

Landmarks Preservation Commission  
September 6, 1988; Designation List 209  
LP-1540

THE EVERETT BUILDING, 45 East 17th Street a/k/a 200-218 Park Avenue South, Borough of Manhattan. Built 1908; architect, Goldwin Starrett & Van Vleck; builder, George A. Fuller Co.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 846, Lot 33.

On May 14, 1985, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Everett Building (Item No. 6). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Thirty-four witnesses spoke in favor of designation; one witness spoke in opposition and one statement in opposition was read. The Commission received several letters in support of designation.

#### DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

##### Summary

The Everett Building is a sixteen-story commercial structure located on the northwest corner of East 17th Street and Park Avenue South. Named for Union Square's nineteenth-century Everett Hotel, and built in 1908 for the Everett Investing Company, it was designed by Goldwin Starrett & Van Vleck, a firm known for its commercial architecture. It is a quintessential example of a building type defined by A. C. David (writing in Architectural Record in 1910): functional, fireproof, speedy to construct, while also demonstrating a concern for "architectural decency;" as such, this building is a uniquely American architectural expression. In its design, the Everett Building synthesizes classical elements with key aspects of both the New York and the Chicago styles; Goldwin Starrett was familiar with the Chicago style as a result of his years in Daniel Burnham's Chicago office. The building reflects its structure in its cladding, while employing a design vocabulary that includes classical motifs. The Everett Building is prominently located on a site on the north side of Union Square and, together with the monumental Germania (now Guardian) Life Insurance Company Building directly across the avenue, forms an imposing terminus to Park Avenue South.

##### The Development of Union Square

The Commissioners Map of 1807-11, which first laid out the grid plan of Manhattan above Houston Street, allowed for certain existing thoroughfares to retain their original configuration. Bloomingdale Road, (now Broadway), and the Bowery intersected at 16th Street. The acute angle formed by this "union" was set aside by the Commissioners and named Union Place.<sup>1</sup> Initially Union

Place extended from 10th to 17th Streets, on land owned by the Manhattan Bank:

It then presented to the eye of the tourist and pedestrian a shapeless and ill-looking collection of lots, where garden sauce flourished -- devoid of symmetry, and around which were reared a miserable group of shanties.<sup>2</sup>

In 1815, the state legislature reduced the size of Union Place by making 14th Street its southern boundary.<sup>3</sup> As the city expanded northward and land use intensified, the need for open spaces became apparent. A report drafted by the street committee in 1831 states the need for public squares "for purposes of military, and civic parades, and festivities, and ... to serve as ventilators to a densely populated city."<sup>4</sup> Designated a public space in 1832 at the urging of local residents, additional land was acquired so that the area could be regularized.<sup>5</sup> Graded, paved, and fenced, Union Place was finally opened to the public in July, 1839. Throughout much of its history, the square has been used for public gatherings, political rallies, and demonstrations.<sup>6</sup>

By the 1850s, Union Square (as it came to be known) was completely surrounded by buildings including some of the city's most splendid mansions; but, "already by 1860, the dramatic march of commerce had begun."<sup>7</sup> Theaters, hotels, and luxury retailers predominated in the 1870s.<sup>8</sup> By the 1890s, the vestiges of the fashionable residential area, as well as the elegant stores and theaters, had been supplanted on Union Square by taller buildings that catered to the needs of publishers and manufacturers who had moved uptown.<sup>9</sup>

The land on which the Everett Building stands was originally part of Cornelius Tiebout's farm. From 1853 on, the site was occupied by the Everett House, a hotel frequented by the singers and musicians performing at the new opera house, the Academy of Music (1854, architect Alexander Saeltzer).<sup>10</sup> Like the Belvedere and the Clarendon, hotels which were also demolished to make way for 'modern' office and loft buildings, the Everett House was razed to clear the site for the Everett Building.<sup>11</sup>

The Everett Building is prominently situated on the northwest corner of East 17th Street and Union Square North, at the base of Park Avenue South (then called Fourth Avenue). Stations for major subway, surface, and "El" lines were close to the site,<sup>12</sup> which was characterized by Real Estate Record & Guide in 1908 as "one of the most accessible locations for modern office buildings in the city."<sup>13</sup> Although when built, the Everett Building was associated with a possible transformation of Union Square to be effected by the construction of a new courthouse, the building was later seen as evidence of the concentration of the silk, woolen, cotton, and dry goods trades on Fourth Avenue, the area around the Square and lateral streets. By September,

1910, about seventeen new loft and office buildings (generally restricted to office and salesroom needs, as opposed to manufacturing) had been erected, conveniently located near hotels and transportation.<sup>14</sup> In October 1911, Real Estate Record & Guide noted that "the Everett Building and those along the avenue, in which dry goods people are tenants, are all filled up."<sup>15</sup> Larger than the late nineteenth-century buildings on Union Square West, the new loft and office buildings, such as the Everett Building, altered the scale of structures on the Square's northern and southern ends<sup>16</sup> and formed the core of a new mercantile district developed as an economical alternative to the commercial district along lower Fifth Avenue.

