

How to Research New York City Buildings

Historic Districts Council Preservation School
 October 9, 2019
 Gregory Dietrich, Principal
 Gregory Dietrich Preservation Consulting

I. BASIC RESEARCH

II. INTENSIVE-LEVEL RESEARCH

Webster Hall: A Case Study for Building Research

Webster Hall, 119-125 East 11th Street

I. BASIC RESEARCH

Books on NYC's Architecture & History

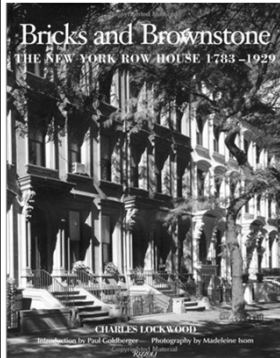
[V115] **Webster Hall**, 119 E.11th St., bet. Third and Fourth Aves. N side. 1886. *Charles Rentz*. 🍏
 An 1880s dance hall, then a 1930s ballroom, then a 1980s rock and roll club called **The Ritz**, then DJ's and raves in the 1990s, now returned to rock and roll. Labyrinthian inside, with multiple stages. Good luck.

Construction Date: 1886
 Architect: Charles Rentz
 Purpose-built Dance Hall
 NYC landmark

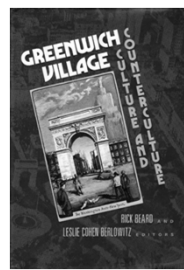
solid apple = landmark
 hollow apple = historic district

Books on NYC's Architecture & History

Books on NYC's Architecture & History



Books on NYC's Architecture & History



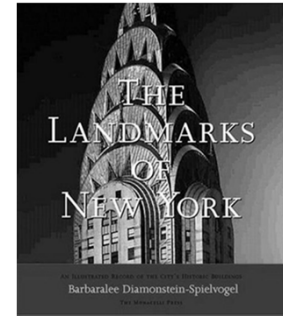
JAN WILSON-BREWER
 Greenwich Village, the oldest center in a settled pattern and the oldest part of the city, is a unique and historic area. It is the heart of the city's cultural life, and its architecture is a testament to the city's rich history. The buildings of Greenwich Village are a mix of styles, from the grand mansions of the 18th century to the more modest row houses of the 19th century. The architecture of Greenwich Village is a reflection of the city's history and its role as a center of culture and commerce.

Image: Indicates a different roof than what is there now
 Text: Indicates that Webster Hall was a popular place for elaborate masquerade balls in the 1910s and 1920s, hosted by radical organizations

Determining if a building is designated

- AIA Guide to New York City
- Guide to New York City Landmarks
- NYC Department of Buildings Website
- New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission Website
- Neighborhood Preservation Center Website

Determining if a building is designated



Determining if a building is designated

NYC Department of Buildings Website
www.a810-bisweb.nyc.gov/bisweb/bispi00.jsp



Determining if a building is designated

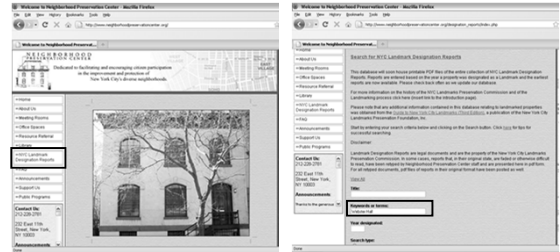
Webster Hall landmark designation (pre-2008)

Webster Hall after NYC landmark designation (post-2008)

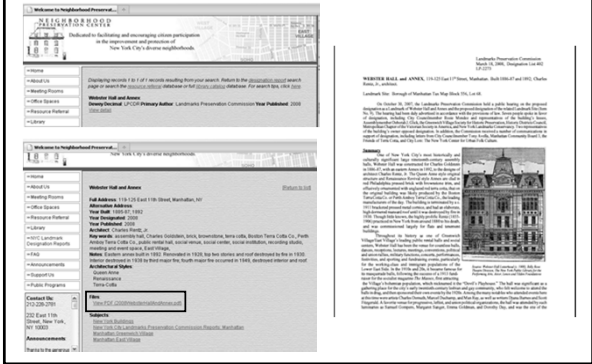
Determining if a building is designated
Finding the Designation Report:
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission Website
www1.nyc.gov/site/lpc/index.page



