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FIFTH AVENUE



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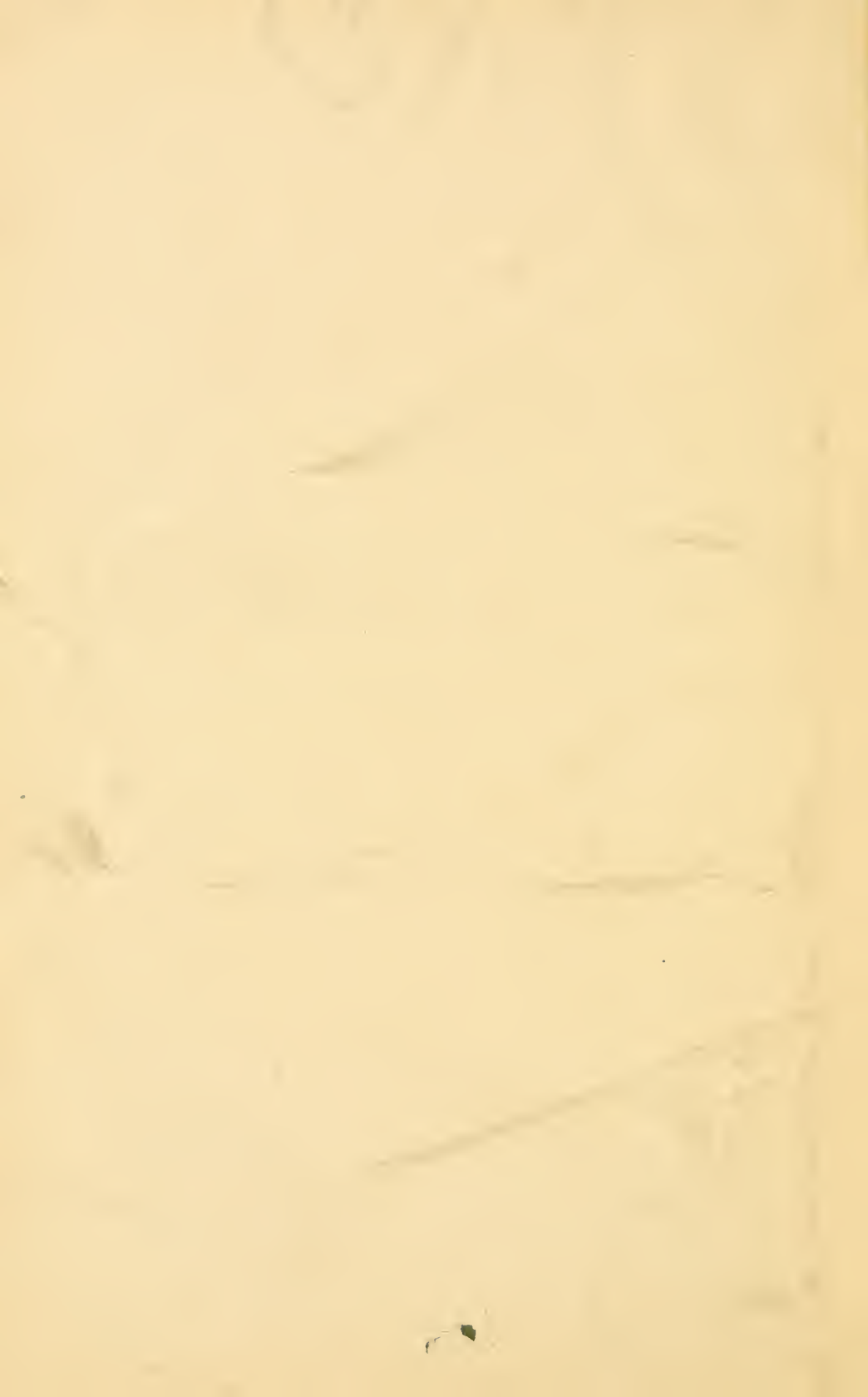
Book 167
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PRESENTED BY

“FIFTH AVENUE”

ERRATA

- Page 6. Paragraph 4 should read, “Onward from Carnegie Hill beginning at about 96th Street, the Avenue rapidly degenerates . . .”
6. Paragraph 4. Line 6 should read, “From 131st to 139th Streets, it swarms with foreigners and negroes.”
 10. Paragraph 2. Lines 3, 4, 5. “One was Hamilton Square, bounded by Third and Fifth Avenues, 66th and 68th Streets . . .”
 21. Next to last line, “southwest” should read “southeast.”
 23. Lines 5, 6. Neither Rev. Theodore L. Cuyler, D.D., nor Rev. Henry van Dyke, D.D., was pastor of the Marble Collegiate Church. Dr. Cuyler was pastor of the Market Street Reformed Dutch Church in New York, and later of the Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church, Brooklyn. Dr. van Dyke was pastor of the Brick Presbyterian Church. Rev. David J. Burrell, D.D., LL.D., has been pastor of the Marble Collegiate Church since 1891.
 23. Line 10. 1768 should read 1795.
 23. Line 6 from bottom. Although the name “Mildenberger” is spelled with an “n” on the Map of the Farms, Victor R. Mildeberger, descendant, says the name should be spelled without an “n,” and that he possesses the will of Christopher Mildeberger, in which name is so spelled. He also thinks Christopher Mildeberger married Mathew Horn’s daughter, and not the daughter of John Horn, the second.
 26. Date of view should be early 80’s.
 29. Paragraph 1. Mr. Charles Greer, a descendant of the Greer family, who owned considerable property in the vicinity of the Caspar Samler farm, says that he is under the impression that the word Samler should be spelled Sembler, and that the farm extended to just above the corner of 30th Street.
 37. Date of view should be 1869.
 40. Paragraph 1. Line 5. “Opened with impressive ceremonies July 4, 1842.”
 44. Line 4 should read, “sold later to Mrs. R. T. Wilson for \$185,000. The Wilson estate sold the corner to the Five Hundred and Eleven Fifth Avenue Company for \$1,200,000.”
 44. Lines 5-6. “Although Tweed lived at 511 Fifth Avenue for several years, his escape was made December 4, 1875, from the house at 647 Madison Avenue, near 60th Street, in which he lived later.”
 45. Paragraph 2. Lines 19-20. Mr. Charles Greer says that “Provost Marshal’s office at 1148 Broadway” should read, “between 28th and 29th Streets.” The row of buildings that stood there at the time was owned by George Greer, and during the riots of ’63 they were broken into and set on fire by the women rioters.
 54. Line under print should read, “From an old print of about 1870.”
 61. Paragraph 2. Lines 8-9 should read, “Commodore Vanderbilt driving his famous trotter, Maud S.; Robert Bonner speeding Dexter.”
 69. Last line 1st paragraph should read, “Richard M. Hunt was the architect retained to design the entrance gateways at 59th Street, which were, however, never constructed. Olmsted & Vaux were the landscape architects. Olmsted was later made architect-in-chief.”





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THE BEGINNING OF FIFTH AVENUE.

Showing the Washington Arch and the dignified character of the earliest houses erected upon Fifth Avenue.

From a photograph.

FIFTH AVENUE

GLANCES AT THE VICISSITUDES AND
ROMANCE OF A WORLD-RENOWNED
THOROUGHFARE, TOGETHER WITH
MANY RARE ILLUSTRATIONS THAT
BRING BACK AN INTERESTING PAST



PRINTED FOR
THE FIFTH AVENUE BANK
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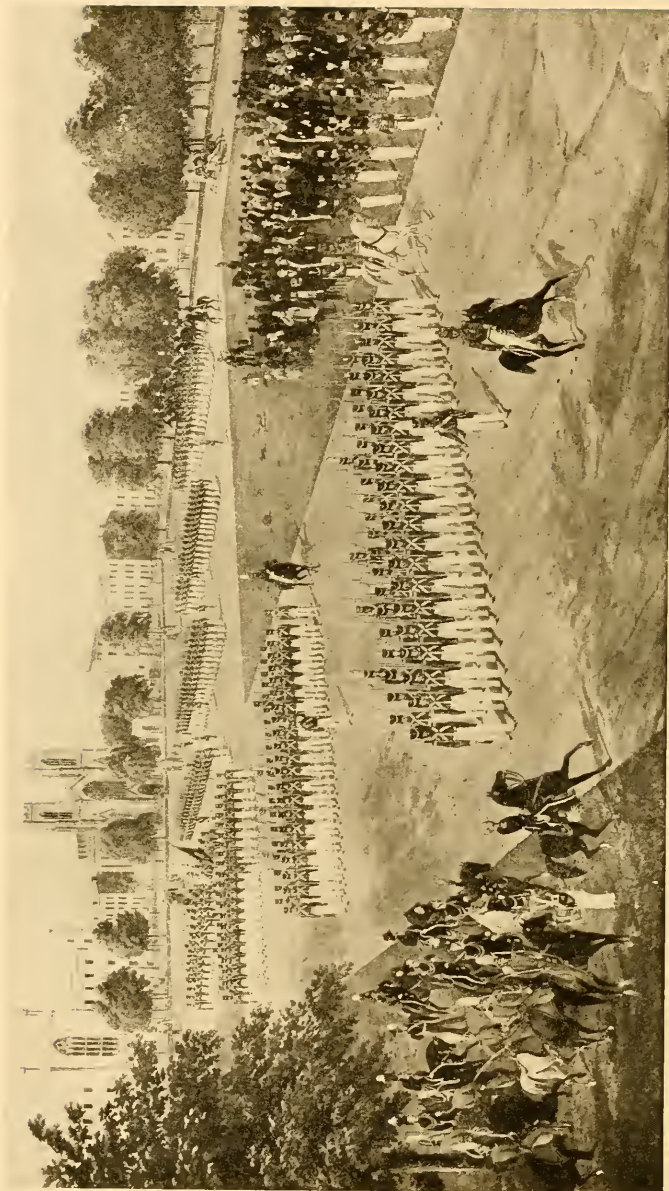


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FOREWORD

Inasmuch as the existence of The Fifth Avenue Bank of New York has been contemporaneous with the remarkable growth and development of Fifth Avenue during the past twoscore years, the Bank deems it appropriate to commemorate its fortieth anniversary on October 13, 1915, by issuing this brief history of Fifth Avenue. While a complete story would fill volumes, the Bank has gathered within these pages the most essential and interesting facts relating to the Avenue's origin and development. So far as can be learned, this is the first attempt to tell the story of Fifth Avenue. There are few, even among those familiar with New York, who know how interesting Fifth Avenue is.

Original authorities, histories, newspapers and magazines have been freely consulted. A list will be found at the end of the narrative. Many persons, whose experience has given them a wide knowledge of the Avenue, have also been interviewed. The Bank desires particularly to acknowledge its indebtedness to Messrs. Edward N. Tailer, Gardner Wetherbee, John D. Crimmins, Robert Weeks de Forest, Amos F. Eno, Percy R. Pyne, 2nd, J. Clarence Davies, S. B. Altmayer, John T. Mills, Jr., Francis Jordan Bell, Francis T. L. Lane, Charles White, George Schmelzel, Frederick T. van Beuren, Jr., J. H. Jordan, Robert Fridenberg, Max Williams, A. M. Chase, Stewart Burchard, A. T. Thomas, Mrs. J. J. Blodgett, Lawson Purdy, President of the Board of Commissioners, Department of Taxes and Assessments of the City of New York, officials of the New York Public Library, New York Historical Society, American Geographical Society, and others, for their courtesy and for the valuable information they have supplied.



Lithograph by C. Gillemmeister.
 From the original picture by Major Bonucher, in the possession of the 8th Co. N. G.
Collection of Robert Weeks de Forest.

Washington Square as a parade ground in 1852. The old castellated buildings of New York University appear in the background.



Richard M. Hunt Memorial on the west side of Fifth Avenue between 70th and 71st Streets.

FIFTH AVENUE



FIFTH AVENUE is one of the world's famous streets. What Regent and Bond Streets are to London, the Rue de la Paix to Paris, the Unter den Linden to Berlin, the Ringstrasse to Vienna, Fifth Avenue is to New York. It is the most æsthetic expression of the material side of the metropolis. A noted English author has characterized it as "architecturally the finest street in the world." Its general aspect is one of great beauty, but its details present surprising contrasts and a few ugly extremes. Long famous for the beauty of its residences, churches and hotels, it is now rapidly becoming a great business street of palatial shops. Close inspection shows that it has a manufacturing centre and also a tenement quarter. Few, even of its residents, know the Avenue in all its phases.

It is difficult to imagine the contrasts which may be drawn along the Avenue. At one end is venerable Washington Square, the beautiful Washington Arch, and the dignified homes of some of New York's oldest families. At the other end, 143rd Street and the Harlem River, is a quasi-public dump littered with unsightly débris. Within the seven miles that lie between, may be found some of the most beautiful homes in the world and unkempt double-decker tenements; building after building given to the manufacture of wearing apparel, or containing the headquarters or agencies of almost every known industry; luxurious and expensive hotels, and some of the most beautiful churches and clubs in this country. Elbowing the churches and the clubs, and pushing up to the very doors of the stately residences, are some of the finest shops and art galleries in the world.

This Avenue, the centre of fashion, wealth, society and trade—where many of the leading business men of America make their home, and the mart which attracts the most expensive products of America, Europe, Asia and Africa—changes so rapidly that after an absence of twenty-five years a former resident would hardly recognize it. To realize what changes have taken place let us fix in our minds the general

*Centre of
Wealth,
Society and
Trade*

aspect of the Avenue as it now is, sketch its rural aspect a century ago, and then traverse it leisurely, stopping here and there to catch a glimpse of its interesting past.

PRESENT ASPECT

Early Residential Section

The earliest residential part of Fifth Avenue, below 12th Street, is to-day much as it was between 1830 and 1840, when the square, homelike, brownstone and brick houses—the first Fifth Avenue residences—were built. Trade has left this section untouched, because the descendants of the old families, some of whom still live in this locality, have refused to sell; but it has laid an iconoclastic hand upon the rest of the Avenue below 59th Street. Between 12th and 23rd Streets the wholesale trade and makers of wearing apparel are entrenched; no less than 491 garment factories, employing 51,476 hands, were estimated to be on Fifth Avenue in April 1915.

Trade Invasion

The Avenue from 23rd to 34th Streets is mainly devoted to retail specialty shops; while from 34th to 59th Streets, department stores and exclusive shops now predominate, having either swept away or flowed around churches, clubs, hotels and residences. Jewelry shops rivalling those of the famous Rue de la Paix; art galleries which exhibit wonderful collections of world-famous pictures by old and modern masters; antique and furniture shops, department stores and other establishments wherein may be found products of the greatest ancient and modern artisans make this part of Fifth Avenue one of the most magnificent streets in the world.

Most Valuable Residential Section in the World

From 60th to 90th Streets is the line of beautiful residences popularly known as "Millionaires' Row." This mile and a half of Avenue—probably the most valuable residential section on the globe—has a total assessed valuation of \$71,319,000. Protected here on one side by Central Park, the Avenue seems to offer effectual resistance to business.

Tenements and Open Lots

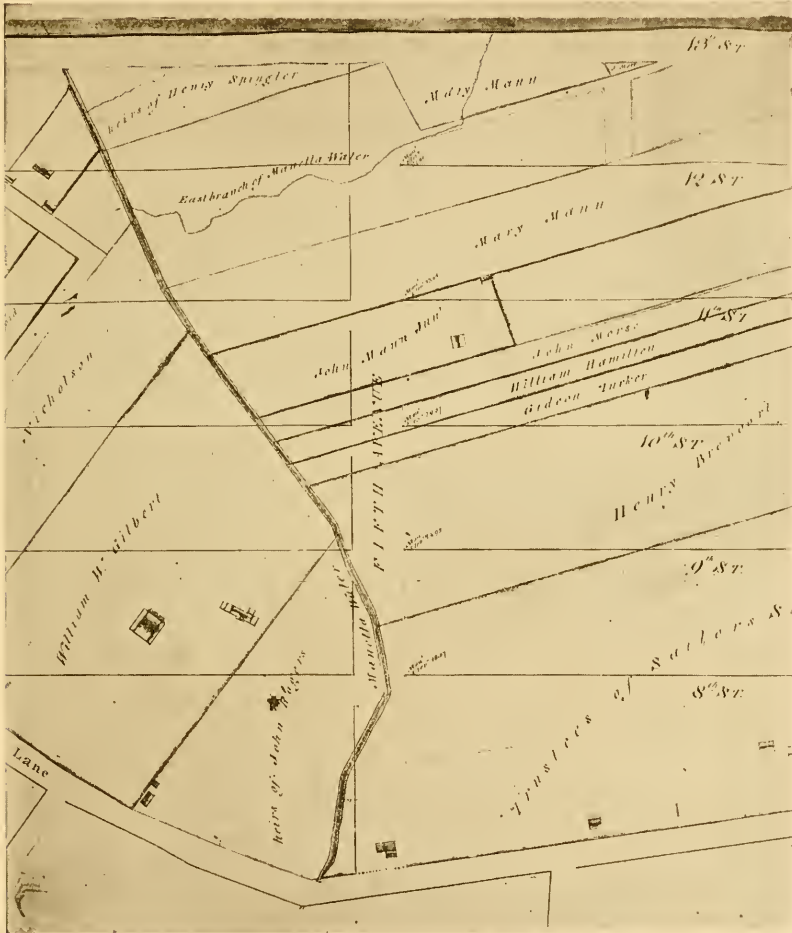
Onward from Carnegie Hill, at 91st Street, the Avenue rapidly degenerates into a tenement section with many open lots, fenced with billboards, and with saloons and refreshment stands on some of the corners. Beyond Mount Morris Park (120th to 124th Streets) for several blocks it rises to the dignity of small brownstone or brick dwellings, but quickly drops to the tenement level again. From 127th to 139th Streets it swarms with foreigners and negroes. Beyond, the Avenue loses its identity in a rutted dirt road bordered by unsightly open lots, until, at 143rd Street, it comes to a degenerate end in the slimy waters of the Harlem River.

FIFTH AVENUE A CENTURY AGO

We need turn back the hands of time less than a hundred years to find almost virgin country where this wonderful Avenue now extends. Prior to 1824 Fifth Avenue had no existence save upon the Commis-

sioners' Map of 1811. During the first quarter of the nineteenth century the line which Fifth Avenue follows to-day wandered over "the hills and valleys, dales and fields" of a picturesque countryside, where trout, mink, otter and muskrat swam in the brooks and pools; brant, black duck and yellow leg splashed in the marshes; the fox, rabbit, woodcock and partridge found covert in the thickets covering the rough, rocky hills which characterized the upper part of New York. A few scattered farms lay about, while the City proper, with a population of less than 100,000, was still below Canal Street.

*Rural
Aspect One
Hundred
Years ago*



MAP OF THE FARMS.

Prepared for the City in 1819-1820, by John Randel, Jr. Showing the farms superimposed upon the Commissioners' Map of 1811.

*Manetta
Water*

Beginning at what is now Washington Square, then Potter's Field, the line of what afterward became Fifth Avenue left "the Road over the Sand Hills" or the "Zantberg" of the Dutch, later called Art Street, and now gone from the map, and went northerly across the estate of Robert Richard Randall, the founder of Sailors' Snug Harbor. This estate extended to about 9th Street, in the valley of the beautiful brook which the Dutch called Bestavaer's Rivulet, and the English, Manetta Water. This sparkling stream, once filled with trout, rose in the high ground above 21st Street, flowed southeasterly to Fifth Avenue at 9th Street, thence to midway between the present 8th Street and Waverly Place, where it swung southwesterly and flowed into the Hudson River near Charlton Street. After Fifth Avenue was built up it frequently flooded cellars and weakened foundations, and even yet, despite the great sewers which now give it an outlet, causes trouble at this part of Fifth Avenue after very heavy rains.

*Brooks,
Ponds and
Swamps*

After leaving the Randall property the line of the Avenue crossed the meadow and marshland of what had been Henry Brevoort's farm, which stretched from 9th to 18th Streets, and had in 1714 been bought by an ancestor for £400. At 12th Street it met the east branch of the Manetta Water, which flowed into the main stream between Fifth and Sixth Avenues. In the centre of the line of the Avenue, and midway between 13th and 14th Streets, lay a small pond. Low and level land, with swamp and marsh at Union Square, extended from 13th Street to Love's Lane, now 21st Street. Isaac Varian owned the land from 18th to 20th Streets, and Gilbert Coutant from 20th to 21st Streets. From 21st Street to Madison Square at 23rd Street, John Horn, John Watts and others had possession. At 23rd Street, as at present, Fifth Avenue met the old Bloomingdale Road (now Broadway), the highway to Kingsbridge. From 23rd to 34th Streets stretched the Common Lands that later became the Parade Ground.

