



September 24, 2019

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th floor
New York, NY 10007

Re: Additional Information regarding historic significance of buildings within proposed historic district south of Union Square

Dear Chair Carroll,

I write to share with you additional information we have uncovered regarding the historic and architectural significance of several buildings in our proposed historic district south of Union Square. Each testifies to the rich history and architecture of this imminently endangered area, and illustrates its vital role in the development of New York as a source of political, industrial, and housing innovation in America in the 19th and 20th centuries. More specifically, they also speak to this area's role as New York's center of the publishing industry, radical and progressive political activity including the women's suffrage and various workers' rights movements, piano manufacturing, and to the career and craft of one of the 19th century's premier American architects, James Renwick, who lived, died, owned property, and built multiple structures in this small area.

10 East 14th Street, New York City Woman Suffrage League Headquarters

This beautifully intact cast-iron structure dating to 1884 was commissioned by W. Jennings Demorest, who perhaps more than any other figure transformed 14th Street in the late 19th century from a high-end residential to a commercial thoroughfare. Not long after it was built, 10 East 14th Street played a significant role in the women's suffrage movement, which was in a critical phase in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. At that time voting rights for women in New York and nationwide were finally being secured, resulting from the long-term efforts of leading suffragists including Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Artists, manufacturers, and other groups advocating for social change also made 10 East 14th Street their home over the years.



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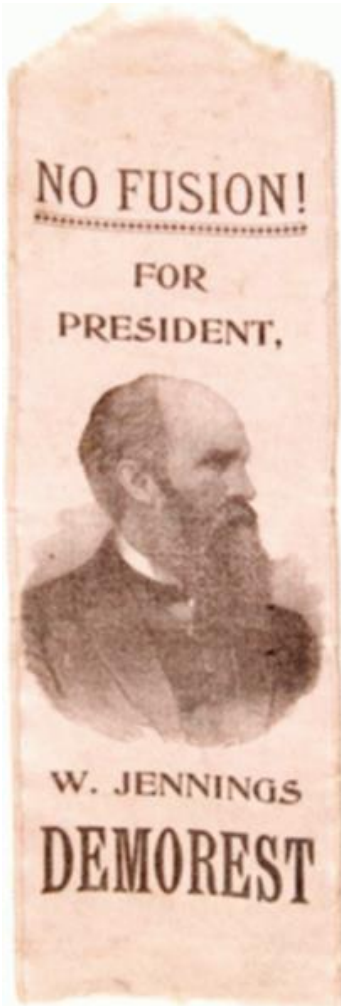
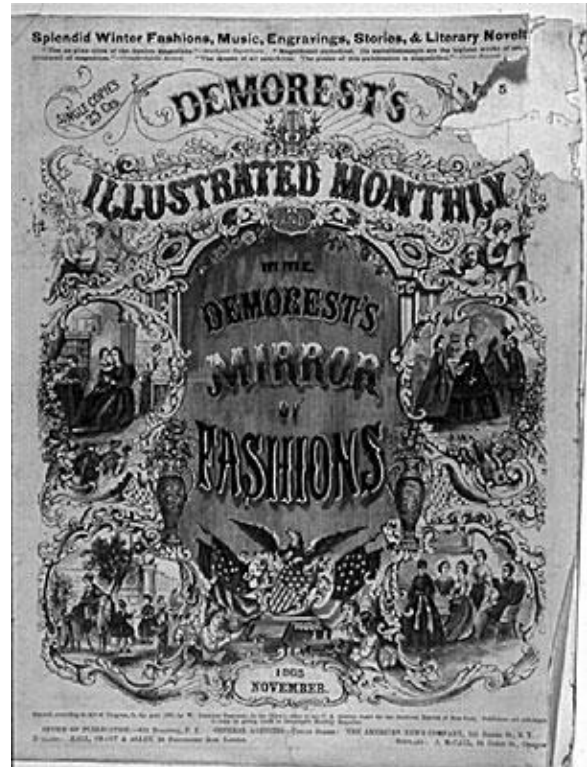
In 1881, the *Real Estate Record and Builders Guide* remarked that Fourteenth Street had changed dramatically over the previous seven years and that W. Jennings Demorest was the person most responsible for this change, altering 14 private residences into stores. Typically these converted residences housed high-end specialty shops, and 14 East 10th Street was no exception. In 1884 the *Real Estate Record and Builders Guide* reported that W. Jennings Demorest had purchased 10 East 14th Street, an old 14th Street mansion, and planned to alter the building by creating two distinct store fronts and converting the upper floors to offices and studios. It was at this time that the elegant cast-iron façade we see today was first erected. Two of the first retailers at this location were silver

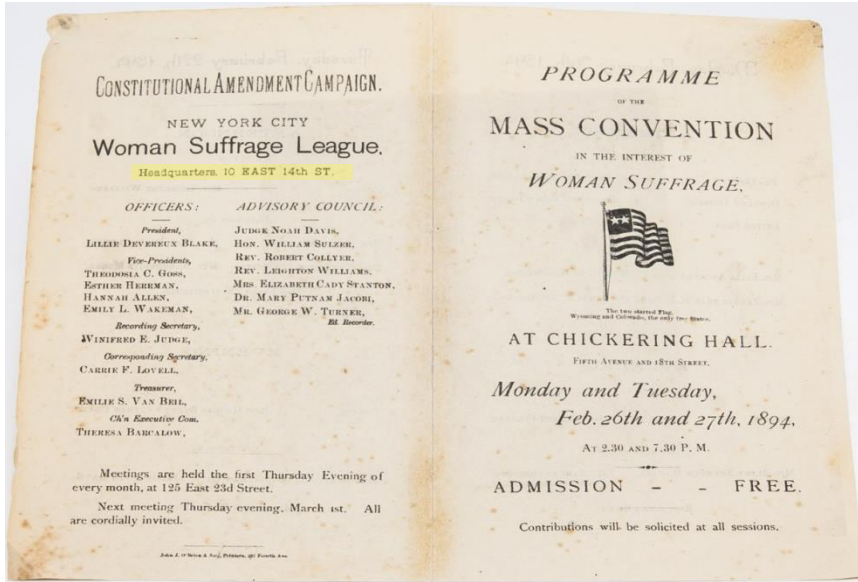
dealer James F. Barclay and gem dealer J.H. Barringer.

Demorest was a notable figure not just for his impact upon 14th Street. Along with his wife Ellen Demorest, he built a fashion empire in New York City that included “Madame Demorest’s Fashion Emporium,” Demorest’s paper patterns, and publications including *Demorest’s Illustrated Monthly Magazine* and *Demorest’s Mirror of Fashions*. Demorest was a noted proponent of prohibition who ran for Mayor of New York City as the Prohibition Party candidate, and in 1892 sought and nearly secured the party’s nomination for President. The town of Demorest, Georgia, was established to provide a living environment where the moral virtues espoused by Demorest could thrive.

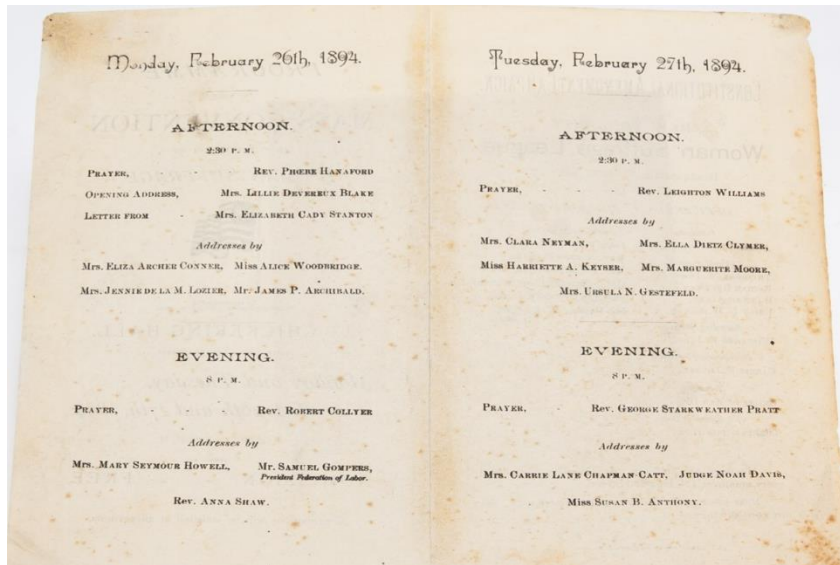
In 1894, 10 East 14th Street housed the headquarters of the New York City Woman Suffrage League. This was a significant time in the women’s suffrage movement in New York for it was then that the Constitutional Amendment Campaign was launched by its leaders to change the New York State

Constitution to give women the right to vote.





