Landmarks Preservation Commission November 13, 2001, Designation List 331 LP-2101

**130 West 30th Street Building**, 130 West 30<sup>th</sup> Street, aka 128-132 West 30<sup>th</sup> Street, Manhattan. Built 1927-28; Cass Gilbert, architect.

Landmark Site: Manhattan Tax Map Block 805, Lot 81.

On October 30, 2001, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the 130 West 30<sup>th</sup> Street Building and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 1). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Six people spoke in favor of designation, including representatives of the owner, State Assemblyman Richard Gottfried, the Landmarks Conservancy, the Historic Districts Council, and the Society for the Architecture of the City. In addition, the Commission received 3 letters of support.

## Summary

Designed by the preeminent architect Cass Gilbert, and constructed in 1927-28, the 130 West 30<sup>th</sup> Street Building was built to accommodate offices, showrooms and manufacturing space. The 18-story structure was a speculative project for the real estate firm of M. & L. Hess, Inc. and of particular interest to its president, John W. Hahner. Gilbert's work includes a wide variety of types of buildings that illustrate his ability to create designs to meet the individual needs of each client: large-scale monumental structures in classical revival styles for official government purposes, distinctive skyscrapers for corporate clients, and highly functional industrial buildings, each combining modern building techniques with a unique appearance. In this loft building on narrow West 30th Street in New York's fur district, the architect displays his ability to use the style most appropriate to the job. Here modern skyscraper style setbacks reflect the zoning rules required by the 1916 Building Zone Resolution to admit more light and air onto the streets. The bold, abstracted terra-cotta designs on the entryway panels and cornices, based on traditional Assyrian hunting scenes and mythical guardian figures help distinguish this building from its neighbors and are truly unusual motifs. The Assyrian Revival style, one of numerous historically-inspired styles used during this



period, was seen on only two other buildings in New York City. Fabricated by the Atlantic Terra Cotta Company, these terra cotta bands and elaborate geometrically-ornamented spandrel panels add an unexpected and exotic element to this industrial building, which was considered an asset for attracting tenants.

# The Neighborhood<sup>1</sup>

This block of 30<sup>th</sup> Street from Sixth to Seventh Avenues was, in the late nineteenth century, part of the notorious Tenderloin section of New York. This area, infamous for its extensive criminal activity, stretched roughly from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 42<sup>nd</sup> Streets and from Fifth to Seventh Avenues. These endeavors co-existed with (and were inspired by) New York's entertainment district which was centered on Broadway, between 23<sup>rd</sup> and 34<sup>th</sup> Streets, during the period from about 1860 through 1910. In 1907-08, in response to neighborhood conditions, New York City constructed a new police station just to the west of where 130 West 30<sup>th</sup> Street would be built.<sup>2</sup>

During the early years of the twentieth century, as New York's theaters, restaurants and hotels moved north to Times Square, the Tenderloin followed, encompassing the streets between 42<sup>nd</sup> and 62nd Streets. The area around Madison Square became home to growing numbers of small garment manufacturers who moved into lofts and showrooms from their previous cramped locations in the tenements of the Lower East Side. These companies were soon pushed north and west by the Fifth Avenue Association, a group of merchants who banded together to foster retail trade in the Madison Square area. As the number of people employed in the manufacturing of ready-to-wear garments increased dramatically, an association of garment manufacturers joined together to develop two large sites near Seventh Avenue and 37<sup>th</sup> Street. By 1920, this became the locus for the garment district, with its manufacturing and designing lofts, showrooms and offices, that eventually took over the area from Sixth to Ninth Avenues, from 30<sup>th</sup> to 42<sup>nd</sup> Streets.<sup>3</sup> During the years between the wars, garment manufacturing and selling and its related trades became New York's largest industry "in terms of both work force and commercial output."4 A subset of this industry was the fur trade, with a somewhat more specialized production, which located in the adjoining neighborhood to the south, between 25<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> Streets, between Sixth and Eighth Avenues. This area became the fur district, the center of this laborintensive industry which employed highly-skilled fur designers and production workers, and their sales and design staff, as well as their suppliers.<sup>5</sup>

#### 130 West 30 Street Building

West 30th Street, between Sixth and Seventh Avenues, was organized into lots beginning in the 1830s. Beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, lots 75 through 81 (on which this building is located) were combined into one parcel. Early in the twentieth century, development activity in the area increased, as demonstrated by the heightened investment level of realty companies. The United States Realty Company purchased lots 77-81 in 1915. In 1920, this same parcel was sold to the 128 West 30<sup>th</sup> Street Corporation.<sup>6</sup> This organization had been founded in April of that year as a real estate holding company.<sup>7</sup>

