SOUTH STREET SEAPORT

HISTORIC DISTRICT

DESIGNATION REPORT

1977

City of New York
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NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
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HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

The East River waterfront of lower Manhattan, which includes the site of today's South Street Seaport Historic District, played an important part in the early history of New York City and became, over a period of two hundred years, one of the most prosperous commercial districts in the City. This development of the South Street Seaport area from a small cluster of wharves in the 18th century to an important part of the leading port of the nation in the mid-19th century reflects the rise of New York City as an international center of commerce.

As early as 1625 when the Dutch West India Company established a trading post at the foot of Manhattan Island, the area south of today's seaport served as a landing site for incoming boats. The Dutch constructed a small floating dock which extended into the East River from what is now Broad Street. As lower Manhattan, then New Amsterdam, became more populous, a few streets were cut through the surrounding countryside. One of the first was Queen Street (now Pearl Street), laid out in 1633, which rapidly became the core of the mercantile community of 17th century Manhattan. Queen Street ran along the waterfront until the latter half of the 18th century when landfill extended the eastern boundary of Manhattan out to Water and later to Front Street. Still later, in the early 19th century, South Street was created on additional landfill.

This southeastern shore of Manhattan was quickly recognized as the natural site for the city's harbor. It was safer to land here than to attempt the more treacherous western shore, where a ledge of rocks proved hazardous. In addition, since the East River was narrower than the Hudson it provided much-needed shelter for the small early vessels.

Early in the development of Manhattan the shipping trade, centered around the East River harbor, supplied the city with an important source of revenue. The Schermerhorn family, which was to play such an important part in the development of South Street Seaport, established a regular shipping service from New York to Charleston in 1728. The port also enjoyed prosperous trade with England at this time, as local merchants sent their goods across the Atlantic in their own ships. Nonetheless, on the eve of the Revolution, New York's trade lagged behind that of Boston, Philadelphia and Charleston, due primarily to the poor condition of her wharves, which were too small and badly maintained. Throughout the 18th century, these seaboard cities competed with one another for leadership in the shipping trade, and it was not until many years after the Revolution that New York could claim her superiority.

After the British won the Battle of Long Island in 1776, they occupied the port of New York for eight years. During this period the city became the center of British authority in America, thereby cutting off much of the domestic trade of the harbor. When the British finally evacuated in 1783 the port suffered a difficult time, since many of the Tory merchants naturally moved to England, consequently disrupting several commercial enterprises. In addition, the cutting of ties with England severely limited New York's sphere of trade and it soon became necessary to seek new markets.

One such endeavor was that of the Empress of China, whose pioneer voyage to Canton in 1784 opened a new world to New York merchants. In the next decade, the New York port gradually recovered from the effects of the Revolution. Fortunately, the British, upon resuming trade, selected New York as the most advantageously located U.S. port to which to export their goods. By 1797 New York had surpassed both Boston and Philadelphia in import and export trade. It was to maintain this position of supremacy for at least the next 50 years, with the brief exception of the War of 1812 (1812-1815).

The most significant impetus to the rise of the New York port as a leading commercial center was the founding of the Black Ball packet line in 1818. These square-rigged liners sailed from South Street just below Peck Slip and were the first vessels to establish regular service between New York and Liverpool. The first group of ships sent to Liverpool included the Amity, Courier, Pacific and James Monroe. These crossings could require as many as twenty-three days or more. The great success of the Black Ball Line soon led to competitive imitators such as the Red Star Line and also to additional lines sailing to Le Havre and to London. In the 1840s these packet ships were replaced by the

far-speedier clipper ships. The frequency and regularity of these trans-atlantic voyages were instrumental in establishing New York's primacy in world trade.

Another major boost to the prosperity of the port of New York came with the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825. This waterway, extending from Lake Erie to the Hudson, enabled goods and produce to be easily transported to the thriving city from the rural mid-West and to be sold for good prices. The large supply of grain from this newly accessible hinterland soon made New York the principal flour market of the East. In addition, thousands of rural towns became major distributing centers for foreign imports shipped to them along the Canal.

During the early decades of the 19th century, the environs of the port underwent several changes, undoubtedly stimulated by the prosperity of the shipping trade. By 1810 South Street had been created on landfill, although the block on which today's Fulton Market stands remained partly swamp until 1821. In 1811 the prominent merchant Peter Schermerhorn began construction of his now famous row of counting-houses along today's Fulton Street. Originally called Beekman Slip, the street was named in honor of Robert Fulton, whose Brooklyn Ferry began landing at the foot of the street in 1814. Another important thoroughfare of the district was Pearl Street. William Earl Dodge, the son-in-law and business partner of Anson Phelps whose office was located near the seaport, noted the early significance of the street: "At this time (1818), the wholesale drygoods trade was confined almost entirely to Paarl Street from Coenties to Peck Slips . . . and any party intending to commence that business must first be sure that he could obtain a store in Pearl Street." By the 1830s, the South Street Seaport area was a burgeoning mercantile center with major shipping and trading concerns established here; it was as well the site of the thriving Fulton Market which had moved from Peck Slip to Fulton Street in 1822.

In 1835 a disastrous fire destroyed much of lower Manhattan, including many early buildings near the seaport. The fire began on a winter night when the severe cold froze the water in the fireman's hoses. Since the majority of the city's buildings were of wood, more than six hundred structures were destroyed, including the first Merchants Exchange of 1827 on Wall Street. Immediately after the fire new construction began, but the financial effect of the catastrophe contributed to the Panic of 1837 when all building came to a standstill.

By the 1840s, the seaport had recovered and began to thrive again. Old prints of the area at this time depict it as a bustling commercial center. Its streets were lined with sea captains just returned from Europe, merchants stocking their counting-houses, and market people busily exchanging goods. Many of the prominent citizens of the district were New Englanders who had come to the seaport to make their fortunes. Among these were Captain Josiah Macy from Nantucket and Abiel Abbott Low from Salem, Mass., who with his brother founded the successful China trading company. These merchants and sea captains were considered the elite of New York. Another type of tradesman prospering in the district was the "commission merchant" who served as a "commercial jack-of-all-trades" and was the middle man between the merchant proper and the broker for the goods. By 1850, New York was second only to London among the ports of the world. The activity of the harbor was recalled by Thomas Floyd-Jones in his Backward Glances - - Reminiscences of an Old New Yorker: "Looking east was seen in the distance on the long river front from Coenties Slip to Catherine Street, innumerable masts of the many California clippers, and London and Liverpool packets, with their long bowsprits extending way over South Street, reaching nearly to the opposite side."

Also arriving at the seaport were thousands of immigrant families from all over the world seeking new opportunities in America. Between 1820 and 1860, five and one half million alien passengers came to the U.S. and more arrived at the South Street Seaport piers than at any other port of entry. This flood of immigration brought the fear of disease to the seaport, and a number of cholera and yellow fever epidemics paralyzed the business of the area. Hotels and boarding houses were opened in the district during the 1850s to accommodate this transient population as well as the many overseas merchants.

During the 1850s the "golden age of shipping" at the South Street Seaport reached its peak. After this period, the larger transatlantic steamships replaced the earlier clipper ships. These steamships needed both deeper and wider waters and the Hudson River became the new site of the New York port. Much of the commercial center of the city moved northward. Further contributing to the decline of the clipper ship era was the founding of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company and the opening of the Panama Railway in 1855.

Nonetheless, the seaport was maintained in part through the efforts of the Fulton Market Fishmongers Association, organized in the 1860s and housed on the site of the present "Tin Building" dating from 1907. As the shipping merchants moved out of the district, businesses related to the fish market filled the empty warehouses. The late 19th-century importance of the fish market to the district is well symbolized by the 1885 building designed by George B. Post on Beekman Street, the facade of which is strikingly ornamented with motifs of the sea. The fish market continues to function today and its activity is certainly responsible for much of the survival of the character of the seaport area.

