

**315 BROADWAY BUILDING**, 315 Broadway, Manhattan.  
Built 1861; architect not determined.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 151, Lot 29

On April 3, 1990, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the 315 Broadway Building and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 17). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of the law. Two individuals testified in opposition to the designation, including an attorney for the owner, 315 Broadway Associates. Three individuals testified in favor of the designation. In addition, the Commission received letters in favor of designation from Assemblyman William F. Passannante, Congressman Ted Weiss, and Senator Manfred Ohrenstein. The Commission previously held a public hearing on this building on December 12, 1989 (LP-1756).

On November 5, 2015 the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a special public hearing on Backlog Initiative items in the Borough of Manhattan, including the 315 Broadway Building and the related Landmark Site (Item 7 – Borough of Manhattan A, Group 1). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. A former owner testified and sent a written submission in opposition to the designation. Ten speakers testified in favor of the designation, including Assembly Member Deborah J. Glick, Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer, New York City Council Member Margaret Chin, Manhattan Community Board 1, Tribeca Trust, the Historic Districts Council, the Victorian Society, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, and two individuals. The Commission also received letters of support for the designation from the Society for the Architecture of the City, the Municipal Art Society, and one individual.

### Summary

The 315 Broadway Building is palazzo-inspired commercial store and loft building of the type that once lined Broadway and shaped the streetscapes of antebellum New York. Constructed as a speculative investment by the retired linen merchant Thomas Suffern in early 1861, 315 Broadway is a fine example of the commercial palaces that were built in the 1850s-1860s throughout the wholesale dry goods district now known as Tribeca. 315 Broadway is distinguished by its structural clarity, inventive detailing, and ornament. The five-story building features a marble façade with rusticated corner piers and bracketed cornices, engaged cast iron columns on pedestal bases, and a cast iron storefront that is currently partially concealed.

In Manhattan, the palazzo-inspired store and loft was first brought to New York by architects Joseph Trench and John Butler Snook in the A.T. Stewart Store (1845-1846), an instant attraction and enormous commercial success that set a precedent for stone-clad stores and lofts throughout Tribeca. The Italian



Renaissance palazzo was thought to be a particularly appropriate model for commercial buildings because of its associations with merchant princes. Few of these commercial palaces still exist on Broadway south of Franklin Street. 315 Broadway has been leased by dozens of tenants since its construction, including Hartley & Graham Arms and Ammunition and its subsidiary Remington Arms Company from 1892-1912, and Hagstrom Company, Inc., a cartography and publishing firm that designed and printed the official New York City subway map during its tenancy, from 1943-1956.

## DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

### Description

The 315 Broadway Building is a five-story Italian Renaissance-inspired store and loft located on the west side of Broadway between Thomas and Duane Streets.

#### **East (main) elevation:**

Ground floor: *Historic:* Three engaged, fluted cast-iron columns on pedestal bases; rusticated corner piers inset from edges of building; projecting modillion cornice supported by corner piers.

*Alterations:* Metal and glass shopfronts and entrances; signage; cast iron painted; marble corner piers painted to cornice line.

Second through fifth floors: *Historic:* Marble façade; four bays of windows with recessed segmental arched window surrounds; two-over-two double-hung wood windows at the southernmost two bays of floors three, four, and five; rusticated corner piers inset from edges of building at each story; projecting cornices supported by three full and two partial brackets at each story; lintel courses above windows at second, third, and fourth stories; paneled frieze above fifth story windows; bracketed cornice at roof line.

*Alterations:* One-over-one windows at southernmost two bays of second story; windows of northernmost two bays altered to provide access to fire escape installed prior to 1891<sup>1</sup>; four-story fire escape.

**North elevation (partially visible):** Common bond red brick; two masonry openings.

*Alterations:* Partial painting of red brick.

