

The Allerton 39th Street House, 145 East 39th Street, (aka 141-147 East 39th Street), Manhattan. Built 1916-1918; Arthur Loomis Harmon, architect.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 895, Lot 34.

On December 18, 2007 the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Allerton 39th Street House, 145 East 39th Street, Manhattan, and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 1). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Two speakers testified in favor of designation, including representatives of the owner and the Historic Districts Council. There were no speakers in opposition to designation.

Summary

Constructed in 1916-18 by architect Arthur Loomis Harmon (1878-1958), the Allerton House at 145 East 39th Street provided the service of a hotel and the intimacy of a private club for young, single men. As described in the company's brochure: "the Allerton has quiet, refined, club-like homes that provided socially respectable, economical housing for hard working refined ambitious young men and women." The services were provided without the usual supervision and restrictions imposed by most residential hotels of the early twentieth century. Between 1913 and 1924, six Allerton Houses were built in New York City; this building was the third Allerton Hotel to be built and the first of three that were designed by Harmon.

The building features a granite base and a main façade structured around three bays of windows, constructed primarily of red brick with projecting headers that ascend to a central hipped roof tower. The prominent roof garden, emphasized by three arched openings separated by twin terra-cotta columns, forms the crown of the building, and was a central feature of the hotel's communal facilities. The use of terra-cotta by Atlantic Terra Cotta Company placed strategically on the façade is in keeping with the Northern Italian Renaissance Style of architecture.

Built just before the new zoning laws came into effect. The Allerton is a transitional design combining the pared-down ornamentation of later hotels with the box-like massing of earlier buildings. For the Allerton, Harmon adapted the Northern Italian Renaissance style, emphasizing the vertical by recessing the window bays. This quickly became the trademark style for the Allerton Club Hotel chain. This building became a seminal building for the hotel type and precursor to the design of the Shelton Hotel, designed by Harmon in 1924. At the Shelton, Harmon combined the use of rich materials, subdued stylistic references and emphasis upon the vertical of the Allerton design with the set-back massing mandated by the new zoning laws. Harmon later became a partner with the architectural firm of Shreve & Lamb, designers of the Empire State Building.

In 1956, the Salvation Army converted the Allerton House to the Ten Eyck-Troughton Memorial Residence for Women. It remained in use by the Salvation Army until recently.



DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Murray Hill¹

The area known today as Murray Hill is bounded roughly by 34th Street on the south, 40th Street on the north, Fifth Avenue on the west, and Third Avenue on the east. Murray Hill took its name from the country estate of Robert and Mary Murray, whose farm comprised a large hill. The Murrays were dedicated to many humanitarian causes; upon his death Robert left £200 to promote the manumission of slaves, and to support a free school for Negro children.² According to legend, during the Revolutionary War, Mary Murray invited the British General Howe and his troops to her house (which stood approximately at the corner of what is today Park Avenue and East 37th Street) for a meal, thus allowing General George Washington's army to escape to the north. The character of the neighborhood was determined in 1847 when local landowners signed a covenant stipulating that only brick or stone houses of two or more stories could be erected in the area.³ Shortly thereafter, many homes of wealthy and socially prominent people began to appear along Fifth and Madison Avenues. The choicest lots were soon occupied by families such as the Belmonts, Rhinelanders, Tiffanys, Havemeyers, and Morgans. Eastward development of the neighborhood started after Lexington and Fourth Avenues were opened in 1848, and expanded farther after 1852 when the New York and Harlem Railroad stopped running steam engines south of 42nd Street, and the below-grade cuts of Park Avenue were filled in with a series of landscaped strips. The cross streets, proceeding eastward from Fifth Avenue, were developed with rowhouses, which became more modest the farther they were located from Fifth Avenue. Many houses in Murray Hill, however, were designed (or sometimes remodeled) by prominent architects in the high styles of their period, such as the J. Hampden Robb House at 23 Park Avenue by McKim, Mead & White (1889-90), and the 1869 Italianate townhouse at 31 East 38th Street, designed by William Easterbrook and owned by William R. Grace while he was mayor of New York. After the turn of the century, when retailing began to move into Murray Hill along Fifth Avenue, many of New York's wealthy families relocated their residences farther north.⁴ In 1914, the Murray Hill Association was formed (with J.P. Morgan as one of its directors) with the intention of preserving the exclusive residential character of the neighborhood, and stopping the construction of apartment houses.

Beginning in the 1920s and continuing in the 1930s and post-war years, many former single-family residences were converted to multiple-dwellings. This was the result of the Morgan family failing in its legal efforts to enforce the Murray Hill restrictions, and reflected the trend toward apartment living among New York City residents. In 1924, the first apartment building was constructed in the district, located at 103-105 East 38th Street, paving the way for future construction. By the 1930s a number of businesses had begun to move into the area, and many of the single family dwellings were converted to multiple dwellings and office space.

