

POTTER BUILDING, 35-38 Park Row (aka 2-8 Beekman Street and 139-145 Nassau Street), Manhattan. Built 1883-86; N.G. Starkweather, architect; Boston Terra Cotta Co., architectural terra cotta.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 101, Lot 1.

On May 14, 1996, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Potter Building and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 9). The hearing was continued to July 16, 1996 (Item No. 1). The hearings had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Representatives of the 38 Park Row Residence Corp. and the Living Earth Realty Corp., the owner and the commercial lessee, spoke in favor of designation but expressed concerns about regulatory policies. In addition, representatives of Council Member Kathryn Freed and Friends of Terra Cotta spoke in favor of designation. The Commission has also received a resolution from Community Board 1 in support of designation.

Summary

The eleven-story Potter Building was commissioned by Orlando B. Potter, a prominent figure in New York politics with prime commercial real estate holdings in Manhattan, and constructed in 1883-86 to the design of N.G. Starkweather, an architect who had formerly practiced in Baltimore and Washington, D.C. Built to replace Potter's World Building, destroyed by fire in January 1882, the Potter Building had the most advanced fireproofing then available. With its vertically-expressed design executed in red brick and brownstone-colored terra cotta above a cast-iron-clad base, and picturesque, flamboyant fusion of Queen Anne, neo-Grec, Renaissance Revival, and Colonial Revival motifs, the Potter Building was distinguished stylistically from most downtown buildings. Several aspects of the Potter Building make it today one of New York's most significant surviving tall office buildings of the period prior to the full development of the skyscraper. Its brickwork is among the handsomest in New York City. An early building to employ extensive exterior architectural terra cotta, it is a rare survivor of that period of development of terra cotta in New York. The highly sculpted terra cotta, produced by the Boston Terra Cotta Co., was employed in a notable "constructive" manner in the loadbearing walls. The Potter Building is also an important surviving example of a New York office building with interior framing mostly of iron, as well as one of the earliest surviving examples of an office building having a C-shaped plan with a major light court facing the street. Its significance is enhanced by the fact that its original design is nearly intact (except for alterations to the commercial base and light court), and its visibility is heightened by its prominent location facing City Hall Park and by its three fully articulated facades.



DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Orlando B. Potter¹

Orlando Bronson Potter commissioned the Potter Building in 1882. A Massachusetts lawyer, Potter (1823-1894) moved to New York City in 1853 to assist in the development of a sewing machine business; he was president of the Grover & Baker Sewing Machine Co. until 1876. A prominent figure in New York Democratic politics, he achieved recognition by developing a plan for a national banking system and currency that was adopted by Congress in 1863, served as a U.S. Representative in 1883-85, and was a member of the Rapid Transit Commission in 1890-94. Potter became extremely wealthy, due largely to his commercial real estate holdings in Manhattan (worth an estimated six million dollars at his death) upon which he concentrated after 1876. Besides purchasing existing structures, Potter commissioned a number of notable buildings, among them: 444 Lafayette Street (1875-76, Griffith Thomas); 746-750 Broadway (1881-83, Starkweather & Gibbs); Potter Building (1883-86, N.G. Starkweather), 35-38 Park Row; 808 Broadway (1888, Renwick, Aspinwall & Russell), adjacent to Grace Church; and 4-8 Astor Place (1890, Francis H. Kimball). In 1886, Potter founded the New York Architectural Terra Cotta Co. with his son-in-law Walter Geer. At the time of his sudden death in January 1894, Potter was thought to have been the wealthiest man in New York City to have died intestate.

The Architect²

The Potter Building was designed by Norris Garshom Starkweather.³ Born in Vermont the son of a farmer-carpenter, N.G. Starkweather (1818-1885) was apprenticed to a builder in 1830 and fifteen years later became a contractor on his own in Massachusetts. By the mid-1840s he had established an architectural practice, moving by the mid-1850s to Philadelphia where he specialized in church designs.⁴ The construction of the Gothic Revival style First Presbyterian Church (1854-59; spire completed 1874 by Edmund G. Lind), Baltimore, Starkweather's finest church, was apparently the reason for his relocation to Baltimore in 1856. The 273-foot spire of the church, built of masonry, necessitated "the most massive and scientifically arranged iron framework ever done in this country, or in any other, to our knowledge," according to a contemporary account.⁵ Achieving

some renown for his ecclesiastical and institutional commissions in the Gothic Revival, Italianate, and Romanesque Revival styles, Starkweather also designed some of the most notable Italianate style villas in Maryland and Virginia.⁶ By 1860 he opened an office in Washington, D.C., and after the Civil War became the partner of Thomas M. Plowman in the architectural and engineering firm of Starkweather & Plowman (1868-71).⁷ Starkweather continued to be listed in Washington directories until 1881, though nothing is known of his career during the period following the Panic of 1873. His letterhead in 1877 read "Architect, Engineer, and Superintendent, All kinds of House Decorations Promptly Attended to."⁸ Baltimore architect George Frederick reminisced that "after an erratic career . . . [Starkweather] moved to New York."⁹

Arriving in New York City by the middle of 1880, Starkweather was a partner of Robert Napier Anderson in the firm of Starkweather & Anderson, "architects and superintendents," at 106 Broadway.¹⁰ From 1881 until about 1884 he was the partner of Charles E. Gibbs;¹¹ the office of Starkweather & Gibbs in 1881 was in the World Building, owned by O.B. Potter, at 37 Park Row. Besides the Potter Building, only two other commissions by Starkweather in New York City are known, both with Gibbs: the previously-mentioned 746-750 Broadway (1881-83), also for Potter, and the Second Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church (1882-83, demolished) at 321 East 118th Street, a Victorian Gothic style composition with flanking asymmetrical towers, executed in brick and terra cotta. Starkweather died in New York in December 1885, prior to the completion of the Potter Building, and was buried in Bridgeport, Conn.

The Tall Office Building in New York City in the 1880s

During the nineteenth century, commercial buildings in New York City developed from four-story structures modeled on Italian Renaissance *palazzi* to much taller skyscrapers. Made possible by technological advances, tall buildings challenged designers to fashion an appropriate architectural expression. Between 1870 and 1890, nine- and ten-story buildings transformed the streetscapes of lower Manhattan between Bowling Green and City Hall. During the building boom following the Civil War,

building envelopes continued to be articulated largely according to traditional *palazzo* compositions, with mansarded and towered roof profiles. The period of the late 1870s and 1880s was one of stylistic experimentation in which commercial and office buildings in New York incorporated diverse influences, such as the Queen Anne, Victorian Gothic, Romanesque, and neo-Grec styles, French rationalism, and the German *Rundbogenstil*, under the leadership of such architects as Richard M. Hunt and George B. Post. New York's tallest buildings — including the seven-and-one-half-story Equitable Life Assurance Co. Building (1868-70, Gilman & Kendall and George B. Post) at Broadway and Cedar Street, the ten-story Western Union Building (1872-75, George B. Post) at Broadway and Liberty Street, and the ten-story Tribune Building (1873-75, Richard M. Hunt) on Park Row, all now demolished — incorporated passenger elevators, iron floor beams, and fireproof building materials.

Cage construction, employed in the 1880s in tall buildings in New York and Chicago, was characterized by the *Record and Guide* as "a frame work of iron or steel columns and girders which carry the floors only, and do not carry the outer walls. In the cage construction the outer walls are independent walls, from the foundation to the extreme top, sustaining themselves only, and therefore, the walls are made less in thickness than if they had to bear the floors as in ordinary buildings such walls would have to do."¹² Ever taller skyscrapers were permitted by the increasing use and refinement of the metal skeleton frame, in which the metal columns and girders support both the floors and the outer (curtain) walls.¹³ In addition, several hybrid structural forms were used in tall buildings, such as the combination of both masonry and metal for interior vertical supports. Fireproofing was of paramount concern as office buildings grew taller, and by 1881-82 systems had been devised to "completely fireproof" them.¹⁴ While tall buildings in New York City often had interior light courts,¹⁵ George B. Post is credited as one of the first architects to introduce and popularize major light courts that faced the street, a solution to providing office towers with maximum light and air, in the Post Building (1880-81, demolished), 16-18 Exchange Place, and Mills Building (1881-83, demolished), 59 Exchange Place, both of which had C-shaped plans.¹⁶ The Potter Building utilized the successful design,

construction, fireproofing, and planning techniques of these earlier buildings.