The M. & L. Hess Company was a real estate brokerage firm begun in the early 1900s by Edwin H. and Nathan J. Hess, with offices at 643 and 907 Broadway.<sup>8</sup> By 1925, John W. Hahner was listed as the president of the company. It was Hahner who, because of the increased business activity in the area, hired architect Cass Gilbert to design a speculative building for the offices, showrooms and lofts of the furriers who were relocating here. The relationship between the 128 West 30<sup>th</sup> Street Corporation and the M. & L. Hess Company is not known.

Real estate pressure in New York has traditionally encouraged the concentration of manufacturing, and specialized districts have developed, such as those of the silk, wool, leather, toy, or furniture manufacturers.<sup>9</sup> This makes it convenient and more efficient for buyers to find their markets as well as for subsidiary businesses to cluster. It has also led to the development of the building type known as the manufacturing loft. This type of building, "a machine for the production of a commodity," had specific requirements, including sufficient space to accommodate the necessary machinery and the handling of goods during the manufacturing process, as well as during packing and shipping. Large elevators and freight halls and high ceilings to transport both raw and finished goods and adequate structural strength for heavy loads on floors are all important considerations for designers of this building type.

### Cass Gilbert<sup>10</sup>

Born in Zanesville, Ohio, Cass Gilbert (1859-1934) moved with his family to St. Paul, Minnesota where he completed his secondary education. In 1876, he entered the office of local architect, A. M. Radcliffe. Two years later he began to study architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, with Eugene Letang. In 1880, Gilbert traveled in Europe, then returned to the United States and briefly worked for the firm of McKim, Mead & White. By 1882, Gilbert had returned to St. Paul where he set up his own architectural practice, then joined in partnership with fellow M.I.T. graduate James Knox Taylor. During the last two decades of the nineteenth century he built a solid reputation in St. Paul designing residences, churches, and office buildings, primarily in the Shingle and Richardson Romanesque styles.

In 1895, Gilbert won the competition for the Minnesota state capitol, a commission that established his national reputation. Clearly reflecting the impact of the 1893 Chicago Columbian Exposition, Gilbert's design was an elegant Beaux Arts style building, which, in its monumental composition, classical style, and elaborate decoration, laid the groundwork for his 1899 winning entry in the New York Customs House design competition. In 1900, Gilbert moved permanently to New York.

Although established as an architect in New York City, Gilbert continued to produce numerous monumental governmental buildings in other locations, including the Detroit Public Library (1914), the West Virginia State Capitol in Charleston (1928-32), and the Supreme Court Building in Washington, D.C. (1933-35), as well as the Federal Courthouse in New York (1934). These structures are elegantly proportioned and elaborately ornamented, both inside and out, in keeping with Gilbert's stated desire to beautify buildings belonging to the public.

At the same time that Gilbert was producing these major government buildings, he was also designing significant skyscrapers in downtown Manhattan, many of which helped to define this new building type and move it toward a fully realized expression. His Broadway-Chambers Building (1899-1900, a designated New York City Landmark) was widely admired as one of the finest examples of the "baseshaft-capital" type yet produced. His West Street Building (1906-07, a designated New York City Landmark) represented a major advance in tall building design by downplaying the base and emphasizing the verticality of the structure. This idea was carried to its logical conclusion in Cass Gilbert's romantic, neo-Gothic style Woolworth Building (1911-13, a designated New York City Landmark), perhaps his most famous design.

Gilbert was able to create highly varied types of designs based on the specific needs of the client and type of building demanded. His work encompassed utilitarian buildings such as the Austin, Nichols and Company Warehouse in Brooklyn (1909-23) as well as the United States Military Ocean Supply Base, known as the Brooklyn Army Terminal, built in 1918-19. The design of this early, poured concrete complex was integrated with the structure of the buildings, with no applied ornament. These buildings were highly admired by modern designers and Le Corbusier even used them as an illustration of modern industrial architecture in his book, *Towards a New Architecture*.

