

R. H. MACY & CO. STORE, 14TH STREET ANNEX, 56 West 14th Street, Manhattan.
Built 1897; [William] Schickel & [Isaac E.] Ditmars, architects.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 577, Lot 12.

On July 12, 2011, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the R.H. Macy & Co. Store, 14th Street Annex and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 1). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Four people spoke in favor of designation, including representatives of Manhattan Community Board 2, Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation, and Historic Districts Council.

Summary

Located near the intersection of 14th Street and Sixth Avenue in the midst of New York City's then-primary retail shopping district, Ladies' Mile, the R.H. Macy & Co. Store, 14th Street Annex was the last phase in the expansion of the complex – including older remodeled structures and several purpose-built annexes – occupied by the famous department store during its 44-year tenure at this location. Founded in 1858 by Rowland H. Macy as a fancy goods store, Macy's became known for innovative retailing strategies and emerged as a full-service department store, one of the city's largest. After R.H. Macy's death in 1877, and the acquisition of controlling interest in the business in 1888 by brothers Nathan and Isidor Straus (who had operated a china and glassware department here since 1874) and sole proprietorship in 1896, the Strauses hired the firm of the prominent New York City architect William Schickel, well known within the German-American community, for a number of commissions. William Schickel & Co. designed Macy's 13th Street Annex (1891-94), while Schickel & Ditmars, the successor firm, designed the limestone-clad 14th Street Annex (1897). Tall at nine stories (plus basement) and slender at 25-feet-wide, the front facade of the 14th Street Annex, designed in an exuberant Beaux-Arts style and arranged in a tripartite base-shaft-capital composition, features a rusticated three-story base with a large round-arched window at the second story, classically-inspired carved detailing, balconies, a four-story midsection with decorative ironwork, a colonnaded upper section, and large copper acroteria at the roof. After Macy's moved to Herald Square in 1902, the 14th Street Annex was occupied in 1904-14 as part of the new 14th Street Store on Sixth Avenue operated by Henry Siegel, the highly successful proprietor of the large Siegel-Cooper & Co. Store at Sixth Avenue and 18th Street. The former Macy 14th Street Annex, owned by the Straus family until 1939 and internally connected to the 13th Street Annex through the 20th century, housed a variety of firms over subsequent decades. The distinctive facade of Macy's 14th Street Annex is a reminder of one of the city's most prominent stores in its original location, and of Ladies' Mile's heyday as the city's central retail shopping district in the second half of the 19th century.



DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Union Square, Ladies' Mile, and 14th Street¹

The land for Union Square, at the juncture of Broadway and the Bowery (later Fourth Avenue and Park Avenue South) north of 14th Street, was set aside as a public space by the City in 1832 and opened as a park in 1839. Residential development, on lots facing the square and on the blocks to the east, began during this period. This area emerged as the city's most fashionable neighborhood and, by the end of the 1840s, the square was surrounded by residences. With the expansion of New York's port in the 1840s and the introduction of railroads into Lower Manhattan in the 1850s, the drygoods trade grew rapidly and the city solidified its position as the country's leading commercial center. As downtown business and warehouse districts expanded to handle this trade, hotels, retail shops, and theaters moved northward along Broadway, following residential development. The first hotels were built in the Union Square area around 1850. The Academy of Music (1853-54, Alexander Saeltzer; demolished) and Steinway Hall (1863-64, John Kellum; 1866; demolished) on East 14th Street contributed to Union Square's status as the city's entertainment and classical music center. Most of the city's piano makers and many theaters, both legitimate and popular, located here. In addition, the area to the east of Union Square was the northern extent of *Kleindeutschland*, the German-American community that by 1880 constituted about one-third of the city's population.

By the end of the Civil War, many of the residences around the square were being converted to boarding houses or to commercial uses, and large retail stores, such as Tiffany & Co. (1868; demolished) on the west side of the square, and Baumann Bros. Furniture & Carpets Store (1880-81, D. & J. Jardine), 22-26 East 14th Street,² began to replace earlier buildings. Within a decade, the stretch of Broadway, particularly between Union and Madison Squares, had become known as "the Ladies' Mile" and was lined with the country's foremost purveyors of fashion, furniture, and luxury items. The commercial development of Sixth Avenue, which became lined with the city's largest and most opulent department stores, was especially fostered by the opening in 1878 of the elevated train running along the avenue, with stops at 14th, 18th, and 23rd Streets, bringing customers from all over the city. These included B. Altman Store (1876-80, D. & J. Jardine; 1887, William H. Hume; 1909-10, Buchman & Fox), No. 615-629; Hugh O'Neill Store (1887, Mortimer C. Merritt), No. 655-671; Ehrich Bros. Store (1889, William Schickel & Co.; 1894, Buchman & Deisler; 1902, Buchman & Fox), No. 695-709; Cammeyer's Shoe Store (1892, Hubert, Pirsson & Hoddick), No. 642-650; Siegel-Cooper & Co. Store (1895-97, DeLemos & Cordes), No. 616-632; Simpson, Crawford & Simpson Co. Store (1900-02, William H. Hume & Son), No. 635-649; and Adams & Co. Dry Goods Store (1900-02, DeLemos & Cordes), No. 675-691.³

