Using the Brooklyn Land Conveyance Collection

Before you begin, you'll need the property's block number and distance in feet from the nearest corner. Lean how to find this information with this video tutorial.

Please contact cbhreference@bklynlibrary.org with your block number to schedule an appointment to view the collection. When you arrive, you'll receive a box that includes conveyances from multiple blocks. Select the folder labeled with your block number. For this example, we'll be using 218 74th Street, block 5928., which is 200 feet from the nearest corner.

The land conveyances should be organized from the earliest transfers (circa 1699) to the latest (circa 1896). The first several conveyances might look like this:
The conveyance above is from 1853, when the block was still part of a larger plot. The conveyance shows the Grantor (seller) Tunis and Elizabeth Bergen and the Grantee (buyer) William Spencer. We can also see the date the transaction was recorded and the liber and page number it was recorded on. **You’ll need the liber and page numbers if you want to find the full deed.** See the bottom of this guide for instructions.

The conveyance above shows us that by 1888 streets we recognize today were mapped out but block 5928 was still part of a large tract of land and had not yet been divided into lots.
In 1893 the block finally began dividing into lots. As you can see, there is no lot or building number. The lots are identified by their size and distance in feet to the closest cross street, which today is Ridge Boulevard, but in 1893 was called Second Avenue.

I know that 218 74th Street begins 200 feet from Ridge Boulevard (Second Avenue) on the south side of the block, and I can see that the lot on the diagram begins 120 feet from Ridge Boulevard on the north side of the block. Although the lot is drawn in a way that it seems to overlap with the current location of 218 74th Street, it does not. We need to keep looking to find a conveyance that includes our address.
The lot represented above was bought and sold between members of the Townsend family in 1894. The lot is on the south side of the block, beginning 100 feet from Ridge Boulevard. 218 74th Street begins 200 feet from Ridge Boulevard, which means the lot seen here is on current site of 218 74th Street.

Unfortunately, our Land Conveyance Collection ends at 1898. To continue your research please visit the City Registrar, 144-06 94th Avenue in Queens. The Brooklyn Real Property books are located in the Queens Business Center; however, microfilm/microfiche are still available at the Brooklyn office of the Department of Finance at 210 Joralemon Street. The property books contain block and lot indexes, which show buyer/seller information from approximately 1900 to 1959. These indexes reference a liber and page number, which indicate the location of a particular land deed. To view the land deed, take the liber/page numbers to Room 203 on the second floor.

Many land deeds have been digitized and are available on FamilySearch.org. See below for instructions.

**Accessing Full Land Deeds**

Navigate to [FamilySearch.org](https://familysearch.org) and create a free account, then find the [United States, New York Land Records 1630-1975](https://familysearch.org/records).
Select BROWSE ALL.

Select Kings (Brooklyn is located in Kings County). For this example, we'll find the 1853 Tunis Bergen conveyance that appears on the first page of this guide. This conveyance tells us that the full deed was recorded on liber 340, page 9. In Family Search, libers are called volumes and are organized by date. Please note that numbers are occasionally incorrect, and not all libers are available.

Conveyances 1853 vol 339-341

Click on your date to access the digitized deeds. Several volumes are on one reel, so it might be easier to locate your liber book by using the “browse multiple images” feature.
I scrolled until I reached liber 340 and clicked on it to pull up the full page. I then used the arrows on the upper left-hand corner to locate page 9.

Zooming in, I can see that this is the deed I'm looking for.