*Snipe-
shooting
on the
Waldorf-
Astoria
Site*

The tract of Common Lands from 28th to 32nd Streets, through which the Avenue was later projected, was part of the thirty-seven acre farm which Caspar Samler bought in various pieces, from the City, between 1780 and 1799 for \$12,100. On the Eastern Post-Road side of the Parade Ground, from 1794 to 1797, was the City's Potter's Field, which later was removed to Washington Square. At 32nd Street a small brook crossed Fifth Avenue, which flowed into Sun Fish Pond, between 31st and 32nd Streets on Madison Avenue. At this point it is interesting to note that within the lifetime of men still living snipe were shot about where the Waldorf-Astoria now stands.

The land rose rapidly from the northerly boundary of the Parade Ground at 34th Street, reaching the summit of the steep slope of "Inclenburg" (now Murray Hill) at about 38th Street. In the early days, this hill was used for signal fires, and was known as Beacon Hill. From 34th to 36th Streets the land belonged to the City, and from 35th and 37th Streets was the property of John Murray, Jr., whose house stood between 36th and 37th Streets, on land which later became Fifth Avenue. The property from 37th to 40th Streets belonged to

a number of small farmers, and from 40th to 48th Streets to the City of New York.

There was a small pond at the northeast corner of what is now 46th Street and Fifth Avenue, fed by a little brook which flowed across the line of the Avenue. From Inculenburg the land fell gradually until it reached 59th Street. At this point, on the sites of the Plaza and Savoy Hotels, were ponds fed by a stream which flowed easterly through 59th Street.

The land ascended from 59th Street, marked by abrupt rises and descents, and crossed by brooks at 64th, 74th and 83rd Streets, until its greatest height was reached between 90th and 91st Streets, 114 feet above sea level, about where Mr. Andrew Carnegie's mansion now stands. This was later known as Observatory Hill, and near here, because of the elevation, was subsequently constructed the Croton storage reservoir in Central Park. From 87th to 96th Streets were the Harlem Commons. At 91st Street the height fell away until Benson's Mill Creek, or Harlem Creek, was reached, now the Harlem Mere at the northerly end of Central Park. The Benson Farm extended along the line of Fifth Avenue from 96th to 121st Streets.

Harlem Creek, which was the largest stream that touched Fifth Avenue, rose in the neighborhood of Tenth Avenue and 123rd Street, flowed to Fifth Avenue at 116th Street, and swung southerly along the Avenue almost to 106th Street, whence it flowed into the Harlem River. Mr. S. B. Altmayer, an elderly gentleman, whose life has been spent in the upper part of Manhattan, as a boy often rowed from the Harlem River up this creek, and fished where it crossed the line of Fifth Avenue.

Traversing the land of Benjamin Vredenburg and Thomas Addis Emmet, the Irish patriot, who in 1812 was Attorney-General of the State of New York, Fifth Avenue reached, at 120th Street, the rocky hill of Mount Morris, called by the Dutch, Slangberg or Snake Hill, from the numerous rattlesnakes found there. This height was never cut through. Beginning at 124th Street the Avenue continued over the lowlands to the Harlem River.

THE BEGINNING OF THE AVENUE

The first appearance of a plan of Fifth Avenue is on the Commissioners' Map of 1811, made in accordance with an act of the Legislature of April 3, 1807, appointing three Commissioners—Gouverneur Morris, Simeon De Witt and John Rutherford—to lay out the City above Houston Street. Under their direction John Randel, Jr., surveyed the island and planned the streets and avenues in parallelograms. In the Commissioners' Report and the Map, published by William Bridges, March 22, 1811, appears for the first time the name "Fifth Avenue."

The street was not opened, however, until many years later and then only in sections. From Waverly Place to 13th Street was

*Ponds at
46th and
59th Streets*

*Other Brooks
and Creeks
and Observa-
tory Hill*

*Rowing and
Fishing on
Fifth
Avenue*

*First
Appearance
of Fifth
Avenue on
Commis-
sioners'
Map of 1811*

*Opening of
the Avenue*

opened in August 1824; 13th to 21st Streets, in May 1830; 21st to 42nd Streets, in October 1837; 42nd Street to 90th Street, in April 1838; 90th Street to 106th Street, in August 1828; 106th to 120th Streets, in April 1838. The grading and paving were not done in some cases until long after the section was declared open. As late as 1869 the Avenue at 59th Street is described as "a muddy dirt road which ran alongside a bog." Few streets in New York have required more grading and filling.

*Original
Dimensions
of the Avenue*

As at first laid out the Avenue was one hundred feet wide, providing for a roadway of sixty feet and sidewalks of twenty; but in 1833 and 1844 the City gave property owners permission to encroach fifteen feet for stoops, courtyards and porticoes. As traffic grew congestion increased, and the City advocated taking the full roadway. This led to emphatic protest from the owners of private and business buildings, in behalf of their ornamental entrances, stoops, and areas. However, in April 1908 the Board of Estimate and Apportionment ordered all the encroachments removed.

*Hamilton
Square and
Observatory
Place*

In addition to the Parade Ground, which, as first planned, extended from 23rd to 34th Streets, two large squares on the upper part of Fifth Avenue were projected by the Commissioners. One was Hamilton Square, bounded by Fourth and Fifth Avenues, 66th and 67th Streets, comprising about twenty acres. Here on October 19, 1847, the Washington Monument Association laid the corner-stone of a shaft 400 feet high to be known as the Washington Monument, a subscription list to raise the necessary money having been opened at the Merchants' Exchange. The monument, however, was not carried beyond the laying of the corner-stone, and the square itself was finally closed in 1867. The other square, called Observatory Place, was to have been between 89th and 94th Streets, Fourth and Fifth Avenues, but was never laid out.

LAND VALUES PAST AND PRESENT

Fifth Avenue, which a century ago presented so rough and so unpromising an aspect, is to-day assessed at \$440,336,900. The most valuable piece of property is the Altman site, at 34th Street, the total assessed value of which is \$13,800,000; diagonally opposite is the Waldorf-Astoria site, assessed at \$12,125,000, the next most valuable parcel. The average assessed value per block front is \$1,495,627, while each twenty-five foot lot has an average assessed value of \$186,953. This is the more astonishing when one learns from musty real estate records that early in the nineteenth century property including Fifth Avenue frontage was sold at valuations which made twenty-five foot Avenue lots then worth about \$15.

*Elgin
Garden
Tract*

On August 6, 1804 Dr. David Hosack acquired title to four plots of the common land, or 256 city lots, extending from 47th to 51st Streets, Fifth to Sixth Avenues, at a price of \$4,807.36 and a yearly quit-rent of sixteen bushels of good merchantable wheat or its equiva-

lent in gold or silver coin. To-day this tract, where he laid out the Elgin Botanical Garden, is assessed for \$30,370,000.

One of the first important transfers of Fifth Avenue realty was the sale in April 1836 of the estate of John Cowman, comprising the block between 16th and 17th Streets, Fifth Avenue and Union Square. The twenty-eight lots brought \$197,000, of which the seven Fifth Avenue lots brought \$57,200.

*Early
Important
Transfer of
Fifth Avenue
Realty*

In 1850 lots at Fifth Avenue and 58th Street, where the Cornelius Vanderbilt house stands, brought from \$520 to \$710 each. Sixty-five years ago, so little value had 57th Street corners of Fifth Avenue that a twenty-five by one hundred foot lot sold for \$1,025. Three lots in 45th Street near Fifth Avenue brought \$500 apiece at the same time, while the corner of Fifth Avenue and 46th Street brought \$1,300. Below 34th Street, prices were better, a Fifth Avenue lot near 27th Street bringing \$4,500. On October 12, 1858 A. J. Bleecker & Sons sold at auction lots on Fifth Avenue between 40th and 46th Streets for \$6,500 to \$7,000 and upwards; Fifth Avenue, 48th and 51st Streets, \$6,000; 52nd and 58th Streets on the Avenue, \$5,000. Lots on 59th Street and Fifth Avenue brought \$7,000; Fifth Avenue corners at 106th Street brought \$2,500; and at 109th Street, \$1,600. Inside lots were as low as \$1,025. The prices decreased from this point until between the north side of Central Park and the south side of Mount Morris Park, lots 25 x 100 feet were sold for as little as \$385.

*Corner
Valuations
in 1850*

*Values in
1858*

KALEIDOSCOPIIC CHANGES

Having taken a bird's-eye view of the early topography of the Avenue, learned something about its origin, and delved into its land values, let us, starting at Washington Square, stroll up this remarkable thoroughfare, stopping here and there to learn what fact and romance, time has woven into the Avenue's story.

Little known is the fact that at the very beginning of this patrician avenue once lay a paupers' burying ground. Three other Potter's Fields were located, at one time or another, along Fifth Avenue. Although the one we here encounter is the farthest south, it was not the earliest.

*Washington
Square a
Potter's
Field*

As epidemic after epidemic of yellow fever, at the close of the eighteenth century, swept the young City of New York, the need became imperative for a new Potter's Field to succeed the one then at Madison Square, and, accordingly, the swamp and waste land, on the site of Washington Square, was bought by the City for £1,800 on April 10, 1797. The land then formed part of the farm of Elbert Herring, an old resident of wealth and consequence in the New York of his day, and one from whom many prominent families are descended. The plot purchased consisted of ninety lots, "bounded on the road leading from the Bowery Lane at the two-mile stone to Greenwich." Here were buried, during the yellow fever epidemics of the early part of the nineteenth century, thousands of bodies, many of which still lie under the soil of Washington Square.

Reminiscences of an Old Resident of the Square

"I remember when heavy guns were drawn over the Square, after it became a parade ground, that the weight broke through the ground into the trenches in which the dead were buried and crushed the tops of some of the coffins," said Mr. E. N. Tailer, an elderly gentleman who lives at 11 Washington Square North, and who has kept a careful record of the City for almost three-quarters of a century. "At one time near 4th and Thompson Streets I saw a vault under the sidewalk opened and the body found there was still wrapped in the yellow sheet in which the yellow fever victims were buried."

In an address before the Historical Society in 1857 Dr. John W. Francis said that the last tombstone to be removed from Washington Square was that of Benjamin Perkins, a "charlatan believer in mesmeric influence who used this specific in his own ailment—yellow fever—and his temerity terminated his life after three days' illness." The site was also used for the town gallows. Rose Butler, a young negress, who had maliciously set fire to combustible material under a stairway, was hanged there in July 1819, before a large crowd which included many young children. The Potter's Field was levelled, filled in and abandoned in 1823.

Washington Parade Ground and the Stone Cutters' Riot

Washington Square contains in all about nine and three-quarters acres, of which six and one-half was the Potter's Field. The additional land was bought for \$78,000 in 1827, when the Square was fenced with wood at a cost of \$3,000, walks laid out and trees planted. It was then called the Washington Parade Ground. Here in 1834 occurred the "stone cutters' riot," which began as a protest against Sing Sing convicts cutting stone for the New York University Building, then in process of erection on the east side of the Square. The angry stone-masons held a meeting and paraded to the building, but were dispersed by the 27th Regiment of the New York Militia, now the 7th Regiment. The regiment was on guard at the Parade Ground for four days and four nights.

Washington Square a Society Centre

The City had hardly levelled Potter's Field when Washington Square became a fashionable neighborhood. Society, driven successively from Bowling Green, Broad and Wall Streets, St. John's Park, Lafayette Place, Bond and Bleecker Streets, found here an abiding place for almost a century. Among the well-known merchants who built along the upper side of the Square in 1831 were Thomas Suffern, John Johnston, George Griswold, Saul Alley, James Boorman and William C. Rhineland. About the Square sprang up houses, some of which to-day have a beauty of line and color and dignity of aspect unsurpassed in the City. On the east side of the Square stood until 1894 the old white castellated stone building of New York University which was opened in 1837. This has been replaced by a large modern building, which contains important branches of the University. The rest of the University has been removed to a commanding site on the banks of the Harlem River. Washington Square North is the only section which still preserves unaltered the characteristics of early days. Some of the houses are still tenanted by descendants of the original occupants.



From a photograph.

RESIDENCE OF EUGENE DELANO.

Collection of Frank Cousins.

At the northeast corner of Fifth Avenue and Washington Square North.

Mrs. Emily Johnston de Forest in her interesting life of her grandfather, John Johnston, describes the beautiful gardens of these houses and charmingly portrays the delightful yet simple life and society of this aristocratic part of New York from 1833 to 1842. "The houses in the 'Row,' as this part of Washington Square was called, all had beautiful gardens in the rear about ninety feet deep, surrounded by white, grape covered trellises, with rounded arches at intervals and lovely borders full of old-fashioned flowers." Some of these gardens may still be seen from Fifth Avenue. Although some of the Row had cisterns, all the residents went for their washing water because of its softness to "the pump with a long handle" that stood in the Square. Concerning this pump Mrs. de Forest tells the following amusing story. One of her grandfather's neighbors requested his coachman to fetch a couple of pails of water for Mary, the laundress. The coachman said that this was not his business, and upon being asked what his business was, replied, "To harness the horses and drive them." Thereupon he was requested to bring the carriage to the door. His employer then invited the laundress with her two pails to

*Life in the
"Row" as
described by
Mrs. Emily
Johnston
de Forest*

step in and bade the coachman drive her to the pump. There was no further trouble with the coachman. The Square and its environs have been the scene of many incidents in novels written about New York, and is to-day, with its studios and population of artists and writers, the nearest approach to "Bohemia" to be found in the Metropolis.

*Washington
Arch*

At the entrance to Fifth Avenue stands the Washington Arch, one of the most beautiful monuments of its kind in America. It was originally a temporary structure erected by the architects, McKim, Mead and White, at the expense of William Rhinelander Stewart and other residents of Washington Square, for the centennial celebration on April 30 and May 1, 1889, of the inauguration of Washington as President. So beautiful was the temporary structure that steps were taken, through popular subscription, to make it permanent. In May 1892 this stately gateway to the Avenue was completed.

*Story of the
Sailors'
Snug Harbor
Property*

Part of Fifth Avenue between Waverly Place and 9th Street traverses the Sailors' Snug Harbor property. About this tract hangs a romantic story. Robert Richard Randall, the donor of the twenty-one acres "seeded to grass," which were valued at Randall's death at \$25,000, and are now worth twice as many millions, was the son of Captain Thomas Randall, a freebooter of the seas, who commanded the "Fox" and sailed for years in and out of New Orleans, where he sold the proceeds of his voyages or captures.

After Robert Randall was born, Cap'n Tom, with fat coffers, settled down and became a respectable merchant at 10 Hanover Street. He was coxswain of the barge crew of thirteen ships' captains who rowed General Washington from Elizabethtown Point to New York, on the way to the first inauguration. Robert, who inherited the bulk of his father's estate, added to his holdings by the purchase of "Minto," a farm in the Seventh Ward of New York. While dying, in 1801, propped up in bed, he dictated his will. After making bequests to relatives and servants, he whispered to his lawyer: "My father was a mariner, his fortune was made at sea. There is no snug harbor for worn-out sailors. I would like to do something for them." Thus came into being the Sailors' Snug Harbor estate, on the Fifth Avenue portion of which, between 1830 and 1840, the wealthiest families of New York settled.

*Misses
Green's
School and
ex-Senator
Root*

The Misses Green's School, conducted at No. 1 Fifth Avenue, by Lucy M. and Mary Green, sisters of Andrew H. Green, "the father of Greater New York," was, for years before and after the Civil War, one of the most fashionable and select schools of its day. Later it was carried on by the Misses Graham. Here were educated the daughters of the commercial and social leaders of New York. Among the pupils were Fanny and Jennie Jerome, the latter now Lady Randolph Churchill, mother of Winston Churchill, recently the First Lord of the British Admiralty. The Honorable Elihu Root, ex-Secretary of State and Senator from New York, taught here, at such an early age that Miss Lucy Green, a martinet for social proprieties, thought it best to frequent his classes. Here also the Honorable



From a photograph.

Collection of Frank Cousins.

RESIDENCE OF CHARLES DE RHAM, 24 FIFTH AVENUE.

Formerly the home of Henry Brevoort, Jr. One of the most typical early Fifth Avenue homes.

John Bigelow taught botany and charmed the young ladies of Washington Square because he was "so handsome."

On the northeast corner of 8th Street, where it has stood for many years, is the Brevoort House. The family from which the hotel takes its name is descended from Hendrick Van Brevoort, who had served Haarlem as constable and overseer, and later "emigrated" to New York, where he was an alderman from 1702 to 1713. His farm adjoined the Randall farm and ran northeasterly to about 14th Street and Fourth Avenue. Later, one of his descendants, Henry Brevoort, whose farmhouse was on the west side of Fourth Avenue, stood in his doorway with a blunderbuss, so tradition says, and defied the Commissioners to lay 11th Street through his homestead. It is a fact that, although in maps of 1807 11th Street runs through Brevoort's homestead, and in 1836 and 1849 the city aldermen passed ordinances cutting the street through, such respect was paid to the

*Brevoort
Family
from whom
the Hotel
takes its
Name*

opposition of the doughty old burgher, that to this day 11th Street has never been cut through; nor is it likely to be, for Grace Church, its rectory and garden, cover the site of old Henry Brevoort's homestead. One of the most palatial early homes on Fifth Avenue was the residence, at No. 24, of another Henry Brevoort of the same family. It was sold in 1850 to Henry de Rham for \$57,000, and is now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Charles de Rham. Brevoort's only daughter married James Renwick, whose son, James Renwick, Jr., was the architect of St. Patrick's Cathedral and Grace Church.

*Romance
of New
York's First
Masked Ball*

A romantic tale is told of the first masked ball given in New York, which was held in 1840 in the Brevoort house. It was popularly spoken of as "an imported amusement." Among those who attended in fancy dress, domino and mask, was Miss Matilda Barclay, the beautiful and charming daughter of Anthony Barclay, the British Consul, who was later dismissed for raising recruits during the Crimean War. Another guest was a young South Carolinian named Burgwyne, who, in spite of the opposition of her parents, had won Miss Barclay's heart. She went as Lalla Rookh and he as Feramorz. At four o'clock, without changing their costumes, they left the ball and were married before breakfast. This incident brought masked balls into such odium that it was many years before another was attempted in New York.

*Early
Churches on
Lower Fifth
Avenue*

On lower Fifth Avenue are two of New York's earliest churches. The Episcopal Church of the Ascension, standing at the northwest corner of 10th Street, of which the Rev. Percy Stickney Grant is now rector, was built in 1840 and consecrated November 5, 1841. The First Presbyterian Church, between 11th and 12th Streets, built in 1845, was opened for worship January 11, 1846. Its present pastor is the Rev. Howard Duffield.

Fifth Avenue to 12th Street, which we have just traversed, has scarcely changed in appearance since 1845. On an avenue lined with trees and dotted here and there with front-yard grass plots, many of the old houses still stand unchanged. Save for one or two business offices, recently opened, and several large apartments, it is the Fifth Avenue of seventy years ago. "Business has never been able to get a hold below 12th Street," said Mr. Amos F. Eno, who lives at No. 32, "because most of the residents think too much of their old homesteads to sell."

But at 12th Street a change so sudden as to be almost startling presents itself. There begins the portion of Fifth Avenue which trade has so radically altered. At the northwest corner stands an eighteen-story office building, a threatening outpost of approaching business. Opposite, on the west side of the Avenue, Nos. 60 and 62, until recently the last survivors, north of 12th Street, of the early homes, are now being razed. No trees are to be seen from this point northward. Immediately above, as far as 23rd Street, is the section of large office buildings given almost exclusively to the manufacturing and wholesale trade.



From photographs.

EARLIEST CHURCHES ON FIFTH AVENUE.

On the left the Church of the Ascension, northwest corner of 10th Street. On the right the First Presbyterian Church, northwest corner of 11th Street.



Copyright, 1915, by Perry Walton.



From a painting by W. R. Miller in 1848.

Collection of New York Historical Society.

