



Saml B. Ruggles

THE STORY OF
GRAMERCY PARK
1831-1921

BY
JOHN B. PINE



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IN RECOGNITION
OF THE FORESIGHT AND LIBERALITY
OF
SAMUEL B. RUGGLES, LL. D.
ON THE NINETIETH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE DEDICATION
OF
GRAMERCY PARK

Gramercy Park

ITS ORIGIN AND HISTORY

GRAMERCY PARK can hardly boast antiquity as one of its charms, but it is interesting to know that its name dates back to the days of Dutch occupation, when the "little crooked knife" brook which meandered from Madison Square to the East River near 18th Street acquired the designation of "Crommessie" which has been modernized into "Gramercy." The name, which is variously spelled Krom Messie, Crummashie, and Crommesshie, certainly can claim a respectable age, for it appears in a deed made in 1674 by Judith Stuyvesant, widow of Governor Peter Stuyvesant, which refers to "a parcel of land lying beyond the fresh water [Collect Pond] nigh the Bowery beyond the neighborhood of Crommessie," and occurs in the Minutes of the Common Council of September 16, 1692, when it was "Ordered that Alderman Kipp and Alderman John Merritt, Capt. Teunis de Key and Mr. Gerritt Doun do view the highways from the fresh water unto Crummashie Hill."

On a map of old farms prepared for *Valentine's*

Manual in 1853 by Cornelius De Witt, the farm which included what is now Gramercy Park is designated as "Krom Messie," and the recurrence of the name "Crommesshie" in the Council Minutes of January 19, 1710/11, and in a deed to Cornelius Tiebout, dated September 20, 1748, shows that the name was in common usage, in 1761, when James Duane acquired the farm by deed from Gerardus Stuyvesant, a grandson of the Governor, and named it "Gramercy Seat," thus unconsciously suggesting the name long afterwards bestowed upon the Park. In the *Manual* of 1856, Mr. Valentine says that "Crummashie Hill was an eminence near Governor Stuyvesant's Farm," adding the explanation that "Mr. DeWitt in his compilation of the old farms of New York has written the name Krom Messie and given a derivation of that name to the shape of the farm upon which it was situated, as being that of a shoemaker's knife." That the name "Crommessie" was a combination of the Dutch words "Krom" meaning "crooked" and "mesje" meaning "little knife" seems probable; and the explanation that "Gramercy" is an Anglicized version of the original name is the most plausible explanation of its origin which has been offered, but it seems much more likely that as a local name it was suggested by the crooked turns of a brook rather than by the boundaries of a farm.

The "Outline of the Title of Samuel B. Ruggles to his lands between 15th Street on the South, 28th Street on the North, the Bloomingdale Road and Old Post Road on the West, and the First Avenue on the East," of which a printed copy is preserved in the New York Historical Society, refers to a map made by Edwin Smith, Surveyor, comprising five parcels, one of which is "The Gramercy Farm, lying between 19th Street on the South, 23rd Street on the North, the Bloomingdale Road on the West and the Second Avenue on the East, containing about 22 acres." This document also quotes the tradition as to the "transport" by Judith Stuyvesant and mentions "another conveyance dated in the ninth year of his Sacred Majesty, King William the Third, Anno Domino, 1697," in which certain lands are described as being "in the Bowery ward near unto a certain place or rising hillock called Crommessie" and as being bounded "south by the lands of Antonio, the free negro."

To Samuel B. Ruggles Gramercy Park owes its existence and as a demonstration of the value of intelligent "City Planning" the creation of the Park can hardly be surpassed. Time has proved, and the Court of Appeals has decided, that the dedication of a small space in the midst of a great city to the beauty of Nature and to the enjoyment

of light and air and sunshine may determine the character and commercial value of a whole neighborhood. But for the foresight which gave us the Park, the space which it occupies would now be covered with buildings; the streets surrounding it would be as dull and monotonous as most of the other streets in New York and the city would be receiving no more in taxes than it does at present from other localities which lack the advantage now enjoyed by the owners and residents who are so fortunate as to share the simple luxuries of the grass and trees of Gramercy Park. The care and forethought which were expended in establishing the Park, which have been so amply justified, are best shown by the deeds conveying the property, which are unique in the documentary history of the City and which express with old-fashioned verbiage and a quaint minuteness of detail the purpose of the founder. These consist of a deed executed on the seventeenth of December, 1831, by Samuel B. Ruggles and Mary R. Ruggles, his wife, by which they conveyed to Charles Augustus Davis, merchant, Thomas L. Wells, counsellor-at-law, Robert D. Weeks, gentleman, Thomas R. Mercein, gentleman, and Philo T. Ruggles, counsellor-at-law, forty-two lots of land lying between Twentieth and Twenty-first streets, having an area of 520 feet by 184 feet. The deed recites that:

Samuel B. Ruggles proposes to devote and appropriate the said forty-two lots of land to the formation and establishment of an ornamental private Square or Park with carriage-ways and footwalks at the south-eastern and north-western ends thereof for the use, benefit and enjoyment of the owners and occupants of sixty-six surrounding lots of land belonging to the said Samuel B. Ruggles and with a view to enhance the value thereof,

and in order to effectuate these purposes conveys the property "Upon Trust, nevertheless, for the uses, intents and purposes hereinafter expressed and declared." These purposes were to erect "an iron fence with a stone coping and ornamental gates," enclosing "an ornamental Park or Square," and "to lay out within such Park or Square ornamental grounds and walks, and plant and place therein trees, shrubbery, and appropriate decorations . . ." and to "preserve, maintain and keep the said Park or Square, and the said plantations and decorations in proper order and preservation," and also

at all times hereafter permit, suffer and allow the owner and owners of any and every of the said sixty-six lots surrounding the said Park and to the families of such owners and also to the respective tenants under such owner or owners and their families, to have ingress and egress to and from such Park or Square,

to frequent, use and enjoy the same as a place of common resort and recreation under and subject always to such rules and regulations as the owners of two-thirds in number of the said lots . . . shall from time to time make, establish and prescribe.

This deed also provides that when and as often as three of the Trustees shall die, or remove from the City, or resign, the surviving Trustees shall cause the title to be vested in themselves, and three other Trustees to be nominated by the owners of the major part in number of the lots surrounding the Park. By the same instrument Mr. Ruggles imposed upon the sixty-six surrounding lots, which were afterwards reduced to sixty by the opening of Lexington Avenue and Irving Place, the restriction which has preserved the character of the Park as a residential neighborhood and excluded business in a covenant that neither he, nor his heirs or assigns, would at any time erect within forty feet of the front of any of the sixty lots "any other buildings save brick or stone dwelling houses of *at least* three stories in height"; this being the first attempt to limit the height of buildings in New York. The same covenant also excluded the erection of buildings for business purposes or for any purpose dangerous or offensive to the neighboring inhabitants and empowered the Trustees and the owner of any of the adjacent



THE WEST FOUNTAIN

lots to take legal proceedings to prevent its violation. Subsequently, on December 24, 1833, by a confirmatory deed Mr. Ruggles and his wife granted to the owners of lots and all subsequent owners the right and privilege to frequent, use, and enjoy the said Park or Square as an easement to their respective lots, the owners at that time being Charles Augustus Davis, Sidney Brooks, Robert D. Weeks, Seixas Nathan and Charles C. King.

It was in 1831 that Samuel B. Ruggles purchased "Gramercy Seat," or a large part of it, from the heirs of James Duane, and the story of his purchase and of the use which he made of it cannot be told better than by quoting from the address of President King, "Progress of the City of New York during the last Fifty Years," delivered before the Mechanics' Institute on December 29, 1851.