Park Row: "Newspaper Row"¹⁷

The vicinity of Park Row, Nassau Street, and Printing House Square,¹⁸ roughly from the Brooklyn Bridge to Ann Street, was the center of newspaper publishing in New York City from the 1840s through the 1920s, while Beekman Street became the center of the downtown printing industry.¹⁹ Beginning in the 1870s, this area was redeveloped with tall office buildings, most associated with the newspapers, and Park Row (with its advantageous frontage across from City Hall Park and the U.S. Post Office) and adjacent Nassau Street acquired a series of important late-nineteenth-century structures: Tribune Building (1873-75, Richard M. Hunt, demolished), 154-170 Nassau Street; Morse Building (1878-80, Silliman & Farnsworth; 1900-02, Bannister & Schell), 140 Nassau Street; Temple Court Building (1881-83, Silliman & Farnsworth; 1889-90, James Farnsworth), 7 Beekman Street; Potter Building (1883-86); New York Times Building (1888-89, George B. Post; 1904-05, Robert Maynicke), 40 Park Row; World (Pulitzer) Building (1889-90, George B. Post, demolished), 53-63 Park Row; American Tract Society Building (1894-95, R.H. Robertson), 150 Nassau Street; and Park Row Building (1896-99, R.H. Robertson), 15 Park Row.²⁰

Construction of the Potter Building²¹

The Potter Building's lot, at Park Row and Beekman Street, had been the location of the Brick Presbyterian Church (1767, John McComb, Sr.). When the church built a new edifice uptown, the church site was divided into two lots; the building erected on the northern lot housed the *New York Times*. Orlando B. Potter, with Boston friends John and Uriah Ritchie, purchased the southern lot in 1857 for around \$350,000, and put up a five-story Italianate style stone structure (first known as the Park Building) that became the home of the *New York World* (founded in 1860). Potter became the sole owner of this building in 1867.²² Destroyed by a fire on January 31, 1882, in which several people died, the World Building (as it was then known) "made itself notorious the country over for burning up in the shortest time on record."²³ The *Real Estate Record & Guide* speculated that "the ground is so valuable that it will no doubt be immediately built upon, and a structure will take its place that

will vie with the several superb buildings in its neighborhood."²⁴ Potter, understandably determined to replace the World Building with a structure having the most advanced fireproofing then available, had suffered heavy financial loss in the fire.²⁵ The *Record & Guide* announced on February 18, 1882, that

*Mr. O.B. Potter proposes to erect on the site of the structure so recently destroyed by fire . . . one of the largest office buildings yet erected in New York. Mr. Potter proposes to have this building absolutely fireproof inside as well as outside . . . The building will be eleven stories high, the fronts being constructed of pressed brick and terra cotta . . . It is proposed to fit up the first floor for banking houses, while the upper stories will be devoted to offices for lawyers and general business purposes. It is the intention of the owner to make this structure an ornament to the neighborhood and in keeping with the numerous handsome buildings by which it will be surrounded.*²⁶

Costs, however, delayed construction until the next year.²⁷ The *Record & Guide* finally indicated in April 1883 that foundation work on Potter's building had commenced: "The structure is to be made absolutely fire-proof. A furnace will be put up on the premises to test the various building materials that Mr. Potter has under consideration. Mr. Starkweather's plans have been adopted, and the work will be pushed as rapidly as good building will permit."²⁸

The World Building fire had occurred while Potter's 746-750 Broadway building was under construction, and the firms working on that project were retained for the construction of the Potter Building.²⁹ The day after architect N.G. Starkweather filed his plans for the Potter Building, the *New York Times* announced that the eleven-story office building, with ground-story commercial spaces, was to cost \$700,000, and that "the materials used in the construction of the walls and front will be the best bricks, pressed bricks, terra cotta, and iron . . . The roof and floor beams will be of rolled iron, and all floors, except the basement, will be laid on iron girders."³⁰ The *Record & Guide* in March 1884 reported that "the Potter building is going forward rapidly."³¹ Five companies apparently supplied the exterior cast iron and interior structural ironwork for the building (New York City Iron Works, J.M. Duclos & Co., H.W. Adams & Co., Lehigh Iron Co., and Jackson

Architectural Iron Works), while Thomas Armstrong was the mason.³² The *Fireman's Herald* thought that "the new structure will be famous as the result of much thought and many experiments in order to put up an ideal fireproof building, and it will endure for ages . . . The work is not done by contract, but by the day, and every detail undergoes inspection."³³ In addition, there was a bricklayers' strike in 1884,³⁴ thus the estimated cost of the project in May 1885 rose to 1.2 million dollars. Construction was completed at the end of June 1886.

Today the Potter Building is recognized as an important and rare surviving example of an 1880s fireproofed New York office building with interior framing mostly of iron. The independent exterior brick walls vary in thickness from forty inches on the ground story to twenty inches on the upper stories. Interior hollow cast-iron structural columns are encased in wire netting covered with "lime water," fire brick, and plaster; flanged wrought-iron joists, set into the brick walls, carry wrought-iron beams; flat-arch tile fireproofing ("a specially constructed brick of the best fire-resisting qualities"),³⁵ between and encasing the joists, is coated with plaster; and floors are laid with concrete and pieces of stone and brick. In each of the building's wings (to the east and west of the light court) an interior masonry wall is set perpendicular to the court, for additional floor support and bracing of the building.³⁶ The *Fireman's Herald* opined that "on the floors and ceilings depend the whole theory and practice of fire-proofing."³⁷ *King's Handbook of New York* in 1892 called the Potter Building "one of the most substantially constructed and absolutely fireproof among the office buildings in the metropolis."³⁸ Besides the eleven above-ground stories, the building has two basement stories; four passenger elevators were originally located in a lobby that extended through the north end of the building.

Design of the Potter Building

The Potter Building, designed by a non-New York architect with a picturesque, flamboyant fusion of Queen Anne, neo-Grec, Renaissance Revival, and Colonial Revival motifs, was distinguished stylistically from most downtown Manhattan office buildings. The vertically-expressed design, executed in red brick and brownstone-colored terra cotta above a cast-iron-clad base, is organized by continuous piers flanking paired fenestration. The

northernmost bay on both the Park Row and Nassau Street facades is narrower, corresponding functionally to the interior elevator halls. Articulation on all three facades is similar, the walls elaborated by ornamental terra-cotta capitals, pediments, segmental arches, panels, and corbelling. The building's brickwork, incorporating molding and patterns, is among the handsomest in New York City. The quadrilateral shape of the lot and the acute angle created by the juncture of Park Row and Beekman Street were skillfully adapted into the design, which features a dramatic, colossal three-quarter-round column terminating in a pinnacle on this primary corner. The roofline is further punctuated by finials and broken scroll pediments with urns. Several elements of the Potter Building can be seen in Starkweather's earlier work, such as an overall picturesqueness, exploitation of a dramatic corner, the use of prominent pinnacles and pediments, and elaboration of windows. The Potter Building provided an interesting contrast with its adjacent neighbors, the slightly earlier Temple Court and Morse Buildings.

Contemporary comment on the Potter Building was decidedly mixed (as it was with most prominent tall buildings of the late nineteenth century in New York). A critic with the *Record & Guide* in 1885 was particularly scathing, stating that "there is not an interesting or refined piece of detail in the whole building . . . All the good work that has been done in recent architecture has been thrown away on the designer of the Potter building, which is coarse, pretentious, overloaded and intensely vulgar."³⁹ Interestingly, this critic also viewed unfavorably the verticality of the design (a hallmark of later favorable criticism on the progression of skyscraper design):

*There is no effort visible anywhere to broaden the fronts and keep them down. There is not an emphatic horizontal line anywhere, with the single exception of the main cornice. Even the demarcation between the principal divisions is not brought out, while the vertical lines are everywhere emphasized so as to make the building look spindling.*⁴⁰

Carpentry and Building in 1885 remarked, however, that

one of the most conspicuous new buildings in the lower part of New York City is the Potter Building . . . noticeable to the casual visitor particularly on account of its high [sic], and also on account of the combined use of iron and brick on the outside walls . . . A

*prominent feature of the building is the extensive use of terra-cotta . . . The front of the principal story and the story immediately above it are of cast iron. Iron trimmings are also used in some of the stories above these, and a judicious combination of iron with brick, and iron with terra-cotta, is a marked feature of the exterior treatment.*⁴¹

King's Handbook in 1892 thought that "the really noble proportions of the Potter Building, and the impressive character of its architecture, make it one of the great and illustrious monuments of commercial success in the Empire City."⁴² And in 1899 the *History of Architecture and the Building Trades of Greater New York* found that the building "as a design is unusual and perhaps excessive in detail, but has great interest in the disposition of its masses."⁴³

The Potter Building is an early example, and one of the earliest surviving, of a New York office building having a C-shaped plan with a major light court facing the street (here Beekman Street). The *Record & Guide* noted that the court was "similar to those of the Post and Mills buildings," while the *Fireman's Herald* thought the building "is so divided that it looks almost like two buildings."⁴⁴ Today the Potter Building is one of New York's most notable surviving tall office buildings of the period prior to the full development of the skyscraper. Its significance is enhanced by the fact that its original design is nearly intact (except for alterations to the commercial base and light court). Its visibility is heightened by its prominent location on Park Row facing City Hall Park and by its three fully articulated facades.

The Potter Building and Architectural Terra Cotta in New York City⁴⁵

While there were several attempts in the 1850s to employ terra cotta for architectural ornament in New York,⁴⁶ it was after the Chicago and Boston fires of 1871-72 that terra cotta began to be used as a significant interior and exterior building material in the United States. Walter Geer observed that "by these fires it was conclusively demonstrated that fire-proof buildings could not be made of unprotected stone or iron, and that only brick and terra-cotta walls were practically fire-proof. This increased use of brick work, and of terra-cotta as a constructive and decorative material in connection with brick work, revived the demand for the manufacture of this material in or near New York."⁴⁷ Advantages seen in terra cotta for both

exterior architectural ornament and interior fireproofing included its fireproof properties, strength, durability, lower cost and weight in shipping and handling, the relative ease with which elaborate decoration could be molded, and the retention over time of crisp ornamental profiles compared to stone. In the 1870s and early 1880s architectural terra cotta was often a color that matched stone (commonly brownstone, buff or red) that could be employed in pleasant juxtaposition with brick, or as a substitute for brownstone. The *Record & Guide* remarked that during this period "terra cotta is most generally used for the trimming and ornamentation of buildings, taking the form of panels, courses, friezes, small tiles, roofing tiles and paving blocks."⁴⁸

George B. Post was the leader in New York City in the use of exterior terra cotta, in his designs for the Braem House (1878-80, demolished), 15 East 37th Street;⁴⁹ Long Island Historical Society (1878-81), 128 Pierrepont Street, Brooklyn, for which a contemporary said "the material has been employed, for the first time in the United States, both for the building material and for all decorative details";⁵⁰ New York Produce Exchange (1881-84, demolished), 2 Broadway; and Mills Building. Among other contemporary architects who employed terra cotta were Silliman & Farnsworth, in the Morse Building, then considered the first prominent New York office building to employ exterior terra cotta (though it was used sparingly for architectural details, in conjunction with molded red and black brick), and Temple Court Building; and Kimball & Wisedell, designers of the Casino Theater (1881-82, demolished), 1400 Broadway, an early New York building having highly intricate, exotic terra-cotta ornament.

