

CUNARD BUILDING, 25 Broadway (aka 13-27 Broadway, 13-39 Greenwich Street, and 1-9 Morris Street), Manhattan. Designed 1917-19; built 1920-21. Benjamin Wistar Morris, architect, and Carrère & Hastings, consulting architects.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 13, Lot 27.

On May 16, 1995, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the Cunard Building and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 3). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Eleven witnesses spoke in favor of designation, including Councilwoman Kathryn Freed and representatives of State Senator Catherine Abate, the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, the Municipal Art Society, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, the Fine Arts Federation, and the Seaport Task Force of Community Board 1. No one spoke in opposition to designation. A representative of the owner attended the hearing but took no position regarding the proposed designation. The Commission has received several letters and other statements in support of designation including a resolution from Community Board 1.

Summary

Located at the head of Bowling Green and extending through the block to Greenwich Street, the twenty-two-story Cunard Building is among lower Manhattan's most architecturally and historically significant edifices. It was designed in 1917-19 by Benjamin Wistar Morris, a talented architect who received much critical acclaim for his scheme. The building's refined neo-Renaissance skin embellishes a structure that used subtle setbacks and ample, well-located open courts to address the natural light and ventilation demands made by the 1916 Zoning Resolution. Morris's tripartite design for the limestone facade — an important component of the masonry "canyon" walls which have come to symbolize lower Manhattan and especially lower Broadway — is characterized by its arcaded first story, the arrangement of which is a reflection



of the varied spaces within, and two loggia-like elements of the central section, which visually balance the slightly projecting end pavilions. The judiciously employed nautical iconographic program of Rochette & Parzini is an acknowledgment of the client and principal occupant of the building, the Cunard Steamship Line Ltd. Founded in 1840 by Nova Scotia businessman Samuel Cunard, the Cunard company pioneered transatlantic shipping and travel. From mid-century on, Cunard maintained a presence on or near Bowling Green, as part of "Steamship Row," and eventually erected this building, its own New York headquarters, in 1920-21. The building was built through Cunard's affiliate, the Twenty-five Broadway Corporation, an organization which retained ownership until the 1960s, when operations were moved uptown.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Development of the Site

Situated at the southernmost section of Broadway, where that thoroughfare widens into Bowling Green, the site of 25 Broadway has long been associated with maritime trade and travel.¹ As early as 1660, the location contained several Dutch colonial dwellings, one of which belonged to Lucas Andries, a skipper and part-owner of a trading yacht. In 1846, Swiss-born restaurateurs Joseph and Lorenzo Delmonico, who had been revolutionizing the eating habits of New Yorkers at other downtown locations since the 1820s, opened a restaurant and hotel on the site. Reopened as the Stevens House hotel in 1856, it was frequented by many whose fame derives from their association with shipping and other mercantile interests. The "Stevens House" name survived into the twentieth century, when, as "the executive office centre for shipping interests in this country,"² it applied to two five-story buildings at the northeast corner of the block, and counted among its occupants the Russian-American Line Steamship Company. Three other edifices on the site along Broadway accommodated restaurants, an art publisher, a haberdasher, and the offices of the Anchor Line Steamship Company. Facing Greenwich Street, along the western side of the site, stood a series of masonry buildings owned by the Manhattan Railway Company and used as a repository for property lost on subway and elevated trains of the IRT Company. Among the small structures which had stood facing Morris Street was the former home of Aaron Burr.

In February 1918 the long-established real estate firm of Irons & Todd acquired the individual lots for \$5 million and formed the construction concern of Todd, Irons & Robertson, Inc.³ in preparation for the erection of a large office building to be turned over after its completion to the Twenty-Five Broadway Corporation, led by Cunard official Thomas Ashley Sparks.⁴ Cunard's decision to build its own headquarters in New York — contemporaneous to the remodeling in 1919-21 of No. 1 Broadway for the headquarters of the International Mercantile Marine Company — signaled the city's growing supremacy as a world port. The assemblage of property was the largest single possession in the lower part of Manhattan at that time and the largest real estate transaction since the preparations for erecting the Equitable Building a few blocks further north on Broadway.

Cunard Lines Company⁵

A leading Nova Scotia businessman engaged in banking, lumbering, shipping, and shipbuilding enterprises, Samuel Cunard (1787-1865) became a pioneer of regular transatlantic steam navigation. He was a co-owner of the first Canadian steamboat to

cross the Atlantic, in 1833, from Canada to England, and six years later received the contract from the British government to carry the mails fortnightly to and from Liverpool, Halifax, and Boston. In association with others, he formed the British and North American Royal Mail Steam Packet Company, which with its four ships began the first regular steamship service between the continents in 1840, and was a turning point in the conquest of steam over sail. During that year "Cunard's Line of Mail Steam Ships"⁶ published its first advertisement in New York; customers could send mail overseas via Cunard's New York agent, William F. Harnden, whose one-year-old express service between New York and Boston was the first in the nation.

When in 1847 a New York-based competitor arranged to run a federally-subsidized steam-packet line directly between New York and Europe, Cunard responded by establishing direct service on a weekly basis between New York (via the Hudson River piers in Jersey City) and Liverpool; eventually service was extended to Glasgow and other European ports. By the 1850s Samuel's son, Edward, was listed in city directories as the representative of his father's company, which maintained its address at 4 Bowling Green for many years. That site and its neighbors, collectively known as "Steamship Row" after all the ticket-booking agents there, were replaced in 1899-1907 by the United States Custom House. Subsequently, Cunard moved its offices to 29 Broadway and 21-24 State Street among other downtown sites, before building its new headquarters at 25 Broadway.