The magnitude of commercial activity in the Ladies' Mile vicinity was indicated in 1893, even prior to the construction of the largest stores on Sixth Avenue, by *King's Handbook of New York*:

the retail shopping district [is] from 10th Street to above 23d Street. In Broadway, 14th Street and 23d Street principally, the prominent retail establishments are the wonder and admiration of all who see them, and in extent and in variety of goods they are not surpassed elsewhere in the world. It has been estimated that the trade in this district annually amounts to over \$500,000,000.⁴

A later history called 14th Street "the Mecca of New York shoppers, and Sixth Avenue was the liveliest part of it."⁵

R. H. Macy & Co. Store at Sixth Avenue and 14th Street⁶

Rowland Hussey Macy (1822-1877), born to a Quaker family in Nantucket, Massachusetts, worked as a youth as a seaman and ship's captain, but in the 1840s entered the drygoods trade in Massachusetts, California, and Wisconsin, without much success. In 1858, "Captain" Macy moved to New York City and opened a "fancy goods" store at (then) 204-206 Sixth Avenue, between 13th and 14th Streets, with his family residing above. This time, his endeavor was highly successful, and brought in some \$90,000 the first year. From 1863 through 1877, Macy leased adjacent properties, all owned by Rhinelander family heirs, and expanded into existing structures and constructed new ones (11 buildings total) to the north and south, controlling the entire 207-foot Sixth Avenue blockfront, as well as 150 feet to the east on both 13th and 14th Streets. Macy, who solely operated the company initially, took a friend and associate, Abiel T. LaForge, as a partner in 1872, while the store's general manager was a distant cousin, Margaret Getchell, one of the first women in New York to assume such a rank in business. Robert Macy Valentine, a nephew of the founder, was admitted in 1874, and the firm was incorporated as R.H. Macy & Co. After Macy's death in 1877, LaForge (who had married Getchell) took control of the business with Valentine. After the deaths of LaForge, Getchell, and Valentine in 1878-79, a series of owners took control. Charles B. Webster, a Macy cousin who had been a buyer since 1876, was made a partner in 1879-96 and headed the firm; Jerome B. Wheeler, his brother-in-law, was a partner in 1879-87. With the opening of the El in 1878, the Macy complex was unified and remodeled in 1880 with a \$36,000, four-story cast-iron front (James J. Lyons, architect) on Sixth Avenue; the iron-and-glass storefront was continued around the corner on 14th Street in 1882. A publication in 1886 commented that Macy's had

the largest area of floor space devoted to the retail dry-goods and fancy-goods trades in the city of New York. The premises are constructed in the most substantial manner, and, architecturally speaking, are a great ornament to the city. No store in New York has such an extent of show-windows. The panes fronting on Fourteenth Street are magnificent sheets of the finest imported plate-glass, through which the eye of the shopper is regaled with a complete panoramic display in the world of dry-goods.⁷

One of the city's best known establishments, Macy's by this time employed some 3,000 people and had sales in the millions of dollars, using innovative strategies in retailing, such as fixed pricing, a cash-only policy, and a money-back guarantee.

In 1888, Nathan and Isidor Straus acquired controlling interest of R.H. Macy & Co., and then sole proprietorship in 1896. The Strauses were two sons of Lazarus Straus, an immigrant from Bavaria in 1852 who started as a peddler in Georgia, then became owner of a general store, and after moving to New York City in 1866, operated a china and glassware store with his sons. In 1874, L. Straus & Sons rented from R.H. Macy a 2,400-foot space in the basement of the Sixth Avenue store for a similar department, which became one of Macy's most popular. Some historians consider this the first time that drygoods and home furnishings were sold within the same store.

During the 1890s, the Strauses further expanded the R.H. Macy & Co. Store complex. In 1891-92, they constructed a nine-story, 75,000 square-foot 13th Street Annex (William Schickel & Co.), at 59-63 West 13th Street.⁸ This annex was extended in 1893-94 (William Schickel & Co.), 55-57 West 13th Street, for an additional 25,000 square feet. In 1895, Macy's opened cigar

and liquor departments across West 14th Street at No. 59, and in 1895-96 built a six-story “New Annex” at 53-57 West 14th Street (aka 54-56 West 15th Street), for men’s and boys’ clothing, furnishings, shoes, horse goods, sporting goods, furniture, rugs, and mattresses. The last phase of the firm’s expansion in this location was its 14th Street Annex [see below] in 1897.

R.H. Macy & Co. Store, 14th Street Annex ⁹

Only a few years prior to its decision to move uptown, according to an historian of the firm, Macy’s “had builded [sic] for its own account in Fourteenth Street, just east of the original store, a very handsome, steel-constructed, stone-fronted building which it had thrown into the older building in order to relieve pressure upon it.”¹⁰ The site, at 56 West 14th Street, had been purchased by Macy’s head Charles B. Webster in December 1892, and later conveyed to Nathan Straus in June 1896. At the time, this was the location of the millinery business of J. Rothschild, who also had stores on Fulton Street in Brooklyn and in Paris. The firm of Schickel & Ditmars, successor to William Schickel & Co., which had designed the R.H. Macy & Co. Store, 13th Street Annex (1891-94) and a number of other Macy commissions,¹¹ filed in April 1897 for the new nine-story (plus basement), 25-foot-wide structure, expected to cost \$90,000. The *New York Herald-Tribune* carried an item in May that stated that “Nathan Straus is about to erect another business building, to be occupied on its completion by R.H. Macy & Co.”¹²