History of Club Hotels in New York⁵

Throughout the nineteenth century, large numbers of New Yorkers lived in multiple residences, including converted dwellings and hotels, due (among other factors) to real estate conditions that made single-family residences prohibitive to all but the wealthy. Hotels were originally conceived as a way to shelter and control strangers, however, within fifty years hotels had radically changed the way Americans (particularly New Yorkers), lived and did business. Hotel living was less expensive and became an immensely popular alternative.⁶ The bachelor apartment hotel, or "bachelor flats," was a variation on one of the purpose-built multiple dwelling building types that emerged in New York City in the early 1870s (and in such cities as Boston, Washington,

and Chicago in the 1870s-80s). Though the terms were sometimes employed imprecisely, the building types came to be defined as follows: 1) the apartment house or French flats consisted of apartments with suites of rooms (including a bathroom and kitchen) for middle- and upper-middle-class residents (luxury apartment houses emerged after 1880); 2) the apartment hotel or residential hotel had apartments, for long-term residents, with suites of rooms (including a bathroom but no kitchen), while a dining room and other services were provided; and 3) the hotel, for transient visitors and long-term residents, had a variety of services, as well as a dining room open to the general public.⁷ Apartment hotels developed in the 1870s. The apartment hotel was initially intended for bachelors and young families and flourished between 1890 and 1910. As the middle class grew, however, the apartment hotel became a feature of metropolitan life. Apartment hotels were also a response to a loophole in the city's buildings laws that controlled the height of residences. Buildings that provided rooms without kitchens facilities were exempt from the laws, and over the next fifteen years, developers took advantage of this loophole and the number of apartment hotels multiplied.⁸ The passage of the Multiple Dwelling Act of 1929 altered height and bulk restrictions and permitted "skyscraper" apartment buildings for the first time, eliminating the economic advantages of apartment hotels. This law, combined with rising labor costs and the onset of the Great Depression, effectively marked the end of the apartment hotels, most of which have now been converted to conventional apartments.

Though less numerous, perhaps the most architecturally distinguished apartment buildings were "club hotels," built for the working man and woman. In the early part of the 20th century, club life was essentially reserved for upper class society, and so the residential facilities that were being constructed by clubs, such as the New York Athletic Club and the New York Yacht Club, were out of reach for the middle class. The "club hotels" concept came about to address a particular set of housing needs in larger urban metropolises, which was the need for respectable, affordable housing and communal social life among the burgeoning ranks of working middle class young single men and women. Club Hotels provided young professionals the service of a hotel and the intimacy of a private club.

The Allerton Company⁹

The Allerton Company was organized by James Cushman and William Silk, with additional contributions from financiers including George W. Perkins, and Arthur Curtiss James. Cushman was dedicated to civic causes, particularly those involving housing. He was a member of the board of the YMCA, president of the East Side Settlement House, President of the Juvenile Asylum, an official of the Children's Aid Society, and also a member of the advisory board of the Salvation Army.¹⁰ Cushman's wife, Vera Scott Cushman, was also president of the YWCA of New York and later became a vice president of the world council of the YWCA.¹¹ In a 1915 interview Mr. Cushman stated, "The object of the Allerton Company was to establish apartments with a home influence for men."¹² They achieved this through design: the use of brick gave a large hotel a small-scale domestic quality, which was much admired in residential architecture. The company also achieved this by providing young men with a safe, stable and economical living arrangement. The company developed a total of six "club hotels" in New York City from 1913 to 1924, and it appears that two additional Allerton Houses were planned in the mid-1920s but never completed. The Allerton chain catered primarily to a male clientele, with the exception of the residence at East 57th Street hotel, the only residence designed specifically for women. In the later part of the 1920s, William Silk left the Allerton Company, and, in 1927, built the Barbizon Hotel for Women, located at Lexington Avenue and East 63rd Street.¹³ In 1930, the Allerton hotel chain was acquired by the Knott Corporation,

which owned 18 hotels in New York City and seven others in New York, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee. Two years later in 1932, James S. Cushman regained control of the Allerton Operating Company and of all of the Allerton Houses. At that time, the five New York City properties represented one of the largest hotel holdings in New York City, worth over ten million dollars in land and assets.¹⁴ In 1937, James S. Cushman, the visionary behind the Allerton Houses, severed all ties to the Allerton Company. For nearly twenty-five years the Allerton Company provided a place of residence for New York's young middle class, becoming an indispensable and unique feature of New York life.¹⁵

The Allerton House Chain¹⁶

The Allerton chain began its association with New York City with the construction, in 1913, of a 50-room Allerton House located at 302 West 22nd Street (1912-1913) in Chelsea. James S. Cushman, a governor of the Society of Mayflower Descendants, named the hotel chain for Mary Allerton,¹⁷ daughter of Isaac Allerton, an early owner of the land on which the first hotel was built. Allerton journeyed to America on the *Mayflower* and eventually settled in the area that is now Greenwich Village. Mary Allerton married Thomas Cushman ca. 1636.¹⁸

The company established five Allerton Houses in New York City, initially developed specifically to cater to a male clientele. The second Allerton House was developed in 1915, and located at 311 Lexington Avenue; it was soon purchased by the YWCA and converted to a women's residence. The subsequent Allerton Houses were located primarily in midtown on the east side, 143-147 East 39th Street (1916-1918), 45 East 55th Street / 551 Madison Avenue (1919), 128-130 East 57th Street (1921-1923), and the Fraternities Club at 14-22 East 38th Street (1922-1924). The sixth Allerton House was the exception, 128-130 East 57th Street was (1921-1923) designed as a residence for women; all of the facilities were intended for semi-permanent guests.