The New York State Woman Suffrage Association (founded in 1869 in Saratoga Springs) and the New York City Woman Suffrage League (founded in 1870 and originally named the New York City Woman Suffrage Society) were at the forefront of the woman's suffrage movement in New York. Lillie Devereux Blake, while still leading the state organization, became the president of the city organization in 1886. New



York held constitutional conventions every twenty years, and New York suffragists, under Blake's leadership, saw them as an opportunity to secure women the vote with the hope that such an action would influence other states to follow suit (at this time, only Wyoming and Colorado allowed women to vote). In December of 1893, a Constitutional Amendment Campaign Committee was formed and shortly thereafter headquarters

for the League were opened at 10 East 14th Street. This location was purposely selected as it was in the midst of a high-end shopping district, and the League was courting support from wealthy New York women both for their donations and their influence.

A pre-convention rally was held on May 7, 1894 at Cooper Union led by Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Other speakers included her daughter, Harriet Stanton Blatch, John Milton Cornell (owner of Cornell Iron Works) and Samuel Gompers, the president of the American Federation of Labor. It was announced at the end of this rally that the headquarters of the League at 10 East 14th Street would be open throughout the summer to lead the organizing effort for achieving women's suffrage in New York State. Ultimately, the delegates of the convention did not support the case for women's suffrage. Undaunted, however, the movement continued, and in 1917 the New York State Woman Suffrage Party was finally victorious.



Elizabeth Cady Stanton

Another group that made their home here and fought for social reform was the Lunacy Law Reform League and the Anti-Kidnapping Union. It was founded in 1889 by Clarissa Caldwell Lathrop (1847-1892) who had been committed to a lunatic asylum in Utica by her mother and sister against her will. Two years later she was found sane by the State Supreme Court, which ruled that she had been unlawfully confined. The Union moved to 10 East 14th Street in June of 1891 with the purpose of obtaining writs of habeas corpus for people who were admitted to lunatic asylums but claimed to be sane. The group also spearheaded efforts to

reform lunacy laws including how asylums were overseen and how patients were treated.

At the of the 19th century and into the 20th century, the building housed both artists and businesses, a common trend at this time in the area. Both groups benefited from the wide expanses of glass that cast iron construction afforded, especially one open to unobstructed northern light due to presence of Union Square such as 10 East 14th Street. Located at the northern edge of Greenwich Village, this area naturally drew artists as the neighborhood became the center of the New York art world with the opening of nearby the Tenth Street Studio in 1858. Among others, the noted American photographer Cranmer C. Langill had his studio here at the turn of the last century; Cranmer's image of the Blizzard of 1888, taken a few blocks away on West 11th Street, is the enduring image of that natural catastrophe's impact upon New York City.



*MRS. LILLIE DEVEREUX BLAKE
President National Legislative League*

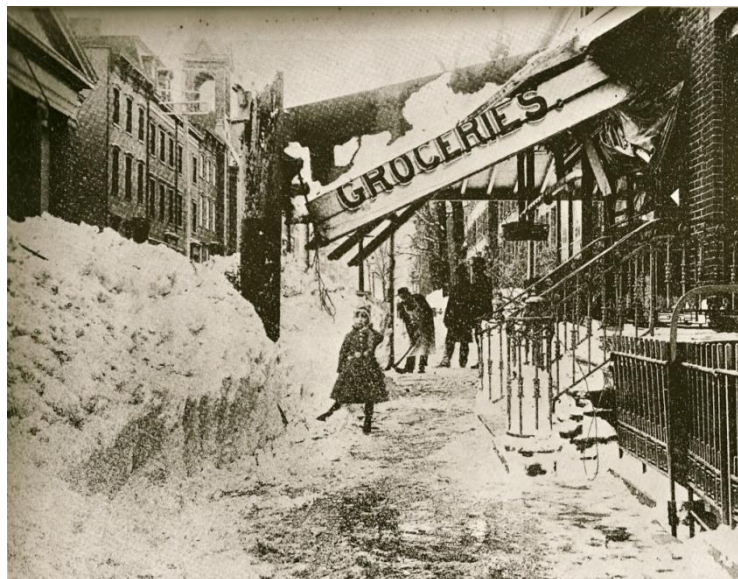


Photo of 11th Street Blizzard of 1888 by Cranmer C. Langill

28 East 14th Street, the Joseph J. Little Building

This distinguished and unusual cast iron-fronted structure stands out for both its architecture and its role as a home to artists and manufacturers, particularly the piano industry which was centered in this area over a century ago. It was also a significant site for radical workers' rights organizations between the two World Wars.

28 East 14th Street was built in 1881 by Joseph J. Little (1841-1913) of 4 Van Nest Place (today's 57 Charles Street) in Greenwich Village. Little had an impressive and varied career, including as a partner of a printing and publishing firm, president of the New York City Board of Education, a congressman, and real estate speculator. He hired William Wheeler Smith to design No. 28 East 14th Street. Smith had recently made his mark on Fourteenth Street with his design for the (still-extant) cast iron building at 40-42 West 14th Street. Known as an architect who embraced the latest technologies in his designs, Smith employed cast iron at this façade, maximizing the width of the single bay windows at the second, third and fourth floors on this 25 foot wide structure. These windows were angled within the façade allowing it to come out to the building line while still having polygonal bays. Ornamented pilasters are found at either side of these



windows, the rhythm is changed to a two-bay configuration and slightly more austere in its ornament at the top story. As varied as cast iron architecture is in New York, this narrow structure stands out in its design.

Like the nearby 10 East 14th Street (located on the same block), 28 East 14th Street attracted as tenants both artists and manufacturers who were drawn by the ample light provided by the unusually large north-facing windows overlooking Union Square. One of the artists who lived and worked here from 1886-1889 was William Michael Harnett. Known for his photo-realistic still-lives, he was commercially successful in his time and influenced many late 19th century painters. His works have included *The Faithful Colt* (1890), *Job Lot*, *Cheap* (1878), *The Old Violin* (1886) and his most famous, *After the Hunt* (1885).