The general contractor on the project was Thomas J. Brady. Born in New York City, Brady (1854-1924) started out as a bricklayer’s assistant in 1870, and aside from his building activities, he was a well-connected Tammany Hall politician, serving as an Inspector in the Fire Dept. (1884); First Deputy (1887) and Superintendent of Buildings (1889) of the Bureau of Inspection of Buildings of the Fire Dept.; the first Superintendent of the new Dept. of Buildings (1892-95); and Commissioner of Buildings for Manhattan and the Bronx (1898-1901). The contract between the Schickel and Brady firms stipulated that if the construction work was not completed by September 1, 1897, that there would be a fine of \$100 per day. This deadline was met, though the Dept. of Buildings officially listed completion as January 1898. The total cost of the 14th Street Annex was \$94,470.

The Architects: [William] Schickel & [Isaac E.] Ditmars ¹³

William Schickel (1850-1907) and Isaac Edward Ditmars (1850-1934) were architectural partners from 1896 until Schickel’s death. The German-born Schickel is believed to have received architectural training in Germany prior to immigrating to New York at the age of 20. He was first employed for about six months by Richard Morris Hunt, one of the country’s preeminent architects at the time, then entered the office of Henry Fernbach, another German-born architect. Schickel established his own practice in 1873 in which, throughout his career, he received the patronage of wealthy German-American clients, such as Oswald Ottendorfer, publisher of the German-language *New Yorker Staats-Zeitung* newspaper, and his wife Anna. The Ottendorfers commissioned the Ottendorfer Branch, New York Free Circulating Library and German Dispensary (later Stuyvesant Polyclinic) (1883-84), 135 and 137 Second Avenue.¹⁴ Schickel became prominent in New York City as an architect of commercial structures, such as the Queen Anne style Century Building (1880-81), 33 East 17th Street, a speculative venture by the owner of Arnold Constable & Co., and became particularly noted as a designer of Catholic churches, institutional buildings, and hospitals around the country.

Schickel expanded his office in the 1880s and formed the firm of William Schickel & Co. in 1887, with Ditmars and Hugo Kafka (who only stayed for a couple of years). Born in Nova Scotia, Canada, Ditmars moved to New York to study architecture, and had worked with

architect John F. Miller prior to joining Schickel. William Schickel & Co. received the commissions for two major department stores in the Ladies' Mile area – Ehrich Bros. Store (1889), and the 1892 addition to Stern Bros. Store (1878-80, Henry Fernbach; 1886 Hugo Kafka), 32-46 West 23rd Street. Schickel & Ditmars continued the earlier firm's commercial, ecclesiastical, and residential work, with Ditmars responsible for the business operations of the firm,¹⁵ while Schickel remained the principal designer. Their later work was often designed in the neo-Renaissance and Beaux-Arts styles, and the R.H. Macy & Co. Store, 14th Street Annex (1897) is an exuberant example of the latter mode. Clad in limestone, tall at nine stories (plus basement) and slender at 25-feet-wide, the front facade of the 14th Street Annex is arranged in a tripartite base-shaft-capital composition and features a boldly rusticated three-story base with a large round-arched window at the second story, classically-inspired carved detailing, balconies, a four-story midsection with decorative ironwork, a colonnaded upper section, and large copper acroteria at the roof. Other notable later commissions of Schickel & Ditmars were the Church of St. Ignatius Loyola (1895-1900), 980 Park Avenue; E.G. Jennings Residence (1898-1900), 2 East 82nd Street; William Baumgarten Residence (1900-01), 294 Riverside Drive, for the owner of an interior design firm who had previously been head designer at Herter Brothers; and Johnston Building (1902-03), 1166-1172 Broadway.¹⁶

Henry Siegel's 14th Street Store¹⁷

By turn of the century, R.H. Macy & Co., though one of the city's largest department stores, was suffering from competition from the large new purpose-built stores nearby on Sixth Avenue, such as the Siegel-Cooper & Co., Simpson, Crawford & Simpson Co., and Adams & Co. Dry Goods Stores. Macy's historian Ralph M. Hower opined that

apart from their age and obsolescence, the Macy premises lacked unity. They consisted of a main store, with its 13th and 14th Street Annexes (so-called) adjoining to the east, and the New Annex across 14th Street to the north. The successive additions had not only caused complications from the managerial point of view but also had confused the public.¹⁸

In addition, the principal leases of the original portions of the Macy's complex, still owned by Rhineland family heirs, were set to expire in 1903. R.H. Macy & Co. secretly amassed property at Herald Square (through Leopold Weil, Macy's real estate broker and the father-in-law of Isidor Straus's daughter Minnie), and announced in 1901 that the firm was constructing a mammoth new store on 34th Street, which was completed in 1902 (DeLemos & Cordes, architects). The old Macy's store complex at Sixth Avenue and 14th Street closed in November 1902.

