

## **THE DOWN TOWN ASSOCIATION BUILDING,**

60 Pine Street (aka 60-64 Pine Street and 20-24 Cedar Street), Manhattan.

Built 1886-87; architect Charles C. Haight.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 41, Lot 15.

On September 17, 1996, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on The Down Town Association Building (Item No. 2). There were two speakers and a letter from Council Member Kathryn Freed in favor of designation. The hearing was continued until November 19, 1996 (Item No. 2). A representative of The Downtown Association spoke and asked that action on the proposed designation of the building be delayed for ninety days. The Commission also received two letters in support of designation. Both hearings were duly advertised according to the provisions of law.

### Summary

Constructed in 1886-87 for The Down Town Association, this elegant Romanesque Revival style building was designed by noted architect Charles C. Haight. The Down Town Association, begun in 1860 as a luncheon club, was one of New York's earliest private clubs. Disbanded two years after it was originally started, the Association was reorganized in 1878 and the existing clubhouse was commissioned from member Charles C. Haight, in 1886. The club he designed for the Association was three bays wide, with a large round arch at the central entranceway and others on the third story where the main dining rooms are located. Faced with Roman brick and highlighted by terra-cotta ornament, the building is striking in its simplicity and refinement. In 1910-11, a two-bay extension to the east of the original building was constructed to accommodate an expanding membership. This addition, designed by the distinguished architectural firm of Warren & Wetmore, echoes the original building in its materials, fenestration, and details. Today, the Down Town Association building is only one of two surviving clubhouses which continue to serve the business population of Lower Manhattan.



## DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

### Clubs in New York<sup>1</sup>

The Union Club, founded in 1836, was New York's first official club, with dues, meeting rooms, and extended activities. The Union Club, with its clubhouse at 343 Broadway, was modeled after the famous clubs of London and was the province of New York's select families, such as the Livingstons, the Griswolds, and the Van Rensselaers. Its success encouraged the founding of other clubs, including the New York Yacht Club in 1844, the New York Club in 1845, and the Century Association in 1847. Located for convenience near the members' homes, these early clubs were housed in rowhouses, fitted out with lounging rooms, bedrooms, and perhaps most importantly for the members, large dining rooms. As the city's fashionable residential districts moved northward, clubs followed their members up Broadway, renting ever larger houses to accommodate their expanding membership. The Union Club was the first to build its own clubhouse at Fifth Avenue and Twenty-first Street in 1855,<sup>2</sup> but other clubs soon followed its example. The clubhouse became a new and important type of building at the end of the nineteenth century, combining characteristics of both domestic and public buildings.

These early social clubs started as the province of New York's wealthiest families. Eventually other New Yorkers, particularly merchants and businessmen, were attracted to the camaraderie of the clubhouse for the status it conveyed or for the business that could be accomplished in these surroundings. Many more clubs started, serving a variety of needs and interests.<sup>3</sup> By 1916, *The World Almanac* listed 89 social clubs in Manhattan, many with membership numbers in the thousands.<sup>4</sup>

A distinct type of social club was the luncheon club, established to provide businessmen with a place to meet during the day, when they were too far from their homes to return for lunch. These clubs had a more limited program and did not need the overnight facilities found in other clubs. Luncheon clubs tended to attract members from a particular field: India House was for men in the shipping business, the Merchants' Club was for merchants, and The Downtown Association attracted bankers, brokers, and lawyers. During the 1950s and 1960s, there were 28 dining clubs in downtown New York.<sup>5</sup> These clubs sometimes did not have their own facilities, but rather leased space on upper floors of tall buildings. Today only India House and The Down Town Association continue to

operate as dining clubs in their own buildings in downtown Manhattan.

