

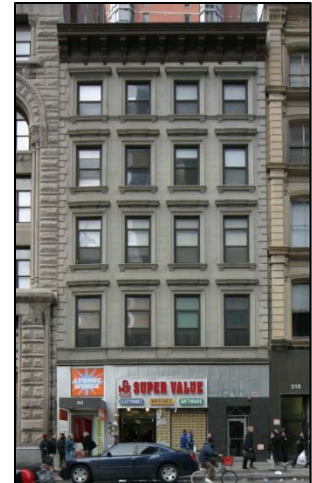
311 BROADWAY BUILDING, 311 Broadway, Manhattan
Built c. 1856-57; Architect not determined

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 151, Lot 31

On June 23, 2009, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the 311 Broadway Building and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 14). The hearing was duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Two people spoke in favor of designation, including representatives of Council Member Alan J. Gerson and the Historic Districts Council. The Commission previously held a public hearing on this building on December 12, 1989 (LP-1755).

Summary

This distinguished commercial building located on the west side of Broadway between Duane and Thomas Streets was erected c. 1856-57 by John and Daniel Jackson Steward. The building is a fine example of Italian Renaissance-inspired commercial palaces that flourished from the 1850s through the 1870s in the former wholesale textile and dry goods district of lower Manhattan. In the mid-nineteenth century, Broadway was the city's most prestigious business and shopping street, lined with commercial palaces. Clad in stone, the building is articulated with a restrained design employing symmetrical square-headed windows with stone surrounds at the upper stories. Today, few mid-nineteenth century commercial palaces have survived on Broadway south of Franklin Street, making the 311 Broadway Building a rare survivor. Constructed during a period when Worth Street emerged as a center of the wholesale textile trade in the United States, the 311 Broadway Building is a significant reminder of New York's mercantile history. Early tenants included two importing firms, and then the well-known scale manufacturing company, Fairbanks and Company. William Waldorf Astor, one of the largest landowners in New York City, and then his estate owned the building for 64 years. Prominent twentieth century tenants included L.C. Smith & Brothers Typewriter Company, David T. Abercrombie Company, and Hagstrom Company, the first owner of the building that appears to have occupied it. The 311 Broadway Building remains in commercial use at the basement and first story with retail and restaurant tenants, although the upper stories are now residential.



DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

The Rutgers-Barclay Family and Early Historic of the Site¹

Prior to the arrival of European fur traders and the Dutch West India Company, Manhattan and much of the modern-day tri-state area was populated by bands of Lenape Indians. The Lenape traveled from one encampment to another with the changes of the seasons. Fishing camps were occupied in the summer and inland camps were used during the fall and winter for harvesting crops and hunting. The main trail ran the length of Manhattan from the Battery to Inwood, following the course of Broadway adjacent to present-day City Hall Park before veering east toward the area now known as Foley Square. It then ran north with major branches leading to habitations in Greenwich Village and the Lower East Side at a place called Rechtauck or Naghtogack in the vicinity of Corlears Hook. In 1626, Dutch West Indies Company Director Peter Minuit “purchased” the island from the Lenape for sixty guilders worth of trade goods.²

In 1646, Governor Kieft granted to Jan Jansen Damen³ forty-five acres of land that came to be known as the Calk Hook Farm. This property was bounded by the Collect Pond, a forty foot-deep body of water located near today’s Foley Square, and extended north and west of the pond to what is today Canal Street and West Broadway, and south as far as Reade Street. In the 1720s, the farm was acquired by Anthony Rutgers, a city alderman and member of the colonial assembly. A portion of this land was eventually used as part of the African Burial Ground.⁴ Rutgers built his residence near the current intersection of Church and Duane Streets. Multiple sources indicate that Anthony Rutgers and his wife Cornelia owned enslaved persons.⁵ In the 1730s, Rutgers petitioned for and was granted the swampland and pond adjoining his property with the understanding that he would drain the land. After Rutgers died in 1746, the property passed to his heirs who had their land surveyed and mapped in the 1760s. In 1772, his grandson, also named Anthony Rutgers,⁶ sold a portion of his share of the estate, a three-acre tract extending from 105 feet west of Broadway to Church Street between Duane and Worth Streets, to the Society of the Hospital in the City of New York (New York Hospital). In 1786, Anthony Rutgers’ [Sr.] daughter Mary Barclay (1723-1788), widow of Rev. Henry Barclay (1712-1764), rector of Trinity Church, sold part of her interest in the Rutgers estate to a group of investors. The following year she conveyed the remainder of the property to her son Anthony Barclay (1755-1805).⁷ This comprised sixty lots, measuring approximately 100' x 25', and included the lots facing Broadway adjoining the hospital grounds. Barclay sold many of the lots in the 1790s and early 1800s.⁸ The remaining lots were leased.

