

**Guide to the Typescripts of Gabriel Furman's
Notes on Brooklyn, N.Y., 1821-1823
ARC.229**

Finding aid prepared by Larry Weimer

This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit

July 08, 2011

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

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June 2011
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Summary Information

Repository	Brooklyn Historical Society
Creator	Furman, Gabriel, 1800-1854
Creator	Huntington, Edna, 1895-1965
Creator	White, Alfred Tredway, 1846-1921
Title	Typescripts of Gabriel Furman's notes on Brooklyn, N.Y., 1821-1823
Date	circa 1920 typescripts of 1821-1823 journal
Extent	0.1 Linear feet in one manuscript box
Language	English
Language of Materials	Materials in English.
Text [Box]	Box 1 (A0002)
Container	2 folders
Abstract	<p>Gabriel Furman (1800-1854) was a lawyer and historian of early Brooklyn. He kept an extensive set of journals and commonplace books during his life. This collection includes typescripts, prepared in the early twentieth century, of one of those journals, perhaps no longer extant, with entries from 1821-1823. Furman's journal entries primarily concern the weather, yellow fever, ferry crossings, agricultural produce at market, fires or the threat of fire, and the built and natural environment. Observations on religion, local politics, and holiday celebrations also appear in some entries. The entries principally concern the downtown Brooklyn area,</p>

especially Brooklyn Heights. Substantive entries also concern lower Manhattan and Paulus Hook, New Jersey.

Preferred Citation

Date or title of entry, page number, Typescript of Gabriel Furman's notes on Brooklyn, N.Y., 1821-1823, ARC.229, Box and Folder number; Brooklyn Historical Society.

Biographical/Historical note

Gabriel Furman (January 23, 1800-November 11, 1854) was a respected historian of early Brooklyn. Among his works were the *Notes Geographical and Historical, Relating to the Town of Brooklyn, on Long-Island* (1824), still available in a recent reprint. Little is known of Furman's youth; he attended Columbia Academy in Bergen (now part of Jersey City), New Jersey, from 1814-1816. Professionally, Furman became a lawyer, having studied law beginning in 1823 in the office of Elisha W. King of Beekman St., New York. Furman was later a justice of the Brooklyn municipal court, a member of the New York State Senate (1839-1842), and an unsuccessful Whig candidate for lieutenant governor. For further biographical information, see Brooklyn Historical Society's guide to its collection of original Furman journals and commonplace books; the guide is available on-line and the call number for the collection itself is ARC.190.

Scope and Contents

This collection consists of two typescript documents. The cover page of the principal document reads *Notes on Brooklyn, N.Y., made by Gabriel Furman in a copy of an old Brooklyn directory owned by Alfred T. White*. Pencilled on the cover page is the additional description, "Indexed by Edna Huntington." The document is bound and is 286 pages in length (exclusive of the index). It includes daily entries describing Furman's observations of Brooklyn, mostly for 1822-1823, with a few entries for 1821.

Furman's observations primarily concern weather (e.g., temperature, storms, specific incidents such as a lightning strike on Alden Spooner's house), yellow fever, ferry crossings, agricultural produce available at market, fires or the threat of fire, people met on the street or in their homes, and the built and natural environment (e.g., ropewalks, ruins of old structures, street development, cedar groves, bluffs, etc.). Religion, local politics, and holiday celebrations also appear in some entries. The entries principally concern the downtown Brooklyn area, especially Brooklyn Heights and Clover Hill, with occasional items on Williamsburgh, Bedford, and Flatbush. Substantive entries also concern lower Manhattan and points in northern New Jersey, especially Paulus Hook (i.e., Jersey City).

The second typescript is headed, "Extracts from Diary of G. Furman, Brooklyn, 1822." It consists of entries (sometimes abbreviated) found in the first typescript and selected, according to a document in the collection, by Alfred T. White.

Arrangement note

The collection consists of two typescripts, one bound and the other loose sheets of paper, in separate folders.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Brooklyn Historical Society June 2011

Conditions Governing Access

Open to researchers without restriction.

Conditions Governing Use note

The material in the collection is in the public domain.

Immediate Source of Acquisition note

The provenance of the typescripts is uncertain, but indications are they were either produced by Alfred T. White or produced with his support, most likely by Long Island Historical Society (now Brooklyn Historical Society) staff, as an addition to the library collection.

Processing Information note

The collection was processed in June 2011 by Larry Weimer. The collection combines two accessions: 1973.086 and 1995.010.

Existence and Location of Originals note

The location of the original Notes made by Furman, owned by Alfred T. White at the time the typescript was prepared, is unknown as of June 2011 and perhaps is no longer extant.

Related Materials

Related Archival Materials note

Brooklyn Historical Society (BHS) holds several of Gabriel Furman's original journals and commonplace books; see the Gabriel Furman papers, call number ARC.190. See BHS's guide for the Furman papers, available on-line, for further information about related materials.

Controlled Access Headings

Genre(s)

- diaries
- typescripts

Geographic Name(s)

- Brooklyn (New York, N.Y.)
- Brooklyn (New York, N.Y.) |x Buildings, structures, etc.
- Brooklyn (New York, N.Y.) |x Climate
- Brooklyn (New York, N.Y.) |x Description and travel
- Brooklyn (New York, N.Y.) |x History
- New York (N.Y.) |x Description and travel
- Paulus Hook (N.J.) |x Description and travel

Personal Name(s)

- Furman, Gabriel, 1800-1854 -- Diaries

Subject(s)

- Ferries |z New York (State) |z Kings County

- Yellow fever |z New York (State) |z Kings County