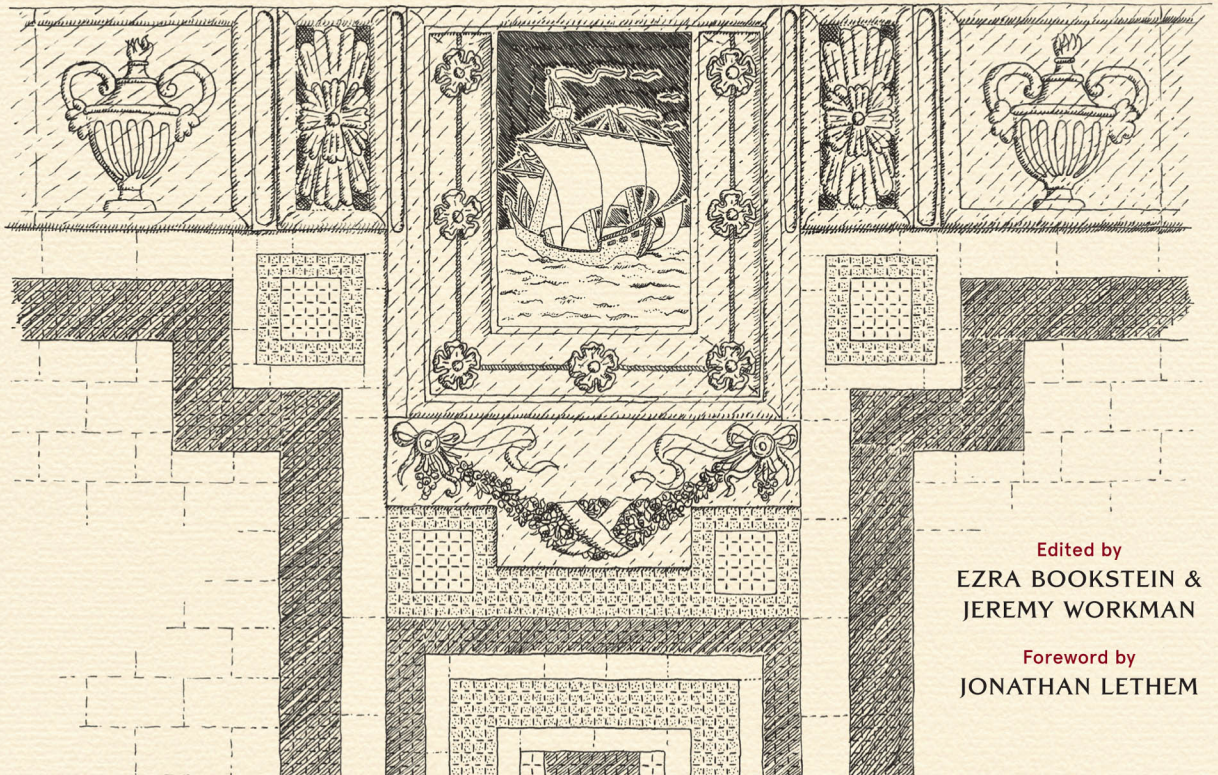


# ONE-TRACK MIND

## DRAWING THE NEW YORK SUBWAY

Drawings by

PHILIP ASHFORTH COPPOLA



Edited by  
EZRA BOOKSTEIN &  
JEREMY WORKMAN

Foreword by  
JONATHAN LETHEM





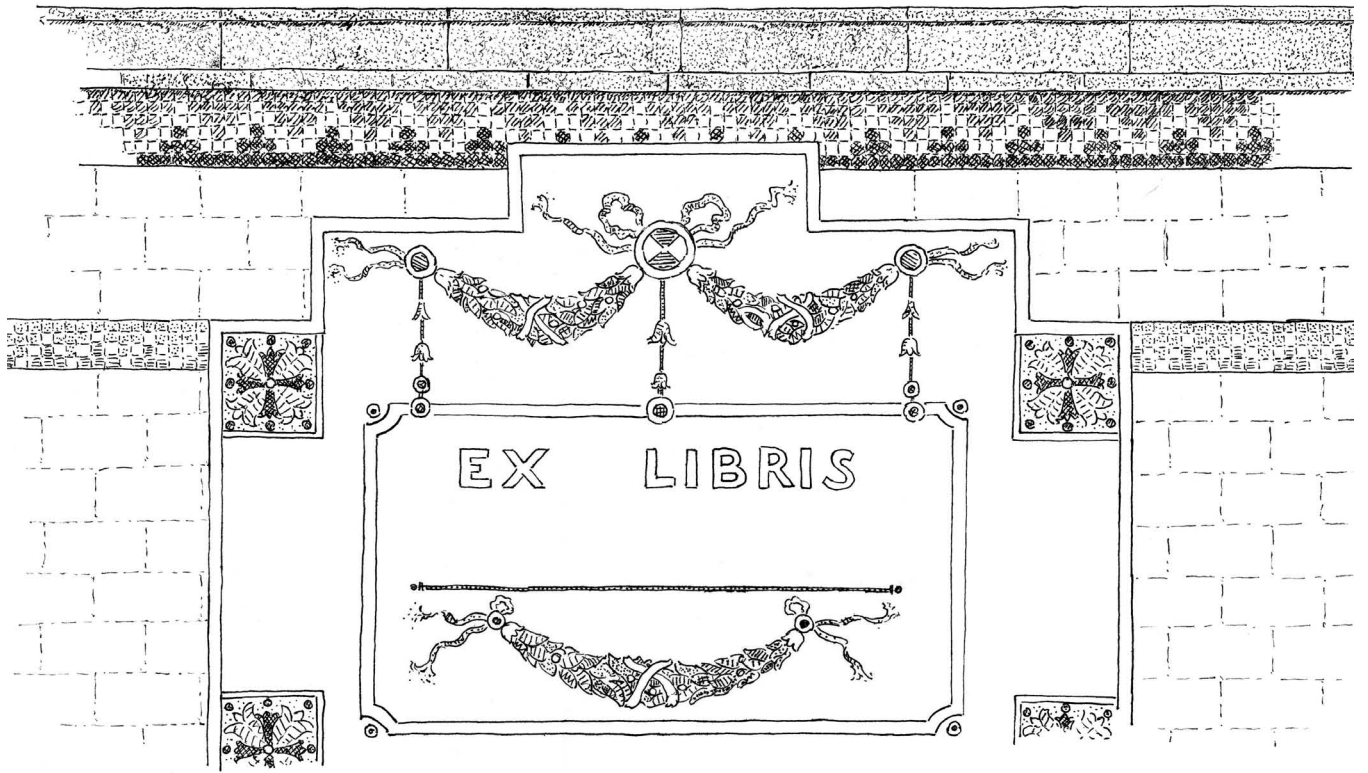
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ONE-TRACK MIND

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# ONE-TRACK MIND

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## FOREWORD

I remember one day, during my short-lived participation in the Music and Art High School soccer team, going north from Manhattan after school, the direction I'd never otherwise go, to Van Cortlandt Park in the Bronx for practice. (I lived in Brooklyn and traveled to Harlem every day for school on the A train.) We were having dinner that night with friends who lived in Staten Island, and it occurred to me, on the subway headed south, that if I diverted to Queens on my way to the dinner and dropped in on my grandmother in Sunnyside, I'd have hit all five boroughs in one day. This act may be routine for marathon runners and mayoral candidates, but it gave me a little shiver of completist satisfaction to do it.

I remember, also during high school, my friends and I finding fresh Keith Haring chalk drawings on the empty black billboard frames in the 135th Street station and smearing them with our hands and laughing about it. We saw the Haring drawings all through the system those days, and we resented him a little for it, in our brat-punk way; we resented him simply for having been there before us, for seeming to be everywhere.

I remember Darius McCollum, who spent his teenage years and beyond impersonating NYC transit workers and illegally driving trains, and got himself sent to Rikers Island for doing so. And I remember Keron Thomas, who at sixteen practiced for months for a single remarkable three-hour joyride as a fake motorman on the

A train, one in which he successfully transported thousands of New Yorkers to their destinations with barely a hitch.

I remember the first time I really noticed the Astor Place beaver mosaic, like so many before me have done and are likely doing right at this moment, and marveled at New York's capacity to persistently disgorge secrets hidden in plain sight, lost histories in ruins and still a part of the (barely) functioning infrastructure, the eccentric system of public trains, which had actually arisen as two rival private rail systems, and which everyone took for granted as if it had grown there, a natural formation, and which most people only complain about or silently endure. I remember trying to conjugate that beaver mosaic

with the name of the station and with the portion of the city above—I was surely visiting to go to some Astor Place club, or teenage party—and failing. Could there actually have been a beaver dam at that site in living human memory? And if so, why would it be commemorated in the station's tilework?

You may ask, now, why on earth would I compare these inadequate and fitful and irreverent and even illegal expressions of surplus fascination with the New York subway system with the titanic accomplishments of the great self-appointed scholar and copyist of the system's decorations, Philip Ashforth Coppola? Coppola, who with saintly intensity has burrowed into the fading archives, dwelling there for decades now like Kafka's

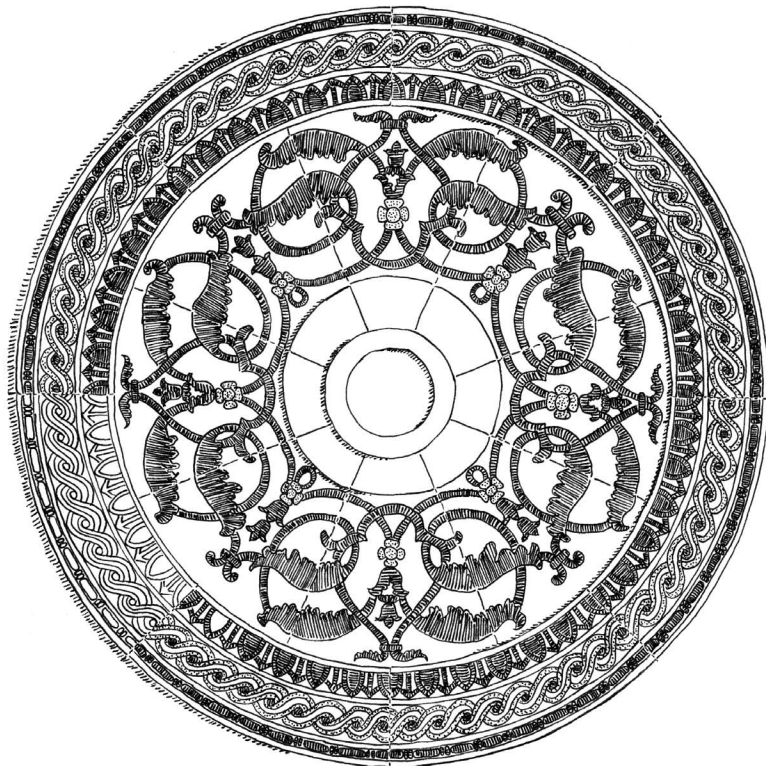
creature from "The Burrow," recording and tracing that which speaks to him at a level deeper than most could imagine? Coppola, whose hand and breath and presence are like those of a dutiful ghost, so that he passes largely unseen, claiming no glory for himself, only enlivening and illuminating the darkening record, the accomplishments of men who passed before our time and who were likely, even willing, to be forgotten? Why, I might as well compare him to a graffiti artist!

Well, I'll do that too. In one sense, sure, a graffiti artist is Coppola's exact opposite—a defacer, a proclaimer, an impulse artist. Yet, like some of the other forms of subway obsessives I've mentioned, I think the NYC graffiti artist's desire arises from a similar place, from the urge to find a way to

talk back, whether in a whisper or a scream, to the great secret system of the subways. For the New York subways are like a magical nervous system, or a secret, vastly distributed spare brain, which every serious New Yorker understands has the power to speak to him or her in a mythic voice, even if one chooses to ignore it. It might be a great burden, this listening; we might only choose to do it momentarily, or to call it to a halt after a certain unbearable intensity has been reached, and cry "Enough!" Well, here might be a good-enough description of Phil Coppola: he is the voice's greatest listener, the mystery's greatest detective. He is the man who never cried "Enough!" Like a character from Borges, his impossible *Silver Connections* project proposes

a map that is the exact size of the territory it describes. Most of us can only envy an artist, and a life, as unwavering and pure.

—Jonathan Lethem







## INTRODUCTION

If you've been in a New York City subway station sometime in the past forty years, you may have passed by him. The guy staring off at a mosaic on the wall, painstakingly sketching each of its tiles into a cheap spiral notebook, is Phillip Ashforth Coppola.

In 1978, after noticing that the original mosaics in the Bowling Green subway station and the ferry boat tiles of the Cortland Street station had been removed and destroyed during renovation, Philip Ashforth Coppola set out to create an encyclopedia of the design and decorative elements of every station in the system before they too vanished. It was to be the definitive story of the overlooked mosaics, plaques, relief sculptures, and

modeled faience that were designed to showcase the new subway system as part of the Gilded Age's City Beautiful movement. Coppola's goal was to immortalize this art and try to identify the forgotten craftsmen, artisans, and designers who produced it. He dedicated his weeknights and weekends to scouring the city's historical libraries for books, maps, directories, and turn-of-the-century newspapers, as well as riding from station to station with sketchbook in hand. Coppola would go on to spend the next four decades researching, writing, illustrating, self-funding, and self-publishing his encyclopedia, which he titled *Silver Connections*. Intended as a single book, it grew to six illustrated volumes totaling nearly

two thousand pages, and though his plan is to include every station (there are 472 currently), Coppola has made it through only 110. Now seventy years old, he's still working on it; he hopes to finish his project by the mid-2030s.

Coppola's love of the subway began when he was a young boy. Born in East Orange, New Jersey, he grew up in the leafy suburb of Maplewood. When he was eight years old, his father, an accountant in Western Union's tax department, casually mentioned that down in the subway stations "there are pictures of old New York on the station walls." This comment seared into Coppola's mind, becoming the spark that would lead him on his lifelong path.

Coppola graduated from his local high school, briefly attended Rhode Island School of Design, and dreamed of a life as an artist. But his dreams didn't coalesce into an artistic career, at least not in the conventional sense. Aside from a two-year stint in Manhattan in the early 1970s, working an entry-level job at a publishing house, he lived most of his adult life in his childhood home with his mother, where he settled into a modest life as a printing-press operator, making letterheads, envelopes, and business cards.

A quiet and humble man, Coppola didn't attract attention. In the early years, he was often dismissed by subway historians as just another "foamer" (the derisive term for

subway fans who "foam at the mouth" from excitement). His first volume, self-published in 1984, was ignored by scholars and librarians, as few recognized the scope of his research or talent of his artistry. But little by little, by the late 1990s, local transit historians began to whisper about *Silver Connections*—"Have you seen it?" "They say he's sketched every mosaic!" "Is it real?"—and word of its magnitude spread. Some wondered if Coppola himself was another modern-day Joe Gould—the central character in Joseph Mitchell's famous *New Yorker* profile whose long-gestating book proved to be nonexistent. Coppola's seller, New York Bound Books, was an early champion of his work. However,

they struggled to get the book on shelves, so only the lucky few ever saw it. Copies were scarce (roughly nine hundred volumes have been sold in over three decades), but *Silver Connections* eventually attained legendary status within those very circles of New York City which had previously locked him out. The *New York Times* keeps a copy in their research room. The New York Transit Museum keeps one as well.

But Coppola's work is much more than an exhaustive study of the subway's history and artwork; *Silver Connections'* true gift is his meticulously hand-drawn illustrations—the New York subway's very own illuminated manuscript.



Each of his drawings takes days of work. Coppola begins “on site” on a subway platform sketching in his trusty notebook (there are forty-one of them to date), then returns home to draw the mosaics anew with the most basic of a draftsman’s tools: a sheet of paper, a ruler, and a pen.

The six volumes to date include hundreds of his black-and-white illustrations. With each drawing, Coppola preserves a glimpse of that golden age of optimism, when the Gilded Age was ushering in “the future” right before New Yorkers’ eyes; when, on March 24, 1900, twenty-five thousand people packed City Hall Park to witness the subway system’s ground breaking and the wonders it promised.

Part outsider artist, part master draftsman, part preservationist, Philip Ashforth Coppola, with this book, takes his rightful place as an artist of distinct and unique talent. Equally important, this book serves his original goal of bringing attention to the subway’s long forgotten artists and craftspeople. Hopefully it can also remind New Yorker and visitor alike that there is beauty all around us. You just have to look.

*—Ezra Bookstein and Jeremy Workman, 2018*



## THE BIRTH OF THE NEW YORK CITY SUBWAY

**A**t the time of the New York subway system's conception, as the nineteenth century was coming to a close, the city had a handful of privately operated, steam-powered, elevated trains. They were standalone endeavors, in competition with each other, constantly going into and out of bankruptcy. The subway was to be a marvel of public transportation that would finally unite the city. Furthermore, it would embody the ideals and monumental grandeur of America's new City Beautiful movement, which in New York would also give birth to the main public library and post office, Pennsylvania Station, and the new Grand Central Terminal.

The Rapid Transit Act was signed into law in 1894 by New York Governor

Roswell P. Flower, to authorize the subway's planning. John B. McDonald of the Rapid Transit Construction Company was awarded the contract for construction, William Barclay Parsons served as the city's chief engineer, and August Belmont II and his Interborough Rapid Transit Company financed the project. These fledgling subway lines, known as the IRT, were built in successive stages. Contract 1 broke ground in 1900 and opened in 1904, with its first line stretching the nine miles from City Hall to West 145th Street and Broadway. Contract 2 began construction in 1902, opening stations in Manhattan in 1905 and in Brooklyn in 1908.

The architects of these lines were Christopher Grant LaFarge

(1862–1938) and George Lewis Heins (1860–1907), MIT graduates whose partnership had previously won the competition to design Manhattan's Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine. They worked very well together—Heins specialized in structure, LaFarge in design and décor. Because of this arrangement, LaFarge took on the subway system's design elements, everything from mosaics to air vents. Heins, meanwhile, was appointed by New York Governor Theodore Roosevelt as State Architect to design Albany's governmental buildings. After the décor of the stations was completed, LaFarge moved on to other projects and was replaced by

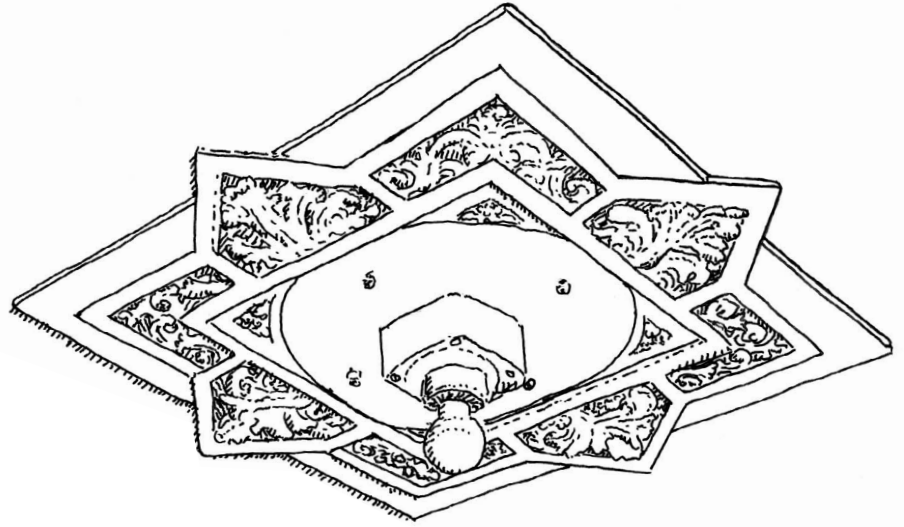
Squire J. Vickers as the Public Service Commission's chief designing engineer and architect.

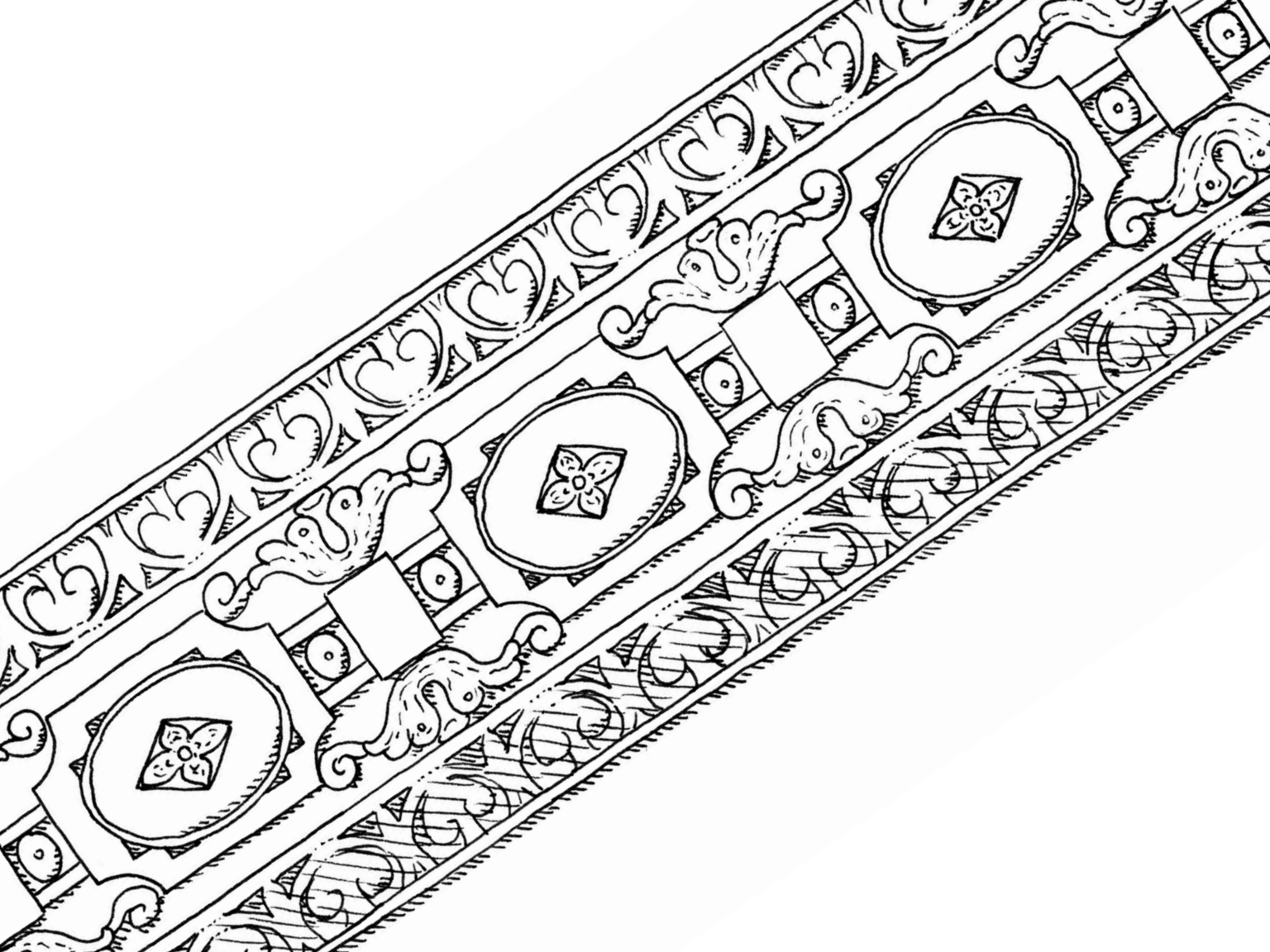
Under Vickers, the next phase of construction was known as the Dual Contracts (Contracts 3 and 4). These began in 1913, as the city worked with the IRT and the Brooklyn Rapid Transit Company (later known as the Brooklyn-Manhattan Transit Corporation) to simultaneously extend the IRT's system and build BMT lines. Subsequently, in June 1940, New York City took control over the subway systems and united them through the Independent City-Owned Subway System (IND), but these later stations are not included in this volume.

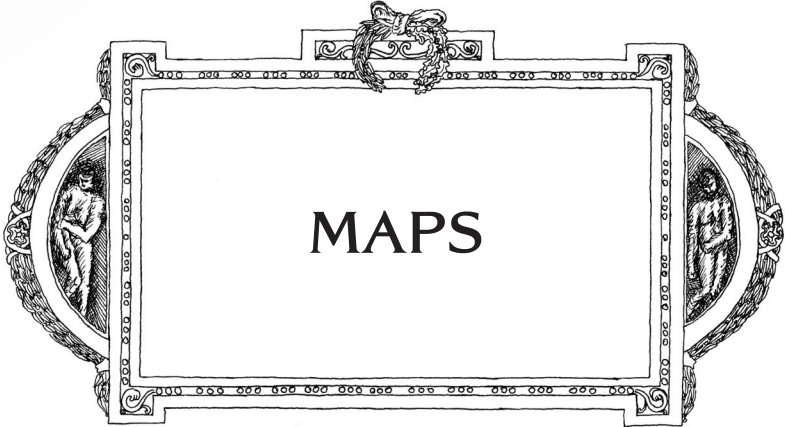
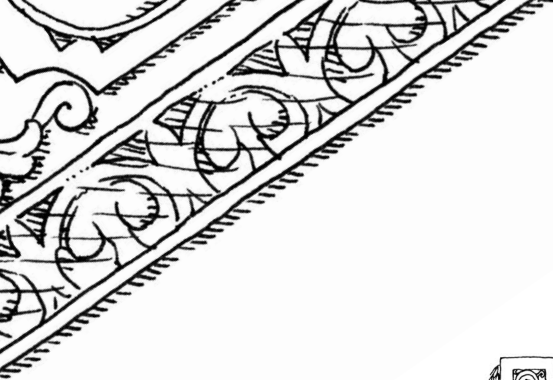
**About the book:**

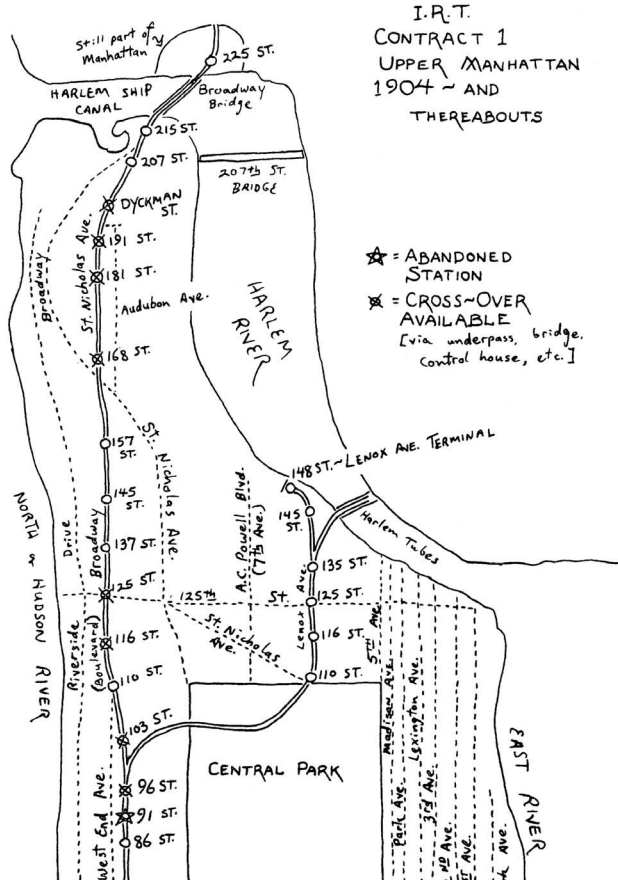
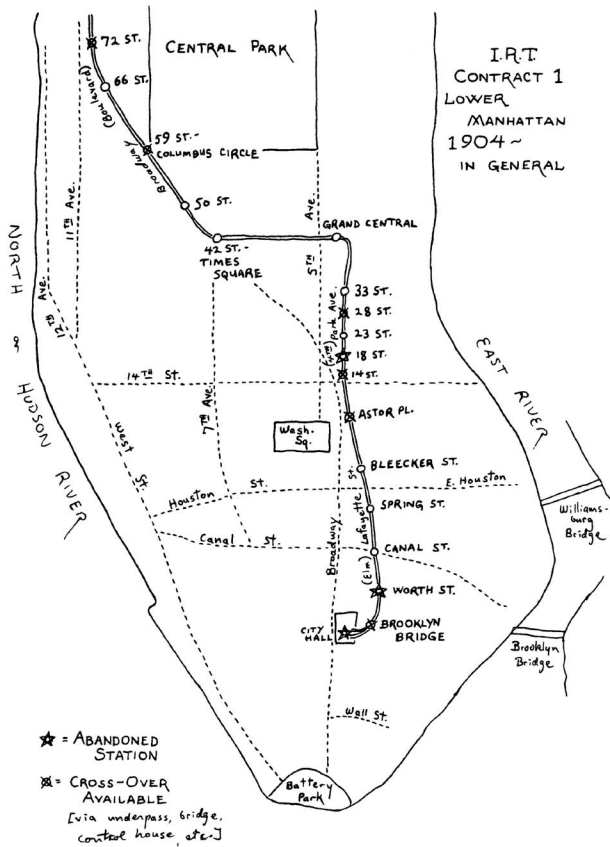
The history of the New York subway system's décor is not widely chronicled. The primary sources for the captions in this book are Philip Coppola's *Silver Connections*, conversations with the artist, and additional online research. *Silver Connections* can be found at the New York Public Library and through New York Bound Books.

The illustrations are organized according to the order of station construction.



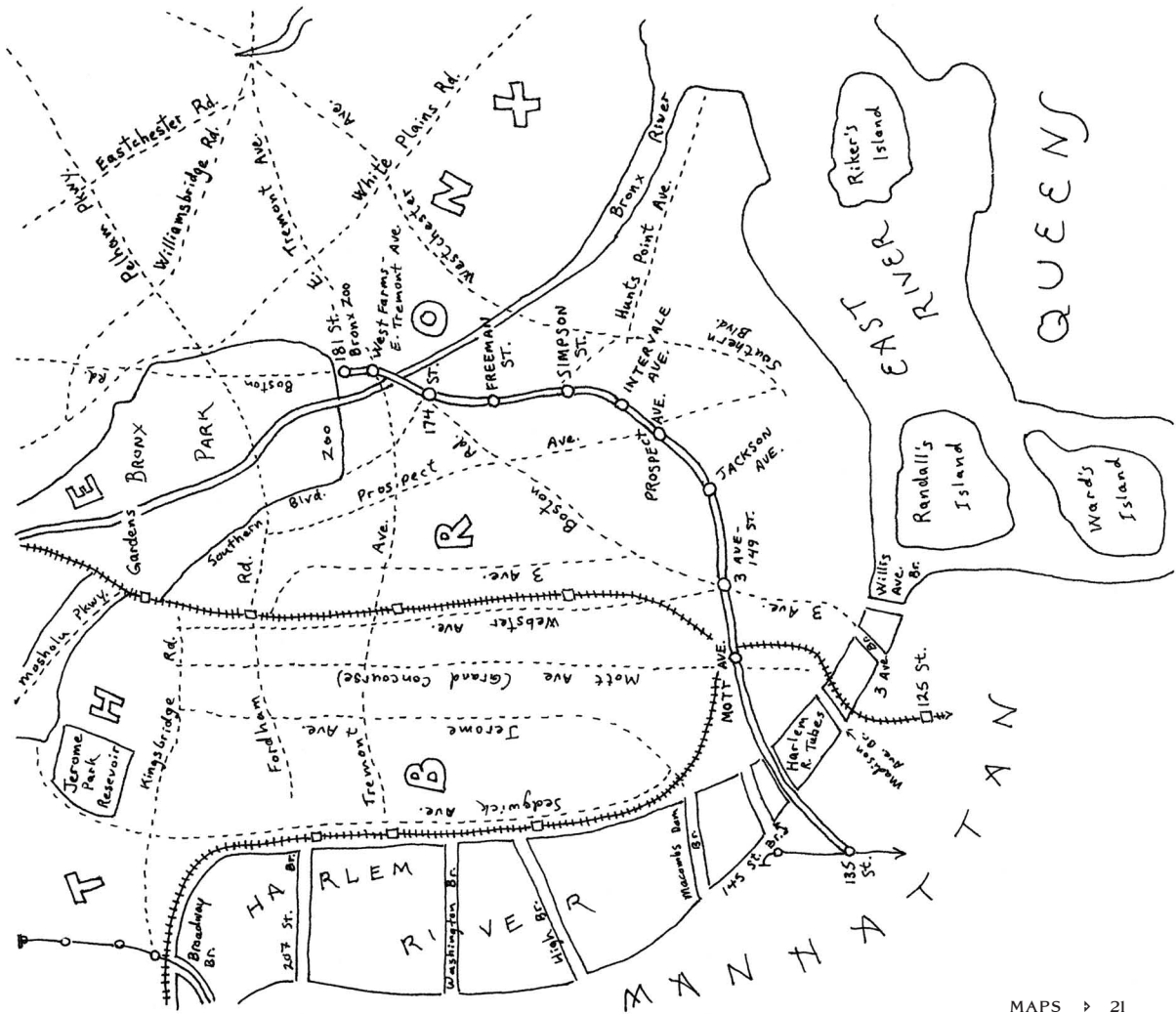








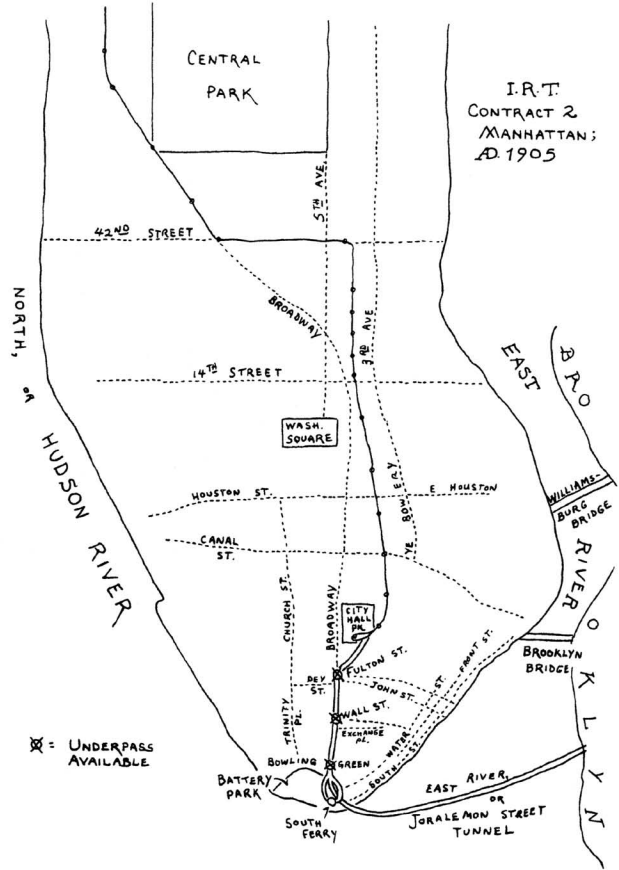
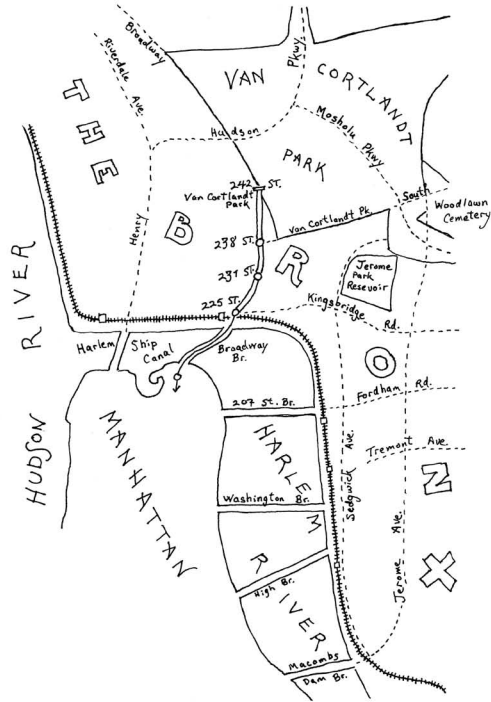
# THE I.R.T. CONTRACT 1 IN THE BRONX ~ 1905



THE I.R.T. ~ THE VAN CORTLANDT PARK EXTENSION:

ADDITIONAL TO CONTRACT 1

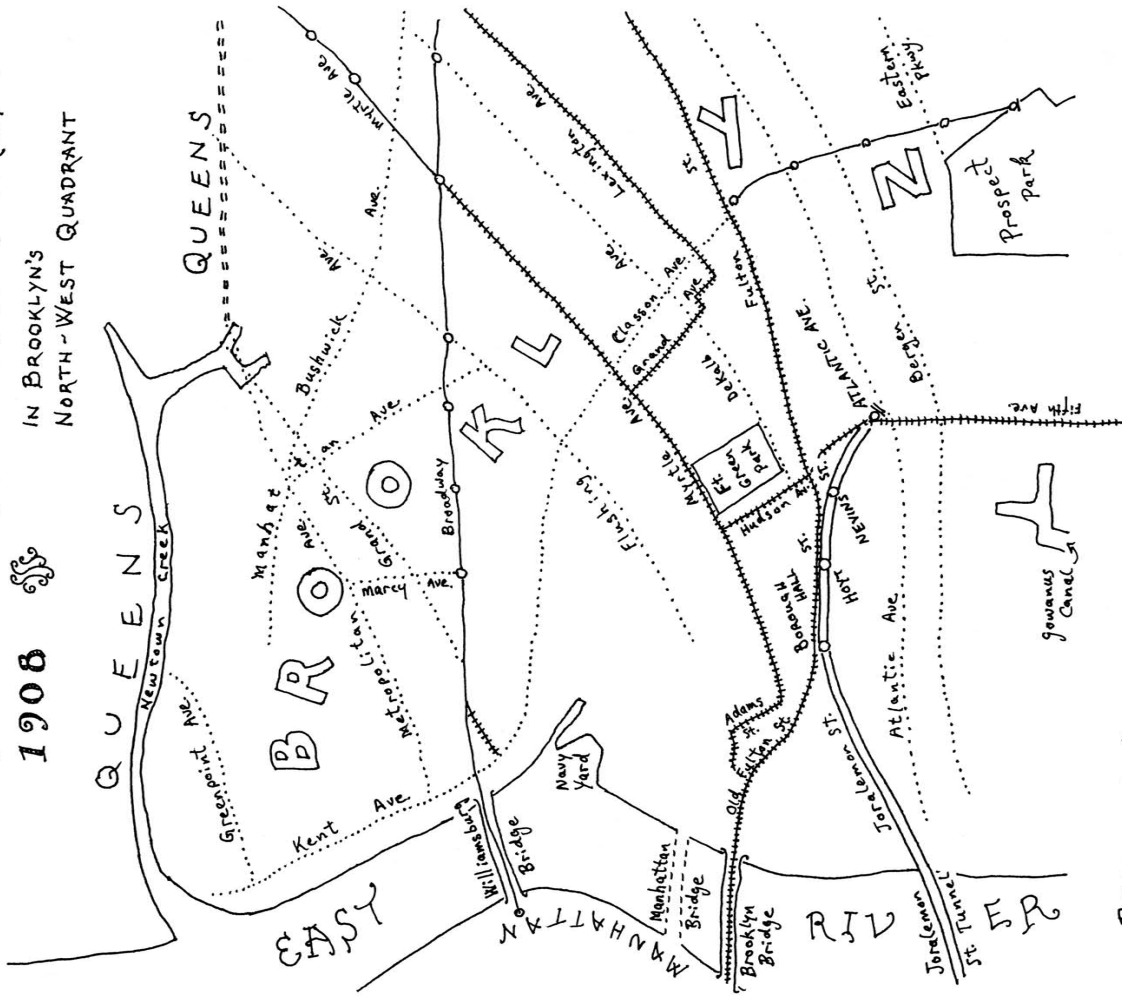
IN  
THE  
BRONX;  
A. 1908



# I.R.T. CONTRACT 2, BROOKLYN~

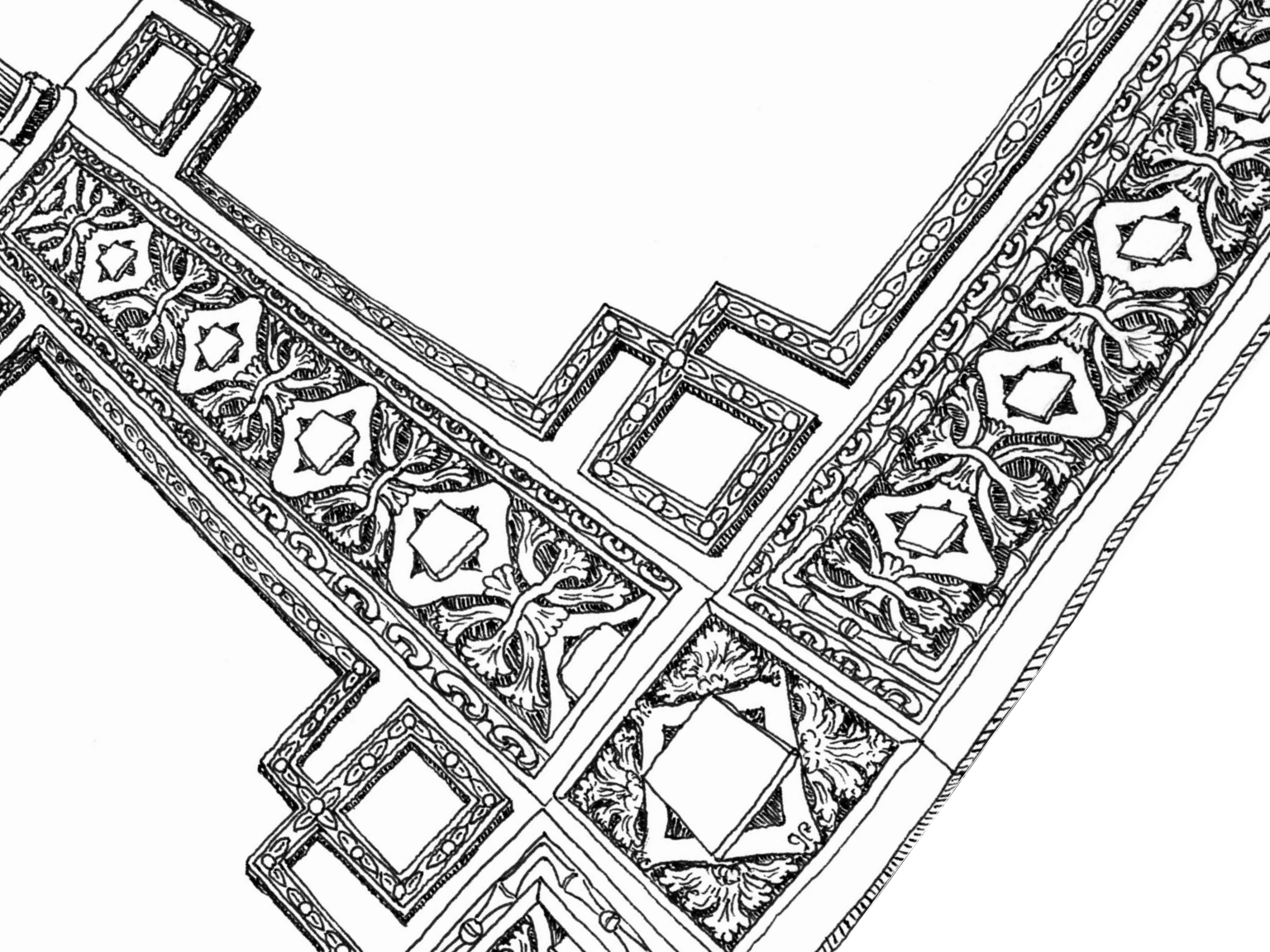
IN BROOKLYN'S  
NORTH-WEST QUADRANT

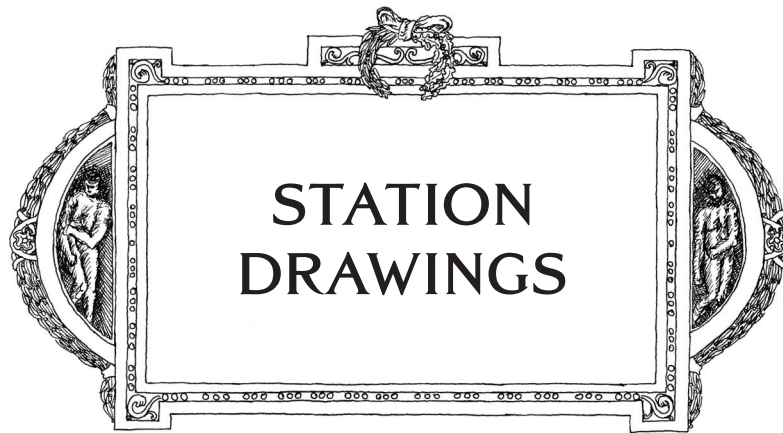
1908



## BROOKLYN'S ELEVATED

SYSTEM: ----- ; AS WELL AS THE BROADWAY, FRANKLIN AV  
ST UPPER MYRTLE AVE. LINES  
(PRESENT TRANSIT)

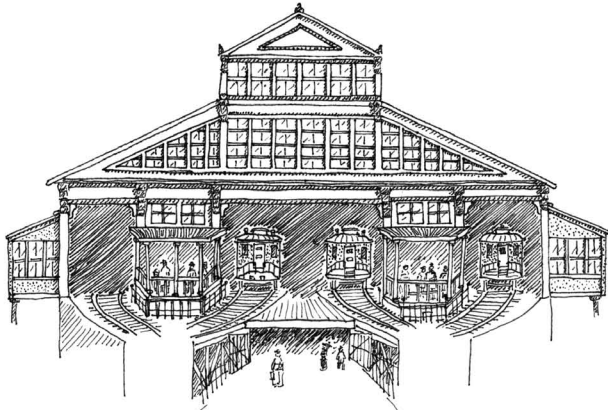




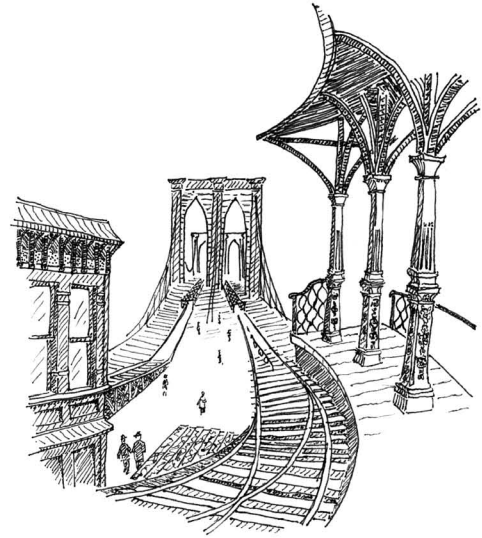
**STATION  
DRAWINGS**



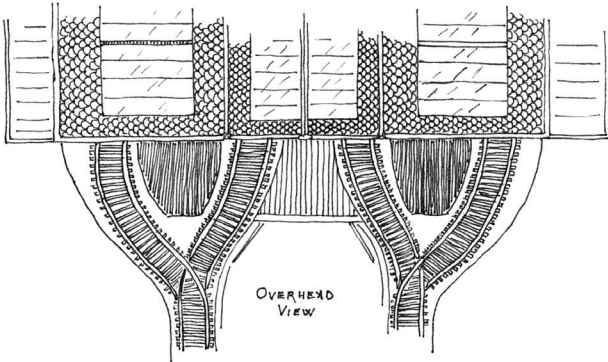
Brooklyn Bridge  
Manhattan terminal  
Structure demolished  
(no longer visible)



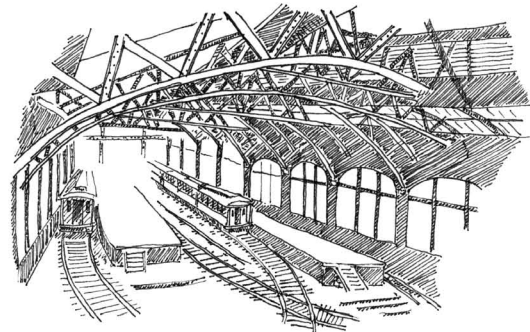
PARK ROW TERMINAL:  
1900



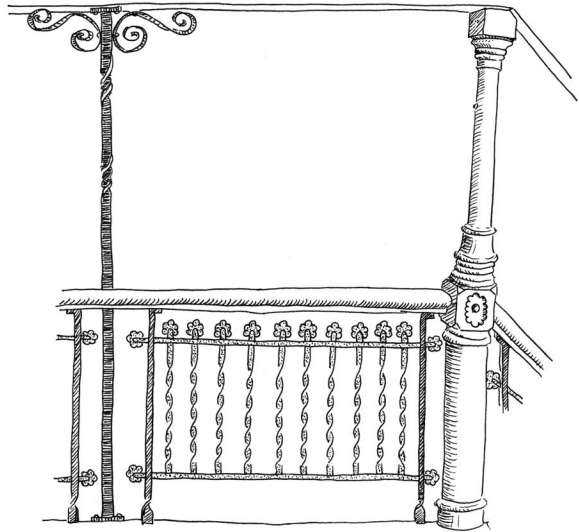
LOOKING OUT FROM WITHIN PARK ROW TERMINAL: ca. 1887



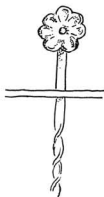
OVERHEAD  
VIEW



INTERIOR OF PARK ROW TERMINAL ~ 1905

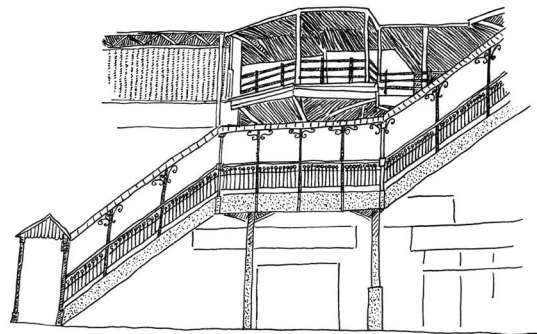


FROM THE S.W. STAIRWAY LANDING:  
WROUGHT IRON & CAST

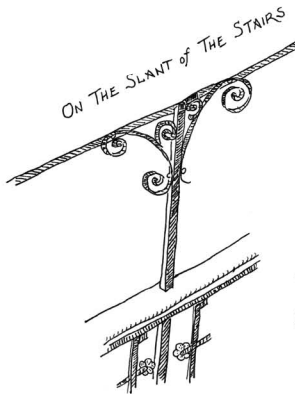


OUTSIDE VIEW  
OF WROUGHT  
IRON RAIL

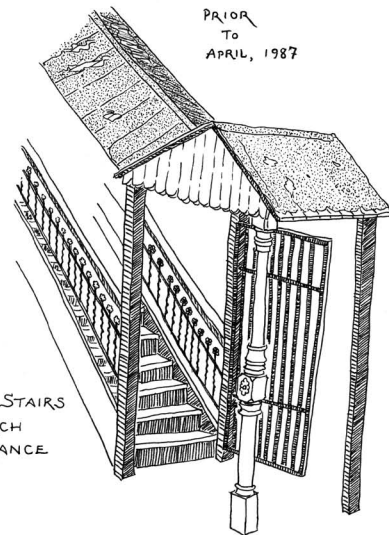
Franklin Avenue  
Entrance stairway  
Structure demolished  
(no longer visible)



GENERAL VIEW OF S.W. STAIRS: ALONG FRANKLIN AVE.