Determining if a building is designated
Finding the Designation Report:
Neighborhood Preservation Center Website
www.neighborhoodpreservationcenter.org/designation_reports/index.php



Finding the Designation Report:
Neighborhood Preservation Center Website



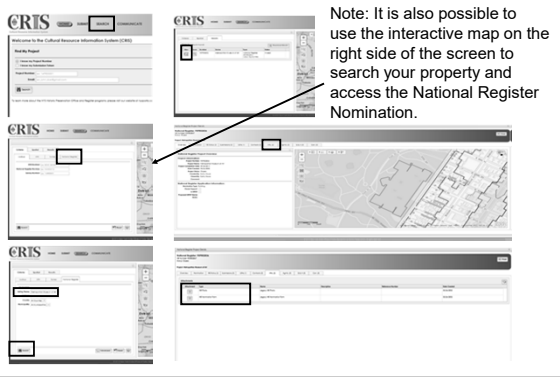
Finding the National Register Nomination: NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Website
www.parks.ny.gov/shpo/



Finding the National Register Nomination:
NY Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Website



Finding the National Register Nomination:
NY Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Website



Note: It is also possible to use the interactive map on the right side of the screen to search your property and access the National Register Nomination.

Finding the National Register Nomination:
NY Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Website



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

1. Name
2. Location
3. Classification
4. Owner of Property
5. Location of Legal Description
6. Representation in Existing Surveys

II. INTENSIVE-LEVEL RESEARCH



Accessing NYC Department of Building Files
NYC Department of Buildings – Created in 1865

Recorded Documents for:

- New Buildings (NB)
- Alterations (Alt)
- Demolition Permits (DM)

Accessing NYC Department of Building Files
Documents Held at:

- Department of Buildings, 280 Broadway
 - On microfiche (if available)
 - Some original scanned documents are accessible via the NYC Department of Buildings website
- Municipal Archives, 31 Chambers Street
 - Paper files and microfilm (for properties below 34th Street)

Files at the NYC Department of Buildings



90-92 Thompson Street, 1913, Louis Sheinart

Application for Reduction of Buildings
City of New York
119-121 & 123 E. 11th St.

1. How many existing buildings to be removed...
2. How many of the buildings to be removed...
3. What is the date of the last...
4. How many of the buildings to be removed...
5. What will be the cost of the buildings to be removed...
6. What will be the cost of the buildings to be removed...
7. What will be the cost of the buildings to be removed...
8. What will be the cost of the buildings to be removed...
9. What will be the cost of the buildings to be removed...
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15. What will be the cost of the buildings to be removed...
16. What will be the cost of the buildings to be removed...
17. What will be the cost of the buildings to be removed...
18. What will be the cost of the buildings to be removed...
19. What will be the cost of the buildings to be removed...
20. What will be the cost of the buildings to be removed...

Block and Lot Files at the Municipal Archives

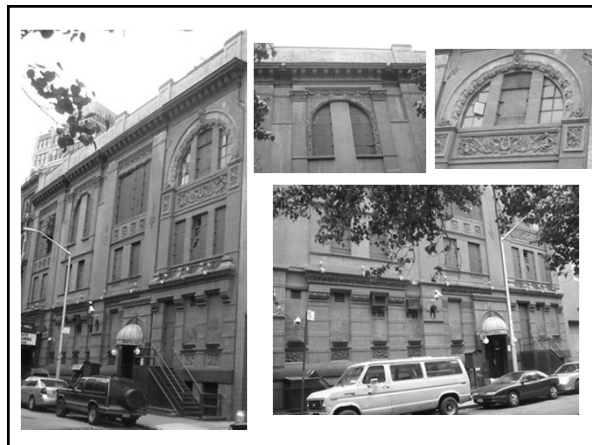
1. Confirmed architect and date
2. Confirmed built as a dance hall
3. N.B. 1212-1886
4. One apartment within building
5. Owner, Charles Goldstein
6. Built with a peak roof
7. Originally only 70' wide, only covering 119, 121, and 123 E. 11th

