OF
CABBAGES
AND KINGS
COUNTY

AGRICULTURE
AND THE
FORMATION
OF MODERN
BROOKLYN

Marc Linder and
Lawrence S. Zacharias

University of Iowa Press  Iowa City
# ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAAPSS</td>
<td>Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AH</td>
<td>Agricultural History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALFBIR</td>
<td>Assessment Lists of the Federal Bureau of Internal Revenue</td>
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<tr>
<td>AR</td>
<td>Assessment Roll</td>
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<tr>
<td>ARSESSNY</td>
<td>Annual Report of the State Engineer and Surveyor of the State of New York</td>
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<tr>
<td>ARTF</td>
<td>Assessment Roll of the Town of Flatbush</td>
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<td>ARTFI</td>
<td>Assessment Roll of the Town of Flatlands</td>
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<td>ARTNU</td>
<td>Assessment Roll of the Town of New Utrecht</td>
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<td>BBGR</td>
<td>Brooklyn Botanic Garden Record</td>
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<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>Bureau of the Census</td>
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<tr>
<td>BDE</td>
<td>Brooklyn Daily Eagle</td>
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<td>BDEA</td>
<td>Brooklyn Daily Eagle Almanac</td>
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<td>BDU</td>
<td>Brooklyn Daily Union</td>
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<td>BE</td>
<td>Brooklyn Eagle</td>
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<td>BEA</td>
<td>Bureau of Economic Analysis</td>
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<td>BHS</td>
<td>Brooklyn Historical Society</td>
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<td>CA</td>
<td>Census of Agriculture</td>
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<td>CD</td>
<td>Collection District</td>
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<td>CG</td>
<td>Congressional Globe</td>
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<td>CO</td>
<td>Census Office</td>
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<td>CP</td>
<td>Census of Population</td>
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<td>CSNY</td>
<td>Census of the State of New York</td>
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<td>DA</td>
<td>Department of Agriculture</td>
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<td>DAB</td>
<td>Dictionary of American Biography</td>
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<td>DI</td>
<td>Department of the Interior</td>
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<td>DS</td>
<td>Department of State</td>
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<td>ED</td>
<td>Enumeration District</td>
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<td>EG</td>
<td>Economic Geography</td>
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<td>EHR</td>
<td>Economic History Review</td>
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<td>ERS</td>
<td>Economic Research Service</td>
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<td>FTC</td>
<td>Federal Trade Commission</td>
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<td>GR</td>
<td>Geography Review</td>
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<td>HJRART</td>
<td>Horticulturist and Journal of Rural Art and Rural Taste</td>
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<td>HNMM</td>
<td>Harper's New Monthly Magazine</td>
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<td>IA</td>
<td>Irish-American</td>
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<td>IR</td>
<td>Internal Revenue</td>
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<td>JASNY</td>
<td>Journal of the Assembly of the State of New York</td>
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<td>JLH</td>
<td>Journal of Long Island History</td>
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<td>JSSNY</td>
<td>Journal of the Senate of the State of New York</td>
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<td>KC</td>
<td>Kings County</td>
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<td>KCG</td>
<td>Kings County Gazette</td>
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<td>Abbreviation</td>
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<tr>
<td>KCRBG</td>
<td>Kings County Rural and Brighton Gazette/Brooklyn Gazette</td>
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<td>KCRG</td>
<td>Kings County Rural Gazette</td>
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<td>LBDBKC</td>
<td>Lain's Business Directory of Brooklyn, Kings County</td>
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<td>LDI</td>
<td>Lain's Directory of Long Island</td>
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<tr>
<td>LIHJ</td>
<td>Long Island Historical Journal</td>
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<td>LIHSQ</td>
<td>Long Island Historical Society Quarterly</td>
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<td>MR</td>
<td>Microfilm Roll</td>
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<td>MS</td>
<td>Manuscript Schedules</td>
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<td>NA</td>
<td>National Archives</td>
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<td>NL</td>
<td>New Lots</td>
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<td>NLAR</td>
<td>New Lots Assessment Roll</td>
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<td>NU</td>
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<td>NUAR</td>
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<td>New York Daily Tribune</td>
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<td>NYGBR</td>
<td>New York Genealogical and Biographical Record</td>
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<td>NYH</td>
<td>New York Herald</td>
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<td>New-York Historical Society</td>
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<td>NYPL</td>
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<td>New York Regional Office</td>
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<td>NYS</td>
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<td>New York State Department of Agriculture</td>
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<td>NYT</td>
<td>New York Times</td>
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<td>New York Tribune</td>
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<td>PS</td>
<td>Population Schedules</td>
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<td>RERBG</td>
<td>Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide</td>
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<td>RG</td>
<td>Record Group</td>
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<td>RO</td>
<td>Regional Office</td>
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<td>SC</td>
<td>Superintendent of the Census</td>
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<td>SD</td>
<td>Supervisor's District</td>
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<td>SI</td>
<td>Secretary of the Interior</td>
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<td>SM</td>
<td>Scribner's Monthly</td>
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<td>SUSC</td>
<td>Superintendent of the United States Census</td>
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<tr>
<td>TMHS</td>
<td>Transactions of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society</td>
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<td>TNYCD</td>
<td>Trow's New York City Directory</td>
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<td>TNYSAS</td>
<td>Transactions of the New York State Agricultural Society</td>
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<td>Town Records of Kings County</td>
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<td>Unbound Documents</td>
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<td>USBC</td>
<td>United States Bureau of the Census</td>
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<td>USDA</td>
<td>United States Department of Agriculture</td>
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NOTES

1. Introduction: Urban Removal of Agriculture

1. Daniel M. Tredwell, “Kings County in Fact, Legend and Tradition,” ch. 2 at 7–8 (BHS). The rough draft of these reminiscences goes back to 1890. Ibid. at 4.


7. Illustrative of such urban histories are Sam Bass Warner Jr., *The Private City*; Robert Fogelson, *The Fragmented Metropolis*. An historian of Gravesend who fails to devote a single word to farming gratuitously writes of the 1930s: “Where once corn stalks grew, iron and cement were now taking over as the Industrial Revolution seized the once tranquil community.” Eric Ierardi, *Gravesend: The Home of Coney Island* 143. For a study of a transformation not dealing with the economics of farming, see Vincent Seyfried, *Corona*. Wendy Futterman, “Which Came First” 99, overlooks Kings County’s massively agrarian character by supposing that in the absence of mass transit, Brooklyn “might be the same as it was in 1860, a series of unsold lots.”


11. Henry Stiles, *Civil . . . History* 1:38 (quotes); USBC, *Historical Statistics of the United States*, pt. 1, ser. D167–81 at 139. Nevertheless, as late as 1837, only one-sixth of Manhattan was covered with buildings and paved streets, the remainder


17. William Fischel, “Urban Development and Agricultural Land Markets” 83 (quote); Raymond Dasmann, *The Destruction of California* 126 (quote); David Wallace et al., *Metropolitan Open Space and Natural Process* 38 (quotes). Fischel reveals that an ideological construction of human nature underlies the claim that profit seeking creates the closest approximation to complete knowledge: “The only advantage that speculators have over anyone else, including planning officials, is that if they guess right, they make money. If they guess wrong, they lose money. I submit that it is difficult to overestimate the power of the prospect of making or losing money in focusing the energies of people on gathering market information.” Fischel, “Urban Development and Agricultural Land Markets” 89.


For a sketch of the profitability of the early years of citrus plantations in Southern California, see Carey McWilliams, *Southern California Country* 205–26. The consumption of housing in certain locations can help reproduce labor power by enabling workers to get to work more quickly or conveniently. Thus demand for housing land is partly determined by how many people want to reside at what
distance (time and space) from workplaces and other amenities at what price(s).
The time spent getting to possible workplaces is related to income per hour; this
variable can, in turn, be expressed as a proportion of income, which would
translate into different rents for each social-income class. In advocating rapid
transit in 1873, the KCRG noted that “‘if time is money,’ (we might even save by
it).” “Bonding the Town,” KCRG, Feb. 1, 1873, 4:1 (editorial).
23. For discussion of the expansion process in the New York Metropolitan Region,
see Edgar Hoover and Raymond Vernon, Anatomy of a Metropolis 183–255.
24. Ernst Freund, “Discussion” (quote); David Johnson, Planning the Great Me­
tropolis 26 (quote); Mel Scott, American City Planning Since 1890 at 152; S. Ma­
kielski Jr., The Politics of Zoning 11 (quote); Lewis Mumford, The City in History
426 (quote). The city planning movement dates from 1905. R. D. McKenzie, “The
Rise of Metropolitan Communities” 481–82. The state legislature amended the
Greater New York charter in 1914 to authorize the Board of Estimate to regulate
and restrict the location of trades and industries. 1914 N.Y. Laws, ch. 470 at 1943,
1944.
25. Staff of the Regional Plan of New York and Its Environs, vol. 1, Regional Plan: The
Graphic Regional Plan: Atlas and Description 383–84 (quote); Benjamin Chinitz,
“New York” 114 (quote); Lewis Mumford, The Highway and the City 227 (quote);
Robert Caro, The Power Broker 943 (quote).
26. Ella Odman and Gun-Britt Dahlberg, Urbanization in Sweden 58–60, 81–84;
Mumford, The Highway and the City 237.
27. James Sundquist, Dispersing Population 256, 258.
28. “The March of Improvements,” KCRG, May 24, 1873, 4:1, 2 (editorial); “A New
County,” KCRG, Apr. 12, 1873, 4:1, 2 (editorial). A few years later, however, the
Rural Gazette was constrained to adopt a less mechanistic view of development,
conceding a need “to encourage Capital to line our streets with cosy cottages
and handsome dwellings” and a place to human agency: “the time is approach­
ing when our town must either take a leap forward toward prosperity, or sink
backward into ‘stagnation.’” “Public Enterprise vs. Private Advantage,” KCRG,
Feb. 15, 1879, 2:1, 2 (editorial).
29. A Brooklyn-born historian of Brooklyn attributed historical amnesia in part to
an educational bias: “As far as school was concerned, history was . . . not any­
thing that might have been made by people like you or me or anyone we knew
or were descended from. History was . . . memorizing names and dates, battles
and places, kings and queens — but not the boroughs, thank you.” Elliott Wil­
lenisky, When Brooklyn Was the World 41.
30. Late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century publications did not follow a uni­
form nomenclature, but the following distinction made by a USDA horticul­
turist is useful: whereas market gardening is “the production of large quantities
of a great variety of standard vegetables and small fruits to supply the demands
of a local market,” “[t]ruck farming is more restricted in its scope, is usually
more extensive, and has chiefly to do with a few standard crops which yield large
returns per acre and which can be shipped to distant markets.” He mentioned
among truck crops: cabbage, spinach, potatoes, eggplant, cucumbers, lettuce,
beets, and cauliflower. Lee Corbett, *Garden Farming* 1. By World War II, standard works still emphasized that market gardening was intensive culture on high-priced land compelling farmers to maximize returns per square foot. Ralph Watts and Gilbert Watts, *The Vegetable Growing Business* 1. Others regarded truck farming as "simply market gardening on a large scale." F. Earle, "Development of the Trucking Interests" 437. Although the majority of Kings County farmers were market gardeners, only the enumerator for the 1870 CP for New Lots used the term, designating 12 farmers as "market gardener" or "farm gardener," most of whom were German-born; in 1880, the description was also used for one German farmer in New Lots.

2. Kings County Farms


4. For part of the nineteenth century, data are available at five-year intervals because the NYS census, which was conducted at mid-decade, included an agricultural component from 1825 to 1875. Methodological or other differences between the federal and state censuses may have rendered data series from the two sources not strictly comparable, but generally trends within each census appear similar. For an account of the growth in the details into which the federal agricultural censuses inquired from 1840 to 1890, see Carroll Wright, *The History and Growth of the United States Census* 99–106, 233–304. From the Tenth Census (1880) forward, production, harvest, and expense data were collected for the full year preceding the census (e.g., 1879), whereas data on acreage and land val-
ues referred to the year in which the enumeration was actually conducted. This procedure eliminated the confusion that had tainted previous census data:

The schedule annexed to and made a part of the law of 1850 requires the products of each farm in the United States "for the year ending June 1." But there is no agricultural year ending June 1. The division made by the law is a purely artificial one, and cuts the agricultural year in twain.

As a matter of fact, as the census under existing laws always has been and always will be taken, the production returned is not the production of any one year distinctly, but is made up, without any determinable proportion, indifferently from the production of two years.

The enumeration at the Ninth Census, for example, beginning upon the 1st of June, assistant marshals obtain for a month or two the production of 1869 in the main, although in some sections many of the crops . . . are already so far advanced that the farmer is quite as likely to estimate his annual production (it must be remembered that few of the statistics of production are obtained as transcripts from actual accounts) from his impressions in regard to the growing crop, as by recalling the experience of the previous year. As the enumeration progresses through September and October, the crop of 1870 is returned in increasing proportion, earlier in some parts of the country than in others . . . . As the work is protracted through November and December, and through the utter want of control at the central office, is allowed to drag, in some counties, through January and February, the crop of 1870 becomes the only one that is in contemplation of either the farmer of the assistant marshal in filling up the agricultural schedule.

SC, Ninth Census, vol. III: 71-72. The 1870 CA was conducted between June and September in Kings County.

The 1860 CA did not expressly state the number of farms in Kings County, but it provided a table of farms with three or more acres by size, which totalled 517. SI, Agriculture of the United States in 1860 at 209. A count of the farms in the MS for that year revealed only 436. The published tabulation included 118 farms of between 100 and 500 acres and 1 of more than 500 acres; in the MS the latter was not enumerated at all and many fewer of the former were recorded. There is a discrepancy between the published CA figure for 1870 of 298 farms and a count of the farms in the MS, which is 297. The mistake in the tabulation may have resulted from the fact that although each full sheet contained space for 40 names, the enumerator actually filled only 39 lines on the first sheet for Brooklyn. The census rubric was "name of owner, agent, or manager of the farm."

The suspicion of an undercount derives from the fact that only 46 farms in New Utrecht were returned in 1870 compared with 96 in 1860 and 103 in 1880; moreover, a number of major farmers (including Peter Cowenhoven, Andrus Monfort, and William Sieger) who were returned as farming in 1860 and 1880 were missing in 1870, although they were listed as farmers in that year's CP. If many farm(er)s were omitted in 1870, total New Utrecht production (including market garden output, the value of which fell from $127,000 to $108,000 from
1860 to 1870 while that of Kings County overall increased by 25 percent) for that year may be significantly understated. Since the enumerator of both the CP (Schedule 1) and the CA (Schedule 3) in 1870 was George Self, a well-known grocer in New Utrecht, it is unlikely that he would have overlooked his own neighbors and customers. It seems more plausible that a sheet from the manuscript schedules was lost. The published tabulations are consistent with the manuscript schedules as preserved by the National Archives on microfilm.


6. Table 21 below. Deagriculturalization of Kings County in the 1890s was not completely synchronized with the pattern throughout the New York–Northeastern New Jersey Standard Metropolitan Area, which overall gained 9,616 acres of harvested cropland in the 1890s but lost 56,941 acres during the 1880s — the second greatest decrement in any area in the United States. Donald Bogue, Metropolitan Growth and the Conversion of Land to Nonagricultural Uses, tab. III at 29. Cropland losses were even greater during the following three decades. On the much slower demise of farming in Philadelphia from a much larger base, see Regine Levitan, “Urban Agriculture” 30–31 (M.A. thesis).

7. Fred Shannon, The Farmer’s Last Frontier 291–95 (on prices). The value of farm products for 1870 was probably overestimated because it included “betterments and additions to stock.” SI, Ninth Census, vol. III: 210. The USBC did not attempt to estimate the total value of farm products for 1909; the figure in the table is the sum of the totals for crops, livestock products, and sales and slaughter of animals. USBC, Thirteenth Census, vol. V: 738–39; USBC, Thirteenth Census, vol. VII at 12. The gross value of farm products for 1919 was also not published; as a surrogate, the value of all crops and livestock products is calculated in the table. USBC, Fourteenth Census, vol. VI, pt. 1, county tab. I at 212, county tab. II at 218. The total value of production was withheld in 1969 to avoid disclosing this information for the one and only farm enumerated that year. BC, 1969 Census of Agriculture, vol. 1, pt. 7, sect. 2 at 176.

8. Elliott Willensky, When Brooklyn Was the World 69, 77, confuses his account by stating that by the 1920s “truck farms and small orchards had largely disappeared,” and then noting that “an astonishing amount of land in Brooklyn’s southern tier was still being used as farms.” Beginning with the 1945 CA, the USBC used pounds rather than gallons as a production standard. In order to avoid confusion, the published data for 1944, 1949, 1954, and 1959 (4,478,364, 2,940,560, 2,950,660, and 2,800,000 lb., respectively) have been converted to gallons using a conversion ratio of one gallon of whole milk = 8.6068 pounds. The total number of horses and cows in New York State did not fluctuate wildly: both rose steadily throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century. The scattered data on numbers employed, hired laborers, and wages paid to hired labor are also difficult to interpret, but the 17 percent decline in total wages from 1870
to 1900 seems plausible. These labor-related data will be supplemented in chapter 4 with data drawn from the CP.

9. Edgar Dunn Jr., The Location of Agricultural Production 12 (quote). For comparisons with developments in New York State, see NYS College of Agriculture, Changes in New York State Agriculture. For background on von Thünen, see the otherwise dogmatic work by Herbert Luck, Zur ökonomischen Lehre des J. J. Von Thünen.

10. Johann Heinrich von Thünen, Der isolierte Staat 11–15, 206–10. Von Thünen regarded manure as a substance sui generis — neither commodity nor product, because it was produced involuntarily — whose quantity could not be altered by changes in demand, and which had a negative value for its owner. He deduced that where the city's manure exceeded the needs of the nearby farms, it would give its manure to all farmers even though close-in farmers would be willing to pay for it because price differentiation would require arbitrary compulsory means inconsistent with a market.


15. The sources are the state censuses cited in tab. 1a–1b.

16. U.S. Census, 1870, Agriculture, KC, Flatbush. Jeremiah Lott was reported as having produced 35,000 bushels in 1870, but this outlier quantity is not consistent with the total value of his output. In 1872, for example, Asher Hubbard of Flatlands and William Bennett of Gravesend both averaged 200 bushels per acre on 30 to 40 and 25 acres, respectively, while two years later J. J. Ryder of Flatlands averaged 225. “Flatlands,” KCRG, May 11, 1872, 5:2; “Potatoes,” KCRG, July 27, 1872, 6:1; “Flatlands,” KCRG, July 4, 1874, 8:4.

17. Teunis G. Bergen, The Bergen Family 108. In 1845, 12 farms of one hundred or more improved acres were returned for Flatbush, the largest being John Vanderveer’s of 180 acres. State of New York, Census for the Year 1845, Flatbush, in TRKC. In Queens, German-born Ascan Backus (1814–1880) acquired seven farms totaling 460 acres; his 50 year-round employees and as many as 300 other workers produced more market garden produce (valued in some years at $100,000) than any other farm in New York State. Long Island Times (Flushing), Nov. 12, 1863, 2:3 (reprinted from Rural American); Vincent Seyfried, “Truck Gardening” 3 (unpub.). According to Lefferts Vanderbilt, Social History of Flatbush 230, John Lefferts’s farm encompassed 300 acres in 1840; it is unclear whether it was operated as one farm. For the sake of simplicity, the term “old-line Dutch” encompasses descendants of the original English settlers in Gravesend such as the Hubbard, Lake, and Stillwell families, many of whom intermarried with members of Dutch farm families. Thompson, History of Long Island 3:117. The Allgeo family was originally English, but married into the Antonidas family. The Eagle and Brooklyn 83.

18. U.S. Census, 1850, Agriculture, reel 4; U.S. Census, 1860, Agriculture, reel 4; U.S.
Census, 1870, Agriculture, reel 5; U.S. Census, 1880, Agriculture, reel 18. The census of 1840 did not collect data on the number of farms, and farm size and the MS for the census of 1890 burned. The seven farms in New Lots in 1860 were owned by three Vanderveers, two Rapeljes, one Conover (Kouwenhoven), and one Duryea. Gravesend reported only seven farms of one hundred acres or more in 1850; the one remaining such farm in 1880 was tenant operated. According to William Fausser, The Brooklyn and Rockaway Beach Railroad n. p. [1], 100 acres of the Vanderveer farm were still under cultivation as late as 1899. Although the Vanderveer farms were primarily situated in New Lots, in 1884 Abram Vanderveer bought Jerome L. Bergens 60-acre farm in Flatlands, which was intended for Vanderveer's son to operate. The $400 per acre price was at the time the highest price that had been paid for any land in that town for many years. "Flatlands," KCRBG, Mar. 8, 1884, 2:3.


21. That the census of 1840 found only 10 men employed in all of Kings County horticulture, in which farmers had invested only $9,400, may have been a function of the rudimentary state of both data collection and horticulture. DS, Compendium of the Enumeration . . . of the Sixth Census at 133. On Bennett's income, see chapter 11 below.

22. U.S. Census, 1850, Agriculture, reel 4; U.S. Census, 1860, Agriculture, reel 4; John C. Bergen Papers, Account Book; "Census," KCRG, Aug. 21, 1875, 2:1 (amounts of Flatlands crops); "Flatlands," KCRG, Oct. 16, 1875, 2:5; "Flatlands," KCRBG, Oct. 16, 1880, 2:5; William Bennett & Son, Farm Accounts; "Bay Ridge," KCRG, Sept. 4, 1875, 2:7; "New Utrecht, Bath and Unionville," KCRG, Oct. 28, 1876, 2:5. The 1865 state census (with data for 1864) reported that all of Kings County harvested fewer cabbages (1,205,000 valued at $86,395) than Flatlands alone in 1860; CSNY, for 1865 at 405. Even if the figure for the later year is an underestimate, Kings County nevertheless produced more than three-fifths of the state's entire crop. John C. Bergen (born 1826) inherited Bergen's Island, which included 90 acres of upland in the salt marshes of Flatlands, from his father, Cornelius (1798–1865), who, in turn, had inherited half from his father and bought the other half from his brother's heirs. Shortly after his father's death, he bought a 15-acre farm for $10,000 from his uncle Garret Bergen. Teunis G. Bergen, The Bergen Family 355–57, 364. It is unclear how the Rural Gazette obtained the New York State CA data so far in advance of their publication; even more puzzling is how it secured data on individual crops that were never published. Since enumerators were instructed to enter information on unenumerated farm produce, including asparagus and sweet corn, but such data were not published, presumably the newspaper had access to the enumerator's census schedules. Secretary of State, Instructions for the Taking of the Census of the State of New York in the Year 1875 at 41–42. For an advertisement of sweet corn for sale by a Flatlands...
farmer, see KCRG, July 10, 1880, 2:8. Tunis Kouwenhoven, a Flatlands farmer, sold asparagus to groceries in the city. "Flatlands," KCRG, June 7, 1884, 2:3.

23. D. W. Meinig, "Geography of Expansion" 166; Adriance Van Brunt, Diary; U.S. Census, 1850, Agriculture, reel 4, Ninth Ward, Brooklyn City (quote); Ralph Gabriel, The Evolution of Long Island 59 (quote).


25. TNYSAS, 12 (1852): 535–36 (speech of John King) (quotes). See also Jeffrey Kroessler, "Building Queens: The Urbanization of New York's Largest Borough" 97–98, 93 (Ph.D. diss.). On the railway's extension of New York City's milkshed to as far away as Rutland, Vermont, see Report of the Commissioner of Agriculture for the Year 1872 at 332. An Eagle editorial suggesting that, because it was more profitable to grow wheat near to the market with fertilizer than two thousand miles away on lands that cost next to nothing and need no manure, Long Island could or perhaps should produce as much wheat as then cultivated in all New York State, must have been fantastic even at the time. "The Future of Long Island Farm Lands," BDE, Nov. 15, 1873, 2:3.


27. TNYSAS, 12 (1852): 545–46.


30. Peters, Report on the Agricultural and Other Resources of the State of New York 260 (quote); Fourth Annual Report of State Assessors, tab. A at 87. Peters' perspective received an interesting confirmation from the fact that the same year a group of Brooklyn citizens, many of whom were descendants of Dutch settlers, founded the Long Island (today Brooklyn) Historical Society because they feared that rapid urban growth would destroy the area's past. Bastedo, "Introduction" 7.

31. H. Cleveland, "Notes on the Market Gardening of New Jersey" 403 (quotes); Michael Sullivan, "The Advancement of Market Gardening in the Past Twenty-Five Years" 65 (quote); Peter Henderson, "Market Gardening in the Vicinity of New York" 243 (quote); A. Oemler, Truck-Farming at the South 163–65 (quote at 165); Percy Bidwell and John Falconer, History of Agriculture in the Northern United States 260–61, 450; Paul Gates, The Farmer's Age 256, 269; Shannon, The Farmer's Last Frontier 259. As late as 1915, special railroad trains to New York City ran daily during the season collecting cauliflower from Long Island. W. Nissley, "Vegetable Growing on Long Island" 1229.

32. Clarence Danhof, Change in Agriculture 147–48.

33. "Farming and Market Gardening"

Money in the Garden 72 (quote); Landreth, Market Gardening and Farm Notes 9; CO, Report on the Statistics of Agriculture in the United States at the Eleventh Census 595.

35. CO, Twelfth Census, vol. VI, pt. II at 300–302. The value per acre figures were not published and are calculated here for the sake of completeness. Acreage data on market gardening were not collected for the crucial last third of the nineteenth century, thus making it impossible to know how value per acre developed. The extraordinary fall in the value of market garden production between 1879 and 1890 is curious. Market garden production amounted to only 18 percent of the value of total production in 1890 compared with 70 percent in 1879; it is unclear what other production could have made up the difference. The cost of fertilizer amounted to 71 percent of the value of market garden production in 1890 compared with only 25 percent in 1879. In Queens County, which also suffered a very large drop in production, fertilizer cost even exceeded the value of market garden production. In fact, blight and rot in 1889–90 created the most serious and general loss of potatoes in New York State since 1849–50. Forty-Ninth Annual Report of the New York State Agricultural Society 9–11; Fiftieth Annual Report of the New York State Agricultural Society 9–11. The sharp decline in the 1920s may be overstated because the value of vegetable production in 1929 (and 1939) excluded that of potatoes. The value of vegetable production inferentially or definitely excluded potatoes in 1854, 1860, 1864, 1879, and 1899, but included it in 1919; for other years it is not clear, but the various rubrics seem to suggest that potatoes’ value may have been excluded. The 1875 state census instructed enumerators to collect data on the acreage and value of market gardens but failed to publish them. Secretary of State, Instructions for Taking the Census 40–41. The reference point is not clear, but the 1924 CA confirmed the decline by reporting that the value of the same crops fell from $184,000 in 1919 to $10,808 in 1924. USBC, United States Census of Agriculture: 1925, county tab. IV at 219. According to Sam Bass Warner Jr., To Dwell Is to Garden 19, 20 million victory gardeners produced 44 percent of the fresh vegetables in the United States in 1944; it is unclear whether such gardens were included in the CA.

36. The following figures are based on the total calculated from the MS rather than the published data. According to the 1850 CA, the first to include town-level data, Brooklyn accounted for 31 percent of total market garden output, slightly more than New Utrecht. In 1860, when Brooklyn’s share had fallen to 18 percent, its $58,464 worth of production (which had risen because the city in the meantime had annexed Bushwick) still exceeded that of Flatbush, which rose eightfold during the 1850s, while its offshoot, new town of New Lots, produced even more than Flatbush. By 1870, Brooklyn’s production had declined to $46,000, but it still exceeded that of Flatbush and Flatlands. Not until 1879–80 did Brooklyn’s vegetable production sink to an insignificant $17,800, or about 2 percent of the county total. At this point of peak recorded output, the towns were rank-ordered as follows: New Utrecht ($287,035, or 34 percent); Flatlands ($203,200, or 24 percent); New Lots ($191,750, or 23 percent); Flatbush ($137,882, or 16 percent); Brooklyn ($22,800, or 3 percent); and Gravesend (0). New York State cen-
suses reveal an even more pronounced and longer-lasting domination of market gardening by Brooklyn. In 1854, the city (including Bushwick) accounted for 30 percent of total acreage and 44 percent of total output; by 1864, these shares had risen to 65 percent and 69 percent, respectively. The minuscule acreage and production recorded for Flatbush and Flatlands in both years are not reconcilable with the federal census data for 1860. Regardless of whether the state census figures for the other towns are credible, Brooklyn’s $120,078 and $173,950 worth of output for 1854 and 1864, respectively, are impressive. They suggest that farmers in Brooklyn underwent a temporally more compressed version of the market gardening that those in the rest of the county were about to adopt.

37. U.S. CA, 1870, KC, Flatbush, MS; U.S. CA, 1880, KC, Flatbush, MS.

38. “Annexation: City and County Union,” BDE, Mar. 3, 1873, 2:6, 7 (quote); KCRG, May 17, 1873, 4:4 (reporting that N. Feltman was putting in tomatoes and had peas in very forward condition); “Gravesend Neck,” ibid., 5:1 (J. Kouwenhoven had already cut 720 bunches of asparagus); “Gravesend,” KCRBGy, July 22, 1882, 2:4 (Daniel Barre planted celery and Stephen Wyckoff had cabbage as good as anyone’s in town); U.S. CA, 1860, MS; U.S. CA, 1870, MS; U.S. CA, 1880, MS; U.S. CA, 1880, MS. William Bennett’s Gravesend farm produced a large volume of cabbages and other vegetables in the 1880s and 1890s. William Bennett & Son, Farm Accounts.

The development in New Lots would be even more deviant if what appear to be two large enumeration errors were corrected: the town’s total market garden output would then have fallen by almost one-fifth and its share of total production would have fallen below one-half. Some of the differences in output and productivity among the towns may be explained by differences in soil quality. The Miami stony loam covering much of New Utrecht was the deepest soil in the county, permitting production of three or even more crops from the same field each year. A typical market garden rotation on this soil type included: early spring spinach, kale, and rhubarb; lettuce, radishes, and early peas; and later cabbage, parsnips, carrots, beets, turnips, onions, and potatoes. The well-drained and moisture-retaining Hempstead loam covering almost all of Flatbush, much of Flatlands, and the eastern part of New Utrecht offered good yields of potatoes, cabbages, tomatoes, and corn, being second in value only to Miami stony loams. Bonsteel et al., “Soil Survey of the Long Island Area” 99–100, 108–10. Some of the soil types in Gravesend, such as Galveston sand and Galveston sandy loam, were not valuable for agriculture, but others, in particular Norfolk sand and Sassafras sandy loam, were the sites of potato, pea, lettuce, and onion cultivation. Ibid. at 101, 103, 105, 115–18.

39. U.S. Census, 1880, Agriculture, reel 18, MS.

40. U.S. Census, 1850, Agriculture, reel 4, KC, Ninth Ward, Brooklyn (remark of enumerator) (quote); U.S. Bureau of the Census, Twelfth Census, vol. VI, pt. 2 at 785–88 (flowers). As late as 1893 Queens “for a distance of twenty miles from the city of Brooklyn is filled with market gardens, in which are grown in large quantities every conceivable vegetable that has any place in the culinary arts and can be grown in this latitude.” BDEA: 1893 at 46. The claim that “the struggle for agricultural survival which took place in Brooklyn at the turn of the century...
brought intensive and efficient cultivation of the most profitable market crops available” is set several decades too late. Harvey Mandel, “The Sequent Pattern of Agriculture on Long Island, New York” 5 (typescript). Kings County’s absolute output and relative position at various censuses may have been artificially depressed by errors committed by enumerators. The tabulations published in the 1850 CA credited the county with $88,086 in market garden produce. However, the individual amounts recorded in the MS add up to $109,605, which would have lifted Kings County from 12th to 9th place. In 1860, Flatlands was credited with no market garden production because the enumerator, instead of filling in this column, recorded the number of cabbages harvested. Had these 1,280,400 head of cabbage been monetized together with the rest of the town’s vegetable output, Kings County might have risen as high as 6th place. In 1870 one whole sheet from the CA covering 40 New Utrecht farms appears to have been omitted from the published tabulations. Since New Utrecht was the biggest vegetable producer in 1860 and 1880, inclusion of these “lost” farms might have brought Kings County as high as 5th place in 1870. The implausibility of census enumerators’ failure to record any market garden production in Gravesend has been noted. These speculative upward adjustments of Kings County’s position in these four census years presuppose that similar errors did not generate similar undercounts in other counties. On the other hand, the enumerator for the third election district of the town of New Lots in 1880 credited Nicholas Linington and U. Van Sinderen with $25,000 and $50,000 worth of market garden production, respectively. These sums were not only much higher than that of the next highest Kings County producer (which was $10,000, with one exception to be mentioned), but far in excess of the two farmers’ total production, which was $5,000 and $10,000, respectively. The tabulators in Washington apparently did not notice this discrepancy. Even if their combined market garden figure of $75,000 were deleted, however, Kings County would still remain far ahead of third-place Middlesex. The enumerator for New Lots introduced another possible error by crediting Williamson Glover with $19,000 worth of market garden production; Glover’s total production, which was crossed out several times and written over, appears to have been $23,000. Both of these figures were the highest in Kings County. Yet Glover was apparently a tenant, who paid $1,800 in rent for 12 acres of pasture and no tilled acreage and spent nothing on fertilizer. U.S. CA, 1880, KC, NL, SD no. 2, ED no. 261 at 2, and ED no. 258 at 1. Even if its total for market garden production in 1879 was erroneous, Kings County would still retain its second-place position.

