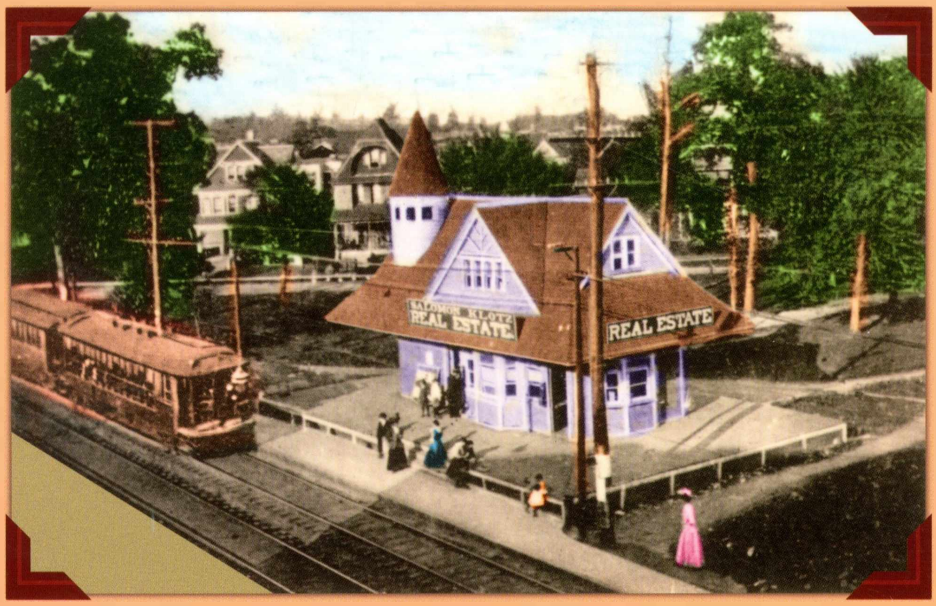
BOROUGH PARK

Centennial Edition 1898-1998



Oscar Israelowitz

"Health is harmony followed by the fruit of spiritual perfection."

– Maimonides
(Moshe Ben Maimon)
12th Century
physician/philosopher

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Borough Park

Centennial Edition 1898 - 1998

by Oscar Israelowitz

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How it all began...

Situated in the Town of New Utrecht until 1894, this section remained rural farmland until the development of Blythebourne in 1886. Electus B. Litchfield, son of Edwin C. Litchfield of Prospect Park fame, bought some vacant land west of New Utrecht Avenue, from 57th to about 53rd Street. He named the area Blythebourne, which means "Happy Home." In order to develop the area, he opened a real estate office at 43rd Street and New Utrecht Avenue. He called it the West Brooklyn Land & Development Company of Blythebourne, Long Island. Brooklyn became part of New York City in 1898. Houses were built and a post office and stores were opened.

For some years, both sides of New Utrecht Avenue were called Blythebourne, but around 1898, Senator William H. Reynolds came and bought land abutting on the east side of the avenue, calling it Borough Park. This tract extended from 43rd to about 60th Street. The Senator sold lots and also built and sold several two-family houses. Soon, for the use of the people in the two growing communities, he had a large club house erected at 13th Avenue and 50th Street. This was a boon to the neighborhood and many a social affair was held there. The Borough Park Club was later sold to Yeshiva Etz Chaim.

A real estate agent at the time warned the Litchfield family to sell its holdings, explaining that the "pogroms" in Eastern Europe would soon cause a mass migration of Jews into the area and ultimately would bring the land values down. Mrs. William B. Litchfield, who controlled the property at the time, decided not to sell. The prediction was partially fulfilled. The Borough Park section did become a major Jewish community, but the land values, instead of falling, rose tremendously.

The opening of the Brooklyn Bridge in 1883, the Williamsburg and Manhattan Bridges, and the construction of the subway lines in the early part of the century, enabled thousands of immigrants who were living in the teaming tenements of the Lower East Side to move to the new suburban communi-

ties in central Brooklyn. Scores of Italian, Irish and Jewish immigrants spread over the face of Brooklyn. They converted mud roads into fine paved highways and turned shacks into modern homes.

On June 6, 1916 the West End "El" opened. The Brooklyn Rapid Transit (BRT) charged only a single five-cent fare for the entire route which extended from Coney Island through Borough Park and to Manhattan. A realty boon was predicted for Borough Park. The Brooklyn Daily Eagle's real estate section described the neighborhood in the following article...

"One of the oldest and most historical localities in Brooklyn, Borough Park is particularly favored in natural advantages being supplied with beautiful trees in abundance. It is one of the highest spots in the borough, and is developed from farmland that supplied the people of old Brooklyn with vegetables and fruit. Some of the farms date back to the early Dutch settlers, bearing such names as Van Cowenhoven, Lefferts and Van Nuyse. The soil of this locality was famous for its productiveness, and many farms reaped substantial fortunes in the days when New Utrecht Avenue was a plank road over which ran Mayor Gunther's steam railroad, a single track line running from Fifth Avenue and 25th Street to Coney Island.

Modern buildings of every type may be found in the district. The detached, semi-detached, one and two-family and apartment houses in Borough Park compare with the best designs to be found in the city. They have been built in abundance and are located convenient to transit lines. The demand for houses there is increasing every day."

During the 1920s, Borough Park was one of the most affluent sections in the city. There were elegant Victorian homes with wide open porches. The Art Deco apartment houses on 15th Avenue all had doormen who would assist the many lawyers and doctors who traveled in chauffeur-driven limousines. Top hats and formal attire were worn by many men in the larger synagogues such as Temple Beth El, Temple Emanu-El, Shomrei Emunah and the Sfardishe Shul.

The chassidim arrived in Borough Park following World War II. These Holocaust survivors established individual congregations, usually in private

homes. These *shteeblech* have multiplied over the years.

The first chassidic congregation in Borough Park, *Ateres Zvi m'Liska*, was organized in 1947 by Rabbi Yosef Friedlander. The congregation was named after Rabbi Zvi Hirsch, the father of the Hungarian chassidic movement. The movement was organized in the 1790s. Some of the larger chassidic sects such as the Bobovers, Satmars, Gerers and Mukotchs have recently constructed multi-million dollar synagogues or *batay medrashim.*

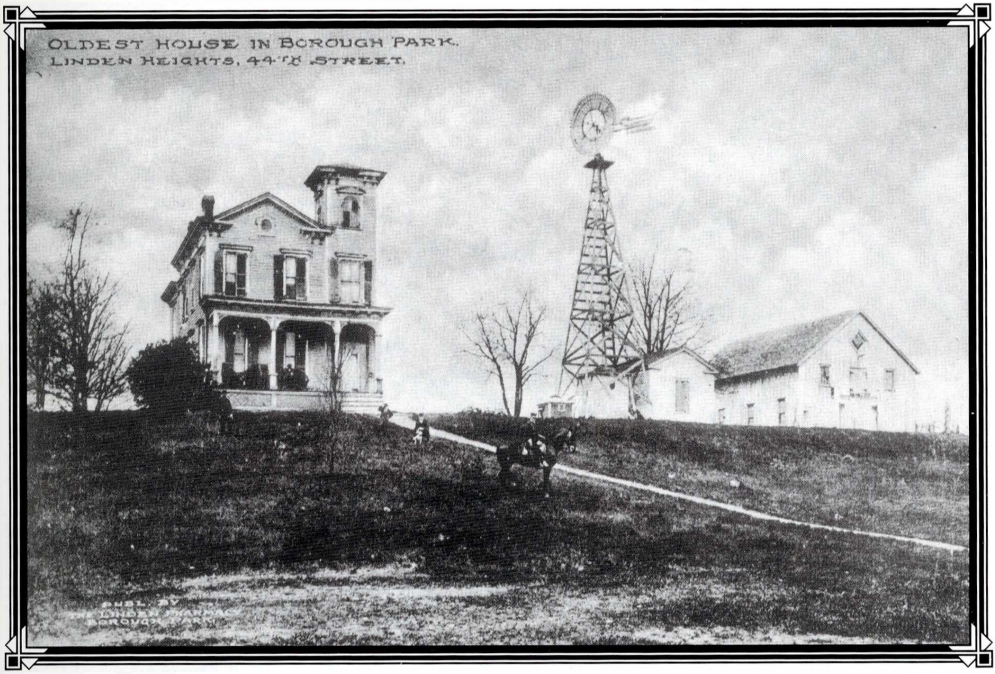
In more recent years, several thousand Russian immigrants and Israelis have moved into the area.

Special Thanks To...

The publisher wishes to thank the following people for supplying photos and maps for this publication:
Brian Merlis, Marie Spina and Elizabeth White at the Brooklyn Public Library, Maimonides Medical Center, The Brooklyn Daily Eagle, U.S. Geological Survey, Transit Authority of New York, and the anonymous woman who donated her shoe box filled with old postcards of Blythebourne and Borough Park to the Brooklyn Public Library.

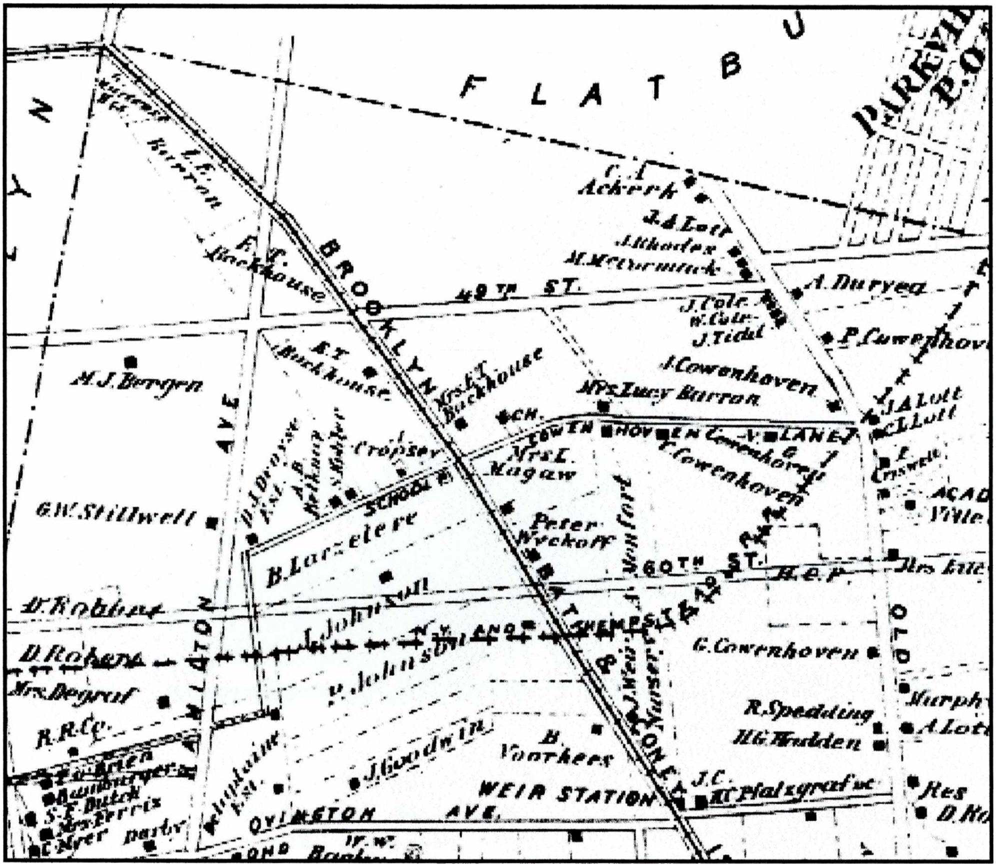
This book contains detailed street maps of Borough Park as it appeared in 1921, showing every single structure, whether it be a detached single-family Victorian home, railroad-flat row houses, auto repair shops, churches, synagogues, public schools, vaudeville houses and even barns and stables. In 1921, there were still many vacant lots in this partially-developed neighborhood. The maps are from the "Desk Atlas of the Borough of Brooklyn, Volume 3, Sections 15-19." It was published by E. Belcher Hyde, Inc. in 1921. These maps appear in quadrants of 5-street-block by 2 avenue-block intervals, e.g. starting at 37th-42nd Streets at Ninth Avenue and continue through to 19th Avenue.

Note: All photographs which do not have photo credits were taken by Oscar Israelowitz.



OLDEST HOUSE IN BOROUGH PARK

This farmhouse and barn were located on top of the hill, at 44th Street and Linden Heights (Ninth Avenue). All that remains of Linden Heights is a synagogue, the Linden Heights Jewish Center. *Courtesy Merlis Collection*

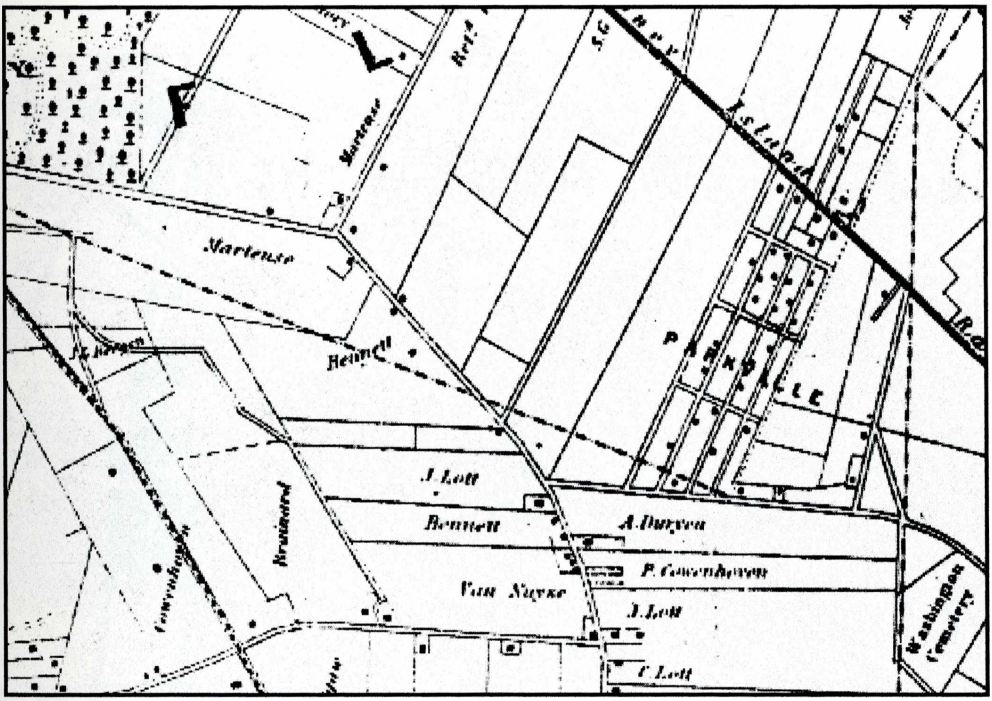


1873 MAP

This 1873 map of Long Island was published by Beers, Comstock & Cline. It shows the farm layouts around Blythebourne. The dotted line in the center of the map and swinging up to the upper right corner is the right-of-way of the Long Island Railroad (at today's 62nd Street and Avenue H). The diagonal line from the upper left corner was the right-of-way of the Brooklyn Bath Beach & West End Railroad. That line ran along today's New Utrecht Avenue.

In the middle of the map is an arched road. That was School Road and Cowenhoven Lane. That street corresponds to today's 54th Street. That is why when driving along 54th Street, from 15th to 16th Avenue, today's street grid is offset by about twenty feet. When crossing 15th and 16th Avenues, you have to bear left and right to continue along 54th Street.

A B



C D E F

FARMS OF BLYTHEBOURNE ca. 1880

In the 1880s, there was no Borough Park. Instead, there were several farms owned by the Cowenhovens, Bennetts, Lotts, Brainards and Van Nuyses. Some of the major points of interest in the 1880s in the area were (A) Greenwood Cemetery. (B) Coney Island Railroad, running along today's Brighton "D" and "Q" lines. (C) Cowenhoven Lane, running close to today's 54th Street. (D) Bath Beach & West End Railroad, running along today's New Utrecht Avenue. (E) Old New Utrecht Road which turned into today's McDonald Avenue (by the Martense farm, near Greenwood Cemetery) and ended its southern terminus at the town of New Utrecht which was located near today's 18th Avenue and 86th Street. The old New Utrecht Dutch Reformed Church was built in 1828 and is an historic landmark. (F) Washington Cemetery

A B C D



E F G H I

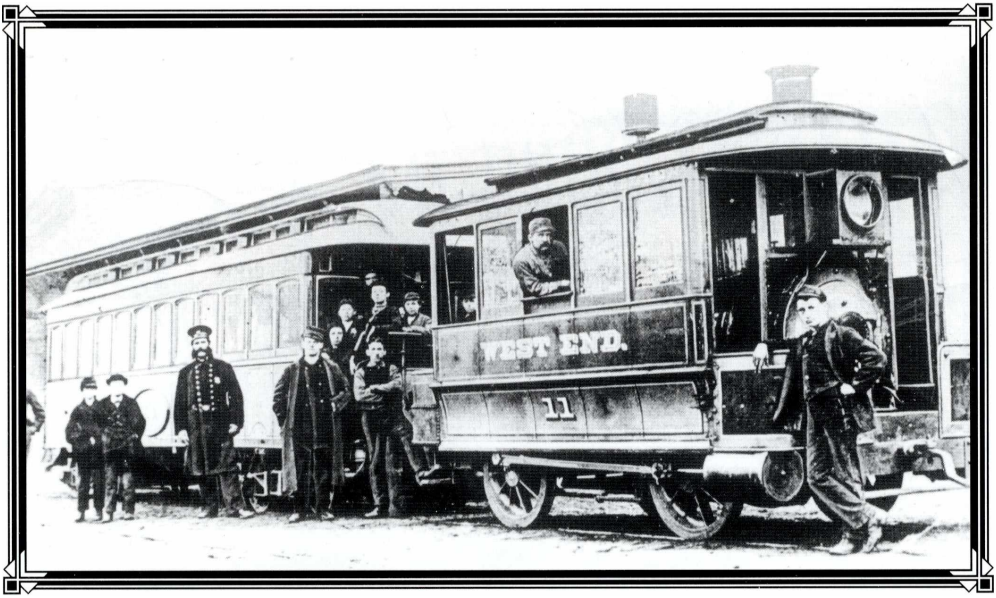
TOPOGRAPHIC MAP

This map, prepared by the U.S. Geological Survey in 1897 shows the towns of Blythebourne, West Brooklyn and Parkville, but no Borough Park. Borough Park came into existence the following year, in 1898. Some sites during this period include: (A) Bath Beach & West End Railroad. (B) Culver Railroad. (C) Gravesend Avenue, later called McDonald Avenue. (D) Ocean Avenue. (E) Old New Utrecht Road, curving up the map to the right and then left. (F) Washington Cemetery is one of Brooklyn's oldest Jewish burial grounds. It was established in 1861, during the Civil War, when several Jewish soldiers were killed in the South. They were "put on ice" and transported back to Brooklyn for proper Jewish burial. This was done by a Mr. Neiberg, founder of Midwood Chapels, still located on Coney Island Avenue and Avenue M. (G) Ocean Parkway. (H) Racetrack, located just south of Avenue H and east of Ocean Parkway. (I) Brighton Beach Railroad, built by the owner of the Manhattan Beach Hotel, Austin Corbin, to bring guests out to his grand hotel. The "D" and "Q" trains still run along this right-of-way.