Henry Siegel (1860-1930) was the highly successful German-born proprietor (with partner Frank Cooper) of the large Siegel-Cooper & Co. Stores in Chicago (1887) and New York (1895-97), the latter, when built at Sixth Avenue and 18th Street, the city's grandest department store. Concerned about a commercial exodus uptown from Ladies' Mile, in the wake of Macy's departure, that would jeopardize his huge investment, Siegel immediately wanted the old Macy's site. The Strauses, however, wanted this site to remain vacant until the expiration of all their leases. Siegel countered by thwarting the Strauses' purchase of a corner parcel on 34th Street, but it ended up causing his eventual lease at 14th Street to be negotiated at a higher rate. Siegel announced his plans in June 1901 for a large new ten-story "14th Street Store" on the leased Rhineland family parcel that extended the entire blockfront between 13th and 14th Streets. The original rendering depicted this new building designed to be fully aligned with, and the same

height as, the R.H. Macy & Co. Store, 14th Street Annex, but as constructed, the 14th Street Store (1903-04, Cady, Berg & See) had a section that was only five stories tall adjacent to the Macy's 14th Street Annex. The 14th Street Store opened in May 1904.

Siegel originally stated that the three Macy's Annex properties "do not interest him at all."¹⁹ In September 1902, R.H. Macy & Co. advertised for rent (Leopold Weil, broker) the New Annex property on the north side of 14th Street, as well as the inter-connected 14th and 13th Street Annexes, which were "to be let entire or by floors."²⁰ Nathan and Lina Straus in January 1903 conveyed (Weil, broker) the former Macy's 14th and 13th Street Annexes for over one million dollars to Hermann Sielcken, apparently for the sole purpose of dealing with Siegel through a third party. Born in Hamburg, Germany, Sielcken (1847-1917) immigrated to the United States in 1869 and worked at various jobs around the country, before moving to New York City and becoming a clerk with L. Straus & Sons. He later worked in South America for W.H. Crossman & Bro., commission merchants, where he was made full partner (1885), became one of the world's leading experts in coffee trading (widely known as the "Coffee King") and a multi-millionaire; his firm became Crossman & Sielcken in 1904.

In January 1903, Henry Siegel disclosed that he would, in fact, lease the former Macy's 14th and 13th Street Annexes. This lease, with Sielcken, began in March 1904 at \$70,000 per year for 21 years. Later that month, Sielcken conveyed this property to the Fourteenth Street Realty Co., the directors of which were Leopold Weil; Edmund E. Wise, a Straus nephew and general counsel for R.H. Macy & Co.; and William W. Fitzhugh, auditor for R.H. Macy & Co. Through the decade, Siegel was overly ambitious, acquiring the Simpson, Crawford & Simpson Co. Store, though he was forced to sign over his share of Siegel-Cooper to Joseph B. Greenhut; establishing the Henry Siegel & Co. Store in Boston in 1906; and forming the Siegel Stores Corp. in 1909. Siegel-Cooper, which had operated a private bank for customers, however, was ruined by scandal when it was disclosed that Siegel had misappropriated as much as ten million dollars and had falsified data to obtain credit. He was convicted of fraud and jailed in 1914; the 14th Street Store was closed, and its contents were auctioned in October 1915.

Later History of the former R.H. Macy & Co. Store, 14th Street Annex²¹

By the early 20th century, the vicinity of Union Square, Ladies' Mile, and 14th Street changed greatly as the theaters and retail trade, like Macy's, moved into midtown. New loft buildings were constructed around Union Square for manufacturing, while older retail buildings were used for similar purposes, especially the needle trades. 14th Street, between Union Square and Seventh Avenue, re-emerged as a popular, though low-end, commercial zone, particularly with the opening of S. Klein's (1912) and Ohrbach's (1920s). The *New York Times* in 1926 noted that "one of the most remarkable changes that have taken place on Fourteenth Street during the past few years is the establishment and growth of the retail shopping centre for women's wear in and about Union Square."²² By 1939, the Federal Writers' Project's *New York City Guide* called 14th Street "perhaps the city's largest outlet for low-priced women's merchandise."²³

After the deaths of Isidor Straus and his wife on the *Titanic* in 1912, and Nathan Straus's retirement in 1914, R.H. Macy & Co. was controlled by the next generation -- Jesse Isidor, Percy, and Herbert Straus. During World War I, the U.S. Government leased large amounts of space in the huge store buildings in the Ladies' Mile area. It was announced in February 1918 that the Quartermaster's Dept. of the U.S. Army would lease the entire former (apparently vacant) Macy's 14th and 13th Street Annexes "for distribution purposes."²⁴ In May 1920, the Fourteenth Street Realty Co. transferred these Annexes back to Nathan and Lina Straus, who conveyed the property to the 56 West 14th Street Corp.

Acker, Merrill & Condit Co. leased both Annexes for the complete wholesale branch of its business in 1920-31. The successor to a firm founded in 1820, Acker, Merrill & Condit was importers of fine wines and ales, staple and fancy groceries, and cigars, and by 1886, it was said “the firm’s trade is the largest in fine groceries in the city.”²⁵ Acker, Merrill & Condit subleased space in the Annexes to the National Cloak & Suit Co. in 1923-26, and to Sears, Roebuck & Co. in 1927-29. The Annexes were leased to Hale Desk Co. as a warehouse in 1931-39, and Hearn Department Stores in 1936-38. Among the storefront tenants of No. 56 West 14th Street were Kanter’s Department Store, fur, shoes, gents’ furnishings, yard goods (1921-26) and [William] Breit’s Wearing Apparel, retail dress shop (1931-39).