The Potter Building was an early and significant building to employ extensive exterior architectural terra cotta. (*King's Handbook* in 1892 claimed, inaccurately, that it was "the first building erected in this city which was elaborately ornamented with terra cotta."⁵¹) Today the building is a rare survivor of that period of development of terra cotta in New York. The terra cotta on the Potter Building, highly sculpted in comparison to the lower relief terra-cotta panels and more judicious use of terra cotta found more typically on contemporary buildings, was produced by the Boston Terra Cotta Co.⁵² One of the first terra cotta firms on the East Coast, the Boston company featured the Potter Building in its 1885 catalogue, declaring that the

terra cotta was "used constructively -- fully demonstrating the great bearing strength (when properly set) of the work made by the Boston Terra Cotta Co."⁵³ The term "constructively" refers to the manner in which the terra cotta was fully integrated into the exterior brick bearing walls of the Potter Building. Some 540 tons of terra cotta were employed in the Potter Building, which was further called in 1888

*an example of the best use of terra-cotta, both for constructive and ornamental purposes . . . No building yet erected in this country is more solidly constructed, and the weight supported by the piers and arches is simply enormous. If stone had been used in place of terra-cotta, the weight to be supported would have been more than doubled, and the risk and cost of handling would have been greatly increased, to say nothing about the first-cost of stone work, as heavily carved and richly ornamented as the terra-cotta work used in this building.*⁵⁴

James Taylor (1839-1898), "the father of American terra cotta,"⁵⁵ was superintendent of the Boston Terra Cotta Co. during construction of the Potter Building. First rising to superintendent of J.M. Blashfield's terra cotta works in Stamford, England, Taylor left and later superintended the Chicago Terra-Cotta Works in 1870-76, the period during which Chicago was the leading location for American terra cotta manufacturing. He advised the establishment of the A. Hall & Sons Fire Brick Works in 1877 (Perth Amboy Terra Cotta Co. after 1879) in New Jersey. After the owner of the Chicago firm collaborated with the Boston Fire Brick Co. after 1876, to meet the demand for terra cotta on the East Coast, this plant subsequently became the Boston Terra Cotta Co. in 1880 and Taylor became superintendent there. Geer reported that Taylor "was frequently in New York supervising the setting of the terra cotta [for the Potter Building], and had numerous opportunities of meeting Mr. Potter, who always personally looked after the construction of his buildings."⁵⁶ O.B. Potter decided to organize his own firm,⁵⁷ the New York Architectural Terra Cotta Co., which was launched in January 1886 with Walter Geer and his father, Asahel Clarke Geer; Taylor was superintendent until he retired in 1893. Ill-starred to say the least, Potter saw his new terra cotta works in Long Island City totally destroyed by fire in July 1886 (it was immediately rebuilt).⁵⁸ The company, the only major architectural terra cotta

firm in New York City, became one of the largest such manufacturers in the United States, remaining in business until bankruptcy in 1932. Walter Geer credited George B. Post and Orlando B. Potter as the two men most responsible for the promotion of terra cotta in New York City, praising Potter for having "employed terra cotta largely in all of the numerous buildings which he erected, and [who] did much by his example, and also by his advocacy of the material on all occasions, to promote and encourage its use."⁵⁹

Early Tenants⁶⁰

King's Handbook mentioned that there were two hundred offices in the Potter Building, "including those of several newspaper and periodical publishers, insurance and other companies, lawyers and professional men."⁶¹ Among its newspaper tenants were the editorial and business offices of *The Press*, a popular penny newspaper founded in 1887 with ties to the Republican party, and the *New York-Observer*, the oldest American religious newspaper, started in 1823 and previously located in the World Building until the fire. Other tenants included Peter Adams Co. and Adams & Bishop Co., manufacturers of fine papers for printing, maps, photography, etc.; the Mutual Reserve Fund Life Association, established in 1881 and the then-largest assessment insurance firm in the world;⁶² the business offices of Otis Brothers & Co., manufacturers of elevators since 1855 and the leading maker of passenger elevators; the New York Architectural Terra Cotta Co. offices; and O.B. Potter himself, on the top floor.

Later History⁶³

After Orlando B. Potter's death in 1894, the Potter Building was conveyed to the O.B. Potter Trust (Estate of Orlando B. Potter),⁶⁴ then in 1913 to O.B. Potter Properties, Inc. Frederick Potter (1856-1923), a lawyer who had assisted his father with family real estate since 1880, became administrator of the estate and later served as president of O.B. Potter Properties.⁶⁵ The firm sold the Potter Building in 1920 to Aronson Investing Co., Inc., "relinquished in the best interests of the [Potter] Estate with the changes brought about in the city's development."⁶⁶ O.B. Potter's daughter, Blanche, stated that, due to financial worries in 1919, the family sold some of its real estate, including the Potter and Empire Buildings.⁶⁷ In 1923 the Potter Building was conveyed to Parbee

Realty Corp., then to Gening Realty Corp. in 1929, to 38 Park Row Corp. in 1931, and back to Parbee in 1932. Seaman's Bank for Savings foreclosed on the property in March 1941, holding it until 1945, when it was purchased by Beepark Estates, Inc. (later Beepark Realty Co.). The majority of twentieth-century office tenants were lawyers and accountants. The 38 Park Row Corp. acquired the building in 1954 and held it until 1973, when it was sold to Pace College, which intended to demolish four adjacent buildings for the construction of a large office tower on Park Row. After this scheme fell through, Pace sold the Potter Building in 1979 to 38 Park Row Associates, a joint venture of the East River Savings Bank with the BOMA, Ltd., partnership (Martin J. Raynes and Robert Stang, principals). The building was converted into a cooperative with loft apartments and the property was conveyed to the 38 Park Row Residence Corp. in 1981.

Description⁶⁸

The eleven-story (plus two basement stories) Potter Building has three principal facades, on Park Row, Beekman Street, and Nassau Street; the C-shaped plan of the building allows for a major light court (now altered) above the third story on Beekman Street. The building, of fireproofed construction with mostly iron framing, is clad in cast iron on the two stories of the base, and red brick and brownstone-colored terra cotta on the upper stories. Articulation on the three facades is similar, organized by continuous piers alternating with paired fenestration; there is a high degree of ornamentation in the cast iron, brick, and terra cotta. A colossal three-quarter-round column is placed on the acute primary corner of Park Row and Beekman Street. Windows have one-over-one double-hung wood sash (there are some exterior storm windows). An exterior restoration, performed in 1992-93 by Siri & Marsik, architects, with Henry Restoration, included overall repointing, patching of the terra cotta with Jahn mortar, and some brick replacement.

Base

The two-story base is clad in cast iron. The entire ground story was originally capped by spandrel panels with segmental arches with bosses, while the second story is capped by spandrel panels with pediments. Shopfronts were originally framed with thin cast-iron colonnettes, and had a display window

(some had additional projecting display cases) and a doorway (with a transom) to the right, surmounted by a two-part transom. Historic photographs indicate that doors and entrance transoms were of the multi-pane Queen Anne style. All of the shopfronts have been altered several times over the years, and no historic fabric survives. Shopfronts are currently framed in metal with rolldown gates.

Base: Park Row The northernmost bay of the ground story was originally the entrance to the elevator lobby; it had shallow steps, columns supporting a heavy broken scroll pediment, and double doors. This entrance received a surround with a veneer of polished granite, the entrance steps were removed, and a shop was installed in the former entrance and western portion of the elevator lobby. The ground-story spandrel panels, originally with segmental arches, were covered by cast-stone panels (1941, Hardie Phillip, Alt. 2119-41).

Base: Beekman Street The center of this facade corresponds to the light court above: the ground story originally had an entrance through a triple-arched portico with a projecting pediment supported by bracketed columns (the entrance was altered in 1912, later converted into a shop, and the portico was removed); the second story has three windows flanked by colonnettes. This is the only facade with its original ground-story spandrel panels with segmental arches exposed. A Duclos & Co. iron founder's plate is located on the first pier at the southwest corner of the building.

Base: Nassau Street The northernmost bay of the ground story was originally the entrance to the elevator lobby; it is now the residential entrance, with metal and glass doors and transom (1980). The ground-story spandrel panels, originally with segmental arches, were covered with cast-stone panels in 1941.

