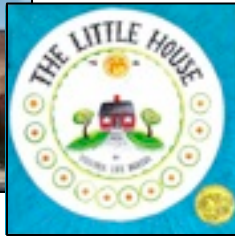


My New York

Post-Visit Activities



"It is never the same city for a dozen years together. A man born in New York forty years ago finds nothing, absolutely nothing, of the New York he knew. If he chanced to stumble upon a few old houses not yet leveled, he is fortunate. But the landmarks, the objects which marked the city to him, as a city, are gone."
(Harpers Magazine, 1856)

Learning Objectives

After visiting the museum, here are some ways to reflect upon and discuss how New York City has changed over time and how the Eldridge Street Synagogue fits into the city's history.

- Discuss why the Eldridge Street Synagogue is a clue to the city's past.
- Compare and contrast *The Little House* with the history of the Eldridge Street Synagogue.
- Stimulate imagination and further exploration through the use of primary sources.

Materials

The Little House
Illustrations in packet

Questions to Consider

How are the stories of The Little House and the Eldridge Street Synagogue similar? How are they different?

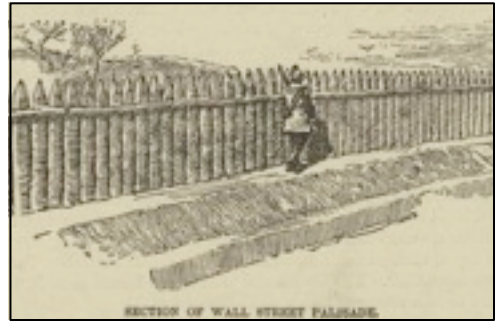
Why is the Eldridge Street Synagogue a clue to the neighborhood's past?

What are other clues to the city's past?



Activities

1. Make a classroom timeline of how New York City has changed. Include clues from the past! For example: Rutgers Street is named after Rutgers Farm.
2. Make a “Did You Know?” booklet about how New York City has changed over time. Here are some fun facts you can include. Add your own facts and illustrations.



Did you know that...?

Wall Street is named after a real wall? Built in 1653 by Peter Stuyvesant, Director-General of New Amsterdam, the wall was originally a picket fence (see above image) but later stood more than ten feet high and stretched from river to river. Why so big? For protection. Stuyvesant built the wall to protect his Dutch colony from feared attacks by Native Americans and the British.

Broadway

The street name “Broadway” comes from the Dutch word, “Breedeweg” or “broadroad.” Broadway is really long! It runs all the way through Manhattan, then the Bronx, then into Westchester County. Broadway finally ends just past Sleepy Hollow, New York, eighteen miles beyond the city!

Bowery

Bowery is another street name with Dutch roots. It comes from the Dutch word for farm “bouwerig.”

Canal Street

Yup, you guessed it! Canal Street is named for a canal that drained Collect Pond into the Hudson River in the 1800s. The pond was filled in 1811. Below an image of that long forgotten Pond and Canal.

The New York City Subway

The subway opened in October 27, 1904. At that time, the Eldridge Street Synagogue was 17 years old. *Question: How did better transportation change New York City?*



Images from the New York Public Library

Further Reading and Ideas

During your visit, we looked at many illustrations of how New York City changed from wilderness to farm, to small town, to modern city. For further classroom reading, your students might enjoy:

1. *Letters to Phil Memories of a New York Boyhood, 1848-1856* by Gene Schermerhorn

Gene Schermerhorn illustrated his stories with many sketches like this one. Here, he shows himself chasing pigs on, of all places, Sixth Avenue in Manhattan!

-Write a letter to Gene describing and illustrating life in the city today. What do the children want to tell Gene? What would surprise Gene about the city today?

-Look at a photograph or visit Sixth Avenue today. How has it changed since Gene was a boy?



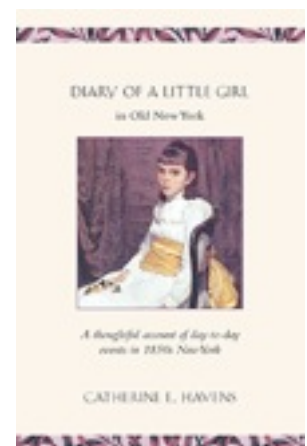
2. *Diary of a Little Girl in Old New York: A thoughtful account of day-to-day events in 1850s New York* by Catherine E. Havens

Here is a description of New York City when Catherine E. Havens was a little girl in 1849.

"New York is getting very big and building up. I walk some mornings with my nurse before breakfast from our house in Ninth Street up Fifth Avenue to Twenty-third Street, and down Broadway home.