The chain provided young professionals the services of a hotel and the intimacy of a private club. The Allerton was large enough to provide low rental prices and personal freedoms to their residents, yet small enough to encourage community spirit, with none of the moral or religious associations imposed by such organizations as the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) or the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), which offered similar residential accommodations. The Allerton was unique: it was not a boarding house, rooming house, apartment building or hotel, but a more refined combination. "Club hotels were meant to provide housing that was convenient, economical, and with greater social cachet than the traditional apartment hotel. They dispensed many of the facilities and services of the standard apartment hotel, including public dining rooms, housekeeping services, and the rental of rooms on a weekly, monthly, or yearly basis."¹⁹

Allerton Houses were also developed in Cleveland and Chicago.²⁰ The Cleveland Allerton Hotel, located at 1796-1808 E. 13th St., a 1926 Moorish Revival style building designed by Murgatroyd & Odgen, was later converted to apartments and re-named the Parkview Apartment.²¹ The Allerton Hotel in Chicago, also designed by Murgatroyd & Odgen with Fugard & Knapp, was located at 701 N. Michigan Avenue, and built in 1922-1924. It was Chicago's first high-rise to comply with new zoning laws, and features pronounced setbacks and towers. The Allerton helped bolster the redevelopment of North Michigan Avenue into a chic boulevard of exclusive shops, clubs, offices, and hotels.²²

In a February 1923 interview from *Architecture Magazine* Architect Arthur Loomis Harmon described the reasoning behind the Allerton House concept:

The purpose of the Allerton Houses is to give a better grade of living accommodations at a low cost, to raise the standard but not the price. This means the elimination of non-essentials and extravagance in construction. An honest attempt has been made to meet these requirements in the design of these buildings and conform to economic necessities.

Arthur Loomis Harmon²³

Arthur Loomis Harmon was born in Chicago and studied at the Art Institute of Chicago and at Columbia University, graduating in 1901. From 1902 to 1911 he practiced with the firm of McKim, Mead & White, during which time he supervised the construction of the extension to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. For two years Harmon worked with the firm of Wallis & Goodwillie, and from 1913 to 1929 he practiced independently. In 1929 Harmon joined the firm of Shreve & Lamb as a partner, at which time the firm's name was changed to Shreve, Lamb & Harmon. In 1943, the firm's name was changed again to Shreve, Lamb & Harmon Associates. Harmon was active for many years in architectural education and professional societies. He was the president of the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects from 1937 to 1939; president of the Architectural League of New York from 1933 to 1935; a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects; an Academician of the National Academy of Design; and a member of the Century Association, the Bund Deutscher Architekten, the Beaux-Arts Institute of Design, and the New York Building Congress. He also served on a number of juries, among them the national jury for the Reynolds Metal Company annual award for outstanding examples of aluminum structures, and was on the organizing committee of the Contemporary American Industrial Design exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1940 along with Ely Jacques Kahn. He died in 1958 in White Plains, New York, at the age of 80.

Arthur Loomis Harmon also was the architectural consultant for the design and construction of Parkchester, Stuyvesant Town, and Peter Cooper Village, and also helped to design the Vladeck City Houses. His partner, Richmond Shreve, was the chief architect of the Parkchester development. Harmon's individual works include the Godfrey building at 729 Seventh Avenue (1915); the fourth Allerton House, 551 Madison Avenue (1919); 128 East 57th Street (1921); The Julliard School of Music (later the Manhattan School of Music), 120 Claremont Avenue (1930-34 addition); The Seamen's YMCA (now the McBurney YMCA), 215 West 23rd Street,(1902); 971-973 Madison Avenue (1927); and 37 West 72nd Street (in association with Donald Purple Hart) (1929).

Harmon's best known individual work is the former Shelton Hotel, currently the New York Marriott East Side. The Shelton Hotel was built in 1923 for James T. Lee.²⁴ Located at 525 Lexington Avenue, the Shelton Hotel received awards from the Architectural League of New York and the American Institute of Architects. At the time it was built, the Shelton was considered the tallest hotel in the world, at 24 stories, and was praised by architectural historians and critics for Harmon's intelligent treatment of the 1916 setback requirements law.²⁵

When Harmon joined the firm of Shreve & Lamb, it was already actively engaged in the design of the Empire State Building. Although he took part in the design work, Harmon reportedly never considered the building to be his own.

Shreve, Lamb & Harmon worked principally on commercial office buildings, although they also designed a number of estates and residences in the New York suburbs, and a few apartment houses in Manhattan (such as 130 East 57th Street and 30 East 76th Street, located within the Upper East Side Historic District). Their other buildings in New York included the office building at 500 Fifth Avenue, a 1931-33 addition to 14 Wall Street (a designated New York City Landmark), an

addition to the New York Times Annex on West 43rd Street, the Lefcourt National Building, and the Mutual of New York Building. Outside of New York City, their work includes the Standard Oil Building in Albany; the Reynolds Tobacco Company building in Winston-Salem, North Carolina; and the Chimes Building in Syracuse, New York. These tend to be similar to their New York City work, with unadorned limestone cladding, metal-framed windows and simple, set-back massing, occasionally with Art Deco or Streamlined ornamental motifs. Although the firm of Shreve, Lamb, and Harmon designed a great many buildings over a number of years, it will always be remembered for the design of the Empire State Building.