### History of The Down Town Association<sup>6</sup>

The first organizational meeting of The Down Town Association was held on December 23, 1859, at the well-known hotel, the Astor House. Twenty-seven men were present. The group was incorporated on April 17, 1860, with the stated purpose being "To furnish to persons engaged in commercial and professional pursuits in the City of New York facilities for social intercourse and such accommodations as are required during intervals of business while at a distance from their residences; also the advancement of literature and art by establishing and maintaining a library, reading room, and gallery of art." The Down Town Association was thus the first of the downtown luncheon clubs and only the seventh club incorporated in New York since the Union Club began in 1836.<sup>7</sup>

In August 1860, the club purchased property at 22 Exchange Place and shortly afterward, member Robert L. Maitland started the club's art collection.<sup>8</sup>

The club's members were successful bankers, lawyers, and businessmen. Their timing however, was poor. Needing a membership of 250 to support its activities, the club was only able to achieve 150. By 1862, with the country at war and financing uncertain, The Down Town Association was forced to disband and sell its property. The charter lay dormant until May 1877, when another group, including several of the original club members, met at Delmonico's Restaurant to reorganize the Association. By the next year the Association was renting rooms at 50-52 Pine Street and had a membership of 354. In 1884, the club moved to purchase the nearby lot at 60-62 Pine Street, and by 1886 club member Charles C. Haight was hired as architect for the new building.<sup>9</sup> When the facility opened on May 23, 1887, the club had an active membership of 500. The Down Town Association continued to grow, reaching a membership of 1000 in 1901. By then the club quarters were cramped, and in 1902 it took a lease on the adjoining building at 64 Pine Street, making alterations to meet its needs. Even this was not sufficient. By 1906 the club secured a long-term lease on the property behind 64 Pine, at 20 Cedar Street. In 1910, the architectural firm of Warren & Wetmore was hired to design an addition which would replace the

existing buildings at 64 Pine and 20 Cedar.<sup>10</sup> The addition and interior remodeling were finished and the building occupied by March 1911.

The club continued to prosper for many years, with a membership primarily composed of bankers, brokers, and lawyers. In 1930, the official membership was allowed to increase to 1350, and there was a twenty-year waiting list. Included in the Association's list of prominent members were Franklin D. Roosevelt, Wendell Willkie, Thomas E. Dewey, and John Foster Dulles. Women were admitted as members beginning in 1985. Many downtown clubs saw their membership numbers decline in the late 1980s when the stock market dropped precipitously, and numerous investment banking, brokerage, and law firms moved uptown. Today, The Down Town Association endures as only one of two such dining clubs in lower Manhattan. The facility is used each day for its dining room, club rooms, and meeting facilities. Its art collection has grown through the years (through contributions and purchases), and includes oil portraits of all the Association's presidents and hundreds of prints, engravings, and maps of old New York, with an emphasis on maritime prints.

#### Charles C. Haight<sup>11</sup>

Charles Coolidge Haight (1841-1917) was born in New York City and graduated from Columbia College (now part of Columbia University) in 1861. After serving in the Civil War, Haight studied architecture and worked with New York architect Emlen T. Littell, then opened his own office in 1867. His successful career was advanced through his family and ties with the Episcopal Church — his father was the Rev. Benjamin I. Haight, assistant rector of Trinity Church. In the 1870s Haight was appointed architect of the Trinity Church Corporation, and subsequently designed many buildings which the Corporation developed, including apartment houses, office buildings, and warehouses.

Haight's early buildings were churches and residences in the Victorian Gothic and English Tudor styles. He later gained recognition for his public and educational buildings, many in the English Collegiate Gothic style, including the General Theological Seminary (1883-1901, now part of the Chelsea Historic District), buildings at Yale University (1894-1914, later buildings completed in association with Alfred Morton Githens), and Trinity School (1893-94, a designated New York City Landmark). Other institutional buildings

designed by Haight include the French-Renaissance-inspired New York Cancer Hospital (1884-86, later the Towers Nursing Home, a designated New York City Landmark) and the restrained neo-Gothic Second Battery Armory in the Bronx (1908-11, a designated New York City Landmark). Beginning in the 1880s Haight designed a number of warehouses in lower Manhattan (now in the Tribeca North, East, and West Historic Districts) for the Trinity Corporation and its subsidiary, the Protestant Episcopal Society of the State of New York for the Promotion of Religion and Learning. These buildings show the influence of the Romanesque Revival and late nineteenth-century commercial styles. This style was also used in his H.O. Havemeyer House (Fifth Avenue and East 66th Street, 1890, demolished), as well as this clubhouse for The Down Town Association.