BATH BEACH & WEST END RAILROAD ca. 1890

Courtesy Merlis Collection

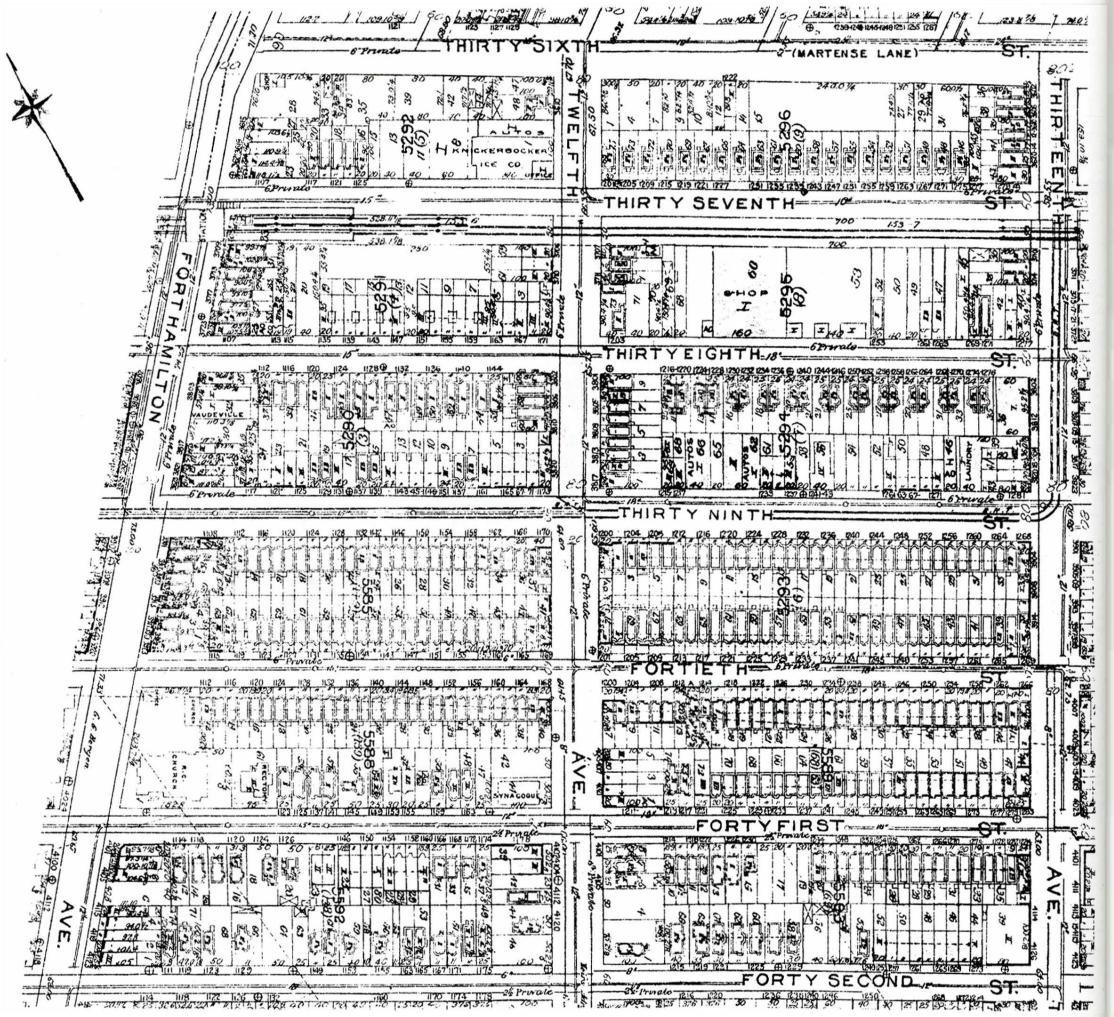


ALL ABOARD THE BATH BEACH & WEST END RAILROAD!
This train ran along grade (on street level) from Coney Island along today's 86th Street and then along New Utrecht Avenue. This photo was taken ca.1880.
Courtesy Brooklyn Public Library

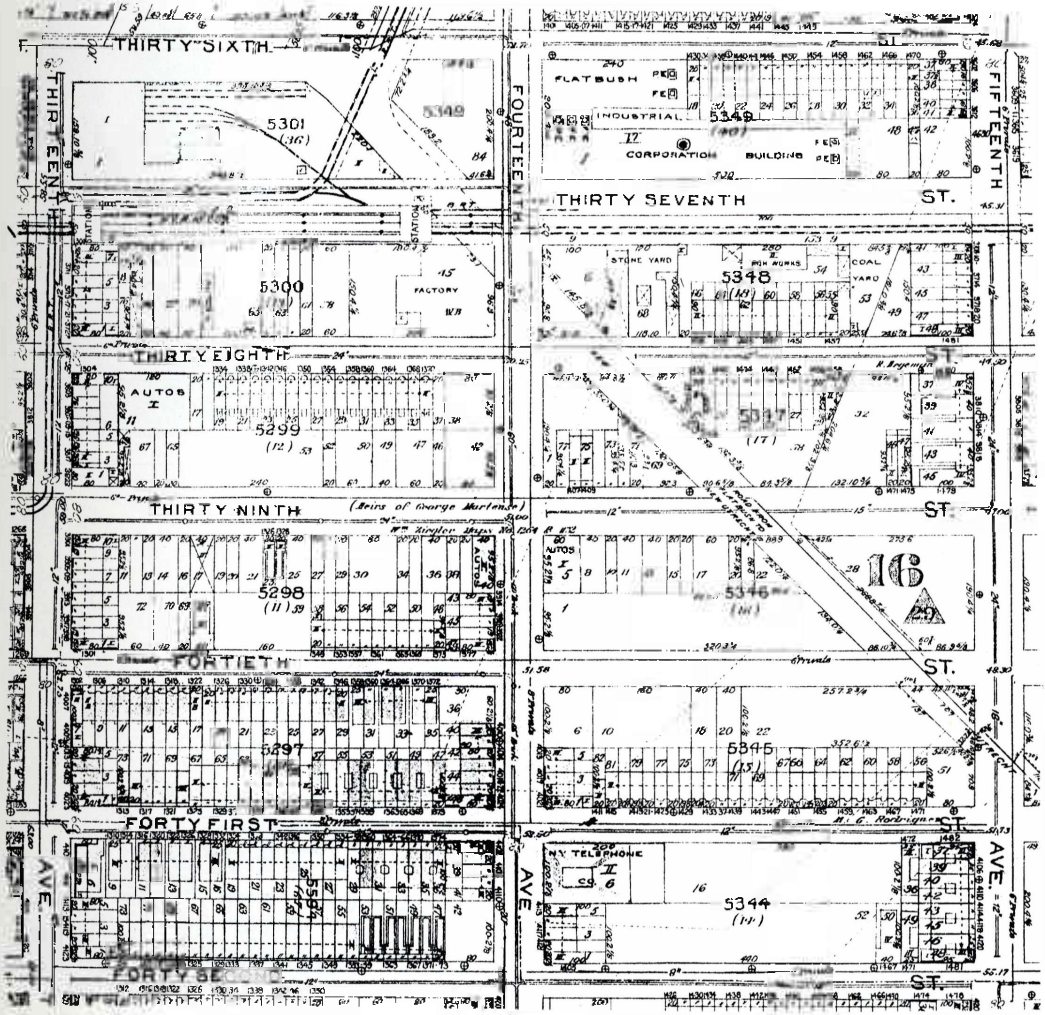

1921 STREET MAPS
36th - 42nd Streets
Ninth - Nineteenth Avenues

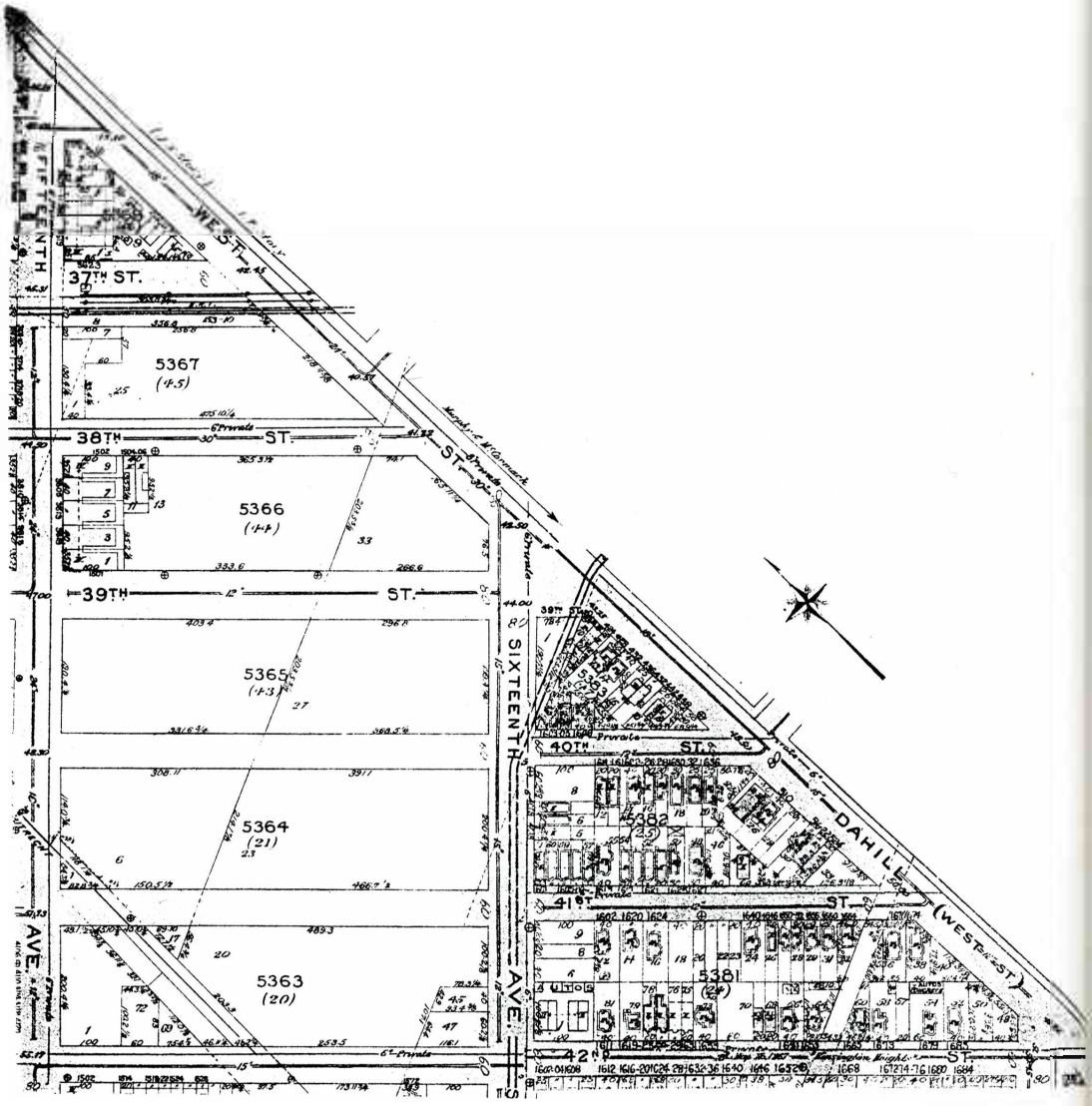


E. Belcher Hyde's 1921 *Street Atlas of Brooklyn*,
showing every lot, block and building in Borough Park.



E. Belcher Hyde's 1921 *Street Atlas of Brooklyn*,
showing every lot, block and building in Borough Park.


THIRTY SIXTH
THIRTEENTH
FOURTEENTH
FIFTEENTH
5301
(36)
5349
FLATBUSH
INDUSTRIAL
5349
CORPORATION
BUILDING
THIRTY SEVENTH
ST.
5300
FACTORY
STONE YARD
5348
COAL
YARD
THIRTY EIGHTH
AUTOS
5299
(12)
5347
(17)
THIRTY NINTH
(Bois of George Merlenon)
5298
(11)
5346
(10)
16
FORTIETH
5297
5345
(35)
FORTY FIRST
AVE.
N.Y. TELEPHONE
5344
(11)
FORTY SECOND



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FORT HAMILTON AVENUE

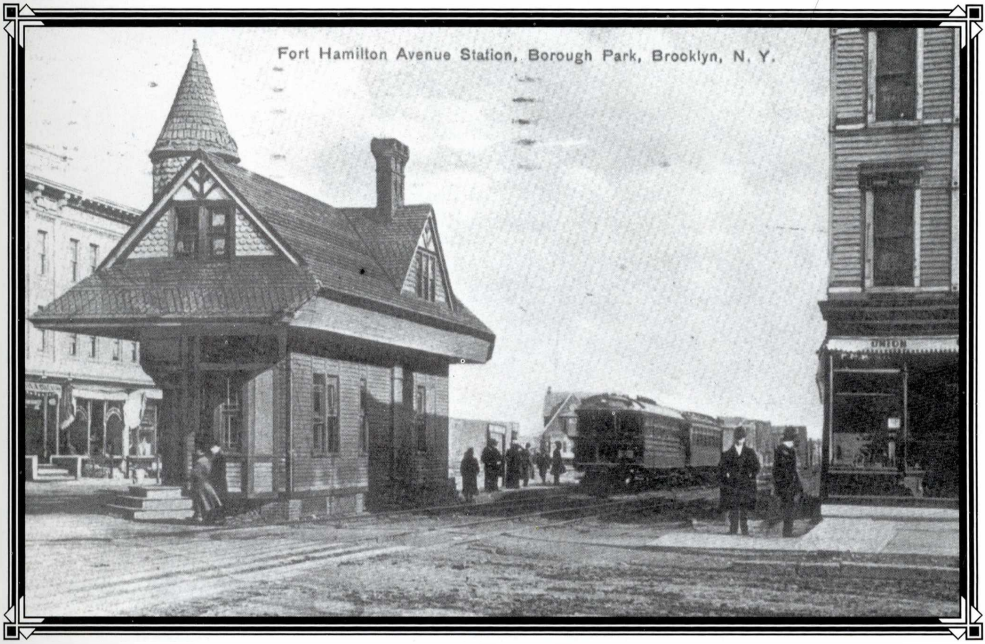
This desolate road in the 1880s was later renamed Fort Hamilton Parkway.

Courtesy Brooklyn Public Library



EARLY HOMES OF BOROUGH PARK

This 1905 photo shows the just-completed Victorian homes along 40th Street, near Tenth Avenue. In the distance (on left) is Public School 131 on Ft. Hamilton Parkway and 43rd Street. *Courtesy Merlis Collection*



FORT HAMILTON AVENUE STATION, ca. 1890

Fort Hamilton Avenue was later changed to Fort Hamilton Parkway.