Notice of Goldwin Starrett & Van Vleck's selection as the recipients of the commission to design the Everett Building appeared in Real Estate Record & Guide for August 1, 1908.<sup>17</sup> The Everett Building was built for the Everett Investing Company;<sup>18</sup> included among its early tenants were a wide variety of businesses and occupations, including William Skinner & Sons, an operating establishment "in the broad silk end"; the firm of W. G. Cornell, which was responsible for the plumbing for the new Gimbel Building<sup>19</sup> and the offices of Goldwin Starrett & Van Vleck.<sup>20</sup>

#### Goldwin Starrett & Van Vleck<sup>21</sup>

The firm was founded in 1907 by Goldwin Starrett (1867-1918) and Ernest Allen Van Vleck (1875-1956). Starrett was one of five brothers, all active in the construction and architectural fields. Born in Lawrence, Kansas, his family later moved to Chicago. Starrett attended the engineering school of the University of Michigan, graduating in 1894. He then entered the architectural offices of D. H. Burnham & Co., as had his two older brothers, Theodore and Paul. He remained in Burnham's employ for four years, rising to be one of Burnham's principal assistants.<sup>22</sup> In 1898 Goldwin entered the New York offices of the George A. Fuller Construction Co. as superintendent and assistant manager, joining his brother Theodore.<sup>23</sup> In 1901, along with Theodore, and his brothers, Ralph and William A., he formed the Thompson-Starrett Construction Company; he remained with the firm for four years, during which time he designed the Algonquin Hotel, a designated New York City Landmark, for Albert Foster of the Puritan Realty Company. Goldwin then entered into a four-year association with the E. B. Ellis Granite Company, which had its quarries in Vermont. In the construction business, Goldwin was associated with many important buildings, including Union Station in Washington, D.C. and the Woolworth Building in New York, a designated New York City Landmark.

In 1907, Ernest Allen Van Vleck joined Starrett to form the firm of Goldwin Starrett & Van Vleck. A native of Bell Creek,

Nebraska, Van Vleck received a degree from the Cornell School of Architecture in 1897. He then traveled to Europe on a fellowship.

About 1908, Orrin Rice was admitted to the partnership, and in 1913, William A. Starrett joined the firm,<sup>24</sup> which then became known as Starrett & Van Vleck, with Goldwin Starrett becoming the senior partner.<sup>25</sup> Starrett & Van Vleck specialized in commercial buildings and schools but also designed many other structures. Among the firm's major commissions were the Lord & Taylor department store, a building that was termed "frankly commercial as well as dignified" in contrast to the residential nature of most other contemporary commercial designs;<sup>26</sup> Saks Fifth Avenue, a designated New York City Landmark; a major expansion of Bloomingdale's; the facade of the Curb (now the American Stock) Exchange Building; the Downtown Athletic Club; the La Salle & Koch store in Toledo, Ohio (1916); the Court & Remsen Street Building in Brooklyn; The Equitable Life Assurance Society Building, and the Royal Insurance Building. The firm was also responsible for designing the Hale Publishing Co. Building, the Berkeley Building, and the twelve-story neo-Italian Renaissance apartment houses at 820 and 817 Fifth Avenue, within the Upper East Side Historic District. Other works by the firm include the Mills-Gibb Building, a mercantile building at Fourth Avenue and 22nd Street;<sup>27</sup> a building for John T. Underwood, president of Underwood Typewriter Co. located at Church and Vesey Streets;<sup>28</sup> the Mercantile Building at Fifth Avenue and 38th Street;<sup>29</sup> 28-30 West 38th Street, a twelve-story building for Capt. W. H. Wheeler;<sup>30</sup> and the twelve-story Sixteenth Street Building, at Irving Place and 16th Street.<sup>31</sup>

#### Loft and Commercial Building

The Everett Building is a quintessential example of the new commercial style of architecture built around 1910 in New York and concentrated on Fourth Avenue from Union Square to 30th Street. Its design was considered innovative when it was illustrated in the Architectural Record (Dec. 1910), as part of a tribute to the new corridor of commercial buildings in what is now Park Avenue South.<sup>32</sup> These buildings termed "thoroughly contemporary" and "strictly commercial" were erected with exceptional rapidity; the Everett Building "was ready for occupants within four months from the time the first column shoe was set."<sup>33</sup>

In "The New Architecture," A. C. David specified a tall order for architects of these loft and commercial buildings, one which Starrett & Van Vleck fulfilled. Tenants required a maximum amount of clear, preferably square or rectangular, floor space so that large numbers of employees could be supervised by a floor manager. In order to secure the greatest amount of natural light, a corner site, large windows, and high ceilings were imperative. In addition, the planning of building services affected the

amount of "clear and available" floor space. These new structures had to meet the specifications of the insurance companies and of the building laws for fireproofing, in order to obtain the lowest insurance rates (as the Everett Building did).<sup>34</sup> Combining the stairway and fire escape provisions of the building law and omission of power plants in the building were additional ways to cut costs. At the same time, the building must be economical to operate. Speedy construction, a goal facilitated by granolithic or concrete floors, the use of metal trim, the omission of ornamental plastering, and the standardization of detail, was also essential.

In his article, David also suggested that attention to the building's design was necessary because "a structure which presents a good appearance sells better."<sup>35</sup> The Everett Building fulfilled these specifications as well. Like the Everett Building, the ideal loft and commercial structure was to consist of "a frame work, usually about sixteen stories high of piers and floors, the lines of both of which are separated by fixed distances, and both of which cannot be disguised by much ornamentation."<sup>36</sup> An ornamental cornice was not merely permitted but encouraged, even if the natural light on the top floor was impaired. The employment of glazed orange and green terra-cotta panels and medallions brings this desired attention to the Everett Building's crown.