Midsection

The midsection consists of seven stories, the ninth story acting as a transition to the upper section. The spandrels above the third, fifth, sixth, and seventh stories are ornamented by corbelling, and the fourth and eighth stories by segmental arches, all of terra cotta. The piers of the eighth story have heavy terra-cotta stylized composite capitals, the corner column at Park Row and Beekman Street having an eagle. The ninth story is capped by a bracketed terra-cotta cornice. Window sills are cast iron.⁶⁹

Beekman Street: Light Court The center section of the Beekman Street facade is the light court. On the third story (below the court) are three windows flanked by cast-iron colonnettes, surmounted by a cast-iron pediment with an acroterion. A T-shaped fire escape was added across the center of the court in 1916-18. The fire escape was extended to the roof, enclosed with parged masonry walls, and braced with steel beams (1979-81). The remaining light court configuration is thus an enclosed interior light court to the north (not visible from the street) and an exposed southern portion, within which extends the enclosed stairway. The northernmost sections of the side walls of this latter (southern) portion of the court still exposed are clad in cream brick.

Upper Section

The two-story upper section has corbelled spandrels above the tenth story and segmental-arched windows with segmental terra-cotta hoods on the eleventh story. Alternate bays are surmounted by pediments. The roofline is punctuated by finials, broken scroll pediments with urns, and a prominent pinnacle above the primary corner column. The roof has later penthouse and service structures.

Report prepared by
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Research Department

NOTES

1. O. B. Potter obit., *New York Times* [hereafter *NYT*], Jan. 3, 1894, 1; "Orlando B. Potter," *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* 1 (New York: James T. White & Co., 1898), 186-187, and *Who Was Who in America*, hist. vol. (Chicago: A.N. Marquis Co., 1963), 421; "Orlando B. Potter Left No Will," *NYT*, Jan. 10, 1894, 12; Blanche Potter, *More Memories: Orlando Bronson Potter and Frederick Potter* (New York: J.J. Little & Ives Co., 1923); Moses King, *King's Photographic Views of New York* (Boston: Moses King, 1895); Margot Gayle and Edmund Gillon, Jr., *Cast-Iron Architecture in New York: A Photographic Survey* (New York: Dover Publ., 1974).
2. Kenneth T. Gibbs, "The Architecture of Norris G. Starkweather" (Univ. of Va., Master's Thesis, 1972); Ed Polk Douglas, historian, telephone interview, Jan. 1996; Sandra Tatman and Roger Moss, *Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects: 1700-1930* (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1985), 614-615, 748-750; N.G. Starkweather, Letter to A.J. Bloor, Mar. 12, 1877, A.I.A. Library and Archives; N.G. Starkweather Certificate of Death (No. 548776-85), NYC Municipal Archives; James T. Wollon, Starkweather Project List (1995); Mills Lane, *Architecture of the Old South: Maryland and Architecture of the Old South* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1991 and 1993); Neal Brooks and Richard Parsons, *Baltimore County Panorama* (Towson, Md.: Baltimore Co. Pub. Lib., 1988); *Ellicott City Bicentennial Journal* (Summer/Fall 1972); Calder Loth, ed., *The Virginia Landmarks Register* (Charlottesville: Univ. Press of Va., 1986); Charles Brownell, Calder Loth, William Rasmussen, and Richard G. Wilson, *The Making of Virginia Architecture* (Richmond: Va. Mus. of Fine Arts, 1992); Christopher Weeks, *A.I.A. Guide to the Architecture of Washington, D.C.* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1994); Pamela Scott and Antoinette Lee, *Buildings of the District of Columbia* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1993); James Goode, *Capital Losses: A Cultural History of Washington's Destroyed Buildings* (Washington: Smithsonian Inst. Press, 1979); David Dunlap, *On Broadway: A Journey Uptown Over Time* (New York: Rizzoli, 1990); *Both Sides of Broadway* (1910), 285; Dennis S. Francis, *Architects in Practice New York City 1840-1900* (New York: Comm. for the Pres. of Archl. Recs., 1979), 33, 72; NYC, Dept. of Taxes, photograph of Second Ave. M.E. Church (c. 1938-40); "Buildings Projected" [Second Ave. M.E. Church], *Real Estate Record & Guide* [hereafter *RERG*], Apr. 29, 1882, 436; *Trow's New York City Directory* (1878-1885).
3. The architect's correct name is Norris Garshom Starkweather (it has frequently been seen in print, incorrectly, as "Nathan Gibson"). He signed his name "Starkweather," but it is also sometimes seen as "Starkwether."
4. Among these were the First Presbyterian Church (1855), Norristown, Pa., and First Baptist Church (1855), Camden, N.J.
5. John C. Gobright, *The Monumental City, or Baltimore Guide Book* (Baltimore: Gobright, 1858), 85-87: cited in Gibbs, 7. The ironwork for the church was produced by engineer Wendel Bollman's Patapsco Bridge and Ironworks, Baltimore: "Some Industrial Archeology of the Monumental City & Environs," Robert Vogel, ed. (Soc. for Indus. Archeology, Apr. 1975), pamphlet.
6. Starkweather designed Pinkney Hall (1855-57), St. John's College, Annapolis; Barnum's City Hotel remodeling (1855-57, demolished), Baltimore; Patapsco Female Institute addition (c. 1857), Ellicott City, Md.; Virginia Theological Seminary buildings (c. 1857-61), Alexandria; St. John's Episcopal Church (1860), near Ellicott City; and Trinity Episcopal Church (1860), Towson, Md. His villas include El Monte, Temora, Wilton, and Chatham (c. 1856-58, the latter two demolished), near Ellicott City; Camden (1856-59), Port Royal, Va.; Grey Rock (1857-61; altered), near Pikesville, Md.; and Mayhurst (1859, attribution), Orange, Va.
7. Plowman was a carpenter-builder listed in Philadelphia directories from 1852 until 1879 (after 1870 he called himself an architect). He continued to work for a time in Washington after his partnership with Starkweather, and was listed as an architect and civil engineer. [Tatman and Moss]. Starkweather & Plowman's commissions included Lincoln Hall (1867, demolished); Freedman's Savings Bank (1869, demolished); and Cooke's Row villas (1868-69) and St. John's Episcopal Church alterations (1868-70; alterations subsequently removed in a restoration), in Georgetown. Starkweather also designed the mansarded Academy Building (1872-74), Convent of the Visitation, Georgetown.
8. Starkweather.
9. Cited in Gibbs, 5.

10. Starkweather was listed as an architect in *Trow's New York City Directory* published that year, as well as a partner of Anderson. Starkweather was living in New Jersey at the time, though he moved to Manhattan by 1884-85. R. Napier Anderson, listed in N.Y.C. directories from 1876 to 1910, began as a partner of Walter Scott West in the firm of West & Anderson in 1876-80.
11. Gibbs (1856-?), born in Washington, D.C., was a young architect who was listed in the census of 1880 as living at the same address in Washington as Starkweather: Gibbs, 42. He was listed in *Trow's N.Y.C. Directory* as a partner of Starkweather in 1881, 1882, and 1884, the last indicating that he lived in Washington.
12. Record and Guide, *A History of Real Estate, Building and Architecture in New York City* (New York: Arno Press, 1967), reprint of 1898 edition, 465.
13. In 1888-89 New York architect Bradford Lee Gilbert used iron skeleton framing for the first seven stories of the eleven-story Tower Building at 50 Broadway (demolished).
14. While a common method of fireproofing metal joists and beams had been the use of brick arches below and poured concrete above, in the 1870s numerous patent systems for fireproofing were introduced, including that of fire-brickmaker Balthasar Kreischer, who patented a system of flat-arch hollow tiles in 1871 (this system was first employed in New York in the U.S. Post Office in 1872-73).
15. Arrangements included a rectangular-O-shaped plan or a C-shaped plan with the light court placed to the side of the adjacent property.
16. See Winston Weisman, "The Commercial Architecture of George B. Post," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 31 (Oct. 1972), 186-187.
17. Gerard Wolfe, *New York: A Guide to the Metropolis* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994), 74-77; Federal Writers' Project, *New York City Guide* (New York: Octagon Bks., 1970), reprint of 1939 edition, 99-100; Edwin Friendly, "Newspapers of Park Row," *Broadway, the Grand Canyon of American Business* (New York: Broadway Assn., 1926), 129-134; Record and Guide, 50-52; Andrew S. Dolkart, *Lower Manhattan Architectural Survey Report* (New York: Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, 1988).
18. Printing House Square is at the northern end of Nassau Street at Park Row and Spruce Street.
19. Among the more significant structures of the mid-nineteenth century located here were the New York Times Building (1857-58, Thomas R. Jackson, demolished), 40 Park Row, and New York Herald Building (1865-67, Kellum & Son, demolished), Broadway and Ann St.
20. The shift of newspapers away from downtown began after the *New York Herald* moved to Herald Square in 1894 and the *New York Times* moved to Longacre Square in 1904, though the *New York Evening Post* constructed a new building in 1906-07 (Robert D. Kohn) at 20 Vesey St. (a designated New York City Landmark), and the majority of newspapers remained downtown through the 1920s.
21. "Out Among the Builders," *REG*, July 14, 1883, 501; "A New Building in Park-Row," *NYT*, July 20, 1883, 8; "An Office Building...", *New-York Daily Tribune*, July 20, 1883, 8; "Buildings Projected" and "Fire Proof Test," *REG*, July 21, 1883, 537-538 and 525; "The New Potter Building," *Building* 3 (May 1885), 89, article reprinted from *The Fireman's Herald*; "The Potter Building," *REG*, June 20, 1885, 701-702; "The Potter Building," *Carpentry and Building*, Sept. 1885, 161-162; Record and Guide; New York County, Office of the Register, Liber Deeds and Conveyances; NYC, Dept. of Buildings, Manhattan, Plans, Permits and Dockets (NB 820-1883); Blanche Potter; Moses King, *King's Handbook of New York* (Boston: Moses King, 1892), 778-779; *Trow's*; Gayle and Gillon.
22. The price was in excess of \$475,000, Potter desiring it "as a permanent investment for my family." B. Potter, 40.
23. According to the *Fireman's Herald* in 1885 ["The New Potter Building"]. That publication also reported that "Mr. Potter, the owner of the building, has been severely criticised for some guilt or sin in the matter, but ... we believe ... Mr. Potter is certainly not to be blamed." The *Herald* reported that the possible cause of the blaze was a malfunction of the boiler and chimney of the nearby Temple Court Building. The case was brought before a grand jury, but Potter was absolved.