Cunard fared well in the competitive market of transporting passengers and packages across the Atlantic. To attract well-to-do customers, the ships soon introduced steam heating and spacious, well-illuminated public rooms. By the late nineteenth century, Cunard was closely associated with luxurious travel, far outstripping its rivals in that regard and thus emerging as the premier British passenger line. Furthermore, beginning in the 1860s, ships transported many emigrants to North America in steerage, thus profiting from travel by low-income passengers as well. Such dominance required constant innovation to increase speed, safety, and (for some) comfort: as the decades passed, technological advances replaced the 200-foot-long wood paddle ships of the 1840s with the 600-foot-long quadruple-screw turbine liners of the 1910s. Cunard continued to prosper, purchasing the competitor Anchor Line in 1912 and Canadian Northern Steamship Company (Royal Line) in 1916, while remaining independent of the acquisition-driven International Mercantile Marine Company.

After contributing substantially to the war effort, Cunard emerged from World War I in a far healthier position than many shipping companies. Recognizing the decreasing numbers of emigrants to North America, the company intensified its efforts to attract luxury travelers and sought to capture the nascent tourist trade. Its ships connected New York to Liverpool, Bristol, Rotterdam, Antwerp, Hamburg, Southampton, and Cherbourg, while other routes serviced Philadelphia; Boston; and Portland, Maine. The intensive post-war rebuilding program added thirteen new ships, one rebuilt vessel, and impressive new headquarter buildings in Liverpool⁷ and New York.

Not long after the completion of the new buildings, Cunard suffered enormous losses in the Great Depression of the 1930s. Yet the Cunard and White Star Lines merged in 1934, and together carried over one-quarter of North Atlantic passengers, almost doubling its nearest rival; again, the company assisted the Allied effort in World War II. After peaking in 1957, sea traffic began to decline due to competition from air travel. In response, Cunard initiated cargo service to ports on the Great Lakes and Gulf coast; withdrew passenger service between New York and Liverpool in 1966-67; and sold its grand buildings in several cities, including the New York headquarters on Broadway. The company relocated to No. 555 Fifth Avenue, a more advantageous location for booking passengers on ships which had become "floating resorts," not just a means of transport. Despite those changes, Cunard maintained a reputation pre-eminent for its enviable peacetime safety record and for the long periods during which it held the fastest crossing times in North Atlantic steamship travel.

Context in the Development of the Skyscraper⁸

Before 1870, the structural limitations of masonry and the human aversion to climbing more than five flights of stairs restricted the height of buildings to six stories. However, during the subsequent decades, the development of steel-frame construction and the diffusion of the passenger elevator permitted edifices of much greater height. Architects were then confronted with new aesthetic and urbanistic challenges, which at first were often addressed simply by vertically extending traditional forms, typically resulting in the so-called "office palazzo" — a seemingly solid, roughly twelve-story block that filled its site and rose to a strong cornice. In order to provide offices with adequate natural ventilation and light, such a building was often arranged in an "H" or "U" shape to allow open courts. During the second decade of the twentieth century, many office buildings were erected with more than twenty stories, though for the most part their designers retained the

"palazzo" arrangement.⁹ As buildings increased in size and adjacent streets correspondingly grew darker — the often-cited, H-shaped Equitable Building (1912-15, E.R. Graham) comes to mind — reformers gathered approval in 1916 of the New York City Building Zone Resolution. That law, besides restricting building uses to specific areas of the city, controlled the height and bulk of new structures. Architectural delineator Hugh Ferriss, in his well-publicized renderings, studied the formal possibilities encouraged by the law and his collaborator, respected architect Harvey Wiley Corbett, articulated the ideas in words, opining that the architect had graduated from being a designer of mere facades to "a sculptor in building masses."¹⁰ The Cunard Building, the first major edifice built in New York after World War I, is an early and outstanding example of the effect of the zoning law on the tall office building. Its neo-Renaissance cladding is a prominent example of the historicizing overlay which many architects of that time applied as an aid to composing their building envelopes newly configured by the 1916 resolution.

Design and Construction¹¹

As early as August 1917, even before the acquisition of the site, architect Benjamin Wistar Morris was producing preliminary schemes for the Cunard Building, which were characterized by a stately Broadway facade, fronting a central, grandly proportioned, and skylighted ticketing lobby — inspired by ancient Roman baths — and a parallel, more modest lobby along the southern edge of the building for the tenanted offices of the upper stories. During the next fifteen months he would compose many refinements to the plans and exterior articulation, but the exterior orientation toward Broadway, the grand ticketing lobby, and secondary office lobby survived as the distinctive features of the final design. After two years of study, the final plans were made public in July 1919. In August plans were filed with the Department of Buildings, which proffered approval in January 1920. Construction began immediately and concluded in May of the following year.

Contemporary publications¹² heralded Morris's design, particularly as an architectural response to the new zoning law of 1916, which aimed at providing adequate natural light and ventilation to the increasingly darkened streetscapes of Manhattan. For the large, irregularly-shaped site, the architect utilized a dumbbell (or "H"; see fig. 1) plan above the building's base; that arrangement of two open light courts — in combination with the unusually wide spaces flanking the building to the east (where Broadway expands at the head of Bowling Green) and to the northwest (where Trinity Place and Greenwich Street merge) — addressed the concerns of the law.

Furthermore, the light courts furthermore allowed light into the enormous Great Hall of the first floor. In stylistic terms, Morris interpreted the setback requirements of the law, via a Renaissance architectural vocabulary, into a stately tripartite Broadway facade (fig. 2), of Indiana limestone, characterized by projecting end pavilions, which were carried up vertically as far as the law permitted, and a subtly recessed central plane which rose to a colonnaded crown resembling an Ionic loggia. The rusticated base reiterated the paired columns of the "loggia" above, using the Tuscan order, and made effective use of five tall first-story arches: the southern arch giving access to the office lobby, the three central arches (fig. 3) corresponding to the Great Hall beyond them, and the northern arch (fig. 4) associated with the banking space at that corner of the first floor. The relatively sober facade was enlivened by nautically-inspired sculpted elements cut from models made by Rochette & Parzini: keystones exhibiting the Four Winds and a Neptune head crown the arched entrances; ship rondels flank the central arcade; and groups of seahorses and riders grace the setbacks of the side pavilions. A two-bay return onto Morris Street continues the historicizing details (fig. 5).

