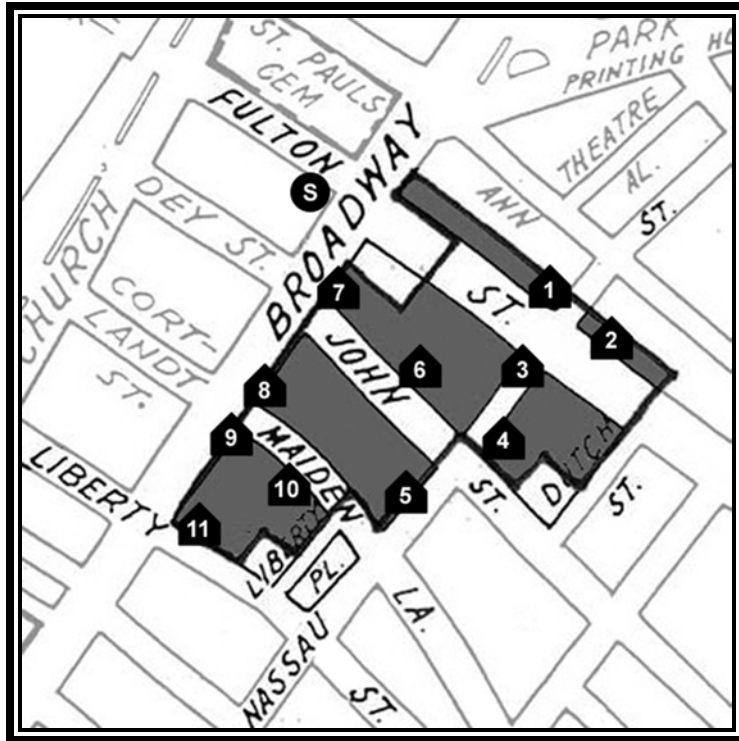


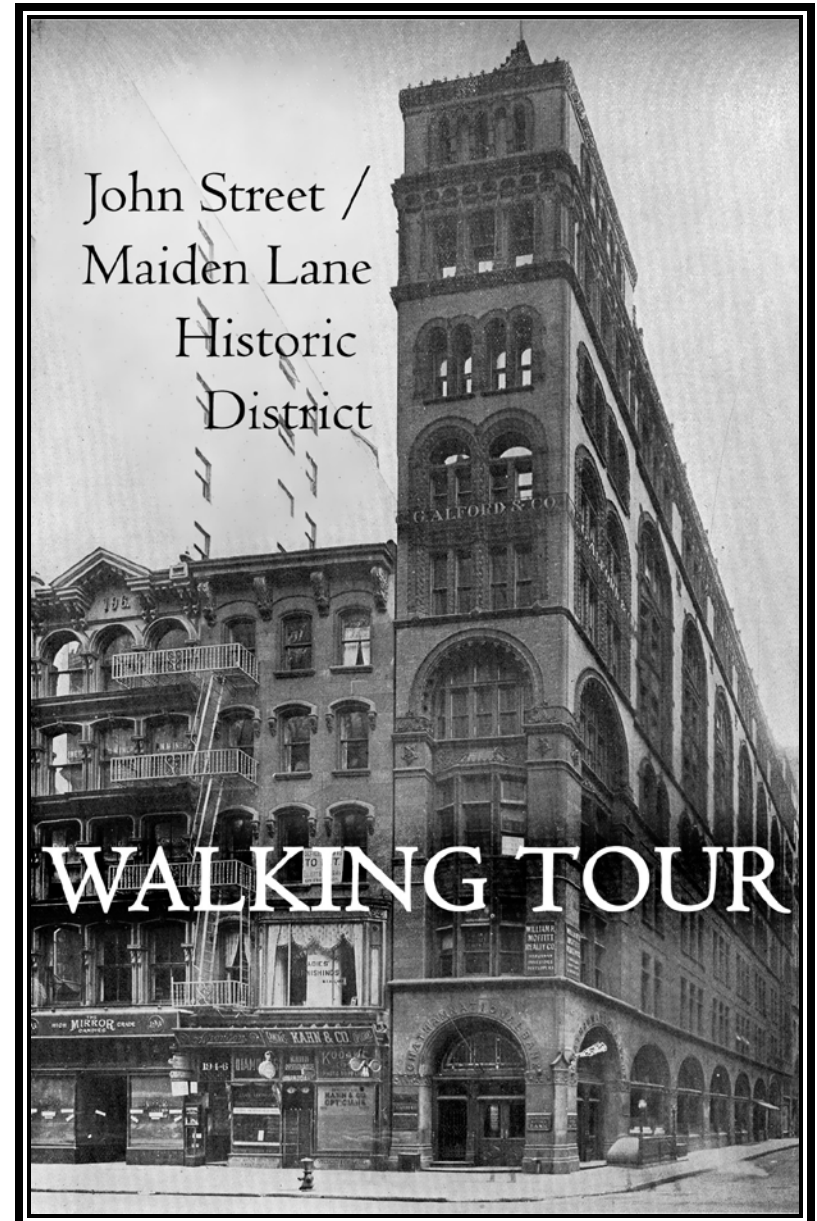
JOHN STREET/MAIDEN LANE
Historic Sites



- S** Tour begins and ends at the Fulton Street Subway Station, corner of Fulton Street and Broadway
- 1** Bennett Building, 139 Fulton Street
- 2** Keuffel & Esser Building, 127 Fulton Street
- 3** Armeny and Fulton Buildings, 124 and 130-6 Fulton Street
- 4** 80 Nassau Street
- 5** 63 Nassau Street
- 6** Tyler Building, 17 John Street
- 7** Corbin Building, 192 Broadway/7-9 John Street; Childs Building, 194-6 B'way; Girard Building, 198 B'way
- 8** Cushman Building, 174 Broadway/1 Maiden Lane
- 9** 170 Broadway
- 10** Diamond Exchange, 14 Maiden Lane
- 11** 67 Liberty Street



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A BRIEF HISTORY

John Street/Maiden Lane Historic District

The John Street/Maiden Lane district in Manhattan is an area of early skyscraper and office building development constructed during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These buildings were built on speculation to house the many collateral businesses attracted by the concentration of wealth and business in the nearby Financial District.

The area is of particular architectural interest, as the buildings show the early evolution of the office skyscraper, in what might be termed its ancestral home of Lower Manhattan. As evidenced by the wealth of extant building decoration, the architects were experimenting with materials and motifs in the new skyscraper form. Although all of the buildings have elevators, several have traditional masonry load-bearing walls and possess façade treatments that are not typical of later steel-frame construction. Many of these buildings rise dramatically from the ground with the sheer vertical walls allowed before setbacks were imposed by the Zoning Resolution of 1916. The combination of the winding street grid, itself a remnant of colonial New York, with the towering building masses lends the area a unique and distinctive “turn of the century” sense of place.

Originally Maiden Lane from the East River to approximately Nassau Street was a pebbly brook where early residents would wash their clothing and household linens. During the city’s tenure as the nation’s capital, the brook was filled in and the area became an elite residential neighborhood, housing residents such as Thomas Jefferson. The neighborhood was home to many fine specialty stores due to its proximity to the docks on the East River. For example, the New York Arcade was built in 1827, stretching between John Street and Maiden Lane along Broadway and containing over forty stores under a skylight-covered corridor. This profitable commercial area was one of the first to be gas-lit by the New York Gas-Light Company in the late 1820’s. As the separation between work and home became more distinct in New York, the area became solely commercial, serving the needs of businessmen who spent the workweek downtown.

