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STATEN ISLAND IN THE HARBOR METROPOLIS:  
THE MAKING OF A REGION  
AND THE DISAPPEARANCE OF AN ISLAND, 1790–1858

by

ADAM ZALMA

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## ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Staten Island In The Harbor Metropolis:  
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By ADAM ZALMA

Dissertation Director:  
Alison Isenberg

This dissertation explores the history behind the metropolitan relationship between Staten Island and Manhattan as it emerged in the maritime era of the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Between the 1790s and 1850s, I argue, a series of historical moments and the periods of Staten Island's visibility they sparked helped lay the foundation, for the first time, of a New York metropolitan region that extended beyond the urban tip of Manhattan Island. Through the Island's maritime institutions, the metropolitan real estate market, the Island's landscape of highly improved farms, estates and cottages, and a web of elite personal and professional networks, New Yorkers, along with visitors and new arrivals to New York, engaged Staten Island with Manhattan in a dynamic transformation of metropolitan life, land and landscape, entwining the Island with the metropolis, yet defining it as a place distinct from the city itself. Using institutional records, government documents, personal memoirs and correspondence, newspapers and magazines, land records, local histories, maps, and other archival material, this project examines how people imagined, experienced and built Staten Island as part of a new regional New York that was more than just urban, more than just Manhattan. Exploring Staten Island in the first half of the nineteenth century complicates the distinction between "country" and

“city,” revealing the complexities and contingencies of social, cultural, economic and political relationships that construct metropolitan regional geography.



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## Introduction

One day at the end of the last ice age, a torrent of frigid water raced down a great valley toward the ocean. The water's force created two islands, astride one of the world's grand harbors, one long and thin, one broad and varied. Before that day, the gentle river bypassed the smaller island that would one day be the heart of the great New York metropolis. Fueled by the enormous pressure of melting ice, the river turned mighty. Bursting a natural dam deep inland and surging toward the ocean, the river blasted through a spine of hills, forging the larger island by cutting a wider route out to sea. A new gateway, later known as the Narrows, was created that day, connecting for the first time, the future site of New York City with the Atlantic Ocean. Geography may not be destiny, yet the arrangement of water and land around New York indeed shaped how Americans used and understood both Manhattan Island and Staten Island centuries later.<sup>1</sup>

Scholars of New York City history have focused their attention relentlessly on Manhattan. Staten Island has been called the "forgotten borough," and in earlier times, before the consolidation of the five borough city, a "terra incognita to the people of New York." Staten Island seems to oscillate between visibility and invisibility in the metropolis to which it belongs. In certain moments of fear, optimism, and desire in New York, however, Staten Island suddenly becomes front and center. These are the moments that bind Staten Island into the metropolis. These moments clarify how Staten Island shapes the metropolis. In the twenty-first century, Hurricane Sandy was such a moment. New Yorkers became keenly aware of Staten Island, grateful it had absorbed so much of the surging ocean to protect Manhattan, and full of pity for the city's middle class

homeowners who had purchased affordable real estate and suffered the ravages of Sandy. Similarly, the closing of the Fresh Kills Landfill in 2001 brought into visibility the Island's long-time role as the sole repository for the city's waste. And the disposal on Staten Island of the mangled and pulverized remains of the World Trade Center made the Island's landfill the most reported on, and yet the most invisible memorial of September 11, 2001; a dark and mournful bond between Manhattan and Staten Island.<sup>2</sup>

This paper explores the history behind the metropolitan relationship between Staten Island and Manhattan as it emerged in the first half of the nineteenth century. The period between the 1790s and 1850s, as is argued in this dissertation, contained a series of poignant historical moments that brought Staten Island into metropolitan visibility, laying the foundation—for the first time—of a notion of a New York region that extended beyond the urban tip of Manhattan Island. Government leaders, real estate men, agriculturists, estate owners, and prominent men of politics and publishing engaged Staten Island with Manhattan in a dynamic transformation of metropolitan life, land, and landscape, entwining the Island with the metropolis and yet defining it as a place distinct from the city itself.

Each of the major events and trends that shaped Manhattan shaped Staten Island too. Such moments, some brief, some extended, focused attention on Staten Island for a period of time and brought the two islands into a closer and more complicated relationship. When Yellow Fever raged in Manhattan in the 1790s, the state built the first permanent quarantine station on Staten Island to protect the city. As the European wars that followed the French Revolution spilled onto the Atlantic, vulnerable New Yorkers demanded and built fortifications on Staten Island to defend Manhattan. As immigration



spiked in the 1840s, Staten Island's Quarantine Station came into focus again as New York's de facto immigration station. In the real estate booms of the 1810s and 1830s, speculators formed the New Brighton and Staten Island Associations to purchase over a thousand acres of Staten Island. They ran steamboats and surveyed grids, making Staten Island the frontier of the metropolitan land market. The Erie Canal may have helped make Manhattan the commercial center of the American continent, however, it also facilitated the transformation of the use and value of Staten Island's "countryside." This was a change from an Island of rural homesteads to the new and fashionable neighborhoods of metropolitan estates and cottages. The spectacular increase in the population of Manhattan in the first half of the nineteenth century, from 33,111 inhabitants in 1790 to more than 800,000 by 1860, helped transform it into a cacophonous, densely built, and socio-economically complicated city of strangers. However, it also caused New Yorkers and newcomers to the city alike to seek out places such as Staten Island because they were apart from and yet accessible to the opportunities of urban Manhattan. In the first half of the nineteenth century, New Yorkers began to imagine and use Staten Island in ways that redefined New York's geography from city to region.<sup>3</sup>

Given New York's nature as a maritime city, it seems natural that Staten Island would form the edge of the metropolitan region as it emerged in the early nineteenth century. Although Staten Island did not join Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx, and Manhattan until 1898 to form the greater New York that is known today as New York City, the metropolitan region began to grow up around the harbor and to extend northward up Manhattan Island much earlier in the century. From the center of the

harbor in 1855, traveller Franklin Langworthy described the metropolitan scene from the deck of his ship as he approached what he called, the “Empire City” he wrote, “Cities of imperial size surround us, New York in front, Quarantine [Staten Island] in rear, Brooklyn and Williamsburg on the right, Jersey City, Hoboken and Newark on the left. The dwellings of a million people are within the reach of the naked eye.”<sup>4</sup>

The boundaries of the emerging regional New York of the early nineteenth century and its components can be defined in two ways. First, military and public health perimeters marked the region’s edges. Both perimeters reflected New York’s maritime nature, designed to interdict ships approaching Manhattan. At the Narrows, stood Staten Island’s Quarantine Station along with fortifications both on Staten Island and Long Island, and later at the mouth of Long Island Sound at Throgg’s Neck. Such harbor institutions, as will be shown, marked the limits of New York’s regional space both visually and functionally. Second, transportation infrastructure linked the tip of Manhattan to a series of places surveyed with grids. Landowners and speculators surveyed gridded streets and lots at Brooklyn and Brooklyn Heights, Williamsburg, Jersey City, Hoboken, and on Staten Island at Tompkinsville, New Brighton, Stapleton and Clifton. They introduced steamboat ferries tying their new locations to Manhattan, and forming a regional space around the harbor. Meanwhile, within Manhattan, omnibuses, horsecars, and later railroads reached uptown as the city built out its own extensive street grid in the decades following 1811, when the Manhattan grid was first surveyed. Transportation and a regional real estate market helped define metropolitan New York. By the 1830s, metropolitan New York’s northern frontier was the land east of Greenwich Village in Manhattan; its southern frontier was Staten Island.<sup>5</sup>

Each of the locations that forged a new relationship with the tip of Manhattan to form the regional metropolis in the first half of the nineteenth century has its own story to tell. The story of Greenwich Village is one of an uptown move of elites seeking to segregate their residences from the social and physical ills of the commercial city. Brooklyn, with its population growing much faster than Manhattan, became the region's second city, a city of homes and churches for a large portion of newcomers to the metropolis, along with many former Manhattanites. Hoboken, with its Elysian Fields, was a pleasure ground for New Yorkers, a place for leisure, refreshment, and special events.<sup>6</sup>

Staten Island's story begins with the fact that it is an island, and an island in a unique location at the mouth of the New York harbor. The virtue of it being an island combined with its close proximity to, yet separation from, Manhattan balanced Staten Island's accessibility with a potential isolation of sorts. It was isolated, because, despite the efforts of some to have it put on the main route between Philadelphia and Manhattan, most people passed by Staten Island unless they had a specific reason to go there. It was accessible, because, in a maritime world where boats dominated transportation, the Island's extensive shoreline offered many points of entry. By the 1840s, steamboats landed at half-a-dozen points around the Island, and oyster sloops, fishing boats, and other sailing craft tucked in at numerous coves, bays, and docks. In addition, as an island, New Yorkers knew Staten Island as a unique, discrete place even though it contained a wide variety of villages, swampy grasslands, high hills, farmland, and sandy beaches. Staten Island was also farther from the tip of Manhattan than any other spot in the emerging regional metropolis of the early nineteenth century. The 5.3 mile ferry trip

to Tompkinsville and then down the Island's eastern shore was more than three times the distance of any other ferry ride from Manhattan. The ferry trip to New Brighton and other spots along the Island's northern shore was even longer. Staten Island's blend of isolation and accessibility and its location at the mouth of the harbor shaped its unique role in the formation of the New York metropolitan region.<sup>7</sup>

Staten Island is an island of approximately fifty-nine square miles, located approximately five miles southwest of Manhattan, across New York Harbor. From the northeastern tip of the Island facing Manhattan down through the Narrows to the Island's southeastern tip lies about four miles of premier harborfront, with fresh springs for watering vessels, an excellent anchorage, accessible waterfront and commanding hills. A spine of hills, including peaks above 400 feet, the highest along the eastern seaboard, reaches six miles into the center of the Island from the northeastern tip. A second set of hills, up to 170 feet clusters around the Island's eastern point, at the Narrows. The Narrows itself, the gateway to New York Harbor, lies between Staten Island and the western tip of Long Island. The Island's superior hills, anchorage, and waterfront accessibility helped New Yorkers decide on the Staten Island side of the Narrows for the port's quarantine station and earliest fortifications, along with other maritime facilities and asylums to serve the city. The northern shore of Staten Island, separated from New Jersey by the narrow, yet still easily navigable Kill Van Kull, is accessible by boat along most of its six-mile length in all weather. The western shore, similarly separated from New Jersey by narrow, but again, navigable water, is mostly marshes and grasslands, with landings for vessels at barely a handful of convenient points. Fresh Kills, the Island's major waterway, and its spring sources reach inland almost three miles,

extending the wetlands into the Island's interior. The southern portion of the Island, below the spine of hills was formed by the glacial outwash, creating the best soils on the Island for farming. Along the south shore of the Island, the upper half facing Upper New York Bay and out to the Atlantic Ocean, is sandy beach; the lower half facing Raritan Bay fronts wide mud flats, punctuated with deeper water at Princes Bay.<sup>8</sup>

From British colonial days until 1860, the Island consisted of four townships. Castleton faced Manhattan, including the northeastern tip of the Island, wrapping around the northern shore about halfway and extending into the center of the Island along the spine of hills. Southfield's eastern shore faced New York Harbor, from the Narrows up to the border of Castleton, and stretching to the southwest along the Island's south shore to right beyond Great Kills, where the sandy shore gave way to mud. Northfield and Westfield, facing New Jersey, made up the western half of the Island, divided from each other by the Fresh Kills waterway.<sup>9</sup>

Before the nineteenth century, Staten Island was anything but metropolitan. It was not even oriented toward Manhattan. Fifty-five percent of Staten Island's small population lived in Northfield and Westfield, the furthest townships from Manhattan. The Island's two little villages, where Staten Islanders went to find merchants and shopkeepers locally, were both in Northfield and Westfield as well. Decker's Ferry at Port Richmond sat along the Island's northern shore opposite Bergen Point, New Jersey; and Richmond, the county seat, was in the center of the Island along Fresh Kills. When Staten Islanders went to sell their produce and buy market goods in the larger towns beyond the Island, they were just as likely to trade in New Jersey as in New York. Manhattan was not the only, or even the most important market for Staten Islanders of the

eighteenth century. Closer than Manhattan were Elizabethtown, New Jersey's largest city; Perth Amboy, an important port city for New Jersey and one of the state's two capitals; and nearby Woodbridge. All were easily accessible across the narrow Kills from Staten Island.<sup>10</sup>

Eighteenth century Staten Islanders were yeoman farmers. More than 95 percent of the white men on the Island around the time of the American Revolution were landowners, according to one New York newspaper. Staten Island farms of the eighteenth century ranged from 80 to 275 acres, though only a small portion of each was cultivated. Farmers grew a variety of crops, including rye, buckwheat, barley, Indian corn, and most importantly, wheat. In 1790, there were 566 families living on Staten Island, totaling fewer than 4,000 people. They used the labor of family members, white indentured servants, and 755 slaves. They planted vegetable gardens and orchards near their houses. The rest of the acreage was left in salt grass, woodland, or pasture. The wood heated their homes and provided a commodity for sale. Salt grass and pastureland fed their horses, sheep, hogs, and cattle. They fed themselves largely from their produce and livestock. They also fished, especially in the Raritan Bay, where fish were unusually abundant, and collected shellfish along the flats at low tide. Additionally, they engaged in the trading markets of the eighteenth century, selling their produce, livestock, wood, and other goods in exchange for cloth, furniture, and other certain foods and items available in the marketplaces of New York and New Jersey.<sup>11</sup>

By the 1840s, everything had changed. The local agricultural crisis, precipitated by the Erie Canal, and the growth of the metropolis and steamboat accessibility led to the revaluation and restructuring of the uses and patterns of settlement of Staten Island land.

Though much of Staten Island remained farmland, the Island was no longer “altogether an agricultural county,” reported Staten Island’s correspondent to the State Agricultural Society. The number of “improved” acres of farmland on Staten Island had peaked in 1825, the same year the Erie Canal was completed. Since then, the flood of cheaper, more abundant, produce from the American interior had undermined Staten Island’s traditional role as a provider of agricultural staples to New York and New Jersey. Slavery ended in 1827 in New York, disposing with a major source of the Island’s agricultural labor. The same agricultural correspondent complained the growing attractions of seafaring and fishing were causing “a neglect in agriculture,” on the Island. Less than a third of Staten Islanders claiming an occupation in the 1840 census considered themselves farmers, though agriculture remained the largest use of land on the Island. A greater number were occupied in either commerce or navigation, including fishing and oystering for the New York market.<sup>12</sup>

Meanwhile, “...large and prosperous villages have sprung up. ...Tompkinsville, New Brighton, Stapleton, and Factoryville are teeming with busy life. ...The rapid increase of the neighboring city [Manhattan], and the increasing demands of her commerce, has driven hundreds of her citizens to Staten Island and to the suburbs,” reported a state commission reviewing the Staten Island location for the quarantine station in 1849. Manhattan was growing by leaps and bounds both in population and wealth as the Erie Canal, immigration, superior market practices, New York’s dominance of the cotton trade, business innovations, and an influx of New Englanders bringing their wealth and merchant connections fed the city’s port. Multiple steamboats facilitated a “constant intercourse” between Manhattan and various points on Staten Island, carrying

metropolitan people, and money across the harbor. Along the Island's northern and eastern shores, one observer noted, "land is not estimated by acres [for farming] but by town lots and plots for country-seats" of metropolitan gentlemen. Castleton, with its regular steamboat ferries to Manhattan, alone accounted for 93 percent of Staten Island's residents by 1855, increasingly clustered along the shore and nearby hills that faced the harbor. New Yorkers and newcomers to the metropolis alike were building estates and country cottages along the eastern shore and up in the hills of adjacent Southfield as well. The Island's population, though still relatively small at 7,000 in 1830, mushroomed two-hundred percent between 1830 and 1855 to more than 21,000, similar to Manhattan, the Island's population increase was four times as fast as the previous three decades and double the rate of the nearby but more rural and much larger Queens County. By 1855, the proportion of Irish and Germans in Southfield was almost identical to Manhattan, and much higher than in the nearby counties of Queens and Westchester. A great deal of metropolitan wealth had flowed into Castleton and Southfield, so much so, that the New York State Census reported that each of the two townships had greater value in its housing stock than all but two townships and a handful of much larger cities in the entire state.<sup>13</sup>

This dissertation is not about Staten Island's yeoman farmers, its fishermen or oystermen, but rather about the people, the ideas, and the institutions of the folks who came across the harbor to Staten Island, and the complicated history of this Island that was formed due to its proximity to Manhattan. It is about the balance of accessibility and separation that Staten Island offered New Yorkers and newcomers to the city. Through



this balance, Staten Island became part of a new regional metropolitan New York, a New York that was more than just urban, more than just Manhattan.

That which is metropolitan cannot be defined simply by urban form, but rather consists of, as Noah Webster's dictionary put it in 1845, the people, and places "pertaining to" the metropolis. In turn, Webster defined "metropolis" as "chief city of a country or state," a status New York had secured in the early decades of the century. While the tip of Manhattan was very much at the center of New York's new regional geography, it was no longer a place that fully contained metropolitan New York. As will be pointed out, the forts, marine hospitals, asylums, country estates and cottages, as well as the highly improved farms New Yorkers built on Staten Island (and the lives and politics surrounding them), were very much "pertaining to" the metropolis. The Island's blend of accessibility with a distinct separation from nineteenth century urban, social, and environmental ills made it an attractive place to experiment with metropolitan uses, lives, and landscapes. As the urban form of dense streets and buildings in Manhattan became an increasingly cacophonous and disorderly intensity made up of strangers, structures, and commercial intrusion, New Yorkers designed a new metropolitan country landscape of highly improved farms, country estates, and cottages on Staten Island, all within easy reach of the city. In contrast, the use of the term "the city," in this dissertation refers more narrowly to the urban built environment at the southern tip of Manhattan, and underscores the fact that much of the Island of Manhattan itself was no more urban than Staten Island in the first half of the nineteenth century. As literary scholar Raymond Williams has argued in, *The Country and the City*, such "country" places, so often imagined as the diametrical opposite of the urban "city" are constructed by metropolitan

ideas and capital. As New Yorkers built a national regional metropolis around the harbor, Staten Island helped define boundaries, landscapes, and the uses of metropolitan space as more than the dense, urban fabric of the city in Manhattan.<sup>14</sup>

The Manhattan and dry land-centric perspective of much scholarly work limits an accurate understanding of nineteenth century New York, a maritime city oriented toward the water. Staten Island presents an opportunity to explore the origins of metropolitan regional relationships in America. The relationship between Staten Island and Manhattan helps reveal the regional nature of the growing and increasingly complex cities of nineteenth century America, explored so extensively by other urban historians. Staten Island offers a new perspective on the politics of New York and the nation in the early Republic and gives insight into New Yorkers' hopes, speculations, and dreams as they expanded the geography of their lives to non-urban places. Scholars have studied uptown Manhattan to understand the development of the nineteenth century metropolis, and twentieth century historians have recognized the history of cities and suburbs as inseparable. However, before Central Park, the railroad, or post-World War Two sprawl, an earlier metropolitan New York emerged around the harbor—Manhattan at one end, and Staten Island at the other.<sup>15</sup>

The story of Staten Island's role in the emergence of the regional metropolis around New York Harbor begins in the 1790s. Chapter 1 examines how the young New York State and federal governments established Staten Island as the gateway to New York Harbor by building forts to protect Manhattan from military attack, and building Quarantine and Customs Stations, checkpoints for the city's maritime commerce. In doing so, they bounded the emerging metropolitan region both symbolically and

functionally. While other historians have seen the port's Quarantine Station through the lens of public health, how the station and the Island's other maritime institutions extended the city's commercial activity, immigration, and politics to Staten Island, will here be explored in depth. Beginning in the 1830s, New Yorkers constructed hospitals and asylums for seamen and their families. These were built on the wealth and politics of the port and its maritime community. Alongside the governmental gateway, these new institutions underscored the Island's role in the maritime metropolis while also identifying it as a place distinct and separate from the city.<sup>16</sup>

Chapter 2 will show that, through their efforts on Staten Island, Manhattan developers and land speculators helped form a regional real estate market. They helped make the Island a frontier of the metropolis, drawing on and extending the form and scale of the recently drawn Manhattan street grid and the new technology of the steamboat. Because of the efforts of Daniel D. Tompkins, the earliest of these speculators, Staten Island had its own steamboat as early as 1817, making the Island one of the few places New Yorkers could reach from Manhattan in less than an hour. In the 1830s, joint stock companies and individual investors bought up thousands of acres of Staten Island land and reimagined farms and hillsides with gridded streets and Manhattan-sized lots for sale to urban buyers through the new real estate market they helped create.

Between the 1830s and 1850s, gentlemen from the city, along with their architects and gardeners, built neighborhoods of improved farms, country estates, and suburban country cottages, shaping a new landscape that was metropolitan, but distinctly not urban. Chapter 3 explores how the urban buyers of the Island's land created a metropolitan country landscape on Staten Island. Although they conceived of their projects as "rural

improvements,” the Island’s scientific farmers, estate owners, architects, and estate gardeners depended on urban capital and knowing, and they designed their landscapes to serve urban needs and desires. As they experimented with country landscape forms rather than urban ones for their metropolitan homes, they brought Staten Island and Manhattan closer together. However, the landscape they shaped and showcased was a generic one, easily replicated across a wider geography. As they built the new metropolitan country landscape, they began to erase Staten Island as a distinct place in the region.<sup>17</sup>

The people who chose to live or sojourn on Staten Island because of its location at the periphery of the metropolis will be explored in Chapter 4. As New Yorkers who made their fortune in the city, and the elite newcomers who came to New York seeking new opportunities, came to Staten Island, they made the Island visible and meaningful to family, friends, colleagues, and clients as part of metropolitan New York. The personal and professional networks of Staten Island residents brought some of the most visible and influential New Yorkers, Americans, and foreign leaders of the era to the Island. Through the decisions of metropolitan families such as William Emerson; Ralph Waldo’s brother, and prominent sojourners such as Giuseppe Garibaldi to settle on Staten Island, one can better understand the balance of accessibility and obscurity, the simultaneous paradox of proximity and place that defined the Island’s relationship with the city. They came because Staten Island was an affordable and accessible option in the emerging metropolitan geography, desirable in large part because it was thought to be a healthful place, distinctly removed from the disorder and disease of urban Manhattan. However, they also came because the Island offered a certain obscurity, a convenient place within

the metropolitan region where they could distance themselves from the limelight and the intensity of Manhattan. While they helped to broaden the role of Staten Island as part of the metropolis (by hosting visitors, writing to family, friends, and colleagues about their homes there), the men and families who chose to live or sojourn on Staten Island also helped define it as a place of obscurity.

Staten Island was a separate place before it began to be recognized as having a value due to its paradox of proximity and obscurity. However, during this period, Staten Island helped to form the New York region by defining the periphery of that region. Yet, in doing so, the island was defined by and as that very periphery, a status that enabled it over time to regularly slip in and out of visibility. As the periphery of the city and its region, Staten Island could no longer be defined separately; it had, rather, to be included as belonging to part of the larger regional whole.

By the 1860s, Staten Island and the harbor-centric region it had helped create were giving way to a different metropolitan geography. New York continued to sit at the fulcrum of international maritime trade and the American continent, yet, as the nation grew westward, the balance of the city and its region increasingly tipped inland. New York's identity and character increasingly shifted from maritime metropolis to the metropolis of a continental empire. Staten Island's potential as desirable metropolitan real estate was undermined as New York built railroads, the Croton water system, the construction of Central Park, and the Annexed District of the Bronx, which is the single part of New York City located on the mainland of North America. Significantly, all of these developments and transformations in infrastructure pointed inland, northward and westward, away from the harbor, away from Staten Island. At the same time, the generic

metropolitan country landscape that Staten Islanders helped formulate spread across a wider geography, giving the men and families of the metropolis seeking its attractions a vastly increased set of alternatives to Staten Island. While it looked increasingly metropolitan, Staten Island's visibility in the geography of New York had already begun to fade. The Island's maritime institutions, real estate markets, and country residences of Manhattan's elite lessened in importance as the metropolis turned from water to land. And when a crowd of Staten Islanders (fueled by some of the Island's leading citizens), violently destroyed the Quarantine Station in 1858, an event to which we will return, they not only destroyed a significant element of Staten Island's place in Maritime New York, they also revealed the complex and contingent nature of the Island's metropolitan relationship with Manhattan. Staten Island was oscillating back out of visibility and ultimately disappeared into the background of the very same regional metropolis that it had helped create.

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<sup>1</sup> Charles Merguerian, "The Narrows Flood— Post-Woodfordian Meltwater Breach of the Narrows Channel, NYC," Hofstra University Geology Department, Hempstead, NY, [www.geo.sunysb.edu/lig/Conferences/abstracts.../merguerian-03.pdf](http://www.geo.sunysb.edu/lig/Conferences/abstracts.../merguerian-03.pdf), accessed January 1, 2012. Yi-Fu Tuan argues that "space" becomes "place" through people's lived experience, see *Space and Place* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977); for the idea of "insideness," a sense of being here and not there, which, as is argued in this dissertation, begins to apply to New York Harbor in this period, see Edward Relph, *Place and Placelessness* (London: Pion, 1976).

<sup>2</sup> Philip Hone, Diaries 1826–1851, Reel 5, 31 August 1842, MSS Collection BV, NYHS.

<sup>3</sup> For Yellow Fever and Quarantine, see Claude Edwin Heaton, "Yellow Fever in New York City," *Bulletin Of The Medical Library Association* 34, (April 1946): 67–78; Joseph Bayley, "The Quarantine Establishment at New York," *The Medical Repository* 6 (1803),

150–4; for defense of the Narrows, see *To the Senate and House of Representatives... threatening aspect of public affairs...*, Broadides SY1800, No. 51, NYHS, September 14, 1801; New York (NY) and Arthur Everett Peterson, *Minutes of the Common Council of the City of New York, 1784–1831* 4 (1917), “Plan of Colonel Jonathan Williams for Fortifying the Narrows between Long and Staten Islands,” August 4, 1807, 512–18, also July 27, 1807, 504; for Quarantine’s role in immigration, see New York (State), “Report Of The Select Committee Appointed by the Legislature of New York to Examine into Frauds Upon Emigrants,” *Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York* 8:250 (1847), 18, 33, 80, 44, and 62; and New York (State) Commissioners of Emigration, *Annual Reports of the Commissioners of Emigration of the State of New York from the Organization of the Commission, May 5, 1847, to 1860* (New York: [Commissioners of Emigration], 1861), iii–v; for Manhattan’s population growth, see United States Census Bureau, Census of 1790 and 1860, Historical Census Browser (2004), University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center: <http://mapserver.lib.virginia.edu/>, accessed on July 11, 2014; for the real estate investment associations, see New Brighton Association, *Articles, &c. of the New Brighton Association* (New York: s.n, 1836); and Staten-Island Association, *Description of Clifton, at the Narrows, Staten-Island With a Map of the Same and the Articles of Agreement of the "Staten-Island Association" Entered into on the 9th Aug. 1837* (New-York: H. Ludwig, printer, 1838); for the importance of the Erie Canal to the growth of New York, see Edwin G. Burrows and Mike Wallace, *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 430–1 and 450; for the expansion of New Yorkers into a larger metropolitan region, see Edward K. Spann, *The New Metropolis: New York City, 1840–1857* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), 176–204.

<sup>4</sup> Franklin Langworthy, *Scenery of the Plains, Mountains and Mines or a Diary Kept on the Overland Route to California...* (Ogdensburgh: J.C. Sprague, 1855), 301–2.

<sup>5</sup> The spelling of Throgg’s Neck has become popularly mistaken to be Throgs Neck, see <http://www.sunymaritime.edu/Maritime%20Museum/FortSchuyler/>, accessed March 13, 2014; for the geography of early grids and ferry routes around Manhattan, see John Randel, Jr., *The City of New York as Laid Out by the Commissioners with the Surrounding Country* (1821), Library of Congress Geography and Map Division Washington, DC, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g3804n.ct001389>, accessed September 15, 2013.

<sup>6</sup> For Greenwich Village, see Luther S. Harris, *Around Washington Square: An Illustrated History of Greenwich Village* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003); and Emily K. Folpe, *It Happened on Washington Square* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002); for Brooklyn, see [No title], *BDE*, March 3, 1860, 2; New York State (Secretary of State), *Census of the State of New York for 1855* (Albany: C. Van Benthuyssen, 1857) xxii–xxiv; and Burrows and Wallace, 449–50, 580–2 and 728–30; see also Joshua Britton, “Building a ‘City of Churches and Homes’: Elites, Space and Development in Nineteenth-Century Brooklyn, New York,” (Unpublished dissertation, Lehigh University, 2013); and Ralph Foster Weld, *Brooklyn Village, 1816–1834* (New York: AMS Press, 1970); for Hoboken, see Charles Winfield, *Hopoghan Hackingh: Hoboken, a Pleasure Resort for Old New York* (New York: The Caxton Press,

1895), and William A. Mann, "The Elysian Fields of Hoboken, New Jersey," *Base Ball: A Journal of the Early Game* 1:1 (Spring 2007), 78–95.

<sup>7</sup> [No Title. Post Chaise Line] (ad.), *National Advocate*, May 20, 1819. O. L. Holley, (ed.), *A Description of the City of New York: With a Brief Account of the Cities, Towns, Villages, And Places of Resort Within Thirty Miles: Designed As a Guide for Citizens And Strangers . . .* (New York: J. Disturnell, 1847), 59.

<sup>8</sup> J. H. French, *Gazetteer of the State of New York*, 6th ed. (Syracuse: R. Pearsall Smith, 1860), 563. Thomas F. Gordon *Gazetteer of the State of New York* (Philadelphia: for author, 1836), 655. Wayne G. Powell, *Geology of Staten Island*, [http://academic.brooklyn.cuny.edu/geology/powell/NYCgeology/staten%20island/staten\\_island.htm](http://academic.brooklyn.cuny.edu/geology/powell/NYCgeology/staten%20island/staten_island.htm), accessed March 13, 2014; United States Coast Survey, *Map of New-York Bay and Harbor and the Environs* (Washington, DC: Survey of the Coast of the United States, 1844, <http://www.davidrumsey.com/>, accessed March 31, 2014). United States Geological Survey, 15 Minute Series (1891), Historic USGS Maps of New England & New York, Documents Department & Data Center, Dimond Library, University of New Hampshire (<http://docs.unh.edu/NY/stil91ne.jpg>, <http://docs.unh.edu/NY/stil91se.jpg>, <http://docs.unh.edu/NY/stil91nw.jpg>, <http://docs.unh.edu/NY/stil91sw.jpg>, accessed March 13, 2014). " 'As The Crow Flies' Distance Calculator" (<http://tjpeiffer.com/crowflies.html>, accessed March 13, 2013).

<sup>9</sup> J. J. Clute, *Annals of Staten Island from Its Discovery to the Present Time* (New York: Press of Chas. Voght, 1877), 206.

<sup>10</sup> Clute, 159. Phillip Papas, *That Ever Loyal Island: Staten Island and the American Revolution* (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 14–5.

<sup>11</sup> Papas, 13–5. United States Census of 1790, Historical Census Browser (2004), University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center: <http://mapserver.lib.virginia.edu/>.

<sup>12</sup> Samuel Akerly, "Agriculture of Richmond County," *Transactions of the New York State Agricultural Society* 2 (1842) (Albany: E. Mack, 1843), 189 and 194.

<sup>13</sup> New York (State), "Communication from the Committee Appointed by the House of Assembly, at its Last Session, to Inquire into the Propriety of the Removal of the Quarantine Establishment," *Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York*, 72nd sess., 2:60 (Albany: Weed, Parsons & Co., 1849), 8; for Manhattan's maritime and urban growth, see Robert Greenhalgh Albion and Jennie Barnes Pope, *The Rise of New York Port, 1815–1860* (New York: C. Scribner's sons, 1939, reprint edition, Boston: Northern University Press, 1984), and Edward K. Spann, *The New Metropolis: New York City, 1840–1857* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981). Akerly, 200. For population growth and housing value, see United States Census of 1830 and 1860, Historical Census Browser (2004), University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center: <http://mapserver.lib.virginia.edu/>; and New York (State) and Chas W. Seaton, *Census of the State of New York for 1875* (Albany: Weed, Parsons and Co., 1877), 2–3. New York State (Secretary of State), *Census of the State of New York for 1855* (Albany 1857), xxiv, xxvii, 2–3, 112–67, and 230–48.



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<sup>14</sup> Noah Webster, *A Dictionary of the English Language: Abridged from the American Dictionary* (New York: Huntington and Savage, 1845), 242. Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973).

<sup>15</sup> The historiography of nineteenth century New York is extensive and complex; for a few important examples, see Elizabeth Blackmar, *Manhattan for Rent, 1785–1850* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989); David M. Scobey, *Empire City: The Making and Meaning of the New York City Landscape* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002); see, again Spann, *The New Metropolis* (1981); and Albion and Pope, (1939, 1984). Scholars of the nineteenth century have examined urban and suburban history more separately than their twentieth century counterparts; for nineteenth century suburban history, see Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985); Robert Fishman, *Bourgeois Utopias: The Rise and Fall of Suburbia* (New York: Basic Books, 1987); Dolores Hayden, *Building Suburbia: Green Fields and Urban Growth, 1820–2000* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2003); John R. Stilgoe, *Borderland: Origins of the American Suburb, 1820–1939* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988); for a more social and economic history approach from the perspective of the urban fringe, see Henry C. Binford, *The First Suburbs: Residential Communities on the Boston Periphery, 1815–1860* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985); for manufacturing's role in the building of suburban places between the 1850s and 1950s, see Robert D. Lewis, *Manufacturing Suburbs: Building Work and Home on the Metropolitan Fringe* (Philadelphia: Temple University, 2004); for a sense of the changing nature of urban places, culture and social structure during the period, see Dell Upton, *Another City: Urban Life and Urban Spaces in the New American Republic* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003); Spann; Karen Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women: A Study of Middle-Class Culture in America, 1830–1870* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982); Christine tansell, *City of Women: Sex and Class in New York, 1789–1860* (New York: Knopf, 1986); and Sean Wilentz, *Chants Democratic: New York City & the Rise of the American Working Class, 1788–1850* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984); Sam Bass Warner, *The Private City; Philadelphia in Three Periods of Its Growth* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1968); Paul Edward Johnson, *A Shopkeeper's Millenium: Society and Revivals in Rochester, New York, 1815–1837* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978); Diane Shaw, *City Building on the Eastern Frontier: Sorting the New Nineteenth-Century City* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004); Sarah Luria, *Capital Speculations: Writing and Building Washington, D.C.* (Durham: University of New Hampshire Press, 2006). Also: Sam Bass Warner, *Streetcar Suburbs: The Process of Growth in Boston, 1870–1900* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962); and Michael Holleran, *Boston's "Changeful Times": Origins of Preservation & Planning in America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998). Scholars of twentieth century suburban history have more often taken a regional approach; see, e.g., Robert O. Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003); Becky M. Nicolaides, *My Blue Heaven: Life and Politics in the Working-class Suburbs of Los Angeles, 1920–1965* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); Kevin Michael Kruse and Thomas J. Sugrue, *The New Suburban History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006); see also Andrew Wiese, *Places of their*

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*own African American Suburbanization in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

<sup>16</sup> John Duffy, *A History of Public Health In New York City, 1625–1866* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1968), 330–55.

<sup>17</sup> “Article IV: Horticultural Association of the Valley of the River Hudson,” *The Magazine of Horticulture* 4:9 (1838), 353.

## CHAPTER ONE

### Gateway to New York Harbor: Maritime Institutions and the Regional Metropolis

At last we got as far as the Narrows, which everybody knows is the entrance to New York Harbor from the sea; . . . when you go in or out, it seems like going in or out of a doorway . . . as you go out, the land is quite high; and on the top of a fine cliff is a great castle or fort, all in ruins . . . It was a beautiful place . . . wonderful and romantic. . . . I saw a black goat with a long beard, and crumpled horns, standing with his fore-feet lifted up high on the topmost parapet, and looking out to sea, as if he were watching for a ship that way bringing over his cousin. – Herman Melville<sup>1</sup>

Staten Island is now seen distinctly ahead, and in very plain sight. No prospect in grandeur can surpass the approach by sea, to the City of New York. . . . Steamboats, sailing vessels, and small craft innumerable now meet the view on all sides. Passing Sandy Hook, the west end of Long Island is four or five miles to the right, the Jersey shore on our left, and Staten Island in front. – Franklin Langworthy<sup>2</sup>

Beginning in the 1790s, New Yorkers built a series of institutions on Staten Island to serve the maritime metropolis: A Military Ground; Customs and Quarantine Stations; the Seamen's Retreat, for sick and injured seamen; the Sailors' Snug Harbor, a retirement home for "aged, decrepit and worn out sailors," and two smaller institutions to serve the poor wives and "destitute children" of New York's mariners. All were intended to protect and manage the harbor and its city from a distance, yet all brought Staten Island into the life of metropolitan New York. As they did so, Staten Island's harbor institutions pushed the limits of metropolitan space from the docks and waters adjacent to Manhattan out—across the harbor—to Staten Island and included the Island in networks of politics and patronage. At the same time, because of their location on Staten Island, defined the Island as distinct from the city. After all, the key advantages Staten Island offered to those choosing a location for such establishments were both accessibility to and separation from urban Manhattan. Each of Staten Island's maritime institutions has a

different story to tell, but all point to a new kind of relationship between Staten Island and Manhattan: that of a metropolitan periphery.

Staten Island's maritime institutions of the early decades of the nineteenth century are also part of the larger story of international ocean-borne trade and the establishment of governmental authority, both crucial to the new nation and the wealth and character of New York. Through the examination of these institutions, Staten Island offers a new view on the early republic and its young metropolis by shifting the perspective away from the centers in Manhattan, Philadelphia and Washington D.C. to the emerging metropolitan periphery. Refocusing on Staten Island puts the harbor at the center rather than urban Manhattan in the geography of politics, power and patronage, as well as the geography of disease during an era of epidemics.<sup>3</sup>

Staten Island's maritime institutions can be divided into two types. The first, built between 1790 and the war of 1812, and constituted by Forts Tompkins and Richmond along with the Quarantine and Customs Stations, were institutions designed to create a defensive perimeter for the metropolis, a harbor gateway of governmental authority. These faced outward to defend the city. The second group, built beginning in the 1830s, were asylums to serve the New York's community of seamen and their families. These faced inward toward the harbor metropolis.

The stories of the establishment of Staten Island's forts, Quarantine and Customs Stations, each reveal the importance of a moment in New York and national history in the establishment of the island as the gateway to New York Harbor, a "doorway" to the metropolis itself. The forts were created in a moment of fear as war between France and England spilled out onto the Atlantic in the wake of the French Revolution. The

Quarantine was also created in a moment of fear, following a decade of Yellow Fever in New York and its maritime trading partners. The Customs Station was created in the context of the new nation struggling to establish its authority over maritime commerce and the tariffs necessary to fund its survival, evidenced by the battle with smugglers at Staten Island.<sup>4</sup>

Each of these historical moments brought Staten Island into view and lined its shore along the harbor with the institutions of a maritime gateway to the metropolis. Yet even beyond their seminal moments, Staten Island's governmental institutions persisted, offering a foundation for a growing and changing relationship with Manhattan. The forts offered a potential new setting for the national military academy, which was almost relocated from West Point in the 1810s. The Quarantine Station persisted even as yellow fever receded, taking on an institutional persistence as power and wealth flowed through the station, attracting the interest of politicians. The fact that such a governmental facility was already present at the harbor gateway also made Quarantine New York's de facto immigration station by the 1840s, reflecting the changing needs and fears of the metropolis.

The military, commercial and public health perimeter of forts, customs and quarantine formalized the distinction between the waters inside the Narrows and those outside, separating the orderly and safe space of the harbor, from an uncontrolled, threatening and potentially infectious outside world. In 1856 a columnist for *Harper's Magazine* made the distinction this way: "we console ourselves," he wrote, "with the reflection that we have no country house on the south shore of Staten Island, or at Rockaway [both outside the Narrows], or at such other exposed places as would be

within range of an enemy's guns" but rather enjoy a quiet home life on the Island's North Shore "utterly beyond the reach of any hostile demonstration."<sup>5</sup>

By the 1830s, New Yorkers were building the second kind of maritime institution on Staten Island: asylums to serve its community of seamen and their families. It is only because the harbor became a metropolitan space through its bounding at the Narrows with governmental institutions that places like Snug Harbor and the Seamen's Retreat could be built on Staten Island and still be within the emerging regional metropolis. The story of the Sailors' Snug Harbor reveals the metropolitan sorting of uses and land value across an emerging regional geography no longer limited to urban Manhattan. The story of the Seamen's Retreat is one of New York's port city politics and maritime community. The Retreat, as will be shown, was the legacy of the public source of funds established decades earlier to support the Quarantine Station in the moment of the yellow fever crisis. The story of the smaller family asylums for mariner's families underscores both the differentiation of metropolitan space and the legacy of the Island's existing maritime institutions that made Staten Island *the* place in New York's metropolitan geography for maritime institutions.

### **Sailing Into New York Harbor**

Imagine Staten Island's location in the New York Harbor, in the nineteenth century. One approaches the southern tip of Manhattan, perhaps after a long ocean voyage, sometime between the 1830s and 1850s. Before the airplane replaced the ship, Staten Island was front and center for people arriving to New York. It was a herald announcing the approaching city. Viewing the shore of Staten Island and experiencing

the arrival procedures that went on there during these decades captures New York's metropolitan geography at the height of the maritime era. It also reveals the vestiges of the 1790s infrastructure (an infrastructure) that helped bound the harbor as a future metropolitan region and the later asylums that extended the city's maritime institutions to the edge of the harbor. Staten Island in the maritime era helps explain the earliest formations and emergence of New York as a regional metropolis, a formation that began before the dominance of railroad travel and before New Yorker's attention shifted westward, away from the harbor, toward the American continent.

Upon approach, one would likely be excited to spy Sandy Hook, undoubtedly the first land sighting for weeks in the voyage across the Atlantic. Once the ship reached the mouth of the channel a harbor pilot would come aboard to navigate the vessel through the maze of narrow waterways ahead. Depending on the type of ship, the direction of the winds, the levels of the tide, and the season (Autumn or Spring), the respectable-looking harbor pilot would guide the boat directly toward Staten Island. Perhaps he would choose to cut through the Swash Channel by lining up the lighthouses on the Island's south shore or perhaps he would traverse through Gedney's Channel and the Main Ship Channel before turning north towards the Narrows, and the city. Either way, soon the impressive farms and beautifully long, sandy beaches of Staten Island would come into view. By the 1850s, the Island was crowned with country estates atop a long row of hills that ranged as high as 410 feet, the highest point on the entire Eastern seaboard.<sup>6</sup>

As a ship approached the Narrows, the bold structure of Fort Tompkins soon came into view up on a cliff, with the iconic visual telegraph signal poles in the foreground. Perhaps the passengers were familiar with images of the fort and the signal

poles from the popular book, *American Scenery* (or from other publications).

Technological advances in the electric telegraph would eventually make the visual telegraph system obsolete, but for over a century, the signal poles on Staten Island relayed news of arriving vessels directly from the edge of the harbor to the eyes of merchants in Manhattan. The poles, therefore, signified trade, commerce, and communication, and a place for Staten Island in metropolitan geography. Fort Tompkins itself, although in a “dilapidated state” by the 1820s indeed still had a “very picturesque appearance,” as described in traveler’s guidebooks. And perhaps travelers might also recall some vivid images of the fort’s “long vaults, twisting and turning on every side” from Herman Melville’s popular novel *Redburn*.<sup>7</sup>

As the vessel proceeded into the Narrows, the homes that came into view along the shore, wrote one Manhattanite who moved to Staten Island, seem to form “almost a continued village.” One would next notice, as the ship proceeded further, the impressive edifice of the estate of the Seamen’s Retreat Hospital set “on a high and commanding bluff” amidst forty-acres of “beautiful gardens and pleasure grounds.” The four-story building, where the sick and injured seamen of the era were cared for, was a grand structure “of hammered blue stone trimmed with granite and covered with brazier’s copper” with “extensive galleries or piazzas.” As ships passed the hospital, they approached Stapleton, by the 1840s already a dense village of about eighty houses or more tucked together near a steamboat dock. These homes would multiply as recently arriving Germans and Irishmen settling in the metropolitan area came to Stapleton.<sup>8</sup>

Having already passed through the Narrows, activity upon the ship has gotten much busier. The harbor pilot steers towards the port’s Quarantine anchorage adjacent to



the Quarantine Station on the Staten Island shore and everyone aboard prepares for the arrival of the Health Officer for inspection. Both passengers and crew have already been feverishly throwing bedding and clothing overboard even before the passage through the Narrows, to rid the ship of potentially infected material that might delay clearance for Manhattan.<sup>9</sup> The captain implores everyone to clean and groom him or herself and prepare to line up as the Health Officer comes aboard. Quarantine agents collect clothing for required laundering. If the Health Officer finds any evidence of fevers, ranging from typhus to “bilious” and “intermittent,” or the dreaded yellow fever, cholera, or small pox, either in the form of sick passengers or the “seeds” of deadly disease in clothing, bedding or cargo, persons, or perhaps the whole ship might be detained at Staten Island. Furthermore, this detention might possibly be for days or up to a month. In most years, diseases were not epidemic, and most passed inspection readily, meaning the ship could proceed immediately to the city.<sup>10</sup>

The Quarantine Station and its anchorage, was as one traveler explained: “the usual rendezvous of all vessels bound to the city of New York.” Guidebooks and travel literature described the “great number of vessels from different quarters of the globe may here be seen riding anchor” in the waters of the Staten Island Quarantine anchorage and the steamboats that “fly rapidly and skillfully [in] constant succession” back and forth between Staten Island and Manhattan. Gazing ashore, one could marvel at the impressive extent of the Quarantine establishment: Three grand hospitals designed to handle 450 patients “pleasantly situated . . . on the acclivity of a soft rising hill.” The largest was 136 feet long, three stories tall and crowned with a cupola, with two sizable wings alongside. A lovely tree-lined lane separated the dock area and the quarantined ships at anchor

offshore from the buildings, designed to keep the miasmas of infected air from reaching the station. By the end of the 1840s, however, the station grounds were crowded with hastily constructed “shantee” hospitals to serve waves of newly arrived immigrants.<sup>11</sup>

The activity at the Quarantine Station was as busy as anywhere in the harbor. While waiting at the Quarantine anchorage, the sight may seem rather chaotic. People rushing to get ashore from the ships—no matter if the ship was cleared immediately or not. Passengers might jump aboard passing steamers to get into the city quicker, while others would wait on the ship, delayed by winds and tides, even if the Health Officer had already cleared the vessel for Manhattan. By the late 1840s, while some of the passengers might remain on the ship for a quick continuation on to Manhattan, most passengers, especially from steerage, were discharged at Staten Island and conveyed to the city on smaller vessels contracted by the ship owner, or on the public ferry. Some crewmen went ashore to spend the day on Staten Island with their families who came down from Manhattan to meet them; others would go up to the city. Simultaneously, coming off the ferries from Manhattan on visiting days, were waves of friends and family of travellers, eager to see their loved ones detained at Quarantine.<sup>12</sup>

By 1850, through the windows and on the verandas of the hospitals on shore, one could see some of the nearly four-dozen nurses at work. In addition, some seventy or more laborers worked on the grounds. Many others came to Quarantine and its adjacent Customs Station on business or ancillary activities related to the ships and cargoes. Offshore, crews opened the hatches to air out the cargo and holds. Stevedores might swarm onto a nearby ship, transferring quarantined cargo to the storehouses at the Customs Station, and lighterers transloaded cargo to smaller ships bound for the docks of

Manhattan or Brooklyn. Another ship might be refitted to return to sea. Yellow flags indicated quarantined ships, onto which African American laborers lumbered, rolling barrels of phosphate of lime. They went below deck, into the holds to scrub potentially infected vessels clean of any potential disease. This was the deadliest job at the Quarantine.<sup>13</sup>

Once the ship continued passed Quarantine on its way to Manhattan, the visual journey did as well. On the north shore of Staten Island one would have caught sight of New Brighton, promoted as an aristocratic resort village for New Yorkers and visitors to the metropolis, its shore lined with Greek revival villas punctuated with fine hotels. Just beyond New Brighton lay Snug Harbor, among the great maritime institutions of its time. Surrounded by manicured landscapes, set across 130 acres, lived hundreds of old, retired seamen amidst the comfort of grand buildings, the center-piece of which had a “handsome marble front ... three stories high...with eight pillars or columns.”<sup>14</sup>

Crossing the harbor toward Manhattan in the decades before 1860, one could practically sense being in the midst of a great metropolis. As one traveler put it, “Cities of imperial size nearly surround us. New York in front, Quarantine in the rear, Brooklyn and Williamsburgh on the right, Jersey City, Hoboken, and Newark on the left.” The entire stretch of water between Staten Island and Manhattan pulsed with the activity of the regional metropolis.<sup>15</sup>

### **Building a Gateway: Governmental Outposts of the Maritime Metropolis**

Staten Island has a long history in the military geography of New York, but before the 1790s, no permanent governmental presence marked the Island as the

metropolitan perimeter. When the British took New Amsterdam from the Dutch, they first positioned their four warships at Staten Island; the little Dutch blockhouse nearby, with its garrison of six was irrelevant to the colony's defense. During the French and Indian War, the British used Staten Island as a principal military encampment, but the Island did not persist as a permanent military position of consequence. At the beginning of the American Revolution, the Continental Congress decided not to fortify Staten Island to defend New York from the British fleet. Once the British captured the Island, they fortified it for the duration of the war and used it as a key staging area, both for taking New York, and for the rest of the Revolutionary conflict. None of the fortifications, however, survived after the war.<sup>16</sup>

Beginning in the 1790s, as the State of New York and the United States jockeyed for authority and responsibility, the two governments established a more permanent harbor gateway at Staten Island, building a set of barrier outposts for the maritime city. The forts, Quarantine and Customs Stations built there accomplished three things. First, through their establishment and operation, the state and national authorities established control of the port, its defense, and commerce, and in doing so, their own power and legitimacy. Second, the new outposts projected port wealth, metropolitan attention, and political power onto Staten Island, linking the interests of the Island and Manhattan across the harbor while they still prioritized the city's agenda. Third, the Staten Island gateway created a visual and functional relationship that defined the emerging region with the harbor at its center and Staten Island at its periphery.

The outposts drew the edge of the emerging New York region's perimeter at Staten Island, yet as has been said, they also established the Island as a place in

contradistinction to Manhattan. The harbor outposts made the Island indivisibly related to, but not part of, the maritime city—a metropolitan place—but not urban. The forts and the Quarantine defined Staten Island as the vanguard of protection from attack by military enemies and disease. The Customs Station was designed to interdict commerce at a controllable place apart from the chaos of the busy port itself.

In 1800, “the inhabitants of the City of New-York” petitioned the state legislature for harbor fortifications pointedly reminding leaders, “the government is as much bound to furnish protection, as the citizen is to render obedience.” Amidst the tensions of war on the high seas between France and England New Yorkers demanded their young state and national governments prove their usefulness and responsiveness by providing protection from attack. Although President Washington and later Jefferson both declared American neutrality, New York and other coastal cities seemed vulnerable between the 1790s and the War of 1812 as British and French warships captured American ships and mariners with impunity.<sup>17</sup>

Meanwhile, New Yorkers feared equally attack by yellow fever both because of the physical devastation of the disease, and the commercial devastation that followed in its wake. Over the decade, the disease killed nearly 3,000 in the city (approximately 5 percent of the total population) and merchant ships avoided infected ports. New Yorkers, who were able to, fled the city to Greenwich Village, Staten Island, and other nearby places that were believed to be inherently healthful. When yellow fever raged, Manhattan’s commerce virtually ceased. A healthy port was a competitive port.<sup>18</sup>

At their very first meeting in 1794, the Commissioners of Fortifications for the City of New York and Vicinity focused their attention on Staten Island, calling on the

City Surveyor to lay “before them, a map of the Narrows & such Fortifications there, as would in his judgment be proper for the defense of the Harbour.” And Staten Island was “esteemed so salubrious,” noted one guidebook that the Commissioners of Health “selected its shore as a fit place for receiving invalids and sickly ships from abroad.” In the 1790s, both sets of commissioners empowered by the State of New York to defend the city settled on Staten Island as the proper place to do so. Shortly after their first meeting, the Commissioners of Fortifications bought up twenty-five acres for a New York State Military Ground on Staten Island at the base of the Narrows, the first piece of the metropolitan military perimeter and a property that would eventually grow to 225 acres. Meanwhile, at the top of the Narrows, the state’s Commissioners of Health appropriated a separate thirty-acre site in 1799 for a Quarantine Station and “a Marine Hospital.” Of the Quarantine property, the state ceded five acres “for accommodation of the United States” government, which was already using the site for its customs operation.<sup>19</sup>

Staten Island was a strategic place, far enough from Manhattan to provide protection, yet located at the accessible and enforceable point of entry to the harbor. Defending the harbor at Staten Island, New Yorkers believed, would prevent the bringing of “the battle home to our doors, within the cries of our wives and children.” As for a location for quarantine, as Manhattan merchant Richardson Underhill put it, Staten Island was a “convenient place remote from the centre of population where ware houses might be prepared for the reception of ... goods and from whence they might be transported at little expence to their respective consignees after having been duly examined.” The State Military Ground lay at the first defensible point of entry to the harbor, at the narrowest

point of the Narrows, with land for both a shore battery and commanding hilltop fort, much higher than the one across the strait on Long Island. The site proposed for Quarantine, safely inside the new military perimeter, contained abundant fresh water and adequate space to air-out cargoes along a breezy hillside slope, all essential for purification according to late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century public health practices. The Quarantine site also stood astride one of the largest and best anchorages in the harbor, perfect for interdicting large numbers of vessels safely distant from Manhattan, in case of an epidemic.<sup>20</sup>

In order to respond to the fears and demands of the city, the state shifted the threat of disease and military engagement from Manhattan to Staten Island, and in doing so also challenged Staten Islander's individual rights by appropriating their land. Although the state government continued to exercise the English Common Law power to take land after the Revolution, the few appropriations that it indeed pursued were typically for roads, canals, and other improvements that would likely benefit adjacent landowners. The taking of dozens of acres for forts, and worse yet quarantine facilities, was however another matter. Before 1821, the state constitution said nothing about the government's right to appropriate land for public purpose, leaving the issue up to the courts, which had not yet established a definitive set of precedents. With an eye to legitimate the process of taking land to protect the city at the expense of Staten Island property-holders, the state established commissions to select and acquire the sites.<sup>21</sup>

For both the state's new Military Ground and its the Quarantine Station, the appointed commissioners minimized confrontation by choosing land that was not owned by property-owning voters and by appealing to legal process to legitimate the price they

paid. Catherine Vanderventer and Ann Jacobson, the two widowed sisters who owned the original 25 acres of strategic land at the Narrows, demanded more than the Commissioners of Fortifications were willing to pay. As women, they were excluded from the political process. The commissioners appealed to a jury of male Staten Islanders to determine a fair price, and purchased the land. The state's acquisition of the Quarantine property was more controversial. "[P]urchasing from individuals," complained Governor Jay in a letter to the mayor of New York, was an "impossibility... on account of the popular prejudices against having such an establishment in their neighbourhood." Nobody wanted to live near a yellow fever lazaretto. Therefore, in the case of the Quarantine property, the Commissioners of Health appropriated land from St. Andrew's Episcopal Church and the State Supreme Court appointed a committee of appraisers (none of whom was a Staten Islander) to determine fair value of the site and any damages due to property owners. With the acquisition of the two properties, the state had secured its footprint on Staten Island for both the Military Ground and the Quarantine Station.<sup>22</sup>

### ***The Staten Island Military Ground***

The Staten Island Military Ground both delineated the city's military perimeter and projected high-level politics toward Staten Island. While Staten Island's usefulness to the metropolis as a military perimeter seemed obvious to New Yorkers in the early nineteenth century, the federal government resisted building any fortifications there in both the 1790s and 1800s, the decades in which they constructed two sets of coastal defenses for the new nation that historians have called the First and Second Systems of



American defense. After the state's purchase of the Military Ground in the 1790s, the federal government refocused harbor defenses closer to the city, on Governor's Island, part of the First System.<sup>23</sup>

As war loomed again in 1807, the city's Common Council approached Secretary of War William Eustis as the federal government was constructing the Second System, specifically requesting a plan to fortify Staten Island. Colonel Jonathan Williams, head of the Army's Corps of Engineers and the officer in charge of harbor fortifications admitted, "I have often heard it said that, could the defense of the Narrows...be procured, the inhabitants of New York would not think a million dollars too great an expense." Instead, Secretary Eustis and Colonel Williams again applied limited federal resources to fortifications on Governor's Island and other sites closer to or on Manhattan, just as their counterparts had in the 1790s. While Williams did provide the city council with plans for fortifying the Narrows as requested, he made it clear that he was not authorized to build them. He explained to the City Council that even with batteries on Staten Island and across on Long Island, "with fair wind and tide," of a dozen ships of the line in an attacking fleet "ten might surely pass unhurt" through the Narrows. "Let us secure our house first," he told the Council, "then according to our ability, defend our courtyard."<sup>24</sup>

New York's new governor, Daniel D. Tompkins was more responsive to New Yorkers' demands to fortify Staten Island and place the harbor "courtyard" within the city's military perimeter. Tompkins was a creature of early Democratic-Republican politics in New York. Born to a politically connected freehold farmer from Westchester during the Revolution, Tompkins moved to the city in 1792 to study law at Columbia College and try his hand at politics. He got his break, in part, by marrying Hannah

Minthorne, daughter of Mangle Minthorne, Assistant Alderman of Manhattan's 7th Ward and a leader in the city's Tammany Society. By the election of 1800, conservative members of Tammany were resigning as the Society took on more of a partisan and populist tone. Young men with political ambitions, like Tompkins, flocked to Tammany, along with propertyless mechanics and artisans seeking a political voice and immigrants fearful of the Federalist's push to restrict their access to citizenship. Tompkins' door-to-door efforts in the election of 1800 helped turn 7th ward voters from Federalist to Republican candidates and possibly propelled his father-in-law into the Alderman's post for the ward.<sup>25</sup>

New York politics, like American politics generally in the early republic, revolved more around networks of interest and shifting alliances rather than organized political parties. The Federalists, led by Alexander Hamilton represented one faction. The artisans and mechanics of Tammany formed another. Powerful families like the Livingstons and the Clintons led other factions. In 1807, the Clinton clan, led by George Clinton and his nephew DeWitt, saw in Tompkins a chance to heal a rift between themselves and Tammany. Backed by the Clintons, Tompkins became governor in 1807. Relying on a power base at Tammany and a network of support he had built upstate as a circuit court judge, Tompkins served as governor for ten years, though he moved quickly to establish independence from the Clintons.<sup>26</sup>

As governor, Tompkins mobilized state resources to fortify the state-owned Military Ground on Staten Island, moving the city's military perimeter to the edge of the harbor. To address the federal cry of poverty, Tompkins offered the large sum of \$100,000 to begin construction in 1808. To make clear that he saw harbor defense as a

federal responsibility, he turned to Colonel Williams to design a plan for the Staten Island forts and communicated his expectation that once begun, the national government would take over the project. Williams provided plans, as Tompkins requested, as he had the previous year for the Common Council, but warned the governor that the state would have to do without financial support from the federal government. Tompkins moved ahead anyway, knowing that his frightened constituents would feel safer with impressive forts and loud cannon out at Staten Island, safely distant from Manhattan.<sup>27</sup>

In the devastating winter of 1808–9, the governor’s decision to commit \$100,000 in state funds to construct the Staten Island forts was motivated by more than military concerns. Two hundred to two hundred and fifty New Yorkers “deprived of the ordinary means of subsistence, by the critical state of our national affairs” were employed on the giant Staten Island project, each earning twenty-five cents and one ration a day, reported the Commissioners of Fortifications. It was a work-relief program for an economically troubled city. On December 22, 1807, President Jefferson had passed the Embargo Act, which was a desperate attempt to avoid American involvement in hostilities between the British and the French by halting all trade with both nations. Despite widespread attempts by New York merchants to evade the embargo, thousands of sailors, artisans, laborers, and mechanics dependent on the city’s maritime trade were without work. By the winter months many were facing severe distress. The state sent hundreds of them to Staten Island, where, by mid-winter they had completed the groundwork for Fort Richmond, the water battery, and had begun preparing the site for the principal work, Fort Tompkins, atop the hill. With the Embargo Act lifted by the spring of 1809, construction flagged and Fort Tompkins was not completed until after the War of 1812

had begun. As they labored out at the edge of the harbor, to defend their metropolis, New York's "mechanicks and labourers" forged a new relationship between Staten Island and Manhattan, driven by the competing demands of state and national politics.<sup>28</sup>

As a work relief project, the Staten Island fortifications were of particular political value to Tompkins. First, because he was the governor of New York, and second, because he had taken a strong position in favor of the Embargo Act. He had done so, in part to secure his political independence from the Clintons by creating a bond of loyalty to the Jefferson administration. The construction of the Staten Island fortifications was, therefore, an opportunity for Tompkins to try to offset the local political consequences of such an unpopular position. By its very name and visibility, Fort Tompkins, the principal structure at the State Military Ground, boosted the governor's stature, and, quite possibly, cemented the political loyalties of the workers and their families. Meanwhile, DeWitt Clinton, Tompkins' rival, could claim the political loyalty of the men employed in the project on Staten Island too. Clinton had maneuvered himself onto the position of Chairman of the Commissioners of Fortifications, overseeing the construction of the Staten Island forts.<sup>29</sup>

Tompkins' efforts on Staten Island also helped align the Island's politics with Manhattan's. Before the construction of Forts Tompkins and Richmond, Staten Islanders elected mostly Federalists, even in the nationally transformative election of 1800 that swept Jeffersonian Democrats into power. Yet by the late 1820s, Staten Island had its own Democratic newspaper, and Tammany resolutions were read at Island political meetings. While many elections were close, only Westfield, the township most isolated from the city continued to vote regularly for Federalist candidates. The turning point was

the election of 1810, with Tompkins for governor at the head of the ticket; the Democratic-Republicans won the Island for the first time.<sup>30</sup>

Searching for a way to get the national government to take responsibility for the state's Staten Island Military Ground, Governor Tompkins presented Secretary of War Eustis with a plan to move the national military academy to Staten Island even before the forts were even completed. Like the forts themselves, the idea was rooted in the conception of a metropolitan relationship between Staten Island and the city. The current location of the academy at West Point, complained Colonel Williams, made it as "completely obscure as if it were placed on the north side of Ohio." As head of the Army Corps of Engineers and thereby in charge of the academy, Williams wanted to transform the academy from a small training ground for military engineers to a national center for science and engineering. Williams believed Staten Island was the kind of place where the struggling institution might attract the attention and patronage of men of science because it was near to Manhattan. Williams wrote to DeWitt Clinton, then serving as Congressman from New York, arguing that an academy on Staten Island would "become known throughout the United States." Tompkins noted the Island's "vicinity to genteel amusements and society" of Manhattan, and thus "to books, instruments and other advantages for a complete military education." For Williams and Tompkins, a move to Staten Island would be a move for the academy from the obscurity of West Point to a metropolitan center.<sup>31</sup>

Staten Island was also a politically palatable solution for a variety of interests and agendas. Even before Tompkins offered the Staten Island option, Colonel Williams had been lobbying to move the academy to Washington, where he hoped it would become

more visible to patrons of science and engineering. Secretary of War Eustis, however, opposed the aristocratic tendencies of the “academical education” at West Point. Eustis feared such an elite corps was antithetical to a republican army, preferring an officer corps built out of men who had proven themselves in the field and shared the practical training and physical grunt work of the army. Meanwhile, New York’s delegation in Washington had an interest in keeping the academy at West Point. Staten Island offered an alternative New York location, acceptable to New York politicians, and because of its proximity to Manhattan, one with access to the men of influence and science that Williams sought. In order to satisfy Eustis’ critique of the academy as “academical,” Williams argued that the fortifications under construction at Staten Island provided an opportunity for “practical instruction” at a real field establishment. For Tompkins, as already noted, moving the academy was a strategy to entice the federal government to take over the state’s Military Ground and its partially completed fortifications.<sup>32</sup>

In a moment of confluence of politics and impending war, Staten Island almost became home to the national military academy, an institution that would have transformed the Island’s relationship with both Manhattan and Washington. The fact that it never happened is less interesting than that it almost did. In 1811, a bill in the House was amended to relocate the Academy to Staten Island, increasing the appropriation for academy buildings from \$25,000 to \$40,000. Recognizing “that it is probable that Staten Island will be chosen for the future site” of the academy, the New York Legislature provided for the cession of the 47-acre public property to the United States “as long as the principal military academy of said United States shall be established, suitably endowed, and continued on said Island.”<sup>33</sup>

By the outbreak of the War of 1812, Staten Island's forts marked the city's military perimeter, defining the geography of the city's defenses in terms of the harbor. Sited atop the cliff at the Narrows, the appropriately named Fort Tompkins was without question the most visually imposing fortification protecting New York. The fort could easily be seen both by ships approaching the city from the sea and from Manhattan itself. Fort Richmond, the shore battery, promised a brutal pounding to any enemy vessel approaching the Narrows. Scattered across the Military Ground, a series of smaller batteries flanked and defended the two main works. At the beginning of 1810, the governor declared that the fortifications at the Narrows were ready to receive 108 guns, compared to the capacity for 166 guns at Governor's Island and other fortifications in and around Manhattan, the federal government's forts that the governor called the "interior defense of the harbor of New York...erecting by the United States." By the end of the war the state had expended \$350,000 building a defensive gateway at its Staten Island Military Ground.<sup>34</sup>

As the War of 1812 began, hundreds of New Yorkers from Manhattan and the Hudson Valley deployed to Staten Island, many seeing the Island for the first time. Their experience with Staten Island was in the context of its role as the military perimeter of the metropolis and the State of New York. Just a few months after the war began, New Yorkers watched fearfully as the federal government ordered troops out of New York to defend other places. Tompkins again stepped into the federal void, mobilizing the state's own militia to defend the city. The governor planned a military procession that symbolically drew up the strength of the state and arrayed it at the harbor's edge. Men from all the major towns along the Hudson: Albany, Catskill, Poughkeepsie, Hudson,

Newburgh, Athens – five artillery and seven infantry companies in all – picked up their guns and uniforms and headed downriver for the “defence of [the] City of New York.” Tompkins ordered each unit to wait at their dock until the upstream units had arrived, fashioning a growing wave of strength flowing down the state’s greatest highway. When they reached Manhattan, to allay the fears of a frightened city, Tompkins envisioned a grand procession of the force “escorted by the uniform troops of the City from the Arsenal to White Hall” where they would “embark for the State Forts” at Staten Island. During the war, the rotation of units to positions around the harbor and gun salutes that echoed among the forts performed a similar unity of metropolitan geography. Defending the harbor as a single place brought to order by governmental authority highlighted Staten Island as the edge of metropolitan space.<sup>35</sup>

Following the war, Staten Island’s military moment had passed. The legacy of the state’s initiative to construct the metropolitan military perimeter at Staten Island put the Island at a disadvantage in the evolving hierarchy of New York’s military geography. The favorable end to the war established for the federal government a greater sense of permanence and authority, precipitating continued investments in military infrastructure, while the in the absence of an immediate crisis, the state was less willing to invest in its own defense. By 1823, the meager state appropriations to maintain Staten Island’s Military Ground also dried up. The Army Corps of Engineers completed Fort Hamilton across the Narrows on Long Island in 1832. The new fort protected Fort Lafayette, the massive shore battery directly offshore Long Island, which the national government had also recently completed. Until the state finally convinced the federal government to take over the state’s Military Ground on Staten Island by threatening to sell off portions of the



property to private bidders in the mid-1840s, Fort Tompkins and Fort Richmond deteriorated into ruins.<sup>36</sup>

Nevertheless, Staten Island's forts continued to mark the edge of the metropolitan harbor, though they took on a more symbolic role. In the new regime of peace that followed the war, and resulting in part from the state's efforts, New York Harbor emerged as a safe and orderly metropolitan place. As early as the 1830s, guidebooks to New York City and images of the harbor pointed to the Narrows fortifications as either romantic or patriotic symbols of a safe and strong, well-protected city, culturally reinforcing Staten Island as the limit of the New York metropolitan region.<sup>37</sup>

### *The Federal Customs Station*

In the early decades of the republic, even as the national government refused to consider Staten Island in the geography of defense for the city, it was quite eager to invest in the Island as a gateway to control the city's maritime commerce and collect revenue. As the first Treasury Secretary, Alexander Hamilton argued the national government's future depended on controlling and tapping seaborne trade, and establishing its authority over state and local interests in such matters. Among its first acts, the Congress of the United States established a Customs Service to collect tariffs on trade and a Revenue Cutter Service to enforce new customs and maritime laws. Collection of the revenue was paramount, but customs house politics and operations also became the foundation for both conflict as well as new relationships of accommodation between governmental administrations and the merchant elite of the city in the new republican nation.<sup>38</sup>

Federal officials chose the edge of the harbor at Staten Island for a Customs Station for the New York port. Known as the “Watering Place,” the location had a long tradition in the functional geography of New York’s shipping activity. Like the Dutch before them, New York ship captains “dropped down to Staten Island” before beginning their ocean voyages. At the Watering Place, they took on fresh water and supplies, and waited for favorable winds and tides before exiting the harbor. From here customs agents would be able to observe every ship approaching Manhattan both through the Narrows, as well as via the back route around the west side of Staten Island. Strategically located, the site was an obvious place to interdict commercial shipping bound for Manhattan and assert the authority of the new nation over international trade.<sup>39</sup>

In the early decades of the republic, the national government built up the Staten Island Customs Station as part of their larger operation, known as Customs House-New York, which included rented warehouses and a Customs House building in Manhattan. By 1799, when the state purchased thirty acres at the Watering Place for its Quarantine Station, the New York customs operation had already “laid out and expended a large sum of money” there “in making improvements for the purpose of commerce, and collecting duties in the port of New-York.” After pro-commerce Hamilton and the Federalists lost control in the election of 1800, the national government under Thomas Jefferson yet continued to build on Staten Island. By 1807, David Gelston, Jefferson’s appointee as Port Collector for New York presided over a Staten Island station that included three large warehouses, a dwelling house, and one of two revenue boats for the port, representing most of the “public property belonging to the United States” for customs operations in New York Harbor. Between 1818 and 1820, under President James

Monroe, Gelston oversaw more than \$15,000 dollars worth of additional improvements. In contrast, the entire operating expense of Customs House-New York, both in Manhattan and on Staten Island had been a mere \$11,100 in 1814. The Port Collector's construction of a residence at the station reflected Staten Island's early importance in the geography of customs in New York Harbor.<sup>40</sup>

Interdicting smugglers was an important part of the function of the Customs Service in the early republic, as New Yorkers had become adept at evading maritime regulations during the colonial period. Staten Island was significant in the government's struggle against smugglers because of its location and function as the harbor gateway. David Burgher, one of Gelston's inspectors "confirmed the active part taken by Abr'm Jones" of Staten Island "in aiding and procuring a conveyance [et cetera] for the Smugglers and their goods." Staten Islanders were actively engaged in smuggling because of the Island's location between the port and the open ocean. Beginning in 1812, the central government tried to assert greater federal authority over maritime trade and the years following the War of 1812 were busy ones for the Customs Service as port traffic grew. On August 17, 1815, Burgher, who himself served for some time on Staten Island, informed Gelston of the seizure of 80 boxes of sugar and a large pot of sweetmeats from the packet brig *Havana* that were not on the manifest. Like his fellow inspectors, Burgher searched vessels for such smuggled goods, often placing them at the warehouses on Staten Island as well as at other storage sites in Manhattan.<sup>41</sup>

Staten Island's moment as a crucial forward checkpoint for enforcing customs laws and interdicting smugglers passed as the balance between governmental authority and the politics of accommodating local merchants became more settled. Yet, the

institutional presence of customs continued as part of Staten Island's relationship with Manhattan, and the station grew as the port grew. Although few in number relative to their Manhattan counterparts by 1826, agents stationed at Staten Island accounted for 75% of all agents working in the New York district outside the city, a district that stretched up the Hudson River as far as Albany, and around the harbor to Jersey City, and part of Long Island. Even as the port in Brooklyn grew beginning in the 1830s, the Staten Island station remained the largest component of the New York customs operation outside Manhattan. In 1835, *Jones Digest*, the authoritative handbook to the customs operation, reported that the Boarding Officer at Staten Island inspected over 2,000 vessels during the quarantine season, 400 of which were discharged at the station. "The quantity of merchandise landed at Staten Island during the quarantine months," wrote Jones, "is immense."<sup>42</sup>

It was because of its co-location with the port Quarantine Station that the Staten Island Customs Station continued to exist. With the removal of the quarantine operation from Staten Island in 1858 the Customs Station faded from the shipping activity in New York. By the time the federal government repurposed its Staten Island property adjacent to the old Quarantine Station, as the central depot for the National Lighthouse Service in 1867, the Staten Island Customs Station was already defunct. The new "Central Lighthouse Depot" was indeed nationally important. It contained "the manufacturing establishment, vaults for the storage, and apparatus for photometrical tests of oil, and store-houses for the general supplies, [et cetera] for the service of the lights in the Atlantic, Pacific, Gulf and Lake coasts of the United States," however, unlike the Customs and Quarantine Stations, the new function was not one that brought merchants

or travellers of the metropolis to Staten Island. By the 1860s, as the federal use of the property drifted from being a highly visible gateway enforcement to a largely invisible supportive role, Staten Island's institutional role in the maritime metropolis receded as well.<sup>43</sup>

### *The Quarantine Station*

As with harbor defense, beginning in the 1790s, New Yorkers turned to Staten Island as they formed a metropolitan geography for public health. After years of limited success experimenting with ad-hoc quarantine stations closer to Manhattan, Staten Island increasingly seemed like the right place for a perimeter of defense against disease. Samuel Latham Mitchill, Richard Bayley and other leaders of the New York scientific and medical community petitioned the Senate in Washington to erect “a suitable establishment on the east side of Staten Island” with “a wharf, stores and inclosed [sic] piece of land.”<sup>44</sup>

“The regulation of commerce belonging exclusively to the national legislature,” argued Mitchill, called for the national government to take responsibility for a public health perimeter for the port of New York.” “[T]his great and terrible evil of filth and sickness,” he continued, “cannot be sufficiently guarded against unless the authority of the General Government should cause a piece of land to be purchased” for the purposes of a port quarantine. The Staten Island Quarantine Station, he concluded, should be built at “the expence of the United States and under the controul of the Custom house [sic].”<sup>45</sup>

As in the case of the forts, however, the State of New York, not the federal government, ultimately gave Staten Island its prominent place in the metropolitan

geography of public health. In 1799, as we have seen, the state authorized the survey and taking of 30 acres at Staten Island's Watering Place for a permanent Quarantine Station for New York Harbor. Earlier that year, President Adams had charged Congress with "fram[ing] a system ... to preserve the general health, ... compatible with the interests of commerce and the safety of the revenue." However, when Congress laid down the law, it was clear that federal officers would only assist in enforcing state quarantine regulations. There were no uniform national quarantine regulations until 1878, and not until 1893 did the National Marine Hospital Service have the authority to act on quarantine regulations without authorization from the local authorities.<sup>46</sup>

Building a permanent Quarantine Station at Staten Island was part of an international trend of governmental action in the 1790s designed to benefit commerce by addressing public health. England had most recently established and codified a system of quarantine based at Stangate Creek, outside the mouth of the River Thames. English merchants had lobbied for the new system aiming to speed commerce from the Mediterranean and capture new trade business away from Mediterranean ports with the new quarantine facilities and rules. Philadelphia, New York's chief rival, began construction of its architecturally-grand permanent quarantine station in 1799. New Yorkers would make certain their new permanent Quarantine establishment would be in keeping with their aspirations to be the nation's leading port.<sup>47</sup>

The state acted quickly to establish a public health presence on Staten Island, at the new metropolitan perimeter. The new Quarantine Station would be in sharp contrast to the old ad hoc quarantine anchorage alongside Manhattan or the temporary quarantine facilities at Bedloe's and Governor's Island created in haste to deal with specific disease

outbreaks. Within two years, Dr. Richard Bayley, the State's Health Officer of the port of New York had overseen the construction of a Marine Hospital for up to fifty quarantined patients on Staten Island. However, it was not enough. On June 10, 1801, the *Penelope* arrived carrying 150 people sick with yellow fever. The people in Manhattan clamored for expanded quarantine facilities at Staten Island. According to the Health Officer's records, 945 patients had passed through the new Marine Hospital that season, a remarkable number considering the entire population of Manhattan was approximately 60,000. Following Bayley's death from yellow fever the following season, his nephew and assistant Joseph Bayley described the Staten Island hospital complex in the *Medical Repository* (America's first medical journal). The expanded station consisted of "seven separate buildings for the reception of the sick," all were "well ventilated" and capable of accommodating 200 patients at a time. Amidst the hospital buildings and the Health Officer's official residence, sat a washhouse, kitchens, and houses for the boatman and gardener.<sup>48</sup>

Quarantine of the eighteenth century and into the early nineteenth century was all about the port. Unlike quarantine efforts later in the century, which focused on removing sick bodies from within the city to separate and controlled locations, the rules and activities at the Staten Island station show us that New Yorkers of the time understood quarantine as a barrier, designed to protect port cities like their own from the importation of dangerous diseases. The idea of quarantine as a barrier dated back to the Middle Ages. Even as Americans entered a new "Sanitary Era" in the 1840s, and focused on cleaning up filth within the cities to prevent disease instead of interdicting it at a defensive perimeter, the state articulated the continued importance of a port barrier for the public

health. The debate over the efficacy of port quarantine as a barrier against disease came to a head in 1846 as the state legislature empowered a special committee to review the quarantine laws. The committee concluded, “Science, naval skill, the love of money, and man’s indomitable desire to know all regions and explore all seas, and bring home the world’s productions make it necessary to form laws, if possible, to protect the quiet and unoffending from the pestilence which comes with the adventurer, or starts into life as he approaches.” In short, the state resolved that quarantine was a necessary, if unfortunate, consequence of the nature of the maritime city itself.<sup>49</sup>

The theory of miasmas, or bad air, which increasingly dominated medical thinking by the middle of the century, supported the idea that disease could travel to places like New York in the holds of ships from foreign and southern ports where environmental conditions were ripe. Certain cargoes or the clothing of passengers and crew could serve as “fomites,” where such poisons might concentrate and become virulent seeds of disease, infecting a new environment and possibly causing an epidemic. Interdicting and purifying incoming ships and cargoes, it was believed, would protect the city. Scientists wouldn’t discover germs and disease vectors like mosquitoes until after the Civil War, and further decades would pass until germ theory was popularly accepted. Until then, yellow fever and other epidemic diseases, people believed, were created by fermentation of rotting substances in damp and hot environments.<sup>50</sup>

With the establishment of the Quarantine Station, Manhattanites looked to Staten Island to protect them from the era’s most dreaded diseases: yellow fever, typhus, smallpox, and cholera. It mattered not that yellow fever, the disease most associated with Quarantine, had not been epidemic in Manhattan since 1822. New Yorkers remembered



well the scourge of yellow fever. In 1846, Dr. Vache, the city's official resident physician, testified before the 1846 state committee, "Who does not shudder at the memory of closed dwellings, the suspension of business, the shunned city, the quarantine abroad, and the sepulchers of hundreds, during the summer of 1822." As late as 1857, E. Meriam, Esq., of Brooklyn Heights reminded the readers of *Hunt's Merchant Magazine*, "If yellow fever should enter the great city of New York, as it did the cities of Norfolk and Portsmouth, Virginia, in 1855, New York would become a ruin."<sup>51</sup>

