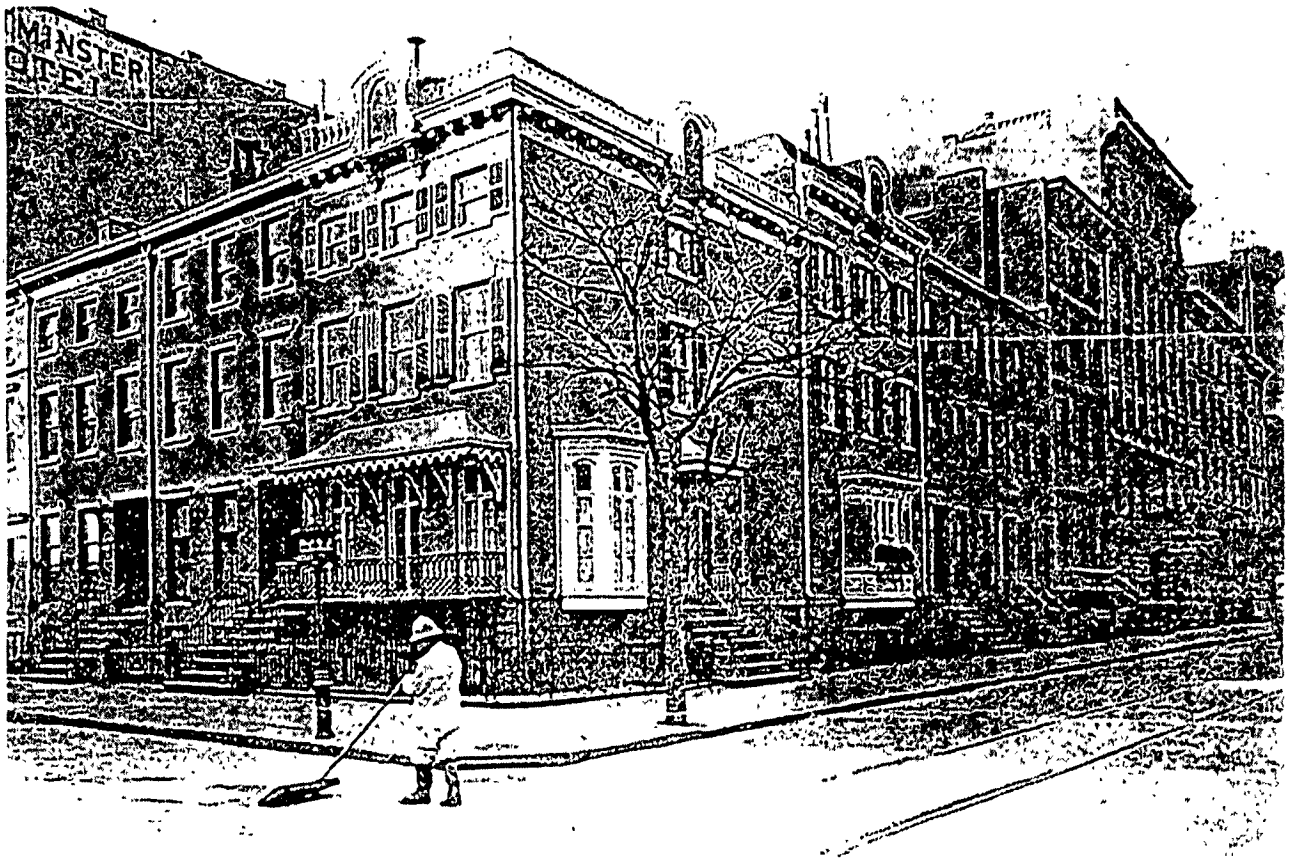
EAST 17th STREET/IRVING PLACE

HISTORIC DISTRICT

DESIGNATION REPORT



N.Y.C. LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION
1998

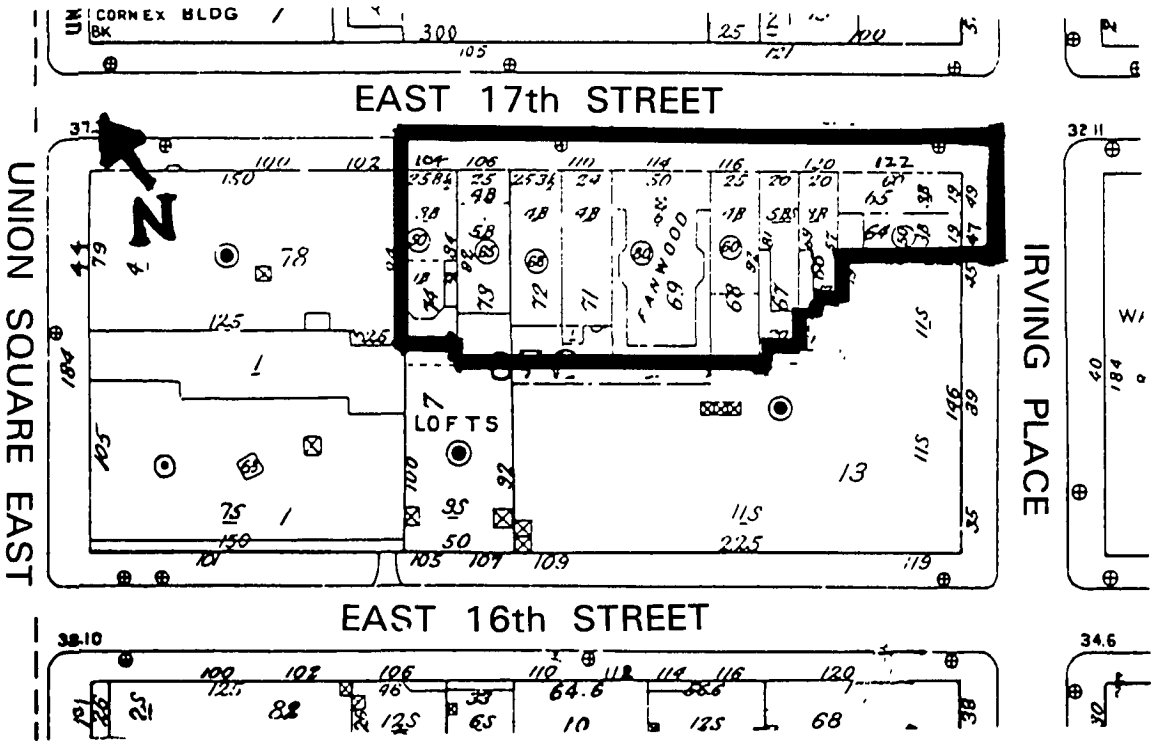
EAST 17th STREET/IRVING PLACE HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION REPORT

Research by **Gale Harris** and **Jay Shockley**
Research assistance by Kerry Ehlinger and Glenn Modica

Written by **Gale Harris** and **Jay Shockley**

Building Descriptions and Editing by Marjorie Pearson, Director of Research

Front Cover: View of East 17th Street/Irving Place Historic District (c. 1900)
Photo Source: Museum of the City of New York, Byron Collection



EAST 17TH STREET/IRVING PLACE HISTORIC DISTRICT

Designated: June 30, 1998
Landmarks Preservation Commission

TESTIMONY AT THE PUBLIC HEARING

On October 21, 1997, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the East 17th Street Historic District (Item No. 6). The hearing was continued to December 9, 1997 (Item No. 1). Both hearings had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Representatives of the 1804 Washington Avenue Corp., owner of all of the properties in the proposed historic district, indicated at the hearings and in correspondence that the owner opposed historic district designation, but would accept the individual designation of three properties: 47 Irving Place, 49 Irving Place aka 122 East 17th Street, and 112-114 East 17th Street. Thirty speakers testified in favor of designation of the proposed historic district, including representatives of Community Board 5, Municipal Art Society, New York Landmarks Conservancy, Historic Districts Council, Historic Buildings Committee of the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, Friends of Cast Iron Architecture, Beaux Arts Alliance, Gramercy Neighborhood Associates, Union Square Community Coalition, and Stuyvesant Park Neighborhood Association. Then-Manhattan Borough President Ruth Messinger and State Assemblyman Steven Sanders sent statements in support of designation. In addition, the Commission has received many letters and other expressions in support of designation of these properties over the years, as well as in conjunction with these public hearings, including those from U.S. Representative Carolyn B. Maloney, current Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, Councilmember Margarita Lopez, The Residents of East Seventeenth Street Association, the Metropolitan Chapter of the Victorian Society in America, the Tilden Midtown Democratic Club, and Brendan Gill.[1]

EAST 17th STREET/IRVING PLACE HISTORIC DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

The East 17th Street/Irving Place Historic District consists of the property bounded by a line beginning at a point on the southern curb line of East 17th Street, then extending southerly to and along the western property line of 104 East 17th Street, easterly along the southern property line of 104 East 17th Street, southerly and easterly along part of the western and the southern property lines of 106 East 17th Street, easterly along the southern property lines of 108 through 116 East 17th Street, northerly along part of the eastern property line of 116 East 17th Street, easterly and northerly along the southern and part of the eastern property lines of 118 East 17th Street, easterly, northerly, easterly, and northerly along the southern, eastern, southern, and part of the eastern property lines of 120 East 17th Street, easterly along the southern property line of 47 Irving Place extending to the western curb line of Irving Place, northerly along the western curb line of Irving Place, and westerly along the southern curb line of East 17th Street, to the point of beginning.

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[1]The Commission had previously held a public hearing on 49 Irving Place/122 East 17th Street on March 8, 1966 (LP-0220).

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SUMMARY

The East 17th Street/Irving Place Historic District, which is comprised of ten residential buildings, extends east of Union Square, along the south side of East 17th Street, to Irving Place. It is a significant surviving enclave of the era when the Gramercy Park-Union Square neighborhood was developed with large residences for well-to-do New Yorkers, and it portrays through its residents an important aspect of New York City's social and cultural history during the second half of the nineteenth century and in the years prior to the Depression.

Union Square, which coincided with the intersection of Broadway and the Bowery (later Fourth Avenue and Park Avenue South) north of 14th Street, was laid out as a public space in 1832 and opened to the public in 1839. Development began in the 1830s facing the Square and on the blocks extending to its east; in the 1840s, during the recovery from the financial Panic of 1837, this became the city's most fashionable neighborhood. This block of East 17th Street, extending to Irving Place, is the only surviving enclave of this era. The majority of the buildings are single-family rowhouses dating from the 1840s and 1850s, with one house (No. 104) dating from c. 1836-37. Those houses built in the 1830s-40s were designed in the Greek Revival style; constructed of red brick with brownstone detail, they retain high stoops leading to parlor floor entrances. Most of the Italianate style rowhouses, dating from 1853-55, are faced with brownstone, characteristic of the style in its most fashionable form. Several retain their stoops. In addition, the Greek Revival style house at 122 East 17th Street (aka 49 Irving Place) received an extension facing East 17th Street (c. 1853) and was remodelled in the Italianate style.

Until the 1880s, residents were prominent and well-to-do merchants, bankers, politicians, professional men, and their extended families. These prosperous households reflected the increasing importance of New York City as the nation's commercial center in general, and as the heart of the drygoods industry in particular. Some of them owned the houses they occupied, while many others rented. At No. 104 lived shipping merchant Joseph Ogden and his wife Grace between 1848 and 1859, and Dr. David L. Eigenbrodt and the Rev. William E. Eigenbrodt between 1860 and 1865. Drygoods merchant Henry Barnes, his wife Mary, and son Charles, a lawyer, lived at No. 106 between 1859 and 1915. At No. 108 lived Mary Eleanor Stevenson Kip, widow of a drygoods merchant, between 1854 and 1856, and capitalist William R. Grace and his wife Lillius between 1873 and 1880, prior to his first term as Mayor of New York. Clothing merchant Thomas S. Young and his wife Mary lived at No. 110 between 1854 and 1878. The extended family of lawyer Henry J. Scudder lived at No. 116 between 1855 and 1882. At No. 120 lived customs officer, and later broker, Edgar Irving (the nephew of Washington Irving) and his wife Amanda between 1847 and 1873. At 47 Irving Place lived Mary Minturn Post, widow of merchant banker Henry Post, between 1848 and 1853, merchant Thomas M. Lewis and his wife Mary between 1856 and 1871, and flour merchant John S. Foster between 1872 and 1880.

By the 1860s, the area around Union Square was becoming the heart of the city's entertainment and shopping districts, with the Academy of Music and the Steinway Piano Company showroom and Steinway Hall on East 14th Street, hotels on side streets east of Union Square, theaters, music stores, music publishers, art galleries, studios for painters, photographers, and sculptors, restaurants, as well as some the city's most fashionable shops and department stores in what became the Ladies Mile. These changes were reflected on East 17th

Street by the fact that, as early as 1873, houses were no longer occupied by their owners as single-family dwellings. However, a significant and culturally important group of residents, with important ties to the institutions and commerce in the immediate area, continued to reside here. Some of them also had ties to the large German-American community known as *Kleindeutschland* located to the east. Among these residents were John Biddle, owner of the Biddle Piano Co. on East 14th Street, and his wife Harriet at No. 104 between 1881 and 1903; the German-born conductor Theodore Thomas who rented No. 108 between 1881 and 1891 from the Graces; the inventors and entrepreneurs William D. Andrews and George H. Andrews at No. 110 between 1887 and 1895; and decorator William Baumgarten and his wife Clara, both German-born, at 47 Irving Place in 1880-81, as well as architect John Pool Hardenbergh, Jr. (brother of the more famous architect, Henry J. Hardenbergh) at No. 47 between 1885 and 1889.

The house at 49 Irving Place (originally 122 East 17th Street) is the most architecturally distinctive in the historic district because of its canopied porch, intricate entranceway, and cast ironwork, added after the original Greek Revival house was enlarged and remodelled c. 1853-54, as well as its unusual roof treatment. This house also has one of the richest histories of any of the properties in the historic district. Insurance executive Charles Jackson Martin and his wife Mary lived here between 1844 and 1852, and from 1854 to 1863 it was the home of merchant/banker Thomas W. Phelps and his wife Elizabeth. Between 1864 and 1886 it was the home of the family of Charles A. and Sarah Macy. Macy, a banker, was a member of the family of shipping and commission merchants and the uncle of the founder of the department store. Dr. August G. Seibert, a prominent pediatrician, lived and practiced here in 1887-89. Two of the most famous residents of the historic district, actress/interior decorator Elsie de Wolfe and theatrical agent Elizabeth Marbury, rented the house between 1892 and 1911. During their tenure the house began to be proclaimed as the historic home of Washington Irving. (This legend continues to be perpetuated by the bronze plaque installed next to the entrance in 1934.) The famous photographer Clarence H. White and his wife Jane lived and ran a photography school in the house in 1917-20.

The late 1880s saw the first conversion of a single-family house (No. 116) to a boardinghouse, a reflection of the changing residential population in the neighborhood. This was followed by the construction of the Fanwood Apartments (No. 112-114) in 1890-91, replacing two rowhouses. One of the first works of architect George F. Pelham, it was designed in the Romanesque/Renaissance Revival style. Among the Fanwood's notable residents were painter Edward Percy Moran, bookseller Simon Brentano, vaudeville impresario William Morris, and Henry Ziegler and Joseph Kuder, both prominent in piano manufacturing. The Irving, a six-story Renaissance Revival flats building which replaced one rowhouse at No. 118, was the last building to be constructed in the historic district, in 1901-02. It attracted a less prominent clientele than the Fanwood, with tenants largely in the working and middle classes. Both buildings are compatible in scale and complementary in detail to the earlier rowhouses on the block.

Further changes occurred to the single-family houses after World War I, as several were converted to accommodate studio apartments and other multiple-dwelling uses. Stoops were removed and ground-level entrances created at No. 106 and No. 108. No. 120 was the last house to remain solely in single-family occupancy, finally becoming a multiple dwelling in 1936. All the properties were purchased in 1930-31 by real estate entities associated with Union Square department store magnate Samuel Klein, and were further consolidated under the ownership of a

single entity, the 1804 Washington Avenue Corp., in 1955 All remain in use as multiple dwellings.

Today, the historic district survives as a cohesive enclave creating a distinct sense of place, its buildings linked by their scale, materials, and details, as well as a rich social and cultural history.

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ARCHITECTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE EAST 17TH STREET/IRVING PLACE HISTORIC DISTRICT

The East 17th Street/Irving Place Historic District is a small residential enclave, with buildings from several eras of development that are linked architecturally by their scale, materials, and details. The majority are rowhouses, the typical dwelling in nineteenth-century New York City. Five of the houses, Nos. 104 to 110 East 17th Street and No. 116, are built on lots measuring approximately twenty-five feet by ninety feet, reflecting the original lotting of the block in the 1830s. The three houses at 120 East 17th Street, 122 East 17th Street (aka 49 Irving Place), and 47 Irving Place are constructed on lots measuring approximately twenty feet by sixty feet, reflecting the decision of landowner David Sherwood Jackson in the early 1840s to combine and remap several lots, maximizing the number of houses that could be built, a common practice during the period.

The earliest houses in the district, No. 104 East 17th Street (c.1836-37), and No. 120 East 17th Street, 122 East 17th Street (aka 49 Irving Place), and No. 47 Irving Place (all 1843-44), were designed in the popular Greek Revival style.[1] Originally about forty feet deep and three stories high above raised basements, these buildings are faced in brick with brownstone trim. They have rectangular window openings set off by simple brownstone sills and lintels (modified at No. 104). They feature such characteristic elements of the style as prominent entrances framed by pilasters and an entablature (Nos. 104 and 120); simple molded cornices (No. 120); simple molded lintels (No. 120 and No. 122 (aka 49 Irving Place)); small square attic windows (No. 122 (aka 49 Irving Place)); and high stoops with wrought-iron railings and/or areaway fences (No. 104, No. 120, No. 122 (aka 49 Irving Place), and 47 Irving Place).

The main entrance to the houses was at the parlor level, with a secondary basement entrance below the front stoop providing for the delivery of goods. Typically, these houses would have had an informal dining room in the front of the basement level, with the kitchen and laundry at the back; the front and back parlors on the first floor (the rear one being used as a more formal dining room) along a side hall; and the stairs leading to the upper floors, which contained the family bedrooms and bathrooms; and rooms for servants in the top story.

The second phase of construction within the historic district occurred in the early 1850s, when Nos. 106, 108, 110, and 116 East 17th Street were built and No. 122 (aka 49 Irving Place) was modified. The 1850s houses were a story taller and fifteen to twenty-five feet longer than the earlier houses, reflecting changing tastes.[2] Erected for his own use by builder Thomas G. Gardiner, No. 106 (1852-53), a brick-fronted rowhouse, was designed in a simplified Italianate style (later modified). The twin pair of houses at Nos. 108 and 110 East 17th Street (c. 1853-54, Robert C. Voorhies, builder) were designed in the Italianate style, faced in brownstone, and featured carved surrounds at the window openings, elaborate foliate entrance hoods, bracketed cornices, and carved parlor-floor balconies with cast-iron railings, and cast-iron stoop railings. No. 116 East 17th Street (c. 1854-55), the last rowhouse constructed in the historic district, also has brownstone facing, but its design is in the Renaissance Revival style. It features an elaborate

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[1]For New York rowhouses during the Greek Revival period, see Charles Lockwood, *Bricks and Brownstone* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972), 55-89.

[2]For these changes in the design of the typical rowhouse in the 1850s, see Lockwood, 164-168.

entrance surround with carved pilasters supporting a pediment, and molded window surrounds.

The deeper floor plan of the 1850s houses allowed for the introduction of a third room which would have been used on the first floor as a dining room. During this period the front room on the second floor was often used as family sitting room or library, while the back room served as the main bedroom and bathroom, and was separated from the front room by dressing rooms. The third and fourth floors were used for bedrooms and servants' quarters.

No. 122 East 17th Street (aka 49 Irving Place) was modified around 1853 by the construction of a three-story extension along East 17th Street, filling in a twenty-foot open site between the original portion of the house and No. 120 East 17th Street. It seems likely that this extension was commissioned by Henry E. Coggill, a wealthy merchant and real estate speculator, who lived across the street at 50 Irving Place. The work may have been carried out by builder Robert C. Voorhies (builder of Nos. 108 and 110), who was associated with Coggill on other projects during this period. Constructed of brick with brownstone trim, the facade of the extension was designed to harmonize with the Greek Revival elements at either side. It repeats the fenestration pattern of No. 120 at the second and third stories, but incorporated an oriel window at the first story to light a new dining room. Coggill, or more likely next owner Thomas W. Phelps, may have been responsible for adding the various Italianate style elements to the older portion of the house which contribute so much to its architectural character.

In addition to the rowhouses, the historic district also includes two buildings that were constructed as multiple dwellings, the Fanwood Apartments (1890-91) and the Irving (1901-02). Their scale, materials, and details are harmonious with the earlier houses. The Fanwood, a relatively early surviving apartment building, is among the first works of the prolific apartment house specialist George F. Pelham (1866-1937), who had opened his office in 1890. This six-story-plus-basement building has a frontage of fifty feet on East 17th Street, is eighty feet deep, and replaced two rowhouses. It is basically T-shaped in plan but has angled bays (not visible from the street) on the long arm of the T to capture maximum light from the sidecourts next to the adjacent rowhouses. Designed for prosperous middle-class tenants, the building originally housed two families per floor and provided elevator service and accommodations for servants. Its handsome polychrome brick and brownstone facade incorporates Romanesque and Renaissance Revival elements in an arcuated design. Notable features include rusticated brownstone facing, colossal red brick and brownstone arches extending from the third through the fifth stories, intricately carved friezes and spandrel panels, an arcuated sixth story articulated by pilasters, and a bracketed roof cornice (installed in 1898). The entrance is set off by a brownstone porch with clustered corner columns supporting a balcony.

The Irving, the last building constructed in the historic district, is a flats building. This form of multiple dwelling, common in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century New York City, offered fewer amenities than an apartment building and was designed for somewhat less prosperous, though clearly middle-class, tenants.[3] The plans for the Irving, a five-story-plus-

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[3]The term "flat" was first used in Edinburgh and London in the early nineteenth century to denote living units that were all on one floor in larger buildings, often after those buildings were subdivided. In New York the term may have been applied to rowhouses altered in the mid-nineteenth century to contain separate living units on each floor. By 1866, a common type of structure consisting of three or four

basement, brick-and-stone fireproof building with steel framing, were drawn by Alfred E. Badt, who is credited with a number of rowhouses and multiple dwellings in Manhattan, as well as the Romanesque Revival Pike Street Synagogue (1903-04) at 13-15 Pike Street.[4] Construction was supervised by architect Charles B. Meyers, a prominent designer of apartment houses and institutional buildings who seems to have been associated with Badt in 1901-03. The Irving's Renaissance Revival facade is constructed of brick and brownstone. Its design features a rusticated brownstone base with a curving window bay surmounted by a balustrade, and a pilastered and bracketed entrance surround enriched by carvings, including a plaque with the inscription "Irving." The brick-faced upper stories are enriched by stone trim, including string courses above the second and fourth stories, aedicular window surrounds at the second story, splayed stone lintels with bracketed keys and corner quoins at the third and fourth stories, and string courses, archivolts, and decorative wreaths at the fifth story. The building is crowned by a prominent bracketed roof cornice. Twenty feet wide and L-shaped in plan, replacing an earlier rowhouse, the Irving covers much of its 81-foot-deep lot.

In the late 1910s, two of the buildings in the historic district (Nos. 106 and 108) were converted from single-family dwellings to small apartment buildings. Changes included removal of the stoops, conversion of the former parlor entrances into windows, redesign of the areaways, and the creation of molded surrounds at the basement to aggrandize the entrances. A setback penthouse story was also added to No. 106 during this period. Some minor alterations have also occurred over the years to the basement of No. 122 (aka 49 Irving Place) (primarily to the areaway, stairs, and windows) to accommodate its use as a restaurant (after 1930). Further modifications have occurred to a number of the buildings in the last decade, including the shaving of certain projecting details, and the removal of the oriel window from the extension to No. 122 (aka 49 Irving Place).

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stories, each with a separate living unit, was classified by the the Department of Buildings on the basis of construction and use as a "second-class dwelling." At some point both second-class dwellings, and the living units within them, began to be referred to as flats. See "The Architectural Development of Carnegie Hill," prepared by David M. Breiner, in Landmarks Preservation Commission, *Expanded Carnegie Hill Historic District Report* (LP-1834) (New York: City of New York, 1993), 32.

[4]Congregation Sons of Israel Kalwarie, a designated New York City Landmark.

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HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE EAST 17TH STREET/IRVING PLACE HISTORIC DISTRICT

The Union Square-Gramercy Park Neighborhood

The East 17th Street/Irving Place Historic District had its origins in the thirty-three acres of farmland, extending east from the Bowery (Fourth Avenue) north of present-day 14th Street, acquired by the merchant Cornelius Tiebout in 1748.[1] Tiebout named his estate Roxborough and built a farmhouse near the present-day intersection of East 18th Street and Park Avenue South. After Tiebout died in 1785, the property passed to his widow Mary Magdalene Tiebout. She married Edward Williams in 1785, and they had a son, Cornelius Tiebout Williams, who inherited the property. The Williamses leased or sold some lots along the Bowery and Broadway during the early 1800s, but the property remained largely intact until 1811, when the Commissioners' Plan was adopted, establishing the street grid that characterizes Manhattan. In the late 1820s, as the city expanded northward, Cornelius Williams tried several times without success to prevent the opening of new streets through his property.[2]

The Commissioners' Plan had also provided for a public square called Union Place at the narrow fork where the Bowery met Broadway, just to the west of Williams's property. In 1832, additional land was acquired to regularize the area into a "parallelogram something after the plan of the Rue de la Paix and the Place Vendome."[3] The park was regulated and graded in 1834 and "the iron fence and other improvements were added in 1835 and 1836."[4] It opened to the public as Union Square in 1839.

Bowing to the inevitable, Williams began leasing his property in 1832, along the east side of Fourth Avenue (now Union Square East/Park Avenue South) to the developer Samuel B. Ruggles.[5] By 1834, Ruggles had acquired leases from Williams for all the lots along Fourth Avenue between 14th and 19th Streets. The leases, which ran for a term of thirty years, required Ruggles to construct substantial dwellings of brick or stone, within seven years. During this period Ruggles was also actively involved in acquiring and regulating the land to the north of Williams's farm for a prime residential development centered around a private square, which he

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[1]This material on the Cornelius Tiebout Williams farm is based on I.N. Phelps Stokes, *The Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498-1909* (New York: Robert H. Dodd, 1928), v. 6, 144-145; Otto Sackersdorff, *Maps of Farms Commonly Called the Blue Book, 1815* (1815: Rpt. New York: E. Robinson, 1887), pl. 4; New York County, Office of the Register, Conveyances Indices, blocks 870-873.

[2]*Minutes of the Common Council, 1784-1831* (New York: Dodd, Mead 1917), v. 17, p. 21; v. 18, pp. 5, 18, 108; v. 19, pp. 617, 627.

[3]David Thomas Valentine, *Manual of the Corporation of the City of New York* (New York: D.T. Valentine, 1857), 480.

[4]Stokes, v. 3, p. 702.

[5]New York County, Office of the Register, Liber Deeds and Conveyances, Liber 313, p. 215.

named Gramercy Park.[6] In conjunction with this development, Ruggles petitioned the New York State Legislature in 1832 to create a new north-south thoroughfare between Third and Fourth Avenues, running from 14th Street to 30th Street. Ruggles (who owned most of the land along the street and therefore was assessed for much of its cost) named the southern portion Irving Place, in honor of his friend Washington Irving; it was opened to 20th Street in 1833. The northern portion, named Lexington Avenue in commemoration of the Battle of Lexington, was opened in 1836.

The developments around Union Square and Gramercy Park encouraged Peter G. Stuyvesant, who had inherited the land lying east of Cornelius Williams's farm, to deed the land for Stuyvesant Square to the city in 1836 and to begin leasing house lots on the surrounding streets.[7] Stuyvesant, Ruggles, and Cornelius T. Williams all placed restrictive covenants on the lots they sold or leased, requiring the construction of substantial dwellings of brick or stone, within a fixed period (usually five to seven years), and forbidding such noxious uses as slaughter houses and manufactories. Thus, the development of East 17th Street and Irving Place as first-class residential streets, linking the fashionable enclaves of Union Square, Gramercy Park, and Stuyvesant Square, was assured. In 1839, the *Mirror* reported that "new blocks of houses, capacious and stately," were "springing up with surprising celerity" in the area around Union Square.[8]

Early Development of the Historic District (mid-1830s to 1840s)

Within the boundaries of the historic district, development began on East 17th Street closest to Union Square around 1836-37. Williams had sold the lots fronting on East 16th and 17th Streets, between Union Square and Irving Place, to the builder-architect Isaac Green Pearson in 1834.[9] Pearson, who is best known for his development of the elegant terrace houses (1827-

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[6]For Ruggles' development of Gramercy Park and the naming of Irving Place, see D.G Brinton Thompson, *Ruggles of New York* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1946), 56-59; Stephen Garmey *Gramercy Park: An Illustrated History* (New York: Rutledge Books/Balsam Press, 1984), 31-39; Stokes, v. 5, 1711, 1719. For a discussion of parks as a tool for creating elite residential districts in this period, see Elizabeth Blackmar, *Manhattan for Rent, 1785-1850* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Univ. Press, 1989), 149-182.

