

HAROLD LLOYD Brooklyn *Speedy* Film Location Tour A *SILENT VISIONS* Tour of Brooklyn

This tour is provided as a special bonus to author John Bengtson's introduction of Harold Lloyd's *Speedy* at Film Forum, 209 West Houston Street, New York, on Sunday, October 21 at 3:10 pm, and on Monday, October 22 at 7:30 pm, supplementing his book *Silent Visions: Discovering Early Hollywood and New York through the Films of Harold Lloyd*, Santa Monica Press (2011). The tour is annotated with corresponding page numbers (SV) from Bengtson's book.

Harold Lloyd filmed his final silent comedy feature *Speedy* (1928) in New York and Brooklyn during the late summer of 1927. Aside from a lengthy sequence filmed at Coney Island (filmed partly at Venice, California), most of the Brooklyn locations were filmed in the D.U.M.B.O. (Down Under the Manhattan Bridge Overpass) neighborhood. While the elevated trolley tracks appearing in the film that once ran along Old Fulton Street and along Broadway no longer exist, many filming spots are still recognizable.

Lloyd plays title character Harold "Speedy" Swift ("Speedy" was Lloyd's real-life nickname), who celebrates losing his soda jerk job by taking his girl, Jane (played by Ann Christy), to Coney Island for the day. *Speedy's* next job as a taxi-cab driver ends disastrously, but not before he takes Babe Ruth (in a cameo appearance) on a wild ride to Yankee Stadium. Jane's grandfather, Pop, operates the last remaining horse-drawn trolley franchise in New York. Shady developers wish to buy out Pop's interest, but when he refuses their low offer, they steal his trolley, as they know the franchise will expire if the trolley does not run at least once every 24 hours. Harold finds the stolen trolley, and in a wild cross-town chase arrives in time to save the franchise, which Pop then sells for a hefty sum.

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1. The tour begins south of the Williamsburg Bridge at the corner of Kent Avenue and S. 8th Street. Harold has intercepted a note saying the stolen trolley car is hidden at Kent Avenue. When Harold arrives on the scene, pondering where to look, you can read the actual street sign that says "KENT AV.—S 8 ST" (SV 261). During the scene, you can also see three landmark New York buildings across the East River in the background; the Transportation Building, the Woolworth Building, and the Metropolitan Building.



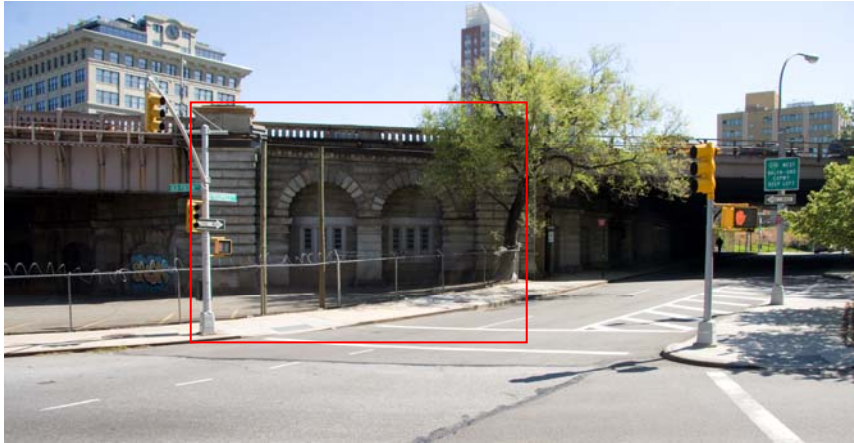
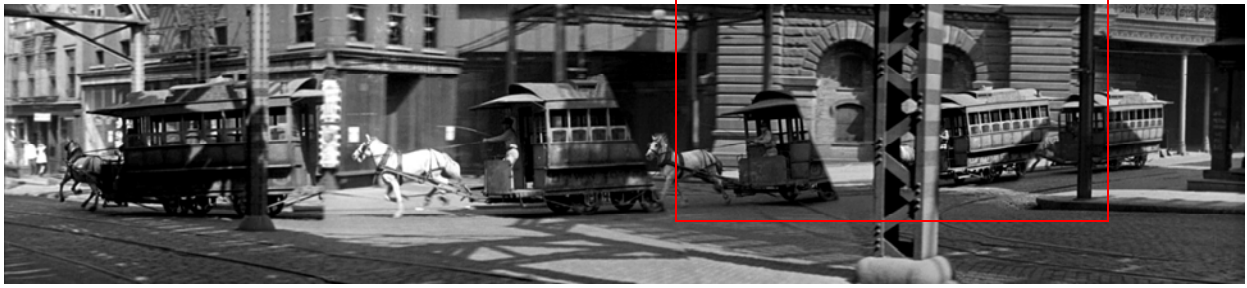
2. During other scenes at the ferry yard you can look west and seeing the overlapping silhouettes of the Manhattan and Brooklyn Bridge towers in the distance (SV 262).



3. When Harold takes off with the trolley, he turns left (north) from the yard onto Kent Avenue. The elevated trolley tracks that once ran east down Broadway appear at back, and block from view the deck of the Williamsburg Bridge. The vintage buildings that stood at the corner of Kent and Broadway have been demolished, but the left edge of the extant building at 409 Kent appears in the shot (*box below*). (SV 263).



