

826 Broadway Building

(now the Strand Building)



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LOCATION

Borough of Manhattan
826 Broadway

(aka 826-828 Broadway; 57-63 East 12th
Street)

LANDMARK TYPE

Individual

SIGNIFICANCE

826 Broadway is an eleven-story store and loft building designed by William H. Birkmire in 1902. The building's intact Renaissance Revival facade and steel skeleton-frame construction exemplify the stylistic character and technological advances in skyscraper architecture at the time it was built, and it has housed the internationally-known Strand Bookstore for over 60 years.



826 Broadway, 1910
Museum of the City of New York

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Lisa Kersavage, Executive Director
Mark Silberman, General Counsel
Kate Lemos McHale, Director of Research
Cory Herrala, Director of Preservation

REPORT BY

Margaret Herman, Research Department

EDITED BY

Kate Lemos McHale

PHOTOGRAPHS BY

Sarah Moses

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826 Broadway Building (now the Strand Building)

826 Broadway (aka 826-828 Broadway; 57-63 East 12th Street), Manhattan

Designation List 512 LP-2615

Built: 1902

Architect: William H. Birkmire

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan, Tax Map Block 564, Lot 34

Calendared: September 25, 2018

Public Hearings: December 4, 2018; February 19, 2019

On September 25, 2018 the Landmarks Preservation Commission calendared the 826 Broadway Building (now the Strand Building) as part of a cluster of buildings on Broadway between East 12th and East 13th Streets, identified based on individual merit and elevated by the intact historic character of the group.

On December 4, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the 826 Broadway Building (now the Strand Building) as a New York City Landmark, and on the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 3). The hearing was duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of the law. Twelve people testified in favor of the proposed designation, including representatives of the Historic Districts Council, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, the Society for the Architecture of the City, the Greenwich Village Society of Historic Preservation,

and the East Village Community Coalition, and seven individuals.¹ Twelve people spoke in opposition to the proposed designation, including the building's owner. The Commission received five written submissions in support of the proposed designation, including submissions from Councilmember Carlina Rivera, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, State Senators Brad Hoylman and Liz Kreuger, and State Assemblymember Deborah Glick, and from the Municipal Art Society of New York and the Victorian Society of New York. The Commission received three written submissions in opposition to designation.

On February 19, 2019, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a second public hearing on the proposed designation of the 826 Broadway Building (now the Strand Building) as a New York City Landmark, and on the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 1). The hearing was duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of the law. Seven people testified in favor of the proposed designation, including Councilmember Carlina Rivera, representatives of the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation, the Historic Districts Council, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, and the Victorian Society of New York, and two individuals. One individual testified with an unclear opinion. Fourteen people testified in opposition to the proposed designation, including the building's owner. The Commission received 53 written submissions in support of the proposed designation, including from representatives of the Alliance for a Human-Scale City, Bowery Alliance of Neighbors, Carnegie Hill Neighbors, East Village Community Coalition, Friends of the Lower East Side, Friends of the Upper East Side, Landmarks 50+ Alliance, and the Murray Hill Neighborhood Association. The Commission received one letter from the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The Commission received 76

written submissions in opposition to the proposed designation, as well as one petition containing approximately 6,600 signatures.²

Summary

826 Broadway Building (now the Strand Building)

826 Broadway is an eleven-story store and loft building developed by the National Realty Company and designed by William H. Birkmire in 1902. The building is significant architecturally for its intact Renaissance Revival facade that stretches around a corner site and for its steel skeleton-frame construction, features that exemplify the stylistic character and technological advances in skyscraper architecture at the time it was built. In addition, 826 Broadway is culturally significant as the home of the Strand Bookstore since 1956, and historical association with the garment industry in the early 20th century.

826 Broadway was constructed during a period of large-scale commercial development on Broadway just south of Union Square. This development was initiated as the introduction of elevators, electricity and steel framing around the turn of the century made the construction of tall buildings more cost effective. The surge of new building north of the traditional loft districts of Lower Manhattan made rents more affordable for the garment manufacturing and wholesale companies that moved into the buildings on this stretch of Broadway. Garment factories such as those that populated 826 Broadway in the early 20th century were a major employer of New York City's working class and immigrant women, and the industry became an important sphere through which their advocacy on issues such as labor rights and suffrage emerged.

After primarily housing garment industry tenants for its first decades, in 1956 the Strand

Bookstore moved into the ground floor of 826 Broadway from its previous location on Fourth Avenue's "book row," eventually expanding to three floors of retail and two floors of offices. The bookstore's presence has long marked the building, with its large, trademark, red and white signage, including large storefront signage, banners and an awning that covers the entire ground floor, making it stand out in the streetscape. The Strand became a center of literary life in Lower Manhattan and is an internationally recognized bookstore and destination for New Yorkers and visitors alike. The company purchased the 826 Broadway building in 1996, cementing the store's reputation as a neighborhood institution.