[7]For the development of Stuyvesant Square, see Landmarks Preservation Commission, *Stuyvesant Square Historic District Designation Report* (LP-0893)(New York: City of New York, 1975), 2-3.

[8]Quoted in Charles Lockwood, *Manhattan Moves Uptown* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976), 167. Samuel Ruggles was responsible for the handsome rows on Union Place between 15th and 16th Streets (1838-39), and between 16th and 17th Streets (1840-41), which included his own house as well as the homes of such wealthy businessmen as John Griswold, G.W. Coster, Elihu Townsend, S.R. Brooks, and Richard Tighe. (All of these buildings have been demolished). For these rows, see Stokes, v. 3, 703-704; Conveyances, Liber 313, p. 32; Liber 437, 202, Liber 414, p. 546; Liber 417, p. 512; Liber 419, p. 521; Liber 445, pp. 615, 616. For these merchants, see Henry Wysham Lanier, *A Century of Banking in New York, 1822-1922* (New York: Gillis Press, 1922).

[9]For Pearson, see Lanier, 126; MCC, v.15, pp. 392, 439, 500, 575; v. 16, pp. 497, 659; Blackmar, 164; Charles Lockwood, *Bricks and Brownstone* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972), 42-45.

28) at Le Roy Place (Bleecker Street), between Greene and Mercer Streets, held the fourteen East 16th-17th Streets lots until April 1836, selling them at almost three times the original purchase price, to Samuel Ward. Ward was acting as an agent for his kinsman, the prominent physician, Dr. John Wakefield Francis. Francis and his wife Maria Eliza Cutler Francis immediately repurchased the property from Ward. By 1837, Francis had built two three-story brick houses at 102 and 104 East 17th Street. No. 102 (demolished; outside the boundaries of the historic district) was sold to Samuel Ruggles' contractor and business partner, George Furst in April 1837.[10] Francis retained ownership of No. 104 as an investment property. It seems likely that the house was rented, but no evidence has come to light identifying a lessee during the 1830s.

The bank Panic of March 1837 and the subsequent business recession and crash of the real estate market had left many of the new homes around Union Square standing "virtually alone in fields, half a mile beyond the edge of the built-up city."[11] As the building industry began to recover in 1843, development resumed around Union Square. By the late 1840s, almost the entire perimeter of the square was built up with imposing residences.[12] New houses appeared on Irving Place and on the side streets off of Union Square. Several churches opened to serve the neighborhood, including the Church of the Puritans (1846) on the west side of the Union Square, and Calvary (Episcopal) Church (1846) at Fourth Avenue and East 21st Street, both designed by architect James Renwick, Jr. By 1850, Union Square and its vicinity was considered "the most fashionable portion of the city."[13]

Within the historic district, development also resumed in 1843. Cornelius T. Williams had retained ownership of the lots facing Irving Place.[14] After his death in 1835, his widow Eliza B. Williams entered into a partition agreement with Williams's heirs in 1838 in which she agreed to release her dower rights to his real estate in exchange for a cash annuity. Through this agreement, David Sherwood Jackson received four lots fronting on Irving Place south of East 17th Street. To maximize his return from this property, Jackson had the parcel (which had a frontage of 104 feet on Irving Place and 125 feet on East 17th Street) remapped into seven lots of varying sizes. In May 1843, Jackson sold three lots, which extended fifty-seven feet along Irving Place (the corner lot extended sixty feet along East 17th Street), to Peter P. Voorhis, a builder active in New York in the 1840s and early 1850s who also had a stoneyard at Washington and Bethune Streets in Greenwich Village. Voorhis built three, nineteen-feet-wide, forty-feet-deep brick houses at 45 and 47 Irving Place and 122 East 17th Street (now 49 Irving Place) between

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[10]Conveyances, Liber 374, p. 502. For Furst, see also Thompson, 61-63.

[11]Lockwood, *Manhattan*, 167.

[12]These included the mansions of Anson Phelps (1844) at Broadway and 15th Street; James Penniman (1846) and Cornelius Roosevelt (1849) on 14th Street between Broadway and University Place; and Robert Goelet (1847) and Henry Parish (1848) on the north side of 17th Street at Broadway. Except for the Goelet House, which is within the Ladies Mile Historic District, these houses have been demolished.

[13]E. Porter Belden, *New York: Past, Present, and Future* (New York: Prall Lewis & Co., 1850), 33.

[14]This section is based on Conveyances, Liber 400, p. 226; Liber 437, p. 137; Liber 441, p. 93; Liber 443, p. 611; Liber 449, p. 634; New York City, Tax Assessment Records, Maps, 18th Ward, 1845-52.

1843 and 1844. No. 47 was completed by December 1843 and was sold to builder John S. Seal, who retained it as a rental property. In April 1844, Voorhis conveyed the house at 45 Irving Place (demolished, outside the boundaries of the historic district) back to David S. Jackson. In November 1844, the corner house, 122 East 17th Street, was sold to Charles Jackson Martin, who resided here until 1853 and worked as an officer at the Contributionship Insurance Company.

In June 1843, a few months after selling the lots on Irving Place, Jackson conveyed a parcel measuring 40 feet by 57 feet, coinciding with present-day 118 and 120 East 17th Street, to builder James Whitlock.[15] Whitlock held the property for only two weeks before conveying it, at considerable profit, to builder Ephraim Scudder. Scudder died two months later following a long illness. It is possible, though unlikely, that Scudder began construction of the twin houses at Nos. 118 (replaced in 1901) and 120. In October 1843, Peter P. Voorhis bought a small irregular lot behind Scudder's property, presumably signaling that he had entered into an agreement with Scudder's widow Nancy to merge their lots and complete the houses. In April 1844, Nancy Scudder and Peter P. Voorhis sold the two houses to Runyon W. Martin, who was related to Charles J. Martin and also an officer in the Contributionship Insurance Company. (He had previously built several houses in Greenwich Village for investment purposes.)

Because lessees were not recorded in the tax records prior to 1847, little is known about the occupants of the district in the early-to-mid 1840s.[16] At the end of the decade, most of the residents were members of New York's elite merchant families, many with ties to the city's leading trading and shipping firms. Mary Minturn Post, who leased 47 Irving Place from 1848 to 1853, was the sister of Robert Browne Minturn, and widow of Henry Post, Jr. Both men were partners in the firm of Grinnell, Minturn & Company, "one of the most extensive shipowners in America, trading with England, China, Cuba, and elsewhere."[17] Joseph Ogden, who occupied 104 East 17th Street from 1848 to 1859, was a shipping merchant whose wife Grace was the daughter of shipping magnate Jonathan Ogden and sister to Sarah Goelet, wife of Robert Goelet, who lived across Union Square at Broadway and East 17th Street. The original house at 118 East 17th Street was occupied, from 1847 to 1852, by Runyon W. Martin's daughter, Angelina Matilda Todd, and son-in-law, William James Todd, head of the leading salt importing and distributing firm in the city. (Their house was replaced by the Irving in 1901-02.) Customs agent Edgar Irving was the son of merchant Ebenezer Irving and Elizabeth Kip and the nephew of author Washington Irving. He and his wife Amanda Tenant Irving moved to 120 East 17th Street around 1847. They subsequently purchased the house in 1851 and continued to occupy it until Edgar Irving's death in 1873.

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[15]This section is based on Conveyances Liber 437, p. 395; Liber 438, p. 383; Liber 440, p. 130; Liber 449, p. 172; Ephraim Scudder, obituary, *New York Evening Post*, Sept. 12, 1843, p. 2.

[16]Information on the occupancy of these houses is based on the directory listings, tax assessment records, and census records. See the entries for the individual houses for additional biographical data and citations.

[17]Robert Greenhalgh Albion, *The Rise of the New York Port* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970), 248.

Washington Irving and the East 17th Street/Irving Place Historic District

In the late nineteenth century, the notion arose that Washington Irving had once resided at 122 East 17th Street. From statements made by Irving family members in the 1910s and 1920s, it appears that on coming down to town from his home "Sunnyside," the author generally stayed with his nephew John Treat Irving in a house on East 21st Street.[18] While Washington Irving may never have stayed with Edgar and Amanda Irving at 120 East 17th Street, he was likely to have been a visitor when he was in the city.[19] As a young midshipman in the Navy, Edgar Irving had visited Washington Irving at the Alhambra in Spain. Washington Irving was part of the family party who traveled to Baltimore to attend Edgar and Amanda Irving's wedding. On several occasions, the author used his connections to get jobs for his nephew, including his position at the Custom House. For their part, Edgar and Amanda Irving named their eldest son Washington (1835-1910). Moreover, Edgar's sisters, Sarah and Kate Irving, lived with the author at "Sunnyside."[20]

Second Development Phase of the Historic District (1850s)

After the spate of new construction in 1843-44, development ceased within the historic district until the early 1850s. It seems likely that Dr. John W. Francis, who owned most of the property, had decided to hold his lots off the market until the neighborhood was more developed and property values had increased. By 1852, the blocks around Union Square were largely built up and development was moving north and east to the blocks around Gramercy Park and Stuyvesant Square. In February 1852, Francis sold two adjoining lots on the East 16th Street side of the block (outside the boundaries of the historic district) to the printing press manufacturers Richard M. Hoe and Robert Hoe. Each unimproved lot cost $5,000 -- $500 more than Charles J. Martin had paid for his Irving Place corner lot and house in 1844.[21]

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[18]According to John Treat Irving's son: *The third-story front room in my father's house was set apart for his uncle, who had his books and papers there and could work undisturbed. He came and went as he pleased sometimes staying a week or a month and once he stayed nearly all Winter, going to Tarrytown only off and on. Sometimes he would stay for a day or two at Moses H. Granville's corner of Fifth Avenue and Fourteenth Street. Mrs. Granville was his sister, Julia Irving.* "Old Landmark Threatened," *N.Y. Sun*, June 11, 1911, 14.

[19]This section on Washington Irving's relationship with Edgar Irving is based on Stanley Thomas Williams, *The Life of Washington Irving* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1935), v. 1, 362, v. 2, 66; Washington Irving, *Letters*, editted by Ralph M. Aderman, Herbert L. Kleinfeld, and Jenifer S. Banks, v. 23-26 in the *Complete Works of Washington Irving* (Boston: Twayne, 1978-82), v. 2, 741, 769-70, 796-97, 871-73, 928-30; v. 4, 650-51.

[20]Washington Irving may have also visited No. 47 Irving Place. According to a family history, Irving was a friend of author Lydia Minturn Post, who occupied No. 47 with her mother Mary Post in the late 1840s and early 1850s. Marie Caroline De Trobriand Post, *The Post Family* (New York: Sterling Potter, 1905), 88; Lydia Minturn Post was the author of *Personal Recollections of the American Revolution*, published in 1859, and edited *Soldiers' Letters from Camp, Battlefield, and Prison*, published in 1865.

[21]Conveyances, Liber 596, p. 114, 116, 118.

In June 1852, the carpenter/builder Thomas G. Gardiner purchased the lot at 106 East 17th Street from Dr. Francis and erected a four-story brick house by 1853, where his family lived until 1858.

Dr. Francis sold the four lots extending from 108 to 114 East 17th Street to wool merchant John W. Smyth in August 1852. Smyth kept the lots for seven months before selling them at 100 percent profit to builder Robert C. Voorhies in March 1853. Voorhies constructed houses on the lots, selling them to individual owners between February and November 1854. Initially, all of these new residences were owner-occupied: a wealthy widow, Mary Eleanor Kip at No. 108; drygoods merchant Thomas S. Young at No. 110 (he lived here until 1878); the well-known real estate broker and political leader, Anthony J. Bleecker, at the now-demolished No. 112; and attorney William Mootry at the now-demolished No. 114.

The lot at 116 East 17th Street, which had been part of David Sherwood Jackson's property and had passed through the hands of several speculators in the 1840s and 1850s, was developed with a house by prominent attorney Henry Joel Scudder in 1854-55 for his own use (his family resided here until 1882).

Two of the earlier houses also changed hands during this period: No. 47 Irving Place was leased to dry goods merchant Thomas M. Lewis in 1856, and No. 122 East 17th Street was sold to merchant Henry Coggill in 1853 as an investment property. A year later (probably after the construction of an extension along 17th Street), No. 122 was purchased by Elizabeth B. Phelps and her husband merchant/banker Thomas W. Phelps. After Mrs. Kip's death in 1856, No. 108 East 17th Street was purchased by merchant Darius Mangam, who leased the house to Catherine, Eliza, and Ann Thorn. The Thorns, in a practice common for the period, shared the house with another family (merchant Washington Morton and his wife Julia in 1860). In 1859, Thomas Gardiner sold No. 106 East 17th Street to dry goods merchant Henry Ward Barnes (the Barnes family continued to live here until 1915). That year, the Francises conveyed No. 104 to their son Dr. Samuel Ward Francis, who leased the house to Sarah Eigenbrodt and her sons, Dr. David Lamberson Eigenbrodt and the Rev. William Ernest Eigenbrodt, associate rector of the nearby Calvary Church.

Union Square's Hotel and Theater District, the Initial Development of Ladies Mile, and the Impact on the Historic District

During the 1850s, a number of developments were taking place in Union Square area that would affect the future development of the East 17th Street/Irving Place Historic District.[22] The

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[22]For the redevelopment of Lower Manhattan in response to the growth of the dry goods trade in the 1840s and 1850s, see Lockwood, *Manhattan*, 81-107; Landmarks Preservation Commission, *Tribeca South Historic District Designation Report* (LP-1712) (New York: City of NY, 1992), 10-15. For the movement of the retail and hotel districts uptown, see Lockwood, *Manhattan*, 170-172, 290-292; Christine Boyer, *Manhattan Manners: Architecture and Style 1850-1900* (New York: Rizzoli, 1985), 44-61; "Ladies Mile: The History of the Retail Shopping District of Manhattan in the Nineteenth Century" (Preservation Program Studio Report: Columbia University, 1982) Copy in the Landmarks Preservation Commission, Ladies Mile Historic District Research File. For the hotels, see also Stokes, v. 3, 703, 883; v. 5, 1825, 1843; v. 6, 618.

expansion of the Hudson River port in the 1840s and the introduction of railroads to Lower Manhattan in the 1850s led to a rapid expansion of the city's drygoods trade, solidifying New York's role as the country's leading commercial center. As the business and warehouse districts of Lower Manhattan expanded to handle this growing trade, retail shops, hotels, and theaters moved northward along Broadway into once exclusive residential districts, until they reached the Union Square vicinity. Around 1850, the first hotels began appearing here, including the Clarendon Hotel (1851) at Fourth Avenue and East 18th Street; the Union Place Hotel (c. 1849) at the southeast corner of Broadway and East 14th Street; and the Everett House (1853-54), at Fourth Avenue and East 17th Street, which counted among its guests President James Buchanan, Senator Stephen A. Douglas, and William Lloyd Garrison. (All of these hotels have been demolished.)

In 1853-54, the Academy of Music was constructed at East 14th Street and Irving Place, to the *Rundbogenstil* design of architect Alexander Saeltzer. This new opera house, with the world's largest seating capacity at the time, quickly became the center of musical and social life in New York, presenting such notable performers as Adelina Patti (who made her debut here in 1854), and such events as the grand ball in honor of the Prince of Wales in the autumn of 1860.[23] The building burned down in 1866, and was replaced by a new Academy of Music by architect Thomas R. Jackson in 1868. (The Academy remained fashionable until the construction of the Metropolitan Opera in 1883; the building converted to a theater in 1887, and was demolished around 1926.) Irving Hall, a ballroom, concert, and lecture hall annex to the Academy, opened at Irving Place and East 15th Street in December 1860, and served as the home to the New York Philharmonic in 1861-63. In 1866, the Steinway piano company opened Steinway Hall, a combination showroom and recital hall at 109 East 14th Street, which for many years was the foremost concert hall in the country (it closed in 1890). The Tammany political club constructed a new headquarters building, on East 14th Street (next to the Academy of Music), in 1867-68 to the design of Thomas R. Jackson. Tammany Hall included a large theater that was site of the National Democratic Convention in 1868 and was subsequently leased to Bryant's Minstrels and later to Tony Pastor (it was demolished around 1928). By the mid-1860s, a number of legitimate theaters were also opening in the vicinity of Union Square, which during the last quarter of the nineteenth century became the center of New York theater. These included Wallack's Theater (1861, Thomas R. Jackson), 728 Broadway at 13th Street, the most prestigious dramatic theater in the country during this period; the Union Square Theater (1870), an adjunct of the former Union Place Hotel, which had been renamed the Morton House; and Chickering Hall (1875), Fifth Avenue and 18th Street (all demolished).

In conjunction with these changes, many of the mansions on Union Square were

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[23]This section on the Union Square concert halls and theaters is based on Garmey, 150-151; Boyer, 62-73; "Academy of Music," "Classical Music," "Theaters," in *Encyclopedia of New York City* (New Haven: Yale, 1995); T. Allston Brown, *A History of the New York Stage* (1903; rpt. New York: Benjamin Blom, 1964), 24, 222, 244, 476, 493; Mary C. Henderson, *The City and the Theater* (Clifton, N.J.: James T. White Co., 1973), 139-147; Andrew Dolkart, *Gramercy, Its Architectural Surroundings* (New York: Gramercy Neighborhood Association, 1996), 78, 91; Nathan Silver, *Lost New York* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967), 76-82; Sarah Landau and Carl Condit, *Rise of the New York Skyscraper, 1865-1913* (New York: Yale Univ. Press, 1996), 43.

converted to boardinghouses or taken over for other uses.[24] The fashionable Delmonico's restaurant moved to the former Cornelius Roosevelt mansion in 1861, and the Union League, Lotos Club, and Century Association occupied houses in the vicinity of Union Square in the 1860s.[25] Small retail shops and services began to open on the first, and sometimes the second, stories of rowhouses on the Square and to the north along Broadway. By the end of the 1860s, many of the earlier buildings in the area were being replaced by large retail stores such as the Tiffany & Co. at Broadway and 15th Street (1868), and the adjacent Hoyt and Arnold Constable stores on Broadway between 18th and 19th Streets (both 1868).[26] Within a decade, Broadway between Union Square and Madison Square had become known as "the Ladies' Mile" and was lined with the country's foremost purveyors of fashions, furniture, and such luxury items as imported wines and jewelry. Most of the leading piano makers, such as Decker Brothers (at 2 Union Square East in the 1860s, and in its building at 33 Union Square West after 1870) and Chickering & Sons (at 11 East 14th Street in the 1860s, and in its building at Fifth Avenue and 18th Street after 1875), also moved to the area to be near the theaters and Steinway showrooms.

Many of the houses on the side streets intersecting with Broadway were also altered for commercial use during this period; however, the side streets east of Union Square and north of 14th Street remained largely residential and fashionable. Some popular new hotels were erected, replacing houses that were barely twenty years old, including, just outside the boundaries of the historic district, the Westminster Hotel at Irving Place and East 16th Street, where Charles Dickens stayed while in New York; and the Westmoreland Hotel at Fourth Avenue and East 17th Street (both demolished). In addition, the first luxury apartment building in New York City, Richard Morris Hunt's Stuyvesant Apartments (1869-70, demolished), went up at 142 East 18th Street, just a block and a half from the historic district.

East 17th Street from the 1860s to the 1880s

Within the boundaries of the historic district, the boom in the dry goods trade was reflected by households headed by drygoods merchants in the 1860s and 1870s. A number of residents were commission merchants, who dealt with the financing and large-scale distribution of manufactured goods, usually textiles. They included Philip C. Harmon, who had a business at Broadway and Cortlandt Streets and who owned and occupied No. 108 East 17th Street with his wife Louisa and family from 1865 to 1873; and Hewlett Scudder, a partner in the firm of Joseph Samson & Co., who lived with his brother Henry J. Scudder [see above] and his family at 116 East 17th Street from 1859 to 1882. Banker Charles A. Macy, owner of No. 122 East 17th Street, was a member of the famous family of bankers and merchants that included his nephew

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[24]This section on the development of Ladies Mile is based on Boyer, 78-129; Landmarks Preservation Commission, *Ladies' Mile Historic District Designation Report* (LP-1609) (New York: City of New York, 1989), 10-13, 79-88.

[25]The buildings that housed the Union League and Lotos Club have been demolished. The (former) Century Association Building (1869, Gambrill & Richardson), 109-115 East 15th Street, is a designated New York City Landmark.

[26]The Tiffany Store, which replaced the Church of the Puritans, has been demolished; the Hoyt Building and Arnold Constable Store are within the Ladies' Mile Historic District.

R. H. Macy, founder of the department store. Macy family occupants of No. 122 between 1864 and 1886 included his wife Sarah, their son Charles Macy, Jr., a dealer in stationery, their daughter Charlotte Leggett, and her husband, George W. Leggett, a partner in a wholesale firm dealing in paints, their granddaughter Sarah Leggett, and five servants.

Perhaps the most prominent resident of the 1870s was merchant-trader William R. Grace who owned No. 108 East 17th Street and occupied it with his family from 1873 to 1880, moving after his election as New York's first Irish Catholic mayor in 1880. Other notable residents included Levi Bissell, a builder of locomotives, who resided at 104 East 17th Street from 1868 to 1880 with his wife Jane, and their son William and daughter Sarah, both of whom became physicians; flour merchant John S. Foster, who lived at 47 Irving Place from 1872 to 1880; and banker Richard Baring-Gould, who occupied No. 120 East 17th Street from 1874 to 1878. Charles Edward Tracy, a leading corporation lawyer whose clients included several railroads and his brother-in-law J.P. Morgan lived at No. 120 in 1878-80. John Biddle, the owner of a piano factory with showrooms on East 14th Street and later a piano factory on East 13th Street, purchased No. 104 with his wife Harriet in 1878, and they lived here from 1881 to 1903. John P. Hardenbergh, Jr., who resided at 47 Irving Place from 1885 to 1889, was an architect and shared an office his famous brother Henry Hardenbergh in the West 20s until 1888. Inventors and entrepreneurs William D. Andrews and George H. Andrews occupied No. 110 from 1887 to 1895.

The German-American Community

The neighborhood to the east of the historic district was impacted during the last half of the nineteenth century by the growth of *Kleindeutschland*. This enclave in a section of the Lower East Side had originated in the 1840s as thousands of Germans immigrants settled in New York, after fleeing the land shortages, unemployment, famine, and political and religious oppression in their homeland. In the 1870-80s, dislocations caused by the growth of the German Empire brought thousands of new immigrants to the area. By 1880, the German-speaking population of *Kleindeutschland* exceeded 370,000, approximately one-third of the city's population, and the area became the leading German-American center in the United States. As the boundaries of the enclave pushed northward as far as 18th Street, the German-American community had a major influence on the political and cultural (particularly, musical) life of the neighborhood and the city. A number of institutions opened in the area around Union Square which catered to a specifically German clientele, including the German Savings Bank (1864) at 14th Street and Fourth Avenue; the Germania Theater (1874); Lüchow's Restaurant (1882) at 110 East 14th Street, opposite Steinway Hall; and the Amberg Theater (1888), 11 Irving Place (all demolished).[27]

A number of prominent German merchants and professional men also began to make their homes in the neighborhood around the Square. Within the historic district, these included the Eigenbrodt family [see above], and Dr. August G. Seibert, a prominent physician specializing in

[27]The Germania Theater was located in Tammany Hall in 1874-81, in Wallack's Theater in 1881-82, and in the former Church of St. Ann on East 8th Street near Broadway until it closed in 1902. The Amberg Theater (Theodore G. Stein, arch.) replaced Irving Hall in 1888; under new management, and renamed the Irving Place Theater (1893), it continued to present German-language productions until 1919, when it became a Yiddish theater. See Brown, 224-244, 303; Henderson, 139-141.

childhood diseases, who occupied No. 122 East 17th Street in 1887-89. William and Clara Frankel Baumgarten lived at 47 Irving Place in 1880-81. William Baumgarten had been employed by Herter Brothers, the famous furniture makers and decorators, since 1870, and in 1881 he took over as head of the firm, which was located at 18-22 East 18th Street. His wife Clara Baumgarten was the daughter of of the noted physician Dr. Julius Frankel. One of the district's most famous residents, the German-born orchestra conductor, Theodore Thomas, who leased No. 108 from the Graces between 1881 and 1891, undoubtedly chose to live on East 17th street because of its proximity to Steinway Hall and Chickering Hall, where he conducted the Theodore Thomas Orchestra and New York Philharmonic.

Artists' Enclave

In the late nineteenth century, Union Square remained the heart of the city's entertainment and shopping districts.[28] Besides the legitimate and musical theaters, the Union Square area drew theaters for vaudeville and other forms of popular entertainment. New office buildings going up on the Square attracted publishers, artists, photographers, and architects in search of large, well-lit spaces for their offices and studios. Art- and music-related businesses continued to flock to the neighborhood, and a number of businesses that had been located near the Square (for example, the Herter Brothers decorating firm and the Decker Piano Company) moved to larger quarters or built their own buildings. The artistic and cultural milieu was also enhanced by the presence of several important institutions in the area, notably the National Academy of Design at Fourth Avenue and East 23rd Street (P.B. Wight, 1863-65, demolished); the National Conservatory of Music, founded in 1885 at 126-128 East 17th Street (demolished); the Players Club, a theater club founded by actor Edwin Booth in 1888 at 16 Gramercy Park South; and the National Arts Club, which in 1906 moved into the Samuel Tilden House (Vaux & Radford, 1881-84), 15 Gramercy Park South.[29] Many artists and writers began to settle in the residential neighborhood east and north of Union Square, including East 17th Street and Irving Place.

Elsie De Wolfe and Elisabeth Marbury

Actress Elsie de Wolfe and her companion Elisabeth Marbury, just then establishing her career as an agent to the leading European and American playwrights, began leasing No. 122 East 17th Street in 1892. The house was located near the home of Elisabeth Marbury's parents at 76 Irving Place and was close to the Union Square theaters and the homes of several friends, including the collectors Sarah and Eleanor Hewitt, architect Stanford White, and composer Reginald DeKoven. (The Hewitts and White lived on Gramercy Square; DeKoven's house was on Irving Place.) In 1897-98, de Wolfe began to redecorate and simplify the interiors of No. 122, gaining experience and publicity that enabled her to launch her career as one of America's first professional interior decorators in 1905. It seems probable that de Wolfe created or enhanced the legend that No. 122 had been Washington Irving's house to gain publicity for this decorating project. De Wolfe and Marbury opened their house to their many friends from

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[28]This section on the later development of the Union Square/Ladies Mile district are based on LPC, *Ladies Mile Rpt*, 11-13; Boyer, 73-79, 105-18, 113-124; Garmey, 98-151.

[29]The Players Club and National Arts Club are designated NYC Landmarks and included within the Gramercy Park Historic District.

abroad, and in 1897 began to host famous Sunday afternoon "teas." These attracted American and European celebrities including the opera stars Emma Calvé, Nellie Melba, and Jean de Reszke; actresses Sarah Bernhardt, Ellen Terry, and Ethel Barrymore; authors Victorien Sardou and Henry Adams; editor Charles Dana; and society figures Isabella Stewart Gardner and Mrs. William Waldorf Astor, as well as Marbury and de Wolfe's close friend Anne Morgan and her mother Frances Tracy Morgan. Millionaire William C. Whitney told friends that "you never know whom you are going to meet at Bessie's and Elsie's but you can always be sure they will be interesting and you will have a good time."[30] Marbury herself characterized the house as "a glorified Ellis Island."[31]

The Fanwood, the Irving, and the Boardinghouse Era

As the Ladies Mile commercial district continued to develop in the 1880s and 1890s, there was an increasing demand for housing in the contiguous residential neighborhoods. The resulting increase in real estate values apparently led families who moved from the district to retain ownership of their houses for rental. This occurred as early as 1873, when the Irvings left No. 120, which remained in family ownership until 1909.[32] While at first owners leased their buildings as single family dwellings or apartments, by the late 1880s houses were also being converted to boardinghouses (No. 116 in 1888, No. 110 in 1898, No. 108 in 1901, No. 47 by 1915, and No. 106 before 1920).

The Fanwood Apartments (1890-91) replaced earlier rowhouses at Nos. 112 and 114. The district continued to attract middle-class and upper-middle class residents in the 1890s and early 1900s, and the Fanwood, in particular, attracted tenants involved in the arts. The 1900 census lists among its residents a vocal director, a music professor, two publishers, an art embroiderer, and genre painter Percy Moran, who lived here with his wife Virginia in 1898-1901. Other notable tenants included publisher-bookseller Simon Brentano and his wife Frederika (1903-06); future Broadway star Grace Elliston (1904-05); vaudeville impresario William Morris (1905); and piano makers Henry Ziegler and his father-in-law, Joseph Kuder (1905-07), the former the vice-president at Steinway & Sons, and the latter a founder of Sohmer & Co.; restaurateur John P. Suerken (1906 to about 1918); and Dr. Edward Frankel, a prominent surgeon (about 1917 to 1925).