Around 1800, the city government began a number of improvement projects in the vicinity of Barclay’s property. Between 1795 and 1798, the hill at Barley [Duane] Street was leveled and Broadway was regulated as far north as Canal Street. By 1810, most of the cross streets below Canal Street were laid out. Health concerns about pollution in the Collect Pond and the disease-breeding marshy land surrounding it led the city to purchase the pond from the Rutgers family in 1791; the city began draining the swamps in 1798 and began filling in the pond in 1803. The historic Commons was improved by the construction of a new almshouse in 1797 (demolished) and City Hall in 1802-11 (Joseph F. Mangin and John Macomb, Jr., architects, a designated New York City Landmark). New York Hospital, which had been severely damaged by fire in 1775 and had been used as a barracks by Hessian and British troops during the Revolutionary War, was renovated and began receiving patients in 1791. Set back from the street, it was surrounded by landscaped grounds that were open to the public.⁹ Initially, the neighborhood north of City Hall was built up with modest two-and-one-half- and three-and-one-half-story brick or frame structures in the Federal style.¹⁰

In the 1820s and 1830s, wealthy New Yorkers displaced by the expansion of banks and other financial institutions in the previously residential Wall Street area began moving to Broadway and the surrounding side streets opposite City Hall Park and to the blocks to the north that formerly had been part of the Trinity Church and Rutgers family holdings. This residential neighborhood was served by several churches including Christ Church (PE) at 79-85 Worth Street (1822, demolished) and Broadway Tabernacle (Congregational) on Worth Street, east of Broadway (1835-36, demolished). The concentration of wealth in the neighborhood soon attracted theaters, hotels, and shops, including Entwisle & Bowne, a store selling linens, ribbons, silks, gloves, etc., which occupied the first story of a residential building at 311 Broadway in 1820 (replaced by this building).¹¹

The A. T. Stewart Store and the Development of the Broadway Commercial District¹²

Alexander Turney Stewart, an Irish immigrant who became one of New York's wealthiest merchants, opened his first store at 283 Broadway in 1823, selling Irish lace and notions. As his business expanded Stewart moved to increasingly larger quarters on Broadway opposite City Hall Park. In 1845 he acquired a site at Broadway and Reade Street, and began construction of a new store building that eventually occupied the entire block front between Chambers and Reade Streets. The new A.T. Stewart store was the largest retail establishment in the city and employed a novel arrangement in which different categories of merchandise were separated into individual departments, setting a precedent for the development of the American department store. Designed by Joseph Trench and John Butler Snook, the A.T. Stewart Store introduced a new architectural mode to New York based on the palaces of the Italian Renaissance. While most early nineteenth-century commercial buildings had brick and stone facades, the Stewart store was faced with marble above a cast-iron store front with huge plate glass windows. Almost immediately, Stewart's new marble palace became the favored store of New Yorkers and visitors alike. Imitators soon followed and, within a few years, Broadway and its side streets from City Hall Park to Canal Street became lined with marble, brownstone, and cast-iron commercial palaces. Commenting on this change in 1852, *Gleason's Pictorial* noted:

The entire length of Broadway seems to have measured for a new suit of marble and freestone – six and seven story buildings going up on its whole, of most magnificent elegance in style. ... Indeed public and private buildings are going up in all directions... with Aladin-like splendor and celerity.

Today the 311 Broadway Building is one of the few remaining commercial palaces modeled on the Stewart store on Broadway south of Franklin Street.