**West and south elevations (partially visible):** Common bond red brick.

## HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

### Early Site History and the New-York Hospital

Prior to European settlement on Manhattan, the trail that ran the length of the island was known as Wickquasgeck, or “birch bark country,” to Algonquian inhabitants. Following the “purchase” of the Manhattan from the Lenape by Dutch West Indies Company director Peter Minuit in 1626, the trail was renamed de Heere Straat, or the Gentlemen's Street, and was known colloquially as Breedeweg, or Broadway. In 1646, Governor of New Amsterdam Willem Kieft granted a 45 acre tract between the Collect Pond, an expansive fresh water source, and the future Canal Street, West Broadway, and Reade Street to Jan Jansen Damen, a privateer; Damen's tract, known as Kalck Hoek Farm, was bisected by Broadway, the axis along which his farmhouses were built.<sup>2</sup> In 1725, Kalck Hoek Farm was purchased by Anthony Rutgers, an alderman and member of the colonial assembly.<sup>3</sup>

At the first commencement from the King's College School of Medicine in 1769, Samuel Bard, Professor of the Practice of Medicine, urged an audience at Trinity Church to establish a public hospital as a "useful and necessary charitable institution" to offer instruction to students and raise the cachet of medical research in New York.<sup>4</sup> The Hospital in the City of New York, later New-York Hospital,<sup>5</sup> was built on three acres purchased from Anthony Rutgers in 1772 and bounded by Church Street, Hospital [Duane] Street, Broadway, and Anthony [Worth] Street, though Rutgers' heirs retained all but 90 feet of frontage on Broadway.<sup>6</sup> Although a foundation was laid in July 1773, the structure was heavily damaged by fire in February 1775 and occupied by British and Hessian soldiers as a barracks and military hospital during the American Revolution. An H-plan Georgian structure with a sizeable cupola, the hospital was completed in January 1791, when it opened with the admission of 18 patients.<sup>7</sup> Mitigation of the Collect Pond from 1796-1810, the leveling of Barley [Duane] Street from 1795-1798, and the platting of most cross streets below Canal Street by 1810 coincided with the reestablishment of civic institutions, including the Almshouse (1797, now demolished) and City Hall (1802-1811, a New York City Landmark), in the Commons, now City Hall Park.

#### Improvements in Transportation and the Emergence of a Wholesale Dry Goods District

In the 1830s-1860s, settlement of the area now known as Tribeca by dry goods jobbers — businessmen who purchased fabric and related items in bulk and sold them to smaller dealers — was driven by a number of transportation and site improvements. The opening of the Erie Canal in 1825 gave New York direct access from the Atlantic Ocean to the Great Lakes via the Hudson River; the surge in commerce brought about the expansion of banks on Wall Street, displacing affluent residents to blocks north and west of City Hall, which, in turn, drew retailers to cater to wealthier clientele. Devastation of the Pearl Street warehouses in the Great Fire of 1835 drove merchants to relocate uptown and to consolidate in an informal district to encourage competition. The accommodation of mercantile steamships at the North [Hudson] River piers and the establishment of freight depots by the New York & Erie Railroad at the Duane Street Pier and by the Hudson River Railroad at St. John's Park in 1851 afforded merchants efficient and direct importation of their wares. Lastly, an 1851 initiative to widen Dey and Cortlandt Streets between Broadway and Greenwich Street made vast tracts of cleared land available for development.<sup>8</sup>

According to an article in the New York Daily Tribune, "forthwith commenced a most astonishing migration. [The] whole mercantile community seemed to have woken from a long sleep."<sup>9</sup> By 1850, a former mayor of New York observed a "mania for converting Broadway into a street of shops," while a prominent physician noted that "Broadway is like a boy who grows so fast that he can't stop to tie up his shoes."<sup>10</sup> By 1853, dry goods merchants had all but rebuilt Dey and Cortlandt Streets with store and loft buildings, the likes of which began to line Park Place, Vesey Street, and Church Street. Over the next fifteen years, the dry goods trade radiated to the area north and west of City Hall Park, where merchants were able to capitalize on access to transportation facilities.<sup>11</sup>