The Irving (1901-02), a six-story flats building, replaced an earlier rowhouse at No. 118. While the Irving initially attracted young professional tenants, it generally housed a less prominent clientele made up of the the working and middle classes. One notable Irving resident was Victor D. Brenner, designer of the Lincoln-head penny, who resided here around 1915. The

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[30]Quoted in Jane S. Smith, *Elsie de Wolfe: A Life in the High Style* (New York: Atheneum, 1982), 69.

[31]Elisabeth Marbury, *My Crystal Ball* (New York: Boni & Liverwright, 1923), 65.

[32]Subsequently, the Youngs left No. 110 in 1878 which was retained by their estate until 1904; the Scudders left No. 116 in 1882 which they retained until 1895; the Macys left No. 122 in 1886 which was sold by the Estate of Sarah Macy in 1906; Frank and Felicia Tucker left No. 108 in 1901, retaining ownership until 1930; Charles Mayer left No. 104 c. 1906, retaining co-ownership until his death; and the Barnes family left No. 106 in 1915.

Irving was owned between 1912 and 1917 by one of the country's leading underworld figures, Arnold Rothstein, and his wife Carolyn Green, although they did not live here.

Early Twentieth Century Developments

In the early 1900s, as the retail stores, theaters, and professional offices which had been located in the area of Ladies Mile began moving to Midtown, and new loft buildings for manufacturing began going up in the areas north and west of Union Square, the blocks east of the square remained a quiet secluded residential area that retained "an air of old-fashioned dignity and substantial respectability rare ... so near the centres of business."[33] In January 1907, the site committee for the new County Courthouse proposed the construction of a mammoth new building on a site extending from Union Square East to Irving Place, between East 14th Street and East 17th Street. The proposal was eventually rejected as too costly and inconvenient, but it also was criticized for endangering No. 122, which by then was regarded as Washington Irving's "city home."

While the area east of Union Square had escaped outright demolition, by 1910 it had suffered a number of incursions. Two large office buildings, the Everett Building (1908, Starrett & Van Vleck)) and the Germania Life Insurance Company Building (1910-11, D'Oench & Yost) went up on the north side of East 17th Street at Park Avenue South.[34] Along Irving Place, the Huyler Cocoa and Chocolate Works factory (c. 1907) was constructed on the east side near the corner of East 18th Street, and the Washington Irving High School (1911-13, C.B.J. Snyder) replaced the houses on the east side of Irving Place between East 16th and East 17th Streets. A large new headquarters building (1909-10, J. Riely Gordon) erected for the importer and toy distributor Georg Borgfeldt on East 16th Street and Irving Place, had a significant impact on the historic district, replacing the Westmoreland Hotel and looming eleven stories over the rear lot lines. In 1911, Elsie de Wolfe and Elisabeth Marbury decided that they "could not forgive the skyscrapers encroaching on our supply of sunshine" and moved to a larger house in midtown.

By 1915, No. 122 was divided into two apartments. Nos. 106 and 108 were converted to studio apartment buildings in 1917 and 1919.

Other Noteworthy Residents

Among the notable residents of the historic district at the turn of the century were Dr. Alonzo D. Grey, who lived with his wife Minnie and practiced at No. 120 from 1890 to 1901; Frank Tucker, editor and publisher of the *Jersey City News* until 1898, then head of the N.Y. Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor (1898-1902), who owned and resided at No. 108 with his wife Felicia Murray Tucker from 1894 to 1901; and Rear Admiral (ret.) Theodore F. Kane, who lived at No. 47 with his wife Bessie H. Kane and son Captain Theodore Porter Kane (USMC) from 1898 to 1904. Doctors continued to reside and practice in the historic district, which was located within walking distance of three hospitals. Among them was Dr.

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[33]"Irving Place Changes," *New York Times*, Jan. 3, 1909, p. 113. See also [Courthouse Proposal], *Real Estate Record & Guide*, Jan. 19, 1907, 97.

[34]These buildings are designated NYC Landmarks.

Robert L. Irish who lived at No. 120 with his wife Kathleen from at least 1920 to about 1936. *Staats-Zeitung* music critic Maurice Halperson lived at No. 116 from at least 1925 to 1928.

No. 122, which had been purchased by architect Algernon S. Bell in 1906, was occupied for a period around 1915 by author Mary Hunter Austin, who was then a well-known figure in avant-garde literary and feminist circles. From 1917 to 1920, it was the photography school and residence of the renowned photographer Clarence H. White and his family. Teaching at the school at that time were the noted photographer Paul L. Anderson and important modernist painter and theorist Max Weber.[35] From 1922 to 1925, Algernon Bell had his architectural office at No. 122, and the building also contained two apartments: one the residence and office of architect Henry J. Healy; the other the residence of structural engineer William H. Hunt. In 1928, No. 122 was acquired by the National Patriotic Builders of America, a group headed by the former president general of the DAR, which hoped to create a memorial museum to Washington Irving in what it erroneously believed to be the "Irving House." Unsuccessful in its fund raising efforts, the house was sold to Louis and Lena Sobel who owned the house when the plaque "commemorating" Irving was installed in 1934.

1930 to the Present

As early as the 1910s, investors had begun to create assemblages of properties within the historic district, including the adjacent Geo. Borgfeldt & Co. The neighborhood's heyday as an artists' enclave was largely over, and an increasing number of residents were salesmen and clerks connected with the garment factories and wholesalers quartered around Union Square. A new Tammany Hall building was constructed in 1928-29 next to the historic district at 100-102 East 17th Street, to the neo-Colonial design of Thompson, Holmes & Converse, with Charles B. Meyers.

In 1930-31, all of the historic district properties were acquired by corporations associated with Samuel Klein, owner of the S. Klein Department Store, located on Union Square East since about 1912. By the end of the 1930s, all of the houses had become multiple dwellings. Nos. 104 and 120 also contained doctors' offices until the 1940s. The Washington Irving Tea Room opened in the basement of No. 122 by 1930, and continued to operate until at least 1945 (a restaurant continues to occupy the space today).

In 1955, all of the properties were consolidated and remain under the ownership of a single entity, the 1804 Washington Avenue Corporation, which was headed by engineer-builder Charles Mayer. His daughter Berna Osnos is the president of the corporation. All of the buildings remain in use as multiple dwellings.

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[35]Marianne Fulton, ed., *Pictorialism into Modernism: the Clarence White School of Photography* (New York: Rizzoli, 1996), 58. Among the notable students of the Clarence White School during this time were Laura Gilpin (1916-17) and Doris Ulmann (1915-18).

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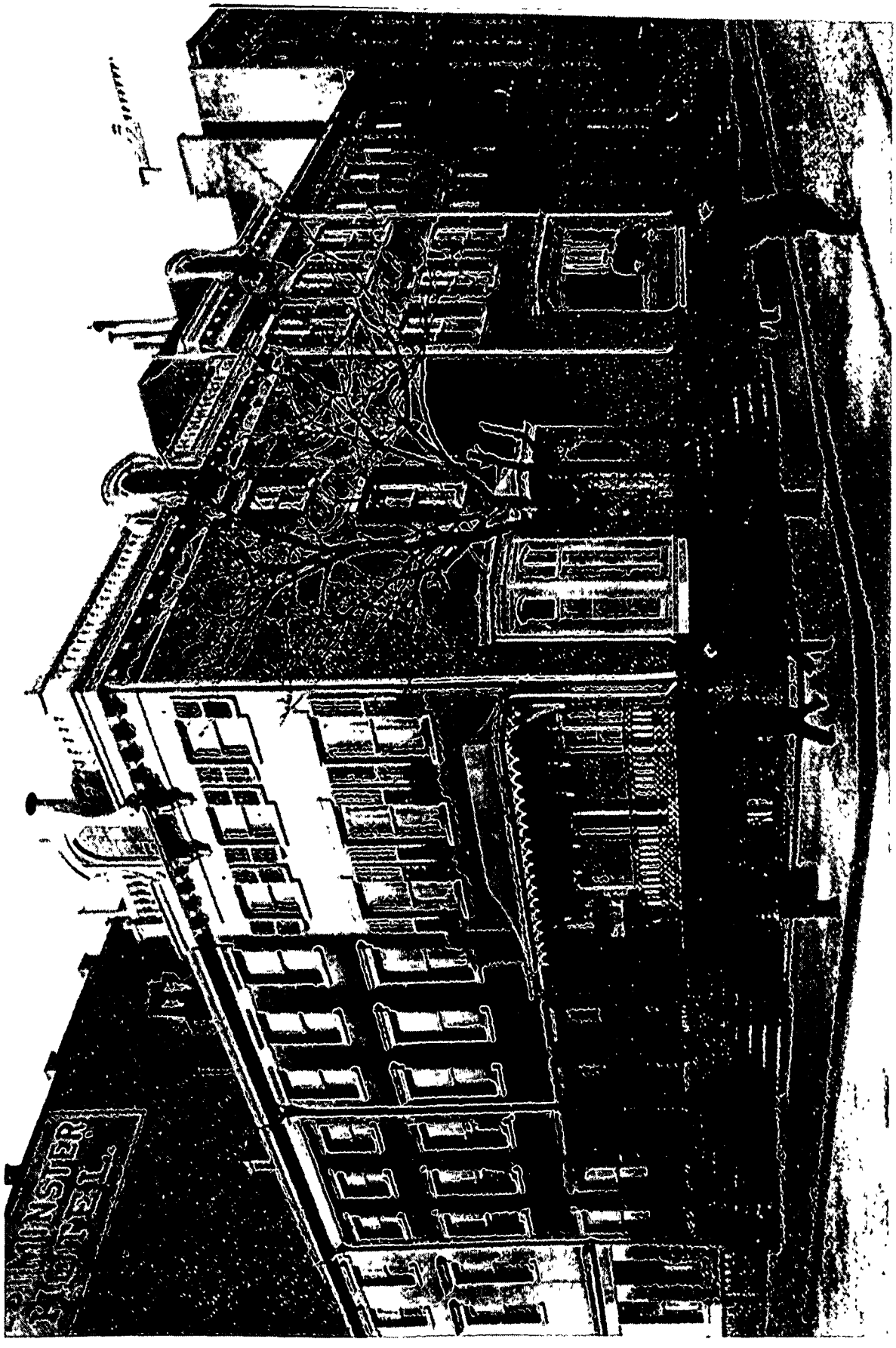
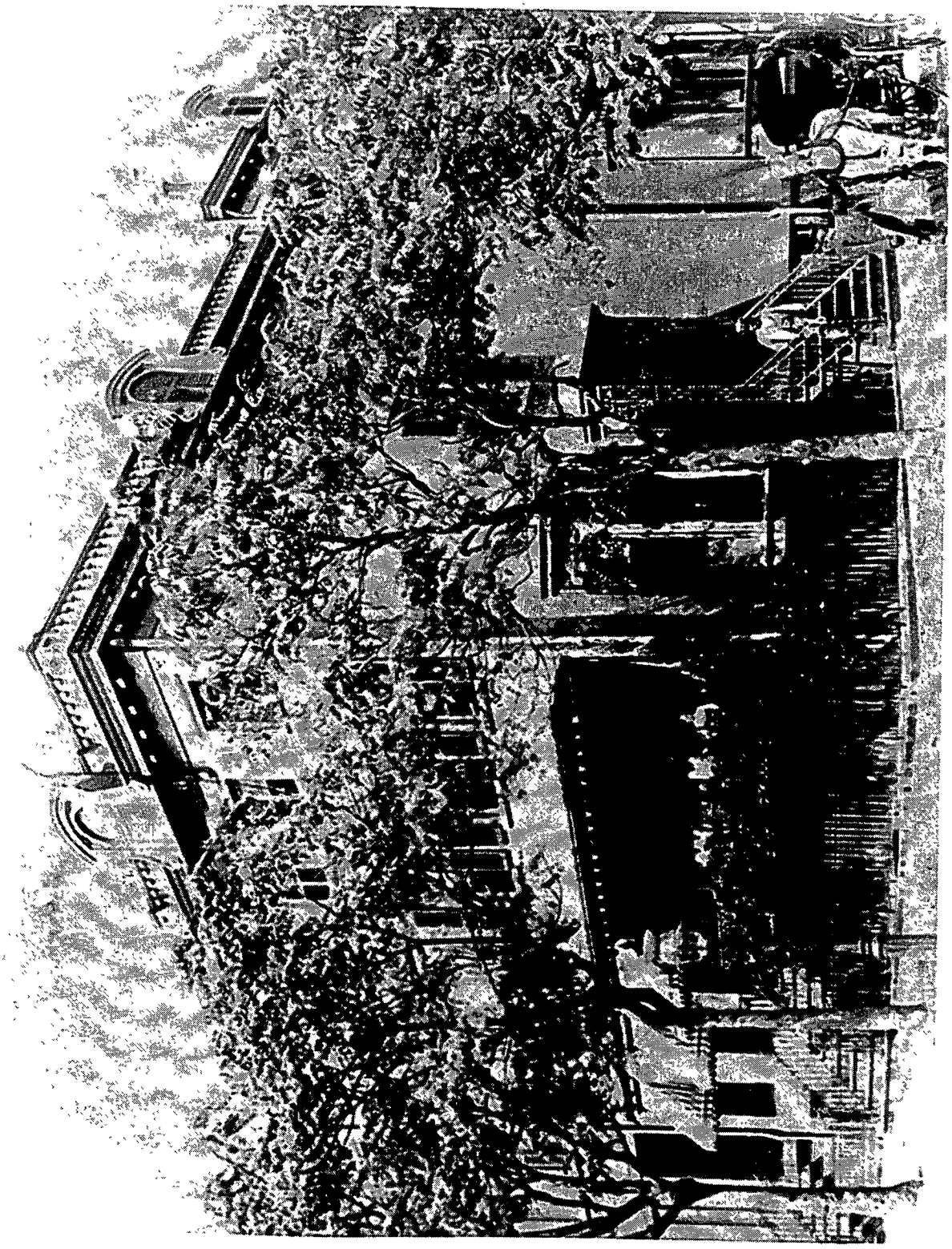
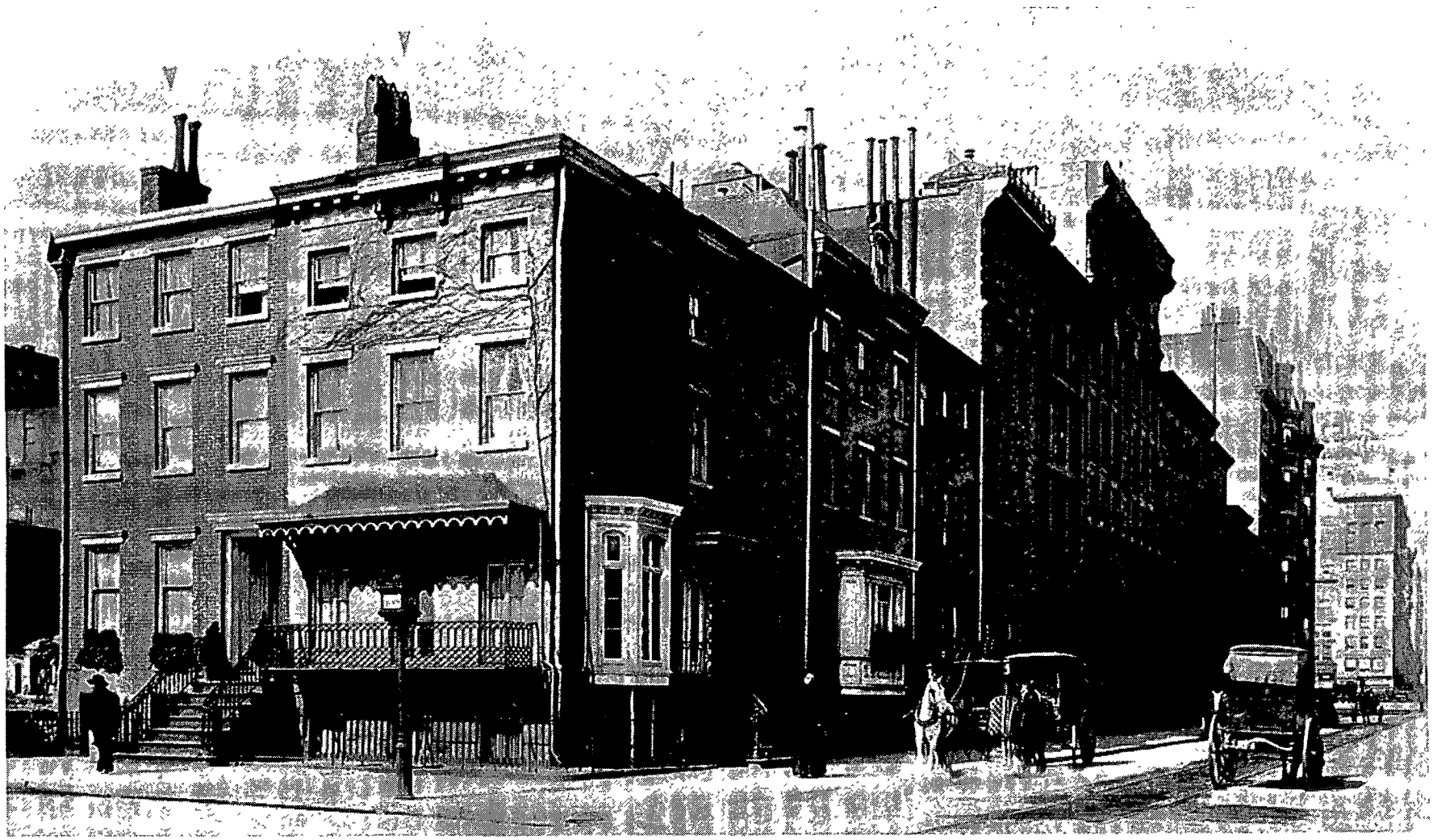


View of East 17th Street/Irving Place Historic District in 1898
Photo Source: Museum of the City of New York, Byron Collection



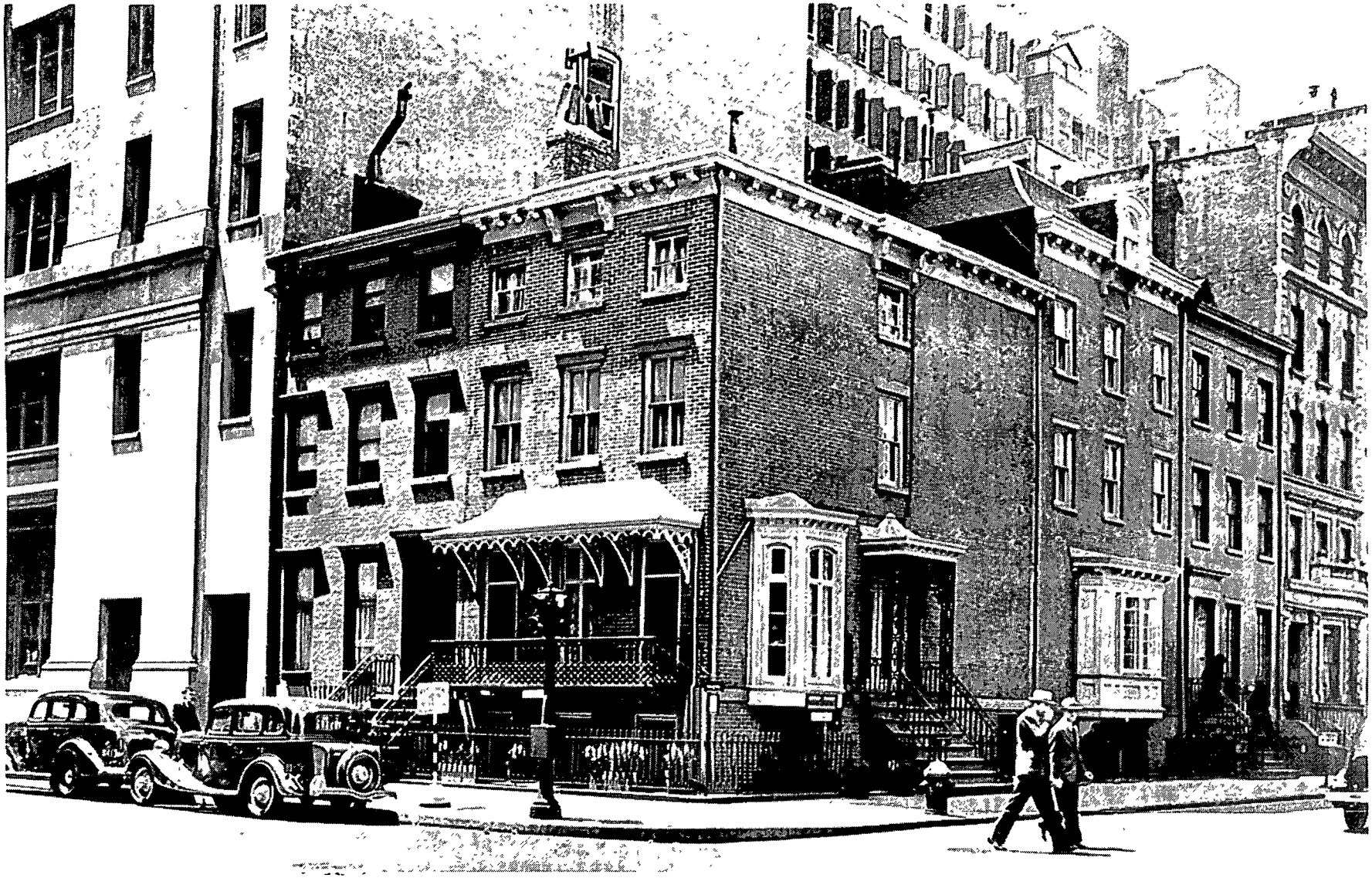
No. 122 East 17th Street (aka 49 Irving Place) in the late nineteenth century
Photo Source: Andrew Dolkart, *Gramercy, Its Architectural Surroundings* (1996)

View of the East 17th Street/Irving Place Historic District, c. 1912
Photo Credit: Underwood & Underwood, New York Public Library



View of the East 17th Street/Irving Place Historic District in 1909
Photo Source: New York Public Library

View of the East 17th Street/Irving Place Historic District in 1927
Photo Credit: P.L. Sperr, New York Public Library



View of the East 17th Street/Irving Place Historic District, c. 1935-39
Photo Source: Works Progress Administration Photography Collection, N.Y.C. Municipal Archives

(L) Elisabeth Marbury and Elsie de Wolfe
Photo Source: Elisabeth Marbury, *My Crystal Ball* (1923)
(R) William R. Grace
Photo Source: *King's Notable New Yorkers* (1899)

BUILDING ENTRIES

NO. 104 EAST 17th STREET (formerly No. 57)
Tax Map Block 872, Lot 74

Date: c. 1836-37
Builder: unknown
Original Owner: John Wakefield and Maria Eliza Cutler Francis

Type: rowhouse
Style: Greek Revival; neo-Renaissance
Stories: three plus basement
Facade Materials: red brick, brownstone

Designed in the Greek Revival style, the house is characterized by its planar red brick facade above a brownstone base. It retains its high stoop, prominent entranceway, and denticulated molding below the cornice. Around the turn of the century, the cornice and lintels of the house were altered in the neo-Renaissance style.

Description: Original/Historic Elements
Basement: areaway, wrought-iron areaway fence and gate set on brownstone sill, brownstone steps down to areaway; window openings with 4/4 wood sash; iron window grilles; brownstone base of stoop walls; cast-iron gate on doorway under stoop; cast- and wrought-iron stoop railings

Parlor Floor: brownstone entrance enframement (partially replaced) enclosing three-center arch wood doorway surround and arched transom; triangular stone window pediments (added late 19th-century) and stone sills; windows have 1/1 wood sash

Upper Floors: projecting stone window lintels (added late 19th-century) and stone sills; windows have 1/1 wood sash; denticulated brownstone molding above third story below late 19th-century pressed metal cornice with swags, brackets, and dentils

Alterations
1888 rear extension, [Walter] Jones & Co., builder (Alt. 656-1888)

areaway has concrete paving; brownstone basement wall resurfaced with tooled cast-stone facing; stoop walls and steps rebuilt in brownstone concrete; entrance door with flanking pilasters is a 20th-century replacement; curved pediment with address number above original entrance enframement replaced late 19th-century triangular pediment (c. 1990); brick on upper three stories has been painted, but paint has been mostly removed; stone window lintels and sills have been painted; window boxes added below parlor story windows.

Ownership History

1836 John Wakefield and Maria Eliza Cutler Francis
1859 Samuel Ward Francis (later Valentine Mott and Anna Mercer Francis)
1878 John and Harriet S. Biddle
1904 Charles Mayer
1905 Charles Mayer/Florence E. Goddard [later Goddard-Todd]
1931 Planet Realty Co.
1945 Third Holding Corp.
1955 1804 Washington Avenue Corp.

This is the oldest house in the historic district, built around 1836-37 (based on tax assessments). The lot had been purchased in 1836, from architect Isaac Green Pearson and his wife Eliza, by **Dr. John Wakefield and Maria Eliza Cutler Francis**. Dr. Francis (1789-1861), the first graduate of the College of Physicians and Surgeons (1811), became New York's leading obstetrician; he was a founder of the New York Academy of Medicine (1846) and helped to finance the Women's Hospital (1850s). In 1859, this property was conveyed to the Francises' son, **Dr. Samuel Ward Francis** (1835-1886), who became a physician at New York Dispensary, as well as an inventor; he moved to Newport, R.I., in 1863. The house was later conveyed to his brother, **Dr. Valentine Mott Francis** (1834-1907), and his wife **Anna Mercer Francis**, who retained it until 1878. It is not known who occupied the house in its earliest years, but it appears that none of the Francis family lived here.

The house was rented from 1848 to 1859 by **Joseph and Grace W. Ogden**. Joseph Ogden (c.1807-1896), born in Wales, came to New York City in the 1830s and first worked with two brothers as shipping clerks, later establishing a successful maritime shipping firm; he was also involved in railroad, coal, and iron companies, and was an incorporator of the Metropolitan Trust Co. Grace Ogden (c.1815-1873), a member of the socially prominent Ogden family in New York, was the daughter of Jonathan Ogden, founder of the shipping firm of Ogden, Ferguson & Co., and a director of the Merchants Bank.

The house was next rented, from about 1860 to 1865, by the Eigenbrodt family. **Sarah Eigenbrodt** (c. 1790-1869) was the widow of the Rev. Dr. Lewis Ernest Andrew Eigenbrodt (1773-1828), who was born in Germany, came to the U.S. in 1793, and in 1797 became the principal of the noted Union Hall Academy in Jamaica, L.I. Her son **Dr. David Lamberson Eigenbrodt** (1810-1880), a graduate of the College of Physicians and Surgeons (1835), practiced at New York and Bellevue Hospitals, as well as in Cuba for fifteen years; in 1858, he organized the surgical and medical departments of St. Luke's Hospital, serving as its first resident physician. Another son, **Rev. William Ernest Eigenbrodt** (1813-1894), after serving at two upstate churches, became rector of All Saints Church in 1846, associate rector of Calvary Church in 1858, and professor of pastoral theology at the General Theological Seminary in 1862.

From about 1868 to 1880, the house was rented by the family of **Levi and Jane Bissell**. Levi Bissell (c.1801-1874), born in Connecticut, was a machinist and engineer active in the fabrication of locomotives. Both of their children, **William H. Bissell** and **Sarah E. Bissell**, became physicians.

In 1878, the house was purchased from the Francis family by **John and Harriet S. Biddle**, who resided here from 1881 to 1903. A rear extension was constructed during their tenure. John Biddle (1829-1903) was the owner of the Biddle Piano Co. at 7 East 14th Street (later on East 13th Street), and was later also a director of the First National Bank of Port

Jefferson, L.I., where he had a summer house.

The property was purchased in 1904 by **Charles Mayer** (c. 1854-?), who lived here for a few years. He was listed in a 1906 directory as an underwear merchant, with Max W. Mayer in the firm of M. & C. Mayer at 568 Broadway. In 1905, the house was conveyed to Charles Mayer and **Florence E. Goddard [later Goddard-Todd]** as "joint tenants." The 1910 census listed a stockbroker named **Coin** living here; the building was turned into a lodging house by 1920.

The property was conveyed in 1931 by Florence Goddard-Todd (presumably after Mayer's death) to the Planet Realty Co., and in 1945 (along with Nos. 110, 116, 118, and 120 East 17th Street, and No. 47 Irving Place) to the Third Holding Corp. These latter two owners were real estate entities associated with **Samuel Klein** (1886-1942), Russian-born founder and sole owner of the S. Klein department store on Union Square, "the largest independent retail house for women's clothing in the world." Klein's had been located on the block of Union Square East, between 14th and 15th Streets (in the former Union Square Hotel), since around 1912. Interests associated with Klein purchased all of the properties in this historic district in 1930-31, around the same time that the store expanded into the buildings at 24-30 Union Square East. After Klein's death, his real estate holdings were headed by his executor, **Aaron J. Simon** (c.1901-1960), a real estate broker and investor.

