

BENNETT BUILDING, 139 Fulton Street (aka 135-139 Fulton Street, 93-99 Nassau Street, 28-34 Ann Street), Manhattan. Built 1872-73, Arthur D. Gilman, architect; addition 1890-92 and 1894, James M. Farnsworth, architect.

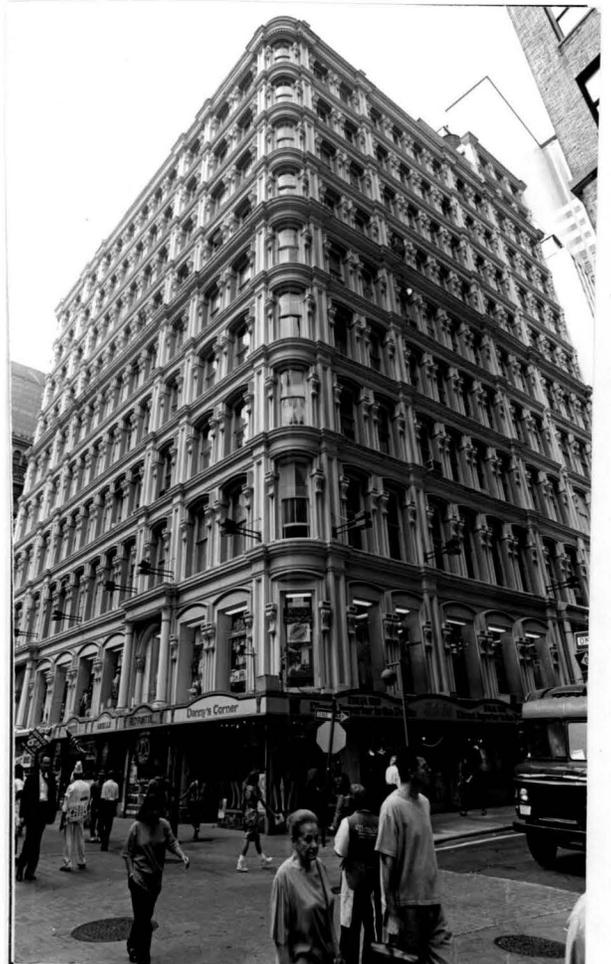
Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 89, Lot 1.

On September 19, 1995, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Bennett Building and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 7). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Twenty-three witnesses spoke in favor of designation including Councilwoman Kathryn Freed and representatives of Borough President Ruth Messinger, Community Board 1, Tribeca Community Association, New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, Municipal Art Society, New York Landmarks Conservancy, Friends of Cast Iron Architecture, Friends of Terra Cotta, Queens Historical Society, and Heritage Trails, N.Y. One of the owners of the building and the owners' representative expressed concerns about the impact of the designation. The Commission has received a number of letters and other statement in support of this designation, including a letter from Assemblymember Deborah Glick.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Summary

The Bennett Building, constructed in 1872-73 and enlarged in 1890-92 and 1894, is a major monument to the art of cast-iron architecture. Ten stories high with three fully designed facades fronting Fulton, Nassau, and Ann Streets, it has been described as the tallest habitable building with cast-iron facades ever built. Commissioned as a real estate investment by James Gordon Bennett, Jr., the publisher of the *New York Herald* newspaper, the Bennett Building was originally a six-story French Second Empire structure. Designed by the prominent architect Arthur D. Gilman, whose Boston City Hall was instrumental in popularizing the Second Empire style in America, the Bennett Building appears to be the architect's only extant work in the style in New York. Gilman was also an important pioneer in the development of the office building, and the Bennett Building is the sole survivor among the major office buildings he designed. Second Empire office buildings flourished in Lower Manhattan after the Civil War; this is one of two such buildings with cast-iron fronts still standing south of Canal Street. In 1889, the Bennett Building was acquired by John Pettit, a leading real estate investor who commissioned architect James M. Farnsworth to enlarge the building to its present size. Farnsworth replicated the Gilman's richly textured, ornate design, including the distinctive curving corners linking the facades and the crisply articulated details that are particularly well suited to the medium of cast iron.



The James Gordon Bennett, Jr. and
the *New York Herald*¹

Founded in 1835 by James Gordon Bennett, Sr. (1795-1872), the *New York Herald* was "the most interesting, entertaining, and popular newspaper in [mid-nineteenth-century] America" -- and the most profitable.² Written in a straightforward manner atypical of the period, the *Herald* was noted for its unprecedented emphasis on local news. It maintained an extensive network of reporters and correspondents in the chief European and American cities and kept a fleet of dispatch boats to intercept steamers bringing the latest news from Europe. It was the first paper in America to employ a corps of reporters to cover Congress; the first to make extensive use of stenography to print verbatim reports of interviews and political speeches; the first to treat the arts, sports, and religion as news; the first to print a regular column analyzing financial trends; the first to make extensive use of the telegraph; and the first to remain completely independent of any political party. Its war coverage was unparalleled: during the Mexican War the paper initiated an overland express route that made it the nation's prime source of news from the Texas frontier, and during the Civil War its sixty-three correspondents reported on every aspect of the war. The *Herald* also devoted considerable coverage to society news and sensational crimes, laying the foundation for such popular publications as Joseph Pulitzer's *World* later in the century.