Block and Lot Files at the Municipal Archives

- Alt. 7-1892
- 20' extension built covering 125 E. 11th St.
- Addition also designed by Rentz
- Continues to be a dance hall, now has a restaurant
- Roof identified as mansard now

Block and Lot Files at the Municipal Archives

- Alt. 1031-1930
- Building still used as a dance hall
- Repairing the roof after the fire
- Replacing floor, roof, and balcony beams damaged by fire



The Real Estate Record Online Database
(for NYC buildings constructed/alterd between 1868 -1922)

www.recored.library.columbia.edu/

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES
DIGITAL COLLECTIONS

The Real Estate Record

The Real Estate Record is a weekly report of building activity in New York City and its environs. This website contains fully digitized volumes, ranging from Volume 1 (published in 1868) to Volume 110 (published in 1922).

SEARCHING THE COLLECTION

- If you have a particular volume or issue, use **Search by Volume & Issue**.
- If you are looking for information about a particular topic or address, try **Find by Keyword**.
- For search combinations such as date or section, use **Advanced Search**.

SEARCH BY KEYWORD

SEARCH BY VOLUME & ISSUE

ADVANCED SEARCH

Search for: [text input]

Limit by section: [dropdown menu]

Limit by date: [start/end date inputs]

The Real Estate Record Online Database
(for NYC buildings constructed/alterd between 1868 -1922)

www.recored.library.columbia.edu/

"Kovalsky Brothers...have received the general contract for repairing the 2-sty brick ballroom, 90x100 feet at 119-25 East 11th st, from plans by William G.I. Roeder to cost \$25,000. The Webster Hall Co., Charles Wanderman, president..."

Office for Metropolitan History Online Database
(for Manhattan buildings constructed/alterd between 1900-1986)

www.metrohistory.com/

Office for Metropolitan History

Specialists in the Architectural History of New York City

Manhattan Building (NB) Database, 1900-1986

SEARCH: The Buildings Periodic Database, 1900-1986

With gratitude to and respect for all those who are interested in the history of New York City, we have digitized all the new building (NB) applications filed in Manhattan for each year from 1900 to 1986, and saved it into a database.

SEARCH PARAMETERS

Year: [input field]

DOB NB #: [input field]

Cost: [input field]

Building Address: [input field]

Owner Address: [input field]

Architect Address: [input field]

Description: [input field]

Comments: [input field]

SEARCH RESULTS

Reset

BASIC SEARCH TIPS

- You will want to determine the date and architect of your building, and you can, for instance, on West 66th Street a building you think was built around 1920, search for "1920" in the address field and work backwards from 1919 to 1922. Be sure that the present 100-foot limit has been lifted as 124-122 West 66th, or even simply 129 West 66th.
- Some records are not indexed by address. For example, "100 West 66th Street" (17th of "100 West 66th Street") will be indexed by the address field, but "100 West 66th Street" will not. To search for a building with a specific address, you can use the "Address" field. To search for a building with a specific address, you can use the "Address" field. To search for a building with a specific address, you can use the "Address" field.
- Architect abbreviations: [list of abbreviations]

Multiple parameters (comma (and) users) search results

- Use an asterisk (*) for a wildcard or an ending
- Use an all symbol (|) for a single character wild card
- Searching for word fragments and multiple word fragments is OK
- Use "quote" to search for an exact string

The Year and Cost fields can be searched using the following operators:

- Use (>) for less than: e.g. >2000 means Year from 2000
- Use (<) for greater than: e.g. <1000 means "greater than 1000"
- Use an equals (=) for a range: e.g. 1910-1920 means "between 1910 and 1920"
- Cost can be entered either with or without commas