Other writers chronicled the success with which the architects and their engineering consultants¹³ managed to erect a very large building above the tortuous, curving and steeply sloped subway tunnel which bisected the site. The remaining massive elevations of the structure are of brick, trimmed in limestone and terra cotta. Workaday rooftop elements like penthouses, tanks, and steam stacks were hidden from view. While the lowest four floors and the top floor¹⁴ accommodated the Cunard company and its allied and subsidiary lines, the remaining levels were leased to tenants, who would enjoy the outstanding location, which was convenient to transportation (subway, "El," ferries, and Hudson Terminal) and offered views of lower Manhattan and the bay. The fireproof steel skeleton allowed unusually spacious floors (48,000 square feet each) and modern conveniences abounded, such as thirty-three high-speed passenger elevators and three freight elevators.

Situated at the head of Bowling Green, with its historic links to the steamship industry, embellished with a most discriminating architectural curtain wall, and reinforcing the masonry "canyon" walls that had come to characterize the streetscapes of lower Manhattan and particularly lower Broadway, the twenty-one-story building was conceived and executed to display Cunard's business success and its good taste. The July 1921 edition of *Architectural Forum* featured the Cunard Building in no less than six separate articles. In one of them, respected critic Royal Cortissoz applauded the building and its

designers, writing "This is indeed organic architecture" to explain that the well-arranged plan was expressed on the exterior, which avoided all "empty gestures," and that the "genuine architectural inspiration [sprang] straight from the personality of the designer." He concludes, "Mr. Morris imaginatively grasped the idea of the Cunard Building from the start, and he has bodied it forth, in a great work of architecture, alive and beautiful."¹⁵ The structure heralded a wave of tall new office buildings for the shipping industry, built in the 1920s along the spine of lower Broadway.¹⁶

The Architects and Artists

*Benjamin Wistar Morris*¹⁷

Among the most talented architects active in New York during the early twentieth century, Benjamin Wistar Morris III (1870-1944), son of a socially prominent family, was educated at Trinity College in Hartford, Columbia University, and the École des Beaux-Arts. As an apprentice for Carrère & Hastings, he helped prepare the winning drawings for the New York Public Library competition (1897). During the first decade of the new century, he practiced alone and between 1910 and 1915 as a partner of Christopher Grant LaFarge, during which time that firm produced the Architects' Building at 101 Park Avenue (1912, demolished) among other works. Morris's career blossomed in the 1920s, beginning with his highly-regarded neo-Renaissance Cunard Building (1917-21). Each of his designs is intelligently adapted to its particular site and client's needs, and often reflects each institution's history. In addition to the Cunard Building, Morris's other notable designs include two prominent Wall Street skyscrapers — the neo-Romanesque Seamen's Bank for Savings (1926-27, now occupied by AIG) at 74 Wall Street and the neo-Georgian Bank of New York & Trust Company Building (1927-28) at 48 Wall Street — and several uptown projects, including the Pierpont Morgan Library Annex (1927-28, a designated Landmark) at East 36th Street and the American Women's Association Clubhouse (1929) at West 57th Street. Morris also produced interesting but unexecuted projects for the Metropolitan Opera House and Metropolitan Square. As the senior partner of Morris & O'Connor, beginning in 1930, he was responsible for the neo-Georgian Union League Clubhouse (1931) at Park Avenue and East 37th Street. Outside New York City, Morris completed a substantial number of buildings, including dormitories at Princeton University, several significant buildings in Hartford, and the Westchester County Courthouse in White Plains, N.Y. Prominent in many professional organizations, he was associated with the Art Commission, the Beaux-Arts Society of Architects and Beaux-Arts Institute of Design, the American

Institute of Architects, the National Commission of Fine Arts, and the Architectural League of New York. *Carrère & Hastings*¹⁸

In designing the Cunard Building, Morris was assisted by his former employer, Thomas Hastings (1860-1929) of the firm of Carrère & Hastings. Both Hastings and John Mervin Carrère (1858-1911) were educated at the École des Beaux-Arts and worked in the office of McKim, Mead & White, before establishing a partnership in 1885 in New York City. Carrère & Hastings earned national acclaim for its winning design (1897) for the New York Public Library (1898-1911, a designated New York City Landmark). Subsequently, the highly prolific firm enjoyed a wide-ranging practice and produced many other memorable designs which survive as designated Landmarks.¹⁹

Hastings, who continued the firm for many years after his partner's death, was an early and highly respected exponent of the curtain wall system of construction. By 1920, he had developed a personal, Beaux-Arts inspired approach to the design of the masonry envelope of steel-framed structures, and was exploring innovative solutions to the massing of tall buildings in response to the set-back requirements of the 1916 Building Zone Resolution. Hastings considered the skeleton frame and the exterior sheathing as separate entities with different functions: the first supporting the structure and the second enclosing it. His designs for the curtain walls of the Blair Building (1902, demolished) at 24 Broad Street and the United States Rubber Building (1912-12) at Broadway and 58th Street were for thin, veneer-like masonry skins, organized for architectural impact rather than to convey a sense of structure; that design approach was at odds with the more structural, muscular style advocated by other tall building designers working in New York, including Pierre LeBrun, George B. Post, and Bruce Price. Hastings's hand is evident in the massing and facade of the Cunard Building, either through his influence on former apprentice Benjamin Wistar Morris, or an active role in the project. Carrère & Hastings designed three other tall buildings of note, the Liggett Building (1919-20, demolished) at the northeast corner Madison Avenue and East 42nd Street, the Fisk Building (1920-21) at 250 West 57th Street, and the Standard Oil Building (1921-28, with Shreve, Lamb & Blake); all three buildings have distinctive massing with pavilions of uniform setback rising above large bases, and are clad with thin masonry walls detailed to unite the two main portions of the building and add to their pictorial qualities.

