

*Richard Deeves & Son,
Mason Builders.*

*"Mutual Reserve" Building,
Broadway & Duane Sts.*

*Personal Office Hours:
from 11 to 2 P. M.*

New York, June 5, 189 6.

Hon. William L. Strong,
Mayor of New York City.

My dear Mr. Strong:--

Since our Bridge meeting the other day, I have thought seriously of the New York approach to the Bridge, especially the one favored by the majority of the Commission and our chief engineer, and I am only confirmed in the conclusion that it would not be wisdom in the present state of the finances of the united cities, to put upon them the additional burden of widening Delancey street to the Bowery and Clinton street to East Broadway, so as to make proper approaches to the approach proper of the Bridge.

Such approaches, after the required land had been condemned, would cost over seven million dollars, when the re-paving and everything is counted in. The following figures are what I base my calculations on; and when condemnation proceedings are over and everything paid for, you will find that I am not many thousands out of the way:

Increased land for approach, up Delancey street to the Bowery from Clinton street;

80 lots with improvements at \$50,000 each, - - \$4,000,000

Approach from Delancey street to East Broadway
on the line of Clinton street;

50 lots with improvements at \$45,000 each, - - 2,500,000

Repaving, resewering, and re-adjusting Sts., 750,000
\$7,250,000

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New York, 189

(Hon. W. L. S. 2)

As I said at the meeting, I think it would be only common sense on our part in planning this approach, to so plan it that the City in the future could build a highway from the end of the Bridge, say where we turn up at Pitt street, and run north or west from this point. The present natural outlet at the New York end is at Grand and Pitt streets. There is no engineering difficulty in regard to trains making the curve, as the curve from Grand street to Delancey can be made a very easy one, and a train could run around it at the rate of forty miles an hour.

Further, it does not seem to me, as a tax-payer, that it comes within our province to open thoroughfares simply for the accommodation of railroads, as no doubt would be the case, if this were done. This straight line of approach, if the Ullman people were consulted, would no doubt be just the line that would suit them best to get their original scheme through for across town.

You probably are not aware as I am (and I say this in all friendliness to you, and as one of your most ardent admirers) that there is a great deal of grumbling among tax-payers in New York to-day over the increased expenditures in various departments under your administration, which will very seriously handicap us in the next municipal election. Tammany Hall will make good use of these additional expenditures in campaign logic. The facts are there to show increased appropriations; and when people have to go down deeper into their pockets to pay their taxes, the advantages of clean streets are likely to be forgotten.

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3.

You will find that these figures are not far out of the way;
and I would urge you as a sincere friend to carefully consider the in-
creased cost to the City of this straight approach before it is too
late.

Very sincerely yours,

Richard Deeves
Cornell

W. F. DAY, PRESIDENT.

GEO. W. SPRINGER, TREASURER.

L. W. HOW, M. D., SECRETARY.

OTTO MOLLENHAUER, 1ST VICE-PRES.

FRANCIS SHACKELL, 2ND VICE-PRES.

WM. GERMAIN, FIN. SEC'Y.

WILLIAMSBRIDGE IMPROVEMENT LEAGUE,

NEW YORK CITY, March 5th, 1897.

Hon. William Strong,

Mayor of the City of New York.

Dear Sir:

At a meeting of the Williamsbridge Improvement League, an organization composed of taxpayers of Williamsbridge, held March 2nd, 1897 the following resolution was passed and its Secretary directed to forward a copy to your Honor.

Hoping that this matter will receive your favorable consideration, I remain,

Yours respectfully,

Lucius W. How,
Secretary.

WHEREAS the Hon. Douglas Mathewson has introduced into the legislature, a Bill providing for a bridge across the Bronx River between Williamsbridge and Woodlawn:-

RESOLVED by the Williamsbridge Improvement League, that it hereby earnestly endorse this measure, the need of the bridge between these points having become a matter of urgent public necessity in view of opening of Webster Avenue between Williamsbridge and Woodlawn, which work is now in active progress.

This Association would point to the fact, that such proposed bridge would be about the centre of population of the Williamsbridge district, that there is at present no highway leading into that important main thoroughfare, Webster Avenue, between the Gun Hill Road at Williamsbridge and Nineteenth Avenue, Woodlawn, a distance of over one and a half miles, along a territroy on the Easterly side thereof, densely populated for a surburban district.

FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of these resolutions be forwarded by the Secretary to his Hon. the Mayor.

FURTHER RESOLVED that a Committee of three of this Association be formed, consisting of Messrs Alex. U. Mayer, C. Ades and Otto Mollenhauer to represent this Association in the matter, and to take such action in the matter as to said committee may seem expedient, in line with the foregoing resolutions, and to report at the next meeting.

SUBJECT: Bridge over Harlem River at 156th Street, New York.

WAR DEPARTMENT,

WASHINGTON, D. C.,

✓ FILE NO.

April 1, 1897.

Sir:

In connection with my telegram to you of this date, requesting that you withhold your approval of the recent act of the New York legislature in reference to the bridge across the Harlem River at 156th Street, until I could communicate all the circumstances in relation to the matter, I now have the honor to advise you that on September 7, 1891, plans and specifications for a bridge at 155th Street and McComb's Dam Road, to be constructed by virtue of an act of the legislature, were approved by the War Department as required by law.

On June 14, 1892, the President of the Board of Public Works of New York City urged the early approval of plans for the erection of a temporary bridge over the Harlem River at 156th Street. In reporting upon this request, the Acting Judge Advocate General remarked that the law authorizing the construction of the bridge at 155th Street contained no provision as to the construction of a temporary bridge, and he was unable to find any State authority for its construction. The Chief of Engineers recommended that the desired authority be granted by revocable license in view of the fact that it was necessary to accommodate local traffic during the building of the permanent bridge.

In accordance with the recommendation of the Chief of

Engineers, a license, revocable at will by the Secretary of War, was granted on July 5, 1892, to the Commissioners of Public Parks of New York to erect and maintain a temporary bridge at 156th Street subject to the following conditions:

1. "That unless sooner revoked this license shall expire upon the completion of the bridge at 155th Street, and not later than three years from the date of approval of the plans and specifications for the said bridge by the Board of Estimate and Apportionment of the city of New York.

2. That the temporary bridge authorized to be constructed by this license shall be removed by the Commissioners of Public Parks of the city of New York upon the revocation of this license or if this license shall not be revoked, then upon its expiration at the time of the completion of the bridge at 155th Street, and not later than three years from the date of approval of the plans for said bridge at 155th Street by the Board of Estimate, &c.

3. That any sum which may have to be expended after revocation of this license, in putting any premises or property, hereby authorized to be occupied or used, in as good condition for use by the United States as it is at this date shall be repaid by said Commissioners of Public Parks of the city of New York on demand."

This license was duly accepted on July 1, 1892, by the President of the Department of Public Works, subject to its terms, provisions and conditions.

From the above facts it will be seen that the action of the Department in authorizing the construction of a temporary bridge was for the sole purpose of providing for local traffic pending the completion of the permanent bridge, and as the continuance of the temporary structure would seriously affect navigation interests, I beg to urge that you withhold your approval of the above-mentioned act.

Very respectfully,

Hon. Wm. L. Strong,
Mayor,
New York, N. Y.


Secretary of War.

Lt. Col. William Ludlow,
Corps of Engineers, U. S. A.

ENGINEER OFFICE U. S. ARMY,
Room F 7, Army Building, 39 Whitehall Street.
NEW YORK, N. Y.

Copy.

May 6th, 1895.

The President of the
Department of Public Parks,
49 Chambers Street, New York City.

Sir:-

As the permanent bridge across the Harlem River at 155th Street, built under plans approved by the Secretary of War September 7, 1891, has been completed, and is now open to the public, I have the honor to request that the temporary bridge, located about 200 feet to the northward of the new bridge, be removed as early as practicable.

Very respectfully,

(Signed) G. L. Gillespie,
Lieut. Col. Corps of Engineers.

Lt. Col. William Ludlow,
Corps of Engineers, U. S. A.

ENGINEER OFFICE, U. S. ARMY,
Room F 7, Army Building, 39 Whitehall Street,
NEW YORK, N. Y.

Copy.

May 10th, 1895.

