

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

<b>FOR NPS USE ONLY</b>	
RECEIVED	DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

New York Chamber of Commerce Building

AND/OR COMMON

New York Chamber of Commerce and Industry Building

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

65 Liberty Street

\_\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

New York

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

17th

STATE

New York 10005

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

CODE

36

COUNTY

CODE

061

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

- \_\_\_ DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- \_\_\_ STRUCTURE
- \_\_\_ SITE
- \_\_\_ OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

- \_\_\_ PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- \_\_\_ BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- \_\_\_ IN PROCESS
- \_\_\_ BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

- OCCUPIED
- \_\_\_ UNOCCUPIED
- \_\_\_ WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- \_\_\_ YES: UNRESTRICTED
- \_\_\_ NO

**PRESENT USE**

- \_\_\_ AGRICULTURE
- \_\_\_ MUSEUM
- \_\_\_ COMMERCIAL
- \_\_\_ PARK
- \_\_\_ EDUCATIONAL
- \_\_\_ PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- \_\_\_ ENTERTAINMENT
- \_\_\_ RELIGIOUS
- \_\_\_ GOVERNMENT
- \_\_\_ SCIENTIFIC
- \_\_\_ INDUSTRIAL
- \_\_\_ TRANSPORTATION
- \_\_\_ MILITARY
- OTHER: Chamber of Commerce

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Chamber of Commerce of New York

STREET & NUMBER

65 Liberty Street

CITY, TOWN

New York

STATE

New York 10005

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

New York County Hall of Records

STREET & NUMBER

31 Chambers Street

CITY, TOWN

New York

STATE

New York 10007

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

New York City Landmarks Commission

DATE

January 1965

\_\_\_ FEDERAL \_\_\_ STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

305 Broadway

CITY, TOWN

New York

STATE

New York

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Chamber of Commerce rises four and one half stories and is square in plan with masonry bearing walls. The principle facade is four bays wide, the first story heavily rusticated and containing two entrances--the center door leading directly into the main hall and a more elaborately carved door, projecting slightly on the west end leading into a side entrance and the club spaces above. The material is ashlar Vermont marble, which is dressed on the second and third levels. The asymmetrical facade above the ground level is divided by six giant order Roman fluted columns, two stories in height, on bases and capped by Ionic capitals. The columns were centered to frame sculpture, two in the center and paired at each end. The capitals have the usual Ionic scrolls with swags replacing the traditional acanthus leaves. The third floor is defined by four large bulls-eye windows, elaborately carved with swags above and wreaths below based on a running frieze of modified brackets. At the third story there is a full entablature carried on modillions with a row of dentils below. The copper roof is a steeply-pitched convex mansard decorated with elaborate ornament and punctured by closely-set dormers, three on each facade. The dormers also have rich hoods and side volutes.

The interior first floor contains the Great Hall which measures 60 feet by 90 feet and was patterned after the Guild Halls of London. The wall are hung with 284 portraits of prominent Americans. Included are works by Copley, Trumbull, Stuart, Vanderlyn, the Peale family, Durand and Johnson.

On the second level are a series of meeting rooms and the Commerce Club. There is a full basement below the entire building.

The Chamber of Commerce of the State of New York exemplifies the solidity and power of this organization in the city and in the Nation.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

1901-1902

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

James B. Baker (1854-1918)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The first organization in America for the promotion of trade and commerce was organized in 1768 in Fraunces Tavern and chartered by King George III in 1770. The present Chamber of Commerce building in the French Renaissance style was completed in 1902 and dedicated by President Theodore Roosevelt. This lavish marble structure housed the foremost commercial membership in America and was completed at a cost of \$1,500,000. Although dwarfed today by surrounding skyscrapers, the building retains its rich marble detail on the exterior and still houses a magnificent collection of American portraits.

The history of the New York Chamber of Commerce is described as follows:

"On the 5th of April 1768, twenty New York merchants met together at the tavern kept by Bolton and Sigell (later Fraunces Tavern) (which is still on the southeast corner of Broad and Pearl Streets, and the same at which, on December 4th, 1783, WASHINGTON took farewell leave of his officers,) and organized the New York Chamber of Commerce.

In 1769, its meetings were held in a building called "The Exchange," at the lower end of Broad Street. In 1779, removal was made to "The Merchants' Coffee House," on the southeast corner of Wall and Water Streets. There it remained till 1817, when another move was made to the "Tontine Coffee House," on the northwest corner of the same streets. In 1827, a still further change took place to the Merchants' Exchange, then occupying the site of the present Custom House, where it remained till that building was destroyed by fire in 1835. It then found shelter for many years in the Directors' room of the Merchants' Bank, No. 42 Wall Street, leaving it in 1858 for rooms in the building, No. 63 William Street, and, finally, in 1884, it moved into its present quarters.