Another citizen who has devoted rare intelligence, precious years, and large sums of money to the advancement, embellishment, and solid progress of the City, is Samuel B. Ruggles. In 1831, he became possessed of a portion of the old Duane Farm. This farm had a front of about four hundred feet on the Bowery road, and ran thence easterly almost to the river, with some upland, but much morass, overgrown with cat-tails, and through which wandered a stream known as the Crumme-Vly, or Winding

Creek. The heirs, five in number, estimating the value of the property according to its frontage on the Bowery, divided the farm by that front, four hundred feet, into five equal parcels, and thus constituted narrow strips of land nearly half a mile long, and eighty feet wide. One of these fifths having been acquired by Mr. Ruggles in the year 1831 he forthwith set himself at work to make it available. Between him and the actual City was the Bowery Hill, twenty feet above the level—behind him morass. It was clear that the latter was of little value without the former. After incredible difficulties, he succeeded in obtaining both the Bowery Hill and the morass, covering together more than fifty acres, and very soon tumbled the one into the other to the amount of some three millions of loads, at a cost of \$180,000—and squaring the lines as he went along, and regulating the lots, he planted on the edge of the morass, in December 1831, Gramercy Park, by gratuitously giving the whole of the sixty-six lots it comprises—now worth two hundred thousand dollars—and attaching to the grant a condition that ten dollars a lot should be annually paid forever by the residents around the square, as a fund out of which to plant, preserve and adorn it. Disdaining, too, the personal vanity of entailing his own name upon this creation of his own energy and property, he preserved the name by which the old Duane estate was known, the Gramercy Seat—corrupted, probably, from the Crooked Creek, or Crumme-Vly, which meandered through its meadow.

Next came, in 1833, Union Square, made up chiefly

of those "Children of Necessity" to which allusion has heretofore been made, fragmentary lots, which, after much trouble and labor on the part of Mr. Ruggles and others, and with the aid of the Legislature, were reduced to the sightly and admirable square, with its wide open area of streets around, which we all now admire. The assessment for lands for this square was \$110,000, and it was imposed upon lots as far as Gramercy Park, of which very many belonged to Mr. Ruggles who thus contributed largely in money as well as personal exertions to this embellishment of the City. In walking, upon one occasion, round this square with Rev. Dr. Hawks, Mr. Ruggles was expatiating upon the value, for all time, of such squares in a great city. "Come what will," said he, "our open squares will remain forever imperishable. Buildings, towers, palaces, may moulder and crumble beneath the touch of time; but space—free, glorious, open space—will remain to bless the City forever." "And do you not perceive the reason?" was the prompt return of Dr. Hawks; "Man makes buildings but God makes space," thus stamping as it were, the signet of the Almighty on the labors of Mr. Ruggles to perpetuate to his fellow-citizens, for all time to come, Heaven's boon of free air and open space. Mr. Ruggles also cut through his own property two wide streets, parallel with and between the Third and Fourth Avenues, and being allowed by the Corporation to name them, he again avoided the temptation of personal feeling, and called the one Irving Place, after our admirable fellow-townsmen, whose gentle

and genial humor and fine literary taste and talents have illustrated our City and nation—the other he named, with the just pride of a New England man, Lexington Avenue after that battlefield where the first blood was shed for independence.

The man, so well described by President King, was the son of Philo Ruggles, Surrogate and District Attorney of Dutchess County. He was born in New Milford, Connecticut, April 11, 1800, and was graduated from Yale in 1814. Subsequently he studied law, was elected to the Assembly in 1838 and took an active part in public affairs, particularly in the development of the Erie Canal. His report on the Finances and Internal Improvements of the State of New York was an epoch-making document in promoting the commercial prosperity of the State. He was a commissioner of the Croton Aqueduct and represented the United States abroad at several monetary and other congresses. He also took a keen interest in public education, was Mr. Astor's chief adviser in founding the Astor Library, going abroad to purchase books for its collection and serving as one of its trustees. He was also a trustee of Columbia College for many years, and was largely instrumental in broadening its scope and increasing its efficiency. Yale University recognized his attainments and civic spirit by

conferring upon him the degree of Doctor of Laws, but the Park which he has left us will best keep his memory green.

After the establishment and beautification of Union Square as a public park had been secured Mr. Ruggles devoted his attention and efforts to the development of Gramercy Park. It can only be surmised that this act may have been prompted in part by his familiarity with some of the many similar oases which add so greatly to the charm and attractiveness of many parts of London. In creating Gramercy Park, the only park on Manhattan Island which has cost the City nothing, and has always paid taxes indirectly, if not directly, Mr. Ruggles conferred a boon not only upon the residents of the Park but upon the multitudes who pass it daily, and whose toilsome way is cheered by the greenness of its sward or a glimpse of sky and sunshine through its branches. The laying out of Gramercy Park represents one of the earliest attempts in this country at "City planning" and had this example been followed by other large real estate owners, New York would be a vastly more beautiful city than it is to-day. A bronze medallion portrait of Mr. Ruggles upon a marble pedestal has recently been erected in the Park, and his generosity and service in creating the Park is recorded upon a stone which lies in front of the westerly park gate and which bears the

inscription: "Gramercy Park founded by Samuel B. Ruggles, 1831: commemorated by this tablet imbedded in The Gramercy Farm by John Ruggles Strong, 1875."

During the first thirteen years after the Park was deeded to the Trustees slow progress was made towards realizing the ideals of its founder, but it appears to have been enclosed with a fence and graded when the first recorded meeting of the Trustees was held on November 15, 1844, at the residence of James W. Gerard who lived at No. 16, which is still owned by his namesake. In the interval three of the original Trustees died or resigned, and Norman White, James W. Gerard, then a prominent real estate lawyer, and William Samuel Johnson, a grandson of the first president of Columbia College, had been chosen to replace them. Under the presidency of Charles Augustus Davis, one of that group of old New Yorkers whom Philip Hone has commemorated so delightfully in his Diary, the new Trustees proceeded to develop "an ornamental Square or Park" by awarding a contract to one James Virtue, whose very name was a happy omen, to set out "one thousand healthy plants called Privet or Prim, being considered a quantity sufficient to surround the said Park inside its fence," an order which has been duplicated by their successors within the

last few years with a promise which would have gratified the original gardener. They also ordered a hundred trees, including Horse Chestnuts, Willows, Lindens, Helianthus, Maples, Catalpas, Elms, Beech, Ash, Poplars, Sycamores, Walnuts, and Mulberries. Of these the only survivors are a fine old Elm and a Willow which has been commemorated in the graceful lines of Mr. Seabury Lawrence:

Old willow tree, if you could tell
The secrets that you know so well—
How much of life's eternal lore
You must have kept in mem'ry's store.

For you have watched the children play,
Grow serious and go away;
And you have seen, beyond the gate,
Some great men pass—to meet their fate.

How far the whirling city seems
Within your graceful, quiet shade—
A place for dalliance and dreams
Before a pilgrimage is made.

But to your secrets you are wed;
These tales are not for such as me;
Let's mind what gallant Kilmer said—
"It's only God can make a tree."

The new Trustees also appointed a committee to prepare plans for a fountain and it is significant

of their ambitious ideals that the committee recommended in favor of "the plan of one of the fountains erected in front of St. Peter's Church in Rome, which are acknowledged to be the most beautiful in Europe." The cost was estimated at \$5,300, "to be provided by the voluntary contributions of lot owners." Unhappily this enthusiastic effort of the Trustees met with a cold response, and when the plan was presented to the lot owners at a meeting held in April, 1846, the fountain instead of being erected in the Park was laid on the table. Two years later a fountain of more modest design was erected and it was apparently surmounted by a statue, for in 1866 the treasurer was directed "to replace it with a new statue." The age of the nymph who has so long presided over the Park is thus determined, and it may be some consolation to the older residents, who had grown familiar with her presence and resented her displacement by the Booth statue, to learn that she still has a place of honor, even if somewhat less conspicuous.