Atlantic Terra Cotta Company²⁶

Terra cotta, which literally means "burnt earth," is a ceramic technique that was used for small sculptures and vessels even before Roman times. Its use as an ornamental building material is more recent, dating to early nineteenth-century England; manufacture in the United States began in 1848. The material gained real popularity during building booms of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when Beaux Arts style architecture was in ascendance. The sculptable nature and range of matte or glazed finishes possible in terra cotta were ideally suited to the intricate historical ornamental details of the academic Beaux Arts, especially since terra cotta was typically one third the weight of and one tenth the cost of masonry. Terra cotta was also an ideal medium for more creative essays in architectural expression.

During the first quarter of the twentieth century the Atlantic Terra Cotta Company was the largest producer of architectural terra cotta in the world. By 1908 the firm operated four plants, in Perth Amboy and Rocky Hill, New Jersey; Staten Island, New York; and East Point, Georgia. The company maintained branch offices in New York, Atlanta, Philadelphia, Dallas and Newark, New Jersey. William H. Wilson presided as company president during peak years of production.

National production of terra cotta quadrupled from 1900 to 1912, and the industry prospered throughout the 1920s. Terra cotta provided the ideal facade for the high rise, metal skeletal, constructed buildings. Atlantic Terra Cotta manufactured products for forty percent of the terra cotta buildings in New York City.

The plasticity of the terra cotta medium allowed manufacturers to adapt to the changing architectural styles of the 1920s, as contemporary geometric building designs were enhanced by the rich coloring, texture, and patterning of terra-cotta products. Machine extrusion techniques mechanized terra cotta manufacture in the late 1920s and allowed for mass production of terra cotta veneers that were both practical and fireproof.

In the early 1930s, both the failure of the economy and new construction technologies contributed to the decline of the terra cotta industry. Architectural design trends at that time stressed economy and utility, and architects preferred more contemporary materials such as glass and steel. The Atlantic Terra Cotta Company closed in 1943.

Significant buildings utilizing Atlantic Terra Cotta products include the Flatiron building at 75 Fifth Avenue (1901), the Woolworth Building at 233 Broadway (1908) (both designated New York City Landmarks), the Union Trust building in Detroit (1928), the Philadelphia Museum of Art (completed c. 1933), and the Allerton House building at 145 East 39th Street. The terra-cotta elements employed in this building include the restrained use of red, terra-cotta details strategically placed above the second floor windows, with balconettes supported by terra-cotta brackets with the foliate design, and at the roof top loggia, also cartouches with Greek and Roman symbols.

The Design of the Allerton 39th Street House Building²⁷

The Allerton 39th Street House is located mid-block on the north side of East 39th Street between Lexington and Third Avenues. Plans for a hotel on the site began to be developed in 1916. At that time the owner of the site was A. Stanley Jones of Brooklyn.²⁸ During the planning phase of the twelve-story hotel, Jones owned lots 35, 36, and 37. By acquiring lot 34, which increased the total square footage of the site, a taller structure was allowed.²⁹ Jones worked in concert with the Allerton Company and Arthur Loomis Harmon to make plans for a taller fourteen-story structure. Upon completion, the Allerton 39th Street House sat on a 71- by 100-foot lot, was fifteen stories tall and had a total of 400 rooms.

The Allerton 39th Street House is the earliest example in New York of the Northern Italian Renaissance style applied to a tall building. The Northern Italian Renaissance style was popular from 1890 to 1930, and is traditionally rectangular in plan. Features include the use of arched windows, balconies, terra cotta, and square towers. Harmon adapted an H-plan and designed the center core as a tower using the hipped roof characteristic of Northern Italian style architecture.³⁰ The style is usually marked by varied brickwork and a raised basement followed by a piano nobile, which Harmon adapted for public spaces: dinning, reception, and lounge. The balconettes usually found at this level were raised one level, clad in red terra cotta and used as ornament. Full-length arched windows and doorways were symmetrically placed and inset with stone trim. Instead of the traditional cornice Harmon applied large terra-cotta cartouches and a blind arcade band, followed by the colonnade and arcades of the rooftop garden. Built just before the new zoning laws came into effect, Harmon, knowing that the surrounding streetscape would change over time, had the foresight to leave the upper stories exposed on all four sides, creating light courts. Emphasizing the vertical by recessing the window bays, he also chose this style of architecture for its economy of construction. This style quickly became the trademark style for the Allerton Club Hotel chain. Constructed primarily of red brick with projecting headers, which ascend to a central hipped roof tower, the open sides of the H-plan building face adjacent structures along 39th Street. The prominent roof garden, emphasized by the three arched openings separated by twin terra-cotta columns forming the crown of the building, is a central feature of the hotel's communal facilities, part of the distinctive style introduced by Harmon. The Northern Italian Renaissance style of architecture fits skillfully into the surrounding streetscape. The building's imaginative and graceful combination of details and monumental red brick surface unite to make it one of the most distinguished structures of its time. The main entrance is decorated with a stone border pattern of abstracted foliage, surmounted by an Eagle surrounded by a wreath with ribbons, designed to pay homage to the United States entry into World War I.