ON THE SLANT OF THE STAIRS

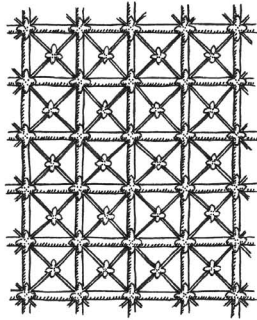
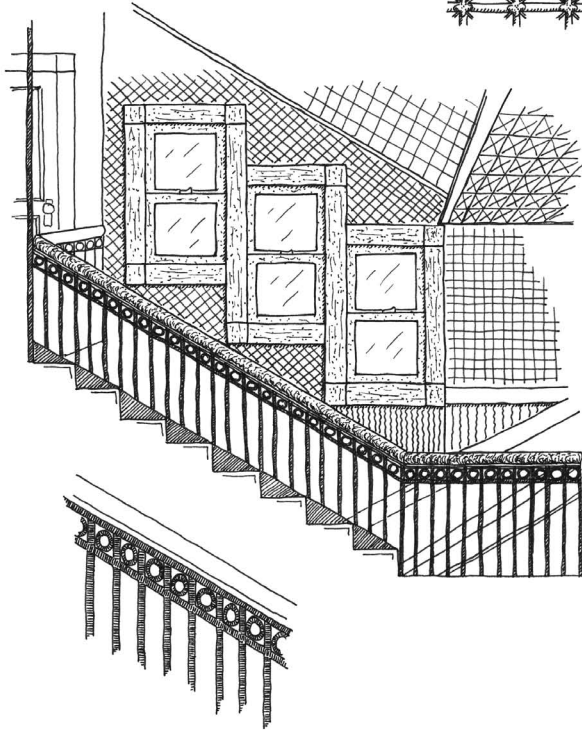


PRIOR  
TO  
APRIL, 1987

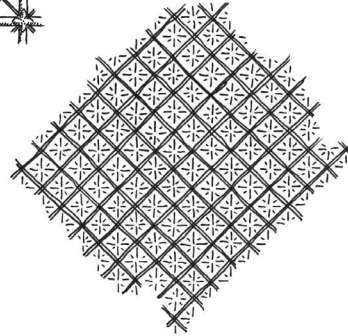
S.W. STAIRS  
PORCH  
ENTRANCE

Park Place  
Station details  
Structure demolished  
(no longer visible)

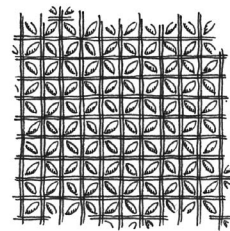
THE  
PARK PLACE  
STATION HOUSE:  
INTERIOR VIEW



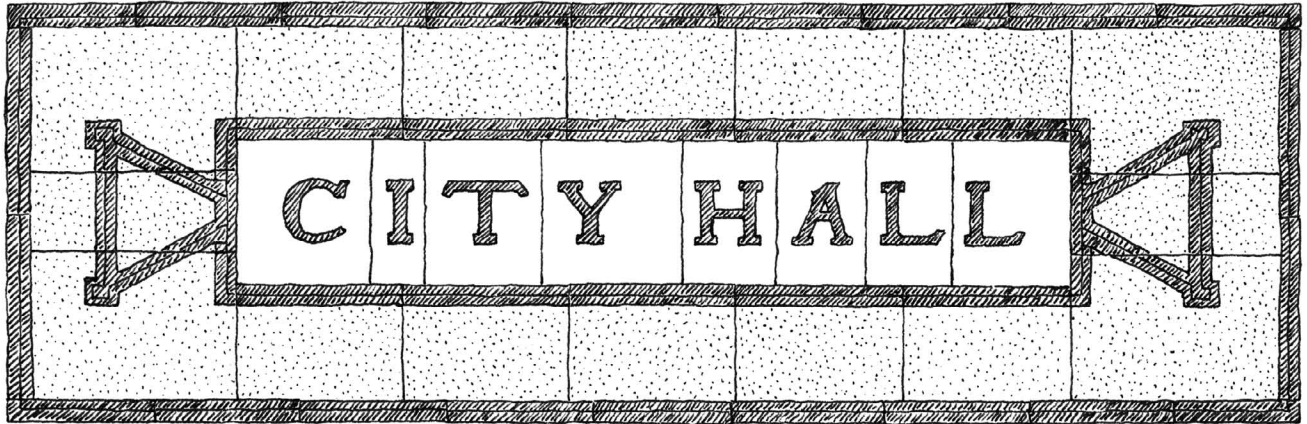
THREE  
VARIETIES  
of STAMPED  
TIN



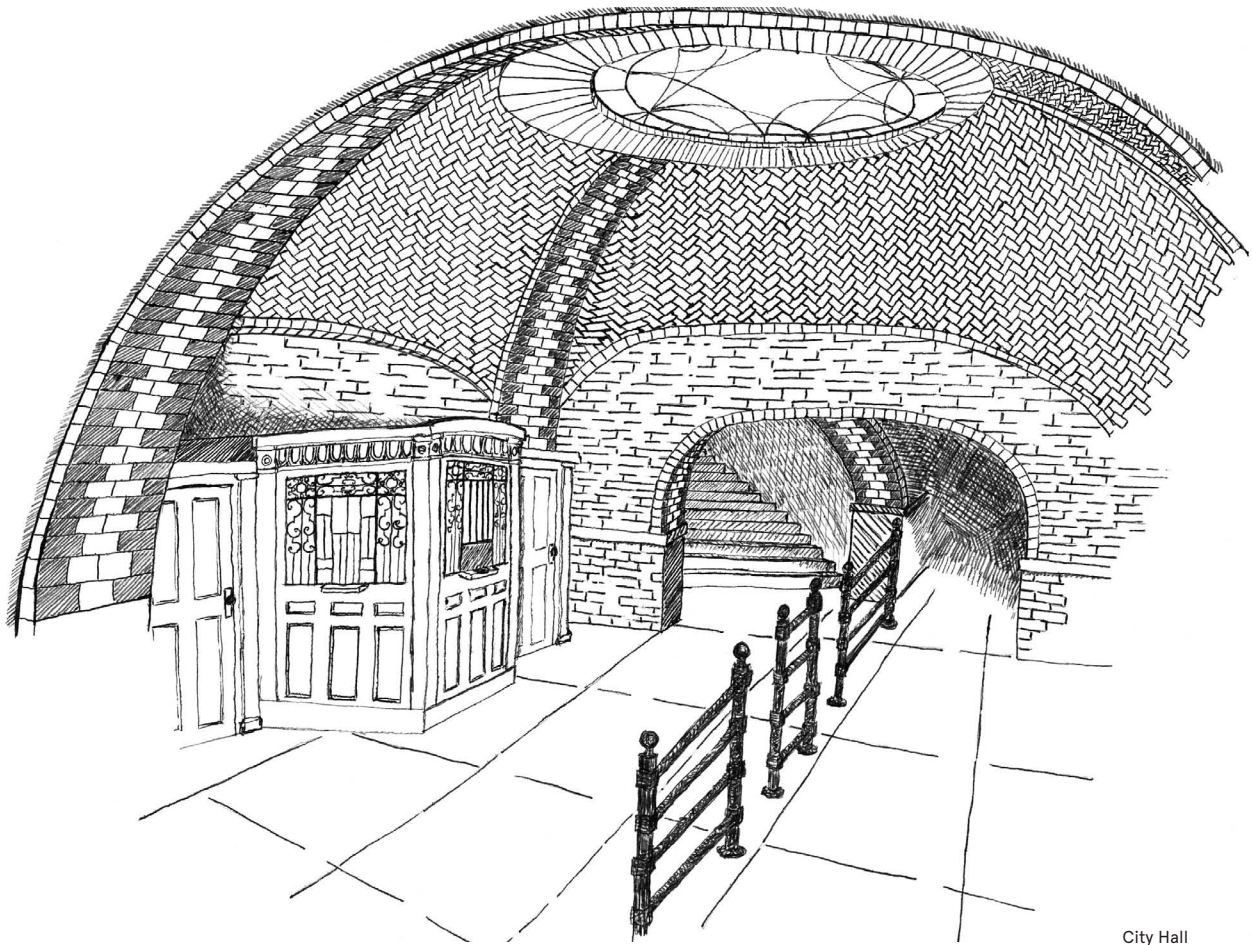
CEILING & WALL  
DESIGNS







City Hall  
Ceramic name panel  
Closed station  
(no longer visible)



City Hall  
Mezzanine  
Closed station  
(no longer visible)

## CITY HALL STATION

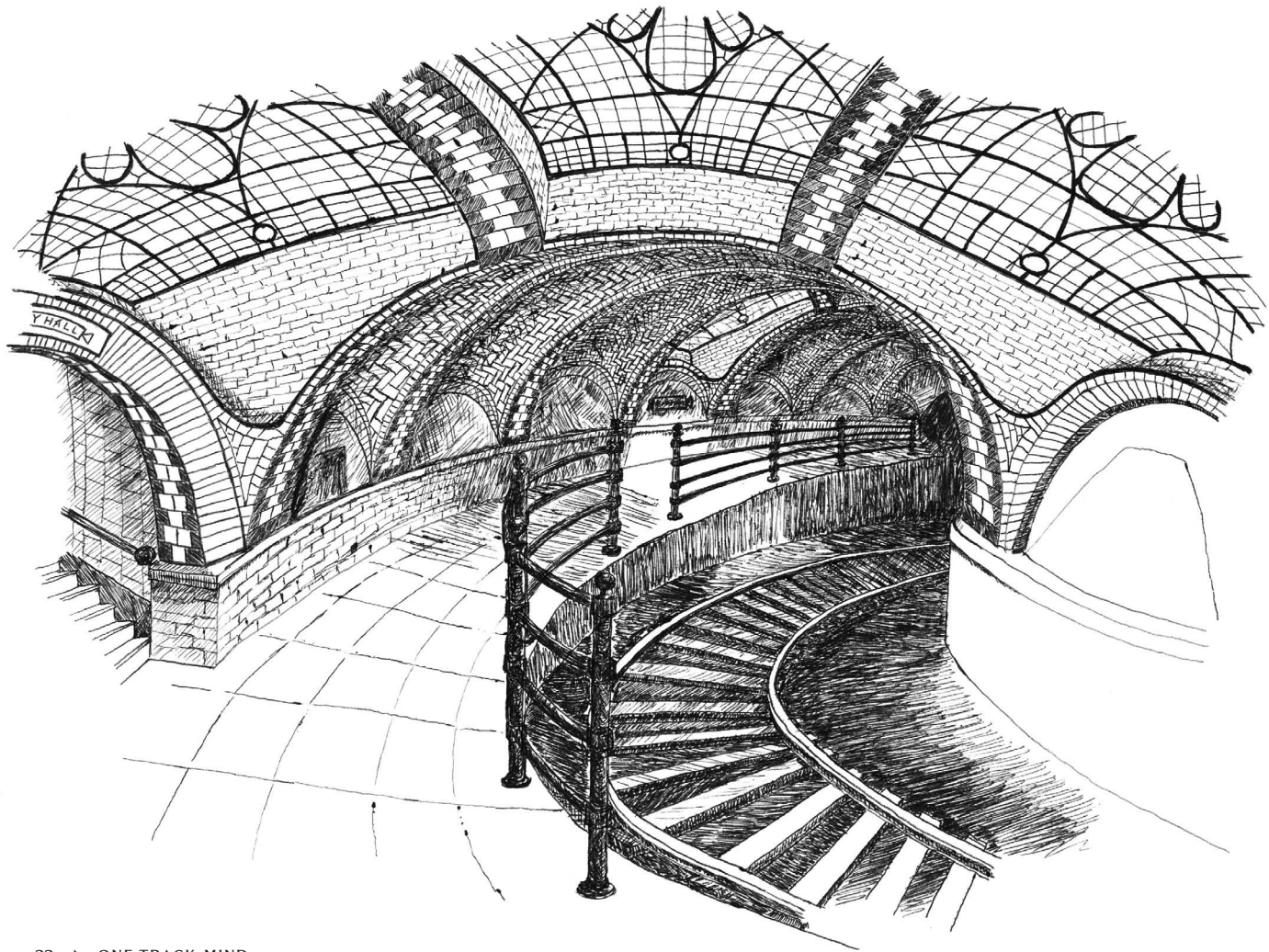
**G**eorge Lewis Heins and Christopher Grant LaFarge envisioned the City Hall subway station as the crown jewel of the system. So when Chief Engineer William Barclay Parsons told them that the station itself would curve on a looped track, their thoughts raced ahead with visions of Romanesque arches. Heins and LaFarge would capitalize on this curvature, sending the walls vaulting overhead and filtering daylight in through three amethyst-hued, glass skylights. It was to be the quintessence of the subway's City Beautiful ideal.

This was one of the first stations LaFarge detailed, and he brought in the artisan Rafael Guastavino, who

at the time was working with him on the Bronx Zoo animal houses, to build the arched tile ceiling and cast the name panels and the white and viridian tiles of the buttressing arches. When the station opened to the public on October 27, 1904, the press raved about its design, and more than fifteen thousand people were given passes for a ride.

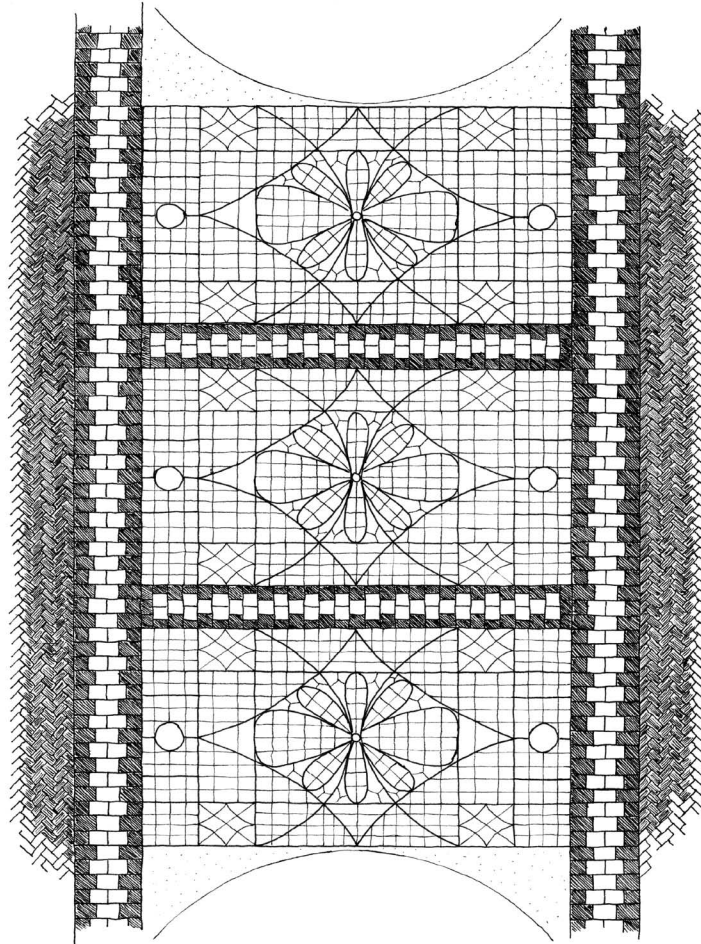
As ridership rose and more cars were added, the longer trains could no longer navigate its tight loop and the station closed in 1946. Today this well-preserved station is occasionally opened for tours, and it remains a time capsule of all that the subway's creators had envisioned.

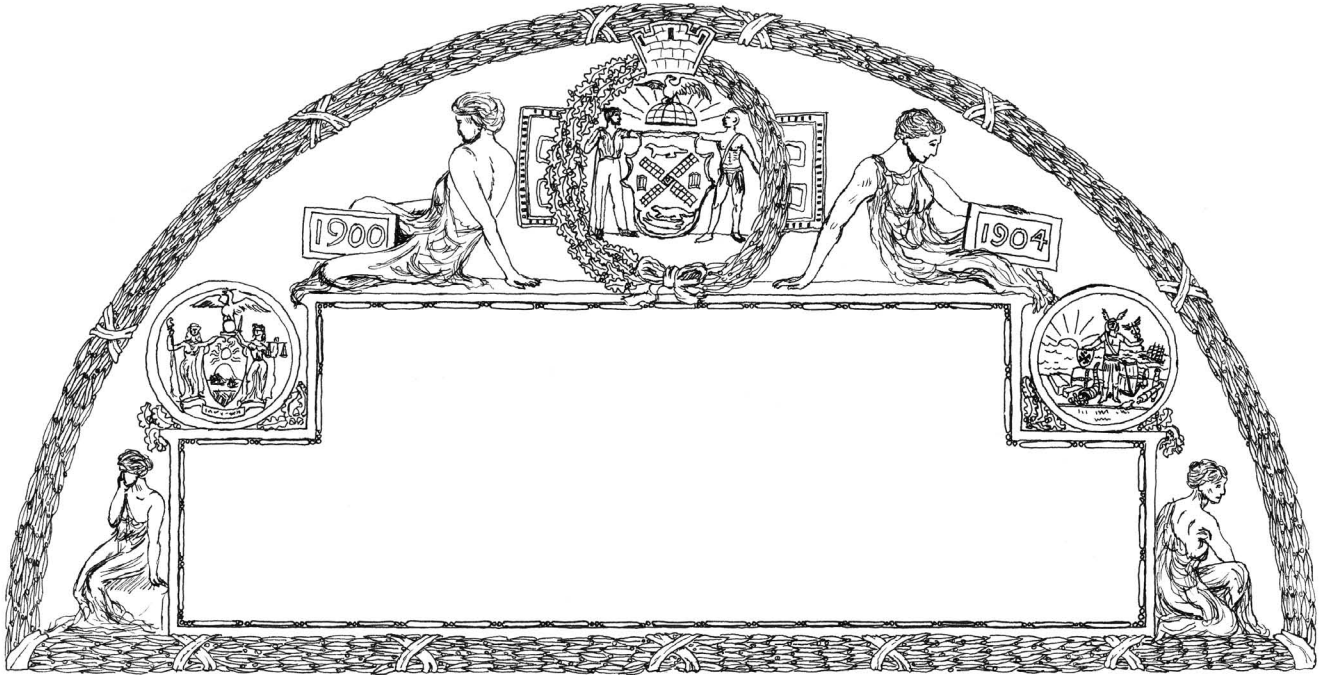




**opposite:**  
City Hall  
Platform  
Closed station  
(no longer visible)

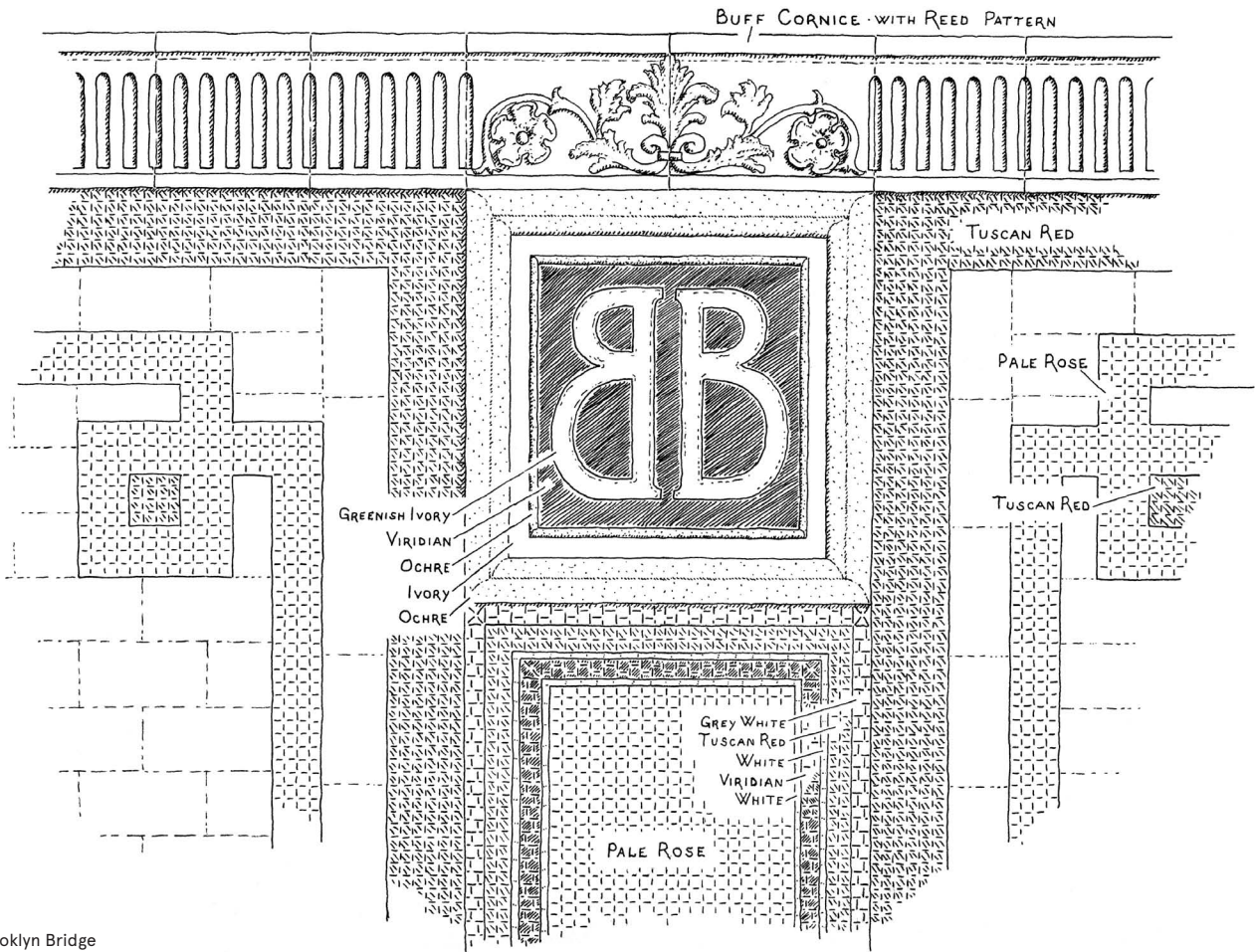
**right:**  
City Hall  
Leaded glass skylight  
Closed station  
(no longer visible)





City Hall  
Bronze  
commemorative tablet  
Closed station  
(no longer visible)





Brooklyn Bridge  
 Faience monogram  
 plaque  
 4/5/6 lines

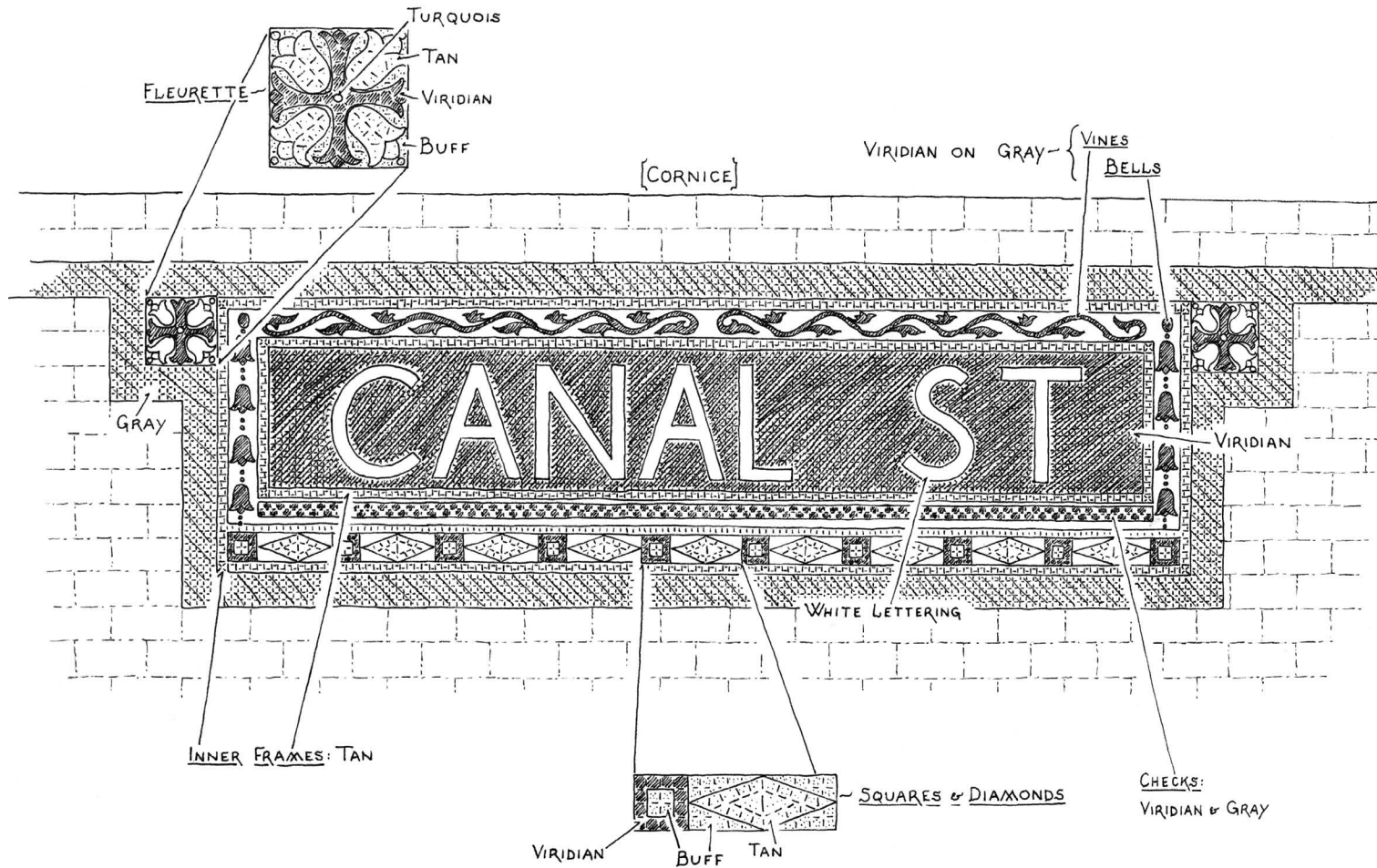
## CANAL STREET MOSAIC NAME PANEL

Chief Engineer William Barclay Parsons came by one day with a message from the subway's financier, August Belmont II, ordering the architects to cut down on all the variety and create a standard design for the stations, because individualizing them was costing the banker a mint. So LaFarge worked on establishing a standard, repeatable design system for the stations and settled upon this mosaic format for name panels. While his design was

standardized, these panels (and the station's design) are distinct in one specific way: it was a system Chief Engineer Parsons and his team formulated. How were the weary commuters, new to the very idea of subway travel, going to recognize their home station in an instant? The stations were color coded.

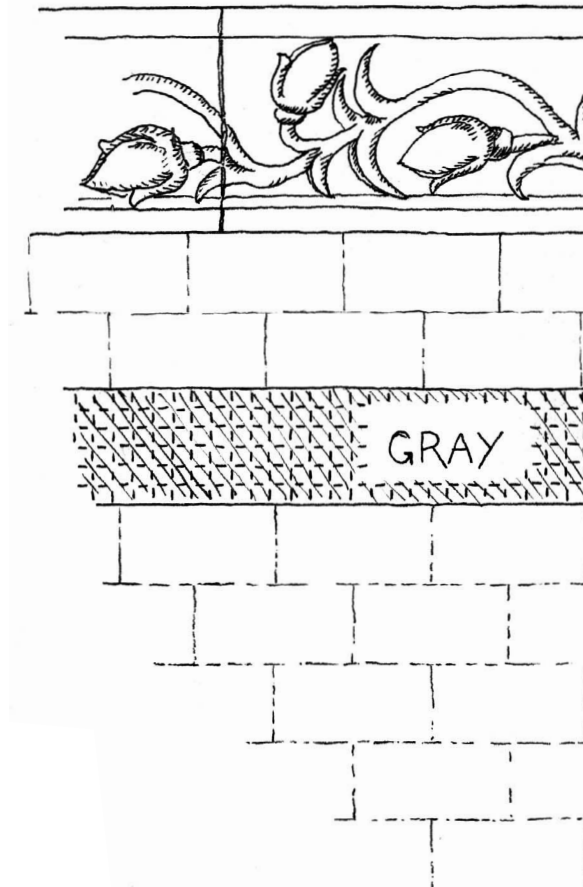
*Felix Alcan, along with his dozen French and Italian craftsmen, hand cut and set the mosaics in 1904.*

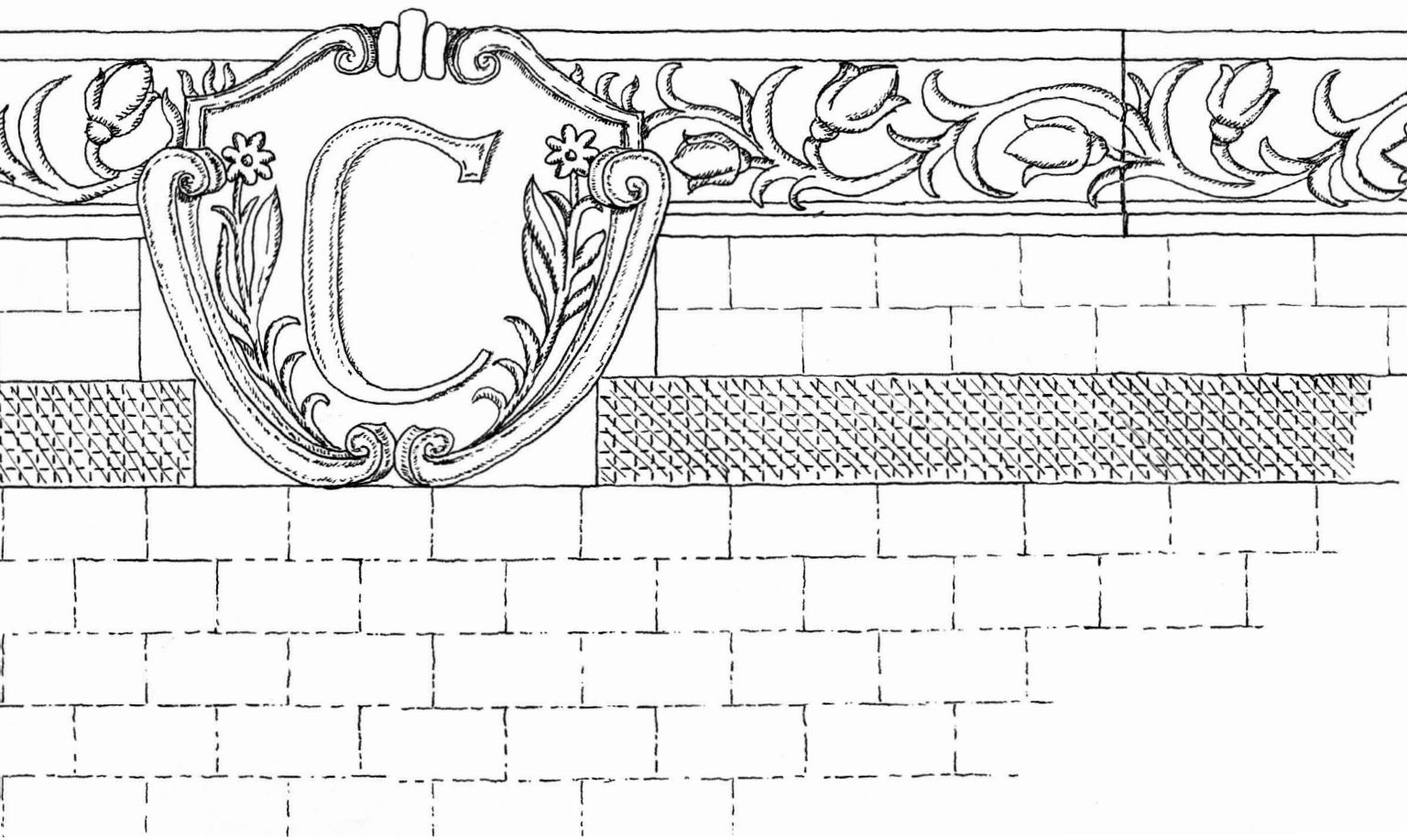




Canal Street  
 Mosaic name panel  
 6 line

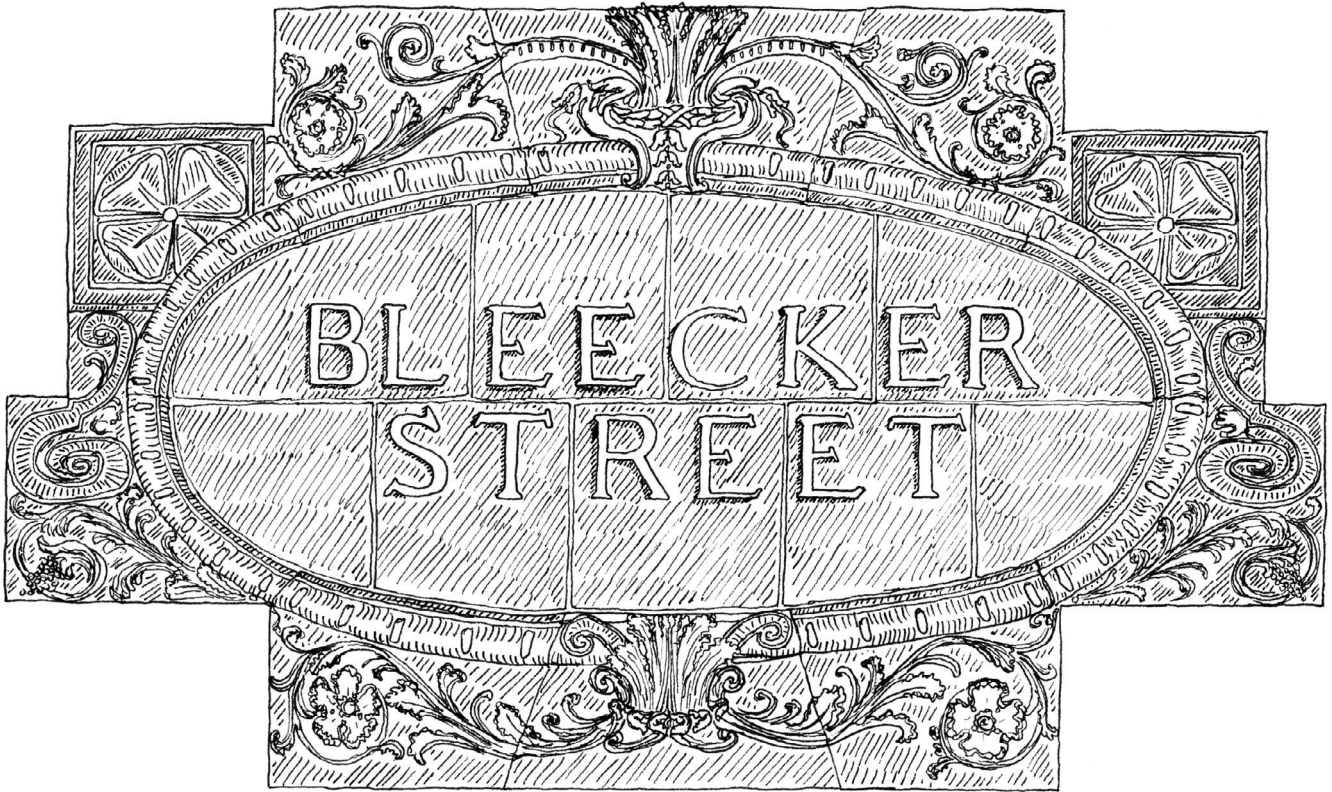
Canal Street  
Terracotta plaque  
6 line







Bleecker Street  
Faience name panel  
6 line

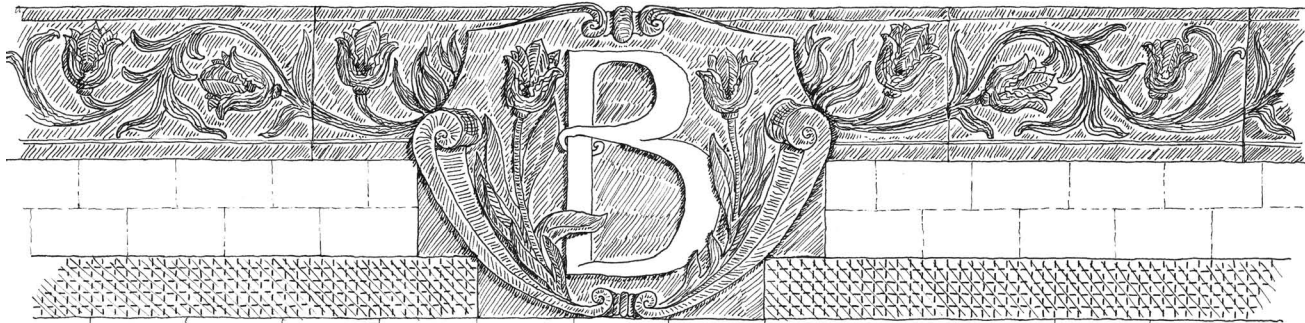


## BLEECKER STREET FAIENCE NAME PANEL

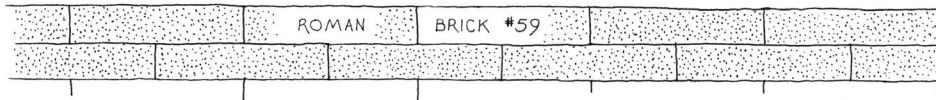
**I**n all the New York City subway system, you won't find any other name panels like these. This IRT station at Bleecker Street was one of the first to have its décor installed, and it benefitted from an early burst of LaFarge's enthusiasm to see the system live up to its City Beautiful aspirations. The faience name panel features enormous oval platters surrounded by a wide irregular frame

of scrolls, blossoms, and acanthus clusters—all in a deep, lustrous cobalt blue. The station's eight original faience name panels survive to this day.

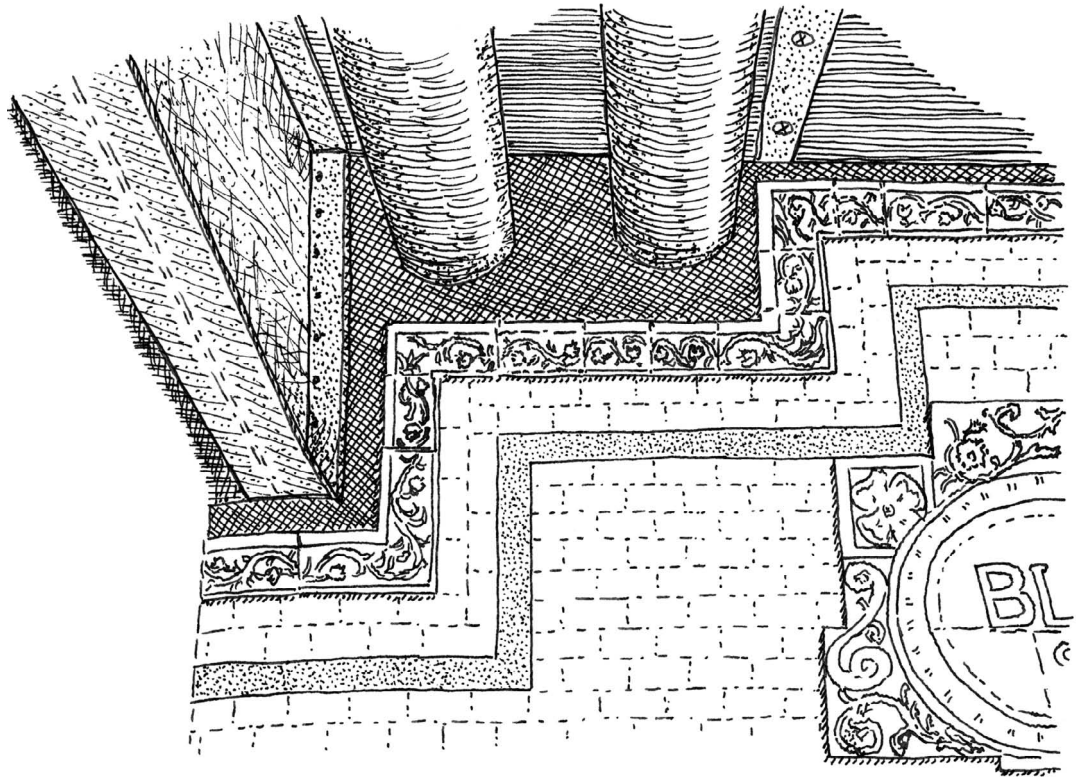
*The panels were manufactured at Grueby Faience Company of South Boston, which was better known for its vases and the lamp bases it produced for Tiffany Studios.*



MARBLE COPING







opposite and right:  
Bleecker Street  
Faience name panel  
and cornice  
6 line

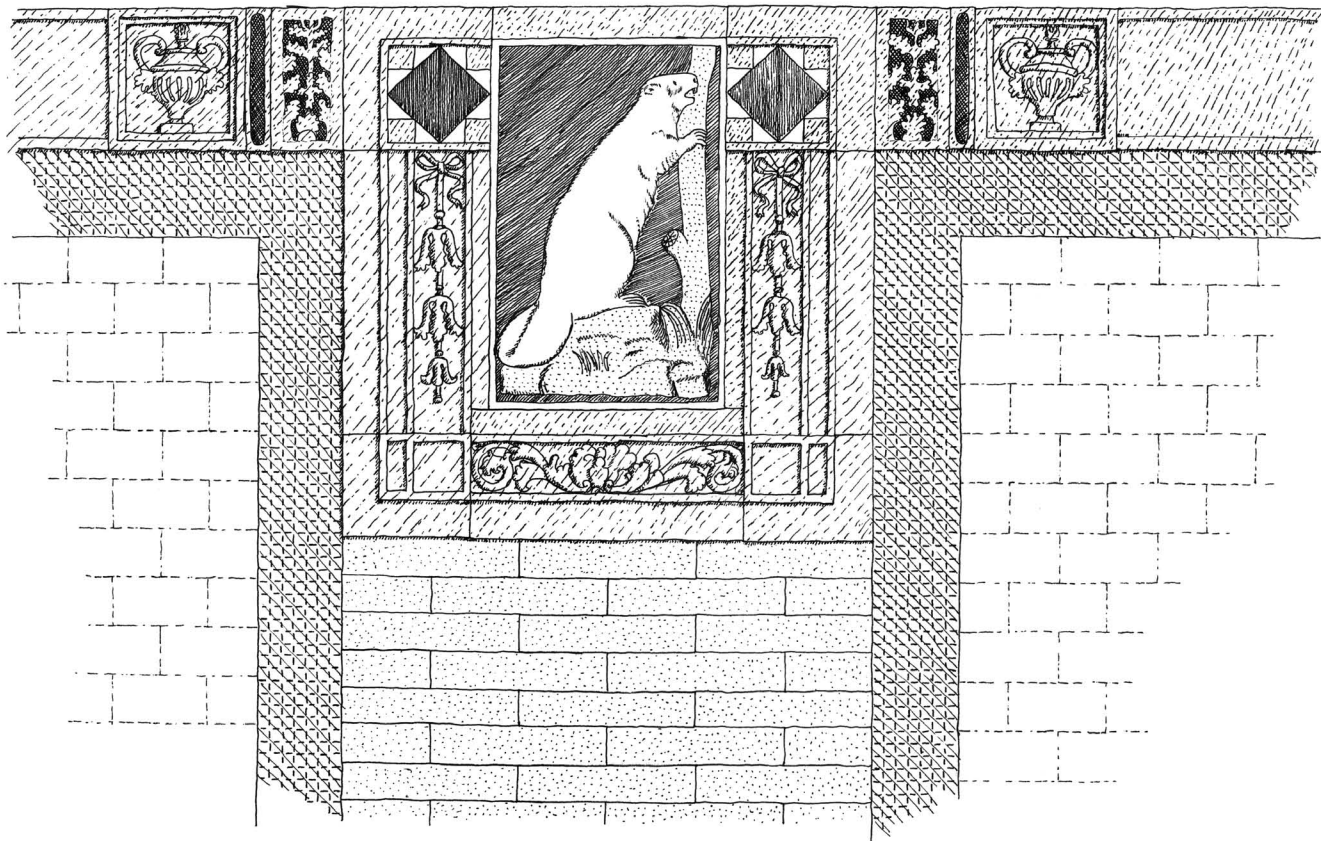
## ASTOR PLACE FAIENCE BEAVER PLAQUE

**S**urely the Astor Place beaver plaque is the most fondly beheld of all the subway's iconic tableaux. Astor Place's namesake, John Jacob Astor, was one of the richest men in the world during his lifetime. Astor, labeled "the landlord of New York," made a great fortune in real estate. But other fortunes came before, most notably when he latched onto a fashionable trend of his time, when gentlemen of quality wore beaver-fur top hats. He entered into commerce with Native Americans and Canadian trappers, importing beaver pelts,

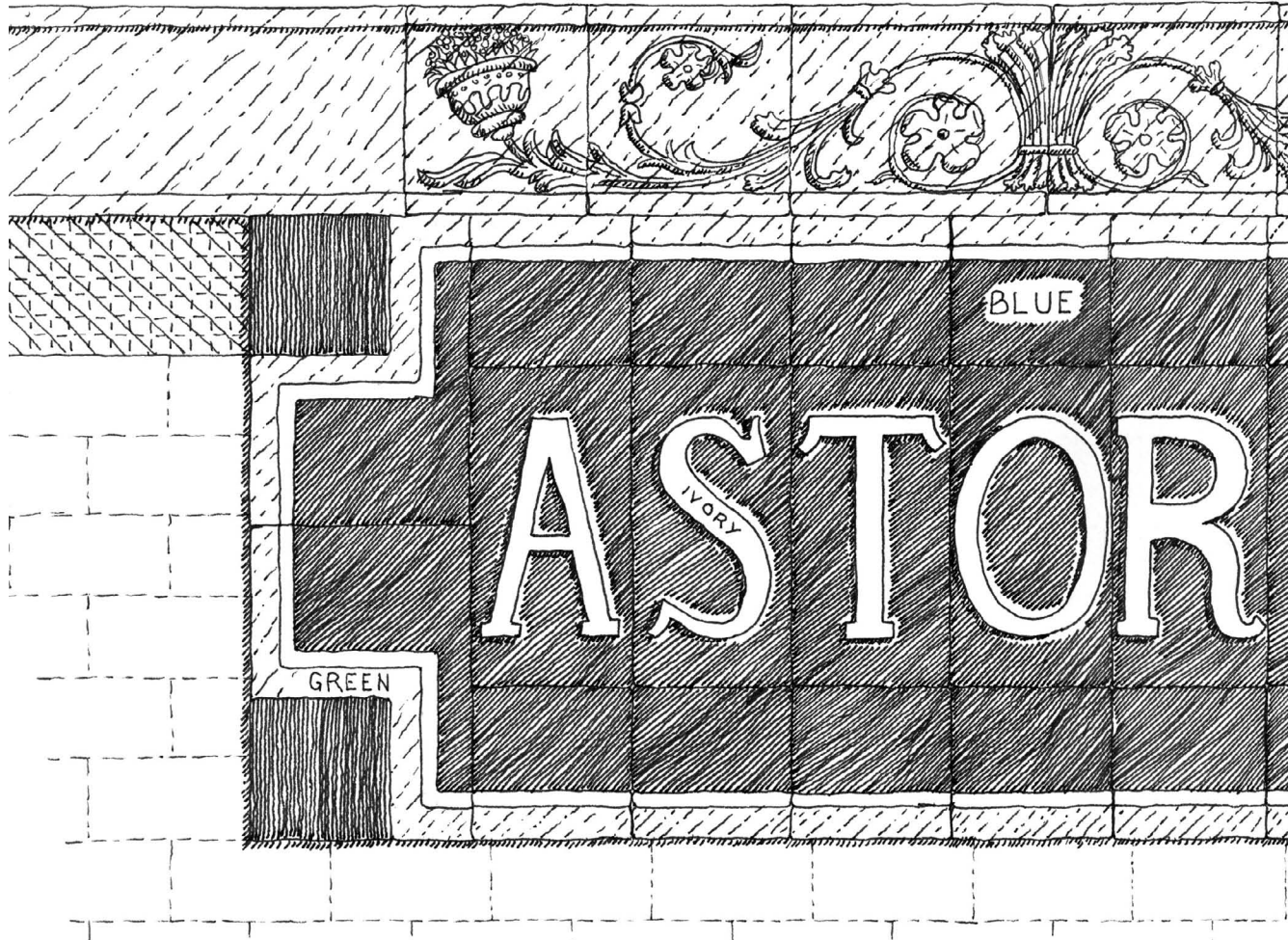
and established his own trading post out in Oregon, which he modestly named Astoria. So it was beaver pelts that earned Astor his early fortune and enabled him to start buying up Manhattan piecemeal. Hence, the beaver plaques, to pay homage to his beginnings.