24. "That Fire," *REG*, Feb. 4, 1882, 95.
25. Potter lost "at least \$200,000 above insurance, and at least half my income is stopped ..." B. Potter, 129.
26. "Out Among the Builders," *REG*, Feb 18, 1882, 142.
27. The *Record & Guide* reported that "O.B. Potter has, it is said, decided to go on with his great structure . . . He had, it seems, made up his mind to postpone the building till such time as labor and material would be down to lower figures." ["Out Among the Builders, *REG*, May 20, 1882, 499]. As late as February 1883, however, Potter was reportedly in negotiations with the *New York Sun* over the sale of the site to that newspaper for a new building; he held out for \$800,000, which the paper refused. ["About Printing House Square," *REG*, Feb. 10, 1883, 57].
28. "Out Among the Builders," *REG*, Apr. 21, 1883, 163. During the foundation work in July 1883, two small temporary buildings were constructed, one with wood joists and the other with iron joists fireproofed with flat-arch hollow tiles; the structures were then set on fire for three days in order to test which was the better material (iron won out).
29. The seven-story 746-750 Broadway building, intended as a hotel with stores, was designed by Starkweather & Gibbs in the neo-Grec style, constructed with interior wood framing, and executed in brick, terra cotta (supplied by the Boston Terra Cotta Co.), and ironwork (by Jackson Architectural Iron Works), with [Owen] Moran & [Lancelot] Armstrong as masons/builders.
30. *NYT*, July 20, 1883.
31. "Prominent Buildings Underway," *REG*, Mar. 22, 1884, 289. The article also indicated that "the main fronts of the building will be on Park row and Beekman street, though that on the latter will be more imposing."
32. The first four companies are listed in *Carpentry and Building*, 161. A Duclos founder's plate is still located on the southwest corner of the building (also cited in Gayle and Gillon, 7). Jackson Architectural Iron Works is mentioned in *Record and Guide*, 485-486. The Jackson firm, established in 1840 in New York City by James L. Jackson, was one of the city's oldest iron works. The business expanded throughout the nineteenth century, particularly after the Civil War, as the demand grew for both structural and ornamental ironwork, as well as structural steelwork in later years. The company was considered a leader in the production and development of structural ironwork in New York. Among the many buildings for which Jackson supplied the metalwork were the Bowling Green Offices Building, American Museum of Natural History, Carnegie Hall, Puck Building, Tower Building (demolished), and American Surety Co. Building. The first four buildings are designated New York City Landmarks. Thomas Armstrong, listed in *Trow's* as a mason, at a different address than Moran & Armstrong, probably had a familial connection with that firm.
33. "The New Potter Building."
34. As late as May 1886 the *Record & Guide* stated that "several architects and builders [have] complained of the effect of the unsettled condition of the labor market upon building, and the consequent delay in the erection of new work which otherwise would have now been underway." "Building Down Town," *REG*, May 8, 1886, 601.
35. "The New Potter Building."
36. These walls are indicated on an original framing plan reprinted in Sarah B. Landau and Carl Condit, *Rise of the New York Skyscraper, 1865-1913* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1996), 140.
37. "The New Potter Building."
38. *King's Handbook*, 778.
39. *REG*, June 20, 1885, 702.
40. *Ibid.*
41. *Carpentry and Building*, 161.
42. *King's Handbook*, 778.

43. *History of Architecture and the Building Trades of Greater New York* (New York: Union History Co., 1899), 101.
44. *RERG*, June 20, 1885, 701, and "The New Potter Building."
45. Boston Terra Cotta Co., *Catalogue* (Boston: P.H. Foster & Co., 1884 and 1885); Walter Geer, *Terra-Cotta in Architecture* (New York: Gazlay Bros., 1891) and *The Story of Terra Cotta* (New York: Tobias A. Wright, 1920); "The Use of Terra Cotta in Building," *RERG*, Mar. 3, 1883, 85; Charles T. Davis, "Architectural Terra Cotta - I," *American Architect and Building News* 17 (June 6, 1885), 267; Michael Stratton, *The Terra Cotta Revival* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1993); Robert C. Mack, "The Manufacture and Use of Architectural Terra Cotta in the United States," *The Technology of Historic American Buildings: Studies of the Materials, Craft Processes, and the Mechanization of Building Construction*, H. Ward Jandl, ed. (Washington: Fdtn. for Pres. Technol., 1983), 117-119; Susan Tunick, "Architectural Terra Cotta: Its Impact on New York," *Sites* 18 (1986); Record and Guide ["A Review of Architectural Terra-cotta," James Taylor], 509-528; James Taylor, "The History of Terra Cotta in New York City," *Architectural Record* 2 (Oct.-Dec. 1892), 137-142; "Artistic Brickwork -- The Morse Building," *Carpentry and Building* 1 (June and July 1879), 101-103 and 121-123. The author would like to thank Susan Tunick for her comments and for sharing her research on terra cotta.
46. Historians of terra cotta credit the Trinity Building (1851-53, Richard Upjohn, demolished), 111 Broadway, and the St. Denis Hotel (1853, James Renwick, altered), 797 Broadway, as two of the first structures in New York City to employ terra cotta for exterior architectural ornament.
47. Geer, *Terra-Cotta ...*, 20.
48. *RERG*, Mar. 3, 1883.
49. The correct address was determined by Landau and Condit, 409.
50. Davis. The building (now the Brooklyn Historical Society) is located in the Brooklyn Heights Historic District and is a designated New York City Interior Landmark.
51. *King's Handbook*, 778.
52. The Boston Terra Cotta Co., which produced the exterior terra cotta for many of the contemporary buildings in New York, lasted until 1893. Geer noted that four other companies (Perth Amboy, H.A. Lewis, A. Hall, and Burns-Russell) also bid on the Potter Building project: *The Story ...*, 84.
53. Boston Terra Cotta Co. (1885), 92B.
54. New York Architectural Terra Cotta Co., *New York Architectural Terra-Cotta Company* (New York: Lowe & Co., 1888), 17-18.
55. Tunick, 8.
56. Geer, *The Story ...*, 87-88.
57. It is not clear whether this resulted from his experience with the Potter Building, realization of the demand for and potential profits from terra cotta, or from being convinced by or convincing Taylor of the need for a company in New York. Geer stated that "the demand for terra-cotta continued to steadily increase in New York, until it far exceeded the capacity of local manufacturers to supply it, and even threatened to make the use of the material unpopular on account of delays which often occurred in the execution of orders," not to mention shipping costs. Geer, *Terra-Cotta ...*, 21.
58. *Building 5* (July 24, 1886), 38. The N.Y. Architectural Terra Cotta Works Building (1892, Francis H. Kimball), 42-10 -- 42-16 Vernon Blvd., Queens, the plant office of the firm, is a designated New York City Landmark. [See: LPC, *New York Architectural Terra Cotta Works Building* (LP-1304) (New York: City of New York, 1982), report prepared by Patricia Florio]. Besides fires at his World Building and terra cotta works, Potter suffered fires at Dodworth Hall (806-808 Broadway) and 746-750 Broadway building (c. 1885), as well as heavy bomb damage at the Empire (Arcade) Building at 71 Broadway in 1891.
59. Geer, *The Story ...*, 94.

60. *King's Photographic Views; King's Handbook.*
61. *King's Handbook*, 778.
62. Mutual was headquartered in the Potter Building prior to the construction of its own building (1892-94, William H. Hume) at 305 Broadway.
63. "Transfer of the Potter Estate," *NYT*, Feb. 1, 1894, 1; F. Potter obit., *NYT*, Mar. 24, 1923, 13; N.Y. County; "Orlando B. Potter," *Encyclopedia of American Biography* 5 (New York: Amer. Hist. Soc., 1936), 235-236; *Manhattan Address Directory* (1930-1975); "2 Downtown Office Buildings to Be Covered to Co-ops," *NYT*, Apr. 4, 1980, A16.
64. The building was worth \$2.5 million. O.B. Potter obit.
65. The Estate commissioned the Empire Building (1897-98, Kimball & Thompson), 71 Broadway, on the site the elder Potter had purchased in 1884, as well as 740-744 Broadway (1910-12, Francis H. Kimball). The Empire Building, a designated New York City Landmark, is one of New York City's earliest steel skeletal-frame curtain-wall skyscrapers set on pneumatic caissons. After Frederick's death, his son Orlando B. Potter II became president of the firm.
66. "Potter," *Encyclopedia...*, 236.
67. Blanche Potter, *Recollections of a Little Life* (New York: William E. Rudge, 1927), 240.
68. NYC, Dept. of Buildings; Hurley & Farinella, *Potter Building Alteration Drawings* (1979); Hyun & Siri [Siri & Marsik], *Report on Building Facade Repairs and Specifications for Facade Remedial Repairs* (1990); "Preserving the Terra Cotta: \$1 Million Facelift," *NYT*, Mar. 8, 1992, X, 1.
69. Landau and Condit (p. 139) indicate that some lintels are wrought-iron lintel beams covered with terra cotta.