According to David, windows should be grouped in order to emphasize the corners and to convey an impression of solidity; a building could thus be made to resemble a tower rather than a cage.<sup>37</sup> Face brick, laid in patterns, and architectural terra cotta were recommended for the cladding of the shaft. In other instances, exemplified by the Everett Building, "white glazed terra cotta decorated with superficial ornamental patterns has been effectively employed."<sup>38</sup> David continues that these buildings were a specific and original American type, "the only genuine commercial architecture in the world."<sup>39</sup> These characteristics constitute what may be called a New York style.

#### Classical Aspects of the Building's Design

The Everett Building incorporates many classical elements in its design. As in other nearby skyscrapers including Bruce Price's Bank of the Metropolis, a designated New York City Landmark, the tripartite skyscraper elevation inspired by the parts of a classical column is employed in the Everett Building. A rusticated base is surmounted by a decorative transitional story; an eleven-story shaft leads to yet another transitional story, which is capped by a two-story attic crowned by an elaborate bracketed cornice. The two-story base is articulated by rusticated piers which carry a classically-derived entablature that is embellished with stylized triglyphs and metopes. The building's two-story crown evokes a giant order; the elements of

the pilasters are articulated and embellished by abstract terra-cotta elements. The doorway as built was pedimented with acroteria at center and sides.<sup>40</sup> William H. Jordy has observed that such commercial buildings retain "something of the blocky quality of the Renaissance palace format" which permitted the anonymity and interchangeability of functions.<sup>41</sup> Real Estate Record & Guide concluded that the building "an investor might expect for \$900,000," would be a structure "not ... gaudy ... the whole with its straight, Renaissance architecture giving the impression of commercial utility."<sup>42</sup>

### Influence of the Chicago School

Goldwin Starrett's years working in Daniel Burnham's prestigious office (in the 1890s, the largest in Chicago, with branch offices in New York and San Francisco)<sup>43</sup> are of clear influence to the design of the Everett Building which frankly expresses function. Starrett doubtless knew such monuments of Chicago architecture as Burnham & Root's Rand McNally Building (1888-90) and Burnham & Atwood's Reliance Building (1895). Starrett's Chicago connections also would have insured his familiarity with the Carson, Pirie, Scott Store (the first two parts designed by Louis Sullivan, 1899, 1903-04; third part designed by Daniel Burnham, 1906). All three buildings contain innovations later incorporated in the Everett Building. The Rand McNally by Burnham & Root was formed of a consistent steel frame with facades "of terra cotta produced specifically to fit the frame."<sup>44</sup> The steel and terra cotta combination introduced in the Rand McNally was further refined after Root's death by Burnham and his designer Charles Atwood in the Reliance Building (1895).<sup>45</sup> Terra cotta, which although lighter, less expensive, and more solid than masonry, had heretofore been employed only as a fireproof undercoating to masonry and for ornamental embellishment. Its use as sheathing for the skyscraper was a precedent followed by Goldwin Starrett & Van Vleck and in many contemporary office and loft buildings in New York City.<sup>46</sup>

By creating the appearance of a grid on the elevations, Starrett incorporated a major tenet of the Chicago School: the articulation on the exterior of interior structure. In this building, verticals are juxtaposed against horizontals and thus serve as visible surrogates for the concealed skeletal frame; such a system is one of the most important characteristics of the Chicago School.<sup>47</sup> The panels which emphasize the spandrel beams, the use of textured, ribbed moldings to articulate the panels themselves, and the vertical alignment of the windows is, in some respects, reminiscent of Carson, Pirie, Scott's structural expressiveness.<sup>48</sup> In Carson, Pirie, Scott, the terra-cotta panels and the fenestration create the impression of a grid and of horizontality; like the Chicago structure, the Everett Building can be viewed as both grids "expressing the frame" and as bands of horizontals.<sup>49</sup>

The Everett Building, however, is more overtly classical than Carson, Pirie, Scott. In contrast to the receding two-story loggia which originally capped the two portions of the store designed by Sullivan, Starrett's design articulates the top two stories (which do not recede) with terra-cotta moldings. Starrett topped the building with an avowedly classical cresting that features acroteria (as did the pedimented portico over the doorway as originally completed) and rests the building on rusticated piers.

Starrett and Van Vleck also render the Chicago idiom more traditionally. For example, the tripartite "Chicago window" with wide central pane and two narrow sash windows has here been translated into a bay containing three equally sized one-over-one windows. Although the end piers of the Everett Building are of the same width as those between bays, an additional textured molding has been added to their outer edges. Moreover, at the intersection of the Park Avenue South and Union Square elevations, the rusticated pier emphasizes the effect of the corner.

### Description<sup>50</sup>

Prominently located at the corner of East 17th Street and Park Avenue South, fronting on Union Square, the Everett Building is a sixteen-story, steel-framed office and loft building. A seventeenth story is concealed beneath the cornice and is evident only on the north and west walls. The building is sheathed in white terra-cotta panels and has applied green and orange architectural terra-cotta ornament. It is rectangular in shape with a rectangular light-court in the northwestern portion. There are six bays on the Union Square side; the Park Avenue South elevation consists of eight bays. Each bay is divided into three parts, (with the exception of one bay on the Park Avenue South side which only contains two), each of which contains a window; above each first story window (with the exception of the second from the right on the Park Avenue South elevation which contains only two) and framed by the rusticated piers are three narrow, rectangular panels.