As substitutes for the fountain which was for so many years the central feature of the Park, and which was displaced to provide a site for the statue of Edwin Booth, two smaller fountains have recently been erected, one at each end of the Park, which are an addition both to its beauty and to its interest. The fountains, each of which consists of



THE OLD FOUNTAIN

a basin of very graceful, semi-circular form, and a pedestal, were designed by Mr. Charles I. Berg, Architect, and face the easterly and westerly entrances of the Park. The pedestal of the easterly fountain is surmounted by the statue of the water nymph, which for over fifty years stood on the summit of the original fountain now removed, and which, relieved of many coats of white and gold paint and restored to its natural pewter color, proves to be a very charming feature in its present setting of trees and shrubs, far more so than it ever was in its more exalted, but less suitable perch. The westerly fountain has already proved a still greater addition to the Park, as it has led to the erection upon the pedestal, which forms one side of the basin, of a marble shaft bearing a bronze medallion portrait of Samuel B. Ruggles, admirably executed by Edmond T. Quinn, the sculptor of the Booth statue, and the inscription "Samuel B. Ruggles—Founder of Gramercy Park—1831," thus perpetuating the features and the name of the benefactor to whom so many are indebted, and appropriately commemorating the liberality and foresight which created the Park as an oasis in the midst of a dry and barren land. This memorial, which was the gift of Mr. John R. Strong, a grandson of Mr. Ruggles, cannot but be gratefully accepted by all who enjoy the Park as a long deferred and richly

earned recognition of the boon which the donor conferred upon his fellow citizens of many generations.

For many years the annual charge upon each lot was ten dollars, and the amount was so inadequate as to lead to almost pathetic appeals to the lot owners on the part of the Trustees for contributions to maintain the Park, until about 1877, when the assessment was increased to thirty dollars. During these years meetings of the lot owners were frequently held in the Gramercy Park House, a hotel much resorted to by Southerners and Cubans, which occupied the easterly frontage of the Park from 1860 until about 1880, and which played an important part in the history of the Park while it was under the management of Curtis Judson who was its proprietor for many years. Here were discussed many burning issues, such as the question of allowing baseball playing in the Park, and, twenty years later, of allowing croquet and lawn tennis, and it is evidence that great minds can take an interest in small affairs when we find Samuel J. Tilden and Cyrus W. Field uniting with the other Trustees in an appeal to the lot owners to preserve the "ornamental" character of the Park and to exclude "games which will engender disputes and ill feeling." In this opinion they were supported by a large majority of the lot owners.

A much more real danger menaced the Park in 1890, when a bill was passed by the Legislature, permitting the construction of a cable road through the Park in spite of the strenuous opposition of the Trustees who expressed their gratitude to Governor David B. Hill for refusing to sign the bill by sending him an engrossed letter of thanks. Twenty-two years later the Park was again similarly threatened when the Board of Aldermen adopted an ordinance for the condemnation of an easement under and through its grounds for the construction of a subway.

In 1902 the residents of the Park were aroused by the proposed building of the Irving Hotel, and a suit for an injunction was brought by Mrs. Gallatin, the owner of a lot fronting on the Park. Several meetings of the lot owners were held in the Quaker Meeting House at which the Hon. John Bigelow presided, at which the right of the lot owners to the exclusion of business structures from the Park was warmly discussed, and about a thousand dollars was subscribed toward the expense of prosecuting the suit for an injunction. The result turned upon the question whether a "hotel" was a "dwelling house," within the meaning of the term as used in the covenant in the Ruggles deed, which forbids the erection of any building on the Park except a "dwelling house." It was decided by the Courts that the building of a

private family hotel, divided into apartments for residential purposes was not a violation of the covenant, but the right of the owners to exclude business occupation was recognized.

The most serious attack upon the Park, however, occurred in 1903, when the City assessed it for purposes of taxation at \$750,000, subsequently reduced to \$500,000. The Trustees protested that the Park was a public benefit, and as such ought not to be taxed, and also that the additional taxes derived from the enhanced value of surrounding property more than compensated the City for any loss from non-taxation of the Park. The City authorities, however, refused to remit the tax and the Trustees thereupon retained counsel to contest the claim of the City, and under the able advice of Mr. Henry B. Anderson proceeded to defend the rights of the lot owners in the Courts. A memorial to the Legislature was also prepared and printed, and a bill was introduced exempting the Park from taxation, but the attempt to secure relief from the Legislature met with no success. The Park was again assessed in 1904, and succeeding years, and proceedings were commenced to set aside the assessments, the tax being paid under protest.

After seven years of litigation the assessments were vacated, and the Park was declared to be exempt from taxation. The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court (139 App. Div. 83), before

which the appeal was argued, held that the title to the Park was vested in the Trustees, that the lot owners had an easement in the Park, *i.e.*, a right to use it as a park, and that the Tax Commissioners had included the full value of the park privileges in their assessment of the surrounding lots with the result that the assessed value of such lots was several hundred dollars per front foot in excess of the value of other lots in the same part of the City, the total excess amounting to \$660,000. The conclusion of the Appellate Division was that the City, having added to the market value of the surrounding lots a sum equal to the estimated value of the easements, which exceeded or equalled the value of the Park itself, it could not assess the value of the Park a second time against either the Trustees, who held the fee, nor by necessary consequence, against the owners of the land benefited by the easement. This decision, which was affirmed by the Court of Appeals (200 N. Y. 519), furnishes a complete answer to the not infrequent newspaper attacks which are made upon the Trustees and lot owners for maintaining the "privacy" of the Park, as it is a judicial finding that in so doing they are merely exercising the right which every property owner has to the enjoyment of property which he has bought and paid for. As such owners they are fortunate in possessing a "front yard" as well as a

"back yard," and their right to the exclusive use of the one can no more be questioned than their right to the exclusive use of the other. As the result of this litigation the City was compelled to refund the taxes which had been paid, pending the controversy. The sum so refunded amounted with interest to \$105,067.48, which was distributed among the lot owners after deducting the expenses of the litigation, except the sum of about \$12,000 which, by the consent of certain of the owners, the Trustees retained as an Endowment Fund for the maintenance of the Park. With the aid of the income afforded by this fund the Trustees have been and will be able to expend more upon the care of the Park; considerable improvement has already been effected, and its future maintenance has been more fully assured.

In 1912 the Gramercy Park Association was organized by residents and others interested "to preserve and maintain the residential character of the neighborhood of Gramercy Park and to promote the interests and comfort of the property owners and residents of the neighborhood." At the moment the Park was threatened by the proposed extension of Irving Place through the Park to Lexington Avenue as incident to the construction of the Lexington Avenue Subway, and the particular object of the Association was to prevent this invasion, but happily, it was averted



THE PARK IN SUMMER

by a change of plan on the part of the City. A few years later the Association was able to render an important service by securing the inclusion of the streets surrounding the Park as a "Residential District" under the Zoning System adopted by the City on July 25, 1916, thereby reinforcing the restriction contained in the deeds of lot owners which precludes the erection of buildings on the Park except for residence. It is the aim of the Association, so far as lies in its power, to develop a community spirit, and to encourage and aid the efforts of organizations such as the Gramercy Music Committee, the Gramercy Boys Club, and the like, having as their object the immediate interests of the Park or the improvement of the condition of our East Side neighbors.

OLD INHABITANTS

So much for the bare facts which comprise the history of Gramercy Park as an acre or two of ground surrounded by an iron fence, but any account of the Park which should omit its human history would be sadly inadequate, for while there are many historic sites on Manhattan Island identified with more stirring events there are few, if any, which have so continuous a history or which, in the transformation of the City, have so long preserved their original character. Here the

spirit which led James Duane to abandon "Gramercy Seat" to serve with Washington found new expression when the Park was turned into an encampment during the Civil War for the militia then protecting the City in the Draft Riots, and still later when "Pershing House" was established in the residence of Mrs. Schieffelin as a canteen for our troops returning from France. Here have been decided questions of national and even international moment, and art and literature have found a congenial atmosphere, and here three generations have lived to enjoy the quiet seclusion of the Park.

The story of the men, who if they have not brought fame to our modest little Park have certainly enriched it with many associations, may well begin with James Duane for he was as fine an example of the patriot of the Revolution as New York produced. A lawyer of prominence and of high social standing, having married the daughter of Colonel Robert Livingston, he was the friend of John Jay and Alexander Hamilton, and like them an ardent advocate of civil and religious freedom. He seems to have enjoyed to an unusual degree the confidence of his fellow citizens and was chosen to represent them as a member of the Continental Congress, of the State Senate when it was first organized, and of the Constitutional Convention of 1788, and it was only the fact that he was serving

in the Provincial Congress of 1776, called to frame a State Government, which prevented him from being a signer of the Declaration of Independence. He was also active in municipal affairs and served for many years as a warden of Trinity Church and as a governor of Kings College, of which he became a trustee when its name was changed to Columbia. At the close of the Revolution he re-entered the City with Washington on November 25, 1783, to find his house in King, now Pine, Street practically destroyed, but his farm "Gramercie Seat in pretty good order, having been occupied by one of the British generals." Unfortunately no description or view of the "Seat" exists, and the only reference to the site is found in the Ruggles abstract of title which states that:

The whole of the land forming "the rising hillock of Crommessie" has recently been excavated to a depth of seventeen feet below the natural surface, but a vestige of Judge Duane's possession yet remains in the lower section of his well, walled up with brick, on the lots purchased by Messrs. Davis and Brooks on the west side of the Park.