Until 1869, the enclosure of the hospital site with a brick retaining wall and elevation of the grounds "considerably above the level of Church-Street" set the block apart from developments on Broadway.<sup>12</sup> Prior to the Civil War, the expiration of

subsidies for the expansion and operation of the New York Hospital left the institution in dire financial straits, and hospital-owned lots and buildings were leased to raise capital beginning in 1868. In 1869, the hospital was demolished and Thomas Street was extended through the grounds from Hudson Street to Broadway. The hospital lot was divided into fifty parcels and the ground lease was purchased by the New York Real Estate Association, an organization founded by textile merchants to secure the area for their interests.

#### Prior Site Occupants

313 and 315 Broadway were two of 10 lots formed from the frontage that Anthony Rutgers' heirs had retained on Broadway, with 315 Broadway directly abutting the hospital garden, entrance, and fence.<sup>13</sup> Records attest to the existence of a dry goods store on the current 315 Broadway site by 1798, following the sale of the lot to Andrew Paff, a butcher.<sup>14</sup> After Paff's death, the structure and lot at 315 Broadway were sold to Thomas Suffern on April 15, 1826, though it would be decades before he would raze the structure and construct the extant store and loft on the site in 1861. Between 1798 and 1861, a succession of portraitists and daguerreotypists ran their businesses on the site.

#### Thomas Suffern and the Construction of the 315 Broadway Building

Following the death of Andrew Paff, the structure and lot at 315 Broadway were sold at auction to Thomas Suffern at the Tontine Coffee House for \$12,300 on April 15, 1826. Paff's eight heirs sold the adjacent lots at 311-313 Broadway to Isaac Lawrence, a former merchant and president of the Branch Bank of the United States, who later sold 313 Broadway to Thomas Suffern on March 2, 1839.<sup>15</sup> Suffern leased 313 and 315 Broadway to tenants until 1861, when construction began on the four-bayed, five-story store and loft that now occupies both lots. Suffern had earlier built stores and lofts with marble facades at 41-43 Warren Street (1851-54, within the Tribeca South Historic District Extension), 159-165 Church Street (1854-55, now demolished), and 459-461 Broadway (1860-1861, within the SoHo Cast Iron District), and was lessee and builder of his residence at 11 Washington Square North (1833, within the Greenwich Village Historic District). By 1862, Suffern was thought to have \$750,000 in real estate holdings as far as Chicago.

Born in Belfast in 1787, Thomas Suffern was a cousin of Andrew Jackson; heir to the tobacco business of George Suffern, his uncle; son-in-law to William Wilson, a well-connected dry goods and tobacco dealer in New York; and business advisor to Alexander Turney "A.T." Stewart, whose Marble Palace at 280 Broadway was inspiration for the stores and lofts that Suffern had built in the 1850s and 1860s. Thomas Suffern became an affluent importer of Irish linens and a bank director, and constructed stores and lofts to be leased as speculative investments following his retirement.<sup>16</sup>

#### The A.T. Stewart Store, the Development of the Broadway Commercial District, and the Design of 315 Broadway

Throughout the 1830s-1850s, stores and lofts in Manhattan were primarily built in the austere Greek Revival Style. Italian Renaissance-inspired "commercial palaces" were introduced to England with Sir Charles Barry's Travellers' Club (1829-1831) and Reform Club (1837-41) in London and Athenaeum (1837-1839) in Manchester, a center of

English textile production. The Anglo-Italianate Athenaeum captivated Manchester's cotton retailers, to whom it represented the architecture of merchant princes and afforded impressive exteriors for their businesses. Throughout the 1840s and 1850s, palazzo-inspired stores and lofts were built in cities across Great Britain. According to historian James Stevens Curl, "the palazzo vogue was favoured for secular architecture as it was astylar – that is, without columns or pilasters on the exterior – and avoided the unfashionable use of colonnades that had been associated with the Neoclassical styles and especially with the Greek Revival."<sup>17</sup>