41. Calculated according to Frederick Emerson, “A Geographic Interpretation of New York City” 20 (Ph.D. diss.).

42. The population of Jersey City rose by almost 4,000 percent between 1840 and 1880 from 3,000 to 120,000. Edward Bergman and Thomas Pohl, A Geography of the New York Metropolitan Region 37, 52.

43. Daniel Tredwell, “Flatbush” at 41–42.

44. KCRG, Nov. 27, 1875, 3:6. Other farmers owned more or different implements. Benjamin Hitchings, a lawyer who in 1879 auctioned the stock of his Gravesend
farm after the death of his son who had farmed it, offered not only five market wagons, but also a mowing machine, two cultivators, one gang-plow, five-beam harrows, steel plows, and a furrowing machine. KCRG, Dec. 20, 1879, 2:8. Although Hitchings advertised for a tenant after his son's death, the 1880 CA still returned Hitchings as operating the farm, which produced $6,000 worth of product. Ibid., Nov. 29, 1879, 3:5. Among the items that Jerome L. Bergen, who sold his Flatlands farm, offered in 1884 were a hay rack, potato marker, potato coverer, shovel plow (which was used for digging potatoes), potato harrow, corn harrow, cultivator, corn drill, Collins plow, Peekskill sod plow, seven-beam harrow, Fisher wheel plow, fan mill and corn sheller, fertilizer distributor, two cabbage plows, two six-beam harrows, and four other plows. KCRBG, Mar. 22, 1884, 3:3. Jerome L. Bergen was returned at the 1870 CP and CA as 29-year-old farmer who produced $3,125 worth of products on his 45-acre farm. He did not appear in either census for 1880 in Flatlands. Other auction notices included similar items. E.g., KCG, Oct. 3, 1885, 3:2 (George Ryerson of Flatlands); KCG, Oct. 31, 1885, 2:6 (W. J. and A. J. Cropsey of New Utrecht). On the shovel plow, see Arthur Gilbert, The Potato 230.

45. The eleven counties with the largest fertilizer expenditures were: Queens ($636,058), York, Pa. ($489,576), Lancaster, Pa. ($349,684), Montgomery, Md. ($335,775), Chester, Pa. ($319,498), Frederick, Md. ($305,038), Harford, Md. ($274,346), Suffolk, N.Y. ($272,134), Burlington, N.J. ($260,522), Bucks, Pa. ($259,887), and Baltimore ($251,754). The data on commercial fertilizer, which presumably included animal manures and chemical fertilizers, did not attain a "high degree of accuracy." CO, Report on . . . Agriculture . . . Tenth Census xxv. Forrester's complete manures was a major advertiser; e.g., KCRG, Jan. 4, 1879, 1:6.


47. USCO, Twelfth Census, vol. V, pt. I, tab. 19 at 266-307; USCO, Twelfth Census, vol. VI, pt. II, tab. 22 at 360-99. According to alternative data, Kings County farmers harvested vegetables on 1,191 acres with an average yield of $219, while average yields in Queens and Middlesex counties were $223 and $244 respectively. Ibid. at 316-18.

48. USCO, Twelfth Census, vol. V, pt. I at 306 (quote). The highest-valued farmland was found in Baltimore (city) ($1,258), Hudson, N.J. ($815), and Suffolk, Mass. ($528). Census authorities defined the cash value of farms as the price they would ordinarily bring if sold without reference to cost or assessed value. Secretary of State, Instructions for Taking the Census of State of New York in the Year 1875 at 36.

49. U.S. Census, 1880, Agriculture, reel 18, KC, MS. Because the 1880 Census of Agriculture collected but did not publish wage data, a comparison with other counties cannot be made.

50. Rawson, Success in Market Gardening 99 (20 cords of manure at $7 per cord used per acre of cabbage); Landreth, Market Gardening and Farm Notes 124 ($80 per acre of celery); Henderson, Gardening for Profit 250 ($72 per acre of onions);
Henderson, *Gardening for Profit* 37, 110–11 (1890) (quotes). Henderson stated that manure and guano together costing $100 to $150 per acre were used on vegetable crops in the vicinity of New York. Ibid. at 39. Kings County farmers did not always let a large proportion of their land lie fallow. In 1872, for example, Robert Magaw, a large Flatlands market gardener, cultivated 70 of his 80 acres. "Flatlands," *KCRG*, May 11, 1872, 5:2.

51. Calculated according to *SC, CSNY* for 1875, tab. 55 at 324. Why wage costs amounted to only 20 percent of the value of market garden production in Flatbush, which had the lowest proportion of owner-operators, is unclear. In Gravesend, where farmers produced chiefly potatoes, fertilizer and labor costs amounted to 20 percent and 29 percent, respectively, of the total value of production. Over the years from 1883 through 1898, William Bennett’s fertilizer and labor costs — which in 1879–80 were a below-average 12.5 percent and 20 percent — amounted to 15 percent and 20 percent, respectively, of his total sales. William Bennett & Son, Farm Accounts.

52. Calculated according to data in U.S. Census, 1880, Agriculture, reel 18, KC, MS. The cost of seeds may, at least for potatoes, have been significant. In the spring of 1877, for example, high seed prices prompted farmers in New Utrecht not to plant as many potatoes as usual and small farmers not to plant at all. "New Utrecht, Bath and Unionville," *KCRG*, Apr. 21, 1877, 2:6. William Bennett spent considerable sums on seed potatoes: in 1884 he spent $138.25 on 79 barrels in addition to $21.25 on various vegetable seeds; in 1891 he spent $220 on seed potatoes and $10 on cabbage seeds. William Bennett & Son, Farm Accounts.

53. Compared with the value of total production, wage and fertilizer costs were highest in New Utrecht at 52 percent, and lowest in Flatbush at 30 percent. Table 8 reveals that the New Lots data are defective: the value of market garden produce exceeds that of all productions. The reason for this logical impossibility is that for a few farms the census enumerator inserted values for huge market garden produce that exceeded the value of the corresponding total production. The other New Lots indicators do not appear to be similarly flawed.


55. Richard Wines, *Fertilizer in America* 11 (quote); *KCRB*, Jan. 29, 1881, 3:4 (Atlantic Ave. R.R.) (quote); *KCRB*, Sept. 22, 1883, 3:1 (Dekalb Ave. R.R. advertising manure from 400 horses for a year); *KCRB*, Nov. 17, 1883, 3:4 (Franklin Ave. Railroad selling stable manure); *KCRB*, Aug. 2, 1884, 3:3 (Nostrand Ave. R.R. selling cheap manure of 300 horses for a year or more); "Injustice to Our Farmers," *KCRG*, Dec. 20, 1873, 4:1 (editorial) (the injustice lay in applying an ordinance fining those who carted manure uncovered to several of "our well-to-do farmers" without having given them fair notice); Robert Criswell, "Economy in Farming," *KCRG*, Feb. 27, 1875, 1:1, 2 (quote). In the 1880s and 1890s, the Long Island R.R. operated twice-weekly piggyback market trains from Suffolk County to Brooklyn; farmers wagons were loaded onto flat cars, while the horses stood in box cars, and the farmers rode in passengers coaches; on return trips farmers could transport manure. Vincent Seyfried, "Truck Gardening" 2–3.
56. “The Lefferts Property,” BDE, Mar. 6, 1873, 2:8; “Sanitary Notes — Sewerage and Sewage.”


60. TNYSAS 6:632–36 (1847), reprinted in James Bunce and Richard Harmond, Long Island as America 115 (quote); TNYSAS 8:527–29 (1849), reprinted in Bunce and Harmond, Long Island as America 116–17 (quote).


62. Wines, Fertilizer in America 9–11. The manure-vegetable recycling system was not confined to Long Island. Soon after the Civil War, Connecticut farmers imported horse manure from New York City to spread on their onion fields; much of the onion crop was then marketed in New York City. Russell, A Long, Deep Furrow 449. Nor was the urban market gardening-manure complex unique to the United States. In late nineteenth-century France, the “agricultural preoccupations of the urban periphery . . . were accentuated . . . with the development of garden or truck farming in response to the demands of the increased urban population.” John Merriman, The Margins of City Life 36. One-sixth of the area of Paris was devoted to small-scale marais or market gardening; as many as 9,000 maraîchers not only supplied the city with more fresh vegetables than current consumption levels while exporting much to London as well, but also helped abate the transportation pollution problem by transforming enormous volumes of horse manure into fertile soil. On as few as one to four acres, market gardeners, using abundant manure and hotbed frames and hot-water pipes throughout the winter, and paying rents as high as $125 per acre, took as many as eight successive crops per season. Yet another heavy user of manure in the late nineteenth century were the 200 or more mushroom growers, who year-round produced tremendous quantities in the miles of caves or galleries that traversed Paris at depths of 10 to 20 meters. So heavy was the Paris vegetable growers’ reliance on the city’s horse manure that motorization of transport was a prime cause of the demise of this cultivation in the first quarter of the twentieth century. G. Stanhill, “An Urban Agro-Ecosystem”; George Campbell, “Horticulture” 389–91, 393–98; Petr Kropotkin, Fields, Factories and Workshops 73–86, 127–53. Paris, however, exercised greater control over sanitation and waste recycling. The city began to deal with its street sewage after it was recognized
that discharging it into the Seine polluted the water, poisoned and killed the fish, and rendered neighborhoods along the river unhealthful and unaesthetic. Experiments began in 1868 to use the sewage as fertilizer for horticultural products in nearby Asnières. Pumps controlled by steam engines, conduit pipes, drains, and trenches were built to direct the fertilizing streams at the rows of crops. Yields soon doubled and quadrupled on theretofore poor and infertile land, from which by the 1870s 140,000 kilos of cabbage per hectare were harvested. Campbell, “Horticulture” 414–18. Sewage farming was also widely practiced in Britain and near continental European cities such as Berlin. M. Baker, “The Utilization of City Wastes on the Farm.”


64. HIRAT 3 (1): 487–89 (July 1848); History of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, 1829–1878; Wines, Fertilizer in America 12 (quote). William Schenck, the Flatbush farmer pictured in figure 1, bought $33.25 worth of potato fertilizer and $10.00 worth of cabbage fertilizer from H. J. Baker & Co., Importers, Dealers and Manufacturers, in New York, on March 22, 1880. Copy of invoice furnished by Lola Schenck Cheney. William Bennett of Gravesend bought $523.80 worth of potato manure and corn manure on May 15 and 17, and July 5 and 8, 1893, from Baker. Invoice at Wyckoff-Bennett Homestead.

65. 1864 N.Y. Laws, ch. 310, sect. 2, at 743, 744 (quote); KCRG, Jan. 25, 1873, 6:2 (quote); “Farm Notes,” KCRG, Feb. 22, 1873, 6:1 (quote); “Long Island Items,” KCRG, Jan. 24, 1880, 4:2. At its meeting in Long Island City in 1880, farmers from New Lots and Flatlands, which were closest to that town, were especially well represented and included C. B. Kowenhoven, Abraham Van Siclen, and Simon Rapelye.


68. “Long Island as a Farming Country,” KCRBG, Aug. 26, 1882, 2:7 (quote). This article casts doubt on the accuracy of a fertilizer infomercial asserting that the “old fashioned custom of our farmers hauling manure, from the city for two or three months, every spring has to a large extent died out” as they recognized that chemical manures were superior and required only two or three days’ hauling. “Manures,” KCRBG, Apr. 12, 1884, 2:2. A previous infomercial for Forrester’s Potato Fertilizer asserted that commercial fertilizer could save Kings County farmers “the labor of their teams in carting manure, and the labor of their help in cutting down and turning manure in the heap.” KCRG, Mar. 23, 1878, 2:2.

69. Ralph Watts and Gilbert Watts, The Vegetable Growing Business 3 (disappearance of manure); ARSESSNY 1863 at 164 (Brooklyn City R.R.); Second Annual Report of the Board of Railroad Commissioners, 1884 at 2:962 (Brooklyn City R.R.); BDEA: 1891 at 47 (animal power); Joel Tarr, “From City to Farm.” Kings County’s
position as an outlier with respect to fertilizer costs was not positively correlated with its livestock holdings (and thus with access to farm-generated manure), which at 0.38 livestock per acre was the second highest among the 12 largest spenders on fertilizer in 1879. CO, *Report on the Productions of Agriculture*, tab. VII at 104–40, tab. IX at 142–76. As late as 1916, 12,000 motor vehicles crossed the four East River bridges in a single day compared with 7,500 one-horse, 5,000 two-horse, and 500 three-horse vehicles. Ellsworth Huntington, “The Water Barriers of New York City” 174. William Bennett’s account books shed light on the comparative use of chemical fertilizer and manure: although he spent much more (never less than 2.7 times as much) money on the former, he also bought many loads of the latter until the final years of the farm in the late 1890s. For example, in 1884, he spent $1,132.50 on fertilizer and $64.50 on 47 loads of manure. Manure became cheaper over time: in 1883 Bennett never paid less than $1.50 per load; by 1893, he often paid less than 60 cents and at times as little as 12.5 cents. William Bennett & Son, Farm Accounts.

70. G. Brown Goode, “The Sea Fisheries (A History of the Menhaden)” 168, 175, 189; Gabriel, *Evolution of Long Island* 76–88; The Eagle and Brooklyn 1137 (quote); Ross, *History of Long Island* 1:316 (quote); Stiles, *Civil... History* 1:78–79. In the 1930s, Barren Island still resembled “an isolated village in some remote countryside.” *The WPA Guide to New York City* 504. The 1880 CP for Flatlands included a special subsection for Barren Island, listing 309 inhabitants; the occupation column of several pages of the manuscript schedules was headed, “Fisch Oil and Guano Factory” and “For Fertilizing Crops.” Many of the factory laborers were black. Tenth Census, 1880, NY, vol. 38, Kings, pt. 10, Flatlands 60–66.


72. L. C. Corbett, *The Potato as a Truck Crop* 15 (quote); L. C. Corbett, *Intensive Farming* 129–34 (quote at 133); Corbett, *Garden Farming* 165. Although horse manure contains less nitrogen and less overall nutritive value than cow manure, there is no evidence that Kings County farmers’ principal competitors had such greater access to the latter that it would have explained their vastly lower expenditures on fertilizer.

3. Competitiveness and the “Courageous Capitalist”


3. Thomas F. De Voe, *The Market Book* 1:448 (quote); “City Markets,” HJRART 19:377–79 (1864) (quote). De Voe, a market merchant, focused his description on meat marketing. His account appears more reliable than later newspaper stories. He stated that Washington Market was opened in 1813, nine years before Fulton Market, and mentioned nothing about farmers’ having been driven
from the latter to the former. Ibid. at 406–407, 488–96. According to "The Big Market Wagons," NYT, Jan. 24, 1880, 8:1, farmers began congregating at Fulton Market fifty years earlier and were then driven away. The Common Council authorized the establishment of West Washington Market in 1861; four years earlier, the clerk of the market had been directed to assign farmers certain streets for selling market garden produce. "Where Shall the Market Be?" NYT, Jan. 16, 1880, 8:4.


6. "West Washington Market," KCRG, Oct. 11, 1879, 3:1 (reprinting article). The Market Index suggested that West Washington Market would enable farmers to bring their produce directly to the market's dealers and return home, thus saving time and eliminating one set of middlemen.


13. "The Market Question," KCRG, Feb. 21, 1880, 2:3; Stiles, Civil . . . History 2:972 (quoting an identified issue of the Brooklyn Daily Eagle from 1883 or 1884); KCRG, Oct. 20, 1878 (on efforts to compel Kings County farmers to cease taking midday loads to New York); "Facts" 4:1 (quote).


20. CG, 39th Cong., 1st Sess. 2656 (1866) (quote); Act of July 13, 1866, ch. 184, sect. 9, 14 Stat. 93, 119 (quote); CG, 39th Cong., 2d Sess. 1480 (1867) (quote); Act of Mar. 2, 1867, ch. 169, sect. 11, 14 Stat. 471, 477. In 1863 the Commissioner of Internal Revenue had already ruled that: "A person who sells the products of his farm by travelling from house to house and disposing of the same wherever he finds a purchaser is not, under the law, considered a peddler." Although farmers whose sales by means of a store or stall exceeded $1,000 were liable to license as dealers, this liability "when above a certain amount does not extend to their sales as peddlers." Office of Internal Revenue, Ruling No. 102, printed in George Boutwell, A Manual of the Direct and Excise Tax System of the United States 318. On Bergen, see Biographical Directory of the American Congress 654; Stiles, Civil... History 1:268; CP, 1870, KC, NU, MS, at 11; CP, 1880, KC, NU, MS, SD no. 2, ED no. 262, at 57. The course of Bergen's operations reflected the overall trend from extensive to intensive farming. In 1850 he produced $1,500 worth of market garden produce on his 53-acre farm; by 1860, his farm encompassed only 25 acres but the value of his market garden produce had doubled to $3,000; by 1870, his even smaller 16-acre farm yielded another doubling to $6,000. On Bergen's sale of part of his farm, see Bergen, Bergen Family (2d ed.) 366. As late as 1879, Bergen bought six acres of woodland from the Van Brunt heirs. "New Utrecht, Bath and
Unionville,” KCRG, May 10, 1879, 2:2. Even in 1880, a year before his death, his 24-acre farm produced $2,740 worth of vegetables. 1850, 1860, 1870, and 1880 CA, KC, NU, MS.


23. Turner v. Kouwenhoven (testimony of W. Kouwenhoven), in Appeal Book 34, 43 (quote); Turner v. Kouwenhoven, Brief for Appellant 3–4, in Appeal Book (quote); testimony of William Harrison, grocer (for defendant), in Appeal Book 16 (quote).

24. “Some Suburbs of New York” 125 (quote); A Flatlander, “Plea For (?) Annexation,” KCRG, Jan. 11, 1873, 1:2 (quote); “Flatlands,” KCRBG, Aug. 22, 1885, 2:4; KCRG, July 28, 1877, 2:4 (untitled) (quote); Turner v. Kouwenhoven, Testimony by John Turner, Mar. 17, 1882, at 90, in Appeal Book (quote). Turner was presumably referring to Manhattan Market on West 34th Street, which opened in 1880. “Manhattan Market,” KCRBG, July 3, 1880, 2:4. It is unclear when farmers began using the Brooklyn Bridge, which users in the nineteenth century had to pay to cross. Initially, one horse and vehicle cost 10 cents, two horses and vehicle 20 cents; by 1889, one horse and vehicle cost 5 cents. By the end of 1889, after six and a half years of operation, 166 million passengers had paid almost $5 million in tolls. “The Bridge Toll,” KCRBG, May 19, 1883, 2:1–2; BDEA: 1890 at 86–87. On the danger to which a “rough” could expose a marketman, see “Gravesend,” KCRG, Sept. 19, 1874, 1:1. Flatlands farmers had either to use extra horses to drive loads on the Flatlands town roads at night or to drive their wagons to Flatbush during the day and let them stand there until evening before proceeding to market. “Flatlands,” KCRG, Sept. 15, 1877, 2:4.

25. J. D. M., letter to editor, KCRG, Apr. 22, 1876, 2:5 (complaining about carriers’ exorbitant $1 wage at Washington Market); “New Utrecht, Bath and Unionville,” KCRBG, Sept. 12, 1885, 2:5 (quote).

Farmers may have chosen this route because it was easy to follow after dark and/or enabled them to avoid the Flatbush toll road. Horse-car railroad companies apparently did not object. "Flatlands," KCRG, Nov. 6, 1875, 2:4. Nicholson pavement, which was patented in 1848, was laid extensively during the decade after the Civil War. U.S. Forest Service, *Wood Paving in the United States* 6. At least one large farmer, Rulef van Brunt, sent his vegetables to New York by boat from his own docks on the shore below his house in Bay Ridge. Younger, *Old Brooklyn in Early Photographs* 102.

27. See, e.g., "Gravesend," KCRG, July 18, 1874, 1:2 (a Gravesend farmer killed a girl in Brooklyn); "East New York," KCRG, Sept. 12, 1874, 1:2 (farmer’s wagon severely injured boy).


32. Theodore Baker, "Market Gardening" 223. The *Rural Gazette* published some data on yields, costs, and profits of market gardening in Virginia, adding that from "all we hear, it would seem . . . a better place for market gardening than Kings County." Unfortunately, it never published any replies to its request to readers for similar data from Kings County. "Market Gardening," KCRG, Apr. 25, 1874, 4:3.

33. A. Oemler, "Truck Farming" 584, 583. Much of this article is based on Oemler’s book, which first appeared in 1883. Oemler, *Truck-Farming at the South*.


35. Henderson, *Gardening for Profit* 18–19, 23 (1890 ed.) (quotes). The issue of whether Dutch farmers’ competitive cost position was strengthened by the absence of land costs is distinct from the question of whether they at some point considered the present value of their land in order to calculate the opportunity cost of farming as opposed to selling the land; see part II below. On the few Dutch farmers still farming in the 1880s, see chapter 9 below.
36. Oemler, "Truck Farming" 609-10 (quote); Earle, "Development of the Trucking Interests" 439 (quote). Shortly after World War I, the FTC stated that: "A distant producer is on a footing almost equal to that of one near by who drives to market by reason of the low railroad rate. . . . It is estimated that a ton of freight can be sent by rail nearly 700 miles for the amount it costs to carry it 20 miles by horse-drawn conveyance." FTC, Food Investigation 124.

37. "Farm Notes," KCRG, Mar. 8, 1873, 6:1.

38. Oemler, "Truck Farming" 584-85. Shannon, Farmers' Last Frontier 123, noted that "the bountiful supply of labor to be exploited cheaply in the picking and packing season" supported nineteenth-century southern truck farming.

39. Oemler, Truck-Farming at the South 7.

40. Philip Bruce, The Rise of the New South 64. Not all southern market gardeners were white. Peter Henderson, who also operated a seed and plant business, reported that when he called on a customer in Charleston, South Carolina, he was "surprised" that the owners were "two modest-looking colored men." By 1883 they owned "75 acres of valuable land" on which they employed 75 workers. He considered the farm, generating annual profits of $20,000 to $30,000, a model and technologically more advanced than those in Hudson County. Henderson, "Market Gardening" 161-62.

41. USCO, Census Reports, vol. VI, Twelfth Census, pt. II at 307 (quote); Andrew Soule, "Vegetable, Fruit and Nursery Products and Truck Farming in the South" 128 (quote); USDA, Div. of Statistics, Wages of Farm Labor in the United States 22 (quote). The data were calculated according to CO, Report on the Statistics of Agriculture in the United States at the Eleventh Census 597, 593, 596, which must be used with caution since it omitted vegetables grown in market gardens. Ibid. at 595.


43. Sherman, Merchandising Fruits and Vegetables 36-37; Jeremiah Johnson, "Recollections of Old Roads, Residents and Their Occupations" 5, 15 (quote); USCO, Census Reports, vol. VI, Twelfth Census, pt. II at 323 (quote). Sherman, Merchandising Fruits and Vegetables 36-37, argued that southern competition had the further impact of causing commission men (the farmers' agents) to become indifferent to local producers' interests because, being paid a percentage of gross sales, they "made much more money" from selling the higher-priced southern produce, in which they had frequently invested their own money.


45. USDA, Rates of Charge for Transporting Garden Truck 22 (quote); James Mc-


47. Landreth, Market Gardening and Farm Notes 8–9 (quote); “Potatoes from Abroad,” KCRBG, Feb. 18, 1882 (quote).

48. Oemler, Truck-Farming at the South 170 (quote); Landreth, Market Gardening and Farm Notes 9–11 (quote); “New York Vegetable Market,” KCRG, May 30, 1874, 7:2 (quote); Bruce, Rise of the New South 67 (quote). By 1906, the Long Island Railroad’s special service trains “placed vegetables in the hands of city consumers inside of four hours after they were packed and shipped from a distance of nearly seventy miles” in Suffolk County. Edith Loring Fullerton, The Lure of the Land 75–76.

49. Oemler, Truck-Farming at the South 140. Truck farmers in Concord, Massachusetts, began specializing in asparagus in the 1870s. When California farmers began underselling them in Boston markets in the mid-1920s, local farmers turned to noncompeting crops such as cabbage, cauliflower, and squash, “which are so heavy and low-valued that they cannot stand the freight from points outside the state,” and vegetables such as sweet corn and string beans, which “do not keep well in transit.” Edward Ackerman, “Sequent Occupance of a Boston Suburban Community” 68–69.

50. Quinn, Money in the Garden 137–39; Henderson, Gardening for Profit at 81 (quote).

51. Oemler, Truck-Farming at the South 140 (quote); Henderson, Gardening for Profit 23, 312, 67 (quote). Kings County’s next biggest vegetable crop in monetary terms, tomatoes, was only one-sixth as large, but accounted for 54 percent of the state’s total output. Calculated according to SC, CSNY, for 1865 at 405, 327, 409. Queens accounted for 30 percent of the state’s cabbage harvest and 22 percent of tomatoes.

52. Prince, “Sketch of the Agricultural History of Queens County” 278 (quote); B. Galloway, “Progress of Commercial Growing of Plants Under Glass” 583, 586 (quotes); USCO, Census Reports, vol. VI, Twelfth Census, pt. II, tab. I at 774 (prices); History of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society 448; Howard Russell, A Long, Deep Furrow 374–76, 451. Because the Boston area was the center of East Coast under-glass vegetable production, capital investment, involving hot-houses, irrigation, and heating, may have been higher than in the New York area. Regional specialization may have been linked to the fact that there were longer winters, less sun, and colder air and soil in the Boston area than on Long Island — which experienced less extreme winters and summers than the mainland — which made forcing a more rational and even pressing response to southern competition. Bonsteel et al., “Soil Survey of the Long Island Area” 94. Scale increased from 1860, when 200 hotbed sashes “was a large number for one market gardener to have,” to 1900, when 2,000 was not. Market gardening, according to Rawson, “will not produce millionaires, but it has laid the foundation of fortunes, though this was largely from the rise in the value of land; but
this applies only to the vicinity of Boston and other cities." Rawson, "Discussion" 73–74.


54. "The Farmers’ Market in New York City," KCRG, Jan. 3, 1880, 2:2 (quote); "For the Farmers," KCRG, Nov. 27, 1880, 2:1; "Market Men Agitated," NYH, Jan. 18, 1880, 12:1 (quote); "New Utrecht," KCRG, Apr. 10, 1875, 8:1 (William Sieger "has one of the finest side-hills to raise hot-bed truck that we have seen for some time"); KCRG, Nov. 27, 1875, 3:6 (quote); KCG, Oct. 31, 1885, 2:6 (notice of auction sale of the farm stock of W. J. and A. J. Cropsey in New Utrecht including 30 hotbed sashes and shutters); "Flatlands," KCRG, May 23, 1874, 1:1 (quote). W. I. Kouwenhoven maintained large hotbeds of early productions in Flatlands, while the auction sale of Court Van Sicklen’s Coney Island farm included 200 hotbed sashes. "Flatlands," KCRG, Mar. 29, 1879, 2:4; ibid., Feb. 1, 1879, 3:7 (advertisement). The auction of Benjamin Hitchings’ farm in Gravesend also included hotbed sash and covers. Ibid., Dec. 20, 1879, 2:8. The Rural Gazette also frequently included advertisements for hotbed sash glazed at $2.25; e.g., KCRG, May 20, 1876, 5:5.


56. Landreth, Market Gardening and Farm Notes 6 (quote); Sullivan, “The Advancement of Market Gardening in the Past Twenty-Five Years” 68; Rawson, Success in Market Gardening 75–76 (data).

57. Henderson, Gardening for Profit xi (1890 ed.) (quote); Charles Baltet, L’Horticulture dans les cinq parties du monde 261; USDA, Rates of Charge for Transporting Garden Truck 21, 22 (quote).

58. Sullivan, “The Advancement of Market Gardening in the Past Twenty-Five Years” at 68. See also W. Massey, “The Developing of Market Gardening Southward and its Lesson to the Northern Trucker.”

59. Corbett, Garden Farming 2, 144.

60. USCO, Census Reports, vol. VI, Twelfth Census, pt. II at 321 (quotes); Landreth, Market Gardening and Farm Notes 6, 5 (quotes); Quinn, Money in the Garden 13 (quotes).

61. Rawson, Success in Market Gardening 163, 213 (quotes); Thirteenth Annual Report of the Commissioner of Labor 1:24–25, 87, 90–91, 93: 2:436–39, 448–55, 468–69. One advantage that southern farmers did not grasp was artificially powered machinery that only plantation-size farms would have justified financially. But in the nineteenth century, such equipment was little used anywhere in the United States, let alone in the South, where the valuation of farm equipment in 1900 was still only half of its level in 1860. Vegetable operations "were
only slightly affected by machinery even in the 1890’s.” Shannon, Farmer’s Last Frontier 128–44 (quote at 144).

62. William Crozier and Peter Henderson, How the Farm Pays 302 (quote); Henderson, Gardening for Profit 78–79. Henderson operated a business on Cortlandd Street in Manhattan.

63. Peter Henderson, Gardening for Profit 16 (1867) (quote); Henderson, Gardening for Profit 20 (1890) (quote); “Gardening for Profit,” KCRBG, Oct. 30, 1886, 2:3 (quote). More than 100,000 copies in 41 editions purportedly made Henderson’s book at the time the best-selling horticultural work ever. Crozier and Henderson, How the Farm Pays 7 and advertisement following final page 400; Carl Woodward, The Development of Agriculture in New Jersey 1640–1880 at 239–40. The cost-profit data that Henderson gave for the 10 years preceding publication of this edition were the same as in the second edition. Ibid. at 18. These data put in a different light his assertion in 1884 that early vegetables had been less profitable in the New York vicinity during the previous 10 years than at any time during the previous half century. Henderson, “Market Gardening” 160. Two cost components that Henderson did not include were insurance and pesticides. From frequent accounts in the Rural Gazette of fire damage, especially to barns and their contents, caused by lightning, insurance may have been widespread. Evert Suydam of New Utrecht was insured for $500 with the Dutchess County Mutual Insurance Co. when his barn burned down, resulting in a loss of more than $1,000. “New Utrecht, Bath and Unionville,” KCRG, July 7, 1877, 2:7. But when the barn of Jacobus Lake in Gravesend burned down with $3,000 worth of implements, wagons, and 500 bushels of potatoes, it was uninsured. “Gravesend,” KCRBG, Oct. 25, 1884, 2:5. The barn of Richard Berry, who for years rented the Martense farm, was also struck by lightning and burned, but insurance was not mentioned. “Struck by Lightning,” KCRBG, July 17, 1881, 3:3. The cost of insurance is unknown, but the Rural Gazette estimated repairing fences, building, and insurance at $4 per acre per year. “Taxation,” KCRG, Oct. 9, 1875, 2:1. In several years the Rural Gazette reported on potato bugs and the efforts to eliminate them, including the use of pesticides such as Paris Green. “Flatlands,” KCRG, May 19, 1877, 2:4. There were also reports of army worm infestations. “Gravesend,” KCRBG, June 12, 1880, 2:6, and ibid. at 3:1 (untitled). William Bennett bought considerable amounts of Paris Green (e.g., 128 lb. for $23.04 in 1885) as well as Paris Green machines in 1889 ($40) and as late as November 1897 ($51), the next-to-last year of his farm. William Bennett & Son, Farm Accounts.

64. Bailey, Principles of Vegetable-Gardening 338; Rawson, Success in Market Gardening 99–100; Quinn, Money in the Garden 89; Rawson, Success in Market Gardening 163.

65. William Bennett & Son, Farm Accounts; Ross, History of Long Island 1:793. During the first four years covered by Bennett’s ledgers, 1883–86, potato prices fluctuated between $1.56 and $2.58 per barrel; in 1895–96, the range fell to $0.87 to $1.96; but by 1897–98, the farm’s last years, the price range recovered to $1.55 to $2.49. A roughly similar price pattern prevailed for cabbages, which were as high...
as 4.3 cents in 1884 and fell to 0.8 cents in 1894–95. The prices of potatoes and cabbages were about the same in 1854. See the journal of Williamson Rapalje.


