

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Building at 315-325 West 36th Street

other names/site number n/a

2. Location

street & number Manhattan [] not for publication

city or town New York [] vicinity

state New York code NY county New York code 061 zip code _____

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] nomination [] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements as set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [X] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [] nationally [] statewide [X] locally. () see continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature]
Signature of certifying official/Title

4/05/04
Date

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. () see continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- [] entered in the National Register
[] see continuation sheet
- [] determined eligible for the National Register
[] see continuation sheet
- [] determined not eligible for the National Register

[] removed from the National Register

[] other (explain) _____

Signature of the Keeper

date of action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	TOTAL

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: business

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: business

DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT/Art Deco

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Stone, Cast Stone, Brick, Metal

roof _____
other _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

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7. Narrative Description

Setting

The building at 315-325 West 36th Street is a 16-story loft, showroom and office building, built 1926, located on the north side of West 36th Street between 8th and 9th avenues in Manhattan. Most of the other buildings on the block are similar garment district loft, showroom and office buildings of the same period; the block is part of the city's Garment District (or Garment Center), which is comprised of many similar blocks between 6th and 9th avenues and 30th to 41st streets.

Exterior

As is typical for commercial buildings of the period, the building's bulk occupies most of the site, but includes a series of setbacks to conform to the zoning regulations then in place. Its façade rises from the lot line at the sidewalk, with a series of setbacks. The setbacks are organized in such a way that the outer three window bays on either side have setbacks at different levels, thereby creating the effect of a pavilion plan. The setbacks on the outer bays occur above the 9th, 11th and 13th stories; on the inner bays, they occur above the 7th, 9th, 11th, 13th, 14th and 15th stories. The building's uppermost stories rise as a narrow, six-story tower, square in plan.

The building's first three stories are visually set off from the upper stories both by their design and by their use of different facing materials. Whereas the upper stories are faced almost entirely in brick, with cast-stone trim, the bottom stories are faced in stone with metal trim.

The building has recently been converted to a mixed-use arrangement. It is entered through a triple arcade set in a three-story stone-faced area, each arch being accented by surrounding stone moldings suggestive of the Romanesque style. The arch on the west leads to a utilitarian loading area; the arch on the east leads to the lobby for the commercial portion of the building; the central arch, which will lead to the lobby for the residential portion of the building, is currently closed for construction.

Both the eastern and western entrance arches open into a deeply recessed porch with a groin-vaulted ceiling. On the east, the vault retains its details, including a decorative metal light-fixture on a chain hanging from the vault's center. On the west, some detail has been lost and the light-fixture removed. At the property line, double iron gates secure the entrance area; at the opposite side, new aluminum doorways lead into the vestibule and lobby.

The stone-faced arca directly above the arcade is adorned with two rosette reliefs, one between either pair of arches. Above the arches there is a double-height set of three pairs of new windows, one pair over each arch. Their sills and spandrels, also stone-faced, are adorned with reliefs of abstract floral patterns typical of the Art Deco design popular during the period. To the left and right of the central entrance-way, the façade is occupied by three stories set in metal frames, and incorporating rows of decorative metal spandrels, with abstract floral patterns, separating the first story from the second-story windows, and the second-story windows from those of

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the third story. The ground floor to the west has been obscured with a series of roll-down gates; the area to the east is less altered.

The building's brick-faced upper stories, starting at the fourth floor, are organized into a series of vertical window bays; individual bays are separated from each other by narrow brick piers rising uninterrupted to the nearest setback; groups of such bays are further organized by wider vertical brick piers. A decorative brick area just below the setback but above the nearest window accents each setback; the area is adorned with three vertical rectangles of a darker brick, set in geometric patterns, and topped by a cast-stone molding with an abstract decorative pattern. At each setback, the narrow brick columns separating the window bays rise to a simple, decorative stone cap; the wider brick columns rise to more elaborate stone caps. The window bays in the tower are organized differently: windows and spandrels are deeply recessed, and the window bays rise to narrow arched openings. Additional window bays adjoin the tower's lower two stories, and are set at angles against it.

At various places on the upper stories, stone panels with decorative patterns are set in the brick. Some panels are square, and adorned with an eight-pointed star superimposed over a diamond form, with abstract floral forms; others are rectangular, with carefully carved swags of fruit and floral forms; still others are circular forms set within decorative surrounds.

The rear façade of the building, currently visible because it faces onto an empty lot on West 37th Street, is plain, faced with unadorned brick.

Interior

The lobby has been divided in two, creating a residential lobby on the west and a commercial lobby on the east. The commercial lobby, reached through a small, similarly designed vestibule, has new wood paneling and aluminum doors, but preserves its original plaster ceiling with a simple pattern of recesses. The residential lobby is similar, but includes a new set of wooden multi-light doors.

The building's upper floors, originally organized as large, open spaces for lofts and showrooms, have been subdivided, with new partitions, for apartments and offices. Typical spaces on these floors have simple, utilitarian ceilings with beams running across them, and concrete floors.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance:

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Commerce

Period of Significance:

1926

Significant Dates:

1926

Significant Person:

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect/Builder:

Blum, George M. and Edward

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all boxes that apply.)