In the United States, the palazzo-inspired store and loft was first brought to New York by architects Joseph Trench and John Butler Snook in the A.T. Stewart Store (1845-1846). The white Tuckahoe Marble façade earned the Stewart Store the nickname "the Marble Palace"; against its brick and granite Greek Revival competitors, the Marble Palace became an instant attraction and enormous commercial success, and set precedent for stone-clad stores and lofts throughout Tribeca.<sup>18</sup>

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 modillion cornice.

In 1860, The New York Times documented the relocation of dozens of dry goods jobbers to Tribeca; thirteen "marble palaces" were said to be under construction, including 315 Broadway: "Thomas Suffern will build on the southwest corner of Grand Street and Broadway a splendid edifice of Dorchester stone, ornamented in the highest style of art, 50 feet front on Broadway by 100 feet deep. Also a marble-front building, 40 feet by 100, at No. 315 Broadway, adjoining the lower end of the Hospital yard."<sup>19</sup>

Sandwiched at the time of construction between 311 Broadway (c. 1856-1857, a designated New York City Landmark) and the garden of the New York Hospital, 315 Broadway features rusticated corner piers that are inset from the edges of the building envelope to give the appearance of a freestanding structure. This feature might have been designed to address the 100' setback of the adjacent hospital, anticipation of the hospital's demolition, or the visibility of three elevations of the building to the public at the time of construction. This unusual feature is shared by 459-461 Broadway (aka 115-119 Grand Street Grand Street, within the SoHo Cast Iron District) which was built concurrently for Thomas Suffern and features a paneled frieze and brackets that are strikingly similar to those of 315 Broadway.

### Tenants and Subsequent History

Because the 315 Broadway Building was constructed as a speculative investment by Thomas Suffern, he, his heirs, and his estate leased 315 Broadway to a succession of tenants between 1864 and 1919 that were in keeping with the changing character of commercial enterprise in the area. The earliest known lessee of 315 Broadway was Loder Brothers & Co. in 1864, an importing firm that was declared bankrupt in 1869. In 1891,

the building was leased to Hartley & Graham Arms and Ammunition, an iteration of the weapons and ammunition firm Schuyler, Hartley, and Graham. The business was overseen by Marcellus Hartley, an arms supplier who had been appointed by the Union Government to purchase arms from Europe during the Civil War. In partnership with the Winchester Arms Company, Hartley purchased the Remington Arms Company in 1888; he acquired the Winchester share in 1896, after which advertisements refer to “Remington Arms Co., 315 Broadway.” The Hartley business leased 315 Broadway as M. Hartley Co. in 1901 and as M. Hartley Co. Guns, Etc. in 1910, and sold arms, ammunition, sporting goods, and Remington bicycles. A 1950 Certificate of Occupancy lists the tenant at 315 Broadway as Hagstrom Company, Inc., a cartography and publishing company that leased both 311 and 315 Broadway for a store, factory stock room, printing, and a showroom. The Hagstrom Company designed and printed the official New York City subway map during this period, from 1943-1956.

In 1978, a mortgage was assigned to Clinton Funding Corporation and Emil Rogers, and a deed was awarded to Arthur and Lester Palestine in 1979, after which a succession of tenants ran businesses from the ground floor.<sup>20</sup> Tenancy in the building by such a variety of business types is reflective of its construction as a speculative venture, and of the adaptability of the boxlike commercial palace form.

The 315 Broadway Building is an example of the palazzo-inspired commercial store and loft buildings that once lined Broadway and shaped the streetscapes of antebellum New York. It is one of the few store-and-loft buildings from that era to survive on Broadway south of Franklin Street.