SPINGLER FARMHOUSE.

Shown on the Damage Map of 14th Street (1828) as standing about in the centre of the street.
Near its site now stands the old Van Beuren house.

*Story of the
Spingler
and Van
Beuren
Estates*

At 14th Street and Fifth Avenue was the Spingler market garden farm of about twenty-two acres. Long before New York had stretched above City Hall Park, John Smith, a wealthy slave-holder, bought of Elias Brevoort, in 1762, part of the Brevoort farm about 14th Street and Fifth Avenue. On the choicest site, now the centre of 14th Street, just west of Fifth Avenue, he built his country residence. His widow continued to live in it until 1788, when James Duane, Mayor of the City, and others, executors of Smith's will, sold the estate to Henry Spingler for about \$4,750. Here Spingler lived until his death in 1813. His barn stood on the southwest corner of 14th Street and Fifth Avenue. Most of the property was inherited by Mrs. Mary S. Van Beuren, Spingler's granddaughter. She built the Van Beuren brown-stone front house on 14th Street and lived there for years, maintaining a little garden, with flowers and vegetables, a cow and chickens. Spingler's estate, valued in 1845 at \$200,000, eventually found its way into the possession of many well-known New Yorkers. Moses H. Grinnell of the firm of Grinnell, Minturn & Co., the famous merchants of the clipper ship days, had his beautiful home at the northeast corner of 14th Street and Fifth Avenue. Later the house was leased to the Delmonicos until they moved in 1876 to 26th Street and Fifth Avenue.

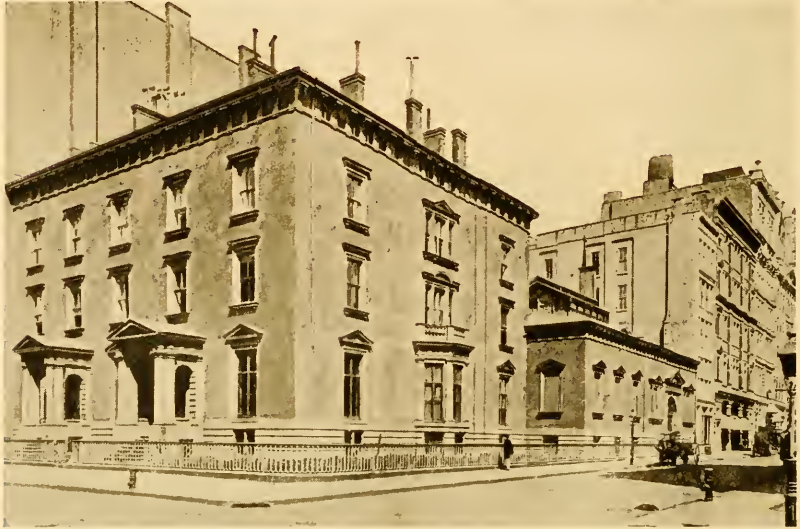


MAP OF THE FARMS.

Prepared for the City in 1819-1820, by John Randel, Jr. Showing the farms superimposed upon the Commissioners' Map of 1811, the 23rd Street part of the Parade Ground, Bloomingdale Road, and the Eastern Post-Road.

As we go up the Avenue from 15th to 18th Streets we pass across what was the farm of Thomas and Edward Burling, relatives of those old merchants James and John Burling, whose name was given to Burling Slip, part of the East River front, and also over the farm owned until 1836 by John Cowman. The stretch from 18th to 21st Streets was part of the farm sold in 1791 to Isaac Varian for \$3,000, by the heirs of Sir Peter Warren. The property formed part of the complimentary tract of land granted by the corporation of the City in 1744 to Captain, afterward Admiral,

*Farms
traversed by
the Line of
Fifth
Avenue*



From a photograph.

Collection of J. Clarence Davies.

AUGUST BELMONT'S HOUSE AND ART GALLERY.

Northeast corner of Fifth Avenue and 18th Street.

Just before demolition in 1894-95.

Sir Peter Warren, in commemoration of "Singular and Imminent Services done and performed by him Not Only for the Kingdom of Great Britain in Generall, but for this City and Colony in particular." A valiant character was Sir Peter Warren, who in 1743 was Commodore of the English Squadron off the Port of New York.

*Prominent
Early
Residents*

Worth noting are the names of prominent New Yorkers who, during the fifties, lived on Fifth Avenue between Washington Square and 21st Street. Among them are Lispenard Stewart, Thomas Eggleston, Silas Wood, Henry C. de Rham, Thomas F. Woodruff, Francis Cottinet, David S. Kennedy, James Donaldson, Dr. J. Kearney Rodgers, C. N. Talbot, N. H. Wolfe, James McBride, Charles M. Parker, L. M. Hoffman, August Belmont, Benjamin Aymar, Henry C. Winthrop, Eugene Schiff, Captain Lorillard Spencer, Moses Taylor, John H. Coster, Henry A. Coster, Sidney Mason, Marshall O. Roberts, Robert L. Cutting, Gordon W. Burnham, Robert C. Townsend, George Opdyke, Robert L. Stuart, whose magnificent art collection was given to the Lenox Library, and James Lenox, the founder of the Lenox Library. The fortunes of these gentlemen, as recorded in "Wealth and Biography of the Wealthy Citizens of New York," averaged between \$100,000 and \$300,000. One of the richest men in New York at that time was James Lenox, who had inherited the then huge fortune of \$3,000,000; another large fortune was that of James McBride, estimated at \$700,000.



From a print.

Collection of S. B. Altmayer.

UNION CLUB IN 1855.
Northwest corner of 21st Street and Fifth Avenue.

As early as 1855 clubs had begun to elbow themselves into Fifth Avenue, and one of the first to intrude among the residences was the Union Club, organized in 1836 with four hundred of the City's most distinguished citizens as members. In 1855 it moved from Broadway near 4th Street into a new club house on the northwest corner of 21st Street and Fifth Avenue, described at the time as "a superb brownstone structure which cost \$300,000," and which was the first house erected in New York solely for club purposes. In 1859 the Athenaeum established itself at the southwest corner of Fifth Avenue and 16th Street. The Manhattan Club, in 1876, when August Belmont was president, occupied the former home of Charles M. Parker at the southwest corner of Fifth Avenue and 15th Street. The Lotos Club in 1888 had its home opposite the Union Club at the northeast corner of 21st Street. The Travellers' Club occupied the large residence that had belonged to Gordon W. Burnham, at the southwest corner of 18th Street and Fifth Avenue. The Arcadian Club, for promoting fellowship among journalists, artists, musicians, literary and theatrical men, was at 146 Fifth Avenue between 19th and 20th Streets. In 1874 the New York Club, which had been formed in 1846 by a number of young literary and professional men and "men about town," moved from its location at 15th Street and Fifth Avenue to a building which faced the Worth Monument at the corner of Fifth Avenue and 25th Street. The Knickerbocker Club, organized in 1871 and composed of descendants of the first settlers of New York, bought from William Butler Duncan his residence on the southwest corner of Fifth Avenue and 28th Street for \$180,000 and fitted it up as a commodious and elegantly appointed club

*First Clubs
on Fifth
Avenue*



CORPORAL THOMPSON.

MADISON COTTAGE
cor. of Broadway 23rd St. & 5th Ave.
NEW YORK.
N. Stages leave every 4 Minutes.

From a photograph.

Collection of Amos F. Eno.

ENGRAVED BUSINESS CARD OF THE MADISON COTTAGE, ANNOUNCING THE TIME OF THE DEPARTURE OF STAGES.

house. On the northwest corner of 18th Street and Fifth Avenue, opposite the former home of Gordon W. Burnham, in later years stood Chickering Hall, famous in its day as a musical and social centre.

*Earliest
Fifth
Avenue
Churches*

As the residences drew the clubs to Fifth Avenue, so even earlier they attracted the churches. The Church of the Ascension, at 10th Street, and the First Presbyterian Church, at 11th Street, have been mentioned. The South Dutch Reformed Church was built in 1850 at the southwest corner of 21st Street, and the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church was built at the corner of 19th Street and Fifth Avenue in 1853. At the northwest corner of 29th Street stands the Marble



From a lithograph by T. S. Berry.

Collection of J. Clarence Davies.

FRANCONI'S HIPPODROME.
23rd Street and Fifth Avenue in 1853.

Collegiate Church. The corner-stone was laid November 26, 1851, and the church was opened for worship October 11, 1854. This massive building of Hastings marble houses the oldest ecclesiastical organization in New York, the congregation having been formed in 1628. For years the Rev. Theodore Cuyler, D.D., was pastor, and later the Rev. Henry C. Van Dyke, D.D., now United States Minister to The Netherlands. In 1878 was held here the celebration of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the Collegiate Church. The bell which stands in the churchyard bears an inscription showing that it was cast in 1768 at Amsterdam.

Twenty-third Street and Fifth Avenue is an interesting spot in our antiquarian journey along the Avenue. Back in 1670 Sir Edmund Andros, Governor of the Province, granted to Solomon Peters, a free negro, thirty acres of land from 21st to 26th Streets, between Broadway (Bloomingdale Road) and Seventh Avenue. Solomon's descendants sold the tract in 1716 to John Horn and Cornelius Weber, and in 1815 it became vested in John Horn the second. The Horn farmhouse stood near the centre of Fifth Avenue south of 23rd Street, and was later occupied by Christopher Mildenerger, who married Horn's daughter.

When Fifth Avenue was cut through at 23rd Street, in 1837, the Common Council allowed the old farmhouse to remain where it was until 1839 when it was removed to the present site of the Fifth Avenue Building, the northwest corner of 23rd Street and Broadway. Here it

*Fifth
Avenue
Farm of
Solomon
Peters, a
Free Negro*

*Madison
Cottage at
23rd Street*

became a road-house known as the "Madison Cottage," whose sign was a huge pair of antlers and whose proprietor was Corporal Thompson. This was a famous resort of the riders and drivers from the City, still some miles south, and was also a post tavern in the coaching days.

*Franconi's
Hippodrome*

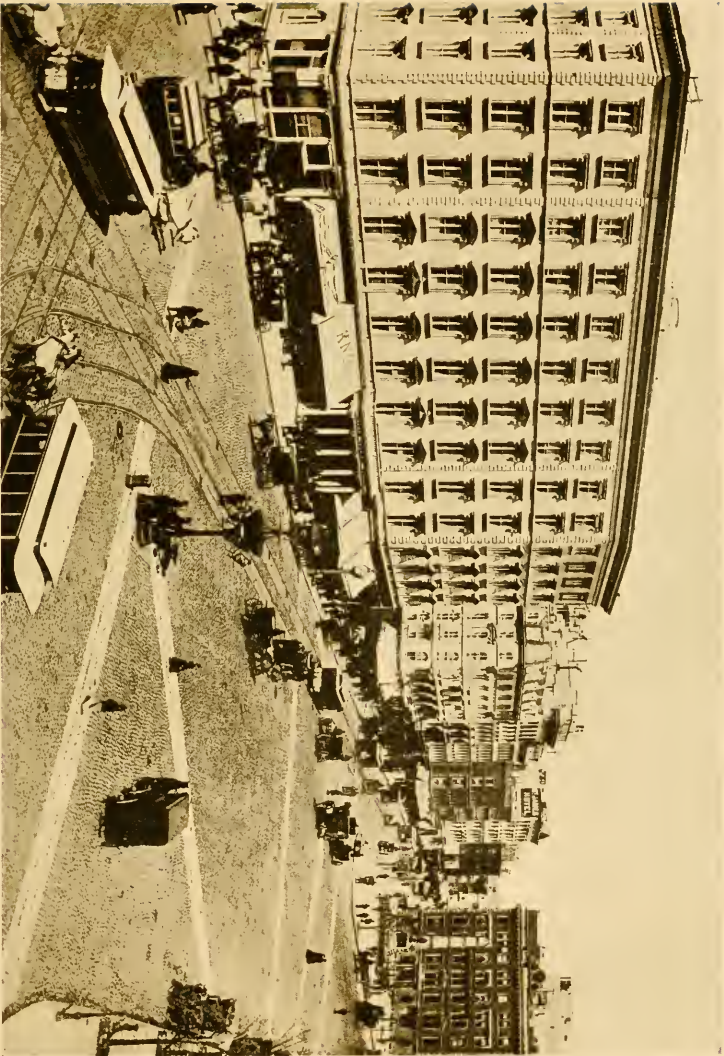
Madison Cottage was torn down to make room for Franconi's Hippodrome, opened May 2, 1853. The Hippodrome was built by a syndicate of eight American showmen, among whom were Avery Smith, Richard Sands, and Seth B. Howe. It was seven hundred feet in circumference; of brick, two stories high, with an oval ring in the centre two hundred feet wide by three hundred feet long. The arena was covered with canvas and seated about six thousand people, with standing room for almost one-half as many more. Although the circus presented here compared very favorably with performances later given at Madison Square Garden, the venture was not a success, and after two years of losses the Hippodrome gave way to the Fifth Avenue Hotel (first called the Mount Vernon Hotel). The property was bought by Amos R. Eno, a New Englander who had made a fortune in New York. Many predicted that a hotel so far up town would not pay. In fact, John Brougham, the actor, in his reminiscences speaks of "shooting birds where the Fifth Avenue Hotel now stands," and playing cricket in a field near 35th Street as late as the forties. The hotel was opened in September 1859 under the control of Colonel Paran Stevens. It fronted 23rd Street, Broadway, Fifth Avenue and 24th Street, was six stories high, built of white marble, and had every convenience then known, including the first passenger elevator (called a "Vertical Railroad") ever installed. This hostelry accommodated one thousand guests, and the rates, including room and board, were \$2.50 a day. Under the management of A. B. Darling, a native of Burke, Vt., and Hiram Hitchcock, of Claremont, N.H., who had both gained great popularity while running well-known Southern hotels, the house filled with a large Southern patronage and soon became one of the famous hotels of the world. Well-known men from all over America and from Europe were its guests. Here the Prince of Wales, later Edward the Seventh, was entertained when he came to America in 1860.

*Fifth
Avenue
Hotel*

*Mr.
Gardner
Wetherbee's
Recollections
of the
Prince of
Wales'
Visit to
New York*

"I remember the Prince of Wales' visit well," said Mr. Gardner Wetherbee, who was a clerk at the hotel and who later became one of New York's most successful hotel proprietors. "He had the suite on the first floor 23rd Street side, and was pretty much bored, as a jolly youth of nineteen might well be, by the ceremony he was obliged to face from the time he set foot in New York. So great was his relief to escape to the privacy of his suite that he and his immediate companions engaged in an enthusiastic game of leap-frog in the corridor.

"At the time of the draft riots in 1863 when the rioters, after burning the Orphan Asylum at 44th Street and Fifth Avenue, came down Broadway to burn the hotel, we put up the iron shutters for protection. A United States officer who was at the hotel told Mr. Hitchcock



From a lithograph.

FIFTH AVENUE AT 23rd STREET ABOUT 1880.

Collection of Percy R. Pyne, 2nd.

Showing the Fifth Avenue Hotel on the left, the old horse-car lines and Fifth Avenue stages.



From an old print, Charles Magnus, publisher.

Collection of J. Clarence Davies.

MADISON SQUARE IN THE EARLY 60's.

that if he could borrow a pistol he would turn back the rioters. He met them at the corner of 25th Street and succeeded in diverting them up Broadway. At 27th Street they burned the draft offices."

Emperor Dom Pedro, of Brazil, and the Empress, stayed at the hotel in 1876. Presidents Lincoln and Grant, senators, congressmen, governors, judges, generals, admirals, ambassadors, actors and actresses stopped at the Fifth Avenue. Here for years lived General W. T. Sherman, William J. Florence, the actor, and ex-Senator Thomas C. Platt, the Republican boss. Senator Platt's "Amen Corner," where weekly political conferences were held in a corner of the corridor, made and unmade presidents, governors, senators, and congressmen, as well as lesser political officials. The old hostelry was razed in 1908 to make room for the present Fifth Avenue Building, occupied by stores and offices, and the Aldine Club, an organization of advertising men, publishers, authors and artists.

Why the Flatiron Building has an Apex When Fifth Avenue was carried through to 23rd Street, where it intersects Broadway there was formed a triangular plot with a base of eighty-five feet on 22nd Street and an apex at 23rd Street. On the 22nd Street side of the plot formerly stood the St. Germaine Hotel. The Fuller Building, popularly called the Flatiron Building, now occupies the entire triangle.

Madison Square, formerly the Parade Ground As originally laid down on the Commissioners' Map of 1811, the Parade Ground, extending from 23rd to 34th Streets, and bounded on the east by the Eastern Post-Road and on the west by the Bloomingdale Road (now Broadway), was largely common land belonging to the City. Fifth Avenue, as at first planned, did not bisect the Parade Ground but was continued northward at 34th Street.



From Valentine's Manual.

Collection of Perry Walton.

HOUSE OF REFUGE IN 1832.

The remodelled United States Arsenal building, which stood on a site now part of Madison Square.

Near the lower end stood an old United States Arsenal; to the northeast was a Potter's Field; while to the west was the land of General Theodorus Bailey, the City Postmaster; and at the north, the farm of Caspar Samler. The Arsenal was erected in 1808, at the junction of the Eastern Post-Road and the Bloomingdale Road, near where the Farragut Statue now stands, on land sold to the Government in 1807 by the City. A powder magazine stood here as early as 1785. In 1823 "the barracks," as the Arsenal was called, were abandoned, and the following year the building and land were sold, for \$6,000, to the Society for the Reformation of Juvenile Delinquents, the first society in America organized to care for and reform youthful offenders. The remodelled edifice, the first House of Refuge in New York City, was opened with six boys and three girls. In 1839 it was destroyed by fire, and the institution was transferred to the foot of East 23rd Street, where it remained until its removal, about 1854, to Randall's Island.

United States Arsenal and the Juvenile Asylum

At the southern end of the Parade Ground, on the Eastern Post-Road, a Potter's Field was opened in 1794, in which the dead of the almshouse and victims of the yellow fever epidemics were interred until the new Potter's Field was established at Washington Square, in 1797. In 1837 the Parade Ground, called "a public place," was reduced to the present dimensions of Madison Square (6.84 acres), and in 1844 the Eastern Post-Road, which traversed the Square, was closed. The course of this old road may be still traced by the double row of trees that runs northeast toward Madison Square Garden. Madison Square, named after President Madison, was formally opened as a

Potter's Field and the Opening of Madison Square



Lithograph by A. Weingartner.

Collection of Amos F. Eno.

CEREMONIES OF DEDICATION OF THE WORTH MONUMENT NOVEMBER 25, 1857.
The houses in the background are typical of the buildings which then surrounded Madison Square.

park in June 1847. During the Civil War the Square was used as a camp for recruits.

*Prominent
Early
Residents
of Madison
Square*

The migration of society to Madison Square began soon after the opening of the Square in 1847, during the mayoralty of James Harper, of the well-known publishing firm of Harper & Brothers. From 1853 until after the Civil War, Madison Square was the social centre of the City. William Allen Butler's poem, "Miss Flora McFlimsey of Madison Square," characterizes the frivolity of certain phases of society at that time. The poem was published in *Harper's Weekly*, which was owned by the firm whose head was then Mayor of the City. Among those who lived in this vicinity were Leonard W. Jerome, and his elder brother, Addison G. Jerome, who, with William R. Travers, were social leaders and prominent Wall Street brokers; James Stokes, who, in 1851, built at No. 37 Madison Square East, the first residence on Madison Square, and whose wife was a daughter of Anson G. Phelps; John David Wolfe, whose daughter, Catherine Lorillard Wolfe, gave her magnificent art collection to the Metropolitan Museum of Art; Frank Work, William and John O'Brien, Henry M. Schieffelin, James L. Schieffelin, Samuel B. Schieffelin, Benjamin H. Field, Peter Ronalds and William Lane.

*Dedication
of the
Worth
Monument*

The triangular piece of ground bounded by Broadway and Fifth Avenue, 24th and 25th Streets, was set apart by order of the Common Council, December 5, 1854, for the erection of a monument dedicated to the memory of Major-General William J. Worth, of



From a photograph.

Collection of J. Clarence Davies.

FIFTH AVENUE AND 33RD STREET.

Showing Grant's funeral procession, August 8, 1885. On the right-hand side are the residences of John Jacob and William B. Astor, now the site of the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel.