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location
- C** a birthplace or grave
- D** a cemetery
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by historic American Building Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other repository: _____

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8. Statement of Significance

Overview

The building at 315-325 West 36th Street, Manhattan, is a sixteen-story loft, office and showroom building in the heart of New York City's garment district. Designed by the architectural firm of George and Edward Blum, it was built in 1926 for the Herogel Construction Company, whose principles, Paul Herring, Isaac Geller and Max Rosenfeld, were major builders and operators of garment district buildings. The Art Deco-inspired building meets Criterion C as an intact, representative example of garment loft design. It is distinguished by the unusual decorative detail for which its architects, Blum and Blum, became known. The building also meets Criterion A for its association with the garment district's commercial history. The garment district, generally bounded by West 30th and West 42nd streets between Sixth and Ninth avenues, is visually one of New York's most cohesive areas, with a strong sense of place and a visual character that sets it apart from other areas of the city. Historically, the district was created by major forces in the city's development: the 20th century growth of the garment industry into a major engine of the economy of New York and the nation; the entry into that industry of large numbers of immigrants, especially though not exclusively Eastern European Jews; the reform movements that pushed the garment industry out of the immigrants' cramped and unhealthy apartments in Lower East Side tenements and into buildings specifically designed to accommodate the industry's workshops and showrooms; and the campaign by the Fifth Avenue Association to keep the garment industry away from fashionable Fifth Avenue. Architecturally, the district's appearance results from the long, narrow blocks, west of Sixth Avenue, created by the 1811 Commissioner's Plan, and the set-backs produced by the requirements of New York's zoning resolution of 1916, which, together, created the striking cityscape of cliff-like buildings rising above narrow canyons that makes the garment district one of 20th century New York's most characteristic urban environments.

Note: While a comprehensive survey of the garment district has not been undertaken, preliminary fieldwork and research indicate the potential for a National Register-eligible historic district. The loft building at 315-325 West 36th Street meets the National Register criteria as an individual listing as proposed and would also be a contributing building should a historic district be identified in the future.

Development of the Midtown Garment District¹

New York City's garment district (or garment center), located in the blocks between Fifth and Ninth Avenues, from West 30th to 41st streets, has been the heart of the city's, and also the nation's, garment industry since the years immediately following World War I. The garment district has played a key role in the city's economy, and been a major focus for the social, labor and union history of both the city and the nation.

¹ Much of the information that follows is based on the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission's designation report for the Brown Building (originally the Asch Building), LP-2128, prepared by Gale Harris of the Commission's Research Department. The Asch Building was the site of the infamous Triangle fire.

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Built up in just two decades – 1916 to 1935 – the garment district was shaped less by architects than by general urban forces: national markets, transportation routes, reform movements, the economics of density and commercial concentration, the set-back requirements of New York City's 1916 zoning ordinance, and the long narrow blocks of the city's street grid laid out in the Commissioners' Plan of 1811. Side by side, dozens of tall buildings share standard profiles and setback heights, differentiated one from the next only by varying ornamental detail. The result is an urban landscape unlike that of any other commercial district in the city: a series of steep, narrow canyons, and asphalt, brick and concrete vistas.

The New York garment industry² grew up in the last two decades of the 19th century and into the first decades of the 20th thanks to the confluence of several factors, including technological innovations, beginning in 1880, that made possible the large-scale manufacture of ready-made clothing; the development of the department store where that clothing could be sold; and rapid population growth to supply a workforce. From 39,000 workers in 1889, the women's wear industry grew to more than 165,000 by 1919. Factors making New York City the main garment industry location included its role as a dry-goods distribution center – with warehouses and showrooms for mills, importers and manufacturers – and its prominence as a cultural and media center, with a pronounced fashion consciousness. And New York had a massive, newly arrived population of immigrants – especially but not exclusively Eastern European Jews – providing a cheap source of labor.

Early on, working conditions and abuses in what became known as sweatshops plagued the garment industry, inspiring various reforms. The New York State Factory Act of 1892 required a minimum of 250 cubic feet of air for each worker, while the 1901 Tenement House Act helped push garment production out of the cramped tenement quarters where many workers had done so-called "home work." Garment manufacturers began moving into loft buildings in NoHo, in the blocks north of Houston Street, and the newly developed shopping area of Ladies Mile in the blocks between 5th and 6th Avenues from 14th to 23rd streets. The high ceilings and large windows of the loft buildings greatly improved the light and air conditions for garment workers. These buildings also had electricity, making possible the transition to electric sewing machines and other equipment. Conditions were still unsafe, however, as exemplified in the tragic Triangle Fire of 1911. In the aftermath of that fire, increased union militancy led to collective agreements that included improved conditions. New laws set up strict requirements for fire escapes, exits, and fireproof partitions, fire alarms, and fire drills, as well as ventilation, lighting, and sanitation. New York City and State became national models for such reforms.³

² The following is summarized from Harris, "Brown Building," who cites the following sources: Roger D. Waldinger, *Through the Eye of the Needle: Immigrants and Enterprise in New York's Garment Trades* (New York: New York University Press, 1986), 50-54; Florence S. Richards, *The Ready-to-Wear Industry: 1900-1950* (New York: Fairchild Publications, 1951), 7-13; Nancy L. Green, "Sweatshop Migrations: The Garment Industry Between Home and Shop," in *The Landscape of Modernity: Essays on New York City 1900-1940*, eds. David Ward and Olivier Zunz (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1992), 213-215, 220-221; Stein, 159-162; Robert D. Parmet, "Garments," *Encyclopedia of New York City*, ed. Kenneth T. Jackson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995); Elizabeth Ewen, *Immigrant Women in the Land of Dollars: Life and Culture on the Lower East Side, 1890-1925* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1985), 242-248; Frances B. Jensen, *The Triangle Fire and the Limits of Progressivism*, (Ph. D. diss., Univ. of Mass., Amherst, 1996), (UMI, 9638974), 14-37.