Gilbert's abilities to meet the specific needs of his clients was recognized in the business world. A letter found in Gilbert's business correspondence of 1925 refers to a potential client's interest in Gilbert's work. "Mr. Hill stated that he could not disclose the name of his clients but they had seen some of my work and liked it, that the thing they liked about it was its individuality; that it was individual and had character of its own, and that they wanted a building that was not a mere standardized structure..."<sup>11</sup>

# The Design of the130 West 30th Street Building

The loft building at 130 West 30<sup>th</sup> Street is a utilitarian structure, combining offices and manufacturing spaces for businesses in the fur trade. Since it was also built as a speculative venture, Gilbert used an idea that had proved successful on the Woolworth Building. He found that a distinctively ornamented building served as an advertisement for its occupants and was more likely to attract good tenants than one which was totally plain. In addition, Gilbert used terra cotta, which he had previously employed successfully, both as a decorative accent or for complete cladding in several of his earlier designs, including the Broadway-Chambers, the Kinney Building(in Newark), the West Street Building, and the Woolworth Building.

On the 130 West 30<sup>th</sup> Street Building, Gilbert used terra cotta in three particular areas of the building, for the design emphasis it could create: as spandrel panels on the front, in decorative panels over the entrances, and as friezes marking each setback. On the front facade, Gilbert set off the main section with monotone terra-cotta spandrel panels that are part of a gridwork formed by the windows, spandrels and bronze piers. Each terra-cotta panel is covered by an intricate design consisting of a central circle holding a spread-winged bird surrounded by a grid with flowers in each section and geometric patterns framing the rectangle. The panels echo the larger grid of the whole front facade. The overall effect is almost one of a large woven textile, an idea especially appropriate to a building in the

garment district.

A second use of terra cotta on this building consists of the two mirror-image hunting scene panels which are set into the marble above each of the two entrances. Based on the famous stone reliefs taken from the palace of Assyrian King Assurnasirpal II of c. 883-859 which show the king hunting lions from his chariot, this modern adaptation has two helmeted men, one with a bow and arrow aimed toward a fleeing antelope. The ancient panel shows the lion downed by the arrow, under the legs of the running horses, while in the modern one some sort of cat (or lion) fills the same space. Each terra-cotta panel is flanked by the three-dimensional front end of a lion, whose head and front legs emerge from the wall, and whose mouth is open to roar. These fierce beasts are also reminiscent of the Assyrian culture, where lions were an important motif. Motifs taken from the Assyrian culture are extremely rare on New York City buildings, being found only as ornamental accents near the roofline on the Fred F. French and Graybar buildings. Although, to date, no one has discovered any statements by Gilbert indicating why he selected these motifs, comments by one of the designers of the Fred French Building may shed some light on the subject. H. Douglas Ives noted that the stepped masses of 1920s skyscrapers strongly resembled the forms of Assyrian ziggurats or observation towers and decided that "we felt we might safely adapt these Assyrian or Chaldean forms of ornament which were peculiarly suitable to flat surfaces" for the French building.<sup>12</sup> Gilbert's terracotta designs are very flat and highly abstracted, with light-colored designs on a darker background. These would have been less expensive to reproduce than the highly sculptural designs Gilbert had employed on many of his office structures and thus more suitable for this industrial building. In addition, many artists and designers of the late 1920s, especially those influenced by the Art Deco designs coming from Europe, were taking inspiration from other, often ancient cultures, particularly those seen as more primitive. This influence can also been seen in Gilbert's panels.

The third use of terra cotta on this building is found on the friezes which encircle the building and are located at each setback level and at the floor above: the tenth and eleventh stories, the fourteenth and fifteenth stories, and at the seventeenth and eighteenth stories. The friezes consist of two tones of terra cotta: light tan designs with a glossy finish against a darker, matte background. They are composed of panels with two highly stylized, alternating designs: facing winged lions with horse heads, and facing winged lions with human heads above animal heads. These boldly abstracted creatures can be seen as mythical guardian figures, again drawing inspiration from earlier cultures. These distinctive designs and colorations contributed to an unusual building which stands out strikingly on this bustling, crowded street.

# Architectural Terra Cotta

While terra cotta, as a building material was not new, architects of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century found many more uses for this inexpensive yet effective material. Promoted for its fireproof characteristics, the material was also inexpensive and highly adaptable for many kinds of visual effects. Architects could create individual and colorful designs for buildings, using terra cotta in panels or inserts, either plain or polychromed. Cass Gilbert employed terra cotta in many different ways and for different design purposes on a number of his buildings. On the 130 West 30th Street Building, as on the Broadway-Chambers, and the West Street buildings among others, the terra cotta is set off as a distinct area of the design and used to highlight a particular part of each building. On the Rodin Studios (a designated new York City Landmark) the terra cotta is fully integrated into the design with spandrels and vertical piers made of the material, while it is used as a complete sheathing material on the Woolworth Building. The Atlantic Terra Cotta Company supplied Gilbert with this material for all of these buildings.