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

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the Potter Building, one of New York's most significant surviving tall office buildings of the period prior to the full development of the skyscraper, was constructed in 1883-86 to the design of N.G. Starkweather, an architect who had formerly practiced in Baltimore and Washington, D.C.; that it was commissioned by Orlando B. Potter, a prominent figure in New York politics with prime commercial real estate holdings in Manhattan; that in replacing the World Building (also owned by Potter and destroyed by fire in 1882), Potter was determined to build a structure with the most advanced fireproofing then available; that it was one of the group of important tall office buildings, most associated with New York's newspapers, that redeveloped Park Row and adjacent Nassau Street, beginning in the 1870s; that the eleven-story Potter Building was distinguished stylistically from most downtown buildings, with its picturesque, flamboyant fusion of Queen Anne, neo-Grec, Renaissance Revival, and Colonial Revival motifs; that the vertically-expressed design is executed in red brick and brownstone-colored terra cotta above a cast-iron-clad base, and that among its distinctive features are continuous piers, some of the handsomest brickwork in New York City, a dramatic, colossal three-quarter-round column terminating in a pinnacle on the acute primary corner of Park Row and Beekman Street, walls elaborated by ornamental pediments, segmental arches, panels, and corbelling, and a roofline punctuated by finials and broken scroll pediments with urns; that the Potter Building was an early building to employ extensive exterior architectural terra cotta, which was highly sculpted as produced by the Boston Terra Cotta Co. and employed in a notable "constructive" manner in the loadbearing walls, and is a rare survivor of that period of development of terra cotta in New York; that it is a significant surviving example of a New York office building with interior framing mostly of iron, as well as one of the earliest surviving examples of an office building having a C-shaped plan with a major light court facing the street (here Beekman Street); and that its significance is enhanced by the fact that its original design is nearly intact (except for alterations to the commercial base and light court), while its visibility is heightened by its prominent location facing City Hall Park and by its three fully articulated facades.

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 Potter Building, 35-38 Park Row (aka 2-8 Beekman Street and 139-145 Nassau Street), Borough of Manhattan, and designates Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 101, Lot 1, as its Landmark Site.

POTTER BUILDING

Park Row Beckman & Nassau Sts.

NEW YORK

CITY

OFFICES OF THE

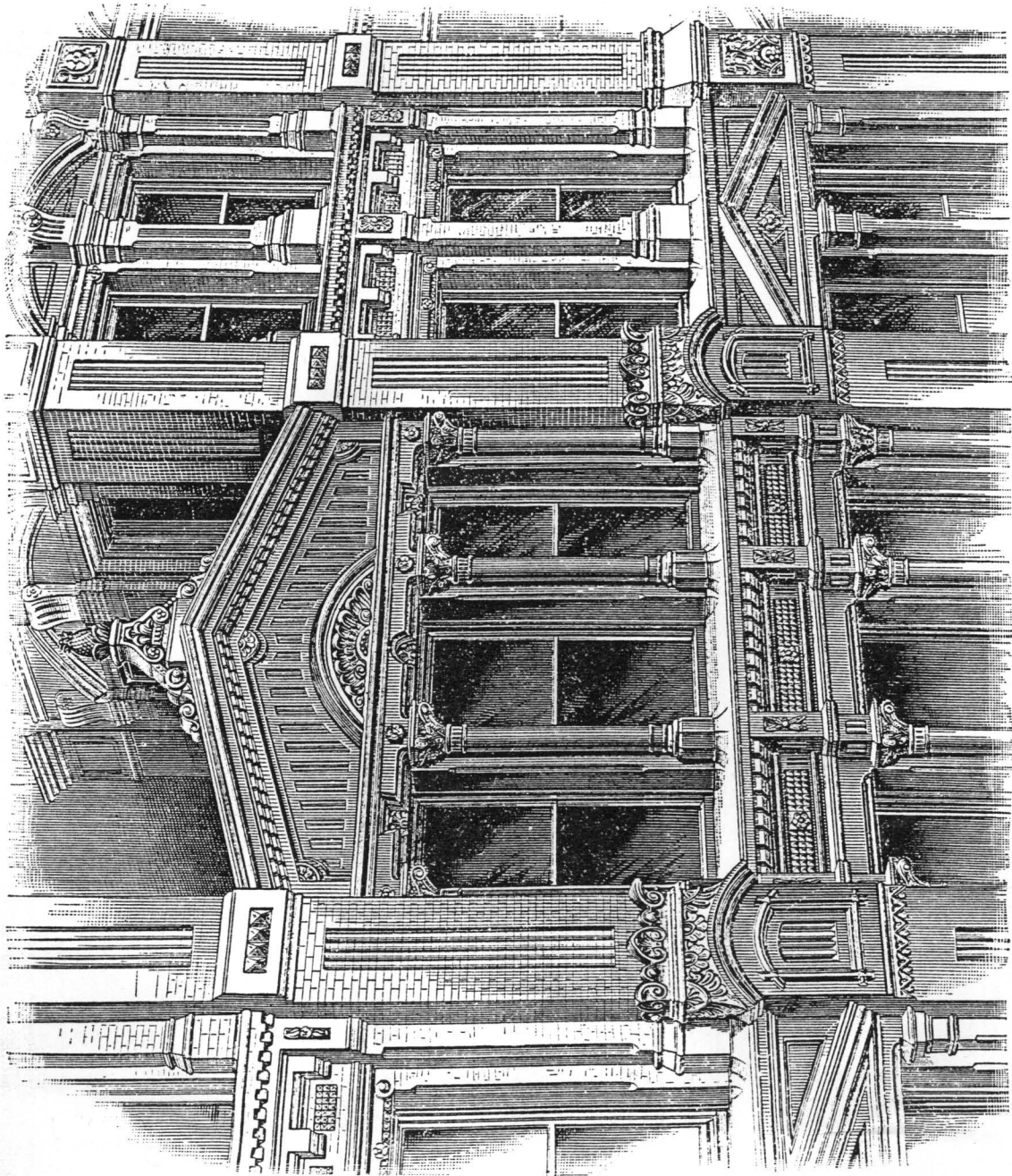
New York Architectural

TERRA-COTTA

COMPANY



Potter Building, 35-38 Park Row, Manhattan
New York Architectural Terra-Cotta Company (1888)

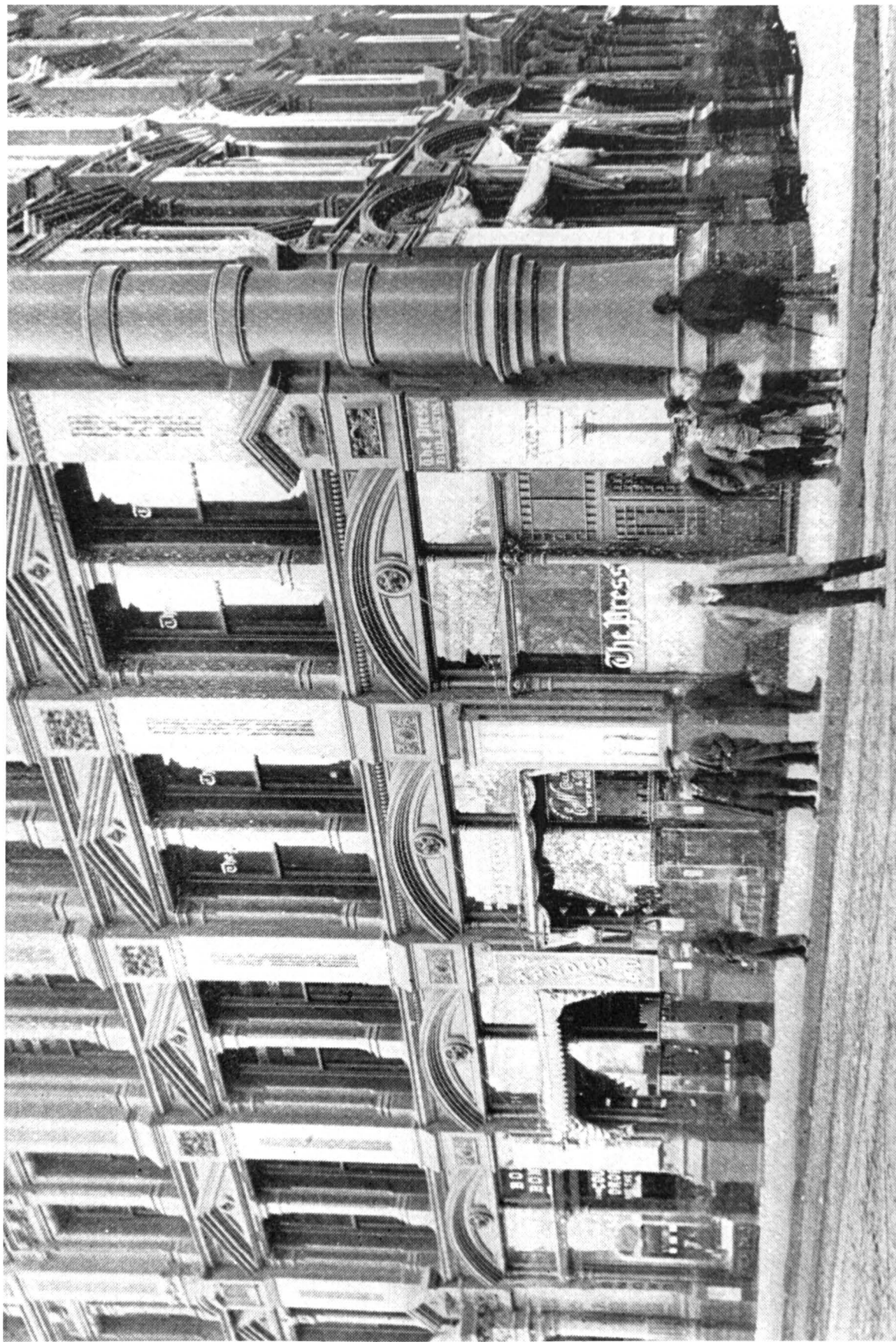


Potter Building, Beekman Street facade, detail
Source: *Carpentry and Building* (Sept. 1885)

