

# Park Terrace West – West 217th Street Historic District



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DESIGNATION REPORT

# Park Terrace West – West 217th Street Historic District

LOCATION

Borough of Manhattan

LANDMARK TYPE

Historic District

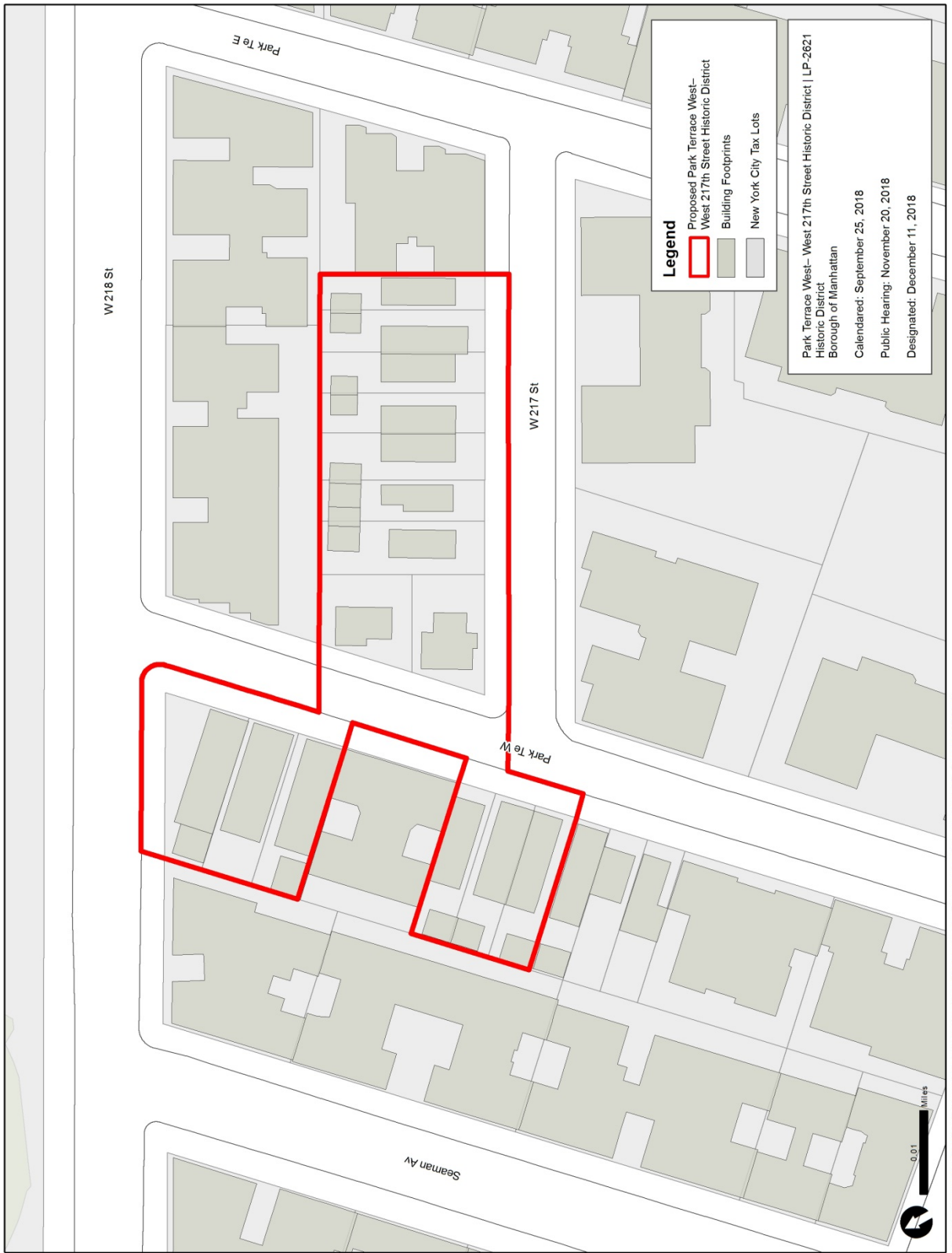
SIGNIFICANCE

The Park Terrace West – West 217th Street Historic District is a significant enclave of residential architecture with a special character unusual in Manhattan, consisting of freestanding and semi-detached Tudor Revival and Colonial Revival Style houses designed between 1920 and 1935.

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# Park Terrace West-West 217th Street Historic District

# Boundary Description

## Designation List 511 LP-2621

**Calendared:** September 25, 2018  
**Public Hearing:** November 20, 2018

On November 20, 2018, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the Park Terrace West-West 217th Street Historic District (Public Hearing Item No. 1). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of the law. Eight people spoke in favor of the designation as proposed, including representatives of Manhattan Community Board 12, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, the Historic Districts Council, Park Terrace Block Association, several property owners within the proposed district, and residents of Inwood. The Commission also received letters in support of the district from United States Congressman Adriano Espaillat, the office of Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, Moving Forward Unidos, Inwood Preservation, Inwood Owners Coalition, and four letters from property owners on Park Terrace West and West 217th Street, and several property owners from the Inwood neighborhood. The Commission received no testimony or letters in opposition to the proposed designation.

The proposed Park Terrace West-West 217th Street Historic District consists of the property bounded by a line beginning on the southwest corner of 91 Park Terrace West, Block 2243, Lot 385, extending northerly along the western property lines of 91 to 97 Park Terrace West, then extending northerly to the south curbline of West 218th Street, extending easterly along West 218th Street, to the western curbline of Park Terrace West, then extending southerly along the western curbline of Park Terrace West to 93 Park Terrace West, then easterly across Park Terrace West, along the northern property line of 96 Park Terrace West, and along the northern property lines of 539 to 527 West 217th Street, then extending southerly along the eastern property line of 527 West 217th Street, then to the northern curbline of West 217th Street, then extending westerly along the northern curbline of West 217th Street, then across Park Terrace West to the western curbline of Park Terrace West, then southerly along the western curbline of Park Terrace West, to the southern property line of 77 Park Terrace West, then westerly along the southern property line of 77 Park Terrace West, then northerly along the western property lines of 77 to 81 Park Terrace West, then easterly along the northern property line of 81 Park Terrace West, then northerly along the western curbline of Park Terrace West to the southern property line of 91 Park Terrace West, then westerly along the southern property line of 91 Park Terrace West, to the point of beginning, as shown in the attached map.

## Summary

### Park Terrace West-West 217th Street Historic District

The Park Terrace West – West 217th Street Historic District, located in Inwood, consists of a picturesque enclave of fifteen early-20th-century Tudor and Colonial Revival style houses. The fifteen residences, both free-standing and semi-detached, were designed by architects (Moore & Landsiedel, Benjamin Driesler, Louis Kurtz, C. G. de Neergaard, and A. H. Zacharius) between 1921 and 1935. The district's appealing character and historic significance is created by its uniform scale, similar architectural styles, and consistency of building materials and setbacks from the street, with landscaped gardens accentuating the area's topography.

Inwood is the northern-most region of Manhattan, surrounded by two rivers, the Harlem River to the north and east, and the Hudson River to the west. Inwood was given its current name in 1864; historically the area was known as Tubby Hook. The area was once vast farm land, and initially the land on which the proposed historic district is located was part of the Isaac and Michael Dyckman farm. In 1851 it was divided and a 26-acre parcel was sold to John Ferris Seaman and his wife Ann Drake-Seaman. By the 1860s it was bounded by the Isham estate to the south, West 218th Street to the north, Seaman Avenue to the west, and Broadway (formerly Kingsbridge Road) to the east.

The city began to develop around the edges of these vast estates in the late-19th century. Upon Ann Drake-Seaman's death in 1878, the property was left to a nephew Lawrence Drake. Drake divided the bulk of the property into lots which were sold to developers. The Drake-Seaman family mansion sat on a precipice, and the mansion remained intact until

1938, it was the last property to be developed in the area.

In 1906 the extension of the Interborough Rapid Transit (IRT) subway lines spurred the initial residential development of the area. Later in the 1920's the construction of the Independent Subway System (IND) lines along Broadway initiated even more speculative development of large apartment buildings for middle-class families. Several parks were created in the neighborhood in the early-20th century to serve the growing residential neighborhood. The earliest, Isham Park, is south of the historic district and was developed in 1911 on land that had been part of the Isham family estate. In 1916, the city purchased land west of Seaman Avenue and created Inwood Hill Park.

Because of its location associated with the Drake-Seaman estate, the proposed Park Terrace West – West 217th Street Historic District developed later than other parts of Inwood, and as a result has a special character which is more typically found in suburban development of the city's other boroughs. The small scale of the residences and the suburban quality of the historic district is rare in Manhattan. Particularly notable is the use of textured and patterned multi-color brick, random stone accents, and decorative tile in entries. Many of the houses exhibit Medieval-revival half-timbering, strapwork and hardware, plank doors, and pebble dash stucco.

The Historic District's characteristic two-story red brick houses possess a high degree of integrity. Many of the houses feature front yards and gardens that work with the topography, and have detached or basement garages. They belong to that period of American architecture that freely incorporated revival-style features into the designs, while embracing the early-20th century modern car culture.

## Historical and Architectural Development

Park Terrace West – West 217th Street Historic District

### The Topography<sup>1</sup> of Inwood and its Early History

Inwood’s topography has played an important role in the historical development and physical character of the Park Terrace West-West 217th Street Historic District. As described in the 1939 *WPA Guide to New York City*, “Inwood’s rivers and hills insulate a suburban community that is separate an entity as any in Manhattan.”<sup>2</sup>

The topography of Manhattan is a result of “glaciers that carved the land and distributed massive amounts rocks sediment, boulders over thousands of miles, at various rates of erosion over millions of years on the rock formations that created the island.”<sup>3</sup> These rock formations differ, and according to a 2017 Archeological assessment: “Inwood’s bedrock is composed of gneiss, marble, and schist, formed approximately one billion years ago.”<sup>4</sup>

Reginald Bolton described 17th-century Inwood valley as “sheltered by the dense woodlands of the hillsides with a broad meadow-land and a marsh in the center of the vale extending from the base of Fort George Hill to the southerly point of Marble hill, dotted with hilly outcroppings.”<sup>5</sup>

In the 17th and 18th centuries marble quarries dotted the landscape of Inwood; the marble’s principal use was gravestones, however, some buildings were clad with “Inwood marble.”<sup>6</sup> There was a marble quarry on the Seaman Drake property,<sup>7</sup> this marble was used to build the Seaman mansion in 1854 to 1855 and the arch that served as an entrance to the estate.<sup>8</sup> Inwood Marble can still

be found above ground in Isham Park, near Isham Street and Seaman Avenue.<sup>9</sup>

Ample water sources made Inwood attractive to early native-American settlements, and later European settlements. According to a 2017 archeology report on Inwood:

During the 19th and early 20th centuries, the extensive farms and estates in Inwood enjoyed the fresh water supplied by the district’s springs and wells. There was a spring on the Valentine-Drake-Seaman estate, west of Broadway and south of West 218th Street. The southern boundary of this large holding was situated between later West 215th and West 217th Streets and the Harlem Ship Canal. The spring was located about 40 feet from the canal.<sup>10</sup>

The waterways that surround northern Manhattan—the Harlem River, Spuyten Duyvil Creek, and the Hudson River—were the lifeline of the Lenape people who lived in the Inwood area prior to European settlement; they supplied food and were a highway for trade amongst the other tribes in the tri-state area. During the Colonial era these waterways continued to serve some of same functions for the Dutch and English colonists. English settlers constructed fortifications at some of the most strategic points in northern Manhattan: Fort Tryon at the highest point in Manhattan, and Fort Cockhill at the northern-most point in Manhattan on a hilltop overlooking the mouth of Spuyten Duyvil Creek at its junction with the Hudson.

The Erie Canal opened in 1825 and hastened the need to straighten and widen the Spuyten Duyvil Creek, which circled the northern tip of Manhattan, for direct access from the Harlem River to the Hudson River to allow a suitable connection to the



western part of the state.<sup>11</sup> Widening of the creek and construction of the Harlem River Ship Canal started in 1875 and continued until 1936.<sup>12</sup> Though construction was ongoing, Harlem River Ship Canal officially opened June 17, 1895, and was called the “Wedding of the Waters” by newspapers of the day.<sup>13</sup>

### **Pre-Colonial Inwood**

Prior to the arrival of Europeans, Manhattan was populated by groups of Native Americans from the Lenape tribe.<sup>14</sup> Three clans populated Manhattan; the Wiechquaeseck was the largest and lived in northern Manhattan, the west Bronx, and Westchester County.<sup>15</sup> The Manahate were located in Lower Manhattan and the harbor islands, and the Rechgawawank were located in Harlem and the Upper East Side, and relocated to the central Bronx in winter months.<sup>16</sup> Like most indigenous populations across North America, the Lenape were nomadic, and traveled from one encampment to another via land and water with the seasons; occupying fishing camps in the summer, and inland areas, where they hunted and harvested crops, during the fall and winter.<sup>17</sup> Reginald Bolton described the area as having “abundant natural resources” in the form of “fresh water supply, cave shelters, a plentiful supply of fish, and shell fish from Spuyten Duyvil Creek, as well as rich soil, and a forest to supply timber.”<sup>18</sup> Bolton also described Inwood as “continuously inhabited”; a Lenape village was located on the eastern side of Inwood Hill, along Seaman Avenue.<sup>19</sup> Also, according to Bolton; “Inwood was one of the earliest occupied places in northern Manhattan,”<sup>20</sup> and “the sheltered side of Inwood hill was ‘a place to hedge in,’ a village, along present day Seaman Avenue, and was the most desirable place of all the Native-American settlements.”<sup>21</sup>

### **Colonial era**

When Director-General Peter Minuit of the Dutch West India Company “purchased” the island of Manhattan from the Lenape for sixty guilders worth of trade goods in 1626, the deal was made with Lenape tribes in Lower Manhattan who did not have land rights beyond Yorkville on the East and Manhattanville on the West. An early Dutch map of Harlem included all of northern Manhattan,<sup>22</sup> and in 1677 the Dutch took ownership of a vast area of northern Manhattan. The first to acquire property in the area were the Dyckman and Nagel families.<sup>23</sup>

The same resources that had attracted the Wiechquaeseck people to Inwood enticed later Colonial settlers, and by the early 1700s, Wiechquaeseck tribes had been driven out of Inwood by Dutch and later English colonists.<sup>24</sup>

Due to its topography and geographic location surrounded by waterways, Inwood was a location of several Revolutionary War-era forts, soldiers’ camps, and a good deal of fighting. Many of the families living in Inwood at the time were displaced and their homes were confiscated or burned by British soldiers, having a devastating effect on the area.