826 Broadway's first three stories are clad in limestone, with thick piers and ribbon capitals. The upper stories are clad in brick with limestone and terra-cotta Renaissance details, including wreaths and garlands, and are topped by a heavy projecting metal cornice at the roof. The building footprint is an irregularly shaped trapezoid, with the narrowest part of the building facing Broadway, and the widest part facing East 12th Street. The decorative features are identical on both facades.

The building's architect William H. Birkmire was a prominent designer of steel-framed structures in New York City. Born in Philadelphia in 1860, Birkmire studied with Samuel Sloan before moving to New York City in 1885 to work for local ironworks companies. Birkmire became a well-known expert on the engineering aspects of design, establishing his own architecture practice in the mid-1890s. Ten of his works are New York City landmarks, including large warehouses and an office building in the Tribeca North, East, and West Historic Districts, loft buildings in the Ladies' Mile Historic District, an apartment building in the West End-Collegiate Historic District Extension, and the

Tremont Baptist Church in the Bronx, a designated individual landmark.

Located on a highly visible corner site just south of Union Square, emblazoned with identifying Strand signage and with its intact Renaissance Revival facade, 826 Broadway is a notable example of the commercial architecture built in New York at the turn of the 20th century, significant as the home of the Strand Bookstore for more than 60 years, and an important reminder of the neighborhood's historic role as a center of the book trade in New York City.

Building Description

826 Broadway Building (now the Strand Building)

Description

826 Broadway is an eleven-story store-and-loft building designed by William H. Birkmire in the Renaissance Revival style in 1902. Situated on the corner of Broadway and East 12th Street, the building has an irregular trapezoidal shape, on a lot measuring approximately 43 by 154 feet.

The building's lower three stories are clad in limestone, while the upper stories are clad in brick with limestone and terra-cotta details. The building is organized into three parts, including a three-story base, a five-story shaft, and a three-story decorative crown with a heavy projecting metal cornice. The two visible facades have identical decoration, and are organized into vertical bays, which are subdivided by thick piers running from the base to the roof cornice. These piers are intersected horizontally above the second, third, eighth, and tenth stories by additional projecting cornices that stretch around the building. The Strand's large awning also stretches around both facades at the ground floor and animates the sidewalks outside the building with book browsing.

The building's roof contains stair bulkheads, HVAC equipment, and skylights that are not visible from the street.

Broadway (West) Facade

The west facade facing Broadway has two three-windowed bays. At the base, non-load-bearing stone piers originally ran from the first through the third stories, although only the leftmost pier remains fully intact; the middle and the rightmost (corner) pier at the first story were replaced in the late 1920s by steel

beams for structural reasons after nearby subway construction. In 2018, these steel beams were covered with a limestone veneer to match the extant piers. The piers are interrupted by ribbon capitals and a projecting dentilled cornice above the second story. The third story continues the rusticated limestone cladding but is topped by a simpler projecting cornice with no dentils. On the second story, the windows in each bay are framed by two plain stone pilasters with scroll-like capitals, while on the third story the windows are framed by thin rusticated limestone piers that mimic the thicker ones that frame the building's vertical bays.

The main building entrance within the left bay at the first story consists of limestone pilasters topped by a projecting rectangular pediment. The pilaster capitals and the pediment are lined with elaborate floral motifs and egg-and-dart molding typical of the Renaissance Revival style. Within the entryway, the doors are topped with a glass transom, and a second stone transom with number plate. The rest of the storefront facing Broadway consists of glass-paned show windows and a glass-paned entrance near the East 12th Street corner, all of which are modern replacements.

The next five stories of the building are clad in brick with terra-cotta decoration, including wreaths positioned in the center of each bay, and egg-and-dart molding lining each grouping of three windows. The thick brick piers that frame each bay in this section have limestone bases and paired Ionic scroll capitals at the eighth story, which sit underneath an additional projecting stone cornice. The windows on the eighth story are topped with splayed stone lintels. The brick piers are five-stories tall and act like a giant order, enhancing the building's verticality.

On the ninth through eleventh stories, delicately detailed garlands are positioned in between the floors. Two-story-tall fluted pilasters in this

section are topped with Corinthian-style capitals. The uppermost segment of the building consists of one more story; here the brick piers have Renaissance style wreaths set within them, and extravagant floral decoration lines the underside of the window frames. The monumental metal cornice with dentils and modillions projects over the building and creates a sense of grandeur in the streetscape.

Alterations

Since the building's earliest history, extensive ground floor changes have been made. The Strand has continued to make changes to the ground floor associated with its use as a bookstore, including to the storefronts and signage.