Courtesy Merlis Collection

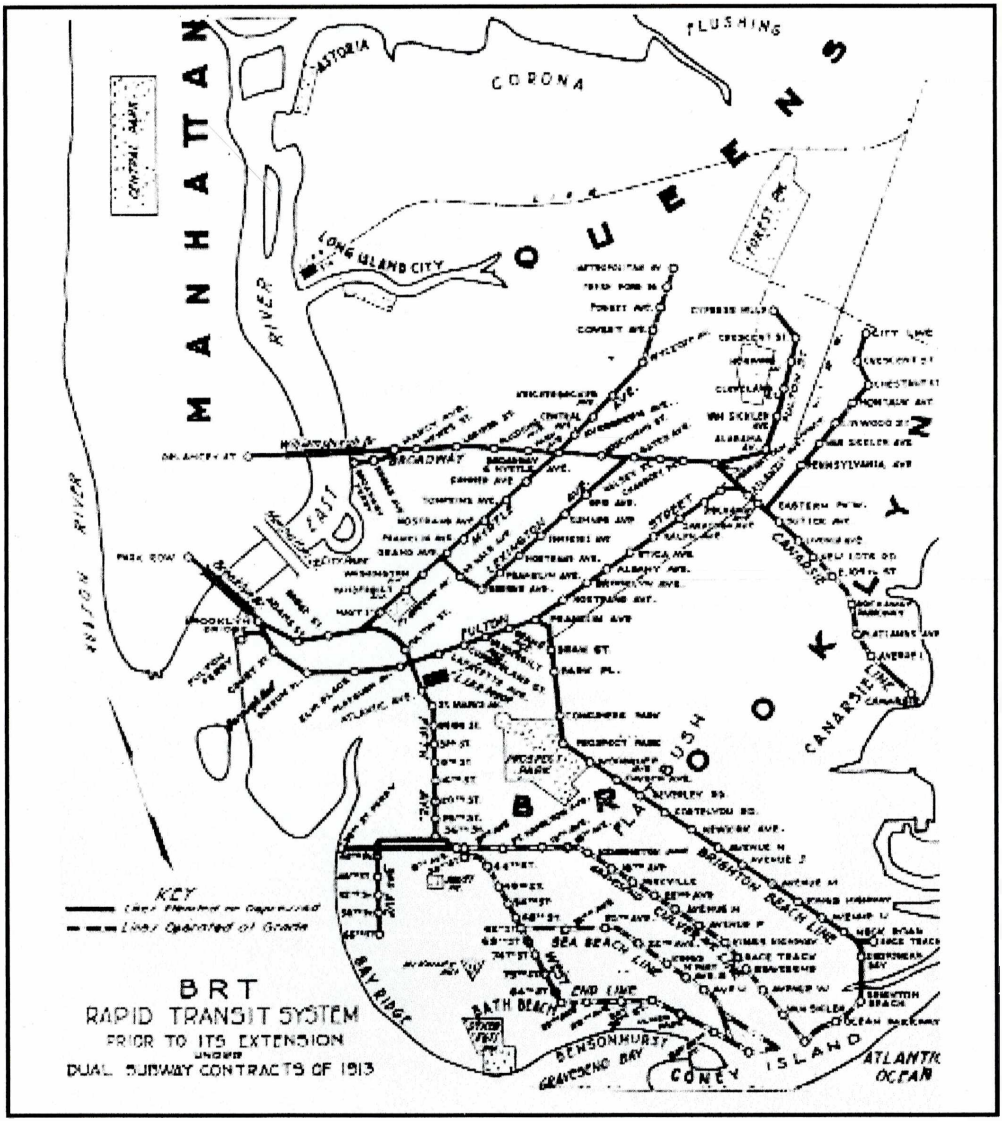


ST. CATHERINE'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, ca. 1900
Fort Hamilton Parkway & 41st Street
Courtesy Merits Collection



CORNER CANDY STORE

This photo was taken in 1970, when there were still old-fashioned corner candy stores. On the opposite corner of Fort Hamilton Parkway & 41st Street is St. Catherine's Roman Catholic Church.



THE RAILROADS OF BROOKLYN, 1913

This historic map shows all of the lines owned by the Brooklyn Rapid Transit. The West End and Culver lines were running on grade (at street level). There were elevated lines on Third Avenue, Fifth Avenue, Fulton Street, Lexington Avenue, Myrtle Avenue and Pitkin Avenue. There was no Fourth Avenue subway, no DeKalb Avenue station and no trains crossing over the newly-opened Manhattan Bridge. The Brighton Line started at Coney Island, went along today's "D" train but at Prospect Park, turned onto today's Franklin Shuttle line to Fulton Street. At that point it joined the Fulton Street elevated to downtown Brooklyn. It then proceeded across the Brooklyn Bridge and terminated at Park Row, just across the street from City Hall.



FORT HAMILTON PARKWAY & 37th STREET

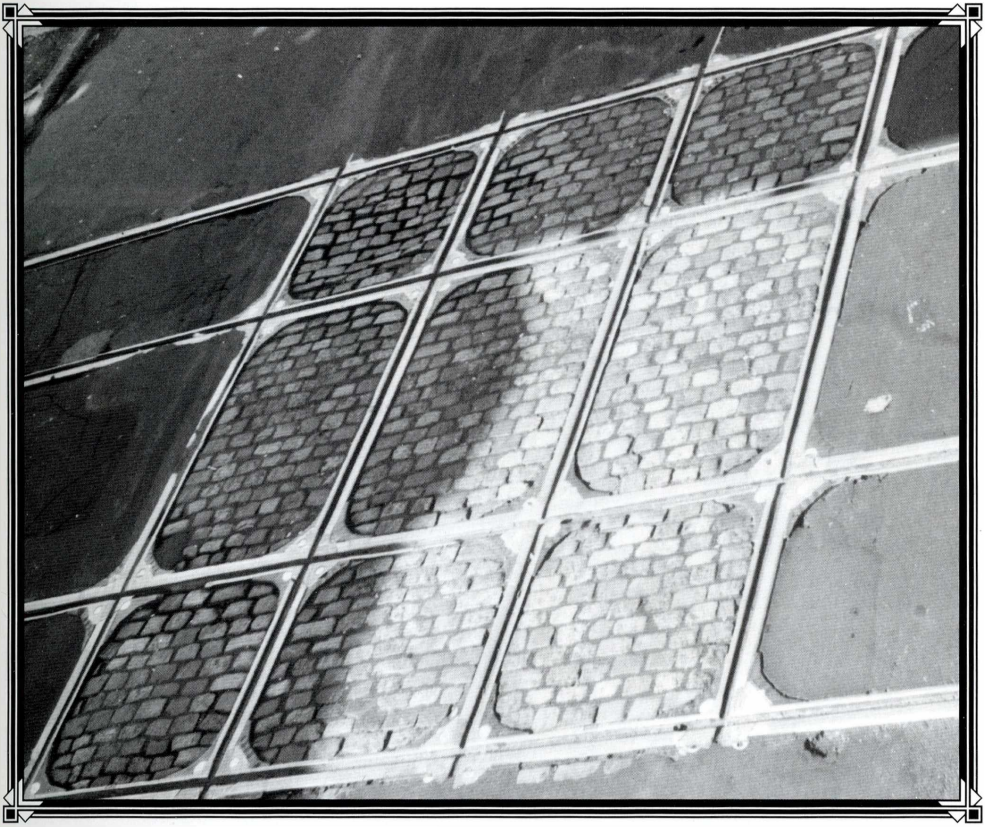
This photo of the entrance to the Culver Line was taken in 1965. In the background is Greenwood Cemetery, a non-sectarian burial ground designed as a park-cemetery, similar to the ones found in Paris. This cemetery contains the remains of many prominent Civil War generals, the artists Currier and Ives, and the conductor and composer Leonard Bernstein. The main entranceways to the cemetery, at Fifth Avenue and along Ft. Hamilton Parkway, were designed in the Gothic style in the 1840s by Richard Upjohn, designer of St. Patrick's Cathedral in Manhattan. The Culver Line was demolished in the 1980s.



Courtesy Transit Authority of New York

In 1919, the Culver Avenue El started at Coney Island, went along McDonald Avenue to 37th Street, then down into the tunnel at Ninth Avenue and proceeded along Fourth Avenue as an underground subway. After DeKalb Avenue it crossed the Manhattan Bridge (along the west side of tracks) and terminated at Chambers Street. The view above is from the Ditmas Avenue Station, looking toward 14th Avenue on the left and McDonald Avenue on the right.

When the IND "F" train was built in 1933, it terminated at Church Avenue. It was extended above ground to the old Culver Elevated tracks in 1954. This view shows the beginning of that extension on the right side of the curving tracks. The old Culver "Shuttle" was dismantled in the late 1980s.



RAILROAD CROSSING AT 13th AVENUE

The original Gravesend Culver line ran at grade (along the street) from Coney Island, along today's McDonald Avenue, then turned onto 37th Street and continued to the 39th Street ferry landing. A branch joined the Fifth Avenue elevated line and continued to the downtown section. That Fifth Avenue El ultimately crossed the Brooklyn Bridge and terminated at an elegant terminus at Park Row in Manhattan.

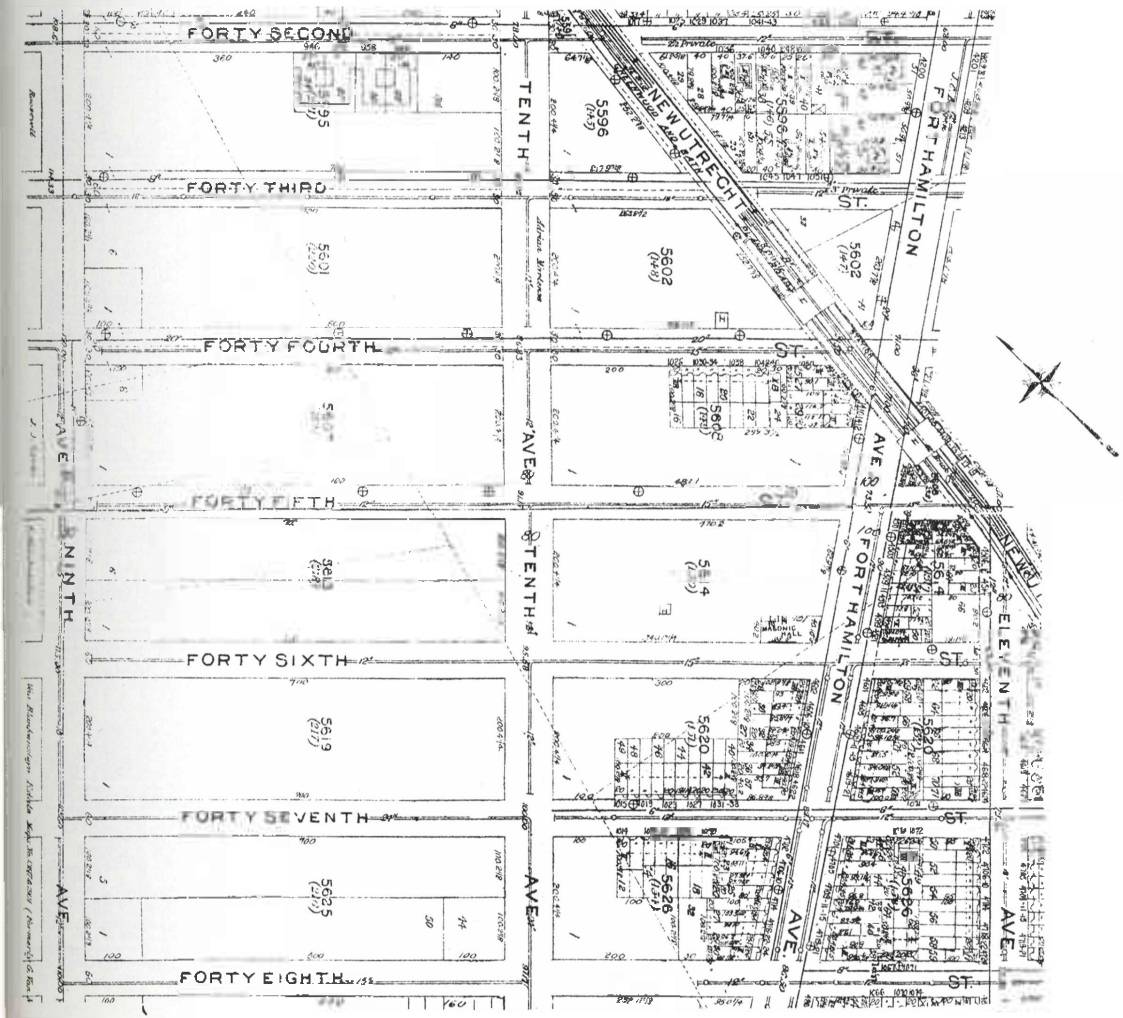
The cross tracks in the photo above were where the old Culver Railroad intersected the 13th Avenue trolley line. The old Culver Railroad tracks were used by a private railroad company, the South Brooklyn Railroad, which carried freight to the Long Island Railroad junction at McDonald Avenue and Avenue H. The company ceased operating in the early 1990s. All of the tracks were paved over or ripped up.



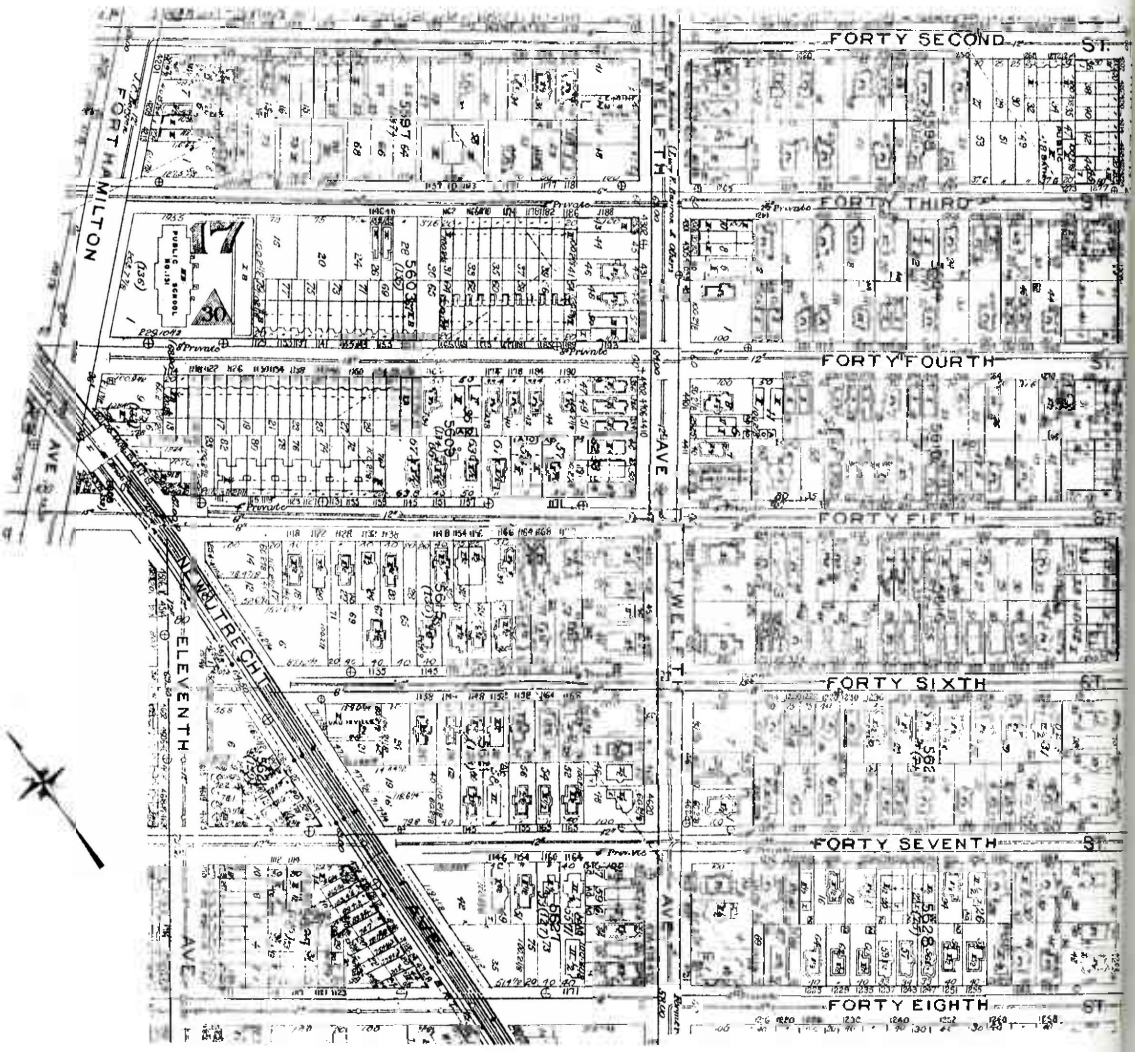
CONGREGATION BETH EL OF BOROUGH PARK

Located on the corner of 12th Avenue and 41st Street, Beth El built the first synagogue in the neighborhood in 1906. In 1920, the congregation moved to the more fashionable section at 15th Avenue and 48th Street. That area contained several Art Deco apartment buildings with doormen. The original 12th Avenue building was used by Congregation Anshe Lubawitz for many years. The building is still standing but was modified with an extended front portico and Doric columns. It is still used as a synagogue. *Courtesy Brooklyn Public Library*

