Landmarks Preservation Commission
September 11, 1984, Designation List 171
LP - 1506

THE CHATSWORTH APARTMENTS AND ANNEX, 344 and 340 West 72 Street, Borough of Manhattan. Built 1902 - 1904 and 1905 -1906; Architect John E. Scharsmith.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1183, Lots 53 and 50.

On June 12, 1984, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a Public Hearing on the proposed designation as landmarks of the Chatsworth Apartments and Annex and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Sites (Item No. 6). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. At this hearing, six witnesses spoke in favor of designation. There were no speakers in opposition to designation. In addition, the Commission received numerous letters in support of designation. The Chatsworth Apartments and Annex (LP - 1424) had been the subject of a previous Public Hearing on April 12, 1983 (Item No. 6). At this hearing, four witnesses spoke in favor of designation. There were no speakers in opposition to designation. In addition, the Commission received numerous in support of designation.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Prominently sited on the south side of West 72 Street at the foot of Riverside Park on Manhattan's Upper West Side, the Chatsworth Apartments and Annex are two exceptionally handsome apartment buildings that were constructed early in the twentieth century as luxury "housekeeping apartments" for an affluent clientele. Both structures were designed by architect John E. Scharsmith in the Beaux-Arts manner and feature exuberant French-inspired classical and Beaux-Arts detailing. The Chatsworth Apartments (1902 - 1904) at 344 West 72 Street, the older of the two structures, consists of two twelve-story blocks sharing a common base that extends through the block from West 72 Street to West 71 Street. The smaller Annex (1905 - 1906) at 340 West 72 Street, is a separate eight-story tower linked to the earlier building at its base. These two buildings, which are examples of the early twentieth century luxury apartment building, are also notable for their Beaux-Arts inspired design.

Development of the Upper West Side[1]

The Dutch settlers of New Amsterdam called the Upper West Side "Bloemendael." Later, this area of Manhattan was known by the anglicized variant of Bloomingdale. In the early eighteenth century, Bloomingdale Road, which ran diagonally through the area approximating the course of an ancient Indian Trail, provided the main link to the city at the tip of Manhattan. The opening of the road prompted many wealthy New Yorkers to establish their country seats in its hinterland; later, the road's presence encouraged the gradual growth of small villages and hamlets along its course.

Although the Commissioners' Map of 1811 had imposed a uniform street grid on Manhattan, some fifty years elapsed before streets on the Upper West Side were actually laid out. In the interim, the bucolic character of Bloomingdale began to urbanize as its many country estates were carved into smaller farms and as numerous institutions began to establish themselves in the area. By midcentury, New York City found itself in the throes of expansion and transformation into a major metropolis. As the city's population continued to swell, mounting development pressures pushed residential development further north. However, the bulk of this expansion was funneled to the East Side, attracted there by existing mass transit facilities. Development in Bloomingdale proceeded slowly. Its pace was influenced by a complex interrelationship of factors which included successive waves of real estate speculation, the construction of a variety of civic improvements and, ultimately, the opening of reliable rapid transit, especially the Ninth Avenue El in 1879.

By the mid-1880s, the pace of the Upper West Side's residential development gathered an ever increasing momentum and by the early 1890s, the Upper West Side had become densely built up. The West 70s and 80s, in particular, had acquired long stretches of rowhouses and this neighborhood quickly cultivated a reputation for being the Upper West Side's most desirable residential area. By the turn of the century, the Upper West Side had evolved, in the minds of many, into the city's most fashionable residential area.

The Project

The land occupied by the Chatsworth Apartments and Annex was originally within the Jacob Harsen farm.[2] With the exception of a narrow strip of land at the northerly portion of the block fronting on West 72 Street, this property remained in the Harsen family until 1873 when Jacob Harsen, M.D. conveyed it in lots and parcels. The narrow northerly strip was part of a larger parcel of land that was transferred , in 1867, to Gustavus A. Sacchi who thereafter sold it in lots and parcels.[3]

This land, which remained vacant, was sold numerous times until it was eventually acquired by George F. Johnson.[4] Johnson was a real estate developer active in Manhattan and the Bronx. He is credited with the development of the Hendrik Hudson Apartments in Morningside Heights area of Manhattan[5] and was associated, in the Bronx, with much of the residential neighborhood which today comprises the Longwood Historic District.[6] On May 14, 1903, Johnson transferred the Chatsworth Apartments site to the Johnson Kahn Company, a real estate concern of which he was a principal.[7] A year earlier, the firm had made an application to the city's Department of Buildings for approval to erect a twelve story brick and stone apartment building according to the designs of architect John E. Scharsmith.[8] The projected cost of this endeavor was placed at $1,100,000.[9] Construction commenced September 23, 1902, and the building was certified as complete on September 30, 1904.[10]

