

"A town of my own," said Lady Deborah Moody. She smiled in a sort of wonder. She couldn't believe it.

She'd never dreamed of such a thing when she set sail from England. All she'd hoped for then was to find a happy new home in America.

Her husband had died a few years before and left her a rich woman. But she was lonely. She knew that many English Puritans were moving to America. And she was a Puritan. So she decided that she'd move too.

She landed at Boston, and it looked like a nice town. But soon she learned that her ideas of being a good Puritan were not the same as those of the Boston ministers. She didn't like the harsh way they treated people of other faiths. She also didn't like the laws they had passed to rule almost every minute of one's life.

Lady Deborah decided to move to some other town. She'd made some friends in Boston who felt as she did. And they said they'd move with her. The first town they tried was Salem, up the river from Boston. But they found that Salem's Puritans were just as harsh as those of Boston.

Lady Deborah and her friends moved on once more. This time they went to New Amsterdam, a town that had been started by the Dutch.

A man showed Lady Deborah around. They stopped on a riverbank, and he pointed across the river. "Long Island," he said. "The part you see is rich, unsettled land. I'm sure you could buy some if you wished."

Now Lady Deborah had an idea. Instead of going from town to town, why not start a town herself?

It was a daring idea. But it wasn't impossible. A few days later the Dutch governor of New Amsterdam, William Kieft, gave her the deed to a large tract of land. He also gave her permission to start a town.

Lady Deborah was the first woman in America given such permission. But she had no time to think about that. She was too busy. She gave land to friends who had come with her from Boston. She made plans for starting to build. And most important of all, she wrote the laws for her town. It was to be free in every way. There would be no slaves. And people of all faiths would be welcome.

Lady Deborah named her town Gravesend, after a town she had known in England. Gravesend is still part of Brooklyn in New York City. It's a crowded place that Lady Deborah wouldn't know. But the spirit of freedom that she thought so important is still there, just as America's first lady mayor would have wished.

## CHECK YOUR READING

- Lady Deborah Moody left England for America to**
  - find a new home
  - start a religion
  - become rich
- When Lady Deborah's husband died, she was left**
  - tired and sick
  - rich, but lonely
  - homeless
- Lady Deborah's religion was**
  - Lutheran
  - Roman Catholic
  - Puritan
- At first Lady Deborah thought Boston looked like a**
  - wild frontier town
  - little English village
  - small, but nice town
- Lady Deborah did not like the way the Puritan ministers treated**
  - the Indians
  - their children
  - people of other faiths
- Lady Deborah and her friends went from Boston to**
  - Plymouth
  - Salem
  - Philadelphia
- Lady Deborah decided that instead of moving around she would**
  - go back to England
  - start her own town
  - give Boston another try
- Governor William Kieft, who sold Lady Deborah some land, was**
  - English
  - French
  - Dutch
- The laws of Lady Deborah's new town permitted**
  - no slaves
  - freedom of religion
  - Both A and B
- Lady Deborah's town of Gravesend is now a**
  - part of Brooklyn
  - small market town
  - state capital

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