The Allerton is a transitional design combining the pared-down ornamentation of later hotels with the massing of earlier buildings. This building became a seminal building for the hotel type and precursor to the design of the Shelton Hotel, designed by Harmon in 1924. Harmon gives a detailed description of the design of the Allerton in an interview in *American Architect*:

The building was treated as a tower, adopting a symmetrical plan and providing a nearly uniform wall surface treatment on all four sides. Common red brick was used on the front, with a restricted use of terra cotta trimmings. The main façade of the brick shaft on the street rises directly from a low granite base. Stone was used to trim the openings of the first floor. On the street façade the brick has been laid up with projecting headers to accent the slight vertical lines of the shaft and with wide and irregular joints, in a subtle attempt to give character to the materials. The appearance of height has been fostered by the accenting of the

vertical lines and the elimination of all horizontal ones. Particular attention was paid to the roof garden; this is enclosed by arcade columns forming like a crown on the building, giving interesting glimpses of the East River and the city.³¹

The Allerton 39th Street House was noted for the quality of design and the amenities provided.³² Public facilities included: one or more dining rooms, a reception room for visitors, a library, and a solarium off the roof terrace. The athletic facilities consisted of a swimming pool and a gymnasium that were reserved for residents. All amenities were designed to evoke the exclusivity of “club life.”

Description

The Allerton 39th Street House is located on the north side of East 39th Street between Lexington and Third Avenues. It is a 15-story H-plan building that sits on a 71- by 100-foot site, and is built to the lot line. The southern wing faces East 39th Street, and the west side abuts another structure obscuring the windows from the first to the sixth floor. On the east side the windows are not visible from the first to the eighth floor. A central tower is the core of the H-plan and is visible from Lexington Avenue from the west. Only the roof line of the eastern façade of the tower is visible. The upper floors of the northern wing are visible from East 40th Street.

Southern wing

Base: The facade has a raised base that is clad in granite with an astragal belt course, topped by a row of header bricks spanning the width of the building and marking the water table. The first-floor arched windows, the main entrance, as well as the two flanking entrances are trimmed with stone. Below the first-floor windows are stone diamond grille work covering the ventilation openings. The main entrance is decorated with a border pattern of abstracted foliage; surmounted by an eagle surrounded by a wreath with ribbons, followed by a lintel with a denticulated molding. Flanking the main entrance are two historic wrought iron filigree ventilation grilles with attached wrought iron light fixtures. The windows and subsidiary entrances have rusticated stone surrounds with decorative raised discs and molded lintels. A stone panel divides the lunettes from the doorway in the easternmost bay.

Upper Stories: The main façade of the building is structured around three bays of windows, which are separated by piers faced in patterned brick. Each bay has three windows, with stone sills and header brick lintels. Below each large window is a raised brick spandrel panel. The center windows at the outer bays are smaller in size and sit in a slightly raised plane. The second and third floors have historic red, terra-cotta balconettes decorated with foliated moldings, bas relief of inverted bell-shaped foliate forms and ribbons surrounding cartouches embellished with winged satyr heads and with, from west to east, winged caduceus, ribbons surrounding a bundle of fasces, a swan-handled chalice with sword and a flaming torch with garland. These are supported by foliated terra-cotta brackets with lion heads and cartouches, the sides of which are embellished with bead and reel moldings and ribbons. At the same level, at the central bay, is a band of blind-arched, red, terra-cotta detail, with three individual cartouches, inset below, similar to those on the balconettes, with from east to west, an incense burner, urn, and lyre. Each of the cartouches at this level appears to have Greek and Roman symbols. From the third to the fifteenth floor the central bay is slightly recessed, lending to the illusion of verticality. The twelfth through fifteenth floor center bay windows are surrounded by diaper-work patterned brick created by protruding header bricks. The arched, red, terra-cotta detail is repeated in the central bay at the eleventh floor; this same detail spans across each bay of the fifteenth floor, and is repeated on the east and west facades of the building. At the outer bays, above the arched, red, terra-cotta details are two large terra-cotta cartouches. A more

substantial broad, blind arcaded band serves as a base for the Corinthian colonnade and arcade of the roof garden. All of the terra-cotta details appear to be original to the building. There are three arched openings on the main façade on the side bays flanking a central five bay colonnade. The arched, red, terra-cotta detail is repeated on the adjacent portions of the western and eastern facades, which have three bay-wide Palladian arcades with a gabled roof line.

Central tower: The central tower is constructed of the same red brick as the north and south wings. The tower has two more stories than the wings of the H-plan. The fifteenth floor has two large, arched casement windows with iron balconettes on the east and west sides. The sixteenth floor has three smaller, arched casement windows with raised brick surrounds and a terra-cotta keystone cartouche and stone sills. These elements are repeated on the east side. Below the roof line and repeated on each side of the tower are a series of red, terra-cotta rosettes with header brick moldings. The tower is not visible from the north or south. The hipped roof has a single dormer on each side and is clad in copper.

The northern wing of the H-plan: The 15-story section is constructed of red brick and is partly obscured by several buildings that face East 40th Street. The first through fourth floors are not visible from the street. This elevation, like that of the 39th Street façade, is structured around three bays of windows. The outer bays have four windows and are of standard size and have simple stone sills and brick lintels. The central bay windows, however, vary in size and configuration. The center windows are larger than the windows that flank it, and all have stone sills and brick lintels. A band of arched, red, terra-cotta detail and the Corinthian colonnade are repeated at the roof garden level of the east and west elevations of the northern wing. At the 13th floor there is a projecting horizontal metal snow/rain guard, with copper flashing. There are no windows at the outer bays at the 14th floor, the brick has been stuccoed or painted over, and this treatment is continued on the western and eastern elevations. Several windows at the 15th floor of the eastern and western elevations have been closed. The gable has been removed at the eastern and western elevations, leaving flat parapets. At the far eastern corner of the north wing there is a black metal chimney that runs from the roof to the first floor into an addition that is not visible from the street.