Mr. D. H. King, Jr.,
President, Department of Public Parks,
The Arsenal, Central Park, New York City.

Sir:-

Referring to your favor of the 8th instant, on the subject of the temporary bridge at 155th Street, I have the honor to say that before this bridge can be utilized at another point in the Harlem River, the matter must be referred to the Secretary of War according to law, and his approval obtained therefor.

Very respectfully,

(Signed) G. L. Gillespie,
Lieut. Col., Corps of Engineers.

Copy.

Bridges.

Subject: Temporary Bridge at 156th St.

Lt. Col. William Ludlow,
Corps of Engineers, U. S. A.

ENGINEER OFFICE, U. S. ARMY,
Room F. 7, Army Building, 39 Whitehall Street ,
New York, N. Y.

February 26, 1897.

The President of the
Department of Public Parks,
49 Chambers Street, New York City.

Sir:

I beg to invite your attention to the enclosed copies of letters addressed to you by Colonel Gillespie, recently in charge of this office, in reference to the removal of the temporary bridge situate about 200 feet northward of the new bridge across the Harlem River at 156th Street.

The completion of the new bridge terminated the necessity for the retention of the temporary structure, and it becomes my duty to renew the request made by Colonel Gillespie, that it be removed as early as practicable.

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) William Ludlow,

Lt. Col. Corps of Engineers.

(2 inclosures.)

Copy.

NOTICE OF REVOCATION OF LICENSE.

To

The Commissioners of Public Parks of the City of
New York.

TAKE NOTICE THAT -

WHEREAS, The Acting Secretary of War, under date of July 5th, 1892, granted the Commissioners of Public Parks of the City of New York a license, revocable at will by the Secretary of War, to construct and maintain a temporary bridge over the Harlem River at 156th Street, New York City, New York, upon the following provisions and conditions, inter alia:

1. That unless sooner revoked this license shall expire upon the completion of the bridge at 155th Street and McCombs Dam Road, in said City, the plans for which were approved by the Secretary of War, September 7, 1891, and not later than three years from the date of approval of the plans and specifications for the said bridge by the Board of Estimate and Apportionment of the City of New York.

2. That the temporary bridge authorized to be constructed by this license shall be removed by the Commissioners of Public Parks of the City of New York upon the revocation of this license or if this license shall not be revoked, then upon its expiration at the time of the completion of the bridge at 155th Street and McCombs Dam Road, and not later than three years from the date of approval of the plans and specifications for the said bridge at 155th Street and McCombs Dam Road by the Board of Es-

time and Apportionment of the City of New York.

AND WHEREAS, Said bridge at 155th Street and McCombs Dam Road was completed and opened to the public on May 1, 1895, but said temporary bridge over Harlem River at 156th Street, New York City, has not been removed;

AND WHEREAS, The said temporary bridge is an unreasonable obstruction to the free navigation of said river (which is one of the navigable waters of the United States);

NOW THEREFORE, I, R. A. Alger, Secretary of War, do hereby notify said Commissioners of Public Parks of the City of New York to remove said temporary bridge within ninety days from date hereof.

WITNESS my hand this Seventh day of April 1897.

(Signed) R. A. Alger,

Secretary of War.

54.-55

-2-

and Apportionment of the City of New York
AND WHEREAS, said bridge at 125th Street
had been completed and opened to the public
but said temporary bridge over Harlem River
Street, New York City, has not been removed

NEW YORK, April th, 1897.

Hon. William L. Strong,

Mayor,

City Hall, N. Y.

Dear sir:

I have read the Act to authorize the construction of a Bridge between Long Island City and New York at Ward's Island and beg to submit the following thoughts for your consideration:

The Bill names three incorporators, Henry H. O'Brien, T. H. Bauchle, and James C. Reed, who, together with two other Commissioners, one to be appointed by the Mayor of New York and the other to be appointed by the Mayor of Brooklyn, are to be Commissioners with power to initiate this enterprise by bringing into being a corporation possessing powers to fix the amount of capital stock and securities to be issued and dispose of them on such terms as they see fit; also to fix the tolls to be charged on said Bridge; also to fix the location, condemn property required for the purposes of the Bridge, and many other important provisions.