The South Street Seaport Museum, founded in 1967, has been highly instrumental in revitalizing this area. Under the auspices of the Museum, several of the old brick buildings have been accurately restored and some now house the offices and stores of the Museum. In 1974, the State of New York purchased the "Schermerhorn Row block," bounded by Front, Fulton, South and John Streets, an act which expressed the State's recognition of the historical importance of the Seaport. New life and interest have been brought to the district through the many South Street Seaport Museum activities which attract thousands of tourists to the area each year. In 1976, when some of the tall ships of "Operation Sail" were docked at the Seaport, the district was a major focal point of New York City's Bicentennial celebration. The South Street Seaport Museum also has been responsible for bringing to the piers many different types of old ships which are now part of a permanent exhibit. The piers are the site of a variety of musical and theatrical events during the summer months. Through the efforts of the Museum, many have become increasingly aware of the richness, diversity and great historical significance of the South Street Seaport.

ARCHITECTURAL INTRODUCTION

The buildings of the South Street Seaport Historic District span a period of almost 200 years and range from the famous Captain Joseph Rose house of the late 18th century and George B. Post's delightfully detailed 1885 Romanesque Revival building on Beekman Street, to the mid-20th century structure of the Fulton Market. Dating predominantly from the first half of the 19th century, these buildings are representative of several different styles of mercantile architecture, including Georgian, Federal and Greek Revival. Some later 19th-century styles, such as the Italianate and Romanesque Revival, may also be seen in the District. In many cases an early building was substantially altered at a later date, so that the original structure is either scarcely recognizable or is a combination of several architectural styles.

Quite simple in overall design, few of the early stores and warehouses of the seaport area were the work of professional architects. Generally these commercial structures were designed by builders. William W. Berwick, who built many structures for the prominent Schermerhorn family, is one of the few builders whose name is known today. Another may have been David Louderback, a mason, who is believed to have built the warehouse at 211 Water Street. In the later 19th century such prominent New York City architects as Stephen D. Hatch, George B. Post and Richard Morris Hunt designed commercial buildings in the District which contrast with the less sophisticated work of the earlier builders.

Many of the early buildings in the seaport area were wood frame and frequently destroyed by fire. Although attempts were made as early as 1766 to require brick construction in the more populous areas of the city, a number of factors made enactment of such legislation rather difficult. Buildings on landfill were exempt from the new building requirements, probably because it was still not certain if the newly-made marshy land could successfull support masonry structures. Joseph Scoville in his Old Merchants of New York describes the rather peculiar construction method for buildings on landfill. According to Scoville, the buildings "were just put up one story and allowed to stand one year" before they were completed. If this method was actually used, no doubt it was to allow the ground floor to settle before the upper stories were constructed. Further complications in masonry construction involved the brick itself. Since the brick had to be shipped to New York City from small towns along the Hudson River, the material was quite costly. The best and most expensive brick came from Philadelphia and was considered an item of luxury. The making of brick was also a tedious and time-consuming process in the early 19th century. Before 1835 bricks were made by hand. The original portions of the Schermerhorn Row facades (1811-12) are of this soft, hand-molded type of brick. A hand-powered brick molding machine patented in 1801 was not in general use until about 1830. The smooth texture of the brick facades at 207-211 Water Street (1835-6) is a product of this machine technique and this texture generally characterizes most of the Greek Revival buildings in the District. Despite the many obstacles involved in brick construction, it was nonetheless preferred by the merchants, and the material was used for most of the structures in the district from the 1790s onward.

The earliest buildings in the Historic District served as both house and store and were designed in a simple vernacular style. The Rose House at 273 Water Street, erected by the 1790s, is one of the few remaining examples of this type in the District. Constructed of brick with frame side walls, the building was rented out by Captain Joseph Rose to merchants and their families for both commercial and residential use. Slightly later in date, No. 206 Front Street, built about 1798, certainly served much the same function. First occupied by grocer Matthew Howell, No. 206 Front Street had, to one side of the shopfront, a separate narrow Federal style entrance leading to the family area. Generally the family sitting or dining room was located on the ground floor behind the store, while the bedrooms were above. The house-store type was constructed in the district through the early decades of the 19th century and had a planar brick facade with narrow proportions and simple brownstone decorative detail displaying some features of the Federal style. As the seaport area developed in the 19th century, this building type was generally converted to boarding house use.

By the beginning of the 19th century, the seaport was swiftly becoming one of the busiest centers of the city and the random siting of buildings which had produced a rather disordered pattern of stores and houses was brought to an end. In April of 1801, the act "for regulating the Buildings, Streets, Wharves and Slips of the City of New York" was passed, and the construction of buildings along the wharves projecting into the river was prohibited. In contrast to other seaport cities such as Boston where the buildings were erected on the piers, the buildings at South Street Seaport were erected instead along the waterfront and around the slips. These slips, such as Burling Slip (now John Street) and Beekman Slip (now Fulton Street) served as landing places for boats. When warehouses were constructed along the slips, loading of cargo from ship to store was greatly facilitated.

As the seaport began to prosper, a new building type was introduced to satisfy the demands of expanding trade. Known also as a "fireproof warehouse" or "store," the "counting-house" quickly became the standard formula for commercial design and remained so until the 1830s. The design of the counting-house had originated in English seaport cities, such as London and Liverpool, and had been readily transmitted to the seaport of New York through the close contact between the merchants of New York and England. Constructed of brick with front walls of Flemish bond and side and rear walls of English bond, it was generally three or four stories tall with a pitched roof of slate or tile. The large wheels of the hoistways used for loading the wares into these buildings were stored under these high peaked roofs. Combining features of both the Georgian and Federal styles, the handsome Schermerhorn Row block (1811-1812) was originally made up of counting-houses. This particular building type was characterized by rusticated arched openings trimmed in brownstone at the ground floor and by plain Federal style fenestration at the upper stories. The ground floor Georgian arches formed a full arcade at 216-18 Front Street (now demolished). The arches at 140 Beekman Street are among the few remaining in the Historic District. Another important feature of some of the counting-houses, the exterior iron stairway which led to the second floor counting room, is no longer in evidence in the District. Used no doubt to avoid further congestion at the crowded ground floors, these stairways were originally features of the Schermerhorn Row buildings. Few of the details of the Georgian style counting-house have survived in the District, since the ground floors of these buildings were almost all remodeled during the height of the Greek Revival period.

The popularity of the grand Greek Revival style swept America and the style was readily adapted to a commercial formula which characterizes many of the buildings in the Historic District today. The noted New York architect, Ithiel Town, was the first to design a commercial structure in the Greek Revival style--the 1829 store of Lewis and Arthur Tappan on Pearl Street--which served as the prototype for New York City warehouses during the next 20 years. The great fire of 1835 in lower Manhattan created a tremendous need for new buildings and soon after the fire trabeated granite Greek Revival shopfronts began to line the streets of the seaport area. Granite, a popular Massachusetts building material, was imported to New York and was used for the monolithic ground floor piers and for the window lintels at the brick upper stories. The ranges of granite piers, generally with simple Tuscan capitals, are the hallmark of the Greek Revival commercial style. The handsome Baker, Carver & Morrell building of 1840 is the only completely granite-faced structure in the Historic District. The roof of the Greek Revival building was no longer steeply pitched and since the wheel of the hoistway, formerly located below the peaked roof, had become much smaller, it no longer needed as much space. Furthermore, the hoistway itself was moved to the front inside the Greek Revival building. Particularly fine examples of the Greek Revival style in the Historic District may be seen at 207-11 Water Street (1835-6) and 21-25 Fulton Street (1845-6). These two building groups have been handsomely restored by the South Street Seaport Museum.

In addition to the many Greek Revival buildings erected in the area of the seaport, a number of earlier Georgian and Federal structures were altered to the fashionable Greek Revival style. 165 John Street, originally built in 1811, underwent major alterations in 1835 to accord with its Greek Revival neighbor, 181 Front Street. The popularity of the Greek Revival style is most apparent in the Historic District where the rhythmic ranges of granite piers lend a striking dignity and uniformity to the many warehouses and stores lining the narrow streets.