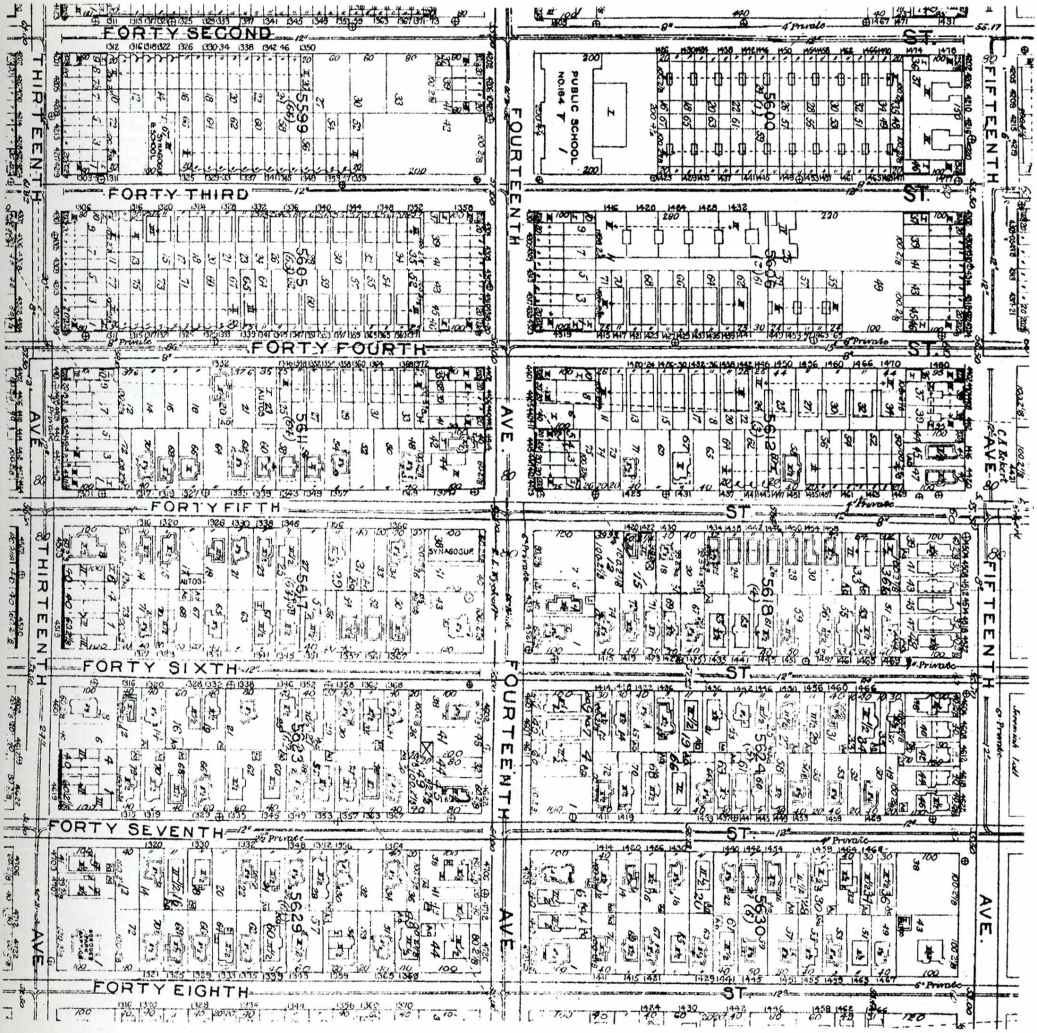

1921 STREET MAPS
42nd - 48th Streets
Ninth - Nineteenth Avenues

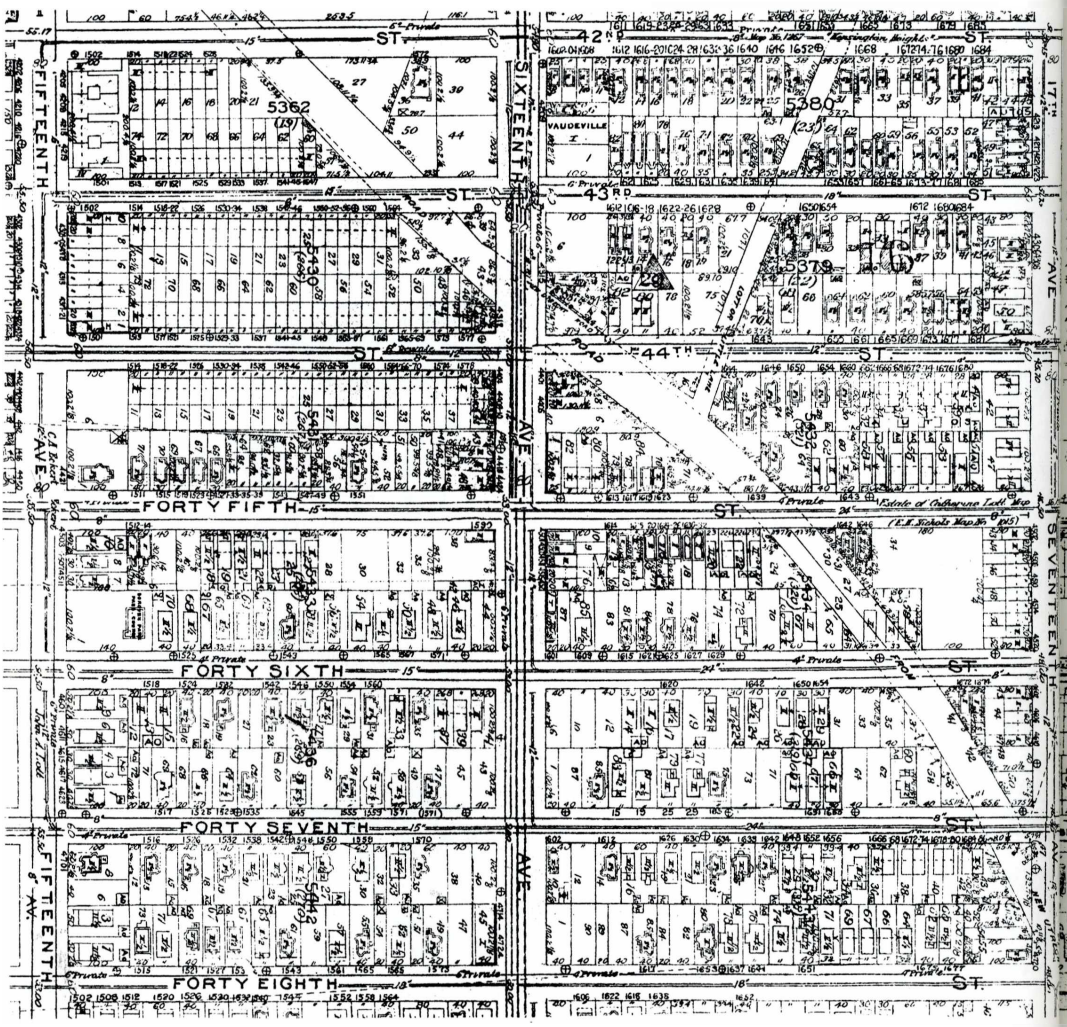


E. Belcher Hyde's 1921 *Street Atlas of Brooklyn*,
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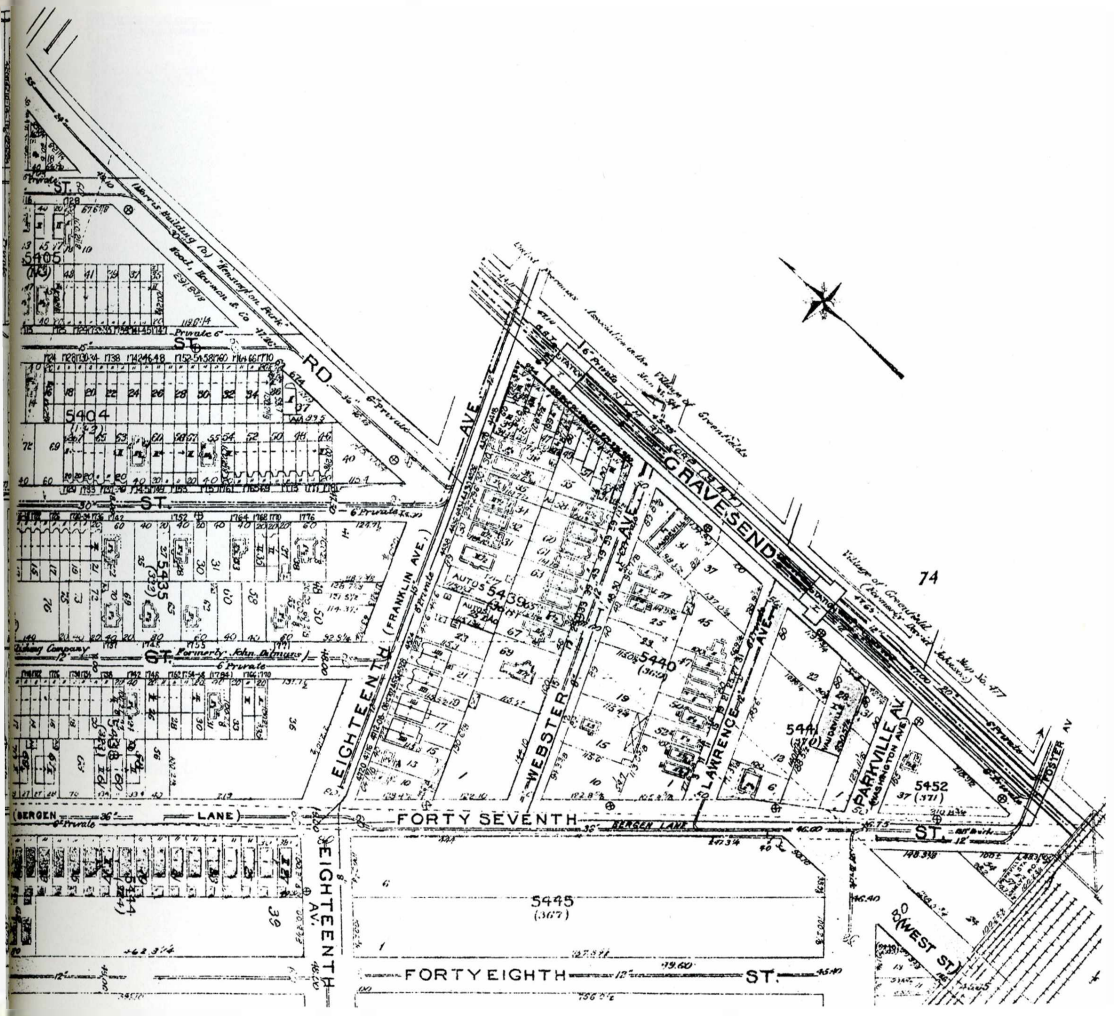


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FORTY SECOND
FORTY THIRD
FORTY FOURTH
FORTY FIFTH
FORTY SIXTH
FORTY SEVENTH
FORTY EIGHTH
THIRTEENTH AVE.
FOURTEENTH AVE.
FIFTEENTH AVE.
PUBLIC SCHOOL NO. 164
5599
5605
5611
5617
5623
5629
5600
5606
5612
5618
5624
5630



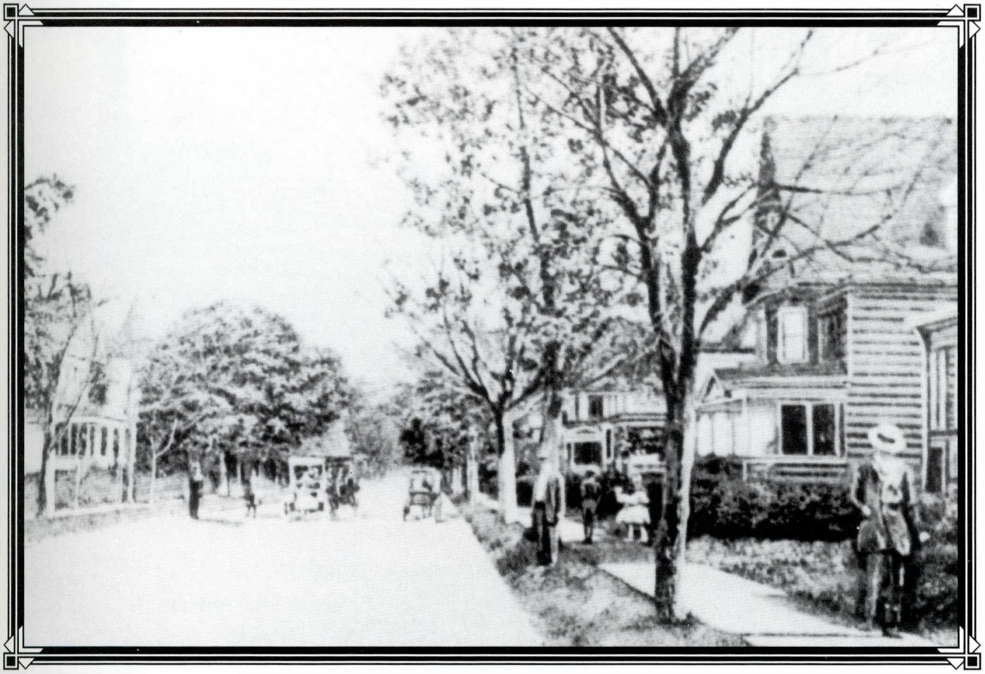
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RD.
AVE.
GRAVESEND
74
ST.
5404
5405
5435
5439
5440
5441
5452
5445
(3077)
EIGHTEENTH
(FRANKLIN AVE.)
WEBSTER
LAWRENCE
PARKVILLE AV.
FORTY SEVENTH
FORTY EIGHTH
(BERGEN
LANE)
WEST ST.
Railway Company
Formerly John Altmus



NEW UTRECHT AVENUE & 44TH STREET

This view of a typical suburban community around the turn of the century shows women and children waiting for the train that might take them down to Coney Island on a summer's day. *Courtesy Merlis Collection*



Typical Borough Park street scene around the turn of the century.
Courtesy Brooklyn Public Library



NEW UTRECHT AVENUE & 45th STREET

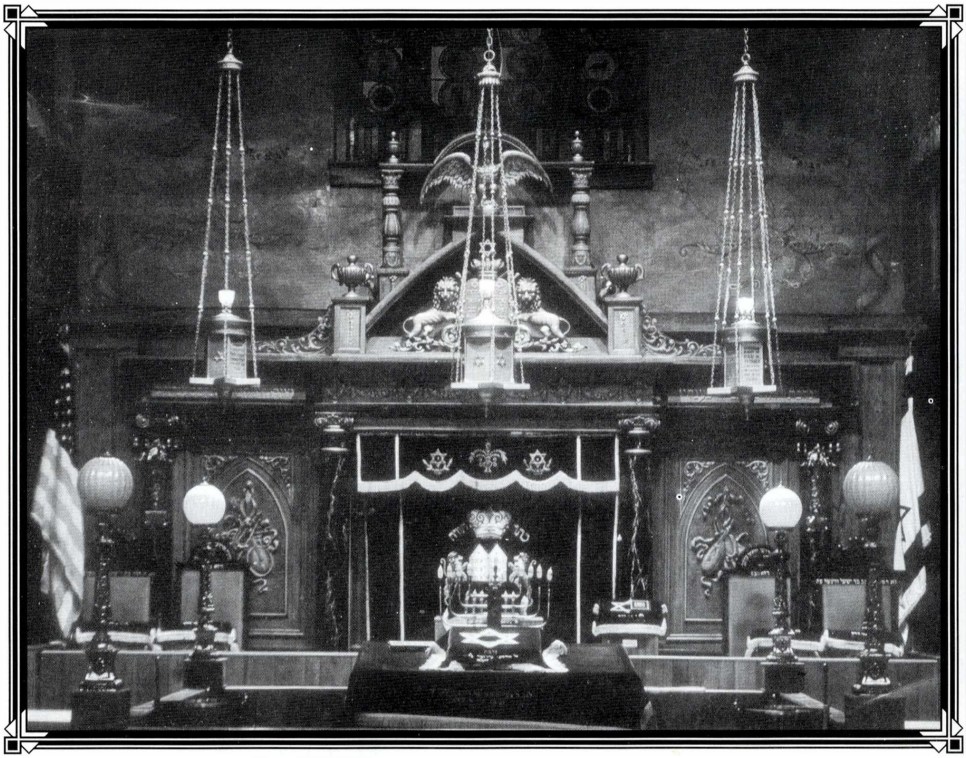
This view, taken in 1919, is looking "up the hill" toward 11th Avenue. The lamppost on the corner is on Ft. Hamilton Parkway.

Courtesy Brooklyn Public Library



NEW UTRECHT AVENUE & 11th AVENUE, ca.1919

Courtesy Brooklyn Public Library



FIRST CONGREGATION ANSHEI SFARD OF BOROUGH PARK

The *Sfardishe Shul,* as it is known by the locals, is located on 14th Avenue and 45th Street. It was built in 1915 and once featured one of the world's greatest cantors, Yossele Rosenblatt. One of its prominent rabbis was Rabbi David Singer who would rattle off, at supersonic speed, all of the commentaries related to a biblical passage. He recently passed away.

The glorious Ark is all hand carved and features lions, eagles, and musical instruments which were used in the Holy Temple. The Ark doors are engraved with Hebrew letters, abbreviations for the prayer, *Avinu Malkaynu (Open the Gates of Heaven to our prayers).* The Sfardishe Shul was always known to have continuous *minyanim* or services from six in the morning to ten at night.



MEMORIAL SERVICE

This memorial service was over several Torahs from another congregation which were destroyed by fire in the 1950s. Jewish law requires that any holy book or Torah which was damaged or destroyed by fire must be buried. The memorial service was held in the Sfardishe Shul, First Congregation Anshei Sfard of Borough Park. The man on the extreme right is the congregation's shamos, Reverend Joseph Fishman.

Courtesy Brooklyn Public Library



YIDDISH NEWSPAPER STAND

13th Avenue & 49th Street

This photo was taken during the intermediate days, *chol ha'moed*, of the Jewish holiday of Succos. Chassidim dress in holiday or Sabbath attire, donning their fur-trimmed hats or *shtreimlech*, yet they are permitted to shop or drive cars. There are about 20 different chassidic sects in Borough Park. The most prominent are the Bobover, Satmar, Gerer and Munkotch chassidim. The chassidim moved into the neighborhood after World War II. They are primarily Holocaust survivors. All of their villages in Eastern Europe were destroyed by the Nazis.



TORAS MOSHE CONGREGATION

The old Toras Moshe Congregation is located on Tenth Avenue, near 43rd Street. The elaborate brick and terra cotta structure was designed in 1928. The building was later sold to Yeshiva Beth Aaron of Chernobyl. It is now occupied by a girls' yeshiva, Bais Brucha d'Stolin Karlin.