The former Macy’s 14th and 13th Street Annexes were advertised for sale together in December 1938. In October 1939, the Macy’s 14th Street Annex was purchased by the Babsol Realty Corp. (Babsol Realty Co. after 1988, and Babsol Realty, LLC after 2003), and leased to the Noma Electric Corp., which had acquired the Macy’s 13th Street Annex. Founded in 1925 by Albert Sadacca (whose family owned a novelty lighting firm, selling Christmas lights since 1917) as the National Outfit Manufacturers Association, a trade group, NOMA was incorporated the following year. Noma Lites, Inc., incorporated in 1953, became “the world’s largest manufacturer of Christmas lighting decorations,”²⁶ remaining here until bankruptcy in 1965. NOMA’s associated TICO Plastics operated its plastics molding factory here until 1971. Another tenant was [Bertram] Clarke & [David] Way, Inc., acclaimed printers of fine art books, founded in 1953 and dissolved in 1970. Storefront tenants in No. 56 have included lingerie, sportswear, jewelry, and children’s wear businesses.²⁷

Description

Historic: nine-story (plus basement), 25-foot-wide Beaux-Arts style commercial building, arranged in tripartite base-shaft-capital composition; limestone cladding; classically-inspired carved detailing; three-story rusticated base with large round-arched second-story window; third- and eighth-story balconies; four-story midsection with iron spandrels, colonnettes, and decorative railings; two-story colonnaded upper section; large copper acroteria at roof

Alterations: ground-story storefront (originally with decorative piers, curved glass display windows, recessed entrance, and ornamental sconces; later with multi-pane transom windows c. 1906-14), awning, and rolldown gates; one-over-one double-hung metal sash (originally wood), some single-pane on third and fourth stories; tripartite metal second-story arched window (originally double wood casement); central arched element at roof removed; metal roof railings installed

Eastern and Western Walls: unarticulated; brick cladding; eastern wall pierced by windows

Sources: Library of Congress, photograph (c. 1904); New York Public Library, digital online photographs (c. 1906-14 and 1926); NYC Dept. of Taxes photograph (c. 1939); LPC, photographs (c. 1974-80s)

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NOTES

¹ Adapted from: Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC), *East 17th Street/Irving Place Historic District Designation Report* (LP-1976), prepared by Jay Shockley and Gale Harris, and *Ladies' Mile Historic District Designation Report* (LP-1609) (New York: City of New York, 1998 and 1989).

² The building is a designated New York City Landmark.

³ These buildings are all located within the Ladies' Mile Historic District.

⁴ Moses King, *King's Handbook of New York* (Boston: M. King, 1893), 147-148.

⁵ Ralph M. Hower, *History of Macy's of New York, 1858-1919* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Pr., 1943), 264.

⁶ NYC, Dept. of Buildings, Manhattan, Plans, Permits and Dockets (Alt. 780-1872, Alt. 828-1872, Alt. 496-1880, Alt. 685-1880, NB 685-1891, Alt. 587-1893); Hower; "R.H. Macy & Co.," *Finance and Industry. The New York Stock Exchange. Banks, Bankers, Business Houses, and Moneyed Institutions of The Great Metropolis of the United States* (New York: Histl. Publg. Co., 1886), 136-137; Joseph Devorkin, "R.H. Macy & Company," *Great Merchants of Early New York: "The Ladies' Mile"* (N.Y.: Soc. for the Arch. of the City, 1987), 13-17; Edward Hungerford, *The Romance of a Great Store* (New York: Robt. M. McBride & Co., 1922); U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Natl. Park Service, "R.H. Macy and Company [34th Street] Store" National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (Feb. 1977), prepared by George R. Adams; "Fall Openings," *New York Times* (NYT), Sept. 26, 1872, 8; "R.H. Macy & Co.'s Opening," NYT, Sept. 28, 1873, 5; "Alterations," *Real Estate Record & Builders' Guide* (RERBG), Oct. 17, 1874, 268, July 6, 1878, 587, Apr. 24, 1880, 403, and May 29, 1880, 520; "Macy's New Store Opened," NYT, Sept. 28, 1880, 8; "New York City Building Items," *Manufacturer & Builder* (Oct. 1880), 224; "Alterations," RERBG, May 6, 1882, 471, and Aug. 26, 1882, 798; "New Styles for Fall Wear," NYT, Oct. 3, 1882, 8; "An Army of Ladies," NYT, Mar. 30, 1885, 5; "Gossip of the Week," and "Out Among the Builders," RERBG, Mar. 2, 1889, 279 and 281; "Out Among the Builders," RERBG, May 16, 1891, 785; "Business Men of New-York. Isidor Straus," NYT, Oct. 29, 1893, 19; "The Building Department," NYT, Dec. 18, 1894, 15; "Mercantile," RERBG, Dec. 22, 1894, 925; R.H. Macy & Co., advertisement, *The American Hebrew*, Sept. 4, 1896, and NYT, Sept. 6, 1896, 3.

⁷ "R.H. Macy & Co.," *Finance and Industry*..., 136.

⁸ This Annex was called by the *New York Times* "the tallest building devoted to the dry goods business in the city [which] will afford the firm a welcome relief from the congested condition of their establishment." "R.H. Macy & Co.'s New Store," NYT, Aug. 16, 1891, 9.