*The plaques and cornice were fabricated by Grueby Faience, South Boston. Addison B. LeBoutillier probably guided the molding of these plaques.*



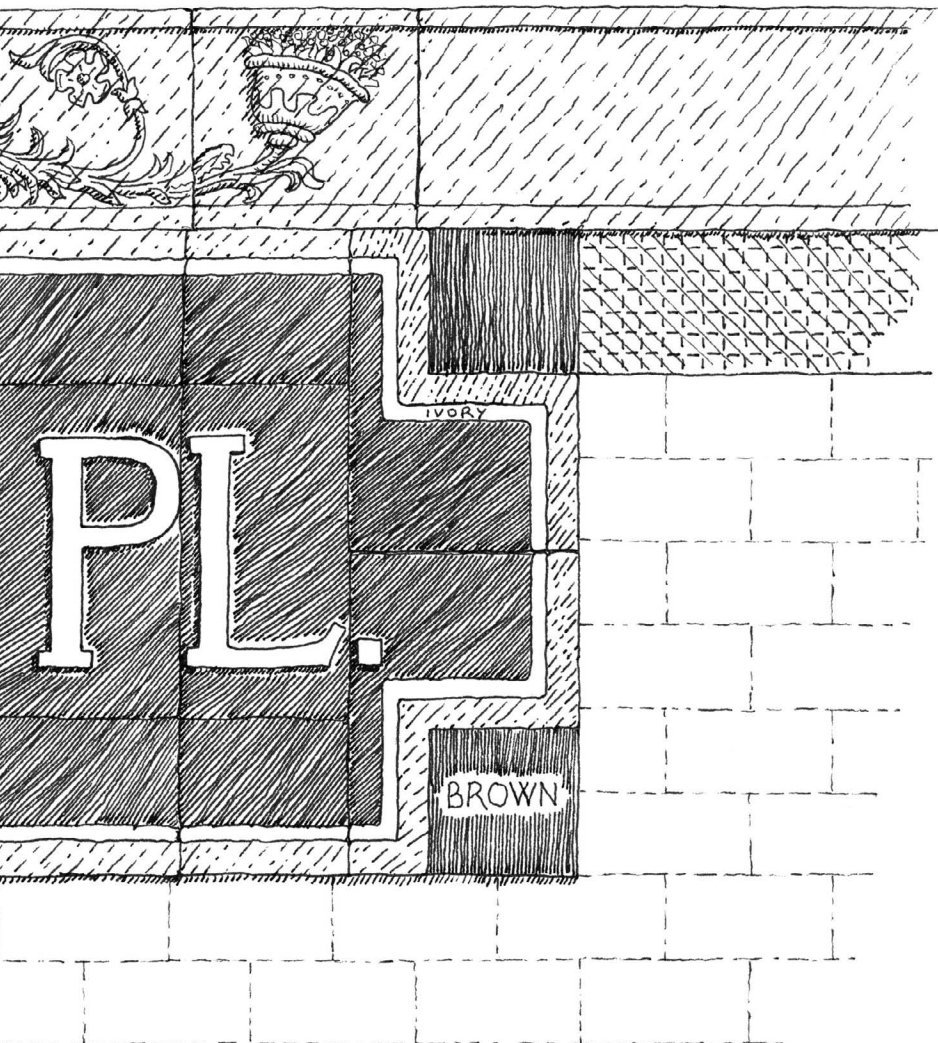


Astor Place  
Faience beaver plaque  
6 line

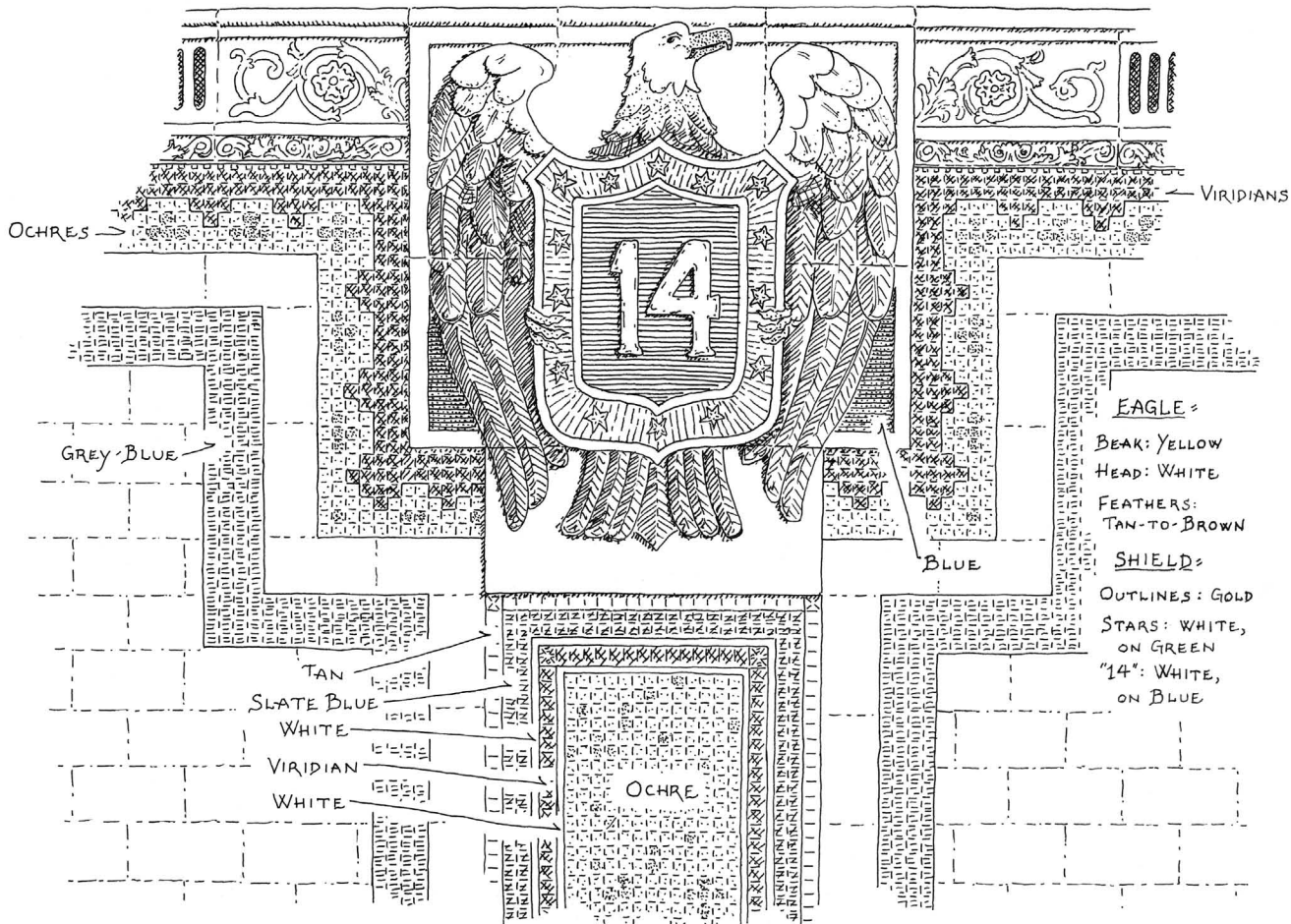




Astor Place  
Faience name panel  
6 line



CORNICE & PLAQUE FRAME: LT. BROWN/OCHRE



## 14TH STREET FAIENCE EAGLE PLAQUE

**T**hese eagle and escutcheon plaques adorn three stations on the first IRT line: Brooklyn Bridge, 14th Street / Union Square, and 33rd Street. So why are these magisterial eagles only at these three stations? If we associate these American bald eagles and their star-studded shields with American defense and strength, then armories

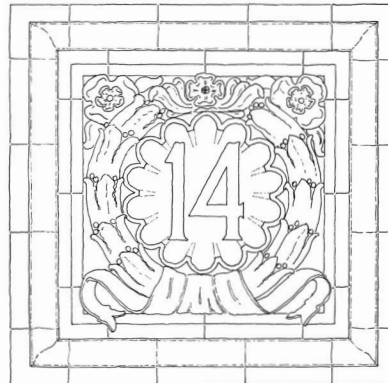
are the answer. The 71st Regiment Armory stood just upstairs from the 33rd Street station, and the 42nd Infantry Armory was at Union Square. As for the eagles at Brooklyn Bridge, it's not readily known if there had been an armory there; unfortunately, these were covered up by a station reconstruction project in the 1960s.

**opposite:**

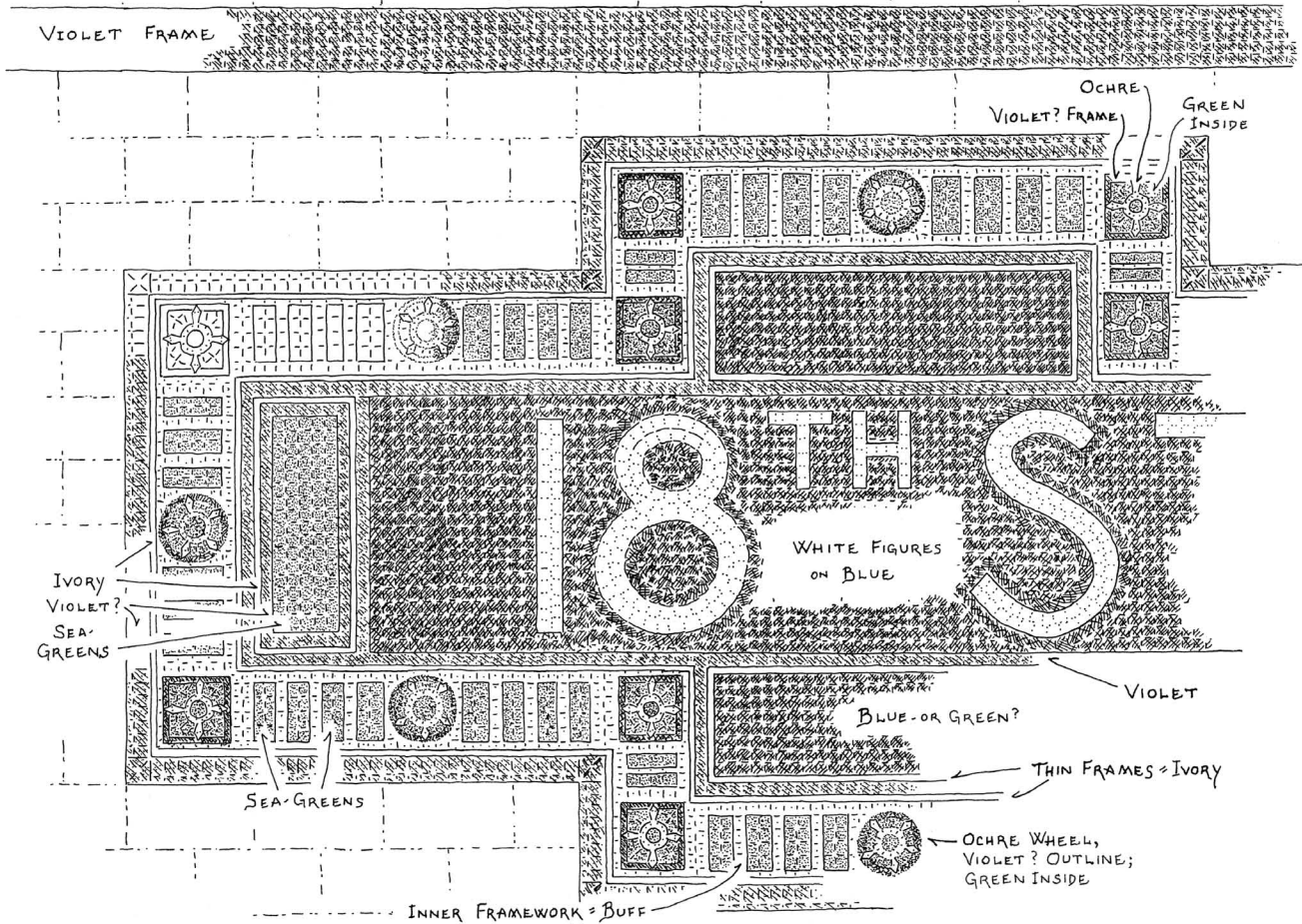
14th Street / Union Square  
Faience eagle plaque  
4/5/6 lines

**right:**

14th Street / Union Square  
Faience wreath plaque  
4/5/6 lines  
(no longer visible)



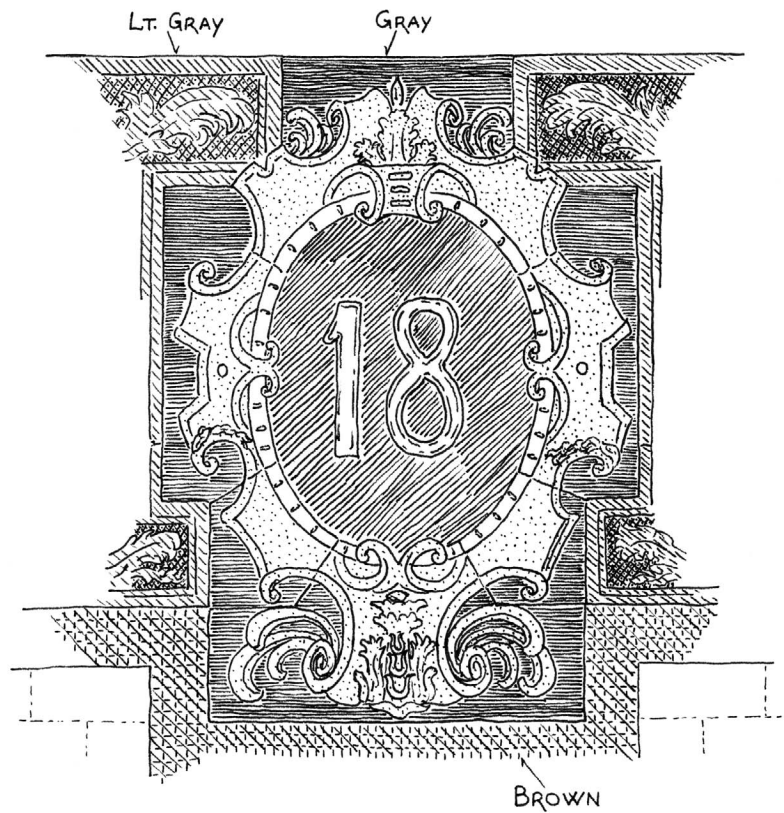




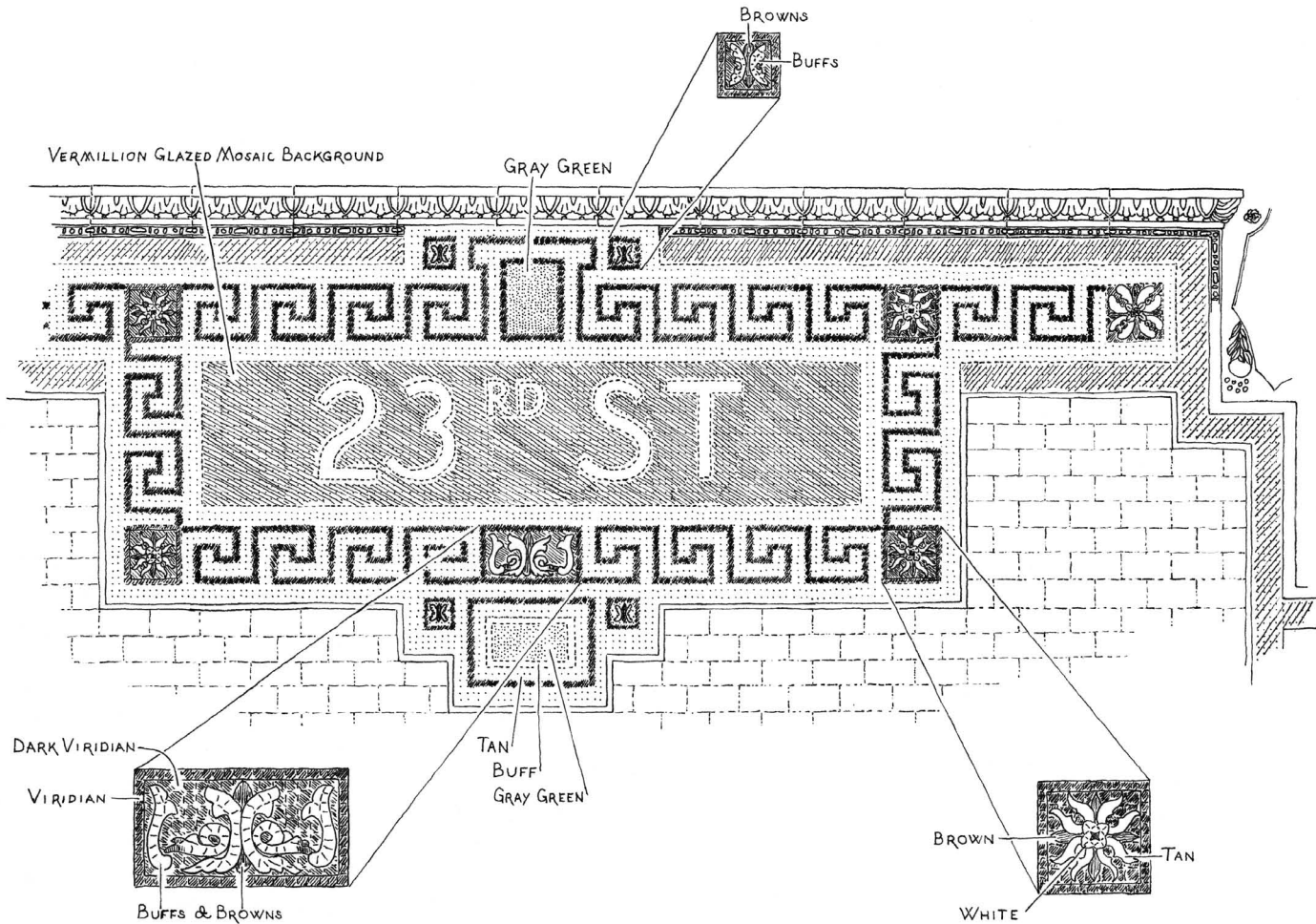
opposite:  
18th Street  
Mosaic name panel  
6 line  
Closed station  
(no longer visible)

right:  
18th Street  
Faience plaque  
6 line  
Closed station  
(no longer visible)

NUMERALS:  
IVORY-GREEN  
OVAL:  
VIRIDIAN  
OVAL FRAME:  
WHITE  
CARTOUCHE FRAME:  
OCHRE









## 23RD STREET MOSAIC NAME PANEL

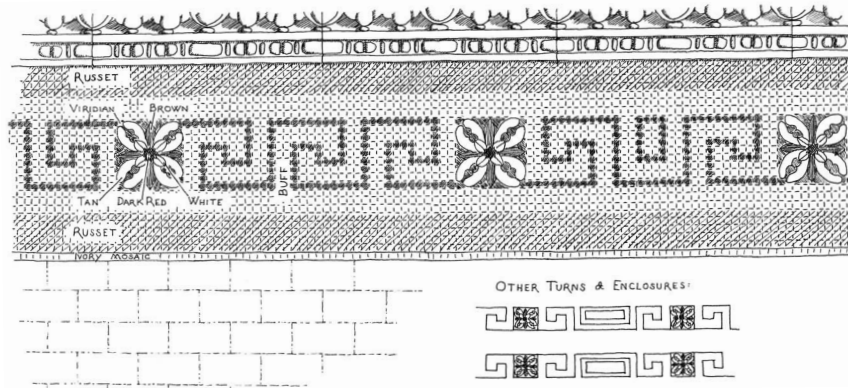
The 23rd Street station was one of the first stations ready to have its artwork installed, so this sprawling mosaic name panel is one of LaFarge's earliest designs. There are no other name panels in the system like these, and sadly, it's now lost to history. In 1979 there were still two of the (possibly) eight

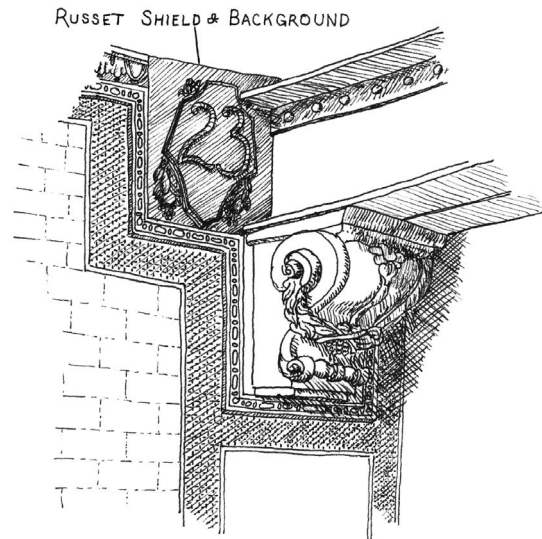
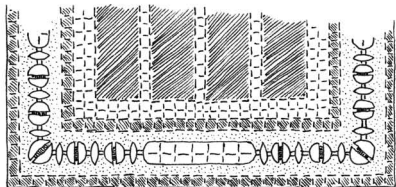
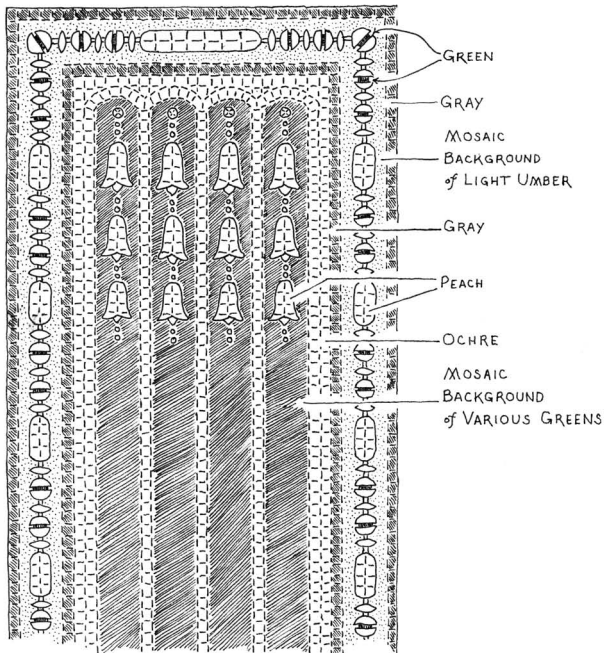
name panels visible, but by the mid-1980s, the station had been renovated with beige wall tiles, obliterating the originals.

*The mosaics were composed by Felix Alcan and his team of European craftsmen in 1903.*

opposite:  
23rd Street  
Mosaic name panel  
6 line  
(no longer visible)

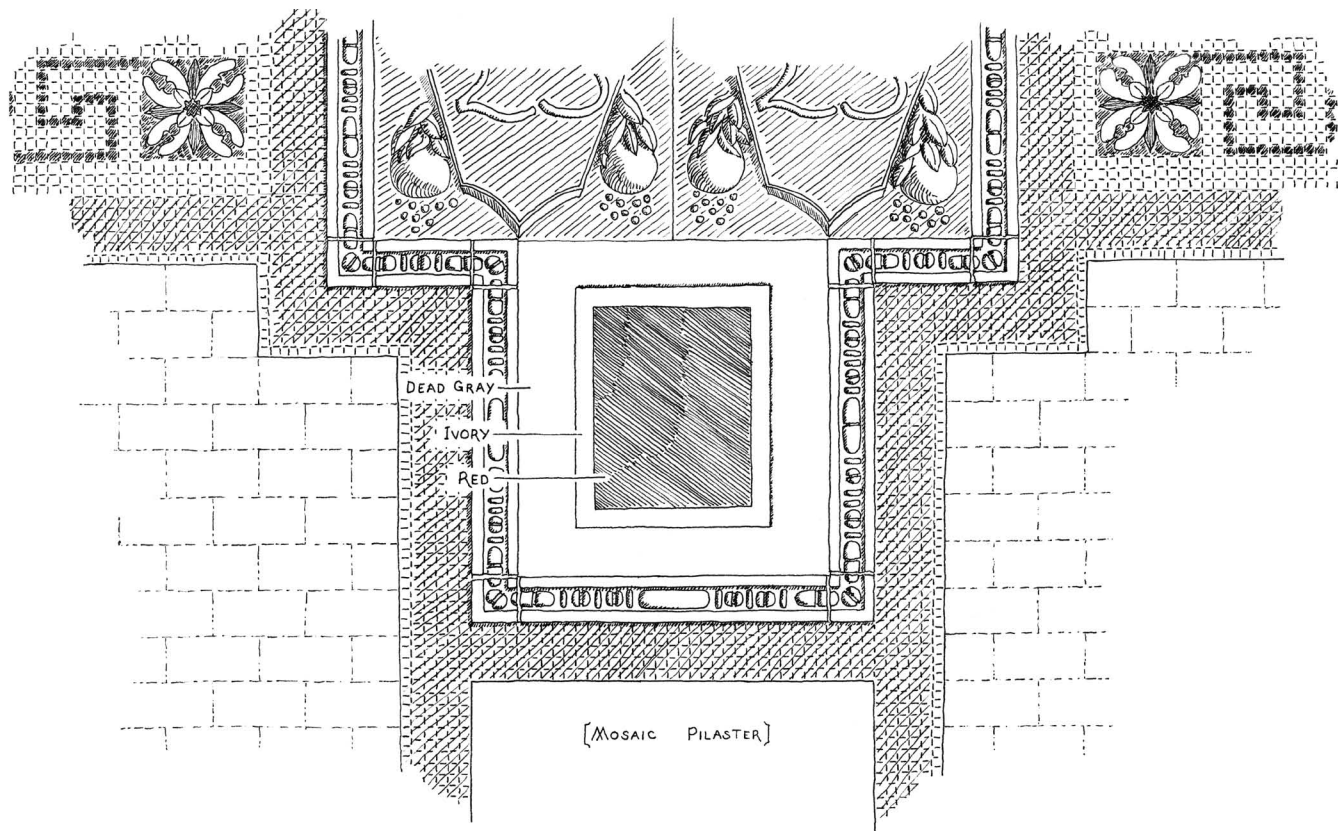
right:  
23rd Street  
Mosaic band  
and faience cornice  
6 line





**left:**  
 23rd Street  
 Mosaic pilaster  
 6 line

**right:**  
 23rd Street  
 Faience corbel  
 6 line



23rd Street  
 Faience shields  
 and panel  
 6 line  
 (Shields no longer  
 visible)

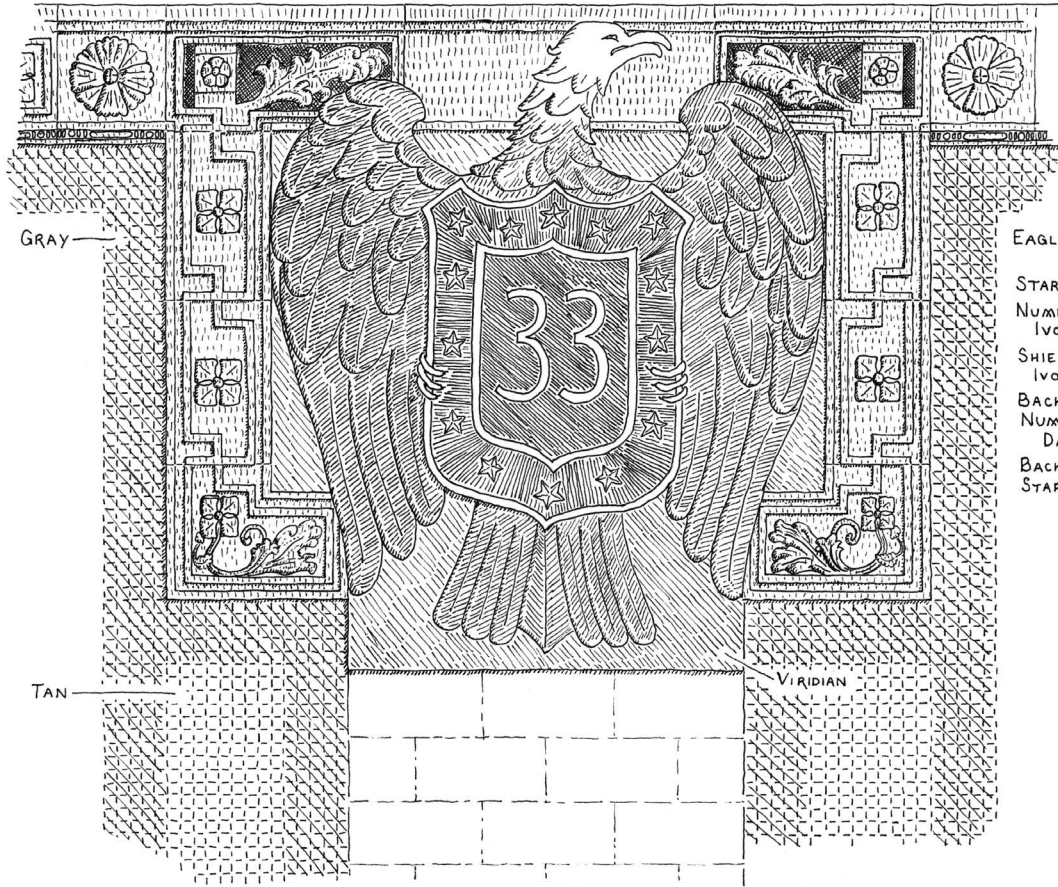


OCHRE FRAME



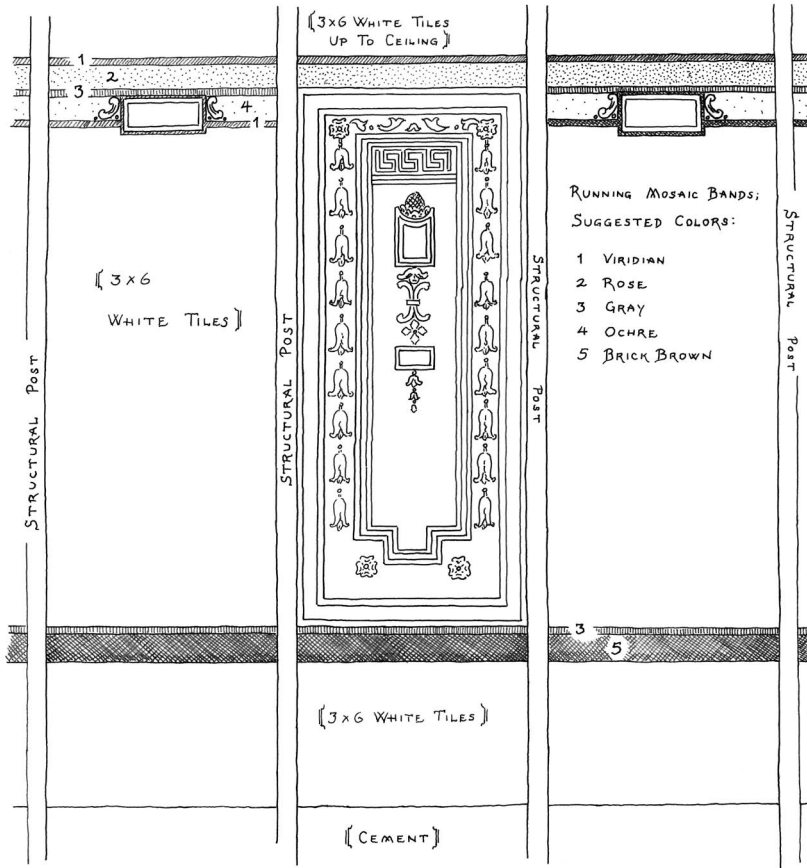
-  BLUE
-  OCHRE
-  PISTACHIO
-  TAN FRET IN BORDER
-  WHITE LETTERING

28th Street  
Faience name panel  
6 line



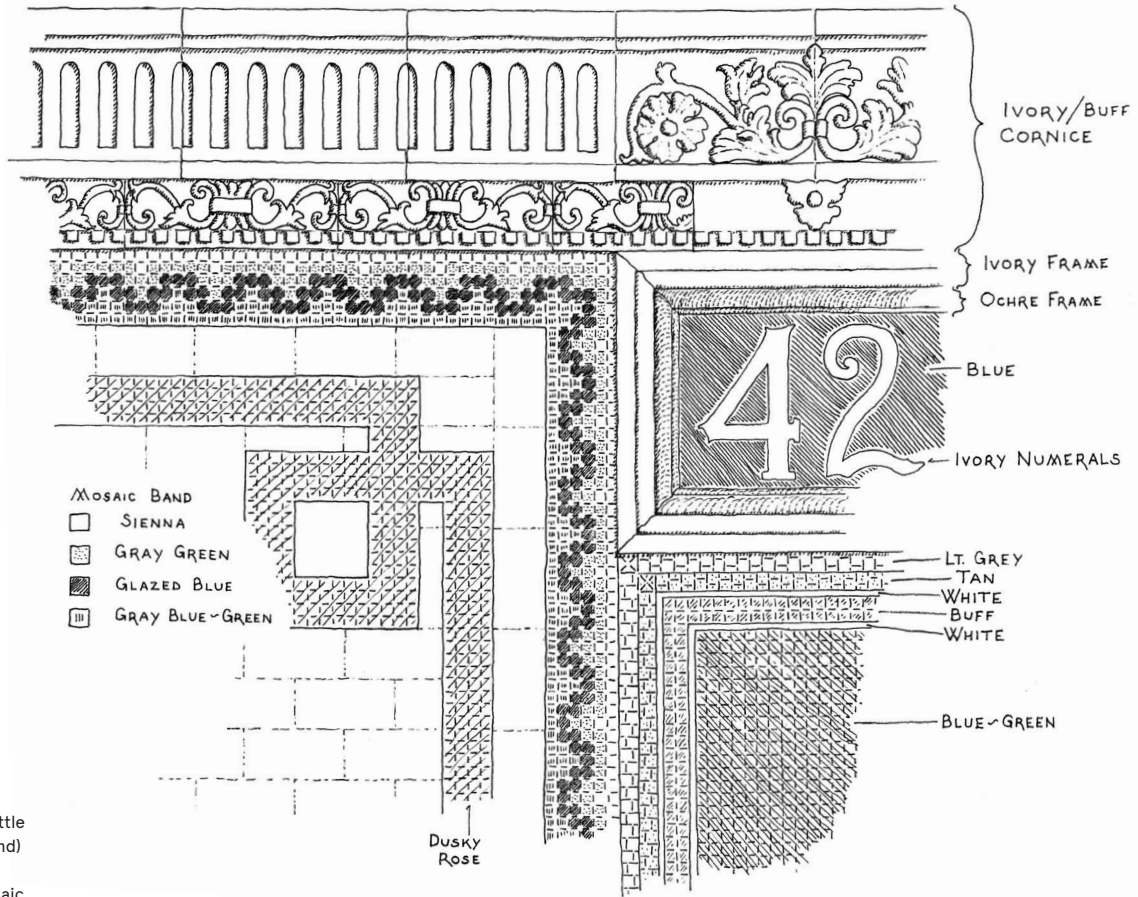
- EAGLE: BRONZE & WHITE
- STARS: WHITE
- NUMERALS: IVORY GREEN
- SHIELD FRAMES: IVORY GREEN
- BACKGROUND of NUMERALS: DARK GREEN
- BACKGROUND of STARS: BLUE

33rd Street  
 Faience eagle plaque  
 6 line

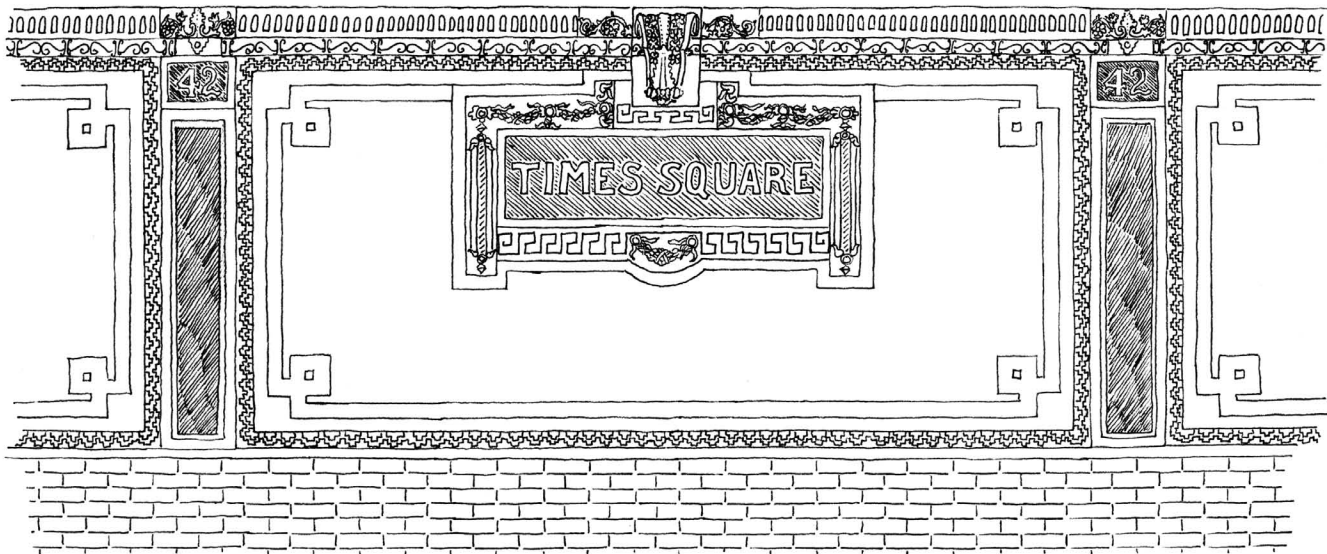


42nd Street Shuttle  
(Grand Central end)  
Mosaic panel  
S line  
(no longer visible)

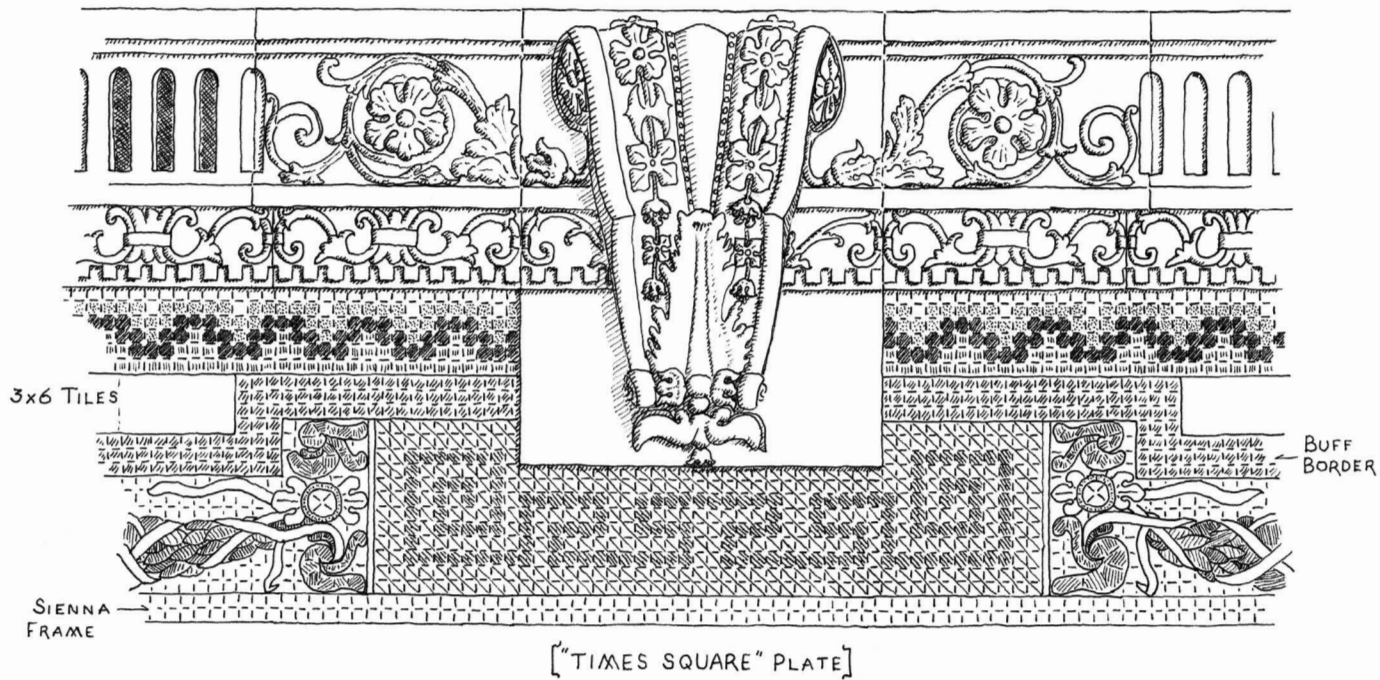




42nd Street Shuttle  
 (Times Square end)  
 Faience cornice  
 and plaque; mosaic  
 band and frame  
 S line  
 (no longer visible)



42nd Street Shuttle  
(Times Square end)  
Mosaic name panel  
S line



42nd Street Shuttle  
 (Times Square end)  
 Faience corbel  
 S line  
 (no longer visible)

## COLUMBUS CIRCLE BEAM STRIPS

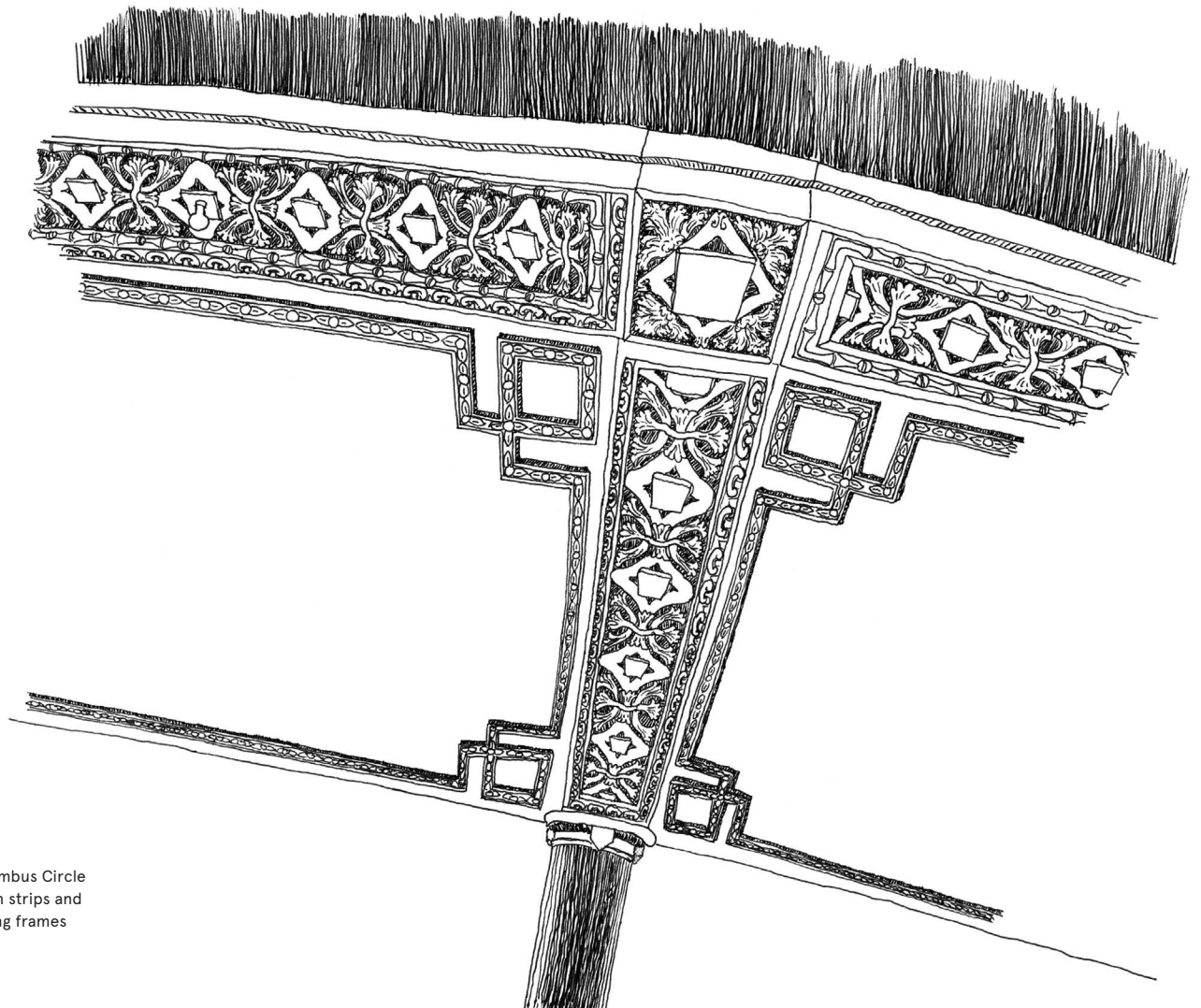
**F**ew middle-class homes had their ceilings decorated with artistic moldings. That touch belonged to upper-class mansions, which had their own carriages and whose residents did not depend on subway travel. LaFarge wanted to bring that ornamentation to the commuter class, so along with cornices, paneling, and wainscots, there were decorative strips that ran along the ceiling

beams, molded framework on the ceiling sections, and arabesque surrounds around light bulbs.

Though they appear to be plaster, these moldings are actually a three-dimensional wire construction built up with papier-mâché.