*Rochette & Parzini*²⁰

Exterior sculpture on the Cunard Building was the work of the New York firm of Rochette & Parzini. A native of Turin, sculptor Michael Parzini (1865/66-

1946) studied at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and emigrated in 1893 to the United States, where he produced ornamental objects for the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. In 1904 he formed a partnership with fellow sculptor Eugene Rochette (dates undetermined), a resident of Flushing, Queens. By the time of the Cunard commission, Rochette was no longer active in the firm; Parzini retired in 1938. According to Parzini's *New York Times* obituary, Rochette & Parzini worked for McKim, Mead & White and other prominent architectural firms, being employed to decorate the New York Public Library (1898-1911, Carrère & Hastings), Hotel Pierre (1929, Schultze & Weaver), and other significant New York structures.

Occupancy

Long before construction of the Cunard Building was complete, several large businesses had signed leases in the new building, among them the Atlantic, Gulf & West Indies Steamship Lines, Merchant Shipbuilding Corp., Consolidated Steel Corp., and International Motor Truck Corp. The tenant space at the northeast corner of the first story was first occupied by a branch of the Mechanics & Metals National Bank. Such success is not surprising, given the shortage of downtown office space following World War I, the owner's provision for twenty-one-year leases and a concerted attempt to provide the best possible building, and the affordable rents due to the felicitous conditions of its erection (construction was kept to its schedule and almost within its cost estimate). According to the building prospectus, "no expense or care will be omitted to make it ... worthy of internationally known tenant whose name building bears."²¹ Over the following decades, occupants included many steamship lines and their agents; brokers; shipbuilders; oil, mining, and steel companies; railroad companies; engineers; and attorneys.

Later history²²

The conversion of office space into a garage necessitated alterations to the openings in the ground-story front of the Greenwich Street facade. In 1968, several years after Ashforth, Todd & Company purchased No. 25 Broadway, Cunard moved its offices to 555 Fifth Avenue. Though the upper floors remained rented, the Great Hall was vacated in 1971, and in 1972 the building was bought by the Cementation Company of America, an international heavy construction concern and a subsidiary of the new parent company of Cunard, the Trafalgar House Investment Group of Companies. In 1974 the U.S. Postal Service leased the Great Hall and other spaces in the building. Tenants associated with Cunard interests also eventually left the building; they were

replaced by Standard & Poor's Corporation, a rating-service company that is one of the largest producers of publications and information services in finance and business, and whose name still adorns the southern entrance along Broadway.

Description

Broadway Facade. Sheathed in Indiana limestone (now painted grayish white) on a granite water table, the Broadway facade features slightly projecting end pavilions flanking a wide central section. At the four-story rusticated base, five double-height arched entrances are crowned with carved keystones. Reached by granite steps, the three central arches contain historic bronze infill: multi-paned transoms and door enframements of crested cornices, pilasters, side panels with ornate grilles, and glazed doors. Carved rondels with ships bracket the central section. At the northern arch, bronze infill survives in the form of fluted Doric half-columns and a crested cornice; the side panels appear to have been simplified. Flanking window openings contain historic multi-pane metal-framed casements beneath multi-paned transoms. At the southern arch, the historic bronze fabric survives in part, with multi-paned transoms replaced by large single panes of glass. The two smaller entrances flanking the southern arch retain their historic paired bronze-framed and glazed doors and carved stone jambs; the windows above have chamfered jambs and address-bearing sills, both with a profusion of relief carving. Other changes at this level are few. Recent additions consist of a metal plaque from the New York Community Trust, signs for the Post Office, and, over the circular doors at the southern arch, the metal numerals "25." Ornate grilles have been removed from the openings flanking the southern arch and the infill of that arch has been refinished. The upper portion of the base is treated like a loggia, with pilaster-fronted side pavilions and a colonnaded center. These support a richly-carved entablature — exhibiting nautilus shells, titans, and compasses — which is crowned by stunted obelisks with shields. A few historic multi-paned, bronze-framed windows survive at the base.

Above the base, the central section is recessed slightly more than it is below. Both side pavilions and central section are faced in smooth limestone, except for horizontal bands of rustication at transitional stories and vertical bands of rustication which serve as quoining. The end pavilions terminate in a three-story arrangement of double-height pilasters (which frame decorated metal spandrels), piers

bearing bundled fasces, and pairs of carved seahorses with riders. The crown of the facade, wherein the end sections are now recessed behind the central portion, duplicates the loggia treatment of the base and includes paired Ionic columns, decorated spandrels, and a balustraded and modillioned upper entablature. The further setback attic continues the Renaissance-inspired detailing at the limestone central portion, which is crowned by a mansard roof, but the side wings are much simpler, faced in stone-trimmed brick and flat-roofed. A few historic one-over-one double-hung sash windows survive; replacements are either single pane, single pane beneath a transom, or multi-pane.

Morris Street elevation. The Morris Street elevation contains a granite watertable, limestone two-story base, and a central court which separates the limestone-faced east wing from the limestone-trimmed tan brick west wing. All court elevations are of tan brick. Openings at the upper levels contain a variety of window types, including historic three-over-three double-hung metal sash beneath a divided glazed transom. The base retains an historic iron sign projecting from the wall, several bronze-framed glazed doors, and multi-paned metal-framed windows beneath divided glazed transoms. At the central bay, there is a wide multi-paned metal-framed bay window, the curve of which is related to the interior layout.