#### Warren & Wetmore<sup>12</sup>

Whitney Warren (1864-1943), a member of a socially prominent New York family, graduated from Columbia University in 1886 and then continued his studies in Paris. Returning to New York in 1894, he joined the architectural firm of McKim, Mead & White. Charles Delevan Wetmore (1867-1941) graduated from Harvard Law School in 1892 and began practicing law in New York with the firm of Carter, Ledyard & Milburn. He had always had a great interest in architecture, however, and had designed three dormitories on the Harvard campus while he was a student there. Wetmore hired Warren to design his own home, and the two men discovered their common interest and outlook. They formed their own architectural firm in 1898, with Wetmore taking the role of legal and financial specialist and Warren as the principal designer.

Warren & Wetmore's first major commission was the Beaux-Arts New York Yacht Club (1899, a designated New York City Landmark). In 1904, they began the Grand Central Terminal (a designated New York City Landmark), the first of a number of railroad stations throughout the country, including those built for the Erie, the Michigan Central, and the Canadian Northern Railroads. The firm also became known for its hotel designs, including the Biltmore, Vanderbilt, Commodore, and the Ritz-Carlton in New York, as well as the Hotel Ambassador in Atlantic City, the Royal Hawaiian in Honolulu, and the Bermudiana in Hamilton, Bermuda. The firm's best known office tower is the New York Central Building, now known as the Helmsley Building (1927-29, a designated New York City Landmark). The firm,

a favorite among socially prominent New Yorkers, designed many residences in what are now the Upper East Side Historic District, the Metropolitan Museum Historic District, and the Carnegie Hill Historic District.

The choice of the firm of Warren & Wetmore to expand the clubhouse for The Down Town Association in 1910 is not surprising, since many members of the club would have been familiar with its work. Instead of the usual French-influenced, Beaux-Arts designs so characteristic of the firm, Warren & Wetmore created an extension to Haight's original structure which blends harmoniously with the extant, well-proportioned Romanesque Revival building.

#### The Down Town Association Building

Working within the Romanesque Revival style,<sup>13</sup> Haight skillfully used materials and fenestration to create the sense of strength and dignity which is so prominent in this building for The Down Town Association.<sup>14</sup> The dark, vermiculated stone on the two lower stories emphasizes the base and creates a clear contrast with the buff-colored (though now dirty) Roman brick above. Ornament, predominantly in the form of terra-cotta capitals between the arches and a modest frieze above the fourth story, is applied sparingly and serves to underscore the strength of the facade. Haight used a variety of squared and round-headed openings. Large squared windows on the two lower stories and successively smaller ones on the upper floors, grouped on continuous sills and deeply recessed in the medieval manner, create the rhythm of the facade. On the ground story, the prominent central arch makes the entranceway distinct, although the front doors were recessed within the arch sometime after construction and are therefore not as prominent as they once would have been.<sup>15</sup> Large round arches, characteristic of the Romanesque Revival style, are used on the windows of the third story to illuminate and emphasize the large dining area, the most important space in the building. Another typical design feature of this style is the truncated column, seen here grouped by the entrance and serving as a screen on the fifth story. The pattern of four-one-four created by these columns on the fifth story, with the smaller window openings, provides an appropriate finishing rhythm to the facade.

In 1910 when Warren & Wetmore enlarged the building, they extended Haight's original designs for two bays to the east. Although this changed the symmetrical aspect of the front facade, it combines

well with the original section to create a homogenous whole. Although significant interior alterations took place at this time, the entrance and entry hall were kept in the same location. While the eastern section of the facade is harmonious, it is also clear, from the smaller windows on the ground story and the slight vertical separation, that this is an addition. On the rear facade the addition also blends but is distinct from the original section.

#### Description

The Down Town Association Building, a relatively small building, is dwarfed by the newer structures around it. Five stories high and five bays wide on Pine Street, the building has a secondary facade on Cedar Street. The three bays to the west on both facades comprise the original building. The 1910 extension, located on the eastern side, echoes the original design. A mansard roof with three hipped-roof dormers caps the original section of the building on Pine Street creating 5 1/2 stories, while the rest of the building has a flat roof. All of the windows on both facades retain their original wood sash.

