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To Whitman, Brooklyn was many things: it was home on three separate occasions, his workplace, and it was an endless source of inspiration for his creative work, particularly *Leaves of Grass*, which was richly infused with the sights and sounds he experienced during his time there. In his writing, Brooklyn became a powerful and versatile symbol representing the profound and rapid urban growth of the 19th century, a midpoint between the rural expanse of Long Island and the urban center of Manhattan, and a model of the democratic ideals he believed in. Brooklyn also stood as a shared space for Whitman, a common ground where he could root his experiences in order to provide readers with intimate access to his life. At the same time, he would project himself into the future, imagining a Brooklyn that only his readers would know, looking out through their eyes at his city. This tour aims to look deeply at this connection created through place, to our relationship with Whitman through landscapes and vistas, streets and scenes. We invite him to join us in looking back at the past and to walk side by side with us as we imagine what aspects of modern life he would add to his endless catalogues.

Walking with Whitman: The Brooklyn Walking Tour starts at the High Street subway station in Brooklyn and takes you through the city Whitman once called his own: You will have the opportunity to traverse the historic streets of Brooklyn Heights and look out at Manhattan from the Fulton Pier. Then you will have the chance to either walk over the Brooklyn Bridge and see the majestic skyline of Manhattan unfold before you, or take the Water Taxi and experience a modernized version of Whitman's travels across the East River.

When you see the Whitman icon on your map, refer to the corresponding number in your travel packet for more information and audio tracks related to that site. With these audio tracks, Whitman will become your personal tour guide, and will accompany you with poetry and musings on Brooklyn, Manhattan, and life. The tour takes approximately 2 1/2 hours, but you are encouraged to take your time and enjoy all that Brooklyn has to offer and perhaps even write some verse of your own.

This Travel Pack Contains

- Walking Tour Maps
- Historic Information on locations in Brooklyn and Manhattan
- Resources for further research

