

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE NEW YORK

Date Entered SEP 14 1977

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Dansville Library	Dansville Livingston County
Litchfield Villa	Brooklyn Kings County
✓ Devinne Press Building	New York New York County
Reformed Dutch Church of Stone Arabia	Nelliston vicinity Montgomery County



Also Notified

Hon. Jacob K. Javits  
Hon. Daniel P. Moynihan  
Hon. Barber B. Conable, Jr.  
Hon. Leo C. Zeferetti  
Hon. Edward I. Koch  
Hon. Donald J. Mitchell

**COPY OF CONCERNED PARTY NOTIFICATION**

Form No. 10-300 (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

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DATE ENTERED

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

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

The DeVinne Press Building

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

393-399 Lafayette Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

New York

VICINITY OF

Edward Koch - 18th

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

New York

CODE

036

COUNTY

New York

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  
☒ COMMERCIAL  
☐ EDUCATIONAL  
☐ ENTERTAINMENT  
☐ GOVERNMENT  
☐ INDUSTRIAL  
☐ MILITARY  
☐ MUSEUM  
☐ PARK  
☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
☐ RELIGIOUS  
☐ SCIENTIFIC  
☐ TRANSPORTATION  
☐ OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Mr. Samuel Galewitz, President

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Water Peek Paper Company

CITY, TOWN

New York

VICINITY OF

STATE

New York

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

New York County Hall of Records

STREET &amp; NUMBER

31 Chambers Street

CITY, TOWN

New York

STATE

New York

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

DATE

October 19, 1966

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☒ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

CITY, TOWN

New York

STATE

New York

**7 DESCRIPTION**

<b>CONDITION</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>	<b>CHECK ONE</b>
<b>CONDITION</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>	<b>CHECK ONE</b>
XX EXCELLENT	___ DETERIORATED	___ UNALTERED	XX ORIGINAL SITE
___ GOOD	___ RUINS	XX ALTERED	___ MOVED    DATE _____
___ FAIR	___ UNEXPOSED		

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The DeVinne Press Building is a seven-story commercial building constructed of brick bearing walls with terra cotta trim, and wrought iron beams. Located at the corner of East 4th and Lafayette Streets, its two street sides display an architectural forcefulness and solidity of design in the Romanesque Revival style, which is appropriate for the building's industrial function.

The building is located on Manhattan's Lower East Side in an area fashionable for commercial buildings after the 1860's. The structure is rectangular in plan. The main facade (west elevation) is divided into horizontal sections marked by belt courses and characterized by patterns of recessed arched window openings of varying sizes. The thickness of the bearing walls is dramatically contrasted to the flat thin screen of steel and glass which fills the openings. The first three stories of the facade are treated as one section of the composition. Three three-story round arched openings (with some alterations) are flanked by three sets of paired arched windows, segmental on the first and second floors (except for alterations), and round on the third floor. The fourth story is a series of segmentally arched windows in a rhythm of 2-3-3-3-2. Above this section are three three-story round-arched windows flanked by three paired windows of which the lower ones have segmental arches while the upper two stories have round arches. Here a belt course underlines the top set of windows and occurs on the same axis as the moldings which distinguish between the pier and spandrel of the facade's massive three arches. The top story is lit by a series of thirteen round-arched windows. The corners of the building are accentuated with quoins heavily articulated in almost Mannerist fashion on the first floor and formed in low relief above. The roof is a gently sloping gable, with an ornamental cornice of bronze.

The south elevation with its eastern addition displays interesting variations on the rhythms of the main facade. Here the first two stories are united by four large segmentally arched windows. There are numerous alterations on these two stories. The third story has four large round-arched windows flanked by two smaller ones. The belt

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courses run above and below the fourth story which is lit by segmentally arched windows placed in a pattern of 1-2-2-2-2-1. The next two stories have four large round-arched window openings spanning both stories and flanked at each level by a single similar window. The top two stories, delineated by belt courses, have two rows of round-arched windows placed in a rhythm of 1-8-1. The eastern addition is similar in its rhythmic patterns but the wall surface between the two buildings is broken by a bay which consists of a massive quoined doorway surmounted by a two-story recessed round-arched opening articulated by quoins and, on the fourth story, a segmentally arched window. The quoins continue for the height of the building but above the fourth floor the entire wall of this bay is recessed between the quoins, visually dividing the 1885 building from its addition. The cornice of the addition is of terra cotta.

The interior spaces of the main building are large and open with exposed cast-iron structural members. There is some alteration of the first floor plan.