Improvements in Transportation and the Emergence of a New Wholesale Dry Goods District¹³

As the new retail district began to develop on Broadway in the late 1840s and 1850s, the wholesale dry goods merchants who had been located on Pearl Street near the South Street Seaport began to move their businesses to Broadway and the blocks to the west between Dey Street and Park Place. To a large extent this move was prompted by the growing popularity of the North (Hudson River) piers, which were better able to accommodate the large steam-powered vessels used for coastal and transatlantic shipping. Two major railroads established freight depots in the area during the 1850s and several other railroads built terminals in New Jersey where goods were off-loaded for transshipment across the river to the West Side piers. In addition, the New York & Erie Railroad, then the longest railroad in the country, extending from Lake Erie to Piermont-on-Hudson, in Rockland County, operated a ferry service from Piermont to a large depot at the foot of Duane Street which was constructed in 1851. According to historian Carl Condit:

The nearly simultaneous openings of the New York and Erie and the Hudson River railroads, in addition to the presence of the relatively long-established Erie Canal, gave New York City an immediate and overwhelming advantage over Philadelphia and Baltimore... In the year 1858, for example, the total of rail freight carried into the New York port area exceeded the combined total for Baltimore and Philadelphia by 141,000 tons.¹⁴

This increase in trade and relocation of transportation facilities coincided with a city project in 1851 widening Dey and Cortlandt Streets between Broadway and Greenwich Street that made large tracts of cleared land available for redevelopment. Within the space of two years, Dey and Cortlandt Streets were almost entirely rebuilt with store-and-loft buildings for wholesale dry goods businesses and similar buildings were going up on Park Place, Vesey Street, and Church Street. According to the *Daily Tribune*, "forthwith commenced a most astonishing migration. [The] whole mercantile community seemed to have woke from a long sleep."¹⁵ Over the next twenty years the wholesale dry goods trade continued to move northward into the blocks west and north of City Hall Park where merchants could take advantage of the new transportation facilities in the area. In 1857, the important dry-goods importing firm George Bliss & Co. (later Dunham Buckley & Co.) purchased the site at the southeast corner of Broadway and Worth Street formerly occupied by Broadway Tabernacle and erected a large building which was entirely occupied by the firm. In 1861, H. B. Claffin & Co., the most successful dry goods firm in the country, moved from Pearl Street to 40 Worth, occupying the northern half of the block bounded by Worth, Thomas, and Church Streets and West Broadway. In 1862, A.T. Stewart, who had become increasingly involved in the wholesale trade, moved his retail business to a new cast-iron store building on Broadway near Astor Place (1859-62, King & Kellum, demolished) and devoted his downtown store entirely to wholesale trade. Textile houses from other cities, including Parker Wilder & Co. of Boston and Woodward, Baldwin & Co. of Baltimore, began opening branch showrooms in the Worth Street area. According to Frank Walton, whose book *Tomahawks to Textiles* details the history of Worth Street as a center of the textile trade, it was from that time forward that "Worth Street crystallized as the primary mill-agency market in the United States."¹⁶

Construction and Early Occupants

The 311 Broadway Building is located on the west side of Broadway between Duane and Thomas Streets. There was a building on this site as early as 1798¹⁷ and by 1808 it contained a commercial ground story housing a porter-house and residences at the upper stories.¹⁸ The building and its neighbor at 311 ½ Broadway had a series of owners and tenants before being purchased in 1856 by John Stewart, Jr. (1814-1901) and Daniel Jackson Stewart¹⁹ (1816-1898) from Joseph Kernochan.²⁰ The present building replaced the two four-story buildings at 311 and 311 ½ Broadway and was constructed as a speculative investment by the Stewards c. 1856-57.²¹ John Stewart, Jr. and Daniel Jackson Stewart were sons of John Stewart (1777-1854), a prominent New York merchant. The Stewart family was associated with New York City and Goshen, New York. In the 1790 and 1800 U.S. Census there is no John Stewart in Goshen but there is a John Stewart who had enslaved persons in his household; in the 1810 U.S. there are two John Stewards (but no John Stewart) in Goshen, one had enslaved persons in his household and the other did not; and in the 1820 U.S. Census, there is a John Stewart (but no John Stewart) in Goshen who had enslaved persons in his household. There also were several John Stewarts living in Manhattan according to the 1790, 1810 and 1820 U.S. Census and one in the 1800 U.S. Census and there was one John Stewart living in Manhattan according to the 1820 Census.