A two-story base with rusticated piers (each resting on a pink polished marble base and topped by a geometrical molding) is set off from the rest of the building by a cornice embellished with stylized triglyphs and metopes. Mullions separating windows in the bays of the second story resemble pilasters; they are set on blocks and feature consoles supporting pyramid-shaped blocks that reiterate the rustication on the piers and serve as capitals. A cornice with mutules completes the frieze above the second story. On the Union Square facade, atop the aperture of the bay on the extreme left, the original overdoor consisting of several thin moldings (two of which are embellished by small applied bosses in the shape of flowers) remains. On the Park

Avenue South elevation, the bay to the extreme right contains the original transom treatment: above the shop windows and entrance (which are new), the transom area is divided into three panels each consisting of twelve lights, arranged in three rows of four. Two faciae separate each group of twelve lights; directly above these faciae, on the beltcourse, two dark bezants appear, serving both to embellish and to link the dark frames of the glazed panels below and the windows above.

The third story consists of ornamented piers (which separate the bays) demarcating the transition from the two-story base to the eleven-story shaft above. Set atop a plain base, the shaft of each pier is ornamented by borders with foliated and ribboned embellishments and palmette accents set diagonally into the corners. Pilasters between the windows are also set atop plain bases; they are ornamented by long, thin recessed panels. The capitals of both piers and pilasters are both embellished by palmettes. A frieze embellished by garlands draped over bezants completes the transitional story and signals the beginning of the shaft.

On the eleven-story shaft, the crossings of the ribbed mullions and the outer textured edges of the panels which cover the spandrel beams establishes a grid, which reflects the building's construction and underscores the grid created by the intersection of windows, spandrel beams, and piers. On the Union Square facade, spandrel bands below each window are three panels wide and two panels high; each such group of six panels is outlined by raised moldings. Each bay consists of a total of three such groups. On the Park Avenue South elevation, each group is two panels wide and two panels high; each such group of four panels is outlined by raised moldings. On both elevations, the moldings which separate each group of panels are both continuations of the window mullions and indications of the window's outer edges. Piers are also indicated (when they intersect with the spandrel beam) by outlined terra-cotta panels, one panel wide and two panels high. The intersection of the horizontal spandrel demarcation and the window's mullions and outer edges sets up a grid motif. The regularity of the grid deflects attention from the bay (second from the right on the Park Avenue South elevation) which consists of only two windows and from the change from a width of three panels for each subsection of each bay on the Union Square facade to two panels for each subsection on the Park Avenue South elevation.

A beltcourse tops the eleven-story shaft and sets off the two-story crown, which corresponds to the "capital" of the "tripartite column," from the body of the building. The piers are transformed into abstract pilasters by the application of applied reiterating polychrome terra-cotta ornament. Within raised borders of white terra cotta that extend the length of both stories, orange rectangular panels embellished at their midpoints

by applied green circles appear. The spandrel beams between the two stories are covered with white terra-cotta panels within which are rectangular orange panels. Mullions (and their extensions) which abut spandrel beams are also embellished with recessed panels. The two-story section is topped with several moldings including one incorporating applied polychrome geometric motifs: in this scheme, paired and single green and orange rectangular lozenges alternate with green circular motifs. An elaborate dentilled cornice crested by acroteria tops the building.

On the west elevation, a brick wall pierced by four-over-four sash windows is visible from the ninth story upward; two windows indicate the seventeenth story. Bands demarcate borders that correspond to the terra-cotta spandrel beam covers on the facade. This elevation features interpretations of the stringcourse separating the top two stories and of the polychrome panelling and cornice treatment on the Union Square facade. To the right of and above the seventeenth story windows, a substantial amount of replacement brick appears.

On the north elevation visible above the ninth story, a buff brick wall features eight windows per floor; the remaining originals have four-over-four sash. From the visible base of this elevation through the fourteenth story, a terra-cotta border appears; above this, the border continues as panels. On this elevation, windows indicate the presence of the seventeenth story. A significant portion of the top two stories appears to be resurfaced. With its essential architectural features unchanged, this building continues to function as an office building with retail spaces at the ground story.

