I find the conditions they had to struggle with shocking."<sup>11</sup> Their poverty gained sympathy from some neighbors, but most thought that all Pollock did was spill paint.

The Springs, where Pollock and Krasner settled, was at first not very receptive to the pair. It was a community of fishermen and farmers with a population of about 300 people. Artists here were considered slackers who did not work for a living. When the Pollocks arrived the people of Springs people made them out to be "crazy" artists. The residents would keep tabs on Pollock's purchases, especially alcohol. He was looked at with contempt as a "drift," the term for those who only stayed for the summer, even though he lived there year round. The Pollocks married right before moving because they knew that they would have been less welcome if they were unmarried.

Dan Miller, a Springs local, loved to tell Pollock stories. His favorite story is captured by two Pollock biographers.

One day, just as Charlie was reining his team to the porch post outside Miller's window, Jackson clattered by in his Model A. Charlie watched him pass and shook his head. "That old Pollock" he said to Miller, "lazy son of a bitch, ain't he, Dan?"

Miller, who liked his new artist neighbor said, "What do you mean he's lazy?" Charlie shook his head again for emphasis. "Why I never seen him do a day's work," he said, "did you?"<sup>12</sup>

The Springs was less accepting of artists than its neighbor East Hampton. There were the usual jokes about him painting with a broom. Most people left him alone because they did not know how to respond to his work. No one said hello when Jackson went out to get his much needed liquor. But he did become friends with the aforementioned Dan Miller, and their conversations eventually becoming a sort of therapy, with Jackson as patient.

Lee, on the other hand, never quite warmed up to the "Bonackers," as the locals were called. She had contempt for their rural ways. She also felt it was her duty to shelter Jackson, often keeping friends from seeing him, fearing that they would drink. She missed the city, but the country did keep Jackson away from drinking to some extent, and in their isolation she had him all to herself.

When Jackson's January, 1947 show was not very successful, he found himself in a stretch of acute poverty. He tried to get money any way that he could, for example, offering Dan Miller a painting to pay off a grocery bill. Miller accepted this offer and his wife was abashed, not letting him keep the painting in the house.<sup>13</sup> The fact that she would not hang up the painting and the amazement of the rest of the community that Miller would take this kind of payment indicate the depth of the community's refusal to accept Pollock.

At the same time that Pollock experienced these clashes in the Springs community, there were similar clashes within the art world. This would come from two fronts: one conflict between traditional minded people who favored representational forms and the other with the branch of art that would become known as Pop art. American art in the 1930s was restrained compared to that of the decades to come. It was often political. The Great Depression did not favor the blossoming of art. Some Abstract Expressionist art did exist, but would not become prominent until the 40's and 50's, after World War II, although even then it had to battle to be seen as a viable form of art.

In the late 40's a number of more conservative artists strongly disliked the work of Pollock and other Abstract Expressionists. In Southampton, there was more of a battle against the artists' lifestyles than there was against their work. Although there were many *avant garde* artists, most of the shows on the East End were still made up of older artistic styles. The aforementioned William Merritt Chase, who opened the Shinnecock Summer School of Art, was a famous Long Island

painter, and his works, such as *Near the Beach, Shinnecock*, depicted the seaside and women with parasols. They were direct, pretty representations of nature and people, rather than works of Abstract Expressionism which was just that, abstract, unrecognizable. The art world was not yet used to Abstract Art. It was not the norm, and had not yet proved itself a commercially viable form of art. Modern art therefore had very little appeal in the Hamptons. Giving up on attempting to showcase their work in museums, some contemporary artists exhibited their work in bookstores, though their audience remained miniscule.

The art community in East Hampton was rather conservative. A large majority of the artists who lived and displayed their art had impressive social connections, and they did not challenge social norms.<sup>14</sup> It is not shocking that they did not particularly welcome *avant garde* artists of the forties. Guild Hall, the creative center in East Hampton, was an embodiment of the town's traditional views and mistrust of new styles.

In 1949, after much twisting of arms, the board of Guild Hall finally allowed new artists to show their work. The Guild Hall was determined to honestly portray the artistic developments of the area and eventually did include the Abstract Expressionists. Their works were displayed in a show that became a success and an important annual tradition. Pollock was one of the new artists. His art was again included in the 1950 show, which was a landmark as the first all abstract exhibition in the hall's history.

The overall lack of acceptance between *avant garde* artists and audience was not one sided, the *avant garde* artists sometimes showing little enthusiasm towards the community in which they did not feel wholly accepted. When in the early 50's Abstract Expressionism began to gain viability as an art form outside of East Hampton, viewers began to make an effort to understand the new art form. Their attempt, however, was not always welcome. This situation can be seen through this amusing anecdote: "At one regional opening, Phyllis Wheelock...who was serving as a hostess, tried to put Pollock at ease by telling him how much she admired his painting. Pollock responded with [crude language] that resounded through the gallery and shocked his own friends as much as it did the lady herself."<sup>15</sup> The regionals continued each year, some people beginning to appreciate the art, others attempting to tolerate it. Abstract Expressionists then complained that their work was not exhibited during the summer. In 1955, a group of summer residents petitioned against the showing of abstract art at Guild Hall. Eloise Spaeth, chairman of the Art Committee gave an inspired speech to the board asking,

Do we have a right to close our doors to our regional artists because they paint abstract? Carlyle

Burrows of the *New York Herald Tribune* was here last Sunday and told Enez Whipple, our director, that of all the summer museum programs from Maine on down, ours has been the most interesting and vital. Do we want to be judged by a pro who knows his business or by those self-appointed critics who don't know anything about art but 'know what they like?' Do you want to take the easy way and not show anything that's been painted since 1910... or do you want to roll up your sleeves and prepare for a little controversy?<sup>16</sup>

The petition was unanimously turned down.

The second struggle, taking place on a bigger scale was the one with the world of Pop Art. Post World War II art also saw a focus on mass culture and a sort of conformity appeared, which would later be dubbed Pop Art. The conflicts, one between the two branches of art and the other between him and his Springs community, are similar in that they stem from largely ideological differences. Abstract Expressionism dealt with the internal feelings of the artist which became externalized through the work. Expressionists were of the idea that mass culture was inferior and not a creative pursuit. Pop Art was more national and less global, appealing to the general American audience. It showed the "world of Middle America and common experience."<sup>17</sup> Abstract Expressionism was more subjective, while Pop Art tended to be more objective. To move away from the mass art culture that became almost a cliché, artists often isolated themselves, and here is where Abstract Expressionism really took off. Of course, Pollock was the leader of this movement.

Both showed America's wish to distinguish herself from Europe as a viable producer of art, while at the same time wishing to prove herself and to show how she was evolving, making the Abstract Expressionist's struggle in East Hampton a sort of microcosm of their struggle for an original, native vocabulary.

Pollock crusaded to gain recognition for American artists. In 1947, Pollock fought against a statement made by James S. Plaut, the Director of the Institute of Modern Art in Boston in which Plaut launched an attack on the integrity of modern art. Pollock was part of a protest in New York at the Museum of Modern Art. Pollock denounced the favoring of European artists that was common in the art world. According to Peter Blake, "American artists were considered a bunch of hicks by the intellectual art world; any American worth his salt went to live in Europe." But Blake goes on to say that Pollock was the one to change



this: "Jackson and no one else shifted the art world center from Paris to New York."<sup>18</sup>

Pollock also made changes closer to home. People of the Springs began to accept his presence, to look at him with sympathy when he and Lee did not have coal for the winter. The Pollocks also changed life there by bringing more artists to the community, helping friends such as David Porter, Conrad Marca-Relli, John Little and Wilfried Zogbaum to find residence in the area. Artists knew more artists and writers and soon their population grew in the Springs and East Hampton.

Pollock turned East Hampton art in a new direction, towards the abstract and away from the classic landscape. It is undeniable, however, as Helen Harrison tells us, that their abstraction was influenced by the surroundings by "the night sky, wind, sea life, and the tangle of undergrowth."<sup>19</sup> With Pollock's help Abstract Expressionism had hit the East End.

In 1981, an exhibition was dedicated to a Pollock and his wife Lee Krasner. As Whipple notes: "If there had been a cutoff point when one generation of artists gave East Hampton over to a new generation, it was with the arrival in 1945 of artist Jackson Pollock, who would become known as the most influential artist of his time, and his wife, Lee Krasner, also considered a pioneering New York School abstractionist."<sup>20</sup> This exhibition was the first time their work had ever been shown together, although the partnership has often been emphasized as an invaluable one.

Jackson Pollock did eventually achieve fame. His paintings now sell for millions of dollars.<sup>21</sup> He was a man plagued with many difficulties, and he died tragically in a car crash. He lived most of his adult life in East Hampton, and it was clear that he loved the village. Jeffrey Potter tells us that "Land meant a great deal to Jackson and not only because of his love for the Bonac landscape. Land to him also meant Gardiner's Bay, the Atlantic, the sky, the weather."<sup>22</sup> Wayne Barker believed Jackson found a sanctuary in the Spring's landscape.<sup>23</sup> Jackson would make this a sanctuary for others as well. He did amazing things for the art world, though Joan Ward points out, "I can't remember any painters envying Jackson his success; he suffered too much for it." Indeed he did suffer, through poverty, alcoholism, lack of acceptance, and personal depression. It was a struggle through which he combated ideological differences between old and new to make something new.

## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Helen Harrison and Constance Ayers Denne, *Hamptons Bohemia: Two Centuries of Artists and Writers on the Beach* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2002), 15.

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<sup>2</sup> Jeffrey Potter, *To a Violent Grave: An Oral Biography of Jackson Pollock* (New York: Putnam Publishing Group, 1985), 20.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 33.

<sup>4</sup> Steven Naifeh and Gregory White Smith, *Jackson Pollock: An American Saga* (New York: Woodward/White, Inc., 1989), 516.

<sup>5</sup> Pollock's evocation of natural rhythms and harmonies in these paintings was suggested to me by Professor Helen Harrison in a private conversation on May 21, 2004.

<sup>6</sup> Naifeh and Smith, 532.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 559.

<sup>8</sup> Ronald G. Pisano, *Long Island Landscape Painting, Volume II: The Twentieth Century* (Boston: Little Brown & Co, 1990), 8.

<sup>9</sup> Pisano, 7.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 80.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 93.

<sup>12</sup> Naifeh and Smith, 507.

<sup>13</sup> Miller instead hung the painting up on his office wall in his store. He later sold it for \$7,300 when Pollock died. Pollock's paintings now go for millions. Naifeh and Smith, 557.

<sup>14</sup> Enez Whipple, *Guild Hall of East Hampton: An Adventure in the Arts* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1993), 36.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

<sup>17</sup> Sidra Stich, *Made in USA: An Americanization in Modern Art, The 50's and 60's* (California: University of California Press, 1987), 6.

<sup>18</sup> Quoted in Potter, 96.

<sup>19</sup> Harrison and Denne, 75.

<sup>20</sup> Whipple, 41.

<sup>21</sup> In May, 2005 *Newsday* reported that 32 small Pollock paintings worth \$10 million were discovered in a Wainscott storage locker. The paintings had been given to photographer Herbert Matter, a long time Springs resident and friend of Pollock. See Joseph Mallia, "Finding Buried Treasure," *Newsday*, May 11, 2005, A04.

<sup>22</sup> Potter, 175.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

## THE STRUGGLE FOR RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN FLUSHING

*Brian Tashman*

*Brian Tashman reflects on an early religious tussle in Queens that helped pave the way for religious liberty.*

From 1657 to 1664, one of the earliest conflicts in American history for the right of religious freedom occurred in the town of Flushing, known then as Vlissingen of the New Netherland colony. Although the term “liberty of conscience” was a popular maxim of the seventeenth century in American colonies and Europe, it only meant that men were able to keep their beliefs to themselves, as long as they paid taxes and respected the established church.<sup>1</sup> “Liberty of conscience” often times did not apply to non-Christians, and sometimes even to non-Protestants. Maryland and Rhode Island notably had laws tolerating different religions, but were unable to actually secure religious freedom throughout their colony.<sup>2</sup> In Flushing, the townspeople wrote the Flushing Remonstrance to check government overreach and to question the government in order to allow religious diversity in their village.<sup>3</sup> John Bowne took up the cause of the Flushing Remonstrance writers, by challenging the New Netherland authorities over their laws that punished non-Calvinists. The potency and resolve of both government officials and inhabitants of Flushing allowed them to confront successfully a repressive government.

In 1607, Holland claimed the Hudson River Valley and by 1621 the Dutch West India Company sought to populate the colony and profit from the colony’s fur trade. But the Dutch were not immigrating in sufficient numbers to New Netherland. The company understood that people from other countries would be needed in order for the colony to prosper.<sup>4</sup>

The Dutch West India Company allowed people fleeing the Massachusetts Bay Colony to settle in New Netherland. After the devastating Indian Wars, New Netherland Governor Kieff wanted to repopulate Long Island and made the Flushing patent “probably the most liberal arrangement for any settlement in America by or on behalf of any government up to that time.”<sup>5</sup> The patent, The Charters of Freedom and Exemptions of 1640, established the right to town self-government and assured that a group of Englishmen settling in Flushing would have the same type of liberal religious laws as the Dutch laws that allowed freedom of religion. Kieff saw Flushing as a barrier against the Indians of Long Island who could possibly attack the main city, New Amsterdam, and a way to make the colony more profitable. The patent of the Town of Flushing pledged to the settlers “to have and Enjoy the Liberty of Conscience, according to the Custome and manner of Holland, without

molestacon or disturbance, from any Magistate or Magistrates, or any other Ecclesiaticall, Minister, that may extend Jurisdicon [sic] over them.”<sup>6</sup>

In 1647 this policy of religious freedom of Kieft was reversed when Peter Stuyvesant, a Calvinist zealot, became Director General of the New Netherland colony.<sup>7</sup> The reverend Francis Doughty, another devout Calvinist, became a major figure in Stuyvesant’s new government. Both were committed to upholding the authority of the Dutch Reformed Church as the state church.<sup>8</sup> In accordance with Calvinist theology, the clergy of the Dutch Reformed Church had enormous political influence. In 1652 the Calvinist clergymen pressured Stuyvesant to persecute Jews, Lutherans, Catholics and other non-Calvinists who lived in the colony.

In 1656 Stuyvesant took extreme measures to arrest and deport a Baptist preacher, William Wickenden, by firing William Hallett, an English sheriff of Flushing. The situation with Hallett, who did not consider Reverend Wickenden a problem, made Stuyvesant believe that English residents were committed to overthrowing him and the state church. In another example of religious persecution, the Quaker Reverend Hodgson and two Quaker women were arrested for “preaching turbulently in the streets.”<sup>9</sup> Stuyvesant even condemned Hodgson to two years of slave labor with black slaves or hefty fines. Hodgson was eventually exiled from New Netherland after Stuyvesant’s sister pleaded for mercy.

Stuyvesant’s religious policy contradicted the principles of the Dutch West India Company. In a letter to Stuyvesant, the company claimed, “We would also have been better pleased if you had not published the placat against the Lutherans . . . and committed them to prison, for it has always been our intention to treat them quietly and leniently.”<sup>10</sup> The company’s directors also expressed beliefs against the harassment of Catholics and Jews, but they were unable to stop the persecution.

Stuyvesant referred to the Quakers as the “abominable sect.”<sup>11</sup> Almost all the Quakers residing in Vlissengen were refugees from the Massachusetts Bay Colony, where the Puritans ruthlessly persecuted them.<sup>12</sup> The Quakers, followers of George Fox, believe all people have an inner light that allows them to directly communicate with God.<sup>13</sup> Quakers do not have any sacraments or priests, their only creed is pacifism and they staunchly affirm ideas of equality, peace, simplicity and community.<sup>14</sup> At that time, Quakers were pugnaciously evangelical and rebuffed any church tax or ecclesiastical authority.<sup>15</sup> The residents of Flushing greeted the Quakers with hospitality, something they rarely experienced.<sup>16</sup>

An ordinance by Stuyvesant jeopardized the promises of the Flushing Patent. This decree outlawed meetings outside of a church of non-

Calvinists. Although this decree concerned Anglicans and Independents as well, sheriffs rarely used it against them.<sup>17</sup> The Quakers faced the bulk of the persecution, as they did not hold church ceremonies but meetings of silent prayer. On December 27, 1657, in response to the ordinance, thirty Flushing freeholders and four town officials at a town meeting in town official Michael Milner's house, wrote the Remonstrance to protest the curbing of the rights granted to them in the town patent.

One unique detail of this Remonstrance was that it allowed religious freedoms to non-Christians. It is important to note that this Remonstrance was not written by Quakers, but by Presbyterians, Anglicans and others. Most tolerant European societies of the time only guaranteed these freedoms to Christian sects, and in contrast the Remonstrance claims "The law of love, peace and liberty in the states extending to Jews, Turks, and Egyptians, as they are considered the sonnes of Adam." It goes on to say,

for if God justifie who can condemn; and if God condemn who can judtifie...And because our Saviour saith is impossible but the offenses will come, but woe unto him by whom they cometh, our desire is not to offend one of his little ones, inwhatsoever form, name or title hee appears in, whether Presbyterian, Independent, Baptist or Quaker, but shall be glad to see anything of God in any of them desiring to doe unto all men, as wee desire all men should doe unto us, which is the true law both of church and state.

Passages found in the Flushing Remonstrance are similar to verses from the King James Bible.<sup>18</sup> The Remonstrance was written only forty-six years after the King James Version of the Bible was published. The Bible was usually the only book in people's homes and was recited daily.<sup>19</sup> Ministers began to use a technique dubbed "speaking scripture," where in their everyday conversations and Sunday sermons they would use passages from the Bible. "Speaking scripture" was assimilated into common dialogue.<sup>20</sup> For example, "Wee desire therefore in this case not to judge lest we be judged, neither to condemn least we be condemned" of the Remonstrance is similar to the passage Luke 6:37: "Judge not and ye shall not be judged. Condemn not and ye shall not be condemned: forgive and ye shall be forgiven." In another instance, the Remonstrance's "Wee are bounde by the Law to Doe good unto all men, especially to those of the household of faith" is analogous to Gal 6:10: "As we therefore have opportunity let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."