Daniel Jackson Steward was a founding member and vice-president of the American Museum of Natural History, to which he gave his large collection of shells, comprising some of the largest and rarest specimens in the world. According to his obituary, he was not engaged in active business.²² Early tenants of the building included the importing firms of C. F. van Blanketeyn and Linnemann de Griefff & Co., which occupied the building in the 1860s.²³

In February of 1872, the well-known scale manufacturer, Fairbanks & Co. relocated from 252 Broadway to No. 311. The company, which was founded in 1830, had a large manufacturing concern in St. Johnsbury, Vermont and had warehouses in major cities throughout the country, Montreal, Canada and London, England.²⁴ Due to an increase in business, they required additional display room and moved to a “spacious and elegant store” at 311 Broadway, which provided them with “ample facilities both for storage and the display of samples.”²⁵ Fairbanks remained in the building until the end of the century. While Fairbanks was still a tenant, Daniel Jackson Steward and his wife Mary Anna Steward sold the building to William Waldorf Astor in 1887.²⁶ The notice in *The World* stated that the building was sold for \$220,000 and that it was “a five-story marble-front structure occupied by the Fairbanks Scale Company. The annual rent bill is \$18,000.”²⁷

The Astor family had extensive real estate holdings in Manhattan. John Jacob Astor I (1763-1848), a German immigrant, was at the time of his death the wealthiest man in America; his wealth, originally accumulated in the fur and China trades, was largely concentrated in New York City real estate after 1834.²⁸ Successive major inheritors of the Astor fortune were William Backhouse Astor I (1792-1875), John Jacob Astor III (1822-1890), and William Waldorf Astor (1848-1919). The latter Astor ventured, for a time, into politics; he was elected to the New York Assembly (1877) and Senate (1879), and was appointed Minister to Italy by President Chester Arthur in 1882. After a period as a writer, Astor became the manager of the family estate upon his father’s death in 1890, and had a personal worth estimated at \$100 million. He immediately removed his family to England, expressing a distaste for the United States; he became a British subject in 1899 and eventually was made a baron, then viscount. Despite his residence in England, Astor was responsible for the construction of a number of lavish hotels and apartment buildings in New York City and had substantial real estate holdings (worth an estimated \$66 million in 1916), which included the 311 Broadway Building.²⁹

Design and Construction³⁰

The 311 Broadway Building is a distinguished example of the palazzo mode, introduced in New York by Trench and Snook with their design for the A. T. Stewart Store. Inspired by the early sixteenth-century Renaissance palaces of Florence and Rome, the palazzo mode had been introduced in England by Sir Charles Barry in his designs for the Travelers’ Club House (1829-31) and Reform Club (1837-41) in London and the Athenaeum (1837-39) in Manchester, a center of the English textile industry. The design of the Athenaeum stimulated the interest of Manchester’s cotton merchants who envisioned themselves as modern-day merchant princes and who wanted impressive exteriors for their warehouses, which served as the principal seat of their wholesale businesses. Within two years, Manchester had its first commercial building in the style, the Mosley Street Warehouse (1839-40, Edward Walters). In the 1840s and 1850s, the palazzo style was adopted in cities across Britain for store-and-loft buildings, such as those in London’s Faringdon Street North and New Coventry Street (both mid-1840s), which featured stuccoed facades and glassy iron-framed shopfronts. A.T. Stewart, who made frequent buying trips to England, would have been familiar with these buildings. Trench and Snook may have

seen illustrations of the Manchester warehouses and certainly would have known about the Barry clubs.

Following the opening of the A.T. Stewart Store, the palazzo mode was adopted for a number of different commercial building types, notably the numerous new store-and-loft buildings that proliferated in the neighborhood north of Chambers Street. Many followed the Stewart store model, employing a first-story storefront composed of engaged cast-iron columns and pilasters supporting an entablature and a four-story upper section faced with marble or stone. The upper stories of these buildings were based on Roman and Florentine models and were framed by quoins or paneled pilasters and had rectangular window openings embellished with molded surrounds and lintels, stringcourses separating the stories, and a heavy bracketed and/or modillioned cornice.

Broadway was once the city's most prestigious business and shopping street, and while a number of store-and-loft buildings from that era have been preserved on the side streets west of the boulevard within the Tribeca Historic Districts, few such buildings survive on Broadway itself south of Franklin Street.