Greenwich Street elevation. The Greenwich Street elevation (fig. 6) has a granite basement punctuated by several openings; three historic metal-framed glazed doors survive (their transoms have been painted over) and the remaining bays contain service entrances (some with vehicular roll-down doors) and one-over-one double-hung windows which have been sealed and painted. Above the basement rises a three-story arched opening with its deeply-set multi-paned metal-framed windows and two metal balconies. On the remainder of the elevation, the regularly-spaced openings retain a few historic metal-framed windows, both one-over-one double-hung and multi-paned casement windows. The terminal cornice of stone survives, as do rooftop extensions with stepped gables trimmed in terra cotta. The south elevation, also of tan brick, retains several three-over-one double-hung sash windows. A few roof elements are partly visible over that elevation, including a corrugated sheet-metal enclosure.

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NOTES

1. See: New York County, Office of the Register, Liber Deeds and Conveyances, Block Indices, and Mortgages, block 13; William Perris, *Maps of the City of New York* (New York: William Perris, 1852), pl. 3; *Atlas of the City of New York and Part of the Bronx* (New York: E. Robinson, 1885), pls. 1, 2; *Atlas of the City of New York, Borough of Manhattan*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: G.W. Bromley & Co., 1899-1909), pls. 1, 2; "Cunard Line to Build Big Skyscraper Here," *New York Evening Post*, Feb. 19, 1918, p.1; "Cunard to Have Big Building Here," *New York Times* (hereafter, *NYT*), Feb. 20, 1918, p. 13; *Atlas of the City of New York, Borough of Manhattan*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: G.W. Bromley & Co., 1931-1961), pls. 1, 2; R.M. DeLeeuw, *Both Sides of Broadway* (New York: DeLeeuw Riehl Publishing Co., 1910), 42; I.N. Phelps Stokes, *Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498-1909* (New York: Robert H. Dodd, 1915-28), vol. II, 218-220; vol. III, 977-981; vol. V, 1858, 1864.

"Monumental Broadway Building for Cunard Steamship Company," *NYT*, July 20, 1919, IX, p. 16, lists the following Stevens House clients: George Steers, builder of the famous yacht "America"; John Ericsson, inventor of the "Monitor"; Joseph Francis, inventor of a lifeboat bearing his name; Commodore Vanderbilt; John Morgan, head of the Morgan Steamship Line; as well as Civil War figures Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson, and J.E.B. Stewart.

2. "Cunard Line to Build Big Skyscraper Here," p. 1.
3. Attorneys John Reynard Todd (1867-1945) and Henry Clay Irons (dates undetermined) came into the building field inadvertently, but their initial success encouraged them to remain in the business, through which they erected and sold at large profits numerous hotels, apartment buildings, and commercial structures. Following the dissolution of that firm in about 1920, John R. Todd joined the partnership of Dr. James M. Todd (c. 1870-1939) and Hugh S. Robertson (1880-1951), creating Todd, Robertson & Todd. Their greatest achievement was as the builders and managers of the twelve buildings of Rockefeller Center. See John Reynard Todd obituary, *Architectural Forum* 83 (Aug. 1945), 86, 90, and LPC, *Rockefeller Center Designation Report*, LP-1446, report prepared by Janet Adams (New York: City of New York, 1985), 13-15.

The firm of Todd, Irons & Robertson, which the building prospectus lists as the builder of the Cunard structure, must have been a short-lived organization, functioning as a transitional firm between Irons & Todd, which was dissolving, and the newly-expanded Todd, Robertson & Todd. This conjecture is based on a review of city directories, 1920-25.

4. Among the incorporators of the Twenty-Five Broadway Corporation, Thomas Ashley Sparks (1877-1963), a native of London, served as the company's U.S. resident director beginning in 1917; from 1920 until his retirement in 1950 he simultaneously was the president of the Twenty-Five Broadway Corporation.
5. New York City Directories, 1873-1920; I.N. Phelps Stokes, *Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498-1909*, III, 646-648; V, 1765, 1799, 1801, 1803, 1807-1808; VI, 567. "Cunard, Sir Samuel," *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed., eds. William Bridgwater and Elizabeth J. Sherwood (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950, 1959), 491; T.W.E. Roche, *Samuel Cunard and the North Atlantic* (London: Macdonald, 1971), 163, 170; N.R.P. Bonsor, *North Atlantic Seaway*, vol. 1, rev. ed. (Newton Abbot, U.K.: David & Charles, 1975), 72-140; Howard Johnson, *The Cunard Story* (London: Whittet, 1987), passim; René De La Pedraja, *The Rise & Decline of U.S. Merchant Shipping in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Twayne, 1992), 4-10, 125, 192.
6. Though popularly called by that name, it was only following the 1878 merger of Cunard's North Atlantic and Mediterranean routes that the company became known officially as the Cunard Steam Ship Company, Ltd.
7. For the Liverpool building, see Cunard Steamship Company, Ltd., *The New Cunard Building* (Liverpool: Taylor, Garnett, Evans & Co., Ltd., 1917), passim.
8. For a more complete discussion of the development of the skyscraper in the nineteenth century, see LPC, *Bowling Green Offices Building Designation Report*, LP-1927, report prepared by David M. Breiner (New York: City of New York, 1995). See also Paul Goldberger, *The Skyscraper* (New York: Knopf, 1982), passim, and Robert A.M. Stern et al., *New York 1900: Metropolitan Architecture and Urbanism, 1890-1915* (New York: Rizzoli, 1983), 507-528.
9. Some prominent examples were: the 20 story East River Savings Bank Building (1910, Clinton & Russell); 22 story Germania Life Insurance Company Building (1910-11, D'Oench & Yost) and Emigrant Industrial Savings Bank Building (1908-12, R.F. Almirall), both designated Landmarks; and 33 story Adams Express Building (1912-16, F.H. Kimball).
10. Harvey Wiley Corbett, "Architecture," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 14th ed. (1929), II, 275.
11. Cunard Steamship Company, Ltd., *Preliminary Studies of a Building for The Cunard Steamship Company, Limited. Sir Alfred Booth, Chairman. the Twenty-five Broadway Corporation, Owner. T. Ashley Sparks, President* (New York: The Company, 1918), passim; "To Start Work at Once on New Cunard Office Building," *Real Estate Record & Builder's Guide* (hereafter *RER&G*) 104, (July 19, 1919), 71; "Unusual Features Mark Plans of New Cunard Building," *RER&G* 104, (August 2, 1919), 141; NYC, Department of Buildings, Manhattan. Plans, Permits and Dockets, Block 13, Lot 27. NB 222-1919; "The Cunard Building in New York," *American Architecture* 116 (September 9, 1919), 336; "The Cunard Building New York," *Architectural Review* 26 (October 1919), 113-114; B.W. Morris, "The Cunard Building, New York," *Architectural Forum* 33 (July 1920), 1-6; John Taylor Boyd, Jr., "The New York Zoning Resolution and its Influence upon