In April 1867, the management of the *Herald* passed to the founder's only son, James Gordon Bennett, Jr. Born in New York in 1841, the younger Bennett had been raised largely in Europe and educated at the Ecole Polytechnique. He returned to the United States in 1861 to serve in the Union navy and, following his military service, began training at the *Herald*. In 1867, with financial support from his father, James Gordon Bennett, Jr., began publishing the *Evening Telegram*, a light journal featuring gossip and entertainment news. On January 1, 1868, he assumed complete stewardship of the *Herald* as the paper's editor and publisher. Under James Gordon Bennett, Jr., the *Herald* became noted for its excellent coverage of foreign events and for sponsorship of expeditions to exotic locales, such as reporter Henry M. Stanley's search for Dr. David Livingstone in Africa in 1871. In the 1880s Bennett established London and Paris editions of the *Herald*; the Paris edition continues today as the *International Herald Tribune*.³ In addition to his newspaper interests, Bennett derived a large income from the Commercial Cable Company, an international telegraph company, which he established in 1883 in partnership with John A. Mackay.⁴ Including the

considerable real estate he inherited from his parents, it is estimated that Bennett made and spent over \$30,000,000 from his various enterprises. He died in his villa in Beaulieu, France, in 1918. After Bennett's death the *New York Herald*, *Evening Telegram*, and Paris edition of the *Herald* were sold to publisher Frank Munsey.

The Downtown Office District and
the Bennett Building⁵

In 1842, after moving the *Herald* several times, James Gordon Bennett, Sr., acquired a new building at the northwest corner of Nassau and Fulton Streets, in the heart of the newspaper and printing district that was growing up around Nassau Street. (That same year Bennett's chief competitor, Moses Beach, moved the *Sun* to a new building on the southwest corner of Nassau and Fulton Streets). As the newspaper grew, Bennett purchased additional buildings on Fulton, Nassau, and Ann Streets until he owned all the property encompassing 135-139 Fulton Street, 93-99 Nassau Street, and 30-34 Ann Street. However, by the mid-1860s the paper had outgrown these quarters. In 1865, after a fire destroyed Barnum's Museum at Broadway and Ann Street on the opposite end of the block from the paper, James Gordon Bennett, Sr., acquired the property and erected a new fireproof headquarters for the *Herald*, designed by Kellum & Son, that was "the most modern and costly newspaper building in New York."⁶

The five-story Herald Building (1865-67, demolished) and the adjacent National Park Bank Building at Broadway and Fulton Streets (Griffith Thomas, 1866-67, demolished) were among the earliest harbingers of the movement to replace the older downtown office buildings, "which were little more than private houses on a large scale, [with] modern specialized structures."⁷ The post-war buildings usually incorporated elevators and employed the most up-to-date building techniques which made possible the construction of taller, more fire-resistant (often termed "fireproof") buildings.⁸ The majority were designed in the then fashionable Second Empire style, characterized by its use of French Renaissance ornament and mansard roofs. The most notable of these new buildings was Arthur Gilman, Edward Kendall, and George B. Post's Equitable Building (1868-72) at Broadway and Cedar Streets, which many scholars regard as the first skyscraper.⁹ Other Second Empire style office buildings included Griffith Thomas's Kemp Building (1870) at William and Cedar Streets, Alfred B. Mullett's Post Office Building (which also housed courts and offices) at City Hall Park (1868-75), and

Henry Fernbach's *Staats-Zeitung* Building (1870-73) at Chatham Street and Tryon Row.¹⁰

By the 1870s Nassau Street was one of the busiest office streets in the city. In June 1872, a few days after his father's death, the younger Bennett had the noted architect Arthur D. Gilman file plans for the Bennett Building, to be built on the former Herald Building site. It was to be a mansarded, cast-iron-fronted, elevator building which was to have six stories of offices above a street-level basement.¹¹ According to an advertisement which appeared several times in the *Herald* in 1873, the elevated floor above the basement was designed to house a bank or insurance company offices while the street-level basement offices were "especially adapted to insurance, money brokers, merchants, lawyers, large law firms businesses where security from fire to legal documents is a desideratum."¹² The building was ready for occupancy by May 1873.¹³

Cast-Iron Office Buildings and the Design of the Bennett Building¹⁴

Today the Bennett Building is notable as one of the few remaining post-Civil War office buildings in Lower Manhattan and as one of only two cast-iron-fronted office buildings south of Canal Street from the period. Cast iron had been adopted by the architectural profession and began to reflect the Italianate style prevalent among commercial buildings in the 1850s. New York examples included the Cary Building (King & Kellum, 1856-57) at 105-107 Chambers Street, and the Haughwout Store (John Gaynor, 1856) at 488 Broadway, both designated New York City Landmarks. These buildings, as well as most other Italianate cast-iron buildings in New York, were used for mercantile purposes.

In the late 1860s and early 1870s, cast-iron buildings began to be executed in the recently imported Second Empire style. In addition to mercantile buildings like the Lord & Taylor store (James H. Giles, 1869) at 901 Broadway, a designated New York City Landmark, the style also appeared in other prestigious building such as hotels (Gilsey House, 1200 Broadway, Stephen Decatur Hatch, 1869-71, a designated New York City Landmark), and exchanges (Real Estate Exchange, 59-65 Liberty Street, architect undetermined, c. 1875, demolished). Office buildings in the style included the Bennett Building, Kemp Building, Seaman's Bank for Savings Building at 74-76 Wall Street (R.G. Hatfield, 1870, demolished), and the New York Life Insurance Company Building at 346 Broadway (Griffith Thomas, 1870, demolished). Today the only survivors among the Second Empire style cast-iron office buildings that once flourished in

Lower Manhattan are the Bennett Building and the 287 Broadway Building, a small cast-iron-fronted office building designed in a combination of the Italianate and Second Empire styles by John B. Snook in 1871-72 (a designated New York City Landmark).