Several sites in northern Manhattan date to the Revolutionary War, including an early fort located in the northwestern corner of Inwood Hill Park. Fort Cock Hill a “quickly constructed” earthen-work fort located at the mouth of Spuyten Duyvil Creek, it fell to the British in November of 1776.<sup>25</sup> The fort and surrounding woodlands would later house a large number of British and Hessian troops, the fort was held by the British until the war ended in 1783.<sup>26</sup>

### **The Drake-Seaman Estate**

The earliest recorded landowning families in northern Manhattan were the Dyckmans (1810),<sup>27</sup> the Ishams, and Lamberts (1819), the Posts (1816), and the Boltons (1823).<sup>28</sup> The northwestern tip of

Manhattan, known in the early-19th century as Tubby Hook, was described as “pastoral, littered with large family owned estates and farms, surrounded by woodlands and two rivers.”<sup>29</sup> In 1864, the name of the northwestern area was changed from Tubby Hook to Inwood.<sup>30</sup>

The Dyckman family farm and several other plots of land were owned by brothers, Jacob, Isaac, and Michael Dyckman. The Dyckman family started selling of plots of land in the late 1820’s through the 1860s, hoping to generate money due in part to higher taxes. After the Dyckman family began auctioning off lots of land, during this time, city planners starting in 1863 began drawing plans for new streets and avenues in northern Manhattan, north of 155<sup>th</sup> Street. Culminating in 1868 street grid plan which paid respect to the topography of northern Manhattan.

From 1851 to 1856, John Ferris Seaman (1800-1872), and his wife Ann Drake-Seaman (1807-1878) purchased property in northern Manhattan, totaling roughly 26 acres,<sup>31</sup> encompassing the area of the Park Terrace West-West 217th Street Historic District.<sup>32</sup> John Ferris Seaman was born into a large land-holding Quaker family that dates back to the 1600s on Long Island, where the family first settled after emigrating from England.<sup>33</sup> John Ferris Seaman was the great-grandson of Dr. Valentine Seaman, who was the first to introduce a vaccine for small pox in New York City.<sup>34</sup> He was a successful merchant and married Ann Drake in 1837.<sup>35</sup> Ann Drake-Seaman was born to a family whose wealth and pedigree was derived from both her mother’s and father’s families. Ann’s father (Thomas Drake) was a descendant of Sir Francis Drake, and John Drake one of original members the Council of Plymouth established by King James in 1606.<sup>36</sup> Her mother, Susannah Morgan was a part of the Morgan family that made their fortunes in finance and banking.

John and Anne Drake-Seaman built a large

lavish mansion of Inwood marble on their estate.<sup>37</sup> Upon Ann Seaman’s death in 1878, her will left the Inwood estate to her cousin Lawrence Drake,<sup>38</sup> (the will was contested by a number of family members, and not settled until 1899).<sup>39</sup> In October 1899, Drake divided the property into roughly 240 lots of various sizes;<sup>40</sup> in December of that same year 50 of the lots were sold interested parties. For several years starting in the 1890s, the mansion was used as a clubhouse for the “Suburban Driving and Riding Club,” of which Drake was a member.<sup>41</sup> The Drake-Seaman mansion and the bulk of the estate property was sold in 1906 to Thomas Dwyer<sup>42</sup> (1862-1943) a noted engineer and contractor.<sup>43</sup>

Thomas Dwyer<sup>44</sup> lived in the Drake-Seaman mansion for 33 years and eventually sold the property and surrounding land to developers in 1938.<sup>45</sup> He was born in Ireland in 1862, and immigrated to the United States in 1884. Dwyer was a noted engineer, and worked as the general contractor for the Brooklyn Hall of Records built in 1886; and completed the construction on the first Fifth Avenue wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Dwyer was the contractor for several buildings on the campus of City College built in 1907, and built a number of New York City public schools in Manhattan and the Bronx. Most notable of his endeavors was the construction of the Soldiers and Sailors Monument on Riverside Drive. The now modified Seaman Arch on Broadway near 215th Street served as the headquarters for his construction Business, the Marble Arch Corporation.

### **Early Plans and Parks in Inwood<sup>46</sup>**

The Central Park Commissioners laid the groundwork for future development of Inwood by establishing a street grid plan. From 1866 to 1870 they extended the street grid plan north for a “larger proportion of the area for streets,” from “Fort Washington district (155<sup>th</sup> Street to Inwood Street) and the Inwood District North of Inwood and

Dyckman Streets for finer applications of subdivisions.”<sup>47</sup> An 1879 G.W. Bromley & Co. map of the area displays conceivable future street grid east and west of Kingsbridge Road (now Broadway).<sup>48</sup> Notably, this early street planning did not include the Drake-Seaman estate, which was still private land. The later development of the Drake-Seaman estate in the 19th century led to the unique character of the Park Terrace West – West 217th Street Historic District, which was built within the boundary of the former estate.

Frederick Law Olmsted and J. James R. Croes, a Civil and Topographical Engineer, submitted a drawing to the New York City Parks Department in 1876 proposing residential neighborhood in Inwood for “fairly comfortable people”.<sup>49</sup> Olmsted and Croes suggested “Terraces,” “constructions in a manner sympathetic with picturesque landscape.” Though their vision for the area was not realized, it may have inspired picturesque qualities of the Park Terrace West neighborhood and the preservation of the surrounding woodlands as parks.<sup>50</sup>

Two parks created in the early 20th century, Isham Park and Inwood Hill Park, added to Inwood’s “rural charm,” and the “unique topography,” of the neighborhood and the Park Terrace West – West 217th Street Historic District.

Isham Park’s original 24-acre plot was purchased by William Bradley Isham in 1864. Upon his death in 1911 his daughter Julia Isham-Taylor, donated about six-acres to the City of New York with the stipulation it be named in her father’s honor, and used as a park for the residents of the neighborhood.<sup>51</sup> Additional property was purchased from the Isham family estate in 1925 for Inwood Hill Park.<sup>52</sup> As early as 1895, Central Park Commissioner Andrew Haswell Green, dubbed the “Father of Greater Manhattan,”<sup>53</sup> advocated for a park in northern Manhattan. Inwood Hill Park or “Inwood wilds” was home to unspoiled woodlands, marshes,

hilly out-cropping, prehistoric and Revolutionary War ruins.<sup>54</sup> The City acquired the park between 1917 and 1925 by acquisition and condemnation of several parcels.<sup>55</sup> The park, bordered by West 218<sup>th</sup> Street, Seaman Avenue, West 214<sup>th</sup> Street, Indian Road to the west, Broadway to the east, officially opened on May 8, 1926 and served as an amenity to the growing residential community.<sup>56</sup>

In 1904 the area north of the Park Terrace West – West 217th Street Historic District was planned as the future site of a 31-acre Wonderland Park. Andrew J. Cobe and a large group of investors had high hopes for an extravagant amusement park at the tip of Manhattan.<sup>57</sup> They would use the same designers as “Coney Island’s Luna Park,” boasting such attractions as lagoons, and 180 feet wide and 1800 feet in length concourse, as well as “thirty-two different amusements.”<sup>58</sup> Mr. Cobe promoted that the park would have, “Italian gardens, lakes, Venetian canals, and deep shaded rambles.”<sup>59</sup> Wonderland Park would also contain “enchanted foreign micro-cities so popular at world exposition, German and, Japanese villages, featuring a 16th-century German castle and beautifully decorated pagodas.”<sup>60</sup> Though it was included in a 1911 Bromley Atlas, it was never realized.<sup>61</sup> In the early 1920s Columbia University purchased the 31 acres, described as “nearly all the land included between Broadway, Two Hundred and Eighteenth Street and the Harlem Ship Canal.”<sup>62</sup>

## Transportation and Speculative Development

The physical remoteness and the hilly terrain, long-established estates, and the lack of transportation choices dampened real estate speculation in northern Manhattan, particularly the neighborhood of Inwood, until the 1906 extension of the Interborough Rapid Transit (IRT) subway lines.

Prior to the extension of the IRT subway line north to Inwood the area had limited public

transportation connections to lower Manhattan. Residents could ride the Hudson River Rail Road “Inwood Dolly Varden line,” or “Vanderbilt’s riverside railroad.”<sup>63</sup> A June 25, 1952 *New York Times* article recalled this as a “two-car train with steam locomotive that stopped at hamlets along the way, making stops at Spuyten Duyvil, Tubby Hook (later Inwood), and Fort Washington,” “it ran four trains four times a day,”<sup>64</sup> these were the only forms of commuter transportation directly to Inwood before 1906.<sup>65</sup>

Expansion of streetcar lines or “trolleys,” a form of mass transit introduced in the 1830s, to accommodate the growing population was spurred by real estate development.<sup>66</sup> Steam-driven cable cars were introduced in 1883,<sup>67</sup> and in 1909 these gave way to electric cable cars which would later be extended to all five boroughs.<sup>68</sup>

After the extension of the IRT line was completed in 1906,<sup>69</sup> speculative developers constructed numerous apartment buildings in Inwood. Initially five and six-story apartments started to dot the landscape along the east and west sides of Broadway, starting around 1912. The 1926 plan to extend the Independent Subway System (IND line), and the 1932 extension of the Eighth Avenue line to 207th Street, spurred more speculative development in Inwood.<sup>70</sup>

Speculative development occurred throughout Inwood in the early 20th century, initially through the construction of five- and six-story apartment houses along the planned city street grid, and later along the portions of the former Drake-Seaman Estate. As a result of their location within the former estate, the buildings in the Park Terrace West – West 217th Street Historic District were developed separately from the more standard developed in Inwood, first with Colonial Revival style two-story semi-detached homes in the early 1920s on Park Terrace West, and then with Tudor Revival style houses on West 217th Street in the

mid-1930s.<sup>71</sup> The enclave therefore has a distinct suburban character surrounded by nearby parks and larger apartment houses.

### **Development of the Park Terrace West – West 217th Street Historic District**

Lawrence Drake inherited the Drake-Seaman estate, upon his cousin’s Ann Drake-Seaman’s death in 1878.<sup>72</sup> In 1899 he divided the estate into 240 lots and advertised in several newspapers of the day “Choice and Valuable Lots known as the Seaman Estate.”<sup>73</sup> Only 50 lots were sold at that time; the bulk of the estate where the Seaman mansion was located did not sell until 1906, when Thomas Dwyer purchased the Seaman Mansion and its surrounding property.<sup>74</sup>

The earliest buildings in the historic district are 77 through 81 Park Terrace West, constructed between 1921 and 1923 designed by architects Landsiedel & Moore for speculative developers. The houses feature elements of the Colonial Revival and Craftsman styles popular at the time. Nos. 91-95 Park Terrace West were constructed in 1925, designed by architect Abraham H. Zacharius for Mrs. Jennie Levy who sold 91 and 93, but lived in the large house at 95 on the corner.

A total of nine houses along West 217th Street (Nos. 527-545) were developed as speculative properties by building contractors-Jack L. Kessler & Adolph Sayetta between 1933 and 1935. Most were designed by Benjamin F. V. Driesler; but two, 539 and 545 West 217th Street, were designed by Louis Kurtz and 96 Park Terrace West was designed by C. G. de Neergaard.<sup>75</sup> Upon the completion of construction Kessler & Sayetta had buyers in place for all nine of the homes.<sup>76</sup> The Kessler family stayed in the neighborhood; they were the first owners of the large free-standing house at 545 West 217th Street.

The residences are typically set back from the street, have front and rear yards and most are

separated by a shared driveway that accesses a shared garage at the rear, an early 20th century provision for the automobile's increased popularity.

In 1938 Thomas Dwyer sold the mansion and its surrounding property to developers.<sup>77</sup> In the late 1930s to the early 1940s, the property was developed with an apartment complex, advertised as offering “country life without moving out of town.”<sup>78</sup>

### **The Architecture of the Park Terrace West – West 217th Street Historic District**

The Park Terrace West – West 217th Street Historic District consists of a small geographic area with detached and semi-detached period-revival houses. The area is surrounded by parks and apartment buildings, most constructed between World War I and World War II. By that time, most of Manhattan had already developed with row houses and apartment buildings that extended to the edges of the lots. This left few available areas for free-standing houses with any accommodation for automobiles. The exception was Inwood because several large estate properties remained intact and were not sold to speculative developers until the 20th century. Consequently, the district's two-story homes, sited on lots that include yards and detached garages, illustrate a type of 20th-century residential development unique in Inwood and not commonly found in Manhattan. This type of development on large tracts of land, previously the sites of large estates or farms, occurred during the 1920s and 1930s on a large scale in New York City's other boroughs, particularly Queens.

The architecture of the Park Terrace West – West 217th Street Historic District illustrates the popularity of the eclectic period revival styles and the influence of the Arts and Crafts in American residential architecture during the 1920s and 30s. These decades were called “the era of period houses” when architects and developers freely borrowed from a wide range of earlier styles and incorporated those

features into their (sometimes modest) house designs. These were popular with residents for their “old world” charm, but were adaptable for up-to-date modern interiors that were both comfortable and practical.<sup>79</sup>

The most popular at the time were based on the American Colonial style, houses that ranged from simple clapboard boxes to the more formal Georgian models. Also very popular were houses using English (particularly Tudor) and French-cottage influence; less common were Italian and Spanish versions. Most American subdivisions included a variety of revival houses using several stylistic precedents. Although six different architects (or firms) used two distinct revival styles in this district, the area presents a collection of houses unified by their scale, consistency of building materials, and similar stylistic features.<sup>80</sup> Also important to the character of the area was the use of terraced landscaping that followed the topography and utilized rustic materials.