The main building entrance and doors were replaced c. 1905-1912; two steel beams on the ground floor facing Broadway replaced historic stone piers c. 1928; the ground-floor retail entrance and storefronts were installed c. 1946; and bird spikes and a flagpole were attached to the facade c. 1940 and 1990, respectively.

Since 2002, the building's facade was repaired and repointed; all windows on the second through fifth floor were replaced; a second flag pole was attached to facade; and a new awning stretching around the building was installed. At the time of designation, repair work was underway at the ground-floor retail entry and storefronts; this work includes covering the previously visible steel beams with a limestone veneer to match the building's extant stone piers.

East 12th Street (South) Facade

The south facade facing East 12th Street has seven three-windowed bays, and one two-windowed bay. The decoration of the south facade is identical to that of the east facade. With the exception of the leftmost (corner) pier, all of the piers on the East 12th Street

facade run from base to cornice, and are clad in limestone on the first three stories and brick above.

Alterations

The East 12th Street side entrance was replaced c. 1905; the ground-floor storefronts were installed c. 1946. Since 2002, the building's facade was repaired and repointed, and all windows on the second through fifth floor were replaced. The ground-floor windows along this facade are covered in order to limit sunlight to the interior bookstore.

East Facade

This painted brick elevation is undeveloped and is only partially visible. It has several projecting HVAC pipes along the middle part of the facade.

History and Significance

826 Broadway Building (now the Strand Building)

Early History of Broadway South of Union Square

Over the course of the 19th century, the corner of Broadway and East 12th Street closely followed the history of SoHo and NoHo, the neighborhoods situated immediately south and north of Houston Street. At first a fashionable residential district lined with lavish Federal and Greek Revival style residences built in the 1830s, by the middle part of the century, Broadway in these neighborhoods increasingly became commercial, filled with an increasing number of warehouse and “store-and-loft” buildings.³ The store-and-loft building type originated in the early nineteenth century as merchants and real estate speculators began to build structures in Manhattan specifically to satisfy the commercial needs of a growing city, which was then developing into the country’s major port and trading center. On Broadway, this growth followed a northward pattern, with commercial development supplanting residential areas that were reestablished even farther to the north.

By the 1850s, Manhattan’s “dry goods” district, which included the garment industry, was approaching the section of Broadway north of Houston Street. High rents for commercial and industrial space along Broadway produced the right economic climate for the construction of larger buildings.⁴ Many textile and garment businesses, including manufacturers of silk, wool, cotton, hosiery, underwear, knitted goods, and furs began to congregate on Broadway, as did printing and

publishing houses, jobbing houses, retail specialty houses, and the offices serving these firms.

The consolidation of Greater New York City took place in 1898. That year, the Real Estate Record and Guide detected signs of a real estate slump due to overbuilding in the mercantile district along Broadway from Murray to 14th Streets, but following consolidation, this section of Broadway quickly recovered as the city experienced economic growth and a city-wide building boom.⁵ Rents and property values increased, and the construction of new loft buildings continued through the early years of the 20th century, with additional textile dealers and garment makers moving into the blocks closest to Union Square.

The scale and density of Broadway between Astor Place and Union Square substantially increased from the 1890s to 1910. New construction technologies, such as iron and steel interior framing, curtain wall construction, and improved passenger and freight elevators allowed for buildings that were taller and more fire-resistant, and with more flexible interior spaces, than those in SoHo and NoHo. Many of the buildings on Broadway surpassed ten stories or more, and took up larger sites that sometimes comprised multiple historical tax lots.⁶

Their taller and wider facades became more complex in design, usually organized into modular bays with a tripartite division of a one- or two-story base, multi-story mid-section or shaft, and one- or two-story top or crown. Typically, ornamentation was classically-inspired, influenced by the successful World's Columbian Exposition (1893) in Chicago and the popular City Beautiful, Beaux Arts, and Renaissance Revival movements.⁷ This formula provided a sense of order to facades involving so many windows, piers, spandrels, and mullions. Many of the buildings took advantage of corner sites, with two fully articulated facades, as at 826 Broadway. These large buildings with classical details establish

the unifying streetscapes that characterize Broadway and East 12th Street today.

Development History of 826-828 Broadway

On its completion in 1902, 826 Broadway was the last of the large store-and-loft buildings constructed on the east side of Broadway between 12th and 13th streets over the previous decade. The building replaced several structures dating from the 1830s to the 1850s, including no. 828 Broadway, a six-story cast-iron-fronted loft building, no. 826 Broadway, a five-story row house converted to commercial use, and no. 61 and no. 63 East 12th Street, which were five- and four-story warehouse buildings.⁸

In 1895, Albert Joske purchased the L-shaped property comprising no. 828 Broadway and no. 63 East 12th Street, while Jacob Hirsh acquired the corner sites of no. 826 Broadway and no. 61 East 12th Street, for approximately \$285,000 and \$240,000 respectively.⁹ In January of 1902, John H. Parker purchased both parcels, merging the lots together into a site on which he would commission William H. Birkmire to design an eleven-story building.¹⁰ Parker was the president of the National Realty Company, and thus 826 Broadway was referred to in its early years as “The National Building.”

