

BROADWAY'S FUTURE SOUTH OF TIMES SQUARE

Real Estate Movement That Promises to Have Unusual Elements of Strength—Large Plots Awaiting Development.

That stretch of Broadway connecting the Thirty-fourth Street centre on the south with that at Times Square on the north promises to become one of the most coveted parts of the city's great thoroughfare. Land values there, if one will make exceptions of a few properties facing Madison and Greeley Squares, are higher than any others to be found on Broadway north of Chambers Street. Not only has the up-town movement of the hotel and theatrical centre served to advance prices steadily in the territory shown in the accompanying diagram, but the junction of

certainty that its future is firmly fixed, and that there is no possibility that the next ten or fifteen years will witness the withdrawal of those elements and conditions which make for its prosperity. There is every indication that its growth will be steady and without any such period of "marking time" as that section of Broadway from Madison Square to Thirty-second Street is now undergoing. Once the "Rialto" itself, this latter district is at present in an indeterminate state—no longer attractive for the building of hotels and theatres, and yet with its future as a business district far from settled.

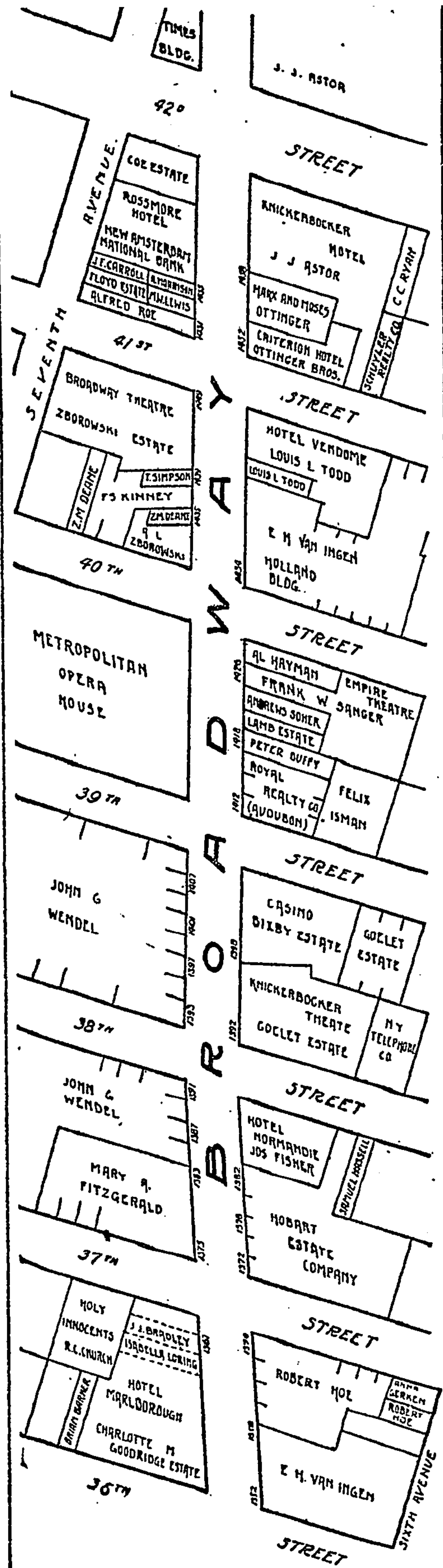
Another element that is likely to give permanence to the prosperity of Broadway from Thirty-fourth to Forty-second Street is that it may be said to bisect the territory between the city's two great railroad terminals of the future. Not that Broadway will get any great part of the travel between the New York Central and Pennsylvania stations, but every passenger going from one to the other will be obliged to cross it either at Thirty-fourth or Forty-second Street, a circumstance which will add greatly, and for all time, to the value of the intervening blocks for hotel purposes.

The development of the blocks in question has yet very largely to be undertaken—in the sense that with the exception of the new Hotel Knickerbocker at Forty-second Street, and possibly one or two of the theatres there are no improvements that do not antedate the last decade. It has been until now—justifiably enough—a region of those two and three-story structures known as "taxpayers," but with the particularly bright future of this part of Broadway it is difficult to see how the erection of modern buildings can be deferred much longer.

Not the least remarkable feature of these Broadway blocks is the number of large plots that are held in individual ownerships. This state of affairs is likely to operate both for and against the early improvement of the neighborhood. The serious difficulties frequently encountered in the collecting of a number of small parcels into one large site will of course be obviated, but, on the other hand, some of these plots along Broadway just south of Forty-second Street are too large—they are nearly all above what might be termed "popular size," and the owners will sell only on the "all or none" basis. On the east side of the thoroughfare are the two enormous plots owned by E. H. Van Ingen, one at Thirty-sixth and the other at Fortieth Street; the Hobart estate's holdings, at the northeast corner of Thirty-seventh Street, and those of Robert Hoe, on the southeast corner, of only slightly smaller area. On the west side, the properties of Mrs. Mary A. Fitzgerald, at the northwest corner of Thirty-seventh Street, and notably those of the Wendel estate, extending up to Thirty-ninth Street, have come to be pointed out as typical of an unprogressive policy in real estate management. The Wendel holdings were bought by the founder of that estate, John D. Wendel, nearly sixty years ago, probably at farm land prices, so that the little stores on the lots to-day undoubtedly show an enormous return on the original investment, but it will be interesting to see whether the estate will be able, in this instance, to adhere to its hard and fast doctrine of "never sell and never improve."

There is little doubt that Mr. Van Ingen would have been able to dispose of the greater part of his two big plots had he been willing to subdivide them. Both are said to be held at about the same figure, \$1,850,000—the one at Fortieth Street being somewhat the larger, but lacking the extra corner which adds to the value of the Thirty-sixth Street parcel.

Broadway values in these blocks have passed the \$100-a-square-foot level. The sale of the Audubon apartment house at Thirty-ninth Street several months ago was made at just about that rate, and there is now in existence a provisional contract for a resale of it at a somewhat higher figure. When Al Hayman and the late Frank W. Sanger bought the building at the southeast corner of Fortieth Street, which is completely surrounded by the Empire Theatre, they paid \$275,000. The Rossmore Hotel was sold three years ago for \$700,000—\$70 a square foot—although it is said that \$1,000,000 has since been refused for it, and that it is now held at \$1,250,000. Directly opposite, at the northeast corner of Forty-first Street, Ottinger Brothers control a large parcel consisting of the Criterion Hotel and the adjoining low buildings. They have acquired all of this property at auction within the last four years—the small buildings for \$211,000 and the hotel itself for \$487,000.



Broadway and Forty-second Street, what with the present subway and the one to be built down Seventh Avenue, will become a centre the importance of which can never be seriously diminished.

The present high scale of values along this new "Rialto," in other words, is in large measure the result of a feeling of