Upon their completion, the two sections of the Chatsworth contained a total of 66 "housekeeping apartments." According to the modest advertisements placed in numerous city newspapers[11] to announce the opening of the Chatsworth, the building was "positively completed and ready for occupancy September First."[12] Further, the ads noted that the Chatsworth offered apartment suites ranging in size from five rooms and bath to 15 rooms and bath. Leases, beginning October 1, 1904, ran from $900 to $5000.[13]

Evidently the response to the Chatsworth must have been substantial enough to spur the Johnson Kahn Company to build an annex to the original building. By late December, 1904, Johnson had acquired the necessary land for the annex and within a year

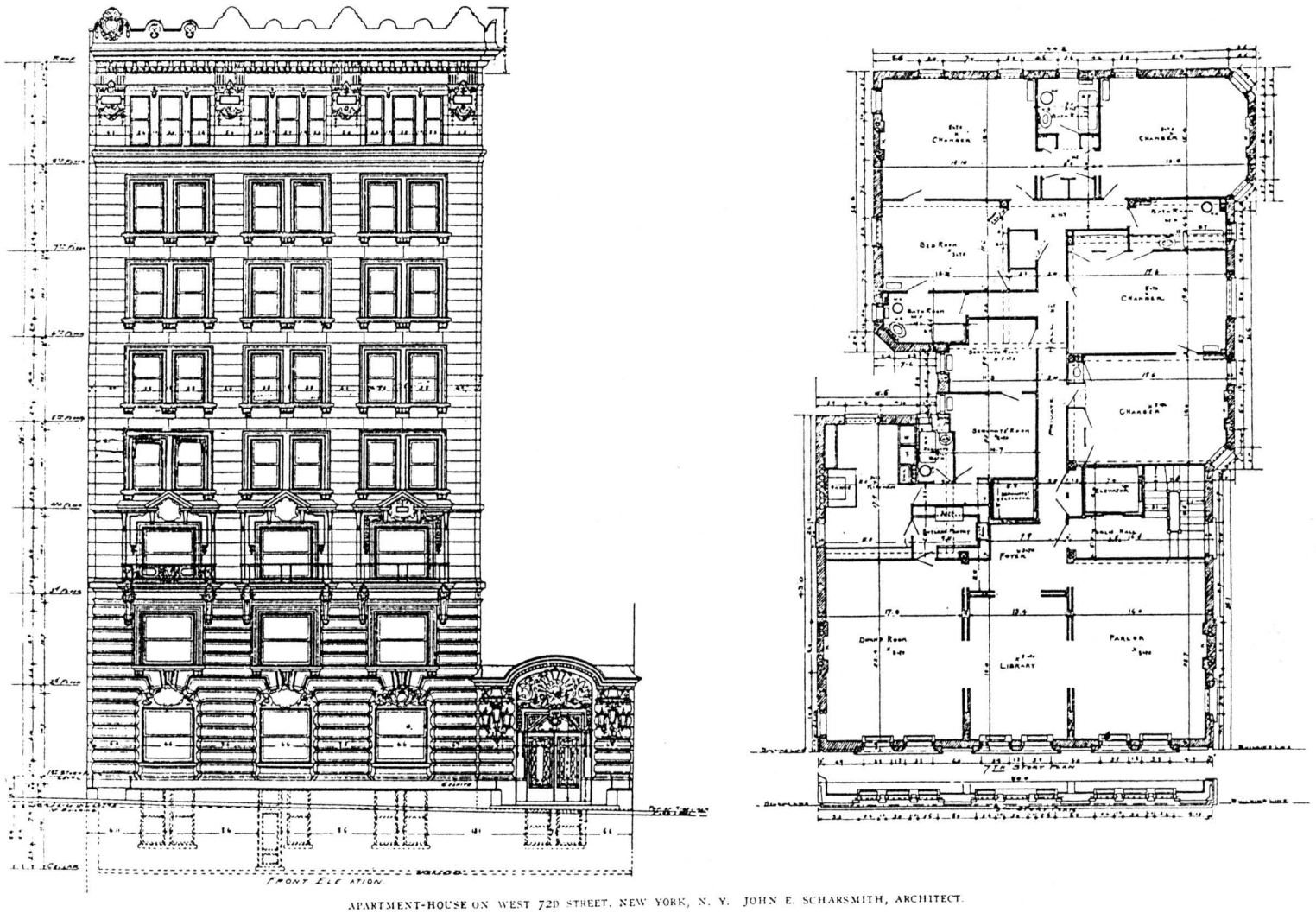
plans were submitted to the Department of Buildings for approval to erect an eight-story "flat" of brick, limestone , and terra cotta (see figure 1, page 5) at a projected cost of $150,000.[14] Once again the architect was John E. Scharsmith. Construction commenced on January 5, 1906 and the building was completed in early November.[15] In the interim, Johnson conveyed the land to the Johnson Kahn Company. The annex, when completed, contained eight large apartments, one on each floor. George Johnson, himself, occupied one of these units until his death at age 71 in 1918.[16]