Although the migrations of the Chamber were numerous its members seemed to have enjoyed what, in the early days of its history, was considered solid comfort. It is recorded that at all meetings, and until well into the present century, the Treasurer was obliged

(Continued)

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Craven, Wayne, Sculpture in America, Thomas Y. Crowell Co., New York, 1968.

132nd Anniversary of the Founding of the New York Chamber of Commerce, Chamber of Commerce Press, 1900.

Minutes of the New York Chamber of Commerce

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,8	5,8,3,6,2,0	4,5,0,6,7,0,0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

65 Liberty Street, Block 64, Lot 9: Bounded on the east by Liberty Place; on the south by Liberty Street; on the west by 67 Liberty Street (Lot 10); and on the north by Lot 26.

Building described from south-east corner as: west 83.5 feet, then north 96.11 feet, then east 84.6 feet, then south 91.3 feet.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Ms. Carolyn Pitts, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Historic Sites Survey Division, NPS

STREET & NUMBER

1100 L Street, NW.

CITY OR TOWN

Washington,

DATE

7/7/77

TELEPHONE

(202) 523-5464

STATE

D.C.

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL \_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_

LOCAL \_\_\_

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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National Register of Historic Places  
May 1972  
Washington, D.C.

Federal

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to provide bread and cheese, beer, punch, pipes and tobacco, the expense to be paid by the members present, "but not to exceed one shilling a piece," and in order to obtain a full attendance it was decreed "that members not attending the monthly meetings were to be fined two shillings each."

In later years several efforts have been made to provide a suitable building for the Chamber, but they all failed for the reason that while as an Association, remarkable as ours has always been for educating its members into a system of princely giving towards maintaining works of philanthropy and charity, in founding universities of learning and libraries, in cultivating the arts and sciences, and all else that pertains to the elevation, refinement and happiness of a great community, it failed completely to appreciate that phase of charity which the good old proverb describes as "beginning at home."<sup>1</sup>

Subscribers to the permanent building fund in 1900 included J. Pierpont Morgan, John D. Rockefeller, Cornelius Vanderbilt, Andrew Carnegie, the Guggenheims and William C. Whitney, they raised \$1,500,000.

Of the founding of the Chamber of Commerce itself, the minute books state:

"Founded in the eighth year of the Reign of King GEORGE the Third, while New York was still a British Colony, the history of the Chamber bridges over the long period between the first manifestations of the spirit of American Independence and the development of the United States into one of the greatest of commercial and industrial powers. The most remarkable of all the conquests of the Republic has been its conquest of foreign markets, and the Chamber has always stood as the exponent of the most intelligent opinion and progressive policy of the merchants of the great emporium of the foreign trade of the country...the patriotic spirit of the society's founders was disclosed unmistakably at their first meeting. They chose for their President John Cruger, the man who had drawn up in 1765, in the Stamp Act Congress of the Colonies assembled in New York City, the famous 'Declaration of Rights and Grievances of the Colonies in American,' which was sent to the British Parliament. When in the same year the stamps arrived and the Royalist Governor had declared his purpose to enforce the act, there was a popular uprising against their reception, during which an effigy of the Governor was burned in Bowling Green.

<sup>1</sup>132nd Anniversary of the Founding of the New York Chamber of Commerce  
1900 New York, pp. 18, 19