Described soon after its completion as "one of the most substantial and beautiful [buildings] in the city,"¹⁵ the Bennett Building is distinguished by its richly textured, ornate design and its inventive, crisply articulated detailing. The building has three fully designed cast-iron facades fronting on Fulton, Nassau, and Ann Streets and was originally crowned by a towered mansard. Corner pavilions framed the facades which are articulated with paneled pilasters, cornices, and segmental arch window openings above a rusticated basement story (now completely concealed by shopfronts). Columns and entablatures (originally capped by arched pediments) frame the four first-story office entrances, two on Nassau and one each on Fulton and Ann Street. The deeply recessed windows are capped by molded labels and framed by paneled pilasters with boldly modeled consoles and paneled dossierets used in place of conventional capitals. Gilman's free treatment of the orders, which adds greatly to the plasticity of the facade, is unlike anything he attempted in his Second Empire masonry designs, and is particularly well suited to the medium of cast iron. Other notable features of Gilman's design include the sensitive handling of the rounded corners which link the facades and treatment of the horizontal cornices which contribute to the rich shadow patterns that give the facade character.

Arthur D. Gilman¹⁶

The architect of the Bennett Building, Arthur Delavan Gilman (1821-1882), was an important architectural theorist and designer who played a significant role in the early development of the skyscraper and the popularization of the Second Empire style in America. Born in Newburyport, Massachusetts, and educated at Trinity College in Hartford, Gilman rose to prominence in 1844 with a series of lectures at the Lowell Institute in Boston (later published in the *North American Review*) which provided an important critical basis for the American adoption of the Gothic Revival and Renaissance Revival styles as exemplified in the work of the English architects Charles Barry and Augustus W.N. Pugin. After a trip to Europe during which he spent some time studying architecture in England, Gilman began practicing architecture in Boston and was for a time associated with Edward C. Cabot. His early work consisted primarily of churches, notably the

Arlington Street Church, Boston (1859-61), one of the earliest American buildings to consciously evoke the country's Colonial heritage.

In the 1850s Gilman was influenced by French academic design theories. Second Empire Paris was the model for his plan of Boston's Back Bay (1856), "where his spacious mansions set new standards of style."¹⁷ From 1859 to 1866, Gilman worked in partnership with Gridley J. Bryant; their designs for Boston City Hall (1862-65), Boston City Hospital (1861-64, demolished), and Horticultural Hall (1865, demolished) have been credited with popularizing the Second Empire mode in the United States. In 1866 Gilman moved to New York, where, working first with Edward Hale Kendall and later with Thomas C. Fuller, he had a influential role in the design of the New York State Capitol building. In addition to his trend-setting Equitable Building and the Bennett Building, Gilman also designed impressive Second Empire office buildings in Boston for the Equitable Life Assurance Company (1873, demolished) and in New York for Drexel, Morgan & Co. (the Drexel Building, 1872, demolished). A resident of Staten Island during his years in New York, Gilman designed the handsome Gothic Revival St. John's (Episcopal) Church on Bay Street in Clifton, Staten Island (1869-71), a designated New York City Landmark.

The 1890s Addition

In 1882, the *Real Estate Record & Guide* noted that Mr. Bennett had been "a little too previous" in his erection of the Bennett Building, which had been built "when prices were at their highest," immediately prior to the Panic of 1873. By the time economic conditions had improved, a number of new office buildings, notably the *Tribune* Building, the Morse Building (1880-81, 1889-90), and Temple Court (1879-80), had been erected which were "nearer the law courts, and better for lawyers and public offices, while Ann and Fulton Street [had proven to be too far] for the exchange or brokerage business of Wall street and below."¹⁸ By 1889, the building had become "run down," and its mechanical systems (especially the elevators) were out-moded. In October 1889, Bennett sold the Bennett Building to John Pettit, a prominent builder and real estate developer.¹⁹ The following year Bennett commissioned McKim, Mead & White to design a new building (1892-95, demolished) for the *Herald* at the intersection of Sixth Avenue and Broadway at West 35th Street, in the midst of the theater district.²⁰

Pettit had been involved in building and improvement in the business district since the 1870s and had erected "over one hundred and fifty of the

best class of commercial buildings."²¹ As a realtor Pettit specialized in converting old stores, factories, and warehouses in the downtown district into modern office buildings.²² Almost invariably these projects were designed and supervised by James Farnsworth, a specialist in business building design who had designed Temple Court and the Morse Building in partnership with Benjamin Silliman during the 1880s.²³ At the Bennett Building, Farnsworth renovated the interiors, installed new plumbing and mechanical systems, removed the mansard roof, reconstructed the seventh story and added three full stories and a two-story masonry penthouse, raising the building to ten full stories plus the penthouse.²⁴ The exterior of the addition was faced with cast iron which replicated the articulation of the lower stories.²⁵ When it was completed in 1892, the building had 600 offices and counted among its tenants a congressman, bankers, manufacturers, architects, publishers, and a branch of the Postal Telegraph Cable Company. J.M. Farnsworth had his offices at the Bennett Building in 1892-97.

Two years after this alteration was completed, Pettit acquired the adjoining lot at 28 Ann Street where he had Farnsworth construct a twenty-five-foot-wide, eleven-story (ten-story plus basement) addition to the Bennett Building.²⁶ This addition had a three-bay-wide cast-iron front which replicated the design of the older portions of the building with some slight changes of detail. Although cast iron was less commonly used as a facade material in the 1890s than it had been in the 1870s and early 1880s, it continued to be used in New York until the early 1900s, especially for additions to pre-existing buildings.²⁷ The Bennett Building is remarkable in its use of two bearing wall cast-iron fronts along Fulton and Ann Streets and a non-bearing wall cast-iron front on Nassau Street which extend to a height of ten and eleven stories. According to Donald Friedman, a structural engineer who is the author of *Historical Building Construction*:

*Cast iron was usually used for a single non-bearing wall, and occasionally for one non-bearing wall and one bearing wall, as in the Haughwout Building. The original design [of the Bennett Building] was six stories and an additional seventh story within a mansard roof. Most cast iron front buildings are five or six stories. The 1890s enlargement, which removed the mansard and continues the cast iron facades up to a tenth floor, makes the Bennett Building probably the tallest occupiable building with cast iron facades ever built.*²⁸