The Apartment House

In 1901, architect Charles Israels noted that "...New York is a city of apartments."[17] A mere thirty years earlier, the apartment house was regarded with suspicion. The private, single-family dwelling, however humble it might be, represented an entrenched ideal. "Every good Knickerbocker," observed Israels, "with even the most modest pretensions, considered it his duty to house his family within four wells (sic) wherein he would be the sole lord and master; and the highest reach of his ambition was a brownstone front."[18]

As the nineteenth century progressed it became increasingly difficult for many middle-class New Yorkers to find affordable single family houses in desirable neighborhoods. Due primarily to the high cost of vacant building lots, the construction of single family rowhouses declined. As apartment buildings became more popular, the value of available vacant land, which previously had been reserved for rowhouse construction, escalated even more dramatically. And since the cost of land was added to the purchase price of a newly constructed house, the cost of the average rowhouse soared to a point where not even the prosperous upper middle-class could afford to own their own home.[19]

Earlier in the century the subdivision of rowhouses into quarters for poor families or the conversion of single family houses to boarding houses had become common. As a result, multi-family dwelling arrangements had long been associated with some kind of deprivation or serious hardship. Those braver wealthy families trying hotel life as an alternative to a single family dwelling found themselves not only sacrificing the home values of



APARTMENT-HOUSE ON WEST 72D STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y. JOHN E. SCHARSMITH, ARCHITECT.

The American Architect and Building News.
International Edition.

Volume XCI., Number 1619.
January 5, 1907.

Figure 1: The Chatsworth Annex

privacy and family unity so highly prized by the middle-class, but, also being stigmatized as irresponsible, if not immoral. If these ad hoc living arrangements were lacking in respectability, there was an even more frightening possibility: tenements. Tenements, the only model built expressly to house numerous families under one roof, were crowded, disease ridden and lacking in privacy. They were synonymous with poverty and not at all suited to middle-class sensibilities.[20]

The negative connotations and the social stigma associated with multi-family living arrangements did nothing to cultivate any enthusiasm that New York's middle-class in the late nineteenth century may have had for apartment living. Before apartment living could acquire any measure of respectability and acceptance by the city's middle-class, an architectural solution mitigating the negative circumstances associated with existing prototypes had to evolve. At first, New York apartments were designed hesitantly; tenants' needs were unclear and architects' experience with the middle-class apartment house was lacking.[21] During this period (1870s-1900), European models provided a useful reference point.[22] Apartment houses of several types, including residential hotels, bachelor flats and French Flats, grew both in size and reputation. An admired example of an early apartment building was the Dakota, a designated New York City Landmark, designed by H. J. Hardenbergh and constructed in 1880-1884.[23] Unlike tenments and French Flats, the Dakota occupied a lot larger that 25' X 100', included more stories and was strictly intended for the well-to-do New Yorker.

Another device adopted to make the notion of apartment living more palatable was the tendency to give individual apartment houses names. This practice can be traced to English tradition where a name identified a house in locations where street numbers were lacking.[24] In New York, where the streets did have numbers and where every apartment building had a perfectly acceptable address, a building name served another need. Giving apartment buildings names, especially exotic ones, did confer a certain cache and a specific identity on them.[25]

> 'Given the situation of tenants learning to live in these new apartment buildings . . . the practice of naming them eased the way. It was more comfortable to come home to the "Evelyn" than to a street number; the name gave the building a little more personality, a

> little more to identify as home, and remains an identifying device for high priced apartment houses today.[22]

The Chatsworth, of course, was no exception to this practice. The name "Chatsworth" can be traced to England. It comes from the estate of the Dukes of Devonshire which was originally built in 1552 by William Cavendish and Elizabeth Hardwick.[27]

The surge in apartment building construction, which began in the 1870s, rose through the 1880s and 1890s to almost totally supplant new construction of private houses as a middle-class dwelling type in New York. Questions of both physical design and social mores affecting the development of acceptable apartment buildings led, by 1905, to an articulated set of "proper" planning practices for buildings as a whole as well as for the individual family units.[28] Modern equipment such as central heating, elevators, built-in bath and kitchen equipment combined with telephone, refrigeration and laundry systems to create a fully serviced building which made modern urban life a reality for Manhattan's middle classes. The Chatsworth, for example, offered a conservatory on the mansard "story," a sun parlor, billiard parlor, a cafe, a first class barbershop, ladies hair dressing parlor, a valet and tailor service. Electric bus service was also maintained along 72nd Street from Central Park West to the building.[29]