The commercial and artistic nature of the building converged with several tenants in the building connected



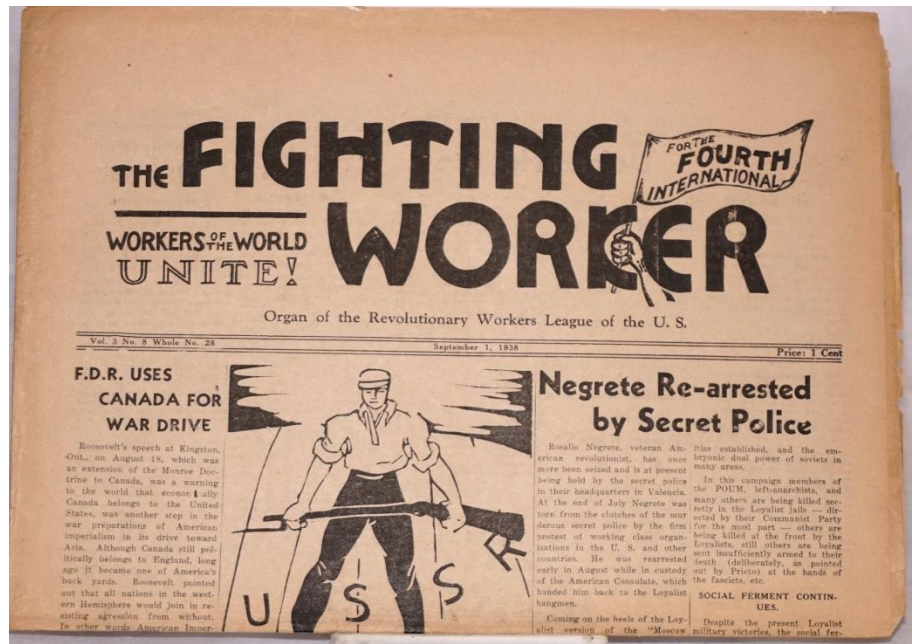
William Michael Harnett's 'Still Life – Violin and Music,' from the Metropolitan Museum of Art

to the burgeoning piano industry, which was centered around 14th Street (Steinway & Sons was located just a block away at 109 East 14th Street). Early in the building's life, the ground floor was occupied by the store of prominent piano dealer Jeremiah M. Pelton.

Around 1920, when the U.S. Communist Party evolved

from the left faction of the newly divided Socialist party, a number of schools teaching the party's beliefs began to emerge. The New York Workers School, which developed in October 1923, was first located on University Place near Union Square, then moved to 28 East 14th Street, where the Communist Party headquarters was already located. The school sought to promote "true proletarian education" and to build a new generation of workers to advance the labor movement. Later, the school moved to another building within the proposed historic district, 35 East 12th Street.

The Revolutionary Workers League, a radical left group formed by Hugo Oehler and active in the United States from about 1935 until 1947, was also located at 28 East 14th Street in 1936. The League published the "Fighting Worker" newspaper.



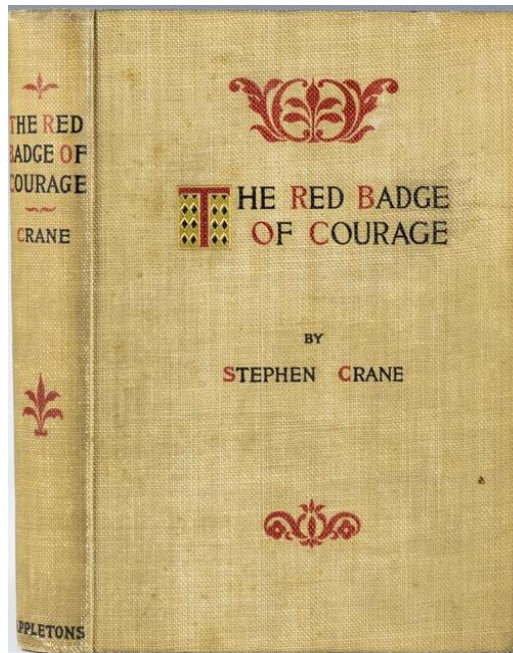
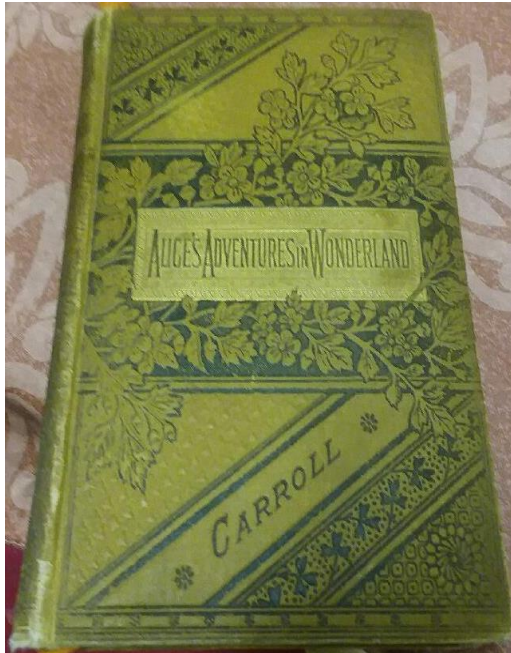
72 Fifth Avenue, Appleton & Co. Headquarters

This almost perfectly intact late 19th century masonry structure is not only an outstanding example of the Romanesque Revival style, but its occupancy over the years reflects the area's prominent connection to the publishing industry, left-wing political movements, and perhaps most surprisingly, the tobacco industry.

In 1893 Marx and Moses Ottinger (whose son, Albert Ottinger, would become the first Jewish major party candidate for Governor of New York in 1928, losing by less than 1% of the vote to Franklin Roosevelt) and Isidore and Max Korn, built the new



headquarters and a store for the Appleton & Company publishers at 72 Fifth Avenue. At the end of the 19th century the area just south of 14th Street was developing into a vital center for the publishing world, making this site the perfect new home for the publishing company. Here as in many other buildings in this area, this type of use would continue well into the 20th century.



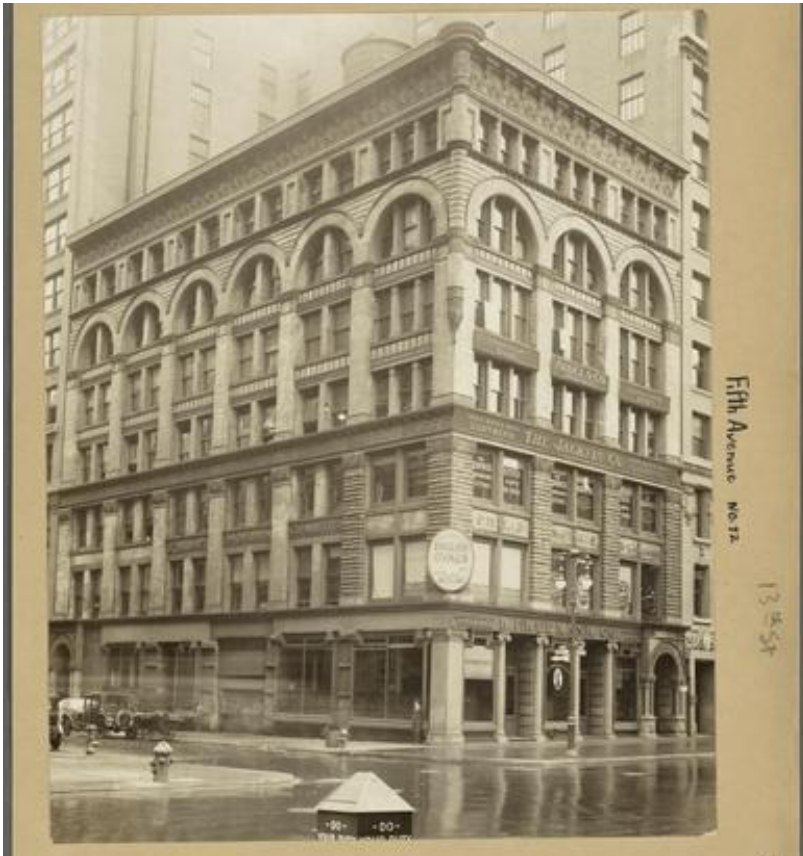
Appleton & Company was founded in 1825 by Daniel Appleton. By the time 72 Fifth Avenue was constructed, it was one of the leading and fastest growing publishers in the country. The company also distinguished itself with the prestigious writers and works it published, including Edith Wharton,

Henry James, Charles Darwin, and William Cullen Bryant. They published the first U.S. edition of Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, and during the time they operated out of 72 Fifth Avenue published Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage*, considered one of the most important American novels and the work which made Crane (who lived nearby just south of Washington Square) a household name.