*These ornamental moldings are the product of Charles Smithson and his team of craftsmen.*





Columbus Circle  
Beam strips and  
ceiling frames  
1 line

## COLUMBUS CIRCLE

This was actually the very first station to receive its complete design from LaFarge's drawing board, and it is an example of his most lavish use of faience, featuring plaques of Christopher Columbus's *Santa Maria* and broad, modeled cornices. This extravagance was not lost on August Belmont II, the subway's financier, and he again pleaded to have the architecture simplified. His injunction led to a future reduction on faience

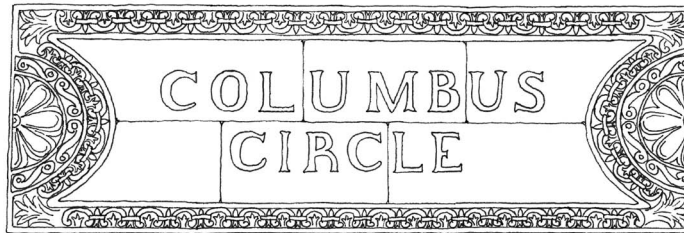
and marble wainscots and increased reliance on mosaics and terracotta.

But for all its status, this station at 59th Street was neglectfully treated when, about thirty years after it opened, a new construction project demolished many of the plaques, cornices, and name panels.

Recently, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) Office of Station Design reversed Columbus Circle's fortunes with a station

facelift. The new design work is clad in terracotta, in homage to LaFarge's décor, with broad, flat, green cornices and plaques announcing "59" in large raised numerals. The new mosaic name panels, complete with ivy, bells, fleurettes, and other decorative designs, are faithful to the originals.

*Original faience caravels were cast by Grueby Faience Company of South Boston in 1902.*



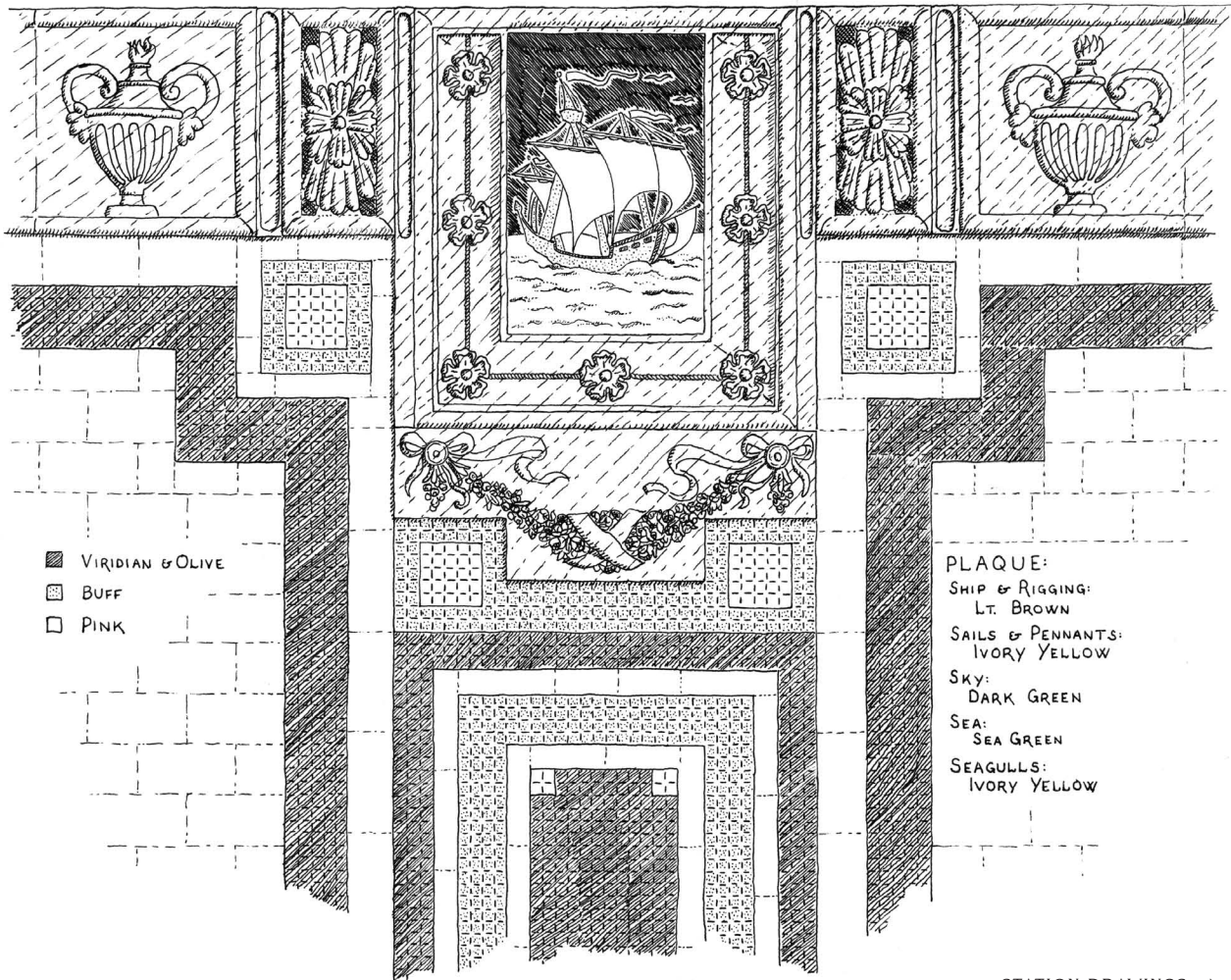
**left:**

Columbus Circle  
Faience name panel  
1 line  
(no longer visible)

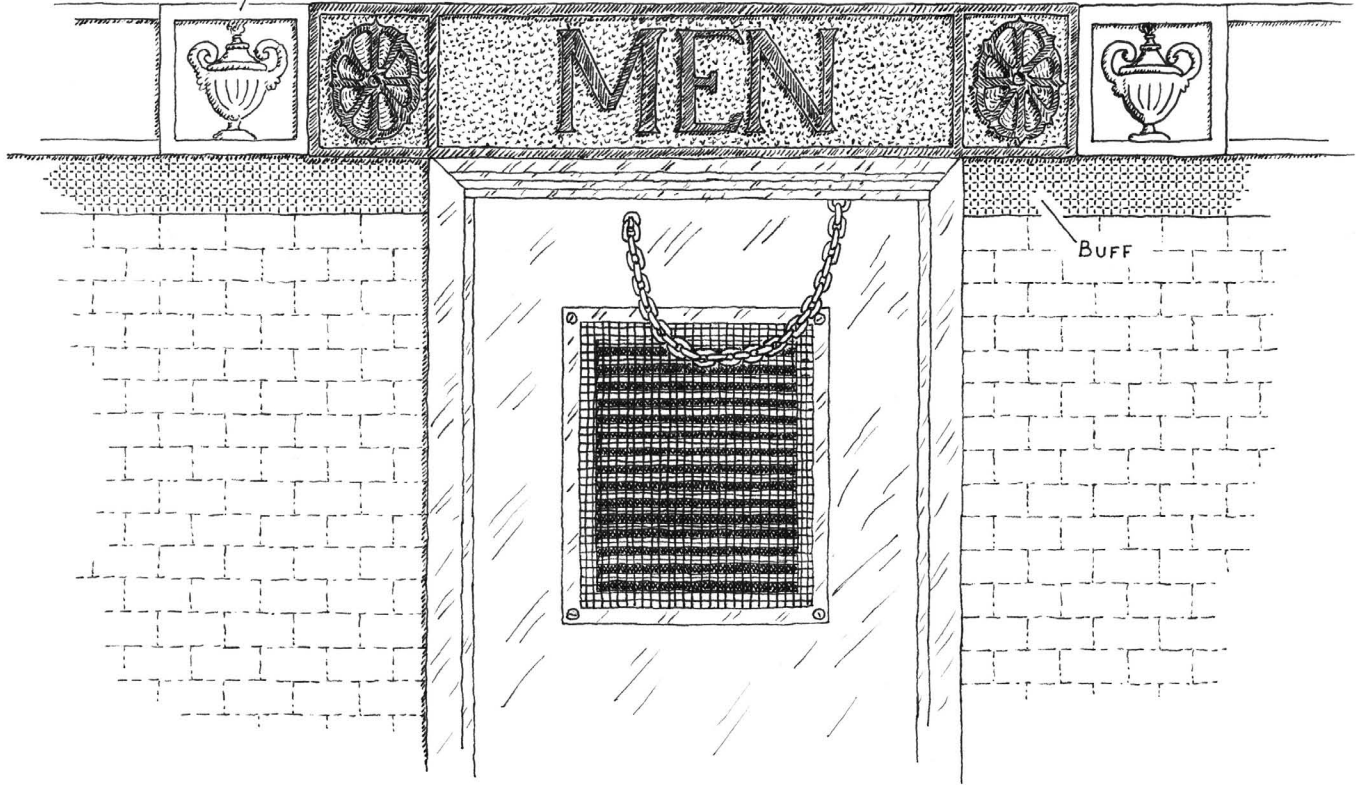
**opposite:**

Columbus Circle  
Faience *Santa Maria*  
plaque  
1 line





LT. BROWN CORNICE

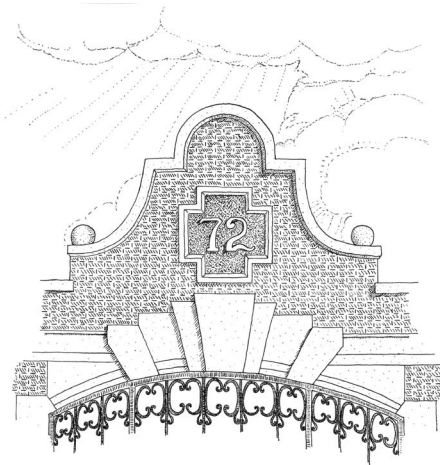
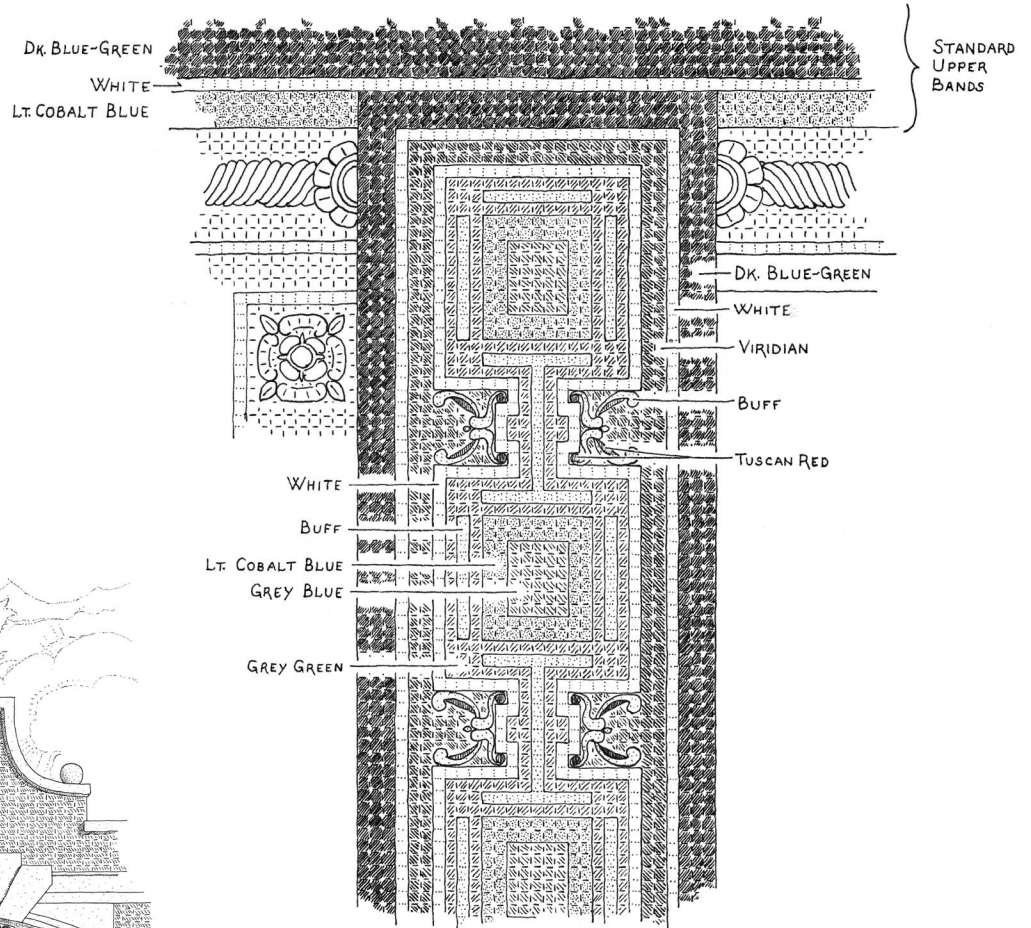


BUFF

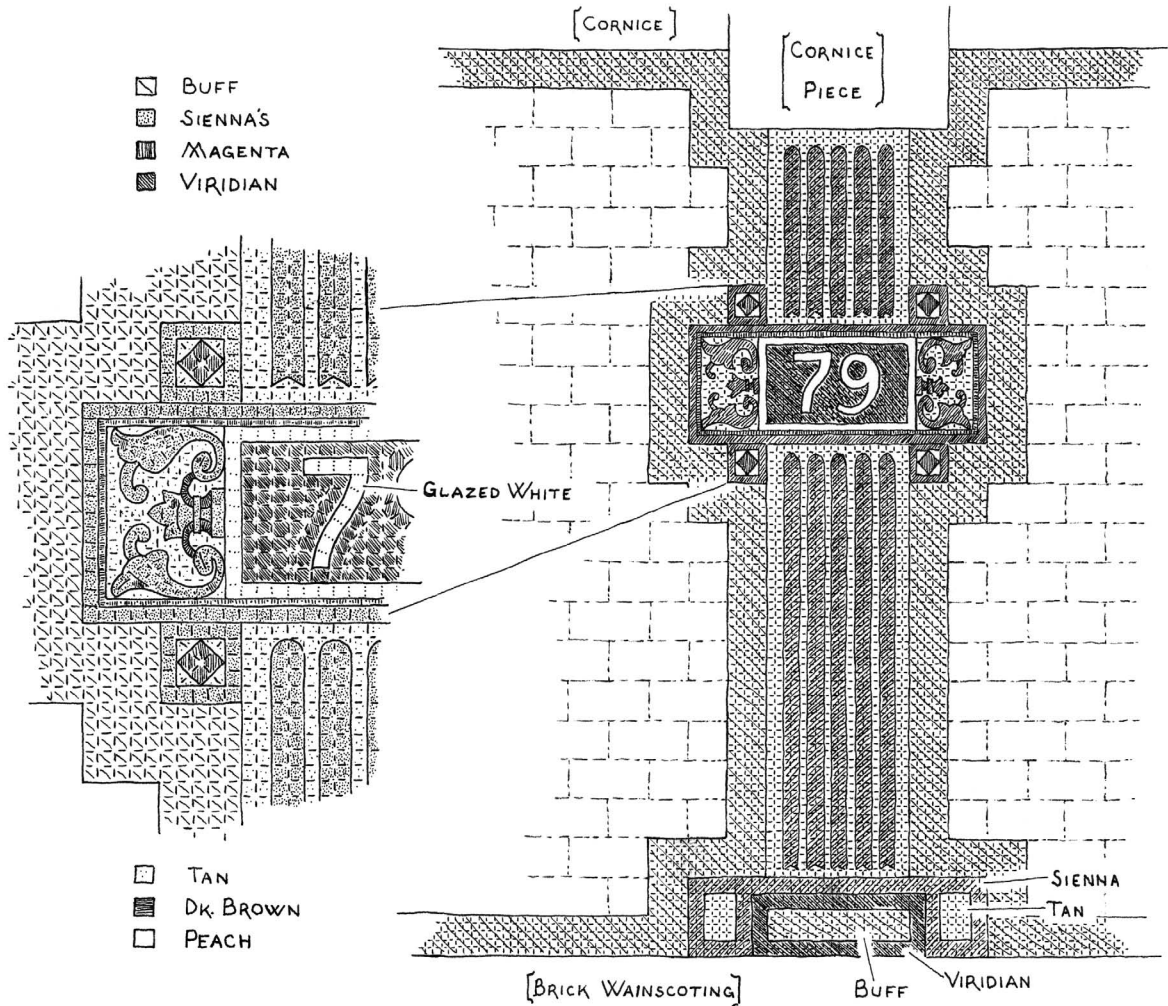
**opposite:**  
 66th Street  
 Marble lintel  
 1 line  
 Former restroom  
 (no longer visible)

**right:**  
 72nd Street  
 Mosaic panel detail  
 1/2/3 lines

**below:**  
 72nd Street  
 Entrance house roofline  
 1/2/3 lines



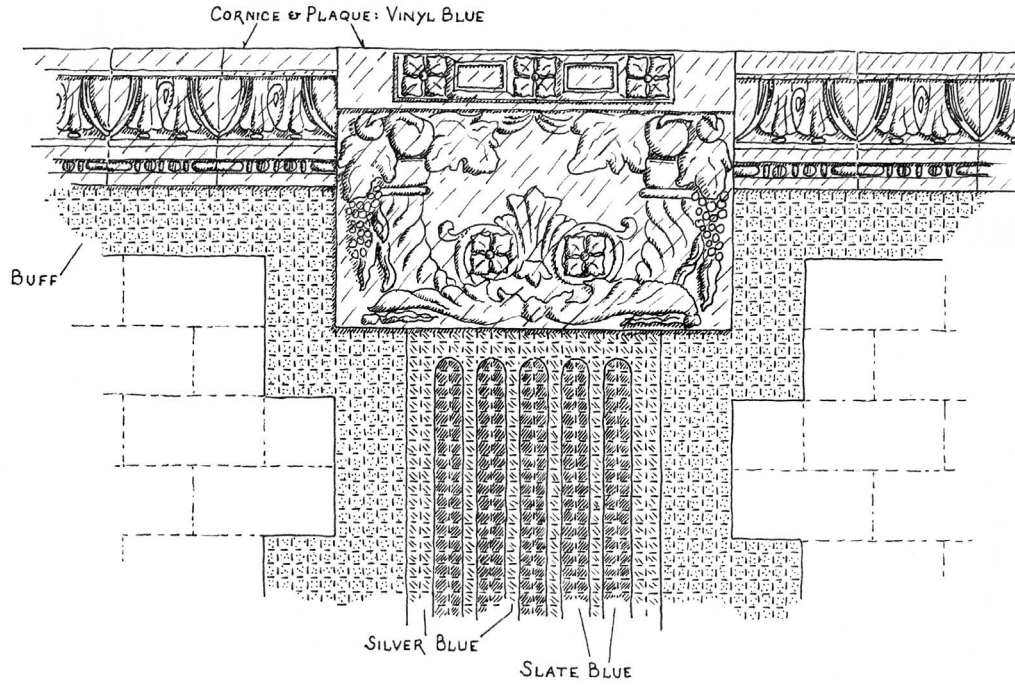
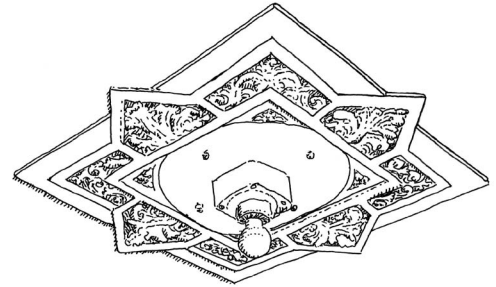


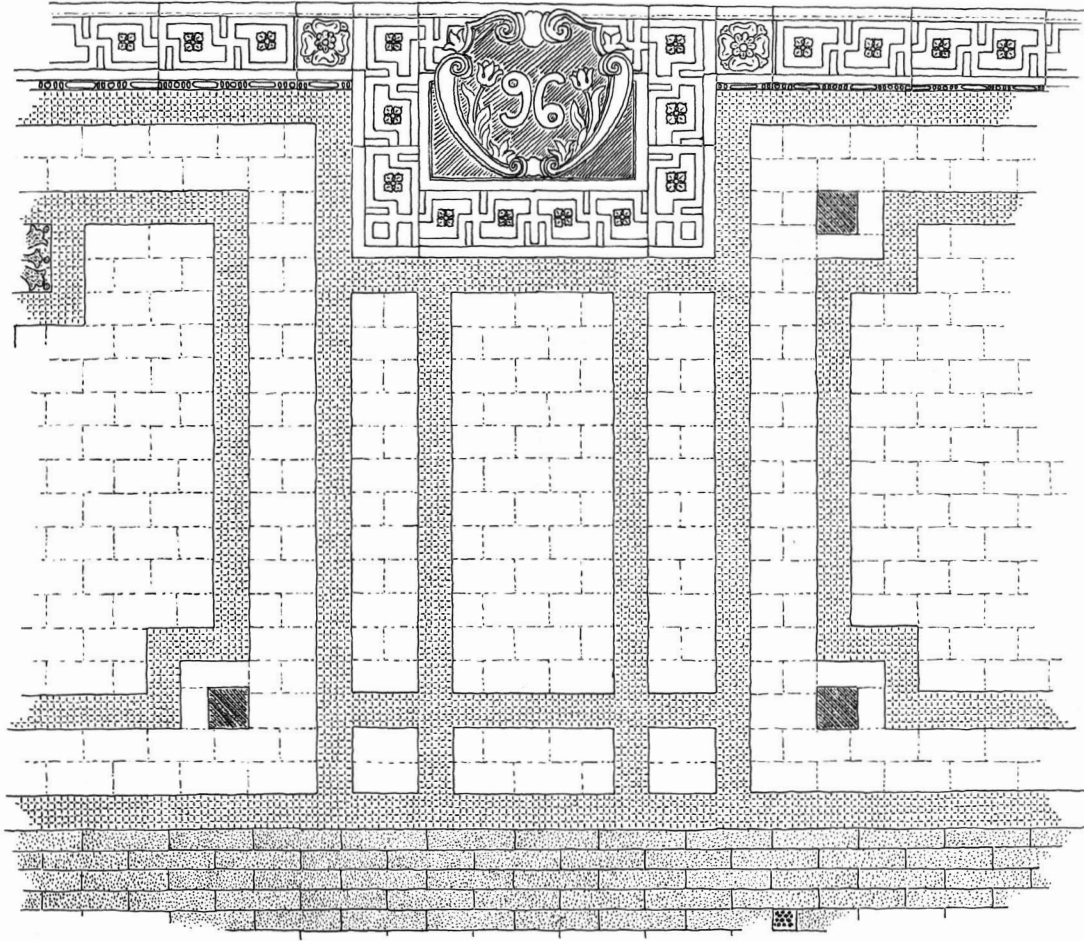


opposite:  
79th Street  
Mosaic pilaster  
1 line

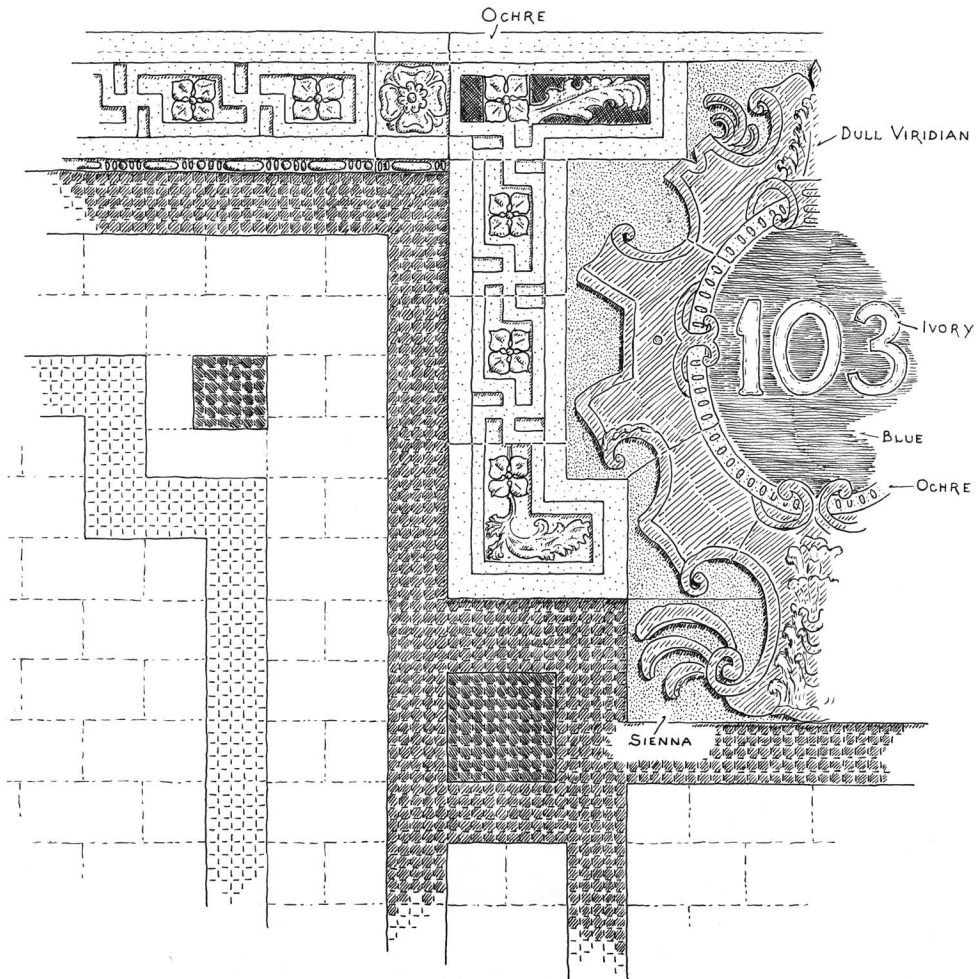
right:  
86th Street  
Plaster ceiling frame  
and light fixture  
1 line

below:  
86th Street  
Faience cornice and  
cornice plaque  
1 line



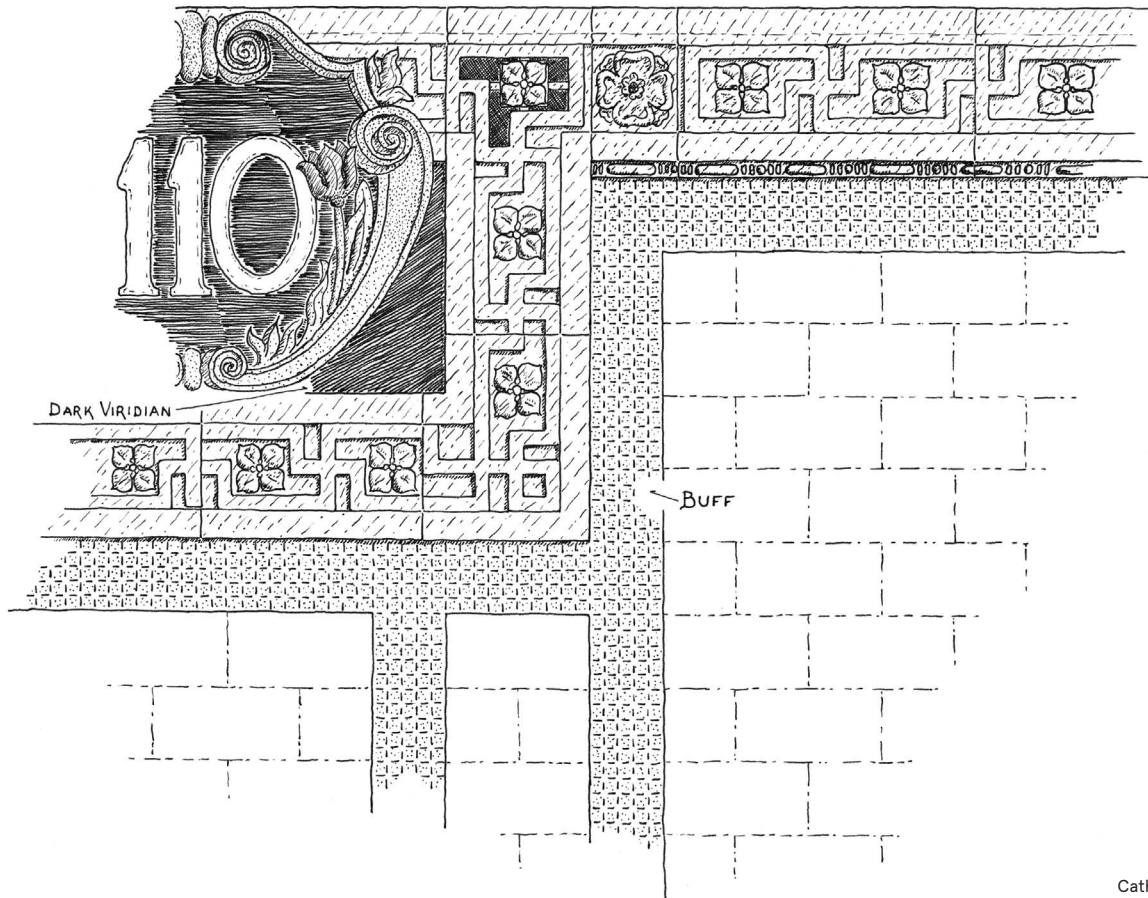




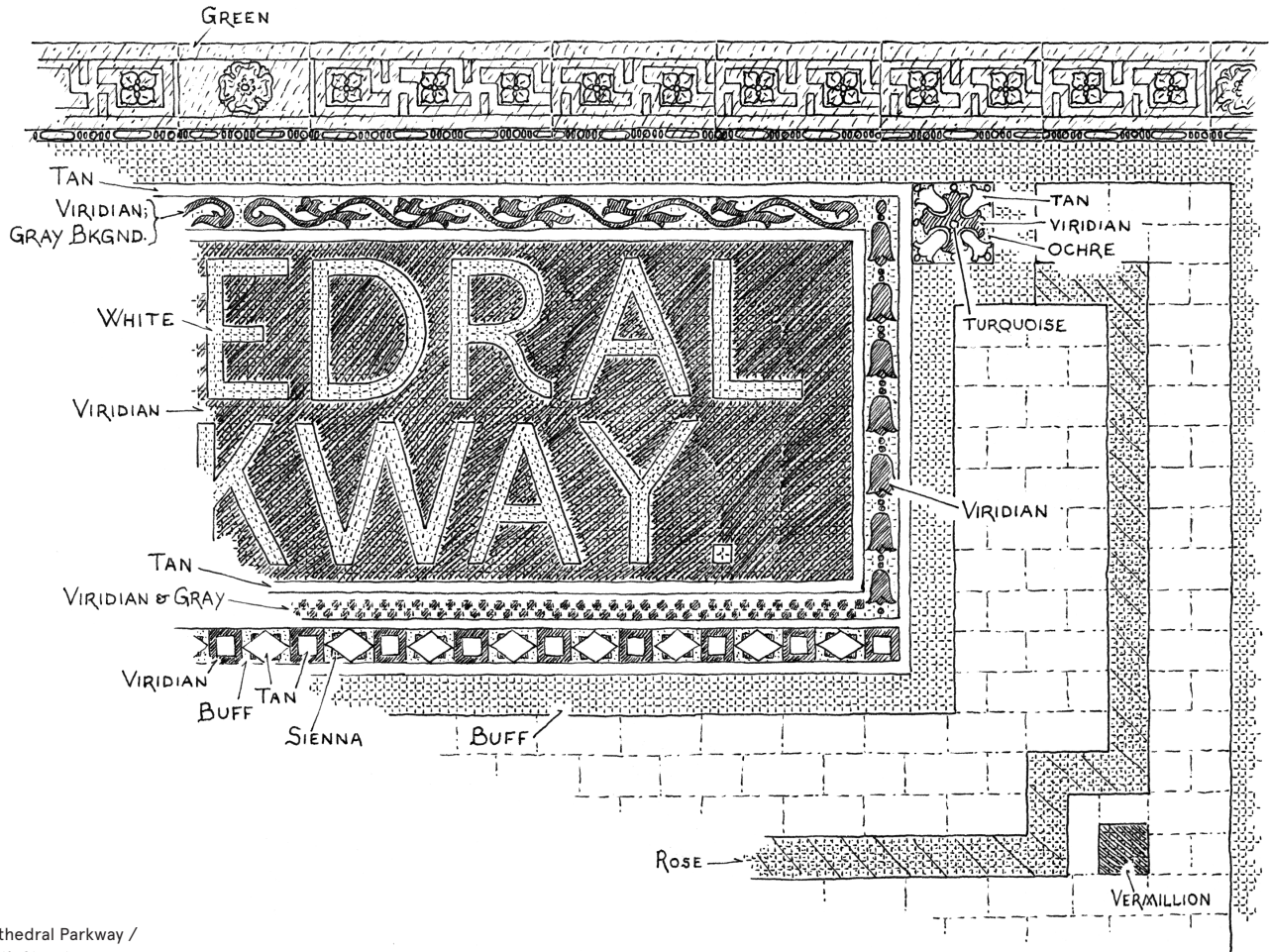


**opposite:**  
 96th Street  
 Faience plaque and  
 mosaic frameworks  
 1/2/3 lines  
 (mosaic frameworks  
 no longer visible)

**right:**  
 103rd Street  
 Faience plaque and  
 mosaic frameworks  
 1 line



Cathedral Parkway /  
110th Street  
Faience plaque and  
mosaic frameworks  
1 line



Cathedral Parkway /  
 110th Street  
 Mosaic name panel  
 1 line

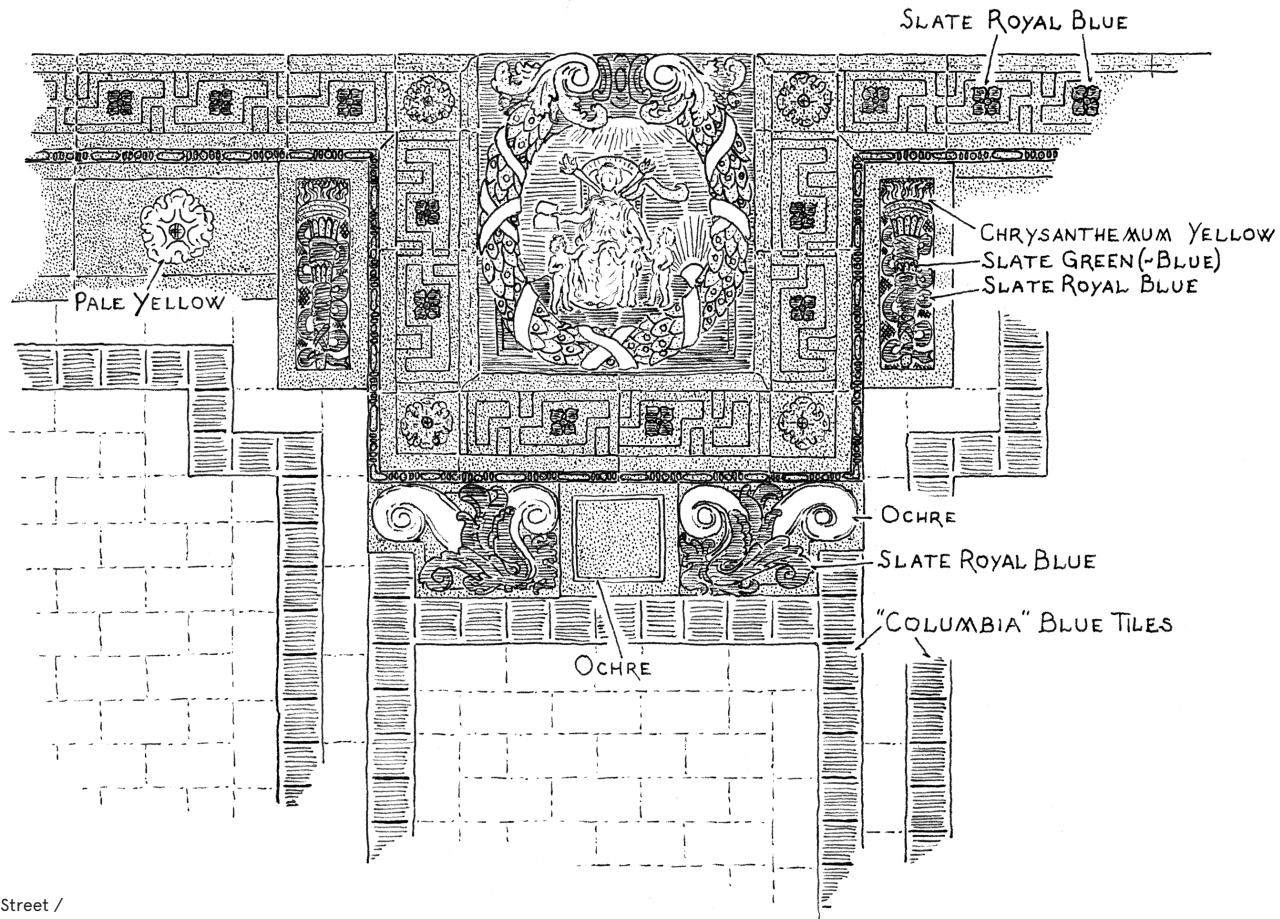
## COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY SEAL PLAQUE

Columbia University established its uptown campus through the 1890s, about ten years before the IRT arrived at 116th Street. The wall plaque is a rendition of the university's seal—the grand lady, in the center, is the university, and the three cherubs represent the student body. The seal itself was designed by the Reverend Dr. Samuel Johnson, the first President of Kings College, whose original campus was down at

Chambers Street in pre-Revolutionary New York. Kings College then changed its name to the present "Columbia" after the American Revolution.

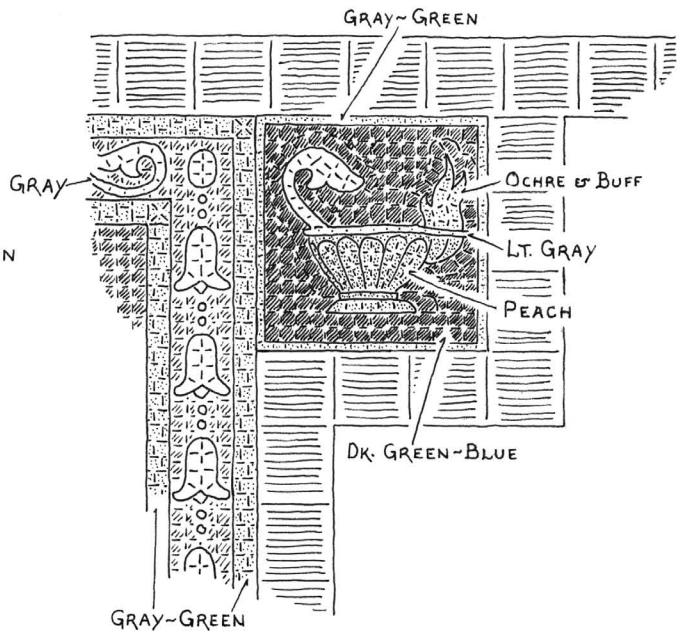
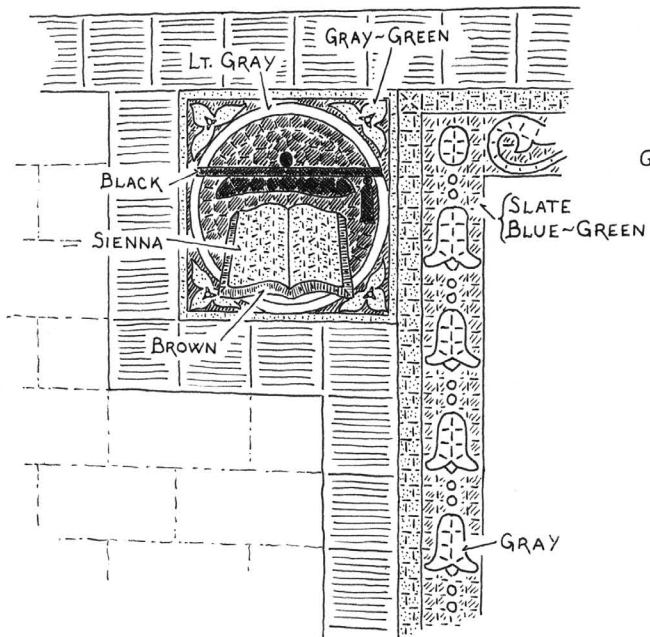
*This is one of the more beautiful Contract 1 stations, and its lavishness may have had something to do with the fact that the subway's chief engineer, William Barclay Parsons, graduated from Columbia's School of Mines in 1882.*

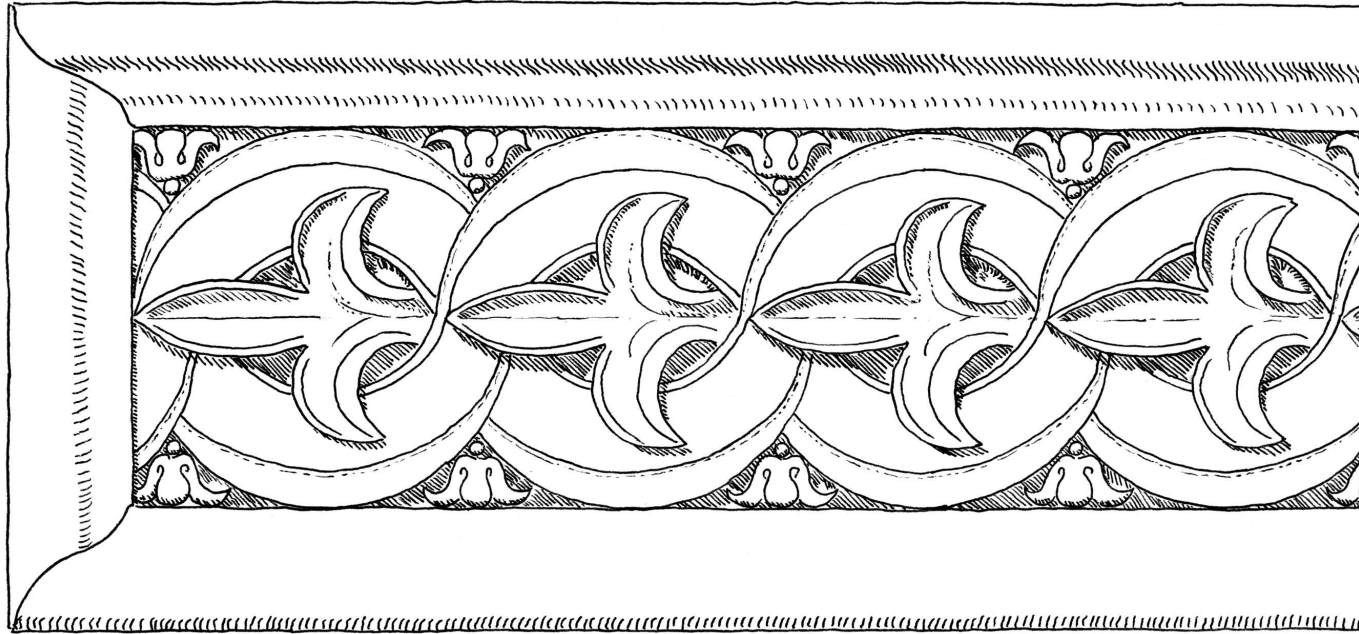




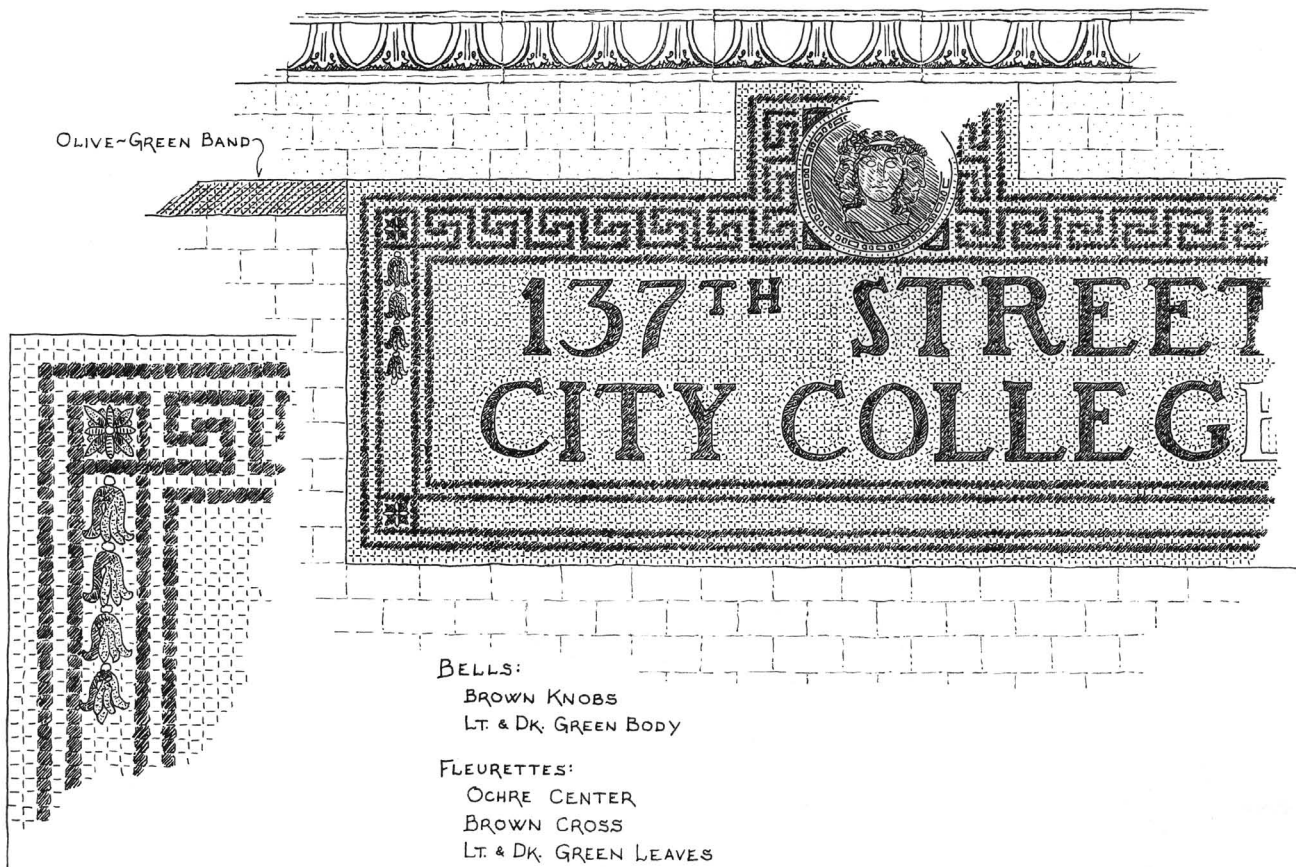
116th Street /  
 Columbia University  
 seal plaque  
 1 line







116th Street /  
Columbia University  
Pilaster beam strip  
1 line



137th Street /  
City College  
Mosaic name panel  
1 line

## 137TH STREET MOSAIC NAME PANEL

**I**t is likely that the first version of this stop's decoration, dating to 1904, had standard mosaic name tablets and the panel "137th Street" in white on blue. But City College wanted its existence acknowledged in the station in the same way that Columbia University was named two stations to the south. City College filed their first petition with the Rapid Transit Commission within a year of the subway's début, but its request was declined. City College tried again and again over the next decade until the Public Service Commission agreed to install modest placards announcing "City College"

on the station's walls. Not satisfied with such a token response, the college resumed its efforts and by 1920 the Transit Construction Commission agreed to a name change, though it demanded that the college fund the project itself. The college's subsequent fund drive was so successful that 137th Street benefitted with the installation of twelve beautiful mosaic panels, resplendent in the lavender and black colors of the college. Two of these panels are still visible.