MAPS

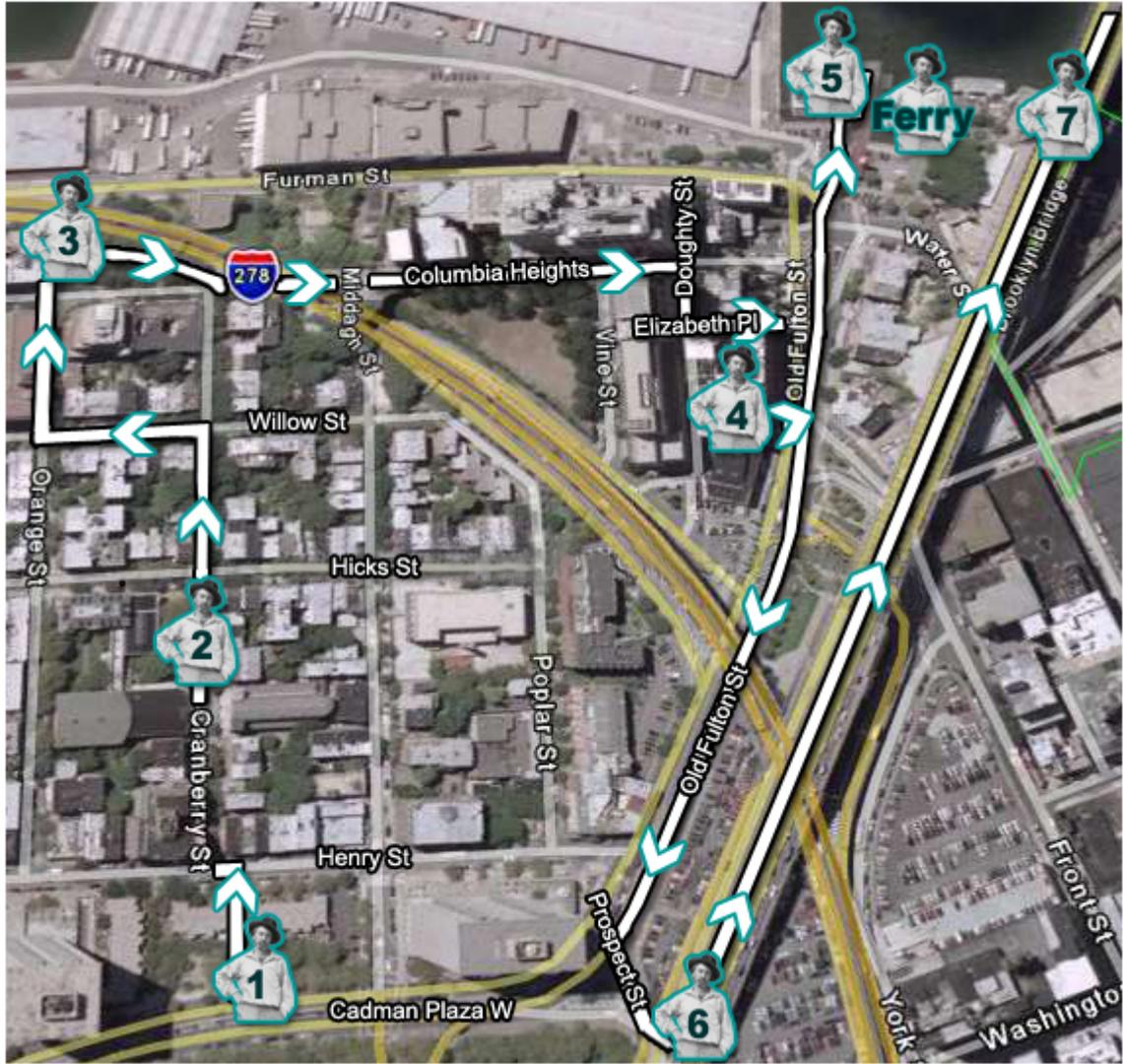


Figure 1: Figure 1: Google Imagery ©2009 TerraMetrics, Map Data ©2009, Leaddog Consulting Europa Technologies



Figure 2: Google Imagery ©2009 TerraMetrics, Map Data ©2009, Leaddog Consulting Europa Technologies

WALKING TOUR



Audio Track: Song of Myself, Excerpt I (3:26)
Additional Reading: Whitman on Brooklyn, Pt. I

Stop 1: High St./Cadman Plaza

This tour starts at the High St. Subway entrance. When you arrive at the station, make certain to take the Fulton Street, and not the Adams Street, exit. Outside the subway station, you will be on Cadman Plaza West.

- ▷ **Park Acquired by City of New York in 1935**
- ▷ **Park Size: 10.384 acres**
- ▷ **Named after Reverend Dr. Samuel Parkes Cadman, a Brooklyn Congregational minister**

Emerging from the subway, you will find yourself on Cadman Plaza West, standing approximately where Cranberry and Old Fulton Streets once intersected and where the Rome Brothers' Print shop once stood. Although the building no longer exists, in 1855 Whitman walked to this spot almost daily from his home on nearby Prince Street to work on the first edition of *Leaves of Grass*. Even without a building or plaque to mark this historic location, stop for a moment at what was the publication site of one of the most influential books of poetry ever written; it is the epicenter where Whitman's experiences in Brooklyn coalesced into poetry and where his verses radiated out into the world.

The audio track for this stop is opening section of the first edition of *Leaves of Grass*, the poem that what would later be titled "Song of Myself." The additional reading for this section is Whitman, the Brooklyn historian, discussing the origin of Brooklyn's name. This passage was published in 1861 by the *Brooklyn Standard* as part of a series called "Brooklyniana."



Audio Track: Song of Myself, excerpt 2 (1:03)

Stop 2: Plymouth Church

Head away from the park through the pass toward Cranberry Street, crossing over Henry St.