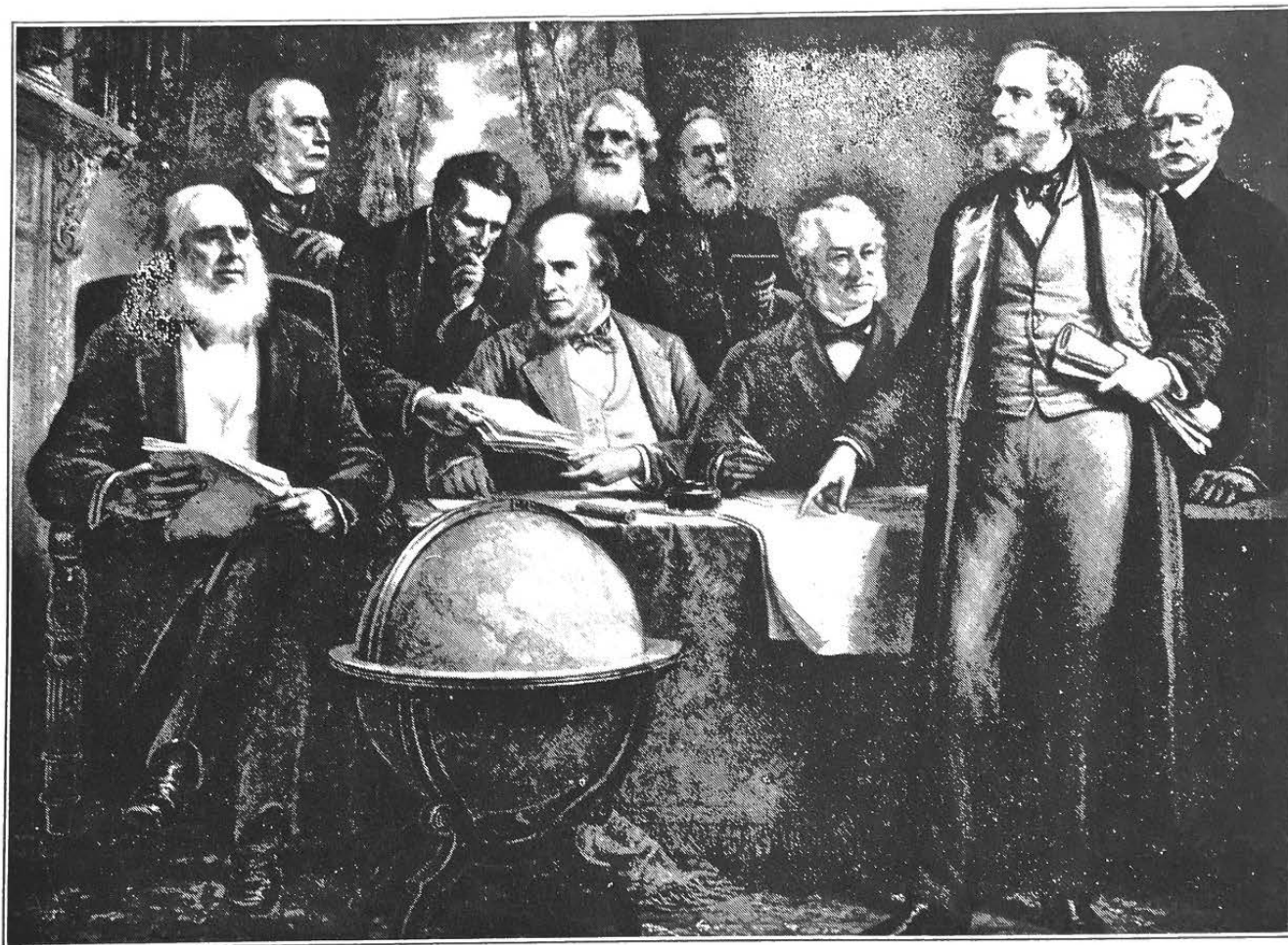
At this time the mayoralty of the city was an appointive office, the selection resting with the Governor of the State, and the Common Council promptly petitioned the Governor to appoint Duane the first Mayor of the City, "as no one," they say in

their petition, "is better qualified, so none will be more acceptable to us and our constituents at large than Mr. Duane. Few have sacrificed more or deserved better from their country." Accordingly he was appointed Mayor of the City in 1784, and served for six years, during which he officially welcomed Congress when it assembled in New York in 1785 and in 1789, and received Washington as the President of the new republic. On his retirement as Mayor he was appointed by Washington Judge of the United States District Court of New York and served in that capacity with the ability and fidelity which distinguished his whole career. Gramercy Park has had two other Mayors and many distinguished residents since Duane's time, but he may well be remembered as being in a literal sense its first citizen.

Among the earliest to appreciate the advantages which the Park offered as a place of residence was Peter Cooper, who purchased the lots at the corner of Lexington Avenue and 22d Street, and completed the building of No. 9 Lexington Avenue in 1848, and here he lived until his death in 1883. The house was constructed on piles over a small stream, which was doubtless the historic "Cromessie" brook, and is supported on two central walls. The lintels are of cast iron, probably the first ones made, and were cast in Mr. Cooper's iron foundry. Originally the house had a high stoop

but this was removed in 1884 and the present basement entrance, the first alteration of the kind, was constructed by Mrs. Abram S. Hewitt with the help of Stanford White, then a rising young architect. Mr. Cooper had a private entrance to his stable on 22d Street, and until he was an old man, invariably drove to business in his one horse shay, which is still preserved in Cooper Union. On Sundays he habitually walked to All Souls Church to hear the Rev. Dr. Bellows preach, and his granddaughter, who often accompanied him, recalls that in these walks they always found, seated on the steps of 17 Gramercy Park, an old Irish woman in a poke bonnet and a plaid shawl, to whom Mr. Cooper invariably gave one of the numerous ten cent pieces with which he always provided himself for such appeals. Mr. Cooper was certainly one of the most picturesque figures associated with the Park, and it is pleasant to recall the fact that the Trustees presented him with a key, and to imagine his satisfaction in witnessing the beginning of its growth and, as saplings became trees, to picture his venerable figure seated under their shade. His career is a remarkable story of unaided ability coupled with persistence and inventive genius. His industry was indefatigable and his inventions covered the most extraordinary range, from a contrivance to "rock the cradle," which also kept off the flies and played a music box to amuse the

baby, to a torpedo boat, which he designed in 1824 to blow up the Turks for their inhuman cruelties to the Greeks in their struggle for freedom. He also invented the first lawn-mower, a tide-water wheel, an endless chain three miles in length to convey coal from his mines to his furnaces, and finally a locomotive, the first which was operated on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, which could draw a train of cars around short curves and over rough country. The development of the manufacture of iron was his special interest and he established extensive works at Trenton and also at Ringwood. In 1854, he became the president of the North American Telegraph Company, when it controlled more than half of all the lines then in this country; and also the president of the New York, New Foundland, and London Telegraph Company, thus becoming identified with one of the greatest triumphs of American enterprise, and the accomplishment of a result vital to modern civilization and epoch making in the history of the world, the laying of the Atlantic cable. The leading spirit in this undertaking was Cyrus W. Field and in the library of his house which stood where No. 1 Lexington Avenue now stands was born the project of connecting Europe and America by telegraph, a project which at the time was generally regarded as visionary and utterly impracticable. Mr. Field, Mr. Cooper, and a small group



