

recent amendment of the city's landmarks legislation to include interiors, there is slow motion on a bank or two, but as yet no Cunard or Woolworth lobby or Grand Central Concourse—those cathedral spaces of modern mercantile grandeur adorned with nearly lost arts.

These strange omissions are a gargantuan oversight. Even these buildings are not big enough for a timid Landmarks Commission to hide behind.

No Skyscraper Landmark

New York is not all bad news. Even as the Franklin Savings Bank prepares to demolish its fine stone palazzo in an act of real estate vandalism that diminishes an already tarnished neighborhood, the McGraw-Hill Building farther along West 42d Street will be saved.

That distinctive green giant—a major (but undesignated) landmark of New York's skyscraper age, designed by Raymond Hood in 1931, has stood empty since McGraw-Hill left it for a routine modern tower on the Avenue of the Americas. Thus a patron of the arts becomes a face in the crowd. The purchase of Hood's abandoned masterpiece by Group Health, Inc., which finds the building "ideal," continues its useful life and keeps it as a prized part of the New York scene.

At the same time, the spectacular Great Hall of the Cunard Building on Lower Broadway (also undesignated) will be taken over by the Postal Service so that this magnificently embellished interior can again serve a useful public purpose. It, too, has been closed. And its restoration to appropriate activity is an equal cause for pleasure. Both examples are outstanding acts of building recycling—an admirable way of using energy and an architectural heritage wisely and well.

Both episodes, however, point up the fact that the Landmarks Commission has failed to designate precisely those buildings that are not only New York's most real and famous landmarks but also some of the greatest urban landmarks of the 20th century—the skyscrapers that are synonymous with the city's life and style. Perusal of any official landmark publication yields no mention of the Woolworth Building, no Empire State Building, no Chrysler Building, no Rockefeller Center. The Singer Building has already been lost. With the