Later History

In 1898, during the height of a financial depression which gravely impacted on the real estate market and building trades, John Pettit disappeared from Manhattan. After several years of litigation, his creditors finally foreclosed on the Bennett Building, which was acquired by George B. Wilson in 1906. Wilson's family continued to own the building through the 1940s, by which time it was being used for manufacturing as well as for offices and stores. In 1949 the property passed to Jackadel Associates, who undertook a number of alterations to bring the building up to code, notably moving the south entrance on Nassau Street to the basement (street) level, closing the north Nassau Street entrance, and moving the Ann Street entrance to basement level.²⁹ In 1951 the Dorlen Realty Company acquired the building. Dorlen held the property until 1983, when it was acquired by the Haddad & Sons Limited. The Haddads undertook a number of alterations, including moving the building's main entrance from Nassau Street to Fulton Street, replacing the second-story windows, introducing new storefronts on Fulton Street and the south end of the Nassau Street front, and erecting a new canopy with signage for the stores extending along all three fronts. ENT International Realty, Inc. acquired the Bennett Building in 1995.

Description

The Bennett Building is located on an slightly irregular L-shaped lot which extends seventy-five feet along Fulton Street, 117 feet along Nassau Street, and 100 feet along Ann Street. A narrow light court rises above the first story on the west side of the building. The lower six stories (erected in 1872-73) were built with bearing wall construction on Fulton and Ann Streets; the top four stories and two-story penthouse (constructed in 1890-92) were erected with cage construction, as was the twenty-five-foot wide, eleven-story extension erected on the western end of the Ann Street facade in 1894. Fully designed cast-iron facades were used for the street fronts; the western side walls and penthouse are faced with brick. The designs of the later portions of the building replicated the earlier articulation, but the windows are slightly wider and the decoration slightly more florid on the 1894 extension.

Base

The ground story of the Bennett Building was originally treated as a high basement with rusticated cast-iron piers separating the bays filled with shopfronts. In the 1980s the storefronts on Nassau Street and Fulton Street were brought forward about two feet and the original piers were enclosed (and are

no longer visible) within the stores; on Ann Street the facade remains flush with the original street wall, but the original shopfront infill has been replaced and the piers and lintels are completely concealed with facing materials. In the 1980s the main entrance to the building was moved to the third bay (reading west to east) of the Fulton Street facade. The freight entrance is in the third bay (reading west to east) of the Ann Street facade. In the 1980s the street-level entrance in the third bay (reading south to north) of the Nassau Street facade was modified to provide access to a stairwell leading to a second-story retail space.

Upper Stories

Above the commercial base, the Bennett Building's Second Empire facades are articulated with paneled pilasters, molded cornices, and arched window and door frames. Large paneled pilasters and projecting cornices accent the rounded corners which link the facades and the original entrance bays on the second story (originally the first story) at the western corner of the Fulton Street and fourth bay of the Ann Street facade and the third and tenth bay (reading south to north) of the Nassau Street facade. The entrances are framed by projecting columns and entablatures. (On Ann Street the column bases have been removed and the columns are supported on steel brackets). On Nassau Street the entrance bays retain their original arched cast-iron surrounds with Corinthian columns flanking the doors. No original entrance doors survive; these would have been recessed behind the wall plane. The third bay on Nassau Street contains a single plate glass window to permit light to enter the stairwell. The other second-story entrances have been enclosed and contain rectangular windows set in wood surrounds. The segmental-arch window frames on the upper stories are capped by molded labels and framed by paneled pilasters with boldly modeled consoles and paneled dossierets used in place of conventional capitals. In the 1980s the original transoms and sash were removed from the tall second-story window openings which currently contain single-pane show windows set in wood surrounds. Above the second story, the building retains its deeply recessed two-over-two wood sash. The building is crowned by a dentiled entablature surmounted by an openwork parapet.

The 1894 Ann Street Addition

The iron facade of the three-bay-wide 1894 extension is almost identical in design to the older portions of the building except that the second-story windows are trabeated, the molded brackets incorporate floral motifs which extend as pendants

onto the paneled pilasters, and escutcheon-shaped tie bolts are used in place of projecting cornices on the corner piers.

Side walls

The western elevations of the building incorporate a light court and are faced with brick which has been painted a cream color. The wall of the Ann Street addition and the walls facing the light court have window openings with two-over-two sash.

A portion of the wall adjacent to the Fulton Street facade has been given a trompe l'oeil treatment to imitate two bays of the cast-iron architectural detail on that facade.

Report prepared by
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Research Department