³ Information on legislative reforms is summarized from Harris, who cites: Jensen, 186-228; US Dept. of

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After the end of World War I, Manhattan commercial loft districts expanded northward, following the city's major department stores – which had moved up along Fifth Avenue north of 23rd Street precisely to avoid proximity to the lofts that had invaded the shopping precinct of Ladies Mile. The blocks closer to 34th Street also offered proximity to the new Pennsylvania Station, completed in 1910, which attracted large hotels catering to out-of-town buyers, and proximity also to the major department stores around Herald Square at Sixth Avenue, including Macy's, Gimbel's and Saks.

The buildings of what would become the garment district were built to the new specifications. But their location, not far from the elegant residential and shopping district of Fifth Avenue, caused a negative reaction, and became a major cause for the newly formed Fifth Avenue Association. According to its own publication, the Association's original

. . . main purpose was to oppose the wrong kind of commercialism and to safeguard the standards which are the heritage of Fifth Avenue The first menace it was called upon to remove was the invasion of the garment industries, in 1911, into manufacturing loft buildings, where sweatshops were hatched The disastrous Asch Building fire [the Triangle fire], on the outskirts of lower Fifth Avenue, in 1911, presented the first opportunity to start a reform along legislative lines. In working for the State Factory Investigating Commission, the Association stood upon the sound reasoning that any restriction which would tend to keep factories out of Fifth Avenue would not only conserve property values, but would tend also to conserve the health of the workers by having them employed under better conditions. The proposal was favorably acted upon and legislation was enacted restricting factories and factory structures, making it impossible in some cases for manufacturing establishments to exist in Fifth Avenue."⁴

The Association's efforts contributed to the City's zoning resolution adopted in 1916. Those efforts effectively pushed the new garment district westward, to its current location.

The physical characteristics of the new district grew out of two major pieces of city planning, separated by a century: the Commissioners' Plan of 1811, which laid out the Manhattan grid, and the 1916 Zoning Resolution. On the east side of Manhattan, the long blocks between avenues were shortened by the insertion of Lexington Avenue between Third and Fourth (later Park) avenues, and of Madison Avenue between Fourth and Fifth. On the west side, the only intermediate avenue was Broadway, running between Fifth and Sixth avenues from 23rd to 34th streets, and between Sixth and Seventh avenues from 34th to 42nd Streets. Otherwise, the west side street blocks were very long, and very narrow.

The primary effect of the zoning resolution on the building bulk along those blocks was to introduce the "zoning envelope." The resolution, through various formulas, required setbacks at various height levels, generally

Labor, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy, History, 7, "The New York Factory Investigating Commission," www.dol.gov/asp/programs/history; New York State Archives, Research Room, Business and Labor Record, Working Lives, "A History of the Factory Investigating Commission," www.Archives.nysed.gov/a/researchroom/IT.

⁴ Henry Collins Brown, *Fifth Avenue Old and New 1824-1924*; official publication of *The Fifth Avenue Association*, New York: Fifth Avenue Association, 1924, p.111.

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forcing building silhouettes to be stepped back following a diagonal from the middle of the street, until the area of the building mass in the highest floors equaled no more than 25% of the area of the entire lot. The law was in effect from 1916 until 1961, and it resulted in the construction of hundreds of buildings in the so-called "wedding cake" configuration, gradually stepping up and back from the city's sidewalks. Because the new garment district developed largely after 1916, the entire district, more than most in Manhattan, was affected by the resolution. The new set-back buildings, rising anywhere from 10 to 25 stories, came to dominate the garment district's long, narrow blocks, creating its unmistakable visual character.⁵ This was the environment in which the Herogel Construction Company erected 315-325 West 36th Street, as a speculative loft building for the garment industry.

The Herogel Construction Company

The three developers involved in the building of 315-325 West 36th Street – Max Roscnfeld, Paul Herring and Isadore B. Geller – were all Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe who made their way in New York City in the construction industry. Rosenfeld (c.1885-1943) – generally described as the senior partner – was born in Rovna, in Russia, and immigrated to the United States in 1903.⁶ Herring (c.1872-1933) was born in Nimokst, Lithuania, and immigrated to the United States in the late 1880s.⁷ Few details are available about Geller (c.1892-1966), other than that he outlived his partners and retired about 1950. Their lives appear to be typical of those of many developers active in the garment district, while their ethnic and immigrant background was shared by many of the owners and employees of garment district companies.

Separately and together, all three were active in real estate and construction in the 1920s, especially in the garment district but also on the Upper West Side as well as other sections of the city including the Upper East Side, Harlem and parts of Brooklyn. Depending on the building, their firms were called "Herogel" (Herring, Rosenfeld and Geller), "Hero" (Herring and Rosenfeld), "Roher" (Rosenfeld and Herring) and "Rohegal" (Rosenfeld, Herring and Geller), among other names. In his New York Times obituary, Rosenfeld was described both as a "leader in the development of the Central Park West district," and as helping to "develop the garment district, where in one year, 1928, his firm started to build six twenty-five story buildings." Herring, in his *New York Times* obituary, was described as taking "a prominent part in the building up of the Central Park West section and the garment center in Manhattan." The trio's garment district buildings included a 12-story loft building at the north-west corner of Fourth Avenue and East 30th Street⁸, a 25-story showroom and loft building at the 494 Eighth Avenue,⁹ and a 16-story loft building at 306-308 West 38th Street¹⁰, as well as a loft

⁵ For a discussion of this phenomenon see Carol Willis, "A 3-D CBD: Or, How the 1916 Zoning Law Shaped Manhattan's Business Districts," in *Planning and Zoning: New York City Yesterday Today and Tomorrow*, New York: The New York City Department of City Planning, the City Planning Commission, and the New York Metropolitan Chapter of the American Planning Association, January 30, 1992, pp. 1 ff.