*The identities of the designer and artisans are unknown.*

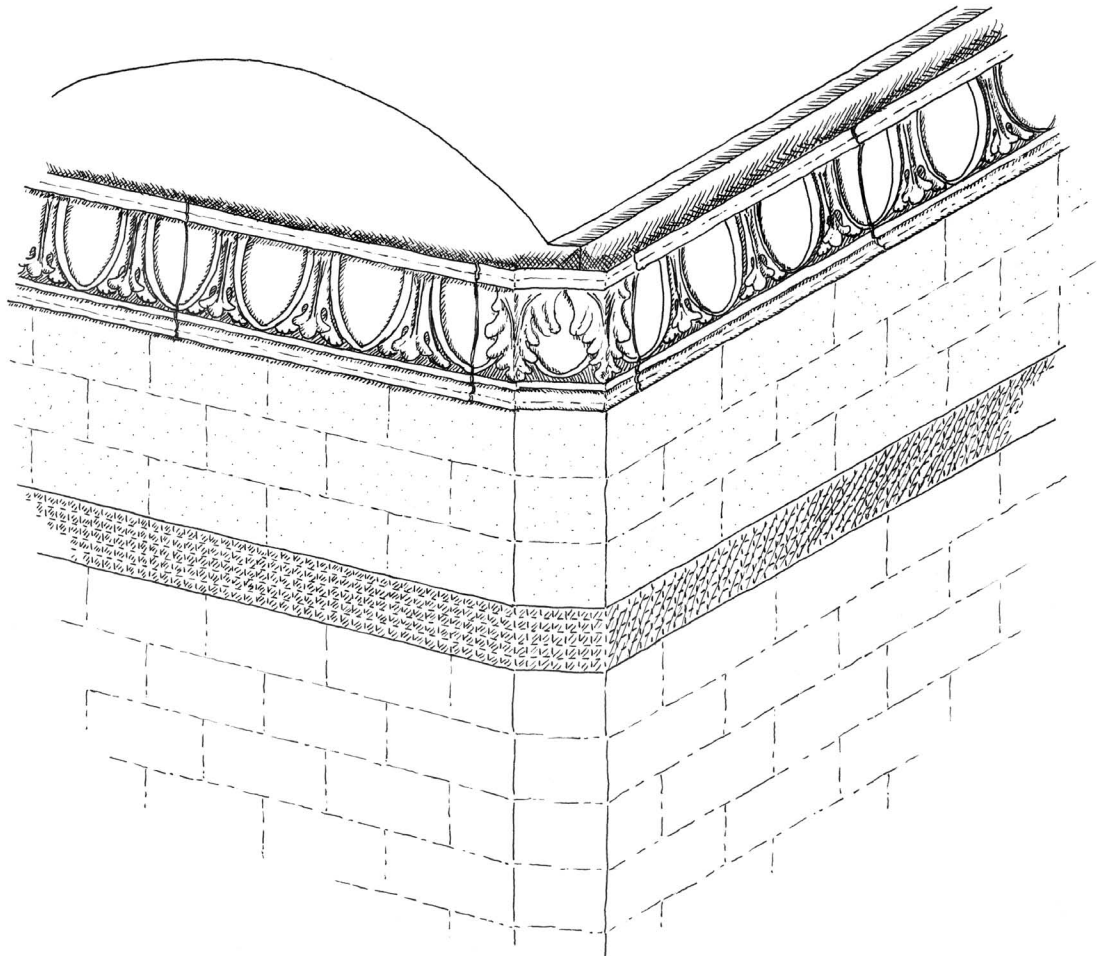


OLIVE GREEN BAND

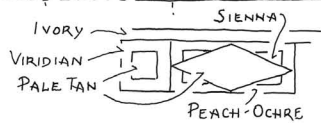
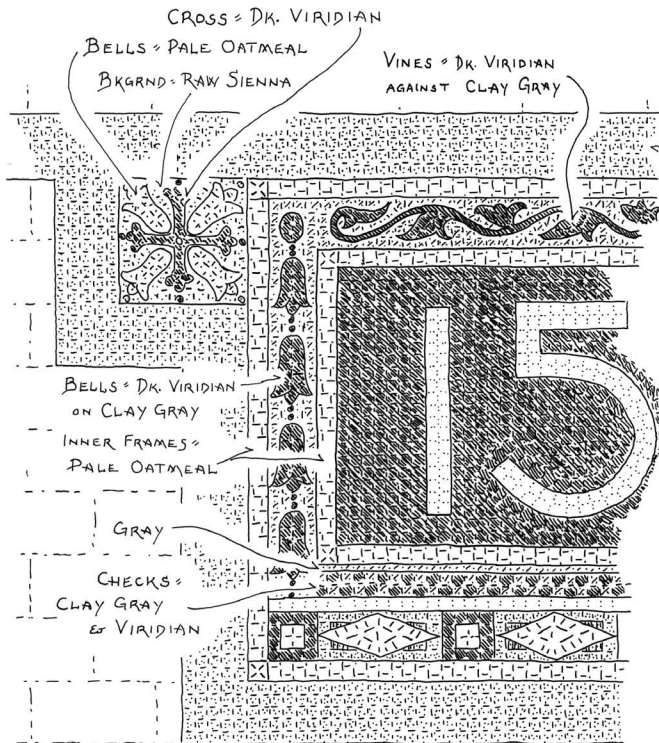


137th Street /  
City College  
Terracotta medallion  
and mosaic  
name panel detail  
1 line



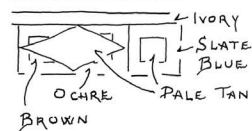
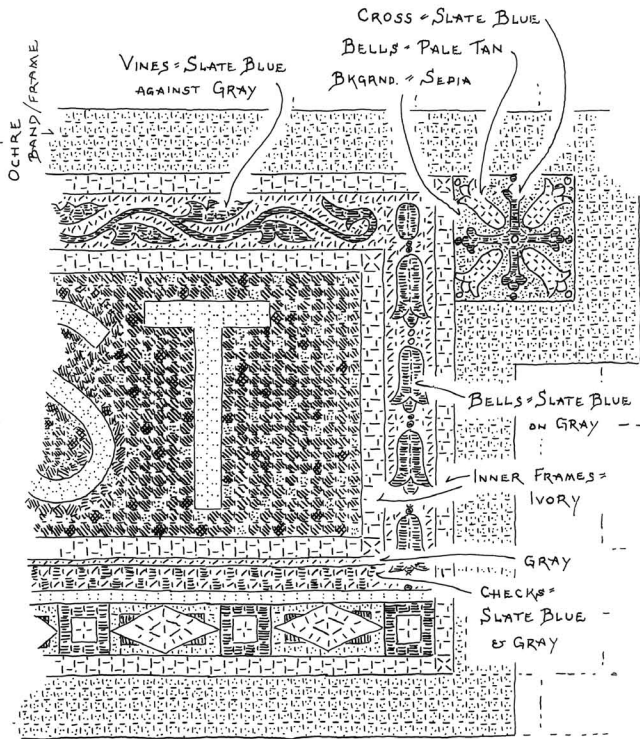


137th Street /  
City College  
Terracotta cornice  
1 line  
(no longer visible)



1904 HEINS & LAFARGE:  
 STYLE "A"

WHITE NUMERALS & LETTERS  
 AGAINST GRAYED VIRIDIAN



1910 P.S.C. VERSION:  
 STYLE "B"

WHITE NUMERALS & LETTERS  
 AGAINST VARIED GREENS

**opposite:**

157th Street

Mosaic name panels

1 line

**right:**

168th Street

Mosaic edging

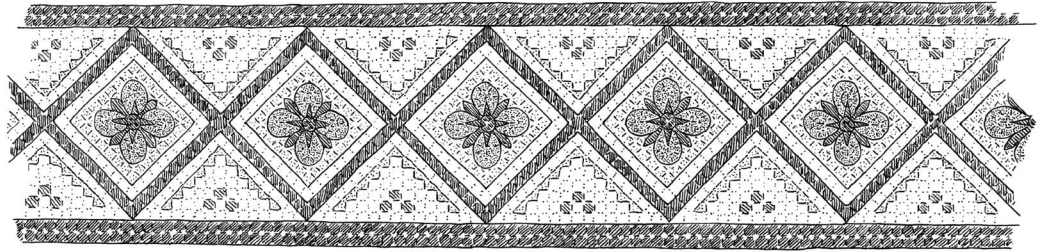
1 line

**below:**

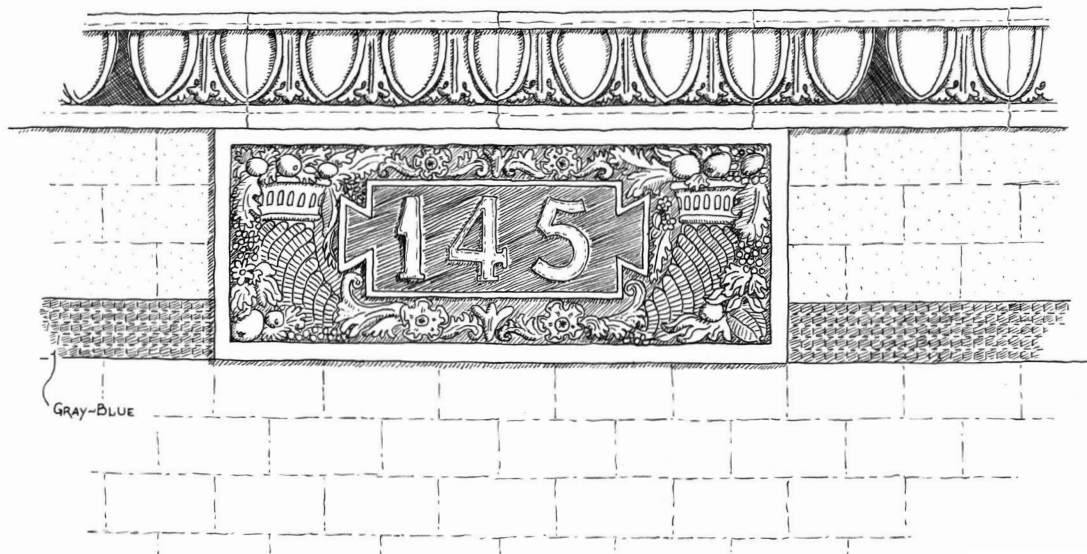
145th Street

Terracotta plaque  
and cornice

1 line



MOSAIC BORDER TO OLD ELEVATOR AREA [FLATTENED OUT]



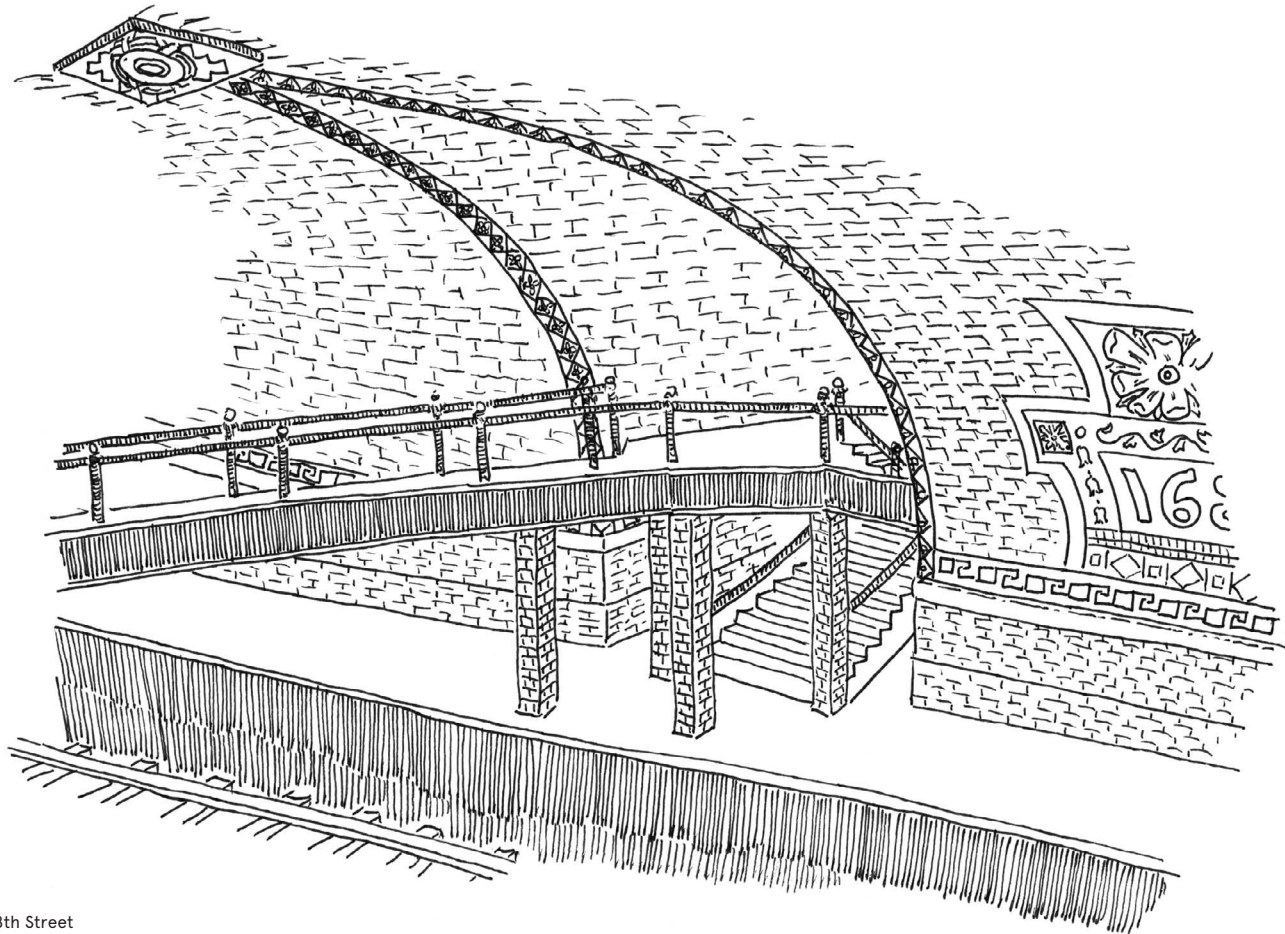
## 168TH STREET BRIDGE LEADING TO 1906 ELEVATOR ALCOVE

This is almost like needlepoint rendered in mosaic. This ribband of triangles and fleurettes surrounds a stone ceiling-wreath that once bore a light fixture above the overpass bridge leading to the original 1906 elevator bank. The ceiling mosaics were corrupted by water pressure and fallen out in some places, but recently

LaFarge's delicate pattern has been reproduced to look like the original. The elevators have been removed completely. Another piece of the city's subway has passed into history.

*The mosaics were composed by Felix Alcan and his European craftsmen in 1904.*





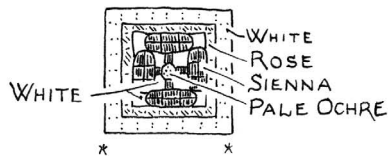
168th Street  
Bridge leading to  
1906 elevator alcove  
1 line  
Elevators removed

VARIOUS FLEURETTES AT 168<sup>TH</sup> ST.:

ON ORIGINAL PLATFORMS;

SEE ILLUS. # 77

UPTOWN SIDE EXT. BAND;



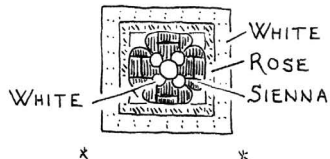
UPTOWN SIDE EXT. PILASTER;

SEE THIS ILLUS.

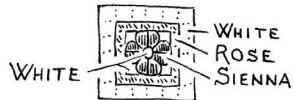
UPTOWN SIDE EXT. PIER;

SEE ILLUS. # 73

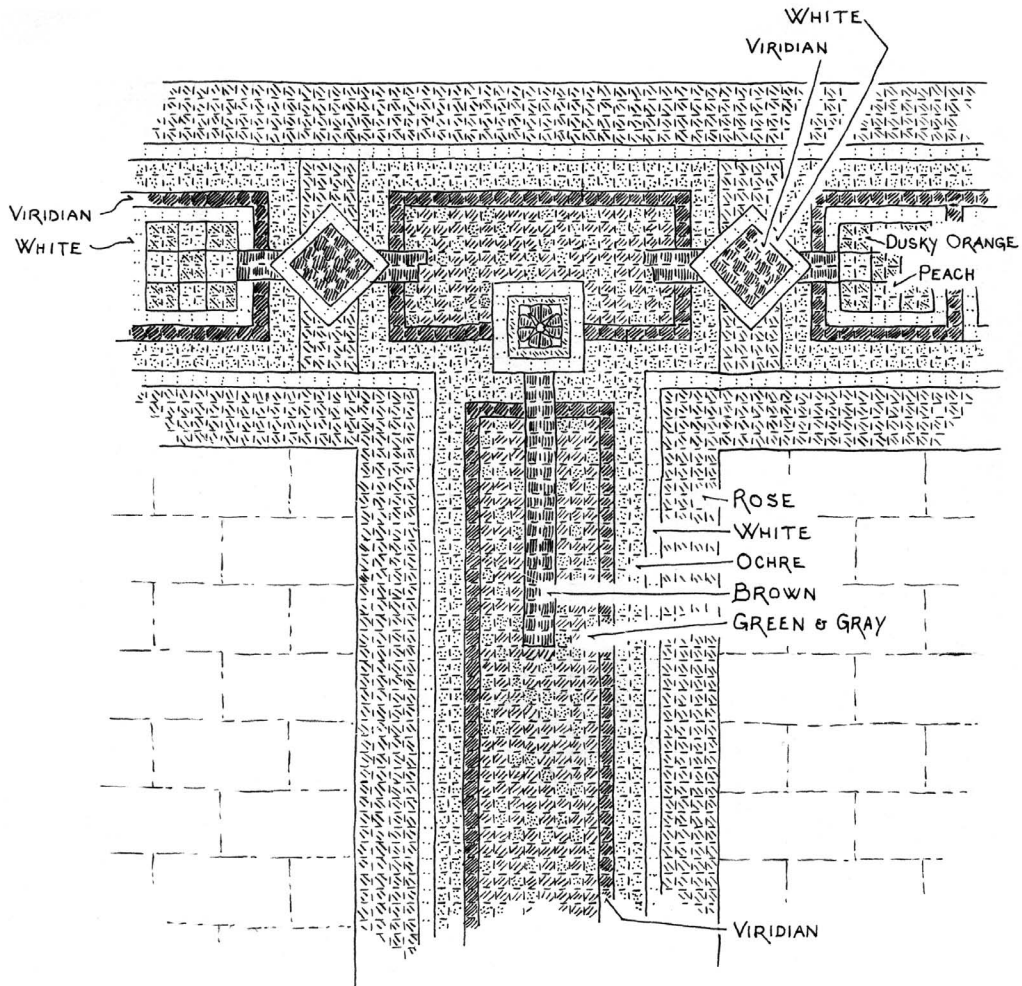
DOWNTOWN SIDE EXT. BAND;



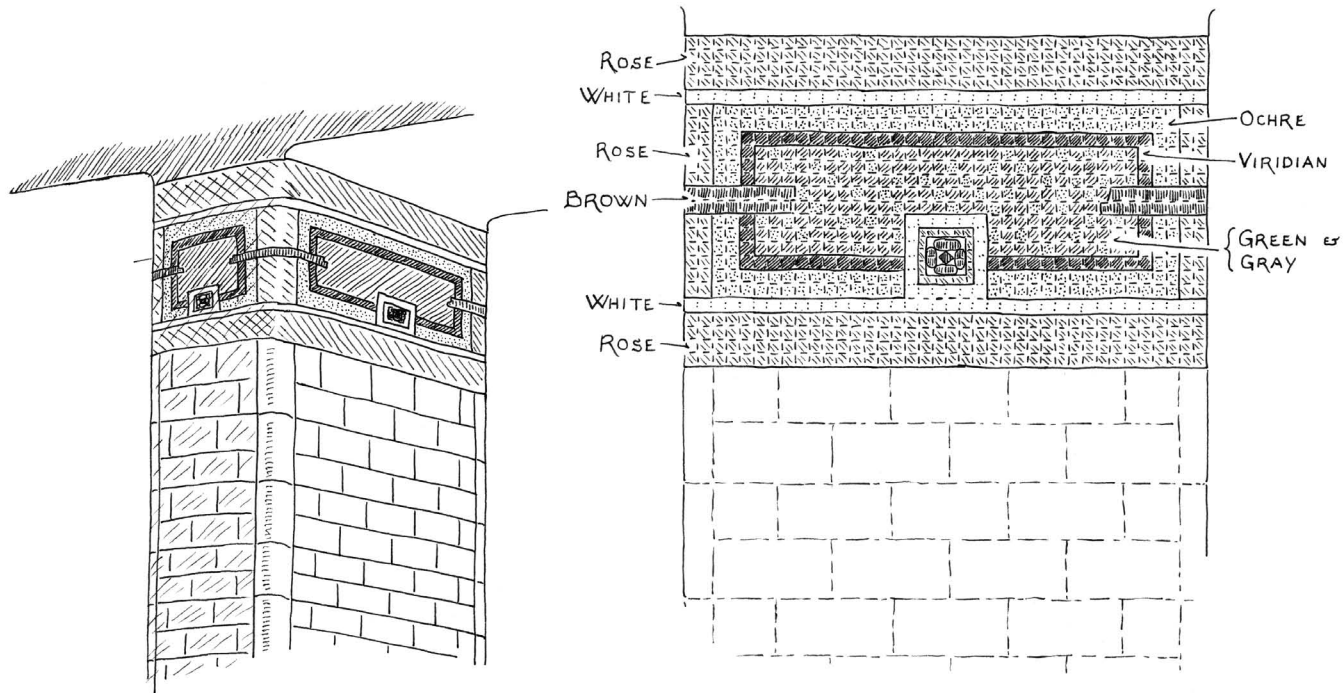
DOWNTOWN SIDE EXT. PILASTER  
& (IN SMALLER VERSION) PIER;



left and opposite:  
168th Street  
Mosaic pilaster and  
fleurettes  
1 line

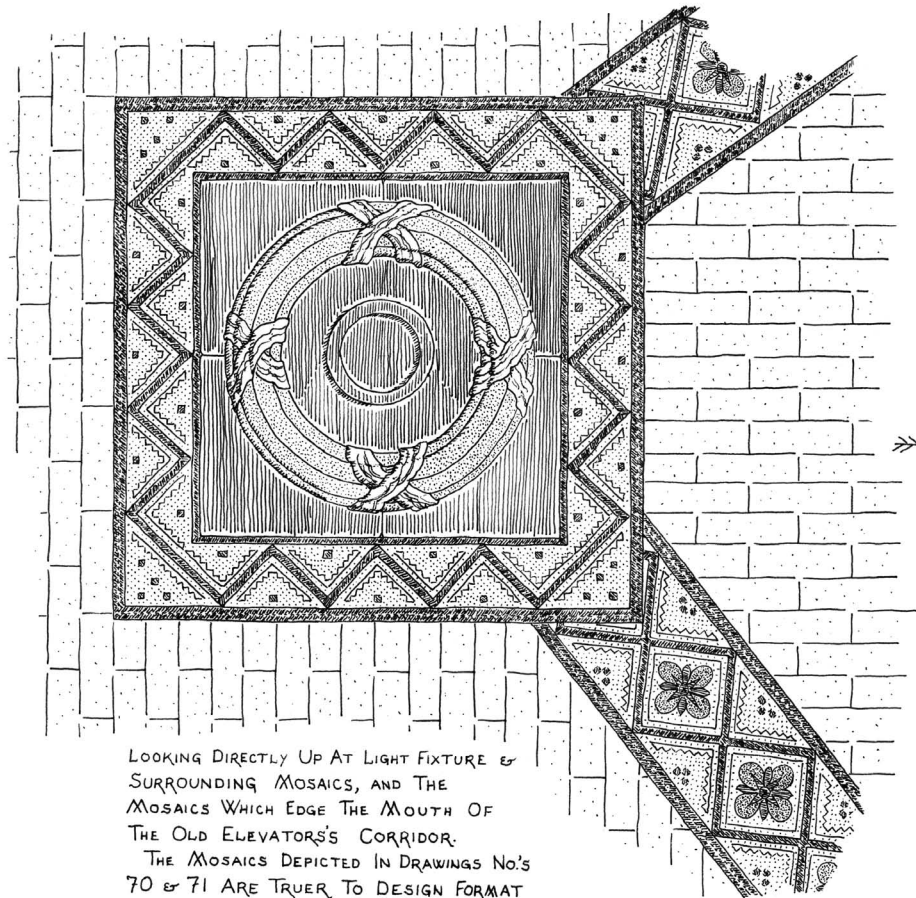


UPTOWN SIDE EXTENSION PILASTER



UPTOWN SIDE  
EXTENSION PIER



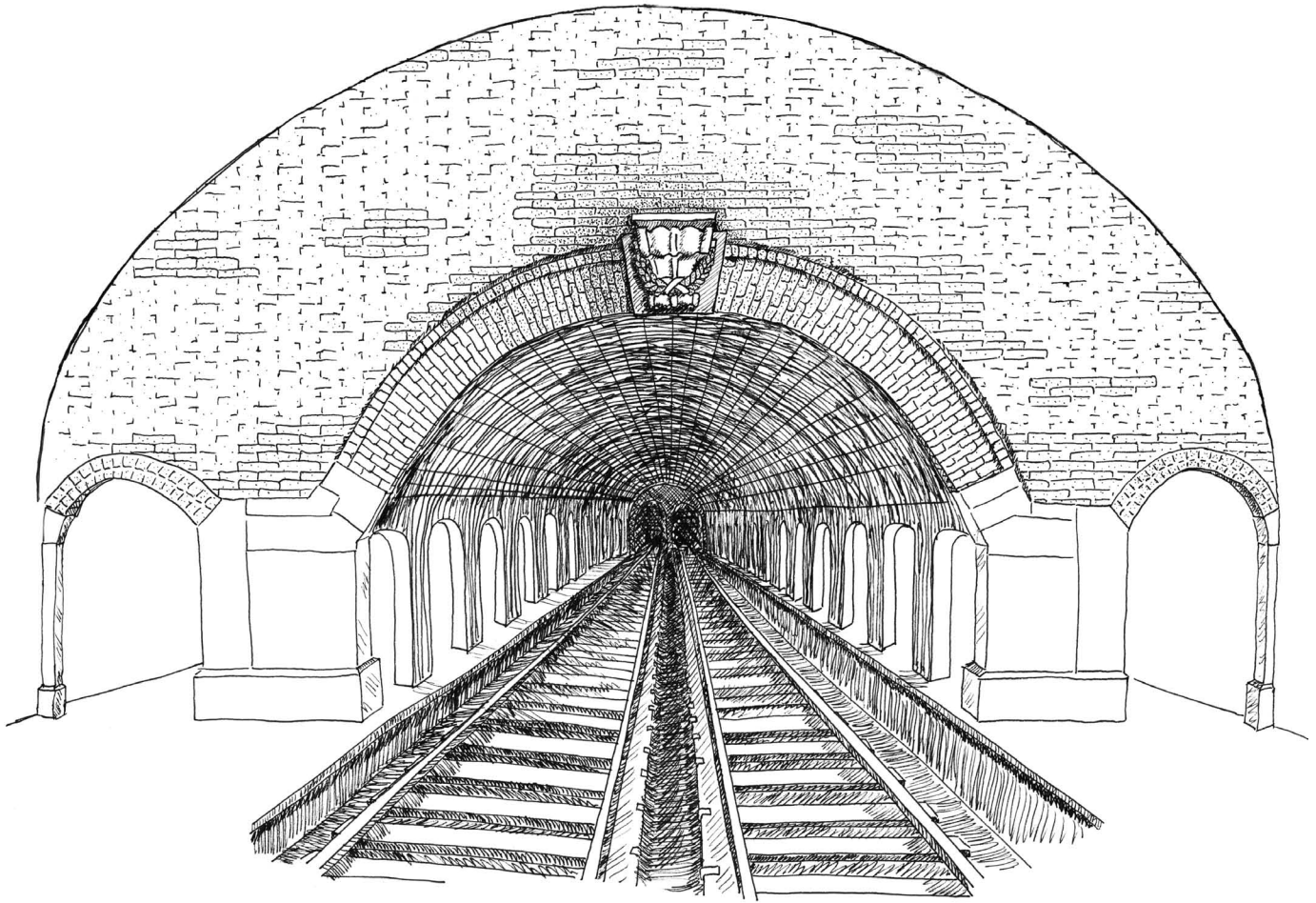


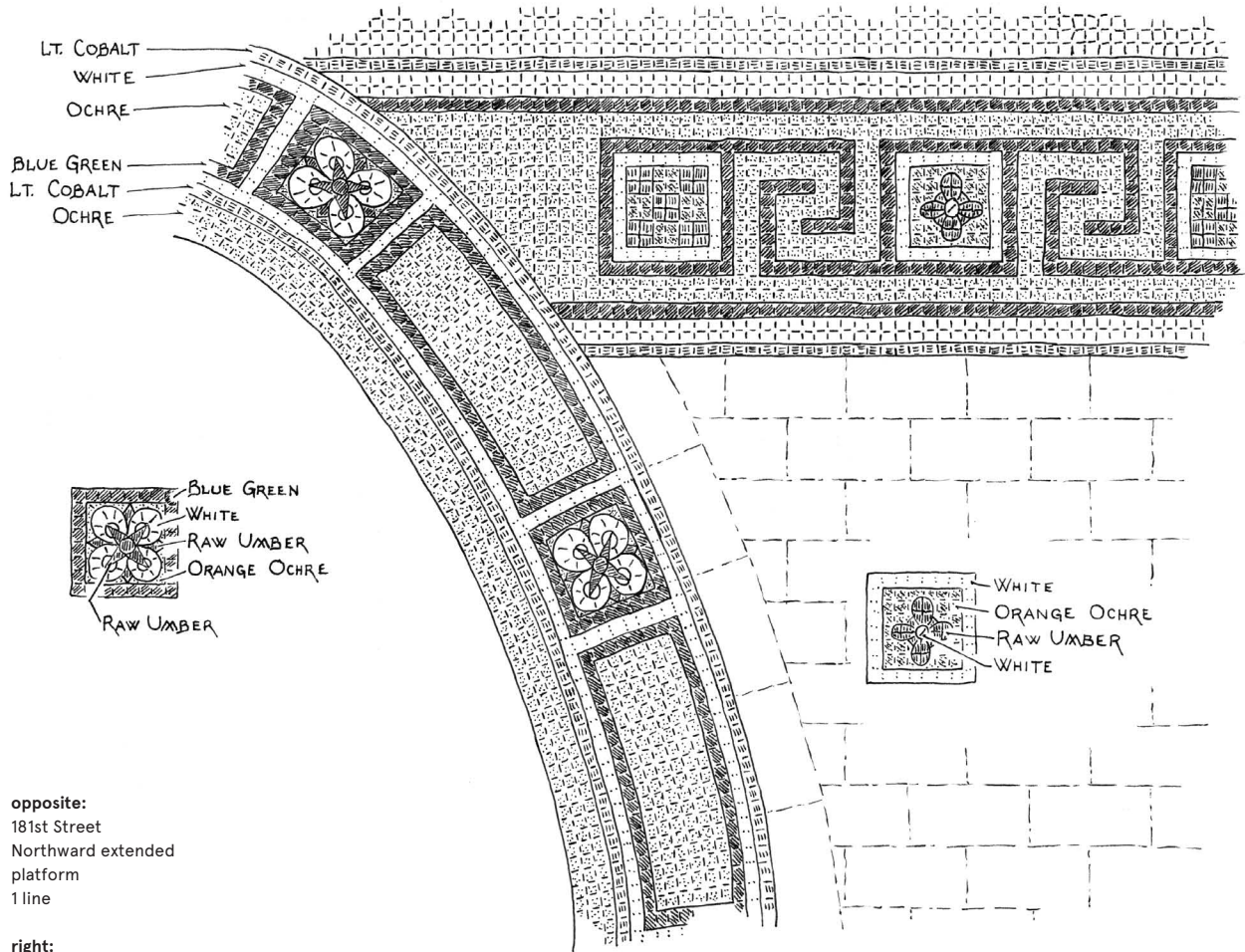
TO THE  
ELEVATORS

LOOKING DIRECTLY UP AT LIGHT FIXTURE &  
SURROUNDING MOSAICS, AND THE  
MOSAICS WHICH EDGE THE MOUTH OF  
THE OLD ELEVATOR'S CORRIDOR.

THE MOSAICS DEPICTED IN DRAWINGS NO'S  
70 & 71 ARE TRUER TO DESIGN FORMAT  
THAN THEY ARE TO EXACT PROPORTION.

168th Street  
Faience ceiling wreath  
and mosaic border  
1 line  
Rebuilt with new frame





opposite:

181st Street

Northward extended

platform

1 line

right:

181st Street

Mosaic designs

1 line

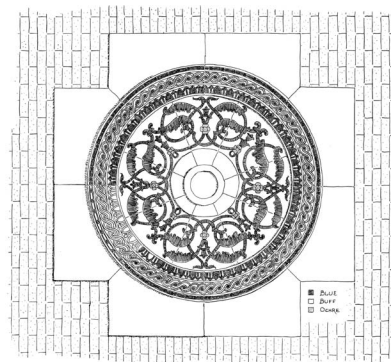


## 181ST STREET ROSETTE

Deep under the hills of Washington Heights, 126 feet below ground, lies the 181st Street station. There is an oversize rosette crowning the name panels, and everything seems done on a grand scale. The large mosaic band of frets and fleurettes arches with the barrel vault just as it begins to curve over the heads of the commuters. Form was function, and all of the architectural arrangements—plaques, cornices, paneling, floral designs on the walls, even the lowly air vents—were meant to remind the commuters of a pleasant room, providing comfort to city folk unaccustomed to riding

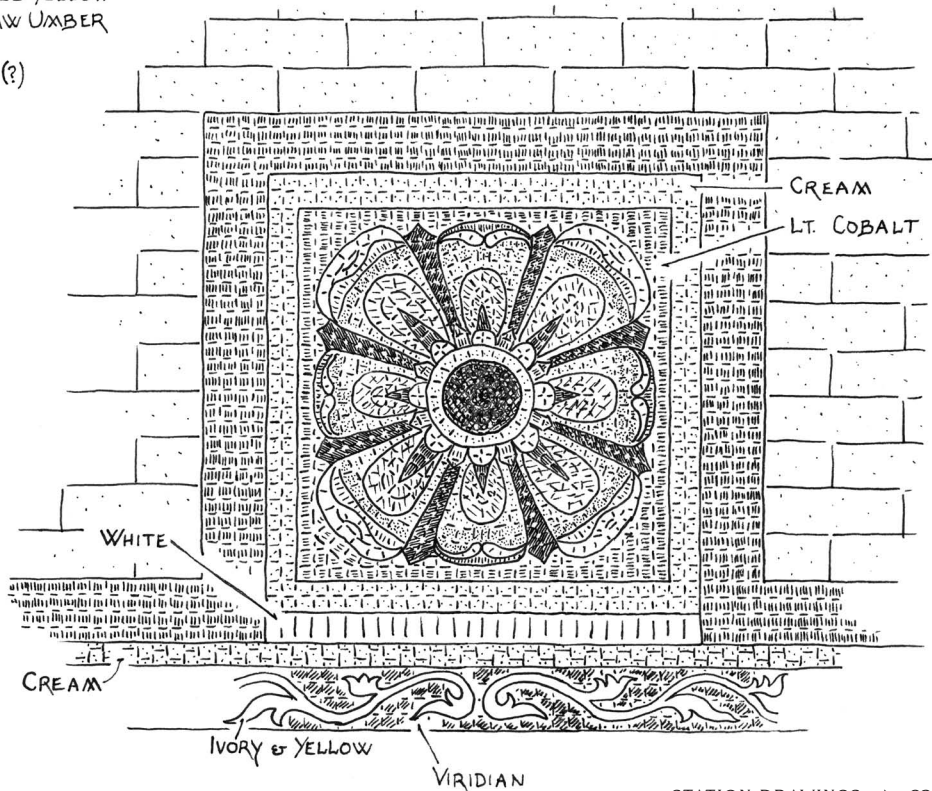
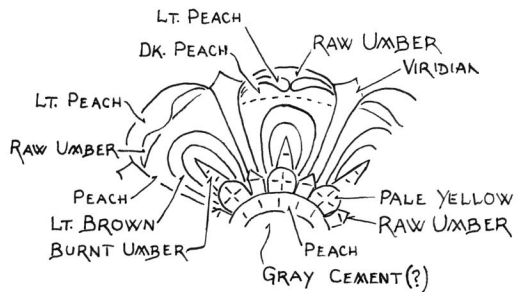
a train under the earth. (181st Street station is actually not the deepest station in the system. That distinction goes to the 191st Street station, built in 1911, which runs 180 feet below ground.)

*The mosaics were composed by Felix Alcan and his European craftsmen in 1904.*

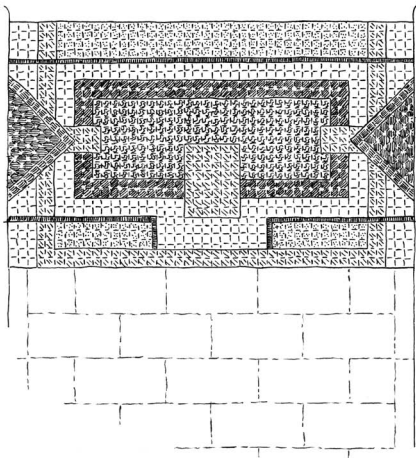


181st Street  
Ceiling wreath  
1 line





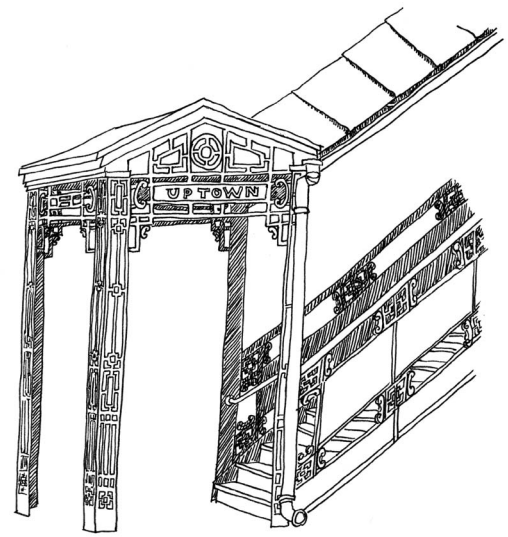
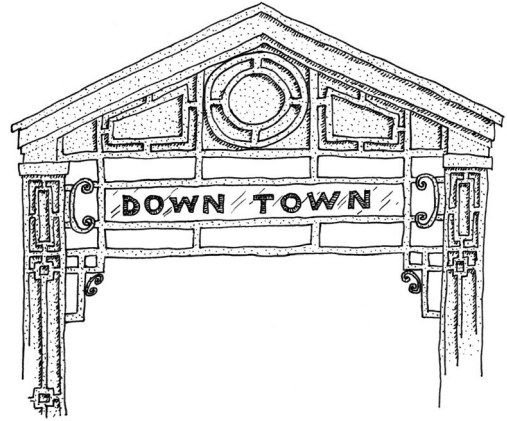
181st Street  
 Mosaic rosette  
 1 line



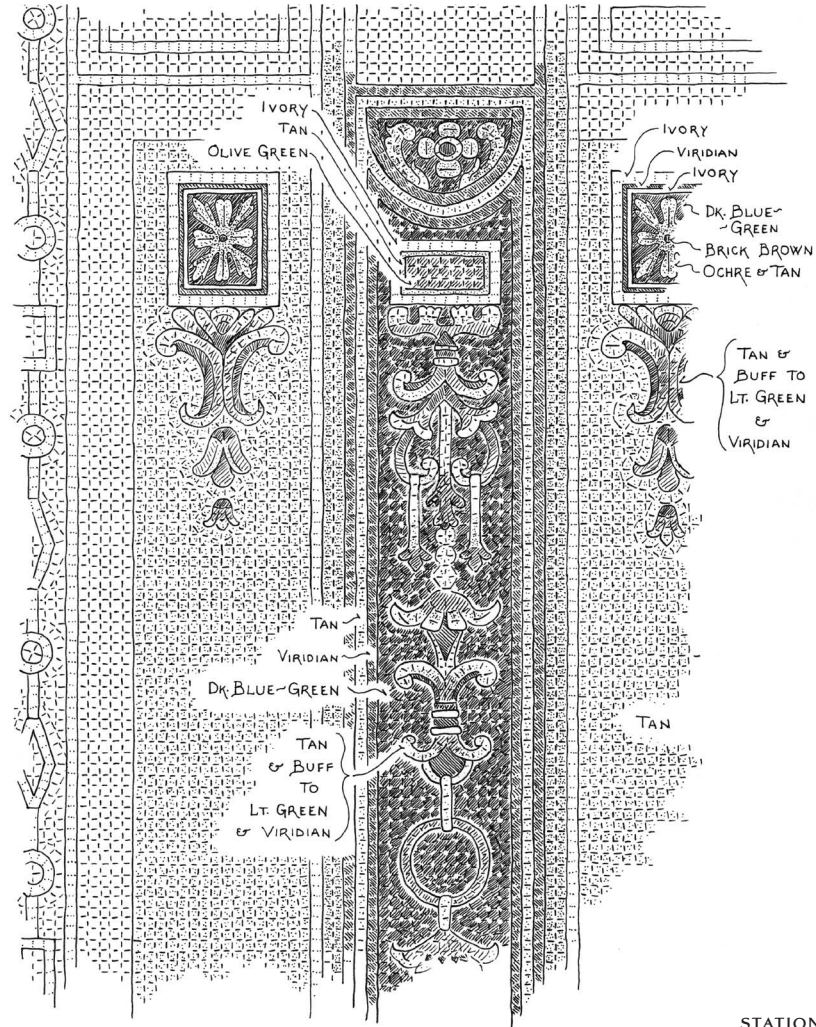
- OCHRE
- BROWN
- IVORY
- VIRIDIAN
- ▣ SLATE TURQUOISE
- ▤ ROSE (SIENNA?)

left:  
191st Street  
Mosaic band  
1 line

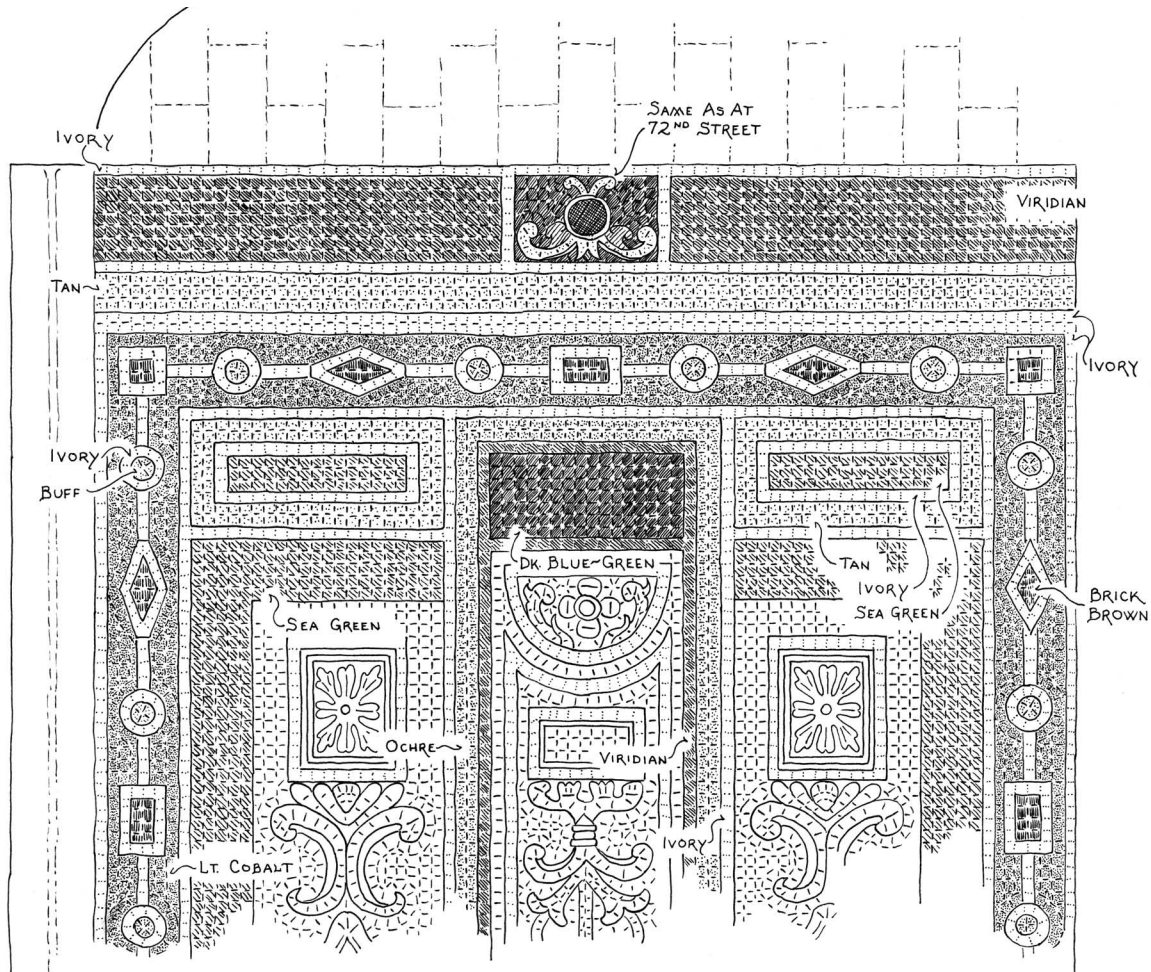
below:  
215th Street  
Stairway porch  
1 line



110th Street /  
Central Park North  
Mosaic panel detail  
2/3 lines









## 110TH STREET AND LENOX MOSAIC PANEL

This is just one detail of the magnificent tapestry panels tucked away in the 110th Street and Lenox Avenue station. A strand of mosaic jewels runs around a wide border, framing a chain of floral horns and caps, jacquard straps, and jade rings descending through the central panel, flanked by boxed fleurettes and verdant curls. LaFarge created four distinct design formats for these “oriental rug” panels, which graced

four stations of the early IRT lines in Manhattan. Aside from this station, there is one other station whose panels are still visible: 72nd Street and Broadway. The Bowling Green station’s were lost in 1977, and the Grand Central panels were destroyed in a fire in 1964.