By the late 19th century many office buildings began to replace the smaller commercial structures and residences that had existed in the area. This pattern of development continued into the 1920’s. The character of the district is a product of its central location during years of continuous innovation beginning over a hundred years ago. The creation of the John Street/Maiden Lane Historic District will help preserve the diverse group of buildings that you see today. The narrow streets, a holdover from the origins of the district, combined with the energy of the lively commercial occupants make it easy to get lost in the modern street life. At the same time, the proposed historic district holds numerous surprises for those who manage to look a little further.



The Historic Districts Council is the independent, not-for-profit, nonpartisan, citywide advocate for New York’s designated historic districts and for neighborhoods meriting preservation. The Council is dedicated to upholding the New York City Landmarks Law and to furthering the preservation ethic. This mission is accomplished through ongoing programs of hands-on assistance to more than 100 local community and neighborhood groups and through public-policy initiatives, publications, educational outreach and sponsorship of community events.

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CUSHMAN BUILDING, 174 Broadway/1 Maiden Lane
C.P.H. Gilbert, 1898

Built by C.P.H. Gilbert, the Cushman Building is notable for its elegant mansard roof and deft terra cotta work that set it apart from its neighbors. Known for the clock they have embedded in the sidewalk at the corner of Broadway and Maiden Lane, Barthman Jewelers has occupied the storefront space since the building's completion. The business is a modern reminder of the bustling jewelry trade that characterized Maiden Lane into the early 20th century.

170 BROADWAY

Clinton and Russell, 1902

The prolific firm of Clinton and Russell, notable for the Apthorp Apartments on the Upper West Side, were also instrumental in the development of the skyscrapers along the Broadway corridor. 170 Broadway is an example of such work. This Beaux Arts building is marked by its tripartite façade and the monolithic streetwall it forms with its neighbors along Broadway.



THE DIAMOND EXCHANGE, 14 Maiden Lane
G. A. Schellenger, 1894

This unusual and remarkably vertical building features three slender brick colonettes flanking two stacks of angular bay windows crafted in metal. Originally a commercial building known as the Diamond Exchange, the building has been converted to residential use. G.A. Schellenger, the architect, was also a prolific residential architect, with numerous extant row houses in Brooklyn and Manhattan constructed near the turn of the century.

67 LIBERTY STREET

Architect Unknown and date undetermined

This five-story building, one of the oldest in this district of skyscrapers, is marked by its graceful composition that is dominated by a grand three-story arch. It is the former Joseph P. Day Building and was once occupied the John Wanamaker's store for men.



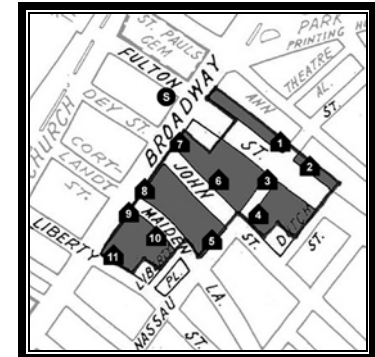
THE BENNETT BUILDING, 139 Fulton Street
Arthur D. Gilman, 1872-73.

Commissioned by real-estate investor Gordon Bennett, Jr., the Bennett Building remains an icon of cast-iron architecture to this day. According to the Lower Manhattan Emergency Preservation Fund "the heavy window enframements, horizontal massing, and rhythmic arrangement of openings typify the finest in Italianate design." Originally a 7-story office building with a mansard roof, it was enlarged in 1889 with the addition of 4 floors, and may now be the tallest cast-iron structure standing in New York City. As the only extant example of Arthur Gilman's work in this style in the city, the Bennett Building is emblematic of his contribution to the architectural developments of the office building and of the promotion of the Second Empire style in the United States.



KEUFFEL AND ESSER BUILDING, 127 Fulton Street
DeLemos & Cordes, 1891-92

The Keuffel and Esser Building was once the home of a manufacturer of architectural products (who, notably, popularized the slide rule). Such tools adorn the lovely spandrels under the Keuffel & Esser name, along with the date of the founding of the company, 1867, and that of the building, 1892. The terra cotta trim and unique combination of structural and decorative elements distinguish the façade among the stylistic diversity of Fulton Street. The Keuffel & Esser Building predates the yellow-brick structures across the street, which were designed by the same firm.