- ▷ **Founded: 1847**
- ▷ **First Pastor: Henry Ward Beecher**
- ▷ **Visited by Abraham Lincoln 1860**
- ▷ **Visited by Martin Luther King Jr in 1860, where he gave a reading of an early version of his "I Have a Dream" speech.**

Often referred to as the "Grand Central Depot" of the Underground Railroad, Plymouth Church was well known for its role in the Abolitionist movement, and was a vital part of the vibrant religious community of Brooklyn Heights. Whitman visited the church several times in his life where he would hear Henry Ward Beecher preach. Beecher, who assumed pastorphism of the Church in 1847, drew thousands to this site with his dramatic sermons that often brought attention to the abolition movement. He would directly engage his audience with these anti-slavery sermons, even holding

mock auctions where the congregation would bid to buy slaves' freedom. Whitman wrote frequently on Brooklyn's preachers while he was the editor of the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, and found the oratory techniques of Beecher inspirational: "He hit me so hard, fascinated me to such a degree that I was afterwards willing to go far out of my way to hear him talk." The influence of preachers, such as Beecher, on Whitman's poetic style is noticeable in his direct and personal approach to his readers and may have played a part in the formulation of his views on slavery, particularly his editorial support for the Wilmot Proviso, a proposition to exclude slavery from new American territories in the west, which is largely believed to be the reason for his firing from the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* in 1948.

Track 1 is another excerpt from "Song of Myself" that gives us an idea how religious leaders, such as Henry Ward Beecher, may have had an impact on Whitman's poetry and his views on slavery.

You can visit Plymouth Church Monday through Friday from 10am to 4pm, and on Sundays after worship. To arrange a tour of Plymouth Church, please contact Lois Rosebrooks, the Director of History Ministry Services, by phone, (718)624-4743, or by email, loisrosebrooks@plymouthchurch.org.



Audio Track: Manahatta (2:38)

Stop 3: Brooklyn Promenade

Proceed to the end of the block and make a left onto Hicks St. At the next intersection, take a right onto Orange St, and proceed until the street terminates at the Brooklyn Heights Promenade.

▶ **Dedicated October 7 1950**

▶ **Design proposed by Robert Moses**

▶ **Promenade is 1826 ft. long**

In 1864, looking out from this Brooklyn Heights vista, Abraham Lincoln commented, "There may be finer views than this in the world, but I don't believe it." Certainly, Whitman was impressed by the rising spires of New York City across the East River, the "high growths of iron, slender, strong, light, splendidly uprising toward clear skies," and would have taken in this view frequently during his time in Brooklyn. It is hard to imagine, however, that even Whitman could have forecasted the height and density of present-day Manhattan as he contemplated the remarkable urban growth across the river. Looking out from the promenade today, much has changed from Whitman's "Manahatta", but we can still feel a strong connection to his sense of awe as we look out at the sky scrapers of the Financial District, north to midtown and the Empire State Building, and south to the bay and the Statue of Liberty. Moreover, just as Whitman did, we too can imagine this panorama "a hundred years hence, or ever so many hundred years hence," and wonder what those to come will they see and hear as they stand in this very spot looking out at the ever-changing Manhattan skyline.

The poem "Manahatta" accompanies us on this stop of our tour. It is Whitman's homage to Manhattan and illustrates his passion for the city of spires and masts across the East River.



Audio Track: Philosophy of Ferries (3:32)

Stop 4: Eagle Warehouse

Follow the Promenade to the right, and continue down Columbia Heights toward the Brooklyn Bridge until you reach Doughty St. Take a right and then a quick left onto Elizabeth Place. Continue on to Old Fulton Street over one the few remaining cobble stone streets in the area. At Fulton St., take a right and proceed to the entrance of the Eagle Warehouse Building.

- ▶ **Home of *Brooklyn Eagle* Newspaper from 1841-1892.**
- ▶ **Warehouse conceived by architect Frank Freeman and completed in 1906.**

Formerly the home of the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, Whitman worked here as an editor on the second floor of the western side of this building from March 1846 to January 1848. Surrounded by the Eagle Warehouse, which is now residential space, you can still see the outline of the original three-story pressroom where Whitman wrote his editorials for the four-page, conservative Democratic paper. Whitman documented Brooklyn life and history from this location; his editorial work connected him to the stories and lives of his fellow Brooklyn residents whom he conversed with daily and would have been able to watch traveling below.

The audio track for this stop is one of Whitman's editorials written on August 14, 1847 during his time with the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*. In this passage, you can almost imagine Whitman looking down on the frantic scene at the pier below his office as the passengers boarded and departed the Ferries.