### **The Colonial Revival Style<sup>81</sup>**

From approximately 1910 to 1930, “...about 40 percent of the houses built in the United States were in the Colonial Revival style.”<sup>82</sup> This popular style was easily adaptable to many housing types and is well-illustrated along Park Terrace West with houses that use either the simpler “front porch and dormered” model like 77-81 Park Terrace West or 91-95 Park Terrace West that use more Georgian references. In general, there is an overall simplicity in the box-like form and the use of features that is consistent with the Colonial Revival.

The houses at 77-81 Park Terrace West, all designed by Moore & Landsiedel in 1921, show Colonial Revival inspiration in the side-gabled two-story form with strong horizontal lines emphasized by the full-width porch and the continuous wood railing atop the porch roof.<sup>83</sup> These houses were designed with the typical Colonial Revival multi-

light double-hung windows. In addition, there are pedimented dormer windows, a popular feature of the style. Prominent at the rooftop are brick stepped parapets at the fire walls, reminiscent of both Dutch and English chimney parapets of the colonial era.

Nearby, the three houses at 91-95 Park Terrace West designed in 1925 by Abraham H. Zacharius, are more box-like, each with a roof that looks hipped from the street and carries a shed-roofed dormer and a larger shed dormer along the ridge line. These dormers originally were clad with a smooth surface and wood trim, similar to half-timbering. Stone quoins, keystones, and impost blocks at the arched entries give the houses a formal quality that contrasts with the rustic appearance of the multi-color brick cladding. The corner house, 95 Park Terrace West, achieves a more picturesque appearance through its large terraced garden with rock walls and its north facade with a greater variety of design details such as the enclosed entry with an arched window.

### **The Tudor Revival Style<sup>84</sup>**

During the heyday of Tudor-like designs in the 1920s and 30s, a modest residence might be promoted as an “English Country Home.” These often incorporated limited and sometimes random features that are associated with the English Tudor. Typically houses were designed with steep roofs or gables using slate shingles, large prominent chimneys, miniaturized entries, small rounded towers with conical roofs, diamond-paned or multi-light windows (often leaded), and small dormers. Inspired by the hand-hewn quality of medieval buildings, doors were plank with decorative iron hardware, and facade cladding consisted of textured wall surfaces such as rough stucco, patterned brick, and half-timbering (also called “black and white”). Although the prototype for these houses was overtly English, they were also seen as related stylistically to the early timber-framed houses of the American

colonies.<sup>85</sup> Like the Colonial Revival examples within this district, the Tudor Revival houses along West 217th Street used the same rustic and textured multi-color brickwork.

527 to 545 West 217th Street and 96 Park Terrace West are examples of the Tudor Revival style. They were developed in 1933-35 by the Kessler & Sayetta construction firm and designed by several different architects. These detached and semi-detached examples are not common in Manhattan, but there are many Tudor Revival residential developments throughout the other boroughs, particularly Queens. This style was often used for its adaptability to a broad range of house sizes, budgets, and locations.<sup>86</sup> These Tudor Revival houses became fashionable and appealing to many homeowners for their picturesque appeal within garden settings.

The lots along West 217th Street are long and narrow; consequently the houses display their Tudor Revival features at the front facade. In general, the side facades are flat, and dotted with windows that face a common driveway. The two pairs of semi-detached houses (529, 531, 533, and 535 West 217th Street) have more opportunity for a variety of typical Tudor Revival details because they are wider and as such feature turret entries and half-timbering. Similar to 95 Park Terrace West, the houses with the most opportunities for stylistic details are the two free-standing houses at 545 West 217th Street and 96 Park Terrace West. They are surrounded by gardens, incorporate the garage within the houses themselves, and their irregular forms use the additional facades for variety to achieve a picturesque effect.

### **Influence of the Arts and Crafts Style**

The houses built within the historic district are additionally notable because both styles are interpreted with brick-work that uses texture, color, and patterns that became associated with the popular

Arts and Crafts designs of the day. The Arts and Crafts approach is also evident in the open pattern of the brick entry porch railings at 77-81 Park Terrace West and the use of multi-colored tile at the enclosed entries at 91-95 Park Terrace West. The tilework extends from the porch floor to the wainscoting where there are accent tiles with a peacock pattern. These tiles appear to be Batchelder, a well-known decorative tile of the day. The walls above the tile are finished with pebble dash, another type of wall finish that is seen in Arts and Crafts houses. Wood plank doors with decorative metal hardware complete the fine Arts and Crafts aesthetic within the district.

### **Gardens and Site Design**

The hilly topography of the area also influences the overall design of the property. With grade changes, there are decorative stone retaining walls, particularly along West 217th street and along Park Terrace West near West 218th Street. In addition to the rough texture of the buildings' exterior, the yards also display a rustic appearance, with rough-faced rock walls topped with sharp pointed stones and stone steps that complement the meandering off-center walkways. Many of the gardens consistently exhibit these types of walls with the sharp pointed stone caps. Although the sidewalks are primarily concrete, there are flags of bluestone paving along the east side of Park Terrace West and in front of 527 and 529 West 217th Street. In addition, a bluestone curb is present along the north side of West 217th Street within the district boundaries. This type of paving complements the quarry-faced stone retaining walls and stone walkways.

It was during the popularity of the period-revival houses that many suburban-like developments occurred throughout New York City's other boroughs and the country. Both the Colonial Revival and Tudor Revival styles, with their cottage-like charm, were easy to promote as "garden homes."

These outlying areas could incorporate land for adjacent planting areas and allowed for driveways and garages. The Inwood area was one of the last areas in Manhattan to experience development, and as such also had the luxury of available open space for yards and garages. Consequently, an important component of these houses is the integration of landscaping features, both hardscape and plantings, that responds to the topography, complements the revival styles, accommodates automobiles, and creates a country-like setting.

The houses are remarkably well-preserved and retain most of their original design and materials. Most alterations are limited to replacement windows and doors, areas of re-cladding or resurfacing, and minor landscape changes. Three of the houses (529, 535, and 537) along West 217th Street, and 91 to 96 Park Terrace West were designed with multi-light fixed and casement steel-sash windows. Typical replacements for the steel sash are one-over-one double-hung windows. Some of the houses (527, 531, and 539 West 217th Street) retain leaded diamond-pane windows at the first floor of the front facade (the diamond-pane windows at 533 were removed). Nos 77 to 81 Park Terrace West and 545 West 217th Street were designed with multi-light double-hung windows, today the replacement double-hung windows exhibit different configurations for the lights. All of the houses retain their textured brick cladding and many retain the historic vertical plank doors, decorative hardware, half-timbering, and slate roofs.

### **Later History**

After World War II, Inwood was a predominantly German and Irish neighborhood.<sup>87</sup> During the 1940s through to the 1960s, residents of the Park Terrace West – West 217<sup>th</sup> Street Historic district included several lawyers, people in the real estate field, a stock broker, many teachers, accountants and several executives. Notably, in February 1970, the home of

New York State Supreme Court Justice John M. Murtagh on Park Terrace West was firebombed. Justice Murtagh was presiding over a trial of the “Panther 21,” at the time, and the firebombing was initially thought to be caused by members of the Black Panther Party. However, the anti-government group the Weather Underground claimed responsibility for the bombing attack.<sup>88</sup> As reported in *The New York Times*, as a result of the attack, “no one was hurt, and the firebombs caused minimal damage to the home.”<sup>89</sup>

Inwood was a working- and middle-class neighborhood through the late-20th century, and from 1970 to the present its Hispanic population grew to 46% of the overall population.<sup>90</sup> Today it remains a diverse community. The houses of the historic district are owned by retirees, families with children, and young professionals.

## **Conclusion**

The Park Terrace West – West 217th Street Historic District, located in Inwood in the northern-most region of Manhattan, is an intact enclave of early-20th-century residential architecture with a special character in this part of New York City. Its location on the site of the former Drake-Seaman Estate, one of two important estates that defined the 19th-century history of Inwood, led to a development history unique in its area in the 1920s and 30s. Combined with an emphasis on landscaped gardens and making provisions for the automobile, the district’s historic character and architectural significance derives from its uniform scale and building materials, and consistent use of Tudor Revival and Colonial Revival architectural styles with Craftstman influences, all contributing to a strong sense of place.



## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> For a topographical map of Manhattan with the street grid overlaid, see Egbert L. Viele, *Sanitary & Topographical Map of the City and Island of New York* (New York: Fred Mayer & Co. Lithographers, 1865); also within Stokes, v. 3, 777-778.

<sup>2</sup> Information from: Federal Writers Project, *American Guide Series: New York City Guide*, (New York: Octagon Books. 1939, reprint 1970), 302-306.

<sup>3</sup> Information from: Inwood Rezoning: (CEQR No. 17DME007M), Phase IA Archaeological Assessment, (Prepared for: Philip Habib & Associates), Prepared by: Celia J. Bergoffen Ph.D. R. P. A., September 2017, 16.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. Bergoffen

<sup>5</sup> Information from: Reginald Bolton, *Bolton Indian Paths in the Great Metropolis*, (New York: New York Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, 1922), 81-85; 1936 Colton Map.

<sup>6</sup> The marble quarry that supplied the material for the Seaman mansion was mined from a quarry located on the 26 acre estate. Topographical Map of the City and County Of New - York, and the adjacent Country, With Views in the border of the principal Buildings and interesting Scenery of the Island, Published By J.H. Colton & Co. No. 4 Spruce St. New-York. 1836. Engraved & Printed by S. Stiles & Company, New-York. Entered ... 1836, by J.H. Colton & Co., New York, The New York Public Library Digital Collections.

<sup>7</sup> Information from: John H. Betts, "The Minerals of New York City," *Rocks & Minerals Magazine*, (May, 2009, v.84, No. 3) 204-252; John Randal map of northern Manhattan Island 1836; Accessed from the internet 08/15/2018.

<sup>8</sup> Christopher Gray, "Streetscapes: Upper Broadway: Marble Entry to a Vanished Estate," *The New York Times*, March 4, 2001, RE7; Christopher Gray, "Streetscapes: Encrusted Relic of a Mid-19<sup>th</sup>-Century Inwood Estate," *TheThe New York Times*, June 5, 1988, R14.

<sup>9</sup> Information from: New York City Parks Department, New York City Parks "Inwood Marble in New York City Parks - Isham Park", [https://www.nycgovparks.org/about/history/historical-](https://www.nycgovparks.org/about/history/historical-signs/listings?id=12344)

[signs/listings?id=12344](https://www.nycgovparks.org/about/history/historical-signs/listings?id=12344), (accessed: August 21, 2018).

<sup>10</sup> See, Lionel Pincus and Princess Firyal Map Division, The New York Public Library. "Page 26: [Bounded by W. 228th Street, Harlem Creek, W. 208th Street and Hudson River.]" The New York Public Library Digital Collections, 1868, <http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47e2-6f39-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>.

<sup>11</sup> New York State Canal Corporation, "Navigating the Canals," <http://www.canals.ny.gov/navinfo/index.html>, (accessed: August 20, 2018).

<sup>12</sup> Information from: John H. Betts, "The Minerals of New York City," *Rocks & Minerals Magazine*, (May, 2009, v.84, No. 3) 204-252.

<sup>13</sup> "Wedding of the Waters," *Elmira Daily Gazette and Free Press*, June 22, 1895, 5; "Wedding of the Waters," *The Pittsburg Post*, June 18, 1895, 1; "Wedding of the Waters," *The Washington Times, (District of Columbia)*, June 18, 1895, 6; The widening of Spuyten Duyvil Creek isolated Marble Hill, what was originally at the northern tip of Manhattan from Inwood and the rest of Manhattan.

<sup>14</sup> Information from: Landmarks Preservation Commission, *Central Harlem Historic District Designation Report*, (LP-2607) New York City of New York, 2018, prepared by Barrett Reiter and Theresa Noonan.

<sup>15</sup> Information from: Eric W. Sanderson, *Mannahatta: A Natural History of New York City* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 2009), 106-110.

<sup>16</sup> Information from: Edwin G. Burrows and Mike Wallace, *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

<sup>17</sup> Information from: Inwood Rezoning: (CEQR No. 17DME007M), Phase IA Archaeological Assessment, (Prepared for: Philip Habib & Associates), Prepared by: Celia J. Bergoffen Ph.D. R. P. A., September 17, 2017.

<sup>18</sup> Information from: Reginald Pelham Bolton, Inwood Hill Park on the Island of Manhattan, (New York: Dyckman Institute, 1930).

<sup>19</sup> Information from: Reginald Pelham Bolton, *Indian Paths in the Great Metropolis*, (New York: New York Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, 1922), 83.

<sup>20</sup> Bolton, 80-82.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, 83.

<sup>22</sup> Information from: James Riker, *Revised History of Harlem*, (New York: New York Harlem Publishing Company, 1904), Dutch Map of Harlem.

<sup>23</sup> Riker, 549-550; Inwood & Isham Parks [https://www.nycgovparks.org/sub\\_your\\_park/vt\\_north\\_manhattan\\_parks/master\\_plan\\_pdfs/june2012/Inwood\\_and\\_Isham\\_Parks.pdf](https://www.nycgovparks.org/sub_your_park/vt_north_manhattan_parks/master_plan_pdfs/june2012/Inwood_and_Isham_Parks.pdf), (accessed: August 17, 2018).

<sup>24</sup> Bolton, 22.

<sup>25</sup> Information from: I. N. Phelps Stokes, *The Iconography of Manhattan Island 1498-1909*, v. 4, (New York: Richard H. Dodd Publishers, 1922), 910; “Last Stand of Rural Manhattan,” *The New York Times Magazine*, October 19, 1924, 2.

<sup>26</sup> “Manhattans New Park,” *The New York Times*, April 16, 1922, 97. There are also several other sites that archeologists have attributed to English and Hessian soldiers camp sites scattered within the park, and on the “eastern side of Inwood.”

<sup>27</sup> The Dyckman family was granted land patents in 1666, Stokes v. 5, 1609.

<sup>28</sup> New York County, Office of the Register, Deeds and Conveyances, Block: 2243, 1810 to 1823.

<sup>29</sup> Stokes v. 5, 2076.

<sup>30</sup> “Change of Name,” *The Evening Star*, November 14, 1864.