Newspapers reinforced these fears, reporting regularly on yellow fever outbreaks at New York's trading partners, and anxiously tracing the progression of cholera. Suggesting the fears of different epidemic diseases built on each other, the *New York Tribune* continued to refer to the "portion of the City extending from the Park to the Battery" as the "yellow fever district" in a 1849 article about the cholera epidemic. And fear, it was believed, contributed to the chaos, and even the spread of epidemics. Alderman J.R. Rhinelanders wrote to George Templeton Strong as cholera approached the city in 1832, "Courage is the great preservative....I say quarantine. It is of the greatest consequence to quiet the public mind." Even William Meredith Reese, head physician at Bellevue Hospital, concurred, telling state legislators in 1849, "I would only detain the sick to prevent the panic which the public would suffer and which predisposes them to disease." Quarantine procedures themselves helped keep the memories and fear of epidemics at the forefront of the minds of New Yorkers, perpetuating the Quarantine Station's institutional power and metropolitan presence.<sup>52</sup>

Beginning in the mid-1840s, New Yorkers' disease fears shifted from cargo to immigrants, as waves of Germans and Irish arrived at the harbor. Twenty-three thousand

patients with “contagious or infectious diseases” were admitted to the Quarantine hospitals on Staten Island between 1847 and 1850. From the city’s popular promenade at the Battery and close up from the decks of passing ships and ferries, New Yorkers regularly saw ships sitting in anchorage at Quarantine with those dread diseases mentioned above: yellow fever, typhus, smallpox, and sometimes cholera. In the 1830s, 1,200 patients with typhus fever, about 800 with smallpox, and nearly sixty with yellow fever were admitted, with cases of each occurring virtually every year. During the 1840s, the state expanded the facilities at the Quarantine Station, building a separate hospital for smallpox patients and forced by sheer numbers, to hastily construct “shantees” for waves of typhus patients.<sup>53</sup>

The rising tide of immigration in the 1840s transformed the Staten Island station and the Island’s relationship with the metropolis from perimeter checkpoint to a more full-service public health institution for immigrants. Once a seasonal operation focused on purifying cargo, by the mid-1840s Quarantine became a much larger year-round establishment flooded more with people and patients than with goods. Until the mid-1840s, passengers detained by the Health Officer at the time of their ship inspection were the only ones admitted to the Marine Hospitals at the station. Following the recommendation of the state’s 1846 select committee, the state legislature entitled all citizens and immigrants to receive care at the Staten Island facility within a full year of their arrival, regardless of their affliction, or how or when they became ill. In 1847, the state turned over control of the Marine Hospital at the Quarantine Station to the newly formed Commissioners of Emigration. Not surprisingly, the number of cases of typhus, cholera and smallpox, all associated with immigrants by contemporaries, spiked in the

1840s, and regularly outstripped the station's historical role of interdicting yellow fever. Meanwhile, city officials sent thousands of sick immigrants down to the Island. Although an 1849 law restricted admissions to Staten Island's Marine Hospitals to "contagious" and "infectious" diseases, admission statistics suggest all kinds of cases were sent down to Staten Island well into the 1850s.<sup>54</sup>

By the 1840s, the Staten Island's Quarantine establishment had become New York's de facto immigration station. Most immigrants arrived in New York during the port's busy season, when quarantine regulations were in force. The *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* reported in 1847, "There have arrived at the quarantine ground, Staten Island, between the 2d of April and the 26th of June, a period of 85 days, 75,000 emigrants." Until the state's immigration station at Castle Garden was completed in 1855, immigrants continued to be landed at Staten Island. As in the case of the early harbor fortifications and public health, the state not the federal government took the early lead in managing the needs of the maritime metropolis as they emerged. The federal government did not take over immigrant processing in New York until 1890.<sup>55</sup>

Because Staten Island was the first point of contact with immigrants, New Yorkers interested in exploiting the newcomers went down to the Island into intercept them upon arrival. The state's 1847 special legislative committee charged with examining "frauds perpetrated on emigrants" reported that agents known as "runners" travelled down to the Island from Manhattan, swarming the ships, docks and business at Quarantine. In the early 1840s, the canal lines began stationing agents at Staten Island to book immigrants passage on the Erie Canal. Other runners went to solicit immigrant business lodging and other transportation. George W. Daley, a runner himself, testified

to the 1847 commission, “When a vessel was reported,” the forwarding agency he worked for “sent down [to Staten Island] 3 or 4 men to engage the passengers.” Agents from the various “emigrant protective societies” boarded vessels at Quarantine as well. Runners often traveled with the immigrants up to Manhattan from the station aboard steamboats and lighters. Forwarding agents and lodging house owners solicited men with posts at the Quarantine Station to serve as runners or paid them off to gain access to the incoming ships and passengers.<sup>56</sup>

Through the 1850s, a new proliferation of institutions on Wards Island, Manhattan itself and elsewhere around New York reorganized the metropolitan geography of immigration, public health and poverty, decentering the harbor gateway on Staten Island. New Yorkers increasingly focused on disease and immigration as endemic problems of the city, far beyond solution by a defensive barrier at the edge of the harbor. The state built a new immigrant-landing depot at Castle Garden in Manhattan and hospitals and asylums at Wards Island to serve destitute immigrants and quarantine disease outbreaks originating in the city. The *Annual Reports of the Commissioners of Emigration*, reveal the rising prominence of Wards Island and Castle Garden in the 1850s, and the fading importance of Staten Island’s Marine Hospital at Quarantine.<sup>57</sup>

***A “Vast Medico-political Engine:” Money, Politics and Power  
at the Staten Island Quarantine and Customs Stations***

Between the 1790s and the 1850s, the Health Officer of the Port of New York and the Collector of the Port of New York became two of the most important (and most lucrative) governmental posts in the metropolis, giving the Staten Island station a notable place in the geography of power and wealth in New York. One critic described the

harbor's Quarantine Station as a "vast medico-political engine," more a "regal or princely domain, than... a charitable or benevolent institution" to protect the city or help the sick. The power at Staten Island's gateway institutions derived from three related sources: patronage opportunities; port-generated wealth; and functional control of the harbor. Political power in the early republic rested in alliances of interest maintained and strengthened through patronage. Jobs, contracts and other favors at the Quarantine and Customs Stations offered political leaders opportunities to reward loyal allies. In turn, they offered power, status and a reliable income to recipients of these rewards, especially for the Health Officer and Collector who presided over the sister stations. Port wealth supported the patronage empire at the Quarantine Station through dedicated harbor fees, tapping the metropolitan wealth of New York's maritime trade. Meanwhile, the decisions of the officials at Staten Island had concrete ramifications for Manhattan's elite merchants and other New Yorkers who depended on port commerce. Given Staten Island's small population and size, an unusual amount of power and political attention came to the Island because of the money and patronage jobs located at the Quarantine Station. Patronage and "influence" as the basis for political control was at the root of the relative stability of the English political system, and although both more tenuous and more suspect in the American colonies and early republic, still formed the most important tool of political discipline.<sup>58</sup>

Contemporaries referred to the positions of The Health Officer and Collector of the Port as "responsible" positions, though many patronage posts of the era were sinecures (i.e. public salaries and prestige with little or no work). "The importance of this office," Governor Jay wrote to Dr. Richard Bayley, the newly appointed Health Officer in

1796, “[requires] me to signify to you that your personal attention to the Duties of it will be expected, and considered as being indispensable.” After all, Quarantine protected the city from disease and its commerce from the interruption by an epidemic. Decades later, Philip Hone, a celebrated Manhattan politico and socialite who made a point of recording in his diary whenever a new Health Officer was appointed, noted in one 1850 entry, “This is a responsible...office.” The Collector of the Port was entrusted with a similar level of responsibility, enforcing important federal maritime policies and collecting from the nation’s busiest port the major source of federal revenue. In 1808 for example, Albert Gallatin, Jefferson’s Treasury Secretary, praised the Collector Gelston for enforcing the Embargo Act.<sup>59</sup>

From their earliest days, the gateway institutions of New York Harbor involved Staten Island in high-level national and metropolitan politics, establishing the foundation for a regional conception of New York that included the Island. During the election of 1800, New York’s Port Collector, appointed by John Adams, threatened to dismiss at least one of the clerks at the Customs House “for voting for and advocating the Cause of Republicanism.” Recognizing the “immense influence” of the post, the newly elected Thomas Jefferson quickly replaced him with David Gelston. Gelston should have owed his political allegiance to Jefferson, as the president ultimately controlled the appointment of the Collectors at each port, but Gelston, like Tompkins, faced a political picture complicated by state as well as national politics. Gelston might have been expected to grant James Cheetham, publisher of a Manhattan newspaper and a strong ally of Jefferson, the lucrative printing contract controlled by the Port Collector. Yet because

Cheetham opposed Aaron Burr, Manhattan's powerful Democratic-Republican, in his editorial pages, Gelston denied him the contract.<sup>60</sup>

Health Officer Richard Bayley, stationed at Staten Island, had a different political challenge. In an attempt to limit the patronage power of the chief executive, the state constitution of New York had established a Council of Appointment, largely controlled by the legislature. During the American Revolution, Dr. Bayley served as a surgeon for the British army, which made him vulnerable in the vengeful mood of many New Yorkers following independence. Bayley owed his political survival to more conservative New Yorkers who made an effort to reintegrate loyalists into politics and society in the years after the Revolution. By the mid-1790s, the Federalists, made up of many of New York's conservatives, were using the State's Council of Appointment to solidify political power. In 1796, the Council appointed Bayley as Health Officer.<sup>61</sup>

The career of Dr. Joseph Bayley (Richard Bayley's nephew) at the Staten Island Quarantine Station between 1800 and 1823 illustrates how the system of patronage, favors and political interests that dominated the era extended beyond the centers of power in Manhattan and Albany to the edge of the metropolis. Joseph, who served as Assistant Physician at Quarantine under his uncle, also exemplifies the nepotism found in the patronage system of the era. Though Joseph continued to serve at the station after his uncle died in 1801, he was not appointed Health Officer until 1810, when the Federalists briefly took control of the state in the wake of widespread opposition to Jefferson's Embargo Act. Over the next 13 years, Bayley was removed and reappointed as Health Officer depending on who was in power. While in power, Bayley remembered his uncle's loyalties as well as his own debt to the Federalists and at one point to their

temporary coalition with the Clintonians to defeat Tammany candidates. In 1822, the Bucktails, a nickname for the political men associated with the Tammany Society, launched a campaign against Bayley, accusing him of being “an old and bitter Federalist” and a “rank Clintonian.”<sup>62</sup>

The Health Officer and the Port Collector were important to the patronage system because they controlled significant numbers of jobs and favors and thus votes. State and city interests battled specifically for control over appointing the Health Officer at the state constitutional convention of 1821. In 1823, the new state constitution took effect and the power of appointment was reassigned from the disbanded Council of Appointment to the governor. Governor Daniel D. Tompkins, a Tammany man himself, quickly moved against Bayley, replacing him with what one critic called a “favorite crony” of the governor, someone who could be relied upon to push Quarantine workers toward Tammany candidates instead. The Bucktails’ major complaint against Bayley in 1822 was that he had ordered the workmen at the Quarantine Station to vote against the Tammany slate, or lose their jobs.<sup>63</sup>

Some Health Officers, like Richard and Joseph Bayley, committed to their posts and worked hard while others treated it more as a sinecure and left day-to-day operational control to their assistants. For example, The *International Monthly Magazine* praised Dr. Doane as a man of science whose, “fearless and energetic... discharge of his official duties...protected the city from unnecessary fear, as well as from disease.” Hone, the New York socialite mentioned earlier, called Doane a, “faithful and vigilant,” Health Officer. In contrast, Hone thought Dr. Van Hoevenburg, Doane’s successor, a “shameful,” party hack. Van Hoevenburg admitted to treating the post as something of a



sinecure, letting his deputy conduct most of the boarding inspections. *The Subterranean* accused him of having an, “itching palm, who suffers his fist to be greased by those who wish to arrive first at the city.” Regardless to their personal commitment to the responsibilities of the post, Health Officers were clearly political. Doane was a Whig, Van Hoevenburg and Westervelt, Democrats, and in the late 1850s, Thompson, a Republican.<sup>64</sup>

As the workforce at Quarantine grew, so did the power of the Health Officer to influence elections locally on Staten Island, and (because many Quarantine workers came from Manhattan), in the city as well. On the customs side, the power of the Collector of the Port extended from the Manhattan base of the Customs House to Staten Island’s Customs Station. Governor DeWitt Clinton complained specifically about political pressuring of customs agents on Staten Island in his message to the state legislature in 1821. By 1827, the Collector distributed \$5,500 annually to the five inspectors and one weigher at the station. By 1836, there were nineteen customs posts on Staten Island, including Boarding Officer, Store Keeper, Assistant Store Keeper, eight Inspectors and eight bargemen, approximately 9 percent of all non-clerk posts under the control of the Collector of the Port. Powerful New York families like the Duers, Hamiltons, Van Burens and Bayards were rewarded with customs posts on Staten Island.<sup>65</sup>

Patronage opportunities at the Quarantine Station grew faster than they did at customs, proliferating by 1837 as one critic put it, into “a retinue of subordinate officers, pensioners and sinecures, boatmen, nurses, mechanics, masons, bakers, butchers, [et cetera].” Boat owners around the harbor sought lucrative licenses from the Health Officer to lighter ships at Quarantine and carry passengers from the station to Manhattan.

For a few lucky boatmen, an official Quarantine job paid substantially more than equivalent work in Manhattan. The 1850 census recorded more than one hundred and twenty laborers, nurses, boatmen and other employees at Quarantine and an additional nineteen at customs.<sup>66</sup>

In the contentious politics of the late-1850s, the Quarantine Station was a powerful outpost of the young Republican Party. Health Officer R. H. Thompson published the *Chronicle*, a pro-Republican newspaper at the station to challenge the Democratic *Staaten Islander*. The *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* reprinted an accusation from the *Staaten Islander* during the 1856 election: “Whoever is employed to work on vessels at quarantine must solemnly promise to vote for Fremont [the Republican candidate]. Last week two poor Germans were discharged for the ‘enormous’ crime of attending a democratic meeting!” That year, locals burned the Health Officer in effigy. His figure could be identified because its pockets were stuffed full of copies of the *Chronicle*. In testimony before a state committee, Thompson admitted to sending “a force” of stevedores from Quarantine to swing local political meetings and nominate what his adversaries called “Black Republican” candidates. Because of the power and patronage at Quarantine to distribute favors and drive votes, the Health Officer continued to be, as Hone put it, a post of “great political importance which is the cause of a pretty sharp contention.”<sup>67</sup>

The Health Officer’s position also came with the power of provisioning, that is funds for the purchase of goods and services to support Quarantine operations – funds he could use to curry favor with Staten Islanders and Manhattanites. Manhattan socialite and politico Philip Hone, for example, accompanied the governor and the city’s Health

Commissioners down to inspect the station in 1840 and stayed to enjoy dinner hosted by the Health Officer at his villa on the Quarantine compound. By 1847, the Health Officer was distributing \$1,200 in ferry tickets, a sizable favor to the powerful Staten Island ferry owners and providing the Health Officer with a currency to distribute as smaller favors to both Manhattanites and Staten Islanders. Liquor flowed freely to friends and guests as well. When the Health Officer finally lost control over provisioning in 1847 to the Commissioners of Emigration, the new commissioners “Resolved, That the wine, brandy, beer, porter, &c, furnished to the Marine Hospital, are intended for the use of the patients solely, and that the Steward be instructed to deliver them upon the requisition of the physicians for that purpose only.”<sup>68</sup>

Port wealth, the basis of such power, flowed through the Quarantine empire from two sets of dedicated fees on passengers, crew and shipmasters. In 1801, the state legislature created the “hospital fund,” to pay for improvements and operating expenses for the Marine Hospital at the Staten Island station, and to fund the substantial salaries of the city’s Commissioners of Health, including the Health Officer. Every captain sailing into New York Harbor from any foreign port paid into the fund, \$1.50 for each cabin passenger, 75 cents for each steerage passenger, and 75 cents for each member of the crew.<sup>69</sup>

In the early years, however, the funds were insufficient to cover expenses. In order to maintain an effective quarantine, complained James Farlie, Vice President of the City’s Board of Health, “infirm seamen of every description and class have been taken into the Marine Hospital at Staten Island. The State Hospital therefore became chargeable with a large number of sick, who, if they had come up to the city, would have

gone to the New York Hospital.” The federal government maintained a separate Marine Hospital fund based on yet another set of fees on sailors entering the harbor. Unlike many other ports, however, there was no national Marine Hospital in New York, so the funds were disbursed to the New York Hospital to cover health costs of seamen with a claim to the national fund. Farlie made an appeal to Port Collector Gelston to redirect such funds to the state’s Marine Hospital on Staten Island in 1809, but to no avail. To solve the problem, the state legislature increased the fees feeding the Staten Island station in 1811 and added a 25-cent charge for the crews of coasting vessels.<sup>70</sup>

The 1811 law secured a large and permanent “hospital fund” to support the Staten Island Quarantine Station and its Marine Hospital. The law raised the fees and allowed the Health Commissioners to purchase “stock or securities” to store any excess fees. The new structure allowed the Quarantine establishment to retain any surplus rather than reverting it to the State Treasury. In 1827, total receipts were \$37,000. By 1841, the surplus alone was \$30,000 annually, the equivalent of nearly \$7 million today, adjusted using an index of labor costs. As the traffic arriving at the Port of New York exploded, the Health Officer presided over an increasingly wealthy Quarantine establishment, with a flow of funds completely independent of legislative appropriation.<sup>71</sup>

A second set of fees flowed directly into the pockets of the Health Officer, making his Staten Island post among the most lucrative in the nation. “Those health officers who went to Staten Island,” observed one delegate to the state Constitutional Convention of 1821, “whatever might be their circumstances when they went there...came away men of large property.” Although the fees varied from time to time, the 1827 law is illustrative: In addition to his salary, which was drawn from the hospital

fund, the law entitled the Health Officer to collect \$6.50 from every vessel arriving from a foreign port during the quarantine season, and between \$1 and \$2 if arriving coastwise from south of Delaware Bay, depending on vessel's tonnage. Therefore, there was a most high incentive to inspect as many vessels as possible and, by the 1840s, Health Officers stopped virtually every ship with more than 40 passengers entering the port, regardless of any immanent threat of disease. In 1831, a committee of Manhattan's Common Council estimated the Health Officer's fees and salary at \$6,000. By 1851, Dr. Stewart, who served for a time at the Quarantine hospital, suggested the Health Officer was collecting as much as \$27,000.<sup>72</sup>

"On the arrival of our ships, we exercise no control over them until they pass out of the hands of the health officer," testified Robert Minturn, one of the most powerful merchants in New York, to a state legislative committee in 1847. Beyond the power to distribute patronage wealth and jobs, the Health Officer held tremendous functional power over the maritime metropolis. For much of the year, he had the coercive power to detain ships, passengers and cargo at Staten Island. Manhattan merchants anxious to speed their ships to the city's docks or inspect their cargoes at the Quarantine Station were at his mercy. Depending on the date, ports of call, and incidence of disease aboard, the Health Officer cleared most ships quickly for the Manhattan or Brooklyn docks, detaining some for 1–3 days, a few for up to a month. It was no wonder, as New York merchant John Pintard put it in 1818, "Captains and Sup[er] Cargos...are always liberal to Health Officers" smoothing the way for their vessels with "many handsome presents."<sup>73</sup>

From his post on Staten Island, the Health Officer reigned over the port of New York for the busiest months of the year. Although the law changed the length of the quarantine season and the specific rules for the detention of ships and passengers from time to time, from 1827 until 1846, the Health Officer controlled entry to the port of New York between April 1 and November 1 from his post on Staten Island, stopping and inspecting virtually all ships from foreign ports and many from domestic ports as well. During the height of quarantine season in the summer months, he had greater authority and the law was stricter, applying more explicitly to certain vessels and mandating more specific quarantine periods. Under the 1827 law, ships south of Cape Henlopen, Delaware (that is, essentially all ports south of Philadelphia) were under the Health Officer's inspection power for four and a half months, and those from south of Georgia for the full 6 months. An 1842 report in the *New York Tribune* reveals how much of New York's annual port traffic was concentrated in the months the Health Officer controlled the harbor. About 200 ships per month arrived at the port of New York from foreign ports between May and August, according to the *Tribune*. In contrast, before the peak, in April, there were a mere seven arrivals from foreign ports, and after the peak, arrivals declined to 164 in September and thirty-five in October.<sup>74</sup>

Though the 1846 revision of the law removed the explicit authority for the Health Officer to inspect all vessels with more than forty passengers, Minturn's testimony to the 1847 select committee investigating frauds on emigrants suggests ships from Europe were still passing through the Health Officer's control. Minturn's ships ran mostly between New York and Liverpool or London (that is, hardly the tropical zone most associated with quarantine laws). Through the 1850s, there was some additional

curtailing of the scope of quarantine regulation and the power of the Health Officer. Additional curtailing included, for example, the explicit removal of the coasting trade between Virginia and New York from quarantine regulation in 1852. While the power at Quarantine might have begun to wane in the off-season, by the 1840s and 50s, hundreds of patients remained in residence at the Quarantine hospitals throughout the year and the Health Officer retained substantial power during the quarantine season, and even in winter, limited power to detain ships and passengers in case of disease.<sup>75</sup>

### **Maritime Asylums for the Metropolitan Community**

Beginning in the 1830s, New Yorkers constructed asylums on Staten Island to serve the metropolitan community of seamen. They were Sailors' Snug Harbor, a retirement home for "aged, decrepit and worn out sailors," the Seaman's Retreat, a hospital for sick and injured sailors, and two smaller institutions, the Mariners' Family Asylum and the asylum of the Society for the Destitute Children of Seamen. The Trustees and Directresses of the new institutions chose Staten Island because it offered easy access to the city, on the one hand, and yet seemed to stand at a safe distance on the other hand. Together, they made Staten Island a haven for New York's economically vulnerable seamen and their families.<sup>76</sup>

The new asylums reflected a conception of the harbor that differed from the patronage networks run out of the Quarantine and Customs Stations. While the older governmental gateway faced outward to enforce a boundary at the edge of the harbor, the new asylums were clearly inside the harbor, facing the city. The new institutions put a vulnerable urban population at the metropolitan edge to achieve social order, designed to

benefit the inmates and the larger metropolis by their safe removal from urban Manhattan. This was possible in large part because the state and national governments had, through their forts, Customs and Quarantine Stations, succeeded in establishing the harbor as a safe, known and controlled space, distinct from the world beyond New York.

The Seamen's Retreat and Sailors' Snug Harbor reveal the changing politics and demands of the larger and more complicated, yet still sea-oriented, metropolis of the 1830s. The Seamen's Retreat grew out of the political mobilization of sailors amidst the democratization of politics at a time when social and political identity was still more rooted in vocation than class. The story of the Sailors' Snug Harbor reveals a changing nature of paternalism and the sorting of urban land uses in the context of the growing value of Manhattan real estate. Both the Retreat and Snug Harbor were products of a larger effort to restore order to urban life through the controlled institutional environments of asylums, spatially removed from the city proper, while still remaining within the purview of metropolitan leaders.<sup>77</sup>

In the 1830s, Staten Island was one of a limited number of places easy to get to from the city. Regular steamboat service made the harbor into a highway, connecting urban Manhattan with the other shores of the region: Staten Island; Long Island, particularly Brooklyn and Williamsburg; and Hoboken and Jersey City in New Jersey. From the popular Battery promenade, New Yorkers could see Staten Island's signal poles, forts, and ships riding at the Quarantine anchorage. They went down to the Island for Sunday outings and summer retreats or to conduct business at Quarantine or collect travelling friends. Because the city was oriented toward the harbor, Staten Island was more visible and accessible to New Yorkers than much of Manhattan Island itself.<sup>78</sup>



Equally important, Staten Island was considered countryside rather than urban; it was an inherently healthful place, separate from the city's ills and costs. As will be shown, the Trustees of both the Seamen's Retreat and Sailors' Snug Harbor worried that Manhattan was no place for old, infirm, sick and injured seamen. What would they do in the city when they could not go to sea?

As temperance and church attendance became markers of self-discipline, success and independence, the blasphemous, hard-drinking, prostitute-seeking sailor, caricatured as Jack Tar, an embodiment of spirited disorder, was the perfect candidate for the reform possibilities of the orderly asylum. Aboard ship, the mobility of the sailor was naturally controlled, and his behavior could be disciplined, often harshly. Because of long periods at sea, sailors' ties to urban social structures were tenuous, making them vulnerable during their time between voyages, in need of care, as well as dangerous to societal order. Sickness or old age often meant destitution for ship crewmen; and for mates and captains as well. Such afflictions, along with periods between voyages brought them back into the city for an indefinite time. When ship captains died, the families of well-established captains were obviously affected and they often faced difficult economic hardships. This was a problem the Marine Society, the city's oldest charity, was designed to address. The founders of the new Staten Island asylums wanted to remove the seamen from a chaotic city to an orderly environment. At the same time, they did not wish to exile them away from the metropolitan maritime community. So they turned to Staten Island.<sup>79</sup>

### *The Seamen's Retreat*

The Seamen's Retreat established Staten Island as the place for seamen's welfare in the metropolis. The city's seafarers imagined the new Retreat as a place for those "who have fallen victims to their hazardous and arduous profession, whereby they have been rendered sickly, infirm or decrepet [sic]" could go "so that in their days of adversity, they may enjoy at least the common comforts of life." An asylum on Staten Island would also keep them away from drink and the degradation of poverty that might otherwise be found in the city. In its first year of operation "the unusual severity of the winter drove frost bitten seamen in crowds to the care of the trustees." They accommodated as many needy seamen as they could at the farm buildings they had recently purchased, sick or not. By the end of the decade, the Retreat was an impressive harbor landmark symbolizing metropolitan benevolence and order.<sup>80</sup>

Though the idea for such an institution had been percolating for years, the Seamen's Retreat grew out of a "full and respectable meeting of seamen" in Manhattan in 1830 that mobilized a political movement among the city's mariners. The shipmasters leading the meeting recommended two of their own "to the suffrages of their fellow citizens, as the candidates of seamen." Before 1823, when the new state constitution went into effect, New Yorkers needed to own property in order to vote. Before 1826, they needed to be taxpayers. After 1826, virtually any adult white male could vote. Historians have argued that maritime workers of the period were claiming power to disrupt traditions of deference, and shipmasters needed to assert in new ways their leadership over the maritime community in the increasingly democratic milieu. In 1831,

shipmasters and sailors organized into a political force and elected Captain James Morgan to the state Assembly to represent their interests as seamen.<sup>81</sup>

The number one issue for the mobilized “shipmasters and nautical men” was control of the fees they and their crews paid into the hospital fund that supported the Quarantine Station on Staten Island. By the mid 1820s, the growing surplus of the hospital fund had attracted the interest of social reformers looking for funding sources for new institutions to manage and control troublesome populations newly emergent in the growing metropolis. In 1826, Cadwallader D. Colden, a powerful Manhattan political figure, succeeded in getting the state legislature to divert the surplus from Quarantine to support a House of Refuge for his “society for the reformation of juvenile delinquents in the city of New York.” While mariners and public officials had argued for years that medical care for sailors was inadequate, Colden’s grab at diverting the port hospital fund from maritime uses was a catalyst in mobilizing captains, mates and common seamen to demand control of the fees they contributed to the fund. A series of articles in *The Sailor’s Magazine* in 1830 and 1831 suggests a concerted effort to educate seamen about the extent, nature and uses of taxes levied against them, and mobilize them regarding the issue. It was a significant amount of money. Seamen paid into the fund about \$15,000 annually, or approximately 7 percent of their earnings. Soon the sailors and their leaders were complaining both about diversion of funds to projects like the House of Refuge, and also about the fact that the Health Officer and the other Commissioners of Health spent their hard-earned money on extravagancies at the Quarantine Station rather than serving mariners. Even without such wasteful extravagancies, they argued, the Marine Hospital

at Quarantine simply did not meet the health and welfare needs of New York's seafaring community.<sup>82</sup>

The compromise in the battle for control of Quarantine's hospital fund reflected the political importance in the metropolis of Staten Island's maritime institutions and the money and patronage they commanded. At first, each of the three parties seemed to get much of what they wanted. Captain Morgan secured for the seamen their dedicated "Mariner's Fund" for a new Seamen's Hospital and Retreat, and a funding structure that would make it impossible for fees collected from sailors to end up diverted to other causes. Colden got \$8,000 annually for his House of Refuge, a portion of the fees collected from passengers. Dr. John Westervelt, the Health Officer, who had fought to keep control of the entire hospital fund, retained the larger and growing portion collected from passengers for his empire at Quarantine, less Colden's \$8,000. He also got an ex-officio seat on the Board of Trustees of the Seamen's Retreat, allowing him and future Health Officers influence over the new institution. Dr. Peter S. Townsend, the 6th Ward Assistant Alderman who had worked with Morgan to draft the bill and get the support of the Common Council, was appointed Resident Physician in charge of the Retreat.<sup>83</sup>

While the Trustees built the new Seamen's Hospital and Retreat amid a proliferation of asylums in and around the metropolis, the maritime nature of their mission made Staten Island the logical home for their institution. The authors of the law made a point of authorizing the Trustees to build anywhere touching the waters of the harbor: Manhattan, western Long Island, and Staten Island. Staten Island was the practical choice. Located directly on the Narrows a mile south of the Quarantine Station, sick or injured seamen could be easily transported to the new Seamen's Retreat when

ships stopped for the Health Officer's inspection. On Staten Island, the Trustees could buy a thirty-eight-acre farm for \$10,000 while a similar transaction in Manhattan, even if far uptown, would have cost ten times more, if such a large parcel could indeed have been found. Their chosen Staten Island property, explained the Trustees, "stands on a high and commanding bluff, in full view of the city, and of all vessels entering or leaving New York." The visibility to sailors and visual connectivity with the city offered by a Staten Island location was important to the Trustees. The placement and orientation of the Retreat buildings, like the other marine asylums on Staten Island, maximized the institution's presence in the harbor and views of shipping activity from its piazzas, underscoring the Island's metropolitan identity as the place for New York's maritime institutions.<sup>84</sup>

By the late 1830s various interests battled to control the Retreat and its patronage potential. Backed by the Whigs, Dr. Townsend and others spoke at a meeting of seamen in 1838 complaining their Staten Island Retreat had been "corrupted into another political and party institution" akin to Quarantine. He accused Westervelt and Morgan of forcing him out as Resident Physician, the head managerial post at the Retreat, because he had resisted their attempts to distribute favors and pervert the Retreat's noble purpose for political gain. However, Westervelt had already won. By 1837, when Westervelt was replaced as Health Officer at the Quarantine Station, he used his political influence to secure his appointment as the new Resident Physician at the Retreat, with all its power and perks.<sup>85</sup>

When the Whigs captured Albany in 1839, Samuel Stevens, the new state comptroller, relying on Townsend's testimony, tried to restructure control of the Retreat

away from the shipmasters, a number of whom were Tammany men. Although no one alleged widespread misuse of funds, Townsend testified that in the years since he had left the Retreat, the sailors were escorted to the polls to support the politics of the institutions officials. The Trustees, many of whom were easily identifiable Democrats, struck back with a “Memorial and Remonstrance...Against any Alteration” in the structure of the board. Corrupt or not, by 1854, the men in charge of the Retreat wielded influence through the annual \$40,000 in hospital tax receipts, eight lucrative posts for managers, physicians and a chaplain, plus 35 jobs for artisans, mechanics and laborers ranging from apothecary and carpenter to farmer, cook and washerwoman.<sup>86</sup>

Despite the efforts of New York’s political establishment, the Seamen’s Retreat did not become an empire of wealth and power to match the one at the Quarantine Station. Because the number of seamen never exploded as the volume of passengers did, the Mariner’s Fund never generated giant surpluses like the Quarantine’s hospital fund. In the early years, however, sizable sums were spent on shoddy construction and later on what critics called “the desire to embellish the suburbs of a proud and rich city.” Ultimately, the Mariner’s Fund could not support the Trustees’ agenda, and an 1847 law relieved the Trustees from having to repay at least two of loans they had taken from the Quarantine’s fund.<sup>87</sup>

The Seamen’s Retreat did, however, help extend the geography of the maritime metropolis to Staten Island. By 1862, nearly 50,000 seamen had spent time at the Retreat at some point in their working lives. Others read about the asylum and saw lists of their crewmates who died at the hospital there in *The Sailor’s Magazine*. At the laying of the cornerstone for the permanent building in 1834, Reverend Curtis articulated the sense of

ownership of the Seamen's Retreat by city's maritime community. Every seamen, said Curtis, "When he enters the noble and beautiful harbor of New York...can point to this lovely spot and say, Yonder splendid hospital is mine, and has been built from the hard earnings of sailors."<sup>88</sup>

### *Sailors' Snug Harbor*

Captain Robert Richard Randall conceived of the Sailors' Snug Harbor around the time the harbor gateway of governmental institutions on Staten Island first began to reform metropolitan geography. Although the Snug Harbor would help solidify Staten Island's place in that geography, Randall himself never considered a Staten Island location for his home to shelter the city's "aged, decrepit and worn out sailors." He wanted to create a perpetual institution that would survive him, much like a line of descendants (which he didn't have). Thus, his model was patriarchal inheritance; and his landed estate was in Manhattan. As a family patriarch would, he bequeathed his property and its future income upon his death in 1801 to support Snug Harbor, his institutional offspring. There was no reason at the time to believe the new asylum would be built anywhere but on his Manhattan property.<sup>89</sup>

Unlike family inheritance, however, he could not rely on familial interest and intergenerational transfer to keep his estate and his institutional vision for the Sailors' Snug Harbor intact. Consequently, he turned to the social and governmental pillars of New York for the permanence and structure he sought for his seamen's asylum. Through his will, he established a perpetual Board of Trustees, naming as ex-officio members the Chancellor of the State of New York, the Recorder and mayor of the City, the president

of the city's Chamber of Commerce, the president and vice president of the charitable Marine Society, and the senior ministers of Manhattan's Episcopal and Presbyterian churches. It was an unprecedented move for a private citizen to bind future public officials to his personal institutional purpose. However, no one questioned the will. In 1806, the state legislature incorporated the Sailors' Snug Harbor exactly as Randall had outlined.<sup>90</sup>

Nearly thirty years later, the Snug Harbor Trustees chose Staten Island as the location for Randall's asylum. Their choice of a Staten Island location reveals the changing relationship between the marketplace value of urban land and the inclusion of Staten Island in the regional geography of the maritime metropolis between 1801 and the 1830s. It also highlights the difference between a father's paternalism for his heirs and an institution's paternalism for their inmates. In 1801, Randall expected the Snug Harbor asylum to be built on and supported by his twenty-one-acre Manhattan farmstead, directly east of Greenwich Village, the same kind of thinking any father might have had when leaving land to his son. Meanwhile, Staten Island was first beginning its role as harbor gateway. The state had barely begun the construction of the Quarantine Station and there were no forts at the Narrows. At the time, the part of Manhattan east of Greenwich Village and Staten Island looked quite alike, both decidedly rural. In fact, a few years earlier, the city had acquired the land to the southwest of Randall's farm for a potter's field because it was well outside the city.<sup>91</sup>

By the 1830s, and with the perspective of an institution, Snug Harbor's Trustees recognized the financial potential opened up by the new regional geography. Perhaps because they had no familial emotional relationship to Randall's Manhattan land, it was



easy for the Trustees to conceive of dividing the property's use value and its market value. They were also ready to see the related advantages of isolating the less than desirable population with whom they were charged away from the valuable estate Randall had entrusted them with. At their meeting on January 23, 1823 the Trustees articulated how using land on the Manhattan property for the asylum would "materially encroach on the plot of Twenty One Acres," undermining its income potential by diminishing "the number of Building lots." Meanwhile, the presence of the asylum would "depreciate" the value of the remaining lots "especially of those fronting the Hospital as also the next range thereon, whereby the revenue would likewise be diminished." After all, they reasoned, "No respectable family would incline to live in the vicinity of a Lazaretto."<sup>92</sup>

The urban future the Trustees envisioned for Randall's land went hand in hand with the logic for removing the "aged, decrepit and worn-out sailors" from Manhattan. Apart from diminishing the wealth potential of Snug Harbor's estate, the Trustees reasoned that a seamen's asylum "in the heart of the City" would be bad for the sailors themselves. In the urban world of Manhattan, they argued, the asylum would necessarily be a harsh place. "The pensioners must be in a degree imprisoned, subject to the strictest discipline to prevent them from wandering abroad and annoying the community." Meanwhile, "In spite of any restrictions they would become street beggars to acquire the means of intoxication." In Manhattan there would be no way to separate the sailors from the temptations of urban life.<sup>93</sup>

As early as 1817, the Trustees were thinking about New York in regional terms, and began exploring the idea of building Snug Harbor "on the Shore of the Harbour and

in sight of the City.” It was the same year Governor Tompkins inaugurated steamboat service between Manhattan and Staten Island. In fact, Tompkins offered the Trustees some of the land he owned on the Island. As it would be for the Retreat’s Trustees, visual connection between Staten Island, the city and the harbor was of great importance to the Snug Harbor Trustees. Mariners, they reasoned, were men of the city and men of the sea. It was important that the pensioners would be in full view of “the Water, the element to which they are attached” and “gratified with the sight of the numerous shipping frequenting this port.” It was also important that working sailors leaving the safety of the harbor would see the institution, “pleased with the view of an Assylum [sic] in case of old age, want and decrepitude.” Staten Island, argued the Trustees, was more connected to the city’s maritime world than Randall’s landlocked Manhattan property.<sup>94</sup>

Staten Island’s accessibility to the city was foremost in the minds of the Trustees when they finally selected a site. In 1831, they investigated three sites on Staten Island and one in Brooklyn. After more than a decade of fighting legal challenges to Randall’s will, the Trustees were ready to purchase land and build. The Staten Island sites had better access during all tides, and the site they finally settled on was already along a regular steamboat route between Manhattan and Elizabethport, New Jersey, stopping on Staten Island at nearby Mersereau’s Ferry landing. When the Trustees began construction, they started with the dock, not the asylum itself. In 1833, when the Snug Harbor opened for the first pensioners, *The Sailor’s Magazine* made a point of reporting the thrice daily steamboat service from the new dock, affording “every facility for communicating with New York.”<sup>95</sup>

The differentiation between Manhattan's urban and Staten Island's country forms of landscape and land value opened up new possibilities for Snug Harbor. For one thing, harsh discipline might be relaxed if the institution were outside the city, and the Trustees would also be able to provide amenities they could not afford in Manhattan. Staten Island land was cheaper, and the Trustees saw that the growing value of their Manhattan property meant they could "afford not only ample space for the necessary buildings" on property apart from the city "but for a garden, walks for recreation and a cemetery." As they collected growing rents from their Manhattan land, the Trustees began thinking on a grander scale. When they had first considered a Staten Island location in 1817, the Trustees discussed a 10-acre parcel, similar in size to what they thought the asylum would have needed in Manhattan. In 1823, they were thinking 40–50 acres. The Staten Island farm they finally bought in 1831 was nearly 150 acres.<sup>96</sup>

The divergence of urban land values and uses in Manhattan from the country form and lower cost on Staten Island funded the differentiated landscapes of the emerging metropolitan region. Snug Harbor Trustees funneled the rents they collected from their Manhattan lots (the property that constituted Randall's initial bequest) into their estate on Staten Island. The transfer of land wealth from the urban center to the periphery allowed the Trustees to build some of the grandest edifices and finest grounds in the state. In 1831, the Trustees solicited designs for the first building to "accommodate 200 Seamen," four times the number Captain Randall had contemplated in his will. By 1840 both the West Wing and East Wings were completed, and the Trustees soon considered new projects: A hospital; quarters for colored Seamen; a new wash house and bake house; bowling alleys and shuffleboard courts; replacement of the central columns with marble;

and new stone houses for the governor and resident physician. By the mid-1850s, three hundred retired Seamen lived at the Harbor in the luxurious landscape of an institutional country estate.<sup>97</sup>

The metropolitan wealth of the Snug Harbor attracted the same political interests that controlled Quarantine and captured control of the Seamen's Retreat in the 1830s. As mentioned above, under the terms of Randall's will, the Board of Trustees was made up entirely of ex-officio members. Although some were political posts, most were not. The Trustees of the Harbor were much more circumspect with spending than their counterparts at Quarantine and the Retreat, and they strongly resisted political interference. The Trustees of the Harbor granted the post of governor, responsible for running the asylum, to a leader from the community of captains and shipmasters when he was ready to retire from the sea, rather than as a political patronage reward. The governor was expected to preside over the asylum until old age prevented him from continuing his duties. Such tenure resisted political influence. Nevertheless, the Trustees successfully fought off a legislative attempt in 1835 to overwhelm the board with appointees controlled by the Governor (of New York State), a move that would have likely reoriented the money and patronage possibilities of the institution toward a Quarantine-style system of political favors.<sup>98</sup>

The Trustees of the New York's maritime asylums engaged in high-stakes power struggles, channeled port fees and urban real estate wealth onto Staten Island. Their choices to build on the Island reflected and reinforced the divergence of Manhattan and Staten Island. By the 1830s, Randall's Manhattan farm was bordered by Washington Square, which had replaced the potter's field. Broadway, the city's great boulevard, now

reached the area. Real estate interests were transforming this area of Manhattan into the city. Inside the harbor gateway defined by the governmental establishments and procedures at the Narrows, regular steamboat service connected the northern and eastern shores of Staten Island to Manhattan in less than thirty minutes. At the same time, however, the Trustees' choice to locate their maritime institutions at the regional periphery gave Staten Island a metropolitan identity and helped form a New York region that incorporated Staten Island.

### *Family Asylums for the Maritime Community*

Building on the institutional foundations of the Seamen's Retreat and Snug Harbor, the women of New York's maritime community founded two additional asylums on Staten Island, yet the purpose and approaches of the Directresses differed from their male counterparts at the Retreat and Harbor. Unlike the men, the object of elite women's charity and social reform was not for the sailors themselves, but for their wives and children. On April 2, 1846, a group of "benevolent ladies" resolved to form a Society for the Relief of the Destitute Children of Seamen after listening to a sermon on the subject at the Presbyterian Brick Church in Manhattan. A few years earlier, another group of women, the wives of shipmasters, along with other charitable ladies of the metropolis had transformed New York's Female Bethel Society into the Mariner's Family Industrial Society. Like their male counterparts, the women of both Societies agreed that "Staten Island presented advantages over every situation in the neighborhood of the city" for their asylums. It was healthier, cheaper, and safer.<sup>99</sup>

The Directresses of the two societies chose Staten Island for reasons both similar to and subtly different from the male Trustees of the Seamen's Retreat and Snug Harbor. Like the men, the women found Staten Island's "convenience of access" and "economy in rent" attractive. While the men focused on the discipline of sailors and saw the harbor-front as their natural home, the Directresses of the Society for Destitute Children focused on the purity of children's souls. In Manhattan, they wrote, children's "souls and their bodies were alike filthy and polluted." On Staten Island they would be "removed from the temptations and expenses incident to a city residence," in some cases indeed "rescued" from sailors' wives "abandoned to vice and intemperance," who trained their children "in the same soul-destroying courses." Meanwhile, the Island's "salubrity of air" would help restore their health and their souls.<sup>100</sup>

The women of the Societies sought to segregate and remove a vulnerable population of poor wives, widows and children of sailors from the urban environment of Manhattan to Staten Island. They did not choose Staten Island because it was a rural escape or exile rather they chose it because it was a practical and healthy place apart from the city, yet within the metropolitan periphery. Directresses of the Destitute Children's society imagined their Island asylum as something of a surrogate home for the children of the city's working mothers. "The wives of many of these sailors," they argued, "if not encumbered with a family, could seek employment, labor respectably, and by the payment of 50 cents per week at the 'Home,' contribute towards the support of their children; happy in the knowledge that they were sheltered from cold and hunger, and receiving both mental and moral training, that would enable them to earn an honest livelihood." The Directresses imagined their asylum as a proper domestic environment,

where they would relieve poor mothers of child rearing and send them back to Manhattan to work.<sup>101</sup>

Mirroring the emerging distinction between the world of domesticity and commerce in their personal lives, the women of both Societies contrasted a Manhattan world of commerce, and a domestic Staten Island of retreat, recuperation, dependency, and supervised control. In Manhattan, the Mariner's Family Society ran a clothing store "for the purpose of providing work at a fair remuneration for the female members of the families of seamen and of relieving the necessities of such families when incapable of labor." While on Staten Island, they ran an asylum for "destitute, sick or infirm mothers, wives, sisters, daughters, or widows of seamen." The women on Staten Island, however, were required to produce goods for sale to combat the evils of idleness. Like the dependent sailors at Snug Harbor and the Seamen's Retreat, the needy families of New York's mariners were dependents, to be cared for in the controlled benevolent environment of Staten Island's institutions.<sup>102</sup>

The Directresses of the two Societies pursued very different strategies to mobilize metropolitan wealth to build and maintain their asylums, but both depended on the foundation of Staten Island's existing maritime asylums, Snug Harbor and the Seamen's Retreat. The Directresses' strategies also reveal the initiative of different groups of elite women of the era, and how they leveraged male-dominated institutions to achieve their agendas. The women who formed the Society for the Destitute Children of Seamen were wealthy. The list of officers and managers of the Society includes the names New York's elite families, including the Morgans, Aspinwalls, Griswolds, LeRoys, Stuyvesants, and Wetmores. Their husbands were successful merchants. Many had fancy villas on Staten

Island. Initially, they were confident that they could raise funds through charity solicitations from their wealthy families and friends. When they failed to collect adequate funds, they turned to the Trustees of the Sailors' Snug Harbor. The Directresses of the Mariners Family Society were a different kind of elite, with less access to merchant wealth. Many were wives of shipmasters. They chose a more political route to access land and resources for their Staten Island asylum.<sup>103</sup>

The fact that they had chosen Staten Island enabled the Directresses of the Society for the Destitute Children of Seamen to survive their fiscal crisis in 1850 by appealing to their wealthy institutional neighbor, Sailors' Snug Harbor. After two months of deliberation, the Snug Harbor Trustees extended their umbrella of Manhattan real estate wealth and Staten Island land to the Society, granting five acres on a twenty-one-year lease with a very limited rent. The Trustees set aside land for the ladies' and destitute children at a safe distance from the aged sailors, an option made possible by the sheer size of the Snug Harbor property. Although the women began constructing a hospital and school for the children at the Society's expense in 1851, their dependency on the Snug Harbor Trustees grew, first for supplies like food and water, then for money. Over the long life of the Society's asylum, the Snug Harbor Trustees continued to meet the Directresses requests for funds, repairs, and new buildings, while at the same time they complained about paying for work that they did not directly authorize.<sup>104</sup>

The women of the Mariners Family Industrial Society took a more political and confrontational approach, pressuring the Trustees of the Seamen's Retreat to share a portion of their Staten Island property and the port fees that fed the Mariner's Fund. "Had it not been for the perseverance of ladies" lobbying at Albany, one legislator



remarked at the opening of the Mariners Family Asylum, the new institution “could not have been carried against such opposition.” The ladies began their attempt to tap the Mariner’s Fund to support their fledgling asylum in 1847, but failed. In 1849 they legally incorporated the Society with a female board of managers and an advisory male board of counselors and tried again. Despite a legislative victory for the women that year, the Retreat’s Trustees found a loophole in the new law and did nothing. In 1851, the women went to Albany in person and won additional legislation ordering the Retreat Trustees to erect a separate building for the care of mariner’s family members. To overcome resistance by the Retreat, the new law placed the Society’s male counselors on a special board to oversee the construction. Nevertheless, the special board immediately faced “strong opposition” from the Retreat Trustees “to the appropriation of any portion” of the Retreat’s Staten Island property. Even after the Trustees buckled and built the asylum building, they stonewalled its operation. The final victory for the women came in 1854, when the legislature ordered the Trustees of the Retreat to “pay over monthly, to the Treasurer of the Mariners Family Asylum, for the maintenance of said asylum, 10 percent” of the Mariner’s Fund.<sup>105</sup>

Through the politics, power and wealth of their maritime institutions, New Yorkers laid the foundations for a new geography of the metropolis, a regional place extending into the periphery beyond Manhattan. The institutions they built between the 1790s and the 1850s established a role for Staten Island as part of maritime New York. It was a multifaceted role. At the beginning of the republic, the forts, Customs and Quarantine Stations served at a moment of vulnerability in New York history,

establishing the Island as a defensive perimeter for the city. The gateway the state and federal governments established on Staten Island bounded the harbor, helping construct it as a distinct and safe metropolitan place. By the 1830s, Staten Island's role in the metropolis expanded as New Yorkers made it home to the city's asylums for the needy of its seafaring community. As the port grew, fees and patronage networks built Staten Island's Quarantine and Customs Stations and its asylums into sites of power, wealth and politics of the maritime metropolis.

By the mid-1840s, Staten Island's role in the region as New York's place for maritime institutions and its potential as a place for metropolitan residence came into conflict. As will be shown in subsequent chapters, beginning in the 1830s, Staten Island attracted real estate speculators, agricultural improvers, country estate owners, and other residents who helped construct the new regional New York. As they did so, the money, power and functional importance of Quarantine was cresting. New Yorkers struggled with the intersection and contradiction of managing immigrants and public health at the single, increasingly hectic, and constrained station. In 1847, the state established the new Commissioners of Emigration and gave them authority over the Marine Hospitals at Quarantine, and the fund that supported them, eroding the imperial authority of the Health Officer. Meanwhile, merchants mounted legal challenges to the port head tax, as immigrants became a high volume cargo, finally winning their case in the Supreme Court in the 1849 Passenger Cases. Although the state designed legal ways to keep the Marine Hospital fund legal, many merchants paid under protest and the fund faded as an important source of revenue for the Commissioners of Emigration.<sup>106</sup>

In 1848, Staten Islanders took account of the shifting balance between the power, money and visibility the Quarantine Station brought to the Island and the growing presence of immigrants and disease. The new regime of control by the Commissioners of Emigration undermined the decades-old system of distributing ferry tickets, liquor, lavish dinner invitations and other rewards that helped align the interests of Staten Islanders and Manhattanites with the station and the Health Officer. By the late 1850s, following a decade effort to get the Quarantine Station removed from the Island through the political process, Staten Islanders realized they did not have the clout to do so. Power and politics of the metropolis and state of New York proved more complicated than the Islander's expectations that they could control their own destiny in a democratic republic.<sup>107</sup>

By then Staten Islanders protested the presence of the Quarantine Station as a threat to both their property values and their health. Taking a cue from the tense and violent politics between Manhattanites and the government in Albany in the 1850s over the state's excise tax on liquor and state versus local control of the police, a small group of Staten Islanders planned an attack to destroy Quarantine. Over two nights in 1858, these leading citizens led a crowd and burned the station to the ground. We will explore further the significance and context of this dramatic act later. Suffice it to say here that the destruction of the Quarantine was the end of an era for Staten Island, erasing the most visible and powerful of the Island's maritime institutions. However, it was not the end of Staten Island's metropolitan relationship with Manhattan. It is to another aspect of that relationship which we now turn.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Herman Melville, *Redburn: His First Voyage* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1850), 50–2.

<sup>2</sup> Franklin Langworthy, *Scenery of the Plains, Mountains and Mines or a Diary Kept on the Overland Route to California...* (Ogdensburgh: J. C. Sprague, 1855), 300.

<sup>3</sup> For the status and importance of seamen and the maritime city in the formation of the new nation, see Jesse Lemish, "Jack Tar in the Streets: Merchant Seamen in the Politics of Revolutionary America," *William and Mary Quarterly* 25:3 (July 1968), 371–407; Paul A. Gilje, *Liberty on the Waterfront: American Maritime Culture in the Age of Revolution* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004); and Gary Nash, *The Urban Crucible: Social Change, Political Consciousness, and the Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979); for some early demographics of American seamen, see Ira Dye, "Early American Merchant Seafarers," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 120 (October 1976), 331–60; for the continuing importance of maritime work, and seafarers in national identity and construction of rights and citizenship through the first half of the nineteenth century, see Matthew Taylor Raffety, *The Republic Afloat: Law, Honor, and Citizenship in Maritime America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), esp. 174–210; for a look at changes in American maritime life between the colonial era and the nineteenth century, see Daniel Vickers and Vince Walsh, *Young Men and the Sea: Yankee Seafarers in the Age of Sail* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), 163–204; for New York as a maritime city, see Paul A. Gilje, "On The Waterfront: Maritime Workers in New York City in the Early Republic, 1800–1850," *New York History* 77:4 (October 1996), 395–426; Michael B. Cohn, "The Maritime Impact on New York's Early Development, 1800–1860," *International Journal of Maritime History* 4:2 (December 1992), 227–38; Albion and Pope, *The Rise of New York Port* (1939, 1984); and Richard C. McKay, *South Street: A Maritime History of New York* (New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1934); for the establishment of governmental authority and responsibility in the early republic through institutions, esp. those related to the port, see Gautham Rao, *The Creation of the American State: Customhouses, Law, and Commerce in the Age of Revolution*, Thesis (Ph. D.), University of Chicago, Dept. of History, December 2008; Gautham Rao, "Administering Entitlement: Governance, Public Health Care, and the Early American State," *Law and Social Inquiry* 37 (Summer, 2012), 627–56; and Jerry L. Mashaw, "Recovering American Administration federalist Foundations, 1787–1801," *Yale Law Journal* 115 (2006), 1256–1344; for a discussion of the construction of governmental authority through both the establishment of the notion of public property, including ports and harbors, and through public health, including the establishment of quarantines, see William J. Novak, *The People's Welfare: Law and Regulation in Nineteenth-century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 115–48 and 191–233.

<sup>4</sup> Melville, *Redburn* (1850), 50.

<sup>5</sup> "Editor's Easy Chair," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 13:75 (August, 1856), 417.

<sup>6</sup> James Stuart, *Three Years in North America* I (New York: J & J Harper, 1833), 21–2.

<sup>7</sup> Nathaniel Parker Willis, *American Scenery* (London: G. Virtue, 1840), image preceding 59 and 59–60. *Wilson's Illustrated Guide to the Hudson River* (New-York: H. Wilson, 1848), 26. *Francis's Guide to the Cities of New-York And Brooklyn: and the Vicinity* (New York: C. S. Francis & Co., 1854), 60. Melville, *Redburn* (1850), 2.

<sup>8</sup> Samuel Akerly, "Agriculture of Richmond County," *Transactions of the New York State Agricultural Society* 2 (1842) (Albany: E. Mack, 1843), 199. New York (State), "Report

of the Select Committee on the Memorial of the Trustees of the Seamen's Fund and Retreat of New York," *Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York*, 55th sess., 3:199 (Albany: E. Croswell, 1832), 6. P.S. Townsend, "Seamen's Retreat," *Army and Navy Chronicle* 5:6 (August 10, 1837), 87. John Francis Richmond, *New York and Its Institutions, 1609–1871*, (New York: E. B. Treat, 1872) 583–4. "George B. Rollins, Auctioneer: By Wilkins & Rollins (ad)," *New York Commercial Advertiser*, June 15, 1841. New York State (Secretary of State), *Census of the State of New York for 1855* (Albany, 1857), 138–9.

<sup>9</sup> New York (State), "Communication from the Committee Appointed by the House of Assembly, at its Last Session, to Inquire into the Propriety of the Removal of the Quarantine Establishment," *Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York*, 72nd sess., 2:60 (Albany: Weed, Parsons & Co., 1849), 46.

<sup>10</sup> *The New World in 1859: Being the United States and Canada, Illustrated and Described* 5 (London: H. Bailliere, 1859), 26. New York (State), "Report of a Special Committee of the House of Assembly of the State of New York on the Present Quarantine Laws, 1846," *Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York*, 69th sess., 3:60 (Albany: Carroll & Cook, 1846), 52, 251. New York (State), "Communication from the Committee Appointed by the House of Assembly, at its Last Session, to Inquire into the Propriety of the Removal of the Quarantine Establishment," *Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York*, 72nd sess., 2:60 (Albany: Weed, Parsons & Co., 1849), 46, 85, 27–8 and 34.

<sup>11</sup> Mrs. Felton, *Life in America* (Hull: John Hutchinson, 1838), 31. O. L. Holley, (ed.), *A Description of the City of New York: With a Brief Account of the Cities, Towns, Villages, And Places of Resort Within Thirty Miles: Designed As a Guide for Citizens And Strangers* (New York: J. Disturnell, 1847), 106. Willis, 35. New York (State), *Documents of the Assembly* 3:60 (1846), 59–60. The Philological Society (Great Britain), ed., "Descriptions, Remarks, Anecdotes and Sentiments, during a Voyage from the West Indies to North America and from thence to England, and during the Author's Rambles in the two latter Countries," *The European Magazine and London Review* 51 (January–June 1807), 271. Townsend (1837), 85–7. *Map of the Marine Hospital Ground* (1845), New York Public Library, Digital Collection <http://digitalgallery.nypl.org/nypldigital/id?434727>, accessed on February 15, 2014. *Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York*, 72nd sess., 2:60 (1849), 13.

<sup>12</sup> For passengers getting into the city from Staten Island upon arrival by ship, see Felton, 34; Grund, 49–50; and New York (State), "Report Of The Select Committee Appointed by the Legislature of New York to Examine into Frauds Upon Emigrants," *Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York* 8:250 (1847), 34, 41–3. It may seem surprising that quarantined passengers had visitors, but as will be shown, the Quarantine Station had become a complex operation with multiple, conflicting functions by the 1840s; see New York (State), *Documents of the Assembly* 2:60 (1849), 87, 115; for mariners spending the day on Staten Island with family, see Idem, 93.

<sup>13</sup> U. S. Census of 1850, Enumerator Sheet, Town of Castleton, County of Richmond, New York, [http://archive.org/details/us\\_census](http://archive.org/details/us_census), accessed March 13, 2014. Stevedores

and lighterers are common terms for dock and maritime workers. A stevedore loads and unloads cargo in a port area. A lighterer transloads cargo from a larger vessel to a smaller one for local transport. New York (State), *Documents of the Assembly* 2:60 (1849), 7. New York (State), *Documents of the Assembly* 3:60 (1846), 72–3, 83, 233. “The Quarantine Stations.” *Harpers Weekly*, May 23, 1857, 324.

<sup>14</sup> See Figure 3.3 for an image of the New Brighton waterfront, John A. Rolph, *New Brighton in the Vicinity of New York*, Emmett Collection of Manuscripts, etc. EM11838, Wallach Division, Print Collection, New York Public Library, Image ID: 423272, NYPL Digital Collections (<http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47da-2811-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>, accessed April 24, 2014). The image dates to at least 1837, appearing in: *The Richmond County Mirror* 1:1 (July 1837). “Sailors’ Snug Harbor,” *The Sailor’s Magazine* 6:61 (September, 1833), 1. “Illustrations of Staaten Island, No. 2,” and “The Sailors’ Snug Harbor,” *Hagadorn’s Semi-Weekly Staaten Islander*, February 2, 1856.

<sup>15</sup> Langworthy (1855), 302.

<sup>16</sup> “The Rev. Samuel Drisius to the Classis of Amsterdam September 15 1664,” as translated and reprinted in John Franklin Jameson ed., *Narratives of New Netherland* (New York: Scribner and Sons, 1909), 414. Frederick R. Black, *A History of Fort Wadsworth, New York Harbor* (Boston: Division of Cultural Resources, North Atlantic Regional Office, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1983, <http://purl.access.gpo.gov/GPO/LPS115847>, accessed January 1, 2013), 16–25. Papas, *That Ever Loyal Island* (2007), 44, 65–6.

<sup>17</sup> “To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, in Congress assembled: The memorial of the inhabitants of the city of New-York, respectfully sheweth, that your memorialists, in common with their fellow citizens throughout the United States, are alarmed at the threatening aspect of public affairs . . .,” Broadside SY1800, No. 51, NYHS. Idem: Broadside SY1800, No. 50, NYHS.

<sup>18</sup> Claude Edwin Heaton, “Yellow Fever in New York City,” *Bulletin Of The Medical Library Association* 34, (April 1946): 67–78. Folpe, *It Happened...* (2002), 63–4. Charles Lockwood, *Manhattan Moves Uptown: An Illustrated History* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1976), 64–6. “Letter from a Gentleman at Staten Island, dated September 16, 1798, to his friend in Edinburgh,” *Caledonian Mercury* (Scotland), November 22, 1798, 3.

<sup>19</sup> New York (State) Commissioners of Fortifications, *Proceedings of the Commissioners of Fortifications for the City of New York and Vicinity, April 2, 1794–February 6, 1796*, Minutes entries for April 2, 3, 4, May 9, June 20, and September 5, 1794, Mss Collection, NYHS. Josiah Conder, *The Modern Traveller: A Popular Description, Geographical, Historical, And Topographical, of the Various Countries of the Globe* 1 (London: Printed for James Duncan, 1829), 222. Conder mistakenly attributes the locational choice to the Corporation of the City of New York, rather than the Commissioners of Health; see also, Henry Storms to William Wilkins, November 29, 1844 in “Communication from the Governor Transmitting the Annual Report of the Commissary General State of New York,” *Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York, 70th sess.*, 4:110 (Albany: C. Van Benthuysen, 1847), 53; Daniel D. Tompkins, and Hugh Hastings (ed.), *Public*

*Papers of Daniel D. Tompkins, Governor of New York, 1807–1817* 2 (New York and Albany: Wynkoop, Hallenbeck, Crawford Co, 1898), 273; for the expansion of the Staten Island Military Ground, see Black, 106. New York (State), “Chapter 76: An Act to Vest in the United States the title to certain lands on Staten Island,” *Laws of the State of New York Passed at the Sessions of the Legislature Held in the Years 1797, 1798, 1799, 1800, Inclusive, 20<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> Sessions* 4 (Albany: Weed, Parsons and Company, 1887), 534; see also, “New York, Land Records, 1630–1975,” Richmond County, Staten Island, *Richmond Deeds 1769–1800*, vol. E, Image no. 235 of 242.

<sup>20</sup> “Plan of Colonel Jonathan Williams for Fortifying the Narrows between Long and Staten Islands,” in *Minutes of the Common Council* 4 (1917), August 4, 1807, 515. Richardson Underhill to James Hardie, 12 December 1798 as printed in James Hardie, *An Account Of The Malignant Fever, Lately [sic] Prevalent in the city of New-York*. (New-York: Hurtin and McFarlane, 1799), 24; see also John Charlton to John Jay, 19 December 1799, Papers of John Jay Projects, Jay-ID (no.8671), Rare Book & Manuscript Division, Butler Library, Columbia University, accessed January 15, 2013, <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/digital/jay/>.

<sup>21</sup> For property rights and the evolution of eminent domain in America and related legal doctrines, see Stuart Bruchey, “Impact of the Concern for the Security of Property Rights on the Legal System of the Early American Republic,” in James W. Ely (ed.), *Property Rights in the Colonial Era and Early Republic* (New York: Garland Pub., 1997); Harry N. Scheiber, “Property Law, Expropriation, and Resource Allocation by Government: The United States, 1789–1910,” *The Journal of Economic History* 33:1 (March 1973), 232–51; and Morton J. Horowitz, *The Transformation of American Law 1780–1860* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977), ch. 3.

<sup>22</sup> “Annual Report of the Commissary General” (1847), 59; Commissioners of Fortifications, Minutes entries for April 4, May 9, June 20, and September 5, 1794. Black (1983), 30. John Jay to the Mayor of New York, June 7, 1796, *The Correspondence and Public Papers of John Jay* 4 (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1890–1893), 217. “Chapter 19: An act to amend an act entitled An Act to provide against infectious and pestilential diseases,” *Laws of the State of New York Passed at the Sessions of the Legislature Held in the Years 1797, 1798, 1799, 1800, Inclusive, 20<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> Sessions* 4 (Albany, 1887), 320. “New York, Land Records, 1630–1975,” Richmond County, Liber E, 451 and 454.

<sup>23</sup> New York (State) Commissioners of Fortifications, *Proceedings of the Commissioners of Fortifications for the City of New York and Vicinity, April 2, 1794–February 6, 1796*, MSS Collection, NYHS. Black, 26–61. Emmanuel R. Lewis, *Seacoast Fortifications of the United States: An Introductory History* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1993), 20–5.

<sup>24</sup> *Minutes of the Common Council* 4 (1917), July 27, 1807, 504. “Plan of Colonel Jonathan Williams for Fortifying the Narrows between Long and Staten Islands,” in *Minutes of the Common Council* 4 (1917), August 4, 1807, 512–18.

<sup>25</sup> For Tompkins’ life and politics, see Ray W. Irwin, *Daniel D. Tompkins: Governor of New York and Vice President of the United States* (NYHS, 1968), esp. chs. 2–3; “Daniel

D. Tompkins,” *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*, accessed February 21, 2012, <http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=T000306>; “Biographical Memoir of Governor Tompkins, of New York,” *Niles’ Weekly Register* (1814–1837), 9 (December 9, 1815), 245; and John P. Kaminski, *George Clinton: Yeoman Politician of the New Republic* (Madison: Madison House, 1993), esp. 277–8, and 288; for a broader look at the politics of New York in the era, see Alexander De Alva Stanwood, *A Political History of the State of New York* 1 (New York: H. Holt & Co., 1906), 129–238; and Sean Wilentz, *Chants Democratic: New York City & The Rise of the American Working Class, 1788–1850* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 23–103; see also Anthony Gronowicz, *Race and Class Politics in New York City before the Civil War* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1998), 23–39; for list of Aldermen and Assistant Aldermen, see *Minutes of the Common Council* 19 (1917), 730–2. There is little recent scholarship on the early years of Tammany; see Jerome Mushkat, *Tammany: The Evolution of a Political Machine, 1789–1865* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1971), 8–127; Gustav Myers, *The History of Tammany Hall*, 2nd ed. (New York: Boni & Liveright, 1917), 11–55; and M. R. Werner, *Tammany Hall* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Doran & Co., 1928), 19–39; for more recent work on Democratic-Republican Societies of the era in general, see Matthew Schoenbachler, “Republicanism in the Age of Democratic Revolution: The Democratic-Republican Societies of the 1790s,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 18:2 (Summer, 1998), 237–61. While New York had a separate Democratic Society in the 1790s, the politics surrounding such societies led to a crisis at Tammany that resulted in the exit of most of its Federalist members; see Mushkat, 22–6; for the kinds of men who joined Tammany in its early era, see Irwin, 36; and Musk, 25.

<sup>26</sup> Myers, 11–16; and Mushkat, 26–31. Meyers presents Tammany as a more unified political force dominated by Aaron Burr and his supporters, while Mushkat argues the Society was a less politically unified organization, still more fraternal in character at least until 1807–8 when the Society began to expand its membership, and the Burrists took control; for the political relationship between Tompkins and Clinton in 1807–8, see Irwin, 50–7 and 65–9.

<sup>27</sup> Daniel D. Tompkins to Col. Jonathan Williams, 12 May 1808 and Williams to Tompkins, 21 October 1808, as reprinted in Hastings 2, 78–9 and 138–45. Williams was not wholly unsympathetic to the idea of fortifying the Narrows. He saw it as less of a priority and a very expensive project, if done properly; see, “Report of Col. Williams,” in Hastings 2, 246–9. The military landscape on the Long Island side of the Narrows came later. A detailed history of the forts at the Staten Island site is found in Black, (1983); and in Jean B. Gleisner and John Auwaerter, *Cultural Landscape Report for the Battery Weed Headland* (Boston: Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, 2008).

<sup>28</sup> The crisis in available work and the demands made by the populous of New York can be found in *Minutes of the Common Council* 4 (1917), January 11, 1808, 700–4; see also Burrows and Wallace, 412–13. DeWitt Clinton to Tompkins, 16 February 1809 and Tompkins to Thomas Jefferson, 21 January 1809, in Hastings 2, 207–10 and 185–7; for the timing of the completion of the forts, see Black, 45.

<sup>29</sup> Irwin, 69. Tompkins to Jefferson, January 21, 1809 and DeWitt Clinton to DDT February 16, 1809 in Hastings 2, 186 and 207–10; for Federalists sweep of state and city



elections of 1809, see Burrows and Wallace, 415. Though Tompkins retained the governorship in the election of 1810, he did not carry Manhattan; see A New Nation Votes, Tufts University Digital Collections and Archives, <http://elections.lib.tufts.edu/catalog/tufts.ny.governor.1810>, accessed March 13, 2014.

<sup>30</sup> Ira K. Morris, *Morris's Memorial History of Staten Island 2* (New York: Memorial Pub. Co., 1898), 241–3; for county and township-level election returns, see A New Nation Votes: American Election Returns, 1787–1825, <http://elections.lib.tufts.edu/>.

<sup>31</sup> Tompkins to Eustis, 18 November 1809, and Tompkins to Eustis, 23 March 1810 in Hastings 2, 217 and 273. Williams to Dewitt Clinton, 26 January 1810, as reprinted in Cullum (1891), 532. Tompkins to Congressman Peter B. Porter, 22 December 1810 in Hastings 2, 307–8.

<sup>32</sup> Jennings L. Wagoner, Jr. and Christine Coalwell McDonald, “Mr. Jefferson’s Academy: An Educational Interpretation,” in Robert M. S. McDonald (ed.), *Thomas Jefferson’s Military Academy: Founding West Point* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004), 118–53, esp. 140–6. Eustis to Williams, June 4, 1810, as quoted in Cullum, 538; see also Cullum, 524; and Samuel J. Watson, “‘Developing Republican Machines’: West Point and the Struggle to Render the Officer Corps Safe for America, 1802–33,” in Robert M. S. McDonald (ed.) (2004), 154–81, esp. 159–60. Williams to Dewitt Clinton, 26 January 1810, as reprinted in Cullum (1891), 532. Tompkins to Eustis, 23 March 1810 in Hastings 2, 274.

<sup>33</sup> George W. Cullum, *Biographical Register of the Officers and Graduates of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point From its Establishment in 1802 to 1890 with the Early History of the United States Military Academy*, 3rd Ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1891), 558. U.S. Congress. House. *Annals*. 11th Congress, 3rd sess., February 15, 1811, 967, <http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=llac&fileName=022/llac022.db&recNum=188>, accessed August 7, 2014. New York (State), “Chapter XCIII: An Act Authorizing a Cession to the United States of the Title and Jurisdiction of this State to the Lands Therein Mentioned,” *Laws of the State of New York 34th sess.* (Albany: S. Southwick, 1811), 173. Tompkins to Williams, October 26, 1810 in Hastings 2, 288–91.

<sup>34</sup> Tompkins to Paul Hamilton, 4 January 1810, Hastings 2, 227. “The Governor’s Address to the Legislature,” January 30, 1810, Hastings 2, 230–7. Henry Storms to William Wilkins, 29 November 1844 reprinted in *Documents of the Assembly, 70th sess.*, 4:110 (1847), 53.

<sup>35</sup> William Paulding, Jr., “G[eneral] O[rder],” August 19, 1812, Tompkins to Captains Walker, et al., August 19, 1812, J. W. Livingston, “G[eneral] O[rder],” August 22, 1812, and Paulding, Jr., “G[eneral] O[rder],” August 31, 1812 in Hastings 1, 382–3, 670, 384 and 390. General Orders were orders ultimately issued, “by the order of the Commander in Chief,” that is, by Governor Tompkins, as Commander in Chief of the state militia. Tompkins’ original plan was neater in symbol than strategically practical. When the troops actually arrived at the city, they were dispatched to a variety of posts; for gun salute examples, see R. S. Guernsey, *New York City And Vicinity During the War of 1812–15: Being a Military, Civic And Financial Local History of That Period II* (New

York: C. L. Woodward, 1889–95), 479–80 and also vol. I, 135; for arrangement and rotation of troops onto and off of Staten Island during the war, see, e.g., Chrystie, “G[eneral] O[rder],” December 13, 1814, and December 15, 1814 in Hastings 1, 752 and 755; see also Tompkins to Maj. Gen. Lewis, 15 September 1814 in Hastings 3, 528–9; and Guernsey I 342, 140–1, 213 and 116.

<sup>36</sup> Black, 57 and 65. Report of Attorney General Barker, March 2, 1842, as reprinted in “Annual Report of the Commissary General” (1847), 58–78, esp. 58 and 76. Henry Storms to William B. Maclay, 25 February 1844, as reprinted in “Annual Report of the Commissary General” (1847), 103–4. Black, 60, 79 and 98.

<sup>37</sup> *Wilson’s Illustrated Guide to the Hudson River* (New-York: H. Wilson, 1848), 16 and 32. James Hardie, *The Description of the City of New-York* (New-York: S. Marks, 1827), 149. *Francis’s Guide to the Cities of New-York And Brooklyn: and the Vicinity* (New York: C. S. Francis & co., 1854), 60. Willis, 59–60.

<sup>38</sup> Alexander Hamilton, *The Federalist*, no.12 “The Utility of the Union In Respect to Revenue,” from the *New York Packet*, November 27, 1787, Library of Congress, [http://thomas.loc.gov/home/histdox/fed\\_12.html](http://thomas.loc.gov/home/histdox/fed_12.html), accessed March 31, 2014; Rao (2008), 46–144; see also Mashaw; for a history of the early Revenue Cutter Service, see Horatio Davis Smith, *Early History of the United States Revenue Marine Service* (Washington DC: United States Coast Guard, 1989, <http://www.uscg.mil/history/articles/USRCS1789-1849.pdf>, accessed February 5, 2014).

<sup>39</sup> “Korte Historiael Ende Journaels Aenteyckeninge, by David Pietersz de Vries, 1633–1643 (1655),” as translated and reprinted in John Franklin Jameson ed., *Narratives of New Netherland* (New York: Scribner and Sons, 1909), 211. The phrase “drop down to Staten Island” or similar ones like “beat down to Staten Island,” or other variations were fairly common; e.g., James Fenimore Cooper, *Ned Myers, or a Life Before the Mast* 1 (London: Richard Bentley, 1843), 40; and Thomas F. De Voe, *The Market Book, Containing a Historical Account of the Public Markets in the Cities of New York, Boston, Philadelphia and Brooklyn, With a Brief Description of Every Article of Human Food Sold Therein...* 2 (New York: Printed for the Author, 1862), 214; “New York, April 24,” *American and Commercial Daily Advertiser* (Baltimore, MD), April 27, 1805; and “Mad Dogs,” *New York Spectator*, June 17, 1831.

<sup>40</sup> New York (State), “Chapter 76: An Act to Vest in the United States Title to Certain Lands on Staten Island” (April 1, 1800), *Laws of the State of New York, 2d Edition* 1 (Albany: Websters and Skinner, 1807), 171. “A list of public property belonging to the United States,” February 24, 1807, David Gelston Papers, Coll. 170 – Box 16, Folder 13, p. 6, G. W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport; for 1809 and 1814 expenses, see, e.g., Gelston Papers, Box 16, Folder 3, pp. 1 and 26; for the bills and contracts for the improvement of the Staten Island station between 1818 and 1820, see Gelston Papers, Box 23, Folder 3, 1–138, the contract for the house, e.g., is on p. 1; for the construction of the wharf, representing the bulk of the investment, see “No. 617: Contract for Building and Repairing a Wharf,” *Documents Legislative and Executive of the Congress of the United States From the First Session of the First to the Second Session of the Seventeenth Congress Inclusive* (Washington: Gales and Seaton, 1834), 882.

<sup>41</sup> Burgher to Geltson, August 17, 1815 and July 19, 1815, Gelston Papers, Box 4, Folder 2, pp. 23 and 29. John Naff to Geltson, August 30, 1815, Gelston Papers, Box 4, Folder 2, p. 65. Brig Packet Havana, R. Thompson Master from Havana, August 17, 1815, Gelston Papers, Box 4, Folder 2, p. 39. Rao (2008), 321–69 and 458–484.

<sup>42</sup> New York (State), “Communication from the Committee Appointed by the House of Assembly, at its Last Session, to Inquire into the Propriety of the Removal of the Quarantine Establishment,” *Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York, 72nd sess.*, 2:60 (1849), 85. *A Register of Officer and Agents Civil, Military and Naval, In the Service of the United States, on the 30th of September 1827* (Washington City: Peter Force, 1828), 41–45. Andrew A Jones, *Jones Digest Being a Particular and Detailed Account of the Duties Performed by the Various Officers Belonging to the Customs House Departments of the United States but More Especially of Those Attached to the District of New York* (New York, 1835), 54–5.

<sup>43</sup> See, “Report of the Secretary of the Treasury of the State of the Finances for the Year 1867,” House of Representatives, 40th Congress, 2nd sess., *Executive Document No. 2* (Washington DC: Govt. Printing Office, 1868), 210–11 and 195; and United States, *The Statutes, At-Large Treaties and Proclamations of the United States of America from December 1865 to March 1867* 14 (Boston: Little Brown & Co., 1868), 458–9. The *Annual Reports of the Light-House Board* give a regular presentation of the use, growth and unique role of the Staten Island Depot in the national lighthouse system; e.g., *Annual Report of the Light-House Board of the United States to the Secretary of the Treasury for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1872* (Washington DC: Govt. Printing Office, 1872), 31–3.

<sup>44</sup> Samuel L. Mitchill, et al. “Appendix: Article II,” *The Medical Repository*, 3rd Ed. 2 (New York: T. & J. Swords, 1805), 437–8.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> John Adams, “Second Annual Address, December 8, 1798,” as reprinted in United States, and James D. Richardson, *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789–1897* 1 (Washington: Govt. Printing Office, 1896), 271. U.S. and Richardson 10, 558–9; and Ronald Hamowy, *Government and Public Health in America* (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, 2007), 26; for the mid-century debate about national quarantine regulations, see Michael Les Benedict, *Journal of the History of Medicine & Allied Sciences*, 25: 2 (April 1970), 177–93.

<sup>47</sup> John Booker, *Maritime Quarantine: the British Experience, 1650–1900* (Hampshire, England: Ashgate Publishing, 2007), chs. 8–9. Duffy, *History of Public Health in New York City: 1625–1866* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1968), 60–1, 86, 126 and 251. Rebecca H. Sell, “The Lazaretto: The Cultural Significance and Preservation Plan in the Spirit of the Burra Charter,” Thesis in Historic Preservation, Master of Science in Historic Preservation, University of Pennsylvania, 2005.

<sup>48</sup> Duffy, *History* (1968), 330–55. Joseph Bayley, “The Quarantine Establishment at New York,” *The Medical Repository* 6 (1803), 150–4; for an early image of the Quarantine hospital, see, “Quarantine Hospital, Tompkinsville, Staten Island, New York,” Object

1912.52, Luce Center, NYHS, (<http://www.nyhistory.org/exhibit/quarantine-hospital-tompkinsville-staten-island-new-york>, accessed March 31, 2014). This may be a representation of the new hospital completed in 1819, as the original buildings had deteriorated under the strain of use as barracks during the War of 1812.

<sup>49</sup> For early conception of disease and the idea of quarantine as a disease barrier beginning with its medieval roots, see John Duffy, *The Sanitarians* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 1–8 and 40; and Charles E. A. Winslow, *The Conquest of Epidemic Disease; A Chapter in the History of Ideas* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1943), 119–20; for how much the notion of what quarantine was had changed by later in the nineteenth century, see Howard Markel, *Quarantine!: East European Jewish Immigrants and the New York City Epidemics of 1892* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997); for the sanitary reform movement of the 1840s and 50s that re-focused ideas about disease on environmental causes, particularly the link between dirt and disease, see Duffy, *Sanitarians* (1992), 93–125; and Martin Melosi, *The Sanitary City* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 43–72. New York (State), “Report of a Special Committee of the House of Assembly of the State of New York on the Present Quarantine Laws, 1846,” *Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York*, 69th sess., 3:60 (Albany: Carroll & Cook, 1846), 40.