On December 29, 1657, the sheriff, Tobias Feake, a signer of the Remonstrance, handed it to Stuyvesant during a Council meeting. Stuyvesant met the Remonstrance with rage and retribution. He was insulted by the protest of people who were not Dutch and who defended the extremely unpopular Quaker sect. He arrested Sheriff Feake for his "new and unheard of heresy,"<sup>21</sup> and he fined Rustdorp (Jamaica) town founder Henry Townsend 300 florins for twice harboring Quakers in his house. Clerk, and signer, Edward Hart told Stuyvesant that the town sentiment was very supportive of the Remonstrance, "from the general votes of the inhabitants."<sup>22</sup> Those that signed it were mainly English, and their ethnicity excluded them from most government positions in New Netherland. Stuyvesant punished Feake with a 200-florin fine or banishment and blamed Feake for having maintained the appalling attitude that "all sects, and principally the aforesaid heretical and abominable sect of Quakers, shall and ought to be tolerated."<sup>23</sup> Stuyvesant did not attack the town itself, and even said that the town was "forgiven" for its actions.<sup>24</sup>

After his punishment of town officials, Stuyvesant attempted to assert more Dutch authority in Flushing. He established a council of seven tribunes to govern the town, appointed a Dutch sheriff and created a tax to support the Reformed Church. Stuyvesant believed that through strict Calvinist rule the residents of Flushing could be led towards righteousness.<sup>25</sup> Although the town was forgiven, the town officials never rescinded the Remonstrance and Quakers were still able to live in people's homes and practice their religion in secret.

This was one of many Dutch-English feuds under the rule of Peter Stuyvesant. Stuyvesant believed that Flushing's English and Quaker residents were part of a scheme to remove him from power.<sup>26</sup> Even before Stuyvesant dissolved the Flushing local government made up of Englishmen, there had been problems between the English and Stuyvesant. His past disputes with the English included a conflict with the British Connecticut colony and in 1653 he used Dutch soldiers to massacre the Massapequa Indian tribe, which had a trading alliance with the British. Stuyvesant's mistrustful feelings towards the English were again put to the test with the arrival of John Bowne.

In 1653, Englishman John Bowne settled in Flushing and the same year married Hannah Feake. Bowne, like other settlers in Flushing, had fled the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Bowne attended a Quaker service with his wife Hannah, a Quaker convert, out of inquisitiveness. He was "powerfully struck by the beauty and simplicity of their worship."<sup>27</sup> In 1661, Bowne began construction of his house and used his kitchen as a meeting place for the Quaker church, the Society of Friends. Bowne converted, "not merely from kindness and affection to his wife, but his

judgment also was convinced by the truth of the principles they held forth.”<sup>28</sup>

Bowne originally was active in neither politics nor religion. He did not sign the Flushing Remonstrance, and was not a church leader or a politician. His wife’s father and brother in-law, neither of who were Quakers, were involved with the writing of the Remonstrance. Both Bowne and his wife became fervent Quakers during their time in Flushing, and felt it was their duty to be active in political and religious life.<sup>29</sup> On August 24, 1662, two Jamaica magistrates informed the government of the Quaker meetings at Bowne’s house, and Bowne was arrested a week later by order of Stuyvesant.

At the beginning of his captivity, John Bowne was debased. When Bowne appeared before Stuyvesant, he kept his hat on, as it is a Quaker custom to wear one’s hat in front of an earthly power. Yet Stuyvesant refused to hear his case unless he removed it, and eventually had a sheriff forcefully remove Bowne’s hat from him. The main charge against him was that he held meetings with “heretics, deceivers and seducers.”<sup>30</sup> The government then demanded Bowne pay twenty-five flanders for his actions and also pay for the court costs.

On September 25, Bowne was thrown into solitary confinement for his refusal to pay the fines. During his imprisonment, Stuyvesant asked the guard to let Bowne leave the prison in order to see his family, hoping that he would then flee the colony. But Bowne did not flee. Instead, he returned to his prison cell and on December 31, 1662 was banished “for the welfare of the community” and “for an example to others” on the ship the *Fox*, to Amsterdam.<sup>31</sup>

The Dutch West India Company had received Stuyvesant’s letters that discussed his troubles with Bowne before his arrival in Holland. In response to the letters, on April 16, 1663, the court said,

Although it is our anxious desire that similar and other sectarians may not be found among you, yet we doubt extremely the policy of adopting rigorous measures against them. In the youth of your existence, you ought rather to encourage than check the population of the colony. The consciences of men ought to be free and unshackled so long as they continue moderate, peaceable, inoffensive and not hostile to the government. Such have been the maxims of prudence and toleration by which the magistrates of his city have been governed; and the consequences have been, that the oppressed and persecuted from every country have



found among us an asylum from distress. Follow in the same steps, and you will be blessed.<sup>32</sup>

The *Fox* released Bowne in Dublin, and told him he could make his way through England as long as he went to his trial in Holland. Instead of hiding in England, Bowne asked for legal advice from sympathizers, such as his aide, William Caton, and made it to his trial in Amsterdam. On May 14, 1663, at the trial, Stuyvesant's government pointed to the disruptive nature of the Quakers and Bowne's violation of the ordinance that banned the harboring of Quakers as criminal. Bowne challenged Stuyvesant's government by claiming that the ordinance violated the Flushing Patent, and he quoted the Remonstrance in his defense. When asked by Lord Perkins if he had anything else to add, he answered, "Nay, but you would consider of these things and do there in as you would be done unto."<sup>33</sup>

The court, reluctant to intervene in the internal affairs of the colony, first asked Bowne to return to Flushing only to bring his family back to Holland and live in Holland. After Bowne's refusal, the judges said that he may live in Flushing as a free man but he must still abide by the laws of the government. Bowne declined, declaring, "For which of you, being taken by force from your wife and family (without just cause) would be bound from returning to them, unless upon terms to act contrary to your conscience and deny your faith and religion, yet this (in effect) do you require of me and not less."<sup>34</sup>

Ultimately, on January 30, 1664, Bowne returned to New Amsterdam. Happily reunited with his family, friends and townspeople, he met with Stuyvesant. One witness described their meeting, "Some time after his Return, the Governour meeting him in the Street, seemed ashamed of what he had done, and told him, he was glad to see him safe Home again, and that he hoped he should never so do any more to any of his Friends. A Token of Repentence, and of an Ingenuous Disposition, such as few, if any of rigid persecuters in New-England did ever shew."<sup>35</sup>

Yet the rule of Stuyvesant would last only briefly after Bowne's return. In September of that year the Dutch surrendered to the royal navy of Colonel Richard Nicholls of Great Britain. Governor Nicholls supported the idea of religious freedom for Christians. Nicholls and his successor Edmund Andros allowed houses of worship of many different faiths. Twenty years later, Governor Thomas Dongan wrote with officials and representatives, the Charter of Liberties stating "That no person or persons, which profess faith in God by Jesus Christ, shall at any time, be any ways molested . . . who do not actually disturb the civil peace of the Province."<sup>36</sup>

The Flushing Remonstrance was one of the first declarations of religious freedom in America. Some people even assert that the Flushing Remonstrance's ideas are directly reflected in the first amendment of the US Constitution.<sup>37</sup> Although the writers of the Flushing Remonstrance did not immediately end the government's persecution of different religious sects, John Bowne used the Flushing Remonstrance as his guiding principles to achieve religious freedom throughout the colony. It is sure to say the little town of Flushing made a bold statement in its writing of the Remonstrance and along with townsman John Bowne, will always be remembered as having played a major role in checking government actions and affirming the beliefs we hold so dearly today.

## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Bowne House Historical Society, Haynes Trebor, member of the Research Committee of the Bowne House Historical Society, *The Flushing Remonstrance*, 1947.

<sup>2</sup> "Origins of the First Amendment." *Long Island Forum* (December 1960): 269.

<sup>3</sup> Trebor, *The Flushing Remonstrance*..

<sup>4</sup> Philip Horne, "John Bowne and Freedom of Religion in New Netherland" (Thesis diss., Williams College 1973), 1.

<sup>5</sup> Trebor, *The Flushing Remonstrance*.

<sup>6</sup> Horne, 2.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Haynes Trebor, *Colonial Flushing* (Flushing Federal Savings and Loan: 1945), 24.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Horne, 3.

<sup>11</sup> Trebor, *Colonial Flushing*, 24

<sup>12</sup> "Origins of the First Amendment," 269.

<sup>13</sup> The Flushing Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, "The Story of Flushing Meeting House," (Flushing, New York: The Flushing Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, 1994), printout.

<sup>14</sup> Pendle Hill, *Introducing Quakers* (Newbury, Vermont: Pendle Hill, 1990), printout.

<sup>15</sup> Trebor, *The Flushing Remonstrance*.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> R. Ward Harrington, professor, *Speaking Scripture: The Flushing Remonstrance of 1657*, Friends Historical Association, no date.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> Trebor, *The Flushing Remonstrance*.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> Trebor, *Colonial Flushing*, 23

<sup>26</sup> John Ewell Wilson, "Freedom of Worship Championed in Flushing's 1657 'Remonstrances'," *Daily Star*, October 27, 1937.

<sup>27</sup> Horne, 5.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> Trebor, *Colonial Flushing*, 26

<sup>30</sup> Horne, 6.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> “Origins of the First Amendment,” 270.

## ***Debate***

### **HOW DOMINANT WERE EUROPEAN SETTLERS?**

*John A. Strong vs. Faren R. Siminoff*

*John Strong takes Faren Siminoff to task for suggesting in her recent book that relations between Native Americans and European settlers were more balanced than previously thought, involving give and take from both sides. Afterward, Siminoff replies to Strong.*

Faren R. Siminoff. *Crossing the Sound: The Rise of Atlantic American Communities in Seventeenth Century Long Island*. New York: New York University Press, 2004. Notes. Index. Bibliography, Pp.203

Faren Siminoff presents a new perspective on the early years of English settlement in New England and Long Island. Her approach to the study of colonial history brings Long Island, an area often ignored in the histories of New York and New England, into a central focus. She introduces the term “Atlantic America” to describe the emerging societies along the north Atlantic coast. Atlantic America, she argues, was a rich amalgam of English and Native American cultures. “The identity of an Atlantic American community,” she says, “was not strictly rooted in any particular native or European tradition but drew on multiple cultural constructions by which these older traditions and identities were reconfigured” (p.3). Her book, she continues in her conclusion, “discards the traditional notions of a ‘New’ England, which like the name it bears, conjures up an image of English communities that were virtual facsimiles of their homeland” (p.152). One of her primary concerns is to bring to the forefront Native American contributions to Atlantic America. She wants to rescue the native peoples from what she argues is the impression left by contemporary historians that the Native Americans are “a mere footnote in the region’s post-settlement history” (p.152).

Her argument favoring *in situ* explanations for local institutions is a variation on Frederick Jackson Turner’s frontier thesis, which had displaced Herbert Baxter Adams’ “germ” theory by the beginning of the twentieth century. Adams and many historians in the nineteenth century had argued that all American institutions could be traced back to the Teutonic forests of Germany. By the mid-twentieth century most historians took a more balanced view that “the New England colonists winnowed out those parts of the English institutional past that were not congenial to the New World conditions and adopted and adapted those

that were” (Daniels 1979:64) Siminoff’s interpretation, however, moves back a bit closer to the Turner thesis.

Siminoff contrasts the open, more autonomous colonial towns on Long Island with the villages in old England where some aspects of the feudalistic system survived. She notes that in colonial America a majority of townsmen could become freeholders; whereas in seventeenth century England freehold was limited to a small percentage of the people. “An aspiring landholder,” she says, had to obtain permission from an “appropriate colonial authority,” and then “obtain an Indian deed” (p. 113). To illustrate this process, Siminoff offers the example of William Salmon, a Southold resident, who, she says, purchased his land directly from Lord Stirling’s agent James Farrett and then “obtained a confirming native deed from Wyancomb, Wyandanch’s son and successor (P. 113).

Although her description of the procedure is accurate, there are some problems with her interpretation of the document. William did not purchase land directly from Farrett, nor did he obtain a confirming deed from Wyancomb. Salmon’s father-in-law, Matthew Sunderland, purchased the land from Farrett on June 18, 1639.<sup>1</sup> Salmon then purchased the land from Paucump, the local sachem, but he apparently never occupied the parcel because after his death the title went to John Conklyn, who married Salomon’s widow. Conklyn went back to Paucump and paid him thirty shillings for the same parcel.<sup>2</sup> This suggests that Paucump viewed his transaction with Salmon as gift exchange rather than as an absolute transfer in the English sense. Conklyn’s willingness to make the second payment also indicates that he understood the cultural differences. It was John Conklyn, not William Salmon, who went to Wyancomb for a confirmation of the earlier purchases.

Siminoff’s emphasis on Native American inhabitants is a most welcome addition to the approach that emerged during the last three decades of the twentieth century. Most contemporary historians, by the 1980s, had begun to draw on the research of anthropologists to help them understand the important role of native peoples in American history. Historians such as James Axtell and Neal Salisbury, for example, focused their attention on the interaction between Native Americans and the new European settlers. Axtell discussed the impact of Indian culture on the English in some detail. He asked, “to what extent did English colonial culture become ‘Indianized’ by contact with the culture of native America?” His answer is a now familiar list including wilderness skills,

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<sup>1</sup> RTSO 1882. *Southold Town Records* edited by J. Wickham Chase, 3 vols. S.W. Green.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 208.

nutritious and medicinal plants, Indian names, recipes, planting and fertilizing techniques, moccasins, canoes, and woodland warfare strategies.<sup>3</sup> Kathleen Bragdon and Robert Grumet in his *Northeastern Indian Lives*, also brought native peoples to the center stage in colonial history. Grumet, in particular, focuses on “boundary crossers,” those Indians who served as liaisons between the two cultures.<sup>4</sup>

Other contemporary scholars have also studied the interaction between English and Native American cultures during the colonial period. In 1997 Colin Calloway pushed this theme further. He says in his introduction to *New Worlds For All: Indians, Europeans and the Remaking of Early America*, “this book explores the new worlds that Indians and Europeans created together in early America and considers how conquest changed conquered people and conquerors alike” (p xiii). Closer to home, Gaynell Stone’s eight volume collection of primary and secondary sources of Long Island Native American history and culture (1978-2004) is a major contribution to our understanding of the local Algonquian peoples.<sup>5</sup> Siminoff, however, presses this emphasis on Native American influences further, introducing some new and quite provocative ideas.

Using data from the two eastern Long Island settlements of Southampton and East Hampton, Siminoff challenges the view that the Long Island settlements were “the product of activities that originated in and then radiated out from Massachusetts” (p.3). Siminoff argues that the role of Native Americans in what she calls “Atlantic America” was much more important than historians have acknowledged. The two eastern Long Island settlements, she believes, are typical of a regional development characterized by a rich amalgam of English and Native American cultures. One of the more important areas of this amalgam, she

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<sup>3</sup> James Axtell, *The European and the Indian: Essays in Ethnohistory of Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), 218.

<sup>4</sup> Kathleen J. Bragdon, *Native People of Southern New England 1500-1650* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996); Robert Grumet, *Northeastern Indian Lives 1632-1816* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1996).

<sup>5</sup> Gaynell Stone, *Readings in Long Island Archaeology and Ethnohistory*, 8 vols. Stony Brook: Suffolk County Archaeological Association; Colin G. Calloway, *New Worlds For All: Indians, Europeans and the Remaking of Early America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997).

argues, is the shared attitudes about property. Both cultures believed that unoccupied land became property only when it was settled on and used. The English, she argues, placed great emphasis on the importance of occupation and use to legitimize land claims. "Ultimately the process of possessing and owning land in Atlantic America," she says, "was a triadic process: 'peopling and planting,' acquiring an Indian deed, and obtaining an English patent or derivative permission, accomplished in no particular order" (p. 7).

Her argument that the emphasis on land use in both cultures was the basis for a shared understanding about ownership challenges the general consensus among historians that there was a fundamental cultural difference between Native American attitudes toward land and the European definitions of property. The consensus view is that there was a "working misunderstanding" between the native peoples and the English as illustrated by the transactions with Paucump, the North Fork sachem mentioned above. The Native Americans believed that the land was a part of nature to be used by the entire community, not something that could be divided into individual parcels. They did understand the concept of sovereignty over hunting and planting grounds and would go to war to protect them. They also understood that a family might own their planting grounds as long as they were using it to supply their needs. What they did not understand, at first, was that the Europeans viewed land as a commodity that could be bought and sold, often by parties who never set foot on the property in question. It did not take too long, however, for the native peoples to become fully aware of European concepts of property. The Europeans paid little attention to the complexities of Indian attitudes and beliefs about the land. As Kathleen Bragdon noted in her study of Southern New England native peoples, the native concept of ownership was "linked to notions of personal identity, descent, and intimate use, a constellation of factors distinct from European notions of the same period."

In Siminoff's analysis, however, the emphasis on use becomes a shared value that defines the Atlantic American community rather than marking the differences between Indian and English views. The English, she notes, placed great importance on fencing and cultivating to strengthen their land claims. While it is true that the English believed in the Biblical call to go forth and make the land fruitful, unoccupied land was often bought and sold by colonial entrepreneurs. Occupation and cultivation was not a legal requirement for validating property ownership. In Southampton, for example, John Ogden sold a parcel of unoccupied land to John Scott who then sold it to the Southampton proprietors. In another such transaction Richard Smith bought a huge parcel of land from Gardiner that later became the town of Smithtown. Wyandanch had



allegedly given the land to Gardiner as a gift for past favors. The differences in attitudes towards the land seem to be more striking than the areas of overlap.