The later 19th-century buildings of the Historic District are neither as numerous nor as distinctive in design as those erected during the prosperous era of the seaport. However, a few exceptional buildings from this later period give further interest to the architecture of the District. The 1850 Abiel Abbot Low building on John Street is particularly handsome and displays a cast-iron "double storefront" produced by the renowned Architectural Iron-works of Daniel D. Badger. Cast iron was a popular building material after the mid-19th century and many of the earlier Greek Revival storefronts were remodeled with the more up-to-date cast iron, which made it possible to introduce slender columns in lieu of the heavier granite piers. An ornate cast-iron ground floor facade was added to 214 Front Street, originally built in 1802. The 1868 warehouse at 213-15 Water Street, designed in the Italianate style by Stephen D. Hatch, is also of cast iron at the ground floor, while the upper stories are of Tuckahoe marble. The Romanesque Revival style is represented in the Historic District by George B. Post's striking building on Beekman Street of 1885 with engaging decorative motifs and by the 1888 tenement at 251 Water Street. The contrast between these later buildings and those of the Georgian counting-house and Greek Revival periods provides the District with a diversified architectural character.

Today many of the buildings in the Historic District have been successfully restored by the South Street Seaport Museum, and some of these fine buildings house offices of the Museum. Businesses attracted to the area by the Fulton Fish Market occupy the majority of the buildings in the District, and during the early mornings the streets of the seaport are filled with the activities of the fish merchants. A few of the warehouses in the District have been converted to residential use, but the area remains primarily commercial today.

DESCRIPTION

BEEKMAN STREET

Beekman Street was not extended from Pearl Street to South Street until 1824, long after the other streets of the area had been created. Before 1824 a narrow lane, known as Crane's Wharf, extended along this route from Water Street to the river.

BEEKMAN STREET Between Pearl and Water Streets

SOUTH SIDE

No. 111-117. (280-286 Pearl and 216-222 Water)

Rising high above the Historic District, this large seven-story building, originally known as the Volunteer Hospital, was erected in 1917-18, and was designed by the architect Adolph Mertin. Its early 20th-century design displays some neo-Renaissance features and contrasts markedly with the very early commercial structures nearby. The building is set on a rusticated limestone basement with arched windows and square-headed doorways. The next five stories are faced in yellow brick, contrasting with the limestone trim at the top story which defines square brick panels. A deeply projecting dentilled cornice crowns the building.

NORTH SIDE

Nos. 108-120. A parking lot extends the length of the block from Pearl to Water Streets.

BEEKMAN STREET Between Water and Front Streets

SOUTH SIDE

No. 133. (217 Water and 208-210 Front)

In 1750, this site was a water lot owned by the Livingston family. Eight early buildings stood on this landfill site until 1914, when James Laher built this yellow brick loft building for Ruth Livingston. Three stories high, the building extends the whole length of the block from Water to Front Streets. Large tripartite windows are set between massive, full-height pilasters which have sheet metal capitals. A deeply projecting dentilled cornice of sheet metal crowns the building.

NORTH SIDE

No. 132. This building is described under 227 Water Street.

No. 134.

A building was erected on this site by 1824. The present brick building, shown as four stories high by 1859, may incorporate some of the earlier structure. In 1884, this building was purchased by a new owner, and the following year it was raised to five stories. A dormer window is set at the fifth story. Available records indicate that the present facade may also date from 1885. The facade is of machine-pressed brick with narrow granite band courses extending the width of the building. The projecting band courses also serve as sills for the windows of each of the three upper stories, while the flush window lintels are also connected to form band courses. Above the top-most band course, there is a corbeled brick cornice. The off-center pedimented dormer window of sheet metal is set in the pitched roof.

BEEKMAN STREET

No. 136-138. This site is now a vacant lot.

No. 140. (212 Front)

Built in 1824, the same year that Beekman Street was created, this brick structure with facades in Flemish bond is one of the few in the Historic District to retain its round-arched ground floor openings. These arches were typical features of the Georgian style which characterized so many of the early buildings in the District until the ground floors were altered to the Greek Revival trabeated shopfronts of the 1830s and 1840s. The Georgian arches at No. 140 were enframed in brick with brownstone keystones. Although the arched doorway and the arched windows on both Beekman and Front Street are now covered with stucco, incised to simulate rustication, their arched forms remain intact, and are among the few extant vestiges of the Georgian counting-house era. In 1890 the building was raised to four stories and the earlier brownstone window sills and lintels were altered to bluestone. A simple sheet metal cornice now crowns the building.

BEEKMAN STREET Between Front and South Streets

SOUTH SIDE

No. 141-153. This building is described under 1-13 Fulton Street.

NORTH SIDE

No. 142-144. (211 Front)

One of the most interesting structures in the Historic District, this fine Romanesque Revival building was erected in 1885 for Ellen S. Auchmuty, a Schermerhorn descendent. It was designed by George B. Post (1837-1913), architect of the Long Island Historical Society building (1878), which is within the Brooklyn Heights Historic District, and the old New York Times Building (1889) at Printing House Square. Post had trained with the prestigious architect, Richard Morris Hunt, who also designed a building in the Historic District, 21-23 Peck Slip. Post's building was first occupied by Samuel T. Skidmore, a fish dealer, and over the years it has always housed businesses associated with the Fulton Fish Market. At one point, it reputedly served as the Western Union office and played a vital role in the life of the market. It was here that the orders and replies between merchants and customers were received before the days of the telephone. The relationship between the fish market and the building was symbolized in a delightful way through the introduction of an imaginative variety of ornamental detail. Above the cast-iron ground floor, the four stories of round-arched windows are enlivened by terra-cotta keystones displaying fanciful decorative fish. The wide, molded brick arches of the windows are connected to one another at impost block level by a molded terra-cotta band course which extends across the Beekman and Front Street facades. These decorative features and particularly the intriguing keystones create a rich and lively facade. The starfish tie rod washers continue the maritime theme, as does the elaborate cockleshell roof cornice of terra-cotta. These elegant cockleshells repeat in miniature the round arch motif of the windows and give the facade a graceful and striking rhythm.

No. 146-148.

This Victorian building, also designed by George B. Post in 1885, was erected before No. 142-144, since an old view of Beekman Street shows the building standing next to small hipped-roof structures at the corner. It was erected for Elizabeth S. Jones and Harriet D. Potter. A large metal canopy, hung from diamond-shaped washers at the third story, projects out over the

BEEKMAN STREET

ground floor. Above, the three-story brick facade is enriched with stone band courses which connect the windows at impost block level and extend the width of the building. The contrast in color between the stone band courses and the red brickwork creates the polychromatic effect fashionable in the 1870s and 1880s. At the center of each story, curvilinear wrought-iron tie rod washers enliven the facade. A corbeled brick roof cornice spans the building.

No. 150-152.

Built in 1882-83 from the designs of David and John Jardine, architects of several buildings in both the SoHo Cast-Iron and Greenwich Village Historic Districts, this four-story brick building was erected for Mrs. Cordelia Stewart. A metal canopy projects out over the cast-iron ground floor. At the upper stories, tall windows, with molded brick segmental arches, create a gentle rhythm across the facade. A cornice, resting on long brick corbels set between the windows, adds further enrichment to the building.

No. 154. This building is described under 104 South Street.

DOVER STREET Between Pearl and Water Streets

SOUTH SIDE ONLY

The gas station at the corner of Pearl Street is described under 332-336 Pearl Street. It is adjacent to the empty lot at 338 Pearl Street.

The building at the corner of Water Street is described under 272-274 Water Street. It is adjacent to the empty lot at 276 Water Street.

DOVER STREET Between Water and Front Streets

SOUTH SIDE ONLY

No. 14. This building is described under 279 Water Street.

No. 16.

The first tax assessment record for this building dates from 1827, when the building was owned by C. Johnson, who leased it out as a boarding house. The much-altered ground floor reveals both Greek Revival and later 19th-century cast-iron features. The early granite piers with simple Tuscan capitals carry a cast-iron lintel which is ornamented with a seried of rosettes. The four upper stories are faced in Flemish bond brickwork and display windows with simple stone sills and lintels.

No. 18-20. This site is now a vacant lot.

DOVER STREET Between Front and South Streets

SOUTH SIDE ONLY

No. 34. This building is described under 259 Front Street.

DOVER STREET

No. 36-38.

This four-story double brick building was owned by the prominent flour merchant, David Lydig, and was first mentioned in the 1814 tax records. It stands on the old site of Lydig's flour wharf and connects his earlier buildings at 259 Front and 160 South Street. Like Lydig's two other buildings, this structure was originally three stories tall and later raised to four stories. A simple dentilled cornice spans the facade.

No. 40. This building is described under 160 South Street.

FRONT STREET

A series of water lots until the late 18th century, Front Street was created on landfill and served as the eastern boundary of lower Manhattan until South Street was created by 1810.

