



BROOKLYN DAILY EAGLE

1841-1902

Monday, April 4 1897

TEN YEARS OF PROSPERITY

Work of a Local Building Loan Association.

One of the pioneers of building and loan associations, the Brooklyn City Co-operative, at 91 Court street, is celebrating its tenth anniversary this week. This institution, just beginning its eleventh business year, was organized on March 2, 1887, in the old hall at Third avenue and Twenty-fourth street, South Brooklyn. About fifteen members signed the roll this first evening of business.

This association was named Brooklyn City Co-operative Building and Loan association. After the institution was incorporated on March 30, 1887, under the banking laws of 1851, of the state of New York, the membership grew rapidly. The system was that of a serial association, under which some of the associations still do business to-day. At the end of the first year the assets of the society amounted to what seemed to the incorporators an enormous sum, \$81,763.38. By this time success was assured.

By 1890 the money invested amounted to \$250,000 and the old serial system of co-operation became cumbersome and a change of plan was effected in that year. The Brooklyn City and Co-operative Building and Loan association was the first of all associations in Brooklyn in changing from the serial to the permanent installment plan.

The association had grown to be one of the largest institutions in Brooklyn, when the panic of 1893 came. In that crisis it not only held its own, but when quiet times came again was found to have increased its assets. In September, 1895, the association moved its offices from Third avenue and Twenty-fourth street to 91 Court street, where it is now doing a daily business. At 76 Thirtieth street is a branch office, open every Tuesday evening from 7 to 9 o'clock.

The bylaws of this institution confine the business within a circle of twenty-five miles of the Brooklyn city hall and it is therefore to all intents a purely local association.

The assets of the association are \$465,000, and they are expected to reach the half million mark within a short time. The membership is now about 1,800. The present officers of the association are:

Thomas F. Lewis, president; Joseph V. Sculley, vice president; John H. Kampf, secretary; John A. Knowles, treasurer; Joseph J. Mooney, recording secretary; John J. Dannaher, assistant secretary; John Muhlstein, trustee; Theodore T. Sweeney, trustee; John F. Tolson, trustee; directors, George W. Dimmick, Joseph Cox, jr.; Frank H. Davidson, Denis Meagher, Robert A. Shufelt, James Madden, John O'Donnell, Joseph H. Delaney, John G. Taylor, George N. Nelson, John J. Foley, Francis P. Mooney, Robert P. Orr, William J. Gerber; Delaney & Niper, attorneys.



BROOKLYN DAILY EAGLE

1841-1902

April 14, 1899

IN PURSUANCE OF AN ORDER OF THE Hon. George B. Abbott, Surrogate of the County of Kings, notice is hereby given, according to law, to all persons having claims against CHARLES A. GROGAN, late of the Borough of Brooklyn, City of New York, N.Y., deceased, that they are required to exhibit the same, with the vouchers thereof, to the subscriber, at his place of transacting business, No. 91 Court street, Brooklyn, New York, N. Y., on or before the tenth day of July next.—Dated Brooklyn, N. Y., December 30, 1898.

THOMAS F. LEWIS, Executor.



BROOKLYN DAILY EAGLE

1841-1902

October 7, 1900

BUILDING & LOAN ASSOCIATIONS.

Brooklyn City Co-operative
Building & Loan Ass'n.

Main Office, 91 Court Street.

Assets, \$850,000.

**A SAVINGS
INSTITUTION.**

**Write or Call for Descrip-
tive Pamphlet.**

Thomas F. Lewis,
President.

John H. Kampf,
Secretary.



BROOKLYN DAILY EAGLE

1841-1902

May 3, 1896

**Do You Want to Sell Your Property ?
Have You Any Apartments to Let ?**

Send description and price to
THOMAS F. LEWIS, Real Estate Broker,
91 Court st, Brooklyn.



BROOKLYN DAILY EAGLE

1841-1902

January 27, 1900

BROOKLYN CITY CO-OPERATIVE BUILDING AND LOAN ASS'N.