The building was designed by Cleverdon & Putzel, architects of several of the many impressive buildings in this area. It is a stunning example of the Romanesque Revival style. To this day, it retains almost all of its exterior façade detail, including at the ground floor -- a rare occurrence in this area especially given the age of the building.



The whole design is a seamless mix of contradictory elements: rough and smooth, simple and ornate, uniform and free-form. At the front façade, pink granite engaged columns line the storefront along Fifth Avenue with Ionic capitals. Spanning the second and third levels are unusual piers of stacked quarry-faced stones lending a sense of



72 Fifth Avenue, the Philip Morris Building, 1925 NYPL

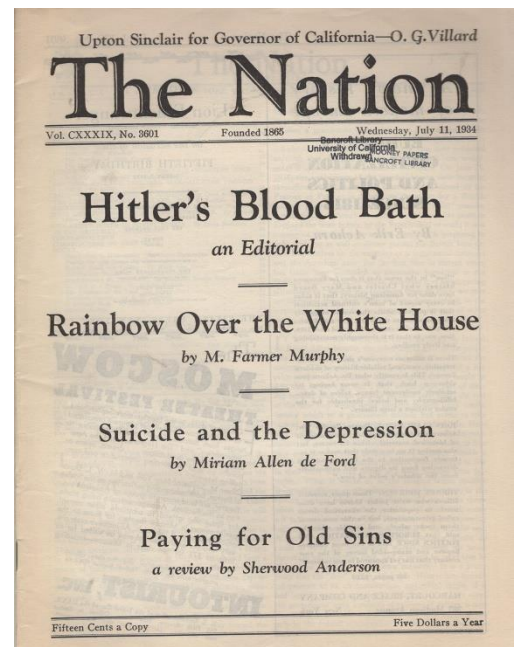
solidity to the base of the structure. Almost in contrast to the piers are their finely ornamented capitals all supporting a simple classical cornice with Greek keys running the widths of both facades. Romanesque arches which are two bays wide at the West 13th Street façade and three bays wide at the corner and Fifth Avenue façade span the sixth floor resting on piers of smooth ashlar stone that run the height of the fourth and fifth floors. At the top floor small windows are placed in accordance with the rhythm of the fenestration below and the cornice at the top is highly ornamented and features unusual brackets with women's faces. At the corner of the building is slender finial at the top three stories.

In 1896 Louis L. Lorillard (1849-1910) purchased the building. He was one of four sons of Pierre Lorillard III (1796-

1867), real estate speculator and heir to the New York-based P. Lorillard Tobacco Company. Louis was touted as one of the wealthiest young men in New York upon his father's death.

By 1902, Appleton & Company grew too big for the space and moved out of 72 Fifth Avenue, allowing smaller tenants to take its place. In 1915 Philip Morris & Co. Ltd. leased the building, which became known as the Philip Morris building. Philip Morris would eventually become the largest tobacco seller in the United States.

In 1946 the building would return to its roots when the educational publishing firm of Ginn & Co. purchased it. The firm had been nearby at 70 Fifth Avenue for the previous sixty years. Other publishers joined Ginn & Co. including Longman, Inc. and Penguin Books by 1976. In 1979 publisher Hamilton Fish moved his magazine *The Nation*, the oldest continuously published weekly in the country, to the building. First founded in 1865, *The Nation* covered culture and politics, and called itself "the flagship of the left." The choice of this location was unsurprising given the area's history not only as a center of publishing but of left-wing political activity.

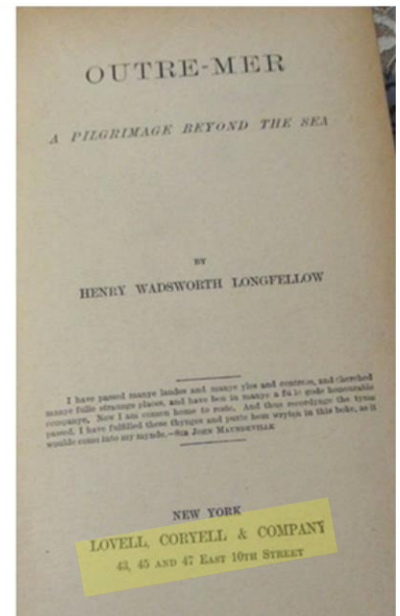
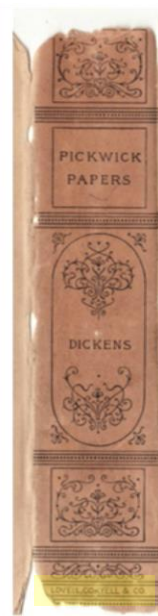
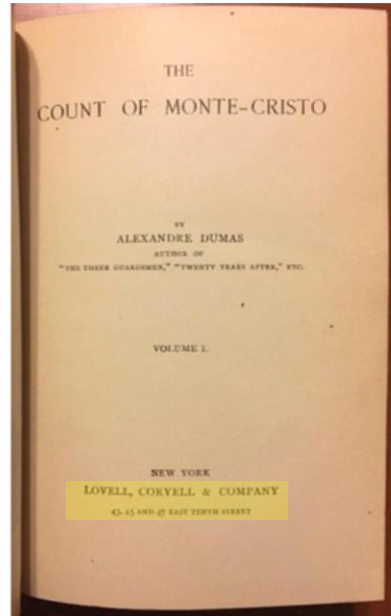
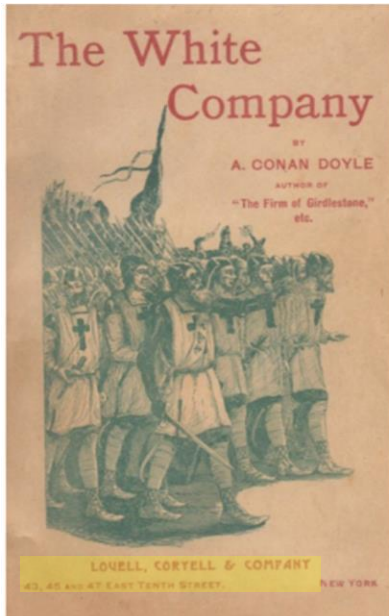


The L. Sachs & Bros. Building, 43-47 East 10th Street



Commissioned by fur manufacturers and importers Louis and Samuel Sachs, 43-47 East 10th Street was designed by Richard Berger in 1891. This brick, cast iron and terra cotta building was constructed with the intention of housing manufactories in its upper floors. Three five-story arches span both the width and the five of the structure's six stories. Cast iron infill accommodates wide expanses of windows within the large arches at those first five floors. At the top floor, twelve round Romanesque arches cap the structure along with a bracketed cornice. Berger was a distinguished architect of cast-iron fronted structures, many of whose works can be found in the SoHo Cast-Iron Historic District.

As with many other buildings in the district, a series of publishers would make their home here, the first of which was Lovell, Coryell & Company, whose first offices were located here. The firm published the works of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, author of the Sherlock Holmes series and pioneer in the crime fiction literary genre, and Jules Verne, considered by many to be, along with H.G. Wells, the "Father of Science Fiction." Shortly after, University Publishing Company also moved to 43-47 East 10th Street. The second-oldest publishing house in New York, William Wood and Company, founded in 1804 and publisher of medical journals, was also located here.



By the turn of the century, dry goods and clothing firms were dominant in the area, a trend already seen earlier along 14th Street, and now made itself felt at 43-47 East 10th Street. One of the first was Northrop & Curry, maker of boys' clothes. This trend continued into the 1930s, ending in 1973 when the building was converted to residences, with virtually all of its exterior architectural features remaining intact.

24-26 East 13th Street, the G. Gennert Building

This striking 7-story store and loft Beaux Arts Belle Époque structure housed significant figures in the fields of photography and stained glass design, two industries embodying the intersection of commerce and art which was so characteristic of this area.

