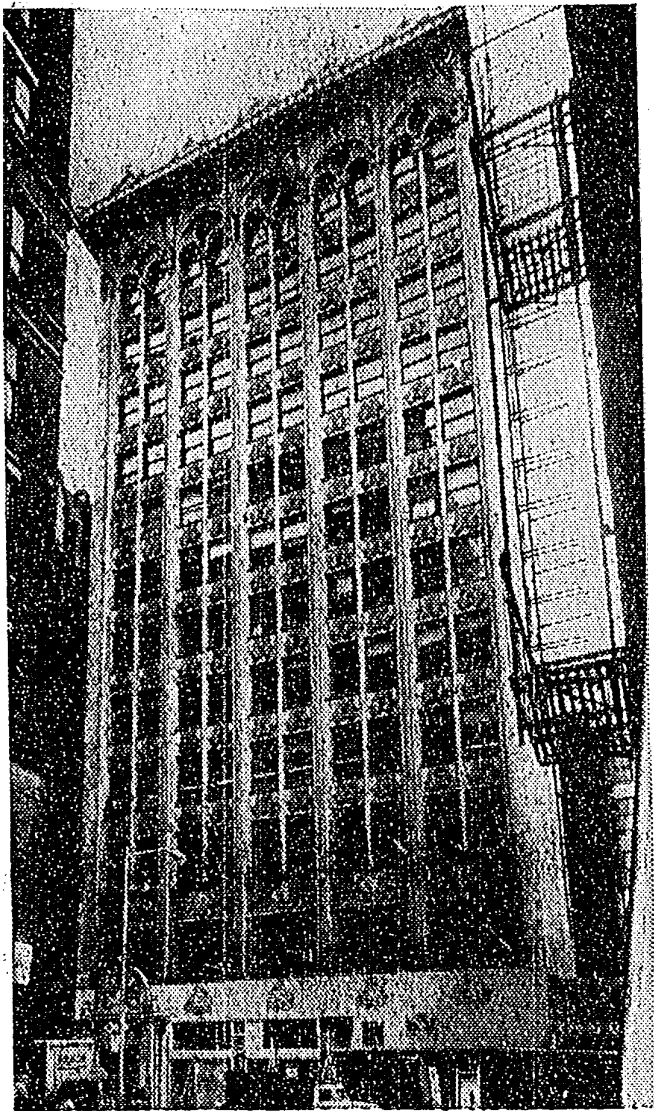


Noted Architectural Ornaments Will Go to Museum



Workmen removing an ornament from face of building at 65 Bleeker Street, the only building here designed by Louis Sullivan. Originally, the ornament was the capital of one of the supporting pillars. These were covered some years ago with blocks needed to protect surface from weathering. Now ground floor of structure is being remodeled.



The New York Times
In a general view of the building, a capital may be seen to right, below another row of ornaments. Building was erected in 1897-98. Brooklyn Museum will get capitals.

ARTS GROUP SAVES
BITS OF LANDMARK

Anonymous Unit Rescues
Capitals of Louis Sullivan
Building From Wrecker

MUSEUM TO GET PIECES

Ground Floor of 12-Story
Bleeker St. House Built
In '90's, Being Changed

By ADA LOUISE HUXTABLE

A New York landmark was the scene of a gallant salvage operation yesterday.

The only building in New York by Louis Sullivan, one of the great names in American architecture and the teacher of Frank Lloyd Wright, is having a partial face-lifting on its ground floor. An alert group devoted to preservation of architectural sculpture and ornament, the Anonymous Arts Recovery Society, appeared on the scene at 65 Bleeker Street yesterday morning to save the last of the building's ornate 66-year-old column capitals from the wrecker.

The society, under the leadership of Ivan Karp, is a kind of respectable architectural ambulance-chasing organization that collects the stone corpses of gods, giants, nymphs and satyrs and the discarded garlands and graces of the city's fine old structures that are knocked down. In this case, the carved capitals will be taken to the Brooklyn Museum.

A 'Top Priority' Building

Sullivan ornament is considered a particular prize. Collected by institutions like the Chicago Art Institute and Yale University, it is the Tiffany jewelry of architectural decoration. The Sullivan building, in the opinion of architectural experts and New York's Landmarks Preservation Commission, is one of the top priority landmarks on the city's rapidly diminishing list.

It stands on a shabby street just south of Washington Square Village in a section that has become a marginal commercial area. Its sparkle has been dimmed by at least 50 years of deterioration and some less-than-sensitive remodeling.

The ground floor of the 12-story structure built in 1897-98 was partly destroyed about 15 years ago, when weatherproofing problems were solved by covering the top of the original storefronts with cinder block and plaster. This hid Sullivan's characteristic storefront treatment—all-glass panels between the building's supporting columns, with the glass window tops slanted and stepped back to expose elaborate foliated capitals at the column tops.

Shift to Contemporary

The present remodeling involves modernization of these ground-floor stores with granite and aluminum facades. The glass area will be as large as it was originally, but the look will be standard contemporary.

The owner of the Sullivan building is Elgin Shulsky of 307 Fifth Avenue, and the architect is Gustave W. Iser, and both are aware of the building's status.

From the time that it was called the Bayard building in the eighteen-nineties and hailed by the critics as the most important structure in New York and the first example here of Sullivan's "Chicago style," its status has never slipped as a work of architecture, even as it aged as a commercial building.

It was later known as the Condict Building and it is still in every important textbook of the American skyscraper. Its elaborate terra cotta ornament emphasizing the lines of the steel skeleton showed the early skyscraper architects how to design the new tall buildings, although few approached Sullivan's masterly combination of structural strength and decorative delicacy.