No. 104 was converted to apartments in the 1930s. It passed in 1955, along with the other nine properties in this historic district, to the **1804 Washington Avenue Corp.** Members of the Mayer family, owner of the 1804 Washington Avenue Corp. (incorporated in 1942), have had a long involvement in New York real estate, through its activities in construction, management, and investment in properties by various corporate entities. **Charles Mayer** (c.1888-1980) [relationship, if any, with above Charles Mayer unknown], an engineer and builder involved in such projects as the construction of Lewisohn Stadium through the J.H. Taylor Construction Co., was also president of the J.H. Taylor Management Corp., a real estate management firm, as well as a philanthropist of Jewish causes. His daughter, Berna Osnos, is the president of 1804 Washington Avenue Corp. His brother, **Albert Mayer** (1897-1981), a graduate of MIT, worked from 1919 to 1935 for Charles Mayer's engineering firm and for the Taylor Construction Co. In 1935, he formed the architectural firm of Mayer & [Julian H.] Whittlesey, which became Mayer, Whittlesey & [M. Milton] Glass in 1961. His firm (which included William Conklin as an associate in 1958, and James Rossant later), specializing in the design of apartment buildings, was responsible for No. 240 Central Park South (1941); Manhattan House (1950-51, with Skidmore, Owings & Merrill), 200 East 66th Street; additions to the New School for Social Research (1955-60), 66 West 12th Street; and Butterfield House (1959-62), 37 West 12th Street. Mayer retired from active practice in 1961; he was also well known as a planner and housing consultant in the U.S. and abroad, from the 1930s on.

References

N.Y. County, Office of the Register, Liber Deeds and Conveyances; N.Y.C., Dept. of Buildings, Manhattan, Plans, Permits and Dockets; U.S. and N.Y.S. Census Records (1840-1925); N.Y.C., Tax Assessment Records (1836-1886); N.Y.C. Directories (1836-1945); "John Wakefield Francis, and Samuel Ward Francis," *Dict. of Amer. Biog.* 3 (N.Y.: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1959), 581, 583, and *Who Was Who in Amer.* hist. vol. (N.Y.: Marquis Co., 1963), 190; "Samuel Ward Francis, and Valentine Mott Francis," *Natl. Cyclop. of Amer. Biog.* 4 (N.Y.: James T. White & Co., 1902), 528; V.M. Francis obit., *NYT*, June 8, 1907, 9; Jos. Ogden obit., *NYT*, Aug. 5, 1896, 5; [Jon. Ogden], Henry W. Lanier, *A Century of*

No. 104 East 17th Street, Manhattan
Photo Credit: N.Y.C. Dept. of Taxes (c.1940)

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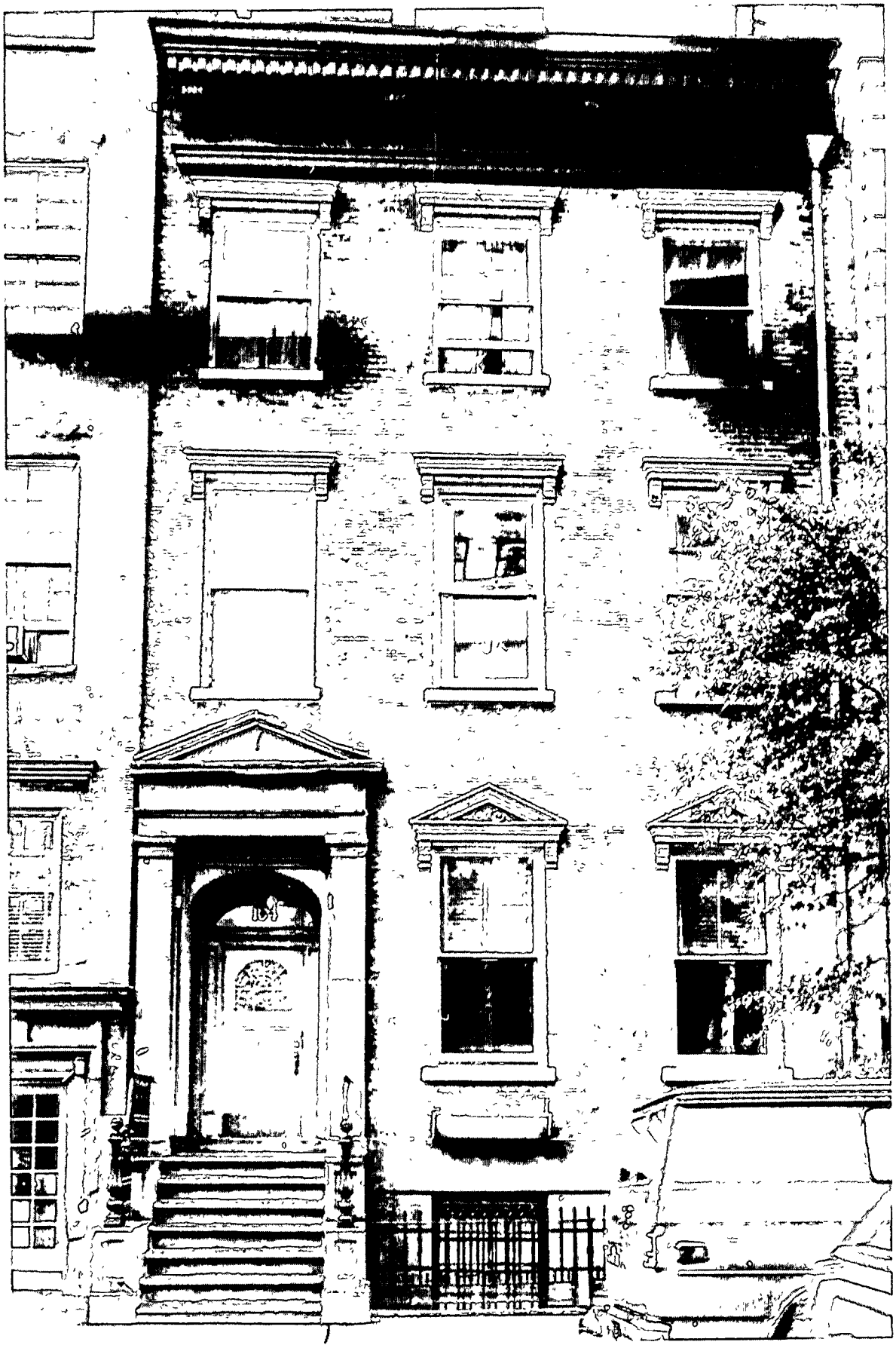
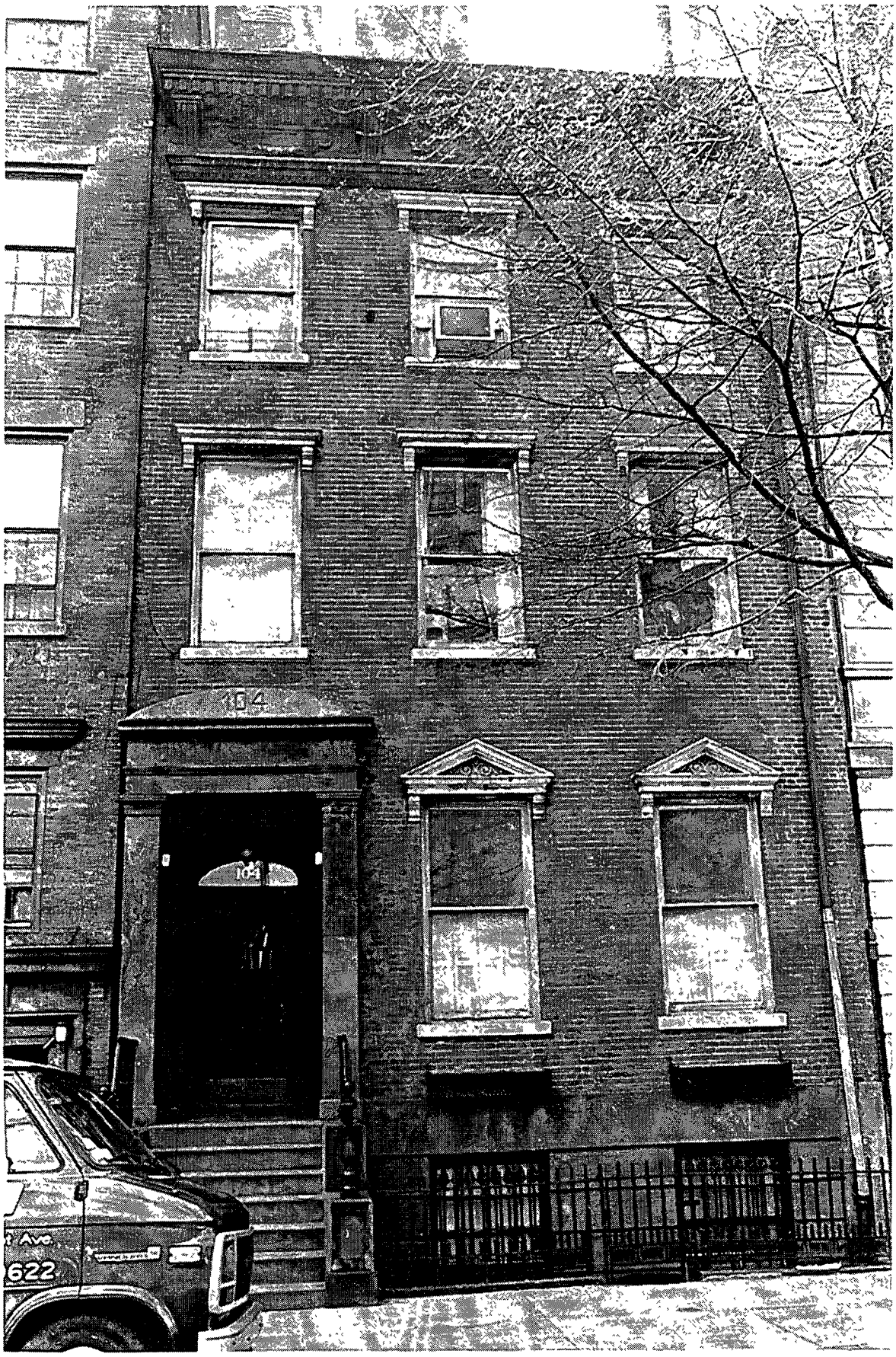


No. 104 East 17th Street, Manhattan
Photo Credit: LPC (1980)



No. 104 East 17th Street, Manhattan
Photo Credit: Carl Forster (1998)

NO. 106 EAST 17th STREET (formerly No. 59)
Tax Map Block 872, Lot 73

Date: 1852-53
Builder: Thomas G. Gardiner
Original Owner: Thomas G. and Emma H. Gardiner

Type: rowhouse
Style: Italianate/modified
Stories: four plus basement and setback penthouse
Facade Materials: red brick, brownstone

Designed in a simple Italianate style with a red brick facade above a brownstone base, the house retains its scale, proportions, and fenestration pattern. When the house was converted to studio apartments, the stoop was removed, a prominent new ground-level entrance was created, a penthouse story was added, and the corbelled cornice replaced the original.

Description: Original/Historic Elements
Ground (Basement) Story: double wood and glass doors in entrance appear to date from creation of molded entrance surround with raised lintel (1917)

Second and Third Stories: square-headed window openings

Fourth Story: square-headed window openings with molded lintels; corbelled cornice (appears to date from 1917)

Western Elevation: faced with brick, visible at fourth story and penthouse

Alterations
1917 areaway filled in; stoop removed; new ground-level entrance created; window over entrance created and set in visible brick infill of the original parlor floor entranceway; segmental arched windows in basement raised; parlor floor windows shortened; slightly setback penthouse with two window bays added above the fourth story (Alt. 721-1917, Herbert Lucas, architect)

brownstone base redone; all windows have replacement aluminum sash; non-historic window grilles at ground story; window boxes added below the first story windows; projecting window lintels rebuilt at parlor story; window lintels shaved at second and third stories (c.1990); penthouse faced with stucco

Ownership History

1852 Thomas G. and Emma H. Gardiner
1859 Henry Ward and Mary C. Barnes (after c. 1910, Charles Wheeler Barnes)
1916 Herman B. and Nancy Neufield Goodstein
1917 Gramercy Apartments Inc.
1923 Nathan and Esther Friedman
1926 Julius J. and Anne G. Stanfield
1929 Kenlee Hotel Co.
1930 Squarerule Holding Corp.
1952 19 Irving Place Corp.
1955 1804 Washington Avenue Corp.

The lot for this rowhouse was purchased in 1852, from Dr. John Wakefield and Maria Eliza Cutler Francis [See No. 104], by **Thomas G. and Emma H. Gardiner**. Thomas Gardiner (c. 1803-1887), born in Rhode Island, was a carpenter/builder with a business and a lumber yard on East 19th Street. He undoubtedly built this house in 1852-53, and his family lived here until 1858. By 1860, his firm Thomas Gardiner & Sons included **Thomas G. (Jr.), Joseph, and William W. Gardiner**, the latter an architect who practiced through 1891.

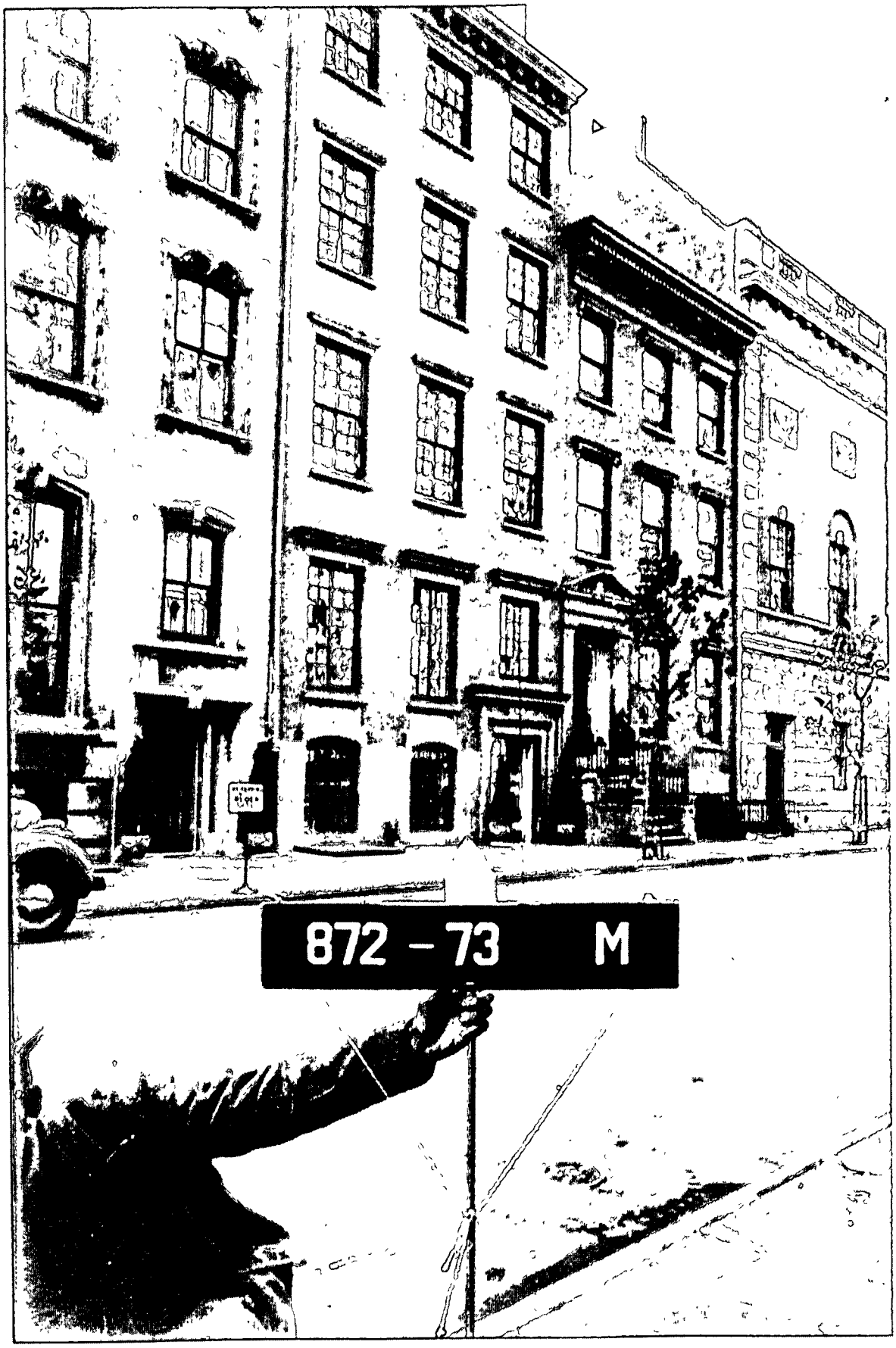
Long-term owners of this house were the family of **Henry Ward and Mary C. Barnes**, who purchased it in 1859 and resided here until 1915. This was the longest occupancy by a single family within the historic district. Henry Barnes (c.1809-1879) was a drygoods merchant in lower Manhattan. After her husband's death, Mary Barnes (1829-c.1910) continued to live here with her son **Charles Wheeler Barnes** (1855-1928), a lawyer.

The house was sold in 1916 to **Herman B. and Nancy Neufield Goodstein**. Herman Goodstein (c.1880-1966), a lawyer, later represented the Austrian Count Ludwig Salm von Hoogstraeten in one of the most closely followed such trials of the 1920s, the Count's divorce suit in 1924 against Millicent Rogers. The property was conveyed in 1917 to Gramercy Apartments Inc., which converted the building to studio apartments.

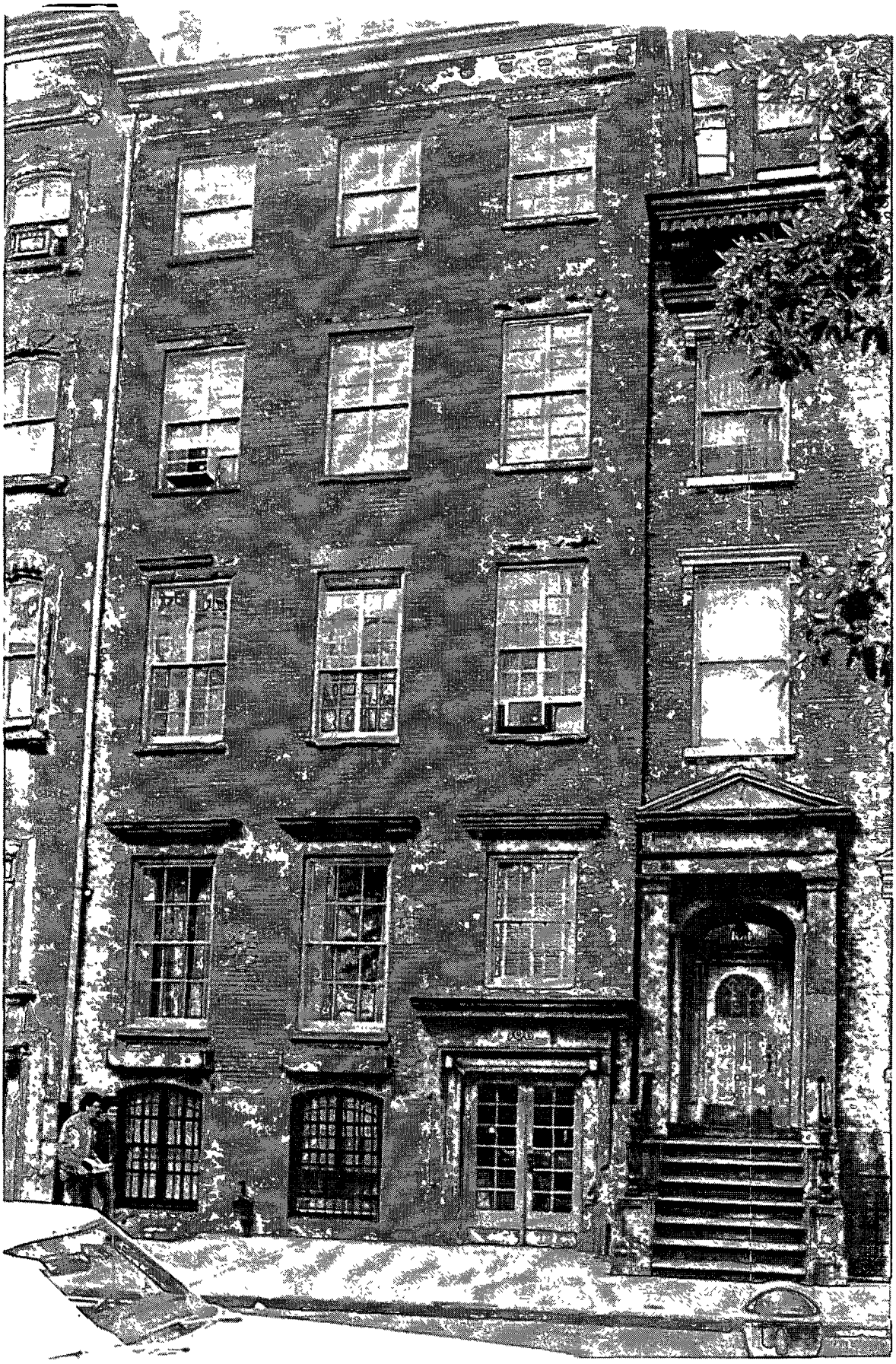
It was briefly owned after 1923 by Nathan and Esther Friedman, after 1926 by Julius J. and Anne G. Stanfield, and in 1929 by the Kenlee Hotel Co. The house was conveyed in 1930 to the Squarerule Holding Corp., then in 1952 (along with Nos. 108 and 122 East 17th Street) to the 19 Irving Place Corp., real estate entities asociated with **Samuel Klein** [See No. 104]. It passed in 1955, along with the other nine properties in this historic district, to the **1804 Washington Avenue Corp.** [See also No. 104]

References

N.Y. County, Office of the Register, Liber Deeds and Conveyances; N.Y.C., Dept. of Buildings, Manhattan, Plans, Permits and Dockets; U.S. and N.Y.S. Census Records (1840-1925); N.Y.C., Tax Assessment Records (1836-1886); N.Y.C. Directories (1836-1945); T. Gardiner will; H. Barnes obit., *N.Y. Eve. Post*, Feb. 3, 1879, 3; C.W. Barnes obit., *NYT*, Dec. 21, 1928, 27; Goodstein obit., *NYT*, Feb. 16, 1966, 43.



No. 106 East 17th Street, Manhattan
Photo Credit: N.Y.C. Dept. of Taxes (c.1940)



No. 106 East 17th Street, Manhattan
Photo Credit: LPC (1980)

No. 106 East 17th Street, Manhattan
Photo Credit: Carl Forster (1998)

NO. 108 EAST 17th STREET (formerly No. 61)
Tax Map Block 872, Lot 72

Date: c. 1853-54
Builder: Robert C. Voorhies
Original Owner: Mary Eleanor Stevenson Kip

Type: rowhouse
Style: Italianate
Stories: four plus basement
Facade Materials: brownstone

This is one of a pair of impressive brownstone-fronted Italianate houses characterized by the elaborate treatment of the window and entrance surrounds and a prominent roof cornice. When the house was converted to studio apartments, the stoop was removed and a prominent new ground-level entrance was created.

Description: Original/Historic Elements
Ground (Basement) Story: segmental-arched window openings; wood and glass entrance door flanked by traceried sidelights appears to date from creation of molded entrance surround with keystone (1918-19)

Parlor/First Story: full-length segmental-arched window openings retain historic wood sash; protective grilles at window bases appear to date from 1918-19

Second through Fourth Stories: segmental-arched window openings: roof cornice with brackets and panels above fourth story (continuous with No. 110)

Alterations
1918-19 stoop and areaway removed; new ground-level entrance created; window opening with molded surround created above entranceway (Alt. 1397-1918, Fitz-Henry Tucker of Renwick, Aspinwall & Tucker, architect)

brownstone base redone (c.1990); significant amount of patching and replacement of brownstone at upper stories; all window surrounds shaved and rebuilt, and corbelled sills resurfaced (c.1990); all window sash, except at parlor story, are aluminum replacements (1997); window boxes added at base of first-story windows

Ownership History

1853 Robert C. and Mary Ann Voorhies
1854 Mary Eleanor Stevenson Kip
1857 Darius R. and Henrietta Mangam
William and Rebecca Howell
1858 Darius R. and Henrietta Mangam
1865 Philip C. and Louisa Harmon
1873 William Russell and Lillius Gilchrist Grace
1891 Felicia Mariana Leiss Murray (later Frank and Felicia M.L. Tucker)
1930 F.M.T. Holding Co., Inc.
1952 19 Irving Place Corp.
1955 1804 Washington Avenue Corp.

In 1854, this rowhouse was purchased by **Mary Eleanor Stevenson Kip** from **Robert C. and Mary Ann Voorhies**. Robert Voorhies (d. 1859), a builder with a business on East 16th Street and a house on East 17th Street, undoubtedly constructed this house c. 1853-54, along with No. 110 East 17th Street [See], of which it was a twin. He is connected with the construction of a number of other houses in what is now the Gramercy Park Historic District and nearby blocks in the 1850s. Eleanor Kip (1780-1856) was the widow of downtown drygoods merchant Lucas ("Luke") Kip (1770-1834), a descendant of the Voorhes [sic] family on his mother's side.

After Eleanor Kip's death, the house was acquired in 1857 by **Darius R. and Henrietta Mangam**, who conveyed it that year to **William and Rebecca Howell**, but the property reverted to the Mangams in 1858. Darius Mangam (d. 1886), previously listed in directories as an accountant or merchant, lived in Dutchess County, N.Y., at this time, and was later the president of the National Trust Co., which collapsed in 1878. William Howell was a merchant in Philadelphia. The house was rented between 1858 and 1864 by **Catherine, Eliza, and Ann Thorn**, and in 1860 also by merchant **Washington Morton** and his wife Julia.

The property was purchased in 1865 by **Philip C. and Louisa Harmon**, who lived here until 1873. Philip Harmon (c.1822- ?) was a commission merchant with a business at 171 Broadway in 1866.

The house was acquired in 1873 by **William Russell and Lillius Gilchrist Grace**, who lived here until 1880. W.R. Grace (1832-1904), born in Ireland, became known as the "Pirate of Peru" for his enormously profitable financial exploitation of that country's military needs and its debts, railroads, and resources (including minerals, oil, guano, and silver), through the Grace & Brothers Co., W.R. Grace & Co., and Peruvian Corp., Ltd., all later consolidated under William R. Grace & Co. in 1895. His import-export and banking firm established branches throughout South America, with many interests in Chile. In 1891, Grace formed the New York & Pacific Steamship Co., and later the Grace Steamship Co. W.R. Grace, who was twice elected Mayor of New York City, serving in 1881-82 and 1885-86, was the first Roman Catholic in that position. His administration became known for its reforms and opposition to Tammany Hall. Together with his wife Lillius (c.1838-1922), he established the Grace Institute in 1897 as a vocational schools for girls in the domestic sciences and business. Their daughter Alice married architect Albert Frederick D'Oench in 1901. D'Oench had been appointed Superintendent of Buildings during Grace's administration and designed, with his partner Joseph W. Yost, the Germania Life Insurance Co. Building (1910-11, 50 Union Square East, a designated New York

City Landmark), across the street from this house. A biographer of Mayor Grace reported that he loved music, "anything from an Irish jig tune to the productions of classical composers. He was a frequent attendant at the opera in Manhattan . . ."

After Mayor and Mrs. Grace moved to 31 East 38th Street in 1880 following his election, they rented this house for a decade to **Theodore and Minna L. Rhodes Thomas**. Theodore Thomas (1835-1905) was one of the most important figures in classical music in the United States in the nineteenth century. Born in Germany, Thomas immigrated to the U.S. in 1845, beginning his career as a touring solo violinist by 1851; he performed in a series of widely noted chamber concerts with pianist William Mason at Dodworth Hall from 1855 to 1869. He began conducting in 1859, became conductor in 1862 of the Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra, and in 1864 began a series of symphony concerts at Irving Hall (Irving Place and 15th Street). The Theodore Thomas Orchestra began its national and Canadian tours in 1869. Thomas was musical director of the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876. He also conducted the New York Philharmonic Orchestra in 1877-78, but left for Cincinnati, where he directed the new College of Music. Upon his return to New York in 1880, he resumed the conductorship of both the Brooklyn and New York Philharmonic Orchestras, as well as his own orchestra (the latter lasted to 1888). In 1882, he conducted seven choral-orchestral concerts at the Seventh Regiment Armory, each of which was attended by some 8000 people, and in 1883 he conducted, as the country's preeminent Wagnerian, special memorial concerts after the composer's death. Thomas and Mayor Grace were two of the incorporators of the National Conservatory, founded in 1885 by Jeannette Thurber at 126-128 East 17th Street. Thomas became the musical director of the American Opera Co. at the Academy of Music (Irving Place and 14th Street) in 1886. Minna Thomas died in 1889, and he married Rose Fay in 1890. In 1891, Thomas moved to Chicago to conduct the Chicago Orchestra, a position he held until his death. Considered the first significant American conductor, Thomas is also credited with popularizing classical music in the United States, as well as launching many local orchestras through the inspiration of his tours.