67. John C. Vanderveer was the president and Jeremiah Johnson the first vice president of the county society. Kings County Society for Promoting Agriculture, Constitution of the Kings County Society for Promoting Agriculture 2. The state society’s conclusion that it could not “reasonably be supposed that there is any lack of liberality in sustaining the County Agricultural Society” proved as untenable as its prediction that: “If it were possible that the practical farmers in that quarter should prove negligent of their own interests in this matter, could it be doubted that there would be found in the city of Brooklyn alone numerous citizens sufficiently imbued with the love of agriculture and horticulture to render efficient aid in sustaining any society judiciously organized for promoting improvement in those essential branches of industry?” TNYSAS 3:654–55.


4. Labor Supply: Agricultural Workers and Labor Relations

1. Eric Wolf, Europe and the People Without History 364.

2. “Index Showing the names of the owners of those slaves to whom Children were born after the 4th day of July 1799,” in TRKC, Flatlands; CP, 1810, Schedules, NYS, KC; CP, 1820, Schedules, NYS, KC; “Ancestral Brooklymites: How the Predecessors of Our Local Millionaires Disposed of Their Property,” BDE, Jan. 17, 1873, 2:8.

3. Boughton, “Old Flatbush” 9 n., quoted the diary according to the manuscript, which one of Baxter’s descendants made available to him. This entry is lacking in the typescript at the Holland Society, which is a copy of the typescript at the BHS, which also houses an original. Since the typescript is titled “Extracts from the Journal of John Baxter of Flatlands, Long Island,” perhaps Boughton read a longer version.

4. Henry Stiles, Civil . . . History 1:49. Because the farming season did not last all year, in order to make slaves’ labor economical, owners also gave them non-agricultural productive work. Richard Moss, Slavery on Long Island 75.

5. 1799 N.Y. Laws, ch. 62 at 721.


7. Robert Fogel and Stanley Engerman, “Philanthropy at Bargain Prices” 378–79 (quote), 392; 1817 N.Y. Laws, ch. 137, sect. 31 at 136, 144; 1799 N.Y. Laws, ch. 62 at 721–23; TRKC, UD, Flatbush, Board of Health-Manumitted and Abandoned Slaves (quote). The slaveowner’s only financial obligation was to support the child during his or her first year. Slaveowners who failed to file the notice were
"answerable for the maintenance of every such child until the arrival of the . . . periods of servitude specified in . . . this act." 1799 N.Y. Laws, ch. 62 at 723. For examples of indentures, see indenture of Bill to Dominicus Vanderveer, Apr. 29, 1807, in TRKC, UD, Flatbush, Board of Health-Manumitted and Abandoned Slaves. Some older slaves when manumitted became immediately "entitled to all the rights and privileges of a free Citizen of the State of New York." Adrian Vanderveer and Jacob Rapelje, the overseers of the poor, certified this entitlement on behalf of Tone and his wife Sarah, slaves whom John Lott manumitted on August 16, 1819. TRKC, UD, Flatbush, Overseers of Poor; Slave Indentures; Slave Manumissions, 1805–1820.

8. Agreement dated Nov. 6, 1802, in Benson Papers, box V, fifth folder. For an example of the earlier trade in slaves, see an agreement, dated April 22, 1753, and witnessed, inter alia, by Gerret Couwenhoven, in which Garret Verdoon of New Ootrecht purchased for 60 pounds "one Negro winch named Dine," "to HAVE and to HOLD the said Negro winch Dine . . . for ever." Copy furnished by Catharine Weber Scarborough, a descendant of the Cowenhovens.

9. Shane White, Somewhat More Independent 16–18, 51–53 (quotes); Edward Bergman and Thomas Pohl, A Geography of the New York Metropolitan Region 12 (quote). White's figure combines data for Kings and Richmond counties, but since slavery was even more prevalent in the former, it is likely that the 90 percent figure is an understatement. On the extent of slavery in New Utrecht a century earlier, see B-Ann Moorhouse, "A 1698 Census New Utrecht." Dutch farmers also used slaves as personal servants. When Peter Kouwenhoven of Flatlands died in 1787, his will provided that if his wife did not remarry, his sons "shall allow her out of my estate a negro wench to wait upon her." "Funeral Clothes Willed to Slaves: Old Kings County Testaments Made Provision for Negroses" (copy of undated newspaper clipping provided by Catharine Weber Scarborough).

10. Alice Kenney, Stubborn for Liberty 214 (quote); USBC, A Century of Population Growth, tab. 113 at 275; Arthur Zilversmit, The First Emancipation 148 (quote); White, Somewhat More Independent 55; Henry Hazelton, The Boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens 2:1087. For further evidence that "Dutch . . . owners of small, subsistence farms . . . were perhaps the largest and most dedicated slave owners throughout the eighteenth century," see "Pretends to Be Free" xvii.

11. USBC, A Century of Population Growth, tab. 114 at 282, tab. 115 at 293. In Westchester County and New York City slaves accounted for 6 and 7 percent, respectively, of the population. Ibid., tab. 104 at 194–95.


13. Census for 1820 [no pagination].

14. USBC, Heads of Families at the First Census: New York at 98; Journal of John Baxter (entry for Aug. 12, 1791), in Protestant Dutch Reformed Church of Flatlands, Tercentenary Anniversary 54 (printing extracts from the journal) (quote); USBC, Heads of Families at the First Census: New York at 97–98; PS of the Third [sic; should be Second] Census 1800; CP, 1810, Schedules; CP, 1820, Schedules;
A. Leon Higginbotham Jr., *In the Matter of Color* 143 (quote). For an effort at reconstructing slave life in one of the Lefferts families, see Firth Fabend, “Black Roots on Brooklyn Farms” (unpub. ms.). The published census count for slaves in Flatbush for 1820 is in error: the actual number of slaves returned in the manuscript schedules was 224 and not 211; as a result, the number actually rose somewhat from 1810. The totals for Kings County and Flatbush for 1820 deviate slightly from the figures in table 18, which are taken from the totals as they appeared in the census for that year (and reproduced in a secondary source cited in that table), but which were added incorrectly. The figure of 258 free colored persons for Flatbush for 1850 should be 257: one Irishman was presumably erroneously designated black by the census enumerator. PS of the Seventh Census, 1850 at 2. The CP did not publish race data for the Kings County towns in 1880 and 1890. The figure for Flatbush in 1880 was calculated from the manuscript schedules and includes 29 people in various Kings County institutions located in Flatbush. The schedules for 1890 were destroyed by the fire at the Department of Commerce building in 1921 and disposed of. NA, *Federal Population Census 1790–1890* at 177.

15. 1799 N.Y. Laws, ch. 62 at 721; TRKC, Flatbush, Slave Holders, 1799–1826 at 7, 37–41 (quote); TRKC, Translations/Transliterations, Flatbush, Court Minutes, 1679–1681, Town Meeting Minutes, 1762–1818, Birth and Manumissions of Slaves, 1799–1819 at 309 (quote); TRKC, UD, Flatbush, Overseers of Poor; Slave Manumissions; Reports, 1818–1821 (quote); TRKC, Flatlands, “Index Showing the names of the owners of those slaves to whom Children were born.” Slave owners who failed to file birth certificates in a timely fashion did not forfeit their statutory entitlement to enslave the child for 25 or 28 years, but were merely subject to late fees. John Lefferts, for example, filed certificates as late as 1818 for children born in 1805 and 1807. TRKC, Flatbush, Slave Holders, 1799–1826 at 40. John Blake, who filed the certificate in 1826, had been returned at the 1820 census as owning seven slaves.

16. Edgar McManus, *A History of Negro Slavery in New York* 172–73, 193–94 (quote); Edgar McManus, *Black Bondage in the North* 176–77. A Lott family genealogist inadvertently hinted at Dutch slaveholders’ attachment to their slaves when he wrote that Joris Lott, one of Flatlands’ largest farmers, “was an owner of slaves, but, owing to this Manumission Act, slaves were freed prior to [his death] in 1835.” A. V. Phillips, *The Lott Family in America* 58. Slaveholding patterns in Kings County resemble those in New York State as a whole and New Jersey and Delaware, where the absolute numbers of slaves increased through 1790 or 1800, but differ markedly from the course of emancipation in Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and Rhode Island, where slavery fell rapidly throughout the post-revolutionary period. Gary Nash and Jean Soderlund, *Freedom by Degrees* 5, 7. The data for the towns are taken from the same sources underlying table 9. The slave figures for 1738 assume that all those listed as “Blacks” were slaves. The decline in slaves in the various towns between 1800 and 1820 may be over- and understated: according to White, *Somewhat More Independent* xxv, the totals tabulated in the published census of 1800 overcounted the number of slaves in
Flatbush by 10 and undercounted those in New Utrecht by 30; for the county as a whole, 1,506 (rather than 1,479) slaves were enumerated on the manuscript schedules. For Flatbush, the manuscript schedules support the published count rather than White. The data for 1814 may not be consistent with the earlier and later census figures because they derive from a “Return of Electors (and other Inhabitants),” which contained inaccuracies and may have been conducted in a different manner.

17. Ralph Weld, *Brooklyn Is America* 159; PS of the Fifth Census, 1830, NY, KC; calculated according to Sixth Census, 1840, NY, KC, Flatbush. The allegedly 113-year-old “colored” woman, whom the census enumerator met in 1840 at the Gravesend residence of Maria Stilwell, who could milk cows “as readily as she could a hundred years ago” was presumably an ex-slave. “An Old Colored Woman,” *Iowa Sun*, Oct. 3, 1840, 1:5 (photocopy furnished by Merle Davis).

18. PS of the Seventh Census, 1850; PS of the Eighth Census, 1860, NY, KC.


21. Teunis G. Bergen, *The Bergen Family* 248–49. The *Kings County Rural Gazette* was replete with derisive reports about “darkeys.” E.g., “Gravesend,” *KCRG*, Aug. 9, 1873, 1:4. Peter Wyckoff (1828–1910), by the 1890s reputedly the only farmer in Brooklyn and a director of two banks, an insurance company, a railroad, and a plate glass company in Brooklyn, reminisced that in the wake of the breakup of slavery, his father (who had died in 1883) had asked the oldest of the farm’s 14 slaves “what they had done with the corn:[] the Hogs eat up the corn and nigers eat the Hogs.” *The Eagle and Brooklyn* 258–59; “Reminiscences of Peter Wyckoff of Bushwick, L. I.” 4 (typescript in BHS) (quote).

22. “‘Uncle Sammy’ Anderson: The Last Flatbush Slave,” in John J. Snyder, *Tales of Old Flatbush* 177; Sixth Census, 1840, NY, KC, Flatbush; U.S. CP, 1870, Flatbush, MS at 70; U.S. CP, 1880, Flatbush, MS, SD no. 2, ED no. 252 at 62. Anderson first appeared on the Flatbush assessment roll as a property owner in 1870, when his house was valued at $125 and taxed $2.50. ARTF1870 at 8-9. Anderson appeared with an interracial group of property owners before the Flatbush Board of Improvement to oppose a proposal to open Malbone Street on the grounds that they would not be sufficiently compensated for the damage that they expected would result. The Board members, including John A. Lott, did not allude to the presence of black citizens. “Board of Improyement [sic],” *KCRG*, Mar. 29, 1873, 4:1, 2.

23. Adriance Van Brunt, Diary, June 9, 10, 12, 19, 1828.

24. A. Oemler, “Truck Farming” 584–85. By the mid-nineteenth century, the black population as a proportion of the whole population of Kings County had dropped to the 1–3 percent range from 34 percent in 1790. The absolute num-
ber of free blacks began rising by the 1820s, but this increment was concentrated in Brooklyn; in Flatbush, the total black population declined steadily from 390 in 1790 to 222 in 1880; their share of the population plummeted from 41 percent to 3 percent as the total population of Flatbush increased almost sevenfold. In rural Kings County, the “colored” population of 1,058 and 1,046 in 1880 and 1890, respectively, accounted for only 3 percent of the population. Table 9.

25. At the turn of the century, “flat cars, loaded with people, and especially with women and children, run out from Chicago, Detroit, and other large cities every morning, and back every night during the berry season. Steamboat lines carry thousands of berry pickers from Chicago to the strawberry fields about St. Joseph and Benton Harbor, Mich.; and Baltimore every year sends thousands of berry pickers out into Anne Arundel and other strawberry counties of Maryland.” USCO, Census Reports, vol. VI, Twelfth Census, pt. II at 306–307.


27. The creator of the quasi-official sets of estimates of employment for the nineteenth and early-twentieth century observed that: “The bourne from which no traveler has ever returned unsathed is the region where lie the Censuses of 1870–1900, with their indefinite estimation of ‘laborers.’ . . . [T]he inability, and/or unwillingness of respondents, enumerators, and coders to classify laborers with adequate precision left a large group of ‘laborers, not specified.’ An unknown portion of these belong in agriculture. The group is so substantial that we can have no reliable figure for agriculture without estimating them. The proper method for estimating them, however, is hard to discover.” Stanley Lebergott, “Labor Force and Employment, 1800–1960” at 156–57. Census nomenclature was not uniform in 1860 among the towns of Kings County: in Flatbush, Flatlands, and New Lots, “farm laborers” was used, whereas in Gravesend “laborer” was used, and in New Utrecht both. Where “farm laborer” was not used, only a “laborer” living in a farmer’s household was counted as a farm laborer; this conservative procedure necessarily understates the total number of farm laborers by omitting farm laborers who lived independently.

28. Calculated according to CP, 1860, MS; a very large proportion of servants were Irish. One hired farm woman was Mary Jane Anderson, an Irish Protestant, who worked on the Bergen family farm in Flatlands together with her brother-in-law in 1853–54, and John Johnson “coloured known as old Dad,” who had lived there 28 years. John C. Bergen, Diary, Mar. 1, 1854, in John C. Bergen Papers.


30. Merle Curti, The Making of an American Community 145–46. Curti noted in his study of one Wisconsin county: “In some cases, of two sons in the same family both of working age, the older was recorded as farmer, the younger as agricultural laborer. This suggests that sometimes the older son was considered to be in line for operation of the farm when the father’s working days were over.” Ibid.
at 60. The 1880 data are calculated from Tenth Census, 1880, NY, vol. 37, Kings, pt. 9, 10.


32. The 1860 census asked only each individual’s birthplace; the 1870 census asked whether the parents were of foreign birth, but not where they had been born. The 1880 census also returned 139 farm laborers living in the city of Brooklyn, of whom 21 were Irish and 33 German, although it is unknown where they worked; 221 farmers and planters also lived in Brooklyn, of whom 28 were Irish and 55 German, but, again, the location of their farms is unknown. CO, *Statistics of the Population . . . Tenth Census*, tab. XXXVI at 865.

33. Based on tables 9 and 10 and sources mentioned therein. The 1880 census did not break out the data for race for the towns of rural Kings County.

34. The small figure for Flatbush in 1880 is implausible, but since farm laborers were enumerated by residence, some residing in neighboring towns, all of which bordered on Flatbush, may have worked on farms in Flatbush.

35. John T. Ridge, *The Flatbush Irish* 9; calculated according to PS of the Seventh Census, 1850; calculated according to PS of the Eighth Census. The published CP for 1860 did not present county-level ethnic data. The other groups in 1850 in descending order were Germans (13), blacks (10), U.S.-born whites (8), English (2), and Danish (1).


37. Calculated according to CO, *Statistics of the Population . . . Tenth Census*, tab. XIV at 521, tab. XVI at 541; *KCRG*, Apr. 12, 1873, 4:4 (quote); “Washington Cemetery,” *KCRG*, Oct. 24, 1874, 1:1; “Parkville,” *KCRG*, May 22, 1875, 4:3 (150 Italian workers); “Bay Ridge,” *KCRG*, Mar. 18, 1876, 2:7 (Italian workers refused to work for $1 per day, but then agreed to $1.21 building the Bay Ridge R.R.). On the number of Italian immigrants, see USBC, *Historical Statistics of the United States*, pt. 1, ser. C-100 at 106; on the failed attempts to organize agricultural settlements for Italian immigrants in the South, see Humbert Nelli, *Italians in Chicago 1880–1930* at 3–5, 15–19. No evidence has been found that any significant number of Polish peasant immigrants, such as those working as farm laborers in Queens in the 1870s and 1880s, was employed on Kings County farms. Vincent Seyfried, “Truck Gardening” at 1 (unpub. paper).


40. E.g., Weld, Brooklyn Is America; Harold Connolly, A Ghetto Grows in Brooklyn 8–9, 33–35; U.S. CP, 1870 and 1880, KC, MS; Leon Litwack, North of Slavery 162–67, 175 (quote). Abraham Lavender and Clarence Steinberg, Jewish Farmers of the Catskills 31, mention one Jewish family that briefly had a farm on Pitkin Avenue in Brooklyn in the 1890s before joining other Jews who farmed in upstate New York, but they do not mention any who had been farm laborers in Kings County.

41. Henderson, Gardening for Profit 361 (1890 ed.).

42. “Canarsie,” KCRG, June 24, 1876, 2:6. An anecdote indicates one farmer’s problem recruiting workers — or his speculation as to how to take advantage of a lumpenproletarian’s desire to avoid incarceration. In November — presumably a nonpeak period — 1873, Johannes Kouwenhoven of Gravesend caught a “German tramp” in a neighbor’s cellar, whom he was in the process of hauling off to the village for commitment as a vagrant when he instead gave the man to a German farmer, William Willkomm, who said he would hire his landsman. Willkomm later made a bargain with the man, who, however, after three days broke into the house and fled. “Gravesend,” KCRG, Nov. 15, 1873, 1:1–2.


44. “Gravesend,” KCRG, July 19, 1879, 2:6. The horse epidemic was so severe that it impelled two Gravesend farmers to charter Lefferts Vanderbilt’s yacht Gertrude to transport their cauliflower to Manhattan. “Coney Island,” KCRG, Dec. 14, 1872, 5:1.

45. In 1870, 1874, 1879, the potato harvest amounted to 547,000, 420,000, and 772,000 bushels, respectively. Using 30 and 100 bushels as the minimum and maximum output per worker-day, respectively, the maximum and minimum number of worker-days would have been in 1870: 18,233/5,470; 1874: 14,000/4,200; 1879: 25,733/7,720. Hand diggers could harvest one-eighth to one-half an acre per day; with yields of 200 bushels per acre, these estimates are reconcilable with the productivity estimates in the text. Gilbert, The Potato at 234; chap. 2 above. For another estimate of one-half acre as the upper limit, see Samuel Fraser, The Potato 144. The agricultural censuses did not distinguish among var-
ious kinds of potatoes, but Kings County farmers grew several varieties, which, at least on some farms, prolonged the season. On John C. Bergen’s farm in Flatlands in 1865, Jackson white potatoes were harvested from June 29 to July 13, Dikeman potatoes from July 13 to Aug. 13, and bucks from Sept. 2 to 12. John C. Bergen papers. To the extent that the use of mechanical potato diggers spread, it could also have diminished the demand for workers. See KCRG, July 12, 1873, 5:1 (advertisement for potato digger). On the increase in productivity in potato production, including the introduction of potato diggers, between 1866 and 1895, see Thirteenth Annual Report of the Commissioner of Labor 1:24–25; 2:452–55.

46. E.g., “Gravesend,” KCRG, Jan. 31, 1874, 8:2 (William Willkomm, who at the 1870 census was returned as having three German laborers living in his household); Gertrude Ryder Bennett, Living in a Landmark 51 (slaves’ quarters). In 1877, John D. Van Pelt of New Utrecht tore down a cottage that had been built forty years earlier to accommodate his farm laborers. “New Utrecht, Bath and Unionville,” KCRG, May 12, 1877, 2:6. Laborers residing on farms were calculated according to manuscript schedules of the CP, 1860, 1870, and 1880, KC. These calculations assume that persons listed as farm laborers and residing in the household of a farmer worked for that farmer. The percentages actually understated the proportion of hired laborers living on the farm because they exclude relatives (especially sons) of the farmers listed as working on the farm from the numerator but not the denominator. The percentage for 1860 is estimated because enumerators that year did not uniformly use the occupation “farm laborer”; where, as in Gravesend, “laborer” was used, only laborers living in a farm household could be counted as farm laborers. Excluding Gravesend, 65 percent of farm laborers lived in the farm family’s household, ranging from 51 percent in Flatbush to 83 percent in New Utrecht, where the enumerator did not use the term “farm laborer” consistently. In 1870, the proportion of farm laborers living on farms was relatively uniform across the five rural towns, ranging from 42 percent in New Utrecht to 58 percent in Gravesend. By 1880 the dispersion had increased, varying from 0 percent in Flatbush to 40 percent in Gravesend.

47. Kings County data calculated according to manuscript schedules of the CP and CA, 1860, 1870, and 1880; national calculated according to data in Paul Gates, The Farmer’s Age 273.

48. Wage data calculated from the U.S. Census, 1880, Agriculture, KC; other data calculated according to CO, Report on the Productions of Agriculture, tab. VII at 127. It is unclear why the wage data were not published. Another set of data not published was labeled, “Weeks hired labor in 1879 upon farm (and dairy) excluding housework.” This information was frequently omitted even where wages were entered; the figures bear no uniform relation to wages, and it is unclear what they refer to.

49. See also Lawanda Cox, “The American Agricultural Wage Earner, 1865–1900” at 96–97.

50. The two labor-intensive vegetable producing counties whose average per farm wage costs were next highest, New York ($784) and Hudson ($753), were also the
only counties in which market garden production formed a higher proportion of total output. Norfolk is only a seeming exception: its market garden production as a share of total output was about as high as Kings County's, yet its wage bill was only 27 percent as large. This disproportion is in large part explained by its lower wage level (it was the only southern county on the list). Nevertheless, the fact that wage expenditures in Philadelphia, where market gardening was almost as important as in Kings County, were less than two-thirds as large gives pause. Of these 19 counties, 8 were in Louisiana, 4 in Georgia, 2 in Alabama and Mississippi, and 1 in Florida, Maryland, and North Carolina. The highest per farm wages were recorded in Washington County, Mississippi ($4,746).

51. Williamson Rapalje's father of the same name and Henry Wyckoff also employed foremen; two others were enumerated in 1870 who did not live on the farm. The largest vegetable farm in 1870 was owned by W. Bennett & Brothers in New Utrecht, whose 75-acre farm produced $16,000 worth of market garden produce. U.S. CP, 1870, KC, MS; U.S. CP, 1870, KC, MS; U.S. CA, 1870, KC, MS.

52. Since enough rich nonfarmers lived in the rural towns to employ more than a few gardeners, the assumption here and throughout has been that those returned as "gardener" by the census were not part of the agricultural labor force.

53. Tracing individuals through successive censuses is difficult because census enumerators did not always spell names correctly and people themselves did not always spell their names consistently. See Stephanie Wolf, Urban Village 79 n.50. The limited number of names among the Dutch and the concentration of names among the Irish and blacks exacerbated this problem. A further source of possible error is the failure to report accurately and consistently the ages of all household members. If all other data indicate that it is the same person, the fact that someone was only six (rather than ten) years older at the next census did not operate to disqualify him. The procedure erred on the side of exclusion, which here affected a total of only three people.

54. The four were Michael Aljohn, Edward Coleman, John Crooke, and Edward Tully.

55. Alexander Keyssar, Out of Work 343; U.S. CP, NY, KC, MS. It is plausible that farm laborers living on the farm were more likely to be employed year round, but there was no uniformity: about three-fifths of farm laborers living on the farm in Gravesend experienced unemployment compared with only one-quarter in Flatlands.

56. Willard Thorp, Business Annals 133; IA, Feb. 14, 1880, at 5, col. 3.

57. William Bennett & Son, Farm Accounts; TRKC, UD, Flatbush, Highway Commissioners — Crosswalks; Railroad Petitions; Gas Lamps; Labor Reports; Proposals: 1874–1883; Henderson, Gardening for Profit 218 (1890 ed.) (in 1874 the labor of three men for six months cost $750, or $41.66 per person per month); W. W. Rawson, Success in Market Gardening; Burnet Landreth, Market Gardening and Farm Notes 124 (planting, hoeing, and banking celery cost $1.50 per worker-day). These calculated wages are somewhat higher than the monthly farm wages without board for all of New York State that the USDA collected for the period. USDA, Div. of Statistics, Wages of Farm Labor in the United States: Re-
suits of Nine Statistical Investigations 16. The data for the city of Brooklyn are neglected here because it is assumed that farm laborers returned as living in rural Kings County by the CP also worked there. Although some farm laborers were returned as living in Brooklyn, the figure was not verified because the Brooklyn census manuscript schedules were too voluminous to process. The average wage mentioned in the text may also be overstated because the Census of Population presumably did not enumerate as farm laborers those who worked only seasonally in farming; migratory farm laborers who were not residing in Kings County at the time of enumeration in June would also have been excluded. Finally, the relationship between residence on the farm, as enumerated by the Census of Population, and wages paid by the farm operator, as calculated by the Census of Agriculture, may also be a source of confusion. For example, Williamson Rapalje, whose household included 11 farm laborers in 1870, paid only $2,500 in wages, which amounts to only $227 per worker. His neighbor, Ferdinand Wyckoff, in whose household seven farm workers lived, paid $2,700, which works out to $386 per worker. Since the two groups of workers were all German-born and of a similar age, such a large difference seems implausible. One possible explanation is that Rapalje’s laborers worked fewer months. U.S. CP, 1870, KC, Town of NL, MS; U.S. CA, 1870, KC, Town of NL, MS.

58. “Farm Hands to Strike,” KCRG, Apr. 21, 1877, 3:1 (quote); “Flatlands,” KCRBG, Mar. 25, 1882, 2:3; “Pretty Jack’ Sues for a Years [sic] Wages,” KCRBG, June 10, 1882, 2:3; “A Novel Case from Flatlands,” KCRBG, June 10, 1882, 2:1; “Flatlands and Canarsie,” KCG, Oct. 17, 1885, 2:5; “A Noted Case,” KCRBG, Aug. 5, 1882, 2:2 (quotes); “A Novel Case from Flatlands” (quote). The case is of further interest because the farm worker was represented from trial to the state’s highest court by William J. Gaynor, who in 1910 became mayor of Greater New York. Before becoming a judge in the 1890s, Gaynor lived in Flatbush, where he was counsel to the Board of Health and the elite Law and Order Association of the Town of Flatbush, and had close business ties to politicians in various Kings County towns, especially John Y. McKane, the so-called czar of Gravesend. Why Gaynor represented Turner is unclear. He maintained a large and varied practice and did take cases without a fee, but he also represented a defendant who had been “sued by a servant girl for wages.” Gaynor, who accumulated a fortune from his legal practice, which brought him an annual income of more than $50,000, derived considerable income from real estate speculation in Flatbush. Lain’s Business Directory of Brooklyn . . . 1886/87 at 365; Louis Pink, Gaynor 36, 40–41, 43 (quote), 46, The Eagle and Brooklyn 484. Gaynor speculated in the Flatbush land boom in 1882, he was the second-largest buyer (10 lots) at an auction of a large and valuable property, which was in a district in which the greatest improvements in Flatbush in the previous 14 years had been made. “A Great Sale of Property,” KCRBG, Jan. 21, 1882; “Bargains: Sale of the Robinson Estate,” KCRBG, Feb. 3, 1882 (quote). By 1890 he had “augmented his lucrative practice by large real estate holdings.” Mortimer Smith, William Jay Gaynor 21. Gaynor was sufficiently prominent in 1876 for the Rural Gazette to announce that he was moving to Flatbush. KCRG, May 6, 1876, 2:2.

60. Turner v. Kouwenhoven, testimony, in Appeal Book at 21; Brief for Appellant at 3, in Appeal Book (quotes); Turner v. Kouwenhoven, testimony, in Appeal Book at 46; Brief for Appellant at 6, in Appeal Book. Such annual wage arrangements were common in some regions in nineteenth-century agriculture; e.g., Britton v. Turner, 6 N.H. 481 (1834).


62. CP, 1880, MS; CA, 1880, MS; Turner v. Kouwenhoven, testimony, in Appeal Book 49–50 (quote). Turner too testified that Kouwenhoven was known in Flatlands as “Stingy Bill.” Turner v. Kouwenhoven, testimony, in Appeal Book 68. This testimony was taken at a previous trial on March 17, 1882. Alone in the small town of Flatlands, no fewer than 12 Kouwenhoven's were farming in 1880, including five named William, three of whom were William W.

63. Turner v. Kouwenhoven, testimony, in Appeal Book 85, 33, 46, 23 (quote); Turner v. Kouwenhoven, testimony of W. Kouwenhoven, in Appeal Book 22–29; Exhibits 1 and 2, in ibid. at 65–67; testimony of John Turner (Mar. 17, 1882), in Appeal Book 86. The fact that this investment was arranged through the same New York City law firm that represented Kouwenhoven in this litigation suggests that it may have had a conflict of interest. Turner v. Kouwenhoven, testimony of W. Kouwenhoven, in Appeal Book 46.

64. Turner v. Kouwenhoven, testimony, in Appeal Book 21, 24, 30, 32, 42 (W. Kouwenhoven), 50 (Ryder), 51 (C. B. Kouwenhoven).

65. Turner v. Kouwenhoven, Complaint, County Court of KC, Jan. 3, 1882, in Appeal Book 4. Turner v. Kouwenhoven, testimony, in Appeal Book 32. Turner v. Kouwenhoven, testimony, in Appeal Book 41 (question to which Kouwenhoven responded affirmatively) (quote). This delegation of marketing may not have been common. The USDA official in charge of the vegetable division of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, in a historical retrospective, noted that among urban truck farmers who sold assorted vegetables chiefly at retail: “Almost invariably a member of the family drove to market and did the selling. Retail marketing was not a hired man's job. It involved handling the entire family income.” Wells Sherman, Merchandising Fruits and Vegetables 15.

66. Kouwenhoven defended on the grounds that Turner had failed to perform his contract fully because he had not paid over to the farmer the full proceeds from the sales at market, instead having kept some of this money for himself. Despite the fact that Turner had served out his full term and that the employer had no complaints concerning Turner's work on the farm proper, he argued that Turner's failures legally disentitled him to any recovery at all. Kouwenhoven filed a counterclaim for the money Turner had allegedly retained not only in 1881 but during the two preceding years. Turner v. Kouwenhoven, 29 Hun 232, 233 (N.Y. A.D. 1883), aff'd, 100 N.Y. 115, 118 (1885). At trial in County Court in Kings County, the chief question for the jury was whether Turner had in fact re-
tained and converted any money belonging to the farmer. The trial judge, who agreed with both counsel that the case was one of first impression in New York State, rejected the defendant's request to charge the jury that any failure by the laborer to pay over proceeds must result in forfeiture of all his compensation for the year, but did instruct the jurors that they could deduct from an award to Turner any amounts that they found he owed. Turner v. Kouwenhoven, Appeal Book 54–60. Before the case went to the jury, Turner agreed that the number of loads that he had transported for Kouwenhoven was 201 rather than 398. Turner v. Kouwenhoven, Appeal Book 60. Kouwenhoven appealed to the intermediate appeals court the trial judge's refusal to issue the aforementioned jury instruction. Two of the three appellate judges rejected the farmer's argument that any delinquency by a laborer during a year's term should bar him from receiving any compensation whatsoever. A discharge for cause during the term could bring about such a result, but even if a farm laborer who served his entire term had injured his employer, forfeiture of his whole salary would be inappropriate where the farmer could be indemnified. Turner v. Kouwenhoven, 29 Hun 233–36.


5. Comparative Demographic and Economic Development in Brooklyn and Rural Kings County

3. Ibid.
7. Census for 1820 [no pagination].
8. Weld, Brooklyn Village 47.
9. Ibid. 6–7.
10. Ibid. 47 (quote); The Diary of Philip Hone 1:147–48 (entry for Jan. 14, 1835) (quote).
12. Calculated according to CSNY, for 1845. The low one to one ratio in Flatlands may be explained by the fertilizer industry on Barren Island. The Flatbush fig-
ures were skewed by the fact that almost 30 percent of all persons returned as employed were inmates of the Kings County Poor House, which happened to be located in Flatbush, but most of whose residents came from the city of Brooklyn. PS of the Sixth Census, 1840. As early as 1830, Kings County bought 64 acres from the Martense heirs for the county farm, which that year produced 750 bushels of potatoes, 107 bushels of turnips, 13 bushels of onions, four tons of hay, and manufactured goods worth $244.36. Stiles, Civil...History 1:464–92.

13. J. T. Bailey, *An Historical Sketch of the City Brooklyn* 31, 34 (quote); calculated according to TRKC, UD, Flatbush, Jurors — List of, 1815–1847.