Mexican War fame, who died at San Antonio, Texas, June 7, 1849. On November 25, 1857, when the monument was dedicated, with a parade and a review, General Worth's remains were interred under its south side.

Within the confines of the old Caspar Samler farm, which comprised the greater part of Fifth Avenue from Madison Square to 31st Street, have stood some well-known buildings. Among them were the old Brunswick Hotel, at the northeast corner of 26th Street, once famous as the headquarters of the Coaching Club, now replaced by a modern office building, and the Victoria Hotel, at the southwest corner of 27th Street, patronized at one time by Grover Cleveland, and recently demolished to make way for a twenty-story business structure. The Marble Collegiate Church at 29th Street and the Holland House at 30th Street also stand on sites once part of the Samler farm.

North of the Caspar Samler farm, extending on Fifth Avenue from near 32nd almost to 36th Streets, were the twenty acres of land bought in 1799 by John Thompson for £482 10s. In 1827 William B. Astor bought a half interest, including Fifth Avenue from 32nd to 35th Streets, for \$20,500. He built an unpretentious square red brick house on the southwest corner of 34th Street and Fifth Avenue, while John Jacob Astor erected a home at the northwest corner of 33rd

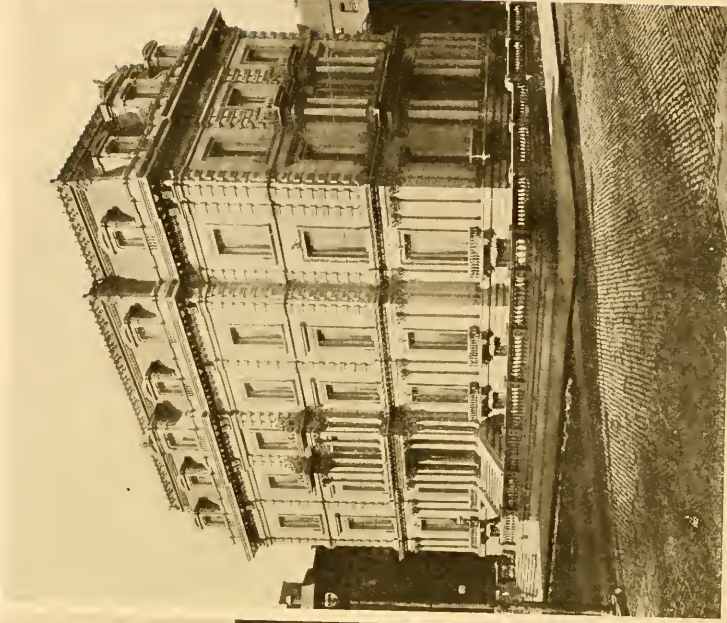
*Interesting
Sites on the
Old Samler
Farm*

*The
Thompson
Farm,
bought by
William B.
Astor*



Collection of The Fifth Avenue Bank.

THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF 34TH STREET AND FIFTH AVENUE AS IT WAS.
Showing the Dr. Samuel P. Townsend mansion (1861) on the left and the A. T. Stewart mansion (1876) on the right.



Collection of J. Clarence Davies.



From a photograph.

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34TH STREET AND FIFTH AVENUE TO-DAY.

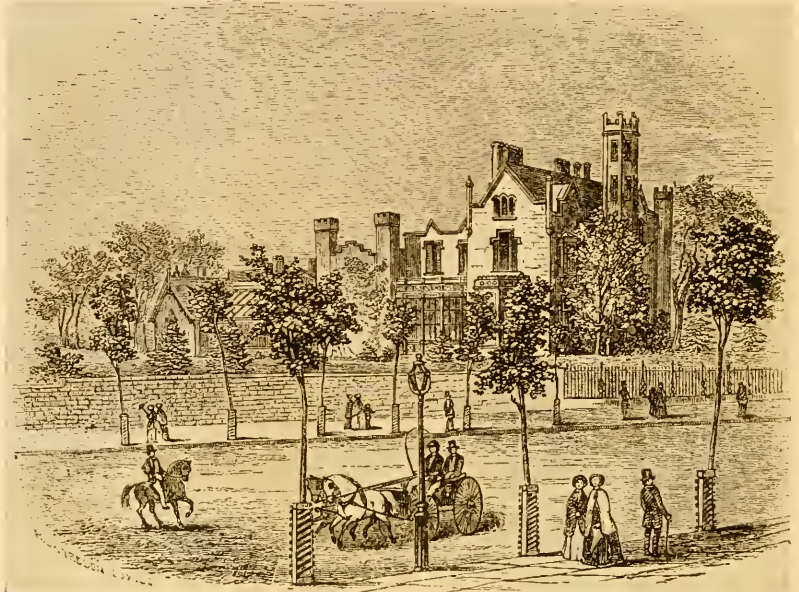
Showing the Waldorf-Astoria, and the Columbia Trust Company building on the site of the Townsend and Stewart mansions.

Street. The Waldorf Hotel, named after the little town of Waldorf, Germany, the Astors' ancestral home, occupies the former site of John Jacob Astor's house, and was opened for business March 14, 1893. The Astoria, named after Astoria, Ore., founded by John Jacob Astor, Sr., in 1811, stands on the site of William B. Astor's house. It was opened November 1, 1897. The two hotels, under one management, are now called the Waldorf-Astoria.

On a site which was also part of the Thompson farm, at the north-west corner of 34th Street, stood, at the beginning of the Civil War, the residence of "Dr." Samuel P. Townsend, known as "Sarsaparilla" Townsend. Townsend, who had been a contractor, made his money by successfully advertising Townsend's Sarsaparilla. His house,

Waldorf-Astoria Site

"Sarsaparilla" Townsend's House and the A. T. Stewart Mansion



From an old print.

COVENTRY WADDELL MANSION.

Putnam's Magazine.

Northwest corner of 37th Street and Fifth Avenue. Now the site of the Brick Presbyterian Church.

which cost about \$100,000, was one of the wonders of the City. He sold it in 1862 to Dr. Gorham D. Abbott, uncle of Dr. Lyman Abbott of *The Outlook*, and here Dr. Gorham D. Abbott, who had been principal of the Spingler Institute on Union Square, conducted a school until the site was sold to A. T. Stewart, the famous merchant. Stewart, as a lad, came to America from Belfast in 1818; began life as a school teacher; opened a small shop for trimmings; entered the dry-goods business; and when he died in 1876, left an estate worth \$40,000,000. The estate included the Italian marble palace which he had built at the corner of 34th Street at a cost of \$2,000,000. His widow occupied it until her death in 1886, after which the Manhattan Club leased the property. It was later torn down to make room for the building of the Columbia Trust Company.

As remarkable a transformation as may be found anywhere on Fifth Avenue is the development of the section in the neighborhood of 34th Street and Fifth Avenue. Within the span of a lifetime it has changed from a rural district into the most exclusive residential locality in the City, and, finally, into the notable business section which it now is. Benson J. Lossing, the historian, writes that in 1845 he and a companion, while strolling up the country lane then known as the Middle Road, picked blackberries at what is now the corner of 35th Street and Madison Avenue—the northeast corner of the Altman block.

*Picking
Blackberries
on the
Site of the
Altman
Block*



From a photograph.

Copyright, 1915, by Perry Walton.

BRICK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.
37th Street and Fifth Avenue.

Showing the remarkable transformation of the Waddell site since 1845.

The Middle Road, then a typical country thoroughfare, ran north-westerly from the Eastern Post-Road (at about Fourth Avenue and 28th Street) and intersected Fifth Avenue at 41st Street. This road was the eastern boundary of the Thompson farm, portions of which have become the two most valuable parcels on Fifth Avenue, namely, the Altman and Waldorf-Astoria properties.

The block from 37th to 38th Streets, between Fifth and Sixth Avenues, was the country-seat of W. Coventry H. Waddell, a close friend of President Andrew Jackson. Waddell's fortune sprang from the services he rendered as financial representative of Jackson's Administration. His villa stood on the site of the Brick Presbyterian Church, at the northwest corner of 37th Street. In 1845, when Mr. Waddell went "into the wilderness" to build, Fifth Avenue above Madison Square was a country road lined with farms, and while Mr. Waddell

*Coventry
Waddell
Mansion at
37th Street*



From a photograph.

UNION LEAGUE CLUB.

Copyright, 1915, by Perry Walton.

Northeast corner 39th Street and Fifth Avenue, once the site of Dickel's Riding Academy.

was bargaining for the land his wife sat under an apple-tree in a neighboring orchard. He paid \$9,150 for the tract, which was sold ten years later for \$80,000, and for part of which in 1856 the Brick Church paid \$58,000. His villa was of yellowish gray stucco with brownstone trim, Gothic in style, and had so many towers, oriels and gables, that when Waddell's brother saw it and was asked what he would call it, replied, "Waddell's Caster; here is a mustard pot, there is a pepper bottle and there is a vinegar cruet." The house stood considerably above the street level upon grounds which descended by sloping grass banks to the street. It was elegantly furnished and had a large conservatory and picture gallery. From a broad marble hall a winding staircase led to a tower, from which a charming view was obtained of both the East and Hudson Rivers, the intervening semi-rural landscape, and the approaching city. Mr. and Mrs. Waddell were noted for princely hospitality, and among their frequent guests



From a photograph.

Copyright, 1915, by Perry Wallon.

JOHN G. WENDEL HOUSE.

Northwest corner of 39th Street and Fifth Avenue.

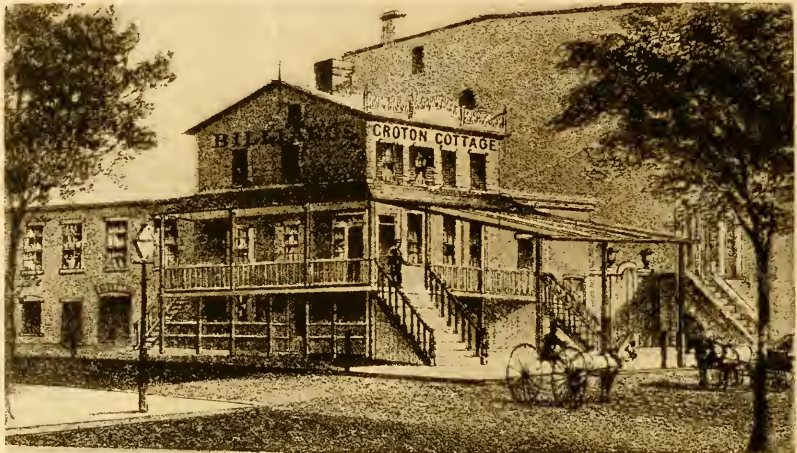
were the social, political and literary celebrities of the time. Having lost his fortune in the financial crash of 1857, Mr. Waddell was obliged to sacrifice his estate. The grounds were levelled to make way for the growing city, and the villa, after standing less than a dozen years, was torn down.

At the northeast corner of 39th Street and Fifth Avenue is the home of the Union League Club, built at a cost of \$400,000 in 1879-1880. The interior decorations are the work of Louis Tiffany, John La Farge and Franklin Smith. The club, organized in 1863, "to oppose disloyalty to the Union, to promote good Government, and to elevate American citizenship," had been housed from 1868 until it moved into its present quarters, in the former Jerome residence on Madison Square.

Opposite the Union League Club, on the northwest corner of 39th Street, with a yard along Fifth Avenue, guarded by a high board fence, is an old-fashioned brick and brownstone house, dating back to 1856. Three elderly sisters of the late John Gottlieb Wendel live there amid surroundings which recall the simple days of fifty years ago.

*Union
League
Club*

*The Wendel
House and
its Story*



From Valentine's Manual, 1865.

Collection of J. Clarence Davies.

CROTON COTTAGE.

Southeast corner of 40th Street and Fifth Avenue.

These three women, with a married sister, are the sole heirs of the \$80,000,000 in real estate left by their brother. The Wendel name is of Revolutionary fame, a direct ancestor, General David Wendel, known as "Fighting Dave," having fought in the War of Independence. The fortune, like that of the Astors', began with a furrier who bought and sold real estate, the original John G. Wendel (great-great-grandfather of the late John G. Wendel). He and the original John Jacob Astor were partners in the fur business in a little house that stood on Maiden Lane. They married sisters, and both the Astors and the Wendels have since continued to buy and hold real estate. The passion for holding became so great with the late John G. Wendel, that he would never sell, and before he died his holdings, which were second only to the Astors', extended all over the City. He collected his own rents, would not lease to a saloon, gave only three-year leases, and was characterized as "one of the squarest landlords in the City." He lived with his three sisters in the most simple manner in a house assessed at \$5,000, on a site valued at \$1,897,000.

Fifth Avenue, from 34th to 42nd Streets, was once part of "Inclenburg," the estate of Robert Murray, a Quaker. The entire estate extended from Broadway to Fourth Avenue. At the manor house, which stood near Park Avenue and 37th Street, Mrs. Murray entertained British officers so hospitably with her fine old Madeira, on Sunday morning, September 15, 1776, that Washington and Putnam had time to rally the Continental troops. The Continentals had been routed at Kip's Bay (the foot of East 34th Street), and panic-stricken soldiers filled the farms and fields in the neighborhood of Murray Hill. General Washington strove so desperately to stop the panic, that General Greene subsequently remarked, "He sought

*Mrs.
Murray's
Madeira
and
Generals
Washington
and Putnam
save the
Fleeing
Continental
at Murray
Hill*



From a photograph.

Collection of New York Historical Society.

RUTGERS FEMALE COLLEGE, ABOUT 1860.
41st to 42nd Streets on the east side of Fifth Avenue.

death rather than life.” On Lowe’s Lane, an old road crossing Fifth Avenue at 42nd Street, and in the field now occupied by the Library and Bryant Park, Washington and Putnam stopped the rout and withdrew their troops to Harlem Heights, where the battle was fought which enabled the Continentals to escape to White Plains.

In 1804 John Murray, Jr., a son of Robert, and the brother of Lindley Murray, the famous grammarian, bought a tract of five acres between 35th and 37th Streets, for \$5,000, and built a large square mansion a short distance from the Middle Road, directly in the line of Fifth Avenue between 36th and 37th Streets. Murray, who was a brewer and wealthy philanthropist, helped to establish public schools in New York and to organize the American Academy of Fine Arts; he was also one of the first commissioners of the State Prison. His ample grounds were bordered by a sparkling brook, and the mansion house is shown on the Colton Map of 1836 in the midst of a beautiful formal garden and screened from the road by a row of trees.

At the southeast corner of 40th Street and Fifth Avenue, in 1854, stood a small country tavern known as the Croton Cottage, which took its name from the Croton Reservoir, located diagonally opposite on the Avenue. It was built of wood, painted yellow, and surrounded by trees and shrubbery, and here ice-cream and refreshments were served to those who came to view the City from the top of the reservoir walls. The cottage was burned down during the draft riots in 1863, and on this site later lived William H. Vanderbilt, who bought it in

*John
Murray's
House in
the Middle
of Fifth
Avenue*

*The Croton
Cottage and
the Old
William H.
Vanderbilt
House*

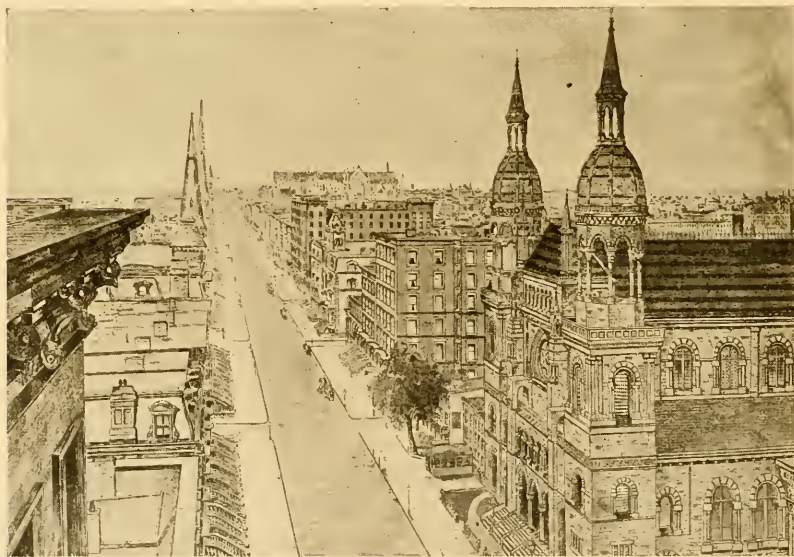


Collection of J. Clarence Davies.

Copyright, 1904, by Max Williams.

VIEW OF FIFTH AVENUE.

Looking south from 42nd Street. Croton Reservoir on the right. From a photograph in 1879 by John Bachman.



Collection of J. Clarence Davies.

Copyright, 1904, by Max Williams.

VIEW OF FIFTH AVENUE.

Looking north from 42nd Street. Temple Emanu-El, 43rd Street and Fifth Avenue, in the foreground; St. Patrick's Cathedral, before its spires were raised, in the background. From a photograph in 1879 by John Bachman.



From a photograph.

Collection of J. Clarence Davies.

CROTON RESERVOIR, FIFTH AVENUE AND 42ND STREET.

As it appeared when the work of demolition began in 1900.

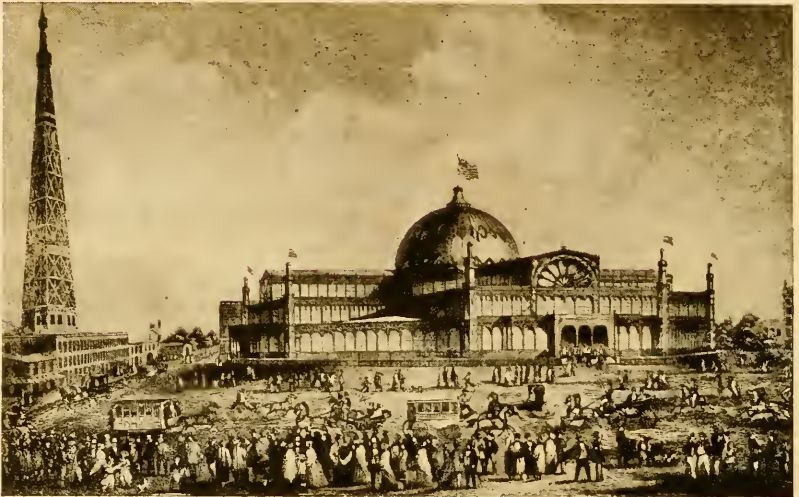


From a photograph.

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Occupying the site of the old Croton Reservoir, Fifth Avenue, 40th to 42nd Streets.



From an old engraving by Capewell & Kimmel.

Collection of John D. Crimmins.

CRYSTAL PALACE AND THE LATTING TOWER IN 1853.

The Crystal Palace was erected at the rear of the Reservoir, on the site which subsequently became Bryant Park.