<sup>31</sup> New York County, Office of the Register, Deeds and Conveyances, [Edgar H. and Sophia V. Laing to Ann Seaman] Liber 583, p.604, October 23, 1851; New York County, Office of the Register, Deeds and Conveyances, [George Crookshank to Ann Seaman] Liber 651, p.114, June 22, 1853; New York County, Office of the Register, Deeds and Conveyances, [Isaac Dyckman to Ann Seaman] Liber 715, p. 342, September 23, 1856.

<sup>32</sup> New York County, Office of the Register, Deeds and Conveyances, [Edgar H. and Sophia V. Laing to Ann Seaman] Liber 583, p.604, October 23, 1851; New York County, Office of the Register, Deeds and Conveyances, [George Crookshank to Ann Seaman] Liber 651, p.114, June 22, 1853; New York County, Office of the Register, Deeds and Conveyances, [Isaac Dyckman to Ann Seaman] Liber 715, p. 342, September 23, 1856.

<sup>33</sup> Information from: Mary Thomas Seaman, James Haviland Seaman, *The Seaman family in America as descended from Captain John Seaman of Hempstead, Long Island*, (Salem, Massachusetts: Higginson Book Co, 2000), 128.

<sup>34</sup> Information from: Valentine Seaman, 1797 (1804) – the

Black Plague or Yellow Fever of New York City, <https://briantaltonemph.com/gis/historical-disease-maps/valentine-seaman-1804-the-black-plague-or-yellow-fever-in-new-york-city/>, accessed: August 18, 2018.

<sup>35</sup> Information from: *Index to Marriages and Deaths in the New York Herald: 1835-1855* (Baltimore, Maryland: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc.), 38; “Marriages,” *New York Evening Post*, January, 17, 1837.

<sup>36</sup> Information from: Robert Bolton, *The History of Several Towns, Manors, and Patents of the County of Westchester*, (New York: Charles F. Roper publishers, 1881, v. II), Appendix, 514-515, Appendix A, 726-727.

<sup>37</sup> Information from: James Riker, *Revised History of Harlem*, (New York: New York Harlem Publishing Company, 1904), Dutch Map of Harlem.

<sup>38</sup> “A Generous Testatrix,” *The New York Times*, March 13, 1878, 8.

<sup>39</sup> The will of Ann Drake-Seaman was initially contested by 15 family members; actually total 145 family members contested the will. Ann Drake-Seaman’s will was not legally settled until 1899. The property was not recorded in Deeds and Conveyances until 1883; New York County, Office of the Register, Deeds and Conveyances, [(will of Ann Drake-Seaman to (Devisee) Lawrence Drake Liber 1742 p. 465, Lots 236-399 included, October 25, 1883.

<sup>40</sup> [Notice], “Auction Sales of Real Estate,” *The New York Tribune*, October 8, 1899, 21.

<sup>41</sup> “Suburban Riding Club’s New Home,” *The New York Times*, May 18, 1894, 3; Christopher Gray, “Encrusted Relic of a Mid-19<sup>th</sup>-Century Inwood Estate,” *The New York Times*, June 5, 1988, R14.

<sup>42</sup> “The Magnificent “Marble Mansion,” *The New York Times*, February 2, 1913.

<sup>43</sup> Information from: New York County, Office of the Register, Deeds and Conveyances, [Chelsea Realty to Thomas Dwyer], Liber 30, p. 41, 45 June 30, 1906.

<sup>44</sup> Thomas Dwyer, 81 A Retired Builder,” *The New York Times*, March 5, 1943, 18.

<sup>45</sup> “Manhattan Transfers,” *The New York Times*, November 29, 1938, 43.

<sup>46</sup> Information from: Frederic Law Olmsted and J. James R. Croes, Document No. 7. “The Possibility of a Permanent Suburban Quarter,” Department of Public Parks 1876, 15-20.

<sup>47</sup> Information from: City of New York, Board of the Department of Public Parks; *Document No. 70*, June 9,

1876, 20.

<sup>48</sup> Lionel Pincus and Princess Firyal Map Division, The New York Public Library, G.W. Bromley & Co. 1879 Plate 33, The New York Public Library Digital Collections, <http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/itemsef689d50-0b74-0132-e1d5-5>.

<sup>49</sup> “Inwood Old Dutch, New Latin,” *The New York Times*, August 7, 1977, R1.

<sup>50</sup> Information from: Federal Writers Project, 303-306.

<sup>51</sup> “Offer More Land for Isham Park,” *The New York Times*, March 18, 1912, 16. In 1912, Flora Isham (William’s sister) also donated land that extended west towards the Spuyten Duyvil Creek.

<sup>52</sup> “Inwood Hill to Be A Park,” *The New York Times*, May 5, 1925, 13. When Samuel, the last of the Isham brothers passed in 1914, his property north along Broadway was also gifted for additional parkland. Lastly, in 1917, additional land was purchased by Julia Isham-Taylor, an L-shaped lot at the corner of Isham Street and Seaman Avenue.

<sup>53</sup> “A Famous New Yorker: Career of Andrew H. Green,” *The New York Times*, August 31, 1913, BR1; “Andrew H. Green Murdered By Negro: ‘Father of Greater New York,’” *The New York Times*, November 13, 1903, 1. However, archeological discoveries in 1900 and more in the 1920s, coupled with the completion of the plan for a new subway prompted the renewed interest in preserving the 196.4 acres of woodlands in northern Manhattan.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Sherman Graft, “Taming’ Inwood Hill,” *The New York Times*, April 10, 1938, 159.

<sup>56</sup> “City to Celebrate Indian Day By Opening Inwood Hill Park,” *The New York Times*, May 7, 1926, 21.

<sup>57</sup> “Wonderland Case Decided,” *The New York Times*, March 19, 1904, 2.

<sup>58</sup> In the Real Estate Field: “New Interest in Wonderland,” *The New York Times*, November 23, 1905, 16.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> “To Build A Wonderland on the Upper Harlem,” *The New York Times*, November 16, 1904, 16.

<sup>61</sup> See, Lionel Pincus and Princess Firyal Map Division, The New York Public Library. 1911 G. W. Bromley Map, Plate 50, The New York Public Library Digital

Collections,

<http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47e2-0989-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>.

<sup>62</sup> “Secure Tract For Stadium,” *Columbia Daily Spectator*, v140, May, 29, 1921, 1; “Turn Virgin Tract into Baker Field,” *The New York Times*, August 19, 1923, E5.

<sup>63</sup> Information from: Paul Luchter, “More on the Dolly Varden Train, May 11, 2004, <http://www.railfan.net/lists/rshsdepot-digest/200405/msg00011.html>, (accessed: August 27, 2018).

<sup>64</sup> Meyer Berger, “Retiring Rail Man Recalls Old City,” *The New York Times*, June 25, 1952, 16.

<sup>65</sup> “Last Stand of Rural Manhattan,” *The New York Times Magazine*, October 19, 1924, 2; “Manhattans New Park,” *The New York Times*, April 16, 1922, 97; Raanan Geberer, “History of the Highline,” *Strausmedia*, <http://www.nypress.com/local-news/20150610/history-of-the-high-line>, accessed August 28, 2018; Elizabeth Hoey, Ed., “History of the Railroads in the Hudson River Valley,” *Overview: Transportation of the Railroads in the Hudson River Valley*, <http://www.hudsonrivervalley.org/library/pdfs/Railroads.pdf>, (accessed: September, 5, 2018); <https://kenkinlock.com/west-side-freight-line/>.

<sup>66</sup> Information from: “Harry Bubbins, “One Hundred Twenty-Five Years of NYC Streetcars Started in the Village, *Off the Grid: The Blog of the Greenwich Village Society For Historic Preservation*, April 16, 2016, <http://gvshp.org/blog/2016/04/06/last-stop-for-trolleys-in-nyc-1957/>, (accessed: September 27, 2018).

<sup>67</sup> Information from: Richard E. Mooney, “From Rail to Rubber: How the bus replaced the streetcar on New York City’s streets, *The New York Daily News*, August 14, 2017, <http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/dead-sailing-ships-goodbye-trolleys-1936-article-1.2903124>, (accessed: September 27, 2018). The street cars were a convenient form of transportation, until they were replaced by the bus lines in the late 1930s. Inwood residents could use the Kingsbridge line from East Harlem to Marble Hill via (125th Street, Amsterdam Avenue, and Broadway), run by the Third Avenue Railway.

<sup>68</sup> Information from: “List of Street Car Lines in Manhattan, North –south lines”, *Wikipedia*, (accessed: September 27, 2018).

<sup>69</sup> Information from: Kenneth T. Jackson, *The Encyclopedia of New York City*, (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, 2010), 1259-1263

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid. Jackson.

<sup>71</sup> “Plans for Uptown Homes,” *The New York Times*, November 2, 1933.

<sup>72</sup> After the reading of Ann Drake-Seaman’s will, Lawrence received three quarters of the property, which at the time was valued at \$800,000 dollars. 145 other family members filed suits against Lawrence Drake, contesting Ann-Drake-Seaman’s will, the case against the will lasted for more than 20 years; “The Seaman Will Case,” *The New York Times*, November 26, 1878, 5; “Mrs. Seaman’s Will Again,” *The New York Times*, February 21, 1900, 12.

<sup>73</sup> [Notice], “Auction Sales of Real Estate,” *New York Tribune*, October 8, 1899, 21.

<sup>74</sup> “In the Real Estate Field: Good Prices for Drake Estate Lots at Auction,” *The New York Times*, May 24, 1906, 15.

<sup>75</sup> Information from: New York County, Office of the Register, Deeds and Conveyances, [Daley to Sayetta Adolf, Kessler Jack L.], August 21, 1934, Liber 860, p. 168 and August 21, 1934, Liber 764, p. 384.

<sup>76</sup> “Buyers found for Nine Homes,” *The New York Times*, November 24, 1935, RE1.

<sup>77</sup> Information from: New York County, Office of the Register, Deeds and Conveyances, [Thomas Dwyer to Park Terrace Gardens Inc.], Liber 3997, p. 480.

<sup>78</sup> “Apartment Values That Make Dollars Stretch,” [Display Add 55], *The New York Times*, August 15, 1939, 10.

<sup>79</sup> Lester Walker, *American Homes: The Landmark Illustrated Encyclopedia of Domestic Architecture* (New York: Black Dog & Leventhal Publishers, Inc., 2002), 210.

<sup>80</sup> Six architects or architectural firms are associated with the development of this district, Benjamin F. V. Driesler, Moore & Landsiedel, C. G. de Neergaard, Joseph Lau, Louis Kurtz, and Abraham Zacharius.

<sup>81</sup> Information from: Richard Guy Wilson, *The Colonial Revival House*, (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc.).

<sup>82</sup> Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013), 414.

<sup>83</sup> Lester Walker, 171, 198

<sup>84</sup> Information from: Lee Goff, *Tudor Style: Tudor Revival Houses in America from 1890 to the Present* (New York: Universe Publishing).

<sup>85</sup> Information from: Hugh Morrison, *Early American Architecture: From the First Colonial Settlements to the*

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*National Period* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1987), 16.

<sup>86</sup> Tudor City in Manhattan, a complex of large apartment buildings and gardens, developed in the late 1920s and early 1930s, incorporated a Tudor-like design on its tall apartment buildings, but most apartment buildings during that time were designed with Georgian, Art Deco, or some form of Renaissance or Classical Revival details.

<sup>87</sup> United States Census Records, 1940, 23 Ward, District 1166.

<sup>88</sup> Information from: Jeffrey A. Kroessler, “Bombing for Justice: Urban Terrorism in New York City from the 1960s through the 1980s,” *Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement Annual*, Volume 6 (New series, volume 1), edited by Larry E. Sullivan, Staci Strobi, and Dana Greene, 63-112. Brooklyn: AMS Press, 2014. Roughly three weeks later in March 1970, a bomb would accidentally explode at a townhouse in Greenwich Village occupied by Weather Underground.

<sup>89</sup> “Justice Murtagh’s Home Target of 3 Fire Bombs,” *The New York Times*, February 22, 1970, 1; Three bombs were placed around the property; one at the front door, one at the right façade of the house on a window ledge, and the last under the Judge’s car.

<sup>90</sup> Information from: US Census Records, 2000, 2010; <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/inwood-ny/>; <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/planning/data-maps/nyc-population/historical-population.page>.

## Findings and Designation

### Park Terrace West – West 217<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture, and the other features of this area, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the Park Terrace West – West 217th Street Historic District contains buildings and other improvements that have a special character and a 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. Further, this historic district is part of the development, heritage, and culture of the city, state and nation, as set forth in this designation report.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 47, Section 3020 (formerly Section 534 of Chapter 21) 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 Park Terrace West – West 217th Street Historic District containing the property bounded by

a line beginning on the southwest corner of 91 Park Terrace West, Block 2243, Lot 385, extending northerly along the western property lines of 91 to 97 Park Terrace West, then extending northerly to the south curblines of West 218th Street, extending easterly along West 218th Street, to the western curblines of Park Terrace West, then extending southerly along the western curblines of Park Terrace West to 93 Park Terrace West, then easterly across Park Terrace West, along the northern property line of 96 Park Terrace West, and along the northern property lines of 539 to 527 West 217th Street, then extending southerly along the eastern property line of 527 West 217th Street, then to the northern curblines of West 217th Street, then extending westerly along the northern curblines of West 217th Street, then across Park Terrace West to the western curblines of Park Terrace West, then southerly along the western curblines of Park Terrace West, to the southern property line of 77 Park Terrace West, then westerly along the southern property line of 77 Park Terrace West, then northerly along the western property lines of 77 to 81 Park Terrace West, then easterly along the northern property line of 81 Park Terrace West, then northerly along the western curblines of Park Terrace West to the southern property line of 91 Park Terrace West, then westerly along the southern property line of 91 Park Terrace West, to the point of beginning, as shown in the attached map.