#### Pine Street Facade

Base:

On the Pine Street facade, the two lower stories are faced in vermiculated brownstone in a random ashlar pattern while those above have buff-colored Roman brick, with terra cotta trim. On the ground story, a large, round-arched entryway is centered in the original three bays. Reached by three shallow steps, the original glass and wood-paneled double doors are capped by a large, semicircular transom. This doorway is deeply recessed from the front plane of the building, and the opening is emphasized by a series of rounded moldings, which end with a group of short colonnettes with foliate terra-cotta capitals. To each side of the entrance opening are a pair of large, square-headed, double-hung windows covered by metal grilles bearing the insignia of The Down Town Association. Three of these windows have tinted and textured glass which is not original to the building. At this first story, the eastern wing has four smaller, double-hung windows on a continuous sill. These windows are covered by metal grilles.

The distinction between the original three bays and the eastern addition continues at the second story level. In the western section, there are three pairs of large, double-hung windows on a continuous stone sill. In front of the center pair, this sill projects outward, forming the top of a

narrow balustraded balcony which is supported by two brackets rising up from each side of the round-arched entrance below it. Each of the two bays to the east also has a large, tripartite window with tripartite transoms. These windows have diamond-paned, leaded glass set in one-over-one, double-hung sash.

**Midsection:**

At the third story level, the change from stone to brick creates a strong visual distinction. Five large, round-arched windows extend across this entire level, each with a tripartite lower section and a round-arched transom. In the lower sections are double-hung, one-over-one sash. Terra-cotta capitals with foliate designs are located on the piers between each window, from which spring brick and stone moldings which echo the window openings. A small balcony with balustrades runs in front of all the windows at this level, next to the wall on the newer section but projecting slightly on the older section.

The fourth story is marked by five pairs of smaller squared windows. Continuous sills connect the three pairs on the west and the two pairs on the east. Narrow colonnettes are located between and beside each of the windows in the western section, while those on the east have only one colonnette linking each pair of windows. Each window has double-hung, one-over-one sash. Small air conditioner grates have been cut into the wall below each pair of windows.

**Top:**

A heavy cornice, which includes a foliate terra-cotta frieze, separates the fourth from the fifth stories. Above this, the squared, recessed windows are grouped in threes in the western section and in twos in the eastern part. Narrow colonnettes form a screen in front of the window openings.

Cedar Street Facade

The secondary Cedar Street facade of the building is a simpler version of the Pine Street facade. It is four bays wide, including the one-bay extension which was added to the building in 1910. Five stories high, it sits on a raised basement with an areaway shielded from the sidewalk by metal piping. A basement entrance is located near the eastern end of this facade. The basement and the first story are faced with vermiculated random

ashlar brownstone with pink Roman brick and terra cotta on the upper part of the facade. An early iron fire escape is attached to the building at the middle bays.

**Base:**

At the first story are three large, squared window openings. Each has a tripartite, double-hung window with a tripartite transom above it. The central part of each transom contains a semi-circular frosted light. Metal grilles cover each of these openings entirely. The eastern bay contains a smaller squared opening, containing paired, double-hung windows on a stone sill.

**Midsection:**

A stone cornice crowns the first story and creates a platform for the narrow balustrade which runs across the facade, in front of the four large windows of the second story. These squared window openings contain tripartite windows with one-over-one, double-hung sash.

At the third story are four large round-arched windows. Each has a tripartite window topped by a rounded transom. The three windows in the original section of the building are grouped with a continuous sill and shared pilasters between them. The window in the newer section is set off by itself. Each is crowned by a broad molding which springs from terra-cotta capitals set on the pilasters between the windows.

The fourth story is marked by four pairs of recessed squared windows, with a colonnette joining each pair. A continuous sill links the three pairs in the western section of the building, while a foliate terra-cotta and stone cornice crowns this story.

**Top:**

At the fifth story, the windows are smaller and run across the entire facade. They are recessed behind a screen of single and grouped colonnettes. A broad terra-cotta cornice caps the building above these windows.