The 826 Broadway Building

Construction of 826 Broadway was undertaken throughout 1902, and the eleven-story steel-frame building was ready for occupancy in 1903.¹¹ While he embraced many of the same aesthetic features of the contemporary skyscraper style already present on this stretch of Broadway, architect William H. Birkmire chose a comparatively restrained and over-scaled Renaissance Revival style for the corner building. The lower three stories of 826 Broadway are clad in limestone, while the upper stories are clad in brick with limestone and terra-cotta decorative

details. The building is organized into three parts, including a three-story base, a five-story shaft, and a three-story decorative crown with a heavy projecting metal cornice. Thick piers run from the base to the roof, emphasizing the building’s verticality. The base-shaft-capital configuration and the cornice that wraps around the building’s two primary facades further draw the eye upward and mark the building’s place within the streetscape.

At 826 Broadway, Birkmire utilized a decorative program that features a spare application of abstracted Classical and Renaissance motifs which contributes to the building’s monumentality. Floriated Corinthian capitals and Ionic scrolls are incorporated into the rusticated stone piers at the second and eighth stories, while fluted pilasters are applied across the ninth and tenth stories. Ribbons, garlands, and egg-and-dart moldings are affixed to the facades in a regular pattern, adding a sense of delicacy and sophistication to the steel skeleton-frame structure.

Early Tenants and Ownership

826 Broadway was a speculative building constructed for garment industry tenants that sought larger manufacturing and wholesale spaces near Union Square. Early tenants included a variety of women’s shirtwaist, cloak, and dress factories; men’s suit-makers; manufacturers of children’s clothing; and wholesalers.

Garment industry tenants immediately found 826 Broadway’s prime location and 10,000 square-foot open floor plans appealing. The building’s numerous windows along its two unimpeded street-facing facades provided a light-filled and airy work environment in comparison to the smaller factory buildings of SoHo and the Lower East Side. Tenants in the first decades of its operation were primarily large ready-to-wear garment manufacturing companies, including: Samuel Floersheimer and

Hirsch Brothers, both all-purpose women's clothing factories; Philip Rosenwasser, a shirtwaist specialist; Piddian & Wormser, maker of children's clothing; and S.J. Nathan and Merrimac Manufacturing Co., both men's suit producers. Other garment-related businesses such as the wholesale showrooms of Corliss, Coon & Co. and Epstein, Charles, Douglas Co. also rented space in the building, while the A.B. Kirschbaum men's retail clothing store occupied the ground floor.¹²

In the two decades after the building was constructed, 826 Broadway was a highly valuable property for the real estate companies that owned it. In 1908, Herbert Du Puy, a Pittsburgh industrialist, purchased the National Building from the Belfrank Realty Company for \$1,000,000 dollars.¹³ This sale was described in the press as an example of a trend in which premier Manhattan buildings were being bought up by wealthy out-of-town buyers.¹⁴ In 1917, in a deal worth \$7,000,000, Du Puy sold the National Building and four Pittsburgh properties to the Herald Square Realty Company (headed by Henry Morganthau, Sr.), in exchange for the Saks department store building on West 34th and Sixth Avenue.¹⁵

Over the next several years, however, 826 Broadway's valuation suffered as clothing manufacturers began to move uptown to a new Garment District centered in the West 30s near Seventh Avenue, closer to the department stores of Herald Square and Fifth Avenue.¹⁶ When Morganthau's company sold 826 Broadway to the Deroldine Realty Corporation in 1923, the building's value had declined to around \$680,000.¹⁷ In 1942, the building was assessed at only \$290,000, although it was fully occupied and earning approximately \$50,000 per year in rent.¹⁸

From the 1920s to the 1950s, some garment production continued at 826 Broadway, but tenants from other industries also occupied the building.

Among others, these included a stationary company, a perfume manufacturer, a maker of medical devices, and a number of import/export firms.¹⁹ By 1950, book publishers also moved into 826 Broadway, taking advantage of the building's proximity to Fourth Avenue's traditional sales district known as "book row."