In 1892 a new building permit was filed for 24-26 East 13th Street by G. Gennert, a photographic materials company. Gennert Brothers Photo Supply was founded in 1856 by German immigrant Gottlieb Gennert and his brother; it was one of the first photo supply houses in America, and became famous for their daguerreotype mats, cases and other supplies. By 1869 Gottlieb broke out to start his own firm, G. Gennert, and soon his business was the third largest photo supply business in the country. Gennert expanded to have shops not only in New York but Chicago, Los Angeles, and San Francisco, introducing





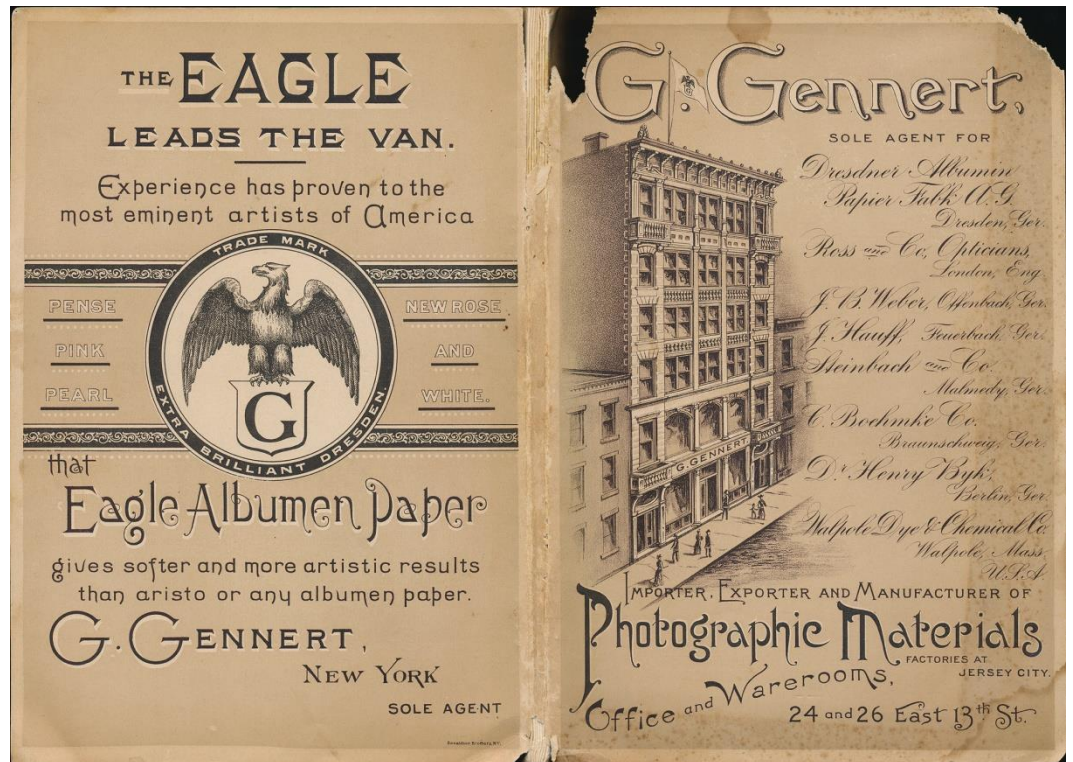
innovative new types of cameras including the 'Montauk' and the 'Penny Picture.'

By 1892, Gennert had outgrown his business' home at 54 East 10th Street (at Broadway, within this area but demolished), and two of his sons, Maurice G. and Gustav C. had taken over the daily operations of the business. They hired the architectural firm

of DeLemos & Corden, who partnered in 1886 and would become known for their designs for large department stores, including the Siegel-Cooper Building (1895-1897) at 616-632 Sixth Avenue, part of the Ladies Mile Historic District.

Just shy of 50 feet wide, this mid-block building is nonetheless an exuberant example of the Beaux Arts style. Its façade is clad in a combination of stone, brick, terra cotta and cast iron, with the grandest section at the first and second floors, which housed Gennert. The upper floors were intended for commercial and manufacturing tenants.

Two side entries are capped by oval windows with projecting balustrade balconies above. At the center entry are polished granite columns with ionic capitals. Above the center entry are three large segmentally arched windows separated by columns with ionic capitals. The upper stories are more austere clad in a light buff brick.



The side windows have flat arches at the third and fourth floors and segmentally arched windows at the fifth floor all with radiating voussoirs above.

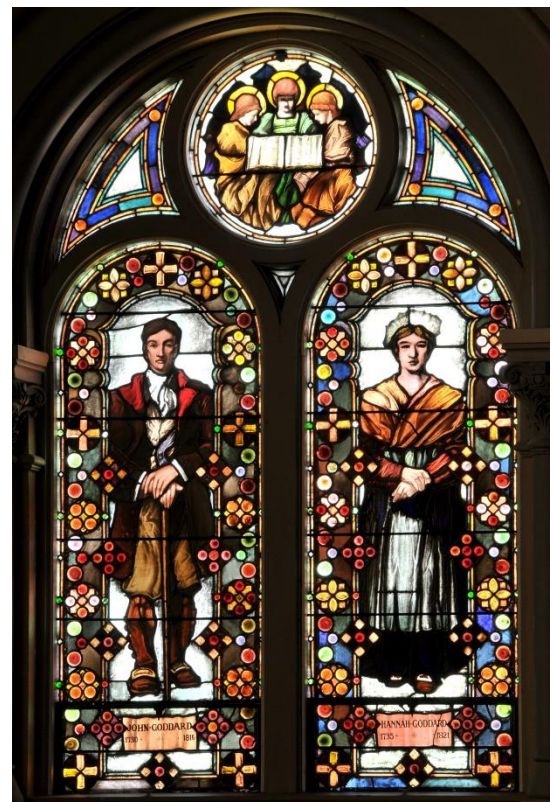


Three double windows are at the center of the third, fourth and fifth floors with blind balustrades at the spandrels in between the levels. The top story assumes some of the first two floors exuberance; the outer windows' enframements project over balustraded balconies. A large modillioned cornice caps the façade with an ornate frieze. So proud was G. Gennert of their building and its design that they used it extensively in their

catalogues and advertisements.

In addition to Gennert, the building had several other tenants of note in prominent fields connected to the commercial and artistic character of this area. This included Heinigke and Bowen, producers of architectural stained glass and mosaics. Owen J. Bowen was a former associate of both Tiffany and La Farge, while Otto Heingeke was also a sought-after glass artisan and enjoyed a career as a successful watercolorist. Their firm was employed by some of the leading architects of the time, including McKim, Mead & White, Cass Gilbert, and John Russell Pope, and was responsible for the stained glass in the Library of Congress, Carnegie Hall, the New York Stock Exchange, and the Woolworth Building.

G. Gennert left the building in 1931, and later tenants included a variety of offices and manufacturers. In 1974 the upper floors were converted to residential use. With the exception of the fire escape, the front façade remains almost entirely intact to its original design.



Heinigke and Bowen stained glass

114-118 East 13th Street, the American Felt Company Headquarters

This classically-inspired loft building was built by and for a company that was a major player in the piano industry which had such a dominant role in this area. The building later housed several printers and bookbinders, industries which became prominent in the area in the early-to-mid-twentieth century, and which were so important to New York's rise as a commercial and cultural capital. Reflecting the arc of area's development, the building was converted to residences in the 1980s.

Architects Knight & Collins designed this eleven-story building in 1906 for the American Felt Company as their main headquarters. This company was founded in Newburgh, New York in 1899, and was formed from smaller companies from several different states. As early as 1903, the company occupied the neighboring 110 East 13th Street, where they would also remain even after the construction of their headquarters here in 1906.