Siminoff's admirable goal to restore the native voice to the "transformative process that flourished on these shores" (p.153), could have been more fully achieved by including a reference to the role of Native American women. A discussion of their participation in land transactions would have given a fuller native voice to her narrative. Women, probably because of their role as cultivators, were often parties to land transactions, beginning with Aswaw, the wife of Yovawam, who joined her husband in negotiating with Lion Gardiner for his purchase of Gardiners Island in 1639. This aspect of native culture is directly related to Siminoff's emphasis on negotiations involving land. Between May 3, 1639 and September 17, 1697, for example, there were thirty-five documents which illustrate the active role of women in land transactions on Long Island.<sup>6</sup>

Siminoff does, however, celebrate the role of women in the controversies over property lines. In the 1660s Shinnecock women were involved in a dispute over the sale of Shinnecock lands west of Canoe Place. In 1662 Weany, a Shinnecock sunksquaw, (female sachem) sold land to a Southampton settler named Thomas Topping. The daughter and widow of Mandush, the sachem who had negotiated the original deed with the Southampton settlers in 1640, contested the sale in 1666. Governor Richard Nicolls settled the controversy, but the incident underscores the important role of native women in land transactions.

In 1666 there was another dispute over the lands south of the Peconic River in what is now Flanders. Although she makes some minor errors in her interpretation of the documents related to this conflict, Siminoff is correct in noting that the testimony of Indian women was an important contribution to the trial. The dispute was not, as she wrote, between Southampton and East Hampton - they had many - but between Southampton and Southold. Siminoff also thought that there was a second dispute a year later, but it is actually the same one. It was recorded in the town records and in the colonial Court of Assizes records, but it was the same case.

In her section entitled "Treaties and Deeds Reconstruct the East End" (pp. 114-129) Siminoff bases her analysis on the 1640 purchase of Southampton and the 1648 purchase of the parcel that would later

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<sup>6</sup> John Strong, "The Role of Algonquian Women in Land Transactions on Eastern Long Island 1639-1859, in *Long Island Women Activists and Innovators*, ed. Natalie A. Naylor and Maureen O Murphy (Interlaken, N.Y.: Empire State Books, 1998).

become East Hampton. Siminoff identifies these transactions as “settler-native” deeds. The 1640 deed between the Southampton settlers and the Shinnecocks, she notes correctly, was not “simply wholesale giveaways of their lands.” They acknowledged the native rights to certain traditional uses, such as hunting and fishing and access to beaches and wetlands. The English also agreed to provide the Shinnecocks with military protection against their enemies. These clauses, argues Siminoff, are evidence that the Indians bargained effectively to gain advantages in their negotiations with the English. This agreement, however, is not necessarily evidence of aggressive bargaining by the Shinnecocks. As Neal Salisbury has pointed out, the native peoples in New England frequently “retained limited rights to use portions not contemplated for immediate occupation.”<sup>7</sup> While it is true that native peoples astutely protected their interests and, in some instances, made use of colonial courts and other institutions to gain temporary advantages, in the long run they were squeezed onto a fraction of their original land and made subjects to English rule. Their descendants frequently complained about abuses and fraudulent actions by whites.

Although Siminoff states that the 1648 deed for East Hampton was “entered into between settlers living in Southampton and the Montauketts” (p.123) this was not what happened. The deed was not negotiated directly between settlers and the Montauketts. It was part of an ambitious policy driven by Governor Theophilus Eaton of New Haven Colony for personal gain and colonial expansion. Eaton’s agent, Thomas Stanton, actually negotiated with four native communities: the Shinnecocks, the Corchaugs, the Munhansetts and the Montauketts. Siminoff’s argument that the Montauketts drove a hard bargain that forced the settlers to concede fishing rights and access to shells for wampum is open to question (p. 124). Stanton probably made little resistance to these demands because he knew that Eaton was eager to get an agreement, which would block any Dutch initiative on eastern Long Island. Eaton and the English were more than willing to give the Indians access to shells because they wanted them to make as much wampum as possible. There was a great demand for wampum, which the English used as currency in the fur trade with the northern Indians. That is why the deed included a payment of one hundred muxes (drills) to the Indians for use in the manufacture of wampum. After the defeat of the Pequots in

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<sup>7</sup> Neal Salisbury, *Manitou and Providence: Indians, Europeans, and the Making of New England, 1500-1643* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982).

1637, the English were poised to challenge the Dutch hegemony over the fur trade.

It seems evident that Eaton's primary concern was English imperial policy rather than immediate settlement. Eaton began this campaign a few years after he had gained ownership of the Stirling Patent from James Farrett by default. Farrett had used what was left of Lord Stirling's Long Island lands as collateral for a loan from investors led by Governor Eaton. Farrett returned to England and never paid off his loan. Eaton purchased Indian lands in Huntington, East Hampton, and Southold, which he later sold to prospective settlers. He hoped, of course, that in addition to his own profit, he would convince the settlers in the new towns to join New Haven Colony. He was successful with Southold, but Huntington and East Hampton had no interest in putting themselves under the strict Puritanical rule personified by the Reverend John Davenport in New Haven.

The East Hampton settlers purchased the title to their initial settlement from Eaton in 1651. They did not buy land from the Montauketts until a decade later after war and disease had severely weakened the small native community. The remainder of the Montaukett lands was purchased in 1703 with the promise the Indians could have resident rights "in perpetuity," a promise that was later ignored. Montaukett leaders in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries bitterly protested all of these deeds, arguing that they had been obtained through deceit (Gonzales 1993:67-76). It is not at all evident, therefore, that the Montauketts and the Shinnecocks were willing participants in "Atlantic America."

In her conclusion, Siminoff says that her study offers three "interconnected propositions" designed to help the readers understanding of southern New England and Long Island during the colonial period. The first proposition is that scholars have overrated the influence of Massachusetts Bay on the rest of southern New England. It is certainly true that the Southampton and East Hampton settlers showed little enthusiasm for Winthrop's views of the Puritan "errand into the wilderness," and were not "virtual facsimiles of their homeland" (p. 152). Siminoff's interesting and provocative argument here does not give quite enough weight to cultural baggage the Long Island settlers brought with them from England and adapted to frontier realities.

Her second proposition is that the newly emerging disparate Native American and settler communities formed a synthesis that became a new society, an "Atlantic America." There was no triumph of the settlers over the Indians, rather there emerged, says Siminoff, "a vast matrix in which all groups were immersed and from which they all emerged altered" (p. 153). The third, closely related, proposition was that the Native

Americans despite the loss of their lands and their political power made considerable contributions to Atlantic America.

It is certainly true that, as Calloway and Axtell have also pointed out, native peoples and the English borrowed from each other. The cultural boundaries between natives and settlers was, as Calloway states, “the frontier operated as a sponge as often as a palisade, soaking up rather than separating peoples and influences.” But this was going on all across the colonial frontier and continued as the frontier moved west, it was not limited to southern New England and Long Island. At best we can say that out of the frontier experience a multicultural national community emerged. The Shinnecocks, for example, are proud of their success in retaining their core values and their unique identity in spite of the forces of “amalgamation.”

Nevertheless Siminoff’s provocative and ambitious approach should be welcomed by scholars of this crucial period in the history of Long Island and southern New England. The towns of Southampton and East Hampton, in particular, have a wealth of primary sources long overlooked by colonial historians who seem reluctant to stray very far from Boston and coastal Virginia. Siminoff has effectively forced our attention to eastern Long Island with her thoughtful and challenging book.

JOHN A. STRONG  
Southampton College  
Long Island University, *Emeritus*

## ***Faren R. Siminoff Replies***

Over the last half-century, scholarship in the field of early American history has inexorably edged away from a tale told simply from the viewpoint of the winners to that of a more nuanced story of complex interactions that gave rise to British colonial America and ultimately a new nation. John Strong rightly points out a long list of scholars who began to turn the conversation away from this older paradigm. Most of the scholarship that Strong refers to is focused on reconstructing a myriad of discrete local histories, both native and settler. In recent years, however, this scholarship has been further enlarged by theoretical analysis from the perspective of an Atlantic world framework. This framework examines the effects of the global reshuffling set in motion during the latter half of the fifteenth century.

*Crossing the Sound* builds on all of this prior scholarship. It uses the history of seventeenth century eastern Long Island as a vehicle to propose a community building in colonial America that is based less on a clash of monolithic cultures and more on the complex interactions between a multiplicity of communities that were present in the region. Consequently, both settlers and natives underwent a process of negotiation resulting in the hybrid society of Atlantic America, that was neither wholly the product of transported traditional European systems nor native ones.<sup>1</sup> It was this diversity of voices that shaped the communities of colonial America. This is more than a restatement of Turner's frontier thesis or the older germ theory. *Crossing the Sound* also aims to add to the current historiography by drawing attention to the role of the many "communities of interest" present in the region.<sup>2</sup> This approach moves beyond understanding seventeenth century America from the perspective of large monolithic groups – native versus settler – and examines the impact of the many diverse interests and agendas in shaping community and culture in the region. I offer numerous examples of this in *Crossing the Sound*. The settlement of Connecticut was one of the earliest examples of this negotiation. The English did not converge on

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<sup>1</sup> I use the term "Atlantic America" to refer to the new society that emerged in the Americas as a result of the assemblage of peoples, products, and cultures from both sides of the Atlantic.

<sup>2</sup> Communities of interest, is a term used here to denote the existence of multiple smaller communities within the larger traditional aggregates of peoples (English, Dutch, native) in southern New England, who articulated their own specific goals and gave shape to the formation of the Atlantic world.

Connecticut as a single monolithic group but quickly divided into separate and competing communities of interests staking out conflicting and overlapping claims to the area, along with those of the Dutch and native groups. These communities whether of English, Dutch or native origin, produced fluid and dynamic alliances and agendas within these larger aggregates in which cultural and institutional practices were exchanged and transformed. While *Crossing the Sound* uses the southern New England-Long Island Sound region to illustrate interactions and the impact of such “communities,” this type of analysis can be applied across colonial America.

Jurisdictional conflicts did not simply promote the wholesale importation of transplanted institutions and ways into the region, but introduced a constant conversation within and between groups that opened the way for shared, altered, and fluid perceptions of identity. Boundary crossers, cultural intermediaries, assisted in this process and themselves became agents for promoting these changes. The Montaukett sachem Wyandanch and Lion Gardiner, the onetime English engineer and master of fortifications for the Prince of Orange, commander of Saybrook Fort in Connecticut and by, 1639 the first owner of Gardiner’s Island, were both boundary crossers and prominent leaders of their respective East End communities. Each became conversant with the language, culture, and agendas of the other group and were instrumental to land transactions and central to both the individual’s and communities’ reassessment of life in the rapidly changing environment of seventeenth century America. Wyandanch and Gardiner facilitated this process through their actions as mediators of both cultural artifacts as well as actual goods and services. Such devices as deeds both added to the fledgling settlements’ ability to secure their claims against competing claimants as well as securing selected rights and privileges to the land that the indigenous peoples considered vital to their physical and spiritual existence.

The extent to which Gardiner became embedded in this kind of cultural transformation is seen in his memoir of the Pequot War written in 1660, a little more than twenty years after that war’s end. In it, he strongly criticized the settlers’ and in particular, the Massachusetts Bay Colony’s pursuit of a policy that had led to the utter destruction of the Pequots solely in the pursuit of self-interest and regional dominance. He further admonished his audience that during the more than two decades since that war’s end he had watched the English desert those who should have been catalogued among their friends and allies, “Uncas of Mistick Fort, and Waiandance at the great Swamp and ever since your trusty friend is forgotten and for our sakes persecuted to this day with fire and sword.” He concluded his recollections with a warning to the current settlers that

their numerical superiority over the native peoples would neither guarantee the English colonists' future security nor their hegemonic aspirations. He predicted the outbreak of a conflict that would make the Pequot War appear "but a comedy" in comparison "if God do not open the eyes, ears, and hearts of some that I think are willfully deaf and blind."<sup>3</sup> Gardiner's recollections reflect the attitudes and perspectives of a man formed by his experiences in Atlantic America and provide a window through which modern eyes can glimpse the interests that were at the heart of the Atlantic American experience in seventeenth century southern New England.

I reject the notion that there was generally a "working misunderstanding" between settlers and natives. Instead, I believe that in both the negotiated documents and actions of natives, we see that the indigenous peoples very quickly became adept at interpreting the significance of the newcomers' claims to the region and took positions and adopted tactics countering them. The treaties and deeds cited point to a continuing attempt by native peoples to preserve their interests. The reservation in these documents of a variety of rights and prerogatives denotes this conscious understanding and deliberate activism. There is no reason to believe that the settlers would have gratuitously inserted such provisions, which both benefited and created a broadening of jurisdictional claims that reified indigenous culture and identity and ultimately tied it to and bound the settlers as well.<sup>4</sup> As a result the settlers' claims and legitimacy in the area were often anchored in these indigenous rights and traditional perceptions. Indeed the East End's protest to the Duke of York's jurisdictional claims, in part, hinged on native title along with a variety of forms, including peopling and planting and English patents.<sup>5</sup> Peopling and planting,<sup>6</sup> Indian deeds and treaties,

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<sup>3</sup> Lion Gardiner, *Lieft. Gardener His Relation of the Pequot Warres*, (1660), reprinted in *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ser.3 (Boston, 1883), 151-158.

<sup>4</sup> The fact the settlers and their descendants often breached these agreements is not evidence of a "working misunderstanding." Contracts are breached all the time and can be motivated by many factors: changed circumstances, bad faith etc.

<sup>5</sup> *Crossing the Sound*, 145-146.

<sup>6</sup> Patricia Seed, *Ceremonies of Possession in Europe's Conquest of the new World, 1492-1640* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995). Seed has named and pioneered this concept.

and obtaining an English patent or derivative permission, accomplished in no particular order, became the accepted *process* by which land was possessed and ultimately converted into property in Atlantic America in areas that were still subject to multiple claims.<sup>7</sup> In the fluent and turbulent world of seventeenth century Atlantic America the process of turning land into property in an environment outside the reach of established English property laws was complicated and unsure, because it was potentially subject to multiple and competing systems, claims, and interests, from settler and native groups. The newcomers' attempts to turn land into property forced all groups, settlers and natives alike, to each break with certain traditional ideas and relationships about land. Consequently, settler groups made a final break with certain English notions of and expectations about the nature of land tenure, while native communities also had to accept altered notions of property and land transfers. The result was the creation of a landholding system throughout the region in which freeholds became the most common form of ownership.<sup>8</sup>

These American style freeholds were not solely dependent on English-derived grants and patents, but deeply rooted in native title and landholding practices as well. The result was that the underlying settler title was a tacit acknowledgment that native title not only existed but also had intrinsic value and legitimacy, which until properly extinguished, was good against all claimants except the sovereign. This added a new dynamic to the process of actual land acquisition and to the settlers' very notion of the role and nature of land, property rights, and community itself.<sup>9</sup> For these reasons the legal and symbolic construction of land is particularly illustrative of the transformative processes that were at work in the region and became a primary tool for negotiating and formulating the precise nature of these communities. The examples cited by Professor Strong of land sales by John Ogden to John Scott and Lion Gardiner to Richard Smith is consistent with these processes. This type of commodification of land during the seventeenth century by individuals

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<sup>7</sup> *Crossing the Sound*, 7.

<sup>8</sup> A freehold is the ownership of real property of undetermined duration, alienable by the owner either through sale, gift or inheritance. It is not subject to traditional feudal obligations and conditions.

<sup>9</sup> Indeed, the Indian non-Intercourse Act first enacted by Congress in 1790 and existing today as 25 U.S.C. 177 is evidence of the lasting effect of native land holding systems and perceptions and forms one of the basis, where applicable, for perfection of legal title to land.



such as Gardiner and Ogden were not necessarily prohibited nor opposed, particularly when the individuals involved were resident somewhere in the region. On the other hand, local authorities, while not always successful, attempted to proscribe the engrossment of large tracts of land by absentee landlords, defined as those not resident in the region.<sup>10</sup>

It is important to remember that the triadic procedure I describe in *Crossing the Sound* is a *process* for securing possession of land and its subsequent transformation into property in *contested* regions, particularly by the claiming authority, as opposed to individuals.<sup>11</sup> In these contested regions, peopling and planting was a *de facto* and not *de jure* method.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, “peopling and planting” does not mean that every inch of claimed land was transformed in the manner seen in modern suburban sprawl. What was required was a sufficient transformative nexus over a general swath of land to make a claim to constructive possession.

The product of this ongoing renegotiation of political, legal, and cultural structures between groups contributed across the region to the rise of the reordering of identity and institutions. In looking at this process of community development I hope that the history of the development of the United States specifically, and the Americas generally, will become more a story without a single dominant voice. Indeed, from this perspective, the continuing American challenge and ability to not simply absorb new peoples, but to interact with waves of immigrants and their cultures, and to change and be changed by these, becomes understandable as a hallmark of American culture and identity.

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<sup>10</sup> John Martin, *Profits in the Wilderness* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press: 1991), 28-30, 37-38 and *Crossing the Sound*, 90-91.

<sup>11</sup> *Crossing the Sound*, 7.

<sup>12</sup> It is interesting to note, however, that a version of peopling and planting as a prerequisite to initiate the transformation of land to property was retained in the nineteenth century Homesteading acts. Most of these required the prospective landowner to live on and undertake minimum improvements for a certain number of years to perfect title.

## **BOOK REVIEWS**

Ron Ross. *Bummy Davis Vs. Murder Inc.: The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Mafia and an Ill-Fated Prizefighter*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2003. Glossary. Pp. 214.