This property was acquired from the Graces in 1891 by **Felicia Mariana Leiss Murray** (1870- ?), the widow (by 1893) of John B. Murray; she lived here until 1901. In 1894, she married **Frank Tucker** (1861-1946), a New Yorker who after 1882 had operated a wheat farm and edited a newspaper in North Dakota; was assistant city editor at the *New York Herald* in 1887-89; was founder, editor, and publisher of the *Jersey City News* in 1889-98; headed the N.Y. Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor in 1898-1902; managed Charles M. Schwab's Park Playgrounds on Staten Island in 1902-04; and was the vice president of the Provident Loan Society from 1904 to 1928.

The building was converted to a boardinghouse in 1901, operated until 1913 by Alipio F. and Jane Menghetti, and in 1919 was converted to studio apartments. The house was conveyed in 1930 to the F.M.T. Holding Co., Inc., and in 1952 (along with Nos. 106 and 122 East 17th Street) to the 19 Irving Place Corp., real estate entities associated with **Samuel Klein** [See No. 104]. It passed in 1955, along with the other nine properties in this historic district, to the **1804 Washington Avenue Corp.** [See also No. 104.]

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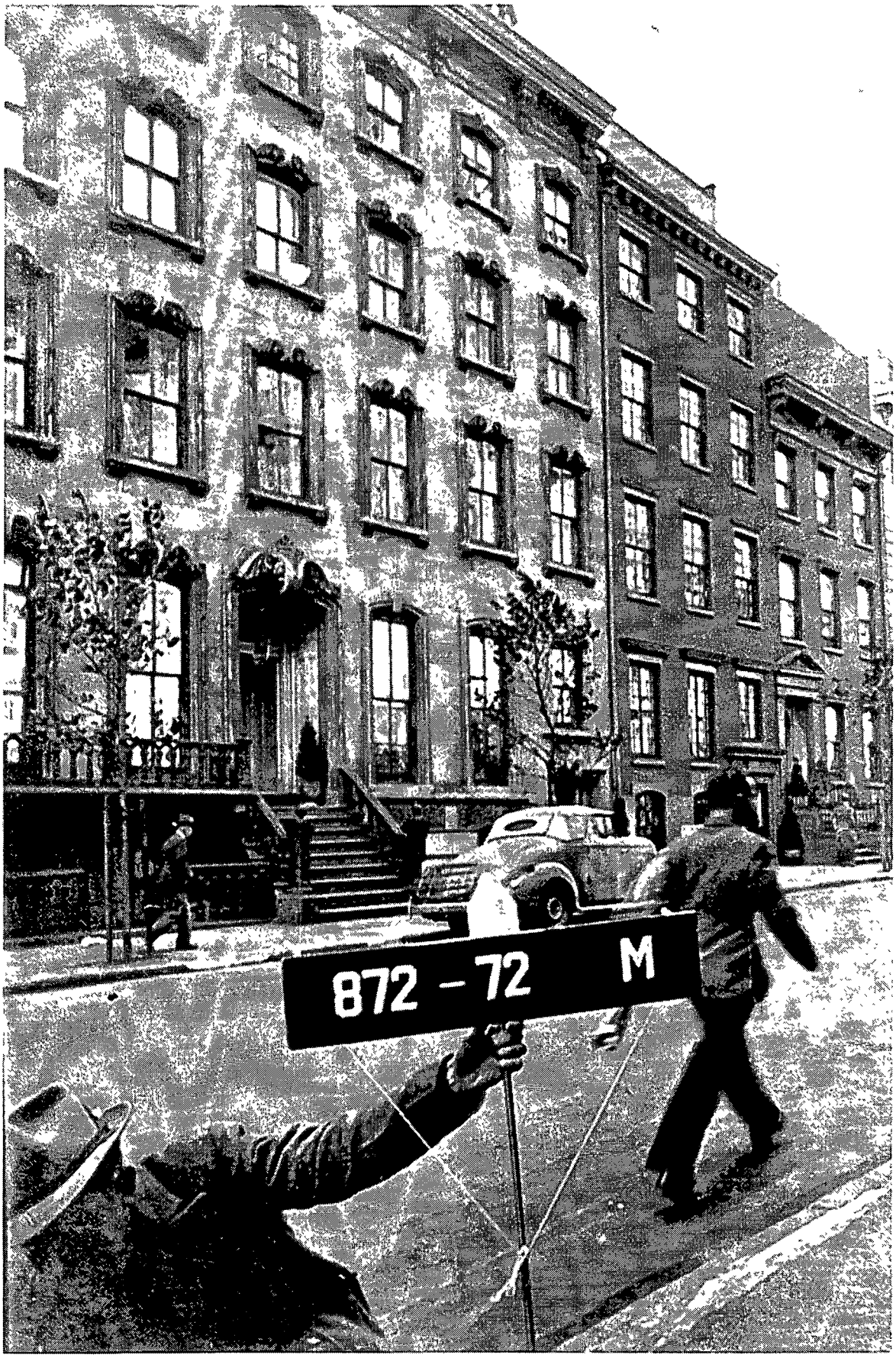
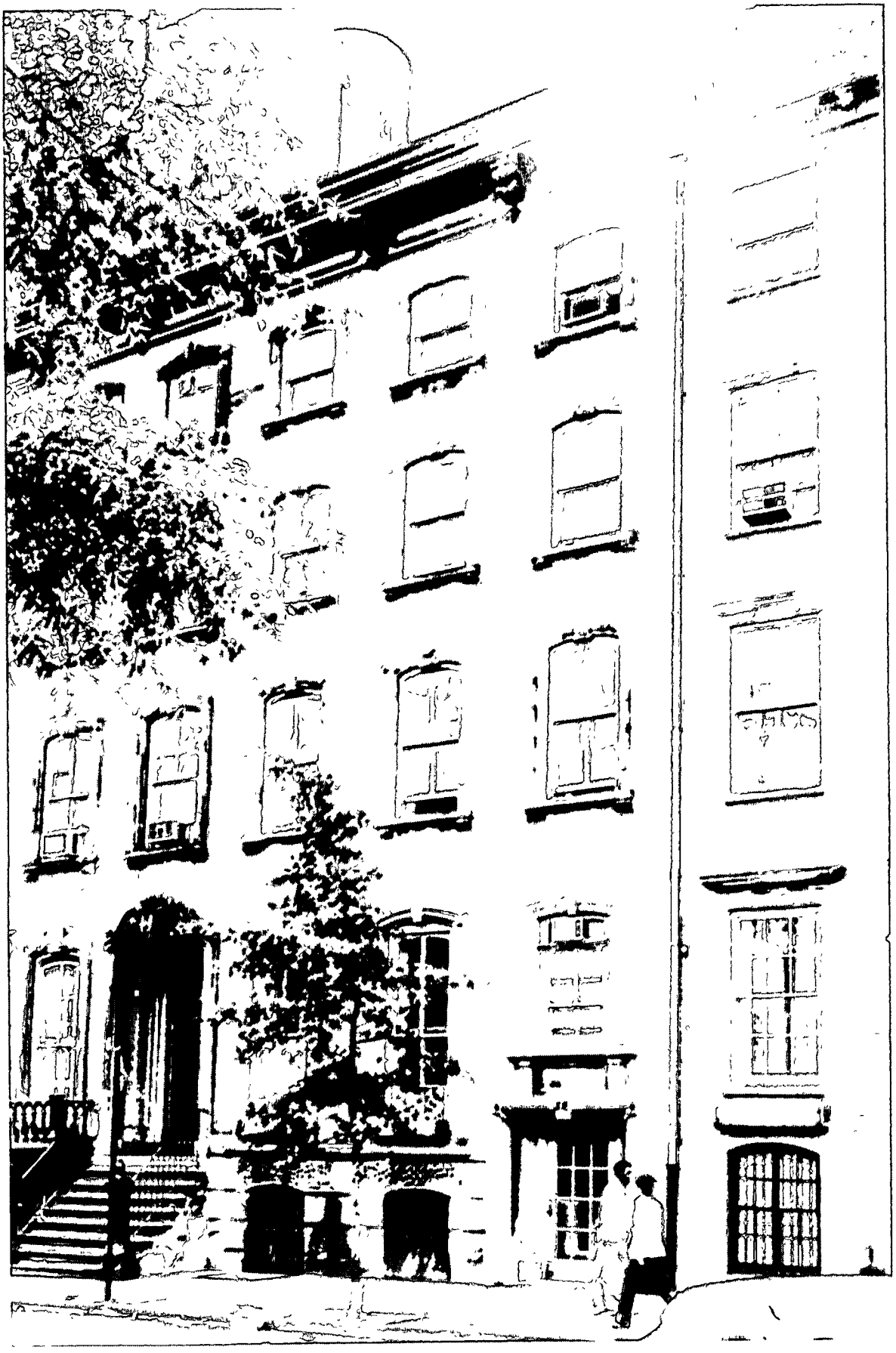
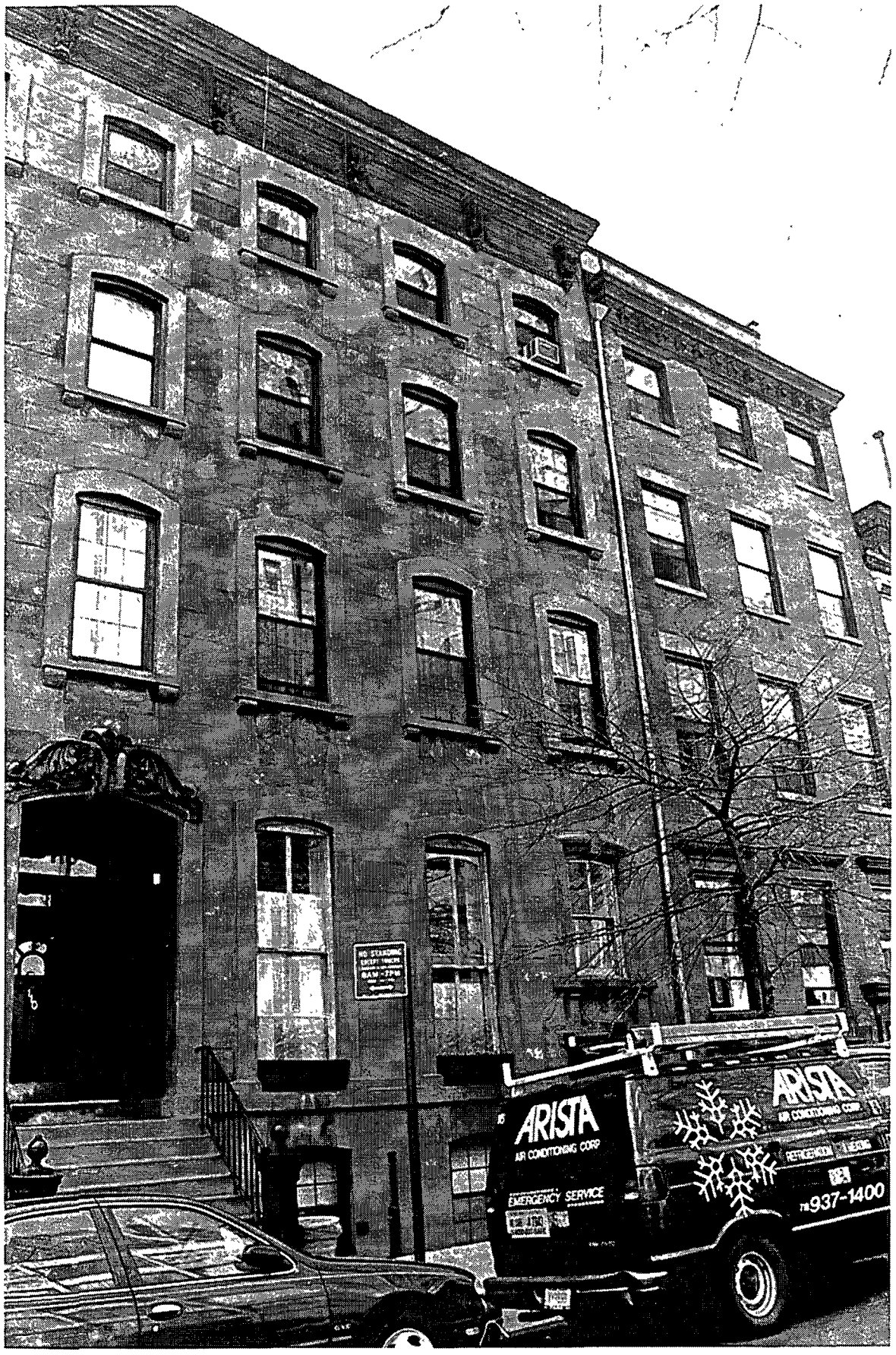


No. 108 East 17th Street, Manhattan
Photo Credit: N.Y.C. Dept. of Taxes (c.1940)



No. 108 East 17th Street, Manhattan
Photo Credit: LPC (1980)



No. 108 East 17th Street, Manhattan
Photo Credit: Carl Forster (1998)

NO. 110 EAST 17th STREET (formerly No. 63)
Tax Map Block 872, Lot 71

Date: c. 1853-54
Builder: Robert C. Voorhies
Original Owner: Thomas S. and Mary E. Young

Type: rowhouse
Style: Italianate
Stories: four plus basement
Facade Materials: brownstone

This is one of a pair of impressive brownstone-fronted Italianate houses characterized by the elaborate treatment of the window and entrance surrounds and a prominent roof cornice. It retains its high stoop with characteristic cast-iron newels and carved brownstone balcony at the parlor story with a cast-iron balustrade.

Description: Original/Historic Elements
Basement: areaway with brownstone sill and steps; segmental-arched window openings with 2/2 wood sash and historic iron window grilles set below vermiculated panels; cast-iron newels on stoop; historic iron gate on doorway under the stoop

Parlor/First Story: stylized foliate pediment over doorway; wood paneled reveal and surround with foliate moldings; inner and outer transoms in doorway; projecting stone balcony set on massive brackets, with cast-iron railing; full-length segmental-arched windows

Second through Fourth Stories: segmental-arched window openings; roof cornice with brackets and panels above fourth story (continuous with No. 108)

Alterations
areaway fence is non-historic; stoop has been rebuilt in brownstone concrete (c. 1990), with non-historic railings; 20th-century entrance door; significant amounts of patching and replacement of brownstone at upper stories; all window surrounds shaved and rebuilt, and corbelled sills resurfaced (c.1990); all window sash are aluminum replacements (1997)

Ownership History

1853 Robert C. and Mary Ann Voorhies
1854 Thomas S. and Mary E. Young (later Mary Young estate)
1904 Katherine Shippen Tarr
1931 Marble Holding Corp.
1945 Third Holding Corp.
1955 1804 Washington Avenue Corp.

In 1854, this rowhouse was purchased by **Thomas S. and Mary E. Young** from **Robert C. and Mary Ann Voorhies**. Builder Robert Voorhies undoubtedly constructed this house c. 1853-54, along with No. 108 East 17th Street [See], of which it was a twin. Thomas Young (c.1813- ?), born in Putnam County, N.Y., was the proprietor of the downtown clothing firm of Thomas S. Young & Co. He was a resident of East 17th Street prior to moving into this house, where he and Mary Young (c.1818-1887) lived until 1878. The Young estate retained the property until 1904.

The 1880 census lists **Harry Bowley and Evelina Knapp Hollins** residing here. Stockbroker Harry Hollins (1854-1938) first clerked in 1870 at Levi P. Morton & Co., then worked for a number of other firms before going into business on his own in 1875. He founded the banking and brokerage firm of H.B. Hollins & Co. in 1878 at 74 Broadway, which early on handled most of the Vanderbilts' financial transactions. Hollins was one of the organizers of the Knickerbocker Trust Co. in 1884 and became vice president of the Central Railroad & Banking Co. of Georgia in 1886. The Hollins firm was involved in the financing of numerous transit and power companies, a number of which it eventually controlled, as well as the U.S. Rubber Co., and was the first New York banking concern to locate in Havana, in 1899. The later Hollins residence at 12-14 West 56th Street (1899-1901, McKim, Mead & White) is a designated New York City Landmark.

The families of two brothers, **William Draper and George H. Andrews**, rented No. 110 East 17th Street between 1887 and 1895. William Andrews (1818-?), an inventor born in Massachusetts, patented 25 variations on centrifugal pumps, oscillating steam engines, boilers, gangwells, valves, safety elevators, and other devices, all after 1846. During the serious drought of 1885, gangwells fabricated by Andrews supplied Brooklyn with up to twenty-seven million gallons of water a day. George Andrews (c.1831-?) was a partner in the firm of William D. Andrews & Brother.

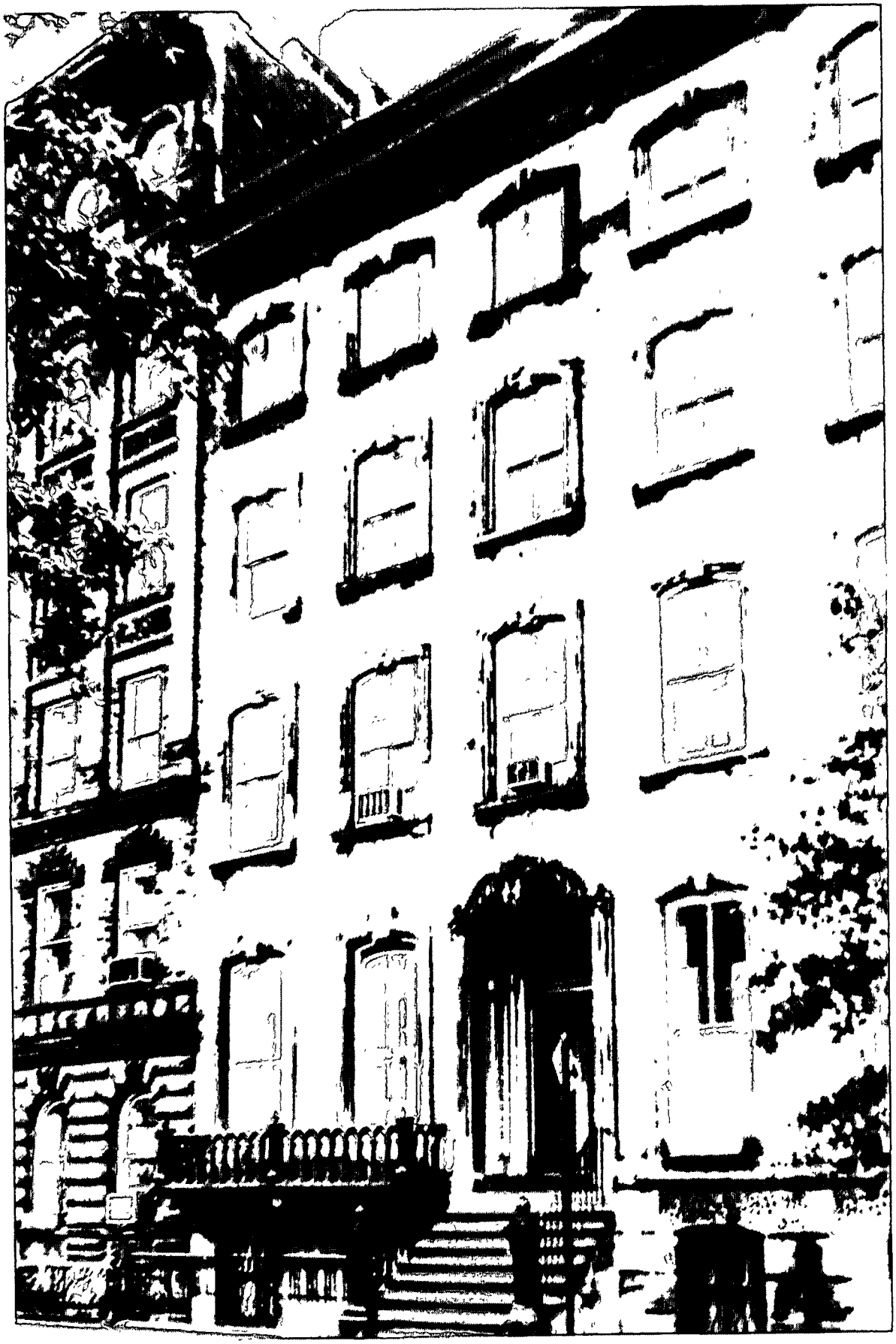
By 1898, this property was a boardinghouse operated by Florence Wurtz. The Young estate sold it in 1904 to **Katherine Shippen Tarr** (c.1858-1935), who had operated a boardinghouse nearby prior to this; she lived here and operated a boardinghouse until she sold the property, and upon her death left most of her estate to charities in Meadsville, Pa. The house was conveyed in 1931 to the Marble Holding Corp., and in 1945 (along with Nos. 104, 116, 118, and 120 East 17th Street, and No. 47 Irving Place) to the Third Holding Corp., real estate entities associated with **Samuel Klein** [See No. 104]. It was converted to apartments in the 1930s, and passed in 1955, along with the other nine properties in this historic district, to the **1804 Washington Avenue Corp.** [See also No. 104]

References

N.Y. County, Office of the Register, Liber Deeds and Conveyances; N.Y.C., Dept. of Buildings, Manhattan, Plans, Permits and Dockets; U.S. and N.Y.S. Census Records (1840-1925); N.Y.C., Tax

Assessment Records (1836-1886); N.Y.C. Directories (1836-1945); M.E. Young will; "Harry Bowley Hollins," *N.Y. State's Prominent & Progressive Men* 1 (N.Y. Trib., 1900), 178-179; H.B. Hollins obit., *NYT*, Feb. 25, 1938, 19; "William Draper Andrews," *Appleton's Cyclop. of Amer. Biog.* 1 (N.Y.: D. Appleton & Co., 1887), 77; "Estate of Mrs. K.S. Tarr," *NYT*, June 25, 1940, 26.

No. 110 East 17th Street, Manhattan
Photo Credit: N.Y.C. Dept. of Taxes (c.1940)



No. 110 East 17th Street, Manhattan
Photo Credit: LPC (1980)

No. 110 East 17th Street, Manhattan
Photo Credit: Carl Forster (1998)

NO. 112-114 EAST 17th STREET (THE FANWOOD) (formerly Nos. 65-67)
Tax Map Block 872, Lot 69 (originally lots 69 and 70)

Date: 1890-91 (NB 881-1890)
Architect: George F. Pelham
Builder: Peter N. Ramsey
Original Owner: Peter N. and Hortense Ramsey

Type: apartment house
Style: Romanesque/Renaissance Revival
Stories: six plus basement
Facade Materials: red brick, brownstone

The Fanwood, a Romanesque/Renaissance Renaissance apartment house, is one of the first works by architect George F. Pelham. Employing a T-shaped plan with angled bays on both sides (not visible from the street), it is faced in rusticated brownstone and red and buff brick, and features colossal arcades, carved stone panels, and a prominent entrance porch with clustered corner columns supporting a balcony. The galvanized iron cornice was installed in 1898.

Description: Original/Historic Elements
Basement: areaways on either side of entrance porch; wrought-iron areaway fences set on brownstone sills; wing walls of entrance porch; rusticated brownstone facing

First Story: entrance porch with clustered corner columns supporting balcony; double wood and glass doors below transom; rusticated brownstone facing; wrought-iron grille at the base of the porch; round-arched windows

Second Story: buff brick facing; rusticated stone window lintels

Third through Fifth Stories: colossal arcade composed of red brick pilasters, buff brick infill, and stone arches and spandrel panels

Sixth Story: red brick pilasters and facing; stone arches and capitals; bracketed roof cornice dating from 1898

East and West Elevations: faced with brick (parged on the east), visible at the sixth story

Alterations
1898 galvanized iron cornice replaced "present coping" (Alt. 1270-1898, Brickelmain & Stephens, contractors)

steps and balustrade on entrance porch replaced in brownstone concrete (c.1990); lamps removed from foliate bases on wing walls; carved stone panels patched in places; fire escape added, resulting in removal of side balustrades of balcony above entrance porch; all window sash are replacements in aluminum (1997); window guards added at base of first-story windows

Ownership History

1890 Peter N. and Hortense Ramsey
1892 Joseph Fetherman Stier
1896 Hortense Ramsey
1898 New York Realty Co.
1899 Joseph A. Kehoe
1900 Ernest B. Wintersmith
1903 New York Building Loan Banking Co.
1904 Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. (foreclosure)
1906 Alexander Phoenix Waldron and Charlotte Ora Morris Kinnan
1909 Herman and Serena Wronkow
1910 George H. Pigueron/ Acme Building Co.
1912 Trustees of Herman Wronkow (foreclosure)
1924 Hampar O. Ambrookian
1925 Ambro Realty Corp.
1928 Staverton Estates Inc.
1930 112 East 17th Street Corp.
1952 Third Holding Corp.
1955 1804 Washington Avenue Corp.

The Fanwood replaced two rowhouses built c. 1853-54 by Robert C. Voorhies, builder [See also Nos. 108 and 110]. The first owners of No. 65 [later 112] East 17th Street (lot 70) in 1854 were Anthony J. and Cornelia Bleecker. Anthony Bleecker (1799-1884) had attended the Union Hall Academy in Jamaica, L.I., under Rev. Dr. Lewis Eigenbrodt [See No.104], and joined his father James Bleecker in the family's auction and real estate business, serving as a respected broker for over sixty years. Active in New York politics and civic affairs, he was appointed a U.S. marshal by President Van Buren, and was appointed, with Courtlandt Palmer, by Tammany Hall "Boss" Tweed in 1871 to appraise city-owned property. One of the founders of the Republican party in New York, Bleecker was the party's first candidate for mayor in 1856, and was appointed district Assessor of Internal Revenue by President Lincoln in 1862. He was also a founder of St. Luke's Hospital. The first owners of No. 67 [later 114] East 17th Street (lot 69) in 1854 were lawyer/insurance agent William Mootry (later Moultrie) and his wife Jane.

The Fanwood was constructed in 1890-91 for **Peter N. and Hortense Ramsey**. Peter Ramsey was listed in an 1890 directory as a builder at 351 West 59th Street. This fairly early apartment building, which cost an estimated $110,000, originally housed two families per floor, and had an elevator. It was apparently named after President James Monroe's Upper Manhattan estate, where he lived at the end of his life (1830-31). The property constantly changed hands every few years, and was foreclosed on twice prior to 1912. Among its owners were: **Joseph Fetherman Stier** (1858-1932), a lawyer and vice president of Broadway Realty Co., in 1892-96; the **New York Realty Co.** (Albert Flake, pres.; Robert E. Dowling, sec.-treas.) in 1898; and **Alexander Phoenix Waldron Kinnan** (1856-1924), president of the Union Dime Savings Bank and a director of Arrow Realty Co., J. Romaine Brown Co., City of New York Insurance Co., and Metropolitan Life Insurance Co., and his wife **Charlotte Ora Morris Kinnan**, in 1906-09.

The Fanwood was acquired in 1909 by **Herman and Serena Wronkow**. Herman Wronkow (d. 1910) was a loan broker and real estate operator at 23 Union Square. The Wronkows sold the property in 1910 to **George H. Pigueron** (c.1879-1955), a real estate

operator (who developed properties in association with architect William G. Pigueron), but the Trustees of Herman Wronkow foreclosed on it in 1912.

In 1924, the Fanwood was purchased by **Hampar O. Ambrookian**, a rug dealer on the Upper West Side, who conveyed it to the Ambro Realty Corp. in 1925. After ownership in 1928 by Staverton Estates Inc., it was conveyed in 1930 to the 112 East 17th Street Corp., and in 1952 to the Third Holding Corp. [See also Nos. 104, 110, 116, 118, and 120 East 17th Street, and No. 47 Irving Place], the latter two real estate entities associated with **Samuel Klein** [See No. 104]. Prior to this latter transaction, the Fanwood was officially on two tax lots. It passed in 1955, along with the other nine properties in this historic district, to the **1804 Washington Avenue Corp.** [See also No. 104.]