Researched and written by  
Sarah Moses  
Research Department

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> New York City Department of Buildings, Alteration 178-1891.

<sup>2</sup> This material on the early history of the Rutgers farm is based on information found in D. T. Valentine, "Operations in Real Estate in the City of New York in the Olden Time," [Valentine's] Manual of the Corporation of the City of New York (New York: D.T. Valentine, 1860), 562-567; "History of Broadway," Valentine's Manual (New York, 1865); Landmarks Preservation Commission, Tribeca East Historic District Designation Report, prepared by David M. Breiner and Margaret M. M. Pickart (LP-1711), (New York: City of New York, 1992), 7.

<sup>3</sup> New York County, Office of the Register, Conveyance Index, Liber 31, p. 25 and Liber 31, p. 128.

<sup>4</sup> Samuel Bard, "A Discourse Upon the Duties of a Physician, with Some Sentiments, on the Usefulness and Necessity of a Public Hospital: Delivered Before the President and Governors of King's College, at the Commencement, Held on the 16th of May, 1769."

<sup>5</sup> The New York Hospital was the first public hospital in Manhattan; a private Dutch hospital had been built in 1638 to treat military personnel and individuals enslaved by the Dutch West India Company. "Old New York Hospital, Its Interesting History Retraced by Dr. D. B. St. John Roosa," *New York Times*, February 11, 1900, 5.

<sup>6</sup> This Anthony Rutgers was the grandson of Alderman Anthony Rutgers. New York County, Office of the Register, Conveyance Index, Liber 45, p. 213.

<sup>7</sup> *An Account of the New-York Hospital*, 10.

<sup>8</sup> The Great Fire of 1835 began in a warehouse at 25 Merchant Street, now Beaver Street.

<sup>9</sup> *New York Daily Tribune*, quoted in Charles Lockwood, *Manhattan Moves Uptown* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1976), 100.

<sup>10</sup> Ellen W. Kramer, "Contemporary Descriptions of New York City and its Public Architecture ca. 1850," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, XXVII (December 1968): 269.

<sup>11</sup> This paragraph refers to information in New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, Tribeca South Historic District and Extension Report, prepared by Donald Presa (LP-2122), New York, New York, 2002, 8-9.

<sup>12</sup> *An Account of the New York Hospital*, 10.

<sup>13</sup> Construction beside the Broadway entrance of the New York Hospital was met with criticism: "The whole of this ground ought to belong to the Hospital; and when it is considered how important it is to the institution, and how inconvenient and disagreeable the immediate vicinity of the Hospital must be to those who may be disposed to erect dwelling-houses on those lots, it is hoped that the owners will prefer selling them to the Hospital, on reasonable terms, and that, in this instance, at least, private interest will yield to a sense of public good." Humane Society, London, "Reports of the Society: Instituted in 1774, for the Recovery of Persons Apparently Drowned," 1784, 10.

<sup>14</sup> New York County, Office of the Register, Conveyance Index, Liber 55, 471.

<sup>15</sup> New York County, Office of the Register, Conveyance Index, Liber 203, 461.

<sup>16</sup> Walter Barrett, *Old Merchant of New York City*, (New York: Worthington Co., 1885), 33-35.

<sup>17</sup> James Stevens Curl, *Victorian Architecture*, (Exeter: David & Charles, 1990), 87.

<sup>18</sup> Stewart made frequent business visits to England and would have been familiar with the commercial palaces, while Trench and Snook would have known of Charles Barry's work might have seen illustrations the Manchester warehouses.

<sup>19</sup> "Broadway: The Past, Present and Prospective Character of the Street; Upward Tendency of Business Removals and Changes on the First of May New Buildings to be Erected, &c., &c." *New York Times*, April 21, 1860.