Author Ron Ross has graphically portrayed Brownsville Brooklyn life circa 1920- 1945 in his gripping historical novel. Told amidst the backdrop of Prohibition, the Depression, the rise of organized crime and World War II, Ross chronicles the life and tragic death of one of the neighborhood's heroes, boxing great Al "Bummy" Davis. In his short life Davis not only battled opponents in the ring but those who like himself were the product of Brownsville's streets, the mobsters known as Murder Incorporated.

Ross tells the intriguing story of how organized crime gained a foothold in Brownsville. Following the demise of Prohibition, a syndicate of gangsters consolidated their power and proceeded to apply a stranglehold on the neighborhood. Through loan sharking, insurance protection, gambling and labor management control, organized crime dominated Brownsville's economic and social life. Merchants and residents, many of whom were immigrants with an ingrained old world fear of those in power, found it in their best interests to cooperate. Those who terrorized Brownsville included a who's who of Brooklyn's most vicious criminals of that era; Abe "Kid Twist" Reles, Martin "Bugsy" Goldstein, "Pittsburgh" Phil Strauss, "Dutch" Schultz, Allie "Tick-Tock" Tannenbaum, and the Shapiro brothers, among others. Proving once again that crime is not the sole province of any one particular ethnic group, these men were first generation sons of Jewish immigrants. America, the *goldeneh medina*, (Yiddish for "golden land"), with all its freedoms and new ways of life caused these wayward young men to indulge themselves in a life of crime.

One son of Jewish immigrants who did not choose this way of life was Albert Abraham Davidoff. As a young boy, "Vroomy" or "Boomy" as he was known, was a tough kid with a heart of gold and keen sense of right and wrong. He was beloved by his friends and admired by those who knew him well. As a teenager, young Boomy developed a talent for boxing which ultimately brought him into direct conflict with Abe "Kid Twist" Reles and his ruthless cohorts. Professionally known as Al "Bummy" Davis and dubbed the "Brownsville Bum," his story of courage and bravery in and out of the ring, against great odds, is poignantly told.

As a result of the lawbreaking exploits of his brother Willie, Davis was unjustly linked to organized crime by the newspapers. Besides

damaging his reputation, this led to an unfair suspension from the New York State Boxing Commission, effectively stalling his career at a time when his fighting ability was at its best. With the incessant negative publicity from the press, Bummy's fan base extended to very few outside his own neighborhood. Even with all the ordeals he faced, Davis' strength of character enabled him to ultimately defeat and outlive Murder Inc. They failed in their attempt to take control of his career. By the early 1940's all of those who represented Murder Inc. were either jailed, killed or executed after trial by the State of New York. Organized crime in Brownsville disappeared but unorganized crime unfortunately didn't. Ironically, Bummy's life ended at age 25, while heroically trying to stop a robbery by a group of young punks looking to make a name for themselves.

Ross summons up life in Brownsville between the two world wars with his faithful descriptions of street life. The stores, which drew many outsiders to Pitkin Avenue, as well as the pushcart peddlers, candy stores, and butchers of the two-and-a-half square miles of the neighborhood are nostalgically revisited. The religious life of Brownsville is illustrated by many absorbing anecdotes woven throughout the story. And the interest in sports, especially boxing as exemplified by Bummy Davis' popularity, was significant since it served both as diversion and a source of ethnic pride.

Accounts of mob initiated executions and other criminal activity are explicitly detailed. Some of the more notorious events written about include the horrific murders of "Dutch" Schultz and the Shapiro brothers. Ross also recounts the mysterious death of Abe "Kid Twist" Reles, who while supposedly under strict round-the-clock police custody at Coney Island's Half Moon hotel, found himself flying out the window to his death one November morning in 1941.

The story is compellingly told through a narrative both touching and amusing. Written in a breezy, witty style, *Bummy Davis Vs. Murder Inc.* is based on actual events and real people. The many unforgettable characters are colorfully depicted in anecdotal fashion. Bummy's major fights are vividly recreated.

There are neither photos (except for a great shot of Bummy in boxing trunks ready to fight that graces the cover), nor an index in this journalistic history. However, there is a glossary of Yiddish words and phrases that are liberally found throughout the story. The author, who closes with a moving tribute to Davis, has done a masterful job in this homage to the life and times of a great Brownsville son.

GARY WILBUR,  
New Hyde Park, N.Y.

Thelma Jackson. *African Americans in Northport: An Untold Story*. Huntington, N.Y.: Maple Hill Press, 2000. viii+ Pp. 95.

Thelma Jackson's series of portraits concerning the lives, careers, and social institutions of African Americans in Northport, Long Island is an affectionate attempt to keep the memory of this community alive. *African Americans in Northport: An Untold Story* is a meticulous cataloguing of important black families and institutions in that community, along with stories about the experiences of more famous (and infamous) people who visited the community.

Yet, the book refrains from drawing profound conclusions about all the data it so richly documents, leaving the reader with questions about the relevance of Northport to the local and national black experience during that period. "In the early 1900s," according to Jackson, "blacks in the Huntington area resided primarily in Huntington Station or Greenlawn. Few blacks lived in Northport, but those who did interacted with the white community. Social gatherings, such as attending the local movie houses, "were freely enjoyed by all races" (p. 28). In discussing the childhood of one of her subjects, Thomas David Wood, she gives a specific example of such interaction. "During a time when blacks in the southern states were relegated to separate accommodations such as segregated theaters and restaurants, Tom enjoyed going to the movies with his white friends. They collected and returned bottles to get the twenty-one cents needed to purchase a ticket at the movie theater" (p.48).

Vera Groves Shorter, a black resident of Bayview Avenue, had a similarly exceptional experience during her youth in the 1920s or 1930s. Shorter was walking through the back yard of a person's residence on a very hot day, and asked the white lady who owned the house if she could take a swim in the swimming pool to cool off. Not only did the lady consent to Shorter's request, but she allowed Shorter to come back and swim there on future occasions. Surprising as these examples may be, Jackson does not explain what made incidents like these possible in Northport during that era, an era in which there were plenty of places in the northern states where such interactions were forbidden.

Similarly, her descriptions of Thomas Wood's boxing career (in which "people flocked to Main Street, tossing money in the ring, to watch young Thomas fight white boys"(p.26) does not address the question of how these contests were perceived in light of Jack Johnson's controversial career as a black heavyweight boxing champion during the same era. How did Northport respond socially to these interracial bouts? Was Wood attacked in any way for either winning or losing? How did the behavior between blacks and whites on Main Street change following the outcome of these fights? The answers would provide a revealing look at

race relations in Northport at that time.

Another surprising fact Jackson uncovers, without explaining it, is that Booker T. Washington “found a quiet haven in the wealthy white town of Fort Salonga in the early 1900s. His family frequently traveled by train from Tuskegee, Alabama to stay at their rented summer retreat. The property had a sweeping view of Long Island Sound” (p.64). Jackson never explains how or why this particular location came to Washington’s attention as a desirable location for a summer retreat. She does explain that Washington’s invitation to speak at St. Paul Methodist Episcopal Church, a local congregation, was vehemently opposed by the congregation’s members, a sentiment that only changed once Washington actually got to make his speech. As Jackson puts it: “Washington delivered an eloquent speech that was well received, thus enormously changing the attitudes among the congregation and in the community. His speech created a significant impact on the residents, and the harsh restrictions of segregation were temporarily put aside” (p. 65). Jackson’s words indicate that although Washington was given a second speaking invitation, this time at Northport High School in 1901, his ability to “change attitudes” was limited. Indeed, Jackson writes, Washington had complaints from a neighbor who threatened to have Washington’s telephone wires removed because they crossed his own property (a complaint the telephone company investigated and found to be groundless).

How “quiet” a haven was Northport for Washington, then? At best, Jackson’s brief account of his experiences leaves that issue unclear, and these experiences conflict with the generally positive picture of race relations she paints when describing the lives of black citizens who did not have Washington’s national celebrity status. In fact, in the context of that overall harmonious picture, Jackson’s account of an open Ku Klux Klan meeting in Northport (which had its own chapter of the organization) on June 6, 1924 sticks out even more starkly than her accounts of the resistance to Booker T. Washington. The scene was a horrid tableau; members were so proud to be part of the Klan that they did not wear masks to hide their identities. The Klan’s National Lecturer, Dr. Oscar W. Haywood, spoke at this meeting, indicating that the Klan’s national offices, at least, found Northport to be an important recruitment locale. (Why so? Again, this is a question Jackson does not explore or answer.) Moreover, Haywood successfully encouraged a Northport congregation to join the Klan on the spot, with oaths recited and crosses burning right at the scene. Apparently the Klan’s efforts to strengthen their influence in the community were successful. According to Jackson, a black family in Makamah Beach had their house burned down by the Klan eleven years later, forcing the family to move out of Northport.

Jackson's report of this incident did not include information (although it is unclear whether her interview subjects were able or willing to furnish it) concerning why this black family, led by a Dr. Kent, had been singled out for this terrible attack. Another unanswered question is why the Klan felt the need to recruit so intensely in Northport, when in Jackson's words, "Northport's black population was a small one" (p. 66).

The closest that Jackson comes to deriving conclusions about Northport society is her discussion of the Genola Cemetery toward the end of the book. She observes that in this inter-denominational and interracial cemetery, the black tombstones are all segregated in one section, but they have not been vandalized. This fact she asserts, "bear[s] witness even in death to the complex racial attitudes in Northport throughout most of the twentieth century" (p. 83). This conclusion that the status of blacks in Northport was "complex," one in which segregation and racial violence happened in some quarters and not in others, is basically the only analysis that the reader can take from this book. A much deeper analysis of this community is needed, because such an investigation would present a fuller, less idiosyncratic picture of the black experience in Northport than Jackson offers in this work.

DURAHN TAYLOR

Pace University

Floris Barnett Cash. *African American Women and Social Action: The Clubwomen and Volunteerism from Jim Crow to the New Deal, 1896-1936*. Westport, C.T.: Greenwood Press, 2001. Introduction, Pp. 213.

In her new work, Floris Barnett Cash has joined the long list of scholars who have examined the African American clubwomen's movement. Originating in the antebellum period, black women formed their own organizations to advance the causes of the race through charity, education, and political mobilization. Once ignored by historians, the importance of the activities of black clubwomen in the African American experience has increased since the in the 1980s. The groundbreaking scholarship of Darlene Clark Hine, Deborah Gray White, Cynthia Neverdon Morton, Stephanie Shaw, Glenda Gilmore and many more have clearly demonstrated the importance of the activities of middle-class African American women. By examining the lives of these clubwomen and their contributions to society, scholars of black women's history have fashioned a well-rounded understanding of African American self-created institutional support systems in the post-Reconstruction South and the unreconstructed North.

Cash brings together discussions on both religious and secular organizations to build her portrait of black clubwomen. Rather than uncovering a myriad of motivations for women's activism, Cash's study reveals the commonalities among black clubwomen regardless of differences of region, political status, and economic opportunity. Whether they were rural or urban, lived in the South, North, or Midwest, the communities of these black middle class women were, for Cash, plagued by the same issues of health, poverty, education, and stereotyping. Motivated by a spirit of religion and democracy, black women across the country organized to uplift their race, in a time when they often found themselves paralyzed by Jim Crow legislation, occupational limitations, and mob violence. Cash's study of African American clubwomen discusses the means by which these activists navigated civil rights issues to secure a place for women of color in these debates.

This study focuses on the period beginning in the 1890s and concluding with the New Deal, drawing our attention to the period when women were at the forefront of political activism in the African American community and allowing us to understand the ways in which their organizations were undermined by both the rise of more traditionally "male" organizations like the NAACP and National Urban League, and by the rise in importance of the federal government under the leadership of Franklin D. Roosevelt in issues of social welfare.

Cash's study is based on a survey of both primary and secondary documents. Her goal, as stated in the introduction, is to "analyze issues and provide insights on the social action of the pioneer black clubwomen" exploring the vast network of sites of action from the formal organization of the National Association of Colored Women, to the creation of settlement houses and other forms of service work, and concluding with the integration of black women into the institutions of the federal government. As white women were motivated to action during the progressive era, so too were their sisters across the racial divide. Black clubwomen took on the responsibility to "uplift" their race, offering assistance and guidance to their less fortunate racial counterparts with the aim of securing their rights as citizens as guaranteed by the Constitution. According to Cash, "the primary goal of black women in organized clubs was full acceptance and acculturation into mainstream society" (p. 12). Often excluded from white organizations, African Americans were forced to create their own community institutions to provide services for their race, from literary groups to mutual aid societies. By proving themselves worthy, black clubwomen attempted to increase opportunities for their communities, socially, politically, economically, and educationally.

Cash examines the ways that black clubwomen transformed the public arena into a space where their concerns could be vocalized by members of their group, by challenging both black men and mainstream society. One example of this shift can be found in discussions of racial violence. While black clubwomen took a strong stand against lynching, whose victims were predominately male, they also spoke out about the vulnerabilities involved with domestic work and the frequent, yet unreported, attacks against black women in these positions. Women-led groups provided opportunities for female leadership on both the local and national level, offering a voice for both gender-specific issues, along with those that impacted the entire race. Cash's study incorporates the stories of women from all regions of the United States, who transformed their communities in the realms of health care, education, and social work, in addition to participating in the struggle to end mob violence.

Providing a concise survey of the period, Cash begins her study by situating the black clubwomen's movement in historical and scholarly perspectives. Distinguishing between the pre-Civil War and post-Reconstruction organizations built by black women, Cash offers a succinct, yet broad, explanation for the reader of the foundational issues that led to the call for a national black women's organization. A deep religious influence can be found in many of the founding principles in local groups across the country, along with an awareness of (or personal experience with) profound racism and sexism. The reasons for the broadening of the movement to the national level were linked to both opportunity and economic and social needs. With the dissolution of slavery in the United States in 1865 came more responsibility and more opportunities, most of which were aimed at increasing racial progress.

Cash charts the development of individual black women's clubs leading to the formation of the National Association for Colored Women (NACW) in 1896, identifying three main focuses of women's activism that came together in this group: temperance, religious, and literary clubs. The expansion of opportunities for women's writing also promoted the awareness of the need for a national organization. As more black women gained access to the print media as both participants and as readers, the commonalities between the activities of local groups and their political philosophies became clear. Here Cash cites the influence of women like Ida B. Wells, Anna Julia Cooper, and Frances E.W. Harper, in her long list of women who took on significant social and political roles. The lack of a political voice, particularly around the issue of lynching, served as a motivating factor, along with the idea that "A race, no less than a nation, is prosperous in proportion to the intelligence of its women," a point argued by Monroe Majors, physician and editor of *Noted Negro Women*:



*Their Triumphs and Activities* (1893), along with well known early African American feminists, and leading figures like W.E.B. Du Bois.

Cash brings attention to women such as Josephine Ruffin, who as editor of the *Woman's Era* was able to access the ideal forum through which to call for a national meeting of black clubwomen in 1895. Morality was the central issue of this first meeting, where most participants felt an urgency to refute charges that their sisters were "loose," an idea that placed every black woman in jeopardy. According to Cash, these women argued that racial uplift would begin with the uplift of their sisters; therefore black clubwomen would become the arbiters of socially acceptable behavior. In the early years of the NACW like-minded African American women could come together to share ideas, discuss strategies, and put forth a united message. Cash concludes that "[f]or the new black women who emerged during the 1890s, the women's clubs served both a political and social purpose," marking another step in the long journey to place their concerns on the national stage (p. 44).

Cash engages in a systematic discussion of the foundations of black settlement houses, and the women who started these programs, with groupings based on the differing needs of rural and urban communities. The work of metropolitan institutions founded by women including Janie Porter Barrett, Lugenia Burns Hope, and the little known Sarah Collins Fernandis, and rural campaigns for racial uplift led by Judia Jackson Harris and others are examined, albeit briefly. The same can be said for Cash's discussion of settlement houses located in Boston, Chicago, and New York. Cash details the stories of individual institutions from the White Rose Mission in New York to Chicago's Phillis Wheatley Home for Girls, offering insight into the motivations of their founders. Though the reader might conclude that extensive networks were needed to maintain the viability of these institutions, in fact the discussions of schools and settlement houses in Chapters Five and Six, for example, often reads more like bibliographic entries, with each facility receiving its own subheading and brief history. Given the national character of the clubwomen's movement, the reader is often left with more questions than answers about extant correspondence between similar organizations or like minded individuals, as well as how these black led operations functioned on a daily basis.

In looking at the field of social work, Cash outlines the connections between the volunteer activities of the progressive era and the professionalization of social work as an academic discipline and career, which was opened to black women. With the founding of the National Urban League in 1910, black women found another outlet for their "volunteerism," but according to Cash "were not placed in policy-making positions in the organization" (p. 120). It was not until the development

of social work programs at Historically Black Colleges and Universities such as the famous Atlanta School of Social Work, that black women had the opportunity receive a salary for what they had been doing for decades.

Cash's concluding chapter "A New Image: From the Black Woman to the New Deal" explores a wide range of topics from the ideas behind the "New Negro" and the "New Woman," the conflict between Mary Church Terrell and Mary McLeod Bethune about the direction of the NACW, to Bethune's role in Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal administration, as head of the Negro Division of the National Youth Administration. From political outsiders at the turn of the century to gaining a role on the national political stage by the mid-1930s, black women had secured a place for themselves as racial representatives. Through her discussion of clubwomen from the progressive era to the 1930s, the reader can begin to understand how these activists were able to use skills they had developed to organize members in gender specific organizations to launch both statewide and national campaigns to improve the lives of African Americans.