FRONT STREET Between Fletcher and John Streets

EAST SIDE

No. 165.

Built in 1835-36, this three-story brick building, faced in Flemish bond, has been substantially altered since its original construction. Four stories high when first erected, it was increased to five in 1894, at which time it also received a rear extension. The silhouette of the roofline of the five-story building may still be seen on the sidewall of the adjacent structure. The ground floor facade dates from after the mid-19th century, and is of cast iron from the foundry of Cook & Radley. Particularly handsome paneled cast-iron square columns enframe the large glass display areas and the double entrance doors. A finely molded cornice extends along the top of the cast-iron architrave and effectively crowns the storefront. At the two upper stories, now painted a deep red, the double windows at the second story are probably a later addition, while the narrow shuttered windows at the third story appear to be original. Stone lintels and sills, now painted white, enliven the facade. The simple narrow coping stone at the roofline indicates the removal of additional stories.

Nos. 167-175. This site is now an empty lot.

FRONT STREET Between John and Fulton Streets

EAST SIDE

Nos. 181-189. (159-163 John)

This site was part of the estate of John Byvank, whose daughter, Mary, married George Codwise, Jr., an owner of much of the property in this part of the seaport area. This handsome pair of Greek Revival warehouses, a designated New York City Landmark, was built in 1835-36 and is contemporary with the row at 207-211 Water Street. These buildings replaced two smaller brick structures, owned by Anson G. Phelps, a merchant and philanthropist who founded the merchandising firm of Phelps, Dodge & Co. When the present stores were constructed, No. 181 was owned by the grocers, Mackie, Oakley & Jennison, and No. 189 by Josiah Macy. Born in Nantucket, Massachusetts, in 1785, Josiah Macy was a prominent merchant captain who traveled extensively, carrying cargoes of whale oil to international ports. At the end of the War of 1812, Macy bought the ship Edward, and was active in the New York-Liverpool trade for the next fourteen years. In 1828, he founded the shipping and commission house of Josiah Macy & Son, with his son William, in New York City.

Having amassed a considerable fortune, Macy retired from business in 1853 and the firm was continued by his sons. Josiah Macy & Son occupied No. 189 until 1885, when the firm moved next door to No. 191, where it remained until after the turn of the century. The trabeated granite ground floor, characteristic of the Greek Revival commercial style, displays a fine row of regularly-spaced piers with Tuscan capitals supporting a deep architrave. Above the molded cornice which elegantly terminates the granite storefront is a continuous granite sill shared by the tall, narrow second story windows. At the upper stories, the shorter windows, some of which retain their six-over-six sash, are simply detailed with granite sills and lintels. The handsome roof cornice of No. 189 is of molded brick. An additional story with a deeply projecting cornice was added to No. 181, the corner building, in 1917.

FRONT STREET

No. 191.

This five-story building, a designated New York City Landmark, may have been erected before 1793 as one of a pair with No. 193. If so, it has been significantly altered since that early date. The late 18th-century building was two stories high with a peaked roof. Garrett Westful, a merchant, occupied the stores in 1794-95, and the leading mercantile establishment of Minturn & Champlin was housed here intermittently between 1804 and 1816. The present facade reflects many 19th century alterations. The cast-iron storefront displays tall, slim, rectangular columns, ornamented like those at 214 Front Street. These columns have traces of their original Corinthian capitals. The upper stories are faced in the pressed brick typical of the late 19th century. Stone lintels and sills are at each of the windows and a dentilled roof cornice of a very retardataire Greek Revival type extends above the brick fascia.

No. 193.

This building, a designated New York City Landmark, may have been built before 1793 as one of a pair with No. 191. If so, the 18th-century building is completely concealed by a 19th-century Victorian alteration to its facade. The 18th-century building was two stories high with a peaked roof. By about 1847 the original building had been either replaced or raised to five stories with a tall two-story, studio-type top floor. Later, in 1877, another story was added and the Victorian front installed. At the first story the cast-iron storefront has large paneled square columns. These columns carry a broad lintel with curved projected ends and contrast with the narrow rectangular columns with stylized lotus leaf capitals which flank the central opening. The next three stories are embellished with neo-Grec stone lintels with elegantly incised curvilinear decor. Vertically grooved band courses connect these windows at impost block level, a motif which occurs uninterrupted for the width of the building between the fifth and sixth stories. The extremely tall windows of the fifth story are separated by narrow engaged cast-iron round columns. The three sets of paired windows at the top story are crowned by a deeply projecting metal roof cornice with an impressive arched pediment at its center. The distinctive top floors and roofline, together with the variety of fine detail, give this facade a particularly striking appearance.

No. 195.

Part of the well-known Schermerhorn Row, this narrow Federal style building, a designated New York City Landmark, was erected in 1811-12. It was first occupied by Jenkins & Havens, an important early shipping firm, which had moved from 205 Front Street. Although the ground floor has been substantially altered, the three upper stories, each only two bays wide, have retained their original Flemish bond brickwork as well as their splayed stone lintels. This building also retains its original pitched roof.

No. 197.

This building is described under 18 Fulton Street.

FRONT STREET Between Fulton and Beekman Streets

The street numbering system on this block is continuous, rather than the even-odd alternating pattern.

WEST SIDE

No. 201-202. (15-19 Fulton)

Handsome Federal style buildings with arched doorways and peaked roofs

FRONT STREET

originally stood on this site which is now occupied in part by a concrete subway ventilator shaft erected in 1938. The remaining portion of the site is now an empty lot.

No. 203-204.

These two fine buildings, erected at different times, have been combined as a single structure and substantially altered since their original construction. In 1814-15, No. 203 was built for Peter G. Hart, a grocer. Its neighbor, No. 204, had been erected fifteen years earlier, in 1799, for Philetus Havens and for Thomas Carpenter, a merchant. In 1821, a serious fire destroyed all of the frame buildings on the east side of Front Street in this block, along with the single frame store on the west side. Both of these brick buildings, however, escaped harm. That same year, this block of Front Street was regraded, and the street level was raised above the original ground floor entrances of these stores. When Peter Hart and his neighbor objected to the change, the Common Council advised them that it would be to their advantage to raise the levels of their stores. In the 1830s or 1840s the ground floors of these buildings were altered to the Greek Revival style. Granite piers with simple Tuscan capitals flank the large openings for the shop windows and carry a plain lintel with cornice. At No. 203 the two pairs of double doors and the shop window have been handsomely restored with flat-headed transoms arched at the corners. In 1882, No. 203, then still owned by the estate of Peter G. Hart, was joined with No. 204. At this time, the upper floors of No. 203 were altered and the two buildings were remodeled as a single hotel with a new brick facade. These alterations were executed from the designs of architect Theobald Engelhardt. The hotel was leased to William Wainwright, who listed his occupation in 1883-84 as simply "Liquors." A photograph taken shortly after the 1882 remodeling includes part of the sign on No. 204 which

reads "____t's Hotel," which might have been "Wainwright's Hotel." Included in Engelhardt's remodeling was the raising of the height of the granite piers. He did not, however, use the same type of granite and the difference between the two types is still evident today. The three upper stories now date completely from Engelhardt's alteration. The brownstone window sills on corbel blocks are fancifully designed with small triangular wedges at their centers, as are the shouldered lintels which are also embellished with incised curvilinear ornament. The original peaked roof of No. 203 was lowered in 1882 in order to align with the roofline of No. 204. A massive, ornate metal roof cornice, carried on large vertical brackets set between modillions, spans this handsome pair. No. 203, joined to No. 204, now serves as the South Street Seaport Museum Administration Building. During the restoration of the building to 1882 appearance, several tooled brownstone quoin blocks dating from the original 1815 facade were discovered.

No. 205.

This brick building, with Flemish bond facade, was erected by 1800 when it was occupied by the prominent shipping firm of Jenkins & Havens. This is the earliest tenancy record available for the building. Like No. 203-204, the ground floor has been remodeled in the popular Greek Revival commercial style. Granite piers enframing the storefront openings support a granite lintel with molded cornice. In a photograph taken about 1883, this ground floor is shown with a three-sided bay window at its southern bay and with double doors at the two other bays. Handsome signs and an oversized firecracker announced the gun powder and sports equipment firm of William P. Howell that was housed within at that time. Also depicted in the photograph are the early six-over-six window sash and a simple wood cornice, all since altered. The present structure, four stories in height, is simply detailed with stone lintels and sills at the windows and a copper rain gutter above a molded brick cornice and fascia.