Apartment House Design at the Turn of the Century

The period of classical eclecticism in American architecture beginning in the 1890s coincided almost exactly with the era of the luxury apartment building. Since architects of the era had little experience with apartment buildings they looked to contemporary, low-scale residential work for design clues to find an an appropriate stylistic expression that would reinforce the acceptability of the apartment house as an alternative to the single family dwelling. At the turn of the century this entailed adapting classically inspired prototypes which had only recently evolved for three, four and five story buildings to structures twice or three times as tall.

Harmon Goldstone maintains that the process which arose to meet this challenge may well be termed "design by inflation."[30] Bases were blown up to two, three and even four stories in height. Friezes were enlarged to include up to two full stories. Cornices were given either an exaggerated projection in an attempt to hold down the sheer mass of these buildings, or else they were lowered a few stories to accommodate an enlarged attic or mansard roof in order to reduce the building's apparent height. The shaft of the building was treated more or less with uniformity. Bandcourses, balconies and pedimented windows were introduced to relieve what otherwise would have been a monotonous expanse while such vertical elements as pilasters, tiers of bay windows or of rusticated stone were blown up into multi-story elements. Goldstone notes that those apartment buildings which can be considered among the most successful examples of classically inspired design are those to which horizontal rhythms were the most imaginatively adapted.[31]

The Architect

When John E. Scharsmith designed the Chatsworth Apartments and Annex, he was probably at the pinnacle of his career. It was roughly at this time that he worked on one of the few other commissions that can be solely attributed to him, the Swiss Home (1904 - 1905)[32] at 35 West 67th Street. While *Keys to the Architects of Greater New York*, published 1899, indicates that Scharsmith specialized in residential work,[33] his only known residential work, besides the Chatsworth Apartments and Annex and the Swiss Home, is a group of five row houses at 529 - 537 West 187th Street in the Washington Heights section of Manhattan.[34]

Prior to anglicizing his surname from Schaarschmidt, probably in 1895, Scharsmith is known to have maintained an architectural office at 12 Chambers Street for a brief period before relocating to 1267 Broadway.[35] In 1893, he evidently entered into some sort of collaborative effort with architects Thom & Wilson (also at 1267 Broadway), who are remembered as the architects of the Harlem Court House, a designated New York City Landmark, as well as numerous rowhouses and apartment buildings.[36] While this liaison was brief, lasting roughly a year, it was sufficient enough for Thom and Wilson and Schaarschmidt to produce the design for the New Criminal Court Building[37] (replaced in 1939 by the present Tombs and Criminal Court Building).

According to directories, Scharsmith continued to maintain an architectural office at various addresses in the Madison Square and midtown areas of Manhattan until 1911.[38] During this period he resided in a number of locations in Hamilton Heights. In 1912 he was still listed as an architect but no longer in Manhattan. Instead he had relocated his practice to 1910 Morris Avenue in the Bronx.[39] By 1913, Scharsmith had evidently abandoned his architectural career in favor of one in real estate. In that year directories list him as the president of J. and A. Real Estate at 2645 Jerome Avenue.[40] Evidently this concern was a family venture for numerous family members are listed as officers of the firm. Scharsmith now resided next door at 2641 Jerome Avenue.

Architectural Description

The Chatsworth Apartments, which consists of two separate twelve-story blocks sharing a common base and entry, fills an irregular site defined by the abandoned railroad yards to its west. The tower fronting on West 72 Street and overlooking Riverside Park to the north resembles, in plan, a modified "U" while that of the rear takes the form of an "H. (See Figure 2 below).