Like the lived experience of Cash's subjects, *Black Women's History* is also located on the nexus of the race and gender divide. Black clubwomen often found themselves in the position of having to choose between these competing interests, given the foci of both African American and women's liberation struggles. This study details how these women were able to chart a path that would identify them as both women and black, pushing for recognition of their interests by groups led by "race men" and white women. One of Cash's strengths is the diligence of her treatment. Providing biographical information on both major and minor figures in African American women's history, this study reveals the diverse undertakings of these subjects. However, this volume would have been enhanced by exploration of the role played by black clubwomen in the suffrage movement and in the creation of black chapters of organizations such as the Young Women's Christian Association. Nevertheless, for audiences unfamiliar with the black women's club movement, this study can provide a useful introduction to the major figures and ideas of the era. While she draws heavily on the work and conceptual models of her predecessors, Cash provides an overview of the field and the lives of black clubwomen as they interjected an alternate perspective on the activities and struggles of those who have been historically excluded as both agents of change and subjects of analysis.

PRUDENCE D. CUMBERPATCH  
Brooklyn College-CUNY

Antonia Booth and Thomas Monsell. *Images of America: Greenport*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2003. Illustrations. Pp. 128.

Geoffrey Fleming. *Images of America: Southold*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2004. Illustrations. Pp. 128.

Arcadia Publishing's stated mission is to make history accessible and meaningful through the publication of high quality books on the heritage of America's people and places. In this, the company has been successful throughout the United States. *Images in America* is a series consisting of books that are similar in size and shape, each highlighting historic photographs from a specific community. However, to the extent they appear no different on the outside, they are each unique and distinctive in content.

Antonia Booth has been Southold Town Historian for more than twenty years. Thomas Monsell is a native of Greenport as well as Greenport Village Historian. Their combined depth of knowledge of the Village of Greenport shows in each of the captions for the approximately 200 photographs in this standout volume in the series. History is really brought alive as the text, combined with each photo, creates a three dimensional portrait of a diverse, thriving seaport. Greenport's colorful history dates back to the mid-seventeenth century. Settlers included farmers, shipbuilders, oystermen, whalers, and the forebears of today's bay men. Mitchell's Restaurant, at one time a popular destination for people from all over, is described so colorfully, I felt part of a time and place I have never been. This is truly bringing history alive.

The seven chapters are creatively named, including "Sterling Days", "The Sound of the Sea," and "Community." Each photographic description encompasses both the historical significance of the image, as well as the social story behind it. For example, looking at a photo of David Gelston Floyd playing dominoes with a young relative, we also learn he "was a successful investor in whaling ships. In 1851, he built the mansion Brecknock Hall, now the centerpiece of Peconic Landing, the life care community on the North Road in Greenport. Floyd Memorial Library is named after him. His grandfather William Floyd signed the Declaration of Independence." Virtually every description in this book covers a broad spectrum of facts, interspersed with the authors' intelligent and fine tuned sense of humor.

A worthy companion to the Greenport book is Arcadia's *Images of America: Southold* by Geoffrey Fleming, Director of the Southold Historical Society. Fleming incorporated about 200 images from the large photographic collection at the Society to present Southold's rich history as the oldest English settlement in the state of New York. The images in

this volume are well researched and presented in a logical and thorough way. Each chapter covers a slice of life and depicts part of a vital and flourishing settlement. Mr. Fleming has a talent for capturing numerous facts and compiling them in a way that is interesting as well as informative to the reader. The Hamlet of Southold, although adjacent to Greenport, was a decidedly different community. It was primarily agrarian, as opposed to Greenport's maritime emphasis. The chapters are well organized, covering the people, homes, businesses, schools and churches that made up the community. Numerous portraits of Southold's early residents are included. They bring life to the names that make up the hamlet's history. I found the chapter on homes to be one of the best. Many of these buildings have been lost. They bring a vivid evocation to the way Southold once looked. Mr. Fleming has included a bibliography for those interested in pursuing further research into one of the many aspects of Southold's history.

Both of these books offer a glimpse into what life was like in these small yet vibrant communities in centuries past. They will continue to keep history alive for the foreseeable future.

CAROLINE MACARTHUR  
Southold Free Library

Belle Barstow. *Setauket, Alias Brookhaven: The Birth of a Long Island Town with Chronological Records 1655-1679*. New York: Author-House, 2004. Index, bibliography, Pp. 631.

Belle Barstow, a long time resident of Setauket, spent many years researching the history of her community. In the tradition of William Pelletreau, Benjamin Thompson, R.M. Bayles, Martha Flint, and Nathaniel Prime, Barstow labored out of love of place and appreciation for Long Island history.\* It is surprising that Barstow makes no reference to the earlier histories of Brookhaven by R.M. Bayles (1883) and Pelletreau (1903). These men did the pioneering research on the town

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\* Richard M. Bayles, "Brookhaven," in *The History of Suffolk County, New York*, edited by W.W. Munsell (New York: W. W. Munsell), 1-101; Bertha Clark, "Rhode Island Woods on Long Island, *The American Genealogist* 39(3): 129-140; Lillian Mowrer, *The Indomitable John Scott: Citizen of Long Island* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1960); William Pelletreau, "Brookhaven," in *The History of Long Island* (New York: Lewis Publishing, 1903).

and deserve some acknowledgement. Barstow's research took her to archival sources in Connecticut, Boston, and England. She worked in the British Museum archives and in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. The result is a rich and comprehensive study of Brookhaven Town during the first three decades after its founding when it was known as Setauket.

Barstow's approach, however, is rather disjointed. She presents brief biographies of prominent early settlers interspersed with accounts of daily life in the town. In her second chapter "1657-1661; Setauket's Beginnings and The Men Who Made It," we find a collection of two to three page vignettes cobbled together with no connecting references. Brief biographical essays on John Underhill, Richard Woodhull, Richard Smith, Arthur Smith, George Wood, and John Dyer are interspersed among the following topical headings; Southold Residents, Quaker, Cromwell's Bay, the years 1660-1661, Townsmen Changes, Self Reliance, Connecticut Jurisdiction, Restoration, Restoration and New England, and English laws. Unfortunately these subheadings are not listed in the table of contents so the reader must flip through the pages to locate a topic or look for clues in the index of proper names at the back of the book.

Many of her vignettes, however, are worth searching for. She describes the activities of the village blacksmith, the construction of houses, a "day in the life of a woman," the inventory of a household, the town mill, the village weavers, the boats, and the shore whaling enterprise. Her treatment of the native people, however, is very disappointing. She repeats the shortcomings of the nineteenth century lay historians. Her account of the native peoples is derivative, relegating them to a shadowy backdrop on the stage of white settler history.

Barstow's rich details about daily life in colonial Setauket and her account of John Scott's role in Setauket history more than compensate for the shortcomings of the book. Scott, an enigmatic figure who is viewed by most historians except his biographer Lillian Mowrer as a scoundrel, lived in Setauket from 1663 until his flight from Long Island in 1665. Barstow went to the archives in England to revisit the documents studied by Mowrer. These documents, located in the Bodleian Library and in the British Museum, have much to offer scholars interested in Long Island history. They are, however, strongly biased against John Scott because they were collected for use in the treason trial of Samuel Pepys. Scott testified against Pepys, who then gathered testimony from many sources in an attempt to destroy Scott's credibility. Barstow has gleaned some information that Mowrer omitted, probably because it reflected badly on Scott.

We learn, for example, that Richard Nicolls, who had resisted Governor John Winthrop Jr.'s request for Scott's arrest, began to change

his mind as a result of two social occasions. Nicolls met Scott at two dinner parties at the home of his friends. Nicolls found Scott to be “an inconsiderable fellow and so great a liar,” that he reproached his host for having a good opinion of Scott (p. 156). Nicolls finally decided that Scott’s character was questionable and later issued a warrant for his arrest. Scott quietly slipped away to the West Indies. Mowrer argues that Nicolls turned against Scott because Scott encouraged the eastern towns to resist absorption into the new colony of New York. It is true that Nicolls was angered by the towns’ reluctance to accept New York’s jurisdiction, but there is little evidence that Scott was a leader in this matter. It is also true that Scott and his motives remain somewhat of a mystery.

Barstow found another fascinating reference in the Bodeleian Library collections that was understandably ignored by Mowrer. Although Barstow’s interpretation of this reference is highly speculative, it does add a tantalizing anecdote to Scott’s colorful biography. Barstow believed that she had found evidence connecting Scott to the 1665 witchcraft trial of Ralph and Mary Hall. The Halls lived in Setauket where Mary had gained a reputation as a healer who understood the medicinal powers of herbs. When George Wood, the keeper of the tavern in Setauket, suffered a prolonged illness, Mary may have tried to cure him. The sparse trial records do not give any details about the relationship between Wood and the Halls. All we know is that Ralph and Mary were accused of causing the death of George Wood by the dark powers of “witchcraft and Sorcery” (p. 195). Wood’s widow, Ann, married a man named Rogers, apparently while she was pregnant with George’s child.

Barstow made an error at this point in her account of the trial. She mistook the reference to Ann Rogers in the trial records. The record states that Ann Rogers is George Wood’s widow, indicating that Ann must have married a man named Rogers soon after George died. Barstow, however, refers to Wood’s “marriage to widow Rogers” (p. 197). Bertha Clark, in her genealogy of the Wood family, however, makes it clear that Ann married Henry Rogers after George’s death.<sup>i</sup> Henry became the guardian of George and Ann’s surviving children. They were, therefore, his stepchildren, not his grandchildren as Barstow believed (P. 197n). When the infant died of an illness that seemed to be similar to the one that caused her father’s death, the Halls were arrested. The jury found that there was no evidence implicating Ralph Wood and only “some suspicion” about his wife. They were both released, but the

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<sup>i</sup> Bertha Clark, “Rhode Island Woods on Long Island,” *The American Genealogist* 39 (1963): 131

court required Mary to make annual appearances to the authorities for the next three years.

The reference discovered by Barstow was among the testimonies collected by Samuel Pepys to discredit Scott. Thomas Lovelace, the brother of Francis Lovelace who served as the colonial governor from 1668 to 1673, stated that John Scott took a “wench one widow Rogers, and kept her in ye house with his wife and had a child by her, a girl” (p. 195n). But was it the same widow Rogers? Barstow thinks so, but there is no corroborating data to support her interpretation. This does not mean, of course, that she is wrong. The reference to “widow Rogers” in both documents must be considered because it seems unlikely that there was more than one widow Rogers in Setauket. It must also be recalled that the Pepys trial testimony clearly indicates that Scott was capable of such behavior.

Still, there are several unanswered questions. Lovelace’s testimony does not mention the date when “widow” Rogers lived in Scott’s home. The trial records are a problem because there is no mention of the time lapse between the death of George Wood and the marriage of his widow to Henry Rogers. The records do clearly indicate that Ann’s infant died after she remarried. Did Ann leave her new husband and go to the Scott home after her marriage and conceive of the child there? This would mean Scott might have fathered the child who died. All this is very tantalizing speculation, but we cannot resolve the matter without more documentation.

All we can say for certain is that a Thomas Lovelace, who appears to be a creditable witness, testified that Scott impregnated a woman called “widow” Rogers. Even if she was not George Wood’s widow, the incident is an important addition to the biographical data on John Scott.

Another important, albeit much less dramatic, contribution of the volume is in Part Two “The Chronological Town Records 1655-1679 with Name Index” Barstow has arranged documents that relate to Brookhaven in chronological order from 1655 to 1679. The documents, which are indexed by individual’s names, make up the last three hundred pages in the book. Barstow has selected most of the documents from the Brookhaven town records.

Different editors originally published these records in three volumes in a confusing sequence, which often overlapped. Benjamin Hutchinson edited the first in 1880. This collection, *Records of the Town of Brookhaven up to 1800*, included an incomplete collection of town records from 1655 to 1800. In 1924 Archibald Weeks edited *Brookhaven Town Records, Volume 1 1662-1679*. This volume reprinted some of the documents in the Hutchinson volume and transcribed the rest of the documents in Book 1 and Book 2 of the original town records. For some

reason Weeks did not correct a mistake made when the number designations on the covers came unglued and had to be reattached. The numbers were inadvertently switched so that Book 1 included documents from 1675 to 1678 and Book 2 ran from 1662 to 1670. Some of the documents for the years 1670 to 1675 are in Hutchinson's 1880 edition. In 1930 Osborn Shaw compiled more documents for the periods from 1657 to 1679 and from 1790 to 1798 (along with the 1686 Dongan Patent). To make the whole thing even more confusing, Shaw titled his volume, *Records of the Town of Brookhaven Book A*. In the preface the reader is told that Books 1 and 2 were originally two parts of Book A and that this volume includes documents that were not in the 1880 and 1924 editions.

Barstow integrates relevant documents from neighboring towns on Long Island, the Connecticut records, O'Callaghan's *Documentary History of New York*, the Rawlinson manuscripts in the British Museum, and O'Callaghan's *Court of Assizes Records*. The result is a very useful compilation for those interested in the history of eastern Long Island. Each entry is accompanied with a reference to its source.

The volume has a little something for everyone. The descriptions of material culture and the anecdotes about important individuals and events in Brookhaven history will interest the general public and the documents in Part Two will be very useful for professional scholars.

JOHN STRONG  
Southampton College of  
Long Island University, *Emeritus*

*Images of America: Stony Brook*. Portsmouth, NH: Three Village historical Society & Arcadia Publishing, 2003. Pp. 128.

This thin volume covers four centuries of Stony Brook history. The book accomplished its purpose of bringing life to a little-known historic village and its community of farmers, artisans, seamen, and businessmen. The book is divided into seven chapters, with an afterword on Stony Brook University. The authors were able to utilize photographs, documents, and memoirs from the resources of the Three Village Historical Society's Captain Edward R. Rhodes Memorial Collection of Local History, as well as private collections.

In the seventeenth century Long Island attracted settlers from New England. Setauket, with Stony Brook as a small community on the North Shore, with its flat farmlands near protected harbors was highly desirable. Most of the early Long Islanders were subsistence farmers, with the



exception of whalers. However, after 1700 with the depletion of near shore whales, the focus shifted offshore and to Nantucket.

In the early eighteenth century activity along Stony Brook Creek was centered at the intersection of Main Street and Harbor Road where a mill, a general store, a blacksmith shop, and a bakery developed. There was no church in this remote village, but by 1743 there was a schoolhouse on a hill above the millpond. The authors demonstrate through a series of historic photographs of residences, businesses, schools, and churches how the Stony Brook community developed. Beginning with the Hawkins Mount House which was built around 1757, the first chapters present numerous historic residences, including the Thomas Bayles House, the Caleb Davis House, the Kane House (c. 1790), the John Smith House (1795), the Obediah-Davis-Hadaway House (1710), and the Hawkins-Terrell House (c. 1890), among others.

Main Street ran up the center of the old business triangle, as pictured in a 1941 photograph. The business triangle evolved as activity developed along the roads to Setauket and the town dock, Christian Avenue, and Shore Road. The second chapter focuses on the outer area of the triangle where homes and small shops were built and along the creek. The photographs include Gould's General Store, the Stony Brook Post Office, the Bank of Suffolk county, the Stossel House, the Horton Young House, the Three village Tea House, and the Whitford House. The focus of the third chapter is the triangle itself. The triangle block of Stony Brook may have begun with the construction of the Old Brick House in 1822. Shops and service buildings emerged, with many shopkeepers living above or behind their businesses. Development of the new shopping center in 1940 necessitated the removal of these structures, a process which continued when Suffolk County repositioned Main Street in 1946, leading to a newly constructed village green. Included in chapter three are photographic views of Stony Brook Harbor (1906), the Old Brick House, the Odd Fellows Building, the Old Stone House as the Suffolk Museum, the Mills House, the R. H. Smith's General Store, the A. H. Mills General Store, Duane C. "Ducky" Cole's Service Station, Roulston's Market and Zimmerlein's Drugstore, and the T. R. Rogers Plumbing Shop.

Christian Avenue, the main road to north shore communities east of Stony Brook, was settled rapidly in the nineteenth century. The land south of Christian Avenue could be used for individual garden plots and subsistence farming. Many ship captains built modest homes in this ideal location. Hollow Road, known as Oak Street (1873), Hollow Road-Bicycle Road (1909), Wopowog Road (1910) and Park Avenue (1917) was also settled with homes. In the twentieth century the cultural center of the community shifted toward the

Stony Brook Union Free School (1898) on the hill above 251 Christian Avenue. Shown here are photographs of Christian Avenue (1930), Christian Avenue (1940), and various businesses on Christian Avenue.

Approaching the pristine Stony Brook Harbor has been a navigational challenge for centuries. Neither shipping nor shipbuilding was more than moderately successful and, despite commercial fishing off and on in Stony Brook Harbor, it did not become an economically an important port.

The history of Stony Brook is interwoven with the history of a few prominent and locally powerful families. These men and women, who exerted control over an area that was financially isolated in the eighteenth and nineteenth-centuries, intermarried and created a web of cousins, including John Smith, Obediah Davis, and Jonas Smith, a descendant of “Bull” Smith of Smithtown whose home became the Three Village Inn.

Soon after arriving in Stony Brook Frank and Jenny Melville embarked on a program of village improvement. Ward Melville continued his father’s vision of a restored colonial village in Stony Brook. Beginning in the 1930s, many buildings and tracts of land were purchased. Many structures were moved, some were modified, and others were demolished.

The most significant event that took place was Ward Melville’s invitation to New York State to move a university to Stony Brook. Melville donated 600 acres to provide the nucleus of the main campus. The state provided additional lands for the university hospital and medical school. The university not only influenced Stony Brook, but Setauket, Port Jefferson, Smithtown and surrounding villages.

The Three Village historical Society, located in the Bayles Sweezy House (c. 1800), is dedicated to servicing the community through preserving the material heritage of the Three Villages. It has done so with this exemplary pictorial history.

FLORIS CASH

Stony Brook University

Steven Petrow, with Richard Barons. *The Lost Hamptons*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Arcadia Publishing, 2004. Pp. 120.