<sup>50</sup> Melosi has called the entire period between the colonial era and 1880 an “Age of Miasmas;” see Melosi, 17–72; and also Duffy (1992), 67–8. Miasmatic theory was an important component of debates over contagionism and anti-contagionism; for the rise and fall of anti-contagionism as the basis of disease etiology, see Erwin H. Ackerknecht, “Anticontagionism between 1821 and 1867,” *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 22 (January 1, 1948), 562–93, esp. 567, 579 and 590–3 as it relates to the politics of quarantine; for recent commentary and a summary of historiographic responses to Ackerknecht, see Christopher Hamlin, “Commentary: Ackerknecht and ‘Anticontagionism’: A Tale of Two Dichotomies;” Alexandra Minna Stern and Howard Markel, “Commentary: Disease Etiology and Political Ideology: Revisiting Erwin H Ackerknecht’s Classic 1948 Essay, ‘Anticontagionism between 1821 and 1867’”; and Charles E Rosenberg, “Commentary: Epidemiology in Context,” *International Journal of Epidemiology* 38 (2009), 22–33. David S. Barnes argues that for most of the nineteenth century, quarantine was based on loose ideas about infection that implicated cargo more than people; see David S. Barnes, “Cargo, ‘Infection,’ and the Logic of Quarantine in the Nineteenth Century,” *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 88:1 (Spring 2014), 75–101; for the term “fomites” see Duffy (1992), 40; and Winslow, 119–20; for persistence of the idea of fomites into the 1840s, see New York (State), *Documents of the Assembly* 3:60 (1846), 125–6, 149, 154–5.

<sup>51</sup> New York (State), *Documents of the Assembly* 3:60 (1846), 97. “Removal of Yellow Fever Quarantine to Sandy Hook,” *Hunt’s Merchant’s Magazine and Commercial Review* 36 (January–June 1857), 43.

<sup>52</sup> See, e.g., “Yellow Fever,” *NYTr*, August 20, 1855, 4; “Health of New Orleans,” *NYTr*, October 22, 1841, 2; “From Europe: Progress of the Cholera,” *NYTr*, June 20, 1846, 1; and “Appearance of the Cholera in San Francisco,” *NYTr*, December 9, 1850, 6; see also Rosenberg (1962). “City Items,” *NYTr*, July 27, 1849, 1. “Cholera in New-York,” *New-*

*York Spectator*, July 6, 1832. New York (State), *Documents of the Assembly* 2:60 (1849), 67; see also Gretchen A. Condran, "Changing Patterns of Epidemic Disease in New York City," in David Rosner, *Hives Of Sickness: Public Health And Epidemics In New York City* (New Brunswick: Published for the Museum of the City of New York by Rutgers University Press, 1995), 33. Condran argues epidemic disease had a much greater impact on the cultural psychology and politics of the city than suggested by actual death rates; for further evidence of persistent fears of disease while there was no evidence of epidemic outbreak in the city, see New York (State), *Documents of the Assembly* 3:60 (1846), 80–4, 97, 132–3; and Philip Hone, *Diaries 1826–1851*, Reel 6, 28 August 1843, MSS Collection BV, NYHS.

<sup>53</sup> New York (State), *Documents of the Assembly* 3:60 (1846), appendix no. 3 and no. 6. New York (State) Commissioners of Emigration, *Annual Reports of the Commissioners of Emigration of the State of New York from the Organization of the Commission, May 5, 1847, to 1860* (New York: Commissioners of Emigration, 1861), Appendix 11. *Map of the Marine Hospital Ground* (1845), New York Public Library, Digital Collection (<http://digitalgallery.nypl.org/nypldigital/id?434727>). New York (State), *Documents of the Assembly* 2:60 (1849), 7–8 and 13.

<sup>54</sup> Commissioners of Emigration, iii–v and 44; the text of the law (Chapter 483) is reprinted in the appendix. New York (State), *Documents of the Assembly* 3:60 (1846), 55. Control over the ships, anchorage and cargoes remained with the Health Officer and the Commissioners of Health. Commissioners of Emigration, 45, 58, Table B (290), 113, and "Physician's Report for 1850" in the appendix.

<sup>55</sup> No title, *BDE*, June 30, 1847, 2; for first year of Castle Garden operation, see Commissioners of Emigration, 185–88.

<sup>56</sup> New York (State), "Report Of The Select Committee Appointed by the Legislature of New York to Examine into Frauds Upon Emigrants," *Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York* 8:250 (1847), 18, 33, 80, 44, and 62; for evidence of the continued activity of emigrant runners on Staten Island into the 1850s, see, "Domestic Summary," *Irish American Weekly*, June 9, 1855, 4; and W. C., "American Jottings," *Chambers Journal* 61 (March 3, 1855), 141.

<sup>57</sup> *Annual Reports of the Commissioners of Emigration*.

<sup>58</sup> P. S. Townsend, "Seamen's Retreat," *Army and Navy Chronicle* 5:6 (August 10, 1837), 85–7. It is important to note that the Health Officer, along with the Health Commissioner, and the Resident Physician made up the Board of Health for the city, as defined by state law. This body differs from the ad hoc Boards of Health discussed by Charles Rosenberg created locally in times of need by the city itself; see Charles Rosenberg, *The Cholera Years: The United States in 1832, 1849, and 1866* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1962). In 1850, the legislature shifted control of a restructured Board of Health to city officials, but the Health Officer remained independent of the city, and appointed by the Governor; for the role of patronage in early American politics and its contemporary critiques, see Bernard Bailyn, *The Origins of American Politics* (New York: Knopf, 1968); for the centrality of patronage in early New York state politics, see

J. M. Gitterman, "Council of Appointment in New York," *Political Science Quarterly* 7:1 (March, 1892), 80–115.

<sup>59</sup> John Jay to Richard Bayley, 22 February 1796, Papers of John Jay Projects (Jay-ID no. 2992), Repository: New York State Library, Manuscripts & Special Collections (N), <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/digital/jay/>, accessed May 14, 2013. Philip Hone, Diaries, Reel 8, 31 March 1850; "Biography of David Gelston," Gelston Papers, (<http://library.mysticseaport.org/manuscripts/coll/coll170.cfm#head46741112>, accessed April 7, 2014). Albert Gallatin to Thomas Jefferson, 29 July 1808 and Jefferson to Gallatin, 15 May 1808, as quoted in Rao (2008), 322.

<sup>60</sup> James Cheetham to Thomas Jefferson, 12 June 1801, as reprinted in Thomas Jefferson and Barbara B. Oberg (eds.), *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson* 34 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 317. Cheetham to Jefferson, 25 July 1804, *Letters of James Cheetham* (Boston, 1907), 60–1. By 1809, however, Gelston was paying Cheetham for printing; see Gelston Papers, Box 16, Folder 3, p. 1.

<sup>61</sup> Hugh M. Flick, "Council of Appointment in New York State: The First Attempt to Regulate Political Patronage, 1777–1822," *New York History* 15:3 (July 1934), 253–80; for the controversy over Bayley, see George Clinton and Hugh Hastings (ed.), *Public Papers of George Clinton* 8 (Albany: Oliver A. Quayle, 1904), 265–7; and William Stephens Smith to Henry Knox, 28 October 1783, Gilder Lehrman Collection (no. GLC02437.02719, <http://www.gilderlehrman.org/mweb/search>, accessed March 14, 2014), NYHS; for Richard Bayley's life and career, see James Thacher, *American Medical Biography or, Memoirs of Eminent Physicians who have Flourished in America...* 1 (Boston: Richardson & Lord [et cetera], 1828), 156–68; for the debate on punishing vs. reintegrating Loyalists, see Alexander Hamilton, *A Letter from Phocion to the Considerate Citizens of New York on the Politics of the Day* (New York: Samuel Loudon, 1784), [https://archive.org/details/cihm\\_57335](https://archive.org/details/cihm_57335), accessed March 11, 2014); Isaac Ledyard, *Mentor's reply to Phocion's Letter; With Some Observations on Trade. Addressed to the Citizens of New-York* (New-York, 1784, Eighteenth Century Collections Online, Galegroup, <http://infotrack.galegroup.com>, accessed March 11, 2014); and Alexander Hamilton, *A Second Letter From Phocion To The Considerate Citizens Of New-York, Containing Remarks On Mentor's Reply* (New-York, 1784, Eighteenth-Century Collections Online, Galegroup, accessed March 11, 2014); for Bayley's appointment, see John Jay to Richard Bayley, February 22, 1796, Papers of John Jay Project (ID no.2992).

<sup>62</sup> For the genealogy of the Bayleys, see, "Genealogy," Writings of Elizabeth Ann Seton, [http://via.library.depaul.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?filename=0&article=1008&context=vincenarian\\_ebooks&type=additional,24](http://via.library.depaul.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?filename=0&article=1008&context=vincenarian_ebooks&type=additional,24), accessed July 5, 2013. To trace Joseph Bayley's career, see, "August 30," September 5, 1803, *The Albany Gazette*, 3; "Board of Health," *American Medical & Philosophical Register*, April 1, 1811, 513; "Arrived at the Quarantine Ground Yesterday," *Schoharie Observer* (Schoharie, New York), October 13, 1819; Joseph Bayley, "Report on the Yellow Fever which Prevailed in New York in 1822," *The New York Medical and Physical Journal* 1 (1822), 422; Joseph Bayley, "Facts and Observations that Prevailed at the Quarantine Establishment at Staten Island New York During the Autumn of 1821," *The New York Medical and Physical Journal* 1 (1822),

12; and “Secrets Worth Knowing,” *NYEP*, April 28, 1823; for political background in New York, see Flick, 271–6; and Alexander, *A Political History* (1906), 179. Isaac Pierson to Jeromus Johnson, 2 February 1822, as quoted in Craig Hanyan, Mary L. Hanyan, *DeWitt Clinton and the Rise of the People’s Men* (Montreal: Mc-Gill-Queens University Press, 1996), 28.

<sup>63</sup> Nathaniel Carter and William Stone, *Reports and Proceedings of the Debates of the Convention of 1821 Assembled for the Purpose of Amending the Constitution of the State of New York* (Albany; E and E Hosford, 1821), 479–82 and 543–4. Flick, 276–7. “Secrets Worth Knowing.” Isaac Pierson to Jeromus Johnson, 2 February 1822, as quoted in Craig Hanyan, Mary L. Hanyan, *DeWitt Clinton and the Rise of the People’s Men* (Montreal: Mc-Gill-Queens University Press, 1996), 28.

<sup>64</sup> “Recent Deaths,” *The International Monthly Magazine of Literature, Science and Art* 5 (January–April 1852), 427–8. Philip Hone, Diaries, Reel 6, 28 August 1843; “Report of The Select Committee Appointed by the Legislature of New York to Examine into Frauds Upon Emigrants,” *Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York* 8:250 (1847), 34. [No Title], *The Subterranean* 4, April 24, 1847, 48.

<sup>65</sup> “Legislature of New York: Governor’s Message,” *Niles’ Register*, February 3, 1821, 378. *A Register of Officer and Agents Civil, Military and Naval*, 41–5. *Jones Digest*, 54–5; U. S. Census of 1850, Enumerator Sheet, Town of Castleton, County of Richmond, New York, [http://archive.org/details/us\\_census](http://archive.org/details/us_census).

<sup>66</sup> Townsend (1837), 85. New York (State), *Documents of the Assembly* 3:60 (1846), 83–4 and 252. New York (State), *Documents of the Assembly* 8:250 (1847), 42 and 33–5; Commissioners of Emigration, 31; U. S. Census of 1850, Enumerator Sheet, Town of Castleton, County of Richmond, New York, [http://archive.org/details/us\\_census](http://archive.org/details/us_census).

<sup>67</sup> “The Staten Island Chronicle,” *Hagadorn’s Semi-Weekly Staaten Islander*, February 13, 1856. “Vote for Fremont or be Discharged,” *BDE*, July 30, 1856, 2. Charles W. Leng, and William T. Davis, *Staten Island and its People, a History, 1609–1929* 1 (New York: Lewis Historical Pub. Co., 1929), 260–1. “Testimony Taken Before Judge Metcalfe,” in Executive Committee of Staten Island, 70. Philip Hone, Diaries, Reel 8, 31 March 1850.

<sup>68</sup> Philip Hone, Diaries, Reel 4, 6 June 1840; see also Reel 5, 1 October 1841; Commissioners of Emigration, 31–2.

<sup>69</sup> “An Act to Provide Against Infectious and Pestilential Diseases, passed 30 March 1801,” *Health Laws of New York* (New York: James Cheetham, 1805), 20.

<sup>70</sup> James Farlie to Gelston, 13 February 1806, Gelston Papers, Box 3, Folder 7, p. 23–4; for more on the federal marine hospitals, see Fitzhugh Mullan, *Plagues and Politics: The Story of the United States Public Health Service* (New York: Basic Books, 1989); Bess Furman and Ralph Chester Williams, *A Profile of the United States Public Health Service, 1798–1948* (Washington, DC: Govt. Printing Office, 1973); Robert Straus, *Medical Care for Seamen: The Origin of Public Medical Service in the United States* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1950); and Rao (2012). “Chapter 175: An Act To Provide Against Infectious and Pestilential Diseases,” *Laws of the State of New York* (Albany,

1811), 308–10. Subsequently, the fees varied from time to time as the quarantine laws were amended, until they were repealed in 1849; see, e.g., “Chapter 229: An act to provide against infectious and pestilential diseases,” *Laws of the State of New York*, 42<sup>nd</sup>, 43<sup>rd</sup> and 44<sup>th</sup> sessions 5 (Albany: William Gould & Co., 1821), 219–20; “Chapter 213: An Act to Amend the Revised Statutes in relation to the Marine Hospital and its funds,” *Laws of the State of New York*, 66<sup>th</sup> sess. (Albany: C. Van Benthuyzen, 1843), 284; “Chapter 227: An act in relation to the Marine Hospital and its Funds,” *Laws of the State of New York*, 68<sup>th</sup> sess. (Albany: C. Van Benthuyzen, 1845), 249; and “Chapter 350: An act to amend certain acts concerning passengers coming to the city of New-York,” *Laws of the State of New York*, 72<sup>nd</sup> sess. (Troy: Albert W. Scribner and Albert West, 1849). See fn. 106, below for the funding mechanism that replaced the “head tax” after 1849.

<sup>71</sup> For the size of the budget and surplus at Quarantine, see Cadawaller Colden on behalf of the Board of Managers of the House of Refuge (Society for the Reformation of Juvenile Delinquents in the City of New York), “Memorial to the Honorable Legislature of the State of New York,” in *Documents Relative to the House of Refuge* (New York: M Day, 1832), 177; and “Quarantine,” *Hazard's United States Commercial and Statistical Register* 4 (January–July 1831), 153; see also *Minutes of the Common Council* 19 (1917), April 4, 1831, 590. A more typical inflation conversion using ‘basket of consumer goods’ as a measure of scaling the value of money over time would yield and estimate of \$800,000. Since much of the cost of the facility was in the labor for both operations and the improvement of the physical facility, however, a cost of labor index is used here, as we are measuring the ability of the funds to support patronage jobs and build a new landscape on Staten Island. Calculations are from [measuringworth.com](http://measuringworth.com).

<sup>72</sup> Carter and Stone, 482. “Chapter 14: Of the Public Health,” *Laws of the State of New York, Second Meeting of the 50th sess.*, 2 (Albany: E. Croswell, 1827), 267. *Minutes of the Common Council* 19 (1917), April 4, 1831, 591. “Quarantine,” *New York Medical Gazette* 2:9 (May 1, 1851), 99.

<sup>73</sup> New York (State), *Documents of the Assembly* 8:250 (1847), 41–2. John Pintard to Dr. Richard Davidson, 18 April 1818, in John Pintard and Dorothy C. Barck (ed.), *Letters from John Pintard to His Daughter, Eliza Noel Pintard Davidson, 1816–1833* 1 (New York: Printed for the NYHS, 1940), 118. A supercargo is an agent of a merchant or ship-owner responsible for the commercial operation of the ship, including the buying and selling of cargo during the voyage.

<sup>74</sup> *Laws of New York* (1827), 269. “Chapter 300: An Act Concerning Quarantine, and Regulations in the Nature of Quarantine, at the Port of New York,” *Laws of the State of New York*, 69<sup>th</sup> sess. (Albany: C. Van Benthuyzen, 1846), 395–6. New York (State), *Documents of the Assembly* 8:250 (1847), 41–2. “Arrivals,” *NYTr*, October 12, 1843, 2. New York (State), *Documents of the Assembly* 3:60 (1846), 300. “Chapter 275: An Act Relative to the Public Health in the City of New York,” *Laws of the State of New York*, 73<sup>rd</sup> sess., (Albany: Little & Co., 1850). “Chapter 78,” *Laws of the State of New York*, 75<sup>th</sup> sess., (Albany: Little & Co., 1852), 74.



<sup>75</sup> Idem. Each Annual Report of the Commissioners of Emigration includes the number of patients at the Marine Hospital on Staten Island as of January 1; see, e.g., Commissioners of Emigration, 10, 43, 112 and 177.

<sup>76</sup> Trustees of the Sailors' Snug Harbor, *Copy of the Last Will and Testament of the Late Robert Richard Randall, Esq., of the Act of Incorporation and of other Acts of the Legislature of the State of New York Respecting the Sailors' Snug Harbor, Together with the Names of Persons who have acted as Trustees of the Same – With their By-laws, &c.* (New York: Robert Carter, 1848), 5.

<sup>77</sup> For the shift from a vertical political identity organized around kind of trade and sources of wealth to a society more stratified by class identity, see Wilentz; and Sven Beckert, *The Monied Metropolis: New York City and the Consolidation of the American Bourgeoisie, 1850–1896* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001); for the intersection of New York social reform and the maritime community, see Gilje (1996), 405–14.

<sup>78</sup> For a history of steam ferries in New York Harbor, see Brian J. Cudahy, *Over and Back: The History of Ferryboats in New York Harbor* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1990). John Randel's 1821 map, *The City of New York as Laid Out by the Commissioners with the Surrounding Country*, Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division, Washington, DC, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g3804n.ct001389>, shows early steam ferry routes; for Staten Island as a place for excursions from Manhattan, see ch. 2; for Staten Island as a metropolitan neighborhood of country estates and summer retreats for Manhattan elites, see ch. 3.

<sup>79</sup> For seamen and their families as subjects of the social reformers of the era, see Gilje (2004), 196–227; for the larger contemporary movement to construct asylums, see David J. Rothman, *The Discovery of the Asylum: Social Order and Disorder in the New Republic* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1971); see also Janet Miron, “‘In View of the Knowledge to be Acquired’: Public Visits to New York's Asylums in the Nineteenth Century,” *Clio Medica* 86 (2010), 243–66; for the culture of self-discipline and church attendance in the context of the second great awakening of the 1820s and 1830s, see Paul E. Johnson, *A Shopkeeper's Millennium: Society and Revivals in Rochester, New York, 1815–1837* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978). For the contemporary importance of cultivating and communicating a respectable individual character, see Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women* (1982); for cultural refinement and how its adoption by the growing middle classes helped define class distinctions of respectability that would have excluded much of the city's maritime workforce, see Richard L. Bushman, *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities* (New York: Knopf, 1992); for the kinds of men who joined the merchant marine, and a closer look at the stereotype of the sailor as a reckless, hard-drinking, and semi-dependent subject personified as Jack Tar, as well as the more complex reality of seamen in the era, see Lemish, 371–80; and Gilje (2004), 1–32 and 66–94; and Gilje (1994); for a complication of the Jack Tar stereotype by the later in the century at least among English seamen, see Valerie Burton, “The Myth of Bachelor Jack: Masculinity, Patriarchy, and Seafaring Labour,” in Colin Howell and Richard J. Twomey (eds.), *Jack Tar in History: Essays in the History of Maritime Life and Labour* (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1991), 179–98;

for the complex Anglo-American relationship between the sailor, shipmaster and government which both provided the sailor protections beyond other workers, but also established him as a partly-free, partly-dependent subject, see Rao (2012), 631–4; and Raffety, 51–72; for contemporary articulations of the character and temperament of Jack Tars, see U.S. Congress. House. “Marine Hospitals,” 25th Cong., 2nd sess., 338:2 (January 12, 1838), 380; for Frederick Law Olmsted’s comparison of the similarities between the sailor and the slave, see Olmsted, *The Cotton Kingdom* 1, (New York: Mason Brothers, 1862), 129–30; for a contemporary contrast between gentlemen’s culture and the harsh seafaring culture aboard ship, see Melville (1850), 69–72 and 316–23. Also, Richard Henry Dana, *Two Years Before the Mast: A Personal Narrative* (Boston: Fields, Osgood & Co., 1869), 111–16; for a scholarly look at such seamen’s autobiographies and memoirs, see Myra C. Glenn, *Jack Tar’s Story: the Autobiographies and Memoirs of Sailors in Antebellum America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

<sup>80</sup> “Memorial,” *New York Spectator*, March 18, 1828. New York (State), *Documents of the Assembly* 3:199 (1832), 2; for images of the Seamen’s Retreat, see Gamaliel Hart, “Seamen’s Retreat, Staten Island, New York City,” Object 1930.54, Luce Center, NYHS; “Seamen’s Retreat,” *The Sailor’s Magazine* 10:3 (November 1837), 9; and “Institutions for Sailors in New York,” *The International Magazine*, September 1851, 146; for a brief history of medical care for seamen at the port of New York, see Florence Kavalier and Shirley A. Zavin, “Health Care for Seamen in the Port of New York, Part I: Recognizing the Special Needs of Seamen,” *New York State Journal of Medicine* 92:8 (August 1992), 353–8; and Florence Kavalier and Shirley A. Zavin, “Health Care for Seamen in the Port of New York. Part II: The Rise of the Seaman’s Retreat,” *New York State Journal of Medicine* 92:9 (September 1992), 394–9.

<sup>81</sup> “At a full and respectable meeting of seamen,” *NYEP*, October 14, 1830. “Quarantine Hospital Money,” *The Sailor’s Magazine*, April 1, 1831, 260; see also New York (State), “Report of the Committee to Whom Was Referred the Memorial of the Ship Masters and Others, in the City of New York,” *Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York*, 54th sess., 2:104, (Albany: E. Crosswell, 1831). Seamen’s engagement and awareness of politics was not new; for the politicization of seamen before the 1830s, see Lemish (1968); and Gilje (1996), 414–26; and Gilje (2004), 98–191; for the seaman as a symbol and an active and leading participant in the politics of rights and liberties of workingmen, see Gilje (2004), 228–58; for the changing nature of maritime work, and labor and class relationships between ship-owner, shipmaster, mate and sailors, see Vickers and Walsh, 163–204 and 233–47 and Raffety, esp. 73–120; for shipmaster’s need to reframe their authority as gentlemen in the context of increasing democracy and legal intervention in shipboard discipline, see Raffety, esp. 121–45.

<sup>82</sup> See, e.g., various articles from *The Sailor’s Magazine*, including: “Quarantine Hospital Money,” April 1, 1831, 260; “Hospital Funds,” June 1, 1830, 322; “Quarantine Hospital Money,” March 1, 1830, 221–2; “Quarantine Hospital Money,” February 1, 1831, 182–3; and “Hospital Money,” March 1831, 224–8. While on some level evangelical and paternalistic, the American Seamen’s Friend Society, which published *The Sailor’s Magazine* was also interested in educating seamen and defending their rights; see Gilje

(1996), 406–10; see also *Documents Relative to the House of Refuge*, 176–8, 87, and 306–09; New York (State), *Documents of the Assembly* 2:104 (1831); and *Minutes of the Common Council* 19 (1917), April 4, 1831, 588–93.

<sup>83</sup> “Chapter 234, An Act to Provide for Sick and Disabled Seamen,” *Laws of the State of New York*, 54th sess., 1 (Albany 1831), 273. Under this plan, the Commissioners of Health continued to collect the bulk of the fees for Quarantine; for life of Dr. Townsend and his position on the politics of the Seamen’s Retreat, see, “Obituary Notice of P. S. Townsend, MD,” *New York Journal of Medicine* 1 –New Series (1848), 427–8; Townsend, (1837), 85–7; “Seamen’s Retreat,” *New York American for the Country*, 19:1649, July 14, 1837, 1; and *Minutes of Common Council* 19 (1917), 588–93 and 738.

<sup>84</sup> New York (State), “Chapter 234,” *Laws of New York*, 54th sess., (1831). I’m using James L. Curtis’s purchase of 34 lots at 107th Street and 11th Avenue in Manhattan in 1833 as a comparison, (“New York, Land Records, 1630–1975,” New York County, (<https://familysearch.org>, accessed April 13, 2014), New York, Conveyances 1833, Liber 304, 72; New York (State), *Documents of the Assembly*, 55th sess., 3:199 (1832), 6.

<sup>85</sup> “Obituary Notice of P. S. Townsend, MD,” 427–8. “Seamen’s Meeting,” *New York Commercial Advertiser*, September 21, 1838. Townsend (1837), 85–7. “Seamen’s Retreat,” July 14, 1837, 1. “Hospital Money,” *The Sailor’s Magazine*, April 1, 1836, 243–6; for the political defenders of Morgan and Westervelt see, “Seamen’s Retreat – ‘Flagrant Abuses,’” *NYEP*, September 26, 1838, 2 and “Seaman’s Retreat-Staten Island,” *NYEP*, September 21, 1838, 2.

<sup>86</sup> “Communication from the Comptroller transmitting the sundry reports relating to the investigation of the Seaman’s Fund and Retreat, Marine Hospital, &c. &c.,” *Documents of the Senate of the State of New York*, 63rd sess., 5:214 (Albany: Thurlow Weed, 1840), including Townsend’s allegations on p. 21. “Memorial and Remonstrance of the Trustees of the Seaman’s Retreat, New York Against any Alteration of the Law in Relation to that Institution” *Documents of the Senate of the State of New York*, 63rd sess., 4:111 (Albany: Thurlow Weed, 1840); for the Democratic affiliations of some of the signatories of the “Memorial and Remonstrance, see, e.g., “Seventh Ward,” *NYEP*, March 13, 1838, 2; and “Senatorial Convention,” *NYEP*, October 4, 1842; for Stevens and Townsend’s Whig affiliation, see, “Third Ward,” *New York Commercial Advertiser*, December 11, 1839; and “Third Ward,” *New York Commercial Advertiser*, February 27, 1840. *Report of the Finances and Management of the Seamen’s Retreat...* (1854), 45 and 54–5; see also New York (State), “Chapter 172: An act in relation to the moneys levied by law on masters mates mariners and seamen arriving at the city and port of New York and the disposal of the same by the trustees of the Seamen’s Fund and Retreat,” *Laws of the State of New York*, 77th sess., (Albany: Gould, Banks and Co., 1854), 363.

<sup>87</sup> New York (State), “Report of the committee on charitable and religious societies on the bill from the Assembly relative to sick and disabled seamen,” *Documents of the Senate of the State of New York*, 70th sess., 3:95 (Albany 1847), 7. “Chapter 373: An Act to amend an act entitled An act to provide for sick and disabled seamen,” *Laws of the State of New York*, 70th sess., 2nd meeting (Albany: C. Van Benthuyssen, 1847), 478; see *Report of the Finances and Management of the Seamen’s Retreat* (1854), esp. pg. 4,

which notes the money borrowed from the state and from the individual credit of the Trustees. By 1880, the finances had deteriorated so badly that the Marine Society stepped in to help manage the Retreat. In 1901 active Marine Society members succeeded in getting the federal government to take over the institution, making it part of the National Marine Hospital Service. While the hospital remained a presence in the lives of the city's seamen, the shift in control to Washington undermined the Retreat's metropolitan identity and removed it from New York politics; see, "The Seamen's Retreat," *NYT*, February 27, 1872. "The Seamen's Retreat," *NYT*, October 13, 1873. "The Seamen's Retreat Embarrassed," *NYTr*, April 23, 1875, 1. Marine Society of New York, *Letters Explaining the Acquisition and Sale of the Seamen's Retreat Property at Staten Island* (1903), Marine Society Collection, SUNY Maritime College Archives.

<sup>88</sup> Thomas Moffatt and Seaman's Fund and Retreat, *Annual Report of the Physician in Chief and Auditing Committee for 1862* (New York: J. M. Davis, 1863), 7. "Laying the cornerstone of the Seamen's Retreat," *The Sailor's Magazine*, September 1, 1834, 14; for number of seamen passing through the hospital in various years, see *Report of the Finances and Management of the Seamen's Retreat from its Establishment in 1831 to January 1854*, (New York: John M Elliott, 1854), wx2.an7.s32 1855–61, National Medical Library, Bethesda, MD; e.g., lists of deaths at Seamen's Retreat, see, e.g., "Sailor's Deaths at Seamen's Retreat," *The Sailor's Magazine* 21:1 (September 1848), 19; and "Deaths at the Seamen's Retreat," *The Sailor's Magazine* 11:10 (June 1839), 322.

<sup>89</sup> Trustees of the Sailors' Snug Harbor, *Copy of the Last Will and Testament of the Late Robert Richard Randall, Esq.*, 2–6.

<sup>90</sup> Trustees of the Sailors' Snug Harbor, *Copy of the Last Will and Testament of the Late Robert Richard Randall, Esq.*, 2–14. Trustees of the Sailors' Snug Harbor (1848), 4–7 and 10–14.

<sup>91</sup> Idem. Folpe, 55–60; for a picture of the rural nature of the land east of Greenwich Village as late as the 1830s, see, "Plate 8th: Junction of Broadway and Bowery," in George Melksham Bourne et al., *Bourne views: The Bourne Series of Views of New York City* (New York and London, 1830–1, online image available at: Museum of the City of New York, Object 44.344.13, collections.mcny.org, accessed May 15, 2014); Harris, *Around Washington Square* (2003), 5–6.

<sup>92</sup> Trustees Minutes Book A, February 26, 1823, mark 69–70, Sailors' Snug Harbor Collection, Stephen B. Luce Library Archives, SUNY Maritime College.

<sup>93</sup> Idem.

<sup>94</sup> Trustees Minutes Book A, February 21, 1817, mark 37–9. Trustees Minutes Book A, February 26, 1823, mark 69–70.

<sup>95</sup> Trustees Minutes Book A, February 17, 1830, mark 165–74; July 12, 1830, mark 178; March 1, 1831, mark 185; March 28, 1831, mark 187–8; May 5, 1831, mark 190; May 14, 1831, mark 190–1; and July 5, 1831, mark 192. "Sailors' Snug Harbor," *Sailors' Magazine* 6:61 (September 1833), 1–3.

<sup>96</sup> Trustees Minutes Book A, February 26, 1823, mark 69–70; February 21, 1817, mark 40. "Sailors' Snug Harbor," (September 1833), 1–3.

<sup>97</sup> For both income from the Trustees' Manhattan property and expenditures on Staten Island see Trustees Minutes Books, e.g., Trustees Minutes Book A, October 6, 1806, mark 13; January 31, 1817, mark 37; 1821, mark 60–61; January 31–May 14, 1831, mark 180–90; September 22, 1831, mark 208–9; September 30, 1833, mark 220–4; February 21, 1836, mark 255–8; January 23, 1837, mark 276–8; and Trustees Minutes Book B February 10, 1841, mark 1–2; June 27, 1842, mark 25; January 31, 1845, mark 58–60; March 25, 1850, mark 243–6; December 26, 1854, mark 304–10; and March 7, 1860, mark 362–6; for scale and plans for the asylum, see, e.g., Trustees Minutes Book A, May 14, 1831, 190–1; July 11, 1836, mark 266–8; September 11, 1838, mark 295; May 6, 1839, mark 31–2; May 19, 1839, mark 333; September 9, 1839, mark 335; September 18, 1840, mark 348; and Trustees Minutes Book B, June 11, 1844, mark 46; and March 31, 1845, mark 64; for the number of inmates by the 1850s, see, "Sailors Snug Harbor," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, December 15, 1855, 14 and Trustees Minutes Book B, November 21, 1855, mark 317–19.

<sup>98</sup> For Board discussions about transitions between Governors see, e.g., Trustees Minutes Book C, November 19, 1867, mark 916; and Trustees Minutes Book B, October 11, 1844, mark 53. Though the 1835 legislative proposal was precipitated by the Trustees to allow them to add Trustees that were not ex-officio in order to stabilize the board, they strongly repudiated the bill, as written; see Trustees Minutes Book A, April 20, 1835, mark 240.

<sup>99</sup> "Destitute Children of Seamen," *NYT*, June 4, 1852. Roald Kverdal, *Seamen's Missions: Their Origin and Early Growth* (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1986), 519–20. Society for the Relief of Destitute Children of Seamen, "Seventeenth Annual Report" (1863), *Annual Reports of the Board of Managers of the Society for the Relief of Destitute Children of Seamen* (1847–1969), microform, NYPL, 69–70. "The Mariners Family Asylum," *NYTr*, June 10, 1853. Charles W. Leng and William T. Davis, *Staten Island and Its People: A History, 1609–1929* 2, 594; for a broader analysis of the relationship between female charity and public reform movements from the perspective of gender, see Anne M. Boylan, "Women in Groups: An Analysis of Women's Benevolent Organizations in New York and Boston, 1797–1840," *Journal of American History* 71:3 (January 1984), 497–523; for a closer look at gender in maritime culture and community, see Gilje, (2004), 33–65; Margaret S. Creighton, "American Mariners and the Rites of Manhood, 1830–1870"; Lisa Norling, "The Sentimentalization of American Seafaring: The Case of the New England Whalefishery, 1790–1870"; and Burton, "The Myth of Bachelor Jack," all in Howell and Twomey (eds.), *Jack Tar in History*, 143–98; see also Margaret S. Creighton and Lisa Norling (eds.) *Iron Men, Wooden Women: Gender and Seafaring in the Atlantic world, 1700–1920* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996); for women on the waterfront and in the maritime community of New York, see Gilje (1996), 404–5.

<sup>100</sup> "Report of the Board of Managers" (1847), *Annual Reports of the Board of Managers of the Society for the Relief of Destitute Children of Seamen* (1847–1969), microform, NYPL, 4–5. "Twelfth Annual Report of the Board of Managers of the Society for the Relief of Destitute Children of Seamen" (1858), *Annual Reports . . . Society for the Relief of Destitute Children . . .*, 7. "Fourteenth Annual Report of the Board of Managers of the

Society for the Relief of Destitute Children of Seamen” (1860), *Annual Reports . . . Society for the Relief of Destitute Children . . .*, 6. “The Mariners Family Asylum,” June 10, 1853. The origins of the Mariners Family Association reveals an interest in saving souls as well, see, “Female Bethel Association,” *Sailors Magazine* 5 (May 1833), 283.

<sup>101</sup> “Fourteenth Annual Report . . .,” (1860), *Annual Reports . . . Society for the Relief of Destitute Children . . .*, 5–6.

<sup>102</sup> Belden, 102. “Memorial of the board of counsellors of the Mariners Family Industrial Society,” *Documents of the Senate of the State of New York*, 77th sess., 2:73 (Albany: Van Benthuyssen, 1854), 2. “*The Old Ladies Home as a Sailor's Delight*,” paper presented by Cece Saunders, Historical Perspectives, Inc. at the Staten Island 350 Conference, College of Staten Island (CUNY), 2010. “Mariners Family Industrial Society,” *The Sailor's Magazine* 20:11 (July 1848), 351.

<sup>103</sup> Kverdal, 519–20. “Report of the Board of Managers” (1847), *Annual Reports . . . Society for the Relief of Destitute Children . . .*, 1–2. “Female Bethel Association,” *Sailors Magazine* 5 (May 1833), 283.

<sup>104</sup> Trustees Minutes Book B, July 15, 1850, mark 248; September 30, 1850, mark 251; December 29, 1851, mark 261; September 27, 1852, mark 274; December 6, 1858, mark 348–9; December 29, 1862, mark 385; September 28, 1868, mark 28; June 27, mark 87; April 27, 1874, mark 185; and March 26, 1877, mark 252.

<sup>105</sup> “The Mariners’ Family Asylum,” *NYTr*, June 10, 1853, 7. “Memorial of the Board of Counselors of the Mariners Family Industrial Society,” *Documents of the Senate of the State of New York*, 77th sess., 2:73 (Albany: Van Benthuyssen, 1854), 1–6. “Chapter 293: An Act to incorporate the Mariners Family Industrial Society of the port of New York,” and “Chapter 418: An Act to amend an act entitled, ‘An act to provide for sick and disabled seamen,’” *Laws of the State of New York*, 72nd sess., (Troy: Albert W. Scribner, 1849). “Chapter 52: An Act to amend the act entitled, ‘An act to provide for sick and disabled seamen,’” *Laws of the State of New York*, 74th sess., (Albany: C. Van Benthuyssen, 1851). “Chapter 172...,” *Laws of New York*, 77th sess., (1854), 363.

<sup>106</sup> Commissioners of Emigration. *Annual Reports of the Commissioners of Emigration of the State of New York from the Organization of the Commission, May 5, 1847, to 1860* (New York: [Commissioners of Emigration], 1861), Appendix [of laws concerning the Commissioners] 1–10; for shipmasters’ challenges to the port fees, see, e.g., *Report of the Finances and Management of the Seamen's Retreat...* (1854), 7; for the Passenger Cases, see *Smith v Turner* and *Norris v Boston*, 48 U.S. 283 (1849). The state passed new legislation to get around the ruling, requiring shipmasters post bond for passengers to ensure they didn’t fall onto the public dole or pay \$1.50 per passenger to release the bond, obviously preferring the latter. This scheme remained legal until 1875, when it too was deemed unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in 92 US 259; see Senate, *Abstracts of Reports of the Immigration Commission*, 61st Cong., 3rd sess., Document 747, 567–8; for the revenue sources of the Commissioners of Emigration, see the *Annual Reports of the Commissioners of Emigration*.

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<sup>107</sup> For background and discussion of the removal of Quarantine from Staten Island in the 1840s and 50s see New York (State), *Documents of the Assembly* 2:60 (1849); and New York (State), "Report of the Commissioners Relative to the Removal of the Quarantine Station," *Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York*, 81st sess., 3:69 (Albany: C. Van Benthuysen, 1858); see also the collection of documents published by a committee of Staten Islanders to defend their actions: Executive Committee of Staten Island, *Facts and Documents Bearing Upon the Legal and Moral Question Connected with the Recent Destruction of the Quarantine Buildings on Staten Island* (New York: Wm. C. Bryant & Co., 1858).

<sup>108</sup> *Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York*, 81st sess., 3:69 (1858); see also Commissioners of Emigration, 413–6; and Executive Committee of Staten Island (1858). Kathryn Stephenson, "The Quarantine War: The Burning of the New York Marine Hospital in 1858," *Public Health Reports* 119, January–February 2004, 82; for the political tensions of state versus local control, see Burrows and Wallace, 835–41; for the context of the (at times, violent) public nature of politics in the city across different segments of society, see Mary P. Ryan, *Civic Wars: Democracy and Public Life in the American City during the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 21–181; and J. T. Headley, *The Great Riots of New York, 1712 to 1873, including a full and complete account of the four days' draft riot of 1863* (New York: E. B. Treat, 1873).

## CHAPTER TWO

### The Metropolitan Real Estate Frontier

The point of land thus occupied combines advantages, which, it is believed, are unrivaled in this country. Added to its proximity to the great commercial mart of the western hemisphere, it possesses a beauty of location, extent of prospect and salubrity of climate, that will in vain be sought elsewhere. – New Brighton Association<sup>1</sup>

In 1818, Daniel D. Tompkins, Vice President of the United States, stood in front of his 40-room Staten Island hilltop mansion and gazed out over his Island empire. While his peers promoted the Cumberland Road and the Erie Canal to reach into the American west and connect remote communities to the economic, social, and political order of the eastern seaboard, Tompkins sought to do the same at the metropolitan frontier, on Staten Island. From his hilltop estate, Tompkins would have seen Tompkinsville, a little suburban village he had surveyed for people from the city, and to which they might bring their urbane interests and refinement. He did not choose some distant country setting for Tompkinsville, but rather the land he owned alongside the Quarantine Station; the beachhead of the maritime metropolis on Staten Island. To connect Tompkinsville with Manhattan, Tompkins contracted with Noah Brown, one of the city's leading shipbuilders, to construct the *Nautilus*, one of the first steamboats in the harbor. At the Tompkinsville dock, Tompkins could have seen the first coach of the new Post Chaise Line drive off the *Nautilus* and onto the Richmond Turnpike on its way to Philadelphia, connecting that great city with Manhattan for the first time “in less than one day.” By integrating the Richmond Turnpike Company with his ferry, Tompkins had transformed a local effort to build a road across the Island into a metropolitan project.<sup>2</sup>



In 1836, nearly twenty years later, Thomas E. Davis stood in front of the Belmont Hotel as the steamboat from Manhattan approached the 500 acres of Staten Island farms, meadows and wooded hills he reimagined as New Brighton. Much of it had once been part of Tompkins' estate. New Brighton was to be a new kind of place: a metropolitan resort village, a fashionable retreat from the city, as its British namesake or like Saratoga. New Brighton, however, would be within a half-hour steamboat ride of Manhattan. Inside the Belmont Hotel, across from the dock, one of New York's best innkeepers had laid out a splendid ball for the Manhattan's elites. Davis and his co-investors in the New Brighton Association had invited them to the Island to sell the idea of an accessible resort village as an extension of their metropolitan lives. In doing so, Davis and the Association sought to sell the thousands of gridded lots at New Brighton as well.<sup>3</sup>

To understand how Staten Island helped form a regional New York, this chapter will explore the Island's construction as the frontier of metropolitan real estate. The waves of speculative interest in real estate that accompanied the economic booms of the 1810s and 1830s were historical moments that made Staten Island visible as land for an expanding metropolis. As will be discussed, land on Staten Island, like the land becoming available and accessible in the American west, held potential for spectacular visions and great wealth for men like Tompkins and Davis. In the 1810s, Tompkins engaged Staten Island in a larger national project connecting peripheral places with centers like New York through what his contemporaries celebrated as "internal improvements." Together, Tompkinsville, the *Nautilus* and the Richmond Turnpike, all coming together at the Quarantine, laid the foundation for Staten Island becoming the southern frontier of a regional New York.<sup>4</sup>

In the 1830s, amidst the boom in land prices and development in Manhattan, Davis and others among New York's biggest speculators and developers built on Tompkins' earlier foundation, making Staten Island part of a new regional market in real estate. In Manhattan, Davis had developed St. Mark's Place along with other prominent projects, and according to Joseph Alfred Scoville, chronicler of New York's elite in the nineteenth century, was on par with John Jacob Astor and Alexander T. Stewart as one of the city's greatest landowners and developers. Peter A. Stuyvesant, a descendant of New York's old Dutch governor, Joseph L. Joseph, the Rothschild's New York agent, and James L. Curtis, who was accumulating hundreds of acres of the Upper West Side of Manhattan, among other prominent financiers and developers joined with Davis to form the New Brighton Association. Another set of wealthy New York businessmen and speculators, including Moulton Bullock, Lewis Lyman and Daniel Low, formed the Staten Island Association to buy up a thousand acres of farmland at the Narrows and create Clifton, another large-scale real estate speculation. Both associations were joint stock companies, enabling the initial investors to pool capital, to make it easier to bring in new investors and to capture the increasing value of the land by trading stock.<sup>5</sup>

In order to further understand Staten Island's place within the emerging context of a regional market in real estate, the next part of the chapter explores the value of land at the metropolitan periphery. More than anything else, Manhattanites valued land for its healthfulness. As historian Elizabeth Blackmar has noted, housing in Manhattan "was above all else a market in health." New Yorkers' fears surrounding health extended to related urban desires for order and leisure. Though their visions for Staten Island differed, both Tompkins and the Association men capitalized on the meaning of

countryside near to the city by revaluing Staten Island land in terms of these fears and desires of people living in the city. As they presented Staten Island land to urban buyers for sale, Tompkins and the men of the Associations tied the Island's value to the New York real estate market.<sup>6</sup>

The formula Tompkins and the Association men devised for making Staten Island land into metropolitan real estate consisted of three parts, each of which will be discussed in greater detail. First, they applied the urban grid form to Staten Island farms, meadows and forest to make the land into a salable commodity, legible to urban buyers. Second, they mobilized the steamboat to physically connect their Staten Island land to Manhattan, making it reliably and quickly accessible from the city. Third they marketed their land as distinct places in contrast to urban Manhattan, yet desirable for the residence and resort of metropolitan men and families.

The speculative moments of the 1810s and 1830s both ended abruptly, with the Panic of 1819 and the Panic of 1837, respectively. The New Brighton and Staten Island Associations, like Tompkinsville before them, were more than merely attempts to make their investors rich from quick profits on the sale of land. Tompkins and the men of the Associations built their homes and lives into the speculative visions they had for Staten Island, as will be shown. The villas and estates they built, the commodified real estate they formulated, the steamboat links they made, and the ideas they promoted of country living within the geography of metropolitan life survived. Like the crises of yellow fever and the War of 1812, the real estate moments left behind infrastructure and ideas that made Staten Island into part of a regional metropolis.

## Frontier Real Estate

Staten Island captured the interest of real estate speculators and developers in the early nineteenth century, in much the same way as western land did. By the 1830s, Manhattan real estate speculators and developers made Staten Island and the land east of Greenwich Village into the southern and northern frontiers of a new metropolitan region. Both western land and land at the metropolitan periphery held new possibilities for Americans struggling with the decline of eastern farms and the deteriorating environmental and social structures in the growing cities.

Real estate speculation was not merely a gamble; it was a vision. Sarah Luria, scholar of English and urban places, defines “speculation” at the intersection of “politics, literature, architecture and urban planning.” Luria suggests that while the term underwent a “semantic revolution” in the early republic from its earlier meaning of “deep philosophical thought” to “risky strategy of financial investment,” speculation was really about articulating, selling and physically manifesting a transformative vision for the land. Speculators may have been interested in making money, but they did so by reimagining and promoting land into new places with new value for a new set of users and uses. In the new real estate market, western land generated wealth not merely because of its rich soil, but also because of the desires that speculators and developers attached to it.<sup>7</sup>

In the west as well as at the metropolitan frontier, speculators invested the land with meaning by projecting their expectations. Speculators in western lands in Ohio, Illinois, Texas and Mississippi conjured a fantasy of ideal soil and natural features that promised settlers agricultural abundance, access to markets for farm produce or new places destined to become great market centers themselves. They were not merely selling

land; they were selling the restoration of a sense of self-sufficient independence that was eroding on eastern farms. At the metropolitan frontier on Staten Island, real estate men bought and sold land valued by the dreams and desires of more urban buyers: a restoration of health and order, increasingly elusive in the dense and cacophonous environment in the city. Both the promise of the American West and the promise of Staten Island were rooted in access to land.<sup>8</sup>

The men behind New Brighton and Clifton actively speculated and developed western land as well as land at the metropolitan frontier in Manhattan before (and in many cases after) they turned to Staten Island. Two years before joining with Moulton Bullock and Oliver Ogden to form the Staten Island Association, Daniel Low helped form the Mississippi and Arkansas Land Company to buy 40,000 acres of western land. Ogden had been associated with the Holland Land Company, which controlled millions of acres of western New York and western Pennsylvania. Bullock and his partner, Lewis Lyman financed immigration to Canada, feeding the land companies there with settlers. Davis, and several of his partners in Staten Island's New Brighton, bought up western land as well, particularly in Texas.<sup>9</sup>

In Manhattan, Davis developed land at the city's northern frontier, east of Greenwich Village. In 1836, Philip Hone, a prominent Manhattan socialite and politico, moved to the area east of Greenwich Village, noting in his diary that the area had quite recently been "orchards, cornfields, or morasses a pretty smart distance from town . . . a journey to which was formerly an affair of some moment." It had recently become, however, "the most fashionable quarter of New York." Until the early 1830s, much of the land east of Greenwich Village looked like Staten Island: farms, woodland, meadows,

and a few clusters of buildings. With support of major landowners, like Nicholas W. Stuyvesant, and important investors, like Joseph L. Joseph, Davis and his peers set a model for reshaping the city's northern frontier. Davis built Carroll Place (now part of Bleecker St.) and St. Mark's Place, with its signature setbacks from the street. James B. Murray pioneered the idea of rows of similar houses along the new Washington Square. Curtis spent over \$100,000 buying lots and acres all over Manhattan's west side. William J. Staples bought land both east of Greenwich Village and more extensively near the future 95th Street, along the proposed route of the new Harlem Rail Road. By 1836, Murray, Curtis, the sons of Nicholas W. Stuyvesant (Nicholas W., Jr. and Peter A.), and Joseph along with a number of their friends and business partners all joined Davis, investing in land on Staten Island. Staples partnered with Minthorne Tompkins, son of Daniel D. Tompkins, to do the same.<sup>10</sup>

Whether as large-scale rentiers, sellers of subdivided property, or smaller scale owners and speculators, Manhattanites generated tremendous wealth from the reorganization from farms and family estates at the edge of the city to urban grids of blocks and lots. Land at the metropolitan frontier was worth more to meet the needs and desires of the urbanite than as farmland. In the decades before 1800, Henry Rutgers, James DeLancey, Nicholas Bayard and Trinity Church all began to grid their properties at the city's northern edge in Manhattan for a more urban land market. By 1811, the Commissioners for Laying out Streets and Roads hired John Randel, Jr., to survey an audacious street grid covering virtually all of Manhattan Island, the foundation of New York's standardized real estate market. If reorganization of Manhattan farmland at the

northern edge of the city for a metropolitan real estate market could turn land into gold, why not do the same with land at the southern edge, across the harbor on Staten Island?<sup>11</sup>

Land on Staten Island was more available than land at the frontier within Manhattan. As historian Blackmar has shown, Manhattan land was controlled by a small elite class of landlords and rentiers, often from families who had controlled large swaths of the Island for generations. Tompkins in the 1810s, and Davis in the 1830s both realized that on Staten Island they could control land on a similar scale as the great Manhattan estate owners like the Stuyvesants. Meanwhile, the heirs of Nicholas W. Stuyvesant faced the complexities of their father's will and heavy assessments from the city that threatened their control over the family's Manhattan estate in the 1830s. Outside city limits, on Staten Island, they would have greater control.<sup>12</sup>

The re-valuing of Staten Island land facing the harbor in the 1830s is evident in the contrast between the story of the Island's Houseman Farm at the beginning of the decade and the Fountain Farm later in the decade. In 1831, the Snug Harbor Trustees purchased the Houseman farm on Staten Island for their asylum to serve "decrepit and worn out sailors" because it was outside the city's real estate market. In contrast, they understood the Manhattan farm entrusted to them by Captain Robert Richard Randall in terms of money and market transactions. Situating the asylum to the northeast of what would soon become Washington Square, argued the Trustees, would at once, "materially encroach on the plot of Twenty One Acres, and diminish...the number of Building lots [as well as] deprecate their value, especially of those fronting the Hospital as also the next range thereon, whereby the revenue would likewise be diminished." Separating the asylum from market potential of its Manhattan landed estate, the Trustees believed,

would benefit both. The Trustee's decision to locate the Snug Harbor asylum on Staten Island helped secure Washington Square's future as an elite residential district. Unlike Randall, who had expected Snug Harbor to be built on his Manhattan property, the Trustees distinguished between marketable real estate and land as a place to use. For the Trustees the land east of Greenwich Village at the northern frontier of the metropolis was the former. The land on Staten Island was the latter.<sup>13</sup>

By 1837, a Manhattan Chancery Court saw Staten Island land differently, ruling that the Fountain Farm was very much part of the metropolitan real estate market. The master of the court was charged with using the Fountain land to protect the interests of the widow Eliza and her five children when Abraham Fountain died. He ruled that the farm presented "eligible sites for country residences" for metropolitan gentlemen and was too valuable to be used in any other way. If sold into the metropolitan real estate market, he ordered "the proceeds invested for [the Fountain family's] benefit would yield a much greater income than could be derived by them from the land while cultivated as a farm." It was the same logic the Trustees of Snug Harbor had applied to their Manhattan land: the real estate marketplace could generate cash wealth, which could in turn be applied to the needs of the landowner. Also like the Trustees, the court recognized that the "enhanced value" of the land in the real estate market was based on its desirability to urban buyers. Staten Island land was becoming a metropolitan real estate commodity.<sup>14</sup>

Around the same time, the New Brighton and Staten Island Associations used the joint stock model to make Staten Island land into a real estate commodity on a new scale. Speculators in western land had long used the joint stock model to pool capital and share risk. Such companies made frontier land into tradable financial paper. With \$600,000 in



real estate assets a mere twenty minutes from Manhattan by steamboat ferry, buying shares in the New Brighton Association looked like an attractive liquid investment in metropolitan real estate. The Association's Manhattan office at 8 Wall Street gave the company a presence in the city and a place from which to facilitate land transactions and other business. The deal excited other wealthy investors, who quickly put together the Staten Island Association to pool their own investments in Staten Island land. In a series of large purchases, Daniel Low, Moulton Bullock and Oliver Ogden brought hundreds of acres out of the hands of Staten Island farm families and brought it into the metropolitan real estate market. They imagined Clifton as a much larger area of blocks and lots, covering 1,100 acres.<sup>15</sup>

The stock of the Associations were considered "fancy stock," a term for speculative stock whose value could not be truly ascertained. It was an uncomfortable, yet exciting designation for people of the time, who expected their stock investments should be based on some intrinsic value rather than simply determined by what buyers were willing to pay for commodified land in the marketplace. In one example, Daniel Low purchased two farms near the Narrows for \$16,000 and contributed them to the capital of the Staten Island Association for \$85,000. Henry Seaman, who pledged to purchase 250 shares, claimed this was fraud. Looked at another way, the shift in value was from what the land was worth in the traditional rural market to its value in terms of metropolitan desirability. Critics who derided the Associations as speculative "fancy stocks," failed to see that the value of both agricultural produce and metropolitan desires for suburban lots with their promise of health, order, leisure and status were determined in the marketplace. They also failed to see that the Associations did add value to the

land, mobilizing the urban grid, the steamboat, and connecting Staten Island land with metropolitan meaning through their marketing efforts.<sup>16</sup>

“Farms are for sale all around...and so, I suppose men are for purchase,” wrote Henry David Thoreau of Staten Island in 1843. Because of the efforts of the men of the Associations, the meaning and value of land on Staten Island had shifted from rural homesteads of citizen farmers to a commodity in the metropolitan marketplace. The new market that was created then ploughed under the rural republican ideal that fused the farmer, his land, his family, and independent citizen-hood. Speculators and developers made land at the metropolitan frontier a new opportunity to generate wealth, infinitely transferrable in the marketplace.<sup>17</sup>

### **Health, Order and the Value of Metropolitan Real Estate**

In the early nineteenth century, the value of Staten Island land held new potential because of the anxieties and desires of people in the growing and changing metropolis nearby. Health in particular shaped land value in and around New York. “In the early decades of the nineteenth century,” Blackmar has written, “Manhattan’s housing market developed above all else as a market in health.” In a city increasingly plagued with disorder, sensory overload, and disease, New Yorkers valued order, pleasurable relief, and healthfulness –and they looked to the metropolitan periphery to find it.<sup>18</sup>

When Tompkins arrived in Manhattan in the early 1790s to attend Columbia College there were about 33,000 people living there. In the eighteenth century, New Yorkers generally knew each other. They lived integrated home and work lives organized around a patriarchal family structure. By the 1830s, when Davis and the men

of the Associations conceived of New Brighton and Clifton, over 200,000 people crowded into Manhattan, turning the city into a community of strangers. The density, proximity and activity of people, animals and goods generated a cacophony of sights, sounds and smells. Patriarchal social order eroded as wage work increasingly replaced the system of apprentices and journeymen and workers moved out of their masters homes into boarding houses for rent. The bifurcation of work and home life extended to the elites of the city as well. They too sought a retreat from the chaos and increasing unpleasantness of the city environment.<sup>19</sup>

New Yorkers conflated health, social order and the physical order of the city, each of which was thought of in terms of disease. Like most Americans, urban New Yorkers lost children and other family and friends regularly to disease. Historian Gretchen Condran argues epidemic disease had a much greater impact on the cultural psychology and politics of the city than suggested by actual death rates. The physical health of family members was a frequent topic of conversation and correspondence. Amidst limited and often flawed medical knowledge, growing urban disorder and physical disease seemed related, making health seem ever more precarious. No longer confident in the inherent healthfulness of their city, New Yorkers looked beyond their urban environment to a larger geography.<sup>20</sup>

Manhattanites began to consider health in spatial terms, assigning healthful and diseased associations with different parts of the city and beyond. In Manhattan itself, the chaotic waterfront dock area and a damp part of Manhattan, built on landfill became known as “the Yellow Fever District.” The refined homes of the city’s elite west of Broadway were seen as immune from the disease, at least until the 1822 yellow fever

epidemic proved otherwise. When the city's Common Council approached the State in 1807 to lay out a new street plan for Manhattan, they specifically requested a new urban pattern of "regularity and order... in particular to promote the health of the City."

Beyond the urban form of their city, New Yorkers assigned meaning to near and accessible country places. Public health institutions underscored the role of Staten Island and the land around Greenwich Village in the metropolitan geography of health and disease. Since 1799, Staten Island was known among New Yorkers as the location of the port's Quarantine Station. Also in the 1790s, the city laid out its potter's field, initially established for Yellow Fever victims, at what is now Washington Square. The State chose Staten Island and the land east of Greenwich Village in part because each was safely outside the city. New Yorkers, in addition, understood Staten Island's breezy hillsides and the open places around Greenwich Village to be inherently healthful. Many believed such places could be counted on to dispel miasmas, the dangerous atmospheric poisons that infected the environment and caused disease.<sup>21</sup>

Speculators capitalized on New Yorkers' desire for social, moral and physical health to multiply the value of places perceived as salubrious by bringing them into the metropolitan real estate market. Manhattanites in the early nineteenth century knew Staten Island and Greenwich Village as healthful country refuges at the edges of the city. During the Yellow Fever epidemics, refugees from the city went to Greenwich Village, Staten Island and other similar places around the harbor. They went for personal health too. In 1818, Governor Clinton himself went down to Staten Island, "for the purpose of recruiting, if possible, Mrs. Clintons health." Healthfulness marked both Greenwich Village and Staten Island as places valuable to the metropolis.<sup>22</sup>

## **The Foundations of the Metropolitan Real Estate Market**

The New York metropolitan real estate market of the early nineteenth century emerged atop three foundations: The urban grid of blocks and lots; the steamboat; and the differentiation and intentional marketing of specific parcels of land into distinct and desirable places. By virtue of the fact that developers like Tompkins and Davis decided to stake a claim for the land on Staten Island and create a commodity from the land made places like Tompkinsville and New Brighton come to be. This is to say, without the deliberate making of the real estate commodity via this tripartite formula –none of these locations would have come to exist as places within the metropolitan region. The grid reorganized land into a commodity form that facilitated marketplace trading and pricing. The steamboat offered opportunities to extend the emerging market in Manhattan real estate around the harbor. The marketing of land as places, combined with the first two, was a conscious effort by landowners and developers to revalue their land in terms of metropolitan legibility and desire. In the 1810s, Tompkins was the first to bring the grid-steamboat-marketing combination to Staten Island. Davis and his cohort of land investors revived the formula for New Brighton in the 1830s, opening up the Staten Island harborfront to the metropolitan real estate market on a large scale. Each of the three components can be traced back to 1807.

### ***The Grid***

In 1807, at the request of the city, the state legislature formed the Commissioners of Streets and Roads in the City of New York. Surveyor John Randel Jr., began work on

the grid plan for Manhattan Island the following year. The choice of a grid plan was not surprising. According to urban and architectural historian Dell Upton, Americans revived the grid form a decade or so earlier, repurposing it to their ideas of republican society through what he calls the “republican spatial imagination.” In the cities, he argues, this early American mapping of social phenomena onto spatial schema, took the form of the grid – a platform for a more democratic social order that allowed for the articulation and differentiation of self-made individuals interlocked in a common project. The plan New York’s Street Commissioners approved in 1811, plotted a unified order for the city, an optimistic framework for what they imagined as “centuries” of growth, improvement and opportunity.<sup>23</sup>

Gridded streets facilitated sorting metropolitan land into standard lots. The city’s new grid covered nearly all of Manhattan Island with the potential for a seemingly endless number of 25x100 foot lots. It was the ultimate commodification of land, reimagining the Island’s estates, farms, marshes and woodlands as marketable real estate parcels. The Commissioners recognized the pressures of rapid growth of the city and the practical need for houses “cheap to build,” and “convenient to live in.” Randel himself later wrote that the plan greatly facilitated, “*buying, selling, and improving* real estate.” Such “improvement” imbued the land with a powerful sense that it inherently generated wealth.<sup>24</sup>

As a young man, Tompkins watched the Manhattan farms of Nicholas Bayard, Henry Rutgers, and the DeLancey family, which were each beyond the old colonial city limits, become gridded cityscapes. As Manhattan farm estates became urban lots they generated enormous wealth for their owners, sometimes through sale, but more often in

rents. According to Blackmar, the assessed value of Manhattan real estate grew over 700% between the time Tompkins graduated from college in the mid-1790s and the time he was buying Staten Island land in 1814.<sup>25</sup>

Tompkins was also politically ambitious. A landed estate might validate him as a peer of the Livingstons and Clintons, and powerful national leaders like Jefferson and Madison. He was, however, merely the son of a small, though politically active, freehold farmer from Westchester County. To achieve the wealth to support his ambitions, he turned to the real estate market at the metropolitan frontier, first in Manhattan. When he married Hannah Minthorne, Tompkins had entered into a family with a minor landed estate in Manhattan. When Hannah's grandfather died (documented as having occurred before 1765), his executors divided the family estate along the Bowery, leaving Tompkins' new father-in-law, Mangle with 20 acres. While the acreage of the Tompkins family homestead in Westchester was likely larger, Minthorne's land was just north of the old DeLancey estate in Manhattan, and held the transformative potential of conversion to gridded lots in the metropolitan market.<sup>26</sup>

Tompkins watched as his new aunts and uncles divided much of their portions of the inherited Manhattan land into small parcels and sold them off. Transactions like these converted Manhattan estates and farms from a passive, inherited store of wealth to a dynamic source of wealth, enabling greater engagement with the expanding metropolitan consumer marketplace of goods and services. Tompkins bought several of his aunt's lots. A few years later, he bought 4 acres of the Mann estate, a short ways up the Bowery Road. In Manhattan though, Tompkins could not possibly buy enough land to have a country estate that would mark him a peer of the leading men of the state and the nation.

Away from Manhattan, however, real estate would not have the potential to generate the wealth that would support such a status. On Staten Island, perhaps could potentially have both.<sup>27</sup>

Beginning in 1815, Tompkins brought the urban grid to Staten Island. He was not the first on the Island to divide his property into town-size lots, but he was the first to imagine mirroring the Manhattan grid on Staten Island on the scale of hundreds of lots. Between 1815 and 1821, Tompkins hired surveyors to map out rectilinear streets and lots on the portion of his land adjacent to Quarantine, first on the south side, next to the steamboat dock, and then on the north side. He advertised 300 lots in two separate offerings, selling some for as much as \$300, more than he had paid for his aunt's lots in Manhattan 15 years earlier. For Tompkins the grid was an opportunity to sell lots as part of a larger plan of improvements for Staten Island that included his steamboat, turnpike and country estate. Twenty years later, for the men of the Associations, ordering a vast area on Staten Island for the metropolitan real estate market was at the core of their entire project.<sup>28</sup>

In the 1830s, the men of the Associations along with a number of small-scale investors laid out Staten Island land at the southern frontier of the metropolis in a manner similarly audacious to the Commissioners' Plan for Manhattan's northern frontier. Together, the maps for New Brighton and Clifton covered 1,500 acres of Staten Island with gridded streets, which the Associations began to survey into standard 25x100 Manhattan-sized lots, an area more than twice the size of the city of Brooklyn at the time, and larger than the entire part of Manhattan that might have been called "city" ten years earlier. The Staten Island Association planned standard 60 foot wide streets at Clifton,



the same as Manhattan, with the major thoroughfares, New York Avenue and Richmond Avenue, ten and twenty feet wider, respectively. They even extended the urban order of Clifton on their map to land that they did not own, but presumably either expected to own or believed would come to take the same gridded form. The total potential envisioned on the New Brighton and Clifton maps would be nearly 28,000 lots. Other real estate investors planned smaller projects along the shore adjacent to New Brighton, Clifton and Tompkinsville, covering scores of additional Staten Island acres with gridded streets and lots.<sup>29</sup>

While the men of the Associations did not imagine a different underlying organization of the land than the Manhattan grid, they did expect a different landscape to emerge at New Brighton and Clifton than the more urban landscape east of Greenwich Village. As the Association sold multiple adjacent lots to many of the same buyers purchasing near Greenwich Village, including to themselves, they expected and helped create a landscape of country villas and cottages on Staten Island, albeit on gridded streets. As the Manhattan grid promised future subdivision of such estates, so too, the plans of New Brighton and Clifton might facilitate the sale of individual lots and the wealth that a possible future transition to cityscape promised. For some critics, like the editors of the *New-York Mirror*, the grid seemed to guarantee a more urban future, where Manhattan-sized “lots of twenty five feet by a hundred” would “disfigure [the Island] with continuous rows of brick houses just the width of their lots.” The newspaper asked rhetorically, “Who wants a country place like those offered at Clifton, New Brighton, Ravenswood, Verplanck or any of those mongrel Cockney contrivances which affect to be both town and country and are got up like outer wards to our great city?” Either way,

as country estates or future urban lots, the gridding of New Brighton and Clifton enabled developers to include Staten Island in the metropolitan real estate market.<sup>30</sup>

Unlike in Manhattan, on Staten Island the landowning Associations controlled the plan and sought to differentiate parcels to increase their value. In Manhattan, the Common Council had called in the state commission to bypass the cacophony of demands by landowners each with their own interest in raising the value of their particular parcels. As a result, Manhattan street commissioners created a grid democratic by design, ignoring topography and purposefully avoiding any cues as to differentiated uses of the land or hierarchy among parcels. The New Brighton Association, in contrast, deliberately terraced their Staten Island village, bending the grid along the hillside facing the harbor, taking advantage of differentiated topography and pricing lots accordingly. They asked more for the lots higher up the hill or down along the waterfront, with the best view of the harbor. Other New Brighton streets followed local waterways, perhaps recognizing the enormous costs and difficulties of large scale grading and leveling demanded by the Manhattan grid plan.<sup>31</sup>

The intent to differentiate value of Staten Island lots was evident in the sales process for New Brighton and the marketing of Clifton. The New Brighton Directors established a price list that set different minimums for lots on different parts of the property. The hills and shoreline had value in a metropolitan real estate because they promised healthfulness and aesthetic views. At the initial sale in 1836, lots on the prime tiered hillside village sold for \$500. Further west the price was about \$350 per lot. Down in the wetter, less desirable land between the two, fewer lots sold, and at lower prices. Similarly, the Staten Island Association used the grid form to divide Clifton into

two zones, separated by New York Avenue. Clifton's investors recognized that waterfront property facing the harbor also held value for Manhattan buyers interested in using the land for commercial and industrial purposes. To the east, along the harbor, they defined the property in terms of, "desirable sites for Warehouses and Manufacturing Establishments;" to the west and south, "situations for villas."<sup>32</sup>

Building out the street plan in New Brighton and Clifton also differed from Manhattan because the land was owner-controlled. In Manhattan, the city government determined when streets would be opened, assessing costs to landowners, and generally extending the grid northward in consecutive sections over time. The New Brighton Association tried to establish for itself some of the same powers, but also the flexibility to change it. Through deed covenants, the Association legally required every purchaser of lots to "grade, pitch, regulate and pave in proper and sufficient manner the street to the center thereof in front of the premises...according to the plan ...established by the persons who may for the time being be the directors of the New Brighton Association." If the lot owner failed to do so, the Association retained the right to build the street and charge them the cost. The Staten Island Association was not nearly so sophisticated. It did not codify a process for building out the grid, but did ensure the future grid structure by specifying the size and location of key streets in the trust deed that transferred the property to their sales agents.<sup>33</sup>

Unlike in Manhattan, the Associations built their streets in a particular way in order to raise their property value. For example, the Staten Island Association first built New York Avenue nearly its entire length in order to open a spine through the entire property. It stretched a mile and a half from "near the Sailor's Retreat to the Sea Shore."