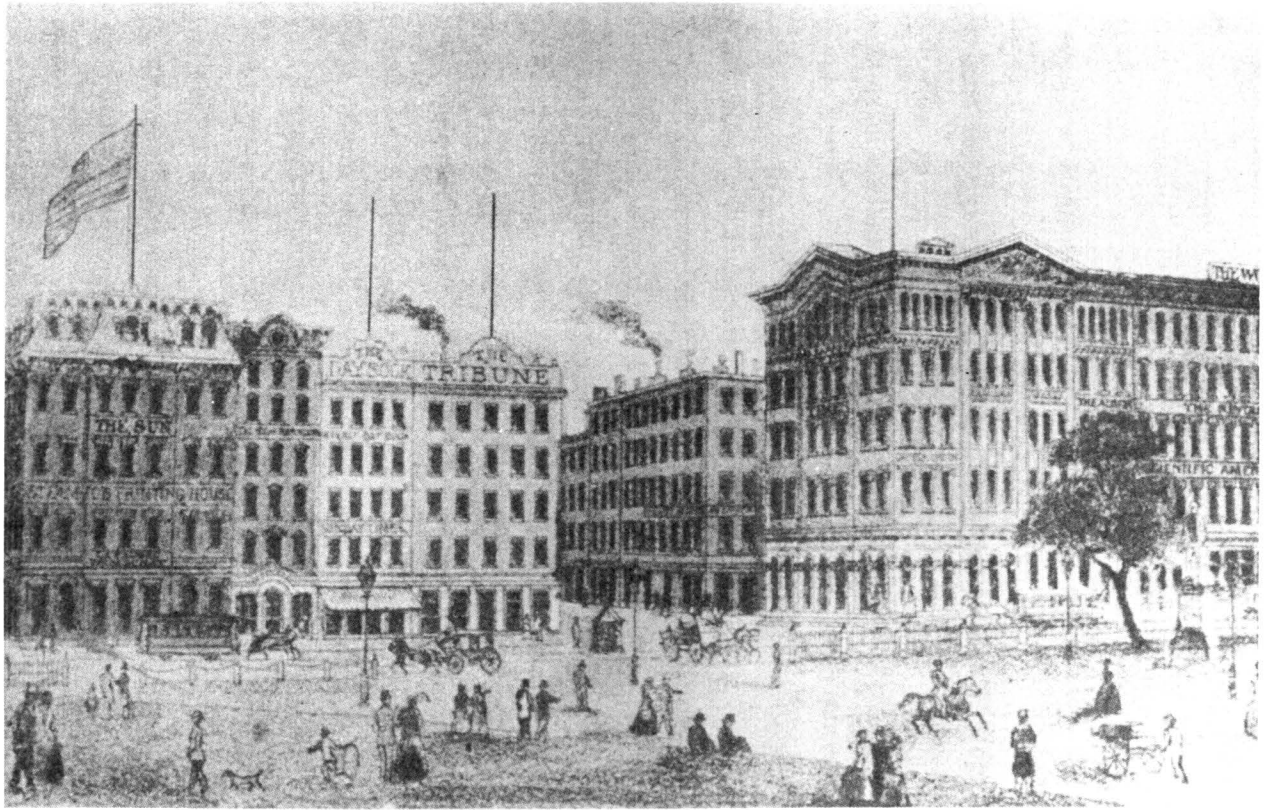


Potter Building

Source: *King's Photographic Views of New York* (1895)



Potter Building, base of building
Source: *King's Photographic Views of New York* (1895)



Printing House Square in 1868 (World Building at extreme right)
Source: *A History of Real Estate, Building and Architecture in New York City* (1898)

Printing House Square (Potter Building at extreme right)
Photo: *Greater New York Illustrated* (1905)





746-750 Broadway (1881-83, Starkweather & Gibbs)
Source: *Both Sides of Broadway* (1910)



Potter Building, Park Row facade
Photo: Carl Forster



Potter Building, Beekman Street facade (left) and Nassau Street facade (right)
Photo: Carl Forster



Potter Building, Beekman Street facade
Photo: Carl Forster



Potter Building, base, cast iron detail

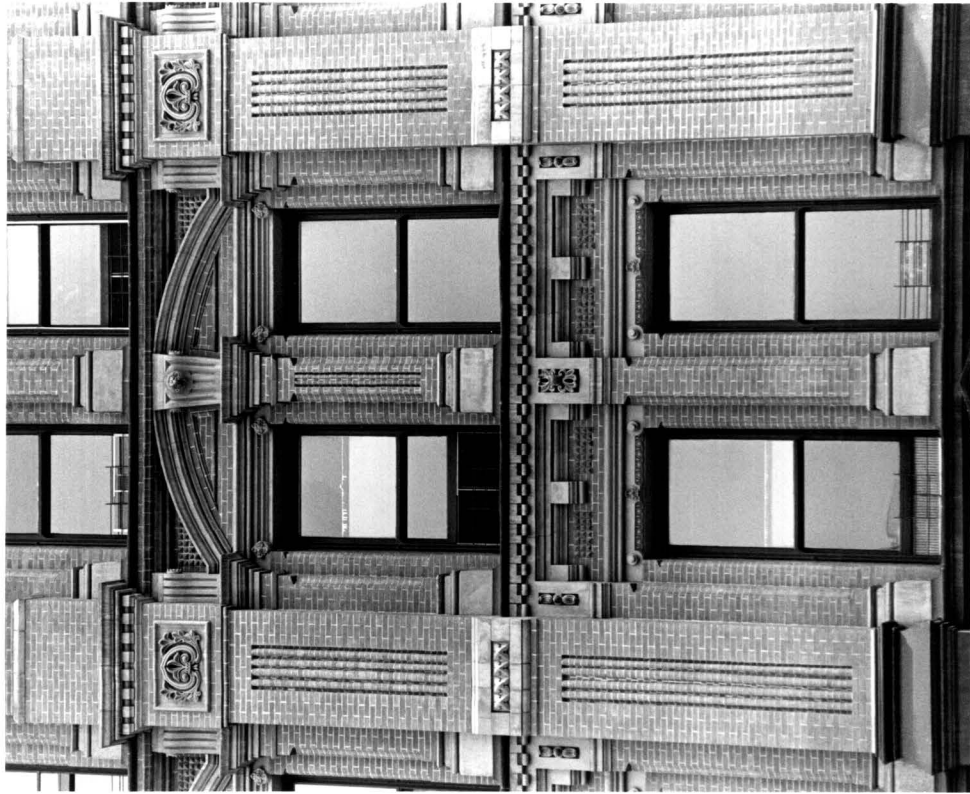
Potter Building, second and third stories, cast iron detail
Photos: Carl Forster