*The mosaics were composed by Felix Alcan and his European craftsmen in 1904.*

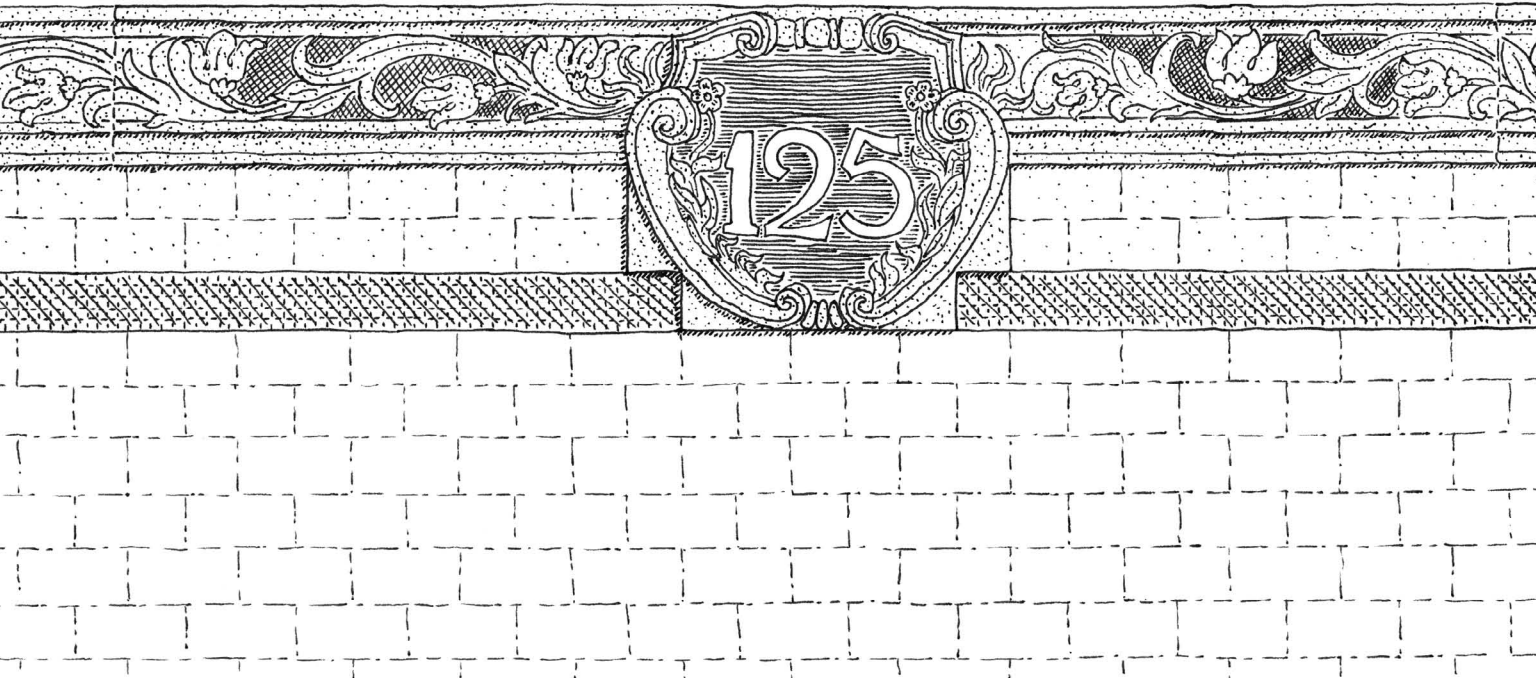
**opposite:**  
110th Street / Central  
Park North  
Mosaic panel detail  
2/3 lines

## 125TH STREET TERRACOTTA PLAQUE AND CORNICE

The basic design of this “125” cartouche plaque is a recurring décor element featured in a good quarter of the earliest stations. LaFarge initially wanted the subway’s plaques and cornices fashioned in faience, but in many instances, as costs mounted, the later stations needed to be trimmed, as this one is, in the less costly terracotta. LaFarge’s decorative wall of white tiles, mosaics, and ceramics is actually a shell, approximately a half-foot thick, standing about two inches away from the rough structural wall. This was a deliberate strategy of

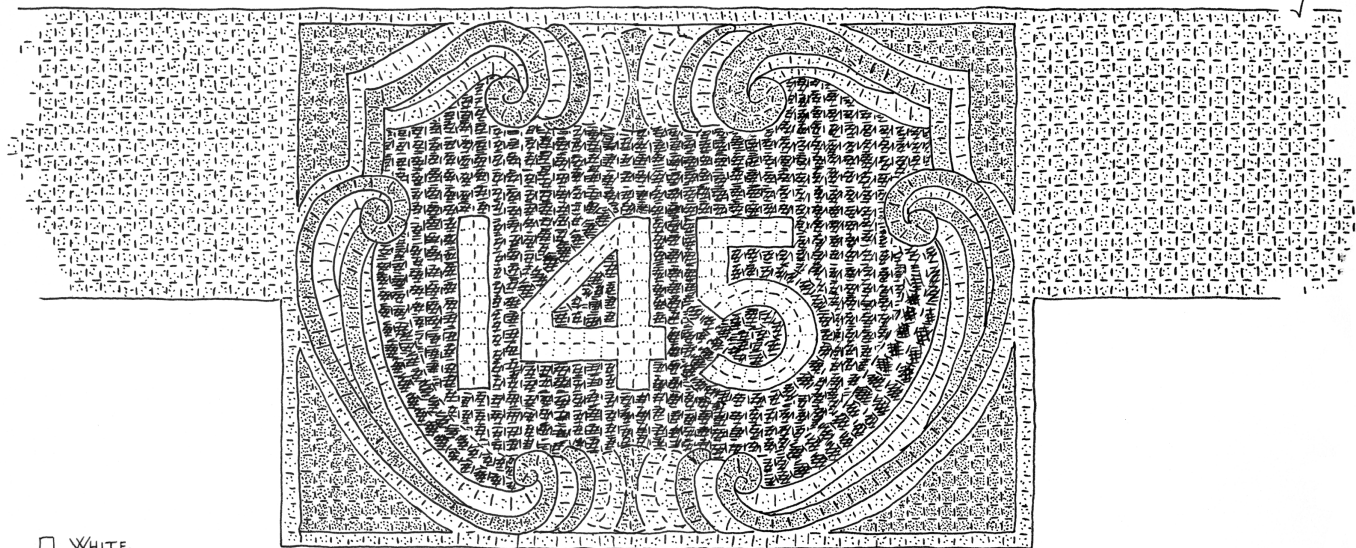
the station’s construction. Through holes in the cornice, air may flow between the structural and the finish walls of these stations. The engineers intended, by this device, to eliminate the destructive effects underground water pressure could have on these subterranean walls, hopefully keeping everything dry within.

*Plaque and cornice were cast by Atlantic Terra Cotta Works, Staten Island, New York, in 1904; it’s possible that they were modeled by William D. Frerichs.*



125th Street  
Terracotta plaque  
and cornice  
2/3 lines

"CORNICIE" BAND



- WHITE
- ▤ TAN
- ▥ BLUE
- ▦ OCHRE

145th Street  
Mosaic rendition of  
terracotta plaque  
2/3 lines



## 145TH STREET MOSAIC NAME PANEL

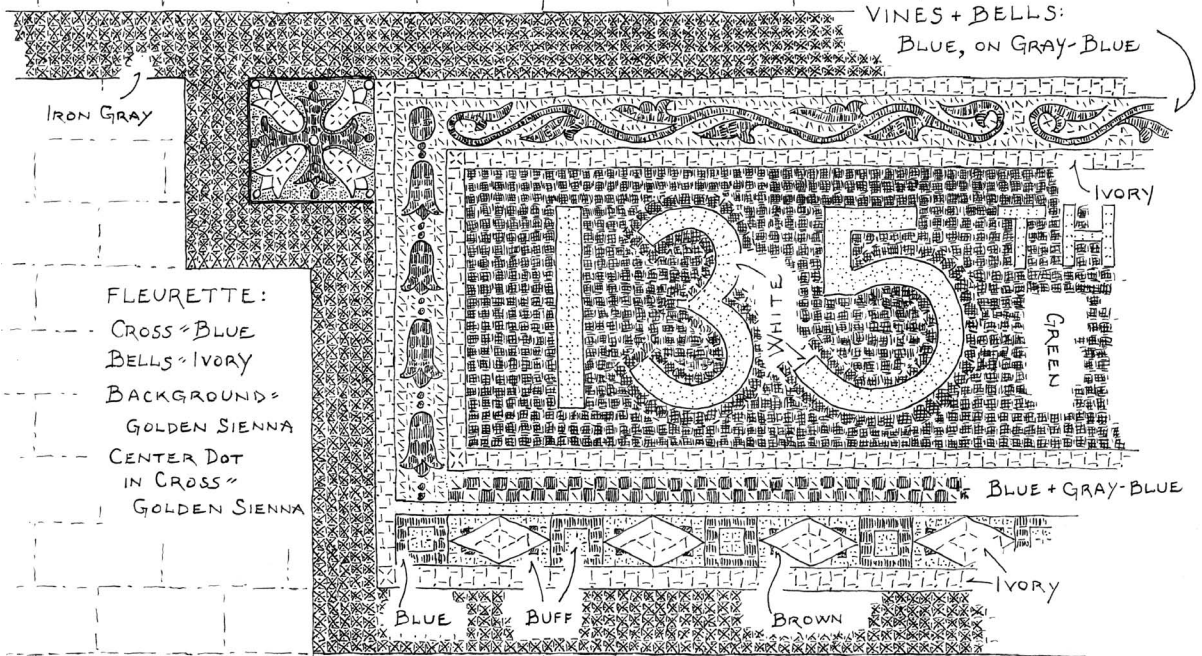
**I**n 1904 this station was the end of the line. (The only facility farther north was a train storage yard at 148th Street.) The tulip frieze cornice and cartouche number plaques here were originally made of terracotta, but within a few years of the station's

public debut, a section of the wall was altered and rebuilt with mosaic renditions of the terracotta plaques.

*This mosaic plaque is likely by Felix Alcan and his European craftsmen.*

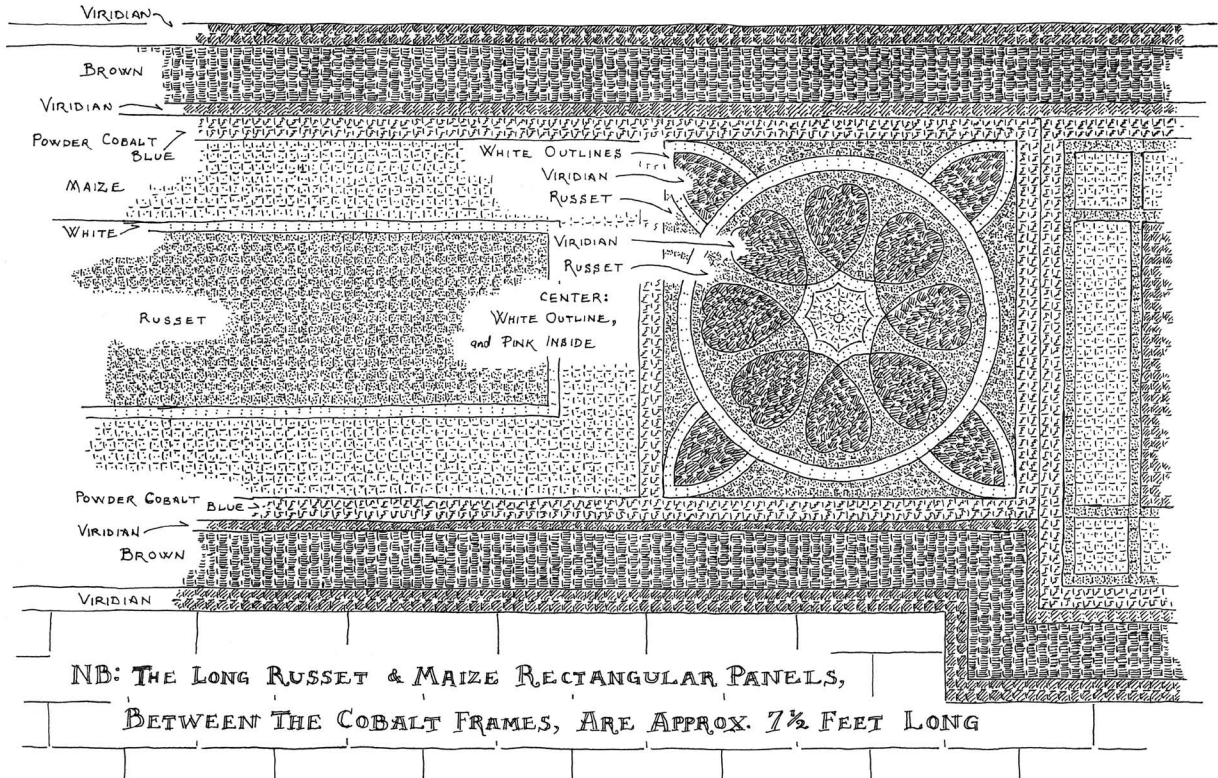
"CORNICIE": TAN MOSAIC

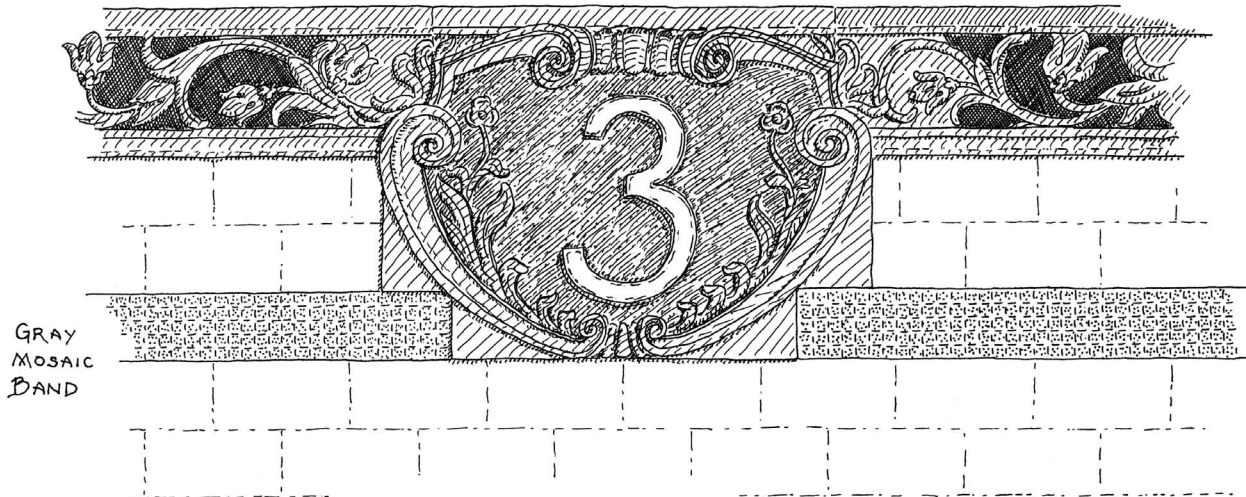
P. S. C. NAME PANEL



opposite:  
 135th Street  
 Mosaic name panel  
 2/3 lines

below:  
 149th Street /  
 Grand Concourse  
 Mosaic band  
 2/5 lines





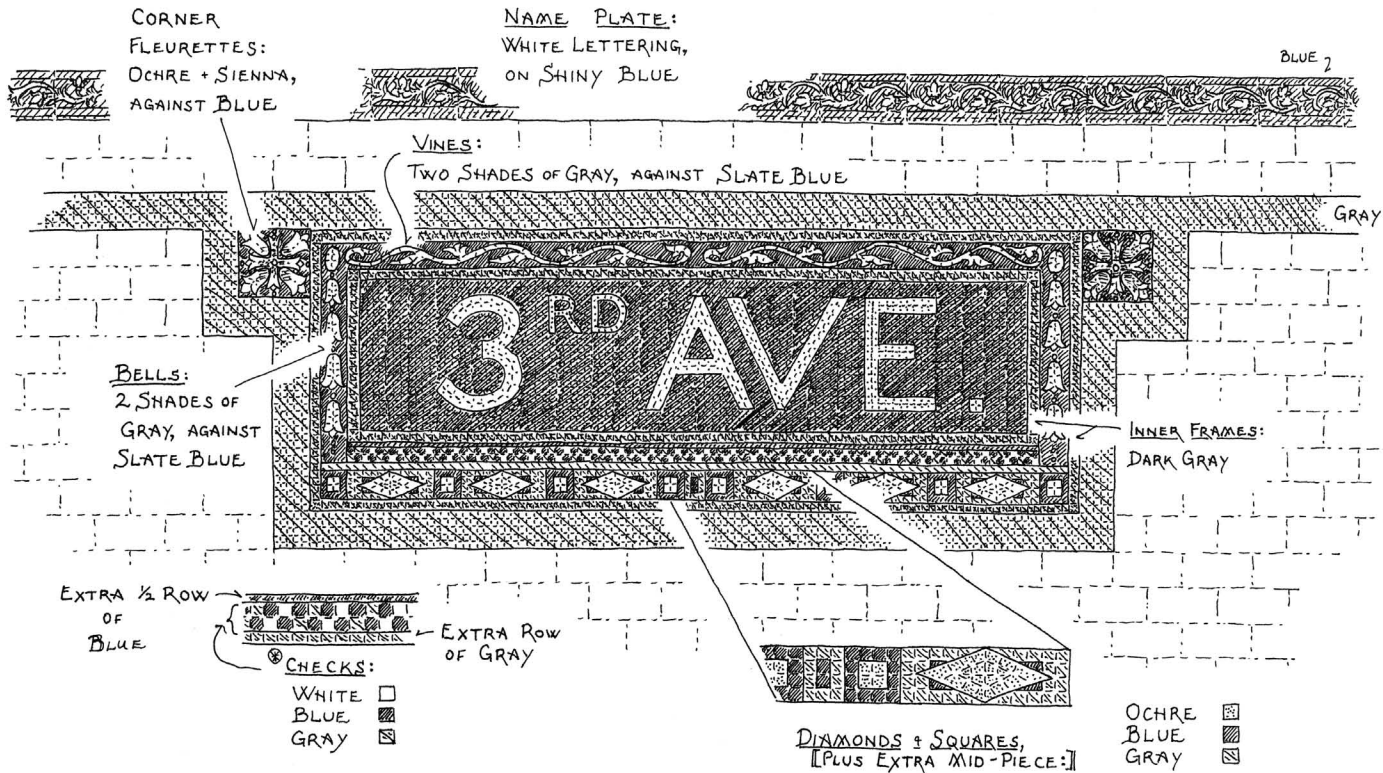
GRAY  
MOSAIC  
BAND

BLUE TERRA COTTA CORNICE.

BLUE PLAQUE, WITH  
WHITE NUMERAL  
"3".

3rd Avenue  
Terracotta plaque  
2/5 lines  
(no longer visible)





⊗ See "Additions & Corrections"

3rd Avenue  
Mosaic name panel  
2/5 lines  
(no longer visible)

## FULTON STREET STEAMBOAT FAIENCE PLAQUE

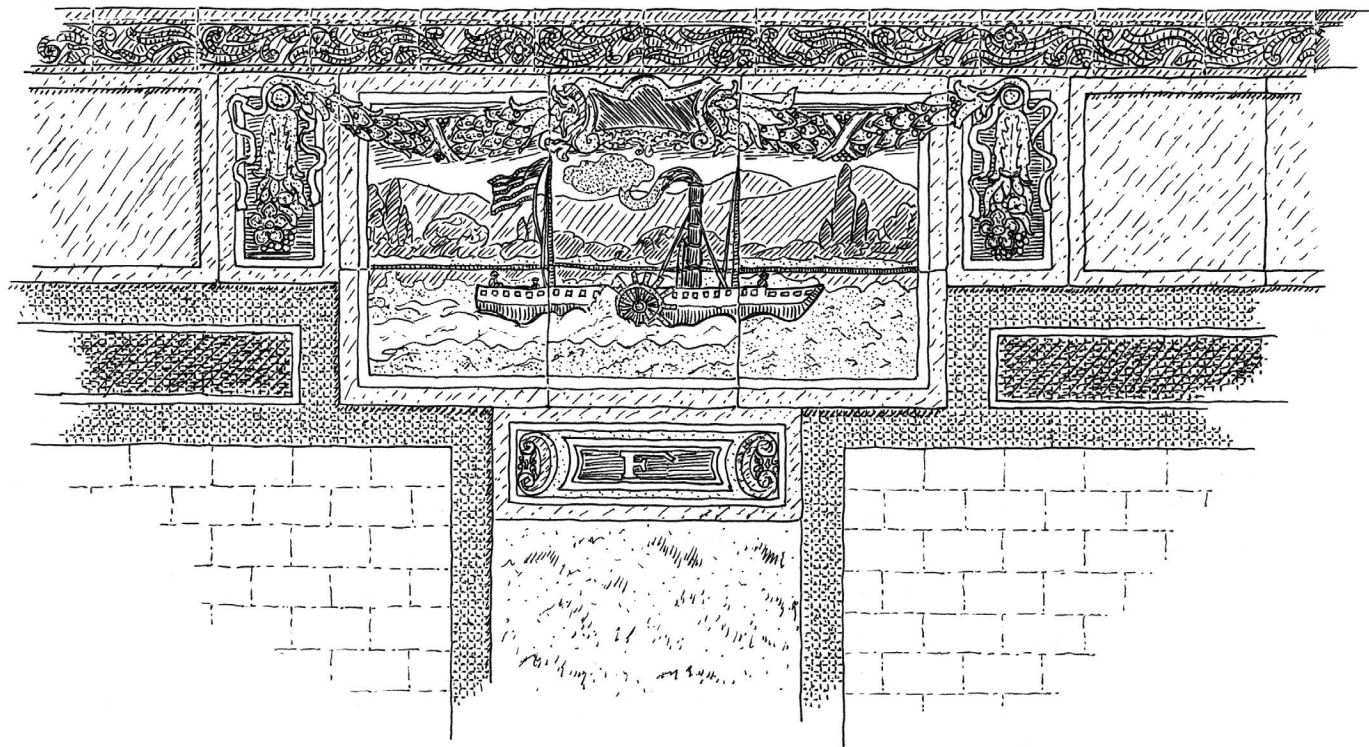
When Robert Fulton first brought the steamboat to New York in 1807, it was nicknamed "Fulton's Folly," for nobody believed a "steam engine" could possibly have the strength to turn a heavy paddle wheel and propel a vessel upstream. But Fulton knew better. He'd already run a steamboat in Paris in 1803, where he found a wealthy New York benefactor, Robert Livingston. Later, with Livingston's backing, Fulton steamed up the Hudson from the Battery to Albany and back, nearly halving the time it took a sailboat to make the same trip.

Four of these faience plaques survive on the west side of the station, but the east side platform, along with its faience plaques, was entirely bricked over in the 1980s.

*These faience plaques were fabricated by Rookwood Faience, Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1905. It is possible the master mold was modeled by John Dee Wareham.*

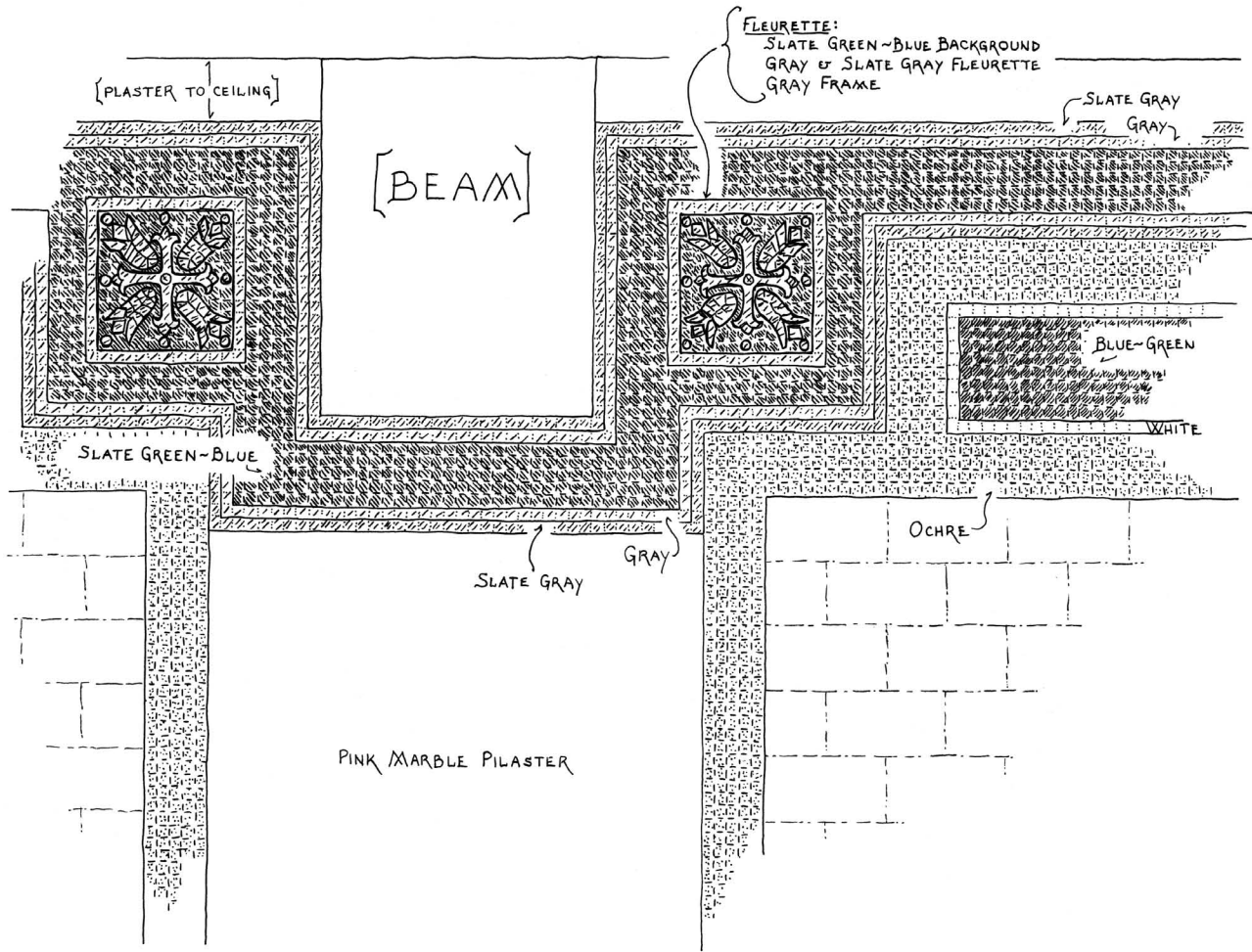
NARROW FRAMES:  
IVORY  
FESTOONS & HANGING BOUQUETS:  
OCHRE, WITH IVORY RIBBANDS  
FULTON STEAMBOAT PLAQUE:  
SKY: LT. BLUE & COBALT  
LAND: PALE GREEN HILLS, GREEN TREES & SHRUBS  
SHORE: OCHRE, WITH BLUE WATERLINE  
WATER: PALE BLUE & WHITE  
BOAT: BLUE STACK & HULL, WHITE GUNWALE,  
OCHRE SIDEWHEEL & "SPEAR" (?)  
FLAG: RED, WHITE, & BLUE  
SMOKE: MED. DK. BLUE - TO - BROWN - GRAY  
MEN IN BOAT: BLUE

Color scheme  
Fulton Street  
Faience plaque  
4/5 lines

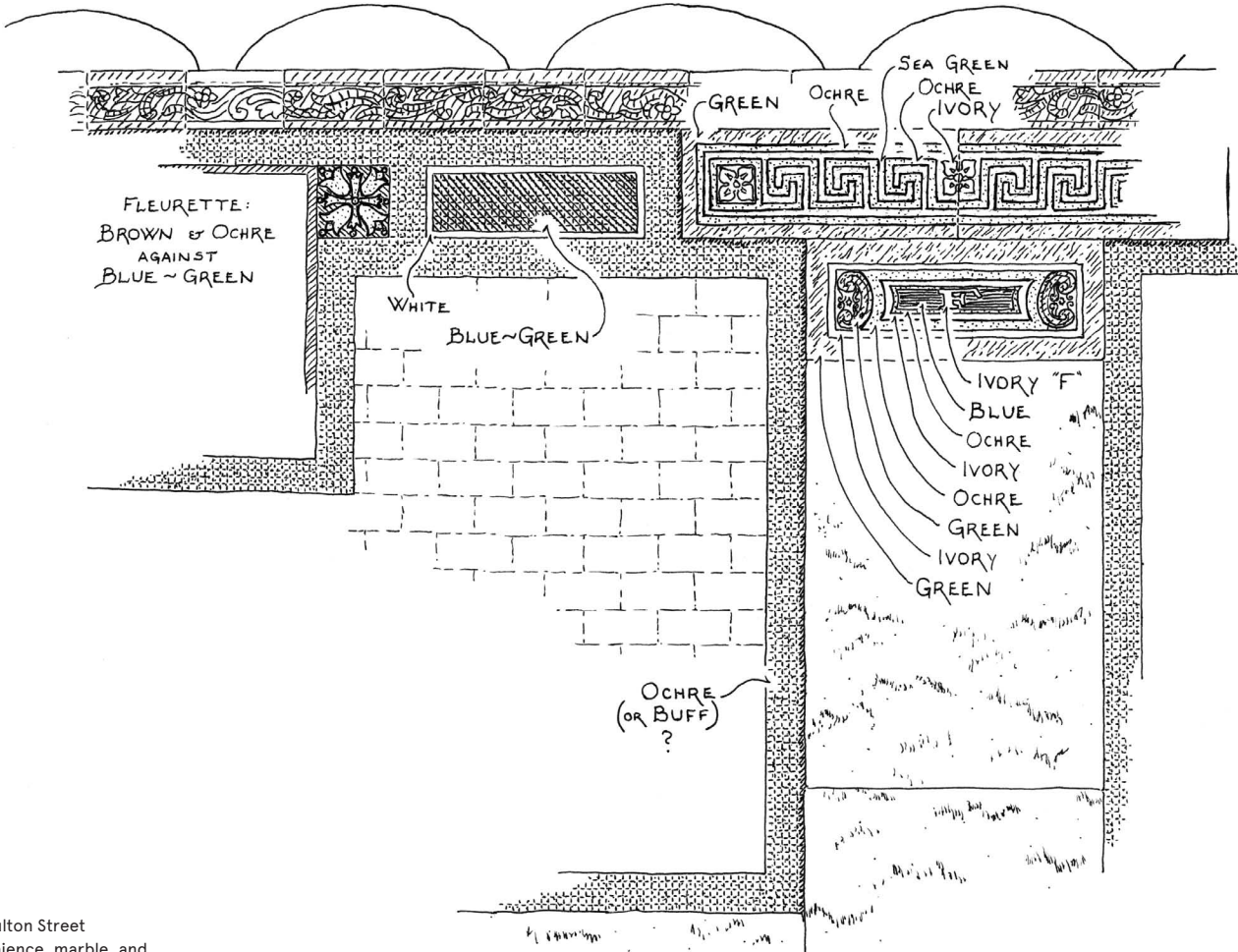


Fulton Street  
Faience plaque  
4/5 lines



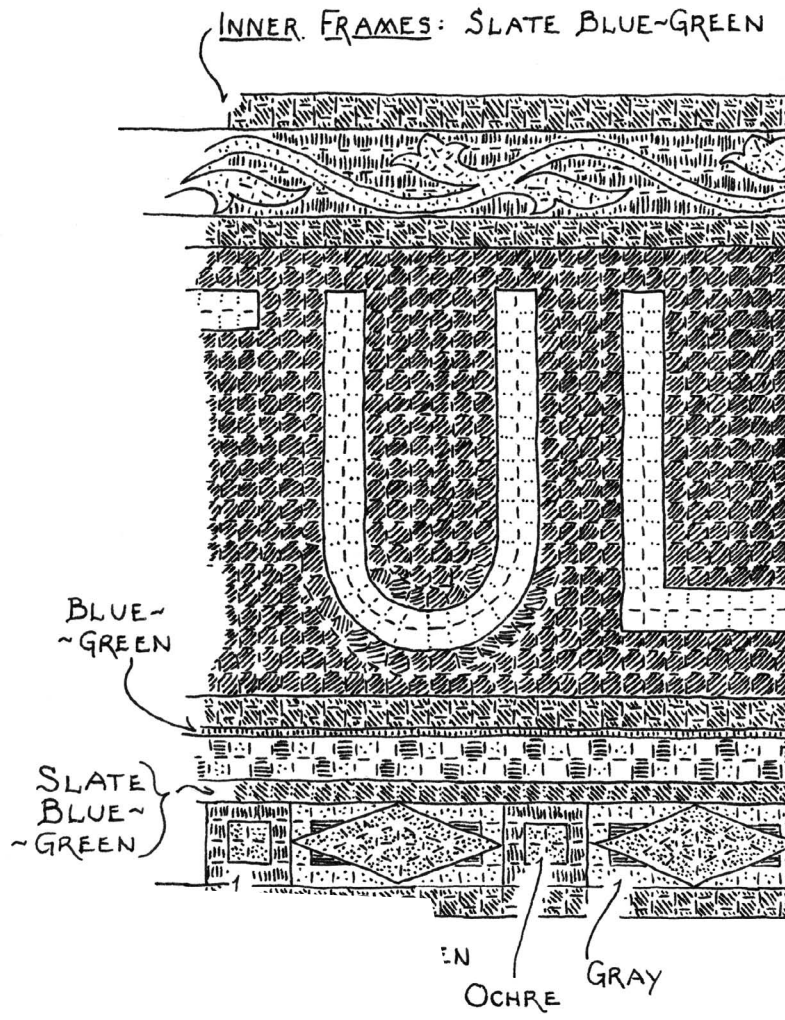




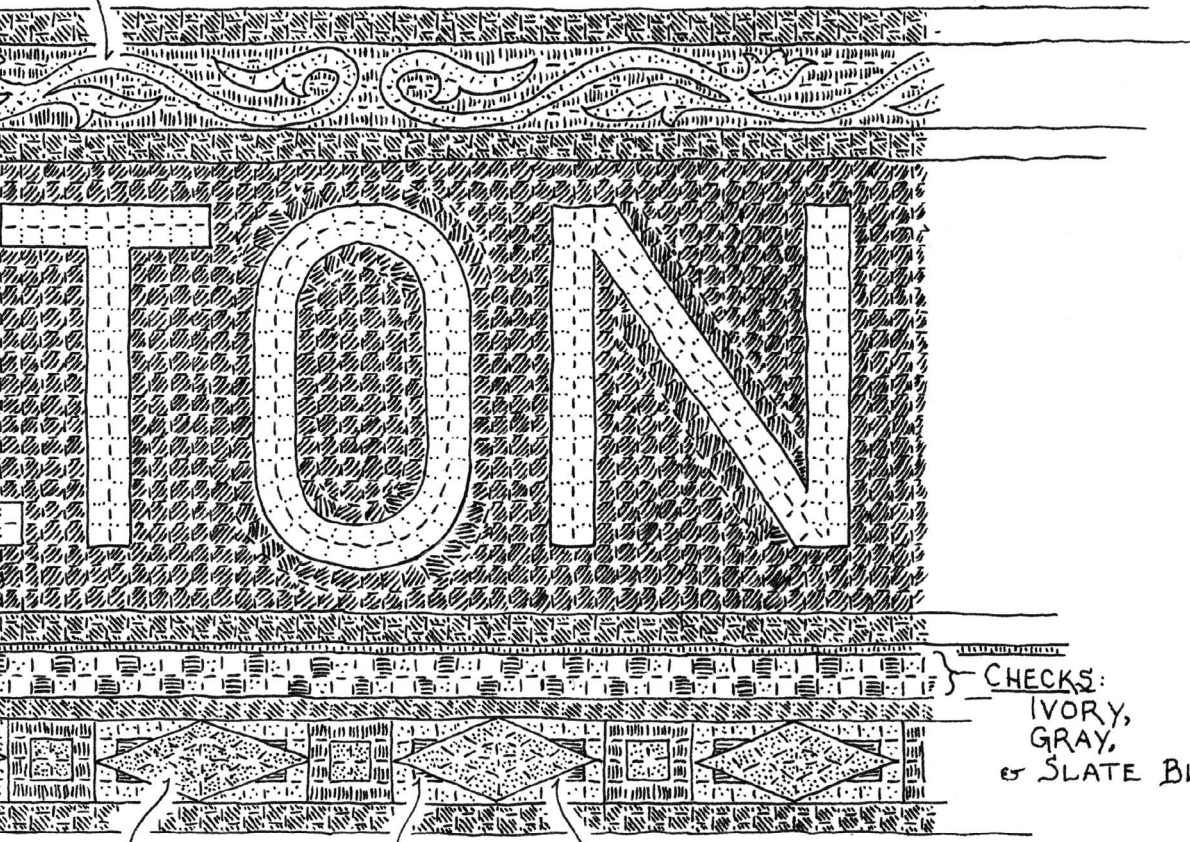


Fulton Street  
 Faience, marble, and  
 mosaic  
 4/5 lines

Fulton Street  
Mosaic name panel  
4/5 lines



VINES (& BELLS): GRAY & GRAY-GREEN ON BLUE-GREEN

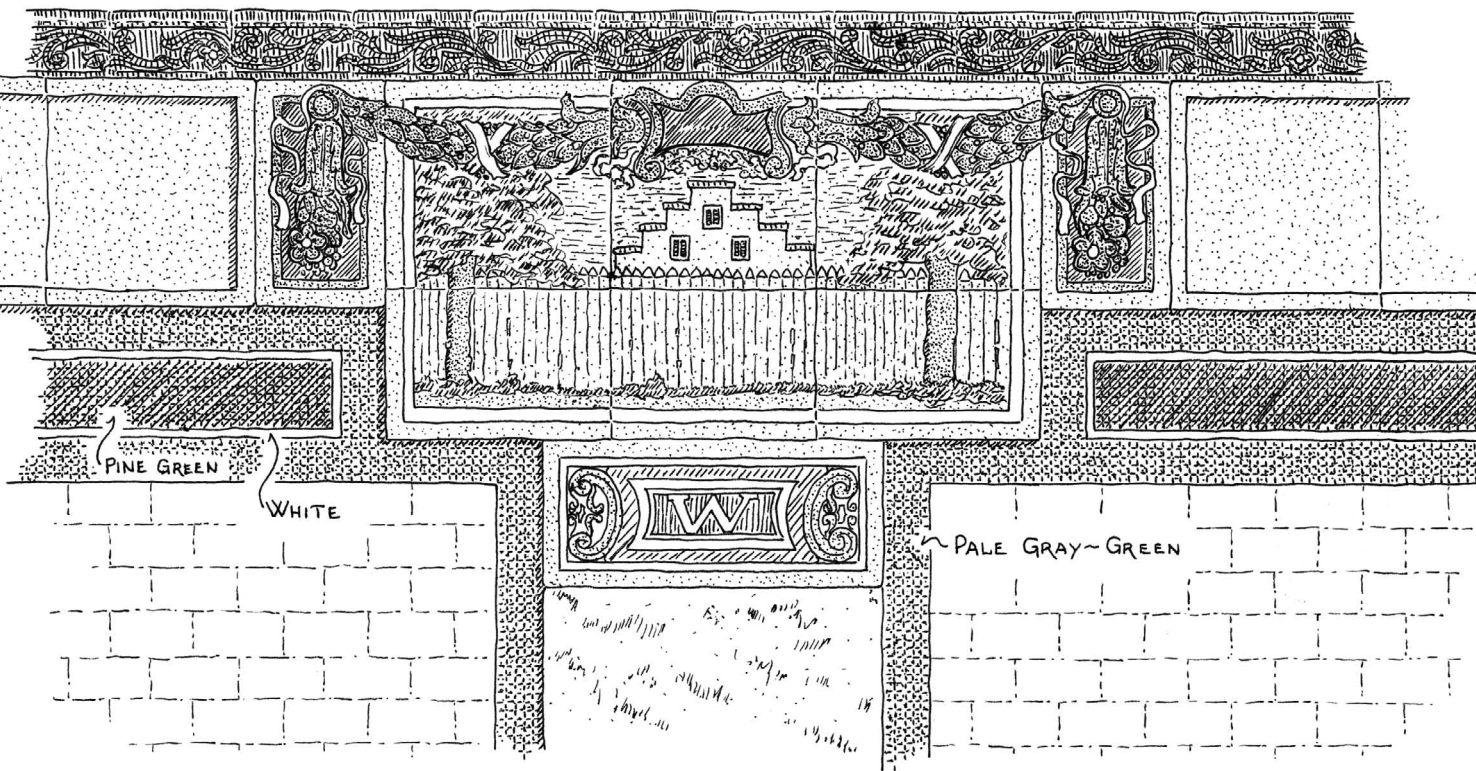


CHECKS:  
IVORY,  
GRAY,  
& SLATE BLUE

OCHRE

SLATE BLUE





Wall Street  
 Faience plaque  
 4/5 lines



## WALL STREET FAIENCE

Anyone seeing this view of Nieuw Amsterdam would have been standing just outside the Dutch settlement's limits, on the northern side of its fabled wall, which spanned the width of Manhattan isle. The Dutch Governor, Pieter Stuyvesant, had this wall erected in about 1653 to protect the town, as the British were challenging the Dutch's hold on the New World and there was an ongoing conflict with the Weckquaesgeek tribe.

The Dutch brigade that patrolled the interior of the wall eventually wore a path through the grass, and this dirt lane became known as the "Waal Straat." When the British attacked in 1664, they came in from the Bay rather than the north, so the wall didn't help. They took possession of Nieuw Amsterdam and recrowned it New York City.

*The faience plaque was crafted at Rookwood Faience, Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1905. It was possibly modeled by John Dee Wareham.*

### FESTOONS & HANGING BOUQUETS:

GRAY-GREEN, WITH IVORY RIBANDS

### CARTOUCH BOX:

GREEN, WITH A GRAY-GREEN FRAME

### WALL PLAQUE:

FOREGROUND: YELLOW OCHRE

GRASS: GREEN

TREES: BROWN TRUNKS, PINE GREEN BOUGHS

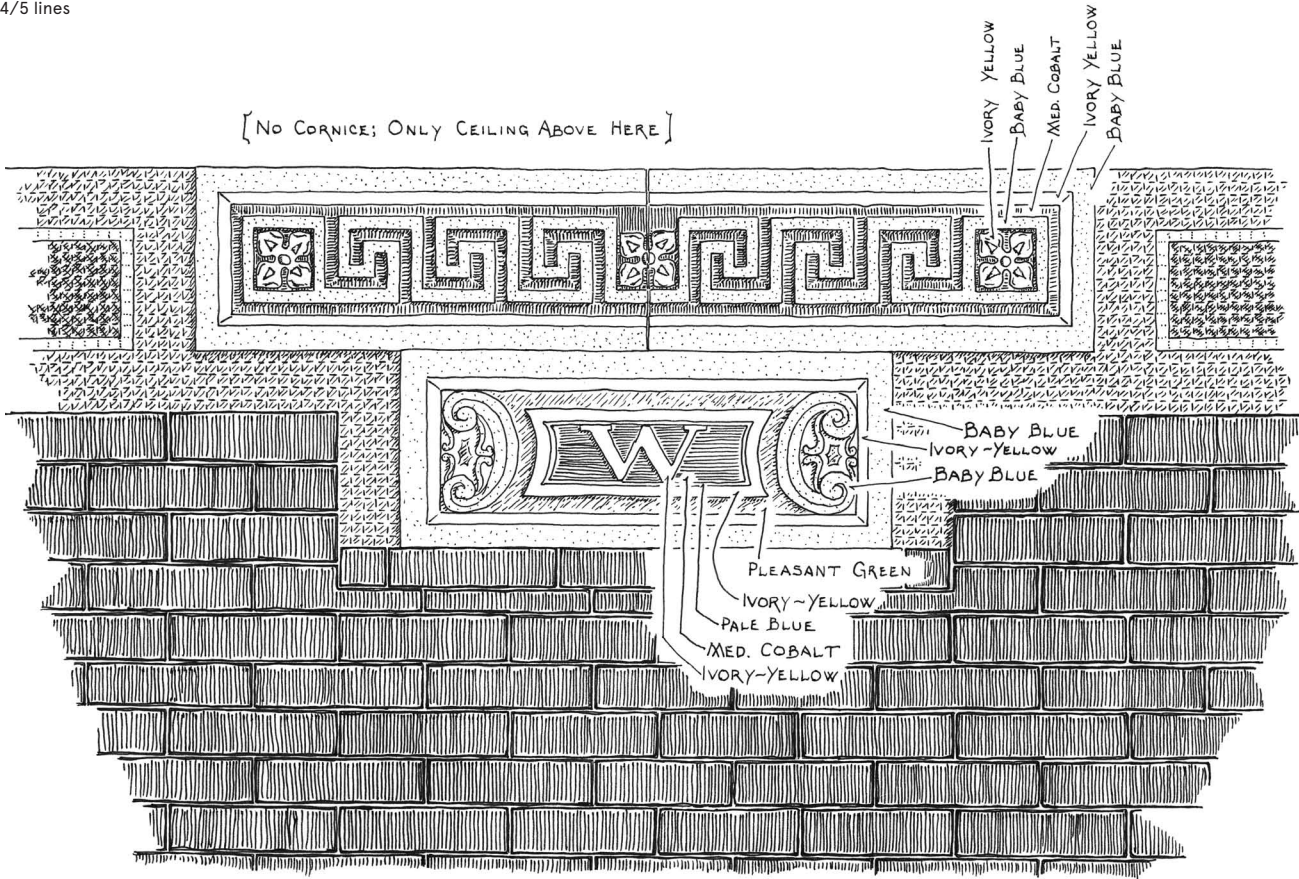
WALL: RAW SIENNA PALLISADES, WITH PALE GREEN TIPS

BUILDING: YELLOWISH

WINDOWS: DULL BROWN, WITH PALE GREEN FRAMES

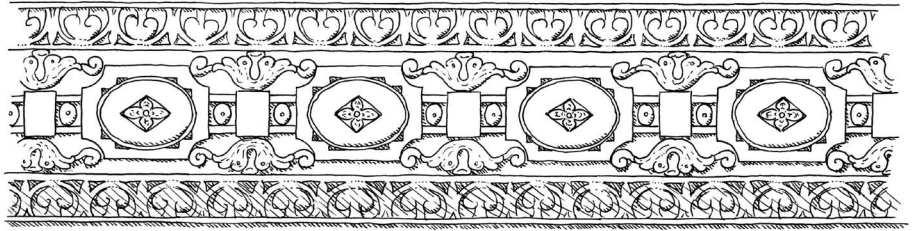
SKY: MED. COBALT

Wall Street  
Faience panel,  
mosaics, and brick  
4/5 lines



right:  
Wall Street  
Plaster beam strip  
4/5 lines

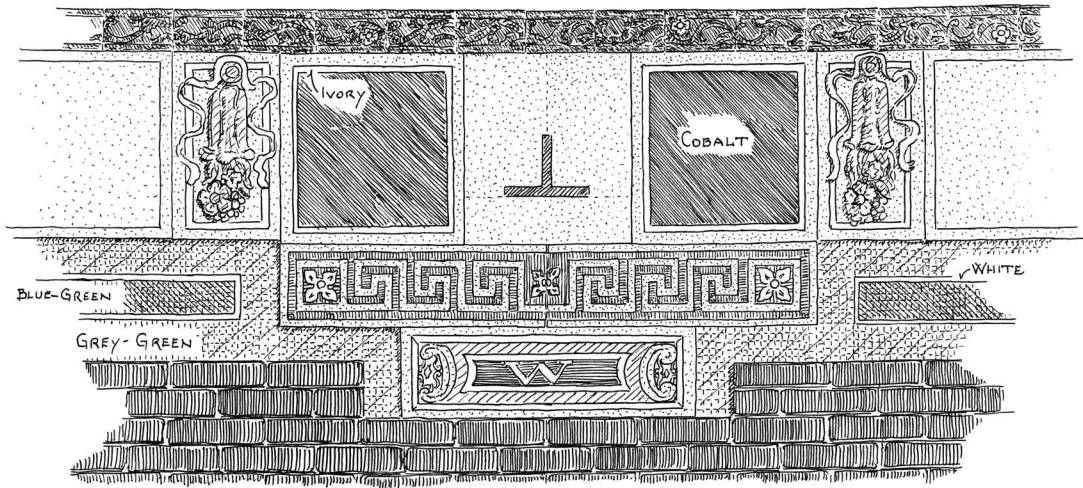
below:  
Wall Street  
Faience panel,  
mosaics, and brick  
4/5 lines



FLORAL FAIEZE CORNICE - COBALT, WITH IVORY ROSES  
REVERSE BOUQUETS - IRON GREEN



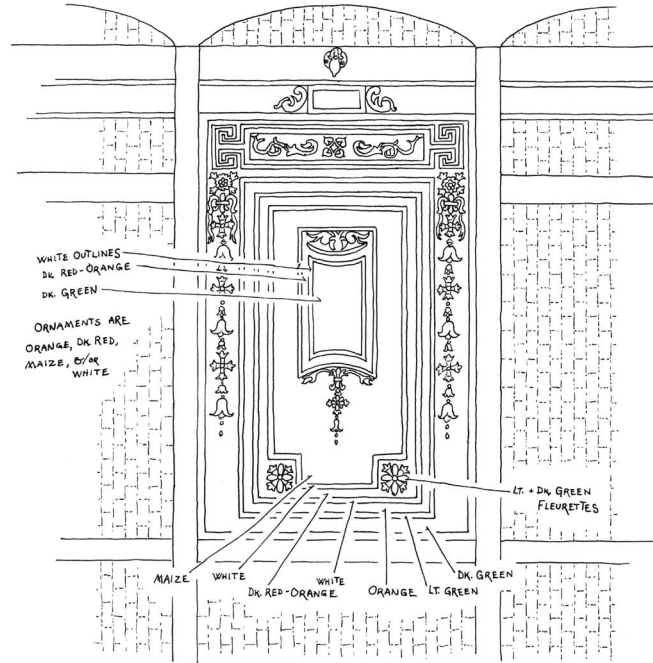
= COLUMN-INTO-WALL IRON BRACE



## BOWLING GREEN

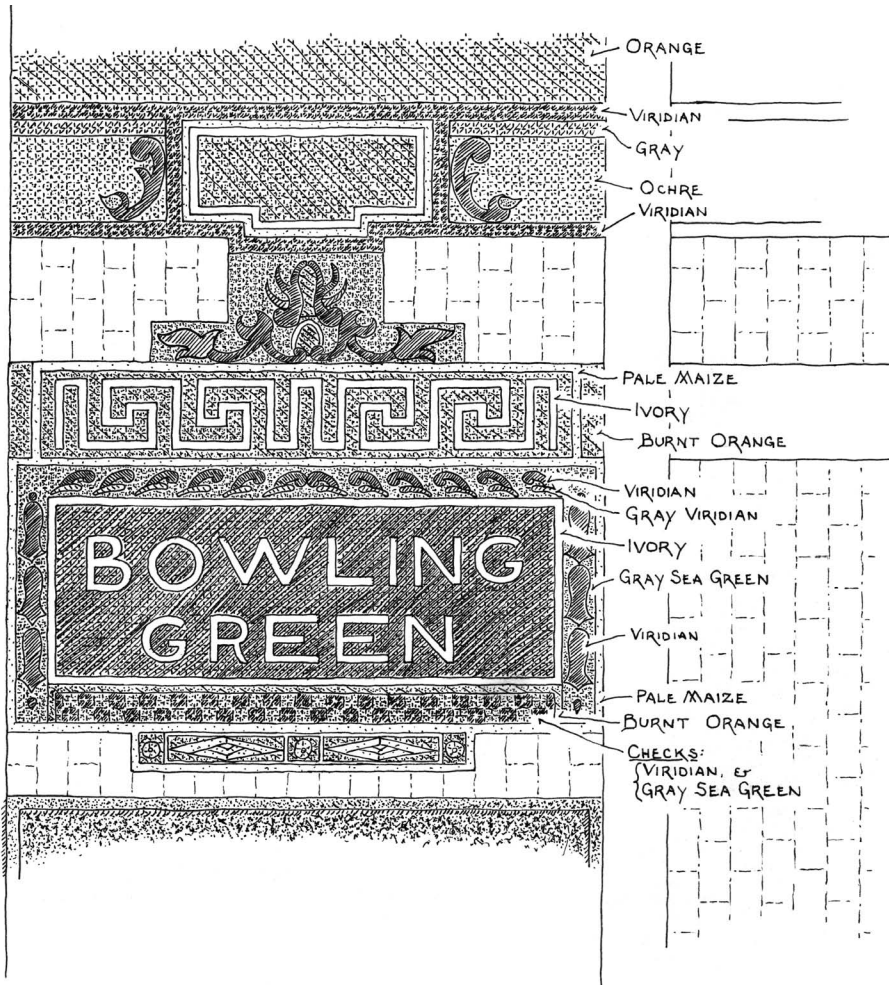
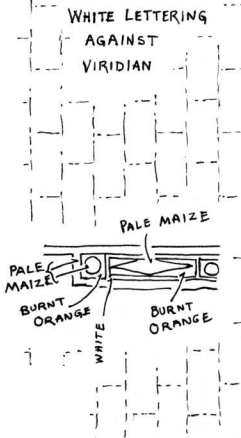
The Bowling Green mosaic name panel was designed by LaFarge, rather late in the process of the project, and its name comes from the city's very first park, which sits above the station. Bowling Green's mosaic name panels were like no others in the entire subway system, but unfortunately, they're no longer with us. The MTA revamped the station from top to bottom in the late 70s, and not one of its beautiful mosaic name or rug panels was preserved.