⁶ "M. Rosenfeld dead; realty operator," *New York Times*, obituary, July 18, 1943, p.35.

⁷ "Paul Herring Dies; Real Estate Man," *New York Times*, obituary, March 14, 1933, p.22.

⁸ "January Set Record for Midwinter Projects," *New York Times*, February 6, 1926, p.26.

⁹ "25-story Building on Eighth Avenue," *New York Times*, April 13, 1927, p. 43.

¹⁰ "Flat is Financed by \$475,000 Loan," *New York Times*, July 14, 1927 p.39.

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building at 261-265 West Thirty-fifth Street¹¹. They also bought, sold and operated many other buildings in what the Times called "their extensive Garment Centre [sic] holdings."¹² In their private lives, both Rosenfeld and Herring were active in Jewish charitable and educational organizations.

Architects George and Edward Blum

George M. and Edward Blum, brothers born into a French-Jewish family that immigrated to New York City, built an architectural practice that flourished in the 'teens and 'twenties of the last century.¹³ George (1870-1928) was born in New York, and in 1904 studied at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. Edward (1876-1944), born in a Parisian suburb, studied at Columbia University (BS in architecture 1899), and also at the Ecole des Beaux Arts (1901). The firm of George and Edward Blum first appeared in New York City directories in 1909. During the next 20 years, the Blums designed more than 120 New York City apartment buildings, and a number of loft buildings for the garment industry.

Though the Blums were just two of the many American architects who studied at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts at the turn of the last century, their family connections to French life apparently led them to a different experience of contemporary French architecture. While other American architects returned to the United States with a standard Ecole repertoire, the Blums brought back knowledge of the most up-to-the-minute trends in Parisian architecture, including an emphasis on brick facades with handcrafted ornamental details, and a new interest in avant-garde architectural design in Glasgow and Vienna. Parisian buildings demonstrating these trends used brick laid in elaborate ornamental patterns, interspersed with abstract ornamental detail in terra-cotta, tile or glass mosaic. The Blums' apartment houses brought this approach to New York City, particularly in their work during the 'teens. In the mid- to late-1920s, their facades tended to be clad in clinker (deliberately irregular) brick with ornament in terra-cotta, iron and fieldstone.

The Blums' known buildings in the garment district all date from 1925 to 1929.¹⁴ Their garment district buildings tended to be more modest in design than their apartment houses, with a handful of exceptions including 236-238 West 30th Street, 257-261 West 38th Street, and 51-57 West 39th Street. Of them all, No. 315-325 West 36th Street ranks as one of the most ornamentally unusual and carefully designed, making use of the same unusual approach to design as the Blums' better known apartment houses.

¹¹ "West 36th St. Site Resold by Winter," *New York Times*, December 18, 1926, p.32.

¹² "West 36th St. Site Resold by Winter," *New York Times*, December 18, 1926, p.32.

¹³ The following account of the Blums is based on Andrew S. Dolkart and Susan Tunick, *George & Edward Blum: Texture and Design in New York Apartment House Architecture* (New York: The Friends of Terra Cotta Press, 1993). The book focuses almost exclusively on the Blums' residential work, but also includes a list of the firm's known commercial buildings.

¹⁴ The list of the Blums' commercial buildings in Dolkart and Tunick includes the following: 1925: 144 W. 30th Street, 236-238 W.30th Street, 49-57 W.37th Street. 1925-27: 51-57 W.39th Street, 519 Eighth Avenue, 1412 Broadway. 1926: 234 W.30th Street, 315-325 W.36th Street. 1926-27: 247-249 W.30th Street, 251-255 W.30th Street, 257-261 W. 38th Street, 545 Eighth Ave. 1927-28: 227-229 W.29th Street, 347-351 W.36th Street. 1928-29: 42-46 W.48th Street.

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No. 315-325 West 36th Street

While the original garment district centered on Seventh Avenue, No. 315-325 West 36th Street was built in a newer section just west of Eighth Avenue. As described in the *New York Times*, "Although the building actually on Eighth Avenue north of Thirty-fourth Street started barely four years ago, that thoroughfare immediately south of Fortieth Street closely resembles Seventh Avenue in the high character of its modern buildings devoted to kindred garment trades."¹⁵

Newspaper notices about plans for the building appeared in the *New York Times* as early as February of 1925; it was to replace four five-story flats on the site.¹⁶ Max Rosenfeld was named as the purchaser; later articles also named Paul Herring as a co-owner. In February of the following year, the Herogel Construction Company applied to the New York City Buildings Department to build a 16-story fireproof building to house "stores, offices, showrooms and manufacturing."¹⁷ Paul Herring and Isadore B. Geller were named in the application as officers of the Herogel Construction Corporation. The building's cost was estimated at \$1,200,000. Construction began on March 11th of the same year, and was completed on December 29th.

George and Edward Blum's design for 315-325 West 36th Street is one of their most ornamental for a garment district building, and makes this building one of the most architecturally distinguished erected by Rosenfeld, Herring and Geller. Most of the Blums' fourteen known garment district buildings are fairly modest in design; only a handful¹⁸ reflect the interest in decorative detail for which the Blums' apartment houses are known.