⁹ New York County, Office of the Register, Liber Deeds and Conveyances; NYC, Dept. of Buildings (NB 287-1897); Schickel & Ditmars, *Contract Book* (Nos. 17 and 18, 1895-97), on microfilm in the possession of Gale L. Harris; New York City Directories (1897-1903); "Recorded Real Estate Transfers," NYT, Dec. 8, 1892, 7; J. Rothschild, advertisement, NYT, Sept. 26, 1897, 8; "Alterations" and "New Buildings," RERBG, Apr. 3, 1897, 558 and 577; "The Building Department," NYT, Apr. 4, 1897, 10; "Thomas J. Brady," *The Brown Book: A Biographical Record of Public Officials of The City of New York for 1898-9* (New York: Martin B. Brown, 1899), 126-127, E. Vale Blake, *History of The Tammany Society or Columbian Order From Its Organization to the Present Time* (New York: Souvenir Publg. Co., 1901), 298, and obit., NYT, Sept. 7, 1924, 31.

¹⁰ Hungerford, 66.

¹¹ These included alterations/additions at the stable at 161 West 19th Street (1895), a stable on West 148th Street (1896), and work on the New Annex on the north side of 14th Street (1897).

¹² "Real Estate," *New York Herald-Tribune*, May 21, 1897, 8.

¹³ LPC, architects files, *Century Building Designation Report* (LP-1539) (1986), prepared by Gale Harris, *Upper West Side/ Central Park West Historic District Designation Report* (LP-1647) (1990), A130-131, 294 *Riverside Drive House (William Baumgarten Residence) Designation Report* (LP-1618) (1991), prepared by Lynne D. Marthey and Gale Harris, and *West Chelsea Historic District Designation Report* (LP-2302) (2008), prepared by Christopher D. Brazee and Jennifer L. Most (New York: City of New York); Dennis S. Francis, *Architects in Practice, New York City 1840-1900* (N.Y.: Comm. for the Pres. of Archl. Recs., 1979); James Ward, *Architects in Practice, New York City 1900-1940* (N.Y.: Comm. for the Pres. of Archl. Recs., 1989); Ditmars obit., NYT, Mar. 2, 1934, 19.

¹⁴ Both buildings are designated New York City Landmarks.

¹⁵ Ditmars continued to practice architecture until 1930.

¹⁶ The Church and Baumgarten Residence are designated New York City Landmarks. The Jennings Residence is within the Metropolitan Museum Historic District. The Johnston Building is within the Madison Square North Historic District.

¹⁷ NY County; Dworkin, 71-74; "Herman Sielcken, the Last Coffee King," in William H. Ukers, *All About Coffee* (New York: Tea & Coffee Trade Journal Co., 1922); "Big New Dry Goods Store for Macy Site," *NYT*, June 6, 1901, 16; "Sale of Old Macy Property," *NYT*, and "Real Estate. Sale in West Thirteenth-st. -- Price \$1,000,000," *New-York Daily Tribune*, Jan. 29, 1903, 5 and 5; "In the Real Estate Field," *NYT*, Jan. 30, 1903, 14; "Henry Siegel's Store Plans," *NYT*, Jan. 31, 1903, 16; "In the Real Estate Field," *NYT*, May 9, 1903, 14; "New Department Store," *NYT*, Jan. 31, 1904, 8; "In the Real Estate Field," *NYT*, Mar. 9, 1904, 12; "Real Estate Transfers," *NYT*, Mar. 22, 1904, 13; "Crowds Visit Newest Department Store," *NYT*, May 1, 1904, 9; "Fourteenth Street Realty Co.," *The Trow Copartnership & Corporation Directory of New York City* (1906), 253; "\$10,275,000 Capital for Siegel Stores," *NYT*, June 17, 1909, 1; "Straus Will Leaves \$3,000,000 Bequests," *NYT*, May 18, 1912, 1; "Siegel Stores Put in Receivers' Hands," *NYT*, Dec. 31, 1913, 1 and 3; "Will Sell Siegel Stores at Auction," *NYT*, Mar. 10, 1914, 6; "Siegel Stores Close To-morrow," *NYT*, Mar. 13, 1914, 1; "Auction Announcement," *NYT*, Oct. 19, 1915, 18; "H. Siegel's Profits Going to His Creditors," *The Pottery, Glass & Brass Salesman*, Apr. 20, 1916, 9 and 13; "William W. Fitzhugh," *The Clothier & Furnisher* (July 1920), 100; "Funeral of Edmond E. Wise," *NYT*, July 25, 1932, 15; Christopher Gray, "The Rise and Fall of the Department-Store Napoleon," *NYT*, May 16, 1999, RE7.

¹⁸ Hower, 315.

¹⁹ *NYT*, June 6, 1901.

²⁰ R.H. Macy & Co., "Offer for Rent," *NYT*, Sept. 30, 1902, 14.