Next, the Association began the perpendicular Richmond Avenue, with, “*an average distance of about 1300 feet* from the Beach, upon an elevation commanding the most extensive Sea view.” The New Brighton Association began by widening and paving the old shore road between the Quarantine Station and the Sailors’ Snug Harbor, which became Richmond Terrace. Davis designed Richmond Terrace as a grand metropolitan space, facing and mirroring the popular Battery promenade in Manhattan. To ensure the maintenance of the Terrace to metropolitan standards, the Association ruled that all the property of New Brighton would be assessed a share of the cost. To ensure the unbroken view of harbor and city, the Association pledged that no structure would be built on the waterside of the Terrace. Many years later, a legal complaint which sought to protect the common status of the shorefront and protected views from the Terrace recognized that, “the design and intention of the association to keep and reserve [the Terrace] ... entered very especially into the value of the lots situated upon the terrace and much enhanced the price.” For the Associations, the street grids at New Brighton and Clifton more than ordered the land into a mass of tradable commodities. The new grids were part of a project to transform the value of the land for a metropolitan marketplace.<sup>34</sup>

### ***The Steamboat***

In 1807, Robert Fulton successfully tested his steamboat, *Clermont*. It is safe to assume that Tompkins soon recognized the potential of this new technology to connect property around the harbor with the city at the tip of Manhattan by the fact that he began buying up land at the northeastern tip of Staten Island in 1814. Within two years, he had

charged Noah Brown, one of New York's leading shipbuilders, with constructing a new steamboat to run between Manhattan and Staten Island.<sup>35</sup>

In order to do what he wanted to with his steamboat, however, Tompkins needed to secure the right to connect Manhattan and Staten Island by steamboat from the Livingston family. Robert R. Livingston, held the monopoly rights for all steamboats in New York. Such risky ventures, it was believed, required—perhaps deserved—monopoly protection to make them viable, because they were in the public interest. Livingston divided his exclusive right into territories and licensed it to different parties. Tompkins had two claims. The first, dated September 14, 1816, from “agents of Robert R Livingston and Fulton” seemed to entitle him and his partners to exclusive steamboat rights to a wide territory from Staten Island into Lower New York Bay and beyond. But this conflicted with Livingston's 1808 grant of the steamboat territory south and west of the city to his brother, John R. Livingston. To solve the conflict, Tompkins, primarily concerned with connecting his Staten Island property to the city, settled for rights to land steamboats within a mile of the Quarantine Station, signing another agreement with John R. Livingston to that effect in 1817.<sup>36</sup>

Tompkins' *Nautilus* made its maiden voyage from Manhattan to Staten Island in 1817, merely three years after the first steam ferry to Brooklyn. By the following year, the *Nautilus* ferried passengers four times daily between Manhattan and the site of Tompkinsville. The trip took a little more than thirty minutes. At the beginning of the steamboat era, Tompkins' ferry service made possible the potential development of Staten Island as the southern limit of metropolitan real estate.<sup>37</sup>

Ready access to the city from places around the harbor made possible by the steamboat transformed metropolitan geography. Tompkins was part of an early cohort of landowners connecting steamboat service to real estate they owned around the harbor in the 1810s. Other such developers included John Stevens, who experimented with a steamboat ferry to connect his estate at Hoboken to the city (as early as 1811) and Hezekiah Pierrepont, who planned Brooklyn Heights for his property, near Fulton's new Brooklyn ferry service (which began operating in 1814). David Dunham bought up the land at Williamsburg and began a steam ferry in 1818. The proprietors of Jersey City inaugurated their steamboat ferry in 1812.<sup>38</sup>

The idea of connecting grids of town-sized lots with Manhattan via ferry from around the harbor was not new, but the mobilization of the new technology by the landowners was transformative. As early as 1785, Daniel Van Duzer bought twenty acres beginning approximately 1,000 feet south of the Quarantine Station on Staten Island, began a ferry to Manhattan, opened an inn, and laid out "ranges" of 25x100 foot lots along the portion of his property closest to the city. Other landowners around the harbor surveyed more extensive grids of streets, blocks and lots in the 1790s and 1800s. But Van Duzer, Stevens, Pierrepont, Dunham's predecessor at Williamsburg, and the proprietors of Jersey City sold few lots before the steamboat. The steamboat made traveling from the city to other places around the harbor, such as Staten Island, faster and easier than getting uptown on Manhattan Island.<sup>39</sup>

Steamboats proliferated in New York Harbor as the Livingstons lost monopoly power in the 1820s, opening up new possibilities for speculators and landowners around the harbor. In the *Gibbons v. Ogden* decision in 1824, the Supreme Court asserted the

constitution's interstate commerce clause to mediate the dispute between the conflicting monopolies granted by New York (to Ogden, as an agent of the Livingstons) and New Jersey (to Gibbons). The Livingston's intra-state monopoly ended shortly thereafter. By the 1830s, any Staten Island landowner with harbor-front access could connect his real estate to Manhattan with a steamboat. Davis and his business partner inaugurated a new steamboat line that went directly from the city to New Brighton, charging half the fare of the old ferry to the Quarantine dock, even through the winter. William J. Staples linked the opening of his new steamboat dock with the christening of his village as Stapleton. The Staten Island Association promised direct steamboat service to Clifton as well. Although the Staten Island Association never introduced a separate boat, the ferry to Quarantine soon made an additional stop for Stapleton and Clifton, providing direct, quick, and reliable service to the city. In the 1810s, Tompkins had chosen a location where something significant (the Quarantine Station) already existed as the landing point for the *Nautilus*. In contrast, Staten Island speculators of the 1830s, behind New Brighton, Clifton and Stapleton ignored such considerations, building their ferry landings at otherwise insignificant locations with little to no metropolitan activity. This ferry traffic would eventually generate profit by raising the value of their land.<sup>40</sup>

In their marketing material, the New Brighton Association also mobilized the separate steamboat as a symbol distinguishing Staten Island from the city, promising distance and order from urban disease and chaos. The Association knew that the city's rising middle class of clerks, agents, and professionals valued domestic respectability and retreat from the commercial marketplace of the city and promised that their steamboat would provide "the means...at stated intervals [for] withdrawing from the labor and

anxiety of commerce to the quiet of their own families, exposed to intrusion.” At the same time, the trip itself would serve as a “means of healthy recreation.” As passengers on the ferries crossed the harbor to Staten Island, they physically enacted their separation from the negative associations of the city while reinforcing metropolitan access.<sup>41</sup>

“Groups of those with similar tastes or interests came naturally together on the deck” of the New Brighton ferry recalled one Staten Islander, “with reasonable certainty that none of the common herd would intrude.” Separate “exclusive” steamboats like New Brighton’s *Citizen* were a way to organize social order through class sorting. The *Citizen* name itself evoked responsibility and romantic sensibility associated with respectable classes, in contrast to the brute strength of the *Hercules* and the *Samson*, which served the Quarantine dock at Tompkinsville. A ride on the Quarantine ferry could be a rough and tumble experience. In 1836, the New York papers reported on a “riot” instigated by “intoxicated” and “tumultuous” Irishmen trying to board the ferry at Quarantine after spending “all their money,” at a local boarding house. The separate ferry to New Brighton helped establish its exclusivity. As early as 1837, a contributor to the *New York Herald*, recognized the emerging class segregation of space in suburban Staten Island, contrasting “democratic,” Stapleton with “aristocratic” New Brighton.<sup>42</sup>

In 1821, Randel, the surveyor of the Manhattan grid, made a map of the new regional New York entitled, “The City of New York With the Surrounding Country.” Randel’s map integrated the grid, the harbor and the steamboat, and defined Staten Island as the metropolitan limit of the new region organized around the harbor. Radiating from the city, Randel drew lines on his map across the water to the gridded places around the



harbor: Brooklyn, Williamsburg, Hoboken, the “City of Jersey,” and Tompkinsville, Staten Island. Many were clearly marked as ferry routes. Others traced sight lines and distances between landmarks. The most dramatic spanned the harbor from the tip of Manhattan to Staten Island: 8926 yards from Castle Clinton to the gridded streets of Tompkinsville; 9418 yards for the ferry route from Whitehall terminal to the Quarantine dock; and 12,430 yards from Castle Clinton to Fort Tompkins at the Narrows, the farthest limit of Randel’s new metropolitan geography.<sup>43</sup>

Like the Manhattan grid, in 1821, Tompkinsville and the other gridded places around the harbor were mostly fantasies of future metropolitan growth. Yet Randel drew them on his map, exactly as he had done for the entire planned street grid of Manhattan. Randel did not survey the gridded places outside Manhattan himself. Brooklyn and Jersey City were the only locations organized enough to have official maps, which he got from their respective town clerks. The others, he got from “the principal proprietors,” of the land, including Tompkins. The remaining space on the map Randel left largely blank, save for some family names, identifying the rest of the land in the “Surrounding Country” as outside the regional market in commodified real estate. Perhaps most interesting of all, in his preliminary sketch for the map, Randel projected Manhattan’s own grid across the harbor, showing where First and Fifth Avenues would intersect Staten Island. Randel depicted the organizational power of the grid extending across the harbor and defining a larger metropolitan region.<sup>44</sup>

T. Hazard advertised his new Nautilus Hall hotel, named for Tompkins’ steamboat, which landed at the adjacent dock. Hazard described his hotel as “opposite

the city of New York” and ready to serve those from the city “who may visit the island for health, pleasure, or business.” In the 1820s and 30s, proprietors opened many halls, hotels and pleasure grounds at and around Tompkinsville helping stitch Staten Island into a regional metropolitan fabric by attracting Manhattan excursionists across the harbor. Daniel Van Duzer, Jr. opened Union Garden, “a pleasant walk below” the dock for “Parties of pleasure who may wish to the benefit of the sea breeze” while “receiving the best of attention” and enjoying “the best liquors and refreshments of all kinds.” Steamboat operators promoted Union Garden and the nearby Pavilion atop Mount Tompkins, with its, “prospect...not surpassed by any in the world.” Promising metropolitan refinement, the proprietor of the Planters Hotel advertised that his brother would bring his experience with running the well-known City Hotel in Manhattan to the new Staten Island hotel. The new church at Tompkinsville even advertised in the New York papers in order to sell their pews as well as their services to a metropolitan clientele of excursionists, noting ferry times, “for the purpose of conveying those citizens who may wish to provide themselves with Pews, or to attend Worship.”<sup>45</sup>

It mattered that Staten Island was not distant countryside, but directly across the harbor, accessible for a quick urban excursion. One visitor from England to the city in the 1830s found himself among many other visitors and Manhattanites headed to Staten Island, “going on a similar errand with ourselves to pass the day free from the cares of business in the country.” During his stay in New York, “[I] frequently bent my steps to [the Pavilion] when I had leisure to spend an hour or two in the island,” something he could not have done with more distant countryside. Manhattan lawyer James Kent took his wife aboard the *Nautilus* for a “charming sail down York Bay [New York Harbor] to

Staten Island” and spent “the evening on the Piazza fronting the bay” at the Planters Hotel. It was “delightful.” In the morning they “walked up the steep hill to the Pavilion” where they enjoyed the “magnificent view and cool air” that they could not find in the city. By coming to the Island with their urban peers and engaging in leisure activities, entertainment, consuming food and drink, and enjoying the scenery, excursionists enacted a role for Staten Island in the geography of the metropolitan region.<sup>46</sup>

By the 1830s, when the Associations drew grids over nearly 1,500 acres of Staten Island facing Manhattan, the harbor was the city’s healthful, pleasurable front yard. The city’s Street Commission assigned the waters around Manhattan the same role Central Park was later given: that of the “lungs” of the city. In their respective times, each served as the primary locus of health, and focus of recreation for the metropolis. Defensively recognizing their grid plan for Manhattan contained virtually no open spaces, the Street Commissioners argued that the wide rivers and harbor “which embrace Manhattan island render its situation, in regard to health and pleasure...peculiarly felicitous.” The city’s premier recreational space, the Battery promenade, already faced the harbor and steamboat owners offered access to the harbor itself through excursions for “health and pleasure.”<sup>47</sup>

***Marketing Real Estate: St. John’s Park; Tompkinsville; New Brighton; Clifton and Others***

In 1807, the vestrymen of Manhattan’s Trinity Church (located at Broadway and Wall Street) completed the parish church of St. John at what came to be known as St. John’s Park (located at the time beyond the urban part of Manhattan, near the Lispinard Meadows). St. John’s Park was the first real estate development in New York built on

the idea of creating a new metropolitan place at the edge of town. The Park and the parish church of St. John's differentiated the land from the surrounding meadows and farms, reorganizing it as lots and made it attractive to elite urban residents. The new place stood on a small piece of the Queen's Farm, a large property owned by Trinity that stretched from the heart of the city all the way up to Greenwich Village. Years earlier, the Vestrymen had successfully platted blocks and lots on the lower part of the Queen's Farm, attracting small merchants and artisans across Broadway, vastly raising the value of that piece of their land, in the heart of the city. Now they imagined the large tract beyond the traditional limits of the city as metropolitan real estate too. By 1827, the park was surrounded by an "elegant iron fence" and filled with "ornamental walks and shrubbery," marking the place as exclusive and elite. The church had succeeded in raising the value of the sixty-four lots around the park by anchoring the district with a high profile church and reserving exclusive rights to the owners to enjoy the "recreation and resort" of the park.<sup>48</sup>

Staking out the southern frontier of metropolitan real estate on Staten Island in 1817, Tompkins pitched Tompkinsville as a perfect seasonal, "temporary or permanent residence" for "professional gentlemen, merchants, mechanics and other citizens" of the city. To reach these potential buyers, he filled the Manhattan papers with advertisements for hundreds of lots. Tompkins could not have intended the less than 1,000 Staten Island households, mostly farmers and fishermen, to buy them. He offered the first 100 lots in an auction at Manhattan's Tontine Coffee House, the city's central marketplace for financial and real estate transactions. Manhattan was the one place where he could find a marketplace of buyers large enough for so many lots.<sup>49</sup>

To attract such an urban base of buyers skeptical about living beyond the city proper, Tompkins promised in his advertisements a balance between city and country. “From all the lots,” advertised Tompkins, one could see “the city of N. York and its promenade [at the Battery],” thus situating his village safely and accessibly across the harbor from Manhattan. Tompkinsville residents, he promised, would be connected to the city by steamboat access to the city “every hour in the day,” and “throughout the year,” as well as by “daily mail.” Clearly visible in the other direction were, “the Narrows, the Ocean and the fortifications of the harbor,” dividing a regional New York from the outside world. Second, Tompkinsville would have a village community anchored by a church, like St. John’s Park. Leveraging both his position as governor, and the presence of the Quarantine station, Tompkins got the legislature to earmark \$2,000 to fund construction of the new church for his village. Tompkins donated the land himself. Third, Tompkinsville would also offer the best of both country and city with regard to food: “cheapness and variety of fish, fowl and other provisions derived from the surrounding bay and hills;” and the presence of local “market and bakeries . . . are already established . . . to meet the demand of vessels” (because of the metropolitan activity at the Quarantine station). And for those demanding “greater variety,” Tompkins reminded his potential buyers of the “facility with which the markets of the city may be resorted to . . .” Tompkins’ choice of words like “cheapness,” and “provisions,” reveal the very natural abundance of the “country” around his lots in urban terms of consumption, not rural production. Fourth, Tompkins promised urbanites the country advantages of a “prospect from every lot,” “salubrity of the climate,” and “excellence of the water.”<sup>50</sup>

Tompkins was not proposing a trade of a metropolitan life for a rural one. Instead he suggested Tompkinsville's country setting could improve one's family without abandoning Manhattan altogether. In particular, he focused on the domestic role of educating children. Tompkinsville, he suggested was a place where "...professional gentlemen, merchants, mechanics, and other citizens who may desire to educate their children economically and in a healthful place," could "at the same time attend to business in town." Despite its country setting, Tompkinsville would clearly be oriented toward the city and be of a metropolitan character, not merely a rural village life supported by the productive potential of the surrounding land.<sup>51</sup>

Tompkinsville was also a real estate speculation designed to increase the value of Tompkins' Staten Island land. By transforming farmland into suburban village he would also attracting metropolitan interest to his vast adjacent landholdings. He also invited others to participate in Tompkinsville's real estate potential to generate wealth. In addition to the New York families he intended to attract to build their "permanent or temporary residence" at Tompkinsville, Tompkins targeted out-of-towners with capital to invest. "Southern gentlemen who frequent this state...or who may wish to invest capital in real estate rapidly rising in value," he advertised, "or to build houses or lodges that in addition to increasing value, will produce a great interest in rents, will find these lots highly eligible for these objects." To encourage development and not mere speculation in future land value, in his second offering of 200 lots, Tompkins promised, "a portion of the lots...without consideration, or payment on condition of erecting houses, or other edifices thereon, within a reasonable time." With Tompkinsville, Tompkins was the first

to lay out the ideas that underpinned Staten Island's inclusion in a metropolitan real estate market.<sup>52</sup>

In the 1830s, Davis and his partners in the New Brighton Association took up Tompkins' model, but they also applied to Staten Island lessons they had learned about the metropolitan real estate market as they developed land at the city's northern frontier in Manhattan. James B. Murray and Davis marked their new "places" along Washington Square, Carroll Place and St. Mark's Place with rows of high quality townhouses set back from the street or fronted by a square or other orderly green space. Such aesthetic regularity signaled neighborhood stability and social order, an attractive feature for elite buyers who had witnessed the chaotic and rapid transformations of their earlier places of residence further downtown. Meanwhile, Seth Geer's New York University building and Colonnade Row helped define Washington Square and Lafayette Place as desirable places for elite residence.<sup>53</sup>

As they later would at Staten Island, these same landowners and developers integrated their orderly projects east of Greenwich Village with the leisure and health opportunity of open spaces associated with the edge of town. Open spaces like Washington Square and the setback building lines on St. Mark's Place facilitated ventilation, and thereby health, as did pleasure grounds like Vauxhall Gardens, which fronted Lafayette Place. Pleasure grounds like Vauxhall and nearby Niblo's Garden, offered pleasant paths, refreshments, statuary, stages for musical and theatrical entertainment, fireworks, and other amusements, retaining for the area the leisure opportunities urban New Yorkers associated with the edge of the city. Such pleasure grounds offered some of the advantages of a private country estate to a wider range of

urbanites who could not afford their own. Davis bought the Winthrop Estate “about one quarter mile east,” of St. Mark’s Place, and laid out beautiful walks on the 20 acre property, seeking to make it, “a place of fashionable resort.” Integrating their new residential developments with leisure, health and urban order, Davis and his colleagues experimented with metropolitan possibilities on the frontier east of Greenwich Village, transforming the value of the land there.<sup>54</sup>

For Davis, Murray, Geer and others, Staten Island provided an opportunity to take their experience from Manhattan and apply it on a larger scale, but also in a different, non-urban form. New Brighton’s separation from Manhattan and its cheaper land allowed Davis and the men of the Associations to differentiate their properties as more of a country setting, yet still pitch it for sale to urbanites in the metropolitan real estate market. Davis built a series of houses along Richmond Terrace to set the tone and order for the rest of New Brighton, as he had with St. Mark’s Place in Manhattan. The uniform Greek Revival houses echoed the urbanity of Manhattan’s Lafayette Place and The Row at Washington Square, but Davis’ row on Richmond Terrace was a set of free-standing cottages, each set across multiple lots amidst country surroundings and scenic views of the harbor. Although Staten Island and the land east of Greenwich Village both stood at the frontiers of the metropolis, New Brighton was more clearly distinct from the city.<sup>55</sup>

The Associations chose names that underscored their marketing pitches. Davis chose the same street names as his successful addresses in Manhattan: St. Mark’s Place and Carroll Place, perhaps in the hopes of invoking that same success. Similarly, New Brighton’s Lafayette and Stuyvesant Streets mirrored the street names in the new exclusive district east of Greenwich Village in Manhattan. The Staten Island Association



chose to name its major cross-streets Richmond Avenue and New York Avenue, capturing the connection they were forging between Staten Island (Richmond County), and the city. The avenues parallel to New York Avenue were named for famous men like [George] Washington, [Christopher] Columbus, [Henry] Clay and [Robert] Fulton, names that brought to mind the pinnacle of civilization. The avenues parallel to Richmond Avenue, Chestnut, Walnut, Elm, and closer to the beach, Coral, Bath and Wave, all evoked nature, reinforcing Clifton as an intersection of civilization and nature, city and country. At New Brighton, the choice of the village name itself evoked the legendary English New Brighton, perhaps the most famous metropolitan resort of them all.<sup>56</sup>

In the summer of 1836, the men of the New Brighton Association introduced New Brighton to New York society, as though it were a debutante. George Bennett, publisher of the *New York Herald*, and pioneer of the society pages, described the ball at the Island's Belmont Hotel as, "a first step in the fashionable and elegant career for which New Brighton is to be distinguished." The men of the New Brighton Association knew that a well-run elegant hotel was the anchor for a resort destination of the nineteenth century. Bennett too understood the connection between the society event and real estate marketing. "[H]ow difficult it is to take an accurate inventory of paradise or put down the sparkling charms of woman," he wrote, "with the same coolness and composure, as you could lay out a plan for a cottage building lot in New Brighton." As a result of the ball, "lots and ladies," he concluded, "are now higher and better at New Brighton."<sup>57</sup>

By 1837, the several of the Association's investors also opened the grand new Pavilion Hotel, with its domed 88x40 foot ballroom, and three "magnificent" porticos forming a 231-foot long "grand promenade," facing the harbor. To attract an innkeeper

adequate for elite metropolitan taste, the Association advertised as far away as Charleston. A good social calendar at the Pavilion Hotel would make it easier to rent cottages nearby, not to mention filling the hotel. The *Herald* praised society life at New Brighton, particularly at the Pavilion, regularly in his columns through the late 1830s. Good press in the city attracted Manhattanites to Pavilion events, introduced them to the pleasures of New Brighton, where they might buy or rent real estate in the future. One *Herald* subscriber wrote that, Bennett's "charming descriptions of New Brighton society," with its "nice parties, tableaux, calico hops, balls, suppers, [et cetera]," induced her to convince her father to choose New Brighton over Saratoga for the 1838 season. But the innkeeper had changed, and she was disappointed. The success of a resort depended on the presence of a society of desirable peers. It also depended on the association of the place with metropolitan desires.<sup>58</sup>

In their marketing materials, both Associations capitalized on the relationship between land value and health. According to the Associations' prospectuses, Clifton was a place of "remarkable salubrity," and New Brighton offered, among other things, "...a salubrity of climate that will in vain be sought elsewhere." "Visited as it is constantly by the most refreshing Sea breezes," explained the Staten Island Association, "no place can be found where so little disease is known." To prove it to potential buyers, they offered the "ample testimony," of the families who had owned the land, "for near a century." The New Brighton Association offered proof too, noting "the attendance of a physician has not been required," for any of their hundreds of laborers.<sup>59</sup>

More specifically, the men of the Associations were well aware of the lack of fresh water in the city and promoted New Brighton and Clifton accordingly. George

Atkinson Ward, one of the principal investors in New Brighton imagined using the Fresh Pond up the hill behind the property to create a “Village of Fountains,” based on models he had collected at Versailles, Berlin, Constantinople and Vienna. Fountains had long been a source of water for washing, bathing and drinking for urbanites, but by the 1830s, they were also symbols of abundant and fresh water, representative of moral, as well as physical, cleanliness. On Staten Island, the Associations promised, “The Water on the Island is abundant, pure, and wholesome,” and the “shores are uniformly free of the deposite of nuisances of any kind.” Meanwhile, in Manhattan before the Croton Aqueduct was completed in 1842, a scarcity of fresh water and pollution of the waterfront defined the city as an unhealthy and unwholesome place.<sup>60</sup>

Stepping outside Manhattan and raising oneself to a prospect offered regional perspective and a visual order in sharp contrast to the close up chaos within urban Manhattan. From Clifton, the Staten Island Association pitched, one would have, “a circular view of all the rich and varied objects for many miles round – the Cities of New-York and Brooklyn, a view of the North and East Rivers, the Palisades, Long Island, the town of Tompkinsville,” amidst, “the life and activity exhibited by the approach and departure of the extensive Commerce of this great Western Metropolis.” Viewed from a distance, the maritime activity of the metropolis held a certain, “swelling beauty and majesty,” that contrasted with the up close urban waterfront in Manhattan. The Staten Island Association also recognized a market for those interested in “dwellings more retired,” from the metropolis, promising, “spots which cannot fail to meet their views.”<sup>61</sup>

The New Brighton Association included a sketch with its map and prospectus, articulating a visual order to the village with two different types of properties for the

metropolitan market: suburban village and country villa. The village was to be a series of parallel terraced rows of refined homes, notably geometric, evenly spaced and perfectly aligned with the streets. The idealized terraces of genteel houses, most of which had not yet been built, differed in architecture but all suggested a certain metropolitan refinement and class that would appeal to urban elites seeking social order and a separated domestic space. The fenced rows along Richmond Terrace at the shorefront and the oval green space and fence fronting the houses at the summit suggested a certain exclusivity and differentiated social hierarchy. The spired building at the very pinnacle suggested New Brighton in terms of the Christian trope of “city on a hill,” easily recognizable by the middling and rising classes immersed in the Second Great Awakening.<sup>62</sup>

On the adjacent, gentler slope, the Association depicted a more country setting of grander villas popping out from among the trees. The imagery suggests both a cloudlike heaven and a utopian relationship between American culture and nature, perhaps evocative of contemporary lecturers and writers like Ralph Waldo Emerson. It also suggests the exclusivity of class. The village and country villa halves of the sketch are unified by the picturesque foreground of fishermen in the bay, underscoring a romantic remove of New Brighton from the busy commercial city. Yet the steamboat can be clearly seen at the dock, promising access to Manhattan. The image of New Brighton presented by the Association depicted a metropolitan order and presented a series of symbols designed to appeal to a range of buyers in the real estate marketplace.<sup>63</sup>

The Associations created New Brighton and Clifton for a metropolis that was beginning to sort social classes and bifurcate domestic and commercial realms

geographically. Within Manhattan, workplaces and counting houses remained within the traditional limits of the city and along the expanding commercial waterfront of the East River. The city's elite merchants, lawyers and other professionals, however, increasingly bought or rented separate residences for their families at St. Mark's Place, Washington Square and the other new places men like Davis were developing east of Greenwich Village. Meanwhile, the city's middling classes of mechanics, artisans and small manufacturers struggled to maintain the independence associated with ownership of their homes and workplaces. Most turned to renting or taking in boarders, an often-unwelcome marketplace intrusion in a city that increasingly valued the segregation of domestic and commercial lives.<sup>64</sup>

Both Associations articulated differentiated pitches for a range of respectable urban classes, from "men engaged in active business, as well as to those of leisure," to "mechanics and manufacturers." The range of classes imagined by the Associations as part of their new metropolitan places was reflected in their prospectuses. At New Brighton Association promised accommodations ranging from "elegant buildings" to "chaste and simple cottages" to "hotels and boarding houses" for the seasonal and "transient resident" at the village. At Clifton, the Staten Island Association divided their site into two sections, one along the shore facing the city for, "those desirous of embarking in Manufactures of any kind," and the other, "bounded by the Ocean," for metropolitan men of means seeking, "situations for villas."<sup>65</sup>

To the city's elite, the Associations focused on Staten Island's value as a place of domestic and recreational separation from the chaotic commercial city, but not disconnected from the metropolis. For city businessmen, the New Brighton Association

promised “the means...of withdrawing from the labor and anxiety of commerce to the quiet of their own families, unexposed to intrusion.” On Staten Island, “In the immediate vicinity” of their homes, were all the pleasures of an aristocratic estate: “extensive rides over roads in excellent order...opening at every mile new subjects of admiration,” along with abundant opportunities for fishing and hunting. The Staten Island Association promised a “Park of from thirty to forty acres...laid out as pleasure grounds” at Clifton, amidst a range sites for elite villas ranging from bold sweeping vistas to more secluded sites, “should any purchaser desire to have their dwelling more retired.” At the same time “swift and beautiful” steamboats would have metropolitan businessmen and gentlemen back in the city in “twenty minutes,” without “a day’s interruption.”<sup>66</sup>

To the city’s “Mechanics and Manufacturers,” the Associations stressed the lower cost of a Staten Island location, while maintaining access to the “great” market of the city. “To the mechanic and artisan,” wrote the New Brighton Association, “a field for the prosecution of their avocations will be opened at cheaper rates than in the dense population of [the] city....” The Staten Island Association stressed accessibility to “the best price, the most speedy returns,” in the city and its markets. Clifton, they argued was a viable alternative to the northern metropolitan frontier “at Twenty Fifth Street on [Manhattan] Island,” and it was perhaps superior, because the steamboat from the Island offered cheaper, faster and more reliable transportation. They also saw mechanics and artisans in domestic terms as well. Living on Staten Island would save an artisan or mechanic’s family the cost and complication of the annual, “banishment of their families [from the city] by the visitations of disease.” At Clifton or New Brighton, these middling classes of the city could remain connected to the metropolis while regaining for their

families the independence of ownership, or perhaps participation in the wealth generative potential of metropolitan real estate. “[A]n opportunity is here offered to Mechanics and Manufacturers,” the Staten Island Association boasted, “of making investments and forming establishments, which...may be purchased at a very small comparative price, and must greatly increase in value.”<sup>67</sup>

The Associations took different views when it came to extending the metropolitan geography of commercial and industrial uses to Staten Island. The Staten Island Association seemed committed to attracting “Warehouses and Manufacturing Establishments” to the Clifton waterfront, though they excluded such uses from the rest of the property. In contrast, the New Brighton Association tried to exclude industry altogether, despite its marketing pitch to mechanics and artisans. The different approaches were rooted in the different experiences of the men who made up the Associations. Moulton Bullock, Lewis Lyman and E.D. Comstock, investors and directors of the Staten Island Association were involved in the New York Dry Dock Company and shipyards active in developing the industrial frontier along the East River in Manhattan. As we have already seen, Davis and his New Brighton partners, in contrast, garnered their experience building the urban residential frontier around Washington Square and Second Avenue. The timing of the removal of the gun factory on the site of New Brighton around 1835, for example, suggests Davis’ involvement. As other speculators and developers at the residential frontiers of New York and other cities, the New Brighton Association wrote covenants into their deeds to reassure urban buyers of landscape and land use stability, and preservation of a separation between the domestic and work spheres that such buyers were beginning to desire in their neighborhoods. The

long list excluded a remarkably wide range of uses ranging from obviously noxious slaughterhouses and glue manufactories to the workshops of carpenters and cabinetmakers. Meanwhile, the large Snug Harbor property provided a clear barrier between New Brighton and nearby Factoryville, home to the largest fabric printing and dyeing factory in the state.<sup>68</sup>

While Tompkins, Davis and the men of the Associations developed marketing pitches to appeal a variety of metropolitan desires, they articulated Staten Island as a place apart from the city. The steamboat itself represented both accessibility and distance from the city. The Staten Island real estate men promised health, order and leisure in contrast and distinction from Manhattan. The Island was promoted as a retreat from the city, for both gentlemen seeking domestic insulation and mechanics seeking relief from urban pressures on their independence. Tompkins, Davis and the men of the Associations articulated Staten Island land as metropolitan real estate, but not as an urban place.

### **From Marketing to Reality: Staten Island Real Estate Before and After the Panic of 1837**

With their grids, steamboats, docks, roads, hotels, pleasure grounds, and marketing efforts speculators and developers went to Manhattan to turn their Staten Island land into gold. At first, in both the 1810s and the 1830s, it seemed they would make a killing. Tompkins bought his first 47 acres on Staten Island in January 1814 for a mere \$900. By the end of the year, he had amassed nearly 540 acres at an average cost of \$72.38/acre. In 1819, buyers paid Tompkins between \$125 and \$300 per 25x100 lot. If



he had sold all 200 lots he offered for sale that day at the average price, Tompkins could have paid for the whole 540-acre property with the sale of twelve acres. Similarly, on April 29, 1836, the New Brighton investors finalized their purchase of about 500 acres, much of it the same property Tompkins had owned, for \$600,000. In a single day, a few days later, the Association's trustees sold three hundred lots for about \$140,000. The New Brighton property had the potential for about 8,700 lots, if fully surveyed, suggesting a value of over \$4 million. By September, speculators were selling the same lots they bought in May for double the original price, suggesting the land at New Brighton might be worth \$8 million, or more. According to one report, Joseph L. Joseph's investment in New Brighton alone was valued at \$260,000.<sup>69</sup>

The metropolitan dreams Davis and the men of the Associations had for Staten Island did not turn out as they expected. The Panic of 1837 precipitated a collapse in the metropolitan real estate market, reducing the price of Staten Island land and devastating the value of Association stock. Although the boundless optimism of the Associations' giant urban-style grids faded after the Panic, the grids did shape the futures of New Brighton and Clifton by continuing to form the basis for reorganizing farms into metropolitan real estate. Instead of thousands of 25x100 lots, however, New Brighton and Clifton developed into neighborhoods of metropolitan country estates, as will be described in the next chapter, though in a more geometric form than might otherwise have been expected. Although the Panic ruined the fortunes of many of the men of the Associations, the Associations left a lasting mark on the Island, as Tompkins had, making Staten Island land into metropolitan real estate.

Before the Panic of 1837, the New Brighton Association's vision of a new metropolitan place and a market in real estate went as they expected. At the initial sale on May 5, 1836, most buyers of New Brighton real estate bought a dozen lots or more, suggesting they intended to speculate or amass an acre or more for a miniature country estate. Several of the purchases were for 6–8 lots, or about a third to half of an acre, enough for a detached cottage or villa surrounded by some greenery, but certainly village-like than the seclusion of a traditional country estate. For example, Manhattan merchant Henry N. Wild bought 20 lots to speculate, selling them five months later for a profit of more than 100%. Seth Geer, who had recently built the New York University building at Washington Square and the row of townhouses at nearby Lafayette Place in Manhattan, bought 200 New Brighton lots from Wild and others for \$185,000. The sheer volume of his purchases suggests he intended at least some of his New Brighton land as a speculative investment, but he also professed himself “builder” and “architect” alternately in the deed records, suggesting he may also have intended to develop some of the lots himself.<sup>70</sup>

In those first few years, the men of the New Brighton Association began to build New Brighton into a metropolitan place through their own lives, locating their homes and families there, either seasonally or year-round. Their family members, business partners and friends did the same. Ward and Davis had already built homes at New Brighton, and Ward was living there year-round. Dudley and Nicholas W. Stuyvesant, Jr. bought special undivided parcels along Richmond Terrace alongside each other, each with more than 200 feet fronting the harbor, perhaps intending to build their own personal metropolitan country villas along the Terrace. By the 1840s, Peter A. Stuyvesant,

Nicholas' brother, was living there, as were Seth Geer and his son. Joseph L. Joseph nearly finished his new Staten Island home, a "large brick building, two stories high," across an entire block on an estate made of 94 lots (about 9 acres). As with other business transactions of the era, the men of the Association did business with people they knew and trusted. Joseph's business partner, Moses Henriques, took another undivided parcel along Richmond Terrace and moved to New Brighton as well. Davis, as part of the Association's "committee of sales," approved every sale himself. Despite shaping Staten Island land into a commodity form, the personal association between so many buyers reveals that lots at New Brighton were not purely a commodity for sale in a marketplace of strangers.<sup>71</sup>

In the 1830s, real estate transactions blended speculation and the practical life of New Yorkers, linking city people and property with new real estate at the metropolitan frontier. Manhattan socialite Philip Hone, recounted in his diary the connection between speculation and moving to the metropolitan frontier in Manhattan. In 1835, Hone was offered his asking price for his home on Broadway in the center of the city, but Hone resisted as the buyer offered to pay him mostly in lots at St. Mark's Place and 2nd Avenue, rather than cash. Similarly, Joseph King took \$50,000 worth of lots at New Brighton as payment for his Manhattan property between Greenwich Village and the center of the city. In turn, Seth Geer, who had earlier built two houses for King in Manhattan, was willing to take King's Staten Island property as collateral for the remaining payments because he thought it would, "improve his security."<sup>72</sup>

In the early days of the Panic of 1837, the *Herald* described New Brighton as a "[A] city of...half build palaces and half dug streets, ...cottages, esplanades, hotels,

castles, gardens, promenades, all – all in a state of ruin, desolation, beauty, and laughable folly.” The Panic upset the transformative relationship between the real estate market and the geography of metropolitan lives, revealing the tenuousness of a market that valued land at the edge of the city in terms of urban desires. Several Directors of both Associations faced loss of their Staten Island homes and property investments as mortgages came due over the next few years. His investment in New Brighton wiped out, Ward sold off four of his Richmond Terrace lots in a chancery sale in 1839. Daniel Low, of the Staten Island Association, still struggling in 1844, negotiated a deal to turn over most of the property on his Clifton estate plus cash to cover an overdue mortgage, in return for the right to keep his house. Although Ward and Low were able to keep their homes and rebuild their fortunes, others abandoned their Staten Island homes and investments. Henriques died in a steamboat accident a few years later, paying for his choice to live at New Brighton with his life.<sup>73</sup>

Personally, many of the investors in New Brighton and Clifton went bankrupt, especially after the Bankruptcy Act of 1841 made the bankruptcy process uniform and easier. Shocked at the scale of the bankruptcies, the *Baltimore Sun* reported, “the debts of three individuals...amount to more than two millions of dollars.” One was Seth Geer. Another was Peter A. Stuyvesant. Both were living on Staten Island. Geer noted in his filing the decline of his New Brighton assets, specifically that his security in the King property, had become “considerably deficient in value so as to [cause] alarm.” In perhaps the most important bankruptcy of the era, Joseph L. Joseph, listed the bond and mortgage he owed to Davis for his New Brighton property as one of his largest liabilities. A few

years earlier he considered it an asset worth \$260,000. George A. Ward, the largest single investor in New Brighton, filed for bankruptcy too.<sup>74</sup>

It is unclear how the logic of metropolitan real estate would have shaped New Brighton and Clifton had the Panic of 1837 not intervened. At New Brighton, second and third round sales by men like Geer suggests that at least part of the land would have ended up in smaller parcels in the hands of less wealthy Manhattan buyers. Grocer Fitz Frazier bought 6 lots from Geer, jeweler Aaron C. Burr bought 2, and Nathan M.P. Keeler, a saddle harness and trunk maker, bought one, through a broker. The Association behind Clifton, in contrast, never had a chance to sell lots before the boom ended. Perhaps New Brighton would have developed more like Stapleton.<sup>75</sup>

With less hype in the real estate marketplace than New Brighton, Stapleton had already become more “democratic” by 1837, as William J. Staples and his partner, Minthorne Tompkins sold lots to a less exclusive clientele. Staples and Tompkins bought the land for Stapleton and began selling lots around the same time as the Associations. Like the Associations, Staples promoted the new village in the Manhattan papers promising direct ferry service, offering proof of new homes, and plans for a new church. He promised promise of a future railroad stretching to the Staten Island interior from the village. Unlike the big sales to wealthy investors, Staples and Tompkins sold lots one or two at a time to more of a mix of Manhattanites and Staten Islanders. Both before and after the Panic, buyers of lots at Stapleton were just as likely to be a “butcher,” “chairmaker,” “waterman,” “victualler,” or “carpenter,” as a “merchant” or “gentlemen.”<sup>76</sup>

After the Panic of 1837, the geometry of the grid survived at New Brighton and Clifton, but much of the land took shape in larger parcels for country estates. The block and lot model from the pre-Panic plans reflected optimism about the expanding metropolis, a faith in the potential of the land at the edge of the city to generate wealth. In the wake of the Panic, the marketplace in land seemed dangerous and the metropolitan desire to secure a safe domestic space beyond the city became even more powerful. Amidst the economic despair and polarization of wealth, New Yorker's confidence in the power of 25x100 lots to generate wealth was gone and the small-lot grid as a symbol of democratic society faded.<sup>77</sup>

In 1841, the New Brighton Association dissolved, unable to pay the mortgage it owned to Davis. Davis brought in new partners to help him buy the vast acreage of the unsold land at New Brighton at sheriff's sale. Like his old partners had, Davis' new partners, George Griswold, of N.L. & G.G. Griswold, one of the city's most successful merchant houses, and George Griffin, prominent Manhattan lawyer, built new villas at New Brighton. Unlike many of his old partners, who chose an acre or less and built near the public promenade at Richmond Terrace, Griswold, Griffin and Davis himself, chose multi-acre parcels for their villas, set deeply back from St. Mark's Place, at the top of the hill, and appropriated for themselves the public oval green-space in the original New Brighton plan. By the late 1840s, Griswold had spent \$50,000 on a much larger mansion on a larger site. Griswold Hill was the highest hill overlooking New Brighton, on land that was never part of the Association's plan.<sup>78</sup>

Other prominent men of the city bought up other much larger plots for country estates further back into New Brighton, away from the more public harbor-front. As they

did so, Davis and the Association backed away from strict adherence to the original the grid, as well as the covenants originally intended to order Staten Island land for the metropolitan real estate market. William Pell, from a prominent family of auctioneers in Manhattan, and Smith Ely, whose son would later become mayor of New York, built their villas on about 6 acres each, obliterating a portion of what would have become 2d Street in the original New Brighton plan. Jonathan Goodhue, who owned perhaps the most respected auction house in the city, and Samuel T. Jones, a Manhattan commission merchant, built the two largest estates at New Brighton, though each was no more than 25 acres. In the 1841 deed for his property, Goodhue demanded the Association promise never to open the streets through his estate. Similarly, Jones' privatized the land on his Cedar Place estate that should have been part of Franklin Avenue under the original New Brighton plan.<sup>79</sup>

At Clifton the gridded order of the original plan survived, but the Association codified a mere fraction of the original number of planned streets into the covenants of their post-Panic trustee deeds. Maps of the 1840s and 50s reveal the resulting row of rectangular country estates at Clifton, ranging in the 10–30 acre range, mostly between New York Avenue and the harbor. Across the Avenue, the estates were larger still. A mix of Manhattan merchants and old Staten Island families held the property in the next rank behind, as if they expected the grid of country estates to expand over time. By 1848, Frederick Law Olmsted, a local gentleman farmer, described Clifton as “the villa village or quarter” of the Island.<sup>80</sup>

Staten Island “is too near the city and too cheaply accessible to ever be pre-eminently fashionable,” wrote the *Rover* magazine in 1844, yet “the yachter, the bather,

the horseman, the sketcher, the florist, can always here enjoy his favorite diversion...while in an half-hour's time, he can exchange the singing of birds, and the music of the waters for the busy atmosphere of Wall Street." In the 1830s, Davis and the men of the Association had hoped New Brighton would take its place among the leading resorts like Saratoga and Newport. Instead, because of their location within the metropolitan region, New Brighton, Clifton and Stapleton instead became commuter retreats. Philip Hone stayed at Stapleton's Bay House while his house in Manhattan was being painted, noting in his diary, "the boarders as transact their business in the lower part of the City ...leave here after breakfast [and] may get to their counting houses earlier than those who reside in the upper wards" of the city itself. "With one foot on [Staten] island, the other in New-York," reported the *United States Magazine*, urbanites were, "in the morning to their business, in the evening to their country houses." Despite its grandeur and social calendar, even the Pavilion Hotel could not succeed in molding New Brighton into another Saratoga or Newport. By the 1840s, New Brighton, Clifton and Stapleton were places distinct from the city but very much within the metropolitan region.<sup>81</sup>

Staten Island, wrote Philip Hone in 1842, "has been a sort of Terra incognita to the people of New York until within the last seven years when by means of the establishment of a regular line of Steam ferry boats...and the establishment of New Brighton they have become better acquainted with its beauties." In the speculative real estate moments of the 1810s and 1830s, developers like Tompkins and Davis transformed Staten Island from invisibility to a part of the metropolitan region. Through the urban



grid, they made Staten Island land legible to urban New Yorkers and their markets. Their steamboats made it accessible. Their marketing efforts attached urban desires for health and leisure to Staten Island real estate, giving it value in the metropolitan market. As New Yorkers increasingly perceived the urban environment as unhealthy, both physically and socially, Staten Island's land speculators positioned the Island's real estate as distinct from urban ills, yet well connected to Manhattan. Through the land they bought, marketed and sold, men like Tompkins and Davis made Staten Island a place of experimentation at the metropolitan frontier. Although their specific dreams for Staten Island collapsed due to personal and national economic hardships in 1819 and 1837, respectively, Tompkins, Davis and the Associations still helped lay the foundations for a regional New York and the metropolitan countryside, a distinctly non-urban landscape that began to form at its periphery.<sup>82</sup>

In the 1840s, despite the Panic of 1837, Hone indeed predicted Staten Island would be "covered with villas and cottages within twenty years." The *Tribune* noted, "the beauty and convenience of [New Brighton] for a suburban residence are already well known." In 1845, C. H. Blood published a Map of Tompkinsville, New Brighton, Stapleton, and Clifton, the first map of Staten Island that differentiated the towns facing the harbor from the rest of the Island. In his report to the State Agricultural Society, Samuel Akerly, described Tompkinsville, Stapleton, Clifton and New Brighton as "almost a continued village," where land "is not estimated by acres, but by town lots and plots for country seats." While Staten Island did not take the same urban form as the Manhattan frontier east of Greenwich Village, by the 1840s Staten Island's real estate

speculators and developers had succeeded in making Staten Island part of a larger New York region by including it in the metropolitan real estate market.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> George Atkinson Ward, *Description of New Brighton on Staten Island, Opposite the City of New York* (New York: s.n, 1836), 5, Cornelius Kolff Collection, 41.cgK, SIM.

<sup>2</sup> “To Let, The Mansion House And Appurtenances With Twenty Acres Of Land Occupied by Daniel D. Tompkins, Esq.,” *National Advocate* (New York) 10, March 26, 1822, 4; for Tompkins’ land purchases amassing his estate on Staten Island, see, “New York, Land Records, 1630–1975,” Richmond County Liber G, 369, 382, 384, 386, 389, 391, 393, 421, accessed August 9, 2014 (<https://familysearch.org/>); for the creation of Tompkinsville, see, “One Hundred Lots on Staten Island,” (ad) *The National Advocate*, April 04, 1817; and “For Sale: 200 Lots of Ground,” *New-York Gazette*, August 6, 1819, 7; for the steamboat see, “J. R. Livingston against D. D. Tompkins,” in New York (State) and William Johnson (ed.), *Reports of Cases Adjudged in the Court of Chancery of New York* 4 (Albany: E.F. Backus, 1821), 415–33; and “Bridgeport Wednesday, January 8, 1817,” *Republican Farmer* (Bridgeport, CT), January 8, 1817; for the Post Chaise Line from New York to Philadelphia via Staten Island, see [No title], *New-York Gazette*, May 11, 1818, 2; [No Title] (ad.), *National Advocate*, May 20, 1819; “Expeditious Travel,” *Boston Daily Advertiser*, May 27, 1818, 1; for the Richmond Turnpike, see New York (State), “Chapter 122: An Act to Incorporate the Richmond Turnpike Company,” *Laws of the State of New York, Passed at the Thirty-Sixth, Thirty-Seventh, and Thirty-Eighth Sessions* 3 (Albany: Websters and Skinners, 1815), Thirty-Eighth Session 119–21, and “Chapter 22: An Act to Amend an Act to Incorporate the Richmond Turnpike Company,” *Laws of the State of New York*, 39th – 41st sess., 4 (Albany: Websters and Skinners, 1818), 16–17. The John H. Eddy’s *Map of the Country Thirty Miles Around the City of New York* (New York: Prior and Dunning, 1812, David Rumsey Map Collection, <http://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/detail/RUMSEY~8~1~282~30102:Map-Of-The-Country-Thirty-Miles-Rou>, accessed May 8, 2014), is the earliest evidence of the Richmond Turnpike, and shows the road oriented westward, extending into New Jersey and terminating at Woodbridge, before Tompkins’ involvement.

<sup>3</sup> “Splendid Ball at Belmont House, Staten Island,” *NYH*, August 26, 1836. *Abstract of the Title of Thomas E. Davis to Certain Lands in Castleton in the County of Richmond* (New York: William Osborne, 1844), Box 2, Folder 4A, Land Records, SIM; see also Ward, *Description of New Brighton on Staten Island* (1836), 3.

<sup>4</sup> For internal improvements as part of the republican project of the young American nation, see John Lauritz Larson, *Internal Improvement: National Public Works and the Promise of Popular Government in the Early United States* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); for cultural ideas and rhetoric surrounding internal improvements, see Michael J. Hostetler, “The Early American Quest for Internal Improvements: Distance and Debate,” *Rhetorica* 29:1 (Winter 2011), 53–75.

<sup>5</sup> For Davis and St. Mark’s Place, see Joseph F. Bosworth and New York (City) Superior Court, “Maxwell, et al. v The East River Bank,” *Reports of Cases Argued and*

*Determined in the Superior Court of the City of New York*, Volume 3 (Albany: W.C. Little, 1860), 124–26; New York (NY) and Christopher D. Brazee, et al., *East Village/Lower East Side Historic District Designation Report* (New York: Landmarks Preservation Commission, 2012, accessed April 2, 2013, <http://www.nyc.gov/html/lpc/downloads/pdf/reports/2491.pdf>), 6 and 11–15; and “City Improvements,” *The New-York Mirror*, November 3, 1832. Joseph A. Scoville, *The Old Merchants of New York City* 1 (New York: Carleton, 1863), 133–34; for Davis’ partners in New Brighton, see Ward, *Description of New Brighton* (1836), 3; and New Brighton Association, *Articles, &c....*, 3 and 20; for the extent of the Stuyvesant property in Manhattan, see The “Farm Book,” of maps surveyed by John Randel, Jr. ([http://gigapan.com/gigapans/fa872952d35e237828aea5dda50b3126/options/nosnapshots\\_hidetitle/iframe/flash.html?height=800frameborder=0%25height=80%25scrolling=nowidth=100%25](http://gigapan.com/gigapans/fa872952d35e237828aea5dda50b3126/options/nosnapshots_hidetitle/iframe/flash.html?height=800frameborder=0%25height=80%25scrolling=nowidth=100%25), accessed April 7, 2014); see, e.g., Curtis’ purchases, “New York, Land Records, 1630–1975,” New York County, Liber 302, 158; 303, 72 and 284; 301, 550 and 553; 299, 405; 306, 154, 430 and 432; 308, 80; 310, 16; 317, 510; 327, 503; 329, 442; 336, 150 and 190. Staten-Island Association, *Description of Clifton, at the Narrows, Staten-Island With a Map of the Same and the Articles of Agreement of the "Staten-Island Association" Entered into on the 9th Aug. 1837* (New-York: H. Ludwig, 1838), 5–9.

<sup>6</sup> Elizabeth Blackmar, “Accountability for Public Health,” in David Rosner, *Hives of Sickness: Public Health and Epidemics in New York City* (New Brunswick: Published for the Museum of the City of New York by Rutgers University Press, 1995), 48.

<sup>7</sup> Luria, *Capital Speculations* (2006), xxii–xxiv.

<sup>8</sup> For the importance of real estate speculation and development in the 1810s for both wealth-making and self-making, see Jane Kamensky, *The Exchange Artist: A Tale of High-Flying Speculation and America's First Banking Collapse* (New York: Viking, 2008), esp. 31–48 and 172–217; for the speculation and development of land into a ‘place’ at the early western frontier, see Alan Taylor, *William Cooper's Town: Power and Persuasion on the Frontier of the Early American Republic* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1995); for the historiography of the American West, and critiques of Frederick Jackson Turner’s idea of the American frontier, see, e.g., John Mack Faragher, “The Significance of the Frontier in American Historiography,” in *Rereading Frederick Jackson Turner* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 225–41; also John W. Reps, *The Making of Urban America: A History of City Planning in the United States* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), 349–80; William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1991), 29–54.

<sup>9</sup> “Bankruptcy,” *NYEP*, July 14, 1842. Kate M. Scott, *History of Jefferson County Pennsylvania with Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of Some of Its Prominent Men and Pioneers*, (Syracuse, NY: Mason & Co, 1888), 339. Clarence Karr, *The Canada Land Company: The Early Years, An Experiment in Colonization, 1823–43*, (Ottawa: Ontario Historical Society, 1973), 63–4 and 86. Carl Coke Rister, *Comanche Bondage: Dr. John Charles Beales's Settlement of La Villa de Dolores on Las Moras Creek in Southern Texas of the 1830s* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), 27. “A Memoir of George Atkinson Ward,” *Historical Collection of the Essex Institute* 7:2 (April 1865), 55.

<sup>10</sup> Hone, as quoted in Lockwood, 49; for an image of intersection of the Bowery and Broadway see, "Plate 8th: Junction of Broadway and Bowery, in George Melksham Bourne et al., *Bourne Views: The Bourne Series of Views of New York City* (New York and London, 1830–1), Museum of the City of New York, Object 44.344.13, collections.mcny.org, accessed May 15, 2014; for Davis' projects east of Greenwich Village, see New York (State), "Maxwell, et al. v East River Bank," 124–47 (esp. 131–2); New York (NY), *East 10th Street Historic District Designation Report*, (New York: LPC, 2012, <http://www.nyc.gov/html/lpc/downloads/pdf/reports/2492.pdf>), particularly 7–8; *East Village/Lower East Side Historic District Designation Report* (New York: LPC, 2012, <http://www.nyc.gov/html/lpc/downloads/pdf/reports/2491.pdf>), 6 and 11–15; and *Hamilton-Holley House* (New York: LPC, 2000, <http://www.nyc.gov/html/lpc/downloads/pdf/reports/hamiltonholly.pdf>), esp. 2–3, all accessed April 4, 2013; for Murray's houses on Washington Square, see Harris, *Around Washington Square* (2003), 12–13; for Curtis' purchases between 1833 and 1835, see fn. 5, above; for Staples' Manhattan investments, see, "New York, Land Records, 1630–1975," New York County, Liber 308, 172; 308, 174; 334, 162; 334, 165; 334, 168; and 334, 171; for a list of men active in the New Brighton Association in the 1830s, see, *Articles, &c...*, 3 and 20; "New Brighton Association," *New York Commercial Advertiser* July 01, 1836; and *New York As It Is, in 1837: Containing a General Description of the City of New York* (New York: J. Disturnell, 1837), 156; for Staples and Minthorne Tompkins' investment in Stapleton, see Charles W. Leng and William T. Davis, *Staten Island and Its People: A History, 1609–1929* 1, 226; and "Messrs. Bleeckers will sell tomorrow...", *NYEP*, June 24, 1836, 2. Staples the brother-in-law of Daniel D. Tompkins, and thus Minthorne Tompkins' uncle by marriage.

<sup>11</sup> Blackmar (1989), 30–5 and 100–5; for the street commissioners and the 1811 Manhattan grid plan, see Hilary Ballon (ed.), *The Greatest Grid: The Master Plan of Manhattan, 1811–2011* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 27–48 and 87–101; for the full career of Randel, see Marguerite Holloway, *The Measure of Manhattan: The Tumultuous Career and Surprising Legacy of John Randel Jr., Cartographer, Surveyor, Inventor* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2013).

<sup>12</sup> Blackmar (1989), 28–43; "Salmon v Stuyvesant," in John L. Wendell, *Reports of Cases Argued in the Supreme Court of Judicature and in the Court for the Correction of Errors of the State of New York* 16 (Albany: Wm. & A. Gould & Co., 1837), 329.

<sup>13</sup> See ch. 1n65. Trustees Minutes Book A, February 26, 1823, mark 69, Sailors' Snug Harbor Collection, Stephen B. Luce Library Archives, SUNY Maritime College.

<sup>14</sup> "New York, Land Records, 1630–1975," Richmond County, Liber 5, 23.

<sup>15</sup> New Brighton Association, *Articles, &c...*. Staten-Island Association, 11–24. Land companies seem to have been far more common for western land than land on the metropolitan frontier. Some, like the Holland Land Company, were longer term investors and landlords; see Charles E. Brooks, *Frontier Settlement and the Market Revolution: The Holland Land Purchase* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996). Others, like the New England Mississippi Land Company's Yazoo land scheme of the 1810s and the Mississippi and Arkansas Land Company of the 1830s, in which Daniel Low invested,

were shorter-term speculations; see Kamensky, 35–9; and Gene Dattel, *Cotton and Race in the Making of America: The Human Costs of Economic Power* (Lanham: Ivan R. Dee, 2011), 43–4; for the New Jersey Company, an early eastern land company, see Alexander McLean, *A History of Jersey City, NJ: A Record of its Early Settlement and Corporate Progress* (Press of the Jersey City Printing Company, 1895). Richmond County Liber 1, 24.

<sup>16</sup> For a contemporary reference to “Fancy Stock,” see New York (State), “Documents Accompanying the Report to the Select Committee on the Commercial Bank Investigation,” *Documents of the Senate of the State of New York*, 59th sess., 2:95 (Albany: E. Croswell, 1836), 41. The term “fancy” applied to property which had no value that could be objectively quantified, such as “fancy maid” for certain female slave property; see Edward E. Baptist, “Rape, Commodification, and U.S. Domestic Slave Trade,” in Walter Johnson, *The Chattel Principle: Internal Slave Trades in the Americas* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 183. “Seaman v Low,” in New York (State) and Joseph E. Bosworth (ed.), *Reports of Cases Argued and Determined in the Superior Court of the City of New York* 4 (Albany: W. C. Little, 1861), 337.

<sup>17</sup> “Henry David Thoreau to his father and mother, June 8, 1843,” in Henry D Thoreau, F B. Sanborn (ed.), *The Writings of Henry David Thoreau* 6: *Familiar Letters* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co, 1906), 86. Robert S. Hill, “Federalism, Republicanism, and the Northwest Ordinance,” *Publius – the Journal of Federalism* 18:4 (Fall 1988), 41–52.

<sup>18</sup> Blackmar (1995), 48; for further work on the cultural relationship between disease and environment see Charles Rosenberg, “The Therapeutic Revolution: Medicine, Meaning and Social Change in Nineteenth Century America,” *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine* 20:4 (1977), 487; for more recent work that considers nineteenth century understanding of environment and disease, see Linda Nash, *Inescapable Ecologies: A History Of Environment, Disease, And Knowledge* (Berkeley: University of California Press, c2006), esp. ch. 1; and Conevery Valencius, *The Health of the Country: How American Settlers Understood Themselves and their Land* (New York: Basic Books, c2002); see also Martin Melosi, *The Sanitary City: Environmental Services In Urban America from Colonial Times to the Present* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, c2008).

<sup>19</sup> For the emerging order of nineteenth century cities that sorted people and uses through the land and housing value and the built environment, see Blackmar, *Manhattan* (1989); Dell Upton, *Another City: Urban Life and Urban Spaces in the New American Republic* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008); and Diane Shaw, *City Building on the Eastern Frontier: Sorting the New Nineteenth-Century City* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004); see also Stuart Blumin, *The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City: 1760–1900* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 20–7, 46–51, and 149–55; for the link between cultural ideas and urban form in the early nineteenth century, see also Luria, *Capital Speculations* (2006), and Lockwood, *Manhattan* (1976).

<sup>20</sup> For the idea that an orderly, balanced and healthy environment and an orderly, balanced and healthy body were related, see Conevery Valencius, *The Health of the*

Country (2002), see, e.g., 3 and 10; Charles E. Rosenberg, "The Therapeutic Revolution: Medicine, Meaning and Social Change in Nineteenth Century America," *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine* 20:4 (Summer 1977), 485–506; for the mobilization of narratives of physical health as cultural authority in the construction of an American national culture, see, e.g., Joan Burbick, *Healing the Republic* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994); for broad context on health and disease in New York, see John Duffy, *A History of Public Health in New York City: 1625–1866* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1968); also see, e.g., Gretchen A. Condran, "Changing Patterns of Epidemic Disease in New York City," in David Rosner, *Hives Of Sickness: Public Health And Epidemics In New York City* (New Brunswick: Published for the Museum of the City of New York by Rutgers University Press, 1995), 33; for broad context on health and disease in New York, see John Duffy, *A History of Public Health in New York City: 1625–1866* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1968).

<sup>21</sup> "The Cholera," *Albany Argus*, May 28, 1833, 2. Valentine Seaman mapped out one of the Yellow Fever epidemics in New York in "An Inquiry into the Cause of the Prevalence of the Yellow Fever in New York," *Medical Repository* 1 (3rd ed.) (New York: T & J Swords, 1804), 303–23. Folpe, 63. New York (NY) and Arthur Everett Peterson, *Minutes of the Common Council of the City of New York, 1784–1831* 4 (New York, 1917), February 16, 1807, 353–54. Folpe, 55–60. Harris, *Around Washington Square* (2003), 5–6; one example that links Staten Island's "salubrity" with its selection as a site for quarantine is Josiah Conder, *The Modern Traveler: A Popular Description...of the Various Countries of the Globe, North America* 1 (London: James Duncan, 1829), 222.

<sup>22</sup> Claude Edwin Heaton, "Yellow Fever in New York City," *Bulletin Of The Medical Library Association* 34, (April 1946), 78; Folpe, 63–4; Lockwood, 64–6; "Letter from a Gentleman at Staten Island, dated September 16, 1798, to his friend in Edinburgh," *Caledonian Mercury* (Scotland), November 22, 1798, 3; John Pintard and Dorothy C. Barck (eds.), *Letters from John Pintard to his Daughter, Eliza Noel Pintard Davidson, 1816–1833* 1 (New York: Printed for the NYHS, 1940), 133.

<sup>23</sup> Ballon, 27–9 and 39–42; Holloway, 54; for revival of grid from earlier use with a different set of ideals, see Upton, 113–44. "Remarks of the Commissioners for Laying Out Streets and Roads in the City of New York, Under the Act of April 3, 1807," in William Bridges, *Map Of The City Of New York And Island Of Manhattan With Explanatory Remarks And References* (New York: William Bridges, 1811, (<http://www.library.cornell.edu/Reps/DOCS/nyc1811.htm>, accessed April 16, 2014).

<sup>24</sup> "Remarks of the Commissioners for Laying Out Streets...", John Randel, Jr., "City of New York, north of Canal Street, in 1808 to 1821," in D. T. Valentine, *Manual of the Corporation of the City of New-York* (1864), 848; see also Ballon, 27–9 and 39–42; and Holloway, 48–51.

<sup>25</sup> Much of this land had been surveyed into gridded streets and lots decades earlier, but much of the growth that changed the survey lines into built environment took place between 1790 and 1810. Blackmar (1989), 30–43.

<sup>26</sup> Ray W. Irwin, *Daniel D. Tompkins: Governor of New York and Vice President of the United States* (New York: NYHS, 1968), 2–7, 23–4, and 27–8. Hopper Striker Mott, “The Road to the Bouwerij, Part 2” *Americana* 8 (July 1913), 588–92. Randel, “Farm Book.”

<sup>27</sup> Mott, 588–93. Randel, “Farm Book.” “New York, Land Records, 1630–1975,” New York County Liber 69, 497 and 504; 68, 507; and 69, 511.

<sup>28</sup> Edward C. Delvan, Jr., “The Marble House,” *Proceedings of the Staten Island Institute of Arts and Sciences* 2:1 (October 1907–January 1908), 32. *Map of Property Situated at Staten Island adjoining the Quarantine Belonging to Daniel D. Tompkins, New York, February 27, 1821, Surveyed By Daniel T. Ludlam*, Map Collection, SIM; “One Hundred Lots on Staten Island.” “For Sale: 200 Lots of Ground.” “New York, August 16,” *Albany Gazette*, August, 30, 1819, 2. “New York, Land Records, 1630–1975,” New York County, Liber 69, 497.

<sup>29</sup> New Brighton Association, *Articles, &c....* Staten-Island Association, 2–9. New Brighton Association, *Staten Island Map of New Brighton....* Gordon A. Sage, New York City Surveyor, *Plan of New York Avenue from the Bay or Shore Road to Richmond Avenue* (1843), NYHS Map Collection, 2N T8. Acreage estimated from <http://www.freemaptools.com/area-calculator.htm>. In the trust deeds following the Panic of 1837, Richmond Avenue was reduced to 60 feet from the initial 80-foot plan; see, e.g., “New York, Land Records, 1630–1975,” Richmond County, Liber 4, 266; 4, 270; 4, 274; 4, 279; 4, 287; and 4, 291.

<sup>30</sup> At the first day of the sales of lots at New Brighton, several buyers bought in 4–12 lot blocks (about 1/4–2/3 acre) examples include: “New York, Land Records, 1630–1975,” Richmond County, Liber 2, 187; 2, 208; 2, 213; 2, 220; 2, 225; and 2, 231. “Clifton Villas, etc.,” *New-York Mirror*, August 26 1837.

<sup>31</sup> Hendrik Hartog, *Public Property and Private Power: The Corporation of the City of New York in American Law, 1730–1870* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1983), 158–67; see also Ballou, 27–9 and 39; Holloway, 48–51; and “Remarks of the Commissioners for Laying Out Streets....” New Brighton Association, *Staten Island Map of New Brighton....* Ward, 5–7.

<sup>32</sup> New Brighton Association, *Staten Island Map of New Brighton....* Ward, 5–7. “Ward v Davis,” *Reports of Cases Argued and Determined in the Superior Court of the City of New York* 3 (Albany: Little, 1879), esp. 502–6; for sale prices, see, “New York, Land Records, 1630–1975,” Richmond County, Liber 2, 117; 2, 129; 2, 168; 2, 175; 2, 187; 2, 193; 2, 202; 2, 208; 2, 213; 2, 220; 2, 225; 2, 231; 2, 237; 2, 243; 2, 249; 2, 255; 2, 261; 2, 320; 2, 325; 2, 403; 2, 409; 2, 416; and 2, 471. Staten-Island Association, 6–7.

<sup>33</sup> See, e.g., “New York, Land Records, 1630–1975,” Richmond County, Liber 2, 117, for New Brighton; and Liber 4, 266, for Clifton.

<sup>34</sup> Staten-Island Association, 5. “Ward v Davis,” esp. 502–6; for Richmond Terrace, see also Marjorie Pearson, Elisa Urbanelli, and Gale Harris, *St. George Historic District: Designation Report* (New York: New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, 1994, accessed April 3, 2013), 9.

<sup>35</sup> For Tompkins' Staten Island land purchases, see fn. 2, above; for steamboat contract see, "Bridgeport Wednesday, January 8 1817," *Republican Farmer* (Bridgeport, Ct.), January 8, 1817, 3.

<sup>36</sup> For the Livingston steamboat monopoly and challenges to it, in cultural context, see Stiles, 39–51; and "Livingston v Ogden and Gibbons," "Ogden v Gibbons," "Ogden v Gibbons," and "In the Matter of Vanderbilt," in Johnson, *Reports of Cases Adjudged...* 4 (1821), 48, 150–65, 174–83, and 57–62.

<sup>37</sup> For use of Bedloe's Island and Governors Island for quarantine, see Duffy (1968), 86, 105–6, 125–6, 131, 251; for "A new steam boat," *Susquehanna Centinel* (Montrose, PA), December 13, 1817, 2; for initiation of steam ferry service to Brooklyn, see Brian J. Cudahy, *Over and Back: The History of Ferryboats in New York Harbor* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1990), 34; for increase in frequency of service to Staten Island, see, "Notice (ad)," *New-York Gazette*, September 26, 1818, 3.

<sup>38</sup> For a general history of early steam ferries in New York, see Cudahy (1990), 20–89; for Stevens' initial steam service to Hoboken, lasting a mere two years because of conflicts with the Livingston monopoly, see *ibid.*, 30–4; for Jersey City/Paulus Hook, see McLean, 31; for consolidation of Williamsburg ferries by Dunham, see, e.g., *Minutes of the Common Council* 10 (1917), March 8, 1819, 281–2. Henry Reed Stiles, *A History of the City of Brooklyn* 2 (Brooklyn: by subscription, 1869), 385; for the relationship between Pierrepont's Brooklyn Heights and the ferry, see Kenneth Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 31–2.

<sup>39</sup> "New York, Land Records, 1630–1975," Richmond County, Liber E, 367; F, 403; G, 317; H, 102; H, 209; Leng and Davis 2, 967; Sail ferry history from Leng and Davis 2, 677–88; McLean, 29–31; Jackson, 31.

<sup>40</sup> For more on the Gibbons decision, see Thomas H. Cox, *Gibbons v. Ogden, Law, and Society in the Early Republic* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2009); and Herbert A. Johnson, *Gibbons v. Ogden: John Marshall, Steamboats, and the Commerce Clause* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2010); see also "Livingston v Tompkins," 415–33; for ferry routes with stops on Staten Island in the 1830s, see *New York As It Is in 1837*, 181; For stops on Staten Island as the "usual landings," on the Manhattan to New Brunswick, NJ route listed in the 1837 guide, see, "Traveller's Directory," *Richmond Republican*, November 24, 1827; and "Steamboat Directory," *NYEP*, June 22, 1836; for New Brighton and Stapleton ferry service, see, "Another New Ferry," *New-York Spectator*, November 12, 1835; and "Sale of 300 building lots at Staten Island," *NYEP*, June 22, 1836; for Clifton, see Staten-Island Association, 6–7. It is important to note that the use of specific vessels was often in flux, with boats often repurposed to other routes or used both for harbor towing and for ferry service.

<sup>41</sup> Ward, 6.

<sup>42</sup> C. G. Hine, *Legends, Stories, And Folklore of Old Staten Island* (New York: SIHS, 1925), 29. "Riots at Staten Island," *New York Spectator*, August 22, 1836. "An Excursion," *New York Morning Herald*, August 15, 1837.



<sup>43</sup> See Figure 2.1. John Randel, Jr., *The City of New York As Laid Out by the Commissioners with the Surrounding Country* (New York: P. Maverik, 1821), Library of Congress Geography and Map Division, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g3804n.ct001389>.

<sup>44</sup> Idem. John Randel, Jr., *[Map of the Upper Bay, New York and New Jersey]* 1814 (manuscript), NYHS Maps, X3.1.5.

<sup>45</sup> “Nautilus Hall,” *NYEP*, June 24, 1818, 3. “Staten Island Union Garden (ad),” *NYEP*, May 26, 1823, 3. “For Staten Island” (ad), *New York American*, August 28, 1828, 3. “Planter’s Hotel, on Staten Island,” *New York American*, July 28, 1820, 3. “Notice: Divine Service,” *New York Commercial Advertiser*, July 29, 1820, 3.

<sup>46</sup> James Stuart, *Three Years in North America* 1 (Edinburgh: Printed for R. Cadell, 1833), 403, 412. August 25th 1828, Reel 6, Journal 1828–1839, James Kent Papers, Library of Congress.

<sup>47</sup> For the “lungs” metaphor in the 19th century for parks, see David Schulyer, *The New Urban Landscape* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 60–1. “Remarks of the Commissioners for Laying Out Streets.... “Excursion for Health and Pleasure (ad),” *NYEP*, July 24, 1822, 3.

<sup>48</sup> Blackmar (1989), 100. Comparing maps from 1798 and 1808 reveals the early development of the area around the promised St. John’s Church, see P.R. Maverick, *Plan of the City of New York, Drawn and Engrav’d for D. Longworth* (ca. 1798), The Eno Collection of New York City Views, Print Collection, Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs, New York Public Library (<http://digitalgallery.nypl.org/nypldigital/id?1650699>); and David Longworth, *Plan of the City of New York* (1808), Pusey Map Collection, Harvard University Library, (<http://vc.lib.harvard.edu/vc/deliver/~maps/009712644>, accessed March 15, 2014); for a description of St. John’s Park in the 1830s, see *New York As It Is in 1833* (New York: J. Disturnell, 1833), 179–80; for more on the development of St. John’s Park, see Morgan Dix, *History of the Parish of Trinity Church in the City of New York*, Part 4 (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1906), 235–7; Part 2 (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1901), 187–90; and Part 3 (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1905), 376; see also Randall Mason, *The Once and Future New York: Historic Preservation and the Modern City* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 67–8.

<sup>49</sup> “One Hundred Lots on Staten Island.” The 1,000 household estimate is based on the Island’s average of 7 persons per family from the 1790 census, and the 1820 population of 6,135. United States Censuses of 1790 and 1820, Historical Census Browser (2004), University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center: <http://mapserver.lib.virginia.edu/>.

<sup>50</sup> “One Hundred Lots on Staten Island.” “For Sale 200 Lots of Ground.” “Chapter 124: An Act to Aid in the Erection of Places of Worship at the Quarantine Ground on Staten Island,” *Laws of the State of New York*, 42nd–44th sess. 5 (Albany: William Gould & Co, 1821), 150. “Religious Intelligence,” *Evangelical Recorder (1818–1821)*; September 2, 1820, 2:44 (American Periodicals Series Online, [www.proquest.com](http://www.proquest.com)), 143.

<sup>51</sup> “One Hundred Lots on Staten Island.” “For Sale 200 Lots of Ground.”

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> For the development of land east of Greenwich Village, including Davis, Murray and Geer's involvement, see Lockwood, 49–64; Folpe, 70–9; Harris, 12–24; and "City Improvements"; see also fn. 10, above.

<sup>54</sup> Naomi Stubbs, "Pleasure Gardens of America: Anxieties of National Identity," in Jonathan Conlin (ed.), *The Pleasure Garden from Vauxhall to Coney Island* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 127–49. "To the Public" (ad), *New York American*, July 19, 1832.

<sup>55</sup> Unlike Murray and Davis, Geer was not an investor in the New Brighton Association, but he bought 200 lots there in a series of transactions in 1836; for Geer's investments in New Brighton, see, e.g., "New York, Land Records, 1630–1975," Richmond County, Liber 2, 281; 2, 276; 2, 271; 2, 267; 2, 123; and 2, 134; for Richmond Terrace, see, "Ward v Davis," esp. 502–6; Figure 3.3 (John A. Rolph, *New Brighton in the Vicinity of New York*, EM11838, Emmett Collection of Manuscripts, etc., Wallach Division, NYPL, Print Collection, Image ID: 423272, NYPL, Digital Collections, <http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47da-2811-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>, accessed April 24, 2014); and for close-up view of the Greek Revival row of homes along the Terrace dating back to the 1830s, see the 1928 photo of 386 and 396 Richmond Terrace at <http://apeshall.blogspot.com/2010/04/richmond-terrace-as-classical.html>, accessed March 12, 2014.

<sup>56</sup> New Brighton Association, *Staten Island Map of New Brighton....* Staten-Island Association, 2–3.

<sup>57</sup> "Splendid Ball at the Belmont House, Staten Island," *NYH*, August 26, 1836; for history of hotels and their place in American history, see A. K. Sandoval-Strausz, *Hotel: An American History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007).

<sup>58</sup> For early descriptions of the Pavilion Hotel, see, "Pavilion, New Brighton (ad)," *NYH*, July 11, 1837; and "The New Brighton Pavilion," *New York Spectator*, July 13, 1837. "New Brighton Pavilion: To Lease (ad)," *Charleston Courier* February 3, 1837, 3; for Bennett's reporting of society happenings at New Brighton in the 1830s, see, "Mr. Bennett's Letters, No. 12," *NYH*, August 19, 1839; "Splendid Ball at Belmont House, Staten Island," *NYH*, August 26, 1836; "Great Ball at New Brighton," *NYH*, August 4, 1837; "New Brighton Gaities," *NYH*, August 16, 1837; "An Evening at New Brighton," *NYH*, August 24, 1837; "Another Calico Hop at New Brighton," *NYH*, July 29, 1837; "Great Ball at New Brighton," *NYH*, August 4, 1837; "Fashion at New Brighton," *NYH*, August 26, 1839; "Ball at New Brighton," *NYH*, July 15, 1839; and "Fashionable Intelligence," *NYH*, August 28, 1840. "Dear Mr. Editor," *NYH*, August 17, 1838. The Pavilion Hotel was still listed as one of the "best hotels in the world" according to Moses King, *Where to Stop: A Guide to the Best Hotels of the World* (Boston: Moses King, 1894), 113–67.

<sup>59</sup> Staten-Island Association, 7. "New Brighton Association," *New York American*, July 14, 1836, which is a modified version of Ward's *Description of New Brighton* (1836).

<sup>60</sup> Scoville 1, 220. Staten-Island Association, 7. Ward, 7; for the relationship between fountains, water and moral reform, see Michael Rawson, "The Nature of Water: Reform and the Antebellum Crusade for Municipal Water in Boston," *Environmental History* 9:3 (July 2004), 421; for the history of the Croton water system, see Gerard T. Koeppel, *Water for Gotham: A History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

<sup>61</sup> Ward, 5. Staten-Island Association, 8–9.

<sup>62</sup> See Figure 2.5: Image accompanying New Brighton Association, *Staten Island Map of New Brighton...*; for an analysis of the Second Great Awakening in the North in terms of the rise of the commercial economy and evolving class distinctions and geographical sorting in cities and towns, see Paul E. Johnson, *A Shopkeeper's Millenium: Society and Revivals in Rochester, New York 1815–1837* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1985).

<sup>63</sup> See Figure 2.5: Image accompanying New Brighton Association, *Staten Island Map of New Brighton...*. It is interesting to note that Ralph Waldo Emerson's brother William bought a 50-acre estate on Staten Island, though not at New Brighton, shortly before Emerson published *Nature* (see ch. 4).

<sup>64</sup> For the geographical and housing type sorting of classes, see Blackmar (1989); for the struggles and changing nature of the artisan class, see Sean Wilentz, *Chants Democratic: New York City & the Rise of the American Working Class, 1788–1850* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984); for the emergence of an artisan cum capitalist class interested in geographical separation from and moral reform of an emerging working class, see Paul E. Johnson, *A Shopkeeper's Millenium: Society and Revivals in Rochester, New York 1815–1837* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1985); for the unification of elites in New York into a single "bourgeois" class beginning mid-century, see Sven Beckert, *The Monied Metropolis: New York City and the Consolidation of the American Bourgeoisie, 1850–1896* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), esp. Part 1.

<sup>65</sup> Ward, 6. Staten-Island Association, 6–7.

<sup>66</sup> Ward, 6–7. Staten-Island Association, 8–9.

<sup>67</sup> Staten-Island Association, 6–7. Ward, 6.

<sup>68</sup> Staten-Island Association, 6; for the New York Dry Dock Company and a broader sense of what is called here the East River industrial frontier, directly to the east of the new residential frontier (around St. Mark's Place and Washington Square), see, "Steam Power to Let," *NYEP*, March 5, 1829, 4; John H. Morrison, *History of New York Ship Yards* (New York: W.F. Sametz, 1909), 50–2; Richard C. McKay, *South Street: A Maritime History of New York* (New York: G.P. Putnam's sons, 1934), 182; and George Swede, *The Steam Tug* (Bloomington: Xlibris Corp, 2010), 78–80; for Lewis Lyman, E. D. Comstock and Moulton Bullock's involvement in the New York Dry Dock Company and its banking operation, see *New York As It Is, in 1837*, 130; Swede, 78–80; and "Testimony taken by the Bank Committee, in the Case of the Dry Dock Bank," *Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York, 61st sess.*, 6:318 (Albany: E. Croswell, 1838); for the relocation of the gun factory, see Leng and Davis 1, 618; for the New Brighton Association's deed restrictions, see, e.g., "New York, Land Records, 1630–1975," Richmond County, Liber 2, 117; for discussion of deed restriction and land

covenants, see Michael Holleran, *Boston's "Changeful Times": Origins of Preservation & Planning in America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 67–83.

<sup>69</sup> For Tompkins' land, see, "New York, Land Records, 1630–1975," Richmond County, Libers G, 369; G, 382; G, 384; G, 386; G, 389; G, 391; G, 393; G, 421. "New York, August 26," *Albany Gazette*, August 30, 1819, 2. My calculation for Tompkins assumes the lots sold in 1819 were 25x100. The small, dense nature of these lots is shown on the *Map of Property Situated at Staten Island adjoining the Quarantine Belonging to Daniel D. Tompkins....*; for the purchase of the land for New Brighton by the Association, see Liber 1, 24; for the first day of sales by the New Brighton Association, see, e.g., Liber 2, 117; 2, 129; 2, 168; 2, 175; 2, 187; 2, 193; 2, 202; 2, 208; 2, 213; 2, 220; 2, 225; 2, 231; 2, 237; 2, 243; 2, 249; 2, 255; 2, 261; 2, 320; 2, 403; 2, 409; 2, 416; and 2, 471. New Brighton Association, *Staten Island Map of New Brighton....* "Commercial," *NYH*, March 23, 1837.

<sup>70</sup> For first day sales of the New Brighton Association, including Wild's see fn69, above; for transactions involving Geer, see, e.g., "New York, Land Records, 1630–1975," Richmond County, Liber 2, 281; 2, 276; 2, 271; 2, 267; 2, 123; and 2, 134.

<sup>71</sup> Hine (1925), 23; *Longworth's* (1837), 644; for Dudley, Stuyvesant, Joseph and Henriques purchases, see, "New York, Land Records, 1630–1975," Richmond County, Liber 2, 237 and 2, 249; 2, 403; and 2, 409; Bankruptcy Act of 1841 Case Records, no.838, bankruptcy of Seth Geer, Item 71, Schedule A, National Archives (New York). "For Sale, One of the Most Eligible Locations in the Vicinity of New York," *NYH*, May 25, 1841. "Ward v Davis," esp. 502–6.

<sup>72</sup> Philip Hone, *Diaries 1826–1851*, Reel 4, 30 April 1835, NYHS; for Geer and King's financial relationship, Bankruptcy Act of 1841 Case Records, no.838, Item 71, Schedule A, National Archives (New York).

<sup>73</sup> "New Brighton," *NYH*, June 6, 1837. Scoville, 221. "Auction Sales," *NYEP*, March 21, 1839, 3. "New York, Land Records, 1630–1975," Richmond County, Liber 11, 508. "Accidents on the Staten Island Ferry," *Richmond County Mirror*, July 6, 1839.

<sup>74</sup> "A Big Item," *The Sun* (Baltimore), March 25, 1842, 2. Bankruptcy Act of 1841 Case Index, National Archives (New York); for Geer bankruptcy. see fn. 72, above; for bankruptcy of Joseph L. Joseph, see Bankruptcy Act of 1841 Case Records, no.1210, Schedule A, National Archives (New York); for Ward bankruptcy, see, "Commercial."

<sup>75</sup> "New York, Land Records, 1630–1975," Richmond County, Liber 2, 340 and 465; and 1, 472.

<sup>76</sup> "An Excursion," *New York Morning Herald*, August 15, 1837; for the mix of Manhattan and Staten Island buyers and sellers of various professions and crafts at Stapleton, see, e.g., "New York, Land Records, 1630–1975," Richmond County, Liber W, 25; W, 206; 1, 64; 1, 84; 1, 86; 1, 100; 4, 67; 4, 64; 1, 103; 1, 117; 6, 291; 6, 380; 12, 398. *Longworth's* (1837). *Longworth's American Almanac: New-york Register and City Directory for the Fifty-Ninth Year of American Independence* (New York: T. Longworth, 1834). "Sale of 300 building lots at Staten Island."

<sup>77</sup> Blood, *Staten Island: Map*; James Butler, *Map of Staten Island*, SIM; for the republican optimism and order of the grid, see Upton, 113–44; for the subsequent rise of romantic nature in city and suburban planning, see David Schuyler, *The New Urban Landscape: The Redefinition of City Form in Nineteenth-Century America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986).

<sup>78</sup> For the dissolution of the original New Brighton Association and Davis' and his new investors' ownership of the land, see *Abstract of the Title of Thomas E. Davis...*; and "Ward v Davis," 506; Blood, *Staten Island: Map*; James Butler, *Map of Staten Island*, SIM; for a sense of the mansions of this era, including Griswold and Griffin, from a romantic sensibility, see Mrs. L. H. Sigourney, "A Visit to Staten Island," *Graham's Magazine* 37 (June 1850–January 1851), 149–51; and "An Afternoon's Drive on Staten Island," *Newark Daily Advertiser*, August 28, 1848.

<sup>79</sup> Blood, *Staten Island: Map*; James Butler, *Map of Staten Island*, SIM; for Pell, see Scoville 1, 84; for Ely, see Leng and Davis, 550, 746. Liber 7, 478; for Jones, see *Sheldon & Co.'s Business or Advertising Directory* (1845), 34; and "Foreign Dry Good – S. T. Jones & Co.," *New York Commercial Advertiser*, March 11, 1843, 3; for more on Goodhue, see, "Death of Jonathan Goodhue," *New-York Municipal Gazette* 1:52 (January 18, 1849), 880–1; and Scoville 1, 23–6. "Ward v Davis," esp. 506–8; Leng and Davis 2, 619, and 880–1; and U. S. Census of 1850, Enumerator Sheet, Town of Castleton, County of Richmond, New York, [http://archive.org/details/us\\_census](http://archive.org/details/us_census).

<sup>80</sup> Blood, *Staten Island: Map*; James Butler, *Map of Staten Island*, SIM; Frederick Law Olmsted to Charles Loring Brace, 9 March 1848, Reel 4. FLO Papers.

<sup>81</sup> "New Brighton," *The Rover: A Weekly Magazine of Tales, Poetry, and Engravings, Original and Selected* 3 (1844), 193. Philip Hone, Diaries, Reel 5, 22 August 1841. "French Critics and Yankee Foibles," *United States Magazine* 22:116, (February 1848), 174.

<sup>82</sup> Philip Hone, Diaries, Reel 5, 31 August 1842.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, NYTr, August 14, 1841. Blood, *Staten Island: Map*; "Citizens of New York...", Samuel Akerly, "Agriculture of Richmond County," *Transactions of the New York State Agricultural Society* 2, 1842 (Albany: E. Mack, 1843), 199–200.

## CHAPTER THREE

### “Neighborhood to a Great City:” Creating a Metropolitan Countryside

In all respects a very pleasant residence —much more rural than you would expect of the vicinity of New York. — Henry David Thoreau<sup>1</sup>

. . . Many a mechanic or tradesman is able, by a little retrenchment besides the amount of his rent bills in a few years to erect a tasty cottage on a pleasant country or suburban lot. — William H. Ranlett<sup>2</sup>

On March 4, 1848, Frederick Law Olmsted sailed through New York Harbor on the *Juliet* toward his new farmstead on Staten Island. Traveling through Hell Gate and down the East River from his old home in Connecticut, Olmsted passed the Manhattan docks, with the forest of masts that defined the maritime metropolis. The city streets were densely lined with buildings, punctuated by church spires, and teeming with the activity of the leading commercial city of the nation. After waiting behind Governor’s Island for favorable winds and tide, the Captain angled the sloop toward Staten Island and the Narrows, leaving urban landscape of Manhattan behind.<sup>3</sup>

A very different kind of metropolitan landscape revealed itself as Olmsted approached Staten Island. A neat row of fine country cottages came into view along Richmond Terrace at New Brighton. Amidst the forested slopes of oak, cedar and sweet gum, the Island’s hilltops were crowned with fine estates belonging to the families of Manhattan’s elite. On the shore beyond the Quarantine Station at the Narrows, Olmsted saw the dense little villages of Tompkinsville and Stapleton. Piloting the sloop towards Fort Tompkins himself, Olmsted watched the gardens and lawns and orchards of what he would later call the Island’s “villa village or quarter” at Clifton, once the land of the Staten Island Association. At last, out in the broad expanse of Lower New York Bay, he

spied the farming landscape of the Island's terminal moraine with its superior soil.

Olmsted was moving to Staten Island to farm, or so he thought. Really, Olmsted was moving to the edge of the New York region to become a man of the metropolis.<sup>4</sup>

This chapter will explore two cultural movements that brought visibility to Staten Island between the 1830s and 1850s and helped form the Island into what Henry David Thoreau described as "a neighborhood to a great city." Each of the two movements promoted transformation of the Island's landscape. Olmsted bridged them both. First, the agricultural improvement movement motivated scientifically-minded men in Manhattan, like Dr. Samuel Akerly and William A. Seeley, to move to Staten Island farms where they applied their urban ideas of efficiency and progress to the landscape. Olmsted bought Akerly's farm in 1848 and came to Staten Island as an agricultural improver too. Second, Andrew Jackson Downing spearheaded a movement to refine the rural landscape in terms of urban aesthetic sensibilities rooted in American romantic ideas about nature and the English country estate. Although Downing was not a Staten Islander, Olmsted and other Islanders helped make his ideas reality at the metropolitan periphery. As Olmsted shifted from agriculturist to landscape designer, he experimented with Downing's ideas on his Staten Island farm, helped his neighbors refine their Staten Island estates, and later brought the movement's ideas into the city itself as he designed and built Central Park.<sup>5</sup>

Alongside each other, Staten Island's "scientific" farms, country estates, and smaller country cottages formed what will be termed, for the purposes of this dissertation, a "metropolitan countryside." Both movements referred to their projects as rural improvements but both shaped the metropolitan periphery with urban ideas about how the

country landscape beyond the city should look and how it should be used. As literary scholar Raymond Williams teaches us, such so-called country places as Staten Island, rather than being in contradistinction from the city, are a product of capitalism and culture originating from within and then emanating out of the cities. The landscape that developed on Staten Island between the 1830s and 50s was inherently metropolitan because it reflected and constructed a new and deeper relationship between the Island and Manhattan, transforming two separate places into a regional unity.<sup>6</sup>

Staten Island was not like most other places influenced by the agricultural improvement movement and the rural refinement movement because it was a country place easily accessible to the city. This chapter will explore two ways in which the Island became important in the development of the metropolitan country landscape. First, Staten Island, between the 1830s and 1850s, was a place to experiment with landscape ideas for New York's estate owners, gardeners and agricultural improvers; and second, the Island developed a density and regular intercourse with the city that made the Island's countryside part of the regional metropolis. As will be shown, Staten Island's agriculturists, instead of restoring soil fertility through rural self-sufficiency as proscribed by the movement, brought the Island's agricultural economy, farmscape and community into closer relationship with Manhattan institutions, capital and commerce. The shape, design and uses of Staten Island country estates will show the formation of what Olmsted described as the "villa village or quarter" at Clifton, and other definable neighborhoods on the Island as well as their metropolitan nature. Manhattan elites like shipping mogul William H. Aspinwall and commission merchant Samuel T. Jones could access their



Staten Island country homes with greater frequency and in different ways than they could with larger estates more distant from the city in the Hudson Valley or on Long Island.<sup>7</sup>

Finally, this chapter will explore the promise of the metropolitan periphery for the city's middle classes. It will do so through the examination of the landscape ideas of Staten Island architects and gardeners. Here, too, was Staten Island a prototype of possibilities for a regional metropolis that was more than just urban. Having gained experience by shaping the estate homes and grounds of New York's elite on Staten Island, architect William H. Ranlett and estate gardener William Chorlton (among others) articulated a vision of mini-country estates with cottages on village-sized plots, and showed a way to settle a wider swath of urban society in the metropolitan countryside. Together, Staten Island's agricultural improvers, estate owners, architects and gardeners transformed the Island from a separate rural place, where the value of its land lay primarily in the soil's ability to produce foodstuffs for the city, to a non-urban part of the emerging regional metropolis.

As will be shown in a variety of ways, Staten Islanders like Akerly, Olmsted, Ranlett and Chorlton also helped make the landscape of the metropolitan countryside a generic formulation, applicable as much to any "country" place accessible from the city as it was to Staten Island itself. In the improved farms, country estates and cottages that is what Staten Island's landscape became, one sees a pattern similar to that of the Island's maritime institutions and real estate speculators: Men (of the metropolis) come to the Island with grand visions for a new relationship with Manhattan. Thus, they bring Staten Island into an emerging region, but simultaneously, define the Island as distinct from the city, and therefore, precipitate its erasure as a separate place of unique importance. Even

the men who shaped Staten Island's new metropolitan country landscape had no historical allegiance to the Island. Some, like Olmsted, moved into Manhattan. Others relocated to different places around the emerging New York region. As country estates and cottages proliferated across a wider area around Manhattan, Staten Island became just one among many options for metropolitan families expanding into the new regional geography, helping to slowly erase the Island as an individually identifiable and thus, singularly desirable place in metropolitan geography.

