

206 Bowery House

206 Bowery, Manhattan

Built: c. 1825

Architect/Builder: Not Determined

Style: Federal

Significant Alterations: Ground floor storefront; signage covering much of facade; roof and dormers covered with roofing material; windows replaced

Previous Actions: None

The 206 Bowery House, a modest Federal style rowhouse in Lower Manhattan, was built c. 1825 and, until 1918, was a speculative investment associated with the family and heirs of the wealthy English-born leather merchant James Meinell. At the time of its construction, the lower Bowery was a fashionable address for New York's social elite and wealthy merchant class. Since its completion, however, this house has always had a commercial ground story, with the family of the commercial tenant originally residing upstairs. Beginning in the 1870s, the building has apparently been used solely for commercial (non-residential) purposes. Among the very wide variety of tenants and uses over the years have been: Walter Keeler, shoestore (1826-39); James Cooper, fancy goods, hosiery, threads, and needles (1839-53); Thomas Bruns, engraver (1853-60); William Wood, umbrellas and parasols (1853-74); Henry H. Pfalzgraf, cigars (1870-91); Philip and Rosalia Berg, millinery and fancy goods (1870-78); jewelers Sidonia Kampf (c. 1896-99) and Bernhard Hebold (1904-11); Tri-City Barber School (c. 1933-46); New York China Corp. (c. 1975-88); and J&D Restaurant Equipment Corp. (c. 1993-2010). The 206 Bowery House is significant as a rare surviving house from the period of the lower Bowery's history as an elite neighborhood in the post-Revolutionary War era, the others being the Edward Mooney House (c. 1785-89) at No. 18 and Hardenbrook-Somarindyck House (c. 1817) at No. 135, and is among the relatively rare extant Manhattan houses of the Federal period and style. Despite alterations, it is characteristic of the Federal style in its Flemish bond brickwork (now painted) and high peaked roof with two pedimented dormers. In particular, it is made notable as a very rare surviving and significantly intact, Federal style Manhattan house of the very modest (only 16 feet, 8 inches wide), two-and-one-half-story, three-bay, double-dormered peaked-roof type that has always had a commercial ground story.