Census records and directories indicate that there was a continual turnover in Fanwood tenants, who worked in a wide variety of professions. There were a number of residents who achieved prominence. Landscape and genre painter **[Edward] Percy Moran** (1862-1935), son of Edward Moran and nephew of Thomas Moran, both also painters, lived here with his wife Virginia in 1898-1901. **Simon Brentano** (c.1859-1915) resided here with his wife **Fredericka Loewenthal Brentano** (c.1865-1957) in 1903-06. Born in Cincinnati, Simon Brentano came to New York in 1871 and started out working with two brothers delivering newspapers for the firm of Brentano's, founded by an uncle as "Brentano's Literary Emporium" in 1853. The brothers took over the business in 1877, moved it to Union Square, and Simon became president in 1899. Brentano's, booksellers and publishers, became known for its high literary standard. Fredericka Brentano became vice president of the firm after her husband's death, until her retirement in 1933. **Grace Elliston (nee Rutter)** (c.1878-1950), born in Memphis, started her New York career as a chorus girl and later became a leading Broadway actress until 1932, as well as founder of the Theater Workshop in Stockbridge, Mass.; she lived here in 1904-05. **William Morris** (1873-1932), who became one of the leading American theatrical booking agents, lived in the Fanwood with his family in 1905. Born in Germany, he worked after his arrival in New York as an advertising solicitor for a trade paper, which ended in the Panic of 1894. He later worked in the booking office of George Liman, becoming general manager, and purchased the firm after Liman's death. Early in his career, Morris put on specialty acts at Keith's Union Square Theater, and came to operate his own vaudeville theater chain, becoming known as the "Dean of the Golden Age of Vaudeville," until he quit vaudeville due to competition from the larger chains. Morris's numerous clients (many of whom he discovered or made successful) included Maurice Chevalier, Anna Held, Sophie Tucker, Eddie Cantor, Rudolph Valentino, Weber & Fields, Al Jolson, Will Rogers, Charlie Chaplin, Julian Eltinge, James Cagney, Joan Blondell, Burns & Allen, and "Diving Girl" Annette Kellermann. **Henry Ziegler** (1858-1931), the grandson of Steinway & Sons founder Henry Engelhard Steinway, was a tenant here with his family around 1905-07. Ziegler entered the piano manufacturing firm in 1875, becoming a director in 1882 and vice president in 1919; he is credited with a number of patented features of Steinway pianos. Ziegler's father-in-law, **Joseph Kuder** (c.1831-1913), also lived here; he was a founder and partner with Hugo Sohmer in Sohmer & Co., piano manufacturers. Born in Bohemia, Kuder began making pianos as a boy in the firm of Johann Hertzold in Vienna. He is also credited with a number of technical improvements in the modern piano. **John P. Suerken** (c.1869- ?), born in Germany, ran the firm of J.P. Suerken & Brother [Hermann], liquor dealers and proprietors of two downtown eateries, and resided here with his wife Kate from 1906 to about 1918. **Dr. Edward Frankel, Jr.** (1880-1941), with his wife Julia W., lived and practiced here from about 1917 to 1925. Dr. Frankel, a graduate of the College of Physicians and

Surgeons with associations with numerous hospitals, grew up down the street at No. 217 East 17th Street, where his grandfather and father had also practiced medicine (the former had at one time been a private physician and surgeon to Kaiser Wilhelm I in Germany) [See also Clara Frankel Baumgarten, under No. 47 Irving Place entry]. **Henry J. Torrance** (1870-?), a mechanical engineer specializing in refrigeration and vice president of the Carbondale Machine Co. for twenty-five years, was a resident here with his wife Mary H. Fisher Torrance, from 1920 until at least 1945.

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N.Y. County, Office of the Register, Liber Deeds and Conveyances; N.Y.C., Dept. of Buildings, Manhattan, Plans, Permits and Dockets; U.S. and N.Y.S. Census Records (1840-1925); N.Y.C., Tax Assessment Records (1836-1886); N.Y.C. Directories (1836-1945); A. Bleecker obit., *NYT*, Jan. 18, 1884, 8; Thomas Norton and Jerry Patterson, *Living it Up: A Guide to the Named Apartment Houses of New York* (N.Y.: Atheneum, 1984), 140; J.F. Stier obit., *NYT*, Mar. 13, 1932, II, 6; "Alexander P.W. Kinnan," *Who Was Who in Amer.* 1 (N.Y.: Marquis Co., 1943), 679; G. Pigueron obit., *NYT*, Feb. 26, 1955, 15; [W.G. Pigueron], LPC, architects files; "Wronkow Estate...," *NYT*, Aug. 30, 1913, 6; "Dr. Jacoby, Alienist, Accused of Fraud," *NYT*, Mar. 21, 1920, II, 1; P. Moran obit., *NYT*, Mar. 26, 1935; S. Brentano obit., *NYT*, Feb. 16, 1915, 9; F. Brentano obit., *NYT*, Nov. 29, 1957, 29; G. Elliston obit., *NYT*, Dec. 15, 1950, 32; W. Morris obit., *NYT*, Nov. 2 and 6, 1932, 19 and IX, 1-2; H. Ziegler obit., *N.Y. Her. Trib.*, May 11, 1930, and *Musical America*, May 25, 1930; J. Kuder obit., *NYT*, July 26, 1913, 7, and *Musical America*, Aug. 2, 1913, 25; Hermann Suerken obit., *NYT*, July 12, 1952, 13; E. Frankel obit., *NYT*, July 6, 1941, 27; "Henry Torrance," *Who's Who in N.Y.* (1924), 1258.

The Fanwood, 112-114 East 17th Street, Manhattan
Photo Credit: N.Y.C. Dept. of Taxes (c.1940)

The Fanwood, 112-114 East 17th Street, Manhattan
Photo Credit: Carl Forster (1998)

NO. 116 EAST 17th STREET (formerly No. 69)
Tax Map Block 872, Lot 68

Date: c. 1854-55
Builder: unknown
Original Owner: Henry Joel and Louisa Davies Scudder

Type: rowhouse
Style: Renaissance Revival
Stories: four plus basement
Facade Materials: brownstone

This brownstone-fronted rowhouse was designed in the Renaissance Revival style. It retains its high stoop and intricate carved entrance surround with pediment and elements of the bold window surrounds. In the late nineteenth century, a neo-Grec style cornice was installed on the building.

Description: Original/Historic Elements
Basement: areaway with brownstone sill; arched window openings with historic wood sash set behind iron grilles

Parlor Story: intricate carved entrance surround with pediment; paired wood and glass doors (modified from original) below transom, set in arched wood surround with moldings; full-length window openings with historic double-hung sash with wide center muntins to simulate casements

Upper Stories: window openings with historic double-hung sash with wide center muntins to simulate casements; paired corbels at window sills of second and third stories; prominent roof cornice with brackets and corbels at the fourth story dating from late 19th century

Alterations
rusticated brownstone base redone at basement; non-historic fence at areaway; stoop rebuilt in brownstone concrete (c.1990) with non-historic railings; brownstone facing appears to be patched and/or resurfaced; all window surrounds and sills, and molding course above third story, shaved and resurfaced (c.1990); window boxes added at base of first-story windows

Ownership History

1853 Henry Joel and Louisa Davies Scudder (later Emma W. Scudder, second wife)
1895 William S. and Mary E. Patten
1909 Ekko and Elise Sollmann
1917 Geo. Borgfeldt & Co.
1930 Irving Place & 17th Street Corp.
1945 Third Holding Corp.
1955 1804 Washington Avenue Corp.

This was the home of the extended family of **Henry Joel Scudder** (1825-1886) during the entire period that this rowhouse was a single-family residence (1855 to 1882). The lot had been purchased in 1850 from Courtlandt Palmer, a wealthy hardware merchant and real estate speculator, and the house was constructed about 1854-55. Henry J. Scudder, born at the family estate in Northport, L.I., was admitted to the New York bar in 1848, served as a captain in the 23rd Regiment of the National Guard and throughout the Civil War, was a Republican Congressman in 1873-75, and a partner in the legal firm of Scudder & Carter, with James C. Carter. His first wife was **Louisa Davies Scudder** (c.1833- by 1870), a daughter of West Point professor Charles Davies, while his second wife was **Emma W. Scudder** (c.1835-1893). **Hewlett Scudder** (1833-1918), Henry's brother who lived here between 1859 and 1882, worked for the firm of Joseph Samson & Co., commission merchants and auctioneers; he became a partner in 1856, and continued with the firm until his retirement in 1901. He was also a founder and president of the Merchants Club, and a vice president of the Union Square Savings Bank. **Townsend Scudder** (d. 1874), another brother who resided here in the late 1850s, was a maritime attorney and the father of Townsend Scudder (1865-1960), a Democratic Congressman (1899-1901, 1903-05) and a New York State Supreme Court justice (1907-20, 1927-36). Henry J. Scudder had seven children who were raised in this house, including three who achieved prominence. **Rev. Henry Townsend Scudder** (c.1855-1937), a graduate of Berkeley Divinity School in 1877, became rector of Grace P.E. Church and St. Stephen's P.E. Church in Brooklyn in 1882-88 and 1890-1908, and then rector of Christ P.E. Church, Tarrytown, in 1908-11. **Dr. Charles Davies Scudder** (c.1857-1892), a graduate of the College of Physicians and Surgeons who was associated with several hospitals, married Louisa Wardner Evarts (daughter of William Maxwell Evarts, a prominent lawyer and statesman) in 1883 at a widely noted and attended society wedding at Calvary Church, and committed suicide in 1892. **Edward Mansfield Scudder** (c.1858-1944) graduated from Columbia Law School, worked for his father's law firm, and was later associated with the firm of Harrison, Elliott & Byrd, specializing in real estate.

After the Scudders' residence here, the house leased to Samuel and Priscilla Chittick who operated it as a boardinghouse in 1888-91. The property was purchased from the Scudders in 1895 by real estate operator **William S. Patten** (c.1835-1916), and his wife Mary.

It was acquired in 1909 (along with No. 120 East 17th Street and, in 1910, No. 47 Irving Place) by **Ekko and Elise Sollmann**, of Hoboken, N.J., and in 1917 (along with Nos. 118 and 120 East 17th Street, and No. 47 Irving Place) by **Geo. Borgfeldt & Co.** Georg Borgfeldt (1833-1903), the German-born founder of the company, came to the U.S. around 1853, and after clerking in a store in Nashville, started a wholesale notions business in Indianapolis. He moved to New York in 1865, operating a commission business. In 1881, he formed the importing firm of Geo. Borgfeldt & Co., which grew into one of the country's largest such operations, with branches around the world, and one of the most significant importers of toys in the U.S. A large

No. 116 East 17th Street, Manhattan
Photo Credit: N.Y.C. Dept. of Taxes (c.1940)

new headquarters building, constructed adjacent to this historic district in 1909-10 (James Riely Gordon, architect) at 35-45 Irving Place (aka 109-119 East 16th Street), contributed to the change in the neighborhood from residential to commercial.

As indicated by directories, No. 116 East 17th Street was operated as "furnished rooms" in the 1920s. One notable tenant, between at least 1925 and his death, was **Maurice Halperson** (c.1860-1928), the Austrian-born music critic for the *Staats-Zeitung* for some two decades.

In 1930, the building was conveyed (along with Nos. 118 and 120 East 17th Street, and No. 47 Irving Place) to the Irving Place & 17th Street Corp., then in 1945 (along with Nos. 104, 110, 118, and 120 East 17th Street, and No. 47 Irving Place) to the Third Holding Corp., real estate entities associated with **Samuel Klein** [See No. 104]. It was converted to apartments in the 1930s, and passed in 1955, along with the other nine properties in this historic district, to the **1804 Washington Avenue Corp.** [See also No. 104.]

References

N.Y. County, Office of the Register, Liber Deeds and Conveyances; N.Y.C., Dept. of Buildings, Manhattan, Plans, Permits and Dockets; U.S. and N.Y.S. Census Records (1840-1925); N.Y.C., Tax Assessment Records (1836-1886); N.Y.C. Directories (1836-1928); "Henry Joel Scudder," *Who Was Who in Amer.* hist. vol. (N.Y.: Marquis Co., 1963), 471; "Henry Joel, and Townsend Scudder," *Biog. Dir. of the U.S. Congress* (Wash., D.C.: USGPO, 1989), 1784-1785; "Townsend Scudder," *Natl. Cyclop. of Amer. Biog.* 44 (N.Y.: James T. White & Co., 1962), 58; H.J. Scudder will; Townsend Scudder obit., *NYT*, Aug. 5, 1874, 5; "Wedding Bells [C.D. Scudder]," *NYT*, Apr. 4, 1883, 8; "Suicide of Dr. C.D. Scudder," *NYT*, July 20, 1892, 2; Hewlett Scudder obit., *NYT*, Jan. 18, 1918, 9; H.T. Scudder obit., *NYT*, July 14, 1937, 21; E.M. Scudder obit., *NYT*, Sept. 6, 1944, 19; W.S. Patten obit., *NYT*, June 27, 1916, 11; G. Borgfeldt obit., *NYT*, Nov. 22, 1903, 7; "Georg Borgfeldt," *Natl. Cyclop. of Amer. Biog.* 5 (1907), 278; "Trend of Modern Design of Business Buildings [Geo. Borgfeldt & Co. Bdg.]," *RERG*, Feb. 6, 1909, 237; M. Halperson obit., *NYT*, Mar. 4, 1928, 26.

No. 116 East 17th Street, Manhattan
Photo Credit: LPC (1980)

No. 116 East 17th Street, Manhattan
Photo Credit: Carl Forster (1998)

NO. 118 EAST 17th STREET (THE IRVING) (formerly No. 71)
Tax Map Block 872, Lot 67

Date: 1901-02 (NB 1394-1901)
Architect: Alfred E. Badt, "for plans only"; Charles B. Meyers, supervision
Builder: [William] Evans & [John H.] Buscall
Original Owner: Benjamin Barnett

Type: flats building
Style: Renaissance Revival
Stories: five plus basement
Facade Materials: red brick, brownstone

The Irving, a six-story flats building employing an L-shaped plan, was designed in the Renaissance Revival style. Faced in red brick and brownstone, it features a prominent entrance above a stoop, a curved window bay with a balustrade, and an arcade at the sixth story surmounted by a bracketed roof cornice.

Description: Original/Historic Elements
Basement: areaway with cast-iron fenceposts and fence; rusticated brownstone base and basement entrance; stoop wing walls with foliate ends and historic iron railings

First Story: rusticated brownstone facing and pilastered, bracketed entrance surround; paired wood and glass doors below transom; curved two-window bay

Second through Fourth Stories: brick facing with contrasting brownstone detail (quoins, window surrounds, keystones); curved balustrade above window bay at first story; "IRVING" on bandcourse between first and second stories

Fifth Story: brick facing with contrasting brownstone detail including window arches; prominent bracketed roof cornice

Eastern Elevation: brick facing visible on fourth and fifth stories

Alterations
areaway steps replaced with metal plates; stoop steps rebuilt in brownstone concrete (c.1990); one ball removed from curved balustrade at second story; all window sash are aluminum replacements; window boxes added at base of first-story windows

Ownership History
1901 Benjamin Barnett
1912 Arnold and Carolyn Green Rothstein
1917 Geo. Borgfeldt & Co.
1930 Irving Place & 17th Street Corp.
1945 Third Holding Corp.
1955 1804 Washington Avenue Corp.

The Irving was the last building to be constructed in the historic district. It replaced a rowhouse similar to No. 120 East 17th Street, both of which had been built in 1843-44 and attributed to builder Peter P. Voorhis [See No. 120]; both were purchased in 1844 by Runyon W. Martin [See also No. 120], who did not live in either house. In 1849, this property was conveyed to his daughter, Angeline Matilda Martin, and her husband, William James Todd, who had married in 1845; they were living here by 1847. William Todd (1823-1886) was a leading salt merchant who continued the business of his father, William Whitten Todd (first established in 1784).

In 1901, **Benjamin Barnett** filed plans (NB 998-1901) for a six-story, brick flats building, to cost $20,000, to the design of architect John P. Cleary. This was abandoned for a new application (NB 1394-1901) for a $15,000, five-story-plus-basement, brick-and-stone fireproof building with steel framing. Though originally filed by Samuel Barnett, Benjamin's son, the elder Barnett was listed on the application as the "new owner" several months later. The architect listed, "for plans only," was **Alfred E. Badt**. A building agreement was signed in November between Barnett and **[William] Evans & [John H.] Buscall** for the construction of the building, to be supervised by architect **Charles B. Meyers**. Little is known about the career of Badt (c.1868- ?), although he was born in the U.S. and is credited with a number of rowhouses and multiple dwellings in Manhattan, as well as the Romanesque Revival style Pike Street Synagogue (Congregation Sons of Israel Kalwarie) (1903-04, a designated New York City Landmark), 13-15 Pike Street. Directories in 1901-03 first list him as a clerk, but indicate that he shared an office, as well as his residential building, with Meyers. Although Badt was listed as an architect at No. 1 Union Square in one directory, by 1904 he had embarked on a business in hats; in 1906, a directory listed a "Badt-Mayer" Co. in real estate.

Charles Bradford Meyers (1875-1958), son of Russian-born engineer Edward E. Meyer[s] and a graduate of City College and Pratt Institute, began to practice in 1900 and apparently early on concentrated on multiple dwellings; he was also listed in directories and the 1905 census as an engineer. By the 1920s, the design of hospitals, educational institutions, and other public buildings, including synagogues, emerged as a specialty. Among his works are the Ohab Zedak Synagogue (1926), 118 West 95th Street; Yeshiva University Main Buiding (1928), 2540 Amsterdam Avenue; Rodeph Shalom Synagogue (1928-30), 7-21 West 83rd Street, included in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District; buildings (1930-34) included in the N.Y.C. Farm Colony-Seaview Hospital Historic District on Staten Island; N.Y.C. Department of Health Building (1935), 125 Worth Street; and N.Y.C. Criminal Courts Building (1939, with Harvey Wiley Corbett), 100 Centre Street. Meyers was also an associate on the design of the new Tammany Hall building (1928-29) next to the historic district at 100-102 East 17th Street.

The Irving originally housed seven families (one per floor plus two in the basement). According to census records and directories of the first half of the twentieth century, the Irving attracted a less prominent clientele than the Fanwood, with tenants in the working and middle

The Irving, 118 East 17th Street, Manhattan
Photo Credit: N.Y.C. Dept. of Taxes (c.1940)

classes. There was at least one person of note here: **Victor David and Ann Reed Brenner** were listed in the 1915 census. Victor Brenner (1871-1924), a Lithuanian-emigré sculptor and medalist, was selected to design the Lincoln head cent, issued in 1909, which was the first American portrait coin.

After Benjamin Barnett's death in 1911, his descendants conveyed their interests in the Irving in 1912-14 to **Arnold and Carolyn Green Rothstein**. Arnold Rothstein (1882-1928) was one of New York's legendary crime figures of the 1910s and '20s. "A leading gambler, bootlegger, drug dealer, and labor racketeer" with close ties to Tammany Hall, he was one of the country's leading "fixers," who supposedly helped "throw" the outcome of the World Series of 1919 in what became known as the Black Sox Scandal. During Prohibition, Rothstein was the foremost importer of illegal Scotch whiskey in the U.S. A moneylender, he amassed a significant business in insurance and real estate. His widow, Carolyn Rothstein, wrote in 1934 in *Now I'll Tell All*: "His branching out into the real estate, insurance and bail bond fields, which led to involvement in many rackets, was done simultaneously with his accumulation of race horses, and his enormous betting at the tracks . . . Arnold went into the real estate business because he felt that his money should always be working, and his earnings from gambling were enormous . . . Arnold's buildings never lacked tenants, and at good prices. He saw to that. He had ways of persuading tenants to live in his houses and to pay more than average rentals."

This property was acquired in 1917 (along with Nos. 116 and 120 East 17th Street, and No. 47 Irving Place) by **Geo. Borgfeldt & Co.** [See No. 116]. In 1930, it was conveyed (along with Nos. 116 and 120 East 17th Street, and No. 47 Irving Place) to the Irving Place & 17th Street Corp., then in 1945 (along with Nos. 104, 110, 116, and 120 East 17th Street, and No. 47 Irving Place) to the Third Holding Corp., real estate entities associated with **Samuel Klein** [See No. 104]. It passed in 1955, along with the other nine properties in this historic district, to the **1804 Washington Avenue Corp.** [See also No. 104.]

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N.Y. County, Office of the Register, Liber Deeds and Conveyances; N.Y.C., Dept. of Buildings, Manhattan, Plans, Permits and Dockets; U.S. and N.Y.S. Census Records (1840-1925); N.Y.C., Tax Assessment Records (1836-1886); N.Y.C. Directories (1836-1945); Richard H. Greene, *The Todd Genealogy* (N.Y.: Wilbur & Hastings, 1867); *Record and Guide Quarterly* (Jan.-Dec., 1901), 412; "Two New Law Flats," *RERG*, Feb. 8, 1902, 250; LPC, *Pike Street Synagogue (Cong. Sons of Israel Kalwarie) Designation Report* (LP-1960) (N.Y.: City of N.Y., 1997), prep. by Virginia Kurshan; [C.B. Meyers], LPC, architects files; "Victor David Brenner," *Dict. of Amer. Biog.* 2 (N.Y.: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1930), 17-18; Margot Gayle, *The Seal of the Fine Arts Federation* pamphlet [V. Brenner] (1991); "Estates Appraised [B. Barnett]," *NYT*, Apr. 4, 1915, IV, 4; "Arnold Rothstein," *Encycl. of N.Y.C.* (New Haven: Yale U. Pr., 1995), 1024, and *Encycl. of Amer. Crime*, Carl Sifakis, (N.Y.: Facts on File, Inc., 1982), 627-628; "Mrs. Rothstein Re-wed," *NYT*, July 18, 1929, 3; Carolyn Rothstein, *Now I'll Tell All* (N.Y.: Vanguard Pr., 1934), 78, 160.

NO. 120 EAST 17th STREET (formerly No. 73)
Tax Map Block 872, Lot 66

Date: 1843-44
Builder: attributed to Peter P. Voorhis
Original Owner: Runyon W. and Margaret Post Martin

Type: rowhouse
Style: Greek Revival
Stories: three plus basement
Facade Materials: red brick, brownstone

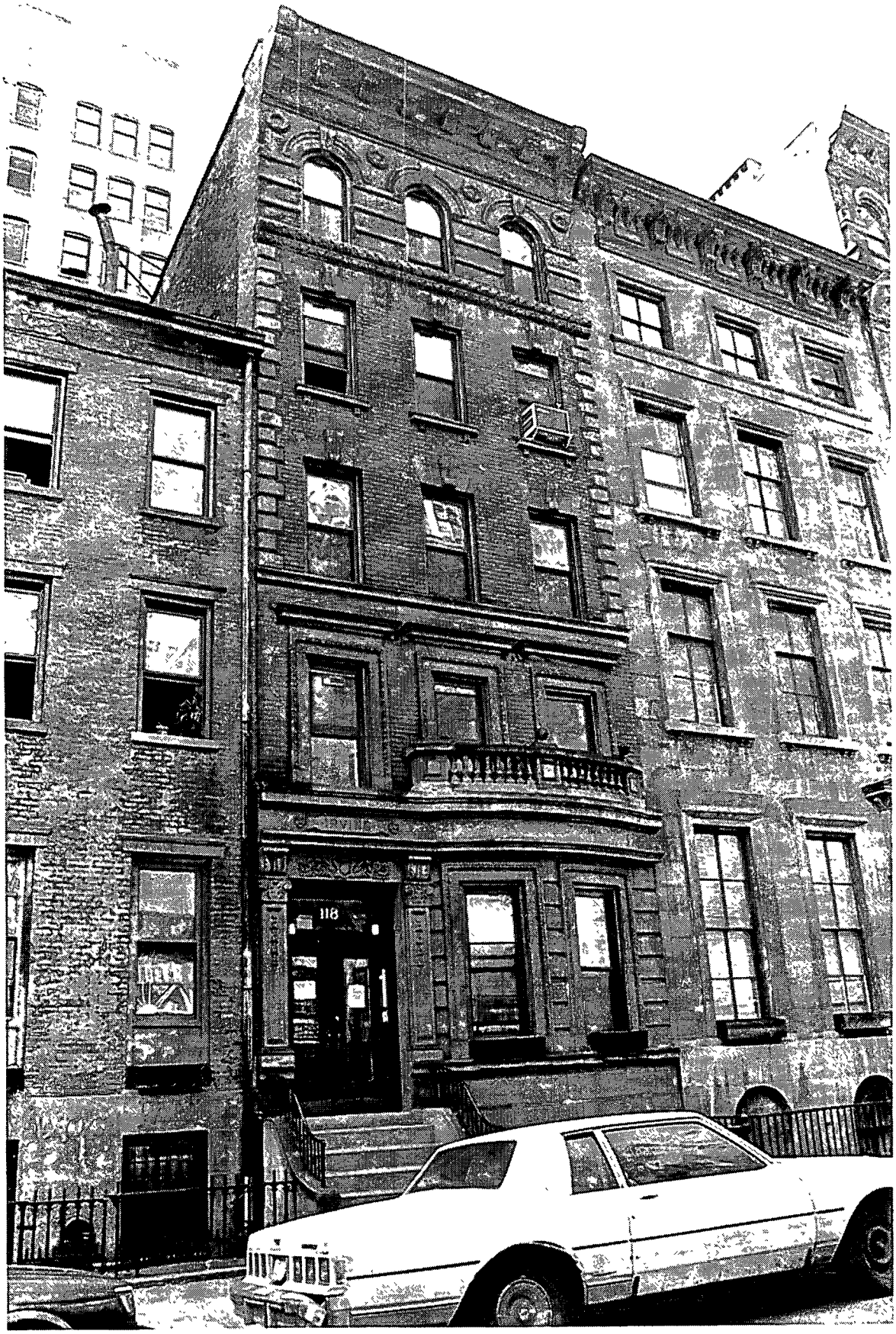
This Greek Revival style rowhouse, one of the least altered in the historic district, was built as one of a pair with No. 118 East 17th Street. The house is characterized by its planar red brick facade above a brownstone base. It retains its high stoop with historic ironwork, prominent entranceway, molded window lintels and sills, and simple molded roof cornice.

Description: Original/Historic Elements
Basement: areaway with brownstone sill, steps, and paving; historic wrought-iron fence; historic iron window grilles; historic wrought-iron railings at stoop

Parlor/First Story: entrance surround with pilasters and raised lintel enclosing historic transom; window lintels and sills retain original form

Second and Third Stories: window lintels and sills retain original form; roof cornice may retain original form

Alterations
brownstone facing redone at basement; stoop rebuilt in brownstone concrete, and gate added at base of steps (c.1990); entrance surround has been patched and/or resurfaced; 20th-century (c.1936?) entrance door; brick facing has been painted but paint is mostly removed; all window sash are aluminum replacements; solid panels and window boxes added at base of parlor-story windows



The Irving, 118 East 17th Street, Manhattan
Photo Credit: Carl Forster (1998)

Ownership History

1843 Ephraim and Nancy Scudder; Peter P. Voorhis (interior lot)
1844 Runyon W. and Margaret Post Martin
1851 Edgar and Amanda Tenant Irving (later Trustee of Amanda Irving)
1909 Ekko and Elise Sollmann
1917 Geo. Borgfeldt & Co.
1930 Irving Place & 17th Street Corp.
1945 Third Holding Corp.
1955 1804 Washington Avenue Corp.

Both this house and the adjacent No. 118 (replaced by the Irving in 1901-02) were built in 1843-44 and attributed to builder **Peter P. Voorhis**. In 1843, a lot on 17th Street had been purchased by Ephraim and Nancy Scudder; Ephraim (c.1796-1843), a builder, died soon after. Several months later, an interior lot was acquired by Peter P. Voorhis, also a builder, who presumably reached an agreement with Scudder's widow to construct the houses. Voorhis was active in the Greenwich Village area and adjacent neighborhoods from 1839 into the 1850s; he also operated a stoneyard on Washington Street in the Village, and was an assistant alderman in the 9th Ward in 1844. Voorhis also built No. 122 East 17th Street, aka No. 49 Irving Place, and No. 47 Irving Place [See below] in 1843-44, as well as other rowhouses along Irving Place [not in the historic district]. Nos. 118 and 120 East 17th Street were purchased in 1844 by **Runyon W. and Margaret Post Martin**, who did not live in either house (Martin also owned four houses built in 1846-47 at 25-31 West 10th Street, now located in the Greenwich Village Historic District). Runyon Martin, a secretary at the Contributionship Insurance Co., was related to Charles Jackson Martin, also a secretary at the company and original owner of No. 122 East 17th Street [See below].

From 1847 to 1873, this was the residence of **Edgar and Amanda Tenant Irving**; they purchased the house in 1851. Edgar Irving (1808-1873), the nephew of author Washington Irving and son of merchant Ebenezer and Elizabeth Kip Irving, married Amanda Tenant (1814-1885) of Baltimore in 1834. After serving in the Navy and Marines in 1826-32 and 1833-35, Edgar Irving worked as a "sampleofficer" in the U.S. Customshouse until 1854, when he became a member of the brokerage firm of Irving & Willey. Prior to moving into No. 120 (formerly No. 73), the Irvings were listed in directories in 1844-45 at No. 45 East 17th Street.

Richard Baring-Gould (d. 1899), a banker previously living on Staten Island, occupied the house in 1874-78. **Charles Edward Tracy** (1845-1896) lived here in 1878-80 (he apparently had a familial connection with the Irvings through the Huntington family). The son of Charles Tracy (d. 1885), a railroad/corporate lawyer, and Louisa Kirkland Tracy (who lived at No. 128 East 17th Street), Charles E. Tracy graduated from Columbia Law School in 1869, became a member of Tracy, Olmstead & Tracy (continuing the firm after his father's death), and after 1887, a member of Bangs, Stetson, Tracy & MacVeagh (Stetson, Tracy, Jennings & Russell after 1895). Tracy became known as "one of the first big corporation lawyers in the country," handling extensive railroad business as well as that of J.P. Morgan & Co. (Tracy was the brother-in-law of J.P. Morgan). Coinciding with Tracy's residence here, he married Helen Dawson in 1878, but she died the following year. **William J. Carmichael**, listed in directories as in "iron," lived here in 1882-84.