### **Agricultural Improvement as a Metropolitan Project**

Beginning in the 1830s, the transformation of agriculture on Staten Island and other older farming areas near Manhattan catalyzed the formation of a New York metropolitan region. Completion of the Erie Canal in 1825 demoted Staten Island and other agricultural places around Manhattan from their traditional importance as the primary suppliers of foodstuffs to the city. The Erie Canal, on the one hand, offered an easy route for settlers heading westward to better farmland, and on the other hand, it also inexpensively carried the abundant western production to eastern markets. Staten Island had once produced "a considerable quantity" of barley for brewers in Manhattan and Queens, and wheat to be milled into flour for urban consumers. But "after the Erie Canal," one Staten Islander wrote, "Farmers in these parts...complain that they are undersold in their customary markets by the abundance of agricultural produce pouring in upon them from the cheap lands and rich soil of the teeming west"<sup>8</sup>

The agricultural improvement movement reflected cultural and economic fears surrounding the decline of eastern farms, like those on Staten Island. Urban growth and

soil exhaustion on eastern farms along with the opening of virgin farmland in the west, drove people away from older farming areas into cities like New York or out to Ohio and other places on the western frontier. Many Americans worried that the decline of farming in the rural places of the eastern United States, presaged the deterioration of American society. Believing the best of America was rooted in the traditions and stability of a self-sufficient rural life, the “agricultural improvers” set out to restore eastern soils and reform eastern farming practices through a program of progress and science.<sup>9</sup>

Agricultural improvement, however, was not really a rural project, especially how it was practiced on Staten Island. It was not based on rural ways of knowing: local knowledge and experience with the particulars of the family farm passed from father to son for generations. “Neither lawyers, nor physicians nor clergymen, nor professors of colleges, nor any other class of the community, have so many inducements or so many facilities for becoming really intelligent and scientific men, as farmers.” In 1839, the *Richmond County Mirror* reprinted a letter that redefined farming as the perfect blend of “science” and “business,” hallmarks of the urban, not the rural world. The business aspect of farming, argued the author of the article, would support the “laboratory” function of the farm, which in turn would deliver improved plants and cultivation techniques, supporting the business. The agricultural improvers’ tools of science and their ethic of linear progress were borne of urban ways of knowing and being, and communicated through urban networks.<sup>10</sup>

Staten Island was not merely another eastern farming area either. It was a stone’s throw from Manhattan. Unlike those with farms further from the city, agricultural

improvers coming to Staten Island faced metropolitan markets in real estate and manpower that shaped the value and use of the Island's land and labor. Many of Staten Island's agricultural improvers came directly from urban places, like Dr. Samuel Akerly from Manhattan and Frederick Law Olmsted from Hartford, applying capital they derived in the cities. Through their agricultural improvement project at the metropolitan periphery, men like Akerly and Olmsted brought Staten Island closer to Manhattan in three ways. First, they forged new commercial relationships with Manhattan for the very manure, farming implements and drainage infrastructure that the agricultural improvement movement proscribed for agrarian self-sufficiency. Second, they built connections between their Staten Island farms and the city's institutions and networks of science, publishing, and business. Finally, they worked to articulate farming and gardening as respectable metropolitan professions. Both intentionally and unintentionally, Staten Island's agricultural improvers moved away from the rural self-sufficiency orthodoxy of the movement, built around convertible husbandry (the ideal of achieving self-sustaining soil fertility through manure generated by the farm's livestock). Instead, they brought Staten Island into a deeper relationship with the metropolis and its markets far beyond the traditional rural role of supplying farm produce.

When Olmsted arrived on Staten Island from his earlier, more isolated farm at Sachems Head, Connecticut, he wrote to his friend of the refined evening entertainments at his neighbors homes, "[just as] you would have expected to find in a ...city as large as Hartford...[with] music...better than you could have heard in N[ew] H[aven] or H[artford]." Unlike rural places far from the city, Staten Island offered its agriculturalists a metropolitan community. While at Sachems Head, Olmsted's brother worried about the

rural character of the place, writing to a mutual friend, “the life down there is just such as to rid him of all dignity.” Staten Island was quite different. Olmsted remarked how much more pleased he was with his “highly educated and refined” Staten Island neighbors than the more provincial and parochial ones at Sachem’s Head. On Staten Island, Olmsted lived amidst doctors, lawyers and “wealthy (at least prosperous) retired citizens,” hailing from Boston and Manhattan, as well as farmers, poor fishermen and laborers. Meanwhile, proximity to the Manhattan meant Olmsted’s brother John and his good friend Charles Loring Brace, both residing in the city, could visit frequently, providing the morally and intellectually stimulating conversation Olmsted enjoyed. Though John settled in Manhattan to practice medicine and Frederick on Staten Island to farm, both engaged with a metropolitan community of friends and peers.<sup>11</sup>

***Staten Island Agriculture in a Metropolitan Economy of Capital, Soils, and Commerce***

Dr. Samuel Akerly, a leader among Staten Island’s agricultural improvers in the 1830s and early 40s implicitly understood the Island’s metropolitan character. Unlike most eastern farming areas where the productive capacity of land for farming still determined its value, for most farmers on Staten Island, wrote Akerly, “land is dear, labor high, and produce low.” Given the economics, Staten Island’s agricultural improvers could never generate from their farm’s produce the capital necessary for the agricultural showplaces they built on the Island. Such a farm, Akerly believed, would need “a wealthy owner, whose resources may be liberally applied to renovate and improve it...to put it in a high state of cultivation.” Only as such, he argued, could it become “highly valuable and productive” enough to support the land value. Although

they sometimes denied it, for improvers like Akerly, the future of Staten Island farming depended on the city—not as a market for produce alone—but as a source of capital, knowledge, and agricultural resources.<sup>12</sup>

In the 1830s, Akerly and William A. Seeley, Esq., and other Manhattan professionals and businessmen moved to Staten Island to farm, buying up some of the Island's best farmland. Akerly, son of a wealthy New York shipbuilder, was born in 1785 and became a prominent man in the city's world of science. He was well published in scientific journals on botany, geology and natural history, as well as medicine. Alongside Samuel Latham Mitchill (his brother-in-law and a leader of New York's scientific community), Akerly helped found the New York Lyceum of Natural History in 1817, the city's premier scientific institution. That same year, as a man with medical credentials as well as philanthropic ones, Akerly was instrumental in the founding and early management of the School for the Deaf and Dumb and later, the New York Institution for the Education of the Blind.<sup>13</sup>

William A. Seeley, a Manhattan lawyer, bought his Staten Island farm in 1835, a few years earlier than Akerly, to satisfy his scientific interests through agricultural improvement as well. As a prominent big city lawyer, Seeley represented clients like the Dutch Consulate. Like Akerly, Seeley was part of the Manhattan scientific community, becoming a Resident Member of the Lyceum in 1845, and serving as a founding member and Vice President of the city's American Agricultural Society in 1846.<sup>14</sup>

In the 1830s, Staten Island farms were becoming more visible to Manhattan buyers because of the emerging metropolitan real estate market. The heirs to many old Staten Island farmsteads like the Poillons and Garretsons began to sell their family land

to men from the city like Akerly and Seeley. The Poillon family had lived on the Island since the seventeenth century. Patriarch John Poillon, however, moved into Manhattan in the 1830s, capitalizing on the rising value of his Staten Island land. Initially, Poillon expected income from renting out his farm to provide “for his support and maintenance during his life time,” but taking advantage of the wave of real estate interest in Manhattan for Staten Island property, Poillon let his son sell the 200-acre family farm to Seeley, through a Manhattan broker in 1835. Akerly bought the nearby 130-acre farm from the Garretsons, another old Staten Island family a few years later. When Akerly died, the market was maturing and the executors of his estate advertised the Staten Island farm widely in the metropolis and beyond through newspapers and agricultural journals.<sup>15</sup>

Seeley’s farm reveals the extent to which, on Staten Island, so-called farming self-sufficiency (that is, a farm’s ability to maintain its fertility from its own resources – the holy grail of agricultural improvement orthodoxy) was actually quite dependent on metropolitan capital. The publishers of the *American Agriculturist* held up Seeley’s Wheatsheaf Farm on Staten Island as a showplace of agricultural improvement, but it was hardly a model that could be copied by farming families less entwined with urban-generated wealth. Seeley, for example, paid \$10,000 for some of the Island’s best farmland, \$3,000 in cash, a sum hardly available to any but the wealthiest farmers. Meanwhile, Akerly’s proscription for extracting manures from local natural resources, like peat, seaweed and fish could not deliver the freedom from urban cash markets dreamed of by the agricultural improvement movement. To “improve” his farm, Seeley built a “large and well constructed windmill, of the most substantial kind” along with under-drains “15 feet or more under the surrounding knolls” to drain ponds and swamps,

and a 25,000 gallon tank to hold barnyard manure. He hired substantial amounts of labor to mine the peat revealed by his drainage projects. Such ditching and draining to access peat, and the intensive labor in collecting and composting seaweed and fish into proper manures required investments beyond the means of most Staten Island farmers unsubsidized by connections to Manhattan. Though Seeley's farm may have been a "profitable" model, it was Seeley's Manhattan-derived wealth that made it so.<sup>16</sup>

Frederick Law Olmsted and William H. Vanderbilt were part of the next generation of Staten Island's agricultural improvers, gentlemen's sons who came to Staten Island in the 1840s, with family financial resources derived in cities like Hartford and Manhattan. Although Vanderbilt's father, Cornelius was born into an old Staten Island farming family, the elder Vanderbilt had tied the family fortunes to the rising, and distinctly Manhattan-centric, steamboat business. Re-centering his life in Manhattan, Cornelius set up William H., his eldest son, as a clerk in a Manhattan merchant firm. But according to Vanderbilt biographer T. J. Stiles, Billy, as he was called, "could not bear the stress of risky, even illegal maneuvers" demanded of him in the urban world of business. Therefore, Cornelius relegated him to a Staten Island farm in the early 1840s. The farm, however, was not the inherited Vanderbilt family homestead, but rather better farmland on the Island's Southside, a valuable asset purchased by Cornelius with \$14,000 of his steamboat-generated wealth. It was more than a decade before Cornelius was confident enough in William's business sense to entrust him with ownership of the Staten Island farm.<sup>17</sup>

Frederick Law Olmsted was born in 1822 into the Hartford household of John Olmsted, a successful merchant in the capital city of Connecticut. Frederick's brother



John H. attended Yale and moved to Manhattan to study and practice medicine.

Frederick needed a respectable profession too, but he preferred the outdoor life. As an agricultural improver, Frederick could be a man of science, like his brother. His father set him up on a farm in Sachem's Head, Connecticut, but young Frederick failed to make it a success. Therefore, John bought Akerly's Staten Island farm for his son when Akerly died, hoping Frederick might be more successful on a farm already well known for the application of science to agriculture.<sup>18</sup>

Olmsted and Vanderbilt borrowed from their father's merchant and steamboat wealth generated in Hartford and Manhattan as they tried to make agricultural improvements. In 1850, Olmsted wrote to his merchant father in Hartford, "I shall draw upon you for this amount to-morrow –that I may pay something on my interest," detailing expenses from carpenters and masons for improvements to the farm, as well as bills for manure and other expenses on his bill from a Manhattan agricultural warehouse. Vanderbilt borrowed thousands from his brother-in-law who had made a fortune alongside father Cornelius in the Manhattan-based steamboat business.<sup>19</sup>

Olmsted and Vanderbilt joined a number of Staten Island agricultural improvers who maintained both Manhattan businesses and Island farms. Manhattan business provided a steadier stream of cash than farming could on its own, and enabled many of them to build and store greater wealth. In Manhattan, Daniel L. Clawson was a partner in his brother-in-law's furnishings business and later owned a large agricultural supply depot in the city. Alfred Field ran the Manhattan operation of the family dry goods business, based in England. Edwin J. Dunning attended to urban teeth at his dentist office, also in Manhattan. Haynes Lord was a Pearl St. commission merchant and jobber;

and George Prince Osgood, a Wall St. agent. On Staten Island, all were officers of the Richmond County Agricultural Society, alongside Olmsted and Vanderbilt.<sup>20</sup>

Some of the older Staten Island farming families like the Garretsons and Seguines found non-farming sources of capital and joined their urbanite neighbors in the Richmond County Agricultural Society. Joseph H. Seguire constructed and served as partner of a candle manufactory and owned schooners carrying freight coastwise to Manhattan. Real estate wealth helped too. Seguire was among the heirs and executors of John Garretson's estate, the farm sold to Akerly. Within a few years of the sale, Seguire built "a splendid Colonial residence" alongside what Akerly described as "the largest and best barn in the county" on his own farm. Family wealth helped the next generation too, and Garretson's grandson, Jacob C. Garretson also served as a founding member of the Agricultural Society. Real estate value and non-agricultural business helped the Seguines and Garretsons join Olmsted, Vanderbilt, Dunning, and Lord as bona fide "agricultural improvers."<sup>21</sup>

Staten Island's proximity to the city also shaped the labor market available to Staten Island agriculturists. Olmsted complained to his father, "labor is not to be had in the neighborhood." It was simply easier for laborers to find better work in the city or on boats out in the harbor. Olmsted went into the city to tap the urban labor pool when he had trouble finding hands on the Island, and fantasized of unlimited "negroid teams" he could have "profitably employed" on his farm. Olmsted finally settled on building a house for "6 Irish souls," a substantial capital investment, to keep labor on the farm. Seeley relied on wage labor too, rather than the older models of family and bound labor, which led him to economize by keeping much of the farm in naturally growing grass for

hay. Vanderbilt, meanwhile, applied labor management tools being developed by urban manufacturers. Unlike his Staten Island neighbors who tried to motivate their workers by working hard alongside them, Vanderbilt observed his laborers, setting output minimums based on what they accomplished on their first day of work, when they were likely to try and impress him with their exertions.<sup>22</sup>

Unable or unwilling to invest the labor and capital in self-provisioning their own local manures, most Staten Island farmers turned to the city and its commercial marketplace for fertilizer as well. The volume of animal dung and human night soil in Manhattan made the city a rich source for fertilizer. A legend in the history of the Vanderbilts captures the relationship between Staten Island farms and fertilizer sourced in Manhattan. Vanderbilt negotiated an agreement with his father, Cornelius for a load of manure from daddy's Manhattan stables. William implied the deal was for the standard cartload, but instead cleaned out the stable entirely, explaining to his angry, but proud father, that he had taken a sloop-load of dung instead. William had finally outmaneuvered the old man.<sup>23</sup>

Street dirt, horse dung and night soil were part of a metropolitan cycle of soils. Island farmers sold hay to feed the city's horses and then bought Manhattan's street dirt, full of horse dung. Olmsted reported the Island's farmers spent \$20–40 per acre for “city manure, principally street sweepings” for their wheat and grass fields and more for cabbage and other crops. Staten Island oysters too were part of this metropolitan cycle of soils. Staten Island oystermen sold oysters to Manhattan; lime from oyster shells crushed and burned in Manhattan returned to fertilize Staten Island farms.<sup>24</sup>

In addition to the metropolitan soil cycle, Staten Islanders engaged with the metropolis in a two-way market for more industrially processed and branded commercial fertilizer, both as consumers and manufacturers. Manhattan manufacturers processed urban night soil, at least partially a byproduct of Staten Island's food produce, into Poudrette, which competed with imported guano (bird dung) as one of the major manure "brands" sold to Staten Island farmers. Other manufacturers produced manure on Staten Island for sale through Manhattan's commercial marketplace to farmers across the region, and even the nation. By the early 1860s, the Lodi Manufacturing Company, the Manhattan producers of Poudrette, complained that several Staten Island producers were marketing a peat-based manure product in barrels that looked suspiciously like theirs. Eagle Chemical made fertilizer from "Bone dust manure and super-phosphate of lime," making "extensive additions to their works" on Staten Island in the mid-1850s. At another fertilizer factory on Staten Island, Duncan Bruce used Manhattan-sourced "blood and entrails of bullocks, sheep and swine produced from the annual slaughter of more than a million and a half of animals" to make Bruce's Concentrated Manure. Manhattan merchants sold Bruce's product as far away as Georgia.<sup>25</sup>

Olmsted argued that under-draining farms could extend the growing season on the Island by two weeks and render "fertile matter" in the soil "much more available to plants." As they did for manure, agricultural improvers placed great hope for producing more and better crops by managing the wetness and temperature of the soil through drainage. As so much of the agricultural improvement movement's program, however, Olmsted admitted the "large expense of reconstructing...soils" through "thorough draining" would be a difficult investment to make for the Island's farmers. Olmsted

himself complained to his father in 1849 that he had been so busy with other tasks on the farm that he had not been able to dig one “yard of drain.”<sup>26</sup>

While Olmsted had trouble finding the time and labor to under-drain his own farm, he still was able to help gather metropolitan capital to make Staten Island a source of agricultural drainage supplies to the commercial marketplace. In a letter to his father in 1850, Olmsted expressed his excitement at the potential to promote and profit from under-draining as regional agricultural business enterprise, one that could raise the value of farms all around New York. Anthony B. Allen, publisher of the *American Agriculturist* and owner of the largest agricultural warehouse in Manhattan told Olmsted he had “no limit to demand” for tiles and pipes used in under-draining. So Olmsted went ahead with his project and solicited subscriptions for a joint stock company to import a tile-making machine and tools in 1850. He enlisted his Staten Island neighbors Lord and Comstock to invest capital from their Manhattan-based stock trading and merchant businesses. By the end of the year, The Staten Island Tile Drainage Company, one of the first of its kind in the nation, advertised “pipes and horseshoe tiles of all sizes” baked in its Staten Island kilns and shipped from its Staten Island docks. Interested customers could also contact the Manhattan dentist’s office of E. J. Dunning, who also happened to be the Recording Secretary of the Richmond County Agricultural Society.<sup>27</sup>

In 1851, Olmsted judged a plowing contest to encourage Island farmers to stop using the “poor sort of plow – made by old Staten Island men” and instead buy better ones that could be sourced from Manhattan. As they bought agricultural implements and supplies in Manhattan, Staten Island’s agricultural improvers forged yet another link to the city’s commercial marketplace. In more isolated rural areas, farmers often made their

own tools or turned to local small-town suppliers for such things, frequently locally sourced. While some plows, harrows and other farming implements were made on Staten Island, Akerly reported that Staten Islanders, or at least the agricultural improvers like himself, generally procured such implements in Manhattan, where they could select among the “most approved kinds.” At the Island’s agricultural fair in 1850, Vanderbilt showed off his “substantial farm wagon, loaded with farming utensils in the most perfect order,” a model of what Manhattan’s commercial marketplace could offer. Manhattan agricultural supplier A. B. Allen listed more Staten Islanders among the users of Wheeler’s Patent Improved Portable Rail Road Horse Power and Overshot Thresher and Separator than farmers in any other county around New York. The cost for the entire contraption was \$145, hardly a small commitment for most cash strapped farmers.<sup>28</sup>

Daniel Clawson’s life and business between Staten Island and Manhattan reveals the fluidity and continuity between the two islands and between business and agriculture. As has been mentioned, Clawson was a Manhattan businessman, taking over the existing agricultural depot at Water Street in 1843. In Manhattan, he manufactured and sold “a full assortment of Ploughs,” a “general assortment of Agricultural Implements and Machines of the most approved patterns, too numerous to mention,” and “a full assortment of Seives, Screens and wire cloth of his own manufacture” to farmers all over the region, and beyond. When Allen took over Clawson’s operation a few years later, he boasted it was “the largest and most complete” Agricultural Warehouse” in the New York market. However, Clawson was not a Manhattanite. He was born in 1798 on a Staten Island farm. Eight years after his father’s death in 1825, though still living on the Island, Daniel tried to sell the family homestead as he went into business with his

Manhattan brother-in-law, but the farm did not sell. By the early-1840s Clawson led a regional life, attending to business in the city and residing on the Island, where he also served as a judge. In the wake of the death of his 10 year-old son in 1845, Clawson shifted his life back to Staten Island, breaking his partnership with his brother-in-law the following year and selling the agricultural depot. He committed the remainder of his life to Staten Island and the improvement of his farm. By 1850, he was a Vice President in the Richmond County Agricultural Society.<sup>29</sup>

***The Staten Island Farmer in Metropolitan Networks of Science and Communication***

For Staten Island improvers like Akerly and Seeley, going to Staten Island may have been a “busied retirement” from the city, but not a retreat to rural obscurity. As they moved from Manhattan to the Island, Akerly and Seeley carried the era’s scientific ideas from the urban center of Manhattan, where such knowledge was accumulated and processed back out to the periphery to be applied to the productive landscape. They intended to build a new agricultural landscape, based on metropolitan science. Reflecting his scientific training in the city, Akerly kept a “daily and most minute register of the precise amount of labor and cultivation bestowed on each field [of his Staten Island farm], noting many important observations.” Both Akerly and Seeley shared the results of their Staten Island experiments with the larger community of improvers through urban-centered networks of communication.<sup>30</sup>

New York City seemed to be emerging as one of the focal points for new networks of agricultural knowledge in the 1830s and 1840s. Beginning in 1829, The American Institute of the City of New York for “encouraging and promoting

domestic...agriculture, commerce, manufactures, and the arts,” showcased agricultural innovations and produce from around the New York region at its annual and well attended fairs. In 1846, the more scientific American Agricultural Association was established in Manhattan with a mission to provide for agriculturalists a museum, laboratory and library, all classic institutions of centralized and universalized urban knowledge.<sup>31</sup>

Manhattan was also a center of agricultural publishing. The agricultural press in the United States began in the cities in the 1820s with publication of *The American Farmer* in Baltimore (1819), *The New England Farmer* in Boston (1822), and the *New York Farmer* in Manhattan (1828). Anthony B. and Richard L. Allen started the *American Agriculturist* in Manhattan in 1842, which along with the Albany-based *Cultivator*, was among the leading agricultural journals of the 1840s and 50s. Chemist-turned-agricultural-improver James Jay Mapes published *The Working Farmer* out of Manhattan beginning in 1849 as well. Manhattan was also the center for the publishing of how-to books for agricultural improvers. Richard L. Allen authored *Domestic Animals* and popular *The American Farm Book*, published by Orange Judd & Co. and C. M. Saxton, respectively. Beginning in the 1850s, Judd transformed the Allen’s business into a publishing empire, raising circulation of the *Agriculturist* to 100,000 by 1864 and dominating agricultural book titles. Manhattanites and Staten Islanders were similarly likely to read such publications. The February 1846 *Cultivator* listed 515 Manhattan subscriptions (by post office) and 23 for Richmond County, a rate of 0.16% per capita for Manhattan and 0.21% for Staten Island. Henry David Thoreau hawked the *American Agriculturist* “about the city” and in the upper wards of Manhattan in 1843.<sup>32</sup>



Unlike those with farms more remote from the metropolis, Staten Island agriculturalists could retain closer contact with agricultural journals and associations and other resources in the city. Agriculturist authors and publishers like Richard L. Allen moved to Staten Island in the 1850s. Caleb N. Bement, another prolific agriculturalist author, who worked alongside Andrew Jackson Downing laying out Springside (the Vassar estate in the Hudson Valley), regularly visited his brother on Staten Island and lived there for a time. Bement dedicated his *The Rabbit Fancier* from Staten Island in the 1850s and wrote “The Guinea Fowl: Its History, Habits, Characteristics &c,” and “A Chapter on Swine,” while living on the Island in the early 1860s. Seeley served among the American Agricultural Association’s earliest Vice Presidents and travelled into Manhattan to deliver scientific papers to his peers at the Association. Other Staten Island farmers had their soils chemically analyzed by the Association’s Manhattan laboratory. Staten Island’s agriculturists travelled into Manhattan to attend twice-monthly meetings of the American Institute’s Farmer’s Club and showed their produce at the Institute’s fairs. Staten Islanders were also close enough to the city to use the rooms provided by the *American Agriculturist* for “Social Meeting[s] of Farmers and Gardeners,” and for farmers from places around the city to display their produce in Manhattan. Agriculturists from other places near the city, on Long Island, Westchester and parts of New Jersey were similarly able to engage with Manhattan and its agricultural institutions, and together with Staten Islanders, formed a metropolitan agricultural community.<sup>33</sup>

Seeley’s Wheatsheaf Farm, on Staten Island’s south shore, was a showcase of agricultural improvement. In the 1840s, Seeley offered his farm to the American Agricultural Association “to conduct any desired experiments in electricity or general

agriculture.” The Allen brothers, publishers of the *Agriculturist*, highlighted Seeley’s farm in a lengthy article (which was widely reprinted in other agricultural journals around the country) and promoted it as the perfect location for a national “agricultural school.” The Island’s location at the nexus of the “rich...freight” of the Hudson, and the East River “highway” to New England, argued the Allens, made it easily “accessible from every portion of the Eastern United States.” And the Island’s “diversity of...soil, and the convenience for procuring every kind of marine and inland manures [allowed for] almost every variety of experiment.” The Allens praised Seeley’s barns, drainage, and manure management infrastructure, calling him “one of the best practical and theoretical agriculturists of the present day.” Ultimately the idea of a farm-based metropolitan agricultural school shifted to the farm of another prominent Manhattanite, in Flushing, Queens, similarly within the newly emerging New York region.<sup>34</sup>

As they highlighted Seeley’s farm for their larger readership, the Allens also situated Staten Island within the regional metropolis. They noted the farm’s adjacency to the “vigorous metropolis” in Manhattan “with its undefined and countless forms of architectural beauty, utility and strength; and its mazy forest of masts....” They invoked the well-known “twin swans” of metropolitan Staten Island: “New Brighton” and the “Quarantine.” The landscape of Staten Island, described the Allens, was full of “well cultivated fields” amidst more suburban “picturesque scenes of beautiful villas and quiet, tasteful country houses....” The Allens were articulating Seeley’s farm and the surrounding landscape of Staten Island as a metropolitan countryside of improved farms and country homes of urbanites, all well connected to the city itself.<sup>35</sup>

**A Neighborhood of Country Estates:  
The Creation of Staten Island as a Metropolitan Residential District**

“The margin of New Jersey, Staten Island and Long Island” along “the beautiful Bay below us,” predicted the *New York Mirror* as early as 1823, “will be ‘studded with villas’...growing with our growth,” that is, the growth of the city. But Staten Island did not grow like the city. Beginning in the 1830s, Manhattan elites beyond those interested in agricultural improvement came to Staten Island and began building a metropolitan district in the countryside around the harbor, a neighborhood of country estates. As merchants and other men from New England and elsewhere came to New York between the 1830s and 1850s, with capital, business inclination, and connections to elite society they settled their families in “the vicinity” of the metropolis. While a larger number chose the more urban form of other emerging places for the city’s elite, like Washington Square and Brooklyn Heights, and some spread themselves out across larger estates along the Hudson or on Long Island, many looking for a country life with easy access to the metropolis came to Staten Island to form neighborhoods of country villas.<sup>36</sup>

As a critical mass of New York elites created metropolitan neighborhoods of peers, friends and family on Staten Island, they made the Island part of the new regional metropolis. In 1856 the *Staaten Islander* listed 400 lawyers, doctors, merchants, and other businessmen who lived on the Island and maintained regular places of business in Manhattan – a remarkable number for an Island with only about 3,100 households. Other Manhattan elites retired to Staten Island yet retained social connections in the city. Assuming the census counted all 400 as Staten Island residents and most dwellings contained single households, as many as 1 in 5 Staten Island households would have been supported by Manhattan business income by the mid-1850s. Some lived on the Island

year-round, others, like Benjamin L. Dawson, resided “in Bleecker-street, New York in the winter and New Brighton, Staten Island in the summer time.” Those with homes on both sides of the harbor did not necessarily prioritize their Manhattan homes over their Staten Island ones. They were residents of a regional New York.<sup>37</sup>

The concentration of country homes on Staten Island into neighborhoods for the metropolitan elite is evidenced by the value of the housing stock in Castleton and Southfield, the two Island townships facing the harbor. Despite Staten Island’s relatively small population, the New York State Census reported that the value of the Island’s housing stock was greater than the much larger Queens County on Long Island, and nearly 4 times greater than the portion of Kings County outside the City of Brooklyn. Of all the townships in the state, West Farms of Westchester County was the only one that had a housing stock value greater than Castleton, due to the much larger number of lower value frame dwellings, and Southfield wasn’t far behind. More than any other place around Manhattan, Staten Island’s hills and harbor-front became a series of metropolitan neighborhoods of compact country estates.<sup>38</sup>

In the steamboat era, Staten Island was unusually attractive as a place of metropolitan residence because it was both “country” and one of a handful of places easily accessible to Manhattan. When Henry David Thoreau arrived on Staten Island in 1843, he was pleased to find the Island “in all respects a very pleasant residence — much more rural than you would expect of the vicinity of New York.” With a regular steam ferry as early as 1817 and multiple ferry landings along the northern and eastern shores by the 1830s, an elite family could split their lives between Staten Island and Manhattan —from country estate to Wall Street in under an hour. Such a dual city-country existence

promised a richer metropolitan life. “A country residence,” wrote Staten Island architect William H. Ranlett, “affords, to the intelligent mind and diligent hand, pleasures and profits which are unknown in exclusive city life.” As a result, “The cliffs and vales of this enchanted Island,” wrote popular poet Lydia Sigourney, “are crowned with the elegant mansions of the merchant princes.”<sup>39</sup>

Amidst the varied topography of Staten Island, metropolitan men and their families could express themselves through the design of their property. “A man’s Cottage” in the country, wrote Ranlett, “should honestly conform to his tastes and his means; the fashion of it should be peculiar to himself.” The urban commercial world, in contrast, confined one’s self-expression. Unlike most other places near Manhattan, Staten Island offered an unusually dense variety of breezy hills and cliffs, and beachfront, a wide range of sites for building a personalized country home. Staten Island, wrote Ranlett “is so varied, so abounding in fine views, so broken up into hills, valleys and meadows; so diversified in its scenery that it might serve as an index to the rest of the earth.” Combined with the proper style, be it Italian, Tudor, English Cottage, Grecian, or any of the dozens of others Ranlett and other architects presented to their metropolitan clients, Staten Island offered the owner the widest range of possibilities to express his inner self.<sup>40</sup>

A Staten Island estate was not a place of isolation. The country seats the metropolitan elite built on Staten Island in the middle decades of the nineteenth century were not the Gilded Age estates of Long Island with their opulent mansions of dozens of rooms set amidst private 100-acre fiefdoms, nor the more distant old Hudson river estates of New York’s old landed gentry. In 1848, before the increasing opulence of larger and

more remote country estates for the city's elite, William H. Aspinwall's Staten Island estate, for example, could still be "said to be the finest place in the U.S." A country estate on Staten Island was more likely to be five acres than fifty, with a villa and grounds tastefully and finely appointed, but reflecting the more moderate wealth and greater cultural restraints on opulence still present at mid-century. "No part of the world can furnish so many elegant residences within so small a compass as are situated along the banks of the Narrows on Staten Island," wrote a contributor to the *Newark Daily Advertiser* in 1848. When the editors of *The Horticulturist* toured Staten Island in 1856, they noted that the estates there were either "within walking distance of the...ferry," or a short carriage ride away. The fine estate of J.C. Green, wealthy Manhattan merchant, was a mere half-mile from the ferry dock. "Though so near to neighbors as the place is," wrote *The Horticulturist* of J.C. Green's twelve-acre estate, "[a]dvantage is judiciously taken, in the planting" such that "the scene about the house presents an appearance of rural luxury and ease" that is for "all purposes of privacy, complete." By the 1850s, Staten Island's country estates formed a neighborhood of the city, and along with the nearby farms of the agricultural improvers, a landscape of metropolitan countryside.<sup>41</sup>

Because of the geography of the steamboat landings, the topography of desirable sites and the lot-oriented efforts of real estate men in the 1830s, Manhattan elites concentrated their metropolitan country estates in a particular set of districts on Staten Island: Clifton, the hills behind Stapleton, and New Brighton. In 1848, Olmsted defined Clifton along the Island's eastern shore between the Seamen's Retreat and Fort Tompkins as a "villa village or quarter." Another observer described Clifton this way: "At the top of the hill is the princely residence and extensive park of William H. Aspinwall...around

and in front are fine gothic cottages arranged in rows on the bank, or buried in...the thick groves in the rear of Mr. A's domain." The rest of the eastern shore "road leading to the Quarantine," he continued, "is lined with fine residences, or they come into sight, situated upon every commanding elevation." This second concentration of estates, though less angular, stretched along the spine of hills upland of the eastern shore. New Brighton, along the northern shore right past Quarantine, was the third district of metropolitan country homes on the Island, described by contemporaries as "a cluster of palaces," where "showy cottages and residences" of New York's elite sat on smaller lots, with a few larger estates on the slope behind.<sup>42</sup>

Men who made their fortunes in the maritime trade of the metropolis clustered their estates on Staten Island, perhaps because it preserved a close connection to the seaborne source of their wealth. "On enquiring for the proprietors of so much taste and beauty," wrote one visitor to Staten Island, "the names of distinguished merchants of our metropolitan city come up to notice." A list of the Island's estate owners reads like a who's-who of New York's shipping moguls of the era. William H. Aspinwall, John Lloyd Aspinwall, and Mortimer Livingston had their estates at Clifton. William H. Aspinwall transformed his uncle's already successful merchant firm into Howland & Aspinwall, pioneering the clipper ship business and later the Pacific Mail steamboat service to California. John Lloyd Aspinwall, William's brother, was a partner in the firm. Livingston was the president of the U.S. Mail, a New York and Le Havre Steam Packet Line. Others joined wealthy New York lawyers, merchants, building their estates atop the spine of hills behind Stapleton and Clifton. Among them were steamboat giants Cornelius Vanderbilt and Oorondates Mauran. Mauran made his fortune in Havana

steamboats and pioneered steamboat towing in New York Harbor using Richmond Turnpike Company's Staten Island ferryboats. Vanderbilt's estate was not the old Staten Island family homestead, but rather a more elaborate home befitting a metropolitan gentleman, built with Manhattan steamboat wealth. Englishman Samuel Cunard, founder of the first transatlantic steamboat service, sent his son Edward to New York to manage the British company's U.S. operation. When Edward married in 1849, he too chose the Staten Island hills for his country estate, nearby his peers. George Griswold, Samuel T. Jones, and Jonathan Goodhue built their estates in nearby New Brighton. Griswold was partner of N. L. & G. Griswold, another of the city's most successful merchant shipping houses. J.C. Green, a successful maritime merchant in his own right married Griswold's daughter and inherited the Staten Island estate. Jones was a successful commission merchant, specializing in imported fabrics. Goodhue, founder of one of the city's most successful auction houses also bought the Black Ball Line, the transatlantic packet service that helped establish New York as America's dominant seaport. On Staten Island, Manhattan merchants and ship-owners could build accessible country-seats, definitively removed from the chaotic commercial city, yet within full view of the harbor and commerce of the maritime metropolis upon which they built their fortunes.<sup>43</sup>

Like Staten Island's agricultural improvers, country estate owners chose the Island because it held country possibilities for their metropolitan lives. Aspinwall could go to his Staten Island estate on a whim, or take his favorite clerk and protégé there to recover when he was feeling ill. He could not do that with the much larger country property he owned in common with his brother and brother-in-law in the Berkshires of Western Massachusetts, it being so much further from the city. Similarly, the Phelps-



Stokes family, wealthy from Anson G. Phelps' metals importing empire, could take their children to their Island estate from their Manhattan townhouse on a winter day to play in the snow. Seasonally, Manhattan businessmen could move their families to their Staten Island homes in the summer, safe from the unhealthy city, yet still attend to business in town. Other metropolitan elites like lawyer William Emerson settled permanently in their Staten Island country-seats with their families, from which they could still maintain their professional practices in Manhattan.<sup>44</sup>

A Staten Island estate could also provide a metropolitan family with a luxuriant table of fresh and fine fruits, vegetables, and flowers at both their country and city homes, befitting their status and demonstrating their refinement. "The whole produce of" J. C. Green's "beautiful" Staten Island estate, wrote *The Horticulturist*, "is made use of by the proprietor's family, excepting a liberal supply which he generously distributes among his friends." Like their agriculturist neighbors, Staten Island estate owners and their gardeners displayed their skill and refinement at agricultural and horticultural fairs, including the well-attended American Institute fairs in Manhattan, often taking home prizes. Unlike the agriculturists, however, the estate owners did not produce for the commercial marketplace. Green's gardener estimated that produce at \$3,500–4000 annually, but none of it sold. Nearby, S. T. Jones buried the fruit he didn't use in the earth before it rotted, "to prevent its becoming a nuisance!" wrote *The Horticulturist*, shocked by Jones' disinterest in marketing the excess, especially "With the New York market so near...." Practically, the urban marketplace could not supply elite families of the metropolis with the same quality and availability as they could source from their own estates. By self-sourcing from their estates, metropolitan elites both established a certain

exclusivity while limiting the need for domestic engagement in the commercial marketplace.<sup>45</sup>

Staten Island, wrote architect William Ranlett, “appears to have been created expressly as a regenerator for the population of a great city...invit[ing] the toiling denizens of the great metropolis of the New World....” By the 1840s and 1850s, New Yorkers associated Staten Island with country-seats, a pleasurable and domestic retreat, suggesting the Island might secure a specific and prominent role in the emerging metropolitan region. Staten Island, according to Olmsted, was “naturally the pleasure ground by the gate of commerce....” When Olmsted visited the wealthy port city of Liverpool during his trip to England, his first thought was to compare the “high ground occupied by villas belonging to the merchants” of the city with New Brighton, Staten Island. A Staten Island estate, wrote Ranlett, blended city and country amid “crowds of white-sailed vessels and splashing steamers;...cedar-fringed hills... a gurgling brook..., and numberless beautiful villas, cottages and farm houses which surround it on every side.” While other emerging places around Manhattan, such as Brooklyn and Williamsburg may have been growing more rapidly, they were townscapes. Staten Island, especially the northern and eastern shores along with the hills behind, was developing into a metropolitan countryside.<sup>46</sup>

“We are not surprised...at the numberless rural improvements that are annually going on within” Staten Island, wrote Downing in *The Horticulturist*. “There are some residences, on the island, highly remarkable in a landscape gardening and tasteful point of view [along with] dozens of smaller suburban cottages and villas...increasing in number every day.” Downing’s *The Horticulturist* and popular writers like Lydia

Sigourney brought widespread attention to Staten Island as a place for country estates in the 1840s and 50s. Sigourney waxed eloquent in her “Visit to Staten Island” about the estates and the beauty of nature on the Island to the more than 40,000 readers of *Graham’s Magazine*. Downing singled out Aspinwall’s estate for praise in his influential, *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening*. During their “Visits to Country Places,” in the mid-1850s, the editors of *The Horticulturist* who succeeded Downing devoted an entire article to Staten Island, visiting four estates. It was more than any other place they visited for the series, perhaps because the density and smaller size of the estates on Staten Island formed a more compact neighborhood. They praised the “the beauty of these Staten Island sites [and] the kind and generous hospitality of its inhabitants,” remarking on the “exquisitely beautiful” views “of the Bay of New York” from the J. C. Green estate and the “air of domestic comfort and family repose” of the S. T. Jones estate. The latter estate, gushed *The Horticulturist*, was “one of the loveliest spots on this or any other island.”<sup>47</sup>

In 1850, Olmsted noted the “constant and generally healthy and sustained rise in the value of [Staten Island] land” due to “the increase of population and wealth of New-York,” in his annual report to the State Agricultural Society. As they searched for and built country-seats on Staten Island, Manhattan’s elite engaged with the metropolitan regional real estate market that increasingly pushed the value of the Island’s land beyond the value of farming it. As early as 1842, Akerly reported to the State Agricultural Society, “In the north and eastern parts of the island,” facing Manhattan “the land is not estimated by acres [for farming], but by town lots or plots for country seats.” When Olmsted arrived on the south shore, the part of the Island further from the city in 1848, he

anticipated a new steamboat landing, “which will make my land more available for Country Seats.” Four years later, Olmsted wrote to his friend, “great many fine houses building and moving this way.”<sup>48</sup>

The metropolitan neighborhood of Staten Island consisted of more than the estates themselves. “[A] company of German speculators,” reported the *New York Times*, bought several acres of Staten Island farmland in 1851 “to erect 200 houses for gardeners and villagers.” The land was “a full mile back from the water,” away from desirable country estate sites but close enough to serve their owners. A surprising number of Staten Islanders claimed occupations that supported the construction of and maintenance of country homes. By the 1850 census, more Staten Island residents living in the two townships facing the harbor called themselves carpenters or masons than farmers. Several claimed more specific occupations like “builder,” “house painter,” and “shingle shaver.” Others had ongoing work on the estates as “gardeners” or “coachmen.” Yet, others worked in manufactories that supported metropolitan growth. By 1847, for example, Staten Islanders were mining the Island’s clay deposits to manufacture bricks and making the base for paints at John Jewett’s white lead works, among the largest factory of its kind in the country.<sup>49</sup>

### **Staten Island in the Formulation of the New Metropolitan Landscape of Country Residence**

Unlike places further away from the metropolis, where fashionable landscape refinement was imported through journals and books published in Manhattan and long annual journeys by local merchants to the commercial metropolis, Staten Islanders were was right in the midst of the men and institutions that formulated the new metropolitan

country landscape. Estate owners, gardeners, and architects, and some of their agricultural improver neighbors worked out on Staten Island the landscape forms that fulfilled their urban desires for health, order, leisure and luxury, yet in doing so they transformed the very features that informed that vision. They used Staten Island estates as showplaces and as a platform to project an authoritative voice over landscape design to a wider audience.<sup>50</sup>

Before Central Park catapulted Olmsted into national visibility as the nation's foremost expert in landscape design, he honed and disseminated his early landscape ideas on Staten Island. On his own farm, unlike an earlier generation of agricultural improvers, Olmsted invested aesthetic refinements beyond practical investments in agricultural efficiency. For example, to "improve appearances" of the farm, Olmsted selected a design for a "tasteful" cottage from Andrew Jackson Downing's *Horticulturist* to house his laborers. By the time Olmsted moved into Manhattan to pursue a career designing landscapes like Central Park, he had transformed his Staten Island farm into something of a country estate. A close friend later explained, Olmsted "moved barns and all their belongings behind a knoll, he brought the road in so that it approached the house by a graceful curve, he turfed the borders of the pond and planted water plants on its edge and shielded it from all contaminations. Thus, with a few strokes and at small expense he transformed the place from a very dirty, disagreeable farmyard to a gentleman's house."<sup>51</sup>

From his Staten Island farm, Olmsted served Staten Island's emerging market for landscaping country estates as well as Manhattan's produce markets. Olmsted imported, experimented with, and resold, thousands of apple, pear, peach, and quince trees of a wide variety from his farm. He sold fruit into Manhattan's large urban markets and to

specialized buyers like confectionaries in the city. However, he also supplied trees to estate owners on Staten Island and elsewhere for the growing metropolitan country landscape itself. Olmsted wrote to his father in 1851 that a man “engaged in laying out grounds for Aspinwalls, Livingston and others at Clifton” came to him looking for “shade trees” and “fruit trees.” He sold the man thirty-one pear trees along with thirty-nine to other estate customers “making the best sort of nest eggs for the business.”<sup>52</sup>

Olmsted not only provided the trees; he also helped shape the landscapes of his Staten Island neighbor’s farms and estates. As he put it later in life, “I gradually came to be known among my neighbors and friends as a man of some special knowledge, inventiveness and judgment in such affairs [of landscape design] as I have mentioned and to be called on for advice about them.” William H. Vanderbilt, who lived a short distance down the road from Olmsted admired his neighbor’s aesthetic improvements and engaged Olmsted to help shape his own farmstead toward a landscape of greater refinement befitting a metropolitan gentleman. Local histories record a number of other estates of Manhattan businessmen on Staten Island in which Olmsted had a hand as well, including the Henry Mason estate at Rossville, the Theophylact B. Satterthwaite estate (later known as “Vale Snowden”), and the Ernest Cazet property.<sup>53</sup>

Personal experiences with the naturalistic tradition of English landscape design shaped the vision Olmsted and other Staten Islanders brought to the metropolitan periphery. From the 1830s to the 1860s, the rise of a more romantic view of nature among Americans, exemplified by the transcendentalists and the Hudson River School of painting meshed with the expanding regional geography of the metropolis. In earlier decades, a more geometric, democratic and utilitarian view based on continental

enlightenment ideas had structured the large-scale plans for metropolitan growth the Manhattan grid and for Washington DC in a more urban form. Olmsted was part of a shift to a more English landscape style. Olmsted travelled through England in 1850, viewing and writing about the English landscape through the eyes of a Staten Island farmer, but returning to Staten Island with landscape ideas well beyond agricultural improvement. In addition, Manhattan elites brought estate gardeners with personal experience working on English country estates to Staten Island. James Kennedy, for example, worked as head gardener on an estate about eight miles from London before coming to Staten Island, about eight miles from Manhattan, to serve as gardener to fabric merchant S.T. Jones. Similarly, following a traditional apprenticeship in Manchester, William Chorlton served as gardener to a banker there before moving to America. When Chorlton first came to New York to find work in the country landscape, he went to Manhattan, working initially for a florist uptown and then in Astoria before moving to Staten Island where he turned the estate landscape of J. C. Green into a horticultural showplace.<sup>54</sup>

Manhattan elites also brought some of the era's most influential architects to Staten Island to design their country estates, many of whom also had exposure to English designs. Professional architects were already shaping the urban landscape with important civic buildings and townhomes for elite clients, but it was on Staten Island and similar places in the country landscape around cities where the architect laid claim to a broader role in the design of metropolitan residences. Staten Island's own William Ranlett designed country estates around New York in Westchester, New Jersey and Staten Island, having absorbed a certain sensibility about English architecture from his partnership with

English architect Joseph C. Wells when Wells relocated to New York. John Haviland, another architect trained in England, designed a number of Staten Island country houses at New Brighton and has been credited by some with the overall design for the resort village. Historians have focused on Alexander Jackson Davis' work with Downing and developer Llewellyn Haskell creating Llewellyn Park in the Orange Hills of New Jersey, perhaps the most influential planned suburb in the new romantic garden style of the metropolitan countryside, but Davis was also the architect of high profile country estates around Manhattan, including Staten Island. Davis designed Smith Ely's country home on Staten Island; in the Hudson Valley, the Lyndhurst estate in Tarrytown; and in Hoboken, the Stevens estate. James Renwick, who designed Grace Church and St. Patrick's Cathedral along with other notable buildings and elite homes in Manhattan, designed a number of country houses on Staten Island as well, including Satterthwaite's Vale Snowden.<sup>55</sup>

Staten Island was part of the personal life as well as the professional life of many of these New York architects. Ranlett moved to New York in the early 1840s, setting up an office on Wall Street, but chose Staten Island for his country cottage home. In 1851, Renwick married Anna Aspinwall, daughter of Manhattan shipping magnate and Staten Island estate owner William H. Aspinwall. Renwick frequented his father-in-law's Island estate and perhaps influenced its design. Ten years later, Catherine Howland, Aspinwall's eighteen-year-old ward, married Richard Morris Hunt, perhaps the leading architect for the next generation of gilded age mansions, away from Staten Island at places like Newport, Rhode Island. In 1866, Henry Hobson Richardson, another leading architect of the era, moved to Staten Island, building a home for himself there the



following year. Richardson and Olmsted became good friends on Staten Island, the latter having returned there in the mid-1860s for the “convenience in ferrying across to Brooklyn for the [Prospect] Park work.” Olmsted also capitalized on his Staten Island connection to William H. Vanderbilt, his old fellow agricultural improver from the Richmond County Agricultural Society. Olmsted collaborated with Hunt on the elaborate Staten Island burial ground and mausoleum for William H. and Cornelius Vanderbilt and went on to design estates around the country for five of William’s children.<sup>56</sup>

In the 1840s and 50s, New York’s metropolitan elite and their gardeners invested the capital necessary to make their Staten Island estates into showplaces of horticulture. Gardener William Chorlton designed and maintained 8,000 square feet of glass houses on the J. C. Green estate. The camellia house alone was 78 feet long. J. McCall, Esq. “has not hesitated in making a judicious outlay,” observed *The Horticulturist*, in his “good vegetable garden, ... [and] fine collection of fruit-trees, with a well kept lawn, and flowers and shrubbery.” Like so many of his Staten Island estate neighbors, McCall too built greenhouses, “a small conservatory attached to the dwelling, a warm greenhouse, forty feet in length, and a newly erected range of four connected houses, divided into two graperies and two plant-houses.” Estate owners laid out capital for orchards of the finest, often imported fruit trees, buying from men around the region, like Downing in the Hudson Valley, and Olmsted on Staten Island.<sup>57</sup>

“[T]he success of a society for the refinement of horticulture in a “*great city*” like New York,” wrote Downing, “required the participation and support of “gentle proprietors – men on the [Hudson] river and Staten Island” to succeed. They alone could “make it the *fashion*,” he told George William Curtis, who sought Downing’s advice on

starting an horticultural society for New York. Years earlier, Downing had conspicuously included Staten Island in the purview of his Horticultural Society of the Valley of the Hudson, a short-lived institution he had hoped would be a vehicle for promoting his vision for an improved country landscape around New York. Staten Island estate owners like William Emerson were active in Downing's Society.<sup>58</sup>

Staten Islanders like Olmsted, and New Yorkers like Curtis, who would soon become Staten Islanders, were influenced by Downing as were so many others around the nation. But unlike those living away from New York, Olmsted and Curtis could know Downing personally, enabled by the regional steamboat network to travel up to Downing's Newburgh nursery. Meanwhile, Downing relied on New York publisher George Palmer Putnam, who lived on Staten Island, to publish his work. Curtis who worked for Putnam and eulogized Downing in the posthumously published *Rural Essays*, was living on Staten Island by the mid-1850s as well.<sup>59</sup>

### **Democratizing and Standardizing the Metropolitan Countryside**

#### ***From Staten Island Gardener and Architect to Voice of Professional Authority***

"Disseminate and diffuse knowledge," wrote Staten Island gardener William Chorlton, "and the more extensively and enthusiastically will it be sought after, the greater in number will be its proselytes, and the more the demand for those who practice in its various spheres." Promoting themselves as professionals, Staten Island's estate gardeners, like Chorlton and architect William Ranlett, claimed the authority to shape the metropolitan countryside and helped make it an aspirational landscape for a wider swath of society beyond the city's wealthiest elites. As Downing had parlayed his horticultural

experience in the family nursery business in Newburgh into a broad cultural authority over landscape design through publication, Chorlton and Ranlett disseminated their knowledge as gardener and architect, respectively, from Staten Island. Chorlton's prolific "how to" articles in the *Horticulturist* and his *American Grape Grower's Guide* helped shape the metropolitan countryside well beyond the estate he tended for J. C. Green on Staten Island, or indeed any of the fine estates of the elites who could afford to hire experienced gardeners like him directly. Similarly, through publication of *The Architect*, Ranlett shaped the design of country homes and grounds for the middle classes who could not afford his services as architect. From Staten Island, Chorlton and Ranlett shaped and spread the emerging landscape ideals of the mid-nineteenth century into an increasingly generic and widespread metropolitan countryside.<sup>60</sup>

Chorlton and Ranlett's authority stemmed in part from their efforts to distinguish themselves as professionals. Historians have noted that pattern and stylebooks like Ranlett's were an important element defining the distinction between "builder" (a hired mechanic) and "architect" (a professional designer). Ranlett used *The Architect* to define the role of architect as expert advisor to the metropolitan elite for their domestic investments, in much the same way that accountants, lawyers and the emerging class of business managers were beginning to do for their business enterprises. Unlike a builder, the architect, Ranlett argued, would select a proper "situation," or site, on the client's property because he was the expert who knew how to open up vistas and avoid unwanted exposure to the miasmas of damp earth, strong winds and rain, while retaining access to desirable fresh air breezes and sources of water. Equally important, Ranlett continued,

the architect was an arbiter of taste, schooling his employer in the various styles and conforming the choice of design to stylistic consistency.<sup>61</sup>

Similarly, Chorlton distinguished the “gardener” above the lowly labor of the “clodhopper and wheelbarrow trundler.” As professionals, gardeners like himself, wrote Chorlton, should not have to “succumb to the degrading position...of doing all kinds of conveniences for every domestic about a gentleman's back door.” Metropolitan elites, he argued, needed expert advice on their gardens in much the same way as they did on their cottages and villas. “We find most of our wealthy citizens keeping a country house...wishing to have gardens,” he wrote, but it was not enough to be willing to “expend thousands of dollars in laying out their grounds.” A true gardener, unlike “an ordinary mechanic,” offered expertise in design, husbandry, and management of the estate landscape of gardens and “pleasure grounds.” Through the expertise of a higher “class of gardeners” and professionals like himself, argued Chorlton, was how “American gentlemen [might] have as good gardens as most Europeans.” The metropolitan elite needed professionals like Ranlett and Chorlton to guide them in shaping their country homes and landscapes.<sup>62</sup>

Like Staten Island’s agricultural improvers before him, Chorlton claimed the authority of urban-based science and metropolitan institutions for the improvement of the “rural” landscape around New York. “Let horticulture be advocated and acknowledged as a science,” wrote Chorlton, “so as to make it appear worth while for the intelligent youths of the country to take it up, let it be spoken of on the hearthstone as something worthy of their acceptance.” In the same manner that agricultural improvers tied Staten Island and Manhattan together through metropolitan institutions (like the American

Institute and the American Agricultural Association), Staten Island estate owner Thomas Paxton argued that gardeners and nurserymen “in the vicinity of large towns and cities” were the ones who could form the “libraries” required to absorb and share urban-based knowledge of “Agriculture, Horticulture, Architecture, Mathematics, Botany and Natural History,” for the “improvement of gardeners.” Similarly, Chorlton argued for the establishment of horticultural societies in all “the principal large cities,” each with its demonstration garden, where professional men could learn and test their abilities. Such metropolitan institutions would have “a scientific and experienced director whose recommendation could be relied on ”to establish professional credentials. Gardening in the Staten Island countryside was not a rural endeavor, but rather one quite metropolitan.<sup>63</sup>

Ranlett’s *The Architect* ensured Staten Island houses and grounds, including his own Brier Cottage, became widely distributed models for duplication elsewhere in the new country landscape. First published in serial form, and then in two collected volumes in 1847 and 1849, *The Architect* was one of the first architectural pattern books to mix ideas of style and taste with practical construction information for a broad audience. For the house, Ranlett offered floor plans, elevations, architectural details and specifications for materials, but he also provided ground layouts for driveways, gardens, paths and outbuildings for a wide variety of country villas and cottages. Ranlett’s book was widely reviewed and promoted in publications ranging from *The Merchant’s Magazine* and *The American Whig Review* to *The Farmer and Mechanic* and the *Ohio Cultivator*. Indeed even schoolchildren absorbed Ranlett’s ideas on “Styles and Sites of Houses,” in the pages of the *Schoolmate* magazine. Ranlett’s designs were also reprinted in some of the

era's most widely disseminated publications geared for women, including *Godey's Lady's Book*. Although not all of Ranlett's designs were from projects for Staten Island clients per se, through *The Architect*, Ranlett disseminated the landscape ideal he helped develop on Staten Island all around New York and all over America.<sup>64</sup>

Like Ranlett, Chorlton projected his expertise from his experiences on the Island to a wider audience through publication. Chorlton was among the most prolific contributors to Downing's *Horticulturist*, writing regularly on everything from the design and cultivation of a successful vegetable garden, "The Development and Ripening of Fruit," and "The Improvement of Grounds" to the culturing of flowers from the Dahlia to the Carnation. Publishing *The Cold Grapery* in 1853, Chorlton established himself as the foremost expert on grape growing, just as a wave of interest in greenhouses swept the country landscape, "especially in the suburbs of our three largest cities." Promoting and shaping the proliferation of graperies by "fanning the flame and directing it into the proper course," Chorlton believed he would increase success and extend the trend, and thus the value of his expertise. Claiming authority over horticultural design and cultivation from the twelve acres of landscaped grounds and 8,000 square feet of glasshouses that he managed on Staten Island for J.C. Green, Chorlton shaped the choices estate and cottage plot owners made in their garden landscapes across the metropolitan countryside.<sup>65</sup>

The metropolitan countryside needed landscape professionals like Chorlton and Ranlett for another reason too. In a traditional rural community, land, capital and knowledge of cultivating plants passed into the hands of the property owner through generational transfer, or through a network of family and neighbors who had similar

agricultural skills and resources. However, in the metropolitan countryside, capital and knowledge came from urban sources; the land itself was sourced from beyond the city. As we have seen, agricultural improvers brought capital and scientific thinking to Staten Island farms and presented their work as a metropolitan profession. Staten Island's estate owners and their less wealthy cottage plot brethren brought capital from their urban enterprises too, but unlike many of the agriculturists, the estate and country cottage owners often had little knowledge of what or how to plant a desirable landscape. Some were interested amateurs. Others were uninterested in producing their own country landscape. Either way, Staten Island gardeners like Chorlton and architects like Ranlett positioned themselves as metropolitan professionals to guide the growing ranks of "rural" cottage plot owners on the design and implementation of a more widespread country landscape beyond their elite client's estates.

### *Extending the Country Estate Ideal to the Middle Classes*

"Cottages and small villas [are] the most appropriate class of dwellings for the mass of citizens," wrote Ranlett. "The poor man is regarded as having equal capacities for enjoyment as the rich." Broadened to include a broader swath of metropolitan families, Staten Island's country landscape, more than Brooklyn and the other townscape alternatives to Manhattan, seemed to offer a model for the nation, a democratic solution to the emerging urban problems of class and moral discipline. On Staten Island, country cottages for the city's middle classes, and perhaps its laborers, could blend with the estates of the elite without taking them away from metropolitan life and business.<sup>66</sup>

Ranlett and Olmsted offered their metropolitan countryside vision for Staten Island as a widespread alternative to the urban model of Manhattan and the similar town form of places like Brooklyn for housing metropolitan families. Olmsted praised Staten Island's New Brighton as "wholly untownlike" with "magnificent" views and homes "surrounded by grounds with a variety of flourishing trees" – a model residential neighborhood for the New York region. Olmsted suggested dividing more of the Island into lots one quarter to five acres in extent in his report to the Staten Island Improvement Commission in 1871, a generic framework that might reproduce the success of New Brighton. Similarly, Ranlett used one of his Staten Island designs to offer a widely reproducible alternative to the 25x100 Manhattan lot, arguing the extension of such an urban standard to places beyond the city destroyed the potential for a country landscape. Ranlett used his plan for a Staten Island client to articulate his new country village standard in *The Architect*. Ranlett's proposed standard took the form of eight miniature country estates side by side, each on a 244x151 lot, specifically designed to be subdivided into sixteen smaller country cottage plots at some future date. Little pieces of country, measuring 100x150 feet (about a third of an acre), Ranlett thought sufficient, exactly enough for the full range of country amenities arranged tastefully.<sup>67</sup>

Olmsted's and Ranlett's proposals could have housed a substantial portion of the metropolitan population in a "country" setting on Staten Island. Olmsted's proposal would have covered the Island with "twenty thousand detached villas and cottages" for "one hundred thousand people," suggesting Staten Island alone might have housed 11% of Manhattan's 1870 population in the metropolitan countryside. Ranlett's 100x150 lot standard spread across the Island would have housed quite a bit more. For comparison



purposes, if Manhattan had been rearranged to the suburban country village standard Ranlett proposed, each city block could have contained fourteen ideal country cottages. Assuming an average household size of six, common at the time, that would be at least 8,500 people per square mile, more than 2.5 times the population density of modern day Atlanta.<sup>68</sup>

With a little effort, Ranlett believed, virtually anyone could reside in the metropolitan countryside. “[M]any a mechanic or tradesman is able, by a little retrenchment besides the amount of his rent bills in a few years to erect a tasty cottage on a pleasant country or suburban lot,” he wrote. Since the urban mechanics and tradesmen he hoped would build such homes could not retain the services of a professional like himself, Ranlett promised in *The Architect*, “These designs are accompanied by the necessary specifications and estimates to guide the proprietor in contracting, and the builder in their construction.” He included also a word-for-word model contract so the aspiring cottage owners could engage with masons and carpenters on the same terms as their elite estate owning neighbors. As proof of the practicality of his vision, he offered “four designs of cottages in approved styles” in *The Architect* “that would cost from 975 to 1050 dollars.”<sup>69</sup>

The emerging country landscape on Staten Island and other places on the periphery of the new region could democratize the advantages of non-urban living for metropolitan families. Up until now, argued Ranlett, “Men of moderate circumstances and the really poor have been so long accustomed to plain, uncomfortable houses, that beauty and convenience have come to be regarded as solely the right of the wealthy and independent....” The downsized version of the country estate landscape Ranlett and

Chorlton designed for the metropolitan elite on Staten Island promised the middle classes of mechanics and craftsmen a country cottage plot complete with miniature pleasure grounds, refined homes and fine produce of vegetables and fruits. By copying models Ranlett had designed for Staten Island, “the humblest Cottage” could and “should in beauty of form and convenience of construction be equal to the finest Villa.” If they followed his instructions in *The Cold Grapery*, Chorlton promised “the mechanic and small tradesman” the “enthusiastic pleasure [of] the several stages of bursting buds, flowers, and fruit, knowing that he could enjoy his own luscious grapes, equal in quality with those of the most wealthy proprietor in the land.” With Chorlton’s help, the cottage-owning family could build a small greenhouse and consume their roses regardless of the natural cycle of the seasons, very similarly to their wealthy estate-owning neighbors.<sup>70</sup>

Properly designed cottage living in the country and villages of places like Staten Island, argued Ranlett and Chorlton, would elevate the family of moderate means in ways that urban living could not, promoting moral discipline through leisurely, yet conscientious engagement with nature. A “convenient front yard,” wrote Ranlett, is “beneficial to the family by its tendency to foster good taste.” Cultivating the yard “with flowers and ornamental shrubs as [it] should be,” he continued, “affords also innocent and useful amusement and pastime and the effects of such employments are always of a genial character, as they cultivate habits of industry and attention, and improve the taste and other fine feelings of our nature.” Such horticulture, wrote Chorlton, would save women from “lolling from morn to night, inanimate, as it were, upon the downy sofa, reading exciting and voluptuous novels, and assisting the seeds of consumption to germinate.”<sup>71</sup>

Getting metropolitan families from urban dwellings into “tasty cottages” in places like Staten Island would spread the new country landscape ideal. It was natural, predicted Ranlett, for each owner of such a property to pursue “the convenience of a vegetable garden, and all the decorations of bowers, shrubs and flowers, that his means ... taste and industry ... enable [him] to accumulate.” To do so, they would turn to *The Horticulturist* and Staten Island estate gardeners like Chorlton for the horticultural and landscape design expertise to guide them. By disseminating their expertise to the amateur who could not afford their services directly, Ranlett and Chorlton sought to spread the landscape of the metropolitan countryside far beyond their direct work on the Staten Island estates of their elite clients.<sup>72</sup>

As Ranlett and Chorlton projected the ideal of the metropolitan country landscape from Staten Island to a larger geography, they presented it as a model for all America, and a project of national significance. The democratization of gardening and architectural expertise, they suggested, would elevate the nation and prove that the potential of the American republic was greater than the aristocratic achievements in the European countryside. Despite progress already affected on the landscape by men like himself, Ranlett wrote, “Much still remains to be done for the comfort and elevation of the people” by “beautifying the incomparable sites for building which abound in the suburbs of our great cities.” Doing so would equalize the condition of the poor and rich “in the vicinity of our large towns.” Unlike in England and Europe, where the homes of the laborer marked him as “a wholly different race, having lower instincts and baser appetites,” in America, argued Ranlett, as befitting a republic, “The Villa of the wealthy

merchant is nothing more than an enlargement of the Cottage of his poor laborer,” differing merely “in size, in costliness of material and in ornamentation.”<sup>73</sup>

Ranlett and Chorlton saw the blending of fine estates for the elite and tasteful suburban cottages for the middling classes emerging on Staten Island as part of the same country landscape, working together to mark an improving and democratic America. The homes and grounds of the non-elites were essential to this landscape ideal. “The rich man may build himself a beautiful Villa, but he cannot enjoy its beauty by looking out of his own windows,” wrote Ranlett, “it is therefore as necessary for the lover of beauty in art to promote good tastes among his neighbors as to possess it himself, since he must of necessity see more of his neighbors’ houses than he does of his own.” Many of those homes, thought Ranlett, would be homes of families of lesser status. But, luckily, in America, he argued, “There is no necessity that any man in this country, however humble in position, or restricted in means he may be, should live in an ugly or ill-constructed house.” Chorlton concurred, imagining for the American landscape “...universal scenery of beauty, elegance and grandeur, that shall outrival all older countries,” depending not on “aristocratic noblemen” as in Europe, but “a unitedness and greatness collectively which, although divided among a number of possessors, will give gratification to the many, and, as a total, will form one great feature.” Helped along by landscape design professionals, Chorlton believed this ideal American landscape would “not destroyed by individual bad taste,” but rather, as a nation, America might aspire to “possess a park-like landscape, equal in finish, and of far greater extent, than Britain itself,” where both the rich and humble would live together in a refined metropolitan countryside.<sup>74</sup>

### **From Metropolitan Landscape Experiment to Generic Suburban Periphery**

As they built the foundation for a metropolitan relationship between Staten Island and Manhattan through the country landscape they forged, Staten Island's agricultural improvers, estate owners, gardeners, and architects defined the Island as the region's periphery. By the 1850s, the new metropolitan country landscape created by men like Akerly, Olmsted, Aspinwall, Ranlett and Chorlton was a generic form. It had no inherent connection to a particular place. As metropolitan periphery, Staten Island had become little different from other, increasingly accessible places around Manhattan.

In a maritime era where the city faced the harbor, Staten Island with its healthful hills and extensive waterfront facing the city, was one of a limited number of places accessible enough to Manhattan for the new metropolitan countryside to emerge. Beginning around mid-century, New York turned uptown and inland, away from the harbor, and became the imperial metropolis of an increasingly continental domain. By the 1850s, railroads complemented and later supplanted steamboats as the circulatory system of a geographically reoriented New York region.

The railroad changed the regional organization of New York and rearranged the value of places within it. For the agricultural improvers the railroad meant, as one Staten Islander remarked at a meeting of the Farmers Club in Manhattan, that fruits and vegetables produced at market "gardens a hundred miles distant are as good as those of 10 miles only." Farming continued as an important part of Staten Island life and economy, but as the Island's leading agriculturists died, moved away, or engaged in increasingly Manhattan-oriented pursuits, Staten Island lost its metropolitan visibility as a place of agricultural improvement. For the residential landscape of metropolitan country

estates and cottage plots, the railroad opened larger spaces in Westchester, on Long Island and in New Jersey to urban accessibility, a vast new territory increasingly distant from Staten Island and the harbor.<sup>75</sup>

Other structural changes contributed to refocusing New Yorker's attention uptown, westward and away from the harbor. Public investments in Central Park and the water supply reinforced the uptown growth of Manhattan. Meanwhile, Manhattan elites increasingly derived their wealth from the national interior and industry. International maritime trade and local agricultural markets, which had focused the attention of merchant elites toward Staten Island as a place for metropolitan country estates, faded in relative importance. Although the Island's population continued to grow, other places around Manhattan, especially those like Brooklyn that had defined themselves in more urban terms, absorbed a much larger share of the burgeoning population, wealth and cultural attention of the metropolitan region.

As the railroad allowed the metropolitan country landscape to proliferate across a wider territory around the city, there was nothing to focus gardeners, architects, estate owners, or cottage residents toward Staten Island. Slowly, it became increasingly difficult to distinguish the Island's landscape from any of a number of other places near and around the city. Ranlett moved to Ho-Ho-Kus, New Jersey in the late 1850s when he returned from his foray into the California gold rush. While Chorlton stayed on Staten Island and opened a nursery business, a number of his fellow estate gardeners left. One example was John Eagan, who had been gardener to J. F. Roeck, Esq. of New Brighton in the late 1850s and early 1860s. Eagan left the Island by 1865 to become gardener to the Stevens estate in Hoboken. Many of the major estate owners left too, including William

H. Aspinwall, who traded his older and comparatively modest Staten Island country home for a much grander mansion and estate in Tarrytown in 1860. After J. C. Green died in 1875, his wife summered in Newport, Rhode Island with her peers. The Phelps-Stokes family (relative latecomers among the elites on Staten Island) too left the Island by the 1880s. As Anson Phelps-Stokes put it, “a number of our friends had left Staten Island.” Phelps-Stokes’ and his neighbors, “had been disgusted at some of the conditions [there],” where the opening of spectacles like the Fall of Babylon show and Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show along with “cheap excursion places had caused the ferry boats to be overcrowded and had brought a rough element to the island.”<sup>76</sup>

As the city and the wealth of its elites grew, Manhattanites who could establish country estates looked beyond Staten Island to places farther removed from the city for larger estates where they could establish grander landscapes to display their wealth, refinement, and status, and better enforce their exclusivity. As New York’s elites shifted from a social organization based on the sources of wealth to a more class-based unity Ranlett and Chorlton’s vision of places like Staten Island as a democratic American countryside integrating estates of the elite and cottages of mechanics and artisans faded as an ideal. While Staten Island remained a place where the middle classes could live among the city elites as well as among farmers, by the 1860s, the Island was no longer at the forefront of landscape experimentation nor metropolitan country life in New York.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Henry David Thoreau to his Parents, 8 June 1843, in F. B. Sandborn (ed.), *Familiar Letters of Henry David Thoreau* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1906), 85.

<sup>2</sup> William H. Ranlett, *The Architect: A Series of Original Designs, for Domestic and Ornamental Cottages and Villas, Connected with landscape Gardening, Adapted to the United States, Illustrated by Drawings and ground Plots, Plans, Perspective Views, Elevations, Sections, and Details* 1 (New York: William H. Graham, 1847), 37.

<sup>3</sup> Olmsted's trip from Connecticut to Staten Island was a bit more eventful than depicted here, with winds that forced the sloop to go back inside the Narrows overnight before a difficult unloading near Olmsted's farm the following day. Frederick Law Olmsted to John Hull Olmsted 6 March 1848, Reel 4, FLO Papers. Frederick Law Olmsted to Charles Loring Brace, 9 March 1848, Reel 4, FLO Papers.

<sup>4</sup> Frederick Law Olmsted to Charles Loring Brace, 9 March 1848, Reel 4, FLO Papers.

<sup>5</sup> For the agricultural improvement movement, see Steven Stoll, *Larding the Lean Earth: Soil and Society in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2003); for agricultural improvement in the south and similar fears of abandonment of eastern farms and cultured society for the frontier, see Jack Temple Kirby, *Mockingbird Song: Ecological Landscapes of the South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 84–99; for American's romantic view of nature, see Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), esp. 78–95; for Downing and rural refinement, see David Schuyler, *Apostle of Taste: Andrew Jackson Downing, 1815–1852* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996); for Olmsted's career, see Roy Rosenzweig and Elizabeth Blackmar, *The Park And The People: A History of Central Park* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992); and for a broad view of Olmsted's career, see Laura Wood Roper, *FLO: A Biography of Frederick Law Olmsted* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973); Witold Rybczynski, *A Clearing In The Distance Frederick Law Olmsted and America in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Scribner, 1999); and Elizabeth Stevenson, *Park Maker: A Life Of Frederick Law Olmsted* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2000); see also David Schulyer, *The New Urban Landscape* (1986); and Richard Bushman, *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities* (New York: Knopf, 1992).

<sup>6</sup> For contemporary use of the term “scientific farming,” see Samuel Akerly, “The Late Dr. Samuel L. Mitchill,” *The Cultivator* 4 (1884–5), 248; for Akerly's use of “improvements” with regard to farmscape, see Samuel Akerly, “Improvements on Mr. Ketchum's Farm at Westport, Connecticut,” *The Cultivator* 1:1 (July 1844), 33; for Downing's use of “rural improvement,” see Downing, *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening, Adapted to North America* (New York: Wiley & Putnam, 1841), vii. Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973). Other scholars have long been interested in the relationship between city and country in the nineteenth century as viewed through landscape architecture, see, e.g., John Stilgoe, *Borderland: Origins of the American Suburb, 1820–1939* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988); Schuyler (1986); John Archer, “Country and City in the American Romantic Suburb,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 42:2 (May 1983), 139–56; also Schuyler (1996).

<sup>7</sup> Frederick Law Olmsted to Charles Loring Brace, 9 March 1848, Reel 4, FLO Papers. Staten Island was not entirely unique; for the cultural agenda of metropolitan gentlemen farmers near Boston, see Tamara Plakins Thornton, *Cultivating Gentlemen: The Meaning of Country Life Among the Boston Elite, 1785–1860* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).



<sup>8</sup> Samuel Akerly, "Agriculture of Richmond County," *Transactions of the New-York State Agricultural Society* 2 (Albany: E. Mack, 1843), 205. Samuel Akerly, "Letter from Richmond" *The Cultivator* 1 (1844), 287; for the importance of the Erie Canal to the growth of New York, see, e.g., Burrows and Wallace, 430–1 and 450; Albion and Pope argue that other factors such as the scheduled packet service and the capturing of cotton exports were at least as important as the Erie Canal to New York's dominance as a seaport; see, e.g., Albion and Pope, 13, 15 and 19–121; for a more in depth history of the Erie Canal itself and the transformative effects of the Canal on lives and farms upstate, see, e.g., Carol Sheriff, *The Artificial River: The Erie Canal and the Paradox Of Progress, 1817–1862* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1996).

<sup>9</sup> For the American cultural roots linking plant cultivation, societal progress and fears of degeneracy, see Philip Pauly, *ruits And Plains: The Horticultural Transformation of America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), esp. ch. 1; see also fn. 5, above.

<sup>10</sup> "Education of Farmers," *Richmond County Mirror* 3:19 (June 8, 1839), 154. "Practical Farming—Wheatsheaf Farm," *American Agriculturist* 1 (1843), 201–5.

<sup>11</sup> Frederick Law Olmsted to Frederick Kingsbury, 10 May 1848, Reel 47, FLO Papers, Library of Congress. Olmsted also noted, that Staten Island was "isolated" enough such that he and his neighbors could still "knock 'round sans souci as much as at" his former more isolated Connecticut farm. John Hull Olmsted to FK, May 1847, Reel 4, FLO Papers, Library of Congress; for Charles Loring Brace's visits to Olmsted on Staten Island, see, e.g., Emma Brace Donaldson and Charles Loring Brace, *The Life of Charles Loring Brace, Chiefly Told in His Own Letters, Edited by His Daughter*, (London: Sampson Low & Co, 1894), 58–70.

<sup>12</sup> Akerly, "Letter from Richmond," 287. Akerly, "Improvements on Mr. Ketchum's Farm at Westport, Connecticut," 33.

<sup>13</sup> For Akerly's purchase of the Staten Island farm, see, "New York, Land Records, 1630–1975," Richmond County liber 5, 572; for background on Samuel Akerly, see Roswell S. Coles, "Early Records of the Rocks and Minerals of Staten Island, Part II," *Proceedings of the Staten Island Institute of Arts and Sciences* 12:2 (January 1950), 31; "The Death of Dr. Akerly," *The Cultivator* 1 (1844–5), 252; and Akerly, "The Late Dr. Samuel L. Mitchill," 248.

<sup>14</sup> For Seeley's purchase of the Staten Island farm, see, "New York, Land Records, 1630–1975," Richmond County Liber Y, 281; for background on William A. Seeley, see, "Supreme Court Special Terms before Hon. Judge Irs Harris without a Jury," *NYH*, October 12, 1853, 8; "The Princess Orange's Jewels," *NYEP*, August 1, 1831, 2; [Brothers Charpie Case, No title], *New York American*, September 26, 1826, 1; "List of Members," *Annals of the Lyceum of Natural History of New York* 5 (New York: Lyceum of Natural History, 1852) and *Transactions of the American Agricultural Association*, Part 1 (New York, 1846), front matter, Biodiversity Heritage Library, biodiversitylibrary.org, accessed March 5, 2014.

<sup>15</sup> Morris, 2, 86–7 and 109–10; for John P Poillon living in Manhattan and his son working as a Manhattan cartman in the 1830s, see, "Fourteenth Ward," *NYEP*, April 7,

1832, 2; *Longworth's American Almanac*, *New York Register and City Directory for the Fifty-Second Year of Independence* (1827), 392 and *Longworth's* (1834), 553; for the transactions involving the Akerly and Seeley farms, see, "New York, Land Records, 1630–1975," Richmond County Liber Y, 161; Y, 163; Y, 281; and 5, 572. "For Sale, a Valuable Farm," *NYEP*, May 29, 1838. The advertisement of Akerly's farm was not an entirely new development, as farms for sale were sometimes advertised in newspapers earlier, but the accelerating proliferation of publically recorded deeds beginning in the 1830s, and the rising number of Manhattan buyers, suggests sale of Staten Island land to strangers, esp. to urban buyers, was an emerging pattern; see, "New York, Land Records, 1630–1975," Richmond County Deed Records, Indexes.

<sup>16</sup> "Practical Farming—Wheatsheaf Farm," 201–5. "New York, Land Records, 1630–1975," Liber Y, 281. Samuel Akerly, "Remarks on Peat," *The Cultivator* 1:10 (October 1844), 323. Samuel Akerly, "Waste Manures," *The Cultivator* 2:7 (July 1845), 211. Samuel Akerly, "Zea Maise or Indian Corn," *The Cultivator* 8 (1841), 65.

<sup>17</sup> T. J. Stiles, *The First Tycoon: The Epic Life of Cornelius Vanderbilt* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2009), 131–2, 121, 213–4; see also Edward Renshan, *Commodore: The Life of Cornelius Vanderbilt* (New York: Basic Books, 2007), 156; and W. A. Croffut, *The Vanderbilts and The Story of Their Fortune* (London: Belford, Clarke, 1886); for Cornelius' acquisition of the Staten Island farm on which William resided, see, "New York, Land Records, 1630–1975," Richmond County Liber 2, 184; 10, 33; 103, 338; and 37, 562.

<sup>18</sup> For a brief biography of John Olmsted, as it pertains to the life of his son Frederick, see Frederick Law Olmsted and Charles Capen McLaughlin (ed.), *The Formative Years, 1822 to 1852*, vol. 1, PFLO (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977), 83–5. Hartford, as the capital and second largest city in the state, was perhaps the most "urban" place in Connecticut in 1840, and one of the largest cities in New England; for literature on Frederick Law Olmsted, see fn. 5, above.

<sup>19</sup> Frederick Law Olmsted to John Olmsted, 10 & 14 March 1850, Reel 4, FLO Papers; Stiles, 323.

<sup>20</sup> For Clawson, see, "To Farmers, Agriculturists, &c. (ad), *NYH*, June 26, 1843; *Doggett's New York City Directory, 1842* (New York: John Doggett, Jr., 1842); for Osgood, Dunning and Field in Manhattan, see, *Doggett's New York City Directory, 1848–1849, Seventh Publication* (New York: John Doggett, Jr., 1848), 313, 134 and 148; for Haynes Lord, see *Sheldon & Co.'s Business or Advertising Directory: Containing the Cards, Circulars, and Advertisements of the Principal Firms of the Cities of New-York, Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, etc., etc.* (New York: John F. Trow & Co., 1845), 35; for these men as the first set of officers of the Richmond County Agricultural Society, see, "Appeal to the Citizens of Staten Island," Reel 4, 1850. FLO Papers.

<sup>21</sup> Richmond County Agricultural Society, see, "Appeal to the Citizens of Staten Island," Reel 4 [1850], FLO Papers; for Seguine, see Charles W. Leng and William T. Davis, *Staten Island and Its People: A History, 1609–1929* 3, 37. "New York, Land Records, 1630–1975," Liber 5, 572. Akerly, "Agriculture of Richmond County," 202; for Garretson, see Morris 2, 87.