"Fifth Avenue is very muddy above Eighteenth Street, and there are no blocks of houses as there are downtown, but only two or three on a block. Last Saturday, we had a picnic on the grounds of Mr. Waddell's country seat way up Fifth Avenue, and it was so muddy I spoiled my new...boots."

-Imagine being Catherine. Would you have liked living in New York City before it was a big city? Why or why not?



Further reading continued...

3. To continue the discussion of how New York City has changed over time, find photographs of familiar New York City locations on these two excellent sites:

<http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/>

<http://collections.mcny.org/C.aspx?VP3=CMS3&VF=Home>



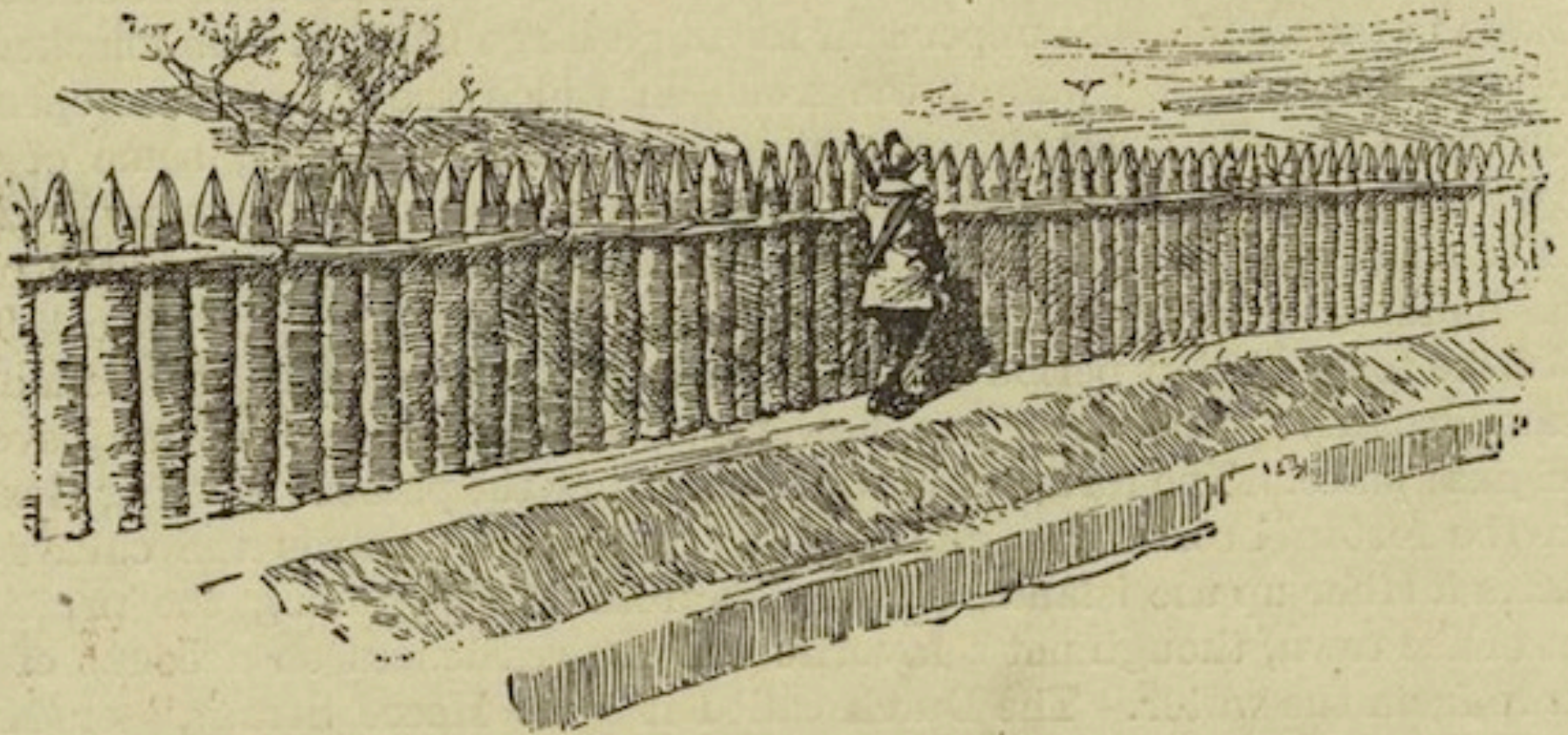
Think about this! How do you feel about change?

Every year, you have a new teacher, new classmates, and new subject. Sometimes change is exciting and other times scary or hard.