91 COURT ST—OPEN DAILY.

ASSETS . . . \$800,000.

A SAVINGS *PAYING 5½ and*
INSTITUTION *6 PER CENT.*
INTEREST
PER ANNUM.

**WRITE OR CALL FOR
DESCRIPTIVE PAMPHLET**

JOHN H. KAMPF, THOMAS F. LEWIS
Secretary. President.



January 31, 1901

THEY HOPE FOR BETTER TIMES

**"Ten Years Ago the Public Regarded
the Building Loan Companies as
Sort of Fad."**

The voluntary liquidation of the Kings County Co-operative Association, which was announced yesterday, with the explanation that the association could no longer make any money, calls attention to the marked decline in property which has fallen upon a class of money lending institutions in Brooklyn which no longer than ten or twelve years ago were unable to handle the flood of business which was being thrust upon them. This decrease in business which has made associations of this character a doubtful investment for men of wealth and was the direct cause of the liquidation of the Kings County Association is admitted by the officers of the different associations and various causes are ascribed.

Thomas F. Lewis, the president of the Brooklyn City Co-operative Building and Loan Association of 91 Court street in discussing the question to-day said:

"There is no question that business has become very bad with the majority of the co-operative associations. It is safe to say that 40 or 50 per cent. of them are not making money, but are holding on in the hope of better times. There was a time about ten or twelve years ago when the public took up such associations as a sort of fad, building took a great boom in Brooklyn and the building and loan associations had no difficulty in placing all the money they could obtain.

"I attribute the falling off in business to several causes. First, the fad died out and people were not so anxious as formerly to build houses nor to get into co-operative institutions. The springing up of hundreds of co-operative plants without any legitimate foundation or capital paying large returns to early subscribers and leaving the later ones without anything did much to shake confidence in co-operative plans of any kind, and, although the building and loan associations in Brooklyn were entirely honest, a certain lack of confidence did much to check the public from investments of any co-operative character. The local associations also

suffered in a similar way from the failure of several large national associations which carried on business in an entirely different way.

"The second cause was adverse legislation and the poor impression of our associations circulated by State Bank Superintendent Kilburn. This man has done all in his power to discourage the public from investing with co-operative associations of all sorts. Besides these there is a more immediate reason for the falling off in business during the last few years. The price of building materials has increased from 30 to 40 per cent. over what it was six years ago. This has discouraged business and made it extremely difficult to place money advantageously. Some localities have suffered more from this cause than others.

"Where at one time the Building and Loan Association was unable to get money to place, now it is necessary to look and look carefully to place the money. Those associations which have watched the movement of the times and have offered inducements to investors and have advertised and carried on their business as any other business is carried on, are still doing well. Our association shows an increase in the assets every year. But the trouble is that most of the Brooklyn associations were formed at a time when it was not necessary to seek business. The directors were, many of them, wealthy men, who went into the association as a business investment. They were interested in other more important business ventures and could not give their time and attention to the associations. They did nothing to bring business to the association, and the result has been that a great many of them have lapsed into inactivity. They are making no money, doing no business to speak of and holding meetings attended by very few every week or every month, as the case may be."

Continued On Next Page



BROOKLYN DAILY EAGLE

1841-1902

January 31, 1901 Continued

Mr. W. Irving Marble, one of the directors of the Fulton Co-operative Building and Loan Association of 82 Court street, said: "There is no doubt that the co-operative building and loan business has suffered a great falling off in recent years. Most of the associations are run at a very slight expense and are still doing some business, but there has been a great slump in building in Brooklyn within the past few years, and that fact has of course diminished the business of the loan associations. Adverse legislation and the bad reputation of co-operative associations of other character has also had an effect. I would not care to say how large a proportion of the co-operative building and loan associations of Brooklyn are making little or no profit now, but I think there are a good many in the same condition as the Kings County Association."

An Eagle reporter, in visiting nine offices of co-operative loan associations in all parts of Brooklyn to-day, failed to find an official of any sort in authority in six of them. Many of them had notices upon the doors announcing the meeting nights.