19. SC, CSNY, for 1865 at 322. This was the last NYS census to break out separate data for Brooklyn.


22. LDLI: For 1878–9 at 267–68, 242, 279, 282; “Brooklyn Annexation Projects,” NYDT, Apr. 6, 1894, 6:4 (editorial) (quote); “Annex Them All at Once,” BDE, Mar. 8, 1894, 4:1 (quote); “A Great Work Well Done,” BDE, Apr. 27, 1894, 4:1 (editorial) (quote); NYT, Nov. 8, 1894, 4:1 (editorial) (quote); Harold Syrett, *The City of Brooklyn, 1865–1898* at 38, 159–93, 222–27. Just the previous year, the Eagle had written that McKane's entire career had “revealed him to be a man of thoroughly democratic instincts, a literal believer in the equal rights of men and in fair play for all.” In addition to being supervisor, chief of police, and president of the town, health, police, and water boards in Gravesend, McKane as building contractor built most of the hotels and houses on Coney Island. *The Eagle and Brooklyn* 453. McKane was also one of the Commissioners of Common Lands of Gravesend, which let lots of barren land on Coney Island which freeholders held in common. “Coney Island Lands at Auction,” BDE, Aug. 19, 1873, 1:1 (advertisement); “The Progress of the Consolidation Commission,” BDE, Aug. 28, 1873, 2:2. (editorial); “Gravesend Common Lands,” KCRG, Feb. 15, 1879, 2:1 (editorial). See generally Edo McCullough, *Good Old Coney Island* 15–113. On the legislature's effort to deal with the corruption surrounding these leases, see 1880 N.Y. Laws, ch. 92 at 204. The county's budget was considerably smaller than that of the city of Brooklyn; in 1888, the two were $1.4 and $8.1 million, respectively. The interest paid on Brooklyn's debt in 1888, for example, was larger than the
county's entire budget. The county budget's largest items were, in descending order, the Department of Charities and Corrections, interest on funded debt, county wards, county jail, city court, jurors' fees, Supreme Court, Board of Supervisors, principal of funded debt, County Court, and National Guard, which accounted for more than three-fourths of total expenditures. BDEA: 1888 at 119.


25. J. J. Stilwell, “Annexation: Supervisor Stilwell Argues Against It,” BDE, Apr. 5, 1873, 1:8 (letter to editor) (asking rhetorically who fills the county institutions in order to refute claims that rural towns did not pay their fair share of county expenses); PS of the Ninth Census, 1870. “Annexation: City and County Union,” BDE, Mar. 3, 1873, 2:6, 7, noted that the population of 6,000 included 2,000 institutionalized inmates. The East New York Sentinel also noted that the population of New Lots was more than double that of Flatbush. “Who’s Doing this Annexing?” KCRG, Jan. 11, 1873, 4:1 (reprinting article of Jan. 4). These institutions date back to the 1830s, but were expanded in the 1850s; to overcome overcrowding in Flatbush, the county in 1884 purchased 750 acres of small adjoining farms at St. Johnsland, 60 miles away on Long Island. “St. Johnsland,” KCRBG, Aug. 22, 1885, 2:3; Annual Report of the State Board of Charities for the Year Ending September 30, 1886, at 38; “The Sick Poor: Shall They Be Sent to Flatbush or St. Johnland?” BDE, Feb. 26, 1887, 6:7; David Schneider, The History of Public Welfare in New York State 361. By 1892, about one thousand people were received at the Long Island location, which was renamed King's Park. The Eagle and Brooklyn 379. The statutory basis of the farm work requirement is set forth in 1871 N.Y. Laws, ch. 491, sect. 3 and 8 at 1030, 1031, 1033; 1874 N.Y. Laws, ch. 114, sect. 1 and 6 at 127, 130. The farm's output is documented in U.S. Census, 1860, Agriculture. The county farm was not returned at the 1850 or 1870 CA. In 1887, the products of the 70-acre Flatbush poor farm operated by the Kings County Commissioners of Charities were valued at $5,000. BDEA: 1888 at 125. The institutional population was calculated according to PS of the Seventh Census, 1850; PS of the Eighth Census, 1860. In January 1873, the KC Commissioners of Charities reported 387 persons in the nursery, 444 inmates, 1,007 persons in the almshouse, and 745 persons in the lunatic asylum for a total of 2,583. KCRG, Jan. 25, 1873, 4:4. At the time of the NYS census of 1875, about 30 percent of the town's population was returned as residing in the county buildings. “The Census,” KCRG, July 17, 1875, 2:1.


27. BDEA: 1893 at 97; “Enlarging Brooklyn,” NYDT, Mar. 12, 1894, 6:3–4 (editorial); Report of the Jamaica Bay Improvement Commission, tab. 2 at 72, 54 (H. Doc.).

29. The juxtaposition between farming and manufacturing appears in one of the very few backward glances at agriculture in historical works. In a section titled, "Farming Country in 1880," a historian noted: "A sidelight on the immense growth of Brooklyn since 1880 is the fact of record that in that year Kings County contained four hundred and eighty-six farms, comprising 9,075 acres, valued, with buildings, at $4,872,055. Five years later, in 1885, Brooklyn was credited with having 85,000 buildings." Henry Hazelton, *The Boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens* 3:1590.

30. Calculated according to CO, *Report on Wealth* at 391, 393.

31. *BDEA: 1888* at 124; *BDEA: 1894* at 228. The years from 1855 to 1885 are used here because Brooklyn and rural Kings County remained territorially unchanged during this period (Williamsburgh and New Lots having joined Brooklyn in 1854 and 1886, respectively).


6. The Prehistory of the Conversion of Rural Kings County Farms into Suburban Real Estate

1. Peter Ross, *History of Long Island* 1:369 (quote). Because the NYS census stopped collecting the relevant agricultural information in 1875 and the 1890 federal census manuscript schedules were destroyed by fire, shifts during the crucial decade of the 1880s can no longer be reconstructed, although it is known that aggregate county farm acreage did not decrease. The vast decline in Flatbush acreage from 1850 to 1855 resulted exclusively from the detachment of New Lots and its formation as a new town in 1852; the loss during the 1860s may have resulted in part from the creation of Prospect Park. The sharp increase in acreage in Flatlands between 1845 and 1855 resulted from the introduction in 1855 by the NYS census of data on unimproved acreage. The huge decline and increase in New Utrecht's acreage before and after the 1870 census is anomalous, resulting in all likelihood from tabulators' failure to process one schedule sheet.


7. Strong, "History of the Town of Flatbush" 232; *The Eagle and Brooklyn* 1136; ARTF, 1866 at 20; ARTF 1867, at 36; Teunis G. Bergen, *The Bergen Family* 333–
36. The United Freemen's Association was a division of the Sons of Temperance. *KCRG*, Jan. 18, 1873, 2:1. According to Bennett, *Living in a Landmark* 81, many of the laborers on William Bennett’s Gravesend farm in the 1880s and 1890s “came from Greenfield, a small settlement of Irish emigrants.”


9. Vanderbilt, *Social History of Flatbush* 220 (quote); John A. Lott was not the owner of this farm. Oddly, a contemporaneous article characterized Suffolk as a “strickly [sic] farming county,” Queens as “in great measure a land of market gardens,” and rural Kings County as “largely taken up by the city of Brooklyn and the suburban residences of wealthy gentlemen” despite noting Kings County’s large market garden production. “Long Island Agricultural Society,” *KCRG*, Oct. 19, 1872, 6:1. On New York merchants living in rural Kings County, see chapter 10–11 below.


13. 1871 N.Y. Laws, ch. 567, sect. 1, 8, 10 at 1203, 1205, 1210; Strong, “Modern History of Flatbush” 236. At the end of the 1870s, the membership of the Flatbush Board of Improvement was virtually unchanged; the only addition was Lefferts Vanderbilt as clerk. *LDLI: For 1878–79* at 269. Philip Crooke took John A. Lott’s place as president after the latter’s death in 1878.

158, 178 (NYCMA). The board met at Lott’s house from May 4, 1872, to January 11, 1876; it met there even when he was absent (e.g., Sept. 27, 1873). For a list of the Erasmus Hall trustees, see KCRG, Aug. 5, 1876, 4:7.

15. “Aroused at Last — A Delegation of the Principal Property Owners Wait on the Excise Board,” KCRBG, May 22, 1880, 2:2; “William Matthews Is Dead,” NYDT, Apr. 16, 1896, 14:1; “William Matthews,” NYT, Apr. 16, 1896, 5:4; DAB 6:420–21. Born in Scotland, he learned the bookbinding trade in London, and emigrated to the United States in 1843; the turning point in his life was a strike in 1841 at one of London’s largest binderies, when he “remained faithful to his employers and advanced rapidly to a responsible position.” Ibid. Matthews also laid out Waverly Avenue and projected a development later called Matthews Park.

Fisher, Flatbush Past & Present 83. The fact that Flatbush resident and Manhattan dry goods merchant Jonathan Longmire, whose total income of $115,191.29 in 1863, 1864, and 1865 made him the richest person in rural Kings County, was exempt from military duty during the Civil War on the grounds that he was an active fireman doing duty in Flatbush, suggests that New York merchants residing in the rural towns may have participated in civic affairs. Longmire’s sworn statement, notarized by John Z. Lott and dated August 13, 1864, is in TRKC, UD, Flatbush, Military Exemptions 1862–1864.


17. 1869 N.Y. Laws, ch. 670, sect. 1, 4, 5 at 1590–91 (quote); “Our Town Improvements,” KCRG, Jan. 18, 1873, 4:1, 2 (editorial) (quote).


20. The literature on Olmsted is huge. The discussion here is based primarily on Irving D. Fisher, Frederick Law Olmsted and the City Planning Movement in the United States; Civilizing American Cities; and the first six volumes of The Papers of Frederick Law Olmsted.


24. Olmsted, Vaux & Co., Observations on the Progress of Improvements at 23. The meaning of the phrase, “and only through the most perverse neglect of the landowners of their own interests is it [the slope] likely to be built upon for other purposes,” referring to those habitations, is ambiguous. Id. at 22.
27. For a summary of the objections of the planners and designers who followed Olmsted, see Thomas Adams, “Modern City Planning: Its Meaning and Methods” 172.
29. “How Water Works Benefit Real Estate,” KCRBG, Sept. 27, 1884, 2:1 (editorial) (quote); “A Union Growl,” KCRBG, June 30, 1883, 2:1 (editorial) (quote); “Strong Arguments Against Increased Assessments,” KCRG, Oct. 16, 1875, 2:1 (editorial); “Kings Co. Real Estate,” KCRBG, Aug. 28, 1880, 2:1 (editorial). Lefferts’s holdings declined from 163 acres and seven houses in 1868 to 87 acres and four houses in 1870. ARTF, 1868 at 20; ARTF, 1870 at 8. The church entered into an agreement to sell three acres west of Coney Island Plank Road to John Monsell for $4,000 per acre on February 11, 1869. Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of Flatbush Archives.
30. “Annexation: City and County Union” BDE, Mar. 3, 1873, 2:7 (quotes); “A Week of Snow,” KCRG, Jan. 4, 1873, 4:1; “Why Not?” KCRG, Feb. 8, 1873, 4:1 (editorial) (quote). Philip Crooke and other leading Flatbush residents financed the newspaper; KCRG, May 4, 1878, 2:1 (reprinting article from the Brooklyn Times).
31. “What Others Say of Us,” KCRG, Feb. 22, 1873, 3:2–3 (quote); “Real Estate and Cheap Living,” KCRG, Apr. 3, 1875, 4:1 (editorial) (quote); “What Others Say of Us,” KCRG, Feb. 22, 1873, 3:2, 3; “Moving into the City,” KCRG, Sept. 20, 1873, 4:1, 2 (quotes). Nevertheless, the paper reported that the $500,000 stock for the rapid transit scheme had all been taken so that “we may look for a large advance in real estate this coming spring in our town.” KCRG, Feb. 22, 1873, 4:4.
33. “Sewers,” KCRG, June 8, 1872, 2:1 (editorial). A week later, the newspaper predicted “the growth of a palatial city.” “Prospect Park: Its Material and Aesthetic Influence,” KCRG, June 15, 1872, 2:1–2. These predictions provoked a reader to opine that “a mighty sewer” would be needed “to carry off the filth” that would populate the police station, jail, and penitentiary in an urbanized Flatbush. Samuel Weston, “Forebodings,” KCRG, July 13, 1872, 8:1–2.
34. An Act to lay out, open, construct, and keep in repair Ocean Avenue, in the county of Kings, 1871 N.Y. Laws, ch. 579 at 1256; Ross, History of Long Island 1:368; “Rail Road Consolidation,” KCRBG, July 8, 1882, 2:1 (editorial) (quote); 1869 N.Y. Laws, ch. 861 at 2072; 1874 N.Y. Laws, ch. 583 at 781; ARTNU, 1880 at 257.
(John A. Lott's assessment for interest for the years 1874 to 1880 was $5,296.38); “Board of Supervisors,” KCRBG, May 20, 1882, 2:4 (quote); “Taxation,” KCRG, Oct. 9, 1875, 2:1 (editorial) (quote); 1882 N.Y. Laws, ch. 247 at 299; “Farmers Cannot Drive Loaded Wagons on the Parkway Boulevard,” KCRBG, Mar. 10, 1883, 2:2. The Rural Gazette charged that Brooklyn had “run out long and expensive avenues through valuable farming lands, and . . . levied taxes on it, equal to its highest market value.” “City Greed and Country Rights,” KCRG, Mar. 16, 1878, 2:1 (editorial). From the published list of the amounts due for the construction of Ocean Parkway it is clear that the largest taxpayers were not farmers, but other large landowners, some of whose families had once farmed, such as Lott and Martense, whereas others were longtime merchant residents, such as Henry Johnson (or his heirs), or speculators such as Robert Turner. “Assessment Notice,” KCRBG, Aug. 12, 1881, 2:7–8.

35. “Flatbush: Town Meeting,” BDE, Mar. 27, 1873, 1:9 (reprinted from KCRG) (quote); “Summer Talk About Real Estate,” KCRG, June 28, 1873, 7:2, 3 (quote); “Has Real Estate Reached the Lowest Point?” KCRG, Aug. 11, 1877, 2:2 (editorial); “Justice for Flatbush,” KCRG, Feb. 21, 1874, 4:1, 2 (editorial) (quote); “The Park Tax Decision,” KCRG, Dec. 26, 1874, 4:1, 2 (editorial); “Real Estate and Cheap Living,” KCRG, Apr. 3, 1875, 4:1 (editorial) (quote); KCRG, Nov. 14, 1874, 5:3 (quote); “The Railroad Fever,” KCRG, Sept. 16, 1876, 2:1; Seyfried, The Long Island Rail Road 146 (stating that Turner was a banker); “The Great Real Estate Sale,” KCRG, Nov. 21, 1874, 4:3–4 (quote). Half a year later, however, Turner postponed a further sale when bidders refrained from buying lots at prices 50 percent lower. “A Rare Chance Lost,” KCRG, May 22, 1875, 4:2.

36. McElroy, “Town Survey of Kings County” 411. For background, see Kings County, Minutes of Commissioners for Mapping Towns, 1869–1874.


38. “Bay Ridge and Hempstead: The Railroad Now Building,” BDE, Mar. 26, 1873, 2:5. On high farmland prices paid by railroads: According to “Bay Ridge,” KCRG, Mar. 22, 1873, 3:2, Abram Wakeman, a director of the New York and Hempstead R.R., bought the Bergen farm for $210,000, which gave the company the right of way and access to “an exceedingly valuable water front and ferry.” Earlier the newspaper had reported that the railroad had bought 110 acres for $3,000 [sic] per acre for a total of $220,000 in order to gain the right of way to the waterfront. “Bay Ridge,” KCRG, Nov. 30, 1872, 5:1. The Bergen in question was Michael Bergen (1809–1875), a 60-year-old retired farmer at the time of the 1870 Census of Population, who had farmed 100 acres according to the 1860 Census of Agriculture. In 1873 the railroad became owner of 24.39 acres that had until then been owned by Bergen and were assessed at $10,780. It also appeared as the owner of an additional three properties for a grand total of 87.52 acres, none of which it had owned the previous year. In 1874, the railroad disappeared from the roll and Abram Wakeman was entered as the owner of six properties totalling 79.86 acres. Bergen had owned 105.7 acres in 1872 but only 2.3 in 1873 and 1874. ARTNU, 1872 at 28, 31–33, 54, in TRKC, vol. 2145, MR 45; ARTNU, 1873 at 33, 37, 39, 61, in TRKC, vol. 2146, MR 45; ARTNU, 1874 at 35, 49–51, 65, 67, in
Bergen died in 1875 at the age of 66. "Died," *KCRG*, Jan. 16, 1875, 5:3. If the railroad and/or Wakeman bought all 80 acres from Bergen, the per acre price of about $2,400 was higher than the prices farmers received during the 1889 boom. See chapter 10 below. According to Seyfried, *The Long Island Rail Road* 3, the total cost to the New York and Hempstead for the 110 acres was $330,000, of which $60,000 was paid in cash, the balance remaining on bond mortgage to Bergen. In 1878, Bergen's executors, Jacob L. Bergen and Theodore V. H. Bergen, sued Wakeman, Austin Corbin, the New York, Bay Ridge, and Jamaica R.R., and the Manhattan Beach R.R. Co. to foreclose a $165,000 mortgage, which was created when Bergen gave back $165,000 of the purchase money. The state supreme court granted a decree of foreclosure, ordering a sale of the 111 acres that included the Bay Ridge depot and dock. "New Utrecht, Bath and Unionville," *KCRG*, Jan. 26, 1878, 2:5; "Bay Ridge," *KCRG*, Apr. 27, 1878, 2:6. A discrepancy in the newspaper account is that it asserted that Bergen had bought the Jacobus Cropsey farm in 1820 — at a time when Bergen would have been only 10 years old. According to the doubtless more accurate account by genealogist Teunis G. Bergen, in 1835 Michael Bergen's father, Jacob Bergen, bought 70.5 acres from John T. Bergen for $30,000 and an adjoining 17.5 acres from William Kelly for $4,000; Michael Bergen sold all but 1.5 acres to Wakeman for upwards of $200,000, and moved to a house on 2 acres that he bought from Ann Hendricksen in New Utrecht near the city line. Bergen, *Bergen Family* 345–47 (2d ed.). In 1882, a company of New York and Boston capitalists bought 26 acres of the old Michael Bergen farm on 2nd Avenue near 66th Street extending 365 feet along the shore to establish a new shipyard; the $125,000 price amounted to almost $5,000 per acre — a very high price. "Bay Ridge," *KCRBG*, July 15, 1882, 2:6. The assessed value of an 18.44-acre plot of land that the estate of Michael Bergen owned at that location was only $340 per acre in 1880. ARTNU, 1880 at 83, in TRKC, vol. 2153, MR 48.


1879, 2:1 (editorial). The 18-minute trip from the Brooklyn city line to Coney Island cost 23 cents. "Gravesend," KCRG, July 3, 1875, 2:6. Some landowners protested the substitution of steam for horse power because it was more dangerous and devalued property along the route. John A. Lott advised them that they were at least entitled to greater compensation. "A Public Meeting Against Steam on the Coney Island Road," KCRG, Feb. 5, 1876, 2:2. The Culver line also transported freight, including building materials for the hotels and amusement centers, to Coney Island. Seyfried, The Long Island Rail Road 152. The year-round service particularly benefited Parkville, a section straddling several towns, which in 1881 proposed to incorporate itself as a village. "A Step Forward: Incorporation of Parkville," KCRBG, Sept. 10, 1881, 2:3.

42. "A Steam Railroad Sure to Pay," KCRG, July 21, 1877, 2:7; ARSESSNY for the year Ending Sept. 30, 1878, at 53–59; "Another Coney Island Railroad," NYT, July 2, 1878, 5:6; “The Grand Centre of Railroads for Coney Island,” KCRG, July 6, 1878, 2:1 (editorial); “Brooklyn, Flatbush and Coney Island Rail Road Company,” KCRG, June 15, 1878, 2:1. See also “Railroad Notes,” KCRG, Dec. 7, 1878, 2:1; “What Brighton Did,” KCRG, Oct. 19, 1878, 2:3; JA, Dec. 14, 1878, 5:2. Stiles, Civil . . . History 1: unpaginated (tab. between pp. 424 and 425), contains a comprehensive list of Kings County railroads. The railway’s president, John A. Lott, on April 19, 1878, requested that the Flatbush highway commissioners permit the company to extend the road to Atlantic Avenue in Brooklyn from its then termination at the Willink entrance to Prospect Park. TRKC, UD, Flatbush, Highway Commissioners — Crosswalks; Railroad Petitions; Gas Lamps; Labor Reports; Proposals: 1874–1883. The Kings County Central R.R. opened a few days before the Brooklyn, Flatbush, and Coney Island R.R., which competed it out of existence by the end of its first season. The Kings County Central, on its way to Coney Island, made stops on the east side of Flatbush including the county buildings, but John L. Bergen, a large landowner in Flatbush and Flatlands, who was among the new owners in late 1878, had no interest in such local traffic. Seyfried, The Long Island Rail Road 47–59. The Manhattan Beach R.R. transported twice as many passengers that season. “Railroad Notes,” KCRG, Oct. 12, 1878, 2:3. Like Lott, John Lefferts also resigned his position as treasurer of the railroad — not on account of infirmity, but because it demanded too much of his time, which he had to divide among his far-flung economic and political interests. "Local," KCRBG, Mar. 25, 1882, 3:1. Elizabeth Rawson, “Flatbush,” in The Encyclopedia of New York City 416, ascribes a key role to this line, arguing that Flatbush remained rural until the 1880s when it was made ripe for development by the Brooklyn, Flatbush, and Coney Island R.R. and the impending annexation to Brooklyn. See also Daniel Bluestone et al., Flatbush 8.


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46. "Gridironing the County Towns with Railroads," KCRG, Mar. 24, 1877, 2:1 (editorial); "The Great Railroad Hub!" KCRG, Oct. 7, 1876, 2:1 (editorial); "A New Era in Our Future," KCRG, Aug. 17, 1878, 2:1 (editorial) (quote); KCRG, July 6, 1878, 1:6, 8 (railroad schedules); "The Grand Centre of Railroads for Coney Island," 2:2; Henry M. Wells, "Tales of Old Flatbush" 13 (quote); "The Cattle Law," KCRBG, Sept. 2, 1882, 2:2 (editorial); Appleton's Dictionary of New York and Vicinity 83. Also emblematic of the end of an era was the destruction by fire in 1879 of the Flatbush Vanderveer farm mill. Built in 1804, it was being used as a storehouse for hay. At the time of the draft riots in 1863, it served as a refuge for blacks in Flatbush. "Destroyed by Fire: Vanderveer's Mill Vanishes in Flames," KCRG, Mar. 8, 1879, 2:3. The account in the IA, Mar. 15, 1879, 5:3, contained several errors.


48. Seyfried, The Long Island Rail Road 1–12.


51. David McCullough, The Great Bridge 26; "Annexation," KCRG, July 27, 1872, 4:1–2 (quote); "Around the Circle," KCRG, Nov. 28, 1874, 4:1 (quote); "The Bay Ridge Steam Railroad and Ferry Company Route," KCRG, Feb. 27, 1875, 4:1, 2 (quote); "Flatlands," KCRG, Jan. 5, 1878, 2:3; KCRG, Feb. 17, 1877, 2:1 (untitled); letter from New York and Manhattan Beach Railway Co. to Highway Commissioners of the Town of Flatbush, Jan. 7, 1878, in TRKC, UD, Flatbush, Highway Commissioners — Crosswalks; Railroad Petitions; Gas Lamps; Labor Reports; Proposals: 1874–1883 (quote). Flatlands farmers also made arrangements with the railroad to convey manure from New York according to a Long Island R.R. plan. "Flatlands," KCRG, Oct. 27, 1877, 3:1. Later trains that ran over the Flatlands branch road carried manure for two farmers, Jackson Ryder and George Schenck, thanks to the "kindness" of the railroad president, John Bergen. "Flatlands," KCRG, Feb. 1, 1879, 2:6. These trips were apparently the last run over the Kings County Central line. John L. Bergen, the president and receiver of the railway, listed himself as residing in Flatlands (as well as Flatbush). ARSESSNY For the Year Ending Sept. 30, 1878, at 262–63; ARSESSNY For the Year Ending Sept. 30, 1879, at 504. Bergen was apparently the son of Tunis J. Bergen of Flatbush; born
in 1835, he married a daughter of the large Flatlands farmer Peter Lott, and like his father, he too was a real-estate broker. Bergen, Bergen Family 336 (2d ed.). See also Seyfried, The Long Island Rail Road 146.


54. Strong, "Modern History of Flatbush" 239–40; "Slightly Corned," KCRG, Aug. 1, 1874, 4:3; "The Police Commission," KCRG, June 22, 1878, 2:1 (editorial) (quote); "Local," KCRBG, Jan. 17, 1885, 3:1; "Our Police Bill" (quote); "Public Opening & Formal Transfer of the New Town Hall," KCRG, Feb. 12, 1876, 2:1. Henry S. Ditmas may have been content with the efficiency of the existing law enforcement system: a chicken thief who had been caught in his outhouse was sentenced to six months of hard labor. "Caught at Last," KCRG, May 25, 1872, 2:3.

55. 1864 N.Y. Laws, chs. 443 and 444 at 1057, 1058; Strong, "Modern History of Flatbush" at 235 (quote); "Knocked Down and Robbed," KCRG, July 1, 1876, 3:2; "Real Estate," KCRG, Mar. 15, 1873, 4:1 (quote); "Our Gas Company," KCRG, May 3, 1873, 4:1 (editorial) (quote); "Gas and Police," KCRBG, Feb. 11, 1882, 2:1 (editorial); "Darkness and Light," KCRBG, Feb. 18, 1882, 2:1 (editorial). For an example of the solicitation of funds for the gas company within the extended farming community, see letter from John A. Lott to Elizabeth Ludlow, Mar. 16, 1864, Cruikshank Coll., box A. Ludlow was Willink's sister-in-law and inherited his estate upon his wife's death. On the Willink family, who were not among the original Dutch settlers of Flatbush, see The Eagle and Brooklyn at 84. The contract with the town provided that: "The lamps are to be lighted and kept lighted during each part of the night as there is no moon light excepting those nights when the moon shall set after twelve o'clock at night." Agreement of Feb. 11, 1880, between Flatbush Gas Co. and Commissioners of Highways of the Town of Flatbush, in TRKC, UD, Flatbush, Highway Commissioners — Crosswalks; Railroad Petitions; Gas Lamps; Labor Reports; Proposals: 1874–1883.

56. Strong, "Modern History of Flatbush" 240–41; "The Romance of the Flatbush Water Works," in Snyder, Tales of Old Flatbush 145 (quote); "Improving Flatbush and Removing the County Buildings" (quote); "The Late General Crooke's Successor," KCRBG, Apr. 30, 1881, 2:1 (editorial) (quote); Proposal for Water Works (May 14, 1881), Town meetings (May 27 & June 3, 1881) (quote), Agreement (June 6, 1885), in TRKC, UD, Flatbush, Town Board, 1878–1890, Bundle no. 9, MR 18. On a dispute that erupted over Lefferts's probity in connection
with his appointment as a commissioner to appraise the value of land to be taken by a railroad to which he himself had also sold land, see “Communications,” KCRG, Jan. 22, 1876, 3:1; John H. Bergen, letter to editor, ibid.; Jacques J. Stillwell, letter to editor, KCRG, Jan. 29, 1876, 2:6.


59. “Growth,” “Fertility,” KCRBG, Feb. 4, 1882 (quote); KCRBG, Jan. 28, 1882 (quote); KCRBG, Apr. 12, 1884, 2:2.


62. Teunis G. Bergen, “History of the Town of New Utrecht” 263 (quote); Syrett, The City of Brooklyn 241 (quote); “Brooklyn Real Estate” (quote).

63. Syrett, The City of Brooklyn 241 (quote); Henry Hazelton, The Boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens 2:1143 (quote).

64. Appleton’s Dictionary of New York City and Vicinity 58 (quote); Coney Island and the Jews 8 (quote); “Sea-Side Edition,” KCRBG, June 19, 1880, 1:1 (steam railroads alone could accommodate 100,000 passengers daily); “Old Country Towns”; IA, Dec. 6, 1879, 5:3 (the Manhattan Beach Improvement Co. bought 108 acres, adjacent to the proposed Coney Island Jockey Club, from Voorhies and Vanderveer, at $600 per acre, to be laid out in streets); “Large Sales of Real Estate: The Coney Island Jockey Club,” KCRG, Nov. 29, 1879, 2:1. Ross, History of Long Island 1:369 (quote).


7. Modernizers Thwarted: The Great Annexation Debate of 1873

1. 1873 N.Y. Laws, ch. 861 at 1287.


3. “Consolidation: Lone Meeting at New Lots Last Night,” BDE, Oct. 22, 1873, 2:7;
1869 N.J. Laws, ch. 501 at 1225; Report of the Commissioners to Revise the Laws for the Assessment and Collection of Taxes 17 (quote).

4. “County and City,” BDE, Mar. 4, 1873, 2:3 (editorial) (quote); “The Committee of One Hundred Resolve in Favor of the Annexation of the County Towns,” KCRG, Dec. 28, 1872, 4:3.


9. “Annexation: City and County Union,” BDE, Mar. 3, 1873, 2:8. Flatlands’ “well to do farmers” were not, however, above taking a day to party “in the surf” at Coney Island before it became a resort. “Flatlands,” KCRG, Aug. 9, 1873, 1:3.


11. “Annexation: City and County Union,” BDE, Mar. 3, 1873, 2:8. The obituary of George Kouwenhoven, who died at 73 in 1880 and owned a 99-acre farm in Flatlands at the 1870 census, stated that he had cultivated his large farm so successfully that he became “a wealthy man.” “Flatlands,” KCRB, Dec. 4, 1880, 2:2.


13. “Annexation: City and County Union,” BDE, Mar. 3, 1873, 2:8 (quote); Bergen, “Annexation: A Townsman of Flatlands Opposes It,” BDE, Mar. 19, 1873, 2:8 (quote); Jacques J. Stilwell, “Annexation: Jacques J. Stilwell Opposes the Union of the County Towns with the City,” BDE, Mar. 26, 1873, 1:8 (letter to editor) (quote); “County Annexation,” BDE, Feb. 14, 1873, 2:2; “Annexation: Public Sentiment in the County Towns,” BDE, Mar. 28, 1873, 4:2; “City and County,” BDE, Apr. 8, 1873, 2:3 (editorial) (quote). The agricultural tax preference for Bushwick was not mentioned in the consolidation statute of 1853.


17. “City and County,” BDE, Apr. 8, 1873, 2:3 (editorial).
18. Strong, “Modern History of Flatbush” 237; CP and CA, 1870, MS; Pessen, Riches, Class, and Power Before the Civil War 55 (quote); Stiles, Civil . . . History 1:352–54; “The Legislature’s Work,” NYT, Mar. 15, 1881, 1:6; “Hon. John A. Lott,” KCRG, July 11, 1874, 4:1. Peter Lott (1815–1879), was a successful market gardener, his 70 acres, the products of which he sold at Washington market, yielding him “a handsome yearly income” until his retirement in 1874. A. V. Phillips, The Lott Family in America 84. Peter Lott and John A. Lott were distant relatives, both being descendants of the common ancestor of the entire Lott family of Long Island, Peter Lott, who settled in Flatbush in 1652. Ibid. at 1, 5–6, 84, 101. William Bennett (1823–1903) was a large potato farmer, who did not sell his 100-acre farm until the turn of the century; his account books from the 1880s and 1890s are cited in this book. Gertrude Ryder Bennett, Living in a Landmark.