4. Travel SE down Kent Avenue about ten blocks, and merge right onto Williamsburg Street W. Continue past Flushing Avenue and take the onramp west onto 278, the Brooklyn Queens Expressway. Continue west and take Exit 29 and continue west on Tilary Street. Continue west past the Brooklyn Bridge, until Cadman Parkway West. Turn right (north) and continue north until you reach Prospect Street. Lloyd filmed a dramatic scene here of the trolley racing from under the Brooklyn Bridge, west on Prospect, and veering wildly round the corner north onto Cadman. The scene in the movie is shaded by the former elevated tracks than ran along Old Fulton Street. (SV 268).



5. Turn right (east) on Prospect Street under the bridge, past Washington Street, then turn left (north) on Adams Street. Continue up Adams to Plymouth Street. Pause under the shadow of the Manhattan Bridge. Lloyd staged a stunt here, racing the trolley between oncoming cars, that was filmed from opposing vantage points, so that the resulting shots appear as two different scenes in the movie. One scene looks west, as the trolley races east along Plymouth from Washington towards Adams; the other scene looks east, as the trolley races east under the shadow of the Manhattan Bridge. It appears that every vintage building in both shots is still standing. (SV 274).





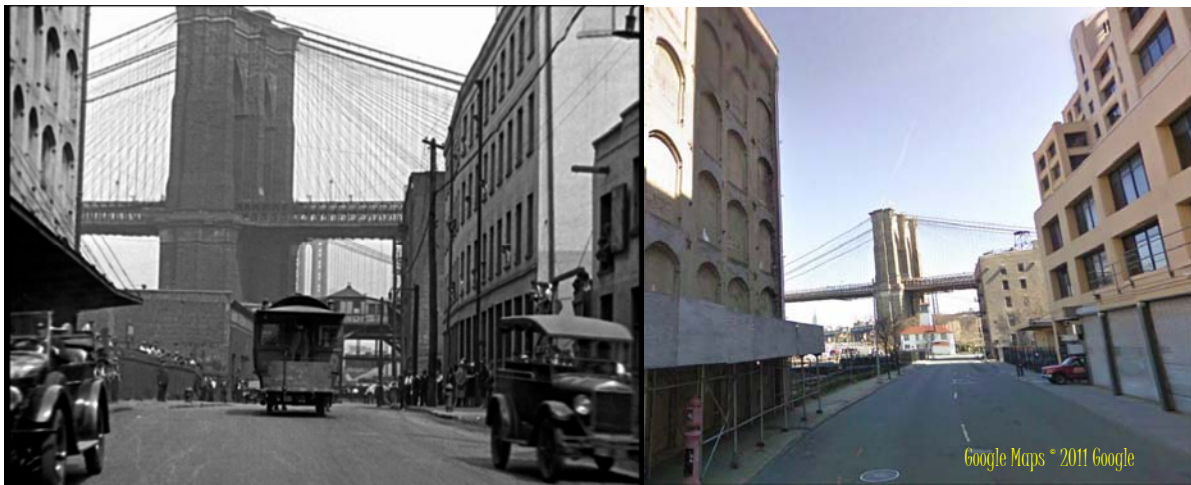
6. Travel east on Plymouth under the Manhattan Bridge, and continue east until Jay Street. Turn right (south) on Jay, and continue three blocks to York Street. Turn right (west) onto York, traveling three blocks until back at Washington Street. Turn right (north) on Washington, and turn left (west) onto Water Street. Continue on Water Street under the Brooklyn Bridge, then pause at the corner of Old Fulton Street. It was here that Harold raced north from Everit Street, across Old Fulton Street, to Water Street. The elevated tracks block most of the view of the extant buildings at back. (SV 266).



7. Another scene filmed at this corner pans further to the left, revealing the sides of the buildings along Water Street. (SV 267).



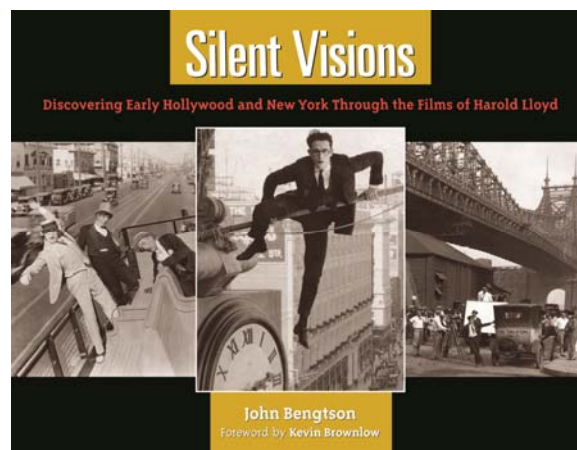
8. Jog right (west) from Water Street on Old Fulton Street, and then quickly turn left (south) onto Furman. Quickly turn left (east) again onto Doughty Street. **NOTE:** there is **no outlet** from Furman past Doughty until you reach Atlantic Avenue, about twenty blocks further south. Lloyd filmed on Furman about one block south of Doughty, but to see the precise view you will have to travel far out of your way to return. (SV 275).



9. Assuming you turned onto Doughty Street from Furman, continue east and turn left (north) onto Everit Street. Near Old Fulton Street is where Lloyd filmed the trolley racing under the elevated tracks. This scene was filmed at the same time as the view described at paragraph 6 above. The doorway marked with a red box (*below*) is the same doorway marked with red boxes at paragraph 6. (SV 265).



This concludes the *Speedy* Brooklyn Tour.



Color photographs courtesy of Beth Goffe — www.pbase.com/bgoffe

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