BROOKLYN DAILY EAGLE

1841-1902

February 3, 1901

LETTER FROM MR. LEWIS

Relative to an Interview With Him in the Eagle.

To the Editor of the Brooklyn Eagle:

Under a heading, "Building-Loan Companies' Business Is Falling Off," contained in the Brooklyn Daily Eagle of January 31, I am quoted as making a number of statements which are entirely and absolutely contrary to my sentiments and which I deny. I am quoted, among other things, as having stated that 50 per cent. of associations are not making money.

This is so obviously untrue that it barely requires denial. Anybody who desires to inform himself to the contrary has only to take up the last report of the Superintendent of Banks to the Legislature, which will show that thousands of dollars are annually earned and distributed among the shareholders of building and loan associations. Almost without any exception, all associations of this state, near 400 in number, have for the last year, and prior years as well, paid dividends to their shareholders, ranging from 5 to 6 per cent. I do not think there are more than probably a half dozen associations that have paid less than 5 per cent.; this certainly does not show that associations are not making money. I did state, as a matter of fact, that the rates of dividends had decreased during the last ten years, which said decrease, however, is not caused by any fault or bad management of the associations in general, but is caused by sharper and greater competition among all money lending institutions; that same condition exists everywhere. Through such competition, money has become cheaper to the borrower, which, if looked upon from a business standpoint, has bettered the condition of business in general and increased the popularity and stability of our associations. I am also quoted as saying that adverse legislation had hurt the business of associations and that the Superintendent of Banks had discouraged the public from investing with co-operative associations of all sorts. This I deny. I did say that the criticism of the superintendent of some national associations had hurt the business of associations in general, because the public, as a rule, does not discriminate between nationals and locals. The superintendent has always in his annual reports and through other mediums commended the business of the local and co-operative associations and

has done everything in his power to encourage good and clean business methods of the associations of this state. I further stated that I am opposed to a part of a bill introduced by Mr. Kilburn in the Senate, through Senator Humphreys. I am opposed to the section contained in this bill, which compels associations to submit proposed amendments to bylaws to the Banking Department, and I am also opposed to the section prohibiting an exchange of real estate property.

The article did not by any means convey my views, as expressed to the young man, who called upon me and who was with me but for a few minutes; I cannot account for this, except that he took no notes and relied entirely upon his own memory. My views, as expressed by your young man, would appear ridiculous, for the figures of various reports show a very large increase in membership, as well as assets, in almost every association, during the past ten or twelve years.

I rely upon the well known fairness of the Eagle to give this version of the interview the necessary space. THOMAS F. LEWIS.

Brooklyn, February 2, 1901.

[The reporter who interviewed Mr. Lewis states that the report printed was a fair and accurate summary of the remarks of Mr. Lewis and of John H. Kampf, secretary of the Brooklyn City Co-operative Building and Loan Association, and that the statements made by both were incorporated in one interview at Mr. Lewis' suggestion.—Ed. Eagle.]



BROOKLYN DAILY EAGLE

1841-1902

February 14, 1901

POLICE CALLED BY DIRECTORS

**No Funds Missing, Say the Latter, but
They Are Having an Examination
of the Books.**

Joseph V. Sculley, who is assistant city clerk in charge of Brooklyn Borough, but who is also the vice president of the Brooklyn City Co-operative Building and Loan Association, at 91 Court street, ran into local police headquarters at 1 o'clock this morning and asked that a policeman should be sent to the office at once.

"I'd like to have a man stay there all night," said Mr. Sculley, "for there has been some trouble and we want to be protected."

A message was sent from headquarters to the Adams street station and a policeman walked down to the office of the association and stayed there all night. Mr. Sculley, the two members of the auditing committee and Joseph H. Delany, the counsel to the organization, stayed with him there until 3 o'clock this morning, and then left him in charge. When it was time for the policeman to go to breakfast Detective Toman of the Adams street station was sent around to relieve him. Mr. Sculley did not get home until 4 o'clock this morning, and at an early hour he was back again in the office looking over the books.