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NOTES

¹ Portions of this section adapted from: Landmarks Preservation Commission, *George S. Bowdoin Stable Designation Report* (LP-1953) (New York: City of New York, 1997), prepared by Virginia Kurshan; LPC, *Murray Hill Historic District Designation Report* (LP- 2102) (New York: City of New York, 2002), prepared by Gale Harris and Donald G. Presa. This brief history of Murray Hill has been compiled from the following sources: "Mrs. Murray Had A Farm..." *Herald Bicentennial Supplement* (July 2, 1976), 12; Charles Lockwood, *Manhattan Moves Uptown* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1976), 223-231; Frederick S. Lightfoot, ed., *Nineteenth-Century New York in Rare Photographic Views* (New York: Dover Publ., Inc., 1981), 100-110; M. Christine Boyer, *Manhattan Manners* (New York: Rizzoli, 1985), 134-135; and Anita Pins, *An Historic District in Murray Hill* (New York: The Murray Hill Committee, Inc., 1977), 9; Kenneth Jackson, ed., *The Encyclopedia of New York City* (New York: Yale University Press, 1995) 785.

² Portions of this section adapted from: Charles Monaghan, *The Murrays of Murray Hill*, Urban History Press, (Brooklyn, NY 1998), 112.

³ In addition to requiring quality construction, certain types of businesses were prohibited as well. No "livery stable, slaughter house, smith shop, forge..." was to be established there; as well as no manufacture of "gun powder, glue, vitriol, ink or turpentine." Also there was to be no tannery, no "brewery, distillery, museum, theater, circus..." Such restrictions were fairly common in many residential neighborhoods.

⁴ While the other families cited moved their residences farther north, the Morgans stayed in Murray Hill. The J.P. Morgan, Jr. house is located at Madison Avenue and East 37th Street, and the library (both designated New York City Landmarks), built to accommodate J.P. Morgan's vast art and literary collections, is located at Madison Avenue and East 36th Street.

⁵ Arthur Loomis Harmon, "The Allerton 57th St. House, the Allerton 34th St. House, the Allerton 39th St. House, the Allerton 55th St. House, New York" *Architecture*, (February 1923), 41-45, 47 pl 17-22; AKRF Inc., "Cultural Resource Evaluation 145 East 39th Street, Manhattan" (June 2007); this section adapted from: LPC, *The Wilbraham Designation Report* (LP-2153) (New York: City of New York, 2004), prepared by Jay Shockley; LPC, (Former) *Aberdeen Hotel (now Best Western Manhattan Hotel) Designation Report* (LP-2076) (New York: City of New York, 2001), prepared by Donald G. Presa.

⁶ Information in this section adapted from: Dominique Browning, "Gimme Shelter: How the Rise of the Hospitality Industry Helped Shape the Way the Americans Work and Live," *New York Times*, December 2, 2007.

⁷ Information in this section adapted from: Robert Stern, A. M., Gregory Gilamrtin, and John Massengale, *New York 1900: Metropolitan Architecture and Urbanism 1890-1915* (New York: Rizzoli, 1983), 272, 275.

⁸ Apartment hotels built during this period introduced "bootleg kitchens" – a true kitchenette – into their suites, which were intended to warm up food provided by room service. Under the law, stoves were not allowed in living units of apartment hotels, but the law was not strictly enforced. Many existing apartment hotels were retrofitted in this manner. The situation became a matter of public controversy; LPC *Aberdeen Hotel*; LPC *Hotel Belleclaire* (LP-1507), (New York: City of New York, 1987), report prepared by Nancy Goeschel; and LPC, *Hotel Marsailles* (LP-1660) (New York: City of New York, 1990), report prepared by Kevin McHugh.

⁹ Information in this section adapted from: "James S. Cushman, Realty Man Dead," *New York Times*, March 20, 1952; Christopher Gray, "Old Winslow Hotel," *New York Times*, August 31, 1997.

¹⁰ Information in this section adapted from: "Apartment for New York Men," *New York Times*, January 31, 1915.

¹¹ Information in this section adapted from: "Mrs. James Cushman Leader in Y.W.C.A.," *New York Times*, February 2, 1946.

¹² Information in this section adapted from: "Apartment for New York Men"; Gray, "Old Winslow Hotel."

¹³ For further information about the Barbizon Hotel, see: "Places Where Women Made History: Barbizon Hotel for Women," <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/travel/pwwmh/ny25.html>. For many years the Barbizon was touted as the premier hotel for respectable young women. Codes of conduct and dress were enforced, no men were allowed above the lobby floor, and prospective tenants needed three letters of recommendation to be considered. The Barbizon attracted several famous tenants, including Grace Kelly, Candice Bergen and Liza Minnelli.

¹⁴ Portions of this section adapted from: AKRF Inc., "Cultural Resource Evaluation 145 East 39th Street, Manhattan" (June 2007).