Founded in 1897 by DeForest Grant and others, the Atlantic Terra Cotta Company was one of the earliest New York manufacturers of architectural terra cotta, with their factory at Tottenville, Staten Island. Several founding members had worked previously at Perth Amboy Terra Cotta Company. The Atlantic Terra Cotta Company was reorganized in 1907 as the consolidation of the Perth Amboy, the Excelsior and the Atlantic Terra Cotta Companies. The Standard Terra Cotta Works was added to the company shortly thereafter, as was the Atlanta Terra Cotta Company. Their plants were located at Tottenville, Staten Island, Perth Amboy and Rocky Hill, New Jersey, and Atlanta, Georgia. This company was well-known in the architectural field, creating a wide variety of terra cotta products, from the white glazed terra cotta which faced most of the Woolworth Building, to the polychrome decorative work on the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and the ornate, multi-colored murals on the walls of the Grill Room in the McAlpin Hotel.

The company was clearly proud of its work at 130 West 30<sup>th</sup> Street and featured it in the March 1928, issue of its magazine. In this article, the author stressed that Gilbert's friezes used only two designs, which were repeated across the facades, and that the spandrel panels were all the same design, also repeated many times, thus showing that the use of terra cotta on buildings could be very economical. This was important for a speculative loft building. While the building is primarily a very functional design (plain brick walls with large, industrial-type windows), the terra cotta enlivens the facade at a reasonable cost.

# Zoning and the 130 West 30th Street Building

Although Gilbert was not hired to design this building until the end of March, 1927,<sup>13</sup> it seems that Hahner had previously worked on it and had clear ideas of what he wanted. Gilbert wrote a letter to Hahner dated May 29, 1928 that delineated his history of involvement with the project: "Started work on building Stewart & Co. furnished us with a drawing dated Feb. 9, 1927 titled 'Layout of building 128-134 West 30<sup>th</sup> Street, Conforming to Zoning limits"<sup>14</sup> Gilbert notes that this drawing formed the basis for his own plans. Stewart & Company was the contracting firm hired to complete the project and were likely to have engineers who were familiar with the provisions of New York's 1916 Building Zone Resolution.

This law, which had such an immense effect on the city's skyline, was passed after the 40-story Equitable Building was built at 120 Broadway.<sup>15</sup> The enormous height and bulk of this building forced city officials to realize that height limits needed to be placed on new structures so that the city streets could continue to receive enough light and air. But soon after its passage, World War I limited new building projects and an economic depression that followed in continued this trend. It was not until 1925 that the implications of this zoning law began to be seen in actual buildings. The new law required that buildings set back at certain heights rather than extend straight up from the lot line. Architects made many attempts to understand the design implications of this law, including Hugh Ferriss' famous, dramatic series of drawings showing several possible massings for tall buildings under the new regulations. The results were buildings with stepped or tiered profiles such as the Chrysler and Empire State Buildings. From the 1920s through the 1950s, these buildings and other similar ones dominated the New York City skyline and defined its image.

While the 1916 law was designed to affect tall skyscrapers, setback designs came to be seen as representative of the period, and of everything that was modern. This type of profile could be found on furniture and other objects of the period, as well as buildings, as an indication of the modernity of the design. It was therefore not unusual that when Cass Gilbert was designing this eighteen-story loft building, he should choose to emphasize the setbacks as if it were a much taller building.<sup>16</sup> In addition, ziggurats or stepped pyramidal shapes were associated with ancient Assyrian buildings, a further association with the architect's design inspiration. Gilbert created setbacks at the 10<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 17<sup>th</sup> stories, emphasizing them with two-tone terra-cotta friezes on those stories and on the stories above.<sup>17</sup> The frieze was also a modern touch, used instead of a projecting cornice that would have been the finishing element in designs of earlier years. The flat frieze subordinated the cornice, allowing the viewer's eye to continue traveling upward along the building to emphasize its height. Since the building is located midblock. Gilbert was most concerned with the street facade, rather than those on the sides, but he carried the terra-cotta friezes around both sides anyway.

#### Description

The building at 130 West 30<sup>th</sup> Street occupies a mid-block site on a fairly narrow street and rises eighteen stories through a series of setbacks. The base has glass and metal storefronts flanked by marble-framed entryways. The rest of the facade is composed of brick, with large, metal-framed, industrial windows, and terra-cotta at the spandrel panels, window sills, and cornices, as well as in panels over the two main entrances.