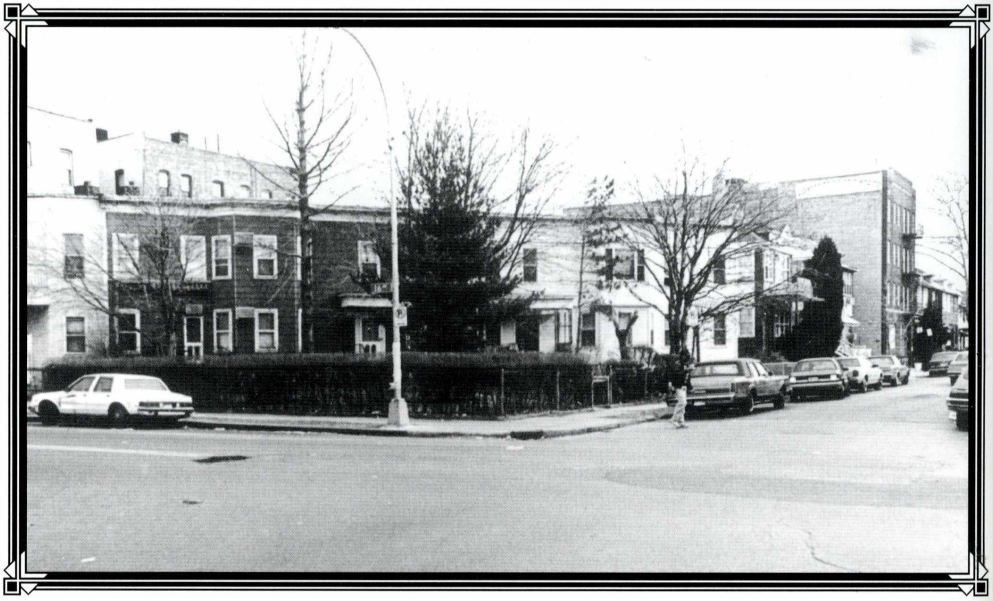
Chernobyl, located in the Ukraine, was once a major center of Jewry. The old Jewish cemetery was desecrated when a nuclear reactor was built directly above the grand rabbi's tomb. It has been said that spirit of that holy rabbi took revenge and caused the nuclear reactor to explode, causing one of the 20th century's greatest disasters. Nuclear waste is still found hundreds of miles around the epicenter of that explosion. People are still dying from radiation contamination.



FORT HAMILTON PARKWAY & 47th STREET
Looking toward 50th Street. ca.1910
Courtesy Brooklyn Public Library



NEW UTRECHT AVENUE & 43rd Street, 1919
Public School 131 on Ft. Hamilton Parkway is on right.
Courtesy Brooklyn Public Library



OLD NEW UTRECHT ROAD

This was one of the main thoroughfares of Blythebourne. Fragments of this road cut diagonally through the present-day street grid of Borough Park. The above contemporary view is at the corner of 16th Avenue and 44th Street. The houses originally built around the turn of the century were once facing Old New Utrecht Road. In mid-1998, the homes seem to be abandoned and might be demolished. Other fragments of this road can be found from 48th through 52nd Streets, between 15th and 16th Avenues. Until the 1980s, parts of Old New Utrecht Road were not even paved!



Electric trolley-bus along 16th Avenue in the 1930s.

Courtesy Brooklyn Public Library

BOBOV BAIS MEDRASH ("Veiber" or Women's Entrance)

The multi-million dollar Bobov Bais Medrash and Holocaust Center has three main entrances. One on 15th Avenue, between 47th and 48th Streets. Another on 48th Street, between 15th and 16th Avenues. And the 47th Street women's or "veiber" (in Yiddish) entrance which was designed by Oscar Israelowitz. The two main entrance portals of this last entrance are trimmed with limestone decorated with floral patterns. The steel beam extending from the left side of the brick wall supports one of the largest and most ornate succahs in the city.



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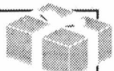
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Explore the vast selection of Yom Tov/Holiday items all year round. ***Menorahs***, ***seder trays***, ***matzah covers***, ***esrog boxes***, ***shofars*** etc. on sale every day of the year.



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Mazel tov, Chason and Kalloh! Head to ***Flohr's*** for a beautiful selection of ***ketubahs***, ***benchers***, and ***yarmulkas***. Then choose from our variety of ***taleisim***, ***atorahs***, ***kittels***, ***talis bags*** and ***leather mechzorim*** (same day embroidery and gold stamping available). We have everything to make your simcha an unforgettable event. ***Plus, don't miss our WEDDING SHTICK department.***

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Discover the store that has the lowest prices on brand name ***dinnerware*** (Mikasa, Noritake, Lenox etc.) ***flatware*** (Oneida, Reed & Barton, etc.) & ***stemware***. Our knowledgeable sales people will guide you to find the tableware that suits your taste and budget. In addition to ***mezuzahs***, we carry a huge array of ***mezuzah cases*** - unique styles in silver, brass, wood and lucite - to enhance your home.

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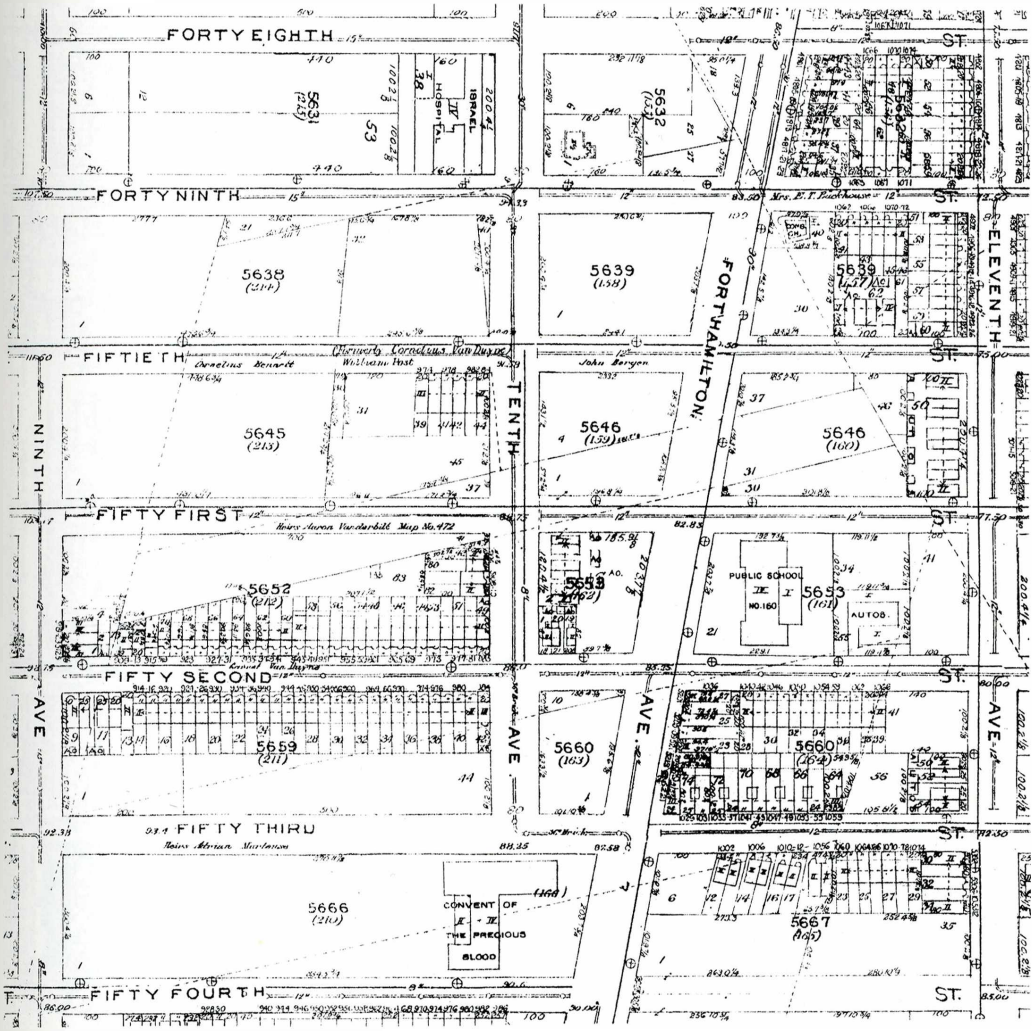


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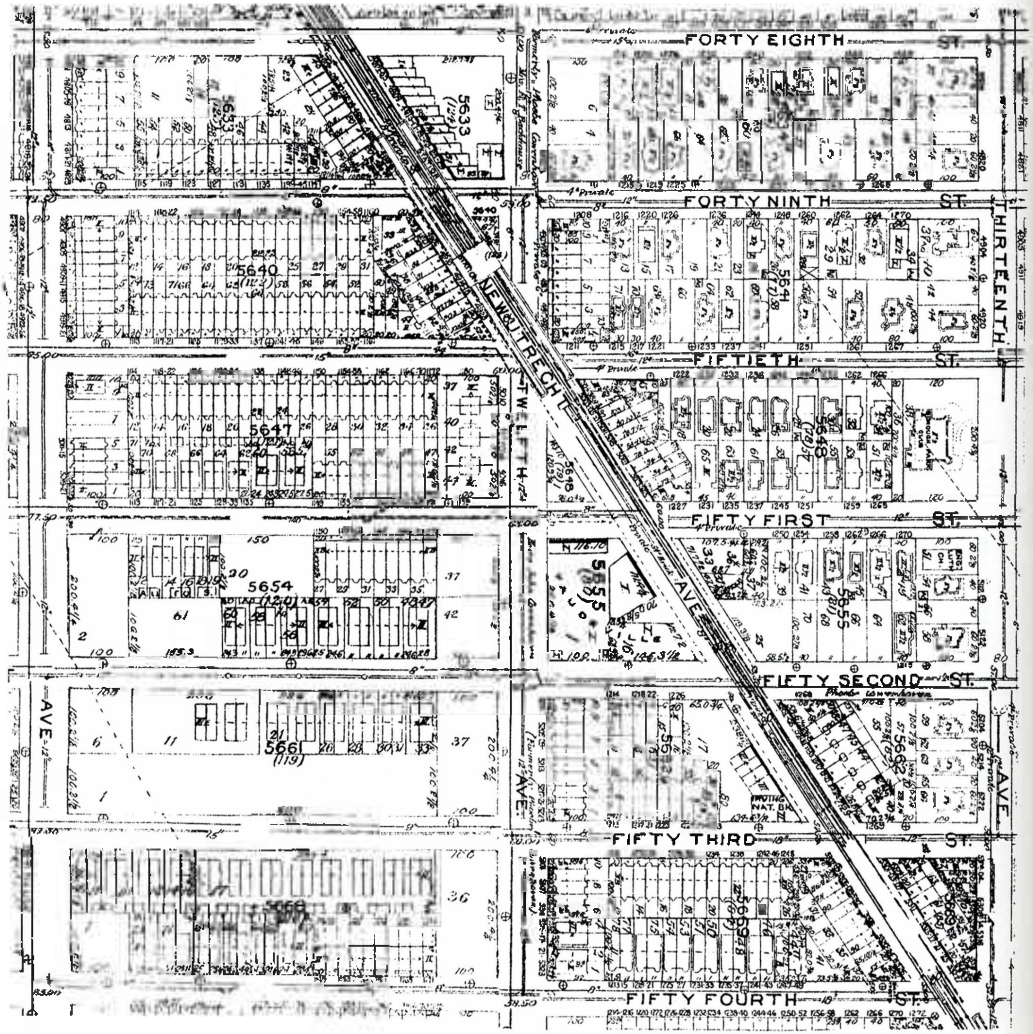
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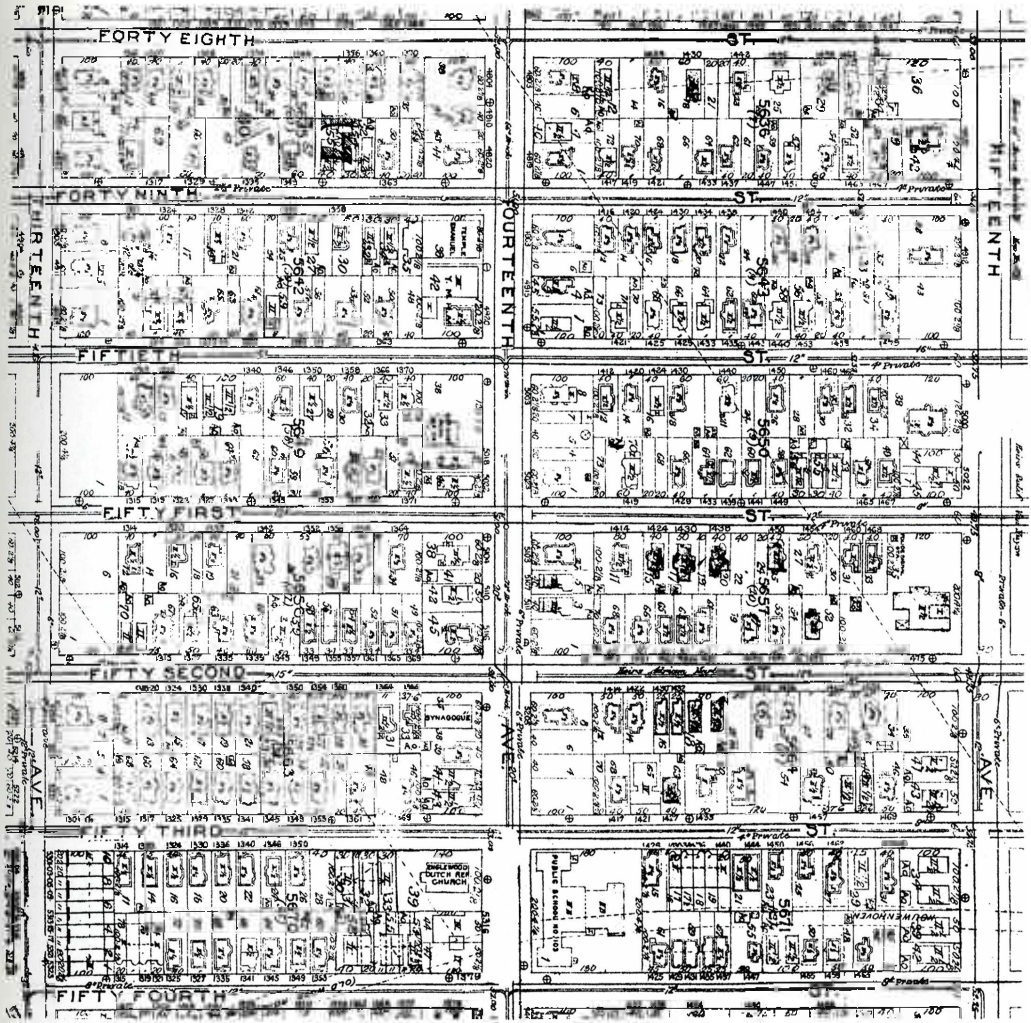