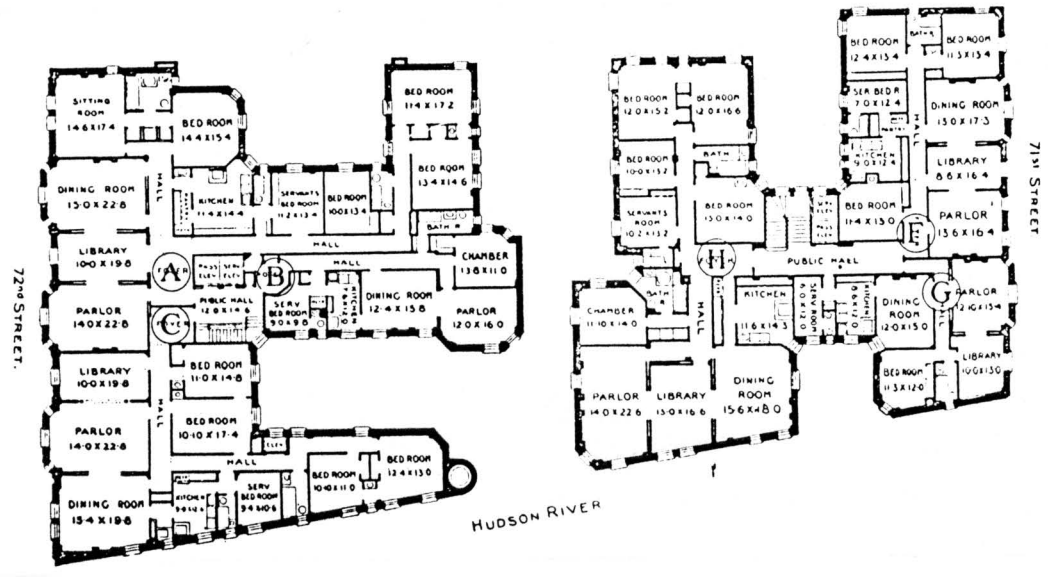


Figure 2: Typical floor plan of the Chatsworth. From Andrew Alpern, Apartments for the Affluent (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1975), p. 36.

The organization of the Chatsworth's main, or West 72 Street facade, reveals a delicate interplay of both horizontal and vertical elements. The prevailing horizontal organizational theme expressed is the one of base, shaft and capital, reminiscent of the column, which helps to reduce the building's apparent height. Another effort aimed at counteracting the verticality of the building is evident in the use of specific ornamental motifs that are limited to one or two stories and not employed elsewhere on the building.

The base is of rusticated limestone and rises three stories where it is terminated with a convex frieze and a cornice. The first floor contains the building's entry which is partially obscured by a white wrought-iron porch that replaced the original entry canopy. The entry is flanked on either side by three windows. Each of these windows is capped with voussoirs and a scrolled keystone. Crowning the first floor is a frieze and a bandcourse. The fenestration at the second floor is set into molded surrounds with console brackets carrying a triangular pediment. At the third floor the fenestration is set into molded surrounds.

The mid-section, analgous to column shaft, consists of seven stories faced in russet colored brick with limestone trim and detailing. The mid-section springs from the cornice of the base and continues through a transitional zone at the fourth floor where most of the fenestration is set into molded surrounds with console brackets supporting broken triangular pediments. The fourth floor is terminated by a continuous molding course. The fifth through eighth floors, which constitute the bulk of the mid-section, is uniformly treated with fenestration set in Gibbs surrounds. Plain limestone spandrels are set between windows of each floor. The mid-section enters another transitional zone with a molded course above the eighth floor; at the ninth floor it is differentiated from the lower section by the use of solid limestone bays with fenestration that is articulated with either pilaster surrounds carrying a triangular pediment or a shelf lintel. At the tenth floor round arches articulate the five center bays from which garlanded half-caryatids function as brackets supporting the heavy denticulated and modillioned cornice which terminates the midsection.

The upper section, analogous to capital, reaches down to embrace the eleventh story which is partially obscured by the wrought-iron fence of the balcony that is formed by the top of

the cornice. The fenestration at this floor is once again set into Gibbs surrounds, The keystones of these openings also serve as brackets to support a secondary cornice from which the slate mansard roof springs. The twelfth floor features molded window surrounds capped with segmental arched pediments. The top of the mansard, which contained the building's conservatory, has two sets of three-over-three over-sized windows set into molded architraves.

The facade's more complex vertical articulation features seven bays symmetrically disposed in a subtle A-B-C-D-C-B-A rhythm. The end or, "A," bays project slightly from the base through to the mansard to suggest discreet end pavilions. These pavilions are set off from the rest of the facade by the use of paired windows at each floor except the first floor, which contains a single opening, and the ninth floor where a single story limestone faced, angled oriel rises from the keystone of the eighth floor window surround. The oriel contains three windows in separate surrounds and is supported by a garlanded human figure. These paviliions are further set apart from the rest of the composition by the use of two garlanded cartouches rather than half-caryatid brackets to support the cornice. Directly above these cartouche brackets at the eleventh floor two squat blocks break up the continuity of the balcony railing reinforcing the articulation of the end pavilions. At the twelfth floor the end pavilions are given further emphasis with window surrounds that rise two stories into the mansard roof and recall Baroque precedents. These limestone surrounds contain two pilasters flanked by two attenuated piers and surmounted by a blind niche containing a medallion with a human bust. The surround is capped with a broken triangular pediment.