Subsequent History

Although William Waldorf Astor's heirs started selling some of his real estate holdings soon after his death in 1919, the estate owned 311 Broadway for 61 years.³¹ During that time several prominent tenants occupied the building including the L.C. Smith & Brothers Typewriter Company, a manufacturer of typewriters (c. 1910-1917), Eugene H. Towers, Inc., a stationer (c. 1919-1955) and David T. Abercrombie Company, a sporting goods outfitter (c. 1909-1945). Lyman Cornelius Smith (1850-1910) engaged in the livestock commission business and gun manufacturing before organizing the Smith Premier Typewriter Company in 1890 in Syracuse, New York. After this company merged with another typewriter company, Smith and his three brothers severed ties with it and formed the L.C. Smith & Brothers Typewriter Company in 1903. The company merged with Corona Typewriter to form the Smith Corona Company in 1926.³² The David T. Abercrombie Company was established in downtown Manhattan in 1892 by Colonel David T. Abercrombie (1867-1931), an engineer, topographer and inventor. The firm was a leading manufacturer and retailer of sporting goods whose clients included Antarctic explorer Admiral Richard E. Byrd, Presidents Taft, Harding, T. Roosevelt, Wilson, Hoover and Eisenhower, and fliers Charles A. Lindbergh and Amelia Earhart.³³

In 1948, the Astor estate sold the building to Hagstrom Company, Inc.,³⁴ a well-known map-making, art and photography company that appears to be the first owner to occupy 311 Broadway. After Hagstrom's sold the building in 1969,³⁵ the building has had several owners, none of whom appear to have occupied the building, and tenants, including the New York City Department of Health at the upper stories (c. 1980-1993) and Lincoln Card and Gift store (c. 1986-1993).³⁶

The building is no longer used entirely for retail and commercial uses as the upper stories were converted to residential use in 1999 with commercial and retail uses only remaining at the basement and first story.³⁷

Description

A fine example of the commercial palace type, the 311 Broadway Building has a richly embellished stone façade. The upper stories are framed by quoins and regularly placed square-headed window openings are distinguished by molded stone surrounds with projecting lintels and sills. Recessed panels are set beneath the second story-windows and continuous sill courses run

beneath the second- and fifth-story windows. The sills at the third through fifth stories are bracketed. On the second, third and fourth stories the lintel moldings break forward over rectangular frieze panels. Recessed panels are also set between the ornate console brackets which support the building's projecting cornice. The ground floor has been altered with modern commercial storefront infill but the original molded stone cornice separating it from the upper stories remains intact.³⁸ There is modern aluminum sash and panning at the upper story windows and it appears that the upper stories have been painted.

Report prepared by
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NOTES

¹ This section is taken almost in its entirety from New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, 325-333 *Broadway Building Designation Report*, prepared by Gale Harris (LP-2112), (New York: City of New York, 2002).

² This first paragraph is taken almost in its entirety from New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, *Noho Historic District Extension Designation Report*, prepared by Marianne S. Percival and Kathryn Horak (LP-2287), (New York: City of New York, 2008), 6.

³ No evidence was found that Jan Jansen Damen had enslaved persons in his household; however, a primary source for slave ownership information is the census records, and he died in 1651 prior to the first existing census for Manhattan.

⁴ New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, *African Burial Ground and The Commons Historic District Designation Report*, prepared by Gale Harris, Jean Howson and Betsy Bradley (LP-1901), (New York: City of New York, 1993), 10.

⁵ According to the 1703 Census of New York City, there was one Negro female in Anthony Rutgers' household; the census does not state whether she was an enslaved or free person. His will dated August 2, 1764 left his widow, Cornelia, if she remarried two Negroes and 50 pounds for the rest of her life. *The Abstract of Wills on File in the Surrogate's Office, City of New York*, vol. IV, 1744-1753, 91-92. Cornelia Rutgers ran an advertisement in *The New-York Gazette* on October 8, 1750 for a runaway slave named Hector requesting his return if he should be found.

⁶ No evidence was found that the grandson Anthony Rutgers, Mary or Henry Barclay had enslaved persons in their households; however, a primary source for slave ownership information is the census records and there is no existing census for Manhattan between 1703 and 1790.