# Park Terrace West – West 217<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District: Illustrations





**535 to 527 West 217<sup>th</sup> Street (left to right)**  
LPC Staff, February 2018



**96 Park Terrace West (left) and 545 West 217th Street (right)**  
LPC Staff, December 2018



**91, 93, and 95 Park Terrace West**  
LPC Staff, February 2018



**95 Park Terrace West**  
LPC Staff, February, 2018





537 West 217th Street (above)  
539 West 217th Street (upper right)  
535 West 217th Street (lower right)  
LPC Staff, February, 2018

77, 79, and 81 Park Terrace West (below)  
LPC Staff, December 2018





**527 West 217th Street**  
LPC Staff, February, 2018



**545 West 217th Street**  
LPC Staff, February, 2018

# Park Terrace West – West 217<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District: Building Descriptions



## Park Terrace West

Park Terrace West West-West 217<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District

### West Side of Park Terrace West



#### 77 Park Terrace West

Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 2243, Lot 391

**Date(s):** 1921-23 (NB 305-1921)

**Architect / Builder:** Moore & Landsiedel (Frank L. Landsiedel), Architect

**Owner / Developer:** J. Routh/ Unknown

**Type:** Semi-detached

**Style:** Colonial Revival

**Stories:** 2 plus basement

**Materials:** Brick cladding, wood deck railing

**Status:** Contributing

#### History, Significance and Notable Characteristics

This is one of three residences (77, 79, and 81 Park Terrace West) within the district that were built together in 1923 as part of a picturesque enclave of early 20th-century free-standing and semi-detached period-revival houses with gardens and garages. The southern half of a two-family house, it was designed to look like a single-family residence with its party-wall neighbor (79 Park Terrace West). The Colonial Revival form, massing, and organization are interpreted through the Arts and Crafts materials and decorative elements. Notable features of the house include the horizontal emphasis of the front facade (porch, roof edge, and deck railing), a prominent full-width front porch, the pedimented window dormer, stepped parapets, decorative patterned brickwork (particularly at the porch railing), and single window openings. The site includes a separate garage and small front planting area. Previous owners include John Routh (1921); B. Riley (1923); S. Riordan (1923); Hudan Holding (1927); L. Ferris (1935); E. A. McGuire (1940); and V. F. Amo (1963).

The east-facing primary facade is slightly set back from the street and is clad in buff-colored brick with scattered variations in color. The doors and windows, along with a belt course below the porch, are trimmed with brick soldiers and headers. Windows are double-hung, except the small basement one-light window below the porch. The porch is supported by squared brick posts and a decorative railing in an open pattern of stacked and alternating bricks. The porch railing is topped with slanted bricks and the posts feature a brick course that suggests a capital. The roof of the porch creates a second-story deck with a simple post railing. The

building's side-facing pent roof has a pedimented window dormer, but the rest of the roof is flat. Stepped brick parapets at each end extend above the roof. Both doors at the entrance and second-floor deck are wood, with multi-light glazing. The front porch steps, cheek walls, and newels are clad with buff-colored brick.

Along the south facade that faces the driveway, the basement level is smooth with a cementitious coating. There are three small windows at the basement and shallow-arched window openings at the first and second stories. Two belt courses, one at the first and the other at the second story, continue the brick pattern at the front porch.

#### **Alterations**

Composition roof shingles; one-over-one double-hung aluminum windows replaced multi-light double-hung wood windows; aluminum siding replaced wood at dormer; a routed wood product clads eave and dormer soffits, the porch ceiling and porch beam; numerals, security camera, and porch ceiling light added

#### **Site**

There is a concrete walkway adjacent to a small areaway yard with a small planting area edged with and a short brick border.

Garage: A semi-detached buff-colored brick garage with a flat roof and a replaced door is at the end of the concrete driveway along the south side of the building.

#### **Sidewalk and Curb Materials**

Concrete sidewalk and concrete curb

#### **References**

New York City Department of Taxes, Municipal Archives; New York City Department of Buildings



#### **79 Park Terrace West**

Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 2243, Lot 390

**Date(s):** 1921-23 (NB 305-1921)

**Architect / Builder:** Moore & Landsiedel (Frank L. Landsiedel), Architect

**Owner / Developer:** M. Corcoran/ Unknown

**Type:** Semi-detached

**Style:** Colonial Revival

**Stories:** 2 and basement

**Materials:** Brick cladding, wood deck railing

**Status:** Contributing

#### **History, Significance and Notable Characteristics**

This is one of three residences (77-81 Park Terrace West) built together in 1923 as part of a picturesque enclave of early 20th-century free-standing

and semi-detached period-revival houses with gardens and garages. The northern half of a two-family house, it was designed to look like a single-family residence with its party-wall neighbor (77 Park Terrace West). The Colonial Revival form, massing, and organization are interpreted through the Arts and Crafts materials and decorative elements. Notable features include the horizontal emphasis of the front facade (porch, roof edge, and deck railing), the prominent full-width front porch, the pedimented window dormer, stepped parapets, decorative patterned brickwork (particularly at the porch railing), single window openings. The site includes a separate garage and small front planting area. Previous owners include Coran Holding Corp. (1921); M. Corcoran (1923); B. Bolz (1923); S. Mazzola (1924); Saljosu Realty (1929); H. Grad (1934); B. Charof-Ano ((1946); and Dillon family members (1946).

The east-facing primary facade is slightly set back from the street and is clad in buff-colored brick with scattered variations in color. The doors, windows, and a belt course below the porch are trimmed with brick soldiers and headers. Windows are double-hung, except at the dormer window and the basement below the porch. The porch is supported by squared brick posts and a decorative railing in an open pattern of stacked and alternating bricks. The porch railing is topped with slanted bricks and the posts feature a brick course that suggests a capital. The ceiling of the porch is thin wood boards. The roof of the porch creates a second-story deck with a simple wood post railing. The building's side-facing pent roof has a pedimented window dormer. The rest of the roof is flat. Stepped brick parapets at each end extend above the roof. Both doors at the entrance and second-floor deck are wood with multi-light glazing. The cheek walls and newels at the front porch entrance are clad with buff-colored brick.

Along the north facade that faces the driveway, the basement level is smooth with a cementitious coating. There are three small windows at the basement and shallow-arched window openings at the first and second stories. Two belt courses, one at the first and the other at the second story, continue the pattern at the front porch.

#### **Alterations**

Composition roof shingles; one-over-one double-hung windows replaced multi-light double-hung wood windows; an original second-story window opening was converted to a deck door; aluminum siding replaced wood at dormer; two single-light windows replaced multi-light windows at the dormer; cladding added to eaves, porch beam and dormer soffits; stone steps replaced brick steps; a stone porch floor replaced a wood floor; two mailboxes, numerals, ceiling light, and security camera added

#### **Site**

There is a concrete walkway adjacent to a small areaway yard with a small planting area and a short terra-cotta border.

Garage: A semi-detached buff-colored brick garage with a flat roof and

replaced garage door is at the end of the concrete driveway along the north side.

### **Sidewalk and Curb Materials**

Concrete sidewalk with concrete curb

### **References**

United States Census Records, 1930, 1940; New York City Department of Taxes, Municipal Archives; New York City Department of Buildings



### **81 Park Terrace West**

Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 2243, Lot 389

**Date(s):** 1923 (NB 305-1921)

**Architect / Builder:** Moore & Landsiedel (Frank L. Landsiedel), Architect

**Owner / Developer:** J. & M. Routh/ Unknown

**Type:** Free-standing house

**Style:** Colonial Revival

**Stories:** 2 and basement

**Materials:** Brick cladding

**Status:** Contributing

### **History, Significance and Notable Characteristics**

This is one of three residences (77-81 Park Terrace West) built together in 1923 as part of a picturesque enclave of early 20th-century free-standing and semi-detached period-revival houses with gardens and garages. It is the same original design as 77 Park Terrace West, but its north lot-line wall abuts the adjacent apartment building at 87 Park Terrace West. The Colonial Revival form, massing, and organization are interpreted through the Arts and Crafts materials and decorative elements. Notable features include the horizontal lines of the facade (front porch and roofline), the full-width front porch, the pedimented window dormer, stepped parapet, the decorative patterned brickwork, and single window openings. The site includes a separate garage and small front planting area. Previous owners include Coran Holding (1921); John (investigator) & Martha Routh (1923); Carey family members (1940); H. K. Galler (1964); and G. & S. Stefanie (1976).

The east-facing primary facade is slightly set back from the street and is clad in buff-colored brick with scattered variations in color. The doors and windows, along with a belt course below the porch, are trimmed with brick soldiers and headers. Windows are double-hung, except the small roof dormer windows and the basement window below the porch. The porch is supported by squared brick posts and a decorative railing in an open pattern of stacked and alternating bricks. The porch railing is topped with slanted bricks and the posts feature a brick course that suggests a capital. The roof of the porch creates a second story deck. The building's side-facing pent roof has a pedimented window dormer. The rest of the roof is flat. Stepped brick parapets at each end extend above the roof. The

first story entrance door is period-appropriate. The cheek walls and newels at the front porch entrance are clad with buff-colored brick.

Along the south facade that faces the driveway, the basement level is smooth with a cementitious coating. There are three small windows at the basement and shallow-arched window openings at the first and second stories. Two belt courses, one at the first and the other at the second story, continue the pattern at the front porch.

#### **Alterations**

Porch enclosed with windows, corner panels, and a door; composition roof shingles; one-over-one aluminum windows replaced multi-light double-hung wood windows; a pair of one-light dormer windows replaced multi-light wood windows; aluminum siding replaced wood at dormer; red brick risers and stone treads replaced buff-colored brick at porch steps; red brick cheek-wall extensions added at entry; pipe metal handrails added at steps; three metal mailboxes, numerals, and hanging light fixture added near entrance door; a pipe railing with semi-opaque panels replaced wood post railing at porch roof deck; sconces added at deck wall; soffits clad in scored alternative material

#### **Site**

There is a concrete walkway adjacent to a small areaway yard with a small planting area and a short stone retaining wall.

Garage: A semi-detached buff-colored brick garage with a flat roof and a replaced garage door is at the end of the concrete driveway along the south side of the building.

#### **Sidewalk and Curb Materials**

Concrete sidewalk and concrete curb

#### **References**

United States Census Records, 1930; New York City Department of Taxes, Municipal Archives



#### **91 Park Terrace West**

Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 2243, Lot 385

**Date(s):** 1925 (NB 768-1925)

**Architect / Builder:** Abraham H. Zacharius, Architect

**Owner / Developer:** Abraham & Jennie Levy

**Type:** Free-standing house

**Style:** Colonial Revival

**Stories:** 2 plus basement and attic

**Materials:** Brick and stone cladding, slate roof, tile entry

**Status:** Contributing



### **History, Significance and Notable Characteristics**

Part of a picturesque development of free-standing and semi-detached brick houses, this property is characterized by the integration of the popular period-revival styles with front-yard gardens and early accommodations for automobiles. This is one of three buildings (91, 93, and 95 Park Terrace West) with nearly identical front facades and setbacks, each built as a two-family residence in 1925. The Colonial Revival form, massing, and organization are interpreted through the Arts and Crafts materials and decorative elements. Notable features include the squared front facade with a hipped multi-color shingle roof, decorative patterned brickwork and rustic stonework including stone quoins, and a small shed-roof dormer window. Particularly notable is the arched entry flush with the facade with a stone keystone and impost blocks. The recessed entry itself features pebble-dash stucco above a multi-color Arts and Crafts tile wainscoting and tile flooring (Batchelder or similar) and a doorbell. Two vertical-board doors retain the medieval-style strap hinges and six-light glazing. Additionally, one of the doors retains its bottle-glass panes and scrolled metal plate combination handle and key lock. The site includes a separate garage and a small front-yard planting area. Previous owners: Abraham & Jennie Levy (1925); Roman Catholic Church of Good Shepherd (convent) (1942); and J. & M. Gavin (1952).

The building has a long rectangular footprint, and its east-facing primary facade is slightly set back from the street. The building is clad primarily in multi-color red and klinker brick (some protruding slightly) in a Flemish bond, with a variety of brick patterns defining openings, water table, and cornice area. Midway along the roof's east-west ridgeline, is a large double-sided shed-roof attic dormer. Quarry-faced rubble stone clads the basement level.

The north facade, with paired and several single windows is visible from the street and continues the brick and stone cladding pattern. Immediately adjacent to the facade is a concrete driveway that leads to the rear of the lot to access a detached garage, visible only from West 218th Street.

The south facade sits several feet from the adjacent apartment building at 87 Park Terrace West and as such is not visible from the street.

### **Alterations**

Aluminum double-hung windows have replaced the historically notable multi-light steel-sash casement and fixed windows at both facades; clapboard-like aluminum siding replaced wood trim and corner boards at attic-level dormers; ceiling light fixture, five metal mailboxes, and numerals added within recessed entry; entrance steps with stone slab treads and concrete risers replaced historic stone-block steps; metal pipe hand railings; chain-link fence visible in rear yard from West 218th Street; ALT 1109-1952 converted the building from 2-family to 3-family

### **Site**

A concrete walkway leads to the front steps; rectangular planting area

with brick retaining wall that accommodates downslope.

Garage: A detached two-car hipped-roof brick-clad garage is located at the rear of the lot.

### **Sidewalk and Curb Materials**

Concrete sidewalk and concrete curb

### **References**

United States Census Records, 1930; Department of Buildings; New York City Department of Taxes, Municipal Archives



### **93 Park Terrace West**

Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 2243, Lot 384

**Date(s):** 1925 (NB 768-1925)

**Architect / Builder:** Abraham H. Zacharius, Architect

**Owner / Developer:** Abraham & Jennie Levy

**Type:** Free-standing house

**Style:** Colonial Revival

**Stories:** 2 plus basement and attic

**Materials:** Brick and stone cladding, slate roof, tile entry

**Status:** Contributing

### **History, Significance and Notable Characteristics**

Part of a picturesque development of free-standing and semi-detached brick houses, this property is characterized by the integration of the popular period-revival styles with front-yard gardens and early accommodations for automobiles. This is one of three buildings (91, 93, and 95 Park Terrace West) with nearly identical front facades and setbacks, each built as a two-family residence in 1925. The Colonial Revival form, massing, and organization are interpreted through the Arts and Crafts materials and decorative elements. Notable features include the squared front facade with a hipped multi-color shingle roof, decorative patterned brickwork and rustic stonework including stone quoins, and a small shed-roof dormer window. Particularly notable is the round-arched entry flush with the front facade trimmed with a stone keystone and impost blocks. The recessed entry itself features multi-color Arts and Crafts tile wainscoting (Batchelder or similar). Previous owners include Abraham & Jennie Levy (1925); E. Horn (1926); and Roman Catholic Church of the Good Shepherd (1941).