THE INCEPTION OF THE ATLANTIC CABLE

FROM THE PAINTING OWNED BY THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE. FROM THE LEFT SITTING—PETER COOPER, MARSHALL O. ROBERTS, MOSES TAYLOR. FROM THE LEFT STANDING—DAVID DUDLEY FIELD, CHANDLER WHITE, SAMUEL F. B. MORSE (THE ARTIST IN BACKGROUND) CYRUS W. FIELD, WILSON G. HUNT

including Moses Taylor, Marshall O. Roberts, and Wilson G. Hunt, however, had the imagination, the courage, and the perseverance which such an enterprise demanded, and after overcoming innumerable difficulties and meeting repeated failures; once, when the cable was lost in mid-Atlantic, and again when it parted after having conveyed the first messages; after eight years of persistent effort they finally achieved success. The story of the laying of the cable is a thrilling record of foresight, resourcefulness, and determination, and as the birthplace of the Atlantic cable Gramercy Park enjoys a unique distinction. Mr. Cooper was a staunch supporter of all of Mr. Field's efforts and aided him largely by financial support when a loss seemed more than probable; but with success came profits, and Mr. Cooper is quoted as saying that all the profits which he derived from the Atlantic cable were devoted to the foundation of Cooper Institute. This institution, so named in spite of Mr. Cooper's modest protest, must be regarded as a great educational achievement, not only on account of its direct results in affording a technical education otherwise unobtainable to thousands of students, but as establishing a type of institution which has led to the foundation of countless others of like character, to the inestimable benefit of this and other countries; and no man ever left a nobler monu-

ment or one which has proved more useful to his fellow-men.

Gramercy Park celebrated the completion of the Atlantic cable by a grand illumination and, as the chief promoter of the undertaking and as the man whose energy and persistence contributed most largely to its success, Cyrus W. Field attained world-wide distinction. The greatness of the accomplishment was recognized by Congress, which presented to Mr. Field a gold medal and the thanks of the nation; John Bright described him as the "Columbus of modern times, who, by his cable, has moored the new world alongside the old"; and at the Paris Exposition of 1867, he was awarded the grand medal, the highest prize which it could bestow. The New York Chamber of Commerce elected Mr. Field an honorary member and presented him with a gold medal, and subsequently caused to be executed the painting of the projectors of the Atlantic cable, which is here reproduced. The house which he occupied subsequently became the residence of Henry W. Poor, and through the artistic skill of Stanford White was converted, as to its interior, into a veritable Italian palace, rich in foreign spoil of carvings, tapestries, and furniture, which has been appreciatively described by the author of *The House Dignified*, who incidentally gives us a picture of the Park too charming to be omitted.

The library [he says], overlooks a city square where magnolias blossom in the Spring, and flowers under arching trees bloom all the Summer through. To one who enters here, the quiet stretches of the square and the sky beyond seem suddenly and somehow to belong to libraries, so great is the sense of repose and refreshment they inspire.

David Dudley Field, the brother of Cyrus W. Field, who was also a resident of the Park, was the legal adviser of the cable company and one of the most prominent lawyers in New York. He will always be remembered by the Bar as the author of the Codes of Civil and Criminal Procedure which were adopted by this State and have greatly influenced the judicial procedure of many other States, and furnished the basis of the reforms established by the Judicature Acts of England and several of its Colonies. As counsel for Jay Gould and Jim Fiske in the litigations of the Erie Railroad, and of William M. Tweed in the "Tweed Ring" scandal, and as the originator of the scheme for the Electoral Commission in 1876 which defeated the election of his neighbor, Samuel J. Tilden to the presidency of the United States, Mr. Field gained notoriety at the expense of popularity.

Among the earliest settlers of the Park was James Harper, one of the founders of the firm of Harper Brothers, which published its first book in 1817 and was for many years the leading pub-

lishing house in this country. He lived at No. 4 from 1847 until 1869, and was the second in our succession of Mayors of the City, holding that office in 1844 and 1845. In his *Reminiscences of an Octogenarian* Charles Haswell writes that:

Mayor Harper signalized his administration by active service in the improvement of Madison Square, and in improving the organization of the police department. His administration partook of the purity of that of his early predecessors in the office, but without the *savoir faire* and *pratiques* of some of the local politicians who succeeded him.

It seems that in Mayor Harper's time the police were unorganized and wore no uniform, and that he succeeded with the vigorous support of his neighbor, James W. Gerard, in laying the foundation for the present police department and in putting the force in uniform. The traditional Mayor's lamps still stand in front of his former residence as emblems of his municipal dignity.

Mr. Gerard, already mentioned as a trustee of the Park, in addition to being an eminent lawyer and an authority on Colonial history, was actively interested in the public schools of the City and the prevention of pauperism, and deserves to be remembered especially as the originator of the plan for the establishment of the "House of Refuge for Juvenile Delinquents," which was

incorporated in 1824, and was the first institution of its kind in the United States.

Our third mayor, Abram S. Hewitt, when he married Miss Cooper in 1855 came to live at No. 9 Lexington Avenue and made it his home for nearly fifty years. His brilliant record as a student in Columbia College, from which he graduated in 1842, gave promise of the great career which was fully realized in a long life devoted largely to public service. As a member of the firm of Cooper, Hewitt & Co., in which he was associated with his brother-in-law, Edward Cooper, also at one time Mayor of the City, he had the direction of the Trenton Iron Works, which had been founded by Peter Cooper, and became a pioneer in the manufacture of iron and steel in the United States, managing its affairs with conspicuous ability, and furnishing one of the earliest and most successful demonstrations of the possibility of harmonizing the interests of capital and labor. He was an earnest advocate of technical education for wage-earners and took an active part in the establishment of Cooper Institute, which was throughout his life one of his most absorbing interests and the chief object of his liberality. He was an insatiable reader and profound student of history, and as a speaker was both eloquent and convincing. During the twelve years which he served in Congress he was one of the most influential members of the

House and displayed high qualities of statesmanship. His international reputation as a scientific student of iron and steel production was recognized by the Iron and Steel Institute of England, which presented him with the Bessemer Gold Medal in 1890. He became prominent in City politics in 1871, when, upon the downfall of Tweed, he was made chairman of a committee of citizens to reorganize the Democratic party which had Tilden as its adviser, but while he was a staunch Democrat, he refused to follow his party on the silver issue and fought against it with tongue and pen. When nominated as Mayor in 1886, he said:

No pledges to any party or any set of men have been asked. Nor under any circumstances would I make any other pledge than that which I now fully give, that, if elected, I will discharge the duties according to law to the best of my strength and ability, keeping in view the interest of the whole people without distinction of party and class, and in strict conformity to the legislation affecting the Civil Service and the just demands of the great mass of the people for the removal of abuses which impose taxation without corresponding benefits.

These pledges were fully redeemed during his two years of office in which among other important accomplishments he revolutionized the public school system and placed it upon a much higher

plane, but his greatest service to the City was performed as a member of the Rapid Transit Commission which projected and secured the construction of the first underground railroad on Manhattan Island. To commemorate Mr. Hewitt's services in this connection, the Chamber of Commerce presented him with a gold medal and elected him an honorary member.

A philanthropist in the broadest and truest sense of the word, Mr. Hewitt was especially interested in education and rendered invaluable service as chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Carnegie Institution; as a trustee of Columbia University and Barnard College, of the American Museum of Natural History, and of other institutions, and it has been well said of him that:

Great as were his intellectual qualifications, his heart, more than his brain, often controlled his conduct. Character was his standard of success. He was a worker for humanity, and has made the world better worth living in for those who come after him. He acquired breadth of vision and insight which penetrated beneath the popular opinions and policies of the hour, and advocated principles which are of universal application in all time. He adopted as his motto, "Be just and fear not." It was the keynote of his character and actions. The example of a long life of intense activity and usefulness is his legacy to posterity.

Advancing years only added to the earnestness of his purpose, the keenness of his intellect, and the esteem in which he was held by his fellow-men, and the whole city echoed the sentiment which Richard Watson Gilder so beautifully expressed in the lines to "The Great Citizen" which were read at his funeral:

Mourn for his death, but for his life rejoice,
Who was the city's heart, the city's voice.