²¹ N.Y. County; NYC, Dept. of Buildings, (Alt. 1566-1930) and Certificates of Occupancy; *Manhattan Address Directories* (1929-65); "M. & L. Hess & Co.," *RERBG*, Dec. 8, 1917, 750; "Old Macy Store Leased," *NYT*, Apr. 30, 1920, 25; "Acker, Merrall & Condit Co.," *The Manual of Statistics/ Stock Exchange Hand-book* (New York: Manual of Statistics Co., 1903), 309, and *RERBG*, May 8, 1920, 613; "Recorded Leases and Liens," *NYT*, May 8, 1920, 30; "Recent Changes in Times Square Area," *NYT*, Oct. 17, 1920, RE6; Kanter's Dept. Store, advertisement, *NYT*, June 9, 1921, 23; "Big Fourteenth Street Rental," *NYT*, June 11, 1921, 19; "Stores: Manhattan-Bronx For Rent," *NYT*, Feb. 25, 1924, 27; Acker, Merrall & Condit Co., "For Rent," *NYT*, July 12, 1923, 29; "Commercial Leases," *NYT*, Dec. 11, 1923, 37, and Feb. 29, 1924, 30; National Cloak & Suit Co., "Entire Building... To Lease," *NYT*, July 7, 1926, 6; "3d Av. Site Leased for a New Building," *NYT*, June 19, 1927, E21; "Leasehold Deals," *NYT*, Aug. 31, 1928, 38; "Investment Deals Feature Trading," *NYT*, Apr. 18, 1931, 39; "Home Near 5th Av. Sold for \$400,000," *NYT*, Apr. 21, 1931, 53; "Thugs Hold Up Auto...", *NYT*, Dec. 17, 1934, 3; "3d Avenue Houses Bought From Bank," *NYT*, Sept. 15, 1936, 53; "Manhattan Real Estate - For Sale," *NYT*, Dec. 20, 1938, 48; "Manhattan Plant in New Ownership," *NYT*, Nov. 2, 1939, 44; "Manhattan Transfers," *NYT*, Nov. 1, 1939, 46; "Investor Acquires 56 West 14th St.," *NYT*, Nov. 3, 1939, 43; "The Forty-niner by Speidel," advertisement, *NYT*, May 5, 1946, 33; "Manhattan Transfers," *NYT*, Mar. 31, 1948, 43; "Help Wanted - Female," *NYT*, Jan. 29, 1951, 34; "Factory Building on W. 13th St. Sold," *NYT*, July 16, 1962, 48; D. Way and B. Clarke obits, *NYT*, Feb. 10, 1994; "The NOMA Story," www.oldchristmastreelights.com website (Oct. 2011); "Everyday Mysteries: Who Invented Electric Christmas Lights?" www.loc.gov/rr/scitech/mysteries/christmaslights.html website (Oct. 2011); "A Macy's Building...", *NYT*, May 30, 2004, RE7.

²² "The Rebuilding of Fourteenth Street," *NYT*, Aug. 29, 1926, RE2.

²³ Federal Writers' Project, *New York City Guide* (New York: Octagon Bks., 1939), 202.

²⁴ "Real Estate Field," *NYT*, Feb. 7, 1918, 19; "Government Leases," *RERBG*, Feb. 9, 1918, 176.

²⁵ "Acker, Merrall & Condit," *Finance and Industry. The New York Stock Exchange. Banks, Bankers, Business Houses, and Moneyed Institutions of The Great Metropolis of the United States*, 138.

²⁶ Noma Lites, Inc., advertisement, *Life*, Apr. 18, 1955, 55.

²⁷ The former Macy's 14th and 13th Street Annexes remained internally connected through the 20th century.

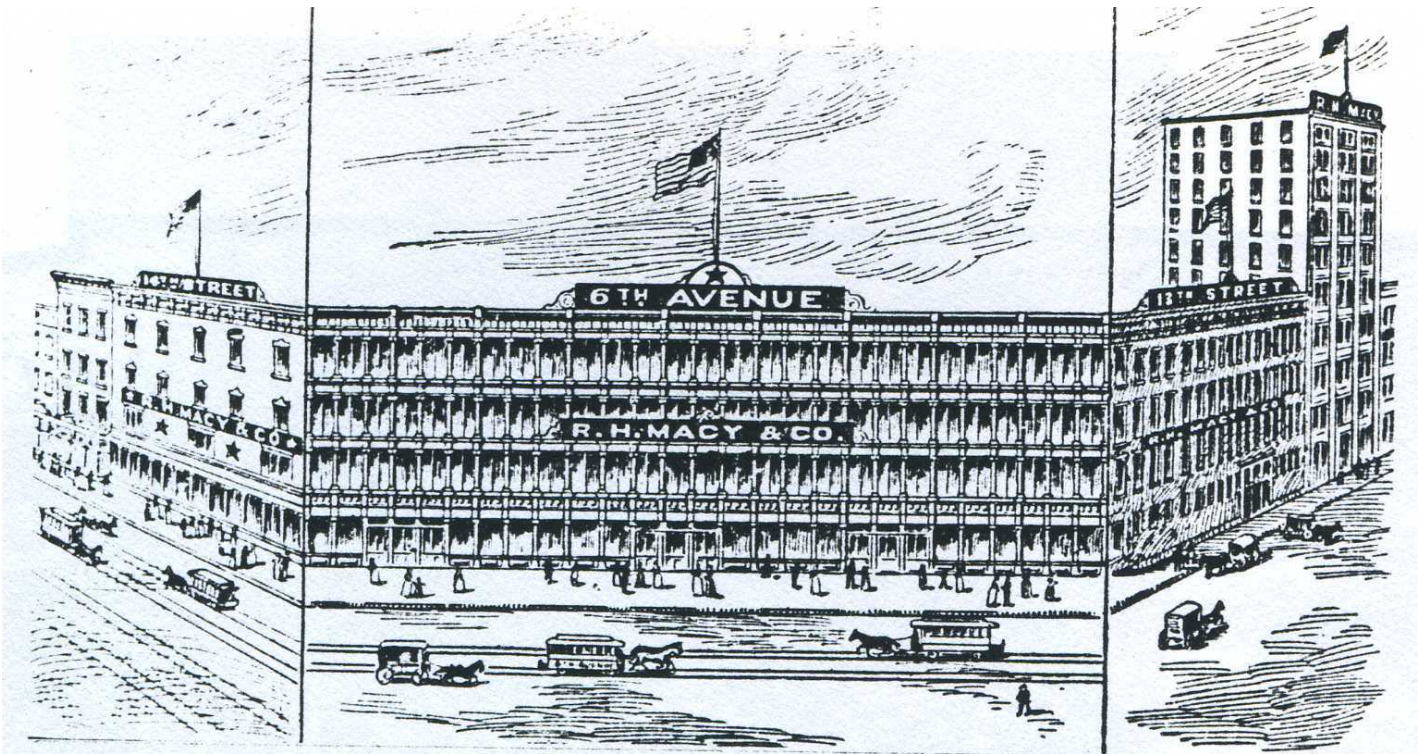
FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