Audio Track: Crossing Brooklyn Ferry (15:07)
Additional Track: Whitman on Brooklyn, Pt. II (2:08)

Stop 5: Fulton Pier

Leaving the Eagle Warehouse, proceed down Old Fulton St until it terminates at the waterfront and Fulton Pier.

- ▶ **The Fulton Pier was refurbished in 1995**
- ▶ **Marine Company 7 Firehouse built in 1924**
- ▶ **Site of George Washington's retreat after losing the Battle of Long Island**

The first record of ferry service at Fulton Street dates back to 1642 when a Dutch man, Cornelis Direksen, transported passengers from Peck Slip to the present foot of Fulton Street. It was not until 1814 that the first steamboat operated on the East River, taking passengers between Fulton Pier in Brooklyn and Fulton street in New York. As the population of Manhattan swelled, resulting in a high

demand for Long Island produce and livestock, the need for rapid, reliable, and frequent transportation into the city grew as well. With Robert Fulton's purchase of Beekman slip, present Fulton Street, and exclusive rights to run steamboats between Brooklyn and Manhattan, a ferry service was established that departed once an hour from half-an-hour before sunrise to half-an-hour after sunset, costing each passenger 3 cents. It was this pier that was a point of departure, a beginning of journeys for Whitman, and also a return to home. Looking around the pier today, you will note an excerpt from "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" inscribed along the railing, marking Whitman's meditation on the passage between Brooklyn and Manhattan.

It is from this point that you can decide how to spend the rest of your time with Whitman. Taking the Water Taxi, you have the opportunity to move over the waters of New York City, traveling from Brooklyn to Manhattan along a route very close to the one taken by Whitman. Walking across the Brooklyn Bridge offers ever-changing vistas of Brooklyn and Manhattan from heights that Whitman never had the chance to experience. Even so, looking out you will bring Whitman along and "who knows, for all the distance", that Whitman is not looking out with you on your travels, enjoying the journey through your experience.

In the first Track, "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry," we join Whitman on his passage over the river. We see Brooklyn and Manhattan through Whitman's eyes, layering his experiences over our own. Lean over the rail and drift with Whitman for a moment. The additional audio track for this stop is from the "Brooklyniana" series and has Whitman taking account of the rapid population growth of Brooklyn, which would jump 60,000 persons between 1845 and 1850.



Audio Tracks: Manhattan From the Bay (3:14) & My Passion for Ferries (1:50)

THE WATER TAXI

Please refer to the Water Taxi schedule online for times and days of operation:
<http://www.nywatertaxi.com>

► **Limited transportation service resumed on the East River with the Water Taxi in 2002.**

Despite the discontinuation of the steam ferry service in 1924, the city now runs a Water Taxi during rush hour on weekdays for commuters and a hop-on/hop-off service on weekends for visitors who wish to see New York City in a unique way. Enjoy the view of Manhattan from the East River and in 12 minutes be at the South St. Sea Port, or continue around Battery Park to the conclusion of the Taxi service at west 44th Street, taking time as Whitman would have to look at the rushing water below, the surrounding cityscape, and the passing ships.

The first audio track for this section was written by Whitman much later in his life, but shows his continued fascination with the cities that influenced him in his youth. The track also has Whitman noting the Brooklyn Bridge under construction. The second track is Whitman telling of his love for ferries, what he considered "inimitable streaming, never-failing, living poems."



There is no audio track for this stop. The Brooklyn Promenade is shared space between pedestrians and bicyclists, so please remain aware your surroundings at all times. Look to your left to see a eye-level view of the Eagle Warehouse's stained glass clock.

Stop 6: Brooklyn Bridge: Brooklyn Entrance

Walk back up Old Fulton St. until you reach Prospect St. Take a left and proceed under the Brooklyn Bridge. Take a right on Washington St./Cadman Plaza E and look for the pedestrian entrance at the foot of the bridge on your right.

- ▷ Length of the main span: 1595.5 feet
- ▷ Construction began January 3, 1870
- ▷ Bridge opened May 24, 1883



Audio Track: Manhattan from the Bay (3:14)

Stop 7: Brooklyn Bridge: Brooklyn Tower

Follow the Pedestrian walkway toward the Brooklyn Tower of the bridge. Since this walkway is shared with Bicycle traffic, remain aware of your surroundings, and always remain on the pedestrian side of the walkway.