As I studied the windmill and the sailboats pictured in the stunning postcards on the cover of Steven Petrow’s book, *The Lost Hamptons*, I wondered not how much has been “lost,” but how much has withstood decades of development on the South Fork. Eleven windmills survive to dot the landscape of eastern Long Island, more than in any other region of

the country, and sailboats abound in the still magnificent waters of the Hamptons, dwarfing the number there in 1910.

It is only after entering this book and appreciating its 105 or so color postcards, dating from 1895 to about 1935, that the reader begins to see and feel what the author believes has been lost. Petrow finds that past in the particulars of the “place and a way of life,” filled with “celebrity . . . architecture. . . landscapes and seascapes” (p. 9). Those Hamptons predate the Great Depression and were experienced mainly by visiting social elites. They are lost only in relation to each new generation’s perception of them. According to Petrow, they can “be found again by each subsequent generation” (p. 10) and, I assume, continually redefined. While most historians might prefer a title and organizing theme more in keeping with the complexity of the subject, this book’s value is in the postcards it reproduces and the often insightful narrative that introduces each chapter and places each card in its immediate setting. A few of the captions even include the card-sender’s message.

*The Lost Hamptons* is a collaborative project. Petrow, the lead author, is a journalist with degrees in American history. The knowledgeable Richard Barons, currently the director of the Southampton Historical Museum, is identified as “co-writer” (p. 119). Eric Woodward is the local architect whose postcard collection, augmented with a few selections from the Southampton Historical Museum and the Harvey Ginsberg Collection at the East Hampton Library, forms the basis of this book.

In the period before color film, black and white photographs were often hand colored by postcard artists. In the next step, as Woodward explains in his brief historical essay at the end of the book, “Quality photographic images of cities and towns were lithographed on card stock in Germany and sent back to local retailers in the United State for sale” (p. 117). Woodward pins the highpoint of penny postcard popularity to the period from the late nineteenth century to the start of World War I. The collaborators have noted the approximate year when each card was printed, enhancing the cards’ usefulness as a historical source. In the number of cards reproduced here, about equal attention is paid to the main streets and activities of “year-rounders” (p. 10) as to the summer environment of the “rich and famous” (p. 5). A helpful “Hamptons Timeline” includes notes on the dates of significant land purchases, the number of working farms to be found at particular times, the founding dates of clubs, and time of introduction of new modes of transportation. In the text he also notes the changing values of farm land spawned by rampant speculation, the human responses to the railroad that begins to replace the stagecoach in the 1870s, the role of artists by the 1880s who “forever changed how people valued and perceived the East End’s dunes

and beaches” (p. 101), and the introduction of electricity and the telephone. During the summer of 1901 in East Hampton, a newspaper is quoted as reporting that horse owners hired the owner of an early Locomobile “to run up and down the street while they accustom their animals to the machine” (p. 50).

Lacking in both notes and bibliography, the reader is left to assume that Petrow has depended only on the sources he quotes directly, although few of these direct quotations even sight the source. It appears that he relied primarily on local, Long Island and New York City newspapers, magazines, travelogues, and local histories.

While I enjoyed and learned from *The Lost Hamptons*, a reliable survey of any period in the social history of the South Fork requires more careful context setting. For example, the postcards and the narrative address, primarily, life and times in the villages of Southampton and Easthampton. Yet, in referring to locations in the two towns of the same names, the omission of certain hamlet designations overlooks their unique identities, even if that name includes “Hampton.” The caption for the postcard of Canoe Place Inn (p. 84) fails to place the famous inn and nightclub in Hampton Bays, the hamlet in Southampton Town once called Good Ground. Another opportunity to teach about hamlet communities is lost by quoting only the title of the Hayground windmill, “The Old Hayground Windmill near Southampton, Long Island, N.Y.” (p. 20). The description is merely a 1905 marketing creation to capitalize on chic Southampton. Hayground was part of the hamlet of Bridgehampton during the period addressed, not the village of Southampton, a clarification that more accurately describes colonial settlement patterns.

Apart from its missed opportunities and limited usefulness to researchers, this work is an attractive addition to the coffee table and makes a significant contribution to our understanding of local history by making these historic postcards available to the general public.

ANN SANDFORD  
Regis College (Ret.)

Vincent Seyfried. *The Rockaway Trolley: The Story of the Ocean Electric Railway, 1886 to 1928*. Privately printed, 2003. Notes, Pp. 112. Available from the author, 163 Pine Street, Garden City, N.Y.

Vincent Seyfried and William Asadorian. *Old Rockaway, New York in Early Photographs*. New York: Dover, 2000. Index, Pp. 116.

Vincent Seyfried is an indefatigable researcher whose extensive contributions to Long Island history were summed up by Jeffrey

Kroessler in "Who Has Done More? Vincent Seyfried and the Discovery of Queens History," in *LHJ* 10 (Fall 1997): 79-85. Seyfried's books on transportation and Queens history include seven volumes on trolley lines and an equal number on the Long Island Rail Road, several community histories, and five newspaper indexes. (Copies of vol. 7 of his definitive *Long Island Rail Road* history, *The Age of Electrification, 1901-1916* are still available from the author.)

The Rockaway peninsula was part of the town of Hempstead until the consolidation and expansion of New York City in 1898. Beginning in the late eighteenth century, stagecoaches brought people to Rockaway to enjoy the ocean. The elegant Greek revival style Marine Pavilion hotel opened in 1833, and Rockaway soon became one of the most fashionable resorts in the nation. Excursion steamboats brought visitors in the summer, but it was the coming of railroads in 1869 and 1872 that enabled Rockaway to flourish as a seaside resort. The branch lines extended from Valley Stream and Cedarhurst. By 1890, Far Rockaway and Rockaway Beach together had more than fifteen percent of the town's population, rivaling the older village of Hempstead.

In *The Rockaway Trolley*, Seyfried briefly recounts the history of the two competing railroad lines and the horse car line to the beach, but focuses on the electric line. The trolley survived for more than four decades, doing most of its business in the summer months. The Ocean Electric Railway became a subsidiary of the Long Island Rail Road in 1897, but its franchise expired in 1928, putting an end to trolley service on the peninsula.

The 8-1/2" x 11" book is extensively illustrated with more than a hundred well-reproduced photographs and ten detailed maps. There is, however, no index. One chapter deals with the Meadowbrook Shuttle in central Nassau County, which operated from 1906 to 1933 and used some of the Ocean Electric cars. Other photographs document trolleys in Huntington and Northport that used some of the Rockaway line's equipment. Thus, the contents are broader than the title suggests.

Seyfried relies on company records, numerous newspaper articles, and his own extensive postcard and photograph collection. He provides detailed descriptions of the passenger cars, passenger statistics, and reproductions of telegrams and correspondence. This book is a welcome contribution to Long Island's transportation history and will delight railroad aficionados.

Seyfried co-authored *Old Rockaway* with William Asadorian, with whom he had also collaborated on a 1991 Dover book, *Old Queens, N.Y. in Early Photographs*. Their *Old Rockaway* focuses on the resort era of Rockaway, which lasted a full century (until 1950). Its golden age as a resort was the turn of the nineteenth century when it had grand hotels and

boarding houses, many small bungalows and summer cottages, bathhouses and tent colonies, “fun palaces” and amusement parks, an iron pier and six miles of boardwalk, as well as the ever-present attraction of sandy beaches on the ocean and Jamaica Bay. Access for automobiles increased with bridges built under the auspice of Robert Moses across Jamaica Bay, the Cross Bay Boulevard (1925) and the Marine Parkway Bridge (1937). Subway trains on elevated lines arrived in 1956, using the LIRR right of way on the Cross Bay Boulevard.

*Old Rockaway* has more text than do many photographic histories. After an historical overview of the peninsula, subsequent chapters focus on specific communities, each introduced by two to four pages. As the largest, Far Rockaway and Rockaway Beach appropriately receive the most attention. Other chapters discuss the history of Edgemere, Arverne, and Rockaway Park and the Western Section (Belle Harbor, Neponsit, Jacob Riis Park, and Breezy Point). Ethnic enclaves are noted as well as economic and class differences in communities and developments. Present street locations of sites are identified. It is interesting that Wave Crest began as a gated community in the 1880s. Year-round residential communities also developed.

Like other books in Dover’s “Early Photographs” series, *Old Rockaway* is a large paperback (nearly 9 x 12 inches). It has more than 180 photographs and illustrations, including early maps and advertisements. Most of the photographs date from the early decades of the twentieth century and many are from Seyfried’s own extensive collection.

The authors briefly mention post-World War II changes with high-rise apartment houses, nursing homes, and the development of Gateway National Park, but their focus, as the title indicates, is on the earlier period. Those interested in the more recent history of the Rockaways can read *Between Ocean and City: The Transformation of Rockaway, New York* by Lawrence Kaplan and Carol P. Kaplan (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003). *Old Rockaway* is highly recommended for anyone who visited or has lived in the Rockaways, and those interested in the history of a unique Long Island seaside resort. *The Rockaway Trolley* provides added detail on the development of the peninsula.

NATALIE A. NAYLOR  
Hofstra University, Emerita

Joel T. Rosenthal. *From the Ground Up: A History of the State University of New York at Stony Brook*. Port Jefferson, N.Y.: 116 Press, 2004. Introduction, Pp. 265.

Alumni or former staff who have been away from the State University of New York at Stony Brook for a few years may rub their eyes a bit when coming back to visit. Fountains and attractively landscaped walkways have replaced the ugly concrete desert on the central mall. A recently opened 8,200 seat football stadium hyping a new emphasis on sports (go *Seawolves!*) won't bring Notre Dame to town but is definitely part of the University's new look. The \$40 million Charles B. Wang Center, with its imposing steel panel tower, stands like an exclamation point over this whole new enterprise. Stony Brook's current administration is investing in cosmetics, wagering a better appearance will mean a better university in the long run.

But the school's character could never be reduced to new trees, fresh paint, and a more vibrant color scheme. People and ideas, not "Seawolves," are at the heart of it all. Joel Rosenthal, a nationally prominent professor of Medieval History who has been teaching at Stony Brook since 1964, is one of those pioneering sort who helped build the university "from the ground up": from a fledgling postwar adventure to a nationally prominent institution at the forefront of scientific, medical, and liberal arts research, from 782 students in 1962 to nearly 20,000 today. Rosenthal's book is a personal account that delves into the nearly fifty-year history of Stony Brook (est. 1957) in an entertaining and informative narrative.

Even at the advanced stages of a distinguished career, Rosenthal still sees himself storming the barricades, eagerly telling readers his study was not "commissioned by the University nor submitted for a seal of approval," and insisting that he would not indulge in "pious regard for founding fathers" (pps. vii, 4). Of course, as a tenured professor, there is little risk in such posturing. But Rosenthal's book is not a hatchet job either. Rather, Rosenthal looks at the complex whole of administrations and phases of development, providing balanced assessments of prominent figures. President John Toll (1965-1978) is "resilient" and "a combination of workaholic dedication and glaring insensitivity" (p.153), an administrator who ably oversaw Stony Brook's most prodigious construction phase and also frequently clashed with faculty and students.

The genesis of Stony Brook University came in the 1950s, after the rise of the colossal New York State University system (est. 1948). Against the backdrop of increased government spending, anti-Communism, and the postwar suburban boom, Albany and local movers and shakers decided to position one branch of the new system on Long Island's North Shore. Ward Melville, whose family owned the Thom McAnn Shoe Company, had already made his mark with the 1940s Colonial Revival makeover of the village of Stony Brook. Melville gifted the state a square mile nearby, some 478 acres of heavily forested land, in

1956. Deemed years away from being ready, a temporary campus operated for over five years at the former William Coe estate, now Planting Fields Arboretum, in Oyster Bay. When the new university was finally in place at Stony Brook for 1962's fall semester, the campus was just forty percent of its current size. Bulldozers continued to rumble and tree removals made the overall appearance pretty stark. "Granted, as is often the case, the new baby was not much to look at, at least not unless you had some personal reasons to find it attractive. But it did have good genes and doting parents (and a few aunts and lots of uncles), and it was going to do quite nicely, thank you" (p. 46).

While the 1960s at Stony Brook were a time of constant building – both the campus' infamous "penal code" structures and the academic offerings – the 1970s and the early 80s were marked especially by budget austerity and day-to-day operational struggles. The student growth rate and government funding concurrently slowed to a trickle. The Department of Education was retrenched in 1976, eliminating a crucial service to suburban Long Islanders. Training quality local elementary school teachers was dropped (a hole that would soon be filled by other local institutions, such as Dowling and St. Joseph's Colleges). Meanwhile, one major physical overhaul was taking shape across campus, which temporarily contributed to everyone's suffering: a vast expansion to the old library, in which Rosenthal remembers faculty, staff and students "stoically accepting" the "dust or mud, noise and a long trek on a narrow wooden pathway in search of a working entrance . . . a sort of Battle of Britain mentality kept people on an even keel" (p. 66).

While the growth picked up once again in the 1980s and 90s, funding for graduate students in humanities programs remained proportionally low and a whole new set of challenges faced the campus' enlarged physical plant. Still, Rosenthal recounts the John H. Marburger administration's (1980-1994) positives, which included a stronger commitment to Affirmative Action, a refinement of existing programs plus the development of new ones such as the Humanities Institute, and a greater tolerance towards student and faculty protest.

In addition to earlier Vietnam-era protests, some of the more dramatic episodes of the university's history took shape within the context of the surrounding community. The "great drug bust" of January 1968, in which almost 200 Suffolk County police officers descended upon dormitories and hauled off students on petty marijuana and pills charges, was a publicity stunt at its core. Such actions appealed to local conservative voters who had been increasingly uncomfortable with the scruffy, authority-questioning students in their midst. Later, Rosenthal describes the "Dube" affair, in which Africana Studies professor Ernest Dube was publicly castigated for including an examination of Zionism in



his 1983 “Politics of Race” course. Though Rosenthal contends that Dube had no intentions of such a bald attack on Israel as his accusers claimed, the story stayed in the public eye for several years and resonated with “an outraged public, on up to state legislators who mumbled about the misuse of university funding and the need for more intrusion and control” (p.228).

As these two episodes indicate, Rosenthal characterizes the relationship between “town and gown” as frequently contentious and simmering. But he notes that the university has also been an economic and cultural watershed for the locale, something that residents of the Three Village area have more readily acknowledged in recent years. The book closes with a quote from a local newspaper in early 2000 which states that as a result of the university a conformist white Anglo-Saxon Protestant community gradually became multi-ethnic, and more tolerant of differences than in its hidebound past. Taking a long look back here fifty years ago was placid, serene, and dull. The university brought art, ideas, intellectual resources, even ethnic restaurants (pp. 233-34).

This is not the first history of how SUNY-Stony Brook came to be. Most recently, Kristen J. Nyitray and Ann M. Becker’s *Stony Brook, State University of New York* (2002), a photographic history with plenty of sepia-toned nostalgia but also good and succinctly interesting facts, is actually a little more accessible to the kind of reader Rosenthal states he envisioned when he wrote his book: “an alum male or female — one who now looks back with interest and curiosity about the institution that might now be dunning him or her for a badly needed contribution” (p. 2). Set side by side in the campus bookstore, which book will curious but time-pressed alums pick up? Rosenthal’s study has its own rewards for the patient page turner and seems it will be most appreciated by a different audience: faculty and long-time staff who saw Stony Brook evolve and had, from their vantage points, a perspective of campus operations and conflicts more in line with Rosenthal’s experiences.

*From the Ground Up* tells an important Long Island story: how a highly regarded institution, home to Nobel and Pulitzer prize winners, with programs that have attracted students from around the globe, arose from the wilderness of the North Shore. There were plenty of blemishes and fights along the way, episodes that probably won’t make the official campus fiftieth anniversary catalogue in a few years. Joel Rosenthal is to be commended for rescuing both the human and the heroic elements of this great experiment in higher education.

JOSHUA M. RUFF  
The Long Island Museum

Donald M. Bayles. *The Civil War Letters of Albert and Edward Bayles, and the History of their Regiment, the 139<sup>th</sup> New York Volunteer Infantry*. Middle Island, N.Y.: Longwood Society for Historical Preservation, 2004.

Donald Bayles has made a nice little book out of the Civil War letters of his grandfather's two brothers, discovered when the family moved out of their ancestral house. The letters are introduced by Bayles' account of how he found them and transcribed them, and the research he did to place them in context. They are followed by an official narrative history of the regiment, complete with full rosters of officers and men, and an account of the battles it participated in. Bayles intersperses lines from the letters to locate the brothers in the chronology.

The heart of the book, of course, is the letters themselves, covering the period from August 1862 to June 1864. They bring to life two mid-nineteenth century Long Islanders who enlisted to fight for the Union in 1862. Albert at twenty-three years old entered with the rank of Sergeant, Edward at twenty-one as a private. Their letters, most written by Albert, describe their first experiences of camp life, constant drilling, their fellow soldiers and officers, and express wonder at the escaped slaves coming into camp, typical of many letters from the war. They thank relatives for boxes of food or other items they requested, talk about the future of land owned by the family, ask after old friends, and dispense advice to their younger brother Richard, who seems disposed to get-rich-quick schemes. They have the satisfaction of seeing Richard (the author's grandfather) begin to settle down as a storekeeper.

Albert and Edward are both religious men, dismayed to find themselves in a regiment they hope "may be noted for its Christian, as it is now for its ungodly, soldiers" (p. 17). Albert for a period lost his position as Sergeant because his friend the Chaplain had denounced the Captain and the regiment for their sinfulness. Recognizing his abilities, the Captain eventually restored Albert's rank. Albert despairs being in surroundings, the soldier's rough life, "that on each day is degenerating us in all points of virtue." Nevertheless he has faith that "He, who is father to the fatherless," has sustained him through all "severe temptations and trials . . . His grace is sufficient. I will trust in him" (p. 51).