For the West 36th Street building, rather than simply following the requirements of the zoning envelope, the Blums created a more interesting profile by varying the building's setbacks to create a pavilion-like arrangement, with three outer bays of windows on either side framing the building's central portion. The three-story entrance area is adorned with wide sections of decorative metal spandrels with abstract floral patterns. In the area directly above the arched entry the Blums included Art Deco style stone reliefs – including both the sills and spandrels of the upper windows, and stone rosettes above the arches. The Blums' more typical ornament appears in the upper stories: geometric patterns in light and dark brick at every setback, topped by an abstract cast-stone molding; decorative stone panels with an eight-pointed star superimposed over a diamond form, with abstract floral forms; rectangular stone panels with carefully carved swags of fruit and floral forms; and other panels with circular forms set within decorative surrounds. The resulting design makes 315-325 West 36th Street one of the most architecturally distinctive loft buildings in the garment district.

No. 315-325 West 36th Street became a successful garment district building almost immediately on its completion. By December 1926, the building was reported 95% rented¹⁹, and by October 1927 it was 100%

¹⁵ "New Garment Area Rapidly Expanding," *New York Times*, April 17, 1927, p. F18.

¹⁶ "Building Operations," *New York Times*, February 7, 1925, p.28.

¹⁷ New York City Buildings Department, Docket Books, New Building Application Number 65 of 1926.

¹⁸ Besides 315-325 West 36th Street, these are: 236-238 West 30th Street, 257-261 West 38th Street, and 51-57 West 39th Street.

¹⁹ "West 36th St. Site Rcsold by Winter," *New York Times*, December 18, 1926, p.32.

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rented.²⁰ The Manhattan Address Telephone Directory of Summer 1929²¹ listed approximately 100 tenants, almost all in the garment industry. These included 42 companies identified as manufacturers of ladies' dresses²²; 20 companies identified as manufacturers of cloaks, coats and suits²³; nine companies identified as providing hem stitching, tucking and pleating²⁴; three fur companies²⁵; two embroidery companies²⁶; two thread and trimmings companies²⁷; one button company²⁸; and five general garment companies²⁹. The handful of non-

²⁰ "Deal in West 36th Street," *New York Times*, October 15, 1927, p.32.

²¹ This is a reverse directory, listing all the tenants at various Manhattan addresses; the 1929 volume is the earliest such directory available at the New York Public Library at Fifth Avenue and 42nd Street.

²² Adelman & Levine; Albert J; The Beacon Dress Co; Bernstein Henry; C C L Dress Co; C & M Dress Co; Charleston Dress & Costume Co; Deco Dress Co; De Rosa Dress Co; Dickes Benj; Edelstein Henry; Em-N-Em Dress Co; Fischbein Michael; Fleishbank & Kaplan; Goldstein Henry; Harris, Mary; Harris & Savelli; Her Kay Dress Co Inc; Herscher Saml; Herzig & Greenwald Inc.; Hoffman Louis; Irwin Dress Co; Kittmir Dress Co; Kleinberg & Hanig; Lee-Rae Dress Co Inc; Lentz Herman; Leon Dress Co; Ma Belle Dress Co; Marks Abraham; Michaelson J; N C Four Dress Co; Premier Dress Co; Rappoport & Lustberg; Royalty Dress Co; Shaffer R I Inc; Stahl Samuel; Valerio John; Vozi J; Waldman Jack; Walgee Dress Co; Weissberger Sam; Wollowitz & Friedman.

²³ Arrow Cloak Co; Becker Phil Coats & Wraps Inc; Cloth Joseph & Matte Inc; Dannenberg & Siegel Inc; Dickman Abe; Fahrer & Eidenberg; Famous Cloak Mfg Co; Fiedelbaum Louis; Flavia Cloak & Suit Co Inc; Fox Saml; Goodman & Sanders; Hoover Cloak & Suit Co Inc; Horowitz & Levine; Kahn Philip; Leon & Nicholson; Philrose Cloak Co; Preferred Cloak Co Inc; Rosenthal Philip; Rosenthal Sidney; Schneider Bros.

²⁴ Berkowitz, H.; Botwin A & Co; D & D Tucking & Hemstitching Co Inc; Eahnrich A; Fair Tucking Co Inc; Hygrade Tucking & Stitching Co; LaRose Hemstitching & Pleating Co Inc; Rite Hemstitching Co; Standard Pleating & Stitching Co.

²⁵ Furkiotis, John; Roll & Yudkin; Theoharous Bros.

²⁶ Chrysler Embroidery Inc; Citron Jacob.

²⁷ Gershon & Schreiber; Kaplan Myer.

²⁸ Expert Button Co.

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Section 8 Page 8

Building at 315-325 West 36th Street

Name of Property

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garment industry companies renting space in the building provided services and products including “artistic metal novelty casting,” costumes, advertising and life insurance.

Today, 315-325 West 36th Street has undergone a conversion for mixed-use, with residential lofts in the tower floors and offices below. As a typical, garment district set-back loft building, with an atypically handsome design provided by architects George and Edward Blum, it both helps define the district’s character, and stands out from it as a fine, individual example of commercial

²⁹ M.G. Garment Co Inc; Neilinger S & Co (cotton goods); Preston Mills (silks, velvets); Senco Mills (cotton goods); SinLake Garment Mfg Co.