The Strand Bookstore

Since the late-19th century, secondhand book stores had concentrated along Fourth Avenue from Astor Place to Union Square. At its peak during the mid-20th century, "book row" held as many as 30 to 40 shops, located mainly in the ground-floor storefronts of the avenue's row houses and small commercial buildings.²⁰ The cluster of stores along book row organized into the Fourth Avenue Booksellers Association, creating a vibrant intellectual community that persisted even as rents rose in the neighborhood and many stores were forced to close or move during the late 1970s.²¹

Founded by Benjamin Bass in 1928, the Strand Bookstore opened as a stall on East 8th Street and soon moved into a row house storefront located at 95 Fourth Avenue and East 11th Street. When that building was demolished to make way for the Cooper Station branch of the U.S. Post Office in 1938, the Strand moved one block south to 81 Fourth Avenue, where it operated for the next 18 years.²² Like many of the secondhand stores of "book row," from its early years the Strand maintained outdoor sidewalk carrels to engage passersby, a tradition it continues today.²³

Benjamin Bass's son Fred Bass became manager of the Strand in 1956.²⁴ That same year, 81 Fourth Avenue was demolished for the construction of a large apartment building, and the Strand moved into the ground-floor store of 826 Broadway.²⁵ Under the younger Bass' guidance, over the next decades the Strand expanded to occupy three floors

of retail space, and an additional two floors of offices, with its inventory rising to more than 2.5 million books. With more space in the 826 Broadway building, the Strand began hosting author readings as well as community events, becoming a center of literary life in Lower Manhattan. The store also became a well-known tourist attraction, noted in travel guides for its unique book-browsing experience and enormous variety of books.²⁶

When the company purchased the 826 Broadway building in 1996, the Strand had become the largest used-book store in the world, recognized internationally as a major hub for rare and out-of-print publications, as well as current titles.²⁷ The purchase of the building further cemented its reputation as a neighborhood institution.

The presence of the bookstore has long branded the building. Over the years the installation of large storefront signage, banners and an awning covering the entire ground floor storefront, as well as the myriad of movable book carrels, has made the building and its famous occupant a dominant presence in the streetscape. By the early 21st century, most bookstores in the neighborhood south of Union Square had closed or moved, due to increased real estate pressures and changing economics in the industry. The Strand's continuing presence on Broadway serves as an important reminder of the neighborhood's historic role as a center for the book trade in New York City.

Architect William H. Birkmire

William Harvey Birkmire (1860-1924) was a prominent designer of steel-framed structures in New York City.²⁸ Born in Philadelphia in 1860, Birkmire studied with the influential American architect Samuel Sloan before moving to New York City in the mid-1880s. For the next decade, Birkmire served as head of construction for two different ironworks companies, and he became a well-known expert on

the engineering aspects of design. Among other projects, he developed the steel details for the Astor Hotel, the Mexican National Opera House in Mexico City, and many large commercial structures, including Bradford L. Gilbert's now-demolished Tower Building of 1889, located at 50 Broadway in the financial district.

In the 1890s, Birkmire's work on the Tower Building was at the heart of a debate over the invention of steel skeleton-frame construction. When a plaque appeared on the building in 1899 giving full credit for the idea to Gilbert as the building's architect, Birkmire wrote a strongly worded letter to the *New York Times* stating that it was actually he, in his position at the Jackson Architectural Iron Works, who had invented steel skeleton framing while preparing the construction plans for the building.²⁹ Unsurprisingly, Gilbert vehemently disputed this assertion, as did William Le Baron Jenney of Chicago, who made his own claim in two letters he wrote to Birkmire later in the year. Jenney argued that in fact he had used steel skeleton framing in the Home Insurance Building as early as 1883-1884.³⁰ Birkmire appears to have earlier been unaware of the Chicago developments, and may have come to a similar solution working independently in New York City as Jenney did in Chicago.

Birkmire compiled his extensive knowledge of modern building methods into several publications that were references in the field, including *Skeleton Construction in Buildings* from 1894 and *The Planning and Construction of High Office Buildings* from 1896.³¹ These books provided information about the rapid improvements in iron and steel construction, and were greatly informed by Birkmire's practical experience.

In the mid-1890s, Birkmire established his own architecture practice in New York City, and he embarked on a successful career applying advanced structural techniques in a variety of buildings. Ten of

his works are New York City landmarks, including lofts, offices, and a warehouse in the Tribeca Historic Districts and the Ladies' Mile Historic District, a hotel in the Madison Square North Historic District, and an apartment building in the West-End Collegiate Historic District Extension. He also designed the Tremont Baptist Church in the Bronx, a designated individual landmark.

Birkmire's designs for commercial buildings indicate that he was especially inspired by Renaissance sources when designing the exteriors of steel-framed structures. For example, the office building at 396-398 Broadway from 1898-1899, and the cold storage warehouse at 27-29 North Moore Street from 1905 both display similar stripped down, buff brick, stone, and terra-cotta facades and stylized classical features he used at 826 Broadway.