Report prepared by  
Lisa Koenigsberg,  
Research Department

Report edited by  
Nancy Goeschel,  
Research Department

NOTES

1. I. N. Phelps Stokes, The Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498-1909 vol. 5 (New York, 1915), s.v. 1808.
2. David Thomas Valentine, ed., Manual of the Corporation of the City of New York (New York, 1857), 480.
3. Stokes, s.v. 1815 Apr. 11; Sophia Schachter and Elsa Gilbertson, "Union Square," (unpub. manuscript submitted to the Program in Historic Preservation, Columbia University, A8790: June 1982), 3.
4. Stokes, s.v. 1831 Nov. 7.
5. Valentine, 480; Schachter and Gilbertson, 5.
6. Stokes, s.v. 1833 Apr. 4,; 1833 Apr. 20; 1833 Nov. 12; 1834 Jan. 14; 1834 May 30; 1835 May 14; 1836 Aug. 3; 1839 J1 19; 1842 Oct. 11, 13; on use of the term "Union Square" see: Schachter and Gilbertson, 7.
7. M. Christine Boyer, Manhattan Manners: Architecture and Style, 1850-1900 (New York, 1985), 45; for the development of this area, see: Charles Lockwood, Bricks and Brownstones: The New York Row House, 1783-1924: An Architectural and Social History (New York, 1972), 132, 135-136; Charles Lockwood, Manhattan Moves Uptown (Boston, 1976), 165-171.
8. A History of Real Estate, Building, and Architecture in New York City (1898; rpt. New York, 1967), 129.
9. The section above is based on research by Gale Harris and Lisa Koenigsberg, which was revised by Elisa Urbanelli.
10. Schachter and Gilbertson, 25.; on the closing of the Everett House, see: "Office Building on Hotel Site," Real Estate Record & Guide 81, no. 2102 (June 27, 1908), 1242.
11. "Construction: Silk Trade Also Coming to Fourth Avenue. Nine Million Dollars for Construction Represented by the Visible Operations -- A Great Commission District Building Up" RER&G, 86, no. 2216 (Sept. 3, 1910), 371; "Activity on Fourth Avenue. Many Large Operations Under Way Which Will Alter The Character of This Thoroughfare," RER&G 83, no. 2142 (Apr. 3, 1909), 649.
12. "Plans for Everett House Site Improvement," RER&G 81, no. 2101 (June 20, 1908), 1178.

13. "Architect for Everett House Site Improvement," RER&G 82, no. 2187 (Aug. 1, 1908), 245.
14. "Construction: Silk Trade Also Coming to Fourth Avenue," 371-372; Schachter and Gilbertson, 30.
15. On the movement of the silk and wool trades to the area near Fourth Avenue, see: "Trade Interests Need More Modern Buildings. Natural Expansion of Business, Unaffected by Pessimistic Reports of General Unrest, Is Rapidly Taking Care of Vacant Lot and Office Space," RER&G 88, no. 2274 (Oct. 14, 1911), 539.
16. Schachter and Gilbertson, 42.
17. "Architect for Everett House Site Improvement," RER&G 82, no. 2187 (Aug. 1, 1908), 245.
18. NYC, Department of Buildings, Manhattan. Plans, Permits and Dockets, Block 846, Lot 33. NB 333-08.
19. "Materials and Equipment of the Gimbel Building," RER&G 84, no. 2156 (July 10, 1909), 60.
20. "Proposed Building for West 38th St.," RER&G 83, no. 2148 (May 1, 1909), 866.
21. For biographical information of Goldwin Starrett and Ernest Allen Van Vleck, see LPC Research Department files: Goldwin Starrett, obituary, Journal of the A.I.A. 6, no. 5 (May 1918), 260; "Starrett, Goldwin," National Cyclopaedia of American Biography vol. 24 (New York, 1935), 42; Goldwin Starrett, obituary, New York Times, May 10, 1918, p. 11; Ernest Van Vleck, obituary, NYT, Aug. 9, 1956, p. 25; Ernest Allen Van Vleck, obituary, Architectural Forum 105, no. 4 (Oct. 1956), 37; Henry Withey and Elsie R. Withey, Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased) (1956; rpt. Los Angeles, 1970), 567; LPC, The Algonquin Hotel Designation Report, report prepared by Nancy Goeschel (New York, 1987), 2; LPC, Saks Fifth Avenue Designation Report, report prepared by Sarah Williams (New York, 1984), 4-5; LPC, Starrett-Lehigh Designation Report, report prepared by Jay Shockley (New York, 1986), 3-5.
22. "STARRETT, Goldwin," National Cyclopaedia of American Biography, 42.
23. "STARRETT, Goldwin," National Cyclopaedia of American Biography, 42; Goldwin Starrett, obituary, Journal of the AIA, 260. The Fuller Company had its beginnings in Chicago and enjoyed a long association with Burnham's firm. Its New York headquarters, soon dubbed the Flatiron Building (1902),

was a D. H. Burnham & Co. design.

24. Goldwin Starrett, obituary, Journal of the AIA (May 1918), 260; T[albot]. F[aulkner]. H[amlin]., "Starrett, William Aiken," Dictionary of American Biography, ed. Dumas Malone (1935; rpt. New York, 1963), vol. 9, 536.
25. Goldwin Starrett, obituary, Journal of the A.I.A., 260.
26. American Guide Series: New York City Guide (New York, 1970), 217-218, quoted in LPC, Saks Fifth Avenue Designation Report, report prepared by Sarah Williams, p. 4.
27. "Starrett & Van Vleck to Plan Mills-Gibb Building," RER&G 84, no. 2180 (Dec. 25, 1909), 1167.
28. "Plans Progressing for Vesey Street Office Building," RER&G 86, no. 2209 (July 16, 1910), 115.
29. "Fuller & Co. Get Contract for Wheeler Building," RER&G 83, no. 2146 (May 15, 1909), 970.
30. Ibid.
31. "Building for Irving Place Corner," RER&G 83, no. 2153 (June 19, 1909), 1244.
32. A. C. David, "The New Architecture," Architectural Record 28, no. 6 (Dec. 1910), 388-403; this article was reprinted in excerpted form in RER&G: "The New Architecture: The First American Type of Real Value Represented by the Group of Commercial Buildings on Fourth Avenue," RER&G 86, no. 2232 (Dec. 24, 1910), 1085.
33. David, 390; "Loft Buildings as Investment Propositions. The Sort of Building an Investor Might Expect for \$900.000-- Where Such a Building Would Pay -- The Nature of the Foundations -- Precedents Furnished by a Notable Structure," RER&G 84, no. 2179 (Dec. 18, 1909), 1,093.
34. See also: "Fireproof in a High Degree," RER&G 82, no. 2118 (Oct. 17, 1908), 733.
35. David, 396.
36. David, 400.
37. David, 402.
38. Ibid.
39. David, 392, 394.