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Building at 315-325 West 36th Street
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Building at 315-325 West 36th Street

Name of Property

New York County, New York

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Building at 315-325 West 36th Street
Name of Property

New York County, New York
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10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>5</u> <u>8</u> <u>4</u> <u>9</u> <u>1</u> <u>4</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>1</u> <u>1</u> <u>7</u> <u>3</u> <u>4</u>	3	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>		
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>			4	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>		

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By (**For author see continuation sheet)

name/title Contact: Kathleen A. Howe, Historic Preservation Specialist
Field Services Bureau
organization NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation date 12/15/03
street & number P.O. Box 189, Peebles Island telephone (518) 237-8643 ext. 3266
city or town Waterford state NY zip code 12188-0189

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner (Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name David I. Berley, Managing Member, 36LLC, c/o Walter & Samuels, Inc.
street & number 419 Park Avenue South, 15th Floor telephone _____
city or town New York state NY zip code 10016

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20503

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Section 10 Page 1

Building at 315-325 West 36th Street
Name of Property
New York County, New York
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of this nomination is outlined on the attached Sanborn map.

Boundary Justification

The boundary of this nomination includes the entire parcel historically and currently associated with the building.

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Building at 315-325 West 35th Street

Name of Property

New York County, New York

County and State

Form prepared by:

Anthony Robins

Thompson & Columbus, Inc.

50 West 67th Street, Suite 1-F

New York, New York 10023

(212) 877-7637

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National Park Service

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Building at 315-325 West 35th Street

Name of Property

New York County, New York

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Section 11 Page 2

Photo List

315-325 West 36th Street

New York County, New York

Photos by: Anthony Robins

Date: October 2003

Negatives stored with Anthony Robins, 50 West 67th Street 1-F, New York, NY 10023

1. No. 315-325 West 36th Street in its streetscape, south elevation, looking northwest on West 36th Street.
2. Western half of the 36th Street façade, looking north.
3. Upper stories of the western half of the 36th Street façade, showing setbacks; looking north.
4. Tower, south and east elevations, looking up from 12th story balcony.
5. Rear (north) façade, currently visible because it backs onto an empty lot on West 37th Street; looking south.
6. First three stories, western side of south façade, looking north.
7. Detail, decorative metal spandrel at second story, western side of south façade, looking north.
8. Triple arcade entrance, center of south façade, looking north.
9. Second and third story windows, directly above entrance arcade, south façade, looking north.
10. Detail of spandrel ornament, between second and third story windows above entrance arcade, looking north.
11. Entrance to commercial lobby, in easternmost arch of the triple entrance arcade, south façade, looking north.
12. Detail, light fixture, hanging from ceiling of entrance to commercial lobby, looking north
13. Setback at 12th story, south façade, showing stone and brick ornamental detail, looking west
14. Ornamental details at 13th story, looking east
15. Ornamental details at 13th story, looking east: swag
16. Commercial lobby (entered through easternmost arch in the triple entrance arcade), looking south at the entrance.
17. Commercial lobby, ceiling.
18. Residential lobby, looking south to entrance (currently closed off).
19. Typical subdivided loft floor, 12th story, looking east.