Dauntless in youth, impetuous in age,
Weighty in speech, in civic counsel sage;

Talents and wealth to him were but a trust
To lift his hapless brother from the dust,—

This his chief aim, to wake in every man,
The soul to do what only courage can.

He saw the evil, as the wise must see,
But firm his faith in what the world shall be.

Following the truth, he led his fellow men,—
Through years and virtues the great citizen.

By being great, he made the city great,—
Serving the city, he upheld the State.

So shall the city win a purer fame
Led by the living splendor of his name.

Contemporary with Mr. Hewitt was his neighbor, Samuel J. Tilden, who, as governor of the



THE EAST FOUNTAIN

State, and almost as president of the United States has given the Park its greatest political distinction. During that most critical period in the history of the United States, when the election of Tilden or Hayes hung in the balance, when it was even a question whether there might not be another civil war, Samuel J. Tilden was living in the house now occupied by the National Arts Club on the southerly side of Twentieth Street, and the eyes of the nation were focused upon Gramercy Park. For years previously Tilden had been conspicuous as a political power. His public service in breaking up the Tweed Ring and in bringing many of its members to justice led to his election as governor of the State and the reputation and confidence which he gained as a reform governor led to his nomination for the presidency. The Park often echoed to the strains of political bands and witnessed the glare of torchlight processions of enthusiastic supporters, when the headquarters of the presidential campaign of 1876-1877 was at No. 15, but no political excitement ever disturbed the Sphinx-like calm which was Tilden's most striking characteristic. When the Electoral Commission rendered against him a decision which he believed, and which many, if not a majority of his countrymen believed, was based upon fraud, he nevertheless accepted it as conclusive and advised his countrymen to do the same. Recognizing, as he must have done, the

injustice of this decision as it affected him personally, his action could only have been inspired by the highest patriotism, and he should be honored as one of the very few great men of the Republic who have surrendered their highest ambition for the good of their country. Such an experience would have embittered many a man, especially one who had led such a solitary existence as Mr. Tilden, but it is another evidence of his inherent nobility of character that by his will he left practically all of his large estate to the people of the City of New York for the establishment of a public library, the form of gift which he believed would be of the greatest benefit to the greatest number. This bequest led to the consolidation of the Astor and Lenox libraries with the library proposed by Mr. Tilden, which has given New York City the Public Library, one of the City's most precious possessions. Henry Watterson in his recently published *Looking Backward* describes Tilden as the nearest approach to an ideal statesman he had ever known, and gives a picture of him in his home:

To his familiars Mr. Tilden was a dear old bachelor who lived in a fine old mansion in Gramercy Park. Though sixty years of age he seemed in the prime of his manhood; a genial and overflowing scholar; a trained and earnest doctrinaire; a public-spirited, patriotic citizen, well known and highly esteemed, who had made fame and fortune at the bar and had always

been interested in public affairs. He was a dreamer with a genius for business, a philosopher yet an organizer.

Tilden was fortunate in having as his biographer, his friend and neighbor, John Bigelow, who knew him well, and appreciated all his fine qualities. Mr. Bigelow was one of Tilden's executors and was himself the last survivor of the group of men who made the Park famous during the last century. He lived at No. 21 for thirty years and died there in 1911. But many still recall his venerable figure and massive gray head, the very embodiment of the dignity of age, and recall the keen sympathy and quick intelligence with which to the very last he greeted his many visitors. Few, however, recall the important part which he played at a most critical period in the history of the nation, when in 1865 by appointment of President Lincoln, he represented the United States as Minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of France. At this time the issue of the Civil War was uncertain and the sympathies of Napoleon and his government were so strongly on the side of the South that gunboats for the Southern Confederacy were built in the imperial shipyards and equipped from the government ordnance stores. Mr. Bigelow worked in season and out of season to make it impossible for these vessels to get to sea without an open breach between France and the United

States, and his success was a diplomatic triumph of the utmost importance to his country. Previous to his going abroad Mr. Bigelow had been associated with his intimate friend, William Cullen Bryant, on the *Evening Post*, and while abroad he devoted all of his literary skill and ingenuity to counteracting the propaganda actively conducted on behalf of the Southern Confederacy. He also aided the Government in disposing of its securities abroad, and like his great predecessor, Franklin, he was instrumental in securing financial aid from Holland, when the "cotton bonds" of the Confederacy were proving a seductive investment to the capitalists of other European countries. Returning to New York after having accomplished his onerous and difficult diplomatic task with success and distinction, and resuming his literary labors in the quiet seclusion of Gramercy Park, he wrote the *Life of Samuel J. Tilden* and finally *Retrospections of an Active Life*. He was richly entitled to describe his life as "active," for when not engaged in national service he gave the greater part of his time to matters of local interest and importance and held numerous public positions, from that of a member of the Tilden Commission, which broke up the Canal Ring, to the presidency of the New York Public Library. It was a tribute to his remarkable virility that he was elected president of the Cen-

ture Club in his eighty-ninth year and he held that office until his death. At the memorial meeting which was held in his honor the appreciation of the club was happily expressed by one of the speakers who said:

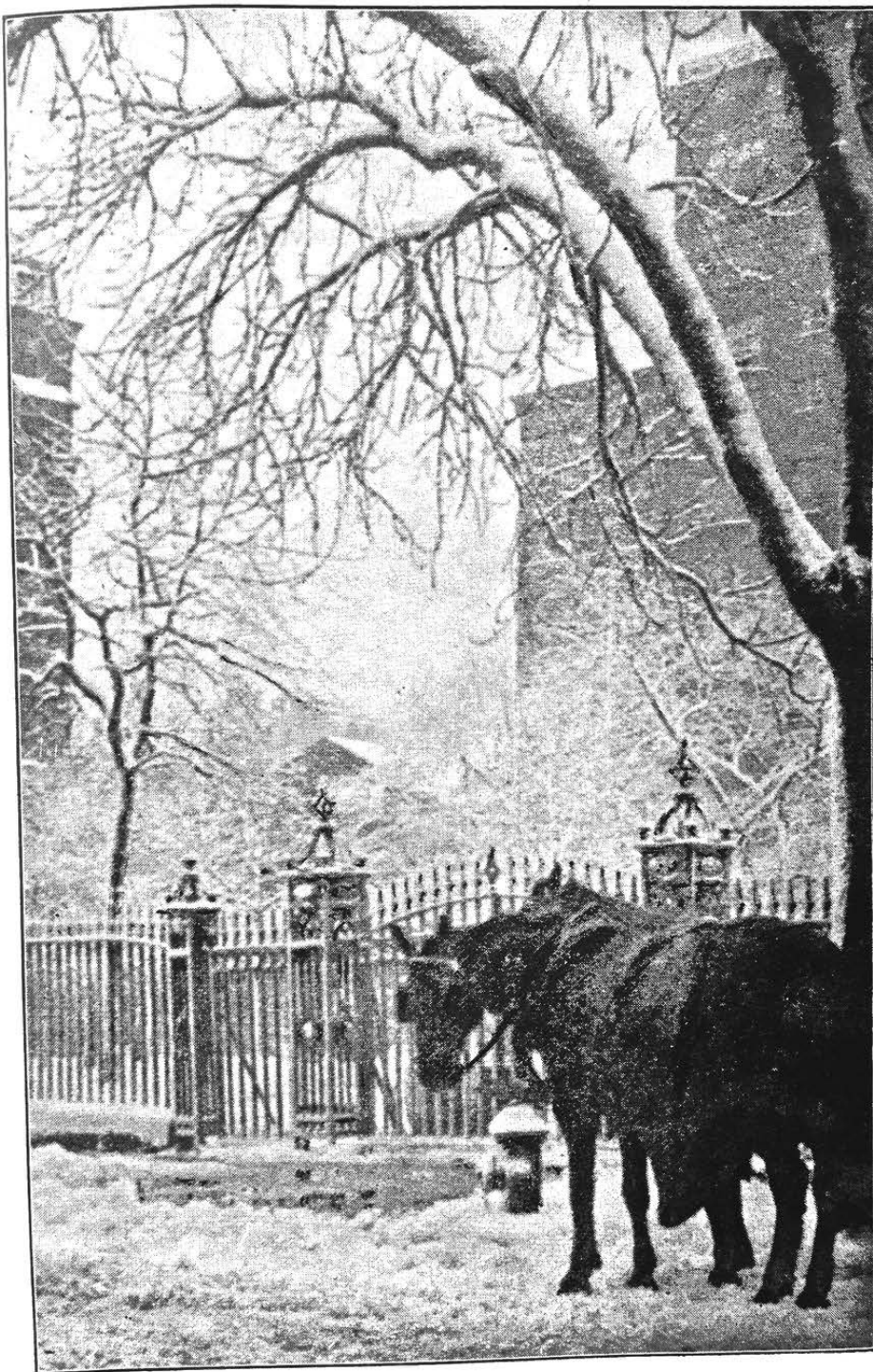
John Bigelow deserves, and will receive from all who knew him and from all who come to understand the work that he did, cordial gratitude and the largest possible measure of appreciation as a sturdy, courageous, and able national representative, a skilled diplomat, a Christian gentleman, and a great citizen.