40. For a publication perspective that shows the doorway as originally built, see: "Fireproof in a High Degree," RER&G 82, no. 2118 (Oct. 17, 1908), 733.
41. William Jordy, "The Tall Buildings," in Louis Sullivan: The Function of Ornament, ed. Wim de Wit. (New York, 1986), 77.
42. "Loft Buildings as Investment Propositions," RER&G 84, no. 2179 (Dec. 18, 1909), 1094; contemporary critics praised the buildings; see: "Ideas from the Everett Building," RER&G 83, no. 2134 (Feb. 6, 1909), 238; "A Common Sense Plan," RER&G 82, no. 2126 (Dec. 12, 1908), 1136.
43. Condit, Carl W. The Chicago School of Architecture: A History of Commercial and Public Building in the Chicago Area, 1875-1925, (1952; rev and enlarged ed. Chicago, 1964), 108; according to David Van Zanten, "The Nineteenth Century: The Projecting of Chicago as a Commercial City and the Rationalization of Design and Construction," in Chicago and New York: Architectural Interactions (Chicago, 1984), 38: Burnham was "the great unavoidable fact of Chicago architecture in 1900 [and] to be an architect was to position oneself in relation to him."
44. Van Zanten, 38.
45. Ibid.
46. William H. Jordy, American Buildings and Their Architects: Progressive and Academic Ideals at the Turn of the Twentieth Century. 1976; paperback ed., New York, 1976, 57.
47. On Sullivan's use of such a system, see for example: Jordy, "The Tall Buildings," 98 and 130; on the "Chicago School," see: Condit, 128.
48. Jordy, "Progressive and Academic Ideals," 135.
49. Ibid.
50. For views of the Everett Building at the time of completion, see: RER&G (Dec. 19, 1908), 1230; RER&G (Apr. 3, 1909), 649; and RER&G (Dec. 18, 1909), 1090; for a plan of an upper floor, see: "A Common Sense Plan," RER&G (Dec. 12, 1908), 1136; Chase, The Wonder City (New York, 1931), 198.

## FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

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

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the Everett Building, named for Union Square's nineteenth-century Everett Hotel, and built in 1908 for the Everett Investing Company, was designed by Goldwin Starrett & Van Vleck, a firm known for its commercial architecture; that it is a quintessential example of a building type defined by A. C. David (writing in Architectural Record in 1910): functional, fireproof, speedy to construct, while also demonstrating a concern for "architectural decency"; that as such the building is a uniquely American architectural expression; that in its design, the Everett Building synthesizes classical elements with key aspects of both the New York and the Chicago styles; that Goldwin Starrett, as a result of his years of experience in Daniel Burnham's Chicago office, brought to his New York practice a familiarity with the Chicago style; that the building reflects its structure in its cladding, while employing a design vocabulary that includes classical motifs; and that the Everett Building is prominently located on a site on the north side of Union Square and, together with the monumental Germania (now Guardian) Life Insurance Company Building directly across the avenue, forms an imposing terminus to Park Avenue South.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 21, Section 534, of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 3 of Title 25 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark the Everett Building, 45 East 17th Street a/k/a 200-218 Park Avenue South, Borough of Manhattan and designates Tax Map Block 846, Lot 33, Borough of Manhattan, as its Landmark Site.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- "Activity on Fourth Avenue. Many Large Operations Under Way Which Will Alter the Character of this Thoroughfare." Real Estate Record & Guide 83, no. 2142 (Apr. 3, 1909), 649.
- "Architect for Everett House Site Improvement." Real Estate Record & Guide 82, no. 2187 (Aug. 1, 1908), 245.
- Boyer, M. Christine. Manhattan Manners: Architecture and Style 1850-1900. New York: Rizzoli, 1985.
- "Building for Irving Place Corner." Real Estate Record & Guide 83, no. 2153 (June 19, 1909), 1244.
- Chase, W. Parker. New York: The Wonder City, An Illustrated Story of New York with Statistics and General Data Concerning New York's Vastness, New York's People, New York's Activities and New York's Intimate Inside Life in the Year 1932. New York City: Wonder City Publishing Co., Inc., 1931.
- "A Common Sense Plan." Real Estate Record & Guide 82, no. 2126 (Dec. 12, 1908), 1136.
- Condit, Carl W. The Chicago School of Architecture: A History of Commercial and Public Building in the Chicago Area, 1875-1925. 1952; rev and enlarged ed. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1964.
- "Construction: Silk Trade Also Coming to Fourth Avenue. Nine Million Dollars for Construction Represented by the Visible Operations -- A Great Commission District Building Up." Real Estate Record & Guide 86, no. 2216 (Sept. 3, 1910), 371-372.
- David, A. C. "The New Architecture." Architectural Record 28, no. 6 (Dec. 1910), 388-403.
- David, A. C. "The New Architecture. The First American Type of Real Value Represented by the Group of Commercial Buildings on Fourth Avenue." Real Estate Record & Guide 86, no. 2232 (Dec. 24, 1910), 1085.
- "Erecting Steel Against Time. Tiers of Big Office Building on Site of Old Everett House As If By Magic." Real Estate Record & Guide 82, no. 2126 (Dec. 12, 1908), 1116.
- "Fireproof in a High Degree." Real Estate Record & Guide 82, no. 2118 (Oct. 17, 1908), 733.
- "Fourth Avenue, Looking North From 16th Street, Where the Rebuilding of this Thoroughfare Started." Real Estate Record & Guide 84, no. 2179 (Dec. 18, 1909), 1090.

