

Landmarks Preservation Commission
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LP-0084

EDWARD MOONEY HOUSE (18 BOWERY BUILDING), Borough of Manhattan. Built between 1785 and 1789; architect unknown.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 162, Lot 53.

On October 19, 1965, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Edward Mooney House (the 18 Bowery Building) and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site. (Item No. 56). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of Law. Two witnesses spoke in favor of designation. There were no speakers in opposition to designation.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

This is the only known town house surviving in Manhattan which dates from the period of the American Revolution. It was built between 1785 - a scant two years after the British evacuation of the City - and 1789, the year George Washington was inaugurated as first President of the United States and New York City became the first Capital of the nation. The house stands on its original site, at the southeast corner of Pell Street and the Bowery, and its red brick facade above the street-floor level is in a remarkably good state of preservation. A brick extension, equalling the size of the original structure, was added in 1807.

The architectural style of the house is Early Federal, reflecting strongly its Georgian antecedents in construction, proportions and design details. It is three stories in height, with a finished garret beneath a gambrel roof. Two features of special note which verify the documented age of the building are the hand-hewn timbers framing the roof and the broad width of the front windows in proportion to their height. On the exterior, original splayed stone lintels with double keystone blocks are above most of the windows. At the gable end of the house, which can be viewed from Pell Street, the garret floor is lighted by a central round-headed window, the upper sash of which contains original wooden tracery. It is flanked by a pair of quadrant windows. The gambrel roof on this side is within a parapet wall connecting two large chimneys. The interior of the house also discloses many original architectural details including, in the earliest section, window frames and trim, and in the extension, a stairway with an oval-shaped handrail.

Edward Mooney, a merchant, purchased the land on which this house stands in 1785 from the Commissioners of Forfeiture in the sale of the property of James Delancey, who remained loyal to the British Crown during the Revolution. Mooney was an important figure in the wholesale meat business in New York and represented the City's butchers in the Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen. The town house he erected, and in which he resided until his death about 1800, is a unique example of the domestic architecture which flourished in Manhattan two centuries ago.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATIONS

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture and ~~other features of this building~~, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the Edward Mooney House (18 Bowery 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.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the Edward Mooney House (18 Bowery Building) is the only known town house surviving in Manhattan which dates from the period of the American Revolution, that it is in the Early Federal style of architecture with many interesting details and that it is a unique example of the domestic architecture which flourished in Manhattan two centuries ago.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 8-A of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 8-A of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark the Edward Mooney House (18 Bowery Building), Borough of Manhattan and designates Tax Map Block 162, Lot 53, Borough of Manhattan, as its Landmark Site.