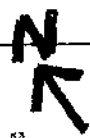
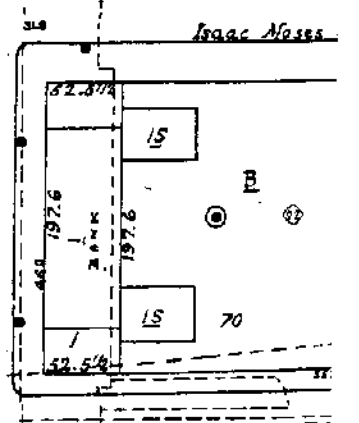
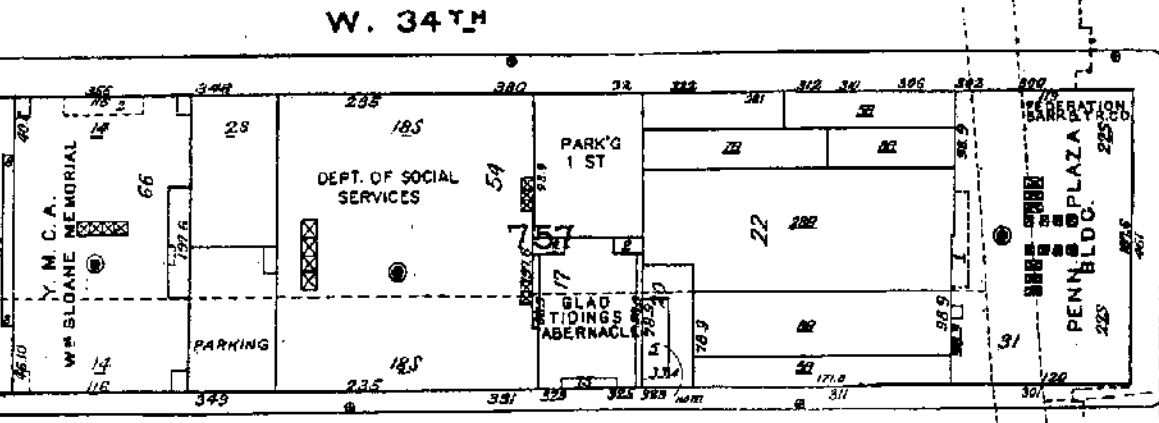
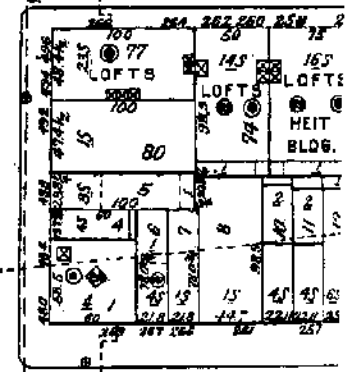
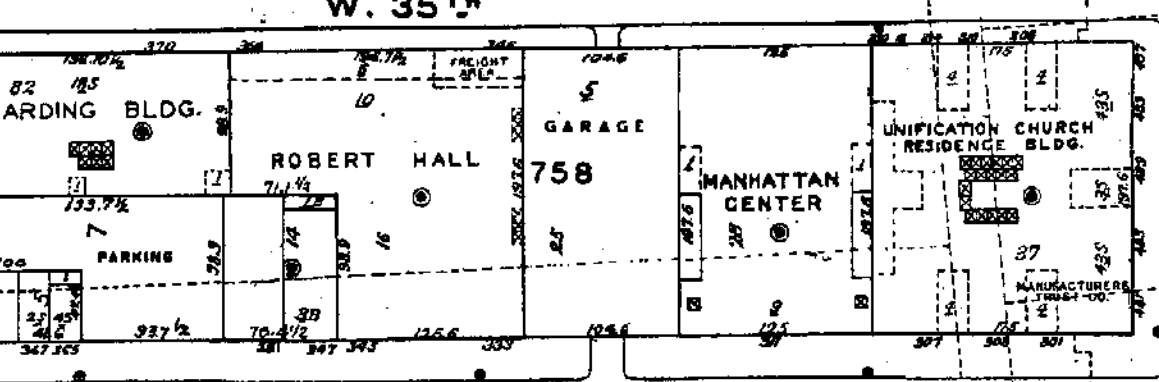
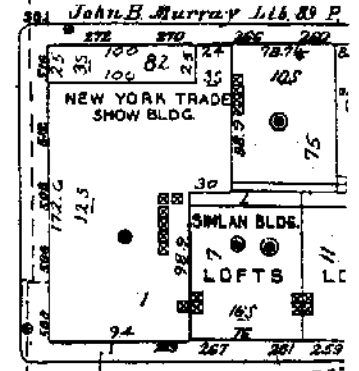
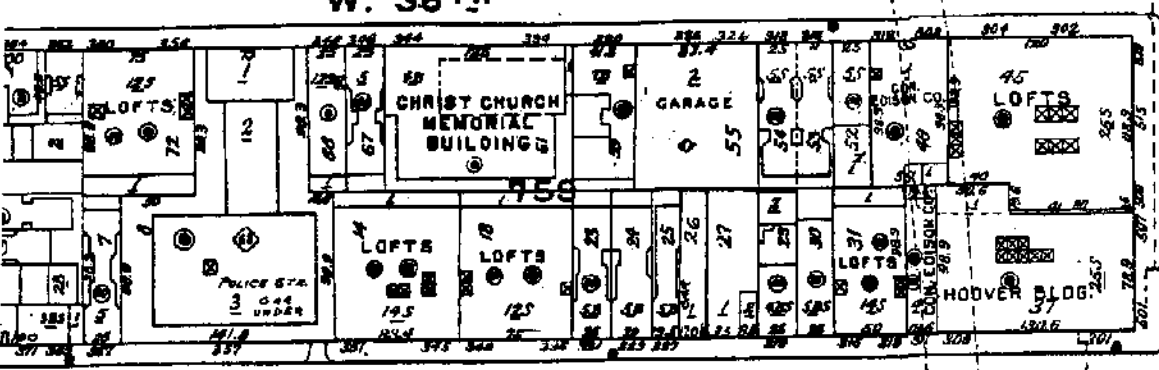
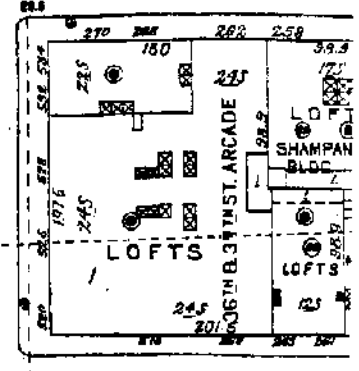
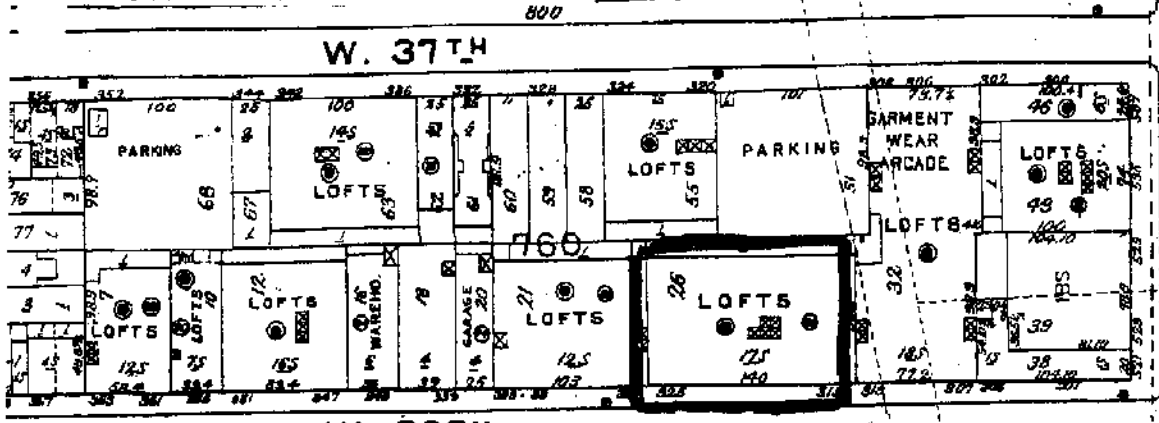
315-325 West 36th Street, Manhattan
 New York County, NY
 Manhattan Land Book, City of NY
 First American Real Estate Solutions
 2003, Edition 23