<sup>22</sup> Frederick Law Olmsted to John Olmsted, 7 November 1849, and FLO to JO, 18 May 1853, Reel 4, FLO Papers. Unlike many other New England transplants to New York, Olmsted was not an abolitionist, but he did become well known for his more moderate anti-slavery views as he wrote about his travels in the South in the 1850s. Here he was likely venting frustration over the dearth of available agricultural labor on Staten Island and the tremendous amount of work he wanted to do on the farm rather than commenting on slavery, per se; for Olmsted's views on slavery, see Frederick Law Olmsted and Charles E. Beveridge and Charles Capen McLaughlin (eds.), *Slavery and the South*, 1852–57, vol. 2, PFO (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981); and Frederick Law Olmsted, *A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States: With Remarks on Their Economy* (New York: Dix & Edwards, 1856); for Vanderbilt and his laborers, see; "The Millionaire As A Farmer," *NYT*, December 10, 1885, 2; and Croffut, 58–9; for another example of coping with labor scarcity, see again, "Practical Farming—Wheatsheaf Farm," 202.

<sup>23</sup> Akerly, "Agriculture of Richmond County," 205–7, 210; for the Vanderbilt legend, see Renahan, 339; and Croffut, 62–3

<sup>24</sup> Akerly, "Agriculture of Richmond County," 205–7, 210. Frederick Law Olmsted, "Richmond," *Transactions of the New York State Agricultural Society* 10 (1850) (Albany: C. Van Benthuyzen, 1851), 288–92.

<sup>25</sup> Akerly, "Agriculture of Richmond County," 209. Samuel Akerly, "Balance of Organic Nature," *The Cultivator* 2:2 (February 1845), 64. Poudrette, made from "the contents of the city's privies," was first introduced in 1837; see, "A Commendable Undertaking," *The Cultivator* 4:7 (September 1837), 112. Lodi Manufacturing Company ads for Poudrette were common in the 1840s and 1850s; see, e.g., "Poudrette (ad)," *The Cultivator* (May 1846), 164; "Farmers and Gardeners (ad)," *The Cultivator* 3 (April 1855), 135; and Poudrette (ad)," *American Agriculturist* 8 (1849), 38; for Staten Island manure manufacturers, including Lodi's complaint, see, "Caution," (ad) *American Agriculturist* 21:4 (April 1862), 127; "Bone Dust Manure and Superphosphate of Lime," *The Cultivator* 1 (1855), 293; and Solon Robinson, "Staten Island Interior," *Richmond County Gazette*, August 23, 1865; for Manhattan distribution of Bruce's fertilizer in the to the south, see, "North River Agricultural Works (ad)," *Daily Constitutionalist* (Augusta, GA), January 26, 1866, 1.

<sup>26</sup> Olmsted, "Richmond," (1851), 290. Frederick Law Olmsted to John Olmsted, 7 November 1849, Reel 4, FLO Papers. When Olmsted moved from Staten Island to Manhattan to work on Central Park, drainage remained a central idea in his plans for landscape improvement, and he brought George A. Waring, who was managing his Staten Island farm at the time, to lead drainage projects at the Park.

<sup>27</sup> FLO to JO, 26 January 1850 and 29 February 1850, Reel 4, FLO Papers. "Drain Tiles," *The Cultivator* 8, (July 1851), 256. "Appeal to the Citizens of Staten Island."

<sup>28</sup> FLO to JO, 21 November 1851, Reel 4, FLO Papers. Akerly, "Agriculture of Richmond County," 205–7. Frederick Law Olmsted, "Richmond," *Transactions of the New York State Agricultural Society* 11 (1851) (Albany: C. Van Benthuyzen, 1852), 611.

“Wheeler’s Patent Improved Portable Rail Road Horse Power and Overshot Thresher and Separator (ad),” *American Agriculturist* 8 (1849), 232.

<sup>29</sup> For Clawson’s Manhattan business and the transition to Allen’s ownership, see; “Notice to Southern and Western Merchants (ad),” *NYH*, October 29, 1844, 4; “To Farmers, Agriculturists, &c. (ad),” *NYH*, June 26, 1843; *Doggett’s New York City Directory, 1842* (New York: John Doggett, Jr., 1842); “NY Agricultural Warehouse,” *NYEP*, December 16, 1845, 3; and *Doggett’s New York City Directory* for both 1845 and 1848–9; for the rest of Clawson’s life and career, see; William T. Davis, Charles W. Leng, and Royden Woodward Vosburgh. *The Church of St. Andrew, Richmond, Staten Island Its History, Vital Records, And Gravestone Inscriptions* (Staten Island: SIHS, 1925), 200 (<http://catalog.hathitrust.org/api/volumes/oclc/6070291.html>, accessed March 13, 2014); “Historic Dutch Houses Upon Old Staten Island,” *The New Country Life* 31 (November 1916–April 1917), 74; Leng and Davis 2, 876 and 540; “Farm for Sale,” *NYEP*, February 9, 1833, 3; “Married,” *NYEP*, December 21, 1830, 2; *Longworth’s* (1827), 534; “Died,” *New York Spectator*, July 5, 1845, 1; “Notice: The firm of J. B. Windle & Co...,” *New York Commercial Advertiser*, February 19, 1846; and “Appeal to the Citizens of Staten Island.”

<sup>30</sup> For scientific knowledge as an urban form, where information tends toward a central place where it can be legitimized, universalized and processed through calculation, see, Bruno Latour, *Science in Action* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987), particularly “Chapter 6: Centers of Calculation.” William A. Seeley, “Farm Machinery—Peat Earth,” *The Cultivator* 5:1 (March 1838), 17; “Valuable farm on Staten Island for sale,” *The Cultivator* 3 (1846), 200.

<sup>31</sup> “Chapter 348: An Act to Incorporate the American Institute in the City of New York,” *Laws of the State of New York*, 51st–52nd sess. (Albany: E. Croswell, 1829), 527–8. Information about the fairs can be found in the Annual Reports of the American Institute, available online (accessed March 20, 2014, <http://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/010307447>, accessed March 13, 2014). American Institute Fairs were covered regularly, usually in multiple articles in *The New York Times* from 1851 through 1890. The Fairs were not merely agricultural, though agricultural improvement and promotion was part of the Institute’s mission; e.g., from before 1851; see, “Fair of the American Institute,” *National Advocate* (New York, NY), October 24, 1828, 2; “Fair at Masonic Hall,” *New York Commercial Advertiser*, October 14, 1831, 2; “The Fair,” *New York Commercial Advertiser*, October 13, 1832, 2; “Fair of the American Institute,” *New York Spectator*, October 14, 1839; “Fair Of The American Institute,” *New York Commercial Advertiser*, October 9, 1845, 2.

<sup>32</sup> Gilbert Milligan Tucker, *American Agricultural Periodicals: An Historical Sketch*, (Albany, 1909). Donald B. Marti, “Agricultural Journalism and the Diffusion of Knowledge: The First Half-Century in America,” *Agricultural History* (1980): 28–37; for a brief biography of Mapes, see Frederick W. Ricord and Sophia B. Ricord, *Biographical and Genealogical History of the City of Newark and Essex County, New Jersey* (New York: Lewis Pub. Co., 1898), 149–51. *Working Farmer* 1:1 (February 1849), 1. Richard Lamb Allen’s *The American Farm Book* (New York: C. M. Saxton, 1849) went through numerous editions and continued to be published into the 20th

century; for an overview of the life of Richard Lamb Allen, see the biographical sketch at the beginning of Richard Lamb Allen and S. O. Allen (ed.), *Last Letters of Richard L. Allen* (New York: Dodd & Mead, 1871); for Orange Judd, see, “His Life History,” *Orange Judd Farmer*, January 7, 1893, as republished in *Annual Report of the Nebraska State Horticultural Society for the Year 1893* (Lincoln: State of Nebraska, 1893), 254–7; and David B. Potts, *Wesleyan University, 1831–1910: Collegiate Enterprise in New England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 76–7. Following a financial crisis in the 1880s, Judd moved the agricultural publishing business to Chicago. “To Our Agents,” *The Cultivator* 3 (1846), 70. Henry David Thoreau to Ralph Waldo Emerson, 14 September 1843, *Familiar Letters*, 107.

<sup>33</sup> Allen and Allen, 8–9. Caleb N. Bement, *The Rabbit Fancier* (New York: C.M. Saxton, 1855), 8; Caleb N. Bement, “The Guinea Fowl: Its History, Habits, Characteristics &c,” *American Stock Journal* 5:6 (September 1863), 127–8. Caleb N. Bement, “A Chapter on Swine,” *American Stock Journal* 5:8 (November 1863), 177–8. American Agricultural Association, *The Transactions of the American Agricultural Association* (New York: The Association, 1846), front matter; for Seeley and other Staten Islanders’ involvement with the American Agricultural Association in Manhattan, see, “Meeting of the American Agricultural Association,” *American Agriculturist* 4, (1845), 79; “American Agricultural Association,” *American Agriculturist* 4 (1845), 112; “Analysis of Soils, Manures, etc.,” *American Agriculturist* 8:5 (May 1849), 158; see also, “New York Farmer’s Club,” *American Agriculturist* 4 (1845), 206 and 272; “Social Meeting of Farmers and Gardeners,” *American Agriculturist* 7:10 (1848), 297; and “Fruit Grower’s Meetings,” *American Agriculturist* 21:10 (October 1862), 292. For the agricultural school at Flushing, see, “American Agricultural Society,” *American Agriculturist* 5:4 (April 1846), 109.

<sup>34</sup> “American Agricultural Association” *American Agriculturist* 4 (1845), 112. “Practical Farming—Wheatsheaf Farm,” 201–5; for reprints ranging from Richmond, Virginia to New Hampshire, see, e.g., “Practical Farming,” *The Southern Planter* 3:2 (February 1843), 27–8; and “Practical Farming,” *The Farmer’s Monthly Visitor* 5:2 (February 28, 1843), 28. “American Agricultural Society,” *American Agriculturist* 5:4 (April 1846), 109.

<sup>35</sup> “Practical Farming—Wheatsheaf Farm,” 201–5.

<sup>36</sup> “Our City,” *The New York Mirror and Ladies Literary Gazette*, September 6, 1823, 47. Henry David Thoreau to his Parents, 8 June 1843, *Familiar Letters*, 70.

<sup>37</sup> “Staten Islanders in New York: Their Places of Business,” *Hagadorn’s Semi-Weekly Staaten Islander*, March 1, 1856. The United States Census put the population of Richmond County at 15,061 in 1850 and 25,492 in 1860, with an average of 6.45 per dwelling. Minnesota Population Center, *National Historical Geographic Information System: Version 2.0* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2011), <http://www.nhgis.org>, accessed March 27, 2014. New York (State), *Documents of the Assembly, 72nd sess.*, 2:60 (1849), 92.

<sup>38</sup> For the high value of Staten Island’s housing stock, esp. in Castleton and Southfield, the two townships facing the harbor, see *New York State Census of 1855*, 240.

<sup>39</sup> Henry David Thoreau to his Parents, 8 June 1843, *Familiar Letters*, 83. Ranlett 1, 19. Lydia H. Sigourney, "A Visit to Staten Island," *Graham's Magazine* 37 (June 1850–January 1851), 149–51.

<sup>40</sup> Ranlett 2, 10–11. Throughout *The Architect*, Ranlett introduces architectural styles and discusses their character as well as their form.

<sup>41</sup> "An Afternoon's Drive on Staten Island," *Newark Daily Advertiser*, August 28, 1848, 2. "Visits to Country Places No.2, Around New York," *The Horticulturist* 6 (1856), 401–3; for the culture of sentiment that restrained great displays and performances of wealth and how it gave way to a more performance culture of display, see Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women* (1982); for the size of Staten Island country seats, see Blood *Staten Island: Map*; James Butler, *Map of Staten Island*, SIM;

<sup>42</sup> Frederick Law Olmsted to Charles Loring Brace, 9 March 1848, Reel 4, FLO Papers. "An Afternoon's Drive on Staten Island." Sigourney, 150; for more on the estates in the hills behind Clifton and Stapleton see Charles G. Hine, *History and Legend of Howard Avenue and the Serpentine Road, Grymes Hill, Staten Island* (Privately Printed, 1914), SIM.

<sup>43</sup> "An Afternoon's Drive on Staten Island." For the "merchant princes" of New York in the era, see Albion and Pope, (1939, 1984), esp. 235–59; for more on Aspinwall, see Duncan S. Somerville, *The Aspinwall Empire* (Mystic, Conn: Mystic Seaport Museum, 1983); and *William Henry Aspinwall*, Panama Railroad website <http://www.panamarailroad.org/aspinwall.html>, accessed March 26, 2014; for more on Livingston, see, "Mortimer Livingston," *New York Mercury*, August 30, 1857, 5; and "Mortimer Livingston," *The American Merchant* 1:6 (October 1858), 250–3; for maps showing the owners of estates, see Blood, *Staten Island: Map*; James Butler, *Map of Staten Island*, SIM; for Cornelius Vanderbilt's Staten Island mansion, see, "A Noted Mansion Burned," *NYT*, January 4, 1882, 8; and Stiles, *The First Tycoon*, 127–9 and 150–1; for Mauran's estate, see, "To Let – The Country Seat of the Late O. Mauran," *New York Evening Express*, May 11, 1860; and "Auction Sales," *New York Evening Mirror*, November 10, 1847; for more on Mauran and Vanderbilt, see A.C. Freeman (compiler) "Vanderbilt v Richmond Turnpike Company," (October 1849) *The American Decisions: Cases of General Value and Authority* 51 (San Francisco: Bancroft Whitney, 1910), 315; Stiles, (2009), 124; Moses Yale Beach, *The Wealth And Biography of the Wealthy Citizens of the City of New York: Being an Alphabetical Arrangement of the Names of the Most Prominent Capitalists . . .* (10th ed.) (New York: Pub. at the Sun Office, 1846), 20; Mauran's obituary is reprinted in John Calvin Stockbridge and James Eddy Mauran, *Memorials of the Mauran Family* (Providence: Snow and Farnham, 1893), 92; see also George Matteson, *Tugboats of New York: An Illustrated History* (New York: New York University Press, 2005), 22–5; Hine (1914), 52–5; and "The H. B. Foster," *Reports of Cases in Admiralty Argued and Determined in the District Court of the United States for the Southern District of New York* 1 (Boston: Little Brown, 1857), 222; for Edward Cunard, see *The Register and Magazine of Biography* 1 (1869), 389–90; John MacIntyre, "Famous Cunard Mansion," *Shipping: America's Leading Magazine of Marine Transportation*, February 25, 1922, 10–14; for more on Griswold, see, "Obituary: Death of Mr. George Griswold," *NYH*, September 07, 1859, 8; for more on Green, see

“Died: Green,” *NYT*, May 22, 1893; for more on Jones, see *Sheldon & Co.'s Business or Advertising Directory* (1845), 34; and “Foreign Dry Good – S. T. Jones & Co.,” *New York Commercial Advertiser*, March 11, 1843, 3. Goodhue bought Black Ball in the 1830s, though he was not the founder of the line; for more on Goodhue, see, “Death of Jonathan Goodhue,” *New-York Municipal Gazette* 1:52 (January 18, 1849), 880–1.

<sup>44</sup> Somerville, 11–15. Anson Phelps Stokes, “Bay Villa: The Residence, on Staten Island, of Anson Phelps Stokes (S.I.: s.n., c.1880), Metropolitan Museum of Art, Watson Library Digital Collections (<http://library.metmuseum.org/record=b1152569~S1>, accessed March 26, 2014); for the Phelps fortune, see Joseph Alfred Scoville, *The Old Merchants of New York City* 5 (New York: Thomas R. Knox, 1885), 246–8; for the life of the Phelps Stokes family, see Anson Phelps-Stokes, *Stokes Records* (New York: Privately Printed, 1910), <https://archive.org/details/stokesrecordsnot12instok> and <http://www.archive.org/details/stokesrecordsnot11stok>, accessed March 1, 2014. The Phelps-Stokes mansion is briefly described in New York City Landmarks Commission, *August and Augusta Schoverling House*, Landmarks Designation Report, January 30, 2001, Designation List 323, LP–2073, [http://www.neighborhoodpreservationcenter.org/db/bb\\_files/01-SCHOVERLING.pdf](http://www.neighborhoodpreservationcenter.org/db/bb_files/01-SCHOVERLING.pdf), accessed March 28, 2014), 3; for more extensive discussion of William Emerson’s life and property on Staten Island, see ch. 4.

<sup>45</sup> “Visits to Country Places No.2,” 402–3. Horticulture is the more intensive gardening of vegetables and fruits as distinct from the more extensive cultivation of grains and other crops on fields; for examples of Staten Island estate owners and their gardeners winning recognition and premiums at fairs like those sponsored by the American Institute, see, “Fifteenth Annual Fair of the American Institute: Horticultural Exhibition,” *The Magazine of Horticulture* (December 1842), 469–70; *Transactions of the American Institute of the City of New York* (1851) (Albany: C. Van Benthuyssen, 1852), 599 and 604–5; and *Transactions of the American Institute of the City of New York* (1850) (Albany: C. Van Benthuyssen, 1851), 24–5 and 28–9; for Staten Island’s own horticultural fair, drawing regional participation, in 1853, see, “Staten Island Horticultural Society’s Annual Exhibition,” *American Agriculturist* 11:4 (October 5, 1853), 52. Other articles by Staten Island estate gardeners like J. Kennedy (gardener to S. T. Jones), suggest the pattern of use of produce by the proprietor rather than commercial sale was commonplace; see, e.g., J. Kennedy, “On the Cultivation of the Mushroom,” *The Magazine of Horticulture* (April 1848), 155–8; for the link between plant cultivation, and civilized refinement, see Pauly, esp. ch. 1; and Thornton, esp. 162–72.

<sup>46</sup> Ranlett 2, 10–11. Olmsted, “Richmond,” (1851), 288–9. Frederick Law Olmsted, *Walks and Talks of an American Farmer in England* (New York: G.P. Putnam and Co., 1852), 48.

<sup>47</sup> “Design for a Small Villa,” *The Horticulturist* 1:9 (March 1847), 414. Sigourney, 149–151: for the prominence of *Graham’s Magazine* and Sigourney herself, see “Introduction,” *Index to the Periodicals of 1899* (London: Review of Reviews, 1900), vii; and Emily Stipes Watts, *The Poetry of American Women From 1632 to 1945* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1977), 68 and 83–90; Andrew Jackson Downing, *A Treatise*

on the *Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening* (New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1844), 37–8; “Visits to Country Places No.2,” 401–3.

<sup>48</sup> Olmsted, “Richmond,” (1851), 289. Akerly, “Agriculture of Richmond County,” 200. Akerly, “Letter from Richmond,” 288. Frederick Law Olmsted to Frederick Kingsbury, 10 May 1848, Reel 47, FLO Papers; FLO to FK, 7 October 1852, Reel 4, FLO Papers.

<sup>49</sup> “Real Estate Movement,” *NYT*, December 22, 1852, 4; U. S. Census of 1850, Enumerator Sheet, Town of Castleton, Town of Southfield, County of Richmond, New York, [http://archive.org/details/us\\_census](http://archive.org/details/us_census); “Brick Machine,” *Augusta Chronicle*, November 3, 1847, 2; the brick operation grew into a company town called Kreischerville, owned by Balthazar Kreischer. “New York Fire Brick Manufactory (ad.),” *American Gas – Light Journal*, September 1, 1859, 14; for Jewett’s factory, see Chauncey M. Depew, *1795–1895: One Hundred Years of American Commerce* (New York: D. O. Haynes, 1895), 439.

<sup>50</sup> For references to the influence of eastern cities in the landscape and fashion of distant places, see Lisa Tolbert, *Constructing Townscapes: Space and Society in Antebellum Tennessee* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 96, 127, and 134.

<sup>51</sup> Frederick Law Olmsted to John Olmsted, 7 September 1849, Reel 4, FLO Papers; for “tasteful cottage” reference, see “The Simple Rural Cottage,” *The Horticulturist* 1:3 (September 1846), 1. Frederick Kingsbury as quoted in Frederick Law Olmsted, Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. and Theodora Kimball (eds.), *Frederick Law Olmsted, Landscape Architect, 1822–1903* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1922), 85–6.

<sup>52</sup> Frederick Law Olmsted to John Olmsted, 6 October 1849; FLO to Frederick Kingsbury, 21 December 1850; FLO to FK, 5 August 1851; FLO to FK, 17 October 1852, Reel 4, FLO Papers. Frederick Law Olmsted, “Importation and Exportation of Fruit,” *The Horticulturist* 6:2 (February 1851), 99–100. FLO to JO, 6 November 1851, as reprinted in Olmsted, Olmsted Jr., and Kimball, 82.

<sup>53</sup> Olmsted, Olmsted Jr. and Kimball, 63; for local histories mentioning Olmsted’s hand in Island estates, see Leng and Davis, 252 and 927, Margaret Boyd-Cullen, “The Woods of Arden House, Part 3,” *Staten Island Historian* 15:2 (April–June 1954), 14; D Valentine Smith, *This Was Staten Island*, 98–9; Hine (1914), 43 and 78; see also, “Local Intelligence—Mr. Satterthwaite's Funeral,” *NYT*, June 8, 1862.

<sup>54</sup> Frederick Law Olmsted, *Walks and Talks of an American Farmer in England* (New York: G. P. Putnam and Co., 1852). The book went through a number of reprints, suggesting that the English landscape ideas that Olmsted articulated and interpreted for an American audience were popularly disseminated; for Chorlton, see L. H. Bailey, *Annals of Horticulture in North America for the Year 1889* (New York: Rural Publishing Co., 1890), 224; for Kennedy, see James Kennedy, “Article V: On the Propagation of Stove and Greenhouse Exotics in a Series of Letters,” *The Magazine of Horticulture* 13:7 (July 1847), 29; for American’s romantic view of nature, see Nash, esp. 78–95; for the debate between Continental and English landscape forms as they surfaced in the design debate for Central Park, see Rosenzweig and Blackmar, 103–11; for the transition from geometric plans for Manhattan and Washington to more naturalistic forms, see Schuyler



(1986); for a contrast of the urbanity of French city growth with the “suburbanity” in America and England, see Robert Fishman, *Bourgeois Utopias: The Rise and Fall of Suburbia* (New York: Basic Books, 1987), 103–33.

<sup>55</sup> For Ranlett, see, “William Ranlett, Architect,”

[http://www.thehermitage.org/history/history\\_architecture\\_gothic\\_tell\\_me\\_ranlett.html](http://www.thehermitage.org/history/history_architecture_gothic_tell_me_ranlett.html), accessed March 31, 2014; for Haviland and New Brighton, see John Archer, “Country and City in the American Romantic Suburb,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 42:2 (May, 1983), 152–3; and New York (NY), Marjorie Pearson, Elisa Urbanelli, and Gale Harris, *St. George Historic District: Designation Report* (New York: LPC, 1994), 7–8 and 11; for the importance of Davis’ work on Llewellyn Park, see Archer, 154–5; and Schuyler (1986), 156–60; for Davis’ country homes around Manhattan, see, “Ely residence (Staten Island, NY),” Alexander Jackson Davis Collection II, no. 24–1; “Lyndhurst (Tarrytown, NY),” Alexander Jackson Davis Collection I, no. C1–3c, both at the Department of Drawings & Archives, Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library, Columbia University; and “The Stevens Family,” Hoboken Historical Museum online (<https://www.hobokenmuseum.org/history/the-stevens-family/the-castle>, accessed March 31, 2014); for Renwick, see, “James Renwick,” *Dictionary of American Biography* 15 (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1935), 507; for Renwick’s work on Staten Island, see Hine (1914), 47 and 78; “Death of James Renwick,” *NYT*, June 25, 1895, 1; and “Staten Island Homesteads,” *New York Sun*, June 20, 1909, 12.

<sup>56</sup> For evidence of Ranlett’s Manhattan office, see *Doggett’s New York City Directory* (1842), 266; for Renwick, see Genealogy, Box 2, Folder 16, and Marriage, Box 2, Folder 19, Selma Rattner Research Papers on James Renwick, 1856–2001, Department of Drawings & Archives, Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library, Columbia University; for a brief biography of Hunt, see, “Richard Morris Hunt, Architect,” Howland Cultural Center, (<http://www.howlandculturalcenter.org/hunt.php>, accessed March 31, 2014); for Hunt’s work and style in the next generation of mansions in places like Newport, see Sarah Bradford Landau, “Richard Morris Hunt, the Continental Picturesque, and the ‘Stick Style’,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, vol. 42, no. 3 (October 1983), 272–89; for Richardson, see Jeffrey Karl Ochsner, *H. H. Richardson, Complete Architectural Works* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1982), in particular see, p. 1 (for his life on Staten Island), 46 (for his Staten Island home), and 30 (for another Staten Island villa project); for Olmsted’s relationship with Richardson, including their time together on Staten Island, see Charles E. Beveridge, Ethan Carr, Amanda Gagel, and Michael Shapiro, (eds.), *The Early Boston Years, 1882–1890*, vol. 8, PFLO (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013), 7–9 and 302n2; for Olmsted’s return to Staten Island and his work for the Vanderbilts, see Olmsted, Olmsted Jr. and Kimball, 13; and *The Early Boston Years, 1882–1890*, vol. 8, PFLO, 27, 326–32 and 385–88. Olmsted and Richardson, both relocated to Brookline, Massachusetts in the mid 1870s.

<sup>57</sup> “Visits to Country Places No.2,” 401–3. Frederick Law Olmsted to John Olmsted, 6 October 1849; FLO to Frederick Kingsbury, 21 December 1850; FLO to FK, 5 August 1851; FLO to FK, 17 October 1852, Reel 4, FLO Papers. “Importation and Exportation of Fruit,” *The Horticulturist* 6:2 (February 1851), 99. More important than Newburgh

and Staten Island, Flushing, Queens with the nurseries of both Prince and Parsons, was probably the most important center for supplying trees in the New York area.

<sup>58</sup> Andrew Jackson Downing to George William Curtis, 25 April 1852, Box 1, Folder 31, George William Curtis Collection, SIM, 25.gwC; "Horticultural Society of the Valley of the River Hudson," *The Magazine of Horticulture* 4 (Boston: Hovey and Co., 1838), 353

<sup>59</sup> For Olmsted's interaction with Downing, see Frederick Law Olmsted to Andrew Jackson Downing, 3 November 1850, Reel 4, FLO Papers; and FLO to Frederick Kingsbury, 5 August 1851, Reel 4, FLO Papers. Many of Downing's works were published by Putnam during his partnership with John Wiley, but Downing wrote *Rural Essays* (New York: G. P. Putnam, 1853) while Putnam was living on Staten Island, after his break with Wiley; for more on Putnam and Curtis' lives on Staten Island, see ch. 4.

<sup>60</sup> William Chorlton, "How to Have Roses in Winter," *The Horticulturist* 6 (1851), 454; e.g., Chorlton's prolific writing and his authoritative voice, see fns. 62 and 63, below; for details on Ranlett's *The Architect*, see fn. 64, below.

<sup>61</sup> Upton (1984), 107–50; for the rise of a professional class supporting the businesses of urban elites, see Alfred D. Chandler, *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1977). Ranlett 1, 10–11; Ranlett's discussions of various styles are found throughout *The Architect*; see, e.g., Ranlett 1, 35–45.

<sup>62</sup> William Chorlton, "Qualities of a Good Gardener," *The Horticulturist* 3 (1853), 178–9. William Chorlton, "Education of Gardeners," *The Horticulturist* 6 (1851), 245–6.

<sup>63</sup> Chorlton, "Qualities...", 178–9. Thomas Paxton, "The Improvement of Gardeners," *The Horticulturist* 7 (1852), 100–1. Chorlton, "Education of Gardeners," 245–6.

<sup>64</sup> See, e.g., reviews of *The Architect*, see, "The Book Trade," *The Merchants Magazine and Commercial Review* 17 (July–December 1847), 128; "Critical Notices," *The American Whig Review* 2:5 (November 1848), 544; "The Architect," *Farmer & Mechanic*, March 18, 1847, 140; and "Notices of Publications," *Ohio Cultivator* 4:5 (March 1, 1848), 36. "Styles and Sites of Houses," *The Schoolmate*, January 1, 1852, 209–10; for reprinting of full designs by Ranlett see, e.g., "Cottage Architecture: The Author's Own," *American Journal of Agriculture & Science*, December 1, 1848, 534–5; "Cottage Designs—No. 3," *Plough Loom & the Anvil*, March 1, 1852, 531–2; "Model Cottage," *Godey's Lady's Book*, April 1852, 287–8; and "Model Cottages," *Godey's Lady's Book*, March 1852, 202–3. Most of Ranlett's designs in the two volumes of *The Architect* do not reveal a specific client, but designs identified with Staten Island clients include Design 1 (his own home), Design 10 (Anglo–Grecian Villa), Design 11 (Gothic–Tudor Villa), Designs 14–17 (part of one project), Design 36 (Small Cottage Villa in Semi–Italian Style), and Design 37 (Anglo–Norman Villa), along with discussion of an "improved" old Staten Island farmhouse (Vol. 2, 53).

<sup>65</sup> See, e.g., Chorlton's prolific publishing, see William Chorlton, "Remarks on the Vegetable Garden," *The Horticulturist* 4 (1854), 460; William Chorlton, "The Development and Ripening of Fruit," *The Horticulturist* 6 (1856), 463–5; William Chorlton, "The Improvement of Grounds," *The Horticulturist* 4 (1854), 33–4; William

Chorlton, "Culture of the Dahlia," *The Horticulturist* 4:5 (November 1849), 207–10; William Chorlton, "Culture of the Carnation," *The Horticulturist* 4:9 (March 1850), 400–3; and William Chorlton, *The Cold Grapery, from Direct American Practice* (New York: J. C. Riker, 1853). Chorlton revised the work as *The American Grape Grower's Guide* (New York: C. M. Saxton & Co., 1856), which, along with the later modified version, entitled *Chorlton's Grape Growers' Guide* (New York: Orange Judd Company, 1883), was periodically re-published into the early 20th century. "Construction of Vineries," *The Horticulturist* 6:2 (February 1851), 100. Chorlton, *Cold Grapery*, 7.

<sup>66</sup> Ranlett 2, 5–6.

<sup>67</sup> Frederick Law Olmsted, *Report of a Preliminary Scheme of Improvements* (New York: Staten Island Improvement Commission, 1871), 19 and 27. Ranlett 1, 60–2.

<sup>68</sup> Olmsted (1871), 27–8. A quick mathematical check of Olmsted's figures confirms this, using the land area of the island, 20,000 lots and assuming an average household size of 6. The average block of the Manhattan grid is about 5 acres, or about 6.25 acres including adjacent street surface. Atlanta has about 3,100 people per square mile.

<sup>69</sup> Ranlett 1, 37; and 2, 42.

<sup>70</sup> Ranlett 2, 5–6. Chorlton (1856), 16–17. "How to Have Roses in Winter."

<sup>71</sup> Ranlett 1, 60. Chorlton (1856), 17.

<sup>72</sup> Ranlett 1, 37. Chorlton (1856), 16–17.

<sup>73</sup> Ranlett 2, 5–6.

<sup>74</sup> Ranlett 2, 5–6. Chorlton, "The Improvement of Grounds," 33–4.

<sup>75</sup> David Scobey, *Empire City: The Making and Meaning of the New York City Landscape* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002). "Farmers Club – American Institute," *Working Farmer* 5 (1853), 150.

<sup>76</sup> For Ranlett's move, see U. S. Census of 1860, Enumerator Sheet, Country of Richmond, New York, [http://archive.org/details/us\\_census](http://archive.org/details/us_census); and "William Ranlett, Architect" For the contrast between Aspinwall's Staten Island and Hudson Valley estates, see Figure 3.2; for Eagan and Roeck, see William Manning Morgan, *Trinity Protestant Episcopal Church, Galveston, Texas, 1841–1953: a Memorial History* (Houston: Anson Jones Press, 1954), 369–70; "Brooklyn Horticultural Society," *The Horticulturist* 17 (1861), 476; and *Annual Report of the American Institute of the City of New York* (1864–5) (Albany: C. Wendell, 1865), 18; for Mrs. J. C. Green at Newport, see, e.g., "In the Social World," *NYT*, February 5, 1893, 8; "Life at Newport – Cottagers and their Guests Enjoying Themselves," *NYT*, July 12, 1885, 7; and "The Season at Newport," *NYT*, June 22, 1883, 5; for Stokes' move, see Stokes 1, Part 2 (1910), 235 and 240.

<sup>77</sup> For the reorganization of New York society from a source-of-wealth to a class-based structure, see Sven Beckert, *The Monied Metropolis: New York City and the Consolidation of the American Bourgeoisie, 1850–1896* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

## CHAPTER FOUR

### **Metropolitan Connection and Obscurity: Staten Island in a Web of Personal and Professional Networks**

As the sun sank low in the sky one summer day in 1851, Frederick Law Olmsted mounted his horse and set out from his Staten Island farm to visit his cousin. Victorine Haven Putnam lived with her husband and children in a small rented house near the ferry dock at Stapleton. Victorine's husband, Manhattan bookseller and publisher George Palmer Putnam, had recently encouraged Olmsted to transform his travelogue notes into a book and published them as *Walks and Talks of an American Farmer in England*. However, tonight Olmsted was in for an evening of fun and entertainment.<sup>1</sup>

The Putnams had built a little stage in the back parlor and invited friends and family to take part in an amateur performance of Richard Brinsley Sheridan's play, *The Rivals*. The play's setting, Bath, England held a certain parallel to Staten Island; both were resort retreats for metropolitan elite. Olmsted acted the part of Acres, the country gentleman. Other parts went to urban visitors: a cousin of Victorine's from Boston; Parke Godwin, one of Putnam's editors, who came down from Manhattan. Staten Island neighbors and Manhattan businessmen, Dr. Dunning and Alfred Field, who Olmsted knew from the Island's agricultural society, performed in the play as well. The young nephews of Ralph Waldo Emerson acted three of the smaller parts. The boys lived up the road from the Putnams, with their father William Emerson, a Manhattan lawyer. Miss Julia Clinch, the sister-in-law of Manhattan department store mogul Alexander T. Stewart, and "one of the belles of the Staten Island society," performed the part of Lydia Languish, the romantic female lead.<sup>2</sup>

In the middle decades of the nineteenth century, Staten Island stood at the cusp of metropolitan connection and obscurity. Despite the quiet country roads Olmsted travelled to get there, the performance of *The Rivals* in the Putnam family parlor reveals a network of personal and professional connections that belies Staten Island as a place of rural isolation. Yet, it was not Manhattan's increasingly impersonal urban world of strangers either. Because of the metropolitan men and families who chose to locate themselves at the edge of the new metropolitan region, some of the most important figures in politics, business, literature, medicine and public opinion of the nineteenth century came to Staten Island.

Before Manhattan-based institutions and clubhouses would remake the circuits of influence and communication, the homes of metropolitan men and their families, whether on Staten Island or in Manhattan, functioned as nodes in a network that knit the region together and connected New York with other centers of intellectual and political life, in particular, New England. While Manhattan may have had a preponderance of such elite metropolitan homes, it certainly did not have a monopoly on New York's web of connections to the world beyond. As long as society, business and professional practice was organized around personal relationships of familiarity and trust and prominent, well-connected families chose to locate their homes on Staten Island, the Island was part of a known and experienced geography of metropolitan New York for people who shaped cultural ideas and politics. Yet, though a Staten Island home functioned similarly to a Manhattan one as a site of social and professional connections, it was nevertheless distinct from the city. Somehow the half-hour ferry trip to New Brighton or Clifton seemed more distant than a similar ride uptown within Manhattan.

Families and prominent visitors to New York chose Staten Island as a place to live or sojourn because it was near the city, but was not the city. Through their stories, this chapter explores the paradox of proximity – the balance of obscurity and connection – that defined Staten’s relationship with Manhattan as a peripheral part of a shared metropolitan region. For some, especially the well-known, the vaunted anonymity of the city was not enough to shield them from unwanted attention. For others, the overwhelming anonymity of the city was too much. Staten Island offered a more familiar community of known neighbors. For yet others, the Island’s setting at the metropolitan periphery provided attractions unavailable in the city, like healthful countryside, a knowable community of like minded neighbors, affordability, and the wealth potential of frontier real estate.

Prominent political figures populate the first two sets of stories in this chapter. Why did Aaron Burr, Daniel D. Tompkins, and John C. Fremont, all once popular but failed local and national political figures, spend the nadirs of their lives on Staten Island? Why did international political exiles of the nineteenth century like Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, longtime leader of Mexico, and Giuseppe Garibaldi, republican hero of Italy, spend their exiles in New York on Staten Island? Staten Island’s location at the metropolitan periphery, as will be seen, offered such well known figures, especially those at the nadir of their power, a certain refuge, a desirable quiet obscurity from the constant gaze of the metropolis, yet within easy reach of its resources and networks of support.

Literary and publishing figures populate the next set of stories. The Staten Island homes of William Emerson, George Palmer Putnam, Sidney Howard Gay and Frederick Law Olmsted will help explain how the Island became visible and connected to a wide

array of prominent families and figures of the nineteenth century through social and professional networks. The literary friends of Ralph Waldo Emerson, as well as his New England family, came to know Staten Island as part of metropolitan New York because Emerson's brother William lived there. Henry David Thoreau educated his own family about Staten Island's paradox as part of, but distinct from New York during his own sojourn at William Emerson's house. Manhattan publisher Putnam and abolitionist editor Gay hosted their circles of friends and colleagues on Staten Island as well. Because of its regional location, Olmsted's Staten Island farm provided opportunities for his forays into writing and publishing in the metropolis.

Why did men with careers in Manhattan choose to locate themselves on Staten Island? The next two sections on metropolitan homes and medical geography help answer this question. First, through the decisions of Emersons, Gays, Putnams and Manhattan oculist Dr. Samuel MacKenzie Elliott to settle on Staten Island we will explore how frontier real estate and the metropolitan country landscape translated into practical choices of where to live for actual families. Second, the stories of prominent New York medical men like Elliott, Dr. Frederick Hollick, Drs. Richard and Joseph Bayley and others help explain Staten Island's place in the metropolitan geography of health, both as accessible healthful countryside and as a place of medical institutions like Quarantine and the Seamen's Retreat.

Finally, Staten Island's role will be explored as a place of meaning for New England social reformers who were transplanted to New York. It will be shown through the intertwined stories of Elliott, the family of Francis Shaw, and the remnants of Brook Farm (the failed utopian experiment outside of Boston) how and why a community of

important social reformers in New York coalesced on Staten Island (and how, like their literary brethren, their presence there helped make the Island visible and meaningful to both Manhattan and New England). Through the story of Charles Loring Brace, founder of the Children's Aid Society, the meaning of Staten Island's location at the metropolitan periphery for social reform will be explored.

The Island's visibility to men and families of prominence in the nineteenth century and thus its relevance as a known and experienced part of the metropolitan region in elite circles were inherently impermanent. As long as individuals and families who were important in such circles lived or sojourned on Staten Island, the Island became visible to other men of metropolitan, national, and international prominence in Manhattan and beyond. As they moved away or died, that connection began to disappear. As the city invested in improvements uptown and railroads that extended the metropolitan region northward, away from the harbor, Staten Island faded from the short list of desirable residential locations around the city. As was argued in the previous chapter, the generic landscape of the metropolitan countryside undermined loyal identification with specific places of residence and made it easier to move from Staten Island to the increasing number of similar places around the city. Fewer elite homes of key political, literary, and social reform leaders meant a more threadbare web tying Staten Island to the leaders of the metropolis.

Perhaps more importantly, by the latter decades of the nineteenth century, the foundation of social and business relationships shifted as professionalization and specialization favored institutions over local personal ties. In a regime organized around the residences of prominent men and families, a Staten Island home could be as much of



a destination as a Manhattan one. However, as the regime shifted, Staten Islanders who focused their lives and institutional affiliations on the Island rather than in Manhattan faded in metropolitan prominence. As institutions and clubhouses replaced homes as the nodes of the metropolitan network, Manhattan more completely asserted its dominance over the rest of the region.<sup>3</sup>

### **Staten Island in the Geography of Local New York and American Politics**

Staten Island was the final resting place for three of the greatest failures in the history of New York and national politics. Every American schoolchild has heard of Aaron Burr and his duel with Alexander Hamilton. Most have heard of John C. Frémont, hero of western exploration, and the failed first candidate of the nascent Republican Party in the Presidential election of 1856. Virtually no one has heard of Daniel D. Tompkins, Governor of New York for nearly a decade in the early nineteenth century. Scandal and relentless attack by political rivals destroyed Burr, Tompkins and Frémont, but only after the first two had each reached the powerful obscurity of the Vice Presidency of the United States.<sup>4</sup>

Tompkins arrived on Staten Island in 1814, ambitious and hopeful, determined to build a country-seat as a locus of power and connection, to rival his political peers. He died on the Island a decade later, politically, personally and financially ruined. The seat of power he tried to build on Staten Island helped destroy him. Burr came to Staten Island twice, first following his political defamation in 1808 and again in 1836, once to hide, and a second time to die. Frémont retreated to Staten Island twice as well. In the summer of 1856, Frémont and his wife sought shelter on Staten Island from the scathing

politics of the Presidential election in Manhattan, a place from which he could still maintain a metropolitan headquarters. In the 1880s, the Frémont's returned to Staten Island amidst the difficult financial circumstances toward the end of their lives.

Before they came to Staten Island, Burr and Tompkins, a generation his junior, were two of the most ambitious politicians of their day and key figures in the early history of Manhattan's Tammany Society. Although there is no evidence Burr was ever a member of Tammany, history has credited him with mobilizing the Society, founded as a patriotic club, into a more political institution. By 1800, Burr was Vice President of the United States. Meanwhile, young Tompkins was cutting his political teeth as perhaps Tammany's first true 'ward heeler,' going door to door to build a political base in the 7th Ward of Manhattan. His father-in-law, Mangle Minthorne, Alderman of the 7th Ward and an important Tammany leader, helped secure Tompkins' place in politics. In 1807, DeWitt Clinton saw Tompkins as a pawn in a scheme to solve political rifts and bring Tammany regulars into a more reliable coalition behind New York's powerful Clinton clan. Promoted in populist terms as a "Farmer's Boy," Tompkins won the Governorship, but acted quickly to establish his political independence from the Clintons. By the end of the War of 1812, Tompkins was a popular and powerful political figure in New York, poised for national office.<sup>5</sup>

In 1808, Burr chose Staten Island because it was a safe place to hide at the edge of the city. His political career was over. Disgraced by killing Alexander Hamilton in a duel and by his political intrigues in the new Louisiana Territory, Burr resolved to leave the country for Europe. He kept his self-exile plan a secret. Such secrecy would have been difficult in Manhattan, amidst the unavoidable gaze of angry citizens and

newspapers of the metropolis. Instead, he waited quietly among a few friends on Staten Island and Long Island for the ship that would carry him into exile. Burr left New York aboard the *Clarissa*, bound for Halifax under an alias. He did not board the ship in Manhattan, but rather from a pilot boat once the ship was down near Staten Island, safely away from the city.<sup>6</sup>

A few years later, Tompkins, in contrast, tried to capitalize on the Island's paradox of proximity to establish for himself and his family a seat of power. He did not have the wealth to acquire or build such an estate in Manhattan, like Alexander Hamilton's Grange or Burr's Richmond Hill, and the state's old wealthy families like the formidable Livingstons already controlled the great Hudson River properties. On Staten Island, however, Tompkins could afford to acquire an estate similar in scope and prominence of the state's most powerful families and still be close to the city that underpinned his political network.<sup>7</sup>

The manner in which Tompkins built his Staten Island home suggests he expected to make it a locus of political and social power, connecting metropolitan, state and national leadership. Beginning in 1814, he bought up hundreds of acres along the Island's eastern shore, facing the city. Across twenty of his acres, atop a commanding hill, Tompkins constructed one of the finest estates in New York. The mansion house was described in the newspaper in all its finery: "nearly 40 rooms, three of which are 35-feet in length, one circular room 30 feet in diameter, and one with a circular end 28 feet long....Four covered areas of 33 feet long each, and a long range of piazza." The size of the rooms and the "two large kitchens," suggest Tompkins' intended to entertain in scale and style befitting a leader of society. Tompkins' manor house was within easy reach of

the city, a venue to entertain the elites of New York and national politics and society, as well as prominent foreign visitors to the United States. It was at his manor house that, Tompkins received President Monroe, General Lafayette of revolutionary war fame, and political power broker Martin Van Buren (among others). On part of the estate down near the waterfront, he built a second mansion that became known as the Marble House, perhaps initially intended as a place for visiting dignitaries. Instead, he used it in an attempt to bring a branch of the powerful Livingston family into his Staten Island orbit, giving it to his daughter and her husband, Gilbert L. Thompson. Thompson's father was Chief Justice of the New York State Supreme Court and his grandfather was a cousin of Robert R. Livingston, Jr., the head of the Livingston clan.<sup>8</sup>

Big plans sometimes end in big failures. His Staten Island ambitions helped destroy Tompkins, politically, financially, and personally. Politically, Tompkins' image was built around him being a man of the people, son of a simple freehold farmer from Westchester. Once settled in his Staten Island estate, Tompkins' Whig enemies took him to task for living, "more splendidly than any other governor." He had, after all, spent well over \$40,000 amassing the property, and one Whig newspaper estimated an additional \$150,000 investment in Staten Island "building an elegant steam boat, making a turnpike road, and improving his seat." The contrast of this aristocratic image and his political identity as, "The Farmer's Boy" and the "People's Friend," put him in a difficult position.<sup>9</sup>

Financially, Tompkins' massive investments in his Staten Island estate compounded debt and cash-flow problems, forcing him into crisis. During the War of 1812, as governor, Tompkins had used his own personal funds, credit and influence to

raise capital for the defense of New York. By the 1820s, he was struggling to get the federal government to reimburse him. Meanwhile his political enemies accused him of appropriating public money for personal use. Given his high living on Staten Island, it was easy for his enemies to accuse him of putting, “his hand into the treasury box.”<sup>10</sup>

Destroyed by the stresses and accusations, Tompkins found the obscurity of Staten Island attractive and isolated himself there. Embarrassed and embittered, he rarely went to Washington during his term as Vice President. He struggled to sell or encumber much of his Staten Island property to meet debts, undermining the very estate upon which he had built his claim to peership with the Clintons and Livingstons. He turned to drink. As one contemporary New Yorker put it, “...owing to his misfortunes, Mr. Tompkins has degenerated into a degraded sot....” Although the federal government eventually decided in his favor and reimbursed him a sizable sum, he was already a broken man. In 1825, Tompkins died, a relatively young man, amidst his failed dream on Staten Island, once on the cusp of greatness.<sup>11</sup>

A decade later, an elderly and ailing Aaron Burr went to Staten Island to die. Burr could not remain at the Jay House in Manhattan; the innkeeper told him it was about to be torn down. The *Times* reported that Burr’s friends, “observing that his strength was gradually failing thought that a residence in the country during the summer would be more conducive to his health and comfort than one in the city.” Staten Island was a convenient choice. It was certainly easier to carry Burr’s ailing body the short distance to a Staten Island steamboat than to subject him to the bumpy ride uptown to a suitable alternative within Manhattan.<sup>12</sup>

Staten Island offered Burr a place to live out his final days connected to a network of friends and family. Burr's cousin Judge Moses Ogden Edwards, among Burr's most frequent visitors and active supporters during his time in Manhattan, spearheaded the plan to move Burr to the Island. Edwards chose the Richmond House, an inn near his own Staten Island summer home, for Burr. Conveniently, the inn was steps from the dock at a place called Mersereau's Ferry, where the steamboat from New York stopped on its way to Elizabethtown, New Jersey. Burr had spent much of his childhood in Elizabethtown, and it was still home to many of his kin. The steamboat also made Burr's inn accessible to several old friends from his revolutionary and early republican days, still living in and around the city. According to one biographer, Burr's former hostess and caregiver at the Jay House in Manhattan had promised to visit him daily, plausible if unlikely. On his better days, Burr travelled around the Island, visiting Staten Islanders like the Conners, his one-time political rivals on the Island.<sup>13</sup>

The Staten Island inn offered Burr both the opportunity to be in the company of metropolitan society and the option of isolating himself as necessary to protect his privacy. "The inn was very gay that summer," recalled the proprietor's daughters, "several naval officers...with their wives, being quartered there in addition to the regular guests," and Burr, "insisted on taking his dinner at the public table, where he was the object of much interest to the guests, and led the conversation." Burr flirted with the daughter of the proprietor of the Richmond House, and her cousins who also lived there that summer remembered him fondly. At the same time, the young women recalled the strict rule to keep the inn's account book out of the public eye, "lest his detractors should

obtain,” information about the “stimulants” proscribed to Burr and, “publish them as proof of the Colonel’s intemperance.”<sup>14</sup>

In the years after Burr’s death in 1836, politics in New York were beginning to change. Although rhetoric reviling political parties as agents of self-interest undermining a unified public good persisted, parties had become increasingly structural in New York and national politics. New York politician Martin Van Buren, helped establish a new Democratic Party from the seemingly unified single party of the Democratic-Republicans (a political unity known as the Era of Good Feelings during the administrations of Presidents Madison and Monroe). The new party was highly structured, with a well-articulated party platform and an organized system of rewards for party loyalty. Van Buren and the Jacksonian Democrats forced those who continued to support greater governmental involvement in the economy (a higher tariff to support domestic industry, a central bank, turnpikes, canals, and other “internal improvements”) to form a rival party, the Whigs.<sup>15</sup>

John C. Frémont came to Staten Island in 1856, as the nascent Republican Party grew out of the ashes of the Whigs. The two-party structure of the Whigs and Democrats, often referred to by historians as the second party system, began to break down in New York in the late 1840s. In 1848, Van Buren’s Barnburner faction defected from the Democratic Party to support the new Free Soilers, who opposed the spread of slavery into the western territories. The personal rivalry between New York Whig leaders Millard Fillmore and William H. Seward helped undermine the unity of the state’s Whig party as well. Fillmore’s “Compromise Whigs” favored a more conservative approach to the political demands of Southern states for the expansion of

slavery, while Seward's "Conscience Whigs," were staunchly anti-slavery. By 1854, several of New York's more conservative Whigs, helped form the American Party, seeing political opportunity in anti-immigrant nativism as the Whig party began to disintegrate over the issue of slavery. Many of the "Conscience Whigs" joined the coalition with the Free Soilers to form the Republican Party in 1854. By the election of 1856, Seward himself was jockeying for the Republican nomination, but ultimately fell in behind the party's nominee, John C. Frémont.<sup>16</sup>

Frémont and his wife moved from Manhattan to Staten Island in the summer of 1856 as their experience being at the center of political attention turned from pleasurable to painful. In the fall of 1855, propelled to the center by a wave of political attention, Frémont moved into Manhattan with his wife Jesse. All the parties courted Frémont that summer: First a coalition of the Democratic and American parties; and then the Republicans. He turned down the former on principle as their platform would have required him to back the Fugitive Slave Law and the Kansas-Nebraska Act, two controversial laws that protected property in slaves and opened up expanded possibilities for slavery in the western territories. He accepted the Republican's courtship instead. At first, the Frémonts enjoyed the attention and luxuries of life at the center of the metropolis.<sup>17</sup>

As the political rhetoric and accusations turned sour and nasty with the approaching election, the Frémonts fled from the center of attention in Manhattan to the relative obscurity of Staten Island. "All this has made me ill," wrote Jesse from Staten Island, "Dr. Van Buren says 'no newspapers, no ideas, no excitement of any kind,' & by way of forgetfulness I am to get well enough to go to town next week when the opera re-



commences.” Following Frémont’s formal nomination by the Republican Party, the newspaper organs of the Democrats and Americans began attacking his character. Capitalizing on anti-Catholic sentiment in New York, Erastus Brooks’ *New York Express* relentlessly accused Frémont of secretly belonging to the Catholic Church. In July, Frémont and his wife moved to Staten Island, from which they could still commute to Manhattan by boat, but perhaps get some respite from the venomous attacks.<sup>18</sup>

By 1860, it was Erastus Brooks’ turn to move to Staten Island. Although Frémont lost the election of 1856 to James Buchanan, so did Brooks’ American Party candidate Milliard Fillmore. Brooks was hero and spokesman of New York’s anti-Catholic Nativists, debating publically with Bishop Hughes over the Church’s ownership of property in New York. Riding a wave of popular support, Brooks served three terms in the State Senate. In 1856 Brooks was the American Party’s candidate for governor. The sweeping victory of the Republicans in 1860 curtailed Brooks’ influence. Tyler Anbinder, a scholar of nineteenth-century American politics has noted the new Republican government specifically “halted distribution of [Brooks’] *New York Express* for its purported ‘Copperhead’ proclivities.” From the relative obscurity of Staten Island, Brooks could still win an election, and did so, serving regularly as a Democrat in the State Assembly between 1878 and 1883.<sup>19</sup>

The Frémonts returned to Staten Island for much of the 1880s, the last decade of John’s life, when they were down on their luck. John had invested much of his fortune in railroads, but as the Memphis, El Paso and Pacific Railroad descended into scandal in 1869, the Frémonts began to have troubles, both political and financial. In 1878, President Hayes appointed Frémont governor of Arizona, a post from which Frémont

might be able to rebuild his fortunes. Meanwhile, his wife, Jesse returned to New York to find investors for a new mining enterprise. Initially she settled in Manhattan but soon returned to Staten Island, settling into a small house to husband the limited family resources. It was a prudent move, as Chester Arthur, who was not favorably disposed to Frémont, replaced the assassinated President Garfield in 1881 and ended Frémont's Arizona governorship.<sup>20</sup>

For the Frémonts, Staten Island offered a chance to live within easy reach of Manhattan despite difficult financial circumstances. Jesse looked forward to relocating into "a pretty flat in town," as soon as family finances allowed. In 1883, the Frémonts tried moving into Manhattan, but retreated again to Staten Island by the end of the year because it was cheaper. Three years later, they tried to make the move into the city again, but returned to California instead. John, however, spent much of the final years of his life travelling back east to Washington and New York. He died in Manhattan in 1890.<sup>21</sup>

The stories of politicians Burr, Tompkins, Frémont and Brooks, highlight the paradox of proximity that gave Staten Island its identity within the metropolitan region, a place accessible yet distinctly separated from the city itself. The quiet nadirs of Burr and Brooks and the spectacular failures of Tompkins and Frémont parallel the Island's obscurity of forgotten-ness. Each chose to reside on the Island because it was within the metropolitan region, connected to the power, attention and networks of support centered in Manhattan. At the same time, Staten Island allowed each to retreat from the unremitting gaze, maelstrom of controversy, personal attack, and competition whirling at the center of the metropolis.

## **Metropolitan Geography of International Political Exile**

International political exiles came to Staten Island in the mid-nineteenth century, raising the Island's visibility in the metropolis. But world leaders like Giuseppe Garibaldi and Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna who stayed on the Island during their time in New York chose to locate themselves at the regional periphery either because they wanted to avoid the Manhattan limelight (Garibaldi), or because circumstances marginalized their importance (Santa Anna). The middle decades of the century were a time of political turmoil around the world. In Europe, Lajos Kossuth and Garibaldi led revolutions to create nation-state republics in Hungary and Italy, respectively. In the Americas, Santa Anna struggled with his opponents for control of the young Mexican nation, and General José Antonio Paéz fought to establish Venezuela as separate from the newly established Colombia. They all came to Staten Island, some passing though on their way to Manhattan, and others to sojourn in exile.

Staten Island was visible to world leaders coming to the United States as part of the New York regional metropolis because of its gateway role for New York Harbor. Because the state had settled on Staten Island for its Quarantine Station, the Island was the natural point of reception to New York for high profile visitors arriving by sea. In the early 1850s, Dr. Doane, Health Officer at Quarantine, was the first public official to welcome General Paéz, Garibaldi, and Kossuth to New York. General Lafayette, hero to Americans for his help during the Revolutionary War, was first greeted at Staten Island too, by the Vice President of the United States, Governor of New Jersey, and the official reception committee of the City of New York, when he arrived in 1824. Arrival at

New York via Staten Island helped make the Island a known place in metropolitan geography for foreign leaders and the New Yorkers who welcomed them.<sup>22</sup>

At the cusp of the metropolis, celebrated visitors to New York waited at Staten Island for the official reception committee from Manhattan. Garibaldi stayed at the Pavilion Hotel in New Brighton to recover from his, “attack of rheumatism” before he would “accept the honors of a public reception.” Dr. Doane, the Health Officer, hosted Kossuth in his official residence at the Quarantine Station. General Paéz stayed at the Clifton Hotel for several days before “the Mayor; the [reception] committee and several members of the Common Council; District Attorney; chief of police; ...ex-Governor Young; officers of the first division N.Y.S. M[ilitia] in full uniform... and the state company of State Fusileers,” went down to fetch him to the city. Similar processions were prepared for Garibaldi, Kossuth and others. Santa Anna, a military adversary of the United States in the recent Mexican American War, and a much more controversial figure, got no such reception. He landed quietly at Elizabethport, New Jersey, instead.<sup>23</sup>

The celebrations of the arrival of foreign heroes highlighted Staten Island as the point of entry to the regional metropolis for Manhattanites and Staten Islanders as well. Newspapers in Manhattan (and around the country) reported on the arrivals of Paéz, Kossuth and Garibaldi at Staten Island. Staten Islanders; unlike others living at the periphery of the New York region, saw first hand, and often participated in, the elaborate official welcomes to New York. While tens of thousands of excited New Yorkers awaited the arrival of visiting republican heroes at the Manhattan docks, thousands of others took the steamboat down to Staten Island to catch a first glimpse. Visiting dignitaries like Kossuth often spoke their first official words on Staten Island, before

crowds of Staten Islanders as well as Manhattanites, and men from both Islands, in turn, made official greetings and speeches to the visiting dignitaries. In his speech welcoming Kossuth, Richard Adams Locke, Manhattan writer and Staten Island resident, naturalized the Island's predestined role as a gateway to the metropolis. "Upon the island county of Richmond in the bay of New York," orated Locke, "has...devolved, by the natural delegation of its position, the high honor of greeting you...."<sup>24</sup>

Garibaldi and Santa Anna sojourned on Staten Island for an extended period, though for different reasons, as other exiles like Kossuth and Paez stopped at the metropolitan periphery briefly on their ways to the city. The Island suited Garibaldi who wanted to stay out of the limelight, as biographer Lucy Riall put it, "to keep busy and make money to support his mother and children." Garibaldi spent nearly two years on Staten Island beginning in 1850. Riall suggests Garibaldi's quiet life on Staten Island helped him shed his "bandit persona" for a more respectable statesman image. Santa Anna came to New York in 1866 seeking support and resources to oust the French-backed Maximilian from Mexico and return himself to power. Marginalized by American diplomats and the New York Mexican community, Santa Anna turned to the fringes of the metropolitan region to settle, first in Elizabethport, New Jersey, and then on Staten Island. From the periphery, Santa Anna hoped to still be able to access the resources of the metropolis and return to Mexico triumphant. For both Garibaldi and Santa Anna the balance of proximity and distance, connection and remove from the city made the Island an useful alternative to Manhattan.<sup>25</sup>

Garibaldi and Santa Anna lived on Staten Island because the men who hosted them during their stay in New York had homes there. Antonio Meucci, active in the

small Italian community in New York, hosted Garibaldi at his Staten Island home at Clifton. Gabor Naphegyi did the same for Santa Anna. In a world of personal connections, foreign exiles in America depended on such supportive individuals as hosts. Garibaldi met Meucci through the New York Italian community, the latter having served on his welcoming committee. Santa Anna likely first met Naphegyi in 1853 or 1854 during his service at Vera Cruz as a medical practitioner at the Mexican military hospital there.<sup>26</sup>

Staten Island was an attractive place for Meucci to live because of its peripheral location within the New York metropolitan region. Staten Island offered accessibility to his job in Manhattan, space and privacy for his work as an inventor, and a community of his countrymen and professional acquaintances, all at a price much lower than housing in the city itself. Meucci and his wife came to New York from Cuba in 1850 with the Italian opera company they worked for. The Meuccis designed lighting, staging, and costumes for the opera company in Manhattan, but Antonio also experimented at home on Staten Island, developing a telephone prototype and new candle technology. Like Meucci, others associated with the New York opera scene chose to live on Staten Island, including Max Maretzek, producer of a leading Manhattan opera company, and the steamboat magnate Oroondates Maura, one of the owners of the Italian Opera House in the city. Internationally famous opera stars chose Staten Island too, including Italian tenor Lorenzo Salvi and German soprano Madame Henriette Sontag. Meucci became part of the little colony of Italians at Clifton emerging in the 1850s and 1860s, helping make Staten Island part of the emigrant geography of metropolitan New York. Some had come to build the Staten Island Railroad in 1851, but also because, as Italian-American author

Gay Talese later put it, Staten Island was “favored by many Italian settlers because it had the familiar atmosphere of our own agricultural villages; and it offered a seaside view as well.” Salvi, the tenor, knew Meucci through the opera and funded the candle factory Meucci built next to his home. Although the factory ultimately failed, Salvi hoped the Staten Island enterprise would be a source of employment for some of his fellow Italians in New York.<sup>27</sup>

Garibaldi spent most of his exile in America on Staten Island because it was at the cusp of metropolitan connection and obscurity. It was a place where fellow Italians like Meucci could offer him a home, a job making candles and a small community of countrymen within the New York region, all beyond the Manhattan limelight. On Staten Island, Garibaldi could achieve what Riall called a period of “self-imposed obscurity.” He shunned the attention of official welcomes and honors in Manhattan. On Staten Island he could live quietly, earning his keep working in Meucci’s candle factory, hunting in the Island’s woods, and singing republican songs with his Italian brothers in the evenings. At the same time, being within the regional metropolis, Garibaldi would not be so isolated as to be inaccessible or forgotten. From Staten Island Garibaldi could still, as Riall put it, be “involved with the affairs of the Italian committee” in New York, help “Italian immigrants, and...mediate in the rivalries between” supporters and opponents of Giuseppe Mazzini, a leading Italian revolutionary activist. Though at times restless and bored, Garibaldi found Staten Island a good place to mark time, connected to yet quietly apart from an Italian network of politics and power, waiting for a better moment to return and capture his homeland.<sup>28</sup>

While Garibaldi chose the regional periphery of Staten Island against New Yorkers' eager efforts to pull him to the metropolitan center, Santa Anna was pushed toward the margins during his exile in New York. First at Elizabethport and then at Staten Island, Santa Anna set up "headquarters" where he husbanded resources and plotted a desperate attempt to recapture control of Mexico without the support of the New York Mexican community or the American government. By his own account, Santa Anna had been lured to New York by false friends who led him to expect support from Secretary of State Seward and leaders of the Mexican community in Manhattan. Isolating him in a house they owned in Elizabethtown, New Jersey, they manipulated him and drained him of resources. Santa Anna described his retreat from hopeful prominence in the metropolis to a struggle against obscurity as he escaped his first hosts and moved to Staten Island.<sup>29</sup>

When Gabor Naphegyi, Santa Anna's Staten Island host, came to settle finally in New York in the 1860s, a home on the Island may have afforded him a useful retreat from the focus of metropolitan society and scrutiny in Manhattan too. Naphegyi was something of a shadowy figure – hard to pin down from the available evidence. Between 1850 and the time he was arrested for a second time in 1874, Naphegyi presented himself as an Hungarian, foreign correspondent of the *Tribune*, and "quondam secretary" of Kossuth, and a professor of modern languages at the University of Texas. The *Tribune* denied any affiliation, calling Naphegyi a "mild *chevalier d'industrie*." Santa Anna accused Naphegyi of betrayal, as he had accused his Elizabethtown hosts (however, betrayal by Naphegyi seems unlikely given Naphegyi's efforts with the State Department to get the Mexican leader safely back to the U.S. after his failed landing at Vera Cruz in



1867). That having been said, Naphegyi was charged with swindling Santa Anna out of land he owned in South America that same year. The Manhattan authorities had trouble arresting him, “because of his constant absence in another county,” that country being Richmond County, Staten Island. Decades later, a former New York chief of police wrote a scathing, and fantastic, expose of Naphegyi’s exploits.<sup>30</sup>

For Santa Anna, Staten Island was a perfect place to engage in the delusion that raising an invasion force to spark a revolution in Mexico might be feasible. On Staten Island, Santa Anna was away from the mainstream of information that would have bombarded him in Manhattan and might have provided him a stronger check of reality. Yet at the same time, Santa Anna remained close enough to the city, desperate for any indication of support and opportunity to tap metropolitan resources. The outpost of metropolitan elite society at New Brighton entertained the Mexican general in style, while he was largely ignored or even derided by many in the city. When the Fenian Brotherhood, the society actively seeking independence for Ireland, came down from Manhattan to Staten Island for their picnic, Santa Anna donned his “full uniform...his breast covered with various medals” and tried to sell the Irish republicans on their shared interest in his victorious return to Mexico.<sup>31</sup>

According to the *Herald*, Staten Island was “besieged” by “one hundred and twenty German and Hungarian officers,” presumably having come down from the city, to be commissioned personally by Santa Anna for an invasion of Mexico. The press reported wildly on Santa Anna’s schemes, at times, printing unsubstantiated rumors, which might have been more thoroughly investigated had the General’s headquarters been located in Manhattan rather than on Staten Island. For example, a *Chicago Tribune*

correspondent visited Santa Anna on Staten Island in the fall of 1866 reported Santa Anna had organized an “expedition composed of 2,000 Dominican and Cuban volunteers, and 150 American soldiers,” already dispatched to Mexico, and planned another with 5,000 more men. The *Herald* reported the General had raised \$5,000,000 and arranged for six steamers. In June of the following year, the *Times* printed a fantastic story related by Santa Anna’s nephew, who was living in Manhattan. Denied access to Naphegyi’s Staten Island house, the nephew imagined his uncle mysteriously isolated on the Island, held prisoner in an elaborate scheme to prey on his “feeble” mind. In fact Santa Anna had already sailed for Mexico with a handful of supporters, in the vain hope of retaking control of the country.<sup>32</sup>

While Santa Anna failed to recapture Mexico, he did spark a revolution in chewing gum from Staten Island. Santa Anna had brought with him to New York a sample of chicle, a natural gum from the sap of certain trees in Mexico. According to some sources, Santa Anna intended to promote its use as an alternative to rubber, hoping it would fund his political agenda. While the specifics of the story vary, it seems clear that Naphegyi, knew a shopkeeper named Thomas Adams. The two met at Adams’ glass shop, which, depending on the version of the story, was on Staten Island or near the ferry dock in Manhattan, such that Naphegyi passed it on his way into the city from the Island. Naphegyi supplied Adams with the chicle. While Adams failed to make rubber, he discovered the chicle was good to chew and began selling it to drugstores as a revolutionary new product: chewing gum.<sup>33</sup>

**“Neighborhood to a Great City:”  
Staten Island in the Literary and Publishing World of New York**

Given the relatively small population of Staten Island, it is surprising how many literary and publishing figures living, visiting or sojourning in New York chose to reside on Staten Island in the mid-nineteenth century. While Henry David Thoreau wrote of Staten Island, “It is rather derogatory that your dwelling-place should be only a neighborhood to a great city,” for writers and publishers connected with the New York metropolis, the Island was an attractive place to write, quiet and peaceful, free from the endless distractions of Manhattan. Staten Island homes became places of social and professional interaction, distinct from, yet part of the New York literary world centered in Manhattan. George Palmer Putnam, Frederick Law Olmsted, and Henry David Thoreau tried to launch New York writing and publishing careers from a home base on Staten Island in the 1840s and 50s. Sydney Howard Gay moved to the Island in 1847, early in his career as editor of the *Anti-Slavery Standard*, and stayed on the Island as he progressed to the more widely-read *New York Tribune* in the 1850s and 60s. John A. Appleton moved to the Island in 1861, at the peak of his publishing career, while “practically the business manager” of D. Appleton & Co., one of the largest publishers in Manhattan. George William Curtis, an influential editor at *Putnam’s Magazine* and columnist and later editor at *Harper’s Magazine* moved a few doors down from Gay in 1856. Richard L. Allen and Erastus Brooks, who, along with their Manhattan brothers edited the *American Agriculturist* and *New York Express*, respectively, chose Staten Island in the 1850s as well. Richard Adams Locke, whose writing was praised by Edgar Allan Poe “for its concision, luminosity, and completeness,” also lived on Staten Island. Locke’s series of articles on the “discovery” of life and civilization on the moon was one

of the greatest hoaxes of the century, and helped establish the large readership of the *New York Sun*. William Winter, writer, editor and critic for the *Albion*, *Harper's* and the *Tribune*, and Caleb C. Norvell, in "charge of the financial columns" of the *New York Times* for more than twenty years, both lived on the Island with their families too. And Charles F. Briggs, who gave Edgar Allen Poe his big break by bringing him on as editor of the *Broadway Journal*, lived on Staten Island for much of the 1840s. It was no wonder the *National Aegis* wrote in 1871, "Staten Island...for its size, has a large quota of literati."<sup>34</sup>

Brothers, uncles and other relatives of prominent writers settled or spent part of the year on Staten Island as well. As their literary relatives came to visit, Staten Island became visible to New York and New England literati, part of their personal lives and experiences. In the 1840s and 50s, Ralph Waldo Emerson and a number of his transcendentalist friends from Concord passed through the home of his brother William Emerson. Herman Melville spent summers at Sailors' Snug Harbor, where his brother Thomas lived and worked as Governor beginning in the 1860s. Washington Irving's nephew, who later served as executor of his famous uncle's will, lived on the Island as well. Henry James Jr., and William James summered on Staten Island with their father, Henry James Sr., a prominent philosopher and writer in Manhattan, and friend of the Emersons.<sup>35</sup>

William Emerson's Staten Island home is illustrative of how personal relationships connected New England literati to the world of publishers and writers in Manhattan via Staten Island. Having disappointed the family by rejecting a career in the clergy, Emerson moved to New York in 1826 to study law. He was soon working for

Ketchum and Fessenden in Manhattan, practicing real estate and civil law. In 1836, he bought some land on Staten Island. By 1838, he moved there with his wife and baby son.<sup>36</sup>

Elite New Englanders came to understand Staten Island as part of the New York metropolitan region because of the presence of families like the Emersons. William Emerson's move to Staten Island made the Island visible and meaningful to his family back in Concord, transforming it from an unknown place to a beautiful, healthy, happy one. Initially, Emerson family correspondence reveals the skepticism of the Concord Emersons over William's move from Manhattan to Staten Island. Waldo, as the family called Ralph Waldo Emerson, wrote to William's wife, "I almost hate to hear that William must build anything... but I know nothing of the circumstances that make it desirable." Regarding the choice of Staten Island, Waldo advised his brother to sell "to the first honest man who offers to make you just whole, without profit." As William completed the new house in the fall of 1838, Mother Emerson refused to visit, concerned about "the habitableness of your cottage," as the weather began to get cold and expecting her son to reconsider and "decide to board in the City."<sup>37</sup>

Instead, the New England Emersons came to know Staten Island as a desirable place. "We looked to hear of a hundred unexpected inconveniences," wrote Waldo, "& we get nothing but Arcadian pictures." William reported comfort at Staten Island through the first winter. After Mother's initial visit, Waldo wrote to his brother, "Your account and Mother's makes me wish I lived at Staten Island." As more members of the family visited, Waldo was incredulous, "At Staten Island, it seems the very grass has a superior color; the flowers, the semicircle, the Clove, the babe, the boy, the serene

Mistress, the serene Master, —of all we have eloquent accounts.” From a questionable, dark, cold, possibly uninhabitable place, Staten Island had become for the Emerson clan, a virtual paradise.<sup>38</sup>

Through William’s residence on Staten Island, the Concord Emersons also learned of the metropolitan possibilities of a home base there. William helped connect Concord’s emerging literary figures with Manhattan. Waldo resided with William when he came to New York in 1840 to deliver his first lecture series in the metropolis. William spearheaded planning for Waldo’s second series in 1843. The lectures were important to Ralph Waldo Emerson’s career, not because of their financial success, but because, as William put it in a letter to his brother, “they produced a marked sensation” and “created for you many lovers & admirers here [in New York].” Because William was within easy reach of Manhattan, Waldo also enlisted his brother to communicate with, receive and deliver books and correspondence to New York publishers. In turn, such favors brought William in contact with important Manhattan-based writers and publishers like William Cullen Bryant, Horace Greeley, John Wiley, and George Putnam.<sup>39</sup>

From Staten Island, New Englanders scouted opportunities in New York for friends and family back home. Waldo saw his brother’s presence on Staten Island as an opportunity for Henry David Thoreau, his friend and protégé, to launch a career as a writer in New York, where the publishing world had developed more of a commercial nature than in New England. Waldo wrote to his brother with the idea that Thoreau might reside at his Staten Island home and tutor his children. The arrangement was a practical way for Thoreau to come to New York without needing much cash while giving the young writer a home base within easy reach of Manhattan. Thoreau moved to Staten

Island in the spring of 1843. In turn, Thoreau wrote home about teaching opportunities on Staten Island for his sister back home in Concord. Margaret Fuller, another transcendentalist writer and friend of the Emersons from Concord, visited with Thoreau that summer at William's Staten Island home during her visit to New York. The following year, she moved to the Manhattan, writing for Horace Greeley's *Tribune*.<sup>40</sup>

Following Waldo's plan for him, Thoreau tried to launch a New York writing career from William Emerson's Staten Island home. Travelling back and forth on the ferries, he frequented the libraries of Manhattan. Through his Concord friends, Thoreau made contact with Henry James (Sr.), writer and philosopher, and Horace Greeley, editor of the *New York Tribune*, among others in the city. "I have rambled into every bookseller's or publisher's house and discussed their affairs with them," Thoreau wrote from a desk on Staten Island to his family in Massachusetts, "it is a very valuable experience, and the best introduction I could have." He went into Manhattan to sell his work to the wealth of New York magazines: *The Democratic Review*, *The New Mirror*, *Brother Jonathan*, *New World*, *The Knickerbocker*. But most, he reported, were "overwhelmed with contributions which cost nothing, and are worth no more." As he, "was to earn a certain sum before winter," Thoreau tried other ways to earn money, including selling "*The Agriculturist* about Manhattan," for the Allens. Though publishing boomed in New York, Thoreau concluded, "Literature comes to a poor market here; and even the little that I write is more than will sell."<sup>41</sup>

"There are two things I hear and am aware I live in the neighborhood of," he wrote from Emerson's house, "—the roar of the sea and the hum of the city." Thoreau's letters communicated to friends and family back in New England his evolving

understanding of the relationship between Staten Island and the city as he engaged with and retreated from metropolitan life from the Emerson home. Staten Island was neither part of the metropolis, nor was it as far as it seemed when Thoreau first arrived. “I am seven and a half miles from New York,” Thoreau wrote four days after arriving on the Island, “and, as it would take half a day at least, have not been there yet.” When he actually made the trip a couple of days later, he detailed to his family the multitude of ferry landings and learned he could be in Manhattan in less than an hour and a half. In his letters back home, Thoreau communicated the Island’s place at the periphery, the part of a regional New York at the cusp of city and country.<sup>42</sup>

Distinct from, yet accessible to Manhattan, Staten Island seemed more comfortable to New England visitors and sojourners like Ralph Waldo Emerson and Thoreau than the nearby city. Of Manhattan, wrote Thoreau, “I don't like the city better, the more I see it, but worse. It is a thousand times meaner than I could have imagined.” In contrast, Thoreau wrote of Staten Island, “This is in all respects a very pleasant residence, – much more rural than you would expect of the vicinity of New York.” As a more rural place, Staten Island was an environment more familiar and attractive to many New Englanders. Of the beach, Thoreau wrote, “It is very solitary and remote, and you only remember New York occasionally.” Of the trees and plants, he informed his sister, “Things are very forward here compared with Concord. The apricots growing out of doors are already as large as plums. The apple, pear, peach, cherry, and plum trees have shed their blossoms. The whole island is like a garden, and affords very fine scenery.” Unlike Manhattan, Staten Island offered life among nature, beautiful beaches and a horticultural paradise appealing to the mind of a New England Transcendentalist.<sup>43</sup>



William Emerson's home was a pivot between a personal world of family and an overwhelming world of strangers in the city. Manhattan was increasingly an impersonal place. Everything in the city disappointed Thoreau "but the crowd." "The crowd is something new, and to be attended to," he wrote, but the crowd also meant that in Manhattan, "You don't know where any respectability inhabits." Therefore, one relied on personal introductions. William Emerson introduced Thoreau to friends his own age, William Tappan, Giles Waldo and George Ward, all from New England families resettled in New York.<sup>44</sup>

Via Staten Island, New Yorkers came in contact with New England ideas and visa versa. In Manhattan, Tappan and Waldo took Thoreau to their "English alehouse," and explained their work as clerks for Tappan's father's Mercantile Agency. On Staten Island, Thoreau introduced his new friend Waldo to the transcendental possibilities of nature as the two young men, "lost ourselves in the interminable forests." Absorbing the transcendentalist ideas of New England, Waldo later remarked, Thoreau "has shown me how desperately ignorant I have been content to remain of books."<sup>45</sup>

The Staten Island homes of Sydney Howard Gay and George Palmer Putnam served as nodes within the network of publishing and writing in New York, places for hosting metropolitan colleagues and clients. As Editor of New York's *Anti-Slavery Standard*, Gay chose Staten Island because, as his brother put it, Gay would have to entertain New Yorkers and visitors to the city in "a comfortable house, in order to fulfill the duties of his station with the greatest effect and success." Like Emerson's circle of Transcendentalists, Gay brought his New England abolitionist ideas to New York from

his Staten Island home. Gay was born in 1814 in Hingham, Massachusetts. He tried studying at Harvard, working in a Boston counting house and reading law before he concluded that his anti-slavery stance made it impossible for him to take an oath to defend the Constitution. He abandoned law and in 1844, Gay came to New York to serve as Resident Editor of the Anti-Slavery Society's *Anti-Slavery Standard*. By 1847, he had married Elizabeth Neall, daughter of a prominent Quaker abolitionist family from Philadelphia, and moved to Staten Island. Gay's editorial job at the *Standard* made him a rare and highly visible proponent of abolitionism in 1840s New York. As he began writing for the *New York Tribune* in the 1850s, serving as Managing Editor during the Civil War, Gay's influence and circle expanded further. With the exception of a three-year stint in Chicago as editor of the *Chicago Tribune*, the Gays resided on Staten Island for the rest of their lives.<sup>46</sup>

Through the Staten Island home of George Palmer Putnam passed the relatives and colleagues of a rising New York publisher. Another transplant from New England, Putnam came to Manhattan in 1829, and with several years in the New York book trade under his belt, he entered a partnership with his employer John Wiley in 1840. In 1847, after some time serving Wiley & Putnam as the head of their London office, Putnam returned to New York, split the partnership, and moved to Staten Island. On Staten Island, Putnam hosted authors like Washington Irving when they had business in New York. The son of a bookseller colleague from Oxford, England lived with the Putnams too when he came to America to seek his fortune. Frederika Bremer, a Swedish author Putnam published stayed for weeks with the Putnam family on Staten Island as Putnam arranged for lectures and publishing of her books in America.<sup>47</sup>

Novelist Susan Warner's sojourns on Staten Island with the Putnams reflect the blend of personal domestic contact and professional work at the publisher's home and the regional fluidity between the Island and Manhattan. "Mr. Putnam comes home to a late tea," the author wrote to her sister in September 1850, "and after tea I correct proofs at the centre table." Warner was likely working on *The Wide, Wide World*, her first novel, which Putnam published the next year, and which *The New International Encyclopedia* would later call "perhaps the most widely circulated story of American authorship" next to *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. As a prolific and popular author, Warner became a staple of Putnam's business. During her extended stay on Staten Island she got through "ten pages in the morning before I have to go downstairs." She spent much of the rest of each day with Mrs. Putnam, socializing, knitting, or traveling into Manhattan on errands. In the evenings, Warner dined with the Putnams and their children.<sup>48</sup>

The fact that Frederick Law Olmsted's Staten Island farm was near Putnam's home and not out in rural Connecticut facilitated his transformation from an agricultural improver to a metropolitan writer and social reformer. When Olmsted returned from a tour of England with his brother in 1850, he took his travel notes to Putnam for publication. Putnam was, after all a Staten Island neighbor and the husband of his cousin as well as a leading New York publisher. In *Walks and Talks of an American Farmer in England*, his first book, Olmsted stressed his "vocation as a farmer," in both the title and the preface, clearly placing himself at "Tosomock Farm, Southside, Staten Island." Over the next few years, Olmsted's identity shifted from farmer to writer, the first step in his metropolitan transformation. By 1854, Olmsted expected his book on the American South to secure for him "a prominent situation in the literary world" of New York. Yet,

he anticipated living on Staten Island while he finished the book, even as he intended to sell the farm “or a part of it.” The following year Olmsted became a partner in Dix & Edwards, a new publishing enterprise in Manhattan, which took over *Putnam’s Magazine*. Olmsted’s new business and literary partner, George William Curtis, had already served as an editor to Putnam. When Dix & Edwards failed, Olmsted turned to another Staten Island neighbor, lawyer William Emerson to help him sort out the mess.<sup>49</sup>

As Olmsted traveled more and began to reorient his professional life toward Manhattan, his family and colleagues continually reconnected his metropolitan life with Staten Island. Olmsted’s brother John, the Manhattan physician, moved to the Staten Island farm in 1853 when he returned to New York from his sojourn in Europe. Punctuated by their trip to Texas in 1854, the two brothers lived together on Staten Island until April 1855, when Olmsted took a room in Manhattan in order to be closer to the offices of Dix & Edwards. Back on Staten Island, John managed the farm, and was actively engaged with his brother’s publishing career, writing up Olmsted’s Texas notes into what became *A Journey Through Texas*. Curtis, Olmsted’s partner at Dix & Edwards, moved to Staten Island around the same time to live near his in-laws with his new wife. Calvert Vaux, who would soon become Olmsted’s partner in the design of Central Park, took a house on Staten Island as well.<sup>50</sup>

### **Choosing Staten Island as a Metropolitan Home**

Why did men like William Emerson, Sidney Howard Gay, George Palmer Putnam and others like Dr. Samuel MacKenzie Elliott, with careers based in Manhattan choose Staten Island? As has been shown, its healthful reputation and the landscape form

of the metropolitan countryside made it a desirable place to raise a family. Some bought Staten Island land as speculations or investments. Others rented on the Island because it was cheaper than living in the city, yet still allowed them to conduct their Manhattan business and maintain their metropolitan social life. As family, friends and business associates came to Staten Island to visit them, the Island seemed to secure a place in metropolitan geography distinct from urban Manhattan.