The story that a policeman had been on guard on the two big safes in the office soon got noised around the neighborhood and all sorts of stories were afloat. Of course, the most serious construction was put on the matter and all varieties of versions of trouble in the association were peddled about.

President and Financial Secretary Suspended.

Mr. Sculley denied that there was any defalcation, but admitted that the president and financial secretary of the concern had been at least temporarily suspended from their offices. Mr. Sculley as vice president and the two auditors, Joseph J. Mooney and Joseph Cox, had been placed in charge of the books, funds and papers.

"There was a semi-monthly meeting of the board of directors last night and we accidentally discovered an irregularity which gave us some uneasiness," said Mr. Sculley, "but we have no suspicion that there is anything wrong with the accounts. It was only as a matter of self-protection that we suspended the executive officers and got a policeman to guard the office for a while. We made a very careful examination of the cash books before we went to bed and we found that they balanced to a nickel. But there are other books which must be examined before we feel really safe, and I purpose employing an expert accountant to go over them."

"This is only a precautionary measure, mind you, and we have no reason to believe that there is anything wrong with the accounts. If we had there would have been arrests by this time."

Young Mr. Kampf Is Held Responsible.

"The man whom we hold directly responsible for the irregularity, which is merely technical, is J. H. Kampf, our secretary, but he is a young man of excellent reputation and for that reason we do not intend that erroneous stories should go out without our denial and a statement of the exact facts in the case, as far as we know them at present. I have lived a good many years in Brooklyn and I think I have built up for myself a reputation for honesty. I am jealous of my own reputation, and for that reason I would not for a moment sully the good name of another without having good reason. And we have no reason in the case of Mr. Kampf."

"But what is all this fuss about?" asked an Eagle reporter who was questioning.

Arrears of Payment Not Reported to Directors.

"It is a very serious matter," said Mr. Sculley. "You see there is a rule in the association that all persons in arrears of payment must be reported at once to the board of directors. That rule is made for our protection and the protection of our members and depositors. If a member who has borrowed money from us defaults either in his taxes or payments we must know it at once. The executive officers are supposed to and must, under the bylaws, report at once the matter to the board."



BROOKLYN DAILY EAGLE

1841-1902

February 14, 1901 Continued

"We had a meeting last night. It was the regular bi-monthly gathering, and one of the directors reported that one of our members and debtors was in arrears for six months' payment. The notification fell on us like a thunderbolt. The president, Thomas F. Lewis, who is one of the salaried officers and who has a desk and office in the headquarters of the association, said that he knew nothing of it. Then we called in the financial secretary, Mr. Kampf, who gets a yearly salary of \$2,050, and who gives all his time to the work of the association. He admitted that he knew of the arrearage and that he had not reported it to the society, as he was required to do. He produced the books to show that the default was duly recorded, but that was not satisfactory.

Directors Pass a Resolution of Suspension.

"So a resolution was passed and adopted temporarily deposing the two officers named, and directing them to turn over the keys of the desks and safes and to give the combinations of the safe to a committee consisting of myself as vice president, and to Messrs. Mooney and Cox, the auditors. In order to protect ourselves and to see that there was no interference in the meanwhile, or in our absence, with the money or records of the association, we called in the police. That is all there is about it.

"Before we went to bed we had carefully overhauled the cash books and we found that the account of money in the bank and money in the safe balanced to a nickel with the records," proceeded Mr. Sculley. "It may be that there are other accounts in arrears. If that is so, the case may be very serious, but we do not think that the further examination of the books will show any irregularity. But we have to take precautions for our own protection and that is why we have



BROOKLYN DAILY EAGLE

1841-1902

February 20, 1901

SEVEN APPEAR IN COURT.

**Lewis Says His Desk Was Broken Open,
but They Declare That He Gave
Up the Keys.**

The troubles in the Brooklyn City Co-operative Building and Loan Association are not by any means over. Thomas F. Lewis, the deposed president, has caused the arrest of seven of the officers of the organization on a charge of grand larceny.