After Amanda Irving's death in 1885, the property was held until 1909 by the Trustee of Amanda Irving (her children were Washington Irving, named after his great-uncle, and Mary

[Mrs. Charles R.] Huntington). The widow **Mary Brown** resided here in 1887-88, and **Dr. Alonzo Duffy and Minnie Grey** were residents between 1890 and 1901 (they later moved across the street). **Dr. Herman L. Reis** (c.1877-1967) occupied the house in 1906-07. A graduate in 1898 of Bellevue Hospital College, Reis was befriended by Tammany Hall leader Tim Sullivan, who appointed him Surgeon to the N.Y.C. Fire Department, and sent a number of prominent clients his way. Reis became the medical director of the Aetna Life Insurance Co. In 1933, he left the medical profession to accept the presidency of the West Side Federal Savings & Loan Association, of which he had been a director since 1908. Not only was the concern kept in operation during the Depression, it was one of the first S&L's to receive a federal charter, as well as one of the first to have mortgage loans guaranteed by the FHA. By the time Reis retired as president in 1966, West Side Federal had assets of some $300 million.

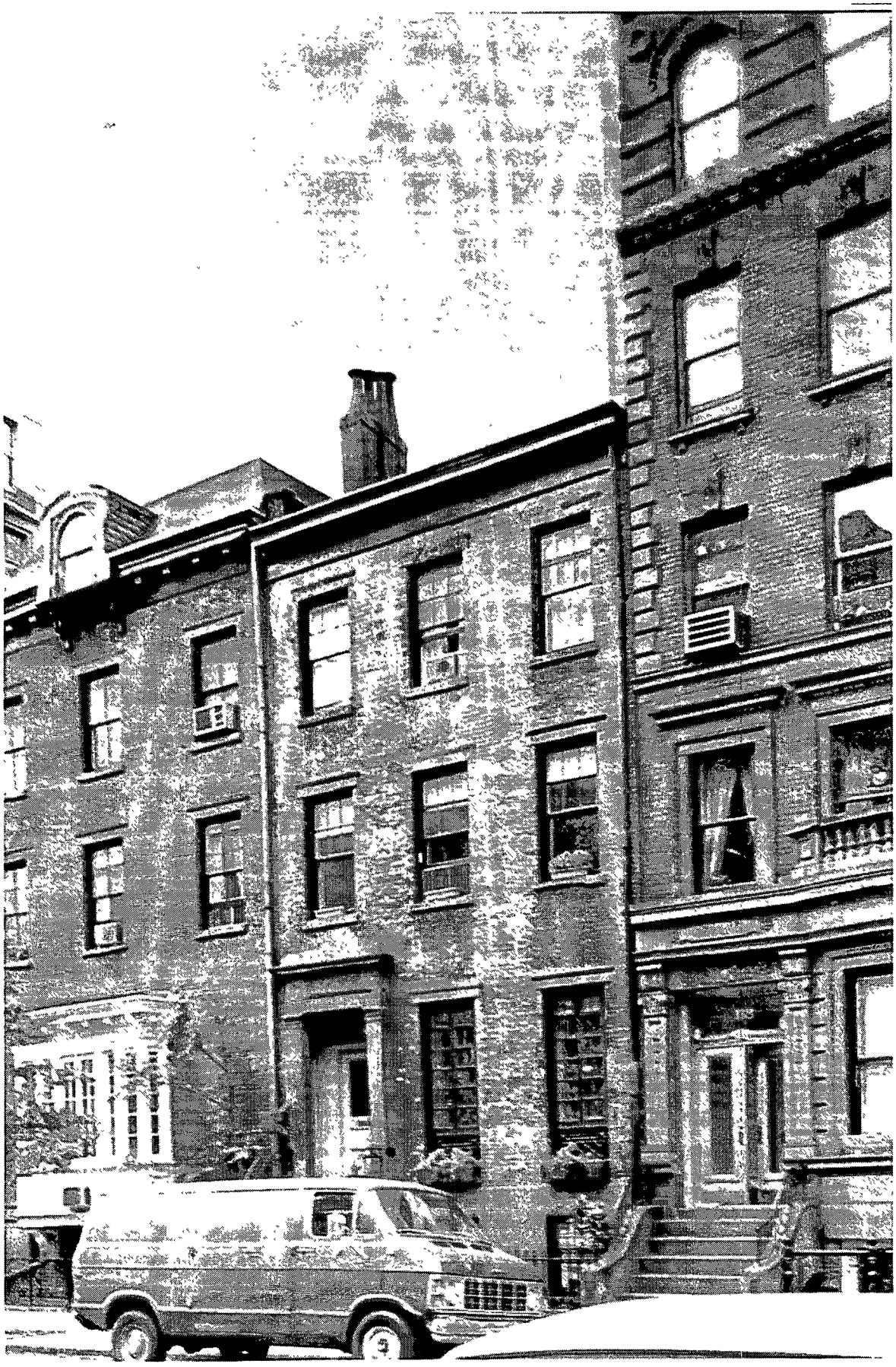
The house was acquired from the Irving estate in 1909 (along with [from other owners] No. 116 East 17th Street and, in 1910, No. 47 Irving Place) by **Ekko and Elise Sollmann**, of Hoboken, N.J., and in 1917 (along with Nos. 116 and 118 East 17th Street, and No. 47 Irving Place) by **Geo. Borgfeldt & Co.** [See No. 116]. **Dr. Robert Liston and Kathleen M. Irish** lived here from at least 1920 until about 1936, making this the last single-family residence in the historic district (it was converted to a multiple dwelling around 1936). Dr. Irish (c.1868-1937), a graduate of Bellevue Medical School in 1899, was a national vice-president, president, and treasurer of Theta Chi fraternity between 1917 and 1933.

In 1930, the property was conveyed (along with Nos. 116 and 118 East 17th Street, and No. 47 Irving Place) to the Irving Place & 17th Street Corp., then in 1945 (along with Nos. 104, 110, 116, and 118 East 17th Street, and No. 47 Irving Place) to the Third Holding Corp., real estate entities associated with **Samuel Klein** [See No. 104]. It passed in 1955, along with the other nine properties in this historic district, to the **1804 Washington Avenue Corp.** [See also No. 104.]

References

N.Y. County, Office of the Register, Liber Deeds and Conveyances; N.Y.C., Dept. of Buildings, Manhattan, Plans, Permits and Dockets; U.S. and N.Y.S. Census Records (1840-1925); N.Y.C., Tax Assessment Records (1836-1886); N.Y.C. Directories (1836-1935); [P.P. Voorhis], LPC, architects files; E. Scudder will; E. Scudder obit., *N.Y. Eve. Post*, Sept. 12, 1843, 2; Stanley T. Williams, *The Life of Washington Irving* (1935); *The Complete Works of Washington Irving* 26 (Letters); R. Baring-Gould will; "Charles Edward Tracy," *Natl. Cyclop. of Amer. Biog.* 31 (N.Y.: James T. White & Co., 1944), 103-104; H. Reis obit., *NYT*, Oct. 16, 1967, 45; R. Irish obit., *NYT*, June 7, 1937, 19.

No. 120 East 17th Street, Manhattan
Photo Credit: N.Y.C. Dept. of Taxes (c.1940)



No. 120 East 17th Street, Manhattan
Photo Credit: LPC (1980)

No. 120 East 17th Street, Manhattan
Photo Credit: Carl Forster (1998)

122 EAST 17th STREET (formerly No. 75) **aka NO. 49 IRVING PLACE**
Tax Map Block 872, Lot 65

Date: 1843-44/c. 1853-54/c. 1868-70
Builder: Peter P. Voorhis (1843-44)
Original Owner: Charles Jackson and Mary Martin

Type: rowhouse
Style: Greek Revival/Italianate
Stories: three plus basement
Facade Materials: red brick, brownstone

This Greek Revival style rowhouse, built as one of a row of three houses, is characterized by its planar red brick facade above a brownstone base. From the initial construction, it retains its high stoop with historic ironwork and projecting window lintels and sills. Probably at the time (or soon after) the house was enlarged with an extension along East 17th Street (c. 1853-54), it was given features in the Italianate style including the canopied porch with the cast-iron balustrade on Irving Place, the canopied cast-iron entrance portico on East 17th Street, oriel windows, and a modillioned cornice. Further changes were made to the house, probably around 1868-70, included the addition of a balustraded roof parapet with flared dormers, and a flared hipped roof over the extension. At some point prior to 1903, the balustraded roof parapet and two flared dormers over the original portion of the house were removed. The oriel window located on the facade of the East 17th Street extension was removed in 1997.

Description: Original/Historic Elements (East 17th Street extension to 122 East 17th Street aka 49 Irving Place)
Basement: historic bluestone paving over space of areaway; historic wrought-iron fence; brick facing topped by brownstone bandcourse

Parlor through Third Stories: brick facing; molded window lintels; 2/2 wood sash at third story; modillioned and dentilled cornice above third story with console brackets supporting a central flared dormer; flared hipped roof

East Elevation: partially visible above East 17th Street facade of No. 122 East 17th Street (aka 49 Irving Place)

Alterations
areaway removed; window opening at basement containing glass block; openings for air conditioner and vent covers at basement; projecting oriel window removed from parlor story, new brick arch and infill created above new concrete beltcourse, new window sash with iron gates (all 1997); brick facing erratically repointed; all window sills resurfaced; replacement aluminum window sash at second story (1997); folding shutters removed from windows at second and third stories (prior to 1909); roof covered with tarpaper

Description: Original/Historic Elements (East 17th Street elevation)
Basement: historic bluestone paving and sill in space of areaway (west of stoop); historic

wrought-iron fence; brick facing below a brownstone beltcourse; historic wrought-iron stoop railings; historic gate on doorway under stoop

Parlor/First Story: historic cast-iron entrance portico below a bracketed peaked roof canopy; paired wood and glass entrance doors (may be modified from late 19th-century original) below a narrow transom; projecting wood oriel window with historic sash, arched openings, and bracketed cornice; brick facing; bronze plaque "commemorating" Washington Irving (dating from 1934, executed by A. Finta) placed on wall between oriel window and entranceway

Second and Third Stories: brick facing; modillioned and dentilled cornice with bracketed and paneled dormer base above the third story

Alterations

areaway partially removed; air conditioning unit on ground to west of stoop; new steps down to restaurant entrance below the stoop; pedestal sign for restaurant in areaway; polished granite wall facing and restaurant sign on portion of basement wall; stoop rebuilt in brownstone concrete, new gate at base of steps, two iron columns placed in areaway partially support projecting oriel window, down spot lights placed underneath projecting oriel; spotlight placed on edge of projecting oriel; window boxes placed above basement beltcourse to west of stoop; window sash at upper stories are aluminum replacements; window lintels and sills have been resurfaced; folding shutters removed from windows at second and third stories (prior to 1909); roof dormer and balustraded parapet removed (prior to 1903)

Description: Original/Historic Elements (Irving Place elevation)

Basement: historic iron areaway fence set on brownstone base

Parlor Story: three full-length windows with paired casements below paired transoms, fronted by porch with cast-iron balustrade carried on cast-iron brackets, set below a continuous wood canopy set on large pierced wood brackets, metal roof surface; brick facing

Second and Third Stories: brick facing; modillioned and dentilled roof cornice with bracketed and paneled dormer base above third story

Alterations

areaway removed and replaced by planted garden; basement covered with brownstone stucco; glass block in two basement window openings and air conditioner in third opening; metal roof of porch canopy has been painted, decorative scallops removed from edge of canopy; window lintels and sills have been resurfaced; folding shutters removed from windows at second and third stories (prior to 1909); replacement aluminum sash at second and third stories (1997); flared roof dormer and balustraded parapet removed (prior to 1903)

Ownership History

1843 Peter P. Voorhis
1844 Charles Jackson and Mary Martin
1853 Henry and Ann E. Coggill
1854 Thomas W. and Elizabeth B. Phelps
1864 Charles A. and Sarah L. Corlies Macy
1906 Algernon S. Bell
1927 National Patriotic Builders of America, Inc.
1930 Louis and Lena Sobel
1936 49 Irving Place Inc.
1952 19 Irving Place Corp.
1955 1804 Washington Avenue Corp.

The only property in the historic district located on a corner with two street facades, this house was known historically (until at least the 1920s) as "No. 122 East 17th Street"; the entrance to the house is in fact located on 17th Street. After that time, the address "No. 49 Irving Place" has been employed.

One of the most popular legends associated with this historic district and, in particular, with this house, is that author Washington Irving lived here in the 1840s or '50s. This notion has no historic factual basis. The earliest known published version of this legend, dating from an article in the *New York Times* in 1897, was clearly created or enhanced by the theatrical flair and self-promotion of Elsie de Wolfe, living here at the time. By the 1910s, Irving family members (including the two nieces who had lived with Irving at his home "Sunnyside") began to publicly discount this misconception, and a former neighbor, who had been in this house many times, wrote in 1927 that she had never heard any mention of Irving prior to de Wolfe. Adding to the confusion are a number of factors, such as that the house of his nephew Edgar Irving was next door, at No. 120 East 17th Street [See entry on]; that Edgar named his son Washington Irving; there are other houses in the neighborhood where Irving is known to have actually stayed; and that Irving Place was named after him. The story has also been embellished or further misrepresented to the point of caricature, by such pronouncements as this was an "ancient dwelling," a lone house in the country, that Irving designed the house, that he sat in the window or on the porch and gazed during "many of his leisure hours" at the river, and that he wrote a number of works here. The legend has been perpetuated by a plaque on the building which states Irving's residence here as fact. Aside from this legend, there has been historically, for a hundred years now, a great fondness for this house, by a large number of people, based on its architectural character. This fondness has resulted in efforts to preserve it several times over the last century.

This rowhouse was originally built as part of a row of three houses [See No. 47 Irving Place; No. 45 was demolished in 1909] in 1843-44 by builder **Peter P. Voorhis** [See No. 120 East 17th Street]. The lot had been purchased by Voorhis in 1838 from David Sherwood and Sarah C. Jackson. In 1844, the house and lot were conveyed to **Charles Jackson and Mary Martin**, who lived here until about 1852. Charles J. Martin (c.1816-1888), born in Connecticut, was secretary of the Contributionship Fire Insurance Co., became secretary of the Commercial Insurance Co. around 1850, and was a founder and the first secretary of the Home Insurance Co. in 1853. He rose to the presidency of Home Insurance in 1855 (a position he kept until his

death), and under his direction it became the most successful fire insurance company in the nation. His last years were marked by the growth of the firm's business in the West and Midwest, as well as the construction in 1883-85 of an important early skyscraper, by architect William Le Baron Jenney, to house its Chicago operations. The *New York Times* called him "one of the best known underwriters in the city." Martin was related to Runyon W. Martin, also a secretary at the Contributionship Fire Insurance Co. and original owner of No. 120 East 17th Street [See].

In 1853, this house was purchased by **Henry and Ann E. Coggill**, who lived across the street at 50 Irving Place. Henry Coggill (c.1809-1868) was a wool merchant and proprietor of the firm of Henry W. Coggill & Co. It is possible (based on tax assessment records) that Coggill, listed in many property conveyance records in the 1840-50s, was responsible for the construction of the extension to the house along East 17th Street, which filled an open site between the original portion of this house at the corner and No. 120 East 17th Street. Coggill is known to have been involved in the construction of houses on East 16th Street by builder Robert C. Voorhies in 1853, the same year that Voorhies constructed four houses on this block. Coggill sold the property in 1854 to **Thomas W. and Elizabeth B. Phelps**, who lived here until 1863. Thomas Phelps (c.1812-c.1869), a merchant/banker, was listed in property conveyance records as formerly from Mobile, Ala., and as residing in 1853 in New Jersey.

The property was acquired in 1864 by **Charles A. and Sarah L[udlam] Corlies Macy**, and it became the residence of their extended family until 1886. Charles A. Macy (1808-1875), a descendant of an old Quaker family from Nantucket, followed family members in the 1820s to New York City, where he clerked with Isaac Wright & Son, shipping agents of a Liverpool line. He became a partner in 1831 with his father and brother, Josiah [Sr.] and William H. [Sr.] Macy, in Josiah Macy & Sons, a shipping and commission business; he left a few years later to join his father-in-law (Benjamin Corlies) in the auction/commission firm of Corlies, Haydock & Co. From 1851 to 1855, he was a partner in the drygoods firm of Macy, Stanton & Co. Charles A. Macy was one of the organizers, as well as the first president, of the New York County National Bank in 1855, then became cashier at the newly-formed Park National Bank the next year. In 1863, Macy established Howes & Macy at 30 Wall Street, with Reuben W. Howes, former president of the Park Bank. [The department store R.H. Macy & Co. was established in New York in 1858 by nephew Rowland Hussey Macy]. The Charles A. Macys had previously resided in a number of locations, including Brooklyn, Newburgh, and Poughkeepsie, N.Y., prior to their purchase of this house. After her husband's death, Sarah Macy (1808-by 1906) continued to reside here until 1886, and retained the property for the rest of her life. Sharing this house by 1870 were **George F. and Charlotte L. Macy Leggett**, the Macys' daughter and son-in-law. George Leggett (c.1830-1875) was a partner in F.W. & G.F. Leggett, paint dealers, and later worked as a real estate agent.

The house was rented in 1887-89 to **Dr. August G. Seibert** (1854-1926), a German-born-and-trained physician who practiced in New York City for nearly fifty years. He specialized in children's diseases, developed a formula and apparatus for feeding infants, taught pediatrics, and studied the cholera epidemic in Hamburg in the 1890s.

Two of the most famous residents of the historic district, who rented this house together between 1892 and 1911, were **Elsie de Wolfe and Elisabeth Marbury**, called by the *New York Times* "the most fashionable lesbian couple of Victorian New York." They first met in 1887, and their relationship lasted for nearly forty years. Openly called "the Bachelors," the two women formed a famous Sunday afternoon "salon" after 1897, and received New York and foreign

notables connected with the worlds of theater, art, music, literature, society, politics, etc. Elsie's mother, Georgiana Copeland de Wolfe, lived with them during their first few years here.

Elsie (nee Ella Anderson) de Wolfe (1865-1950), born in New York City and raised in Great Britain, returned to New York in 1884 and became a professional actress in 1890, and a member of the Empire Theater Co. in 1895. She was said to have worn clothes well, outshining her dramatic talent. Influenced by *The Decoration of Houses* (1897) by Ogden Codman and Edith Wharton, de Wolfe began to redecorate and simplify the interiors of this house in 1897-98, painting the woodwork white, and employing mirrored panels and Louis XVI style furnishings. (Interestingly, the *Times* had profiled the interior decoration and their antiques collection in 1897, prior to the changes. The exterior of the Irving Place house was described as painted yellow, with dark green shutters). De Wolfe later wrote fondly that "When we found this old house . . . we had so many dreams, so many theories, and we tried them out on the old house. And like a patient, well-bred maiden aunt, the old house always accepted our changes most placidly. There never was such a house." She left the stage in 1905 and secured the interior decoration commission for the Colony Club (1904-08, 120 Madison Avenue, a designated New York City Landmark), through its architect, Stanford White. The first private women's club in New York, the Colony Club was founded in 1903 by Anne Tracy Morgan (daughter of J.P.) and others. Elsie de Wolfe's publication of a series of articles culminating in *The House in Good Taste* (1913) brought her national recognition, and she developed a highly successful decorating practice. Often credited as the first professional American interior decorator, an area previously in the domain of male architects and furnishing firms, she championed French taste, simplicity, comfort, and modern convenience.

Elisabeth ("Bessie") Marbury (1856-1933), one of the world's leading (as well as as one of the pioneering female) literary and theatrical agents, grew up down the street at No. 76 Irving Place, the daughter of socially-and-Tammany Hall-connected lawyer Francis F. Marbury. Interested in the theater since childhood, she raised money at a charity performance in 1885 and was advised by leading producer Daniel Frohman to develop her talents into a business. After becoming the agent for Frances Hodgson Burnett, author of *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, Marbury obtained rights in 1890 to represent Victorien Sardou and all other members of the Society of French Dramatists. She later became the American agent for George Bernard Shaw, Somerset Maugham, James M. Barrie, Clyde Fitch, and, notably, Oscar Wilde (she continued to attempt to assist him during his confinement in Reading Gaol, and after his release in 1897). She became a partner with F. Ray Comstock and Lee Shubert in producing musical comedies, and she formed the American Play Co. in 1914. Marbury was also involved in Democratic politics in New York and nationally, between 1918 and 1932.

In 1905, de Wolfe and Marbury purchased (and later shared with Anne Morgan) the Villa Trianon, in Versailles, which became their French residence. They decided to change their New York address in 1911, to No. 123 East 55th Street. De Wolfe later recalled that "we couldn't forgive the skyscrapers encroaching on our supply of sunshine, and we really needed more room, and so we said good-by to our beloved old house and moved into a new one." After World War I, they moved to Sutton Place where, with the added presence of the houses of Anne Morgan and Anne Vanderbilt, there began rumors of a "Sapphic enclave." De Wolfe ended the relationship by abruptly marrying Sir Charles Mendl in 1926. Despite de Wolfe's marriage, Bessie Marbury left nearly her entire estate to Lady Mendl in 1933.

The house was purchased from the Sarah Macy estate in 1906 by **Algernon S. Bell** (c.1861-1936), a bachelor architect active from about 1887 to 1925, about whom little is known

other than that he was a partner in 1889-92 of Robert C. Walsh in the firm of Walsh & Bell, and that he designed country houses and churches. Bell's obituary in the *New York Times* in 1936 mentioned that he was the former owner of the "Washington Irving House" [sic]. His office was located here in 1922-25. The house was also shared during that period as the residence and office of architect **Henry J. Healy** (c.1870-?), active from about 1905 to 1928, and as the residence of **William H. Hunt**, an agent for the Lehigh Structural Steel and Bethlehem Construction Cos.

The house was threatened with demolition after the selection in January 1907 of the three blocks east of Union Square between 14th and 17th Streets, for the construction of a new county courthouse by the Court House Board. Calling it "one of the most important literary landmarks in the city," the *New York Times* called for its preservation as a literary museum. The Board of Estimate in May 1907 rejected the courthouse site as too costly, and the proposed closing of East 15th and 16th Streets as too inconvenient.

During Bell's ownership, after the tenancy of de Wolfe and Marbury and prior to the occupancy listed above, the house was rented, according to the 1915 census, by author **Mary Hunter Austin** (1868-1934). Born in Illinois, she moved with her family to California in 1888, where she was first published in 1892 and became interested in mysticism, the women's rights movement, the desert landscape, and southwestern culture. Separating permanently from her husband and moving to Carmel in 1905, she became acquainted with a number of notable writers there, including Jack London and John Muir. Between 1911 and 1923, she alternated living in Carmel and New York City (No. 122 East 17th Street was one of her four New York residences). Her first play, *The Arrow Maker*, was produced at the New Theater in New York in 1911, and *A Woman of Genius*, considered her best novel, was published in 1912; during her time in New York, she wrote nine works. Austin became part of the salon of Mabel Dodge in 1913, and joined such feminists as Charlotte Perkins Gilman and Margaret Sanger in their causes here. She settled in Santa Fe, N.M., in 1924, and became increasingly interested in folklore and folk arts.

No. 122 East 17th Street was the residence and photography school of **Clarence H. and Jane Felix White**, from 1917 to 1920. Clarence White (1871-1925) was a founding member with Alfred Stieglitz in 1902 of the group of photographers (most in New York) known as the Photo-Secession, who worked in an aesthetic, pictorialist manner (as a reaction to increasingly popular, standard "snapshots") and thus gained recognition for photography as a fine art. Born in Ohio, White worked as a bookkeeper there until 1904, and after his photographs began to appear in *Camera Work* in 1903, moved to New York City in 1906. He taught art photography at Columbia University (1907-25), at the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences (1908-22), and at various summer schools (1910-25). He established the Clarence H. White School of Photography in 1914 in a rowhouse at 230 East 11th Street (next to the Rectory of St. Mark's-in-the-Bowery Church), and moved to No. 122 East 17th Street in 1917. White was a founder of the PPA (Pictorialist Photographers of America), a national amateurs organization that met at the Studio Building of the National Arts Club (1905, Geo. B. Post & Sons, located within the Gramercy Park Historic District) at 119-121 East 19th Street, and was its president from 1917 to 1921. Among the teachers at White's photography school in 1917-18 was the avant-garde painter **Max Weber**. White moved in 1920 to 460 West 144th Street.

In 1927, this house was transferred by Algernon Bell to the **National Patriotic Builders of America, Inc.** [*hereafter* NPBA], with Daisy Allen Story as president. Mrs. Story (c.1860-1932), a granddaughter of New York Mayor Stephen Allen (1821-24), and wife of William

Cumming Story, vice president of both the Standard Statistics Bureau and American Savings Bank, was president general of the Daughters of the American Revolution in 1913-17, and was described by the *New York Times* as a "militant patriot and anti-pacifist." NPBA was an organization devoted to "foster[ing] the patriotic ideals of the Fathers of the Republic" and "propaganda for the dissemination of American ideals and culture" to counter "some of the subversive philosophies of today." "Irving House" [sic] was chosen because one of the group's aims was to "preserve historic places." The building was intended to serve as a memorial museum to Washington Irving (under the presumption that he had lived there), the headquarters for NPBA, a center for like-minded groups, and for its "Americanization" activities in the basement. The center was officially opened in May 1928, and NPBA announced a drive to raise money for a planned restoration of the house (including the stripping of the gray paint from the exterior).

Under the threat of foreclosure, however, when NPBA failed to raise sufficient funds, the house was sold in 1930 to **Louis and Lena Sobel**. Sobel, a real estate operator, was reportedly the only party interested in the property at that time; Lena Sobel was apparently the sister of **Samuel Klein** [See No. 104 East 17th Street]. By 1930, the Washington Irving Tea Room had opened in the basement of the house, which lasted until at least 1945 (a restaurant continues to occupy that space today). A plaque, furthering the allegation that this was the home of Washington Irving, was installed next to the East 17th Street entrance in 1934 (Alexander Finta, the Hungarian-born sculptor of the plaque, had been a student of Rodin, and director of sculptural work at the Centennial Expo., Rio de Janiero, in 1923).

The property was conveyed in 1936 to the 49 Irving Place Inc., then in 1952 (along with Nos. 106 and 108 East 17th Street) to the 19 Irving Place Corp., real estate entities associated with Samuel Klein. The building had been converted to a multiple dwelling sometime prior to 1938. It passed in 1955, along with the other nine properties in this historic district, to the **1804 Washington Avenue Corp.** [See also No. 104 East 17th Street.] The Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the "Washington Irving House" [sic] in 1966, but took no action at that time.