Notes

1. This section is based on Junius Henri Browne, *The Great Metropolis: A Mirror of New York* (Newark, N.J.: Bliss & Co., 1869); James L. Crouthamel, *Bennett's New York Herald and the Rise of the Popular Press* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1989); Don C. Seitz, *The James Gordon Bennetts, Father and Son* (Indianapolis: Bobbs Merrill, 1928); Douglas Fermer, *James Gordon Bennett and the New York Herald: A Study Editorial Opinion in the Civil War Era 1854-1867* (New York, 1986); "Bennett, James Gordon (1795-June 1, 1872)" and "Bennett, James Gordon (May 10, 1841-May 14, 1918)," *Dictionary of American Biography*, ed. Dumas Malone *et al.* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1964).
2. Crouthamel, 42.
3. Bennett moved to France in 1877. A *bon vivant* and noted yachtsman, Bennett was one of the most prominent figures in French sports and French Society at the turn of the century. See Jean Christophe P. Gourvennec, *Un journal américain à Paris: James Gordon Bennett et le New York Herald, 1887-1918* [Catalog of an exhibition at the Musée d'Orsay, July-Sept. 1990] (Paris: Reunion des Musees Nationaux, c. 1990).
4. On the Commercial Cable Company see "Mackay, John William," *Dictionary of American Biography*.
5. For the Bennett Building site see New York County, Office of the Register, Liber Deeds and Conveyances, Liber 425, p. 320; Liber 449, p. 246; Liber 554, p. 481; Liber 670, p. 626; Liber 891, p. 21; Liber 880, p. 624; New York City, Tax Assessment Records, Ward 2, 1841-1873. For the various headquarters of the *Herald* see Crouthamel, 43-45. On Bennett's acquisition of the Barnum Museum site see Seitz, 150-154. For the post-Civil War office building development see *A History of Real Estate, Building and Architecture in New York City* (1898; rpt., New York: Arno Press, 1967), 50-54, 66-67, 352-82, Landmarks Preservation Commission, *90-94 Maiden Lane Building Designation Report*, prepared by Gale Harris (LP-1648) (NY: City of New York, 1989), 5-6; Kenneth Turney Gibbs, *Business Architectural Imagery in America, 1870-1930* (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1984), 22-40; Winston Weisman, "Commercial Palaces of New York: 1845-1875," *Art Bulletin* 36 (Dec. 1954), 285-302; *Atlas of the City of New York* (New York: Bromley & Robinson, 1879).
6. Seitz, 154.
7. *A History of Real Estate*, 66.
8. *A History of Real Estate* (p. 360) records that these "nominally fire-proof" office buildings "were constructed with broad and massive foundations and walls of masonry, iron floor beams and girders resting upon these walls and upon cast-iron interior columns or brick piers, and with floor arches of set up brick or corrugated iron, each leveled up with concrete."
9. For the Equitable Building's role in skyscraper history see Gibbs, 26-40; Winston Weisman, "A New View of Skyscraper History," *The Rise of an American Architecture*, ed. Edgar Kaufmann, Jr. (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1970), 119-27.
10. A number of other buildings were modernized during this period, including the Mutual Life Insurance Building at Nassau and Cedar Streets and the Bank of New York at Wall and William Streets, both of which had mansards added during the 1870s, while two of the other great office buildings of the period, Richard Morris Hunt's Tribune Building (1872-75) at Nassau and Spruce Streets and George B. Post's Western Union Building (1873-75) at Broadway and Dey Street, incorporated mansards and were influenced by contemporary French design

(though not by the style now known as Second Empire). These buildings and all of the buildings discussed in the previous section have been demolished.

11. New York City Department of Buildings, Manhattan, New Building Docket 614-1872.
12. "Fireproof Buildings," *New York Herald*, Jan. 1, 1873, p. 1; Mar. 1, 1873, p.1; Apr. 27, 1873, p. 1.
13. One of the building's first tenants was the banking firm of L.S. Lawrence & Company, a private bank dealing in currency exchange and collections that was the New York agent for the San Francisco banking house of Drexel, Sather & Church. See *Trow's New York City Directory* (New York: John F. Trow, 1873-75); *Asher & Adams New Columbian Railroad Atlas and Pictorial Album of American Industry* (1876, Rpt.), 40. The latter source contains an excellent engraved view of the building.
14. This section on cast-iron buildings, the Second Empire style, and the design of the Bennett Building is based on Margot Gayle, *Cast-Iron Architecture in New York* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1974), especially pp. vi, 5; LPC, *90-94 Maiden Lane Building Designation Report*, 5-6; LPC, *287 Broadway Building Designation Report* (LP-1649), prepared by Kevin McHugh (NY: City of New York, 1989), 4.
15. Asher & Adams, 40.
16. This section on Gilman is based on Talbot F. Hamlin, "Gilman, Arthur Delevan (sic)," *DAB*; Margaret Henderson Floyd, "Gilman, Arthur Delavan," *Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects*, 4 vols., ed. Adolf K. Placzek (New York: The Free Press, 1982), vol. 2, 208-210.
17. Floyd, 208.
18. "Market Review," *Real Estate Record & Guide*, May 20, 1882, p. 504.
19. Liber Deeds and Conveyances, Liber 2273, p. 20; "Gossip of the Week," *Real Estate Record & Guide*, Oct. 5, 1889; "Gossip of the Week," *Real Estate Record & Guide*, Oct. 12, 1889, 1371; "Two Nassau Street Office Buildings," *Real Estate Record & Guide*, Jan. 28, 1892, 124-125.
20. See Leland Roth, *McKim, Mead & White Architects* (New York: Harper Row, 1983), 171-172.
21. *A History of Real Estate*, 230.
22. Among the buildings he renovated during this period were the Nassau Chambers Building, 45 Ann Street, aka 110-116 Nassau Street, renovated in 1891 and sold to Levi P. Morton in 1893; the Beekman Building at the southeast corner of Beekman and Pearl Streets, renovated in 1889 (demolished); 50 Cortlandt Street at the northeast corner of Cortlandt and Washington Streets, renovated c. 1889 (demolished); and the Downing Building at 106-108 Fulton Street, renovated c. 1895 and sold to western investors (altered).
23. James M. Farnsworth (dates undetermined) was a draftsman with Calvert Vaux in 1873, prior to joining the firm of Benjamin Silliman, Jr. (1848-1901), a German-trained architect who had worked with Vaux, Withers & Co. in 1866-71. By 1877, Silliman and Farnsworth had joined in partnership. Their varied practice included office, educational, and institutional buildings. The firm dissolved in 1882. Farnsworth practiced independently from 1883 to 1897, then was associated with Charles E. Miller from 1897 to 1900 and with Victor Hugo Koehler from 1901 to 1910, then practiced alone again until 1923. See LPC, *Ladies Mile Historic District Designation Report* (LP-1609)(New York: City of New York, 1989), vol. 2, 1014; *James Ward Architects in Practice, New York City 1900-1940* (New York: Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records, 1989), 16, 44.
24. New York City Department of Buildings, Manhattan, Alteration Docket, 384-1890. See also "Two Nassau Street Buildings," 124, 126.
25. The drawing of the Bennett Building published in the *Real Estate Record & Guide* in 1893 shows projecting shopfronts at the street level. One such front is shown at the corner of Ann and Nassau Street in a c. 1880 photo, which would suggest that the shopfronts were original to the building or added soon after construction. A photograph of the building published in *King's Handbook* in 1892 shows both a projecting shopfront and a show window flush with the building plane.
26. For the addition see Alteration Docket 222-1894 and "Out Among the Builders," *Real Estate Record & Guide*, Feb. 3, 1894, 176.
27. Notably the cast-iron-front department stores in the shopping district along Sixth Avenue and West 23rd Street such as Ehrich Brothers at 695-709 Sixth Avenue (built 1889, and enlarged with cast-iron-fronted additions in