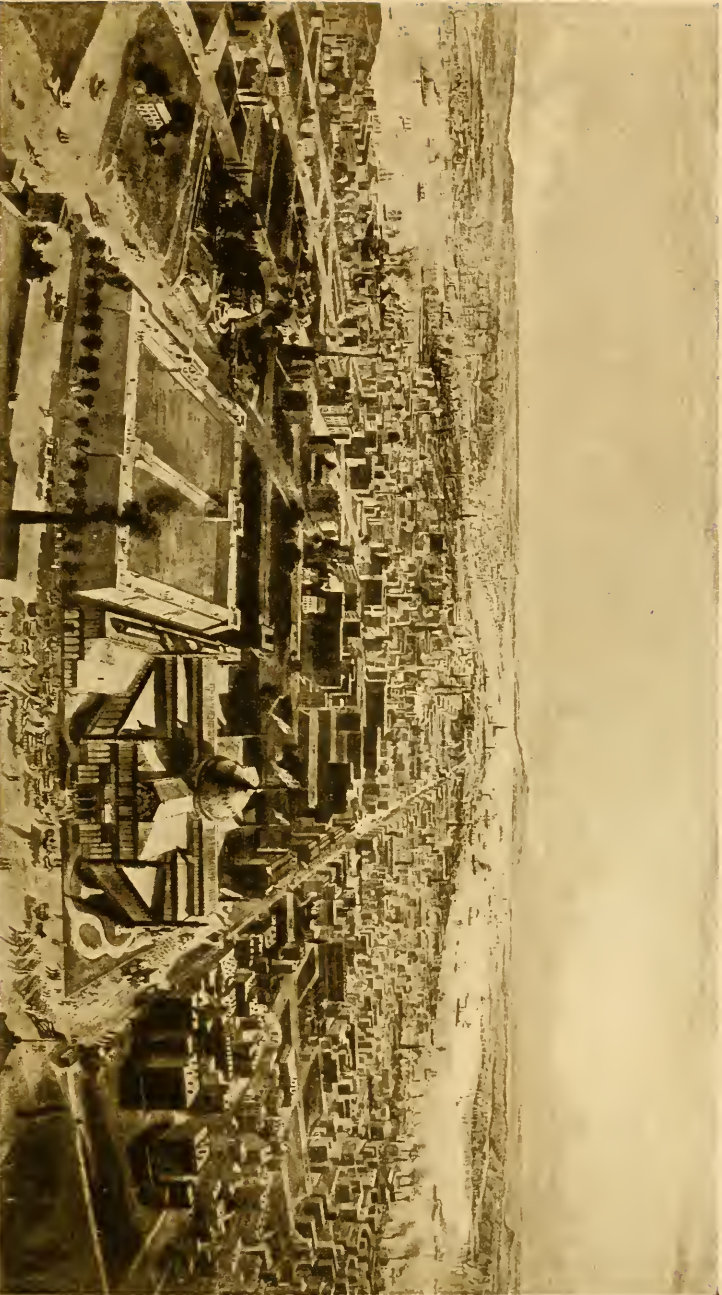
1866 for \$80,000. Mr. Vanderbilt left the house to his son, Frederick W. Vanderbilt, and it was only recently demolished to make room for the new Arnold, Constable & Co. building.

Potter's Field at Bryant Park and the Old Croton Reservoir

The land between 40th and 42nd Streets, Fifth and Sixth Avenues, now covered by Bryant Park and the Library, was used as a Potter's Field from 1822 to 1825. Later, on the eastern part of this ground, was erected the distributing reservoir of the Croton Water system, which was opened with impressive ceremonies October 14, 1842. The reservoir, which occupied more than four acres, was divided into two basins by a partition wall. In appearance its exterior was like an Egyptian temple. The enclosing walls had an average height of forty-four and one-half feet and were constructed of granite. It was thirty feet deep and contained 20,000,000 gallons of water. The introduction of Croton water had the immediate effect of reducing insurance rates forty cents on one hundred dollars. The reservoir was demolished in 1900, to make way for the New York Public Library, a consolidation of the Lenox, Astor and Tilden Foundations, which was opened May 23, 1911. The Library, constructed of Vermont marble, cost about \$9,000,000 and is one of the most beautiful buildings on Fifth Avenue.

Rutgers Female College and "The House of Mansions"

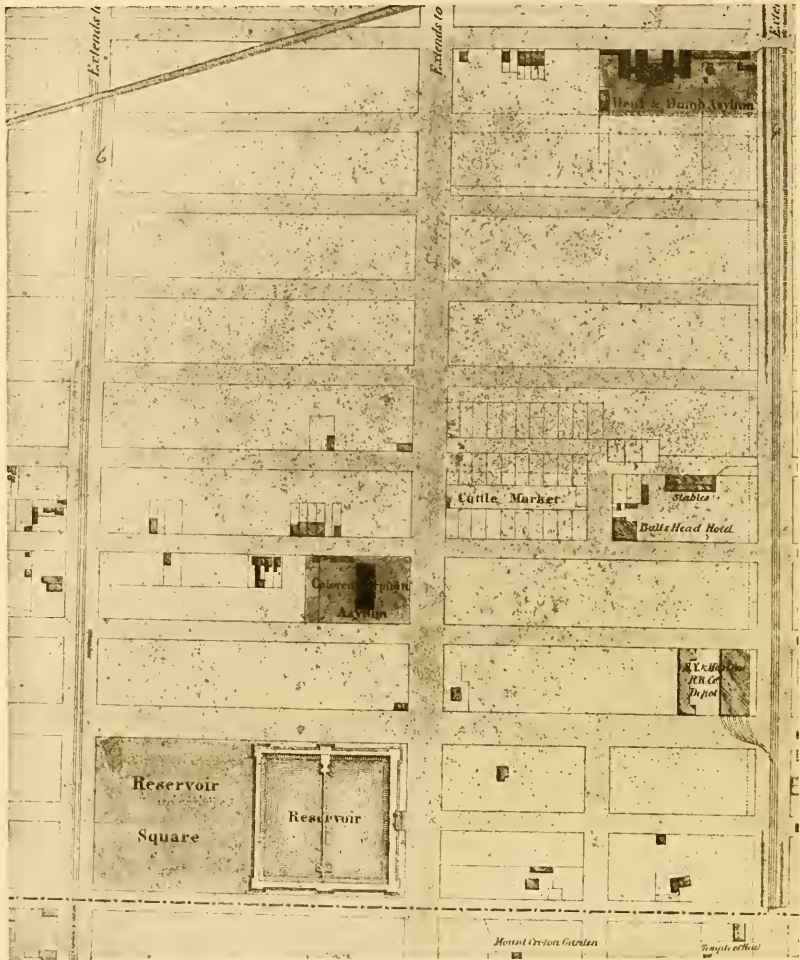
Opposite the reservoir on Fifth Avenue, between 41st and 42nd Streets, was located for years Rutgers Female College. This institution occupied the buildings known as "The House of Mansions" or "The Spanish Row." They were erected about 1855 by George Higgins, who thought "that eleven dwellings, uniform in size, price and amount of accommodation, of durable fire-brick, and of a chosen



B. F. Smith, Jr., artist.

A view from the Lattin Tower, looking southward from 42nd Street. The corner of Fifth Avenue and 42nd Street (in the left foreground) gives an idea of the unimproved character of the land in this vicinity as late as 1855.

Collection of Percy R. Fyne, 2nd.



M. Dripps, publisher; John M. Harrison, surveyor. Collection of New York Geographical Society.

MAP OF FIFTH AVENUE FROM 40TH TO 50TH STREETS IN 1852.
Showing the cattle-yards on Fifth Avenue, from 44th to 46th Streets.

cheerful tint of color and variegated architecture," would suit the most fastidious home-seeker. He notified the public in his prospectus that the view from the windows was unrivalled, as it commanded the whole island with its surroundings. The project was not, however, a success, and, later, most of the block was occupied by Rutgers Female College. This institution was first opened in the spring of 1839, on ground given it by William B. Crosby, at 262-264-266 Madison Street, which had been part of the estate of Colonel Henry

Rutgers, a distinguished Revolutionary officer after whom the college was named. It was the first seminary for the higher education of young ladies in the City. Dr. Isaac Ferris, long chancellor of the University of New York, was the first president. In 1860, after the institution had been in existence over twenty years, it moved to the Fifth Avenue location. Here it conducted a complete college course for young ladies. The encroachments of business soon drove it from Fifth Avenue to a site farther up town. On the south half of the block now stands the new Rogers Peet Company building.

On land immediately west of the reservoir, from 1853 to 1858, stood the Crystal Palace, opened by President Franklin Pierce, July 14, 1853, as a World's Fair for the exhibition of the arts and industries of all nations. The building, which cost \$650,000, was constructed in the shape of a Greek cross, of glass and iron, with a graceful dome, arched naves and broad aisles. Its prototype was the famous Crystal Palace of London. Here in 1858 an ovation was given to Cyrus W. Field upon the completion of the Atlantic cable. As a place of exhibit the palace was not a financial success. It was burned, October 5, 1858, burying in its ruins the rich collection of the American Institute Fair. The site of the Crystal Palace, used as an encampment for Union troops in 1862, was laid out into what was known as "Reservoir Park" in 1871. In 1884 the name was changed to Bryant Park.

*Crystal
Palace and
Bryant
Park*

On 43rd Street with an entrance on 42nd Street, opposite the Crystal Palace, was the famous Latting Tower, an observatory, which, with its flagstaff, was three hundred and fifty feet high. From the summit a magnificent view of New York and the country about could be obtained. It was designed by Warren Latting, and cost \$100,000. The tower was an octagon seventy-five feet across the base, built of timber, well braced with iron and anchored at each of the eight angles with about forty tons of stone and timber. There was a refreshment room immediately over the first story, and an opening one hundred and twenty-five feet from the ground, whence one obtained the first view of New York. An elevator ran as far as the second landing. The highest landing was three hundred feet from the base, or one hundred and seventy feet higher than the topmost window in St. Paul's spire. At each landing there were telescopes and maps. The proprietors took a ten-year lease of the ground, and hoped to reap a fortune from those who would pay an admission to view New York and the surrounding country. The venture was a failure, however, and the structure was sold under execution. It was destroyed by fire August 30, 1856.

*Latting
Tower*

The land on the east side of Fifth Avenue, from 42nd almost to 44th Streets, about 1825 was the property of Isaac Burr, whose estate extended along the Middle Road which here coincided with Fifth Avenue. On the Burr property, at the northeast corner of 42nd Street, in 1889 was the Hamilton Hotel, later the site of ex-Governor Levi P. Morton's home, and now the Seymour Building. Of interest is the fact that the immediate predecessor of Governor Morton, ex-Governor Roswell P. Flower, lived on Fifth Avenue, at No. 597, and

*Interesting
Sites about
42nd Street*



From an old print.

Collection of S. B. Altmyer.

COLORED ORPHAN ASYLUM, FROM 1842 TO 1863.
44th Street and Fifth Avenue.

Edwin D. Morgan, also a former Governor of the State, lived at the corner of 37th Street and Fifth Avenue. At No. 511 Fifth Avenue, near the corner of 43rd Street, stood the former residence of "Boss Bill" Tweed, sold later to R. T. Wilson for \$1,200,000, and recently demolished to make way for a business structure. From this house Tweed made his escape after his arrest for robbing the City. Having secured permission to return to his home for clothes, he escaped by a rear alley, while policemen were on guard at the front door, and made his way to his yacht, which lay with steam up, in the East River. He fled to Spain, whence he was extradited.

Across the Avenue, on the northwest corner of 42nd Street, stood a small tavern before the Civil War. On the lot next to it was the garden of William H. Webb, the shipbuilder, who lived at No. 504 Fifth Avenue. On this corner later stood the Hotel Bristol, which has been transformed into an office building. No. 506 Fifth Avenue, on the same block, was once the home of Mr. and Mrs. Russell Sage.

*Temple
Emanu-El*

The Temple Emanu-El has stood at the northeast corner of Fifth Avenue and 43rd Street since 1868, when it was completed at a cost of \$600,000. It was designed by Leopold Eidlitz, and is considered one of the finest examples of Moorish architecture in the country. The congregation was organized by a combination of the reformed congregation of the Rev. Leo Merzbacher with an association of young Hebrews who had organized a Kultur Verein. The congregation thus formed has widespread influence in reformed Judaism. Rev. Samuel Adler, father of Felix Adler, was for years Rabbi of the Temple. The present Rabbi is the Rev. Joseph Silverman.

The block between 43rd and 44th Streets, on the west side of Fifth Avenue, was the scene on July 13, 1863, of the burning of the Colored Orphan Asylum during the terrible Draft Riots. This asylum, which stood a short distance back from Fifth Avenue, was under the management of the Association for the Benefit of Colored Orphans, organized in 1836 by Miss Anna Shotwell, Miss Mary Murray, and twenty other ladies. The Association received from the City in 1842 twenty-two lots on Fifth Avenue between 43rd and 44th Streets, and there the building was erected which contained two hundred and thirty-three children at the time of the riot. The asylum was not only a place of refuge for colored children, but here they were taught trades so that they could earn their living.

The riot was precipitated by the conscription law passed by Congress, which forced over 30,000 reluctant men from New York into the ranks of the army. The names of those first drafted were announced in the evening papers of Saturday, July 11th, and all that night and Sunday the City was a cauldron of excitement. On Monday morning the rioters found a leader in a Southerner, under whose command the worst elements of the city ranged themselves. A mob surrounded the draft offices, and at eleven o'clock, as the name of Z. Shay, 633 West 42nd Street, was called, a stone was thrown through the window of the drafting-room. The crowd poured into the room, the furniture was shattered, and the officers barely escaped with their lives. The rioters then set fire to the building, cut telegraph wires and successfully routed the police. A squad of soldiers sent to the assistance of the police were set upon after they had fired a blank volley, were disarmed, routed and many of them horribly beaten. The mob pillaged the home of William Turner on Lexington Avenue, destroying the furniture and valuable paintings, and burned it to the ground. Bull's Head Hotel on 44th Street was set on fire. Croton Cottage met the same fate. A whole row of stores and the Provost Marshal's office at 1148 Broadway were plundered. About three o'clock a party attacked an arms factory on Seventh Avenue and 21st Street, which was partially owned by Mayor Opdyke. After stealing the arms they burned the place and killed a number of people.

The Colored Orphan Asylum was then attacked, but before the rioters arrived the children were taken to the Police Station and later conducted under guard to the Almshouse on Blackwell's Island. When the mob reached the Asylum they pillaged and burned it to the ground. Here and there they overtook colored men and summarily hanged them to the nearest trees or lamp-posts. The Arsenal on Seventh Avenue was threatened, but troops sent from Fort Hamilton and Governor's Island saved it. After having destroyed over half a million dollars' worth of property, which the City had to make good, the rioters were finally put down by troops from the front under General Wood and General Sanford.

The property of the old Asylum was sold by its proprietors in 1866

*Colored
Orphan
Asylum*

*The Draft
Riots of
1863*

*Burning
of the
Colored
Orphan
Asylum*



From a photograph.

Collection of J. Clarence Davies.

"YE OLDE WILLOW COTTAGE," THE WILLOW TREE, AND TYSON'S MARKET, 1880.
 Southeast corner of 44th Street and Fifth Avenue, now the site of the American Real Estate Co.'s building.

for \$170,000, and a lot was bought at Amsterdam Avenue and 143rd Street, where a new building was erected. Since 1907 the asylum has been located at Riverdale, N.Y. Part of the site of the Colored Orphan Asylum is now occupied by Sherry's.

At the time of the riot there stood near the southeast corner of Fifth Avenue and 44th Street a little frame cottage, named from the willow tree which stood in front of it, the Willow Tree Inn. At one time this was run by Tom Hyer, the noted pugilist. According to Mr. John T. Mills, Jr., whose father owned the cottage, the draft rioters made it their headquarters during the riot. "My mother planted the old willow tree," said Mr. Mills, "and I remember distinctly the Orphan Asylum fire. The only reason our home was not destroyed was that father ran the Bull's Head stages which carried people down town for three cents, and the ruffians did not care to destroy the means of transportation. There were many vacant lots in this section of Fifth Avenue at the time of the Civil War, and a small shanty below the Willow Cottage was the only building that stood between Madison Avenue and Fifth Avenue. On the northwest corner of Fifth Avenue and 45th Street, then considered far

*Willow
 Tree Inn
 and
 Recollections
 of One who
 lived there*

north, stood a three-story brick building. The stockyards were between Fifth Avenue and Fourth Avenue from 44th to 46th Streets, and Madison Avenue was not then cut through. The stockyards were divided into pens of fifty by one hundred feet into which the cattle were driven from runs between the yards. On the east side of Fifth Avenue, just above 42nd Street, stood four high brownstone front houses, the first to be built in this neighborhood. In the rear of these were stables that had entrances on Fifth Avenue."

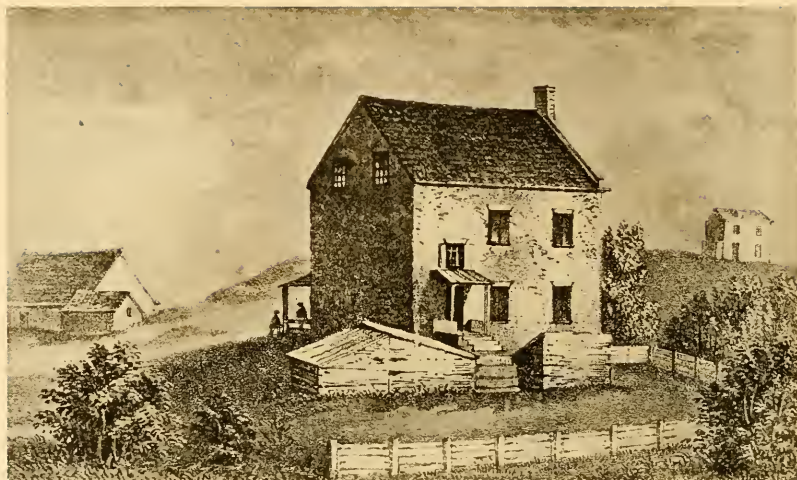
The Willow Tree Inn corner illustrates the appreciation of Fifth Avenue real estate. In 1853 this corner was the extreme southwest angle of the Fair and Lockwood farm, and was sold for \$8,500. Here in 1905 a twelve-story office building was erected, replacing Tyson's meat market and the old Willow Tree Inn. The corner was then held at \$2,000,000. The property was bought in 1909 for \$1,900,000 by the American Real Estate Company.

Appreciation of the Willow Tree Inn Corner

At the northeast corner of 44th Street, where Delmonico's now stands, was located, from 1846 to 1865, the Washington Hotel, also called "Allerton's," a low white frame building surrounded by a plot of grass. The rest of the block was a drove-yard. In 1836 Thomas Darling bought the entire block for \$88,000 and leased it to George W. Archibald, M. and David Allerton. The latter ran the tavern during the Civil War. After the cattle-yards were removed to 40th Street and Eleventh Avenue, Allerton's was discontinued. John H. Sherwood bought the site after the war and erected the Sherwood House, a well-known family hotel. Mr. Sherwood was a prominent builder who, as a pioneer in the erection of high-class residences north of 42nd Street, materially assisted in establishing upper Fifth Avenue as a residential part of the City.

It was in the basement of the old Sherwood House, at No. 531, that The Fifth Avenue Bank of New York first opened for business. The Bank was founded by John H. Sherwood, William H. Lee, Philip Van Volkenburgh and others, to furnish a place of deposit for those who resided or did business in this part of the City. There was no other bank in the vicinity, and it was estimated that there were at least fifty thousand people in the neighborhood without banking facilities. The Bank was organized October 7, and commenced doing business October 13, 1875. Philip Van Volkenburgh was president, John H. Sherwood, vice-president, and A. S. Frissell, cashier; comprising the board of directors, were the officers and James Buell, John B. Cornell, Jonathan Thorne, Gardner Wetherbee, William H. Lee, Russell Sage, Webster Wagner, Joseph S. Lowery, Charles S. Smith and Joseph Thompson, many of whom were Fifth Avenue residents. The original minute book of the Bank furnishes an interesting record of early Fifth Avenue rental values. The Bank's offices in the basement of the Sherwood House were secured "at a rental of \$2,600 per year, said rental to include the gas used, and the heating of the rooms." The Bank moved to the northwest corner of Fifth Avenue and 44th Street in April 1890, to the house of

Story of The Fifth Avenue Bank



From Valentine's Manual.

Collection of John D. Crimmins.

OLD HOUSE, 45TH STREET NEAR FIFTH AVENUE, 1849.

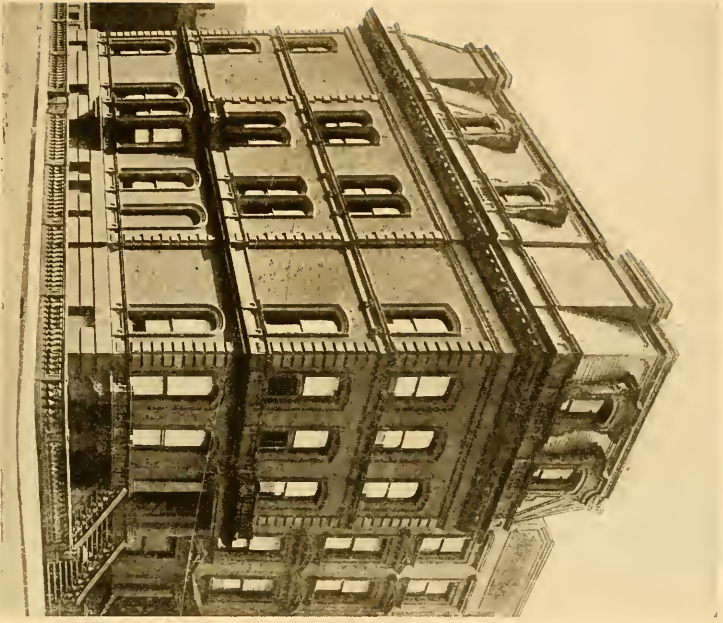


From a photograph.