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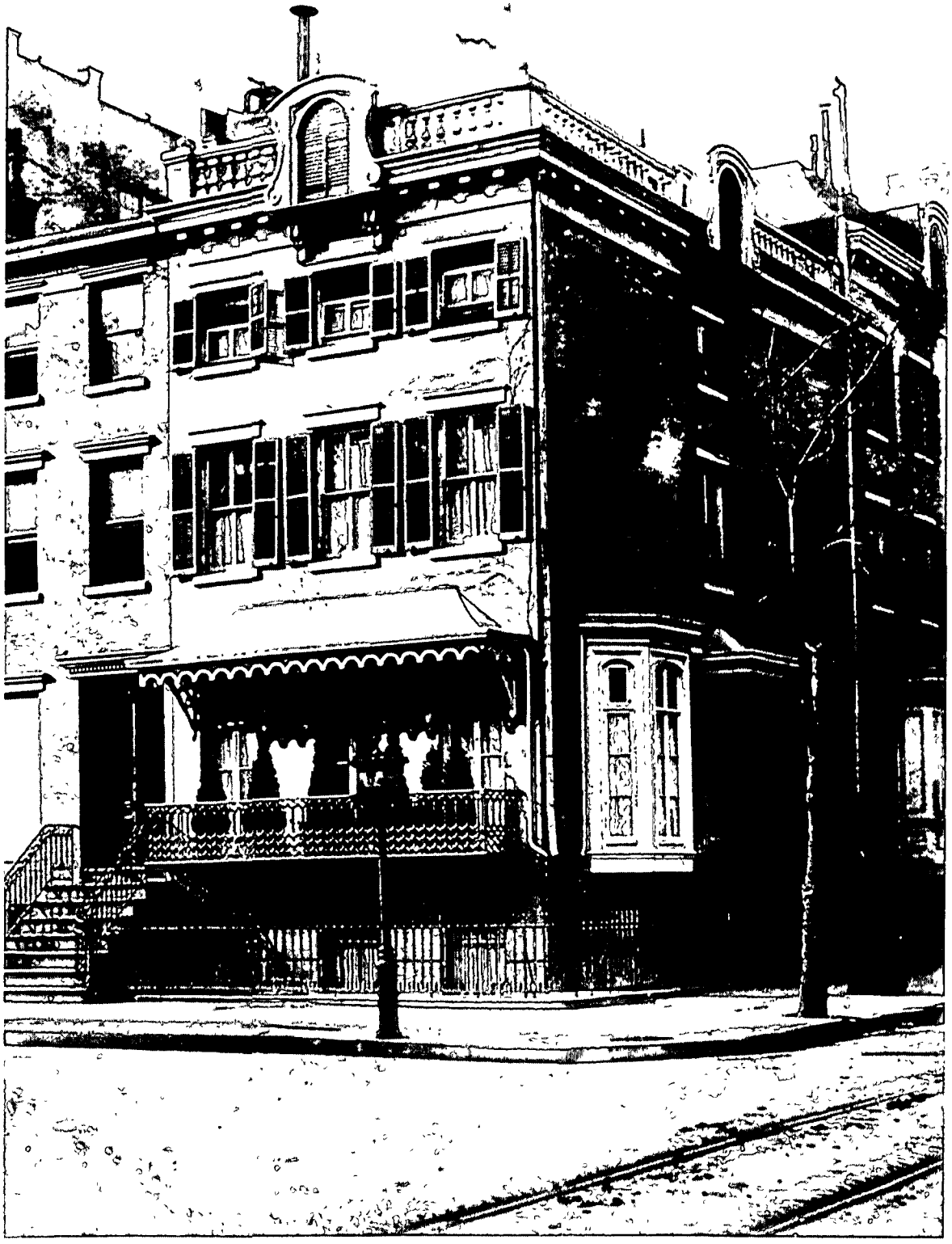

Nos. 47 and 49 Irving Place (aka 122 East 17th Street), c. 1900
Photo Source: New York Public Library

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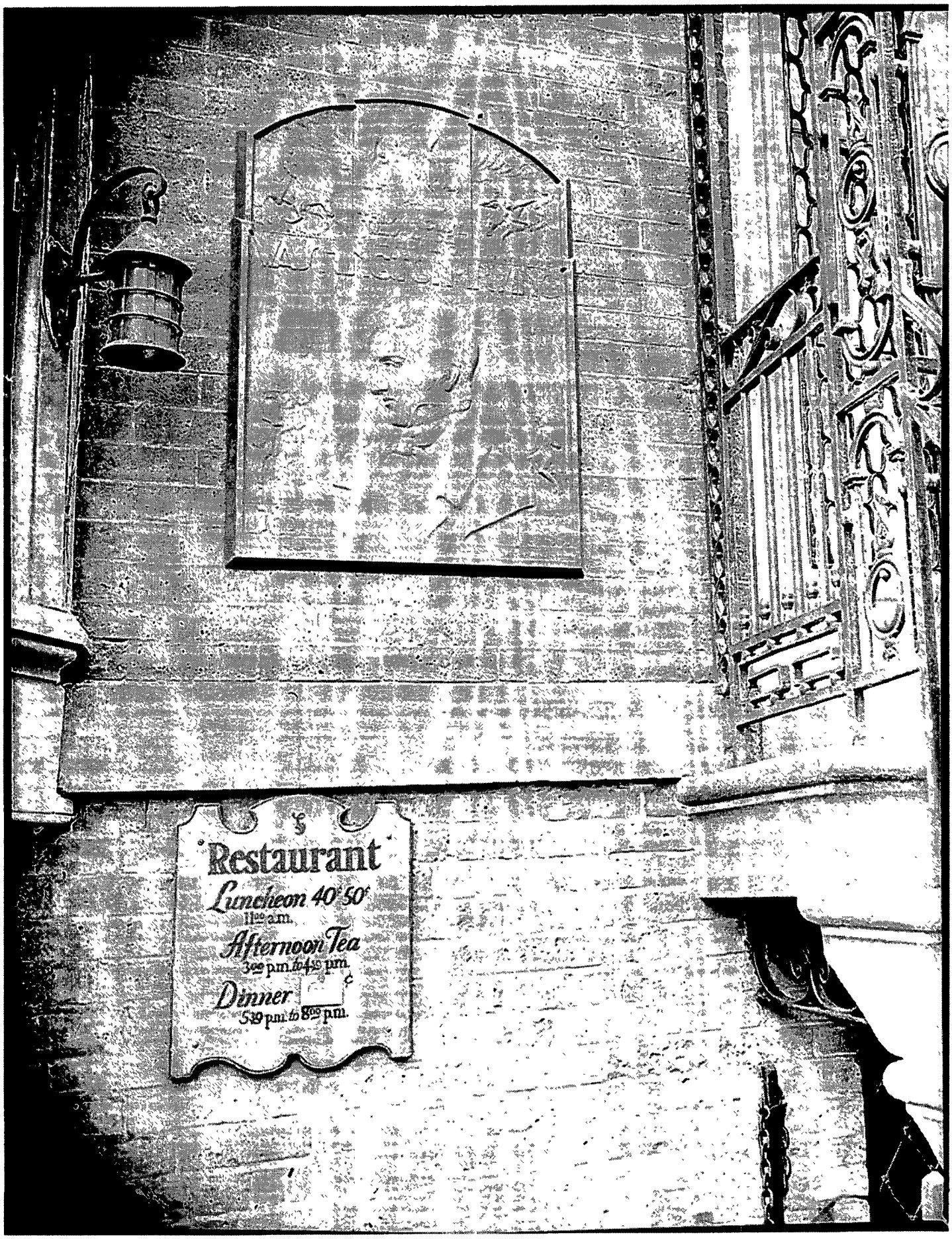
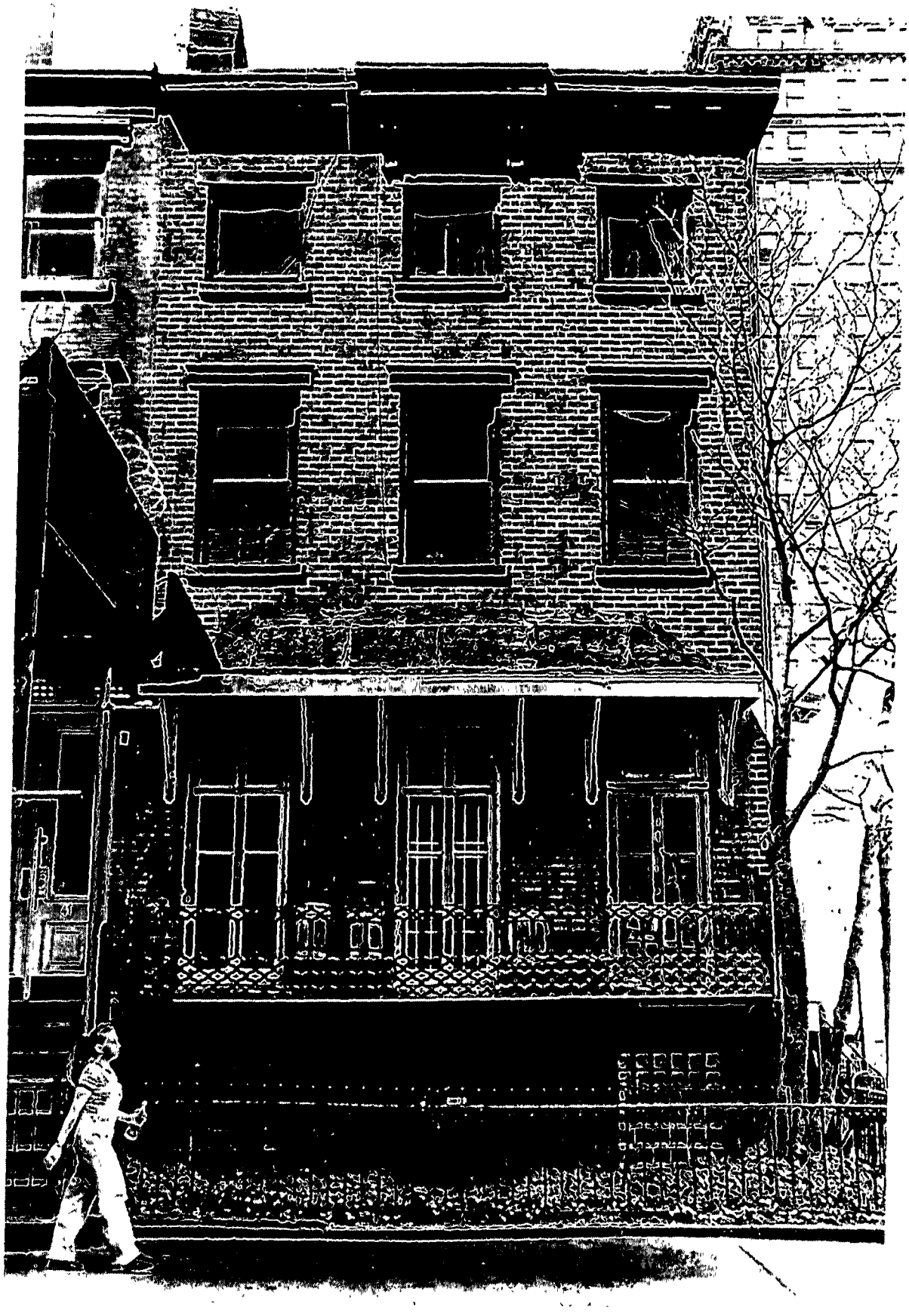
No. 49 Irving Place (aka 122 East 17th Street), c. 1903-09
Photo Credit: P.L. Sperr, New York Public Library



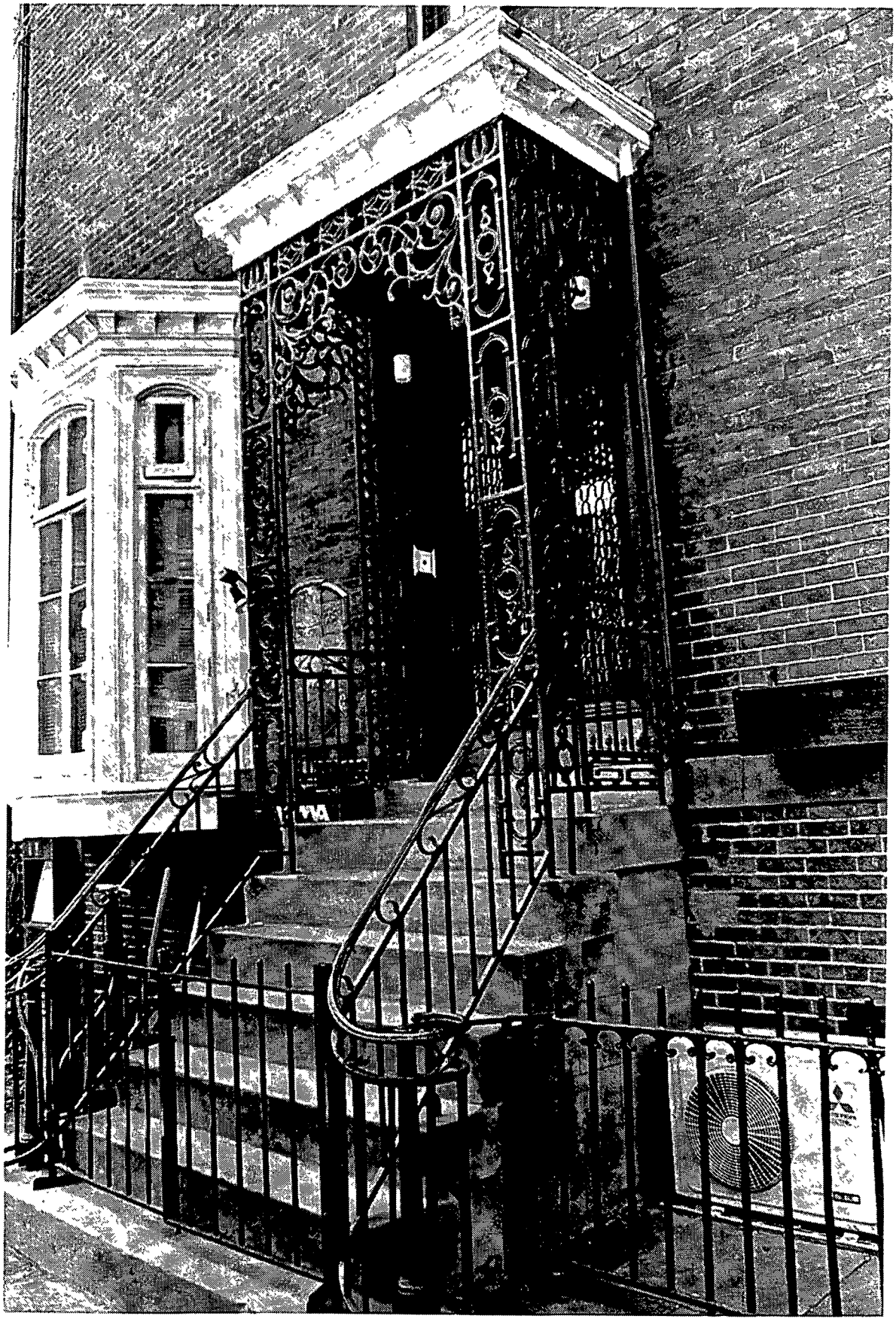
Washington Irving Plaque (1934), 122 East 17th Street (aka 49 Irving Place)
Photo Source: Works Progress Administration Photograph Collection, N.Y.C. Municipal Archives

No. 122 East 17th Street (aka 49 Irving Place), Manhattan
Photo Credit: LPC (1980)

No. 122 East 17th Street (aka 49 Irving Place), Manhattan
Photo Credit: LPC (1980)



No. 122 East 17th Street (aka 49 Irving Place), Manhattan
Photo Credit: Carl Forster (1998)



Entrance Portico, No. 122 East 17th Street (aka 49 Irving Place), Manhattan
Photo Credit: Carl Forster (1998)

Extension, No. 122 East 17th Street (aka 49 Irving Place), Manhattan
Photo Credit: Carl Forster (1998)

NO. 47 IRVING PLACE
Tax Map Block 872, Lot 64

Date: 1843
Builder: Peter P. Voorhis
Original Owner: John S. Seal

Type: rowhouse
Style: Greek Revival
Stories: three plus basement
Facade Materials: red brick, brownstone

This Greek Revival style rowhouse, built as one of a row of three houses, is characterized by its planar red brick facade above a brownstone base. It retains its high stoop with historic ironwork. The third-story front windows have been enlarged, possibly in 1885, when a rear extension was added; the projecting entranceway and window lintels probably date from this time as well.

Description: Original/Historic Elements
Basement: areaway with brownstone sill, paving, and steps; historic wrought-iron fence; 1/1 wood sash in basement windows with historic iron window grilles; historic stoop railings and historic iron gate on doorway under stoop

Parlor Story: paired wood and glass entrance doors (appear to be modified from original) set below late-19th century projecting dentilled stone lintel; full-length window openings with 1/1 wood sash; projecting stone window lintels (rebuilt in late 19th century); brick facing

Second and Third Stories: projecting stone window lintels (redone in late 19th century when third-story window openings were enlarged at tops); 1/1 wood sash in window openings

Alterations
1885 rear extension (Alt. 1422-1885, Henry J. Hardenbergh, architect; John Banta, builder)

basement wall resurfaced in brownstone stucco; stoop rebuilt in brownstone concrete, new gate at base of stoop (c.1990); projecting entranceway lintel and window lintels are painted; window sills and window lintels at second and third stories resurfaced; bracketed and dentilled roof cornice removed and replaced with simple roof cornice, fascia replaced (c.1992); new aluminum drainpipe installed at south edge of facade

Ownership History
1843 Peter P. Voorhis
1844 John S. Seal
1881 Joseph Gall (later Amelia Stevens Gall)
1895 Eliphalet Nott and Annie Schenk Anable
1903 Mark and Martha Fishel
1910 Ekko and Elise Sollmann
1917 Geo. Borgfeldt & Co.
1930 Irving Place and 17th Street Corp.
1945 Third Holding Corp.
1955 1804 Washington Avenue Corp.

This rowhouse was built as part of a row of three houses [See No. 122 East 17th Street; No. 45 Irving Place was demolished in 1909] in 1843 by builder **Peter P. Voorhis** [See No. 120 East 17th Street]. The lot had been purchased by Voorhis in 1838 from David Sherwood and Sarah C. Jackson. In 1844, the house and lot were conveyed to **John S. Seal** (d. 1879), also a builder/mason, who is listed in directories as living here in 1847; he retained the property for the rest of his life.

The house was occupied from 1848 to 1853 by **Mary Minturn Post** (c.1790-1864), the widow of merchant/banker Henry Post, Jr. (1774-1847), who had been a member of the shipping firm of Minturn & Post (later Grinnell, Minturn & Co.), a director of the Mechanics' Insurance Co., a member of the cotton firm of Post & Russell, and cashier at the Franklin Bank. Her daughter **Lydia Minturn Post** later became an author.

From 1856 to 1871, the house was rented by **Thomas M. and Mary Lewis**. Born in Massachusetts, Thomas Lewis (c.1811-?) was a merchant in men's furnishings, with a business located on Broadway. The next occupant, from 1872 to 1880, was **John S. Foster** (c.1845-1914), a merchant in flour and provisions at that time, who for more than the last twenty-five years of his life worked for the Bowery Bank (the last sixteen as president); he later moved to 54 Irving Place.

In 1880-81, the house was occupied by **William and Clara Frankel Baumgarten**. William Baumgarten (1845-1906), born in Germany, came to New York City in 1865 and became associated with the furniture and decorating firm of J. Ziegler & Co. In 1870, he started to work for Herter Brothers, the famous furniture and interior decoration concern, and succeeded Christian Herter as head of the firm in 1881. He led the company for ten years, a period during which its prestige was unrivaled; in 1891 he established William Baumgarten & Co., which itself became a successful decorating firm. Clara Frankel (c.1852-?) was the daughter of Dr. Julius Frankel [See also Dr. Edward Frankel, Jr., in the Fanwood entry - No. 112-114]. The Baumgartens later built a house (1900-01, Schickel & Ditmars) at 294 Riverside Drive, which is today a designated New York City Landmark.

In 1881, the executors of John S. Seal sold the property to **Joseph Gall** (d. 1886), a prominent optician and partner in the firm of Gall & Lembke, at 21 Union Square. Gall, a real estate investor, did not live in this house. After his death in 1886, his will was contested over the next eleven years. Gall's nephew, **Charles F. Funkenstein**, had moved to New York from San Francisco in 1882 to assist with his uncle's business, under the promise that if he changed his name (to Charles F. Gall), he would inherit his uncle's estate. Joseph Gall's housekeeper **Amelia Stevens**, however, having born two daughters by him, claimed that they had lived as a

married couple, and brought a suit claiming the estate. The courts eventually ruled in her favor, but awarded Charles a monetary settlement.

According to a biography of **Oscar Wilde** (1854-1900) by Martin Birnbaum, first published in 1914, the great gay Irish wit and writer lodged here while touring America in 1882. To date, this has not been definitively corroborated. Birnbaum apparently based his account on information from the Philadelphia artist-sculptor James Edward Kelly, who befriended Wilde and produced a portrait of him soon after his arrival in New York on January 2, 1882. The *New York Daily Tribune* of January 8, 1882, reported that "Oscar Wilde, the poet and apostle of aestheticism, is at present living in a private house so that he may secure the quiet and freedom from interruption which his work demands. He occupies two rooms furnished in matter-of-fact style, and has his meals sent in from a neighboring restaurant." William F. Morse, Wilde's tour manager, later wrote that after Wilde's arrival, "he was taken to a hotel for breakfast, and thence to private apartments, and his address kept secret." In his authoritative biography *Oscar Wilde* (1988), Richard Ellmann reports that Wilde stayed at "No. 61 Irving Place, at the corner of 17th Street" [sic] for awhile (one of five hotels or residences where he is supposed to have stayed) during his two-month return to New York after October 1882.

John Pool Hardenbergh, Jr., lived in this house from 1885 to 1889. The brother of famous architect Henry Janeway Hardenbergh, John was also an architect, listed in directories from 1884 to 1890, part of that time sharing his brother's office. During his residence here, an extension was built (1885) on the rear of the house; the building application was signed by Henry J. Hardenbergh.

Robert Arthur Osborn (c.1860-1930) was a tenant in 1890-94. Formerly residing in Tuxedo, N.Y., Osborn was during this time a wine merchant; he later established and ran the Osborn Hotel in New Rochelle, N.Y., and was active there politically.

No. 47 Irving Place was sold by the Gall estate in 1895 to **Eliphalet Nott and Annie Schenk Anable**, who lived down the block at the Westminster Hotel (Irving Place and East 16th Street). E.N. Anable (d. 1904) was named after his great-uncle Eliphalet Nott (president of Union College, Schenectedy, N.Y., in 1804-62). Anable was a lawyer, proprietor for a time of the Westminster Hotel, and worked with his father Henry S. Anable (treasurer of Union College) administering the college's real estate in Long Island City. Annie S. Anable (1861-1945) formed her own real estate business in 1929.

This was the residence, from 1898 to 1904, of the family of **Theodore F. and Bessie H. Kane**. Theodore F. Kane (1840-1908), born in Washington, D.C., and a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy in 1859, rose through nearly forty years in the Navy to the rank of rear admiral by his retirement in 1896. Commissioned a captain in 1886, Kane was assigned to the Brooklyn Navy Yard and, after active ship duty, headed the Board of Inspection of Merchant Vessels. His son **Theodore Porter Kane** (1869-1943), born in Annapolis, Md., was a captain in the U.S. Marine Corps; active in the Spanish-American and First World Wars, he rose to the rank of brigadier general by his retirement in 1924.

This property was purchased in 1903 by **Mark and Martha Fishel**, who were listed in directories as living here in 1905-09. Mark Fishel (c.1872-?) was a banker. The 1910 census and directory listed **Adele Jebbett**, a widow and real estate broker, as a resident. The house was acquired in 1910 (along with Nos. 116 and 120 East 17th Street in 1909) by **Ekko and Elise Sollmann**, of Brooklyn (formerly of Hoboken, N.J.), and in 1917 (along with Nos. 116, 118 and 120 East 17th Street) by **Geo. Borgfeldt & Co.** [See No. 116]. It was converted to a boardinghouse prior to 1915.

In 1930, it was conveyed (along with Nos. 116, 118 and 120 East 17th Street) to the Irving Place & 17th Street Corp., then in 1945 (along with Nos. 104, 110, 116, 118 and 120 East 17th Street) to the Third Holding Corp., real estate entities associated with **Samuel Klein** [See No. 104]. It was converted to apartments in the 1930s, and passed in 1955, along with the other nine properties in this historic district, to the **1804 Washington Avenue Corp.** [See also No. 104.]

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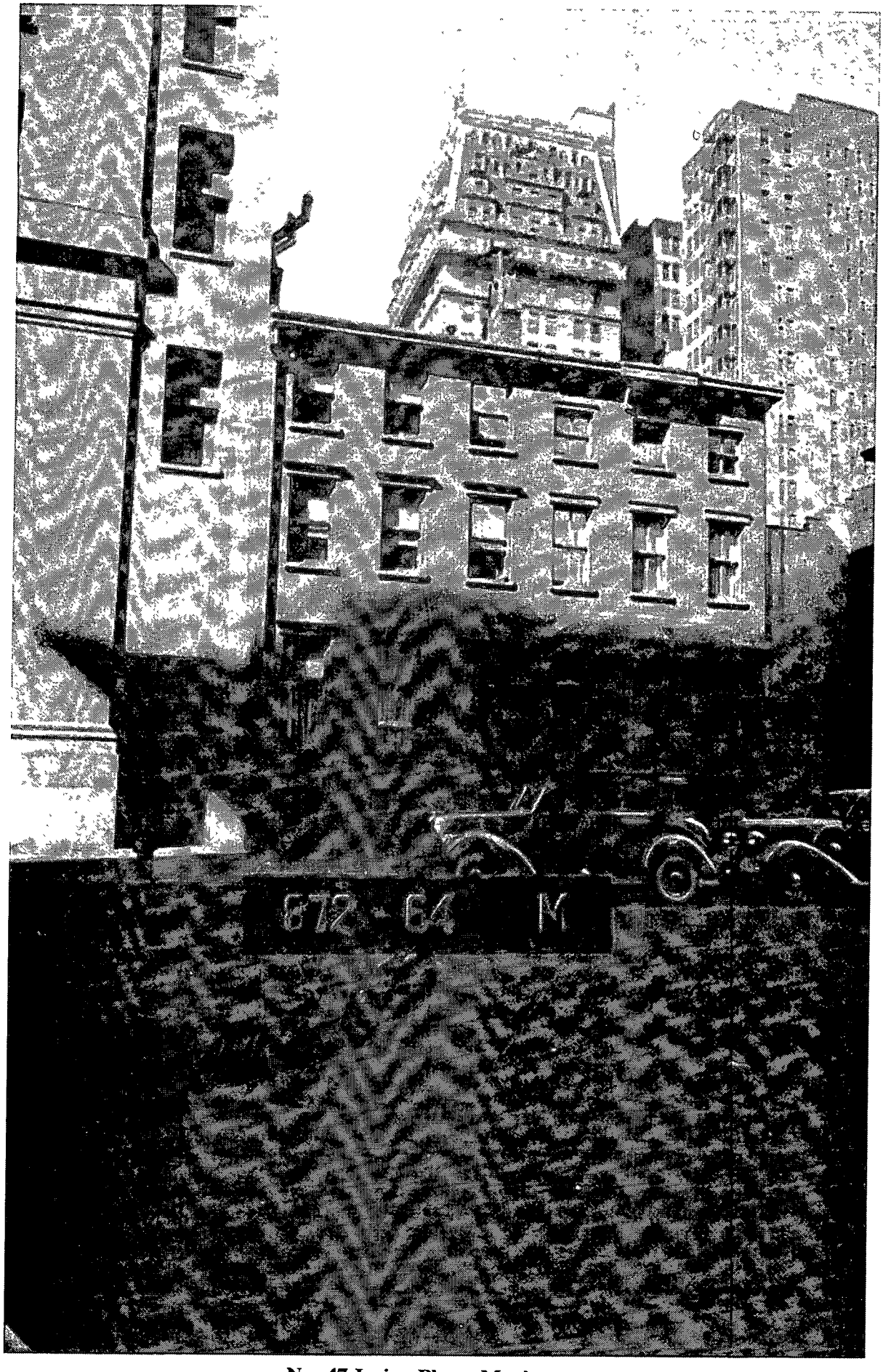

No. 47 Irving Place, Manhattan
Photo Credit: N.Y.C. Dept. of Taxes (c.1940)

No. 47 Irving Place, Manhattan
Photo Credit: LPC (1980)

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture, and other features of this area, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the East 17th Street/Irving Place Historic District contains buildings and other improvements which have a special character and special historical and aesthetic interest and value and which represent one or more eras in the history of New York City and which cause this area, by reason of these factors, to constitute a distinct section of the city.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the East 17th Street/Irving Place Historic District, which is comprised of ten residential buildings constructed between 1836 and 1902, extends east of Union Square along the south side of the street to Irving Place; that it is a significant surviving enclave of the era when the Gramercy Park-Union Square neighborhood was developed with large residences for well-to-do New Yorkers; that it portrays through its residents an important aspect of New York City's social and cultural history during the second half of the nineteenth century and in the years prior to the Depression; that the majority of the buildings were constructed as single-family rowhouses dating from the 1840s and 1850s and designed in the Greek Revival and Italianate styles; that many retain their high stoops and other characteristic details including ironwork and carved ornament which enhances the architectural quality of the historic district; that residents from the time of initial construction into the 1880s were prominent and well-to-do merchants, bankers, politicians, professional men, and their extended families, including William R. Grace, prior to his election as the first Roman Catholic mayor of New York City; that changes in the area around Union Square, beginning in the 1860s, as the heart of the city's entertainment and shopping districts, brought to East 17th Street a significant and culturally important group of residents with important ties to the institutions and commerce in the area, including conductor Theodore Thomas and decorator William Baumgarten; that the house at 49 Irving Place, aka 122 East 17th Street, is the most architecturally distinctive in the district and has a rich history because of notable owners and tenants including Charles A. Macy, Elsie de Wolfe, Elizabeth Marbury, and Clarence H. White, as well as its mythical association with Washington Irving; that the construction of two flats buildings, the Fanwood (1890-91), designed by George F. Pelham in the Romanesque/ Renaissance Revival styie, and the Irving (1901-02) in the Renaissance Revival style, responded to the changing residential population of the neighborhood, while complementing the earlier rowhouses in scale and detail; that the owner entity of the district's buildings, since 1955, has had important ties to the city's real estate and construction businesses; and that the historic district survives as a cohesive enclave creating a distinct sense of place with its buildings linked by their scale, materials, and details.

Accordingly, pursuant to Chapter 21, Section 534 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 3 of Title 25 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Historic District the East 17th Street/Irving Place Historic District, consisting of the of the property bounded by a line beginning at a point on the southern curb line of East 17th Street, then extending southerly to and along the western property line of 104 East 17th Street, easterly along the southern property line of 104 East 17th Street, southerly and easterly along part of the western and the southern property lines of 106 East 17th Street, easterly along the southern property lines of 108 through 116 East 17th Street, northerly along part of the eastern property line of 116 East 17th Street, easterly and northerly along the southern and part of the eastern property lines of 118 East 17th Street, easterly, northerly,

easterly, and northerly along the southern, eastern, southern, and part of the eastern property lines of 120 East 17th Street, easterly along the southern property line of 47 Irving Place extending to the western curb line of Irving Place, northerly along the western curb line of Irving Place, and westerly along the southern curb line of East 17th Street, to the point of beginning, Borough of Manhattan.