No. 206.

First occupied by Matthew Howell, a grocer, this small brick building was erected in 1798 or 1799. A print of 1855 shows the structure as a handsome

three-story Federal building with a separate narrow entrance to the residences above. This doorway was paneled and enframed by handsome fluted pilasters. Also depicted are two tall, narrow pedimented dormer windows set in the original pitched roof. After an 1880 fire, the building was substantially remodeled. At that time the roof was lowered and the facade was completely rebuilt.

No. 207.

An early building on this site was erected by 1797 and was used as the house and shop of Benjamin Stratton, Jr., a grocer and cooper. This 18th-century building was demolished and replaced by 1816 with the four-story structure on the site today. This building was first occupied by Jonathan and Joseph Coddington, grocers and merchants. Although the ground floor was altered in 1901, the three upper stories retain their Flemish bond brickwork and stone window trim. The full-width sign with wood letters below the third story windows adds further interest to this facade. The building has a peaked roof.

No. 208-10. This building is described under 133 Beekman Street.

EAST SIDE

The building on the east side of Front Street between Fulton and Beekman Streets is described under 1-13 Fulton Street.

FRONT STREET Between Beekman Street and Peck Slip

WEST SIDE

No. 212. This building is described under 140 Beekman Street.

No. 214.

Erected by 1802 for William Shotwell, a merchant, this building has been substantially altered since that early date. The handsome mid-19th century cast-iron shopfront is enriched with ornamented paneled square columns, similar to those at 191 Front Street. The same iron foundry undoubtedly cast the members of both storefronts. At the southernmost cast-iron column an elegant cartouche bears the street number, "214", of the building. Surmounting the broad cast-iron lintel is a projecting modillioned metal cornice. The four upper stories of smooth-pressed brick certainly date from the late 19th century. Some of the gudgeons for the 19th century shutters still remain at the windows. The original height of this building is not known, but it was perhaps less than it is today and the building may have once had a peaked roof. A dentilled brick cornice above a paneled brick fascia now crowns the building.

Nos. 216-218.

This empty lot was originally the site of a pair of three-story buildings dating from the first quarter of the 19th century. In a 1936 photograph the buildings were shown to have triple-arched ground floors. The silhouettes of the pitched roofs of these buildings may still be seen on the sidewalls of No. 214 and No. 220. Demolished in 1962, this pair was one of the finest in the Historic District.

Nos. 220-226.

These four buildings were constructed at about the same time that 237-243 Water Street were erected, in 1798-1800. These buildings, like the Water Street buildings, occupy the land which was part of the extension of the water

lot Peter Schermerhorn and Ebenezer Stevens had bought from William Beekman in 1795. Schermerhorn's ship chandlery was at 243 Water Street and Stevens, a Revolutionary War general who was both a fleet owner and liquor importer, ran his business from 222 Front. The Schermerhorn and Stevens families were officially joined when John Peter Schermerhorn married Rebecca Stevens.

Although none of these buildings has any visible late 18th or early 19th-century surface material, it does seem possible that these are the original structures, how greatly altered, as no record of demolition or of new construction has been found. In 1858, Nos. 222 and 226 were recorded as two-and-one-half-stories high, while Nos. 220 and 224 were five stories. The peaked roof of No. 226 was lowered in 1897 and at that time another story was added. Between 1854 and 1856, the assessed valuation of No. 220 increased significantly, indicating alterations to the building. Its cast-iron storefront, a product of J. L. Jackson Brothers Ironworks, may date from this period. At No. 220 paneled square columns, similar to those at Nos. 222 and 224, flank a large display window with cast-iron muntins and frame. The original window lintels of No. 220 may have once been similar to the metal ones at Nos. 222 and 224. These molded metal lintels were probably applied over the stones ones at mid-century. Slightly lower in height than No. 220, the common rooflines of Nos. 222 and 224 are ornamented with dentilled brick cornices similar to that at No . 220. The last building in this row, No. 226, displays a plain facade, also substantially altered over the years.

No. 228-230.

Dating from 1830, this building with four windows at each upper story, retains few of its original Greek Revival features. The cast-iron shopfront, added in the second half of the 19th century, is particularly handsome. Three massive paneled square columns with stylized acanthus leaf capitals extend across the facade and once carried a cast-iron lintel, now missing. At the four upper stories of Flemish bond brickwork, some of the early six-over-six double-hung window sash, typical of the Greek Revival, remain. The simple dentilled roof cornice with brick fascia, partly restored, extends the width of the building.

No. 232-234.

This broad double building was erected under a single street number in 1816 for Gershom Smith, a grocer, who had previously occupied another building on the site as a tavern keeper. This early building has been substantially altered. The cast-iron ground floor, composed of square columns supporting a narrow lintel with rosettes, is protected by a corrugated metal canopy. Such canopies as these appear to have been used frequently in late 19th-century commercial buildings. The three upper brick stories are characteristically utilitarian and plain in design. Stone lintels and sills are the only ornamental features. Short attic windows, now filled in, enliven the fenestration pattern of the facade. They were probably filled in when the original peaked roof of the building was lowered in 1897. In 1891 the building functioned as a stable. Carriages were stored on the ground floor; the horses were carried by hoist to the second floor and the fodder was kept on the third floor.

No. 236. (28 Peck Slip)

This building was constructed in 1827 for Edward G. Falle, a grocer, who rented this property from the Corporation of the City of New York. It had been one of the city's last water lots and the Common Council felt it unwise to sell the land at the low real estate values of 1827. The land was not sold to Falle until 1840. The ground floor facade, an evident alteration, displays narrow cast-iron rectangular columns at both its Front Street and Peck Slip sides. A large fluted round cast-iron column at the corner of the building is an interesting feature of the shopfront. At the upper stories, star-shaped tie rod washers indicate where the interior floors meet the brick facade.

In 1884 the building was raised from four stories with a peaked roof to five stories. A flat roof with an ornate metal cornice was added at this time. This cornice appears to have been later altered to the present more simple one.

EAST SIDE

No. 211. This building is described under 142 Beekman Street.

No. 213-215.

A late 19th-century five-story building was once located on this site, now occupied by a garage.

No. 217-219.

A pair of three-story buildings once occupied this site, now an empty lot.

No. 221-223.

These lots were part of the extension of the water lot Peter Schermerhorn and Ebenezer Stevens bought from William Beekman in 1795. Nos. 221 and 223 were built on Stevens' land and resembled somewhat today's 225 and 227 Front Street. This site is now an empty lot.

No. 225.

Also owned by the prominent New York merchant, Peter Schermerhorn, this building was erected in 1822 by William W. Berwick, a builder active in New York between 1819 and 1845. Berwick also constructed buildings for the Schermerhorn family in other neighborhoods of the city. This building, originally three stories high, was raised to four stories in 1873, as indicated by the unusually wide distance between the third and fourth stories. The peaked roof of this building was also lowered at that time. The original Flemish bond brickwork of the second and third stories has been retained. At the much-altered ground floor, remnants of the keyed brownstone door enframement remain at the southern bay. An early brownstone sill remains at the northern window. At the upper stories, some of the brownstone window lintels and sills are still in place. The fourth story addition of the 1870s is terminated by a retardataire dentilled brick cornice.

No. 227.

Also built by William W. Berwick in 1822 for Peter Schermerhorn, this brick building was significantly remodeled later in the 19th century. The cast-iron lintel with rosettes at the storefront level was part of the later alteration. The fifth story was added in 1899, at which time the peaked roof was lowered. The corbeled brick roof cornice is characteristic of this later period.

No. 229-231.

This robust Greek Revival building was erected in 1838-39 for grocers Hopkins & Hawley. At the ground floor, massive granite piers carry a deep granite lintel with molded cornice. The Flemish bond brickwork of the four upper stories appears to be a refacing of the original brick facade. The roof cornice has been removed from the building.

No. 233.