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 R.H. Macy & Co. Store, 14th Street Annex 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 R.H. Macy & Co. Store, 14th Street Annex (1897), located near the intersection of 14th Street and Sixth Avenue in the midst of New York City's then-primary retail shopping district, Ladies' Mile, was the last phase in the expansion of the complex – including older remodeled structures and several purpose-built annexes – occupied by the famous department store during its 44-year tenure at this location; that, founded in 1858 by Rowland H. Macy as a fancy goods store, Macy's became known for innovative retailing strategies and emerged as a full-service department store, one of the city's largest; that after R.H. Macy's death in 1877, and the acquisition of controlling interest in the business in 1888 by brothers Nathan and Isidor Straus (who had operated a china and glassware department here since 1874) and sole proprietorship in 1896, the Strauses hired the firm of the prominent New York City architect William Schickel, well known within the German-American community, for a number of commissions – William Schickel & Co. designed Macy's 13th Street Annex (1891-94), while Schickel & Ditmars, the successor firm, designed the limestone-clad 14th Street Annex; that, tall at nine stories (plus basement) and slender at 25-feet-wide, the front facade of the 14th Street Annex, designed in an exuberant Beaux-Arts style and arranged in a tripartite base-shaft-capital composition, features a rusticated three-story base with a large round-arched window at the second story, classically-inspired carved detailing, balconies, a four-story midsection with decorative ironwork, a colonnaded upper section, and large copper acroteria at the roof; that after Macy's moved to Herald Square in 1902, the 14th Street Annex was occupied in 1904-14 as part of the new 14th Street Store on Sixth Avenue operated by Henry Siegel, the highly successful proprietor of the large Siegel-Cooper & Co. Store at Sixth Avenue and 18th Street; that the former Macy 14th Street Annex, owned by the Straus family until 1939, housed a variety of firms over subsequent decades; and that the distinctive facade of Macy's 14th Street Annex is a reminder of one of the city's most prominent stores in its original location, and of Ladies' Mile's heyday as the city's central retail shopping district in the second half of the 19th century.

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 R.H. Macy & Co. Store, 14th Street Annex, 56 West 14th Street, Borough of Manhattan, and designates Manhattan Tax Map Block 577, Lot 12, as its Landmark Site.

Robert B. Tierney, Chair; Pablo E. Vengoechea, Vice Chair
Michael Devonshire, Joan Gerner, Christopher Moore, Margery Perlmuter, Elizabeth Ryan, Roberta Washington,
Commissioners



R.H. Macy & Co. Store complex (c. 1892), Sixth Avenue between West 13th and 14th Streets, with the 13th Street Annex to the right

Source: Joseph Devorkin, *Great Merchants of New York: "The Ladies' Mile"* (1987)



R.H. Macy & Co. Store, 14th Street Annex, 56 West 14th Street, Manhattan

Photo: Detail from Detroit Publg. Co. (c. 1904), Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division



R.H. Macy & Co. Store, 14th Street Annex, historic storefront

Photo: Detail from Detroit Publg. Co. (c. 1904), Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division



Former R.H. Macy & Co. Store, 14th Street Annex (left), as part of the 14th Street Store

Photo: Detroit Publg. Co. (c. 1904), Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division



Former R.H. Macy & Co. Store, 14th Street Annex (right) in 1926

Photo: Digital Gallery, New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations



R.H. Macy & Co. Store, 14th Street Annex

Photo: Christopher D. Brazee (2011)



R.H. Macy & Co. Store, 14th Street Annex , second story

Photo: Christopher D. Brazee (2011)



R.H. Macy & Co. Store, 14th Street Annex , fourth story

Photo: Christopher D. Brazee (2011)



R.H. Macy & Co. Store, 14th Street Annex, fourth-fifth stories

Photo: Christopher D. Brazee (2011)



R.H. Macy & Co. Store, 14th Street Annex, upper section

Photo: Christopher D. Brazee (2011)



R.H. MACY & CO. STORE, 14TH STREET ANNEX (LP-2474), 56 West 14th Street
Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan, Tax Map Block 577, Lot 12

Designated: December 20, 2011