Potter Building, eighth-story terra cotta details
Photos: Carl Forster

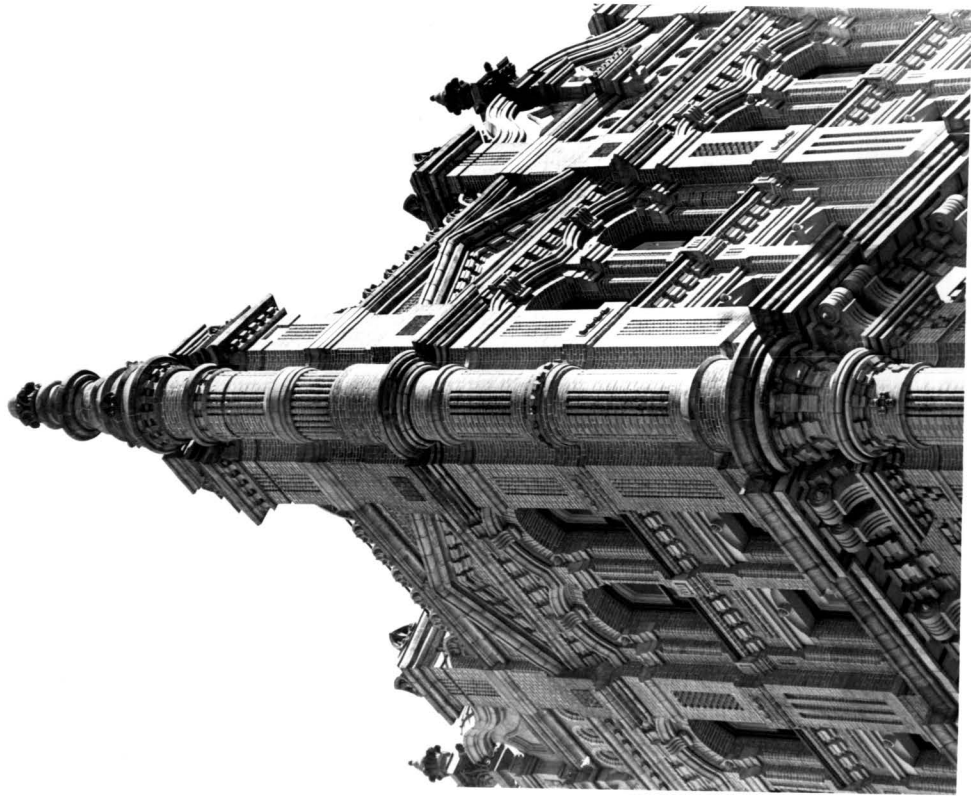




Potter Building, third and fourth stories, detail

Potter Building, eighth to tenth stories, detail
Photos: Carl Forster

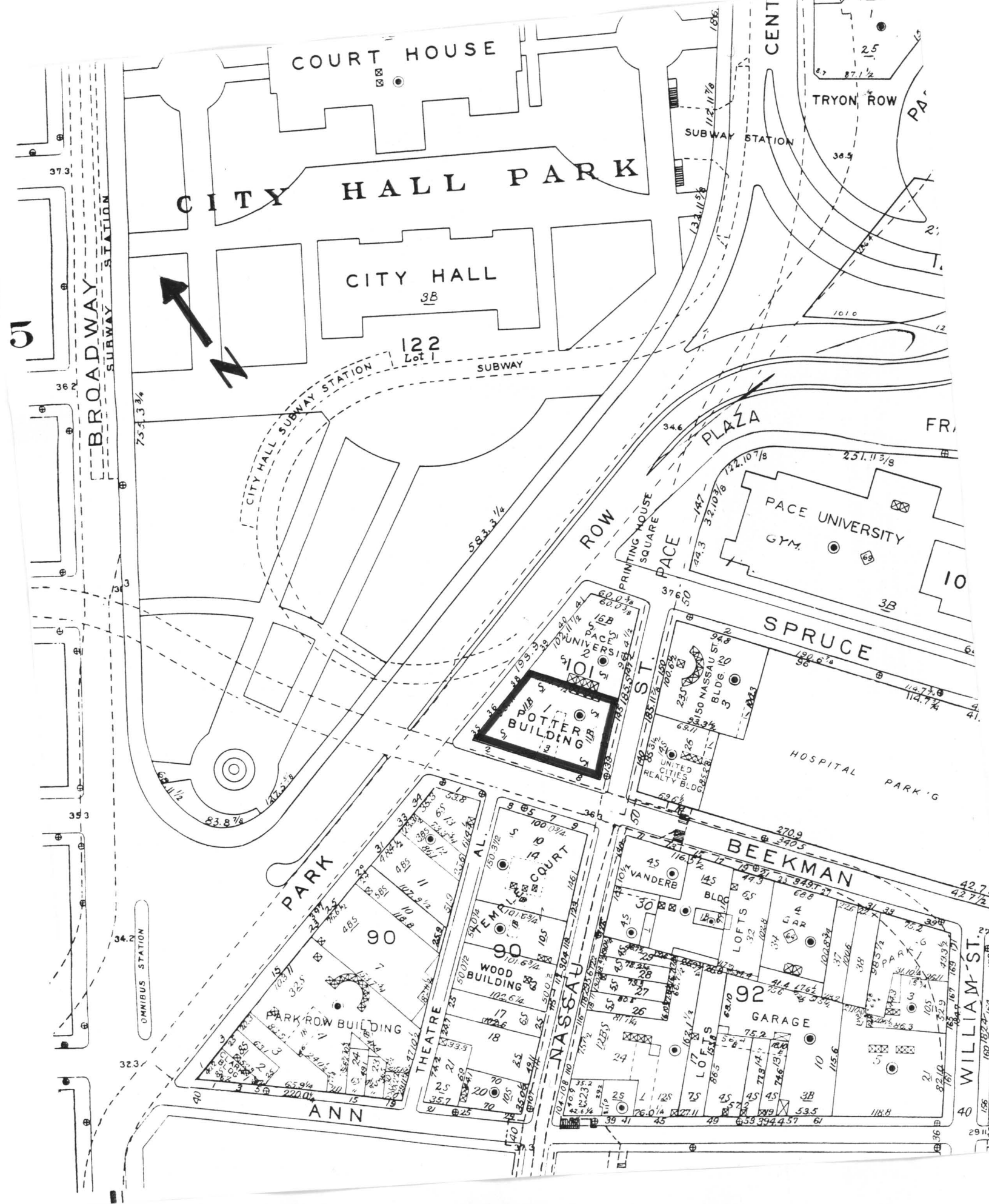




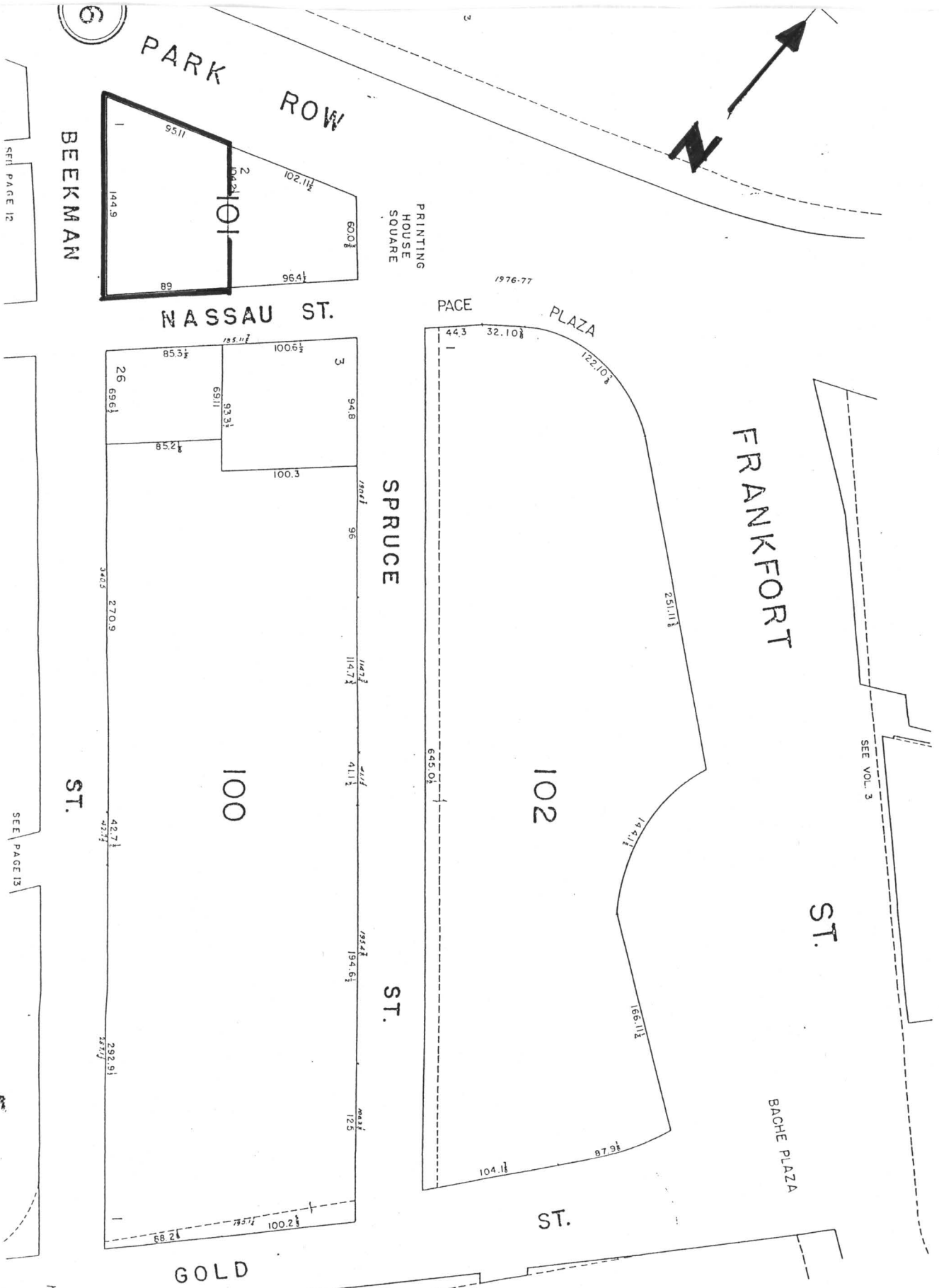
Potter Building, roofline corner pinnacle

Potter Building, roofline broken scroll pediment
Photos: Carl Forster





Potter Building
 Source: Sanborn, Manhattan Land Book (1995-96), pl. 6



Potter Building
 Landmark Site: Manhattan Tax Map Block 101, Lot 1
 Source: Dept. of Finance, City Surveyor, Tax Map