1894 and 1902-04) and Stern Brothers at 32-46 West 23rd Street (built 1878, and enlarged with a cast-iron-fronted addition in 1892). Farnsworth himself used cast iron for the facade of 102-104 Fulton Street, a seven-story store and office building, constructed in c. 1895 as an addition to Pettit's Downing Building at 106-108 Fulton Street. On late cast-iron fronts see Cervin Robinson, "Late Cast Iron in New York," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 30 (May 1971), 164-169; LPC, *Ladies Mile Historic District Report*, v. 1, 394-99; v. 2: 917.

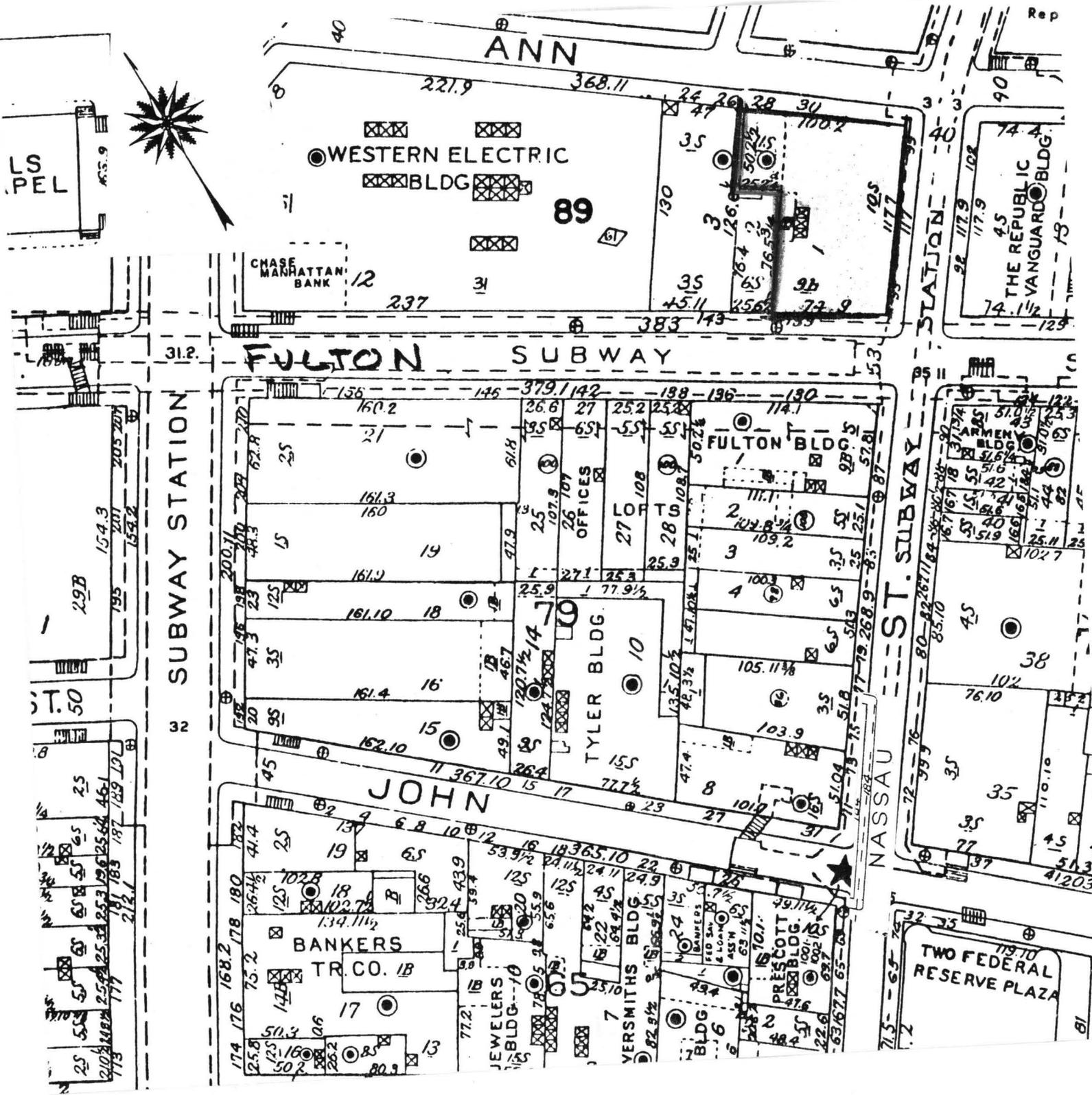
28. Donald Friedman, P.E., Statement in support of the Designation of 139 Fulton Street and 100 Broadway, Sept. 19, 1995. Copy available in the Landmarks Preservation Commission, Bennett Building, LP-1937 file.
29. For these changes see Alteration permit, 1124-1949. The entrance on Fulton Street had already been closed, presumably when the subway entrance was constructed next to the building on Fulton Street.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