HOME HELP

New Buildings and/or Building Alterations (Post-1990) on NYC Department of Buildings Website

NYC Department of Buildings
Property Profile Overview

114-108 East 114th Street

Address: 114-108 East 114th Street, Apt 2B, NYC 10029

Department of Public Works: 114-108 East 114th Street, Apt 2B, NYC 10029

Department of Environmental Control: 114-108 East 114th Street, Apt 2B, NYC 10029

Department of Health: 114-108 East 114th Street, Apt 2B, NYC 10029

Department of Social Services: 114-108 East 114th Street, Apt 2B, NYC 10029

Department of Transportation: 114-108 East 114th Street, Apt 2B, NYC 10029

Department of Parks and Recreation: 114-108 East 114th Street, Apt 2B, NYC 10029

Department of City Planning: 114-108 East 114th Street, Apt 2B, NYC 10029

Department of Finance: 114-108 East 114th Street, Apt 2B, NYC 10029

Department of Information Technology Services: 114-108 East 114th Street, Apt 2B, NYC 10029

Department of Operations and Maintenance: 114-108 East 114th Street, Apt 2B, NYC 10029

Department of Strategic Planning and Policy: 114-108 East 114th Street, Apt 2B, NYC 10029

Department of Community Development: 114-108 East 114th Street, Apt 2B, NYC 10029

Department of Economic Development: 114-108 East 114th Street, Apt 2B, NYC 10029

Department of External Affairs: 114-108 East 114th Street, Apt 2B, NYC 10029

Department of General Services: 114-108 East 114th Street, Apt 2B, NYC 10029

Department of Human Resources: 114-108 East 114th Street, Apt 2B, NYC 10029

Department of Legal Affairs: 114-108 East 114th Street, Apt 2B, NYC 10029

Department of Procurement: 114-108 East 114th Street, Apt 2B, NYC 10029

Department of Records and Communications: 114-108 East 114th Street, Apt 2B, NYC 10029

Department of Safety: 114-108 East 114th Street, Apt 2B, NYC 10029

Department of Special Services: 114-108 East 114th Street, Apt 2B, NYC 10029

Department of Technology: 114-108 East 114th Street, Apt 2B, NYC 10029

Department of Training and Development: 114-108 East 114th Street, Apt 2B, NYC 10029

Department of Urban Planning: 114-108 East 114th Street, Apt 2B, NYC 10029

Department of Water and Power: 114-108 East 114th Street, Apt 2B, NYC 10029

Department of Workforce Management: 114-108 East 114th Street, Apt 2B, NYC 10029

New Buildings and/or Building Alterations (Post-1990) on NYC Department of Buildings Website

NYC Department of Buildings
Job Overview

114-108 East 114th Street, Manhattan

Page: 1 of 1

Start overview at new date, select Month: [] Day: [] Year: []

Show All Job Types [] Show All Floors [] APPLY

FILE DATE	JOB #	DOC #	JOB TYPE	FLOOR	JOB STATUS	STATUS DATE	LIC #	APPLICANT	FLING REF	IN ADMT
03/11/2002	18318283	01	A2	002	G PERMIT-PARTIAL	07/01/2004				
04/26/2002	18318286	01	A2	002	G PERMIT-PARTIAL	05/17/2002		Dalga		
02/15/1991	18822285	01	A3	002	P APPROVED	03/19/1991		BALKAJA	HASHAS	
02/26/1991	18822285	01	A2	002	X SIGNED-OFF	03/26/1991		BALKAJA	HASHAS	
11/28/1991	18818332	01	A2	002	X SIGNED-OFF	06/11/2006		MANFREDO	VALBIT	
11/14/1991	18822285	02	A2	002	P APPROVED	11/05/1991		BALKAJA		
11/19/1997	181567503	01	A2	001	G PERMIT-PARTIAL	02/28/2005		BALKAJA		