*The mosaics were composed by Felix Alcan and his European craftsmen in 1905.*



Bowling Green  
Mosaic panel  
4/5 lines  
(no longer visible)





Bowling Green  
 Mosaic name panel  
 4/5 lines  
 (no longer visible)

## SOUTH FERRY

With wind whipping sharply across New York Bay, the Battery has always been a great place to sail. The Dutch held races here in sloops just like the one depicted in this station's plaques. In fact these sturdy little vessels were used to ferry people and cargo up the Hudson, monopolizing river traffic from the 1620s to nearly the 1850s, when paddleboats came to dominate the waterways.

These faience plaques have the deepest relief of all the system's pictorial décor. The porters hated them because so much dust settled on the sloop's hull and sails, requiring additional cleaning.

*These faience plaques were fabricated at Hartford Faience, Connecticut, 1905. The master casting form was probably carved by Louis F. Dettenborn's woodworking company, which made models for various industries in the region.*

"SF" PANEL:

"SF" ~ PALE GREEN, AGAINST VERMILLION  
FRAME ~ OCHRE  
CURLY BRACKETS ~ PALE GREEN, AGAINST YELLOW  
ENFRAMING BARS (TOP & BOTTOM) ~ OCHRE

FESTOONS:

BASICALLY YELLOW, WITH IVORY RIBANDS  
GREEN FLORAL ENDS  
YELLOW & WHITE FASTENING KNOBS

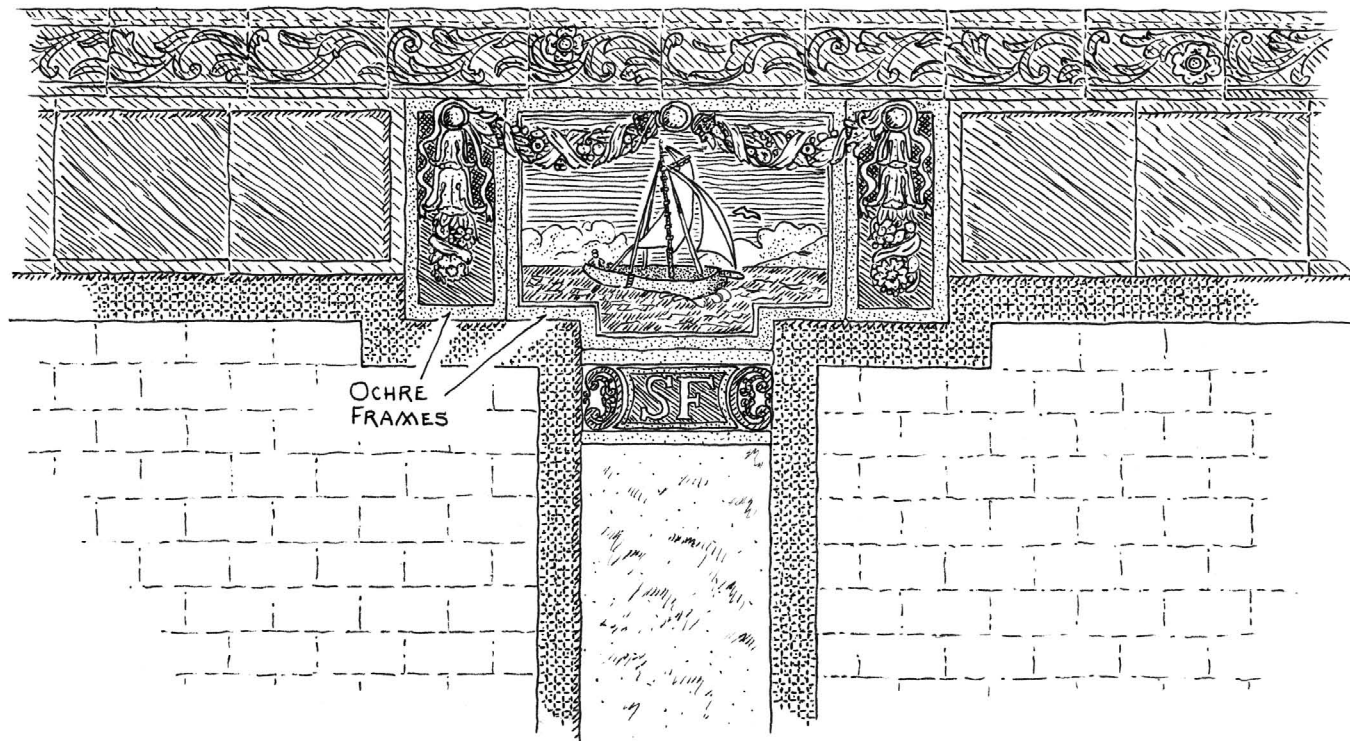
HANGING BOUQUETS:

YELLOW, WITH WHITE RIBANDS, AGAINST VERMILLION

SLOOP PLAQUE:

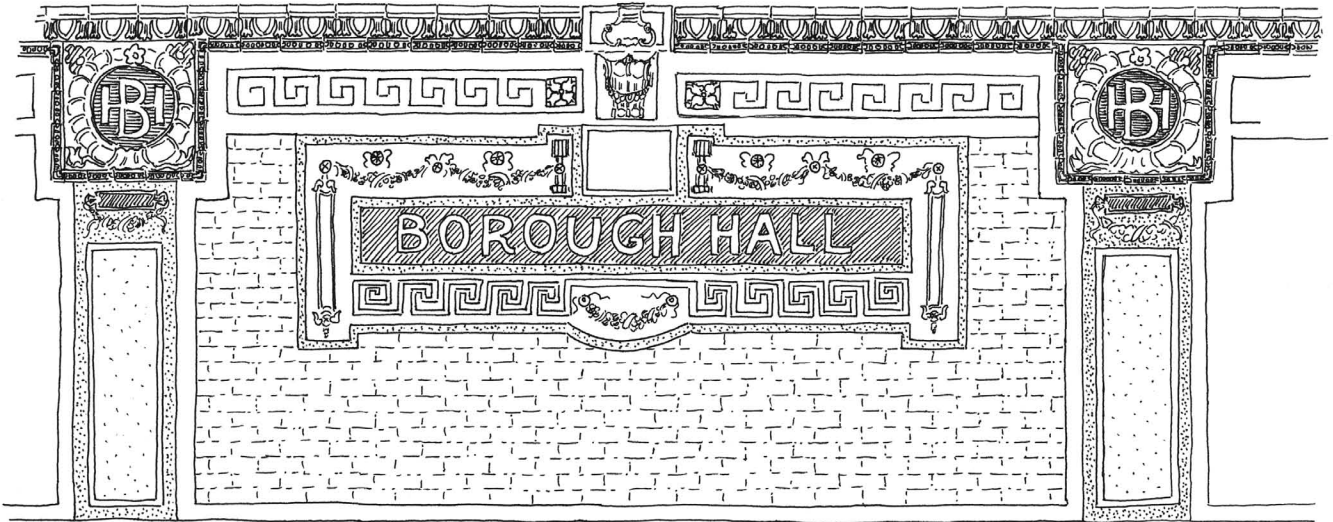
SEA ~ VIRIDIAN, WITH YELLOWER VIRIDIAN HIGHLIGHTS  
SKY ~ BLUE  
LAND ~ MAROON  
CLOUDS ~ WHITE, WITH MAROON SHADOWS  
HULL & MAST & LINES ~ RAW SIENNA  
SAILS & SEAGULL ~ WHITE  
DUTCHMAN ~ BLUE & IVORY

Color Scheme  
South Ferry  
Faience sloop plaque  
1 line  
(no longer visible)



South Ferry  
Faience sloop plaque  
1 line  
(no longer visible)

Borough Hall  
Mosaic name panel  
2/3/4/5 lines



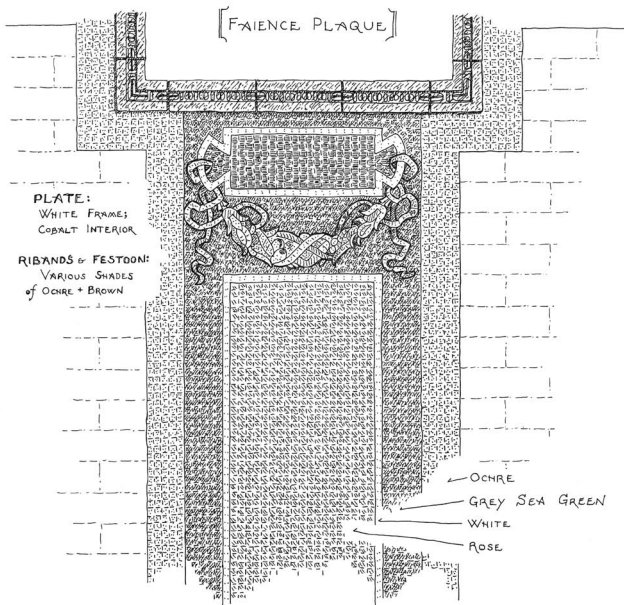


## BOROUGH HALL MOSAIC NAME PANEL

**F**or this grand station, one of the jewels of the system and the IRT's first stop into Brooklyn, LaFarge fully celebrates his Beaux-Arts training in the design of the signage and décor. There is noble Roman capital lettering in the two bronze plaques at entrance level, set in broad panels replete with mosaic pilasters, festoons, fruits and flowers, ribbands, and ovoids. Downstairs there are gold-rimmed plates, ribbands, cascading florals, rosettes, fleurettes, motifs of egg and acanthus and bead and reel, consoles, and the majestic "BH" monogram

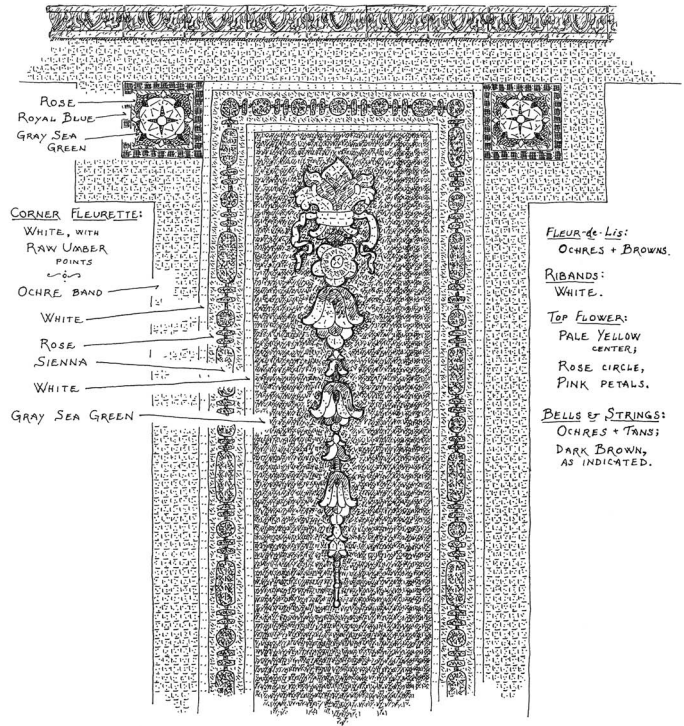
plaques, set within a victor's wreath of laurel leaves and berries. Only one other station, 14th Street / Union Square, bore wreath plaques, but there they were entombed behind walls around 1910. Thankfully, we can still appreciate these Borough Hall splendors, as they have survived in full view for more than a century now.

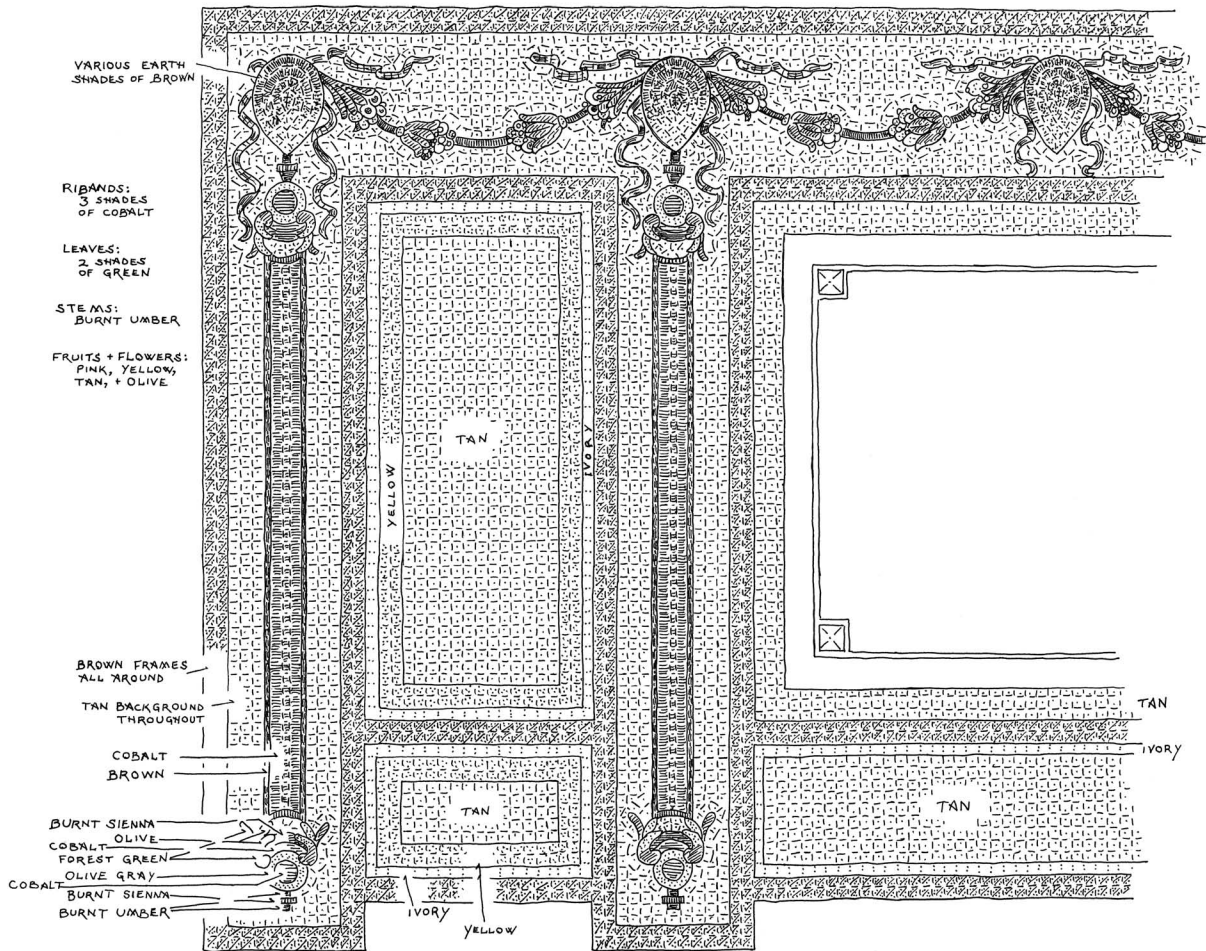
*The "BH" plaques and cornice were produced by Hartford Faience, Hartford, Connecticut, in 1908. The Dettenborn company probably crafted the casting master.*



**below:**  
Borough Hall  
Mosaic pilasters  
2/3/4/5 lines

**opposite:**  
Borough Hall  
Mosaic setting for  
bronze tablet  
2/3/4/5 lines

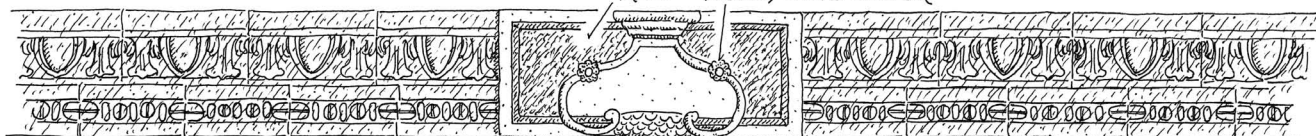




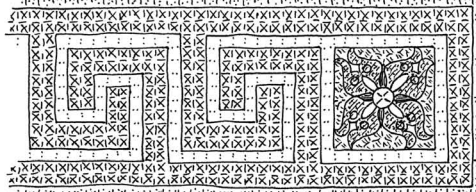


GRAY-BEIGE CONSOLES:

GREEN YELLOW, WHITE CENTER

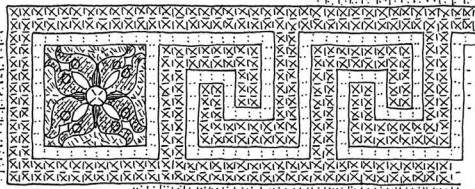
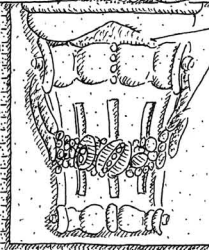


OCBRE



GREEN;

FRUITS: RED, YELLOW, BROWN, OCHRE



BROWN BKAND;  
PINK & ROSE PETALS,  
PINK CENTER, BLACK SPIKES

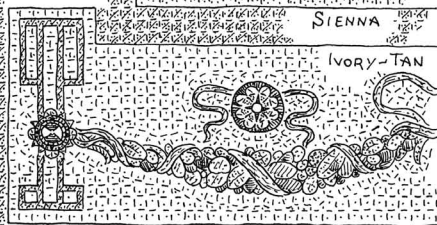
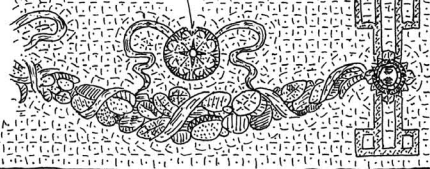
SIENNA

IVORY-TAN

CHALK BLUE

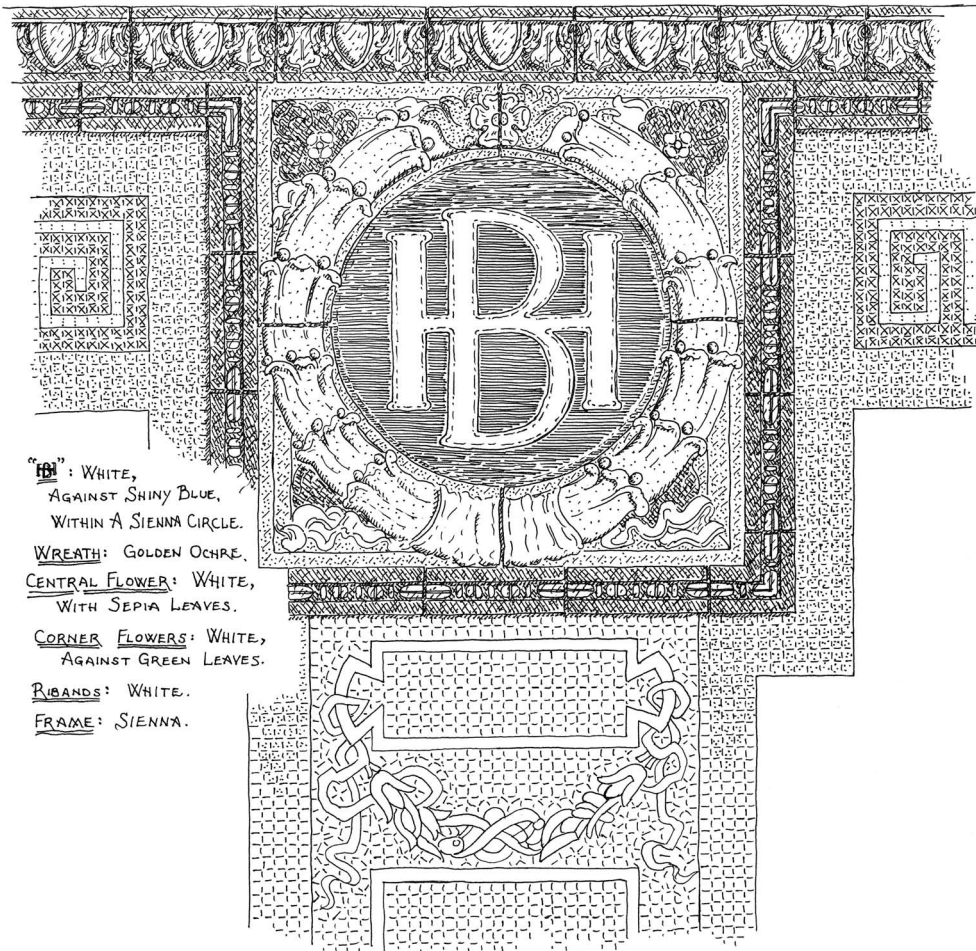
SIENNA

IVORY-TAN



# DROUGH HAI



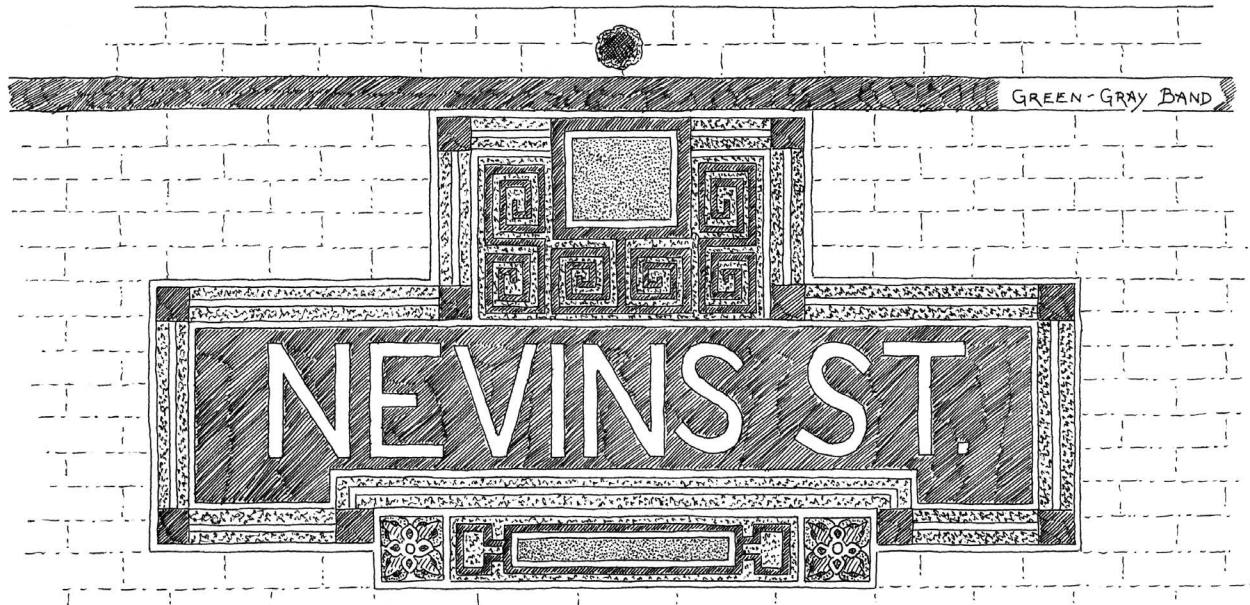


"IBI": WHITE,  
 AGAINST SHINY BLUE,  
 WITHIN A SIENNA CIRCLE.  
WREATH: GOLDEN OCHRE.  
CENTRAL FLOWER: WHITE,  
 WITH SEPIA LEAVES.  
CORNER FLOWERS: WHITE,  
 AGAINST GREEN LEAVES.  
RIBANDS: WHITE.  
FRAME: SIENNA.

**opposite:**  
 Borough Hall  
 Mosaic name panel  
 detail  
 2/3/4/5 lines

**right:**  
 Borough Hall  
 Faience monogram  
 plaque  
 2/3/4/5 lines

{ WIDE OCHRE MOSAIC BAND }



GLAZED WHITE LETTERS  
GLAZED VIRIDIAN BKGRND.

TAN

LT. CHALK BLUE

TERRA COTTA

VIRIDIAN

BURNT ORANGE

CHALK BLUE

TERRA COTTA

VIRIDIAN

TERRA COTTA

LT. CHALK BLUE

TAN

FLEURETTE:

WHITE CENTER; PEACH RING;

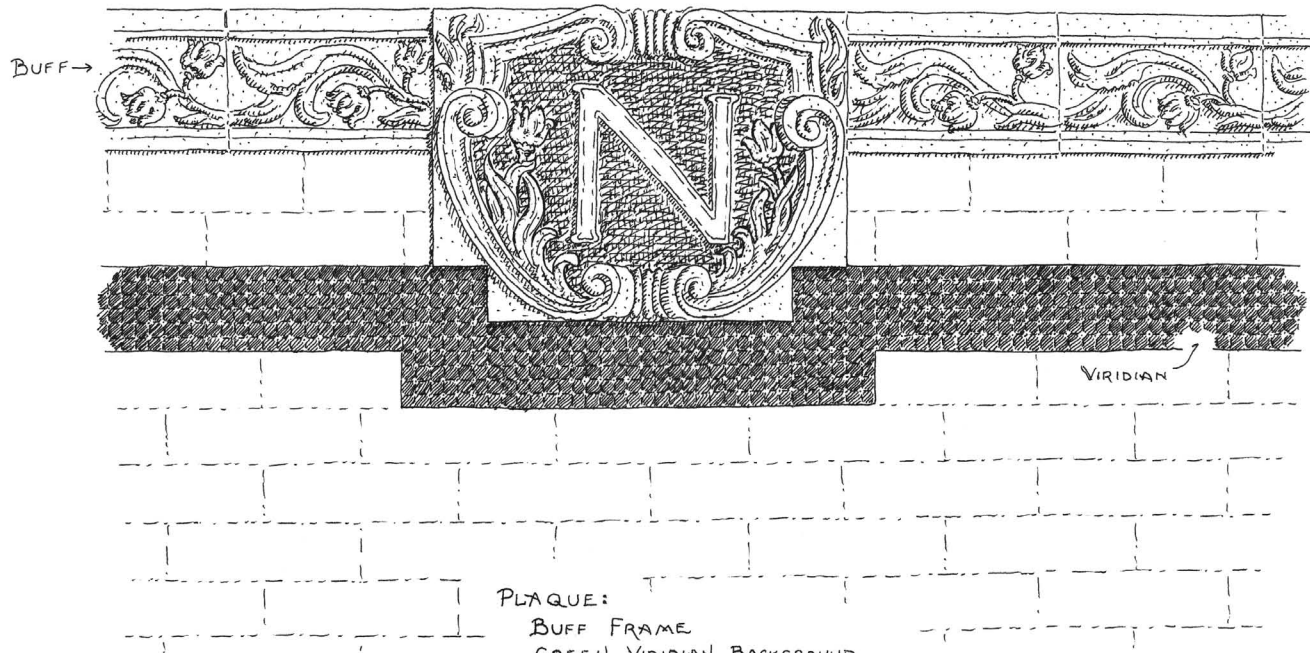
PEACH INNER PETALS;

BURNT ORANGE WITHIN

BURNT ORANGE

GRAY-GREEN

VIRIDIAN



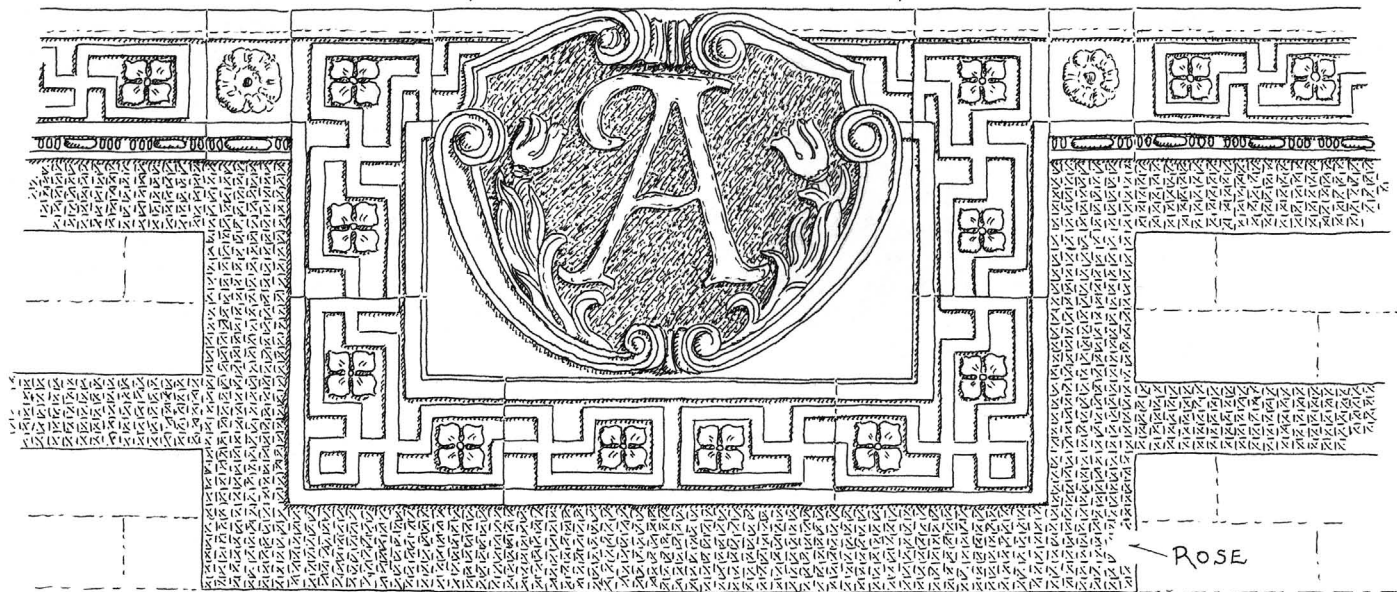
PLAQUE:  
 BUFF FRAME  
 GREEN VIRIDIAN BACKGROUND  
 IVORY INITIAL "N"

**opposite:**  
 Nevins Street  
 Faience plaque  
 2/3/4/5 lines  
 (no longer visible)

**above:**  
 Nevins Street  
 Mosaic name panel  
 2/3/4/5 lines



CREAM-BUFF CORNICE, PLAQUE FRAME, CARTOUCHE FRAME, & TULIPS



INITIAL 'A': IVORY,  
AGAINST A GREEN VIRIDIAN BKGRND.



## ATLANTIC AVENUE MOSAIC PLAQUE

This station is as far as the IRT's first line into Brooklyn reached. This "A" plaque, a typical design format found in many of the early IRT stops, features a round shield with embossed tulips flanking the station's initial. The plaque also bears a swastika fret pattern flowing to the cornice. One theory suggests that the ubiquity of tulips in much of the

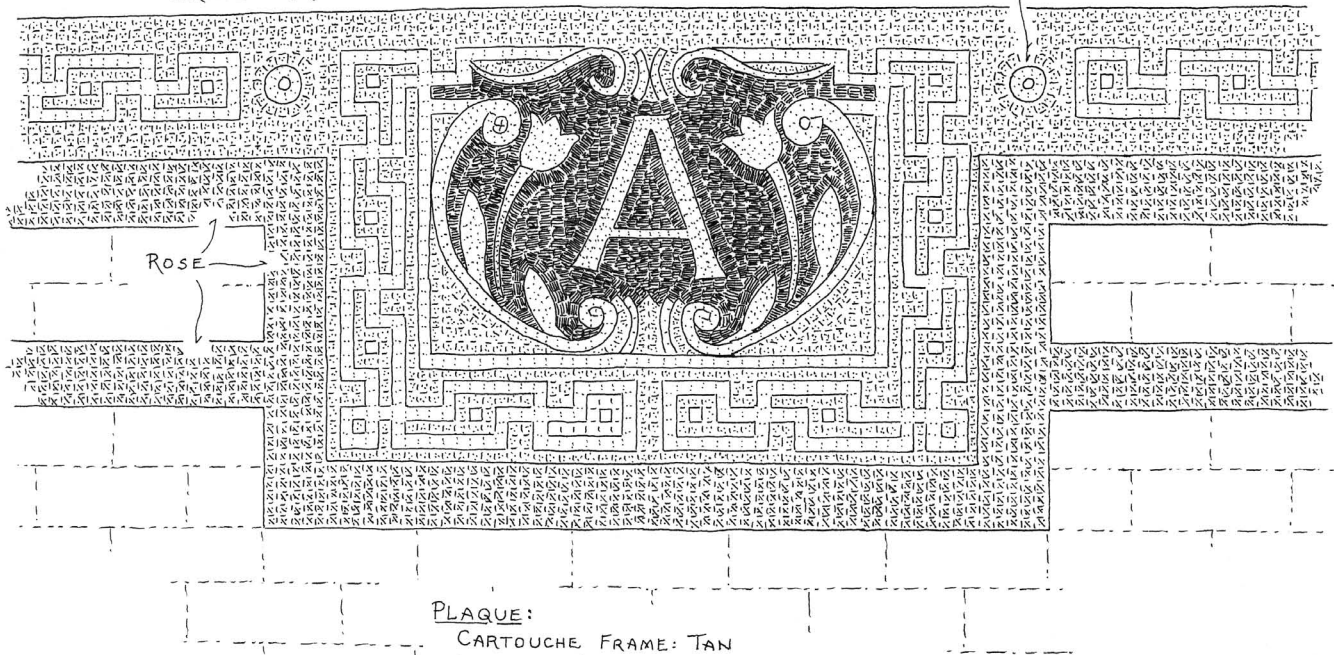
early subway's ceramic is a reference to New York's Dutch heritage.

*Perhaps the faience "A" plaques are by Hartford Faience, which also produced the Borough Hall wreath plaques. The mosaic renditions of these plaques were likely fabricated by Felix Alcan.*

Atlantic Avenue  
Mosaic rendition of the  
1908 faience plaque  
2/3/4/5/LIRR lines

FRETS - IVORY  
"CORNICHE" + "FRAME" - OCHRE

IVORY CIRCLE, YELLOW CENTER



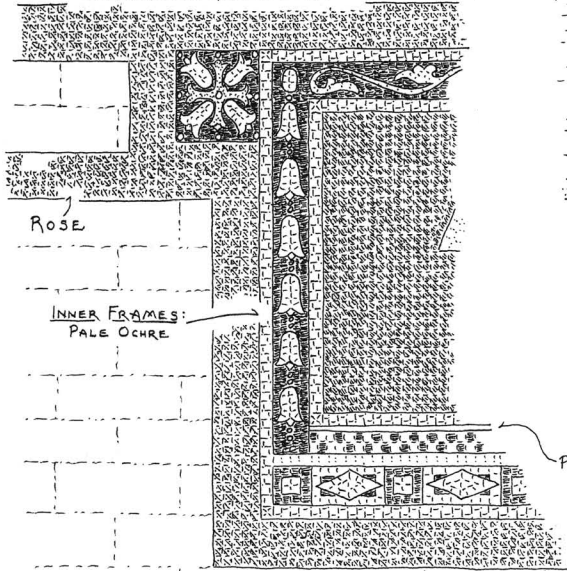
PLAQUE:

CARTOUCHE, FRAME: TAN  
LEAVES & TULIPS: TAN ; STEMS: OCHRE  
INITIAL "A": IVORY OR TAN  
BACKGROUND: COBALT

Atlantic Avenue  
 Mosaic name panel  
 2/3/4/5/LIRR lines

CORNER FLEURETTES:

PALE GREY-BLUE BELLS,  
 SEPIA + SIENNA CROSS;  
 SLATE BLUE-GREEN BKGRND.



ROSE

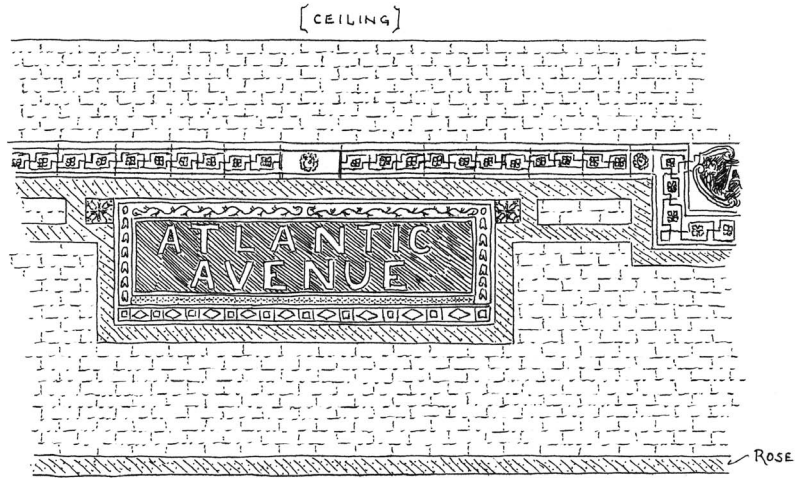
INNER FRAMES:  
 PALE OCHRE



SLATE BLUE-GREEN  
 RAW SIENNA

SIENNA

SLATE BLUE-GREEN  
 PALE GRAY-BLUE



ROSE

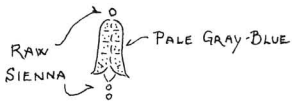
PINK MARBLE WAINSCOT

NAME PANEL & WALL FORMAT;  
 NORTH FROM CONTROL HOUSE STAIRS

PALE GREY-BLUE 1/2 MOSAICS

CHECKS:

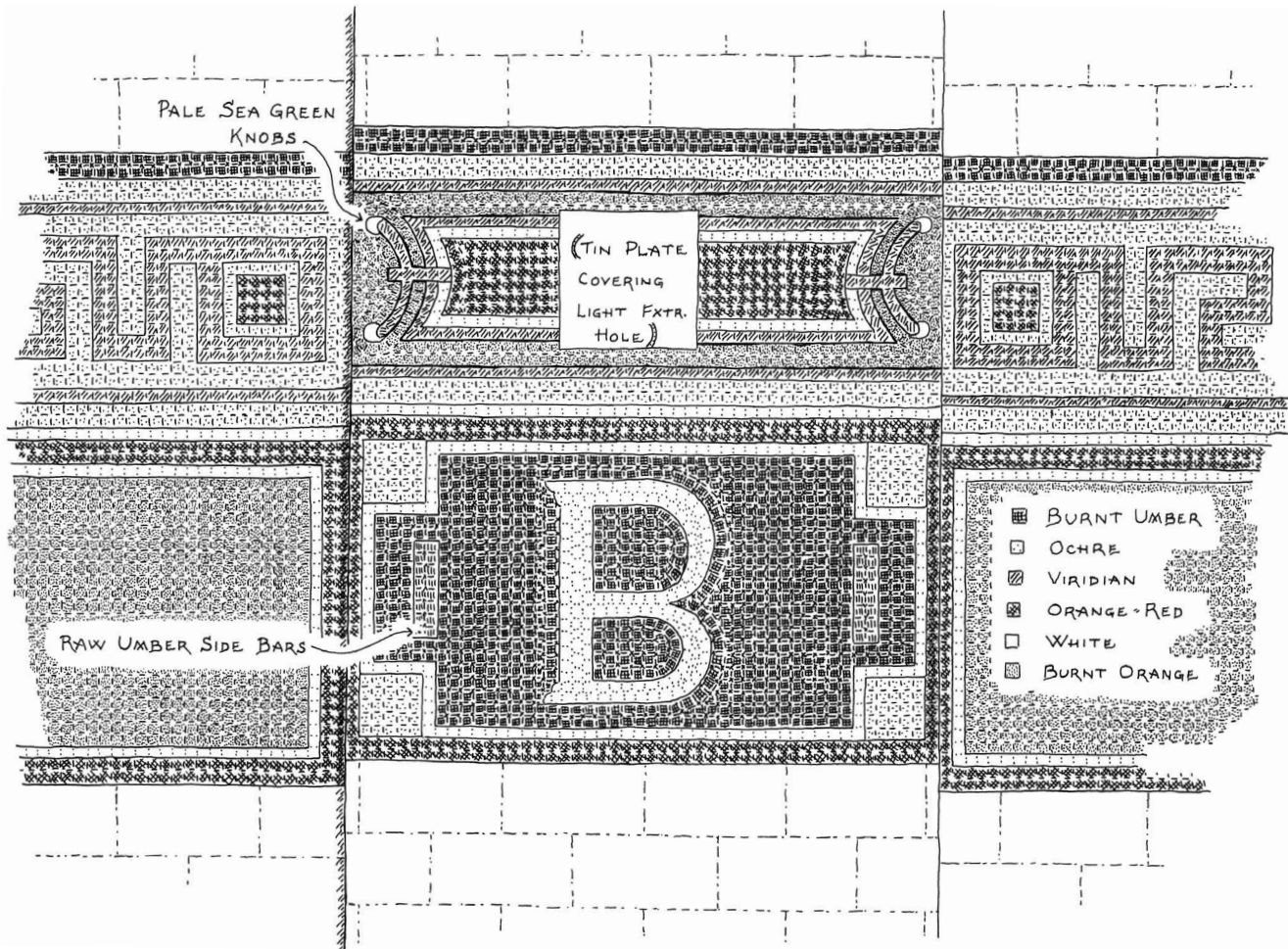
PALE GRAY-BLUE  
 ET SLATE BLUE-GREEN



VINES:

PALE GRAY-BLUE,  
 AGAINST SLATE BLUE-GREEN





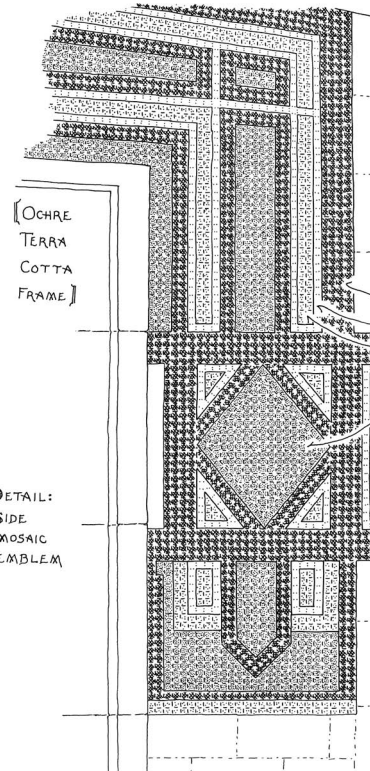
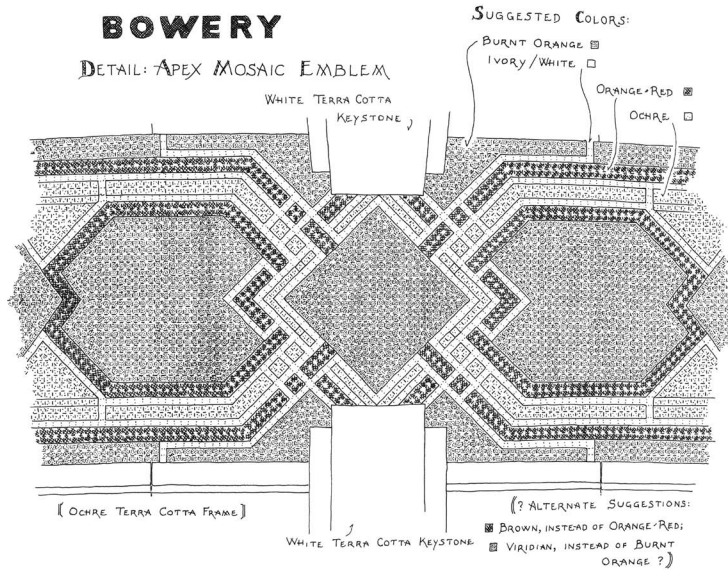


opposite:  
Bowery  
Mosaic band  
J/Z lines

below:  
Bowery entrance  
house  
Mosaic design  
J/Z lines  
House demolished  
(no longer visible)

## BOWERY

DETAIL: APEX MOSAIC EMBLEM



## BOWERY

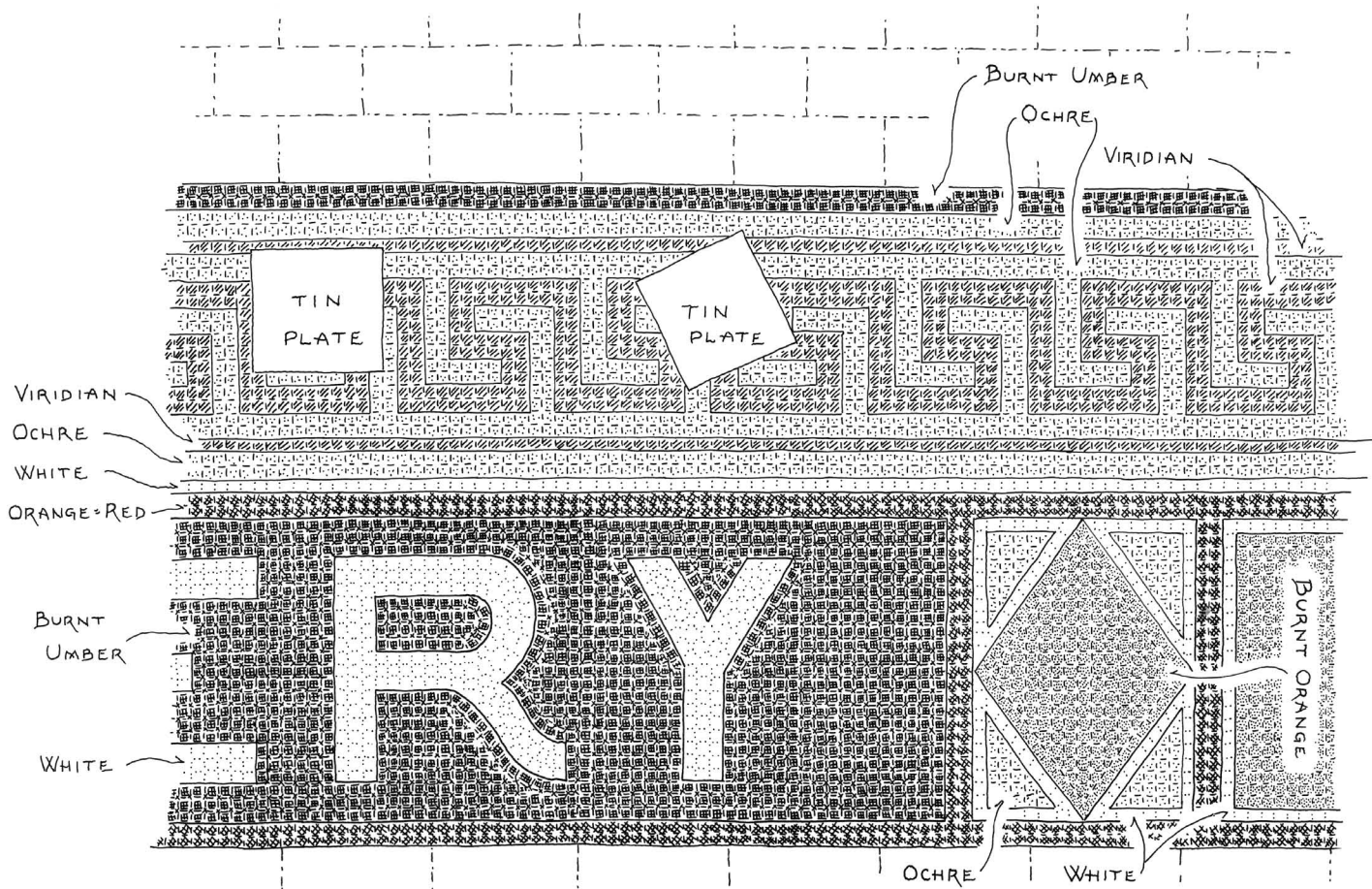
SUGGESTED COLORS:

- ORANGE-RED
- IVORY/WHITE
- OCHRE
- BURNT ORANGE

( ALTERNATES TO THIS SUGGESTED SCHEME:

ORANGE-RED IS, INSTEAD, BROWN ■

AND BURNT ORANGE IS, INSTEAD, VIRIDIAN ■  
? ? ? )

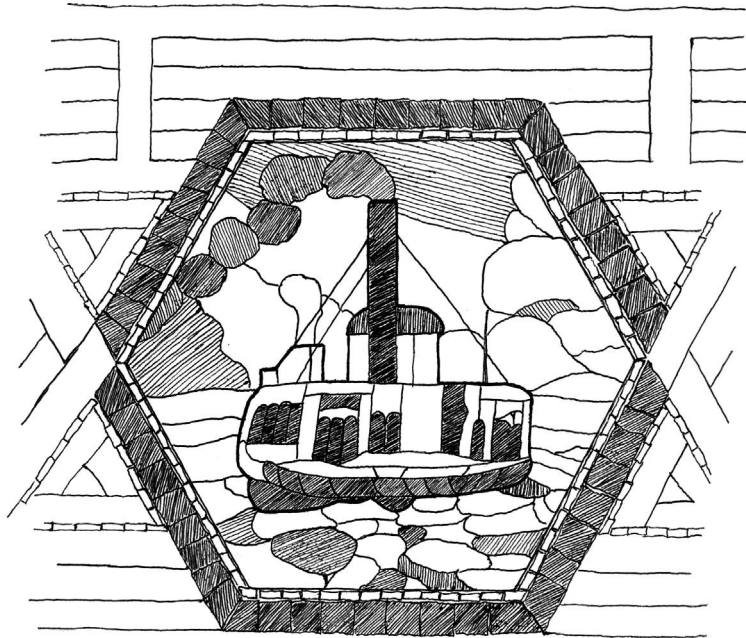


**opposite:**

Bowery  
Mosaic name panel  
detail  
J/Z lines

**below:**

Cortlandt Street  
Terracotta  
ferryboat panel  
1 line  
(no longer visible)





## GRAND CENTRAL FAIENCE LOCOMOTIVE PLAQUE

When Grand Central Terminal's subway station opened in 1918, the locomotives depicted in these plaques were not contemporary to the times. They are bell-stacked locomotives from the 1860s, referencing the trains that Cornelius "Commodore" Vanderbilt built into his railroad empire and subsequent opening of his Grand Central Depot in 1871.