Collection of The Fifth Avenue Bank.

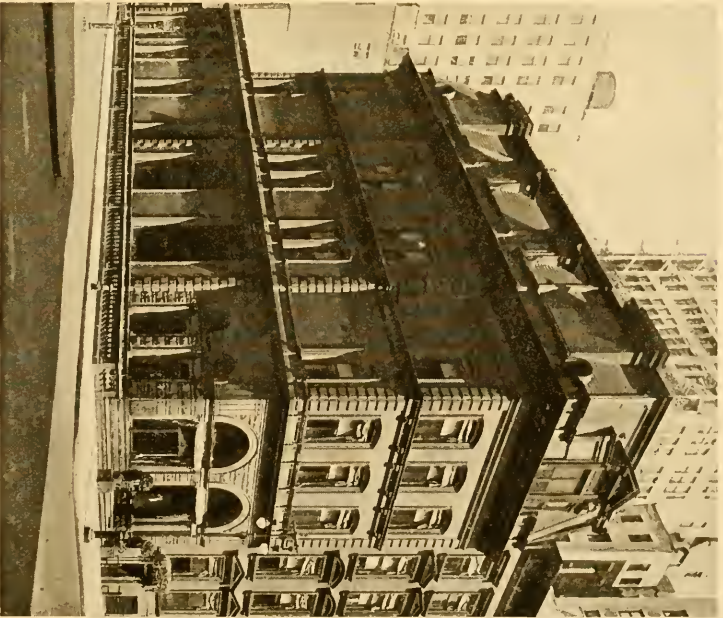
THE SHERWOOD HOUSE, 1889.

Northeast corner 44th Street and Fifth Avenue. The first offices of The Fifth Avenue Bank are shown in the basement.



Collection of The Fifth Avenue Bank.

JOHN B. CORNELL AND NANTON MARBLE RESIDENCES, 1889.
Cornell house on the corner, and Marble residence adjoining, before they
became the home of The Fifth Avenue Bank.



Collection of The Fifth Avenue Bank.

THE FIFTH AVENUE BANK OF NEW YORK, 1915.
44th Street and Fifth Avenue. Showing the Cornell and Marble residences
as now occupied by the Bank.

*Bank's Site
Transferred
but Four
Times since
Manhattan
was bought
from the
Indians*

John B. Cornell, which had been built in 1866. Later, it bought the adjoining residence of Manton Marble, former editor of the *World*. In these quarters it has been ever since. From the day in 1626, when Peter Minuit bought Manhattan Island from the Indians for about \$24 in cheap trinkets, to the present, there have been but four transfers of the corner on which the Bank stands. It became the property of the City under the liberal Dongan Charter on April 27, 1686, which granted to the corporation all the vacant, waste and unappropriated lands of the island. The plot, fifty by one hundred feet, on the northwest corner of 44th Street, was sold by the City in 1848 to Samuel White for \$3,850. White sold it to Amos R. Eno in 1862 for \$15,000. Eno sold it to John B. Cornell in 1865 for \$40,000, and on April 22, 1889, the executors of John B. Cornell sold to the Bank for \$232,066, the corner lot, No. 530, with a frontage of thirty feet on the Avenue, together with No. 1 West 44th Street. The adjoining Avenue lot, No. 532, twenty feet wide, was sold by Cornell, in January 1867, to Matthew Byrnes, a builder, for \$21,540. Byrnes sold the property, November 6, 1868, to Manton Marble for \$85,000. The Bank acquired the property on March 5, 1897 for \$125,000. From the time of its organization the Bank has given especial attention to personal and family accounts, of which it has a great number. So many prominent bank officials have received their training in its employ that it is often referred to as the "Kindergarten of Bankers."

*Buchanan's
Fifth Avenue
Estate*

On the east side of Fifth Avenue, extending from 45th almost to 48th Street, was a portion of the fifty-five acre estate which Thomas Buchanan bought between 1803 and 1807 from the City, which was then disposing of its common land, for the ridiculously low sum of \$7,537. This property is now worth over \$20,000,000. Buchanan, after being educated at the University of Glasgow, came to America when but nineteen, and soon took prominent part in the business activity of early New York. In 1800 he purchased real estate in Wall Street which became the site of the United States Custom House, and later the National City Bank. He also purchased for his country-seat a beautiful tract of ground on the East River between 54th and 57th Streets. Buchanan died in 1815, leaving his real estate to his widow and eight children. A daughter, Almy, married Peter Goelet, and another daughter, Margaret, married Peter's brother, Robert Ratzer Goelet; thus the Goelets inherited much of their Fifth Avenue holdings.

*Church
of the
Heavenly
Rest*

*Windsor
Hotel*

On Fifth Avenue near 45th Street stands the Church of the Heavenly Rest, noted for its stained glass windows and wood carving. The Windsor Hotel formerly stood at 46th and 47th Streets on the east side of Fifth Avenue. Under the management of Hawk & Wetherbee it long enjoyed a patronage as distinguished as that of the Fifth Avenue Hotel. It was, after Mr. Wetherbee had retired from its management, the scene of one of the most tragic fires in the history of New York, when many guests were fatally burned



From a photograph.

Collection of J. Clarence Davies.

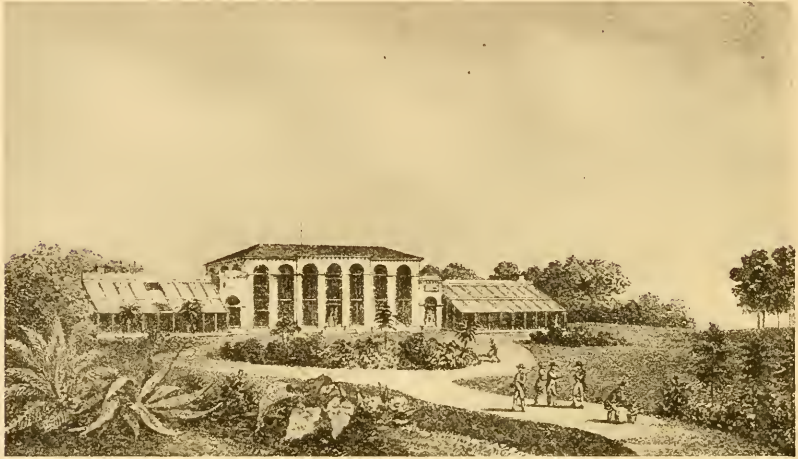
WINDSOR HOTEL, FIFTH AVENUE, 46TH TO 47TH STREETS, 1898.

or injured by leaping from the windows of the burning structure. In 1869 part of the block later occupied by the Windsor was a small skating pond. On the north half of the block now stands the palatial building of W. & J. Sloane.

The story of the Elgin Botanical Gardens which occupied the tract from 47th to 51st Streets between Fifth and Sixth Avenues begins in 1793 in the garden of Professor Hamilton near Edinburgh, where Dr. David Hosack, a young American, who was studying with the professor, was much mortified by his ignorance of botany, with which subject the other guests were familiar. Hosack took up the study of botany so diligently that in 1795 he was made professor of botany at Columbia College, and in 1797 held the Chair of *Materia Medica*. He resigned to take a similar professorship in the College of Physicians and Surgeons, where he remained until 1826. For over twenty years he was one of the leading physicians of New York, bore a conspicuous part in all movements connected with art, drama, literature, city or state affairs, and was frequently mentioned as being, with Clinton and Hobart, "one of the tripods upon which the City stood." He was one of the physicians who attended Alexander Hamilton after his fatal duel with Burr. While professor of botany at Columbia he endeavored to interest the State in establishing a botanical exhibit for students of medicine, but failing to accomplish this he acquired

*Elgin
Botanical
Gardens*

*Prominence
of Dr.
David
Hosack,
their
Founder*



From Valentine's Manual.

Collection of New York Historical Society.

THE ELGIN BOTANIC GARDENS.

Between 50th and 51st Streets, and Fifth and Sixth Avenues, 1825.

from the City, in 1801, the plot mentioned above, for the purpose of establishing a botanical garden. In 1804 the Elgin Botanical Gardens were opened. By 1806 two thousand species of plants with one spacious green-house and two hot-houses, having a frontage of one hundred and eighty feet, occupied what to-day is one of the most valuable real estate sites in New York, the tract being now valued without buildings at over \$30,000,000.

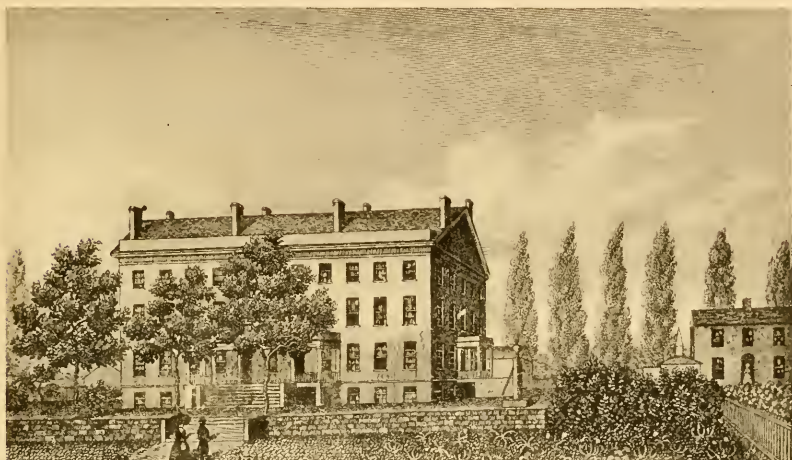
Land given to Columbia College

The financial burden of maintaining the garden was more than the doctor could carry, and he appealed to the Legislature for support. Finally on March 12, 1810, a bill was passed authorizing the State, for the purpose of promoting medical science, to buy the garden. The doctor sold it for \$74,268.75, which was \$28,000 less than he had spent on it. The State finally conveyed the grounds in 1814 to Columbia College, and this property, part of which the College still holds, has largely contributed to the wealth of this great University.

Collegiate Church of St. Nicholas

The Collegiate Church of St. Nicholas, a Dutch Reformed Church, dedicated in 1872, is located at the northwest corner of 48th Street, on part of the Elgin Garden site. In the tower hangs a bell, cast in Amsterdam in 1731, which for years hung in the Middle Dutch Church on Nassau Street, where the Mutual Life Building is now situated. This bell was taken down and secreted while the British held New York. In the Consistory of the Church of St. Nicholas are portraits in oil of all its ministers from Dominie Du Bois, who in 1699 preached in the old Church in the Fort, to the present.

In the centre of the block between 51st and 52nd Streets, on the west side of Fifth Avenue, there stood back from the street in 1868 a



Drawn and engraved by M. Osborne.

Collection of New York Historical Society.

DEAF AND DUMB ASYLUM, 1829-1853.

Between 49th and 50th Streets, near Madison Avenue. Later occupied by Columbia College.

small three-story frame house kept by Isaiah Keyser, whose vegetable garden supplied the residents along lower Fifth Avenue, and who also dealt in ice and cattle. Occupying this block are the famous Vanderbilt "twin mansions," handsome brownstone structures practically identical in design. They were built in 1882 by William H. Vanderbilt, the 51st Street house for himself, and the 52nd Street house for his daughter. They stand now, island homes in a flood of business, and it is probable that before long they too will be engulfed, despite the fact that the Vanderbilts spent several millions in purchasing property to protect themselves against business encroachments.

*Keyser's
Vegetable
Garden
between
51st and
52nd Streets*

The east side of Fifth Avenue, from 48th to 53rd Streets, and the west side, from 54th to 55th Streets, were long used for philanthropic and religious purposes. Between 48th and 50th Streets and Fourth and Fifth Avenues stood the New York Institute for the Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb. The Asylum was incorporated in 1817 and occupied a room in the almshouse then on Chambers Street. The corner-stone of the 50th Street building was laid October 19, 1827, and the new quarters opened in 1829. It was one hundred and ten feet long, sixty feet wide, four stories high, with a beautiful colonnade fifty feet long in front. The Asylum stood on one acre of ground donated by the City, from which the directors leased nine adjoining acres. They had also a donation from the State of a percentage of the tax on lotteries. The grounds were beautifully laid out in lawns and gardens, planted with trees and shrubbery. There were workshops in which tailoring, shoemaking, cabinet-making, gardening and other trades were taught. Girls were instructed in

*Deaf and
Dumb
Asylum
between
East 48th
and East
50th Streets*

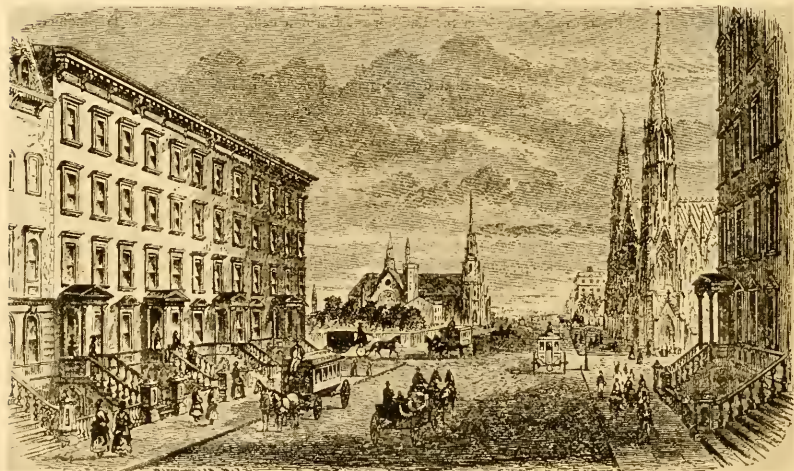


From a photograph.

Copyright, 1915, by Perry Walton.

TWIN VANDERBILT HOUSES.
51st and 52nd Streets.

“Island Homes in a Flood of Business.”



From an old print of about 1858.

Collection of S. B. Altmyer.

**FIFTH AVENUE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF THE CATHEDRAL SHORTLY
AFTER ITS ERECTION.**

The two houses in the left foreground were occupied by the school of the Rev. C. H. Gardner; in the background are the Cathedral, the site of the twin Vanderbilt houses, and St. Thomas' Church.



From a photograph.

Copyright, 1915, by Perry Walton.

ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL.
Fifth Avenue, 50th to 51st Streets.

needlework and other useful occupations. In 1853 the Asylum sold the property and moved to Washington Heights between 162nd and 165th Streets. The Buckingham Hotel and National Democratic Club for many years have stood on part of the land of the Deaf and Dumb Asylum.

*Potter's
Field at
50th Street
near Fifth
Avenue*

Somewhat east of Fifth Avenue, with irregular boundaries from 48th to 50th Streets, was a Potter's Field. Speaking of this Potter's Field, Mr. John D. Crimmins recalls that when excavations were made for the Women's Hospital on the eastern side of the land wide trenches were found into which many bodies had been thrown without having been enclosed in coffins. Hundreds of barrels of bones were removed from the field to Hart's Island.

*The Site of
St. Patrick's
Cathedral*

The property on which St. Patrick's Cathedral stands, between 50th and 51st Streets, was originally part of the Common Lands of the City. It was sold to Robert Lylburn in 1799 for £405 and an annual quit rent of "four bushels of good merchantable wheat, or the value thereof in gold or silver coin." Lylburn, who was a merchant at No. 8 Garden Street, now Exchange Place, sold the property to Francis Thompson and Thomas Cadle for \$9,000, and they in turn conveyed it to Andrew Morris and Cornelius Heeney for \$11,000. In describing a part of the purchase, Cardinal Farley, in his history of the Cathedral, says, "a mansion on the property was occupied by the Jesuit Fathers as a school known as the New York Literary Institution which had been transferred from its original location opposite old St. Patrick's (on Mulberry Street). In the summer of 1813 the New York Literary Institution was closed. The title to the property remained with the Jesuits. The price they paid for it above the mortgage was \$1,300. In 1814 the Trappist Monks occupied the building and conducted an orphan asylum. They left New York in the autumn of that year, and their work disappeared with them." The New York Literary Institution, referred to by Cardinal Farley, was started by Father Kohlmann. It was so successful on Mulberry Street that Father Kohlmann bought for it the site on upper Fifth Avenue, but in the new situation it was maintained with difficulty, although it possessed such an excellent teacher as Professor James Wallace, the distinguished writer on astronomy. In 1813 the college sold the property to the diocese for \$3,000.

*New York
Literary
Institution*

*Steps in
acquiring
the Cathedral
Site*

Subsequently the remainder of the land bought by Morris and Heeney was mortgaged to the Eagle Fire Company, and under foreclosure sale in 1828, was acquired for \$5,550, by Francis Cooper, acting in behalf of the trustees of St. Peter's Church, on Barclay Street, and St. Patrick's Cathedral, on Mulberry Street. These churches had contemplated establishing a new burying-ground, but found the Fifth Avenue land, on account of its rocky nature, unsuited for the purpose.

*Church of
St. John the
Evangelist*

In 1842 the trustees of the two churches conveyed about one hundred feet square on the northeast corner of Fifth Avenue and 50th Street to the Church of St. John the Evangelist. A little frame church



From a photograph.

Collection of Roman Catholic Orphan Asylum, Bronx.

OLD CATHOLIC ORPHAN ASYLUM, ABOUT 1852.
51st Street and Fifth Avenue.

was erected on the site, and the old mansion of the Literary Institution used as a rectory. The church was later moved from this site to a position east of Madison Avenue (then not cut through), between 50th and 51st Streets. Two of the well-known pastors of this little church were Fathers Larkin and McMahan. The church was burned while the Cathedral was being erected, but was immediately rebuilt and used until the Cathedral was occupied.

A partition suit brought in 1852 by St. Peter's and St. Patrick's Churches finally vested the title in St. Patrick's upon the payment of \$59,500 to St. Peter's for its share. In 1853 Archbishop Hughes, acting for the trustees of St. Patrick's Cathedral, acquired the corner belonging to the Church of St. John the Evangelist. Thus the entire cathedral site came into the hands of the trustees of St. Patrick's Cathedral.

The idea of the Cathedral had originated in 1850 in the mind of Archbishop John Hughes, of the diocese of New York, who planned a cathedral to cost \$867,000. He announced that one hundred and three persons, including two Protestants, had started a subscription of \$1,000 each to help defray the cost. James Renwick, Jr., who designed Grace Church, was selected as the architect. Archbishop Hughes died in 1864. The work was in turn carried on by Cardinal McCloskey, Archbishop Corrigan and Cardinal Farley. After years of effort to obtain the means to build this magnificent edifice—the ultimate cost of which was \$4,000,000—the Cathedral was formally opened and blessed on May 25, 1879, and dedicated on October 5, 1910.

*Erection
of the
Cathedral*



From a photograph.

Collection of The Tribune.

EASTER SUNDAY PARADE PASSING ST. THOMAS' EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

Northwest corner Fifth Avenue and 53rd Street. Showing the results of a heavy snowstorm, April 2, 1915.

*Roman
Catholic
Orphan
Asylum*

North of the Cathedral, between 51st and 52nd Streets, on the east side of Fifth Avenue, stood the Roman Catholic Orphan Asylum, which was organized in 1817 as the Roman Catholic Benevolent Society, and first established at Prince and Mulberry Streets. The number of inmates, only thirty at first, so increased that a new building was taken on Prince Street, which later had to be enlarged. Finally the property on Fifth Avenue was occupied in 1852. The first building had accommodations for five hundred boys, and a wing built in 1893, as a trade school, accommodated two hundred more. The girls' wing, completed in 1890, held eight hundred. There was every facility for religious, moral and social training. The asylum is now located at Sedgwick Avenue and Kingsbridge Road. At the northeast corner of 51st Street since 1903 has stood the Union Club, on land once part of the Orphan Asylum site.

*St. Thomas'
Church*

St. Thomas' Church, at the northwest corner of Fifth Avenue and 53rd Street, one of the most beautiful examples of Gothic architecture in this country, was organized in 1823. The first church stood at Broadway and Houston Street, then a rural community. Later, the need of a building farther up town was felt, and in 1870 an imposing structure of brownstone was built, the work of Richard Upjohn, who regarded it as one of his masterpieces. It was decorated by



From a photograph.