Scale 1" = approx 125'

Mary O. Lynch
 Lib. 206 P.158

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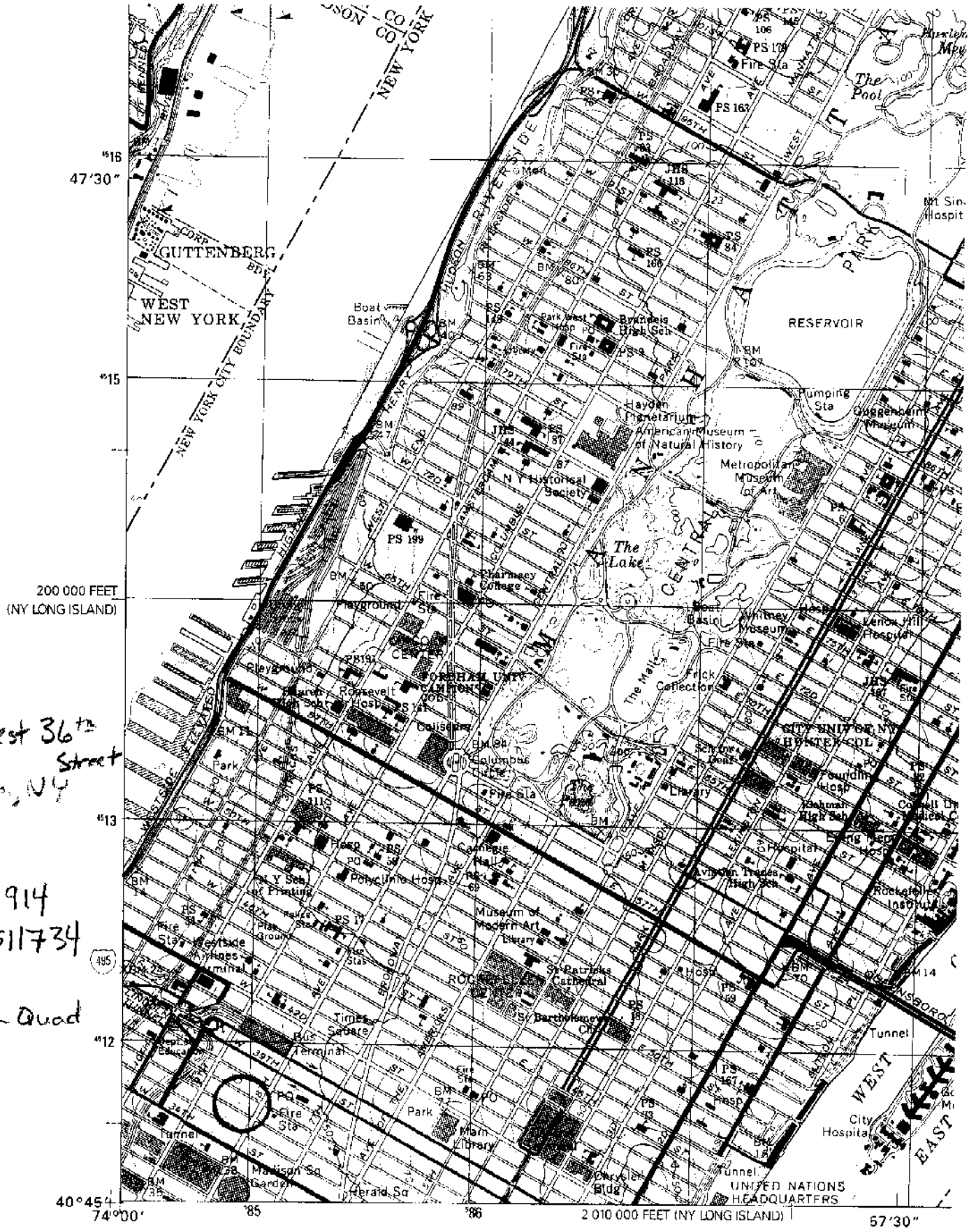
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EIGHTH

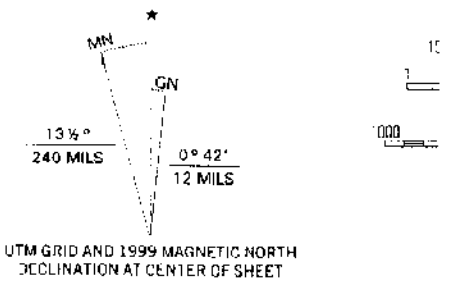
Samuel Oswood

Building at
 315-325 West 36th
 Street
 New York City, NY
 Zone 18
 Easting: 584914
 Northing: 4511734
 1:24000
 Central Park Quad



Produced by the United States Geological Survey
 Topography compiled 1966. Planimetry derived from imagery taken 1977 and other sources. Photoinspected using imagery dated 1995; no major culture or drainage changes observed. Survey control current as of 1966. Boundaries, other than corporate, revised 1999
 Selected hydrographic data compiled from NOS charts 226, 274, 745, 746, and 747 (1966). This information is not intended for navigational purposes

North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27)
 Projection: New York coordinate system, Long Island zone (transverse Mercator)
 10 000-foot ticks: New York coordinate system, Long Island zone and New Jersey coordinate system
 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 18
 North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 27 and NAD 83



UTM GRID AND 1999 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET



