1921 STREET MAPS
48th - 54th Streets
Ninth - 21st Avenues

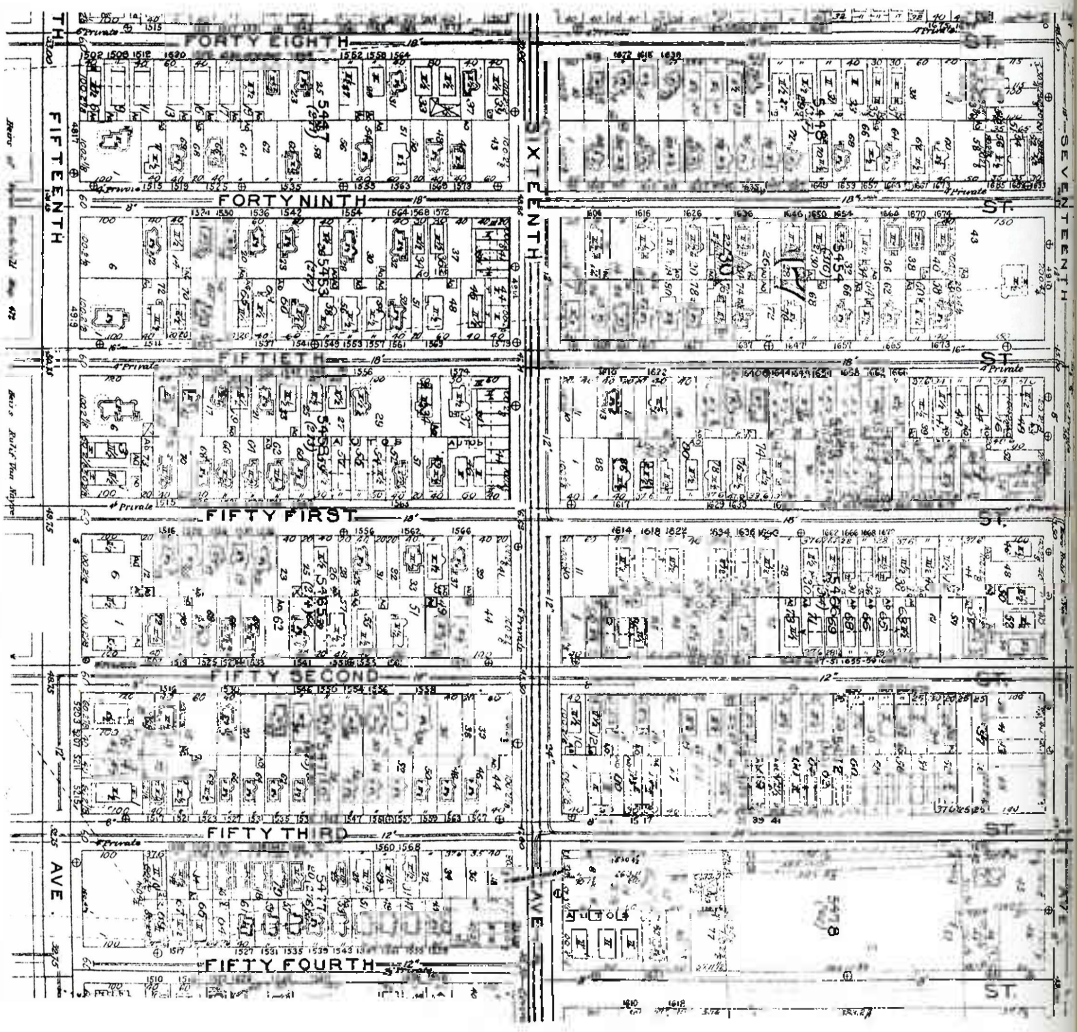


E. Belcher Hyde's 1921 *Street Atlas of Brooklyn*,
showing every lot, block and building in Borough Park.

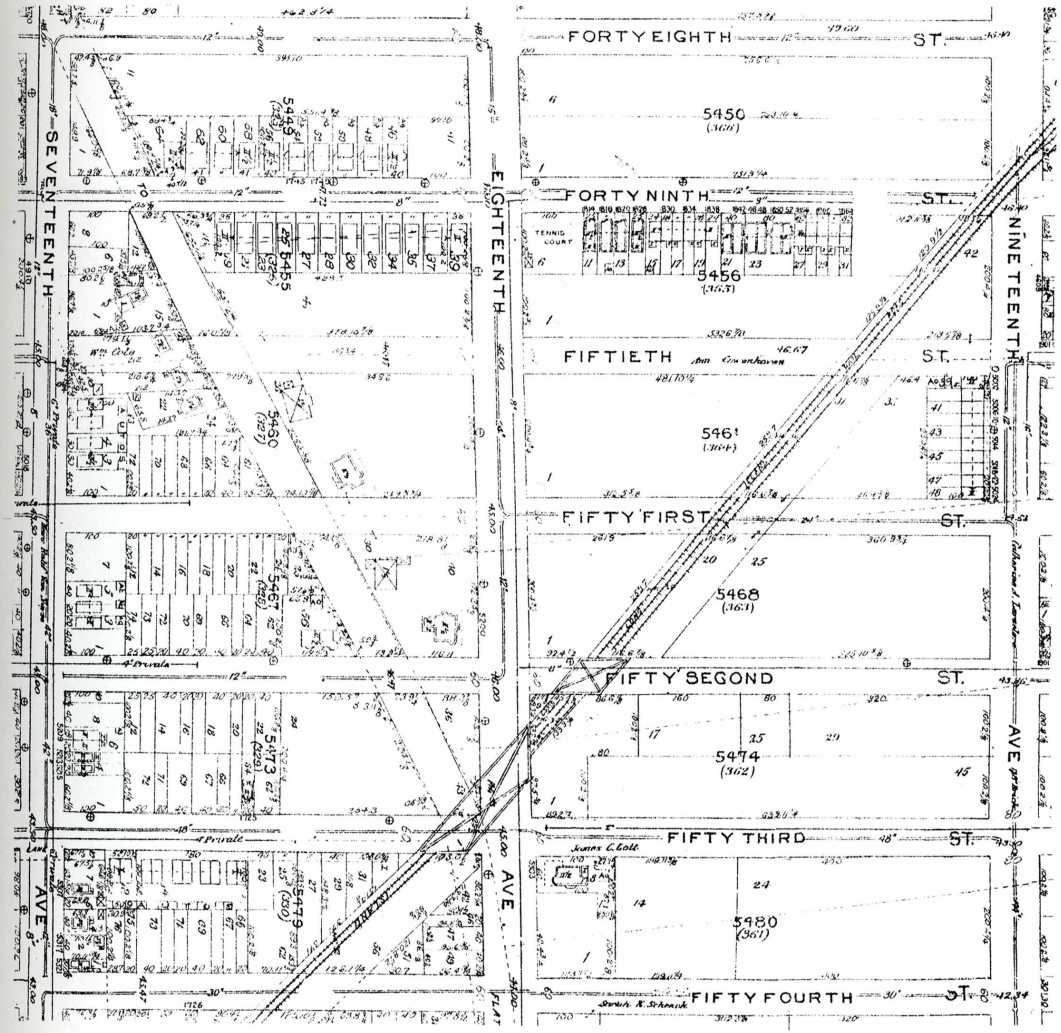


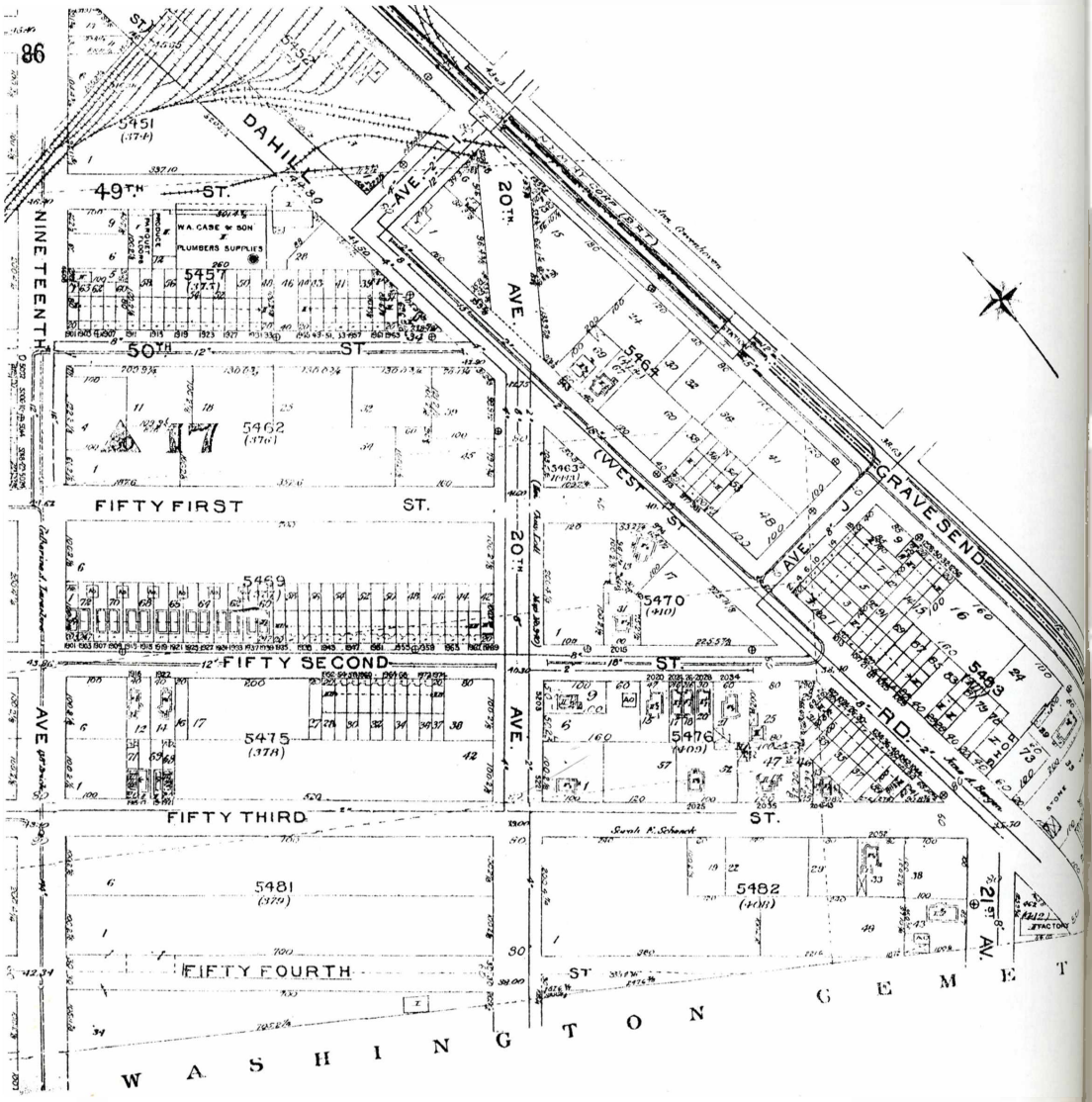
E. Belcher Hyde's 1921 *Street Atlas of Brooklyn*, showing every lot, block and building in Borough Park.


FORTY EIGHTH ST
FORTY NINTH ST
FIFTIETH ST
FIFTY FIRST ST
FIFTY SECOND ST
FIFTY THIRD ST
FIFTY FOURTH ST
THIRTEENTH AVE
FOURTEENTH AVE
FIFTEENTH AVE
SYNAGOGUE
SHELLWOOD DUTCH REF. CHURCH
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FORTY NINTH ST.
FIFTIETH ST.
FIFTY FIRST ST.
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FIFTY THIRD ST.
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TENNIS COURT
Wm. Cole
John Cornhoven
Johannes J. Tuinstra
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4 Private



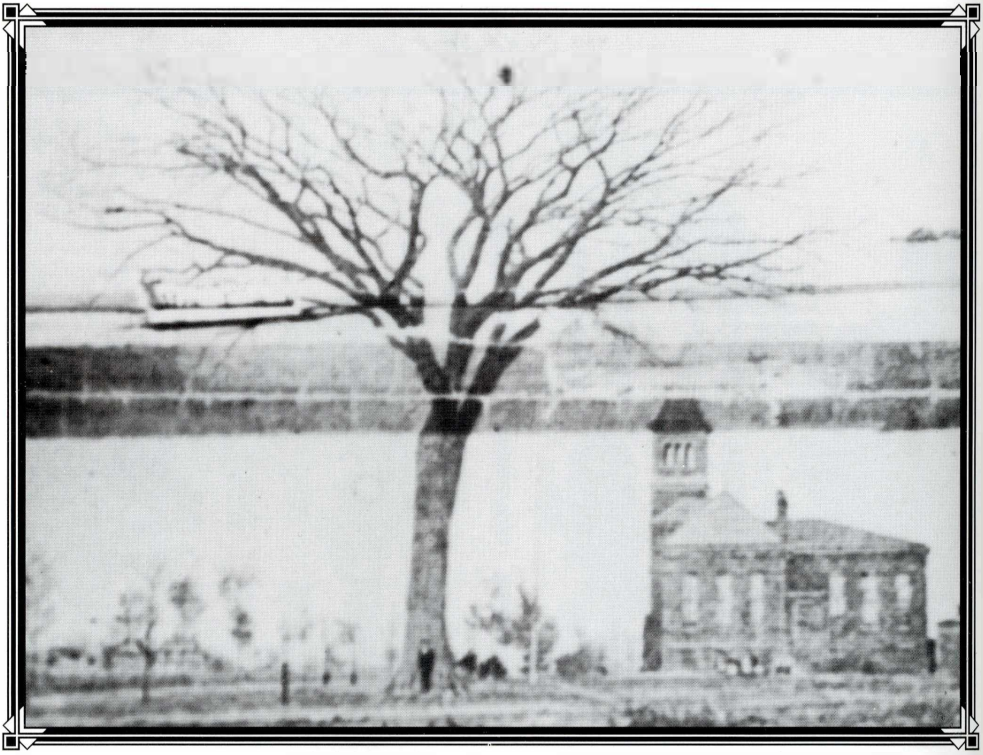
E. Belcher Hyde's 1921 *Street Atlas of Brooklyn*, showing every lot, block and building in Borough Park.



EDGEWOOD REFORMED CHURCH

This church was located on the corner of 14th Avenue and 53rd Street, just across the street from the Third District School House of West Brooklyn. It is no longer extant.

Courtesy Brooklyn Public Library



OLD UMBRELLA TREE

The old "Umbrella" oak tree stood near today's 14th Avenue, near 55th Street. In the distance is the Third District School House of West Brooklyn. The tree was planted before the American Revolution of 1776 and was almost blown down during the Great Blizzard of March, 1888. This photo was taken around 1915.

Courtesy Brooklyn Public Library



14th AVENUE & 53rd STREET

The first public school in Blythebourne was located on 14th Avenue and 53rd Street. It was known as the Third District School House of West Brooklyn. A new addition was built in front of the original structure around 1915 closer to 14th Avenue. The Board of Education sold the building to Kamenitz High School. It is presently owned by the Satmar Yeshiva. The original (back wing) structure was recently demolished and replaced with a new building. *Courtesy Brooklyn Public Library*

The corner of New Utrecht Avenue and 50th Street. Our First Home.

We have a similar photograph in our family album, but it has a more modern look to it. It was taken in 1980. Then, when we opened our doors to the same New Utrecht Avenue you see depicted on these pages, we became known as the first ever kosher weight control program.

From the beginning, we felt we understood the need for people to be healthy so they could have the strength and ability to contribute to those who depend on them. So we began to put that understanding to work. We opened new locations in different cities, ran summer classes in the Catskill Mountains and expanded our food line. We were written up globally.

Meanwhile, back in Borough Park, we spoke at Tzedakah benefits and seminars, and hosted programs for school children at our center. We initiated lifetime members who achieved their goals and we gratefully welcomed new ones. Neighbors and families walked through our doors seeking guidance and motivation. They gathered here to trade news -- both the good and the difficult to bear. They allowed us to share in their simchas, and we watched them become bar mitzvahed, engaged and married.

Borough Park evolved, making way for new businesses and new residents and families, while maintaining the spirit of a traditional community in an increasingly progressive city. And over time, we grew so attached to our roots here that we realized our relationship with this community – through our Borough Park headquarters – was very much bashert.

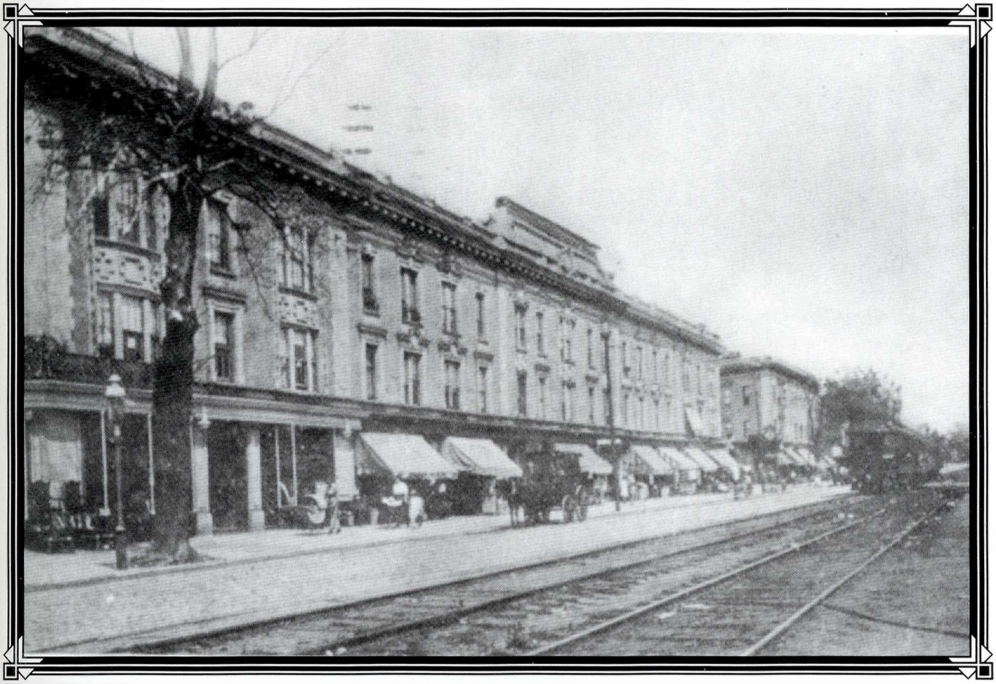
Today, from a different corner in Borough Park, we look forward to another century in which we may continue to reach out to those who have included us in the success of this community and have helped our business grow -- whether by word of mouth, recognition or their own personal achievement. Or simply by having as much faith in us as we always had in them.

The Start Fresh Weight Control Program

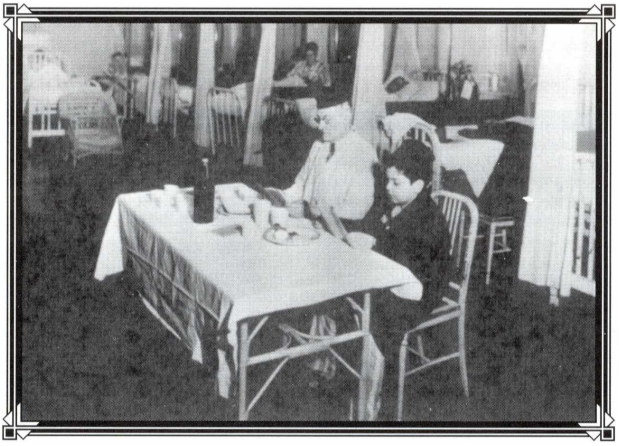
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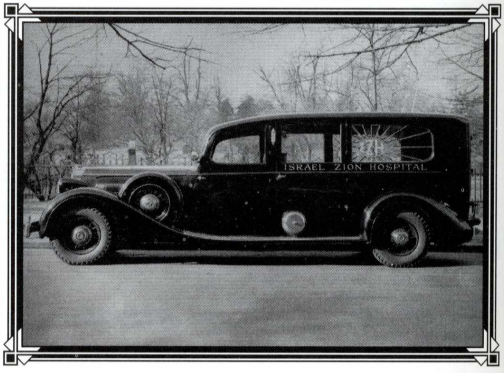
Erma S. Bressler
Founder & Executive Director
Robert S. Bressler
Director, Men's Division
Marcia Bodenstein
Director of Operations



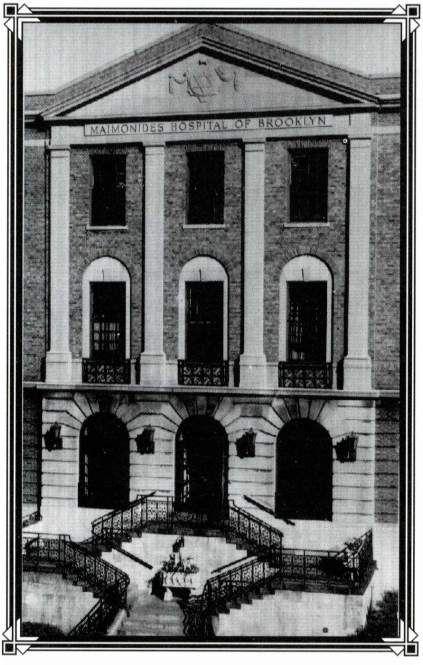
NEW UTRECHT AVENUE ca. 1912
North of 50th Street
Courtesy Meris Collection



MAIMONIDES MEDICAL CENTER, ca. 1955
Passover Seder conducted by Jewish chaplain in the men's ward. *Courtesy Maimonides Medical Center*



ISRAEL ZION AMBULANCE, ca. 1940
Courtesy Maimonides Medical Center



MAIN ENTRANCE ON TENTH AVENUE, ca. 1955
Courtesy Maimonides Medical Center



MAIMONIDES MEDICAL CENTER

Tenth Avenue & 48th Street

Maimonides traces its lineage back to 1911 when neighborhood women founded the New Utrecht Dispensary at 37th Street. By 1916, the dispensary was also a full-fledged hospital located on 44th Street. Immediately following World War I (and the Great Influenza Epidemic)the first of a series of name changes, moves and hospital mergers took place. In 1919, the hospital changed its name to Israel Hospital of Brooklyn and merged with Zion Hospital. Zion Hospital traced itself back to 1913 when it was founded as the Borough Park Sanitarium. The merger took place in 1920 to form United Israel Zion Hospital. Their new building opened in 1922 and was located at Tenth Avenue and 48th Street.