The building has a long rectangular footprint, and its east-facing primary facade is slightly set back from the street. The building is clad primarily in multi-color red and klinker brick (some protruding slightly) in a Flemish bond, with a variety of brick patterns defining openings, water table, and cornice area. Midway along the roof's east-west ridgeline, is a large double-sided shed-roof attic dormer. Rubble stone clads the

basement level.

The north and south facades are visible from the street and continues the rubble stone cladding at the basement level and the brick pattern at the upper floors where there are paired and single one-over-one windows. There is a concrete service alley at the north facade and a shared driveway to the south.

### **Alterations**

Aluminum double-hung windows have replaced the historically notable multi-light steel-sash casement and fixed windows at all facades; clapboard-like aluminum siding replaced wood trim and corner boards at attic-level dormers; added aluminum soffit cladding; recessed entry alterations include smoothing-over pebble dash, painting some of the wainscoting tiles, new flooring and doors replaced multi-color tile floor and vertical-board entry doors; replaced ceiling light fixture, added mailbox; and numerals; entry steps with stone slab treads replaced historic stone-block steps; metal hand rails similar to railing in the 1939 tax photograph; security bars on first-story windows; non-historic bulkhead at rear of roof visible from West 218th Street; and several through-the-wall air conditioning units along south wall

### **Site**

The residence is set back from the street with a concrete walkway to the front steps. There is a short metal garden fence (similar to the metal fence in the 1939 tax photograph) at the rectangular planting area with a masonry retaining wall that accommodates the downslope. There is a parking pad in the rear accessed by the concrete driveway along the south side of the building and shared with 91 Park Terrace West.

### **Sidewalk and Curb Materials**

Concrete sidewalk with concrete curb

### **References**

New York City Department of Taxes, Municipal Archives; United States Census Records, 1940



## **95 Park Terrace West**

Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 2243, Lot 382

**Date(s):** 1925 (NB 768-1925)

**Architect / Builder:** Abraham H. Zacharius, Architect

**Owner / Developer:** Abraham & Jennie Levy

**Type:** Free-standing house

**Style:** Colonial Revival

**Stories:** 2 and basement and attic

**Materials:** Brick and stone cladding, slate roof, tile entry

**Status:** Contributing

### **History, Significance and Notable Characteristics**

Part of a picturesque development of free-standing and semi-detached brick houses, this property is characterized by the integration of the popular period-revival styles with front-yard gardens and early accommodations for automobiles. This is one of three buildings (91, 93, and 95 Park Terrace West) with nearly identical front facades and setbacks, built as two-family residences in 1925. The Colonial Revival form, massing, and organization are interpreted through the Arts and Crafts materials and decorative elements. Notable features include the squared front facade with a multi-color shingle hipped roof, the decorative patterned brickwork and rustic stonework including quarry-faced stone quoins, a shed-roof attic dormer window, the stone-block stairs, and the attached garage. Particularly notable is the round-arched entry flush with the facade with a quarry-faced stone keystone and impost blocks. The recessed entry itself features multi-color Arts and Crafts tile wainscoting (Batchelder or Batchelder-like), a vertical-board door with medieval-style strap hinges, a scroll-shaped door handle and key lock, and six-light glazing. Also notable are the planting areas at the front and large terraced side yards. Previous owners include Abraham (builder, real estate broker) & Jennie Levy (1926); R. Esposito (1942); and R. Galler (1968).

A corner property at Park Terrace West and West 218th Street, the building's east-facing front facade is set back slightly from the street. The building is clad in multi-color red and klinker brick (some protruding) in a Flemish bond, with a variety of brick patterns defining openings, water table, and cornice area. Midway along the roof's east-west ridgeline is a large double-sided shed-roof attic dormer. Rubble stone clads the basement level.

Around the northeast corner of the building is an additional enclosed entry porch (97 Park Terrace West) that is set back and extends northward from the building, and has a hipped roof and quoins, and entrance steps with historic stone-block treads and risers. The side entry door faces Park Terrace West and is similar in design to 95 Park Terrace West's door, but without the decorative handle.

The north facade faces West 218th Street and has a slightly projecting section with a quoined corner. The side entrance porch has an arched window opening on its north wall. The basement, two stories, and attic have single and paired windows. A two-car brick basement-level garage is a rear extension of the building. It features decorative brickwork including a roof railing in an open pattern of stacked and alternating bricks, similar to the porch railings at 77-81 Park Terrace West.

The south facade faces a concrete service alley and continues the brick cladding of the front facade, including the soldier course from the front. There are several window openings toward the rear and a door at the ground level with an awning. The west facade continues the pattern of brick and rubble stone cladding and single window openings.

### **Alterations**

Aluminum double-hung windows have replaced the historic multi-light

steel-sash casement and fixed windows at all facades; clapboard-like aluminum siding replaced wood trim and corner boards at attic-level dormers; smoothing-over pebble dash and addition of ceiling light fixture and one metal mailbox within recessed entry; security lights along north facade; metal hand railings added at steps (similar to railings in 1939 tax photograph); garage doors replaced; trim around garage doors painted bright red; bubble sky light placed on north side roof; four through-the-wall air conditioners at west wall, three along north wall, and one in window dormer that faces Park Terrace West; surface-mounted conduit added

#### **Site**

The residence is set back from the street with a concrete walkway to the front steps; rectangular planting area with short stone retaining wall. The lot's corner and north area accommodate an irregular steep downslope with plantings and retaining walls. There is a side patio with wood fencing and pergola on a rubble stone foundation to the north of the side entrance. The patio's brick railing with corner posts were replaced by the wood railing, but two masonry corner posts remain along with a number of concrete urns that sat on the posts.

#### **Sidewalk and Curb Materials**

Concrete sidewalk and concrete curb

#### **References**

United States Census Records, 1940; New York City Department of Taxes, Municipal Archives; New York City Department of Buildings.

## **East Side of Park Terrace West**



#### **96 Park Terrace West**

Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 2243, Lot 296

**Date(s):** 1934 (NB 59-1934)  
**Architect / Builder:** C. G. de Neergaard, Architect  
**Owner / Developer:** A. Daley/ Kessler & Sayetta, Developer  
**Type:** Free-standing house  
**Style:** Tudor Revival  
**Stories:** 2 and basement  
**Materials:** Brick and stone cladding  
**Status:** Contributing

#### **History, Significance and Notable Characteristics**

This house, built in 1934, is part of a picturesque enclave of early 20th-century free-standing and semi-detached period revival houses with gardens and garages. Located on the east side of Park Terrace West this

free-standing residence with an irregular footprint is set back slightly from the street and is surrounded by planting areas. Notable features include steep rooflines, including an asymmetrical gable at the entry, rustic brick and stone cladding, and the rock-terraced garden. Particularly notable is the enclosed entry porch with an asymmetrical gabled roof and a round-arched opening accented with stone voussoirs and trim. The wood-plank door features a leaded-glass window and decorative hardware including medieval-style strap hinges, mail slot, handle, key escutcheon, and knocker. Previous owners include Arthur J. (writer) & Betty Daley (1934); E. Bastrup (1950); and J. E. Boylan (1959).

The building's primary facade faces west along Park Terrace West. The northern section of the building with a hipped roof projects slightly from the southern section where the roof is a side-facing gable. The entry porch is one story above grade with a side-facing set of stone steps and landing that features an open-pattern decorative brick railing. Cladding consists of multi-color red and klinker brick and quarry-faced blocks for quoins and trim. Quarry-faced random-range ashlar is along the basement level, but the base of the stairway is rubble stone. The brick is a variation of running bond, with a soldier course at the lintels and rowlocks in line with the slightly projecting brick window sills. There is a small light fixture above the entrance door. A single-car garage opening is at the basement level near the northwest corner.

The south facade's gable end roof is bisected by a brick chimney; brick and stone cladding pattern continues.

The north facade's basement level is clad with rubble stone while the upper stories continue the front facade brick. There is a concrete stairway from the driveway to the rear along the north wall.

The east facade has a steep asymmetrical gable end, continues the brick cladding, and has a small one-story wood clapboard shed extension.

#### **Alterations**

Aluminum single-light casement and fixed windows replaced the historic multi-light steel-sash casement and fixed windows; a small one-over-one double-hung wood window replaced a six-light window above the entry porch; composition roof shingles replaced slate roof; articulated garage door replaced a pair of barn-like wood doors; added metal hand railing at entrance steps; through-wall air conditioning

#### **Site**

The house sits on a north-south sloping lot and is set back slightly from the street with a short concrete driveway accessing a single car basement garage at grade. There is a small terraced planting area, partially set behind a rubble rock retaining wall that is continuous with the tall wall that supports the entry landing; some sections are topped with a jagged rock cap. Near the sidewalk is more recently installed rock curbing.

### **Sidewalk and Curb Materials**

Concrete and bluestone sidewalk and concrete curb

### **References**

"Buyers found for Nine Homes," *New York Times*, November 24, 1935, RE1; United States Census Records, 1940; New York City Department of Taxes, Municipal Archives; New York City Department of Buildings

# West 217<sup>th</sup> Street

## North Side of West 217<sup>th</sup> Street



### 527 West 217th Street

Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 2243, Lot 305

**Date(s):** 1933 (NB 20-1933)

**Architect / Builder:** Benjamin F. V. Driesler, Architect

**Owner / Developer:** T. Murtha/ Kessler & Sayetta, Developer

**Type:** Free-standing house

**Style:** Tudor Revival

**Stories:** 2 and basement

**Materials:** Brick and stone cladding, slate roof, wood porch at rear

**Status:** Contributing

### History, Significance and Notable Characteristics

This is one of three residences (527-531 West 217th Street) built together in 1933 as part of a picturesque enclave of early 20th-century free-standing and semi-detached period-revival houses with terraced gardens and garages. Notable features include the asymmetrical composition, rustic stone and brick cladding, slate roof, central chimney, small enclosed entry porch with gable roof, and diamond-pane windows. The site includes a separate garage and a stone-terraced front garden. Previous owners include Thomas Murtha, (ticket agent) (1933); T. Conroy (1943); and Roberto Ruez, (engineer) & wife Rosa Ruez (1955).

The south-facing primary facade is set back from the street and is dominated by a gable that is bisected by a prominent chimney. Behind the gable is a building-wide pent roof; the rest of the roof is flat. The east wall is several inches from the adjacent apartment building. Quarry-faced random-range ashlar with small patches of red brick clads the basement and first story; multi-color red and “charred” brick in a Flemish bond clads the second story with stone accents at the chimney. Sill and lintel at the first story are stone; second-story windows are trimmed with brick stretchers and soldiers; sills are brick. At the first story, a pair of diamond-pane windows with transoms is protected by its own pent roof. At the second story, are two six over one double-hung windows. A light fixture over the entry door and copper scuppers, leaders, and gutters are also present.

The west facade faces a shared driveway and is clad with a lighter red brick in a common bond pattern and is topped with terra-cotta coping tiles



at the parapet. Visible along the flat wall are multiple single-window openings with brick sills at each story, but there is also a pair of windows with transoms at the first story near the southwest corner. Windows are six-over-six, double-hung. Partially visible at the rear of the first floor is a wood porch at the first story.

#### **Alterations**

Aluminum windows replaced the building's wood windows, retaining the historic configurations and operations except at the first story at the primary facade where casement diamond-pane leaded-glass windows replaced double hung; metal storm door added at entry (obscuring main door); stone entry steps replaced brick steps; two metal hand railings at entry replaced similar metal railing; surface-mounted conduit and security lights at west facade

#### **Site**

Stone stairs with stone-slab treads access the house through a rubble-stone wall capped with jagged stones. Beyond the wall is a small front yard and a flagstone pathway that leads diagonally to the house from the driveway. A metal railing has been added at the garden stairs

Garage (NB 41-1933): An asphalt driveway shared with 529 West 217th Street accesses a semi-detached brick garage with a slate pent roof, added roof-top deck, and replacement garage door.

#### **Sidewalk and Curb Materials**

Concrete sidewalk with three flags of bluestone and bluestone curb

#### **References**

"Plans Three Private Homes on West 217th Street Site," *New York Times* (NYT), February 28, 1933; "Homes at 527, 529, and 531 West 217th Street," NYT, October 22, 1933; United States Census Records, 1940; New York City Department of Taxes Property Assessments, Municipal Archives; New York City Department of Buildings; New York City Department of Finance, Deeds



#### **529 West 217th Street**

Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 2243, Lot 304

**Date(s):** 1933 (NB 20-1933); Porch (ALT 1839-1936)

**Architect / Builder:** Benjamin F. V. Driesler, Joseph Lau (porch), Architects

**Owner / Developer:** N. Palmer/ Kessler & Sayetta, Developer

**Type:** Semi-detached

**Style:** Tudor Revival

**Stories:** 2 and basement

**Materials:** Brick and stone cladding, slate roof, wood half timbers, stucco

**Status:** Contributing

### **History, Significance and Notable Characteristics**

This is one of three residences (527-531 West 217th Street) built together in 1933 as part of a picturesque enclave of early 20th-century free-standing and semi-detached period-revival houses with terraced gardens and garages. The eastern half of a two-family house, it was designed to look like a single-family residence with its party-wall neighbor (531 West 217th Street). Notable features include the asymmetrical composition, steep gable roof, rustic stone and brick cladding, slate roof, and rough stucco with half-timbering. The site includes a separate garage and a stone-terraced front garden. Shortly after the house was built, the enclosed front entry porch was added in 1936. Previous owners include Nora Palmer, Lyle (accountant) & Mary Scott (1933); Lanigan (1956); J. & M. Murtagh (1957), and Broadway Temple, Washington Heights (1977).

The south-facing primary facade is set back from the street and features a full-width enclosed entry porch set below a prominent second-story gable. The building's pent roof is continuous with its party-wall neighbor; the rest of the roof is flat. Quarry-faced random-range ashlar with small patches of red brick clads the first story; the second story is clad with multi-color red and "charred" brick in a running pattern, with the exception of half-timbering at the southeast corner. Sills are brick, door lintel is stone. The entry porch, accessed by brick steps, features a wide window opening and doorway. The second story has three double-hung windows within the gable end. Additional features include sections of copper gutters, leaders, and a light fixture to the right of the door.