⁷ There is no evidence that Anthony Barclay had enslaved persons in his household; however, he does not appear in the 1790 or 1800 U.S. Census.

⁸ In 1797, Barclay sold lots 29 (313-315 Broadway) and 31 (311 Broadway) to Andrew Paff. New York County, Office of the Register, Liber Deeds and Conveyances, Liber 55, page 471.

⁹ In 1806, a second building was constructed at the southern end of the hospital grounds to treat insane patients.

¹⁰ *Elliot's Improved Double Directory* of 1812, which lists residents alphabetically and by address, indicates that the building on the 311 Broadway Building site was occupied by Charles Fleet, a hair dresser; and the building's owner, Andrew Paff, was a butcher located at 90 Bayard Street.

¹¹ Advertisements in the *Evening Post* on May 16, 1820 and July 13, 1821. James Van Benschoten, a merchant, lived with his family in the building in 1817. *Columbian*, July 3, 1817; *Rodes Directory* 1817-1818.

¹² This section is taken almost in its entirety from 325-333 *Broadway Building Designation Report*.

¹³ This section is taken almost in its entirety from 325-333 *Broadway Building Designation Report*.

¹⁴ Carl W. Condit, *The Port of New York City* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1980), v. 1, 59.

¹⁵ *Daily Tribune*, quoted in Charles Lockwood, *Manhattan Moves Uptown* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1976), 100.

¹⁶ Frank L. Walton, *Tomahawks to Textiles: The Fabulous Story of Worth Street* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1953), 103.

¹⁷ A woman offering services as a wet nurse placed in an advertisement in the *New York Gazette* on April 25, 1798 (page 3).

¹⁸ NYC Department of Finance, tax assessment records, 1808; *Commercial Advertiser*, November 17, 1809; 1810 *Longworth Directory*.

¹⁹ The Stewards were brothers and their last name sometimes appears as Stewart. In 1874, John Steward conveyed his one-half interest in the building to Daniel Jackson Steward. Liber 1273, page 397.

²⁰ Liber 706, page 380.

²¹ NYC tax assessment records, 1856-58.

²² "Death List of a Day: Daniel Jackson Steward," *New York Times*, February 10, 1898, 7. Although his obituary states that that he was not engaged in active business, the 1870 U.S. Census lists his occupation as a retired merchant. Further information about John Steward, Jr. could not be found because the name is so common.

²³ 1864 engraving of Broadway by A. Tallis reproduced in *Tomahawks to Textiles*.

²⁴ "Fairbanks & Co., 311 Broadway," *New York Times*, October 28, 1874, 5.

²⁵ Classified advertisement, *New York Times*, March 9, 1872, 8.

²⁶ Liber 2060, page 417.

²⁷ *The World*, May 1, 1887, 31. According to the notice of sale in the *Homes News* on April 29, 1887 (page 8), Fairbanks made all repairs to the building.

²⁸ According to the 1800 and 1810 U.S. Census, John Jacob Astor did not have any enslaved persons in his household.

²⁹ This information about the Astor family is taken almost in its entirety from New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, *Graham Court Apartments Designation Report*, prepared by Jay Shockley (LP-1254), (New York: City of New York, 1984).

³⁰ This section is taken almost in its entirety from 325-333 *Broadway Building Designation Report*.

³¹ "Astor's Heirs Sold \$21,073,983 Realty Here in Five Years," *New York Times*, May 17, 1925, 1. The bulk of his estate in this country was held in two deeds of trusts executed by him shortly before his death for his two sons, Waldorf Astor and John Jacob Astor.

³² "Lyman C. Smith Dead," *New York Times*, November 6, 1910, 13; *The National Cyclopedia of American Biography* (N.Y.: James T. White & Company, 1910), 490.

³³ “D.T. Abercrombie, Sportsman, is Dead,” New York Times, August 30, 1931, N6; Robert McG. Thomas, Jr., “An Old Sport, Abercrombie & Fitch Says It Must Close Historic Doors,” New York Times, November 14, 1977, 37. Abercrombie formed a partnership with one of his clients, Ezra H. Fitch; although the two ceased to be partners in 1912, Fitch continued in business under the name Abercrombie and Fitch. In 1917, that business moved from downtown Manhattan to Madison Avenue and 45th Street.