The base is two stories high, with two large storefronts in the center section of the facade. Set on a granite watertable, each storefront has large, plate-glass windows in metal framework, with sections of the original metal grill beneath the glass. The double-height metal piers at the outside and between the two stores are original. Each store has a central entrance with double glass doors recessed between the windows. Fixed glass panels, as in the original design, are above the main shop windows. The side bays of the ground story have entrances framed with travertine marble. The eastern entrance is for freight, while that on the west is for pedestrians. Each opening is topped by mirror-image terra-cotta panels displaying a hunting scene of two men standing in a horse-drawn chariot. One has a bow and arrow pointed towards a running antelope, with a

smaller cat (or lion?) running beneath the horse's legs. The terra-cotta designs are in light tan on a darker brown background. The panels are flanked by highlystylized, three-dimensional terra-cotta figures of fiercely-roaring lions, their heads and front legs seeming to emerge from the marble wall. Recessed within the marble at the western side is a bronze and glass doorway composed of three doors topped by a bronze cornice bearing the words "130 West Thirtieth Street." Above the cornice is a transom divided into three sections by bronze mullions. A small bronze insignia is set in the marble, beneath the terra-cotta panel and above the opening, consisting of the vertically arranged letters "SJM" surrounded by a circlet of leaves placed over the word Building. The marble surround, terra-cotta panel and bronze insignia are the same on the eastern entrance. Recessed within it however, is a non-historic freight entrance. Closer to street level is a metal transom bearing the same lettering "130 West Thirtieth Street" as on the other entryway, with a non-historic three-section glass area above it.

Above the base, the building rises straight up for eight stories. It is symmetrically arranged with a center section eight bays wide and side sections, each one-bay wide. The side bays are faced with brick and each has a single, three-over-three window at each floor. In the spandrels between each floor, the brick is laid as headers, creating a patterned effect. Within each bay of the center section is a large window, separated from its neighbor by a narrow metal pier which rise continuously to the bottom of the first cornice. Windows on the third and fourth stories have two-pane sash, while all the others have original threeover-three sash. Beneath each window, completely filling the area between the floors, is a rectangular panel in monotone tan terra cotta. Each panel is completely filled with patterns and designs, including a central circle containing a bird with spread wings, surrounded by a grid in which each section contains a flower. Strips of geometric designs frame each panel. At the top of this section is a cornice that extends across the front and both sides of the building. The frieze consists of panels of stylized terra-cotta designs featuring light tan motifs on a darker brown ground. Two patterns alternate: facing winged beasts (lions

bodies with horses heads), and facing winged lions with human heads on top of the animal heads. Between each panel is a narrow section containing a stylized palm tree. The entire cornice is framed by strips of zig-zag patterns.

Above the tenth story, the front facade steps back the width of one-half a bay. The pattern of the entire front facade, with eight central bays and single side bays, is repeated at this story, and includes another terra-cotta cornice with the same design that begins next to the center section and extends across the side bays and on both sides of the building.

At the eleventh story, the two side bays step back another half a bay, while the center section continues straight up through three more stories. At the top of the fourteenth story is another cornice that goes across the entire front and both sides of the building. Across the center section and its reveals, the cornice is set in a metal frame around each panel, with gargoyles that project between each bay. At the fifteenth story the entire front facade steps back another half bay, with the terra-cotta cornice starting again at each side bay and continuing around the sides of the building. Above the fifteenth story, the two side bays again step back a half bay while the center section rises through the next two stories. At the top of the seventeenth story is another terra-cotta cornice with metal enframements around each panel where it crosses the center section. The entire front facade steps back again after this story. Another story rises above this cornice with windows in the center section, while the two side bays continue as unfenestrated towers for several stories. Each is capped by a terra-cotta cornice around all four facades.

The side facades of this building are primarily faced in plain brick above the neighboring buildings, except for the terra-cotta cornices, that highlight each side and the one or two bays of industrial windows with sash similar to that on the front which are located near the front, center and rear of the side facade.