<sup>20</sup> Tenants at 315 Broadway included the Dunlap-Baldwin Lunch Co., Inc., a restaurant and store, in 1912; Baldwin's Lunch Room, Baldwin's Ladies' Lunch Room, a rubber goods business on the third, a printing business, and a bakery and stock room in 1919; and Bell's Cut Rate in 1939. This section culls information from New York City Department of Buildings, Alterations 178-1891, 477-1901, and 1809-1912; c. 1939 Tax Photograph, Department of Records, Municipal Archives; A. Tallis, *Tallis' Street Views*, "Broadway from 309 to 347," 1854; A. Tallis, "Broadway," 1864, reprinted in Frank L. Walton, *Tomahawks to Textiles* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1953); and Dylan Stone, "Block 120: Broadway between Thomas Street and Duane Street (West Side)," 1999, New York Public Library Digital Collections.



## FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

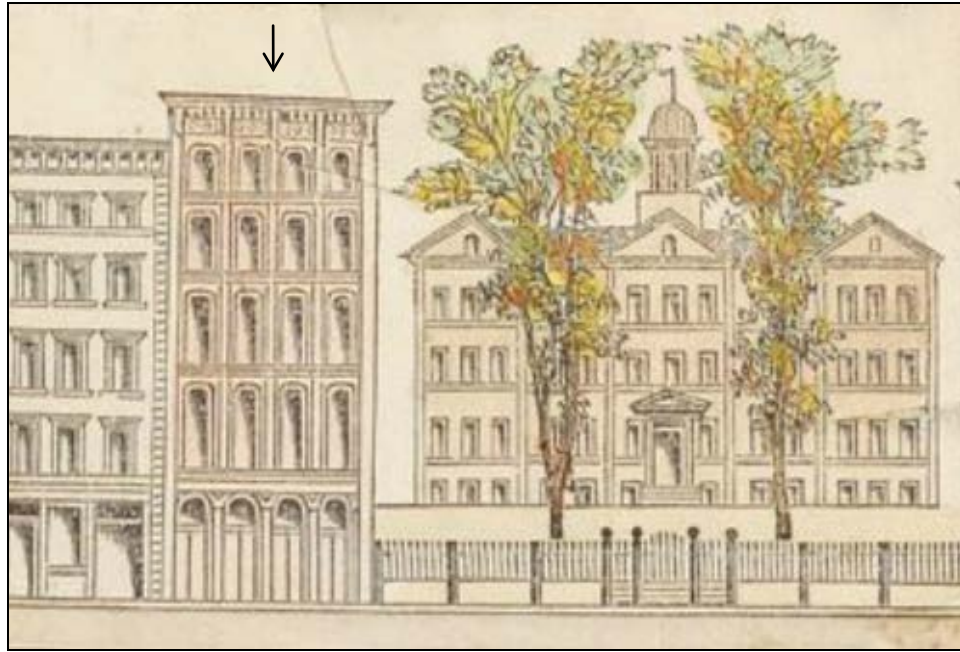
On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture, and the other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the 315 Broadway Building has a special character and a special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage, and culture characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the 315 Broadway Building was erected in 1861 for the prominent linen merchant Thomas Suffern; that the building is a fine example of Italian Renaissance-inspired commercial palaces that flourished from the 1850s through the 1860s in the former wholesale textile and dry goods district now known as Tribeca; that in the mid-nineteenth century, Broadway was the city's most prestigious business and shopping street, lined with commercial palaces; that, clad in marble, the building is distinguished by its structural clarity, inventive detailing, and ornament, including rusticated corner piers and bracketed cornices, recessed segmental arched window surrounds, and engaged cast iron columns on pedestal bases; that today, few mid-nineteenth century commercial palaces remain on Broadway south of Franklin Street, making the 315 Broadway Building a rare survivor; that constructed during a period when the wholesale textile trade flourished in lower Manhattan, the 315 Broadway Building is a significant reminder of New York's mercantile history; and that prominent twentieth century tenants included Hartley & Graham Arms and Ammunition and its subsidiary Remington Arms Company from 1892-1912, and Hagstrom Company, Inc., a cartography and publishing firm, from 1948-1969.