Believe it or not, that's how people felt when the horseless carriage was invented. Some people said "yay," and others, like this US Senator said, "no way."

"If I had my way, I would make it a crime to use automobiles on the public highways...perhaps the time will come when horses will be educated to the point where they will not be afraid of automobiles; but I doubt that, for I have not yet seen the time that I was not afraid of them myself."

-Senator Joseph W. Bailey of Texas, 1909



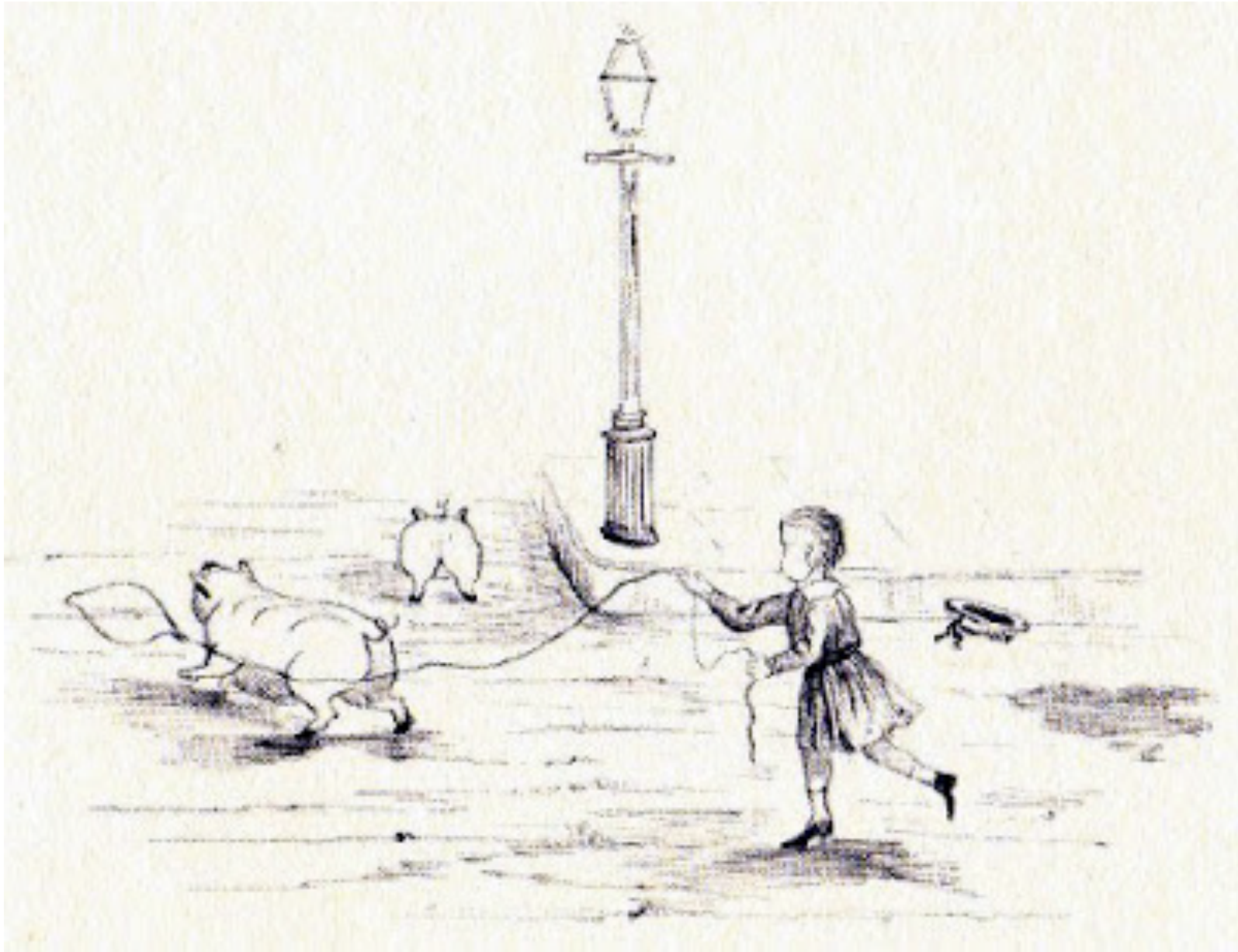
SECTION OF WALL STREET PALISADE.

703,1887

G. NEW YORK CITY - Wall Street - 1600s

N. Y. PUBLIC LIBRARY
PICTURE COLLECTION

Sixth Avenue, around 1848



Letters to Phil Memories of a New York Boyhood 1848-1856
By Gene Schermerhorn