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

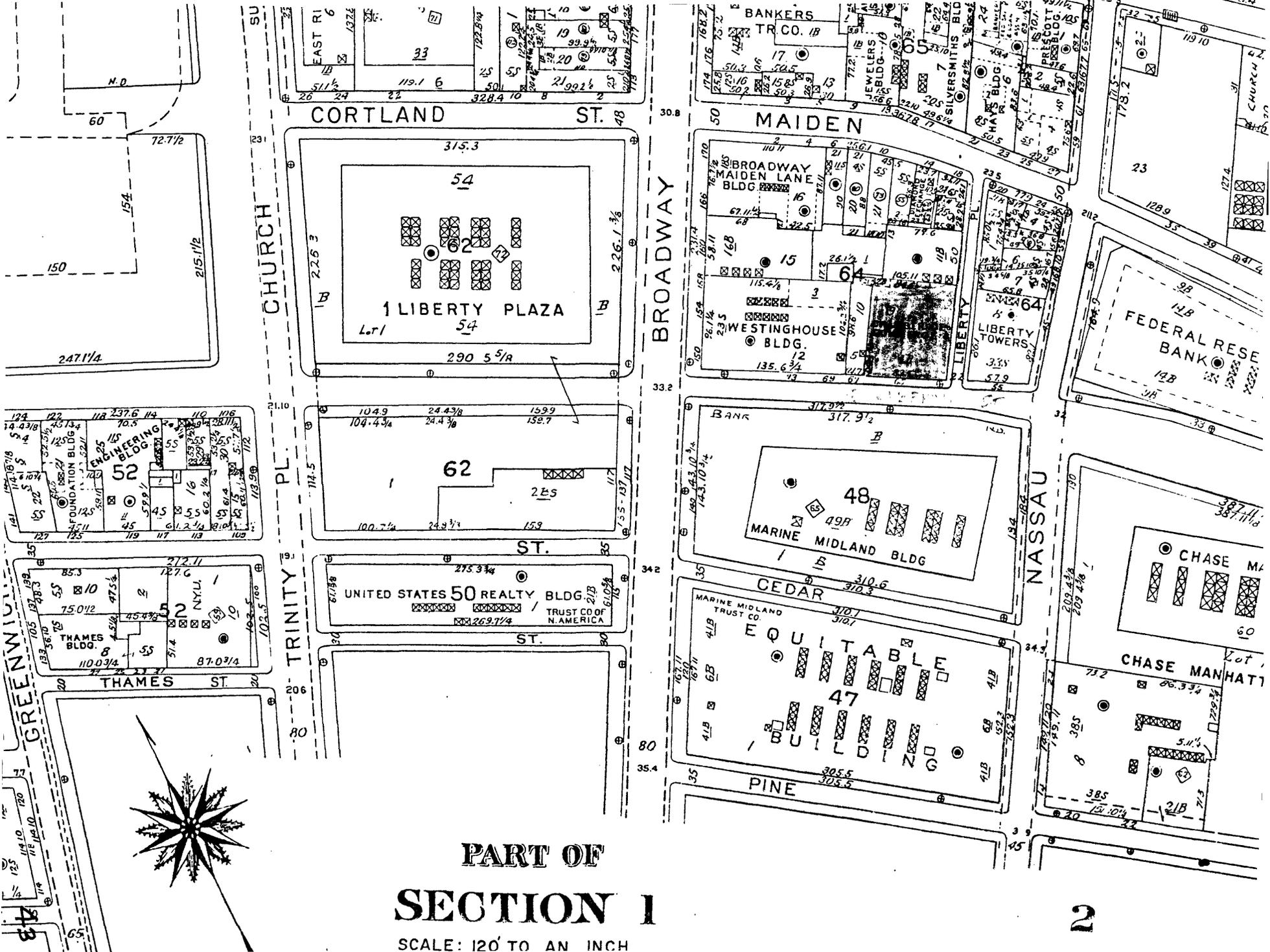
.....the members of the Chamber were in full sympathy with the patriotic views of their President was shown a year later, when he was re-elected. He was at the same time speaker of the last Colonial General Assembly ever gathered in the colony, and in the minutes of the session of the Chamber on May 2, 1769, it is recorded that 'Mr. President reported that he had it in charge to give the merchants of this city and colony the thanks of the House for their repeated, disinterested, public-spirited and patriotic conduct in declining the importation of goods from Great Britain until such Acts of Parliament as the General Assembly had declared unconstitutional and subversive of the rights and liberties of the people of this colony should be repealed.'

It was inevitable that the activities of a society founded at such a time, and by such men, though nominally for 'promoting and encouraging commerce,' should be extended to a field with far wider boundaries than the words imply. From the very beginning the Chamber took its place as an influence in national affairs whenever there appeared in those affairs issues affecting the national welfare and honor, and the successors of the founders have adhered to that interpretation of its functions down to the present day, not only in national but in state and municipal affairs as well. It is a noble tradition and nobly has it been maintained."<sup>2</sup>

The New York Chamber of Commerce was powerful far beyond the boundaries of New York City--they represented the commercial, financial and industrial history of the Nation.

The architect of the new building was James Barnes Baker (1854-1918). The structure has a mansard roof and columned facade that once framed three monumental sculptures of famous New York statesmen. An elaborate over-entrance carving symbolizing Commerce (two reclining figures represent Mercury and Ceres framing an elaborate escutcheon) are by Karl Bitter. The other three sculptures represented Dewitt Clinton by Daniel Chester French and Alexander Hamilton and John Jay by Philip Martiny. The two decorative groups by Martiny were particularly well suited to the decorative French-Renaissance facade. In 1926, the sculpture was removed and placed in storage because the marble had begun to weather badly.

<sup>2</sup>Special Meeting Minutes, Chamber of Commerce of New York, April 1918  
pp. 5-7



PART OF  
**SECTION I**

SCALE: 120' TO AN INCH