- ▷ Construction on the Brooklyn caisson began in 1870 and was completed in 1871
- ▷ Washington Roebling, son of original bridge engineer John Roebling, gets the bends working on the caissons and relies on his wife Emily to convey instructions to the bridge workers

Although there is no evidence that Whitman ever crossed the completed Brooklyn Bridge, he did see it during its construction and marveled at its twin towers looming over the East River. From our vantage point, we have a view of Fulton Pier and of the ebbing and flowing East River that only Whitman's Twelfth-month sea-gulls, moving in "slow-wheeling circles" overhead, could have had. Ironically, it was the completion of the Brooklyn Bridge that sealed the fate of Whitman's beloved Ferry, even as it connected the two cities he lived in and traveled between until his departure from New York at the onset of the Civil War.

The audio track for this section was written by Whitman much later in his life, but shows his continued fascination with the cities that influenced him in his youth. The track also has Whitman noting the Brooklyn Bridge under construction.



Audio Track: Human and Heroic New York (3:12)

Additional Track: Kosmos (1:45)

Stop 8: Brooklyn Bridge: Manhattan Tower

Continue along the walkway to the Manhattan tower of the Brooklyn Bridge.

- ▶ **The Manhattan Caisson and both Towers were completed in 1875**
- ▶ **Emily Roebling becomes the first person to cross the bridge in 1883**

Nearing the end of our tour, the skyline of New York City grows before us as we move closer to being immersed in its bustle. At this point, still between Brooklyn and New York, it is important to remember that for much of Whitman's life these two urban centers remained separate cities. Whitman felt a deep connection to both, recognizing their individual character and promise, but also sensing their importance as a larger whole united. He was certain that the two cities would be joined in the future, but it was not until 1898 that his vision was realized, long after he had left New York.

While we stop here at the Manhattan tower of the Brooklyn Bridge, look below to the south where you will see the large masts of the Peking and Wavertree, as well as the smaller schooners the Lettie G Howard and the Pioneer, which are all part of the South Street Seaport Museum. Although they were built after Whitman's time in Manhattan, we can look at this small cluster of ships and try to imagine the "mast hemmed" shores that Whitman once saw. The South St. Seaport also features Schermerhorn Row, a restored block of buildings built in 1810. Whitman would have seen these buildings as he disembarked from the ferry.

The audio track for this section, "Human and Heroic New York", documents Whitman's impressions of Brooklyn and Manhattan on a return visit north. It is clear that he idealized these cities and chose to concentrate on the best elements of each, especially their character as quintessential democratic symbols.



Audio Tracks: Omnibus Jaunts and Drivers (2:28)

& To a Stranger (1:11)

Stop 9: City Hall

Follow the Pedestrian walkway to its termination at New York City Hall

- ▶ **Constructed between 1803 to 1812**
- ▶ **Building is topped by a copper statue of Justice**

This stop brings us to the conclusion of our tour, but to what is only the starting point of another chapter in Whitman's life. Whitman lived in Manhattan from 1841 to 1845 and frequented the City throughout his life, seeking out its cultural, intellectual, and social offerings. He regularly attended operas, and enjoyed mingling with the Bohemian community of intellectuals and artists that gathered at places like Pfaff's Restaurant. During his time in Manhattan, Whitman also found work at many of the newspapers that proliferated after the invention of the steam press in 1835, including his first experience as an editor with the *Aurora*, a small 4-page paper with a circulation of 5,000. The radical

improvements in the printing process resulted in the mass, daily distribution of penny papers, many of which were printed near here on Ann Street. Whitman saw these papers as vehicles for a democratic mass literacy, and his time writing for them put him in close contact with the inhabitants of the city and their lives. These interactions and experiences in Manhattan, just as those in Brooklyn, were infused into his work and became important factors in the development of Whitman's rich, representative poetic voice.