In 1947, Maimonides Hospital of Brooklyn formed when United Israel Zion Hospital merged with Beth Moses Hospital. In 1966, the designation "hospital" would be replaced by Medical Center. *Courtesy Maimonides Medical Center)*



NEW HOMES IN BOROUGH PARK, ca. 1910

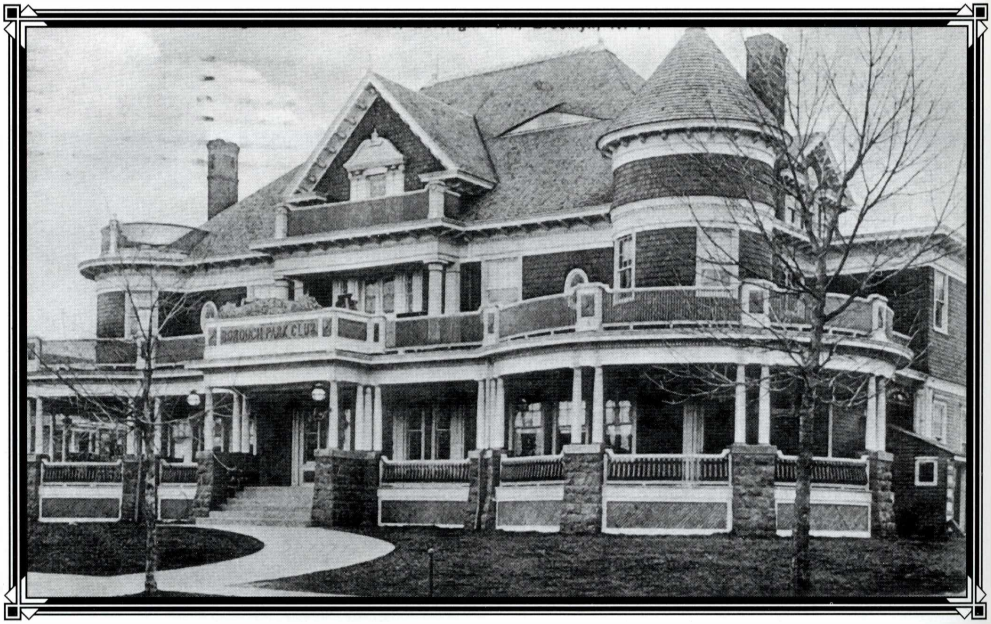
This view of new Victorian homes is located on 53rd Street, between 13th and 14th Avenue. Note the mud on the roadway.

Courtesy Meris Collection



13th AVENUE & 51st STREET

View looking down the avenue towards 49th Street. Yes, there were once trees and private Victorian homes along 13th Avenue! The old Borough Park Club appears on the left. This photo was taken around the turn ofthe century. *Courtesy Brooklyn Public Library*

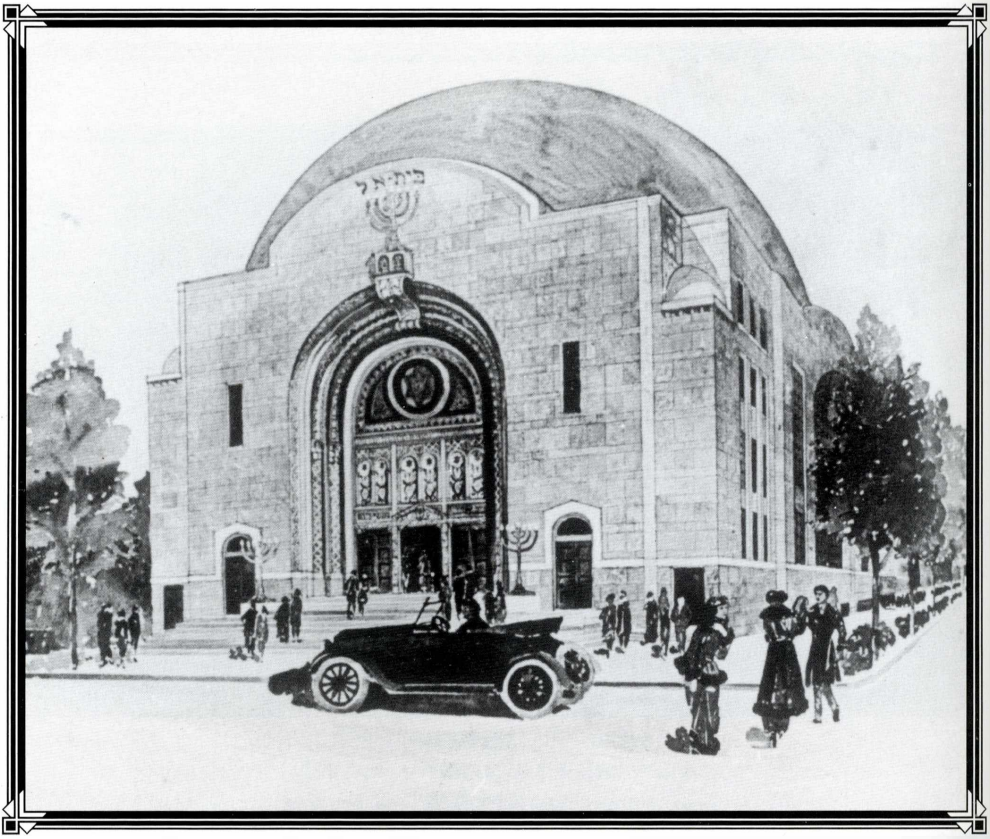


THE BOROUGH PARK CLUB, ca.1900
13th Avenue, between 50th & 51st Streets
Courtesy Brooklyn Public Library



13th AVENUE, between 50th & 51st STREETS

Yeshiva Etz Chaim purchased the old Borough Park Club. They rebuilt the entire interior space and constructed new brick extensions on either side of the original structure. All that remains of the original turn of the century building was the pitched roof, dormer and curved air vents. Yeshiva Etz Chaim was demolished in the 1980s. It was replaced with Salomon Plaza, a shopping strip with Eichler's bookstore as one of its larger stores.



TEMPLE BETH EL OF BOROUGH PARK

Temple Beth El of Borough Park's first synagogue was built in 1906 and was located on the corner of 12th Avenue and 41st Street. In 1920, the congregation moved to the corner of 15th Avenue and 48th Street. This magnificent structure was designed by the architectural firm of Shampan & Shampan. Its interior closely resembles the Moorish designs found in Manhattan's B'nai Jeshurun Congregation, located at 88th Street, between Broadway and West End Avenue. The view above is an architect's rendering of the temple, complete with flappers and Studz-Bearcat. The menorah and Hebrew inscription above the main portal were never included in the final designs. *Courtesy Brooklyn Public Library*



TEMPLE BETH EL OF BOROUGH PARK

This glorious interior was designed with near-perfect acoustics This view was taken before the holiday of Shavuos. Flowers decorate the Ark area and the balcony railings. Originally, the reading platform faced the congregation. So when you had an aliyah, you had to know the blessings before and after the reading of the Torah. The congregation was able to hear the person who read the Torah portion. Since this photo was taken in the 1970s, the bimah or reading table was turned around, facing the Ark, and moved back about fifteen feet on a separate platform. The congregation has also merged with the Young Israel of Borough Park which was housed in the old Shulamith School for Girls, located on 50th Street, near 14th Avenue.



TEMPLE BETH OF BOROUGH PARK

Located on 15th Avenue and 48th Street, Beth El was once one of the largest Orthodox congregations in the city, with a seating capacity of 2,000. It was once the great synagogue featuring world class cantors of the day including Chagi, Hershman, Koussevitski, Stern and Miller. Until recently the cantors were accompanied by world renowned choirs. At one time, all of the leaders of the congregation, e.g. rabbi, president, shamash, gabbai, and ushers all wore top hats and formal attire. The rabbi of Beth El for the past fifty years is Rabbi Dr. Israel Schorr.



CANTOR MOSHE STERN

Moshe Stern served as cantor in Beth El in the 1970s.

Courtesy Cantor Moshe Stern

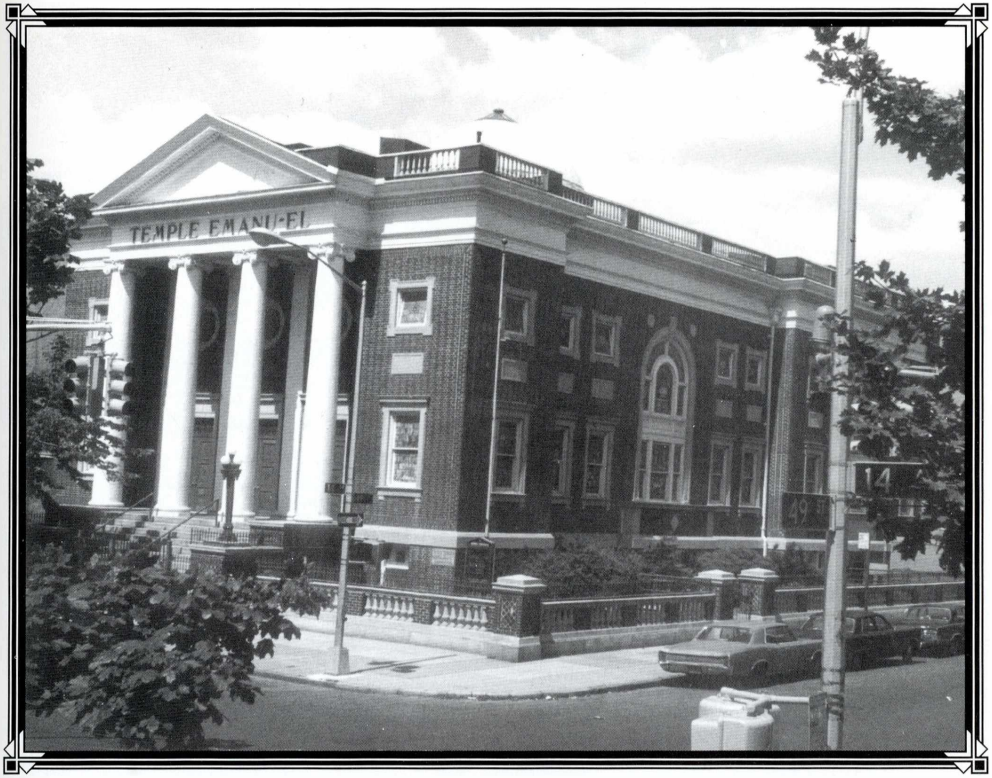


CONGREGATION SHOMREI EMUNAH

14th Avenue & 52nd Street

There was a time when Borough Park was the home of the world's greatest cantors. Yossele Rosenblatt was at the Sfardishe Shul (14th Avenue & 45th Street), Moshe Koussevitski was at Temple Beth El (15th Avenue & 48th Street), David Koussevitski was at Temple Emanu El (14th Avenue & 49th Street) and Yaakov Koussevitski was at Shomrei Emunah.

Shomrei Emunah was organized in 1908. Its first services were conducted in the Masonic Hall on New Utrecht Avenue at 56th Street. Its present Romanesque Revival yellow brick structure was built in 1910 and contains an exquisite rectangular skylight decorated with Victorian floral patterns.



TEMPLE EMANU-EL OF BOROUGH PARK

14th Avenue & 49th Street

Temple Emanu-El was organized in 1908. Its Georgian structure was falling apart over the past few years. The only Conservative congregation in Borough Park, Temple Emanu-El just sold its building to the Satmar chassidim. The congregation will move out in a few years. Between the old synagogue building and its adjoining Hebrew school building is a stairwell containing a magnificent Holocaust memorial stained-glass window which was designed in the 1950s by the studios of Payne-Spears. They might be removed once the Satmar chassidim take over, since the windows portray images of people and the creation of the State of Israel.

There is still a small Reform congregation in the neighborhood. The Borough Park Progressive Synagogue, is located on 46th Street near 15th Avenue.



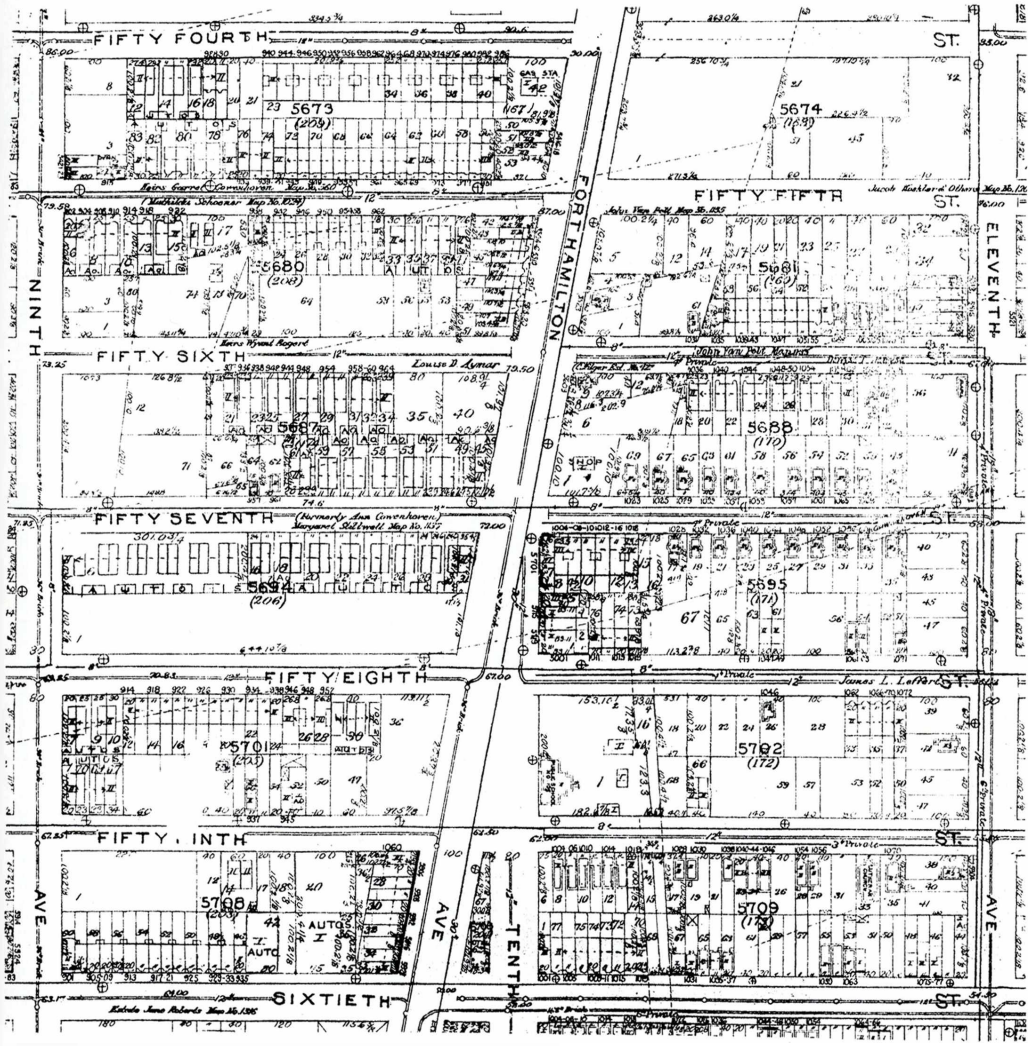
Electric trolley-bus along 16th Avenue in the 1930s.