¹⁵ Portions of this section adapted from: "The Fraternity Clubs Building, New York," *Architectural Forum* (July, 1924), 41, 9-11.

¹⁶ Portions of this section adapted from: Robert Stern, A. M., Gregory Gilamrtin and Thomas Mellins, *New York 1930: Architecture and Urbanism Between the Two World Wars* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987) 195, 208; AKRF Inc., “Cultural Resource Evaluation 145 East 39th Street, Manhattan.”

¹⁷ Christopher Gray, “An Orphan Asylum and a Fifth Avenue Farmhouse,” *New York Times*, August 31, 1997; “James S. Cushman, Realty Man Dead.”

¹⁸ Information in this section adapted from <http://www.mayflowerhistory.com/Passengers/MaryAllerton.php>; Robert S. Wakefield, *Mayflower Families: Isaac Allerton for Five Generations* (Mayflower Families, 1998), after careful research, there is no evidence to suggest that the Allerton or Cushman families owned slaves.

¹⁹ *The Allerton Hotel Designation Report*, Commission on Chicago Landmarks, Chicago Department of Planning and Development (February 4, 1998).

²⁰ Portions of this section adapted from: AKRF “Cultural Resource Evaluation 145 East 39th Street, Manhattan.” An article in the *National Hotel Review* referenced one additional Allerton hotel, in Detroit, Michigan, but no other information could be obtained.

²¹ Nominated in April of 2007 to the National Register of Historic Places by the Ohio Historic Site Preservation Advisory Board; <http://www.ohiohistory.org/about/pr/040307a.html>.

²² The hotel was designated a Chicago Landmark in 1998; <http://www.cityofchicago.org/Landmarks/A/AllertonHotel.html>.

²³ Information in this section adapted from: New York Landmarks Preservation architects file; AKRF, “Cultural Resource Evaluation 145 East 39th Street, Manhattan.”

²⁴ James T. Lee was Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy Onassis’s grandfather. He also developed 740 Park Avenue (in association with Rosario Candela, 1929), the former home of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and the former childhood residence of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis.

²⁵ Christopher Gray, “Streetscapes, Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis’s Grandfather: Quality Developer with a Legacy of Fine Buildings,” *New York Times*, 12 March 1995.

²⁶ Information in this section adapted from: <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/taro/utaaa/00038/aaa-00038.html>; <http://www.cmu.edu/magazine/02spring/cfa.html>; <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs/brief07.htm>; <http://www.preserve.org/fotc/>.

²⁷ Information in this section adapted from: Arthur Loomis Harmon, “Allerton House” *American Architect* (June 4, 1919), 115, 773-776; Arthur Loomis Harmon, “The Allerton 57th St. House.”

²⁸ “The Real Estate Field, \$200,000 East Side Hotel,” *New York Times*, July 15, 1916.

²⁹ New York County, Office of the Register, Liber, Deeds and Conveyances, Liber 3007, 79 Liber 3032, 209; “Hotel For East 39th Street,” *New York Sun*, July 15, 1916, May 10, 1917.

³⁰ Harmon, “The Allerton 57th St. House.”

³¹ Harmon, “Allerton House.”

³² Stern, *New York 1930*, 208.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture and other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the Allerton 39th Street House has a special character and a special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage, and cultural characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the Allerton 39th Street House was designed and constructed in 1916-1918 as a club hotel for professional young, middle class, single men; that between 1913 and 1924, six Allerton Houses were built in New York City; that the Allerton 39th Street House was the first to be designed by Arthur Loomis Harmon; that Harmon designed three of the six Allerton houses in New York City; that the Allerton 39th Street House provided the young men of New York City with a safe, stable and economical living arrangement; that the Allerton 39th Street House provided residents with the service of a hotel and the intimacy of a private club; that the Allerton 39th Street House provided low rental prices and personal freedoms to their residents; that the Allerton 39th Street House is a transitional design combining the pared-down ornamentation of later hotels with the box-like massing of earlier buildings; that the Allerton 39th Street House is one of the earliest example in New York of the Northern Italian Renaissance style applied to a tall building; that the Northern Italian Renaissance style is manifested by varied brickwork, inset stone trim, and rooftop arcades; that the prominent roof top garden was a central feature of the hotel's communal facilities; that Arthur Loomis Harmon, adapted the Northern Italian Renaissance style of architecture to emphasize the vertical by recessing the window bays; that the Allerton 39th Street House was built just before the zoning laws came into effect; that this building became a seminal building for the hotel type, and a precursor to the design of the Shelton hotel; that the Northern Italian Renaissance style became a trademark of the Allerton chain; that the Allerton 39th Street House helped to make "club hotels," an essential and distinctive aspect of New York life.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 74, Section 3020 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 Landmark the Allerton 39th Street House, 145 East 39th Street, Borough of Manhattan, and designates Manhattan Tax Map Block 895, Lot 34.