New Buildings and/or Building Alterations (Post-1990) on NYC Department of Buildings Website

NYC Department of Buildings
Application Data

114-108 East 114th Street, Manhattan

Location: 114-108 East 114th Street, Apt 2B, NYC 10029

Work Order Submitted: 01/11/2002

Current Applicant of Record: NITAN BALKAJA, P.E., P.E. (100 MONTGOMERY AVENUE, BRONX, NY 10469) Phone: 201-281-4100

Hiring Representative: NITAN BALKAJA, P.E., P.E. (100 MONTGOMERY AVENUE, BRONX, NY 10469) Phone: 201-281-4100

Lead Action Plan (LAP) - APPROVED 03/19/1991 (P)

Additional Considerations:

Job Description: REPLACE DAMAGED WOOD BEAMS AT BASEMENT AND MINOR PARTITION WORK. NO CHANGE IN OCCUPANCY, USE OR ADDRESS.

Plans Submitted: 01/11/2002

Emergency Classification: COMM - COMMERCIAL BUILDING - 002-0002

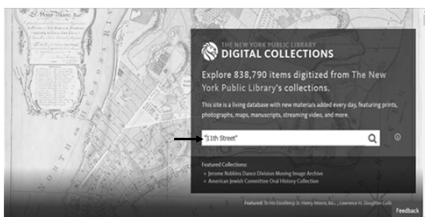
Historic Maps

Sources in NYC:

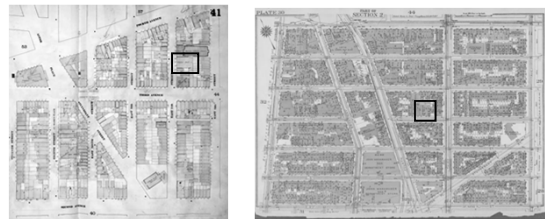
- New York Public Library
- Municipal Archives
- Library of Congress (online)
- New-York Historical Society
- Other internet sources

Historic Map Research - New York Public Library

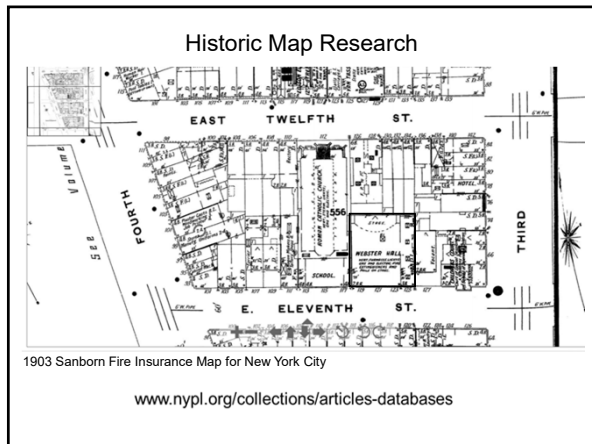
www.digitalcollections.nypl.org



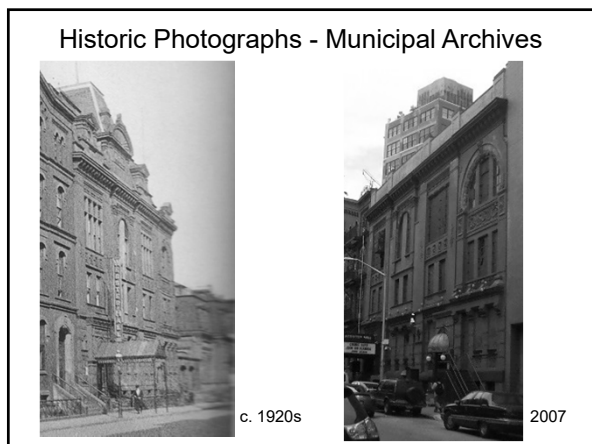
Historic Map Research




From: New York Public Library's Online Map Division




- ### Historic Photographs
- Sources in NYC:
- New York Public Library (online)
 - Municipal Archives' Tax Photos (online)
 - Municipal Archives' Other Photos
 - Library of Congress (online)
 - New-York Historical Society
 - Museum of the City of New York (online)
 - Other internet sources