Uniquely, the American Felt Company produced every type of felt including that which was used for piano strikers. It's no coincidence that this location was chosen by the company given its proximity to a number of piano manufacturers in this area towards the end of the 19th century and into the 20th century, including Steinway on the north side of 14th Street. The American Felt Company was the primary felt producer for Steinway, one of the largest and most prestigious piano manufacturers in the world.



The building is symmetrical in its horizontal arrangement and classical in its ornament. The stone two-story base features sheep's heads above the second floor centered on the two outer bays, an homage to the animals which provided the raw material for felt production. The upper stories are clad in tan brick and the center bay is capped at the top stories by a pedimented temple front.



Later tenants of the building during the 1920s included printers and book binders as the area emerged as a center for those industries. This included Hal Marchbanks of Marchbanks Press, “one of the greatest printers and publishers of his time” according to a 1919 issue of American Printer and Lithographer, and Hoffman Type & Eng. Company. The building was converted to condominiums in 1984, at which time the balconies were added to the building's exposed east wall, preserving the integrity of the façade on Thirteenth Street. The building has been the home of several celebrities, including actor Tom Cruise.



Steinway Hall, 109 East 14th Street, demolished 1926. photo by Wurts Bros. from the collection of the Museum of the City of New York <http://collections.mcny.org/C.aspx?VP3=SearchResult&VBID=24UAYW6S99YY&SMLS=1&RW=1366&RH=629>

The Erskine Press Building, 17 East 13th Street



This charming and diminutive building bears a remarkable connection to the history of this area as a center of publishing and printing, as an artistic center, and as a font of feminist activism. All came together in the work of the writer Anais Nin, one of the 20th century's most revolutionary female writers, who established her own press here in the 1940s.

17 East 13th Street was built in 1911 as a two story brick store. It was designed G.T. Goosey and owned by Charles H. Benke and Rudolph C. Faber. The 1911/12 Trow's Directory of Manhattan lists Archibald and George C. Erskine, printers, at this location and likely its first tenant (a painted sign saying "Erskine Press" remains on the front façade of the building to this day). The previous directory shows them at 22 East 13th Street, another extant building within the proposed historic district.

Erskine Press was started by Archibald Erskine (1831-?), a Scottish immigrant and carpenter by trade. According to the *Printing Trades Blue Book* of 1918, the company was established in 1895 and the 1896/97 Directory first lists Archibald as a carpenter and a printer with the printing business at 22 East 13th Street. By the time that Erskine Press moved into 17 East 13th Street, two of Archibald's sons, Archibald Erskine, Jr. (1870-1946) and George Chambers Erskine (1873-1958), had taken over the business.



22 East 13th Street

Sometime in the second half of the 1930s, Erskine Press closed. According to the diary of Anais Nin, *The Villager* was the tenant at 17 East 13th Street, prior to when she and her lover Gonzalo More moved their printing company, Gemor Press into the building in 1944. Nin (1903-1977) was an essayist and memoirist; she also self-published and very often re-published her text when it went out of print. Today she is regarded as one of the leading female writers of the 20th century and a source of inspiration for women challenging conventionally defined gender roles.

Nin and More first established their press at 144 MacDougal Street in 1942. The first book that they published was a new edition of Nin's most recent work,

Winter of Artifice. According to Nin's diary, special care and thought went into all aspects of the printing process, including the selection of the type face, the quality of the paper and the accompanying engravings. The books themselves were special artifacts in their own rights, and an extension of the author's writings and creative process.

This edition of *Winter of Artifice* sold out within one month, without the benefit of marketing. The press would publish works by other authors as well, including Max Ernst and Hugh Chisolm. The next book of Nin's they published had been printed in Europe prior to the Spanish Civil War, *Under a Glass Bell*, which received strong reviews, including by Edmund Wilson of the *New Yorker*.

Nin agreed to rename the business Gemor Press (although 'Gemor Press' was already imprinted on the first edition they published of *Under a Glass Bell*). They borrowed money from a bank, bought a bigger press, and moved to 17 East 13th Street at a considerably higher rent. But the location appealed to More due to its more visible location with a storefront to showcase their work. At the time this location was also close to many other press operations and printing houses just to the west, and to a booksellers row along Fourth Avenue. Other presses in the neighborhood included the Bookazine Company at 43 East 10th Street, the MacMillian Company at 60-62 Fifth Avenue and Gin & Company at 72 Fifth Avenue, to name just a few.



Anais Nin.



Original edition *This Hunger*, Anais Nin, 1945, Gemor Press.

In September of 1945, Gemor Press released Nin's new book, *This Hunger*, with which Nin was very involved with the printing. At a thousand copies, this was Nin's largest edition to date. This publication got Nin noticed by other publishers. Most wanted her to change her style and the approach of her writing to be more mainstream, something which Nin resisted. At the suggestion her new friend Gore Vidal, she signed a contract with Dutton publishers, earning an advance of \$1,000 without having to compromise her writing style at all.

Shortly after the publication in November of 1946 of her first book with Dutton, *Ladders to Fire*, Gemor Press left 17 East 13th Street due to, as Nin wrote in her diary, "Gonzalo's irresponsibility." The large press was sold to pay debts and More brought the smaller press home. He would continue to print small print jobs including two works of Nin's: *A Child Born Out of the Fog* and a new edition of the 1936 *House of Incest*, both in 1947.

This period (1942-47) in which Nin and her press were located at 17 East 13th Street was significant both for connecting Nin to an American audience and to a large publisher, and for expanding her role and autonomy in her publication and in developing her creative process. Becoming associated with Dutton gave her the recognition of her work that she sought and the time to concentrate on her writing. Although she no longer participated in the typesetting after this time, she continued to self-publish limited edition paperbacks of her books that were out-of-print. She established the Anais Nin Press to distribute these works which did so until the late 1950s when she partnered with Swallow Press to publish her works.

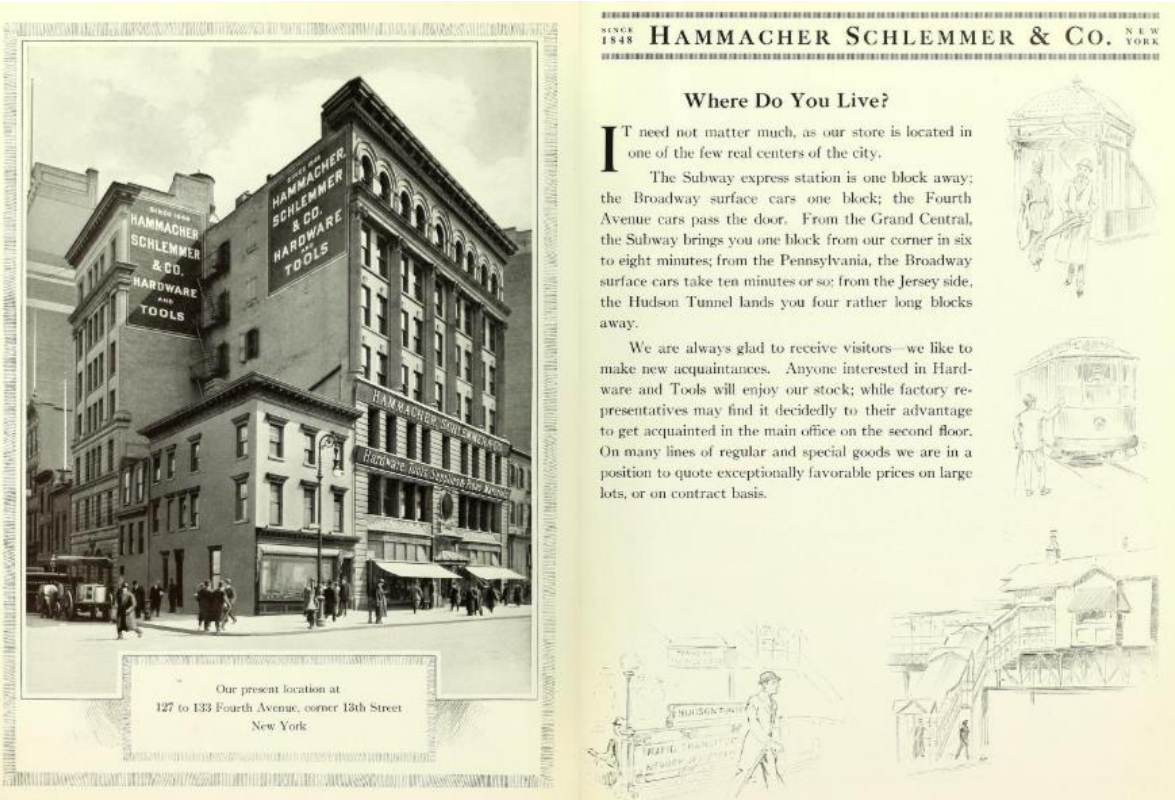
127-135 Fourth Avenue, Hammacher Schlemmer Building