Robert B. Tierney, Chair
Pablo E. Vengoechea, Vice-Chair
Diana Chapin, Joan Gerner, Roberta Brandes Gratz,
Christopher Moore, Commissioners



South Elevation 145 East 39th Street
Photo by: Carl Forster



South Elevation 145 East 39th Street
Photo by: Carl Forster



South Elevation: terra-cotta detail
Photo by: Carl Forster



South Elevation: terra-cotta detail
Photo by: Carl Forster



South Elevation: detail
Photo by: Carl Forster



South Elevation: Entrance detail
Photo by: Carl Forster



South Elevation: terra-cotta detail
Photo by: Carl Forster

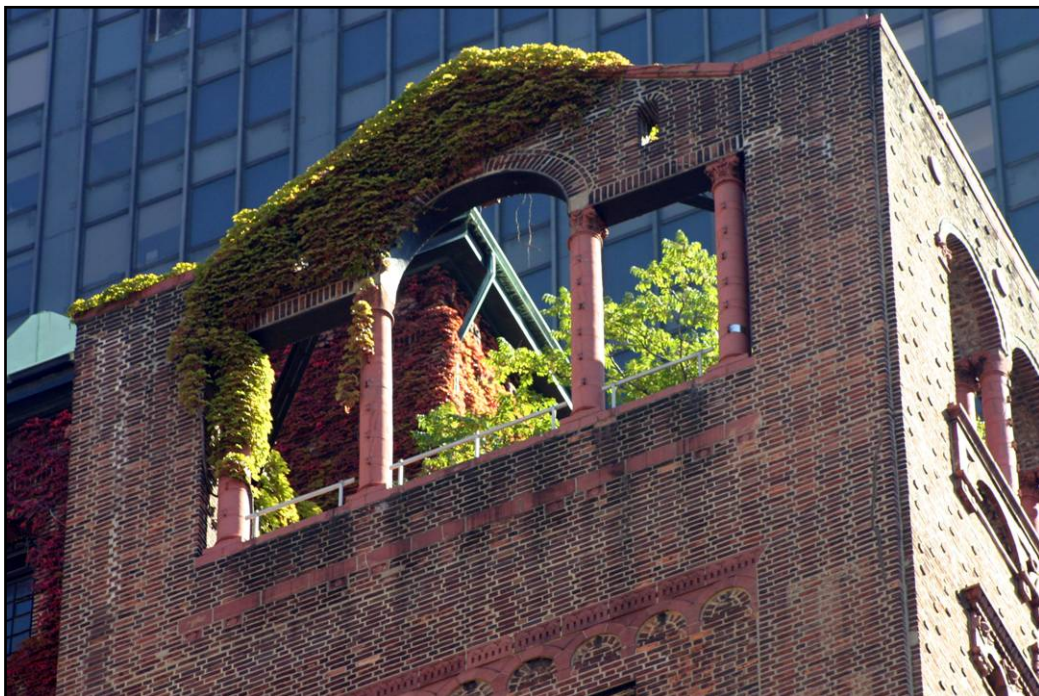


South Elevation: Historic wrought-iron grille/light fixture
Photo by: Carl Forster



West Elevation: Central tower and roof garden

Photo by: Carl Forster

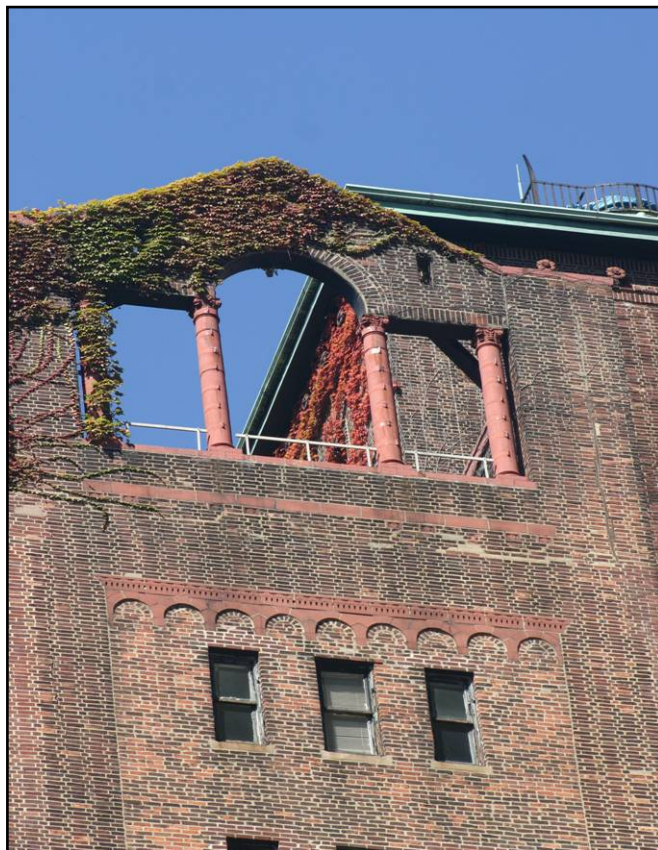


West Elevation: Roof garden

Photo by: Carl Forster



East Elevation: Roof garden and core tower
Photo by: Carl Forster



East Elevation Roof garden
Photo by: Carl Forster



North Elevation
Photo by: Carl Forster



North Elevation: Detail
Photo by: Theresa C. Noonan



North Elevation: Detail
Photo by: Theresa C. Noonan



THE ALLERTON 39TH STREET HOUSE (LP-2296), 145 East 39th Street (aka 141-147 East 39th Street).
Borough of Manhattan, Tax Map Block 895, Lot 34.

Designated: March 18, 2008

Graphic Source: New York City Department of City Planning, MapPLUTO, Edition 06C, December 2006.
Author: New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, JM.