



The City of Seattle

## Landmarks Preservation Board

400 Yesler Building Seattle, Washington 98104 • (206) 625-4501

LPB-01/82

### REPORT ON DESIGNATION

Property: Times Square Building  
414 Olive Way

Legal Description: Heir's of Sarah A. Bell's Addition,  
Block 8, Lot 1, 2, 3 (entire).

At a Public Hearing held Wednesday, December 16, 1981, the City of Seattle's Landmarks Preservation Board voted to approve Designation of the Times Square Building as a City Landmark. Designation was approved based upon satisfaction of the following designation criteria from the Landmarks Preservation Ordinance #106348:

*Section 3.01 (2) It is associated in a significant way with the life of a person important in the history of the city, state, or nation.*

The Times Building is a significant design produced by the early, long-standing and influential architectural firm of Bebb and Gould. Examples of important structures in which one or the other of these men or both were involved include the Hoge Building, Frye Hotel, Rainier Club, the University of Washington Master Plan, Suzzalo Library and six other buildings on the UW campus, the U.S. Marine Hospital, Lakeside School, St. Nicholas School, the Seattle Art Museum, the Government Locks in Ballard, and many other buildings. Both men played important roles in the American Institute of Architects, both on a state and local level, and the Society of Beaux Arts Architects.

*Section 3.01 (3) It is associated in a significant way with a significant aspect of the cultural, political, or economic heritage of the community, city, state or nation.*

From 1916 when the building was completed until 1931, the Times Building was the location of the Times daily newspaper which has long been one of the major publications of the Northwest, and as such has been an important voice in the City and State.

*Section 3.01 (4) It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or of a method of construction.*

The Times Building is one of our earlier, better designed and more richly ornamented steel-framed, terra cotta clad, commercial buildings in Seattle, and especially in the Downtown. Although this building is not overly tall, when it was built it was no longer feasible nor philosophically desirable to clad a steel frame structure in heavy masonry, and thus this light-weight, economical and weather-proof material (terra cotta) was skillfully employed in this design.

*Section 3.01 (6) Because of its prominence of spatial location, contrasts of siting, age, or scale, it is an easily identifiable visual feature of its neighborhood or the city and contributes to the distinctive quality or identity of such neighborhood or the city.*

The building completely filled a free-standing triangular block in the northern edge or almost boundary between the downtown and the Denny Regrade area. Since it is completely surrounded by streets, and although it is increasingly surrounded by higher and newer buildings, because of its shape and high visibility, it will long remain a visual landmark.

Features/Characteristics to be preserved:

The entire exterior of the building.

Issued: 12/30/81  
Earl D. Layman  
City Historic Preservation Officer

by:   
Roberta Deering  
Landmarks Preservation Coordinator  
01/94/82

cc: William Justen, D.C.L.U.  
414 Olive Associates VIA CERTIFIED MAIL  
William Krippaehne, Chairman  
Bill Staltzer, DCD  
Ellen Petersen, Law Dept.



City of Seattle

LPB-261/81

Department of Community Development/Office of Urban Conservation

# Landmark Nomination Form

Name Times Building Year Built 1916  
(Common, present or historic)

Old Times Building or Times Square Building

Street and Number 414 Olive Way

Assessor's File No. \_\_\_\_\_

Legal Description Plat Name Heirs of Sarah A. Bell's Adn. Block 8 Lot 1,2,3  
(entire block)

Present Owner 414 Olive Associates Present Use Offices and shops  
(Douglas McFadyen and Steve Koehler)

Address Same

Original Owner Times Investment Co. Original Use Newspaper publishing

Architect Bebb & Gould Builder \_\_\_\_\_

**Description:** Present and original (if known) physical appearance and characteristics

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The Times Building rises six to seven stories (with basement) in height at Fifth Avenue/Times Square and five stories at Fourth Avenue because of the rapid rise of the site to the West. It is triangular in planform with the apex of the triangle on the Fourth Avenue end. The building is organized in the beaux-arts, classic formula, with all of the structure below the Fourth Avenue level designed as a base for the shaft and crown of the building; that base consists of polished granite, whereas the rest of the building is clad in a light, beige terra cotta. The terra cotta is assembled in simulation of stone-work with handsome voussoirs, lintels, and rich embellishments, including moulding courses, at the top of the second and fifth floors, and a richly decorated and projecting cornice. The three main facades (excluding the apex which contains a fire stair) amplify the shaft element of the building with a series of three storey high arched openings uniting windows on those three floors. Apparently the only significant external changes have been to the entrances, particularly the bank entrance on Fifth Avenue.