Report prepared by  
Virginia Kurshan  
Research Department

## NOTES

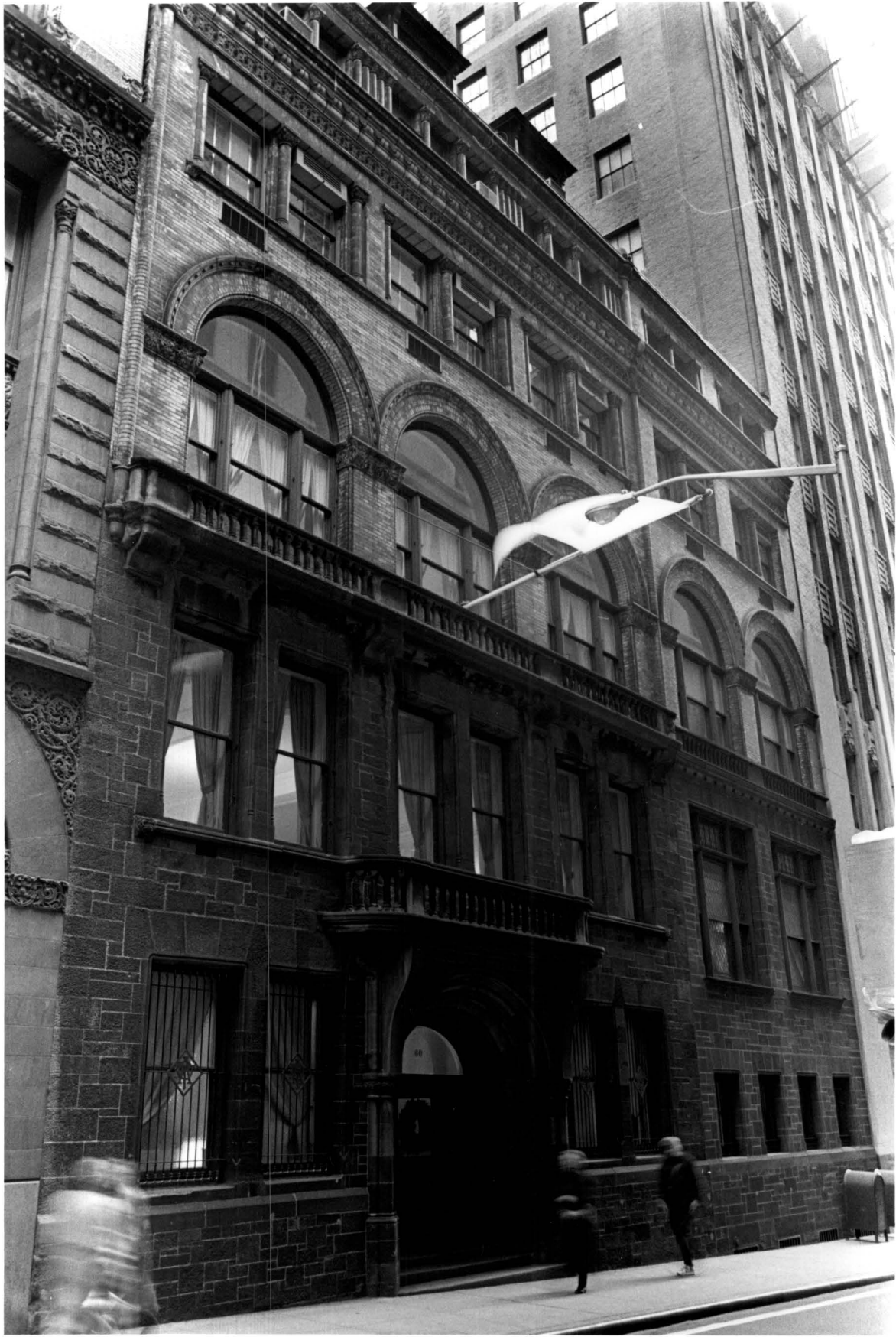
1. During the city's earliest years, taverns served as meeting places: the poets at Old Tom's or the Pewter Mug, for the politicians. By the 1820s some New Yorkers belonged to clubs which met in members' homes, for dinner and conversation. Philip Hone and eleven friends created such a club, the Hone Club in 1836, meeting once a month over a period of ten years. Information about these and other clubs in New York City was taken from Charles Lockwood, *Manhattan Moves Uptown* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976), 211-15; Robert A.M. Stern, et. al., *New York 1900, Metropolitan Architecture and Urbanism 1890-1915* (New York: Rizzoli, 1983), 226-45; Moses King, *King's Handbook of New York City* (New York: Moses King, 1892), 503-32; Fremont Rider, *Rider's New York City* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1923), 100-102.
2. While Lockwood (p. 212) cites the Union Club as the first to build its own clubhouse, Stern (p. 228) claims this distinction for the Union League Club in 1879.
3. Some were general social clubs but some were specialized and intended for those with specific political or professional affiliations or certain hobbies, or clubs for alumni of particular colleges.
4. This was noted in a pamphlet history written for members of The Down Town Association by William Rhinelander Stewart, *Sixty Years of The Down Town Association of the City of New York, 1860-1920* (New York: The Down Town Association, 1920), 4-5.
5. As per conversation with Mr. Mark Altherr, Treasurer of The Down Town Association, on 11/20/96.
6. The history of The Down Town Association was compiled from Stewart, *Sixty Years...*, a recent membership pamphlet published by the club, and conversations with Mr. Mark Altherr, Treasurer, and Mr. Ron Cosgrow, Club Manager. Information was also found in I. N. Phelps Stokes, *Iconography of Manhattan Island*, III (NY: Robert Dodd, 1918), 937-38.