3

ARMENY AND FULTON BUILDINGS, 124 and 130-6 Fulton

DeLemos and Cordes, 1890, 1891



Physically distinct yet stylistically related, this pair of yellow brick structures mark the entrance to the Nassau Street portion of the John Street/Maiden Lane Historic District. The sculptural cornice and top story on the Fulton Building contrasts with its weighty street-level horizontality. Across Nassau Street, the Armenia Building displays striking metal window framing and ornamentation.



4

80 NASSAU STREET

Herman Gronenberg, 1932

An example of later construction in the proposed district, this Art Deco style building features prominent vertical elements that lead the eye to a lovely frieze above the fourth floor windows.

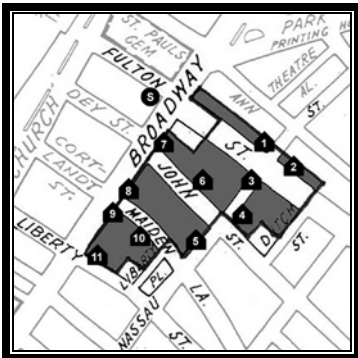


63 NASSAU STREET

Attributed to James Bogardus, 1860



Though poorly maintained, this building still retains some beautiful detail work including rope moldings, fluted cast-iron columns, heavy foliate spandrels, and decorative bas-relief portraits of Benjamin Franklin. The structure is a small but unique example of cast-iron construction in keeping with the style and era of James Bogardus, a pioneer of the style. Though his hand in the design cannot be confirmed, the façade is still unique among its contemporaries, with engaged columns spanning the upper three stories and uniting them with the robust, detailed cornice.



6

THE TYLER BUILDING, 192 Broadway/17 John Street

Frederich Putman Platt and Brothers, 1925

An inscription on the Tyler building, built on the site of the John Street Theater opened in 1767, reads: "during the Revolution while the city was occupied by General Howe's troops, British army officers took part as players and playwrights." In reference to the historic site, the building was named for Royall Tyler, author of *The Contrast*, and the first American playwright to "receive recognition," according to a New York Times article of 1925. The Starrett Corporation, builders of the Tyler, figured prominently in the contemporary New York City building scene: the Empire State Building and the New York Life Building are among their notable projects. Art deco detailing along the stepped upper floors is particularly interesting, but can be difficult to see on narrow John Street.



7

THE CORBIN BUILDING, 192 Broadway/7-9 John Street

Francis H. Kimball, 1888-9



In the 1880's when office buildings in Lower Manhattan were beginning to grow taller, Francis H. Kimball and a handful of other architects began to design buildings that did not conform to the sober utilitarian-style office buildings that marked many parts of New York. Kimball employed load-bearing masonry in the construction of the nine-story Corbin building. Architectural critic Montgomery Schuyler noted that Kimball's "work is of a very high interest. ... We can scarcely see in New York, except in Mr. Kimball's own work, so idiomatic and characteristic a treatment of terra cotta on so elaborate a scale." Though the Corbin Building will be preserved and incorporated into the proposed Fulton Street Transit Center plans are to raze its neighbors to the north: the Girard and Childs Buildings. The Transit Center, according to MTA chairman Peter S. Kalikow "makes what was a mess into something beautiful." Enjoy these buildings while you can:

THE CHILDS BUILDING, 194-96 Broadway

Architect Unknown, 1911

Built for the Childs Restaurant chain, a moderately-priced restaurant with a penchant for fancifully designed buildings, this cast-iron fronted structure holds its own between the substantially taller Girard and Corbin Buildings.



THE GIRARD BUILDING, 198 Broadway

Walter H. Wickes, 1904



White and Willensky, in the *AAA Guide to New York City*, describe the style of the Girard building as "Assyrian Revival on a rampage." True or not, the Girard Building undeniably sports a distinctive and sculptural façade.