The central five bays, B-C-D-C-B, contain numerous vertical elements which function to differentiate them from the end pavilions. Rusticated pilasters spring from the first floor impost blocks that consist of garlanded shields capped by festooned elk heads, rise two stories, terminate in an Ionic capital, and support a convex projecting frieze which is crowned by a cornice. Flanking each pilaster's capital are stylized console brackets embellished with garlanded human busts between which nestles an antlered animal bust. The unification of the five central bays is once again achieved at the tenth floor where the round arched openings have scrolled keystones. Further, between each arch, rising from an impost at a point roughly between the ninth and tenth floors, elongated half-caryatids with garlands rise to support the building's main cornice.

Bays "B" and "D" are essentially similar. At the second floor of each bay is a pedimented window surround containing a garlanded cartouche in the tympanum. Tripartite-arched windows are found at the tenth floor. The most striking commonality is a six-story angled bay which rises from the base at the fourth floor and terminates in a triangular pediment at the ninth floor. The angled bays project from the brick plane of the facade with quoins marking the point of projection. The side of each bay is faced in limestone while its front plane is of russet brick articulted by quoins. At the fourth floor limestone cherubs seated on blocks recline against either side of each bay.

The facade's center bay "D" differs from the two "Bs" in that it contains the entry treatment for the building. At the first floor this consists of a white wrought-iron portico which replaced the original. The portico partially obscures the main entrance to the building. At the second floor, a curved projecting balcony with a simple white wrought-iron fence projects over the entry portico below. At the eleventh, floor the "D" bay contains a series of three windows set into a common Gibbs surround while the "C" bays contained two separate window openings each of which is set into its own Gibbs surround. Above the eleventh story cornice, the "D" bay once again features a series of three grouped windows but they are set into a common, two-story-high Baroque surround. This elaborate surround is composed of a set of pilasters flanking the windows and supports a garlanded frieze and cornice from which a round-arched niche set between pilasters carrying a triangular pediment rises.

The remaining "C" bay features fenestration containing a single window opening at each story. The triangular pediment at its second floor contains no ornamentation in its tympanum while the pediment at the fourth floor is round-arched and contains a shell motif. Rising from a blind balustrade at the ninth story is a window surmounted by a shelf lintel carried on brackets. At the tenth floor a single, narrow window pierces the facade under the bay's arched opening. The single windows at the eleventh, twelfth and mansard levels are the same as those at bay "B." Bay "C" contains no angled bay nor oriel windows, but, rather, is faced with brick with limestone quions.

The Chatsworth's rear, or West 71 Street facade, rises to 13 stories and is also organized along horizontal lines expressing the theme of base, shaft or mid-section, and capital or upper section. The five bays comprising this elevation are symmetrically ordered into a vertical A-B-C-B-A rhythm. Lacking, however, is the vast amount of sumptous Beaux-Arts ornament and sculpture that characterizes the building's West 72 Street facade.

The base consists of two stories and a transitional third floor terminated by a narrow stone band course. The first floor is faced in rusticated limestone that is punctuated by flat-arched window openings. At the second and third stories, wide projecting bands of limestone alternate with bands of multi-coursed russet brick. The fenestration is set into Gibbs surrounds. Separating these two floors are a series of band courses which herald the transitional nature of the third floor.

The mid-section, consisting of the seven stories between the transitional third and eleventh floors, is clad in russet brick that is articulated with tightly laid stone quoins. All fenestration at each of the seven floors has Gibbs surrounds and footed stone sills. Unornamented rectangular limestone spandrels are set between the windows of each level. A pair of narrow band courses, separated by a band of multi-coursed bricks set between limestone spandrels, caps the tenth floor and provides the transition to the eleventh floor. The eleventh floor is treated like the second and third floors save that the alternating horizontal bands of limestone and multi-coursed brick are laid flush. The window openings here are set into molded surrounds which are capped with limestone spandrels.

The upper section reaches down to embrace the transitional eleventh floor which is crowned by a bracketed cornice. The treatment of the twelfth floor essentially mirrors that of the eleventh except that twelfth floor window surrounds are further embellished with keystones. Completing the twelfth story is a molded band course from which springs a slate covered mansard roof with window openings set into molded surrounds that are crowned with segmental arched pediments.

The end, or "A," bays feature a single window opening at each story. At the eleventh floor, the window is flanked by cartouche brackets which lend additional support to the cornice they carry. The "B" sections of the facade have a single window at the first and second floor but feature a three-sided angled bay which originates just below the horizontally transitional third floor and rises eight stories where it is terminated by a triangular pediment. Each side of the bay contains a single window at every floor. At the eleventh, twelfth and mansard levels two separate windows punctuate the facade. The "C" bay consists of a series of three separate windows at each story. At the base, one of the window openings is actually a service entry door. At the mansard level, these windows share a common segmental pediment whose tympanum is ornamented with a foliate motif.