Collection of The Fifth Avenue Bank.

54TH STREET LOOKING WEST FROM FIFTH AVENUE, 1867.

The dwelling on the left is No. 4 West 54th Street, now the home of John D. Rockefeller, Sr., and on the right is St. Luke's Hospital, now the site of the University Club and the Hotel Gotham.

La Farge and Saint-Gaudens, and with its rectory cost about \$1,000,000. It was burned in 1906, and the present structure has but recently been erected.

A landmark gone from Fifth Avenue is St. Luke's Hospital, which occupied the block on the west side between 54th and 55th Streets, where now is the home of the University Club, and near which stood until 1861 the Public Pound. St. Luke's Hospital, built of red brick, faced south, and consisted of a central edifice with towers. It was opened, with three "Sister Nurses" and nine patients, May 13, 1858, having cost \$225,000. St. Luke's was the idea of the Rev. W. A. Muhlenberg, D.D., Rector of the Church of the Holy Communion, who had organized in 1845 the "Sisters of the Holy Communion," the first organization of Protestant Sisters of Charity in America. He incorporated the hospital in 1850, with thirteen managers, and opened beds in a house adjoining the Church of the Holy Communion on Sixth Avenue and 21st Street. Here more than two hundred patients were received prior to the erection of the Fifth Avenue building. The funds for the new hospital were raised by public subscription. The hospital accommodated about two hundred patients. The corner-stone of its present buildings, opposite the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, on Morningside Heights, was laid May 6, 1893.

The Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, long known as Dr. John Hall's Church, has stood at the northwest corner of Fifth Avenue and 55th Street since 1875, at which time it moved from its old location at 19th Street and Fifth Avenue. Diagonally opposite, on the southeast corner of 55th Street and Fifth Avenue, stands the St. Regis Hotel.

The block from 57th to 58th Streets, on the east side of the Avenue, was known for years as the "Marble Row." The row was built by Mrs. Mary Mason Jones, daughter of John Mason, a former president

*St. Luke's
Hospital
and its
Fifth
Avenue Site*

*Fifth
Avenue
Presbyterian
Church*

*Romance of
the "Marble
Row"*



From a photograph.

Copyright, 1915, by Perry Walton.

THE "MARBLE ROW," FIFTH AVENUE BETWEEN EAST 57TH AND EAST 58TH STREETS.

Part of the Estate of John Mason, from which the Joneses, Iselins, and the Hamersleys inherited their Fifth Avenue holdings.

of the Chemical National Bank, from whom she inherited the site. Mason, who was long prominent in business and social circles early in the nineteenth century, invested largely in real estate. Among the parcels he purchased, most of which were Common Lands of the City, were sixteen blocks from Park to Fifth Avenues, and from 54th to 63rd Streets, excepting the block from 56th to 57th Streets on Fifth Avenue. The tract between 57th and 58th Streets, Fourth and Fifth Avenues, he bought from the City in 1825 for \$1,500. Mason died in 1839, leaving a will in which he cut off with a small annuity both his son, James Mason, who had married Emma Wheatley, a famous actress of 1838, and his daughter, Helen, who also had married against his wishes. The will was set aside, and in the division of the estate the block from 57th to 58th Streets became the property of Mrs. Mary Mason Jones, who in 1871 built the Marble Row. The erection of these houses, built of white marble, and in a style of architecture unlike anything heretofore seen on Fifth Avenue, marked the passing of the era of long-fashionable brownstone fronts. On the 57th Street corner lived Mrs. Mary Mason Jones, at one time a New York social leader, and later, Mrs. Paran Stevens, also promi-



From a lithograph, Currier & Ives, 1869.

Collection of Perry Walton.

FASHIONABLE TURNOUTS IN CENTRAL PARK, NEW YORK.

(Sketched from life by T. Worth in 1869.)

ment in society. Most of the houses of the Marble Row have been altered or torn down to make room for business buildings.

Although in 1869 Fifth Avenue below 59th Street was an almost unbroken row of brownstone mansions, as early as 1882 trade had invaded the Avenue as far north as Central Park. Between 34th and 59th Streets are now established many of the foremost jewellers, art dealers, publishers and high-class shops.

Not until 1847 was Fifth Avenue lighted with gas as far as 18th Street, and not until 1850 as far as 30th Street; about 1870 gas was carried as far as 59th Street. As early as 1869 the Sunday parade of fashion on Fifth Avenue had become a feature of New York life. The Easter Parade still continues, but the fine equipages, with spirited horses and uniformed footmen, have given way to the automobile. Another notable feature of former days was the driving in Central Park. Here might be seen old Commodore Vanderbilt, driving his famous trotter, "Dexter"; Robert Bonner, speeding "Maud S."; Thomas Kilpatrick, Frank Work, Russell Sage, and other horsemen driving to their private quarter- or half-mile courses in Harlem; leaders of society and dowagers in their gilded coaches; and even maidens of the "Four Hundred" driving their phaetons.

John D. Crimmins, most of whose long life has been spent in New York, gives an interesting picture of Fifth Avenue before the war. His father was a contractor, who, before entering business, had been employed by Thomas Addis Emmet as a gardener. The Emmet country-seat was on the Boston Post-Road in the vicinity of 59th Street,

*Invasion of
Trade as
far North as
59th Street*

*Lighting the
Avenue*

*The Sunday
Parade and
Driving in
Central
Park*

*Recollections
of John D.
Crimmins*

then designated as Mount Vernon, from the tavern and race-track of that name kept at one time on the East River shore.

"In the immediate vicinity were the country-seats of other prominent New Yorkers, such as the Buchanans, who were the forebears of the Goelets, the Adriance, Jones, and Beekman families, the Schermerhorns, Hulls, Setons, Towles, Willets, Lenoxes, Delafields, Primes, Rhinelanders, Lefferts, Hobbs, Rikers, Lawrences, and others," writes Mr. Crimmins. "A little further to the north were the country-seats of the Goelets, Gracies, and the elder John Jacob Astor. With all these people, who were practically the commercial founders of our city, my father had an acquaintance.

*Business
Methods
of Old Fifth
Avenue
Residents*

"The wealthy merchants of New York at that period frequently invested their surplus in outlying property and left its care largely in the hands of my father, who opened up estates, as he did the Anson Phelps place in the vicinity of 30th Street, which ran north and extended from the East River to Third Avenue. He also opened up the Cutting and other large estates. When a lad, as I was the oldest son, my father would take me with him to the residences of these gentlemen, several of whom had their permanent homes on Fifth Avenue or in the vicinity. At that period, these wealthy citizens conducted much of their business at their homes. James Lenox had his office in the basement of his house at 12th Street and Fifth Avenue. R. L. Stuart attended to much of his business at his residence, 20th Street and Fifth Avenue, and the same may be said of the Costers, Moses Taylor and others. These men had no hesitation in receiving in their homes after business hours the people whom they employed. I remember distinctly before gas was generally introduced, how very economical in its use those who had it were. In the absence of the butler, the gentleman of the house would often walk to the door with his visitor and then lower the gas.

*Market
Gardens
near Fifth
Avenue*

"The estates of many of these wealthy merchants were rented to market gardeners. And it was not an unusual sight to see a merchant drive in his carriage to the vegetable garden, select his vegetables and carry them to his table, showing the economy and simple manners of the people of that older day as compared with our present extravagance.

"After the Board of Aldermen had acceded to the petition of the residents of Fifth Avenue for permission to enclose a part of the roadway in a closed yard or area, it was not an uncommon sight to see many of the older men standing at their gates, in high stocks, white cravats, cutaway coats with brass buttons, greeting their neighbors as they passed along the Avenue—a custom which survived to about 1870 when the white cravat, too, passed into history.

*Early
Improvements on
Fifth Avenue*

"The improvement of Fifth Avenue, north of 34th Street, began with the erection of the Townsend house, which was a feature of the City and shown to visitors. The location was the foot of a high hill. I recall very vividly the old Waddell mansion. I was taken into it by my father the day they began to dismantle it, and remember very

distinctly the courteous manner in which we were received by Mrs. Waddell, and how she regretted the destruction of her home.

“At that time the Reservoir was an attraction for the view it furnished. There were no buildings high enough to interfere, and visitors could get a bird’s-eye view of the entire City and the Palisades. The neighborhood at that time is well illustrated in the old New York print showing the Reservoir and the Crystal Palace, 1855. There were no pretentious houses north of 42nd Street. It was interesting to see the drovers,—tall men, with staffs in their hands, herding eight, ten, or twenty cattle,—driving the cattle to market, generally on Sunday, as Monday was market day.

Sight-seeing from the Reservoir

“On the corner of Fifth Avenue and 50th Street, where the Cathedral now stands, stood the frame church, thirty by seventy feet, in which I was baptized in May, 1844. A path and a road led to the Post Road which ran east of the church and bordered the Potter’s Field. To the north was the Orphan Asylum, and further on was another cattle yard, Waltemeir’s, a family well known to cattle men. From 50th Street to St. Luke’s Hospital at 54th Street, there were a few frame houses, and the ground extending to Sixth Avenue was used for market gardens. Old maps of New York show the lanes crossing this section at the time, much like the country roads we see to-day thirty or forty miles distant from the City. Walls ran along these roads with an occasional house with its gable of the old Dutch type. Mr. Keyser, who dealt in ice gathered from ponds, and slaughtered cattle, occupied the site of the present Vanderbilt houses, 51st to 52nd Streets. The Decker house of Dutch architecture occupied the block between Fourth and Fifth Avenues, 56th to 57th Streets.

Reminiscences of the Cathedral and Neighboring Sites

“Peter and Robert Goelet I recall very well. Those who called on Peter Goelet would find him in a jumper, bluish in color, such as we see mechanics wear, with pockets in front. He loved to be occupied and always had a rule and other articles in his pockets. His brother, Robert, was the grandfather of the present Goellets; Peter was the elder and a bachelor. Robert lived a few blocks below him in 17th Street, the northwest corner. They accompanied each other on walks, Peter, the more active of the two, in front, and Robert a pace behind. They dealt directly with their tenants and those whom they employed in taking care of their properties. I can recall them coming on foot to my father to have him repair a sidewalk or a fence. I doubt if these men in their day, except for ordinary living expenses, spent five thousand dollars a year. They were simple in their manners and tastes.

Ways and Habits of Peter and Robert Goelet

“The older generation was noted for industry, thrift and economy. An old merchant, an executor of the Burr estate which owned property opposite the new Public Library, extending to Fourth Avenue, once stated that no man who had a million dollars invested, could spend his income in a year. This was a frank statement from an important man, made in his office where I visited him many times. Money at that time brought 7% per annum. The contents of his office

possibly did not exceed in cost fifty dollars, a pine desk and table, a few chairs and no carpets or rugs, but everything neat and clean and sufficient furniture to transact business. The men of that day wrote their own letters. I have many letters of James Lenox, James H. Titus, Robert L. Stuart and others. There were no stenographers, and typewriters were unknown.

*Simple
Customs of
Early
Merchants*

"I met practically all the noted merchants of that day as at the age of fourteen I became my father's clerk, made out bills and collected them, often working after dinner. These old merchants attended to their own personal accounts, drew their own checks, and occasionally corrected errors in my accounts. They were always willing to give advice, particularly to a lad. I recall very well Mr. Hassard, who established the Hassard Powder Company, a man at that time more than eighty years of age. He told my father, in my presence, how, before the introduction of gutta percha fuses for exploding powder in blasts, he sold straw fuses. He spoke of his early determination to become a business man and not to work for a salary, and that whatever he manufactured must be of the best.

*Transporta-
tion before
the War*

"Transportation was principally by stage. There were car lines on Second, Third, Sixth and Eighth Avenues. The gentlemen who kept carriages were few and they generally lived in Harlem or Manhattanville. Occasionally smart four-in-hands were seen, and I recall Madam Jumel driving to town and how we boys would run to the side of the road to see her coach pass. Many business men would go to the city driving a rockaway with a single horse. Few of the streets were paved, and there were but two classes of pavements, macadam and cobblestones. Where streets were not paved, the sidewalks were in bad condition. In some places the high banks of earth on either side of the street were washed down by heavy rains and deposited on the sidewalks.

*Street-
lighting*

"Oil lamps were in general use as street lights, and the light was easily blown out by the wind. The lamplighter was usually a tall man, a character, and his position was considered an important one. Politics affected the general administration much more than is the case to-day, and people were obliged to protect themselves. Conditions to-day are better in many respects and I believe that the moral tone of the people is better.

"Fifth Avenue, north of 59th Street, remained undeveloped for years and it was not until sometime in the 70's that my father and I finished grading upper Fifth Avenue. Sixty years ago saw the beginning of the substantial situation we have to-day. On both sides of Fifth Avenue were stone walls where there were deep depressions. There was no traffic except drovers coming down to market with cattle. There were but two main thoroughfares, Boston Post-Road on the East side, and Bloomingdale Road on the West side. From the Boston Post-Road, long lanes led to the residences of gentlemen who had country-seats on the East River, and similar lanes led from the old Bloomingdale Road to the country-seats on the Hudson River."



From an oil painting executed for John D. Crimmins.

Collection of John D. Crimmins.

POND OF THE NEW YORK SKATING CLUB IN 1860.

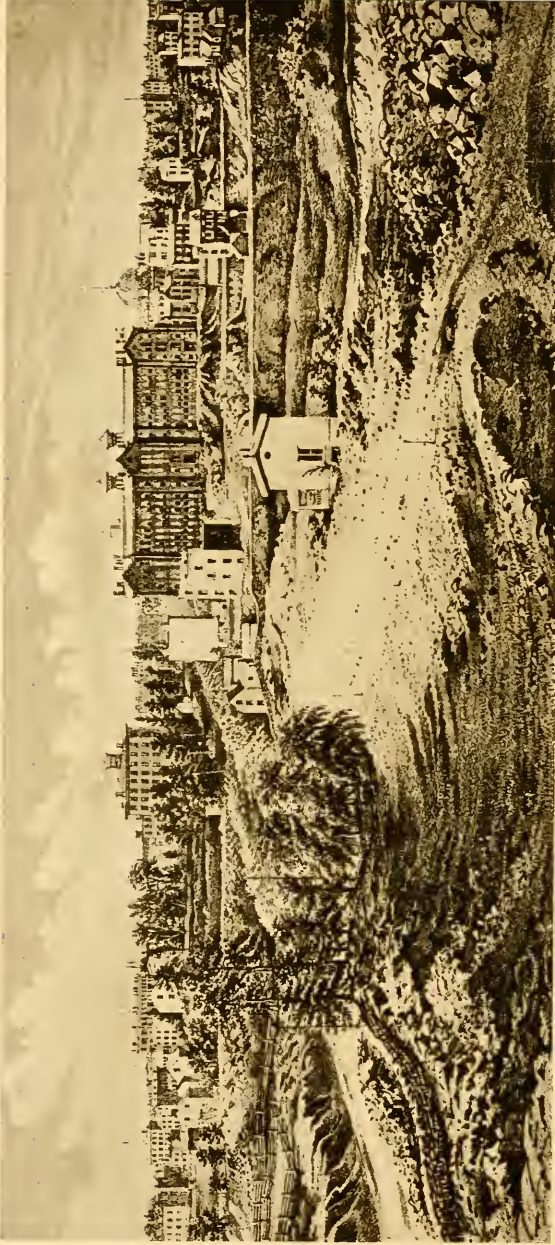
At 59th Street, between Fifth and Madison Avenues.

The sites of the Plaza, the Savoy and the Netherland Hotels at 59th Street and Fifth Avenue were once rocky knolls. A brook which came down 59th Street here formed several shallow ponds which remained for a number of years after the Civil War. A large pond where the Plaza now stands was turned into a skating rink, from which the owner, John Mitchell, gained a respectable livelihood. There was another pond at 58th Street, extending to 59th Street, across Madison Avenue, made by this same stream, where the New York Skating Club had its quarters. An old ledger owned by Mr. Crimmins shows that many well-known residents of the City paid annual subscriptions of \$10 for the privilege of belonging to the Club. In 1859 at the northeast corner of 59th Street, now the site of the Hotel Netherland, stood Disbrow's Riding Academy. The original Plaza Hotel, which occupied the site of the present one, on the block from 58th to 59th Streets, west of the Plaza, was built in 1890; the Savoy in 1892; and the Netherland in 1893.

Before Central Park was laid out, 59th Street was the dividing line between the most exclusive section of New York and the most promiscuous. Below 59th Street was the centre of fashion and wealth; while above, along the country road which was then Fifth Avenue and throughout the unsightly waste land taken later for the Park, lay what was jeeringly termed "Squatters' Sovereignty" section. It extended almost to Mount Morris Park. Here lived over five thousand as poverty-stricken and disreputable people as could be seen anywhere. The squatters' settlements in the Park were surrounded by swamps, and overgrown with briars, vines and thickets. The soil that covered the rocky surface was unfit for cultivation. Here and there were stone quarries and stagnant ponds.

*Skating
Ponds at
the Plaza
and Savoy
Sites*

*The
"Squatters"
of Central
Park and
Fifth
Avenue*



From a print.

VIEW IN CENTRAL PARK SOUTHWARD FROM THE ARSENAL, 64TH STREET, JUNE, 1858.

Collection of J. Clarence Davies.

Fifth Avenue is the roadway on the left.

- No. 1. Columbia College, Madison Avenue near 49th Street. No. 2. Roman Catholic Orphan Asylum at 51st Street. No. 3. St. Luke's Hospital, 54th Street. No. 4. Crystal Palace, 42nd Street and Sixth Avenue.

In this wilderness lived the squatters, in little shanties and huts made of boards picked up along the river fronts and often pieced out with sheets of tin, obtained by flattening cans. Some occupants paid \$10 to \$25 rent, but the majority paid nothing. Three stone buildings, two brick buildings, eighty-five or ninety frame houses, one rope-walk and about two hundred shanties, barns, stables, piggeries and bone factories, appear in a census made just before Central Park was begun. Some of the shanties were dugouts, and most had dirt floors. In this manner lived, in a state of loose morality, Americans, Germans, Irish, Negroes, and Indians. Some were honest and some were not; many were rougns and crooks. Much of their food was refuse, which they procured in the lower portion of the City, and carried along Fifth Avenue to their homes in small carts drawn by dogs. The mongrel dogs were a remarkable feature of squatter life, and it is said that the Park area contained no less than one hundred thousand "curs of low degree," which, with cows, pigs, cats, goats, geese and chickens, roamed at will, and lived upon the refuse, which was everywhere. In the neighborhood of these squatter settlements, of which one of the largest was Seneca Village, near 79th Street, the swamps had become cesspools and the air was odoriferous and sickening.

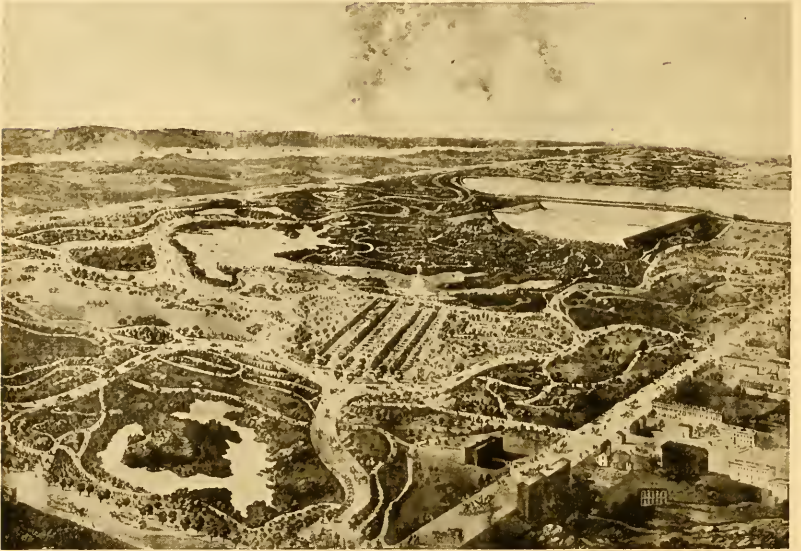
*Shanties
and Huts
on Upper
Fifth
Avenue*

The largest building on the site of Central Park was the Arsenal, on the Fifth Avenue side at 64th Street. Completed by the State in 1848 at a cost of \$30,000, it was then the largest arsenal in the State. In the rear of the main building was a small magazine. The building was two hundred feet long by fifty feet deep, eighty-two feet high and had towers at each angle. The basement was used for heavy cannon and ball; the second story for gun-carriages, and the third for small arms. It was sold to the City in 1857 for \$275,000, and became a museum and office of the Park Department. The basement for a time was used as a menagerie. The top floor has long been used as a weather observatory, in which accurate records have been kept since 1869.