The Garment Industry

The garment industry had its origins in the early 19th century when the mass production of work clothes for farmers, miners, and other laborers grew to meet the demands of an expanding market.³² By 1860 New York's garment industry accounted for 35% of the city's manufacturing jobs and produced approximately 40% of the nation's clothes. Starting in the 1880s, in both the men's and women's fashion industries, ready-to-wear garments such as suits, cloaks, shirtwaists, skirts, and dresses became increasingly popular, and there was a dramatic rise in the number of manufacturing firms associated with ready-to-wear production in New York City. From 1880 to 1900, women's clothing companies grew in number from 230 to 3,429, while firms producing men's clothing grew from 736 to 2,716.³³

By the end of the 19th century, the industry had a "trifurcated" structure: "home-work" where laborers and their family members assembled garments in their own tenements from the cut pieces provided by the manufacturers; "outside" shops run

by middlemen whose employees either worked in small factories or in their own homes to finish garments contracted out by a manufacturer; and "inside" shops where employees worked directly for a manufacturer.³⁴ The early tenants of 826 Broadway were primarily "inside" clothing manufacturers, with companies advertising directly for employees in local newspapers.³⁵

During the 1890s and early 1900s, speculators actively purchased older dwellings and commercial buildings along Broadway near Union Square for the construction of modern fireproof loft buildings to house these garment manufacturers and wholesale companies as they followed the great retail stores northward. Manufacturers were attracted by the increased floor space, fireproof construction, improved natural lighting, and electricity needed to run sewing machines and an array of specialized machinery.³⁶

Women made up the majority of employees in New York's garment industry in the early 20th century, comprising approximately 40% of shop positions in men's-wear manufacturers, and approximately 90% of the positions in women's-wear and children's-wear companies.³⁷ At 826 Broadway, contemporary classified advertisements seeking employees indicate that tenants there employed a large number of women, especially as skirt and shirtwaist drapers, trimmers, tuckers, dress makers, and as sewing machine operators.³⁸ As with many garment companies at the time, male employees were sought for higher-paid, higher-skilled roles such as designing, cutting, and pressing, as well as clerk roles. Because of the complex system of contractors, subcontractors, and apprenticeships in many firms, women were also often stuck in years-long "learner" positions while men tended to be promoted more quickly.³⁹

Women's complaints about exploitative conditions and low pay within the garment industry

boiled over in 1909 and 1910, when nearly 20,000 workers participated in a strike of the city's shirtwaist factories. Approximately 500 companies were affected by the strike, and dozens of factories faced weeks of pickets outside their doors, including two located down the block from 826 Broadway, at 832 and 836 Broadway.⁴⁰ Thousands of men and women also joined marches and rallies in support of the shirtwaist strikers that centered on nearby Union Square.⁴¹ By early 1910, most shirtwaist factories had capitulated to worker demands for pay raises, 52-hour weeks, and pledges to run union-only factories.⁴²

The garment industry was racked by the shirtwaist strikes as well as by a large cloakmaker's strike later in 1910, and by protests that arose in 1911 in the wake of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire at the Asch Building near Washington Square, a designated New York City Landmark.⁴³ The demonstrators during these events included among their ranks many leaders of the early 20th century women's rights and labor movements, including, among others, Clara Lemlich, Rosa Pastor Stokes, and Inez Milholland.⁴⁴ The garment industry protests of 1909-1911 not only gave a broad mandate to labor organizations like the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union, they brought significantly greater public and political attention to the fight for women's suffrage.

Conclusion

826 Broadway Building (now the Strand Building)

826 Broadway is architecturally significant as a steel-frame Renaissance Revival store-and-loft building designed by William H. Birkmire, and is emblematic of the historical development pattern along Broadway northward to Union Square and beyond. The building also has important cultural significance, first housing garment businesses critical to the city's economy, and later serving as the home of the Strand Bookstore for more than 60 years. With its highly visible corner site and two intact facades, 826 Broadway is a distinguished example of the commercial architecture built in New York at the turn of the 20th century. It is culturally significant as the location of the internationally renowned and locally beloved Strand Bookstore since 1956, a reminder of the thriving bookselling district that once located in this area of Manhattan south of Union Square. This designation recognizes the Strand as the last remaining survivor of "Book Row" and a significant New York City institution in its own right, which needs to be nimble and innovative to continue its important place and adapt to a changing retail climate.

Endnotes

¹ At the public hearing on December 4, 2018, the representative of GVSHP provided testimony but did not specifically support or oppose the proposed designation according to the sign-in sheet. An email received on June 7, 2019 clarified that the testimony from GVSHP on December 4 was in support of the proposed designation.

² The owner submitted a petition to the Landmarks Preservation Commission after the second public hearing on February 19, 2019, when it had approximately 6,600 signatures. The owner stated prior to designation that the petition had risen to “well over 11,000” signatures, but did not submit any additional documentation for the record.