William Emerson first saw Staten Island as a land speculation. As a Manhattan lawyer in the 1830s dealing in real estate as well as other civil cases, Emerson must have been well aware of the boom in land prices both in the city and around it. As the New Brighton Association and Staten Island Association were both selling stock in hundreds of acres on Staten Island, Emerson bought seventy acres for himself. However, within a few months the speculation turned sour, and William approached his brother Waldo in a panic for money in order to cover his payment obligations on the property. Waldo, worried about his brother's health subsequent to his Staten Island speculation and wrote, "For what sums are you further bound, to the original proprietors? Do not be sick. That would be giving too much importance to this land-trap." Waldo was also embarrassed that William had engaged in a land speculation in the first place. Because of Waldo, however, William was able to save his Staten Island property, and the two brothers talked finance and supported each other's cash needs through regular correspondence over much of their lives. By 1838, Emerson decided he could not both live in Manhattan and maintain the Staten Island property, so he moved the family to the Island. William's land speculation had become a home.<sup>51</sup>

Dr. Samuel MacKenzie Elliott, the nation's premier eye specialist, saw his Staten Island land as an investment as well. Elliott was born in Scotland in 1811 and studied at Glasgow's Royal College of Surgeons around the time of the founding of the Glasgow Eye Infirmary, soon to become the premier center for the treatment of diseases of the eye. After a few years in London, Elliott decided to move to America in 1833, serving as ship surgeon en route. After spending a couple of years in Ohio and Philadelphia establishing himself as an "occulist," Elliott returned to New York and opened an office in Manhattan. Elliott recalled the "beauties of Staten Island" he had enjoyed when he had first arrived in America and the Health Officer had invited him to stay a while at Quarantine. In 1839, Thomas E. Davis, the developer of nearby New Brighton, sold Elliott a plot of land for a country home. Soon, Elliott was living in his Staten Island home and buying up adjacent properties from Davis and others.<sup>52</sup>

By 1843, Elliott had acquired more than 30 acres and planned to make his Staten Island land into a desirable country suburb of Manhattan. His original deed from Davis promised Elliott access to the waterfront for a "boathouse and bathing house." In the deed, he promised Davis that the land, directly to the west of New Brighton, would contain no nuisances and houses would be built at least 50 feet from the street. Soon Elliott was calling the area Elliottville and building a series of stone houses to rent in the metropolitan real estate market.<sup>53</sup>

Men bought and rented from Elliott on Staten Island because he offered affordable, pleasant place to live, all within easy reach of Manhattan. Sydney Howard Gay was one of them. When Gay went "house hunting" in 1847, he struggled between his limited income as a Resident Editor of the *Anti-Slavery Standard* and his need for a

“proper house in a convenient situation” to his work in Manhattan. From Elliottville, Gay’s wife Elizabeth could easily walk down to the ferry and run errands in the city. Despite being separated from the city, Elizabeth found more of a community on Staten Island, describing her neighbors as “sociable” and “very kind & friendly.” This contrasted with the Gay’s more isolated existence in Manhattan, where Elizabeth complained, “We see very few people, partly because we have not many acquaintances and partly because we are rather indifferent about seeking those whom we have.” In 1850, Gay gave up renting and bought a house and 2.5 acres from Elliott for \$4,700, settling permanently on the Island.<sup>54</sup>

George Palmer Putnam was more cash constrained when he chose Staten Island upon his return to New York from England with his young family in 1847. Having failed to make the London office of Wiley & Putnam a success, Putnam was ready to strike out on his own in New York. Wiley, however did not have the cash to buy Putnam out of the partnership, so he paid Putnam for his share of the business in the form of books. “The question of expenditure for the family,” recalled Putnam’s son, “was of [such] importance,” that the family chose to live at Stapleton, Staten Island. Putnam’s son remembered their modest home as a “cottage in the form then described as ‘semi-detached’.” With more than eighty houses clustered around the waterfront, Stapleton was somewhat denser and more “democratic” than the nearby “aristocratic” New Brighton and Elliottville.<sup>55</sup>

Staten Island homes still allowed Emerson, Elliott, Gay and Putnam to carry on their professional lives in Manhattan. Emerson maintained his Manhattan legal office on Wall Street. Putnam opened his new publishing and book importing business at 155

Broadway. Elliott boasted the, “most successful and extensive practice in the Union [for] diseases of the Eye,” confirmed by his contemporaries, one of whom described his office near City Hall as “being overrun with patients.” The offices of the American Anti-Slavery Society, which published Gay’s *Anti-Slavery Standard*, were around the corner. All were within 15 or 20-minute walk of the Manhattan docks of their respective Staten Island ferries. On Staten Island, Emerson was the only one of the four who lived more than a mile from the ferry, which he described as an “inconvenience.” But Thoreau walked from the Emerson home to the steamboat dock in half an hour, and Emerson could easily have taken a carriage if need be.<sup>56</sup>

Staten Island was also attractive because the metropolitan country landscape promised advantages for family life. Within a few months of living on the Island, Emerson wrote to his brother that his wife, “Susan would not willingly go back to the city. The health of the family has been better than ever before.” A few years later, Emerson’s brother Waldo observed, “It is a great good to have a goodly house & garden to come home to from the discords of Wall Street and I trust that you and Susan will have the content of seeing its constant benefit to [your children] Willie & Haven as they go & come to your grove these many many years.” Similarly, the Gays chose to relocate to Staten Island from Manhattan about a year and a half after their marriage. George William Curtis and his wife moved to Staten Island shortly after their marriage as well, literally down the street from the Gays.<sup>57</sup>

A Staten Island home held advantages for the children as well. The Emersons, recognizing the relative lack of educational options at the metropolitan periphery hired Thoreau to be a tutor for their young son Willie, but they also realized the potential of



being at the edge of the metropolis, charging Thoreau to “go to the woods & go to the city with him.” Putnam’s son remembered a happy childhood, describing Staten Island as “an admirable abiding place.” “Amusements,” he recalled, “included bathing on the Stapleton beach, which was easily reached from the house.” He played games of “Noah’s Ark and Swiss Family Robinson” with his siblings in the garden around the low hanging branches of a mulberry tree. Visitors to the Putnam and Emerson homes remarked on how happy the two families seemed on Staten Island.<sup>58</sup>

By choosing Staten Island, men like Putnam, Emerson, Elliott and Gay gave the Island a presence in personal and professional networks and connected it to the city. Family, friends, clients and colleagues came to their Staten Island homes when they had business in the city. Or when they came to New York City, they considered time on Staten Island as part of their visit. They told friends and family members about their experiences on the Island, describing it, often in glowing terms, and relating its relationship with the metropolis. The presence of Staten Island families in the networks of the literary, publishing and social reform worlds of New York and New England made the Island a known place, a place defined and experienced in relationship with the metropolis.

### **A Place of Health and Disease: Metropolitan Medical Leaders and Ailing Elites on Staten Island**

Health and disease, as has been discussed, was a defining element of Staten Island’s place in metropolitan geography. As such, the Island’s communities attracted both medical men and citizens seeking a healthful environment. The marine hospitals at Quarantine and the Seamen’s Retreat served as nodes in the medical networks of the

metropolis and brought prominent physicians and surgeons to the Island. Some came at the start of their professional lives, others at the peak of their careers. Staten Island was also part of a metropolitan geography of health because it was a place of salubrious breezy hills and sea air known to and accessible to Manhattanites. Through personal and professional networks, people in the city and beyond learned of and experienced Staten Island both as a place to isolate disease and as a place to recover one's health. Their stories too reveal both the Island's obscurity and its connectedness, the polarity of the Island's metropolitan identity.

Through their lives and medical careers, Dr. Richard Bayley and his nephew Joseph connected Staten Island and Manhattan in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Richard was born in Fairfield, Connecticut in 1745. He came to New York in the 1760s to study medicine under Dr. Charlton, a leading physician of the city. Family brought Bayley to Staten Island. Charlton's father was pastor of the Church of St. Andrew. Bayley married Charlton's sister around 1770. By the 1790s, Bayley was well established as one of a few medical leaders in Manhattan: A founding member of the New York Medical Society in 1795; and one of the first two professors at Columbia College's new medical school in 1792. When he was appointed Health Officer of the port in 1799, Richard moved to Staten Island permanently, to serve at the new Quarantine Station.<sup>59</sup>

Bayley's nephew Joseph continued the family legacy of New York medical leadership, spanning from Manhattan to Staten Island. In Manhattan, Joseph was active in the Medical Society's attempts at professionalizing medicine in New York and served on the faculty and first Board of Trustees of the reorganized College of Physicians and

Surgeons in 1820. On Staten Island, Joseph served for many years at the Quarantine Station, as both assistant to Richard and later Health Officers, and as Health Officer himself. Both Bayleys published in the medical journals of their day, particularly on the yellow fever. Joseph's publications in particular brought experiences with yellow fever at the Staten Island Quarantine Station into the Manhattan medical literature. For the Drs. Bayley, Staten Island was at the center of, and the peak of their New York medical careers.<sup>60</sup>

"I have lots of men to try experiments on, with calomel [et cetera]—they'll take everything you give them, these sailors, [and] thank you—and then have a great chance to examine their bodies afterwards....I shall enjoy and profit by the summer very much," Dr. John H. Olmsted wrote to a friend. Isolating diseased passengers and crew and injured sailors at Staten Island's marine hospitals made the Seamen's Retreat and Quarantine important sites for New York's medical professionals, providing work, prestige and research subjects. Dr. Olmsted, Frederick Law Olmsted's brother reported to the Seamen's Retreat as a "2nd assistant," physician in May 1851 for the summer fever season. It was a great opportunity to further his New York medical career.<sup>61</sup>

Many of New York's important medical and public health pioneers spent early or forgotten parts of their more famous careers at Staten Island's maritime institutions. The medical and public health careers of Drs. Elisha Harris and Joseph J. Kinyoun, been largely divorced from their time on Staten Island, their fame instead derived from their work in Manhattan and Washington D.C. Historian John Duffy has called Dr. Elisha Harris, "possibly the outstanding health reformer of his day," for his work as a pivotal figure in the formation and early management of The United States Sanitary Service and

the Metropolitan Board of Health in the 1860s. Yet, Harris served earlier as Physician in Chief at the Marine Hospital at Quarantine in the mid-1850s. In the 1880s, Dr. Joseph J. Kinyoun first came to the Seamen's Retreat Hospital, which had recently been rechristened as the United States Marine Hospital, as an assistant surgeon. In 1891, the Surgeon General moved Kinyoun's Staten Island laboratory to Washington DC, where it grew into the National Institutes of Health.<sup>62</sup>

Similarly, Frederick Law Olmsted and George E. Waring developed their expertise on drainage and its relationship to sanitation and public health on Olmsted's Staten Island farm, but the Island has largely been forgotten in their careers as well. Olmsted led the United States Sanitary Commission during the Civil War, but he developed his early understanding of dampness and disease as he under-drained his Staten Island farm years earlier. George E. Waring is perhaps best remembered for his work as street cleaning commissioner of New York, establishing the foundation of the modern New York City Department of Sanitation, and as the leading proponent of separating storm drains from sewage systems. Before he moved into Manhattan to work with Olmsted on the drainage system for Central Park, however, Waring managed Olmsted's farm on Staten Island.<sup>63</sup>

Dr. Frederick Hollick's life on Staten Island, in contrast, was a retreat from the limelight of an already high-profile medical career. Dr. Hollick was born in England in 1818. It is unclear when he first came to America, but in 1844, from a Manhattan lecture hall, Hollick began a sensational series of lectures on human anatomy of reproduction, which included a dissection of an anatomically correct papier-mâché female body. Over the next several years, he took his lectures on the road to Baltimore, Washington,

Philadelphia, New Orleans, Boston, St. Louis, and when recognized while travelling on a Mississippi River steamboat, agreed to lecture to the passengers onboard. Controversy over the appropriateness of his lectures exploded into scandal at Philadelphia in 1846, with charges of “obscene and indecent exhibitions and publications.” The same year he published *The Origin of Life*, which revealed anatomy and sexual function to a popular audience in frank and accessible language, including color plates. He followed it up a few years later with a frank *Marriage Guide*, which promoted intercourse as a healthy and pleasurable activity beyond procreation. Hollick’s *Marriage Guide* was in its 309th edition by 1880.<sup>64</sup>

Staten Island was a place where Hollick could retreat from the attention brought by his fame and write his books, while remaining connected to publishers and medical patients in Manhattan. However, Hollick’s move to the periphery took him out of the limelight and catalyzed his long slide into obscurity. Hollick began living on Staten Island sometime in the 1840s, during the height of his lecture touring. From his Island home he could walk to the ferries, by which he travelled to his Manhattan office to see patients every day but Sunday. By 1850, as his publishing success rose, he tapered off his lecture travels, bought a seven and a half acre spread on Staten Island, and lived there for the rest of his life. In his life as a Staten Islander, Hollick was among the leaders of the local movement against the Quarantine Station’s presence on the Island. His work as a leader in Staten Island’s scientific and medical community, where he helped found the Staten Island Institute of Arts and Sciences, was largely invisible in Manhattan. From his Staten Island garden, he wrote to Downing’s *Horticulturist*, advocating for cultivation of the Chinese Yam, perhaps his least known publication. Although his once-famous

publications continued to be reprinted, as the decades passed, they were no longer groundbreaking, or viewed as up to date. By the time of his death in 1900, no major newspaper even carried his obituary.<sup>65</sup>

Dr. Samuel MacKenzie Elliott used the metropolitan periphery differently, building an empire of health connecting his Manhattan medical practice with his Staten Island property. The biographer of one of Elliott's famous patients observed, "The doctor's establishment [on Staten Island] seems to be a forerunner of the modern sanitarium." Elliott brought patients seeking to recover their health to the Island from Manhattan, New England and beyond. Dr. Elliott's fame as an "occulist" who promised to "cure the most dangerous and chronic diseases of the eye without an operation" had spread everywhere by the 1840s. Staten Island itself was part of the cure Elliott offered. While he treated many of his cases from his Manhattan office, Elliott sent others to his land and home on Staten Island. For Elliott, the Island offered "precisely the conditions of atmosphere...desired for successful treatment." Manhattan, in sharp contrast, was too overwhelming to the senses. On Staten Island, Elliott's patients could rest their minds, and heal their eyes. One local history of the Island recounts that Elliott, "pretended to have discovered great virtue in the waters of a certain well that could only be reached by a footbridge and a long walk, all to insure exercise for his patients." In fact, many attributed Elliott's "miraculous" success "to the green fields and pure, bracing air of Staten Island, as much as to the Doctor's knowledge."<sup>66</sup>

As Dr. Elliott's patients experienced Staten Island and wrote about it to family and friends, they helped make the Island a known place of health in the networks of prominent men and families of the era. A surprising number of the most famous writers

and thinkers of the era came to Staten Island as patients of Dr. Elliott. Edward Youmans, author of books about science for the lay reader and founder of *Popular Science* magazine dedicated his first book to Elliott, “Whose professional ability the author is indebted for the enjoyment of vision and the power of effective labor.” General Winfield Scott, hero of the Mexican American War, along with authors, editors and poets (including Nathaniel Parker Willis, Charles A. Dana and Francis Parkman) also came to Elliott for problems with their eyes. Boston poets and social critics James Russell Lowell and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow came as well.<sup>67</sup>

Family contacts brought Elliott’s clientele to him and to Staten Island. James Russell Lowell’s family was friends of the Parkmans back in Boston. Two years after Elliott treated James Russell, Caroline Parkman became a patient. Elliott encouraged the Parkmans to send Caroline to Staten Island for the summer of 1845 for her treatment. Though she didn’t go that summer, her ailing brother Francis, perhaps the most famous writer of American history of the mid-nineteenth century, spent a great deal of time on Staten Island under Elliott’s care over the next few years. Sarah Shaw, the wife of Parkman’s cousin Francis Shaw came to Staten Island became Elliott’s patient in early 1847 as well. Later that year, the entire Shaw family moved to Staten Island from West Roxbury, Massachusetts, into a home on Elliott’s property.<sup>68</sup>

The Lowells and Youmans were “for a time...members of the [Elliott] household,” recalled Elliott’s son. Similar to the Staten Island homes of Emerson and Putnam, Elliott’s too blended personal and professional life, connecting Staten Island to the family geographies of New Englanders and Manhattanites. Patient James Russell Lowell’s father and sisters joined him at the Elliott’s home on Staten Island for a time.

Parkman went rowing in the Kills with Elliott's and Shaw's sons, telling them fantastical stories of his travels, and socialized freely with his adult hosts. "He was an excellent talker among his peers, the adults," recalled Elliott's son, "and we boys liked him even better than James Russell Lowell, who had taken some notice of our adolescence, but who somehow appeared condescending and Bostony to our untutored fancy." During Youmans' treatment, the young man split his time between a boarding house near Elliott's Manhattan office and Elliott's estate on Staten Island. At the latter, Youmans used Elliott's bathhouse at the waterfront, went horseback riding, and sat in Elliott's home as the doctor instructed him in "chemical and physiological science." Recognizing Youmans' youth and difficult financial circumstances, Elliott treated him as a family friend as much as a patient, paying him to supervise the workmen on the estate and never charging him the full cost of treatment.<sup>69</sup>

"[O]n Staten Island...and in the neighboring city of New York," wrote Francis Parkman of himself in an autobiographical essay, "[I] had friends who willingly offered their aid." Though Parkman recalled his time on Staten Island as one of suffering, the author and historian was in a place connected to the support network of family and friends. With the help of such friends and family, Parkman rigged up an ingenious device of wood, paper and wires, with which "he could write not illegible with closed eyes." It was a rebellion against Elliott's orders that too much engagement of the mind would be like "poison." But Parkman concluded, "nothing could be more deadly to his bodily and mental health than the entire absence of a purpose and an object." With the contraption they built, Parkman began writing his classic "History of the Conspiracy of Pontiac" on Staten Island, while he was supposed to be convalescing.<sup>70</sup>



### **Staten Island in Networks of Social Reform**

Staten Island abolitionists and social reformers, many introduced to the Island through Elliott, clustered around Elliottville forming a distinct metropolitan neighborhood in the mid-nineteenth century. As we have seen, Elliott rented and later sold homes to *Anti-Slavery Standard* editor Sydney Howard Gay and to the abolitionist Shaw family from Massachusetts. The Gays and the Shaws in turn hosted William Lloyd Garrison, the Grimke sisters, Wendell Philips, Lucretia Mott and other high profile abolitionists, social reformers and their supporters at their Staten Island homes. Other prominent New England abolitionists were connected to Staten Island through marriage. Charles Hovey, a major funder of Boston's Anti-Slavery Society (and publisher of *The Magazine of Horticulture*), for example, married the daughter of Captain DePeyster, the governor of the Sailors' Snug Harbor and came to the Island from time to time to visit his in-laws. Being good friends with Hovey's son, William Lloyd Garrison's son Wendell stayed on the Island with the DePeysters in the summer of 1858.<sup>71</sup>

Much of the reformist network of interconnected families that linked to Staten Island to the city and to New England was forged in and around Boston, particularly at Brook Farm. For a few years in the 1840s, Brook Farm, nine miles west of Boston, offered budding transcendentalists and social reformers a haven, a place apart from the New England metropolis, where they could create a distinct and isolated community free from outside influence. When the Brook Farm experiment in utopian communal living failed, many of its members and affiliates came to New York. New York publications could project their ideas, and give them work. Staten Island made moving to New York

palatable, comfortable even, for such New England idealists who were used to smaller communities and enamored of country settings. Staten Island, just about seven miles southwest of Manhattan, offered ex-Brook Farmers a “rural” setting similar to Brook Farm itself and a similar sense of remove from the metropolis. The fact that so many Brook Farmers and similarly minded New Englanders chose to live on or visit Staten Island during their time in New York reveals an understanding of a New York metropolitan region that extended beyond Manhattan.

Francis Shaw was an anchor of the new Staten Island community of socially active New England transplants to New York, as he had been at Brook Farm. Back in Massachusetts, the Shaw homestead had been right next to Brook Farm, and Shaw was among the commune’s major financial and philosophical supporters. At Brook Farm, George William Curtis and Francis Channing Barlow studied together. In the decade after Brook Farm failed, Curtis married Anna Shaw, Francis Shaw’s daughter and moved in with his father-in-law on Staten Island. Barlow came down to the Island regularly from his Manhattan home to tutor the Shaw’s only son, Robert Gould, in 1855. Barlow married Ellen Shaw in 1867, and moved into the Shaw’s Staten Island home too. The Curtis’ built a new home next door, with Francis Shaw’s help, though the Barlows eventually moved back into Manhattan. Charles Russell Lowell, brother of Elliott’s patient James Russell Lowell, another Brook Farm regular, married Shaw’s third daughter, Josephine in 1863. Josephine stayed on Staten Island with her parents as Lowell went off to fight in the Civil War. Christopher Pease Cranch, the Brook Farm artist, came to Staten Island for a time too, because his sister and his friend, George William Curtis both lived there. Other men and women associated with Brook Farm,

including Ralph Waldo Emerson, Thoreau and Margaret Fuller, as we have seen, all spent extended stays on Staten Island with Emerson's brother William Emerson.<sup>72</sup>

Spending much of their childhood and early adult lives on Staten Island, the Shaw children imbibed the culture of social reform of their New England and New York social circles. Though his family home was now on Staten Island, Robert Gould Shaw died leading the Massachusetts 54th Regiment in the Civil War, the first black regiment in American history, into battle. Shaw's daughters all married into prominent families deeply involved in social reform. Anna's husband George William Curtis was one of the leading writers and editors of New York's premier magazines: *Putnam's* and *Harper's*. When Josephine's husband Charles Russell Lowell died in the war, she stayed on Staten Island, dedicating her life to charity, both on the Island, and as founder of the Charity Organization Society, in Manhattan. Ellen's husband, Francis Channing Barlow became a reform-minded lawyer and editor for the *New York Tribune* after the war. Susanna's husband, the lone non-New Englander, was Robert Minturn, Jr., son of one of Manhattan's wealthiest shipping magnates. He too was active in social reform movements, helping found the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor.<sup>73</sup>

Moving between the "hot pavements...and...unceasing din," of Manhattan to Frederick Law Olmsted's "cool piazza" on Staten Island, "with [its] quiet country scene...of meadows and cattle and grain-fields," wrote Charles Loring Brace, was like being transplanted by a "kind hobgoblin." The relationship between Brace, the founder of the Children's Aid Society and his friend, Olmsted reveals the reciprocal and personal nature of social reform connections between Manhattan and Staten Island. The two had known each other since boyhood in Harford. Like so many other New Englanders, both

relocated to New York in the 1840s. Olmsted settled on Staten Island; Brace in Manhattan. Olmsted appreciated intellectual engagement with the larger metropolitan community of thinkers like Brace, inviting his friend out to the Staten Island farm regularly. Brace found Staten Island uncannily accessible yet of marked contrast to the city.<sup>74</sup>

Visiting Olmsted made Staten Island visible to Brace and gave the Island meaning for him in the geography of metropolitan reform. Staten Island offered a retreat from the city to “nature,” for Brace, while keeping him connected to a social network of intellectual spirituality. “Sunday here [on Staten Island],” wrote Brace, “does not mean...going to church yet perhaps something better...We do not sweat all day in a hot building criticising dishonest or stupid essays but we look out on the peaceful sea and the solemn stretch of its waves way on to the misty horizon and perhaps nothing could so remind us of Him its Maker.” On Staten Island, Brace could experience personally the power of “nature,” that the New England transcendentalists like Emerson and Thoreau were writing about. But he could also engage with metropolitan friends like Olmsted in intellectual aspects of spirituality. “[P]erhaps no day in the year is more intellectual than this Sunday of ours. There is earnest talk all day long on the great problems of life and eternity not flippant discussion or prize matches between intellects but as I do believe a serious and rational investigation.”<sup>75</sup>

Brace also found in the Staten Island countryside a social antidote to the ills of the city. Brace’s visits to Olmsted’s Staten Island farm shaped his ideas for the Children’s Aid Society, which defined his life’s work and his historical fame. In 1853, Brace wrote a series of articles for the *New York Times* entitled, “Walks among the New York Poor.”

In his article on “Street Boys,” he imagined sending the poor Manhattan children away from the, “poverty and wretchedness, and rioting crime,” of the city to “a comfortable home, with a Staten Island farmer,” where they, “may yet...do a good part in the world.” Undoubtedly, Brace was drawing on his personal experiences of Staten Island at the Olmsted farm. That year, Brace was asked by a group of Manhattan social reformers to run the new Children’s Aid Society. Rehabilitating the moral character of urban street boys by sending them away from Manhattan, to live with farmers was the seminal idea behind Brace’s “emigration plan,” the Society’s signature program. But Staten Island turned out to be too close to Manhattan, too easy for the urban youth to “run away” back to the city streets. And it was cheaper and easier to send a trainload of children out west than to try to find them individual placements with more local farmers.<sup>76</sup>

As Brace began to ship the city’s “street urchins,” to farms further out of reach of the city, Staten Island took on a different role for the Children’s Aid Society, perhaps more suited to its location at the metropolitan periphery. In 1873, Mr. and Mrs. Phelps Stokes helped the Society secure a Staten Island villa and eight acres of land for its first “Children’s Country Retreat.” At the retreat, the Society reported that, with “A week’s sea air, fresh milk, good fare and play in the fields...the sad were cheered, the thin and hungry made stout with good food, and all through the cellars and attics of poverty in the great city went the pleasant words that the rich cared enough for the poor to give their children a share in their beautiful country homes.” Today, the Society’s forty-two-acre Goodhue Center, on the estate donated by Mrs. Goodhue in 1912 remains one of two facilities outside Manhattan run by the Society (the other is in Chappaqua, New York),

continuing to position Staten Island as a country retreat for city kids within the boundaries of New York City itself.<sup>77</sup>

For Olmsted, Brace was one of a number of important personal contacts linking the Staten Island farmer to metropolitan networks that catalyzed new possibilities for his socially-minded life. As soon as Olmsted moved to the Island he recognized a difference between his new cosmopolitan social circle and the provincial neighbors he had had at his first farm in rural Sachem's Head, Connecticut. We have already touched on the Staten Island lives of Olmsted's publisher Putnam and publishing partner George William Curtis, and in the last chapter, his agriculturally interested neighbors like R. L. Allen, Clawson, and Dunning, all of whom had business in Manhattan. Olmsted also remarked on the metropolitan refinements of his Staten Island neighbor Emerson's "excellent family," and drew heavily from Emerson's library for reading material.<sup>78</sup>

The national debate over slavery was ubiquitous in the decades before the Civil War, but Olmsted's voice could rise to notice in part because of his metropolitan location on Staten Island. Staten Island neighbors like Putnam connected Olmsted with the New York's community of writers and publishers. Because he lived on Staten Island, Olmsted had actual physical access to Manhattan's newspaper publishers like Henry Raymond of the *Times*, who could send him south as a correspondent, and publishing opportunities like the partnership in Dix & Edwards that could publish books on his southern travels. On Staten Island too, Olmsted and his brother John would have the seasonal downtime from the farm and the peace of remove from Manhattan to write about Olmsted's experiences travelling through southern slave society.<sup>79</sup>

While morally opposed to slavery, Olmsted articulated a more conservative view of gradual emancipation than his abolitionist friends like Brace. “Slavery is not the greatest sin in the world,” Olmsted wrote to Brace from his first farm in Connecticut, “a Slaveholder may be a conscientious Christian.” Brace, however, continued to try to push Olmsted toward abolitionism in his letters and during his visits to Olmsted’s Staten Island farm. Theodore Parker, the outspoken abolitionist minister from Boston, came to Staten Island in 1853, encouraged by Brace. “Your visit left a delightful impression on us all,” wrote Brace, “and was of real good, I think, to our friends on Staten Island,” presumably Olmsted included. But in the end, though convinced of the evils of slavery to the character of society, Olmsted clung to a more moderate anti-slavery stance.<sup>80</sup>

### **Not Quite There: The Tenuous Bonds of Personal Networks at the Periphery**

Staten Island was part of important social, intellectual and professional networks of the nineteenth century because individuals and families connected to those networks chose to live on the Island or sojourn there. They were real, but impermanent links. People die. Individuals and families move. Failing to establish himself in the New York literary market, Thoreau returned to Massachusetts at the end of 1843. Charles F. Briggs, the editor and satirist of the *Broadway Journal*, who gave Edgar Allen Poe his big break, moved to Brooklyn in 1847. Putnam moved the family into Manhattan in 1852. Olmsted relocated to Manhattan in order to manage the construction of Central Park in 1857. Unlike more rapidly-growing Brooklyn, where a greater population of metropolitan families laid down denser networks, Staten Island, with its relatively small population was particularly vulnerable to the loss of a single link, a single prominent family home.

Compounding this vulnerability, the rise of clubs, associations, and other institutions in the latter half of the century, replaced individual personal relationships as the primary basis of professional, social and political networks. Metropolitan clubhouses and institutions were almost invariably located in Manhattan.<sup>81</sup>

Furthermore, business relationships, long based on trust and respectable character verified through personal contact began to yield to institutions. In the metropolis, noted Thoreau, “You don't know where any respectability inhabits.” During his stay on Staten Island, Thoreau was first exposed to the Mercantile Agency, the world’s first credit rating institution. William Emerson had introduced him to Giles Waldo and William Tappan, who clerked at the Agency. Thoreau, clearly impressed by this “new and very important business,” described the Mercantile Agency as a “kind of intelligence office for the whole country...giving information with regard to the credit and affairs of every man of business,” essentially establishing respectability through institutional rather than personal means. Other new institutions, like the Century Association, founded by William Cullen Bryant and others in 1847, brought together literary and artistic men with businessmen who had an interest in such cultural endeavors. Parlor gatherings like the performance of *The Rivals* at Putnam’s home were becoming less important. By the latter decades of the nineteenth century, calling at the homes of Staten Island editors, writers, artists and businessmen of the metropolis became increasingly peripheral to one’s engagement in such metropolitan networks.<sup>82</sup>

Meanwhile, the idealistic metropolitan countryside fantasy of healthful, refined, leisurely living easily accessible to the city was never as perfect as it seemed. Olmsted’s often sickly brother John moved from the city to the Staten Island farm in 1853. Given



the Island's hype, such a move should have been beneficial to his health. Practical experience proved otherwise, as John complained to his father that living on the Staten Island farm "requires us to live in the fever and ague." Similarly, Manhattan hardware merchant Alfred Field blamed his ill health on the Staten Island environment, much though he loved the place. When Field had first arrived in New York to establish a branch of the English family's hardware business in America, family friend and Manhattan newspaper editor William Cullen Bryant, steered him to Staten Island. Field's brother, running the family business back in England was none too happy when Alfred proposed leaving Staten Island to relocate at least temporarily back to Birmingham, or removing to the American southwest to recover his health. Nevertheless, when Field finally moved back to England in 1854, he advertised his 12-acre Staten Island estate, claiming "it would be difficult to find...a place...so healthy as this."<sup>83</sup>

Sheet music from the 1850s, like *The Staten Island Gentleman* satirized the choice of the "arcadian" life of a commuter, poking fun at the "rash unthinking Gentleman," who put up with rushed breakfasts, muddy boots and endless instructions from his wife for shopping needs in the city. Steamboats may have connected Staten Island with Manhattan, but being near the city was not the same as being there. "I feel a good way off here," Thoreau wrote of Staten Island, "and [the city] is not to be visited, but seen and dwelt in." During the colder months, Mrs. Putnam wondered whether her husband would "pass the night with a friend in the city or the not very trustworthy ferry-boat was drifting down the bay with her paddles clogged with ice." Sydney Howard Gay's mother worried that "the exposure must be considerable," threatening her son's health as he travelled constantly "back and forth to Staten Island."<sup>84</sup>

“Staten Island comes to N. York oftener than N. York goes to Staten Island,” wrote one correspondent to George William Curtis, expecting the latter to come to Manhattan for their meeting. Although metropolitan men who chose to live on Staten Island expected to and did host their Manhattan friends and colleagues, Staten Island had something of a one-way relationship with the city. William Bryant visited the Island because there were people there he was obligated to call on, but he considered going to Staten Island, “something of an expedition.” Putnam’s Stapleton home, though a mere short walk to the ferry, weighed significantly in his decision to move the family into Manhattan at the end of 1851. As Putnam’s son recalled, with Putnam’s “increasing literary and social responsibilities in New York, he had found it an inconvenience to be domiciled at Staten Island.”<sup>85</sup>

As has been shown in this chapter, Staten Island was desirable to metropolitan New Yorkers and visitors to the city because it embodied the balance of connection and obscurity. In the middle decades of the nineteenth century, metropolitan men experimented with Staten Island as a place to settle themselves and their families because it offered privacy, relief, affordability, health and the comfort of a small community of personally known neighbors, all of which seemed to be vanishing in Manhattan. At the same time in choosing Staten Island, they retained easy access to their professional and social lives in Manhattan. Through their choices to live and sojourn on Staten Island, they knit the Island into the lives and careers of prominent figures in politics, literature and social reform. Great world and national leaders, famous writers and speakers visited or sojourned on Staten Island because men and families connected to them settled on the

Island. But Staten Island was at the fringe of these networks, not at its densely woven center. By the later decades of the nineteenth century, the kinds of connections Island homes had fostered faded as the locus of professional and as well as social networks. As they did, Staten Island began to disappear from metropolitan consciousness.

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<sup>1</sup> George Haven Putnam, *George Palmer Putnam: A Memoir, Together With A Record of the Earlier Years of the Publishing House Founded by Him* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1903), 247–9. Frederick Law Olmsted to unknown, date unknown [archivist approximates “late 1850”], “I saw Putnam yesterday,” Reel 4, FLO Papers.

<sup>2</sup> George Haven Putnam, *George Palmer Putnam: A Memoir, Together With A Record of the Earlier Years of the Publishing House Founded by Him* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1903), 247–9 and 361; for Stewart's relationship with Clinch, see *Posthumous Relatives of the Late Alexander T. Stewart Proceedings Before the Surrogate – Extracts from Newspapers etc.* (1876), 113, (<http://books.google.com/books?id=B6YEAAAAYAAJ>, accessed April 28, 2014); and Joseph Norton Ireland, *Some Account of the Ireland Family Originally of Long Island, NY, 1644–1880* (Bridgeport, 1880), 20, <https://archive.org/details/someaccountofire00irel>, accessed April 12, 2014. The latter confirms Cornelia Clinch Stewart was the half-sister of Julia Clinch.

<sup>3</sup> For the rise of clubs as a social organizing institution and their interlocking memberships, which helped forge a class-based unity of the “bourgeoisie” in New York City, see Sven Beckert, *The Monied Metropolis: New York City and the Consolidation of the American Bourgeoisie, 1850–1896*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001); for the transition in intellectual authority from individualized achievement to professionalized institutions in the latter half of the nineteenth century, in the context of growing socio-cultural interdependence, see Thomas Haskell, *The Emergence of Professional Social Science: The American Social Science Association and the Nineteenth-century Crisis of Authority* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1977), esp. 24–47; for the “literary republic” of the era and its tendency toward a more controlled authority over knowledge among intellectual elites culminating in the more institutional authority of the university, see Thomas Bender, *New York Intellect: A History of Intellectual Life in New York City, from 1750 to the Beginnings of Our Own Time* (New York: Knopf, 1987).

<sup>4</sup> Recent biographical scholarship on Aaron Burr includes Nancy Isenberg, *Fallen Founder: The Life of Aaron Burr* (New York: Viking, 2007); Milton Lomask, *Aaron Burr The Conspiracy and Years of Exile, 1805–1836* (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1982); and Buckner F. Melton, *Aaron Burr: Conspiracy to Treason* (New York: Wiley, 2001). Recent biographical scholarship on the Frémonts include: Tom Chaffin, *Pathfinder: John Charles Frémont and The Course of American Empire* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2002); and Sally Denton, *Passion and Principle: John and Jessie Frémont, The Couple Whose Power, Politics, and Love Shaped Nineteenth-Century America* (New

York: Bloomsbury, 2007). There is little scholarship on Tompkins, see Ray W. Irwin, *Daniel D. Tompkins: Governor of New York and Vice President of the United States* (NYHS, 1968), esp. ch. 2–3; see also, “Biographical Memoir of Governor Tompkins, of New York,” *Niles’ Weekly Register* (1814–1837), 9 (December 9, 1815), 245 and “Daniel D. Tompkins,” *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*, <http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=T000306>, accessed February 21, 2012.

<sup>5</sup> Gustav Myers, *The History of Tammany Hall*, 2nd Ed. (New York: Boni & Liveright, 1917), 11–6. Mushkat argues that Tammany did not become a political organization dominated by Burr’s followers until 1808; see Jerome Mushkat, *Tammany: The Evolution of a Political Machine, 1789–1865* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1971), 26–31; for Tompkins’ life and politics, see previous fn.; and John P. Kaminski, *George Clinton: Yeoman Politician of the New Republic* (Madison: Madison House, 1993), esp. 277–8, and 288; for Tompkins’ role in New York politics of the era, see Harvey Strum, “Property Qualifications and Voting Behavior in New York, 1807–1816,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 1:4 (Winter, 1981), 347–71; De Alva Stanwood Alexander, *A Political History of the State of New York* 1 (New York: H. Holt & Co., 1906), 151–282; For a list of aldermen and assistant aldermen, see *Minutes of the Common Council* 19 (1917), 730–2.

<sup>6</sup> James Parton, *The Life and Times of Aaron Burr, Lieutenant-colonel in the Army of the Revolution, United States Senator, Vice-president of the United States, etc.* (New York: Mason Bros., 1858), 513; Morris, 157.

<sup>7</sup> Burr’s Richmond Hill property had already been sold off in the wake of his political disgrace to cover his debts; see Morris 2, 156.

<sup>8</sup> “To Let: The Mansion House,” *National Advocate*, March 16, 1822, 4; Irwin, 221. A. Levasseur, *Lafayette in America in 1824 and 1825: Or Journal of Travels in the United States* 1 (Philadelphia: Carey and Lea, 1829), 13–14. John Niven, *Martin Van Buren: The Romantic Age of American Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 77. Daniel Preston and Marlana DeLong, *The Papers of James Monroe* (Santa Barbara: Greenwood Press, 2003), 63; for the scale and location of Tompkins’ Staten Island land purchases, see, “New York, Land Records, 1630–1975,” Richmond County, NY, Liber G, 369; G, 382; G, 384; G, 386; G, 389; G, 391; G, 393; and G, 421; for the Marble House, see; Irwin, 218; and Edward C. Delvan, Jr., “The Marble House,” *Proceedings of the Staten Island Association of Arts and Sciences* 2:1 (October 1907–January 1908), 23–33; see ch. 2 for Tompkins’ plans for Tompkinsville, the Turnpike, and the steamboat; for genealogy information on Gilbert L. Thompson, see <http://iment.com/maida/////familytree/henry/cliff/book/ch11politics.htm>; and <http://www.iment.com/maida/familytree/henry/bios/robertlivingston1stlord.htm>, accessed January 7, 2014).

<sup>9</sup> “Gov. Tompkins,” *Northern Whig* (Hudson, NY), November 23, 1819.

<sup>10</sup> For Tompkins’ financial troubles and the politics of his later career, see Irwin, 225–34, 243–63 and 279–301. “Gov. Tompkins.”

<sup>11</sup> Irwin, 300–1 and 305. “Notice: Daniel D. Tompkins (advertisement),” *National Advocate*, March 5, 1822, 4. Dorothy C. Barck, ed., *Letters from John Pintard to his Daughter, Eliza Noel Pintard Davidson, 1816–1833* 2 (New York: NYHS, 1940), 179.

<sup>12</sup> Recent biographies of Burr barely mention his last few months on Staten Island; see Isenberg, 404; and Lomask, 405. Earlier biographical works are little better: Henry Childs Merwin, *Aaron Burr* (Boston: Small, Maynard & Co., 1899), 144; and James Parton, *The Life and Times of Aaron Burr* 2 (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1882), 327–8. Ira K. Morris is the one biographer who provides any greater detail on Burr’s time on Staten Island in “Last Days of Aaron Burr Described,” *State Service: an Illustrated Monthly Magazine Devoted to the Government of the State of New York And Its Affairs* 3:10 (October 1919) (Albany: State Service Magazine Co., 1917), 29–34. There were also a few contemporary newspaper pieces around the time of Burr’s death that mention his time on Staten Island, e.g., “From the Times: Col. Burr,” *New York Commercial Advertiser*, September 26, 1836, 1; for corrections to some of the detail errors in various published accounts of Burr’s time on Staten Island, see Martha S. Kakuk and Ray Swick, *Aunt Abby and Aaron Burr’s Last Days: Staten Island, the Summer of 1836, and the Death of America’s Most Notorious Man* (Charleston: The Printing Press, Ltd, 2013).

<sup>13</sup> Parton, 328, Richard Conner Papers, SIM; The Connors had been Loyalists during the Revolution and then Federalists, and as such rivals of Burr, but the Connors had also appealed to Captain Martling, a leading Burrite to get Richard Conner, Jr. out of military service; see Papas, 107; and Richard Conner to John T. Harrison/John T. Harrison to Capt. Martling (signed Joseph Sharrot), September 4, 1820, Box 1, Folder 9, Richard Conner, Papers, SIM.

<sup>14</sup> C. B. T., “Place Aux Dames: A Lady’s Reminiscences of Aaron Burr,” *Lippincott’s Magazine of Popular Literature and Science* 3 (May 1882), 520. Other first-hand recollections of Burr’s life on Staten Island include: “Memories Of Aaron Burr,” *NYT*, May 31, 1878, 5; and Rev. P. J. Van Pelt, “Last Moments Of Colonel Aaron Burr,” *Boston Recorder*, January 17, 1856. Recollections of Burr’s time on Staten Island often conflict, some reporting him as active and sharp, others as a pitiful invalid. These must be read with the agenda of the author regarding Burr’s legacy, though both may be true, as his condition may have changed during his three months on the Island. Those who reported a more active and aware Burr acknowledged his stroke and limited mobility.

<sup>15</sup> For Van Buren and the Democrats’ more “modern” mobilization of republican ideas in support of the Party as opposed to the older anti-party rhetoric of the Whigs, see Major Wilson, “Republicanism and the Idea of Party in the Jacksonian Period,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 8:4 (Winter, 1988), 419–42; for other, relatively recent, scholarship exploring the importance of Van Buren in transforming political organization in his acceptance of the political party, see Donald Cole, *Martin Van Buren and the American Political System* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984); for a more traditional political history of New York from the political discipline of Van Buren’s Albany Regency through the formation of the Jacksonian Democratic and Whig parties, see Alexander 1, 282–405.

<sup>16</sup> For a traditional political history of New York explaining the foundations of and ultimate breakdown of the second party system, see Alexander 2, 1–204; for the creation of the Republican Party in New York, see Alexander 2, 205–42; for a national and more recent analysis through the end of the Frémont campaign, see William E. Gienapp, *The Origins of the Republican Party, 1852–1856* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987); for the American Party and Nativism, see David Harry Bennett, *The Party of Fear from Nativist Movements to the New Right in American History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 105–34; see also Tyler Anbinder, *Nativism and Slavery: The Northern Know Nothings and the Politics of the 1850's* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

<sup>17</sup> Denton, 227–36.

<sup>18</sup> Gienapp, 368. Denton, 258.

<sup>19</sup> Anbinder, 275; for Brooks' politics, see Erastus Brooks, *Speech of Hon. Erastus Brooks at Hartford, Conn., July 8, 1856 Mr. Fillmore's claims on northern men and union men, for the presidency....* (New York: J. & E. Brooks, 1856); and Erastus Brooks, John Hughes, and W. S. Tisdale, *The Controversy Between Senator Brooks...the NY State Senate, March 6, 1855* (New York: DeWitt and Davenport, 1855); for more on Brooks, including his time on Staten Island, see, "A Veteran Editor Gone: Erastus Brooks Dead at his Staten Island Home," *NYT*, November 26, 1886; and Anna Ella Carroll, "Biographical Sketch of Erastus Brooks," *Star of the West* (Boston: James French & Co., 1856), 161–68. U.S. Census of 1860 records confirms Brooks' Staten Island residence by that date.

<sup>20</sup> Chaffin 483–6; and Denton, 351–67.

<sup>21</sup> Denton 361–73.

<sup>22</sup> "Lafayette's First Landing," *National Advocate*, August 18, 1824, 1; "City Items: Arrival of Garibaldi at Staten Island," *NYTr*, July 31, 1850, 1. "Home Department," *New York Commercial Advertiser*, July 31, 1850. "Kossuth," *NYT*, December 6, 1851, 1.

<sup>23</sup> "Home Department," *New York Commercial Advertiser*, July 31, 1850, 2. "Kossuth," *NYT*, December 6, 1851. "Home Department," *New York Commercial Advertiser*, August 3, 1850. "Correspondence of the Telegraph," *Gloucester Telegraph*, August 7, 1850. "Santa Anna," *NYH*, May 13, 1866, 3. "Our Distinguished Strangers," *The Evening Telegraph* (Philadelphia), May 15, 1866.

<sup>24</sup> "Kossuth," *NYT*, December 6, 1851. "Home Department," *New York Commercial Advertiser*, July 31, 1850, 2; e.g., newspapers beyond New York highlighting Staten Island's role as arrival gateway to New York for a wider readership, see, "Telegraphic Dispatches: Incidents of Kossuth's Arrival," *Boston Daily Atlas*, December 6, 1851; "Reception of Kossuth," *The Georgia Telegraph* (Macon, GA), December 16, 1851; "Kossuth in America," *The Leader* (UK) 2:91, December 20, 1851, 1202; and "Garibaldi and Paéz," *Boston Evening Transcript*, August 1, 1850.

<sup>25</sup> Lucy Riall, *Garibaldi: Invention of a Hero* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 113. Most of Garibaldi's biographers pay little attention to his time on Staten Island; see, e.g., Alfonso Scirocco, *Garibaldi: Citizen of the World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 191–4; and Ron Field and Peter Dennis, *Garibaldi: Leadership, Strategy,*

*Conflict* (Oxford: Osprey Publisher 2011), 21. Jasper Ridley is a little more generous; see Jasper Ridley, *Garibaldi* (London: Constable & Co., 1974), 358 and 361–5; for perhaps the most extensive account of Garibaldi's time on Staten Island, see Henry Tyrrell, "Garibaldi in New York," *The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine* 74 (May–October 1907), 174–84. For Santa Anna, see Will Fowler, *Santa Anna of Mexico* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 326–33; Wilfrid Hardy Callcott, *Santa Anna; The Story Of An Enigma Who Once Was Mexico* (Hamden: Archon Books, 1964), 336–45; and Oakah L. Jones, *Santa Anna* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1968), 140–7; see also Santa Anna's autobiography: Ann Fears Crawford (ed.), *The Eagle: The Autobiography of Santa Anna* (Austin: Pemberton Press, 1967), 185–98.

<sup>26</sup> Riall, 107 and 110. Naphegyi's "Remarks on the Military Hospitals at Vera Cruz, and the diseases admitted in 1853–4, esp. Yellow Fever and Vomito," *New York Journal of Medicine* (May, 1855), places Naphegyi in Mexico in the 1850s.

<sup>27</sup> For Meucci, see Sandra Meucci, *Antonio and the Electric Scream: The Man Who Invented the Telephone* (Boston: Branden Books, 2010), esp. ch. 7; Frances Winwar, *The Monument in Staten Island: Meucci, Garibaldi and the Telephone* (Chicago: E. Clemente and Sons, 1957); and Giovanni Ermenegildo Schiavo, *Antonio Meucci, Inventor of the Telephone* (New York: Vigo Press, 1958); for Italians and opera people on Staten Island, see Max Maretzek, *Sharps and Flats: A Sequel to 'Crotchets and Quavers'* 1 (New York: American Musician Publishing Co., 1890), esp. 10 and 23; "Lorenzo Salvi," *NYTr*, March 15, 1879; George Alfred Townsend, *The Life and Battles of Garibaldi and His March on Rome in 1867* (New York: American News Company, 1867), 5–6; Gay Talese, *Unto the Sons* (New York: Knopf, 1992), 143; and Giovanni Schiavo, "Four Centuries of Italian American History," *Center for Migration Studies Special Issues* 16:4 (July 2000), Wiley Online Library, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/cms3.2000.16.issue-4/issuetoc>, accessed March 13, 2014, 304 and 311; for more on Maretzek and his company in New York, see also, "Max Maretzek is Dead," *NYT*, May 15, 1897; and "The Italian Opera War," *NYH*, April 15, 1860, 4.

<sup>28</sup> Riall, 110. "Garibaldi in the United States," *NYH*, December 4, 1860, 2. "Anecdotes of Garibaldi in New York," *New Hampshire Statesman* (Concord, NH), August 18, 1860, 1. "Garibaldi and the Italian Committee," *NYTr*, August 8, 1850, 4.

<sup>29</sup> See, e.g., for newspapers reporting on Santa Anna on Staten Island, see, "Santa Anna," *New York Commercial Advertiser*, October 3, 1866; "By Telegraph: Santa Anna and the Fenians," *Providence Evening Press*, September 29, 1866; "Miscellaneous," *NYH*, September 29, 1866; and "The Mexican Republic," *NYH*, September 3, 1866; for Santa Anna's narrative of betrayal by his New York hosts, see Santa Anna and Crawford (ed.), 189–98; his biographers generally support Santa Anna's narrative of betrayal by his New York hosts, at least at Elizabeth; see Callcott, 339–44; and Jones, 142–5; the betrayal narrative seems to require an overly naïve Santa Anna. It is at least possible that his portrayal of what happened was an attempt to distance him from a series of failed intrigues, many of which may have been fraudulent.

<sup>30</sup> For Naphegyi's strange career, see Naphegyi's "Remarks on the Military Hospitals at Vera Cruz," Gabor Naphegyi, *Hungary: from Her Rise to the Present Time: Under the*

*Guidance of Lewis Kossuth, in the Years 1848 and 1849, Together with the Original Portraits of Hungary's Valiant Chiefs and Leaders in the Last Revolution* (New York: Putnam, 1849), through which he established his credentials in the Hungarian revolution; "A Heavy Forgery-Naphegyi Again in Trouble," *NTr*, April 30, 1868; and "Late Eastern Intelligence," *Daily Alta California*, May 21, 1868; for the Tribune's denial of affiliation with Naphegyi, see, "Dr. Gabor Naphegyi," *NYTr*, August 25, 1850, 4; for Santa Anna's accusations of Naphegyi, see Santa Anna and Crawford (ed.), 189–98; for Santa Anna's failed return to Mexico and Naphegyi's efforts to protect him, see, "Mexico," *NYTr*, July 15, 1867; and "Correspondence Relative to Recent Events in Mexico," *Executive Documents of the Senate of the United States for the 1st sess.*, 40th Congress, 1867, No. 20, 106–11 and 121–31; "Obtaining Money Under Alleged False Pretenses the Host of General Santa Anna in Trouble the General Reported," *NYH*, February 28, 1867, 8; and "The Case of Dr. Naphegyi. The Santa Anna Alleged Forgery Case-the Defendant Honorably Discharged," *NYH*, May 5, 1868; George Washington Walling and Lawrence Portnoy, *Recollections of a New York Chief of Police*, (New York: Caxton Book Concern, 1887), 335–7.

<sup>31</sup> "The Ladies of New Brighton," *Providence Evening Press*, September 6, 1866, 3. "The Fenian Brotherhood- Pic-nic on Staten Island," *Irish American Weekly*, October 20, 1866. "The Fenians Picnic on Staten Island," *NYH*, October 9, 1866. "Santa Anna and the Fenians - Fenian Pic-Nic at Pavillion Hill, Staten Island," *NYTr*, October 9, 1866, 8.

<sup>32</sup> "The Mexican Republic," *NYH*, October 3, 1866; for the *Chicago Tribune* correspondent's visit, see the reprint: "Santa Anna," *New York Commercial Advertiser*, October 3, 1866. "General Santa Anna: A Curious Statement Concerning His Disappearance," *NYT*, June 19, 1867, 5; see also, "The Mexican Ex-Dictator's Schemes of Conquest from New York," *NYH*, August 4, 1881, 8.

<sup>33</sup> Chewing gum already existed for about ten years prior, but its base was usually paraffin or some other less well-suited substance. Chicle-based gum really made the product a success. Jennifer P. Mathews and Gillian P. Schultz, *Chicle: The Chewing Gum of the Americas, from the Ancient Maya to William Wrigley* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2009), 39–42. "'Snapping & Stretching': A Firsthand Account of Gum in its Infancy," *American Notes And Queries: A Journal for the Curious* 5 (1945), 35–9. "Juice of the Sapota Tree: A Rubber-like Substance that is made into Chewing-gum," *NYT*, March 24, 1884, 8.

<sup>34</sup> For Gay, see Ebenezer Gay (brother) to Sydney Howard Gay, March 8, 1847, Box 17, Sydney Howard Gay Papers (SHGP), Columbia University; Elizabeth Neall Gay to SHG, August 9, 1847 SHGP; and "Veteran Journalist Dead," *NYT*, June 27, 1888, 8. Appleton and his brothers inherited the firm from their father, Daniel Appleton, the founder; for J. A. Appleton's history with the family and the firm, see Gerard R. Wolfe, *House of Appleton* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1981), 18–20, 53, 184–6; see also, "Obituary – John A. Appleton," *NYT*, July 14, 1881; "John Adams Appleton," *Publisher's Weekly* 20 (July–December 1881), 88; and "John A. Appleton," Laura C. Holloway, *Famous American Fortunes and the Men Who Have Made Them* (Philadelphia: Garretson & Co., 1885), 429–32; for the importance of George William Curtis in New York society and intellectual culture, see, Bender, 164–8 and 177–95; for Curtis' life and career, see



Edward Cary, *George William Curtis* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1899); and Parke Godwin, *George William Curtis: A Commemorative Address Delivered Before the Century Association, December 17, 1892* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1893); William Winter, *George William Curtis: A Eulogy...* (New York: Macmillan, 1893); and "A Happy Howadji: An Afternoon on Staten Island with George William Curtis," *New York World*, June 7, 1891, 8; for Allen, see Richard Lamb Allen and S. O. Allen (ed.), *Last letters of Richard L. Allen* (New York: Dodd & Mead, 1871), 3–15; for Locke's career, see; Edgar Allan Poe, "Richard Adams Locke," *Godey's Magazine and Lady's Book* 33 (October 1846), 159–62; Frank Michael O'Brien, *The Story of the Sun, New York: 1833–1928* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1928), 64–102; for evidence of Locke's Staten Island residence, see, "New York, Land Records, 1630–1975," Richmond County Liber 7, 220; U. S. Census of 1840 and 1850, Enumerator Sheets, <https://archive.org>; and the N.Y. State Census of 1855, accessed 13 May 2014, <https://familysearch.org/search/image/index#uri=https://familysearch.org/recapi/sord/collection/1937366/waypoints>; for Winter, see, "William Winter, Noted Critic Dies," *NYT*, July 1, 1917, 19; for Norvell, see, "Obituary: Caleb C. Norvell," *NYT*, February 4, 1891, 5; for Briggs' Staten Island residence, see Bette S. Weidman, "Charles Frederick Briggs (1804–1877)," in Jay Parini (ed.), *American Writers: A Collection of Literary Biographies*, Supplement 18 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2009), 3; for more on Briggs, see Bender, 161–8; Bette S. Weidman, "'Sconset-born Charles Frederick Briggs: Early New York Novelist and Editor," *Historic Nantucket* 57:3 (Summer 2008), <http://www.nha.org/history/hn/HNsummer08-briggs.html>, accessed April 12, 2014; and Bette S. Weidman, "The Pinto Letters of Charles Frederick Briggs," *Studies in the American Renaissance* (1979), 93–157. "Journalists On Staten Island," *National Aegis* (Worcester, MA), November 11, 1871.

<sup>35</sup> Henry David Thoreau and Margaret Fuller are two examples of Ralph Waldo Emerson's circle that stayed on Staten Island with William Emerson; see, e.g., Henry David Thoreau, F. B. Sanborn (ed.), *The Writings of Henry David Thoreau 6: Familiar Letters* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1906), 65–118; and Margaret Fuller to Henry David Thoreau, no. 426, in Margaret Fuller and Robert N. Hudspeth (ed.), *The Letters of Margaret Fuller* 3 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), 148; for the importance of Thomas Melville's home at Snug Harbor to the Melville family, see Hershel Parker, *Herman Melville: A Biography* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 651–72; for Thomas Melville's daily life and work at Snug Harbor see *\*I Governors Reports to Board 1867–78*, Sailor Snug Harbor Collection, Stephen B. Luce Library Archives, SUNY Maritime College; for Washington Irving's relatives on Staten Island, see J. C. Peters, "The Illness of Washington Irving," *North American Journal of Homeopathy* 8 (1860), 465; "Miscellanea," *The Critic* (London) 19 (December 31, 1859), 660; and NYC Marriage & Death Notices 1843–1856 and 1857–1868, New York Society Library Online, (<http://www.nysoclib.org/collection/nyc-marriage-death-notices-1843-1856> and <http://www.nysoclib.org/collection/nyc-marriage-death-notices-1857-1868>, accessed March 13, 2014). The latter indicates Rev. Irving served at Christ Church, New Brighton at least from 1854 through the 1860s; for Pierre Monroe, another nephew of Washington Irving, who also served as Irving's official biographer, see *Appleton's Encyclopedia* (Edited Appletons Encyclopedia, Copyright © 2001 Virtualology™).

(<http://famousamericans.net/washingtonirving/>). Appleton's Encyclopedia indicates Monroe moved to Staten Island and also served as minister at Staten Island's St. Andrews and later Ascension Parish by the 1860s, but the New York Society Library marriage and death notices suggest that Appleton's is confusing Pierre Monroe with either Rev. Pierre P. Irving or Rev. Theodore Irving. Theodore did serve as minister on Staten Island, and was likely yet another Washington Irving relative; for the James family summer sojourns on Staten Island between 1849 and 1854, see Linda Simon, *Genuine Reality: A Life of William James* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1998), 42–3.

<sup>36</sup> Ronald A. Bosco and Joel Myerson, *The Emerson Brothers: A Fraternal Biography in Letters* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 41–2. "New York, Land Records, 1630–1975," Richmond County Liber 1, 159–66.

<sup>37</sup> Ralph Waldo Emerson to Ruth Haskins Emerson, 14 March 1838, *The Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson* 2, 119. RWE to William Emerson, 7 May 1838, 130. RWE to WE, 2 September 1838, 157; RWE to WE, 3 April 1841. Not until William was chosen as county court judge for Staten Island's Richmond County in 1841, did Ralph Waldo seem to accept his brother's residence there as more permanent; see RWE to WE, 3 July 1841, 413.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid. RWE to WE, 26 September 1838, 162; RWE to WE, 8 July 1839, 205–7; RWE to WE, 3 July 1841, 413.

<sup>39</sup> For Ralph Waldo Emerson's lecture tours, see RWE to Lidian Emerson, 8 March 1840, 260; RWE to Margaret Fuller, 17 March 1840, 260–1; RWE to WE, 4 April 1840, 272–3; RWE to WE, 25 January 1843, *Letters of RWE* 3, 134–5; RWE to WE, 31 January 1843, 136; RWE to LE, 1 February 1843, 138–9; RWE to Henry David Thoreau, 9–11 February 1843, *Letters of RWE* 7, 526–7; WE to Mary Moody Emerson, 28 July 1842, as reprinted in Bosco and Myerson, 208; for Waldo using William to make contacts, send things or act on his behalf in writing and book business in Manhattan, see, e.g., RWE to WE, 24 October 1841, *Letters of RWE* 2, 460; RWE to WE, 30 July 1840, 307; RWE to WE, 8 November 1839, 233; RWE to WE, 26 September 1838, 162; RWE to WE, 2 September 1838, 157; see also, Bosco and Myerson, 345.

<sup>40</sup> For Ralph Waldo's plan for Thoreau, see RWE to WE, 12–13 March 1843, *Letters of RWE* 3, 157–9; see also Thoreau, *Familiar Letters*, 65–118. Henry David Thoreau to Sophia Thoreau, 22 May 1843, *Familiar Letters*, 86. Margaret Fuller to HDT, no. 426, *The Letters of Margaret Fuller* 3, 148.

<sup>41</sup> HDT to his Mother, 1 October 1843, *Familiar Letters*, 109. HDT to RWE, 7 August 1843, *Familiar Letters*, 101. HDT to Mother, 29 August 1843, *Familiar Letters*, 105. HDT to RWE, 14 September 1843, *Familiar Letters*, 107; for an analysis of the early marketplace in writing and publishing in America, see Michael T. Gilmore, *American Romanticism and the Marketplace* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985).

<sup>42</sup> HDT to RWE, 23 May 1843, *Familiar Letters*, 79. HDT to Mother and Friends, *Familiar Letters*, 11 May 1843, 70. HDT to Sophia Thoreau, *Familiar Letters*, 22 May 1843, 72.

<sup>43</sup> HDT to RWE, 8 June 1843, *Familiar Letters*, 82 and 83. HDT to Parents, 8 June 1843, *Familiar Letters*, 85. HDT to Sophia Thoreau, 22 May 1843, *Familiar Letters*, 71.

<sup>44</sup> HDT to RWE, 23 May 1843, *Familiar Letters*, 79. HDT to Sophia Thoreau, *Familiar Letters*, 22 May 1843, 72.

<sup>45</sup> HDT to RWE, 23 May 1843, *Familiar Letters*, 79. HDT to Sophia Thoreau, 22 May 1843, *Familiar Letters*, 73. Giles Waldo to RWE, 14 May 1843, as quoted in Martin K. Doudna, "An Emersonian in the Sandwich Islands: the Career of Giles Waldo," *Hawaiian Journal of History* 21 (Honolulu: Hawaiian Historical Society, 1987), 42–57.

<sup>46</sup> Ebenezer Gay to Sydney Howard Gay, March 8, 1847, Box 17, PSHG. "Veteran Journalist Dead." "Marriages," *National Aegis* (Worcester, MA), December 3, 1845, 3.

<sup>47</sup> George Haven Putnam, *George Palmer Putnam: A Memoir, Together with a Record of the Earlier Years of the Publishing House Founded by Him* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1903), 1–23 (early life in New England), 24–39 (early New York career), 40 and 48–51 (partnership with Wiley), 171–5 (return to New York and Staten Island), 246–68 (life on Staten Island); for Irving's visit, see Putnam (1913), 258–9; for the bookseller's son, see Putnam (1903), 249; for Bremer's visit, see Putnam (1913), 402 and 407.

<sup>48</sup> Warner wrote under the pen name Susan Wetherell. Susan Warner to Anna Warner, 15, 28, 30 September and 2 November 1850 as reprinted in Putnam (1903), 253–68; for the popularity of Warner's writing, see Frank Moore Colby and Talcott Williams, *The New International Encyclopædia* 23 (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1915), 405.

<sup>49</sup> Frederick Law Olmsted to unnamed, [late 1850], Reel 4, FLO Papers. Frederick Law Olmsted, *Walks and Talks of an American Farmer in England* (New York: G.P. Putnam, 1852), 1–2. John Hull Olmsted to John Olmsted, June 15, 1854, Reel 4, FLO Papers; for Olmsted's association with Dix & Edwards, see Elizabeth Stevenson, *Park Maker: A Life of Frederick Law Olmsted* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2000), 135–53; Roper, *FLO: A Biography* (1983), 109–23; for Olmsted's employment of Emerson as his lawyer, see FLO to JO, 9 October 1857 in Charles E. Beveridge and David Schuyler (eds.) *Creating Central Park, 1857–1861*, vol. 3, PFLO, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), 103–6.

<sup>50</sup> For a summary of John Hull Olmsted's life, see Biographical Directory in Frederick Law Olmsted and Charles Capen McLaughlin (ed.) *The Formative Years, 1822 to 1852*, vol. 1, PFLO (1977), 86–8; for John's involvement in Fred's publishing career and management of the farm in these years, see Stevenson, 135–46; for Curtis' move to Staten Island, see Cary, 118; for Vaux's home on Staten Island, see Stevenson, 144. Vaux considered buying some Staten Island land from Olmsted to build his own villa; see John Hull Olmsted to Frederick Law Olmsted, 4 May 1856, Reel 6, FLO Papers.

<sup>51</sup> "New York, Land Records, 1630–1975," Richmond County Liber 159–67. Ralph Waldo Emerson to William Emerson, 28 July 1837, *The Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson* 2, 91–2. RWE to WE, 16 December 1836, 50. RWE to WE, 2 January 1837, 53. RWE to WE, 19 June 1837, 83. RWE to WE, 19 July 1837, 88. Bosco and Myerson, ch. 6, which includes reprints of a number of additional letters between the brothers.

<sup>52</sup> Archibald McClellan Wright Thomson, *The History of the Glasgow Eye Infirmary, 1824–1962* ([Glasgow]: Smith, 1963). “The Death of Dr. S. M. Elliott,” *New York Sun*, May 1, 1875. “New York, Land Records, 1630–1975,” Richmond County Liber 6, 326. Local histories suggest Elliott was already living on Staten Island by 1836, see Charles W. Leng and William T. Davis, *Staten Island and Its People: A History, 1609–1929* 1, 253. New York directories suggest Elliott was living on Staten Island at least by 1842, and probably maintaining dual residences in Staten Island and Manhattan by 1845, which was not uncommon; see *Doggett's New York City Directory for 1842 and 1843* (New York: John Doggett, Jr., 1842), 110; and *Doggett's New York City Directory for 1845 and 1846* (New York: John Doggett, Jr., 1845), 121.

<sup>53</sup> “New York, Land Records, 1630–1975,” Richmond County Libers 9, 443; 9, 611; 10, 93; and 10, 425. Elliott continued buying and selling Staten Island property well into the 1850s; see, “New York, Land Records, 1630–1975,” Richmond County Index E. Leng and Davis 1, 253.

<sup>54</sup> Ebenezer Gay to Sidney Howard Gay, March 8, 1847, Box 17, PSHG. Elizabeth Neall Gay to SHG, 9 August 1847, Box 19, PSHG. ENG to Ann Warren Weston, 11 February 1846, Box 19, PSHG. “New York, Land Records, 1630–1975,” Richmond County Liber 21, 157.

<sup>55</sup> Putnam, *A Memoir...* (1903), 173–6. “George B. Rollins, Auctioneer, By Wilkins & Rollins” (ad), *New York Commercial Advertiser*, June 15, 1841. “An Excursion,” *NYH*, August 15, 1837.

<sup>56</sup> *Doggett's New York City Directory for 1842*, 121. Putnam, *A Memoir...* (1903), 219. Edward L. Tucker, “James Russell Lowell and Robert Carter: The ‘Pioneer’ and Fifty Letters from Lowell to Carter,” *Studies in the American Renaissance* (1987), 187–246. The offices of the American Anti-Slavery Society were at 143 Nassau St., according to: “New Works,” *The Emancipator* (New York, NY), June 20, 1839, 4:13, 51. William Emerson to Ralph Waldo Emerson, 17 February 1839, as excerpted in Bosco and Myerson, 331. Henry David Thoreau to Sophia Thoreau, 22 May 1843, *Familiar Letters*, 72.

<sup>57</sup> WE to RWE, 17 February 1839, as excerpted in Bosco and Myerson, 331. RWE to WE, 3 July 1841, *The Letters of RWE* 2, 413; for the timing of Gay’s move, see, “Marriages,” *National Aegis* (Worcester, MA), December 3, 1845, 3; and Elizabeth Neall Gay to Sidney Howard Gay, 9 August 1847, Box 19, PSHG. It is likely that Curtis lived with his in-laws, the Shaws, when he first married in 1856, before he built his own home nearby, probably with Shaw’s help; see Lorien Foote, *Seeking The One Great Remedy: Francis George Shaw and Nineteenth-Century Reform* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2003), 71 and 145.

<sup>58</sup> RWE to WE, 12–13 March 1842, as reprinted in Bosco and Myerson, 341–2. George Haven Putnam, *Memories of My Youth, 1844–1865* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1914), 21–6. Putnam (1903), 262. RWE to WE, 1 June 1839, *The Letters of RWE* 2, 201.

<sup>59</sup> James Thacher, *American Medical Biography or, Memoirs of Eminent Physicians who have Flourished in America...* 1 (Boston: Richardson & Lord [et cetera], 1828), 156–68. *Minutes of the Medical Society of the County of New York* 1 (1808), (New York: Medical Society of the County of New York, 1878), 3–4. Morris 2, 304.

<sup>60</sup> *Minutes of the Medical Society of the County of New York* 1 (1808), (New York: Medical Society of the County of New York, 1878), 197–203 and 221–7. “Literary Intelligence,” *Albany Gazette*, April 6, 1820, 2; for more on Joseph Bayley’s career, see ch. 1, fns. 61 and 62.

<sup>61</sup> John Hull Olmsted to Frederick Kingsbury, May 26, 1851, Reel 4, FLO Papers. JHO to FK, January 28, 1851, Reel 4, FLO Papers.

<sup>62</sup> For Harris, see John Duffy, *The Sanitarians: A History of American Public Health* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 105–25; for the importance of Harris’ Metropolitan Board of Health, see Charles Rosenberg, *The Cholera Years* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), Part 3: 1866; e.g., Harris’ reports as Chief Physician at Quarantine, see, “Annual Report of the Physician of the Marine Hospital,” *Documents of the Senate of the State of New York, 80th sess.*, 3:105 (Albany: C. Van Benthuyssen, 1857); and “Annual Report of the Physician of the Marine Hospital,” *Documents of the Senate of the State of New York, 79th sess.*, 3:104 (Albany: C. Van Benthuyssen, 1856); for Kinyoun, see David M. Morens and Anthony S. Fauci, “The Forgotten Forefather: Joseph James Kinyoun and the Founding of the National Institutes of Health,” *mBio* 3(4):e00139–12. doi:10.1128/mBio.00139–12. Morens seems to confuse the Quarantine and the Seamen’s Retreat hospital. The Quarantine Station itself was no longer on Staten Island after 1858, but rather offshore on Hoffman and Swinburne Islands. The NIH website, though more brief, has the correct location; see <http://history.nih.gov/exhibits/history/>, accessed February 4, 2014.

<sup>63</sup> Duffy (1992), 112; for Olmsted’s involvement with the U. S. Sanitary Commission, see Frederick Law Olmsted and Jane Turner Censer (ed.) *Defending the Union: The Civil War and the U.S. Sanitary Commission, 1861–1863*, vol. 4, PFLO, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986); for Waring, see Martin V. Melosi, *Garbage in the Cities: Refuse, Reform, and the Environment* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005), ch. 2; and Martin V. Melosi, *The Sanitary City: Environmental Services in Urban America from Colonial Times to the Present* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008), 100–2 and 120–2; for Waring’s work on Olmsted’s farm, see, e.g., Frederick Law Olmsted to John Olmsted, 9 October 1857, *Creating Central Park, 1857–1861*, vol. 3, PFLO (1983), 103–6.

<sup>64</sup> Leng and Davis 2, 571–2; for a sense of the range and geography and a little of the controversy of Hollick’s lectures, see, e.g., “Dr. Hollick’s Lectures,” *NYEP*, April 25, 1844; “Dr. Hollick’s Select Lectures for Gentlemen Only!!” *Baltimore Sun*, January 9, 1845; “Dr. Hollick’s Lectures,” *Daily National Intelligencer* (Washington, DC), January 14, 1845, 12; “Dr. Hollick,” *Pennsylvania Freeman*, February 26, 1846; “Dr. Hollick’s Case,” *Baltimore Sun*, March 25, 1846; “Acquittal of Dr. Hollick,” *Pennsylvania Freeman*, April 23, 1846; “Interesting Lectures: Dr. Hollick,” *Richmond Whig*, March 2, 1847; “Private Lectures on Marriage,” *The Boston Daily Atlas*, March 20, 1849; “Free

Admission,” *Daily Missouri Republican*, February 6, 1850; “An Interesting and Novel Scene on Board a Steamboat,” *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, February 22, 1850; “City Hall, Free Admission First Day,” *Portland Daily Advertiser* (Portland, ME), May 20, 1850; “Important and Interesting Lectures – Dr. Hollick,” *Baltimore Sun*, February 23, 1852. Frederick Hollick, *The Marriage Guide, or Natural History of Generation; a Private Instructor for Married Persons and Those About to Marry, Both Male and Female*. (New York: T.W. Strong, 1852). Frederick Hollick, *The Origin of Life: A Popular Treatise on the Philosophy and Physiology of Reproduction, in Plants and Animals, Including the Details of Human Generation, [with] a Full Description of the Male and Female Organs* (New York: Nafis & Cornish, 1845); for a list of Hollick’s publications by 1849, see, e.g., “Interesting to All,” *New Hampshire Gazette* (Portsmouth, NH), June 5, 1849; for recent scholarship on Hollick, see April Haynes, “The Trials of Frederick Hollick: Obscenity, Sex Education, and Medical Democracy in the Antebellum United States,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 12:4 (October 2003), 543–74.

<sup>65</sup> U. S. Census of 1850, Enumerator Sheet, Town of Castleton, County of Richmond, New York, [http://archive.org/details/us\\_census](http://archive.org/details/us_census); “Professional Notices,” *NYTr*, June 4, 1862; Richmond County Land Records, Liber 20, 658. *Trow’s New York City Directory* (1857), 392. *Atlas of Staten Island, Richmond County, New York* (New York: J.B. Beers & Co., 1874). Leng and Davis 2, 571–2. Dr. F. Hollick, “The Old Quarantine: Its Destruction and the Causes that Led to It,” *Proceedings of the Natural Science Association of Staten Island*, Special No. 16, October 1893. “New Publications,” *NYEP*, April 13, 1860.

<sup>66</sup> Howard Doughty, *Francis Parkman* (New York: Macmillan, 1962 (Harvard University Press paperback reprint edition)), 142–3. “The Eye,” *New York Commercial Advertiser*, March 23, 1837. “Obituary: The Death of Dr. S. M. Elliott,” *New York Sun*, May 1, 1875. Leng and Davis 1, 253–4.

<sup>67</sup> Elliott’s obituaries name many of his famous clients; see, e.g., “Obituary – Gen. Samuel M. Elliott M.D.,” *NYTr*, May 1, 1875; “Obituary – Dr. Samuel Mackenzie Elliott,” *NYEP*, May 1, 1875; and “Obituary: The Death of Dr. S. M. Elliott,” *New York Sun*, May 1, 1875. Edward Livingston Youmans, *Chemical Atlas or, The Chemistry of Familiar Objects* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1856), front matter; for more on Youmans, see John Fiske, *Edward Livingston Youmans, Interpreter of Science for the People: A Sketch of His Life...* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1894).

<sup>68</sup> James Russell Lowell to Robert Carter, 15 January 1843 as reprinted in Tucker, 201. Francis Parkman to Mother, 14 July 1845, in Francis Parkman and Wilbur Jacobs (ed.), *Letters of Francis Parkman* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960), 27–8. FP to Charles Elliott Norton, 6 December 1848, in *Letters of Francis Parkman*, 57. FP to George E Ellis [1864] (an autobiographical letter), in *Letters of Francis Parkman*, 175–184. FP to Father, 26 September 1846, in *Letters of Francis Parkman*, 47–9. Foote, 60–1. Joan Waugh, *Unsentimental Reformer: The Life of Josephine Shaw Lowell* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 15. Charles Haight Farnham, a biographer of Francis Parkman included a two page verbatim interview with Elliott’s son of the younger Elliott’s recollections of his father’s home and patients, reprinted in: Charles Haight

Farnham, *A Life of Francis Parkman* (Boston: Little Brown & Co., 1905), 25–6; for more on Parkman, see Doughty (1962); and Wilbur R. Jacobs, *Francis Parkman, Historian as Hero: The Formative Years* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1991), though Jacobs barely mentions Elliott.

<sup>69</sup> Recollections of Elliott's son in Farnham, 25–6. "Obituary: The Death of Dr. S. M. Elliott." C.G. Hine and William T. Davis, *Legends, Stories, and Folklore of Old Staten Island. Part I.* ([New York]: SIHS, 1925) contains a number of first-hand reminiscences by residents and kin – for the residence of the Lowells with the Elliots, see p. 43. Fiske, 43–6.

<sup>70</sup> Francis Parkman to George E Ellis [1864] in *Letters of Francis Parkman*, 175–84.

<sup>71</sup> William Lloyd Garrison to Helen E. Garrison, 5 September 1853, no. 63, in William L. Garrison and Walter McIntosh Merrill, Louis Ruchames (eds.), *From Disunionism to the Brink of War: 1850 – 1860, The Letters of William Lloyd Garrison 4* (Cambridge, Belknap, 1975), 248. WLJ to Oliver Johnson, 1 May 1858, no. 215, *The Letters of WLJ 4*, 523. WLJ to Helen E Garrison, 21 February 1857, no. 163, *The Letters of WLJ 4*, 436. Mary Otis (Gay) Wilcox, "The Gays," in Hine and Davis, 63–9. Mary Otis (Gay) Wilcox was the Daughter of Sydney Howard Gay. Richard Abbott, *Cotton and Capital: Boston Businessmen and Antislavery Reform, 1854–1868* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1991), 20. WLJ to Wendell Phillips Garrison, 20 August 1858, no. 229, *The Letters of WLJ 4*, 547. The Gays also helped connect black Staten Islanders into a network to transport and hide escaped slaves, see Debbie Ann Paige, *Louis Napoleon House Site Application, National Park Service – Underground Rail Road Network to Freedom Program*, [https://www.academia.edu/3088830/NPS\\_UGRR\\_Louis\\_Napoleon\\_House\\_Site\\_Application](https://www.academia.edu/3088830/NPS_UGRR_Louis_Napoleon_House_Site_Application), accessed February 5, 2014. Louis Napoleon, a fellow Staten Islander, was a black man working with Sydney Howard Gay, helping escaped slaves.