**8 SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
PREHISTORIC	__ ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__ COMMUNITY PLANNING	__ LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__ RELIGION
400-1499	__ ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__ CONSERVATION	__ LAW	__ SCIENCE
500-1599	__ AGRICULTURE	__ ECONOMICS	__ LITERATURE	__ SCULPTURE
1600-1699	X ARCHITECTURE	__ EDUCATION	__ MILITARY	__ SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
1700-1799	__ ART	__ ENGINEERING	__ MUSIC	__ THEATER
X 1800-1899	X COMMERCE (printing)	__ EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__ PHILOSOPHY	__ TRANSPORTATION
1900-	__ COMMUNICATIONS	__ INDUSTRY	__ POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__ OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__ INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1885

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Babb, Cook, and Willard

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The DeVinne Press Building designed by Babb, Cook, and Willard in 1885 is significant both architecturally and historically. Deriving basic design characteristics from Romanesque precursors, the structure is an early example of the "Commercial Style" which was made famous in Chicago. The DeVinne Press was completed in 1885, the year construction began on Henry Hobson Richardson's Marshall Field Wholesale Store, generally considered the epitome of the Commercial Style. The two buildings are remarkably similar for their forceful and austere simplicity which suit their commercial functions. Historically, the DeVinne Press was also significant as an important late nineteenth-century printing office, and its owner, Theodore L. DeVinne (1828-1914), was considered a leading authority of his time in both the history and practice of printing.

After an apprenticeship in the office of the Newburgh Gazette, Theodore DeVinne worked in various printing jobs in New York City until 1850 when he went to work for Francis Hart. In 1858 DeVinne was promoted from foreman of the composing room to junior partner. When Hart died in 1877, DeVinne inherited his business. The firm's name was changed to Theodore L. DeVinne and Company and in 1908 the business was incorporated as The DeVinne Press, with DeVinne retiring from active management but taking the office of president.

DeVinne's printing firm became prominent through the work which it did on Scribner's Monthly, St. Nicholas, the Century Magazine, early books done for the Grolier Club and the DeVinne edition of The Book of Common Prayer. His work on the Century Magazine achieved a degree of excellence in printing which was previously unknown. DeVinne installed heavier presses and used a newly invented coated paper to produce fine line wood engravings and half-tone plates for the Century Magazine.

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A prolific writer, DeVinne's major published works include: The Printers' Price List (1869), The Invention of Printing (1876), Historic Printing Types (1886), Christopher Plantin (1888), The Practice of Typography (four volumes, 1900-04), Title-Pages as Seen by a Printer (1901), and Notable Printers of Italy During the Fifteenth Century (1910). DeVinne contributed to the progress of printing in America through his historical writings relating to the history of the craft, and through his achievements as a master printer in successfully working out details of composition and presswork.

The DeVinne Press Building is an early work by the firm of Babb, Cook and Willard, whose other commissions included the remodeling of the Villard Houses and the design of Andrew Carnegie's Fifth Avenue residence. Walter Cook (1843-1916) is considered responsible for the design of the DeVinne Press Building. A grandson of James C. Ireland, an early New York architect, Cook trained at Harvard College and was one of the first Americans to study at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. During his long and successful career, he also designed the Choir School at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, as well as the New York Life Insurance Company building in New York and other company buildings in various eastern cities.

The DeVinne Press Building is an example of the forceful "Commercial Style" of architecture which became most famous in Chicago during the 1880's and 1890's, as exemplified in the works of H.H. Richardson. This structure and the Marshall Field Wholesale Store were designed in the same spirit of simplicity and strength related to their commercial functions. The DeVinne Press Building is a solid visual mass gaining much of its architectural force from the rhythmic patterns and variations of deeply recessed arched openings--reminiscent of the Palazzo Strozzi (1489-1536) in Florence and the Roman Aqueduct Pont du Gard (1st century A.D.) outside of Nimes, France.

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

See continuation sheet.

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	1	8	5	8	5	0	2	0	4	5	10	8	18	2	0
ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING												

B															
ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING												

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

Elizabeth K. Ralph, Program Assistant

ORGANIZATION NYS Parks and Recreation  
Division for Historic PreservationDATE  
August, 1976STREET & NUMBER  
Empire State Plaza, Agency Bldg. #1TELEPHONE  
518-474-0479CITY OR TOWN  
Albany,STATE  
New York 12238**12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL XXSTATE     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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE Deputy Commissioner for Historic PreservationDATE 10/15/76

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

DATE

A DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
ST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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Brooklyn Quad  
DeVenne Press Bldg  
New York, New York Co  
Easting: 51851020  
Northing: 451081820