³⁴ Liber 4583, page 219.

³⁵ Liber 159, page 1105.

³⁶ New York Telephone Company Manhattan Address Directories.

³⁷ NYC Department of Buildings, Certificate of Occupancy No. 117123 dated May 28, 1999.

³⁸ It is possible that the historic ground story piers are concealed by the modern storefront infill.

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 311 Broadway Building has a special character and a special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage, and culture characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, this distinguished commercial building was erected c. 1856-57 by John and Daniel Jackson Steward; that the building is a fine example of Italian Renaissance-inspired commercial palaces that flourished from the 1850s through the 1870s in the former wholesale textile and dry goods district of lower Manhattan; that in the mid-nineteenth century, Broadway was the city's most prestigious business and shopping street, lined with commercial palaces; that clad in stone, the building is articulated with a restrained design employing symmetrical square-headed windows with stone surrounds at the upper stories; that today, few mid-nineteenth century commercial palaces have survived on Broadway south of Franklin Street, making the 311 Broadway Building a rare survivor; that constructed during a period when Worth Street emerged as a center of the wholesale textile trade in the United States, the 311 Broadway Building is a significant reminder of New York's mercantile history; that early tenants included two importing firms, and then the well-known scale manufacturing company, Fairbanks and Company; that William Waldorf Astor, one of the largest landowners in New York City, and then his estate owned the building for 64 years; and that prominent twentieth century tenants included L.C. Smith & Brothers Typewriter Company, David T. Abercrombie Company, and Hagstrom Company.

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 311 Broadway Building, 311 Broadway, Borough of Manhattan, and designated Manhattan Tax Map Block 151, Lot 31, as its Landmark Site.

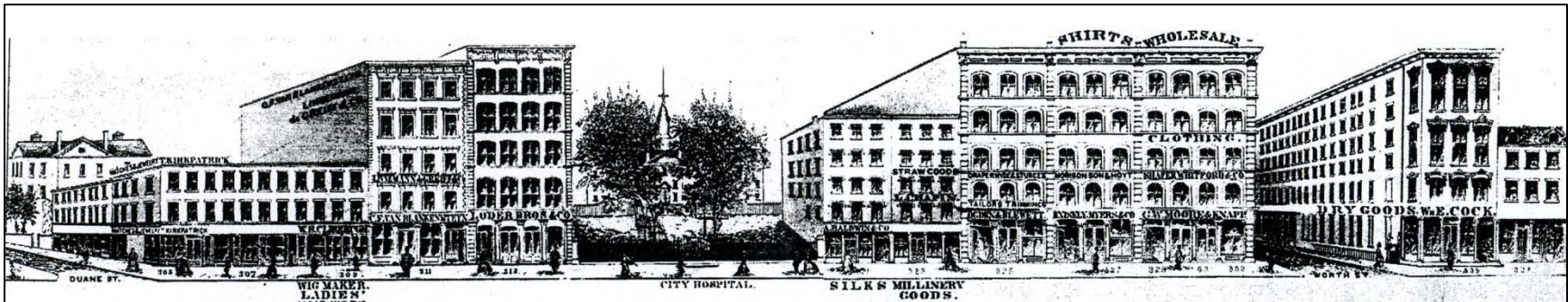
Robert B. Tierney, Chair
Pablo E. Vengoechea, Vice-Chair
Stephen F. Byrns, Joan Gerner, Christopher Moore,
Margery Perlmutter, Elizabeth Ryan, Roberta Washington, Commissioners



311 Broadway
Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2009



311 Broadway
Details of the cornice, quoins and window surrounds
Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2010



Broadway (west side) between Duane and Worth Streets, 1864
 Source: 1864 engravings by A. Tallis reprinted in *Tomahawks to Textiles* by Frank L. Walton
 (N.Y.: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1953)