Built in 1895 and designed by Marsh, Israel & Harder, this seven-story warehouse structure was owned and built by George W. Levy. It was originally known as the Hancock building, but arguably its most noteworthy tenant was Hammacher Schlemmer, New York City's first hardware store and publisher of the country's longest running catalog, first produced in 1881.

This building occupies an odd plot of land which L's around a single story structure at the southeast corner of East 13th Street and Fourth Avenue. It has an elaborate façade facing Fourth Avenue and a more modest one fronting East 13th Street. The Fourth Avenue façade features classical details that include Composite half-columns stretching from the fourth to the sixth stories. The seventh story windows are encased with rounded, multi-layered arches. The bottom two stories are constructed with a different stone in the Beaux Arts style. The entrance is topped with a round window, surrounded with vegetal décor. The East 13th Street facade is also seven stories. The first story is set off against the brown brick by a white painted stone rusticated base. There are two entrance ways, both of which are round-headed arches (a later alteration). The sixth and seventh stories are capped by prominent cornices.



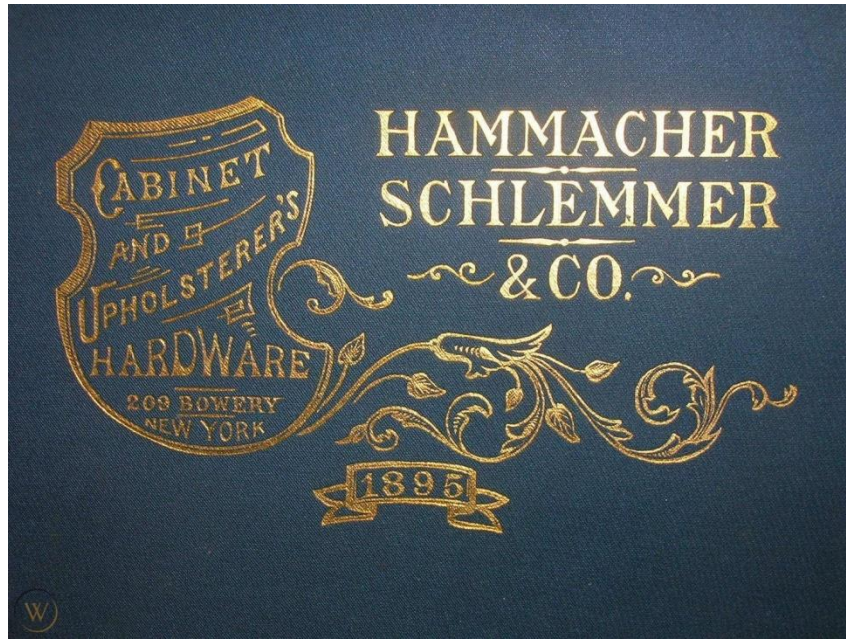


127-133 Fourth Avenue, from the Hammacher Schlemmer & Co. catalogue

Hammacher Schlemmer originally opened at 221 Bowery at a time when high-quality hardware was hard to find. In 1848, William Schlemmer would sell tools in front of his uncle's store at the Bowery Street location. By 1867, he, along with newly acquired partner Alfred Hammacher a fellow German immigrant, bought the business and renamed it Hammacher Schlemmer & Co. The two men turned this local shop into a national company. According to Hammacher Schlemmer's website, "It was here that the world first encountered the pop-up toaster (1930), the electric razor (1934) and the steam iron (1948). Later, Hammacher Schlemmer would offer the first electric pencil sharpener, food processor, electric can opener and automatic coffee maker. Other notable introductions include the first microwave oven (1968), telephone answering machine (1968) and cordless telephone (1975)."

One of the most important aspects of their business, as described in their early catalogues, were piano materials and tools. The central commercial location of Union Square as well as it being a center for the piano trade made it a logical choice for the hardware giant when it outgrew its location on the Bowery (no. 209 by the end of the 19th century). Hammacher Schlemmer & Co. moved into 127-135 Fourth Avenue in 1904 and devoted several pages of its catalogue describing the breadth of its operation at this location. They also adorned the exterior of the building with two large painted signs on the inside walls of the highly-visible corner facing the intersection of East 13th Street and Fourth Avenue advertising their company and its products.

By 1926, the company had once again grown too large for its home, and moved to 147 East 57th Street. Other manufacturers and retailers would take its place at 127-135 Fourth Avenue, including the



Sendar Company, which in the 1950s advertised itself as America's largest distributor of glassware for promotional and carnival use. Like so many of the former manufacturing/commercial structures in the area, by the late 1970s it was converted to residences above the ground floor, with small balconies inserted on the streetfront and sidewall facades. The building continues its residential use today.

39-41 East 10th Street, The Lancaster

This distinctive structure is notable as an early surviving example of the 'French Flat' or middle-class apartment building in New York City, for its unusual combination of architectural styles, and for its design by one of New York's most prominent and esteemed architects of the time, who had a significant impact upon the immediate vicinity with other works, including the National Historic Landmark Grace Church.

39-41 East 10th Street was built in 1887, at a time when apartment buildings were just beginning to be introduced in New York as an acceptable form of living for middle or upper class residents. It is one of the earliest extant 'French Flats' or middle-class apartment buildings in the area and in New York City. Built when this area was still a prestigious