- Design," *Architectural Record* 48 (Sept. 1920), 192-217; William P. Comstock, "The Cunard Building," *Architecture and Building* 52, no. 10 (October, 1920), 88-92. The following citations are all from *Architectural Forum* 35 (July 1921): Royal Cortissoz, "The Cunard Building," 1-11; S.O. Miller, "Structural Features of the Cunard Building, New York," 17-20; Carlton S. Proctor, "Special Problems in Foundations of the Cunard Building," 21-22; Henry C. Meyer, Jr., "Electrical, Heating and Ventilating Equipment of the Cunard Building," 22-23; Clyde R. Place, "Plumbing in the Cunard Building," 24. "The Cunard Building, New York" *Architecture and Building* 53 (August 1921), 61-64; Robert A.M. Stern *et al.*, *New York 1930: Architecture and Urbanism Between the Two World Wars* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), 528-529.
12. For example, John Taylor Boyd, Jr., "The New York Zoning Resolution and its Influence upon Design," John Taylor Boyd, Jr. used the Cunard Building to illustrate a "splendid" response to the new restrictions.
 13. According to Twentyfive Broadway Corp., *Cunard Building. Twentyfive Broadway. New York City. The Twenty Five Broadway Corporation, Owner* (New York: the Corp., 1919), collaborators included Samuel O. Miller, structural steel and foundations; Henry W. Hodge, consulting engineer for structural steel; and Daniel E. Moran, consultant for foundations.
 14. A letter in the Department of Buildings folder, dated Sept. 25, 1953 and addressed from the Twentyfive Broadway Corp. to the Superintendent of Buildings, describes the purpose of the two penthouse apartments: one was intended as a residence for the Cunard resident director, the other as an apartment for the Cunard night cablegram receiver.
 15. Royal Cortissoz, "The Cunard Building," 4, 5, 8.
 16. Prominent among them were the 32 story skyscraper at 29 Broadway; the 36 story Fred F. French Building at No. 35-39; the 22 story No. 50 Broadway; the extension of Aldrich Court at No. 41-45; and, particularly noteworthy, the enlargement of the Standard Oil Building at No. 26. See, in particular, "Lower New York's Building Activity Due to Growth of Shipping Industry," *NYT*, Oct. 3, 1920, IX, p. 2.
 17. "Morris, Benjamin Wistar (III)," *Who's Who in New York (City and State) 1924*, 8th ed., ed. Frank R. Holmes (New York: Who's Who Publications, 1924), 906; Benjamin W. Morris obituary, *NYT*, Dec. 5, 1944, p. 23; "Morris, Benjamin Wistar (III)," *Who Was Who in America*, vol. II (Chicago: A.N. Marquis Co., 1950), 383; Henry F. Withey and Elsie R. Withey, *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)*, (Los Angeles: Hennessey & Ingalls, 1970), 427-428; Dennis Steadman Francis, *Architects in Practice in New York City, 1840-1900* (New York: Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records, 1979), 56; James Ward, *Architects in Practice in New York City, 1900-1940* (New York: Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records, 1989), 55; Robert A.M. Stern, *New York 1930* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), *passim*.
 18. This section is adapted from the corresponding section of LPC, *Standard Oil Building Designation Report*, LP-1930, report prepared by Betsy Bradley (New York: City of New York, 1995). See also "The Works of Messrs. Carrère & Hastings," *Architectural Record* 27 (Jan., 1910), 1-120; John Mervin Carrère obituary, *NYT*, Mar. 2, 1911, p. 9; "John Mervin Carrère," *Who Was Who in America*, vol. I (Chicago: A.N. Marquis, 1967), 197; "Thomas Hastings," *Who Was Who in America*, vol. I, 533; Withey and Withey, 109, 269; Francis, 20; Channing Blake, "Carrère and Hastings," *Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects*, ed. Adolf K. Placzek (New York: Free Press, 1982), vol. 1, 387-388. Regarding individual commissions by the firm, see: LPC, *First Church of Christ, Scientist of New York City Designation Report*, LP-0833 (New York: City of New York, 1974); *John Henry Hammond House Designation Report*, LP-0677 (New York: City of New York, 1974); *Henry T. Sloane Residence Designation Report*, LP-0937, (New York: City of New York, 1977); "Architects' Appendix," *Upper East Side Historic District Designation Report*, LP-1051 (New York: City of New York, 1981); "Architects' Appendix," *Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District Designation Report*, LP-1647 (New York: City of New York, 1990); "Architects' Appendix," *Expanded Carnegie Hill Historic District Designation Report*, LP-1834 (New York: City of New York, 1993). Hastings was a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects and a founder and a president of the Architectural League of New York.
 19. Their designs which have been designated New York City Landmarks include the First Church of Christ, Scientist (1899-1903) at the northwest corner of Central Park West and West 96th Street, the approaches and arch of the Manhattan Bridge (1905), and Richmond Borough Hall (1903-07) in Staten Island. Carrère & Hastings was very active in the design of urban residences and suburban estates, as well as Woolsey and Memorial Halls (1906) at Yale University and the House and Senate Office Buildings (1906) in Washington, D.C.
 20. Michael Parzini obituary, *NYT*, Dec. 5, 1946, p. 31.
 21. Twentyfive Broadway Corp., *Cunard Building. Twentyfive Broadway. New York City. The Twenty Five Broadway Corporation, Owner* (New York: the Corp., 1919).
 22. New York City, Department of Buildings, Manhattan. Plans, Permits and Dockets; "Tenant Hunted for Cunard Building's 'Great Hall,'" *NYT*, Oct. 1, 1972, VIII, p. 1; "Anaconda Plans to Leave Cunard Building," *NYT*, Sept. 22, 1974, VIII, p. 8; Alan S. Oser, "Gradual Changes for the Old Cunard Building," *NYT*, Dec. 7, 1977, p. D-13; New York County, Office of the Register, Liber Deeds and Conveyances, Block Indices, and Mortgages, block 13.

