



The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

1 Centre Street, 9th Floor North New York NY 10007 TEL: 212-669-7700 FAX: 212-669-7960
www.nyc.gov/landmarks



News Release
April 26, 2005

Contact: Diane Jackier
(212) 669-7923

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION DESIGNATES INDIVIDUAL LANDMARK IN LOWER MANHATTAN

“From its first introduction of the slide rule in 1880 to its continued advances in architectural drawing and drafting equipment a century later, the Keuffel & Esser Company played a significant role in the technical developments of architecture in the United States,” said Robert B. Tierney, Chairman of the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

Keuffel & Esser Company Building (127 Fulton Street, Manhattan)

Constructed in 1892-93 to the design of De Lemos & Cordes, the eight-story building at 127 Fulton Street served as the general offices and salesrooms for the Keuffel & Esser Company, the first American company solely devoted to drawing and drafting materials. The Keuffel & Esser Company’s products, which included mathematical and surveying equipment, were used in countless construction and engineering projects in the United States, such as the Brooklyn Bridge. The company also performed a vital role during World War I by greatly increasing production of drafting equipment and developing and manufacturing optical and precision instruments for scientific and military purposes, which was particularly critical since the war ended the import of such material from Europe.

De Lemos & Cordes’ richly detailed Renaissance Revival style design features a strong and eclectic tripartite division. The base has a two-story, arched cast-iron storefront, divided by slender colonettes, bearing the firm’s name, small shields with the firm’s initials, and representations of its products. The midsection has a transitional third story with rectangular fenestration, surmounted by a recessed monumental window capped by a sculptural relief of a knight’s helmet and a winged orb. The upper stories, clad in buff ironspot brick and terra cotta, feature a two-story angled metal window bay with an ornamental spandrel and culminate in a decorative cornice and tall balustrade with end finials.

This building, which remained in use by the Keuffel & Esser Company for nearly seven decades, is one of the best preserved and distinguished of the smaller late nineteenth-century office buildings in this section of Lower Manhattan.