## Statement of significance

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### A. The Architects

CARL BEBB, (April 10, 1856 - June 22, 1942) was born in England and received his education at King's College, the University of Lausanne, and the London School of Mines. After some involvement with the building of railroads in South Africa, Bebb came to Seattle in 1890. For five years he was an architectural engineer for the Denny Clay Company. In private practice, he was associated with Leonard Lewis Mendel, then with Carl Gould. Bebb is credited with having designed the first fire-proof structure in Seattle, the Bailey Building (Saunders and Haughton, architects). He also was responsible for the design and construction of the State Legislature, Temple of Justice, and Insurance buildings in Olympia, Washington. With Mendel, he designed the Hoge Building, the Frye Hotel, and a large number of handsome and well-detailed private residences, including those of James Hoge and Mrs. Dorothy Bullitt in the Highlands. In association with Carl Gould, he designed the triangular Times Square Building, the north addition of the Rainier Club (a National Register property), the University of Washington Master Plan and several campus buildings, including Suzzallo Library, Education Hall, Forestry Hall, Raitt Hall, the Henry Art Gallery, the Women's Gymnasium and the U.S. Marine Hospital. Bebb and Gould also designed University Lutheran Church, Lakeside School, and St. Nicholas School, as well as numerous fraternity houses and, in 1932, the Seattle Art Museum in Volunteer Park (a National Register property). Bebb was elected a fellow of the American Institute of Architects in 1910. In the same year he was appointed membership in the Royal Institute of Arts in London and the American Federation of Arts in Washington, D.C.

CARL GOULD, (November 23, 1873 - June 5, 1939) was born in New York City and attended Philip Exeter Academy and Harvard University (class of 1898). From 1899 to 1903, he studied at the Ecole des Beaux arts in Paris. On the east coast, he worked with the firm of McKim, Mead and White. He was associated with George C. Post on the design of the Wisconsin State Capitol at Madison. He also assisted Daniel Burnham in the plans for the rebuilding of San Francisco after the 1906 earthquake and fire. In 1908, he came to Seattle. An authority on Gothic architecture, Gould and Carl Bebb were responsible for a large number of buildings of the University of Washington campus (see above). Among his other projects were the Government Locks in Ballard ... In addition to his design work, Gould was the founder and head of the Department of Architecture at the University of Washington. He was a member, from 1925-30, of the Civic Planning Commission, President of the Washington State Chapter of the AIA, President of the Art Institute of Seattle (1926-1929), President of the Architectural League of the Pacific Coast, and a member of the Society of Beaux Arts Architects.

### B. The Building

Recent surveys and research have revealed the great wealth of terra cotta structures extant in Seattle's Downtown, and indeed, throughout the City. Few urban centers can boast of the quality and number of such edifices as can Seattle.

## Statement of Significance, Cont'd

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Early in this century, following perfection of the Bessemer process for manufacturing structural steel, combined with the invention of the electric elevator, the rapid growth of our cities and rise of land values, improved methods were needed for "cladding" that new architectural form, the skyscraper. Masonry was no longer practical for covering (or cladding) structural steel frames, and even if it had been, the artisans and workers required for its application were rapidly disappearing into other trades. Fortunately industrialization of both glazed and unglazed terra cotta developed, providing a feasible, light weight, economical and weatherproof material for building skins. The Times Building is one of the earlier of Seattle's terra cotta collection (contemporary with Coliseum theatre, Frederick & Nelson, etc.) but was quite alone when it was erected on this "northerly" site at the foot of Denny Hill. Historically, it was also an important element in the northward movement of the Central Business District, preceding by more than a decade many of its neighbors.

### C. The Seattle Times

On May the third of 1886 The Times began publication. In rapid succession it was then sold to Colonel George G. Lyon and then to W.E. Bailey in 1891. Bailey was the owner of The Press, which had been formed by consolidating The Chronicle with The Call. He consolidated the Times with the Press and named the new publication the Press Times. Mr. Bailey, after piling up a deficit of \$200,000, relinquished all control to John Collins who held a mortgage for \$15,000 on the plant. John W. Pratt followed Collins as owner.

Colonel A.J. Blethen came to Seattle from a newspaper career in Minneapolis and bought the Press-Times on August 7, 1896. With the first issue under his control on August 10, 1896, the paper became The Seattle Daily Times. When he died in 1915, his son, Clarence B. Blethen took over and ran the paper for 26 years. At his death in 1941, the paper went under the control of W.K. Blethen and continued in the Blethen family under President F.A. Blethen and Vice President J.A. Blethen. John A. Blethen was elected publisher in 1967, succeeding his brother.

What had begun in 1886 as a small impoverished evening paper, published as a side line to a job printing business of Yesler Way, was turned by Blethen into a thriving business. From a circulation of 3,100 in 1896, the paper had grown by 1915 to a circulation of 70,000 with a Sunday circulation of 80,000. The headquarters of the paper in the Boston Block at Second and Cherry Street (1896-1902) were fast growing inadequate and the expanding paper moved to the northeast corner of Second Avenue and Union Street, where offices and plant were housed (with a temporary relocation due to a 1913 fire) until 1916 when a new home for the paper was built on the uncrowded triangular site bounded by 4th and 5th Avenue and Stewart and Olive Way. The site became known as Times Square, due to the resemblance to the famous New York Times building in New York City.

