

# 836 Broadway Building

836-38 Broadway  
72-74 East 13th Street, Manhattan  
Tax Map Block 564 Lot 39

**Built:** 1876

**Architect:** Stephen Decatur Hatch

**Style:** Second Empire/ Neo-Grec

**Action:** Proposed for Commission's Calendar September 25, 2018



**836 Broadway, 2018**  
Landmarks Preservation Commission



**836 Broadway, 1912, NYPL**

One of the earliest buildings still standing on this side of Broadway between East 12th and East 13th streets, this six-story cast-iron loft building is notable for its association with the large-scale commercial development of the area just south of Union Square during the decades following the Civil War. 836 Broadway was built in 1876 and its stately cast-iron facade features delicately incised and applied decoration, and shouldered window openings. The mansard roof, popular during the 1870s, carries curved and triangular pedimented dormer windows. The building, with an irregular footprint, extends to East 13th Street where there is a similar, although simpler, facade hierarchy and pattern of bays.

836 Broadway was designed by the prominent New York City architect Stephen D. Hatch (1839-1894), known for his elegant hotel, government, academic, and commercial buildings. He began his career as a draftsman in the office of John B. Snook, but by 1864 established his own firm. He became the architect of the United States War Department, responsible for the construction of military posts in New York State. In the City, he is better known as the architect of the 1871 Gilsey Hotel on East 29th Street, the 1880 Robbins and Appleton Building at 1 Bond Street, and as an early architect of the 1895 former New York Life Insurance Company Building, all New York City Landmarks. Like Snook, his designs reflected the post-Civil War city with Second Empire, Neo-grec, and Renaissance Revival details embellishing a broad range of building types.

The mid-block location was originally the home of James J. and Cornelia Roosevelt. A well-respected judge and United States Congressman, he was a great-uncle of Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. After he and his wife died in 1875 and 1876, respectively, the lot was developed by the estate with the construction of the existing building. It was then leased for showroom and office space to the Mitchell, Vance, & Co., manufacturers of light fixtures, clocks, and ornamental metal. The company's large foundry was nearby at 10th Avenue and West 24th Street in Chelsea. In 1889 the building was slightly enlarged with the addition of a private office in the rear. Just one year later in 1890, the building experienced a destructive fire, but was repaired according to its original design. By 1906, garment-related industries also occupied lofts in the building, sharing space with the original tenant. A few years later, garment factories located in this area along Broadway were picketed during the historic New York City shirtwaist strike of 1909-1910.

The Roosevelt Estate sold 836 Broadway to a cotton merchant in 1921 and the building continued to house both garment-related companies along with a Post Office and a variety of small businesses. Still a commercial and office building with a variety of tenants, 836 Broadway remains largely intact with minor alterations, consisting primarily of the infill of window openings at the ground floor.