LAY STONE ON STONE

But the Park has an architectural as well as a biographical story, and if we inquire as to the up-building of the sixty-six lots which Mr. Ruggles laid out on his map, it appears from the City Directories that it was not until about 1851 that they were nearly all built upon and occupied. Even then there were a number of vacant lots but the growth of population is indicated by the establishment of churches in the vicinity.

The first church to be built near the Park was Calvary Church, at the northeast corner of Fourth Avenue and 21st Street, which was erected in 1846, from the designs of James Renwick, and the rectory was built at the same time. The Church had previously occupied a site on Fourth Avenue

near 30th Street, having been organized in 1836. The Rev. Francis L. Hawks, D.D., was the first rector of the Church in its new edifice and during his incumbency the Church increased greatly in numbers and strength. He was succeeded by the Rev. A. Cleveland Coxe, D.D., who resigned to accept the bishopric of Western New York, when the Rev. Edward A. Washburn, D.D., of Philadelphia, was chosen as rector. Upon his death, in 1881, the Rev. Henry Y. Satterlee, D.D., was called to the rectorship, which he held until 1896, when he became Bishop of the Diocese of Washington, D.C. Dr. Satterlee was well described by Theodore Roosevelt as a "practical idealist; he preached realizable ideals, and then practiced them. He not only helped in the reform movement for the City as a whole, but he was a power for good in his immediate neighborhood." During his rectorship of fifteen years he infused new life and activity into the Church, greatly increased the attendance, which included many of the Park residents, and established extensive missionary work on the East Side. His personal charm and fine devotion to his calling made him greatly beloved by his parishioners and a power in the Church at large. It is one of the distinctions of the Park that it has produced two bishops and been the home of a third, for Bishop Greer was for several years one of its residents.



THE PARK IN WINTER

The land for the Friends Meeting House, with a frontage of 106 feet on the Park, was purchased in 1855 for \$24,000, and the edifice, which was completed in 1857, has a long record of social as well as religious usefulness to its credit. During the Civil War the members of the Society took an active interest in the cause of the negroes, or "Freedmen," as they were then called, and in supplying their needs, and the third floor of the building was used as a sewing-room for making garments. In addition to its usual meetings the Society has conducted an American mission and a school for men of the very poorest class, with an attendance of several hundred, who are provided with breakfast and given instruction and amusement. The "annual meeting" is the event of the year and in former days its occurrence was evidenced by the throng of gray-bonneted or gray-coated figures which were seen in the Park, but of late years the picturesque and distinctive garb has almost entirely disappeared.

The Unitarian Church of All Souls was built in 1855, and architecturally is of exceptional interest as it was modeled by Wray Mould, an English architect, after the Basilica of San Giovanni, erected on an ancient foundation in the fourteenth century at Monza in Northern Italy, which it closely resembles both in design and color, and in the contrast of color afforded by the alternate layers

of terra cotta and Caen stone. The first pastor of the church was the Rev. Dr. Henry W. Bellows, one of our great citizens. Eloquent in the pulpit, and on the platform, he was a powerful force in the nation during the Civil War, and as the president and one of the founders of the United States Sanitary Commission, he rendered a service of inestimable value. Through this great organization, which was the predecessor of the American Red Cross, and which Dr. Bellows extended over the entire country and administered with inspiring enthusiasm and consummate ability, over fifteen million dollars was contributed for the relief of our soldiers in food, medical supplies and comforts, and over five millions in money, and the great moral issues of the war were brought home to every Northern household. Through his work for the Commission he was closely associated with President Lincoln and Secretary Stanton and was one of their most trusted and efficient supporters. He was also actively interested in City affairs and was one of the founders of the Union League Club, the Century Club, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Children's Aid Society. He was also the adviser of his neighbor and parishioner, Peter Cooper, in the founding of Cooper Institute, and as the founder and president of the National Conference of Liberal Churches he was a leading member of the Unitarian Church. As a memorial of Dr.

Bellows a full-length bronze tablet, executed by Saint-Gaudens, has been placed in the south transept of the Church.

Among those who were associated with Dr. Bellows in his work for the Sanitary Commission were George Templeton Strong and Miss Louisa Lee Schuyler. Mr. Strong was the treasurer of the Commission. He was a man of broad culture and an author of ability. A graduate of Columbia College, he became one of its trustees and was one of the founders of the School of Mines. He was also the president of the Philharmonic Society and at one time Controller of Trinity Church. Miss Schuyler, when a young woman, was one of Dr. Bellows's most ardent workers and devoted herself to the cause of the Union with the patriotic spirit of her distinguished ancestors, General Philip Schuyler and Alexander Hamilton. Throughout the Civil War she gave herself untiringly to further the efforts of the Commission to provide our troops with medical supplies and care, and displayed the ability which she showed in later years in organizing the Bellevue Training School for Nurses and the State Charities Aid Association, and in establishing State Care of the Insane. In recognition of Miss Schuyler's many and important public services Columbia University conferred upon her the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws.

During the period of the Civil War, while Dr. Bellows and the Sanitary Commission were supplying the needs of our troops at the front, the quiet of the Park was shattered by something very like the din of war, for during the Draft Riots of July, 1863, when negroes were strung up to lamp-posts and the negro Orphan Asylum was burned, Gramercy Park was in the midst of the turmoil. "From the Cooper Institute to Forty-sixth Street," says the *Memorial History of New York*, "Third Avenue was black with human beings who hung over the eaves of the buildings, filled the doors and windows and packed the street from curb to curb." Chief of Police George W. Walling, in his *Recollections* says: "At Third Avenue and Nineteenth Street, I learned for the first time, that riotry was in progress. I was told that the mob had attacked an enrolling office in Third Avenue, driven off the police and set fire to the building." Dr. Austin Flint recalls that he made the acquaintance of Dr. William T. Lusk, when the latter "was in command of a detachment in Gramercy Park during the draft riots of 1863"; and the Minutes of the Park Trustees show that two years later they applied to the Government, unsuccessfully, to be reimbursed for "the expenses incurred by the Trustees of the Park in consequence of its occupation by a military force during the July riots in 1863." Augustus Saint-Gaudens at this time

lived near the Park and in his autobiography he describes the riots, and comments that "later on, as the storm lessened, it was strange to see two cannon posted in Twenty-first Street at the northeast corner of Gramercy Park, pointing due East in the direction of the rioters."

Happily the Park soon resumed its peaceful tenor, and its home life went on as before, perhaps even more actively than at present, for, though it is difficult to realize, it is none the less the fact, that in the early 60's Gramercy Park was only a little northward of and very near the social center of the City, as that was represented by the Academy of Music on Irving Place and Fourteenth Street, then the only opera house which the City possessed and the scene of all large social functions. Here was given the ever famous ball to the Prince of Wales on his visit in 1860, and at least two generations of old New Yorkers, living in the "Age of Innocence," associate with the Academy all their recollections of Italian Opera, Philharmonics, College Commencements, and public receptions. No part of the city, it may be safely asserted, has preserved its original character so consistently or retained its appearance with so little change. In 1883 one of the first coöperative apartment houses built in New York displaced several of the old dwellings at the east end of the Park, and in later years this has been followed by three other

apartment houses, but there still remain most of the original houses built in compliance with the requirement of the trust deed that they should be of brick or stone and should be at least "three stories high."