Erected at the same time as the corner building, No. 235, this 1828-29 building was constructed upon what had been one of the last water lots to be retained by the City. The grocers Hopkins & Hawley were located here until they moved to No. 229-231. The ground floor has a cast-iron shopfront which was added to the building. Round-arched paneled square columns support a lintel decorated with rosettes. The original brick facing appears to have been retained at the three upper stories. The most striking feature of this fine building is its pitched roof rising above a dentilled brick cornice and crowned by two pedimented wood dormers. This roofline contrasts sharply with the others in this block.

No. 235. (34 Peck Slip)

Like No. 233, this building was erected in 1828-29 on land owned by the Corporation of the City of New York. It was first occupied by the flour merchants, Wood & Birdsall. At the Peck Slip side of the building, an original arched doorway, now filled in, may still be seen. The arch is of gauged brick and is ornamented with a brownstone double keystone and impost blocks. To the right of this doorway, paneled doors of a later period are flanked by ribbed cast-iron square columns, supporting a wood-faced lintel with a beaded bracket at one end. The cast-iron features undoubtedly date from 1892 when the facade was altered according to the plans of the architects, Neville & Bagge. The sheet metal window lintels are also features of this alteration. At this time the building was raised from four to five stories and its peaked roof was lowered. A bracketed sheet metal cornice now crowns the building.

FRONT STREET Between Peck Slip and Dover Street

WEST SIDE

No. 238. This building is described under 33 Peck Slip.

No. 240.

Erected in 1851-52, this building was first assessed to Harris Stone, one of the many provisioners along this block. Other provisioners in this section included flour merchants, grocers and bakers. This building was connected at the rear to 29 Peck Slip, erected for Stone at the same time. In 1857, Jones & Rowland, flour merchants, acquired the building. The five-story structure has been somewhat altered but the members of the cast-iron storefront remain intact. The paneled cast-iron square columns are ornamented with small cartouches at mid-height, two of which bear the street number of the building. At the upper stories the facade is of pressed brick with star-shaped tie rod washers set in the party wall between this building and 33 Peck Slip, which was built in 1856 and was also owned by Harris Stone. An ornate paneled and corbeled brick roof cornice spans these two buildings and may have been added at a later date to the earlier 240 Front Street facade.

Nos. 242 and 244.

These two structures were built shortly after the disastrous Novelty Bakery fire of 1853 which destroyed the earlier buildings on this site as well as most of the structures on this block. Jones & Rowland, the flour merchants, were also the owners of these buildings. The cast-iron shopfronts were the latest in commercial style when this pair was built. The square columns are quite handsome and display round-arched vertical panels. The pressed brick facades are designed in the popular vernacular style with plain stone lintels and sills at the windows. Star-shaped tie rod washers remain at No. 242, while some of the early iron shutters are still intact at No. 244. A small attic story with

short windows distinguishes No. 242, which is crowned by a brick dentilled cornice with fascia. This cornice contrasts effectively with the sheet metal modillioned cornice of No. 244, which is one full story higher than No. 242.

No. 246.

This site is now an empty lot. It had been occupied by a building erected with Nos. 248-250, which was destroyed by the Novelty Bakery fire of 1853.

Nos. 248 and 250.

The 1853 Novelty Bakery fire broke out in a rear building on the site of today's No. 248 and destroyed the early 1810 buildings located here. Erected shortly after the fire, these two buildings are among the most elaborately detailed in the Historic District. The cast-iron shopfronts are especially fine. No. 248 displays ornamented paneled square columns supporting an architrave capped by an egg and dart molding. The shopfront of No. 250 is certainly one of the best-preserved and most handsome in the District. Simple rosettes ornament the tops of the square and rectangular columns which support a deep architrave also embellished with an egg and dart molding. At this shopfront the original paneled double wood doors remain at the center bay while the folding paneled doors remain at the loading dock entrance. The window treatment at the four upper stories of both of these brick buildings is quite richly detailed. Segmental-arched windows are elegantly surmounted by iron lintels with decorative moldings and shouldered end. The iron window sills are also finely molded and are supported on small corbels. The floor levels and roofline of No. 250 are slightly higher than those of No. 248. Both buildings are grandly crowned by ornate sheet metal roof cornices, supported on large foliate brackets. The panels between the brackets of the cornice of No. 248 are embellished with paired swags, while the cornice of No. 250 is more simply ornamented with rectangular panels and dentils.

No. 252.

This building occupies the eastern end of the water lot Captain Joseph Rose purchased in 1771. Rose's building at 273 Water Street was erected on the western end. When the landfill on the Front Street site was completed, Rose had a storehouse for his wharf erected here. It was replaced in 1801-02 by a three-story building which certainly remains as part of today's five-story structure. Many of the early features of the building have been altered, but at the second and third stories of Flemish bond brickwork the original splayed stone window lintels remain.

Nos. 254-256. This site is now occupied by a one-story brick garage.

No. 258. This site is now an empty lot.

EAST SIDE

No. 237-257. (35-41 Peck Slip)

The buildings that occupied this site were demolished for the Consolidated Edison Substation, begun in 1974. The substation was designed by the architectural firm of Edward L. Barnes and is of brick with concrete trim. It is the same height as the cornice line of 45 Peck Slip which was erected in 1806-07. The design of the substation was approved by the Restoration and Development Committee of the South Street Seaport Museum.

FRONT STREET

No. 259.

This Federal style building was erected in 1807-08 for David Lydig, the prominent flour merchant whose first store in the area was at 160 South Street. The Front Street building appears to have been three stories high originally, perhaps with a hipped roof which was a common feature of early corner buildings in the seaport area. At the first three original stories the brick is of Flemish bond, in contrast to the running bond at the fourth story which was added later. In addition, the splayed brownstone window lintels at the second and third stories further distinguish this early portion of the building. The original features of the ground floor have been substantially altered.

FULTON STREET

Originally called Beekman Slip, the section of Fulton Street between Pearl Street and the river was connected with another section of Fulton Street in 1814 and the streets were united under the same name in 1816. The early cobblestones of Fulton Street were replaced by Belgian blocks in 1854.

FULTON STREET Between South and Front Streets

SOUTH SIDE

Nos. 2-12. The eastern portion of Schermerhorn Row.

Schermerhorn Row, a designated New York City Landmark, is one of the finest rows of early commercial architecture in all of New York City. Built for Peter Schermerhorn in 1811, these six counting-houses were designed in the Georgian-Federal style. Peter Schermerhorn (1749-1826), described by Joseph Scoville in Old Merchants of New York as "one of the founders of New York's rapid rise to eminence", was a leading Manhattan merchant. Known as "Captain" Schermerhorn, he was a ship owner as well, and ran a ship chandlery at 243 Water Street, a building which still stands today. The Schermerhorn family had owned property in the area since the 1720's, when Pearl Street was still the eastern boundary of Manhattan Island. Peter's grandfather, Arnout (1686-1749), had built several wharves in this part of the East River. Peter Schermerhorn bought the land on which the buildings of Schermerhorn Row now stand in 1793, when the site was still a series of water lots. This property was partially filled in 1797 and was completely filled by 1807, according to the Bridges Survey of New York. When Schermerhorn Row was begun in 1811, the geographic advantages of its site were not yet realized, since the markets were then located at Peck Slip and Maiden Lane. Shortly after Schermerhorn's buildings were erected, Robert Fulton's Brooklyn Ferry began to land at Schermerhorn's wharf. The ferry terminated at the foot of Fulton Street where a wooden structure of classical design served as the ferry house. This building was replaced in 1863 by a cast-iron Italianate building designed by the architect John Kellum. The Fulton Market did not move to Fulton Street until 1822, and it was then that this site was fully established as one of the prime focal points of the area.

The buildings of Schermerhorn Row were erected as warehouses with counting rooms and were leased by the Schermerhorn family to other merchants. The original appearance of these six narrow brick buildings, united by a common cornice line and almost completely identical to the three other buildings at the western end of Schermerhorn Row (14-16 Fulton), must have been quite handsome. Exterior stairways, which led up to the second story counting house rooms, were removed in the 1840s. At the ground floor of each building there was an arched doorway with brownstone trim keyed to the surrounding brickwork. These doors served as entrances to the warehouse areas of the buildings. At No. 2 one of these doorways, with a large window at one side, may still be seen. The upper stories, executed in Flemish bond brickwork, retain many windows with their original splayed lintels. At Nos. 4-10 the high pitched roofs are intact and, with the exception of No. 10, a gabled dormer crowns each building. These dormers were not, however, original features of the buildings which had only hatchways leading to the roofs. Early fire laws required that the brick party walls be extended above the roofs to prevent the spread of fire from building to building. High chimneys once rose above these party walls. A few of these chimneys have retained their original height.