³ Portions of this section adapted from Landmarks Preservation Commission, *NoHo Historic District Designation Report (LP-2039)* (New York: City of New York, 1999), prepared by Donald Presa, 8-11.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 16-17. Between 1890 and 1898, 3.7 million square feet of store and loft space were added on Broadway from Murray to 14th Streets. See: *A History of Real Estate, Building and Architecture in New York City During the Last Quarter Century* (1898), 127.

⁵ Michael A. Mikkelsen, *A History of Real Estate, Building and Architecture in New York City During the Last Quarter Century* (New York: Record and Guide, 1898; reprint New York: Arno Press, 1967), 127; *Real Estate Record and Guide* (June 11, 1904), 1396; LPC, *NoHo Historic District Designation Report*, 18.

⁶ LPC, *NoHo Historic District Designation Report*, 16.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ See Sanborn Map, 1895, vol. 3, Sheet 57a-b; Bromley Map, 1899, Volume 1, Plate 30, New York Public Library; New York City Tax Assessments, Municipal Archives.

⁹ “Gossip of the Week,” *Real Estate Record and Guide*, October 26, 1895, 558; “Gossip of the Week,” *Real Estate Record and Guide*, November 16, 1895, 676.

¹⁰ “Gossip of the Week,” *Real Estate Record and Guide*, January 11, 1902, 55; “Gossip of the Week,” *Real Estate Record and Guide*, January 18, 1902, 113; “Projected Buildings,” RERG, February 22, 1902, 360. “In the Real Estate Field,” January 10, 1902, 12; “Active Week in New York,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, February 9, 1902, 29.

¹¹ “Active Week in New York,” 29.

¹² Tenant information gleaned mainly from advertisements in contemporary newspapers and trade journals, including *The New York Times*, *The New York Tribune*, *The New York Daily News*, *The Brooklyn Eagle*, and *Clothier & Furnisher*, among others.

¹³ “Broadway Corner in Million Dollar Trade,” *Real Estate Record and Guide*, February 22, 1908, 330.

¹⁴ According to the *New York Times*, buyers from the city of Pittsburgh in particular “have put more money into Manhattan property than those from any other city.” See: “Manhattan Realty as Investment Appeals to Out-of-Town Buyers,” *New York Times*, February 16, 1908; “Pittsburgher’s Latest Purchase Here,” *New York Times*, October 24, 1909, XX1. Pittsburgh’s economy was booming in the early 20th century, and a pipeline of wealthy businessmen from that city, such as the steel magnates Andrew Carnegie and Henry C. Frick, began making large real estate investments here. Herbert Du Puy, the president of the Crucible Steel Company in Pittsburgh, was another such industrialist; over the course of about a decade, he purchased ten-to fifteen million dollars-worth of real estate through his company Morewood Realty.

¹⁵ “7,000,000 Exchange: Saks Building in Herald Square in Deal Involving Other Choice Properties,” *Real Estate Record and Guide*, July 7, 1917, 11.

¹⁶ Wallace, *Greater Gotham*, 322.

¹⁷ “Deroldine Realty Company Buyer of National Building,” *New York Herald Tribune*, February 27, 1923.

¹⁸ “B. Winter firm Buys Broadway Loft Property,” *New York Herald Tribune*, January 31, 1942, 22.

¹⁹ New York City Telephone Directories, 1931-1957, New York Public Library.

²⁰ Allen J. Share, “Book Row,” in *Encyclopedia of New York*, edited by Kenneth T. Jackson, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010). In addition to the Strand, the bookstores included the Arcadia Bookshop, Biblo & Tannen, the Fourth Avenue Bookshop, the Raven Bookshop, Stammer’s Bookstore, and the Samuel Weiser Bookstore. See also: Marvin Mondlin and Roy Meador, *Book Row America: An Anecdotal and Pictorial History of the Fourth Avenue Antiquarian Book Trade* (New York: Carroll and Graf, 2004).

²¹ John Nielsen, “Old Bookstores: A Chapter Ends,” *New York Times*, May 31, 1981; “Book Row is Gone, but Used Bookshops Aren’t,” *New York Times*, March 13, 1988.

²² *New York Times*, November 12, 1933, BR30; Michael Cordts, “Inside the Strand,” *Yonkers Herald Statesman*, August 5, 1979, 2; “90 Years and 18 Miles of Books and Counting: The History of Strand Books,” <https://www.strandbooks.com/strand-history> (accessed October 18, 2018); *Antiquarian Bookman* 17, no. 1-13 (1956), 535; Eric Pace, “Pages of Time Flip Fast for Secondhand-Book Stores,” *New York Times*, March 4, 1973, 40.

²³ Tax Photos, 1940, New York City Municipal Archives.

²⁴ William Grimes, “Fred Bass, Who Made the Strand Bookstore a Mecca, Dies at 89,” *New York Times*, January 3, 2018.

²⁵ *Antiquarian Bookman*, 535; New York City Telephone Directory, 1956, New York Public Library.