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 Cunard 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 Cunard Building has a pivotal location within the fabric of the city, its street walls maintaining the masonry "canyons" of lower Manhattan and its limestone facade commanding a significant presence at the juncture of Bowling Green and Broadway; that the twenty-two-story building, designed in 1917-19 by Benjamin Wistar Morris, a prominent New York architect, assisted by the firm of Carrère & Hastings, was erected in 1920-21 and thus was an early major office building to be completed after the enactment of the New York City Building Zone Resolution; that Morris's design received much critical acclaim for its arrangement of subtle setbacks and ample, well-located open courts, which addressed the natural light and ventilation demands made by the zoning resolution; that the design was likewise praised for its refined neo-Renaissance facade, a tripartite solution which is characterized by its arcaded first story, the arrangement of which is a reflection of the varied spaces within, and two loggia-like elements of the central section, which visually balance the slightly projecting end pavilions; that the building's nautical iconographic program, delicately executed to the designs of Rochette & Parzini, was an appropriate acknowledgment of the client and principal occupant of the building, the Cunard Steamship Line Ltd.; that the Cunard company, founded in 1840 by Nova Scotia businessman Samuel Cunard, pioneered transatlantic shipping and travel, providing the first regular steamship service between Europe and North America, with direct sailings to and from New York beginning in 1848; that from that time on, Cunard maintained a presence on or near Bowling Green, as part of "Steamship Row"; that, through an affiliate called the Twenty-five Broadway Corporation, Cunard erected its own New York headquarters as part of a significant post-World War I expansion campaign; that Cunard was one of the first of the large international steamship lines to do so and signaled the city's growing supremacy as a world port; and that the exterior of the building survives largely intact.

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 Cunard Building, 25 Broadway (aka 13-27 Broadway, 13-39 Greenwich Street, and 1-9 Morris Street), and designates Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 13, Lot 27 as its Landmark Site.