*These faience plaques are probably the design work of Jay Van Everen, a friend of Squire J. Vickers, the chief designer of the Public Service Commission, and likely manufactured by the Herman Mueller Tile Company, of Trenton, New Jersey.*

### LOCOMOTIVE PLAQUE:

ENGINE = GRAYS + BROWNS

HEADLAMP = YELLOW

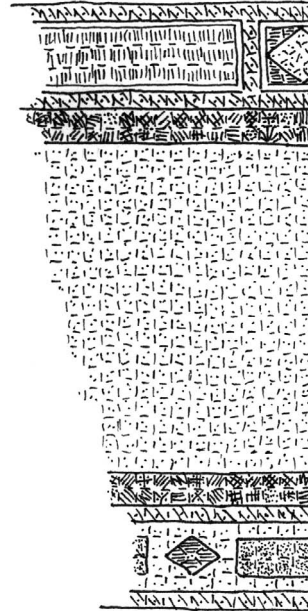
WINDOWS = BLUE + GREEN

COWCATCHER = GRAY

TRACK = GRAY; TIES = BROWN; OCHRE IN-BETWEEN

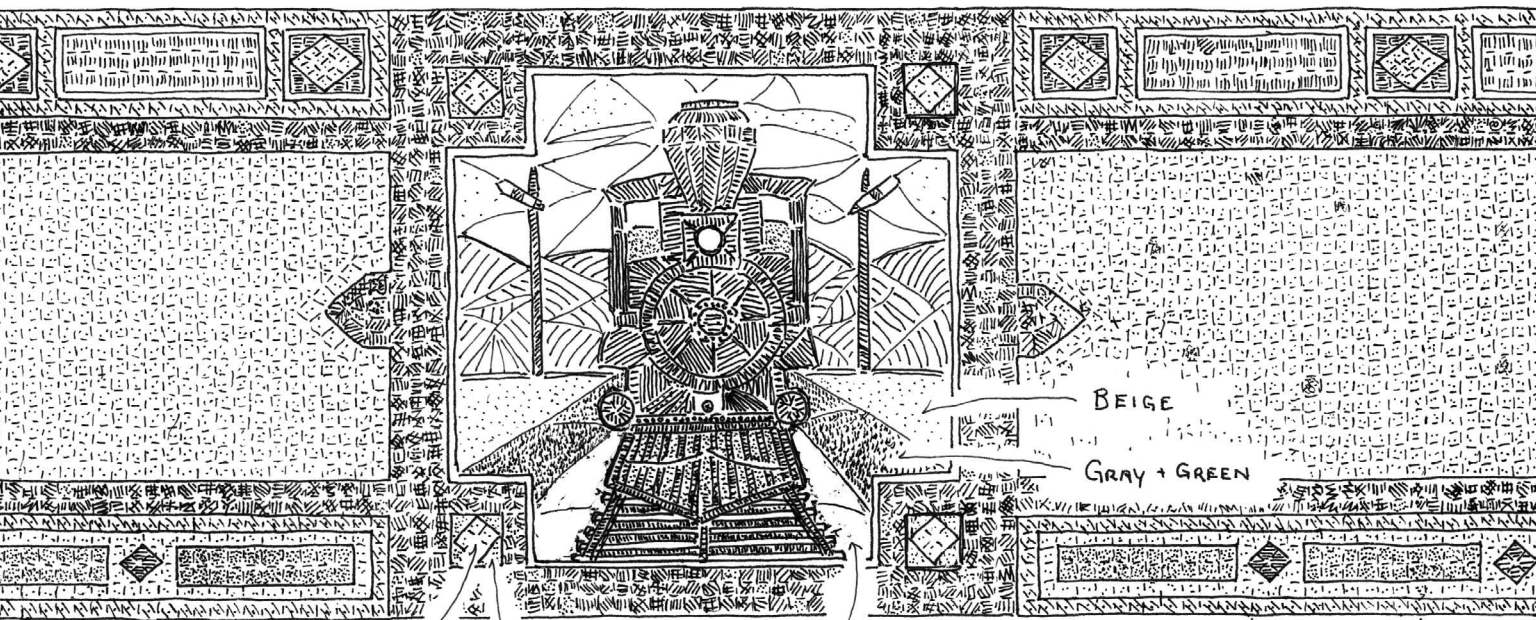
SEMAPHORES = GRAY POSTS, BLUE + RED ARMS

SKY = BLUES + GRAYS; HILLS = GREEN, GRAY, + SAND





Grand Central  
Faience locomotive plaque  
4/5/6 lines



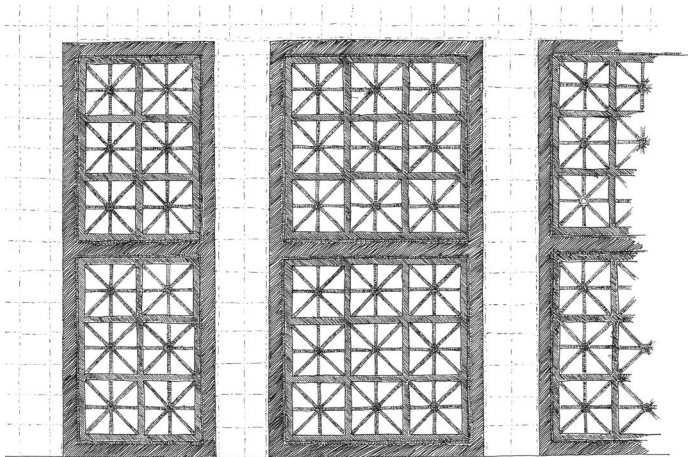
WHEAT

SIENNA

GRAYS

BEIGE

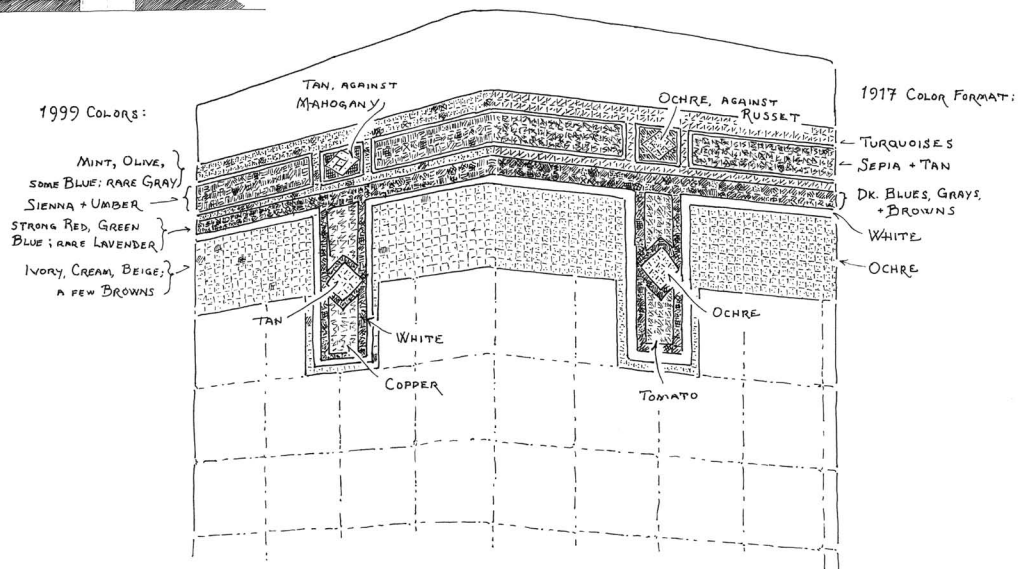
GRAY + GREEN



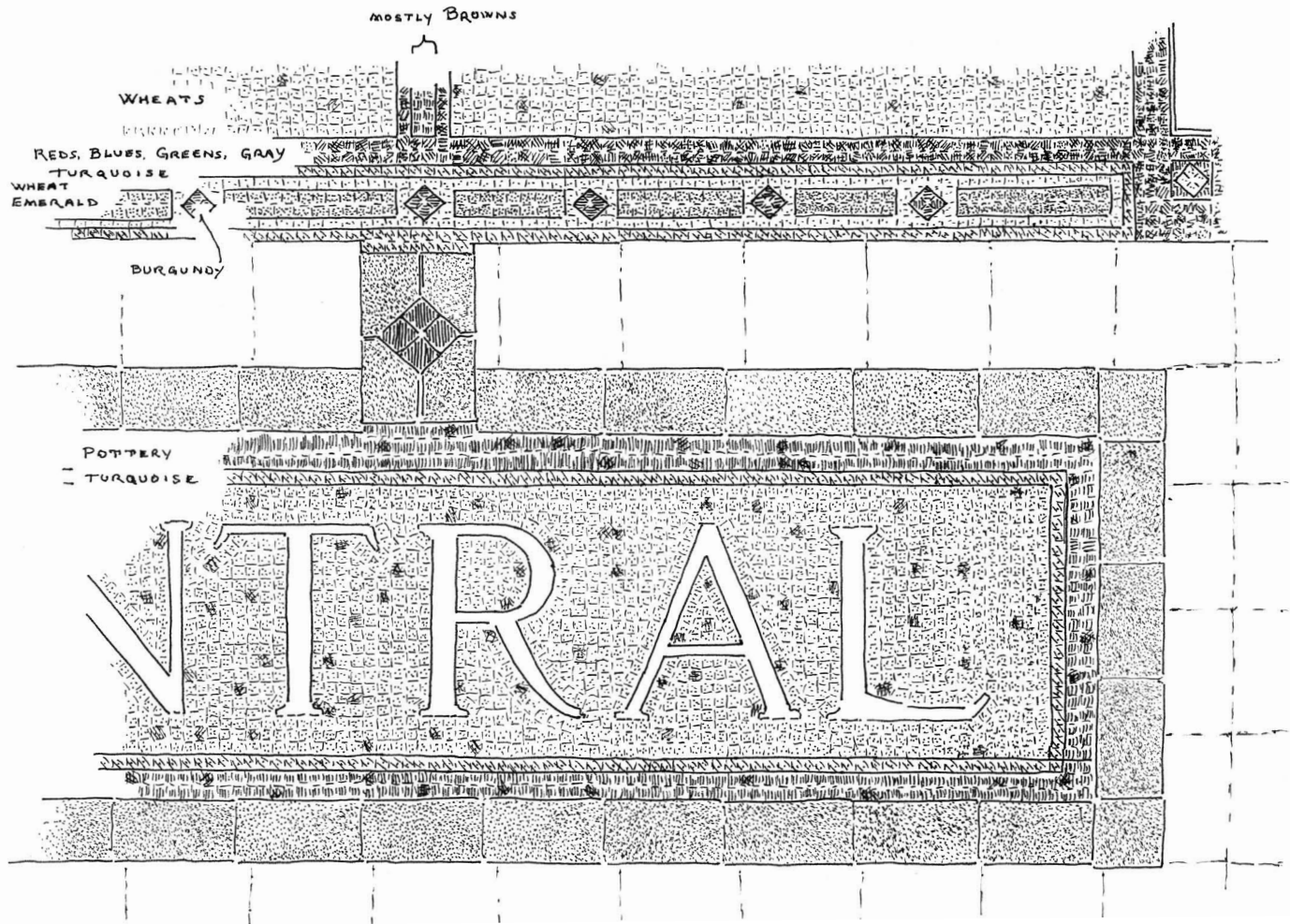
**left:**  
Grand Central  
Iron grilles  
4/5/6 lines

**opposite:**  
Grand Central  
Mosaic name panel  
detail  
4/5/6 lines

**below:**  
Grand Central  
Mosaic pier band  
4/5/6 lines

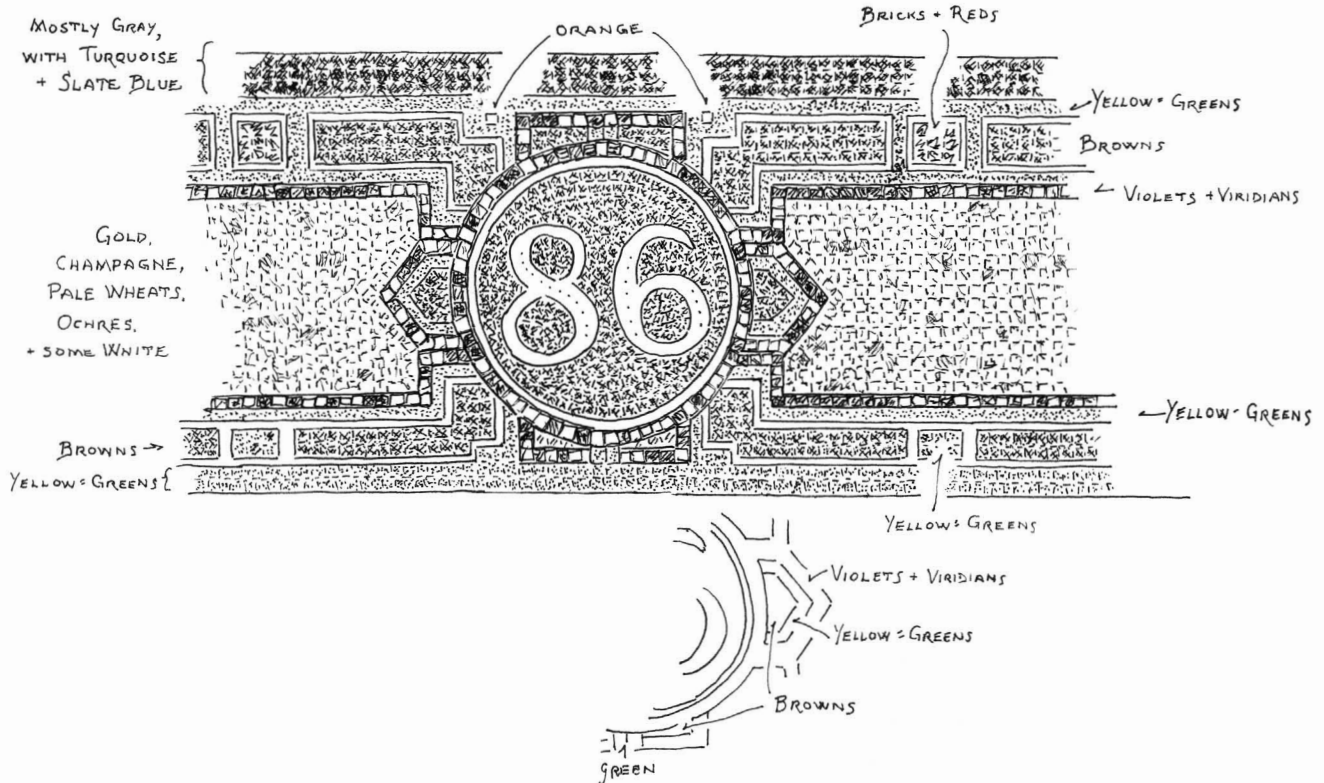






86th Street  
Mosaic band  
4/5/6 lines

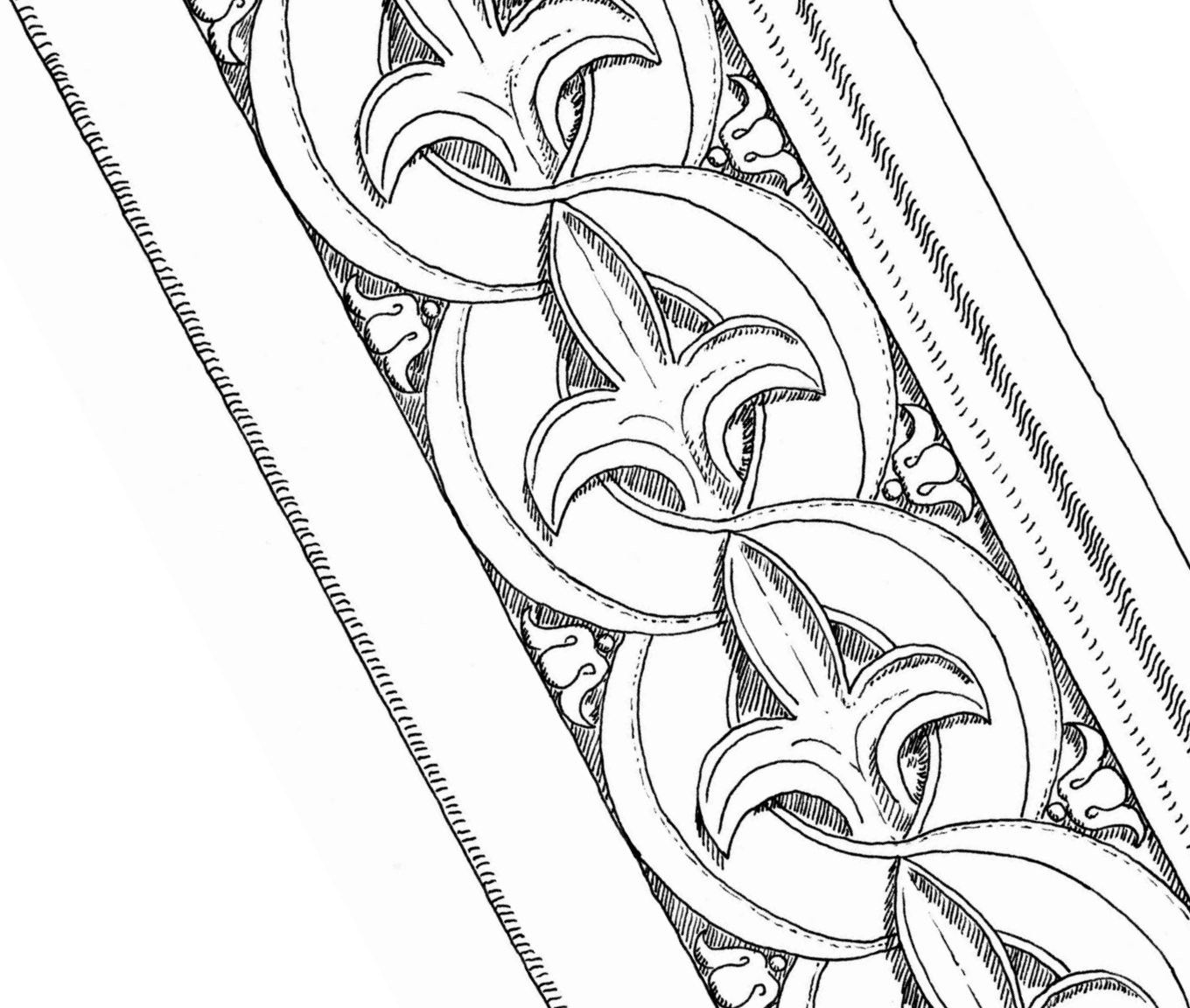
"86" ROUNDEL:  
WHITE NUMERALS AGAINST BROWNS;  
THIN WHITE INNER FRAME;  
VIOLETS + VIRIDIANS OUTSIDE FRAME.

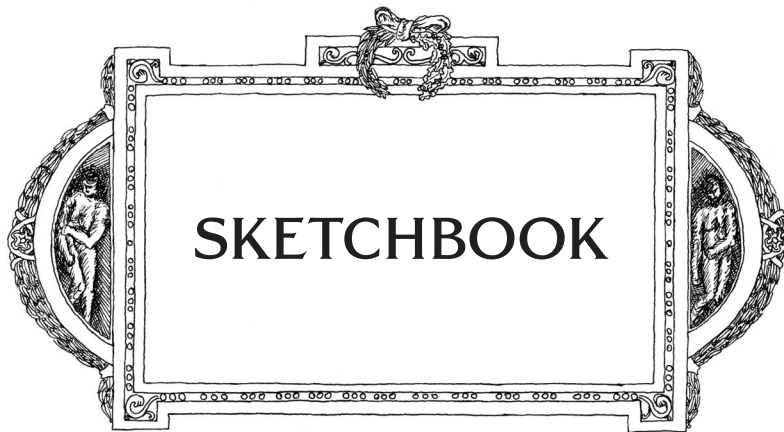




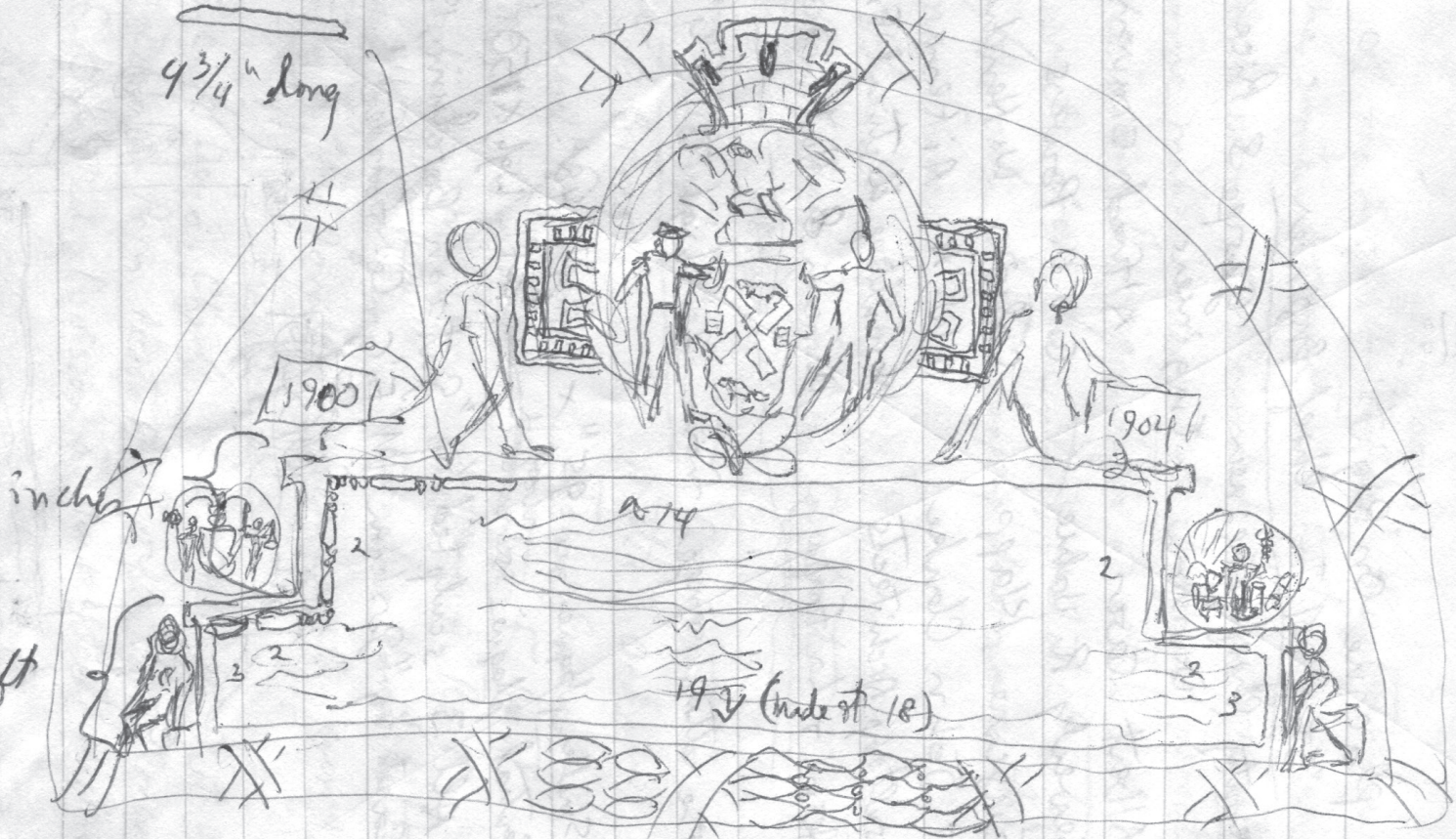
Brooklyn Bridge  
Circular ceiling wreath  
4/5/6 lines  
(no longer visible)







4 3/4" long



1900

1904

1914

1915 (under st 18)

inches

ft

2  
3

2

2  
3

1915

ft

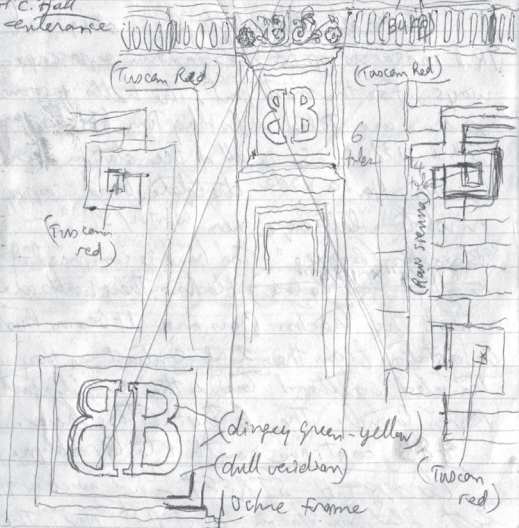


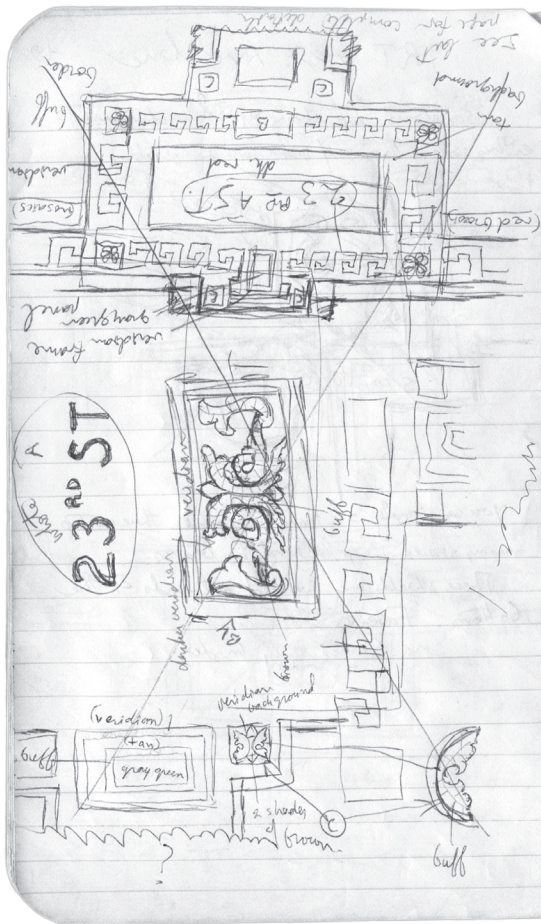


Evidently the BB station was very near the City Hall Station, as both entrances were on the same block around City Hall.

BROOKLYN BRIDGE: IRT Len Ave Line

Old mosaics are outside the entrance bays.  
 Take<sup>2</sup> entrances at the foot of the B.B. pier  
 Place university  
 fragment on William St. Not City Hall  
 entrance





IRT Lex. Ave line 51

### 28<sup>th</sup> Street \* up & downtown

This station is really broken up. Original mosaics in central area of platform. Northern & southern extremes are low ceilinged and with the IND style tile arrangements. Colors are more harmonious. Mocha border, black frame, yellow frame, denim blue background tiles, white letters.

Then, also, some of the walls from the taken booth into the station are the new tan brick tiles.

The original walls reach very high and are in good condition. There is a difference in shade between the 3x6 tiles within the frames and outside them.

Blue egg & dart molding above all.



all faience & no mosaics on this street sign. Bas relief





19T Lex. Ave. Lower

# ASTOR PLACE <sup>up town</sup>

Hey kids! It's Beaver time again!  
They might as well rename it Beaver place.  
JJ Astor would hate it.

Green face in the north, same as before.

Square pillars, w/ teal blue bands.

Marble lintels over doorways, such  
as Men's room or Women's.

Blank lintels over other doors.

3 petals

Plainer molding in green  
facade, street sign beneath center!



Ivory letters + small frame, Outside frame  
but medium green, as holding. Background dull  
blue. All tones expertly harmonized

white

19T Lex Ave line

41

The much-documented beaver.



Can tell where new section begins by change  
from Med To I. Beam, mos.  
down on side, above of beavers, but wall ended top by  
green mosaic. All section to north, near section to South

(GREEN)

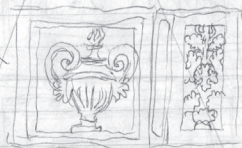
3' birds inside  
NORMAN  
or  
ROMAN.

BRICK #59

no marble coping: 14 rows

Roman brick

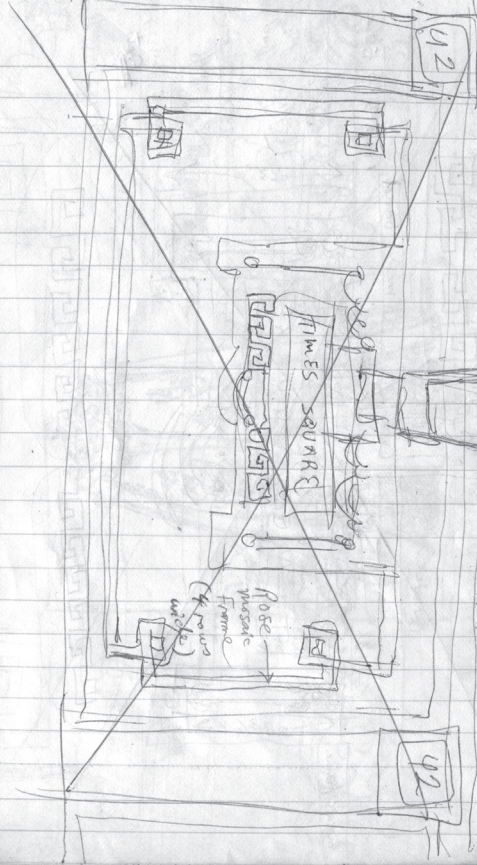
no frames.  
plaster, as  
indicated, of  
Roman brick



Uptown: new  
section S ell 3/4  
Downtown: new  
section the  
INDUSTYKE

"COOPER UNION" - white letters, brown background,  
yellow frame. New ugly mosaic below "ASTOR PL"

TIMES SQUARE - CRT



Rose  
mural  
frame  
(4 mura  
wide)

TIMES SQUARE - CRT



(Ribbon)

Footprint, central ~~area~~ below "TIMES SQUARE" panel.

green fret connection  
(Tan)

Ribbon is gray & turquoise  
ground is mostly shades of green, with some brick red ~~at bottom~~



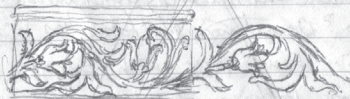
IRT Lex. Ave Line

BLEECKER \* Uptown

Northern end is new face. Green & Green  
Enamel plaques run vertical. Sq. pillars in  
old section.

High up, this time, blue glazed <sup>floral</sup> moldings and  
Cartouche should <sup>be</sup> "B" motif.

This  
sketch is too  
narrow. The  
cartouche is  
wide.



right hand  
molding  
double  
band  
at foot

right hand the molding/frame/border/cornice(?)  
double band of slate blue mosaics at  
at foot of 3x6 tiled wall. Brick below  
1 row of 3x6 tiles between bands at  
foot.

where the 2 directional moldings  
meet and how they meet is unimportant.

emphasize the high walls. No frames  
no pilasters. double band at foot. no connection  
that I can see w/ band at top.

IRT Lex Ave line

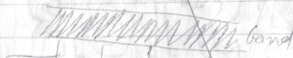
39



This should be seen in person, rather  
than judge from my sketch. Calling is white  
everything else a dark glazed blue; Noxema  
bottle blue.

downtown side north to original, southern  
"new" uptown side - the opposite. No 5x11 1/4

1 row  
of 3x6



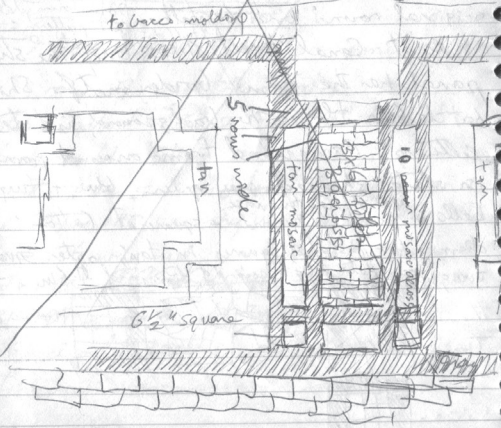
marble coping

Roman Brick (9 rows)



1 RT Lex Ave. line

cross +  
1 F lowers to either side of top one 2 shades  
of brown, tan, & buff. This frame is tan



1 RT  
Lex  
Ave  
line

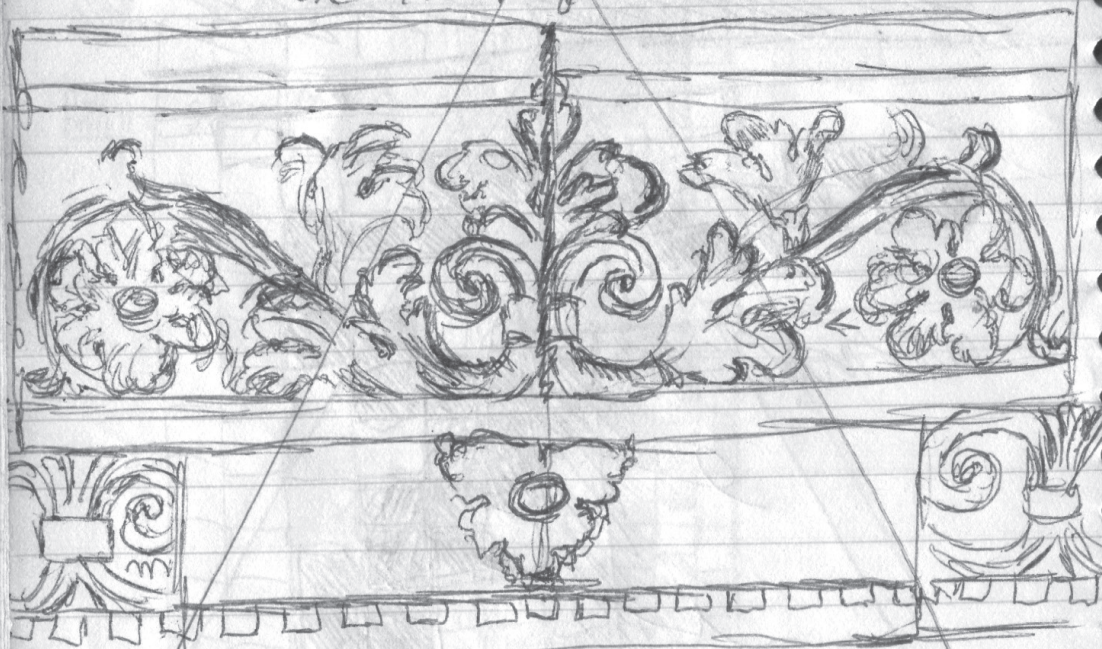
Stones, white

59

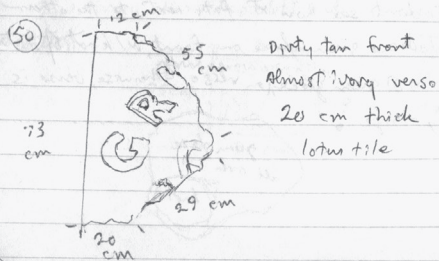
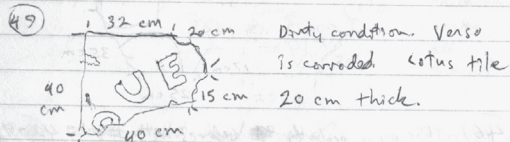
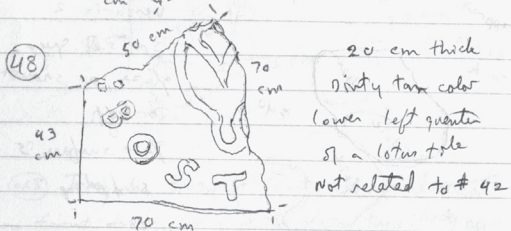
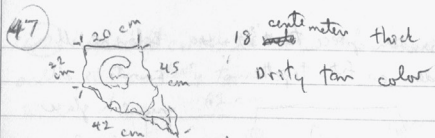




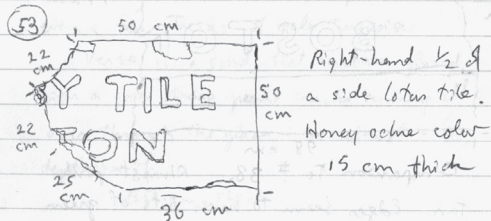
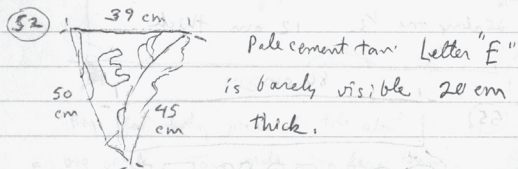
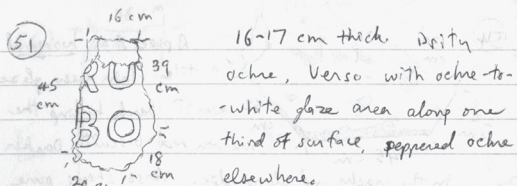
OVER "424" plaque



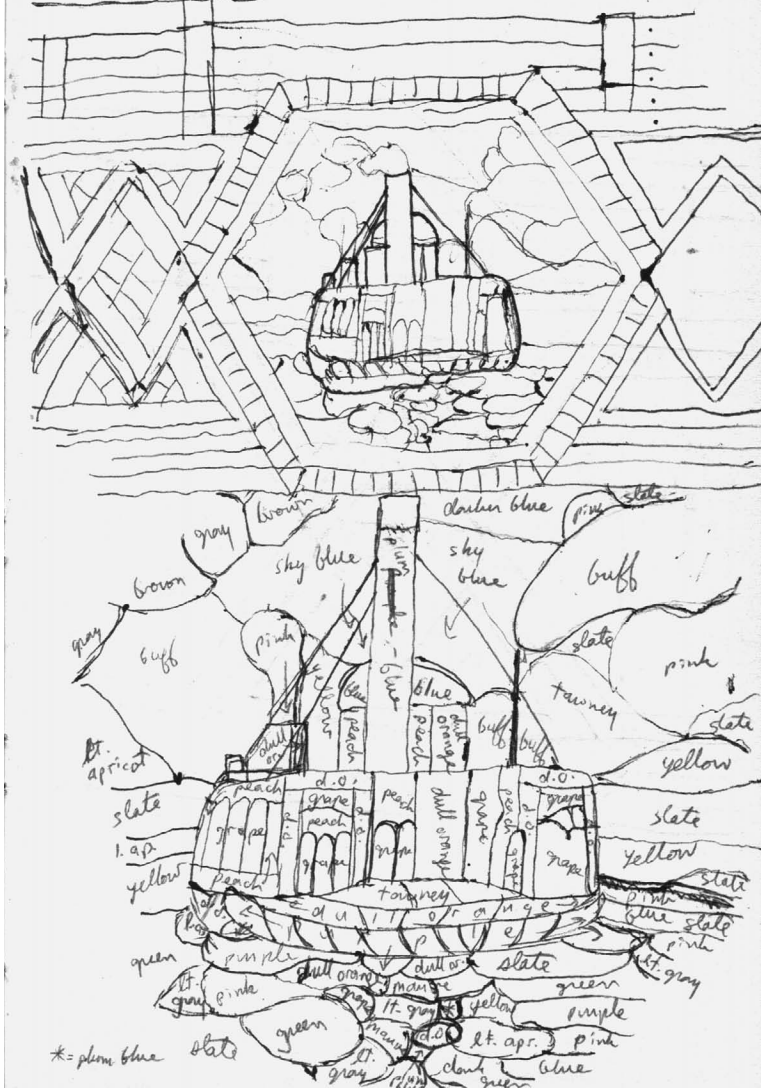
1-29-86



51









## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank the following people who have encouraged me, or advised me, or assisted me over the years. But I must acknowledge that this is not a complete list; there are so many that I'm not able to include. You have all been wonderful, and it's been a rewarding excursion. D. Chester Allen, Jr., Andrew Alpern (American Institute of Architects), Win Armstrong, David Barabbas (MTA), Rowland Bennett, David Black, Sandra Bloodworth (MTA), Ezra Bookstein, Joe Brennan, Frances S. Childs, Barbara Cohen (New York Bound Books), Justin Consalves and crew (CNN), David Roome Copp, Mary F. Roome Copp, Joseph A. Coppola, Joe Cunningham, David Dunlap (New York Times), Burton Fendelman, John Frazier (Urban Center), Larry Furlong (ERA), William Geist (New York Times), Cat

Greenleaf, Thomas R. Jablonski (MTA), Dean Jones, Arnold B. Joseph (Railroadiana), Randy Kennedy (New York Times), Paul Kronenberg, Doug Martin (New York Times), Nym Korakot Punlopruksa, Yukie Ohta (New York Bound Books), Robert Peskin, David Pirmann, Catha Grace Rambusch, Sam Roberts (NY1), Carol Rubiano, Miho Sakai (NHK Television, Japan), Paul SanPietro (Transit Authority), Herbert Serious (New York Public Library), Judith Stonehill (New York Bound Books), Gilbert Tauber, Mary Antonia Thomas, Susan Tunick (Friends of Terra Cotta), Ruth Vickers, Mike Vincze, Linda Voorsanger, Kevin Walsh (Forgotten New York), Miles Ward (BBC), and Jeremy Workman.

—Philip Ashforth Coppola

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—Ezra Bookstein  
and Jeremy Workman





## BIOGRAPHIES

**Philip Ashforth Coppola** is an artist and writer living in Somerset, New Jersey. He began drawing and researching the design elements of New York City subway stations in 1978, which he self-published in his encyclopedic *Silver Connections*. Coppola's artwork has been featured in the *New York Times* and *Hyperallergic*, among other print media. He is the subject of Jeremy Workman's award-winning documentary film *One Track Mind* (2005) and has been featured on multiple news outlets, including NHK World (Tokyo), WNBC, NY1, and on the BBC in conjunction with the one-hundredth anniversary of the New York City subway system. His work is part of the permanent collection of the National Arts Club; the Museum of Modern Art; the Science, Industry and Business branch of the New York Public Library; and other venues.

**Jonathan Lethem** is the author of *The Fortress of Solitude* and nine other novels. He lives in Los Angeles and Maine.

**Jeremy Workman** is a filmmaker living in New York City. He first met Philip Coppola in the early 2000s and became one of his closest friends. In 2005 he directed *One Track Mind*, a documentary about Coppola that premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival; it is included in the anthology documentary film *True New York* (First Run Features). In 2014 Workman directed the acclaimed documentary *Magical Universe* about outsider artist Al Carbee; released theatrically by IFC Films, the film is widely available on all platforms. A graduate of Columbia University, he is currently completing *Walk: 8000 Miles in New York*, a feature documentary on Matt Green and his mission to walk every street of New York City.

**Ezra Bookstein** is a filmmaker, sculptor, producer, and author living in New York City. He is the winner of an Emmy Award for documentary camerawork, and his feature documentary, *The Rich Have Their Own Photographers*, screened at film festivals worldwide, on PBS, and at the Getty Museum and British Museum, among many others. As creator of the Smith Tapes project, Bookstein produced the Grammy-nominated limited-edition box set, hundreds of hours of audio content, and the book, *The Smith Tapes: Lost Interviews with Rock Stars & Icons, 1969–1972* (Princeton Architectural Press, 2015).



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PHIL, JEREMY, AND EZRA WOULD LIKE TO THANK  
THE ARTISTS, ARCHITECTS, AND CRAFTSMEN  
WHOSE BEAUTIFUL WORK IN NEW YORK CITY'S  
SUBWAY STATIONS STILL INSPIRES US, MORE THAN  
A HUNDRED YEARS LATER.

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**O**ne-Track Mind illuminates the work and life of artist Philip Ashforth Coppola, who spent nearly forty years studying, cataloging, and sketching the beautiful—but frequently overlooked—design and ornamentation of the New York City subway. Coppola’s meticulously detailed illustrations depict the century-old artwork built into the walls of the subway stations, which are decorated with intricate mosaics, faience, and relief sculptures often unnoticed by locals and tourists alike. Combining artwork with fascinating facts about the history of New York City transit, this book reveals the beauty and wonder hidden far beneath the city streets.

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“The New York subways are like a magical nervous system, or a secret, vastly distributed spare brain, which every serious New Yorker understands has the power to speak to him or her in a mythic voice. . . . [Philip Ashforth Coppola’s] project proposes a map that is the exact size of the territory it describes. Most of us can only envy an artist, and a life, as unwavering and pure.”

—**Jonathan Lethem**, from the foreword

“Philip Coppola offers an invaluable, exquisite visual guide to the historic ornamental designs of the New York City subway system. We are the fortunate beneficiaries of this remarkable work of observation and preservation.”

—**Amy Hausmann**, senior curator, New York Transit Museum

“For anyone who loves New York City and relies on its incredible subway system, this book will give you reason to slow down your pace and look up from your phone. Philip Coppola’s incredible sketches are a love letter to New York and its rich artistic history.”

—**Edward Burns**, writer/director/actor

“A vividly obsessive compendium of the urban underground, *One Track Mind* is an illuminating book. It will make you see things you never knew were there.”

—**Jeremiah Moss**, author of *Vanishing New York: How a Great City Lost Its Soul*