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 Bennett Building has a special character, and 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, that the Bennett Building, constructed in 1872-73 and enlarged in 1890-92 and 1894, is a major monument to the art of cast-iron architecture; that this ten-story building with three fully designed cast-iron facades has been described by historians of cast iron architecture as the tallest habitable building with cast-iron facades ever erected; that it was constructed as a six-story Second Empire style office building during the post-Civil War period when such structures flourished in Lower Manhattan and is one of the two remaining cast-iron-fronted office buildings south of Canal Street; that the Bennett Building was designed by the prominent architect Arthur D. Gilman, who was an influential figure in the popularization of the Second Empire style in America and a pioneer in the development of the office building; that it appears to be the architect's only extant work in the style in New York and the sole survivor among his major office buildings; that it was built for the influential publisher, James Gordon Bennett, Jr., and occupies a site long associated with the Bennett family's, *New York Herald*, the most popular newspaper in mid-nineteenth-century America; that the building was enlarged to its present size for John Pettit, a leading real estate investor, by architect James M. Farnsworth, a specialist in the design of business buildings; that Farnsworth replicated Gilman's richly textured, ornate design, which is distinguished by its crisply articulated detailing, free and inventive use of the orders, and sensitive treatment of such details as distinctive curving corners and boldly modeled console brackets and dossierets used in place of conventional capitals, that is particularly well suited to the medium of cast iron.

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 Bennett Building, 139 Fulton Street (aka 135-139 Fulton Street, 93-99 Nassau Street, 28-34 Nassau Street), Borough of Manhattan, and designates Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 89, Lot 1, as its Landmark Site.



Bennett Building
 139 Fulton Street (aka 135-139 Fulton Street, 93-99 Nassau Street, 28-34 Ann Street)
 Manhattan.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 89, Lot 1.

Source: Sanborn Manhattan Landbook, 1994-95.

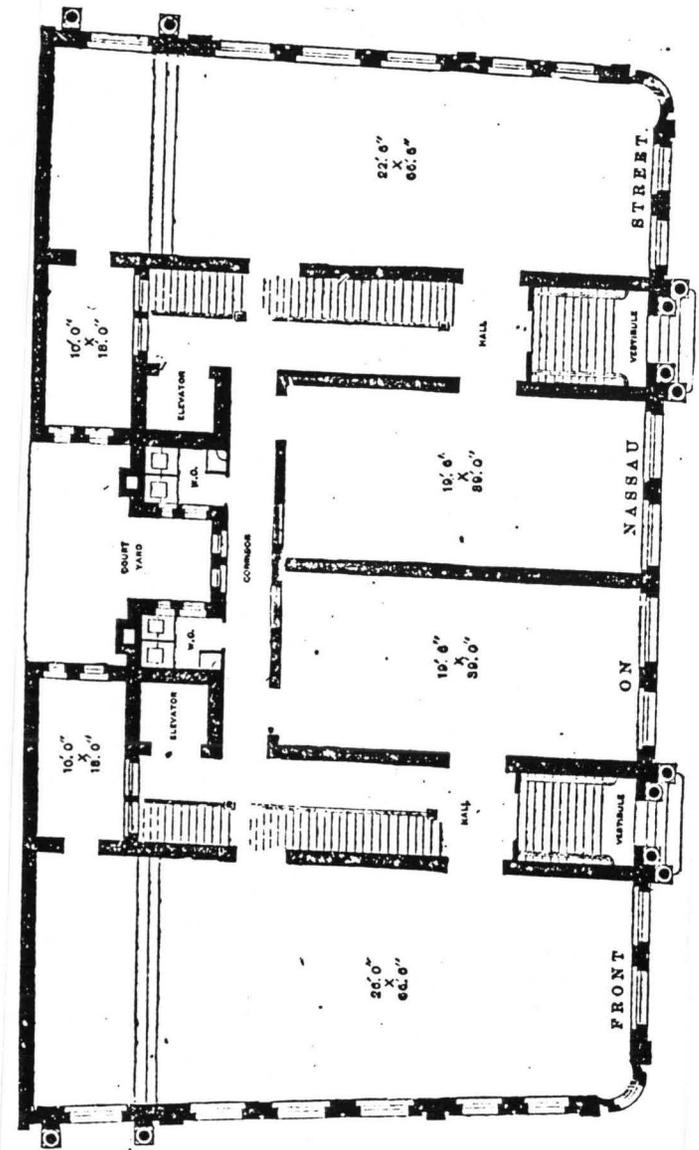


View of Nassau Street looking south, c. 1880
Bennett Building, right of center
Source: *Old New York in Early Photographs*



The Bennett Building, c. 1876

Source: *Asher & Adams New Columbian Railroad Atlas*



Plan of First Floor

Source: *New York Herald*, 1873



Rendering for the addition of 1890-92
Source: *Real Estate Record & Guide*



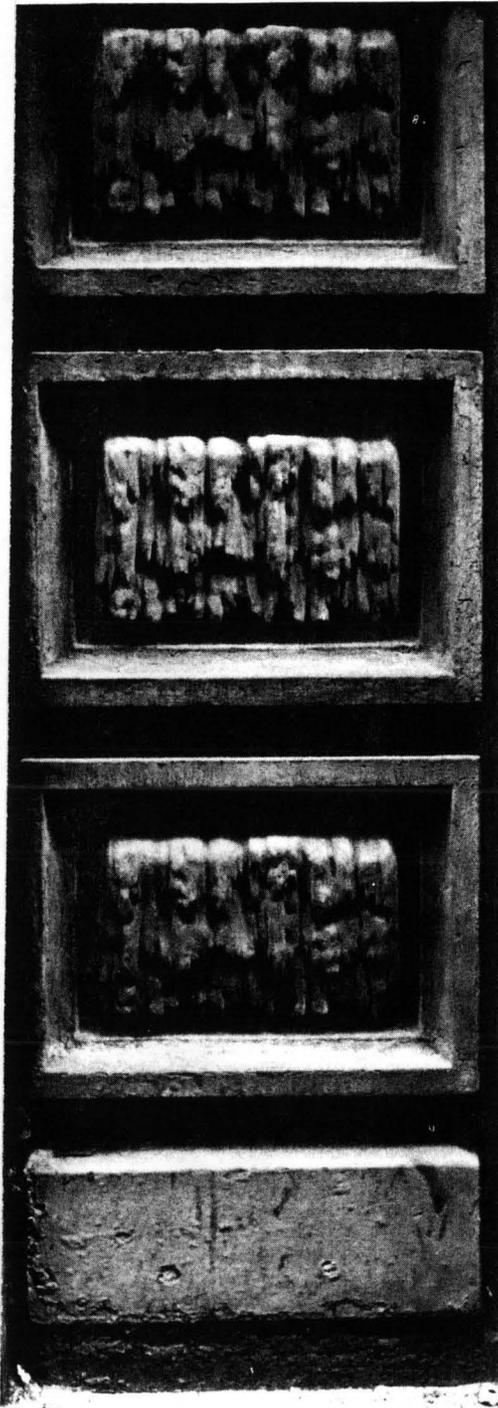
Photograph showing the addition of 1892
Source: *King's Handbook*, 1892