19. O. W. Holmes, “Murphy, Henry Cruse,” DAB 13:350 (referring to the 1830s) (quote); Phillips, The Lott Family in America 101 (quote); LDLI: For 1878–79 at 269; “Brooklyn Riches,” KCRG, May 29, 1875, 4:1 (quote); NYT, Aug. 9, 1878, 8:5 (though “one of the most methodical of business men.” Lott left no will). On Lott’s landholdings, see U.S. Census, 1850, Agriculture; PS of the Seventh Census, 1850, Flatbush 20. In 1873 Lott stated at a conference of the New York State Board of Assessors and the Brooklyn assessors and supervisors that personal property was taxed “a great deal more than it ought to be” — in Flatbush, where he lived, it was taxed at its full value. “County Affairs: View of Judge Lott on the Equalization of State Taxes,” BDE, June 30, 1873, 4:2. Despite his great wealth and the extensive landholdings that he reported and paid taxes on, Lott consistently reported to the Flatbush tax assessor that he owned no taxable personal property; in contrast, John Lefferts consistently reported and paid taxes on more than $100,000 in personal property. E.g., ARTF, 1872 at 10–11, 24–25. In declaring that he had no taxable personalty, Lott may have been taking advantage of a statutory provision permitting taxpayers to deduct their just debts from the value of their personal property. See chapter 8 below. Lott, who had been born in Flatlands and still owned land there, continued to pay taxes there too. “The Consolidation Commission: Another Report on Consolidation by Judge Lott,” KCRG, Sept. 13, 1873, 4:2, 4. Van Brunt and Adrianna Magaw were the grantors of the land that Abraham Lott bought; the date of recording was September 20, 1821. The conveyance is to be found in Kings County real property records, Liber 13, page 65. This title was abstracted from the property records for section 16, block 5240, Brooklyn City Hall. Van Brunt Magaw was the son of Robert Magaw and Marritie Van Brunt, the daughter of Rutgert Van Brunt and Altie Cortelyou; the Van Brunt and Cortelyou families both owned considerable amounts of land. Van Brunt Magaw (1783–1831) married Adrianna Voorhees, whose family appears to have acquired this land in the first part of the eighteenth century. Bergen, The Bergen Family 371–73 n.1. John A. Lott’s extensive landholdings may in part have been a function of his unusual status, among the Kings County Dutch, as an only child. Phillips, The Lott Family in America 73.


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22. Indenture, John A. Lott to George Sprague, for land in Huntington, Long Island (Apr. 9, 1873), [Anita Lott] Cruikshank Collection, box 1. On Willink’s land transactions in New Jersey and Texas, see Cruikshank Collection (box A, John A Willink).


24. “The Progress of the Consolidation Commission,” BDE, Aug. 28, 1873, 2 (editorial) (quote); “Our Need,” KCRG, Jan. 25, 1873, at 4:1, at 2 (editorial) (quote). A dummy was a locomotive whose steam whistle was muffled. Lott’s judicious evenhandedness was amply on display at the commission’s first meeting when he likened Brooklyn’s building of Prospect Park partly in Flatbush “to a rich man building a house of his own volition — a noble mansion in the vicinity of the residences of his poorer neighbors, and then calling upon them to pay part of the expense which he had voluntarily incurred.” “Organization of the Annexation Commission,” BDE, Aug. 12, 1873, 4:2.

25. “Manifest Destiny,” KCRG, Jan. 10, 1873, 4:3 (editorial) (Lott as largest landowner). John A. Lott’s farmland straddled Flatbush, Flatlands, Gravesend, and New Utrecht. M. Dripps, Map of Kings County (1868); Robinson’s Atlas of Kings County New York, plate 6. The 1850 CA recorded that John A. Lott also owned a 41-acre farm in Flatlands and a 45-acre farm in Gravesend. That his name disappeared from later Censuses of Agriculture suggests that tenant farmers were operating them. In 1870, he was listed as owning 100 acres in Flatlands with an assessed valuation of $16,500. ARTF, 1870 at 15, TRKC, vol. 4036, roll 77. In the mid-1870s, he was still one of the biggest taxpayers in Flatlands. “Flatlands,” KCRG, Aug. 5, 1876, 2:4. Lott appeared as the owner of 20 acres of tillable land on the New Utrecht assessment roll for the first time in 1863, although he was not listed as a nonresident. He was assessed property tax on the 20 acres he owned along Ocean Parkway in New Utrecht in 1870, as was his estate in 1880. NUAR, 1863 at 30, TRKC, vol. 2136, roll 44; ARTNU [for 1870] 61, TRKC, vols. NU, AR, 1870, vol. 2143, MR 45; ARTNU, 1880 at 166, 170, TRKC, vols. NU, AR, 1880, vol. 2153, MR 48. Lott also owned 24 acres in Gravesend. AR, Town of Gravesend at 14, in TRKC, vol. 3066, roll 69.


eral other residents, including farmers, supported Bergen. "New Utrecht," 
*KCRG*, Aug. 19, 1876, 2:2. Although Bergen succeeded in securing a temporary 
injunction against Supervisor Gubner's construction of a new town hall, it was 

was 8 to 2. "Kings County Annexation." Three days later the commissioners re-
jected the view that they were empowered to draft a new charter for consoli-
attended only one meeting before resigning because of illness, and was replaced 
by Thomas Kinsella, editor of the *Eagle*. Commissioners were paid $10 per day 
not to exceed a total of $300. "The Annexation Commission," *KCRG*, Aug. 30, 
1873, 4:4. "Consolidation: The Last Meeting of the Commission," *BDE*, Dec. 1, 
1873, 3:2.

sioners also stated that farmland assessments would be considerably lower than 
those on ordinary property. "Brooklyn Annexation Casuistry," *NYDT*, Aug. 19, 
1873, 8:2. Gowanus became Brooklyn's Eighth Ward when Brooklyn became a 
city in 1834. 1834 NY. Laws, ch. 92, sect. 2 at 90–91. An opponent of annexation 
claimed that in Gowanus (and Wallabout) landowners "could not sell it for 
enough to pay taxes and assessments, and those who were thought to be rich 
were made comparatively poor." "Awake," *KCRG*, Mar. 15, 1873, 2:2.

33. "Brooklyn Consolidation," *NYT*, Aug. 21, 1873, 8:2 (quote); "Kings County Consolidation," *NYDT*, Aug. 28, 1873, 8:3 (quote).
34. "Kings County Consolidation," *NYDT*, Sept. 2, 1873, 8:4; "County Consolidation: Meeting of the Commissioners and Discussion of the Proposed Union," 
*BDE*, Aug. 27, 1873, 4:3; "Plundered Brooklyn," *NYDT*, Aug. 30, 1873, 1:1; 

35. "Brooklyn Consolidation," *NYT*, Sept. 14, 1873, 8:4 (quotes). See also *NYDT*, 
Sept. 9, 1873, 8:3; "Kings County Consolidation," *NYDT*, Sept. 15, 1873, 12:4. On 
judicial exemption of Flatbush property owners from assessments for benefits 
resulting from the park, see "The Park Assessment Decision," *BDE*, Nov. 29, 
1873, 2:2 (editorial); "The Vacation of the Park Assessment on Flatbush," *BDE*, 
Dec. 4, 1873, 2:2 (editorial); "Prospect Park: Judge Gilbert's Opinion on the As-
essment Question," *BDE*, Dec. 6, 1873, 4:5.

36. "Improvement: A General Survey of Brooklyn and Vicinity," *BDE*, Oct. 11, 1873, 
2:4, 5 (quote); "Flatbush and East New York," *BDE*, Jan. 23, 1873, 2:8 (quote); 
"The Terms of Consolidation," *BDE*, Sept. 15, 1873, 2:1 (editorial); "The Con-
solidation Commission—The Plan Agreed To, "BDE, Sept. 11, 1873, 2:1 (editorial); “County Consolidation—Judge Lott’s New Section to the Plan,” Sept. 15, 1873, 2:5 (quote). Those parts of Flatbush that did specially benefit from the park were to be assessed.

37. Plan for the Consolidation of the Towns of New Lots, Flatbush, New Utrecht, Gravesend and Flatbush with the City of Brooklyn, art. II, sect. 1, 2, in “Annexation: Shall the City of Brooklyn and the Five County Towns Be United?” BDE, Nov. 3, 1873, 2:8, 9.

38. “County Consolidation—Judge Lott’s New Section to the Plan,” BDE, Sept. 15, 1873, 2:6–7 (quote); “New Utrecht,” KCRG, June 20, 1874, 8:1 (quote).

39. “County Consolidation: Judge Lott’s New Section to the Plan,” BDE, Sept. 15, 1873, 2:5,7. It was far more eloquent than the quasi-minority report that Bergen, Peter Lott, and William Bennett published in pamphlet form, which focused almost exclusively on budget items such as piers, docks, and truant homes, for which the annexed towns would be taxed, and never even alluded to the demise of farming. “Consolidation: Address by Hon. Tunis G. Bergen Against the Proposition,” BDE, Oct. 27, 1873, 2:6. John A. Lott’s response was confined to correcting errors in the items and amounts that might be taxed. Ibid.; “Consolidation: The Issue Succinctly Stated by the Honorable Judge Lott,” BDE, Oct. 29, 1873, 2:9.


42. This interpretation was supported by a resident of New Lots who claimed that for fifteen or twenty years “the farming interest” had stymied his efforts to open streets: farmers refused to sell their land but wanted their neighbors to improve theirs so that the farmers could enhance the value of their property without incurring any expenses. “Anti-Annexation: Mr. Joseph F. Bridges to the People in General and the Voters of New Lots in Particular, on the Consolidation Question,” BDE, Oct. 3, 1873, 2:6, 7 (letter to editor).


44. Plan for the Consolidation of the Towns, art. I, sect. 9, in “Annexation,” BDE, Nov. 3, 1873, 2:9 (quote); “The Consolidation of the Towns and the City—The Vote Tomorrow,” BDE, Nov. 3, 1873, 2:1 (quote).

45. “The Consolidation of the Towns and the City,” ibid. (quotes). After the commissioners had voted on September 13 to submit the annexation proposal to the electorate, they also voted to print 150,000 copies of it in pamphlet form for distribution to the voters. Just as Bergen’s motion to reduce that number to 100,000
lost, so, too, the commissioners rejected his argument that they lacked authority to provide 400,000 ballots (one-half for each side). “County Consolidation: Judge Lott’s New Section to the Plan,” BDE, Sept. 15, 1873, 2:7; “Annexation: The Work of the Commissioners on Consolidation Practically Finished,” BDE, Sept. 30, 1873, 2:2.

46. “The Consolidation of the Towns and the City,” BDE, Nov. 3, 1873, 2:1. In fact, all of the towns, according to the population data in table 18, had grown significantly between 1860 and 1870.


48. “The Defeat of Consolidation,” BDE, Nov. 6, 1873, 2:3 (editorial); “Consolidation: What an East New Yorker Has to Say on the Defeat of the Scheme,” BDE, Nov. 12, 1873, 4:6; “Annexation: Enthusiastic Meeting at East New York,” BDE, Nov. 18, 1873, 4:2 (78 votes); “Consolidation: The Closing Meeting of the Commissioners,” BDE, Nov. 25, 1873, 4:3; “Consolidation Defeated: Official Announcement of the Vote,” KCRG, Dec. 6, 1873, 1:2; Strong, “Modern History of Flatbush” 237–38. The Times, Tribune, and Eagle, after extensive reporting on the commission’s proceedings, failed to publish the vote count. Strong’s mention of a 1,568 majority against annexation in the towns may have been taken from the report in the KCRG, which used this aggregate number despite the fact that the sum of the majorities in the towns was 1,478. The Gazette projected a final majority in Brooklyn in favor of annexation of 20,000 once all the districts had been heard from, although at the time the majority was only 16,197. The Consolidation Commission’s final official tally, which omitted five election districts, stated that in Brooklyn 23,665 voted for and 4,056 against consolidation. This official tally, as reported in the Rural Gazette, differs somewhat from the data in table 22. The total vote in the five rural towns was 2,284 against and 902 in favor; in addition, 147 ballots were endorsed “no” and 10 left blank. “Consolidation Defeated: Official Announcement of the Vote,” KCRG, Dec. 6, 1873, 1:2. In boasting of its rapid publication of general election results from the rural towns, one Brooklyn paper noted that despite the vote against consolidation, “in matters of news, and all the advantages flowing from its gathering and publication, they shall be a part of the city in spite of themselves.” “The Union’s Election Returns,” BDU, Nov. 5, 1873.


Farm at New Lots” (quote). In 1883, another annexation bill was filed in the state legislature providing for a vote in New Lots and Brooklyn and tax preferences for agricultural land. “New Lots,” KCRBG, Mar. 10, 1883, 2:5.


54. 1874 N.Y. Laws, ch. 465, sect. 1 at 607 (authorizing Flatbush to borrow $40,000 payable within 30 years); Daniel Bluestone et al., Flatbush 4; “The Grand Opening of the Bay Ridge & Manhattan Railroad,” KCRG, July 21, 1877, 2:3, 5 (quote).


56. David Hammack, Power and Society 185 (quote), 203–14; 1894 N.Y. Laws, ch. 64 at 146; Report of the Commissioners Appointed Pursuant to Chapter 311 at 2; BDEA: 1895 at 298; “Brooklyn Favors Consolidation,” NYDT, Nov. 9, 1894, 3:4, reported Flatlands voting in favor of consolidation; “Greater New-York in Doubt,” NYT, Nov. 8, 1894, 1:3, 4, published preliminary figures 958 to 708. Neither “Brooklyn for Consolidation,” NYT, Nov. 9, 1894, 1:3, nor “For Consolidation,” NYT, Nov. 10, 1894, 1:6, nor the BDEA mentioned Flatlands, which was annexed January 1, 1896, was a part of the 31st Ward (Gravesend) in 1894, and became the 32nd Ward in 1895. 1895 N.Y. Laws, ch. 313 at 428.

8. The Impact of Property Tax Laws on Deagriculturalization

1. Pranay Gupte, “Hunger for Land Is Turning a Region of Choice Farms into One of Houses,” NYT, Feb. 8, 1976, sect. 8 at 1:1, 4:1, 1:2. Wendell Berry, The Unsettling of America 65, used “journal fodder” to describe a National Geographic report on a Long Island farm that had been owned by one family since 1737 and would be driven out by competition and high taxes unless it mechanized and expanded. For evidence that urbanization, soil productivity, and retirement are more important determinants of loss of farmland than property taxes, see Thomas Plaut, “Urban Growth and Agricultural Decline” 274–87.

2. Ellen Snyder-Grenier, Brooklyn! 104, 106. Snyder-Grenier cited no source in support of this claim; in a telephone interview in October 1996 she was also unable to cite any source. Daniel Bluestone et al., Flatbush 32–36, 56, assert that after annexation, “tax laws for Flatbush changed. Instead of a tax on farm property, land was taxed by town lots which had already been plotted along Flatbush Avenue on the east side. Taxes made it too expensive to own land within the city limits. . . . Farmers could not afford to pay the taxes on their many lots and were forced to begin selling off their farms.” This undocumented claim is at odds with the fact that tax rates in fact did not increase. For a documented example of Queens farmers “forced to sell” by higher taxes based on full market value assessments at the turn of the century, see Jeffrey Kroessler, “Building Queens” 347–48 (Ph.D. diss.). Gertrude Ryder Bennett, Living in a Landmark 43, asserted with respect to Gravesend that: “Around the turn of the century, taxes forced farmers to sell their farms.”

3. Lott was jocularly referring to Teunis Bergen’s motion to remove the parks and
other assets of Brooklyn from among the properties that would accrue to the consolidated city and for which the rural towns would then have had to accept financial responsibility.

4. J. Peter De Braal, *Taxes on U.S. Agricultural Real Estate*, tab. 1 at 6; Thomas Adams, Harold Lewis, and Theodore McCrosky, *Population, Land Values and Government* 264; *BDEA*: 1887 at 103; *BDEA*: 1900 at 448; *BDEA*: 1893 at 201; *BDEA*: 1895 at 240; *BDEA*: 1896 at 250; *BDEA*: 1897 at 352; *BDEA*: 1898 at 413. From 1895 to 1896 the average rate in Brooklyn declined from $34 to $29 per $1,000 of valuation. “Now Get Your Tax Bills,” *NYDT*, Nov. 20, 1896, 10:2. An anonymous author asserted in 1920 that “taxes rose in leaps and bounds and the man who had a fifty acre farm threw up his hands when it came to be assessed, not as agricultural land, but as a city plot. Consolidation of Brooklyn with New York further increased the tax burden.” Few 50-acre farms — and certainly no “great areas where corn . . . had been grown up to the time of their [the developers’] acquisition of the land” — remained by the 1890s in Flatbush, the only town whose annexation statute lacked a special tax privilege for owners of farmland. “Old Flatbush,” in Snyder, *Tales of Old Flatbush* 79.


7. Chap. XIII: Of the Assessment and Collection of Taxes, tit. 1, sect. 3, in *Part of the Revised Statutes* 223 (quote); Chap. XIII: Of the Assessment and Collection of Taxes, tit. I, sect. 49 at 225 (exemption from execution); Chap. XIII: Of the Assessment and Collection of Taxes, tit. II, sect. 9(4) at 227 (quote). The personalty tax also included “such portions of the capital of incorporated companies, liable to taxation on their capital, as shall not be invested in real estate.” The ban on “double taxation” of corporate income was in fact complete because a later section provided that: “The owner . . . of stock in any incorporated company liable to taxation on its capital shall not be taxed as an individual for such stock.” Chap. XIII: Of the Assessment and Collection of Taxes, tit. I, sect. 7, in *Part of the Revised Statutes* 224, 225. State law exempted from execution ten sheep, one cow, two swine, the family’s food and fuel, all necessary wearing apparel, beds and bedding, necessary cooking utensils, one table, six chairs, six plates, teacups, and saucers, a mechanic’s tools and implements necessary to carrying on his trade up to $25 in value, a householder’s necessary household furniture and working tools, and team up to a value of $150 (excluding execution issued on a demand for the purchase money of such items), and the lot and buildings of a homestead up to $1,000. *Revised Statutes of the State of New York*, vol. 3, tit. v, pt. iii, ch. vi, sect. 22, 23, 28 at 644, 645–47. Abraham I. Ditmas on Aug. 3, 1867, filed a preprinted form, sworn to before the assessor, Jacob V. B. Martense, stating that “after deducting his just debts and property invested in the stock of incorporated Companies, liable to taxation, . . . the value of the Personal Estate owned by him does not exceed the sum of five thousand five hun-
dred dollars. And that he has not in any way disposed of his Personal Property, or created any indebtedness with a view to avoid being assessed for such prop­erty, or to enable him to make this affidavit.” On July 27, 1863, John A. Lott filed the same form, swearing that after making the same deductions he had no per­sonal estate liable to taxation. These figures then appeared on the assessment rolls for those years. TRKC, UD, Flatbush, Taxes; Personal Property Oaths; As­sessors’ Notices; Internal Revenue 1870–1895.

8. Report of the Comptroller 3 (quote); Annual Report of the Comptroller 35 (1859) (quote); First Annual Report of the State Assessors 22 (quote); Report of the Com­missioners to Revise the Laws for the Assessment and Collection of Taxes 62–63 (quote); “Assessed Value in Flatbush,” KCRG, Sept. 21, 1878, 2:3. Tax officials almost unanimously observed that “oaths as a matter of restraint, or as a guaran­tee of truth in respect to official statements, have, in great measure, ceased to be effectual; or in other words, that perjury has become so common as to almost cease to occasion notice.” Report of the Commissioners to Revise the Laws for the Assessment and Collection of Taxes 69. Despite continuing complaints over many years from high-ranking state officials — even Governor Grover Cleveland urged treating both kinds of property equally by abolishing deductions for debt — it continued to be set off against personal property throughout the nineteenth century. Annual Report of the Comptroller 18–19 (1868); “Away with Unjust Taxation,” KCRBG, Jan. 19, 1884, 2:1. The provision was again included in the tax code enacted at the end of the century. 1896 N.Y. Laws, ch. 908, art. II, sect. 21(4) at 796, 805.

9. Nevertheless, at the end of the century, when it became clear that “escape of per­sonal property from taxation . . . must be accepted as a basic fact,” the state comptroller reported that personal property was more fully assessed in rural counties because “[n]early all of the personal property of the farmer is tangible, open to view, and easily reached by the assessor.” Annual Report of the Com­troller of the State of New York xv.

10. Annual Report of the State Assessors of New York for the Year 1889 at 16 (quote); ARTF, 1873 at 28–29; ARTF, 1874 at 24–25; ARTF, 1876 at 24–25; ARTF, 1877 at 10–11. Often the largest proportion of tax revenue was assigned to the towns. In 1889, two-thirds of property taxes in Flatbush were designated for the town. An­nual Report of the State Assessors of New York for the Year 1889 at 53. Towns, however, did not always receive the bulk of the tax receipts. In New Utrecht in 1852, for example, the county received 78 percent of the total revenue. NUAR, 1852, TRKC, vol. 2125, roll 43. The New York State legislature imposed certain rates of property taxation to be levied by the counties for specified state purposes. See, e.g., 1872 N.Y. Laws, ch. 736 at 1782; 1873 N.Y. Laws, ch. 765 at 1161; “Brooklyn and the State Tax,” BDE, Oct. 11, 1873, 4:2.

11. Letter from John Lefferts to the Commissioners of Highways of the Town of Flatbush, Jan. 21, 1880, TRKC, UD, Flatbush, Highway Commissioners — Crosswalks; Railroad Petitions; Gas Lamps: 1874–1883 (quote); ARTF, 1880 at 3: CA, 1880, KC, Flatbush, MS; “The Cost of Health,” KCRG, Sept. 19, 1874, 4:1 (editorial). For earlier years, tax rates in New Utrecht — where for the years af-
ter 1858 the tax rate was often identical to that in Flatbush's nongas district — show how minimal taxation was. It was 0.25 percent in 1831, falling to a low of 0.13 percent in 1841, and reaching a high of 0.65 percent in 1857. In 1840, for example, Evert Suydam was assessed $18.33 in tax on his 100-acre farm (valued at $10,000) and $1,000 personal estate. Calculated according to NUAR, 1831–1869, roll 43–44; NUAR, 1840 at 1, vol. 2050, roll 43. The fact that the legislature did not even authorize the establishment of gas districts in New Utrecht until 1888, more than two decades after their creation in Flatbush, points to the earlier suburbanization of Flatbush despite the considerable contingent of wealthy Manhattan merchants residing in New Utrecht since before the Civil War. 1888 N.Y. Laws, ch. 576, sect. 8–20 at 932, 933–35.

12. ARTF [1853] at 8, 7 (typed copy of original ms. at BHS). The 1860 CA listed each as farming 80 acres. On the relation between property taxes and profits, see chapter 10 below and table 36.

13. The tax on real estate in New York State encompassed land and buildings as well as trees, mines, and minerals. Chapter XIII: Of the Assessment and Collection of Taxes, tit. 1, sect. 2 at 224. Because there is no unambiguous correlation between jumps in the assessed value and the appearance of another house, it is not possible to draw conclusions as to the relative weight to be attributed to the houses. Nevertheless, it seems plausible to conclude that, since the amount of land, which was more or less identical with the extent of his farm acreage, remained relatively unchanged, the additional houses may have contributed disproportionately to the rising assessments. Williamson was no exception to the general pattern: the opening of Prospect Park caused assessed values to rise sharply after 1868; the depression that began in 1873 deflated them. See chapter 6 above. Williamson reported to the CA in 1870 and 1880 that the value of his farm was $25,000 and $28,000.

14. ALFBIR, 1864, NY, CD 2, div. 8 at 162; ALFBIR, 1865, NY, CD 2, div. 8 at 394; ALFBIR, 1866, NY, CD 2, div. 8 at 36; ALFBIR, 1870–71, NY, CD 2, div. 8, at 362; ALFBIR, 1869–70, NY, CD 2, div. 8 at 362.

15. ARTF, 1894 at 482, 484.

16. The data in this paragraph are based on the tables discussed in chapter 2 above.

17. The group of Flatlands farmers is composed of John C. Bergen, Asher Hubbard, Cornelius B. Kouwenhoven, George Lott, Robert Magaw, Richard Remsen, Jeremiah Ryder, James Schenck, and Jeffrey Van Wyck. John A. Lott's land is also included. Not all of these farmers appeared in all the assessment rolls; by the 1890s, several had died and their heirs were listed instead. The Flatlands AR for 1860, 1870, 1880, 1890, and 1892 are found in the TRKC, vol. 4057, roll 80; vol. 4036, roll 77; vol. 4043, roll 78; vol. 4050, roll 79; and vol. 4052, roll 80, respectively. The NYCMA appears to lack the assessment rolls for Flatlands after 1892. The averages for Gravesend are based on the taxes of Benjamin Hitchings, William Bennett, David Jones, Philip Leib, Daniel Stillwell, Barnardus, Voorhees, and James Williamson. The Gravesend AR for 1860, 1870, 1880, 1890, and 1883–1893 are found in the TRKC, vol. 3056, 3066, and 3076, roll 69; vol. 3079–3082, roll 70; vol. 3083–3085, roll 71; 3086–3087, roll 72; and vol. 3083...
and 3089, roll 73. 1893 is the last year for which the NYCMA has the assessment rolls. Bennett’s profits are calculated from William Bennett & Sons, Farm Accounts. Bennett’s taxes as a proportion of his profits reached their low point of 4.3 percent in 1886 and their high point of 22.6 percent in 1893, averaging 10.8 percent. These proportions may, however, be overstated: at the 1880 Census of Agriculture, Bennett’s son Elias was returned as renting half the farmland on which his father paid taxes; the annual receipts that William recorded in his account books between 1883 and 1898 were strikingly uniform and about the same as the $6,000 in total production he reported to the census in 1879, when his son reported an additional $3,000. The taxes would, then, amount to a considerably smaller proportion of total profits for both farms. In New Lots, which was industrialized and incorporated into Brooklyn earlier than the other towns, the trend in farmland taxes did not deviate significantly from that in the other towns. For example, Abraham Linington, one of the county’s largest farmers, paid $0.98 in real property tax per acre in 1860, $4.42 in 1870, and $4.34 in 1880. The New Lots AR for 1860, 1870, and 1880 are located in the TRKC, vol. 14, roll 28; vol. 24, roll 30; and vol. 34, roll 33.

20. 1956 Md. Laws, ch. 9, sect. 1 at 10 (quote); A. M. Woodruff, “City Land and Farmland” 33 (quote). After the statute was held unconstitutional, the state constitution was amended to permit the legislature to tax farmland at a different rate. State Tax Comm’n v. Gales, 161 A.2d 676 (Md. 1960); 1960 Md. Laws, ch. 65 at 186. John MacKenzie and Gerald Cole, “Use-Value Assessment as a Farmland Preservation Policy” 252, also claimed: “Maryland enacted the first use-value tax assessment law in the United States in 1957.” See also Raleigh Barlowe, “Taxation of Agriculture” 98; William Whyte, The Last Landscape 121; Henry J. Aaron, Who Pays the Property Tax? 85; John Opie, The Law of the Land 164; Lockeretz, “New Life for Metro Farming” 83; Nelson Bills, “Urban Agriculture in the United States” 15. For evidence that preferential taxation cannot stop urban expansion but can prevent discontinuation of farming before urbanites are willing to make high offers, see Howard Conklin and William Lesher, “Farm-Value Assessment as a Means for Reducing Premature and Excessive Agricultural Disinvestment in Urban Fringes.” A very late and ambiguous example of a farmer who sold out was John B. Kouwenhoven, a descendant of the original Dutch settlers of Flatlands, who died at the age of 82 in 1926 after having owned a farm for years. His obituary stated that: “The realty development of the section forced him to dispose of it a few years ago.” NYT, Jan. 28, 1926, 23:3.
21. In incorporating the city of Brooklyn in 1834, the New York State legislature provided that the two new (agricultural) wards could not be included in the fire and watch district without the written consent of two-thirds of the resident householders and owners and lessees of land (or an act of the legislature). 1834 N.Y. Laws, ch. 92, sect. 37 at 90, 103–104. Two years later, the legislature amended the incorporation act to extend the fire and watch district provisions to the whole
city. 1836 N.Y. Laws, ch. 76, sect. 1 at 101. In 1853, the legislature empowered the consolidation commission preparing the union of Brooklyn, Bushwick, and Williamsburg to set the relative rates of taxation in the various wards. 1853 N.Y. Laws, ch. 577, sect. 7 at 1057, 1058. The commission's general plan (art. 1, sect. 2) provided that the agricultural wards (part of Bushwick, Gowanus, and Bedford) would not be subject to taxation for the fire department, police, and street lighting. "County Consolidation," BDE, Aug. 20, 1873, 4:5, 6. A similar provision was then written into the consolidation statute, whereby the common council was authorized to include the wards by a two thirds vote. 1854 N.Y. Laws, ch. 384, sect. 23, 25 at 829, 846, 847.

22. 1856 Pa. Laws, sect. 6 at 567, 568; 1868 Pa. Laws, no. 407, sect. 1 at 443, 444, repealed by 1939 Pa. Laws, no. 404, sect. 22 at 1199, 1205; 1870 Pa. Laws, no. 234, sect. 9 at 242, 243 (quote); sect. 1, 1859 Conn. Spec. Acts 27–28. The Pennsylvania legislature enacted the two-thirds agricultural tax rate for cities of the second class (Pittsburgh and Scranton) in 1867, reducing it to one-half in 1876 and one-third of the highest rate in 1897. 1867 Pa. Laws, no. 775, sect. 6 at 846, 850; 1876 Pa. Laws, no. 91, sect. 3 at 124, 125; 1897 Pa. Laws, no. 182, sect. 3 at 219, 220–21; repealed by 1911 Pa. Laws, 273; 1913 Pa. Laws, no. 147 at 209, 210. Despite the repeal, the 1897 statute remains on the books. Pa. Stat. Ann., tit. 53, sect. 25900 (Purdon 1957). See generally, Simen's Appeal, 41 Pitts. 13 (1893). The year after it extended Erie's city limits, the legislature supplemented the statute to deprive any tract that was laid out into city lots and sold as such of its farmland assessment. 1871 Pa. Laws, no. 743 at 811. See also City of Erie v. Reed, 6 A. 679 (Pa. 1886). That knowledge of this statutory agricultural tax preference was not totally lost, was shown by the reference to it by Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., "Introductory Address on City Planning" 28. Because the tax preference was applied to large estates of wealthy families in Pittsburgh that were adorned with the trappings of pseudofarms, it created distributional injustices. Shelby Harrison, "The Distribution of Taxation in Pittsburgh."

23. 1833 Ky. Acts, ch. 204, sect. 17 at 211, 217; 1836 Ky. Acts, ch. 257, sect. 28 at 280, 289–90; 1851 Ky. Acts, ch. 373 at 682; 1876 Iowa Acts, ch. 47, sect. 4 at 38, 39 (quote), repealed by 1972 Iowa Acts, ch. 1088, sect. 199 at 219, 289; Leicht v. City of Burlington, 34 N.W. 494, 495 (Iowa 1887) (quote); Fulton v. City of Davenport, 17 Iowa 404, 407 (1864) (quote). Plaintiffs in Leicht were farmers growing vegetables on farms whose size fell below the statutory threshold, which the legislature had in the meantime reduced to 10 acres. 1878 Iowa Acts, ch. 169, sect. 5 at 156.

24. Several state supreme courts agreed with farmers that bringing farmlands within a city's limits for the sole purpose of taxing them "without the pretext of extending the protection of the city over them" was an unlawful taking of private property without compensation — even where the incorporation statute prescribed assessment of the land by the acre according to its value for agricultural purposes and the farmland in question was taxed at only one dollar per acre. Morford v. Unger, 8 Iowa 82, 85, 92–93 (1859); 1856 Iowa Acts, ch. 18, sect. 5 at 49, 51 (city of Muscatine). See also City of Covington v. Southgate, 54 Ky. 491
The foremost nineteenth-century treatise writer favoring this position was John F. Dillon, *Treatise on the Law of Corporations*, sect. 633–34 at 597–600. At the same time Dillon, who had been a justice on the Supreme Court of Iowa, was writing on this subject, he appeared as a pro se litigant before that court, unsuccessfully suing the city of Davenport, Iowa, to restrain it from levying taxes on the 16 acres that he used as a residence and improved with gardens, orchards, and vineyards. Dillon continued to cite the decision at great length in all editions of his treatise without mentioning that he had been a plaintiff in the case that his former colleagues had decided against him. *Durant v. Kauffman*, 34 Iowa 194, 201–202 (1872). See also John F. Dillon, *Commentaries on the Law of Municipal Corporations* 2:973 n.1 (1890); ibid., 4:2429–30 n.2 (1911). Other courts in effect gave legislatures a free hand to tax such farms on the grounds that burdens and benefits could not be calibrated and that farmland owners presumptively benefited from whatever promotes the interests of the larger community of which they had become part. *Kelly v. Pittsburgh*, 104 U.S. 78 (1881); J. Hare, *American Constitutional Law* 1:299–300.

25. *Kelly v. City of Pittsburgh*, 85 Pa. 170, 170–71 (1877). The $10 per acre income was rent that Kelly received for letting his land for dairy purposes; the valuation of his land was increased 50-fold from 1873 to 1874. *Master's Report 12, Kelly v. Pittsburgh*, 104 U.S. 78; Argument for Plaintiff in Error 3, *Kelly v. Pittsburgh*.


27. *Kelly v. City of Pittsburgh*, 85 Pa. 176, 178, 179 (quotes); *Kelly v. Pittsburgh*, 104 U.S. at 82 (quotes). Even state supreme courts that vindicated complaining farmers seemed to harbor a suspicion that the plaintiffs operated with a hidden agenda: "There is little reason to apprehend, that when the city actually grows up to the land now in question, the proprietor, whoever he may be, will withhold it from the necessities of a growing population." *City of Covington v. Southgate*, 54 Ky. 496.