Historic Photographs - Library of Congress




Garment Workers gather at Webster Hall
Unknown date




Greek Nationals gather at Webster Hall
before the Balkan War, 1912

Webster Hall was a popular place for labor unions and groups to rally

Historic Photographs - Library of Congress



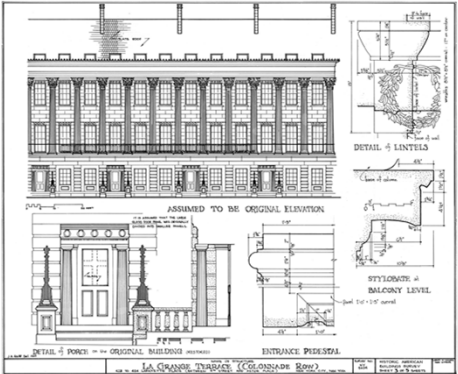
Poster for a ball, c. 1920



Cast and orchestra of *How to Succeed in Business*
recording an album for RCA, 1961

- Webster Hall hosted decadent masquerade balls in the 1920s
- Webster Hall was used as a recording studio for RCA in the 1950s and 1960s (also shows how the interior looked at that time)


Historic Drawings/HABS - Library of Congress




Architectural drawings showing the facade and interior details of Webster Hall, including elevations and sections.

Historic Photographs - Museum of the City of New York

www.collections.mcny.org



Costume ball at Webster Hall, c. 1920s




Poster for Webster Hall party celebrating the end of Prohibition, 1933

Historic Photographs: Other Internet Sources

LaGuardia and Wagner Archives Photos

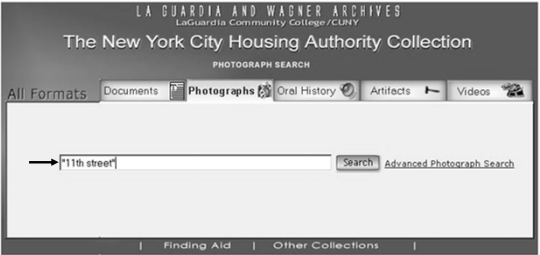
www.laguardiawagnerarchive.lagcc.cuny.edu/COLLECTIONS.aspx



Screenshot of the LaGuardia and Wagner Archives website showing a search interface and historical photographs.

Historic Photographs: Other Internet Sources

LaGuardia and Wagner Archives Photos



Screenshot of the The New York City Housing Authority Collection website showing a search interface for photographs.

Historic Photographs: Other Internet Sources LaGuardia and Wagner Archives Photos

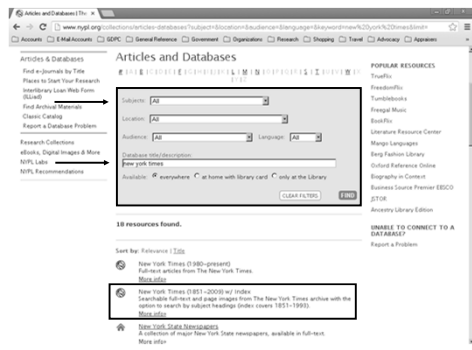


Historic Newspaper Articles and Chronologies

- New York newspapers and other national newspapers via New York Public Library online database ("Research"/search "Articles/Databases")
- Fulton History Website – www.fultonhistory.com
- *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* (available online through the Brooklyn Public Library website)
- New York newspapers and other national newspapers via Library of Congress online database
- Stokes *Iconography of Manhattan Island*