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 315 Broadway Building, 315 Broadway, Manhattan, and designates Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 151, Lot 29, as its Landmark Site.

Meenakshi Srinivasan, Chair

Frederick Bland, Wellington Chen, Michael Devonshire, Michael Goldblum, Adi Shamir  
Baron, Jeanne Lufty, Commissioners



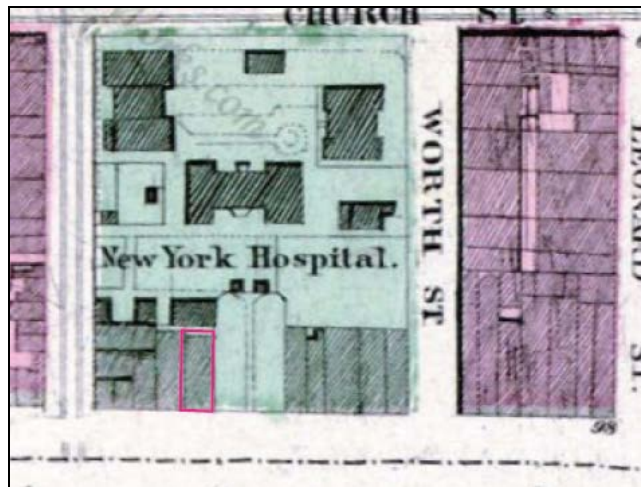
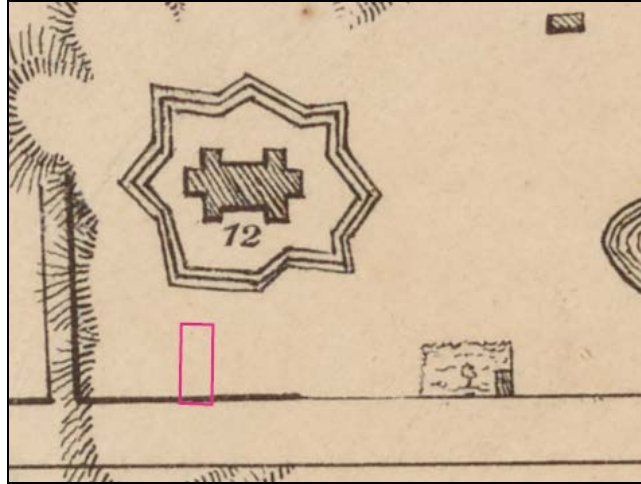
Source: "Broadway, West Side, from Chambers to Worth," J. Clarence Davies Street Views Scrapbook, Museum of the City of New York, 1865



Source: "Broadway, West Side. Chambers to Thomas St." The New York Public Library Digital Collections. 1899



*Photograph: Both Sides of Broadway, Page 162, 1910*



Maps with outline of the 315 Broadway Building site: 1782, 1867, and 1884.  
Sources: John Hills, "Plan of the City of New York and its Environs Surveyed in 1782 and Drawn 1785" The New York Public Library Digital Collections, 1785; Matthew Dripps, "New York City 1867," 1867; Sanborn Map Company, "Manhattan, V. 1, Plate No. 16," The New York Public Library Digital Collections, 1884.



315 Broadway  
*Photo: Christopher Brazeo 2014*



315 Broadway  
*Photo: Christopher Braze* 2014



315 Broadway  
*Photo: Christopher Brazee 2014*



315 Broadway I LP-1756

NYC  
Landmarks Preservation  
Commission



Address: 315 Broadway  
Landmark Site: Borough of the Manhattan, Tax Map Block 151,  
Lot 29  
Public Hearing: December 12, 1989; April 3, 1990; November 5, 2015  
Designator: June 28, 2016

Graphic Source: MapPLUTO, Edition 10r1, Author: New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, DHW, Date: 6/28/2016