Albert described their first combat, a sort of skirmish in detail, remarking that "the yells and screams of the rebels . . . sounded to me almost as bad as the whistling of the shells afterwards. I can't think of anything with which to compare it. Bartlett's dogs might give some idea"(p. 25). Albert's last letter describes the conflicts preceding the battle of Cold Harbor and thanks the "Most Merciful Protector" that the

two brothers are together in good health. He complains about Brookhaven Town's policy of providing residents with money, raised through new taxes, to exempt themselves from the military draft: "Why they are asleep, dumb it seems to me, taxing to the last cent for fear that one more shall go to fight and suffer for the cause"(pp. 54-55). This was fairly common throughout the North: it was possible to hire a substitute or make a cash payment to avoid the draft.

Reading the letters, we have gotten to know the brothers and can identify with them as real human beings. This makes their end even sadder: both were killed on the same day during the Cold Harbor battles, Edward while trying to help his dying brother. The family never found their bodies, buried in a mass grave. Two men, leaving behind "the sweet savor of a good name," (Col. Roberts, p. 56) disappeared and the war ground on, described in the official prose of the regimental history that follows the letters.

Bayles' book is a very good read, thanks to the brothers and to himself, but it is a sad tale.

WILBUR R. MILLER  
Stony Brook University

Joshua Stoff. *Images of America: Long Island Aircraft Crashes, 1909-1959..* Portsmouth, N.H.: Arcadia Publishing, 2004. Illustrations. Pp. 128.

Giacinta Bradley Koontz. *The Harriet Quimby Scrapbook: The Life of America's First Birdwoman, 1875-1912.* Encino, Calif.: Little Looper Press, 2003. Illustrations, notes. Pp. 210.

Long Island can claim preeminence in the number of airplane crashes it has experienced as a result of its many airfields and pioneering role in the early perilous days of flight. This "darker side" of our aviation history receives its first extended treatment in Joshua Stoff's most recent book on aviation (his seventeenth). Aviation enthusiasts will welcome this collection, but some general readers may find the images of so many crashes rather sobering.

Most of the early crashes were the result of technical failures, pilot errors, primitive airfields, and poor flying conditions, including unpredictable weather. Some of the accidents led to improvements in flying, but crashes continued and it is easy to understand why public pressure led to the closing of the military airbase at Mitchel Field in 1961, just after the fifty-year period which Stoff focuses on. Although flight is now much safer, the scale of disasters has increased in recent years with the Avianca crash in Cove Neck in 1990, TWA Flight 800 off East

Moriches in 1996, and the American Airlines 587 crash in Rockaway in 2001.

The book's format is the familiar one in Arcadia's Image of America series: primarily photographs (nearly 200), either one or two on a page and captions. The text introducing each of the chapters is quite brief, usually less than two hundred words. The addition of an index would enhance the value of this and other books in this series.

Stoff generally uses a chronological approach for his chapters. He divides the half century into the "Pioneer Years" (1909-1914), World War I, "Golden Age" (1919-1939), World War II, and the Postwar Years, concluding with a brief chapter "Toward Safer Flying" which focuses on the 1930s. Not all the pictures are of crashes. Sometimes a photograph of the plane or a similar model precedes the crash photo. Surprisingly, the first chapter on the early years is one of the two shortest (eight pages), which may reflect the limited number of photographs available rather than the number of crashes. The longest chapter covers the longest period, from 1919-1939. The scope is geographic Long Island, including crashes in Brooklyn and Queens, but those in Nassau County receive the most attention, as might be expected since Stoff is curator of Nassau County's Cradle of Aviation Museum on Mitchel Field in Garden City.

Harriet Quimby lost her life not in a plane crash, but an aviation accident when she was catapulted out of her plane in a flight around the Boston Lighthouse at the Squantum Aviation Meet in 1912. Long Island, however, is where she fell in love with flying at the Belmont Air Meet, and she learned to fly at the Moisant School on the Hempstead Plains (one of the few aviation schools of the day which accepted women). In 1911, Quimby became the first woman licensed to fly in America. The Cradle of Aviation museum has a life-size exhibit of Quimby in a replica of the purple flying suit she designed for herself next to a Bleriot airplane, the type which she flew.

Quimby was born in 1875, probably in Michigan, but her family moved to San Francisco when she was twelve. She was a photojournalist and drama critic for *Leslie's Illustrated* in New York City from 1903-1912. Her life intersected with D. W. Griffith and she received screen credits for seven of his silent films in 1911. Koontz sketches the facts of her brief life in her introduction to each chapter. Quimby entered flying exhibitions in 1912, and was the first woman to fly across the English Channel.

Giacinta Koontz has been fascinated by Quimby for more than a decade. She organized five conferences devoted to her (the second was held on Long Island), and published proceedings annually in a *Harriet Quimby Research Conference Journal* (1995-2000). Frank Eck reviewed the first two in *Long Island Historical Journal* 9 (Fall 1996): 125-28 and

10 (Fall 1997): 129-30 (the former issue also featured Quimby on the cover, reproducing a 1991 U.S airmail stamp). Koontz has now gathered the results of her years of research in this aptly titled "Scrapbook" with the "bits and pieces" of Quimby's life.

Although Joshua Stoff may exaggerate in referring to this as "the definitive account of Harriet Quimby's life," Koontz has added significant detail to the Quimby biographies by Henry M. Holden and Ed Y. Hall, which were published in the early 1990s. Koontz's introductory text for each chapter is followed by documents, reprinted newspaper and magazine articles, and clippings related to Quimby, including Quimby's own articles in newspapers and magazines, most of which are not primarily about aviation. Brief pithy quotes from Quimby's own writings are sprinkled throughout. This 8-1/2" x 11" book is lavishly illustrated. Many of the photographs are from Quimby's friend Carrie Vanderbilt, which had not been previously published. The longest chapters appropriately are devoted to Quimby's flying career. There is no index, but the chapters are chronological and the end notes give sources and credits.

Koontz's enthusiasm for her subject is obvious in these pages. She describes Quimby as "accomplished, focused and self-sufficient, she was also beautiful, charming and successful" (p. 152). Koontz qualifies some statements by "possibly" or "probably," but she also speculates (without evidence) on Quimby's romantic encounters. Her book will delight Quimby aficionados.

Each of these books contribute to our aviation history. Koontz's diligent research on Quimby also brings to the fore the life of a pioneer woman journalist and aviator.

NATALIE A. NAYLOR  
Hofstra University

Helen A. Harrison and Constance Ayers Denne. *Hamptons Bohemia: Two Centuries of Artists and Writers on the Beach*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2002. Pp. 176.

Residents of and visitors to Long Island's South Fork have long maintained a fascination with the writers and artists who have periodically settled among them. Soon after European artists and writers fled the spread of fascism in Europe and found refuge in the Hamptons, American sculptor Helen Phillips reported that while walking on Main Street in Amagansett she was approached by two women who asked, "We're from Southampton. Can you tell us where we'll find the Surrealists?" (p. 74). In recent years, the critical acclaim of the movie

*Pollock* (2001) and eulogies for George Plimpton (2003) have brought renewed attention to the presence and legacy of artists and writers in the Hamptons. Art Historian Helen Harrison and English professor Constance Ayers Denne accepted the ambitious task of helping us find not only the surrealists, but also the legions of artists and writers who both preceded and followed them to this cultural mecca.

In *Hamptons Bohemia: Two Centuries of Artists and Writers on the Beach* the authors set out to provide “a survey of artistic and literary activity on the East End from its earliest recorded times to the present” and “an examination of how living and working here has contributed to individual artists’ and writers’ creative development” (p. 13). The result is an engaging overview of the history of the artistic and literary scene in the Hamptons from late eighteenth century American portraiture and John Howard Payne’s comforting lyrics in “Home, Sweet, Home” to such recent luminaries as Kurt Vonnegut and Julian Schnabel.

The book is organized chronologically beginning with brief commentary on the extant remains of Native American art on Long Island and Samson Occom’s “Account of the Montauks,” the authors skim over the colonial period to the establishment of the United States of America and proceed to tell the story of the arts in the Hamptons as a reflection of major trends in American art and literature. During the period of the Early Republic, inspired by Gilbert Stuart, Abraham Guglielmas Dominy Tuthill painted portraits of prominent local residents. Other artists followed in his path, especially as members of the community prospered due to Sag Harbor’s prominent role in the whaling industry during the early decades of the nineteenth century. As the young nation sought to establish its own identity American writers and artists also explored other creative genres and examples from the Hamptons abound, including the sermons of the esteemed preacher and social reformer Lyman Beecher, a novel of manners by Cornelia Huntington, the sea novels of James Fenimore Cooper and Herman Melville, the poetry of Walt Whitman, and eventually early landscape sketches and paintings of Winslow Homer, Edward Lamson Henry and John Ferguson Weir. Despite the occasional presence of artists and writers in the Hamptons during the nation’s first century, however, no creative community of artists and writers working in collaboration and influencing each other’s artistic development existed and the environment itself may not have exerted much influence over the artists. Several of the influential writers and artists, including Whitman, Melville and Homer, spent little time in the area. By the end of the nineteenth century that situation would change.

The rapid expansion of American industry, transportation and communication networks during the last quarter of the nineteenth century introduced new opportunities for American artists and writers. Following

the extension of the Long Island Railroad to the East End, railroad executives encouraged writers and artists to escape New York City and visit the beach. William Laffan, art dealer and passenger agent for the LIRR, promoted artists outings, the most famous of which was chronicled in *Scribner's* in 1879. Landscape painter, Thomas Moran, and his wife, Mary Nimmo, established a studio and invited friends to join them in this newly dubbed "American Barbizon" of East Hampton. A few years later William Merritt Chase established the Shinnecock Summer School of Art in Southampton. The artists and writers Moran and Chase influenced soon provided the Hamptons with a reputation as an ideal location for artists' colonies and creative individuals. During the early twentieth century the area attracted artists Francis and Richard Newton, Albert Herter, Adele McGinnis, and Frederick Childe Hassam. Prominent writers, including Ring Lardner, Grantland Rice, Irwin S. Cobb, Percy Hammond, and John Wheeler gathered in East Hampton during the high flying 1920s. Despite the region's economic struggles during the Great Depression, Mrs. Lorenzo Woodhouse was determined to keep the artistic influences in the Hamptons. She provided the funding for the Guild Hall art center, which opened in 1931 and would continue to keep some attention focused on the cultural life of the East End.

With war breaking out in Europe by the end of the 1930s, European artists and writers fled the continent for the United States. The first wave of European refugees, including Max Ernst, Fernand Leger, Lucia, Andre Breton, Marcel Duchamp, and Jean Helion, initially settled in New York City, frequently enjoying the patronage of Peggy Guggenheim, but some of them would soon find their way out to the Hamptons. Having enjoyed the European custom of escaping the city for the countryside during the summer months, artists took advantage of the opportunities provided by other wealthy benefactors, notably Gerald and Sara Murphy, to visit the Hamptons. The surrealists, in particular, enjoyed this new environment and soon either rented or purchased their own homes in the less affluent communities of Amagansett and Hampton Bays.

The Abstract Expressionists followed the Surrealists to the Hamptons a few years later. In 1945, again thanks to a loan from Peggy Guggenheim, Jackson Pollock and Lee Krasner left their Greenwich Village apartment for a house in Springs, and other artists followed, including David Porter, Conrad Marca-Relli, John Little, Wilfrid Zogbaum, John Ferren, Willem and Elaine deKooning, and Alfonso Ossorio. The DeKoonings and Ossorio soon established residences of their own and attracted still more writers and artists to the area, both as occasional visitors and full-time residents. By the 1950s both Springs and Georgica bustled with avant-garde artists, a new enclave emerged in Southampton, this time stemming from the home of Fairfield and Anne

Porter, including poets Frank O'Hara, Kenneth Koch, and John Ashbery, painters Larry Rivers, Jane Freilicher, and Jane Wilson, among others. This postwar renaissance attracted other writers to the East End, including the *Paris Review* Club of George Plimpton, Patsy Southgate, and Peter Matthiessen, novelist John Steinbeck, playwright Edward Albee, and journalists A.J. Liebling and Jean Stafford and creativity flourished throughout the Hamptons. Throughout this period, Harrison and Denne argue – although they do not convincingly demonstrate through examples and analysis – that “contacts and friendships flourished among the avant-garde and the resulting cross-fertilization can be detected in poems, in references to color, in surreal images, in the artistic use of elements of everyday life and in language divorced from sentimentality and moralizing” (p. 96), suggesting that the community itself made the Hamptons a significant location in the world of art and literature.

By the 1960s and 1970s, the reputation of the Hamptons as a center for creative expression had become widely recognized and since then established artists and writers have encouraged its further growth. During the 1960s prominent Pop artists Andy Warhol, Jim Dine, James Rosenquist and Roy Lichtenstein moved to the South Fork, not to form an art colony but simply to “retreat ... from the art world's pressures [without being] isolated from its sphere of influence” (p. 103). The increasing visibility of artists in the Hamptons encouraged Allan Kaprow, the inventor of the “Happening,” to initiate a massive public art event, “Gas,” in the Hamptons during Independence Day weekend of 1965. Educators, activists and politicians recognized that the obviously entrenched creative communities might serve as a resource that could benefit the rest of the community and worked to bring together these different constituent groups. In 1963 Long Island University established a Southampton Campus and employed prominent local artists and writers as faculty members. In the mid-1970s activist Betty Friedan and other activists established the Sag Harbor Institute to promote social justice. In 1972 local artists contributed to George McGovern's presidential campaign by painting a mural to be auctioned off to raise funds. Those trends have continued during the past two decades, with prominent writers and artists maintaining residences on the South Fork. These wealthy people, in turn, help to support new artists by supporting local educational and cultural institutions to ensure that the Hamptons will continue to be a place that inspires creativity.

This story was certainly worth telling, but the term “Bohemia” no longer aptly describes the Hamptons. Edward Albee's foreword was enough to give pause on this issue. After telling the story of the purchase of his beach house in Montauk, he casually added, “I have lived there



ever since – oh, in New York City as well, with trips to Europe and wherever, but that hill in Montauk overlooking the endless Atlantic Ocean has remained the place I most long to be” (p. 9). This jet-setting lifestyle hardly conjures up an image of struggling artists living in lofts and ramshackle apartments. Nevertheless, his comments do suggest a yearning to explain the allure of this place.

Throughout *Hamptons Bohemia* Harrison and Denne demonstrate a desire to explain why the Hamptons are so special. They do not belabor an interpretation of the word “bohemian,” but they clearly wish to convey the argument that place matters. To set the mood, they begin the first chapter by borrowing F. Scott Fitzgerald’s portrayal of Long Island in *The Great Gatsby* as “the old island here that flowered once for Dutch sailors’ eyes – a fresh, green breast of the new world,” and Harrison and Denne suggest that the East End, in particular, became home to writers (not including Fitzgerald) and artists because it is a “place that emerges one’s capacity for wonder” (p. 15). Throughout the book the authors valiantly stick to the argument that place matters. At times they convincingly illustrate this point. The local environment and its people provided some writers and authors with ample material. James Fenimore Cooper moved to Sag Harbor in 1819 to enter the whaling business and wrote two sea novels while living there. Walt Whitman visited the East End and included “Montauk Point” in an 1890s edition of *Leaves of Grass*. Winslow Homer and other landscape artists, including Thomas Moran, William Merritt Chase, their friends and students, sketched and painted the scenery. The influence of the Hamptons on other individuals and groups, including the Surrealists, the Abstract Expressionists, the *Paris Review* Club, and the Pop Artists is less obvious, but some artists, including Pollock, Krasner and Willem de Kooning, drew inspiration from the natural environment even if they did not directly portray its scenes. For others, the community that the artists themselves created influenced their work. Since artists and writers create their art in isolation, those artists who did not use the physical environment in their work could easily dismiss the significance of place. Roy Lichtenstein, for example, commented “I’m sure being in Southampton has influenced my work, but I have no idea how. I could paint anywhere” (p. 109). Short story author James Salter, however, offered another interpretation. “Somebody, I think it was Max Ernst, said ‘art is produced by groups,’ and I think the important thing is not that they’re here talking about their work to each other but just their existence, just their presence there reinforces and stimulates” Salter explained (p. 155). Harrison and Denne share this view and repeatedly suggest that the artists influenced each other, but they rarely support those assertions with substantive analysis.

In their introduction Harrison and Denne acknowledge that their account includes a representative sampling of artists and writers but does not constitute a comprehensive survey. Perhaps they included this caveat to forestall criticism from readers who might search in vain for a favorite artist, but this book would have benefited from yet more sampling even at the risk of omitting additional names. The strongest and most interesting sections of the book – and among the few stories that successfully reflect the authors’ goal of connecting the artistic process and its resulting creations to place – are those that devote at least a few pages to analyzing the life and work of an individual or a small group rather than those sections that give a cursory listing of characters in passing. The sections that reflect the authors’ own areas of expertise – James Fenimore Cooper and Jackson Pollock/Lee Krasner – were particularly compelling, and the discussions of the art colonies of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, beginning with the well publicized expedition of the Tile Club, the Moran studio, and William Moran Chase’s Shinnecock Summer School of Art also succeeded in providing a story that connects the artists to their place and to each other. Other entries provided tantalizing introductions but left the reader hungering for more details and analysis. The authors could have saved space by cutting those writers and artists whose work was neither created in nor influenced by the time they spent in the Hamptons. Nineteenth century author and educator, Catherine Beecher, may have lived in East Hampton while her father preached at the Presbyterian Church during her early nineteenth century childhood, but her reminiscences of the beach do not reflect her most important contributions to American prose, and certainly do not merit a lengthy quotation. Similarly, Betty Friedan’s *The Feminine Mystique* represents an important milestone in activist writing, but she researched and wrote the book while living in Rockland Country, and did not move to Sag Harbor until a decade after the book’s publication. These stories and others like them are simply unnecessary and overwhelm an already full story.