Courtesy Brooklyn Public Library

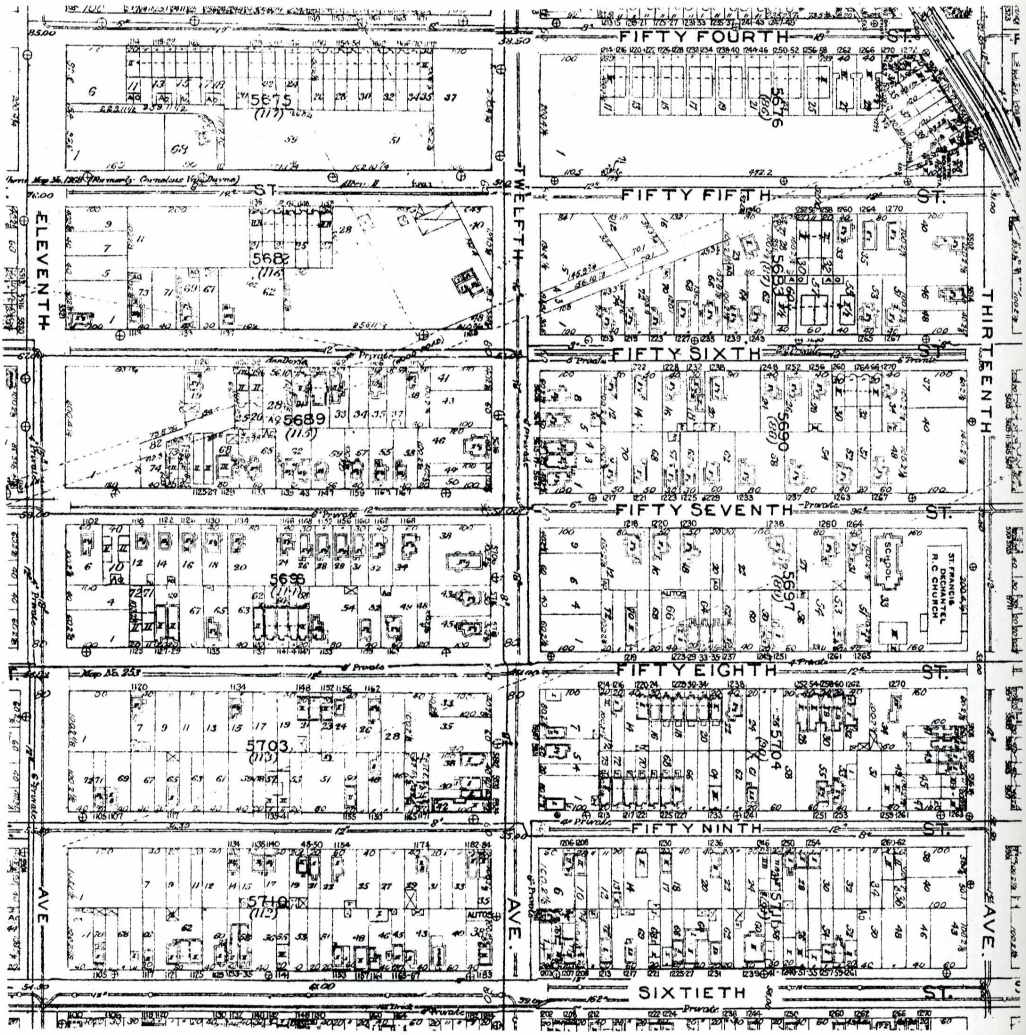


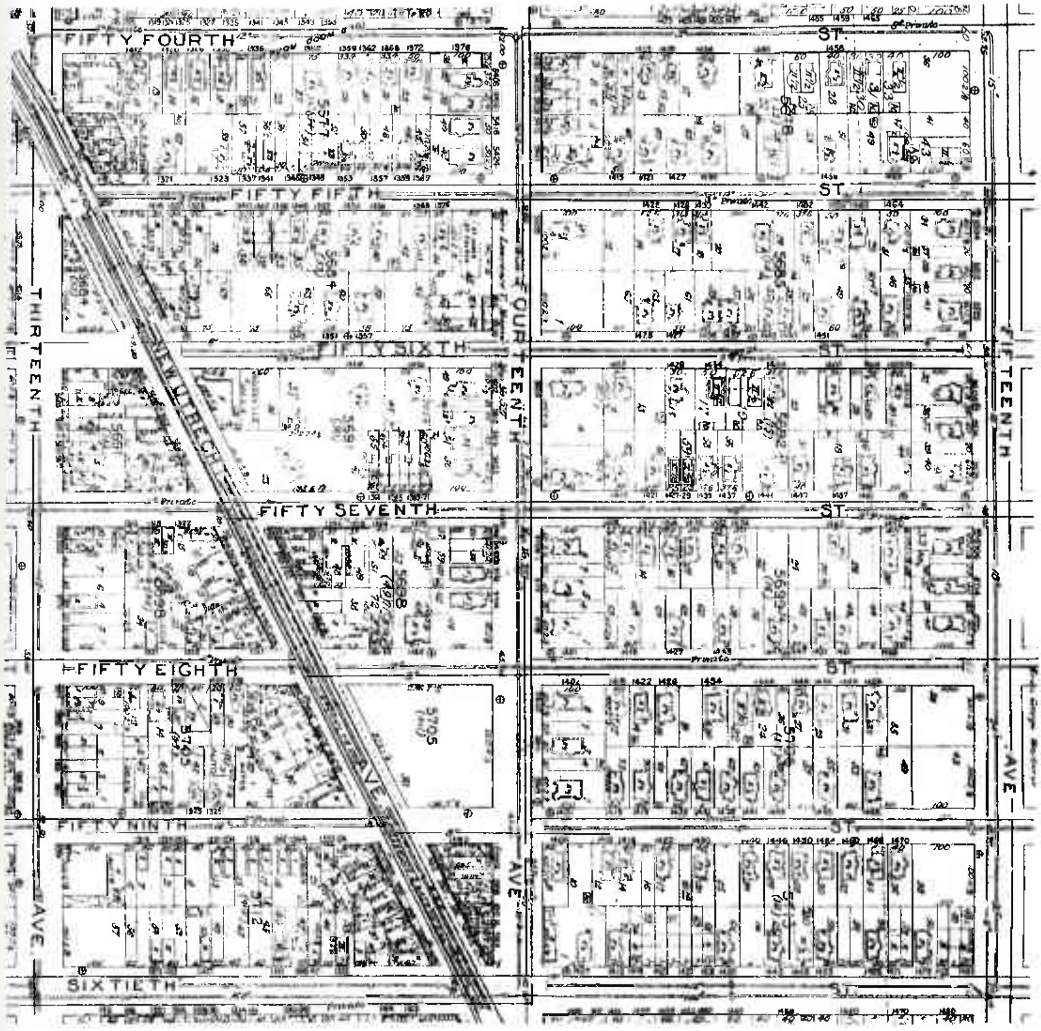
CONGREGATION B'NAI YEHUDA
16th Avenue & 53rd Street
B'nai Yehuda was designed in the Italianate style in 1921.


1921 STREET MAPS
54th - 60th Streets
Ninth - Nineteenth Avenues

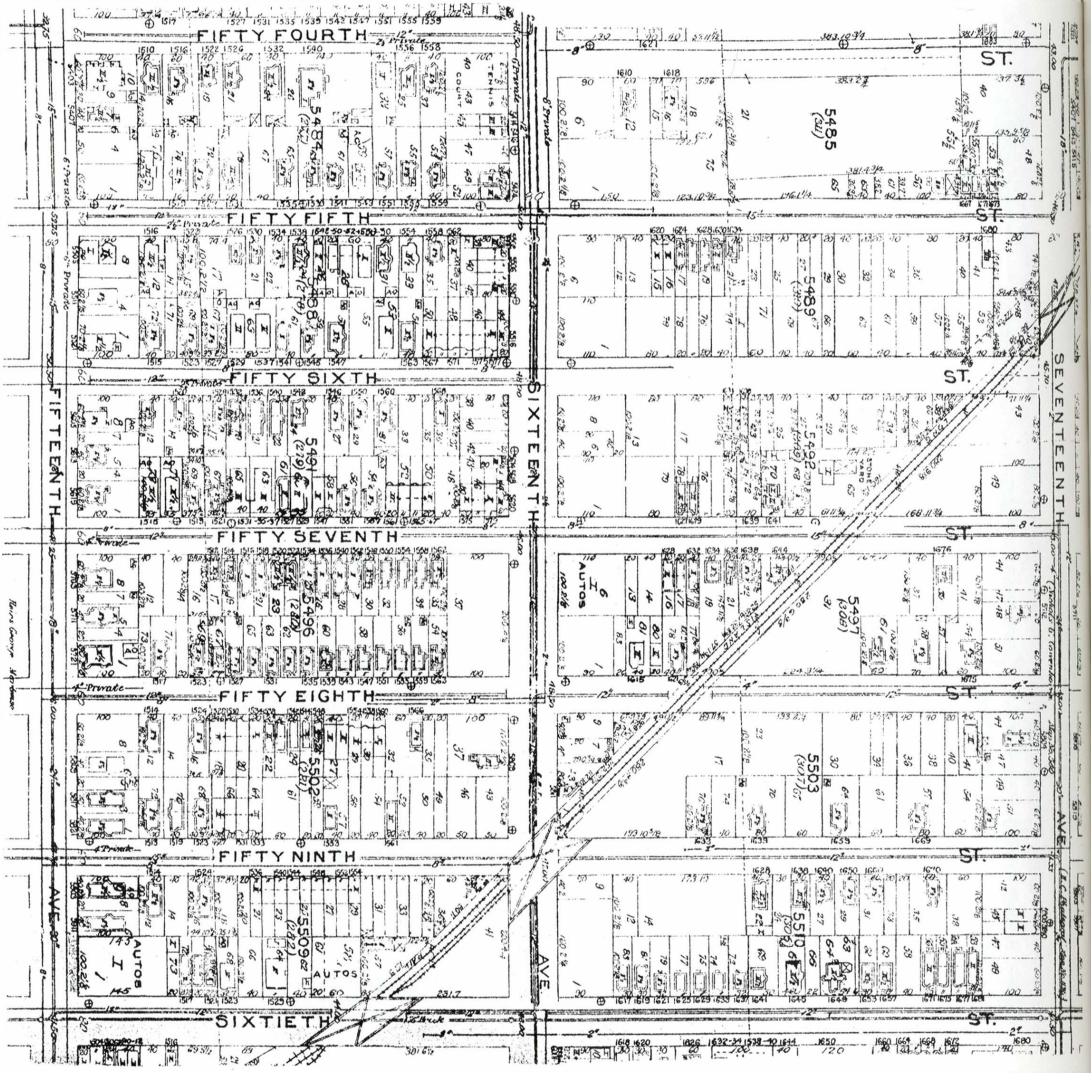


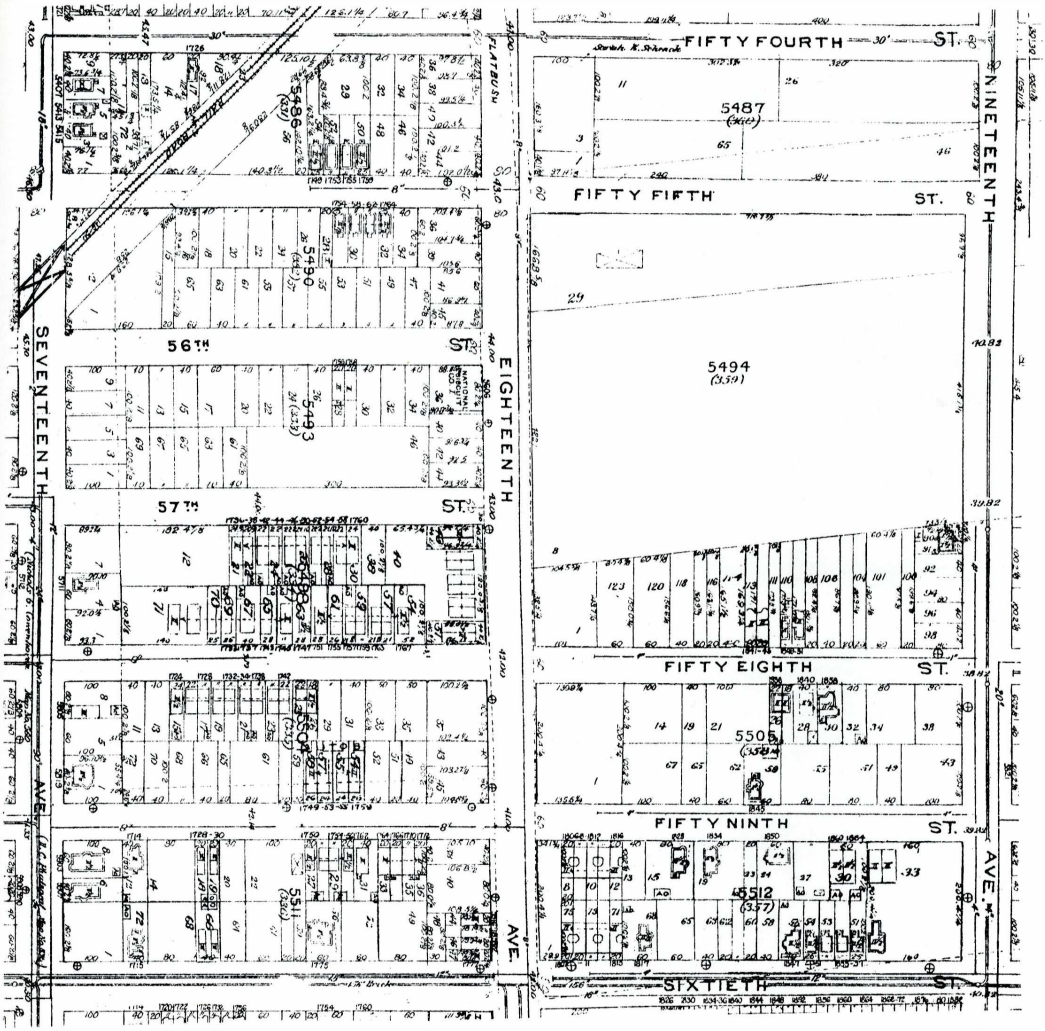
E. Belcher Hyde's 1921 *Street Atlas of Brooklyn*,
showing every lot, block and building in Borough Park.


FIFTY FOURTH ST.
FIFTY FIFTH ST.
FIFTY SIXTH ST.
FIFTY SEVENTH ST.
FIFTY EIGHTH ST.
FIFTY NINTH ST.
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5704 (10)
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5711 (10)
ST. FRANCIS DE CHANTAL R. C. CHURCH



E. Belcher Hyde's 1921 *Street Atlas of Brooklyn*,
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FIFTY FOURTH
FIFTY FIFTH
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AUTOS
TENNIS COURT



E. Belcher Hyde's 1921 *Street Atlas of Brooklyn*,
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FIFTY-FOURTH STREET RAILROAD STATION, ca. 1900

Courtesy Merlis Collection

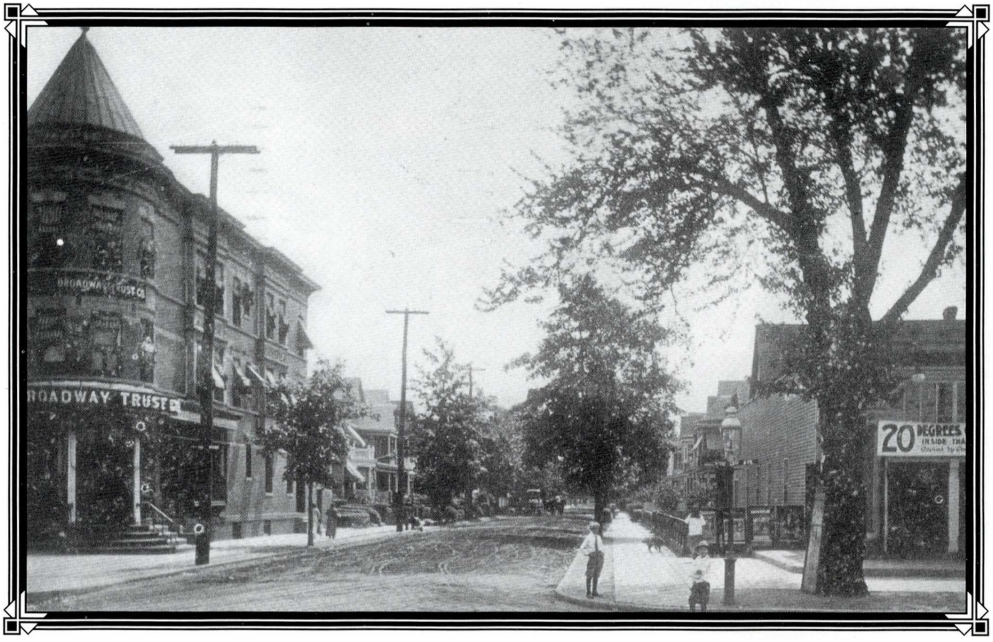


56th STREET, between NEW UTRECHT AVENUE & 14th AVENUE
Early Blythebourne homestead was demolished in the 1980s.



NEW UTRECHT AVENUE, south of 54th STREET, ca.1900

Courtesy Brooklyn Public Library



13th AVENUE & 54th Street, ca. 1915

This view is of 54th Street looking towards 14th Avenue. 54th Street was once called Cowenhoven Lane, a road that cut through the farms around Elythebourne. The one-story building on the right was once a vaudeville house, featuring silent movies and live entertainment. The sign posted outside the theater states that inside the building it is 20 degrees cooler, since they just installed electric fans. *Courtesy Merlis Collection*



NEW UTRECHT AVENUE & 13 AVENUE

This view of 13th Avenue from 55th Street is looking toward 50th Street and was taken in 1919. The small movie house on the extreme right was showing a vaudeville house showing a silent movie starring Lilian Gish. *Courtesy Brooklyn Public Library*



Entrance to the 55th Street entrance on the West End line. Note the spelling of Municipal Railway – the letter "U" is replaced with the Roman letter "V." This sign was removed in the 1980s.



NEW UTRECHT AVENUE & 57th STREET
View looking toward 58th Street, ca.1890.
Courtesy Brooklyn Public Library



RAILROAD CROSSING, ca. 1910

The Long Island Railroad at one time ran on grade (at street level) from the railhead at 65th Street, then along 62nd Street, Avenue H and then to its hub in Jamaica, Queens. The above view is at 16th Avenue and 59th Street. *Courtesy Mertis Collection*

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