7. *Sixty Years...*, 4.
8. Maitland gave the club an engraving after Rosa Bonheur and a picture of Prince John by Atwood.
9. New York City, Department of Buildings, Plans, Permits and Dockets. NB 602-1886.
10. New York City, Department of Buildings, Plans, Permits and Dockets. Alt. 1369-1910.
11. Information about Charles C. Haight was compiled from the architect's file at the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission.
12. Information about the firm of Warren & Wetmore was compiled from the architects' file at the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission.
13. Henry Hobson Richardson popularized the Romanesque Revival style in this country during the 1880s. One of a number of picturesque styles favored during the second half of the nineteenth century, the Romanesque Revival style was loosely based on Medieval fortresses, built of heavy stone with deeply recessed windows. Full, round-arched openings for doors and windows are the most recognizable characteristics of the style. The limited applied decoration featured heavy, truncated columns and foliate ornament.
14. Montgomery Schuyler, in reviewing this building, questioned Haight's choice of the Romanesque Revival style, which he considered an "unfinished" style. He believed Haight to be a talented architect in the Gothic Revival style and attributed his use of the Romanesque to the dominance of H.H. Richardson's personality. Montgomery Schuyler, "The Works of Charles C. Haight," in *Great American Architects Series Nos. 1-6; May 1895-July 1899* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1977), 48-52.
15. The building's front stoop and steps were altered in 1913 (Alt. 2075-1913) and it is likely that the doorway was also changed at this time.

