

In January, 1817, Colonel John Stevens, who for a number of years had held the proprietary right of operating two lines of ferry-boats plying from Hoboken, one to the foot of Vesey Street, in New York city, and the other to the foot of Spring Street, "sold to John, Robert, and Samuel Swartwout, the exclusive right of ferrying from Hoboken to New York," who "proposed to have on the two ferries, by the first day of the following May, 'two horse-boats and other craft for the accommodation of the public.'

"On the seventh of April, that year, the common council of the city of New York consented to the transfer of the ferry leases and to an extension thereof for ten years, on condition that the Swartwout brothers would give to the city \$516.25 a year for the Vesey Street ferry, and within six months, from the first day of the following May, place thereon 'two good horse-boats of not less than eight horses to a boat,' and for the Spring Street ferry, to give \$25 a year to the city, and place on that line, 'as many sail or ferry-boats as the corporation might deem proper.' About that time, the landing on the New York side was changed to Murray Street. But that location was found to be too 'remote from the market to accommodate the country people,' and as Vesey Street was 'too much covered with carts,' *et cetera*, Barclay Street was selected as the landing place, on the eighth of June, 1818." Having operated the two ferries over a year, the Swartwout Brothers parted with them to Philip Hone, of the city of New York.

The magnitude of the work of reclaiming the extensive meadows from the dominance of the tides and freshets became at length too burdensome financially for the three brothers, and they were advised by their friends to solicit aid from the city of New York. They made in the early summer of 1819 a formal application to the corporation for assistance in finishing the draining and diking of the meadows, concerning which the following *excerpta*, from a communication in the *New York Evening Post*, of Wednesday, July 28, that year will explain their motives for following the suggestions presented them.

"The memorialists predicate the prayer of their petition on the following facts: About five years ago, they purchased four thousand acres of land in the immediate vicinity of New York, commonly called salt-marsh. When they purchased it the land was sunken, spongy, and uncongenial to vegetation, being subject to the constant overflowing of the tide waters. The proprietors immediately commenced a great work to reclaim these meadows by erecting permanent dikes or embankments and opening ditches.

"They have advanced in their undertaking with great success amid all the embarrassments of the country, and made *seven and one-half miles of embankment, and one hundred and twenty miles of ditch. Two thousand acres are enclosed by dikes, and thirteen hundred acres completely drained and under*