*Hamptons Bohemia* will no doubt adorn coffee tables across Long Island’s East End. Residents and vacationers may initially be drawn to the beautiful illustrations and poetry selections provided throughout this attractive volume. But they should also take the time to read Harrison and Denne’s narrative which richly depicts the cultural heritage left in the wake of waves of two centuries of artists and writers and contemplate both the place and the “capacity for wonder” it inspires.

STACEY HORSTMANN GATTI  
Southampton College  
Long Island University

*Running Scared, Running Free.* Ward Melville Cultural Organization's Educational and Cultural Center, Stony Brook, New York (February 15 – March 31 2005).

The dramatic presentation, "Running Scared, Running Free," played at the Ward Melville Cultural Organization's Educational and Cultural Center in Stony Brook from February 15 through March 31, 2005. Produced by Sal St. George, the three character play tells the story of an enslaved woman, Dorcas who escapes from her South Carolina plantation, is pursued by a bounty hunter, Tobias, and is sheltered by a free woman, Tempe, in her Setauket home. Based on oral history from the Setalcott Indian clan of the village, the story is set just after the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, a statute which made it a federal crime to harbor a runaway slave.

The story as played by these three characters is a powerful indictment of the American slave system in which Dorcas is forced to endure a lifetime of hardships, humiliations, and horrific punishments, all sanctioned and even mandated by the laws of the land. Carolyn Brown, who played Dorcas, captivated the entire audience of 150 with her riveting and emotional performance. Her narrative of a life of deprivation lit only by love for a man her master took from her because she was barren, her fertility destroyed by the overseer's beatings, was moving all the more because of the very personal tragedy it exposed. The audience felt Dorcas' ineffable sadness, the pain of a woman who had hoped for very little in this world - a man's love, children - but from whom the system of slavery took even that.

The role of Tempe, the free Black woman who lives alone in her own Setauket home, was very admirably played by Dhonna Goodale. Her lovely voice set the mood and tone as she sang or hummed three or four spirituals. This character is the most didactic, explaining to the audience, for example the hidden meanings in the various quilt designs. She held up several patchwork quilts and explained how the "Geese Flying" pattern could tell a fugitive slave which direction to travel or how the "Log Cabin" pattern with a red circle inside represented a safe house on the Underground Railroad. From Tempe we learn about the Fugitive Slave Law as well as the sense of solidarity that existed between the enslaved people in the South and the no longer enslaved in the North. Her long sleeved black silk dress topped with a modest lace collar and calm demeanor spoke volumes about the relative security and class position of Northern Free Blacks, especially when contrasted to the soiled, sack-like frock and desperate air of Dorcas.

The character of Tobias, played by Adam Blair, was in many ways the hardest to render. His character was asked to portray the complicated

and contradictory role of white Southerners who professed Christianity and the love of liberty, yet brutalized the black population of their region for seeking the same values they themselves held dear. The enslaved person's desire for love, his/her own family, freedom of action, and material comfort had to be ignored, silenced and punished by slave owners. White southerners had to express any identification with the longings of a shared humanity. In some ways Tobias is able to capture this irony when he relates the story of himself as a boy saved from drowning by an escaped slave on the run from bounty hunters. The fact that in spite of his debt to a fugitive slave, he could himself have become a bounty hunter says more than anything about the way in which the system of slavery required whites to suppress normal human feelings.

As both historical drama and teaching tool, the play had many things to recommend it. The placement of the production in the exhibit hall surrounded by the quilt display brought an almost tactile dimension to the performance. As a backdrop, the quilts subtly conveyed their strong, colorful geometric patterns into the viewers' consciousness. Introducing them to the audience to demonstrate the language of design, the African cultural heritage, art as a part of culture, African American oral tradition and the strength of cultural retention was a masterful combination of hands on teaching and learning.

The staging, which brought the audience into the performance and thus into the history, was well done. The characters directly addressed the audience at many points, an especially good technique for school groups. The use of props/artifacts was very effective. The students seemed to hold their breath when told that the shackles Tempe held up were real and had been used in the past. And when the actors came out of character, while still in costume, and fluidly answered questions from the audience, the historical world into which they had just been drawn into seemed somehow all the more relevant. Sal St. George, the producer, answered questions and gave a very good sense of how such a production came to be.

Though we learned much about the system of slavery in the South and about the culture of the Africans in America through their designs and songs, there is a sense that we have not learned much more about the Underground Railroad by the end of the performance than we knew at the beginning. Why would Dorcas come to Long Island? And why particularly Setauket? Presumably Tempe was part of a network of safe houses, but this was never explained. Where had Dorcas come from, other than South Carolina, and where was she going? If she were going to Canada, why would her path take her from Brooklyn to Setauket? Some of the available research that has already been done might tie this story more firmly to documented events and people, giving the story a

stronger foundation and lifting it out of the almost mythical context in which it is presented. The Vehey research, for example, linking the Mott families of Cow Neck and Mamaroneck to an escape route from Brooklyn to Rochester and then to Canada is a valuable contribution that in connecting the dots of the Underground Railroad, gives it compelling historical weight. With no reference to the close cooperation of New York's Vigilance Committee in organizing and supporting the Underground Railroad, Tempe seems strangely unique, isolated, and alone in her cabin in the woods of Long Island. That she was in fact not alone, but part of a network of support might be difficult to convey dramatically, but would explain more about the real-life work of resisting state and federal fugitive slave statutes.<sup>ii</sup>

LYNDA R. DAY  
Brooklyn College

*Eye of the Storm: The Civil War Drawings of Robert Sneden.* Main exhibit created by the Virginia Historical Society. Additional Long Island display developed by Joshua Ruff, History Curator, Long Island Museum of American Art, History and Carriages, 1200 Rte. 25A, Stony Brook New York (February 19 – May 30, 2005)

*Eye of the Storm* is a fascinating exhibition of art and artifact dealing with the American Civil War. The core of the show is a traveling exhibit organized by the Virginia Historical Society of original watercolors of war scenes by Robert Sneden, a veteran of the 40<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry Regiment. The material is given a local focus through a display of Long Island Civil War artifacts and images developed by the Long Island Museum's history curator, Joshua Ruff.

The exhibit is well organized, with good lighting, legible labels and sympathetic design, which are the hallmarks of a professional installation. The only shortcoming in this regard is that some of the text explaining the campaigns that Sneden depicted is placed in the middle of the groupings,

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<sup>ii</sup> Mary F. Vehey, *A Hidden History: Slavery, Abolition, and the Underground Railroad in Cow Neck and on Long Island* (Port Washington: Cow Neck Peninsula Historical Society, 1998); Derek M. Gray, "Slavery and Resistance in the Empire State," in James Driscoll et. al., *Angels of Deliverance, The Underground Railroad in Queens, Long Island and Beyond* (Flushing, NY: Queens Historical Society, 1999).

rather than at the beginning of each section as an introduction to what is being viewed.

Sneden's watercolors are a joy to examine. Although small, and somewhat naïve in style, they are packed with detail. His depictions of camp life, battles and, most particularly, his months in a Southern prisoner of war camp are wonderful reflections of the experiences of the North's common soldiers, ranking in importance (if not polish) with sketches by Winslow Homer, Alfred Waud and Private Alfred Bellard.

Sneden's artwork must be approached with one important caveat which, in the major interpretive failing of the show, is not sufficiently emphasized in the Virginia Historical Society's exhibit text: all of the artwork on display – not just the post-1863 studies, as the introductory panel indicates – was produced after the war, in some cases decades later. Reflecting the confusion over this point, some visitors could be heard at the exhibit opening wondering aloud, "When did he have time to fight?" In fact, Sneden produced pencil sketches during the war, and only in later years translated them into finished watercolors. As a result, some of Sneden's details, such as what a given building looked like during the war, are inaccurate. But his depictions of the day-to-day life of a soldier ring true.

A second omission in the Virginia Historical Society's text is the origin of the nickname of Sneden's unit, the Mozart Regiment, which is referred to several times without explanation. (Its not that they were music lovers; the outfit was named for its sponsor, the Mozart Hall faction of the New York City Democratic Party, which was a rival to Tammany Hall).

The Long Island component of the exhibit is designed as a sampling of local wartime artifacts and images, utilizing items from several area historical societies, libraries and collectors. As such, it can barely scratch the surface of Long Island's Civil War history. Topics such as anti-war sentiment, home front activities and Naval service are not mentioned. In addition, Curator Ruff's carefully crafted text for this section would have benefited from a definition of what he considered Long Island to be. His statement that "more than 35,000 Long Islanders served in the Civil War" is correct if it includes Kings and Queens Counties, but could be confusing to the average visitor who visualizes a suburban Long Island of Nassau and Suffolk (whose towns provided only about 2,000 men to the Union cause).

The artifacts are nicely displayed and for the most part well documented, but a few illustrate a common museum pitfall of accepting donors' explanations of items without corroboration. For instance, one cap identified as a wartime uniform item is clearly a postwar veteran's

hat, and a photo labeled as David's Island, Virginia, is actually from the Union Army hospital complex on David's Island in Long Island Sound.

A diorama of a Union army camp, provided by the Co. H, 119<sup>th</sup> New York Volunteers Historical Association, is highly accurate and allows museum goers to better visualize the bivouacs depicted by Sneden.

*Eye of the Storm* is recommended as both a look at a Union veteran's artistic reminiscences of the Civil War and an introduction to Long Island's role in this watershed struggle.

HARRISON HUNT

Nassau County Department of  
Parks, Recreation, and Museums

## IN MEMORIAM

Robert David Lion Gardiner (1911-2004)

*Upon the passing of Robert David Lion Gardiner, the editors gratefully acknowledge the generous contributions of the Gardiner family to Stony Brook University and to this journal in particular.*

*The following eulogy was delivered by the Honorable Peter Fox Cohalan, Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of New York on September 15, 2004 at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, East Hampton.*

I am honored to speak this morning at this service for our friend Robert David Lion Gardiner, Sixteenth Lord of the Manor of Gardiner's Island.

*Nullum quod tetigit non ornavit* as Samuel Johnson said, on hearing of the death of Oliver Goldsmith - he touched nothing that he did not adorn, so let it be said of Robert David Lion Gardiner. His death is a great loss. For his family; his friends and the Long Island community - a loss for all of us who had the privilege of knowing him.

Bob Gardiner was born February 25, 1911, the son of Robert Alexander and Nora Loftus Gardiner - his mother was the daughter of an Irish aristocrat - Sir Pierce Loftus. He was born when William Howard Taft was President of the United States and King George V had just ascended the British throne, and he lived his very long life through seventeen U.S. Presidencies.

He was educated at St. George's School, Newport, Rhode Island, Columbia University and N.Y.U. Law School.

Bob Gardiner contained within his person many exemplary characteristics - he was forthright - a no-nonsense person - who would always tell you where he stood - clearly expressing his opinions.

He was a very loyal person, dedicated to his love of country. He was proud of his service as a naval officer in the Pacific theater in World War II, part of the greatest generation, which faced the grave challenges of its day - not flinching from them - but meeting them heroically.

He was dedicated to the memory of his family - to his lovely wife Eunice - the well-being of the community in which he lived and to his friends. And he was dedicated to his faith in God, a firm believer in the Anglican tradition to which he adhered.

I first met him many years ago when I was a young man, and over the years, I enjoyed the pleasure of his company on numerous occasions. He was very good to me and once I asked him about it, and he told me a story. Bob loved to tell stories. When he was about eight years of age - in an estate dispute in the Gardiner family - before the Surrogate of New



York County, the side representing Bob's interests prevailed as the judge ruled in his favor. He said the judge was quite kind to him, and took a personal interest in his welfare. The judge's name was John P. Cohalan, my grandfather.

Bob was a caring considerate person who exhibited an old-school courtesy to others. One example. One evening here in East Hampton, Bob and Eunice hosted a dinner party for the reigning Miss Universe who, when the finger bowl was brought to her between courses, drank from it. In his kind manner, Bob immediately did the same as did we all, following his example. That was typical of Bob.

He had a droll sense of humor. Two occasions will suffice. I remember the time one fine day on the island after a hike with Hugo Mutz, Nancy and Jerry Kane, Bob told our friend Jerry Kane to kneel before him and, with a broom handle, dubbed him: Sir Jerry, Knight of the Afternoon.

Another time a pedantic guest at the Gardiner home down the street from here was admiring the Turner painting in the living room and informed Bob of the guest's large art collection, which he had been assembling over the years and he asked Bob when and where Bob had acquired the Turner. Bob, half smiling said "from the artist." The guest non-plussed said that Turner had died 130 years ago. Bob said yes, we got it from the artist in his lifetime and it's been in the family ever since. It was a priceless moment and typical of Bob.

Bob was a serious and substantial man proud of his business acumen in shepherding his family inheritance, his fluency in foreign tongues - such as French - a vigorous energetic person who was widely read - a renaissance man, a polymath with a vast range of knowledge. To cite a few examples - painting, art, jewelry, antiques, many of them his own, whose provenance he could, and would, discuss at length - and which reflected these interests and served as a back-drop for his erudite conversation.

Bob was a very generous person - giving of his time and money to the Long Island community and, with his wife Eunice, a very gracious host whether at Sagtikos Manor in Bay Shore, here in East Hampton, in Palm Beach or, on his beloved island. He conducted innumerable tours of his various properties sharing his knowledge of his ancestry, which was so intertwined with the history of our country and Long Island - often with salty asides and always delivered with elan and panache. In 1983, I had the privilege as Suffolk County Executive to appoint him (together with the Hon. Frank A. Gross, another friend with a glorious Long Island heritage) as co-chairman of the Suffolk County Tercentenary Commission. As usual, he performed admirably, again opening his

homes for gatherings and sharing his font of knowledge with others. Typical of Bob.

Bob was a walking repository of Long Island and United States lore - a well-educated, brilliant man who passionately believed it was his duty and responsibility to impart his unique vision and his wisdom and wealth of information concerning his family and local and national history to all who came within his ambit. He was proud of his role as the steward not only of the land, but also of his family's illustrious reputation. He had so much to say he just had to verbalize all he knew, so others would know what he did and enjoy and partake of his enthusiasm. He could bear anything except to be silenced.

He was so proud of his legacy (and who wouldn't be) - of being the present representative of a family whose history included the first European inhabitant of Long Island in 1639 when Lion Gardiner arrived - he viewed the past within the prism of his ancestors and believed he was the living embodiment of over three centuries of his family's fascinating story.

(After all Theodore Roosevelt was not the first Long Islander to reside in the White House, Julia Gardiner Tyler - the wife of our tenth president, lived there in 1841 and another ancestor, together with Alexander Hamilton, founded the Bank of New York in 1784.)

Bob had great pride in this history, which he encapsulated in his person. He knew it so well he would refer to events of 200 years ago as if they had occurred yesterday. And he expounded and shared all this *con molto brio*. I remember a dinner in a local restaurant, Bob asked the waitress her name and upon hearing it looked her straight in the eye and said, "Madam, my great-grandfather hanged your great-great grandfather."

Bob was an optimistic man. I recall a luncheon at the Devon Yacht Club a few Septembers ago with Luis and Nidia Coelho, Eileen [Peter Fox Cohalan's wife] and me. It was a very gray afternoon with a gathering storm outside and Bob, ninety years of age, was speaking of future plans - in his usual exuberant and ebullient fashion. We sat and Bob talked for four hours about various and sundry topics - business - history and - his desires. He was vigorous, funny and lucid and filled with a *joie d'vivre* that carried us all through the afternoon. Typical of Bob.

He loved life and lived his life to the hilt. He ran for public office on two occasions because he cared deeply about the issues of the day.

He took a long broad view of history and he personified a continuum, a great sweep of history with its links to a noble past.

Bob was one of the most interesting and remarkable men I have ever known. He was life writ large. He embraced life, shook it, and got the most from it. I doubt if we shall see his like again.

So, today, we celebrate a long, meaningful, eventful life - a life well - lived. When I think of Bob - I'm reminded of Longfellow's poem - A Psalm of Life - stanza 6.

The lives of great men all remind us  
We can make our lives sublime  
And departing leave behind us  
Footprints on the sands of time.

Adieu, Robert David Lion Gardiner.

## IN MEMORIAM

Kendall A. Birr (1924-2004)  
University Statesman and Historian

Kendall A. Birr, Professor Emeritus, University at Albany, passed away on December 26, 2004. An individual blessed with many intellectual talents and interests, Professor Birr had a great impact on his students. More importantly, Professor Birr insisted that the art of researching local history as an extension of our national history "helps us to extend ourselves, to understand what we have not personally experienced, to bond with those from different times and places."

Ken Birr was born on February 10, 1924 to a middle-class family in Wheaton, Illinois. In the early 1940s he attended the religious affiliated Cornell College in Iowa. His college education was briefly interrupted by Army service during the Second World War. In 1947 he received his Bachelor's Degree and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa.

Professor Birr's interests in religion, science, and the history of ideas led to his pursuit of the Ph.D. at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. As research assistant to Merle Curti he co-authored "The Immigrant and the American Image in Europe, 1860-1914," which appeared in the September 1950 issue of *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* (now *Journal of American History*).

In 1952 Prof. Birr was awarded his Ph.D. His first teaching appointment was at Albany State Teachers College. In 1957 his dissertation was published as *Pioneering in Industrial Research: the Story of the General Electric Research Laboratory*. The work was a path breaking study in the field later earning him appointments to the editorial boards of *Technology and Culture* and *American Economic Historical Review*.

Professor Birr continued as a full professor teaching courses in American Studies and American Economic History until his retirement in 1990. He was selected as one of the earliest faculty members to be a Collins Fellow for his "extraordinary devotion to the University." In 1993 he was the recipient of the University Citizen Award.

Ken is survived by his son Chris and wife Linda, his brother Bob, a niece and nephew, and three grandchildren. He is sorely missed.

*Chuck F. Howlett, Molloy College, For the Editors*

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**Department of History**

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