The mansard roof at No. 2 replaces the original hipped roof which was once aligned with those in the row to the west. At the time the roof was altered another story was also added beneath it. This building served as a hotel in the mid-19th century when it was known as Joseph Calvin's East River Hotel. By 1875 it was known as the Fulton Ferry Hotel.

The Greek Revival style transformed many of these early brick fronts, as illustrated in a print of Fulton Street of about 1848, which shows a series of trabeated granite shopfronts along this row. Later in the 19th century

cast iron replaced many of the granite piers. Today cast-iron features remain at Nos. 4 and 10. Despite the remodeling of No. 2 and the unfortunate 1935 alterations at No. 12, these six buildings form a striking row, most notable forits early date of construction and its well-preserved homogeneity.

Nos. 14-18. The western portion of Schermerhorn Row.

These Schermerhorn Row buildings, also designated New York City Landmarks, were built in 1812, slightly later than the eastern portion (2-12 Fulton). Nos. 14 and 16 retain their original high pitched roofs and the hipped roof of the corner building, No. 18, effectively terminates this fine row. The early features of the ground floors of this portion of the row, including the Greek Revival trabeated fronts of the 1840s, were replaced by cast-iron storefronts dating from the middle of the 19th century. At these shopfronts, some of which have been restored by the South Street Seaport Museum, paneled cast-iron square columns enframe wide openings. Splayed brownstone lintels remain at many of the upper story windows. No. 18 was altered in 1873 by Detlef Lienau, the architect also responsible for two houses on West 23rd Street owned by a later generation of the Schermerhorn family. The uniformity of the Flemish bond brick facades of Schermerhorn Row, together with the high pitched roofs, make this one of the finest early 19th-century architectural rows in the city.

NORTH SIDE

Nos. 1-13. (94-103 South and 141-153 Beekman).

One of the last blocks to be completed by landfill, this site was still lined with wood frame buildings standing on marshy land in January of 1821, when the city condemned it in order to build the long-planned Fulton Market. Twelve days after condemnation, a fire broke out in the area and destroyed thirty to forty buildings on the site. After this disaster, the Common Council was pressured to build the market and by January, 1822, the new building was completed. The market was a handsome brick and stone building, designed by James O'Donnell, who had designed additions to Columbia College in 1818. By 1882 the market building had become decrepit and badly damaged by fire. It was replaced by an exuberant High Victorian style building of dark brick and terra-cotta, designed by Douglas Smyth, the official architect of the City's markets. The South Street facade of this market was open-ended and it was here that the small wood stalls filled with farm produce were located. This striking late 19th-century building was in turn replaced by the present one-story brick market building, erected in 1949. Today the eastern half of this building is occupied by fish stores. The western half, known as the "New Fulton Market", houses a variety of shops, including snack bars, a book store and an art gallery.

FULTON STREET Between Front and Water Streets

NORTH SIDE

Nos. 15-19. (201-202 Front).

Handsome Federal style buildings with arched doorways and peaked roofs originally stood on this site which is now occupied in part by a concrete subway ventilator shaft erected in 1938. The remaining portion of the site is now an empty lot.

Nos. 21, 23, and 25(205 Water Street).

These three handsome brick stores are late examples of the Greek Revival style and were built in 1845-46 for George W. Rogers, one of the city's larger landholders. Five stories high with granite storefronts and machine-

Nos. 21, 23, and 25. (205 Water Street).

pressed brick facades, these buildings have been partially restored by the South Street Seaport Museum. The upper stories of all of the buildings have been cleaned and the ground floor of No. 21 has been renovated and displays fine granite piers with simple Tuscan capitals. No. 25 which now houses the Museum Book Shop and Chart Store has a ground floor of a later date. A fluted cast-iron column at the corner supports the floors above. At the upper stories of this group six-over-six double-hung windows contrast notably with the short three-over-six windows at the fifth story. These fine buildings are spanned by a simple dentilled brick roof cornice, with fascia below, which extends along the Water Street side of No. 25.

JOHN STREET

John Street was formerly called Burling Slip. The slip was filled in 1835. The extra width of the street between Front Street and the river reflects the size of the earlier slip.

JOHN STREET Between Front and South Streets

SOUTH SIDE

Nos. 160-168. This site is now a vacant lot.

Nos. 170-176.

One of the finest and most impressive structures in the Historic District, this stately building, a designated New York City Landmark, was erected in 1840 for Hickson W. Field, a commission merchant. This building has been handsomely restored by the ship chandlers, Baker, Carver & Morrell, Inc., a firm which was founded in 1894. It was originally housed at Coenties Slip and moved to this address in the late 1950s. Unlike the other Greek Revival buildings in the District, this structure is entirely faced in granite including the fifth story which was raised from a low attic to full height. The use of granite at the upper stories was not a common practice in New York and derived instead from the granite-faced buildings in Boston and northern New England. The regular ranges of windows without shutters, extending across the unornamented facade, stress the purely utilitarian character of the building. Most imposing is the use of massive granite piers between the show windows at the ground floor. The large scale and the restrained use of decorative features make this building one of the most outstanding examples of Greek Revival commercial architecture in the city. The building is L-shaped in plan and extends through to 86 South Street.

Nos. 178-180. (87 South). This site is now occupied by a gas station.

NORTH SIDE

Nos. 159-163. This building is described under 181-189 Front Street.

No. 165.

Erected in 1811 for George Codwise, Jr., who once owned the property on the north side of Burling Slip between South and Front Streets, this building is a designated New York City Landmark. This was the westernmost building in a row of six which was constructed at the same time that Peter Schermerhorn's row was begun on Fulton Street. No. 165 is the only extant building of the Codwise row. It was first occupied in 1812 by Merrit & Corlies, flour merchants. In 1835 it housed the firm of Mackie, Oakley & Jennison, commission merchants, who were then building the present 181 Front Street. While constructing No. 181, the firm altered 165 John so that it would resemble its new neighbor. Its trabeated granite ground floor was part of this alteration,

JOHN STREET

No. 165.

as indicated by the pier at the party wall between the two buildings which supports part of both facades. This alteration also included the realignment of the windows to match those of the later structure and the refacing of the facade in a newer brick. In 1839 Edward G. Faile, a grocer, bought this building and 181 Front Street, and made a party wall agreement with George Codwise's widow, Mary, which would allow No. 165 to be raised to five stories. However, in an 1847 print, this building still appears to be four stories high with a steep peaked roof and in the 1870 Perris-Browne Atlas it was also indicated as four stories. Now five stories tall, the building contrasts with the higher 181 Front Street, which had a sixth story added in 1917.

Nos. 167-171.

Also part of the property belonging to George Codwise, Jr., this site was sold by his widow, Mary, to the Low family in 1849. Built for A.A. Low & Brother in 1850, the building housed this famous export firm until well past the end of the 19th century. Abiel Abbot Low (1811-1893) became the foremost merchant in trade between New York and China. At the age of twenty-two he had left his home in Salem, Massachusetts, to clerk at the American firm of Russell & Co. in Canton, where his uncle, William, was a partner. During his stay in Canton, Low came to know one of the legendary Cantonese merchants, Houqua, extremely well and his success in the China trade was greatly enhanced by this connection. In 1840 he became a partner in Russell & Co. and he soon left China to live in New York. The next year he began his own business with offices on Fletcher Street and in 1847 moved to 115 South Street, which still stands today. Three years later Low and his brother, Josiah, moved into 167-171 John, a building which symbolized the success and importance of their firm. This exceptionally fine brownstone-faced counting-house, now covered with stucco, creates an imposing effect by means of its large scale. Raised on a brownstone basement, the building is five stories high and eight windows wide at each floor. It acts as a counter-balance to the broader Baker, Carver & Morrell building which faces it across the street. Its cast-iron first floor is exceptionally notable since it was manufactured by the well-known Architectural Ironworks of Daniel D. Badger. The cast-iron front dates from before 1865, but it is not know if it was an original feature of the facade or not. Its paneled square columns once had elaborate Corinthian capitals. The tall windows at the three upper stories contrast well with the shorter top story windows. These double-hung windows, which originally had molded sills, have central wood mullions. A simple cornice, with fascia below, crowns this handsome building and is characteristic of the generally restrained design of the facade.