- Francis, Dennis Steadman. Architects in Practice, New York City, 1840-1900. New York: Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records, 1980.
- "Fuller & Co. Get Contract for Wheeler Building." Real Estate Record & Guide 83, no. 2146 (May 1, 1909), 866.
- "Goodbye to Union Square?" Village Views 1, no. 2 (Sept. 1984), 3-40.
- H[amlin], T[albot], F[aulkner]. "Starrett, William Aiken." Dictionary of American Biography. Ed. Dumas Malone. 1935; rpt. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1963; vol. 9, 536-537.
- A History of Real Estate, Building, and Architecture in New York. 1898; rpt. New York: Arno Press, 1967.
- "Ideas from the Everett Building." Real Estate Record & Guide 83, no. 2134 (Feb. 6, 1909), 238.
- Jordy, William H. American Buildings and Their Architects: Progressive and Academic Ideals at the Turn of the Twentieth Century. 1976; paperback ed. New York: Anchor Books, 1976.
- Jordy, William. "The Tall Buildings." Louis Sullivan: The Function of Ornament. Ed. Wim de Wit. New York: W. W. Norton, 1986; 65-158.
- Landmarks Preservation Commission. The Algonquin Hotel Designation Report, (LP-1547). Report prepared by Nancy Goeschel. New York: City of New York, 1987.
- Landmarks Preservation Commission. Saks Fifth Avenue Designation Report, (LP-1523). Report prepared by Sarah Williams. New York: City of New York, 1984.
- Landmarks Preservation Commission. Starrett-Lehigh Designation Report, (LP-1295). Report prepared by Jay Shockley. New York: City of New York, 1986.
- Lockwood, Charles. Bricks and Brownstones: The New York Row House, 1783-1924: An Architectural and Social History. New York: 1972.
- Lockwood, Charles. Manhattan Moves Uptown. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1986.
- "Loft Buildings as Investment Propositions. The Sort of Building an Investor Might Expect for \$900,000 -- Where Such a Building Would Pay -- The Nature of the Foundations--Precedents Furnished by a Notable Structure." Real Estate Record & Guide 84, no. 2179 (Dec. 18, 1909), 1093-94.

Manual of the Corporation of the City of New York. Ed. David Thomas Valentine. New York: D. T. Valentine, 1857.

"Materials and Equipment of the Gimbel Building." Real Estate Record & Guide 84, no. 2156 (July 10, 1909), 60.

New York City. Department of Buildings, Manhattan. Plans, Permits and Dockets. [Block 846, Lot 33]. Dockets only are located in the Municipal Archives, Surrogate's Court.

"Office Building on Hotel Site." Real Estate Record & Guide 81, no. 2102 (June 27, 1908), 1242.

"Plans for Everett House Site Improvement." Real Estate Record & Guide 81, no. 2101 (June 20 1908), 1178.

Schachter, Sophia and Elsa Gilbertson. "Union Square," Unpublished Manuscript Submitted to the Program in Historic Preservation, Columbia University, A8790, June 1982.

Schuyler, Montgomery. "The Sky-Scraper Up-to-Date." Architectural Record 8, no. 3 (Jan.-March 1899), 231-57.

"Starrett and Van Vleck to Plan Mills-Gibbs Building." Real Estate Record & Guide 84, no. 2180 (Dec. 25, 1909), 1167.

"Starrett, Goldwin." National Cyclopaedia of American Biography Being the History of the United States. New York James T. White & Co., 1935; vol. 24, p. 42.

[Starrett, Goldwin. Obituary.] Journal of the AIA 6, no. 5 (May 1918), 260.

[Starrett, Goldwin. Obituary.] New York Times (May 10, 1918), p. 11.

Stokes, I. N. Phelps. The Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1898-1909. vol. 5; New York: Robert H. Dodd, 1915.

"Trade Interests Need More Modern Buildings. Natural Expansion of Business Unaffected by Pessimistic Reports of General Unrest, Is Rapidly Taking Care of Vacant Loft and Office Space." Real Estate Record & Guide 88, no. 2274 (Oct. 14, 1911), 537-39.

[Van Vleck, Ernest Allen. Obituary.] Architectural Forum 105, no. 4 (Oct. 1956), 37.

[Van Vleck, Ernest Allen. Obituary.] New York Times, (Aug. 9, 1956), p. 25.