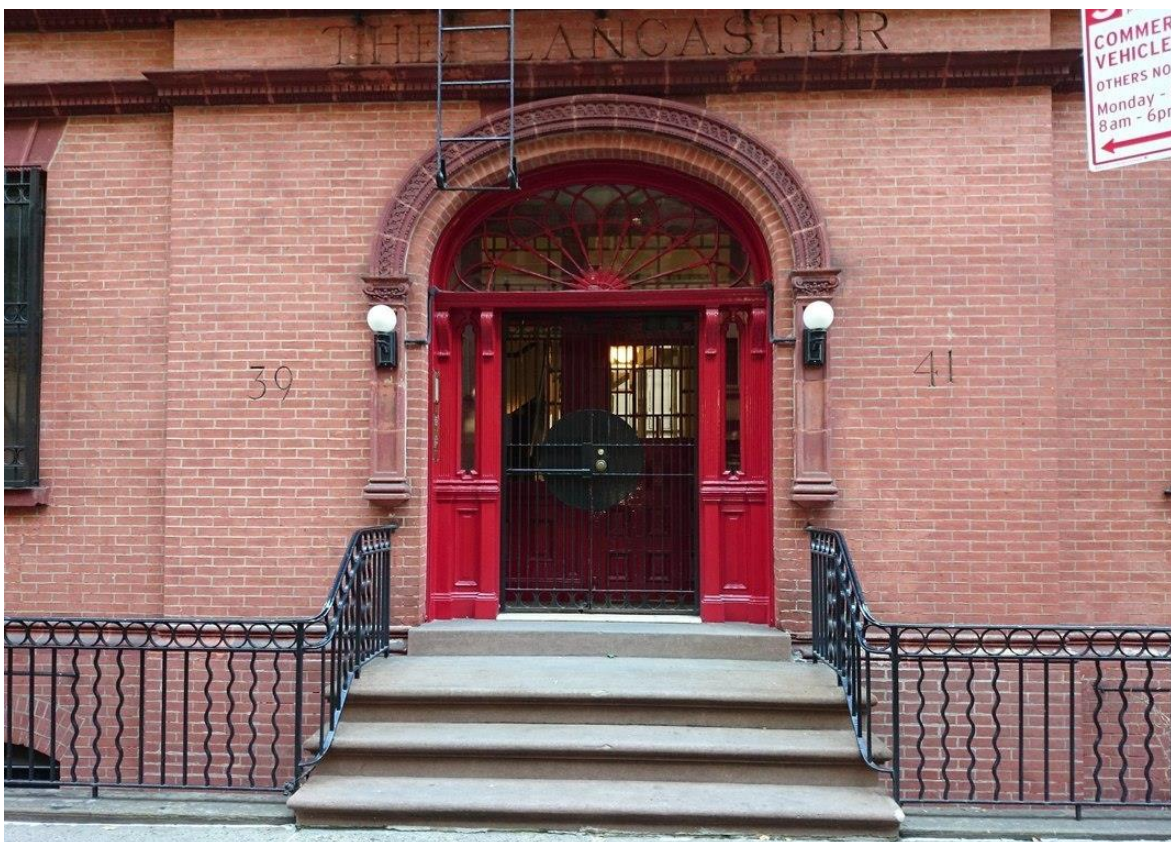


residential address but in flux and beginning to transform into a commercial center, the Lancaster was clearly an attempt to attract a more sophisticated resident of means, as many who preferred a neighborhood of private homes were increasingly shunning the area.

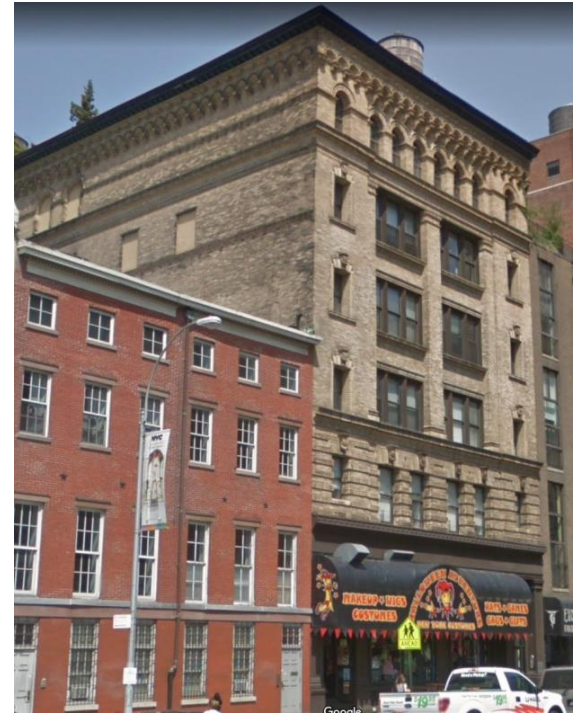
To create this kind of appeal, the firm of Renwick, Aspinwall & Russell was chosen. The firm's roots in the area were deep; not only had Renwick made a name for himself decades earlier with his design of Grace Church just down the block, but the Renwick family (which included Renwick's partner William Russell) were relatives of the landholding Brevoorts. In fact, the Renwicks owned and developed this property, replacing a house which had previously occupied the spot.

The façade combines elements from two then-emerging styles in residential architecture, Queen Anne and Colonial Revival. At the centered entryway is a large Federal style fan light at the transom surrounded by a decorative terra cotta arch. Above the entry is the name "The Lancaster" incised into the brick, and at either side of the entry and also incised into the brick are the numbers "39" to the left and "41" to the right. Splayed lintels are featured at the windows besides those at the top story. There the windows are capped by round arches with ornamented terra cotta at the tympanum. The brick façade is capped by a simple denticulated cornice. On the interior there were, and apparently still are, two apartments per floor.

The building's architectural elements and its exterior ironwork remain remarkably intact to the original period of construction more than one hundred thirty years ago.



806-808 Broadway/104-106 Fourth Avenue, 'The Renwick'



'The Renwick' Broadway façade (l.) and Fourth Avenue façade.

This striking loft building, which runs the entire block from Broadway to Fourth Avenue behind Grace Church, was designed in 1887 by James Renwick (architect of the church forty years earlier) and the partners in his successor firm -- James Lawrence Aspinwall and William Hamilton Russell, Renwick's grand-nephew. Though a utilitarian structure housing offices, storage, and manufacturing, Renwick and partners designed it with vivid Gothic detail to serve as an appropriate backdrop to Grace Church, a New York City and National Historic Landmark. Aside from signage, the building is almost completely intact to its original design, from the gothic arches and tracery to the more robust, industrial Romanesque detailing of the Fourth Avenue façade. Both sides of the building maintain beautifully intact cast-iron storefronts, while the Broadway side boasts florid Art Nouveau-style ironwork over the doorway and entry. The harmony between this structure, built as a store and manufacturing building, and one of the most delicate and important Gothic Revival structures in the United States, is nothing short of remarkable.

In 1981 the building was converted to residences and renamed 'The Renwick,' in honor of its architect.



'The Renwick' as backdrop to Grace Church school (l.); ironwork on the Broadway entrance.

The building gained additional notoriety with the publication of Caleb Carr's *The Alienist*, in which the building serves as the headquarters for the team of investigators looking into the murders at the heart of the book's story.



Dr. Laszlo Kreizler, Sara Howard, and John Schuyler Moore meeting at 808 Broadway in the filmed version of 'The Alienist.'

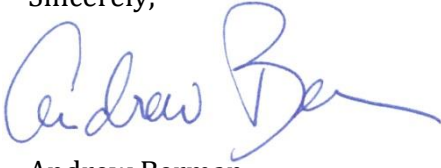


James Renwick Jr. designs within less than a block of Broadway and 10th Street.

The Grace Church, Grace Church Rectory, Grace Church Memorial House, The Lancaster, and The Renwick -- all within feet of one another – provide an unrivalled example of the skill of James Renwick as an architect. The sadly recently-demolished St. Denis Hotel at Broadway and 11th Street added even further to this rich ensemble of Renwick designs added over time. While the master architect constructed other ensembles elsewhere, few if any span nearly half a century as these do, and serve such varied purposes – religious worship, residences, and commercial loft space – while maintaining such compatibility and dialogue between the pieces. Renwick also lived and died at a since-demolished house at what would now be 60 University Place (10th Street), just down the block from all these structures.

These are just some of the buildings located in this area whose histories and architecture provide a compelling case for consideration for historic district designation. They all speak to the incredibly rich and important social and architectural history of the area, and to New York's development as the capital of commerce and culture in the late 19th and 20th centuries. As noted in our original submission to the LPC, there are literally scores of buildings among the 193 we identified for consideration for historic district designation in this area that have strong historic connections to the publishing and printing industries; to prominent writers and artists; to important progressive social and political movements; to important developments in New York's emergence as a center of commerce and retail; and to significant architects and innovative or noteworthy designs. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with landmark designation of these and surrounding buildings in the endangered and historic area south of Union Square.

Sincerely,



Andrew Berman
Executive Director

cc: Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer
City Council Speaker Corey Johnson
City Councilmember Carlina Rivera
Senator Brad Hoylman
Assemblymember Deborah Glick
Community Board 2, Manhattan
Historic Districts Council
NY Landmarks Conservancy
Municipal Art Society
Victorian Society in America, NY Chapter