Statement of Significance, Cont'd

The Rainier Valley Interurban turn around was at 4th and Stewart. Newsprint was delivered on the Stewart Street side and newspapers were loaded on to waiting vans. Eventually the business district moved uptown and surrounded the Times Square offices, and by 1931 the Times was forced to expand and move to its present home at Fairview and John Streets.

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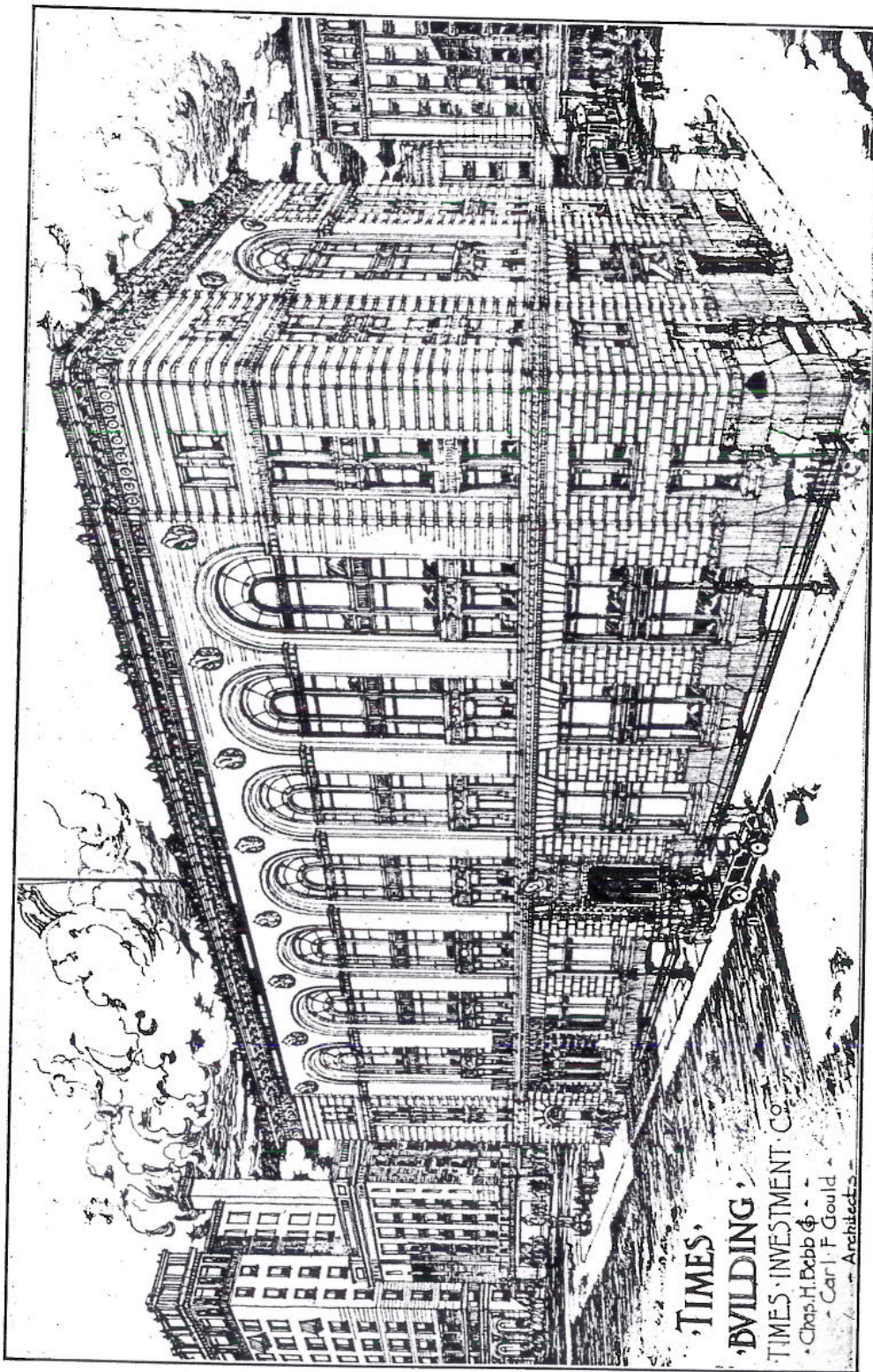
References:

Alexander: Terra Cotta, Seattle, WA a Thematic Nomination to The National Register

Bagley: A History of Seattle

Layman: Sights of Seattle, the Downtown

Office Urban Conservation: Inventory of Historic Resources, City of Seattle



TIMES BUILDING  
 TIMES INVESTMENT CO.  
 •Chas. H. Bobb &  
 •Carl J. Gould  
 Architects