> Report prepared by Virginia Kurshan Research Department

### NOTES

- 1. The information in this section was compiled from Landmarks Preservation Commission, 23<sup>rd</sup> Police Precinct ("Tenderloin") Station House (LP-2019) (New York: City of New York, 1998), report prepared by Jay Shockley, and LPC, Madison Square North Historic District Designation Report (LP-2097) (New York: City of New York: 2001), report prepared by Matt Postal, et al.
- 2. The 23<sup>rd</sup> Police Precinct Station House, now a designated New York City Landmark was designed to look like a medieval fortress and thus "forcefully asserted the authority of the police." Shockley, p.4.
- 3. "Garment District," *The Encyclopedia of New York City*, Kenneth T. Jackson, ed. (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1995), p. 451.
- 4. Robert A.M. Stern et all, *New York 1930, Architecture and Urbanism Between the Two World Wars* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), 517.
- 5. Jackson, "Furs," p. 446.
- 6. New York County Office of the Registrar, Liber Deeds and Conveyances, Liber 3188, page 229.
- 7. New York State incorporation papers, 128 West 30th Street Corporation.
- 8. This information comes from Trow's Business Directories, 1905-1925.
- 9. Francoise Bollack & Tom Killian, *Ely Jacques Kahn, New York Architect* (New York: Acanthus Press, 1995), 8-19.
- Information on Cass Gilbert comes from Landmarks Preservation Commission, Woolworth Building Designation Report (LP- 1273) (New York: City of New York, 1983), report prepared by Anthony Robins; and Landmarks Commission research files.
- 11. Letter in file marked New Business 1925-28, folder marked new business, 1925, #164. New York Historical Society, Cass Gilbert collection.
- 12. H. Douglas Ives, "The Architecture of the French Building," The Voice 1 (February, 1927) 4.
- 13. In letters of Cass Gilbert, dated 3/30/27, in the Cass Gilbert archives at the New York Historical Society.
- 14. Refers to James Stewart & Company who were also contractors for the project. Letter from Cass Gilbert, dated 3/30/27
- 15. 1912-15, Graham, Anderson, Probst & White.
- 16. It is possible that Stewart's initial drawing showed ways of dealing with the setback laws on this rather narrow street.
- 17. During the design process, Hahner decided he wanted taller floor heights and a mezzanine which changed the setbacks. This occurred after the initial drawings had been completed. Gilbert's office had to redo the drawings and get approvals from the Board of Standards and Appeals. (Cass Gilbert Archives, New York Historical Society)

# FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, architecture and other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the 130 West 30<sup>th</sup> Street Building has a special character, special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage, and cultural characteristics of New York City, New York State, and the nation.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the 130 West 30<sup>th</sup> Street Building, built in 1927-28, was designed by the preeminent architect Cass Gilbert, creator of the Woolworth Building and the United States Customs House; that the loft building is an unusual type for Gilbert, better known for his designs of skyscrapers and monumental government buildings; that it was designed as a speculative building for a real estate firm working in the newly-developing fur district of New York City; that its clean lines and series of setbacks echo those of much bigger, skyscraper buildings; that the unusual terra-cotta ornament was created by the Atlantic Terra Cotta Company which had worked with Gilbert on the Woolworth and many other of his projects; that the terra-cotta friezes feature winged beasts and palm trees, while panels over the doors depict hunting scenes with chariots in a flat, highly stylized rendition that echo ancient Assyrian designs; that the designs were created with a limited number of molds to keep the cost of production low, and used repeatedly around the entire building, for maximum effect; that the two-toned friezes accentuate the building setbacks, and the spandrel panels with floral and geometric motifs emphasize the grid-like front facade; that the unusual design of this building helps distinguish it from its neighbors on West 30<sup>th</sup> Street, creating a unique presence which also serves as an advertisement for the building's tenants.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 74, Section 3020 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 3 of Title 25 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark the 130 West 130<sup>th</sup> Street, 130 West 30<sup>th</sup> Street, aka 128-132 West 30<sup>th</sup> Street, Borough of Manhattan, and designates Borough of Manhattan Tax Map 805, Lot 81as its Landmark Site.



**130 West 30<sup>th</sup> Street Building** Photo: Carl Forster



130 West 30<sup>th</sup> Street Building Photo: Carl Forster



130 West 30<sup>th</sup> Street Building, detail of terra cotta over entrance Source: *Atlantic Terra Cotta* (March 1928)



130 West 30<sup>th</sup> Street Building, details of terra cotta Photos: Carl Forster



130 West 30<sup>th</sup> Street Building, details of terra cotta Photos: Carl Forster



130 West 30<sup>th</sup> Street Building, west facade Photo: Carl Forster



# 130 West 30<sup>th</sup> Street Building

Landmark Site: Manhattan Tax Map Block 805, Lot 81 Source: Dept. of Finance, City Surveyor, Tax Map



# 130 West 30<sup>th</sup> Street Building Source: Sanborn, *Manhattan Land Book* (2000-2001), pl. 55