<sup>72</sup> Foote, 40–52. Sterling F. Delano, *Brook Farm: The Dark Side of Utopia* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004), 72. Lindsay Swift, *Brook Farm; Its Members, Scholars, and Visitors* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1900), 82–3 (Barlow), 85–94 (Curtis), 257–9 (Cranch), and 256 (marriages to Shaw daughters). Richard Welch, *The Boy General: The Life and Careers of Francis Channing Barlow* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 2005), 210–214. Christopher Pearse Cranch, *The Life And Letters of Christopher Pearse Cranch* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin company, 1917), 269. Cranch's sister married Erastus Brooks, co-editor of the *New York Express* in 1840. According to local historians, Brooks and his wife moved to Staten Island in 1863 (Leng and Davis 4, 392), but the U.S. Census of 1860 puts Brooks on Staten Island earlier.

<sup>73</sup> For the life of Robert Gould Shaw, see Russell Duncan: *Where Death And Glory Meet: Colonel Robert Gould Shaw and the 54th Massachusetts Infantry* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1999); Peter Burchard, *Glory: One Gallant Rush* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965); and for his own letters, mostly from the wartime: Robert Gould Shaw and Russell Duncan (ed.), *Blue-Eyed Child of Fortune: the Civil War Letters of Colonel Robert Gould Shaw* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1992). Josephine Shaw Lowell stayed on Staten Island with her daughter until at least 1875, when she moved

into Manhattan; “Annual Reports of the New York Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor,” Nos. 1–10 (1845–1853), in David J. Rothman (advisory ed.), *Poverty, U.S.A.: The Historical Record* (New York: Arno Press & The New York Times, 1971), 4; for more on the life of Josephine Shaw Lowell, see Waugh (1997); for her place in New York intellectual life, see Bender, 203–5; for the Barlows, Welch (2005).

<sup>74</sup> For a brief biography of Brace as he related to Olmsted’s life, see Biographical Directory in *The Formative Years, 1822 to 1852*, vol. 1, PFLO (1977), 67–70. Charles Loring Brace to Frederick Kingsbury, September 30, 1848 in Emma Brace Donaldson and Charles Loring Brace, *The Life of Charles Loring Brace, Chiefly Told in His Own Letters, Edited by His Daughter*, (London: Sampson Low & Co., 1894), 59; for Brace and Olmsted in New York intellectual life, see Bender, 195–203.

<sup>75</sup> Charles Loring Brace to Frederick Kingsbury, 25 June 1849 in Donaldson and Brace, 68.

<sup>76</sup> “Walks Among the New York Poor: Street-Boys,” *New York Daily Times*, May 30, 1853, 2; for history of the Children’s Aid Society and its “Emigration Plan,” see Stephen O’Connor, *Orphan Trains: The Story of Charles Loring Brace and The Children He Saved and Failed* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001). Children’s Aid Society *Annual reports of the Children’s Aid Society, February 1854–February 1863* (New York: Arno Press & The New York Times, 1973), 45 (1855) and 31 (1856).

<sup>77</sup> Children’s Aid Society, *Twenty Second Annual Report of the Children’s Aid Society*, (New York: Wyncoop & Hallenbeck, 1874), 35–6 and 41. The Children’s Aid Society: History of Firsts, <http://www.childrensaidsociety.org/about/history/history-firsts>, accessed August 10, 2014. Children’s Aid Society: Goodhue Center, <http://www.childrensaidsociety.org/goodhue-center>, accessed August 10, 2014.

<sup>78</sup> Compare Frederick Law Olmsted to John Hull Olmsted, 26 February 1847, *The Formative Years, 1822 to 1852*, vol. 1, PFLO (1977), 286 to FLO to Frederick Kingsbury, 10 May 1848, Reel 47, FLO Papers and FLO to JHO, 29 February 1850, Reel 4, FLO Papers.

<sup>79</sup> Roper, 83–5. Brace connected Olmsted with Raymond; see Frederick Law Olmsted and Charles E. Beveridge and Charles Capen McLaughlin (eds.), *Slavery and the South, 1852–57*, vol. 2, PFLO (1981), 9; for Olmsted’s association with Dix & Edwards and John’s participation in Fred’s writing career, see Stevenson, 135–53; and Roper, 109–23.

<sup>80</sup> Frederick Law Olmsted to Charles Loring Brace, 22 March 1847, *The Formative Years, 1822 to 1852*, vol. 1, PFLO (1977), 291. FLO to John Olmsted, November 7, 1849, Reel 4, FLO Papers. CLB to Theodore Parker, 18 October 1853, in Donaldson and Brace, 182; for discussion of Olmsted’s views on slavery, see Roper, chs. 8 and 9.

<sup>81</sup> Weidman (2009), 3. Putnam, *A Memoir* (1903), 342. Though Olmsted had taken a room for a time in Manhattan while working at Dix & Edwards, Manhattan became a more permanent home when he “moved to town” in 1857 to work on Central Park. Frederick Law Olmsted to John Hull Olmsted, 11 September 1857, in *Creating Central Park, 1857–1861*, vol. 3, PFLO (1983), 79.



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<sup>82</sup> Henry David Thoreau to Ralph Waldo Emerson, 23 May 1843, *Familiar Letters*, 79. HDT to Sophia Thoreau, 22 May 1843, *Familiar Letters*, 73; for Mercantile Agency history and cultural importance, see Scott Sandage, *Born Losers* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), ch. 4.

<sup>83</sup> John Hull Olmsted to Bertha, 6 May 1855, Reel 5, FLO Papers. Frederick Clifton Pierce, *Field Genealogy: Record of All the Field Family in America* 1 (Chicago: Hammond Press, 1901), 593. William Cullen Bryant to Ferdinand E. Field, 31 May 1848, no. 643, William Cullen Bryant and Thomas G. Voss (ed.), *The Letters of William Cullen Bryant* 2 (New York: Fordham University Press, 1975), 527-8. WCB to FEF, 19 December 1853, no. 855, *The Letters of WCB* 3, 325-7. "Country Seat on Staten Island," *The Country Gentleman* 3, March 2, 1854, 9.

<sup>84</sup> Champion Bissell (lyricist); Thomas Baker (composer arranger), "The Staten Island Gentleman," (sheet music) (New York: Firth, Pond & Co., 1859), Johns Hopkins University, Levy Sheet Music Collection, Box 048, Item 117, <http://jhir.library.jhu.edu/handle/1774.2/30824>, accessed February 5, 2014. HDT to RWE, 23 May 1843, 78. Putnam (1903), 354-5. Mary Allyne Otis Gay to Sidney Howard Gay, 12 December 1847, Box 22, SHGP.

<sup>85</sup> H. W. Bellows to George William Curtis, 9 February 1864, George William Curtis Collection, SIM, Box 2, Folder 14, 25.gwC. William Cullen Bryant to Elisha S. Fish, 22 April 1850, no. 723, *The Letters of WCB* 3, 129. Putnam, *A Memoir* (1903), 354.

## Conclusion

On the night of September 1, 1858, a group of Staten Islanders, led by many of the Island's prominent citizens forced their way into the state's Quarantine Station and burned it to the ground. It was not an attempt to excise metropolitan New York from Staten Island, but rather a result of the changing nature of the Island's relationship with that other island across the harbor. No Island is an island. Places exist in relationship with each other within the contingencies of human social, cultural and political history. While a great flood at the end of the last ice age created a specific physical arrangement of water around Staten and Manhattan Islands, there was nothing determining that one island would become a center of the universe and the other marginalized.<sup>1</sup>

Today, we often think of bodies of water as defining boundaries, enforcing separation. For much of the history of the world, however, water connected people and places, and provided the fastest, easiest, and cheapest mode of communication across distances. In New York's maritime era of the early nineteenth century, the city depended on water for its wealth, its communication with the outside world and its very identity. Staten Island was, well, an island, which gave it a certain visibility and accessibility in that maritime world.

The built environment and landscape formation are locations of politics and lived experience as well as cognitive markers, creating place identities. Through this dissertation, it is explored how and why, in the first half of the nineteenth century, New Yorkers and newcomers to the city attached metropolitan meaning to Staten Island, and re-constructed maritime New York from a little city at the tip of Manhattan into a regional place organized around the harbor. As they projected urban fears and desires for

defense, social order, healthfulness, speculative wealth generation and remove from the commercial cacophony and constant spotlight of city life they made Staten Island metropolitan.

Two ropes lashed together Staten Island and Manhattan, binding the new metropolitan region across the harbor. The city's maritime institutions made up the strands of the first. As we have seen, Staten Island's forts, Quarantine and Customs Stations entwined together to regulate and control the port formed a gateway to New York Harbor, bounding the new regional geography at Staten Island. The Island's asylums added new and different strands. For decades the physical presence on Staten Island of New York's maritime institutions, their role in the lives of the city's seafaring community and its travellers and the politics, power and wealth projected through them held fast a metropolitan region that included Staten Island.

The second rope entwined real estate speculations, landscape ideals, and the personal and professional networks of influential people that settled or sojourned on Staten Island, lashing the Island to both Manhattan, and because of its metropolitan ties, places beyond the region as well. As we have seen, developers and speculators in land both in Manhattan and the American west imagined and reshaped Staten Island into the frontier of the metropolitan real estate market, transforming the meaning and value of the Island's land. As Staten Island became accessible and legible to elite Manhattanites and newcomers to the city, urban elites constructed new metropolitan neighborhoods for themselves on the Island, but in a non-urban form. They built the new Staten Island landscape through agriculture, horticulture, and "rural" architecture, but it was not rural. It was a metropolitan countryside, created using urban capital to serve the practical lives,

cultural needs and desires of urbanites. Through the built environment and the cognitive geography of the metropolis they constructed, many New Yorkers chose to live their lives between Manhattan and Staten Island. Their personal and professional relationships further tied Staten Island into the consciousness of elite New Yorkers, New Englanders and visitors to the city, establishing New York as a regional place.

Regions, however, contain complicated relationships of scale and hierarchy. As New Yorkers and newcomers fashioned a regional metropolis through the Island's new landscape form and the patterns of their lives, they also made Staten Island distinct from urban Manhattan. In fact, as we have seen, both ropes binding together the metropolitan region were defined by the tension between urban accessibility and separation from the city itself. This gave the Island value in the new regional geography, but it also threatened the Island's identity as an independent place in control of its own future. The new region was, after all, the New York region, not the Staten Island region. Could Staten Island indeed survive as a separate place? That depended on how the people in the new region identified themselves.<sup>2</sup>

The people who helped construct the early New York region were, because of their efforts on Staten Island and other places in the emerging metropolitan geography, people confronted with multiple identifications with place. When a family moved from Manhattan to Staten Island were they still New Yorkers? When a New Englander came to New York to seek his fortune but settled on Staten Island, was he a Staten Islander? What about residents who maintained homes both in Manhattan and on the Island? What about those who came repeatedly, but for the season? What about the long-term inmates at the Sailors' Snug Harbor or the Seamen's Retreat? According to one Manhattan

publication, farmers from the more isolated interior of the Island many of these would have been considered simply “Farners from York.”<sup>3</sup>

A region, like any place, because it is constructed through the intertwining of the cognitive as well as the physical, is dynamic. Staten Island’s inclusion in the metropolitan region that it helped create was not necessarily permanent, nor was the manner in which it was constructed. By the mid-1840s, amidst the turbulence of the changing city and Island, the two ropes that lashed the region together across the harbor became unstable. The balance of connection and obscurity, accessibility and separation that stabilized each seemed to be upsetting the balance of the other. New York’s maritime institutions, like the Quarantine Station, depended on Staten Island’s “peculiarly easy access from sea,” its location in the “safe and commodious” harbor, its accessibility “in all seasons and weathers” yet at the same time needed to be isolated from the city to protect the public health, or in the case of the asylums, for moral and social order. Yet the frequency of steamboats and their multiple landings, so important to the rope of metropolitan residence had made it very easy to get back and forth between Staten Island and Manhattan, so easy, in fact, that the Island was no longer isolated enough to serve as an effective place, especially for a quarantine. Inmates at asylums like Snug Harbor easily left the Island undetected for a spree in the city without approval as well. Conversely, Quarantine undermined metropolitan real estate value and residential desirability by threatening the Island’s separation from the city in different ways: The presence at the station of large numbers of immigrants and diseased bodies brought urban ills, both social and physical, onto the Island.<sup>4</sup>

Through the battle over the removal of Quarantine from the Island, Staten Islanders prioritized the metropolitan relationship built on healthful and desirable residence over the one built on maritime institutional geography, while the latter was unique to Staten Island and the former was proliferating around the expanding region. As the state transformed the Quarantine, the most important strand in the institutional maritime rope, into an immigrant facility, Staten Islanders began to see it as a direct threat to their metropolitan future. The yellow fever outbreak of 1848 convinced them that the station had shifted from being an asset in the Island's relationship with the metropolis to a dangerous liability. The very people who built the New York region that spanned the harbor between Manhattan and Staten Island were the same people now demanding Quarantine's removal. They were lawyers like William Emerson; estate owners like William H. Aspinwall and Edward Cunard; agricultural improvers like Alfred Field; real estate men like Thomas E. Davis and Daniel Low; and doctors like oculist Samuel MacKenzie Elliott, and the former Health Officer himself, John S. Westervelt.<sup>5</sup>

The state's 1848 Select Committee charged with exploring the "removal of the Quarantine establishment" confirmed Staten Island as part of the new New York region, clearly terms of the second rope of real estate and healthful, desirable residence. When the Quarantine was built, they wrote, "there were but few inhabitants" living on "nothing but farms." Now, "the rapid increase of the neighboring city, and the increased demands of her commerce has driven hundreds of her citizens to Staten Island...and the numerous villages which now dot the shores of the East and North Rivers, and Staten Island, have sprung up as if by magic; where our merchants, mechanics and others whose business is

in the city seek rest and refreshment after the toils of the day are over, in the more salubrious air of the country.”<sup>6</sup>

Through the battle to remove the Quarantine Station from the Island, Staten Islanders fought for their metropolitan future, yet in doing so they revealed nature of their regional identity. In 1848, the politics behind removing Quarantine from Staten Island highlighted metropolitan unity, as the select committee positioned the idea as a natural and necessary result of the new regional metropolis. With support from men with interests on both Staten Island and Manhattan, the state committed to move the station. By the mid-1850s, however, as power dynamics shifted and the state failed to find a suitable alternative, Islanders battled the state’s Quarantine alone, through their local board of health. They did so in increasingly confrontational ways, culminating in construction of a barricade manned by sentries, briefly cutting the station off from Island. In doing so, they highlighted their identity as Staten Islanders over their regional identity as metropolitan New Yorkers, placing themselves outside the complex power networks of the larger scale metropolis and state to the smaller, but more clearly unified and controllable scale of local authority. When the state moved to build a new quarantine station on the southwestern shore of the Island, away from the harborfront, the more rural community of farmers and oystermen immediately and decisively attacked the new site, burning all the buildings. In 1858, the metropolitan men at the other end of the Island followed suit, destroying the Quarantine Station at the Narrows through arson fires over two nights in a well-planned attack.<sup>7</sup>

Staten Islanders have struggled with the tension between local identity and regional identity ever since. In the wake of the Quarantine arson, the governor declared

Staten Island in a state of insurrection, ordering hundreds of troops from Manhattan to occupy the Island, enacting the metropolitan hierarchy and articulating Staten Island's weakness and peripheral status. Meanwhile, the Island's metropolitan leaders, including lawyer William Emerson, social reformer Francis Shaw and real estate speculator Daniel Low, worked hard to rehabilitate the Island's reputation as a place of and for respectable citizens of the metropolis. William Cullen Bryant published the pamphlet articulating their "legal and moral" arguments. As the powerful editor and columnist for *Harper's* magazine, a Staten Islander himself, George William Curtis bucked other Manhattan editors and publishers who were calling his neighbors rebellious "sepoys." Curtis defended his Island brethren as patriots exercising their republican rights.<sup>8</sup>

Through the remainder of the century, elite Staten Islanders struggled to maintain Staten Island's place within the dynamic geography of the growing and changing metropolitan region. But as New York turned inland towards a national continental empire, the older geography of maritime New York, organized around the harbor frayed, and Staten Island receded from view. New infrastructure of iron and stone, including railroads and the construction of Central Park helped tip the balance of metropolitan frontier growth northward and inland, away from the harbor and away from Staten Island. In 1871, Staten Islanders created an "Improvement Commission" and hired landscape designer Frederick Law Olmsted, health expert Elisha Harris and architect Henry H. Richardson to develop a plan that would return metropolitan attention and investment to the Island, but the maritime construct of the New York region as a place organized around the harbor had already given way to the newer metropolis of a continental empire.<sup>9</sup>



When residents of the metropolitan region in and around Manhattan considered joining together more formally in the 1890s, many in the city itself questioned the inclusion of Staten Island at all. Meanwhile, many Staten Islanders were desperate to secure their place in the very region their Island had helped create. When the votes were counted in the referendum of 1894 anticipating the consolidation of 1898, Staten Islanders proved by far the most enthusiastic, voting 5–1 to join the formal regional New York City. A hundred years later, Staten Islanders made a serious attempt to secede from New York City in the context of post-World War Two suburbanization and urban crisis, again focusing for us the complexities and contingencies of social, cultural, economic and political relationships that construct metropolitan regional geography.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For a history of the cultural and intellectual meaning of islands, see John R. Gillis, *Islands of the Mind: How the Human Imagination Created the Atlantic World* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); for the evolution of geographical ideas about the cultural, social and political construction of urban places and their metropolitan regions, see Robert E. Park, E. W. Burgess, R. D. McKenzie, *The City* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1925); Louis Wirth, "Urbanism as a Way of Life, *American Journal of Sociology* 44:1 (July 1938), 1–24; Lewis Mumford, *The City in History: Its Origins, Its Transformations, and Its Prospects* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1961); Ebenezer Howard, *Garden Cities of To-morrow* (London, 1902); Brian J. L. Berry, "Cities as Systems within Systems of Cities," *Papers in Regional Science* 13:1 (January 15, 1964) 147; R. J. Johnston, *Geography and Geographers : Anglo-american Human Geography Since 1945* (London: E. Arnold, 1983); Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977); Relph, *Place and Placelessness* (London: Pion, 1976); Henri Lefebvre, *The Urban Revolution* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003); David Harvey, "The Urban Process Under Capitalism: A Framework for Analysis," *International Journal of Urban & Regional Research* 2:1 (March 1978), 101; R. A. Walker, "A Theory of Suburbanization: Capitalism and the Construction of Urban Space in the United States," in Michael Dear and Allen Scott (eds.), *Urbanization and Urban Planning in Capitalist Society* (London & NY: Methuen, 1981), 384–429; Michael Keith and Steve Pile (eds.), *Place and the Politics of Identity* (Routledge: London; New York, 1993); and Rob Shields *Places on the Margin: Alternative Geographies of Modernity* (London: Routledge, 1991).

<sup>2</sup> For scale in geographic theory, see Sallie A. Marston, "The Social Construction of Scale," *Progress in Human Geography* 24:2 (June, 2000), 219–42; Sallie A. Marston, John Paul Jones III, and Keith Woodward, "Human Geography without Scale,"

*Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 30:4 (December 2005), 416–32. Anssi Paasi, Place and Region: Looking through the Prism of Scale, *Progress in Human Geography* 28:4 (August 1, 2004), 536–46; Neil Brenner, “The Urban Question as a Scale Question: Reflections on Henri Lefebvre, Urban Theory and the Politics of Scale,” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 24:2 (June 2000), 361–78. Region in geographical scholarship, however, more often than not considers multi-national regions in a global context rather than in metropolitan terms.

<sup>3</sup> The U. S. Census of 1850, for e.g., treated seamen residing at the Sailors’ Snug Harbor and the Seamen’s Retreat and some workers at the Quarantine Station as Staten Islanders, U. S. Census of 1850, Enumerator Sheet, Town of Castleton, Town of Southfield, County of Richmond, New York, [http://archive.org/details/us\\_census](http://archive.org/details/us_census). The electoral implications of this came to the surface in election scandals later in the century; see, e.g., “Mutiny at Snug Harbor, The Sailors at the Institution Selling Their Votes,” *NYH*, May 26, 1889, 22. “Hints for Judicious Idling,” *The Corsair: A Gazette of Literature, Art, Dramatic Criticism, Fashion and Novelty* 1:18 (July 13, 1839), 281.

<sup>4</sup> New York (State), “Communication from the Committee Appointed by the House of Assembly, at its Last Session, to Inquire into the Propriety of the Removal of the Quarantine Establishment,” *Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York*, 72nd sess., 2:60 (Albany: Weed, Parsons & Co., 1849), 8–12; see also Executive Committee of Staten Island, *Facts and Documents Bearing Upon the Legal and Moral Question Connected with the Recent Destruction of the Quarantine Buildings on Staten Island* (New York: Wm. C. Bryant & Co., 1858).

<sup>5</sup> “At a Meeting of the Inhabitants of Staten Island,” *NYTr*, September 2, 1848, 2.

<sup>6</sup> New York (State), *Documents of the Assembly* 2:60 (1849), 8–9.

<sup>7</sup> For background and discussion of the removal of Quarantine from Staten Island in the 1840s and 50s, see New York (State), *Documents of the Assembly* 2:60 (1849); and New York (State), “Report of the Commissioners Relative to the Removal of the Quarantine Station,” *Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York*, 81st sess., 3:69 (Albany: C. Van Benthuysen, 1858); for the ratcheting up of tensions leading to the construction and destruction of the barricade and then the fire itself, see, “Meeting of the Castleton Board of Health,” *NYT*, August 18, 1856, 1; “Sanitary Condition of the City,” *NYT*, August 15, 1856, 3; “Commissioners of Health,” *NYT*, August 14, 1856, 1; “The Sanitary Condition of the City,” *NYT*, August 22, 1856, 1; “Sanitary Condition of the City,” *NYT*, August 14, 1856, 1; and “Our Quarantine Laws” *NYT*, August 23, 1856, 2; for the attempt to move quarantine operations to Staten Island’s south shore, and the resulting violence, see Commissioners of Emigration, 413–6; “A Permanent Quarantine.” *BDE*, January 12, 1858, 2; “Quarantine Matters,” *NYT*, June 3, 1857, 5; “The Quarantine War – Condition of Public Feeling on Staten Island,” *NYT*, May 12, 1857, 1; “Quarantine matters,” *NYT*, August 27, 1857, 5; “Police Business,” *BDE*, May 29, 1857, 2; “Police for Quarantine,” *BDE*, June 3, 1857, 2; “Quarantine Affairs,” *NYT*, July 4, 1857, 1; “Quarantine,” *NYT*, June 9, 1857, 1; “Quarantine—Third and Last Call on the Sheriff,” *NYT*, July 28, 1857, 5; “Public Health,” *NYT*, June 16, 1857, 1; “Attack at Seguines [sic] Point,” *BDE*, July 13, 1857, 2; “Quarantine Incendiaries,” *NYT*, May 16, 1857, 4; “The Public Health,” *NYT*,

June 15, 1857, 1; *Staaten Islander*, December 30, 1857; "Public Meeting Notice," *Staaten Islander*, December 16, 1857; Ira K. Morris, *Morris's Memorial History of Staten Island, New York* 2 (New York: Memorial Pub. Co., 1898), 374–86; "The Quarantine Conflagration," *NYT*, September 4, 1858, 1; "News of the Day," *NYT*, September 6, 1858, 4; "The Staten Island War," *NYT*, September 9, 1858, 8; "Quarantine Affairs," *NYT*, September 15, 1858, 5; "The Quarantine War," *NYT*, September 8, 1858, 1; "The Staten Island War," *NYT*, September 10, 1858, 4.

<sup>8</sup> "Communications from His Excellency, the Governor, Transmitting Papers in Relation to Quarantine at the Port of New York," *Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York*, 82nd sess., 1:19 (Albany: C. Van Benthuysen, 1859), 13–18. Executive Committee of Staten Island (1858). "The 'Sepoys of Staten Island' By One Of Them," *NYEP*, September 9, 1858; "Home Department," *New York Commercial Advertiser*, October 7, 1859, 2; "Destruction of Quarantine Completed," *New-York Daily NYTr*, September 4, 1858, 5; "The Burning of the Quarantine," *Harper's Weekly*, September 11, 1858, 578; "The Lounger," *Harper's Weekly*, October 2, 1858, 627.

<sup>9</sup> David M. Scobey, *Empire City: The Making and Meaning of the New York City Landscape* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002). Staten Island Improvement Commission (3 folders), Box 26, FLO Papers, Library of Congress. Staten Island Improvement Commission, Frederick Law Olmsted, Elisha Harris, J. M. Trowbridge, and H. H. Richardson, *A Letter Introductory from Messrs. Olmsted, Harris, Trowbridge and Richardson* (New York: s.n., 1871), <http://catalog.hathitrust.org/api/volumes/oclc/58773831.html>, accessed March 21, 2014. Staten Island Improvement Commission, *Report of a Preliminary Scheme of Improvements* (New York?: s.n., 1871), <http://catalog.hathitrust.org/api/volumes/oclc/81002889.html>, accessed March 21, 2014. Staten Island Improvement Commission, *Report of Committee on Transportation and Intercommunication* (New York: Frank McElroy's Mercantile Steam Printing House, 1871).

<sup>10</sup> For a summary of the politics and the vote for greater New York, see Richard Dilworth ed., *Cities in American Political History* (Los Angeles: Sage, 2011), 288–9; for sources more contemporary and regarding consolidation of the greater New York area from varied perspectives, see, "Politics of Greater New York," *Gunton's Magazine*, March 1896, 166; "Greater New York," *Gunton's Magazine*, May 1896, 341–7; and New York (State), *In the Matter of the Hearing in Relation to the Greater New York* (Albany: Wyncoop, Hallenbeck, Crawford, 1896), 602, 620–2, and 262.

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*Boston Evening Transcript*

*Boston Recorder*

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*Caledonian Mercury* (Scotland)

*Chambers Journal* (United Kingdom)

*Charleston Courier* (Charleston, SC)

*Daily Alta California* (San Francisco, CA)

*Daily Constitutionalist* (Augusta, GA),

*Daily Missouri Republican* (St. Louis, MO)

*Daily National Intelligencer* (Washington, DC)

*Farmer & Mechanic*

*Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly*

*Gloucester Telegraph* (Gloucester, MA)

*Godey's Lady's Book*

*Graham's Magazine*

*Hagadorn's Semi-Weekly Staaten Islander*

*Harper's Weekly*

*Hazard's United States Commercial and Statistical Register*

*Irish American Weekly*

*Lippincott's Magazine of Popular Literature and Science*

*National Advocate* (New York, NY)

*National Aegis* (Worcester, MA)

*New Hampshire Gazette* (Portsmouth, NH)

*New Hampshire Statesman* (Concord, NH)

*New Orleans Daily Picayune*

*New York American*

*New York Commercial Advertiser*

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*New York Sun*

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*New York Tribune*

*New York World*

*New-York Daily Advertiser*

*New-York Gazette*

*Newark Daily Advertiser* (Newark, NJ)

*Niles' Weekly Register*

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*Northern Whig* (Hudson, NY)

*Ohio Cultivator*

*Orange Judd Farmer*

*Pennsylvania Freeman* (Philadelphia, PA)

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*The Sepoy /Richmond County Gazette* (Staten Island, NY)

*The Southern Planter*

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*The Sun* (Baltimore, MD)

*United States Magazine*

*Working Farmer*

Abbreviations:

<i>BDE</i>	<i>Brooklyn Daily Eagle</i>
FLO Papers	Frederick Law Olmsted Papers, 1777–1952, Library of Congress.
LPC	Landmarks Preservation Commission, New York City
MSC	Marine Society Collection, Marine Society of the City of New York, Stephen B. Luce Library, SUNY Maritime College
<i>NYEP</i>	<i>New York Evening Post</i>
<i>NYH</i>	<i>New York Herald</i>
NYHS	New York Historical Society, New York City
NYPL	New York Public Library, New York City
<i>NYT</i>	<i>New York Times</i>
<i>NYTr</i>	<i>New York Tribune</i>
SHGP	Sydney Howard Gay Papers, 1748–1931, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Butler Library, Columbia University, New York.
SIHS	Staten Island Historical Society
SIM	Staten Island Museum
PFLO	Papers of Frederick Law Olmsted (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977)
USGS	United States Geological Survey

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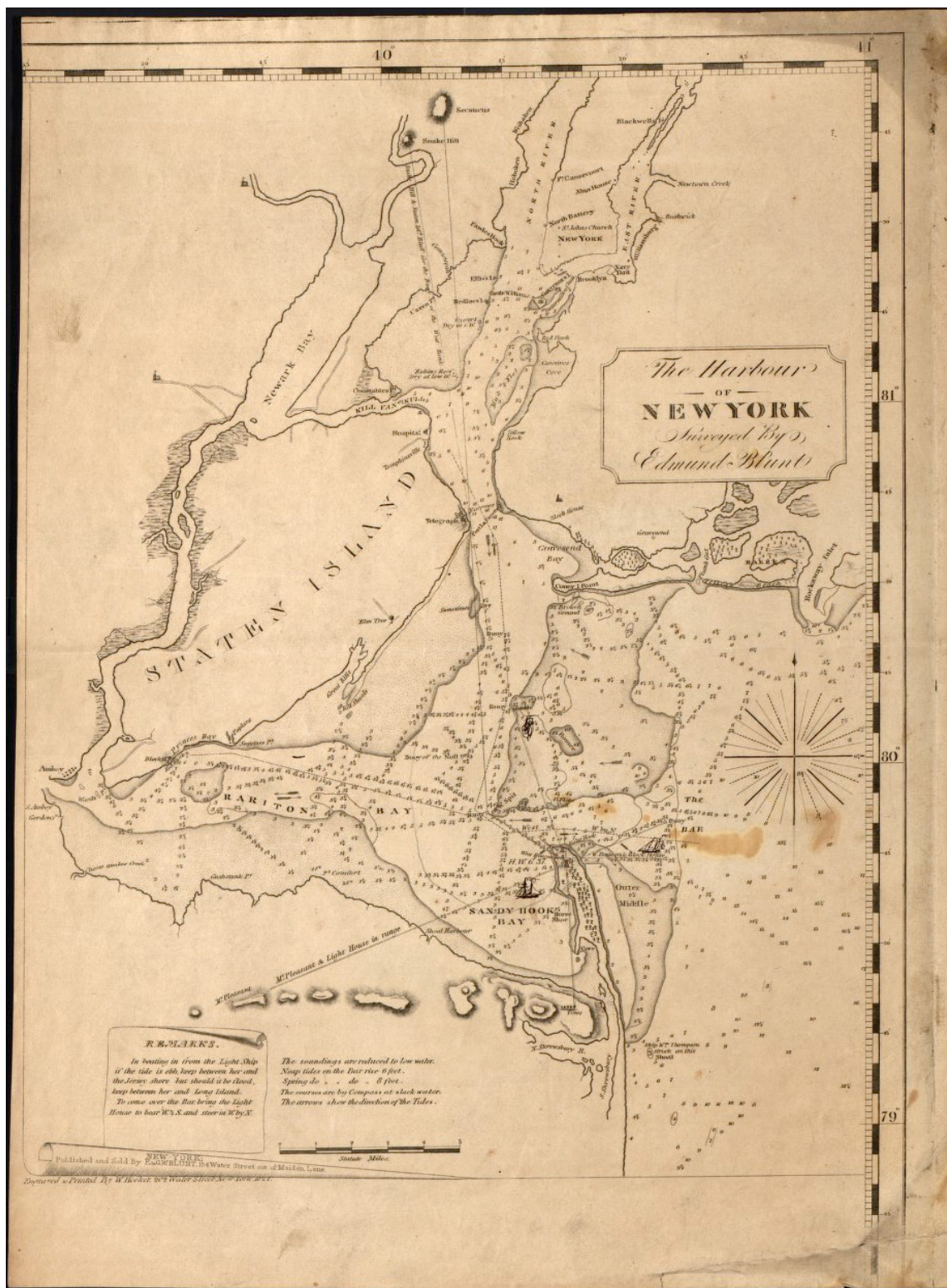
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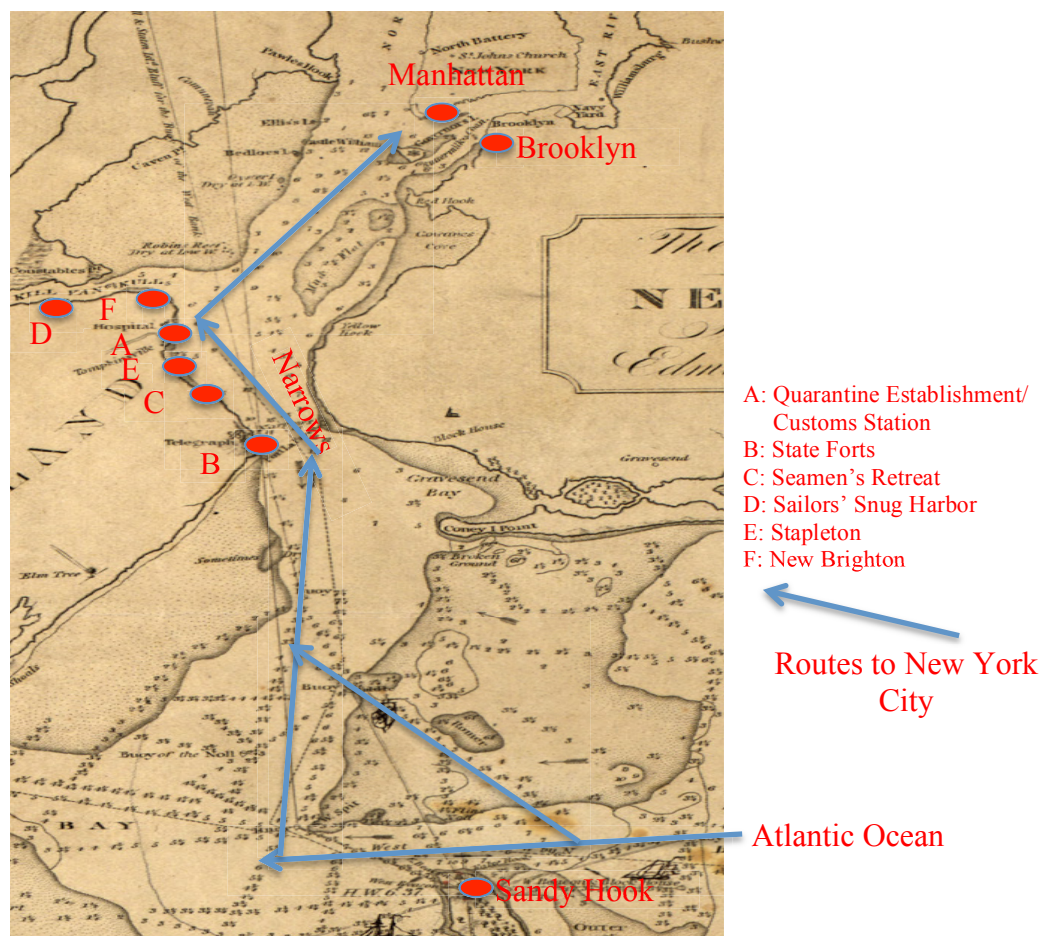
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**Figure 0.1: The Prominence of Staten Island in the Harbor of New York**

*The Harbour of New York*, Edmund Blunt, 1827, Library of Congress Geography and Map Division.





**Figure 0.2: Seeing Staten Island; Arrival at New York**

Base map: *The Harbour of New York*, Edmund Blunt, 1827,  
Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division.



**Figure 1.1: Fort Tompkins (left) and Fort Richmond (Bottom) With the Commercial Activity of the New York Port Entering the Narrows**  
*New York Bay. (From the Telegraph Station), 1838, Robert Wallis, and W. H. Bartlett, Museum of the City of New York.*



**Figure 1.2: Harbor Activity at Quarantine 1830s-1850s**

*Left, View of the New York Quarantine, Staten Island, 1833. Lewis Peter Clover and W. J. Bennett, Museum of the City of New York.*





**Figure 1.3: State Institutional Presence at the Mouth of the Harbor: The Quarantine Station**

Manhattan is shown directly across harbor, with Brooklyn, at *Right*. Similar images and the presence of the “shantee” hospitals suggest this image is from 1849.

*City of New-York, Brooklyn, Jersey City & Quarantine Station on Staten Island*, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C.

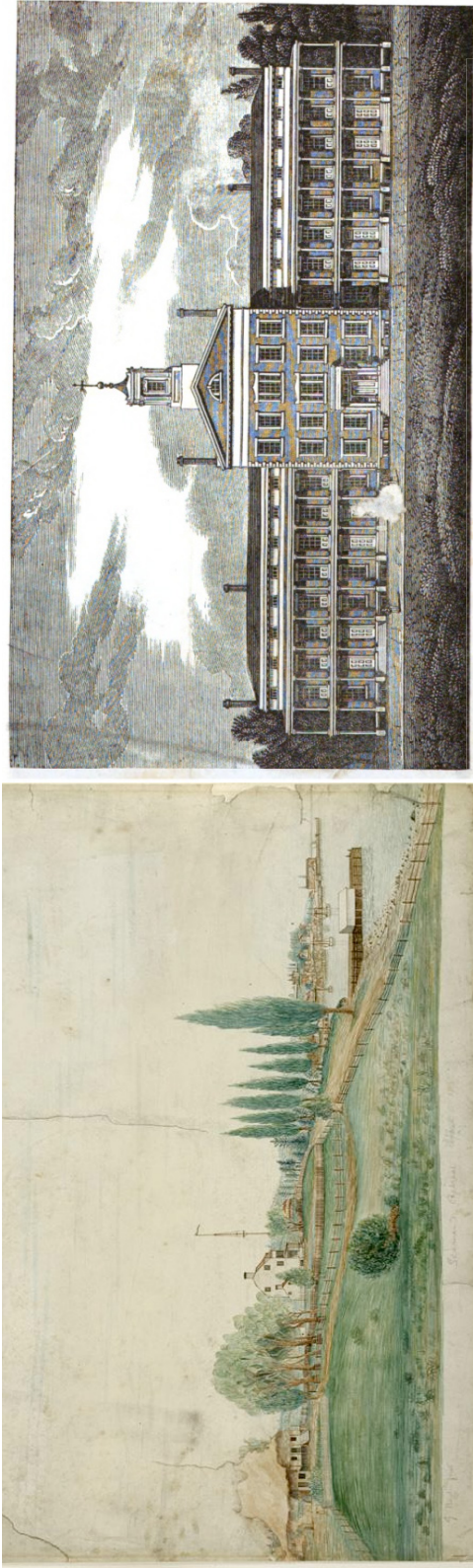


HEALTH-OFFICER BOARDING AN EMIGRANT SHIP,  
QUARANTINE, STATEN ISLAND.

**Figure 1.4: “Health Officer Boarding an Emigrant Ship,  
Quarantine, Staten Island:”**

**Staten Island and the Maritime Geography of Immigration**

“Institutions for Sailors in New York,” *The International Magazine*, 1851.

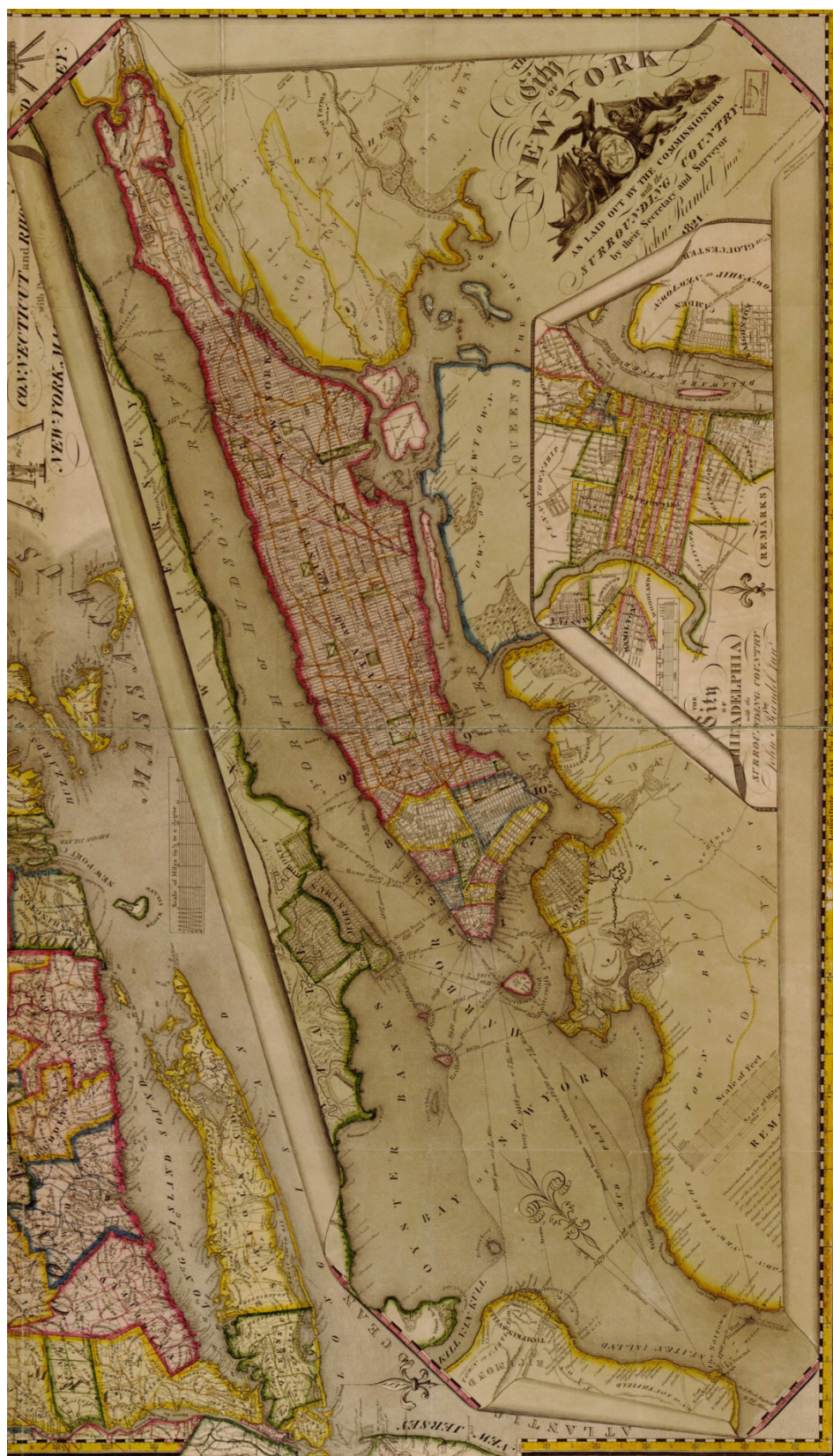


**Figure 1.5: Farmscape to Maritime Institution: Transformation of the Seamen's Retreat, 1831-1837**

*Left*, Gamliel Hart, *Seamen's Retreat, Staten Island*, *New York City*, 1832, Luce Center, NYHS.

*Right*, "The Seamen's Retreat," *Sailor's Magazine* 10:3 (November, 1837), opposite 73.



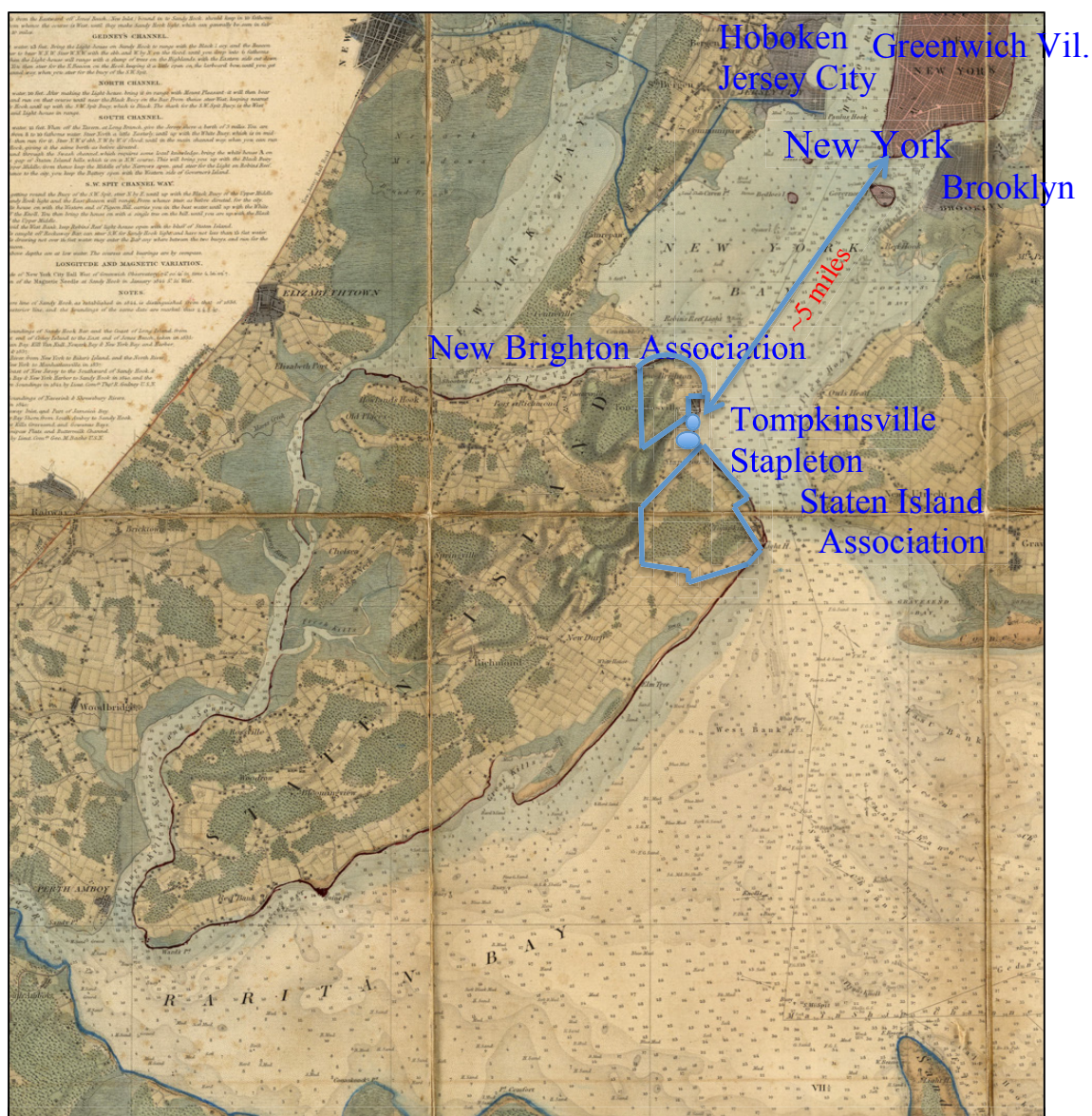


**Figure 2.1: Randel's 1821 Map Showing the Limits of the Emerging Metropolitan Region, Gridded Frontiers on Manhattan and Around the Harbor, and Steamboat and Visual Connections across the Bay**

Note, with the exception of Manhattan itself, the blankness of places away from the harborfront.

*City of New York as Laid Out by the Commissioners with the Surrounding Country*, John Randel, Jr., 1821, Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division, Washington, DC.

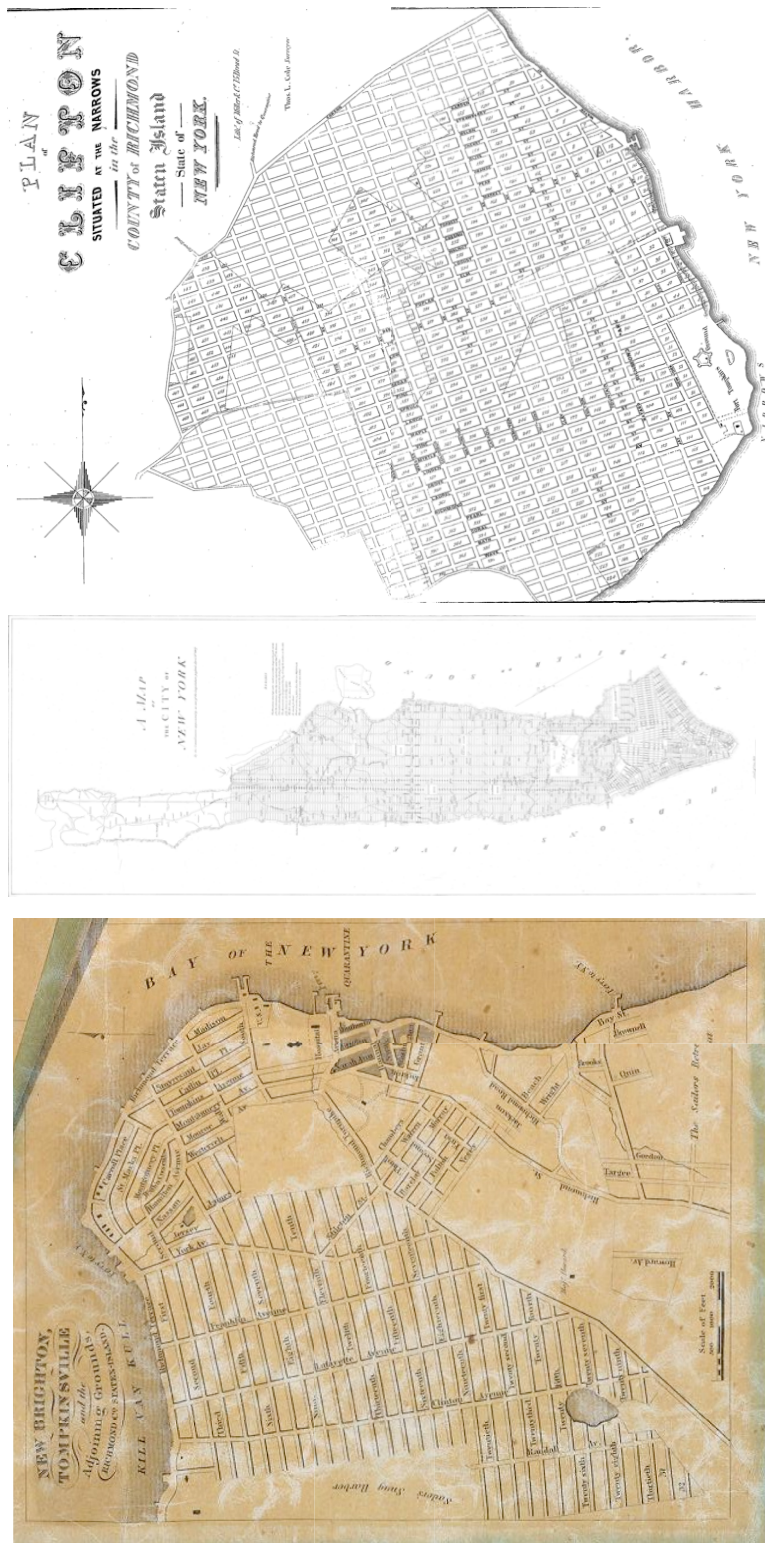




**Figure 2.2: Regional Geography of Metropolitan Real Estate**

Base map: United States Coast Survey, *Map of New York Bay and Harbor* (1845), David Rumsey Map Collection.





**Figure 2.3: The Urban Grid and Metropolitan Real Estate: New Brighton, Manhattan and Clifton**

*Left:* Inset of New Brighton from J. Calvin Smith, *Map of Long Island with the environs of New-York and the southern part of Connecticut* (New York: S. Stiles & Co., 1844), The Lionel Pincus and Princess Firyal Map Division, New York Public Library.

*Center:* John Randel, Jr., *A Map of the City of New York* (1807), Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation Blog.

*Right:* "Plan of Clifton," in: Staten-Island Association. *Description of Clifton, at the Narrows, Staten-Island: with a map of the same and the articles of agreement of the 'Staten-Island Association' entered into on the 9th Aug. 1837.* New-York, 1838. The Making Of The Modern World (Gale Document Number: U105597350). Used with permission from Baker Library, Harvard Business School.





**Figure 2.4: Regional Connections: Steamboat Routes and Staten Island c.1840s**

Base Map: United States Coast Survey, Map of New York Bay and Harbor (1844), David Rumsey Map Collection.

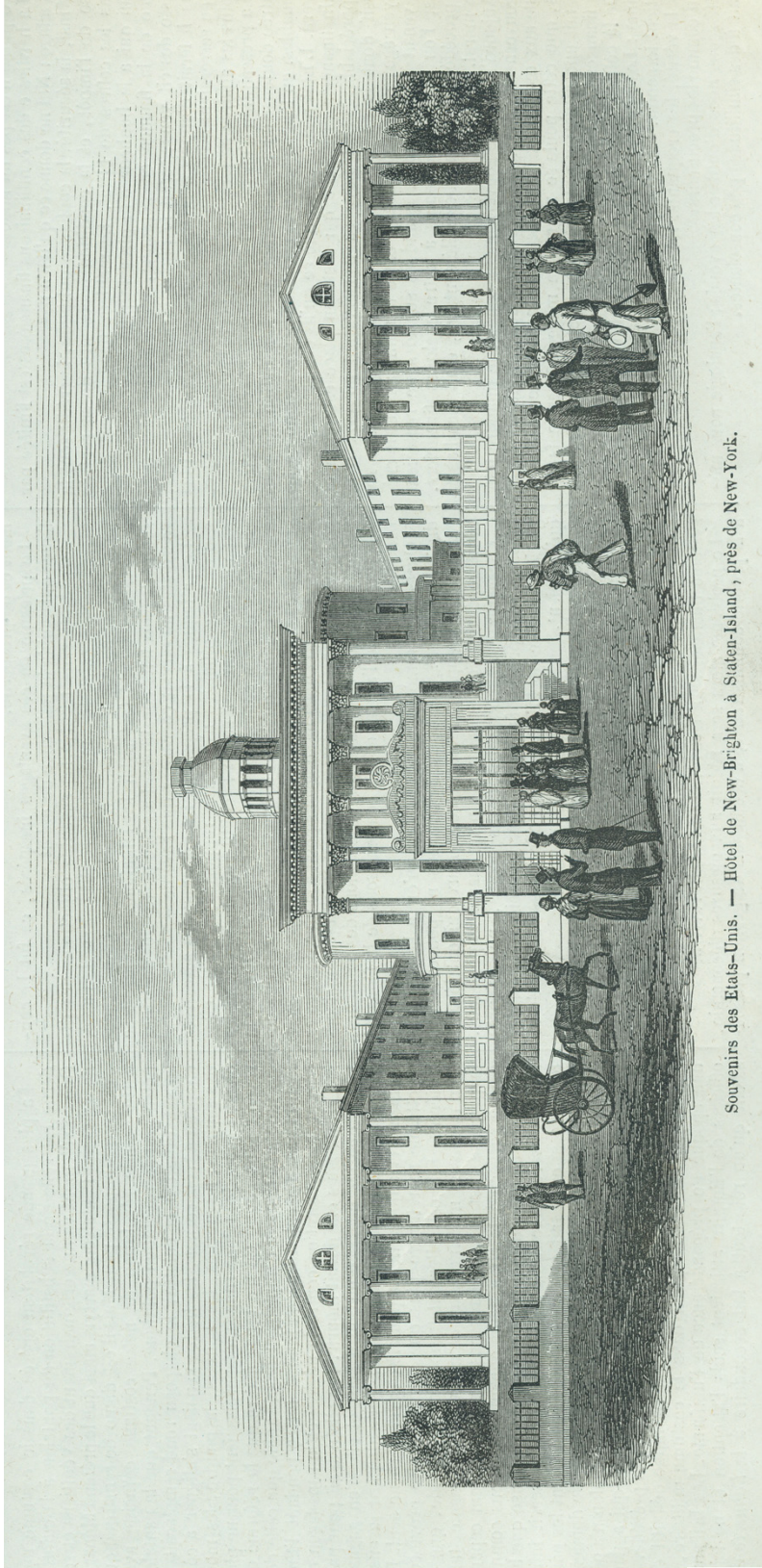




**Figure 2.5: Marketing Leisure, Health and Order: New Brighton as the Ideal Metropolitan Residence Apart from Urban Manhattan**

*New Brighton, Staten Island* (1836).  
From the Collection of the Staten Island Museum.

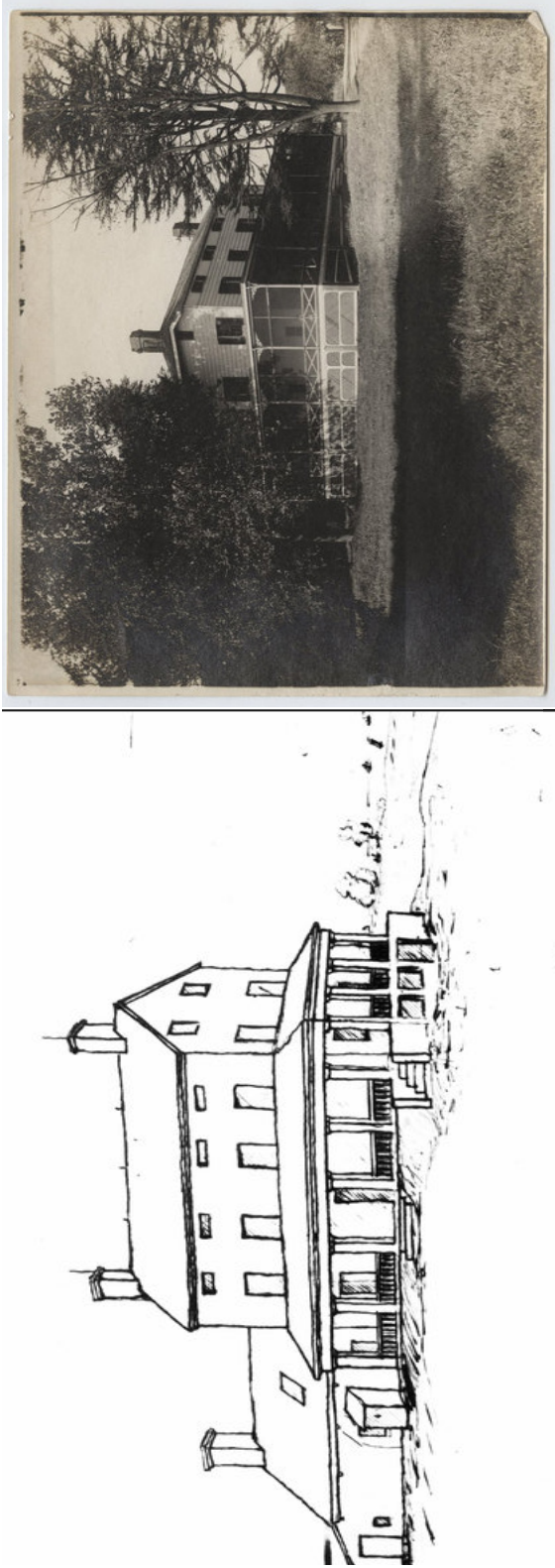




Souvenirs des Etats-Unis. — Hôtel de New-Brighton à Staten-Island, près de New-York.

**Figure 2.6: Social Infrastructure for the Metropolitan Elite: Pavilion Hotel and Richmond Terrace, New Brighton c.1859**

Souvenirs des Etats Unis. Hotel de New Brighton a Staten Island, pres de New York.  
From the Collection of the Staten Island Museum.



**Figure 3.1: Agricultural Improver as Metropolitan Country Gentleman:**

**Frederick Law Olmsted's House, Staten Island**

*Left:* Frederick Law Olmsted and Charles Capen McLaughlin (ed.) *The Formative Years, 1822 to 1852* (The Papers of Frederick Law Olmsted, Volume 1), Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977, 319.

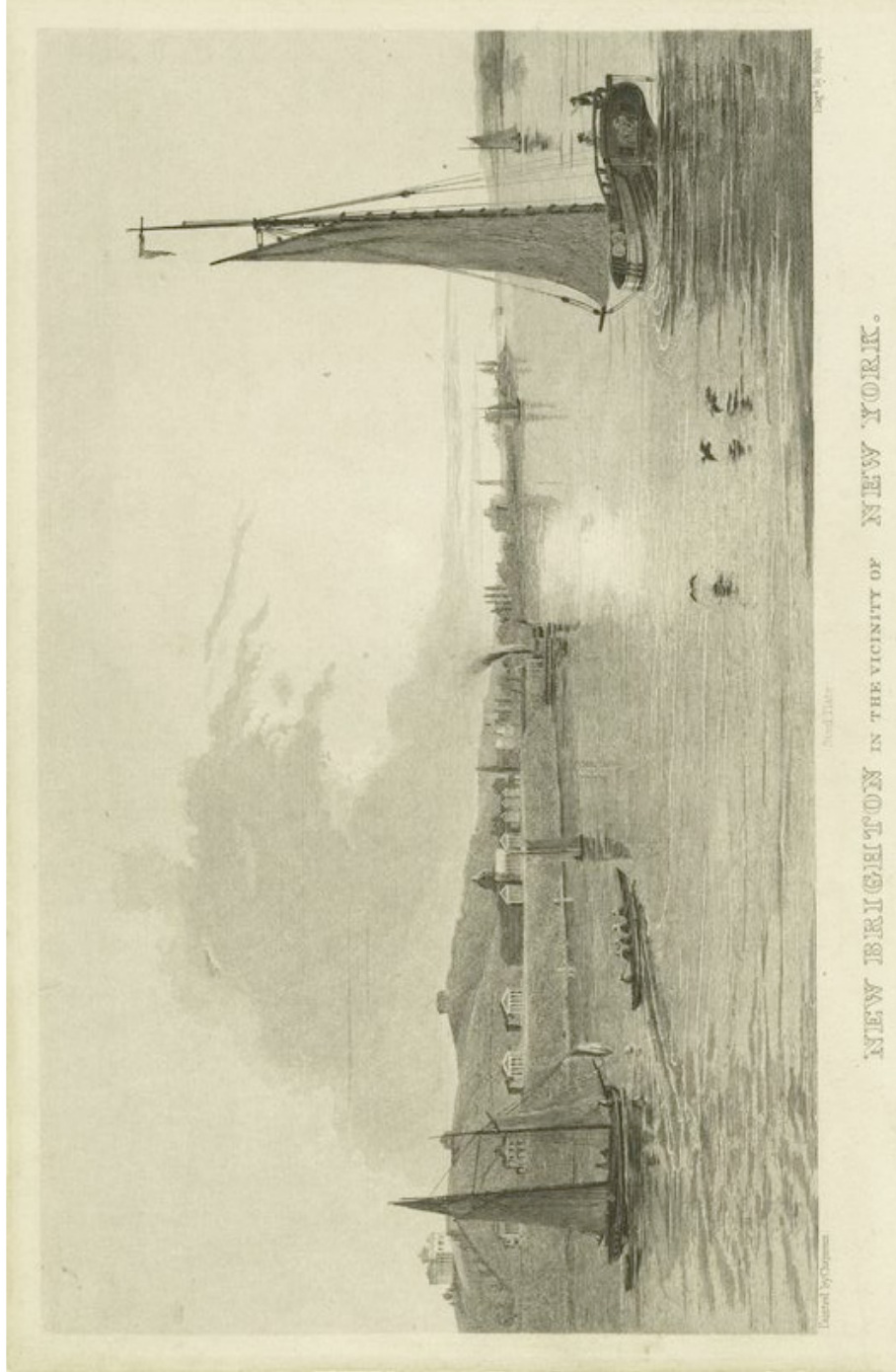
*Right:* From the Collection of the Staten Island Historical Society





**Figure 3.2: Scale of Staten Island's Metropolitan Country Estates vs. Hudson Valley**

*Left*, Cottage Residence of Wm. H. Aspinwall, Esq., found in *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening*, Andrew Jackson Downing, New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1841. Compare with image on the *Right*, found in *Villas on the Hudson: A Collection of Photo-Lithographs of Thirty-one Country Residences*, A. A. Turner Photographer, New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1860, first page. This image shows the exclusive luxury estate that he bought in the Hudson Valley in 1860; three times the acreage.

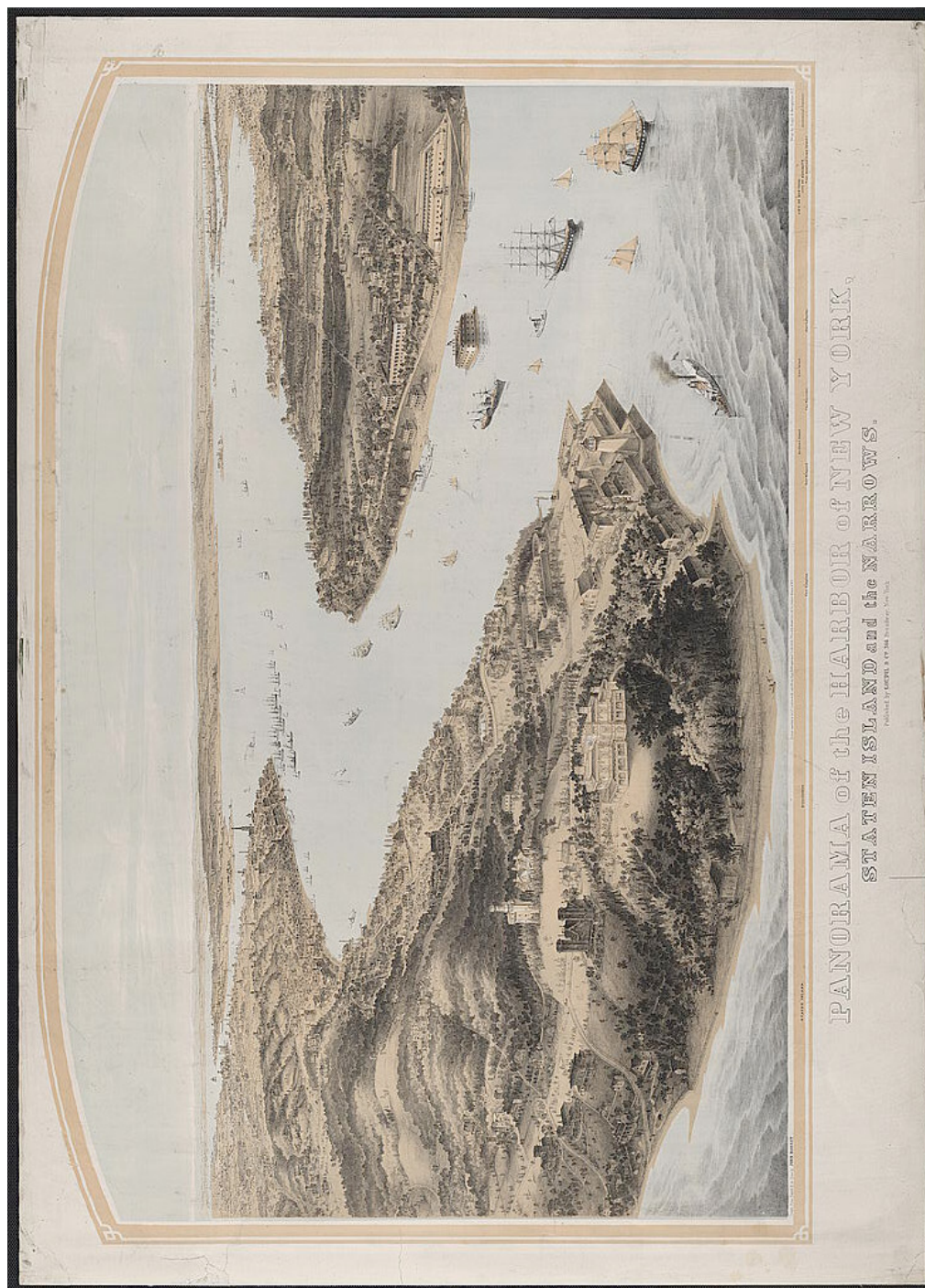


**Figure 3.3: New Brighton: An Elite Neighborhood on the Metropolitan Harborfront**

Note Richmond Terrace with its Greek Revival Villas and Pavilion Hotel near the shore, with larger estates on hills behind and steamboat plume near dock in center, highlighting accessibility.

*New Brighton in the Vicinity of New York*, John A. Rolph, Emmett Collection of Manuscripts, The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division, Print Collection.





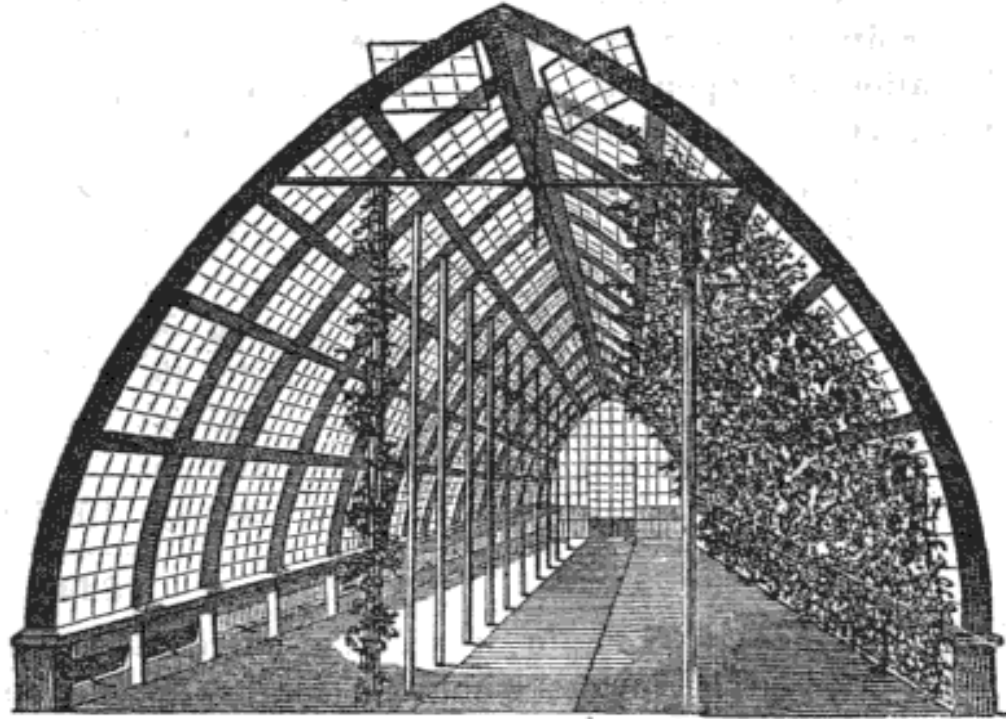
**Figure 3.4: “Villa Village or Quarter:” Metropolitan Countryside at Clifton, Staten Island**  
 Panorama of the Harbor of New York, Staten Island and the Narrows, 1854. Nagel & Weingartner, printmaker. New York : Goupil & Co., 1854, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC.





**Figure 3.5: Neighborhood of Country Estates: Staten Island Homes of the Metropolitan Elite**

August Kollner, "Original drawings representing residences of prominent people, all with "Staten Island N.Y." on the drawn portion," c. 1851-1863. The Eno Collection of New York City Views, New York Public Library. Images selected and arranged by author.

**Fig. 3.****Inside View of the Cold Grapery of J. C. Green, Esq., Staten Island.**

**Figure 3.6: Credentials for Professional Authority: William Chorlton's Grapery at the J.C. Green Estate**

William Chorlton, *The American Grape Grower's Guide*, New York: C.M. Saxton, 1852, 23.



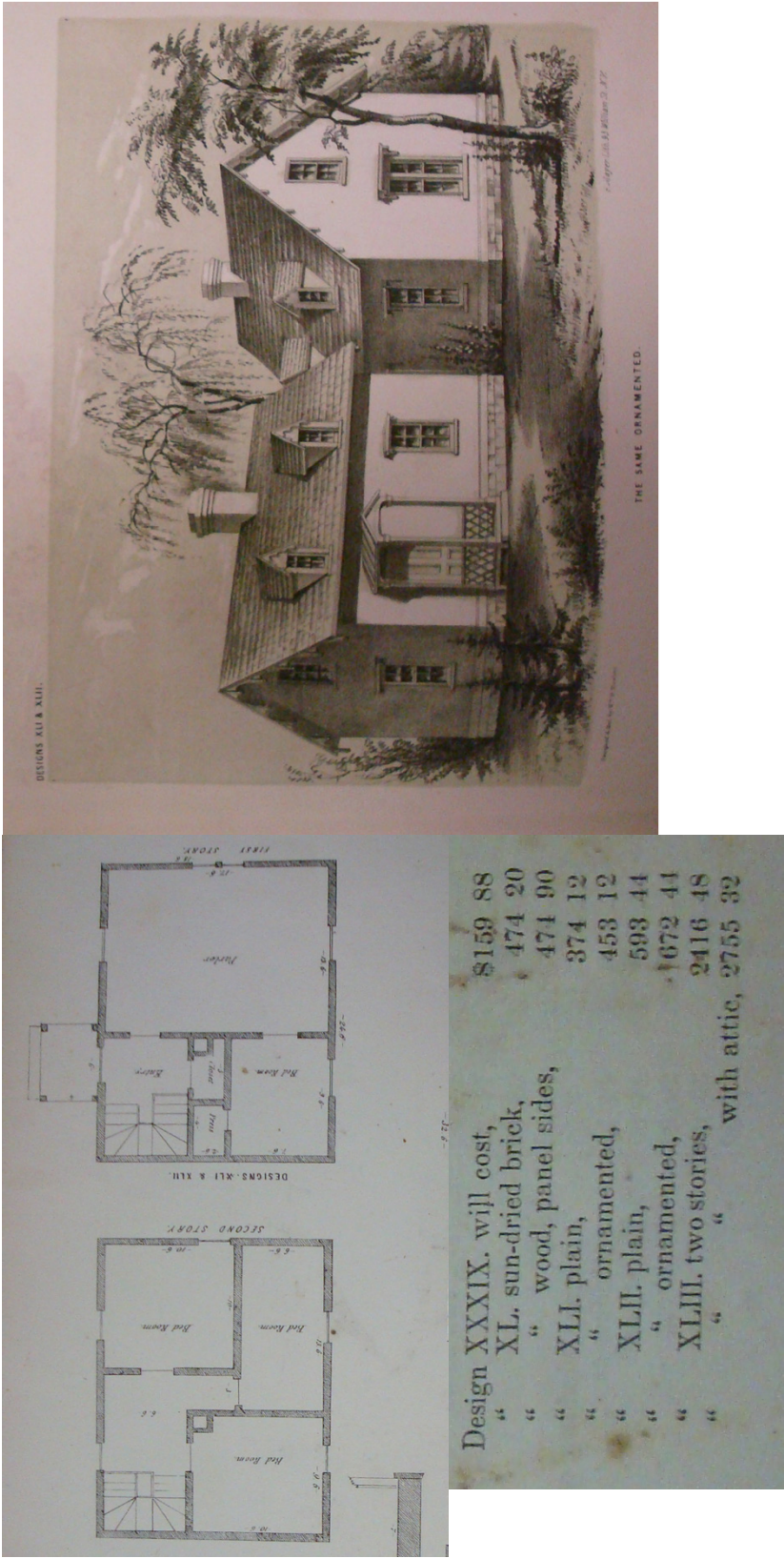
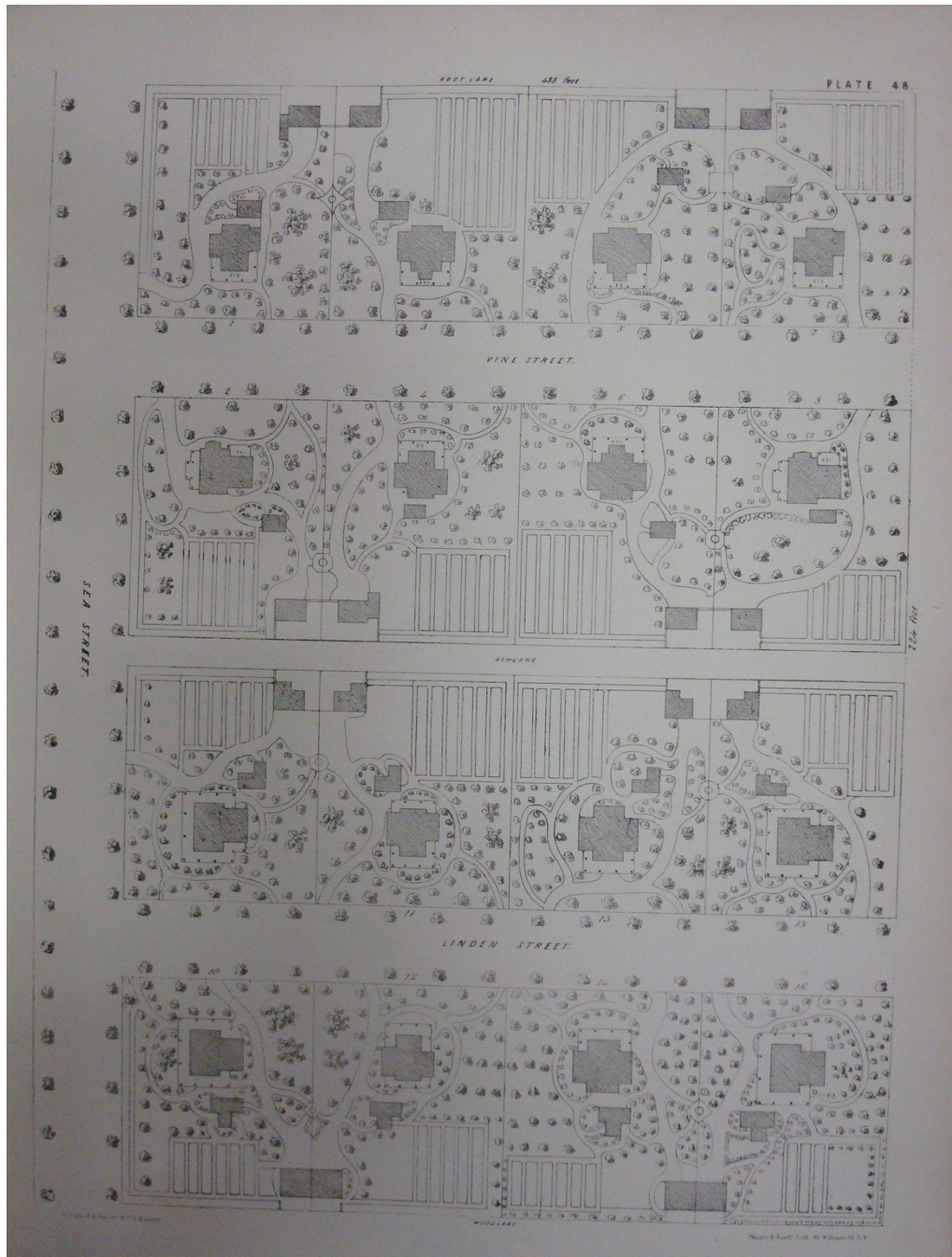


Figure 3.7: Affordable Country Cottages for the City's Mechanics and Artisans

William H. Ranlett, *The Architect* 2 New York: William H. Graham, 1849, Plates 38 and 39 and page 60, Architectural & Fine Arts Library, Avery Classics, Columbia University. Images arranged by author.



**Figure 3.8: Metropolitan Density in the Country Landscape:  
William H. Ranlett's Plan for a Country Alternative to the Urban Lot –  
Eight Mini-estates Shown as Subdivided for 16 Cottages**

William H. Ranlett, *The Architect* 1 (New York: William H. Graham, 1847), Plate 48, Avery Architectural & Fine Arts Library, Avery Classics, Columbia University.