Of the three persons named in the bill, Henry H. O'Brien is not in the Directory; T. H. Bauchle is given in the Directory as Vice-President, #214 Broadway, home #318 W. Fifty-sixth St.; James C. Reed is given in the Directory as Secretary, #15 Broad St., home Sherman Sq., Harlem. None of these men are known as persons representing responsible interests, and this Bill bears all the appearance of a speculative charter, designed to occupy the best available site, and, at some future time, force the public to buy their rights, of which we have recently had an illustration in the case of the NEW EAST RIVER BRIDGE where the Cities were obliged to pay \$200,000 to extinguish rights which had been granted by a charter under which the most available site for the Bridge had been preempted and which the Cities had to pay or go to a greater expense to build on a less available location.

It is a grave question whether any such rights ought to be granted to a private corporation. Bridges between two important divisions of a city should, as a rule, be public highways, as free as the streets themselves. This is the case in London, Paris, and other great cities of the world, the only exception to this being when some great railroad company, to facilitate commerce, needs such a connecting link and has the

means to build it, but to grant such charters for speculative purposes, such as we have seen in the proposed Bridges across the North River, and in the absence of responsible backing, make it a pretext for the issuance of an unlimited amount of securities to be unloaded on the public with, perhaps, an assured profit to a construction company, is all wrong and I respectfully submit that you should be well satisfied, first, of the necessity of the structure; second, that its promoters are responsible men, and, third, that it is carefully examined by the proper law officers of the City and all possible safeguards against abuses imposed. Even then it becomes a question whether the Cities should grant any such rights, for no private corporation can obtain the capital as cheaply as the Cities can and the cost to the public for these facilities must necessarily be greater under such conditions than under municipal auspices.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

H. B. Thibault

THE CITY OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF RECORDS AND INFORMATION SERVICES
MUNICIPAL ARCHIVES

SEPARATION SHEET

INSTRUCTIONS: For each item or unified group of items separated, complete two *exactly* duplicate forms. Place one form within the collection at the exact place the separated item would occupy if it could remain in the collection. File the other form with the separated item in its new location.

DESCRIBE ORIGINAL LOCATION OF ITEM(S):

1. Record Group:

STRONG, WILLIAM L.

2. Subgroup:

3. Series:

SUBJECT FILES

4. Box No.

Fold No.

BRIDGES

5.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ITEM(S):

UD

A.J. ACT TO AUTHDRIZE CONSTRUCTION OF
A BRIDGE BETWEEN NEW YORK CITY
AND LONG ISLAND CITY

SEPARATED TO:

6. New Location:

OV 1

7. Room:

8. Date Separated:

7/1/02

9. Separated By:

T. ADLER

Read by Judge Tappen.

I am of the opinion that power exists in some public body to regulate the operation of the draw bridges over the Harlem River, and that such power is vested in the Board of Public Parks to be reasonable exercised

1st-For the great convenience and accommodation of the very large volume of passenger and freight traffic using the several bridges, and

2nd-Such power should be so exercised as not to disturb the legitimate business traffic by water passing through the draws -

I therefore offer the following:

Resolved, That the draws of 3rd Avenue and of Madison Avenue Bridges be opened as usual for river traffic except during the hours of 6-30 to 9-30 in the morning and 5 to 7 in the afternoon, and that between such hours (standard city time) the draws be closed.

This resolution to take effect on the morning of August 8th and to continue during the month of August.

This resolution shall not apply to the regular transportation boats of the New York and Northern Railway which shall have the right of passage through the draws as heretofore upon exhibiting the proper signal.

let for the Great Government and accommodation of the River
to permanently exercised

River, and that such power is vested in the Board of Public Parks
body to regulate the operation of the draw bridges over the River

I am of the opinion that power exists in some public

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1. Record Group:

STRONG, WILLIAM L.

2. Subgroup:

3. Series:

SUBJECT FILES

4. Box No.

Fold No.

BRIDGES

5.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ITEM(S):

UD

PETITION FOR PROPOSED BRIDGE
BETWEEN EAST 149TH STREET AND
WEST 145TH STREET

SEPARATED TO:

6. New Location:

OV1

7. Room:

8. Date Separated:

7/1/02

9. Separated By:

T. ADLER