New York Times via New York Public Library

www.nypl.org/collections/articles-databases



New York Times Political History

PLANS OF THE SOCIALISTS

THEY ARE PREPARING FOR A GREAT WAR WITH GEORGE. This year will see at least two Labor parties in arms against each other in this city. The Socialists reorganization is taking shape. The Socialist's great conference is to take place tomorrow at Webster Hall, and by next week they will probably have decided upon a line of attack against Henry George and his supporters. It is said that 50 trade unions and 50 assembly districts in New-York, Kings, Queens, and Richmond Counties will be represented there. Among the unions that yesterday announced their intention of sending delegates were the Cigarmakers' Union No. 10, the furniture machine workers, the Carpenters' Progressive Union, the new-carriers, and the Progressive Silk Ribbon Weavers' Union. Fully 250 delegates are expected to assemble. The Socialists have not yet determined whether they will change the name of their party or not, but the rank and file like the name, and it will probably be retained. The genuine Socialists will insist upon the declaration of socialist

MUSSOLINI CALLED THREAT TO PEACE

1,000 Anti-Fascists Here Urge This Country to Stop Making Loans to His Regime. About 1,000 anti-Fascists assembled in Webster Hall yesterday to celebrate the eighth centennial of the first Italian Parliament and unanimously adopted a resolution condemning Mussolini as "a constant threat to world peace" and appealing to this country to stop making loans to the present regime in Italy. Gaspare Nicotri, former professor of criminology at Palermo University; Carlo Fama and Philip Bongiorno, president of the Italian Hospital, speaking in Italian, denounced the Mussolini Government as tyrannical and as having war-like intentions.

40 YEARS MARKED BY CLOTHING UNION

Anniversary Dinner Tuesday to Be in Webster Hall, Where Amalgamated Was Born

By RALPH RATE

Thursday night the glowing anniversary dinner of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America will be held in Webster Hall, the birthplace of the union.

At the dinner, which will be held at 8 o'clock, the union will celebrate its 40th anniversary. The union was formed in 1897 by the merger of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America.

The union has a membership of 100,000 and is one of the largest unions in the United States.

New York Times Social History

1949: Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America celebrates the 40th anniversary of its founding at Webster Hall

consideration of work clothes. The union has a membership of 100,000 and is one of the largest unions in the United States.

The union has a membership of 100,000 and is one of the largest unions in the United States.

New York Times – History of Fires

TWO KILLED IN FIRE AT WEBSTER HALL

Victims and Perils of an Early Morning Blaze Swept Old Scene of Revival

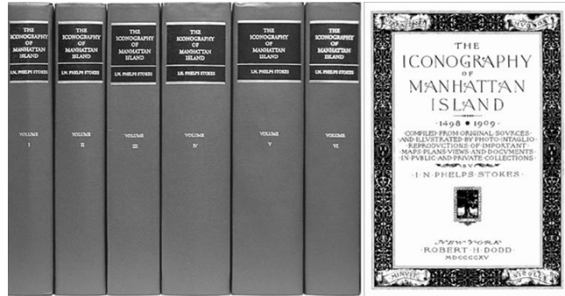
FLAMES FOUGHT 3 HOURS Spread to Tenements—Fireman is Injured

Manhattan, November 19, 1938. A fire that broke out at 10 o'clock this morning in Webster Hall, the headquarters of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, killed two men and injured a fireman. The fire, which started in a room used for storage, spread to the tenements above the hall and was not under control until 3 o'clock.



- 1938 Fire
 - "Traditional Bohemian revelry"
 - "Famous landmark"
 - Historical overview
- Owner is Harris Reiner
- Fires in 1902, 1911 and 1930
- Building was not 40 years old in 1902

I.N. Phelps Stokes' *Iconography of Manhattan Island*
(housed at the New York Public Library)



I.N. Phelps Stokes' *Iconography of Manhattan Island*



I.N. Phelps Stokes' *Iconography of Manhattan Island*



Who owns, owned, lived or operated a business in a building?

- Current tax records
- Current deeds and property records
- Historic deeds
- Census records
- Historic Directories

Tax Records via ACRIS Website: Current Ownership
www.a836-acris.nyc.gov/CP/



Tax Records via ACRIS Website: Current Ownership



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