Nos. 173-179. Four peaked roof buildings, four stories in height, originally stood on this site now occupied by a gas station.

PEARL STREET

Originally called Queen Street, Pearl Street ran along the waterfront of lower Manhattan until the latter half of the 18th century when Water Street was created on landfill. During the early 19th century, Pearl Street was the site of one of the busiest commercial centers of the city.

PEARL STREET Between Fulton and Beekman Streets

EAST SIDE ONLY

No. 268. This site is described under No. 204-214 Water Street.

No. 280-286. This building is described under 111-117 Beekman Street.

PEARL STREET Between Beekman Street and Peck Slip

EAST SIDE ONLY

Nos. 288-312. This site is now occupied by a parking lot and a two-story garage.

PEARL STREET Between Peck Slip and Dover Street

EAST SIDE ONLY

No. 320. (260-262 Water). This building is described under 1-15 Peck Slip.

No. 322. This site is now an empty lot.

Nos. 324-328.

On the site of 326-328 Pearl Street, which was once Franklin Square, stood one of the most famous and handsome early buildings in the environs of the seaport. Built in 1752, the building was an elegant Georgian house owned by the merchant William Walton, whose portrait by Thomas Wollaston hangs in the New York Historical Society. Walton's house was of imported yellow brick with brownstone trim, and the elaborate Walton coat of arms was carved in stone over the central doorway. During the 19th century, this fine building served as a boarding house until it was demolished in 1881.

The three brick warehouses now standing at Nos. 324-328 were erected as one building in 1881-82 from the designs of architect William Kuhler. Owned by James Callery, the buildings originally housed a store on the first floor with a factory above. In 1888 a printing house occupied these buildings. Today they form a homogeneous group, unified by a similar ground floor treatment, window alignment and a common cornice spanning all three facades. Although some portions of the ground floors have been altered, the handsome paneled cast-iron square columns remain. The fenestration at the four upper stories varies slightly. At No. 326 and at one bay of No. 328 the windows are of the same height but paired, contrasting subtly with the other single windows of the facade. Certainly the most ornate feature of this groupd is the corbeled brick roof cornice, ornamented with a fanciful geometric pattern.

No. 330.

Also designed by William Kuhler, this five-story brick building was erected in 1882 and is almost identical to Nos. 324-328. Originally owned by J.S. Shultz, this building was designed to accord with the facades at Nos. 326-328. A corbeled brick roof cornice unites all four buildings.

Nos. 332-336. The pair of five-story buildings which once stood on this site was demolished in 1958. It is now occupied by a gas station.

No. 338. This site is now an empty lot.

PECK SLIP

Peck Slip was named for Benjamin Peck, whose house and wharf were located here in the 18th century. The Slip was graded and raised to high water mark near Front Street in 1755, and in 1763 it was the site of a major public market. Described as "one of the principal wharves in the City" in 1769, Peck Slip was filled in during the summer of 1810.

PECK SLIP Between Pearl and Water Streets

SOUTH SIDE

Nos. 2-18. This site is occupied by a two-story garage and by a parking lot.

NORTH SIDE

No. 1-19. (260-262 Water)

Eleven buildings, one of which was wood frame, stood on this site until at least 1910. The present six-story brick structure with steel sash was erected in 1950, from the designs of Charles M. Spindler, as the Peck Slip Station, U.S. Post Office. The building is clad with modern louvered aluminum siding.

PECK SLIP Between Water and Front Streets

SOUTH SIDE

No. 20-22. This building is described under 251 Water Street.

No. 24-26.

Two buildings were erected on this site by 1835. They were rebuilt as one double building in 1870-71, when they were converted to tenements with stores below. Although the brick ground floor has been somewhat altered, the four upper stories display a regular rhythm of segmental-arched windows, characteristic of the late 19th century. These windows have stone sills and wide brick segmental arches built up with three rows of corbeled brick headers. A simple dentilled brick cornice spans the facade.

No. 28. This building is described under 236 Front Street.

NORTH SIDE

No. 21-23. (257-259 Water)

Until 1873, a picturesque cluster of gambrel-roofed buildings stood on this corner site. The present brick building, designed to house "first class stores", was erected in 1873 from the designs of the prominent, Paris-trained architect, Richard Morris Hunt (1827-95), who also designed the Lenox Library (1877) since razed, and the base of the Statue of Liberty (1886) and the central section of the Metropolitan Museum of Art (1895-1902), which are both designated New York City Landmarks. The Peck Slip building, erected on land that had originally been a water lot granted to Jacobus Roosevelt in 1751, was constructed for the trustees of Roosevelt Hospital. It is interesting to note that in the same year, 1873, Hunt designed another building for Roosevelt Hospital at 478-482 Broadway, now part of the SoHo-Cast Iron Historic District. The six-story high Peck Slip building is particularly rich in decorative detail. Although the ground floor on the Peck Slip side has been altered, the original segmental-arched openings on the Water Street side still remain. A variety of window treatments enlivens the upper stories. At the outer bays, tiers of single segmental-arched windows extend up through the fifth story contrasting with the square-headed windows of the sixth story. The two center bays display paired square-headed windows with stone lintels crowned by segmental relieving arches of brick at the third and fourth floors. These arches are formed with three rows of headers set against stone impost blocks at each

end. The spandrel panels of these paired windows have horizontal bands of brick in herring-bone pattern at top and bottom. The stone window lintels and impost blocks contrast effectively with the brick arches and the dark brick of facade. This use of polychromy was characteristic of the late 19th-century Victorian Gothic style. On the Peck Slip facade is the date, "1873", with the numbers ranged vertically on the central brick pier between the paired windows. This building is crowned by a modillioned cornice.

Nos. 25-27.

This pair, erected in 1835-36, was built for Spofford & Tilletson, commission merchants who, if they occupied the building at all, used it only for storage purposes, since their store was at 149 Water Street. The original Greek Revival ground floor has been altered, but the four upper stories in Flemish bond brickwork remain. The windows retain their simple stone lintels and sills and progressively diminish in height at the upper floors. At the roofline the early dentilled brick cornice with brick fascia may still be seen.

Nos. 29 and 31.

Slightly taller than its western neighbor, this five-story pair was built for Harris Stone, a provisioner. The 1852 Perris-Browne Atlas shows a full-width smokehouse at the rear of No. 29. This was probably the place where meats were prepared for long transatlantic voyages. The altered storefronts of these buildings retain few of the original openings, except perhaps the narrow entranceway at the easternmost bay of No. 29. Oversized star-shaped tie rod washers enliven the brick facade of No. 29. The corbeled roof cornice, spanning the two buildings, is a distinctive feature and similar to that at 240 Front Street, also once owned by Harris Stone. This cornice, which also extends to 33 Peck Slip, is composed of recessed rectangular panels and vertical brick corbels.

No. 33. (238 Front)

Also built for Harris Stone, this five-story brick structure replaced an old frame building on this site in 1856. Slightly narrower than its two western neighbors, it resembles them in its four upper stories and was designed to align with the floor levels of those earlier buildings. The ornamental paneled roof cornice with brick corbels unites the facades of 29 through 33 Peck Slip and extends around the corner to 240 Front Street.

PECK SLIP Between Front and South Streets

SOUTH SIDE

No. 34. This building is described under 235 Front Street.

Nos. 36-40.

Erected as a group in 1813, these three brick buildings were erected for William and John Mott, dry good merchants. The Motts had stores at 35 Peck Slip and 240 Water Street, so that these three buildings were probably used solely as warehouses. Originally three stories high with a peaked roof each of the buildings has been raised in height and the roof lowered. No. 40 was raised to four stories in 1872, but the dates for the additions at Nos. 36 and 38, which are now five stories high, are not known. The similarity of the dentilled brick roof cornices at each building suggests that all three may have been raised at the same time; however, the fact that the windows of No. 40 do not align with the other buildings may indicate that this facade was altered separately. The ground floors of the buildings were modernized in the second half of the 19th century and display some cast-iron features, including narrow rectangular columns at Nos. 38 and 40.