The story of the trouble in the association was told at length in the Eagle at the time. The directors at a business meeting accidentally discovered that the financial secretary, John H. Kampf, had permitted one of the members to remain for six months in arrears of payment on a mortgage. This was considered a serious offense and the president and financial secretary were suspended on the spot.

Joseph V. Sculley, the vice president, and two of the members of the auditing committee demanded from the officers named the keys of the desks and the combinations of the safes in the office at 91 Court street. The keys and books were surrendered and a policeman stayed in the office all night while the vice president and his friends went over the books and cash accounts. Mr. Lewis and Mr. Kampf were permitted to remain in the office while the examination was in progress, but it is understood that they were not allowed again inside of the railing which separates the inner portion of the office from the outside.

Mr. Sculley reported next morning that the cash had balanced to a penny and that the books were all right, with the exception of the default which had occasioned all the trouble. At a subsequent meeting Mr. Sculley was empowered to act as president and John J. Dannaher, the assistant financial secretary, was authorized to act in Mr. Kampf's place.

Lewis, it was understood, made no objection to the action of the directors in suspending him and readily, it was said, gave over his keys to his private desk and the other desks in the office. He could not be seen when a reporter tried to get an interview with him at the time, but yesterday afternoon he went with his counsel, Mr. Whitlock, to the Adams street court, with an affidavit charging seven of the officers of the association with grand larceny. They demanded a warrant for the arrest of Mr. Sculley and his associates and it was issued by Magistrate Brenner. The document was placed in the hands of Court Officer Karcher and late yesterday afternoon he had notified the men charged that they should appear in court to answer the complaint. The affidavit of Mr. Lewis is brief. It simply reads:

"Thomas F. Lewis of 493 Thirtieth street, real estate dealer, deposes and says: That on the 13th of February, 1901, divers goods and chattels, money and property of deponent, namely \$450 in United States currency, desks, papers, deeds, checks, bills, books, record of business, mortgages and bonds, papers and documents of various descriptions, and a typewriter, were taken, stolen and carried away by Joseph H. Delaney, Joseph V. Sculley, Theodore T. Sweeney, Joseph J. Mooney, J. Hoehn, George W. Dimmick and Joseph Cox, at 91 Court street."

The men named are all officials, as has been said, of the association. Lewis intimates that the accused practically took forcible possession of his desk, wherein were all of the papers and documents pertaining to his private business as a real estate agent; that they opened his desk by force; that they appropriated his money and that they practically broke up his business by taking charge of everything.

Mr. Lewis was engaged in the real estate business in the office at 91 Court street, where the association allowed him to have desk room. He was paid a nominal salary as president of the association, but it was not enough to permit him to give up his private business, and he declares that all of the papers in his private desk were part of his business and were not in any way connected with the affairs of the Brooklyn City Co-operative Building and Loan Association.

The seven men whose names are given were in the Adams street court early this morning. It was clear that they were annoyed by the action of Mr. Lewis, but they declined to discuss the case in any way. They united in a plea of not guilty and hearing was postponed until Tuesday next. Magistrate Brenner permitted them to go on parole until that date and they left the court room together.

When seen at the office at 91 Court street this forenoon Mr. Sculley declared that he had done no wrong. Mr. Lewis had voluntarily surrendered the keys of his desk on the night that he was suspended, said Mr. Sculley, and he had made no demands since then for any of the property. The association had no desire to become possessed of money that did not belong to it. All that the officers wanted were the papers and assets of the association. With Mr. Lewis' private business the association had nothing to do. Mr. Lewis had not made any objection on the night that he was suspended from the office and the members of the association were willing at any time to surrender to Mr. Lewis anything that he could prove was his own property. But he had made no demand for anything.

Mr. Sculley denied that any desk had been broken open. The keys were all handed to the members of the board of officers.



BROOKLYN DAILY EAGLE

1841-1902

February 26, 1901

Is Satisfied That the Officers of a Building-Loan Association Had No Wrong Intent.

SILSBEE NOT SO FORTUNATE.

