

## ✧ ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY ✧

# 1148 FIFTH AVE



1148 FIFTH AVENUE

On March 25, 1923 the real estate brokerage of Pease & Elliman published an advertisement in the New York Times announcing three new apartment buildings on "Fifth Avenue" each with a "fine view of Central Park." Among the buildings advertised was 1148 Fifth Avenue, which was then under construction. The building opened that fall, rising thirteen stories above the southeast corner of Fifth Avenue and 96th Street. Its walls originally contained 48 apartments with 30 extra servants' rooms located on the roof-top. Apartment sizes ranged from eight, nine, or ten rooms, each featuring three to four bathrooms. Original rents for these large and airy apartments ranged from \$4000 to \$7200 - top of the market prices in 1923. Obviously, apartments at 1148 Fifth Avenue were in high demand.

The fact that J.E.R. Carpenter designed 1148 Fifth Avenue only added to its desirability. By the mid-1920s, J.E.R. Carpenter was one of the most sought after residential architects in New York City, particularly for his designs for luxurious apartment buildings like the

one found at 1148 Fifth Avenue. Before ascending to the height of the New York architecture scene, however, Carpenter had established himself as an architect in the South. A graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a student at the École des Beaux-Arts, Carpenter's early designs in Nashville, Birmingham, and Atlanta put him on the architectural map. His move to New York in 1909 to design a residential building for Spencer Fullerton Weaver, a developer and architect famed for his partnership with Leonard Schultze, placed him even more in the public eye. After completing several projects for Weaver, Carpenter branched out on his own, expanding his operation shortly thereafter to encompass development as well as design. 1148 Fifth Avenue was the product of such a venture - Carpenter designed the building and also played a large role in its development.

Many of Carpenter's most successful buildings can be found near 1148 Fifth Avenue on the Upper East Side. Two nearly identical structures built in 1926 are located at 1165 and 1170 Fifth Avenue, and another closely contemporary building can be found next door to 1148 Fifth Avenue at 1150 Fifth. 812 Park Avenue, which in 1927 earned Carpenter a gold medal in large-scale residential design from the New York chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA), is also close by. Some changes to the façade of 1148 Fifth Avenue have followed since its opening in 1923; most notably the roof-top servants' rooms were converted to a penthouse in 1950. These changes, however, have done little to alter the prevailing elegance of the structure. All in all, owning a residence in 1148 Fifth Avenue was, and still is, an experience characterized by the unique type of luxury that only a building designed by J.E.R. Carpenter has to offer!