28. 1873 N.Y. Laws, ch. 853, sect. 14 (quote), 15 at 1275, 1277; 1886 N.Y. Laws, ch. 335, sect. 11 at 544, 546 (quote). On annexation, see chapter 7 above. At the same time that annexation was under discussion, amendments to the city charter for Brooklyn were also being debated. Although this provision was ultimately not adopted when the legislature amended the charter in 1873, one proposal with regard to newly admitted wards read: "The valuation for the lands actually used for agricultural purposes . . . shall be based upon the value of said lands . . . for agricultural purposes only." "The One Hundred: Meeting Last Night — Valuation of County Towns Lands," *BDE*, Jan. 28, 1873, 3:8. Between enacting the two New Lots statutes, the legislature in 1877 amended an 1870 statute authorizing Albany to annex parts of two towns to prohibit the assessment of farmland used exclusively for such purpose at a valuation greater than that of similar farmland in the adjoining town. 1877 N.Y. Laws, ch. 402, sect. 2 at 416.


47 (quote); The Citizen Guide to Brooklyn and Long Island at 183 (quote). The Times highlighted the agricultural provision in the Gravesend statute. “County Towns as City Wards,” NYT, Apr. 28, 1894, 9:5.

31. 1894 N.Y. Laws, ch. 451, sect. 9 at 925, 929–30 (quote); “Anxious to Be Taken In,” BDE, Mar. 10, 1894, 5:3; “All Ready for Annexation,” BDE, Mar. 11, 1894, 24:3; “Work for Good Government in New Utrecht,” BDE, Mar. 30, 1894, 4:4 (editorial) (quote). A provision similar to that for New Utrecht was enacted about the same time on behalf of other market gardeners along the East Coast. In 1888, when the Maryland legislature extended the limits of Baltimore to parts of Baltimore County, another leading vegetable producer, it prohibited any increase in the tax rate or the assessment of property in the annexed areas until the year 1900. 1888 Md. Laws, ch. 98, sect. 19 at 113, 127. In upholding the provision, the state’s highest court opined that, since the annexed territory largely consisted of vacant lots and farming lands, “the plainest principles of justice would seem to require a qualified exemption of such property, for a limited period, at least, from the heavy burden of city taxation. It must be some time before such property can be available for building or business purposes, or can enjoy the full benefits and privileges of city government.” Daly v. Morgan, 16 A. 287, 289 (Md. 1888).


33. 1894 N.Y. Laws, ch. 356 at 692 (Flatbush statute); “Annexation Hearing,” BDE, Mar. 9, 1894, 5:5 (sewers); 2. “Twenty-ninth Ward of Brooklyn,” BDE, Apr. 26, 1894, 4:1 (quote); The Citizen Guide to Brooklyn and Long Island 183 (quote). Perhaps the most detailed contemporary newspaper article on the subject of assessments in Brooklyn, which quoted the statutory provisions on agricultural land taxes, did not explain why the legislature had treated Flatbush differently, but noted that with the exception of Flatbush, property in the newly annexed towns was assessed at 25 to 50 percent of its value. “Unequal Assessments,” NYDT, June 27, 1896, 14:1.2. On a group of Flatbush residents who opposed annexation on the ground that it would compel small landowners to pay increased taxes without any benefit, see “Flatbush Citizens Protest,” NYT, Mar. 17, 1894, 9:2. Justice Edward Sweeney, a Flatbush Democrat, contended that “a large majority of the people in the town were against the bill, and that it will only benefit land speculators and the water and lighting companies, while the small householder will get the worst of it.” “Flatbush Enters as a Ward,” BDE, Apr. 26, 1894, 12:1.

34. Brief for Appellant at 28, People of the State of New York ex rel. Coney Island Jockey Club v. Purdy, 137 N.Y.S. 1136 (1912). The census of 1910 recorded 110 farms, only 8 of which were fifty acres or more in all of Kings County. USBC, Thirteenth Census of the United States, vol. VII at 200. Of the two farms enumerated as encompassing 100 to 174 acres, the Jockey Club stated that it owned one, the 100-acre Vanderveer farm, which for some years it had been renting to a farmer for $700. Petition for Writ of Certiorari, in Papers on Appeal from Order of Reversal at 7–25 at 15, People of the State of New York ex rel. Coney Island Jockey Club v. Purdy, 137 N.Y.S. 1136 (1912). The Jockey Club still argued in 1912 that
Gravesend "is and always has been a rural town, there are large farms there and a great quantity of land tilled for truck and garden farming." Brief for Appellant at 24, People of the State of New York ex rel. Coney Island Jockey Club v. Purdy, 137 N.Y.S. 1136 (1912).

35. "Annexation Hearing," BDE, Mar. 9, 1894, 5:5 (quote). The Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide was exceptional in not reporting on the course of legislative proceedings. After annexation it published a brief piece speculating that the "cordon of beer gardens, with dance hall attachments, the vilest and most demoralizing of all evils," which were located just outside the city limits would "have to sneak away beyond the new frontiers, or go out of business." RERBG, 53 (1363):685 (Apr. 28, 1894). The magazine's preoccupation resurfaced when it complained that Brooklyn's "superabundance of the tough and vulgar element" seriously affected property values. "The Leaven of Morality in Brooklyn," RERBG, 54 (1383):351 (Sept. 15, 1894).


37. "Unequal Assessments" 14:1 (quoting George Case).


40. Bennett, Turning Back the Clock 33–34 (quotation). In a case involving property that the Board of Assessors of the City of Brooklyn conceded had always been used exclusively for farming purposes, it took the position that the legislature had intended "to exclude from the exemption (i.e., from the privilege of having his property assessed as agricultural lands)" all owners whose property had been divided up into building lots before the statute was enacted regardless of whether a map had been filed with the board or whether any of the land had been sold. The court rejected this interpretation, instead viewing the provision "as prescribing a general rule of taxation to be applied to the acquired territory, rather than as a provision for the exemption of property there situated." Consequently, the statute required all real estate in Gravesend "to be assessed at the value of the land for agricultural purposes" unless it had been sold or used as a building lot. Since the owner clearly did not fall into either exception, he prevailed. People of the State of New York ex rel. Ferguson v. Neff, 16 A.D. 107, 109, 110 (1897).


9. Were All Kings County Farmers Descendants of the Original Dutch Settlers? The Farm-Tenure Structure

1. "New Utrecht," KCRBG, Apr. 21, 1883, 2:6; John A. Kouwenhoven, "Brooklyn Before the Bridge" 12 (quote); Lefferts Vanderbilt, The Social History of Flatbush 175 (quote). When Rutgert van Brunt's farm was offered for sale in 1879, it, too, had been in the family for more than two centuries. "New Utrecht, Bath and


3. *The Eagle and Brooklyn* 258; “Annexation: City and County Union,” *BDE*, Mar. 3, 1873, 2:6, 7 (quote); *ARTF*, 1873 at 28–29. The church owned a large tract west of the church at what is now Flatbush and Church Avenues. F. W. Beers, *Atlas of Long Island*. The church began selling off the farmland in the 1860s when it was no longer needed to support the minister. Joseph Berg, “The Flatbush Church in the Last 50 Years” 10; Charles Livingston Jr., “Background and History of the Church” 22. The agreements with Heaslip (Feb. 17, 1885, and Mar. 1, 1886) and Kennedy (Feb. 27, 1886) ran one year, and those with Garnin (Mar. 15, 1882, and Feb. 1885) for a term of three years. Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of Flatbush Archives. For the basic data on these tenant farmers at the 1880 CA, see table 27.


5. Charles Andrew Ditmas, *Historic Homesteads of Kings County* 51–52; *CA*, 1850 and 1860, KC, Flatlands, MS.

6. [Anita Lott] Cruikshank Collection (quote); *ARTF*, 1860 at 22–23; Ditmas, *Historic Homesteads of Kings County* 67. The 1860 Census of Agriculture returned a Thomas Barnett(e) as farming 10 acres in Flatbush, but no Thomas Bennett; the value of his production of market garden produce on 10 acres ($1,000) was equal to Lott’s on 80 acres (Lott did produce more potatoes). The 1860 Census of Population returned two farmers named Thomas Bennett but no Barnett(e). It is unclear whether Bennett and Barnett were the same person. At his death in 1861, part of Jeremiah Lott’s farmland passed to his daughters Catharine, who married her first cousin, Judge John A. Lott, and Abby Lefferts, who married John Zabriskie. In 1862, they are listed in the Flatbush assessment rolls as owning 80 and 35 acres, respectively. Phillips, *The Lott Family in America* 50, 70, 101; *ARTF*, 1862 at 16–17, 20–21.

7. W. H. Stillwell, “Local Emigration from Kings County,” *KCRG*, Nov. 30, 1872, 6:2–3. Bizarrely, Stillwell, an antiquarian in Gravesend, exemplified the disadvantage of higher rental, manure, and wages over the advantage of lower transportation costs by reference to Kings County farmers’ inability to grow wheat profitably.


9. William Williamson, who at 35 farmed 41 acres in Flatlands in 1870, ten years later was forced by failing health to let out the remaining acres of his farm. “Flatlands,” *KCRBG*, July 17, 1880, 3:3. Langley’s ad appeared in *KCRG*, Oct. 28, 1876, 3:6. The last year in which Langley owned 44 acres designated as a farm was 1870, but he continued to own almost as much land into the 1880s. NUAR, 1870
at 21, TRKC, vol. 2143, MR 45; NUAR, 1871 at 28, in TRKC, vol. 2144, MR 45; NUAR, 1876 at 66, in TRKC, vol. 2149. On Bergen, see "Flatlands," KCRBG, Mar. 21, 1885, 2:4; KCRG, Nov. 15, 1873, 8:3; KCRG, Jan. 31, 1874, 8:2; KCRG, Oct. 5, 1878, 3:7. Bergen was not returned as living in Flatlands at the 1880 census. He did not sell the Bergen Island until 1892, when his name was crossed out of the assessment roll and those of Thomas Adams Jr. and Perry J. Williams inserted. As of 1890, Bergen was listed as owning 80 acres of land and 25 acres of meadow valued at $13,100. In 1891 his holdings rose to 90 and 150 acres, respectively, valued at $14,000. In 1892, the holdings of the new owners were 90 and 122 acres, respectively, valued at $30,000. The property tax on the land remained virtually unchanged between 1870, when a tax of $201.50 was imposed on land valued at $11,865, to 1891, when a tax of $204.55 was imposed. ARTFI, 1870 at 1, TRKC, vol. 4036, roll 70; ARTFI, 1890 at 14, TRKC, vol. 4050, roll 79; ARTFI, 1891 at 14, TRKC, vol. 4051, roll 80; ARTFI, 1892 at 13, TRKC, vol. 4052, roll 80.

10. “Flatlands,” KCRG, Oct. 16, 1875, 2:5 (Irish farmers). Included here are only persons whom the census schedules returned as “farmers”; sons of farmers whose occupation was listed as “farming” have been included among farm laborers. The category “farming” was not used in the 1860 census schedules; sons were all returned as “farmer.” The following Dutch family farmers appeared in the 1860 Census of Population: Allgeo (1), Antonides (1), Bennett (25), Bergen (16), Cozine (4), Cropsey (6), Degroff (1), Denye (5), Ditmas (4), Duryea (7), Emmons (6), Hegeman (8), Hendrickson (7), Hubbard (6), Lake (4), Linington (1), Lott (29), Kownenhoven (22), Magaw (3), Neufus (3), Remsen (10), Repalje (4), Ryder (15), Ryerson (2), Schenck (10), Schoonmaker (3), Snedeker (2), Suydam (9), Stillwell (23), Stoothoff (5), Stryker (9), Van Brunt (13), Van Cleef (2), Vanderveer (9), Van Duyne (1), Van Dyke (5), Van Pelt (6), Van Sicklen (14), Van Sinderen (2), Van Wyck (6), Voorhees (25), Williamson (18), and Wyckoff (25). The 1870 CP returned the following number of farmers from Dutch families: Allgeo (1), Antonides (1), Bennett (21), Bergen (14), Cozine (5), Cropsey (6), Degroff (4), Denye (5), Ditmas (6), Duryea (4), Eldert (3), Emmons (4), Hegeman (4), Hendrickson (4), Hubbard (4), Lake (7), Linington (2), Lott (20), Kownenhoven (18), Magaw (3), Neufus (2), Remsen (7), Repalje (6), Ryder (15), Ryerson (3), Schenck (7), Schoonmaker (4), Suydam (4), Stillwell (13), Stoothoff (4), Stryker (7), Van Brunt (8), Van Cleef (4), Vanderveer (12), Van Dyke (5), Van Pelt (4), Van Sicklen (12), Van Sinderen (2), Van Wyck (4), Voorhees (25), Williamson (18), and Wyckoff (25). In 1880 the enumerated farmers were: Bennett (18), Bergen (10), Cortelyou (1), Cropsey (4), Degroff (3), Denye (5), Ditmas (3), Dittmars (3), Eldert (2), Emmons (6), Hegeman (6), Hendrickson (1), Hubbard (3), Lake (5), Lefferts (1), Lott (10), Kownenhoven (15), Linington (3), Magaw (1), Monfort (3), Neufus (1), Remsen (6), Repalje (6), Ryder (10), Schenck (6), Schoonmaker (3), Suydam (3), Stillwell (7), Stoothoff (2), Stryker (5), Van Brunt (6), Van Cleef (2), Vandebilt (1), Vanderveer (9), Van Dyke (2), Van Pelt (1), Van Sicklen (7), Van Wyck (2), Voorhees (7), Williamson (5), and Wyckoff (8). Inclusion is based in large part on the account given by Teunis G. Bergen, Register in Alphabetical Order, of the Early Settlers of Kings County; Vanderbilt,
Social History of Flatbush 175–248. Orthography has been made uniform for names that families and enumerators spelled differently. On the multiple spellings of one family name, see Lincoln Cocheu, “The Von Kouwenhoven–Conover Family.” English-sounding names may also have been corruptions of Dutch names; in some cases, for example, Johnson was a corruption of Jansen. Kouwenhoven, “Brooklyn Before the Bridge” 15. This masking of Dutch names may well have led to an undercount of Dutch families, which, however, should not have affected the trend over time. On the origins of one prominent Dutch farm family, see Morton Wagman, “The Rise of Pieter Claessen Wyckoff.” Because the enumerator’s handwriting was poor in 1850, it is possible that additional illegible names in the CA were also Dutch; 1850, 1860, 1870, and 1880 CA, KC, MS.

11. Pessen, Riches, Class, and Power Before the Civil War 207, 209. Pessen erroneously stated that Jeremiah and John Lott were cousins.

12. Ditmas, Historic Homesteads of Kings County 103–105; Teunis G. Bergen, Genealogy of the Van Brunt Family 23–24; Snyder, Tales of Old Flatbush 160, iii (quotes). Because many people shared the same first and last names (with some families’ last names becoming other people’s first names), it is difficult to trace farmers from one census or assessment roll to the next.

13. Some Dutch farmers may have been exposed to such economic pressures. When the New Utrecht farm of the recently deceased John Bennett was sold at auction to his brother-in-law, the $17,000 price just sufficed to cover the mortgage to the Long Island Savings Bank. Yet a few years earlier, New York “capitalists” had offered $50,000 for the farm. KCRG, Feb. 1, 1879, 2:7–8. Murphy and Phillips were the only farmers in that landed property group in Flatbush and Gravesend, respectively. Unclear is not only how Murphy and Phillips acquired their land, but also what they did with it. Murphy reported to the CA in 1870 that his 37 acres were worth $120,000 — which would have worked out to a wholly fantastic $3,243 per acre — but that his farm produced only 2,500 bushels of potatoes, no market garden produce, and a total value of only $2,500. The William Murphy listed as a farmer in Flatbush in 1880 was returned as retired. Phillips reported that his 75 acres were worth $48,000 — this $640 per acre was quite high for the time — but yielded only 1,500 bushels of potatoes, no market garden produce, and only $2,000 worth of total production. The data for both of these wealthy Irish farmers thus seem suspect. The other 11 farmers with property valued at more than $100,000 resided in New Lots: Abraham Linington ($100,000), 53 years old; Christopher Lott ($150,000), 43 years old and retired; Williamson Rapalje ($100,000), 67 years old and retired; Isaac Schenck ($130,000), 66 years old and retired; Abraham Vanderveer ($100,000), 52 years old; John Vanderveer ($100,000), 51 years old; Stephen Vanderveer ($133,000), 44 years old; Ulpine Vansinderen ($100,000), 40 years old; and New Utrecht: J. R. Bennett ($100,000), 56 years old, retired, and also reporting $60,000 in personal estate; Daniel Van Brunt ($100,000), 44 years old; and Ralph Van Brunt ($100,000), 44 years old. U.S. CA, 1870, KC, MS; U.S. CP, 1870, KC, MS; U.S. CP, 1880, KC, MS.

15. PS of the Seventh Census, 1850; PS of the Ninth Census, 1870, Flatbush at 73; Tenth Census, 1880, Flatbush 50 (Anderson). In 1900, a single tenant was “colored.” Twelfth Census . . . Agriculture, tab. 10 at 106–7. In 1860, Francis Anderson, whose family members identify him as the same person returned as F. Anderson in 1870, was listed as a mulatto farm laborer. PS of the Eighth Census, 1860, Flatbush 89. In contrast, a contemporary source stated that by the end of the 1850s, blacks owned $276,000 in unencumbered real estate in Brooklyn and $151,000 in Williamsburgh. James Freeman Clarke, “Conditions of the Free Colored People of the United States” 254. A historian of the Midwest concluded that the “‘farmer’ without a farm . . . seems to have worked on a farm much as the farm laborer did. But since a different name was used in reporting occupation, we adhered to the census classification in considering these as separation occupational groups. We thought the census takers would hardly have classified so many men as ‘farmers’ and so many others on farms simply as agricultural laborers unless there had been in their minds a definite difference.” Merle Curti, The Making of an American Community 60. Some relatives of owners may have been jointly operating farms but would have been excluded from the Census of Agriculture, which listed only one person per farm (though in rare cases it included an entry such as “Cropsey Brothers”), but these instances cannot account for the large discrepancy. Some farmless “farmers” may simply have called themselves such when they in fact occupied more subordinate positions on farms. 1870 CA for New Utrecht. The data for 1860, 1870, and 1880: PS of the Eighth Census, 1860, KC; PS of the Ninth Census, 1870, Flatbush; Tenth Census 1880, Flatbush; U.S. Census, 1880, Agriculture, reel 5, KC; U.S. Census, 1880 Agriculture, reel 18, KC. Farmers in the city of Brooklyn have been excluded from the counts although it is possible that some rural Kings County residents operated farms in Brooklyn.

16. KCRG, July 17, 1875, 2:3.

17. James Bennett, Edward Kennedy, and James Leary are examples of Irish immigrants who were tenants in 1880 and had been farm laborers in 1870 in Flatbush, while Patrick Fitzpatrick, Patrick Maher, and John Whalen had been general laborers, and John Heaslip the son of a (tenant) farmer. John Keenan may have been a farm laborer in 1860, but the identification in the Census of Population is not unambiguous.

18. CP and CA, 1870, MS; ARTF, 1870; Vanderbilt, Social History of Flatbush 175–248; CA, 1880, KC, Flatbush, SD no. 2, ED 251 at 2 (quote). John A. Lott's farm in Flatlands was also let. By 1885, the farm, which the Van Wyck brothers had been occupying, was let in parcels to three men for farming purposes. “Flatlands,” KCRBG, Mar. 21, 1885, 2:4.

19. CA, 1860; ARTF, 1860. The 1860 Census of Agriculture also marked the last appearance of several old farming families, such as Voorhies and Stoothoff, which later also no longer figured as landlords. 1860 was the last census at which certain families, such as Suydam, Neefus, Vanderveer, and Lott were represented by several members; others, such as Vanderbilt, disappeared after the 1850 Census of Agriculture.

21. On methodological problems related to tenancy data, see Allan Bogue, From Prairie to Corn Belt 62–64.


23. ARTF, 1872 at 10–11. The almost $2,000 per acre land value may have been so high — about three times higher than that for many farms in the assessment rolls — because the homestead itself was expensive. The value of John Lefferts’ real property was almost as high, but the value included several houses.

24. The Martense farms derived from Martin Adriaen (1668–1754), Jacob Martense’s great-great-great-great-grandfather, whose Flatbush estate encompassed 500 acres and was divided among his three sons, Rem (1695–1760), Gerrit (1697–1732), and Adriaen (1707–1784). Rem’s male lineage died out by the end of the eighteenth century (one of his great-granddaughters married Philip Crooke), but Adriaen’s great-grandson, George (1791–1835), Jacob Martense’s father, and Gerrit’s great-great grandson, Judge Gerrit L. (1793–1860), operated the farms in the first half of the nineteenth century. After the death of his surviving brothers in the early 1860s, Jacob Martense presumably controlled his father’s farm. After Judge Martense’s death in 1860, only one son, Leffert, who died without issue, survived; although he was returned as a farmer living in his father’s household at the 1850 Census of Population, the 1860 Census of Agriculture returned Jacob Martense as the only Martense left farming. In 1870, 54-year-old Leffert was returned as living together with his sister in his 80-year-old mother’s household; like them, he was listed as owning $25,000 of real property, but had no occupation and the Flatbush assessment roll did not list him as a property owner; Lefferts died two days after his mother in 1875. Jacob Martense was one of the heirs of his father, George Martense, whose land continued to appear under this name on the Flatbush assessment rolls (its 84 acres and house were valued at $44,282 and taxed $616.45 in 1872), but may not have been an heir of the estate of his fourth cousin, G. L. Martense, which continued to appear under this name on the Flatbush assessment rolls. However, Jacob Martense may still have effectively administered both farms — he was listed as the administrator of his father’s estate in 1862 — which were contiguous on the west side of Coney Island Avenue, thus prompting his remarks about it in the Eagle. Albert Ryerson, The Ryerson Genealogy 301–8; NYT, Dec. 14, 1875, 5:6; NYT, Dec. 17, 1875, 5:5; PS of the Seventh Census, Flatbush 23; CP, 1870, Flatbush, MS 65; ARTF, 1862 at 12. On the incomes of Martense and Prince, see tab. 37–38.


26. CA, 1870 and 1880, MS; Ditmas, Historic Homesteads of Kings County 67–69.

folder; Agreement, Egbert Benson with Otto Gubner, Oct. 8, 1862, in ibid., sixth folder; calculated according to NUAR, 1864 to 1869, TRKC, vol. 2137–42, MR 44.
29. Ibid. 2:7–8.
30. ARTF, 1873 at 187–202; Ditmas, Historic Homesteads of Kings County 67–68.
34. Calculated according to ARTF, 1870 at 8, 11, 23; ARTF, 1880 at 3, 11. After Lott died in 1878, his estate was listed as the owner. Assessments declined between 1870 and 1880 because they had been inflated during the "speculative excitement, in and about the year 1868" in the mistaken expectation that the opening of Prospect Park would trigger a residential building boom; the long depression beginning in 1873 then reduced prices significantly. "Strong Arguments Against Increased Assessments," KCRG, Oct. 16, 1875, 2:1.
35. Calculated according to ARTF, 1880 at 13, 46; see chapter 10 below.
36. In 1883, 32.5 acres were assessed at $52,000 and taxed $777.43 ($23.92/acre); another 24 acres were assessed at $15,600 and taxed $233.23 ($9.72/acre). ARTF, 1883 at 12. In 1885, the 32.5 acres were taxed $1,025.90 ($31.57/acre). ARTF, 1885 at 53. All the extant agreements in the church archive, running from 1882 to 1888, provided for $20 per acre rent.
37. CP, 1870, KC, Flatbush, MS 63; CP, 1880, KC, Flatbush, MS, SD no. 2, ED no. 252 at 37. In 1870, Martense declared that he owned a personal estate worth $18,000 but no real estate at all.
38. USBC, United States Census of Agriculture: 1925, pt. I, county tab. I at 192–93; Thirteenth Census, vol. VII, tab. 2 at 206. In the two categories in which Kings County ranked second lowest, it was surpassed only by Manhattan, which had literally only a handful of farms. In the category in which it ranked fourth highest, two of the other three were Staten Island and Suffolk, which were only 2–3 percentage points higher. During the Depression, tenancy declined as owners, presumably, seized an opportunity to supply themselves with food. By 1935, only 3 of 35 farms were tenant-operated. USBC, United States Census of Agriculture: 1935, vol. I, pt. 1, county tab. I at 54.
39. CO, Report on Farms and Homes, tab. 103 at 405, tab. 108 at 452; calculated according to data in CO, Report on . . . Agriculture . . . Eleventh Census, tab. 6 at 220.

10. What Was the Dutch Farmers’ Price?
Profits, Taxes, Land Prices, and Incomes

2. As late as 1895, an authority on horticulture confirmed that Long Island vegetable farms were still profitable: "While this competitive factor has certainly lessened their profits, even at the lower prices that prevail to-day there is still a
fair profit in the business for them, certainly more than in ordinary farm crops.”


A poignant portrayal of the premodern way of life appears in Traven’s novelistic description of the early twentieth-century attempt by a U.S. oil company to buy a hacienda in Mexico. The owner, when offered $400 per acre for land that the company claims is otherwise worth less than one dollar, pleads that he cannot sell the land because he does not own it: he is merely its current custodian, administering it as did his ancestors and passing it along to the generations that will succeed him including the descendants of the hacienda’s workers. The notion that he could just as well take the money and buy land elsewhere overlooks the hacienda’s cultural uniqueness: it had been fertilized with the blood, sweat, hopes, sorrow, and joy of their fathers and mothers. The oil company president, who regards the owner as insane, takes as his matrix the early-twentieth-century U.S. farm, to which the farmer is no more emotionally attached than to any other object of commerce: a farmer builds up the farm not to create a home, but to make a profit by selling it and buying another farm to start the process all over. B. Traven, Die weisse Rose 23, 153, 173, 178–79.

11. “Notebook on the History of Brooklyn and Long Island, NY, including Jeremiah Johnson’s Reminiscences,” [unpaginated at ca. 40] (NYPL, [after 1862]). The word “plutonic” is difficult to decipher and has been guessed at. On the elder Johnson, see “Death of General Jeremiah Johnson,” NYT, Oct. 23, 1852, 6:4–5.

12. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Manifest der Kommunistischen Partei 466 (quote); John Thompson, “The Primary Sector” 203 (quote).

13. Farm Real Estate Values in the United States by Counties 24; USBEA, Long Term Economic Growth, 1860–1970, ser. B73 and B75 at 224; Paul Douglas, Real Wages in the United States 1890–1926, tab. 231 at 646; chap. 2 above; DI, CO, Report on . . . Agriculture in the United States at the Eleventh Census, tab. 6 at 198–235, tab. 24 at 500–537. Manhattan real-estate mortgage rates at the time were about 1.6 percentage points higher. USBEA, Long Term Economic Growth, ser. B77. Ac-
cording to Richard Hurd, *Principles of City Land Values* 133: “At the outer circumference of cities land is held as acreage, the prices per acre advancing from the normal value of farm land near cities, $50 to $150 per acre, up to market garden land, which may earn interest on $300 to $1,000 per acre, and, finally to speculative tracts held at $500 to $5,000 per acre.” According to A. Oemler, “Truck Farming” 607, a good truck farmer could net $100 per acre on a farm with costs up to harvest time of $125 per acre on a farm two miles from a city. In contrast, the census data for 1880 show that no county produced even $125, let alone $225, per acre.

14. $100 + $72.5 = 172.9; $100 ÷ 77 = 129.9. Neither the agricultural nor the population census for 1880 listed four of the names; several of the other names are found in the 1880 agricultural census but only as tenants, while still other names are listed more than once.

15. PS of the Third [sic; should read Second] Census 1800, NY, KC, NU 9; NUAR, 1830, TRKC, vol. 2043, roll 43; NUAR, 1837, TRKC, vol. 2114, roll 43; NUAR, 1848, TRKC, vol. 2058, roll 43. On Jacques Cortelyou, see *Brooklyn Before the Bridge* 64. Although what was called the 130-acre Cortelyou farm roughly matched the acreage owned by Peter Cortelyou, it passed through so many hands and had been split up so many times into smaller holdings, that by the 1880s no one was cultivating such a large farm. This account is strengthened by the fact that the developer bought the Cortelyou farm from Edward Egolf. “A Land Boom in New Utrecht.” The farm associated with the Vechte-Cortelyou house on Fifth Avenue and Third to Fourth Streets was sold in 1850 for real-estate development to Edward Litchfield. Maud Dilliard, *Old Dutch Houses of Brooklyn*, no. 28. A farmline map from about 1872 shows farms owned by Sieger, E. Suydam, and A. Lott. *Map of Kings County*. By 1870, the only Cortelyous listed as owning land on the 1870 assessment roll for New Utrecht were the nonresident heirs of Isaac Cortelyou, who owned 13 acres of salt meadows on the beach. Nonresidents Solomon Sharp and V. K. Stevenson were listed as owning 24 acres and 64 acres, respectively, of farmland and meadowland (and many lots) in 1880. ARTNU [for 1870] at 20, TRKC, vols., NUAR, 1870, vol. 2143, MR 45; ARTNU, 1880 at 40–58, in TRKC, vols., NUAR, 1880, vol. 2153, MR 48.

16. CP, 1850, NU, MS at 35; CP, 1860, NU, MS at 44. Gelston, who was not of an old-line Kings County Dutch farming family, having been born in Connecticut, is oddly listed in 1860 as only 40 years old. Later it was reported that: “Apparently the greater part of the village [Ft. Hamilton] belongs to Mr. G. S. Gelston, whose notices of sale are spread all about.” “Fort Hamilton,” *KCRG*, May 4, 1878, 2:6.

17. Otto, Walter, and Adolph Gubener (ages 27, 26, and 21), all listed as farmers, arrived in New York on October 28, 1850, from Antwerp aboard the Westminster. *Germans to America* 341. According to his obituary in the *NYDT*, Nov. 22, 1887, 3:3, Gubner arrived in 1852. The 1880 census returned him as 57, but at the 1860 census he was 32, which is consistent with the age according to the passenger list. Otto Gubner was also a farmer in New Utrecht, renting 40 acres in the 1860s from Egbert Benson. Agreement of Lease, Oct. 8, 1862, in Benson Family Papers,
box V, sixth folder. Frederick Gubner was killed in 1881 (at age 22) when he was struck by a train while driving his farm wagon in New Utrecht. He was reported as having managed, on his own account, one of his father's farms. The father won a verdict of the "handsome sum" of $4,000. "New Utrecht," KCRBG, Sept. 10, 1881, 3:2; "New Utrecht," KCRB, Sept. 24, 1881, 2:5; "A Verdict of $4,000," KCRBG, Dec. 3, 1881, 2:2. On Gubner's officeholding, see BDEA: 1886 at 121; BDEA: 1887 at 97; Lain's Business Directory of Brooklyn, Kings County . . . 1886/87 at 372; KCRG, Dec. 6, 1879, 2:7 (election to justice of sessions). Gubner's assets sufficed to permit him to bid on leases for the common lands in Gravesend. "Gravesend," KCRBG, Mar. 19, 1881, 2:4. Gubner was "rewarded" with his interpreter's job for having merely fined rather than sentenced to imprisonment a man accused of brutally assaulting an ex-judge. NYDT, Nov. 22, 1887, 3:3 (obit); Stiles, Civil . . . History 412–13.

18. "New Utrecht," KCRG, Apr. 10, 1875, 8:1 (quote); Douglas, Real Wages in the United States, tab. 62 at 186; BDEA: 1888 at 121 (in 1887, weekly wages of skilled building trades workers ranged between $12 and $30); Ronald Karr, "The Transformation of Agriculture in Brookline" 41 (quote). Sieger first appeared as owner of a 43-acre farm on the 1860 New Utrecht assessment roll; the next year and for several years thereafter Sieger and Gubner appeared as "occupant" of a 37-acre farm owned by the estate of John Deleplaine, which adjoined Sieger's land; in 1867 Gubner appeared as the owner of a 17-acre farm. NUAR, 1860 at 5, TRKC, vol. 2133, roll 44; NUAR, 1861 at 5, TRKC, vol. 2134, roll 44; NUAR, 1862 at 5, TRKC, vol. 2135, roll 44; NUAR, 1867 at 4, TRKC, vol. 2140, roll 44. They appeared as "Sieger & Gubner" on an 1873 farmland map and in the Kings County Business Notices in that atlas: "Sieger & Gubner . . . Farmers, State Road, New Utrecht." F. W. Beers, Atlas of Long Island 24, 63. In addition, according to the 1865 and 1866 federal tax assessors' lists, Gubner and Sieger had, to the penny, precisely identical taxable incomes — $1,008.34 and $285.60, respectively. ALFBIR, 1862–66, NY, dist. 2, Annual List 1865, roll T-45 1865 at 301, 319; ALFBIR, 1862–66, NY, dist. 2, Annual List 1866, roll T-46 1866 at 312, 331. Sieger and Gubner appeared for the first time in the 1860 and 1870 Censuses of Agriculture, respectively. Sieger was not listed in the 1870 Census of Agriculture, but this omission may be the result of the loss of the census schedule before it was tabulated.