It is now time to part ways with Walt, however, If you would like to continue on and learn more about Whitman's New York, please refer to Elizabeth Kray's "Tracking Walt Whitman Through Manhattan in the 1840s: A Walk through Printing House Square and Environs" and "A Walk Through the Soho Historic District With Walt Whitman" available online at <http://www.poets.org/>

The first track for this final section, "Omnibus Jaunts and Drivers," speaks to the importance of Whitman's everyday Manhattan experiences which "undoubtedly entr'd into the gestation of "Leaves of Grass." Finally, "To a Stranger" provides a perfect sendoff from Walt until the next time we walk with him.

NOTES

- **Maps:** All Maps used for this site are the property of Google Imagery ©2009 TerraMetrics, Map Data ©2009, Leaddog Consulting Europa Technologies. December 2009. <<http://maps.google.com/>>. Path: Brooklyn Heights, Brooklyn Bridge.
- **Stop 1 (Cadman Plaza):**
I Celebrate myself/ Whitman Poetry and Prose, pg.27-28. **The name given to our city/** Walt Whitman's New York, pg. 25.
For more information on the Rome Brothers print shop, please consult *Walt Whitman's America*, pgs. 310-311.
Photo Credit: dumbonyc. Cadman Plaza. 4 May 2007.
<<http://www.flickr.com/photos/dumbonyc/2046923097/>>.
- **Stop 2 (Plymouth Church):**
He hit me so hard/Reynolds 173. **The runaway slave/**Whitman Poetry and Prose, pg. 35-36.
Photo Credit: MacFarland, E.P. Plymouth Church: Interior (Looking North). 26 April 1934.
Historic American Buildings Survey.
<<http://memory.loc.gov/pnp/habshaer/ny/ny0200/ny0259/photos/116858pv.jpg>>
- **Stop 3 (Brooklyn Promenade):**
There may be finer/ "Brooklyn Heights Promenade". New York City Department of Parks & Recreation.
<<http://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/B223D02/>>. **high growths of iron/** Whitman Poetry and Prose, pg. 585. **A hundred years hence/** Whitman Poetry and Prose, pg. 308.
Photo Credit: Kmf164. Brooklyn Heights Promenade. 9 July 2009.
< http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Brooklyn_heights_promenade.jpg >.
- **Stop 4 (Eagle Warehouse):**
Philosophy of Ferries/ Brooklyn Eagle, Aug 13, 1847: pg 2.
For more information on Whitman's printing experience at the Brooklyn Eagle, please consult David Reynolds's *Walt Whitman's America*, pgs. 114-120.
- **Stop 5 (Fulton Pier):**
who knows, for all the distance/ Whitman Poetry and Prose, pg. 312. **FLOOD-TIDE below me!/** Whitman Poetry and Prose, pgs. 307-313. **The Child is already born/** Walt Whitman's New York, pg. 25.
For more information on the history of Ferries in New York, please consult the Brooklyn Eagle online, May 11, 1890, pg. 8.
- **Ferry (Water Taxi):**
inimitable streaming/ Specimen Days, pgs. 16-17. **June 25.— Returned/** Specimen Days, pgs. 116-117.
Living in Brooklyn or/ Specimen Days pgs. 16-17.

For more information on scheduling and services for the New York Water taxi, please visit their website: <http://www.nywatertaxi.com/schedule-popup/?tab=weekend>
- **Stop 7 (Brooklyn Tower):**
slow-wheeling circles/ Whitman Poetry and Prose, pgs. 307-313. **June 25.— Returned/** Specimen Days, pgs. 116-117.
- **Stop 8 (Manhattan Tower) :**
mast-hemm'd /Whitman Poetry and Prose, pg. 312. **The general subjective view/** Specimen Days, pgs. 117-118.
- **Stop 9 (City Hall):**
undoubtedly entr'd into/Specimen Days, pg. 18. **One phase of those days/** Specimen Days, pg. 18-19.
Passing Stranger!/Whitman Poetry and Prose, pg. 280.
For more information on Whitman's time as a journalist in New York City, please consult *Walt Whitman's America*, pgs. 98-110.
Photo Credit: momos. City Hall Park, New York City. 9 May 2007.
<http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:City_Hall_Park_-_New_York_City.jpg>.

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