*Central
Park
Arsenal*

McGowan's Pass Tavern, about which the tide of war ebbed and flowed during the Revolution, had in 1847 after various vicissitudes come into the possession of the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, who paid \$6,000 for a plot of nearly seven acres. They opened the academy and convent of Mount St. Vincent. When Mount St. Vincent became Central Park property, the sisters looked elsewhere for a site, and in 1856 bought the estate of Edwin Forrest, the actor, known as Font Hill, now Mount St. Vincent-on-the-Hudson. The last commencement was held in the Central Park building in 1858. During the Civil War, the government used old Mount St. Vincent as a hospital, where the sisters gave noble service until the close of the war. Mount St. Vincent reverted in 1866 to its old use by becoming a tavern under a lease granted by the Park Commissioners; the chapel, however, was used as a museum. In 1881 both the museum and the tavern were burned. Owing to protest

*Mount
St. Vincent*



From prints.

Collection of J. Clarence Davies.

CENTRAL PARK BEFORE AND AFTER.

The upper view shows Central Park before it was laid out. The lower is the Martel view of the completed Park. A lithograph by Henry C. Eno in 1864.

against the use of the land for other than park purposes, the site was cleared, but finally in 1883 another refreshment house was built there.

The idea of creating a central park came first from the imaginative brain of Andrew J. Downing, a landscape architect, who, while abroad, studied the great parks of the world and wrote a series of eloquent letters upon the need of a central park for the increasing population of New York. These letters were published in *The Horticulturist* and created wide comment. Mayor Ambrose C. Kingsland took the project up, and in 1851 commended it to the attention of the Board of Aldermen. This action finally led to the introduction and passage by the legislature, July 21, 1853, of the bill creating Central Park. Eleven commissioners were appointed to construct the Park, and Andrew H. Green was made comptroller of the work. The commissioners in 1858 offered prizes for the best design, and of the thirty-three submitted, that of Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux was selected, and the Park was built in accordance with their plans. Richard M. Hunt was the architect.

The original boundaries of the Park were 59th and 106th Streets, Fifth and Eighth Avenues. It contained seven hundred and seventy-six acres, but later when the Park was extended to 110th Street it included eight hundred and forty-three acres. Traversed by a rocky backbone, diversified by streams and ponds and natural gorges, the land lent itself to picturesque landscape work. Roads, walks, terraces, ponds and bridle-paths were built, and no less than half a million trees, shrubs and vines were set out. The Park was not finally completed until 1876. Taking the land for Central Park involved searching the titles of, and buying, seven thousand lots on the borders of a rapidly growing city, the adjustment of many claims and the payment of \$5,069,693.70 in awards, of which \$1,667,590 was assessed upon the adjacent owners who were to derive benefit from the increase in value of their property. The era of speculation which followed the passage of the law creating the Park showed the justice of the assessment, for a tract from 69th Street to 78th Street, Fifth Avenue to Madison Avenue, which was sold in 1852 for \$3,000, brought \$40,000 in 1857; twelve years later William H. Vanderbilt offered in vain \$1,250,000 for it.

The development of Fifth Avenue above 59th Street, begun shortly before the completion of Central Park, has continued ever since, and now Fifth Avenue from the Plaza and entrance to Central Park, to Mount Sinai Hospital is the site of the most costly residences in America. Numerous magnificent houses, the homes of some of the wealthiest and most representative New York families, extend in an unbroken line north of 60th Street. At the north-east corner of Fifth Avenue and 60th Street stands the Metropolitan Club, a palace of white marble, built in 1903. Among its members are so many men of great wealth that it is called the "Millionaires' Club."

Andrew J. Downing suggests a Central Park

Bill creating Central Park

Boundaries and Titles

Completion of Central Park booms Fifth Avenue above 59th Street



From a photograph.

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HENRY C. FRICK'S RESIDENCE.

Occupying the site of the Lenox Library, between 70th and 71st Streets. At the left is Mr. Frick's art gallery, which contains one of the finest private art collections in the world.

*The "Lenox
Fifth
Avenue
Farm" and
"the
Village"*

At the corner of 68th Street begins what in 1839 was the farm of Robert Lenox, whose uncle was a British commissary during the Revolution. This farm extended from 68th to 73rd Streets, from Fifth to Madison Avenues. The land value of the farm, which was bought some time prior to 1829 by Robert Lenox for about \$40,000, is now over \$9,000,000. Lenox was wiser than his generation, for when he bought his farm at the five-mile stone, he was strongly of the opinion that the growing city would greatly increase land values, even so far out in the country. Under the various sections of his will which bear the dates of 1829, 1832 and 1839, he devised his farm to his only son, James "Lenox" (then spelled with two n's), with his stock of horses, cattle, and farming utensils, during the term of his life and after his death to James' heirs forever. The farm then comprised about thirty acres. The will reads: "My motive for so leaving this property is a firm persuasion that it may, at no distant date, be the site of a village, and as it cost me more than its present worth, from circumstances known to my family, I will to cherish that belief that it may be realized to them. At all events, I want the experiment made by keeping the property from being sold." Under a clause in the will dated 1832, however, he withdrew the restriction covering the sale of the farm, but, nevertheless, urged his son not to sell it, as he was still of the firm conviction that some day there would be a village near by, and the property would appreciate.

*The Lenox
Library*

On the lot between 70th and 71st Streets, now occupied by the home of Mr. H. C. Frick, was opened in 1877 the Lenox Library, which owed its creation to the generosity and love of books of James Lenox. This library was completed in 1875, a solid and graceful structure with two projecting wings of white stone, designed by



From a photograph.

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METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART.
View southward from 84th Street and Fifth Avenue.

Richard M. Hunt. Here was housed, until the building was torn down, a collection of priceless paintings, masterpieces of ancient and modern literature, sculpture, missals, bibles, incunabula Americana, autographs, ceramics, the Drexel musical collection, and other treasures now in the New York Public Library.

The Temple Beth-El, which stands at the southeast corner of Fifth Avenue and 76th Street, is a magnificent synagogue, built of Indiana limestone. It was completed in 1891. The congregation is a consolidation of the congregations Anshi-Chesed and Adas-Jesurun, and represents the first German-Jewish congregation in this country, dating back to 1826.

*Temple
Beth-El*

On the site formerly called Deer Park, in Central Park, near 82nd Street, is the Metropolitan Museum of Art, which, from small beginnings, has grown until it has become one of the great art museums of the world. It sprang from a meeting of the art committee of the Union League Club in 1869, which purchased an art collection and exhibited it at 681 Fifth Avenue. The committee rented a house at 126 West 14th Street in which it kept the exhibition for a while, but in 1872, having purchased the antiquities unearthed in Cyprus by General L. P. di Cesnola, it applied to the Park Commissioners for a site in Central Park. Here in 1880 the first wing of the Museum was opened.

*Metropoli-
tan Museum
of Art*

Where now are some of the most beautiful homes in the world about 1836 on the north side of 88th Street near Fifth Avenue, stood the New York Magdalen Benevolent Society, an institution for the reformation of fallen women. This Society occupied a plot of ground containing twelve city lots and an old frame building, which was

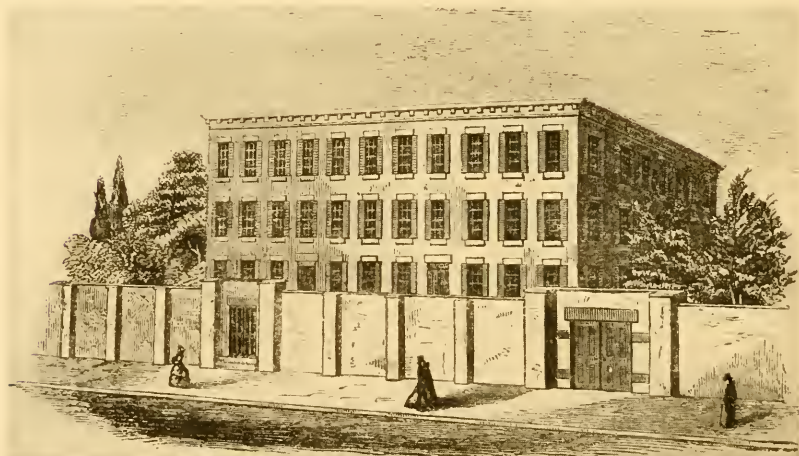
*New York
Magdalen
Benevolent
Society*



From a photograph.

Collection of J. Clarence Davies.

NORTHEAST CORNER OF 81ST STREET AND FIFTH AVENUE.
Showing the small frame houses which stood here prior to the erection of an ultra-luxurious apartment house, the first to be erected in this exclusive section of Fifth Avenue.



From an old print.

Collection of John D. Crimmins.

THE MAGDALEN BENEVOLENT ASYLUM, ABOUT 1856.
Fifth Avenue and 88th Street.



From a photograph.

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NORTHEAST CORNER OF 83RD STREET AND FIFTH AVENUE.

Showing at the right the tiny frame house of Mrs. Hicks Arnold.

purchased for \$4,000. After occupying the building for almost twenty years, the ladies who managed the institution erected a fine three-story brick building, which cost about \$30,000, and which fronted on 88th Street near Fifth Avenue. In this institution, which could accommodate about one hundred women, the inmates were trained in useful occupations and given religious instruction.

On the block where squatters long held sway, between 90th and 91st Streets, is now the beautiful house and grounds of Mr. Andrew Carnegie. So well have the architect and the landscape gardener co-operated, that this mansion and its surroundings have already the dignity and picturesqueness which age alone can give, although the building is of comparatively recent date. It is the only house on all Fifth Avenue which looks as if it might have been transplanted from historic old England.

*The
Carnegie
Home*

Mount Sinai Hospital, originally known as the "Jewish Hospital in the City of New York," occupies the whole block on Fifth Avenue between 100th and 101st Streets. The hospital, which was opened on Fifth Avenue March 15, 1904, was founded in 1852 by a number of benevolent Hebrews headed by Samson Simpson, who gave land on 28th Street between Seventh and Eighth Avenues, where the hospital remained until 1871 when it was moved to buildings on Lexington Avenue between 66th and 67th Streets. From there it moved to its Fifth Avenue location.

*Mount
Sinai
Hospital
and its
Fifth
Avenue
Site*



From a photograph.

Collection of J. Clarence Davies.

THE SQUATTERS' SETTLEMENT WHICH OCCUPIED THE SITE OF ANDREW
CARNEGIE'S RESIDENCE.



From a photograph.

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ANDREW CARNEGIE'S RESIDENCE.
90th to 91st Streets on Fifth Avenue.

Another philanthropic institution, opened between Fourth and Fifth Avenues, 111th to 112th Streets, in 1843, was known as the Leake and Watts Orphan Asylum. This institution was established by a legacy left in 1827 by John G. Leake, a wealthy lawyer, and added to by his friend and executor John Watts, who was a noted philanthropist, Recorder of the City, and Speaker of the Assembly from 1791-1794. A building two hundred feet in length, fronting toward the south and with two wings, was erected on twenty-six acres of land purchased with income from the estate. The institution accommodated two hundred children and commanded a wide view of the surrounding country. It later moved to the present site of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine.

*Leake and
Watts
Orphan
Asylum*

The land now covered by Fifth Avenue and the adjacent streets north of Mount Sinai Hospital, was, during the Revolutionary days, the scene of much marching and counter-marching by troops of both the American and the British armies, for a part of the Avenue is on the line of the old road leading to McGowan's Pass Tavern, where, during the Revolution, both Americans and British built fortifications.

*Fifth
Avenue's
Days of
War*

Extending from 96th Street, as far north as the Harlem Mill Creek at 106th Street, was the estate of Laurence Benson, the ancestor of many well-known New Yorkers. The creek and meadow extended from 106th to 109th Streets, where an old road crossed upon a bridge. This was a famous resort for sportsmen, for the marshes, creeks and the pond, known as Harlem Mere, were favorite haunts of duck and snipe, which were once numerous in the streams and ponds about New York. North of the bridge, where tenements now line Fifth Avenue, was one of the smallest, yet most picturesque, of the early Harlem farms. It was four acres in extent and skirted the creek. It was bought for eighteen pounds in 1793 by Lanaw Benson, a colored woman, who had once been a slave of the Benson family and whose name she had taken. On Fifth Avenue, north of Mount Sinai Hospital to 110th Street, are many vacant lots, and a few tenement houses. At 110th Street, the northerly end of Central Park, is another plaza, quite different in appearance, however, from the one at 59th Street. In place of stately residences, beautiful hotels and luxurious clubs, are saloons, moving picture theatres and crowded tenements.

*A Colored
Woman's
Small
Fifth
Avenue
Farm*

That part of Fifth Avenue immediately to the south of Mount Morris Park ran through the Vredenburg farm. Later Thomas Addis Emmet acquired a strip directly south of the hill for a country home. To the east of the hill stretched Harlem Village. Mount Morris Park has always been an abrupt, rocky knoll, heavily wooded. During the Revolution there was an American battery upon its summit, succeeded in 1776 by a Hessian battery, which commanded the Harlem River. And here for years was a fire tower, which was used to call together the volunteer fire department of Harlem. Some say the hill was named after Lewis Morris, a resident of Harlem, who

*Mount
Morris
Park and
Fifth
Avenue*



From a photograph.

Collection of J. Clarence Davies.

118TH STREET AND FIFTH AVENUE ABOUT 1880.

Fifth Avenue is the street shown on the left, with Mount Morris Park in the distance.

took an active part in obtaining the passage of the bill to secure the land for the Park, and others that it took the name of Robert H. Morris, mayor of New York City in 1841 and 1844, during whose administration this Park was laid out. The City acquired title to the property in 1839, paying \$40,000 for it, and it has ever since been maintained as a public park. It extends from 120th to 124th Streets, directly in the line of Fifth Avenue, which has never been cut through but is continued above the Park at 124th Street.

*Two Old
Harlem
Churches*

Beyond Mount Morris Park Fifth Avenue passed through the old village of Harlem, which long maintained its corporate entity distinct from the growing City of New York. In the middle of the block on the west side of Fifth Avenue, between 126th and 127th Streets, is Mount Morris Baptist Church. On the northeast corner of Fifth Avenue and 127th Street is St. Andrew's Protestant Episcopal Church, which goes back to the early days of this Republic. Among the vestrymen were Aaron Clark, mayor of the City from 1837 to 1839, Lewis Morris, Edward Prime, Jacob Lorillard, Colonel James Monroe, Archibald Watts, and members of the Blount, Sands, Ray, Wilmerding, Slidell and Anderson families. In the vicinity of these two churches clustered all the social life of Harlem, evidences of which may still be seen in the fine old brownstone houses of earlier days.

*End of the
Avenue*

Beyond these churches and private dwellings, Fifth Avenue continues among squalid surroundings for a few blocks to its end in the made land which now covers the marshy meadows along the Harlem River.



From a photograph.

Copyright, 1915, by Perry Walton.

THE END OF FIFTH AVENUE, 143RD STREET AND THE HARLEM RIVER.

A story of Fifth Avenue would not be complete without referring to the many great parades of which it has been the scene. Within the past fifty years more processions, pageants and parades have marched along Fifth Avenue than on any other street in America, not excepting even Pennsylvania Avenue, in Washington, D.C. During gala celebrations commemorating historical events, or on occasions when the country has been steeped in sorrow, Fifth Avenue has been fittingly chosen as the scene for public exhibition of the Nation's emotions. Among the most noteworthy events were the Evacuation Day parade in 1883; the vast parade in 1889 at the Centennial of Washington's Inauguration; the series of pageants in 1892 celebrating the 400th Anniversary of the Discovery of America; the Dewey Celebration; the Hudson-Fulton parades; Lincoln's and Grant's funeral processions, and those of Horace Greeley and General Sherman. An endless number of political, police and firemen's parades, and other exhibitions of local importance, have also taken place on Fifth Avenue.

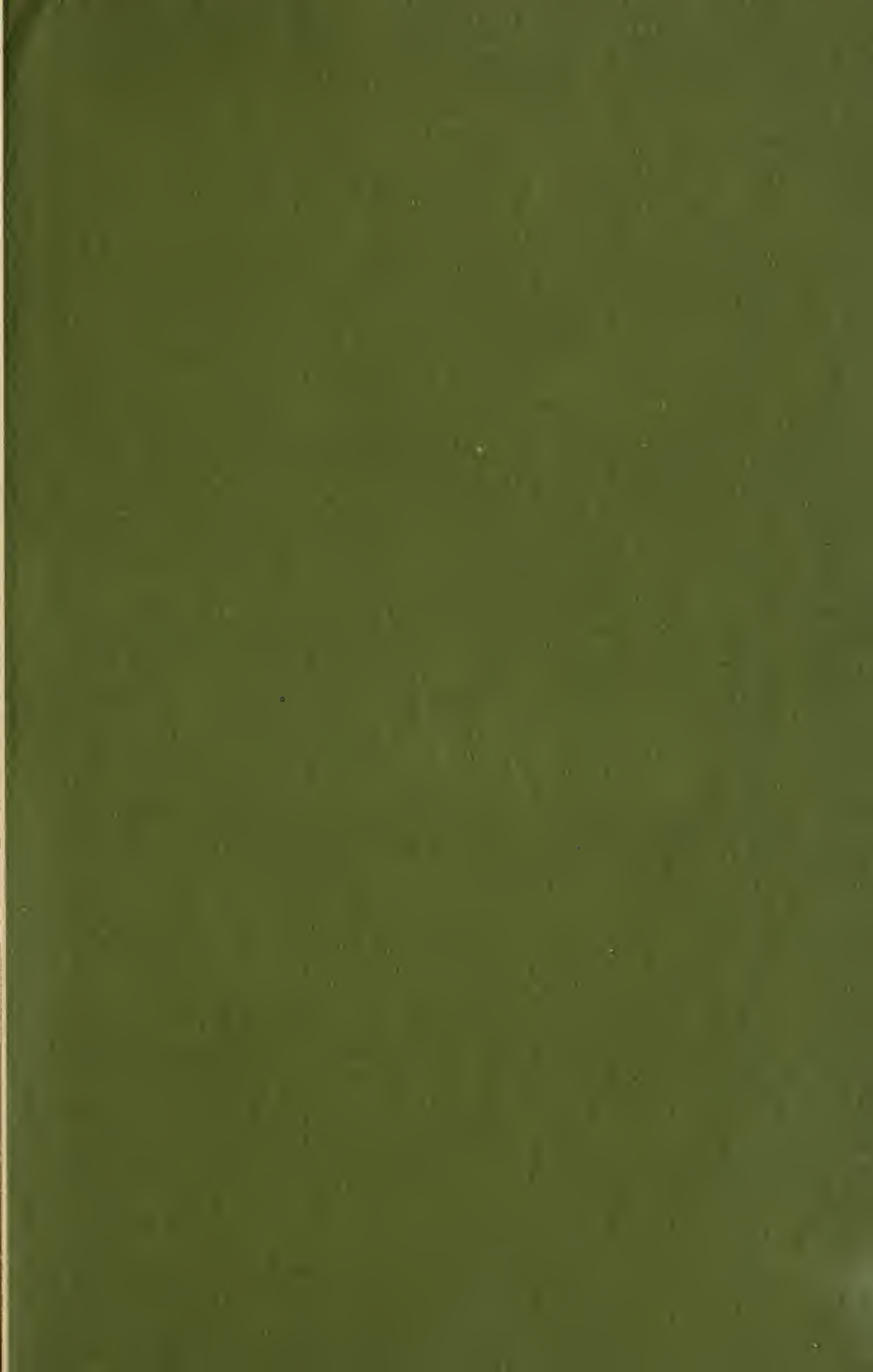
*The Scene
of Many
Noteworthy
Parades*

From an obscure beginning to a position of world-wide importance, from a country road to the Nation's greatest street—within the span of a single century—this is the remarkable transformation of Fifth Avenue. Unparalleled in progress and achievement, held in high esteem for its historic associations and present importance, who can foretell to what higher plane destiny may lift this marvellous thoroughfare?

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