19. The fact that Suydam sold 47 acres in 1889 while owning only 12 in 1880 suggests that he had bought additional land in the interim or that part of his land had been farmed by tenants in 1880. In fact, in early 1880 Suydam did advertise to let 25 acres of land for farming in New Utrecht. KCRG, Jan. 10, 1880, 3:7. Since he was only 21 years old in 1880, the Evart Suydam returned as farming 45 and 100 acres in 1860 and 1850, respectively, was presumably his father. No other Suydam was returned as a farmer by the 1870 or 1880 Census of Population and no other Suydam was returned as operating a farm in New Utrecht by the 1850 Census of Agriculture; a Cornelius Suydam was enumerated in the 1860 Census of Agriculture. The three Cropseys owned more than they sold, but the ambi-
guity here lies more in identifying which one was the seller. The great-great-grandfathers of Aaron Lott and John A. Lott were brothers. Like the latter, he married a Lott family cousin. Phillips, The Lott Family in America 69, 98.


21. The reason that no tax data are displayed for the Cropseys is that they are not listed as owning any acreage on the assessment roll for 1879 (or 1880), although the census returned them as farming and owning considerable acreage (and renting none). The assessments for three of the other five farmers are shaped by a similar inconsistency; Gubner, Sieger, and Martin were all assessed for fewer acres than they farmed — 15, 23, and 35 acres, respectively. Whereas Suydam owned 45 acres more than he farmed, only Lott farmed and owned the same acreage. Despite these discrepancies, the taxes that they actually paid underscore the constraints under which they operated farms and presumably reinforced their decisions to sell their land.

22. “A Handsome Suburb,” NYT, Nov. 9, 1890, 16:2 (quote); “Bay Ridge Real Estate Sold,” NYT, Nov. 14, 1890, 8:4; “Good Prices for Bay Ridge Lots,” NYT, Mar. 5, 1891, 8:4 (quote). Extensive descriptive advertisements by the Bay Ridge Park Improvement Co. appeared in the opening (unpaginated) pages of BDEA: 1891. None of the officers or trustees of the company had a Dutch name.

23. All the land owned by Gubner, Lott, and Suydam was listed as taxed either to their estate or heirs. ARTNU, 1886, 1888, 1889, and 1890. One of the male Cropseys was a lawyer; “Seek an Accounting of Cropsey Estate,” NYT, Nov. 25, 1915, 18:1. Both farmers (William Williamson and John Gamin) reported as giving up farming for reasons of ill health were only in their thirties. “Flatlands,” KCRBG, July 17, 1880, 3:3; “Local,” KCRBG, Dec. 12, 1881, 3:1.

24. Calculated according to U.S. CA, 1880, KC, NU, MS 3, 8. In conformity with the preceding examples, the farmer’s fertilizer and wage costs were multiplied by 1.3.

25. Calculated according to U.S. CA, 1860, KC, NU, MS; U.S. CA, 1870, KC, NU, MS.

26. As early as 1872, Vanderveer sold 31 acres for $21,700. “Real Estate,” KCRG, May 25, 1872, 2:3. This relatively high price may have been a function of the post-Prospect Park real-estate boom, which came to an end the following year. Vanderveer may have been motivated to sell by the fact that at the 1870 census, his farm, which he valued at $80,000, was returned as having only $2,620 worth of production, only $400 of which was market garden produce. U.S. Census, 1870, Agriculture, KC, Flatbush.

27. U.S. CA, 1860, MS; U.S. CA, 1880, MS.

28. ARTF, 1893 at 243 (Williamson); ARTF, 1894 at 482 (Williamson); ARTF, 1874 at 204 (Neefus); ARTF, 1893 at 214 (Neefus); ARTF, 1894 at 424, 427–28, 437–39 (Neefus); “Death of John Neefus,” KCRG, Oct. 9, 1875, 2:2; ARTF, 1893 at 250 (47 acres owned by Suydam); ARTF, 1894 at 468 (total of 53.31 acres subdivided by Suydam), at 482–84, 487 (Schenck); TRKC, UD, Town Board, 1878–1890, Bundle No. 10: Town Board 1892–1894, MR 18 (franchise).

29. The taxes reported in the assessment roll have been adjusted by taking two factors into consideration. First, for Williamson and Vanderveer that part of the tax has been deducted which was accounted for by their personal property as
contradistinguished from their real estate; and second, since the Schencks and Vanderveer reported to the census that their farms encompassed more land than the assessment roll recorded, their taxes have been increased by the appropriate percentage. William Bennett, the large Gravesend farmer, also illustrates the light burden of property taxes at the time of the 1879–80 Census of Agriculture. The $88.56 tax on his 94 acres amounted to only 2.6 percent of his calculated profit of $3,465. Since he was returned as farming 45 acres and his son Elias was returned as a tenant on the other 45 acres, the tax should in fact be set in relation to the total profit of both farms; it amounted to only 1.8 percent of that sum of $5,035. Gravesend AR, 1879 at 1, in TRKC, vol. 3075, roll 69; U.S. CA, 1880, KC, Gravesend, MS at 3.


31. Further light is cast on the potential profitability of these farms by data on vegetable farms at a slightly later time. The 1900 Census of Agriculture reported that whereas a cereal field yielding $8–10/acre was doing unusually well, truck gardens yielded $80 to $200. The additional labor and capital costs did not offset these higher yields, thus leaving “a very considerable margin . . . for higher wages and for profits.” USCO, *Twelfth Census*, pt. II at 307. The census conceded that inexact data on the acreage devoted to vegetables made derivative calculations “somewhat uncertain.” Ibid. In 1913, when the USDA conducted a study of the analogous set of processes forcing farmers outside Louisville, Kentucky, to adapt their operations to generate interest on the increased capitalized value of their land plus a profit, it published data showing that on small intensive potato-truck farms (under 80 acres) near the city, the average farmer derived net income of $23 per acre on $96 per acre of gross receipts, which amounted to 7 percent profit on invested capital (in addition to $1,000 in imputed labor income included in the operating expenses). USDA, *Influence of a City on Farming*, tab. VIII at 12.

32. These invaluable lists, which scholars have rarely if ever used to study any part of the United States, are available on microfilm only for tax years 1862 through 1865 — yet no library appears to hold any for New York City or Brooklyn. The original lists for the last years of the tax are preserved at the New York Regional Office of the National Archives, where they have languished virtually untouched. At the time of the War of 1812, Congress levied direct internal taxes on houses, land, slaves, and certain articles. The Dutch farmers of Kings County were well represented on the list of these taxpayers and of the tax they paid, although they were not among those paying the highest amounts. “Statement of the Amount of Internal Duties . . . during the year one thousand eight hundred and fifteen,” and “Statement of the Amount of Internal Duties . . . during the year one thousand eight hundred and sixteen.” TRKC, UD, Flatbush, Taxes; Personal Property Oaths; Assessors’ Notices; Internal Revenue: 1870–1895. During and after the Civil War, Congress revised progressive tax rates as follows: 3 percent on income between $600 and $10,000, and 5 percent on more than $10,000 (1862); 5 percent on income between $600 and $5,000, 7.5 percent on $5,000 to $10,000, and 10% on more than $10,000 (1864); 5 percent on $600 to
$5,000, and 10 percent on more than $5,000 (1865). As taxpayers’ complaints began to mount after the war, Congress raised the exemption level, lowered the rate, and eliminated progressivity: in 1867 the rate became 5 percent on all income above $1,000, and in 1870 it was 2.5 percent on all income above $2,000. Act of July 1, 1862, ch. 119, sect. 90, 12 Stat. 432, 473; Act of June 30, 1864, ch. 173, sect. 116, 13 Stat. 223, 281; Act of Mar. 3, 1865, ch. 77, 13 Stat. 468, 479; Act of Mar. 2, 1867, ch. 169, sect. 13, 14 Stat. 471, 478; Act of July 14, 1870, ch. 255, sect. 6 & 13, 16 Stat. 256, 257, 260. See generally, Frederic Howe, *Taxation and Taxes in the United States* 90–102; Harry Smith, *The United States Federal Internal Tax History* 45–97. On the publicness of the assessment lists, see Marc Linder, “Tax Glasnost’ for Millionaires” 962.

33. John C. Bergen papers. The Brooklyn Historical Society does not appear to hold any other farm account books from the Civil War forward.

34. *Trow’s New York City Directory for the Year Ending May 1, 1869* at 6 (quote). The occupational data are taken from the CP, 1870, KC, MS. Schaffer was returned as living in Flatlands; it is assumed that Garvin was E. L. Garvin, the only Garvin returned in Flatbush. CP, 1870, KC, Flatbush, MS at 24. George Hope, though president of an insurance company, personally supervised the management of his small acre farm and boasted of the town’s earliest vegetables in 1879. “Bay Ridge,” *KCRG*, Oct. 11, 1879, 2:7. His eight-acre farm was returned at the 1860 Census of Agriculture, but not thereafter.

35. The speculation that Ryerson must have had other sources of income is strengthened by the fact that in 1870 his personal property was valued at $18,000 — the second highest amount in Flatlands and four times greater than that of his land. ARF, 1870 at 9, TRKC, vol. 4036, roll 77. Because the 1870 Census of Agriculture listed operations of the Bennett, Cropsey, and Van Brunt Brothers without specifying the names of the brothers, it is not possible to determine the cost-revenue structure of the farms of several farmers such as Adolphus Bennett and Daniel von Brunt whose taxable incomes were somewhat higher than Linington’s. Because one sheet from the 1870 Census of Agriculture for New Utrecht was apparently lost, it is not possible to determine the revenues and costs of a number of farmers. Larzelere married into the Lott family, having married Catharine Aletta Lott, daughter of Charles Lott, in 1858. Phillips, *The Lott Family in America* 97.

36. Act of Mar. 2, 1867, ch. 169, 14 Stat. 478. Laborers’ subsistence was deductible, but no deduction was permitted for labor or services furnished or produce consumed by the farmer or his family. Commissioner of Internal Revenue, *Regulations for the Assessment of the Income-Tax*, May 1, 1863, printed in George Boutwell, *A Manual of the Direct and Excise Tax System of the United States* 196–98 at 197. Nevertheless, complaints were voiced that farmers’ consumption of their own produce was not taxed. “The Income Tax,” *NYTrib*, Dec. 10, 1869, 4:4. Although the statute did not expressly permit deductions for fertilizer expenditures, the Commissioner ruled that: “Fertilizers purchased by farmers to maintain their land in present productive condition will be considered as ‘repairs’ in estimating income.” Decision no. 110, May 1863, printed in Boutwell,
Manual of the Direct and Excise Tax System of the United States 273–75. For a facsimile of the Civil War-era income tax form, see ibid. at 156; IRS, Income Taxes 1862–1962 at 7–10. In publishing the incomes for the Boston area in book form, a newspaper noted that "some names are wanting, and among those are persons having large incomes. Most of these parties declined or neglected to make their returns, and have been or will be 'doomed' by the Assessors." Boston Traveller, Incomes of the Citizens of Boston n.p. [iii]. David Wells issued his report as Special Commissioner of the Revenue in 1869 in which he recommended that the uniform 5 percent tax be reduced to 3 percent because it would "bring within reach of the tax great numbers who now either avoid giving in lists at all, or, while doing so, force the constituents of their income so as to escape contribution entirely." Report of Special Commissioner of the Revenue LXIX.

37. Roberts, whose name in censuses and tax records was also spelled "Robert" and "Robarts," was not listed in the various lawyers’ directories of the period. A legal notice that appeared in a newspaper after the death of his wife, Jane, spelled the family’s name as "Robert." KCG, Oct. 31, 1885, 2:6. Roberts, who first appeared as living in New Utrecht at the 1840 census, may have been the son of a very wealthy physician who acquired a fortune in the West Indies. In 1845 a Daniel Roberts was an attorney in Manhattan with wealth estimated at $100,000. Sixth Census, 1840, NY, KC, NU at 818; Wealth and Biography of the Wealthy Citizens of New York City 25. Roberts’s high annual incomes as recorded in the federal tax assessor’s lists may have stemmed from bonds or other investments. He first appeared on the New Utrecht assessment roll in 1836 as the owner of a 160-acre farm which until then had been owned by Garret Stoothoff. NUAR, 1836 at 1, TRKC, vol. 2047, roll 43. This genesis, however, conflicts with the account given by Teunis Bergen, who stated that in 1827 “Daniel Robarts” married Jane Cowenhoven, who inherited a farm that ultimately derived from the Van Brunt family. Bergen, Genealogy of the Van Brunt Family 25. In addition to the 119-acre farm, Roberts owned another 42 acres (with five houses) in 1870. ARTNU, 1870 at 1, 45, TRKC, vol. 2143, MR 45.

38. Two of the largest farms in New Utrecht and all of Kings County — two dairies in Bushwick with output of $20,000 were larger — the production of which was valued at $17,000 and $13,500, were returned by the Census of Agriculture as owned by Van Brunt & Brothers and W. Bennett & Brothers, respectively. Given the large number of Bennetts and moderate number of Van Brunts farming at that time, identifying the partners is beset with difficulties. The same problem affects the Cropsey Brothers. The Van Brunts reputedly could trace their property holdings back farther than any other family in New Utrecht. “The Bi-Centennial of New Utrecht,” KCRG, Oct. 27, 1877, 2:3, 6.

39. Whether these low or nonpayments actually reflected flagging profitability or merely placed “the honest tax-payer at a disadvantage in comparison with his neighbor or business competitor who escapes,” might be determined if researchers could compare the income tax returns themselves, which included entries for such deductions as amounts paid for hired labor, repairs, and interest, with the data in the 1870 Census of Agriculture manuscript schedules. Report of
Special Commissioner of the Revenue LXIX. Unfortunately, they may have been destroyed a century ago. In any event, the National Archives believes that they were destroyed, does not have them, and reports that even if they were at the Archives, the IRS takes the position that the confidentiality conferred on post-1913 tax returns retroactively applies to the Civil War-era tax returns and would prohibit their use. Telephone interview with Cynthia Fox, Branch Chief, Textual Reports, NA (Apr. 15–17, 1997). Fox asserts that the returns were burned because Congress, after the U.S. Supreme Court had held the 1894 income tax unconstitutional, ordered all income tax returns in the possession of the Treasury Department destroyed. Cynthia Fox, “Income Tax Records of the Civil War Years” 144. In fact, Congress directed the Secretary of the Treasury to “cause the immediate destruction of all income tax returns and any copies thereof, with all statements and records relative thereto, now in possession of the Treasury Department, by reason of ‘An Act to reduce taxation,’ and so forth, in effect August eighth, eighteen hundred and ninety-four.” H.R.J. 42, 54th Cong., 1st sess., 29 Stat. 470 (1896). Fox concedes that this resolution did not pertain to the Civil War-era tax returns, but speculates that the Treasury Department might have destroyed them without specific authorization. The Commissioner of Internal Revenue did request Congress to authorize the destruction of all income tax records in the custody of the Internal Revenue’s office. Annual Report of the Secretary of Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1895 at 482. Fox could offer no source for her claim that the returns were burned, but refers to a congressional report in which the Treasury Department recommended destruction of all Forms 22 from 1863 through 1869. Fox contends that Form 22 was the tax return, but the list expressly characterized it as “Collector’s monthly abstract of amount collected on each article or occupation.” Useless Papers in the Treasury Department 6. However, even if the returns had been preserved, since taxpayers were permitted simply to affirm that their income was lower than the exemption level in lieu of filing a return, it might still be impossible to scrutinize many farmers’ economic condition. Act of June 30, 1864, sect. 118, 13 U.S. Stat. 223, 282. The accuracy of the returns may have deteriorated over time as the federal income tax came “to be regarded by the better class of citizens with more and more disfavor from year to year.” Income Tax 1.

40. Boston Traveller, Incomes of the Citizens of Boston 28–29; Annual Report of the Commissioner of Internal Revenue VI (nationally, 272,843 persons were assessed for federal income tax in 1869 compared with 266,135 in 1867). The $1,000 exemption was in effect during both years. Brookline was, to be sure, more of a metropolitan suburb, home to wealthy Boston businessmen, and less of a farming community, than rural Kings County. See generally, Karr, “The Transformation of Agriculture in Brookline” 41.

41. Phillips, The Lott Family in America 101; CP, 1880, KC, Flatbush, SD no. 2, ED 251 at 32.

42. Bergen, Genealogy of the Lefferts Family 42; “Flatbush” at 7 in The Towns that Became Brooklyn (quote); Lockeretz, “New Life for Metro Farming” at 84 (quote).
On the sale of Flushing farms to larger Dutch farming families from Kings County in the nineteenth century, see Tony Hiss, *The Experience of Place* 110. At least one of the Flatlands Kouwenhoven farming families moved to Queens in the early nineteenth century, buying an estate of several hundred acres. The property was “worth millions of dollars” by the early twentieth century when a descendant, Luke Kouwenhoven, who had been born in 1829, died at age 85. Half a century before his death, he had been able to retire from farming to “manage his financial affairs.” “Obituary: Luke Kouwenhoven” (undated newspaper clipping furnished by Catharine Weber Scarborough). Gottmann offered this stereotype of the farmer who sold out in the post–World War II period: “The capital gain that comes when a farmer surrenders to the city is a handsome reward. He naturally feels much better about the deal than the suburbanite who follows him with a split-level on an eighty-foot lot and thirty-year mortgage. The ‘poor farmer’ can grieve at his leisure on Miami Beach while the ‘rich city slicker’ works the rest of his able lifetime to pay for taking his land.” Gottmann, *Megalopolis* 333.

43. *KCRG*, Apr. 12, 1873, 6:3 (quote); *BDE*, Apr. 16, 1873, 3:8 (quote); *KCRG*, Apr. 12, 1873, 6:3. In 1872 John S. Ryder of Gravesend bought an 80-acre farm in Smithstown, Long Island, and was to move there. “Gravesend,” *KCRG*, Sept. 21, 1872, 5:2; *KCRG*, Oct. 12, 1872, 5:1. The 1870 Census of Population and Census of Agriculture included several people with this name, one of whom was a butcher and another an operator of a small farm. In 1873 Henry J. Van Sicklen of Gravesend bought a 100-acre farm in Bellport, Long Island. “Gravesend,” *KCRG*, May 10, 1873, 5:2. It is unclear whether he was the 65-year-old restaurant owner or 34-year-old farmer of a six-acre farm at the 1870 census. Within a week of each other in 1874, A. Stryker and Samuel Stryker of Gravesend were reported to have moved to Rockville Center, Long Island, and Long Island (without town), respectively. “Gravesend,” *KCRG*, Nov 7, 1874, 1:3; “Island Items,” *KCRG*, Nov. 14, 1874, 7:1. Neither item mentioned that the residents had bought a farm; two persons with each name, one of each of whom was a small farmer, were returned at the 1870 census. Only one destination lay outside the New York metropolitan area: two brothers from a prominent Gravesend Dutch farming family who were, however, apparently themselves not farmers, bought a large farm in Wisconsin. James Van Sicklen, a carpenter in his 40s, explained that carpentry in Kings County was “too poor . . . to get along.” “Gravesend,” *KCRG*, Nov. 14, 1874, 1:3 (quote); “Gravesend,” *KCRG*, Nov. 28, 1874, 1:3. At the 1870 Census of Population, James was returned as a 39-year-old carpenter, while Lawrence was not listed. On the Van Wycks, see “Flatlands and Canarsie,” *KCRBG*, Mar. 14, 1885, 2:3. The father, Z. B. Van Wyck, appeared in the 1870 and 1880 Census of Population as 50 and 54 years old, respectively, while his son Franklin was 17 and 27; by 1880, four of his sons worked on the farm. Although the 1870 Census of Agriculture returned him as operating a 100-acre farm and producing $10,000 worth of product, Van Wyck did not appear at all in the 1880 Census of Agriculture. At the same time that the Van Wycks were auctioning off their stock, the
newspaper reported that (the deceased) Judge Lott's farm in Flatlands, which had recently been occupied by the Van Wyck brothers, was being let in parcels to three persons to farm. "Flatlands," KCRBG, Mar. 21, 1885, 2:4. It is unclear whether Van Wyck also owned his own land or had merely rented Lott's farm for many years. Van Wyck did not appear on the Dripps farmline maps for 1868 or 1872.

44. Bergen, Bergen Family 353–61, 343–44. By the mid-1870s, one of the brothers had already moved from Mattituck to Brooklyn.

45. "Bay Ridge," KCRG, Feb. 2, 1878, 2:6 (the buyer was George Bergen, who was not a farmer in 1870, and the seller J. V. P. Wyckoff) (quote); One of Them, "About Long Island Wild Lands," KCRBG, Jan. 15, 1881, 2:1–2 (quote).

46. "Farm Lands in Demand," Long Island Farmer, Feb. 10, 1899, 1:2; Gertrude Ryder Bennett, Turning Back the Clock 42.

47. Pessen, Riches, Class, and Power Before the Civil War 38 (quote); “John Z. Lott Dies at 76,” NYT, Oct. 25, 1914, sect. 3 at 3:4; Flatbush of To-Day 132 (quote); “John Z. Lott Left $281,355,” NYT, Dec. 13, 1914, sect. II at 12:1; Phillips, The Lott Family in America 101–2; Ditmas, Historic Homesteads of Kings County 51–52. In Gravesend, Edward Bennett, who had farmed with his father William, became involved in Brooklyn real estate but continued to live in the old farmhouse after the farm was sold at the turn of the century. Papers in Wyckoff-Bennett homestead.

48. Flatbush of To-Day 137, 138, 149, 142 (quote); Phillips, Lott Family in America 120.

49. "Death of John Lefferts," NYT, Apr. 19, 1893, 2:3 (quote); ARTNU, 1870 at 5; TRKC, vol. 2143, MR 45; ARTNU, for the Year 1880 at 6, 38, TRKC, vol. 2153, MR 48; KCRG, May 18, 1872, 4:3 (advertisement); “James Lefferts Dead,” NYT, Nov. 6, 1915, 11:7 (quote borrowing much verbatim from Flatbush of To-Day 144); Thompson, History of Long Island 3:239; ARTNU, 1880 at 6, 38, TRKC, vols., NUAR, 1880, vol. 2153, MR 48; “Local,” KCRBG, Sept. 30, 1882, 3:1 (quote); “A Happy Union,” KCRG, June 17, 1876, 2:3. For the location of Lefferts' farm in New Utrecht, see Map of Kings County (1872?). In his will, signed in December 1892, a few months before his death, John Lefferts bequeathed to his five sons $51,000, which represented the proceeds from the sale of his farm at New Utrecht. Kings County Surrogate Court.


51. Atlas of the Townships of New Utrecht, Gravesend, Flatbush, Flatlands and New Lots; ARTNU, 1888 at 321; ARTNU, 1889 at 369–70; ARTNU, 1890 at 1:550; BDE, Aug. 28, 1892 (quote). Some biographical data are taken from a letter to the author from Garret Cowenhouven's granddaughter, Catharine Weber Scarborough (April 16, 1997), as well as from material prepared by her and published as “Some
Cowenhovens of Borough Park in New Utrecht,” in The Van Kouwenhoven-Conover Family Association Tidings 30–35 (undated); and the obituary in NYT, Aug. 31, 1927, 21:3.

52. “May Accuse Captain Worth,” BDE, Jan. 24, 1898 (quote); “News from the Suburbs: The Kouwenhoven Barn Looks Like a Club House,” BDE, Jan. 30, 1898, at 11 (quote). Cowenhoven’s granddaughter, who was born after his death — he did not marry until he was about 50 years old — though amused by the report of his status as millionaire, does not doubt the possibility based on the lifestyle of her mother as a child; she thinks it likely that Garret Cowenhoven no longer worked by the mid-1890s when his children were born. Telephone interview with Catharine Weber Scarborough, Wilmington, Delaware (Apr. 27, 1997). Apparently even after the sale of the farmland, Cowenhoven continued to own land that he inherited from John Van Duyne (the mother of Cowenhoven’s mother, Ann Denyse, was Catherine Van Duyne). A letter from September 1897 states that the Scholl Bros. had paid Cowenhoven $5 for hay cut from the meadowland inherited from Van Duyne. Copy of letter provided by Catharine Weber Scarborough; letter from Catharine Weber Scarborough to author (Apr. 30, 1997).


54. “Death of Abram Van Sicklen,” NYT, Feb. 22, 1898, 7:5; U.S. Census, 1870, Agriculture, KC, Gravesend, MS. Insularity may have run in the Van Sicklen family: in 1873 Court J. Van Sicklen of Gravesend, “who has not been absent from home over night during the last thirty years, recently went to Bellport, L. I., and remained there two or three days.” KCRG, May 17, 1873, 4:4. Provinciality was not a two-way street for the Times, which opined at the opening of the Brooklyn Bridge that “not one in one thousand of them [New Yorkers] will be likely ever to have occasion to use the new structure except from curiosity.” “The Opening of the Bridge,” NYT, May 29, 1883, 4:2 (editorial).


56. Tredwell, “Flatbush” 41.

11. Case Studies in Suburbanization


2. Williams, “Rural New York City” 180.

3. Stephanie Wolf, Urban Village 70–73. Daniel Bluestone et al., Flatbush 8, fail to capture the essence of the differentiation process by arguing that the “Old Guard . . . balanced in an unsteady position. While they were powerful people who wished to maintain all the goodness of Flatbush they were also the landholders, and development meant opportunity for furthering their economic position. Many were soon to join the ranks of the capitalists — the pro-development citizenry.” This position is inadequate because it fails to see that the old guard, who as employing farmers had already been capitalists for de-
cades, were making a choice between their traditional role as agrarian capitalists and a future role as real-estate speculators or, once (sub)urbanization had gained ground, more diversified investment fields.


6. ARTNU, 1846, TRKC, vol. 2056, roll 43; ARTNU, 1852, TRKC, vol. 2125, roll 43. Although Murphy, an important Brooklyn lawyer, appeared on the assessment rolls as a nonresident residing in Brooklyn until 1862, the 1850 Census of Population returned him as living in New Utrecht. CP, 1850, KC, NU, MS at 58.


8. “Fatal Dive into Gravesend Bay,” *NYT*, July 12, 1895, 1:6 (obituary of Young’s son). The obituary in the *Times* stated merely that Young was “reported to be
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9. "Archibald Young," NYDT, Oct. 24, 1895, 7:5 (obituary). Curiously, the New Utrecht assessment rolls do not confirm this account: Young was not listed as owning any land until 1854, when as a nonresident (39 Broadway, New York), he bought four acres, "late of J. Cropsey." Not until 1875, when he acquired two tracts totaling 113 acres, did Young appear as owning significant acreage. ARTNU, 1854 at 7, TRKC, NUAR, 1854, vol. 2127, MR 43. ARTNU, 1875 at 105, TRKC, vols., NUAR, 1880, vol. 2148, MR 46. In 1874 Young (together with Barney Williams) bought the old Post farm at Fort Hamilton, paying $39,000 for 130 acres. "Real Estate," KCRG, May 16, 1874, 4:2. Two months later he was being praised as a "public spirited gentleman" for having built 100 bathhouses and a five-acre park at Bath. "New Utrecht," KCRG, July 4, 1874, 8:1. In 1859 Young appeared as a resident of New Utrecht. ARTNU, 1859 at 8, TRKC, NUAR, 1859, vol. 2132, MR 44.


11. 1871 N.Y. Laws, ch. 564, sect. 1 at 1199 (quote); Enrollment of Persons Liable to Military Duty, TRKC, NU. The town's cosmopolitan bona fides was called into question in the 1870s when an attempt was made to prohibit a "foreigner" from teaching, even German, in its schools. "New Utrecht Topics, Local and General," KCRG, Oct. 31, 1874, 8:1. The incident prompted a German-American in Canarsie to doubt whether New Utrecht would ever "produce anything but cabbages, etc." "New Utrecht Science and Progress," KCRG, Nov. 7, 1874, 8:1, 2.


13. The occupational data are taken from: 1850 CP, KC, Brooklyn, MS at 41 (Fox); 1860 CP, KC, NL, MS at 23 (Hoag); NU at 93 (Spedding); 1870 CP; 1880 CP, Flatbush, SD No. 2, ED No. 252 at 39 (Westfall); TNYCD for the Year Ending May 1, 1869 (Ceballos, Keyser, and Kattenhorn); TNYCD for the Year Ending May 1, 1861 (Hoag); Beers, Atlas of Long Island 63; LDLI: For 1878–79. The 1860 Census of Agriculture returned Robert Fox as operating a 15-acre farm, but its outputs were small. According to Lefferts Vanderbilt, The Social History of Flatbush 193–94. Lyles was a bank president. On the wealth of the Willink and Ludlow families, see ibid. at 238–46. In addition to the incomes reported in table 38, in October 1871 a 4 percent tax amounting to $17,176.17 was paid on the $429,404.32 estate of Elizabeth Ludlow paid out to her first cousin Charles Livingston; in October 1872, a 2 percent succession tax of $8,500 was paid by the heirs and executors of Daniel and Wilhelm Willink on the $175,000 estate of John Willink. Since
Teunis Bergen was also a surveyor, farming may not have accounted for all this income; the next highest ranked farmer in 1863 was Winant Bennett of New Utrecht, 21st, with an income of $4,713.47. Daniel Roberts, who was listed as having the fourth-highest income in rural Kings County in 1870, was returned by the 1870 Census of Agriculture as operating a 119-acre farm the value of the output of which was $5,000, but he reported himself as a lawyer to the Census of Population. Since Jacob Ryerson’s farm’s output in 1870 was only a fraction of his taxable income, he presumably had another source of income. The next highest-income farmer in 1870 was Abraham Linington, whose $3,232.01 income put him in 18th place and was plausibly generated solely on his farm given the size of his output. Like Jacob Ryerson, John Ryerson produced on his farm only a small fraction of the taxable income he reported; the source of his other income is unknown. That he had other sources is supported by the fact that the value of his personal property was exceptionally high for Flatlands and more than twice as high as that of his real property. ARTF, 1870 at 9, in TRKC, vol. 4036, roll 77. The farmer with the next highest income, in 20th place, was Asher Hubbard of Flatlands whose $2,332.29 income could plausibly have been produced from his farm. Although J. Remsen Bennett was important enough to merit two obituaries in the Rural Gazette, including one seven column-inches long, the paper provided no information on his business life or even mentioned that he had been a farmer. “Sudden Death of J. R. Bennett,” KCRG, Jan. 24, 1880, 3:1; “Death of J. Remsen Bennett,” KCRG, Jan. 31, 1880, 2:7. The papers on file relating to Bennett’s will, of which his son William R. was the executor, do not include any mention of his assets. KC Surrogate’s Court.

14. CP, 1870, KC, Town of Gravesend, MS at 49; KCRG, May 17, 1873, 4:4 (quote, adding that Ridley was building a new barn); “Obituary: Eduard Ridley,” NYT, Aug. 1, 1883, 5:4; “Death of Edward Ridley,” KCRBG, Aug. 4, 1883, 2:1; Stiles, Civil . . . History 1:211. For an advertisement for Ridley’s store, see NYDT, Nov. 3, 1873, 6:3. For years, Ridley advertised in every issue of the KCRG. He also owned a five-acre residence at Pleasantville, Westchester. “Gravesend,” KCRG, July 7, 1877, 2:6.

15. “Gravesend,” KCRG, May 8, 1875, 4:6; Stiles, Civil . . . History 1:211; “Gravesend,” KCRBG, Feb. 19, 1881, 2:5. See also “New Utrecht,” KCRG, Nov. 8, 1873, 1:2. Ridley’s house was located near the corner of King’s Highway and Coney Island Avenue. Catherine Nelson and Theodore Nelson, “The Village of Gravesend As It Was in 1870.”

16. TRKC, Minutes of Flatbush Board of Health, Meeting of Sept. 7, 1874, Rules and Regulations, sect. 7 at 2, 6, and Meeting of Aug. 7, 1879; TRKC, Minutes of Flatbush Board of Health, Meeting of May 4, 1875 at 24, and Meeting of Dec. 7, 1876, at 42 (quote). The unbidden dumping of manure even on farms was also unlawful; for a false report that someone had dumped manure on the Martense farm, see Minutes of Meeting of Jan. 4, 1877, in ibid. at 43.


22. For possible insight into the political machinations against which Bartlett warned, see “Piggeries,” KCRG, July 17, 1875, 2:6; “Piggeries,” KCRG, July 24, 1875, 3:1.

