

## Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Farm Life in Kings Park: The Stattel Farm

by Roxanne Kiefer Mollo

Like most of Long Island, and certainly Suffolk County, in 1906, Kings Park was a very rural area. A community of small businesses existed near the railroad station, but there were no banks, no fire house and few other amenities associated with an established community. The LIRR ran through town, the State Hospital was about a decade old and St. Johnland was still a thriving community of its own.

At that time, Daniel Stattel, a successful farmer and German immigrant bought approximately 83 acres from Eva Tea for his son Henry and his young wife, Louise Kiefer Stattel, to farm. Over time, Daniel would set several of his children up as farmers on land as far east as Water Mill. He chose Kings Park because of its proximity to the Kings County Farm and Asylum. He reasoned that even though the hospital had its own farm, there surely would be a market for crops produced on the farm he was purchasing.



Louise and Henry had been married by then about 7 years and already had three small children. Having spent their married life to date farming the Kiefer family farm in Herricks, Nassau County, they were ready to settle in to their own place.

Henry, other family members and farm hands loaded the family belongings onto a LIRR freight car in New Hyde Park for the rail journey to Kings Park. The farm, located on Indian Head Rd, was roughly bounded by the railroad station on the north, present day Ellen Drive on the south as well as the areas of modern-day Park Drive to Bruce Lane South on the east side of Indian Head Road.

We know Louise and her three children ages 6, 4 and a new born travelled from Herricks, Nassau County to Kings Park in a horse and wagon. Presumably someone, perhaps Henry, made the approximately 30-mile trip came with her. Imagine how long and difficult that trip, under those conditions must have been?

Once in Kings Park, the family settled into the 18-room farmhouse (presently at the northeast corner of Meadow Rd and 1<sup>st</sup> St.) then located approximately where the Chase bank in the Kings Park Plaza sits today. In future installments we will learn about day to day life on the farm. \*

\*(from a letter written by Florence M. Stattel to Dr. Wallis of New York City dated November 10, 1989.)

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For this information and more the Leo P. Ostebo Kings Park Heritage Museum recommends and encourages those interested to visit the Museum's Stattel Exhibit and to read History of Kings Park in Words and Pictures by Miles B. Borden