The east facade faces a shared driveway and is clad with red brick in a common bond pattern topped with terra-cotta coping tiles at the parapet. Visible along the flat wall are multiple single-window double-hung windows with brick sills at each story. There are two pairs of windows with transoms, one at the east side of the enclosed porch and another at the first story adjacent to the porch edge. At the second story, window openings have segmental brick arches, but window sash are square-headed.

### **Alterations**

At front entry porch, existing front door replaced original plank door; four aluminum single-light casement windows with transoms replaced three pairs of steel-sash eight-light casement and multi-light transom windows; composition shingles replaced slate on entry porch; at second story one-over-one aluminum windows replaced multi-light double hung windows; metal guard rails added to basement windows; storm door added; replaced light fixture; numerals added; metal hand railing added at entry; and exposed conduit at east facade

This residence was the target of a Weather Underground Organization bombing February 21, 1970, resulting in minor damage, i.e. the loss of several panes within the front windows and a scorched eave. In addition, there was a serious fire next door at 531 West 217th Street on March 23, 2012, resulting in damage to this residence necessitating facade and roof repairs.

### Site

Stone stairs with stone-slab treads access the house from the driveway through a rubble-stone wall capped with jagged stones. Beyond the wall is a small front yard and a flagstone landing. Metal railings have been added at the stairs.

Garage: An asphalt driveway shared with 527 West 217th Street leads to a semi-detached brick garage with a slate pent roof and replacement garage door.

### Sidewalk and Curb Materials

Concrete and bluestone sidewalk and bluestone curb

### References

"Plans Three Private Homes on West 217th Street Site," *New York Times* (*NYT*), February 28, 1933; "Homes at 527, 529, and 531 West 217th Street," *NYT*, October 22, 1933; "Judge's Home Target of Fire Bombs" *NYT*, February 22, 1970; United States Census Records, 1940; New York City Department of Taxes Property Assessments, Municipal Archives; New York City Department of Finance, Deeds; New York City Department of Buildings



### 531 West 217th Street

Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 2243, Lot 303

**Date(s):** 1933 (NB 20-1933)

**Architect / Builder:** Benjamin F. V. Driesler, Architect

**Owner / Developer:** E. J. Tierney/ Kessler & Sayetta, Developer

**Type:** Semi-detached

**Style:** Tudor Revival

**Stories:** 2 and basement

**Materials:** Brick and stone cladding, slate roof, wood half timbers

**Status:** Contributing

### History, Significance and Notable Characteristics

This is one of three residences (527-531 West 217th Street) built together in 1933 as part of a picturesque enclave of early 20th-century period-revival style houses with terraced gardens and garages. The western half of a two-family house, it was designed to look like a single-family residence with its party-wall neighbor (529 West 217th Street). Although not identical, much of the facade mirrors 533 West 217th Street across the driveway. Notable features include the asymmetrical composition, diamond-pane leaded-glass windows; rustic stone and brick cladding; and corner chimney. Particularly notable is the distinctive enclosed entry porch with conical roof. The arched plank entry door has a leaded-glass window and decorative hardware including medieval-style strap hinges and period-appropriate knocker and handle. The site includes a separate garage and a stone-terraced front garden. Previous owners include Edward J. (public utilities official) & Josephine M. Tierney (1933);

Robert & Eleanor Tierney (1951); and B. & N. Crystal (1977).

The south-facing primary facade is set back from the street and features a corner chimney that is slightly wider at the base. At the first story are three leaded-glass diamond-pane double-hung windows with mullions and transoms; there are three six-over-six windows at the floor above. The building's pent slate roof is continuous with its neighbor; the rest of the roof is flat. First-story cladding is quarry-faced random-range ashlar with multiple-color red and "charred" brick; second story continues the brick in a basket-weave and herringbone pattern with flat boards added as trim. An irregular interplay of brick and stone clads the corner chimney. Sills, lintels, arched opening at the entry, and turret frieze are all brick. An arched basement window is visible along the front facade. There is a light fixture to the right of the entry door.

The west facade faces a shared driveway and is clad with red brick laid in a common bond and topped with terra-cotta coping tiles at the parapet. Visible along the flat wall are multiple single-window openings with brick sills containing six-over-six sash. There is also a pair of double-hung windows with transoms at the first floor near the southwest corner. Second-story window openings have segmental brick arches and square-headed sash.

### **Alterations**

After a serious fire March 23, 2012, the facade was restored to its appearance as shown in a New York City Department of Taxes photograph of 1939. Replaced and replicated features included doors, windows, cladding, roofing, and landscaping. Aluminum windows replaced the building's wood windows, retaining the historic configurations and operations. Reconfigured stone entry steps replaced brick; metal grilles added to basement windows; security lights and camera at west facade; and a period-appropriate storm door was added.

### **Site**

Stone stairs with stone-slab treads lead to the house from the driveway through a rubble stone retaining wall capped with jagged stones. Beyond the wall is a small front yard and a flagstone landing. Recent hardscape includes masonry curbing.

Garage: A concrete driveway shared with 533 West 217th Street leads to a semi-detached brick garage with a slate pent roof and a replacement garage door.

### **Sidewalk and Curb Materials**

Concrete sidewalk with bluestone curb

### **References**

"Plans Three Private Homes on West 217th Street Site," *New York Times* (*NYT*), February 28, 1933; "Homes at 527, 529, and 531 West 217th Street," *NYT*, October 22, 1933; United States Census Records, 1940; New York City Department of Taxes, Municipal Archives; New York City Department of Finance, Deeds; New York City Department of Buildings.



## 533 West 217th Street

Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 2243, Lot 302

**Date(s):** 1933-34 (NB 122-1933)  
**Architect / Builder:** Benjamin F. V. Driesler, Architect  
**Owner / Developer:** Seljosy Realty/ Kessler & Sayetta, Developer  
**Type:** Semi-detached  
**Style:** Tudor Revival  
**Stories:** 2 and basement  
**Materials:** Brick and stone cladding, stucco  
**Status:** Contributing

### History, Significance and Notable Characteristics

This is one of two residences (533-535 West 217th Street) built together in 1933-34 as part of a picturesque enclave of early 20th-century free-standing and semi-detached period-revival houses with gardens and garages. The eastern half of a two-family house, it was designed to look like a single-family residence with its party-wall neighbor (535 West 217th Street). Although not identical, much of the facade mirrors 531 West 217th Street across the driveway. Notable features include the asymmetrical composition, rustic stone and brick cladding, stucco panels; corner chimney, and hipped-roof wall dormer. Particularly notable is the distinctive turret-like enclosed entry porch with conical roof and stone lintel. The plank entry door has a leaded-glass window and decorative hardware including medieval-style strap hinges, knocker, handle, key escutcheon and mail slot. Notable to the site are the front yard planting area and separate garage. Previous owners include Seljosy Realty (1934); A. Esposito and family (1953); John Miller (1976); and C. Jacquez (1980).

The south-facing primary facade is set back from the street and features a corner chimney clad with brick and stone that is wider at the base. The building's pent roof is continuous with its party-wall neighbor; the rest of the roof is flat. The first story is clad with quarry-faced random-range ashlar with scattered areas of multi-color red and "charred" brick. The second story continues the brick with stucco panels flanking the windows and one at the upper chimney. All sills are brick. The first story's double-hung windows are under a projecting roof. There is a light fixture to the right of the front door, accessed by stone and brick steps.

The east facade faces a shared driveway and is clad with red brick in a common bond pattern topped with terra-cotta coping tiles at the parapet. Visible along the flat wall are multiple window openings with brick sills at each story; sash are double-hung. There is also a pair of windows with transoms at the first story near the front corner. At the second story, window openings have segmental brick arches, but window sash are square-headed.

### Alterations

Current one-over-one aluminum windows replaced diamond-pane leaded-glass double-hung wood windows at first story, removing the transoms; at

second story, four aluminum one-light casement windows replaced three six-over-one double-hung windows; imitation slate replaced historic slate shingles; entry storm door added; at east facade, two single window openings expanded to create a wide window opening at first story; aluminum one-over-one double hung windows replaced multi-light wood windows; metal window guards at basement and first story

#### **Site**

Stone stairs with slab treads access the house through a brick retaining wall. Beyond the wall is a small front yard and a flagstone pathway that approaches the house diagonally from the driveway. The rectilinear brick wall with metal gate and fence replaced the historic rubble-stone retaining wall with jagged caps.

Garage: concrete driveway shared with 531 West 217th Street accesses a semi-detached brick garage with a pent roof and replacement garage door.

#### **Sidewalk and Curb Materials**

Concrete sidewalk with bluestone curb

#### **References**

United States Census Records, 1940; New York City Department of Buildings; New York City Department of Taxes, Municipal Archives; New York City Department of Finance, Deeds

### **535 West 217th Street**

Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 2243, Lot 301



**Date(s):** 1933-34 (NB 122-1933); Porch (ALT 2483-1934)

**Architect / Builder:** Benjamin F. V. Driesler, C. G. de Neergaard (porch), Architects

**Owner / Developer:** J. & E. McCarthy/ Kessler & Sayetta, Developer

**Type:** Semi-detached

**Style:** Tudor Revival

**Stories:** 2 and basement

**Materials:** Brick and stone cladding, wood and stucco trim

**Status:** Contributing

#### **History, Significance and Notable Characteristics**

This is one of two residences (533-535 West 217th Street) built together in 1933-34 as part of a picturesque enclave of early 20th-century free-standing and semi-detached period-revival houses with gardens and garages. The western half of a two-family house, it was designed to look like a single-family residence with its party-wall neighbor (533 West 217th Street). Notable features include the asymmetrical composition, steeply pitched roof; rustic stone, brick, and rough-textured stucco cladding, and multi-light steel-sash windows. Particularly notable is the round-arched stone-trimmed entry. The arched plank entry door has a small leaded-glass window and decorative hardware including medieval-style strap hinges, handle, key escutcheon, and mail slot. Notable to the

site are the separate garage and the rock-terraced front garden. Shortly after the house was built, the enclosed front entry porch was added in 1934. Previous owners include Joseph (executive) & E. McCarthy (1934); G. Berlinski (1942); and John Butler (1972).

The south-facing primary facade is set back from the street and features an enclosed full-width entry porch with its own roof and multi-light steel-sash casement windows with transoms. The three six-over-six windows at the second story are set within a slightly projecting steeply-gabled wall dormer; sills are brick. The building's pent roof is continuous with its party-wall neighbor; the rest of the roof is flat. Cladding consists of quarry-faced ashlar blocks interspersed with multi-color red and "charred" brick at the first story; the second story continues the same brick in addition to stucco at the gabled wall dormer and at the corner panel edged with flat wood trim. Copper leaders and gutters, are also present.

The west facade faces a driveway and is clad with red brick in a common bond pattern and is topped with terra-cotta coping tiles at the parapet. Visible along the flat wall are multiple window openings with brick sills at each story. There is a pair of multi-light steel-sash casement windows with transoms at the porch and a pair of double-hung windows with transoms adjacent to the porch. Two windows at the first story and all at the second story have segmental brick arches, but the window sash are square-headed.

#### **Alterations**

Flared standing seam hood added over entry door; rough stucco replaced half-timbering at second-story gable end and corner panel; imitation slate replaced historic slate shingles; aluminum-clad double-hung windows at second floor and along west facade replaced same configuration and operation as historic; stone-slab steps added at front door; surface-mounted conduits and three through-the-wall areas for air conditioning units at west facade

#### **Site**

The front landscaping closest to the house retains the rubble-stone retaining walls with jagged caps. A bluestone walkway leads to the house's entry on a diagonal through a small yard. There is an added metal railing at steps. The bluestone curbing at the sidewalk is a later addition.

Garage: A concrete driveway leads to a detached pent-roof single-story brick garage (designed by C. G. de Neergaard) with imitation slate shingles that match the house.

#### **Sidewalk and Curb Materials**

Concrete sidewalk with bluestone curb

#### **References**

United States Census Records, 1940; New York City Department of Taxes, Municipal Archives; New York City Department of Finance, Deeds; New York City Department of Buildings

## 537 West 217th Street

Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 2243, Lot 300



**Date(s):** 1934 (NB 119-1934)

**Architect / Builder:** C. G. de Neergaard, Architect

**Owner / Developer:** A. & C. Steinberg/ Kessler & Sayetta, Developer

**Type:** Free-standing house

**Style:** Tudor Revival

**Stories:** 2 plus basement and attic

**Materials:** Brick and stone cladding

**Status:** Contributing

### History, Significance and Notable Characteristics

This house, built in 1934, is part of a picturesque enclave of early 20th-century free-standing and semi-detached period-revival houses with gardens and garages. With a long rectangular footprint, this free-standing house is set back from the street. Notable features include the asymmetrical composition, rustic stone and brick cladding, steel-sash multi-light windows, corner chimney, and the gable-roofed enclosed entry porch with Tudor-arched doorway. The Tudor-arched plank entry door has a leaded-glass window and decorative hardware including medieval-style strap hinges, knocker, and handle. The site includes a separate garage and rock-terraced front garden. Previous owners include A. and C. Steinberg (1934) and M. & L. Haliczzer (1938).

The south-facing primary facade with a side-facing gable roof is topped with a small shed-roofed window dormer. The gable-topped entry porch and the expressed chimney are at opposite corners of the building, flanking the multi-light casement and fixed steel-sash windows set within the first story; a similar window is at the second story to the left of the chimney. Cladding in particular adds to the variety of the facade with its pattern of multi-color red and “charred” brick in a common bond pattern randomly interspersed with quarry-faced stone. In addition, stones are used for quoins, lintel trim at windows and at the doorway’s arched opening, while brick is used for the sills. Also present is the light fixture above the entry and three stone entry steps.

The east facade faces the neighboring property’s driveway and is clad in a red brick with slightly projecting brick sills. Visible along the flat wall are multiple single-window openings at the basement, the upper stories, and one window at the attic. Windows are multi-light casement and fixed metal sash.