²⁶ DK Travel, *Family Guide New York City* (New York: Penguin, 2016); “90 Years and 18 Miles of Books and Counting: The History of Strand Books,” <https://www.strandbooks.com/strand-history>

²⁷ Grimes, “Fred Bass,” *New York Times*, January 3, 2018.

²⁸ This section adapted from LPC, *West End-Collegiate Historic District Extension Designation Report (LP-2462)* (New York: City of New York, 2013), prepared by Cynthia Danza, 235. See also: William Harvey Birkmire obituary, *New York Times*, February 10, 1924, 23.

²⁹ “Disputes of Architects: Question About the Invention of the Skeleton Construction,” *New York Times*, August 19, 1899, 12.

³⁰ Birkmire wrote to William Le Baron Jenney in August of 1899 inquiring about his use of skeleton-frame construction prior to 1888, and Jenney wrote two letters in response. Birkmire to Jenney, August 19, 1899; Jenney to Birkmire, August 21, 1899 and August 26, 1899; all from the Elmer C. Jensen Papers, Ryerson and Burnham Library, Art Institute of Chicago.

³¹ William H. Birkmire, *Skeleton Construction in Buildings* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1894); Birkmire, *Planning and Construction of High Office Buildings* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1898).

³² The following section is based on Edwin G. Burrows and Mike Wallace, *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 443, 664-666, 1116; Mike Wallace, *Greater Gotham: A History of New York City from 1898-1919* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 317-322; Allen J. Share, “Garment District” in *Encyclopedia of New York City*, 2nd ed., (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 492-493;

and Andrew S. Dolkart, “The Fabric of New York City’s Garment District: Architecture and Development in an Urban Cultural Landscape,” *Buildings & Landscapes: Journal of the Vernacular Architecture Forum* 18, no. 1 (Spring 2011), 16-17.

³³ Burrows and Wallace, *Gotham*, 443, 664, 665, 1116; and Wallace, *Greater Gotham*, 317.

³⁴ Home-work decreased overtime, in part due to legislation that limited the classes of garments and the rooms in which any garments could be made, for public health reasons (i.e. fear of tuberculosis). Many home-workers took jobs in the newer factories. See Wallace, *Greater Gotham*, 318-319.

³⁵ For example, Piddian & Wormser’s advertisement for female employees, *Brooklyn Eagle*, September 17, 1905.

³⁶ Wallace, *Greater Gotham*, 319.

³⁷ Xiaolan Bao, *Holding Up More than Half the Sky: Chinese Women Garment Workers in New York City, 1948-1992* (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 28-30. See also, Woods Hutchinson, “The Hygienic Aspects of the Shirtwaist Strike,” *The Survey* 23 (1909/1910): 541-550.

³⁸ Some examples include: Piddian & Wormser, *Brooklyn Eagle*, March 30, 1905, 18; *Brooklyn Eagle*, October 1, 1905, 12; and *New York Times*, January 19, 1916, 21; and Samuel Floersheimer, *Brooklyn Eagle*, September 3, 1905; *Brooklyn Eagle*, December 27, 1908, 45.

³⁹ Hutchinson, “The Hygienic Aspects of the Shirtwaist Strike,” 544.

⁴⁰ “One on Mrs. Stokes,” *New York Tribune*, December 16, 1909, 3; “Inez Milholland Arrested,” *New York Sun*, December 16, 1909, 1.

⁴¹ “College Girls as Pickets in Strike,” *New York Times*, December 19, 1909, SM5; “Women Out Strong in Labor Parade,” *New York Times*, September 6, 1910, 9.

⁴² David von Drehle, *Triangle: The Fire that Changed America* (New York, Atlantic Monthly Press, 2003), 62.

⁴³ LPC, *Brown Building (Originally Asch Building) (LP-2128)* (New York: City of New York, 2003), prepared by Gale Harris, 4-5.

⁴⁴ See “One on Mrs. Stokes,” “Inez Milholland Arrested,” cited above, and Mary Brown Sumner, “The Spirit of the Strikers,” *The Survey* 23 (January 23, 1910): 554.

Findings and Designation

826 Broadway Building (now the Strand Building)

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture, and the other features of this building and site, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that 826 Broadway Building (now the Strand 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.

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 826 Broadway Building (now the Strand Building) and designates Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 564, Lot 34 as its Landmark Site.



826 Broadway Building (now the Strand Building)
Sarah Moses, June 2019



826 Broadway (now the Strand Building)
Sarah Moses,
June 2019



826 Broadway

New York City Department of Taxes Photograph (c. 1938-1943), Courtesy NYC Municipal Archives



826 Broadway (now the Strand Building)

Sarah Moses, June 2019



826 Broadway (now the Strand Building)
Sarah Moses, June 2019