Bennett Building
139 Fulton Street, Manhattan
View from the southeast showing Fulton Street and Nassau Street facades
Photo: Carl Forster



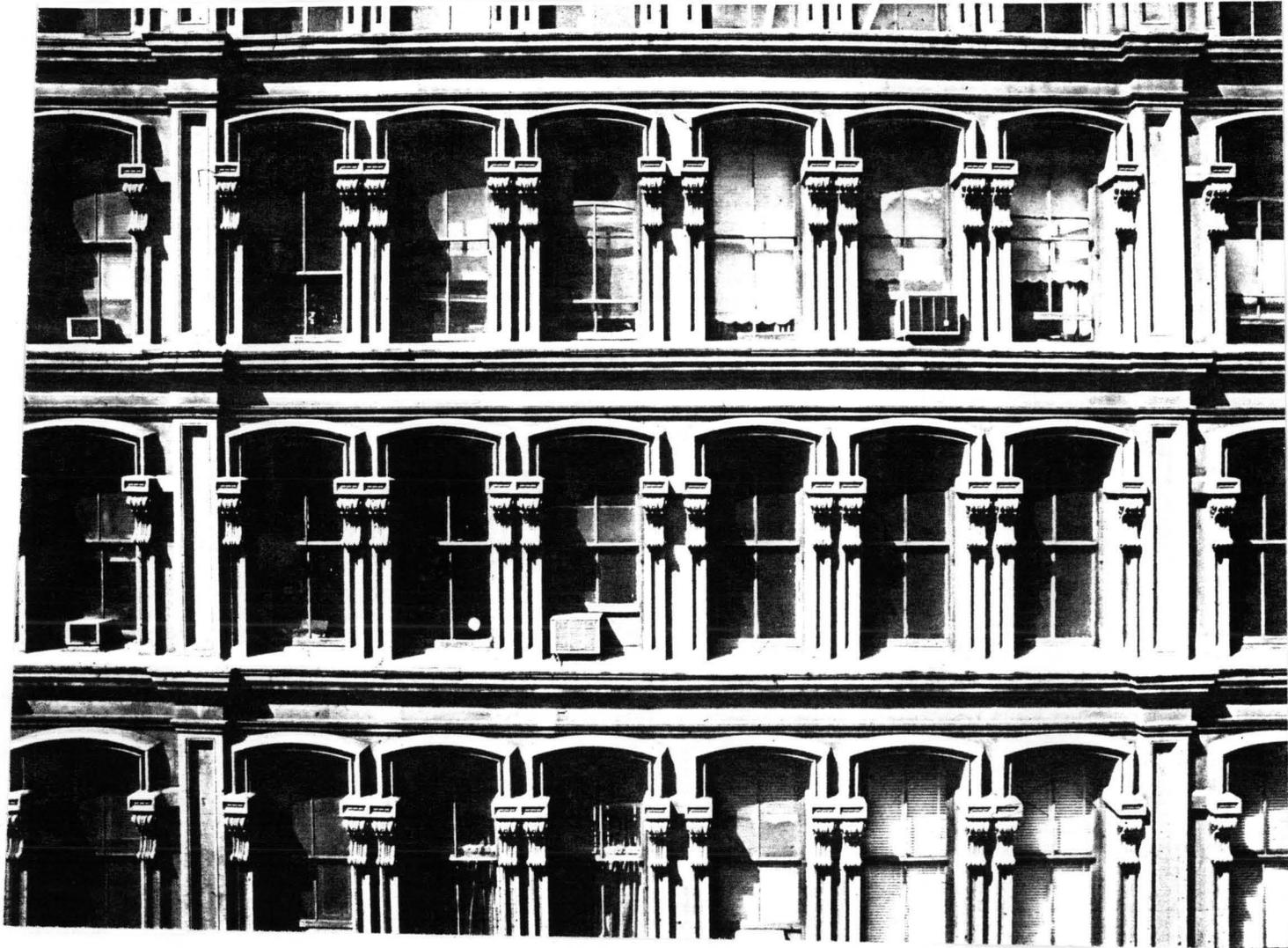
Bennett Building
139 Fulton Street, Manhattan
View from the northeast showing Nassau Street and Ann Street facades
Photo: Carl Forster



Quined pier decoration (no longer visible)
Ground story of the Fulton Street facade
Source: Cast-Iron Architecture in New York, 1974

South entrance
Nassau Street facade
Photo: Carl Forster





Detail of the Nassau Street facade
Photo: Beckett Logan, 1974



Detail of curving corner at Fulton and Nassau Streets
Photo: Carl Forster



Detail of a corner window
Photo: Carl Forster



Detail of top stories, crowning cornice, and parapet at roof
Photo: Carl Forster