The west facade, with a secondary door protected by a hood, faces a concrete driveway shared with 539 West 217th Street. Cladding is red brick with slightly projecting brick sills. Visible along the flat wall are five single-window openings with multi-light casement and fixed steel-sash windows.

### Alterations

Composition roof shingles replaced slate shingles; glass block fills the



window opening at the east facade basement; metal grilles added to basement windows; exposed conduit along east and west facades

#### **Site**

A flagstone walkway with one step accesses the house from the sidewalk through a planting area. Adjacent to the driveway is a rubble-stone retaining wall capped with jagged stones. Recent hardscape includes masonry curbing.

Garage (NB 95-1935) designed by Louis Kurtz: A concrete driveway leads to a semi-detached two-car brick-trimmed garage with a pent roof clad with composition shingles, added deck, and replacement garage door; the building is shared with 539 West 217th Street.

#### **Sidewalk and Curb Materials**

Concrete sidewalk with bluestone curb

#### **References**

United States Census Records, 1940; New York City Department of Buildings; New York City Department of Taxes, Municipal Archives; New York City Department of Finance, Deeds



#### **539 West 217th Street**

Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 2243, Lot 299

**Date(s):** 1935 (NB 76-1935)  
**Architect / Builder:** Louis Kurtz, Architect  
**Owner / Developer:** A. & M. Berninger/ Kessler & Sayetta, Developer  
**Type:** Free-standing house  
**Style:** Tudor Revival  
**Stories:** 2 plus basement  
**Materials:** Brick and stone cladding, stucco

**Status:** Contributing

#### **History, Significance and Notable Characteristics**

This house, built in 1935, is part of a picturesque enclave of early 20th-century free-standing and semi-detached period revival houses with gardens and garages. With a long rectangular footprint, this free-standing house is set back from the street. Notable features include the asymmetrical composition of the front facade, hipped and gabled roofs, rustic stone and patterned brick cladding, stucco panels, corner chimney with decorative masonry, and diamond-paned windows. Also notable is the enclosed gabled entry porch with a wood plank entry door with a leaded glass window and decorative metal hardware that includes medieval-style strap hinges, door handle, knocker, and key escutcheon. The site includes a separate garage and rock-terraced front garden. Previous owners include Alex (cashier) & Margaret Berninger (1935); Kohlman family members (1953); and C. & A. Boxhill (1975).

The south-facing primary facade features a small entrance porch with a gable roof. There are three diamond-pane windows with transoms at the first floor, and six-over-one windows at the second. Cladding consists of multi-color red brick in a running bond pattern interspersed randomly with quarry-faced stone. Sills and lintels are brick or stone, matching the facade material of their particular location. The brick at the frieze and upper section of the chimney are in a basket-weave pattern. At each side of the second-floor window unit is a recessed panel with rough-textured stucco accented with two solitary bricks. The front facade's first-floor window unit is below a pent roof that abuts the slightly expressed corner chimney and the entrance porch roof. There is a light fixture above the entry and a single concrete step to a stone slab threshold.

The east facade faces a shared driveway and is clad in a light-red brick in a common bond pattern. Visible along the flat wall are multiple single segmental-arched window openings and slightly projecting brick sills; six-over-one window sash are square headed. There is a paired window with transoms at the first story near the front facade's southeast corner.

The west facade faces a side yard and has a window at the southern end of the main floor. There is a secondary door with a hood at the basement level.

#### **Alterations**

Composition roof shingles replaced slate shingles; aluminum windows that match historic configuration and operation replaced historic wood windows; storm door added; metal grilles added to basement and first story windows along the east facade

#### **Site**

A concrete walkway with a stone step leads diagonally from the intersection of the driveway and sidewalk to the entry porch through a small front yard. There is a quarry-faced stone retaining wall capped with jagged stones adjacent to the driveway. Close to the house is a short section of metal railing atop the retaining wall (seen in 1939 tax photograph). Brick curbs were added to the landscaping.

#### **Sidewalk and Curb Materials**

Concrete sidewalk with bluestone curb

#### **References**

United States Census Records, 1940; New York City Department of Taxes, Municipal Archives; New York City Department of Buildings

## 545 West 217th Street

Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 2243, Lot 298



**Date(s):** 1935 (NB 126-1935)  
**Architect / Builder:** Louis Kurtz, Architect  
**Owner / Developer:** J. & M. Kessler/ Kessler & Sayetta, Developer  
**Type:** Free-standing house  
**Style:** Tudor Revival  
**Stories:** 2 plus basement  
**Materials:** Brick and stone cladding, slate roof  
**Status:** Contributing

### History, Significance and Notable Characteristics

This house, built in 1935, is part of a picturesque enclave of early 20th-century free-standing and semi-detached period revival houses with gardens and garages. Located at the corner of West 217th Street and Park Terrace West, this free-standing residence with an irregular footprint is set back from the street and is surrounded by planting areas. The building's slate roof is gabled east to west and hipped north to south. Notable features include the asymmetrical composition, a steep and irregular roofline, rustic brick cladding accented with stone, cantilevered entrance hood, vertical-board entry door with small stepped rectangular windows and decorative hardware including medieval-style strap hinges, mail slot, key escutcheon, and handle. Also notable are the two wall-dormer windows, basement garage with vertical-board barn-type doors, and the rock-terraced garden. Previous owners include Jack & Mary Kessler (1935) (who developed the houses 527-545 West 217th Street and 96 Park Terrace West) and J. & R. Galler (1955).

Cladding consists of multi-color red and "charred" brick in a variation of common bond. Windows and doors are set within segmental-arched brick openings. Quarry-faced rock ashlar appears in an irregular pattern at the basement and corners and as individual units as impost blocks at selected arched window and door openings. Sills and lintels are brick. Some of the copper leaders are held in place by decorative copper anchors.

The south-facing West 217th Street facade has a small enclosed entry porch with its own hipped roof that is a continuation of the building's steep hipped roof. This roof extends beyond the front door and is supported by cantilevered stepped bricks beneath a profiled wood plate. Windows are single, paired, or tripartite double-hung. There is a light fixture at the front door.

The west facade features single and paired windows. At the northwest corner basement level is a pair of vertical-board barn-like garage doors. The east facade features another entry and a large chimney with cantilevered bricks at the top.

The north facade faces a planting area; a stone stairway with a metal

railing leads from the driveway to the side yard and a secondary door. Single windows with arched openings continue the pattern of the other facades.

#### **Alterations**

Three-over-one aluminum windows replaced six-over-one wood double-hung windows; added storm door; small area of resurfacing along Park Terrace West below first floor; added mailbox, house numbers, security lights, and surface-mounted conduit

#### **Site**

A walkway with flagstone pavers leads to the entry through the garden along West 217th Street. The walkway also continues to the east facade's secondary entry. There is a planting area at the corner to the south of the driveway that is held in place by a tall rubble stone retaining wall topped with jagged stones. Next to the sidewalks are additional planting areas bordered with stone curbs. A grade change along Park Terrace West creates an above-ground basement level where the single-car garage is located and accessed by a stone driveway.

#### **Sidewalk and Curb Materials**

Concrete and bluestone sidewalk with concrete curb

#### **References**

United States Census Records, 1940; New York City Department of Taxes, Municipal Archives; New York City Department of Buildings

# Park Terrace West-West 217<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District: Architects' Appendix

## Architects' Appendix Park Terrace West-West 217<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District

### Benjamin F. V. Driesler (or Benjamin Driesler, Jr.) (1894-1942)

527, 529, 531, 533, and 535 West 217th Street (1933-35)

Benjamin F. V. Driesler was born in New York City, the son of Benjamin J. Driesler, a well-known Brooklyn architect who was active in the early decades of the 1900s. They shared an office at 153 Remsen Street in Brooklyn until 1924 when the two separated. Driesler senior then maintained an office where he boarded, while junior continued to work at the Remsen Street office. Benjamin F. V. specialized in speculative housing during the 1920s and 30s, most designed in the popular revival styles, such as Tudor Revival and Colonial Revival. He designed many garden homes in Queens, including 46 within the Jackson Heights Historic District. In 1931, the New York Times showcased two-family Tudor Revival houses he designed for the Bayside area of Queens. Built along 48th Avenue and 217th Street, they are similar to his designs in 1933-35 for the West 217th Street houses. One of his last projects was the design of Colonial Revival houses on acreage that had been originally part of the Otto Kahn estate.

Dennis Steadman Francis (Francis), *Architects in Practice in New York City, 1840-1900* (New York: Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records, 1979), 88; "Deaths," *NYT* Dec 17, 1942; "Asks Separation from Driesler," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* or *NYT*, May 13, 1924; "Plan Four Homes Uptown," *NYT*, Nov 2, 1933; "Plans Three Private Homes on West 217th Street Site," *NYT*, Feb 28, 1933; "National Home Show Features The House of Your Dreams," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, Jan 31, 1937; *Jackson Heights Historic District (LP-1831)* (New York: City of New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, 1993); "Buying and Building Active in Metropolitan Zone," *NYT*, September 27, 1931; "Cold Spring Hills Opens Third Unit of Otto Kahn Estate," *Brooklyn Daily*

*Eagle*, May 31, 1942

## **Moore & Landsiedel**

**Frederick William Moore** (1874-1942)

**Frank Louis Landsiedel** (1873-1952)

77, 79, 81 Park Terrace West (1921)

Frank L. Landsiedel was the head draftsman in the office of architect Warren C. Dickerson in 1899. By 1900, Landsiedel formed a partnership with Frederick W. Moore, with offices in East Harlem and the Bronx. The firm's address in 1921 was 'Columbia Bank Building, 3rd Avenue & 148th Street, NYC' as noted on their drawings. They were quite prolific with over 200 known commissions in Manhattan alone. The firm specialized in the design of apartment buildings, but also produced drawings for a variety of other structures. Their designs are represented within the Greenwich Village Extension, Ladies Mile, Tribeca West, Hamilton Heights/Sugar Hill Northwest, and Morningside Heights historic districts. Along Park Terrace West between West 218th and West 215th streets, the firm designed five Colonial Revival brick residences, three of which are included in the historic district.

Francis, 49, 56; James Ward (Ward), *Architects in Practice in New York City, 1900-1940* (New York: Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records, 1989), 55; New York City Department of Building records; *Morningside Heights Historic District (LP-2584)* (New York: City of New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, 2017), 162-3; "Obituary," *NYT*, April 2, 1952, 33; Ancestry.com *U.S. Federal Census Records, 1910*; *World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-8* [database on-line]

## **C. G. (Clifford Gould) de Neergaard** (1896-1987)

537 West 217th Street (1933-35)

96 Park Terrace West (1934)

Porch and Garage, 535 West 217th Street, (1934)

C. G. de Neergaard was born in North Carolina (check). During World War I he was a student at Georgia Tech in Atlanta. By World War II he was an instructor at the City College of New York. Active in New York from the mid-1930s to the late 1950s, he designed residences and commercial buildings. During the 1930s he had offices at 24 Furman St, Brooklyn and at 305 Convent Avenue in Manhattan. Later he had an office at 1560 Amsterdam Avenue and by 1957 at 622 West 130th Street. He died in North Carolina in 1987.

Ancestry.com, *U. S. Federal Census Records, 1940*; *U. S. World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-18* [database on-line]; "The Campus" *Newspaper of College of the City of New York*, May 7, 1937. He and his wife lived at 635 Riverside Drive in 1940

## Joseph Lau (not determined-1974)

529 West 217th Street, porch addition (1936)

Joseph Lau's architectural office in 1936 was located at 24 Furman St, Brooklyn. Architect C. G. de Neergaard was also at the same location or office at that time. In 1939-40 his office was listed as 119 Nassau Street. He designed many alterations, storage buildings, and garages during the early days of his practice. He was also responsible for several projects in the Upper East Side and the Greenwich Village Extension historic districts. He died September 2, 1974.

New York City Department of Buildings; Ward, 46; *Greenwich Village Historic District Extension II (LP-2366)* (New York: City of New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, 2010); *AIA Historical Directory of American Architects* [database on-line]

## Louis A. Kurtz, AIA, (c.1896-c.1966)

539 West 217th Street (1935)

545 West 217th Street (1935)

Garage, 537 West 217th Street, (1935)

Louis Kurtz was born in New York City and grew up on Long Island. After his architectural studies at Columbia University, he joined the firm of Litchfield and Rogers, working as a draftsman for the architects in 1921. In 1931 he was working on house plans with architect Benjamin Schreyer. During the mid-1930s when he was designing the houses along West 217th Street, he had an office at 59 Crescent Place, Yonkers, New York and at 523 West 143rd Street, Manhattan (by 1938, 2 West 47th Street). Before World War II he specialized in residential architecture designed in historical revival styles. There are examples of his work in the Fieldston Historic District, including several Tudor Revival houses. He also designed one townhouse, built in 1939, in the Upper East Side Historic District. By the 1950s his residential designs were modern, either ranch style or split level. Other examples of his work are in The Bronx, Westchester County, and Long Island. He also worked elsewhere in New York State, Connecticut, and New Jersey.

Ward, 45; *Fieldston Historic District (LP-2138)* (New York: City of New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, 2006); "Personals," *Pencil Points*, Vol II, August, 1921, 36; "Tudor Design for this New Residence at Larchmont," *NYT*, April 26, 1931; Ancestry.com, *U. S. Federal Census Records, 1940* [database on-line]; Office for Metropolitan History, *Manhattan NB Database 1900-1986*, (September 8, 2005), <http://www.MetroHistory.com>

## **Abraham Harry Zacharius (1884-1961)**

91, 93, and 95 Park Terrace West (1925)

Abraham was born in Russia, and by WWI was listed as an architect according to his World War I draft card. Although, he worked in Brooklyn, he also had an office at 156 West 20th Street in Manhattan. By 1942 he worked for the Certified Contracting Corporation, 241 East 36th Street. He died February 13, 1961 and was buried in Mt Zion Cemetery in Queens.

Ancestry.com, *U. S. Federal Census Records, 1930*, *U. S. World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-18*, *U. S. World War II Draft Registration Cards, 1942* [database on-line]; Office for Metropolitan History, *Manhattan NB Database 1900-1986*, (October 5, 2018), <http://www.MetroHistory.com>