A CLUB CENTER

The first of the numerous clubs which have now centered about the Park was The Players, founded in 1888 by Edwin Booth to promote "social intercourse between the representative members of the Dramatic profession, and of the kindred professions of Literature, Painting, Sculpture and Music, and the Patrons of the Arts." Mr. Booth presented No. 16 to the Club, after the house, remodeled and decorated by Stanford White with his consummate skill, had been adapted for use as a club. The foremost actor of his time, Edwin Booth, was one of the Park's most famous residents. Representing all that is best and most inspiring in dramatic art, and possessing the mysterious power which held his audiences under a spell, he added the generosity of a large and noble heart and it was characteristic of him that he dedicated the much-loved home in which he spent his declining years to his fellow players. The admirable statue of Booth, which represents him in his favorite rôle of "Hamlet," and now forms the central feature of the Park, was erected by The



EDWIN BOOTH AS "HAMLET"

Players and is both a tribute to his genius and an expression of grateful affection. The unveiling of this statue on November 13, 1918, is to be remembered as one of the most interesting incidents in the history of the Park, and the address of John Drew, the president of The Players, delivered on that occasion, may well be quoted here:

From the poet to whose genius Edwin Booth dedicated his great powers of interpretation I may well take my cue today. You remember that line in *The Merchant of Venice*—"Such harmony is in immortal souls." Out of the immortal memory of Edwin Booth there has flowed the harmony to which we owe this statue, the harmony of many men, working steadily and devotedly together to do honor to his name. Amongst members of The Players, the club which he founded and gave not only to his own profession but to the other arts, the monument was planned and made possible. The Players have fashioned it. The bronze was modeled by the sculptor, Edmond T. Quinn. The pedestal was designed by the architect, Edwin S. Dodge. And that it stands now amid these trees, upon which Booth loved to gaze from the windows of his home yonder, is due also to the courteous coöperation of the Trustees of Gramercy Park, who from the start have sympathized with our project. An immense good will, my friends, has carried the project to its successful completion. I speak of it with feeling. It is as the gift of a company of loyal, loving hearts that I accept, on behalf of The Players,

this statue of the noblest Hamlet the American stage has ever produced, our leader and our friend.

Inspired, perhaps, by the example of The Players, the next club to recognize the advantages of the Park as a site was the National Arts Club which acquired the Tilden mansion, Nos. 14 and 15, with its garden extending to 19th Street, upon which has since been erected an apartment house for the use of members of the Club. During its occupancy, the Club has not only done much "to promote the mutual acquaintance of art lovers and art workers," as its constitution contemplates, but also to create a colony of artists around the Park and in its vicinity. In 1905 the Columbia University Club purchased the house No. 18 Gramercy Park, at the corner of Irving Place, which had been built by Luther C. Clark in 1853, and upon its removal to larger quarters in 1917, the house was rented by the Army and Navy Club which now occupies it. A year or two later the Princeton Club rented the house on the northerly side of the Park at the corner of Lexington Avenue, formerly the home of Stanford White, where it was succeeded by the United Service Club, made up of officers of all the allied armies, during the continuance of the war. The "Tech Club," composed of graduates of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, occupies the old Gerard house, adjoining

the Columbia Club. Another of the group is "De Hollandsche Club" (The Netherland Club), which purchased No. 4 in 1913, and aims to make it the center of the activities of the Hollanders in this City. The sight of the orange, white, and blue flag which is occasionally displayed on the Park flagpole should assure its members that their presence is welcome. The membership of the various clubs represents every phase of art and literature, and philanthropy has its special place in the hotel for the women workers of the New York City Mission and Tract Society, built by Mrs. John S. Kennedy, at the westerly end of the Park. Nor is the Park without its place in literature, for Arthur B. Maurice in *New York in Fiction* tells us that No. 2 was the residence of "Mrs. Leroy" in Hopkinson Smith's *Caleb West*, and that the most dramatic scene in the novel of Edgar Saltus, *The Truth about Tristram Varick*, was laid in the old Field house.

FORMER RESIDENTS

So many men and women, well known in their time, and representing much that was best in the life of the City, have been Park dwellers that it is impossible to do more than add a few names to those already mentioned, but among these should be included Clarkson N. Potter, a son of Bishop Alonzo Potter, who was an influential member of

Congress for ten years and president of the American Bar Association; Henry H. Anderson, a prominent lawyer and president for many years of the University Club; Robert G. Ingersoll, who nominated James G. Blaine at the National Republican Convention in a speech which brought him national fame as an orator; James A. Scrymser, who was the successor of Cyrus W. Field as the promoter of ocean cables, and established cable communications with Central and South America and Mexico; and William Gaston Hamilton, a grandson of Alexander Hamilton, who as an engineer was associated with his neighbor, Mr. Scrymser, in his cable undertakings.

Nor should it be forgotten that at No. 10, as early as 1851, Miss Henrietta B. Haines established her famous school for girls which for many years was the fashionable source of education of the young womanhood of New York, and was supposed to add the highest finish to the charms of Nature. Let us hope that some of her pupils have left descendants among that army of babies, who have been sunned in their carriages, or who as boys or girls have played and romped in the Park, and unconsciously reveled in its air and sunshine since Dr. Hawks reminded Mr. Ruggles that: "Man makes buildings but God makes space."

Two historic names are so closely associated with

the Park that they cannot be omitted, although they were not dwellers on the Park; Washington Irving, who lived for a time at the southwest corner of Seventeenth Street and Irving Place, which identifies his name with the neighborhood; and Theodore Roosevelt, who was born and lived during his boyhood but one block distant, in Twentieth Street, at No. 28, which is to be preserved as a memorial of him. No great stretch of the imagination is needed to visualize the genial author of the Knickerbocker History and the youthful president of the United States in the long procession of old and young which the Park has welcomed within its gates.

As a park given to the prospective owners of the land surrounding it and held in trust for those who have made their homes around it, Gramercy Park is unique in this City, and perhaps in this country, and represents the only neighborhood, with possibly one exception, which has remained comparatively unchanged for more than eighty years. In a city where the tide of progress has swept from the Battery, once the center of social life, almost to the Harlem so relentlessly that but few traces have been left of the family life of a former century, the Park is one of the City's landmarks. Walled in by skyscrapers and looked down upon by the Metropolitan tower, the Park

preserves its quiet seclusion, and its trees and lawns bring new cheer to its residents and passers-by with every recurring spring; rising generations continue to discover in it a happy playground, and perhaps a few of the older generation recall the men and women whose lives are interwoven in its history.



SILVER PITCHERS PRESENTED TO S. B. R. BY THE
FIRST RESIDENTS OF THE PARK

TRUSTEES OF GRAMERCY PARK

	<i>Appointed or Elected</i>	<i>Died or Retired</i>
Charles Augustus Davis	1831	Resigned 1866
Thomas L. Wells	1831	Resigned 1844
Robert D. Weeks	1831	Resigned 1854
Thomas R. Mercein	1831	Died 1844
Philo T. Ruggles	1831	Resigned 1844
Norman White	1844	Resigned 1854
James W. Gerard	1844	Died 1874
William Samuel Johnson	1844	Resigned 1854
Alexander M. Lawrence	1854	Resigned 1877
Eben B. Crocker	1854	Resigned 1866
Charles P. Kirkland	1854	Resigned 1877
Curtis Judson	1874	Resigned 1885
Samuel J. Tilden	1874	Died 1886
Robert T. Woodward	1874	Resigned 1877
Cyrus W. Field	1877	Died 1892
B. Wesley	1877	Resigned 1885
Jonas H. Lane	1877	Died 1908
George R. Read	1885	Resigned 1894
William G. Hamilton	1885	Resigned 1903
Henry H. Anderson	1893	Died 1896
James W. Pinchot	1893	Died 1908
Stuyvesant Fish	1893	
Henry W. Poor	1903	Resigned 1908
John Hone	1903	Died
George Zabriskie	1908	
John E. Cowden	1908	
Grace Bigelow	1916	
John B. Pine	1916	