## 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 Down Town Association 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 the Down Town Association Building, constructed in 1886-87 to the designs of noted architect and club member Charles C. Haight is a rare remaining club building in downtown New York; that this building was designed in a restrained Romanesque Revival style of great dignity and elegance; that when the building was enlarged in 1910-11, the designs of the prominent firm of Warren & Wetmore echoed the motifs of Haight's original facade; that the large, round arches which denote the entrance and main dining area on the third story provide a visual emphasis and focus for the stately facade; that The Down Town Association, originally incorporated in 1860, was one of the earliest private clubs in New York and the first downtown luncheon club; that The Down Town Association was part of New York's vibrant club life and was specifically founded to serve the needs of Wall Street businessmen and lawyers for a dining and meeting club close to their places of work; and that the club continues to serve those in the lower Manhattan community seeking a comfortable meeting and dining environment.

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 Down Town Association Building (60 Pine Street, aka 60-64 Pine Street and 20-24 Cedar Street) and designates Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 41, Lot 15 as its Landmark Site.



The Down Town Association Building, Pine Street facade

*Photo: Carl Forster*





The Down Town Association Building, Pine Street facade

*Photo: Carl Forster*



The Down Town Association Building, Cedar Street facade

Photo: Carl Forster



The Down Town Association Building, main entrance, Pine Street facade



The Down Town Association Building, window detail, Cedar Street facade

*Photos: Carl Forster*



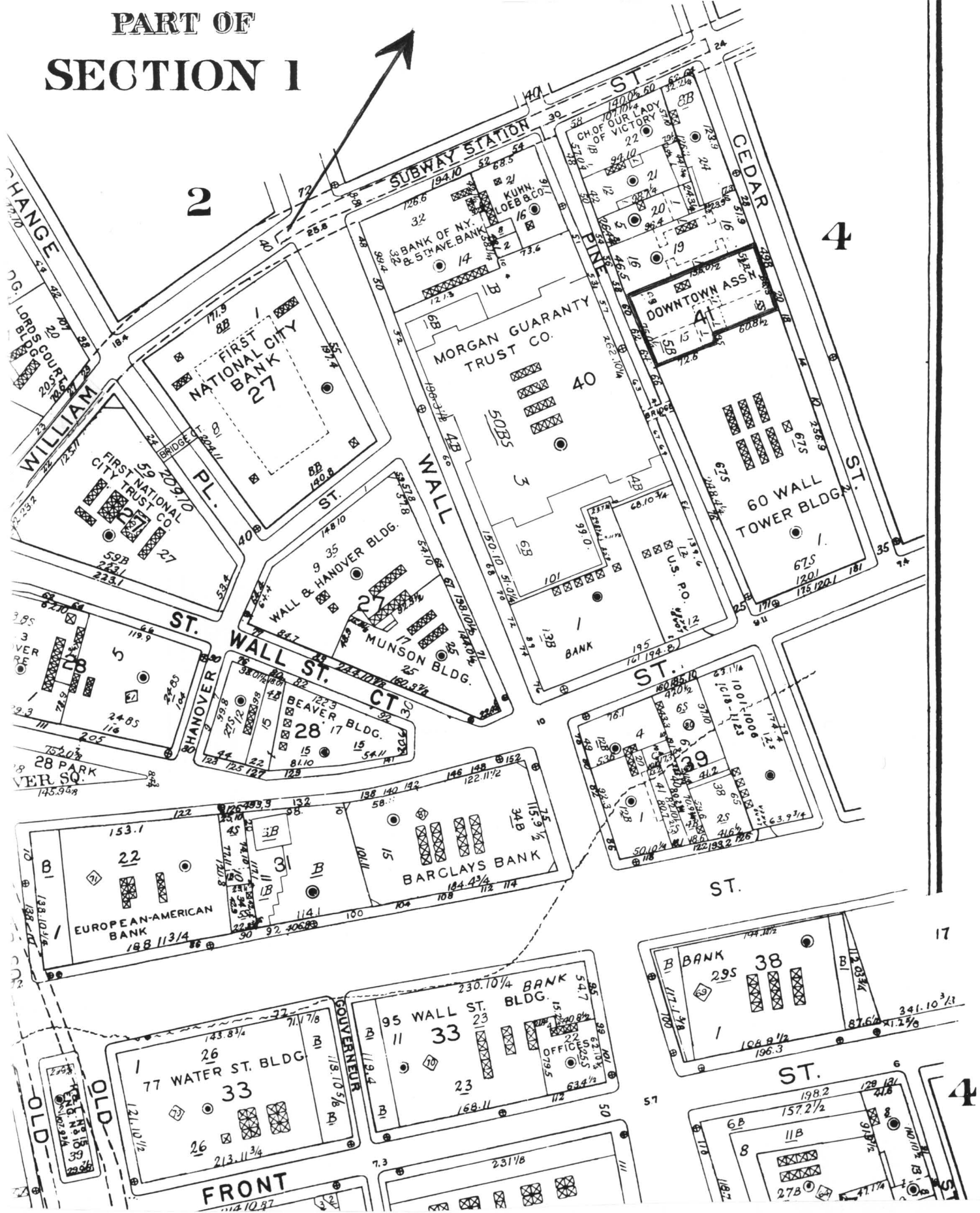
The Down Town Association Building, window details, Pine Street facade