Although the Annex rises only eight stories, its three identical bays are ordered to echo the horizontal theme of base, shaft or mid-section and capital or upper section employed on both facades of the Chatsworth. An areaway wall built of concrete blocks in a webbed pattern is a recent addition and partially obscures the first floor of the building. Entry to the annex is gained through a small pavilion located to the west and wedged in between the Annex and the Chatsworth. This pavilion, which is faced with heavily rusticated limestone, rises one story and is terminated by a cornice and a pent roof. At the center is an elaborate entry treatment consisting of a set of double-leaf wood and fifteen-light glass doors surmounted by a transom enlivened with dentils and a wreath. The doors and transom are set into a flat arched molded opening which features a bay leaf garland hood mold. Crowning the hood mold is a segmental arched pediment with dentils. Its tympanum contains a shell-like niche which protects a garlanded human bust set on C scrolls which reach down and partially obscure the hood molding. At either side of the niche are cherubs. Flanking the entry composition are rectangular projecting niches, presented vertically, which contain a human figure. Cartouches rest in the frieze below the cornice.

The base of the building consists of two stories plus a

transitional third floor. The first two floors are of heavily rusticated limestone and terminate in a frieze. The fenestration at the first floor consists of three round-arched window openings articulated by voussoirs, console keystones and tympani embellished with cartouches. The three flat arched windows of the second floor feature molded surrounds with footed sills. These windows are further set between a pair of oversized stylized console brackets with garlanded lions heads which carry three separate shelf lintels. The third floor is faced in smooth limestone and capped by a molded band course. The fenestration pattern of this level echoes that of the first two floors. Each of the three windows is enframed by molded surrounds, bay leaf garland hood molds, a molded cornice supported by console brackets. Each window is further crowned by a stylized triangular pediment resting on small brackets.

The mid-section consists of the fourth through seventh stories and partially embraces the transitional third and eighth floors. The mid-section is clad in limestone ashlar that is also used at the third floor. It is terminated by a molded band course above the seventh floor. The regular fenestration, which is employed at the fourth through seventh floors, consists of three bays each of which contains two flat-arched openings separated by a stone mullion but unified by a common molded surround and footed sill.

The upper section begins at the eleventh floor. The transitional character of this level is somewhat apparent from its use of a limestone ashlar facade. The fenestration pattern consists of three bays, each of which contains three window openings separated by stone mullions and unified by a common molded surround. Each set of windows is placed between a stylized cartouche set into a wreath from which spring a pair of oversized brackets that rise to support the large, projecting cornice which terminates the composition.

Conclusion

Along with its other nearby Upper West Side contemporaries, the Ansonia Hotel and the Dorilton Apartments, the Chatsworth

recalls an era when wealthy New Yorkers began to forsake the practice of maintaining large houses in favor of residing in luxurious apartment buildings. In the case of the Chatsworth and its Annex, architect John E. Scharsmith successfully reinforced the effect of luxury by relying on a large-scale design, an exhuberant use of classical detail and a sumptuous choice of materials to produce an elaborate essay in the grand French Beaux-Arts architectural tradition. Furthermore, both buildings, due to their conspicuous siting at the foot of Riverside Park, provide an appealing and arresting visual terminus from Riverside Park, Riverside Drive and the Henry Hudson Parkway at the north. Although these buildings retain their original design and ornament, their apartments have been subdivided into smaller units. The Chatsworth and the Chatsworth Annex remain in use as apartment houses offering commanding views of the Hudson River and the Palisades.

Report prepared by:

Edward T. Mohylowski
Landmarks Preservationist

FOOTNOTES

1. The information presented in this section of the report is taken, in abridged form, from Landmarks Preservation Commission, West End-Collegiate Historic District Designation Report(LP - 1418) (New York: City of New York, January 3, 1984), pp. 7 - 23.

2. New York County, Office of the Register, Liber Abstracts, Block 1183.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. "Johnson-Kahn Company" in Apartment Houses of the Metropolis (New York: G. C. Hesselgren Publishing Co., 1908), p. 10.

6. For a more detailed account of Johnson's association with the development of Longwoood in the Bronx, see Landmarks Preservation Commission, Longwood Historic District Designation Report(LP - 1075) (New York: City of New York, June 19, 1984).