Van Zanten, David. "The Nineteenth Century: The Projecting of Chicago as a Commercial City and the Rationalization of Design and Construction." Chicago and New York: Architectural Interactions. Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago, 1984; 30-49.

"View of the Everett Building." Real Estate Record & Guide 82, no. 2127 (Dec. 19, 1908), 1230.

Withey, Henry and Elsie R. Withey. Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased). 1956; rpt. Los Angeles: Hennessey and Ingalls, 1970.



The Everett Building  
45 East 17th Street a/k/a 200-218 Park Avenue South  
Built 1908

Architect: Goldwin Starrett &  
Van Vleck  
Photo credit: Carl Forster



The Everett Building  
West and Union Square elevations

Photo credit: Carl Forster



The Everett Building  
Detail, base, Union Square elevation

Photo credit: Carl Forster



The Everett Building  
Detail, base, Union Square elevation  
(original overdoor molding treatment)

Photo credit: Carl Forster



The Everett Building  
Detail, second through fourth stories

Photo credit: Carl Forster



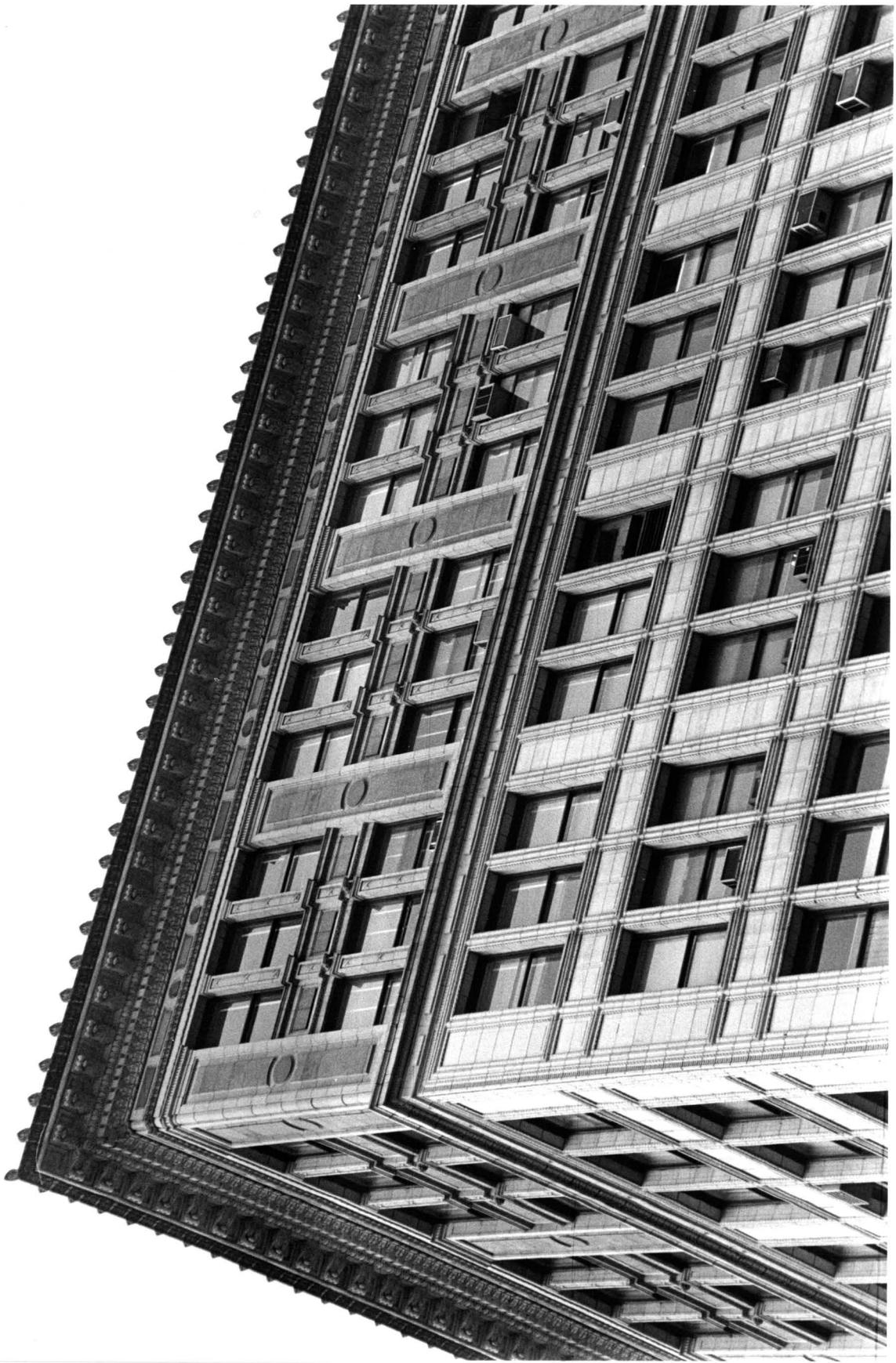
The Everett Building  
Detail, ground story, Park Avenue South  
elevation (original transom treatment)

Photo credit: Carl Forster



The Everett Building  
Detail, upper stories and cornice, Union  
Square elevation

Photo credit: Carl Forster



The Everett Building  
Detail, upper stories

Photo credit: Carl Forster