The Down Town Association Building, window details, Cedar Street facade

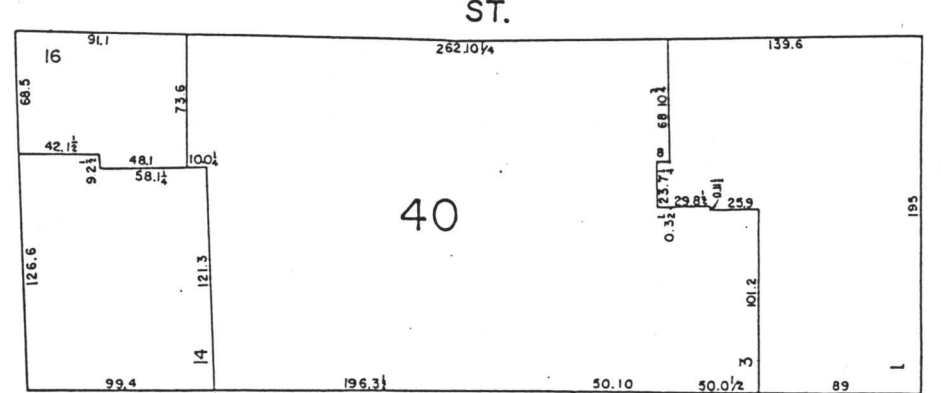
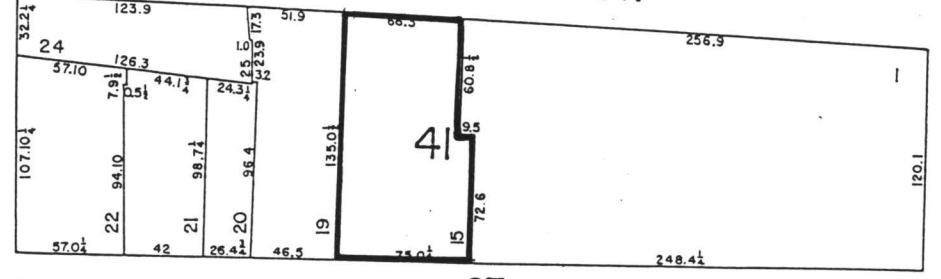
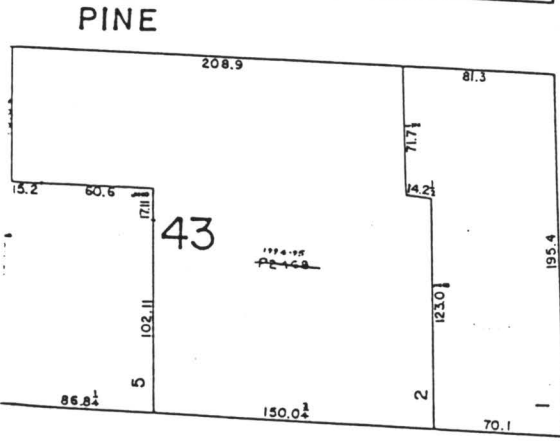
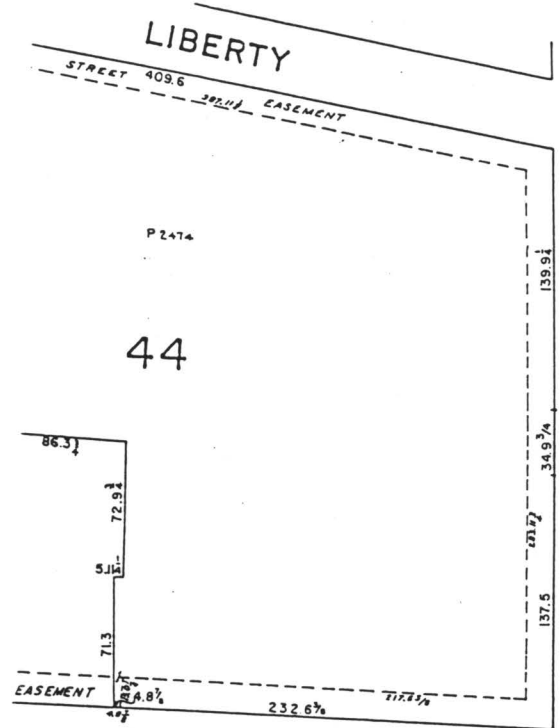
*Photos: Carl Forster*

# PART OF SECTION 1



The Down Town Association Building, 60 Pine Street  
 (aka 60-64 Pine Street and 20-24 Cedar Street), Manhattan  
 Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 41, Lot 15  
 Source: Sanborn Manhattan Landbook, 1994-95, Plate 1

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SEE PAGE 19

WILLIAM

ST.

PEARL ST.

M11 (20)

The Down Town Association Building, 60 Pine Street, (aka 60-64 Pine Street and 20-24 Cedar Street), Manhattan  
 Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 41, Lot 15  
 Source: Dept. of Finance, City Surveyor, Tax Map