Magistrate Steers Refuses to Permit the Withdrawal of Mr. Haas' Charges Against Him.

Thomas F. Lewis, who was suspended from the presidency of the Brooklyn City Co-operative Building and Loan Association, and who afterward made a complaint charging Joseph V. Sculley and other officers of the association with having stolen some of his private property, went into the Adams street court this morning with his counsel, Mr. Whitlock, to withdraw the charge.

"If your honor please," said Mr. Whitlock to Magistrate Steers, "Mr. Lewis would like to withdraw the complaint in this matter. The property which it was charged had been taken has been returned to Mr. Lewis. The only question that seemed to have been involved was one of intent, and it seems clear that there was no felonious intent in this case. Therefore Mr. Lewis would like the privilege of withdrawing the complaint."

The magistrate said that he had no objections and instructed that the statement of counsel should be set forth on the papers. Mr. Lewis was then permitted to withdraw the charge and the case against Mr. Sculley and his associates was accordingly dropped.

There was another request for the withdrawal of a complaint of grand larceny in the Adams street court this morning, but that was differently treated. It was in the case of Gilman E. Silsbee, the proprietor of the restaurant at 311 Fulton street. Mr. Silsbee was charged by Edward Haas with having retained \$100, the property of the complainant. The story of the trouble was published in the Eagle at the time. Haas had been eating and drinking at Silsbee's place and had given Mr. Silsbee, he claimed, change for a \$100 bill. But Mr. Silsbee, according to the story of Haas, did not give him the bill of the larger denomination and Haas made a fuss about it. Silsbee was not around when Court Officer Moloney went to serve him with the warrant and it was given out by

Haas that the trouble between him and Silsbee had been amicably adjusted. Magistrate Brenner would not allow the case to go by default, though, and insisted on the arrest of Silsbee. When the case was called this morning Silsbee's counsel said that the complainant was in court and was anxious to withdraw the complaint.

"That is true," said Mr. Haas coming forward. "This was only a misunderstanding and I want to withdraw the complaint."

"A misunderstanding," echoed Magistrate Steers, who was sitting for Magistrate Brenner. "But you swore, my good man, that this person had stolen \$100 from you. Did you swear falsely?"

"It was all a misunderstanding," pleaded Mr. Haas.

"I think it is a very serious matter," commented the magistrate. "As this warrant was issued by Magistrate Brenner I will not permit you to withdraw the case. You must settle that before Magistrate Brenner."

"But I do not want any more bother about it," said Haas. "I am a traveling man and my business takes me out of the city. I cannot come here again."

"You had better," said Magistrate Steers. "I will set this down for to-morrow morning. Magistrate Brenner will be here then and he will dispose of the case as he thinks best."



BROOKLYN DAILY EAGLE

1841-1902

October 15, 1901

LEWIS WANTS HIS SALARY

**He Secures an Order in His Suit for
\$106 Against Association.**

Justice Dickey, in Supreme Court, Special Term, to-day granted a motion by Lawyer Thomas S. Whitlock to place on short cause calendar the suit brought by Thomas F. Lewis, as president of the Brooklyn City Co-operative Building and Loan Association, against the same association, to recover \$106 alleged by the plaintiff to be due to him.

In opposition, Lawyer William Niper said that Mr. Lewis was suspended on a charge of misconduct and malfeasance in office, and it would be necessary to examine on the trial many witnesses and books, which would occupy much more than an hour, the time set for a short cause case.

Lawyer Whitlock claimed that the sum claimed was accrued salary and the suspension was not affected by the suit.

Lawyer Niper said that the contract voided every contract under it.



BROOKLYN DAILY EAGLE

1841-1902

December 23, 1902

MONTAUK REALTY AND TITLE CO.

375 FULTON STREET, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

A semi-annual dividend of 2 PER CENT. has been declared on the preferred stock to stockholders of record, payable January 5, 1903. Transfer books close December 15, 1902; reopen January 16, 1903.

JOHN A. KNOWLES, THOMAS F. LEWIS.
Sec. and Treas. President.