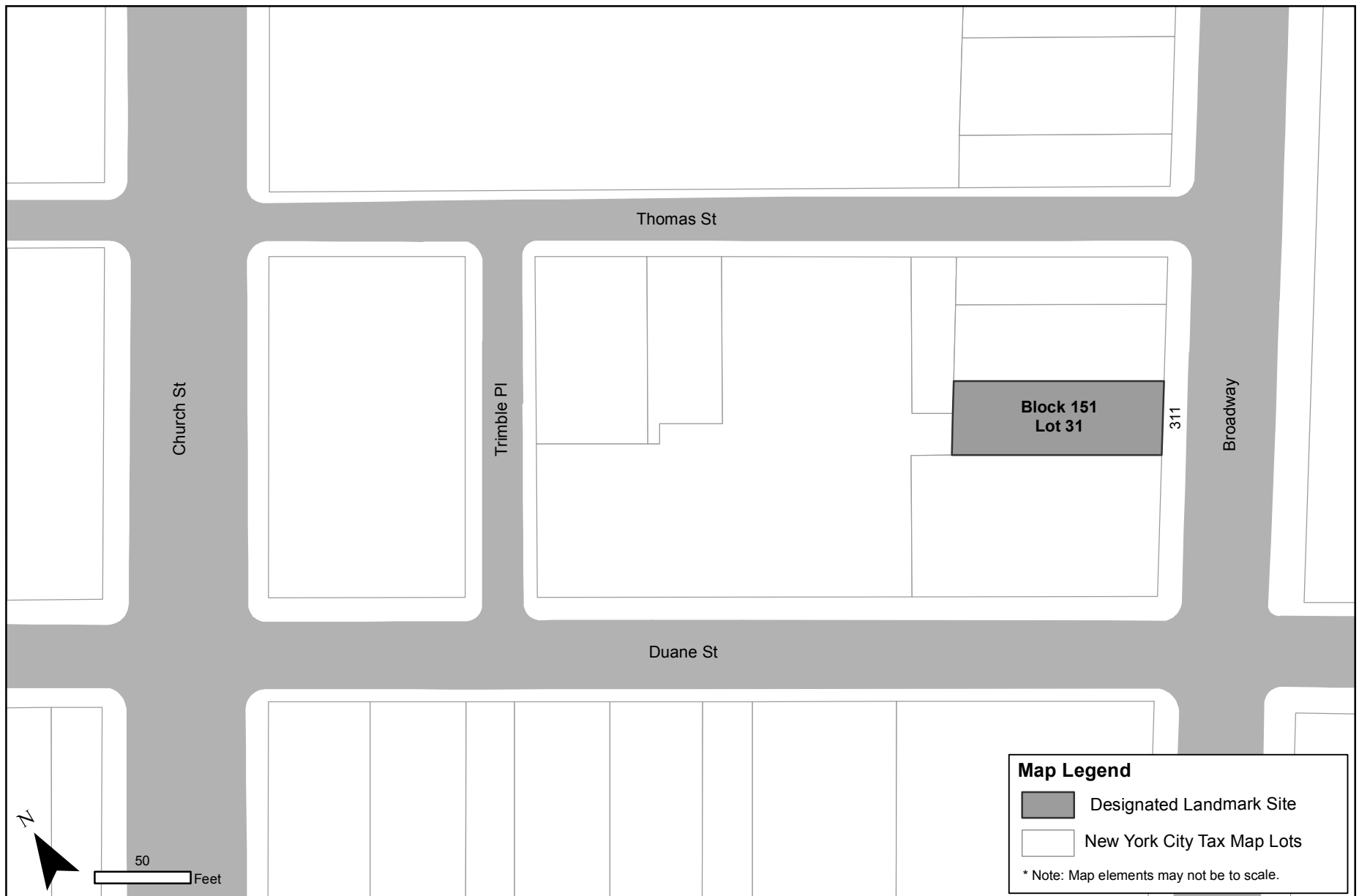


Broadway (west side) between Chambers and Thomas Streets, 1899
 Source: *A Pictorial Description of Broadway* by the Mail & Express (N.Y.: Mail & Express, 1899)
 Image courtesy of the New York Public Library (Digital Image ID 1627854)



Broadway (west side) between Duane and Thomas Street, 1910

Source: *Both Sides of Broadway from Bowling Green to Central Park, New York* compiled by
Rudolph M. De Leeuw (N.Y.: De Leeuw Riehl Publishing Company, 1910)



311 BROADWAY BUILDING (LP-2343), 311 Broadway.
 Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan, Tax Map Block 151, Lot 31.

Designated: January 12, 2010