7. Liber Abstracts, Block 1183 and "Johnson-Kahn Company," p.10.

8. New York City, Department of Buildings, Manhattan, Plans, Permits and Dockets, NB (New Building) docket number 395 -02.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

11. The Johnson-Kahn Company placed "opening announcements" in many of the city's daily newspapers including, among others, The New York Times, The New York Tribune, and The Evening Sun. These advertisements appeared throughout the months of August and September and into October of 1904.

12. New York Times, August 21, 1904, p. 15.

13. Ibid.

14. Department of Buildings, NB 1747 - 05.

15. Ibid.

16. New York Times, March 21, 1918, p. 13.

17. Charles Israels, "New York Apartment Houses," The Architectural Record 11(July, 1901), p. 477.

18. Ibid.

19. West End-Collegiate Report, p. 19.

20. Elizabeth C. Cromley, "The Development of the New York Apartment 1860 - 1902" (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, City University of New York, 1982), pp. 37 - 38.

21. Ibid., p.244.

22. Ibid.

23. See Landmarks Preservation Commission, The Dakota Apartments Designation Report(LP - 0280) (New York: City of New York, February 11, 1969).

24. "Development of New York Apartment," p. 151.

25. Ibid., p. 149.

26. Edward Deitch, "A Long Huddle and I've Got It! Thus Do Buildings Get Their Names," New York Times, November 15, 1984, section 8, pp. 1, 14, cited in "Development of New York Apartment," p. 151.

27. For a more detailed account of this English estate, see Charles H. Wood, ed., Chatsworth: The Home of the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire (Derby, Great Britain: Derbyshire Countryside, LTD., 1976).

28. "Development of New York Apartment," p. 245.

29. Apartment Houses of the Metropolis, p. 9.

30. Harmon Goldstone, "Forward," in Andrew Alpern, Apartment Houses for the Affluent (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1975), [ii].

31. Ibid.

32. Landmarks Preservation Commission, Urban Cultural Resources Survey and Department of Buildings, NB 448 - 04. See also Norval White and Elliot Willensky, A.I.A. Guide to New York City (New York: Collier Books, 1978), p. 199.

33. Cited in Dennis Steadman Francis, Architects in Practice: New York 1840 - 1900 (New York: Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records, 1979), p. 67.

34. Department of Buildings, NB 584 - 97.

35. Architects in Practice, p. 67.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid.

38. From 1903 to 1905 Scharsmith maintained his office at 500 Fifth Avenue. Trow's New York City Directory (New York: Trow's Publishing Co., 1903), p. 1125; 1904, p. 1190; 1905, p. 1254. Between 1906 and 1911, his office was located at 1 Madison Avenue. Trow's Directory, 1906, p. 1330; 1907, p. 1465; 1908, p. 1278; 1910, p. 1302; 1911, p. 1378.

39. Trow's Directory, 1912, p. 1379.

40. Ibid., 1913, p. 1116.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATIONS

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture and other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the Chatsworth Apartments and Annex have a special character, special historical and aesthetic value as part of the development, heritage and cultural characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds, that among their important qualities, the Chatsworth Apartments and Chatsworth Annex are distinguished apartment houses designed in the French Beaux-Arts manner by architect John E. Scharsmith; that they are important turn-of-the-century examples of the luxury apartment house, then a relatively new type of residence for affluent urban dwellers; that because of their site they make an appealing and arresting visual terminus from Riverside Park, Riverside Drive and the Henry Hudson Parkway at the north; that the designs of both buildings are distinguished by their wealth of exhuberant applied ornament including, among others, human and animal sculpture, garlands, pediments, keystones, quoins, brackets and mansard roofs.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 21 (formerly Chapter 63) of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 8-A of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as Landmarks, the Chatsworth Apartments and the Chatsworth Annex, 244 and 240 West 72nd Street, Borough of Manhattan; and designates Tax Map Block 1183, Lots 53 and 50, Borough of Manhattan, as their Landmark Site.

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THE CHATSWORTH ANNEX and THE CHATSWORTH APARTMENTS
340 and 344 West 72 Street

Architect: John E. Scharsmith
Built: 1905 - 1906 and 1902 - 1904

Photo Credit: Carl Forster

THE CHATSWORTH APARTMENTS
340 West 72 Street

Architect: John E. Scharsmith
Built: 1902 - 1904

Photo Credit: Edward T. Mohylowski

THE CHATSWORTH APARTMENTS
West 71 Street Facade

Architect: John E. Scharsmith
Built: 1902 - 1904

Photo Credit: Edward T. Mohylowski

THE CHATSWORTH ANNEX
340 West 72 Street

Architect: John E. Scharsmith
Built: 1905 - 1906

Photo Credit: Edward T. Mohylowski