23. TRKC, Minutes of Flatbush Board of Health, Meeting of Sept. 23, 1874, Rules and Regulations 18 (quotes); “Enlarging Brooklyn,” KCRG, Jan. 16, 1875, 4:1 (editorial).


29. “Two Great Cities United,” NYT, May 25, 1883, 1:6, 2:2 (address of Rev. Dr. Richard Storrs) (quote); Senate, Sub-Committee of the Joint Committee on the
32. David Hammack, Power and Society 361 n.86 (quote); “A Greater New York,”
RERBG, 52 (1323) : 102 (July 22, 1893) (quotes); RERBG 52 (1344) : 755 (Dec. 16, 1893); “Consolidation and Taxes,” RERBG 53 (1161) : 596 (Apr. 14, 1894) (quote);
“To Develop Long Island,” BDE, Apr. 17, 1894, 4:5 (quote). In 1892 the New York Times editorially characterized consolidation as in the interest of Brooklyn property owners because interborough tax equalization would lead to lower taxes in Kings County and thus encourage housing construction on unimproved land. “The Consolidation Scheme,” NYT, Jan. 19, 1892, 4:2–3. See also “An Issue for Brooklyn,” NYT, July 17, 1892, 16:1; “Brooklyn’s Alternative,” NYDT, Apr. 3, 1891, 4:1 (gap between New York and Brooklyn property tax rates widened between 1880 and 1890).
33. The Eagle and Brooklyn 1135.
34. The Eagle and Brooklyn 1137.
35. Vanderbilt, The Social History of Flatbush 175–76. On Vanderbilt and Lefferts, see
Charles Ditmas, Historic Homesteads of Kings County 79; “Death List of a Day:
Mrs. Gertrude L. Vanderbilt,” NYT, Jan. 7, 1902, 7:5; “Died While Driving: Sudden
End of John Lefferts,” NYDT, Apr. 19, 1893, 2:4; “Obituary: John Vanderbilt,” KCRG, May 19, 1877, 2:3. Margaret Latimer, New York and Brooklyn the Year the Great Bridge Opened 17–18, in her snapshot of Brooklyn in 1883, offers no inkling of the trend, instead characterizing the five towns of Kings County in general as “largely... small, quiet communities,” and Flatbush in particular as “a lovely suburban town... known for its gracious tree-lined lanes as well as for its fussiness about who lived within its borders.” More curious is the New York Times review of a later edition of Vanderbilt’s book from 1909, which, in a vast understatement, observed that “even since the book was written (1880) there has been a notable divergence from the older habits of life.” “Social History of Old Flatbush,” NYT, Aug. 14, 1909, pt. 2 at 488:3. The book must have resonated with contemporaries: by 1883 a second edition appeared. KCRBG, Mar. 10, 1883, 3:2. For a sense of the appreciation accorded the book at the time, see, “Mrs. Vander­bilt’s ‘Social History of Flatbush,’” KCRBG, Jan. 29, 1881, 2:2–3. The publisher D. Appleton (the wealthy Flatbush resident William Matthews was a member of the firm) appointed Egleston, the editor of the Rural Gazette, sole sales agent in the rural Kings County towns. Ibid. at 3:3.
36. Letter from Gertrude Lefferts Vanderbilt to Elizabeth Ludlow (undated but ca.
1865–66), Cruikshank Coll. Ludlow inherited part of the estate of her brother-in-law, John A. Willink.
38. “New Utrecht Topics, Local and General,” KCRG, Aug. 22, 1874, 8:1–2; 1874 N.Y.
Laws, ch. 511, sect. 1 at 701; 1871 N.Y. Laws, ch. 721, sect. 1 at 1669; “Bay Ridge,”
KCRG, June 16, 1877, 3:2; The Citizen Guide to Brooklyn and Long Island 180, 183
(quote); “Delight in Flatbush,” BDE, May 21, 1894, 6:3 (editorial) (quote).
39. “General Principles,” KCRBG, Oct. 1, 1881, 2:1 (quote); “Life in a Brooklyn Suburb,” NYDT, Nov. 29, 1884, 3:5 (quote). The Tribune’s failure to mention the longstanding conflict over piggeries suggests that the article was an infomercial.
43. “D. R. [sic; should be “M.”] Tredwell Dies at 95,” NYT, Nov. 12, 1921, 13:5. See also Daniel Tredwell, Personal Reminiscences of Men and Things on Long Island. The Rural Gazette reported that he moved to Flatbush from Brooklyn in 1882, at which time John Lefferts sold him land 75 feet by 505 feet on East New York Avenue for $10,000. “Local,” KCRBG, Apr. 1, 1882, 3:1; “Real Estate,” KCRBG, May 6, 1882, 2:5.
44. Daniel Tredwell, “Flatbush” 41–42 (1964). Tredwell’s reliability can be gauged by the fact that according to the Census of Agriculture, John’s 25-year-old son, James Lefferts, who managed his farms, harvested 7,500 bushels of potatoes in 1879 on 31 acres. U.S. Census, 1880, Agriculture, KC, Flatbush, MS, ED no. 252, SD no. 2 at 3. Lefferts, one of the county’s biggest potato growers — in late March 1882 he was “busy ... with all hands ploughing lands and planting potatoes” — produced no market garden produce, and was returned as a tenant. James Lefferts also advertised repeatedly seed potatoes for sale. U.S. CP, 1880, KC, Flatbush, MS 45; “Local,” KCRBG, Apr. 1, 1882, 3:1; “Death of John Lefferts,” NYT, Apr. 19, 1893, 2:3; KCRG, Mar. 15, 1879, 3:7 (advertisement).
45. Tredwell, “Flatbush” 44 (quote); “Old Flatbush,” in Snyder, Tales of Old Flatbush 78–85 (quote).
46. Ditmas, Historic Homesteads of Kings County 67. Before this time “several farms had been divided and offered for sale in building lots, with indifferent success. As far back as 1885 ... John Reis established a real estate brokerage business in Flatbush, and was followed, before the larger development of the section took place, by other brokers, who negotiated occasional transfers of farm land.” Flatbush of To-Day 112.
47. “Ex-Dock Official Drowned Up-State,” NYT, Aug. 21, 1940, 21:3; The Eagle and Brooklyn 464–65 (quote); Henry Meyer, Vanderveer Park 56 (quote).
48. Meyer, Looking Through Life’s Window 101, 105–8. Puffery may explain the assertion by a Flatbush bank that the deed covering a 133-acre plot (on which one of its offices was located) sold for $199,766.85 (or about $1,500/acre) on March 1, 1899, “might be called the ‘Historic Deed of Modern Flatbush.’” Green Point Savings Bank, Historic Flatbush 22–23.
49. Meyer, Looking Through Life’s Window 112. See also Flatbush of To-Day 96.
50. John Heffernan, Brooklyn Times, May 31, 1931. Henry A. Meyer, pkg. 139A, box 1, BHS. One of the reasons for their success, despite having been the “laughing butt
of their competitors," was their policy of returning deposits to customers who were not perfectly satisfied. Review of Meyer, "Looking Through Life’s Window," Canarsie Civic, Nov. 12, 1932. Henry A. Meyer, pkg. 139A, box 1.

51. Meyer, Looking Through Life’s Window 116–21 (quotes); ARTF, 1892 at 141, 252–53; ARTF, 1893 at 136, 252–53; Meyer, Looking Through Life’s Window at 119 (the $1,250 per acre was an average cost including 15 acres of another Vanderveer farm; an additional 15 acres of land owned by the Cortelyou family was also crossed out, but it is unclear who acquired it); TRKC, UD, Flatbush, Town Board, 1878–1890, Bundle No. 10, Town Board 1892–1894. John Z. Lott was not a disinterested observer: just four days after the contract was signed, he arranged to buy, at Meyer’s cost, 16 acres of the Cortelyou farm on behalf of the Flatbush Water Company, which, in order to protect its plant, agreed to lay the land out as a park and to cooperate with Germania by laying water mains as Germania improved its property. Meyer, Looking Through Life’s Window 120–21. Ironically, in the midst of this hectic sell-off, Harper’s published a hopelessly obsolete article on Greater Brooklyn asserting that although farms had been changing into city blocks for decades, “the prevailing rule of the place, marked by littleness in financial operations, affected the transformation. The process was slow. The farmers sold a little now and a little later, to middle-men, ahead of the actual demands of the inrushing tide of humanity.” Julian Ralph, “The City of Brooklyn” 656.

52. Meyer, Looking Through Life’s Window 121–24; ARTF, 1894 at 382. That land at this time was commonly sold subject to a lease for agricultural purposes is confirmed by a deal gone awry, by which John Suydam would have sold the 50-acre Flatbush farm of Cornelius Suydam in 1893 for $2,500 an acre to the stock promoter Cyrus E. Staples through the real-estate office of Adrian Vanderveer. This price was about five times as high as the value that 77-year-old Cornelius Suydam had declared to the census enumerator in 1880 and four times its assessed value in 1893. Vanderveer v. Suydam, 83 Hun 116 (A.D. 1894); Louis Pink, Gaynor 49; 1880 CP and CA, KC, Flatbush, MS; ARTF, 1893 at 250 (47 acres and house valued at $29,600).

53. Meyer, Looking Through Life’s Window 124–40. Later critics presumably were not referring to such fertile farmland when they wrote: “Some lands in New York have been taken from farming use and held idle during the transition. But the aggregate produce of such land is relatively unimportant. In the case of New York City large areas are useless for any but urban purposes. The rocky hills of the west side were good for nothing but goat pasture.” Report of the Commission on Housing and Regional Planning 50. According to Flatbush of To-Day 121, after buying John Vanderveer’s 150-acre farm, Germania bought five more farms totalling 1,000 acres; later, Charles Osborn, a real-estate broker, sold a 90-acre John Vanderveer farm. Peter McNulty and others bought 70.65 acres from John A. Lott’s heirs. ARTF, 1892 at 11, TRKC, vol. 4052, roll 80. To illustrate the course of development of the Lott farm: that part of the Lott estate that is today bounded by Ocean Avenue, Foster Avenue, East 19th Street, and Glenwood Road was first
conveyed by John A. Lott's children to Germania on July 29, 1899. John Z. Lott continued to convey parts of the same block to Germania in 1900, 1902, 1903, 1904, and 1905. In 1907 Germania began conveying land on this block to the John R. Corbin Co., which built houses there. These entries are taken from the abstract of title for section 16, block 5240, Kings County, at Brooklyn City Hall.

54. ARTF, 1867 at 35, 36, 40, 50, 54, 56; ARTF, 1870 at 8; ARTF, 1870 at 162, 1; Lefferts Vanderbilt, Social History of Flatbush 236–37. On Philip S. Crooke (1810–1881), a politically well-connected Brooklyn lawyer who acquired by marriage farmland in Flatbush that had once been owned by the Martense family and held several offices in Flatbush, see “Death of General Philip S. Crooke,” KCRBG, Mar. 19, 1881, 2:2–3; Crooke v. County of Kings, 97 N.Y. 421 (1884).


56. The Eagle and Brooklyn 244 (quote); KCRG, Feb. 19, 1876, 3:6. ARTF, 1893 at 38; “Death of John Lefferts,” NYT, Apr. 19, 1893, 2:3; KCRBG, Mar. 21, 1885, 3:3 (Lefferts offered 14.5 acres in Flatbush suitable for market gardening); Bluestone et al., Flatbush 41–44; ARTF, 1887 at 35; ARTF, 1880 at 3. John Lefferts had been selling his houses for decades. In 1872, it was announced that he would build several residences in Flatbush. KCRG, Apr. 20, 1872, 4:3. The next year he advertised to sell a house and eight lots near Prospect Park. BDE, Apr. 3, 1873, 3:8. Three years later he advertised lots for sale on Lefferts Avenue.

57. BDE, Feb. 21, 1894, 7:7; BDE, Mar. 17, 1894, 8:3; BDE, Apr. 24, 1894, 7:7; BDE, Apr. 29, 1894, 19:4. Meyer had at first considered naming it “Homestead,” “but because of the riots at Homestead, Pa. . . . we decided this would not do, since we felt public sentiment was against the strikes.” Meyer, Looking Through Life’s Window 110.

58. BDEA: 1896 at 446 (advertisement) (quote); Bluestone et al., Flatbush 20.


60. BDE, Feb. 10, 1894, 7:5; “Jere Johnson, Jr., Dead”; BDE, Mar. 21, 1894, 7:3 (quote); BDE, Apr. 27, 1894, 7:2 (quote); BDE, Apr. 29, 1894, 19:4 (quote).

61. Meyer, Looking Through Life’s Window 114–15; RERBG 47 (1211):111 (May 30, 1891) (quote). The property was located on Ocean Avenue, East 11th to 22nd Streets, Avenues C and D, Flatbush Avenue, and Coney Island Road or Avenue.

63. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier* 176 (quote); Tredwell, “Flatbush” 41 (quote). Jackson’s empirical assertion about Brooklyn — namely, that “the biggest gainers were usually those who owned close-in farms” — is not supported by his source.

64. “Old Flatbush” 83–84. The successful struggle over annexation in Kings County differed in one vital respect from a similar conflict in another market garden suburb in the Northeast: timing. In Brookline, farmers were among the strongest supporters of annexation to Boston in 1873 because suburbanization had already taken a firm grip on the town, quadrupling the population during the previous three decades. This accomplished fact produced a twofold polarized result. First, the reduced number of farmers, working smaller farms, faced a radically altered economic situation despite the continued profitability of their operations. Second, the chief obstacle to the farmers’ efforts to treat their land as the mere commodity it had become in their plans was a group that scarcely existed in the Kings County towns: the already resident commuter suburbs, who “wanted the town to retain its rural atmosphere” and to slow the very pace of development that would increase the price of land that the market gardeners wanted to sell. With Brookline already providing a level of services that towns like Flatbush lacked, the nonagrarian middle class was able to put an end to Boston’s annexationist strivings altogether. Karr, “The Transformation of Agriculture in Brookline” 41–42 (quote); Ronald Karr, “Brookline Rejects Annexation, 1873.”


68. “A Unique Suburb,” *RERBG*, 44 (1118): 1132–33 (Aug. 17, 1889); U.S. Census, 1860, Agriculture, NYS, reel 4, KC, NU at 11; CP, 1810, Schedules, NYS, KC, NU at 98; Fifth Census, 1830, PS, NY, vol. 29, KC, NU at 393. No Benson was recorded as farming by the 1850 Census of Agriculture. George Martense Benson was born in 1826 and died in 1867. “Inscriptions on Tombstones in the Cemetery of the Reformed Dutch Church, New Utrecht, L.I.”

69. Indenture between Egbert Benson Jr. Esq. of Town of New Utrecht and Maria Cowenhouven, his wife, parties of the first part, and Jane Cowenhouven of Flatbush, Aug. 31, 1826, in Benson Family Papers, box V, sixth folder; TRKC, NUAR, 1830, vol. 2043, roll 43; TRKC, NUAR, 1842, vol. 2117, roll 43; TRKC, NUAR, 1849, vol. 2123, roll 43; TRKC, NUAR, 1855, vol. 2128, roll 43; TRKC, NUAR, 1856, vol. 2129, roll 43. The Van Brunt, Wyckoff, Gifford, and Voorhees conveyances are found in ibid., first folder. Egbert Benson was the son of Robert Benson (1739–1823), the secretary of the convention adopting the New York State constitution, who was the brother of Egbert Benson (1746–1833), an important figure in the Revolution and later a federal judge. Robert married Dinah, the daughter of John Kouwenhouven. Their children included Robert (1785–1872), Catherine (who married John Lefferts), Maria (who married Judge Leffert Lefferts), and Egbert, who married Maria, the daughter of John Kouwenhouven. This Egbert, a personal friend of Henry Clay and other “great men” of his time,

70. KCRG, Nov. 27, 1875, 3:1; “An Agreement of Lease,” Oct. 14, 1864, in Benson Family Papers, box V, first folder. An “Agreement,” dated September 13, 1864, between Egbert Benson and Cornelius Doyle and Robert Waters, running during the same three-year period did not specify the acreage. Benson Family Papers, box V, first folder. A similar lease with Otto Gubner ran from March 1, 1863 to March 1, 1866, obligating the tenant to pay $450 annually for 40 acres. Ibid. sixth folder.


73. Hazelton, *The Boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens* 2:1089. Lynch was sufficiently influential that in 1889 he prevailed upon the county Board of Supervisors to alter the boundary lines between Gravesend and New Utrecht in both of which towns he was a property owner. Board of Supervisors of Kings County, Resolution No. 1, in 1889 N.Y. Laws at 799. Lynch, who also developed New London, Connecticut, as a summer resort, died in 1917, leaving an estate in excess of $300,000. *NYT*, May 12, 1917, 11:6; *NYT*, May 1, 1919, 21:3. Contrary to the claim of the architectural critic of the *New York Times*, neither was Bensonhurst named for or developed by Arthur Benson, nor did it even exist in the 1870s. Paul Goldberger, “The Once and Future Montauk,” *NYT*, Sept. 15, 1994, C1:3 (Lexis). The same erroneous account appeared in Thomas Clavin, “Battle over Beach Waged in Montauk,” *NYT*, Feb. 10, 1985, sect. 11LI at 11:1 (Lexis). But the *Times* has also gotten the story right: Lynette Holloway, “Change Turns a Neighborhood’s Eyes Toward the Past,” *NYT*, Feb. 20, 1994, sect. 13 at 10:3; Rosalie Radomsy, “If You’re Thinking of Living in Bensonhurst,” *NYT*, Aug. 26, 1984, sect. 8 at 9:1 (Lexis).


(Oct. 12, 1889); RERBG, 44 (1127): 1409 (Oct. 19, 1889). A half-year earlier Lynch sold lots publicly at prices 25 percent lower than had been anticipated. RERBG, 43 (1093): 237 (Feb. 23, 1889). For still earlier transactions, see RERBG, 42 (1062): 929 (July 21, 1888); RERBG, 42 (1068): 1071 (Sept. 1, 1888).

76. "A Unique Suburb."

77. The Eagle and Brooklyn 1151–52. On the contemporaneous formation of Blythebourne (later Boro Park), a New Utrecht suburb for “the thrifty wage-earner and the careful husbannder of a limited income,” see The Eagle and Brooklyn 1152–53. See also Norman Litchfield, "Blythebourne."


12. Conclusion: Is Urban Agriculture Oxymoronic?


2. Robert Haig and Roswell McCrea, Major Economic Factors in Metropolitan Growth and Arrangement 43 (quote); “Farms Near New York,” RERBG 3 (15): 4 (June 26, 1869) (quote). According to the Real Estate Record: “The small farmers east of the Mississippi are dying out and their properties are falling into the hands of large holders of landed estates. . . . Some small holdings still obtain near the large cities, but they are only truck or vegetable farms. . . . To farm economically — that is, to use labor saving machinery with advantage — large farms are indispensable. The small farmers cannot compete on equal terms with the owner of machinery, hence he must go to the wall, that is, he must sell out. Rich farmers are getting richer not only in money but in land.” The New York Times comes close to making the “Times Square into a potato patch” charge when it bemoans the uses to which vacant lots on which tenements once stood in Manhattan have been put: “Some have been planted with rows of corn. In the middle of America’s most densely populated city. . . . prime residential real estate has been converted to. . . . farmland. Those cornstalks, not the Empire State Building, are the symbol of modern New York.” John Tierney, “At the Intersection of Supply and Demand,” NYT Mag., May 4, 1997, at 38–52 at 41. Wendell Berry, The Unsettling of America 41, argues that the “only difference” between agricultural modernization in the United States, which “involved the forcible displacement of millions of people,” and “the forced removal of the populations of villages in communist countries” is that the latter used military force and “with us, it has been economic — a ‘free market’ in which the freest were the richest.”

3. Henry George, Social Problems 229, 235, 236, 238–39. Despite Marx’s low opinion of him as an economic theorist, George’s denunciation of the mutually harmful relationship between the modern city and countryside was reminiscent of Marx’s critique of the mutually destructive impact of the capitalist city and countryside. For Marx’s views of George, see letters from Marx to John Swinton, June 2, 1881, and to Friedrich Sorge, June 20, 1881, in Karl Marx [and] Friedrich
Engels, Werke 35:191, 199–201. Marx moved from a philosophical view that the abolition of the antagonism between city and country was one of the first conditions of the creation of a higher-order community to the political-economic conclusion that by piling up population in cities, “capitalist production disturbs the metabolism between humans and the earth, i.e., the return to the soil of the components of the soil that humans have used up in the form of food and clothing, the eternal natural condition of lasting fertility of the soil.” Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Die deutsche Ideologie 50; Karl Marx, Das Kapital 1:494.

4. George, Social Problems 239 (quote); Henry George’s 1886 Campaign 26, 78 (speeches of Oct. 5 and Oct. 22, 1886) (quotes).

5. Edward Pratt, Industrial Causes of Congestion of Population in New York City 201 (quote); Report of the Jamaica Bay Improvement Commission 5 (quote). For a contemporaneous suggestion that while more than 300,000 aliens settled in cities in New York State in fiscal year 1904–5, 50,000 agricultural laborers could find employment at good wages on farms in the state, see Bolton Hall, Three Acres and Liberty 303. The Jamaica Bay commission believed that Bronx’s congestion could have been avoided if suitable railway lines had been built to make the growth of Brooklyn and Queens even more “marvelous” than it was.

6. E. H. Bennett, “Report on General Plan for the Borough of Brooklyn” 21 (quote), 115–16; “Houses for Homemakers,” NYT, May 14, 1898, 14:1 (quote). Bennett conceded that “for a long time to come Long Island will furnish a great deal of the market and other perishable produce which will be consumed within the Borough.” Bennett, “Report on General Plan for the Borough of Brooklyn” 33–34. For the background on this report, see David Johnson, “The Emergence of Metropolitan Regionalism” 68–73 (Ph.D. thesis). On the background of the plan and the committee, see “Brooklyn City Plan,” BDE, Jan. 18, 1914, City Plan Section. The masses of Jews and Italians who moved from Manhattan to Brooklyn after the construction of the Brooklyn Bridge did not, for several decades, settle in the recently deagriculturalized rural towns, but in the wards closer to Manhattan. Only later, as rapid transit began to reach those former towns between 1908 and 1920, were workers able to trade off longer commutes for cheaper land and rents. Moses Rischin, The Promised City 93; Thomas Kessner, The Golden Door 144–58; Daniel Bluestone et al., Flatbush 37–40; Donna Gabaccia, “Little Italy’s Decline”; Deborah Moore, “On the Fringes of the City.” The Kings County Rural and Brooklyn Gazette’s boosterism at the opening of the Brooklyn Bridge must also have quickly become an embarrassment: “one must imagine a completed system of Rapid Transit routes, radiating from the common center in every direction across the entire County of Kings, upon which millions of energetic thriving busy people are daily enjoying the bright sunshine and pure ocean air that comes so freely to all parts.” “The Bridge,” KCRBG, May 26, 1883, 1:1.


8. Quoting a food scout for a restaurant in San Francisco, which relies for its fresh vegetables and fruits on the midcity San Francisco Garden Project, an offshoot of the city jail farm. See generally, H. Patricia Hynes, A Patch of Eden.

10. FTC, *Food Investigation* 204, 201, 233.


14. Sullivan, *Markets for the People* 102, 86. Since Sullivan by this time had been living on Stillwell Avenue for at least a decade, it seems unlikely that he would have been unaware of the history of market gardening in Kings County. *Who's Who in America* 3:1443 (1903–5).

15. Corbett et al., "Fruit and Vegetable Production" 314, 321.

16. Wells Sherman, *Merchandising Fruits and Vegetables* 441–42, 444. That it was the pull of high land prices rather than the push of bankruptcy that prompted local farmers’ exit from vegetable production would have simplified market-transcending measures that the state could have taken to maintain local market gardeners. If nearby farmers could hold their own with regard to cost, price, and profitability, there would have been no need to intervene in consumer markets or to provide subsidies to producers. Only land prices would have been relevant to retaining land in production.


23. Thomas Adams, "The Development of the Plan" 144–45.

25. Thomas Adams, Edward Bassett, and Robert Whitten, “Problems of Planning Unbuilt Areas” 216, 220. The policy horizon of the New York Times editorial board extended no further than that of the average New Yorker: by 1931 it could imagine agriculture in Queens only as “amateur ‘farms’ . . . already valued as suburban developments.” “Agricultural New York,” NYT, June 19, 1931, 22:4 (editorial). The newspaper was echoing the views of a Queens developer: “In 1909, when the project of Jackson Heights was first conceived, the present area of development was occupied by some six farms, about 325 acres of space. A rustic place it was, with all the characteristic slowness, sparsity and informality of farms. Then as now, it was geographically near the heart of Manhattan. But it appeared to many a contemporary that the farms were destined to go on for years and years, supplying the needs of the City of New York by means of transportation that consisted chiefly of horses and the ferries to 34th Street.” Franklin Sherman, Building Up Greater Queens Borough 64.


27. Staff of the Regional Plan, Graphic Regional Plan 384, 386–87; Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., “Appendix A — Laws of Planning Unbuilt Areas” 324. The Plan’s positive evaluation of urban farming stands out as even more extraordinary in light of the critique that the Plan accepted urban aggrandizement as automatic and inevitable and acquiesced in the push to centralize and fill in empty spaces. Lewis Mumford, “The Plan of New York.” This judgment is corroborated by the fact that Adams, the Plan’s coordinator, though a leader of the garden city movement in England at the beginning of the century, had become “a bland proponent of ‘practical,’ business-oriented planning,” forcefully opposed to back-to-the-land sentimentalism. Thomas Adams, Garden City and Agriculture; Simpson, Thomas Adams and the Modern Planning Movement 9–39, 79–80; Fishman, “The Regional Plan” 111 (quote).

28. Land Planning Comm. of the National Resources Board, Maladjustment in Land Use in the United States 41 (quote); Urban Planning and Land Policies, fig. 45 at 225.

29. Meyer, Vanderveer Park 30. The same year (1901), Scribner’s published “Rural New York City,” recounting that “our great Greater New York, which is better known as having the most densely populated tenement districts in the world, can show places that are more truly rural than any other city of modern times, places where the town does not succeed in obtruding at all.” Whereas urban landmarks could be seen from the bucolic sections of London and Chicago, “out in the broad, rolling farm lands of [Queens], you can walk on for hours and not find any sign of the city you are in, except the enormous tax rate, which, by the way, has the effect of discouraging farmers (many of whom did not want to become city people at all) from spending money for paint and improvements, and this only results in making the country look more primitive, and less like what is absurdly called a city.” Although such sections of rurality were exceptional because the city had “stretched out its hand” without leaving “the mark of the beast,” the author knew that “the end . . . will come soon enough.” Jesse Williams, “Rural New York City” 180, 191.

31. 1879 N.Y. Laws, ch. 310 at 397; BDEA, vol. VIII, 1893 at 150; Rules and Regulations of Green-Wood Cemetery 5; Donald Simon, “Green-Wood Cemetery and the American Park Movement”; Percival Jackson, The Law of Cadavers and of Burial and Burial Places 395 (quote); Whyte, “A Case for Higher Density Cities” 71 (quote); Martha Fisher, “Cemeteries and Land Use.” The original promoters of Greenwood Cemetery paid $134,675.40 for 178 acres of the Bennett, Bergen, and Wyckoff farms. The Eagle and Brooklyn 354. The Martense farm also once included part of the cemetery. Ditmas, Historic Homesteads of Kings County 67. An historian noted shortly after the cemetery’s opening: “While the location, the general elevation and unevenness of the ground, all mark it as a spot unlikely to be coveted by the spirit of improvement, and therefore may reasonably be expected to remain undisturbed for ages yet to come, it is impossible to convey to the mind of a stranger, a correct idea of the . . . beauty and solemn grandeur of the place. The surface is admirably diversified by hill and dale, while every now and then, a beautiful little lake is spread out in the valley. The greater part of the area is deeply shaded with dense forest trees.” Prime, A History of Long Island 367.

32. R.C., “Greenwood,” KCRG, July 25, 1874, 1:1, 2 (quote); “Washington Cemetery,” KCRG, Oct. 24, 1874, 1:1; R.C., “About Cemeteries,” KCRG, June 28, 1873, at 2:2, 3 (quote). See also “A Grand Offer at the Washington Cemetery,” KCRG, Oct. 30, 1875, 2:2; Bennett v. Culver, 97 N.Y. 250 (1884). When Bennett first laid out his 100 acres as a cemetery, other farmers ridiculed him, “but the farm in a Cemetery has proved to be worth more than 10 times as much as it would have been in a farm.” “Parkville,” KCRBG, Jan. 26, 1884, 2:2. To be sure, in its advertisements, Washington Cemetery management did not predict its own demise. E.g., KCRG, May 6, 1876, 3:2.


34. Sam Bass Warner Jr., The Urban Wilderness 27 (quote); Frederick Howe, “The Municipal Real Estate Policies of German Cities” 14, 15, 18 (quote); Dawson, Municipal Life and Government in Germany 123 (quote). See generally, Frederick Howe, European Cities at Work; Dawson, Municipal Life and Government in Germany 141–60.

35. Howe, “The Municipal Real Estate Policies of German Cities” 19 (quote); Dawson, Municipal Life and Government in Germany 129.


37. Urban Planning and Land Policies 228; Statistisches Jahrbuch deutscher Gemeinden, vol. 30 at 31; Mel Scott, American City Plan Since 1890 at 341–42.

38. Ebenezer Howard, Garden Cities of To-Morrow 45–65. On the movement in


41. H. Roger Grant, *Self-Help in the 1890s Depression* 23-40; Sam Bass Warner Jr., *To Dwell Is to Garden* 13-17; BDEA: 1898 at 497; BDEA: 1898 at 144. A similar movement reemerged during the depression of the 1930s; Joanna Colcord and Mary Johnston, *Community Programs for Subsistence Gardens*. In New York City, the Society for the Improvement of the Condition of the Poor set up quarter-acre farms in Queens to grow potatoes. *NYDT*, Apr. 12, 1895, 10:3. Vacant city lot cultivation survived the depression: in Philadelphia, over 200 acres were cultivated by more than 800 families, who produced more than $40,000 worth of produce in 1906 Bolton Hall, *Three Acres and Liberty* 42-63, 179-81.

42. William H. Whyte Jr., "Urban Sprawl" 143 (quote); Lockeretz, "New Life for Metro Farming" 83 (quote); N.Y. Constitution, art. XIV, sect. 4 (1996) (quote).

43. 1971 N.Y. Laws, ch. 479, sect. 300 at 1370, 1371.

44. 1971 N.Y. Laws, ch. 479, sect. 301(2) at 1371 (quote), sect. 303-306 at 1372-80; Nelson Bills and Richard Boisvert, "New York's Experience in Farmland Retention" 231; William Lockeretz, Julia Freedgood, and Katherine Coon, "Farmers' Views of the Prospects of Agriculture in a Metropolitan Area" 58 (quote).


47. Jac Smit et al., *Urban Agriculture: Food, Jobs and Sustainable Cities; Sustaining Agriculture Near Cities* 65-74; William Lockeretz, "New Life for Metro Farming" 82. Alternatively: "As rising property and labor costs make it more difficult to compete with large commercial operations, an increasing number of family farms, primarily those growing fruit and vegetables along the restless edges of suburbia, are abandoning the conventional notions of farming and cranking up the show biz" — in the form of various kinds of amusements such as corn mazes. Julie Iovine, "A New Cash Crop: The Farm as Theme Park," *NYT*, Nov. 2, 1997, sect. 1 at 1:1 (Lexis).

Hard Line on Urban Sprawl,” *NYT*, Dec. 30, 1996, A1:2–3 (nat. ed.) (quote); Timothy Egan, “Seattle and Portland in Struggle to Avert Another Paradise Lost,” *NYT*, Nov. 1, 1997, 1:2 (nat. ed.) (quote). In 1997, for the first time since 1979, the Portland Metro Council voted to open up the urban area — by 4,500 acres. R. Gregory Nokes, “Metro Oks Modest Expansion,” *Portland Oregonian*, Oct. 24, 1997, at A1 (Westlaw). The long debate between farmers and developers and among farmers, reminiscent in some ways of that in nineteenth-century Kings County, can be tracked in the *Portland Oregonian*. According to George Ford, “What Is Regional Planning?” 17, cities of 100,000 and 1,000,000 inhabitants would require an encircling farm belt of 18 and 60 miles in radius, respectively, to produce their food needs: “Of course, in practice these belts are vastly smaller as most of our foodstuffs must come from elsewhere.”

51. USDA, ERS, *Farming in the City’s Shadow* 12–13 (quote); USDA, *America’s Private Land* 28.
55. Lewis Mumford, *The Highway and the City* 228.