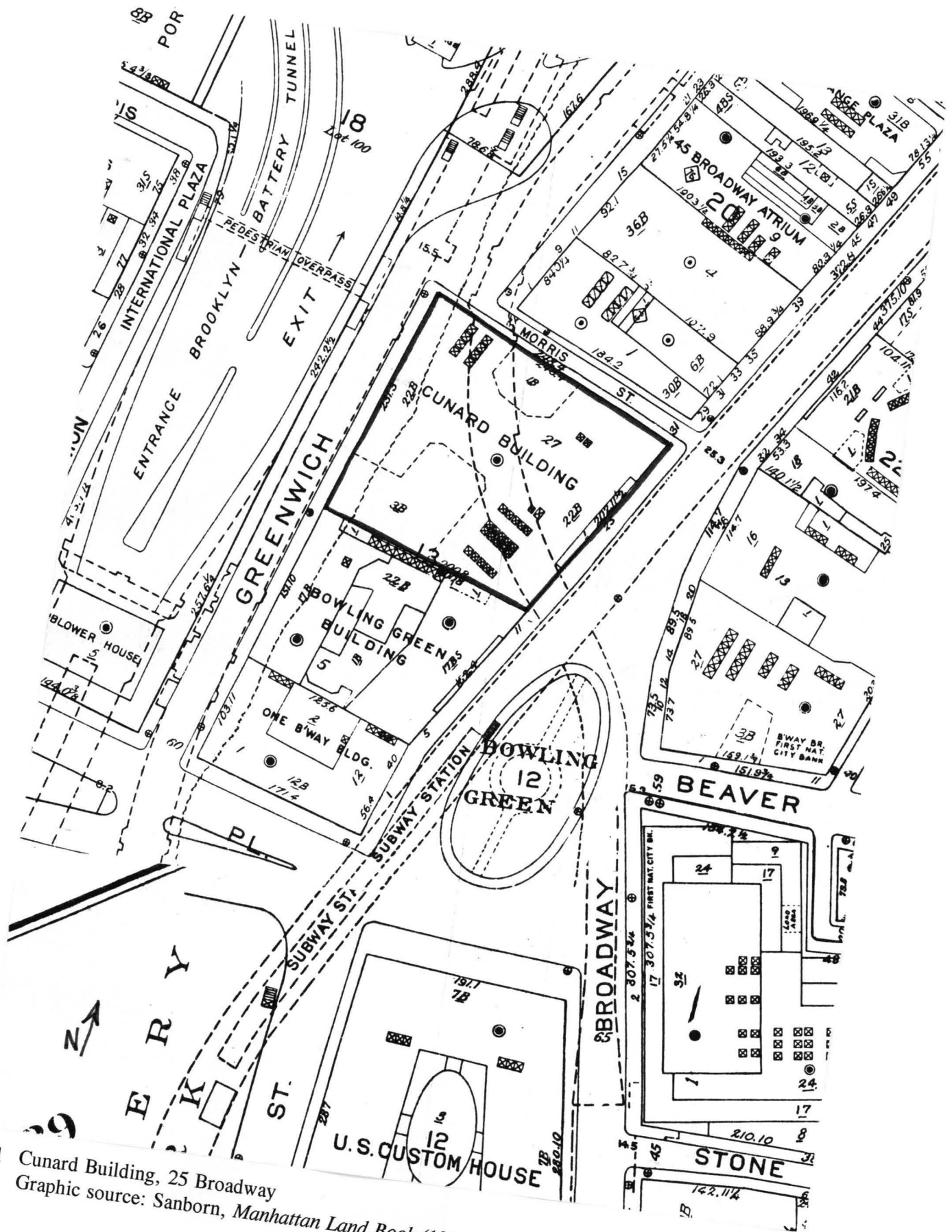


Fig. 1 Cunard Building, 25 Broadway
 Graphic source: Sanborn, *Manhattan Land Book* (1994-95), pls. 1-2.



Fig. 2 Cunard Building, Broadway facade

Photo: DMB



Fig. 3 Cunard Building, Detail of Broadway facade

Photo: DMB



Fig. 4 Detail of northern bay on Broadway facade

Cunard Building

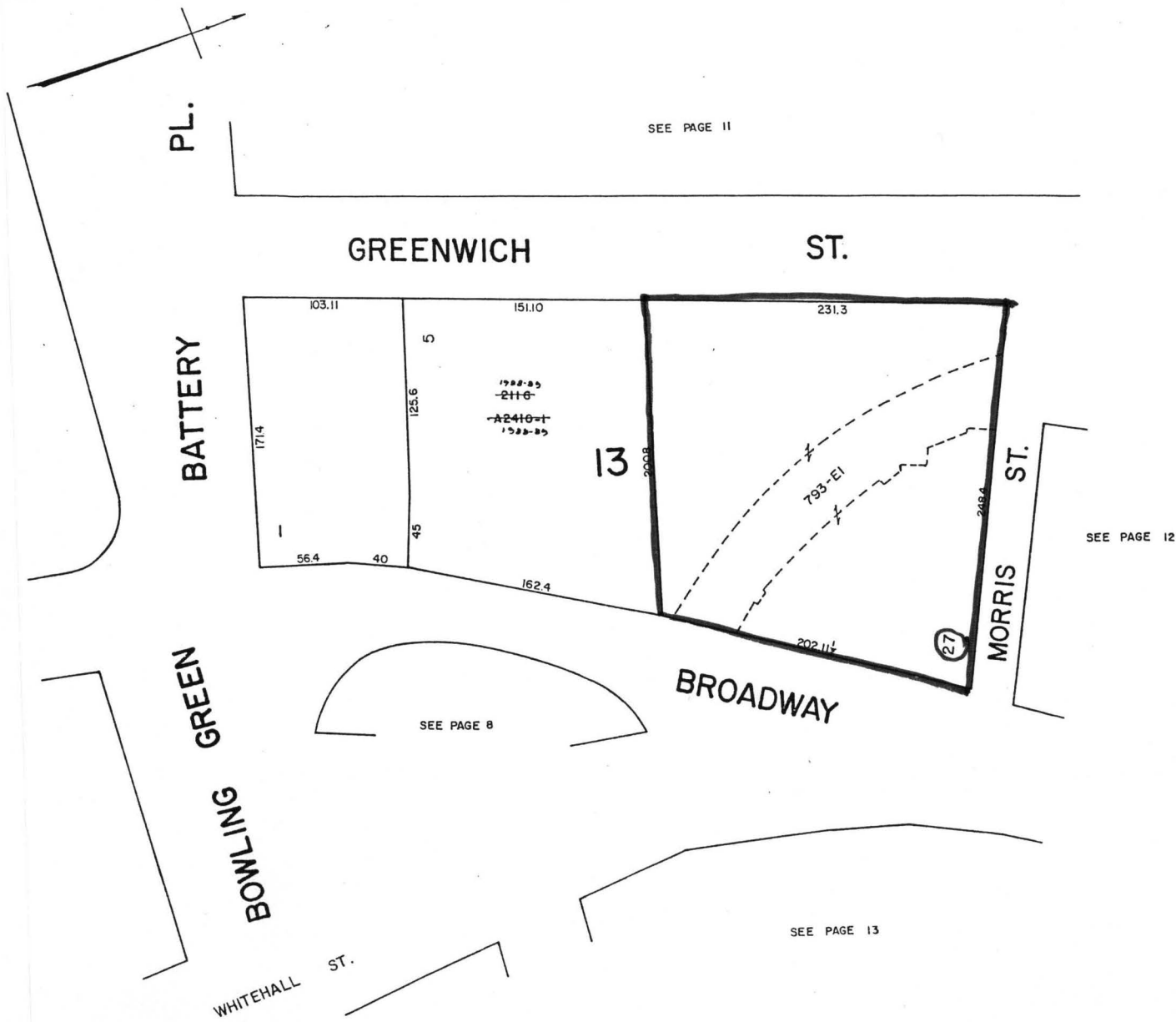


Fig. 5 Northwest corner of building and Morris Street elevation
Photos: DMB



Fig. 6 Cunard Building, Greenwich Street elevation

Photo: DMB



Cunard Building, 25 Broadway (aka 13-27 Broadway, 13-39 Greenwich Street, and 1-9 Morris Street), Manhattan
 Landmark Site: Manhattan Tax Map Block 13, Lot 27
 Source: Dept. of Finance, City Surveyor, Tax Map